



Elizabeth Taylor's

NIBBLES

and

ME



WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED BY

Elizabeth Taylor

SIMON & SCHUSTER BOOKS FOR YOUNG READERS

New York London Toronto Sydney Singapore

with the windows all wide open and the firelight flickering on the ceilings and walls, and outside even at night the birds would still sing.

The days were so busy and so exciting with all our pets. My brother Howard (who is two years and eight months older than I am) always had a lot of pets too.

We had rabbits, turtles, snakes, baby lambs, guinea pigs (we started out with two GP's and very soon had fifteen). They were so tiny when they were babies and were so cute to carry around in our pockets. Then we always had kittens all over the place and dogs of all kinds.

But—we never had a chipmunk!

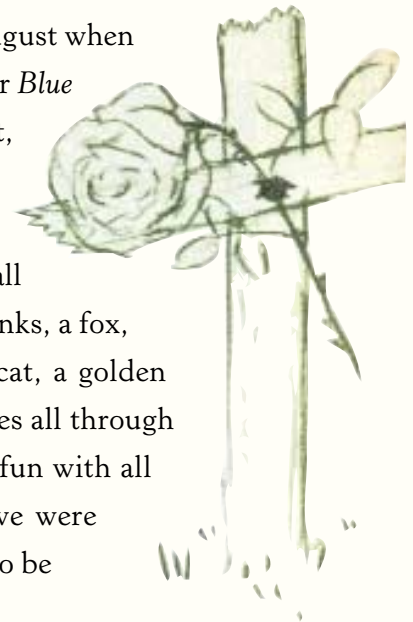
Now if you have never had a chipmunk, you won't know what you have missed. That is why I am writing this, because I think a chipmunk is the nicest *little* pet and companion anyone could possibly have. I say a chipmunk, because I have had a lot of them. I caught twenty-five when we were on location and they were all different. Some were shy and timid, some more daring and bold. One little fellow was so fresh and saucy that I called him Cheeky. (There'll be more about him later.) But the point of it is they were *all little individuals*, and then! there was—

NIBBLES

CHAPTER II

INTRODUCTION TO NIBBLES

TO INTRODUCE you properly to Nibbles, I'll have to tell you first of all *how* and *where* he came into my life. It was a year ago this August when we went to Washington on location for *Blue Sierra*. When I read the manuscript, I could hardly wait to get started. The first part of the picture is like a wonderful symphony acted out by all sorts of animals—bears, coyotes, skunks, a fox, a lizard, a squirrel, a beaver, a bobcat, a golden eagle, and a wonderful raven who goes all through the picture. It was going to be such fun with all those animals. And when I heard we were going to Lake Chelan, Washington, to be





Elizabeth, Frank Morgan, and Lassie on location

Well, we were all playing and Nibbles had been burrowing in Lassie's lovely long coat, when a big sheep dog started barking and frightened Nibbles and he made one dive for the fireplace.

I screamed for everyone to watch out for him. They all gathered around and we searched everywhere for him. We all looked for hours, but no sign of him. Then it came six-thirty and dinnertime. They all went in except Mummie and me. We couldn't. My heart was breaking. Mummie tried to comfort me and she said, "Don't you

see, darling, if it's right for him to be your chipmunk, and if it makes him happy, too, he'll come back to us—now that they've all gone inside and we're here alone—and if he doesn't, promise me you won't cry or worry."

I couldn't promise anything and Mummie didn't ask me to anymore. We just sat there staring at the fireplace. We both somehow knew he was still there even though we had felt all around it with sticks and no sign of him . . .

Presently high above the wire fence we heard a movement and a little tiny chirp, and there he was on top of the fireplace looking down at us.

We didn't say a word to each other, but both of us moved up to the wire, pulled it down, and climbed over into the place where the snakes were crawling. Then Mummie held me up where I could reach him, and Nibbles crawled out onto my hand.



He *wanted* to be my chipmunk! Oh, can you imagine how I felt? I cried and cried for joy, and Mummie did too. But I don't mind telling you, with Nibbles safe in my pocket we couldn't get out of that snake's nest fast enough. Mummie was shaking all over, 'cause she hates snakes.



Elizabeth and her brother Howard

CHAPTER VI

I DO A TRAPEZE ACT OUT MY WINDOW



SUNDAY SEEMED to be our big day, or rather Nibbles's big day, for getting into mischief. He could think of more things come Sunday. I think he saved them up all week.

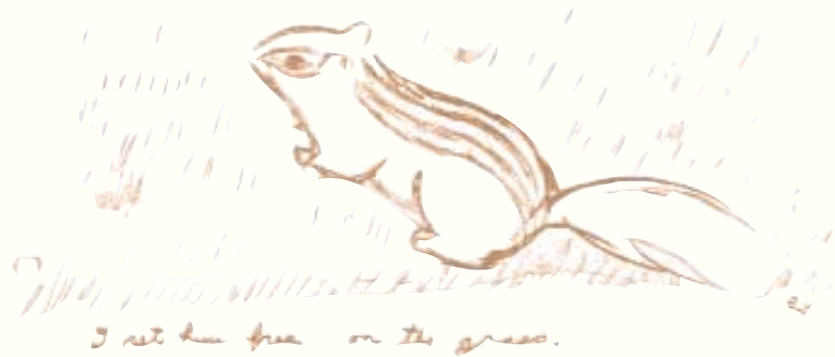
This particular Sunday, Eleanor, the hairdresser (Eleanor and Tommie, the wardrobe girl, were with us all through *National Velvet*, and we just love them both), had washed my hair and was setting it with pin curls. I was playing with Nibbles when someone outside my window called me, and with Nibbles on the back of my hand, I went to the window and opened the screen.

There was a vine with little red berries all over the building, and Nibbles, like any other chipmunk, scampered off

to feast on the berries. I couldn't see where he had gone. I was panicky and started out the window head first. Fortunately, Eleanor grabbed one foot and Tommie the other and they held on to me while I dangled head down. Then I saw Nibbles. He was sitting on the vine looking up at me with his big eyes saying "Here I am." I could hardly reach him, but he hopped toward me, onto my arm, and into my hand.

Mummie rounded the corner of the building just as Tommie and Eleanor were hauling me in. They were worn out! I guess I am more or less like a young horse, at least I'm no featherweight to go dangling out windows, but aside from it being a little rough on certain developing places, I was no worse for wear.

On the way in I grabbed a big bunch of berries, and so Nibs was very happy.



CHAPTER VII

HIS FIRST AND LAST APPEARANCE IN PICTURES

ONE DAY we were doing a scene on a little wooden platform—a sort of lookout high above Lake Chelan where Kathie (that's the girl I am in the picture) used to sit and look for Bill (that's Lassie). In the story Bill gets lost from her when he is herding the sheep and she is up a tree eating apples. A truck runs over him and the drivers take him to a dog hospital, and then because no one knows whom he belongs to, they enlist him in the army. . . . Kathie looks for him day after day. She goes out in her sailboat one day, calling and looking for him when a terrible storm comes up. It turns the boat over and she almost drowns. It really was a terrible storm, too, and to make it worse someone told us that when anyone went down