Name: _____ Date: _____

The Moon's Night Off

Reading level 7 (3rd grade) · 344 words

The moon was tired. She had shone every night for a very long time. "I would like one night off," she told the sky.

She told Owl, who drove the night bus. "Someone must shine," said Owl. "I will do it."

Owl found a big white plate. She flew up above the sleeping roofs.

"Look!" she called. "I am the moon!" In her window, Isla looked out.

"That is a dinner plate," she said. "And you are holding it upside down."

The plate wobbled, and so did Owl. Down it went, into the duck pond. Plop, said the pond, very politely.

Now the sky was dark, and the town was darker. Isla could not find her slippers. The cat could not find the door.

Then the fireflies came. "We will shine for you," they said. They rose over the chimneys in a soft green cloud.

It was lovely for a little while. The fireflies glowed, low and slow. Then one of them yawned, and its light went out.

Another yawned, and another. One by one the sleepy green lights went out. The fireflies drifted down to sleep in the grass.

Owl sat very still, her wings over her head. Her feathers were all in a fluff.

"I am very good at owls," she said, very small. Isla heard, and she pulled on her coat.

Isla climbed the hill in her socks. "Moon?" she called, not loudly. "Everything is hard to find without you."

Behind the hill, something stirred. A thin curl of silver light rose over the trees. It looked like a smile with its eyes closed.

"I only rested a little," said the moon. "So only a little of me came back. Is that enough for everyone?"

"Hoo," said Owl, which meant yes. In the grass, the sleeping fireflies glowed once, too.

Isla found her slippers under the bed. The cat found the kitchen door, open all night. The cat pretended it had not looked.

Owl drove everyone home, the wet plate in her lap. Isla's light was the last to go out.

Questions

1. What did Owl hold up to be the moon?

A. A white plate
B. A paper star
C. A round lamp

2. Why did the fireflies' lights go out?

A. The wind blew hard
B. They got sleepy
C. They ran away

3. What does "drifted" mean in "drifted down to sleep"?

A. Ran fast
B. Fell with a bang
C. Floated slowly

4. Why did the moon come back as only a thin curl?

A. She was lost
B. She had only rested a little
C. She was hiding from Owl

5. What was true about the cat and the door?

A. It was open all night
B. It was locked
C. It was in the pond

Words to know

shone: gave light
wobbled: rocked about
drifted: floated down
stirred: moved a little

Answer key: The Moon's Night Off

1. A. A white plate
2. B. They got sleepy
3. C. Floated slowly
4. B. She had only rested a little
5. A. It was open all night