

The Robin's Perch

There once was a robin who lived high in an oak tree in the middle of the forest. He was the envy of all the other birds, for, although his nest was quite small, it had the best view in the entire forest, and it was dry and warm. Despite the opinions of others, however, the robin could not find contentment in his situation. Instead of enjoying the view and comfort of his nest, he longed for more.

One morning, the robin awoke to the first light with a troubled thought: "What if another robin decides to claim one of the neighboring trees for his nest? His tree could grow taller than mine, and then he would possess the best view in the forest. At once the robin set out to stake his claim to all the other oaks—for they were known to grow the tallest—by building a nest in each and every one.

Years passed, and the robin had become the talk of the forest. All the other birds (robins in particular) marveled at the efforts of the robin as he flew from oak to oak, repairing one nest after the other. One day, as the robin perched wearily on the edge of his loftiest nest, attempting to patch it with new mud and twigs, an owl who was new to the forest remarked, "You must be very pleased to have claimed all the tallest oaks in the forest."

"Certainly I am," replied the robin proudly. "It hasn't been easy, of course, but everyone knows I'm the most hard-working bird in the land."

"Indeed," remarked the owl, "that is said to be true. What I meant, though, was that it must bring you enormous pleasure to survey the forest from the very best vantage points—all of which you possess."

"Don't be ridiculous!" snapped the robin with contempt. "How would I have time to take in the view?"

“Better poverty without care, than riches with.”