The Lantern That Took a Detour

A Paul & Leon adventure



A runaway lantern, a rain-soaked canal, and three tiny passengers turn one easy delivery into a whole-town adventure.

FEATURING

Paul / **Leon** / **Nanna Cardinal** / **Mother Goose**

The last delivery



Every lantern in the town was ready-except the one Paul had promised to deliver before the festival began.

NANNA CARDINAL
Straight to the square, Paul. This one is the heart of the festival.

PAUL
One lantern. One short trip. What could possibly happen?



On the rooftops, a very large friend offered a very confident escort.

LEON
I shall guard it with my life.

PAUL
Could you start by guarding it with your paws?



Mother Goose knew the short way. She also knew the weather.

MOTHER GOOSE
Cross the red bridge. And mind the clouds.

PAUL
The clouds aren't on the map.

MOTHER GOOSE
They rarely make an appointment.

A shortcut with weather



The wind arrived exactly when it pleased.

PAUL
That is NOT our delivery address!

LEON
Lantern! Halt in the name of-oh, bother.



By the bridge, the canal had climbed halfway up the steps.

LEON
My armor appears to be excellent at sinking.

PAUL
Then let's choose a plan that uses the rest of you.



A small golden glow waited beneath the stones.

PAUL
There! It found somewhere dry.

LEON
Then we retrieve it and still make the festival.

A different address



But the lantern had already become important to somebody else.

PAUL
Oh. You weren't stealing the light.

PAUL
You were trying to stay warm.



Three damp wings. One ruined nest. A new problem.

LEON
This shield was made for protecting people.

PAUL
Looks like it works for very small people too.



They returned with a delivery problem that would not fit on any receipt.

PAUL
The square needs its lantern. But a family needs a home.

NANNA CARDINAL
Then we had better make room for both.

The weatherproof plan



Nanna tried a paper shelter. The rain made an unhelpful suggestion.

NANNA CARDINAL
That will never last in this weather.

PAUL
What if the paper wore a raincoat?



Mother Goose had blank pages. Nanna had wax. Paul had a particularly good fold.

MOTHER GOOSE
A useful book can take you anywhere.

NANNA CARDINAL
Even when it has become a boat.



Leon supplied the roof.

LEON
Behold: the Royal Weatherproof Moth Transport.

PAUL
Can we call it a boat until we're out of the rain?

A dry place to glow



They followed the sheltered edge of the canal, one careful step at a time.

NANNA CARDINAL
Keep the ribbon loose. Let the water do a little work.

PAUL
For once, the shortcut is behaving.



Above the old bridge was an alcove the rising water could not reach.

PAUL
Room for three. A view of the canal. Excellent lighting.

LEON
And a very respectable roof.



The little family settled in. The lantern had reached the right address after all.

PAUL
We can leave the light here.

LEON
Then what will we tell the square?

The festival finds its light



They told the truth. Then everybody brought a little light of their own.

NANNA CARDINAL
We are one grand lantern short.

MOTHER GOOSE
And one whole town of small lanterns richer.



The festival shone all the way to the bridge.

PAUL
Delivery complete. Eventually.

LEON
A noble detour. I shall put it in my report.



And Leon finally found something that truly needed guarding.

LEON
No wind shall take this pastry.

PAUL
I'd worry more about the otter.

MOTHER GOOSE
The end. Pass the napkins.