

Molly Mouse and the Meadow Field

by Lloyd Chapell

At the edge of a beautiful green meadow field, awash with flowers of every colour, there lived a young mouse named Molly.

Molly had made a fine little burrow for herself beneath a tall tree, and inside, she had everything she needed to stay safe and well.

But there was nothing that Molly liked more than to head out across the meadow field and meet up with her friends.

She'd natter with ol' Bill Badger about the weather, and chatter with Hannah Hedgehog about all the pretty flowers.

She'd chase dandelion seeds with Rhianna Rabbit, and she'd always stop off at Mr Squirrels tree-hollow shop for a bag of her favourite seed and nut mix.

But then one day, disaster struck. Molly had been happily skipping back to her burrow, kicking up the fallen blossom as she went, when out of the sky came a gigantic foot.

Poor Molly had barely enough time to scurry out of the way as the foot landed with an almighty thud, missing the frightened little mouse by nothing more than a whisker.

Quickly, Molly raced into her burrow. 'That's it,' she cried, slamming the door shut behind her. 'I'm never going outside again!'

Days passed, and Molly's friends began to wonder where she was. The weather and the flowers didn't seem as interesting without her, while chasing dandelion seeds on your own isn't half as much fun as with your best friend.

Soon, her friends decided to visit her burrow. 'Molly, are you in there?' called 'ol Bill Badger when they found the door tightly shut and no answer when they knocked.

'Please go away and just leave me alone,' came a little voice from inside.

'We just want to know you're okay,' called out Rhianna Rabbit. 'We miss you.'

'I'm fine. But please just go. It's not safe out there. There are giants in the sky and they will stand on you. Please, go home,' Molly replied.

Each day, the friends would return and try to encourage Molly to come out. But as soon as they'd arrive, she would send them away, worried for their safety.

Inside, Molly was becoming more and more restless and unhappy. She loved her little burrow, but being at home all the time wasn't so much fun. She missed being out in the meadow field, the fresh air and the flowers, and most of all, she missed her friends. And besides, she was starting to get hungry as she didn't have very much food left. How she missed her favourite seed and nut mix from Mr Squirrel's tree-hollow shop.

One day, after sending her friends away, as she always did, Molly decided that she would have a peek outside her front door. Only a peek though. Surely, it wouldn't do any harm. The light hurt Molly's eyes as it came in through the tiniest of cracks, but how happy it made her to catch a glimpse of the beautiful green meadow field, awash with flowers of every colour.

It was then that something else caught her eye. For just down in front of her door was a package with her name on it, wrapped in flowery paper and tied with a bow. Molly decided to take a chance. She quickly opened her door, grabbed the package and took it into her burrow.

Inside the package, she found a small bunch of meadow flowers, a bag of her favourite seed and nut mix, which she started eating straight away, and a card. The card read:

Dear Molly,

We know that sometimes the world can be a scary place. What you saw was not a giant in the sky, but a child out playing in the meadow field. We understand that you are scared about being outside, but there are things that you can do to look after yourself and keep yourself safe. We're your friends and we understand how you feel. Let us help you, and together, we can be safe and we can be happy.

Signed, all of your meadow field friends.

Molly thought long and hard about the message in the card. They were right, sometimes the world can be a scary place, but she decided that, with their help, she wasn't going to be afraid any longer.

When her friends next came to visit, Molly opened the front door. She thanked each of them. They sat together and spoke about how she could keep safe while being outside, and before long, Molly felt so much better.

The next day, she stepped outside and took a deep breath of fresh, morning air. Soon, she'd be nattering with ol' Bill Badger about the weather, chattering with Hannah Hedgehog about the pretty flowers, chasing dandelion seeds with Rhianna Rabbit, and of course, visiting Mr Squirrel's tree-hollow shop, this time for extra helpings of her favourite seed and nut mix.

But from now on, she'd always keep one eye on the sky, to check if children, or giants, were close by. Today, she looked up into nothing but blue skies and bright sunshine, and she smiled to herself as she set off across the beautiful green meadow field, awash, as it was, with flowers of every colour.

The End.

Dear Parent / Carer,

Thank you for reading **Molly Mouse and the Meadow Field**. I really hope that you and your child enjoyed the story. Below are some discussion questions. These will help with comprehension of the story, but they are also designed to help open up a conversation with your child about the situation that we are currently living through concerning the coronavirus pandemic. The hope is that, by discussing ways to keep safe when being outside (for short periods to get exercise and fresh air), it will settle or help reduce any concerns or worries that they may have. Attached is an information sheet that lists some advice for keeping safe while getting out for a walk during lockdown, which may be useful to refer to. Thank you once again.

Stay safe and be happy!
Lloyd

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Parent / Carer Discussion Questions:

1. In this story, Molly lives in a burrow beneath a tree. She has everything she needs to stay safe and well. What kind of things do you think she might have in her burrow?
2. What kind of things do you have in your house that help you to stay safe and well?
3. Molly enjoys spending time talking and doing things with her friends. What things do you like to talk about and do with your friends and family members?
4. Something happens to Molly that makes her scared to leave her burrow. Can you describe what it is that happened?
5. Just like Molly, some people might be scared of leaving their houses at the moment. Why do you think that is?
6. Molly's friends want to help her and encourage her to come out of her burrow. But each time, she sends them away. Why do you think she sends them away?
7. How does Molly get the message from her friends that they can help her, so that she doesn't have to be afraid of leaving her burrow?
8. Molly's friends tell her some ways she can keep herself safe when outside. What do you think is one thing Molly can do to keep herself safe?
9. There are ways that we can keep ourselves safe when going outside. What do you think some of these are?
10. If you had to give advice to a friend about keeping safe when going outside, what do you think would be the most important thing they would need to remember?

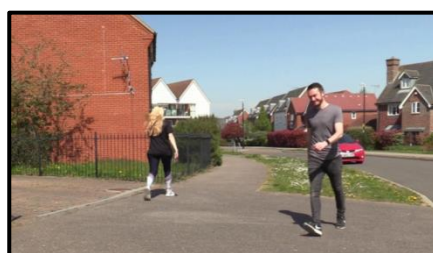
Lloyd's Advice for Keeping Safe While Getting Out For A Walk During Lockdown

1. **Wash your hands** with soap for 20 seconds before going out and immediately when you get home.



2. You may wish to **cover your face** with a scarf or mask, and **wear gloves** on your hands.

3. **Keep your distance** when passing anyone else. This should be at least 2 metres.



4. **Do not touch any surfaces.** Try keeping your hands in your pockets to help with this.

A short video outlining this advice can be found on YouTube, entitled: 'Informative Video for Children - Getting Out For A Walk During Lockdown'.

Please note, this is not official government advice.

For further information on government advice and rules during lockdown, please visit www.gov.uk/coronavirus