



# The Owl Prowl

WRITTEN BY KATHY KRANKING ■ ILLUSTRATED BY CHRISTIAN SLADE

One October night, Ricky Raccoon was having a strange dream. “Who who, who-whoohoo?” someone kept asking.

“Who who, who-whoohoo?”

“Who what?” Ricky asked in the dream.

“Who who, who-whoohoo?” the voice said.

Suddenly Ricky woke up. “Oh,” he said, “it was just a dream!” Then he heard the voice again.

“Who who, who-whoohoo! Who who, who-whoohoo,” it said. Ricky realized that an owl was hooting somewhere outside! He snuggled deeper into his covers. Before long he fell back to sleep.

The next day was the day before Halloween. Ricky, Flora Skunk, Mitzi Mink, and Bizzie Beaver were having breakfast with their friend Mrs. Cardinal. Ricky was telling everyone about the owl that woke him up.

“That gives me a fun idea,” said Mrs. Cardinal. “The four of you could go on an owl prowl,” she said.

“What’s an owl prowl?” asked Flora.

“It’s when you go out searching for an owl,” explained Mrs. C. “To find it, you call like an owl. If you are lucky, an owl will answer you. And if you are really lucky, you might get to see it.”

“That sounds really fun,” said Ricky.

“Yes, let’s do it tonight!” Mitzi said. The others all agreed.

So that night, under the full moon, the friends gathered for their hunt. “This seems like it could be kind of spooky,” said Bizzie. He looked around the shadowy woods nervously.

“It is spooky!” said Ricky. “That’s why it’s the perfect thing to do on the night before Halloween! Come on, let’s go!”

Bizzie was still nervous as he and the others followed along behind Ricky. In the moonlight, the trees made strange shadows. After a few minutes, Bizzie stopped suddenly. Mitzi and Flora fell against him.



“What’s wrong, Bizzie?” asked Mitzi.

“I heard a rustling sound!” said Bizzie.

“It’s just dry leaves,” said Flora. “They make a rustling sound in the wind.” The four friends started off again.

After they had walked a little farther, Ricky stopped. “I’m going to try calling from here,” he said. He opened his mouth and took a big breath. Just as he was about to hoot, there was a sound.



“Aaagh!” Bizzie yelled. “I heard something right behind me!”

“That was just me!” Flora said. “I stepped on a twig and it snapped.” She patted Bizzie’s arm. “Calm down, Bizzie,” she said.

“OK, here goes,” said Ricky. He called loudly, “Who who, who-whooo! Who who, who-whooo!”

Everyone listened. But there was no call in return.

“That’s OK,” said Mitzi. “Let’s walk a little farther and try again.” So the friends walked deeper into the woods.

Ricky put his head back and gave his best hoot. “Who who, who-whooo! Who who, who-whooo!” he called. He thought he sounded very owl-like.

Everyone listened. Then, to their amazement, they heard a sound echoing back through the trees. “Who who, who-whooo! Who who, who-whooo!” it said.

All of a sudden, a large shadow swooped down toward them. It was a big, beautiful owl! Silently, like a ghost, the bird floated past. Then, as quickly as it had come, the owl was gone.

For a few moments, everyone was too surprised to say anything. Then Ricky let out a whoop of joy. “That was awesome!” he shouted.

“Gee, Ricky,” Bizzie said with a grin, “you sure know how to talk owl!” Everyone laughed.

The four friends stayed there for a long time in the moonlight. They talked and giggled and told the story of the owl over and over again. Then finally, they decided to head home.

As Ricky and his friends walked along, Bizzie suddenly said, “Hey, I almost forgot that tomorrow is Halloween!”

“That’s right,” said Ricky. “But tonight is ‘OWL-o-ween!’”