

# THE ADVENTURES OF JERRY MUSKRAT

## CHAPTER 7: JERRY MUSKRAT MAKES A DISCOVERY



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The beautiful springtime had brought a great deal of happiness to the Smiling Pool, as it had to the Green Meadows and to the Green Forest. Great-Grandfather Frog, who had slept the long winter away in his own special bed way down in the mud, had waked up with an appetite so great that for a while it seemed as if he could think of nothing but his stomach. Jerry Muskrat had felt the spring fever in his bones and had gone up and down the Laughing Brook, poking into all kinds of places just for the fun of seeing new things. Little Joe Otter had been more full of fun than ever, if that were possible. Mr. and Mrs. Redwing had come back to the bulrushes from their winter home way down in the warm Southland. Everybody was happy, just as happy as could be.

One sunny morning Jerry Muskrat sat on the Big Rock in the middle of the Smiling Pool, just thinking of how happy everybody was and laughing at Little Joe Otter, who was cutting up all sorts of capers in the water. Suddenly Jerry's sharp eyes saw something that made him wrinkle his forehead in a puzzled frown and look and look at the opposite bank. Finally he called to Little Joe Otter.

"Hi, Little Joe! Come over here!" shouted Jerry.

"What for?" asked Little Joe, turning a somersault in the water.

"I want you to see if there is anything wrong with my eyes," replied Jerry.

Little Joe Otter stopped swimming and stared up at Jerry Muskrat. "They look all right to me," said he, as he started to climb up on the Big Rock.

"Of course they look all right," replied Jerry, "but what I want to know is if they see all right. Look over at that bank."

Little Joe Otter looked over at the bank. He stared and stared, but he didn't see anything unusual. It looked just as it always did. He told Jerry Muskrat so.

"Then it must be my eyes," sighed Jerry. "It certainly must be my eyes. It looks to me as if the water does not come as high up on the bank as it did yesterday."

Little Joe Otter looked again and his eyes opened wide. "You are right, Jerry Muskrat!" he cried. "There's nothing the matter with your eyes. The water is as low as it ever gets, even in the very middle of summer. What can it mean?"

"I don't know," replied Jerry Muskrat. "It is queer! It certainly is very queer! Let's go ask Grandfather Frog. You know he is very old and very wise, so perhaps he can tell us what it means."

Splash! Jerry Muskrat and Little Joe Otter dived into the Smiling Pool and started a race to see who could reach Grandfather Frog first. He was sitting among the bulrushes on the

edge of the Smiling Pool, for the lily-pads were not yet big enough for him to sit on comfortably.

“Oh, Grandfather Frog, what’s the matter with the Smiling Pool?” they shouted, as they came up quite out of breath.

“Chugarum! There’s nothing the matter with the Smiling Pool; it’s the best place in all the world,” replied Grandfather Frog gruffly.

“But there is something the matter,” insisted Jerry Muskrat, and then he told what he had discovered.

“I don’t believe it,” said Grandfather Frog. “I never heard of such a thing in the spring-time.”