

lished; then crawled ashore and left the lily pads to rest, broad, shiny, and unruffled in the moonlight, little platters of silver on the dark glass of the lake.

The newcomer was a female; and with such brief wooing the big porcupine had taken her for his mate. Now he led her off to show her the unequalled den which he had lately discovered. The den was high in the side of a heap of rocks, dry in all weathers, and so overhung by a half-uprooted tree as to be very well concealed from passers and prowlers. Its entrance was long and narrow, deterrent to rash investigators. In fact, just after the porcupine had moved in, a red fox had discovered the doorway and judged it exactly to his liking; but on finding that the occupant was a porcupine, he had hastily decided to seek accommodation elsewhere. In this snug house the two porcupines settled contentedly for the winter.

The winter passed somewhat uneventfully for them, though for the rest of the wood-folk it was a season of unwonted hardship. The cold was more intense and more implacable than had been known about the settlements for years. Most of the wild creatures, save those who could sleep the bitter months away and abide the coming of spring, found