

Name _____ Date: _____

How the Giraffe Got to Sleep

At night, after the people go home, the zoo is a busy place.

“Bring on the food!” the animals call. “Quick!”

Their keeper hurries as fast as he can. The monkeys get fruit. The bears get fish. The rabbits get green vegetables. The other animals get what they like too. When they are all fed, the keeper goes home.

“Close your eyes. Sleep tight until morning,” he tells them.

The little birds do just that. The big cats keep their eyes open. They stare at the moon. It brings them greetings from other lands. The fat bear sometimes makes noise in his sleep. The sheep also make noise when they are sleeping. The mountain goats dream of climbing rocks. The jackals sing. As soon as night falls, they raise their voices. They stay at the far end of the zoo so no one minds the singing there.

Things should have been fine but the old wolf and the giraffe could not get along.

“The wolf runs around all night. He makes so much noise that I can’t sleep,” said the giraffe.

“Wolf, you must stay still!” said the keeper.

“I can’t do that. I’m a wolf. At night, I must move around.” answered the wolf.

“Then move out,” said the giraffe.

“I will do no such thing. I’m the oldest animal here. You move out!” he answered.

“Where should I go? I’m so tall. This is the only cage I fit in.” cried the giraffe. The poor giraffe did look very tired.

I have to do something, thought the keeper. Then, he had an idea. When he had time, he sat under a tree and knit four soft boots for the wolf. When the wolf put them on, he thought it was silly. He wore them only at night. Now, he moves so quietly that the giraffe can get some sleep.

No one who visits the zoo in the daytime knows the secret. No one knows that the fierce wolf wears soft boots in the dark.