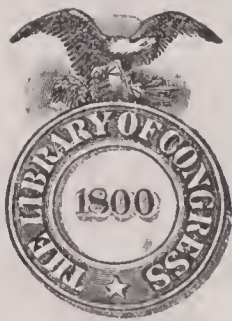


STORIES OF THE FIRST AMERICAN ANIMALS

GEORGE LANGFORD





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STORIES *of the* FIRST AMERICAN ANIMALS



ONE AGONIZED HOWL AND CAN VANISHED BENEATH
THE PONDEROUS FEET.

STORIES OF THE FIRST AMERICAN ANIMALS

By

GEORGE LANGFORD

Colored Illustrations by Ty Mahon



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Dedication

To the Memory of My Father

Augustine G. Langford

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Ideal section of the Earth's surface showing how in the past three million years or more, during the Age of Mammals, the rocks have accumulated to a thickness of over four miles.

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

THE laws of Nature are the same now as when Life began upon the Earth. Not one drop of water or grain of sand has been lost or gained. But the story of animal life is one of many changes, a panorama of constant progress upward from humble to higher forms, finally resulting in an exalted type—Man.

One hundred million years ago—a prodigiously long time that can only be guessed at—the land of our world was bare of stirring life and the water contained only the simplest of creatures resembling tiny globules of gelatine. After a long, long time there appeared flabby molluscs living in shells, sponges, corals, crab-like trilobites and many other sea-dwellers of lowly form. Fishes were slow in coming but their arrival marked a great change in the progress of animal life, for they were the first vertebrates or creatures with spinal columns and bony skeletons. They had gills or clefts behind their jaws which enabled them to breathe under water, but in time some of them acquired cavities in their bodies which served as lungs so that they could sustain life when stranded on sandbars or when receding waters left them high and dry upon mudflats. No doubt many learned to flop their way overland from pool to pool and thus began a new order of lizard and toad-like beings, the Amphibians with short feeble legs in place of fins. They had gills at birth and lived for a time like fishes, but when grown up the gills fell into disuse and lungs served instead. They crawled out of the water to waddle about and such was the beginning of land animals.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Reptiles appeared next. They had no gills and their internal organs were more complicated than those of the Amphibians. Their cold slimy bodies were covered with scales or plates. Evidently the world was then very attractive to reptiles, for they prospered and multiplied until earth, sea and sky were overrun with them. Some went back to the old water life, while others waddled about on land and still others developed skin wings which enabled them to glide through the air or flutter about like big bats.

Bird life began, for birds were originally members of the reptile family that had learned how to fly. Dinosaurs, however, were the largest and most abundant of the reptiles. Their brains were ridiculously small compared with their huge and ungainly bodies and they possessed little or no intelligence. The age of Reptiles lasted for millions of years and then for some unknown reason, it ended. The Dinosaurs and their kind passed away, leaving only a few crocodiles, turtles and lizards as reminders of their former greatness. Meanwhile a new order of creatures had appeared in the world. Their bodies, unlike those of reptiles, were warm to the touch and covered with hair. These were the Mammals, very small and timid at first, and of very primitive type, distantly related to reptiles. These, the Marsupials, are now represented by our opossum and kangaroo. They were followed by True Mammals which, from small and inconspicuous forms, developed into highly specialized and diversified types with comparatively large brains. With the Age of Mammals began the Power of Mind. Man was the latest arrival. Until about fifty thousand years ago, he attracted little attention and not until thousands of years later did he become powerful enough to assume the mastery over all living things. Such in brief is the ancient animal life history of the world.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

The Age of Mammals or Era of Modern Life, has been divided into five periods. Beginning with the oldest, these are:

Eocene	or Dawn	Recent
Oligocene	“ Little	“
Miocene	“ Less	“
Pliocene	“ More	“
Pleistocene	“ Most	“

Each period marks a pronounced change in the upward progress of animal life. The evidence is to be found in rocks, compact layers of sand, gravel, clay and other earthy materials spread out one upon another by wind, water or volcanic action, gradually rising to hundreds and even thousands of feet in thickness and preserving within them the remains of such animals and plants as existed while the layers were accumulating.

Today, wind and water action together with other forces of Nature, have worn or cut away these same rocks, exposing their contents, so that from the animal and plant remains a history can be written of the life that was.

The bones of ancient animals being petrified or changed to stone are usually found much broken and scattered, but the teeth are better preserved because of their hard enamel coats, a fortunate circumstance, for an animal's identity may best be learned from its teeth and often one gives the desired information. Bone-bearing rocks are found in all parts of the world. Those of North America, formed during the Age of Mammals, are best represented in the plains and “bad lands” regions west of the Mississippi River. “Bad lands” are once broad table lands cut up by deep gullies and other depressions into all sorts of queer shapes. From the slopes of buttes, bluffs and hills, protrude the animal and plant remains which determine the period in which

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

each series of rocks was formed. Once any form of life passed out of existence, its like never recurred. This unfailing law of Nature has made it possible for us to recognize each period of the Age of Mammals by noting the disappearance of old animal types and the occurrence of new ones. The rocks themselves give much information, for when the deposits of one period lie upon another, those below being laid down first are of course the oldest. Conditions did not favor the accumulation of rocks representing the five periods of the Age of Mammals all in one place, for this would have resulted in a veritable Tower of Babel at least five miles high. The accumulations of two periods and only parts at that are the most that can be hoped for in any one locality, but their relative positions and comparisons of animal remains embedded in them, establish their ages and by repeating this method of studying other bone-bearing localities, time-values are established and even though widely separated, the rocks of each period become arranged in their proper order. Each scattered and torn leaf then becomes part of a book; a record of the rocks entitled *The Age of Mammals*.

To read this book, one must have some understanding of its rather strange language, for it deals with tremendously long periods and tells of animals whose like cannot be found in the world today. Land-levels, vegetation and climate were different too. Mountains and great rivers were yet unborn. The arid plains of today were the jungles of old. Could we go back in time and travel over the United States, our country would appear an unknown and remote region. Strange animals were moving from place to place in search of suitable food and accommodations. All of them possessed the inborn power to adapt themselves to various conditions and to live the lives that suited them best. Some did not properly exercise this power and finally

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

ceased to exist while others improved their positions in various ways. Enterprising creatures like the camel and horse developed teeth and feet enabling them to change from fertile low-land dwellers to inhabitants of the gradually broadening arid plains, thereby securing new feeding grounds and avoiding the competition and enmity of other animals. A few, like the tapir, served their ends by plunging into thick jungles and leading lives of retirement. Every creature had its own way of trying to live and grow. None of them was thrown into the world without resource. All were sown like seeds with the power to shift their positions to such soil as best suited their healthful development. Every last one of them was given a chance and even those who failed, lived long lives and their disappearance was most gradual. Man has changed all this. His civilization has proven more destructive to Mammals than hunger, cold, disease and all other natural agencies put together. Those unwilling to become his slaves are being rapidly exterminated. The Age of Mammals has ended and we are now living in the Age of Man.

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JOCK THE JUNGLE JINX

INTRODUCTION

In Miles County, Montana, and Converse County, Wyoming, near Hell Creek and Lance Creek, respectively, are great beds of sandstone filled with bones and plant impressions which tell of when the Age of Reptiles ended and the Age of Mammals began. These now desolate wastes were then clad in luxurious vegetation, the climate and altitude being favorable to the growth of fig, banana and palm trees. Here lived a mighty race of reptiles, the Dinosaurs. Some were flesh-eaters, with sabre-teeth, and bird-like feet, while others, with tiny teeth and beast-like hoofs, fed entirely upon plants. They somewhat resembled the dragons we read about in fairy stories, although except for the flesh-eaters, they must have been quite harmless. Most of them were huge and dull-witted, and spent their time eating and growing fat. Nobody knows just what happened, but these great, hulking monsters suddenly disappeared, and all of the world's great reptiles went with them. Such a wholesale and mysterious destruction of animals is without a parallel in ancient history. Something may have occurred which made it harder for them to fill their big stomachs, leaving them to wither away. At any rate, in the Hell Creek and Lance Creek sandstones is recorded their last appearance.

These sandstones also tell of creatures other than dinosaurs. There were turtles, lizards, fishes and small land animals covered

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with hair. The latter were mammals of a primitive order, known as marsupials. Although small-bodied, their brains were comparatively large, and they were alert and active, compared with the dull-witted and slow-moving dinosaurs about them.

In the San Juan region of northern New Mexico are rocks containing bones of dinosaurs similar to those of Hell Creek and Lance Creek. On top of them are more rocks, 800 feet thick, filled with bones of marsupials and a few true mammals, but no dinosaurs whatever, and on the top of this second series are still more rocks, minus dinosaurs and marsupials, and containing only the remains of true mammals.

An important succession of animal life is thus established. The Age of Reptiles below, the Age of Mammals above, with marsupials yielding their place to true mammals in the topmost of the three deposits. It is from such records that we learn much concerning the progress of ancient animal life.

JOCK THE JUNGLE JINX

I

To begin with, Jock was not a squirrel, although at a distance he did resemble one somewhat because of his long bushy tail. He lived in the Jungle; a damp, gloomy place, where the sunlight never came. It was his home, and he knew no other. To him it meant the world, and there could be nothing else beyond.

Jock was small, but his brain was large in proportion to his body—a very important matter, if you but stop and think a moment. This may have been because he was a mammal—a warm-blooded creature with no taint of fish or reptile about him. Brains and Mammals were both scarce, for these were the days of slimy, crawling things—the Age of Dinosaurs.

Jock's most intimate friends were Mammals like himself. His neighbors were the Burrowers and Pouched Animals. It was whispered that they had a bit of the reptile about them, although to look at them nobody would imagine such a thing. They lived in burrows and under rotten logs, while the Mammals spent most of their time in the trees. Now it is a bad thing forever to hide in dark and damp places—bad for the health and morals, and a serious handicap to anyone wishing to get ahead in the world.

Jock seemed to be the liveliest and cheeriest youngster in the Jungle; and yet, in spite of appearances, he was not really happy and contented. Tree-climbing gave him a view of the sun.

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He gloried in its light and warmth; and yet it was not a part of the Jungle, but a thing outside. This set him to thinking. He became restless and longed for something besides the gloom of the forest, which had always been his home. This feeling was shared more or less by his intimates; but the Burrowers and Pouched Animals frowned upon progressive notions. Old Grump, their leader, saw that Jock was growing fast. The time had come when the small Mammal must be told why things were so, and should remain so. Old Grump had always taken a serious and gloomy view of life. Never had he looked upon the sun. He would have feared his own shadow could he have but seen it. It was past midday, and Jock had just descended to the ground from the top of a tree after a period of sun-gazing. The leader of the Pouched Animals sat at the foot of it awaiting him.

“Where have you been?” Old Grump demanded.

Jock’s eyes sparkled. “As high as I could climb,” he said. “I was looking through the leaves at the warm shining ball and wishing that I could get closer to it.”

Old Grump shook his head very solemnly. “It is as I feared,” he muttered in tones of strong disapproval. “Our world is growing too small for you, and you wish to go out into the larger one. You must give up such notions. No good will come of them.”

“Then there is a larger world somewhere,” observed our hero. “I suspected as much. I am so tired of this gloomy place. Why do we remain here?”

The leader of the Pouched Animals shuddered. “It is well I spoke,” he said. “You might have done something rash, in which case nothing could have saved you from death.”

Jock’s eyes opened wide in surprise. “Death? Why?” he inquired.



WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN?" OLD GRUMP DEMANDED.

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"Because of the Dinosaurs. They own the whole outside world. If you venture forth they will destroy you."

"Dinosaurs? What are they?"

Old Grump shivered and looked nervously about him. His voice sank almost to a whisper. "S-s-s! not so loud," he said. "They are savage monsters, taller than the tallest trees. They infest every corner of the land, the waters and even the sky above. The largest and fiercest of them rules all other living things, with tooth and claw. He is a terrible creature, this Dinosaur King and Ruler of the World."

The old Pouched leader became almost dumb with fright as he told this, but Jock felt not at all afraid. What he heard merely sharpened his wits and aroused within him a consuming curiosity to learn more. "Wonderful," he exclaimed. "But it seems to me that if these Dinosaurs are so very very big, we little animals might hide in their country as well as here. There must be holes and——"

Old Grump almost collapsed. Never had he listened to such radical views. Mingled feelings of rage and terror almost overwhelmed him. Jock watched him with a half-curious, half-amused expression as he fumed and sputtered and finally found the use of his tongue.

"Ur-r, um, ach! Bold, wicked words," he said in a choking voice. "Who are you to question the opinions of your elders? If the Dinosaur King knew where we were hidden he would hunt out and destroy us. Not one of us could escape him."

With this parting warning Old Grump took himself off, glancing fearfully about him all the while and shaking his head. Finally he disappeared in a burrow, there to rest and calm his nerves.

Jock was left alone, trembling, not with fear but with excite-

THE JUNGLE JINX

ment, because of the glorious news he had just heard. There was a big world outside, and other animals dwelt in it. They might be terrible, and all that, but they could not be much worse to live with than deadly, stupid old fossils like the Pouched Animals who found no joy in life and never dared look for it.

Jock went to bed supperless that night, for he was too excited to eat. He curled up and shut his eyes and tried to sleep. "The Dinosaur King, Ruler of the World," kept running through his brain. Whenever he did doze off a few moments he dreamed of snapping and screeching monsters, and then woke up again.

"No use my spending the night this way," he thought. With that he sought the tallest tree he could find and climbed to the topmost branch. The moon's rays shone faintly through the dense foliage above his head. Never had the Jungle seemed such a dungeon as it did then. Jock gazed at the moon through the leaves as a prisoner does through iron bars.

Hark! What was that? The small Mammal pricked up his ears and listened again for that strange, distant cry. In a moment it was repeated very faintly—a voice too far away to be distinctly heard. He held his breath, crouching, motionless, and again sounded the mysterious voice, an unearthly screech, such as had never before fallen upon his ears.

"It may be the Dinosaur King," he thought. "I wish I could meet him and learn why he rules the world, leaving so little for the rest of us."

Jock climbed higher. Never had he ventured so far aloft. The slender branches drooped beneath his weight. The moon shone brighter. The fresh air filled his lungs. Never had he so enjoyed himself, and it grew better the higher he climbed.

At last he reached the end—the very top of the Jungle roof. The dazzling moonlight made him blink. The air was delicious,

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and then there were those distant cries. He gazed eagerly over the vast billowy expanse of green foliage. The light, the sweet forest fragrance intoxicated him. Ah! if he only dared.

"Now or never," something within him whispered. "Old Grump and the rest of those Jungle-dwellers will soon learn what you are doing and you may never get another chance like this."

That settled it. Jock took a deep breath and began crawling over the interlocking twigs and leaves. It was difficult getting started, but once having made up his mind he found it easier and kept going. Away he went over the Jungle roof, stopping now and then to look and listen and make certain that he was going in the direction of the distant cries. He had to be careful, too, just where he stepped, for a slip would have meant a bad tumble to somewhere far beneath. It was all so intensely interesting and exciting, and he did not feel a bit frightened. Toward morning the trees began to thin out, leaving large gaps in the Jungle roof. Several times Jock was obliged to seek the ground, cross the open spaces and climb up again. This caused him considerable delay; also it made him tired. The ground beneath was now fairly clear of underbrush and other obstructions. Jock finally descended to earth and stayed there.

A new and wonderful country opened before him—a delightful country and worth ten times the trouble he had taken to reach it. There was none of the gloom and mustiness that prevailed in the depths of the Jungle. The air was charged with the same freshness he had first experienced among the topmost tree leaves; also with another new and most inviting aroma which reminded him that he was hungry. He gazed about him to learn what caused that enticing smell.

It was then he saw something—new, of course. Everything

THE JUNGLE JINX

was new and wonderful. In the distance, through the trees, he made out a vast blue expanse—a sky upside down. He could faintly distinguish a thin hazy line where the upper and lower skies met each other. Earth and trees ended in the near distance. It would seem that he had about reached the edge of the world without meeting a single dinosaur. And then, just when he had about made up his mind to go on and at least have a look over the edge of the world, swish! flop! something made a great commotion above his head. He looked up quickly, then ducked as a dark cloud descended upon him. Head over heels he rolled and tumbled into a burrow which chanced to yawn in his path. It all happened so suddenly that he had no time to think of anything except that a hole was a good place to be in while trouble was going on. In a moment he had righted himself and was peering out of his refuge. An odd-looking creature was running about through the grass. It had two legs only, also two feathered wings. Suddenly it caught sight of Jock's head and made a rush in that direction. Back popped the head into the hole.

"Come out of there, little rascal," screeched a voice. Jock looked up and saw the unknown gazing down upon him. Its mouth, or rather bill, was wide open, showing four rows of sharp teeth. It would have done better to have kept its mouth shut. Jock saw those teeth and decided to stay where he was. A thought struck him. "Are you the Ruler of the World?" he asked eagerly.

"The which?"

"Ruler of the World, King of the Dinosaurs, or whatever else you call yourself."

"Grawk! I am the Reptile Bird, if that is what you mean," the other replied. "As for you, come out of that hole at once. I

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have had nothing to eat since this morning and am nearly starved."

"Since this morning?" Jock glanced at the sky. The day had scarcely begun. "You won't eat me," he chuckled. "I refuse to move unless you are the Dinosaur King. I came here to see him."

"And you won't come out?"

"Not unless you are the Dinosaur King," Jock replied firmly.

The Reptile Bird was greatly displeased. "Very well," he said in a hurt voice. "I refuse to speak to you any more," and with that he turned rudely away. Jock saw his long feathered tail disappear through the grass. When it seemed safe to do so he crawled from his refuge and moved on again toward the edge of the world and that sky upside down. The forest finally ended. The ground sloped gradually downward and disappeared, not in space, but in plain, ordinary water. Jock learned this when he ran down to the earth's jumping-off place to look over the edge. His feet splashed into a cool liquid. He put his mouth to it and made a wry face. The liquid tasted bitter. That sky upside down was salt water—a lagoon or inland sea. Its vastness staggered him. The world seemed to be made of water as well as land.

A ball of light shone in his face. It was brilliant and warm and rising from the lagoon. Another one hung in the sky directly over it. There were two great shining balls in the country of the Dinosaurs.

Jock sat down upon the beach to look and listen and smell all the new and interesting things. "And so this is the Dinosaur country. I wish my people could see it," he thought. "When they do, good-by to the Jungle forever." He sat there for some time, dazed, enraptured, overwhelmed by the new world's attrac-



AN ODD LOOKING CREATURE WAS RUNNING ABOUT IN
THE GRASS

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tions. His eyes vied with his nose, telling him of the wonders about him. The beach extended in a huge semicircle on both sides of where he sat. It was a broad ribbon of nice, clean sand. Clumps of rushes and plants grew from the water's edge; on the land side were many trees. Something resembling a large green stone lay upon the beach on his right. To the left of it was a log with a long dark object on top of it. His eyes were busy telling him these things when all at once his nose broke in with news of the delightfully fragrant smell that had before made him feel so hungry. It also told him something else—not so pleasant. The Dinosaurs might be hiding somewhere near, for the air smelled strongly of animals.

Jock gazed cautiously about him. That green stone had a suspicious odor. He crept toward it and was about to take a sniff when something shot out from beneath the stone. A pair of horny jaws clicked together within an inch of his nose. Jock jumped back and sat down upon the sand at a safe distance. The creature seemed to have no feet, although it was plain to be seen that it possessed a head and tail.

“Are you the Dinosaur King?” the little Mammal made bold to inquire.

No answer. The Soft-shelled Turtle—for it was he—kept perfectly still and watched Jock out of his cold, wicked eyes. He was waiting for another chance, but our hero suspected as much and did not give it to him.

“I don't believe he hears me,” thought Jock. “Probably because he has no ears.” He repeated his question, but received no reply, and meanwhile the Soft-shelled Turtle never moved. “Probably he grows out of the ground,” the little Mammal finally determined. “No animal could walk with such a big stone on his back. At any rate, he cannot be the Dinosaur King.”

THE JUNGLE JINX

He was walking away from the Soft-shelled Turtle when his nose caught another animal odor. It came from the log lying half on the beach, half in the water. The dark object stretched full-length upon it was another creature—a lizard, with a long, thin snout and a long, thick tail, something like a small crocodile, although with fish-like gills and nostrils at the very tip of its nose. It was the Crocodile Lizard. The reptile was asleep, basking comfortably in the warm rays of the morning sun.

Jock coughed noisily to make his presence known, whereupon the Crocodile Lizard slowly opened its eyes and gazed solemnly at the small intruder.

“Are you the Ruler of the World?” Jock inquired very politely.

This must have seemed an odd question to the Crocodile Lizard. He answered never a word.

“Deaf, I suppose,” thought the little Mammal. “He, too, has no ears,” and with that he hopped closer. As he did so the unknown’s long jaws opened very slowly and almost imperceptibly, but Jock got a glimpse of the sharp teeth in them and was on his guard. However, he forgot to watch the reptile’s tail. This had gradually curled itself into a bow. Swish! it let loose like a catapult, but Jock was just a bit too quick for it. Up he sprang in mid-air and the blow cleaved the air beneath him.

Once beyond striking range, Jock walked leisurely away, for he could see that the Crocodile Lizard, like the Soft-shelled Turtle, was too slow and clumsy to catch him. Neither of them could be the Ruler of the World. A real King would be up and about instead of lying around doing nothing.

Jock resumed his way, keeping back among the trees, for there was no telling what more creatures might be lying upon the beach. Suddenly he stopped. His nose brought more news: not

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an animal odor, but the original sweet smell—something of unusual fragrance suggesting food. Sniff, sniff; his nostrils swelled and wiggled until finally they located the origin of that enticing smell. It was a huge cluster of yellow fruit hanging high above his head. Jock had never met a banana, but his trusty nose told him to climb that tree and get acquainted. This he did in quick time. A moment later and he was perched upon the banana cluster, tearing one loose and eating it, skin and all. Um, yum! it was certainly delicious, and so much of it. Jock could hardly hold it up in his two hands. Between bites he looked about him and noticed that other trees also bore fruit; bananas, figs, nuts and more bananas and more nuts and—well, Jock's mouth watered at the sight and smell, but his stomach was now strained to the bursting point. One banana had stuffed him full.

He descended to the ground and continued along the edge of the beach. He moved slowly now, for every step gave him discomfort—this because of the banana that filled his paunch.

“Oo, what a pain,” he groaned. “It was so good, but I ate too much.”

There was nothing left to do but find a bed somewhere and rest until his food had time to digest. Seeing a hollow stump nearby he crept into that and curled himself into a ball. He had scarcely closed his eyes when he heard a noise outside—a cry coming from far out in the lagoon; so he crawled from his refuge in all haste, for it might be that the noise was made by one of the terrible Dinosaurs, possibly the Ruler of the World himself.

II

Jock found walking a difficult matter because of the banana

THE JUNGLE JINX

within him, which was rapidly asserting itself. He had about made up his mind to retrace his steps when he heard a second distant cry like the first one. As he looked over the watery expanse he caught sight of an object floating upon the surface of the lagoon. It was far away, and a mere speck, but Jock knew it to be an animal of some sort. It moved; in fact, everything inside and out of him seemed to be moving just then. However, his discomfort had not yet become acute enough to dull his interest in the distant, floating object. There was a huge boulder lying upon the beach. It would make a fine lookout, so Jock went to it and began climbing up. This latter was a difficult process. There were all sorts of bumps and things to cling to, but as soon as he touched them they began wiggling in all directions. This movement of the surface was soon communicated to the mass until the whole boulder was rocking and tossing like a ship in a stormy sea. By the time our hero arrived at the top he was too dizzy to stand. Cold perspiration oozed from his every pore. "Oh, I am so sick," he groaned dismally. "I wish I hadn't climbed up here. I want to get down."

At this the wiggling stopped instantly. Jock saw one end of the mass beneath him turn partly around. An eye gazed in his direction. A frog-mouth gaped beneath the eye. Jock gasped and held his breath. The boulder was a huge animal, at whose head he now gazed as he stood upon its back.

"I see you, little rascal," bellowed the creature in a deep voice. "You want to get down? Good; I wish you would."

Jock thought he surely must be dreaming, although he was feeling too sick just then to care much about anything. He started over the paved back, slipped on one of the knobs and dug his nails in the crevices to keep from falling. The creature began wiggling again like one possessed.

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"The bumps! Keep on the bumps," it squealed. "You tickle me so when you touch the creases."

Jock tried his hardest to be agreeable, but he was too dizzy to steer a straight course, and his feet simply refused to stay on the slippery knobs. A renewed volley of wiggles sent him tumbling to the ground. This seeming disaster proved his salvation, for it made him disgorge the banana—a sure cure for biliousness. The world stopped spinning around and Jock felt able to examine his new acquaintance—a most genial creature, judging by his actions. He was squirming and giggling just as anyone would do when tickled under the ribs. "Oh, my back! My sides!" he squealed.

"Are you a Dinosaur?" Jock inquired. "Never in my life have I seen an animal as large as you."

"No?" the creature appeared greatly surprised. "I thought myself quite small; probably because I do not get enough to eat. You are very little. You must be starved." He looked at Jock as though he really felt sorry for him.

"Whew!" our hero screwed up his face. "I hope I may never see food again. But you—are you a Dinosaur?"

"Certainly. Everybody knows me, Ankylus the Armored Dinosaur, always ready for fun and frolic, be it eating or sleeping."

"Are you the Dinosaur King?" Jock asked eagerly. He thought himself nearing his goal at last.

"King? No, indeed," was the answer. "Nobody with claws and teeth like mine could be the king. It is my duty to amuse him."

"Amuse him? How?"

"When he is cross," Ankylus chuckled. "You know, he is always cross. He jumps on me and tries to bite his way through



"I SEE YOU, LITTLE RASCAL," BELLOWED THE CREATURE
IN A DEEP VOICE

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the plate on my back. Perhaps this does not amuse him exactly, but it keeps him busy and interested. I will show you how my part is done."

His fat sides shook good-naturedly as he said this. He squatted close to the ground, drawing in his head and legs like a turtle. In this attitude he was about as accessible as a walnut. The mailed coat shielded his back, while the ground prevented any attack on his unarmored parts beneath.

"Clever, indeed," remarked our hero. "But if I were the Dinosaur King I would roll you over and eat you out of your shell."

Ankylus turned sickly green. His fat sides trembled. "Ugh! What's that? Eat me out of my shell? If you value my friendship, make no mention of such a thing to anyone. I would be ruined if our King had it suggested to him. A terrible idea! I feel faint; I must have nourishment."

The monster, after much effort, raised his belly several inches from the ground and dragged himself down to a clump of plants growing near the water's edge. The food question made him forget his fears entirely. Having a head no bigger than his foot and not enough room in it for two ideas at once, he proceeded to gorge himself. While so doing he forgot all about the Dinosaur King, Jock and everybody else.

"Big eater that," the little Mammal remarked as he watched the huge reptile gulping down bales of green stuff unchewed. "No wonder he is so big and clumsy. Ah, me; what a life!"

He was sitting there wondering if all dinosaurs were so stupid and ungainly as this one, when suddenly he caught sight of something coming through the water farther down the shore.

"Another one!" Jock remembered the speck he had first seen far out in the lagoon. He had forgotten all about it in his meet-

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ing with the Armored Dinosaur. Perhaps the newcomer was the Ruler of the World. He would go and see, so away he scampered and waited on the beach in front of the floating object as it swam toward him.

The object in question turned out to be a gigantic duck-like head, and there was much more in the water beneath it. Suddenly it arose from the shallows and a huge body appeared, floundering and splashing among the lily-pads and other plants growing near the water's edge. The duck-head towered five yards high as the monster emerged upon dry ground at last and sat down upon the beach, using his gigantic hind limbs and long, heavy tail as a three-legged stool. His front limbs were ridiculously small compared with the hind ones. Although a water reptile, his toes and fingers were tipped with blunt hoofs instead of claws. The huge creature was in the act of scratching the back of his head with one hand when he caught sight of the tiny Mammal sitting far beneath him.

"Who—what are you?" he asked in surprise.

"I am a stranger here," Jock shouted at the top of his lungs so that his voice might reach the other's ears, wherever they might be. "I have come to see the Dinosaur King who rules the world. Are you he?"

"No," replied the monster emphatically. "I am a Dinosaur, but not the king. They call me the Duck Bill. And so you are to meet our King. How distressing! However, that is your affair—not mine."

"Why? Do you know him?"

"Too well for my own comfort," hissed the Duck Bill. "He would eat me, hoofs, hide and all if I gave him the chance."

"What! eat a big thing like you?" Jock exclaimed. "He must be very large and fierce."

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"He certainly is," the monster declared. He glanced about him in a nervous manner as he said this. His bald pate glistened in the sunlight. It looked more like a green squash than a head. No ears were visible—mere holes where ears ought to have been.

"How odd," thought Jock. "None of these animals seem to have ears. I wonder what they hear with."

"I would suggest that you use caution in your dealings with our King," the Duck Bill now said. "I feel an interest in you because you do not seem disposed to harm me."

"Harm you?" Jock wondered if he could have heard aright. The very idea of his harming such a giant seemed inexpressibly funny. "No, I would not hurt you for anything," he chuckled.

The Duck-billed Dinosaur appeared greatly relieved. "I am so glad to hear you say that," he said gratefully. "Our King feels differently about such matters. He is a flesh-eater and—if you will pardon my frankness—he would eat you without a moment's hesitation. I disapprove strongly of the way he selects his food. I am a vegetable-eater, and would not treat you as he would. I never eat bugs."

"I am not a bug," cried our hero, flaring up.

"I meant a caterpillar," corrected the Duck Bill, much embarrassed.

"Nor a caterpillar, either," shouted Jock in a great rage.

"No?" The monster appeared genuinely astonished. "How odd; you must be something. Nobody can be nothing. You are all covered with fuzz; so is a caterpillar. My skin is smooth and scaly; therefore, I am not a caterpillar. Are you a plant?" This query was delivered in a trembling voice. The Duck Bill's forehead wrinkled with anxiety.

"No, I am not a plant," snapped our hero. The giant hissed a great sigh of relief. "Good!" he exclaimed. "I fairly dote on



JOCK AND THE DUCK-BILLED DINOSAUR

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plants—nice green ones; but it would break my heart if I were compelled to eat you.” He glanced at the water behind him. “Lily stems! Um-yum! I will gather a few now if you do not mind. I have had not a bite to eat since I first met you. Keep right on talking. I can hear every word you say.” With that he waded into the shallows and began shoveling about in the mud with his spade-like bill.

Jock watched this latter process with much interest. “What do you do besides eat?” he inquired.

“Sleep,” answered the Duck Bill with his mouth full. “I do that until it is time to wake up and eat some more.”

“And having eaten——”

“I go to sleep again,” replied the monster. “It keeps me busy doing all these things, but I see no help for it.”

“No, I cannot see just where you have any fun,” Jock remarked after a moment’s thought. “Seems to me you would get more out of life if you did not eat and sleep so much.”

“Im-practical,” declared the Duck Bill in his most positive manner. “Eat when the weather is warm; sleep when it is cool. Everybody does that way.”

“What if the weather stays cool?”

“Stay asleep,” replied the monster, well pleased with himself at having so ready an answer. Jock was silent for a few moments. Why argue with this big good-natured beast? He be-thought himself of what he had come for and changed the subject. “Where will I find the Dinosaur King?” he asked.

“Well, if you insist upon meeting him, keep right on,” was the answer. “When you hear an awful noise and see the most terrible thing you ever saw in all your life, you will have met him. I would take you to him, but I prefer eating to being eaten.”

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"May you stuff yourself and sleep until your dying day," said Jock, waving a paw in farewell.

The Duck Bill paused long enough in his feeding to bestow upon our hero a look of unutterable gratitude, then he turned again to the plants, and that was the last Jock saw of the Duck-billed Dinosaur.

As our hero went his way along the shore of the lagoon he heard no awful noises and saw nothing so terrible that it could be mistaken for a dinosaur king, although he soon encountered an animal, the most remarkable creature he had ever beheld.

Standing among the tall rushes which grew thickly near the water's edge was a huge monster over six yards long. Its body was a wobbly globe supported by four pillar limbs. A ponderous alligator tail trailed along behind it. The most remarkable part of the creature was its head, which was more than half as long as its body. This head spread out behind like a frilled cape, covering the neck and shoulders. Two horns, each a yard long, projected directly over the eyes. A third and shorter one sprouted from between the nostrils like the horn of a rhinoceros. The front of the mouth terminated in a parrot-like beak. The monster was astonishing rather than terrible to look upon; furthermore, it made no fearful noise. It was making some sounds—a subdued lamentation. As Jock came closer, to his amazement, he saw that the creature was weeping—actually crying as though its heart would break. Real tears poured down its face and formed a puddle on the ground beneath.

Jock mounted a cobblestone where he could sit out of the wet and look on. "What are such creatures made for?" he wondered. "Even a dinosaur must be good for something; and yet I cannot see—— Hi-ho!" he suddenly cried out in alarm as the unknown

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lurched in his direction. "Be careful there. Look where you are going."

The Fat Party stopped moving and gazed languidly about him. Finally he caught sight of Jock, whereat his vast body trembled like a bowl of wine jelly. His weeping became so violent that it seemed as though the whole mass of flesh would shake itself to pieces.

"Have no fear," Jock shouted to reassure him. "I will not hurt you. Now be a good dinosaur and stop crying. What is the trouble?"

Vainly the poor creature strove to check his sobs and tears. "Lost," he wailed dismally. "Oh, dear! poor little me. Never will it return to me again."

Jock glanced all around him but saw nothing that might be considered as a dinosaur's particular property. When he looked again at the unfortunate, he was much pleased, for the latter had ceased weeping and was fast recovering his control.

"I do believe it is coming back again," he said hopefully. "I am sure it is coming back. I feel it."

"What did you lose?" asked Jock.

"My appetite. I was eating and suddenly, for some unknown reason, I stopped. It was terrible."

"Appetite?" our hero nearly tumbled off his perch, he was so surprised.

"Perhaps I was unduly nervous," the monster explained. "And yet it is so hard to get along these days. Food is not as plentiful as it was, and then the nights are so cold. It makes me ill to think about it. Do I look thin and haggard?"

"Not thin, exactly," Jock chuckled. "In fact, you appear to me quite hale and hearty. I was just wondering what all your



THE FAT PARTY STOPPED MOVING AND GAZED Languidly
ABOUT HIM

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horns are for, and that thing on the back of your head—what do you do with it?”

“Nothing, absolutely nothing,” was the answer. “I wear those things because I have to. Now if you will excuse me, I must eat and take my nap so as to be perfectly fresh and rested for the next meal.”

“You are a Dinosaur of course,” said the little Mammal. “I suppose, too, that you do nothing but eat and sleep.”

“Ah, but you are wrong,” replied the other sadly. “I am the Three-horned Dinosaur, but I have much more to do than is good for me. I walk and I swim. These require tremendous effort; but how can they be avoided? Food cannot come to me, so I must go to it. Would that I could lie down and have somebody feed me the rest of my life; then I never need move.”

“That would give you plenty of time to think,” Jock remarked thoughtfully, “and probably if you got to thinking you would see the need of stirring about and taking more exercise.”

“Think, think?” the monster repeated dully. “What is there to think about?”

“Particularly when you have nothing to think with,” Jock added in a tone of biting sarcasm. “Probably if you stopped eating long enough to think a moment you would starve to death.”

“Without question,” the Dinosaur agreed. “If anything interfered with my eating and sleeping I would perish.”

“And it is fools such as this that drive my people into the Jungle, away from the land of joy and plenty,” thought our hero. “What would this clumsy beast do if he were forced into a corner and had to fight?”

Sis! boom! agh! A terrible commotion ensued at that moment among the forest trees; screams, hisses, bellows and the crash-

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ing of branches. Pandemonium had broken loose. The Three-horned Dinosaur turned in a panic and waddled into the lagoon as fast as his unwieldy body would permit. "The King!" he shrieked. "The Tyrant Reptile King!" Away he floundered and splashed until the water covered all but his eyes, nose and projecting horns. Then he stopped and remained motionless.

The tumult in the forest grew rapidly louder and nearer. Suddenly a thunderous voice bellowed: "Where is he? I smell flesh, and I will have it."

Jock glanced at that part of the Three-horned Dinosaur which remained above water. The fugitive had heard the remarks and considered them too personal to suit him, for he had a sudden fit of shivers, judging by the ripples and eddies about him.

The cries and disturbance in the woods had by this time increased tenfold. Suddenly there arose a perfect bedlam of screams and bellows and a gigantic monster burst into the open, uttering terrible noises and snapping its great jaws. To Jock, who had come to consider all Dinosaurs as huge, helpless creatures, here was a sight fearful to behold.

The colossal reptile head towered far above the trees. The jaws bristled with gleaming sabre teeth. The gnarled hide hung over the vast body in folds and creases. The long, heavily muscled legs contrasted strangely with the feeble arms. Each clawed—not hooped—foot covered a square yard. The rear of the body tapered off in a long, thick tail, which thrashed about like a flail, felling small trees and mowing down the underbrush. The blood-shot eyes, widely gaping jaws and murderous teeth could have found no equal for hate and fury.

Jock saw and cowered in mortal fear. No need to ask. Here was the one he sought. The Ruler of the World stood before

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him. "Woe is me," he groaned. "I have found him at last. Woe, woe!"

He looked wildly about him for a hole or some place to hide, but saw none. The Dinosaur King stood between him and the friendly trees; behind, spread the lagoon. The giant reptile bent low to sniff the ground. Jock could almost feel his hot breath. He crawled away along the beach, stomach to the ground, doing his best to escape unobserved. Vain hope. The monster saw him. Our hero hid his head in his paws and shut his eyes, thinking that all would be over with him in a moment.

All was over and quickly, but not exactly as Jock expected. At sight of the tiny Mammal, the eyes of the Dinosaur King nearly started from his head. His vast body shivered until the ground vibrated as from an earthquake. His fierce looks changed to abject terror. Here was an unknown creature whose like he had never seen—a diminutive being, and yet different from all other living things. The discovery threw him into a panic. With a blood-curdling screech he jumped back and bounded away at express-train speed. Not for an instant did he consider the manner of his going—anything to escape from the tiny creature he could not understand. His ponderous tail got mixed up with his legs somehow and sent him sprawling to the earth. Head over heels he rolled, tearing great gashes in the ground with his clawed feet. In an instant he was up and on his way again, more frightened than ever. His flight led him to the woods, and he tore through them, bellowing like a thousand mad bulls, knocking down trees and everything else that stood in his way. In less time than it takes to tell it, he had disappeared in the forest, leaving a broad lane of torn and twisted vegetation to mark his cyclonic course. The cries and crashing gradually subsided and finally no sounds could be heard except the ripple of water upon



AT THE SIGHT OF THE TINY MAMMAL THE EYES OF THE
DINOSAUR KING NEARLY STARTED OUT OF HIS HEAD

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the beach. Jock sat alone, watching open-mouthed, and listening, until convinced that there was no more to see or hear. He felt himself all over to make sure he was alive.

"It is too strange to believe," he said in an awed voice. "The Dinosaur King, Ruler of the World, has fled from me. What poor things he and his creatures really are. They are huge and terrible to look at, but they have absolutely no sense at all. Ruler of the World; bah! I could do better than the Dinosaur King myself. My people will soon learn of what they are missing. And now back to the Jungle, so that all may know of the good things awaiting them in the country of the Dinosaurs."

III

The sun had set and twilight was fast changing to night when Jock finally completed his return journey across the Jungle roof and descended to his old home. His companions and neighbors were scattered about, and not much in evidence, so he mounted a fallen tree and chattered his piercing call, which soon attracted the attention of all the Forest Dwellers.

From every hole, brush-pile and hollow stump, they came trooping around him. His absence had been the cause of much speculation, and all were curious to hear what he had to say. The first arrivals were Mammals of his own kind, always looking for and welcoming any excitement; then the Burrowers, forever timid about venturing too far from their holes; and last of all, the Pouched Animals. These latter were a glum lot, and by nature averse to new ideas of any kind. They trailed behind the rest, grumbling and shaking their heads like old grand-daddies. The women-folk wore apron skin-pouches in most of which reposed

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sleepy infants, who squeaked and made a great fuss about being awakened so soon after beginning their night's rest. When all the Jungle Dwellers were settled down around the fallen tree and the youngsters quieted, Jock began the recital of his day's experiences.

The Pouched Animals grunted their disapproval from the very first. To run away from home was unpardonable. They gazed at each other solemnly and shook their heads. Such folly could lead to no end but a bad one. The small Mammals took an entirely different view of the matter. As far as they were concerned, Jock had his audience with him. They edged up to him as close as possible, ears erect so as not to miss a single word. They were mightily interested. The Burrowers as usual were neither this nor that. They took the middle ground, neither objecting nor approving for fear of being drawn into an argument with one or other of the opposing factions. They were like straws, ready to bend whichever way the wind blew.

"It was a long, long journey across the jungle," said Jock; "but I would have done it before and many times had I ever suspected what was at the other end of it. The trees finally became so few and far apart that I descended to the ground. I was looking and smelling at everything when suddenly an animal swooped down upon me from above."

"A Dinosaur!" moaned Old Grump, whereat all the Burrowers and Pouched Animals shivered and held their breaths.

"Well, it looked more like a big bird to me," said Jock. "I tumbled into a hole, and the creature did not know how to get me out, so it went away and bothered me no more."

"Didn't it hide and wait until you came out?" one of the small Mammals inquired.

"No; it did not have sense enough to do that."

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The small Mammals tittered, but none of the others saw any fun in it. They took it as very serious business.

"I crawled out of the hole again," Jock resumed. "I thought I was getting near the end of the world, for there ahead of me was the sky upside down. I kept on to where the land ended and tried to peek over the edge. It was not sky, but water. I never saw so much of it in one place. Most of the Dinosaur country is water, which is not surprising, now that I think of it. Some of them live there."

"And the Dinosaurs; tell us about them," begged one of the small Mammals.

"I am coming to them," Jock replied. "I smelled something so nice, I felt hungry all over, but I smelled something else, too, that I did not like so much."

"What was that?" peeped one of the Pouched Animals.

"A strange creature without legs, and wearing a big stone on his back. He attempted to bite me, but I kept out of his way, and he did not even try to catch me. Soon I smelled another."

"Dinosaur?" Old Grump inquired in an awed voice.

"No; another slow-footed creature. He tried to hit me with his tail but I jumped out of the way. The thing knew it could never catch me, nor did it try. Seeing nothing to fear from him, I hunted around to see what made the nice smell."

The Burrowers and Pouched Animals began to pluck up courage. Nothing very terrible had happened as yet. "What was it?" Old Grump ventured to inquire.

"A tree bearing a cluster of luscious food. A single fruit stuffed me to bursting. There were as many in the cluster as there are of you."

Old Grump's mouth began to water. He licked his chops

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greedily. "And this tree bearing fruit; is there more than one?" he inquired.

"Aye—a whole forest of the best and choicest foods, all going to waste. Nobody wants them; nobody eats them."

"How about the dinosaurs?" grunted one of the Pouched Animals.

Old Grump doubled up and relapsed into his former gloom. "Yes, how about them?" he repeated. "There may be some good in the Dinosaur country but probably bad too, and more of it."

Jock winked at the small Mammals, then addressed himself to the Pouched Animals in a heart-to-heart manner. Even Old Grump experienced a thrill of pleasure at being thus taken into the speaker's confidence.

"Aye—the Dinosaurs. Now listen carefully for I have much to say about them." Every pair of eyes and ears were now centered upon Jock. Every breath was stilled. Only the rustling of breeze-blown leaves and the subdued murmurs of fast-beating hearts broke the stillness of the Jungle.

"The fruit I ate made me sick," Jock confessed, much to the amusement of his small Mammal friends. "I was preparing to lie down somewhere when I heard a noise out in the water. There was a huge rock near by and I climbed up on that so as to see better. You will be surprised to learn that the rock was a huge Dinosaur."

The Pouched Animals nearly jumped out of their skins. Old Grump could scarcely believe his ears. "Most surprising! Remarkable!" he gasped. "Did the monster roar terribly and gnash his teeth?"

"No, he made no sound. However, he wiggled around so that it was all I could do to stay on top of him. His back was covered with many knobbed plates. You would think that he

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could feel nothing through them; but my claws tickled him in the creases where the plates joined together and he could not bear it. He begged me to get down."

"And what did you do?" giggled one of the small Mammals.

"Do?" Jock replied. "I was so sick and the creature jumped around so that I got down faster than I wanted to. He shook me off. However, he shook the banana out of me, too, and I felt well again. He was a very harmless Dinosaur. I tried to learn something about him but he was hungry and had no time for me. He began gulping down all sorts of plants growing near the water. Another Dinosaur appeared just then. He swam ashore from far out somewhere. He was quite different from the first one although big and silly too. He thought I was a bug, then a caterpillar and finally a plant. I talked with him a few moments but he became so hungry listening that he, too, began gobbling up all the waterplants within his reach. It was this one who told me that the Dinosaurs did nothing else but eat and sleep."

Jock paused to rest his voice. The small Mammals began giggling and chatting among themselves. One of them squeaked "Eat and sleep" and this became a catchword to amuse the rest of them. "Is that all?" inquired one. "I like to hear you tell of these Dinosaurs. I never imagined that they were so silly."

"Yes, there was another one," said Jock. "When I met him he was crying because his appetite had left him for a few moments and he feared he would starve to death. He really was a terrible looking monster with horns and all sorts of things growing out of his head. I was not much larger than his toe-nail but he was frightened when first he saw me."

This was too much. The small Mammals could not restrain their merriment. These Dinosaur were so very amusing that it seemed ridiculous to think of fearing them. The Pouched Ani-

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mals, however, felt differently. Dinosaurs were Dinosaurs and there was no denying that. Old Grump was determined that nobody would make a fool of him.

"That may be true of some," he grunted sourly, "but how about the Dinosaur King? The lot of us would be a mere mouthful for him. He would swallow us alive if he had the chance."

The Burrowers and Pouched Animals replied to these glum words of the joy-killer with moans and despairing squeaks: "Woe to us! The Dinosaur King will destroy us. Fly—hide—run!" Old Grump sat rocking from side to side, wailing, "Woe, woe; our end is near." The others joined in dismal chorus; then the babies woke up and their squeaks and squalls were added to the din. It began to look as though the meeting might break up in a mad stampede for the darkest and dampest corner of the Jungle.

Jock ran up and down the fallen tree screaming at the frightened crowd. "Be quiet until I tell you of the Dinosaur King. What I say will surprise you."

"You have said enough," snorted one of the Pouched Animals, an old fossil with low forehead and retreating chin. "I, for one, am going to gather up my family and hide in the darkest hole I can find."

"Why?"

"Because of the Dinosaur King. He will eat every last one of us alive."

"He did not eat me," said Jock. "When he saw me, he was so frightened, he ran away."

"How?" snorted Old Grump. "Ran away—from you? Oomp, oomp! Surprising; ree-markable. I can scarcely believe it."

"As you choose," Jock declared boldly, "but others will because it is the truth. Vegetable Eaters, Flesh Eaters, Dinosaur

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King; they are all alike, too clumsy to do anything but eat and sleep; too big to keep out of their own way. They have no sense. Has anyone sense who would let all those nuts and fruits go to waste? Don't you think it about time for us to make use of them ourselves?"

This last query was addressed to Old Grump. It touched a tender spot—his appetite.

"Nuts; fruits? Um-m, well that's different. If you are positive that the Dinosaurs would not harm us and that we could have the food all to ourselves, I might think about it."

The small Mammals cheered lustily, the Burrowers squeaked and the Pouched Animals began smacking their lips.

Jock's eyes glistened. The battle was as good as won. "Good," he said. "The Dinosaurs will not harm us and the food will be ours," and he grinned at the small Mammals as much as to say, "And plenty of fun to go with it."

His audience was now in as receptive a mood as any such audience could be. Jock raised his voice and shouted boldly:

"So now we are agreed. Tomorrow I lead you from the Jungle and to our new home."

Pandemonium reigned; everybody squeaking, jabbering and grunting at once. Doing a thing was different from saying it. The small Mammals shouted "Aye" to the very last one, but the Pouched Animals grew timid again and did not respond. They were hard to move. "Nuts, fruit," murmured Old Grump in an agony of doubt; but his mates heard and gave up the hopeless struggle. They yielded. The idea of so much good food going to waste was more than their greedy stomachs could endure. All then sought their nests to rest and prepare for the next day's momentous event—the tremendous change from darkness to light whose influence was to reach every corner of the earth.

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The small Mammals were up bright and early, their hearts and minds filled with joy at thought of the near end of dampness and gloom and the new life opening before them. They raced about in wild excitement, filling the air with their noisy chatter. Even the Pouched Animals caught a bit of the general enthusiasm although they were not backward in admitting that the food attraction more than influenced their final decision. They lined up with mouths dripping, awaiting the signal to start. The timid Burrowers plucked up courage and took their places in the rear where they could change their minds and turn back if anything went wrong.

The last of the Jungle Dwellers were now in their places. Every baby was tucked away in its mother's apron-pouch or fastened securely upon her back. Jock gave the signal and the exodus began. Through brake and thicket and over fallen trees, the strange procession swept onward, a compact, moving mass, irresistible as the waves of the sea. The days of the Dinosaurs were nearing their end and a new order of things—the Race of Mammals—was coming to its own at last.

EOHIPPIUS THE DAWN HORSE

INTRODUCTION

No creature, not even Man himself, can boast of an ancient, unbroken pedigree equal to that of the Horse. His bones are found in the rocks of every period of the Age of Mammals, and almost every stage of his development is known.

Beginning in the Dawn Recent (Eocene) period as a little nobody about the size of a fox, he grew to be the large and accomplished Horse of to-day. And yet his first appearance was not really his beginning, for even Eohippus grew from something as yet undiscovered. When found, this something will doubtless prove to be a little five-toed hoofed creature no bigger than a cat. Eohippus the Dawn Horse is known, however, and must suffice for the present. He had four hoofed toes, but even at this stage it would seem that his career was already mapped out, for his feet were undergoing certain changes and his teeth had already outlined the pattern they were to assume in ages to come. These changes in feet and teeth pointed to a life upon the open plains at some time in the distant future, his feet becoming one-toed and rigid to insure speed over hard, level ground, and his teeth assuming a long-crowned form suitable for chewing tough, wiry grass. The Dawn Recent rocks of southwestern Wyoming, in which the bones of Eohippus are found, do not tell us all this; quite the contrary. Nobody would have guessed him to be a horse, had not the rocks of successive periods shown so clearly his passing from one stage to the next. There is a vast gap between an acorn and an oak unless one plants the acorn and can watch it grow. The Rocky Mountain region from Montana to New Mexico, and

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particularly that portion of it which lies in southwestern Wyoming east of the Wasatch Range, was the cradle of mammals. Their bones appear here in great numbers, representing a large variety of small creatures which were just beginning to fit themselves for their various careers. Horses, camels, tapirs and others had not progressed far enough to be easily distinguished one from another, and beasts of prey, with few exceptions, were in a very unfinished state. Many of the flesh and plant-eaters were so much alike that they seem to have been originally cast in the same mould. None of these Dawn Recent creatures exist to-day, and only in a very general way can we liken them to modern animals. Eohippus was no more a horse than an acorn is an oak, although he became one. There was still plenty of time to attain his end, however, for he had a good start with something like four million more years to go.

EOHIPPIUS

THE DAWN HORSE

I

This was my second summer in the "Bad Lands" of the Big Horn Basin—that vast expanse of rugged country which lies nestled among the Big Horn, Shoshone and Wind River Mountains of western Wyoming. I was a hunter of extinct animals and the "Bad Lands" were my hunting grounds, particularly that portion of the Big Horn Basin which borders the Gray Bull River. The sun had not yet emerged from behind the eastern hills when I left my headquarters at the YU ranch and rode off northeastward on horseback along the right bank of the Gray Bull River. Besides my sleeping blanket and provisions, I carried a hand-pick and leather bag. The latter was for transporting small specimens. One peculiarity of the "Wasatch" rocks was that the fossil bones were those of comparatively small animals. Naturally this relieved the difficulties of transporting them very materially, for in the Bad Lands where horse and pack-saddle were the only means of conveyance, the problem of bringing away large specimens was a most perplexing one.

However, the particular object of my search was not large. My real mission in the Big Horn Bad Lands was to find the petrified remains of a four-toed horse; not a few bones but an entire skeleton. One whole season and thousands of dollars had already been vainly spent. I was now in the midst of my second effort. If necessary, I was to make a third. Twenty-five thou-

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sand dollars had been set aside and I was to use all of it if necessary in securing the complete fossil skeleton of a four-toed horse.

Day after day, month after month, I had ridden my cow-pony through the sage-brush over hills, through gulleys, exploring every foot of the Big Horn Basin where the exposed rock-layers gave chance of finding what I sought. I discovered many petrified bone fragments, some whole bones but no complete skeletons. It would seem as though any that might have been entombed within the rocks, must have been ground to bits by the weight of the mountains piled over them. It was a wearing, tiring and apparently hopeless quest; nevertheless I persisted, hoping each day that my hand would be the first to pluck a four-toed horse from the tomb where it had lain buried for possibly four million years. Then as each day went by without result, I pinned my hopes on the next; and so it went for one whole season and the half of another up to the time I now tell of. Much money and effort had been apparently wasted but as I saddled my pony for another journey into the Bad Lands, my former discouragements were forgotten in the renewed hope and determination that followed upon the heels of a night's comfortable rest and a most appetizing breakfast.

That morning I was up and doing earlier than usual. A driving rain had kept me indoors, idle and restless, the whole previous day. My journey to the fossil-bearing ledges was a tedious one because of the sticky clay-mud which dragged hard on my pony's feet. As I rode along the slopes between the river and Tatman Mountain, we had several tumbles on the slippery incline. However, we arrived safely beneath the ledges at last. Here I dismounted, picketed my pony and climbed up the rocks on foot.

The air now fairly sizzled with steaming heat, for by this time

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the sun was well up and its hot rays smote mercilessly upon the dripping ledges. Only those who have roamed over this shadeless region, bare of vegetation except for the ever-present sage-brush, can appreciate the discomforts of a hot, sticky day in the Big Horn "Bad Lands." Had it not been for my broad-rimmed felt hat, my brains would have stewed in my head. As I mounted to the upper ledges, my every step had to be taken with the utmost care. The steep, slippery slope offered insecure footing at best and a single misstep would have meant a bad tumble to the ground below. I was a fool, or at least I was according to W——, who said of my hunting: "None but a crazy man would climb around those rocks looking for busted bones." However, it was my business being so crazy; and on this particular day, the heat and humidity made me crazier than ever. I was squirming my way along the face of the cliff wishing myself in Hades, or any other comparatively cool place, when I caught sight of something that made me forget instantly all personal discomfort.

There, partly protruding from the rock above my head was a fossil jawbone about four inches long. The row of black shining teeth resembled a string of semi-precious stones. They looked like jewels to me, but then as W—— had said, I must have been crazy, also the day was frightfully hot. With my pick I chipped the enveloping stone away bit by bit until finally I had partly uncovered a little skull, less than six inches in length. It was a perfect beauty. Did I rest content with that? No, indeed. I cut away the matrix at the base of the skull and was rewarded by finding the neck-bones. Chopping farther along I encountered part of a shoulder-blade. I became greatly excited as the work progressed. My sensations were those of a miner who, having struck a gold-bearing vein, was digging his way into a nest of nuggets. I continued stripping away the stone until I had

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brought to light the lower half of one front leg. Next came the foot. I stared like one in a trance. W—— would have pronounced me crazy beyond the shadow of a doubt could he have seen me at that moment. It was a wonderful little foot, about the size of a fox terrier's, but the toes—four of them—were tipped not with claws but tiny horse-like hoofs no bigger than my little finger nail. Talk about pedigree! My own faded into insignificance. My pony picketed far below me could—if he knew how—have traced his back several million years. There was the record, clear and indisputable. I had unlocked it from the ancient archives, signed and sealed by Nature's own hand. No expert could have forged that record or counterfeited the evidence of its great antiquity. That evidence was the fossil skeleton of the patriarch, a little creature not much larger than an Airedale, and wearing not one but four hoofs on each of his forefeet. I had found my four-toed horse at last.

A whinny sounded below me. I looked down and saw that my pony was watching me. He looked every inch the aristocrat he was, whereat I felt humbled. What were my few hundred years of lineage to his millions? A wave of dizziness suddenly reminded me that the sun had become unendurably hot; so much so that the steel head of my stone-pick burned my hand. The heat, together with my excitement and labors, had so exhausted me that I saw the wisdom of descending to the ground for shade and rest, so down I went, taking the little stone skull with me for safe-keeping. It was but the work of a few moments to free it from the friable matrix and place it in my bag. This done I carefully marked the spot where the balance of the skeleton lay buried and descended the cliffs.

When on solid ground once more, I led my pony into the shade of an overhanging ledge and sat down beside him. Here I

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rested and refreshed myself with a bit of food and drink. The combination of relaxation and nourishment made me feel much better and so delightfully lazy that I settled back against the rock, gazing dreamily into space through half-closed eyes. My pony lowered his head and sniffed at my bag.

"Oho," I said. "Allow me to introduce your hundred-thousandth great-grandfather. I met him only this morning." With that I reached into the bag and drew forth the little stone skull. My pony eyed it curiously—reverently, I thought. He appeared much interested. "It was long ages ago," I said. "These bad lands were a low, marshy region—quite different from now. Even the animals were different. All were dwarfs. They disappeared in time and no one knows what became of them. Everything has changed greatly since the old days; even this little horse, his teeth, his bones. His four toes have become one and he has grown so large."

I paused. The glare on the surface of the Gray Bull River was so dazzling, I gazed from it to the distant hills. I was not at all startled to observe that the latter were slowly settling down. At the same time the valley was rising to meet them. Gradually the land-surface flattened and smoothed itself out. Trees emerged forming a green forest background. Grass, bushes and other vegetation unfolded toward me like a vast green carpet. Not a breath stirred the air. All was deathly still.

At first the vast panorama upon which I gazed, seemed absolutely destitute of life. I felt as though I had been suddenly transported into the Land of Nobody and Nowhere. But as my eyes grew accustomed to my unfamiliar surroundings, gradually I became conscious of a figure standing before me. It was that of an animal which moved and breathed; a small creature no larger than a fox with slender head, graceful figure and dainty

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feet. The latter aroused my particular interest. Each toe—four on the front and three on the hind feet—was tipped with a miniature hoof. The sight of those little feet affected me strangely. I could only sit and stare at them until finally I became aware that their owner was in his turn staring at mine. I managed to find the use of my tongue. “Who are you?” I asked.

“Eohippus the Dawn Horse.”

“Oh!” and for a moment that was all I could say. It was something of a shock, although a pleasant one, to find myself in the presence of a living four-toed Horse.

“You interest me very much,” I stammered. “Four hoofed toes! One rarely sees so many on a horse’s foot.”

“Only three on my hind ones,” Eohippus corrected me very graciously. “You, I see, have only one.” He was looking at my boots as he said this. They appeared to puzzle him. He made a pretty picture as he stood there watching them with his head cocked on one side. I was about to speak again when I noticed a small animal passing near us. I thought it a weasel at first, but, although slightly resembling one, it was quite different; clumsier in appearance and actions. It paid no attention to me, but watched the Dawn Horse closely as it slouched slowly past.

No mistaking that look. It boded ill for my companion. The latter had by this time espied the evil-looking stranger. He fidgeted uneasily, then sighed with relief as the intruder crawled away and disappeared in the grass. I scented complications. Eohippus, as I could see, was much disturbed. “Who was that?” I asked.

“A Killer.”

“A Flesh-eating animal, you mean.”

Eohippus shuddered. “You think so?” he asked timidly.

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"I can hardly bring myself to believe it and yet something tells me that you may be right."

"Of course I am right. That little weasly fellow could not eat anything but flesh if he tried."

The Dawn Horse appeared stunned, but in a moment he recovered himself. "Do you think that the Bearcats will ever fall into such evil ways?" he inquired anxiously.

"Bearcats?" The name puzzled me. I thought myself familiar with every animal that lived under the sun or moon; but here was a new variety. "What is a bearcat?" I asked.

"Something like a Killer, something like a grass-eater," was the answer.

"Which does it resemble most?"

"Killer," Eohippus replied. "When we first came to this country the Bearcats were grass-eaters and looked like them, but time has changed that. Now they slink and crawl and spend their time away from us and with the Killers. The latter are an evil lot. It is said that they are not above eating the flesh of other animals. However, they never ate one of us that I know of." This last statement seemed to give my companion no little comfort.

"The ones killed and eaten would hardly be in a position to tell of their experiences," I suggested. "You are being imposed upon. The Killers are picking you out one by one, and I suspect that your former grass-eating friends, the Bearcats, are getting the bones and leavings after the Killers have gorged themselves. From what you say, I am guessing that a Bearcat is a sort of hyena-animal."

Eohippus appeared greatly disturbed by my remarks. "You mean that they and the Killers are our enemies?"

"I am sure of it."

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"Why, that means war!" the Dawn Horse exclaimed. "Beast fighting beast. What are we to do?"

"Do? Well now, really." I pondered, and as I did so a great wave of pity swept over me. "This pretty little creature is the Horse," I thought to myself. "True, he is but the seed; but what if his growth is blighted and he is not permitted to develop? Man's best friend and helper would be lost to him forever." It was a pretty state of affairs. The Killers had long ago broken away from the grass-eaters. The Bearcats were now doing the same thing. Eohippus would be overwhelmed by his enemies unless someone warned him of his danger. Who but I could warn and watch over him? What a responsibility! The future of the Horse was now in my keeping. With this sudden realization of responsibility, a terrible feeling of loneliness came over me. Here was I, a solitary man, come into being millions of years before my time. Never could I look upon a human face. I had no friends—none but the Dawn Horse. I vowed that henceforth I would devote my life to him and him alone. By guiding him safely through this trying period, mine would be the greatest service that now lay within my power to perform for the benefit of all mankind.

II

A loud snort suddenly disturbed my train of thought. Eohippus was gazing into the distance at a myriad of moving specks which dotted the country for miles around. They seemed to be concentrating in one large central mass. "Something unusual has occurred," my companion said. "My people are all herding together." So saying, he turned away from me and moved toward the distant specks. I rose to my feet and followed, taking good

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care not to tread upon Eohippus as I walked close behind him. Tread upon him? That may sound strange; but it must be remembered that although he was a horse and fully grown, nevertheless he was very, very small.

I made a hasty survey of the country as we proceeded. The rugged hills and gullies of the Big Horn had resolved themselves into a broad lowland covered with long grass and swampy growth. The Gray Bull River had almost disappeared in the background behind a thin line of stunted trees. Far to the west a range of low hills cut the skyline with their gray crests. I seemed to recognize in them the beginning of a vast scar—the Shoshone Mountains—slowly erupting from the earth. The air I breathed was warm and oppressive; the ground moist and yielding under foot. Strange birds arose from scattered patches of protruding vegetation, flapping away with much labor and noise. The vegetation was that of the semi-tropics.

We were gradually drawing nearer to the outskirts of the moving mass, so near that I could distinguish the various individuals. I felt myself in a strange new world, whose inhabitants were even more strange than the climate and country itself. Here were new faces and forms trooping before me in swarms.

Soon we were in the midst of them and formed a part of the flood flowing toward the central mass. The Dawn Horse attracted considerable attention; but none seemed to notice me. I was a giant towering in their midst; and yet, strange to say, I neither jostled nor trod upon one of the vast throng packed closely about me. Neither by look nor act did they betray knowledge of my presence.

Strange, bewilderingly strange, all these animals were to me; and yet as I noted the bony structure concealed for the most part beneath flesh and hide, they appeared less strange and unfamiliar.

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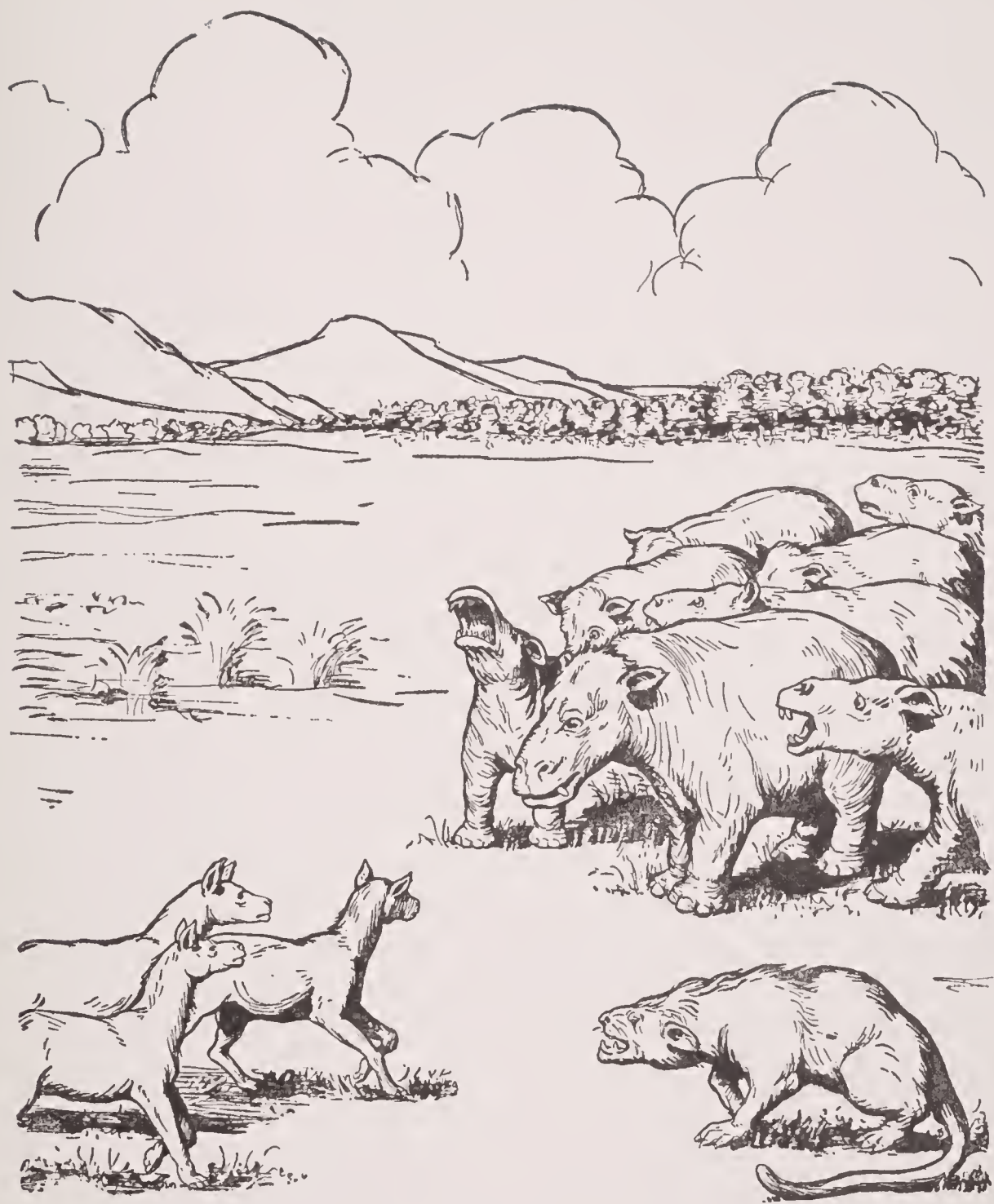
I did not know them; but somehow or other I had learned to know their bones.

Animals of the Dawn Horse's own species began crowding about Eohippus in endless color and variety, gradually forcing the others aside. My companion was evidently an individual of considerable importance, judging by the way they formed an escort about him, leaving him plenty of room in the center. They were of many kinds and sizes. Numerous colts followed their mothers, frisking with each other like kittens. They reminded me very much of kittens with their supple bodies, many-toed feet, and long flexible tails. Not one of the grown animals was larger than a bull-terrier; and yet they were not cat-like nor dog-like at all. There were tapirs too, tiny monkeys, squirrels and various other small creatures too strange to compare with any I knew of.

Farther on we encountered a new set of animals, the Knuckle Joints; larger than the Dawn Horses but quite like them in general appearance. They were more stolid, however, and far less active than the Horses. They wore five toes on each of their four feet. There was something piggish in their manner. I judge that they could be fairly good fighters if anyone offended them.

These Knuckle-Joint animals were simply an enlarged edition of the general type; creatures with five-hoofed feet, loosely connected bodies, heavy tails and elongated heads. The latter seemed to have very little room in them for brains. In this latter respect, Eohippus showed marked superiority over the other animals, whereat I felt a new pride in my little four-toed horse. Although old-fashioned he possessed more than his share of good common sense.

Some of the small animals, although strange, were more or less familiar to me. One of them I passed had his mouth open



THE ARREST OF OXENA

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so that I could see his front teeth. The middle two in each jaw, thick and long, showed that he was a gnawing animal. Another had the making of a hedgehog. I could tell this by his peculiar teeth. The tooth plan in general was 4-11-44; four jaws, eleven teeth in each jaw, forty-four teeth in all. I looked into every open mouth I saw. It was a wonderful experience. I felt like an overgrown child amid the creatures of a toy Noah's Ark, all wound up and ready to go.

By this time we were near the center of the vast herd. My ears caught the sounds of many voices grunting and squealing, "Kill the renegade; Death to the Bearcats!"

Eohippus turned his head and gazed at me. I could not resist the appeal of those soft eyes. They seemed to say:

"Perhaps you know better than I. There may be traitors amongst us, and if so, you are here to guide me."

I edged closer to him and side by side we made our way into the very center of the throng.

Here stood a compact mass of pudgy-bodied animals. They were the largest I had yet seen. In size and general appearance they somewhat resembled the African Hippopotamus. The points of two canine tusks peeped from beneath their upper lips. These were the grass-eating fighters, I judged, by the way they bellowed and snapped their jaws together. They were Ambly Pods or Stumpy Foot animals. As they stood in a semicircle shoulder to shoulder, three ranks deep, one of them, the largest, emerged from the group and advanced to meet the Dawn Horse.

"Oxena has killed a Dawn Colt," he bellowed. "What shall be done with him?"

Eohippus shuddered. "This is terrible news. What has he to say?"

The Ambly Pod gave a signal and soon a squad of his crea-

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tures were hustling the culprit before Eohippus. Oxena was an unwholesome-looking brute, something like a wolverine. He had a large head and a long, heavy tail. His feet were tipped with dog-like claws. He was a Bearcat, a hyena-animal, the kind that fed upon the kill of others and attacked none but the sick or feeble. Oxena's manner now savored of cowardice but even a coward may make a bold stand when cornered. Suddenly his hair bristled and he showed his teeth, all the time glaring fiercely at his captors. At this show of fight, the Stumpy Foot leader confronted him with tusks bared. Oxena quailed and hung his head. "Let me go," he whined. "Why do you treat me so?"

"Yes, why? Shame, shame!" piped a shrill voice.

All eyes were turned toward the speaker, a shifty-eyed, long-bodied individual, the size of a small cat.

"It is the Puppy Mink," someone snorted. "He is as bad as the other one."

"Not so," the small meddler retorted. "I may be a Bearcat, but what of it? Is there any harm in that?"

He glanced at Oxena reassuringly out of his beady eyes. The prisoner's face brightened. His courage revived.

"Yes, what harm?" he growled. And as for the killing, I have plenty of friends to prove my innocence."

"We are all friends here," said Eohippus. "We will listen. I for one will be glad to hear someone prove that what you say is true."

Oxena gazed furtively about him. "They are not here," he said.

"Who?"

"He means the Bearcats," said the Stumpy Foot leader. "Nobody knows where they hide themselves these days."

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"I do," the Puppy Mink volunteered. "If you wish I will go and fetch them."

"Do so," Eohippus commanded.

Instantly the Puppy Mink darted away, squirming through the crowd like a ferret. In a surprisingly short space of time, he emerged in the distance and raced off to the woods. Oxena seemed much pleased with the way his affair was progressing. He gazed boldly about him. His eyes alighted upon a couple of tiny pig-like creatures who had edged up close to him in their eagerness to see and hear everything that was going on. Oxena's face assumed a ferocious expression and he licked his chops so greedily that the two little creatures were much alarmed. They shrank back into the crowd and soon made themselves scarce. Other small fry followed their example until finally only the larger animals remained. What a gathering! The Dawn Horse, Oxena and myself occupied the center. The large Stumpy Foot and Knuckle Joint Animals were massed closely about us with the Tapirs and Horses forming another ring outside of them. It was a court-scene such as I had never looked upon in all my born days—in the open air of Wyoming and conducted entirely by strange animals. Eohippus was the judge; the herd of grass-eaters was the jury; and the Stumpy Foot and large Knuckle Joint animals were there to preserve order. It was to be a fair trial, otherwise Oxena would have been summarily dealt with long before this. He was to be tried before a jury of his peers or rather his former associates. The crime of which he was accused was murder. He had done no worse than any flesh-eating animal; but beasts of prey were not yet generally recognized as such, therefore killing and eating a fellow-creature was a very serious offense.

Oxena was guilty; I felt sure of that. His hyena-like teeth

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were evidence enough for me. But the grass-eaters knew nothing about the meaning of teeth and were delving after the truth in their own way. As an interested spectator and guardian of my little horse, I, with the others, awaited developments in the case of the Herd versus Oxena, or rather in the first break between the flesh-eating and vegetable-eating animals of the Big Horn Basin.

III

A feeling of tenseness was in the air. The assembled animals gazed solemnly at each other as though anticipating trouble of some sort, they knew not what. Oxena's eyes turned from time to time toward the distant woods. Suddenly his face brightened; his tail began to squirm. I looked to the woods and saw a group of animals coming toward us.

Those on the outskirts of the throng were the first to espy the newcomers. It was but a small compact group approaching; but the grass-eaters gave way before them, rolling back and aside in two great waves. They feared the Bearcats, few as the latter were, and meant to give them plenty of room. This commotion communicated itself rapidly to the central mass until it threatened to assume the proportions of a rout. At this juncture the Knuckle Joint and Stumpy Foot Animals drew more closely together in two columns, facing each other and leaving a lane between. The newcomers came rapidly down this lane to where Oxena was sitting, awaiting them. And so, these were the Bearcats! As they drew nearer, I had a fine opportunity to study each one of them. Their leader was a savage-looking brute, so different from Oxena that I ceased to wonder why the grass-eaters were so afraid of him. He was very cat-like and short-faced; in size and form quite similar to a Cougar or Rocky

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Mountain Lion. Of all that vast assemblage, grass-eaters and bearcats both, none was as large and strong as he. His eyes ran swiftly over the Knuckle Joints and Stumpy Foot Animals as he passed between them. A dozen or more strange-looking and mostly small creatures trailed behind him. All stopped in the central open space and seated themselves behind Oxena. One of them, the Bear Dog, rivaled his chief in size but was clumsier—a far less active animal. The grass-eaters had eyes only for these two large brutes but my interest soon became drawn to their smaller companions. These were a strange lot, each a composite of civet and fox, weasel or other flesh-eating type. Several of them were no larger than ferrets and resembled ferrets somewhat. All of them bore the dread stamp of the true flesh-eater; supple bodies, clawed feet, keen eyes and sharp-edged teeth.

These small creatures were those whom Eohippus had termed the Killers. They sat waiting, watching the Knuckle Joints and Stumpy Foot Animals from the corners of their eyes. I was close by and ready, fully determined to protect the Dawn Horse if necessary.

“It is claimed that Oxena killed one of my people,” said the latter addressing the crowd of grass-eaters. “Who can prove it?”

“I”: a small rope-tailed creature emerged from the throng and sprang upon the arched back of one of the Knuckle Joints so as to be better seen and heard. The Killers scowled at such temerity but the newcomer paid no attention to them. He was the Chip Monkey.

“A good witness,” I thought, for he looked like a tree animal with keen wits and eyes. His first words showed that I had made a very good guess.

“I live in the forest,” he chattered boldly. “I was sitting in a tree last night and saw him”—indicating Oxena—“devouring



THE ARRIVAL OF THE BEAR CATS

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an animal, one of the Dawn Colts who lay dead upon the ground."

Everybody gasped and stared at the culprit. The Killers growled angrily and bit their lips. "How could you see at night?" snarled their fierce leader.

"I can see in the dark as well as you," the midget retorted. "How about the night before when you were sneaking up to——?"

"I object," roared the big Killer leader; but nobody heard because of the squeaks, snorts and other noises which now filled the air.

"I saw Oxena too," piped a shrill voice and the Chuck Squirrel hopped out into the open. He too was a tree-climber. He, like the first tale-bearer, was given to night-roving habits. For these reasons alone he appeared well qualified as a second excellent witness.

"The Chip Monkey speaks the truth," he said. "I saw it myself and something else too. Oxena not only ate the Dawn Colt—he killed him."

"Who would believe a Chuck Squirrel?" screeched the Puss Weasel, fiercest of the small Killers. "He is a thief who is forever stealing the birds' eggs."

"But who leaves the young birds for you to eat," was the prompt retort.

"Good for you," I chuckled. Spunk? The Squirrel and Chip Monkey both, had more than their little bodies would hold. The Puss Weasel was fairly swept off his feet.

"Agh-h!" he glared at his accuser fiercely. He could say no more, he was so enraged.

"You have heard our two witnesses," the Dawn Horse now

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said to the prisoner. "What have you to offer in your own behalf?"

"I did come upon the body," Oxena admitted, "but I was not devouring it. Never was I more surprised than when I saw it lying there."

"But you chewed and slobbered," the Chuck Squirrel remonstrated.

"I did but grieve," replied the culprit, rolling his eyes skyward. He appeared so innocent that the Killers smirked at each other as though it were an excellent joke.

"What these two little rascals say, is all lies," Oxena said after a moment's pause. "How can it be true when grass, not flesh, is my food?" He leered at those about him, evidently thinking that his statement was conclusive and that soon he would go scotfree. The voice of the Dawn Horse brought him to his senses.

"Grass your food? We will soon see about that. Bring grass," he shouted. "The accused is about to show us that he has not yet learned how to eat flesh."

The Dawn Horse's commands were instantly obeyed. Grass was brought and piled before the prisoner who grew more and more crestfallen as the arrangements progressed. He looked at the green fodder with a wry face, then glanced appealingly at his friends, the Killers. The latter held their peace, taking cruel satisfaction in his confusion and curious to see what he would do next. The grass-eaters crowded closer around him, eager for him to begin.

"Make haste," bellowed the leader of the Stumpy Foot animals. "We cannot wait on you forever." Oxena's teeth gleamed. In his desperation, he became almost ferocious. His friends edged closer to him. The Knuckle Joints in their turn began to crowd forward. The Stumpy Foot animals rattled their

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tusks. For an instant a clash appeared unavoidable; but the Killers saw that they were vastly outnumbered. They abandoned their threatening attitude. There was no help for Oxena now. The law must take its course. He put on a bold front, bent over the heap of grass and seized a mouthful. That was as far as he got for the moment. I could not help smiling, it was all so ridiculous. It was as though he had made up his mind to take his dose of bad medicine and had lost heart at the last moment. Again the Stumpy Foot animals snapped their jaws together. Oxena made a horrible face, chewed the grass in his mouth and tried to swallow it. The task was beyond his powers. He gasped, choked, spat out the half-chewed morsel and sat with bowed head, a picture of hopeless confusion.

The crowd began to murmur. The Bearcat had proven himself guilty by his own evidence. Surely he could not be permitted to go unpunished. All eyes were turned to Eohippus. He hesitated. The Killers were crouching low as though making ready to spring upon the Knuckle Joint and Stump Foot Animals who in their turn were set and waiting to charge. It was a critical moment. Anything might have precipitated bloody civil war. It was high time for me to take a hand.

"Oxena is a flesh-eater," I whispered to the Dawn Horse. "Waste no more time proving that. Danger threatens. The Bearcats and Killers have joined forces against you and yours. Rid yourself of Oxena and his friends. Act quickly before it is too late."

I did not add that I could then see numerous figures emerging one by one from the distant woods. If the grass-eaters did not bestir themselves, they would soon be overwhelmed by their fierce enemies.

But the sharp-eyed Killer leader had also caught sight of

THE DAWN HORSE

the distant figures. He sprang to his feet and bared his teeth at the crowd. "Oxena is innocent," he snarled. "Come, let us go."

"Good! Tell your friends not to interfere with them," I said to the Dawn Horse. "The quicker they go, the better. Their friends are swarming to their aid."

The Dawn Horse trembled. He began to realize his danger.

"Let them pass," he called to the Stumpy Foot Animals. The latter snorted and stamped their feet angrily but fell back obediently nevertheless. The Killers with Oxena in their midst, passed through.

"And now tell your people to fly and save themselves," I directed. "Quick, the Killers are coming. They cannot catch you if you will only run."

But there was no need for this latter warning. Others had already detected the approaching figures and given the alarm. The vast herd of grass-eaters wavered, then burst into panic-stricken flight across the lowlands like leaves blown by the driving wind. The spell was broken. Killers and Bearcats both arose from their crawling positions and hurried after, barking and howling at the top of their lungs.

The next moment I found myself in the midst of a sea of swirling animals which bore me along like a chip upon the ocean tide. The Dawn Horse was whisked away from me, and although I hurried after him as fast as I could, the distance between us rapidly widened. My breath came in gasps. My speed slackened with exhaustion because of the swiftness of the pace. The last of the grass-eaters sped past me and I stood alone. I looked behind me. Killers and Bearcats both had abandoned the chase and were trooping back to the woods. The Killers were not persistent runners and detested a long stern chase. The

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grass-eaters would return sooner or later and could be dealt with one at a time. As for the Bearcats, now that they had shown their true colors, they too must learn to crawl and spring upon their prey.

I looked before me. The distant horizon had risen and become a line of hills upon whose crest stood a little creature with head turned as though looking for something or somebody behind him. He was far away.

"Wait, wait, little horse," I cried, but he was too distant to hear me. The figure resumed its way and disappeared over the hills. I endeavored to follow, but the ground before me, which was continually rising, suddenly shot up to a great height and barred my further advance.

"Lost," I groaned. "My little horse has left me and I will see him no more."

Then came a sudden change. It was as though I had been whisked away into another world. A flood of fire burst through the sky overhead and almost blinded me with its dazzling light. The glare and heat made my temples throb. A gigantic head suddenly thrust itself between me and the sun. I opened my eyes wide and stared about me in bewilderment. The marshy lowlands had disappeared. The rugged hills and gullies of the Bad Lands surrounded me on every side. The Gray Bull River flowed at my feet.

All had changed. The passing moments yawned infinite time. I was half-sitting with my back to the rock which protected me from the direct rays of the scorching noon-day sun. My pony's soft muzzle was sniffing that which I held within my hand, a little stone skull—the skull of Eohippus.

INTRODUCTION TO "POËBRO"

From Dawn Recent (Eocene) times until not so very long ago our United States was the home of the Camel. He left us for his own good reasons, which is a pity, for had he stayed we could now have caravans trooping across Nevada and other waterless regions, just as they do on the Sahara Desert. He marched off into Asia and Africa, probably by way of Alaska, just as unconcernedly as an easterner would take a trip to California, while several of his relatives, the Llama and Guanaco, branched off to South America. Our country has seen the last of the Camel in a wild state, and only as a circus actor has he ever returned to the land which gave him birth. However, there is no use crying over spilled milk. Our Camel is gone, and we have seen the last of him. And yet, if the truth be told, his disappearance was somewhat in the nature of a trade. Asia got him, also our horses and tapirs, but she had to pay with bison, moose, elk and some bears thrown in. Whenever animals left their homes, others took their places. Land was never permitted to lie idle if it contained food and drink.

This tramping from one continent to another is well illustrated in the Little Recent (Oligocene) rocks of the White River in South Dakota. This is truly an inspiring region with its lofty towers and battlements of brilliantly colored clays, shales and sandstones, piled on top of one another to a height of one thousand feet. These rocks are filled with bones of ancient animals and in few other localities are they so numerous and well preserved. They were the first American Age of Mammal deposits to be systematically explored and our great museums are filled with the skeletons found in them. An extraordinarily large variety of beasts is represented. Besides survivors from the

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Dawn Recent (Eocene) period, numerous visitors may be recognized; emigrants came from Europe and Asia to try their fortunes in the New World. As might be expected, this invasion of eastern hordes with keen appetites aroused considerable apprehension among the natives who were obliged to bestir themselves to retain their fair share of food and water. Some failed as did certain of the visitors, but among the successful ones was a small creature of modest mien who now occupies a conspicuous place in ancient animal history. This individual, a native American, was Poëbro (Poëbrotherium), ancestor of the modern Camel.

POËBRO THE TOY CAMEL

I

To look at him no one would have suspected Poëbro of being a camel, for his two-toed feet were unpadded at the soles and his hump was but a faint suspicion. He was small too; about two feet tall at the shoulders and his legs were of only moderate length. His neck was comparatively short, for not much of it was required to bring his mouth to the ground. Therefore he could not curve it and stand with head settled back sleepy-eyed, chewing and working his thick lips as does the Camel we know. And yet, in spite of these failings, Poëbro was an honest cross-my-heart camel, and there is no use denying that. He may not have been much to look at, but appearances are sometimes deceiving, for his pedigree was as long as your arm.

His early schooldays were spent in the southwestern corner of Wyoming, the Bridger country. Of course it was too soon in his life for him to think of studying to be a camel, for he was no larger than a jack-rabbit, and had no idea what he wanted to be when he grew up, and yet even then he was determined on making a name for himself and being something distinctive. After a time, Southwestern Wyoming began to look too slow and old-fashioned for him, so he moved farther east to the Washakie country. Soon he tired of this, too, and shifted northwestward. As luck would have it, this brought him into the White River region of South Dakota. This was fortunate for him, in that

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the country south of the Black Hills had for some time been preparing itself for a big land boom and Poëbro arrived just in time to reap the benefit. Warm air, mild breezes and abundant moisture had been long busy on this part of the map, so that the little Camel found it well-stocked with tender grass, fresh water and all manner of nice things. He believed with good reason that no more charming spot could be found in all the world. Other settlers began flocking in; the Three-toed Horse, Hornless Deer, Running Rhinoceros and others too numerous to mention.

The Horse was about the size of a sheep, larger than Poëbro, but more slender and graceful and as much like a modern horse as might have been expected in those days, except that his legs were less rigid and he wore three toes on each of his feet. True, the middle one did practically all of the work and the smaller two, dangling one each side of it, were more ornamental than useful, but that did not prevent his being a Three-toed Horse. How he lost the two useless toes and finished up by walking about on the nail of his last remaining one, is another story.

The Hornless Deer was the smallest of the quartette, a dainty little deer-like creature about a yard long.

The Running Rhinoceros was a trim-bodied, slender-legged animal; more like a stout pony than a Rhinoceros. He wore no nosehorn, although his muzzle arched strongly, offering a stout support for a horn if he wanted to grow one. He was much larger and heavier than any one of his three companions.

The four of them were most congenial. Being the country's original settlers and all of ancient family, they formed the aristocracy and were treated like aristocrats by the other animals who came later to settle about them. They were known as the Plains Folk to distinguish them from the common herd or Forest Dwellers who kept to the woods or near the river.

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This river flowed through their domains. It was not the White River nor the Cheyenne, but another one, now long dried up and gone. Forests of wonderful trees lined it on both sides. Rushes and water-plants grew thickly along its banks. On the western side inland, the trees melted away into fertile meadows, then a country bare of vegetation extending to the distant horizon—the barren wastes of the sand dunes.

Poëbro and his friends spent most of their time upon the meadows, although not infrequently they went to the river to drink and bathe. The meadows were their favorite haunt, but having come to believe that all things were intended for their own special benefit, they appropriated the river bank, too. This latter was set aside as a park. Casual intruders were warned away, and for a time they did with it about as they pleased.

Being aristocrats, the Plains Folk did nothing that might be called work. Perhaps if they had spent less time idling and paid more attention to business, their affairs would have turned out better; for things happen sometimes, and when one least expects them.

One morning they were lolling about on the meadow when their nerves were rudely disturbed by the sound of scuffling feet. Four heads rose in unison and four pairs of eyes became centered upon an animal coming toward them. All recognized the Pig Sheep, the Park's headgardener. It was his duty as caretaker to crop the grass, trim the shrubs, etc. His wages were the cuttings and trimmings, so he saw to it that the place was kept spick and span and his stomach well filled to boot. As he halted before the Plains Folk he puffed and blew, so great was his hurry and excitement.

"Some strangers are intruding in the Park," he bleated loudly. "You must come at once and drive them away."

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"Who are they?" Poëbro demanded; "and please remember to whom you are talking. It is for you to take orders, not give them."

"I never saw their like before," came the answer in more subdued tones. "But they are behaving terribly, sir. Something must be done at once."

Poëbro laid his head upon the grass and half-closed his eyes. "Tell them to go away," he yawned. "If talking does no good, use force."

The Pig Sheep slunk away, shaking his head. He was not long absent, and his measure of success might have been judged by his appearance when he returned. Mud covered him from head to foot. His nose was swollen and he had acquired a black eye. One hind leg seemed to have suffered damage, for he limped.

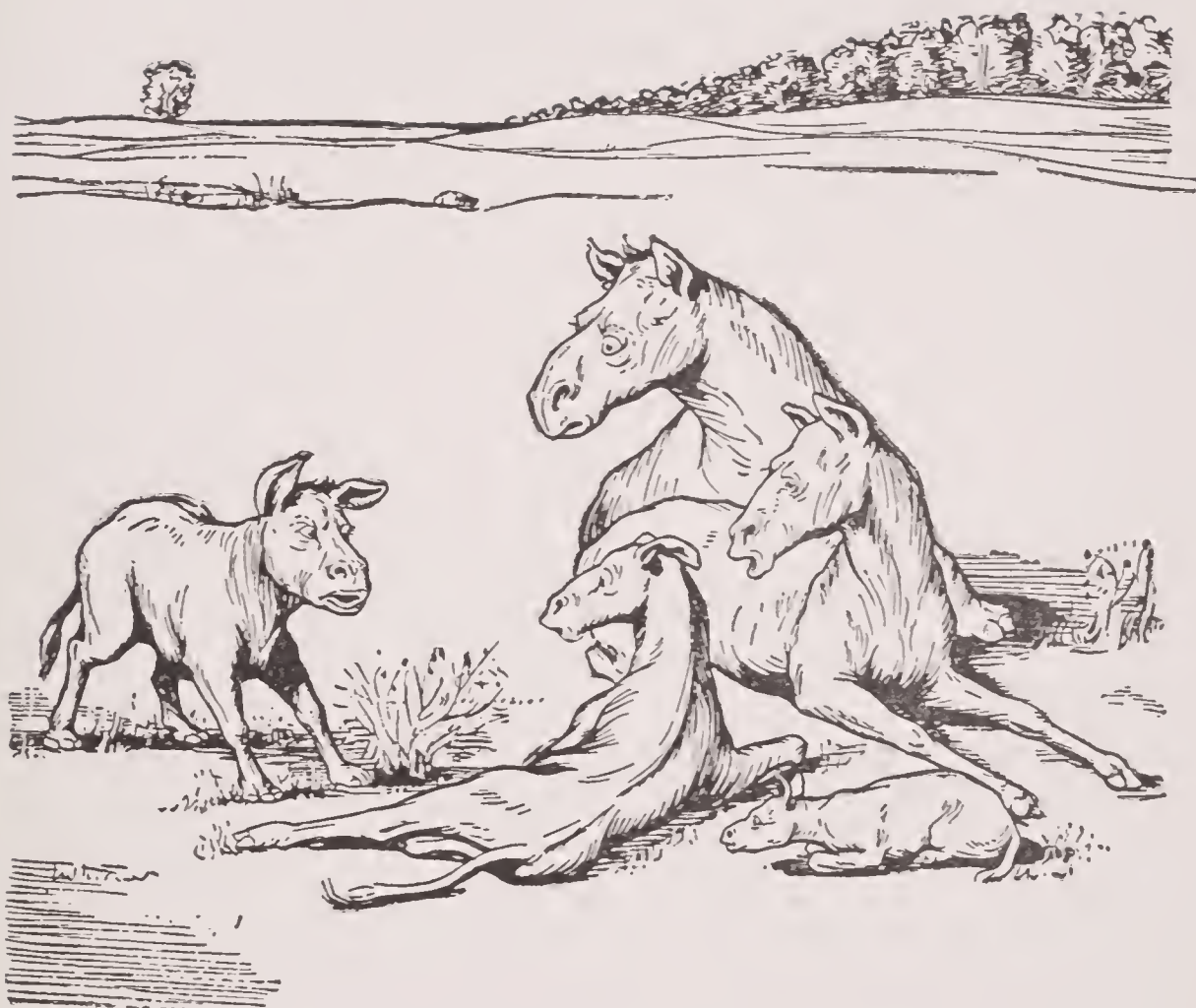
At sight of him the Plains Folk scrambled to their feet. Evidently somebody had been rude. Their surprise changed to rage as their humble servant told his story.

"I ordered them away as you told me to," he said, "but they paid no attention. Then I attempted to use force. What happened after that I cannot quite remember. I seemed to be flying in all directions—principally up—with nothing but air to cling to. Finally I landed somewhere with a bump. That was all; but I think it quite enough, and with your kind permission I will go away for a few days to rest and calm my nerves."

It was a touching narrative. The Pig Sheep presented a most pathetic and woe-begone appearance as he told it.

"We will look into this matter at once," Poëbro burst out angrily. "These strangers must be made an example of. Let us go and attend to the matter ourselves."

So he led the way post-haste across the meadows and through



"SOME STRANGERS ARE INTRUDING IN THE PARK"

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the forest until the four of them stood upon the river bank. Here they stopped and stared, too amazed for words, for what they saw there was enough to open anybody's eyes.

The Park presented a sorry sight. The grass was trampled and torn, the shrubs beaten down and the sloping banks disfigured by wallows and mud holes. All around, and doing nothing but stand, sit and lie, were a host of strange animals. Such a fat, stupid and ungainly lot, the Plains Folk had never seen. Some were large, others medium-sized; long-legged, short-legged with pudgy bodies and heavy noses bearing one or two horns, in some cases none at all. It seemed as though every rhinoceros in the world had come to desecrate this hallowed spot.

Many creatures other than these first-named were present in great number. They resembled the Rhinos, but were larger and more stoutly built. These were the Titan Beasts. Most of them wore nose-horns in all sizes from small to large. They wore them in pairs, not one behind the other as did the Rhinos, but branching out sideways from a thick root to form the letter V. All had small, piggy eyes and scooped-out foreheads where brains ought to have been. None moved. Except for the occasional whisking of a tail or ear, they might have passed for clay, or rather mud statues, for this latter material plastered them from head to foot.

"What a disgusting lot," Poëbro sniffed in amazement. "How did they come here? And so many! Wait, while I go and speak my mind to them."

He tripped down the bank, taking good care not to soil his shiny hoofs in the mud which the intruders had scattered thoughtlessly about. Before him stood Big Horn, one of the Titan Beasts gazing dully into space and spanking the flies with his piglike tail. He was a pudding sort of animal, with nose-horns, legs and

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things sticking out all over him. He looked, not at, but right through the little Camel as the latter halted before him.

They were a strongly-contrasted pair, standing there close to and facing each other; on the one hand, the dainty little Camel, neat and trim from head to foot; on the other, the burly Titan Beast, eyes, ears and mouth buried in fat and heavy skin, and plastered all over with mud. Poëbro had no thought of danger. He would have ventured even closer had he not been fearful of soiling himself on the dirty brute.

"I wish it distinctly understood," he said in his haughtiest manner, "that this is our park and no strangers are permitted here. You and your friends will now clean up this mess and leave at once."

Big Horn merely flicked a fly off his rump and continued gazing dreamily into space. Poëbro was greatly annoyed at such rudeness. "You must leave—at once," he repeated, raising his voice to a higher key; but the Titan Beast paid not the slightest attention.

"He must be deaf," thought the little Camel, so he stepped closer and fairly shouted his commands in the other's ear. The ear in question moved forward half an inch, but that seemed to be the best Big Horn could do by way of response.

At this, Poëbro flew into a great rage. "Miserable brute!" he screamed, "if you do not answer or do as I say I will chastise you."

"Womph! womph!" Poëbro turned quickly and saw one of the intruders coming toward him along the bank. This was another variety, the River Pig, a smaller and more slender animal than either the Rhinos or Titan Beasts, but a most surly-looking brute. He halted a few paces from the little Camel and eyed him threateningly.

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"What are you doing here, little pest?" he grunted coarsely. "Cannot you see that this good creature is trying to rest? Now run away and do not disturb him again, or I will toss you into the river."

His teeth gleamed so menacingly that Poëbro retreated in alarm. He returned to his friends in a great rage, for talking seemed to produce no results, and he knew nothing else to do.

How can we rid the place of these disgusting beasts?" he scolded. "They will not even listen to me, and yet we cannot let them stay here."

"How can we prevent them?" the Three-toed Horse inquired. "They are too big and too many for us. Better return to the meadows. They may go away of their own accord if we leave them alone."

The Hornless Deer and Running Rhinoceros considered this a very good plan. The former was a timid little animal and preferred going around to bumping his head against difficult problems; the latter could not lightly ignore his relationship to the newcomers. He was a rhinoceros—a more refined article than they, and yet of the same general brand. He agreed with the Three-toed Horse that the intruders must be left in possession of the field for the present.

So they returned to the meadows—all but Poëbro. The little Camel's pride was deeply wounded, and he was determined that he at least would not yield so easily. He tripped along the bank, studying the various individuals as they remained immovable in their peculiar poses. None of them paid the slightest attention to him. He descended the bank to drink, and was about to lower his mouth to the water when he clenched his jaws together angrily at sight of a clump of rushes growing in the shallows. Even they were crushed and beaten about as though ponderous



"HE MUST BE DEAF" THOUGHT THE LITTLE CAMEL

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feet had trampled there. He was moving toward them for a closer examination when a muffled snort sounded from their midst. There was another of those awful Rhinos glaring at him as it stood knee-deep in the water. Poëbro could no longer contain himself. "Go away, dirty beast!" he screamed. "This is my river. You must go away."

At this the burly intruder splashed his way ashore and faced the little Camel with mouth wide open. He was a Water Rhinoceros, and wore no nose horn; but his long upper canine tusks were enough to frighten anybody. By this time Poëbro had worked himself into a terrible state of nerves. He simply would not permit those beasts to remain, and yet what could he do? Finally he ceased struggling against Fate and returned to the meadows, where his friends awaited him.

The situation—as far as the Plains Folk were concerned—became more and more difficult each day. Rhinos and Titan Beasts continued trooping in until the river bank fairly swarmed with them. Whenever the Plains Folk went there to drink and bathe they found the water so muddied they turned up their noses and refused to touch it. To their complaints the ill-mannered strangers merely grunted: "Those who are too particular can look for their water somewhere else."

Then a fresh consignment arrived—a herd of Giant Pigs. By this time the river border had become so crowded these later arrivals were obliged to seek the woods to find room for themselves. Luckily for the Forest Dwellers, who were already there, the bulk of them were tree animals; but they passed many sleepless nights with all that grunting and squealing going on beneath them. With this swine influx, Poëbro and his friends felt that their limit of endurance was nearly reached. The Pigs were an even surlier lot than the Rhinos and Titan Beasts and much more aggressive.



THE GIANT PIGS REBUFF THE PLAINS FOLK

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Many of them were as large and strong as bulls. Their heads were simply enormous, their tusks enough to terrify the stoutest heart, and they were surprisingly active, considering their size. They told the Plains Folk, without mincing words, that they would do well to keep out of the woods and stay on the meadows, where they belonged.

Did the Plains Folk do as bidden? You may be sure they did. Imagine a herd of bulls with wild boars' heads. One such animal would make anybody think twice before choosing to offend him.

What brought about this invasion of Giant Pigs, Rhinos and Titan Beasts? Why did they come to this particular spot instead of going somewhere else? These were questions that Poëbro and his friends asked themselves without receiving satisfactory answers.

The fact was that the strangers were emigrants newly arrived from Asia and Europe. Somehow they had learned of the wonderful region south of the Black Hills, and decided it was well worth their time and trouble to have a look. It was a long, hard journey. Steamships, railroad trains, motor trucks and all such means of conveyance were unheard of in those days, and animals traveled about on their own feet. However, North America and Asia were joined together somewhere in the Pacific Ocean, and that made matters easier. How long it took them to make the journey nobody knows—nor cares. Enough to say that finally they arrived and found the White River region up to and well above their standards. It was a quiet, restful place, with warm climate and plenty to eat and drink. Everything suited them, so they decided to stay.

The Plains Folk soon realized this to their sorrow, but they could do no more than make the best of a bad situation. The

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Rhinos and Titan Beasts held the river and its banks, while the Giant Pigs ruled the forests. This left only the meadows for the Plains Folk, but as soon as they had grown a bit accustomed to changed conditions, they really got along very well there, for it furnished the food they liked best. Occasional streams and pools of water gave them plenty to drink. This was more than they deserved, considering the snobbish way they had treated others in the past. They had been taught a good lesson, and would have been much better for it, had not unforeseen complications arisen to give them real cause for worry.

Browsing and grazing animals never went about in large numbers without having a host of fierce beasts trailing after them. Now that the Rhinos and their brood had come to stay, the others stayed, too. Being flesh-eaters, these hangers-on preyed upon the vegetable-eaters, hiding in the woods and springing out upon the more peaceful animals whenever the chance offered.

The beasts of prey consisted of big otter-like minks, bearcats and civet-dogs. Seeing the Plains Folk upon the meadows they would crawl up as close as they could without being seen and then dash upon them. But the Plains Folk were sharp-eyed and swift of foot, and could not be caught by such methods. At the first sign of danger they darted away like the wind, and no flesh-eater was fleet enough to catch them.

The troubles of Poëbro and his friends seemed to be multiplying, and yet, all things considered, a brush now and then with the flesh-eaters really did them good. It kept them keen of eye and ear, and improved their physical condition just as continued rebuffs by the River Beasts had improved their manners. The attacks of their fierce enemies merely sharpened their wits and created many a diversion. They were beginning to enjoy their new life and find much happiness in it when a new and terrible danger

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descended upon them from a clear sky. This was the unexpected arrival of the Sabre Cat, one whose two upper canine teeth were developed into curved daggers. Although no larger than a panther cub, he was to the Plains Folk a most formidable enemy, not merely because of his sabre fangs, but because of his long legs and lean muscular body, so well adapted for swift running, for as a racing competitor of fleet-footed animals the Plains Folk soon learned to their consternation that he was a match for themselves.

II

The Plains Folk took counsel among themselves. All realized that the Sabre Cat was a deadly menace. If they could not circumvent him somehow, they must either go away or face destruction. The Three-toed Horse voiced the general sentiment.

"Our affairs are drifting from bad to worse," he said. "First the River Beasts ruin our park, then the Giant Pigs turn our woods upside down, and finally the flesh-eaters come to destroy our lives. The Sabre Cat is as swift-footed as we are. What shall we do?"

"I might suggest something," replied the Running Rhinoceros with some show of embarrassment. "The River Beasts, as you may know, are relatives of mine. I did not invite them here," he snorted, as his three friends pricked up their ears and glared at him. "I have not the remotest idea where they came from. But now that they are here and cannot be gotten rid of, my relationship to them may be turned to good account."

"How?" demanded Poëbro suspiciously. Although forced to accept the situation, his opinion of the River Beasts had not improved one whit. The Running Rhinoceros was observant enough to see what was in the little Camel's mind.

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"Now be careful, Poëbro, or you will spoil everything," he remonstrated. "We are in a desperate plight, and dare not be over particular. I am related to the River Beasts and I cannot help that; but it gives me an idea which I believe will work out nicely. I slipped past the Giant Pigs and down to the river this morning. There I met Brontus."

"Brontus? Who is he?" Poëbro demanded.

"One of the Titan Beasts; the largest, their leader, and not a bad creature when once you know him. However, he is like all the rest of them—mean and stubborn or good-natured and agreeable, according to the notion he takes. Things have come to the point where we must cultivate his friendship."

The Hornless Deer and Three-toed Horse nodded approval. Poëbro scowled and ground his teeth together, but said nothing.

The Running Rhinoceros assumed a more confident air. Poëbro might be stubborn, but he was only one against three.

"Once on friendly terms with Brontus," he went on, "we will have no trouble with the others. In this way we avoid the Sabre Cat and insure our safety, also our water supply. It is very simple."

"Simple as far as the water is concerned," snapped Poëbro; "but as to our avoiding the Sabre Cat, I do not see your point at all." The little Camel was by nature timid and feared the swift hunter above all things.

"Simple if you will see it," the other retorted. "The Sabre Cat dare not attack the Giant Pigs or River Beasts. They are too big and strong for him. If we stay near them, they will protect us. Brontus hinted as much to me; but then, as I said before, we must be careful the way we treat him."

The Hornless Deer and Three-toed Horse again signified their approval. Poëbro hesitated, torn by contending emotions.

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His fear of the Sabre Cat vied with contempt for the vulgar rabble; but it took him only a moment to decide. His eyes blazed, his nostrils swelled scornfully. "Associate with the River Beasts?" he stormed. "I say, no—no—no! Not one of those dirty brutes will have my friendship, even though I be driven into the Sabre Cat's jaws."

He might have said more, for the very idea of his descending to the River Beasts' social plane was more than he could bear. Suddenly a change came over him. His tongue became paralyzed and froze to the roof of his mouth; his eyes started from his head; his whole body trembled as he stared half-dead with fear at something not a stone's throw distant.

There lay a large boulder and a pair of fierce eyes were peering from behind it. They were the eyes of his dreaded enemy. Espying the Plains Folk from a distance the Sabre Cat had crept up unobserved, skillfully making use of every shrub and stone to conceal his approach. A few yards more and he would have been well within striking range; but fortunately for the Plains Folk, Poëbro caught sight of him just in time. The little Camel managed to find the use of his tongue.

"The Sabre Cat!" he screamed. "Run—run for your lives!"

Out leaped the fleet racer and the Plains Folk scattered in all directions.

Poëbro heard the patter of soft feet close at his heels. He snatched one quick glimpse behind him. The Sabre Cat had singled him out and was racing after him with the swiftness of the wind. A fresh burst of speed, which taxed his utmost powers, and Poëbro barely maintained his lead. He fairly flew over the meadow, but the Sabre Cat kept pace with him, traveling at a tremendous rate with his long leaps and bounds.

Poëbro despaired. Never before had he attained such speed,



POËBRO PURSUED BY THE SABRE CAT

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and yet he could no more than hold even with his relentless pursuer. There must be an end some time, and soon. His strength was failing rapidly. He could not long maintain that terrific pace. In his terror and desperation, the little Camel suddenly turned and dashed toward the vast, open country—the barren wastes of the sand dunes.

His pursuer stopped short as his feet touched the first patch of soft, yielding sand. To him the desert seemed a dreadful place. He snarled horribly as he watched Poëbro speed swiftly away. “That little Camel will soon be mine,” he said between his clenched teeth. “He must have water, and he will find none in the sand country. All I need do is watch and catch him when he returns.”

Poëbro never halted in his flight across the sand dunes until he felt sure that the Sabre Cat had abandoned the chase, then he stopped. Sand—sand everywhere. Its emptiness and vastness were appalling. In the distance behind him, where desert merged into meadow, stood his dreaded enemy.

“What if I had not seen him and he had secured a quicker start?” The idea gave him the shivers, and he decided to stay where he was for the present. Poëbro hated the sand country; but the Sabre Cat apparently liked it even less. The place possessed no attractions, but it was a haven of refuge and the little Camel was more than glad so to make use of it for the time being.

It was now late in the afternoon. Poëbro began to feel hungry and thirsty, too. He looked about him. “I am safe enough from the Sabre Cat,” he thought. “Nobody would choose to annoy me here; but the question is, how am I going to eat and drink?”

Something of a problem. True, it was a safe place to be in—for a time. There was no end of room to run around in; but

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green grass and water were conspicuous by their absence. Poëbro was not long in discovering this, and it worried him greatly. "I must eat and I must drink," he whimpered. "I wish that mean brute would go away and let me alone."

But the Sabre Cat would not go away. The little Camel could see him in the distance moving about upon the meadow. None of Poëbro's companions was in sight. He felt hungry and thirsty and lonesome, too, and would have given much to be with his friends, munching sweet grass and cooling his throat with refreshing drink. But hunger, thirst and craving for companionship could not equal his fear of the Sabre Cat. As night came on he withdrew farther into the sand country, for he was fearful that his enemy might sneak up and catch him unawares if he stayed too close to the meadows.

His surroundings were strange to him, and he passed a bad night. With the first appearance of morning light he made off for the meadows, hoping that the Sabre Cat had tired of his vigil and gone away. As he came in sight of the grassy region, at first his heart fluttered with joyful anticipation. His friends were not there, to be sure, but it would seem that the Sabre Cat was not there, either. A stone lay upon the ground; otherwise the meadow was bare, except for the grass that grew upon it. The sight of that grass filled the little Camel's heart to bursting. Soon his stomach would be in the same condition, provided he got safely to it. He quickened his pace and then—the stone suddenly came to life and bounded toward him with the speed of the wind.

Poëbro was half mad with hunger and thirst, but his legs and wind were still in working order, and he made good use of them. Back he flew into the sand country with the Sabre Cat hot after him.

For a second time Poëbro outran his enemy and escaped.

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The Sabre Cat soon dropped the chase. He merely wished to frighten the little Camel and keep him away from the meadows. Hunger and thirst would do their work in a short time, and then he would have an opportunity to eat his fill of camel flesh.

Meanwhile Poëbro was speeding across the desert, nor did he stop until he could no longer see the meadows behind him. He had slowed down to a trot and was dropping into a fast walk when he saw to the left of him a shallow depression with the green tops of something protruding from its bottom. He turned in that direction and discovered a puddle of water with long grass growing out of it. The next moment he was bending over it, prepared for a long, deep drink.

The water was so hot and foul it almost made him sick; but it was better than nothing. He drank only a little, however; just enough to moisten his tongue and throat, then he turned his attention to the grass. Rank? Worse than that. He screwed up his face at his first taste of the bitter juice. It was hard work chewing it to a pulp, and still worse gulping it down. Even his tough, leathery stomach shifted uneasily as it received the first consignment. It was empty enough to endure almost anything, but that dose of foul water and nasty green mass following closely after was certainly straining a point. However, it did its best to manage the horrible stuff, hoping that it would never have to do so again.

Poëbro ate but sparingly of the grass, just enough to keep him alive for another day. Then, when nearly dead with hunger and thirst, he again endured the operation of eating and drinking at that filthy pool, thus managing to exist for several days. But finally he could stand it no longer, and decided to return to the meadows, even though this meant another race with the Sabre Cat. Perhaps the beast had wearied of his vigil and gone away.

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Poëbro hoped so, for this would give him a chance to secure the food and drink which he sorely craved.

So he journeyed across the desert to the meadows and nearly wept for joy when he saw that his enemy had disappeared. Of course the latter, too, must eat, and no doubt he was away somewhere attending to his own wants. However, there was no telling just how soon he would return, and so Poëbro made good use of the opportunity afforded him. He hurried to the nearest grass plot and ate as he had never eaten in all his life. His hunger being appeased, he trotted to one of the well-known drinking places and attended to his thirst. It was a feast fit for a king. Never had he so enjoyed himself. He would have liked to lie down and doze, and thus round out a heavenly morning, but of course, that was asking too much. The Sabre Cat might return at any moment, and Poëbro shuddered as he reflected that with all that grass and water in his stomach, he would have a hard time if it came to another of those nerve-racking runs.

He could not long stay where he was; that was certain. He hated the very idea of going back alone to the sand country; then, too, there were his friends to consider. What had become of them? They must have gone to the river. He recalled what the Running Rhinoceros had said about making friends with the Titan Beasts. He pursed his lips scornfully. Yes, it must be that the Plains Folk had taken refuge with them. He would go and see.

He crossed the meadows to the woods, meanwhile keeping a sharp lookout for the Sabre Cat and other enemies that might be roving about. However, he managed to reach the forest unmolested. He was making his way gingerly through the underbrush when he heard footsteps approaching. He stopped and remained perfectly still so that he might escape being seen or heard. The

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unknown kept on and was almost abreast of him when Poëbro gave a squeal of delight and jumped out to meet him. The new-comer was the Three-toed Horse. Both were mightily pleased to meet, for each considered the other his dearest friend.

"And so you escaped the Sabre Cat," the Three-toed Horse exclaimed joyfully. "It seems too good to be true. Where have you been hiding yourself?"

"In the sand country," Poëbro replied. "The brute would not follow me there."

"Of course not," said the other. "The place would not keep a squirrel alive. I do not see how you managed to exist."

"I know," the little Camel sniffed, making a horrible face as he remembered his daily dose of medicine at that stinking pool. "The grass and water are the worst I ever tasted, but even they are better than being killed by the Sabre Cat."

"Poor old Poëbro," sighed the Three-toed Horse, "you have had more than your share of trouble, but soon everything will be all right. You must return with me. Matters are now all nicely arranged. The River Beasts are our friends, and you need worry no more about that wretched Sabre Cat."

Poëbro's manner became frigid in an instant. He raised his head and gazed coldly at the other. "Your friends?" he sniffed. "Who would imagine that you could come to that? I know I couldn't."

"I may be less particular than you," the Three-toed Horse explained. "Something had to be done, for we knew that sooner or later the Sabre Cat would catch us if we remained upon the meadows. You chose the sand country; we, the River Beasts, and I warrant that we are more satisfied with our choice than you are with yours."

"How did you arrange it?"

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“Easily enough. The Running Rhinoceros had already prepared the way and only a little care on our part was needed to insure complete success. You see, these River Beasts are too stupid to learn much of anything. They know how to eat, drink and sleep, but not much else. They are stubborn as well as stupid, and are about as mean as any animals I know of when they take a strong dislike to anyone. On the other hand, they are remarkably good-tempered when treated and spoken to kindly. They had not enough sense to see just how we did it, but our soft words pleased them, and they gave us everything we wanted: food, drink and protection from the Sabre Cat.”

“And dearly bought,” the little Camel muttered in tones of deepest scorn. His friend looked at him sharply.

“Now be sensible, Poëbro,” he protested. “Things have changed since the old days; and we must change with them. Your pride will not help you. It may be too late when you discover this. Even Brontus, with all of his dullness, was sharp enough to see that you were not with us. He and all the rest know what you think of them. The first thing he said after we had made our peace with him, was: ‘What has become of that conceited little Camel? No objection to your making your home here, but I will have something else to say if he tries to sneak in. Where is he now?’ I told about our brush with the Sabre Cat and how he had probably caught and killed you, but Brontus flew into a great rage. ‘I know where he is and what he is doing,’ he bellowed. ‘I know everything that is going on about here, even on the meadows and in the sand country beyond.’ You see,” the little Horse explained, “if you do not join us soon it will be too late. Brontus may never give you another chance.”

But Poëbro only shook his head obstinately. “Those River Beasts are more than I can endure,” he said. “Imagine my treat-

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ing them as equals. I will have nothing to do with them. I won't go."

His friend pleaded and strove to reason with him, but in vain. The little Camel had neither hunger, thirst nor the Sabre Cat to worry him at the moment, and he was thinking only of his contempt for the River Beasts. Things had not yet come to such a pass that he need demean himself by associating with such low and vulgar animals. No use arguing; he would live his life alone if he had to.

There seemed nothing more to be said, so the two parted. Now that he had learned how matters stood, the little Camel returned to the meadows. He had a faint hope that he might be permitted to remain there unmolested, for he saw no sign of the Sabre Cat. He was even thinking of lying down upon the cool grass for a rest when, swish! something shot through the air and frightened him almost to death. Away he flew, only to slow up after a short run on discovering that it was merely a large Mink that had so startled him. However, this incident ruffled his nerves considerably, and when a bit later a pack of Civet Dogs rushed out at him from behind some bushes, he considered it high time for him to get back into the sand country, where he belonged. It seemed only a moment since he had last eaten and slaked his thirst, but his recent run and the scorching sun had heated him greatly and already he was beginning to feel the need of food and drink. However, he dared not return to the meadows, for those Civet Dogs had not yet gone away, and no doubt the Sabre Cat was hiding somewhere near.

"I have that ill-smelling pool, anyhow," he consoled himself. "If worst comes to worst, I can get along with that for a time." He turned his steps in that direction to make sure it was still there and could be depended upon. To his surprise and consterna-

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tion, he saw a cat-like figure sprawled upon the sand beside it, and fast asleep. That figure was the Sabre Cat. "That Camel has found water somewhere," he determined as the days passed and Poëbro managed to exist away from the meadows; so he had ventured into the desert that very day and discovered what he was after. Poëbro's tracks were plainly visible. "I can rest here and catch him when he returns. If he does not return before long I will go back to the meadows and find him."

This seemed a very good plan, so the Sabre Cat lay down to rest. Unfortunately for him, he not only rested but fell so soundly asleep that Poëbro had time to hurry away before his persecutor could awake and follow him.

The little Camel was indeed in dire straits. His enemy now guarded not only the meadows but the pool, too. Bad as the latter was, Poëbro would have given anything to possess it undisturbed. He tried to find another, but without success. Drinking holes in the desert were decidedly scarce, for little rain fell there, and what did fall dried up faster than it could accumulate. The days passed. He made several attempts to reach the meadows, waiting until night so that he could slip up to them without being seen. Here, too, he failed. Those dogs and the Sabre Cat saw better in the dark than they did by day. Poëbro was taking desperate chances now, for a lingering death awaited him unless he soon obtained food and water. But he was rapidly growing weaker and one night after a long run across the desert with the hot breath of the Sabre Cat scorching his heels, he gave up the hopeless struggle and decided to throw himself upon the mercy of the River Beasts. They had received his friends and would receive him, too, when they learned what he had endured from the flesh-eaters. Yes, he would swallow his pride. He would speak gently to the River Beasts and treat them more kindly than they

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deserved. He was worn out in body and spirit and could no longer struggle against Fate. Once having made this decision he felt really much relieved. He would be courteous and kind and treat the River Beasts as his equals, and yet this in a manner becoming his dignity. So he crossed the desert until he came within sight of the meadows. Here he waited until a favorable chance presented itself for a dash across them, then away he flew over the grass to the woods. Once there he proceeded cautiously to avoid a clash with any Giant Pig he might meet. All went well with him, and he got safely through. He was trotting to the river bank when a loud voice bellowed him to halt. He stopped, and a huge, ungainly animal came lumbering toward him. It was Brontus, leader of the Beasts of Titan.

III

Brontus was feeling out of sorts. The flies had been tormenting him and something he had eaten lay heavy upon his mind and stomach. He was in a far from jovial mood, and, having observed the Little Camel's approach, was now ambling along the bank to intercept him. Where his line of travel crossed that of Poëbro, he stopped and watched the latter out of one piggy eye. It made him cross-eyed to use two when looking at anything head-on because of his V-shaped nose horn arrangement, which obstructed his direct line of vision.

"Here comes that proud-and-haughty little Camel," he sneered. "I can make a good guess what he wants. Will he get it? Not unless he wallows in the mud and does a few other things to rid himself of his fine airs."

Poëbro came jauntily on until he was within several paces of

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the huge Titan Beast. The latter blocked his further progress, so he stopped. "I have come to join my friends," he said. "Life upon the meadows is impossible while the flesh-eaters are there. The woods are filled with great ugly pigs. The river is all that is left for me. I will disturb neither you nor your friends, and now we can all live peacefully together." Poëbro spoke calmly and graciously. A genuine feeling of good-will prompted him, for he was determined to forgive and forget the past. Brontus did not look at the matter from this point of view, however. His little eyes blinked wickedly.

"Willing to converse with your inferiors, are you?" he grunted. "Aren't you afraid of being seen here talking to me? Your reputation will be ruined if anyone hears of it."

Poëbro detected the biting sarcasm in the other's voice but he had made his decision and was determined to abide by it. "I no longer care what other animals think," he replied firmly. "I am willing to talk with you and nobody will know that I am ashamed to be seen doing it. Things have changed and now I must change with them."

These few sentences cost Poëbro much effort but they were delivered whole-heartedly and without the slightest suggestion of bitterness; and yet, strange to say, the words and the tone in which they were uttered, irritated Brontus exceedingly. It was as though the business end of a hornet had punctured his thick hide.

"So good of you to come and all that," he mocked. "Your affairs must be in a sad state to drive you to it. What is the trouble? Too much rich eating and drinking?"

"No indeed," Poëbro hastened to assure him. "I don't get enough. There is nothing left for me since all these strangers came here and crowded me out."

Brontus felt his rage rising fast.

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"Crowded you out, eh?" he squealed. "Never have I listened to such insolence. You can't deceive me, for I know all about you. What of the warm, delightful, sand country that you have appropriated for your own use without consulting anyone? It is more territory than all the rest of us have put together."

"But who wants such a place?" the little Camel protested. "How can I live there? What do you expect me to eat and drink? Sand and hot air?"

Brontus gulped down the anger that would keep coming up in spite of him.

"You want it or you would not go there," he bellowed. "As for your diet, what business is that of mine? You are old enough to take care of yourself. I still say that you have appropriated far more land than you are entitled to. I suppose that next you will be asking me for this river."

"Some of it, yes; but so very little," was the answer.

Brontus almost choked with the rage that now consumed him.

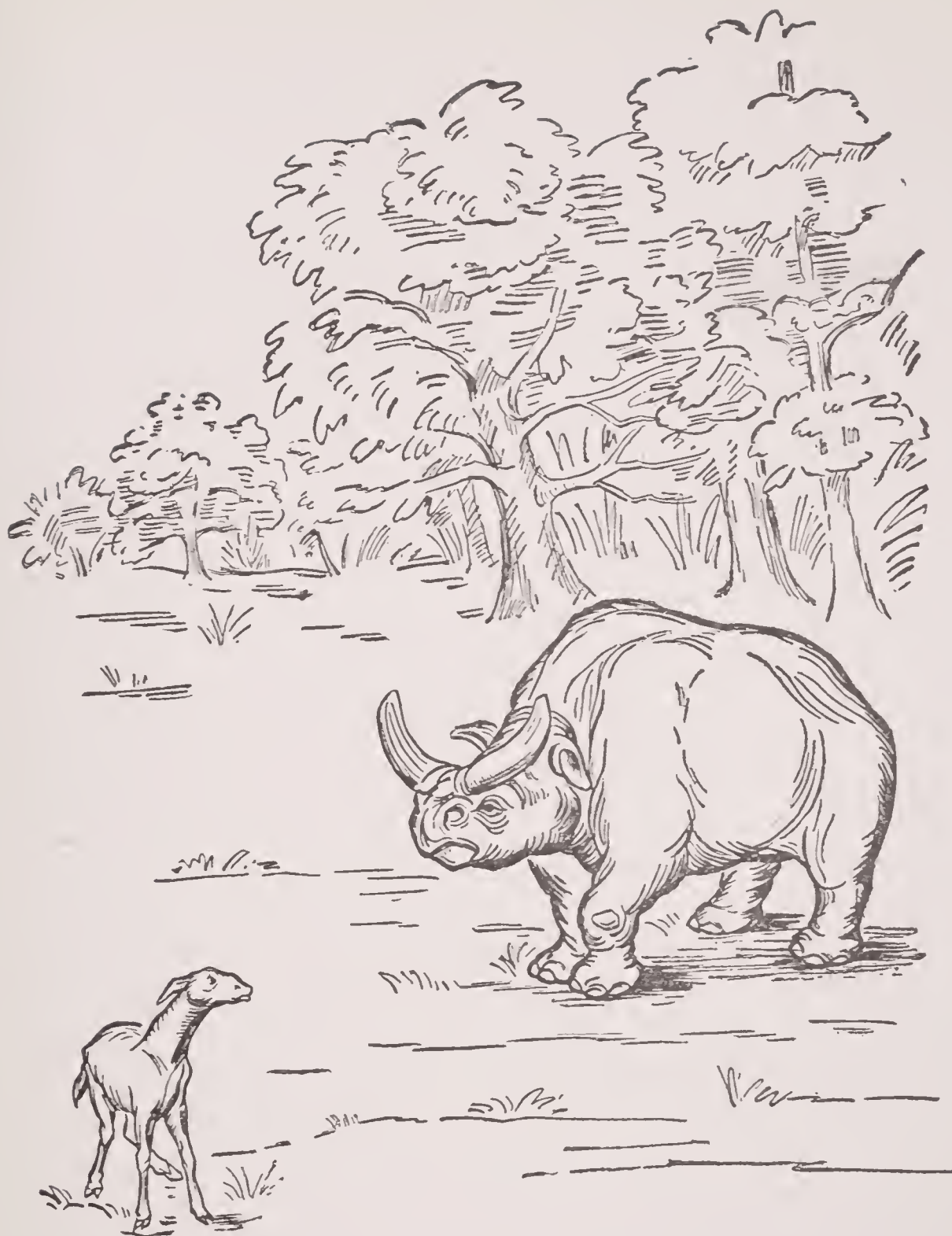
"Isn't there little enough in the sand country?" he roared. "Why don't you stay out there, now that you have grown accustomed to it? It is a wonderful place; plenty of room, quiet, hot air and no end of nice, soft sand. Why, I would go there myself if it only had more water," and the big brute forgot his rage long enough to chuckle at his own humor.

"Yes, water," said Poëbro, "that's what it needs, but there is none. Here is the only place where I can get it."

"Who said you could get it here?" Brontus demanded. "I know I didn't and I am the one who manages this river."

The little Camel's heart sank within him like lead. It was very weak of him to climb down from his lofty pedestal but he was tired and discouraged and his troubles seemed without end.

"I have never injured any of you," he said piteously. "What



THE TITAN BEAST'S ANGER BEGAN TO COOL

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harm can it do you now if I come and drink from this river? Won't you let me have some?"

"Um; well, that's different." The Titan Beast's anger began to cool. It was as the Running Rhinoceros had said; he was not a bad sort at all if managed just right. He could get along with a crocodile if it did not rub him the wrong way. He really admired Poëbro's spunk and if the latter would only drop his lofty airs, the two might be good friends. He remained silent, turning the matter over in his mind, watching Poëbro with his head cocked on one side.

The little Camel stood silently awaiting his answer. The features of the burly Titan Beast remained stolid and entirely devoid of expression. He was thinking and when an animal of his calibre stopped to think, he consumed much time. Poëbro sighed. And so this was his answer. He could expect no favors from the surly brute. His head drooped dejectedly; he sighed, then turned and walked slowly away.

"Wait a moment!"

The little Camel halted as bidden and faced about. "Don't be in such a hurry," Brontus grunted in his softest tones. "I was considering the matter and possibly I can arrange it. But there are conditions. It remains for you to decide."

"Conditions?" Poëbro noted the changed tone with considerable surprise. The ill-mannered grunts were now soft and wheedling. Brontus always appeared at his best when he wore the crabbed and piggish air, common to his kind. He could be genial without one's guessing it to look at him but when he endeavored to appear genial, he invariably made a mess of it. The little Camel's suspicions were instantly aroused; he listened attentively.

"Yes," leered Brontus, with head drawn back into the rolls

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of fat about his neck, "I believe it can be arranged. You can drink and eat all you want and my friends and I will see to it that none of the flesh-eaters harms you. For your part, there are a few things to be observed to show your good faith."

"And those few things are?"

"Simple matters to convince us that you now see the error of your ways. First you must have a mudbath—a roll in the wallows so that you will be well plastered from head to foot."

Poëbro winced. He was about to reply angrily when he thought of the Sabre Cat. He gulped down his pride and answered, "Yes, if I must," and he came forward to proceed with the ordeal at once.

"Um-m, but that is not all," said Brontus. "After your mudbath—and there is to be no washing it off, mind you—I will take you around to meet my friends."

Poëbro bit his lips, swallowed the lump in his throat and answered bravely, "Yes, I will go with you."

"And to each of my friends you must apologize most humbly for your past conduct. Only then will they know that the little Camel considers himself no better than they."

"And what if I refuse?"

"You will never be permitted to come here again," squealed the huge Titan Beast, his soft manner suddenly changing to rage. "Do you mean to say that you dare refuse?" He took a step forward. Poëbro backed off several paces. He too was furious.

"I certainly do," he cried. "I have humiliated myself too much already, standing here talking to you. As for your fat, ill-mannered brood, I would die rather than be seen with any of them. You may keep your river and everything else you have stolen." As he said this, he glanced behind him to make sure that his line of retreat remained open. Brontus was nearly beside himself

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with anger. He would have chastised Poëbro for his insults but he knew that the little Camel was too nimble for him to catch.

“Go and feed your miserable little body to the Sabre Cat,” he stormed. “You will never get a drop of the river water as long as I live.”

Poëbro turned and began walking to the forest without deigning a reply. Brontus squealed mockingly after him:

“When you reach the meadows take a pool along with you to the sand country. Otherwise you will surely be thirsty.”

“Well, I did the best I could,” sighed Poëbro as he made his way through the forest. “Probably that ugly brute would have made my life unbearable, even if I had done all he demanded of me.”

The little Camel had now burned all his bridges behind him, as he well knew. It was the sand country or nothing, and as he was not ready to die just yet, he determined to manage somehow. Before venturing across the meadows, he filled himself with food and drink. This done he made a careful survey, and finding all clear at the moment, dashed off to the sand dunes and safety.

The hot, dry desert was anything but inviting. Its vast emptiness and desolation were enough to deter the bravest spirit. Poëbro was a timid little body. The very thought of being near the Sabre Cat filled him with terror. The River Beasts inspired only his disgust; but the one sentiment was, in its way, as bad as the other.

Nobody would have suspected it to look at him, and yet in some respects Poëbro was really a marvel of daring and desperate courage. No longer could he depend upon the meadows or river. The sand country must be his home. With a bold heart he plunged far into the desert, subsisting upon almost nothing and

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keeping his eyes open at all times in the hope of finding ways and means to make a living.

Just about when he was ready to drop from hunger, thirst and exhaustion, he came upon a patch of fertile country. It was but a patch, a tiny island in a sea of sand, but it proved his salvation. The grass was fresh and sweet; the few trees gave him shelter from the scorching sun and a tiny brooklet gushing from the sand afforded him an abundance of cool drinking water. This haven of refuge or oasis was a revelation to him. With spots like this one to come to, the desert was not such a bad place, after all. Having established his headquarters, he explored deeper into the sand country. Fertile patches similar to the one he had discovered were few and far between; so far that he dared not leave one to go to another. And yet, if he could only manage to carry a supply of water and food with him, a trip from one oasis to another would not have been a matter at all difficult to arrange.

Poëbro's new home was a beautiful spot, but a prison nevertheless. If he were compelled to live in that one place the rest of his life, eventually he would go mad or die of loneliness. "Would that I did not have to drink so often," he sighed; "but in this hot dry country I need more water than ever, and I cannot carry this brook around with me when I want to go anywhere." This made him think of what Brontus had last said about taking one of the meadow pools with him. "Not a bad idea," he thought. "Of course I couldn't think of carrying so much water. An extra supply, even a little, would be enough. But what have I to carry it in? The only place I know of is my stomach, and I have no room there to spare."

However, his stomach could be stretched a bit when it saw the need of stretching. Poëbro had to find extra room there somehow, and Necessity is the Mother of Invention. Before ventur-

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ing forth into the desert, he took a big drink to satisfy his ordinary thirst and another drink after it, such as a long journey in the dry country required. His stomach was not slow in responding to this water treatment. Gradually it expanded until Poëbro had an extra water compartment rigged up in one corner of it. It was like the little gallon tank in the big gasoline reservoir of an automobile—a last resort and enough to get home on if the big tank ran dry. Poëbro was the original inventor, but nobody ever gave him credit for it. He had his own way of arranging the details after the main principle was established. Much time was spent in perfecting it, but finally he became a regular water-tank going about on four legs. It was a grand and glorious scheme. Before leaving one oasis he first took a long, deep drink to care for his immediate thirst, then a second big drink after it to fill his storage tank. This latter provided for future needs and carried him safely to the next oasis.

The matter of food also gave him considerable concern, although it was far less serious than the water problem. It seemed as though there might be some way of storing an extra food supply, too, for traveling long distances. He had already used up the available space inside of him, but he had learned by this time that with persistence his body could be persuaded to do what was demanded of it. True, the space in his stomach was all used up, but there was nothing outside of it that would prevent further expansion. Accordingly he set about to make room upon his back. In time it grew to be a pronounced hump. It detracted somewhat from his former graceful figure, but he could not help that. This hump, although not a thing of beauty, was a great improvement, for it carried food enough to last him for a week. Having succeeded so well thus far, he made another change. He permitted his two-toed hoofs to become encased in pads of flesh



LAUNCHING THE "SHIP OF THE DESERT."

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and calloused skin, thus protecting his feet from the hot sand and securing a more comfortable footing.

Strange how circumstances alter cases. This same sand country, which at first threatened his undoing, was now his paradise. The keel was laid and the finished Camel, or "Ship of the Desert," rose rapidly upon the ways. Somewhere near the Rocky Mountains was the scene of his launching. His range was the length and breadth of our United States. His home is now in far-off Asia and Africa. If he had not gone there, things might now be much different. Probably the tawney Arabs and dusky Ethiopians never stop to think of that, nor does it occur to them that the Camel, which they set so much store by, was American born and bred from little Poëbro the Toy Camel who, ages ago, left the fertile meadows of South Dakota to make his home among the sand dunes.



INTRODUCTION TO MANATUS

Rocks of the Less Recent (Miocene) period which may be found in many localities of the western United States, contain many bones of three-toed horses, long-necked camels, hornless rhinoceri and many other kinds of land beasts, but only on the Atlantic Coast is there much to be learned about sea mammals. Comparatively few warm-bodied, hair-covered beasts took to water entirely and the bones of most of them now lie deep in the ocean bed. However, there is one place where the shore-line extended much farther inland during Less Recent (Miocene) times than it does now and here ancient beach deposits have accumulated. These, the Calvert Cliffs of Maryland, are south of Annapolis on the western side of Chesapeake Bay. The waters of the bay beating against the foot of the cliffs have undermined and cut away great sections, leaving their animal relics strewn upon the present narrow beaches. Shark-teeth are everywhere in evidence, representing many varieties of the Shark family; dog-fishes, sting-rays, hammerheads and huge examples of the modern man-eating type. Their skeletons of cartilage soon dissolved after death and left no trace but their enameled teeth which fairly litter the beaches are sufficient evidence of their once great number and variety. However, sharks belong to an ancient order of the Fish family and as our concern is with mammals, we will pass on. The Calvert Cliffs contain bones of whales; toothless animals like our modern Bowfin and Beluga, also toothed species such as the Sperm, Porpoise, Dolphin and Killer. All

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were mammals, about the only ones to live entirely in the sea except for a solitary individual who has left but one or two bones to identify him. Whales were flesh-eaters, but this lone creature fed entirely upon plants and was therefore in a class by himself. His flippers, which outwardly resembled big thumbless mittens, had their wrist and finger bones arranged like those of a man; and so we call him *Manatus*, which, translated into pure English, means "he of the human hand."

I

MANATUS

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Once upon a time, over one million years ago, the site of Washington, our national capital, faced directly upon the Atlantic Ocean. Southeastern Maryland was at that time submerged and formed a huge sandbar on the eastern side of Chesapeake Bay. A river flowing southeastward somewhere below Washington, emptied into the bay. This river has long since disappeared—filled in with the accumulations of ages—and few know that it ever existed. The lower portion near its mouth was a broad estuary gradually contracting to a narrow stream farther inland near its source. This upper portion was the River of Mystery.

Here dense woodlands formed almost inaccessible barriers on both sides of the restricted channel. The tall, closely-packed trees extended their branches and leaf-masses from either bank, thus forming a vaulted roof, thick and impenetrable to outside light. Beneath it the river flowed lazily onward, a thick, sluggish sewer more dismal and forbidding than the rank mustiness through which it crept. The silence was unbroken, except for the faint sighing of leaves overhead and an occasional plup, as some loathsome denizen of this place of darkness dropped into the murky pool from overhanging branch or vine.

The River of Mystery seemed in truth a River of Death; and yet eyes keen enough to penetrate far into its depths, might have

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observed a dark form gliding downstream over its bed, leaving only an occasional air-bubble upon the surface above and behind it, to mark its course. It was a large torpedo-shaped body of almost fish-like form; but it is not given for fishes to leave air-bubbles behind them such as do mammals or creatures with air-breathing lungs and warm red blood.

Straight and swift as an arrow, the unknown sped downstream without once coming to the surface. Gradually the river widened and the leaf-arch above it parted to admit the warm sunshine. The two shore-lines diverged and subsided into low-lying levees, becoming rapidly denuded of forest growth as the mysterious submarine creature sped swiftly down the central channel.

Another half league from brackish to salty water and he would have passed the mouth of the estuary and entered the Atlantic Ocean. But at this point his pace slackened and he deflected his course upward as though to greet the warm sun rising from the vast white-capped expanse of water toward which he swam. The torpedo-body rose slowly to the surface and a round pudgy head emerged into the open air, noiselessly and without splash or ripple as though the water had been freshly oiled. A pair of eyes almost buried in blubber and bristles gazed long and wistfully at the open sea.

The waves breaking on the margin of the estuary seemed to be beckoning. The murmur of their soft voices upon the beaches sounded, "Come, come," but, although the unknown looked at the siren waves and listened to their pleading, he merely snorted and shook his head. Not yet; the ocean waves must wait for their proper time. His gaze slowly shifted from them to the southwestern border of the estuary—the last land refuge between himself and the broad Atlantic. Two thick flaps on either side of his muzzle lifted and he sucked in mighty breaths of air through

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widely distended nostrils, then the nose-flaps closed, the round head settled beneath the waves and the mysterious swimmer disappeared in the depths of the estuary as noiselessly as he had emerged.

The southwestern shore of the estuary was sun-swept and bare, in marked contrast to the dark forested banks of its more inland portion, the River of Mystery. It was a place of rocks, the latter rising abruptly from the narrow sandy beach; also it was a rookery where all manner of water birds made their homes. Two of them, *Puffina* the Gull, and *Sula* the Booby, had flown down from the Rookery and were standing side by side upon the sand watching the ripples which occasionally washed over their webbed feet.

Puffina the Gull was much the smaller bird, although her wing expanse nigh equaled that of her larger companion. She was a genuine sea lover; one who flew far out over the water, while *Sula* was an ungainly individual, who fancied the ocean merely for the fish that were in it. She really feared wind and wave, and therefore rarely ventured beyond sight of land. *Puffina* and *Sula* were two of the Rookery's most active spirits. They were ardent fisherwomen, too, and nobody could tell them anything new about the finny creatures or any other living things that swam in the sea. They were a restless pair—confirmed gossips and busybodies of the marine feathered world. Although mischievous, nobody could really call them bad birds, for they did little harm and often served many useful purposes, keeping the beaches clear of dead fish and such things. However, their sharp tongues were forever wagging and sometimes caused no end of trouble.

At the moment we come upon them, both birds had recently

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indulged in their regular morning fish diet, and now that their appetites were appeased, they seemed in a bad way for something to do. They had stood there upon the beach, inactive for at least five minutes, and that is saying a good deal, as far as they were concerned.

Puffina was racking her brain for some new form of amusement. "Everything is so dreadfully quiet," she whistled, "I have half a mind to fly out into the ocean and see what the Whales are doing."

"The Sharks are about as far as I will get," said the Booby; "but you won't find me skimming the water near them, as you do with the Whales. They are just mean enough to bite one's feet off if given a chance."

"The Toothed Whales are almost as bad," replied the Gull. "They will eat——" She stopped suddenly and said in a low voice, "Where did that creature come from? See how it stares at us."

Both birds gazed at that which protruded from the water several rods distant. They had been gazing some time in that direction, but the object had appeared so unostentatiously that several moments elapsed before they noticed it.

"A seal," muttered Sula.

She judged wrongly. Although the round object was a head, it differed greatly from a seal's. The small eyes were almost hidden behind a huge fleshy muzzle sown thickly with heavy bristles. This muzzle was split from top to bottom, forming two bulbous halves. The head now rose higher from the water, giving a view of the neck and shoulders, which were no more than a continuation of the thick round body, to which were attached a pair of hand-like flippers. The unknown sat, or treaded water, with these hand-flippers folded across his chest. In this position

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he remained motionless, staring at the two birds. It was as though the Old Man of the Sea had arisen from the depths to tell of their dark secrets.

Sula and Puffina were almost overcome with surprise. They forgot what their wings and feet were made for and remained rooted to the beach like tree-stumps, unable to move. And yet it was not fear they felt—rather awe of the mysterious stranger who had appeared before them so quietly and unheralded. By this time the unknown had set himself in motion, and was drifting slowly toward the beach. Now the lower portion of his body grounded in the shallow water and he settled into a horizontal position; then, with much effort, he dragged himself up the sand until he was high and dry.

Puffina and Sula watched him and his actions with much interest. He was a water animal, as easily could be seen by the fuss he made moving along the sand. His efforts in that respect were attended with much puffing and blowing. His form in general was similar to that of a seal, and he had flippers, too, although their details were peculiar and unseal-like. They looked like hands encased in big mittens; also the rear part of him was distinctive enough, even at a glance, to put him in a class by himself.

He had no hair, hind limbs or fins of any kind, and in this respect he might have passed as a small whale had it not been for his tail. This was attached to his body in true whale style, flat to the water—not upright as in the sharks and fishes; but instead of the broad double-bladed fluke worn by all up-to-date whales, his tail was as round and flexible as a palmleaf fan.

Sula and Puffina absorbed all of these details while the stranger rested and gazed at them with ponderous dignity. He said nothing; and the two birds, who were given to much squawk-



THE STRANGER MEETS THE TWO BIRDS

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ing and fluttering on the slightest provocation, soon became nervous at his continued oppressive silence. Finally, when he closed his eyes as though preparing to doze, Sula could no longer restrain herself.

"Who—what are you?" she asked.

The unknown stared somewhere through and past her. "Ump," he grunted languidly, and again he closed his eyes.

"Ump," squawked Sula in a rage. "If there is anything else you can say, please say it."

To this the stranger showed no resentment whatever. He did not even open his eyes again as he grunted in a deep voice: "Go away and let me sleep."

This was the last straw. Never had Sula been so exasperated; and that is saying a good deal, for the Petrels and Cormorants and Pelicans sometimes nearly teased the life out of her. She sprang into the air and flew squawking away without so much as saying good-bye to Puffina, who had always been her best friend. The Gull was not a little amused at her companion's discomfiture.

"He seems a simple and peaceable sort," she thought. "I see no reason to be angry with him. If I remain here until he awakens, perhaps he will feel more like talking and I can learn more about him."

So she waited around for what seemed to her like an eternity of time. However, the unknown awoke at last. The first thing he saw was the Gull standing within two yards of his nose.

"Are you hungry?" asked Puffina. "Now that you have rested, how would you like something to eat?"

This was a sort of hit-or-miss way of starting a conversation. Perhaps the unknown's generous waist-girth suggested it; but anyhow it struck home.

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"Eat?" was his animated response. "I certainly will. Where are the feeding grounds?"

"There," answered Puffina, gazing toward the ocean. "The waters are filled with fish."

"Fish? Ur-r, ugh! I never eat such things," replied the unknown, screwing up his face into a wrinkled knot. His eyes rolled wildly and finally came to rest, looking at the Gull criss-cross over his nose. The two halves of his upper lip parted widely and then came together again with a loud swat. Puffina was startled, to say the least. Whales, birds, fishes; none of the creatures she knew, ever made faces like that. Gradually the stranger's expression resumed its former stolidity. He opened his mouth wide, thereby displaying a total absence of front teeth, and said in a deep voice: "No, I never eat fish. I am a vegetable-feeder and prefer seaweed growing green and fresh beneath the waters."

Seaweed? Puffina was astonished. No animal she knew of ate such stuff. Her curiosity became overpowering. "Who are you and what brought you here?" she inquired.

"What brought me? I wonder." The unknown was silent a few moments, gazing intently toward the ocean. "It seems as though I heard a voice calling," he said earnestly. "It was the same voice that called me to the water, when long, long ago I made my home upon the land."

"A land animal; are you—were you one?" the Gull asked.

"Perhaps," was the answer, delivered dubiously and in tones of deep regret; "but that is past and done with. Again I hear that voice calling me to go and do it."

"Go where and do what?"

"My life has ever been a quiet and simple one," the unknown replied dreamily. "Never have I dared venture beyond the

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River's dark cramped confines into the vast unknown. But now something urges. The foam-topped waves and ocean breezes are calling me. The bite of the sea water makes my blood boil."

It was as though a wave of light had swept the darkness away from before the Gull's eyes.

"The sea, the sea!" she exclaimed joyfully. "Now I know how you feel. It means more to me than life itself. You who have known only the warm, tasteless river will never return to it when once you have lived in the ocean water. Come, I will fly to it and point you the way."

The stranger shivered and looked at the sand beneath him. "I cannot; I dare not," he mumbled. "I seek and yet I dread a change."

"A change for the better," said the Gull. "You will not want for companions. There may be many there of your own kind."

The stranger shuddered and mumbled something unintelligible, then began backing toward the water. Puffina saw that he was about to depart. It suddenly occurred to her that in a few moments he would be gone without her learning who or what he was. "Your own people may be there," she said. "I know most of the ocean dwellers. Are you a seal?"

Evidently not, for the unknown displayed no interest. He had shifted his position until now he floated full length in the shallow water.

"A whale, perhaps?"

The unknown shook his head. He had now backed to beyond his depth and his body was in an upright position with only its upper part visible.

"Porpoise?" the Gull fairly screamed; and for the third time she aroused no interest. The unknown's nose-flaps lifted. In a moment he would be gone.

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"Then, who are you?" cried the now thoroughly aroused Gull. "How do you call yourself, you who claim to be neither porpoise, seal nor whale? Tell me quickly before you go."

The unknown's nostrils gaped wide and sucked in a long deep breath, then the flap-valves closed.

"Manatus," he replied in a low voice and his head slowly sank beneath the surface, leaving not a ripple to mark the spot where it had gone down.

II

Puffina waited for a time upon the beach, hoping that the mysterious stranger might reappear; but in vain. He was gone, and for all she knew, he might never return. However, she had learned something about him, little as it was, and now she was eager to tell her friend Sula the news, so she flew off, soaring high in the heavens, until she espied the Booby perched upon a ledge several miles south of the Rookery. Sula's anger had not cooled in the slightest degree. The Gull discovered this as she swooped down and settled upon the rock beside her.

"I have learned something about that odd creature," said Puffina. "His name is Manatus, whatever that means. He eats seaweed, nothing else, and can make the queerest face I ever saw."

Sula said nothing. Her anger still sizzled above the boiling point; however, she kept both ears wide open.

"I learned something else, too," the Gull resumed. "He is a fresh-water animal who thinks he would like to live in the ocean, and yet, for some reason or other, he dreads the change. He seems to be a simple and harmless creature, neither porpoise, seal nor whale. I have an idea, however, that he would get along

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nicely with the Whales, that is, the big ones. I believe I will go and tell them about him."

"Do," squawked Sula. "They will smash him with their big tails and I, for one, will be glad of it."

"Not if I prepare the way for him," the Gull replied. "I will tell them that he is a new ruler come amongst them. Whales will believe anything. I can easily make them think that he is brave and strong, in spite of his harmless appearance. The big whales have grown so accustomed to being bullied by the little toothed ones that his small size will not count against him."

"But the Toothed Whales—they do not believe all they see and hear," squawked the Booby. "Your friend Manatus will have a hard time with them."

"They need know nothing about him," said the Gull. "I will say nothing to them nor to the Sharks, either. That would be carrying the joke too far. I do not wish to see him hurt. If all goes well it will be great fun and no harm done. The big Whales will soon have something to interest them, or I am very much mistaken."

"You may well be mistaken," thought Sula, as her friend flew away. "I detest this Manatus, and if I have my way he will soon find the sea too hot to hold him." With that she, too, flew off, sailing low and far behind the Gull, so that the latter would not suspect what she was doing.

Puffina winged her way seaward, flying straight and high. She sped over the deep channel of Chesapeake Bay and reached the outer bar, a broad, sandy shoal, whose half-hidden presence could be seen beneath the water from overhead, a broad band of gray extending far to the north and south. It was a barrier over which few large marine animals dared venture. On the land side of the bar to the south, Puffina saw many green fish-like forms

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thrashing about and cutting the water with their long back fins. These were the Sharks, sea wolves, and the terror of all finny creatures. Further seaward, numerous small specks darkened the ocean surface. Far to the north of them was a group of larger specks which, to the Gull, appeared like black blotches among the white-capped waves. The two groups—specks and blotches—were whales playing about upon the ocean surface. The former were the Toothed Whales, dolphins, sperms, killers and the like, many of them bearing long, bony snouts after the manner of the modern Swordfish. Puffina turned from them and swooped down upon the dark blotches farther to the north. These were the Toothless or Whalebone Whales, much larger than the toothed variety, but far more peaceable in their habits. The feeling between them and their smaller brethren had grown more or less strained, and the two groups had little to do with each other. The toothed killers and dolphins had taken to secret warfare upon others of their kind; therefore their less pugnacious relatives had withdrawn from their society. It had not yet occurred to the large whales that their smaller cousins made up with their fierceness what they lacked in size and might soon develop into formidable enemies. A mere slap of a fluked tail would send any one of them to kingdom come, so the big whales thought little about the matter and proceeded to get all the fun out of life they could.

The Toothless or Whalebone Whales were huge creatures ranging from forty to eighty feet long. Hundreds of individuals representing more than a score of species were gathered together. Their mouths and heads were enormous, being nearly a third as large as their bodies. They wore no hair-covering; but thick coats of oily blubber served the same purpose, shutting the sea-water from their pores and keeping their bodies warm.

They were having a grand time when Puffina descended from

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on high and skimmed over the waves among them. Every now and then one of them would turn tail up and dive to a tremendous depth, coming up twenty or thirty minutes later for a breath of fresh air. Although shaped somewhat like fishes, they were not fishes but mammals, the same as horses and cows. Having real lungs instead of gills, they would have drowned miserably had they stayed too long beneath the water. Their nostrils were small holes high upon their foreheads, but it was astonishing how quickly they could empty their lungs through them and take in a fresh air supply. It was surprising, too, how long one breath sufficed, but they had lived long in the ocean and grown used to it with continued practice.

Puffina skimmed in and out over them like a fly among a herd of cows. Finally she caught sight of Balena and singled her out as the one first to hear the news.

Balena was a Bowfin, the largest of the Whalebone Whales. Her upper jaws were lined with baleen or rows of fringed food strainers instead of teeth. She was at lunch as Puffina came upon her and so the Gull had a fine opportunity to learn just how a toothless whale fed itself.

Balena moved slowly through the water with the greater part of her body submerged and her mouth wide open. It was a tremendous mouth, large enough to hold about a million of the tiny shell-fish that swarmed near the ocean's surface. When enough of them were inside of it to make it worth her while, she closed her jaws together, rolled over on her side and shifted her tongue. That shift of the tongue ejected the water from her mouth but not the tiny shell-fish. They were held back by the baleen food-strainers and then swallowed at leisure.

Puffina was on good terms with the big whale and often flew out to sea to pass the time of day with her. After circling several

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times over her, she alighted upon Balena's head. In a few words she told of her meeting with the mysterious Manatus who lived in the water, breathed air and ate nothing but seaweed. Her eyes twinkled mischievously as she added:

"The ocean has never known a creature so fierce and strong, although ordinarily he appears so calm and good-natured that none would suspect how formidable he really is. He will soon appear in the ocean to rule over it."

Balena was amazed. She hastily gulped down a million shellfish with a speed that almost choked her. She gasped so with astonishment that the Gull was fairly drenched with damp spray spouting from the Whale's forehead noseholes.

"A stranger come to rule over us?" cried Balena. "Indeed, I am amazed! Fierce and strong, you say? Ugh; but calm and good-natured ordinarily—that's better. I detest quarrels and quarrelsome animals. You may be certain, he will find us peaceable enough. It is too wonderful and interesting to believe. Now you must excuse me while I tell my people this remarkable news."

So saying, with a whisk of her mighty tail, she was darting about among her people, leaving the Gull to fly back home again.

"Come you Bowfins," she bellowed. "Come you Hump Backs and Bottle Noses and all the rest of you. The Gull has come bringing grand and glorious news."

And then, great was the commotion that ensued. The water churned and foamed beneath fluke and flipper stroke as the huge monsters crowded about their big leader. Finally all were quieted down sufficiently to hear what Balena had to say.

"A royal stranger named Manatus, has come to rule over the ocean," she cried. "We must make ready to welcome him."

"Who is he?" asked one.

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"Not a savage creature, I hope," said another.

"Who he is, I know not," replied Balena. "But the Gull says that he is a weed-eater. One who feeds upon green things cannot be savage. The Gull tells me that he can be calm and good-natured as well as fierce and strong."

"One of that kind would be welcome here," said one of the Bowfins.

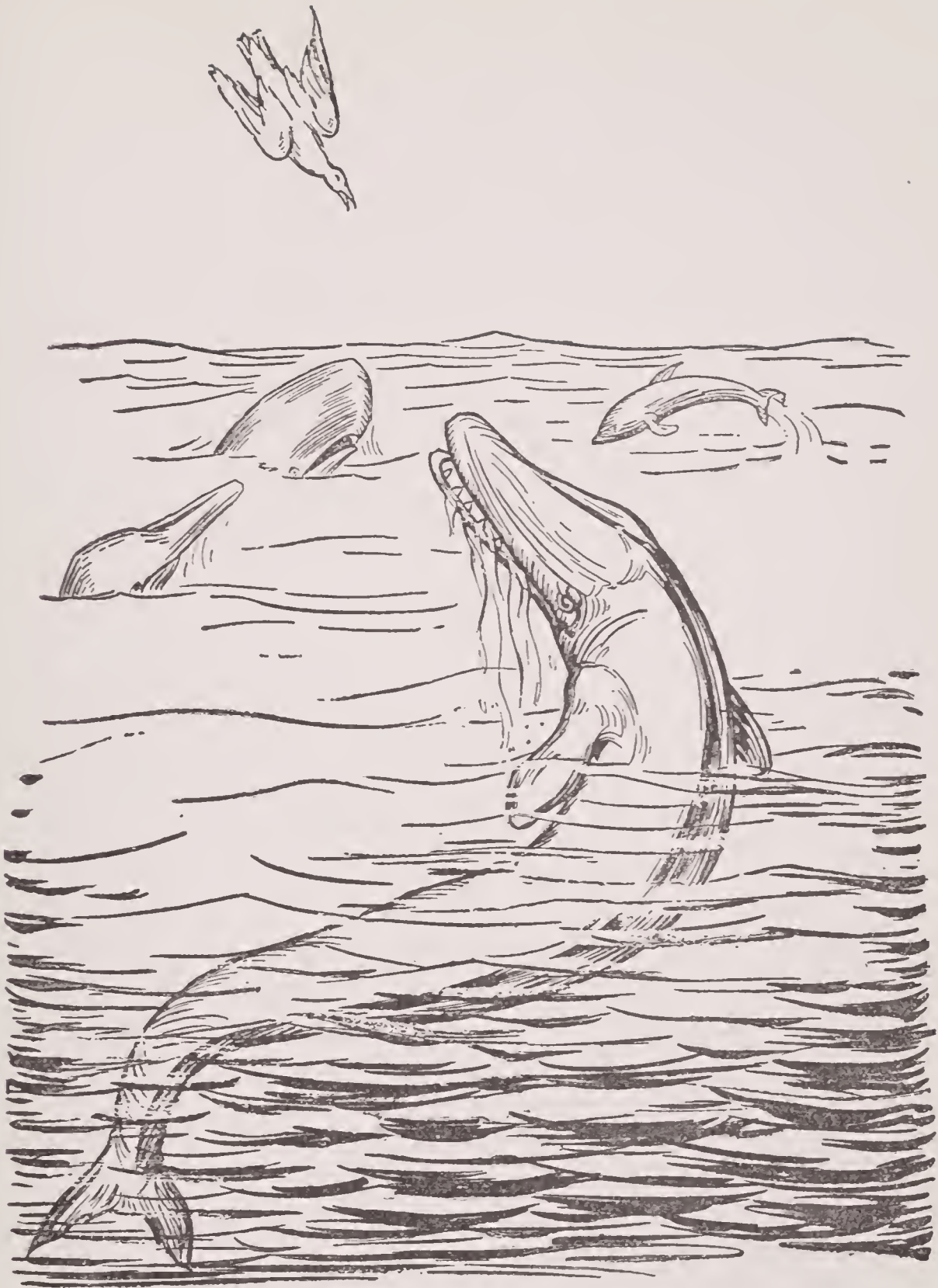
"Welcome? More than that," Balena grunted. "We should hunt him out and provide him an escort so that he need not come amongst us alone."

A most excellent idea; all were agreed on that. Nobody would say that they were lacking in the courtesy and respect due one of royal station. They would treat the stranger in a manner befitting his exalted rank, even though they risked grounding themselves upon the sandbar doing it.

In the meantime, Puffina had flown back to the Rookery. Her prank was successfully launched; more than that, for, unknown to her, the whales had taken time by the forelock and were already pushing matters on their own account.

The royal stranger was hovering about the mouth of the estuary, so the Gull had said, which meant that somebody must go to him across the shoals. Two of the smallest and boldest whales were selected for the task. Being of comparatively light draught, it was adjudged very cleverly by all that they stood the best chance of crossing the bar in safety. Once over, they were to find the mysterious stranger and return with him.

The two envoys set their faces bravely shoreward and their courage was rewarded. By taking advantage of occasional cross-rifts, they crossed the bar and reached the bay without mishap. Once there they kept on until they neared the mouth of the estuary. They were patrolling the waters, when suddenly the



SULA TAUNTS THE KING WHALE

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round head of some strange animal bobbed up above the waves. As they swam toward it, the head sank from sight. Of course royalty must not be unduly urged. There was plenty of time, so the two whales halted over where the head had vanished and waited patiently for its reappearance.

III

While Puffina was busying herself with the big Whalebone Whales, Sula sought their toothed cousins. The Gull meant only to play a harmless prank but Sula was in deadly earnest. The stranger had wounded her deeply and she was determined to more than even matters. He might get hurt, even killed, but it was all his own fault and whatever happened to him would arouse none of her sympathy.

The Toothed Whales were a very different sort from their larger relatives. Rarely did they take things for granted. They were in the habit of investigating and seeing with their own eyes before they would believe anything told them. Sula did not fly down close to them as did Puffina when visiting the Toothless Whales. She was not ready to be eaten just yet; so she flew in circles about the herd, close overhead but beyond the reach of any that might choose to snap at her. There were a great many of them—blunt-nosed Killers and Grampuses, block-headed Sperms, beaked Dolphins and the like. Sula scarcely knew where to begin. Suddenly a long narrow head rose above the water. It was that of *Squalodon* the King Whale. Sula halted in mid-air and hung fluttering over him.

“Look out for yourself, you footless alligator,” she squawked. “A stranger is coming to rule the ocean and unless you behave, he will not let you stay in it.”

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Now Squalodon was not an alligator although at a distance he did look a bit like one. Sula called him that because she knew it was the quickest way to make him angry. Squalodon was angered by the insult but the news he heard aroused him even more. "A stranger—ruler?" he bellowed. "Who, where is he?"

"Wait and see," the bird taunted him. "His name is Manatus and he eats seaweed. How grand it will be to have the ocean ruled by an eater of weeds. I can see you all now jumping around to do as bidden."

Squalodon ground his teeth. Their serrated crowns projected in ragged lines from his four jaws. He was a flesh-eater as all Whales were; and flesh and vegetable-eaters were inclined to think harshly of each other. It was bad enough to have new rulers continually bobbing up; but that the latest should be a weed-eater, was almost too much to be endured.

"He won't rule over me," roared the King Whale. "Anyhow he will have to fight first and you won't find much of him left when I finish with him. When is he coming?"

Squalodon was not large but his long lithe body could cleave and turn in the water with marvelous quickness; also his was a quarrelsome nature and he was ever eager for a fight.

"Awk! but you won't see him for a long time," mocked the Booby. "He intends visiting the big whales first. Probably they will want to keep him with them and away from you little fellows."

With this parting shot, she flew shoreward.

Mad? Squalodon lashed himself into a perfect frenzy; and when he told the other whales about the stranger, they too went wild, tearing around in the ocean until it resembled a kettle of boiling fish.

Sula continued her flight. One would think that she had

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already stirred up trouble enough; but she had her own ideas about that. The Sharks, too, must be put in a proper frame of mind. She could now see them beneath her, swimming on the shore side of the bar, so she swooped down to have a word with them.

Chara, Queen of the Sharks, was gliding lazily along the ocean's surface when Sula accosted her. Chara was a forty-foot damsel of the white shark or sea-tiger variety. Her jaws bristled with large, triangular teeth. Her neck was scarred with long, vertical slits, six on each side. These were her gills, a portion of her breathing apparatus. Like all other sharks she had no scales although her skin was harsher than sandpaper.

She was Queen of the Sharks, being bigger, stronger and fiercer than any of the others; also she had the most effective bite, which counted for a great deal. As for size, she looked more like a whale than a shark. A man—had there been such a thing—could have stood comfortably in her open mouth; comfortably, provided the good Queen did not take a sudden notion to close her jaws.

Rarely did any rival venture to dispute Chara's mastery over the Sharks. She had a naïve and peculiar way of dealing with such disputers and simple too, which consisted of swallowing them bag and baggage. This invariably settled the matter and did away with long-winded argument.

"Lovely day," squawked Sula as she circled around the fierce monster. "I hope you have eaten and rested well."

"Not enough to satisfy me," snapped the Sea Tigress. "You might oblige me by coming closer."

"I did not fly here to be eaten by you," replied the Booby. "I merely wished you to know that the ocean is soon to have a new ruler."

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"I have heard of them before," sneered the big Shark; "but somehow the expected never happens. I have not seen one yet that made more than a mouthful."

"But this one will surprise you," replied Sula. "His name is Manatus. The ocean has never seen a creature so fierce and strong."

"It hasn't, eh? Well, I'm used to rivals and I guess this one won't worry me any more than the others I have swallowed."

"You will think differently when you see this Manatus," Sula retorted. "He is the most dashing creature that ever wore fins. He has taken a particular fancy to you; so I am told."

"To me?" Chara became all attention. "What does he want—a fight?"

"Hardly that," was the answer. "However, wait and see. He is liable to do almost anything. He is bold and so fond of sharks, there is no telling what might happen."

Chara smirked and wriggled like an eel.

"What could happen?" she giggled. "As for sharks, I guess I am enough to interest him." Her mouth gaped wide in a cavernous smile. She was experiencing a new and delightful sensation.

Sula could scarcely conceal her amusement. She was having more fun than she had bargained for. Chara was not only blessed with a temperament but had an exalted idea of her own personal charms. This may have been warranted from her point of view but the Booby could see nothing about her that might be considered attractive or wholesome.

"You have already interested him," said Sula with a twinkle of her fishy eyes. "Just to show how bold and dashing he is, he plans to visit the Sharks and carry off their Queen."

"Me?" gasped the astonished Sea Tigress. "Why, how dare

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he say such a thing, the rascal? I'll slap him with my fin if he tries it." Chara strove to assume an air of offended dignity but failed miserably, for she was a maiden shark, and the news that she was soon to figure in an abduction put her in a seventh heaven of delight.

"Leave this Manatus to me," she said coyly. "I can take care of myself and him too, so you need not worry."

Sula's task was now completed, so she flew back to the Rookery and perched high upon the rocks to watch and await developments.

And now to return to our hero, the mysterious stranger of the Upper River.

After parting with the Gull on the southwestern shore of the estuary, Manatus lost no time hunting up suitable feeding grounds. No vegetation was to be found upon the sandy bottom of the estuary, so he plucked up courage and swam into the bay. Its chill and salt-bite exhilarated him. He dove deeply to the bottom and found to his great delight that it was a veritable sea undergrowth of luscious weeds. Before lunching, he rose to the surface to renew his air-supply. Here he sat upright viewing the endless expanse of white-capped waves. This was his first intimate acquaintance with the ocean itself and it impressed him deeply. Far from discouraging him, its cold green vastness filled him with joy. Alone, he could easily face the great, wide world, but when in the midst of other animals, it was different. He was shy, dreadfully, painfully shy, and he had lived so long in seclusion that the very thought of mingling with other creatures was almost more than he could bear.

But now he was alone and in an endless expanse of delightful ocean. He gazed scornfully behind him. No more of that stinking Upper River for him. In a single day the shrinking hermit



THE WHALE ENVOYS CALL UPON MANATUS

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had shifted from fresh to salt-water and was venturing forth to find fame and fortune in the sea. The world loves a stout heart and venturesome spirit. From that moment, Manatus was to be reckoned with as a power in the briny deep.

These were not exactly the words he would have used to express his feelings at that moment but he admitted to himself that what he now felt and saw was even better than he had expected. But his appetite was rapidly growing rebellious at being kept waiting, so once more he dove to the ocean bottom and glided over it, fanning the weed-tops into his mouth with his split upper lip. Finally when he was full and could eat no more, he swam to the surface vowing that never had he so enjoyed himself. As his head emerged into the open air, he shook the water from it, brushed his lip-bristles with his flippers and was about to inhale a fresh air supply for an underwater exploring trip when he heard a slight noise behind him. He turned quickly, blinked and gasped with astonishment, for two huge creatures were floating beside him.

"Are you Manatus?" asked one.

"Ugh," was all our hero could say for a moment. He was wondering how the stranger had learned his name. Not a soul had he spoken to in that neighborhood except two silly birds.

"Yes, I am Manatus," he finally admitted, and was looking about him for a way to escape when the second stranger spoke:

"We are whales," he said most humbly. "We are pleased to have found your Highness and now beg you to come with us."

"Your Highness?" Manatus stared like one in a trance. "All a mistake," he stammered. "You mean someone else. Go with you? No; I won't go anywhere with anybody."

"No mistake, for you have said that you are the noble Manatus," the other insisted. "Your fame has reached the ocean world.

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Our people are assembled there, eager and waiting to do you honor."

Manatus glanced at the pair suspiciously. No, they were not joking; it was easy to see that. His head or something within it whirled so that he could scarcely think. He must be a person of extraordinary importance, for these whales insisted he was. It was all so confusing and yet he felt a thrill of pleasure at being welcomed so wholeheartedly by these big sea animals. Perhaps he had misjudged himself. In his self-enforced seclusion he had failed to appreciate the latent power within him. He raised his head proudly and strove to appear every inch a king. He threw out his chest, assumed his grandest air and gazed loftily at the two whales, now his humble vassals.

"How noble he looks," one of the pair said in a low voice to the other.

Manatus wilted. They were whispering to one another. A wave of timidity almost overwhelmed him.

"No, I will not go with you," he grunted with a shake of his head. "I know neither you nor your whales. Leave me and depart in peace."

"Impossible," was the answer. "It is death for us to return without your Majesty. We beg, we implore you to come."

Your Majesty! Another title. Manatus felt thrills one after another chasing up and down his spine. His spirits rose again. These whales seemed well-meaning and harmless enough. He dreaded social gatherings but that feeling was more a habit than the result of experience. He had lived alone too long; even he realized that. Now was the time for him to emerge from his shell. If only he could rid himself of his dreadful shyness; but his vanity was already deeply touched and he was becoming

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rapidly inflated with his own importance. "Where are your people?" he demanded pompously.

"In the ocean beyond the sandbar," was the reply. "They dare not cross it for fear of being stranded. If you will but follow, we will guide you safely through to the deeper water."

Manatus paused irresolute, hovering upon the brink and straining his nerve to make the plunge. Fame and power awaited him. Behind him was the old life; before him, the new. He stole one last, furtive look at the two whales. They awaited his pleasure in deferential silence. No amount of pleading and coaxing could have influenced him more than did their impressive dignity as they floated restfully in the green, watery vastness. The shy whisper of protest became hushed, the spirit of daring triumphed and he plunged boldly and blindly into the great unknown.

"Very well; lead and I will follow." He combed his lip-bristles with his flippers, settled into a horizontal position, chest to the waves, and swam seaward with a whale escorting him on either side.

The salt-water was cold and invigorating. The farther he swam, the better he liked it. He quickened his pace and try as they would, the two whales could scarcely keep up with him.

"A mighty swimmer," said one.

"A marvel of daring," added the other. "Take care, noble master, or you will come to grief upon the shoals."

Manatus heard these remarks. His head was in the clouds. "What of that?" he grunted with a devil-may-care air. "Shoals? Ugh; I can climb over them if I have to."

The whales gasped. Never was known such recklessness. Manatus might endeavor to mask his royal daring with an atmosphere of timidity but he could not deceive them. They knew a real king when they saw one.

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However, there was no need of our hero's showing his skill at climbing over bars. A cross-rift opened before him and he swam through, into the open sea. The ocean surface before him was dotted with black moving objects. Manatus slowed up as he caught sight of them.

"What are they?" he inquired anxiously.

"The Whales," one of his companions explained. "They are gathered together awaiting Your Highness."

"Waiting to see me? Ugh!" Manatus lost his boldness in an instant as he realized that soon he would be facing a lot of strangers. His brain became befuddled. He would have turned tail and sped back to where he came from but he was so confused that he lost all sense of direction. While he hesitated, the distant herd began swimming in his direction. They were on the watch and had caught sight of him.

"What huge things they are," he stammered in an agony of doubt. "Are they all whales?"

"Every one," was the reply.

"Will they bite me?"

"No, they would not and they could not if they would. None of them have teeth."

"No teeth?" Manatus recovered his composure. He made so bold as to indulge in a bit of ponderous humor. "Whales, ump!" he snorted. "Why, they are nothing but big fish."

"Not so loud," one of his companions cautioned him, for the oncoming herd was already within hearing distance. "They are not fish and would be offended if they heard you say so."

"Then why do they live in the water?"

"It is a long story and there is not time to tell it now," was the reply. "We whales were once land-animals, but we loved the

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sea-water and spent so much time in it that our hind legs shriveled up and we could no longer use them. There was nothing left for us to do but take to the water and stay there."

"Why, that fits my case exactly," said the surprised Manatus. He began to think that either he was a whale or would soon become one. But now he forgot all about everything, for the herd was crowding about him, and he had no more time to think. They were gigantic creatures, and there were so many of them that Manatus was suddenly overwhelmed with fear and wished himself safely out of the whole mess. His eyes crossed and the two halves of his upper lip flapped wildly from side to side. Astonishing result! The whales in their turn became frightened and backed water in great confusion.

"What poise; how fierce he looks!" these and similar exclamations resounded on all sides. Manatus heard them and his courage revived. He glanced at those before him so graciously that the big whales felt entirely reassured and hurried forward to pay their respects. It was evident that none of them intended to hurt him. Manatus began to enjoy the fuss they were making over him. He had even made up his mind that he had found his proper place in life at last.

He was having a busy and delightful time of it, when, to his consternation, he saw a mass of dark figures coming from the south. It was another herd bearing down upon him. The big whales turned and faced the newcomers. Manatus could see by their behavior that they were not at all pleased with the new arrivals. The latter came on until they almost touched noses with the Toothless Whales; and meanwhile our hero sat upright in the water, hemmed in between the opposing forces and cut off from all escape.

Swish! a long, lithe form darted from the ranks of the new

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arrivals and planted itself in front of Manatus. It was Squalodon; and his companions were the Toothed Whales. Manatus scented trouble, and his spirits instantly collapsed like a bursted bubble. Cold chills crept over him as Squalodon set himself in motion, swimming around and under him, and meanwhile looking him over as a farmer does when about to buy a mule. The big Whales observed this display of rudeness in breathless silence. Squalodon paid no attention to them. Having completed his tour of inspection, he again took up his position in front of Manatus. The latter's last remnant of courage was now absolutely and completely gone. The big whales had backed away until Manatus was given a glimpse of the distant shore, so distant that it appeared like a thin gray line.

Squalodon was eyeing him insolently. A wicked, fishy grin was upon his face.

"And so this is the mighty Manatus," he muttered in tones of biting sarcasm. "It is said that he has come from nobody knows where, and that all sea-creatures must bow before him. However, I am not so sure that he possesses the strength and courage to make good his claim."

The words of the King Whale sounded like a challenge. All eyes were now turned upon Manatus. The latter's heart sank within him. He trembled like a frightened child. Squalodon opened his mouth wide, displaying all of his serried teeth.

"Unless I am much mistaken, we have met before," he snapped viciously. "I can assure you that my liking for you has not improved since then. Where are your hind legs? You seem to have hidden them well, but you cannot deceive me, you miserable landlubber posing as the ruler of the sea."

Manatus almost collapsed. It was with a courage borne of stupidity and desperation that he blurted out: "Landlubber your-

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self. You would be crawling around on the mud-flats even now if your own hind legs had not shriveled up."

Squalodon's face became convulsed with rage. With an effort he restrained himself.

"Silence, fool!" he screamed; then, addressing his comrades, he delivered himself of a torrent of verbal abuse such as Manatus had never before listened to:

"Take a good look at this sniveling sand-puppy, one and all of you," he cried. "Your eyes grow dim or you would surely recognize him. Do you remember in the old days when we floundered upon the mudbanks, how we warred upon the herds of vegetable eaters that trampled our grass and dirtied our waters? None of them dared follow when we left the land forever and made our homes in the open sea; but now——"

He paused for an instant and glared ferociously at the unfortunate Manatus. The latter had none to help him, for the big Toothless Whales, although anxious and interested spectators, were too timid to force an issue with their smaller but fiercer relatives. Manatus was now desperate and thoroughly aware of his own imminent peril. Almost imperceptibly he backed water, setting himself for a dash to the sandbar, whose surface, laid bare by the ebbing tide, showed faintly in the distance. The voice of the King Whale again grated harshly in his ears:

"But now one of them has dared; and more," cried the infuriated Squalodon. "He, an eater of weeds, would rule the ocean dwellers. He is but our slave of the old days, I tell you; a slave posing as our master. Death to the skulker and weed-eater! Death to Manatus the Sea Cow."

Splash! Manatus dove with the quickness of a lightning bolt and was gone. After him plunged Squalodon and the nimblest of the Toothed Whales. Away sped the Sea Cow, straight



A HOST OF LITHE FISH-LIKE FORMS LOOMED IN THE
TRANSLUCENT DEPTHS BEFORE HIM

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and swift as an arrow, his breath and direction calculated to reach the bar with a single dive. His sluggishness cast from him, he was like a bird in its element, shooting through the water with the swiftness of a rifle bullet. But the sea water was new to him, and his pursuers were close behind. It was a long, heart-breaking dash, with his air supply rapidly becoming exhausted, but he kept desperately on. Suddenly the rising ocean bottom touched his chest and the dim light above him brightened through the greenish haze. He made a last spurt and shot up the inclined verge of the bar, while behind him his enemies thrashed and floundered in the perilous shallows which they had failed to take note of in the excitement of the chase.

Once safely clear of the Toothed Whales, Manatus dragged his weary body over the sand to the deeper water. He was desperately tired, but this was no time for resting. Squalodon and his herd might come at any moment through one of the cross-rifts and cut off his escape to the mainland. Manatus took a long breath and dove deeply. He was making good progress shoreward when suddenly a host of lithe, fishlike forms loomed in the translucent depths before him. His escape was cut off. He stopped swimming, believing himself lost. He rose to the ocean surface and bowed his head meekly. The fishlike forms arose with him. No use struggling further against Fate, so he closed his eyes, covered his face with his flippers and calmly awaited the end.

IV

Chara, Queen of the Sharks, floated in her boudoir—a garden of seaweed ten fathoms beneath the ocean surface—with Sphyrna the Hammerhead and Isura the Mackerel Shark attending her.

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She was side-arching her long, tapering body and glancing admiringly at her feathery tail fin when suddenly a shadow thrust itself between her and the dim light overhead. In another instant two broad, flat objects tumbled down into the ocean depths. They were Bat Wing and Whip Tail, the Eagle Rays. Their great spreading fins, growing each side of and the full length of their bodies, gave them the appearance of flying bats. Instead of sharp teeth, their mouths were roofed and paved with thick bony plates. Their long, slender tails cut the water like blacksnake whips as they swung themselves into position before their Queen.

"We bring news!" Bat Wing announced breathlessly. "The mysterious stranger has arrived most suddenly and unexpectedly. He would have dashed right in on you had not the sharks stopped him."

Chara gasped and stared. The suddenness of it all nearly took the breath out of her.

"Why such haste?" she demanded, secretly pleased, but trying her hardest to look fierce. "Seems to me he is a rather forward animal. I am not accustomed to having strangers burst in upon me without the slightest warning."

"No doubt he realizes that," Whip Tail now spoke up. "For he was dreadfully embarrassed at sight of us. We cannot induce him to say a word."

Chara's eyes softened. The gill-slits in her neck quivered. Even she, who could eat half a dozen seals at one sitting, found it hard to resist such a display of the royal visitor's tender sentiment.

"I believe that you little rascals are merely trying to tease me," she snickered; then her voice dropped to almost a whisper as though she feared that her attendants Sphyrna and Isura

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might overhear. "Tell me, is the stranger as handsome as he is daring?"

"Not exactly handsome," Whip Tail replied. "He is much smaller than Your Majesty, and looks much like a seal. And yet never have I seen a creature bear himself with greater dignity and calmness."

Chara glowed phosphorescent green. She was delighted. It was nerve-racking, this being forever feared and kow-towed to as though she were an ogre. She was simply dying for an admirer, particularly one of a masterful nature who would bully and knock her about.

"Good," she gurgled. "Now bid the stranger approach. One thing more: you may tell our people that this stranger is a very important creature, also a particular friend of mine, and it is nobody's business what he says or does to me. Now off with you, and hurry, for I am so anxious to meet him I can scarcely wait another moment."

In the meantime, our hero was given a chance to catch his breath, also to learn that he had stumbled upon a school of sharks and not the Toothed Whales, as he had first feared. This discovery gave him great relief, particularly as his new acquaintances showed no disposition to harm him. Rather, they appeared much interested because of his unexpected arrival among them. The water fairly swarmed with them. One would think that the whole Shark family, Rays and Dog Fishes included, had turned out for a grand celebration. They were a wicked-looking lot, with their big mouths bristling full of sharp teeth and their cold eyes staring at him through the green clouded water. But by this time Manatus felt bored rather than terrified. He had poked himself into a nest of sea-hornets, but failed to appreciate his danger. Sharks might be the terrors of the ocean, but he remem-



THE QUEEN SHARK WRIGGLED WITH DELIGHT.

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bered his recent experience and considered the Toothed Whales a thousand times worse.

He was wishing that his new acquaintances would swim away and leave him a clear path to the mainland, when word came that the Queen of the Sharks awaited him. The Sea Cow's heart sank. More trouble. He would have given anything to be back safe in the estuary or even the Upper River, but there was no ignoring the royal summons, so he followed as directed, and was soon ushered into the presence of the Queen.

At sight of him Chara's heart palpitated so violently she thought it would burst. Her royal visitor was small and queer-looking, and yet all the more thrilling for those very reasons. Such a pygmy must be a marvel of audacity, a daring little rascal, to even think of asserting his mastery over her. Such boldness was enough to take her breath away. She felt humbled. Had he pitched into her just then and laid down the law she would have groveled in the mud and rejoiced at her humility. But the Sea Cow said and did nothing. The sight of the big-mouthed, saucer-eyed monster before him had frozen the marrow in his bones.

Chara felt a twinge of impatience. Why did not her admirer say or do something? Her impatience grew to irritation, and then she smiled happily as she saw the Sea Cow glancing timidly at the crowd of spectators gathered about them. She hastened to put her visitor at his ease.

"Ah, I see. So many strange faces annoy you. You prefer that we be alone. So do I. Please restrain yourself a moment while I attend to it."

"You might tell them to keep away from between me and the land," suggested Manatus as the Queen's purpose dawned upon him.

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"I would have chosen the ocean side," Chara giggled; "but you know best. Anywhere is good enough for me if it pleases you."

With that she turned to her followers and bade them withdraw out of earshot. This they did with a few tail-strokes, hovering in the murky water at a respectful distance. The path to the mainland was now open. Manatus was preparing to make a dash in that direction when Chara snapped her jaws together with a loud crash that made him nearly pop out of his skin.

"Have you nothing to say?" she demanded in a voice trembling with vexation. "Your calmness might be mistaken for indifference, and do stop staring at those other sharks. There is only one that you need look at, and here I am."

Yes, there she was; but for the life of him Manatus could not make head or tail of what she wanted. He wished that all this mummerly might end quickly and that he might be permitted to go his way in peace. He glanced shyly at the Queen, so shyly that the latter wriggled with delight. She endeavored to hide her embarrassment, but this was an almost hopeless task, for she was mostly mouth and teeth.

"Yes, I am looking at you," he mumbled, trying his hardest to be agreeable. "This is my first visit to the ocean, and until I came here never have I seen so many and such fine, big fish."

"Fish!" The Queen's back fin fairly bristled with scorn. "What do you mean by calling me such a vulgar name?"

It was too much. She broke down and bit the water, so great was her disappointment and mortification.

The Sea Cow felt that he had blundered. He made a desperate effort to right himself in the Queen's eyes.

"You a fish?" he gurgled, slapping the two halves of his upper

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lip together in his embarrassment. "I did not mean to say that. I was speaking of whales, not sharks."

It was only a chance remark, delivered blindly and without forethought, but it frothed and sizzled with wit, had he but known it. Even Chara's dull intellect caught the flash of genius.

"Ho-ho, haw-haw! Whales, fish?" she roared in ecstasy. "That is the best joke I ever heard. I wish they could hear you tell it," and the huge shark thrashed about so merrily that Manatus almost grinned in spite of himself. Gradually Chara recovered from her hilarity. Her face finally sobered and assumed a puzzled expression as she gazed inquiringly at the Sea Cow.

"There are no whales here," she said. "They are big, stupid creatures, and it is insulting the fish to class them together; but why mention it? Tell me: what made you think of them?"

Manatus saw that he was getting himself into hot water. Chara was eyeing him dubiously. No trace of coyness now showed itself in her sea-green face. He felt himself slipping, but knew not how to mend matters. He needed help. Had he but known he might easily have secured himself in the good graces of the Queen. To rule her was to rule the ocean. But, in spite of his first brilliant remark, he lacked wit. He was one of those well-meaning individuals who were forever doing or saying the wrong thing.

"Why shouldn't I think of them?" he snorted. "I was just finished seeing them when I swam into all these sharks and met you."

Chara's face became harder than the blade of an ax. "So! you went to see them first, eh? I suppose you were after that mass of blubber, Balena. I'll bite her flippers off the next time I see her. I'll bite her tail off, too, and the tail of every one of those whales that dares even look at you. How did they behave

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themselves? If they played any tricks I'll make them pay dearly."

Chara was in a jealous tantrum. Her bold swain was so exasperating, she felt like snapping a chunk off a coral reef. The thought that he had paid a visit to Balena before coming to see her was maddening. If Manatus had only possessed more tact, she and the ocean would have been his, but being dull-witted he continued on the down grade.

"Tricks?" he drawled. "The big Toothless Whales didn't play any; but you should have seen the way the Toothed ones acted. I never was treated so in all my life."

"The little ones! That's the way the waves roll, eh? What did they do?" The Queen was now beside herself. Gone was her clinging femininity. She was ready to swallow the sun because its rays smote softly upon her Manatus.

"Do?" repeated the adored one. "Not half what they wanted. But it was more than enough for me. They chased me over the sandbar."

"Chased—you?" The Queen could scarcely believe her ears. Manatus was a marvel of strength and courage, according to report. Surely she could not have heard aright.

"Yes—me," replied our hero impressively, convinced that now the conversation was taking a pleasanter turn. "But I was too quick for them, and just when they thought they had me I climbed over the bar."

He chuckled as he recalled the discomfiture of his enemies. It was amusing to think of how he had left them thrashing about in the shoals; but suddenly his face grew ashen; his heart nearly stopped beating; he stared aghast at the huge shark, whose fury was now concentrated upon him in a look of withering scorn. Her idol was shattered. Her royal lover was a coward. Her

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mouth gaped wide. The sea-water boiled through her gills.

"So that is why you came here so unexpectedly?" she bellowed. "Chased by the whales, were you, you miserable little seal-puppy? What ho!" she screamed to her assembled followers. "Here is sport for everybody. Death to the impostor! Away with him and chew him to bits!"

Swish, swirl! Away shot the Sea Cow like an arrow from a bow. He secured a good start before the sharks had sufficiently recovered from their surprise to hustle pell-mell after him; and Manatus could set a surprisingly fast pace in spite of his apparent clumsiness, provided the stakes were big enough. It was nip and tuck, and anybody's race until the Sea Cow's air supply began to dwindle, then his pursuers gradually closed in. They might have caught him, but he was nearing the mainland and the water was shallowing fast. The sharks soon became aware of this and slowed up just in time to avoid grounding on the shoals. Manatus felt his chest touch bottom. In another moment he was dragging himself up the beach, safe at last from his enemies, whose back fins cleaved the water close behind him.

He was a tired and bedraggled Sea Cow, but safe and sound, which was much to be thankful for. He was lying flippers upon the sand and tail in the water when something descended from above and alighted close beside him. It was Puffina the Gull.

"So you have returned," she said. "I saw you swimming out into the ocean, but did not expect you back so soon. How did you like it?"

"The water is all right," Manatus replied timidly; "but there are too many sharks and whales in it for me. Ah, but I am glad to be rid of them." While saying this he was hitching his round body backward into the water.

"Do you intend to try it again?" asked Puffina.

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The Sea Cow shook his head solemnly. "No, it won't do," he declared. "There is nothing left for me but to return to the old life in the Upper River. There I can at least live in peace and quiet and be safe from the sharks and whales."

So saying he backed away until the water became deep enough for him to assume an upright position. His nose-valves closed, his head sank from sight and he swam over the ocean bottom to the mouth of the estuary. Here he rose slowly to the surface and refilled his lungs.

For several moments he sat bolt upright, gazing across the sea, then with a farewell snort he disappeared beneath the waves and began his homeward journey to the Upper River. He had made his last venture into the ocean. He had seen and experienced enough of it to last him the rest of his life. His opportunity had come and gone, and Opportunity rarely knocks twice at anyone's door. Better the dreary seclusion of the Upper River than the turmoil of the briny deep. His chance had passed, the curtain was rung down and to the ocean dwellers the name of *Manatus* the Sea Cow was but a memory,

TOTO THE NON-PROGRESSIVE

INTRODUCTION

The Tapir of today is confined to southern Mexico, Central America and the northern part of South America in the Western Hemisphere and to the Malay Peninsula of Asia in the Eastern half of the world. It would be difficult to account for this animal's presence in such widely separated localities, and no others, did not the rocks tell us that in geologically ancient times his family enjoyed a very wide distribution. During the More Recent (Pliocene) period these odd creatures roamed over the United States, Europe and probably Asia, disappearing from the first-named two regions in the Most Recent (Pleistocene) period. One branch of the family moved down into the Central American region and settled there, while another journeyed into southeastern Asia, where it exists today.

The Tapir is a living fossil, a most primitive form of hoofed animal. From Less Recent (Miocene) times, he has come down to us practically unchanged, in marked contrast to his cousin, the Horse, a model of progressiveness. His noticeable activities began early in the More Recent (Pliocene) period, whose bone-bearing deposits are unfortunately scantily represented in our United States. However, near the head-waters of Snake Creek, western Nebraska, is one; a sand and gravel bed formed by river channel action, and here the remains of ancient animals, the Tapir included, are to be found in abundance. From the numerous bones of browsers or forest-loving hoofed creatures mingled with relics of the more progressive grazers or plains dwellers, it is apparent that the gradually changing climate had not yet produced its full effect. Prolonged droughts, dry winds and lower-

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ing temperature had not entirely discouraged luxurious vegetation nor compelled the forest animals to yield in favor of the hardier plains types. This change came later, as shown at Mt. Blanco, a More Recent (Pliocene) bone-bearing deposit of the Staked Plains, northern Texas. Here the remains of hoofed forest-dwellers are scarce, while those of plains animals abound. But the Tapir, forest-lover and browser, did not make his last bow to the world in the gravels of Snake Creek, Mt. Blanco or anywhere else. Ordinarily it was not in the nature of things for old-fashioned beasts to endure, but his case proved an exception. Physically he was well-adapted for the particular life he had chosen as befitting one of his modest attainments, and his mentality also must have been sufficient, for having found the mode of living which suited him best, he knew enough to stick to it. That is why the Tapir, in spite of his backwardness, has managed to maintain himself throughout the long ages and be alive today.

TOTO THE NON-PROGRESSIVE

I

Kyon the Bear Dog sat upon his haunches gazing gloomily into the distance at a group of slowly moving figures. These were horses, and he regretted exceedingly that they had chosen to congregate on the farther bank of the river beyond his reach. There was really nothing of the bear about him, except his size and clumsiness, he being a gigantic, slow-footed dog, although a powerful one, well able to hold his own with most any creature. However, a flesh-eater as slow-moving as he would find it difficult to catch such animals as should have contributed to his larder. Kyon had found them most elusive, and so he did not fare as well as he might. His had been a carrion diet, except on rare occasions, when a bit of rare good fortune brought some sick or disabled creature within his grasp. The time had been when Bear-dogs in general made an easy living, but that time had passed. Rhinoceri and other ponderous animals had disappeared and their places were taken by hardier and more active individuals, such as the Horse, Camel and Deer. The latter were too swift-footed for the Bear Dog, hence his gloom as he watched the herd of horses moving about on the other side of the river. They had but recently come there from the Plains country to drink and bathe. The Plains country had once been a fertile region, resplendent with forests and green pastures, but gradually lowering temperature and ever-dwindling rainfall had produced marked changes. The trees were gone, and of the meadows only scattered grass-tufts and a few stunted plants remained.

In marked contrast was the forest side of the river where the rapidly-disappearing vegetation had made its last stand. It, too, had suffered from the ravages of time, having retreated a quarter mile or more from the water. Here stood the Old Guard; tall oaks,

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shagbarks and other hardy trees serving as outposts to protect the luxurious vegetation behind them from further inroads of the Plains. The ground between forest and river sloped gently downward. Although bare of trees, it was covered with long grass and dotted with clumps of bushes.

The Bear Dog was a forest animal, while the horses were dwellers of the plains. The former would have sought a closer acquaintance with the latter, but as the Plains country gave flesh-eaters little opportunity to conceal themselves and creep unobserved upon their fleet-footed prey, Kyon had long since given up trying and kept to his own side of the river. While squatting among the bush-clumps, inwardly berating the elusiveness of animals in general, his attention was suddenly drawn from the distant horses to a solitary figure standing out upon the skyline, just beyond the forest's edge only a few hundred yards away. The figure was that of a plump, short-legged animal recently emerged from some hiding-place among the trees. No doubt he was on his way to the river and had paused to make a brief survey of his surroundings, realizing that a journey down the slopes would expose him to such enemies as might be lurking in the neighborhood.

The Bear Dog sank full-length upon the ground, thereby making himself as inconspicuous as possible. His mouth watered, for he had noted the stranger's plumpness, and short legs were not suggestive of speed. Here was fresh meat in the person of a slow-footed creature of the Bear Dog's class. Kyon was preparing to crawl upon the unknown and surprise him with a sudden dash when, like a flash, his prospective victim wheeled halfway around and came tearing along the slopes on a course parallel to the river. Apparently the plump stranger had no suspicion of danger

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lying in his path, for his line of flight led directly to the crouching Bear Dog.

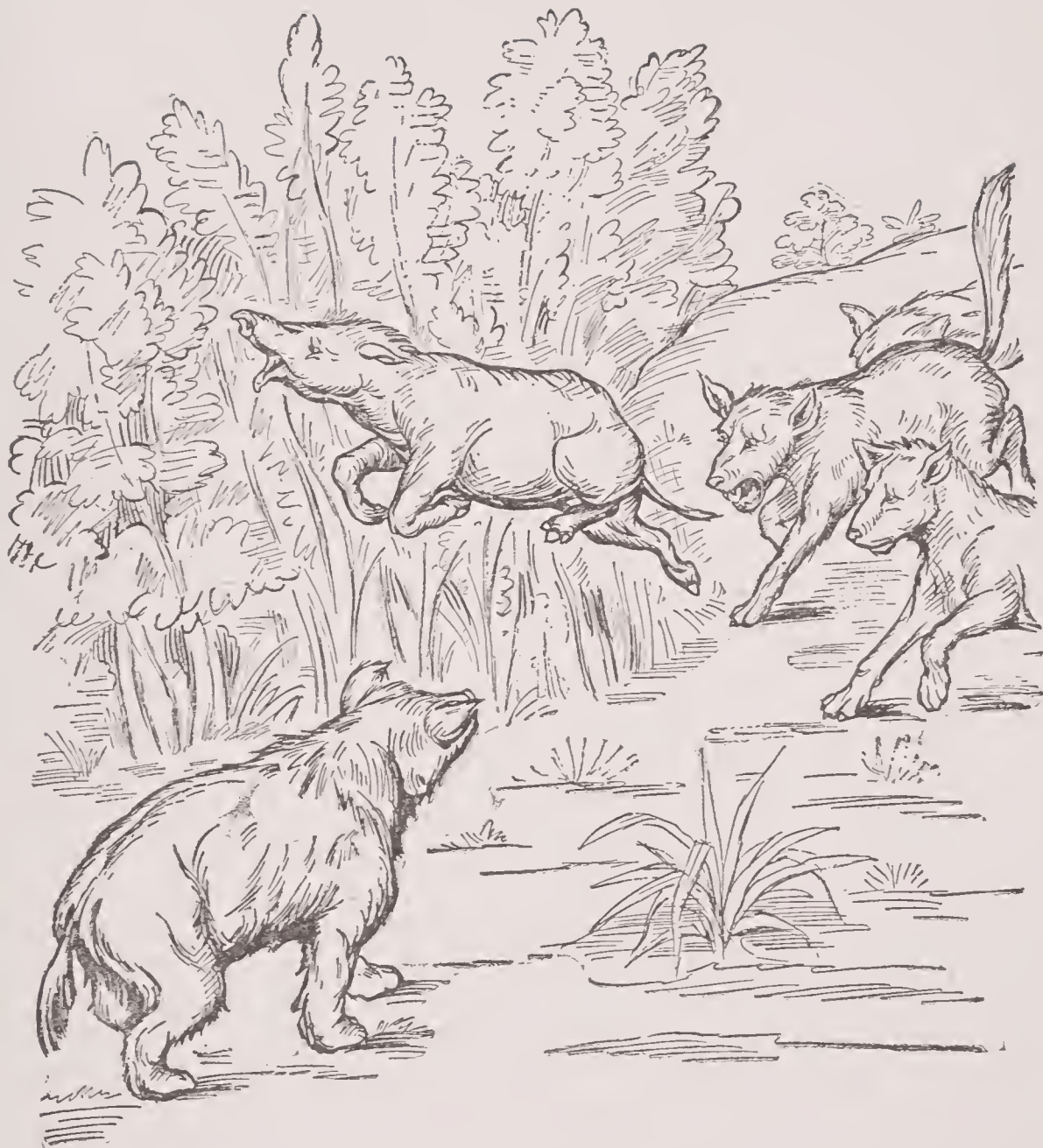
Kyon growled softly and licked his chops. A lucky turn of fate promised to result in something greatly to his advantage. The reason for it soon became manifest. A chorus of howls was borne upon the breeze, and the next moment a score of wolflike forms appeared, racing madly after the fugitive and voicing their hungry eagerness with yelps and howls.

The Bear Dog's mouth expanded in a fiendish grin. "The dholes!" he leered. "They are hunting the quarry down. But this feast is not for them. Too long have I had to be content with their leavings, but now it is my turn," and he waited patiently while his cousins of the bush fast drove the morsel into his open jaws. The fugitive was now near enough to give Kyon a clear view of him; a round-bodied, stumpy-legged beast who might have passed for a small rhinoceros except for his nose, which was long and flexible like an elephant's trunk, although much shorter. He held it uplifted and his mouth was wide open as he put forth his best efforts to escape. That he could or would escape seemed unlikely, for the long-limbed bush-dogs already threatened both flanks, thereby preventing him from reaching either forest or river. He was making a last frantic effort to avoid the snapping jaws close behind him when suddenly a new enemy loomed before him in the person of a gigantic dog.

With an agility most surprising for such an apparently clumsy animal, he veered sharply and leaped, the two motions resulting in a side-dive which landed him in a clump of bushes. His pursuers, unable to check their momentum, collided violently with the Bear Dog, whose presence had escaped their notice in the excitement of the moment. It all happened too quickly and unexpectedly to permit of any explanations. Each faction tore loose

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with tooth and claw, Kyon holding the center of the stage with the infuriated dholes slashing at him from every side. It was a battle-royal, such as he would have been glad to avoid, but being hopelessly in it and becoming enraged by his snarling tormentors, he struck out valiantly and gave as good as he got. He was a powerful beast, and when once his fangs and claws were working properly, the dholes were content to give him plenty of room. They backed off hurriedly, but in good order, all set to renew the conflict if pressed too closely, and yet more than willing to let matters rest without further argument. The Bear Dog felt similarly inclined and, although the opposing parties made much ado of yapping and snarling at each other, the battle ended then and there, with no great damage to either side. The dholes finally drew off the way they had come, and Kyon betook himself to his former station on the slopes, there to lick his numerous bites and growl his resentment at the departing dholes for their stupidity. The tender morsel so nearly within his reach was gone, and it began to look as though his last chance to eat of his own kill had gone with it. A carrion-eater he had been and a carrion-eater he would remain no doubt for the rest of his life. These were his bitter reflections, and the dholes were in an equally unhappy frame of mind as they slouched off with their tails dragging behind them. Suddenly every one of them turned half around with ears held at attention and eyes directed toward the scene of the recent encounter. From his place near the timberline, the eyes of Kyon were drawn in the same direction. The bushes had rustled and parted to permit the exit of a plump short-legged animal. There he was, coming out exactly where he went in. Dholes and Bear Dog gasped at such audacity even while cursing their own stupid forgetfulness. With the unexpected clash of the two factions, it was a case of out of sight, out of mind.



HE VEERED SHARPLY AND LEAPED

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He had disappeared in the excitement of the moment and was forgotten entirely. That he had made good use of his time and gone off scotfree was taken for granted. But, lo and behold! there he was again bobbing up from where he had been lying low awaiting his chance. His enemies, fools that they were, might be feasting now instead of throwing away their opportunity and going off hungry. It was too much to be borne. Dholes and Bear Dog both made haste to remedy their error by renewing the chase. The former came tearing along the slopes, while Kyon hurried to get ahead of them, for he was fully determined to do his own hunting this time and make a clean job of it.

But the plump, short-legged animal had not emerged from his hiding-place with the idea of being a target for his enemies. He had a good start, and his path to the river was now clear. Away he scampered and, although the dholes outran him two to one, his lead enabled him to reach the water first and dash in just as the foremost of his pursuers arrived upon the bank. For an instant the dholes hesitated, then they plunged in, leaving the Bear Dog sitting high and dry upon the bank, panting laboredly from his exertions. The river surface was now a turmoil of bobbing heads, for the dholes, exasperated by their quarry's aversion to being made a meal of, were determined to get him then and there or drown him rather than permit his outwitting them a second time. But the fugitive proved to be better at navigating than moving about on land, for he led his enemies a merry chase, permitting them to get close and then darting away like an arrow. He was as elusive as a fish, and his speed consumed so little effort that he appeared quite fresh, while the dholes, now thoroughly exhausted, climbed out upon the bank to rest themselves.

But that fat, short-legged animal must tire too in good time, they reasoned, and so, when he made as though to come ashore,

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they rushed out into the water and stood there knee deep, howling and yapping at him and giving him no chance to recuperate. Such tactics promised ultimate success, and it would seem that the hard beset swimmer must soon reach the end of his resources. He probably realized this, for seeing that the fierce bush-dogs were determined to prevent his landing, he made a sudden bold resolve. Turning his back upon the dholes, he swam out into deep water and passed midstream. His course pointed to the river's farther shore, the border line of arid wastes and vast desolation. It was a line which only those specially gifted could cross with impunity. But the swimmer had no choice. Fierce enemies thronged the bank which he must reach before seeking safety in the forest, and so he kept on, a voyager plowing through strange waters toward an unknown land, the Country of the Plains.

II

The Plains Horses had come down to the river to drink and bathe. It was their custom to do this once each day, the river being their main source of supply, for the Plains country contained little moisture, and animals living in the almost barren wastes needed water as much as anyone else. These horses were hardy creatures and, although no larger than ponies, were of good size as horses went in their day. Pliohippus was the leader of the herd. He and his companions had finished their ablutions, and were preparing to depart inland when they became aware of a commotion going on across the river. A stout-bodied beast of some sort was running toward the water, followed by a pack of dogs. The one hunted made hard work of his running, and as he plunged into the water his pursuers were almost at his heels. At first it looked as though the fugitive had no chance whatever,

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but he soon proved that he could swim well, even though he was a poor runner. The dogs could not catch him, strive as they might, and all of them finally climbed out upon the bank, howling at the swimmer, who wisely kept to the element wherein he had shown such ability to avoid his enemies. The Plains Horses could see his head moving about in the water. They were wondering how long he could stay there without rest when they noticed the head growing larger and pointed their way with a path of foam and bubbles trailing along behind it. All became interested, for it was unusual for forest animals to venture across the river to a region which offered them so few attractions. The head came nearer and nearer, until it reached shallow water, then it arose, and a plump body appeared behind it all wet and glistening like that of a reptile emerged from the depths. The newcomer splashed his way along until within a few yards of dry land and then he stopped, with his feet in the water, gazing timidly at the assembled horses and exhibiting much embarrassment at seeing so many pairs of eyes directed upon him. The Plains Horses thought him a new variety of rhinoceros at first, although his nose was very unrhinoceros-like, being long and flexible, and bearing no horn. Plihippus called to him from the bank:

“Who are you?”

The stranger blinked and screwed up his big nose. “Toto the Tapir,” he replied.

“The Tapir? Are you the only one?” Plihippus inquired. He had never seen a tapir until this moment.

The plump creature grew more and more embarrassed. “The only one I know of,” he mumbled.

“Um, a browser,” thought Plihippus. Browsers were hoofed animals whose short-crowned teeth could not be used for chewing hard, tough substances, although they did well enough on green

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leaves, tender shoots and other soft food. "Have you no friends?" the Plains Horse asked.

The Tapir did not seem to understand at first. "No, I haven't anything," he said. "But when I see many animals of one kind together, I feel——" he stopped and looked so wistfully from one face to another that all felt sorry for him.

"You feel lonesome," said the Plains Horse, "but old-fashioned animals are scarce. One rarely sees them nowadays."

Toto looked up quickly with his head cocked on one side. "Am I old-fashioned?" he asked.

"Yes," said Pliohippus, looking the other over appraisingly. "Too fat-bodied and short-legged; nose—well I never saw such a queer nose, and as for your feet, I don't know; I can't see them."

Toto obligingly waded out of the water and halted high and dry upon the bank, thereby exposing all four of his feet for inspection. The effect upon Pliohippus was electrical. Uttering a surprised snort, he stood like one transfixed with nostrils dilated and eyes starting from his head.

"Who are you?" he gasped. "Is a tapir some form of horse? Look, friends, and see: this creature is one of us. He is odd-toed."

The horses all gathered about Toto in great excitement and examined the feet in question, much to their owner's confusion. It was as their leader had said. The Tapir's feet at first glance seemed like shapeless pads of flesh, but the third or middle hoof was the largest and supported more weight than any of its fellows. Enlargement of the middle hoof and shrinkage of those on either side of it was the badge distinguishing Odd-toed from Even-toed animals. The latter carried the weight on each of their feet with two toes instead of one; two just alike, and so close together that they might be mistaken for one hoof split in two. All hoofed

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beasts were either Odd or Even-toed. To the Plains Horses it was an amazing discovery, this finding that the Tapir was one of their own kin. All were mightily pleased. But to Pliohippus, Toto's presence meant more than a happy family reunion. The Tapir was alone, probably the last of his kind, all because he was old-fashioned and had not kept up with the changing world. But it was not too late if he could be induced to improve himself as the horses had done.

"Will you stay with us?" Pliohippus inquired of him when the first excitement was over. "We can be your friends and help you. It is not yet too late."

"Too late for what?" Toto asked, much puzzled.

"To change. You are too fat and short-legged. With no horns or tusks to fight with, how do you expect to avoid fierce enemies? You can't even run."

Toto mumbled something about having managed fairly well thus far, but the Plains Horse gazed at him so reprovngly that he glanced down at his feet abashed. They were pudgy and heavily soled with callous pads. Pliohippus studied them critically. "Wrong shape and too many toes," he snorted. Toto began to feel discouraged. "My feet? I never knew that anything was wrong with them. How many toes should I have?"

"One," was the prompt answer.

Toto glanced from his own to his companion's feet. "Is that all? Why do you have more?" he inquired blandly.

Pliohippus frowned and bit his lips. He had three toes on each foot. This he could not deny, although to all intents and purposes he was one-toed. The two little ones dangled too high up to be of any use. They were the remnants of olden days, when horses had three toes, all of which touched the ground. Pliohippus would have been glad to be rid of them, but they still



TOTO HALTED HIGH AND DRY UPON THE BANK

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clung to his feet like dew-claws. The Tapir had touched upon a tender subject, but his air of innocence and inexperience was disarming. He meant no offense.

"Those little extra toes will come off some day," Pliohippus explained. "But it means much work. Yours must come off, too."

"How?" asked Toto.

"Running on hard ground," Pliohippus replied. "You can wear those thick soles down to the bare hoof at the same time."

"I don't believe I would like that," Toto objected, but the Plains Horse would not listen. He kept dwelling upon Toto's imperfections until the latter began to think himself a very inferior animal. "Nobody ever told me this before," he said, then bowed his head and sighed deeply, as though realizing that his being a tapir was a most unfortunate circumstance.

Pliohippus turned the matter over in his mind. The Tapir interested him strangely. He did not know that in long ages past horses and tapirs were very much alike. The first had progressed, while the latter had remained almost stationary, and that was why they now appeared so very different. But the Tapir still wore his big third toe, the badge of kinship, and Pliohippus was profoundly impressed. "You must remain with us," he declared. "Do as we do and who knows but that some day you will become a horse?"

Toto could hardly believe his ears. "I a horse?" he exclaimed, looking from one to another of the faces about him.

All agreed that the transformation was feasible, whether they believed it or not. It was a novel idea, one that caught their fancy, and they were interested in seeing it tried. Toto himself began to view it with favor. He would have friends which he wanted badly, and now that he had been declared a creature of

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low caste, he was not unwilling to better himself. The upshot of the matter was that the herd of Plains Horses marched off, taking Toto with them.

As they left the river border and reached higher ground, the Tapir almost lost heart at sight of the barren wastes extending before him and on both sides as far as he could see. "No trees?" he gasped. "How can animals live without trees?"

His companions made haste to assure him that trees were luxuries, fit only for fat and slow-moving beasts. They encouraged laziness, and were not meant for high-class animals. Horses could live without trees, and did.

Toto would have remonstrated, being still a tapir and not a horse as yet, but he hated argument, and so held his peace. Then, too, he was by this time filled with the notion of bettering himself. Some bad must be expected with the good. The march was resumed, and soon the river lay far behind him. Toto was now prepared to endure many discomforts, but as he saw more and more of the plains country, his heart grew heavier, until it felt like lead. Dust-laden air to breathe and hard ground to walk on; scanty grass-tufts sticking straight up like stiff brushes; no ponds, mud-holes or moisture of any kind; all bare and lifeless beneath a broiling sun. Toto almost rebelled at this appalling state of things. He turned his head and gazed anxiously in the direction from which he had come. "What an awful country," he thought to himself. "No place to drink and bathe. Perhaps I ought not to have ventured so far from home."

His reflections were interrupted by a movement in the herd. His companions had increased their pace to a trot. No exertion for them, but Toto had to gallop his hardest to keep up. A mile or so of the hot, suffocating atmosphere was enough for him. He stopped, thoroughly exhausted, and the herd stopped with him.

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"What is wrong now?" Plihippus demanded. "Don't you like running your extra toes off?"

Toto could only roll his eyes and gasp. Running his toes off was no fun, but his lungs were too full of dust for him to say so. While waiting for him to recover, the Plains Horses amused themselves by nibbling the tufts of grass growing sparsely about them. Plihippus watched the Tapir from the corners of his eyes. "Poor wind comes from too rich eating," he said; "but you cannot be changed in a day. These are our feeding-grounds. You may eat when you feel like it."

Toto was soon sufficiently restored to absorb more knowledge concerning his new life. He glanced from one grass-tuft to another, there being nothing else in the vicinity suggesting food. They appeared tough and uninviting, but judging by the way his companions nibbled and crunched, they must be unusually choice delicacies. He bent low and grasped one with his flexible trunk, and would have plucked it had not Plihippus interposed.

"Hold!" said the Plains Horse in a shocked voice. "Who ever heard of eating with one's nose? Use your teeth."

Toto released his grip and endeavored to nibble, but with poor success. His trunk got in the way, and when after repeated attempts he secured a mouthful, the taste almost made him ill. "Ugh!" he snorted in disgust. "What horrible stuff! I never can eat it."

The Plains Horses were amazed. What was good enough for them should please anybody, and a Tapir was no exception. It simply went to show how rich food and easy living could spoil some animals. They were beginning to think that converting Toto into a horse might prove an extremely difficult task.

As for the Tapir, although rather appalled by the magnitude of the undertaking confronting him, he was too glad at finding

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friends who took an interest in him and too eager to better himself to give up easily. He might be meek and shy, but beneath his unprepossessing exterior lurked unbounded patience and persistence. How to manage without trees and water seemed a problem incapable of solution, but hunger, thirst and the lack of bathing facilities had not yet become unbearable, and so when the Plains Horses announced their intention of moving on, he was ready to proceed.

The air of the plains which had seemed strangely hot and dry, grew hotter and drier, impelled by a strong wind, which stirred up the surface soil and filled Toto's eyes and nostrils with irritating dust. He was sneezing and coughing to rid his nose and throat of the fine particles which annoyed them, when Pliohippus suddenly called a halt. A brownish haze had appeared above the western horizon, rising and spreading rapidly like a pall and shutting off all view of the sky. To the horses familiar with plains phenomena, it was a danger signal not to be disregarded. The haze meant a dust storm, pulverized soil gathered up and borne along in clouds by a strong wind, threatening death by suffocation to every creature in its path. None might hope to outrun it, but fleet-footed animals could avoid it by fleeing to one side. It came from the west, and as the herd was placed nearer to its southern flank than the northern, they chose the direction which promised safety, galloping southward as fast as their legs would carry them.

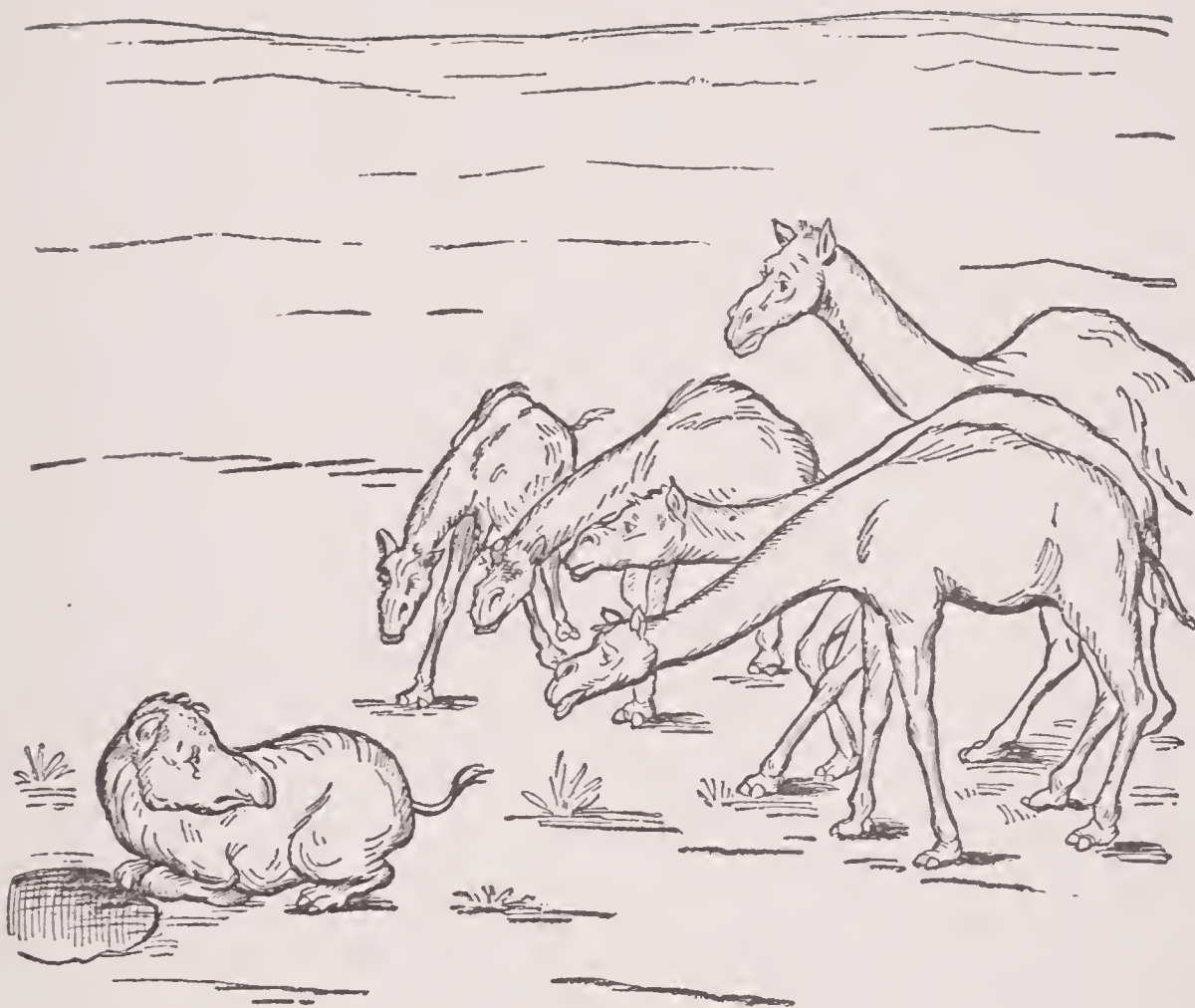
The Tapir was left alone, a solitary creature, standing in the path of the storm, and not swift-footed enough to escape by flight. On swept the cloud of wind-borne particles, a wall of dust which now darkened the sun and obscured the Tapir's vision of everything about him. He dashed away, not to one side as the

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horses had done, but straight ahead, as though to outrun the storm.

But Toto was not thinking to escape by flight. He was looking for a place to hide. It seemed a poor chance, for the ground was as bare as a board, but just as the dust-wall came swirling about him, something yawned in his path—a hole. He plunged in. It was not a large hole, probably the home of some rodent, and intended for one smaller than himself. He managed to insert his head and neck, but that was as far as he could get, and there he stuck like an oversized cork in a small bottle. The storm swept over him with a rush, but his nose and eyes were now protected from further inroads of dust. The hole also contained air which could be breathed. He felt the dust-laden wind buffeting him sternwise and amidships, and doing its best to dislodge him, but his bows grounded in the hole held him too firmly to be torn loose. This endured for but a few moments; then the pressure upon his body slackened. The storm swept over him and was gone leaving behind it a stilled, dust-laden atmosphere which discharged its burden in slowly descending showers.

The danger had now passed but Toto still remained with head stuck in his refuge, making sure before again trusting himself in the open. The air in the hole began to oppress his lungs. His brain whirled and it seemed as though he heard faint voices and felt a jarring of the earth. Something touched his hind-quarters, a soft muzzle with sniffing nostrils. Toto backed hastily out of the hole and looked about him. A host of strange-looking beasts stood there watching him, apparently much mystified by his presence. They were hoofed beasts, and not flesh-eaters as the Tapir could see at a glance; therefore he did not consider himself to be in any immediate danger. However, he kept his wits



TOTO BACKED HASTILY OUT OF THE HOLE AND LOOKED
ABOUT HIM

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about him, wondering how all of those animals had come there and what they wanted of him.

III

The newcomers were a herd of camels. Having followed in the wake of the dust-storm, they had halted to investigate the plump creature lying in their path. Some considered it a huge rodent while others more observing pronounced it a hoofed beast of some sort; a new variety of pig or possibly a rhinoceros and probably dead. But much to their surprise, it suddenly jumped up and stood before them with head bowed meekly like one condemned awaiting the ax.

"Are you a rhinoceros?" one of the camels inquired, "or merely a pig? We never saw your like before."

Toto sneezed, coughed the dust from his throat and answered: "Neither, I am only a Tapir," then held his peace, overwhelmed by the ring of faces about him.

His explanation seemed to the camels far from clear. None of them knew what a Tapir was.

"Hoofed animal?" a voice asked.

Toto nodded his head and mumbled, "yes," whereupon his hearers all blinked at each other and smacked their lips as much as to say, "I told you so."

"Grazer?" someone suggested. Grazers had long-crowned teeth so as to provide for the wear resulting from chewing tough food such as dried grass or seeds.

For reply, Toto humbly regretted to state that he was a browser, greatly to everyone's surprise, for none but grazing animals had heretofore been known to venture upon the plains. He admitted apologetically that he had been presumptuous even

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though someone had advised him to try his fortune in the new country. He was old-fashioned, in other words, an inferior animal who needed enlightenment and besides he wanted friends to cheer him up.

The camels displayed keen interest in his recital and when he explained further his tendency to be odd-toed and related to the horse, they not only blinked and smacked their lips as seemed to be their custom, but also snorted as though greatly impressed.

"What do you intend to do about it?" they asked.

"Make something better of myself," Toto replied. "I can't fight and I can't run. There is much to learn."

Yes, a browser had much to learn if he intended to make his home in the plains country. Many had tried it and failed, while only a few succeeded. The camels were eager to know what the Tapir had done thus far to produce results.

"I tried to be a horse like my cousin," said Toto, "but with poor success. Running my extra toes off and doing without water were more than I could bear."

His audience was deeply moved. None of them could see any reason for his undergoing severe hardships even for a good purpose. However, if he was set on bettering himself, why not choose the best and easiest way? Horses were not the highest class of hoofed animals.

Toto pricked up his ears at this. He had found it hard work trying to be a horse. That he might be something even better and have an easy time doing it, appealed to him strongly. "What else can I be?" he inquired.

A fine question! His hearers were not at all pleased at such a display of crass ignorance. What else? Why if he had any eyes in his head it was a simple matter for him to see and choose. He

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might become a camel, for instance, provided he had sense enough.

A most wonderful idea. Toto gazed in awe at the many faces about him. "What must I do to be a camel?" he asked eagerly.

One of the herd, acting as spokesman, explained that he must learn to run, of course, and eat such plants and grasses as grew upon the plains. However, he might keep two toes on each foot instead of reducing the number to one, and as for water, that was a problem which camels had solved ages ago. They carried an abundant supply with them, enough to last for days at a time.

Toto listened attentively to all this, and the more he heard the more feasible it appeared for him to become a camel; much more so than struggling further to be a horse. One less toe to run off and an assured water supply were strong inducements. He resolved then and there to throw in his lot with his newly-discovered friends. Having made this decision, he was accepted as a camel in the making, and marched off in the center of the herd, more than willing to do his part, but as he trotted along in high spirits, the dearth of trees and moisture would insist upon rising up like spectres to disturb his peace of mind, no matter how hard he tried to forget them. His first impressions of the Plains country were charming compared with what he now felt on getting farther into it. The grass tufts grew sparser and more bristly and the only other vegetation in sight consisted of most unattractive-looking and ill-smelling plants. The sun, blazing from a cloudless sky, sent down its hot rays upon the Tapir's scantily-clothed body. Toto's mouth and throat were hot and dry, and so, when he considered that he had endured enough to warrant his being given some relief, he announced

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himself ready and willing to share the water which his friends carried about with them. His thirst had become intolerable and, besides, he needed a bath.

But, to his consternation, he now learned that the camels were unable to help him. They all carried water, to be sure, but it was in their stomachs, where he could not get at it. Every one of them had a compartment inside of him containing a reserve water supply, which could be drawn upon as needed. Camels were thus peculiarly enabled to travel great distances in dry country, where other animals would perish of thirst. All very fine for them, but unfortunate for the Tapir, seeing that the water in their stomachs was beyond his reach. It was a pity that he had not been told all this in the first place, for knowing it he would never have come. The camels were not inclined to take the matter very seriously, but to Toto the situation was an appalling one. No water! He would surely die if he didn't get some soon. His hopes were blasted suddenly and completely. A camel's life had no more attractions for him. His one thought now was, how to get out of the desperate situation in which he found himself. As he gazed over the barren wastes, hoping against hope, some distant objects moving among the tufts of vegetation caught his eye. They were moving slowly and keeping close to the ground, as though anxious to avoid being seen. The camels did not observe them at first, and not until Toto called their attention to the strange animals approaching, did they sense the danger and take alarm. All stood trembling and staring until the newcomers came near enough to be distinguished. "Desert dogs!" they screamed in terror, and galloped off in a cloud of dust, whereat the skulkers rose to their feet and followed after.

Toto did not run, although the pack was now bearing down

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upon him with the speed of lightning. He stood in their plain view, with feet rooted to the ground and apparently too terror-stricken to move. His legs doubled up under him and he sank slowly to the ground. There he lay as motionless as the grass clumps and plants which dotted the plains about him.

On came the desert-dogs, a pack of lean-bodied, long-limbed brutes to the number of twenty or more. Their voices were silent to save the breath which they needed for a long stern chase after the fleeing camel herd. Their mouths were wide open, showing their white fangs and blood-red tongues. They ran like the wind with muscles straining and long-haired tails streaming along behind them. None of them could have failed to see the inconspicuous object lying in their path but it lay motionless and consequently failed to detract attention from the galloping camels beyond. They swept down upon and over it an avalanche of swiftly-moving bodies and rushing feet.

And still the Tapir never budged. Only a stout heart or stupefied nerves could have endured that mad charge and repressed the frantic impulse to rise in terror and seek safety in useless flight. One gaunt beast avoided the strange obstacle in his path by leaping high over it. The pack flew past and was gone.

Not until pursued and pursuers had faded away in the distance did Toto show any sign of life; then he raised his head and looked cautiously about him. The plains had relapsed into their former desolation. Not a single living object, only bush-grass and dwarfed plants dotted the landscape for miles around. He was safe from the desert-dogs for a time at least and so it behooved him to get out of sight at once in case they returned. Now that a camel's life was impossible, home seemed the best place to go to, assuming that he could find the right direction

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and make the journey in his present parched state. Toto stood erect and tested the air with his nose. Either his sense of direction was good or else his nose found the necessary information; at any rate when he trotted off, his course led straight to the river. The latter was not so very far away, but beneath the sun's scorching rays and with his thirst become more maddening with every step, the journey seemed to him endless. When he finally did arrive at his destination, the sun had about disappeared below the western horizon. Toto drank, bathed and satisfied his hunger with some plants growing near the water's edge, then rested until nightfall, when the darkness gave him his opportunity to swim over to the forest side of the river. No one observed him, and the short walk up the slopes to the woods passed without incident. Toto breathed a deep sigh of relief when at last he found himself beneath the shelter of friendly trees. The forest now seemed a paradise compared with the barren country he had so recently visited. He might be old-fashioned physically and inferior to other animals but this was the life for him and never again would he give it up even to better himself. It struck him as odd that the squirrels and birds whose voices disturbed the night stillness, showed no signs of dissatisfaction with their condition. Apparently none of them cared about changing themselves into something else as they moved about, chattering and chirping gaily. Every one of them seemed happy enough, but why? Was it because they knew no better or because they were really well off? Toto pondered long and deeply over these matters until his brain grew weary and he fell asleep. When morning came, his harrowing experiences of the day before seemed more like products of his imagination than actual occurrences. Perhaps he had eaten something that disagreed with him and given rise to bad

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dreams, for never would he have considered the practicability of a plains life when in his sober mind. And yet, he looked down at his odd-toed feet and sighed. The forest was a lonesome place; no friends in it who cared for him. Solitude, yes that was his trouble. He had learned in his lonely life to dread it more than anything else. Because of that alone, he had ventured into the open in search of friends, prepared to suffer discomforts or even death rather than endure longer his sombre isolation. Inferiority did not count for much. He would willingly change himself into a worm provided it gave him friends. He was wondering if these would ever be his portion in life when a noise sounded in the woods, and looking about him, he discovered something that resembled an animal. It was an emaciated body resting upon four stilt-like legs. Toto could see no more and being curious, he ventured closer, which enabled him to obtain a view of the unknown's feet. The latter turned out to be cloven-hoofed, signifying that their owner was an even-toed creature. Toto felt greatly relieved, for the woods were filled with prowling beasts of prey and nobody knew whose turn would come next. However, any anxiety he may have felt proved ill-founded for all hoofed animals were plant-eaters and therefore comparatively harmless.

Thus far Toto had seen nothing of the stranger's head and was wondering what had become of it when the branches and leaves high above waved violently and the head in question peered forth. It was that of a camel perched upon a remarkably long neck and the latter merged into the emaciated body which rested upon the stilt-like legs tipped with cloven hoofs. All of these widely-separated parts went to make up the Giraffe Camel, a creature over eight feet tall. He was breakfasting and had first attracted Toto's attention by the commotion he made when

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nosing about in the foliage. His eyes twinkled as they rested upon the Tapir beneath him. "What an odd-looking person," he said. "Is it a pig?"

These remarks were delivered in a patronizing tone such as one would use in addressing an inferior, but Toto felt no offense, for he was pleased at being noticed and spoken to in a friendly manner by the tall creature. After humbly disclaiming any affiliation with swine, he declared himself to be a mere tapir, adding in explanation of his humble state that he had but recently endeavored to make better of himself by venturing into the Plains country and trying to become a horse.

The Giraffe Camel was astonished. "A most remarkable notion coming from one like you," he exclaimed. "Did you succeed in becoming a horse?"

"No, I did not." Toto did not go into details. The remembrance of them was far from pleasant. However, his new acquaintance expressed no desire to learn more. His mind had not yet recovered from the shock of the main idea. "I never would have thought of beginning such a hopeless undertaking," he remarked. "I for one would find it much better and easier being a camel than being a horse."

These words of wisdom impressed Toto deeply in that they corroborated what the Grazing Camels had said only the day before. And yet he felt grave doubts. Being a camel was not as easy as it appeared. He knew because he had tried it. "Everything went wrong," he sniffed, "and I guess that the best thing for me to do is to remain a browser and forest animal the rest of my life."

The Giraffe Camel was silent for a few moments searching his mind for an answer to the other's arguments, then his eyes brightened.

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"Your idea was good," he said. "However, you began wrong. Why go to all the trouble and worry of learning to become a grazing horse when you might stay at home all nice and comfortable and remain a browser? You never thought of that."

No, Toto had not, but now that someone else had thought of it for him, he was quite impressed. It was all clear now. He could have retained the old forest life and climbed out of his rut, both at the same time. Was it still too late? "Can I change now?" he asked. "Can I become a browsing horse?"

The Giraffe Camel pursed up his lips scornfully. "Who said horse?" he snapped. "I know I didn't, and besides there are no more left. A big puma got the very last one." Toto was much distressed. "No more browsing horses?" he squealed. "Then I can't be anything but myself."

His tall companion experienced a feeling of genuine sympathy. Why any animal should want to become some other was beyond him; but the Tapir seemed bent on a change and there was one way to oblige him.

"Why don't you learn to be a browsing camel?" he suggested.

The thrills chased each other up and down Toto's spine. His hopes thrice blasted were again revived. He gazed in awe at the giant. One of such impressive appearance must indeed be a superior animal. "Can I be like you?" he asked, jumping up and down with delight. "When shall I begin?"

"Now," was the answer. "But first you must make your neck and legs grow. They are much too short."

Toto's face fell. "How am I to do that?"

The Giraffe Camel didn't know. His neck and legs had been long ever since he could remember. The Tapir would

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have to stretch himself somehow. Of course this would entail much effort and require considerable time.

"I might be a short-necked, short-legged camel," said Toto. "Then I need not change much of anything."

Not a bad idea; perhaps it could be arranged. The tall creature could see no objections; and yet, there were other difficulties. "What will you do about your nose?" he asked. "One like yours would look odd on the face of a camel."

Toto began to feel rebellious. His nose was a most useful tool for grasping things and he would not change it for anybody. He said as much, and rather boldly, too, for being asked to give up things he liked, and to do this and that disagreeable thing, were beginning to ruffle his ordinarily serene temper. The Giraffe Camel lifted his brows. The little, fat, short-legged animal had suddenly abandoned his air of humility for one of presumption. "You must change not only your nose but your neck and legs, too," he said haughtily.

Toto did not reply. His sharp ears had detected a faint snapping which sounded like twigs trodden upon by soft, heavy feet. The Giraffe Camel had not heard, for he went on as though he thought himself perfectly secure. "With a long neck like mine you may look down upon approaching enemies and long legs will enable you to run from them," he remarked sagely.

Toto remained as silent and motionless as a graven image. The noise sounded nearer now and he could make out a dark form crawling stealthily in his direction. He set himself for a quick dash through some bushes placed conveniently near.

The Giraffe Camel was about to deliver further words of wisdom when suddenly the crawling figure gathered its limbs under it and sprang through the air, alighting upon the tall

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creature's back. Down fell the giant, his neck broken by one wrench of his assailant's powerful jaws. But the latter had no stomach for a skinny camel, mostly neck and legs. There was a far more tender morsel at hand which in his haste he had passed over. Its quick dive into the bushes had not escaped his keen eye. Disentangling himself from his victim, he bounded after the fleeing Tapir. Toto must do his best now to escape, for he had to do with the fiercest, strongest and swiftest of forest-dwellers, the Giant Puma.

Realizing fully that he was no match for his pursuer in speed, Toto made use of every art he knew to throw the Giant Puma off his track. Contrary to what might have been expected of a robust and clumsy animal, he chose the most difficult path where hanging vines, dense brush and fallen trees gave little room to squeeze through. But Toto showed masterly skill in finding openings and although greatly impeded, he fared better than his enemy who floundered helplessly among the entanglements and finally broke away from them in disgust. The big cat tried to circumvent the Tapir by turning to a more passable although circuitous route through the woods, but in spite of this strategy he failed again for Toto was not the one to take unnecessary steps and when the Giant Puma arrived at where the two paths crossed, his quarry was not there. The latter lay hidden where his tracker had last left him to take the easier route. Toto seemed to know instinctively that only by the noise he made, could his pursuer ferret him out and so he lay perfectly quiet while the Giant Puma tramped here and there muttering angrily to himself because the Tapir, once nearly within his grasp, had escaped so easily.

Toto remained hidden in the underbrush for a long time just to make sure that his foe was beyond hearing distance, then he



DEATH OF THE GIRAFFE CAMEL

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rose and glided noiselessly away. The vines and underbrush thinned out after a time and he emerged into a wide expanse of forest-land, bare of bushes and other low-lying vegetation. He was considering the wisdom of his appearing in a region so scantily furnished with hiding-places when he heard voices and his nose caught a strange odor. However, the latter was not that of a puma or other flesh-eater; therefore he stood his ground and in time discerned many round bristly backs moving in and out among the trees and coming toward him. The sight of them eased his mind, for he knew them to be peccaries or forest-pigs, familiar figures but ones with whom he had never been intimate.

As they drew nearer, those in front saw Toto and recognized him, and soon the whole lot of them were gathered closely about him. Although not intent on mischief they were rather brusque in requesting the Tapir to explain just why he happened to be there.

Toto gave an account of his adventure with the Giant Puma, whereat the peccaries bristled and gnashed their teeth in a way that showed how cordially they hated the big cat. They reviled him for a skulker and declared themselves eager to annihilate him if ever he dared show himself. To the Tapir, this sounded like vain boasting, but when he spoke of the Giant Puma as the fiercest and strongest of forest creatures, the peccaries grunted loudly in scorn. "That is what comes of being a Tapir," they said. "Why don't you fight instead of hiding and running away?"

Toto bowed his head for very shame. He could not help but admit himself to be a peaceable sort unfit for fighting and of no great use to the world. However, he had made much

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effort to improve himself. Only yesterday he had visited the Plains country and endeavored to become a horse.

By the way the peccaries stared at him, then at each other, it was easy to see that the whole matter was beyond their power of understanding. That a forest animal should venture into the barren wastes was inexplicable enough, but the idea of his wanting to be one other than himself was absolutely beyond them. "Why be a horse?" someone grunted. "You would only wish yourself something else."

"I did try to be something else," Toto answered quickly. "Learning to be a horse was so difficult that I gave it up and endeavored to become a camel."

The peccaries could scarcely believe their ears. The Tapir had been a most eccentric creature as they well knew, but now he must have lost his mind entirely.

"Learning to be a camel was as difficult as learning to be a horse," Toto went on. "I couldn't live in the Plains country with no water or trees, so I came back to the forest side of the river. There I met a browsing camel."

"Oomp," grunted a voice. "I thought that all of the browsing camels were gone. What did he do?"

"Not much," was the reply. "The big cat killed him and then chased me. He thought that I could be like him but my neck and legs were too short, so I did not try. It is much easier being a Tapir even if I do have to live alone the rest of my life."

The peccaries listened attentively to all this. The Tapir was certainly a creature of extraordinary ideas. "Why don't you become like us?" someone suggested. "We are many and a pig is as good as a horse or camel or anyone else."

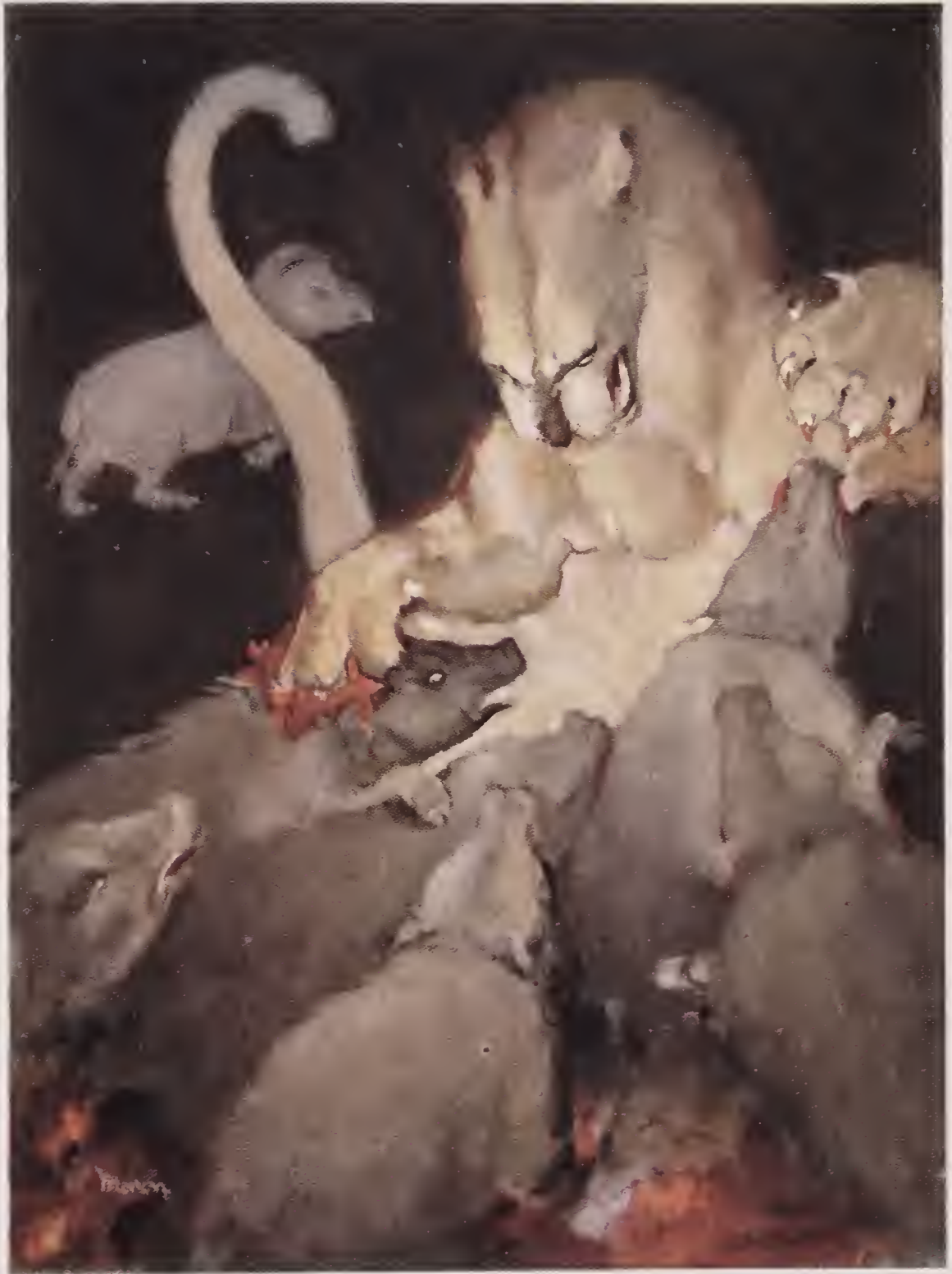
Toto did not accept this offer as quickly as he might for his various unpleasant experiences had filled his mind with grave

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doubts. As a Tapir he had not managed so badly thus far. It was trying to be somebody else that got him into so much trouble. A plains life was hopeless, and as for the forest, perhaps he was as good as anyone in it. Anyhow a live Tapir could be no worse off than a dead horse or camel. But the peccaries mistook his hesitancy for refusal and that angered them. Perhaps the Tapir considered them inferior animals. Did he or did he not?

No, indeed; Toto made his decision at once, for the sight of all those pigs glaring and gnashing their teeth made him nervous. His efforts would be directed at becoming a peccary at once; so he assured them. Thus was the Tapir launched upon a new career and all being satisfactorily arranged, he set himself to the not entirely agreeable task of learning to be a forest-pig. Meanwhile his associates had turned from him to root about in search of food, an occupation wherein they displayed outrageous manners, getting in one another's way and jostling each other rudely. When some found choice tidbits the others tried to rob them. This made trouble, for every pig of the lot was determined either to keep what he had or get it from someone else and soon the whole drove was engaged in a free-for-all fight. Teeth gleamed, blows were struck and blood trickled down many a gashed flank and shoulder. The woods resounded with the din of battle: grunts, squeals and the stamping of feet. Toto retreated to the outskirts of the fray and looked on, an amazed and anxious spectator. "What quarrelsome beasts," he thought to himself. "I wish they wouldn't make so much noise. That and the blood-smell will surely bring the flesh-eaters upon us."

As if in reply, a lithe, sinewy form glided into view from among the trees. It pounced upon the nearest peccary and stretched him lifeless upon the ground with a single blow of its paw. So sudden and unexpected was the attack that before the



"A LIVE TAPIR IS BETTER THAN A DEAD PIG."

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drove could meet it another of their number lay dead. Civil war terminated abruptly and all united to meet the Giant Puma, their common enemy. The disorganized rabble became a fighting machine, as every peccary sprang to his place. Shoulder to shoulder, with ranks pressed close, they bore down upon the big cat, their teeth gnashing and their little eyes blazing like hot coals.

The Giant Puma met the assault by seizing the foremost pig in his jaws, then dropped it hastily with a furious snarl, as his assailants closed in and bit him in a dozen places at once. He bowled them over one after another with mighty paw swings, but for every pig put out of action there was another to take his place, and soon the big cat was so perforated by their sharp teeth that he lost heart. Yowling dismally, he leaped clear of his tormentors and tore off through the woods with the peccaries hot after him. It had been a brief battle, but a sanguinary one, for fully a third of the drove lay dead upon the ground. Only one living animal remained to view the scene of carnage, and that one was Toto, who had taken no part in the fray. "A live Tapir is better than a dead pig," he reflected, "and if they don't let that big cat alone there won't be any more pigs." It was his final effort. All desire to be some other animal was gone. The difficulties were insurmountable. He would remain a Tapir to the end of his days. Having arrived at this decision he left the battlefield and plunged into the forest, farther than he had ever been. The trees grew closer and closer together as he progressed, and were all interlaced with vines and festoons of damp moss. Toto stopped to sniff the air and learn the meaning of its peculiar odor. His scent was keen and it told him that some distance beyond lay something of which he was extremely fond—water. He moved on. The traveling was extremely difficult now, and it grew more so with every step he took. The trees seemed to spring one from an-

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other, the vines and moss were an endless succession of spreading nets and the closely packed underbrush filling every opening, rose up before him like an impenetrable wall. It seemed hopeless for any animal to attempt such a passage, but Toto found holes somehow, and where there were none he pushed, squirmed and battered his way through until at last scattered rays of sunlight pierced the leaf-roof overhead, vines and underbrush suddenly thinned out and he emerged upon the shore of a large pond. Tall rushes grew near the water's edge, and beyond them floated great heart-shaped leaves with white and yellow buds protruding. A splash and round ripples one within another marked the presence of some fish come for a moment to the surface. Another splash and a big soft-shelled turtle dumped himself into the water from his basking place on a partly submerged log. Gnats, dragonflies and other insects buzzed merrily as they darted hither and thither. The voices of singing birds filled the air, and many of the little feathered creatures were visible winging their way in and out among the trees. Coots, grebes and other water-fowl could be seen paddling over the surface of the pond. All seemed happy and carefree. It was a region of peace and contentment.

Toto noted that the place harbored no large animals, cats or dogs in particular. He was lord of all he surveyed, for as far as fierce enemies were concerned, he had this paradise all to himself. After drinking, bathing and filling his stomach with certain leaves and buds pleasing to his taste, he settled down upon his haunches to view the scenery and appraise the many advantages of his new home. It was springtime and, although the various seasons were with difficulty distinguished one from another, Spring was ever the time of cheer, and to Toto it brought hope of happy days to come. The abundance of water and green, succulent plants meant relief from want. Behind him lay the jungle, a wall placed there

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to keep out undesirable intruders. The advantages of his new abiding place gave him the first real sense of security he had ever known. They made him feel satisfied with being a Tapir and, to tell the truth, his recent harrowing experiences had already convinced him how foolish he had been to think of being anything else. Gone was his feeling of inferiority. He did not miss the society of other animals, for they were strangers and he could not learn their ways. True, he was lonesome, but it had ever been so since he was old enough to do without someone to feed and protect him. Although not remembering this someone as his mother, he still retained vague recollections of a Tapir larger than himself who had cared for him in his younger days. This suggested the possibility of there being other tapirs in the world besides himself, and again he experienced the feeling of loneliness that had urged him to roam abroad in search of friends. But those he had met were not of his kind, and so after a brief struggle with Fate, he had given up all false notions and returned to his life of solitude. These were not pleasant recollections, and they must have affected him deeply, for he raised his head and gave utterance to a dismal wail, faint at first, but growing gradually to a shrill, piercing cry, which rang over the surface of the pond and penetrated far into the forest beyond. Once, twice, thrice he repeated his peculiar call, and then relapsed into silence.

For several moments no sound could be heard save the buzzing of insects and voices of twittering birds; then dimly from afar came an answering call like an echo of Toto's own voice. Its effect upon him was magical. He sprang to his feet, every muscle in his body tense, his ears straining to hear more, and as he listened, a second cry reached his ears, followed by a faint crashing of branches as though some animal were making its way through

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the forest on the other side of the pond. Toto waded hurriedly into the shallows and, pausing there knee-deep, again sent his call reverberating across the water. When the response came, it sounded much nearer, and as he strained his eyes for a better view of the opposite shore, a stout, short-legged animal burst into view, standing at the water's edge with head uplifted to repeat what seemed to Toto like the answer to his message. The creature was a full-grown Tapir, and the answer must have been a favorable one, for Toto immediately launched himself deeply and swam toward the newcomer, leaving behind him a trail of whirling eddies and tossing foam.

Several days passed and then Toto returned, but he no longer swam alone, for there came with him the same Tapir whose acquaintance he had recently made. Somehow he had convinced her, his newly-acquired mate, that his side of the pond was better than hers, although she had made considerable ado about not caring at all where he lived. However, his wishes in the matter finally prevailed, and Tapir Number Two, now Mrs. Toto, accompanied her lord in his return journey across the pond. Immediately upon landing she made a most thorough inspection of her new quarters, examining the rushes, water-plants and other furnishings so minutely that Toto's nerves were on edge for fear she would discover something not to her liking and refuse to stay. But Mrs. Toto was now a fixture, had he but known it. Her survey was only pretense. She, a solitary Tapir, had discovered the companion of her choice, and any sort of home was good enough with him there to share it. As for Toto, his pond-dwelling was indeed a paradise. His adventures upon the plains and in the forest with horses, camels and pigs were forgotten. His desire to roam and the efforts to be a creature other than himself became the untold secrets of his past. The life of seclusion, once his dread, was now a joy, for he had a companion to share it with him and no more was needed to relieve his loneliness.

INTRODUCTION TO "MAMMUT"

The American Mastodon was a native of the United States in Most Recent (Pleistocene) times although his ancestors originally hailed from southern Asia and northeastern Africa, sources of the world's elephant supply. He did not live long enough to see Europeans land upon our shores although he doubtless encountered the first so-called Indians who took possession of North and South America long before. In the Most Recent (Pleistocene), sometimes called the Quaternary period, mammals were at the height of their glory. Horses, camels and antelopes swarmed upon the plains; giant ground-sloths, tapirs and deer roamed through the forests; while lions and sabre-toothed tigers ever hovered about, preying upon the larger animals. At least four species of elephants ranged over the greater part of the United States: the Imperial, Columbian and Northern Mammoths and the American Mastodon. The Mammoths were tall, rangey beasts with short, high-peaked heads and widely curving tusks. The largest of them was the Imperial Elephant who stood about 13 feet 6 inches at the shoulders and had tusks over 15 feet long. The Columbian and Northern Mammoths were smaller beasts of 11 foot and 9 feet 6 inch height respectively. The last named animal is the best known of all prehistoric elephants. His body was profusely clad with long hair.

All of the Mammoths possessed long-crowned, grazing teeth, but the Mastodon was a browser, for his low-crowned grinders could chew only soft green food. Although of old-fashioned type, he had the knack of taking care of himself, for he lived and thrived long after most other prehistoric animals had dis-

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appeared. The Ice Age began early in the Most Recent (Pleistocene) period and the glaciers gliding down from Canada into our northern and central states doubtless worked many hardships upon the various animals. The Imperial Mammoth, Sabre-toothed Tiger and many others soon became extinct, but the Mastodon held on for several hundred thousands of years until after the great ice-fields had melted away. This ice-melting epoch probably helped the Mastodon, in that the abundant moisture encouraged growth of soft plants which best suited his low-crowned browsing teeth. His race numbering hundreds of thousands ranged over the United States and to-day their bones are frequently found in peat-bogs, mire deposits or in the beds of dried-up streams. These, the last pages of ancient animal history, precede our modern historical times.

Near Minooka, Illinois, about fifty miles southwest of Chicago, remains of a dozen mastodons were discovered buried at the bottom of a spring. Their bones, together with those of the Deer, Moose, Elk and Beaver, lay on top of the gravels left by the last melting glaciers. Not far distant is Aux Sable Creek. While exploring the latter's bank, I came across a tusk fragment protruding from the sandy loam. It was the girth of a man's thigh, and the two ends of a monster thighbone lay buried beside it. That was all. The tusk fragment served as a headstone to mark the grave:

"AN EARLY AMERICAN SETTLER

MAMMUT, LAST OF THE MASTODONS"

MAMMUT

THE LAST OF THE MASTODONS

I

The van of the Mastodon Herd had emerged from the water and was entering the woods which bordered the west bank of the Cuyahoga River. Every motion of the great elephants came under the careful scrutiny of one of their number—a solitary giant standing motionless upon a knoll close to the river bank. His trunk extended in a straight line to windward. The air came and went through its double-barreled length in deep noisy sniffs, as he tested each breeze-puff for sign of danger. Probably no creature existed that a Mastodon need worry about; but caution was ever an elephant trait; so Burbo followed his natural instinct and kept close watch.

Burbo was the giant, fighting bull, leader of the Herd. The top of his shoulder-hump lacked several inches of rising ten feet above the knoll on which he stood. Ten feet was not so remarkable, and yet Burbo was a plant in bulk, not rangy and slab-sided like a mammoth, but a bulldog type with thick-set body, broad hips and legs like tree-stumps. His stout tusks, seven feet of length in the clear, described three or more curves of ever-changing plane, sweeping widely apart in their middles and finally coming together at their polished tips.

Burbo was not an expert at figures, but as he watched his followers emerging from the river, he could see that their numbers were few and dwindling fast. Only since the full moon had the last bull succumbed to an old injury. Burbo could take some

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selfish satisfaction in that, for he had peculiar notions about any animal that had aspired and might again aspire to lead the herd.

But now Hasta, too, had disappeared. She was one of the finest cows and could be ill spared. Burbo ground his teat-crowned teeth with rage at his own helplessness. It was his style of teeth that had wrought such havoc among his people. They were the main reason why the great Mastodon race which once roamed over the country by hundreds of thousands, now numbered less than forty individuals. They could chop and crush but not grind; therefore their owners could not eat dry grass, but must depend upon softer and greener food, such as plants, tender shoots or the inner bark of trees. Such food was not of the concentrated variety. A single Mastodon's requirements were enormous; a herd's colossal. In times past, the melting of the glaciers had flooded the country and established conditions favorable to the growth of such vegetation as suited Mastodon taste and development. However, the lakes and marshes had now dried up, thereby greatly diminishing the supply of green food suitable for teat-crowned teeth. The climate changed, too—for the worse, and it was not long before the Mastodon found himself in a bad way.

It was the passing of a once mighty race. One by one the old animals dropped off. No recruits were available to restore the rapidly thinning ranks. Thirty years had elapsed since the Herd saw its last new-born calf. That calf was Burbo, now leader, as well as the youngest of the Herd, and its sole surviving male. The big bull had learned too much in his thirty years of life not to understand that there must soon be an end as he stood upon the knoll watching over his charges. He might not fight Fate, but he could at least take good care of the few Mastodons that remained. One by one they emerged from the water. Those

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in the lead had already climbed the bank and were smashing their way through the underwood. Here a tree-top was pulled half over until it arched like a bow, then flew back with the force of a catapult, as a python-like trunk stripped it of its leaves. There the foliage was thrust violently aside before a great tusked head and brown hairy back following close behind it. Others of the huge beasts trailed after, rearing up out of the water and splashing their way ashore. And still Burbo watched and counted them. He who knew nothing of figures, counted them in his own way to the very last one who yet swam deeply with only her trunk tip and forehead appearing above the surface of the stream.

Thirty-seven; it had been thirty-eight before Hasta had disappeared. Burbo sighed deeply. It had been a hundred several seasons ago on the banks of the Mohawk, and now only thirty-seven; cows every one of them, no bulls and not a single calf.

The last of the Herd emerged, with the water dripping from its vast body in showers. Burbo was preparing to descend the knoll and join his comrades when his sharp ears caught the distant snapping of branches. Some large animal was forcing its way through the forest on the far side of the river. The bull leader became all attention, straining his eyes to pierce the heavy morning mist which the sun had not yet cleared.

His eyesight was poor. Mastodons depended almost entirely upon their ears and noses for information; but he could dimly discern a huge figure which had just emerged from the woods and was standing at the water's edge. The unknown's forefeet were in the water. Two curved streaks flashed and a shrill trumpet-call echoed and re-echoed across the stream.

A Mastodon! Burbo emitted an astonished bellow. It could not be possible, and yet, work, worry and lack of nourishment had taxed his brain heavily. He might have miscounted. His health

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was not of the best these days. Yes, he must have miscounted—but it was the first time.

His head drooped; he looked at the ground. It suddenly dawned upon him that he was growing old. A thirty-year-old mastodon, one who should have been in his prime, and yet he had aged rapidly, the proof of which was that he had miscounted. For such a trivial thing, it affected him terribly. He appeared like one crushed beneath some great calamity.

Meanwhile the uncounted Mastodon had entered the river and was swimming rapidly across. Had Burbo looked up he would have observed that the late arrival was making much work out of that easy journey across the water—much pushing and pulling and apparently useless motions such as one might expend in towing an inert burden. However, he paid no attention, for he was brooding over his frightful mistake—the fact that he had miscounted. It was only when the newcomer splashed shoreward through the shallows that he raised his head and gazed listlessly in that direction. A cow Mastodon was disappearing among the trees. Burbo gasped. What was that small mass trotting on four twinkling legs beside her? His eyes were seeing things that could not be. It was worse than old age; he must be going mad.

At that moment a violent uproar arose in the woods, suddenly and without the slightest warning, like the bursting of a bomb. The air resounded with a chorus of squeals, grunts and bellows and the crashing of broken branches.

What was wrong? Burbo heard the tramp of many feet, the thump, thump of thick sole-pads or soft ground. Here and there he caught glimpses of flashing ivory and broad backs battering their way among the trees. Something had frightened the Herd. With a bound he abandoned his post of duty and charged down into the woods.

THE LAST OF THE MASTODONS

A stampede? No; rather a wild celebration. There was no vestige of fear in any of those squeals and other elephant clatter, nor did there appear a single sign of panic in any one of the huge cow tuskers that pushed and pulled those nearest her. The Herd was massed in a solid ring with every one of the huge beasts straining to reach the center. Tremendous was the commotion they made. The whole Mastodon world seemed to have gone mad.

It was some time before Burbo could secure the recognition due him, so great was the crush and excitement. He charged and squealed and bellowed and it was only after several of the cows had the breath nearly knocked out of them that they would pay him the slightest attention. Voices were raised one after another, as the rearmost animals bellowed at those in front of them to stand back and make room:

"A-yee, a-yee! Clear a path. Here comes the master to look upon his own."

Those in front of the big bull crowded hard to the right and left, thus cleaving a narrow lane through the surging mass. Burbo smashed his way through, leaving many a bumped head and bruised body behind him. In a few moments he was standing within a ring of tossing trunks and uplifted ivory. A forest of tusks raised skyward like curved sabres, seemed to flash the message: "Hail to the New-born! Long live the King!"

Burbo's heart leaped almost to his throat. He had not miscounted. Hasta stood before him; Hasta his favorite and Queen of the Herd. The seemingly impossible had occurred; a straggler had returned. The bull leader had counted thirty-seven, but he had not erred even though the correct number was thirty-eight. It was enough to thrill any mastodon with joy. The Herd recently thirty-seven had now increased its number by one. Even one was an occasion for general rejoicing, signifying, as it did, a

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halt in the long-continued shrinkage. Burbo fairly danced with delight as the truth dawned upon him. Only a few moments ago the census was thirty-seven; and now most unexpectedly it had risen to thirty-eight.

"Oomp, oomp," grunted a small voice. Burbo looked down. His eyes stuck out like plums as he stared and stared as much as to say:

"Thirty-seven, thirty-eight? Did I hear someone say thirty-nine?"

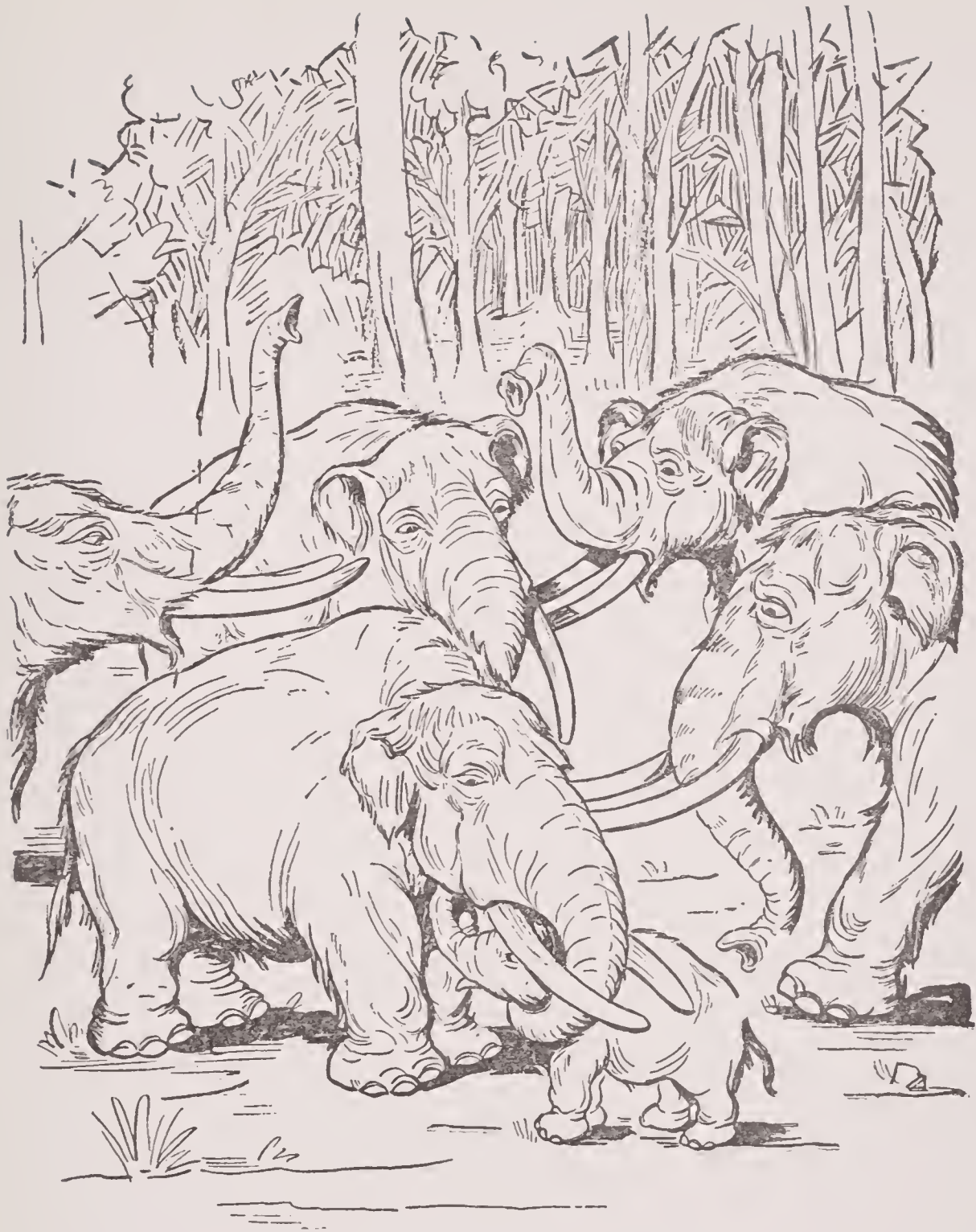
Yes, someone did say thirty-nine, although he who said it was hardly old enough to say much of anything. There, huddled beneath the Queen Hasta's great chest and apparently much concerned at the commotion going on about him, was a vision bordering upon the miraculous—a Baby Mastodon! He was a mere atom—viewed from an elephant's standpoint—a tiny two-hundred pounder as fat as butter. His feet were like puddings with raisin toes sticking out of them. With his low forehead and short trunk he resembled a large tapir with a very long nose.

The tide had turned at last. The stork had flown over the Herd and it was to be hoped that henceforth he would many times repeat his glorious performance. Never had the Mastodons celebrated such a joyous occasion, and all because of the newly born baby Mastodon.

"He is mine, all mine," bellowed the proud mother. "May I wither and blow away if any harm comes to him. It is a long, long time since our herd saw its last calf; I have forgotten how long. Does anyone remember?"

"The last calf?" muttered Burbo. His voice trembled as he gazed at his first and only child. "Yes, I remember. I was the last, and it was indeed very long ago."

At the sound of Burbo's voice the youngster looked at him



THE NEW ARRIVAL

THE LAST OF THE MASTODONS

wonderingly out of his small beady eyes. The big bull shook like a leaf as with a low grunt, his tiny son waddled from his refuge beneath the Queen Mother and came forward cautiously, and all prepared at an instant's notice to beat a hasty retreat. When beneath his sire's mighty head, he stopped and raised his stubby trunk. Burbo bent low. His great tusks encircled the infant's body in a halo of gleaming ivory. His trunk twined about the tiny neck like the coil of a monster serpent.

"I was the last," he said in a voice so low that few could hear. "Until you came I was the last. May you be but one of many calves—Mammut, first of the new race of Mastodons."

II

Mammut began life under what seemed to him ideal circumstances. He was welcome. Never was a newly-born calf more so. He had no end of friends and food, too. His mother always kept an ample supply of milk on hand, and he had but to go to her and get it. Surrounded by friends and with plenty to eat, he became the healthiest and happiest of youngsters. He had no real sorrows, although at times, after being subjected to a bit of maternal discipline, it appeared to him as though the whole world had turned against him. However, such periods of black gloom did not last long, once the microbe of childish contrariness was spanked out of his system.

The Herd now took a new lease on life, a change due entirely to the arrival of the baby Mastodon; partly because of his cheerful nature, but more particularly because of the hope his advent inspired in the revival of the Mastodon race. Past hardships were forgotten in the thought of brighter days to come. When Burbo trumpeted the signal to move on, all responded with light hearts,

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Mammut included. He took his place in the ranks, trotting close to the Queen Mother's side to avoid being trampled upon by the great feet of his elders.

Near the headwaters of the Huron and Sandusky Rivers the Mastodons came upon what might have been considered as a veritable storehouse of green food suitable for teat-crowned teeth. It would have more than sufficed for any except a herd of Mastodons; but experience had taught these great animals what enormous amounts of fodder were necessary to supply their wants. A storehouse it was; and yet no more than a temporary relief. Soon the fodder would become exhausted and they must pass on. However, they need not worry over the present. There was an abundance to satisfy their pressing needs, so they halted and proceeded to enjoy the good things while they lasted.

Animals of all kinds were to be found there; and in such a well-wooded and well-watered region, they might have been expected. By far the most abundant were the White-tailed Deer. These timid dainty creatures were at first much alarmed at sight of the huge, tusked giants suddenly come amongst them. They would run away with the swiftness of the wind whenever they saw a brown hairy back or heard the noise made by a huge elephant crashing its way through the trees. However, a brief acquaintance changed all this. Not once did a Mastodon offer to harm a deer. The White-tails plucked up courage. These mighty animals with horns growing from their mouths, attended strictly to their own affairs and were a peaceable lot after all. More than that: for with their appearance the cougars, wolves and bobcats made themselves scarce. The White-tails found the woods entirely cleared of their natural enemies. They were not long in learning that the retreat of the flesh-eaters to parts unknown was due entirely to their fear of the huge strangers.

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Deer and Mastodon soon lived together on the best of terms. They crossed and recrossed each other's trails and everything went along smoothly for the time being.

The White-tails impressed Mammut deeply. They were so dainty, so animated and so rapid in their motions. He never tired of watching them. The speed they displayed was enough to take his breath away. It seemed incredible that animals could run so fast. There were raccoons and rabbits and woodchucks and many other interesting creatures, too, but most of them were hopelessly unsociable and try as he would, Mammut could never establish even the basis of a formal speaking acquaintance with them. Raccoons roamed abroad only at night when Mastodons and most other animals were taking their rest; rabbits were forever hopping away if one even looked at them; and woodchucks, being too fat and lazy to run, merely rolled into their burrows and disappeared.

There were other little black beasts with white-striped bodies and bushy tails that neither ran away nor hid themselves when Mammut sought to establish friendly relations with them. They were his first experience with animals that rarely fought or fled but had the most unhappy faculty of making themselves absolutely unbearable nuisances. To look at a skunk was a pleasure, so care-free and deliberate were his actions; but to really know him intimately, was to smell him, particularly when he put himself in the best smelling condition. Mammut's first attempt at making friends with a skunk was his last. The little waddling beast turned his perfumery loose and the young Mastodon almost collapsed. Never had his nose experienced such a frightful odor. It was the kind that could easily make room for itself in any crowd. It was too much for Mammut, so away he ran.

That was not all. Some of the odor ran with him and stayed

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with him. The Herd, even his fond mother, noticed it and for several days all shunned the young Mastodon. He could not understand it. There he was, ready to be on friendly terms with any and everybody and yet every animal he came in contact with spurned him. Even the Red Squirrel made sport of him as he sat high and safe upon an overhanging limb delivering himself of many unkind and sarcastic remarks as Mammut passed beneath.

It would seem that the young Mastodon could expect nothing from any but the White-tails; but even with them he failed, even after the skunk-odor had left him. Whenever he came upon the fawns frisking about in the open spaces among the trees, there was a general stoppage of activity. None would frolic while he was present; none would play with him. The way all animals held aloof perplexed him. He could not understand, having yet to learn that creatures of one species never became intimate with those of another species. It was one of Nature's rules. It was as though her voice had whispered from the clouds: "Each to his kind, little Mastodon. So far and no farther. Her word was final; the gap yawned wide and so Mammut was compelled to play alone.

This was the only cloud in the youngster's life. He was denied what all healthy children ever long for—playmates. The lack of them cast a shadow over what might otherwise have been an ideal existence. And now, with his sense of isolation, came an understanding of that which filled every Mastodon mind. What had become of all the baby elephants? Were there any? He wanted one to play with so badly. He would ask his mother about it. She was a wonderful mother and would do anything he wanted if he but asked.

But strange to say, Hasta could not help him find a baby Mastodon to play with. She could not explain why. It seemed

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to Mammut a simple request; but his mother appeared much grieved at the mere suggestion. It pained her even to discuss the subject. It was with a heart almost too full for words that she confessed her inability to find her small son what he most wanted. Mammut must be patient and wait. She could not grant his wish just now; but the time might soon come when the Herd would have another baby Mastodon.

Mammut was satisfied. The youngster's faith in his mother was supreme. He believed everything she told him. Yes, he would be patient and wait; and when another baby mastodon did come, he would have such fun with it. He began to experience a new sensation—hope; anticipated pleasure which was delightful, although tantalizing. Each morning he waddled about among the Herd, inquiring of each and every animal if a baby mastodon had yet arrived. Gloomy were the head-shakes. No, a little Mastodon had not yet appeared. Would one come tomorrow? Perhaps; nobody knew; and Mammut would finally go away disappointed but ever hopeful of what the morrow might bring. Day after day, he repeated this performance; but it was always "perhaps" and "tomorrow" until finally he gave up his questioning and turned his childish mind to matters of greater promise.

Denied the companionship of other than his Mastodon elders, he got to poking about by himself. He had learned much about animals but his education was scarcely begun. There were many things that a youngster must know. His mother could not forever keep an eye on him and at times he must look to his own welfare.

One afternoon he strayed from the Herd, farther than he had ever dared to venture. It was rather terrifying at first, this tramping alone through the woods, but it did not take him long to get used to it. The few animals he met with, stepped aside



MAMMUT WAS COMPELLED TO PLAY ALONE

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and gave him a clear path. Such actions did not indicate a spirit of friendliness but they showed that even a baby Mastodon was worthy of respect. The realization of this gave him confidence in himself. He plodded briskly along battering his way among the small saplings and through patches of thick underbrush just as he had seen his elders do. Finally he rammed a young oak that was too big for him. Back he bounced like a rubber ball. That made him so angry he coiled his trunk about it and tried vainly to uproot it. He was not big and strong enough to do things like that just yet but the fact that his spirit prompted him to try was a commendable sign. It showed that he was ambitious and eager to learn.

On he trotted through the woods. Everything was new and entertaining: the trees with their gnarled limbs, the occasional open spaces with green grass below and blue sky above, the big boulders scattered here and there, lying half-buried in the ground; these and other things in endless number and variety confronted Mammut at every turn.

A stream suddenly appeared before him. The young Mastodon's journey through the woods had made him warm. The water looked cool and inviting. He slid down the bank and waded in. The sun shone brightly overhead. Mammut dipped his trunk in the water and sucked it full. He was about to raise it high above his head and treat himself to a shower-bath like a real grown-up when he saw something that nearly took his breath away. There directly under him stood a baby Mastodon; rather it lay upon its back peering up at him from the stream's muddy bed. His tomorrow had arrived. Here was a playmate, a Mastodon of his own age.

Mammut squealed and danced with joy. The surface of the stream became ruffled and his new-found playmate disappeared.

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Where had he gone? The young Mastodon hunted anxiously but nothing was to be seen in the disturbed and muddied water. He waded out of it and searched the bank. As he moved along it, suddenly a low voice hissed angrily: "Stand back, big beast, or I strike! You are coming too close with your heavy feet."

Mammut looked at the muddy ground before him. There sat Cistra the "Water-moccasin." Her body was coiled, her head was raised and her two long poison fangs were pointed threateningly at the small disturber.

Mammut knew absolutely nothing about snakes; and yet a subdued voice within him warned that it was a thing best left alone. However, his curiosity got the better of him. He yielded to temptation and extended his trunk.

Cistra's head and fangs shot forward. Mammut felt a sharp pain near the tip of his nose and was frightened almost to death. With a loud squeal, he jumped back just as the Water-moccasin recoiled herself and made ready for another strike. However, one was enough. The youngster was up the bank and away as fast as he could go.

Mammut was terrified. He went flying through the woods squealing for his mother, and complaining loudly that he had been bitten by a big worm. Fortunately for him, his exploring trip to the stream, although a momentous affair in his young life, had not been a very extended one. He had strayed but a short distance. Hasta heard the squeals and hurried to the rescue.

In a moment the two were united. Mammut huddled close to his mother and shivered. His body was very cold and his legs felt shaky at the knees. A fit of dizziness made everything go round and round before his eyes; and meanwhile he moaned dimly.

The Queen Mother was greatly distressed. Some dire

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calamity had befallen her young son. She could not imagine what it was. While she stood by, anxious to help but not knowing what to do, Mammut suddenly collapsed and fell sprawling to the ground. His nose began to swell. Hasta saw it growing larger. A mastodon's trunk was his tenderest and most vulnerable spot. Probably the youngster had poked his trunk into a nest of hornets and they had stung him for his pains: and yet for a mere hornet's sting his condition appeared extremely alarming.

Mammut now lay as one dead; unconscious and scarcely breathing. His body was as cold as ice. Hasta trumpeted frantically for help and soon the Herd were gathered about her. None understood the young invalid's strange malady. None could help him. In an agony of dread, Hasta kneeled over the small body and covered it with her own to keep it warm.

This treatment helped—ever so little, but it was enough to keep Mammut's blood circulating and enabled him to hold on to the little life that remained. The sun went down. Night came and still Hasta crouched over her baby. There was no sleep for anyone. The Mastodons, one and all, tramped about the mother and her stricken son, frequently voicing their uneasiness with shrill trumpetings. Mammut lay still and cold as death; the moon climbed slowly into the sky; Hasta yet crouched over the young Mastodon and still no change. She almost despaired. It seemed as though the treasure which had been hers for so short a time, would soon be lost forever.

But Mammut yet breathed, his heart fluttered and he clung to life, unconsciously battling against the deadly serpent venom which clogged his veins. It was past midnight when the Queen Mother, still crouching over him, hoping against hope, felt the tiny body beneath her quickening with restored circulation and returning warmth. Mammut's sides heaved; he groaned. He



SUDDENLY A LOW VOICE HISSED ANGRILY

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even tried to raise his head but the effort was too much for him and he gave it up. The tide had turned at last. Hasta almost smothered the young invalid, so great was her joy. But Mammut was feeling much better now and began to protest loudly at being so completely buried. Hasta arose and Mammut tried to arise with her. This he could not do all by himself but with his mother's help, he finally managed to stagger to his feet.

The Herd rejoiced. It was nearly morning now and the whole night had passed with scarcely a moment's relief from the profound anxiety all had felt. It had been a terrible strain, watching the pride and joy of the Herd, hoping for the best, but fearing that he could not survive.

Mammut was out of danger now, although he was still a very sick little elephant. His head ached as though it would burst and he felt very weak and wobbly. He soon tired and was obliged to lie down again; but this time it was to secure a bit of refreshing sleep. The giant Burbo came forward and peered anxiously into the youngster's face. He stroked the small body with his trunk. Mammut merely rested. Burbo breathed a deep sigh of relief. He was turning away treading as softly as possible so as not to awake the sleeping infant, when the leaves rustled, the bushes parted and a slim figure emerged and stood facing him. It was one of the Deer-people, a buck, the oldest and wisest of the White-tailed Stags.

III

The leaders of the White-tails and of the Mastodons faced each other.

"I come from my people with a message," said the buck.

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"Your herd has done us great harm. We wish them to leave."

"Harm? What have they done?" demanded the surprised Burbo.

"Our feeding-grounds are ruined," the other replied bitterly. "You Mastodons are so wasteful. You trample down and destroy much more than you eat; and it is worry enough for us to see how much it takes to fill your big stomachs."

"The bigger the stomach, the bigger the worry," Burbo retorted. "We mastodons have our troubles too."

"But that does not help us," said the buck. "We were here first, happy and contented until you came. There will be nothing left for either of us unless you go away."

The bull leader pondered deeply. Yes, it was all true enough. His people were indeed wasteful eaters. Their huge feet destroyed far more than went into their mouths. Furthermore, the feeling had been growing upon him for several days that the time was near at hand when the Herd must soon be seeking new fields. Their present food-supply was fast becoming exhausted. He had no quarrel with the White-tails. Deer and Mastodon had gotten along remarkably well together. Yes, he could do as asked and it would be a good thing all around.

"We will leave today," he announced briefly; whereupon the buck went his way rejoicing.

Word was soon passed among the Herd that the time for departure had arrived. All made ready and waited for Burbo to give the signal, or rather they waited for Mammut to awaken. None thought of deserting the young Mastodon, so they all stood together swaying from side to side, blowing dust on their backs and doing various other things to pass the time.

Mammut awoke at last, rested and recovered although weak and hungry. However, a warm drink of milk worked wonders

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and after walking about a few steps to ease his cramped muscles, he was in condition to proceed.

The moment of departure was at hand. Burbo took his place in the lead and the march began. From the cover of the woods, the Deer-people were interested spectators of the sudden leaving-taking of their now unwelcome guests. White-tailed bucks, does and fawns concealed in the distance behind every bush and tree, looked wonderingly on. They saw a wave of great brown backs and tossing trunks, capped with gleaming ivory, rolling away from them to the west. The Mastodons marched off without once turning to look behind them and the land of the Huron and Sandusky saw them no more.

Mammut trotted close to his mother's side. He had not yet fully regained his strength and it was hard for him to keep up with the Herd. Every one of their big steps covered as much ground as did his three; and so his legs had to twinkle three times to their one in order to hold his place in the line of march. He puffed and grunted; the foam gathered upon his flanks and his heart beat like a trip-hammer. Each of his pudgy feet seemed to have a big stone tied to it. He wished that his people would only stop a few moments or slow up and thus give him a chance to catch his breath; but still they lumbered on.

Mammut began to falter. He uttered no complaint but he was dreadfully tired and try as he would, his legs could not be made to move fast enough. He dropped back; and then—softly and from some mysterious source a huge trunk curled down and around his body beneath the armpits; another pressed gently upon his rump. The stones dropped from his feet. Half of his body—the heaviest half—seemed to be floating through space. The lighter half was being propelled by that which pressed upon his rear. Gradually he regained his wind; his heart-beats sank



MAMMUT IS HELPED UPON THE MARCH

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to normal; and he found time to learn what had happened to effect this welcome change. Hasta's trunk wound about his body, was pulling him forward, while another of the Herd was pushing him from behind.

With such help, Mammut was enabled to keep up. However, he was glad enough to rest when the Herd made a short stop for drink and refreshment. Gradually his wind improved, his muscles toughened and it was not many days before he could do his part well and with little assistance. For weeks, the Mastodons kept on the move through western Ohio, veering occasionally to the north or south, but in general, heading toward the land of the setting sun. Wherever food abounded, they halted, only to move on again when the supply was exhausted. Dry unforested regions were crossed at top speed. Hard, dry grass was of no more use to these teat-toothed elephants than salt-water is to a ship-wrecked sailor. None of the Herd could chew it, so they were obliged to hurry on or starve.

This roving life suited Mammut perfectly. It meant that he was hearing and smelling something new with every step he took. It was all so bewildering and interesting. He loved traveling from place to place; and then to cap the climax of his nomadic life, he was treated to a journey over and through the water.

The Mastodons traversed a broad forested region and emerged upon the bank of a broad river which barred their way. Here they stopped to rest and cool off, for these great animals were wise enough to know the danger of attempting a long swim without due preparation. In the meantime, Burbo devoted his attention to the opposite bank, sniffing it carefully at long range. This was to guard against surprise attack by panthers or wolves who might be lurking there. Such enemies, which were ordinarily

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to be scorned, might easily prove formidable to even a Mastodon after a long enervating swim and a landing in a more or less exhausted condition.

Mammut saw the river and it interested him greatly. He noticed that the onward march was halted and wondered what would happen next. Burbo's actions impressed him. He saw no reason for it all; but minds wiser than his were there to decide, so he waited with the others. Then came the order to advance, when the bull leader trumpeted shrilly and waded into the water. The Herd followed. Hasta and Mammut were among the last with several cows bringing up the rear.

Mammut squealed with delight as the many huge feet splashed the water over his body in showers. He loved to wade. He kicked his hardest to make as much commotion as the others did. The river bottom gradually fell away from beneath his feet. The water which had barely reached to his wrists and ankles now rose to above his elbows. A few more steps and it covered the lower half of his body. Some washed into his mouth and down his throat. He coughed, shut his mouth and breathed through his long nose, holding the tip aloft as the others about him were doing.

It was all very interesting and the water was delightfully refreshing but he was becoming just a little frightened and wishing that the river bottom would stop slipping away from under him. He, for one, was willing to turn around and go back to where he came from; and just when he was wondering how he could get himself out of the mess he had stumbled into, down he went, head and all. One terrified squeal; then the water entered his mouth and choked him. His legs thrashed like piston rods as they sought vainly for support. At this critical moment Hasta's trunk

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hovered before his eyes. Mammut clutched it as a drowning man clutches at a straw and still his legs worked frantically.

Water could be walked on, he soon discovered; that is, if he walked fast. Even though there was nothing solid beneath him, the motion of his legs kept him afloat. It was his mother, of course, that made this possible. Her trunk prevented his sinking. He did not realize at first that the life-preserver which he clutched so tightly had gradually relaxed and that he was keeping afloat almost entirely by his own efforts. Hasta's trunk supported scarcely any of his weight. He put on more steam and went plowing through the water like a tiny tug-boat. To his intense delight and astonishment, it suddenly dawned upon him that it was not his mother but himself who produced this marvelous result. He was running through the water—swimming, some call it—and he was doing it all alone.

This was the young mastodon's first swimming-lesson and he was a swimmer before he had reached mid-stream. Two-thirds of the way across and he found time to look about and see what the others were doing. He was in the midst of a flotilla of brown, hairy foreheads, before each of which a trunk-tip projected above the water like the top of a periscope. Three-fourths of the journey and he was swimming like mad to beat those in front of him and take the lead. Chug, chug, chug; then he stubbed his toes on a sunken snag and was walking once more on the river bottom; up, up this time instead of down.

The voyage was ended; and such fun it had been. Never had Mammut so enjoyed himself. He was splashing his hardest to overtake his father and be the first one ashore when something clutched his tail and nearly pulled it out by the roots. It was his mother who thus restrained him. Her son was growing overbold. Burbo must be the first to land and prepare the way.

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Those who thought differently needed a taste of stern discipline.

Meanwhile the bull leader led the way up the slippery bank, choosing an elevated position to halt and keep close watch until every member of the Herd was gathered about him. It did not dawn upon Mammut that Burbo, not his mother, was the master of the Herd, until the big bull took his young son in hand and taught him the respect due himself, the Herd's acknowledged leader.

Mammut was too young to rebel against this new power over him; but Burbo saw that in time he would have a vigorous young male to deal with. He, a bull leader past his prime, could not forever lead and the day was coming when he must yield his place to the rising generation.

However, Mammut had no thought about assuming any of life's responsibilities; at least until he was weaned. This last-named period, however, was the beginning of a marked change in his young life. The suckling calf became a vegetable-eater and was obliged to hunt for and find his own food. From then on he fared no better than the grown-ups. He learned what it meant to feel the real pinch of hunger, the rigors of extreme heat and cold, the hostility of flesh-eating animals and various other discomforts. He experienced his first fear of the elements; the thunder rumbling in the sky, lightning flashes and strong winds that bowed the tallest trees. These and other trials, he faced as best he could, gaining strength and courage with bitter experience. He lost his childish ways rapidly, for now he was but a Mastodon struggling to exist in an environment and in a climate unsuitable to his kind. He began to see more of the dark side of existence and less of its joys. As he matured, gradually he lost all feeling of dependence upon his mother. He even began to

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feel a sense of responsibility concerning her welfare and the welfare of the Herd.

He shed the last of his baby teeth. One after another, they were discarded, three from the front of each jaw. New and permanent ones rolled up and forward from behind to replace them, in the manner peculiar to all elephants. His tusks thickened and lengthened. They were nothing more than his two upper incisor teeth in whose sockets were the means for unlimited growth. They were like beaver teeth, only growing forward and out of his mouth instead of back into it. A lazy Mastodon, like a lazy beaver, was one that neglected the care of his teeth. Tusks were meant to be used constantly and thus kept worn down, for they grew fast like finger-nails and nothing but wear could keep them from curling about so grotesquely as to become absolutely useless in time.

At the age of six, Mammut began to look upon his tusks as matters of prime importance. They would take care of him, provided he took care of them; that is, if he used and kept them worn down to proper length. This he did by giving them daily exercise; uprooting small trees and ploughing deep furrows in the ground. With his continued digging, he became a "straight-tusk," for his ivory weapons were prevented from attaining great curvature and were ever sharp-pointed and directed forward like sabres.

The Herd continued to look upon Mammut as a baby even after he attained his eighth year. Panthers and wolves often cast longing eyes upon the youngster. A full-grown Mastodon was too large for them to manage; but a half-grown calf was a different matter. Hasta and the other animals realized this and guarded the youngster zealously. Rarely would they permit him to leave their sight. It was not long before Mammut became



THE YOUNG MASTODON DREW NEARER SNIFFLING
THE AIR.

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conscious of this restraint. He chafed under it and finally rebelled. One day when the woods rang with the familiar cat-screech, he slipped away unnoticed and hurried through the woods in the direction of the sound.

Pam the Cougar, crouched full length upon a low hanging branch, heard the snapping of twigs. A few moments later, a round figure with pillar legs appeared. It was the young Mastodon coming toward him and alone. Pam's green eyes glistened; his jaws dripped eager expectancy. Mammut was in his power at last. He crouched motionless and waited.

The young mastodon drew nearer, sniffing the air and keeping close watch about him. His nose told him that he of the screeching voice was close at hand. Unfortunately he did not think to look up at the overhanging branch as he passed beneath it.

Suddenly an unearthly scream rang out. Before Mammut could collect his startled wits, a tawny body descended upon him. The next moment, he was in the clutches of a snarling cougar that had fastened itself upon his forehead. The youngster squealed with fear at the suddenness of it all; then a spasm of rage seized him as he felt the big cat's claws piercing his tender trunk. He shook the fury that tormented him, as a terrier shakes a rat. Pam lost his hold and fell heavily to the ground. Mammut kneeled and thrust. It was the right idea; but in his eagerness, he misjudged. Both tusks sank deeply into the ground, missing the cougar by inches. Before he could wrench them free, Pam wriggled out of danger and beat a hasty retreat, thankful to have escaped with no worse damage than a few broken ribs.

Pam lost his appetite for Mastodon veal. The woods often rang with his screeching but he invariably held his tongue when-

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ever Mammut appeared to answer the challenge, only to unloose it once more when the young bull was gone. That screeching irritated Mammut beyond measure. He wished that his enemy would either fight or keep quiet.

The Mastodons entered the forest of Minster. Here the wolves began to grow troublesome, for the hunting had grown poor and a herd of elephants meant an abundance of food. The wolves followed persistently, keeping well back in the daytime, but coming closer under cover of night. When all was dark and the Herd would have rested, they were treated to an unearthly chorus of howls and snarls as their tormentors glided about them among the trees.

These concerts greatly disturbed the Mastodons. There seemed no way of dealing with enemies that chose the night time for their activities and used only guerilla methods of warfare. The wolves were too wise to dash blindly upon a herd of Mastodons. Their way was to spring out, a few at a time, snap at a leg or trunk and then rush to cover again. It was a wearing process that gave the Herd much worry and little rest. It terrified Mammut at first but as he became aware that many of these insults were directed at his own person, his fear turned to rage. One night when the Pack was feeling overbold, he heard them howling to each other: "If only that fat little calf would come out from behind the others, what a feast we would have."

Mammut squealed with rage. Before anyone could stop him, he squirmed through the hedge of pillar-legs around him and was on the outside of the Herd, stamping his feet and bellowing at the top of his lungs:

"Why don't you come out yourselves? A-yee! Shame on you to be afraid of a baby Mastodon!"

Pandemonium broke loose. The Wolf Pack accepted the

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challenge and rushed upon him, howling and snarling like fury. To their din were added the squeals and bellows of the Herd as they rushed madly about in the darkness in a frantic effort to put themselves between Mammut and the tempest he had stirred up. The youngster was now beside himself. Those who would have helped him, he butted out of his way. He dashed headlong into the mass of wolves; charging, backing, turning and trampling them underfoot. He was a steam-roller run wild. The uproar became deafening: bellows, squeals, howls and yelps, with the yelps fast increasing in volume as one after another the wolves fell beneath the young Mastodon's flying feet. The fierce brutes became demoralized; they wavered. It was soon everyone for himself. The Pack finally scattered to the four winds, leaving Mammut in complete possession of the field. The Herd rested well the balance of that night. Their sleep was unbroken the next, and the next and many nights after. That last night-scrimage must have discouraged the Wolf Pack of Minster, for they troubled the Mastodons no more.

This episode opened the Herd's eyes. Their mascot was no longer a baby but a fighting bull. The protected had become a protector. Mammut's calfhood came to a sudden end. But for all that, he was still the last calf. Not one had appeared since the day of his birth. It would appear that he not only was but would remain the last.

The original count of thirty-nine had narrowed down to twenty. Several individuals had become mired. To be mired was to die a lingering death, for no Mastodon dared risk his own life to aid an imprisoned comrade. It was not cowardice that prompted them to desert one of their own kind but the knowledge that such unfortunates were doomed and beyond all aid. Sickness took by far the heaviest toll. Sudden changes of climate brought

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on colds, rheumatism and other ailments. Trivial wounds festered and became fatal. Exposure and lack of proper nourishment undermined their constitutions, leaving them susceptible to the ravages of disease. One of the oldest animals went mad and ran screaming through the woods soon to batter herself to death against the trees. Another perished in the drifts during a blizzard.

Thus the Mastodons dropped off one by one. Finally Hasta became ill and her stomach would no longer retain nourishment. She weakened rapidly. She fell out of the line although still struggling on. One of the Herd dropped back too and marched behind her, pushing her forward with head and trunk. The one who pushed was Mammut. His childhood days were not entirely forgotten as he did his best to help the one who had watched over him so tenderly in the past. But Hasta was beyond all aid. For a time she struggled on but finally her strength failed and she pitched forward to her knees. She was dead even as she swayed and rolled over upon her side. Mammut trumpeted a mournful dirge. He stood over her until certain that she was at rest forever and in no more need of his assistance; then he hurried on to rejoin the Herd.

No words were said. The Mastodons marched on gloomy and silent. Hasta's turn had come and there was no changing Fate's decree. Mammut's temple throbbed. His brain seethed with rebellion. Why was it that his mother, and those who had gone before her, were denied the right to that life which all the rest of the world was enjoying? What were the mysterious forces that wrought such havoc among his people? He would have rushed upon them and trampled them under foot had they but presented themselves. But they were unknown forces that worked insidiously and unseen. He could do nothing and the knowledge enraged even as it perplexed him.



AIDING WITH SIGHT AND SMELL TO WATCH OVER AND LEAD
THE HERD

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The count was now nineteen. Burbo's eyesight began to fail; his power of scent became enfeebled. There were times when he stopped, uncertain of direction and too conscientious to lead blindly. He lost flesh and aged rapidly. Mammut observed these symptoms of gradual decline with much concern. Each day he shifted his position in the line, nearer and nearer to his ailing sire. Finally he walked shoulder to shoulder with the big bull, aiding him with his own sight and scent to watch over and lead the Herd.

One morning, after the Mastodons had secured their night's rest and were ready to proceed, Burbo did not rise. He crouched on elbows and knees with chin resting upon his forelimbs like one asleep. The Herd crowded about him trembling and venting their anxiety with subdued bellows. Mammut sniffed the prostrate figure. Burbo was dead. The young bull ground his teeth. Again the hidden enemy had struck. Every atom of his fighting spirit arose in wrath to contend with that deadly foe which fought unseen. The Herd faced disaster. Now, they were without a leader at a time when one was most needed. All were lost unless a substitute could be found to take Burbo's place. The cows stood huddled together, gazing helplessly at the dead giant. Hope had left them and they were resigned to despair. Suddenly the smallest of the Herd detached himself from the group and faced the shrinking cows.

"Follow me," he bellowed in a voice of authority. All looked up amazed. A champion had arisen to watch over them. Hope returned to quicken the beating of every dulled aching heart. Without a word, the cows fell obediently into line and marched briskly away behind their new leader—Mammut the stripling Mastodon.

IV

Five more years passed—five bitterly cold winters and as many hot, dry summers, which latter baked the meadow-land and

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burned the grass into hard tough wire. The Herd was but a handful now; nine old withered cows and one vigorous young giant bull, their leader.

Time had scored deeply in its final accounting of this once mighty race. Cold, drought, hunger and other destructive agencies had done their work thoroughly and well. Only ten Mastodons now survived to answer the last muster.

And yet the count had stood at ten for several years. In that period, the Herd had suffered many hardships but it had incurred no further losses. Although facing extermination, the Mastodons seemed to be dying hard.

For five years, the Herd had followed their new leader, now a sturdy giant; young in years, old in experience. No beast of hillside, forest or meadow dared stand for a test of strength and skill with the tusked fencing-master. Mammut was a fighter; but things had come to a pass where brains were needed far more than skill or brawn.

The first two years of Mammut's leadership were a determined effort on his part to grapple with the insidious forces that were slowly but surely accomplishing the Herd's destruction. Panthers, wolves and such enemies could be fought and mastered; but there were other foes that worked unseen and drove the young Mastodon almost to his wit's end.

It finally dawned upon him that lack of proper nourishment and the extremes of climate were in reality the Herd's most formidable enemies. He discovered too that their food-supply depended mainly upon climate; in other words, mastodon troubles were all a matter of intense heat and bitter cold. Both worked great physical hardship; also they discouraged the growth of soft green food suitable for teat-crowned teeth.

The fourth year of Mammut's leadership found him and his

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charges in southern Michigan. They had passed an unusually comfortable summer there; but all green things had now begun to wither and the nights were intensely cold. A change of season was at hand. The time had come for the herd to move on.

"Move on? Yes, but where?" Mammut asked himself. The cold seemed to blow down from the North. Winds which blew occasionally from the South, were as a rule much pleasanter. Where else to go but away from the cold breezes and towards those which Mastodons most favored? Mammut guided his charges south.

For a time it seemed to the young leader as though the direction he had chosen promised little relief. Food was still scarce. The wind blowing from behind him grew colder each day; and yet, he was shrewd enough to note that he was going away from, not toward it. The time might come when it would change; so he kept on. Many other animals were moving in the same direction as he; short-haired creatures and birds, too. If the Mastodon had misjudged, others had likewise misjudged; but it appeared to him that the majority opinion was more likely to be right than wrong.

Day after day the march continued, veering westerly to accommodate it to the southwesterly flow of the Wabash River. The Mastodons followed the line of this river and were therefore assured at all times of an ample water-supply suitable for bathing and drinking purposes. Gradually, almost imperceptibly the air grew balmier as they plodded on. Although dormant, the river vegetation was tender and nourishing. The Herd began to move on more leisurely and finally, after having journeyed many hundreds of miles, they settled down and proceeded to enjoy themselves.

There were none to tell them that they were now passing a

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comfortable winter in southern Illinois and that at the same time, the Great Lakes region lay prostrate beneath snowdrifts and bitter cold. It was enough to know that the fertile country north of the Ohio River was satisfactory as to food and climate; and so there they stayed.

With the passing of many months, came discomforts resulting from a gradually rising temperature. Animals that had gone south with the Mastodons, began to drift back northward. The Winter had ended; Spring was at hand. Mammut knew not the why and wherefore of these climatic changes, but his judgment still favored the majority opinion. Back again he piloted the Herd to summer quarters in the North. The cool breezes were now pleasing where previously they had been displeasing. Mammut had begun to understand; now he knew: North in summer, south in Winter; face to the cold winds each Spring, back to them each Fall; and the Spring and Fall signs he learned, partly from the movements of other animals but more particularly from the contrasts in plant development, when the bare trees budded new leaves or when their foliage fluttered to earth in showers of golden yellow, red and brown.

In this manner, Mammut acquired the migrating habit to replace the hitherto aimless roving about in search of food and bodily comfort. He shifted with the seasons; and each move was made in the right direction at the proper time.

The summer which followed the Herd's first northern migration was an unusually hot and dry one. North and a bit more of it seemed to be in order, so Mammut ventured far up into Michigan where he and his companions were rewarded by a most comfortable sojourn on the shores of Lake Huron. Fall was late in coming but when it did come, the sudden advent of cold breezes sent the Mastodons scurrying south in short order.

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For a time all went well. The Herd passed through Michigan safely and kept on to the headwaters of the Wabash River in Indiana. Here the country appeared to have undergone a marked change. This region had for some time been experiencing the greatest rainfall in its history. Day after day, the sun had remained hidden beneath great cloud banks, which poured forth their moisture incessantly. The ponds and lakes filled up until they could hold no more. Every creek and river overflowed its banks. The rainy season had ended when the Mastodons appeared there, but the lowlands of Indiana were still thoroughly soaked. Before Mammut realized his mistake, he had guided the Herd into the very heart of a region abounding in bogs and sloughs.

The young leader soon became aware of his predicament and called a halt. Traveling through such a nest of traps would never do. Mastodon feet were broad and well-suited for supporting great weight on soft ground, but it was straining a point to place too much dependence upon them in these rain-soaked lowlands of Central Indiana. Mammut surveyed his surroundings anxiously. In the distance to the west the land-surface inclined gradually upward. Bogs and mires were less plentiful on high ground as compared with low, according to his experience. Again he ordered an advance, but now, instead of south or southwest, his course was directed due west.

Never did animal more carefully choose a path than did the young leader, now gingerly making his way over that sodden soil. He seemed to be walking on eggs, so deliberate and cautious were his steps. Suddenly a scream rang out in the distance behind him. He stopped and looked back. Poor eyesight prevented his seeing the one who uttered that scream, but its tone was familiar, and his nose told him that its author was an old-

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time enemy. He stamped his feet angrily and trumpeted a defiant call, which rang over the meadow and was answered by a second scream. The voice was that of a cougar.

Mammut retraced several of his steps, even as his companions passed by him and moved on. He had rolled his trunk aloft and assumed a fighting posture—an absurd and useless performance, for no cougar lived who dared venture within range of a fighting elephant. The Herd need feel no anxiety about the skulking cat. Better had Mammut attended strictly to business, for now his companions had gone on without him. The latter was an unheard-of occurrence, but the cows had become alarmed by the distant screams and were hurrying rapidly away.

Mammut's fighting spirit was now thoroughly aroused. His brain seethed with old memories of cat-screams and a scratched trunk. He waited, but no enemy appeared. This inaction on the cougar's part exasperated him; but now he became aware that he was alone. He should be leading his charges instead of lagging behind, wasting his time with a cowardly cat. So he resumed his way, but even while doing so he could not refrain from trumpeting a last defiant call to the cougar far behind him.

Better had he watched the lurking danger ahead than that which skulked behind. His caution slumbered and for the moment he forgot all. Too late came the awakening. His feet suddenly sank into the treacherous ooze. The mire-demon seized him with sucking grip and held on like death. In vain Mammut strained and tugged. He was stuck fast. Here was no chance for him to make use of his great strength, and suddenly it flashed upon him that a Mastodon caught in the mire need expect no assistance from anyone. Would the Herd help him? He gazed in their direction despairingly; but by this time they had passed over the high ground and were beyond sight or hearing.

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Vainly the mired Mastodon continued his struggles to free himself, and then, as though Fate were determined to permit him no chance to escape, rain began to fall, softly at first, but soon pouring down in torrents. Finding his efforts useless, Mammut ceased struggling. He was cold and exhausted, but as he rested and recovered his strength there came over him a wave of the old fighting spirit—the kind that fought with brain even more than brawn.

The morass which gripped his limbs was a small one. He could almost touch its sides with his trunk. A single step forward and he would be safe. He attempted to pull one forelimb free and make that step. The effort shifted his weight to the hind limbs and they sank deeper. Try as he would he could pull neither one of them from the mire. It was like lifting oneself with one's boot-straps. Mammut finally gave it up. His escape must be made in some other way.

The morass was a ditch about twenty feet wide, several rods long. Mammut stood like a bridge across this ditch, and in the center of a thick mass of rushes. If these latter were only trees; something substantial, his escape would have been an easy matter. He curled his trunk about a clump of these rushes in a vain effort to pull himself free. A single tug uprooted them. He flung them down in disgust. He repeated this performance, but with no better result. Mammut eyed the uprooted rushes gloomily. At the same time the thought was growing upon him that, although rushes might be too flimsy to cling to, they might be used in some way to support his weight. It seemed a forlorn hope, but he saw no other, and anything was worth trying.

Night came on. The rain kept pouring down. The body of the mired Mastodon might have been mistaken for a large boulder it stood so still. The head and trunk, however, were in con-

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stant motion among the rushes. They seemed to be thrashing about in the death agony, although there were no despairing shrieks nor dying groans. Finally head and trunk became quiet and the Mastodon lay or, rather, stood as one dead, his legs buried in the mire up to his knees and elbows.

The rain stopped just as the night blackness began changing to morning gray. Mammut still breathed. As the darkness lifted and permitted a clear view, the morass appeared much changed. Most of the rushes had vanished, or rather they had been mysteriously uprooted and piled in a great heap beneath Mammut's chin. The heap was much greater than appeared, for a large part of it had been packed down into the mire, forming a mat supporting the mass above it.

The first gray streaks of dawn had no sooner appeared than the young bull took a deep breath and lowered his head until its full weight rested upon his chin and the green mat beneath it. The mat sank deeply as Mammut leaned forward and settled the entire front and heavier portion of his body upon it. The whole pit surface rocked beneath this tremendous shift of weight. Muddy water shot up into Mammut's face as his jaws settled down against his chest. The raft of rushes protested with loud gurgle and sighs, but it held firm.

The Mastodon's neck began to bulge. His back and shoulder muscles rose up in huge knots as he strained forward. Cords and tendons tautened and became cables which threatened to erupt through his crinkled hide. The veins stood out upon his forehead like tree rootlets. His breath came loud and fast. The morass trembled to its bottom as the huge elephant challenged it to a test of strength; but still it held on. It was as though the captive's feet were clutched by the sucking tentacles of an octopus de-

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terminated to retain its death grip and not permit such noble prey to escape.

But Mammut's power was now being applied to good advantage, with an even greater grim resolve urging it on. It was a test of strength between giants—Mire versus Mastodon. The two forces directly opposed each other and at first no apparent motion resulted, then gradually the tide turned in favor of the determined Mastodon. Not for an instant did his tense muscles relax. Slowly, almost imperceptibly, one hind leg emerged from the engulfing slime. A loud, sucking sigh and the foot came clear for a forward step. The other hind limb was treated in the same slow and labored way. The struggle then shifted to the front limbs. Trunk and tusks were still anchored on the green mat which, as a point of leverage, had thus far performed its part well. One after the other the two front limbs were freed and advanced. This was accomplished only after tremendous exertion, for the mire demon held on to the last, straining desperately to retain its hold. The advance, small as it was, brought Mammut's trunk and tusks within reach of the pit rim and solid ground. His main task was now completed, although to make escape certain he must repeat his first performance and make another advance. This he did after what seemed to him an eternity of squirming and heaving. Slowly, painfully, but surely he dragged himself out of the trap. The mire demon sighed and groaned, then settled back an inert mass as though acknowledging itself beaten and content to take no further part in the tremendous struggle.

Once clear of the morass, Mammut turned his attention to the western hills.

The Herd had gone in that direction. It vexed him to think that they would go without him; but perhaps it was just as well

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that they had not lingered in the low boggy country. Now he must hurry after and find them. Although tired and sore, he allowed himself no rest but set off at once past the last of the quagmires and up the sloping firmer ground. When he reached the end and top of it, he saw before him a broad expanse of rolling country. A line of trees extended across the horizon. The Herd was nowhere to be seen. A bitter disappointment, for he had expected that somewhere on this broad elevation his comrades would surely be waiting for him. They had been there. Their great footprints were plainly visible in the rain-soaked ground; but they had passed on. The trail pointed toward the distant line of trees.

Mammut began to experience feelings of uneasiness. The Herd was without a leader. They were a handful of timid old animals and would soon be getting into difficulties with no master mind to watch over them. He hurried on at his best gait to overtake them.

As he lumbered over the slippery ground another feeling came over him to add to his anxiety. It began to dawn upon him that he was alone. The thought gave him keen mental discomfort. He needed companionship as much as the Herd needed his leadership. He was beginning to think it a very dreadful thing to be alone and without friends.

As he approached the line of trees he heard a low hum which gradually increased to a muffled roar as he drew nearer. It was not a noise made by Mastodons, but something else, and yet it came from where he expected the Herd would be. Mammut felt a sense of impending calamity. He quickened his pace and charged through the line of trees.

The roaring noise became deafening. The Mastodon caught glimpses of waves and dashing spray as he crashed his way

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through the woods. In a few moments he had emerged into the open and stood upon the bank of a river, once the peaceful Washash, now become a raging torrent. The night rain, flowing from every one of its tributaries, had filled it to the brim. In a few hours the modest stream had become a mighty engine of destruction. Great trees torn from their anchorage by the driving flood, were hurled about upon the tossing billows like straws. Waves jostled one another or collided in showers of spray as all strove at the same time to find passage for themselves down the onrushing current.

It was a tremendous spectacle to look upon; an inferno of sound to listen to. Mammut shrank back appalled. The Herd had perished there! He could see their tracks leading to the river—none from it. And then, as he stood trembling with anxiety and great dread, a voice rang out above his head. He turned and looked up. There, on a low-hanging branch, crouched a gray-furred animal with a bushy tail and fox-like face. It was Lotor the Raccoon.

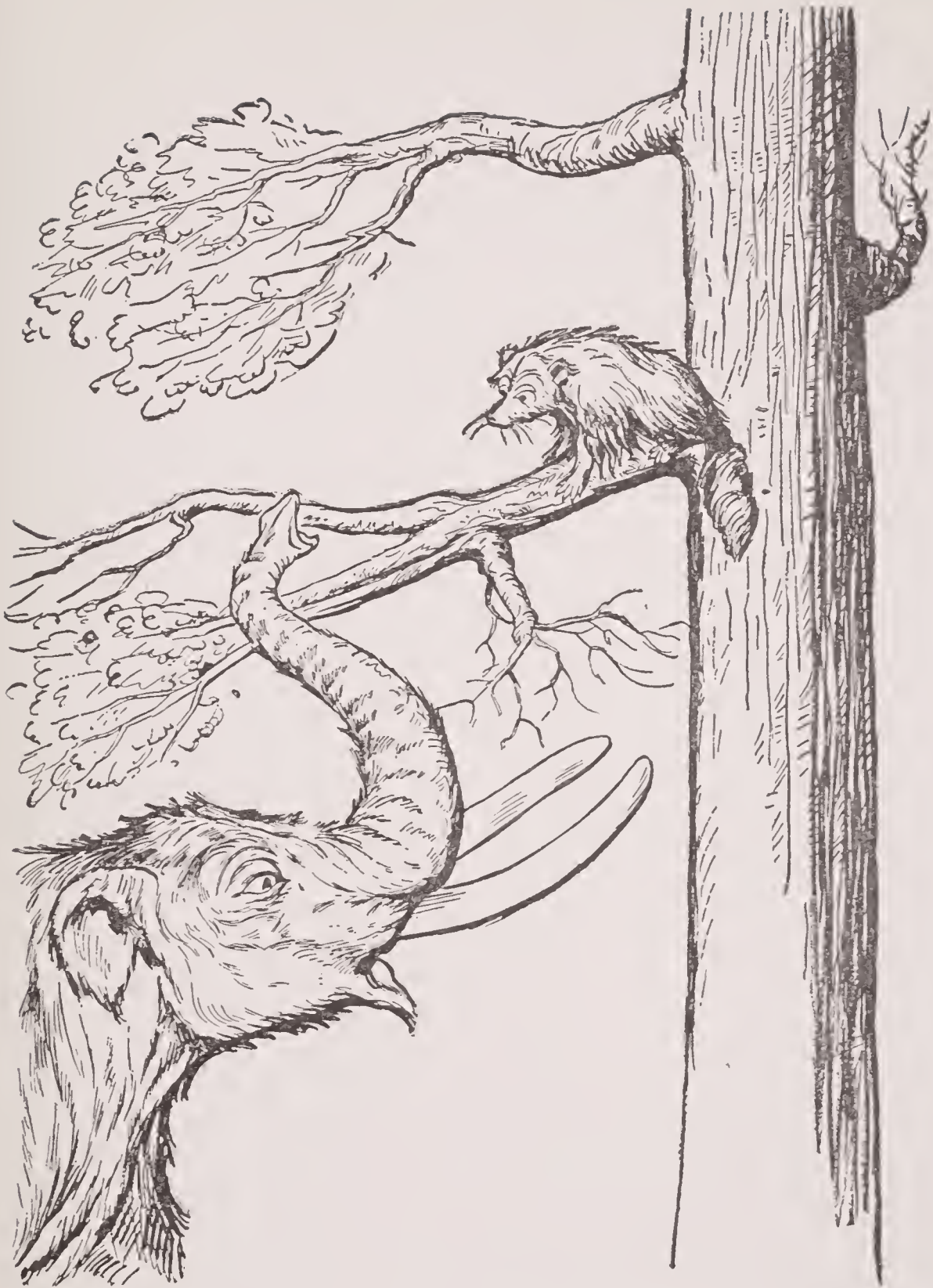
“One more,” chattered the little beast. “But he who lags need expect no favors. The others have crossed, but now you must await your turn.”

“Crossed? How?” Mammut felt as though the world had been lifted off his back. The Herd was safe then. His anxiety was relieved.

“They swam across,” Lotor replied. “It was easy to swim across before this flood came; but look at it now.”

Mammut looked again. He suddenly felt so light-hearted that he could view the roaring river from a much altered standpoint. It was indeed a terrifying spectacle, but now he could enjoy it, for the Herd had crossed in safety.

For some time the Mastodon and Raccoon gazed in silence



MAMMUT MEETS LOTOR, THE RACCOON

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at the remarkable scene. Never had Mammut gazed upon anything more wonderful. But at last he had his fill of it. The Herd awaited him somewhere among the trees on the opposite shore. He was now ready to move on.

He descended the bank and put one forefoot in the water. Lotor on the branch above him chattered loudly and danced about on the limb when he saw what Mammut was doing.

"Have a care!" he shrieked. "If you go any nearer to that water you will be drowned."

Mammut paused. The words of the Raccoon sounded in his ears like death. To attempt a passage of the river in its present swollen condition would be the act of a fool courting destruction. He sickened with disappointment. Yes, he must wait before he could rejoin the Herd. They were so near, and yet so very far away.

For the whole of a long day and night, too, he chafed and fretted with none but Lotor and the roaring flood to bear him company. Finally, when he had become half-crazed with impatience, the slowly-subsiding waters permitted him to pass. After an exhausting swim through the swift current, he landed far below the point from where he started. Here he began a frantic search for the missing Herd. But now he had lost the trail and, try as he would, he could not find it. In vain he dashed here and there with nose to earth. No trace could he smell or see.

Mammut halted to collect his scattered wits. His anxiety was approaching panic. His hopes were dashed, and now the gloom of the woods weighed upon his brain like lead. It was a terrible feeling, this loneliness. He felt that he would go mad if he did not soon find his herd. Then the thought of what they, in their turn, might be undergoing, sobered him. Their predicament was even worse than his. He could take care of himself;

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but now they had none to watch over them and guide them the right way.

The Herd had been traveling in a westerly direction. Probably they still held to it. Mammut headed west, battering his way through the trees into the open. A flood of warm sunlight welcomed him.

Before, and on both sides of him, appeared a vast, gently-rolling plain. It extended to the distant horizon. It seemed destitute of life. Except for a clump of bushes in the foreground, there was not a single object to be seen upon its surface. As Mammut strained for a glimpse or scent of his companions, he saw several of the bushes move. He bellowed with joy. The bushes were animals, Mastodons, no doubt—his Herd. The sight was enough to fill the lonely Mastodon's heart almost to bursting. With a scream of rapture he galloped forward at full speed. In a few moments he and his companions would again be united. All seemed to have gone well with them during his few days' absence, but just the same he was grimly determined that never again would he permit them out of his sight. "They need their leader," he thought; "and I need a Herd." Now that they had suffered no harm he was also thinking that the brief period of separation had given him by far the worst of it.

He was rapidly nearing his goal. All of his companions were there awaiting him. Their heads were lowered. It seemed to Mammut that they had grown smaller; their legs were thin and peculiar-looking. He slowed up to a trot and took a long whiff of them through his nose. The odor was not Mastodon. He came to a sudden halt as the truth dawned upon him. This was not his herd. These trunkless, tuskless creatures, with spindly legs, were something else.

Mammut stood gazing upon them appalled by his overwhelm-

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ing disappointment. For an instant the Bison herd, with horns lowered, returned his gaze, then, with one accord, all turned and fled like the wind. Away they sped, an avalanche of shaggy bodies and galloping hoofs, not once stopping to look behind them.

Gradually the flying mass merged with the western horizon, and only a haze of dust remained to mark the direction of its flight. Finally the haze floated away, leaving the plains absolutely bare of stirring life; even the tusked giant standing motionless with eyes straining westward—the lone Mastodon without a herd.

V

For several long, weary days Mammut tramped up and down through the woods and over the meadows along the west bank of the Wabash, searching for clues that might lead to the Herd's discovery. Not for a single moment did he relax; resting at night with ears alert to catch the faintest sound, and on the go all day with a persistence that never faltered.

The weather grew gradually colder. Fall was at hand; Winter would soon follow; and now was the time to journey south. But Mammut had no herd to lead south. Would his companions remember to go there of their own accord? Surely they would do so from mere force of habit, if nothing else. The thought gave him much comfort. They would go south; in fact, he was now convinced that they had already gone south. He even scolded himself because he had not before given them credit for that much common sense. They had secured almost a week's start and must now be far ahead of him. All seemed clear to Mammut, once he had thought the matter out, so he hurried southward, only to meet with disappointment the whole way, for search as he would

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not a single Mastodon sign was to be found. He had misjudged. The herd had not preceded him, after all; otherwise they would have left some trail for him to smell or see. Although taken aback, he now encouraged himself with fresh hopes. "I was only partly right," he argued. "The Herd did not turn south as soon as I expected. Something must have delayed them. I must be patient and wait, for they will soon be here."

He halted before a large pond where he found food and drink. Here he waited. Day after day passed, and still no sign of his missing companions. Although weary and heartsick, he refused to give up all hope. Whenever a chill voice whispered in his ear: "The Herd has gone north. You will never see them again," he would silence it with, "No, south. They will come in good time."

Various animals passing by halted to investigate the great tusked giant standing by the shore of the pond. In his loneliness Mammut would have turned to them for companionship and consolation, but they mistook the true meaning of his overtures and hurried fearfully away. These were migrants from the north, fleeing before the approaching winter to seek food and warmth in a more temperate climate. Not one of them dared stand before the Mastodon, who, had they but known it, felt enmity toward none and was merely seeking the companionship he sorely craved. Finally, a flock of ducks flying down from the north, alighted upon the waters of the pond. Mammut saw them and became interested. They were a flock of birds; but any gathering of sociable creatures was interesting, even though it served only to remind him of his own enforced solitude. The flock numbered several dozen, all Mallards, and their leader was a big, strapping drake. The latter attracted Mammut's particular attention. Being the leader of a herd—or rather a flock—the drake felt his responsibilities. He had chosen the pond as a good place to round

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up his followers before resuming the flight south. Mammut heard him say:

"Not here yet. Those ducks make me so angry. They are always late."

"Quack, quack," his companions responded in chorus.

The stragglers began to drop in one by one. Finally five or six more were added to the flock. The big drake was about to give the signal to depart when another duck descended with a splash that sent the water flying all over him. "Sss-s! quack, quack," he sputtered in a great rage. Then his ire softened as the newcomer sidled up to him and gave him a coy, admiring glance. He raised his head proudly and fluffed his feathers with studied carelessness as though he had no idea how fine and gaudy they were.

"Always the last one. You are enough to try a coot's patience." He strove to speak harshly, but with those soulful eyes taking note of his gorgeous array it was so easy to forgive and forget. "Now follow me closely, every one of you," he commanded; "and please remember that there is to be no stopping anywhere until I give the word. Now we are all here. Are you ready?"

He was preparing to leap from the water when a loud snort made him pause. The sound came from the neighboring bank. There stood a huge motionless figure, whose color was much in harmony with the surrounding scenery. The big Mallard was not in the habit of paying much attention to motionless, colorless objects, or he would have seen it before. However, it was so large no one could help noticing it now that it had made a noise.

"S-s-s!" he hissed. "How did the big thing happen here? I must look into this. The rest of you stay where you are while I investigate."

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These remarks, as well as the ones previously made, amused Mammut greatly. He remained motionless, watching the big drake swimming toward him. The bird came on haltingly, paddling from side to side as though timid about taking too bold and straight a course. He was consumed with curiosity to learn more of the huge animal that had no color and did not move, but who made a noise. As though knowing he was tantalizing the other, Mammut kept perfectly still and uttered no more sounds. Meanwhile the drake tacked and jibed, all the time drawing nearer. He was like a needle being attracted to a magnet. When about ten yards separated him from the motionless giant, he observed the latter's white tusks and stopped paddling. "What are you doing there?" he quacked.

Mammut's eyes twinkled. All animals had previously fled at sight of him. None had shown the slightest interest in his welfare; but here was a plain, everyday duck demanding an accounting of his actions, just as saucy as you please.

"I was watching you and your friends," he chuckled. "They seem to give you no end of trouble. How would you like to have me help you lead your flock?"

Unfortunately the drake could not see a joke. His skull was not split four ways at the top. His bump of humor never had a chance to grow.

"Lead my flock? Queer idea that," he remarked soberly. "Why, only a duck could do it. I am sure you couldn't. You have no wings."

"Of course not," Mammut replied. "No Mastodon has; but you ought to see me swim."

"Swim? Well, now; really." The drake appeared much perplexed. He remained silent for several moments, staring at the water before him. "No, it wouldn't do at all," he finally blurted

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out. "Besides, I don't need any help. Why don't you get a flock of your own—beasts like yourself?"

Mammut's head drooped. "There are none," he replied gloomily. "I am alone, without a friend in the world."

"No friends?" asked the drake in surprise. "Now that is unfortunate. I would die if I had to fly about the country alone. You may be sure I would not stand around like you, doing nothing. If you need friends, why don't you stir yourself and find some?"

"There are no Mastodons here," Mammut answered wearily. "I have hunted for them high and low, but none are to be found."

"None here, perhaps," said the drake; "but there are some where I came from. I know, because I saw them."

"You saw them?" Mammut's heart bounded within him. "Where?" he asked eagerly.

The drake pointed his bill northward. "There," he quacked. "I passed over them only yesterday. There were not many of them, but all were huge creatures just like you."

Mammut trembled with joy. The drake's words had suddenly raised him from the depths of despair to a seventh heaven of delight.

"Only yesterday?" he squealed. "Then they must be very near me." He beamed; he flapped his ears excitedly. The drake was about to speak, but Mammut's brain was in a ferment and he rambled on like one talking to himself:

"I felt that they were near me and that was all I had to brighten my loneliness. It seems so very long ago that we became separated. It is a dreadful thing, this being separated from one's friends."

The drake nodded his head emphatically. He said nothing; but it was evident by his manner that he fully agreed.

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"The mire came between us," the Mastodon continued. "I was careless and did not see. I should have been leading the Herd. I should be leading them now. They are timid animals and need me to watch over and fight for them. But now that you have told me where they may be found I must go to them at once. Every moment they are in danger; and, as for me, I am so lonely I wish I would die."

He was turning away when he heard a loud "Quack, quack!" behind him. He stopped and looked back.

"You need not be in such a hurry," snapped the big Mallard. "You'll be lonely all the rest of your life if you don't listen and be sensible."

"I am listening," Mammut replied. "But be quick, for I must go."

"You have a long, long journey before you," the drake began.

"But you saw my Herd only yesterday."

"A short journey for me, but a long one for you," said the big Mallard, shaking his head dubiously as he glanced at the Mastodon's post-like limbs. "I fly faster than the strongest wind. Your speed is that of a turtle compared with mine. Your friends are indeed very far away."

Mammut's heart sank. Then, with a mighty effort, he recovered himself. "No matter," he said determinedly. "How long? How far must I go?"

"Until the snowdrifts pile in your path like mountains and the waters harden like stone. If you live through this you will find yourself in the country of the Deer Moose beyond the River of the Plains. Your friends are there." Having delivered himself of these parting instructions, the drake swam back to his flock and the Mastodon turned northward.

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The cold wind blew in Mammut's face. He set his teeth grimly. This was no time to be going north, he knew; but the Herd was in danger and he must hurry to them. It would be a hard journey, but he must get to them and lead them back to the southern country. He dreaded the return journey more than the one now before him. It must be made in the dead of winter. Could the Herd do it? They must. His brows contracted with determination as he hurried on.

Day after day he plodded his weary way. The cold wind, blowing in his face, grew colder, until the steam of his labored breathing gathered upon his trunk and forehead in a mantle of hoarfrost. The ground creaked and groaned and the swamp-tussocks became as hard as cobblestones. No danger of being mired in frozen soil, so the Mastodon drove over the bogs and lowlands at a tremendous pace. His stops were few; brief halts for restless sleep and poor nourishment, barely enough to keep him alive and moving. It was on, on and ever on. The fat melted from his body. His hide bagged and wrinkled over his big-boned frame. He ached and hungered. He grew morose and vicious beneath his burden of suffering. He lost all of his sociable nature. He had no quarrel with anyone, but there was in his look and manner that which warned all to stand aside and give him the right of way. For such animals as he passed he had neither frown nor greeting. On, on he drove against the North Wind. Then came the snow, thick driving snow which piled up in great drifts and dragged hard on the Mastodon's weary feet. His speed slackened. Waist-deep, he floundered desperately through the drifts like a huge snowplow, advancing by inches where before he had advanced by rods.

Now that Winter had spread its cold white mantle over northern Illinois, many creatures began to feel the hunger-pinch.

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It was the season, too, when all manner of hunting-animals roamed the forest searching for deer, moose, elk and other vegetable-eaters that might be attacked to advantage while staggering about helplessly in the snow.

Can, the Timber Wolf—a long-legged bristling giant—came upon the Mastodon's trail yet warm and full of scent. Raising his head on high, he bayed the signal, calling together the Wolf Pack of Theakiki for the hunt. Over hill and ravine they came, racing full cry, howling like fiends. Once assembled, they were off like the wind, their broad, whiskered feet serving as snow-shoes to carry them swiftly over the snow crust. Mammut was ploughing his way slowly through the drifts when faint sounds were borne to his ears. It was an uninterrupted chorus of howls becoming louder at every moment. He stopped and looked behind him. A score or more of gaunt shaggy forms were speeding toward him through the woods. On they came, mouths wide open, displaying their cruel teeth and blood-red tongues.

"Wolves!" grunted Mammut scornfully. He was thinking of the Pack of Minster and how he, a baby, had routed the cowardly lot of them single-handed. So he turned his back upon them and resumed his way.

But the Timber Wolves of Theakiki were of far greater caliber than those of Minster or others the Mastodon had met with. Surprise, rather than fear, held them back at first. They saw neither elk nor moose, but a huge monster with horns growing from its mouth; also it was a veritable mountain of flesh, so said their noses, therefore a godsend to a score of warped and empty stomachs. The fierce brutes crowded closely on Mammut's flanks and rear. Can strode in the van close to the Mastodon's left shoulder. He crept nearer and nearer. The Pack watched him closely, awaiting their big leader's spring as the signal to dash in.

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Mammut jogged on, apparently paying little attention to his unwelcome visitors. But with all his seeming indifference, he kept his eye on Can and bided his time cunningly. The big wolf edged closer. Another moment and he would have sprung, when suddenly the Mastodon's trunk shot at him with the swiftness of a python's thrust and seized him by the middle. One agonized howl and Can vanished beneath the ponderous feet. The next moment he reappeared, whirled aloft a limp and bloody mass, and was flung over Mammut's back to the Pack behind him.

The wolves recoiled. The sudden and terrible end of their leader, together with the giant's strength and quickness, was not lost upon them. They set upon the body of the slain wolf and devoured it in short order, but they followed the Mastodon no more.

Mammut kept on. After several days more of pounding through the drifts he descended a long, wind-swept slope and stood upon the bank of a broad stream. This must be the River of the Plains. He waded and swam through it, breaking up the ice with trunk and tusks until finally he reached the other side.

Although chilled to the bone, and so exhausted he could scarcely stand, he gathered himself together and made a careful survey of the country before him. This was the land of the Deer Moose. His friends must be somewhere near. The ground in front of him to the west inclined upward and terminated in a ridge several miles long. His spirits soared to the heavens as he marched as fast as he could toward it. He fussed and fumed because it obstructed his view of what must be behind it—a herd of Mastodons, his Herd. The thought urged him on to greater speed. His breath came in gasps; his heart pounded like a hammer, but he would not slacken his pace. Now that his goal was so nearly reached, he forgot to think how very tired he was. His

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anxiety and loneliness would soon be relieved, and then the hardships he had undergone would be cast aside and forgotten.

He wished that he were a bird and could fly over and look behind that ridge which seemed so far off and stood there forever in his way. He heaved and strained, panting with excitement and his exertions, and after what seemed to him an age he reached the crest and gazed eagerly beyond. He saw a broad valley beneath him. One side of it was in part the ridge on which he stood. On the other side was high ground as far as he could see. Snow, snow, everywhere; here and there were small clumps of trees. All was bleak and bare. To Mammut it seemed a Valley of Death, for he saw no living animal within it, and worst of all, no Mastodons. Pointing his trunk to windward, he sought that which his eyes could not see. Vainly he searched the valley—no news. The Herd was not there.

Keen was his disappointment; the reaction, overwhelming. His body crumpled up within his bagged and wrinkled hide. He stood upon the ridge, silhouetted against the sky and visible for miles around—an image of despair. And yet—an idea came to fill him with renewed hope. Perhaps he had not gone far enough. The Herd might have shifted, too. They were not such fools as to stand forever in one place, particularly in that valley of death. They must be in the higher forested country beyond it.

Mammut recovered his spirits and, having recovered some of his wind and strength, too, he felt better. He descended into the valley, crossed it and ascended the other side. Disappointment again. He saw nothing but snow, rolling ground and scattered groups of trees; also an occasional crow and rabbit; but no Mastodons. Again he lost hope. He strove to shake off his weariness of heart, body and brain, but without success. Now that he despaired, his unnourished body rose in rebellion against the iron

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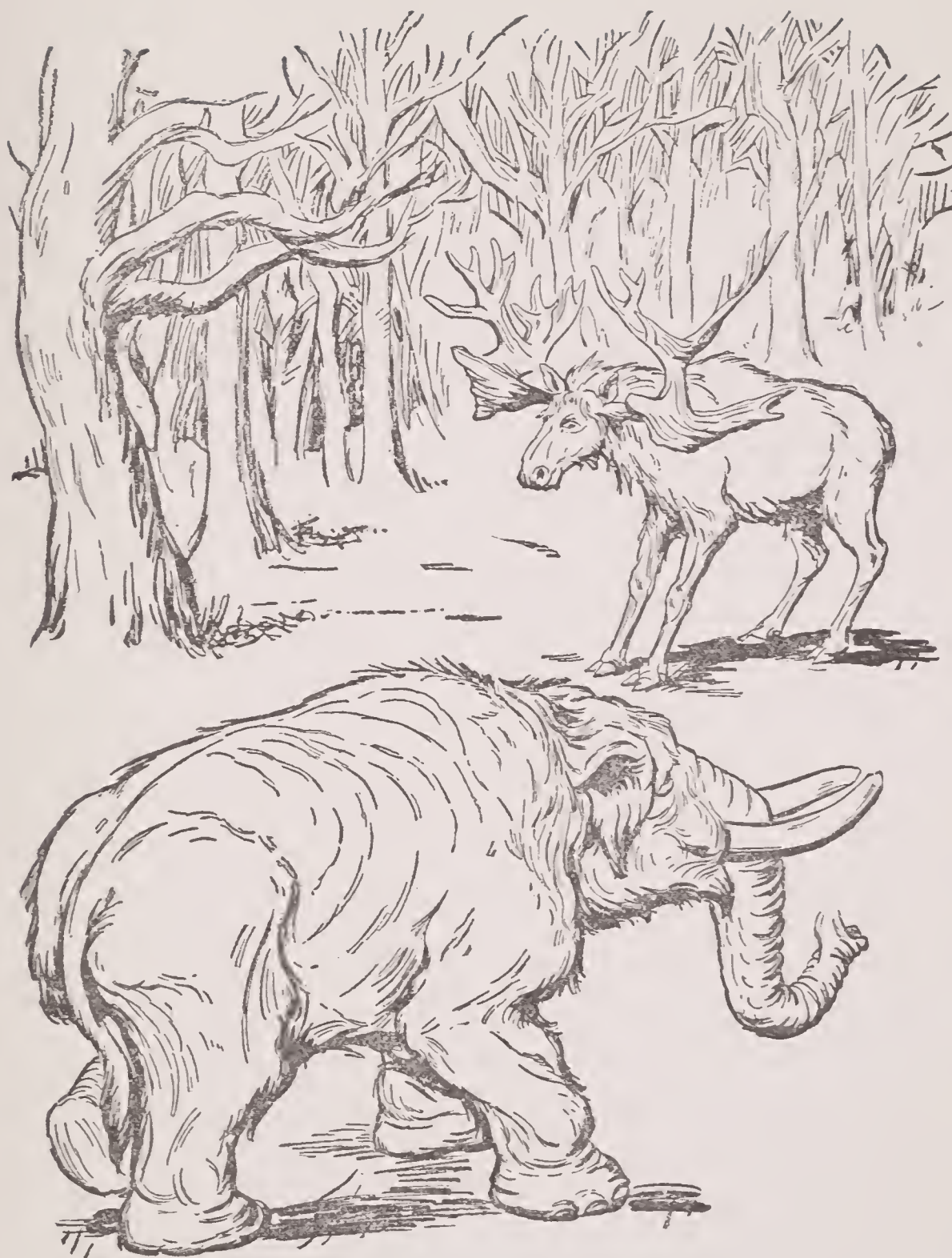
will that had so long driven it mercilessly on. Mammut was forced to heed. Cold, famished and exhausted, he crept on to a patch of woods bordering a creek—the Aux Sable—and sought refuge among the trees.

Night Frost with his bitter tooth sought and found the Mastodon hidden in the woods. Mammut stood there shivering. He scarcely retained strength enough to stamp his feet and thrash his trunk about to warm himself. Gradually his muscles relaxed, his eyes closed and he relapsed into deep drowsiness. Slowly the clouds above rolled away, leaving the sky all blue and clear and dotted with myriads of twinkling stars. The moon rose high and full, casting its sun-mockery upon the numbed earth. The air was lifeless. Not a breath stirred bush or branch. The moon-rays penetrated the woods and cast a ghastly glare upon the great tusked figure standing there, motionless. They brushed aside the hand of the Frost Death and smote upon the Mastodon's forehead.

In his confused moments preceding awakening, Mammut sensed the brilliant glare. He heard a voice calling. He opened his eyes and blinked at the moon which shone directly in his face. The air was deathly still—a mask to hide its bitterness. He tried to stretch his limbs, but they were as numb as four wooden posts. His feet too felt like nothing. They were almost frozen to the ground.

Mammut roused himself with a mighty effort and shook off the drowsiness that had so nearly made an end of him. Slowly and painfully, he coiled and uncoiled his trunk and stamped his feet until they no longer felt like dead weights. The mist cleared from his brain, and then sounded once more the voice of his awaking moments.

“A Mastodon—and alive!”



MAMMUT MEETS THE DEER MOOSE

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Mammut looked up with a start. Not ten paces distant stood a long-legged, moose-like creature with a deer's face and a wonderful crown of three-palmed antlers. "Who are you?" he asked.

"The Deer Moose."

"The Deer Moose? Then I have found you at last," bel-
lowed Mammut in astonishment and great joy. "You alone can
tell me where my people are. Lead me to them, for soon we must
be on our way to the warmer country. You see, I am their
leader. It was long ago that we became separated. Now I am
here and will guide them to the land of safety."

The Deer Moose was silent for a few moments. He stared at
his broad hoofs as though dreading to meet the other's eager gaze.

"You are too late," he said finally.

"Too late?" Mammut's heart almost stopped beating. His
body was as cold as ice.

"Yes, the Mastodons are here; but all are dead. When the
leaves withered they sickened; when the snow came they died. Not
one remains but yourself. You are the last."

The blow staggered Mammut. His limbs shook until he
seemed about to fall. The blood rushed to his temples. His
heart raced madly; then the tempest within subsided and he shud-
dered as an icy chill crept over him. He stared at the snow, the
trees, the sky, but saw nothing. The end of everything had come,
for the Herd had perished and now he was alone. He said noth-
ing more. Speech and reason left him. He made no effort to
move, for now there was no place to go. The Deer Moose
watched him anxiously. Mammut watched the Deer Moose.
The latter moved off several steps. Mammut followed and
stopped when the other stopped. Daylight came. The Deer

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Moose sought his breakfast of inner tree bark. Mammut did likewise. The Deer Moose marched to the Aux Sable and drank. Mammut followed and drank. The Mastodon repeated every motion of the Deer Moose, clinging desperately to this last straw of companionship like an inseparable shadow. All that day it was the same. When night came Mammut huddled up close to his new-found friend like a yearling calf seeking its mother's warmth and comfort. Before long he was sleeping as peacefully as a babe.

It was midnight when the Deer Moose heard in his dreams a voice calling him from on high. He awoke and gazed at the heavens. The North Star was blinking and pointing. It called, it urged, so he stole softly away.

In the morning Mammut awoke and found himself alone. The Deer Moose had disappeared. With a scream, he plunged into the woods, searching frantically for his missing companion. Vainly he searched, his uneasiness increasing to wild excitement as he found no sign. The forest resounded with his loud bellows, which brought no answer but the mocking echoes of his own voice. He became desperate, and his dulled mind flashed forth blind, furious rage.

Mammut was alone. His was a sociable nature and of his kind none but rogues lived alone. A rogue was a mad elephant, usually an old disgruntled animal. Mammut was not old, although he now looked anything but a young bull. But with his last shred of companionship torn from him, something bid his weary brain kill, trample and destroy. He listened and heeded and became an avenging rogue—a Mastodon gone stark, raving mad.

He stormed through the woods like a hurricane charging upon every living thing that crossed his path. A group of deer took

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one look at the onrushing giant and fled in terror before him. Above his head, on an oak branch, crouched a panther whining softly in awful fear. The Aux Sable Wolf Pack scattered before the mad fury like leaves blown by the wind. A flock of crows flapped away screaming as the maniac battered his way among the trees. Every denizen of the woods hastened to make himself scarce as Mammut raged and tore, seeking ones upon whom to vent his wrath. All morning he dashed back and forth, only to find the woods finally deserted, for it was now known that a rogue Mastodon had invaded the country of the Aux Sable, and he had best be left alone.

That afternoon he grew quieter—a relapse due to exhaustion and failing health. His blind rage subsided into morose dullness. He ate nothing; drank nothing. Dark clouds came rolling down from the northeast, bringing with them snow-flurries and biting wind. Mammut crept among the trees bordering Aux Sable Creek and endeavored to find shelter from the increasing cold.

Here the Wolf Pack awaited the big Mastodon. A raging rogue was one thing; a sick and dying elephant another; and now, emboldened by winter hunger, they stole softly up to the tusked giant standing with head bowed low among the trees.

Mammut saw not, but his nose gave him sudden warning of the approaching danger. With a loud bellow he backed rapidly away as the red-mouthed furies rushed at him from all sides. The Aux Sable was behind him. In he dashed for his last stand. The ice gave way beneath his feet. He halted in the shallow water as the wolves came howling and snarling to the attack, and stood waiting with trunk rolled aloft and tusks pointed forward. Suddenly there flashed through his mind the memory of earlier and better days. He was again the young fighting bull facing the Wolf Pack of Minster. He screamed a defiant challenge just

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as the foremost wolves dashed into the water and leaped upon him.

In an instant the creek became an inferno of struggling creatures half concealed beneath showers of bloody foam and spray. Mammut rushed into the midst of his enemies with his last flash of furious strength. With trunk and tusks he struck and jabbed, while his huge feet ground one writhing body after another into the creek's rocky bed. His strength was failing fast, but no faster than the courage and number of his foes. One final labored sweep of the great tusks and the last wolf was either dead or following his flying companions in a mad dash through the woods to escape the Mastodon's wrath.

The waters of the Aux Sable relapsed into their former quiet and Mammut stood alone amid heaps of broken ice and lifeless furry forms. The fire faded from his eyes, his head drooped and he swayed upon his shaking limbs like one about to fall. Slowly he waded ashore and staggered up the bank. He was weary unto death, he could scarcely control his muscles, and he was very, very cold. The wind blew harder from the northeast, bending the tree-tops before it.

Mammut crawled through the underbrush and sank to his knees as the storm fast gathering, whistled among the branches above him. The snow came driving down, first in scattered flakes, then in a furious cloud, covering everything as with a white mantle. It covered the Mastodon until the cold wind no longer chilled him to the bone. With warmth came a feeling of peace and comfort such as he had not experienced for many a day.

His brain gradually cleared and he had visions. He was gazing at a luxuriant landscape; green-covered lowlands bordering a forest, through which wound a peaceful stream—all beneath a bright blue sky. A herd of Mastodons was moving about on

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the lowlands and among the trees—huge tuskers, cows and many calves, all as plump and happy as anyone could be. The youngsters frolicked with each other, while the grown-ups stopped feeding from time to time to look on. All were so joyous and care-free that it made a picture well worth going far to see.

Suddenly a great bull-tusker emerged from the group. He was followed by a cow with a roly-poly calf trotting by her side. "Burbo! Hasta!" Mammut called out. There was no answer but the whistling of wind through the tree-tops and the faint rustling of driving snow. All grew dark as Mammut sank lower beneath his white winding sheet and drifted peacefully away into the land of sleep that knows no waking.

THE END



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