A Squirrel’s Tale

*By Marilynn Reeves*

I don’t eat as much fresh fruit as I should, so one day in early September I bought a small bunch of bananas. But, as is so often the case, I ate only one and the other three just sat there on my kitchen counter, forgotten, until I began noticing a distinctive eau du banana, which happens when they start becoming a bit over-ripe. Well, I had two choices: toss them out or make banana bread. I opted for the latter. When I pulled the bread out of my oven it appeared to have turned out quite nicely – at least it rose up and didn’t fall in the middle, which was a good sign. So I left it sitting on top of an open pan to cool.

I’m one of the few residents at Windsor Gardens who does not have an enclosed lanai – just an open balcony with a railing – but being on the second floor I feel safe enough leaving the patio door open once in a while. I had been enjoying the fresh air coming through on this warm fall day, so I left it open while indulging in my mid-day nap. I settled into my easy chair with a small pillow cradling my head, and was soon fast asleep.

I was about half-way through whatever dream I was having, when – *WHAM!* – a squirrel landed smack in the middle of the screen, startling me awake. The squirrel was obviously drawn to the smell of that banana bread wafting through the open door. I felt rather sorry for it, and even gave some thought to tossing it a crumb of the bread. But then I thought better of it, as I knew I’d be inviting trouble. One taste would be all it would take to give it leave to return to my balcony again and again, begging for more free handouts, and perhaps even inviting a few of its friends. So I shut the glass panel instead, scaring it away.

But since I was up anyway, I decided I might as well try a piece of that enticing banana bread. Tasted pretty good, too, if I do say so. Too bad I couldn’t have shared it with my friend. But then I thought it served him right, after that rude awakening!