



Friends are Forever

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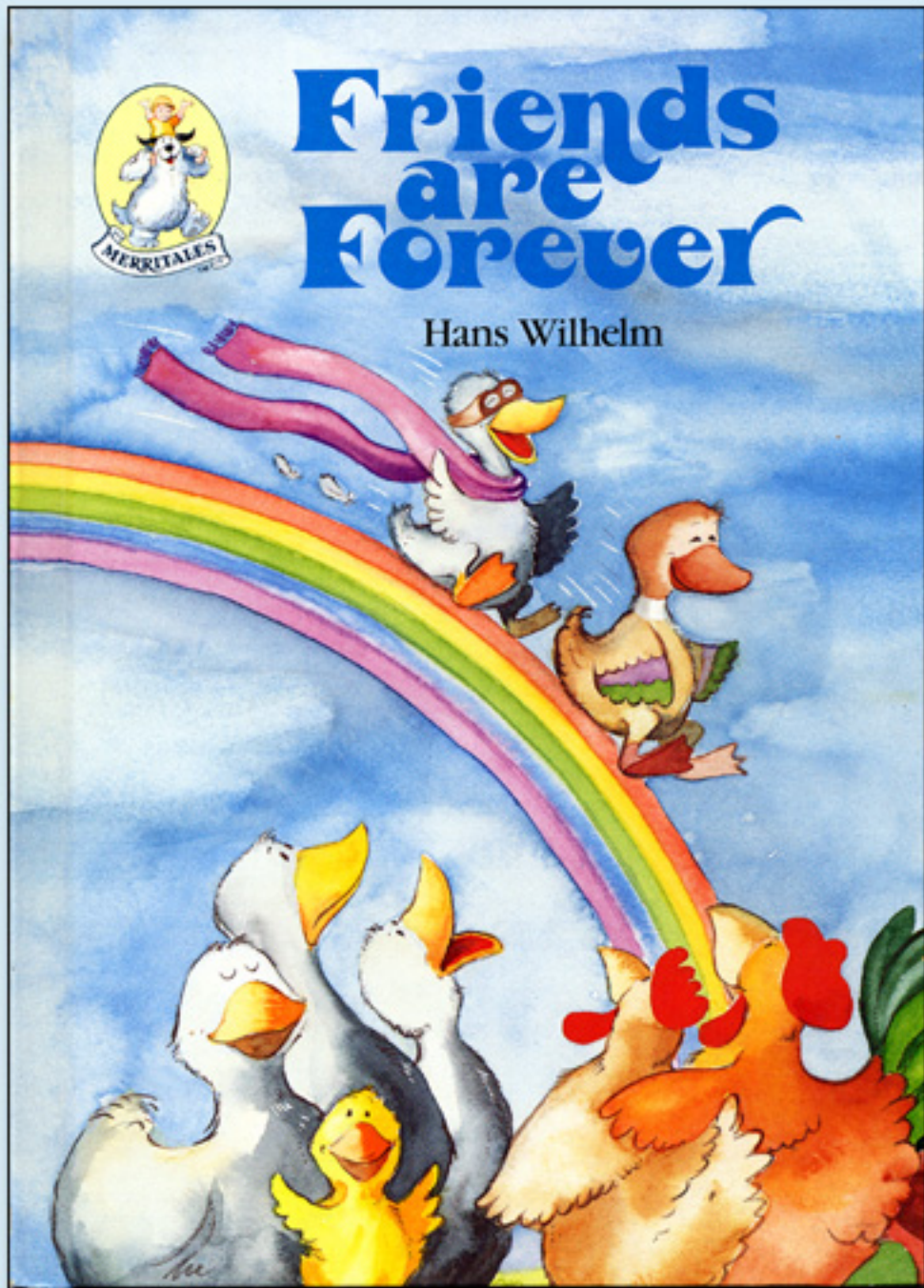
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Friends are Forever

When your best friend moves away, you may feel lonely and sad and think that you'll never find such a good friend again. It really hurts to lose a friend. But good friends are forever—it doesn't matter how far apart we are from them.

Warren, the duckling in our story, was so sad when his best friend left that he even got sick. Everyone was very worried about him. But his wise mother knew a remedy that surprised the entire barnyard.

Let's see what happened.

Your friend,

Waldo



A MERRITALE[™] Book

Friends are Forever

Written and illustrated by
Hans Wilhelm



GROSIER ENTERPRISES CORP.



Warren was a duckling who lived with his parents, his two sisters, and his brother on a farm in the country. The farm ducks had a very good life. All day long they would sit in the sun and eat as much as they liked. They had forgotten all about flying or chasing frogs and butterflies. It was a very easy life for them.

Warren's best friend was Brian. He was a wild duck known as a mallard. The two were very close friends.





But Warren envied Brian a little, because Brian still knew how to fly.

"Do you think you could show me how to fly?" Warren asked Brian one day.

"Of course!" said Brian. "That would be fun!" And he began to explain to Warren the deep secrets about flying.

It took a long time before Warren was finally able to fly up into the sky.

He had never seen the world from high above. Everything below them looked so small, and the sky all around him looked so wide.

Warren was happy like never before.





Even though Warren still had to learn many more things about flying . . .

flight gave him the most wonderful feeling.

Up here was a whole new world to be discovered.

Slowly Warren's flying got better and better.



And the two friends became closer and closer.



The summer went by. Warren and Brian were inseparable. They did everything together and one friend was never without the other.

But the summer passed quickly.



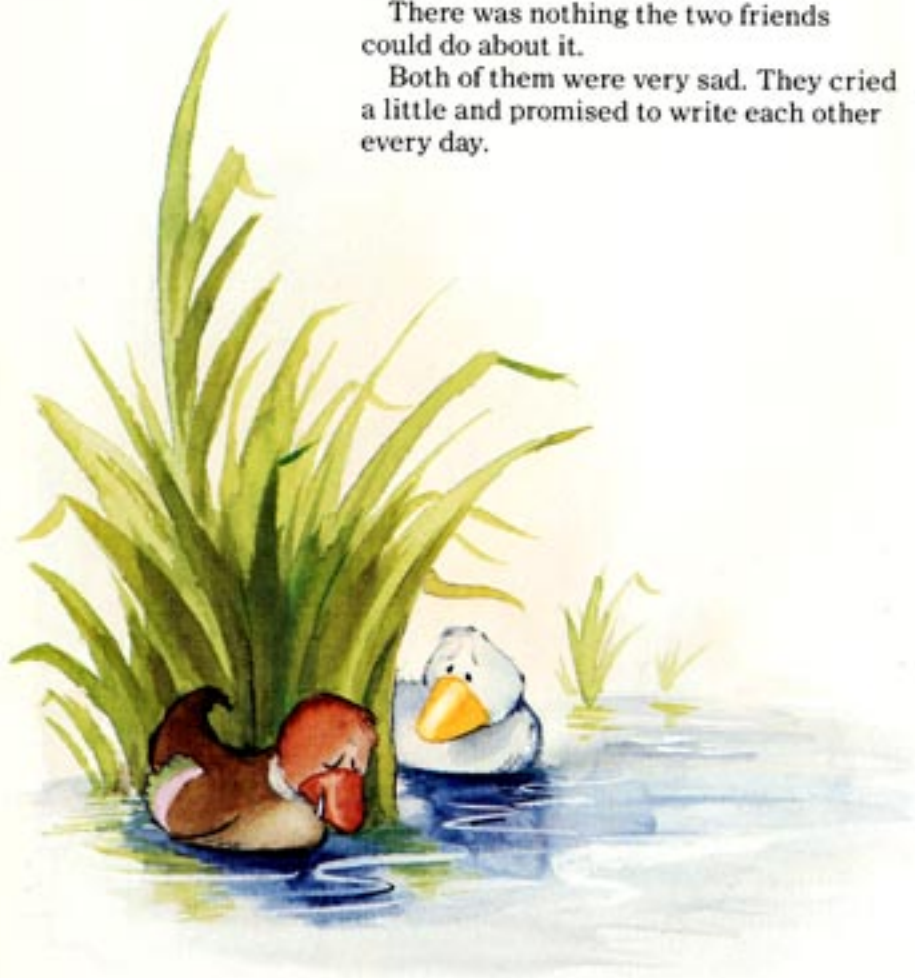
One morning when the two friends met, Warren noticed tears in Brian's eyes.

"What is the matter?" asked Warren.

"I . . . have . . . to . . ." sobbed Brian. "I have to leave. My family is flying to the South," he continued, "and I have to go with them."

There was nothing the two friends could do about it.

Both of them were very sad. They cried a little and promised to write each other every day.



When Brian finally left, Warren thought for a moment about joining him. But Warren's own family would not have understood, and they would have been very sad without him.

Warren had never felt so lonely in all his life.

Every day he revisited all their favorite places: the waterfall, the old mill, the rocks, and the bridge. Wherever he went, he thought of Brian.

Warren had not eaten for several days. He began to feel sick and soon had to stay inside. His parents were very worried.



Then one day his mother had an idea. "If you miss Brian so much," she said, "why don't we all go to the South and visit him?"

"It won't work," sighed Warren.

"Why not?"

"Because you can only get to the South by flying. But not one of you knows how to fly!"

"Well, can't you teach us?" his mother asked.

Warren was surprised. "You mean you want me to teach you how to fly?"

"Yes, why not?" his brother said.





The next morning Warren ate a big breakfast. He was so excited that for the first time in days, he did not think about Brian constantly.

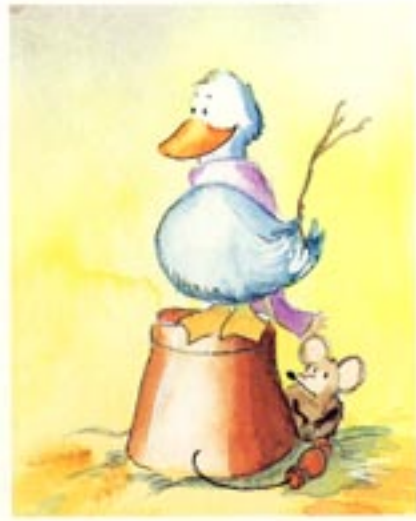
"Let's get started!" he called, and everyone gathered outside for their first flying lesson.



But flying was not for everyone.
Luckily Warren's family enjoyed
the lessons most and showed some
very promising signs.

"Once you get rid of some extra
pounds," said Warren, "I think
you'll soon be able to fly!"





Warren put his family on a very healthful diet and exercise program—no more cookies, potato chips, or popcorn, but lots of huffings and puffings.

“Doing something together with your own folks can be a lot of fun!” thought Warren.

Every day he gave them flying lessons.



By wintertime the whole family
was able to soar up into the sky.
Now they began to understand
why Warren was so excited about
flying.





The months passed quickly. Everyone in Warren's family was now an expert at flying. Each day they learned something new.

Warren noticed that he talked more and more about flying skills, performance, and formation and less about Brian and going to the South. Yet Warren felt good about it, because deep down he knew that Brian would always be his best friend. Never mind how far apart they were. And he hoped that one day they would see each other again.

When springtime finally returned Warren and his family had become real artists. Everyone in the country watched the ducks' performances over and over again.



They called themselves
The Rising Seven.
They were Warren, his father, his
mother, his brother, his two sisters,
and . . .





Brian, who had returned from the South with his family!

Now the two friends were together again. And what a wonderful summer they were going to have!





The End