



Come Back, Gosling

ANNE BOOTH

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TO MY LOVELY AGENT, ANNE CLARK XX – A.B.

FOR POPPY, MINNIE, TREVOR, MAGGIE MAY
AND OTHER MUCH LOVED PETS – D.L.

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Come Back, Gosling



There was once a little girl
who loved a gosling.

And the gosling loved her back.



They had lots
of fun together.



Their very favourite thing was to go to the library
each week and choose new books.





Then they would come home
and take the books up to
their special tree house.



Gosling wasn't very good at climbing. So the little girl used
the bucket and rope to pull Gosling right up next to her.



They both agreed the tree house was
the perfect place for reading books.

One week, Gosling chose a book about baby animals.



They looked at all the pictures together – and then they played puppies and kittens.



The next week, the little girl chose a story about pirates.



She read it to Gosling from beginning to end – and then they played treasure hunts.

The third week, they chose a book with a gosling on the cover. But before Gosling could look inside, the little girl slammed it shut.



So they did.

That night, Gosling wanted to look at the new book, but he couldn't find it anywhere!

Gosling searched all over, and the little girl helped.



They both agreed the book was lost.

The next morning, they went back to the library.



"OH DEAR," said the librarian.
"I HOPE YOU FIND YOUR BOOK SOON. HERE ARE SOME
MORE BOOKS, UNTIL YOU FIND THE LOST ONE."



So Gosling and the little girl went back
to the tree house with their new books.

The first book was a funny one.
They giggled and laughed, and then
Gosling laughed so much that...




HONK!



"WHAT WAS THAT FUNNY
NOISE I MADE?"
said Gosling,
surprised.

"I DON'T LIKE THIS BOOK ANY MORE,"
said the girl. "LET'S READ
A DIFFERENT ONE."





The second book was all
about racing cars.

After they'd read it, they raced
each other round the garden.
The little girl was faster.

But as Gosling ran, he stretched
out his wings and flapped the...

And suddenly he caught
up with the little girl.

WHAT A FUNNY JUMP I DID!

I DON'T LIKE THIS BOOK
ANY MORE. LET'S READ
ANOTHER ONE.

So they went back to the tree house and read the third book together. It was a book of fairy tales with a lovely picture of a flying carpet.

THAT PICTURE MAKES ME FEEL ALL HAPPY AND FIZZY INSIDE. IT MAKES ME WANT TO SPREAD MY WINGS AND JUMP UP AND DOWN!

"GOSLING! STOP JUMPING!" cried the little girl.
"YOU'LL FALL OFF."



But it was too late. Gosling had already tumbled off the edge of the tree house.

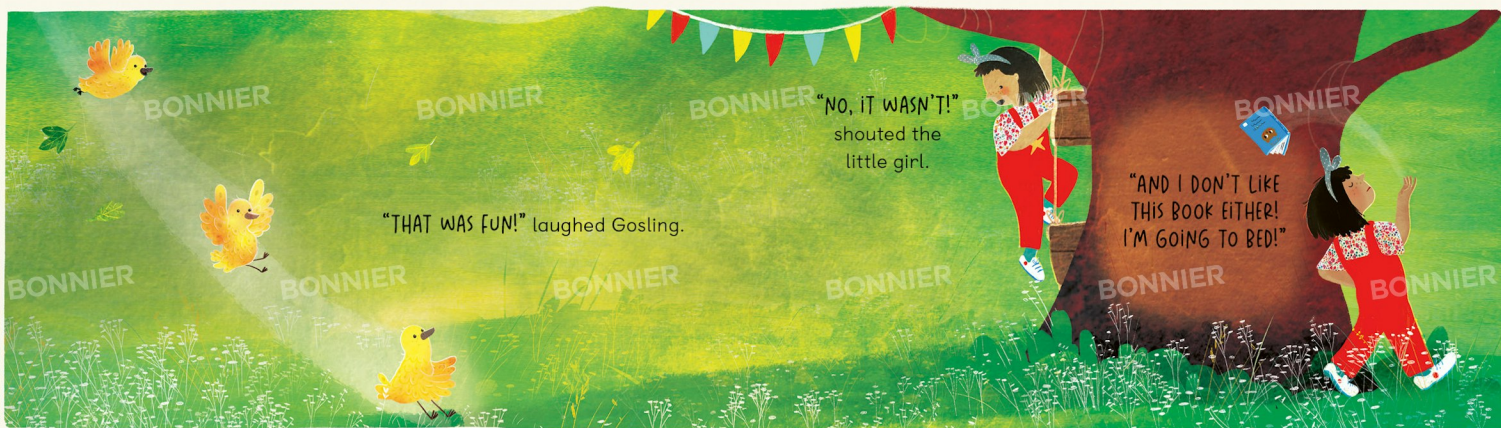


As he fell, he spread his wings out. They caught the wind and he...



...FLEW!





"NO, IT WASN'T!"
shouted the
little girl.

"THAT WAS FUN!" laughed Gosling.

"AND I DON'T LIKE
THIS BOOK EITHER!
I'M GOING TO BED!"



That night, Gosling couldn't sleep. He looked across at
his friend and saw, peeping out from under her pillow...

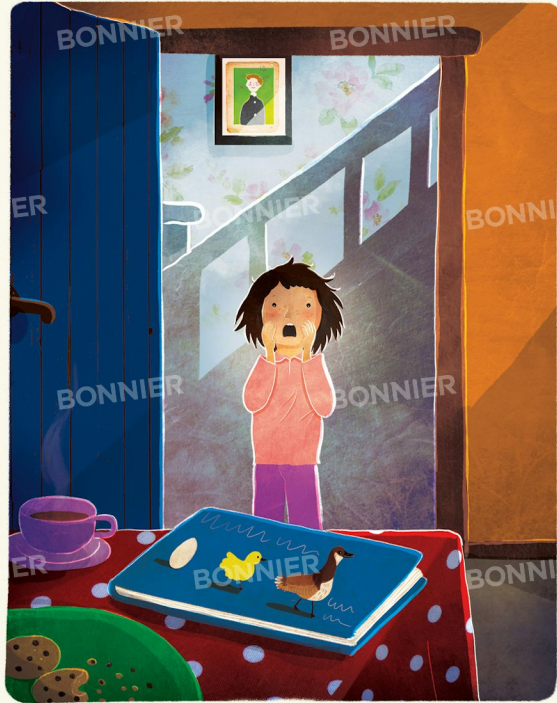


the lost book!

Even though Gosling
didn't understand every
word, he still read the
book right to the end.

So he crept over
and took it.

In the morning, Gosling had gone.



The missing book was on the table.

The girl went outside to look for him.




"COME BACK, GOSLING!" she called.
"GOSLING, PLEASE COME BACK! I'M SORRY!"

All at once she heard lots
of happy honking and the
flapping of wings above her...


...and she saw a big V shape in the sky.

At the very end, there was Gosling!




"I'M SORRY I HID THE BOOK," called the little girl.
"I DIDN'T WANT YOU TO KNOW YOU WERE A GOOSE"


AND TO FLY AWAY FROM ME. BUT YOU ARE A GOOSE,
AND I LOVE YOU AND I WANT YOU TO BE HAPPY!"




"I AM A GOOSE WHO FLIES AWAY EVERY AUTUMN," replied Gosling.




"BUT I AM ALSO A GOOSE WHO LOVES YOU
VERY MUCH. DID YOU FINISH THE BOOK?"



The little girl
shook her head.



"YOU SHOULD," Gosling said. "YOU'LL GET A LOVELY SURPRISE IF YOU DO."



He gave her another hug, then
he flew back to the flock.

Up in the tree house,



the little girl read the book
all the way to the end -



and started to feel
a bit better.



She waited all through the autumn...



and the winter...



until the spring came.



And just like the book said...

...GOSLING
CAME BACK!



And because the
gosling loved the
little girl, he did so
every spring.

