

## **Martin & Sylvia: More Adventures!**

All Story Descriptions by Season

Martin and Sylvia can find fun and adventure just about anywhere they go! When the brother and sister don their explorers' hats, the whole back yard becomes a new land waiting to be discovered. The spring brook becomes a rainforest river! The apple trees become hot air balloons! The neighborhood library is a wizard's castle! These stories delight in the children's adventures at home and beyond.

### **Autumn Season:**



*This is a collection of 13 autumn stories, for the 13 weeks of autumn.*

#### **The Chimney Sweep**

When a bird is temporarily trapped in the chimney, Daddy calls Malcolm, the chimney sweep, to get the bird out safely. Malcolm brings with him all sorts of stories and a lot about the magic and wonder that comes with cleaning out chimneys.

#### **The Necklace**

Momma and Daddy are getting dressed up for a special dinner, and Sylvia notices Momma's beautiful necklace. It was a gift from Daddy, and he explains that every little charm represents something special about Momma. Sylvia gets the idea that she and Martin could make their own necklaces — but what special "charms" should go on them?

#### **The Game of Zoo**

One rainy morning, when Martin and Sylvia can't agree on what game to play, Momma suggests they build their own board game. At first this seems impossible but they are soon excited about creating something that includes things Sylvia likes and things Martin likes. They call it the Game of Zoo and when they share it with their friends Sasha and Jonathan, it changes yet again and becomes even more fun.

#### **Grit**

Martin is excited about giving his friend Sasha a special gift — he wants to make her a microscope. When he is faced with the actual mechanics of how to make a base and an eyepiece and a lens out of the materials he has, he nearly gives up. But then Daddy tells him that the most important thing any builder or inventor must have is grit: sticking with it, especially when things are difficult. Martin hears

him and then turns to his project with a new determination — and in the process, comes up with some new ideas...

### **How to Fly**

One morning Martin asks Momma: "Why is there school?". Momma then tries to explain that school teaches how to answer questions in lots of different ways. Martin then asks, "Well, how do birds fly?" and Momma suggests that they all try to answer the question in their own way. Momma chooses to answer it by drawing, Daddy by study, Sylvia by building a model and Martin by using his imagination.

### **Butterflies**

Martin is invited to recite a poem in Spanish for the annual "Fiesta de la Sol" celebration downtown. Martin is nervous and learns that the fluttery feeling in his belly is called 'having butterflies'. The night before the festival, Daddy helps Martin see his nervousness a little differently by telling him a story about the long journey Monarch butterflies take every year — all the way to Mexico.

### **The Treeclimber's Code**

When Martin wants to climb an extra tall maple tree, Daddy introduces him to the first rule of the 'treeclimber's code': a climber must be able to climb entirely on their own with no help. When he decides instead to climb a spruce tree and gets up higher than ever, Daddy introduces him to the second rule: only climb as high as you can comfortably get down. When Martin is finally down and covered in sticky sap, Daddy introduces him to the third rule: climbers clean off their own pine sap!

### **Pickles for Pickles**

Momma decides that this year's harvest will include pickling many of their extra garden vegetables. They decide to pickle cabbage for Martin and Daddy, eggs for Sylvia, and beets for Momma — but when Sylvia insists they need to pickle something for their kitty named Pickles, Momma is at a loss. She can't think of anything cats eat that could be pickled. Sylvia is resolved to find something and spends the better part of a day following the kitty around seeing what she might eat.

### **A Little Bit of Light**

Every year when the trees have all lost their leaves and the ground starts to frost in the morning, brother and sister start to make their lanterns for their annual lantern festival. This year they can't go their normal route and need to choose another place to walk. When Martin suggests going next door to visit the doctor's house, Sylvia worries that it will be too dark. But the magic of the evening shows her just how much can be seen with the light of a single lantern.

### **Grandma's Brownies**

When Martin and Sylvia's family travels south to Grandma's house, they all think about the traditional foods she serves during their annual feast together. Daddy thinks about the mashed potatoes, Momma thinks about the baked squash, Martin thinks about the rosemary roasted nuts and Sylvia thinks about Grandma's brownies. When they arrive, the question for Sylvia is — how many brownies can she have?

### Wood Elves

Martin would like to be an elf — specifically, a wood elf. He wants to climb trees, use sticks for magic wands, speak in the magical wood elf language and ride squirrels from tree to tree. Momma suggests that he try doing those things even though he is not a wood elf and he is surprised that he can do everything — with the help of a little magic and imagination!

### Hidden Fairies

When Martin and Sylvia can't decide what to make for their grandparents this year, Daddy suggests they make paintings. When they can't decide what to paint, Daddy suggests they let the paint decide. At first, this doesn't sound like it could work, but Sylvia is delighted to see something magical in one of the paintings!

### A Night for Stories

One late afternoon, when Martin expresses his frustration about how the days get so short this time of year, Daddy tells brother and sister about how it is considered the storytelling time of year. He suggests that they spend the evening together telling stories and everyone gets excited. He says that stories almost always bring magic — but that evening, the magic surprises even Daddy.

### Winter Season:



*This is a collection of 13 winter stories, for the 13 weeks of winter.*

### Singing Together

When Mr. Weber invites Martin and Sylvia's family to come downtown to sing wintertime songs at the local shops, brother and sister only think of one thing: they might have to see Mr. Amos. Mr. Amos owns the Antique store, and they've heard stories that he is mean and doesn't like children. On the night of the downtown singing, however, they learn how important it is to ignore hearsay and "see for yourself"!

### Special Secret Books

One chilly morning Martin and Sylvia hop into Momma and Daddy's bed to see Momma writing in her journal. Sylvia wants to know what it is and Martin wants to read what she was just writing. When Momma explains that journals are special secret books where you can write or draw things just for yourself, both brother and sister want a special secret book for themselves — but what to put in it?

### Too Much

When Daddy invites Martin and Sister to join him at the annual town auction, they hesitantly agree. Momma senses that they might not want to go and uses lesson time to help them realize that the auction might be too much and that they should talk to Daddy about how they feel. In the end, Daddy congratulates them on their clear communication and proposes an alternative to the evening.

### **Neighborhood**

When Martin and Sylvia's family visit old friends who have moved away to a neighborhood where the houses are all close together, brother and sister wonder what that might be like. Are the yards really small? Do lots of children always come over to play? When they find out, they learn the benefits of living in a neighborhood — and the benefits of living where they do — in the country.

### **Friend Cake**

One morning Sylvia wakes and remembers a curious dream. In the dream, she helps a group of little ants, and in return, they give her some 'friend cake'. And what is friend cake? She doesn't know at first, but after wondering about it for a while, she, Martin and Momma decide that they need to bake a 'friend cake' and give it to their dear friend Miss Melinda of the Spunderful Shop. When they arrive later that day, however, they realize their friend cake is not only for old friends, but for new friends too!

### **Arctic Explorers**

After a night of gentle snow, Martin and Sylvia discover a sparkling winter landscape in their yard. Martin suggests they become arctic explorers and scout out a spot for camp. As they set up camp, Martin decides they should build a fire — a real fire — and have a real cookout! But it will be a challenge as snow is starting to fall again. He and Daddy are undaunted — just as the original arctic explorers once were.

### **Family Dance**

When Momma suggests they all attend a "family dance" at the Town Hall, Martin says he doesn't want to go. He doesn't know how to dance! But when they finally go, Martin is inspired to learn not only the basic dances but some extra-fancy steps as well!

### **Dreaming the Garden**

One wintery morning, Mr. Brown invites brother and sister to come to the farm for some "secret work". They wonder — is it pruning? Building a new chicken coop? Making pies? But the secret work is much quieter and imaginative than they expect — they are going to help the garden dream.

### **Cabin Fever**

After three days of solid snow, Martin, Sylvia, Momma, and Daddy are sick and tired of being home together. Momma tells them that they all have 'cabin fever' and suggests they all go outside and do something by themselves. But where is Momma going to go — doesn't she have cabin fever too?

### **The Cranky Show**

Momma wants to go downtown to see a "traditional music" concert but this plan makes Sylvia feel cranky. Incredibly, they later encounter something that sweeps all of Sylvia's crankiness away — and it is called a 'cranky show'!

## How to Fall

Sylvia wants to learn how to skate but is afraid of falling down. When Daddy insists that learning how to fall is the first step in learning how to skate, Sylvia is resistant and doubtful. But after her first, second and third fall, she starts to get better at skating and her doubts change into confidence.

## Digbe and Firble

Of all the books they get at the library, Martin and Sylvia love the "Digbe and Firble" series about two mice who are best friends. Brother and sister love to play out all of the "Digbe and Firble" stories: Martin plays Digbe and Sylvia plays Firble. When the children complain that they are tired of playing out the same books over and over, Momma suggests they make up their own story!

## Sweetness

Mr. Brown, Martin and Sylvia's next door neighbor, loves everything that grows on his farm. He loves every blade of grass, every tomato plant, and every tall tree. He particularly loves an old maple tree he called Sweetness. "I've known this tree all my life," he told Martin one day, "and though she might not be the prettiest tree in the lot, they all know who is in charge." When the farm is surprised by a sudden ice storm, Mr. Brown is faced with a difficult decision about his favorite tree — and the children know just how to help.

## Spring Season:



*This is a collection of 13 spring stories, for the 13 weeks of spring.*

## Salamander Crossing

One day in early spring, Momma tells brother and sister about an incredible event that happens every year: the migration of so many salamanders from the forests to the woodland vernal pools. When she explains that dozens of people gather every year to help the salamanders crossroads, Martin and Sylvia jump at the chance to see the salamanders for themselves. And oh, what an adventure!

## A Hat for That

Ellie is Martin and Sylvia's new babysitter and she is always filled with such wonderful ideas! When the children decide to play Explorers and they hand Ellie an Explorer's hat, Ellie wonders: "Could there be a hat for everything we do?" This begins a delightful study into what kinds of hats could be used for just about everything - even naps!

## The Dog Park

Once a week Martin and Sylvia's family takes care of the neighbor's active dog, Rufus. One morning, Daddy suggests they take him to the new dog park in town. When Martin hears Daddy's description of the dog park, he suggests they take their old dog Billbill as well. Sylvia is nervous about this at first, but she soon sees her old dog find new friends!

### **Spring Fever**

The annual Spring Fling celebration in Martin and Sylvia's downtown is approaching — and brother and sister are delighted! They look forward to the silly parade, the toy duck races, the artists and musicians — and especially Miss Claire's hot buttered biscuits and fresh maple cream. Everything changes, however, when first Martin and then Sylvia come down with a fever. Will they miss the festival completely? Momma and Daddy have a plan...

### **The Rainbow Table**

After Sylvia enjoys a picture book about a feast shared by all the colors of the rainbow, she enthusiastically suggests that they hold a Rainbow Table potluck! Each of the guests is to bring a dish that is one of the colors of the rainbow. She worries that, as it is early spring, many of the guests will bring Green — but she is in for a surprise!

### **Smelling Your Way**

When Martin and Sylvia join in the annual Spring Cleaning, they notice a trail of tiny little ants leading to the honey jar. They wonder how the ants found the jar and Momma explains that ants use their sense of smell to find food and to recognize each other. This inspires some scent guessing games and then a grand hunt for treats using nothing but their noses!

### **Welcoming Dozer**

Sylvia gets an accidental lesson on welcoming people visiting from other countries when she receives a gift from her grandmother: a stuffed wombat named Dozer! She is kind and gentle with Dozer and introduces him warmly to her other stuffed animals. Momma helps her to realize that the kindness she shows Dozer could be the very same kindness she could share with the new boy from Mexico, helping him to feel welcome too!

### **Spies and Double Agents**

When Martin and his friend Julian decide to play spies together, Sylvia feels left out. She goes to Momma for help, and Momma teaches her how to become a double agent who spies — on the spies!

### **Green Up!**

Martin and Sylvia wake one morning to a surprise: they were going to experience their first "green up" day. When they learn that green up day means cleaning up trash from roadsides, they are not so interested. But when they find out that it also involves wearing reflective vests, their imaginations begin to spin...

### **Pay it Forward**

One morning, everyone is surprised to see Mr. Brown's son arrive ready to mow the lawn for them. He says that he wanted to do something nice for them because they did something nice for the Browns. Brother and sister are curious about this and Daddy explains that sometimes instead of paying someone back for a kindness, they pay it forward to someone else. Then Martin and Sylvia think of things they can do to "pay it forward."

### **Lamb's Wool**

When Martin finishes knitting a winter hat, he decides he wants to knit lots of hats and will need a lot of wool yarn. In fact, he thinks they should get a sheep! Momma explains that they don't have the yard to care for a sheep but brother and sister start scheming that maybe their neighbors, the Browns, might want to get a sheep...

### **Names of Green**

When Daddy's colleague from Arizona comes to stay with them, he is dazzled by all the different colors of green in the New England landscape. This gets brother and sister interested in finding names for all the greens they see. They take their list of 24 greens to the library and inspire their favorite librarian to start a whole new project, and Martin and Sylvia get to help!

### **Strawberry Slushy Siesta**

It is strawberry-picking season where Martin and Sylvia live, and this time of year is filled with tradition and special treats. Martin starts to feel competitive about the amount they are going to pick this year, but the high temperatures give him and his family an unexpected gift — a rest!

### **Summer Season:**



*This is a collection of 13 summer stories, for the 13 weeks of summer.*

#### **The Tides**

Martin and Sylvia's family are taking a trip to the coast of Maine, and they are so excited! Brother and sister are initially disappointed when they see that their vacation on the ocean is situated on what looks like an empty basin of mud. When friends explain that "the tide is out", the children have a chance to learn all about the amazing natural rhythm of the tides. They also learn about all sorts of tidal adventures that follow the ever-changing waters.

### **Sheep and Shepherds**

Brother and sister love taking care of Pinochle and Roseberry, Mr. Brown's two new sheep. They help feed and clean up after the sheep. One day, Mr. Brown suggests they take the sheep to the pasture — by themselves. This gives them the chance to be real shepherds, learning the importance of "empathy" when taking care of someone.

### **Burger Night and the No No Bug**

Martin and Sylvia's family is excited about a new offering by a local farm: Burger Night! They'll have hamburgers and veggie burgers and mushroom burgers — and music. The only problem is that Sylvia doesn't want to go. She doesn't like burgers, she won't know anyone, and she doesn't like the kind of music they will be playing! Daddy asks her if she has ever heard of a No No Bug. Daddy tells her the secret of the No No Bug and then the biggest secret of all — No No Bug's favorite food ... is "Yes Burgers"!

### **So Much Kale**

Martin and Sylvia discover that their garden is filled with kale ready to harvest. This begs the question — what do you do when you have so much kale?

### **Listening to the Story Whispers**

When brother and sister attend a storytelling workshop, Sylvia insists on telling her "Babbit Stories." She can't wait! She knows everyone will love them. Then the storyteller teaches her that some of the best stories come from listening.

### **Projects**

One morning, everyone wakes with a separate project in mind. Daddy wants to build a compost bin, Momma wants to paint the dining room chairs, Sylvia wants to build a fairy cottage and Martin has an invention idea. Each needs help but no one feels they have space to offer any. What to do?

### **Dirt**

When brother and sister visit a farmer friend who doesn't mind a little dirt inside the house, they wonder if maybe Momma and Daddy might not mind a little dirt in their house either. But when they try wearing their dirty clothes on the clean couch, Momma gently sets them straight.

### **Jam Poetry**

When the Browns happily discover that their three apricot trees have produced a bumper crop this year, Martin and Sylvia come to help harvest and make apricot jam. While preparing the apricots, Mrs. Brown invites brother and sister to describe the complex taste of apricots using poetry.

### **Four Kinds of Pickers**

It is blueberry season where Martin and Sylvia live and when Nanni and Poppi come to visit, Poppi teaches Sylvia that there are four different kinds of blueberry pickers: bear pickers, bird pickers, deer pickers and rabbit pickers — and Sylvia finds out which kind of picker she is!

### **The Fairy Ferry**

When Daddy happily announces that the family is going to a restaurant on the far side of the lake, brother and sister are excited. But when he says that a "Ferry" is going to take them across the lake,



Sylvia is confused. "A fairy?" asks Sylvia. And so begins an exchange that leads Sylvia on a hunt to find fairies ... on a ferry!

### **Paddling to Treasure Island**

When Daddy suggests they paddle to "Luck Island" which was recently made into a public park, brother and sister are at once excited and filled with questions: "Does anyone live there?" "What is on the island?" "Will there be pirate treasure?" They find out that the island does indeed have treasure, but not at all what they were expecting.

### **Mud Oven**

When Momma says that the Brown's are going to make a bread oven that is made out of mud, brother and sister are confused. Mud? How can you cook bread in something mud?

### **Awesome Possum and the Mole Patrol**

One day Martin and Sylvia notice a poster in the local library announcing that the author of their favorite children's book 'Awesome Possum and the Mole Patrol' is coming to town and they are excited! But Sylvia feels a little nervous about meeting her. She wonders what the woman will be like, and worries that she might be very different from her dear Awesome Possum. She almost doesn't go, but when she meets the author she realizes they both have a lot in common.