INTRODUCTION
1. THREE SPOTTED LITTLE CUBS
2. HOME IN THE JUNGLE
3. A JUNGLE TRAGEDY
4. FRIENDLY NEIGHBORS
5. NOISY NEIGHBORS
6. A SPOTTED PROWLER
7. A NIGHT RAID
8. A RIVER MONSTER
9. PAPYRUS SWAMP
10. FIRE IN PAPYRUS SWAMP
11. THE ADVENTURE OF ALBO THE WATERBUCK
12. THE WORLD'S SWIFTEST MAMMAL
13. A RACE ON BROAD PLAIN
14. A STRANGE FRIENDSHIP
15. A FIGHT IN THE FOREST
16. THE ADVENTURE OF GRAY BOY THE ELAND
17. TWO LITTLE FRIENDS
18. ADVENTURE IN LOWER FOREST
19. FLIGHT TO THORNY WOODS
Wild Animals of Africa

20. SOME TRICKSTERS ARE TRICKED
21. LURKING ENEMY
22. A HOME STEALER
23. A FRIEND IN NEED
24. A FIGHT ON SANDY FLAT
25. TWO NARROW ESCAPES
26. MEHARI THE CAMEL
27. PARTNERS IN CRIME
28. FILTHY NEIGHBORS
29. THE RULER OF BAMBOO FOREST
30. AN INTRODUCTION TO THE LEMURS
31. AYE-AYE TAKES A STROLL

Introduction

NO other continent on earth has so many different kinds of Wild Animals as has Africa. Within the memory of men now living, there were not only many, many different kinds, but most of the different kinds were plentiful. In fact, some were so plentiful that they could be seen on the broad plains in droves like cattle. Even those which were less prolific, were seen in large numbers.

But Terror the Hunter has been abroad in the land; and wherever Terror is permitted to follow his wasteful practice, the Wild Animals soon become scarce or disappear entirely. So it is in Africa. Today there are scarcely hundreds, or even dozens, where a few years back there were thousands of some species. Some have almost disappeared.

It is heartening to know that wise men have set aside large areas where hunting is prohibited so that some of the Wild Animals will be saved from extinction. For there is more lasting, pleasure in studying their lives and habits, and in photographing them in their native haunts, than there is in merely putting a high-powered bullet through their bodies.

Wild Animals have their pleasures and sorrows even as humans do. They play games, have families which they love, travel, get angry, store up food, are curious about things they see, and like to show off. They are kind or unkind to their neighbors. Some, I am
sorrry to say, are so much like human beings that they steal and murder. In fact, if we become well enough acquainted with the Wild Animals, we shall find about every trait, good and bad, that mankind displays. But you will never see any one group of Wild Creatures that has all the good and bad characteristics that are found in the human family. One species of Wild Animals will exhibit one or more traits. Another species will be best known by some other trait or traits. But the human race has all of them.

In this book we have tried to show you some of these characteristics among Wild Animals and how they affect their relationship to each other. And, further, we have tried to give you a peek into their daily lives. We hope it will give you a desire to know more about the Wild Creatures, and that in the future you will study them not merely as things that wear fur or feathers, but as real personalities.

We regret that we have space to mention but comparatively few of the Wild Animals of Africa. We trust that the others will not feel slighted, for every one of them is worthy of our acquaintance. We hope that you will eventually know all of them. 

N. W. N.

CHAPTER 1:
Three Spotted Little Cubs

ONE sultry morning in January, far in the interior of Africa, Leo the Lion and his two Weeny Sisters blinked at the Burning Sun as it peeped over the edge of the hot, dry plain known as Broad Plain and searched out the Dense Jungle Thicket which was their home. They blinked because this was the first time they had seen the Burning Sun, and their eyes were not yet strong.
If you could have seen Leo the Lion then, when he was not yet a day old, it would have been hard for you to believe that someday he would be a great, big growly lion, known far and wide as the King of Beasts.

Now it may seem strange to you that the eyes of the Weeny Lion Cubs were open so soon, since the eyes of their furry little cousins, the cat kittens, do not open for several days after they are born; but baby lions are born with their eyes open. You may also wonder how a morning in January could be sultry, but, you see, Leo the Lion's home was almost at the equator, and there the Burning Sun shines almost straight down with terrific heat many, many days during the year. And when the rays are not shining straight down, they are not far from it.

Mrs. Lion had looked for days and days, hoping to find a Rocky Cave Den that would be cool and shady when the Burning Sun was high over head. At last she found one and peeped in, and what do you suppose she saw? There lay a Mother Lion nursing her five Spotted Little Cubs, or maybe there were six. Mrs. Lion did not wait to see how many there were, for the Mother Lion growled fiercely. So Mrs. Lion backed away and went on with her home hunting.

At last Mrs. Lion crawled back into a Dense Jungle Thicket, and there she scratched away the earth and made a Hidden Lair, where Leo and his two Weeny Sisters were born. You may be sure it did not take the Burning Sun long to search out the Hidden Lair in the Dense Jungle Thicket.

Out on Broad Plain there sounded a mighty roar. "I hear your father telling the Jungle Folk that he is returning home with a full and satisfied stomach," said Mrs. Lion to her three Spotted Little Cubs. But they only pressed their noses deeper into her tawny coat, trying to shield their eyes from the bright light while they enjoyed their first breakfast.

In a little while Mrs. Lion saw Mr. Lion enter a Thorn Thicket that was not far away. She knew that he was looking for a quiet spot where he could sleep during the long, hot day. But she also knew that he would keep one eye open for Terror the Hunter and for Black Hunter, and that made her feel safer. For Terror the Hunter and Black Hunter were the only Lurking Enemies that Mrs. Lion feared. They were the only ones who were powerful enough to harm the lions.

Mrs. Lion lay in the shade of Dense Jungle Thicket during the long, hot day, keeping watch over her three Spotted Little Cubs. But when the Burning Sun made his last nod and bowed out of sight in the Glowing West, Mrs. Lion tucked in her babies and crept forth from the Hidden Lair.

"I'm so hungry," said Mrs. Lion to herself, as she stretched her long, lanky body. "I believe I'll go over toward Big Water Hole and see if I can catch a juicy zebra or hartebeest for lunch when they come for a drink."
Many of the water holes were dry, so the thirsty animals of Broad Plain visited Big Water Hole every night. Big Water Hole was always the last one to dry up.

Every night when the long shadows were racing each other across Broad Plain, Mrs. Lion would steal forth to hunt, leaving Leo and his Weeny Sisters alone in the Hidden Lair. Sometimes she would not return until the second morning, because when the water holes became dry many of the Wild Animals left Broad Plain in search of water. Then Mrs. Lion found it more difficult to catch anything.

Of course Leo and his Weeny Sisters became very hungry while their Loving Mother was away, but they never made a cry that would reveal their Hidden Lair. They amused themselves by playing Roll and Tumble, Sneak and Pounce, and other games. Sometimes, when a bird or a butterfly came near, they played the game of Practice Hunt. They really were quite clumsy at first. They would tumble over almost every little stick and stem that was in their way, and they would often run smack into each other if two of them happened to decide to stalk the same butterfly or bird. Then there would be a short battle, which usually ended in a game of Roll and Tumble.

Almost anything was welcome that helped to pass the time while their Loving Mother was away on her long hunts. At last even Big Water Hole dried up. Then it was harder each night for Mrs. Lion to catch something to eat, although Mr. Lion did his best to help. Besides, the lions had to travel a long way to find water to drink when there was not enough warm blood to satisfy their thirst.

It is mysterious how the Wild Animals can find even a tiny Little Water Hole in the midst of a great barren land, but they can. Some unseen force seems to guide them straight to it for miles on end. If Fearful the Man were in the same circumstances, doubtless he would wander around blindly until he died of thirst.

One evening when the Spotted Little Cubs were no larger than half-grown pups, Mrs. Lion decided to forsake the Hidden Lair and find a new home.

"Let's move to Grassy Valley," she said to Mr. Lion when they were ready to leave for the night's hunt.

"I think that is a very good suggestion," agreed Mr. Lion. "Most of our neighbors have left Broad Plain already."

"There is always good hunting in Grassy Valley," continued Mrs. Lion, "for that is where many of the Wild Animals go when there is no water here on Broad Plain."

You see, in Grassy Valley was Lazy River, which wound back and forth as if it were in no hurry at all to get where it was going. Although Lazy River was not wide during the hot, dry season, still almost always there were quiet pools left after all of the water holes on sun-baked Broad Plain were dry.
So it was that Mr. and Mrs. Lion and the three Spotted Little Cubs left their Hidden Lair in the Dense Jungle Thicket when dusk came stealing across Broad Plain and started out to find a new hunting ground in Grassy Valley.

Now, the three Spotted Little Cubs could not walk fast, so Mr. Lion had time to hunt along the way. Each morning as the Burning Sun peeped over a distant mountain to start another day, the lion family would seek the shade of an old, old baobab tree, or they would spend the sultry hours under an almost leafless thorn tree. They did not travel during the day, for the hot earth was not comfortable to their feet, and the Burning Sun hurt their eyes.

So it happened that after almost a week of slow night traveling, they came to Grassy Valley. There in Rocky Cliff, far back from Lazy River, they found a Sheltering Cave, and there they made their new home.

CHAPTER 2:
Home in the Jungle

IF you could have seen the lions some weeks later, you would have found a happy family indeed. In the shade of a scrawny tree lay Mrs. Lion, nursing a sore paw into which a mimosa thorn had run. Near by was Mr. Lion and the three Spotted Little Cubs. Mr. Lion and Leo were getting ready for a game of Frolic.

First, Mr. Lion licked Leo all over as tenderly as a mother cat washes her furry kittens. Then taking him in his huge paws he rolled over on his back, holding the little fellow on his chest. But the Spotted Little Cub did not stay there long. Off he tumbled and then raced around and around, while Mr. Lion rolled from side to side on his back pretending to defend himself. And he did, too, for the game of Frolic soon got out of bounds. Leo became careless and put out his claws, whereupon Mr. Lion gave him a sound smack. That ended the game of Frolic.

Mrs. Lion's foot was quite sore. She limped painfully as she and Mr. Lion left for the night's hunt. She limped back to the Sheltering Cave in the morning carrying a chunk of meat to her hungry babies. It really would have been difficult for her to catch anything if Mr. Lion had not helped. But Mr. and Mrs. Lion hunted together. While Mrs. Lion stalked along with loud grunts to frighten the prey, Mr. Lion lay hidden, ready to pounce upon any Wild Animal that tried to run past him.

So they managed to find something for their Spotted Little Cubs to eat each night until Mrs. Lion's sore foot was healed.

"Would you like to go hunting?" Mrs. Lion asked the three Spotted Little Cubs one evening, when she was ready to go out and look for something to eat.

"Oh, may we go with you, Mother?" asked Leo.
"This very night?" chimed in his sisters.

"Yes, you may go tonight," replied Mrs. Lion. And then, when the three Spotted Little Cubs began to race and tumble around her, she quickly added, "But you must be very quiet."

Leo and his sisters were more than three months old, and Mrs. Lion thought it was time for her to teach them how to hunt. They would soon be large enough to get their own food. It really was quite a task for her to carry something home to the Sheltering Cave every night so that the three Spotted Little Cubs could feast.

So they all stole forth in the bright moonlight. First there was Mrs. Lion. Then came Leo, and trailing along behind were the two sisters. Mr. Lion had become very hungry and had gone away alone earlier than usual.

First Mrs. Lion led them along a rocky trail that entered a little winding ravine, and at last they reached Grassy Valley. It seemed a long way to the Spotted Little Cubs, but it really was not far. They thought more about chasing each other in the bright moonlight than they did about looking for something to eat.

At last Mrs. Lion lost patience, and she gave Leo a smart cuff as he raced past her. "You must be more quiet," she said in her gruff voice; "you will frighten everything away."

Then she showed them how to creep silently through the tall grass, sniffing the night air as they went along.

Suddenly Mrs. Lion stopped. "I hear zebras," she said, "and the noisy things are not far off."

She led the Spotted Little Cubs a little farther, until the Playful Air Whiffs brought the Revealing Scent of the zebras. The Spotted Little Cubs were very much excited. They wanted to race straight toward the zebras. They did not know that the zebras could easily outrun them.

"Now you must stay right here in the shadow of this crooked thorn tree," said Mrs. Lion. "Do not go out in the bright moonlight, and do not make a sound." And then she slunk silently away through the tall grass.

Of course, the three Spotted Little Cubs were greatly disappointed, but they curled up in the shadow of the crooked thorn tree and waited. They could hear the zebras barking and stamping around and arguing among themselves. Once the zebras became still, as if they had sensed a Lurking Enemy near; but soon they were as noisy as ever.

Suddenly there was a great commotion among the zebras, and their hoofs went thumping away across Grassy Valley. Then all was silence for a short while. The three
Spotted Little Cubs sat in the shadow of the crooked thorn tree wondering what had happened. They pricked up their little ears and listened.

"I hear Mother calling us to supper," said Leo, and away they raced as fast as their short legs would go.

And this was how Mrs. Lion gave her three Spotted Little Cubs their first lesson in hunting. But Leo did not really begin his career as a mighty hunter until he was about six months old.

One evening Leo rushed in and clumsily helped his mother kill a young gazelle that she had knocked down. After that for a while he hunted by his mother's side, always eager to pounce on the fallen prey. He would claw and bite most awkwardly until the prey was overcome with fear and pain. But he soon learned to hunt by watching his mother. Then one night he succeeded in bringing down a young hartebeest alone. This is how it happened.

One evening when it was almost time for the Wild Animals to leave the shade of the bush and go to Grassy Valley for feed and water, the lion family decided it was time to start their night's hunt. They had been resting all day in a little jungle thicket, for they no longer bothered to return to the Sheltering Cave.

"Now, I'll tell you what we will do," said Mr. Lion, when they reached their hunting ground. "Each one of us will hide in a secluded spot along this edge of the Brushy Belt. The Wild Animals must pass by here on their way to Grassy Valley, and we will be waiting to pounce on any that come near. You see, tonight the Playful Air Whiffs are coming toward us from Brushy Belt, and the Wild Animals cannot smell us. But their Revealing Scent will come to us and tell us to be ready."

Leo found a clump of tall grass and stretched out on the warm earth. But he hadn't long to wait, for soon his keen nose caught the Revealing Scent of a family of hartebeests coming toward him. He crouched low in the tall grass, with his strong, young legs set for a mighty spring. And then, when a young hartebeest chanced to pass near him, with a few swift bounds he pounced upon its back and bore it to the ground. After that, Leo was well able to do his own hunting.
CHAPTER 3:
A Jungle Tragedy

ONE day, while the lion family were lying on the side of a large anthill, a man sneaked up with a powerful rifle and fired at Mr. Lion. Mr. Lion roared with pain and anger as a bullet passed through the flesh of one of his legs. Mrs. Lion was furious, and, like most lionesses ever ready to defend their lords, she charged the man fearlessly, coughing and grunting angrily as she went. In a flash she was upon him.

That was how Mrs. Lion became a man-eater. Nothing tasted so good to her as human flesh. So it was that she began to visit native villages; and whenever there was an opportunity, she would steal one of the tribe.

Mr. Lion himself became a pest. He would steal the cattle, donkeys, and goats of the natives and settlers, for he found it much easier than to hunt Wild Animals. He especially liked tame ostriches.

At last, when the natives would stand it no longer, they decided to put an end to it. So the warriors came together with their tough leather shields and long, heavy spears and set out in search of the man-eater.

Now it happened that on this day Mrs. Lion lay resting in the open under a low bush in Grassy Valley. Mr. Lion was asleep on the side of a mound some distance away. Near by lay the cubs, now almost grown. As Mr. Lion roused from a nap and looked out across Grassy Valley, his keen eyes caught sight of many black dots. But the bright sunlight hurt his eyes, for he could see much better at night. He always hunted at night, except sometimes on a cool day. The darker and stormier the night the bolder he was.
Mr. Lion watched the black dots as they came nearer. Then with much grunting he and the cubs left the mound where they had been resting, and disappeared in the tawny grass.

Mrs. Lion did not seem to be much alarmed. She lay stretched out flat in the grass that matched the color of her coat so well. As she watched, she slowly waved her tail with its black tip back and forth, and the sharp eyes of one of the black men saw it. Before she noticed it, she was surrounded by a large ring of Black Warriors with sharp spears. Turn whichever way she might, she faced savage spearmen, who were slowly creeping nearer.

Mrs. Lion lashed her tail furiously and uttered terrible grunting roars. The hair on her back bristled, and her sharp teeth gleamed as she faced first one way and then another. With sharp spears poised and shields held ready, the Black Warriors rose and closed in the circle. At topmost speed Mrs. Lion charged, but from each side the Black Warriors rushed in.

That night Mr. Lion roamed Grassy Valley, sending forth one thunderous roar after another. But there was no answering call from Mrs. Lion. A week later Terror the Hunter, with his powerful rifle, put an end to Mr. Lion. Then Leo and his sisters were left to hunt alone.

Now it happened one night while Leo was feeding on a zebra which he had brought down that a sleek Young Lioness came uninvited to his feast.

"I hope you won't mind if I eat dinner with you," she said.

"Oh, I'll be very glad to share my banquet with you," replied Leo, "for I am lonely. My father and mother have been killed, and my sisters have gone away. The cowardly hyenas and the yapping jackals are waiting impatiently for me to finish so that they can rush in and help themselves. So you may as well enjoy my feast. Sometimes they are so rude that they try to grab a piece while I am still eating."

"What bad manners," said the sleek Young Lioness; "they need to be taught a lesson."

Suddenly there appeared near by a bold Young Lion. It was plain that he intended to drive Leo away from the sleek Young Lioness and the feast. Leo was very angry. The two lions glared at each other with eyes green with hatred. Their tails lashed furiously. They grunted and growled and roared.

Leo sank slowly to the ground. The muscles on his legs became taut and ready to spring. With a sudden bound, he threw himself at his foe. The two met in mid-air with bared teeth and claws. They tore and slashed and bit each other savagely. At last the Young Lion was glad to leave. Then Leo roared in triumph to announce to the jungle Folk that he was king of the realm.
By the time Leo and the sleek Young Lioness had satisfied their hunger, they had become good friends. When the Burning Sun peeped over the eastern hills telling them it was time to find a hideout for the day, Leo followed her to the depths of a jungle thicket.

But Leo could not forget that Terror the Hunter was abroad in the land. Leo also remembered his old home on Broad Plain, where Terror the Hunter seldom came. So one night he and the sleek Young Lioness left Grassy Valley and set out for Broad Plain, where there were many zebras and hartebeests and other prey.

CHAPTER 4:
Friendly Neighbors

OUT on Broad Plain all the Wild Animals were happy. Refreshing rain had come. Already the tender grass shoots and smiling wild flowers were springing up. Every day more and more of the Wild Animals were returning to Broad Plain, now that the water holes were brimming full.

Of course, there were some Wild Animals that had not left Broad Plain when the water holes had dried. For, strange as it may seem, some of them do not drink water for months at a time. It is a mystery how they can live on sun-baked Broad Plain without drinking, but they can.

There is old Spindleshanks the Giraffe. He is glad to drink whenever there is water; but when there is none, he doesn't mind waiting six months for a drink. Like many of the other Wild Animals, Spindleshanks has changed some of his habits. The change was brought about by Terror the Hunter. You see, Spindleshanks used to go down to Lazy River for a drink sometimes after the water holes dried. But when Terror the Hunter
began to lie in wait for him, Spindleshanks and many of his friends moved farther out on Broad Plain, where there is no water at all during much of the year; and some of the Wild Animals who used to prefer living on Broad Plain moved into Big Jungle or Black Forest.

It is too bad that the Wild Creatures and Civilized Man cannot get along peaceably together, but that seems impossible. Civilized Man cannot even get along peaceably with his human neighbors; and when a great war comes along, even the Wild Creatures must suffer. At least Spindleshanks found it so.

You see, when World War I reached Africa from far-off Europe, Spindleshanks was living peaceably with the other Wild Creatures on Broad Plain and in Grassy Valley along Lazy River, for Spindleshanks was a friendly wild animal. He never tried to harm any of his neighbors, but he did have to fight the Lions sometimes when they tried to steal his baby.

Now, when World War I came to Africa, it wasn't long until Civilized Man began stringing telephone lines across Broad Plain and many other places where they had not been before, and that was when Spindleshanks got into trouble. You see, Spindleshanks is the tallest of all fourfooted beasts. Some of the giraffes are more than eighteen feet tall. Spindleshanks knew nothing about telephone lines, and he would run through them and tear them down with his long neck. That was annoying to Civilized Man, for the lines seemed very important to him.

Then Terror the Hunter came to drive Spindleshanks and his friends away from the telephone lines and shoot them if they did not stay away. Many, many of the giraffes were killed. That was why Spindleshanks moved far, far out on Broad Plain, where for month after month during the dry season he had no water to drink.

Spindleshanks must have been happy to see the refreshing rain, don't you think? For then the dancing leaflets and tender tips, which were his favorite food, began to grow on the acacia and thorn trees. And then many of the other Wild Animals returned. In the evening they would gather at the water holes and enjoy a long drink and a visit.

Of course, Spindleshanks did not always go to the water hole for a drink. He liked to eat his breakfast early while the dancing leaflets were wet with dew, and then he did not need a drink. But when he did drink, it was an amusing sight. His legs were so long that the only way he could reach the water with his mouth was to spread his front legs wide apart, or step far forward with one and backward with the other. Even so, he must sometimes bend his knees.

That was why Spindleshanks liked to eat dancing leaflets from the top of trees. He had about the longest tongue imaginable, almost a foot and a half long. With its help he daintily picked off a leaf at a time.
Now, Spindleshanks was the leader of a herd. There were Mrs. Spindleshanks and their baby, Dotty Spindleshanks, and other families of giraffes who lived together on Broad Plain. Altogether, there were as many giraffes in Spindleshanks' herd as you have fingers and toes.

Although Dotty Spindleshanks was very, very young, she was almost ten feet tall; and although her legs were very, very slender, still she could run across Broad Plain beside her mother very fast when she was only a few days old.

Now it happened one quiet day after the giraffes had finished an early breakfast that they stopped as usual to rest in the shade of the scattered thorn trees which dotted Broad Plain. For a while Dotty and her little friends played the game Frisk and jump, stopping now and then to nibble a leaf. But their favorite game was Hide and-Seek among their mothers' legs.

Soon most of the grownups were asleep, standing with their heads sticking up through the thorn trees or with their legs spread out and necks drooping. Two of them crossed their necks and gently nipped each other affectionately on the shoulder, as horses sometimes do.

You might think that the giraffes drowsed with their heads sticking up through the thorn trees so as to be hidden from Lurking Enemies, and that is why they did. But they were not the Lurking Enemies you might think. You see, about the only dangerous enemies the giraffes had were Terror the Hunter and Leo the Lion. But the giraffes did not try to hide from these enemies. Instead, they trusted to their keen noses and quick ears and sharp eyes to warn them of danger, and to their long legs to carry them swiftly away. You may be sure that they could see long distances with their eyes searching Broad Plain from such a high position as their long legs and necks made possible.

But the Lurking Enemy which makes the giraffes sometimes seek the shelter of slightly wooded places for protection is Tabanus the Horsefly. For although the giraffe's hide is so thick that he can race through the thorn trees without injury, still it is no protection against the long, sharp beak of Tabanus the Horsefly and his host of bloodsucking friends.

Spindleshanks had one important duty to do. While the others rested, he would stand guard. Usually he would mount a small hillock or an anthill from which he could see farther; for, as you probably know, some of the anthills in Africa are large mounds ten or twelve feet high.

So while the other giraffes rested, Spindleshanks stood on his small hillock looking far off across Broad Plain. Redbill the Tick Bird was running up and down the side of his face, searching around his ears and peeking under his lips and hoping that he would find a plump tick to eat. One would think that such antics would tickle Spindleshanks beyond
endurance, but he did not seem to mind. He often let the friendly little bird ride on his head or neck.

Suddenly Spindleshanks thought he saw a tawny form sneaking along a tiny ravine a long way off. At first it looked as if it were grass moving slowly in the breeze. Spindleshanks waited to see whether it was friend or enemy. The tawny form came nearer. It passed behind a small knoll and disappeared. Spindleshanks stretched his long neck and watched. Slowly the tawny form appeared on the opposite side of the knoll. For a while it lay still. Then it moved over behind a clump of thorny bushes, and from there to some tall grass.

Spindleshanks was suspicious. He could see the tall grass moving as the hidden form came nearer and nearer. And there were Dotty Spindleshanks and her friends frolicking in and out among the drowsing herd.

Now you might think that Spindleshanks would make a loud noise when he warned the herd, but he didn't. Although many people believe that giraffes have no voice, they can and sometimes do make a noise.

But Spindleshanks had his own way of giving an alarm. He gave a certain switch with his long tail, and almost instantly everyone was alert. Some of the mother giraffes had to drive their long-legged babies back into the herd, but Dotty ran and stood under her mother, looking out from between her forelegs, where she felt quite safe indeed. Thus they were standing when Leo the Lion suddenly peeked out of the tall grass not far away.

Now Leo the Lion would have liked very much to pounce upon a baby giraffe if he could have found one away from its mother. But he knew that he was no match for a full-grown giraffe when he was alone. For although the giraffes never use their queer, skin-covered knobs on their heads for defense, they can kick viciously with their long front legs. And they can also strike a powerful blow with their head, using their front teeth as a weapon.

So Leo the Lion slunk away again in the tall grass, hoping that he would find a juicy zebra to pounce upon.
CHAPTER 5:  
Noisy Neighbors

NOW, it did not take long for the news to spread on Broad Plain that Leo the Lion had returned. You see, Spindleshanks the Giraffe told the wildebeests and the hartebeests that he had seen Leo prowling near his family. Fleetfoot the Ostrich happened to hear Spindleshanks, and he ran right over to the gazelles.

"Have you heard the news?" asked Fleetfoot.

"What news?" asked Tommy the Gazelle.

"Why, I heard Spindleshanks the Giraffe telling the wildebeests and the hartebeests that Leo the Lion has returned to Broad Plain. So beware! " And away went Fleetfoot to warn the zebras.

You see, many of the Wild Animals lived peaceably together on Broad Plain, as good neighbors should. Of course, the wildebeests and the hartebeests and the gazelles and the ostriches were not always together, but they often met each other for a visit.

So it was that after Spindleshanks the Giraffe saw Leo the Lion it did not take long for the friendly neighbors to tell each other. And the Playful Air Whiffs carried his Revealing Scent across Broad Plain, warning all the Wild Animals to be on the alert.

Now Stripe the Zebra and his large family were about the noisiest neighbors on Broad Plain. All the other Wild Creatures knew when the zebras returned to their Favorite Feeding Ground after the refreshing rain had come to Broad Plain.

You see, when the dry season had come to Broad Plain and the water holes had dried up, the zebras had gone where they could find a drink. So did many others of the Wild
Wild Animals of Africa

Animals. First the zebras had gone to Dry River. Of course there was no water to be seen. But Stripe remembered going there with his loving parents when he was only a little colt, so he knew what to do.

First he went cautiously down into Dry River, followed by some of the older zebras in single file. They wanted to make sure there were no Lurking Enemies waiting for them. For Stripe knew that was one of Leo the Lion's tricks.

While some of them stood guard, the other zebras pawed out the sand until they had dug a hole as deep as a man is tall, and there they found water. That is how the zebras made for themselves a drinking pool.

Although the zebras liked a refreshing drink every day, they sometimes waited two or three days before going to their drinking pool when their Favorite Feeding Ground was far from it. When they were ready for a drink, Stripe would start toward the drinking pool in Dry River, and the other zebras followed along behind in a long line, Indian style.

That is also the way they went to their stamping ground. You see, the zebras were covered with plump ticks, and they were likewise bothered by the biting flies. So they liked to take a dust bath to drive off these pests. While some of the zebras rolled back and forth, kicking up a great cloud of dust, others stood close by ready to enjoy it.

I am sorry to say that Stripe the Zebra and the other stallions were not kind to each other. They were very selfish. At the drinking pool each would claim the best place to drink. Then there was always a disgraceful fight to see who would get it.

You see, the stallions always went down to drink first, and there was one quarrelsome old fellow who would go from place to place kicking others away until a bold young fellow smacked him in the ribs and put an end to his misbehavior. Then the mother zebras would take their turn, and after them came the youngsters. If a greedy youngster tried to drink ahead of its turn, its mother would give it a nip with her strong jaws and make it wait until she had finished.

When the drinking pool in Dry River dried up, the zebras left their Favorite Feeding Ground on Broad Plain and moved closer to Lazy River. Sometimes they traveled as much as ten miles each day for a drink. At night their keen noses would sometimes warn them that Leo the Lion was crouching near by. Then in terror they would race away, sometimes tearing down the settlers' fences and destroying their crops.

But at last refreshing rain had come to Broad Plain, and the zebras had returned to their Favorite Feeding Ground. Day and night you could hear their queer, dog-like, whining bark. Yes, the zebras were very noisy neighbors. It was no trouble at all for Leo the Lion to tell where they were, because wherever they went they kept up their whining call. One would almost have thought they were a pack of dogs.
Wild Animals of Africa

At noon the zebras usually rested in the shade of the acacia trees that grew thinly on their Favorite Feeding Grounds. But always Stripe kept a sharp watch for Lurking Enemies, and warned the others with a shrill neigh if danger approached.

Now zebra meat was just about Leo the Lion's Favorite Food, and the time he liked best to hunt for zebras was on a very dark night. So one evening when the Laughing Yellow Sun was bowing good night in the flaming west, and the long shadows were racing each other across Broad Plain, Leo left his secluded resting place in Little Thorn Thicket and started for the Favorite Feeding Ground of the zebras.

CHAPTER 6:
A Spotted Prowler

LEO the Lion sneaked quietly in the direction where he had last heard the zebras. Sometimes he would lie in wait for them at their drinking pool, but after the water holes were full he never knew which one they would drink from.

So he decided to stalk them and pounce upon one unawares, as the zebras never tried to defend themselves against Leo once they were caught; but they would fight off the cowardly hyena and the wild dog. A lion petrified them with fear.

Leo had grown to be an experienced hunter. He knew how to go about it to sneak up on his prey. Soon he drew near to the unsuspecting zebras. He was almost ready to pounce upon a young one, when he suddenly heard a hoarse cough in a mimosa tree near by.

Now it happened that Chui the Leopard had also decided he would catch a nice young zebra. So he was lying in wait on a high limb from which he could pounce down upon one when it came near. Of course the zebras were alarmed and ran wildly away when they heard Chui cough. It would be hard to say which of the big cats was the angrier. For
although Chui and Leo were near relatives, each hated the other fiercely. Leo would have liked nothing better than to have killed Chui, and Chui knew it quite well. So he lay on the high limb safe from Leo's sharp claws and strong teeth. For, you see, although leopards can climb trees, lions cannot.

After a while Leo became tired waiting for Chui to come down, so he slunk away, growling angrily as he went. Soon Chui heard him munching wild watermelons, which were plentiful after the refreshing rains came. And when Chui thought he could safely do so, he dropped from the high limb to the ground and bounded swiftly away.

Now Chui was more like a gangster than his big cousin Leo, except that almost always he lived alone. Sometimes he made his home in a cave or hole among rocks. Sometimes on hot days he hid in shady treetops, for he could run straight up a smooth-barked tree as nimbly as a monkey could. Sometimes he would lie basking in the sun on a rocky ledge, or would hide in a deep ravine. But always he was thinking about something which he could kill.

Chui liked to make raids against man, He would kill a flock of sheep or goats without eating one, merely to satisfy his bloodthirsty desires. He would murder calves, pigs, and chickens if he had a chance, but he especially liked dogs and baboons. Sometimes he would go right into a camp and steal a dog. After he was old and his teeth were too worn to catch other prey, he would sometimes kill women and children in broad daylight.

Usually when Chui killed an antelope or small zebra or other Wild Animal, he would first eat the heart and the liver. Then he would carry what was left and hang it in the fork of a tree where the cowardly hyenas could not reach it. When he was hungry, he would return for another feast, unless another leopard had found it. It made no difference to Chui the Leopard whether the meat was fresh or spoiled. But his Favorite Food was baboon.

Now Dog-Face the Baboon and his large tribe were near neighbors of the zebras. They lived on Rocky Slope, which was between Broad Plain and Grassy Valley, and in the bottom of Grassy Valley was Lazy River.

Sometimes the baboons went on long walks in search of Favorite Food where Broad Plain met Rocky Slope. There they often met the wart hogs and the yapping jackals and the vultures and other Wild Animals at the water holes. Sometimes they marched along with the oryxes or the zebras when they happened to be over near Rocky Slope.

One chilly morning the baboons sat on rocks on their Rocky Slope shivering until the Laughing Yellow Sun came up and warmed them. Then they started out in search of Favorite Food. First there was Dog-Face himself, who always acted as leader, for he was chief of the band. Then there followed the other fathers and mothers and boy baboons and girl baboons, for there were several large families. There were baby baboons riding
on their mothers' backs like little jockeys, or stretched out flat and clinging to their hair. At the rear followed a powerful father baboon to guard them from the back, for the baboons lived in continual fear of Chui the Leopard.

Always, whether the baboons were resting or whether they were looking for Favorite Food, you could see watchful sentries sitting on rocks or bushes or other high objects and keeping a sharp lookout for Lurking Enemies. No matter how tempting the food or how interesting the games that were played beneath them, they never dared to desert their post.

So the baboons walked slowly along, searching for almost anything that could be eaten. They would dig for roots, or gather seeds, or catch locusts and other creepy insects. Sometimes one would sit munching a lizard or a centipede or the young shoots or tender buds of trees, or chewing the gum that it found on the stems of the acacias. Another would pop a scorpion into his mouth after first pulling out its stinger. Always they were turning over rocks in search of worms and beetles; and if one found a rock too heavy for him, he called for his friends to help.

There was in the troop a sharp-eyed little fellow who had a crippled foot, and his mother called him something that sounded like Wahah. Because of his crippled foot, Wahah could not play King on His Throne with the other boy baboons when the troop stopped to rest.

It really was an exciting game. First one of them would sit on a large rock as if he were king. Then someone would push him over the side and sit there himself; and while the first one was trying to scramble back, over would go the second one and another would take his place. Thus the excitement grew more and more, while the gossiping mothers sat together on a rock watching the fun. Now and then, as the game grew rough, a little fellow would run whimpering to his mother to be picked up and cuddled.

Wahah sat watching the game for a while, and then his sharp little eyes saw something that the others had missed. It was a bush covered with juicy berries, which was peeping out from between two large rocks not far away. Soon Wahah was munching the juicy berries greedily, his hands and face stained until his own mother would scarcely know him.

Wahah should have been more careful with his eating, but the juicy berries tasted so good that he sat there smacking his lips and making quite a noise. It wasn't long until one of the boy baboons heard him and joined in the feast. Then came another and another and soon there was a wild scramble, which ended in an uproar.

Now, Dog-Face was not only the leader of the troop but also judge. When the boy baboons or the girl baboons, or both together, began squabbling and fighting among themselves, as they often did, Dog-Face would have to settle the argument.
Wild Animals of Africa

Dog-Face was sitting on a rock with his elbows on his knees, as if he were in deep meditation, when the fight for the juicy berries started. But it didn't take long for him to restore peace among the youngsters. He yanked one youngster out of the pile by its tail and shook him thoroughly; he nipped another on its exposed rear, and gave another a cuff that sent it rolling down the Rocky Slope. He pulled another's hair and sent the rest scurrying away to safety. Then he sat down by the bush and enjoyed the juicy berries himself.

Chui the Leopard was sneaking along among the rocks and the bushes when he heard the angry cries of the boy baboons as they fought for the juicy berries.

But soon there were piercing screams and barks from one of the watchful sentries. His sharp eyes had seen Chui the Leopard hurrying toward them among the rocks.

Chui knew very well that he was no match for Dog-Face's powerful jaws and great tusks, not to mention his strong arms, even if he were alone. When the other father baboons rushed at him, throwing sticks and stones, he was glad to leave, for, you see, the baboons understand well how to unite for defense and attack. So Chui the Leopard disappeared among the rocks, grumbling his disappointment as he went. Over in Lower Forest on Green Mountain, which rose on one side of Broad Plain, were many, many monkeys, and Chui told himself he would have better success hunting them.

CHAPTER 7:
A Night Raid

NOW, along Lazy River in Grassy Valley were native settlements, and the inhabitants had planted the fertile fields with many kinds of seeds. Dog-Face the Baboon dearly loved to
lead his troop from their Rocky Slope at night to plunder the gardens that grew along Lazy River.

There were fields of sugary sorghum, patches of sweet potatoes, delicious corn, luscious red tomatoes, golden yellow pumpkins, and many kinds of juicy fruit. It was all tempting indeed for Dog-Face and his troop.

So one evening about the time that Jura the Dove and his many friends were leaving the fields of sugar sorghum to find a roosting place for the night, Dog-Face the Baboon and his troop left their Rocky Slope and went garden raiding. For a while they walked slowly along Rocky Ravine, looking here and there for Favorite Food.

Because of his crippled foot, Wahah could not climb trees very well in search of round little eggs, of which the baboons were extremely fond. But then, at best, baboons were not expert climbers like their cousins the monkeys, and preferred to live on the ground. It was funny to see a mother baboon standing under a tree with outstretched arms, waiting for her baby to fall into them.

Soon the night became dark, for the Silvery Moon had not yet peeked over Green Mountain. The baboons marched along quietly. Sometimes a noisy youngster would be reminded to be silent by a sharp rap of its mother's fist. Near the gardens the troop waited while spies went in to see if they could discover any cunning traps or lurking danger. Then what a merry noise they all made when they heard that everything was safe for them to enter.

My, how hard it must have been for the watchful sentries to remain on guard while the other baboons stuffed their hungry stomachs with such tempting food! After their stomachs were filled they stuffed their large cheek pouches with the tempting food to carry home with them. They really were piggish. If they had not been frightened away, they would have filled their hands and arms to overflowing.

Suddenly one of the watchful sentries heard a soft noise over in the sweet potato patch. It sounded as if stealthy feet were approaching on the soft earth. The watchful sentry screamed a warning.

"Danger! Run! Hurry!" he shouted. "I hear a Lurking Enemy coming."

Away fled the noisy Baboons, dropping their booty as they went.

Now Rooter the Bush Pig had been sleeping during the day with her Striped Little Piglets in a hidden lair in a jungle thicket not far away. When the darkness of night came to Grassy Valley, Rooter crept out with her Striped Little Piglets in search of Favorite Food.

There was nothing she liked better than sweet potatoes. Rooter loved to poke her strong snout into the fertile soil and turn it upside down while she watched for crunchy sweet potatoes to roll out. That is what she was doing when the watchful sentry heard her and thought a Lurking Enemy was coming.
CHAPTER 8:
A River Monster

THERE lived in Lazy River a Lurking Enemy whom the baboons and all of the other Wild Animals greatly feared. He was Snapper the Crocodile. Snapper would lie hidden under the water near the bank, with only his eyes and nose showing, and when the baboons or some other Wild Animal came to Lazy River for a drink, snap! would go his powerful jaws like a huge trap. Yes, sir; almost everyone was afraid of Snapper the Crocodile. And, of course, Mrs. Crocodile was fully as bad.

In fact, the crocodiles were so bad that they would as soon eat each other if one of them were sick or crippled. They would fight each other fiercely.

If the natives came to Lazy River to bathe, or dip water, they had to keep a sharp lookout for crocodiles.

One day Snapper lay basking in the warm sunshine on Little Sandy Bank near the bank's edge, for Snapper was lazy. He really was hoping that some luckless creature would walk past thinking that he was asleep or that he was a log. Then Snapper could knock the animal into the water with a quick sweep of his powerful horny tail. But soon the Cheerful Little Sunbeams had warmed Snapper's back and he was sound asleep.

Now, Snapper liked very much to sleep with his mouth open. And what a terrible looking mouth it was! His teeth were long and sharp and not at all suitable for chewing. His throat was so small that he could swallow only tiny pieces of food. When he caught a large animal, he would bury it under water and leave it until it spoiled, so that he could tear off chunks small enough to swallow. And, strange to say, Snapper had no tongue,
but only a valvelike arrangement that slid back into his throat when his mouth was open.

One would think that such a horrible-appearing mouth would frighten everything away, but not so Zic-Zac. Zic-Zac is sometimes called the crocodile bird. No sooner had Snapper's mouth opened than in he flew and went to work. I suppose you might call him the crocodile's friend. If he was, he was the only one Snapper had. While he was hopping in and out and apparently cleaning Snapper's teeth, doubtless he was mostly looking for Favorite Food with which to fill his own stomach. And if Snapper closed his mouth while Zic-Zac was inside, Zic-Zac waited a minute or two until Snapper opened his huge jaws again, when out he hopped as unconcerned as you please and went on with his business.

While Snapper dozed, Mrs. Crocodile was attending to family duties on Big Sandy Bank farther up stream. You see, sometime back Mrs. Crocodile had crawled out on the warm sand near a spot where Tiny Brook joined Lazy River. There she had wallowed in the sand until she had made a hole about two feet deep, and along the edges of it she had laid three or four dozen white hard-shelled eggs, which she kept covered with sand on which she slept.

The warm sand helped them to hatch, and it also hid them from Lurking Enemies. Monitor the Lizard, who is about six feet long, liked nothing better than to dig them out, if he could find them, and carry them off for a banquet while Mrs. Crocodile was away. Yet, strange to say, Mrs. Lizard had laid her own eggs in the sand where they could be stolen. One would think that Monitor would have told her not to do that.

One day while Snapper was taking life easy on Little Sandy Bank, Mrs. Crocodile was busy digging out her eggs. You see, when the baby crocodiles were ready to leave the eggs, they began to cry, and although they were two feet under the sand, Mrs. Crocodile heard them. She could also notice vibrations long distances when she was under water, for her ears had movable covers that protected the inside by holding the water out.

When the eggs had been exposed to air, the baby crocodiles set to work to free themselves. The Creator had given them a tool for doing this. It was a special tooth with which they could break the hard shell.

When all of them were ready, Mrs. Crocodile led them to Tiny Brook, where they could hide. For in Lazy River were many Lurking Enemies of baby crocodiles.

Now, the crocodiles had a near neighbor named Fatty the Hippopotamus, with whom they seemed to get along fairly well. Perhaps it was because the crocodiles had been taught a lesson and had learned to respect him. Then again, it may have been because the neighbor was so good-natured. He was well able to take care of himself, for among all the four-footed beasts only Longnose the Elephant is larger.
Wild Animals of Africa

Fatty the Hippo and his friends lived in Quiet Pool that Lazy River made where it spread out in a certain place on low ground. Quiet Pool looked almost like a little lake growing on the side of Lazy River. On one side of it was Shady Bank, where many vine-covered trees grew, where Darter the Snake Bird built her nest, and where she could be seen sitting in the trees when she was not fishing.

On the other side of Quiet Pool was Papyrus Swamp, where the graceful papyrus grew thick and tall, and where Fatty the Hippo and his friends had made shady tunnels through the dense growth in which they could hide and rest when Terror the Hunter sought them.

Fatty spent most of his time in the water. Sometimes he would lie long hours beneath the water with only his eyes and nostrils above, and even they were hidden beneath sheltering water plants. You could have passed close by without seeing him. If there were no Lurking Enemies to bother him, Fatty would sometimes bask in the warm sunshine on Sandy Bar that had formed in the middle of Lazy River. In winter, when the water was cold, he might rest on Shady Bank, but he always lay facing Lazy River so that he could quickly plump in if Terror the Hunter came by.

Fatty the Hippo had a tremendous appetite, and he had great fun splashing and wading among the colorful water lilies. He especially liked lotus and papyrus and other water plants. He could explore along on the bottom of Quiet Pool or Lazy River for five minutes at a stretch; and if he was escaping from Lurking Enemies, he could run swiftly along out of sight beneath the water for twice that time. He could close his ears and nostrils to keep out the water whenever he chose to do so.

Sometimes when the settlers did not build a fence to keep him out, Fatty would leave Quiet Pool at night and go exploring in the fertile fields. There he would eat huge amounts of sugar cane and millet and corn, and he tramped down and destroyed much more besides. Of course some of the other hippos that lived in Quiet Pool went along, and there they would sometimes meet their cousins the bush pigs.

"I believe that I'll go out on Grassy Valley," said Fatty the Hippo to his friends one cloudy night.

So about an hour after the Laughing Yellow Sun had set, he climbed the bank that led up from Quiet Pool and started for Grassy Valley.

Fatty walked along in one of his old trails, and an unusual trail it was indeed. It really looked like two paths with a grassy ridge between, somewhat like the ones wagons make when they are hauled across a prairie. You see, Fatty was so broad and his legs were so far apart that the two legs on one side made a separate path from the one made by the two legs on the other side. So wherever he left Lazy River or Quiet Pool he made a double trail as he went along.
Of course, Fatty had no trouble following his old trail as far as it went. When he was in Quiet Pool or Lazy River he often spent the night bellowing and roaring and fighting with the other hippopotamuses, but when he went to Grassy Valley he was always quiet.

There was one thing that often showed where Fatty had spent the night. You see, when Fatty left Quiet Pool or Lazy River there would often be water plants clinging to his broad back, and these would drop off along the way. So if you were to see these water plants withering in the hot sun far from Lazy River some morning, you would know that Fatty had been there during the night.

Fatty followed the old trail as far as it went, but at last it came to an end. Then he grazed around wherever he could find his Favorite Food. He had often done that before. He expected that his keen nose would guide him back over his tracks to the old trail when he was ready to go home, so that he could easily follow the trail back to Quiet Pool.

Suddenly there was a blinding flash of lightning, and the ground trembled with the crash and the rumble of thunder. The rain poured down on Fatty's broad back, and the leeches that were clinging to his more tender parts and sucking blood wriggled joyfully, for leeches cannot live long out of water, but die when their skin becomes dry.

When the fierce storm had passed, all of the Revealing Scent had been washed away, and there was Fatty not knowing which way to go to find his old trail.

"Now what shall I do?" said Fatty to himself, as he sniffed here and there.

Fatty feared that he might be seen by Terror the Hunter when daylight came if he had to stay in Grassy Valley; and once he had seen Leo the Lion pounce upon one of his friends. But search as best he could, somehow Fatty could not find his old trail.

At last he discovered a muddy pool large enough for him to hide in. He found it none too soon, for already the eastern sky was glowing red, announcing a new day.

Fatty was glad when some of the other hippopotamuses came out to Grassy Valley the next night, for then he could follow their Revealing Scent back to the old trail that led to Lazy River and Quiet Pool.

Now Mrs. Hippo had lived pretty much alone for a while in Little Lagoon, that lay hidden from Quiet Pool by a dense growth of graceful papyrus. That is, she was alone except for her Baby Pudge and the herons and cormorants and kingfishers and water turtles and other Wild Creatures.

You see, Mrs. Hippo was afraid that Fatty might fly into a rage and kill Baby Pudge, for Fatty and the other bull hippos often showed a mean temper, fighting and roaring at night. Then there was Snapper the Crocodile, who never could be trusted.
So Mrs. Hippo had put Baby Pudge in Little Lagoon, where he would be safe until he could grow awhile. She lay in the narrow waterway that led from Quiet Pool to Little Lagoon, so that Snapper the Crocodile or the boat of Fearful the Man could not enter.

Then one day, when Baby Pudge was large enough, he crawled up on his mother's neck, and she carried him out to Quiet Pool. And wherever Mrs. Hippo went, Baby Pudge rode on her neck until he was large enough to take care of himself.

Of course Mrs. Hippo could not stay underwater so long when he was riding, for Baby Pudge had to breathe more often than she did. And the first thing you would have seen, if you had been watching when they came up, would have been Baby Pudge's little head. If you could have seen him when he was a little larger, doubtless he would have been enjoying a game of Snort and Blow with other baby hippos as they spouted little streams of water from their noses.

CHAPTER 9:
Papyrus Swamp

SNAPPER the Crocodile was hungry. He had waited a long time on Sandy Bank for some creature to walk past so that he could knock it into Lazy River with a swing of his powerful tail. But most of the Wild Animals were wise to his trick. When they saw him lying on Sandy Bank, they knew that most likely he was only pretending to be asleep. So they didn't go near.
At last Snapper decided he would try something else. "I believe I'll go over to Papyrus Swamp and see if I can catch a buffalo," he said to himself. So he waddled down Sandy Bank and slid into the water.

You see, Fatty the Hippo and Snapper the Crocodile had a near neighbor called Blackie the Buffalo. He lived in Papyrus Swamp that lay along Lazy River on one edge of Fatty's Quiet Pool. Blackie the Buffalo had a mean temper. Terror the Hunter sometimes said that Blackie was more dangerous than either Leo the Lion or Longnose the Elephant.

Blackie the Buffalo stayed in Papyrus Swamp when he wanted to be safe from Terror the Hunter and Leo the Lion, who were his worst enemies. But he also greatly feared Snapper the Crocodile. He had about sixty friends with him, and they had made many, many winding trails through the tall, graceful papyrus. Of course these winding trails were mostly mud and water, but Blackie did not mind living in slimy ooze three feet deep. His winding trails were really like lanes, with the large green stalks of graceful papyrus crisscrossed over them. No one except a powerful beast like Blackie could have forced his way through them.

Now some of Blackie's winding trails led to Lazy River, and some of them came out on Grassy Valley. Although there were in Papyrus Swamp many dry islands where Blackie could go to lie down when he wanted to rest, there was almost nothing on them for him to eat. So when he was hungry he had to go out on Grassy Valley for Favorite Food. If Terror the Hunter was around, Blackie usually rested in Papyrus Swamp during the day and went to Grassy Valley for Favorite Food during the night. But if Terror did not bother him, Blackie went to Grassy Valley almost any time. When there was water to drink, some of Blackie's friends lived on Broad Plain, and some in Lower Forest on Green Mountain. But wherever they were, the buffaloes were never so far from water that they could not get a drink every day. So Blackie and his friends had made winding trails whenever they went to Lazy River to drink.

Snapper the Crocodile swam slowly down Lazy River until he reached Papyrus Swamp. Snapper never seemed to be in much of a hurry. He wriggled slowly through the ooze and tall grass that grew along the edge of Lazy River where it joined Papyrus Swamp.

At last Snapper came to one of Blackie the Buffalo's trails that entered Lazy River. Snapper let his long body sink slowly out of sight in the water. He wriggled and twisted until he was covered with mud and trash. He left only his eyes and nose above water, and they were mostly covered with broken papyrus. There he lay waiting for Blackie and his friends to come for a drink.

Of course Blackie was too large for Snapper to kill in the usual way, but Snapper could grab the strongest buffalo by the nose and pull it under the water to drown. Then he would have to wait for it to spoil before he could eat it.
So whenever the buffaloes went to Lazy River for a drink, they had to be watchful for Snapper the Crocodile. And so it was that when Blackie went to Lazy River for a drink that evening, before starting out for Grassy Valley, there was Snapper the Crocodile hiding, waiting for him.

Now, Blackie had a very good friend. He was Snowy the Cow Heron. Like Mary and her little lamb, everywhere that Blackie went Snowy was sure to go. He went along with Blackie so that he could eat the grasshoppers and other troublesome insects that Blackie scared up as he walked through the grass. If you saw Snowy the Cow Heron and his friends flying around over a certain spot, you could be quite certain that the buffaloes were there. Sometimes Snowy rode on Blackie's broad back as he walked through the tall grass. So it happened that when Blackie came to Little River for a drink, there was Snowy riding along and waiting to snatch any troublesome insects he might see.

Slosh, slosh, went Blackie's big feet as he walked along in the oozy trail. Crack! went the papyrus stalks that were in his way. And Snapper the Crocodile's sharp ears caught the vibrations as Blackie came near.

Blackie stopped near the river's edge and looked carefully at everything. He always did that before he went near enough to drink. He took another step nearer. Then he decided everything was all right.

Suddenly a troublesome insect lighted on what seemed to be an old stub that showed just above the water. In a flash Snowy the Cow Heron darted for it from his perch on Blackie's back. Then his sharp eyes saw the old stub move just the least bit and he caught the glint of Snapper the Crocodile's eyes.

Snowy the Cow Heron sailed right on past and circled overhead.

"Beware! Beware!" he warned, "I see Snapper the Crocodile."

Away ran Blackie to look for a safer place to drink.
CHAPTER 10:  
Fire in Papyrus Swamp

THERE lived in Papyrus Swamp, near Blackie the Buffalo, one of the antelopes by the name of Chobe the Sitatunga. And although there were in Africa about ninety different kinds of antelopes, Chobe the Sitatunga loved water the most of all. Instead of living with a large herd, as some antelopes did, Chobe did not care for much company. He and Mrs. Sitatunga lived by themselves in Papyrus Swamp, and they liked the water so well that they never left it except at night when they went to Little Meadows, that lay around the edge of Papyrus Swamp, in search of Favorite Food.

Yes, sir; the sitatungas surely did love water. They felt safe from Lurking Enemies while they were in the water among the tall reeds. During the day when they were hiding or sleeping, sometimes little more than their noses showed above the water. The truth is, the sitatungas had lived so long in the water and ooze where there was nothing to wear down their hoofs, that their toenails had grown very long. Because of this they were slow and clumsy when they tried to run on dry land. But their toes spread out in the muddy swamp so that they could run with ease where other animals would have sunk down. The sitatungas thought nothing of living in water that would have been waist deep on Fearful the Man; and when the water was too deep for them to wade, they often swam.

So you see that even though the sitatungas were exceedingly shy they felt quite safe in their home in Papyrus Swamp. They had made well-worn winding trails through the tall reeds through which they could sneak silently from place to place as they ate the young shoots of the papyrus and the leaves of water plants.
Wild Animals of Africa

But it seemed that no one was safe when Black Hunter was around, for one day a band of natives came paddling down Lazy River in their clumsy canoes. They were armed with sharp spears, and some of them held pots in which they carried fire. While some of the natives waited in their canoes in open channels in Lazy River, others went about setting fire to the dry grass around the edge of Papyrus Swamp. There had been no rain in many months, and much of Papyrus Swamp had dried up except the part nearest to Lazy River.

Soon the fire was racing along through the dry marsh grass. Closer and closer it came to the situtungas. Back and forth they ran along their paths through the tall papyrus. But each time they ran into a wall of fire that crackled and leaped and frightened them farther back into Papyrus Swamp. At last they came to the open channels that lay between Papyrus Swamp and the islands in Lazy River.

Mrs. Sitatunga was running wildly ahead of Chobe, when she came to the first channel. And there she saw the natives waiting in their canoes with their sharp spears.

"Now what shall we do?" she asked Chobe, as he dashed out of the tall papyrus behind her. "If we stay here, we will be burned; and if we try to cross, they will surely kill us."

Chobe ran along the edge of the channel, hoping that he could find a shallow place to cross where the canoes could not follow. But he soon saw other canoes blocking his way. Back he went the other way, with the odor of smoke hot in his nostrils. But again he saw sharp spears glistening in the sunlight. There were pieces of burning grass dropping around Chobe as he raced back to Mrs. Sitatunga.

Suddenly they heard a loud, angry grunt, and there was a terrific splashing in the water near them. You see, Fatty the Hippo had been enjoying a sound sleep in the water with only his nose sticking out, when a piece of burning papyrus landed right by his huge nostrils and went out with a loud hiss. And when Fatty opened his eyes the first thing he saw was a canoe filled with Lurking Enemies.

Now it may have been that Fatty was badly frightened by the odor of hot smoke, and then again it may have been that he was furious because his nose was singed. He sank out of sight beneath the water and ran along on the bed of the channel until he was under a canoe. Fatty came up with a rush that knocked the canoe out of the water and sent the natives tumbling headlong into Lazy River. Then he made for another canoe not far away. There certainly was great confusion among the natives.

"Let us hurry across," said Chobe, as he plunged into the water. Swiftly they swam past the natives that were struggling and Mrs. Satunga climbed canoe. Soon Chobe out of the water and disappeared among the tall papyrus that was growing on a large island in Lazy River.
CHAPTER 11:
The Adventure of Albo the Waterbuck

MRS. WATERBUCK was proud and happy. She lived with a company of waterbucks that hid during the day among the trees and bushes that grew in a thin belt along a certain stretch of Lazy River that was known as Brushy Flat. Usually during the morning and evening they wandered out on Grassy Valley a mile or two after tender grass shoots, where they often saw the zebras and the hartebeests. But the waterbucks never wandered far from water. For whenever Terror the Hunter or some other Lurking Enemy frightened them, they always ran toward water for protection.

But I haven't told you why Mrs. Waterbuck was so proud and happy. You see, the mother waterbucks lived in a band with their baby waterbucks most of the time, and the father waterbucks went off and lived together somewhere, and some of the old father waterbucks lived alone. Of course you might see one or two of the father waterbucks with the mother waterbucks any time, but they didn't spend much time caring for their families. So it fell to the lot of a wise old mother waterbuck to be the leader of the herd.

One day Mrs. Waterbuck left the others and stole quietly away to a secluded nook. When, after a few days, she started back to the herd, she was proud and happy, for snuggled close to Mrs. Waterbuck's side, and walking along on its rather wobbly legs was a baby waterbuck. And, strange as it may seem, the baby waterbuck was white.

Now the waterbucks usually wear a drab suit with a white patch on the rump and another on the throat. But here was a baby that was all white. No wonder Mrs. Waterbuck was proud of her little sprite, which she had named Albo.
But there was one thing that worried Mrs. Waterbuck. She knew that when she stole through the trees and bushes along Lazy River in her drab coat it was hard for Lurking Enemies to see her. But anyone could plainly see Albo in his white coat, especially at night. So she tried to be very watchful. She sniffed this way and that to see if the Playful Air Whiffs carried a warning message, and she peered carefully at every unusual-appearing object.

"Why are you so fearful, Mother?" asked Albo, one stormy night.

"Because Leo the Lion and his clan like to go prowling on nights such as this," replied Mrs. Waterbuck. "You must learn to be very shrewd, for your white coat can be seen much more readily than mine."

So Albo learned to be cautious and watchful. Sometimes the waterbucks swam across Lazy River and visited the steep, rocky hills on the opposite bank. It is strange, but they did not seem to fear Snapper the Crocodile. Albo especially liked to explore the islands that lay in Lazy River, for he felt secure while there.

While Albo was small, he depended upon his mother for protection. It was she who always gave the warning when Lurking Enemies were near. Then away they would all speed toward Lazy River, the mother waterbucks leading and the father waterbucks following, if they were with the herd. It was she who taught Albo to sneak along beneath her own drab-colored body so that his bright coat would not be seen. And she taught him to stay within the group of the feeding or resting waterbucks so that others less easily seen on the outside of the herd might act as sentinels.

So Albo grew to be very wise. His eyes appeared to be sharper than those of the other waterbucks. His nose seemed to be keener, and none of them had better ears; for Albo could not depend upon the color of his coat to hide him.

One morning Terror the Hunter sat on a high rock while he looked out across Grassy Valley through his powerful binoculars. For a time he watched the zebras and the hartebeests feeding quietly together. He could see some of the young ones chasing each other and frisking in and out among the older ones. Through his glasses they seemed to be quite close.

Terror the Hunter was not looking for such common game as zebras and hartebeests. He turned his glasses toward Brushy Flat, that grew along Lazy River. The waterbucks were coming out to Grassy Valley for their breakfast. Suddenly Terror the Hunter became very much excited. He beckoned to his companion who was resting at the foot of the rock.

"Take a look at those waterbucks just leaving Brushy Flat," he said, as he passed the glasses to his companion.

The man peered at the spot pointed out to him. "There's an albino among them, as sure as I'm alive," he exclaimed, "and what a beauty!"
"We'll have to get that fellow," said Terror the Hunter.

And there was Albo with his white coat shining in the morning sun, not knowing that prying eyes had seen him from afar.

An hour later Terror the Hunter crawled up the side of a small ravine, down which he had walked, and peeped cautiously over the rim. He had been careful to choose a position so that the Playful Air Whiffs would carry his Revealing Scent away from the waterbucks. He had entwined grass around his hat and had cut a small bush to hold in front of him through which to peep, so that the sharpest eye would think he was only a bush moved by the morning breeze.

Albo the Waterbuck looked beautiful to Terror the Hunter. Terror saw him crop a mouthful of grass and then stand chewing it while his sharp eyes peered about and his keen nose sniffed for Lurking Enemies. As usual, he was in the midst of the herd, and Terror the Hunter could not approach for a closer shot without alarming the waterbucks between him and Albo.

Terror the Hunter was quite nervous. So he stretched out and supported his rifle by resting his elbow on the ground. He adjusted the sights for the distance his experienced eye told him was right. He wanted to be sure that he did not miss. What if the waterbucks should discover him before he was ready? His hand trembled with excitement when he thought of losing such a prize. It was some time before he could quiet himself enough to risk a shot.

Then Terror the Hunter did a strange thing. He laid down his heavy rifle and from a black case on his belt he removed a camera. Quietly he opened it and set the focus and the shutter. When all was ready, he waited until Albo raised his head for another look.

There was a sharp click as the shutter opened and closed. It was not very loud, but it was loud enough for Albo's listening ears to catch. Away raced the waterbucks toward their haven in Brushy Flat along Lazy River.

"What went wrong?" asked Terror's companion, when he came out of his place of hiding in the little ravine.

"Not a thing," replied Terror the Hunter. "The conditions were perfect for shot with this," and he held up his camera. "And I would rather have a picture of a live albino waterbuck to keep for my friends to enjoy than a dead one that only you and I would see."

This proves that there is some good in everyone.
CHAPTER 12:
The World's Swiftest Mammal

CHASER the Cheetah sat on Rocky Crag looking out across Grassy Valley. It was early morning, and Chaser was very hungry. He hoped that he would see something that would be a good breakfast. His Favorite Food was antelope, but he often attacked many of the larger Wild Animals that were but half grown.

Chaser had been resting in Little Jungle Thicket most of the night. Sometimes he hid in the tall grass. He did most of his hunting during the day, and he liked open ground where there was nothing to interfere with his running. For, you see, Chaser was the swiftest mammal in the whole wide world, for a short distance. And because the cheetahs are so swift and are easily tamed they are sometimes kept as pets and trained to hunt for their masters.

At first glance you could easily have thought that Chaser the Cheetah was Chui the Leopard as he sat on Rocky Crag looking out across Grassy Valley. He was about the same size as his cousin Chui, and his coat was much the same. But if you were near enough to him, you would see that his feet were quite different from Chui's. For while Chui has softly padded feet and claws that can be hidden like hunting cat's, Chaser's feet and claws are like those of Rover the Dog. While Chui hunts his prey by sneaking up close and pouncing upon it, or by dropping down from a high limb, Chaser catches his prey by outrunning it. He can no more climb a tree than can Rover the Dog.

Now, there lived near Lazy River on Grassy Valley a beautiful and graceful antelope by the name of Jumper the Pallah. Jumper had a large family, because he had fought fiercely with the other grown buck pallahs and had driven them away. There were a dozen or more of them, and they had gone away to live by themselves. But the does had remained with Jumper; so Jumper was master of a large family.

Jumper the Pallah and his family really lived in Brushy Flat, where also lived the waterbucks. Like the waterbucks, in the early morning and late evening the pallahs left Brushy Flat and went out a short way on Grassy Valley for their Favorite Food. They were never more than a mile or so from Lazy River, for they liked a cool drink often.
Their drinking pool was a shallow spot on Shady Bank where vine-covered trees grew along Lazy River. There they could watch out for Snapper the Crocodile, for he had not such a good place to hide.

Sometimes the baboons passed Brushy Flat on one of their raids, and sometimes the pallahs fed close to the waterbucks and the zebras and the gazelles and the hartebeests in Grassy Valley. So, you see, jumper and his family had many friendly neighbors.

Jumper's Favorite Food was tender grass shoots. He especially liked those that grew in the little low places where water kept the grass fresh and sweet. When Chaser the Cheetah looked down from his Rocky Crag, there were jumper the Pallah and his large family in the edge of Brushy Flat on their way to Grassy Valley for an early breakfast. It was easy for Chaser to see Jumper, for his bright red and white coat shone in the morning light.

Chaser could also see the young pallahs. They were playing a game of Jump and Bound. They would spring over very high bushes, as high as the ceiling of your home, and sometimes they would jump over each other. They certainly were having a grand time as Chaser left Rocky Crag and started down Sandy Ravine toward them.

Now Black Hunter knew that jumper the Pallah was very fond of tender grass shoots. So, when the grass was dry, he would burn little patches; for he knew that when the refreshing rain came the tender grass shoots would show first where he had burned and that Jumper would be tempted to visit these places.

So it happened that when Chaser the Cheetah walked down Sandy Ravine toward Jumper the Pallah and his family, he came face to face with Black Hunter, for Black Hunter was hidden in Sandy Ravine near one of his burned patches waiting for Jumper to come and eat the tender grass shoots.

You may be sure that Chaser the Cheetah was surprised, and that Black Hunter was, too. It was a lucky thing for jumper and his family; for although Jumper is the fleetest of the antelopes, still he is no match for Chaser. You should have seen the pallahs as they bounded for safety toward the seclusion of Brushy Flat, sailing gracefully over the tall bushes that were in their way! And away went Chaser across Grassy Valley as fast as his swiftly moving feet could carry him.
CHAPTER 13:  
A Race on Broad Plain

WILDEBEEST the Gnu was one of the strangest-looking creatures on Broad Plain. His head and feet were like an ox's, but he had a long mane and a long flowing tail like a horse's. Each knee had a large bare callus on it that was caused by his resting on them when he was fighting, for the bull gnus fought each other desperately.

Wildebeest lived on Broad Plain, where there were no hills and no bushes. He wanted to be where he could see long distances and keep a sharp watch for his most dreaded enemy, Leo the Lion. During the day he paid little attention to Leo, and Leo did not seem to molest Wildebeest, even though they were within plain sight of each other. It was at night that Leo became very savage, for night was his regular hunting time.

Wildebeest the Gnu lived with a large herd, and the gnus were seldom alone. Usually there were some zebras or hartebeests grazing near by, and often the gazelles would visit them also. Each morning or afternoon the gnus would go for a drink. They were afraid to go at night, for they feared that Leo the Lion would be waiting at the water hole to pounce on them. If the zebras or the hartebeests were with them when they went to the water hole, the gnus would let their neighbors drink first, but it was not because they were polite. They waited to see if there were any Lurking Enemies at the water hole before they came near.

Sometimes when the weather was very dry they would have to go a dozen miles to a water hole each day. If it was dry for a long time, they would leave Broad Plain and join many, many other herds of gnus on their journey to some other place where there was water.
Wild Animals of Africa

Now there lived on Broad Plain many bold, fierce killers called hunting dogs. They were the largest of the dog family that lived in Africa.

They had cozy dens that were connected by tunnels, but it seemed as if the hunting dogs were seldom home. About the only time they needed a home was when their furry babies were tiny.

The hunting dogs wandered about on Broad Plain during the day, but they did most of their hunting at night. They traveled in large packs, sometimes as many as fifty hunting together. If some of them were chasing their prey and became tired, others would take up the pursuit. They were not much afraid of Fearful the Man, and sometimes they would kill large numbers of his sheep and goats merely for the fun of killing.

Early one evening the hunting dogs gathered in a large pack and started out across Broad Plain in search of something to kill. At last they came to a small hill from which they could see a long way. There in the distance were Wildebeest the Gnu and his many friends, and beyond them were the gazelles.

The gnus had returned from their afternoon drink and were eating their supper. Now and then one of them would playfully toss up dust with his horns, and they often shook their heads because of the crawly maggots that lived in their noses. They were almost as noisy as the zebras with their queer grunts.

The hunting dogs could see Tommy the Gazelle violently switching his tail, as was his habit, for the gazelles seemed to move their tails continually. And near by they could see Tommy's cousins, the Grant's gazelles, which are larger than Tommy. The gazelles were friendly toward each other and often grazed together as if they were one family.

Now the hunting dogs really wanted the gazelles. But when Wildebeest the Gnu and his family saw the hunting dogs, they began to prance and rollick and perform strange capers as they always did when they were making up their minds to flee. When the gazelles saw such actions, they knew that a Lurking Enemy was near.

Away raced the gazelles across Broad Plain, the mothers and their fleet babies ahead and the father gazelles following behind. And away went the gnus, bucking and running around each other as if they were enjoying themselves greatly. Then they really hit out across Broad Plain in earnest, with the hunting dogs hot on their heels. The hunting dogs thought they might catch some baby gnus. But the gnus were about the swiftest antelope on Broad Plain, for a long distance.

Suddenly there was a loud bang! -and another, and another. One of the hunting dogs lay still on the ground.

You see, Fearful the Man owned a flock of woolly sheep that he kept at his home near Lazy River. Sometimes he permitted the woolly sheep to go out on Grassy Valley when the grass became short near home. Of course he tried to watch them carefully, but the
hunting dogs were not much afraid of him, and he had decided to teach them a lesson. That morning he had taken his rifle and had ridden out across Grassy Valley toward Broad Plain, where he knew the hunting dogs stayed most of the time. That was how it happened that when the hunting dogs came racing along after the gnus, Fearful the Man was hiding there to surprise them. Bang! Bang! Bang! went his rifle. Boom! Boom
You may be sure the hunting dogs knew what that meant. Those that were able lost no time turning around and racing back again across Broad Plain toward a safe retreat.

CHAPTER 14:
A Strange Friendship

KONGONI the Hartebeest was about the ugliest-looking of all the antelopes, unless it was Wildebeest the Gnu. Kongoni had a funny, long face, long ears, and a sort of topknot from which his horns grew. His shoulders were high and his hips low. Nevertheless, he was the swiftest and most tireless of the antelopes. There are those who say Kongoni can outrun Wildebeest the Gnu, who is also very swift, but probably they never ran a race. Kongoni could keep up with the older ones when he was still very young, and when grown could easily bound over anyone who might be in his way.

Kongoni was called the policeman of Broad Plain because he liked to stand on an anthill and watch for Lurking Enemies. He acted as a sentinel for other animals besides the hartebeests; and if danger threatened, he would whistle a shrill warning to everyone.
You see, the hartebeests were very friendly with their neighbors. They often visited with the ostriches, the gnus, and the gazelles; but they especially liked the zebras. The hartebeests and the zebras were seldom far apart. Although the zebras were noisy, the hartebeests had little to say. Sometimes they made a noise that sounded as if they had caught cold and were sneezing.

Kongoni was the leader of a large band. There were mothers and little calves, big brothers and sisters, and aunts and uncles and cousins; but Kongoni was really the boss. He frequently had terrible fights with others that wanted to be boss. In the morning or afternoon, or sometimes at night, he would go with the other hartebeests for a drink, for they never lived far from water. When the biting flies or botflies or other troublesome insects were bothering them, the hartebeests would go to their Stamping Ground, where they would roll in the dust and kick up clouds of it. There was a rock close by where they could scratch their sides and neck. The Stamping Ground had been an old anthill, which the hartebeests had knocked down and trampled into dust.

One day Kongoni saw another hartebeest practicing fighting. He would fall on his knees and butt and horn the ground until his face, horns, and knees were covered with the red earth. That made Kongoni angry. No doubt he thought the young bull was challenging him to fight. He ran and dropped on his knees in front of the other. They watched each other with flashing eyes. Suddenly they sprang forward, and their heads came together with a crash.

Now Kongoni was not so young anymore. He had led his herd on Broad Plain a long time, and his keen eyes had watched for Lurking Enemies while the others enjoyed the tender grass shoots or rested during the heat of the day. His sides and neck carried many scars where the sharp horns of his challengers had raked him.

Kongoni was surprised at the strength of the Young Bull. When their heads crashed together he was knocked almost off his feet. And before he could recover his balance he felt a painful jab in his side that knocked him flat. Kongoni was no match for the Young Bull. As soon as he could get up, he ran from the herd he had so long watched over and headed out across Broad Plain in search of a new place to live. That is how a very strange friendship began.

You see, Kongoni thought he might find other old leaders who, like himself, had been driven from their herds. Sometimes the old leaders formed a band and lived together. Then again, some of them chose to live alone. But before Kongoni found any of them, whom should he meet but Grumpy the Rhinoceros.

Now, you may think it unusual that a hartebeest and a rhinoceros would become friends, and so it would seem, but if you were to visit Broad Plain and Big jungle you would see other strange friendships among the Wild Animals. You might find an old
zebra and an oryx, who were partners, or an elephant and a buffalo, or a wildebeest with a herd of gazelles.

It was quite natural for Kongoni to stop when he came to Grumpy the Rhino. Kongoni was sore and tired from his fight and journey; and since he was dejected because of his defeat, he was glad for company.

Grumpy the Rhino was taking a rest when Kongoni arrived. His front legs were folded backward beneath him, as if they had given way under his great weight; and he appeared to have sagged down on his knees with his hind legs straight. His huge body was plastered with dried mud, so that from a distance he reminded one of a large fallen-down anthill.

You see, Grumpy had a Favorite Water Hole where he went each night for a drink. Toward evening he would feed along his own private path that led to his Favorite Water Hole, and after drinking he would enjoy a roll in the mud. Usually there were other rhinos who came there for a drink, each along his own path, and there was likely to be a fight. Sometimes Grumpy would have to travel as much as ten miles or more from his home to his Favorite Water Hole.

Every night after he had drunk and had enjoyed his mud bath, Grumpy would start back toward his Favorite Feeding Place. There he would eat a large supper of tender grass shoots or acacia twigs or juicy aloes or other favorite food. It really was Grumpy's supper, although he finished it in the morning. Grumpy did his running about at night and slept most of the day. He was fast asleep when Kongoni the Hartebeest came along.

You see, Grumpy was sound asleep, and he is about the soundest sleeper you could find. If you were careful, you could walk right up to him when he was asleep. That is, you could if Redbill the Tickbird did not awaken him with his loud chatter.

You see, besides having the most grouchy expression of all the Jungle Beasts, Grumpy looked as if he were wearing clothes that were too large for him. His skin was wrinkled and creased, and in these folds was a good place for plump ticks to hide. So while Grumpy slept, Redbill the Tickbird acted as sentinel and spent his time searching for these troublesome pests.

Redbill did not intend to frighten Grumpy, but when Kongoni came up he made a great chatter and fuss. He knew that Kongoni was not a Lurking Enemy, for he had seen him many times. But that is the way with Redbill; he thinks he has to make a fuss when he is disturbed.

Now Grumpy is the most stupid of all the big Wild Animals. His eyes are so poor that he can scarcely recognize his own friends fifty yards away. And to make matters worse, he has two horns growing on the top of his nose and sticking up in front of his eyes. But he does have a keen nose. Before he takes a rest, he sometimes turns back along his trail.
and lies down on the side toward which the wind is blowing. Then the Playful Air Whiffs will warn him if a Lurking Enemy is following his trail.

Grumpy was not in the least afraid of Leo the Lion. That is, he was not afraid of Leo after he was grown. But his thick hide would be the best kind ever for making shields; so he had to watch out for Black Hunter. That was why he was so frightened when Redbill the Tickbird began his loud chatter.

It was a wonder that Grumpy did not charge right at Kongoni the Hartebeest, for that would have been like him. He seldom stopped to think. If his keen nose caught a strange odor, he would probably charge straight for it without waiting to investigate. After he and Kongoni became friends he could trust Kongoni's sharp eyes to watch out for Black Hunter; and Kongoni was glad to do so, because, as I have said, he was used to acting as sentinel for all the Wild Animals around him.

Of course there were many times when Grumpy and Kongoni were not together. If Grumpy got too hot, he would go for a mud bath. You could see where he rubbed mud against the trees near by when he came out.

Now I suppose you will be wondering why Grumpy lived alone most of the time. The truth was, Grumpy and Mrs. Rhino both had mean dispositions; and before Baby Rhino was born, Mrs. Rhino had made a Hidden Lair of her own. It was not much of a home, only a shallow hole which Mrs. Rhino had pawed out under a thorny bush. Grumpy had come around sometimes at night to see how things were going, but Mrs. Rhino was not very friendly to him.

After Baby Rhino was large enough to follow Mrs. Rhino, which was soon, Grumpy often saw them at the Favorite Water Hole. There the baby rhinos would play Frisk and Chase while they puffed and squealed, and the old rhinos argued over the water and prodded each other with their horns. It was no wonder that Grumpy was glad to return to Kongoni, with whom he could live in peace and quietness.

Although Mrs. Rhino and Baby Rhino lived not far away, Grumpy did not stay with them much. Sometimes they would meet while searching for Favorite Food, and although Baby Rhino grew to be half as large as his mother and was several years old, still he stayed with her until another baby rhino was born. Then big Baby Rhino had to go off and live alone most of the time, even as Grumpy did.

The rhinoceroses certainly were a grouchy family. It was strange that Grumpy and Kongoni could be such good companions.
CHAPTER 15:
A Fight in the Forest

KUNGU the Bushbuck was a near relative of the sitatungas who lived in Papyrus Swamp. But you never could be sure where you would find Kungu. He might be on the high, wet, cold mountain, or on the hot, dry, low country; or he might make his home where the ground was wet and marshy and even covered with water, where grass and reeds and bushes grew. Then again, Kungu sometimes chose for his home a belt of timber along a stream, or he might be found in a big reed bed where the reedbuck lived.

Although you could not be sure where you would find Kungu the Bushbuck, at least you would know where you would not find him. You would never find him where there were no trees or bushes or reeds for him to hide in; and you would never find him where he could not get a drink at least once a day, although he sometimes went miles from his Favorite Drinking Place between drinks.

Kungu never liked to be in open country, and when he went for a drink he chose a place where thick forest or other cover came right down to the river's edge. Although he might be near the hartebeests and the waterbucks and other animals, he never went out on Broad Plain where they were feeding.

Kungu the Bushbuck liked to live alone. He did not even care for Mrs. Bushbuck's company most of the time, and she did not care for his. Each lived alone except, of course, Mrs. Bushbuck had a baby to care for part of the year.

The Bushbucks had many Lurking Enemies. There was always Terror the Hunter to be feared. And they never knew when Strangler the Python would drop down from a hiding
Wild Animals of Africa

place in a sheltering tree and squeeze the life out of them. If they went for a drink along Lazy River, they had to watch sharply or Snapper the Crocodile would grab them by the nose and pull them under.

Then there were the natives who tried in many ways to capture the bushbucks. Sometimes the Black Hunters dug pits in the winding trails for the bushbucks to fall into. They also made cunning snares that would spring up and hold the bushbucks high above the earth if they were caught. They used fire, as they did to capture other animals, but with the bushbucks they used a special trick. The Black Hunters would stretch a large net across the end of a small valley. Then they would separate into two parties and each party would guard a side of the valley. When the wind was blowing toward the net, some of them would start a fire and it would drive the Wild Animals in the valley toward the net.

But these were not all of Kungu's enemies. There were the wild dogs that went prowling at night in bands. But of all the Lurking Enemies, Chui the Leopard was most to be feared. Wherever the bushbucks went, they stopped and sniffed to make sure that Chui was not waiting to pounce on them. But, strange to say, they did not seem to fear Leo the Lion. They would rest all day in a jungle thicket even though they knew that Leo had made his bed there also.

One evening when the little feathered friends were singing their good-night tune, and the long shadows were reaching out across Broad Plain, Kungu the Bushbuck rose from his bed in a quiet hiding place and stretched his legs. Kungu was hungry and thirsty. He decided that he would go to Lazy River for a drink first. It was not more than a mile away.

Kungu sniffed the air to make sure that Chui the Leopard was not near. Then he went carefully through the dense trees and brush along a winding trail that the sharp hoofs of many different kinds of Wild Animals had made. At Lazy River Kungu stopped to see if Snapper the Crocodile were lying in wait for him. While he was waiting, Fleetfoot the Kob went down to drink, and Kungu decided he could go down safely himself. But he drank quickly and hurried away through the overhanging branches, for he well knew that a drinking place was a dangerous spot to linger.

After a while Kungu the Bushbuck found a wild olive tree, and he decided he would stop and nibble awhile. He did not care much for grass, but ate mostly tender tips and leaves from trees and bushes.

Suddenly Kungu raised his head and sniffed. He thought he had caught a faint odor of Chui the Leopard. He was sure he had. He took a few steps this way and that, testing the Playful Air Whiffs to see which way the Revealing Scent came from. But there seemed to be almost no breeze to move the little leaflets. And then Kungu suddenly found himself looking right into Chui's green eyes.
Now Kungu knew that if he turned to flee, Chui would spring upon him instantly. But Kungu the Bushbuck was no coward. He was the best fighter among all the antelopes for his size. He wore rather long, sharp horns that spiraled almost like large corkscrews, and Kungu knew how to use them. With them he had speared to death a wild dog that had attacked him. His father had only one horn because he had broken the other off when he stabbed into one of Chui's relatives.

So Kungu lowered his head a little and waited. The hair on his neck bristled and his eyes flashed in anger. He stood close under the wild olive tree so that Chui could not leap upon his back. And always he kept his sharp horns ready for a vicious lunge if Chui should spring at him.

But Chui the Leopard did not hurry. He tried moving stealthily around to see if he could surprise Kungu from the side. He even backed up a few steps as if he were leaving. But Kungu was not to be fooled. From his shelter under the wild olive tree he watched Chui's every move.

Then a surprising thing happened. From out of the bushes behind Chui stepped Mrs. Bushbuck. She had followed Kungu's trail to the wild olive tree. And because she had been sniffing along with her nose to the ground, she had not caught the Revealing Scent of Chui.

When Chui heard footsteps behind him, he turned to see who was coming. Then before he could turn back, he felt a stinging stab in his shoulder as Kungu charged with all his might. Chui tore himself loose and limped painfully into the brush.

You see, Kungu knew that Mrs. Bushbuck could not defend herself, because, like many kinds of female antelopes, she had no horns. Besides, Kungu was very angry. So when he saw a chance he gave Chui a jab with his sharp horns that Chui would long remember.
CHAPTER 16:  
The Adventure of Gray Boy the Eland

KUNGU the Bushbuck's biggest relatives were the elands. In fact, the elands were the largest of all antelopes. But although they were as large as an ox, they were timid and peaceable, and would scarcely defend themselves even when attacked and wounded. They often visited the zebras and the hartebeests and the wildebeests and the gazelles and the ostriches as they fed slowly toward water in the afternoon. When they arrived at the water hole, the elands waited for their neighbors to go down first to drink.

That may not have been because they were kind and polite. It probably was because they were afraid that Leo the Lion might be lurking near the water hole, and they were waiting to see that he did not attack their neighbors. Then they could go down and drink in safety. But as darkness covered Broad Plain and Rolling Hills, and the Shining Stars were winking at themselves in Clear Lake, and Green Mountain echoed to the night cries of the monkeys and the hyraxes, the elands grew more and more alert. For they knew that Leo the Lion would then be abroad in the land looking for a feast, and Leo was the only Lurking Enemy the elands feared except Terror the Hunter.

Of course Chui the Leopard and the wild dogs would carry off baby elands if they saw a chance, but usually the baby elands were kept within the herd or near their mothers where they would be protected. You see, unlike Mrs. Bushbuck and many other antelopes, the mother elands wore horns. Their horns were straight, but spirally twisted, and they were very sharp.
Some of the elands lived far out toward Big Desert where, like Spindleshanks the Giraffe and the oryxes, they had nothing to drink for months at a time, unless they ate wild watermelons. Some of them lived on Broad Plain where there was only grass, and some of them lived where there was scattered brush and trees.

Now there was a herd of elands that lived in Evergreen Forest, which lay on a broad rolling height many miles wide between Happy Valley, where Little Lazy River flowed, and Pleasant Valley, through which Crooked Creek wound. In Evergreen Forest there were jungle thickets of jasmine and smilax and veronica through which it was almost impossible to pass. There were evergreen shrubs and thorn trees. And in between there were grassy parks.

It was on a winter day in August that Gray Boy the Eland was born in Evergreen Forest: It was winter in August because, you see, the elands lived south of the equator, and Old Man Winter spends his time down there while we up north are enjoying a visit with Welcome Summer.

For many months Gray Boy the Eland had no name except Baby Eland. He was not called Gray Boy until he was quite old, and I will tell you later how he got his name. He lived with his Loving Mother and the other elands in Evergreen Forest, where they rested and fed during the day. In the evening when the Laughing Yellow Sun was bowing good night behind Green Mountain, the elands would start toward one of the valley for a drink. Sometimes they would go to Happy Valley, and then again they might go to Pleasant Valley for a drink from Crooked Creek. If Terror the Hunter bothered them one place, they would go elsewhere for a week or two. After drinking, they would spend the night grazing in a cool valley. When morning came, back they would go into Evergreen Forest, for the elands were great travelers. They thought nothing of going twenty or thirty miles after a drink, and they liked to rest in the shade in Evergreen Forest when the days were hot.

Now on a large ranch in Pleasant Valley, called Pleasant Acres, lived a man who was interested in the elands. He knew that they were easily tamed, and he wanted very much to keep some of them on Pleasant Acres with his cattle. So he decided to capture some of them and bring them to live on his ranch.

The man had watched the elands many years. He knew that, when the rainy season came, they would stay near the valley and not go far into Evergreen Forest. He also knew that the elands were the easiest to tire of all the African game animals, for he had seen the natives run them down afoot and catch them.

Early one clear morning the man and his helpers started out on horseback. They had built a high Corral far out on Pleasant Valley near the edge of Evergreen Forest. It had a strong gate, and running out from each side of the gate like a large funnel were fences.
After a while the man thought he saw the elands far off across Pleasant Valley just outside Evergreen Forest. They looked like a small herd of cattle grazing peacefully, with some of them lying down here and there. The man looked at them through his powerful glasses.

"Yep, those are the elands all right," he said; "I can even see the rhinoceros birds flying around among them. Seem to be all cows and calves. Guess the bulls are off by themselves in Evergreen Forest this time of year."

"So much the better for us," replied a helper. "All we want are a few half-grown ones."

The man divided his helpers into two parties. One group he sent far around to the right under a leader. The other band followed him to the left. After a while he began leaving a rider here and there as he went along. The leader of the other band did the same, so that when they met behind the elands they had formed a large horseshoe-shaped ring around them with the open end toward the high corral. Then the riders behind the elands came racing on their horses, shouting and waving as they went.

Of course the elands were taken by surprise. As was their custom when they were alarmed, they rushed together and then started off at a swift trot.

But as the riders bore down upon them, they were forced to break into a gallop, sometimes leaping over one another's back. If they tried to turn to right or left, they were met by those riders who had been left along the way, who joined the chase on fresh horses.

So it came about that the elands soon found themselves inside the high corral with the strong gate shut behind them. Then the man and his helpers rode off to Pleasant Acres.

At first the elands were frantic. They ran around the high corral looking for a place where they could get out. When the man and his helpers came back the next day with a large truck, they found the elands tired and much quieter. Very carefully they separated the mother elands and the baby elands from the young elands and turned them loose through the strong gate. Then they loaded the young elands into the truck and hauled them off to Pleasant Acres.

"Here is a fine yearling bull," said the man, as they were unloading them into another high corral at the ranch. "I think I'll call him Gray Boy." And that is how Gray Boy the Eland got his name.

Each day the man brought the young elands Favorite Food. And they could drink from jolly Brook that ran through the high corral. Later, after they had become quite tame, they were turned out into a large pasture, where they could get plenty of Favorite Food and rest in the shade of sheltering trees when the days were hot.

If you could have seen Gray Boy the Eland a few years later, you would have seen him standing under a sheltering tree with his family, idly switching his long tufted tail, for an
eland's tail is never still for long. Of course you would not have known him, because he had grown so large. He had grown a mane along the top of his neck, and a great dewlap, which hung down under his throat. And, what was more, Gray Boy the Eland had found Pleasant Acres a nice place to live, and he chewed his cud contentedly.

CHAPTER 17: Two Little Friends

GREEN MOUNTAIN was an interesting place. It rose high on one side of Broad Plain, and it was there that Chui the Leopard often went in search of monkeys. He spent most of his time in Lower Forest, where there were strange trees of many kinds laced together with creeping vines and with a space between their mossy trunks crowded with thick brush which hid the leafy mold beneath. Here and there colorful parrots chattered, tree frogs piped and croaked during the night, and crested ibis flew about their business noisily. You could hear monkeys shouting through the depth of the forest, and tree hyraxes added their weird cries to the night sounds of Lower Forest.

Above Lower Forest was Bamboo Belt, and above Bamboo Belt was Cool Forest, where on the high sides of Green Mountain the nights were often bitter cold. Now if you had been looking on a certain day, and at a particular trail that led from a secluded nook in Bamboo Belt, you would have seen a mother elephant leading her pink little calf toward Cool Forest. And the pink little calf's name was Toto.

Toto had been born in the secluded nook in Bamboo Forest only a few days before, and his mother was returning to the family of elephants to which she belonged.

Toto was only about two feet high. He had a short nose in proportion to his size, when compared with what it would be when he was grown. And it was not very flexible. But
Toto really did not need a long nose until he was old enough to eat leaves and grass and fruit.

You see, Toto would not be fully grown until he was about twenty-five years old. As he grew his trunk would gradually become longer and more useful. Some day it would be one of the most remarkable and interesting things found in nature. For the elephant's trunk is not only a nose, with nostrils at the end, but it is also used to do the work of hands. It is long and very flexible, and with it an elephant can pull down large branches from a tree or pick a single leaf. When an elephant drinks, it sucks water into its trunk a foot or two then curls the end into its mouth and empties the water down its throat. Or if its legs and back are hot, it squirts water on them. Sometimes it uses dust instead of water.

Yes, the elephant's trunk is a useful object. On its tip and sides are tufts of stubby hair, and if an elephant is curious about something, or if the ground seems to be unsafe, the elephant uses its sensitive trunk for testing. Whether a herd of elephants are feeding or resting, there will often be a trunk held overhead with its tip moving this way and that, testing the Playful Air Whiffs to see if they bring warning of a Lurking Enemy. The elephant has the keenest nose of all the Wild Animals, and that is what one would expect if size counts for anything. But here we are, talking about the wonders of an elephant's nose, instead of the adventures of Toto and his mother.

The first one they met when they arrived at the herd was Grandma Elephant, who was very old, and who had not lain down to rest for many, many years. For although in some places elephants sometimes lie down to rest, in other places they never do. When they are very old, they know they do not have strength to get up again if they were to lie down.

Then there were some quite old aunt elephants, and some not so old. And there were cousins of different sizes, both boys and girls, for some of the aunts had pink little calves and other babies that were half grown. And there was Father Elephant, who was the head of the family, but who really was not the leader of the herd. Aunt Keen Nose was the leader. She had no pink little calf of her own, and so she had taken upon herself the responsibility of being leader. She it was who kept special watch while the others rested or ate, and who led the herd to new feeding grounds and to water. Like all elephants, her sight was poor, but her keen nose could be depended upon to detect the faintest odor of a Lurking Enemy. But all of the mother elephants were watchful.

Toto also had a Big Brother, who was more than half grown, and a Little Sister, who still followed Mother Elephant even after Toto arrived.

Grandpa Elephant lived alone most of the time, or in company with one or two friends who, like himself, had grown rather irritable with old age and did not like to be disturbed by the noisy youngsters. Then, too, Grandpa Elephant had a beautiful pair of
tusks, and Black Hunter wanted them badly. He could barter them to passing traders for gaudy cloth and copper wire and knives and other things he liked. So Grandpa Elephant lived alone most of the time, for the young elephants were sometimes rather careless about making a noise, and Grandpa Elephant knew that would reveal their location to Black Hunter.

Sometimes Father Elephant also went off by himself, but he was seldom more than a mile or two from his family. He always knew where to find them. Usually the Playful Air Whiffs brought their scent to his keen nose. Or he could hear the squeals of the young ones at play, or the shrieks of the mothers when they thought a Lurking Enemy was near. Then, again, he would hear the cracking of branches that were being broken from trees, or the thud of a tree that had been pushed over by a mother elephant so that she and her half-grown baby could reach the leaves.

It was no trick at all for them to push over a tree that was almost a foot thick. They merely pressed against it with their forehead or pried out the roots with their strong tusks. Of course the mother elephants did not have large tusks, but most of them were long enough to be useful.

Now it happened that, soon after Toto was born, one of the mother elephants who had a pink little calf about Toto's age, fell into a native trap and was killed. You see, Black Hunter and his friends had dug a deep pit in one of the elephants' paths and had covered it lightly with wood, branches, reeds, and grass so that it was cunningly hidden. They had hoped that Grandpa Elephant or Father Elephant or one of the others having big tusks would fall into it.

Of course the pink little calf was lonely and hungry without its mother, and it cried sorrowfully. So it came about that Toto's mother felt sorry for it and adopted it. If you had seen Toto and Tembo nursing together, you might have thought that they were twins. But mother elephants never have twins.

When Tembo's mother was killed, the elephants fled many miles to another part of Cool Forest. With Aunt Keen Nose leading, they tramped silently in single file through the dense jungle. At last they came to a quiet place that seemed to be safe from Lurking Enemies, and where Favorite Food was plentiful. What appetites elephants have! A large one can eat four hundred pounds of Favorite Food every day. You can hear them trumpet with joy when the feeding is good, or give satisfied rumbles way down in their throats.

You may wonder how such large beasts can travel through the dense jungle without making the least noise. The secret is in their feet. The huge feet have a thickly padded bottom which acts as a cushion when it is stepped on. It also spreads out when there is weight on it and shrinks when the weight is lifted. In that way the elephant can pull its
foot out of mud even though it may have sunk three feet deep under the tremendous weight.

Toto and Tembo soon became the best of friends. They spent long hours following Mother Elephant over the many, many trails that the elephants had made through the dense jungle. They made new trails frequently in search of Favorite Food, for they soon ate or destroyed the best along a trail. They also changed trails often, fearing that Black Hunter might set traps in the old ones.

While they were very small, Mother Elephant guided Toto and Tembo along the winding trails with her trunk. If they were too slow, she gave them a boost. Sometimes when Aunt Keen Nose caught the scent of Fearful the Man, and the elephants were fleeing swiftly and silently along a winding trail through the dense jungle, Toto and Tembo would put their little trunks over Mother Elephant's trunk as you would take your mother's hand in time of danger. And although the elephants were in a great hurry, Aunt Keen Nose always set a pace that was not too fast for the smallest among them.

It was surprising how well such large beasts could travel on the steep mountainside. Sometimes when they were coming down in a great hurry and the winding trail was steep and slick with mud, they sat down and slid.

Each year there came to Green Mountain a rainy season. Then the Weather Man poured down rain until everything was dripping and cold, and the sides of Green Mountain were slippery. One wet, cold, slippery day Aunt Keen Nose decided she had had enough of it.

"I am tired of this," she said to Mother Elephant. "It is so hard to get around without sliding down the mountain."

Mother Elephant pulled off the branch of a tree, tucked it into her large mouth, and closed her lips. Then she slowly pulled out the branch, stripping off the leaves as she did so. She had often done the same thing with the prickly branches of the mimosa trees, though it was a wonder how she could do it.

"Yes, the weather is disagreeable," replied Mother Elephant. "It is too cold for my babies."

"I believe it is time for us to move to Lower Forest," said Aunt Keen Nose, and the other elephants agreed.

You see, each year when the heavy rains came to Cool Forest, the elephants left. So it was that after the word had been passed around, Aunt Keen Nose started slowly down the mountainside along a winding trail that led into Bamboo Belt. Father Elephant had been browsing around by himself in Cool Forest; but, as usual, he joined the family for the trip to Lower Forest. He always seemed to know where the others were and what they were doing.
Now Grandma Elephant was very old. She had made the journey down the side of Green Mountain and back many, many times. But this year she did not feel well. She became very tired as she slipped along the winding trail, and the miles seemed long to her. By the time the family had reached the middle of Bamboo Belt, Grandma Elephant was back at the end of the line.

At last, when none of the others noticed, she turned off the winding trail and searched out a secluded nook among the tall bamboo where she could lie down. But Fearful the Man would never see the place, because he could only pass through the tangled bamboo by following the winding trails that the elephants had broken through. So he wondered what became of very old elephants.

Part way down Green Mountain the winding trail reached Elephant Ford, where the elephants crossed Tumbling River. There were other winding trails that also met here, which other elephant families had used on their way down. On the opposite bank the winding trails separated and continued on in different directions.

Now Tumbling River at Elephant Ford was very broad from the heavy rain, and Toto and Tembo had never before seen so much water. While Mother Elephant was assuring them that everything would be all right, who should come down a winding trail but Grandpa Elephant and his old friends. They had crossed Elephant Ford many times. Toto and Tembo watched them wade into the murky water and cross to the other side. But Toto and Tembo were still much afraid.

"Will you please help me get my babies across?" asked Mother Elephant of Aunt Keen Nose, who was standing near by.

"Gladly," replied Aunt Keen Nose, and she held out her trunk to Tembo. Tembo placed his stubby little trunk over Aunt Keen Nose's trunk and permitted her to lead him into the edge of the water. They waited until Mother Elephant had brought Toto beside Tembo. Then over they went, with Toto and Tembo swimming along in the quiet water between Aunt Keen Nose and Mother Elephant, while each held to a strong trunk. On the other side the elephants started down one of the winding trails that took them deep into Lower Forest.
CHAPTER 18:
Adventure in Lower Forest

AS I have said before, Lower Forest contained many, many strange trees. There were also many different kinds of Wild Creatures. It was one of Chuff the Leopard's favorite hunting grounds. Below Lower Forest were Rolling Foothills that lay at the base of Green Mountain, and which came to an end at Broad Plain.

Here and there on Broad Plain near Rolling Foothills were Native Villages. And outside the Native Villages were their cultivated fields, called "shambas." The natives lived in villages so that they would be better protected from Leo the Lion and Chui the Leopard and other Wild Beasts. In their shambas they raised beans and corn and melons and many other good things.

Now the elephants were a peaceable family. They never quarreled among themselves or tried to boss each other. In fact, they showed great love for one another. Often while they were resting, Aunt Keen Nose and Mother Elephant would stand close together with their trunks entwined affectionately. Yes, the elephants were kind and considerate toward each other, as you will see.

Although the elephants were the largest of all land mammals, and could easily have bullied the other Wild Animals if they had chosen to do so, they lived at peace with all their neighbors. The elephants feared no one after they were grown, except Fearful the Man. But Leo the Lion and Chuff the Leopard and even Stripe the Hyena would pounce on baby elephants if they had a chance.
Wild Animals of Africa

Usually the elephants stayed in Lower Forest during the day. Sometimes at night they visited the natives' shambas. There they ate large amounts of beans and corn and other things, and they spoiled more than they ate, for their large, heavy feet trampled the crops into the soft ground.

One night the elephants wandered down into Rolling Foothills. They were enjoying the leaves of the thorny acacia trees along the way. Sometimes one of them would squeal with anger when the sharp thorns stuck its mouth. But the elephant would pull off another branch, tuck it inside its mouth, and slowly pull it out again while stripping off the leaves.

Suddenly Aunt Keen Nose stopped. Up went her long trunk. She turned it this way and that while she tested the Playful Air Whiffs. Soon all of the elephants were doing the same thing. Then Mother Elephant shrieked. Her sensitive nose had caught the scent of Leo the Lion. It was coming from a jungle thicket near by. Leo was waiting to pounce on a baby elephant if one happened to wander away from its watchful mother.

Mother Elephant was furious, and so was Aunt Keen Nose. They charged toward the jungle thicket, trumpeting angrily.

When Leo the Lion saw that he had been discovered, he lost no time bounding away through the jungle thicket. So furious were Mother Elephant and Aunt Keen Nose, they stamped about tearing down trees even when they knew that Leo had escaped. You may be sure that Toto and Tembo stayed close to Mother Elephant on the way back to Lower Forest.

Now there was in a far-away land a certain man who decided he would like to kill an elephant that had very large tusks. So he came to one of the Native Villages with his large rifle and some tents and a great amount of supplies. He wanted to be ready when the wet season drove the elephants down from Cool Forest to Lower Forest. For it would have been a very tiring climb through Rolling Foothills and Lower Forest and Bamboo Belt to reach Cool Forest.

He hired some of the Black Hunters at the Native Village to help him, and he set up his camp in Rolling Foothills near Lower Forest. The Black Hunters were experienced Trackers, and they were familiar with all the ways of the jungle.

Early one gray morning Terror the Hunter left his camp and started for Lower Forest. First were the Trackers, who went ahead to lead Terror through the Dense Jungle and to keep a sharp watch for signs of elephant. Next came Terror the Hunter, and close behind him was a native carrying the heavy rifle. Following along behind were other natives carrying food and blankets and other things that might be needed; also, they were to carry back the large tusks which Terror the Hunter expected to get.
After a few hours' march the Trackers found the winding trail which the elephants had made that very morning when they returned from Rolling Foothills to Lower Forest. There were freshly broken branches from which the leaves had been stripped, and there were deep tracks in the soft earth.

Two of the Trackers who were most cunning now went ahead to find where the elephants were resting, while everyone else waited. Terror the Hunter feared that if all went they would be sure to alarm the elephants. So the two Trackers slipped silently along the winding trail alone.

Deep in Lower Forest the two Trackers suddenly stopped. From the dense jungle ahead there came to their sensitive ears familiar noises. They could hear the snapping of branches as they were broken from trees. There was an occasional low trumpeting or deep rumble from an elephant that was made happy when it found an especially delicious bite of Favorite Food. There were squeaky noises when the elephants chewed. And there were squeals of delight as Big Brother and one of his friends pretended they were fighting. Their short tusks were locked and their trunks were twisted together as they wrestled back and forth through the dense jungle, knocking over small trees as they went.

The Trackers hurried back to tell Terror the Hunter and lead him to the elephants. When he returned with them with his heavy rifle, he found that the elephants were in very dense jungle. He could see only a few feet ahead, and then only where the elephants had broken down the vegetation. He stopped to listen while one of the Trackers climbed a tall tree to see if he could see Father Elephant. For Terror the Hunter wanted an elephant with very large tusks.

At last the Tracker came down the tree. He had seen Father Elephant for a moment as he walked across an open space in the winding trail ahead. Terror the Hunter struck a match and watched to see which way the tiny spiral of smoke drifted. He wanted to be sure that the Playful Air Whiffs would not carry his Revealing Scent to the elephants.

Carefully he tried to pick his way through the dense jungle with his heavy rifle. He would have to approach very close to the elephants before he could see them. The venture was filled with great danger.

At last he thought he saw Father Elephant through the thick leaves. The light was not bright, for the dense jungle shut out the Smiling Yellow Sun even on bright days. Terror the Hunter moved stealthily ahead so that he would have a better view. He saw two huge tusks sticking out into the winding trail ahead. There could be no doubt about it, they belonged to Father Elephant.

Terror the Hunter raised his heavy rifle and braced himself, lest the recoil knock him over. Then he waited for Father Elephant to step out into the winding trail in full sight.
Suddenly there was a loud shriek of alarm, and Aunt Keen Nose ran and stood beside Father Elephant. She held her trunk high in the air, turning its tip this way and that as she tested the Playful Air Whiffs for Revealing Scent. All of the mother elephants rushed to Father Elephant and surrounded him. The baby elephants hid beneath the bodies of their mothers. You would not have known there was a baby elephant among them.

Now the mother elephants loved their babies dearly, and took very good care of them. They often caressed them with their trunks and were always on the alert for Lurking Enemies. The mother elephants also loved Father Elephant. They were proud of him and watched over him continually. Whenever danger threatened, which of course could only be Terror the Hunter, they surrounded him with their bodies, or charged fiercely if they could locate the Lurking Enemy.

So they stood with their trunks held high while they turned the tip about, or curled and uncurled their trunk and listened with their enormous ears standing up. All the while they were trumpeting and shrieking loudly.

Terror the Hunter did not want to kill a mother elephant. He knew there would be no chance to shoot Father Elephant now that the elephants had discovered him. When he saw Aunt Keen Nose standing out in front, swinging one front foot in indecision while she made up her mind which way to charge, Terror was glad to sneak silently down the winding trail to camp and wait for another opportunity.

One day the Trackers hurried into camp with the news that they had found fresh signs of three or four large elephants not a great way off. Terror the Hunter decided he would go right away and see if they might be found. While one of the Trackers led Terror to the place where the signs had been seen, another hurried on, hoping that he might discover the elephants by the time Terror arrived.

Sure enough, as Terror plodded along behind the guide, they suddenly came into view of the Tracker standing in the winding trail with uplifted hand, and Terror knew that the elephants were not far off. The Tracker made signs that the elephants were feeding up the winding trail only three bends ahead.

Carefully Terror the Hunter inspected his heavy rifle, and then he followed the Tracker. They stopped often to listen along the winding trail. At last they heard the crackle of a limb ahead. They looked cautiously around the turn in the winding trail in time to see Grandpa Elephant wave a branch leisurely in the air and then tuck it into his mouth. Terror the Hunter grew eager and excited when he saw how large were the tusks that Grandpa Elephant carried.

Now Grandpa Elephant, like all elephants, had never had good eyes, and they had grown even more dim with age. His once-keen nose was not so good as it had been, and his ears often deceived him. As he had left the elephant herd, there was no mother
elephant to guard him. He stood there eating peacefully, while Terror the Hunter took careful aim.

There was a terrific explosion, and Grandpa Elephant was almost knocked off his feet. He tried to run away, but his legs were weak. He could scarcely walk through the dense jungle.

Suddenly there appeared two of Grandpa Elephant’s old friends who had been quietly feeding near by.

"Are you badly hurt?" one of them asked.

"Yes, very badly," replied Grandpa Elephant.

Then his old friends did a very brave and kindly deed. They could have run away in safety if they had chosen to do so. Instead, they hurried to Grandpa Elephant and, with one pressing tightly against him on each side they almost carried him out of sight into the dense jungle before Terror the Hunter could get another shot.

---

**CHAPTER 19: Flight to Thorny Woods**

IN one way the elephants were quite unlike all their friendly neighbors. They were likely to be found living almost anywhere. There were those who lived in the Cool Forest on Green Mountain, and others who lived in dense, swampy, lowland forests. Some lived in the hot, dry country along a stretch of Lazy River, and others in desert like country where they saw no rain sometimes for two or three years, and where they had to travel for many miles to get a drink of even bitter water.
Although some of the elephant herds lived in the same neighborhood all through the year if they were not disturbed, others traveled long distances from one place to another. Sometimes the herds met and traveled along together. Then when they arrived at their new location they would separate again into families as before. After a while they would all leave, and not an elephant could be found within many, many miles of the place.

So it was not strange that when Terror the Hunter came to Lower Forest, Aunt Keen Nose and the other elephants decided to leave Green Mountain for a while. When the evening shadows stole through Rolling Foothills, the elephants hurried from their hiding place and started out across Broad Plain in search of a new home.

It was a tiresome journey for Toto and Tembo and the other baby elephants. For although the elephants traveled slowly after they were well away from Terror the Hunter, and sometimes stopped to pick Favorite Food, still the journey was long. They did not stop until they had reached Thorny Woods, and that was more than a hundred miles from Green Mountain.

Thorny Woods was quite different from Lower Forest. It lay along the edge of Broad Plain where Little Lazy River met Lazy River. It was not a beautiful place; but it seemed quiet and safe, and there was much Favorite Food. In Thorny Woods were many acacia trees, of which the elephants were fond; and there were trees and bushes with juicy little fruits on them that required much patience of the elephants to pick them one by one. There were tall palmyra trees with delicious seeds, which the elephants shook down by butting their huge heads against the trees. On Broad Plain, where the elephants often went, there was, in some places, elephant grass almost as tall as their backs.

There lived here the white herons, who were good friends of the elephants, as they were also of Blackie the Buffalo and other of the Wild Animals. It did not take them long to discover the elephants after they arrived at Thorny Woods. Every place the elephants went the white herons went also. If the elephants were in Thorny Woods, you could see the white herons circling overhead or perched in the trees under which the elephants were feeding or resting, for the elephants always rested in midday. If the elephants were walking through the tall grass of Broad Plain, the white herons were sure to be flying around or riding along on the heads and backs of their big friends. They even rode on the pink little calves.

When the elephants came to a patch of ground with short grass, or where the grass had been burned off, down would fly the white herons and march along beside their big friends, catching the grasshoppers that the large feet disturbed. Then when they came to tall grass, back they would fly again to their perches on the broad backs and big heads. If anyone wanted to find the elephants from afar, he needed only to look for the
white herons flying about or sitting in the trees, and he could be sure that the elephants would be near by.

Toto and Tembo were no longer pink little calves, for they were almost a year old. Their skin had become grayish, but sometimes after a mud bath they looked like anthills that had suddenly come to life and were scampering about. Although Mother Elephant would continue to nurse them until they were two years old, they really were large babies.

Toto and Tembo had great fun in their new home. One of their favorite games was Roll the Ball. First they would find a large piece of hard clay which some Wild Animal had broken from an anthill. Then away they would go, rolling it across Broad Plain as happy as boys with a football.

But sometimes, like boys who have nothing to do except play, Toto and Tembo got into mischief. One day the elephants were resting near a herd of buffaloes. There were baby buffaloes playing a game of Chase around their mothers. Toto and Tembo watched them for a while. The baby buffaloes seemed to be having great fun.

"Let's go over and play Tease," said Toto to Tembo.

"Yes, let's," replied Tembo.

Away they went, leaving Mother Elephant sleeping under an acacia tree, lazily flapping her big ears now and then to drive away the troublesome insects. Sometimes she would shift her tremendous weight from one side to the other so as to rest her legs. Her short tusks were resting across a strong limb so as to help to hold up her heavy head. Aunt Keen Nose was also asleep. That is, she was sleeping as much as she ever did. Quite often her long trunk would curl and uncurl, or twist this way and that overhead as she tested the Playful Air Whiffs for Lurking Enemies. For there was no telling when Fearful the Man or Black Hunter might pass that way. It really was a good time for Toto and Tembo to run away, while Mother Elephant and Aunt Keen Nose were drowsing.

Soon they were right in the midst of the game of Chase. But the baby buffaloes thought that chasing each other and being chased by Toto and Tembo were two quite different games. Of course, it may have been that the baby buffaloes were a little timid, and then again perhaps Toto and Tembo were too rough. For they were much larger than the baby buffaloes.

So it turned out that Toto and Tembo did all of the chasing; and when the baby buffaloes would no longer play, it became a game of Tease. First Toto would rush at a baby buffalo as if he intended to bowl it over. No doubt he would have if it had not run. Then Tembo would charge at the baby buffaloes, scattering them right and left.
At last the mother buffaloes lost their patience. They decided they would change it into a game of Chase again, and they would do the chasing. Toto and Tembo were glad when they reached Mother Elephant after escaping the sharp horns of the mother buffaloes.

Now came the time of year when there had been no rain on Broad Plain for many months, and the tall elephant grass was yellow and dry. There were few leaves left on the acacias in Thorny Woods. Although the elephants did not mind the hot, dry weather, there came a grave danger that caused them to leave. It happened this way:

One night as the elephants were crossing from Thorny Wood to that part of Broad Plain where the elephant grass grew tallest, Aunt Keen Nose noticed that a path had been cut through the tall dry grass. She stopped and sniffed. She caught the Revealing Scent of Black Hunter, and she thought that he was up to no good trick.

You see, Black Hunter had discovered that the elephants had been feeding on Broad Plain. While the elephants were away, he and his friends had cut a wide path around the place where they expected the elephants to return. They planned that after the elephants were inside the large circle, they would steal out with torches and surround the elephants. Then at a signal all would set fire to the tall grass, and the elephants would perish within the fiery circle.

But Aunt Keen nose was not so easily caught. She remembered that Black Hunter had tried that trick when she was small, and her Loving Mother had managed to lead her through a spot where Black Hunter had not yet started a fire. Then they had fled to Green Mountain.

So when Aunt Keen Nose caught the Revealing Scent of Black Hunter, she lost no time leading the elephant herd away from that dreaded place.
CHAPTER 20:
Some Tricksters Are Tricked

BAM the Chimpanzee looked old, but he really was not. Perhaps it was because he had so many worries that his forehead and face were wrinkled. The hair grew around his face almost like a beard, and he wore his hair parted on his forehead, which seemed to be the style among the chimpanzees. His ears were large and round, and, like his cousins the gorillas, he had no tail.

Bam lived in Lower Forest on Green Mountain. He liked to live there because it was cool. He simply could not stand the heat from the Burning Sun. He felt quite safe in the dense forest as he wandered about during the day in search of Favorite Food, uttering loud cries. He certainly was a noisy fellow, he and his family and the other families of chimpanzees that lived in Lower Forest. Often the night rang with their terrific screams for hours when they were supposed to be asleep.

The chimpanzees were a motley crowd. Some of them wore brown coats, and some of their coats were black or gray. Their complexion might be anything from white to black, but they didn't seem to worry about their appearance. And they didn't worry about a home, for they never stayed long in the same part of the forest. They went from place to place looking for juicy berries and ripe bananas and other Favorite Food.

When the chimpanzees wanted to sleep, Bam would build a nest in a dense tree for Mrs. Chimp and her tiny baby, if she had one. Then he would sit on the ground with his back against the tree's trunk so that it would shelter him some from the falling rain. There Bam would sleep.
But Bam had many worries. They were enough to make him look old and have a wrinkled face. For one thing, he always had to watch out for Chui the Leopard. Chui often came into Lower Forest looking for monkeys, which he liked to eat. Young chimpanzees suited him fully as well.

Then there were the Black Hunters who went stalking through Lower Forest with their poisoned arrows. Sometimes they set cunning traps baited with tempting food or hidden in the Winding Trails for any woods folk who might chance to be passing that way. There was Terror the Hunter with his many guns. Sometimes Bam and his family went out to rob plantations. Then Fearful the Man would chase them with his dogs and gun. That was one worry which Bam brought on himself. But if Bam found a deserted plantation, then he could feast in peace.

Early one evening, when the day began to cool, Bam started out with his family in search of a supper. Bam had a curious way of walking. He placed the backs of his fingers on the ground, then swung his legs forward between his arms as if he were walking on crutches. Bam's fingers were partly webbed, and the skin on their backs was thick and tough where he pressed them on the ground. He even bent his toes under and walked on the back of them sometimes. Bam could walk erect, but he was not steady on his feet. He clasped his hands behind his head to help him to steady himself.

After a while Bam came to a hollow log. He jumped up on it to look around. It made a peculiar noise under his feet. He struck it with his hand. It made a loud booming sound. Then he went at it with both hands, beating out an accompaniment to his loud shouts. Soon his entire family came over and thumped and hooted until they were tired. It was disturbing to the other Wild Creatures.

"Caw, caw, caw!" complained White-Neck the Raven from his perch in a tall tree.

"Caw, caw, caw!" echoed Bam, for he liked to mimic the other Wild Creatures. He mimicked the parrots and the hyraxes who were annoyed by his loud noise. And he hooted back at the elephants when he heard them trumpet from afar. If there was no one to mimic, he often broke the stillness of Lower Forest with his loud yells when all other voices were silent. In fact, he was quite a rowdy.

Now there lived in Lower Forest an old fellow called Grivet the Monkey, who was the leader of a large troop. There must have been nearly thirty of them in his band, but they sounded as if there were fifty, as they went chattering loudly through the treetops. They were a noisy and mischievous lot. They delighted in playing tricks on the chimpanzees.

Grivet the Monkey belonged to a group known as the guenon monkeys, but Bam the Chimpanzee was an ape. While Bam had no tail and lived mostly on the ground, Grivet the Monkey had a long tail and stayed in the high treetops most of the time. Grivet the Monkey had pouches in his cheeks into which he could stuff dainties and carry them off to some secluded place where he could eat them.
One day as Grivet the Monkey and his followers were jumping along through the high treetops, springing nimbly from limb to limb, he spied the chimpanzees far below enjoying a quiet rest.

"Shush!" said Grivet, "I see the chimpanzees down there resting. Let's go down and have some fun."

So the monkeys dropped quietly down from branch to springy branch until they were quite near, keeping their bodies hidden among the dense leaves. Grivet the Monkey silently dropped to the ground near Bam the Chimpanzee and quickly gave him a jab in the back with a sharp stick. Then he sprang nimbly up a tree.

"Wah, wah, wah!" yelled Bam, as he awoke from his daydreaming. "Who jabbed me in the back?" He thought it might have been one of his own playful little fellows, for they were always trying new games.

"Ho, ho, ho," laughed Grivet the Monkey. And the rest of the monkeys joined in with their loud chatter.

"Wah hoo, wah hoo!" shrieked Bam, and he stamped his feet angrily. Which probably meant "Come down and fight."

The monkeys came down as far as they dared and dropped sticks and large chunks of moss on the chimpanzees.

"E-eee-e! " shrieked Bam again, and pounded the ground with his hands. Then he started up a tree after Grivet the Monkey.

But Grivet was not to be caught. He ran far out on a springy limb, sprang nimbly across to another tree, and ran up to the very top of it. The other monkeys scooted for safe places on swaying boughs where Bam could not follow, or hid behind large pieces of moss that hung from the trees.

Now it is hard to say how long this would have continued if Battler the Eagle had not put a quick end to it. You see, Battler the Eagle was out looking for his dinner, and as he sailed high overhead he spied Grivet the Monkey in the top of a high tree where he had run to escape Bam.

Down swooped Battler in a flash, and he most surely would have caught Grivet the Monkey if one of the other monkeys had not spied Battler and shrieked a warning.

You may be sure that the monkeys were glad to vanish among the sheltering trees and mind their own business for a while. And Bam went back down to earth, muttering threats at his tormentors.
CHAPTER 21:
Lurking Enemy

THERE lived in Lower Forest a near relative of Grivet the Monkey by the name of Black and White the Colobus Monkey. It would seem that someone could think of a more interesting name than Black and White; but until they do, suppose we call him BW the Monkey, for short.

Of course BW the Monkey got his name from his color. When he was a baby he was entirely white; but after he was grown, his long, silky hair was mostly black, with long manes of white along each side of his body. His tail was long, and a foot or more of it next to his body was covered with short black hair, and there was a beautiful white, bushy plume that covered almost as much more of the end of his tail. His white beard gave him a serious and dignified expression.

Now BW the Monkey was a near relative of Grivet the Monkey, but he belonged to a different group known as the guereza monkeys. He had no cheek pouches as Grivet the Monkey had, but his stomach was divided into pouches. And because he had no thumbs, or almost none, he was often called "the thumbless monkey."

When BW the Colobus Monkey was first born, he was tiny and helpless. His Loving Mother had to carry him in her arms until he was old enough to cling to the long hair on her back. Of course she could not spring so far from tree to tree while she was holding BW with one arm. And she could not cling by her tail. In fact, no African monkey could do that.
So, if the trees were too far apart, she would jump to the ground and hurry as best she
could to the next one. You see, the guereza monkeys could not walk well, so they
seldom came down to the ground. They lived in the tops of gigantic trees, and they
especially liked those that were draped with beardlike moss that from a distance resem-
bled the monkey's long hair. It was difficult sometimes to tell which was monkey and
which was moss.

It was small wonder that BW the Monkey with his friends lived in the high treetops and
hid among the hairy moss and leaves, for they had many Lurking Enemies. There was
Chui the Leopard, who would pounce on him if he came to the ground, and Chui would
even climb trees after him. There were large snakes that would have been delighted to
crush the life out of BW and then swallow him whole. When he was in the tall cedar
trees BW had to keep a sharp lookout for Battler the Eagle. As if that were not enough
Lurking Enemies for BW the Monkey to worry about, there was Black Hunter.

You see, monkey meat was Black Hunter's Favorite Food. And Black Hunter liked to
make his war bonnet and cape out of the beautiful black and white coat that BW's
friends wore. So it happened one day that when a certain Young Native had grown old
enough to become a warrior, he went stalking for monkeys in Lower Forest. He had
decided that he must have a headdress and cape of monkey skins. So he had set out in
search of BW the Monkey and his troop.

Now one would think that with so many Lurking Enemies waiting to snatch, squeeze,
shoot, or pounce upon him, BW the Monkey would have been quiet as he went from
tree to tree through the Dense Jungle. But he was not at all cautious. It seemed that he
simply must chatter and shriek and shout most of the time while he and his restless
friends were on the move. Of course the noise was a complete giveaway of their
location.

So it was that one day while BW the Monkey and his noisy friends were moving through
the tall trees, as they did much of the time, picking off leaves with their thumbless
hands and eating them greedily, the Young Native was silently following a winding trail
into Lower Forest, stopping now and then to listen.

At last there came to his ears through the tall trees a strange sound. At first it was only a
soft hum or buzz, but it grew louder and louder until it became a mighty chorus. Then it
died away, only to swell again into a loud uproar that echoed through Lower Forest.

The Young Native turned and picked his way cautiously through the tangle of trees and
creepers toward the place from which the sound came. For he had heard the cries of
BW the Monkey and his friends many times before when he was scouting through
Lower Forest with Black Hunter.

At last the Young Native came within sight of a large tree. Its top was broken off and its
hollow inside was filled with water. There were BW the Monkey and his friends getting a
refreshing drink. You see, when BW the Monkey became thirsty, he looked for a hollow water tree, for he was afraid to come down to the ground for a drink. He knew all the hollow water trees for a great distance in every direction. There he was enjoying a refreshing drink, while he shouted and bellowed as though he had not a Lurking Enemy in the world to fear.

Silently the Young Native crept nearer. It was the chance he had hoped to find. From his quiver he drew an arrow. Its tip was smeared with poison, protected by a covering of thin leather. He removed the leather covering and fitted the arrow to his bow. Then he waited for BW the Monkey to show himself through an opening in the leafy branches.

Suddenly the head of a large bird about the size of Ringneck the Pheasant peeked around the side of a tree, and his sharp eyes spied the Young Native crouched near by. It was the head of Touraco the Plantain Eater, who is a distant relative of the cuckoos.

You see, Touraco and his friends liked to play Hide-and-Seek. So he and Mrs. Touraco and two or three more had been chasing each other from branch to branch, dodging behind trees as woodpeckers do, shrieking and shouting and boohooing all the while. They were having a wonderful time until Touraco spied the Young Native.

"Danger, danger!" shouted Touraco. I see a Lurking Enemy! Danger! Danger!" and he hastily dodged behind the tall tree again.

The monkey chorus suddenly stopped as BW the Monkey and his friends vanished among the tall treetops. So there was nothing left for the Young Native to do but cover the tip of his poisoned arrow with the leather sheath and put it back into his quiver.
ARDVARK the Earth Hog had been asleep in his Friendly Burrow for a long time. His Friendly Burrow was deep and wide-spread, and its door was hidden beneath some thorny bushes. When the dry season came to Broad Plain, Aardvark crawled far back into one of the long tunnels of his Friendly Burrow and went to sleep in his cozy bed. And there he had slept and slept.

One evening Aardvark awakened, crept to the door of his Friendly Burrow, and peeked out. A refreshing shower had come to Broad Plain, and it promised to be the kind of night he liked. Yes, sir; the night would be nice and moist, and Aardvark was very hungry.

"I think I'll go for a walk and see if I can find some white ants for breakfast," said Aardvark to himself. "I certainly would like some termites."

Sometimes he called them "white ants" and sometimes "termites," but he meant the same thing. They lived in large hills which they built themselves, some of them twenty feet high. Kongoni and some of the other Wild Animals used them for lookout posts when they wanted to see far out across Broad Plain.

Aardvark was a strange-looking creature, as he sat beside his Friendly Burrow wondering which way he should go. His nose looked like Rooter the Pig's, his ears were much like Heehaw the Burro's, and his body reminded one of Joey the Kangaroo. His head was the shape of an ant bear's, and his legs were like an armadillo's. Of course, Aardvark is supposed to be related to the ant bears and the armadillos, and we would
Wild Animals of Africa

expect him to be like his cousins in some ways. All of them belong to the family of edentates, that is, toothless animals; but Aardvark really does have some teeth.

Now it happened that Mrs. Wart Hog and her five Little Piglets had been looking for tender grass shoots. They enjoyed roaming on cloudy days.

They lived in a hidden lair in Little Jungle Thicket, but it was not much protection. Mrs. Wart Hog had her eyes open for a better home, and when she saw Aardvark's Friendly Burrow she decided to explore it. Into it she backed, as wart hogs always do, and looked around. It seemed real cozy and she decided to stay.

"Come in and see our new home," she said to the five Little Piglets.

The wart hogs are ugly-looking creatures with wartlike bumps on the sides of their head. They have a strange habit of always backing into their Friendly Burrow no matter how much they are in a hurry. When they leave their Friendly Burrow, they pop out and turn a quick somersault. They are always ready to slash right and left with their sharp tusks if a Lurking Enemy is waiting for them outside.

Aardvark was enjoying the cool moist night. It wasn't long until he spied a large termite hill. He sniffed around it but could not detect a familiar scent. Rip, rip went his powerful claws, and out came a piece of the wall. Aardvark poked his long snout into the hole he had made and sniffed again.

"No, sir," he said; "there are no termites living in this hill. They must have moved away."

So Aardvark went searching for another anthill.

Now Aardvark was not the only one who was looking for white ants that night. Over near Sandy Flat there lived one of Aardvark's cousins by the name of Pangolin. He had been sleeping all day in his den curled up into a large ball. It was a wonder that he could tell when it was time to get up, for he always kept his door plugged with earth when he was inside.

But along about dark, Pangolin opened his door and peeked out. Then he started across Sandy Flat to a place where he knew there were plenty of termite hills. Pangolin looked strange as he pegged along with his front feet bent backward. You see, Pangolin had long claws on his front feet, and it would be bothersome for him to walk with them in the usual way. So he turned them under and walked on the top of his toes. But it did seem awkward at best.

Pangolin had an armor like that of a knight of old. His back, head, and legs were covered with rather large, hard, overlapping pointed scales. He reminded one of a large pine cone.

Sometimes when Pangolin was surprised by a Lurking Enemy, while he was in a tree, he would play a trick. He would sit on the side of the tree by holding on with his hind feet
and propping himself with his tail. Then he would fold up his front feet and sit very still. If you didn't look sharply, you would surely think he was an old broken-off limb. If he wanted to get down in a hurry, he would roll into a ball and drop. And his half erect scales would cause him to bounce and not be hurt. Pangolin could not defend himself by biting, because he had such a small mouth and no teeth whatever. But sometimes when a monkey bothered him, Pangolin would contract his scales and pinch Mr. Monkey's fingers or nose.

It didn't take Pangolin long to find a large termite hill and tear a hole in it with his long, strong claws. Then he thrust his long tongue into the hole. His tongue was longer than his head and covered with a sticky substance. When he drew it into his mouth, it held many struggling termites. That was the way Pangolin drank also.

"Yum, yum," said Pangolin to himself, "those plump termites surely do taste good."

In went his long tongue again, for Pangolin did not have to stop to do much chewing. He didn't mind having no teeth.

Suddenly Pangolin heard a noise. He did not have any ear at all on the outside of his head, only a small hole on each side, but he could hear very well. The noise was quite close. It was coming around the large termite hill. He feared it was a Lurking Enemy after him.

"Hiss, hiss," went Pangolin, as he quickly rolled into a ball.

Of course it was only Aardvark looking for his breakfast, too. But it surely did frighten Pangolin, for he did not know who it was.

Now Aardvark is several times larger than Pangolin, and when Pangolin got courage to unroll enough so that he could see, there sat Aardvark helping himself to the termites. Pangolin was glad to know that Aardvark was not a Lurking Enemy. He moved around the large termite hill and made another hole. Aardvark could as well have made a hole for himself, but Pangolin didn't care.

After a while there came across Broad Plain a far-distant sound. Pangolin sat up and listened.

"That is the yapping jackals," he said to himself. "I believe I should be starting for home."

Away he went as fast as he could go on his funny turned-back toes.

Aardvark decided perhaps he should leave also, but he was in no hurry along the way. He stopped here and there to rip a hole in a termite hill and draw out a few of its little people with his long sticky tongue. The night was the kind he liked, and when at last he arrived at his Friendly Burrow, the Laughing Yellow Sun was almost ready to nod good morning over Green Mountain.
Aardvark sniffed at his doorway. There was a strange odor coming from inside. It was a strong odor, and it didn't take Aardvark long to guess who was inside.

"Those wart hogs have stolen my home again," he said. But he didn't seem to mind it.

Aardvark explored around a bit until he found a new location that suited him, and started right to work. My, how the clods flew between his hind legs while his short, strong front legs worked! In a minute he was out of sight, and in a few more minutes he was all ready to curl up in a new cozy bed for a good sleep. It wasn't much of a job for Aardvark to make a new home.

CHAPTER 23:
A Friend in Need

MRS. GROUND SQUIRREL lived in a tunnel burrow with Mr. Ground Squirrel. One day she went inside with a mouthful of grass to add to their soft bed. When she came out, Mr. Ground Squirrel was nowhere to be seen. Although she called and called, and waited until dark, Mr. Ground Squirrel never came home. Perhaps Battler the Eagle could have told why.

Of course Mrs. Ground Squirrel did not want to live there longer. She feared there was a Lurking Enemy around. So she went to search for a new home. At last she came to a large termite hill. There was a hole torn in one side of it where Aardvark had been looking for a meal. Mrs. Ground Squirrel peeked in. The termite hill seemed to be deserted. And so she hopped inside to look around. Yes, it was empty. And so Mrs. Ground Squirrel explored the inside.
The termite hill was quite large, and there were many chambers in it. It seemed dry and comfortable inside. Mrs. Ground Squirrel chose an apartment that suited her and, after cleaning it out, soon had a nest built of fine dried grass.

Mrs. Ground Squirrel did not know it, but she was to have a near neighbor. No sooner had she finished her soft nest than into the termite hill moved Herpestes the Mongoose.

Herpestes the Mongoose was about the size of Hunting Cat, but his body was more slender. His tail was thick near his body, and it was covered with long hair, which he could make bushy as Hunting Cat does when he is angry. Herpestes could climb trees, but he preferred to stay on the ground. He liked company, and he often went hunting on Broad Plain and in Big Jungle Thicket with a number of his friends.

Herpestes was a bold and active hunter. He delighted in chasing mice and rats, and he would fearlessly attack the most poisonous snakes. Sometimes he was bitten, but he had a tough, thick skin, and the poison did not seem to make him sick.

Fearful the Man knew that the mongooses were good hunters. So he decided that they would be useful if they were taken to other countries where there were many troublesome pests bothering him. He thought the mongooses would kill the rats and the mice and the poisonous snakes.

But when the mongooses were turned loose in some of these places, they soon became a troublesome pest themselves. They killed the chickens of Fearful the Man, and hunted game birds, and destroyed many harmless creatures. Then Fearful the Man wished that he had left them in Africa. But in Africa they raid the natives' honey buckets and steal their honey.

Now it seems strange that the mongooses and the ground squirrels could live together, but they often do. They must have some sort of secret understanding. So Mrs. Ground Squirrel did not mind when Herpestes moved into the deserted termite hill with her as long as he stayed away from her private apartment. He had an amusing habit of popping in and out of his doorway as if he were playing a game. But as long as he used his own doorway, that did not bother Mrs. Ground Squirrel.

One day while Herpestes was away hunting, Mrs. Ground Squirrel came out of her private apartment, as she did every day, and sat in the warm sunshine beside the termite hill. She now had four Weeny Little Babies, and she did not go far searching for Favorite Food.

Mrs. Ground Squirrel thought she heard a rustle in the dry grass a short distance away. She sat up and listened intently with her funny little ears. They looked as if they had been mostly chopped off. She wondered if perhaps it was only the Playful Air Whiffs playing among the grass. But, no, that could not be, for the next time she heard it, it was
much nearer. Suddenly Mrs. Ground Squirrel squeaked with terror, for she was looking straight into the beady eyes of Puffer the Adder.

Of all the Lurking Enemies on Broad Plain and Sandy Flat, Puffer the Adder was dreaded by more of the Wild Creatures than almost any other. He would lie half covered in the sand, with his head sticking out, waiting for some creature to pass close by. Then he would strike without warning and his venom was exceedingly poisonous. It was so poisonous that the Black Hunters, after mixing it with the juice of a plant to make it stick, painted the tips of their arrows with it when they went hunting.

Mrs. Ground Squirrel seemed powerless to escape. She felt as if she dared not look away from those beady eyes for one instant. She tried to run, but only jumped up and down as if she were tied. She made strange noises such as she had never made before. It was as if she had suddenly lost her senses. Instead of running away, she actually hopped closer to Puffer the Adder as if she were drawn by some unseen power. She was almost within striking distance of Puffer, and then a fortunate thing happened. That is, it was fortunate for Mrs. Ground Squirrel. She could hardly realize what had happened. Suddenly the spell seemed to be broken, and she saw Herpestes the Mongoose standing close by. The long hairs on his back and tail were sticking out so that he looked twice as large as he really was.

Herpestes the Mongoose stood and eyed Puffer the Adder for a moment, while Puffer drew in a deep breath until his body bulged out like a balloon. Puffer breathed out the air in a long threatening hiss, but that did not frighten Herpestes.

Herpestes quieted. The hairs on his back and tail became smooth. He ran and grabbed Puffer in the middle of his body. Puffer struck Herpestes in the face two or three times, but Herpestes did not seem to care. His sharp teeth bit right through Puffer's spine, and then Herpestes started in to devour him. He did not stop until every last bit of Puffer was eaten, even his head and poison fangs.

You may be sure that Mrs. Ground Squirrel did not wait to see the finish. She was glad to hurry away to her four Weeny Little Babies.

I wonder if that was why Mrs. Ground Squirrel liked to have Herpestes for a neighbor. Perhaps she knew that Herpestes would protect her if Puffer the Adder came near. Do you suppose that Herpestes knew that if he lived near Mrs. Ground Squirrel, Puffer the Adder would be likely to come there looking for the Weeny Little Squirrels and then he could catch him?
CHAPTER 24:
A Fight on Sandy Flat

MRS. OSTRICH was making a nest. It really was not much work. All she did was sit down on the sandy ground among the tall grass that grew on Sandy Flat and turn round and round, scraping here and there with her queer two-toed feet. Mr. Ostrich was enjoying himself and showing off. He would spread his little white wings and strut and dance as if he thought himself quite beautiful.

In case you might think that Mr. Ostrich thought of nothing but play, I will say: Don't judge him too soon, for he really was a dutiful husband, as you shall see.

The ostriches had many friends among the Wild Animals. They often visited with the zebras and the gazelles and the wildebeests and the hartebeests. But they also had many Lurking Enemies. Their special enemy was Leo the Lion, but when they were fully grown, they were too smart to be caught by Leo the Lion or Chui the Leopard. They could run faster than the swiftest antelope. Often, when danger was near, they hid behind a bush, with only their head showing. It was not often that anything escaped their keen eyes.

When Mrs. Ostrich had finished her nest, she left a large pale yellowish egg in it. Then she went to look for Favorite Food. The ostriches were never in one place long during the day. They had strange appetites. In fact, they ate almost anything they could swallow, including small stones, bones, and sand. That was to help them digest the snakes and lizards and insects and grass and berries and seeds and other things which they ate. They also liked the bean pods that grew on the thorn trees.
The next time when Mrs. Ostrich came to the Sandy Nest to leave another egg, there were two eggs in it. If she noticed the extra egg, she did nothing about it. The truth was, there were other Mrs. Ostriches, and one of them had decided to use the first Mrs. Ostrich's nest. So after a while the nest was full of large eggs, and some were lying around the outside.

Sometimes when the days were hot, the eggs were left covered with sand. But if it were cool, Mr. Ostrich sat on them to keep them warm. Yes, Mr. Ostrich was very dutiful. Sometimes during the day Mrs. Ostrich would sit on the eggs for a time while Mr. Ostrich looked for something to eat. But almost always Mr. Ostrich sat on them all night, and there was a good reason.

You see, there were prowling about on Sandy Flat and Broad Plain many yapping jackals. During the day they wandered around alone, or in pairs, to see what mischief they could get into. But at night they would gather in packs and eat what Leo the Lion left if the cowardly hyenas did not get there first. Sometimes they would not wait until Leo had finished his meal, but would try to rob him before his very eyes. Not a few of them paid for their boldness with their lives, for Leo would devour them if he had not enough other Favorite Food.

Now, there lived in a cozy den in Little Jungle Thicket near Sandy Flat two of the yapping jackals. They left their Cozy Den one day to prowl along the banks of Winding Ravine where they knew many hares and mice and jerboas and other Wild Creatures lived. The Jackals had five half-grown hungry babies in the Cozy Den to feed, and it kept them busy looking for Favorite Food to carry home.

After a while Yapper the Jackal decided he would see if he could find a young ostrich. He really was fond of plump young ostriches, and he liked ostrich eggs fully as well. So he started out across Sandy Flat with his large ears scarcely showing above the tall grass.

Suddenly he stopped and sniffed. Yapper thought he smelled ostrich. Near by was a large herd of zebras cropping mouthfuls of grass, while their tails busily switched at biting flies.

The Playful Air Whiffs danced past Yapper's nose again. Sniff, sniff. Yes, that certainly was ostrich, and not far away.

Yapper found a high mound where he could look across Sandy Flat. He saw the zebras lazily feeding near by, and right in the midst of the herd were some ostriches.

"Ah ha," said Yapper. "I wonder if there are any young ones." Away he went through the tall grass, sniffing the breezes as he went.

Mr. Ostrich had just returned and taken his place on the nest. He was lying there amid the tall grass with his long neck stretched out flat on the ground as usual so that he would not be seen. It surely was a surprise to Yapper when he almost ran right over Mr.
Ostrich. Mr. Ostrich was also surprised. He stood up and started to run away. Then he saw it was only Yapper the Jackal, and he came back.

Yapper stood looking at the eggs. They were tempting. He wondered what Mr. Ostrich would do if he grabbed one. You see, Yapper was not experienced. It was the first year he had a family of his own for whom to hunt. He decided to make a quick grab and run.

But Mr. Ostrich was not to be taken by surprise. He was a wise old bird, and not easily bluffed. Suddenly one of his long powerful legs shot out just as Yapper almost reached an egg. Now the ostriches have most unusual feet. There are only two toes on each foot, with strong nails, and the bottom has a rather soft pad. But it didn’t feel soft to Yapper. No, indeed! Yapper was kicked end over end, and almost all the breath was knocked out of him. He was glad to slink away in the grass as soon as he got his breath back.

CHAPTER 25: Two Narrow Escapes

ON the edge of Big Desert, which was next to Sandy Flat, lived a queer little Wild Creature by the name of Jumper the Jerboa. Jumper was a little more than half a foot long, not including his tail. His tail was about eight inches long, and was decorated with a tuft of hair at the tip. But the queer thing about him was his legs. He had very long hind legs and short front ones, like Joey the Kangaroo; and instead of walking, he jumped on his long hind legs while holding his short front ones close to his chest.

Jumper the Jerboa lived in a Friendly Burrow with a large company of friends. All of them had helped to dig the burrow in the hard, pebbly ground. It was quite a job digging
in the dry earth with only their little front feet and their teeth to remove the pebbles. But the jerboas must not have minded digging, for they made four tunnels to their Friendly Burrow before they stopped. Then they built a cozy bed and lined it with their own fur.

You see, the jerboas thought that if a Lurking Enemy came after them through one of the doorways, they could escape through the others. But when Black Hunter found their Friendly Burrow, he was not so easily fooled. He would stop all the doorways but one and then place a net over it for the jerboas to run into. For Black Hunter prized them highly as Favorite Food.

It surely was a desolate country where Jumper the Jerboa and his friends lived. One would think that they would not have many neighbors, but they did. There were the sand grouse and the desert larks and the coursers and the lizards and the snakes and many other desert creatures.

One of the jerboa's strangest looking neighbors was Gerenuk. Gerenuk was sometimes called "little camel" by Black Hunter because he had such a long neck. His neck stuck out like a young giraffe's. It was almost as long as his body. But it was a great help to him sometimes. His Favorite Food was tender twigs, and if he could not reach them with his long neck, he stood on his hind legs as Billy the Goat does and put his front feet against the trunk of the thorn trees and the acacias which grew in that wilderness.

Perhaps the strangest thing about Gerenuk was that he never drank. He did not seem to mind the heat, but would move about all day under the Burning Sun and never give a thought to drinking even if water were near. Of course, Gerenuk needed a rest sometimes, as everyone else does, and then he would often seek the shade of an acacia bush or thorn tree.

Now Jumper the Jerboa had another neighbor who was not to be trusted. He had large ears, larger than Reddy Fox's ears in proportion to his size, and he was an expert digger. In fact, he could rival Digger the Badger for speed. If he were in danger, it seemed as if he could fairly sink from sight in the sand. His name was Bushtail the Fennec, and he was Reddy Fox's cousin.

Bushtail lived in a Cozy Den that he had dug near a desert plant. He had made it near to the Cozy Dens of other fennecs, for the fennecs like near neighbors.

Bushtail believed in keeping a comfortable and clean home. Inside his Cozy Den he made a snug bed, which he lined with hair, feathers, fine grasses, and other soft things. He spent the hot day curled up in his snug bed sound asleep, with his head under his bushy tail. At night he roamed over the sandy wastes of Big Desert looking for birds, small animals, and other Favorite Food.
One evening, as the Burning Sun was bowing good day in the Flaming West, Bushtail the Fennec left his Cozy Den and went prowling. First he went down Little Valley that led to his favorite drinking place. Bushtail always preferred to follow Little Valley rather than climb over piles of sand. Then he started out across Big Desert to see what he could find.

Now, Jumper the Jerboa had been sleeping in his Friendly Burrow all day. If the days were damp or rainy he kept right on sleeping for he greatly disliked wet weather. He was like some of the Wild Creatures who sleep all winter in cold countries. But when the days were bright, he often came out of his Friendly Burrow early in the evening and sat in the warm sunshine.

So it was that when Bushtail left his snug bed and started for his favorite drinking place, Jumper the Jerboa was enjoying the last of his sunbath for that day. Then he went jumping across the pebbly ground that lay in front of his Friendly Burrow, stopping here and there to nibble a tempting leaflet or search beneath the bushes for hard little seeds to munch. That was what jumper was doing when Bushtail the Fennec spied him sometime later.

There was Jumper in the bright moonlight, hopping in and out among some rocks, hoping that he would find some juicy berries on the bushes that were growing among them, or a crawly insect.

Bushtail the Fennec crept up softly behind a rock. He had to be careful not to step on dry twigs or noisy pebbles, for that would have warned Jumper that a Lurking Enemy was near.

Suddenly a black shadow shot across where Jumper was sitting. He was terribly frightened, for he had heard no noise. He hopped into a deep crevice between the rocks and sat listening. Soon he heard Bushtail the Fennec sniffing in the deep crevice and trying to crowd into the narrow opening. But Bushtail soon found out that he was not small enough to follow jumper into the deep crevice between the rocks, and he went on about his business.

When Jumper the Jerboa was sure that Bushtail had gone away, out he came and hurried toward his Friendly Burrow as fast as his long jumps could carry him. It is doubtful if he knows to this day that it was Lightwing the Owl sailing silently overhead in the bright moonlight who warned him with his shadow. But, then, if Lightwing the Owl had seen jumper the Jerboa, he would have tried as hard as Bushtail the Fennec did to catch him, for Lightwing was out looking for his supper also. So Jumper really had two narrow escapes.
CHAPTER 26:
Mehari the Camel

TIPPU-TIB the Arab looked with disgust at the wobbly-legged baby camel that had been born among his herd of camels during the night. He was disgusted because it was black. If it had been sandy-colored, or white, or gray, or brown, that would have pleased him; but black, bah! Black camels were considered worthless by TippuTib.

Tippu-Tib went about his business of putting sulphur on some of his camels that were mangy, stopping now and then to pull off a plump tick.

Within a week after he was born, Mehari the Camel was three feet high and quite strong on his legs. He would keep right on growing until he was around sixteen years old. Perhaps, if all went well, he would live to be fifty years old, but Mehari cared nothing about that. All he wanted was plenty of rich milk from his mother and to be let alone.

Because Mehari’s mother was too old to be used, and because Tippu-Tib the Arab thought that Mehari, being black, was no good, Mehari was let alone and permitted to run with the other unused camels. Perhaps Tippu-Tib the Arab thought that when Mehari was large enough, he would kill him for meat.

So Mehari the Camel grew. He learned to eat the desert shrubs without hurting his mouth, regardless of how thorny they were. After his mother died, he learned to drink water, when water was near, or go without a drink many days, as the other camels did, when no water was to be had.
Like other camels, Mehari had many small pockets in the walls of his stomach, which held water for time of need. The hump on his back became firm and well-filled with fat, which sustained his strength when there was no Favorite Food. His near relative, Bactrian the Camel, whose home is Asia, has two humps on his back.

The African camels are often called "dromedary," from a Greek word that means "running" or "to run;" and, because of their speed, many of them are trained especially for riding. But the two-humped camel is better for carrying heavy loads.

When Mehari was born, he already had callous pads on his chest, elbows, and knees on which he rested when he lay down. His neck was long and curved, his ears were small, and his upper lip was divided like Peter Rabbit's. His feet had thick padlike soles, and although they had two toes each on the top, they were not divided on the bottom, as if they were made especially for walking on sand. When he walked, he stepped forward with both feet on one side at a time, then with both feet on the other side. Thus his weight always rested on at least two feet at once, and he was not so likely to sink into the sand.

One day there came to visit Tippu-Tib a black man by the name of Ali the Somali. Ali was half Arab and half Somali. Although he was distantly related to Tippu-Tib the Arab, he lived with the Somali people.

Now the Somali kept many camels, but their neighbors the Masai raised sheep and cattle. The warriors from the Somali and the Masai often fought each other because of grazing land needed for their stock.

So when Ali the Somali saw Mehari the Camel, and that Mehari was not wanted by Tippu-Tib because he was black, he offered to buy Mehari and take him home with him. Thus it was that Ali the Somali became his master.

Ali the Somali seemed to know how to get along with camels. When Mehari was four years old, Ali put him to work. Although there are some people who say that camels are extremely stupid, and have a temper and disposition of the worst sort, still Mehari soon became friendly and obedient to Ali.

If Ali wanted Mehari to kneel so that he could mount him or place a burden on his back, he would make a scraping noise as if he were clearing his throat. Then if Mehari did not understand or obey, Ali would give Mehari’s beard a tug to remind him what was wanted. So Mehari became well trained for either riding or carrying a burden.

Sometimes Ali the Arab would use Mehari in a caravan carrying goods across desert wastes. As the long line of loaded camels toiled slowly across the hot sand, Ali would trudge by Mehari’s side chanting a song with words of endearment and praise which he made up for Mehari. He would say to Mehari that he was a most beautiful friend; that
none was so swift, so strong, so brave. He would sing many other extravagant praises about Mehari’s virtues, and Mehari seemed to understand and like it.

When the caravan stopped to rest, Ali would give Mehari some dry grass and grain if he had some. If he had no grain, Ali would feed Mehari two double handfuls of dried dates. Ali took good care of all his camels, for they not only carried him and his burdens, but furnished him milk and meat. He used their hair for weaving cloth for garments, bags, and tents, and he twisted it into rope. In fact, his camels furnished about everything that Ali needed for a simple life.

Sometimes Ali would make long rides. Almost always he chose Mehari to ride at such times, for Mehari was fast and tireless. He could travel a hundred miles in a day unless something made the going difficult. If they ran into a sandstorm, Mehari would lie down with his back toward the wind, stretch out his long neck flat on the ground, and there he would stay until the storm was past. Ali would snuggle up close to Mehari and cover himself with a blanket to keep out the cutting sand.

One day when Ali was returning home on the back of Mehari, he met a large caravan. There was riding at the head of the caravan a White Man whose camel was sick and scarcely able to carry him. When he saw Mehari, and noticed that he was walking along at a lively clip, he decided he would like Mehari for his own riding camel.

"How much will you take for that camel?" he asked.


"I'll give you ten pounds for him," said the White Man.

Ali shook his head.

"Fifteen?"

"No," said Ali.

The White Man looked at his own riding camel. It was a good beast, but something had gone wrong with it. Perhaps Ali knew what it was.

"I'll give you this camel and twenty-five pounds," said the White Man, when he saw that Ali made ready to pass on.

Ali was perplexed. True, he had other camels. And the one he would be getting would doubtless be all right in a day or two. Twenty-five pounds! How he hated to part with him! He would make it impossible for the White Man to buy him.

"Forty pounds and camel," he said, feeling sure that no one would pay that much. (Forty pounds is about one hundred sixty dollars in American money.)

The White Man promptly took out his wallet and passed the money to Ali.
Ali was surprised and disappointed, but he would not go back on his word. He put the money in a bag on the side of his camel's saddle, and placed the saddle on his new possession. Then he trudged off toward home, leading the sick camel, and never so much as looking back.

Now Mehari had never been ridden by a White Man, and he did not understand the White Man's words nor was he familiar with his ways. And so it was not long until there was trouble.

Mehari did not know when the White Man wanted him to keel. He did not understand what the White Man was doing when he bound the lower part of one of his forelegs flat against the upper part so that he could not put his foot on the ground. That was usually done to prevent a camel from running away and leaving his master on the desert, but Ali had trained Mehari to stay without it. When Mehari was slow about obeying commands, the White Man became impatient.

Mehari had never been struck in his life. And when he felt a blow on his rump he kicked out viciously. It was a narrow escape for the White Man, and he decided to exchange camels with one of the natives until Mehari got over his anger. So the native transferred the burden from another camel to Mehari's back, and things went along better. White men never seem to get along with camels so well as black men do.

But Mehari grew sulky. He seemed to watch for chances to be stubborn. He complained whenever the burden was placed on his back. He had outbreaks of mad rage at certain times when he was near other camels. If his caravan met another on a narrow trail, he would turn his head and try to bite any man riding by. Even at that, Mehari was no worse than most of the camels.

Then one night he managed in some way to free himself. While his tired master lay asleep, he wandered far out on the Big Desert. When the caravan was ready to start another day's journey, Mehari was far, far away. Rather than delay his journey, the White Man decided to go on without Mehari.

Now it happened that one day as Ali the Somali was riding across Big Desert he saw in the sand the tract of a lone camel.

"Mehari! he cried. "That is Mehari's track. I would know it anywhere."

Although it may seem strange to us, many camel drivers know their beasts so well that they recognize their footprints.

Ali turned and followed the lone tracks. He saw where the camel had stopped to browse on a thorn bush here and there. Then the tracks went on. At last Ali's sharp eyes spied a dark form in the distance. He urged his riding-camel to a winging run. When he was near enough he called.

"Mehari! Mehari! "

www.temkit.com 81
Then he started singing all those words of praise that Mehari knew so well. Although the song would have sounded strange to us, Mehari seemed to understand and like it. He was very, very happy to be with his old master again.

CHAPTER 27:
Partners in Crime

RATEL the Honey Badger was hungry. He had been looking all night for Favorite Food, but had found little. His Favorite Food was honey and bee grubs, but he was also fond of birds and frogs and small mammals and insects. And one of his tricks was to raid chicken coops. Usually he and Mrs. Ratel went together, but this time he had gone off alone.

The Ratels lived in Bamboo Thicket. They were cousins of Snoop the Weasel; and in habits, form, and size they much resembled Digger the Badger. Ratel had a very short tail, and his ears were too small to be worth mentioning. His body was stout, and his legs were short. On his front feet were powerful claws with which he dug out small mammals. He also used them for tearing apart hollow den trees in which buzzy bees kept their store of honey. His skin was so thick he did not mind at all if the buzzy bees stung him.

RATEL the Honey Badger wore a most unusual coat. That is, its color was unusual. The coat of almost all Wild Animals is darker on the back than on the stomach, but Ratel was different. The upper part of his head, body and tail was whitish gray, while his face and stomach and legs were black.

RATEL always did his prowling at night, so that he was seldom seen. When the first blush of morning tinted the eastern sky, he would steal back to his Friendly Burrow in Bamboo Thicket.
Thicket and there he would sleep through the livelong day. But this morning he had stayed out later than usual, hoping that he might find one last tempting morsel before he went home to his Friendly Burrow. Then, as he was almost ready to give up, he heard a familiar twittering in a tree near by. Ratel looked up, and there sat Honey Guide fluttering with excitement.

"Come with me and I will show you something good," said the bird.

"It is time that I should be home," replied Ratel. "I am late."

"Oh, do come with me," urged Honey Guide. "I promise you a feast."

Now, Ratel had met Honey Guide before in the wildwood, and Honey Guide had led him to an old log in which the buzzy bees had stored their honey. After a few swift strokes of his powerful claws, Ratel had enjoyed a banquet. Then Honey Guide had hopped down and eaten some of the bee grubs and honey.

Of course Ratel was usually back in his Friendly Burrow before Honey Guide was awake in the morning, and Honey Guide was usually asleep in a stately tree before Ratel left his Friendly Burrow in the evening. So they did not often see each other. Sometimes when Honey Guide discovered the home of some buzzy bees he would lead Fearful the Man to it. But sometimes he played tricks on Fearful the Man. Instead of guiding him to a store of Honey, he would lead Fearful the Man to a wild animal or a snake or a crocodile.

Honey Guide fluttered and twittered impatiently.

"It's only a short way," he urged.

So Ratel the Honey Badger turned and followed Honey Guide as he flitted from tree to tree twittering all the while to urge Ratel to hurry. But Ratel could not be expected to go as fast on his short legs as Honey Guide could with his fleet wings.

If Ratel had known the trouble that Honey Guide was leading him into, he would have hurried home; but Ratel did not know until it was too late.

At last they came to a small clearing. There was a crude hut in which Fearful the Man lived, but Honey Guide did not seem to care. Over on one side were some queer-looking round-topped hives in which Fearful the Man kept his buzzy bees. Yes, sir; Honey Guide had discovered Fearful's buzzy bees and had taken Ratel straight to them. All the while Ratel had supposed he was going to an old log in the wildwood where he could feast in safety.

Ratel stopped at the edge of the clearing and looked around. It was still early in the morning, and everything seemed quiet. But Ratel was doubtful. He was quite sure that Rover the Dog was not far away, because every settler had at least one dog.

"Come on," twittered Honey Guide; "the feast is right over here."
Wild Animals of Africa

It certainly was tempting, and Ratel was very hungry. He decided maybe he could enjoy a good meal before he was discovered. So he sneaked through the weeds to one of the queer-looking hives. Ratel knew how to go about tearing it apart, for he had discovered some of them himself one dark night and had raided them when everyone was sound asleep.

Rip, rip! went his strong claws, and one of the hives toppled over. Out came the buzzy bees fighting mad. They buzzed angrily around Ratel, but he paid not the slightest heed to them. Honey Guide was all aflutter with excitement. He hopped down close to see what Ratel had found inside the round-topped hive.

Suddenly there was a loud bark behind them, and Rover the Dog burst out of the weeds upon them. He pounced upon Ratel the Honey Badger and rolled him over on the ground. There were fierce growls as they tore at each other, and the leaves and weeds flew as they rolled about. Rover's sharp teeth could not do much damage to Ratel's tough hide, and Ratel had a mean temper. But Rover was hanging grimly to one of Ratel's feet and chewing it as best he could. It was very painful for Ratel.

Then the buzzy bees decided to take a hand. They swarmed upon Rover and Ratel and jabbed them with their sharp stingers. They covered Rover's face and stung him around the eyes, and also on his nose where there was not much hair.

Rover released his hold on Ratel's foot and ran yelping to Trickly Little Creek that flowed near by. Then he jumped right into Deep Pool and washed the buzzy bees all off. Ratel limped painfully into the wildwood as Fearful the Man came out of his hut to see what such a commotion meant.
CHAPTER 28:
Filthy Neighbors

SPOT the Hyena lived in a Rocky Cave Den in the side of Rocky Knoll. Rocky Knoll was really one of the Rolling Hills that lay farthest out on Broad Plain. You could see it from far away as you gazed across Broad Plain toward Green Mountain.

For a while Spot the Hyena had lived in a Cozy Den which he had dug for himself in the side of Winding Canyon which ran through Rolling Hills. Then one night he discovered the Rocky Cave Den; and as his Cozy Den had become very filthy, and his dooryard was cluttered with old bones and other trash, and his bed was alive with hopping fleas, he decided to move to the Rocky Cave Den.

It was not that Spot the Hyena objected to filth, for nothing seemed too rotten for him to eat. Sometimes he would prowl around villages, searching among the rubbish heaps for filthy things to eat. Even though Spot was cowardly, he would sometimes enter the streets of native villages, hoping that he would find someone to eat who had died, or who was very sick and had been left outside to die. For when any of the natives became ill with sleeping sickness, their families knew that eventually they would surely die. When the sick persons became too weak to care for themselves, they were carried outside the village and left to die. Sometimes Spot the Hyena attacked old women and little children, and he was treacherous enough to bite the face of Fearful the Man if he found him asleep in his blankets in camp.

Because of his filthy habits, and cowardly and treacherous ways, he was much hated by the natives and the settlers. He would skulk around during the night looking for some sick or wounded animal; and if he had an opportunity, he would carry off the settler's sheep or goats or dogs or donkeys. He would sometimes attack their horses and cattle. He made the nights hideous with his weird howls and yells, for he was forever quarreling with his neighbors or Leo the Lion. He was tricky enough to chew the leather straps from sleeping oxen without disturbing them.

Now Spot the Hyena did most of his prowling at night, for he greatly disliked the heat; but sometimes on cloudy days he would leave his Rocky Cave Den early in the afternoon, or return to it late in the morning. He usually went alone or with his mate.

Spot had a large head, with thick neck, and his jaws were so powerful that he could crush very large bones. His front legs were large and strong, but his hind ones were short and weak. So his back sloped downward toward his tail. He was more daring and treacherous than his cousin Stripe the Hyena.

One night Spot left his Rocky Cave Den for a prowl on Broad Plain. He often went there, because that was where Leo the Lion did his hunting. Often when Leo killed something that was larger than he could eat, Spot would eat what Leo left, or crack the bones with
his strong teeth and devour the marrow inside, if indeed he did not eat the bones themselves. Leo the Lion was very careful about his teeth. He did not try to chew anything that might injure them.

It happened that Leo the Lion ate his fill quite early that night. When Spot the Hyena came to the place where Leo had feasted, there were the yapping jackals cleaning up what was left. Of course there was a loud fight when Spot arrived and it wasn't long until some of Spot's neighbors heard and came to join in.

When the Laughing Yellow Sun drove all of them back to their dens the next morning, there was nothing left of Leo's banquet but a few scattered bones.

Now there lived on Broad Plain some wild folk who were even more filthy than Spot the Hyena. They were the greedy vultures. No sooner had the Laughing Yellow Sun peeped over the eastern horizon than the greedy vultures could be seen sailing in great circles high overhead. They were searching Broad Plain with their keen eyes in the hope that the yapping jackals and Spot the Hyena had left some of Leo's feast.

Sometimes the greedy vultures would arrive before the yapping jackals had left. Then they would drive off the yapping jackals and stay until the last bone was picked clean. They would stuff themselves until they could not fly. If the flesh was rotten, the greedy vultures liked it better. They would squabble and fight among themselves and pull out each other's feathers. For often there were dozens of the greedy vultures gorging themselves on the very same carcass while it lasted.

So it was that the greedy vultures, soaring high, overhead when the Laughing Yellow Sun first came up, spied the place where the yapping jackals and Spot the Hyena had feasted during the night. It is remarkable how the greedy vultures can see an object as small as a rabbit, or even a squirrel, from the great heights where they fly, and can tell whether it is alive or dead.

Down sailed the greedy vultures, hoping to find a few bites at least on the scattered bones; but there was nothing left. After a squabble among themselves, they all flew away except Old Hooknose, who sat among the bones rather dejectedly. Perhaps he was thinking about the feast he had missed.

Suddenly across Broad Plain a half mile away he saw a long-legged bird about four feet tall jumping up and down and stamping at something on the ground.

"Ah ha," said Old Hooknose to himself, "I see Secretary Vulture catching his breakfast. I believe I shall sail over and steal it from him."

The truth was that Secretary Vulture, who is often called "secretary bird," was getting a breakfast for Mrs. Secretary Vulture, who was sitting on four white eggs about the size of goose eggs in their nest in a tall mimosa tree. They had made the nest of sticks and mud, and had covered the almost flat top with feathers and other soft things. Mrs.
Secretary Vulture would have to sit on her eggs twice as long to hatch them as Old Cluck Cluck the Hen does, and her babies would be helpless a long time. They would not be large enough to leave the high nest until they were almost half a year old.

So Secretary Vulture helped Mrs. Secretary Vulture by bringing Favorite Food to her. He had started out that morning early, sailing high above the earth on motionless wings, and searching the ground with his sharp eyes. At last he decided that he would land and catch a few locusts for himself.

Secretary Vulture could walk very fast with his long legs as he searched back and forth over the ground. He looked quite businesslike with the bunch of feathers protruding from the back of his head. He reminded one of an old-time secretary carrying quill pens over his ear, with the feather tops sticking out behind. That is how Secretary Vulture got his name.

There were many locusts where Secretary Vulture landed. He had also snatched a lizard that had been warming itself in the early morning on the sunny side of a rock. Then, just as he was about to fly back to Mrs. Secretary Vulture with it, he had spied a crawly snake weaving through the grass toward a bush.

Now snakes are Secretary Vulture's Favorite Food. Some persons say that he will kill even poisonous snakes that are not too large for him to overpower. But others say that his snake-killing habit has been greatly exaggerated. At least, he does kill many small snakes to eat.

Secretary Vulture kills his prey by stamping on it. He had dropped the lizard and had begun to stamp on the crawly snake. That is what he was doing when Old Hooknose the greedy vulture saw him.

Old Hooknose decided it was time to see what Secretary Vulture was doing. So he ran along the ground a way, flapping his wings vigorously. He had to run to get a good start, because he was so heavy. Then away he sailed across Broad Plain, and at last came gliding down right beside Secretary Vulture.

Secretary Vulture had been so busy he had not seen Old Hooknose coming. Before he realized what was happening, Old Hooknose grabbed the crawly snake and started right in eating it. So Secretary Vulture quietly picked up the dead lizard and carried that home to his mate.
CHAPTER 29:  
The Ruler of Bamboo Forest

FAR, far in the interior of Africa there stood High Mountain, which cast its long shadow many, many miles toward Broad Plain as the Burning Sun sank behind it each evening. Part way up the steep sides of High Mountain was Bamboo Forest, and it was there that Abu the Gorilla lived.

Abu the Gorilla was about the most helpless Wild Creature that one could imagine when he was born. He was as frail as a human baby, and his mother had to watch over him carefully. She kept him warm in a soft bed by snuggling him against her own warm body. The Laughing Yellow Sun almost never smiled through Bamboo Forest, and there was rain nearly every day during much of the year. Like his mother, Abu the Gorilla was almost black when he was born, but he became a mixed gray color when he was old.

Until he was able to walk, Abu's mother carried him wherever she went. When he was strong enough, he learned to cling to her hair and ride on the back of her neck. It was a wonder he was not knocked off when she passed through the thick bamboo and nettles.

When he was able to walk, he followed his mother through the dense foliage. When he fell too far behind while playing with other baby gorillas, he would stop and listen for his mother's short grunt. Then away he would scamper until he could see her again.

What a strange manner of walking Abu had. His legs and back were short, and that made his arms appear long. When he walked, he partly closed his hands and rested his weight on the backs of his fingers. Then he swung his legs through as if he were walking on crutches. He traveled much like Bam, the Chimpanzee. Often his toes were bent under
Wild Animals of Africa

so that he stood on their backs. So his fingers and toes became calloused on their backs. But when the gorillas were alarmed, they sometimes stood up and ran like running men.

Abu lived a peaceful and lazy life. During the day the gorillas spent the time sleeping or walking slowly through Bamboo Forest in search of Favorite Food. They never had to go far, as their Favorite Food was plentiful. So they were never in a hurry. At first Abu learned to eat the juicy roots and tender inner stalks of wild celery, which his mother pulled out of the ground. It grew far above the gorillas' heads when they were standing upright. Although wild celery was a Favorite Food, the gorillas were also fond of the juicy young bamboo sprouts. Sometimes they chewed the spicy bark from certain vines, but they never ate meat.

Abu the Gorilla grew strong, and he became the ruler of Bamboo Forest. Abu feared no one but Black Hunter, for Leo the Lion never came where the gorillas lived, and the elephants and buffaloes that lived on High Mountain never ventured on the steep slopes where Abu lived most of the time. Sometimes Chui the Leopard would sneak through Bamboo Forest, hoping that he might steal a baby gorilla, for Chui never allowed any of the apes or the monkey family to enjoy peace very long. But Chui was no match for Abu the Gorilla.

So Abu and his troop lived in peace when Chui or Black Hunter were not around. The gorillas had nothing to do but wander slowly through Bamboo Forest and enjoy life. They did not even bother to keep a home. Each night they built a new bed wherever they happened to be, but it was not much of a bed. They raked together the leaves and twigs within arm's reach and crawled in. That was not much protection from the cold night air that was always present on High Mountain. If it were a rainy night, they built their beds under vine-draped trees where the rain could not reach them. Sometimes there would be a big bed with a little bed near it where a mother gorilla and her baby had slept. Sometimes an adventurous young gorilla would build his bed high in a leaning tree. Although the gorillas could climb trees, and sometimes did so after tempting fruit or nuts, they lived most of the time on the ground.

Now, there were in Bamboo Forest many winding trails of elephants and buffaloes and gorillas that crisscrossed here and there where the Wild Animals passed through the dense vegetation. It was in one of these trails that Black Hunter one day set his deadly trap for Abu.

First he hung a sharp spear on the limb of a tree directly above Abu's trail. He tied weights to it so that it would fall with terrific force. Then he fastened strings across the trail which ran to the cunning device that held the sharp spear. If Abu came along the Winding Trail and pressed against the strings, the cunning device would be tripped, and down would come the sharp spear.
Wild Animals of Africa

You see, Black Hunter greatly feared Abu. He had been told many stories about how strong and fierce and terrible Abu was. Although Abu was strong, and could have been savage, still he probably would not have harmed anyone if he could escape into the dense jungle. At least Abu never went out looking for trouble, as Leo the Lion and Chui the Leopard and some of the other Wild Animals did. All he wanted was to be let alone so that he could live in peace. Like many other people who have heard untrue stories about Abu the Gorilla, Black Hunter thought he would be safer if Abu were killed; but Black Hunter feared Abu too much to meet him face to face. Therefore he set a sharp spear with a cunning device to kill him.

Now it happened that Great Naturalist from Far Country came to High Mountain to study the habits of the gorillas. Instead of a gun be brought his cameras, for he was a friend of the Wild Creatures. He made a comfortable camp on the side of High Mountain below Bamboo Forest, so that he would be near to the country of the gorillas.

Early each morning he would be awakened by the songs and chirps and howls and shrieks of his feathered and furry friends. You may be sure that he did not need an alarm clock, for no one could sleep after the jungle folk awakened.

One morning, after a hearty breakfast, Great Naturalist started as usual up the mountainside, carrying his camera with him. There had been rain during the night, and it was hard climbing through the dripping Bamboo Forest over slippery ground. Sometimes he had to get down and crawl on all fours through the thick bamboo stalks that had fallen across the trail, or stop and cut them out of the way with a large native knife which he carried.

Soon he was dripping wet from the clinging raindrops and perspiration, and he thought how wise he had been to prepare a waterproof case to keep his camera dry.

At last Great Naturalist became tired and sat down beside the winding trail to rest and listen. He thought he might hear the gorillas as they searched for their breakfast. Yes, his sharp ears caught the sound of their voices in the distance. They seemed to be noisier than usual, for they did not think anyone was near.

Great Naturalist listened to their noise while he wrote something in his little pocket notebook. He was quite sure they were coming slowly toward him along the winding trail. He hoped that he could get a good picture of them. So after shaking down the clinging raindrops from the trees, he took his camera from its case and got it in readiness for a shot.

Great Naturalist noticed that there were some branches across the winding trail that interfered with his view. He reached far ahead with the bush knife and gave them a swift and almost silent cut with one hand while he held his hat over the camera with the other.
Immediately there was a shower of raindrops from the branches overhead. The sharp spear swished past his outstretched hand and stuck in the mud in front of him with a thud that sent the gorillas scampering through the forest.

"That was a close call," said Great Naturalist to himself. "I must be more watchful in the future."

Then he put the camera back in its waterproof case, picked up the sharp spear with its cunning device, and started back toward his comfortable camp. He would wait until the frightened gorillas has quieted down before trying again for pictures of them.

But Great Naturalist had a good story to tell when he showed the sharp spear to his friends after he returned to Far Country from his long journey.

**CHAPTER 30:
An Introduction to the Lemurs**

AS you probably know, there is, off the east coast of South Africa, a large island called Madagascar. Half the Wild Animals on this island belong to a group known as lemurs.

The lemurs are an interesting Wild Folk. They are supposed to be distant relatives of the monkeys, because they are somewhat like the monkeys. But the lemurs are different in many ways even among themselves. Some of them have a tail, while others do not. Some of them go about during the night, while others are seen only during the day. Some live mostly on the ground, while others spend most of their time in trees. Some are noisy, while others make hardly a sound. No lemur is large.

The largest of the lemurs on Madagascar is Indri, who is about two feet long. Sometimes the natives call him "babakoto," which means "little old man." He wears a black and white suit, and has only a mere stump of a tail. There are usually four or five in his family. They go about only during the day, and they are strict vegetarians.

The smallest of the lemurs is Dwarfy the Mouse Lemur. His body is only four inches long, but his tail adds another six inches. Sometimes he is called the Madagascar rat. He lives in the tops of the tallest trees and on the smallest branches. His home is a Snug Little Nest which he builds of twigs, dried leaves, and such things, in the top of a tree, and which he lines with hair. Here he raises his family, and also sleeps during the day. For, you see, Dwarfy the Lemur goes about only during the night. He has large, round eyes and can see even the smallest things on the darkest night. He has black rings around his eyes as if he were wearing glasses. Do you suppose that is why he can see so well in the dark?

Now, although Dwarfy is mostly a vegetarian, he also eats insects. He prowls about in the darkness on the springy limbs of trees stalking moths and beetles that, like himself,
are abroad only during the night. One would think that it would be difficult to pounce upon them on a springy limb, but Dwarfy knows how to manage it.

Dwarfy the Lemur eats and eats and grows fatter and fatter during the cool, wet season. His coat gets sleek, and the base of his tail is swollen with fat. Then when the hot, dry season arrives, what do you suppose Dwarfy does? Well, sir, he curls up and goes to sleep and waits for cool weather to come back. When he awakens, his fat is mostly gone and his swollen tail has shrunk back to normal again. Perhaps that is his way of going on a reducing diet.

Then there is Ringtail the Lemur, who is sometimes called "the cat lemur" because he makes such a nice pet. He is another vegetarian, but he will also eat insects, eggs, young birds, and such things.

Ringtail is a noisy fellow. He lives with some of his friends among the rocks and cliffs where there are but a few dwarfed trees. His hands and feet have tough palms that are just right for walking on wet slippery rocks. When he is in a hurry, he jumps as a kangaroo does. You are likely to see him only morning or evening, for he sleeps during the night and middle of the day with his bushy tail curled around him.

We must not leave out Simpona the Diademed Sifaka, for he might feel slighted. He is a near relative of Indri's; but he has a long tail, whereas Indri has only a stump.

Simpona likes to get out with six or eight of his friends early in the morning before the day is hot and go leaping from tree to tree in search of his Favorite Food. When the Laughing Yellow Sun is up, he likes to sit close against a tree on a level limb and let the Cheerful Little Sunbeams warm his coat; but when the day is hot, he hunts a place under a shady bough where he can hide and rest.

Simpona seldom comes down to the ground. That is because it is hard for him to walk with his short arms. He finds it easier to jump than walk.

When he was tiny he rode on his Loving Mother's back with his hands clinging to her sides.

Simpona's Favorite Food is fruit, leaves, flowers, and other vegetation. He peels the fruit with his lower teeth, which stick out so they are handy for that. His home is near the coast, where there is rain almost every day; but he never complains about the weather. In fact, he never has much to say about anything.
CHAPTER 31:
Aye-Aye Takes a Stroll

OF all the Wild Animals that lived on Madagascar, Aye-Aye was the strangest. Even his name was strange, for it was pronounced as if it were spelled Eye-Eye. Naturalists had a hard time making up their minds who his relatives were.

You see, Aye-Aye had front teeth like Paddletail the Beaver's, a bushy tail and large ears like Reddy Fox's, a face and body like Hunting Cat's, hands like a monkey's, and he climbed trees like a squirrel. But his habits were like the lemur's. It was finally decided that he was most like the lemurs, but did not belong in their group. So, although he is known as a lemur, he was put in a special class all by himself.

Aye-Aye had the most unusual feet of all Wild Creatures. His big toe had a flat nail as the monkeys have, and like theirs it was used as a thumb; but the other toes on his feet, and also his fingers, had sharply pointed claws. No two of his fingers were alike. The finger next to his thumb looked as if it had forgotten to grow, while the next finger looked as if it had forgotten to stop growing. It was long and strong and slender, like a piece of wire, and it is supposed that he used it for gouging all kinds of bugs and worms out of holes in trees.

Aye-Aye lived with Mrs. Aye-Aye in Bamboo Forest. They had built a Snug Nest about two feet across, and there they slept all day. The Snug Nest was made of twigs and dried leaves, and was hidden among the dense leaves high above the ground. There was a hole in its side, which they used for a door.
Aye-Aye and Mrs. Aye-Aye usually went out together to prowl during the night. They liked wild sugar cane and oranges and other fruit and the pith from bamboo. They scratched away the bark on trees with their sharp claws to expose crawly insects that were hiding beneath. Sometimes they first tapped the bark with their hands and then listened closely to see if they could hear anything stirring.

One evening the Aye-Ayes left their Snug Nest and started out in search of Favorite Food as usual. Soon it was dark, and the Bamboo Forest smelled dank because of the rain that had fallen during the day. There were weird night cries and the piping of frogs, and far, far away there was the faint barking of dogs in a Native Village.

Now there was in the Native Village a Black Trapper by the name of Ishti. Ishti made clever traps, which he took to the forest and set for Wild Creatures. He hoped that he might catch Fitili-ki the Weasel Lemur and have a feast. Fitili-ki spent his nights roaming through the forest, jumping long distances from tree to tree, and eating nothing but tender leaves. Ishti left his cunning traps in certain places where he thought Fitili-ki might come to the ground, and placed some of his Favorite Food inside. Some of them he fastened on high limbs and covered them with boughs. If Fitili-ki did not find them, thought Ishti, perhaps some other Wild Creature would.

So it happened that as Aye-Aye was passing through the forest he thought he smelled the odor of Favorite Food coming from a dark spot beneath some boughs. Aye-Aye went under the boughs to investigate. Suddenly there was a faint click as a little door dropped down behind him.

Aye-Aye ate some of the tempting bait and then decided he would leave. But search as he did, he could not find a way out.

"Now, that is strange," he said to himself. "I thought I came in right here." But the opening certainly was not there.


"What is the matter?" she asked, as she came sailing across from a tree nearby.

"I can't get out of here," replied Aye-Aye.

Mrs. Aye-Aye went round and round, searching here and there among the boughs that covered the clever trap. But there was not an opening to be found.

At last Mrs. Aye-Aye sat sadly on the limb and looked toward the east. The first faint rays of light suggested that a new day would soon be there. She simply could not let the Laughing Yellow Sun catch her away from home.

"Oh, dear," she wailed, "I guess I must go home alone."

Off she went toward the Snug Nest in Bamboo Forest, and there she curled up and went to sleep alone.
Mrs. Aye-Aye was sleeping soundly when suddenly she was awakened by a scratching as if someone were climbing up to her Snug Nest. At first she thought she might be dreaming of Lurking Enemies. But no, there was the light shining in through her doorway, and she blinked as it reached her eyes.

Closer and closer came the scratching. She wondered if it really might be a Lurking Enemy, and her heart beat fast. Then the doorway was darkened by someone coming in, and she could see better. There stood Aye-Aye, tired and hot, and hardly looking like himself. His fur was smeared with grease, and sticking to it were bits of dead leaves and grass seed and other trash.

You see, Ishti the Black Trapper was superstitious. He believed that Aye-Aye had some kind of unusual power and was able to kill anyone who tried to catch or hurt him. So, when he had accidentally caught Aye-Aye in his cunning trap, he was afraid. He had smeared fat on him, thinking that Aye-Aye would like that and would forgive him. Then Ishti had turned Aye-Aye loose.