

Saved by a Fly

A Native American Story

retold by Feana Tu'akoi

One day, a giant moose came to drink at a river. He was very big and very thirsty. All day long, he drank and he drank.

The other animals watched as the river started to empty. They were very worried.

“What shall we do?” moaned Beaver. “If Moose drinks all the water, our homes will be ruined.”

“It’s OK for you,” burbled Salmon. “You can live on land if you have to. Without the river, I’ll die.”

“He’s got to be stopped,” roared Buffalo. “Someone should scare him away.”

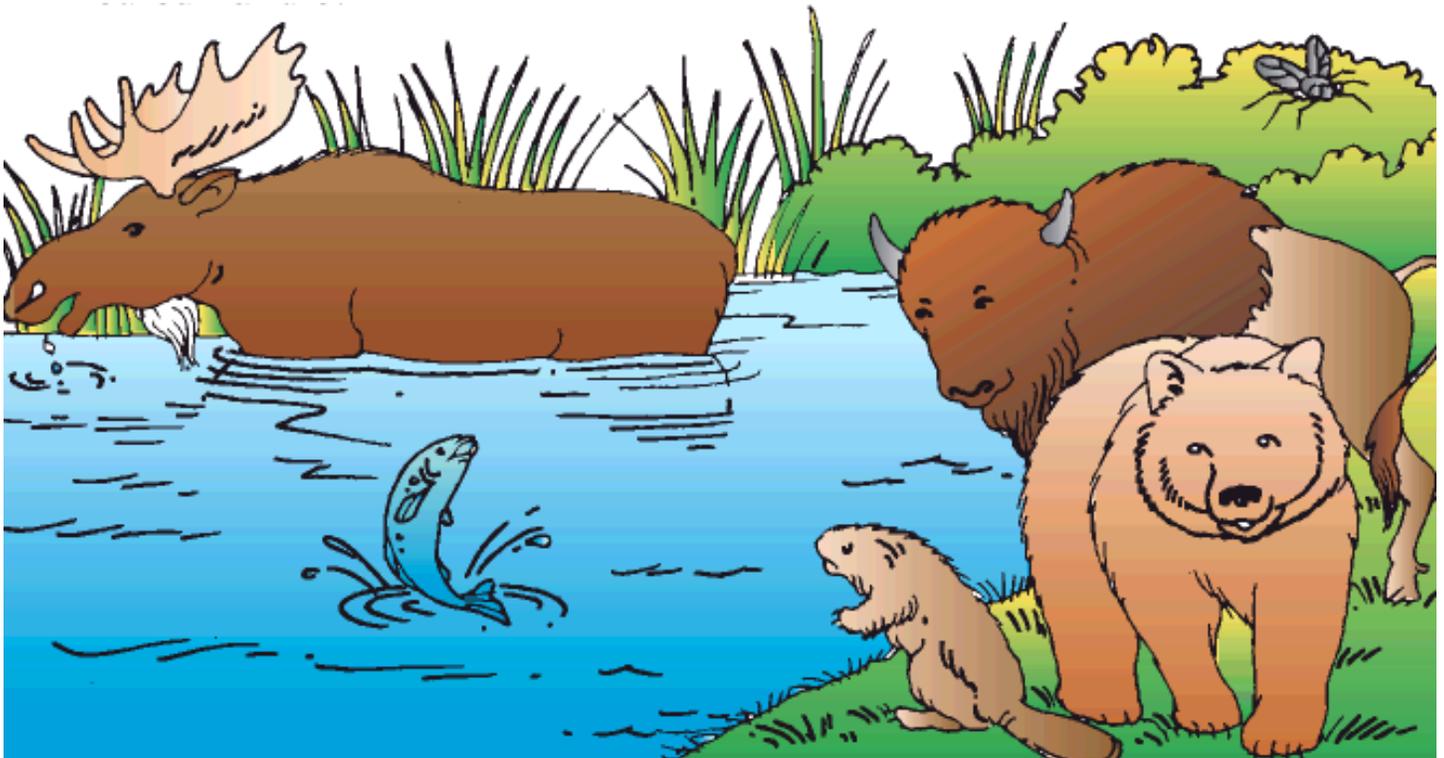
“Well, don’t look at me!” growled Bear. “That moose is twice my size. One flick of his antlers, and I’d be off to the moon.”

The others nodded sadly. Bear was right. They were all too scared to try to make Moose leave.

“Let me try,” buzzed Fly.

The animals looked at Fly in surprise. Then they started to laugh.

“Ha, ha. How could you stop Moose? Look at the size of you!” roared Buffalo.



“Just watch me try,” buzzed Fly.

Fly flew onto Moose’s shoulder and bit him sharply. Moose flicked his enormous head, but he kept on drinking.

Fly landed on Moose’s back leg, biting hard. Moose stamped until the ground shook, but he kept on drinking.

Fly moved to Moose’s front leg and bit again. Moose was getting mad now. He splashed his leg into the river to get rid of Fly, but he kept on drinking.

Poor Fly nearly drowned, but he was determined not to give up. He flew hard to dry out his wings. Then he stopped to get his breath back.

The other animals were worried. “Come back, Fly,” they called.

“We’re sorry we made fun of you! Stop before you get hurt!”

But Fly didn’t listen. He made one last, angry attack. He zoomed around and around Moose’s head, biting and buzzing madly. Moose shook his head, stamped his feet, and splashed in the water. But Fly kept on buzzing and biting.

Moose snorted and blew. He lifted his head and gave a mighty roar.

But Fly kept on buzzing and biting.

Fly was driving Moose crazy. Moose ran up and down the riverbank.

He stomped and roared, making the ground shake as if there were an earthquake. He rubbed himself against the trees, then rolled in the water. But Fly kept on buzzing and biting.

At last, realizing that he was beaten, Moose left the river for good.

The animals were overjoyed.

“You’ve saved my life!” burbled Salmon.

Fly smiled and buzzed tiredly. “Well, that just proves you can do anything if you try hard enough!”