

WHY RABBIT HAS LONG EARS AND A SHORT TAIL

A “Why” Story

Adapted by Carole L. Cooney

Setting: A road by a fishing pond

Characters:

Narrator

Rollie Rabbit

Frisky Fox

Oscar Owl

Narrator: It was a cold winter day when Frisky Fox saw Rollie Rabbit talking to himself on the road by the fishing pond.

Rollie: Oh, how I wish the sun would shine. It always makes my snowy tail look so white and bright! And a little breeze would be good to fluff it up a bit. But, No breeze today. I'll just have to use this twig to comb through my beautiful, long tail. (singing) La-dee-da-doodle dee. Humph! There's that old fox with his scrawny tail swishing through the tall grass. I think I'll have a word with him.

Narrator: Frisky Fox spies Rollie Rabbit.

Frisky: Oh, no! Do I have to listen to that rabbit talk about his tail again? I've heard that same story a million times. Boring! I wish I could find a way to stop Rollie Rabbit from showing off his tail.

Rollie: Whatcha got there, Frisky Fox? It's a mighty big bag.

Frisky: (surprised) Oh! What? No talk about your tail today? What's the matter?

Rollie: I was just wondering what you had in that big bag. It's got my curiosity up.

Narrator: Frisky Fox opens the bag, reaches inside, and pulls out a long string of fish.

Frisky: See? I just caught all these fish.

Rollie: I wish I could catch some fish. How did you do it, Frisky Fox?

Narrator: Just then, Frisky Fox thought of a way to stop Rollie Rabbit from always talking about his long, snowy tail.

Frisky: Well, it's really a secret, but I'll tell you if you won't tell anyone else.

Rollie: I can keep a secret. Tell me, tell me!

Frisky: Usually, I use a pole and a line with a hook. But today, I sat on the edge of the icy pond and let my tail dangle in the water. When a fish bit onto my tail, I quickly leapt up and grabbed the fish out of the water.

Rollie: Oh, Frisky Fox, with my long snowy tail, I'm sure to catch even more fish than you caught. Yes, my tail will catch *many, many more* fish than your tail.

Narrator: Frisky Fox tied up his bag, threw it over his shoulder and began to walk into the woods with a smile on his face. Rollie Rabbit laughed and sang as he walked down to the pond and sat on its icy edge.

Rollie: (laughing and singing) Ha, ha, ha, La-dee -da-doodle dee. This is so easy. Just stick my long, snowy tail in the water and the fish will start biting in no time at all.

Narrator: Rollie Rabbit sat and sat and sat. The hours passed by and not one fish bit his tail. Soon the sun began to set and darkness filled the sky. The wind started to blow and snow began to fall.

Rollie: Brrrr...! I'm freezing. I've got to go home and get warmed up!

Narrator: But when Rollie Rabbit tried to jump up, he couldn't. His tail was stuck in the frozen pond.

Rollie: Help! Help! Please will somebody help me?

Narrator: Just then, Oscar Owl flew over the trees and heard Rollie Rabbit's call for help.

Oscar: Hoot, hoot! Who's that hollering? Oh, it's you, Rollie Rabbit. What's the problem?

Rollie: My lovely long tail is stuck in the ice. Please help me.

Oscar: Hoot, Hoot! Hold still while I grab onto one of your ears.

Narrator: Oscar pulled and pulled Rollie Rabbit's left ear but it just began to stretch longer and longer.

Rollie: Ow! Ow! Ow! Look at my left ear! It drags on the ground! – you'd better pull my right ear so it will match. (crying) I'd die if I had one long ear and one short one.

Oscar: Hoot! Ugh! Hoot! All right! I'm pulling... and pulling... and PULLING!

Narrator: Suddenly, there was a loud *Crack* and *Pop!* Rollie Rabbit's long tail snapped in half and he was free. Now Rollie Rabbit had long ears and a short, fluffy tail. To this very day, most rabbits have the same long ears and short tails. AND they do not go fishing!