



## CHAPTER 21

### WHITEFOOT ENVIES TIMMY



*A useless thing is envy;  
A foolish thing to boot.  
Why should a Fox who has a bark  
Want like an Owl to hoot?  
—Whitefoot.*

Whitefoot was beginning to feel quite at home. He would have been wholly contented but for one thing,—he had no well-filled storehouse. This meant that each day he must hunt for his food.

It wasn't that Whitefoot minded hunting for food. He would have done that anyway, even though he had had close at hand a store-house with plenty in it. But he would have felt easier in his mind. He would have had the comfortable feeling that if the weather turned so bad that he could not easily get out and about, he would not have to go hungry.

But Whitefoot is a happy little fellow and wisely made the best of things. At first he came out very little by day. He knew that there were many sharp eyes watching for him, and that he was more likely to be seen in the light of day than when the Black Shadows had crept all through the Green Forest.

He would peek out of his doorway and watch for chance visitors in the daytime. Twice he saw Butcher the Shrike alight a short distance from the tree in which Timmy lived. He knew Butcher had not forgotten that he had chased a badly frightened

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Mouse into a hole in that tree. Once he saw Whitey the Snowy Owl and so knew that Whitey had not yet returned to the Far North. Once Reddy Fox trotted along right past the foot of the old stub in which Whitefoot lived, and didn't even suspect that he was anywhere near. Twice he saw Old Man Coyote trotting past, and once Terror the Goshawk alighted on that very stub, and sat there for half an hour.

So Whitefoot formed the habit of doing just what Timmy the Flying Squirrel did; he remained in his house for most of the day and came out when the Black Shadows began to creep in among the trees. Timmy came out about the same time, and they had become the best of friends.

Now Whitefoot is not much given to envying others, but as night after night he watched Timmy a little envy crept into his heart in spite of all he could do. Timmy would nimbly climb to the top of a tree and then jump. Down he would come in a long beautiful glide, for all the world as if he were sliding on the air.

The first time Whitefoot saw him do it he held his breath. He really didn't know what to make of it. The nearest tree to the one from which Timmy had jumped was so far away that it didn't seem possible any one without wings could reach it without first going to the ground.

"Oh!" squeaked Whitefoot. "Oh! he'll kill himself! He surely will kill himself! He'll break his neck!" But Timmy did nothing of the kind. He sailed down, down, down and alighted on that distant tree a foot or two from the bottom; and without stopping a second scampered up to the top of that tree and once more jumped. Whitefoot had hard work to believe his own eyes. Timmy seemed to be jumping just for the pleasure of it. As a matter of fact, he was. He was getting his evening exercise.

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Whitefoot sighed. "I wish I could jump like that," said he to himself. "I wouldn't ever be afraid of anybody if I could jump like that. I envy Timmy. I do so."