



## Legend of Rabbit (Pussywillow)

Long ago we were told that the rabbit loved the snow. He loved dancing in it and hated the warm weather. He tried to find ways to make it cold. At this time, he noticed that it was dry this year and there wasn't too much water around the earth, so all the animals went to Trickster because he was highly respected and he knew a lot of things.

The Animals asked, "Is there anything we can do about this? There's not enough water around and it's too dry." Trickster came to them with an idea. He knew a song and dance that would make it rain a lot, but he could only do it in summer months and when there's no snow around.

Rabbit heard Trickster talking. When Trickster does this, no one's supposed to watch or be around, but Rabbit was there watching him dance, sing, and drum. To Rabbit's surprise, a big dark rain cloud started closing in, and to everyone's surprise, it started raining and raining, filling the ground in puddles. Everyone started to cheer and celebrate but to no one's knowledge, Rabbit watched Trickster and now he knew the song and dance.

Rabbit thought to himself, "This is going to be great, when it comes fall, I'm going to do this song and dance in hopes of making it snow a lot!"

Sure enough, when fall came and the animals went to sleep and the leaves fell, as winter approached it started to snow a little but not enough to satisfy Rabbit. So he grabbed his drum and remembered Trickster's song and danced as much as he could.

To his surprise, it started to snow deeper and deeper. Rabbit was so happy he started running around and jumping. Something was telling him this wasn't going to end well, but he didn't care. He pushed that thought aside and started celebrating.

After all the celebration and eating, he was finally tired out, so he went to sleep on a tree branch. What he didn't know was that Trickster only used that dance and song for special reasons and as the sun came back out, it warmed up and started to melt all the snow rabbit made.

When Rabbit woke he was way higher than he remembered because all of the snow that covered the ground was all gone. So Rabbit thought to himself, "How am I going to get down? I don't climb trees!"



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As he tried to climb down he lost his grip and started to fall! As the rabbit fell, he hit some branches on the way down and those branches caught his two ears. As he hung there, his ears started to stretch and stretch. Rabbit started to try to get loose by shaking his head and finally the branches broke and then he started to fall again. He hit another branch, and it caught his feet then his feet started to stretch also!

When he finally got them free, he started to fall once again and on his way down, his lip got split by another smaller branch. As he continued to fall, his long tail got caught and as he tried to get it free, it ripped off!

Finally, he fell and hit the ground so hard he got the air knocked out of him and when he got up, he took a look at himself. His feet were longer and his ears were all stretched out and the long tail he once had was now a small ball of fur! After a while looking at his tail hanging in the tree, he finally walked off.

Without his knowledge, Trickster was watching the whole time, laughing and making fun of rabbit. Trickster knew from the start Rabbit was watching him do his song and dance.

From that day forward Trickster decided that all rabbits would have long ears and feet and a short tail and a split in the mouth because of what Rabbit did. And just so Rabbit doesn't forget what he did, when the pussywillow grow in the spring, rabbits' tail will be hanging in the branches of willows to remind rabbits forever not to only think of themselves and to be careful not to spy on things they shouldn't.

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