

THE
DEAD SEA
SQUIRRELS

Whirly Squirrelies



From the co-creator of VeggieTales

Mike Nawrocki

Illustrated by Luke Séguin-Magee

The Dead Sea Squirrels Series

Squirreled Away

Boy Meets Squirrels

Nutty Study Buddies

Squirrelnapped!

Tree-mendous Trouble

Whirly Squirrelies

The title is presented on a grey scroll with rolled-up ends. The word 'THE' is in a small, simple font above 'DEAD SEA'. 'DEAD SEA' is in a bold, blocky font with a slight shadow. 'SQUIRRELS' is the largest word, in a very bold, bubbly font with a thick black outline and a drop shadow.

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Whirly Squirrelies

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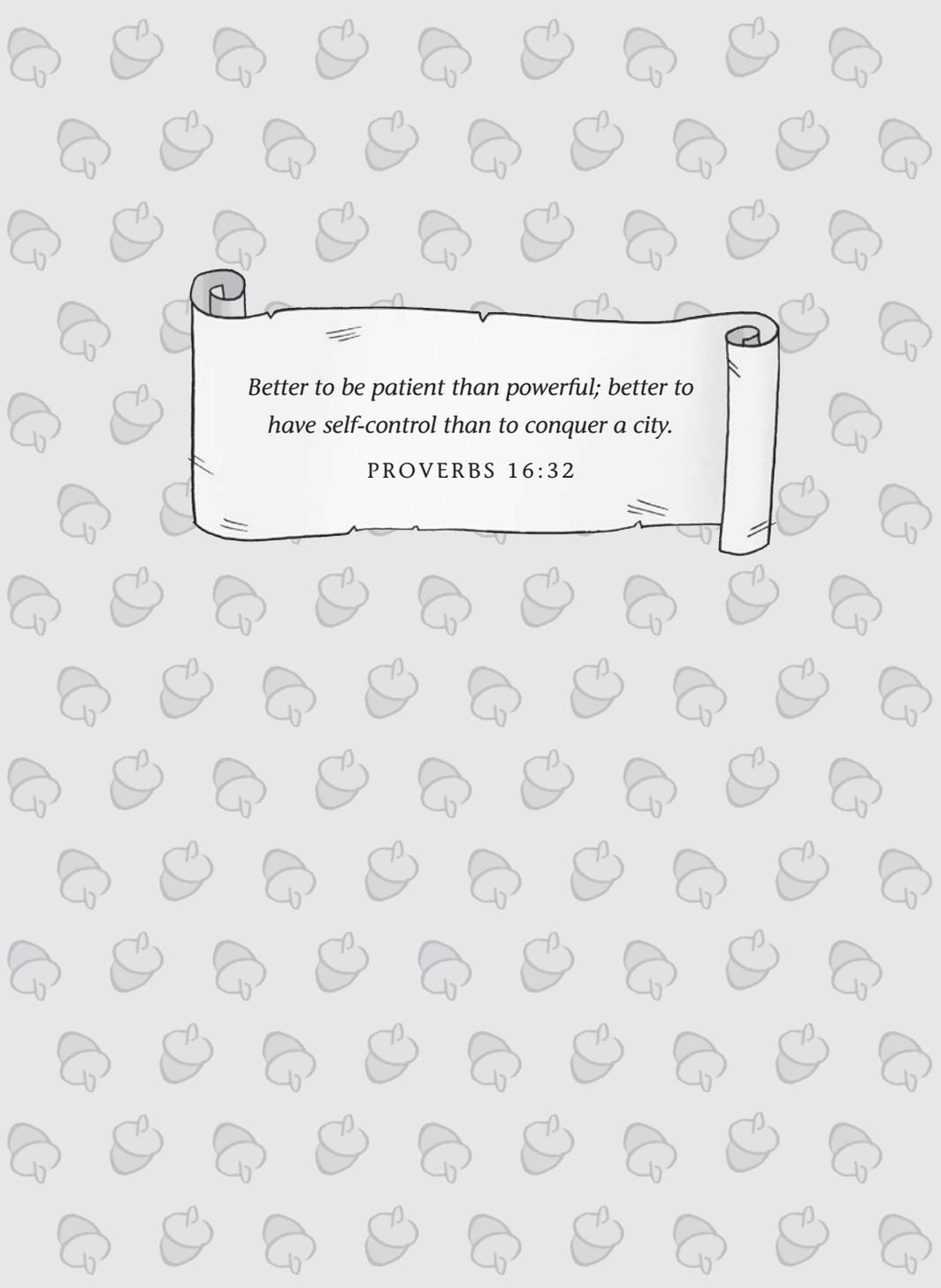
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To the wonderful team at Tyndale who helped bring the squirrels to life—most especially to my editor, Sarah, who helped this first-time author look like he knew what he was doing.

The image features a repeating pattern of light gray thumbs-up icons on a white background. In the center, there is a white scroll with a black outline and a drop shadow. The scroll is unrolled in the middle, with the ends rolled up. The text on the scroll is centered and reads:

*Better to be patient than powerful; better to
have self-control than to conquer a city.*

PROVERBS 16:32

BUT WAIT!

BEFORE WE START...

Who are the Dead Sea Squirrels?

ISRAEL,
AD 70

Merle and Pearl cruise
down the Jordan River ...



... on the
vacation of
a lifetime!

The squirrels end up at the
Dead Sea, where ...

You can't sink!
I've always
wanted
to not sink!



Couldn't you have
just worn your
floaties in the lake
back home?

Soon the two salty squirrels are
hot, thirsty, and desperate for
shade. Then they spot a cave.



Merle's sense of adventure lures him
into the cave, despite Pearl's protests.

If God wanted you to
go into a cave, he
would have made
you a bat.

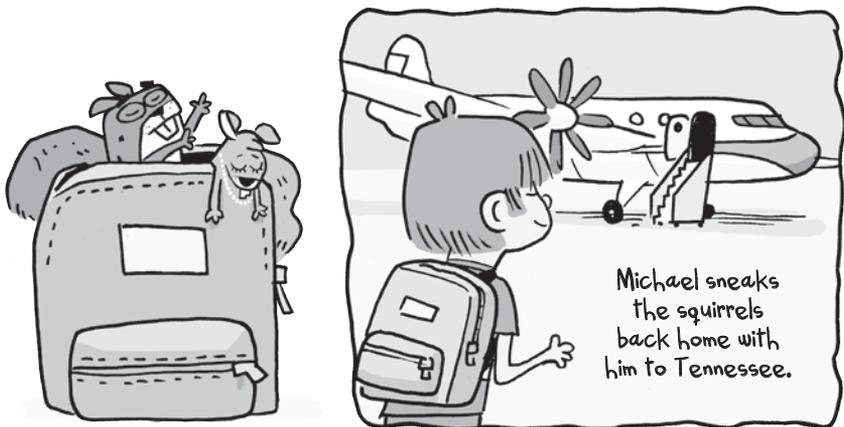


1,950
YEARS LATER

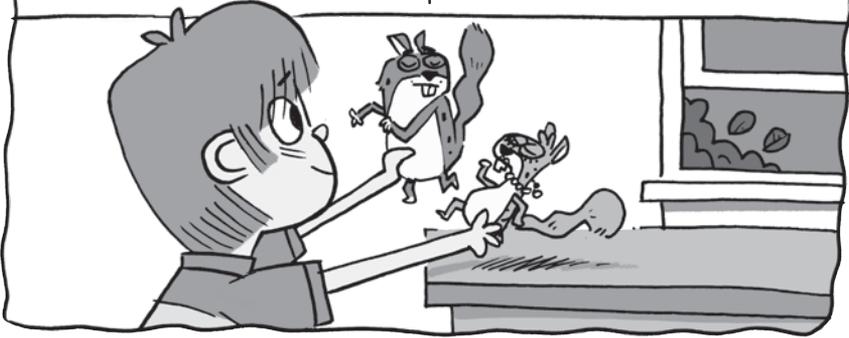
Ten-year-old Michael Gomez is spending the summer at the Dead Sea with his professor dad and his best friend, Justin.



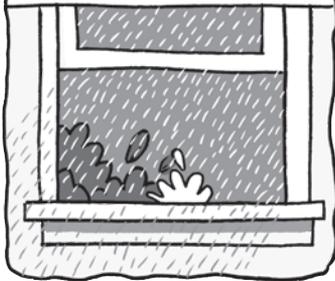
While exploring a cave (without his dad's permission), Michael discovers two dried-out, salt-covered critters and stashes them in his backpack.



He sets them up like posable action figures on his dresser—
under an open window.



While Michael is sleeping,
a thunderstorm rolls in,
and it begins to rain ...



... rehydrating the squirrels!



Up and kicking again after almost
2,000 years, Merle and Pearl
Squirrel have great stories
and advice to share
with the modern world.

They are the
Dead Sea
Squirrels!





BOOM!

**WOOD WOOD
WOOD!**

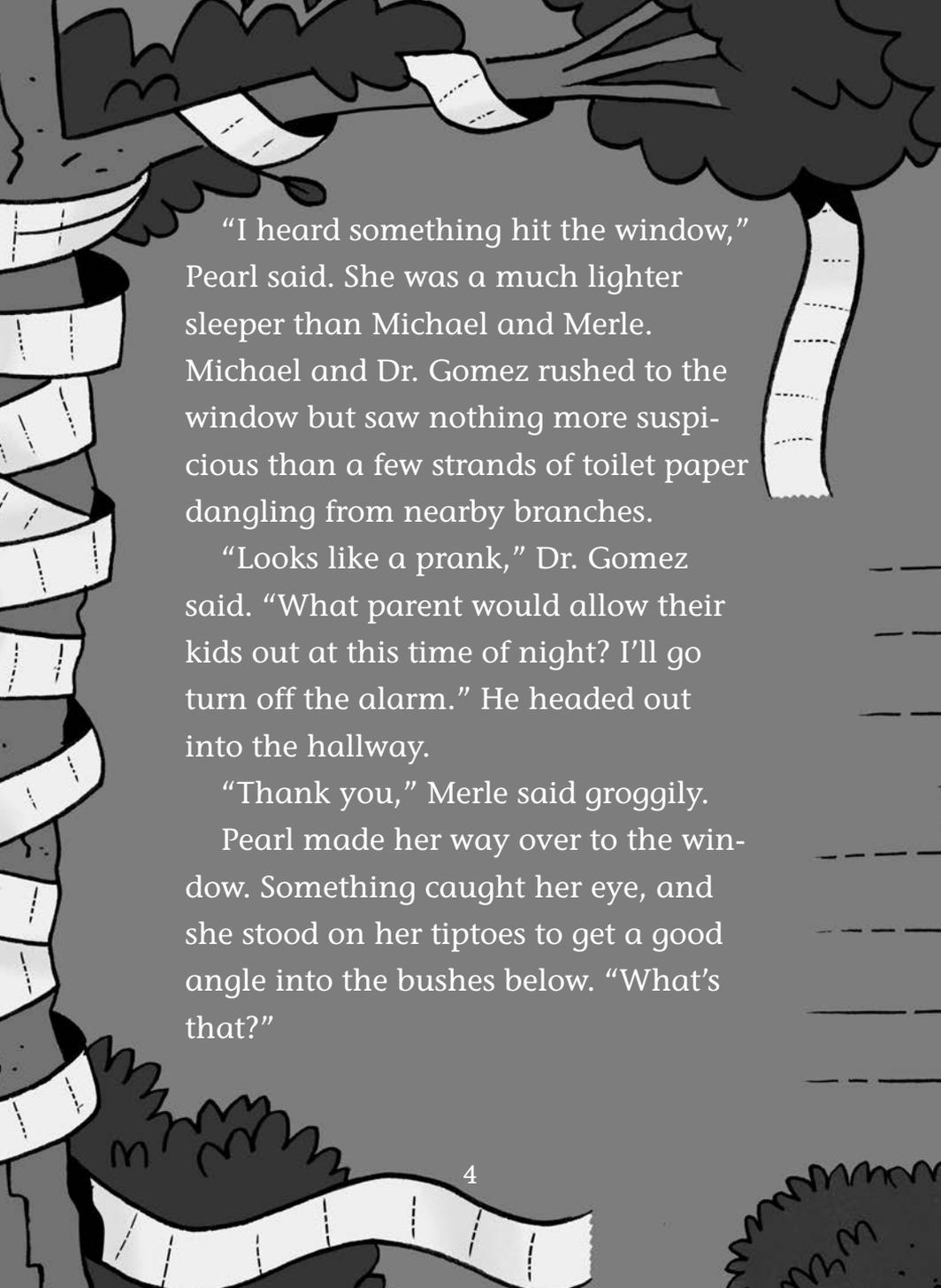
CHAPTER 1

**WALNUT CREEK, TENNESSEE
PRESENT DAY (MONDAY)
11:32 P.M.**

A loud thump on Michael Gomez's bedroom window was followed immediately by the shriek of the burglar alarm Michael's dad had installed to help protect Merle and Pearl Squirrel from the man in the suit and sunglasses, a mysterious agent working for a collector of ancient artifacts. He wanted to bring Merle and Pearl back to the Dead Sea, which was the last place on earth they wanted to be. The ancient squirrels preferred modern-day

Tennessee with its abundance of nuts and HVAC (Heating, Ventilation, and Air-Conditioning). After having spent nearly 2,000 years preserved in salt in a dusty desert cave, who could blame them?





“I heard something hit the window,” Pearl said. She was a much lighter sleeper than Michael and Merle. Michael and Dr. Gomez rushed to the window but saw nothing more suspicious than a few strands of toilet paper dangling from nearby branches.

“Looks like a prank,” Dr. Gomez said. “What parent would allow their kids out at this time of night? I’ll go turn off the alarm.” He headed out into the hallway.

“Thank you,” Merle said groggily.

Pearl made her way over to the window. Something caught her eye, and she stood on her tiptoes to get a good angle into the bushes below. “What’s that?”

Michael slid the window open as the sound of the alarm cut out. "It looks like a . . . drone?" Sure enough, a drone lay sideways in the bushes, buzzing limply like an injured bee, its propellers tangled in toilet paper. He reached down and picked it up.



Edgar realized he'd been spotted.
"Give me back my drone, Gomez!"
he hollered.

"Not when you're using it to TP
my house!" Michael shouted back.



The porch lights clicked on, and the voice of Dr. Gomez rang out. “You! Boys! What are you doing?” This sent the three delinquents scrambling. In his panic, Edgar dropped the drone’s remote control on the lawn.

“That’s right! Run away!” Michael called out. “And don’t come back!”

“Michael.” His dad’s voice came from the porch. “Please clean this mess up after school tomorrow.”

“Aw, man!” Michael responded.

“Shhh . . . ,” Merle, still half asleep, said again from his bed.