Ririro
READ ANYWHERE, ANYTIME

Mr. Owl And His Caller

Abbie Phillips Walker

One day Mr. Owl was awakened from his sleep by hearing a tapping at his door; at least, he thought it was until he went to his door and found no one there.

"That is funny!" he thought. "I must have been dreaming."

So back to bed he went, but had hardly gone to sleep when "Tap! tap! tap!" sounded again, and again Mr. Owl got out of his bed and opened the door. No one there!

"Now, can it be possible I cannot see a thing in the daytime?" thought Mr. Owl. "I cannot see as well, of course, as at night; but I have always been able to make out objects before!" So he poked out his head and looked again, but no one could he see.

Back to bed he went once more, but hardly had he covered his head when, "Tap! tap! tap!" came again. And this time Mr. Owl opened his window and looked out, and there at the side of his house stood Mr. Woodpecker, tapping away. He stopped as soon as Mr. Owl raised the window and looked up at him. Of course, Mr. Owl thought he had made a mistake and instead of knocking at the door, had knocked on the side of the house.

"The door is on the other side," politely said Mr. Owl. "Come around and I will let you in."



So around went Mr. Woodpecker, and Mr. Owl opened the door and invited him to come in.

Mr. Owl was so sleepy that he could not keep his eyes open part of the time, and it was so dark in Mr. Owl's home that Mr. Woodpecker could hardly see.

"I don't see why he called on me," thought Mr. Owl. "He must know I sleep in the daytime."

"I don't see why he bothered me when I was having such a fine time eating insects," thought Mr. Woodpecker. "I don't like calling, but he was so polite I could not refuse to come in!"

Pretty soon, Mr. Woodpecker said he must be going, and Mr. Owl bade him good

day and asked him to call again. And back to his bed, he went to finish his sleep.

But hardly had he gone to sleep, when "Tap tap! tap!" sounded on the house again. "Well, if he isn't back!" said Mr. Owl. "I didn't ask him to call again today. What a strange fellow he is! Now I may as well get up, I suppose, or he will keep on knocking all day."

This time, Mr. Owl opened his door and went out. "You are knocking on the side of my house," he said. "Why don't you knock on the door? You will get in quicker then, and I shall not have to look for you."

"But I don't want to come in," said Mr. Woodpecker, tapping away at the wood. "I am too busy to visit any more today."

"You do not want to come?" asked Mr. Owl. "Then tell me why in the world you keep knocking at my house?"

"I guess you do not know who I am," replied Mr. Woodpecker, telling his name to Mr. Owl for the first time.

"Well, Mr. Woodpecker, will you tell me why you keep knocking on my house?" asked Mr. Owl again.

"To get the bugs and insects," said Mr. Woodpecker as he went on tapping. "Your house is full of them."

Mr. Owl was sure this was not true, but when he watched a while, he found the old tree he was living in was just as Mr. Woodpecker said, full of insects.

That night when Mr. Owl went out, instead of hunting for food as usual, he hunted for a home. "That fellow Woodpecker will never stop tapping on my house until he has the very last bug, and that means I shall never have a decent day of rest unless I move."

So the next day, Mr. Owl went to a barn nearby and made his home, and there he lived ever after. But Mr. Woodpecker never knew that he was the one who started the Barn Owl family by knocking on Mr. Owl's house in the daytime and driving him out of the woods.

Mr. Woodpecker did not even know who Mr. Owl was, and he told his mate the next day when he brought her to the tree that the funny old bird must have gone away. "And it is a good thing, my dear," he said, "for you could not get more than three strokes of work before he would invite you in the house, and in such a polite manner, you could not refuse, and of course, you can see how that interferes with our work."

"Of course," said Mrs. Woodpecker, "that was the reason you were so hungry when you came home — you had not eaten your usual lunch."

"That was the reason," said Mr. Woodpecker, "and now let us get to our work, for I am sure he has gone, or he would have been out before this."

Stories help us explore cultures, learn moral lessons, connect with nature — or simply have fun. That's why ririro.com offers 3,000+ free stories — fairy tales, fables, bedtime stories, myths and more — for every age, in 13 languages, with free printable PDFs and often audio. Reading should be a right, not a privilege. Share ririro.com and spread the joy of reading.
Instagram: @ririro_reading · Pinterest: pinterest.com/ririrocom