
THE WONDERBOUND CLUB
The Night Moss Put the Lantern Down
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For the ones who remember the blanket.
And the ones learning to carry a corner.

The Night Moss Put the Lantern Down
The Wonderbound Club's Adventures

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An original fictional adventure.
All characters and events are imaginary.

Meet the Club



Button	The Brave One
Clover	The Navigator
Juniper	The Collector
Moss	The Snack Keeper

When the leaves turned copper, the fireflies made a river of light above Lantern Hill.

Button had waited all summer to see it.

Tonight, at last, the Wonderbound Club was going.





Button packed a biscuit, a notebook, and a spoon.

"What is the spoon for?" asked Clover.

"I haven't decided. But imagine needing one and not having one."

Clover considered this an excellent point.





In Moss's kitchen, the biscuits were cooling.

Moss packed four cups. Then the tea. Then a blanket, because the hill got chilly.

He added a little extra honey.

Juniper sometimes said she didn't want honey. Juniper was often mistaken.





Clover had found a shortcut.

"Fifteen minutes faster," she said.

Her map was upside down.

Moss gently turned it around.

"Fourteen minutes faster," said Clover.





Juniper brought a leaf shaped like a heart, a ribbon, and a very beautiful stone.

"It's for the top of the hill," she explained.

"What will it do there?" asked Button.

"Be a very beautiful stone."

That seemed fair.





At the gate, everyone remembered one more thing.

Clover's scarf. Button's notebook. Juniper's ribbon.

Moss found room in the basket.

Then he tucked the blanket under his arm and picked up the lantern.

"Ready?" he asked.

Everyone was.





They followed Moss's lantern through the village.

Button watched the hill.

Clover watched the map.

Juniper watched for interesting things.

Moss watched the path, especially the places where small feet might trip.





Button's bootlace came undone.

Moss set everything down and tied it.

"Thank you!" Button called, already looking up.

Something gold had flickered above the trees.

She didn't see Moss pick everything up again.





Juniper found another beautiful stone.

"Could you carry this one too?" she asked.

Moss shifted the basket.

"Just until the hill," she added.

"Just until the hill," said Moss.

His paw was beginning to ache.





Clover's shortcut ended at a pond.

A very pretty pond.

A pond with no bridge.

"The map is a little out of date," said Clover.

A frog blinked at them.

The frog had no suggestions.





They went back past the same fern.

And the same stump.

And the same snail, who was making better progress than expected.

Button walked faster.

Moss walked a little slower.





The hill was still ahead.

Above it, the first golden lights were gathering.

"Look!" cried Button.

Moss looked up too.

He had been hoping to see the fireflies all summer.





"Could we stop for a—" Moss began.

"There are more over the hill!" Button cried.

She hurried around the bend.

Clover and Juniper followed.

Moss's sentence stayed behind with him.





Under the old oak, Moss set down the basket.

Then the blanket.

Then the lantern.

He sat on a root and opened his sore paw.

For a moment, he didn't carry anything.





Button took three more steps.

Then she stopped.

The warm circle of light wasn't following them.

The path ahead looked much darker than before.

"Moss?" she called.





"Stay close," said Clover.

They went back around the bend.

Moss was sitting beneath the oak, right beside the lantern.

"There it is!" said Juniper.

"There you are," said Moss.





"Will we miss the fireflies?" Button asked.

"We might," said Moss.

"Could you walk a little faster?"

Moss looked at his paws.

"I need to rest, Button."

This time, nobody hurried away.





Clover looked at the basket.

Her scarf was on top. Button's notebook was underneath.

Juniper's stones pressed against the cups.

Beside it lay the blanket they all liked sitting on.

Clover looked down at her own paws.

She was carrying a map.





"Does your paw hurt?" Clover asked.

"Yes," said Moss.

Juniper's ears drooped.

"Is it because of my stones?"

"Not only your stones," said Moss. "There was rather a lot."

Nobody had a clever answer.





"I like bringing the biscuits," Moss said.

"And the tea."

He rubbed his paw.

"But I don't want to carry every single thing."

Button looked at the hill.

Then she looked back at Moss.





Button wanted Moss to say it was all right.

Instead, she sat beside him.

"I'm sorry I kept asking you to hurry," she said.

"You were trying to tell us."

Moss gave a small nod.

Button stayed.





Juniper lifted both stones out of the basket.

They were much heavier together.

She put one in each of her own pockets.

"I should have carried what I wanted to bring," she said.

Her neckerchief tilted sideways with the effort.





"I'll take the blanket," said Clover.

She tied it to her satchel.

It slid off.

She tied it again, more slowly.

This time, it stayed.

"That's better," she said, mostly to the knot.





Button's bootlace was loose again.

She almost held out her foot.

Then she bent down.

"Loop around the tree," Moss said softly.

The first loop escaped.

The second one didn't.





Button tugged at the basket.

It hardly moved.

"I can help," she puffed.

"So can I," said Juniper.

They each took a handle.

The basket rose.

Only a little. But enough.





"What would you like to carry?" Clover asked.

Moss thought about it.

"My cup," he said. "That's enough for now."

"Then your cup it is," said Clover.

Nobody added anything else.





They sat for a while.

No one said, "Ready yet?"

A moth landed on the lantern.

Juniper opened her mouth to name it.

Then she closed her mouth and watched.

For once, the little thing didn't need to become a collection.





From the hill came a faraway cheer.

Golden lights rose above the treetops.

Button's throat felt tight.

"I really wanted to be there," she whispered.

"So did I," said Moss.

He didn't tell her not to feel sad.





"I'm glad we're together," Button said.

"I'm still sad, though."

Moss shifted so she had more room on the root.

"You can sit here with both," he said.

So she did.





"The hill is too far tonight," said Clover.

She folded the map.

"What shall we do instead?"

Juniper looked at the blanket.

Button looked at the basket.

Moss looked at his cup.

"A sit-down adventure?" he suggested.





Clover spread the blanket.

Juniper set out the cups.

Button carried the biscuits, one careful stack at a time.

Moss started to stand.

"Stay there," said Button. "Which one would you like?"

Moss chose the biggest.





Button stirred honey into the tea.

With her spoon.

Her extremely important spoon.

Clover smiled.

"Imagine needing one," she said.

"And not having one," said Button.





Clover poured.

Juniper passed.

Button wiped a little spill.

Moss settled in with his biscuit.

It was a very good biscuit.

He hadn't tasted one properly all evening.





The hill went dark again.

Down here, the tea steamed.

A beetle stepped over a pine needle.

Juniper's stone held one bright fleck.

Button noticed the way Moss's shoulders had lowered.

She hadn't known she could notice that.





When it was time to go, Button picked up the lantern.

After a while, her paw grew tired.

"Your turn?" she asked Juniper.

"My turn," said Juniper.

The light kept moving.





They reached the cottage much later than planned.

Clover put away the cups.

Juniper shook out the blanket.

Button gathered the crumbs.

Moss sat by the window and told them how the frog had looked at Clover's map.

They laughed all over again.





For their next adventure, Moss reached for the basket.

Three small paws reached too.

"What do you want to bring?" asked Clover.

"My appetite," said Moss.

Button laughed. Then she looked up at him.

"Coming with us?"

Moss smiled.

"Coming."





A little more to wonder about

- What did the friends notice before they noticed Moss?
- What did each friend do after saying sorry?
- Could Button be glad and disappointed at the same time? When have you felt two things at once?



There's room for you here.



Bring your curiosity.
Bring your big feelings.
And if you bring a blanket,
ask someone to carry a corner.



Goodnight, Wonderbound.

The light can be shared.