

## Sanctuaries

Nicola Beechsquirrel

I have been to magic places  
Whispering forest calm and green  
Where new life bursts from every branch-tip  
And surly man is seldom seen.

I have watched young rabbits playing  
In the fields fearless and gay  
I have walked in summer meadow  
Sweet with the smell of new-mown hay

Through golden cornfields, I have wandered  
That crackle dreamily in the sun  
Their swaying stems alive with movement  
As in and out young pheasants run

I have sat on a windy beech-ridge  
Looking out towards the North  
Watching age-old storm-tossed branches  
Waving wildly back and forth

Long have I strolled in peaceful places  
To soothe my soul and calm my mind  
And let my fears like a worn-out snakeskin  
Fall from my shoulders and remain behind.



Drawing: Evgueni Bozyatski