

# The last Wolf

by Ann Turnbull

*Listen.*

*Do you hear the wolves?  
Do you hear them calling, one pack  
to another, howling on all the hills?*

*Once there was no wolf on these hills,  
no music to the moon at night.*

*This is how it happened.*

The people hated wolves. They said the wolves killed their sheep and frightened children with their howling at night. So they killed wolves whenever they saw them. They killed so many that at last there was only one wolf left.

When the last wolf was captured the hunters brought him alive to the king. The king was sorry for the wolf because he was the last of his kind. He put him in a cage and found a keeper to care for him.





The last wolf was lonely.

He heard the wind's voice: "Where is Grey Wolf who once howled with me on winter nights?"

He heard the stream's voice: "Where is Grey Wolf who once lapped my water?"

He heard the cave's voice: "Where is Grey Wolf whose body warmed the bones of the earth?"

But he never heard the voice of another wolf.

He paced up and down, up and down the length of his cage, and his eyes were wild.

The king wanted the wolf to be content.

"Give him the best food," he said.

He sent venison and veal from the royal table. But still the wolf paced up and down up and down, and still his eyes were wild.



The king said, "Build him a bigger cage."

So they built a bigger cage, and planted fir trees in it, and brought rocks and made a cave. But still the wolf paced up and down, up and down, and his eyes were wild.

Winter came. The wolf lay down in his den, put his head on his paws and refused to eat.

The king knew the wolf would die of loneliness. He opened the door of the cage and said, "Grey Wolf, you are free. Go home."

Grey Wolf stood up. He looked at the open door.

The forest called him: "Come home, Grey Wolf." But Grey Wolf was the last wolf and he had no pack, no other wolf to go home to. He lay down again and closed his eyes.



The king was in despair.

He remembered how the wolves once howled in the moonlight, howling on all the hills. He held out his arms to the moon and begged, "Help me to save the Grey Wolf."

The moon heard him. She said, "I will help you. Tomorrow night, when I am full again, I will save Grey Wolf."





The next night the king found the wolf's cage filled with moonlight and the wolf, bone thin, lying with his eyes closed. The keeper knelt beside him. "Only the moon can save him now," said the king.

The courtiers gathered in the palace yard. The people gathered outside. They waited. The keeper waited. The king walked out into the snow and waited.

And the moon made a wolf out of moonlight. A she-wolf, fur and fangs and feet all silver, silver whiskers, silver tail, silver eyes that gleamed in the darkness, silver breath on the cold air.

Silver Wolf sprang out of the moon and lifted her head and howled.

Grey Wolf heard her. He opened his eyes.

He raised his head. He rose on tottering legs and howled. The two wolves filled the night with their music.

Then Grey Wolf came out of his cage, out through the palace gates, and saw Silver Wolf. And as they met, Silver Wolf changed.

She shook herself, like a wet dog shaking, and with each shake sparks of silver flew around.



When she stood still she was no longer a moon wolf but a grey she-wolf with amber eyes. The only reminder of the moon's work was that each of her hairs was tipped with silver.

Grey Wolf and Silver Wolf licked each other and wagged their tails.



The king and people watched as they padded away together, across

the snow, into the forest, and were lost to sight among the trees.

In the spring the king went hunting in the hills and found the wolf's den. Outside in the sunshine six cubs were playing. They were grey wolf-cubs but each grey hair was tipped with silver.

The king left the cubs in peace, and he never killed wolves again.

## The Last Wolf

(page 2)

- 1 What did Grey Wolf never hear?

Tick **one**.

the sound of the  
stream ☐

the howl of  
another wolf ☐

the voice of the  
cave ☐

the sound of the  
wind ☐

(page 3)

- 2 How did the king try to make Grey Wolf happy?

Write down **two** different ways.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

(pages 2 and 3)

- 3 Why do you think Grey Wolf paced up and down?

\_\_\_\_\_

(page 4)

- 4 Why did the wolf stay in the cage when the king opened the door?

Tick **one**.

because it was  
winter

☐

because he was  
hungry

☐

because there was  
no wolf pack to join

☐

because the king  
had tried to help him

☐

(page 5)

- 5 The king thought the moon might be able to help.

Why did he think that?

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- 6 Look at page 5.

Which words tell you that Grey Wolf had not eaten for a long time?

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- 7 Look at the first paragraph on page 6.

Why does the she-wolf seem special?

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(page 6)

- 8 In the first paragraph **find** and **copy one** word that means *shone*.

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(page 6)

- 9 *The two wolves filled the night with their music.*

What was the music that the two wolves made?

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(page 6)

- 10 What happened when Silver Wolf shook herself?



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(question about the whole story)

11 Why did the king never kill wolves again?

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(question about the whole story)

12 Put these sentences in the right order by numbering from **1** to **5**. The first one has been done for you.

Tick **one**.

The king begged the moon for help.

☐

Grey Wolf was captured.

☐

The moon made Silver Wolf.

☐

The wolf-cubs were born.

☐

The king made the cage bigger.

☐

(question about the whole story)

13 What do you think is the main idea of this story?

Tick **one**.

Hunting is a good thing.

☐

All wolves are dangerous.

☐

Moon wolces are real.

☐

We should protect animals.

☐

## Mark schemes

### Q2.

#### ***The Last Wolf***

- 1      The howl of another wolf. 1
- 2      *1 mark each for any of the following answers;*  
maximum of 2 marks.
- He gave the wolf the best food/venison/veal.  
He built a bigger cage.  
He put fir trees in the wolf's cage.  
He brought rocks/made a cave.  
He tried to make the cage look more like the wolf's home.  
He wanted to let the wolf go/opened the door of the cage.  
He found a keeper to care for him/the king took good care of him.
- Acceptable:**      **he got the moon to make a she-wolf/save Grey Wolf.**
- Unacceptable:**      *Single words or short phrases without a verb, for example:*  
**best food/cage/trees (because these do not answer 'how'**  
**the king tried to make him happy).**
- 1 or 2
- 3      *Answers should refer to Grey Wolf's distress at being alone and/or in captivity.*
- He wanted to be free • go home • he was wild • his cage was too small  
• didn't like being captured/caged.  
He was lonely • wanted a mate/friend/other wolves.  
He couldn't hear the voice of another wolf • no other wolf was  
howling • everything was calling him from outside the cage.
- Unacceptable:**      **he was bored/sad/unhappy (not precise enough).**  
**Because his eyes were wild.**
- 1
- 4      Because there was no wolf pack to join 1
- 5      *Answers should clearly refer to the fact that the king*  
thought that there was a connection between the wolves and the moon,  
or that the king thought the moon had special powers.  
He remembered how wolves howled at the moon/the moon makes  
wolves howl/wolves howl in the moonlight.  
He thought the moon held some special powers/magic.  
• he thought the moon was powerful • because he believed in the moon.
- Acceptable:**      **Because the moon said. 'I will help you'/  
said it would help.**
- Unacceptable:**      **Because the moon shone in the cage.**  
**Because the wolf was unhappy.**  
**Because he wanted to help the wolf.**
- 1
- 6      Both of the following words needed for one mark:

bone thin (also accept these words embedded in a longer phrase, eg his bones were thin; because the bones were thin; he had thin bones).

**Unacceptable:** he refused to eat (refers to incorrect page).  
Very thin.  
He was bony.

1

- 7 The author uses the word silver a lot.  
The she-wolf had silver fur/fang/feet/whiskers/tail/eyes/breath.  
The she-wolf was (very) silver/silver all over/covered in silver/  
nearly silver/had silver on her.  
Her fur had silver tips.  
The she-wolf was shining and glittering.

**Acceptable:** Because she came from the moon  
• was made out of moonlight.

**Unacceptable:** The she-wolf shook herself and silver came out  
(answer does not refer to the first paragraph).

1

- 8 Gleamed.

1

- 9 Their howling.  
Any attempt to indicate a howling noise, eg 'Aoooooww'.

1

- 10 Sparks of silver flew around • bits of silver flew off her.  
She turned into a grey wolf.  
Each of her hairs was still tipped with silver.

**Unacceptable:** (answers which refer to the picture alone)  
All the water came off/like a wet dog shaking.  
She changed (not developed).  
She had silver fur.

1

- 11 Answers should refer to the change that had taken place  
in the king's attitude, or clearly refer to his pleasure at the  
idea of the future of the wolf species.  
Because he had learnt not to kill wolves • he had learnt to  
care (about them).  
Because he didn't want the same thing to happen again.  
Because he wanted the wolves to live in peace.  
Because he didn't want them to be the last wolves • he had  
helped the wolf/wolves to survive • because at first Grey Wolf  
had been the only wolf • because there were only 1 (or 2)  
left/there would be no more left/they would be extinct.  
Because he **now** understood how the wolf felt when he had  
been captured • he **now** felt sorry.  
Because they were precious.  
Because he **now** loved Grey Wolf and the little cubs/family  
• because he loved them **now**.

**Unacceptable:** Because of what happened (not precise enough).  
Because he liked them/loved them • he thought  
they were nice.  
Because he was sorry/sad for them.  
Because there were some small cubs.

**Because it would be cruel.  
Because they are wild.  
Wolves are living things.  
Because Grey Wolf was lonely.**

**1**

- 12    4 sentences correct: 2 marks,.  
1-3 sentences correct: 1 mark  
3,1,4,5,2.

**1 or 2**

- 13    We should protect animals.

**1**