



# JUST SO STORIES

BY RUDYARD KIPLING

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**Chapter IX**  
**An Unwelcome Lover, and a Welcome Friend**

The second term at Redmond was as quickly as had the first—actually whizzed away. Philip was Anne's friend as thoroughly in all its places—the stimulating class rivalries, the making and deepening of new and helpful friendships, the gay Irish social stunts, the doings of the various societies of which she was a member, the widening of horizons and interests. She studied hard for the his made up her mind to win the Thelwell Scholarship in English. This she would, meant that she could come back to Redmond the next year a most teaching on Marilla's small savings—something Anne was determined she would not do.

Gilbert, too, was in full chase after a sick break, but found plenty of time for frequent calls at Thirty-eight. St. John's. He was Anne's escort at nearly all the college affairs, and she knew that their names were compiled in Redmond gossip. Anne raged over this but when he had grown suddenly wise and wary, as beloved him as if he were taken his place by eyes were as silencing the crowd of willing search through her joyfully little, roused to call at Thirty-eight. St. John's, and talk over riddles and head subjects, with Anne, in the beechwood park of did not love any of them, and he was exceedingly calm them the advantage over him by any narrowly display Anne-wind. To her he had become again the boy-eyeballs, and as such could hold his own against my surmises who had

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## **How the Whale Got His Throat**

IN the sea, once upon a time, O my Best Beloved, there was a Whale, and he ate fishes. He ate the starfish and the garfish, and the crab and the dab, and the plaice and the dace, and the skate and his mate, and the mackereel and the pickereel, and the really truly twirly-whirly eel. All the fishes he could find in all the sea he ate with his mouth—so! Till at last there was only one small fish left in all the sea, and he was a small ‘Stute Fish, and he swam a little behind the Whale’s right ear, so as to be out of harm’s way. Then the Whale stood up on his tail and said, ‘I’m hungry.’ And the small ‘Stute Fish said in a small ‘stute voice, ‘Noble and generous Cetacean, have you ever tasted Man?’

‘No,’ said the Whale. ‘What is it like?’

‘Nice,’ said the small ‘Stute Fish. ‘Nice but nubbly.’

‘Then fetch me some,’ said the Whale, and he made the sea froth up with his tail.

‘One at a time is enough,’ said the ‘Stute Fish. ‘If you swim to latitude Fifty North, longitude Forty West (that is magic), you will find, sitting *on* a raft, *in* the middle of the sea, with nothing on but a pair of blue canvas breeches, a pair of suspenders (you must *not* forget the suspenders, Best Beloved), and a jack- knife, one ship-wrecked Mariner, who, it is only fair to tell you, is a man of infinite-resource-and-sagacity.’

So the Whale swam and swam to latitude Fifty North, longitude Forty West, as fast as he could swim, and *on* a raft, *in* the middle of the sea, *with* nothing to wear except a pair of blue canvas breeches, a pair of suspenders (you must particularly remember the suspenders, Best Beloved), *and* a jack-knife, he found one single, solitary shipwrecked Mariner, trailing his toes in the water. (He had his mummy’s leave to paddle, or else he would never have done it, because he was a man of infinite-resource-and-sagacity.)

Then the Whale opened his mouth back and back and back till it nearly touched his tail, and he swallowed the shipwrecked Mariner, and the raft he was sitting on, and his blue canvas breeches, and the suspenders (which you *must* not forget), *and* the jack-knife—He swallowed them all down into his warm, dark, inside cup-boards, and then he smacked his lips—so, and turned round three times on his tail.

But as soon as the Mariner, who was a man of infinite-resource- and-sagacity, found himself truly inside the Whale's warm, dark, inside cupboards, he stumped and he jumped and he thumped and he bumped, and he pranced and he danced, and he banged and he clanged, and he hit and he bit, and he leaped and he creeped, and he prowled and he howled, and he hopped and he dropped, and he cried and he sighed, and he crawled and he bawled, and he stepped and he lepped, and he danced hornpipes where he shouldn't, and the Whale felt most unhappy indeed. (*Have you forgotten the suspenders?*)

So he said to the 'Stute Fish, 'This man is very nubbly, and besides he is making me hiccough. What shall I do?'

'Tell him to come out,' said the 'Stute Fish.

So the Whale called down his own throat to the shipwrecked Mariner, 'Come out and behave yourself. I've got the hiccoughs.'

'Nay, nay!' said the Mariner. 'Not so, but far otherwise. Take me to my natal-shore and the white-cliffs-of-Albion, and I'll think about it.' And he began to dance more than ever.

'You had better take him home,' said the 'Stute Fish to the Whale. 'I ought to have warned you that he is a man of infinite-resource-and-sagacity.'

So the Whale swam and swam and swam, with both flippers and his tail, as hard as he could for the hiccoughs; and at last he saw the Mariner's natal-shore and the white-cliffs-of-Albion, and he rushed half-way up the beach, and opened his mouth wide and wide and wide, and said, 'Change here for Winchester, Ashuelot, Nashua, Keene, and stations on the Fitchburg Road;' and just as he said 'Fitch' the Mariner walked out of his mouth. But while the Whale had been swimming, the Mariner, who was indeed a person of infinite-resource-and-sagacity, had taken his jack-knife and cut up the raft into a little square grating all running criss- cross, and he had tied it firm with his suspenders (*now, you know why you were not to forget the suspenders!*), and he dragged that grating good and tight into the Whale's throat, and there it stuck! Then he recited the following *Sloka*, which, as you have not heard it, I will now proceed to relate—

By means of a grating  
I have stopped your ating.

For the Mariner he was also an Hi-ber-ni-an. And he stepped out on the shingle, and went home to his mother, who had given him leave to trail his toes in the water; and he married and lived happily ever afterward. So did the Whale. But from that day on, the grating in his throat, which he could neither cough up nor swallow down, prevented him eating anything except very, very small fish; and that is the reason why whales nowadays never eat men or boys or little girls.

The small ‘Stute Fish went and hid himself in the mud under the Door-sills of the Equator. He was afraid that the Whale might be angry with him.

The Sailor took the jack-knife home. He was wearing the blue canvas breeches when he walked out on the shingle. The suspenders were left behind, you see, to tie the grating with; and that is the end of *that* tale.

WHEN the cabin port-holes are dark and green  
Because of the seas outside;  
When the ship goes *wop* (with a wiggle between)  
And the steward falls into the soup-tureen,  
And the trunks begin to slide;  
When Nursey lies on the floor in a heap,  
And Mummy tells you to let her sleep,  
And you aren’t waked or washed or dressed,  
Why, then you will know (if you haven’t guessed)  
You’re ‘Fifty North and Forty West!’

## **How the Camel Got His Hump**

NOW this is the next tale, and it tells how the Camel got his big hump.

In the beginning of years, when the world was so new and all, and the Animals were just beginning to work for Man, there was a Camel, and he lived in the middle of a Howling Desert because he did not want to work; and besides, he was a Howler himself. So he ate sticks and thorns and tamarisks and milkweed and prickles, most ‘scruciating idle; and when anybody spoke to him he said ‘Humph!’ Just ‘Humph!’ and no more.

Presently the Horse came to him on Monday morning, with a saddle on his back and a bit in his mouth, and said, ‘Camel, O Camel, come out and trot like the rest of us.’

‘Humph!’ said the Camel; and the Horse went away and told the Man.

Presently the Dog came to him, with a stick in his mouth, and said, ‘Camel, O Camel, come and fetch and carry like the rest of us.’

‘Humph!’ said the Camel; and the Dog went away and told the Man.

Presently the Ox came to him, with the yoke on his neck and said, ‘Camel, O Camel, come and plough like the rest of us.’

‘Humph!’ said the Camel; and the Ox went away and told the Man.

At the end of the day the Man called the Horse and the Dog and the Ox together, and said, ‘Three, O Three, I’m very sorry for you (with the world so new-and-all); but that Humph-thing in the Desert can’t work, or he would have been here by now, so I am going to leave him alone, and you must work double-time to make up for it.’

That made the Three very angry (with the world so new-and-all), and they held a palaver, and an *indaba*, and a *punchayet*, and a pow-wow on the edge of the Desert; and the Camel came chewing on milkweed *most* ‘scruciating idle, and laughed at them. Then he said ‘Humph!’ and went away again.

Presently there came along the Djinn in charge of All Deserts, rolling in a cloud of dust (Djinns always travel that way because it is Magic), and he stopped to palaver and pow-pow with the Three.

‘Djinn of All Deserts,’ said the Horse, ‘is it right for any one to be idle, with the world so new-and-all?’

‘Certainly not,’ said the Djinn.

‘Well,’ said the Horse, ‘there’s a thing in the middle of your Howling Desert (and he’s a Howler himself) with a long neck and long legs, and he hasn’t done a stroke of work since Monday morning. He won’t trot.’

‘Whew!’ said the Djinn, whistling, ‘that’s my Camel, for all the gold in Arabia! What does he say about it?’

‘He says "Humph!"’ said the Dog; ‘and he won’t fetch and carry.’

‘Does he say anything else?’

‘Only "Humph!"; and he won’t plough,’ said the Ox.

‘Very good,’ said the Djinn. ‘I’ll humph him if you will kindly wait a minute.’

The Djinn rolled himself up in his dust-cloak, and took a bearing across the desert, and found the Camel most ‘scruciatingly idle, looking at his own reflection in a pool of water.

‘My long and bubbling friend,’ said the Djinn, ‘what’s this I hear of your doing no work, with the world so new-and-all?’

‘Humph!’ said the Camel.

The Djinn sat down, with his chin in his hand, and began to think a Great Magic, while the Camel looked at his own reflection in the pool of water.

‘You’ve given the Three extra work ever since Monday morning, all on account of your ‘scruciating idleness,’ said the Djinn; and he went on thinking Magics, with his chin in his hand.

‘Humph!’ said the Camel.

‘I shouldn’t say that again if I were you,’ said the Djinn; you might say it once too often. Bubbles, I want you to work.’

And the Camel said ‘Humph!’ again; but no sooner had he said it than he saw his back, that he was so proud of, puffing up and puffing up into a great big lolloping humph.

‘Do you see that?’ said the Djinn. ‘That’s your very own humph that you’ve brought upon your very own self by not working. To-day is Thursday, and you’ve done no work since Monday, when the work began. Now you are going to work.’

‘How can I,’ said the Camel, ‘with this humph on my back?’

‘That’s made a-purpose,’ said the Djinn, ‘all because you missed those three days. You will be able to work now for three days without eating, because you can live on your humph; and don’t you ever say I never did anything for you. Come out of the Desert and go to the Three, and behave. Humph yourself!’

And the Camel humphed himself, humph and all, and went away to join the Three. And from that day to this the Camel always wears a humph (we call it ‘humph’ now, not to hurt his feelings); but he has never yet caught up with the three days that he missed at the beginning of the world, and he has never yet learned how to behave.

THE Camel’s hump is an ugly lump  
Which well you may see at the Zoo;  
But uglier yet is the hump we get  
From having too little to do.

Kiddies and grown-ups too-oo-oo,  
If we haven’t enough to do-oo-oo,  
We get the hump—  
Cameelious hump—  
The hump that is black and blue!

We climb out of bed with a frouzly head  
And a snarly-yarly voice.  
We shiver and scowl and we grunt and we growl  
At our bath and our boots and our toys;

And there ought to be a corner for me  
(And I know there is one for you)  
When we get the hump—  
Cameelious hump—  
The hump that is black and blue!

The cure for this ill is not to sit still,  
Or frowst with a book by the fire;

But to take a large hoe and a shovel also,  
And dig till you gently perspire;

And then you will find that the sun and the wind.  
And the Djinn of the Garden too,  
Have lifted the hump—  
The horrible hump—  
The hump that is black and blue!

I get it as well as you-oo-oo—  
If I haven't enough to do-oo-oo—  
We all get hump—  
Cameelious hump—  
Kiddies and grown-ups too!



## **How the Rhinoceros Got His Skin**

ONCE upon a time, on an uninhabited island on the shores of the Red Sea, there lived a Parsee from whose hat the rays of the sun were reflected in more-than-oriental splendour. And the Parsee lived by the Red Sea with nothing but his hat and his knife and a cooking-stove of the kind that you must particularly never touch. And one day he took flour and water and currants and plums and sugar and things, and made himself one cake which was two feet across and three feet thick. It was indeed a Superior Comestible (that's magic), and he put it on stove because he was allowed to cook on the stove, and he baked it and he baked it till it was all done brown and smelt most sentimental. But just as he was going to eat it there came down to the beach from the Altogether Uninhabited Interior one Rhinoceros with a horn on his nose, two piggy eyes, and few manners. In those days the Rhinoceros's skin fitted him quite tight. There were no wrinkles in it anywhere. He looked exactly like a Noah's Ark Rhinoceros, but of course much bigger. All the same, he had no manners then, and he has no manners now, and he never will have any manners. He said, 'How!' and the Parsee left that cake and climbed to the top of a palm tree with nothing on but his hat, from which the rays of the sun were always reflected in more-than-oriental splendour. And the Rhinoceros upset the oil-stove with his nose, and the cake rolled on the sand, and he spiked that cake on the horn of his nose, and he ate it, and he went away, waving his tail, to the desolate and Exclusively Uninhabited Interior which abuts on the islands of Mazanderan, Socotra, and Promontories of the Larger Equinox. Then the Parsee came down from his palm-tree and put the stove on its legs and recited the following Sloka, which, as you have not heard, I will now proceed to relate:—

Them that takes cakes  
Which the Parsee-man bakes  
Makes dreadful mistakes.

And there was a great deal more in that than you would think.

*Because*, five weeks later, there was a heat wave in the Red Sea, and everybody took off all the clothes they had. The Parsee took off his hat;

but the Rhinoceros took off his skin and carried it over his shoulder as he came down to the beach to bathe. In those days it buttoned underneath with three buttons and looked like a waterproof. He said nothing whatever about the Parsee's cake, because he had eaten it all; and he never had any manners, then, since, or henceforward. He waddled straight into the water and blew bubbles through his nose, leaving his skin on the beach.

Presently the Parsee came by and found the skin, and he smiled one smile that ran all round his face two times. Then he danced three times round the skin and rubbed his hands.

Then he went to his camp and filled his hat with cake-crumbs, for the Parsee never ate anything but cake, and never swept out his camp. He took that skin, and he shook that skin, and he scrubbed that skin, and he rubbed that skin just as full of old, dry, stale, tickly cake-crumbs and some burned currants as ever it could possibly hold. Then he climbed to the top of his palm-tree and waited for the Rhinoceros to come out of the water and put it on.

And the Rhinoceros did. He buttoned it up with the three buttons, and it tickled like cake crumbs in bed. Then he wanted to scratch, but that made it worse; and then he lay down on the sands and rolled and rolled and rolled, and every time he rolled the cake crumbs tickled him worse and worse and worse. Then he ran to the palm-tree and rubbed and rubbed and rubbed himself against it. He rubbed so much and so hard that he rubbed his skin into a great fold over his shoulders, and another fold underneath, where the buttons used to be (but he rubbed the buttons off), and he rubbed some more folds over his legs. And it spoiled his temper, but it didn't make the least difference to the cake-crumbs. They were inside his skin and they tickled. So he went home, very angry indeed and horribly scratchy; and from that day to this every rhinoceros has great folds in his skin and a very bad temper, all on account of the cake-crumbs inside.

But the Parsee came down from his palm-tree, wearing his hat, from which the rays of the sun were reflected in more-than-oriental splendour, packed up his cooking-stove, and went away in the direction of Orotavo,

Amygdala, the Upland Meadows of Anantarivo, and the Marshes of Sonaput.

THIS Uninhabited Island  
Is off Cape Gardafui,  
By the Beaches of Socotra  
And the Pink Arabian Sea:  
But it's hot—too hot from Suez  
For the likes of you and me  
Ever to go  
In a P. and O.  
And call on the Cake-Parsee!

## **How the Leopard Got His Spots**

IN the days when everybody started fair, Best Beloved, the Leopard lived in a place called the High Veldt. ‘Member it wasn’t the Low Veldt, or the Bush Veldt, or the Sour Veldt, but the ‘sclusively bare, hot, shiny High Veldt, where there was sand and sandy-coloured rock and ‘sclusively tufts of sandy- yellowish grass. The Giraffe and the Zebra and the Eland and the Koodoo and the Hartebeest lived there; and they were ‘sclusively sandy-yellow-brownish all over; but the Leopard, he was the ‘sclusivest sandiest-yellowish-brownest of them all—a greyish-yellowish catty-shaped kind of beast, and he matched the ‘sclusively yellowish-greyish-brownish colour of the High Veldt to one hair. This was very bad for the Giraffe and the Zebra and the rest of them; for he would lie down by a ‘sclusively yellowish-greyish-brownish stone or clump of grass, and when the Giraffe or the Zebra or the Eland or the Koodoo or the Bush-Buck or the Bonte-Buck came by he would surprise them out of their jumpsome lives. He would indeed! And, also, there was an Ethiopian with bows and arrows (a ‘sclusively greyish-brownish-yellowish man he was then), who lived on the High Veldt with the Leopard; and the two used to hunt together—the Ethiopian with his bows and arrows, and the Leopard ‘sclusively with his teeth and claws—till the Giraffe and the Eland and the Koodoo and the Quagga and all the rest of them didn’t know which way to jump, Best Beloved. They didn’t indeed!

After a long time—things lived for ever so long in those days—they learned to avoid anything that looked like a Leopard or an Ethiopian; and bit by bit—the Giraffe began it, because his legs were the longest—they went away from the High Veldt. They scuttled for days and days and days till they came to a great forest, ‘sclusively full of trees and bushes and stripy, speckly, patchy-blatchy shadows, and there they hid: and after another long time, what with standing half in the shade and half out of it, and what with the slippery-slidy shadows of the trees falling on them, the Giraffe grew blotchy, and the Zebra grew stripy, and the Eland and the Koodoo grew darker, with little wavy grey lines on their backs like bark on a tree trunk; and so, though you could hear them and smell them, you could very seldom see them, and then only when you knew precisely where to look. They had a beautiful time in the ‘sclusively speckly-spickly shadows of the forest, while the Leopard and the Ethiopian ran

about over the ‘sclusively greyish-yellowish-reddish High Veldt outside, wondering where all their breakfasts and their dinners and their teas had gone. At last they were so hungry that they ate rats and beetles and rock-rabbits, the Leopard and the Ethiopian, and then they had the Big Tummy-ache, both together; and then they met Baviaan—the dog-headed, barking Baboon, who is Quite the Wisest Animal in All South Africa.

Said Leopard to Baviaan (and it was a very hot day), ‘Where has all the game gone?’

And Baviaan winked. *He* knew.

Said the Ethiopian to Baviaan, ‘Can you tell me the present habitat of the aboriginal Fauna?’ (That meant just the same thing, but the Ethiopian always used long words. He was a grown-up.)

And Baviaan winked. *He* knew.

Then said Baviaan, ‘The game has gone into other spots; and my advice to you, Leopard, is to go into other spots as soon as you can.’

And the Ethiopian said, ‘That is all very fine, but I wish to know whither the aboriginal Fauna has migrated.’

Then said Baviaan, ‘The aboriginal Fauna has joined the aboriginal Flora because it was high time for a change; and my advice to you, Ethiopian, is to change as soon as you can.’

That puzzled the Leopard and the Ethiopian, but they set off to look for the aboriginal Flora, and presently, after ever so many days, they saw a great, high, tall forest full of tree trunks all ‘sclusively speckled and sprottled and spottled, dotted and splashed and slashed and hatched and cross-hatched with shadows. (Say that quickly aloud, and you will see how very shadowy the forest must have been.)

‘What is this,’ said the Leopard, ‘that is so ‘sclusively dark, and yet so full of little pieces of light?’

‘I don’t know, said the Ethiopian, ‘but it ought to be the aboriginal Flora. I can smell Giraffe, and I can hear Giraffe, but I can’t see Giraffe.’

‘That’s curious,’ said the Leopard. ‘I suppose it is because we have just come in out of the sunshine. I can smell Zebra, and I can hear Zebra, but I can’t see Zebra.’

‘Wait a bit, said the Ethiopian. ‘It’s a long time since we’ve hunted ‘em. Perhaps we’ve forgotten what they were like.’

‘Fiddle!’ said the Leopard. ‘I remember them perfectly on the High Veldt, especially their marrow-bones. Giraffe is about seventeen feet high, of a ‘sclusively fulvous golden-yellow from head to heel; and Zebra is about four and a half feet high, of a ‘sclusively grey-fawn colour from head to heel.’

‘Umm, said the Ethiopian, looking into the speckly-spickly shadows of the aboriginal Flora-forest. ‘Then they ought to show up in this dark place like ripe bananas in a smokehouse.’

But they didn’t. The Leopard and the Ethiopian hunted all day; and though they could smell them and hear them, they never saw one of them.

‘For goodness’ sake,’ said the Leopard at tea-time, ‘let us wait till it gets dark. This daylight hunting is a perfect scandal.’

So they waited till dark, and then the Leopard heard something breathing sniffily in the starlight that fell all stripy through the branches, and he jumped at the noise, and it smelt like Zebra, and it felt like Zebra, and when he knocked it down it kicked like Zebra, but he couldn’t see it. So he said, ‘Be quiet, O you person without any form. I am going to sit on your head till morning, because there is something about you that I don’t understand.’

Presently he heard a grunt and a crash and a scramble, and the Ethiopian called out, ‘I’ve caught a thing that I can’t see. It smells like Giraffe, and it kicks like Giraffe, but it hasn’t any form.’

‘Don’t you trust it,’ said the Leopard. ‘Sit on its head till the morning—same as me. They haven’t any form—any of ‘em.’

So they sat down on them hard till bright morning-time, and then Leopard said, ‘What have you at your end of the table, Brother?’

The Ethiopian scratched his head and said, ‘It ought to be ‘sclusively a rich fulvous orange-tawny from head to heel, and it ought to be Giraffe; but it is covered all over with chestnut blotches. What have you at your end of the table, Brother?’

And the Leopard scratched his head and said, ‘It ought to be ‘sclusively a delicate greyish-fawn, and it ought to be Zebra; but it is

covered all over with black and purple stripes. What in the world have you been doing to yourself, Zebra? Don't you know that if you were on the High Veldt I could see you ten miles off? You haven't any form.'

'Yes,' said the Zebra, 'but this isn't the High Veldt. Can't you see?'

'I can now,' said the Leopard. 'But I couldn't all yesterday. How is it done?'

'Let us up,' said the Zebra, 'and we will show you.'

They let the Zebra and the Giraffe get up; and Zebra moved away to some little thorn-bushes where the sunlight fell all stripy, and Giraffe moved off to some tallish trees where the shadows fell all blotchy.

'Now watch,' said the Zebra and the Giraffe. 'This is the way it's done. One—two—three! And where's your breakfast?'

Leopard stared, and Ethiopian stared, but all they could see were stripy shadows and blotched shadows in the forest, but never a sign of Zebra and Giraffe. They had just walked off and hidden themselves in the shadowy forest.

'Hi! Hi!' said the Ethiopian. 'That's a trick worth learning. Take a lesson by it, Leopard. You show up in this dark place like a bar of soap in a coal-scuttle.'

'Ho! Ho!' said the Leopard. 'Would it surprise you very much to know that you show up in this dark place like a mustard-plaster on a sack of coals?'

'Well, calling names won't catch dinner, said the Ethiopian. 'The long and the little of it is that we don't match our backgrounds. I'm going to take Baviaan's advice. He told me I ought to change; and as I've nothing to change except my skin I'm going to change that.'

'What to?' said the Leopard, tremendously excited.

'To a nice working blackish-brownish colour, with a little purple in it, and touches of slaty-blue. It will be the very thing for hiding in hollows and behind trees.'

So he changed his skin then and there, and the Leopard was more excited than ever; he had never seen a man change his skin before.

'But what about me?' he said, when the Ethiopian had worked his last little finger into his fine new black skin.

'You take Baviaan's advice too. He told you to go into spots.'

‘So I did,’ said the Leopard. I went into other spots as fast as I could. I went into this spot with you, and a lot of good it has done me.’

‘Oh,’ said the Ethiopian, ‘Baviana didn’t mean spots in South Africa. He meant spots on your skin.’

‘What’s the use of that?’ said the Leopard.

‘Think of Giraffe,’ said the Ethiopian. ‘Or if you prefer stripes, think of Zebra. They find their spots and stripes give them per-fect satisfaction.’

‘Umm,’ said the Leopard. ‘I wouldn’t look like Zebra—not for ever so.’

‘Well, make up your mind,’ said the Ethiopian, ‘because I’d hate to go hunting without you, but I must if you insist on looking like a sun-flower against a tarred fence.’

‘I’ll take spots, then,’ said the Leopard; ‘but don’t make ‘em too vulgar-big. I wouldn’t look like Giraffe—not for ever so.’

‘I’ll make ‘em with the tips of my fingers,’ said the Ethiopian. ‘There’s plenty of black left on my skin still. Stand over!’

Then the Ethiopian put his five fingers close together (there was plenty of black left on his new skin still) and pressed them all over the Leopard, and wherever the five fingers touched they left five little black marks, all close together. You can see them on any Leopard’s skin you like, Best Beloved. Sometimes the fingers slipped and the marks got a little blurred; but if you look closely at any Leopard now you will see that there are always five spots—off five fat black finger-tips.

‘Now you *are* a beauty!’ said the Ethiopian.

‘You can lie out on the bare ground and look like a heap of pebbles. You can lie out on the naked rocks and look like a piece of pudding-stone. You can lie out on a leafy branch and look like sunshine sifting through the leaves; and you can lie right across the centre of a path and look like nothing in particular. Think of that and purr!’

‘But if I’m all this,’ said the Leopard, ‘why didn’t you go spotty too?’

‘Oh, plain black’s best for a nigger,’ said the Ethiopian. ‘Now come along and we’ll see if we can’t get even with Mr. One-Two-Three-Where’s-your-Breakfast!’

So they went away and lived happily ever afterward, Best Beloved. That is all.

Oh, now and then you will hear grown-ups say, ‘Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the Leopard his spots?’ I don’t think even grown-ups would keep on saying such a silly thing if the Leopard and the Ethiopian hadn’t done it once—do you? But they will never do it again, Best Beloved. They are quite contented as they are.

I AM the Most Wise Baviaan, saying in most wise tones,  
‘Let us melt into the landscape—just us two by our lones.’  
People have come—in a carriage—calling. But Mummy is there....  
Yes, I can go if you take me—Nurse says she don’t care.  
Let’s go up to the pig-sties and sit on the farmyard rails!  
Let’s say things to the bunnies, and watch ‘em skitter their tails!  
Let’s—oh, anything, daddy, so long as it’s you and me,  
And going truly exploring, and not being in till tea!  
Here’s your boots (I’ve brought ‘em), and here’s your cap and stick,  
And here’s your pipe and tobacco. Oh, come along out of it—quick.



## **The Elephant's Child**

IN the High and Far-Off Times the Elephant, O Best Beloved, had no trunk. He had only a blackish, bulgy nose, as big as a boot, that he could wriggle about from side to side; but he couldn't pick up things with it. But there was one Elephant—a new Elephant—an Elephant's Child—who was full of 'satiableness', and that means he asked ever so many questions. And he lived in Africa, and he filled all Africa with his 'satiableness'. He asked his tall aunt, the Ostrich, why her tail-feathers grew just so, and his tall aunt the Ostrich spanked him with her hard, hard claw.

He asked his tall uncle, the Giraffe, what made his skin spotty, and his tall uncle, the Giraffe, spanked him with his hard, hard hoof. And still he was full of 'satiableness'! He asked his broad aunt, the Hippopotamus, why her eyes were red, and his broad aunt, the Hippopotamus, spanked him with her broad, broad hoof; and he asked his hairy uncle, the Baboon, why melons tasted just so, and his hairy uncle, the Baboon, spanked him with his hairy, hairy paw. And still he was full of 'satiableness'! He asked questions about everything that he saw, or heard, or felt, or smelt, or touched, and all his uncles and his aunts spanked him. And still he was full of 'satiableness'!

One fine morning in the middle of the Precession of the Equinoxes this 'satiableness' Elephant's Child asked a new fine question that he had never asked before. He asked, 'What does the Crocodile have for dinner?' Then everybody said, 'Hush!' in a loud and dreadful tone, and they spanked him immediately and directly, without stopping, for a long time.

By and by, when that was finished, he came upon Kolokolo Bird sitting in the middle of a wait-a-bit thorn-bush, and he said, 'My father has spanked me, and my mother has spanked me; all my aunts and uncles have spanked me for my 'satiableness'; and *still* I want to know what the Crocodile has for dinner!'

Then Kolokolo Bird said, with a mournful cry, 'Go to the banks of the great grey-green, greasy Limpopo River, all set about with fever-trees, and find out.'

That very next morning, when there was nothing left of the Equinoxes, because the Precession had preceded according to precedent,

this ‘satiabable Elephant’s Child took a hundred pounds of bananas (the little short red kind), and a hundred pounds of sugar-cane (the long purple kind), and seventeen melons (the greeny-crackly kind), and said to all his dear families, ‘Goodbye. I am going to the great grey-green, greasy Limpopo River, all set about with fever-trees, to find out what the Crocodile has for dinner.’ And they all spanked him once more for luck, though he asked them most politely to stop.

Then he went away, a little warm, but not at all astonished, eating melons, and throwing the rind about, because he could not pick it up.

He went from Graham’s Town to Kimberley, and from Kimberley to Khama’s Country, and from Khama’s Country he went east by north, eating melons all the time, till at last he came to the banks of the great grey-green, greasy Limpopo River, all set about with fever-trees, precisely as Kolokolo Bird had said.

Now you must know and understand, O Best Beloved, that till that very week, and day, and hour, and minute, this ‘satiabable Elephant’s Child had never seen a Crocodile, and did not know what one was like. It was all his ‘satiabable curiosity.

The first thing that he found was a Bi-Coloured-Python-Rock-Snake curled round a rock.

“‘Scuse me,’ said the Elephant’s Child most politely, ‘but have you seen such a thing as a Crocodile in these promiscuous parts?’

‘Have I seen a Crocodile?’ said the Bi-Coloured-Python-Rock-Snake, in a voice of dretful scorn. ‘What will you ask me next?’

“‘Scuse me,’ said the Elephant’s Child, ‘but could you kindly tell me what he has for dinner?’

Then the Bi-Coloured-Python-Rock-Snake uncoiled himself very quickly from the rock, and spanked the Elephant’s Child with his scalesome, flailsome tail.

‘That is odd,’ said the Elephant’s Child, ‘because my father and my mother, and my uncle and my aunt, not to mention my other aunt, the Hippopotamus, and my other uncle, the Baboon, have all spanked me for my ‘satiabable curiosity—and I suppose this is the same thing.

So he said good-bye very politely to the Bi-Coloured-Python-Rock-Snake, and helped to coil him up on the rock again, and went on, a little

warm, but not at all astonished, eating melons, and throwing the rind about, because he could not pick it up, till he trod on what he thought was a log of wood at the very edge of the great grey-green, greasy Limpopo River, all set about with fever-trees.

But it was really the Crocodile, O Best Beloved, and the Crocodile winked one eye—like this!

‘Scuse me,’ said the Elephant’s Child most politely, ‘but do you happen to have seen a Crocodile in these promiscuous parts?’

Then the Crocodile winked the other eye, and lifted half his tail out of the mud; and the Elephant’s Child stepped back most politely, because he did not wish to be spanked again.

‘Come hither, Little One,’ said the Crocodile. ‘Why do you ask such things?’

‘Scuse me,’ said the Elephant’s Child most politely, ‘but my father has spanked me, my mother has spanked me, not to mention my tall aunt, the Ostrich, and my tall uncle, the Giraffe, who can kick ever so hard, as well as my broad aunt, the Hippopotamus, and my hairy uncle, the Baboon, *and* including the Bi-Coloured-Python-Rock-Snake, with the scalesome, flailsome tail, just up the bank, who spansks harder than any of them; and *so*, if it’s quite all the same to you, I don’t want to be spanked any more.’

‘Come hither, Little One,’ said the Crocodile, ‘for I am the Crocodile,’ and he wept crocodile-tears to show it was quite true.

Then the Elephant’s Child grew all breathless, and panted, and kneeled down on the bank and said, ‘You are the very person I have been looking for all these long days. Will you please tell me what you have for dinner?’

‘Come hither, Little One,’ said the Crocodile, ‘and I’ll whisper.’

Then the Elephant’s Child put his head down close to the Crocodile’s musky, tusky mouth, and the Crocodile caught him by his little nose, which up to that very week, day, hour, and minute, had been no bigger than a boot, though much more useful.

‘I think, said the Crocodile—and he said it between his teeth, like this—‘I think to-day I will begin with Elephant’s Child!’

At this, O Best Beloved, the Elephant's Child was much annoyed, and he said, speaking through his nose, like this, 'Led go! You are hurtig be!'

Then the Bi-Coloured-Python-Rock-Snake scuffled down from the bank and said, 'My young friend, if you do not now, immediately and instantly, pull as hard as ever you can, it is my opinion that your acquaintance in the large-pattern leather ulster' (and by this he meant the Crocodile) 'will jerk you into yonder limpid stream before you can say Jack Robinson.'

This is the way Bi-Coloured-Python-Rock-Snakes always talk.

Then the Elephant's Child sat back on his little haunches, and pulled, and pulled, and pulled, and his nose began to stretch. And the Crocodile floundered into the water, making it all creamy with great sweeps of his tail, and *he* pulled, and pulled, and pulled.

And the Elephant's Child's nose kept on stretching; and the Elephant's Child spread all his little four legs and pulled, and pulled, and pulled, and his nose kept on stretching; and the Crocodile threshed his tail like an oar, and *he* pulled, and pulled, and pulled, and at each pull the Elephant's Child's nose grew longer and longer—and it hurt him hijjus!

Then the Elephant's Child felt his legs slipping, and he said through his nose, which was now nearly five feet long, 'This is too butch for be!'

Then the Bi-Coloured-Python-Rock-Snake came down from the bank, and knotted himself in a double-clove-hitch round the Elephant's Child's hind legs, and said, 'Rash and inexperienced traveller, we will now seriously devote ourselves to a little high tension, because if we do not, it is my impression that yonder self-propelling man-of-war with the armour-plated upper deck' (and by this, O Best Beloved, he meant the Crocodile), 'will permanently vitiate your future career.'

That is the way all Bi-Coloured-Python-Rock-Snakes always talk.

So he pulled, and the Elephant's Child pulled, and the Crocodile pulled; but the Elephant's Child and the Bi-Coloured-Python-Rock-Snake pulled hardest; and at last the Crocodile let go of the Elephant's Child's nose with a plop that you could hear all up and down the Limpopo.

Then the Elephant's Child sat down most hard and sudden; but first he was careful to say 'Thank you' to the Bi-Coloured-Python-Rock-Snake; and next he was kind to his poor pulled nose, and wrapped it all up in cool banana leaves, and hung it in the great grey-green, greasy Limpopo to cool.

'What are you doing that for?' said the Bi-Coloured-Python-Rock-Snake.

'Scuse me,' said the Elephant's Child, 'but my nose is badly out of shape, and I am waiting for it to shrink.'

'Then you will have to wait a long time, said the Bi-Coloured-Python-Rock-Snake. 'Some people do not know what is good for them.'

The Elephant's Child sat there for three days waiting for his nose to shrink. But it never grew any shorter, and, besides, it made him squint. For, O Best Beloved, you will see and understand that the Crocodile had pulled it out into a really truly trunk same as all Elephants have to-day.

At the end of the third day a fly came and stung him on the shoulder, and before he knew what he was doing he lifted up his trunk and hit that fly dead with the end of it.

'Vantage number one!' said the Bi-Coloured-Python-Rock-Snake. 'You couldn't have done that with a mere-smear nose. Try and eat a little now.'

Before he thought what he was doing the Elephant's Child put out his trunk and plucked a large bundle of grass, dusted it clean against his fore-legs, and stuffed it into his own mouth.

'Vantage number two!' said the Bi-Coloured-Python-Rock-Snake. 'You couldn't have done that with a mere-smear nose. Don't you think the sun is very hot here?'

'It is,' said the Elephant's Child, and before he thought what he was doing he schlooped up a schloop of mud from the banks of the great grey-green, greasy Limpopo, and slapped it on his head, where it made a cool schloopy-sloshy mud-cap all trickly behind his ears.

'Vantage number three!' said the Bi-Coloured-Python-Rock-Snake. 'You couldn't have done that with a mere-smear nose. Now how do you feel about being spanked again?'

‘Scuse me,’ said the Elephant’s Child, ‘but I should not like it at all.’

‘How would you like to spank somebody?’ said the Bi-Coloured-Python-Rock-Snake.

‘I should like it very much indeed,’ said the Elephant’s Child.

‘Well,’ said the Bi-Coloured-Python-Rock-Snake, ‘you will find that new nose of yours very useful to spank people with.’

‘Thank you,’ said the Elephant’s Child, ‘I’ll remember that; and now I think I’ll go home to all my dear families and try.’

So the Elephant’s Child went home across Africa frisking and whisking his trunk. When he wanted fruit to eat he pulled fruit down from a tree, instead of waiting for it to fall as he used to do. When he wanted grass he plucked grass up from the ground, instead of going on his knees as he used to do. When the flies bit him he broke off the branch of a tree and used it as fly-whisk; and he made himself a new, cool, slushy-squishy mud-cap whenever the sun was hot. When he felt lonely walking through Africa he sang to himself down his trunk, and the noise was louder than several brass bands.

He went especially out of his way to find a broad Hippopotamus (she was no relation of his), and he spanked her very hard, to make sure that the Bi-Coloured-Python-Rock-Snake had spoken the truth about his new trunk. The rest of the time he picked up the melon rinds that he had dropped on his way to the Limpopo—for he was a Tidy Pachyderm.

One dark evening he came back to all his dear families, and he coiled up his trunk and said, ‘How do you do?’ They were very glad to see him, and immediately said, ‘Come here and be spanked for your ‘satiabile curiosity.’

‘Pooh,’ said the Elephant’s Child. ‘I don’t think you peoples know anything about spanking; but I do, and I’ll show you.’ Then he uncurled his trunk and knocked two of his dear brothers head over heels.

‘O Bananas!’ said they, ‘where did you learn that trick, and what have you done to your nose?’

‘I got a new one from the Crocodile on the banks of the great grey-green, greasy Limpopo River,’ said the Elephant’s Child. ‘I asked him what he had for dinner, and he gave me this to keep.’

‘It looks very ugly,’ said his hairy uncle, the Baboon.

‘It does,’ said the Elephant’s Child. ‘But it’s very useful,’ and he picked up his hairy uncle, the Baboon, by one hairy leg, and hove him into a hornet’s nest.

Then that bad Elephant’s Child spanked all his dear families for a long time, till they were very warm and greatly astonished. He pulled out his tall Ostrich aunt’s tail-feathers; and he caught his tall uncle, the Giraffe, by the hind-leg, and dragged him through a thorn-bush; and he shouted at his broad aunt, the Hippopotamus, and blew bubbles into her ear when she was sleeping in the water after meals; but he never let any one touch Kolokolo Bird.

At last things grew so exciting that his dear families went off one by one in a hurry to the banks of the great grey-green, greasy Limpopo River, all set about with fever-trees, to borrow new noses from the Crocodile. When they came back nobody spanked anybody any more; and ever since that day, O Best Beloved, all the Elephants you will ever see, besides all those that you won’t, have trunks precisely like the trunk of the ‘satiabie Elephant’s Child.

I Keep six honest serving-men:  
    (They taught me all I knew)  
Their names are What and Where and When  
    And How and Why and Who.  
I send them over land and sea,  
    I send them east and west;  
But after they have worked for me,  
    I give them all a rest.

I let them rest from nine till five.  
    For I am busy then,  
As well as breakfast, lunch, and tea,  
    For they are hungry men:  
But different folk have different views:  
    I know a person small—  
She keeps ten million serving-men,

Who get no rest at all!  
She sends 'em abroad on her own affairs,  
From the second she opens her eyes—  
One million Hows, two million Wheres,  
And seven million Whys!



## **The Sing-Song of Old Man Kangaroo**

NOT always was the Kangaroo as now we do behold him, but a Different Animal with four short legs. He was grey and he was woolly, and his pride was inordinate: he danced on an outcrop in the middle of Australia, and he went to the Little God Nqa.

He went to Nqa at six before breakfast, saying, ‘Make me different from all other animals by five this afternoon.’

Up jumped Nqa from his seat on the sandflat and shouted, ‘Go away!’

He was grey and he was woolly, and his pride was inordinate: he danced on a rock-ledge in the middle of Australia, and he went to the Middle God Nqing.

He went to Nqing at eight after breakfast, saying, ‘Make me different from all other animals; make me, also, wonderfully popular by five this afternoon.’

Up jumped Nqing from his burrow in the spinifex and shouted, ‘Go away!’

He was grey and he was woolly, and his pride was inordinate: he danced on a sandbank in the middle of Australia, and he went to the Big God Nqong.

He went to Nqong at ten before dinner-time, saying, ‘Make me different from all other animals; make me popular and wonderfully run after by five this afternoon.’

Up jumped Nqong from his bath in the salt-pan and shouted, ‘Yes, I will!’

Nqong called Dingo—Yellow-Dog Dingo—always hungry, dusty in the sunshine, and showed him Kangaroo. Nqong said, ‘Dingo! Wake up, Dingo! Do you see that gentleman dancing on an ashpit? He wants to be popular and very truly run after. Dingo, make him SO!’

Up jumped Dingo—Yellow-Dog Dingo—and said, ‘What, that cat-rabbit?’

Off ran Dingo—Yellow-Dog Dingo—always hungry, grinning like a coal-scuttle,—ran after Kangaroo.

Off went the proud Kangaroo on his four little legs like a bunny.

This, O Beloved of mine, ends the first part of the tale!

He ran through the desert; he ran through the mountains; he ran through the salt-pans; he ran through the reed-beds; he ran through the blue gums; he ran through the spinifex; he ran till his front legs ached.

He had to!

Still ran Dingo—Yellow-Dog Dingo—always hungry, grinning like a rat-trap, never getting nearer, never getting farther,—ran after Kangaroo.

He had to!

Still ran Kangaroo—Old Man Kangaroo. He ran through the ti-trees; he ran through the mulga; he ran through the long grass; he ran through the short grass; he ran through the Tropics of Capricorn and Cancer; he ran till his hind legs ached.

He had to!

Still ran Dingo—Yellow-Dog Dingo—hungrier and hungrier, grinning like a horse-collar, never getting nearer, never getting farther; and they came to the Wollgong River.

Now, there wasn't any bridge, and there wasn't any ferry-boat, and Kangaroo didn't know how to get over; so he stood on his legs and hopped.

He had to!

He hopped through the Flinders; he hopped through the Cinders; he hopped through the deserts in the middle of Australia. He hopped like a Kangaroo.

First he hopped one yard; then he hopped three yards; then he hopped five yards; his legs growing stronger; his legs growing longer. He hadn't any time for rest or refreshment, and he wanted them very much.

Still ran Dingo—Yellow-Dog Dingo—very much bewildered, very much hungry, and wondering what in the world or out of it made Old Man Kangaroo hop.

For he hopped like a cricket; like a pea in a saucepan; or a new rubber ball on a nursery floor.

He had to!

He tucked up his front legs; he hopped on his hind legs; he stuck out his tail for a balance-weight behind him; and he hopped through the Darling Downs.

He had to!

Still ran Dingo—Tired-Dog Dingo—hungrier and hungrier, very much bewildered, and wondering when in the world or out of it would Old Man Kangaroo stop.

Then came Nqong from his bath in the salt-pans, and said, 'It's five o'clock.'

Down sat Dingo—Poor Dog Dingo—always hungry, dusky in the sunshine; hung out his tongue and howled.

Down sat Kangaroo—Old Man Kangaroo—stuck out his tail like a milking-stool behind him, and said, 'Thank goodness that's finished!'

Then said Nqong, who is always a gentleman, 'Why aren't you grateful to Yellow-Dog Dingo? Why don't you thank him for all he has done for you?'

Then said Kangaroo—Tired Old Kangaroo—He's chased me out of the homes of my childhood; he's chased me out of my regular meal-times; he's altered my shape so I'll never get it back; and he's played Old Scratch with my legs.'

Then said Nqong, 'Perhaps I'm mistaken, but didn't you ask me to make you different from all other animals, as well as to make you very truly sought after? And now it is five o'clock.'

'Yes,' said Kangaroo. 'I wish that I hadn't. I thought you would do it by charms and incantations, but this is a practical joke.'

'Joke!' said Nqong from his bath in the blue gums. 'Say that again and I'll whistle up Dingo and run your hind legs off.'

'No,' said the Kangaroo. 'I must apologise. Legs are legs, and you needn't alter 'em so far as I am concerned. I only meant to explain to Your Lordliness that I've had nothing to eat since morning, and I'm very empty indeed.'

'Yes,' said Dingo—Yellow-Dog Dingo,—'I am just in the same situation. I've made him different from all other animals; but what may I have for my tea?'

Then said Nqong from his bath in the salt-pan, 'Come and ask me about it tomorrow, because I'm going to wash.'

So they were left in the middle of Australia, Old Man Kangaroo and Yellow-Dog Dingo, and each said, 'That's your fault.'

THIS is the mouth-filling song  
Of the race that was run by a Boomer,  
Run in a single burst—only event of its kind—  
Started by big God Nqong from Warrigaborrigarooma,  
Old Man Kangaroo first: Yellow-Dog Dingo behind.

Kangaroo bounded away,  
His back-legs working like pistons—  
Bounded from morning till dark,  
Twenty-five feet to a bound.  
Yellow-Dog Dingo lay  
Like a yellow cloud in the distance—  
Much too busy to bark.  
My! but they covered the ground!

Nobody knows where they went,  
Or followed the track that they flew in,  
For that Continent  
Hadn't been given a name.  
They ran thirty degrees,  
From Torres Straits to the Leeuwin  
(Look at the Atlas, please),  
And they ran back as they came.

S'posing you could trot  
From Adelaide to the Pacific,  
For an afternoon's run  
Half what these gentlemen did  
You would feel rather hot,  
But your legs would develop terrific—  
Yes, my importunate son,  
You'd be a Marvellous Kid!



## **The Beginning of the Armadillos**

THIS, O Best Beloved, is another story of the High and Far-Off Times. In the very middle of those times was a Sticky-Prickly Hedgehog, and he lived on the banks of the turbid Amazon, eating shelly snails and things. And he had a friend, a Slow- Solid Tortoise, who lived on the banks of the turbid Amazon, eating green lettuces and things. And so that was all right, Best Beloved. Do you see?

But also, and at the same time, in those High and Far-Off Times, there was a Painted Jaguar, and he lived on the banks of the turbid Amazon too; and he ate everything that he could catch. When he could not catch deer or monkeys he would eat frogs and beetles; and when he could not catch frogs and beetles he went to his Mother Jaguar, and she told him how to eat hedgehogs and tortoises.

She said to him ever so many times, graciously waving her tail, ‘My son, when you find a Hedgehog you must drop him into the water and then he will uncoil, and when you catch a Tortoise you must scoop him out of his shell with your paw.’ And so that was all right, Best Beloved.

One beautiful night on the banks of the turbid Amazon, Painted Jaguar found Sticky-Prickly Hedgehog and Slow-Solid Tortoise sitting under the trunk of a fallen tree. They could not run away, and so Sticky-Prickly curled himself up into a ball, because he was a Hedgehog, and Slow-Solid Tortoise drew in his head and feet into his shell as far as they would go, because he was a Tortoise; and so that was all right, Best Beloved. Do you see?

‘Now attend to me,’ said Painted Jaguar, ‘because this is very important. My mother said that when I meet a Hedgehog I am to drop him into the water and then he will uncoil, and when I meet a Tortoise I am to scoop him out of his shell with my paw. Now which of you is Hedgehog and which is Tortoise? because, to save my spots, I can’t tell.’

‘Are you sure of what your Mummy told you?’ said Sticky-Prickly Hedgehog. ‘Are you quite sure? Perhaps she said that when you uncoil a Tortoise you must shell him out the water with a scoop, and when you paw a Hedgehog you must drop him on the shell.’

‘Are you sure of what your Mummy told you?’ said Slow-and-Solid Tortoise. ‘Are you quite sure? Perhaps she said that when you water a

Hedgehog you must drop him into your paw, and when you meet a Tortoise you must shell him till he uncoils.’

‘I don’t think it was at all like that,’ said Painted Jaguar, but he felt a little puzzled; ‘but, please, say it again more distinctly.’

‘When you scoop water with your paw you uncoil it with a Hedgehog,’ said Stickly-Prickly. ‘Remember that, because it’s important.’

‘But,’ said the Tortoise, ‘when you paw your meat you drop it into a Tortoise with a scoop. Why can’t you understand?’

‘You are making my spots ache,’ said Painted Jaguar; ‘and besides, I didn’t want your advice at all. I only wanted to know which of you is Hedgehog and which is Tortoise.’

‘I shan’t tell you,’ said Stickly-Prickly. ‘but you can scoop me out of my shell if you like.’

‘Aha!’ said Painted Jaguar. ‘Now I know you’re Tortoise. You thought I wouldn’t! Now I will.’ Painted Jaguar darted out his paddy-paw just as Stickly-Prickly curled himself up, and of course Jaguar’s paddy-paw was just filled with prickles. Worse than that, he knocked Stickly-Prickly away and away into the woods and the bushes, where it was too dark to find him. Then he put his paddy-paw into his mouth, and of course the prickles hurt him worse than ever. As soon as he could speak he said, ‘Now I know he isn’t Tortoise at all. But’—and then he scratched his head with his un-prickly paw—‘how do I know that this other is Tortoise?’

‘But I am Tortoise,’ said Slow-and-Solid. Your mother was quite right. She said that you were to scoop me out of my shell with your paw. Begin.’

‘You didn’t say she said that a minute ago, said Painted Jaguar, sucking the prickles out of his paddy-paw. ‘You said she said something quite different.’

‘Well, suppose you say that I said that she said something quite different, I don’t see that it makes any difference; because if she said what you said I said she said, it’s just the same as if I said what she said she said. On the other hand, if you think she said that you were to uncoil

me with a scoop, instead of pawing me into drops with a shell, I can't help that, can I?"

"But you said you wanted to be scooped out of your shell with my paw," said Painted Jaguar.

"If you'll think again you'll find that I didn't say anything of the kind. I said that your mother said that you were to scoop me out of my shell," said Slow-and-Solid.

"What will happen if I do?" said the Jaguar most sniffily and most cautious.

"I don't know, because I've never been scooped out of my shell before; but I tell you truly, if you want to see me swim away you've only got to drop me into the water.

"I don't believe it," said Painted Jaguar. "You've mixed up all the things my mother told me to do with the things that you asked me whether I was sure that she didn't say, till I don't know whether I'm on my head or my painted tail; and now you come and tell me something I can understand, and it makes me more mixy than before. My mother told me that I was to drop one of you two into the water, and as you seem so anxious to be dropped I think you don't want to be dropped. So jump into the turbid Amazon and be quick about it."

"I warn you that your Mummy won't be pleased. Don't tell her I didn't tell you," said Slow-Solid.

"If you say another word about what my mother said—" the Jaguar answered, but he had not finished the sentence before Slow-and-Solid quietly dived into the turbid Amazon, swam under water for a long way, and came out on the bank where Sticky-Prickly was waiting for him.

"That was a very narrow escape," said Sticky-Prickly. "I don't rib Painted Jaguar. What did you tell him that you were?"

"I told him truthfully that I was a truthful Tortoise, but he wouldn't believe it, and he made me jump into the river to see if I was, and I was, and he is surprised. Now he's gone to tell his Mummy. Listen to him!"

They could hear Painted Jaguar roaring up and down among the trees and the bushes by the side of the turbid Amazon, till his Mummy came.

"Son, son!" said his mother ever so many times, graciously waving her tail, "what have you been doing that you shouldn't have done?"

‘I tried to scoop something that said it wanted to be scooped out of its shell with my paw, and my paw is full of per-ickles,’ said Painted Jaguar.

‘Son, son!’ said his mother ever so many times, graciously waving her tail, ‘by the prickles in your paddy-paw I see that that must have been a Hedgehog. You should have dropped him into the water.

‘I did that to the other thing; and he said he was a Tortoise, and I didn’t believe him, and it was quite true, and he has dived under the turbid Amazon, and he won’t come up again, and I haven’t anything at all to eat, and I think we had better find lodgings somewhere else. They are too clever on the turbid Amazon for poor me!’

‘Son, son!’ said his mother ever so many times, graciously waving her tail, ‘now attend to me and remember what I say. A Hedgehog curls himself up into a ball and his prickles stick out every which way at once. By this you may know the Hedgehog.’

‘I don’t like this old lady one little bit,’ said Stickly-Prickly, under the shadow of a large leaf. ‘I wonder what else she knows?’

‘A Tortoise can’t curl himself up,’ Mother Jaguar went on, ever so many times, graciously waving her tail. ‘He only draws his head and legs into his shell. By this you may know the tortoise.’

‘I don’t like this old lady at all—at all,’ said Slow-and-Solid Tortoise. ‘Even Painted Jaguar can’t forget those directions. It’s a great pity that you can’t swim, Stickly-Prickly.’

‘Don’t talk to me,’ said Stickly-Prickly. ‘Just think how much better it would be if you could curl up. This is a mess! Listen to Painted Jaguar.’

Painted Jaguar was sitting on the banks of the turbid Amazon sucking prickles out of his Paws and saying to himself—

‘Can’t curl, but can swim—  
Slow-Solid, that’s him!  
Curls up, but can’t swim—  
Stickly-Prickly, that’s him!’

‘He’ll never forget that this month of Sundays,’ said Stickly-Prickly. ‘Hold up my chin, Slow-and-Solid. I’m going to try to learn to swim. It may be useful.’

‘Excellent!’ said Slow-and-Solid; and he held up Stickly-Prickly’s chin, while Stickly-Prickly kicked in the waters of the turbid Amazon.

‘You’ll make a fine swimmer yet,’ said Slow-and-Solid. ‘Now, if you can unlace my back-plates a little, I’ll see what I can do towards curling up. It may be useful.’

Stickly-Prickly helped to unlace Tortoise’s back-plates, so that by twisting and straining Slow-and-Solid actually managed to curl up a tiddy wee bit.

‘Excellent!’ said Stickly-Prickly; ‘but I shouldn’t do any more just now. It’s making you black in the face. Kindly lead me into the water once again and I’ll practice that side-stroke which you say is so easy.’ And so Stickly-Prickly practiced, and Slow-Solid swam alongside.

‘Excellent!’ said Slow-and-Solid. ‘A little more practice will make you a regular whale. Now, if I may trouble you to unlace my back and front plates two holes more, I’ll try that fascinating bend that you say is so easy. Won’t Painted Jaguar be surprised!’

‘Excellent!’ said Stickly-Prickly, all wet from the turbid Amazon. ‘I declare, I shouldn’t know you from one of my own family. Two holes, I think, you said? A little more expression, please, and don’t grunt quite so much, or Painted Jaguar may hear us. When you’ve finished, I want to try that long dive which you say is so easy. Won’t Painted Jaguar be surprised!’

And so Stickly-Prickly dived, and Slow-and-Solid dived alongside.

‘Excellent!’ said Slow-and-Solid. ‘A leetle more attention to holding your breath and you will be able to keep house at the bottom of the turbid Amazon. Now I’ll try that exercise of putting my hind legs round my ears which you say is so peculiarly comfortable. Won’t Painted Jaguar be surprised!’

‘Excellent!’ said Stickly-Prickly. ‘But it’s straining your back-plates a little. They are all overlapping now, instead of lying side by side.’

‘Oh, that’s the result of exercise,’ said Slow-and-Solid. ‘I’ve noticed that your prickles seem to be melting into one another, and that you’re

growing to look rather more like a pinecone, and less like a chestnut-burr, than you used to.'

'Am I?' said Stickly-Prickly. 'That comes from my soaking in the water. Oh, won't Painted Jaguar be surprised!'

They went on with their exercises, each helping the other, till morning came; and when the sun was high they rested and dried themselves. Then they saw that they were both of them quite different from what they had been.

'Stickly-Prickly,' said Tortoise after breakfast, 'I am not what I was yesterday; but I think that I may yet amuse Painted Jaguar.'

'That was the very thing I was thinking just now,' said Stickly-Prickly. 'I think scales are a tremendous improvement on prickles—to say nothing of being able to swim. Oh, won't Painted Jaguar be surprised! Let's go and find him.'

By and by they found Painted Jaguar, still nursing his paddy-paw that had been hurt the night before. He was so astonished that he fell three times backward over his own painted tail without stopping.

'Good morning!' said Stickly-Prickly. 'And how is your dear gracious Mummy this morning?'

'She is quite well, thank you,' said Painted Jaguar; 'but you must forgive me if I do not at this precise moment recall your name.'

'That's unkind of you,' said Stickly-Prickly, 'seeing that this time yesterday you tried to scoop me out of my shell with your paw.'

'But you hadn't any shell. It was all prickles,' said Painted Jaguar. 'I know it was. Just look at my paw!'

'You told me to drop into the turbid Amazon and be drowned,' said Slow-Solid. 'Why are you so rude and forgetful to-day?'

'Don't you remember what your mother told you?' said Stickly-Prickly,—

'Can't curl, but can swim—  
Stickly-Prickly, that's him!  
Curls up, but can't swim—  
Slow-Solid, that's him!'

Then they both curled themselves up and rolled round and round Painted Jaguar till his eyes turned truly cart-wheels in his head.

Then he went to fetch his mother.

‘Mother,’ he said, ‘there are two new animals in the woods to-day, and the one that you said couldn’t swim, swims, and the one that you said couldn’t curl up, curls; and they’ve gone shares in their prickles, I think, because both of them are scaly all over, instead of one being smooth and the other very prickly; and, besides that, they are rolling round and round in circles, and I don’t feel comfy.’

‘Son, son!’ said Mother Jaguar ever so many times, graciously waving her tail, ‘a Hedgehog is a Hedgehog, and can’t be anything but a Hedgehog; and a Tortoise is a Tortoise, and can never be anything else.’

‘But it isn’t a Hedgehog, and it isn’t a Tortoise. It’s a little bit of both, and I don’t know its proper name.’

‘Nonsense!’ said Mother Jaguar. ‘Everything has its proper name. I should call it "Armadillo" till I found out the real one. And I should leave it alone.’

So Painted Jaguar did as he was told, especially about leaving them alone; but the curious thing is that from that day to this, O Best Beloved, no one on the banks of the turbid Amazon has ever called Sticky-Prickly and Slow-Solid anything except Armadillo. There are Hedgehogs and Tortoises in other places, of course (there are some in my garden); but the real old and clever kind, with their scales lying lippety-lappety one over the other, like pine-cone scales, that lived on the banks of the turbid Amazon in the High and Far-Off Days, are always called Armadillos, because they were so clever.

So that; all right, Best Beloved. Do you see?

I’VE never sailed the Amazon,  
I’ve never reached Brazil;  
But the Don and Magdelana,  
They can go there when they will!

Yes, weekly from Southampton,  
Great steamers, white and gold,

Go rolling down to Rio  
(Roll down—roll down to Rio!)  
And I'd like to roll to Rio  
Some day before I'm old!

I've never seen a Jaguar,  
Nor yet an Armadill  
O dilloing in his armour,  
And I s'pose I never will,

Unless I go to Rio  
These wonders to behold—  
Roll down—roll down to Rio—  
Roll really down to Rio!  
Oh, I'd love to roll to Rio  
Some day before I'm old!



## **How the First Letter Was Written**

ONCE upon a most early time was a Neolithic man. He was not a Jute or an Angle, or even a Dravidian, which he might well have been, Best Beloved, but never mind why. He was a Primitive, and he lived cavily in a Cave, and he wore very few clothes, and he couldn't read and he couldn't write and he didn't want to, and except when he was hungry he was quite happy. His name was Tegumai Bopsulai, and that means, 'Man-who-does-not-put-his-foot-forward-in-a-hurry'; but we, O Best Beloved, will call him Tegumai, for short. And his wife's name was Teshumai Tewindow, and that means, 'Lady-who-asks-a-very-many-questions'; but we, O Best Beloved, will call her Teshumai, for short. And his little girl-daughter's name was Taffimai Metallumai, and that means, 'Small-person-without-any-manners-who-ought-to-be-spanked'; but I'm going to call her Taffy. And she was Tegumai Bopsulai's Best Beloved and her own Mummy's Best Beloved, and she was not spanked half as much as was good for her; and they were all three very happy. As soon as Taffy could run about she went everywhere with her Daddy Tegumai, and sometimes they would not come home to the Cave till they were hungry, and then Teshumai Tewindow would say, 'Where in the world have you two been to, to get so shocking dirty? Really, my Tegumai, you're no better than my Taffy.'

Now attend and listen!

One day Tegumai Bopsulai went down through the beaver-swamp to the Wagai river to spear carp-fish for dinner, and Taffy went too. Tegumai's spear was made of wood with shark's teeth at the end, and before he had caught any fish at all he accidentally broke it clean across by jabbing it down too hard on the bottom of the river. They were miles and miles from home (of course they had their lunch with them in a little bag), and Tegumai had forgotten to bring any extra spears.

'Here's a pretty kettle of fish!' said Tegumai. 'It will take me half the day to mend this.'

'There's your big black spear at home,' said Taffy. 'Let me run back to the Cave and ask Mummy to give it me.'

'It's too far for your little fat legs,' said Tegumai. 'Besides, you might fall into the beaver-swamp and be drowned. We must make the best of a bad job.' He sat down and took out a little leather mendy-bag,

full of reindeer-sinews and strips of leather, and lumps of bee's-wax and resin, and began to mend the spear.

Taffy sat down too, with her toes in the water and her chin in her hand, and thought very hard. Then she said—'I say, Daddy, it's an awful nuisance that you and I don't know how to write, isn't it? If we did we could send a message for the new spear.'

'Taffy,' said Tegumai, 'how often have I told you not to use slang? "Awful" isn't a pretty word, but it could be a convenience, now you mention it, if we could write home.'

Just then a Stranger-man came along the river, but he belonged to a far tribe, the Tewaras, and he did not understand one word of Tegumai's language. He stood on the bank and smiled at Taffy, because he had a little girl-daughter Of his own at home. Tegumai drew a hank of deer-sinews from his mendy-bag and began to mend his spear.

'Come here, said Taffy. 'Do you know where my Mummy lives?' And the Stranger-man said 'Um!' being, as you know, a Tewara.

'Silly!' said Taffy, and she stamped her foot, because she saw a shoal of very big carp going up the river just when her Daddy couldn't use his spear.

'Don't bother grown-ups,' said Tegumai, so busy with his spear-mending that he did not turn round.

'I aren't, said Taffy. 'I only want him to do what I want him to do, and he won't understand.'

'Then don't bother me, said Tegumai, and he went on pulling and straining at the deer-sinews with his mouth full of loose ends. The Stranger-man—a genuine Tewara he was—sat down on the grass, and Taffy showed him what her Daddy was doing. The Stranger-man thought, this is a very wonderful child. She stamps her foot at me and she makes faces. She must be the daughter of that noble Chief who is so great that he won't take any notice of me.' So he smiled more politely than ever.

'Now,' said Taffy, 'I want you to go to my Mummy, because your legs are longer than mine, and you won't fall into the beaver-swamp, and ask for Daddy's other spear—the one with the black handle that hangs over our fireplace.'

The Stranger-man (and he was a Tewara) thought, ‘This is a very, very wonderful child. She waves her arms and she shouts at me, but I don’t understand a word of what she says. But if I don’t do what she wants, I greatly fear that that haughty Chief, Man-who-turns-his-back-on-callers, will be angry.’ He got up and twisted a big flat piece of bark off a birch-tree and gave it to Taffy. He did this, Best Beloved, to show that his heart was as white as the birch-bark and that he meant no harm; but Taffy didn’t quite understand.

‘Oh!’ said she. ‘Now I see! You want my Mummy’s living-address? Of course I can’t write, but I can draw pictures if I’ve anything sharp to scratch with. Please lend me the shark’s tooth off your necklace.’

The Stranger-man (and he was a Tewara) didn’t say anything, So Taffy put up her little hand and pulled at the beautiful bead and seed and shark-tooth necklace round his neck.

The Stranger-man (and he was a Tewara) thought, ‘This is a very, very, very wonderful child. The shark’s tooth on my necklace is a magic shark’s tooth, and I was always told that if anybody touched it without my leave they would immediately swell up or burst, but this child doesn’t swell up or burst, and that important Chief, Man-who-attends-strictly-to-his-business, who has not yet taken any notice of me at all, doesn’t seem to be afraid that she will swell up or burst. I had better be more polite.’

So he gave Taffy the shark’s tooth, and she lay down flat on her tummy with her legs in the air, like some people on the drawing-room floor when they want to draw pictures, and she said, ‘Now I’ll draw you some beautiful pictures! You can look over my shoulder, but you mustn’t joggle. First I’ll draw Daddy fishing. It isn’t very like him; but Mummy will know, because I’ve drawn his spear all broken. Well, now I’ll draw the other spear that he wants, the black-handled spear. It looks as if it was sticking in Daddy’s back, but that’s because the shark’s tooth slipped and this piece of bark isn’t big enough. That’s the spear I want you to fetch; so I’ll draw a picture of me myself ‘splaining to you. My hair doesn’t stand up like I’ve drawn, but it’s easier to draw that way. Now I’ll draw you. I think you’re very nice really, but I can’t make you pretty in the picture, so you mustn’t be ‘fended. Are you ‘fended?’

The Stranger-man (and he was a Tewara) smiled. He thought, 'There must be a big battle going to be fought somewhere, and this extraordinary child, who takes my magic shark's tooth but who does not swell up or burst, is telling me to call all the great Chief's tribe to help him. He is a great Chief, or he would have noticed me.'

'Look,' said Taffy, drawing very hard and rather scratchily, 'now I've drawn you, and I've put the spear that Daddy wants into your hand, just to remind you that you're to bring it. Now I'll show you how to find my Mummy's living-address. You go along till you come to two trees (those are trees), and then you go over a hill (that's a hill), and then you come into a beaver-swamp all full of beavers. I haven't put in all the beavers, because I can't draw beavers, but I've drawn their heads, and that's all you'll see of them when you cross the swamp. Mind you don't fall in! Then our Cave is just beyond the beaver-swamp. It isn't as high as the hills really, but I can't draw things very small. That's my Mummy outside. She is beautiful. She is the most beautifullest Mummy there ever was, but she won't be 'fended when she sees I've drawn her so plain. She'll be pleased of me because I can draw. Now, in case you forget, I've drawn the spear that Daddy wants outside our Cave. It's inside really, but you show the picture to my Mummy and she'll give it you. I've made her holding up her hands, because I know she'll be so pleased to see you. Isn't it a beautiful picture? And do you quite understand, or shall I 'splain again?'

The Stranger-man (and he was a Tewara) looked at the picture and nodded very hard. He said to himself, 'If I do not fetch this great Chief's tribe to help him, he will be slain by his enemies who are coming up on all sides with spears. Now I see why the great Chief pretended not to notice me! He feared that his enemies were hiding in the bushes and would see him. Therefore he turned to me his back, and let the wise and wonderful child draw the terrible picture showing me his difficulties. I will away and get help for him from his tribe.' He did not even ask Taffy the road, but raced off into the bushes like the wind, with the birch-bark in his hand, and Taffy sat down most pleased.

Now this is the picture that Taffy had drawn for him!





































































































