

## **Squirrel Nutkin**

(A Puppet Show Adaptation of *The Tale of Squirrel Nutkin* by Beatrix Potter)

Adapted by Brooke Bailey

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This is a tale about a tail- a tail that belonged to a little red squirrel, and his name was Nutkin. He had a brother called Twinkleberry, and they lived in a wood at the edge of a lake.

In the middle of the lake there is an island covered with oak trees, and in one of those trees in a hollow lives an owl who is called Old Brown.

One autumn when the nuts were ripe, and the leaves on the trees were golden and green, Nutkin and Twinkleberry came out of the wood, and down to the edge of the lake.

They made little rafts out of twigs, and they paddled away over the water to Owl Island to gather nuts. Each squirrel used his tail for a saile.

They also took with them an offering of a fat mouse as a present for Old Brown, and put it down upon his doorstep.

Then Twinkleberry made a low bow, and said politely-

“Old Mr. Brown, will you favour us with permission to gather nuts upon your island?”

But Nutkin was excessively impertinent in his manners. He bobbed up and down, singing:

*Whiskey, frisky, hippity hop*  
*Up I scamper to tree-top!*  
*Whirly, twirly, round and round*  
*down I scamper to the ground!*

Mr. Brown paid no attention whatever to Nutkin. He closed his eyes obstinately and went to sleep.

The squirrels each found a nice acorn, and sailed away home.

But next morning they all came back again to Owl Island; and Twinkleberry brought a fine fat mouse, and laid it on the doorstep in front of Old Brown, and said:

“Mr. Brown, will you favour us with your gracious permission to gather some more nuts?”

But Nutkin, who had no respect, began to dance up and down, ticking old Mr. Brown with his tail and singing:

*Whiskey, frisky, hippity hop  
Up I scamper to tree-top!  
Whirly, twirly, round and round  
down I scamper to the ground!*

Mr. Brown woke up suddenly- and carried the mouse into his house.

Twinkleberry searched for acorns all over the island, but Nutkin gathered leaves, green and yellow, and ran around waving them like wings, and watching the door of old Mr. Brown.

The next day Twinkleberry carried another fat mouse, but Nutkin, who had no nice manners, brought no present at all. He ran in front, singing:

*Whiskey, frisky, hippity hop  
Up I scamper to tree-top!  
Whirly, twirly, round and round  
down I scamper to the ground!*

Old Mr. Brown took no notice at all. But Nutkin became more and more impertinent. He danced around like a sunbeam and chattered:

*Whiskey, frisky, hippity hop  
Up I scamper to tree-top!  
Whirly, twirly, round and round  
down I scamper to the ground!*

But still Old Brown said nothing at all.

Then Nutkin took a running jump at the head of Mr. Brown!

There was a loud *squeak!*

Twinkleberry ran away! But when he crept back to have a look, Mr. Brown was just sitting there, eyes closed, as if nothing had happened. *But Nutkin was underneath his claws.*

This looks like the end of the story, but it isn't.

Old Brown carried Nutkin up into his house. He was intending to eat him. But Nutkin pulled so very hard he got away! He dashed away!

And to this day, if you meet Nutkin up a tree, he will throw sticks at you, and stamp his feet and scold, and shout-

*"Cuck-cuck-cuck-cur-r-r-cuck-k-k!"*

The End