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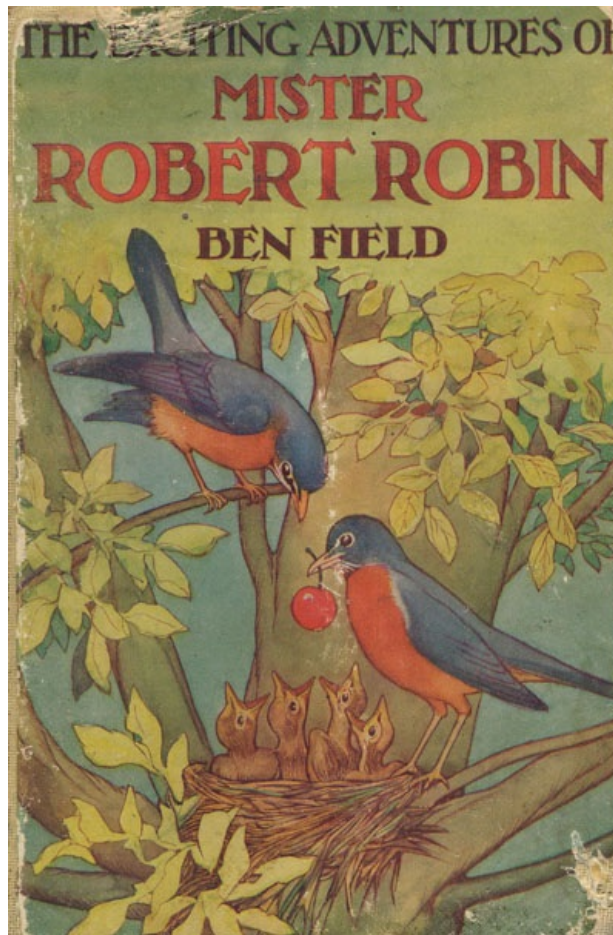
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ROBERT ROBIN \*\*\*



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**EXCITING ADVENTURES  
OF  
MISTER ROBERT ROBIN**

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*The  
Wildwood Series*  
BY  
BEN FIELD

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EXCITING ADVENTURES OF  
MR. TOM SQUIRREL

EXCITING ADVENTURES OF  
MISTER JIM CROW

EXCITING ADVENTURES OF  
OF MISTER GERALD FOX

EXCITING ADVENTURES OF  
MISTER MELANCTHON COON

EXCITING ADVENTURES OF  
MISTER ROBERT ROBIN

EXCITING ADVENTURES OF  
MISTER BOB WHITE



They did not move as the great gray bird floated straight towards their tree.  
(Page 10) (Exciting Adventures of Mr. Robert Robin)

THE WILDWOOD SERIES

Exciting Adventures *of*  
Mister Robert Robin

By BEN FIELD



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Exciting Adventures of Mister Robert Robin

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# THE EXCITING ADVENTURES OF MISTER ROBERT ROBIN

## CHAPTER I

WHERE MISTER ROBERT ROBIN LIVED, AND  
SOMETHING ABOUT HIS NEIGHBORS

Mister and Mrs. Robert Robin lived in the big basswood tree which stood at the corner of Mister Tom Squirrel's woods.

Their nest was made of sticks, and grass, and mud, and was so well hidden in the largest fork of the tree that if you had been standing near the foot of the big basswood, you could not have seen Mister Robert Robin's nest at all. But if you had been able to fly up into the top of the big basswood tree, then you might have looked down and seen the nest and Mrs. Robert Robin's four greenish blue eggs, right in the middle of it.

But if Mister Robert Robin, or Mrs. Robert Robin had spied you up in their tree, they would have made a great fuss about it. They would have screamed with all their might, and if you had gone near their nest they would have flown right at you, and tried to frighten you away. 2

Many of Robert Robin's cousins, and aunts, and uncles lived in town. They built their nests in the parks, and in the shade trees along the streets. Some of them even built their nests in the porches, and on the eaves troughs, and in barns, and sheds, and in the church steeples. Others of Robert Robin's family lived out in the country, and had their nests around the farmer's buildings, in orchards, under bridges, in windmills, and in almost every other sort of a place, but Mister and Mrs. Robert Robin would rather live in their own tall basswood tree than any other place in the whole wide world.

Each Fall, when the weather grew cold, and the winds were chilly, and the leaves of the big basswood turned brown, and then blew away, Robert Robin and his whole family flew south, but each Spring when the weather grew warmer, Robert Robin and Mrs. Robin came hurrying back north, to build a new nest in their own basswood tree. 3

"No other place will ever seem like home to me!" said Mrs. Robin.

"I should never get over feeling homesick, if we should lose our tree!" said Robert Robin.

So every Spring, before the snow banks in the gully were all melted, and before the yellow water had ceased running down the lane, Mister and Mrs. Robert Robin were back in their own tree, and were as busy as could be building a nice new nest.

When Gerald Pox, and Melancthon Coon, and Jim Crow, and Wellington Woodchuck, and Billy Rabbit, and Major Partridge saw Robert Robin flying through the bare woods, or heard him singing his clear notes from the top of his big basswood tree, they would say to themselves, "Robert Robin is back from the south, and Spring will soon be here." And the farmer's wife would say, "I heard a robin singing, it will soon be Spring!" Then she would get her box of garden seeds down from the top shelf of the kitchen cupboard and look to see if she had some tomato seeds, and celery seeds, and pepper seeds, and cabbage seeds to plant in a box by the south window. 4

Then it would not be long before the snow banks in the gully were all melted, and the farmer would be fixing his fences and getting ready to turn his stock out to pasture, and the farmer's wife's celery plants, and all her other kinds of plants would be up, and Mister Swallow, and Mister Swift, and Mister Bob-o-link, and all the other Mister Birds and their wives would be coming back north, and it would be plain to everybody that Spring was here and that Summer was on the way.

Even the big basswood tree seemed to wait for Robert Robin, and seemed to miss him when he was away. All Winter the beautiful tree waved his bare branches in the air, and when the frosty snow sparkled on the meadows, and the stars were shining in the winter sky, the chilling wind swept through the woods, and the branches of the tall basswood made a sound like a sigh. But almost as quickly as Robert Robin returned, the buds of the big basswood swelled with the green of new leaves, and soon the great tree was no longer bare, but dressed from his foot to his highest twig in broad leaves that fluttered in the summer breezes and made a sound like the whispering of children. 5

Early every morning as soon as the sun began to light the east, Mister Robert Robin was wide awake, and one of the first sounds that woke the woods in the very early morning was Robert Robin's morning song.

From the highest branch of his tall basswood tree he would sing his "hurry up song," and his clear cheery voice would echo through all the woods.

"Hurry up! Hurry up!  
Hurry up! Hurry up!  
It is time,—  
It is time  
To get up—to get up!  
Hurry up! Hurry up!"

Then Mister Tom Squirrel would come bounding out of his bed, and Major Partridge would start strutting around, and Mister Wren would shake the dew from his feathers and begin to sing, and in a few minutes all the birds and animals that had been sleeping all night would be frisking and flying around, the sun would begin to shine, the dew would go away, and it would be daylight in the woods. 6

After Robert Robin had sung everybody out of bed, he would get his breakfast, and then he

would be ready for his day's work.

Robert Robin *did* like to sing, but Mrs. Robin did not care to sing. She was a very quiet sort of person, and did not like to appear in public. She would much rather sit on her pretty greenish-blue eggs. She sat on them to keep them warm so that the little baby robins that were inside the eggs would grow to be strong enough to break the blue shells, and come out and grow up to be big robins.

One morning after Robert Robin had finished singing his "hurry up song" and the woods were ringing with the chatter of squirrels, the songs of other birds, and the "Chip! Chip! Chip!" of Mister Gabriel Chipmunk, Robert Robin was just going to get his breakfast, when suddenly the squirrels stopped chattering, and the other birds stopped singing. It was still in the woods, except for Mister Chipmunk, who was sitting on a stump and screaming his "Chip! Chip! Chip!"

"There is danger around!" thought Robert Robin. "Something has frightened the birds and squirrels!" So Robert Robin flew down where Mrs. Robin was sitting on her nest.

Robert Robin perched on one of the big branches near Mrs. Robin, and then he sat perfectly still.

Jeremiah Yellowbird was sitting on another branch, and he was sitting perfectly still. Neither Robert Robin nor Jeremiah Yellowbird could tell what had frightened the other birds and the squirrels, but both of them were looking and listening with all their might.

A shadow fell from above, and Robert Robin cocked his head on one side and looking up, saw Mister Jim Crow flying high above the top of the big basswood tree. Mister Crow was circling around, and around, and looking down into the woods, but he was not saying a word. He was trying to see what had frightened the other birds and the squirrels. Robert Robin could hear Jim Crow's wings go "Swish! Swish!" through the air.

Suddenly Mister Gabriel Chipmunk stopped screaming his "Chip! Chip! Chip!" and Robert Robin could see him sitting on the stump. He was sitting so still that he looked like a little light brown knot.

David Songsparrow, who had his nest in the elderberry bush over by the fence, came flying into the woods. He perched on one of the big branches of Robert Robin's tree and started hopping around looking for a bug for his breakfast, but when he saw Robert Robin and Jeremiah Yellowbird sitting so very still, he became quiet too, but his bright little eyes were looking first one way, and then another, and he was listening with all his might.

Mrs. Sheep, out in the farmer's pasture, called to her little lamb, "Baa!" and the sound of her voice echoed through the woods until it seemed as if all the trees were saying "Baa!" to each other. Then the woods became so still that Robert Robin could hear the sound of the waterfalls in the brook which flowed past Melancthon Coon's tree, way over in the middle of the woods.

Out over the meadow, merry Mister Bob-o-link was singing his "Spingle! Spangle! Song" and his voice sounded so much like the brook that Robert Robin was just beginning to feel like singing a little song, himself, when Mister Gabriel Chipmunk screamed "Chip!" and plunged under the stump. Gabriel Chipmunk lived under the stump, and he went in the front door of his house.

When Robert Robin heard Mister Chipmunk scream in that tone of voice, he knew that Mister Chipmunk had seen something which had frightened him very much.

Then Robert Robin saw something moving among the trees, and a terrible, great, gray bird came swooping through the woods.

It was Mister Percy Hawk, and he was coming towards Robert Robin's tree. The hawk's powerful, wide wings scarcely moved as he floated among the trees, but his cruel eyes were watching to see if a squirrel or bird might not be moving through the forest. If anything moved, Mister Percy Hawk would surely see it, and pounce upon it, so all the birds and squirrels were sitting as still as sticks.

Robert Robin, and David Songsparrow, and Jeremiah Yellowbird, each of them was sure that the big hawk was looking right at them, but they did not move as the great gray bird floated straight towards their tree.

"Swish! Swish!" came the sound of wings; "Caw! Caw!" shouted Jim Crow, and five black crows darted downward through the branches of Robert Robin's tree, and Mister Percy Hawk knew that the very best thing that he could do for himself was to hurry away before the angry crows pulled the feathers out of his back. Percy Hawk soared out of the woods, and when he was above the pasture he struck the air with his powerful wings and circled in great loops, and soon he was flying high above the tops of the tallest tree.

The other crows went home, but Jim Crow came and perched in Robert Robin's tree.

"Thank you very much for driving that terrible hawk away from my tree!" said Robert Robin to Mister Jim Crow.

"Oh, you are entirely welcome, Mister Robin!" said Jim Crow. "If I had only been here a moment before, I would have picked a few feathers out of that bad Percy Hawk's back to pay him for always trying to catch my baby crows!"

Then Jim Crow went over where the farmer was plowing, and Jeremiah Yellowbird went home, and David Songsparrow caught a bug for his breakfast, and Mister Gabriel Chipmunk came out and sat on his stump and said "Chip! Chip!" as loudly as he could say it, and the squirrels began chattering, and Major Partridge played a tune on his drum, and Mister Robert Robin mounted the very highest twig of his big basswood tree and sang a song for Mrs. Robin:

"Cheer up! Cheer up!  
Cheer up! Cheer, up!  
Be cheery!  
Be cheery!  
Cheer up! Cheer up!"

---

## CHAPTER II

### MISTER ROBERT ROBIN SEES THE FARMER'S NEW MALTESE CAT

One fine afternoon Mister Robert Robin was down under the pasture-field brush trying to find some brown bugs. He had caught one, but two more got away from him, so he was beginning to feel discouraged, when he happened to look up and see Mrs. Henrietta Partridge sitting on her nest under a beechwood bush.

Up to that time Mister Robert Robin had not known that Mrs. Partridge had a nest, although he had suspected it.

"Good afternoon, Mrs. Partridge!" said Robert Robin, as he made a very polite bow. "This is wonderful weather we are having!"

"Good afternoon, Mister Robin!" said Mrs. Partridge. "Yes, it is fine weather, but for every nice day that we get, we are almost sure to have *two* bad, stormy days!"

"Nonsense, Mrs. Partridge!" said Robert Robin, "I have always noticed that the more fine weather we have, the more we get! I claim that we are going to have the nicest summer this year that we have had since the year we had so many cherries!"

"I do hope that you are right, Mister Robin!" said Mrs. Partridge. "Major Partridge is always joking me because I am expecting bad weather, but I have noticed that no matter how many nice days we have, it always turns around and rains, before it gets through!"

"Certainly! It *should* rain, or we would all die of thirst! If no rain came out of the sky, we would not have any cherries, and the bugs would all be so dry there would not be any taste to them! We must have rain, Mrs. Partridge! We must have rain!"

"Do you enjoy rainy weather, Mister Robin?" asked Mrs. Partridge.

"I like wet weather, when it is not too wet; I like dry weather when it is not too dry; I like warm weather when it is not too warm, and I like cool weather when it is not too cool! And I have a song for each kind of weather!" said Robert Robin as he again started hunting for brown bugs.

"You seem to be looking for something, Mister Robin!" said Mrs. Partridge.

"Yes, I am hunting brown bugs!" said Robert Robin; "two of them hid under the leaves, but there must be a few more left!"

"Stir the leaves up with your feet!" said Mrs. Partridge, "then if there are any brown bugs under them you will be able to catch them!"

"I cannot make my feet go backwards!" said Robert Robin. "My feet insist on hopping! I think that I must be clumsy with my legs, for even the farmer's big rooster can scratch the ground and dig up wonderful things. I saw him kick a worm clear through the fence!"

"He must be very strong!" said Mrs. Partridge.

"Strong! I should say he is strong! Even Percy Hawk is afraid of him, and never goes near the little chickens when that big rooster is watching him!"

"Major Partridge is very athletic!" said Mrs. Partridge. "He exercises a great deal on his drum!"

"Here comes the Major now!" said Robert Robin.

"How do you do, sir!" said Major Partridge to Robert Robin.

"Good afternoon, Major!" said Robert Robin. "I have just been telling Mrs. Partridge about how strong the farmer's big rooster was, and how he could dig with his feet!"

"Did you ever see *me* dig with my feet?" asked Major Partridge.

"I do not remember ever having seen you dig with your feet, Major Partridge, but the farmer's big rooster kicked a worm clear through the fence!"

"Kicking a little worm is nothing! Once I kicked a stone from hither to yonder, and Billy Rabbit asked me to help him dig his next hole!" declared Major Partridge, as he stood very straight and put his chest out. "If you have a few moments to spare I will dig these leaves up for you!"

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Then Major Partridge began kicking the leaves in all directions, and Robert Robin began catching the brown bugs, and Mrs. Partridge came from her nest, and found the ripe partridge berries which Major Partridge was uncovering, but when the Major happened to see the ripe red partridge berries he forgot all about kicking the leaves, and he and Mrs. Partridge ate all the berries and never invited Robert Robin to have a berry.

"You seem to like partridge berries!" said Robert Robin.

"Yes, we are very fond of them!" said Mrs. Partridge. "They are my favorite fruit!"

"I seldom eat them!" said Robert Robin. "My favorite fruit is a ripe red cherry!"

"I thought that cherries were purple when they were ripe," said Mrs. Partridge.

"Some kinds of wild cherries are purple when they are ripe, but the cherries which grow on the trees near the farmer's house are red when they are ripe, and they are ever so much better than wild cherries!" said Robert Robin.

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"I would like some of the farmer's ripe red cherries, but I would never dare go so near the farmer's house. He would be almost sure to see me and shoot me with his gun!" said Mrs. Partridge, as she got back on her nest and snuggled her eggs.

Major Partridge heard Bob White calling to him, so he strutted over to see what Bob White wanted, but Robert Robin felt like visiting a little more, so he said to Mrs. Partridge:

"You were speaking about being afraid that the farmer would shoot you; he never shoots at me, but one time he threw a stone at me when I was picking some of the cherries to bring home to my babies. He seemed very angry about something."

"Perhaps he did not like you to be picking his cherries," said Mrs. Partridge.

"They were not *his* cherries!" said Robert Robin. "They were on the tree, and belonged to whoever got them first!"

"Men are great pests!" said Mrs. Partridge. "Old Mister Crow was telling me that he could remember when the country was all woods, and there were more of us partridges than there were men. Those must have been the 'good old days!'"

19

"That farmer seems to think that he owns all the trees, and all the fences, and all the fields!" said Robert Robin. "The rude manner he uses towards his horses and the way he slaps them with the straps, and the way he shouts at them is very disgusting to me! If I were a great big horse, I would not let a little man, only one fifth of my size, boss me around like that farmer does his big horses!"

"Neither would I!" exclaimed Mrs. Partridge. "But I shall never let that farmer catch me if I can help it!"

"Then he has cats around his house and barn!" said Robert Robin. "Cats are very bad animals!"

"Yes, they are!" agreed Mrs. Partridge. "And I wish that dog of his would stay out of our woods! He is always prowling around, smelling of things, and I expect that he will find my nest, and mercy knows what I would ever do then!"

20

"Gerald Fox bit him once!" said Robert Robin. "But why not make your nest up in a tree, Mrs. Partridge? It is much safer from dogs!"

"My mother built hers on the ground, and what was good enough for my mother ought to be good enough for me!" said Mrs. Partridge, and just then Robert Robin heard his wife calling to him to come and keep watch of the nest while she went out for lunch.

"Where have you been all day?" asked Mrs. Robin. "I have been calling, and calling, and I was beginning to get worried for fear something dreadful had happened to you! You must have found many good things to eat, for your crop sticks out like a chicken's!"

"I am very sorry if I kept you waiting, my dear!" said Robert Robin. "But Major Partridge kicked up the leaves so that I caught a whole cropful of brown bugs. He must have made so much noise that I did not hear you calling to me!"

"You are usually so prompt in coming when I call, that I was sure you would have a good reason!" said Mrs. Robin. "Now I will go over and get my lunch, but I do not care for brown bugs to-day. I will get me some black bugs, there must be plenty of them over in Black-bug Swamp."

21

So Mrs. Robin went to Black-bug Swamp and found plenty of black bugs, and on the way back she stopped near Mrs. Partridge's nest to get one or two brown bugs for dessert.

"Good afternoon, Mrs. Robin!" said Mrs. Partridge, and Mrs. Robin jumped and looked all around, but she did not see Mrs. Partridge.

"Your husband and I have just had a nice long visit!" continued Mrs. Partridge, and Mrs. Robin kept jumping around and trying to see who was talking to her. But Mrs. Partridge's feathers were so nearly the color of the leaves, that Mrs. Robin might not have seen her at all, had she not moved a little.

"Why! Good afternoon, Mrs. Partridge! I could hear you talking to me but I could not see you! So Mister Robin has been visiting with you! He surely does like to visit!"

22

"So does Major Partridge! He will talk all day if he can coax some one to listen to him. He is over there now visiting with Bob White. What those two can find to talk so much about is a mystery to me! It is real funny to listen to them! They both brag about the big things they have done or are going to do.

"That little puff ball of a Bob White was saying the other day that he was almost ready to whip Mister Horned Owl. You would think to hear him talk that he was larger than Mister Owl!"

"Mister Robin is very apt to boast about himself, when he is talking to strangers!" said Mrs. Robin.

"Major Partridge is the funniest thing!" said Mrs. Partridge. "He is desperately afraid of snakes, but when Bob White was telling about his going to whip Mister Owl, Major Partridge threw his chest out, and swelled himself up, and said in a very gruff voice, "To-morrow, I think, if the weather is good, I shall drive all of the snakes out of our woods!"

23

"That *must* have sounded funny!" said Mrs. Robin. "But I wish that all the snakes were driven from the woods, they are such ugly-looking things!"

"They are so hideous!" said Mrs. Partridge.

"I must hurry back to my eggs!" said Mrs. Robin. "My babies will begin to hatch next week!"

"I expect that my baby partridges will all be out of the shell before next Thursday!" said Mrs. Partridge. "I do hope that the weather stays good! Last year the weather was so cold and wet that it was very disagreeable!"

"How many eggs are you covering, Mrs. Partridge?" asked Mrs. Robin.

"Only twelve, this year!"

"Twelve! Mercy me! Why! Mrs. Partridge! I cannot see how you will be able to look after so many children!"

"I do not think twelve is such a large family! Last year I had fourteen, and every one of them grew to be as big as their father," said Mrs. Partridge.

24

"The largest family I ever had was five, and one of *them* kept falling out of the nest!" said Mrs. Robin.

"I always take my children out of the nest as soon as they are out of the shell! It is so much more sanitary!" said Mrs. Partridge.

"My children simply have to stay in their nest until they are ready to fly! It is such a job to feed and care for them! They never seem to get enough to eat!"

Just then they heard Mister Robert Robin calling. He was standing beside the nest and saying, "Tut! Tut! Tut!—Tut! Tut! Tut!"

"Mister Robin is getting uneasy so I had better hurry home before he does something desperate!"

Mrs. Partridge watched Mrs. Robin as she flew back to her nest in the tall basswood tree.

"That little Mrs. Robin is a very neat sort of a little body!" she said to herself. "I just know that she is a tidy nest keeper,—she always looks so spick and span, herself!"

25

Robert Robin could hardly wait until Mrs. Robin got back to their tree. He was in such a hurry. The moment she settled herself on the nest he darted away across the fields, straight to where the row of cherry trees bordered the farmer's garden.

He wanted to see if the cherries were ripe. But he was surprised to find that the cherries were all green and hard, and were too sour to even taste like a cherry.

"What makes the cherries so late, this year?" he thought to himself. "It does seem to me that these trees were in bloom so many weeks ago, that it is high time for them to be ready with their cherries!"

Robert Robin was sitting in the top of one of the farmer's cherry trees, thinking about the cherries that ought to be ripe when he saw a cat in the farmer's garden.

It was a big Maltese cat. It was a pretty cat, but Mister Robert Robin could not see anything pretty about a cat, and he did not like the looks of this one.

26



"I never saw this cat before!" thought Robert Robin. "The farmer must have a new cat! I hope it is a house-cat instead of a cat that goes prowling around the fields and woods!"

The big Maltese cat went over to the strawberry bed and lay down on some straw. Then the farmer's wife came into the garden, and there was a little boy with her. He was her sister's boy, and he was going to spend the summer at the farmer's home. The boy had a tin whistle, and once in a while he would blow upon it. The farmer's wife was thinking to herself, "After he goes to bed to-night, I am going to hide that whistle where he can't find it!" But she did not say a word to the little boy about the whistle.

The little boy saw the big Maltese cat lying on the strawberry bed, and the little boy went up close to the cat and blew his tin whistle at the cat. The big Maltese cat did not like to hear the whistle so close to his ears; it made his ears hurt, so he said "Meow!" and started to walk away, and the naughty little boy laughed, and blew the whistle with all his might. Then the farmer's wife said: "Do not tease the kitty, Donald!"

But Donald had not been taught to do as he was told, so he blew the whistle again and again and chased the Maltese cat across the lettuce bed, and over two rows of radishes.

The farmer's wife shouted, "Donald! Donald!" but Donald kept blowing the tin whistle and following the Maltese cat, but the next thing he knew the farmer's wife took his tin whistle away from him.

Donald was so angry that he jumped right up and down on the celery plants, and the farmer's wife said, "Look here! Young man!" and shook Donald until he looked like a jumping jack, and Donald was so surprised to think that anyone would dare shake him that he stopped right where he was, and then the farmer's wife said to him:

"Now, young man! You may as well know at the very start that if you want to be a bad little boy you will have a tough row to hoe, but if you want to mend your ways and be a nice little boy, things will be different! I thought I might as well make that plain to you now as later!"

Then Donald wiped his eyes on the farmer's wife's apron, and helped her weed two whole rows of carrots, and the big Maltese cat went to sleep under the gooseberry bush, and Robert Robin flew back to the woods and told Mrs. Robin that the farmer had a new cat and that the farmer's wife had a new baby that didn't like cats.

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## CHAPTER III

### ROBERT ROBIN AND WIDOW BLUNT'S STUFFED OWL

It was a dismal, rainy day. Long before morning, the storm had begun, and when the faint light had at last dawned in the east, the rain still pattered down on the leaves of Mister Robert Robin's big basswood tree, and fell in great drops from their tips. Robert Robin did not like the weather. He had not even sung his "Hurry up!" song, and the rain had pelted down so furiously that his every feather was wet, and he was soaked to his shivering skin.

Mrs. Robin was afraid that the raindrops would fall inside the nest and wet the eggs, so she kept her wings spread out so far that her shoulders ached.

"It is very uncomfortable, sitting in this cramped position!" she said to Robert Robin. "I am afraid that I will get the rheumatism in my joints!"

"Let me cover the eggs for you!" said Robert Robin.

"With your feathers all wet?" exclaimed Mrs. Robin. "I am trying to keep the eggs dry and warm!"

"Let me try it once!" said Robert Robin.

"No! Thank you, dear! your intentions are good, but you are so clumsy you would be almost sure to break one of the eggs, and to-day is the day they will hatch!"

"I wish that it would stop raining!" said Robert Robin.

"Why not sing your 'Dry Weather' song?" asked Mrs. Robin. "The rain might stop coming if it heard you singing your 'Dry Weather' song!"

"I only sing my 'Dry Weather' song when the weather is dry!" answered Robert Robin. "Still I would do almost anything to make this rain stop coming down!"

So Robert Robin flew up to the top of his big basswood tree to sing his "Dry Weather" song, in the rain.

Mister Jim Crow was sitting in his tall hemlock tree. He was wishing that the rain would stop

falling, for he was as wet as water could make him. From over the tops of the tall forest trees came the sound of Robert Robin singing his "Dry Weather" song:

"Dry up the crick!  
Dry up the crick!  
Dry up the beetles!  
Dry up the beetles!  
Dry up the crick!"

"Ha! Ha! Ha!" laughed Jim Crow. "That funny Robert Robin is singing his 'Dry Weather' song! He is saying 'dry up the crick!'—he means 'creek' of course, but could anything be funnier than that wet bird sitting in the rain, and singing about dry weather? The creek is roaring down through the sheep pasture, like a yellow river! 'Dry up the crick!' Ha! Ha! Ha!" and Jim Crow laughed so hard that he forgot all about being wet.

"Dry up the crick!" screamed Robert Robin over and over again, until he was too tired to sing any more. Then he perched near Mrs. Robin and said, "I sang it seven times, but the rain is coming down harder than ever!"

"Well! You did your best, dear!" said Mrs. Robin. "It isn't your fault if it rains," and she could smell his feathers, they were so wet.

Suddenly the sky grew lighter, and with a roar that shook the earth a mighty wind swept through the woods; the clouds began to break away; the blue sky shone in patches between the torn clouds, and the rain was over.

No more rain fell, but all that night the fierce wind raved and roared, and when the sun came up in the east once more, the fierce gusts were whipping the branches of the elms, and twisting the tops of the tall pines, but Robert Robin's big basswood tree stood on the northeast side of the forest, so that the wind scarcely touched it.

During the night four little baby robins had pecked their way out of the blue eggs, and when daylight came, Mrs. Robin had cleared the nest of broken shells and was covering her babies with her warm feathers. Robert Robin was sitting on the big branch close by. He was oiling and arranging his feathers with great care.

"You *did* make it stop raining, didn't you, dear?" said Mrs. Robin.

"I must admit that strange things happen!" said Robert Robin, as he lifted a feather and oiled it on the under side.

"I have a little surprise for you!" said Mrs. Robin.

Robert Robin looked, and as Mrs. Robin stood up, he saw four little baby robins. The four little baby robins looked at him and opened their mouths just as wide as they could.

"Why didn't you tell me they were here?" he said. "The poor little dears are almost starved!" and away he flew in a great rush to get them some breakfast. In a few moments he was back again and fed one of them. Then away he hurried again and in a moment he came carrying more food for the babies, but the babies looked so nearly alike that Robert Robin fed the same one twice, and that made Mrs. Robin laugh.

"Men are such blunderbusses!" she said.

"Why don't you have your children marked so one can tell them apart?" he said.

"I will place little Elizabeth at the north side of the nest, little Sheldon at the east, Montgomery at the south, and Evelina at the west!"

All day long Robert Robin did nothing except carry food for the baby robins, but the next day Mrs. Robin helped him, and both of them were busy, for the four little baby robins were very hungry. They never did seem to get enough to eat.

"The children have wonderful appetites!" said Mrs. Robin.

"They are simply ravenous!" said Robert Robin.

"What does 'ravenous' mean?" asked Mrs. Robin.

"Ravenous means as hungry as a wolf!" answered Robert Robin. "I wish that the cherries would hurry and get ripe!"

"Do wolves eat cherries?" asked Mrs. Robin.

"I do not know!" said Robert Robin, "but I do know that ripe red cherries are good for baby robins, and ever so much easier to find than bugs and worms!"

"Green cherries make them sick! We must be very careful not to feed our babies any green cherries!"

"I know where there is an early cherry tree!" said Robert Robin, "and I am going right over there now and see if any of the early cherries are ripe!"

So Mrs. Robin waited by their nest while Robert Robin went over to see about the early

cherries.

The early cherry tree grew in Widow Blunt's back yard. Widow Blunt's father had planted it, and it was the very earliest cherry tree in all the neighborhood.

When Robert Robin came in sight of it he saw the bright red fruit shining among the green leaves. The early cherries were ripe, and Robert Robin was the first to find them.

In a few moments Robert Robin stood beside his own nest with a bright red cherry in his mouth.

36

"Be sure to pop the pits, children!" said Mrs. Robin, and after the little robin had swallowed the cherry, the cherry pit came popping from his mouth and rattled down to the ground.

Many times that day Robert Robin and Mrs. Robert Robin went back and forth between their nest and Widow Blunt's early cherry tree, but in the afternoon, Widow Blunt was out in her garden when she saw a red-breasted robin picking her cherries.

"Oh! You cute robin red-breast!" she called. "You are after my cherries, but you will have to wait until I have picked all that I want for my own use, before you get any more!"

Widow Blunt went into her house, and brought out her stepladder. Then she went into her parlor and got a big stuffed owl off the mantel. The owl was one that Mister Blunt had shot, and a friend of his had stuffed its skin and put in great glass eyes that would scare almost anything. The owl looked just as if he were going to spring right at you.



Both of them were scared almost out of their wits.  
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Widow Blunt took the owl up the stepladder with her, and tied it fast in the cherry tree, then she went back into her house and looked out through the kitchen window.

37

She had not waited long before Robert Robin came to get another cherry. He perched on a limb and was picking out a nice red ripe one to take home to Elizabeth when he saw something shine. It was the stuffed owl's glass eye.

Robert Robin saw the big fierce owl so close to him that he was so frightened he dropped the cherry and screamed, "Help! Help!" and almost fell out of the tree, and just then Mrs. Robin came and almost sat right beside the big owl, and she screamed, "Help! Help!" and almost fell out of the tree, and both of them were scared almost out of their wits, and they flew over to the harvest apple tree and Robert Robin said, "Tut! Tut! Tut!—Tut! Tut! Tut!" and every time he said, "Tut!" he jerked his tail.

38

Widow Blunt sat in her splint-bottomed chair by her kitchen window and laughed and laughed, and laughed. "That poor robin thought he was a goner!" she said to herself. "That old owl is good for something, after all!"

Widow Blunt's full-blooded Plymouth Rock Rooster came around the house with four hens. He was going to show the hens where the cherries were falling on the ground. One of the hens saw the big owl sitting in the cherry tree.

"See that terrible bird in the tree!" she said. Mister Rooster looked up and saw Mister Sparrow sitting in the English currant bush.

"I could eat four birds like that one!" said the rooster.

"You are very brave!" said the hen, "but something tells me that I do not care for cherries today!" and the hen started running for the barn.

Just then Mister Rooster saw the big owl.

"Ca-daa-cut! Ca-daa-cut!" he screamed. "Run for your lives!" and the big rooster was one of the first to get under the barn. 39

Widow Blunt rocked back and forth in her splint-bottomed chair and laughed, and laughed, and laughed. "It is better than a vaudeville!" she said.

Mister Samson Crow came flying over, and he saw the big owl sitting in Widow Blunt's early cherry tree.

Samson Crow was very much surprised to see an owl sitting in a cherry tree in the daytime, and he said to himself: "My eyes are fairly good, and they tell me that a whole owl is sitting in that tree!" Then Samson Crow flew down to where Robert Robin was saying, "Tut! Tut! Tut!" in the harvest apple tree.

"I am very glad that you came, Mister Crow!" said Robert Robin. "Please drive that ugly owl out of that cherry tree so that I may get some more cherries for my baby robins!"

"That is what I am going to do!" said Samson Crow. "But what puzzles me is why any owl would be sitting in a cherry tree right near a house, in broad daylight! Why is he there, and what does he want?" 40

"I have no doubt but that he is after my cherries!" said Robert Robin.

"That is all I care to know about it!" said Samson Crow. "I will drive him out of your tree this very minute!"

Samson Crow flew straight at the owl. The big owl glared at him with its great glass eyes and never moved. "Caw! Caw!" screamed Samson Crow, but the big owl sat perfectly still. Around and around the tree flew Samson Crow, but the big owl sat perfectly still. Samson Crow perched on a branch and shouted at the big owl, but the big owl did not even turn his head, nor change the steady gaze of his great glass eyes. "Help! Help!" screamed Samson Crow, and he flew away to the woods, and Widow Blunt laughed, and laughed, and laughed, and rocked backwards and forwards in her splint-bottomed chair.

Robert Robin kept waiting, and saying, "Tut! Tut! Tut!—Tut! Tut! Tut!" and wishing that the big owl would fly away, but the big owl did not move, and just stared straight ahead with his great glass eyes. 41

About four o'clock Widow Blunt put on her sunbonnet and her cotton gloves with the fingers cut off, and with an eight-quart tin pail with strips of zinc soldered across the bottom of it, she climbed the stepladder and picked eight quarts of ripe red cherries from her early cherry tree, and the big stuffed owl watched her with his great glass eyes, and never said a word.

Then the Widow Blunt took her eight-quart pail full of ripe red cherries into her kitchen and set it on the kitchen table, then she went back to where her stepladder was standing under the cherry tree, and climbed her stepladder once more and untied the stuffed owl, and put him under her arm, and carried him back to her parlor and put him on the mantelpiece and set the big glass dome over him, to keep the dust off.

Widow Blunt carried her stepladder back into her woodhouse, then she hung her sunbonnet on a nail behind the kitchen door, and put her cotton gloves in the secretary drawer, where she would know where to find them when the berry-picking season came. Widow Blunt then looked out of the kitchen window, and saw Robert Robin picking one of her ripe red cherries. Then Widow Blunt sat down in her splint-bottomed chair by the kitchen window and watched Robert Robin and Mrs. Robert Robin come and pick her cherries. 42

"Those robins will not let any of my cherries go to waste," she said. "But I suppose they have a large family to feed, and eight quarts is all I need for myself!" And Widow Blunt rocked backwards and forwards in her splint-bottomed chair and watched the robins, and the next thing she knew the clock struck six and woke her up.

"Mercy! I went to sleep in my chair!" she said. "Now I will have to hurry to get those cherries canned before dark!"

"Where did the big owl go?" asked Mrs. Robin of Robert Robin.

"A woman caught him and carried him away, but he ate many of the very best cherries before she caught him!" said Mister Robert Robin.

## CHAPTER IV

### MISTER ROBERT ROBIN HAS AN ADVENTURE WITH THE FARMER'S MALTESE CAT

It was a beautiful morning. The sun had just lifted his bright face above the eastern hills; the dew was still glistening on the leaves, and Mister Robert Robin was perched in the very top of his big basswood tree singing his "Sun-up" song.

He looked very handsome in his dark brown topcoat and his red vest, as he finished singing his "Sun-up" song and looked around to see what he could see.

From the meadow came the sound of Bob-o-link's "Spingle! Spangle!" song, and David Songsparrow was singing his seven morning songs, and even Jeremiah Yellowbird was doing his best to make his little voice ring through the woods as Robert Robin's mellow notes had sounded a moment before.

44

But Robert Robin was not listening to the other birds, he was looking to see what he could see.

The fields were green, for rain had fallen the day before, and the tangle of wild-rose bushes along the fence had burst into bloom. From the high place where he sat, Robert Robin could see the pink blossoms, and when the wind blew from their direction, he could smell the perfume of the flowers.

The farmer's sheep were in their pasture, and the little lambs were frisking and playing with each other. A pile of lumber lay near the pasture gate, and the little lambs were running and jumping off the lumber pile. They were having great fun, and Robert Robin felt like laughing as he watched them.

Suddenly Robert Robin sat up very straight and jerked his tail up and down three times and said, "Tut! Tut! Tut!" He saw the farmer's Maltese cat walking along on the rail fence, and the cat was coming towards the woods.

"I am afraid that big cat is coming over here!" said Robert Robin to himself. Mrs. Robin heard Robert Robin saying, "Tut! Tut! Tut!" so she came to see what was the matter.

45

"There is a big Maltese cat coming towards our tree!" said Robert Robin.

"Where is it?" asked Mrs. Robin, who was very much excited.

"On the rail fence!" said Robert Robin. "It is the same cat that I saw in the farmer's garden!"

"That terrible cat will eat our baby robins!" said Mrs. Robin. "You must fly right at him and scare him away!"

"Perhaps it would be better to wait and see if something doesn't happen!" said Robert Robin.

The big cat did not seem to be in any hurry. He walked slowly along the rail fence until he came to the brook. There were no rails across the brook, only a panel of wire fencing—so the big cat sprang to the ground and walked along the brook until he came to a place where the brook was narrow, then the farmer's Maltese cat crouched and sprang across the brook at one leap.

46

"He is surely coming to our woods!" said Mrs. Robin, and Robert Robin was so frightened that all he could say was "Tut! Tut! Tut!"

The great cat tiptoed across the corner of the pasture, and crept under the fence. He was now in the meadow next to the woods, and was walking slowly towards Mister Robert Robin's tree. Every few moments he would stand still and look all around. Once he sat down for several minutes, and Robert Robin was hoping that he would not come any nearer the woods. Mrs. Bee was buzzing around the basswood blossoms, and Robert Robin said:

"Mrs. Bee, you are a very good friend of mine! Please fly down there and sting that big cat for me! It will only take you a moment and it will be a great favor!" But Mrs. Bee was busy filling her bag with honey, and had no time to bother, stinging cats.

Mister Jim Crow came flying past and Robert Robin called to him: "Oh! Mister Crow! Fly right straight at that cat and scare him out of his wits!"

47

"Oh! Let him alone!" said Jim Crow, "he is only catching meadow mice!"

And Jim Crow flew over into the other woods.

Then nearer and nearer the big cat crept towards Robert Robin's tree. Mister Kingbird came fluttering his wings and screaming, "King! King! King!" but though he feared no hawk nor owl he was afraid of the big cat and would not go anywhere near him.

The farmer's big Maltese cat was standing almost under Robert Robin's tree. He was swinging his long tail from side to side, and looking at Robert Robin with his green eyes. The big cat was

thinking to himself, "I would like to have that robin for my breakfast!"

But Robert Robin had no fear of the cat catching him; he was afraid that the animal might climb his big basswood tree and eat his baby robins.

"I will climb that big basswood tree and catch Mister Robin!" said the big cat to himself. Then he crawled under the fence and started climbing up the big tree. The big basswood was very tall and straight, and as the farmer's cat climbed higher and higher he saw Mister and Mrs. Robert Robin sitting in a maple tree screaming at him with all their might.

48

"What is the use of my climbing this tall tree when the birds are in the top of the other one?" the cat asked himself. "I think that I will slide down!"

The big cat slid down the big basswood tree and when he came to the ground, he saw Mister Gabriel Chipmunk sitting on top of his old home stump shouting "Chip! Chip!" as loudly as he could scream.

"Ho! Ho!" said the Maltese cat, "there is a striped squirrel for my breakfast!" and the big cat tiptoed towards Mister Gabriel Chipmunk. But Mister Chipmunk was watching the big cat all the while, and he was all ready to jump into his hole.

Somewhere in the woods a twig snapped, and Robert Robin looked and saw an animal coming through the woods. It was a big bulldog, and he was out for a walk.

49

The big bulldog did not like cats, and if there was any one thing which he liked to do, it was to chase cats. He did like to see them run.

When he saw the farmer's big Maltese cat, he said "Woof!" and the big cat forgot all about Mister Chipmunk, and forgot all about Robert Robin, and ran for the fence.

"Woof! Woof!" roared the bulldog. "Pstt! Pstt!" said the cat, and the cat jumped through the fence, and the dog jumped through the fence, and the cat jumped back through the fence, and the dog jumped back through the fence, and then the cat ran up an elm tree which stood outside the woods, and the big bulldog put both of his front paws against the tree, and said "Woof! Woof! Woof!" Then the dog sat down and barked at the cat, and the cat laid his ears back close to his head and growled at the dog.

The big bulldog laughed and showed all his teeth and said, "Come down and take a walk, Kitty! Come down and take a walk, Kitty!" Then the dog sat down and waited three hours for the cat to come down.

50

The farmer's Maltese cat did not like to stay in the elm tree. The sun was hot and some little flies kept trying to get into his ears, but the dog was sitting in the shade, and he was thinking to himself, "That cat will come down soon, and then I will give him another race! I do enjoy seeing those fraidy cats run!"

Robert Robin did not like to have the farmer's cat anywhere around, and he kept saying "Tut! Tut! Tut!" but Mrs. Robin went and got the baby robins their breakfasts.

The sun kept getting hotter and hotter, and the farmer's big cat kept getting warmer and warmer. "I shall roast in this tree!" he said to himself. "This is the last time that I will ever come into these woods! I had no idea that a big bulldog lived here!"

After a long time the big bulldog happened to remember a bone which he had buried in the garden, and the more he thought about the bone, the hungrier he became, so at last he looked up at the farmer's Maltese cat and said:

51

"Woof! The next time I see you, Kitty! The next time I see you, Kitty!"

And the farmer's Maltese cat growled at the big bulldog and said, "If my dog was here he would eat you up!"

Then Mister Bulldog laughed and showed all his teeth and said, "The next time I see you, Kitty!" And then he went back to the place where he was visiting and dug up the bone, and it was even better than he had expected.

When the dog had gone, the farmer's Maltese cat slid down the elm tree and ran all the way home, and found that the farmer's long-eared hound dog had eaten all the breakfast which the farmer's wife had put in the cat dish.

And Mister Robert Robin said to Mrs. Robin: "I hope that nice bulldog stays all summer!"

And every time the farmer's big Maltese cat looked at the woods he said to himself, "That is the place where that bulldog lives!"

## ROBERT ROBIN SINGS HIS CHERRY SONG

Robert Robin was very happy. The cherries were ripe, and from the top of his tall basswood tree he could see dozens of cherry trees laden with the ripe, red fruit.

The little robins were very fond of cherries, and they never forgot to pop the pits, so that under Robert Robin's basswood tree there were soon great quantities of cherry pits.

One day the farmer and his hired man were coming through the woods, and they saw the cherry pits scattered around under the big basswood.

"Look at those cherry pits!" said the hired man.

"Those are not cherry pits, they are basswood bobs!" said the farmer.

"No! They are cherry pits!" said the hired man.

53

"Ha! Ha!" laughed the farmer. "Cherries do not grow on basswood trees!"

"I guess that I know a cherry pit when I see one!" said the hired man. "And if those are not cherry pits, I'll fry my mittens and eat 'em for supper!"

"The trouble with you, Hank, is that you are never willing to give up when you are wrong!" said the farmer. "How could so many cherry pits be under a basswood tree?"

Just then, one of the baby robins "popped" a pit, and the little cherry stone rattled against the branches of the basswood and fell to the ground near the hired man's feet.

The farmer picked it up and said: "Now, look here, Hank! There is no use of your standing there and telling me that that is a cherry pit, when both of us saw it drop off that basswood! Cherry pits don't drop off basswood trees, and for you to try to tell me that I don't know the difference between a cherry tree and a basswood tree is going just a little bit too far!"

54

"Maybe you're right!" said the hired man.

"There ain't no 'maybe' about it!" said the farmer. "I am most generally right when it comes to understanding nature!"

"All except when you pulled up that poison ivy, barehanded!" said the hired man, and both of them laughed, and the farmer said:

"Those basswood bobs did look so much like cherry pits, that they would have fooled anybody but an expert!"

And the hired man said: "They looked so much like cherry pits that the next time I am over this way, I am going to get some of them, and plant 'em in a box and raise me a cherry orchard!"

After the farmer and his hired man had gone, Mister Gabriel Chipmunk came out from under his old home stump. Mister Chipmunk was worried. He did not know what he was going to have to eat next winter.

So he sat on top of his old home stump and tried to think where he could find something to put in his granary bins.

55

Jeremiah Yellowbird sat in a bush near by, and when he saw Mister Chipmunk keeping so still, he said to him:

"What makes you so quiet to-day, Mister Chipmunk?"

"I am worried about what I will have to eat next winter, Mister Yellowbird! There are no beechnuts, this year, the wild-pea crop is a failure, the farmer has no fields of grain near my woods, and I have not seen a groundnut for six seasons!"

"Can't you find something to take the place of those things?" asked Mister Yellowbird.

"If the country was what it used to be, I would not worry a bit. But every year it gets worse and worse! Why, last winter, Mrs. Chipmunk and I had a miserable time living through the winter on wild buckwheat! My grandfather would have starved rather than eat wild buckwheat! And he would have starved, all right, if he had boarded at our house last winter, for wild buckwheat was all that we had! Imagine me, the monarch of all the woods, living on wild buckwheat!"

56

"Are you the monarch of the woods, Mister Chipmunk?" asked Jeremiah Yellowbird.

"I would like to know who has a better right to be called the 'monarch of the woods,'" said Gabriel Chipmunk. "When I sit on my old home stump and say 'Chip! Chip! Chip!' everyone knows that I am taking care of the woods, and if I did not keep a sharp lookout when men, and dogs, and cats come around, there would be many lives lost! A monarch is supposed to take care of his realm, and then I have plenty of time to be monarch, and I like the work, so that makes me the 'monarch of the woods.'"

Something fell from the big basswood tree. It was a cherry pit which one of the baby robins had "popped."

"Was that a nut which fell from the big basswood?" asked Gabriel Chipmunk. But Jeremiah Yellowbird did not know, so Mister Chipmunk hurried over to see, and when Gabriel Chipmunk saw all the nice cherry pits scattered on the ground under the big basswood, he was very much pleased, for Gabriel Chipmunk and all his folks liked cherry pits.

57

Mister Chipmunk filled his two big pockets with the nice cherry pits, and ran for home as fast as his little legs would carry him.

Gabriel Chipmunk's pockets were in his cheeks, and when he had both pockets full of cherry pits, his head looked larger than all the rest of him. Billy Rabbit saw him running through the woods. "Who on earth is that?" said Billy Rabbit to himself. "That big head is running around without anybody! Help! Help!" and Billy Rabbit ran home and told Mrs. Rabbit that he had just seen a terrible head running through the woods.

When Gabriel Chipmunk got home he dumped his two pocketsful of nice cherry pits into his granary bins, and called Mrs. Chipmunk to come and help him, and both of them worked as fast as they could and in a very short time all the nice cherry pits from under Robert Robin's big basswood tree were safe and snug in Mister Gabriel Chipmunk's granary under his old home stump.

58

Both of them were so tired that they went to bed and slept until the next morning.

Towards night Mister Robert Robin perched on the top of his big basswood and sang his "Cherry Song," and while he was singing he heard some one coming through the woods. It was the farmer's hired man. He was going to get some of the cherry pits to plant in a box.

He scuffed his feet among the leaves, and looked, and looked, but he could not find even just one cherry pit.

"Where did all those cherry pits go?" he asked himself. "There was forty-'leven hundred of 'em here this forenoon, and now they are as scarce as hen's teeth! Some bird must have picked up every last one of them! I wouldn't have cared, only I was so sure about their bein' cherry pits, and the farmer hates to get beat in an argument—but now I'll never hear the last of fryin' them mittens."

59

The hired man climbed over the fence and stood still. He was listening to Robert Robin's cherry song.

"Cherry sweeter!  
Cherry sweeter!  
Cherry sweet!  
Cherry sweet!  
Call Peter—  
Call Peter!  
Call Pete,  
Call Pete!  
Cherry sweet!  
Cherry sweeter!  
Cherry sweet!"

"That robin is a fine singer, and he is singing about cherries all right!" said the hired man, "and if I knew as much as he does about what became of those cherry pits, I could go right to 'em, this minute!"

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## CHAPTER VI

60

### MISTER ROBIN DECIDES TO TAKE A VACATION

The days sped by, and the baby robins grew so fast that very soon the four filled the nest chock-full, and so one day Robert Robin was not much surprised to see two of them standing up in the nest.

"Sit down at once, children!" he said. "You might fall out and frighten your mother!"

But the next day little Sheldon hopped out of the nest and stood beside it, and Elizabeth insisted upon standing so near the edge of the nest that Mrs. Robin was very nervous for fear she would upset the nest and spill Montgomery and Evelina to the ground.

"Do sit down, child!" said Robert Robin. "Your mother does not like to have you stand up in the nest that way!" But Elizabeth gave a great jump and in a moment she was standing on a big limb fluttering her wings, and getting ready to fly. Then little Sheldon gave a great jump and flew clear into the maple tree. Mrs. Robin was very much excited, and was screaming loudly, and Robert Robin was saying, "Tut! Tut!" and jerking his tail up and down.

61



Suddenly Evelina stood up and jumped and the nest went rolling over and over down the side of the tall basswood tree, spilling little Montgomery, heels over head.

"Do be careful! Do be careful!" screamed Mrs. Robin. "You will all be killed! You will all be killed!"

But Montgomery was already flopping his wings at a great rate, and had started to fly when the heavy nest fell right on top of him, and there was little Montgomery under the nest, and the nest was wrong side up on the ground.

"Help! Help!" screamed little Montgomery. "Help! Help! I am under the nest!"

Robert Robin tugged at the nest, but the nest was too heavy for him to lift. Mrs. Robin came, and both of them tugged and pulled at the nest, but it was so heavy that both of them together could not lift it.

62

"Let us tear the nest apart!" said Mrs. Robin, but the dry mud was so hard that the twigs could not be pulled apart.

Just then Elizabeth went fluttering past, and little Sheldon fell off his limb, and Evelina began crying—she was so frightened,—so both parent birds were forced to leave poor little Montgomery under the heavy nest and look after their other children.

And what a time they had with them! For over an hour the three little robins went flying in all directions through the woods. Mister Tom Squirrel sat on a limb and laughed and chuckled, and said to Robert Robin: "The way your baby robins fly makes me remember the time I showed my cousins—the flying squirrels—the way to fly straight down!"

But Mister Robin was too excited to feel like visiting with Mister Tom Squirrel. He was afraid that he would lose one of his children. But at last the baby robins were tired enough to feel like resting. Little Sheldon was in the top of a cedar tree, Elizabeth was sitting in a green osier, and little Evelina was sitting on Mister Chipmunk's stump, but poor little Montgomery was still under the heavy nest, and neither Robert Robin nor Mrs. Robin could think of any way to get him out.

63

Over in the pasture a cow was wearing a cowbell. Every time the cow moved her head the bell said "Tonk! Tonkle! Tonk! Tonkle!" Robert Robin could hear the cowbell making the noise to let the farmer know where his brindle cow was. But Robert Robin kept hearing another sound. "Tonkle! Tonkle!" Then he heard some one talking, and he saw two little girls coming into the woods. They were out strawberrying, and they were carrying tin pails on their arms, and whenever they dropped a strawberry in their tin pails it made a noise like "Tonkle! Tonkle!"

"Let us go through this corner of the woods, and maybe we will find some white strawberries!" said one little girl.

"Or some wintergreen berries!" said the other.

64

"Be careful and not tear your dress on the twigs!" said the first.

"This is an old dress, so I don't care!" said the other.

"There is a bird's nest!" said the first little girl.

"Turn it over and see what is inside of it!" said the other.

So the little girl poked Robert Robin's nest with the toe of her shoe and turned it over, and out jumped Montgomery Robin, and the first thing that he did was to open his mouth just as wide as he could. Both the little girls laughed.

"It is a young robin!" said Lucy, "let's feed it some of our strawberries!"

"You may feed it some of yours, if you want to, but I am going to take mine home to mother!" said Lettie, who was a fussy little girl, and her mother did not eat strawberries. They gave her neuritis and pimples.

"That poor little robin may have been under that nest, days, and days, and he is almost starved!" said Lucy. "So I am going to feed the poor thing some of my strawberries!"

65

So Lucy fed Montgomery three ripe strawberries. "Now that is all you may have now!" said Lucy to Montgomery. "People who have been having a famine should not overload their stomachs!"

"Don't touch the dirty thing or you will get bugs on you!" said Lettie.

"Oh! Bugs yourself!" said Lucy. "I hope you step on a snake! It would serve you right for being so nicey nicey!"

"You are a very rude little girl, to say such things!" said Lettie.

"I am very sorry if I hurt your feelings, Lettie!" said Lucy. "It was very rude of me to wish that you would step on a snake! I will take it all back, but I would laugh if you got a spider down your neck!"

Then Lucy and Lettie went out of the woods and left little Montgomery sitting on the ground, but in a very few minutes he started flying from stump to stump, and soon he was sitting in the

cedar tree close by little Sheldon.

Towards night Robert Robin and Mrs. Robin coaxed the baby robins back into the big basswood tree, and all that night the four of them sat on the same limb and slept just as fine as could be.

At dawn, Robert Robin sang his "Hurry up!" song, then he came back to see how his family was getting along. The four baby robins looked very good in their new silky feathers, and they seemed almost as large as Mrs. Robin, and if their breasts had been red instead of speckled you could hardly have told them from full-grown robins. But they were still quite babies, and had to be fed, and it was several days before their parents taught them to find food for themselves.

"You are a great big man-bird, now. Almost as tall as your father, and you ought to be ashamed to even think of letting your mother feed you!" said Mrs. Robin to Montgomery, who still had the habit of opening his mouth as wide as he could.

About the middle of the week, they were all flying around and getting their own food, so Robert Robin said to Mrs. Robin: "I have had a little matter on my mind for quite a while!"

"What is it?" asked Mrs. Robin.

"I have been thinking about taking a vacation!" said Robert Robin. "I have been working pretty hard, this summer, and the strain is beginning to tell! Only last night, I dreamed that seven spotted cats were chasing me through a briar patch! When I awoke I was all covered with a cold sweat! What I need is a little rest and relaxation!"

"What is relaxation?" asked Mrs. Robin.

"Something like rest, only more refined!" said Robert Robin.

"I think that I need a little vacation!" said Mrs. Robin, "so I will go along with you!"

"That will be fine!" said Robert Robin, "and we will take the children! But where shall we go?"

"Where have you been planning on going, dear?" asked Mrs. Robin.

"I would like to go to some quiet, restful place, where there was plenty to eat and drink, and nothing to do."

"That would be a wonderful place to live!" said Mrs. Robin. "I should like to stay there always!"

"I was thinking that I would like to loaf around Brigg's Brambles for a few days, then go over to Black-bug Swamp for a few days, then drop over to the river for a day or two, or possibly spend a short time at the lake!"

"Brigg's Brambles is not a very safe place to take the children—there are so many owls and hawks around, and there is such an odor to Black-bug Swamp, and the last time we were over to the river, we saw all those boys shooting with their air guns. I was thinking that if we went to the mountains or to the seashore we would meet a great many more of our friends,—but have your own way, dear—I will be perfectly happy anywhere!"

"Perhaps we had better go to the mountains!" said Robert Robin. "It would be safer for the children!"

"That would be fine if the weather stays warm, but I shall never forget that awful chill I had, year before last!"

"That settles it!" said Robert Robin. "We will go to the seashore, where the weather is almost always good!"

"You have the best judgment about everything, dear!" said Mrs. Robin. "You always know just how to decide it! It is perfectly wonderful how quickly you make up your mind!"

"My father was the same way!" said Robert Robin. "I think it runs in our family!" Then Robert Robin felt so fine that he flew up to the top of a hickory tree and sang his "Pick Pickles" song.

"Pick pickles!  
Pick pickles!  
A teasel tick tickles!  
A peasel pick pickles!  
A teasel pick pickles!"

And old Mister Woodpecker stopped drumming on his tree, and looked at Robert Robin and laughed and said:

"Every time I hear you sing that foolish song, I have to laugh in spite of myself!"

Then Old Mister Woodpecker started to drill another hole, but he was still so full of giggles that he could not get his mouth closed, and every time just as he went to tap the tree with his bill he would give a giggle.

"A teasel pick pickles! Ha! Ha! Ha!" laughed Old Mister Woodpecker. "Ho! Ho! Ho!" and it was four minutes before he could get the corner of his lips down so that he could get his mouth closed.

So Old Mister Woodpecker could not laugh and work at the same time, and that may be the reason why only a very few people have ever heard Mister Woodpecker laugh out loud, and not so very many people have even seen him smile.

## CHAPTER VII

### MISTER ROBERT ROBIN AND HIS FAMILY TAKE A VACATION

In the country where Robert Robin lived there were a great many lakes and streams. The streams ran down through the valleys, and emptied into the lakes, and the waters from the lakes emptied into larger streams which flowed into a great lake which looked as large as the sea.

Mister Robert Robin thought that the big lake was the sea, and all the other robins in his part of the country thought the same thing, so it was to the shore of the great lake that Robert Robin and his family went for their vacation.

The children were delighted with the trip across the country. It was great fun to fly from one woods to another, and then look around to see what new things could be found. No one was in a hurry to get anywhere.

"We have all the time there is!" said Mrs. Robin.

"Let us not be in a hurry!" said Robert Robin. "When one is taking a vacation he should never be in a hurry to get where he is going!"

"Much haste, less speed!" said Mrs. Robin. "Children, get your father to sing you his Wait-a-bit song!"

Then all the youngster robins began to coax Robert Robin to sing his Wait-a-bit song.

"Daddy! Please sing us your Wait-a-bit song! Daddy! Please sing us your Wait-a-bit song!"

So at last Robert Robin perched himself in the top of a tall butternut tree and sang them his Wait-a-bit song:

    "Never hurry,  
    Wait a bit!  
    Never worry,  
    Wait a bit!  
    Do your work!  
    Never shirk!  
    Never hurry!  
    Never worry!  
    Wait a bit!"

Before Robert Robin had finished singing his Wait-a-bit song Mister Catbird came rushing over from the edge of a tangled swamp, and perched himself near Robert Robin, in the top of the tall butternut tree. When Robert Robin was through with his song, Mister Catbird said: "Mister Robin, you are a stranger to me but as I have never heard any other robin sing that same song, I would be pleased if you would do me the favor of singing it over once more!"

So Robert Robin sang his Wait-a-bit song over again for Mister Catbird, and Mister Catbird said: "Now sing it again, and I will sing along with you! I would like very much to learn that song! It is one of the best songs that I ever heard."

So Robert Robin sang the song again, and Mister Catbird sang along with him, but although Mister Catbird had a very fine voice, and could sing very good indeed, he put in so many wrong words that Robert Robin got all mixed up and sang a part of his Cherry song.

That made Mister Catbird laugh, and then he made a noise like a cat, and the little robins were very much surprised to see a nice-looking bird like Mister Catbird who could make a noise almost exactly like a cat.

Mister Catbird was a jolly person, and he was full of jokes. He sat there in the top of the tall butternut tree, and pretended that he was Mister Blackbird, and he sang Mister Blackbird's song all the way through. Then he said "Meow!" and then he sang a song very much like Robert Robin's "Rain" song, then he said "Meow!" again, and laughed. It made Robert Robin very angry to have Mister Catbird spoiling a good song like that by saying "Meow!" and he thought that Mister Catbird was making fun of him, so he said to Mister Catbird:

"I am very pleased to have had the pleasure of meeting you, sir, but we are on our way to the seashore, so we must hurry along! Good afternoon!"

"Good afternoon!" shouted Mister Catbird. "Good afternoon, EVERYBODY! MEOW!"

As Robert Robin, and his family flew away they heard Mister Catbird singing with all his might:

“Never hurry!  
Wait a bit!  
Never worry!  
MEOW! MEOW!  
Ha! Ha! Ha!  
Do your work!  
MEOW! MEOW!”

And the young robins couldn't help but laugh, but Mister Robert Robin pretended that he did not hear Mister Catbird at all, and started talking with Mrs. Robin about something else.

Before night they came to the shore of the great lake, and at first the little robins were badly frightened. They saw the hundreds of gulls in the air and thought that they were all hawks.

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“Those are not hawks, children!” said Mrs. Robin. “Those are sea gulls, but there are many hawks here, too, but if you keep under the cover of the bushes, the hawks will not see you, and if a hawk cannot see you, he cannot catch you!”

For a long time they sat in an apple tree and looked at the great lake, and watched the gulls swooping and soaring through the air. Many boats were plowing through the water, and many people were strolling along the beach or swimming in the surf.

“I want a drink!” said little Sheldon.

“I want a drink!” said little Elizabeth.

“I want a drink!” said little Evelina.

“I want a drink!” said little Montgomery.

“The water in the lake is not fit to drink, children!” said Robert Robin. “It tastes bric-a-brac-ish! We will go over to General Scamp's fountain, and get a drink of marble water!”



They sat in an apple tree and watched the gulls swooping and soaring through the air.

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So Robert Robin and his family went over to General Scamp's lawn and had a fine drink from his nice bird fountain, and Robert Robin plunged into the bird basin and took a bath, and spattered water all over little Evelina.

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But in a few moments all of them were bathing in General Scamp's bird basin.

“There is nothing like a cold plunge, when one is traveling!” said Robert Robin. “Now I will

teach you children to catch earthworms!”

“Oh! Goody!” shouted all the young birdsters. “In which tree are they?”

“They are not in any tree! They are in General Scamp’s lawn!” said Robert Robin, as he hopped down and began tripping over the green grass. Suddenly he stood perfectly still and turned his head to one side. Robert Robin was listening and looking closely at the ground.

“Watch your father, children!” said Mrs. Robin. “You must learn to stop, look, and listen before you become a good worm hunter!”

Robert Robin was standing as still as a stick. Then, like a flash, he drove his sharp beak into the green sod and pulled out a long wiggly worm.

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In an instant the young robins had seized the worm and were pulling this way and that.

“Look out! Look out!” screamed Robert Robin. “A cat is coming! A cat is coming!”

The young robins dropped the big worm, and all of them flew up into a tulip tree.

The big cat tiptoed across the lawn, until she came to an iron fountain. No water was coming from the fountain, and its basin was dry. It was an old fountain and was not much used.

“Ho! Ho!” said the cat. “Here is a good place to hide! I will get into this old fountain and wait until a robin gets near enough for me to catch. Then I will pounce upon it!”

So the big cat hid in the old iron fountain.

A man was trimming the hedge. He was a caretaker, and he saw the big cat hide in the old iron fountain.

“That old cat thinks that she will hide in the old iron fountain and catch a bird!” he said to himself. “She is the same cat that has been catching birds around here all summer! What she needs is a good dousing!”

79

The man laid down his clippers, and tiptoed along behind the hedge until he came to a place where a little iron wheel stuck up out of the ground. The man took hold of the little iron wheel and turned it just as quickly as he could, and the water came rushing out of the old iron fountain, and the big cat jumped first one way and then another, and whichever way she sprang she splattered right into streams of cold water that squirted all over her.

“Pstt! Pstt!” she said as she jumped out of the basin, and ran across the nice green lawn, and hurried home.

When the big cat got home she shook herself and said: “That old iron fountain is no good! It is a poor place to hide! I am as wet as a mop! Who would ever have expected that old fountain to blow up like that? General Scamp is letting his place run down so fast that I do not think I will go over there any more! I will dry my fur, then I will go over to the dump and catch a rat!”

80

When Robert Robin saw the big cat get wet in the old iron fountain, he told the little robins never to go near that place. “That big cat got very wet, and a little bird, like you, might drown!” he said.

Then, as it was getting towards night, Robert Robin led his family over to the city park. He expected to get a room in the Bird House, but the rooms were all taken, so Robert Robin and his family were forced to sleep all night in a maple tree.

During the night a dense bank of fog rolled in from the lake, and the black smoke of a factory chimney drifted through the park. The lights of the city and the noise of the traffic kept Robert Robin’s family awake most of the night.

“I do not enjoy sleeping in a strange tree!” said Mrs. Robin, the next morning.

“The fog and smoke were very bad!” said Robert Robin, “and those bright lights made my eyes smart!”

81

Little Evelina had caught cold, Montgomery had hurt his toe, and the other youngster birds were tired and not a bit pleasant, so when Mrs. Robin said, “I would like to go back to our own basswood tree, and build us a nice new nest, in the place where the old one was, then I could lay four more eggs, and we would have plenty of time to raise another family this summer!” When Mrs. Robin said that, all the young robins cried at once: “I want to go home! I want to go home!” and all that Robert Robin said was, “I would like to go to some place where I can get a good night’s sleep!”

The whistles of the city were blowing, and the big clock in the Court House was just striking seven, when Robert Robin and his family flew along the shore of the great lake for a short distance, and then suddenly swerved up into the high air over the woods and fields, and at half-past four that afternoon, they could see Brigg’s Brambles, and their own woods, with their tall basswood tree standing in the corner of it.

Mister Jim Crow was sitting on a fence stake listening to Mister Bob-o-link who was singing his Spingle, Spangle song, when he saw six robins dart into Robert Robin’s basswood tree.

82

"Some strange robins are in Robert Robin's tree!" he said to himself. "I had better go over and see where they came from, what they are going to do, and who they are!"

So Jim Crow flew over towards the big basswood tree and sang out: "What, ho! Strangers! Whence came ye! Whither bound, and who's't?"

A tired-looking robin hopped to the end of a twig and answered: "Well! Well! If there isn't my old friend, Jim Crow! It does seem so good to get back home again and see the neighbors!"

"Why! It is Robert Robin!" exclaimed Jim Crow. "I thought that you were away on your vacation!"

"We have been, and we have returned!" said Robert Robin.

"You made a short stay of it!" said Jim Crow. "You left us yesterday morning!"

83

"Can that be possible?" said Robert Robin. "It seems to me that we were away a week! But the very best part of a vacation is the getting back!" said Robert Robin, and Jim Crow said:

"It was very quiet around the woods while you were away. There was no one to sing us a Hurry-up song in the morning, and no one to sing us a Cheer-up song in the afternoon, and no one to sing us a Good-night song when the red sun was sinking behind the purple hill. Mrs. Crow has had the blues all day, Billy Rabbit has been very lonely, and even Melancthon Coon was asking what had become of you; he had missed your singing. I came over here just on purpose to listen to little Mister Bob-o-link sing his Spingle, Spangle song. So you see, Mister Robin, we all need you to cheer us up with your songs and keep us good-natured!"

"Thank you very much, Mister Crow!" said Robert Robin, "I will surely remember to sing you my Good-night song, when the sun goes down behind the hill!"

84

And that evening, when the red sun was sinking behind the purple hill, and the sky of the west was hung with the tapestry of clouds, and the shadows in the valley were soft as black velvet, and the breath of the wind was like a whisper among the leaves, Robert Robin sang his Good-night song:

Mellow light!  
Mellow light!  
Yellow light!  
Yellow light!  
Has gone!  
Has gone!  
Let us rest,—  
Let us rest!  
'Til dawn,—'til dawn!"

Then Mister Robert Robin fluttered down into his own big basswood tree, and he and all of his family slept soundly all night, and not even Mister Screech-owl and his whistle disturbed them.

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## CHAPTER VIII

85

### ROBERT ROBIN TELLS THE STORY OF WINTER

It was well towards Fall when Mister and Mrs. Robert Robin's second family were out of the nest, and flying around. The days were getting shorter and the nights seemed very, very long to Robert Robin, who kept the sharpest watch to see the first faint light of dawn in the east. For Robert Robin felt it his duty to waken everybody just as quickly as he was sure that morning was about to break. But as the sun came up in the east a little later each morning, Robert Robin had longer and longer to wait.

"It seems to me that last night was the longest night that we have had this summer!" he said to Mrs. Robin.

"Perhaps to-night will not be as long!" said Mrs. Robin.

"Perhaps not!" said Robert Robin, "but if to-night is any longer than last night, I am going to get the children together and tell them about the Great White Bear and the Little Gray Mouse!"

86

That afternoon the clouds covered the sky, and towards night a fine misty rain fell, so that the afternoon was dark, and it seemed to Robert Robin that night arrived long before time for it.

"It is getting dark here in the middle of the afternoon!" he said.

The next morning a fog covered all the land, and Robert Robin had good reason to think that the night was far too long.

"Some one is taking our days away from us! By this time to-morrow we will not have any light left, if it keeps on this way!"

But in the afternoon the fog banks drifted away, and the bright sun shone, so Robert Robin felt much better, and he even sang a few songs to cheer up Jim Crow and the other neighbors.

"This is a very fine day!" said Mrs. Robin. And so it was.

The sky was clear and of the deepest blue, the wind was still, and the woods were quiet. Over in the farmer's barnyard a hen was cackling, but in the woods not a sound could be heard. Mister Chipmunk was sitting on his old home stump, but he had nothing to say, and Mister Tom Squirrel had been working so hard lately, that he was too tired to talk.

"To-day would be a good day to tell the children the story of the Great White Bear, and the Little Gray Mouse!" said Mrs. Robin to Robert Robin.

"Well! Get them together, and I will tell them the story!" said Robert Robin. "I may as well do it one time as another, and it doesn't take any longer to do a thing when you think of it than it does to put it off and then have to think of it again!"

So Mrs. Robin called to the children to come and hear Robert Robin tell the story of the Great White Bear and the Little Gray Mouse.

When the children had all gathered in the big basswood tree Robert Robin said, "Come with me!" and led the way to the other side of the woods, near the big stone under which Gerald Fox had his new home, and not far from the old stump fence. Here were many sumach bushes with their fernlike leaves and bright red bobs.

Robert Robin perched on a sumach limb, and straightened his feathers, then he sat up very much as if he were about to sing, and said:

"I have brought you to this side of the woods to tell you the story of the Great White Bear, and the Little Gray Mouse, because it was in this very spot that my father told me the same story, and it was in this same place that his father told the story to him, and no one knows how many, many years the family has gathered here by the big stone, to listen to this same story of the Great White Bear and the Little Gray Mouse. Sheldon! Will you please turn around and look this way?"

"All of you children should pay the closest attention to this story. You should not miss a single word of it, for it will be your duty to tell it to your children, just as I am telling it to you, for this is the story of Winter, and the story of why all robins fly southward every Fall, and why they return to the north in the Spring!"

Then Robert Robin told them the story of the Great White Bear, and the Little Gray Mouse.

### *Robert Robin's Story*

It was many, many seasons ago, before there was any north or south, and when there was only an east and a west, that there lived in the deep, dark woods of the north a King Robin. This King Robin and his mate and their four baby robins were all the robins that there were to be found in all the deep, dark woods.

Every morning when the gray light in the east glowed through the woods, King Robin sang a song, and every evening when the sun was about to sink behind the hills of the west, King Robin sang another song.

King Robin's breast was covered with the softest and whitest down, but one day Mrs. Robin noticed that the tiny tips of the feathers were stained with red.

"You have some cherry juice on your white breast!" said Mrs. King Robin.

"I will wash it off!" said King Robin.

So King Robin plunged into Lake Win-a-ke-tea-cup and washed his white breast, but the stain would not come off, and each day the tiny tips of the soft white feathers of King Robin's breast became a darker red until at last as King Robin sat in the top of his tall tree and sang his evening song, his breast was the color of the red sunset, and each morning as he sang his morning song, the red sunrise was no redder than King Robin's breast. And King Robin grew very proud of his red breast which was stained by the dyes of the glowing sky.

Near the foot of King Robin's tree a Little Gray Mouse had his nest, and as the weather was neither too warm nor too cold, the Little Gray Mouse often sat outside his door and visited with King Robin.

One day they were talking about the Great White Bear. The Great White Bear lived in a cave. The cave was very large, and in one corner of it the Great White Bear had his nest. The Little Gray Mouse said to King Robin: "I am not afraid of the Great White Bear. Are you?"

And King Robin answered, "Yes, I am very much afraid of the Great White Bear."

"I dare go into his cave, and tangle his fur!" said the Little Gray Mouse.

"I would not do that, if I were you!" said King Robin. "If the Great White Bear grew angry, he might do something terrible to you!"

"Pooh!" said the Little Gray Mouse, "who is afraid of a bear? I will stay in his cave all night, and tangle his fur into little hard knots!"

And that night while the Great White Bear was hunting in the woods, the Little Gray Mouse slipped into his cave and hid himself in a corner of the rocks.

But when the Great White Bear came home he smelled the Little Gray Mouse and roared: "Some mouse is hiding in my cave! I smell a mouse!" Then the Great White Bear listened to hear what the mouse had to say, but the Little Gray Mouse was very much frightened, and was trembling all over and did not say a word.

The Great White Bear was very tired, so he thought that he would not catch the Little Gray Mouse until morning, so he crawled into his nest and went to sleep.

When the Great White Bear was sound asleep and snoring, the Little Gray Mouse came from the corner of the rocks and tangled the Great White Bear's tail fur into little hard knots.

The next morning when the Great White Bear awoke he found that the Little Gray Mouse had tangled his tail fur into little hard knots, and the Great White Bear was very angry, and said to the mouse:

"I let you sleep in my warm cave and then you tangled my tail fur into little hard knots!"

The Little Gray Mouse was so frightened that he ran out of the cave and hid in the woods.

The Great White Bear sat down and tried to untangle the little hard knots, but his tail was so short, and the place where his tail fur was tangled was so hard to reach that the Great White Bear could not untangle his tail fur, and he kept getting angrier every minute, and at last he became so furious that he rushed from his cave and began tearing the woods to pieces to find the Little Gray Mouse. But the Little Gray Mouse hid under some leaves, and the Great White Bear could not find him.

The Great White Bear saw King Robin sitting in his tree. "Tell me, King Robin, where I can find the Little Gray Mouse?"

"I do not know where the Little Gray Mouse may be!" said King Robin. "He is hiding in the woods!"

Then the Great White Bear sat down and thought, and thought, and thought, and at last he said: "I am going to find the Little Gray Mouse if I have to freeze the woods! You have always been a good friend of mine, King Robin, and I dislike to put you to any trouble, but if I were you I would take my family and go across the lakes and over the mountains and along the river to the great bay!"

King Robin thought that the Great White Bear was joking, but the Great White Bear stood in the door of his cave and blew the cold air into the woods, and soon the frost from his cold breath whitened the twigs of the trees, and turned the leaves many strange and beautiful colors.

"What a pretty woods you are making!" said King Robin to the Great White Bear, but the Great White Bear only answered:

"If I were you I would take my family and go across the lakes, and over the mountains, and along the river to the great bay!"

And the next night the Great White Bear stood in the door of his cave and blew his cold breath through the woods, and when the morning came the bare branches of the trees were singing in the wind, and the leaves were drifting in the hollows, and King Robin and his family were cold and hungry.

"If I were you, I would take my family and go across the lakes and over the mountains, and along the river to the great bay!" said the Great White Bear to King Robin.

And that night the Great White Bear stood in the door of his cave and blew his cold breath through the woods, and when the morning came the ground was white with snow, and the streams were covered with ice, and the Great White Bear saw King Robin sitting in his tree,— "If I were you, I would take my family and go across the lakes and over the mountains, and along the river to the great bay."

Then King Robin called his family together, and repeated to them what the Great White Bear had told him,— "Across the lakes and over the mountains and along the river to the great bay!" and King Robin made each one repeat it over and over again,— "Across the lakes, and over the mountains, and along the river to the



great bay.”

And that very day while the snow was still falling and the cold breath of the Great White Bear was blowing through the woods, King Robin led his family southward across the lakes and over the mountains, and along the river to the great bay, and they could feel the cold breath of the Great White Bear on their backs until they reached the great bay.

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And the Great White Bear blew his cold breath through the woods until the forest was deep with snow, and the frosty air sparkled at night, and the frozen trees snapped with the cold. “Now I have frozen the Little Gray Mouse!” said the Great White Bear to himself, and he went back to his cave and slept until the woods were warm with the breath of the south wind, and King Robin was back in his tree.

And that is the story of the first Winter, and we should never have had another were it not for the foolish Little Gray Mouse, who was hidden all winter under the snow. For if the Little Gray Mouse would but be content to stay well hidden from the Great White Bear, then we should have no more Winter, but in the Fall the foolish Little Gray Mouse runs through the corn stubble and the Great White Bear sees him. “There goes the Little Gray Mouse who tangled my tail fur!” roars the Great White Bear, and again he blows his cold breath through the woods, and over the country, and all the cold weather we have is on account of that foolish Little Gray Mouse who tangled the tail fur of the Great White Bear!

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When Robert Robin had finished speaking, Mrs. Robin said, “Now, children, you must all repeat what the Great White Bear told King Robin,—‘Across the lakes and over the mountains, and along the river to the great bay.’” Then all the youngster robins repeated, “Across the lakes and over the mountains, and along the river to the great bay,” and while they were talking, the cool wind began to blow from out the north, and Mrs. Robin said, “Feel how cold that wind is getting! The Great White Bear must have seen the Little Gray Mouse!”

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## CHAPTER IX

### MISTER ROBERT ROBIN HAS A BATTLE WITH THE SPARROWS

99

One morning Mister Robert Robin was awake earlier than usual. The wind was blowing cold and chilly, and the stars were shining out of a cold sky. The faintest glow was to be seen in the east, but that was enough to prove to Robert Robin that morning was about to break. Yet Robert Robin did not sing his Hurry-up song.

It was so cold and chilly that he did not feel like singing, and besides, he thought to himself, “Why should I awaken the birds and squirrels on a cold morning like this? There is nothing for them to do, so I will let them sleep!”

So Robert Robin took a little nap, and when he awoke the sun was just coming up, and then Robert Robin could see the frost. The roofs of the farmer’s buildings were covered with it, and so were the fence rails, and even the leaves of the big basswood were white in places.

100

Mister Tom Squirrel was running through the woods telling everyone that there had been a frost, and that the chestnut burrs would soon be open. Mister Tom Squirrel was very much pleased, but Robert Robin could not help feeling sad. For he knew that Winter was coming, and that the Great White Bear was blowing his cold breath through the woods.

That very day the leaves of the big basswood turned brown, and were dead, but the leaves of the apple trees still shone with a glossy green. The apple tree seemed to like the frost.

Robert Robin did not sing at all, he felt as if he had lost something.

In the afternoon Mrs. Robin said: “When do we go across the lakes, and over the mountains, and along the river to the great bay?”

“We might start to-day,” answered Robert Robin. “Let us call the children and go at once. We should be able to get as far as Watkins Glen, or Elmira.”

101

“Then we could sleep in the Glen!” said Mrs. Robin.

“There are too many crows in the Glen!” said Robert Robin, “but if we reached Elmira, we might stay with Cousin Phineas, who lives on the Heights!”

“Let us call the children and start right away!” said Mrs. Robin.

All the youngster robins came hurrying at the call, except little Sheldon. But little Sheldon could not be found, and though all the robins searched and called he did not answer nor come in sight.

"Where *can* that child be?" said Mrs. Robin. "We cannot go south and leave him here all alone!"

"No!" said Robert Robin. "That would never do! The owls might get him!"

Jim Crow came flying along and asked, "What seems to be the trouble, folks?"

"We have lost little Sheldon!" said Robert Robin.

"Where did you lose him?" asked Jim Crow.

"We lost him from where he isn't!" said Robert Robin.

"You keep on looking where he isn't, and I will go and look where he is!" said Jim Crow, as he flew away.

"He may be playing with those Nuthatch boys!" said Mrs. Robin.

All the robins kept searching the woods for little Sheldon, but Mister Jim Crow flew over to Brigg's Brambles, and in a very short time he came hurrying back and called to Robert Robin:

"Little Sheldon is over in Brigg's Brambles playing I-spy with Billy Nuthatch!"

"Thank you very much, Mister Crow!" said Robert Robin, as he sped over to Brigg's Brambles to get little Sheldon.

Little Sheldon did not want to come away. He was playing I-spy with Billy Nuthatch, and it was his turn to go and hide, so Robert Robin said, "You may hide just this once, then we must go!"

Little Billy Nuthatch "blinded" behind a big stump, and little Sheldon whispered, "Come on, Daddy!" to Robert Robin, and both of them flew away as fast as they could. And that was the reason why little Billy Nuthatch hunted all that Fall for little Sheldon Robin, and never found him.

Robert Robin and his family were now ready to start for the south. "Across the lakes, and over the mountains, and along the river to the great bay!" repeated Robert Robin, and all the rest of the robins repeated it after him,— "Across the lakes, and over the mountains, and along the river to the great bay!"

Over the little lakes they flew, higher and higher into the air, until the mountains were crossed, and the river lay in the wide valley below them. The river itself seemed a blue ribbon on a carpet of brown and green. Hardly a sound came from below, but the noise of their own wing pinions as they whistled through the air made a sound like the panting of tiny engines,— "Swish-swish-swish-swish!" as Robert Robin led his family towards the warm south.

"Isn't that Elmira?" asked Mrs. Robin.

"Yes, my dear!" answered Robert Robin, "and we will soon be with Cousin Phineas."

In a few moments they were all perched in the tree where Cousin Phineas had his nest. But Cousin Phineas was not at home. He had gone to Big Flats after sweet corn; Mister Oliver Sparrow came fluttering into the tree and asked:

"Hi sye, Old Top, don't you know that this is not a public camping spot? We 'ave no accommodations for tourists! Better keep moving or Hi'll call the force!" That made Robert Robin very angry, and he hopped very close to where Mister Oliver Sparrow was sitting and said, "In the country where I came from, we robins do not let an impudent little sparrow even speak to us, but I will not pull the feathers out of your back this time, if you will kindly tell me where my Cousin Phineas is to-day!"

"Hi! Hi! Fellows!" shouted Oliver Sparrow. "'Ere's a country robin what is a cousin of Phin's! Come and 'elp me pick 'em!"



The sparrows came rushing at Robert Robin and his family.  
(Page 104) (Exciting Adventures of Mr. Robert Robin)

Screaming and shouting at the tops of their voices, scores of sparrows came rushing straight at Robert Robin and his family. Robert Robin was very angry, and the first sparrow that came within the reach of his strong bill, he sent reeling to the ground. Robert Robin shook the feathers from his bill and struck the next and the next. The air was full of the wicked sparrows. They came from the alleys, and from the parks, from behind the houses and stores, until a cloud of them hung above the maple tree, and filled the air with their screams.

105

Mrs. Robin and the youngster robins stayed close to the trunk of the maple, but Robert Robin scorned to seek shelter, and bravely fought against the great odds. Sparrow after sparrow went fluttering to the earth under the swift blows of Robert Robin's strong bill, but on they came by scores, and Robert Robin was beginning to tire.

A woman was sitting in a rocking chair by her front porch window. She was reading a book and she was not paying any attention to the birds.

106

Her husband was a night watch, and he slept during the day.

"What are those pesky sparrows making so much noise about?" he called from his bedroom. "They keep me awake with their heckling!"

"They are fighting some robins in the maple tree!" said the woman.

"Let the cat out!" said the man.

The woman got up from her rocking chair and let her yellow cat out of the back door.

The big yellow cat heard the sparrows screaming, and tiptoed around the house until he came in sight of the maple tree. When the big yellow cat saw the flock of sparrows in the maple tree, he said to himself, "I will creep close to those birds, then I will pounce upon one and have it for my supper!"

The big yellow cat crouched under the barberry hedge and crept towards the sparrows.

107

Oliver Sparrow came flying straight at Robert Robin's red breast. Quick as a flash Robert Robin struck with his strong bill, and Oliver Sparrow fell towards the ground. It was then that the big yellow cat sprang from under the hedge.

"A cat! A cat! A cat!" screamed all the sparrows, and away they flew back to the alleys, and parks, and behind the houses and stores, leaving Robert Robin, and Mrs. Robert Robin, and all their children very tired but unharmed.

"Kitty! Kitty! Kitty! Kitty! Kitty!" called the woman, and the big yellow cat went bounding across the lawn.

Just then Cousin Phineas came home.

"My stars! If there isn't Cousin Robert, and all his folks!" shouted Cousin Phineas. "Welcome to our city!"

"Glad to see you again, Cousin Phineas!" said Robert Robin. "But I cannot say that I like your neighbors!"

"Have those wicked sparrows been here again?" asked Cousin Phineas.

"I have just had a fine fight with more sparrows than I ever saw before in all my life!" said Robert Robin. 108

"It must have been that Oliver Sparrow and his gang!" said Cousin Phineas. "They are very bad birds! I hope they did not hurt you?"

"Not a scratch!" said Robert Robin, "but see the sparrow feathers on the ground under this tree!"

"Well! Well!" said Cousin Phineas. "There are enough sparrow feathers to make a nest!"

"I pulled one out!" shouted little Sheldon, and sure enough the bold little robin was still holding a sparrow's feather in his bill.

"He is *so* much like his father!" said Mrs. Robin, "and some day he will be a great big man-robin and whip all the naughty sparrows, just like Daddy does!"

"He makes me think of our young Timothy!" said Cousin Phineas. "I am sorry he is not here! He is a very bright youngster! My folks have gone south for the Winter, but you must stay overnight with me, just the same." 109

"We just dropped in to make a call, but, as you say, it *is* getting rather late, so if it is not too much trouble, we will accept your invitation to remain overnight!" said Robert Robin.

"Good! Then we will spend the night at the Reformatory!" said Cousin Phineas, as he led the way over to the Reformatory trees.

Neither Cousin Phineas nor Robert Robin felt like singing a "Good-night" song, so little Sheldon perched on the top of a tall elm and sang one himself.

"Very good, Sheldon!" said Robert Robin.

"Very good, Sheldon!" said Cousin Phineas. "You have a very remarkable youngster there, Cousin Robert! He can sing a song and knows neither the tune nor the words! Very remarkable! Very remarkable!"

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## CHAPTER X

### ROBERT ROBIN AND HIS FAMILY GO SOUTH

The next morning after Robert Robin and his family had stayed overnight with Cousin Phineas, a heavy frost whitened the roofs of the buildings and covered the fields with a carpet of frost diamonds. The white smoke from the many chimneys of the city floated upward in great fluffy cones until it seemed that the fluffy cones of snowy smoke were columns which bound the city to the sky. 110

"What strange-looking clouds you have here in Elmira!" said Mrs. Robin to Cousin Phineas.

"Yes! We have them go straight up so that we may fly between them!" said Cousin Phineas. "But how about a little breakfast?"

"I was just thinking about the same thing!" said Robert Robin, "and after our long trip, I am sure that we are hungry enough to eat almost anything!" 111

"There are frozen apples in Arnot's orchard, frozen grapes on Sullivan Hill, poison-ivy berries near Big Flats, and sumach bobs on the road to Millport!" said Cousin Phineas. "So you may have your choice!"

"Let us try the sumach bobs!" said Mrs. Robin. "I have not tasted one this season! They must be delicious after this hard frost!"

A railroad wound along the mountain side, and its right of way was lined with sumach bushes whose upper twigs were red with the crimson bobs, and it was here that Cousin Phineas brought Robert Robin's family.

"These are very fine sumach bobs!" said Robert Robin. "They are the finest I ever tasted!"

"Their rich flavor comes from the engine smoke! This railroad has the best smoke of any railroad in this part of the country! Nothing improves the flavor of a sumach bob like nice black smoke!"

112

"I found a stone in my sumach bob!" shouted little Sheldon.

"Hush! Child! It is nothing but a cinder!" said Cousin Phineas. "And cinders are good for coughs! But I would not eat too many of them. They are hard to digest!"

When all the robins had eaten as many sumach bobs as they cared for, Robert Robin said:

"Cousin Phineas, we have enjoyed our stay with you, but it is a long way to the south, so we must hurry along!"

And Cousin Phineas said: "I wish that you had time to stay a week, but I know that you must be in a hurry so I will not coax you to stay this time, but now that you have found the way, you must come and see me often. Be sure and stop when you come back in the Spring. You will find me around here somewhere. I am planning to spend the winter in Elmira and vicinity!"

"Good-by, Cousin Phineas!" said Robert Robin. "Good-by, Cousin Phineas!" said all the rest, and away they flew into the sky, and soon all that Cousin Phineas could see of them was ten tiny dots against a high gray cloud.

113

"Swish! Swish! Swish!" went the sound of wings against the still, thin air. Below Robert Robin and his family the valley of the river widened into fertile farm lands. The glitter of the polished steel of the railroad rails flashed to their eyes under the rays of the morning sun.

"This is going to be a fine day for our trip!" said Mrs. Robin.

"It couldn't be better!" said Robert Robin. "There is just enough breeze to help in our flying; we should reach the great bay before night!"

The youngster robins were very much interested in seeing the new country. The valley continued to widen beneath them, villages and cities appeared, and great locomotives, puffing clouds of smoke, pulled long trains, and pierced the air with screaming whistles; but what interested the youngster robins still more were the other birds. Far above, and as far as could be seen on either side, the air seemed alive with them. There were crows, and thrushes, and flickers, and birds of many other kinds. Large birds, small birds, big birds, and little birds. Black and brown and gray and blue and yellow and red, and birds of all colors in between.

114

Flying so high that they could not be seen from the earth, it looked to the youngster robins as if all the birds in the world were going south for the winter. Robins, robins, everywhere! Hundreds of them flying in little family groups or mingled together in great flocks. Robert Robin kept saying, "Kirk! Kirk!" so that none of the children would get lost.

"Keep close to your father, children!" said Mrs. Robin. "If you should ever get lost in this crowd, we could no more find you again than we could find Jim Crow on a dark night!"

A flock of wild geese called from overhead, and frightened little Sheldon very much. They were such big birds; flying close together, their powerful wings driving their heavy bodies swiftly through the air. Their hoarse-voiced leader honked his loud calls as he led the line, which, straight and true as a file of drilled soldiers, sweeping in perfect formation a half mile on either side, was so different from anything that little Sheldon had ever seen that the little robin screamed, "Help! Help! Help! There comes a row of fat hawks!"

115

"Those are wild geese and they will not hurt you, child!" said Robert Robin.

"What makes them fly so close together?" asked little Sheldon.

"They came from where the fog banks roll over the ice of the north!" said Robert Robin, "and they have learned to fly closely together so that they will not get lost from each other in the fogs."

The swift-winged geese were traveling much faster than the robins, and soon they were far ahead of Robert Robin and his family.

"Why do they fly so fast?" asked Evelina.

116

"They have far to go!" answered Robert Robin, "and they must hurry or they will be late in getting there!"

"There is our White Spring!" shouted Mrs. Robin. "Let us stop there a while and get some new sand for our crops!"

So Robert Robin led his family down to the White Spring.

White Spring was a tiny little spring which gushed from the shady side of a glen. There were no houses nor other buildings near, and very few people knew that there was such a place as White Spring, but Robert Robin's father had known of it and he had led Robert Robin to its tiny basin, and Robert Robin had shown the spring to Mrs. Robin.

The tired robins were glad to drink of its clear cool water which gushed out of the whitest sand.

"Fill your crops with this nice sharp sand, children!" said Mrs. Robin. "You will need good sand in your crops to digest those Virginia bugs!"

117

So all the robins filled their crops with the fine white sand, then Robert Robin sat down to rest.

"Do you remember the first time that I brought you to this spring?" he asked Mrs. Robin.

"Oh, yes! Indeed I do!" said Mrs. Robin. "That was when we were on our honeymoon!"

"There were many other robins around here then!" said Robert Robin. "Do you remember that Miss Lena Robin you were so jealous of?" laughed Robert Robin.

"I might have been jealous of her, but at least I was very polite to her and was not rude like you were to that handsome young Mister Percival Robin, whom you were so insanely jealous of! I remember your trying to knock him into the spring, and raving around like mad! Why! You chased him clear over that hill and you were simply too funny for anything, and all because he was very polite to me and he *was* rather good looking!" said Mrs. Robin.

118

"Good looking?" said Robert Robin. "Good looking? Why! his head looked like a woodpecker's, and his tail looked like a chickadee's, and his legs were long enough for a killdeer!"

"That Miss Lena Robin, you were so infatuated with,—"

"Infatuated with?" screamed Robert Robin. "I barely remember how she looked. But she was not so bad looking! She had pretty eyes, and a charming manner, but what she could see about that long-legged Percival is a mystery to me!"

"What he could see about her is a deeper mystery!" said Mrs. Robin, "but let us not quarrel about those people,—they are nothing to me."

"Nor to me!" said Robert Robin. "Call the children and we will be on our way!"

So Mrs. Robin called the youngster robins from the patch of bushes where they had been playing I-spy, and all of them whirred away into the higher air on their way to the warm south, and the sound of their wings as they followed close behind Robert Robin went "Swish! Swish! Swish!" like the panting of tiny engines.

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THE END

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