



Hello Owl

An owl had moved into the tree at the end of Squarehead's garden and it was hooting at night – which owls do. Whenever he heard a hoot, the Hairy Scary sat up in bed with all his fur standing on end.

“Owl hoots are spooky.” Said Hairy Scary. **“It's hard to sleep when you hear spooky sounds outside.”**

“Perhaps if you meet him, he won't sound so spooky?” Said Squarehead.

Hairy Scary thought about this, scratched his head, rubbed his tummy, pulled his ear and, eventually said:

“Let's go and meet the owl.”

They had to wait all day until it was dark again, because owls are nocturnal (which means they only get up at night). Squarehead and Hairy Scary put on warm coats and gloves and had a torch to light their way.

It was strange how the garden, so cosy and familiar in the daytime, could seem so different, at night. They would have to be very brave and fearless to go out in the dark on their own.

“I wonder,” said Hairy Scary, as soon as they got outside, **“whether we should take some supplies, in case we get lost?”**

“Good idea!” Said Squarehead and they went back in and asked his mum what they could take. She gave them a chocolate biscuit each and a bottle of water and a dog biscuit for Chinwag, which they put into their backpacks. Then they opened the back door and stepped out into the dark wilds of the garden again.

“Do you think we’ve got enough supplies?” Asked Hairy Scary nervously. Just in case, they went back inside and packed two more biscuits and a lump of cheese each. Then they went out again

“Perhaps one more biscuit?” Asked Hairy Scary.

In they went again, but Squarehead’s mum said there were no more biscuits and, if they were going owl hunting, they’d better hurry up and do it, because soon it would be time for bed.

Squarehead and Hairy Scary took some deep breaths, filled their heads with brave thoughts, opened the back door and went boldly out. Chinwag wagged his tail – he liked the outside even when it was dark.

“Lead the way Chinwag.” Said Squarehead and they followed the little dog out into the garden. The wind had died down. It was very, very, very quiet. And then something SQUEAKED!

“AAAAAAGH!” shouted Hairy Scary. **“What was that?”**

“Nothing,” said Squarehead.

“Chinwag found his squeaky ball that’s all.”

They walked on a few more paces.

“I’m not scared...” said Hairy Scary in a shaky voice.

“Me neither...” said Squarehead.

“Monsters aren’t scared of anything, you know.

Especially old owls.” Said Hairy Scary, quaking at the knees.

“I’m glad I’m with you!” Said Squarehead. **“Otherwise I might be ever so slightly scared.”**

“Do you think we’ll find the owl soon?” Said Hairy Scary after a few more steps. **“Or should we stop for a biscuit?”**

They decided that the spot they were standing on was just right for a biscuit. They took off their backpacks and munched bravely.

“Now I come to think of it,” said Hairy Scary, finishing his biscuit before anyone else, **“I’m not quite sure I know what an owl is?”**

“Oh,” said Squarehead, **“that’s easy. It’s a bird.”**

“Quite a big bird?” Asked Hairy Scary.

“Yes, quite big.” Answered Squarehead.

“Does it have speckled feathers?” Asked Hairy Scary.

“Yes.” Said Squarehead.

“And big, yellow eyes?” Asked Hairy Scary.

“Yes.” Said Squarehead, munching on his biscuit.

“And talons?”

“Yes”

“And a sharp beak?”

“Yes that too.” Said Squarehead.

“And does it put its head on one side and stare at you in a funny way?”

Squarehead turned slowly round and saw that his big hairy friend was looking curiously upwards at something that was looking curiously downwards.

“Helloooooo...” Said the Owl from the big tree at the end of the garden.

“Oh!” Said Squarehead. **“Hello owl.”**

He was about to say: **“Meet my friend Hairy Scary”**

but he suddenly noticed that Hairy Scary was no longer there.

“He’s run off...” Said the Owl, realising that Squarehead was looking for his friend. **“He moves quite fast for his size, doesn’t he?”**

“Yes.” Smiled Squarehead **“Especially when he’s not scared.”**

“Woof!” said Chinwag in a way that meant **“He’s a big cowardly custard!”**

Later that night when Squarehead and Hairy Scary were settling down to sleep and the moonbeams were throwing shadows across the garden, they heard a flapping of wings and an owly voice said:

“Goodnight Squarehead.

Goodnight Chinwag.

Goodnight Hairy Scary.”

“Goodnight Owl...” yawned Hairy Scary.

And then a minute or two later he said:

“Owl’s not so bad, when you get to know him.”

Squarehead just smiled to himself and drifted off to sleep.

