

Bed Time Story

by Mike Harris

This once upon a time story is about a talking squirrel. Two boys were walking in the woods. Let us call them Tom and Jerry. Tom and Jerry had been walking for quite a while and seeing a fallen tree decided to sit and rest. While they were sitting quietly a squirrel came up and sat looking at them. Tom looked back at the small animal and got a surprise. The squirrel started talking "What are you doing in my forest" he asked Jerry, who with astonishment replied, "Your forest?" "Yes," said the small animal. "How come you can talk?" said Tom. "All the animals and birds in this forest can talk, it is just that people do not listen." "Well, I'll be!" said Jerry. "Is there something you can tell us, something special that we can tell our friends when we get back?"

"How would you like a guided tour of the real forest?" asked squirrel. Tom looked at Jerry and both said, "Sure, why not?" So the squirrel said, "My name is Fat Tail. What are yours?" "I am Tom and he is Jerry," said Tom pointing first to himself and then to Jerry. "Alright, let's go – follow me." And with that Fat Tail started down a dim path.

The three walked a ways and Fat Tail stopped in front of a huge oak and Fat Tail said, "Wait here. I will ask Giant Oak to let us in." So saying, the squirrel scurried up the tree and Tom and Jerry waited. Soon Fat Tail came down and said, "Follow me." They walked around to the back of the tree and there was an opening with some steps leading down. Fat Tail, Tom and Jerry went down the steps and turned right and there in front of them was what looked like a town. There were streets and sidewalks. On either side were stores and there were displays behind glass show windows. Tom Jerry and Fat Tail walked down the street and behind the windows of the different shops were displays of various kinds of nuts. The first store showed peanuts and jars of peanut butter, creamy and chunky. The next showed walnuts, big and round. Then there were hazel nuts on a bush with the nuts still in their green covers, and brown nuts in their hard shells and some on a plate, ready to eat. The next store had a huge sun flower and the ripe seeds in the middle were just sticking up and a dish with dried seeds was next to the sunflower making a very pretty picture.

All of a sudden someone called, "Hello, Fat Tail, who are your friends?" Fat Tail looked up and there was Cardinal with his distinctive red hat. "Hi, Cardinal meet my friends Tom and Jerry. Why don't you come down and join us?" So the bird came down and the four of them continued walking.

Not long after Cardinal joined them Fat Tail said to Cardinal, "Would you mind taking them back? I forgot I have an appointment with Mr. Elm." "I'll be glad to take them back." With that, Fat Tail scurried off and Cardinal said, "Let's go this way, we can go home past the lake. There is always something going on there." After going past the lake where they saw some fish in a school, Cardinal led them back to the Great Oak. They walked up the steps. Cardinal said, "So long."

Tom and Jerry got on the path and when they got home told all their friends all about Fat Tail, Cardinal and the nut stores. Also the fish school. Good night, and pleasant dreams.