



A shy, unassuming acorn is bored and wants a friend he can explore with. Oddly enough, he finds that friend in a self important, boisterous button. Together, Acorn and Button embark on adventures in the big woods as their friendship grows.

Acorn and Button

By Laura Petrisin

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To my mother-in-law, Do, who always believed in me.

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CHAPTER 5

Lost

It was twilight - that magical time when a golden sun swings low and the first stars appear faintly in a darkening, purple sky. Button headed over to Acorn's house carrying an empty jar.

"Hello, Acorn!" he called from outside, "Would you care to join me in a firefly expedition?"

Acorn came to the door. "A firefly what?"

"Expedition, my friend!" Button boomed. "I'm hunting fireflies.

"What will you do with them after you catch them?" asked Acorn.

"I'll keep them in my house," replied Button, "where I can gaze upon their beauty whenever I want."

At that moment, a small firefly flew right by Button and Acorn. Button gave chase.

"What a specimen!" he shouted. "Come quickly, Acorn!"

Acorn followed as fast as he could. The firefly landed on a bush and Button crept up on it. But, just as he opened his jar, the firefly flew off again. This went on for quite a while.

Button and Acorn chased the firefly past the pond, through the apple orchard, and beyond the big boulder where they often had a picnic lunch. The forest grew darker as they ran, and Button suddenly tripped over a tree root, dropping his jar.

Acorn stopped, and asked anxiously, "Are you hurt, Button?"

Button stood up and brushed himself off. "No, I don't think so."

The two stood still and looked around. The firefly had disappeared. Night had fallen. Shadows loomed and clouds filled the sky.

Acorn gulped. "Do you know where we are, Button?"

Button peered at the trees outlined against the sky. He didn't recognize them. "I'm afraid I don't, Acorn."

Acorn trembled, and said, "We're lost!"

"If only we had a clear sky and stars," said Button. "The North Star would guide us home."

Hearing the word "home" gave Acorn a tight feeling in his throat. He thought of his comfortable bed made of twigs and a big, oak leaf.

"Do you think there are any wild animals around?" asked Acorn as he inched closer to Button.

"I dare say there are," answered Button. "Big, ferocious beasts that only come out at night may be watching us right now."

Just then, a twig cracked nearby. The two raccoon cubs, Clyde and Sammy, had been hunting for treasure and popped their heads above a nearby bush.

"Just as I feared!" Button shouted and grabbed Acorn's hand. "Run for your life!"

The coons watched Acorn and Button speed away.

"I didn't know buttons could run," said Clyde, scratching his head.

"Or acorns!" Sammy chimed in.

They returned to searching for treasure to add to their bounty.

Meanwhile, Acorn and Button ran and ran through the forest. Acorn stumbled once, but Button pulled him to his feet. Whenever they stopped to rest, the night sounds surrounded them. The hoot of an owl or a rustle in a bush filled them with fear, and they raced off again. They ran until their legs felt like jelly, and they could barely breathe.



Finally, Button stopped. "It's no use," he gasped. "We can't keep on. We will have to face the beasts..."

Button drew out his needle and stood in front of Acorn, who was trembling from head to foot. They waited...

Just then, every bush and tree surrounding the two friends lit up with hundreds of fireflies that were blinking and weaving about. The shadows lifted and there was no beast to be seen.

Acorn cried, "The fireflies have come to our rescue!"

There was a clear path before them, and they heard something very soft yet distinct, like the sigh of a breeze or the ripple of a stream. "Follow us," came a whisper.



The fireflies traveled slowly down the path, and Acorn and Button followed them until they recognized the big boulder where they always picnicked. They knew the rest of the way home.

With relief, Acorn began to thank the fireflies when they vanished suddenly, disappearing as quickly as they had appeared.

Button set off out down the path. "This way, Acorn," he said.

As they walked, Acorn noticed that Button's jar was missing. "Did you forget your jar, Button?" he asked.

"No," answered Button. "I left it back in the forest."

"Why did you do that?"

Button was quiet for a moment and then said. "Maybe fireflies don't like being chased. Maybe they don't like being stuck in a jar. I was stuck to a sleeve once and I didn't care for it."

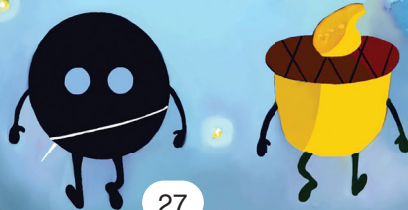
Acorn nodded.

Button sighed. "To be honest, I regret my plan to capture fireflies for my own personal use."

Acorn thought about this. Then, he smiled at his friend. "But, I think you would have let them go, Button."

"Quite right," said Button, brightening and picking up his step.

The two walked on, and it wasn't long before they arrived home, safe and sound.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Laura Petrisin lived most of her life in New York before recently moving to the mountains of North Carolina with her husband and french bulldog. Retired from teaching, she spends a lot of time writing and painting with watercolors, oils and inks. Laura has illustrated several children's books and decided it was time to write and illustrate her own, beginning with Acorn and Button.

When not working, Laura often spends mornings at the backyard creek finding inspiration for story ideas.





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