

The book cover features a vibrant green background with a grid pattern. At the top, a scroll contains the title 'THE DEAD SEA SQUIRRELS' in large, bold, white letters with black outlines. Below the title, the subtitle 'Squirrelnapped!' is written in a smaller, black, sans-serif font. The central illustration depicts a boy with brown hair and a blue shirt, looking distressed as he holds a brown squirrel in a brown jacket. To the left, another squirrel is trapped in a wire cage, looking out with a worried expression. The cage has a license plate that reads 'CPG 872'. The overall style is cartoonish and expressive, with large eyes and exaggerated features.

# THE DEAD SEA SQUIRRELS

Squirrelnapped!

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!*

**Coming Soon:**  
*Tree-mendous Trouble*  
*Whirly Squirrelies*





**THE  
DEAD SEA  
SQUIRRELS**

*Squirrelnapped!*

**Mike Nawrocki**

Illustrated by Luke Séguin-Magee



Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.  
Carol Stream, Illinois

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Visit the author's website at [www.mikenawrocki.com](http://www.mikenawrocki.com).

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*Squirrelnapped!*

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Designed by Libby Dykstra

Edited by Sarah Rubio

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*Squirrelnapped!* is a work of fiction. Where real people, events, establishments, organizations, or locales appear, they are used fictitiously. All other elements of the novel are drawn from the author's imagination.

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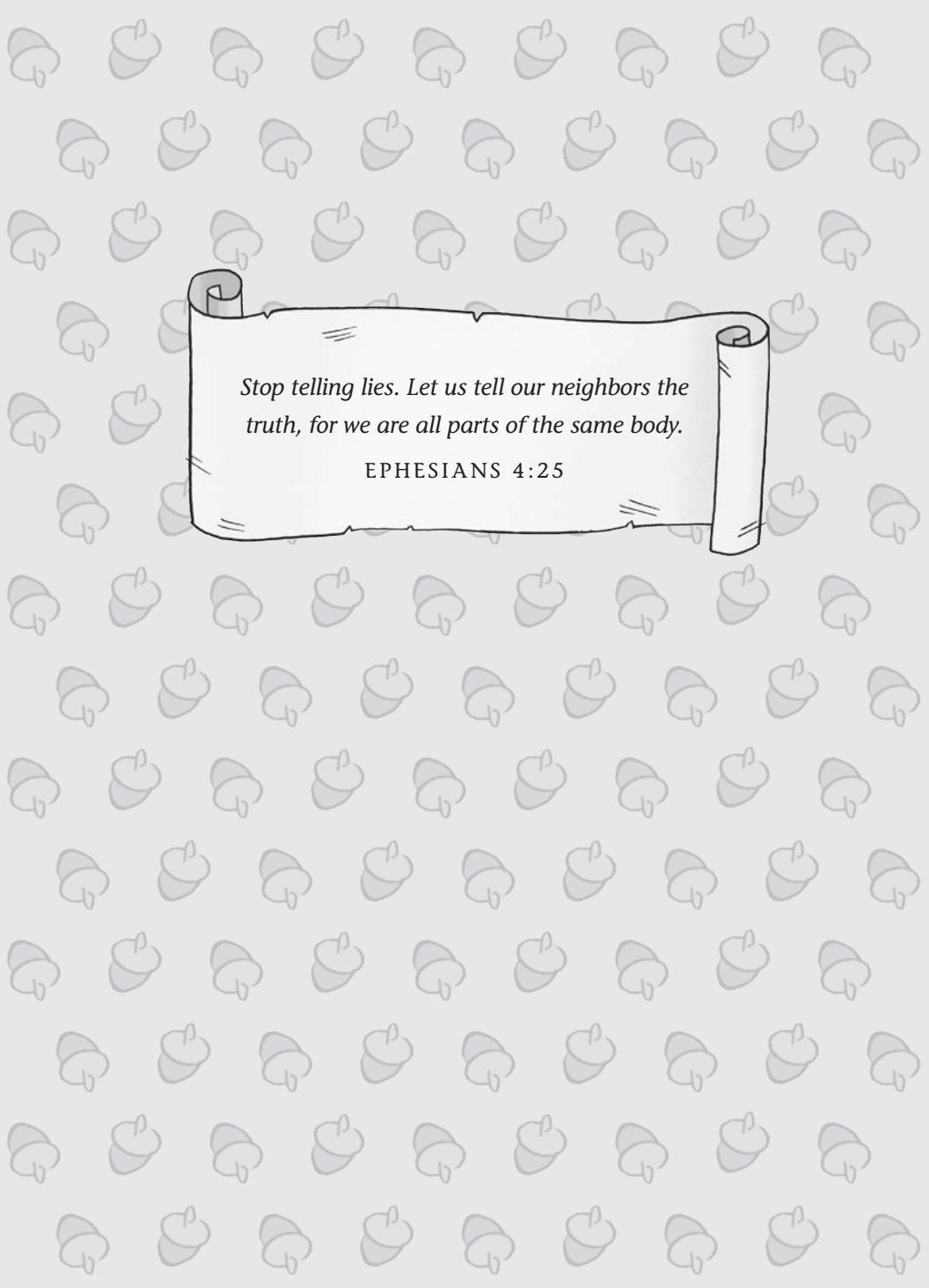
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*To Justin—*

*For sticking closer than a brother to Michael and  
for your contagious dedication to punctuality.*

*The best best friend ever.*



*Stop telling lies. Let us tell our neighbors the truth, for we are all parts of the same body.*

EPHESIANS 4:25

**BUT  
WAIT!**

**BEFORE WE START...**

Who are the  
Dead Sea Squirrels?

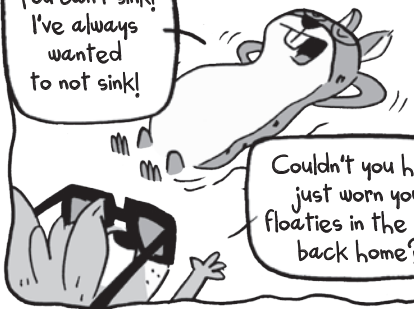
**ISRAEL,  
AD 70**

Merle and Pearl cruise  
down the Jordan River ...



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.

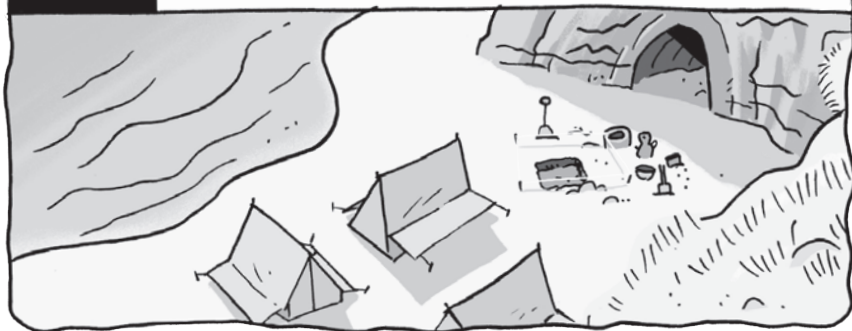
If God wanted you to  
go into a cave,  
he would have made  
you a bat.



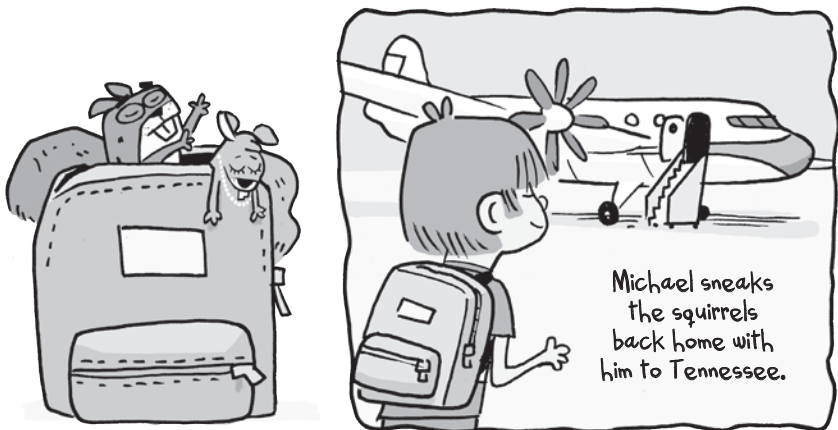


**1,950**  
YEARS LATER

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

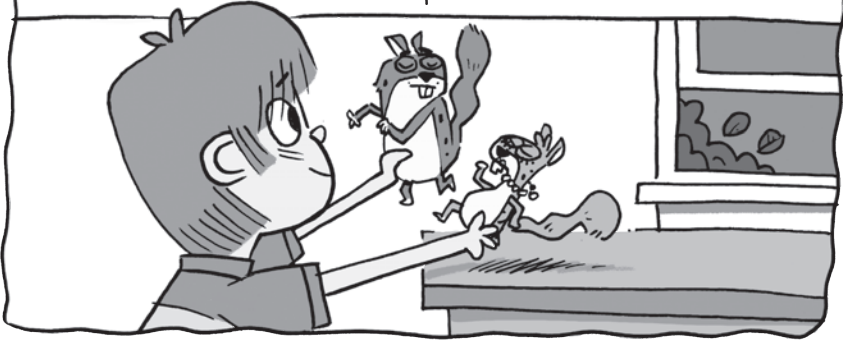


While exploring a cave (without his dad's permission), Michael discovers two dried-out, salt-covered critters and stashes them in his backpack.

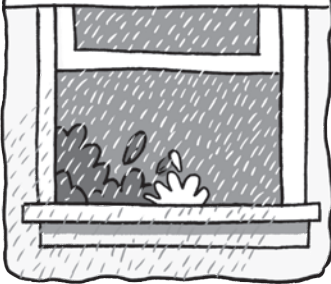


Michael sneaks  
the squirrels  
back home with  
him to Tennessee.

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!





# CHAPTER 1

“Michael, can you please explain to me why you were dancing with squirrels?” Michael’s mom stood just inside the door with her arms crossed. She’d been waiting for Michael to get home from the roller rink.

He was wearing his backpack, with Merle and Pearl Squirrel huddled quietly inside, listening through the canvas. Earlier that evening, Mrs. Gomez had entered Michael’s room to discover him celebrating the almost-acing of his math test with Merle and Pearl. Pearl, who was quite the whiz with numbers, had tutored Michael for his test.

However, before Michael could offer an explanation to his shocked mother, Justin and Sadie had showed up to take Michael roller-skating. Now he was back home, and it was time to come clean.

“You promise not to tell Dad?”  
Michael asked timidly.

“I will do no such thing,” Mrs. Gomez said. “You know they could have fleas?! I may have to fumigate your room.”

“I do not have fl—”

Pearl cut off Merle’s protest with a



paw over her husband's mouth.

"Shhhhh, she'll hear you!"

"Well . . ." Michael hesitated. His dad finding out about the squirrels was Michael's biggest fear. If Dr. Gomez knew Michael had smuggled them home to Tennessee with him from the Dead Sea, he might make them go back—something neither Michael nor the squirrels wanted. "I was dancing with them because Pearl helped me pass my math test."

"Who is Pearl?" Mrs. Gomez questioned.

"One of the squirrels."

Mrs. Gomez raised her eyebrows.

"A *squirrel* helped you with math?"

"Yup," Michael replied.

"Michael Karl Gomez," Michael's

mom began sternly, “if you expect me to believe for one mo—”

*ZIIIIIP!*

She stopped as the top of Michael’s backpack unzipped itself.

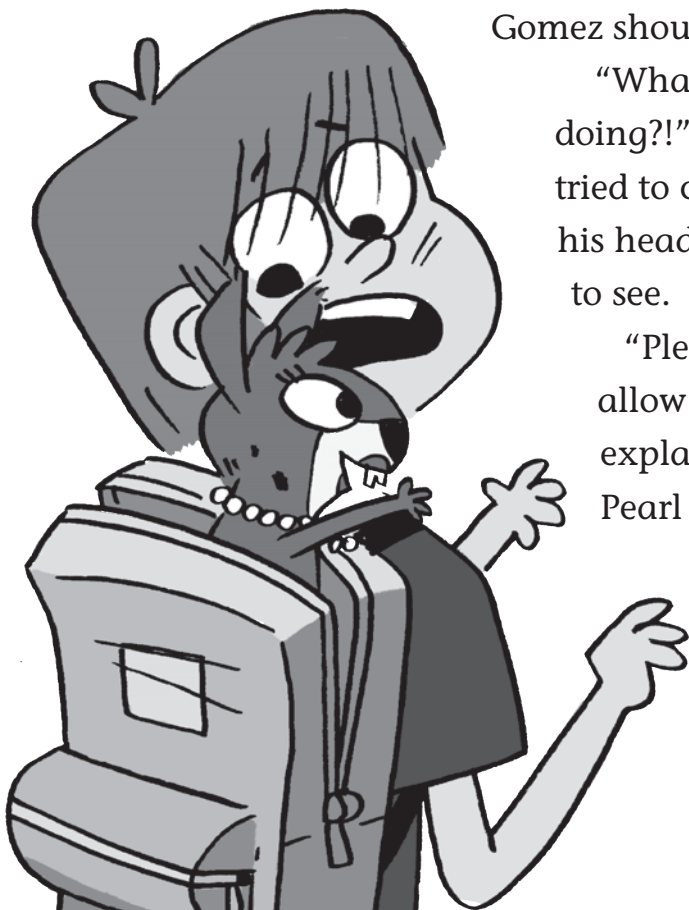
Pearl popped her head out.

“AHHHHH!” Mrs.

Gomez shouted.

“What are you doing?!” Michael tried to crane his head around to see.

“Please allow me to explain,” Pearl said



calmly. Mrs. Gomez's face went as white as a sheet, and her knees weakened. Michael reached out to stop her from falling.

"Maybe you'd better sit down," Pearl offered. The squirrels and Michael then told her the whole story of how Merle and Pearl ended up in 21st-century Tennessee.





