

THE MOONLIT PAGE

The Longer Way Across



An original illustrated story for the quiet hours

The Longer Way Across

Every morning, Nora crossed the iron footbridge on her way to buy bread. She had retired from veterinary work, but she still noticed how animals walked.

One October morning, a terrier stood before the bridge's first metal step. It wore a red mitten on one front paw, secured with a neat strip of tape. Its owner gave the leash a gentle invitation. The terrier considered the shiny step and sat down.

Nora understood. A mitten could slip on damp iron.

"There's a wooden path under the bridge," she told the owner. "Longer, but less slippery."

They turned back together, following the river through reeds bent silver with dew. As they passed beneath the bridge, the old streetlamp overhead blinked three times, exactly in time with the little dog's footsteps. Nora looked up. The lamp went still.

The path brought them to a low bench beside a cupboard of books. Someone had painted TAKE ONE, LEAVE ONE across its door. Nora chose a mystery novel with a blue spine. The owner found a map of local walks.

By the time they reached the bakery, the bread was still warm.

The next morning, Nora went directly to the wooden path. At its entrance, she saw the terrier in its red mitten waiting patiently beside its owner.