

The Tale of a Red Squirrel

As the chair lift whisked me up the mountain, I saw something move out of the corner of my eye. I looked down, and a red squirrel scampered across the snow. Without thinking, I said, "Thank you for showing yourself to me." Spotting the furry red animal filled me with gratitude and joy.

Several minutes later, and a couple of trails away from where I saw the rodent, movement caught my eye again as I swished through tight trees. It was the red squirrel! I stopped in my tracks, dumbfounded by how it got to the exact spot where I was skiing. It performed fancy moves on the branches, swinging underneath and then back to the top, reminiscent of how a monkey would move through trees. It was saying, "Hey, here I am. Look at me!"

I stood motionless, admiring the animal's beauty, agility, and fortitude. It was small but sure of itself. I watched as it made its way over, down, up, and over again to the tree closest to me. It paused periodically to look at me. It was assessing the risk of approaching. I sensed its curiosity. I stayed present and focused on the beauty of the squirrel's coat and the ease with which it navigated its environment.

The coloring of its hair was stunning, a reddish-brown on the top of its head and down its back. The fur on its sides was olive-brown. It had white rings around its eyes and a snow-white underbelly. We remained frozen in the moment as we sized each other up. I thought it might dare to reach out to me or crawl up my pant leg.

We were engrossed when a sudden, abrasive noise startled us. The harsh sound of the skier hitting a patch of ice punctuated the silence and wonder that had enveloped us. The squirrel raced to the top of the grey birch. Once it was safe, the animal shook its tail high above the frozen forest floor. I thanked the squirrel again for the magical engagement and skied through the island of trees to the base, feeling lighter from the experience.

On the next run, I couldn't help but return to where I saw my friend. I found the squirrel sitting comfortably on a branch, devouring birch seeds. I observed it for several moments. It stopped eating and looked down at me as if to acknowledge my presence. I sent gratitude to it and went on my way.

I went to the stand of trees where I sighted the squirrel the next two days. Each time I saw my playful friend. Spotting the cute animal brought me joy. Did anyone else notice the squirrel sitting high in the tree?

I found these encounters extraordinary while also questioning whether they were unique. It seemed I had stumbled upon the squirrel's home. I pondered the probability of seeing the animal in the same place at different times of the day for three consecutive days. What was the chance? I wondered why was I in the mental loop of questioning the importance of this gift. The experiences with the squirrel spoke to my soul, and that is all that mattered.

I researched the symbolism of the red squirrel when I got home. The squirrel teaches us to be adaptable and persevere through difficult times. It encourages us to be resourceful and trust our instincts. It is a symbol of vitality, energy, and agility. The red squirrel is also associated with abundance and prosperity. My doubt about my experience with my furry friend was gone.

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