

MOFFY, NOFF AND DOFF

Once upon a time there was a little boy called Moffy. His real name was Maurice but everyone called him Moffy. Moffy loved toy cars- they were his favourite. Everywhere he went he took at least one with him. Sometimes two, or three, or even hundreds.

He had two friends. One of them was called Noff. He was a bird made of bright green felt with rather bedraggled blue feathers and a large yellow beak. He was quite an agile bird- he could turn somersaults- but only when he was with his friend, Moffy. He had long since forgotten how to fly. Sometimes Moffy would say: "Go on- you can fly," and threw him up in the air. But he always fell down to the ground, did a little somersault and lay quite still, pretending he was too tired to move.

Moffy's other friend Doff was also made out of felt. Doff was really just a very old hat. Once upon a time he had belonged to a magician. When the magician went away he had left some of his magic inside the hat. So Doff was alive and could do all sorts of tricks. But he would only do them when he was alone with Moffy and Noff. And not very often even then, because to tell the truth Doff the hat was rather lazy.

One fine day Moffy, Noff and Doff decided to go for a picnic on top of Clumpy mountain. It was a long way away, so they took some biscuits and a bottle of lemonade and, of course, Moffy's latest toy car. It was rather grand and made a roaring sound like a real car. The hood opened and so did the doors and it had real lights for driving at nighttime.

Soon they came to a bridge built over a stream. Moffy stopped and looking over the parapet, he could see tiny glistening fish wriggling through the clear water. 'Look, fish!' he shouted excitedly. But Noff and Doff had walked on. He chased after them. When they came to a field with big brown cows eating the green grass. Moffy showed one of the cows his toy car. But she was too busy eating the grass to take any notice. So Moffy ran after his friends again and they walked steadily on towards the top of Clumpy mountain.

There was a white cloud perched right on top of the mountain. But soon after they arrived it drifted away. The sun shone out of a clear blue sky.

'Look,' cried Moffy to the others, 'There's our house right down there- the one with the red roof'. But Noff and Doff were so busy opening packets of biscuits they didn't hear him.

They ate the biscuits. They drank the lemonade. Moffy played with his toy car and then they decided that it was time to go home.

Down the mountain they went, Moffy leading the way. They crossed the field with the cows. They walked over the bridge. And just as they arrived outside their house Moffy noticed that he hadn't got his toy car.

'Where is it?' he asked.

Noff said solemnly: 'I think you left it on top of Clumpy mountain.'

'I must go and find it,' Moffy exclaimed and started to walk up the mountain again.

But the mountain seemed to have grown steeper since he last climbed it. The sun beat down on him and he felt very hot. He climbed and climbed, but soon he was so tired he had to give up.

'What am I going to do?' he wailed. 'I must get my very best toy car back.'

Doff said: 'I'll get it.'

'How can you get it?' Moffy said in disgust. 'You're only a hat.'

'Ah, but I am a *magic* hat,' boasted Doff. 'I'll wait for a strong gust of wind to blow me up Clumpy mountain and then I'll grab the toy car and roll back down the mountain side.'

He waited until there was a strong puff of wind. Up went Doff into the air, he went bowling up the mountainside. And then quick as a flash the wind blew him down again before he had time to grab the toy motor car.

'Oh dear!' cried Moffy. 'What am I going to do?'

Then he had a bright idea. He turned to Noff: 'You're a bird. Why don't you fly up the mountain and get my motor car for me'

Noff looked a little puzzled. He had lived in the house with Moffy and Doff so long that he had completely forgotten how to fly. He gave a little twitch with his wings. But nothing happened.

'You must try harder,' ordered Moffy. 'Flap your wings, don't just twitch them.'

Noff flapped his wings as hard as he could. But nothing happened, except that he fell over.

He stood up and looked very crestfallen.

'I'm sorry, Moffy,' he said. 'But I don't know how to fly anymore.'

Moffy thought of his lovely toy car all by itself on top of Clumpy mountain and he cried. So Noff, wanting to help his friend, tried to fly. Again and again. He flapped his wings, he spun round, he fell on his tail, he fell on his head, he sprawled on one wing. He looked so funny that Moffy laughed through his tears.

'Do try to remember,' Moffy appealed to him. 'Try *really* hard this time.'

To help Noff remember how to fly, Moffy went through the alphabet,

A is for Airplane- an airplane can fly.

B is for Balloon- a balloon can fly.

C is for Climbing right up in the air.

D is for Diving down when you're flying.

E is for Effort-

'That's the most important one of all,' Doff the hat said excitedly. My magician taught me that. If you make enough Effort you can do anything you like.'

Noff, the bird made out of felt, whirled around in a fury. He flapped his wings, he lifted his head up in the air towards the sun and suddenly, hurray! He rose up into the air and flew up to the top of Clumpy Mountain. Soon, he was back with Muffy's toy car in his beak.

And they all went home for tea. They had egg sandwiches, peanut butter sandwiches, jam sponge cake and ice cream.

Oh, I forgot to mention the strawberry jelly...