

Snowshoe and Cottontail Rabbit

Once upon a time, Snowshoe Rabbit and Cottontail Rabbit, who were close friends, or “brothers”, were living together. Everyday they would go roaming around, this way and that. One day, Snowshoe Rabbit was up in the mountains, when it suddenly began to snow. The snow got so deep, finally, that he couldn’t get back home. So he had to spend the winter in the mountains, but Cottontail Rabbit stayed in the valley for the winter.

The next spring, when they met again, Snowshoe Rabbit said, “Well, my friend, you have gone through a hard winter. When I would look out this way toward the valley, it would be dark over there and look as if it were raining. I used to tell myself, ‘I wonder how my friend is passing his time, and where he is.’”

Cottontail Rabbit said, “That’s the same thing I would do. I would look toward the mountains and watch. It was dark with storms as if the rain and snow were pouring down. I wondered how you were living.”

“My friend, you thought wrong,” said the Snowshoe Rabbit. “I had a good home, and would throw good wood into the fire to burn. I would lie with my back toward the fire, as it turned into charcoal to make the house warm and comfortable. I gathered lots of food and had plenty to eat. My living was very pleasant in the mountains, but I worried about you.”

Cottontail Rabbit said, “Well, friend, you worried about me for another. As you can see from here, I have a good house where there are plenty of loose rocks. I would throw chokecherry wood into the fire, and it would burn to charcoal. Then I would warm my back toward it. I, too, lived well.”

Snowshoe Rabbit said, “Yes, I see how it was for you. Let us agree, then, that you, Cottontail, will live in the lower country, and I will live in the mountains. We have learned that my best living is in the mountains and your best living is in the low country. At the beginning of each spring and winter season, I will change my clothing. When it snows, I will dress in the same color as the white snow, so no one can see me or find me. But when the spring comes, I shall put on my new gray clothing so that nothing can find me easily.”

Snowshoe Rabbit has never come to the low country since then. On the other hand, Cottontail Rabbit is always found in the low country. That is how they live.