

“Some Big Mouths”  
by Thornton Burgess

Boom! Peter Rabbit jumped as if he had been shot. It was all so sudden and unexpected that Peter jumped before he had time to think. Then he looked foolish. He felt foolish. He had been scared when there was nothing to be afraid of.

“Ha, ha, ha, ha,” tittered Jenny Wren. “What are you jumping for, Peter Rabbit? That was only Boomer the Nighthawk.”

“I know it just as well as you do, Jenny Wren,” retorted Peter rather crossly. “You know being suddenly startled is apt to make people feel

cross. If I had seen him anywhere about he wouldn't have made me jump. It was the unexpectedness of it. I don't see what he is out now for, anyway, It isn't even dusk yet, and I thought him a night bird."

"So he is," retorted Jenny Wren. "Anyway, he is a bird of the evening, and that amounts to the same thing. But just because he likes the evening best isn't any reason why he shouldn't come out in the daylight, is it?"

"No-o," replied Peter rather slowly. "I don't suppose it is."

"Of course it isn't," declared Jenny Wren. "I see Boomer late in the afternoon nearly every day. On cloudy

days I often see him early in the afternoon. He's a queer fellow, is Boomer. Such a mouth as he has! I suppose it is very handy to have a big mouth if one must catch all one's food in the air, but it certainly isn't pretty when it is wide open."

"I never saw a mouth yet that was pretty when it was wide open," retorted Peter, who was still feeling a little put out. "I've never noticed that Boomer has a particularly big mouth."

"Well he has, whether you've noticed it or not," retorted Jenny Wren sharply. "He's got a little bit of a bill, but a great big mouth. I don't see why folks call him a Hawk when he isn't a Hawk at all. He is no more of a Hawk

than I am, and goodness knows I'm not even related to the Hawk family.”

“I believe you told me the other day that Boomer is related to Sooty the Chimney Swift,” said Peter.

Jenny nodded vigorously. “So I did, Peter,” she replied. “I'm glad you have such a good memory. Boomer and Sooty are sort of second cousins. There is Boomer now, way up in the sky. I do wish he'd dive and scare someone else.”

Peter tipped his head way back. High up in the blue, blue sky was a bird which at that distance looked something like a much overgrown Swallow.