



*It's the marshy field he likes the most - all those tasty mice and voles in there, I expect. He doesn't come out every time, but it's worth waiting to see if he does. So I do.
I love owls.*



And sure enough, here he is, floating down out of nowhere! He's like a white ghost, a friendly ghost - unless you're a mouse or a vole that is. He's smaller than I remember. He hardly moves his wings, just glides, dives once, lifts up, and then he's gone again. I hope he caught something. He might have babies to feed. Which reminds me, my tummy's rumbling. I wonder if there's a bun waiting for me at the farm?

HIAWATHA'S CHILDHOOD

Then the little Hiawatha
Learned of every bird its language,
Learned their names and all their secrets,
How they built their nests in Summer,
Where they hid themselves in Winter,
Talked with them whene'er he met them,
Called them "Hiawatha's Chickens."

Of all beasts he learned the language,
Learned their names and all their secrets,
How the beavers built their lodges,
Where the squirrels hid their acorns,
How the reindeer ran so swiftly,
Why the rabbit was so timid,
Talked with them whene'er he met them,
Called them "Hiawatha's Brothers."

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW



Time for another dandelion clock. I blow hard this time, hard as I
can. The hours float away on the air. Eleven o'clock? The sun is climbing
to the top of the sky, shining down on the silvery spiders' webs strung
out in the bramble hedge.

There's one spider waiting right in the middle, ^{pretending} ~~pretending~~ he's not there.
Lucky I'm not a fly. I see you, spider, I see you.

INCY WINCY SPIDER

Incy Wincy spider climbed up the water spout.
Down came the rain and washed poor Incy out.
Out came the sunshine and dried up all the rain
And Incy Wincy spider climbed up the spout again.

ANON

Farmer says I can take Captain out if I like, so long as I groom him and pick out his hooves before I go. Captain's coat is full of dust, so he takes a lot of grooming. He treads on my toe and swishes me in the face with his tail. Thanks a lot, Captain. But he's not being nasty, just letting me know that he wants to go out, that he's fed up with being groomed.

As soon as I put the saddle on him he's happy, and as I swing myself up and we walk out of the farmyard, he's happier still. Past the duck pond; five ducks, ten ducklings, two geese, one gosling and the moorhen. That's good, same as before. Looks like the fox has stayed away.

Twelve's coming along with us too, so excited his tail's whirling round like a propeller.



Captain likes to stop for a drink in the river. So I slide off him, and go stone-skimming while he has a good slurp. Skimming's not easy today, because the river's running too fast, there are too many ripples. My record is fifteen but three hops is all I can manage now. After a while I give up and just sit there under the shade of the willows. This is the place I do my best dreaming, my best thinking.

The little dipper's there, diving into the river from his stone, then he pops out again, shaking his feathers dry, and off.

A Kingfisher! A kingfisher flashes by and he's gone, almost before I even saw him, his colours so bright that they stay in my head long after he's gone.



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