

# Mating Ritual

By Mark Edgemon

"Fraud!" screamed the wolf attorney to the trembling squirrel  
Perched in the witness chair with hands between his legs.

"She married me for my food,  
It was approaching winter  
She wanted me to keep her warm  
Huddled in our nicely carved out hole  
But she didn't love me,  
She didn't want ME,  
She just wanted my provision until spring!"

The wise owl judge watched over the proceedings,  
Having seen this all before,  
Having heard the chatter from squirrels,  
The chirping of cheating birds,  
The wiley banter of snakes,  
He heard it all before,  
He heard it so many times before.

"You know she wanted your food storage all along,  
So it shouldn't be any surprise to you she wants it all,  
She wants the rest of your stash, so where is it?" the wolf howled.

"She can't have it, it goes with me and she don't want me,  
So it stays with me, don't you see, can't you see,  
It stays with me," the shivering squirrel stammered from his chair.

"You hid them, in a hole by what tree, by what tree did you hide them,  
Tell us and you'll be free," her evil attorney howled.

"I'll give her my fuzzy frog, molding away under the shed.  
I'll give her that!" the insisting squirrel chattered.

"Estrangement, that's the case here, you are hiding your nuts,  
You're keeping your nuts hid from her, the female who shared your hole,  
The one who kept you satisfied for the winter. Now she wants your nuts,  
You're keeping your nuts from her!" her attorney moved in for the kill.

I am not keeping my nuts from her, I gave them to her freely," the squirrel declared!  
If I was keeping my nuts from her, I never would have married her!"  
Bump, Bump...Bump, the groundhog patted the stomach of the bear,  
And then he spoke, "Us guys HAVE to protect our nuts, I always say!"

The End