

Backyard Bunnies

Life has two sides. One is fun, happy, and joyful. The other can be mean and even cruel sometimes. This summer, I experienced both sides and learned an important lesson. And it all happened in my own backyard where a very cute and rather fluffy creature burrowed and had young. This creature was a rabbit and here is the story of four babies in a small hole in the ground. They got help from a family of people. I am the sister in the family, and I am going to tell you the story of the Backyard Bunnies.

One August morning, mom called me and my brother. "Guys, come outside!" she said. "Quickly!" We ran downstairs as fast as we could. "What is it?" we said. We walked closer. "Look at this," she pointed at some fluff in the grass next to a birch tree. "It is bunny fluff. The mother rabbit uses it to warm her babies. Here is the burrow." I had noticed the dug up grass a few days before and considered it being a burrow, but I never saw the fluff around it until that day. Could there actually be baby bunnies under that grass? My mom carefully lifted the grass, and sure enough, there were four small bunnies. They all had their eyes closed, fur just beginning to grow, and there was fluff all over them. It was the cutest thing I have ever seen! My brother and I had seen little bunnies before, but these were different. These were not just little, but almost newborn. I wanted to stay with them forever. Our dog thought they were her puppies and wanted to bring them inside. We had to put a barrier to keep our pup away from the burrow, but still let mother rabbit in. We checked on the burrow every day. One time, I got to touch the fluff around it. The fur was as soft as silk. The bunnies were adorable, all cuddled up in a soft bundle.

Time passed. The baby rabbits were getting bigger, stronger, and growing longer fur. However, one day, when we checked on them, we found not four, but three bunnies in the burrow. We carefully took them out to check. Then we saw one bunny still in the hole, lying there, dead. For a minute, we all stood there. My brother and I teared up. Then mom took the bunny and buried him under the nearby spruce. We put the rest of the healthy bunnies back into their burrow and went inside. We then made an important decision.

We didn't know why that bunny didn't survive that night. We went to a pet store and picked up milk for the bunny babies. We had decided not only to check on the burrow, but to keep an eye on the bunnies and feed them, too. We thought that, maybe, the mother rabbit did not feed that one bunny enough and so he starved. So, we helped the mother bunny by also feeding the milk formula to her babies. I don't think they really liked it. *It's not mama's milk!* They seemed to say. But they still drank it and plumped up fast.

It all ended happily. The bunnies grew long, soft fur, their large black eyes opened, and they grew very strong and fast. Their white fluffy tails grew, too. It was fun to watch them hop out of the hole. They leaped like a happy parade to the raspberry bush nearby.

This is what I learned from this experience: sometimes you need to let things go. When that one bunny died, we took care of the others the best we could. Nature can be harsh, but it can also be heartbreakingly cute and nice. We have to do the best we can and move on by focusing on the nice side of things.