

The Bat and the Weasels

A bat perched in a tree slipped and fell to the ground. A weasel saw the fall and pounced on the bat.

“Hey, why are you holding me down?” asked the bat. “Please let me go.”

The weasel narrowed his eyes and stared at the bat. “I don’t like birds. In fact, I capture all birds that come near my home. I give them to the cat that lives down the road.”

The bat thought a moment. “But I’m not a bird. Do birds have ears like mine? I’m a mouse. Do you have anything against mice?”

The weasel wrinkled his brows. He looked at the bat. “Hmm. Yes. You have ears. I guess you are a mouse. I can see that now. I’m sorry for pouncing on you.” The weasel got off of the bat and helped the bat up. “Are you okay?”

The bat checked his body. “It seems I’m fine. You should be careful next time. Be sure a bird is really a bird before you pounce on him.”

“Oh, yes, you’re absolutely right,” said the weasel. “Next time I’ll be extra careful.”

They said their goodbyes. The bat hopped into a cluster of trees so the weasel couldn’t see him. Then he flew back up to the tree limb.

Several days passed, and the bat was sitting on another tree limb. He slipped and fell to the ground. Before he could get up, a weasel pounced on top of him.

“Hey,” said the bat. “Why are you sitting on me? Please let me go.”

The weasel shook his head. “Oh, no. You’re a mouse, and I don’t like mice. I give the ones I catch to the cat who lives next door.”

The bat thought for a moment. “But I’m not a mouse. What makes you think I’m a mouse? I’m a bird. Can’t you tell?”

The weasel crunched up his face. “I don’t know. You look like a mouse.”

The bat shook his head. “No, no. Look at my wings. Do mice have wings?”

The weasel got off the bat while still holding him down with his paw. He looked closely at the bat. “Hmm. Now I can see that you do have wings. Maybe I was mistaken. I guess you’re not a mouse after all.”

The bat hid a little smile. "See, I told you. I'm not a mouse."

"Okay," said the weasel as he helped the bat up. "I'm sorry. It's an honest mistake though."

The bat shook himself off. "Well, next time you should be more careful and make sure a mouse is a mouse before you pounce on him."

"Yes, yes," said the weasel. "I'll be very careful next time. I can see how it's easy to make a mistake."

The bat flew off back into the tree. He was very careful not to slip off any more branches.

Questions

1. How did the bat convince the first weasel he wasn't a bird?
2. How did the bat convince the second weasel he wasn't a mouse?
3. What is another word for "pounce"?
4. After reading the story, how would you describe the bat?