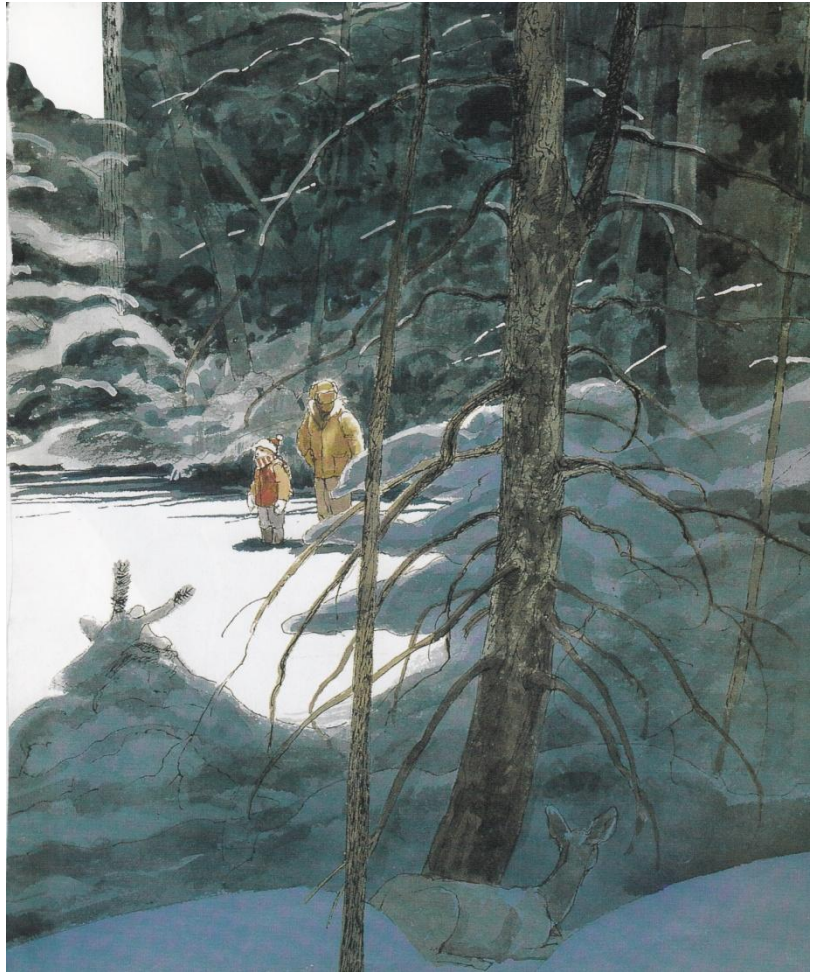


# Owl Moon

## (excerpt)

By Jane Yolen

We went into the woods.  
The shadows  
were the blackest things  
I had ever seen.  
They stained the white snow.  
My mouth felt furry,  
for the scarf over it  
was wet and warm.  
I didn't ask  
what kind of things  
hide behind black trees  
in the middle of the night.  
When you go owling you have to  
be brave.



Then we came to a clearing  
in the dark woods.  
The moon was high above us.  
It seemed to fit exactly over the  
center of the clearing  
and the snow below it  
was whiter than the milk  
in a cereal bowl.



I sighed  
and Pa help up his hand  
at the sound.

I put my mittens  
over the scarf  
over my mouth  
and listened hard.

And then Pa called:

*“Whoo-whoo-who-who-who- whoooooooo.  
Whoo-whoo-who-who-who-whoooooooo.”*

I listened  
and looked so hard  
my ears hurt  
and my eyes got cloudy  
with the cold.

Pa raised his face  
to call out again,  
but before he could open his mouth  
an echo

came threading its way  
through the trees.

*“Whoo-whoo-who-who-who- whoooooooo.”*

Pa almost smiled.

Then he called back:

*“Whoo-whoo-who-who-who- whoooooooo.”*

just as if he

and the owl

were talking about supper

or about the woods

or the moon

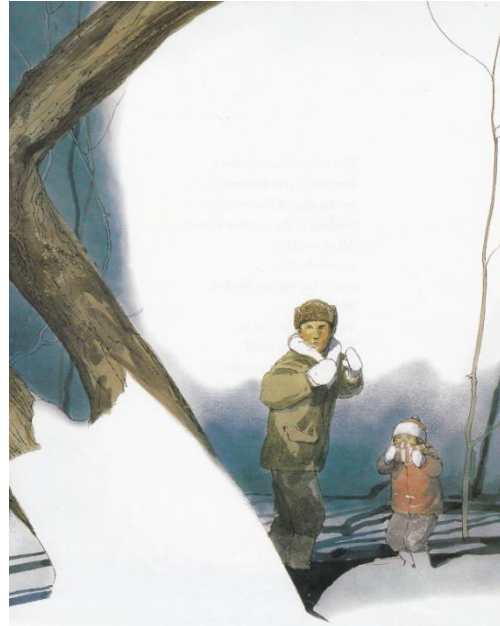
or the cold.

I took my mitten

off the scarf

off my mouth,

and almost smiled too.



The owl's call came closer,

from high up in the trees

on the edge of the meadow.

Nothing in the meadow moved.

All of a sudden

an owl shadow,

part of the big tree shadow,

lifted off

and flew right over us.

We watched silently

with heat in our mouths,

the heat of all those words

We had not spoken.

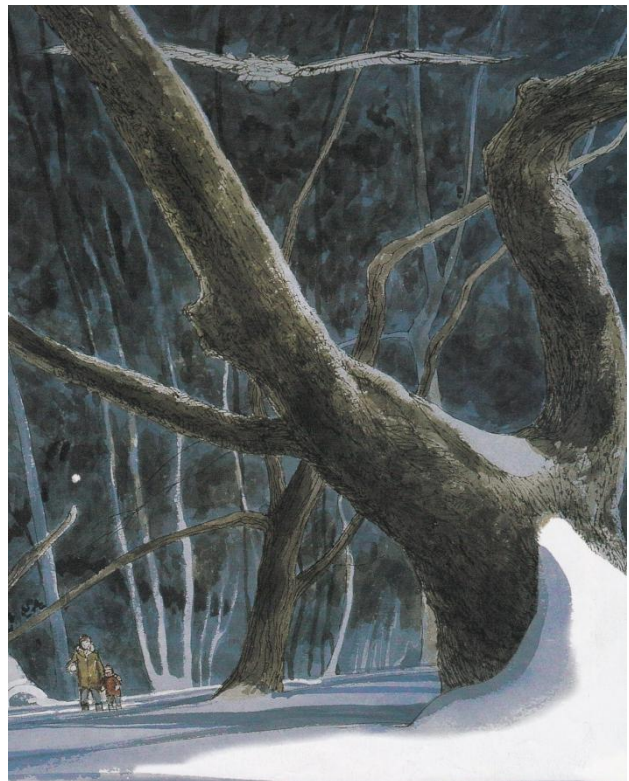
The Shadow hooted again.



Pa turned on  
his big flashlight  
and caught the owl  
just as it was landing  
on a branch.

For one minute  
three minutes,  
maybe even a hundred minutes,  
we stared at one another.

Then the owl  
pumped its great wings  
and lifted off the branch  
like a shadow  
without a sound.  
It flew back into the forest.  
“Time to go home,”  
Pa said to me.  
I knew then I could talk,  
I could even laugh out loud.  
But I was a shadow  
as we walked home.



**In this story, Jane Yolen describes a young girl's first owling experience. Think about how the author describes the way the girl and her father move through the forest.**

**Write an original story describing the same experience from the owl's point of view.**

This image shows a single page of white paper with horizontal black lines, resembling notebook paper. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There is no handwriting or other markings on the paper.

