**The Wind in the Willows**

Kenneth Grahame

“This is a wonderful day!” said Mole, as the rat shoved off and took to the oars again. “Do you know I’ve never been in a boat in all my life.”

“What!” cried the Rat, open-mouthed. “Never been in a – you never – well, I – what have you been doing then?”

“Is it so nice as all that?” asked the Mole shyly, though he was quite prepared to believe it as he leant back in his seat and surveyed the cushions, the oars, and all the fascinating fittings, and felt the boat sway lightly under him.

“Nice? It’s the only thing,” said the Water Rat solemnly as he leant forward for his stroke. “Believe me, my young friend, there is nothing – absolutely nothing – half so much worth doing as simply messing about in boats. Simply messing,” he went on dreamily, “messing – about – in – boats; messing –”

“Look ahead, Rat!” cried the Mole suddenly.

It was too late, the boat struck the bank full tilt. The dreamer, the joyous oarsman, lay on his back in the bottom of the boat, his heels in the air.

“– about in boats – or with boats,” the Rat went on composedly, picking himself up with a pleasant laugh. “In or out of them, it doesn’t matter. Nothing seems really to matter, that’s the charm of it. Whether you get away, or whether you don’t; whether you arrive at your destination, or whether you reach somewhere else, or whether you never get anywhere at all; you’re always busy and you never do anything in particular; and when you’ve done it there’s always something else to do, and you can do it if you like, but you’d much better not. Look here! If you’ve really nothing else on this morning, supposing we drop down the river together, and have a long day of it?”



















