HOW'S INKY?

A Porcupine and His Pals Offer Some Highlights on Happiness

by

Sam Campbell

The Philosopher of the Forest

Illustrations by Bob Kuhn

To
Judge Norton and Bobby

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A BOOK IS NAMED

INKY THE PORCUPINE—I hardly know whether to bless him or curse him!

Whichever I do, he won't care a flick of his tail! He is so exasperatingly self-sufficient, so wholly complacent, he will just waddle away, climb a tree and look down at me, saying in his most gracious grunts: "You take things too seriously, Sammy, old boy. Relax! Come on up and eat some bark!"

Nevertheless, wrapped up in his bequilled little hide is the grandest mixture of troubles and pleasures, worries and joys that ever came to me! Inky can get into more places he shouldn't be, chew more things that shouldn't be chewed (myself included), and claw more things that shouldn't be clawed than any other creature I have known.

He is just enough bother to be adorable. Certainly he is never a bore. Nor does he let life become monotonous for anyone or anything. I love him with all my heart—and yet, I wonder sometimes if there isn't just a little bit of jealousy mixed in with that love. Why, Inky is far more famous than I am! People know of him who seem never to have heard of me; and frequently I am identified only by my association with him. "Oh, you are the man who has that pet porcupine, aren't you?" Wonderful! I have no identity of my own, but as a servant or emissary of Inky I am given standing!

Once in a large city I was walking down a busy street watching the hustling crowd. Presently I noticed several people in a group coming from the opposite direction,

regarding me with interest. It was good to receive some attention, and I returned their glances. Apparently they recognized me and as they drew nearer we all broke out with friendly smiles. One of the group stepped forward with a greeting. Aren't you Sam Campbell?"

"Yes I am Sam Campbell," I replied, warmly. Perhaps my pride had been touched a little that in all that milling multitude I had been recognized. I listened expectantly for the man's next words. Surely there would be something quite intimate, personal and friendly in what was to come. My thoughts were rather hungrily speculating on what he might say: that he had heard my lectures or broadcasts, or perhaps had seen my pictures. At least I thought he might say something of that nature—but he didn't.

"How's Inky?" he asked, in utmost interest and concern, and his whole party listened anxiously for the answer.

How is Inky! How is that porcupine! My pride dropped to the level of the sidewalk. No concern over *my* health or prosperity—just Inky's!

Well, at that moment Inky was probably asleep in the crotch of a tree, dreaming of a perfect land filled with salt licks, where the bark of trees (his favorite food) came in triple layers, and the length of days was doubled so he could get in more sleep! His health was all right, unquestionably, and he would just as soon hear no more about it. However, I trust, in my deflated condition, I answered the question more politely than that.

My solicitous friend (or rather Inky's friend) didn't know it, but he named a book that day. *How's Inky?* The question has been flung at me all over America. I determined to answer it permanently in print, if possible. I would tell the world Inky was all right, and then perhaps I would get some attention. Inky will like the book, too; there is no doubt of that. He will look it over carefully, then methodically chew off the cover, reduce the pages to bits, and walk away grunting a criticism that there should be more salt in the ink!

Well, Inky *is* all right. He is all right in every way, in his health, his disposition, his character. He is part, and an important part, of the grand scheme of nature. Together with his little animal associates at the Sanctuary, he has shown anew what a good world this is.

And because he has helped reveal how much people love creatures like himself, he has shown how fine human beings are, too! I pretend a jealousy, but I feel it not. It is wonderful to see that people can form such a liking for a little creature. But perhaps not so surprising when we discover that a little animal such as Inky is not only an object to love but an inspiration in his character qualities. In truth, I love the love everyone has for Inky!

"How's Inky now?" you ask.

Well, Inky is fine! Just fine!—And if it is of any interest, I feel right good myself!

SAM CAMPBELL

I. THE SANCTUARY OF WEGIMIND
Haven for Wild Life

NATURE was lavish with the new-born loveliness of spring. Lakes still held the left-over chills of winter ice. Finger tips of green new growth were appearing on balsams, tender leaves of aspens had begun their summer-long dance, while June berry and cherry blossoms burst forth among the evergreens, looking like sprays of popcorn. The great forest about us seemed so alive and happy it had difficulty in expressing itself fully. Birds, back from their winter journey, were singing almost violently, flowers were singing from the forest floor, trees were singing in the winds, stars were singing in clear night skies and human hearts were singing with the very joy which comes with this season of new birth!

Within the Sanctuary of Wegimind springtime happiness was enhanced by a contributing factor. It was now the fifth year in which that area had been closed to hunting and trapping. The wild creatures of the region had learned of their safety. No longer were they afraid to show themselves in daylight along lake shores and in the open fern patches of hillsides. No longer did they dash for shelter at the first sight or sound of man. Instead, a cautious friendliness was dawning. Deepening peace rested upon forest halls and permeated the very atmosphere.

But in the midst of all this we felt that adventure was brewing for us. And we were right!

There were three of us at the Sanctuary at the time: good old Tom Norton, Bobby, and myself.

Tom Norton was the grand old gentleman who had spent his boyhood with the pioneers of Indiana. His hair was now white with the caress of years, his manner mellowed with habitual kindliness and thoughtfulness, and his rich memory packed with recollections and stories everyone was anxious to hear—and which he loved to tell. He had a ready wit that kept his companions in laughter. His stories came out of his wealth of experience, his love for, and interest in his fellow beings. And sometimes, accompanied by a wink and a twinkle in his eye, the stories came directly from Tom Norton's imagination. "There is no harm in touching up a story a little to make it interesting," he used to say. At the Sanctuary he was known as the Judge, not that he ever had been a judge, but he looked like one and, with his fairness and fineness of character, he would have made a fine one. Everybody loved Judge Norton.

Now, as to Bobby, he was one of the most boyish boys I ever have seen. He was so very much alive and alert to everything, filled with curiosity and bubbling enthusiasm, and he had that happy faculty of getting into and out of trouble constantly. The day seemed woefully empty if Bobby hadn't spilled a jar of jam in his lap, put varnish in the pancakes, tipped over the coffeepot, lost his shirt or his shoes in the house—or himself in the woods! Everybody loved Bobby, too. There is a certain wholesome promise in such a lad: boyish boys make manly men.

We three were quite happy living in the woods together. But actually the smoothness and ease of things gave us concern. We spoke of it, and the Judge warned us not to get too comfortable and soft, that likely something would break loose soon.

It wasn't that life at the Sanctuary then lacked interest or was monotonous. There just wasn't anything giving cause for worry, and that didn't fit in with our usual experiences. In times past we had such problems as the bears who liked to climb onto the roof and pull off the roofing paper . . . the porcupine who insisted on chewing to slivers the posts which held up our cabin . . . the epidemic of deer mice that literally took over our place and especially loved to jump in our faces in the middle of the night . . . the chimney swallows that nested in our fireplace chimney one cold spring, while we shivered and shook with no fire to warm us until the little birds grew strong enough to fly away.

But now—well, things were just too smooth. A bear was coming nightly to within one hundred feet of our porch door to get food we placed there for him. But that was all right, he didn't try to come In! Chipmunks and squirrels were friendly as usual, climbing all over us with no fear—and little respect. Rascal our raccoon pet of two years previous, was coming in nightly. But he was no trouble, for he could open the screen door for himself and come into the porch to get his midnight dinner.

One night however, Rascal did create a minor bit of confusion. We had forgotten to prepare his food. He came, expecting the usual good service—and did not receive it. Hence, he helped himself. He opened the icebox, climbed in, and for a little while must have behaved like a fur-covered cyclone. We had been out on a canoe trip. When we returned late that night, we found the smoothness of our life had been broken for the time being at least. What a mess we found on that porch! Two dozen eggs had been taken from the icebox and smashed on the floor. Rascal liked eggs in every form. He had eaten them boiled, fried, scrambled, poached and on toast—but never smashed on the floor! So he tried that. Apparently he liked it, as he had eaten almost all of them, leaving just enough debris to decorate things properly. Bacon had been pulled out on the floor, and a bowl of gravy very carefully turned upside down. On the top shelf of the icebox had been a large jar of strawberry preserves. That had been tipped over, and the strawberries were hanging like little monkeys throughout the wire shelves below. Mustard and catsup were in the jello; milk was spilled on the ice; fruit juice was flowing

around among cold vegetables: a head of lettuce was in a dish of applesauce; and tomato juice was in everything.

Two hours' work and the mess was cleaned up. Thereafter, food always was placed out for little Rascal. We had learned our lesson.

That night as we went to bed we heard the Judge singing one of his improvised songs, to the tune of "Turkey in the Straw":

Oh, maybe it's the stars and
Maybe it's the moon
But things are going to happen,
And they're going to happen soon.
So climb into your beds,
Get all the rest you kin,
It won't be so very long
Till trouble will begin!

The very next morning it began!

II. KINDNESS BRINGS RETURNS—APLENTY

WE WERE seated at the breakfast table when word came that on a highway a few miles away a car had hit a doe. A tiny fawn, less than a week old, had been left alone in the world. Would we take it in, give it protection and raise it?

Would we! Breakfast was forgotten, and we were on our way. Within two hours we were back, bearing in our arms our animal treasure—a tiny, spotted, now motherless fawn. Bobette we named her, in honor of Bobby.

Bobette simply took our hearts by storm. Not one of us would ever forget those first moments when we stood looking down at her, feeling awkward and rough before her

frailty—and already worried as to whether we could care for her. Her oversize eyes returned our glances without the slightest fear. Her slender legs wobbled and bent, so young was she; Bobby caught hold of her, afraid she would fall.

Then she let out a weak, thin little bleat. She must be hungry. Pandemonium broke loose! The three of us jumped and started to run at the same time. One would have thought she would have starved if she was not fed within the next five seconds. Bobby bumped into Judge Norton, I bumped into both of them. Bobette was so frightened at the sudden commotion, she forgot her hunger, and probably wished she hadn't said anything.

A baby's bottle had been brought out, and Bobby came running with it, filled with milk—cold and straight from a can. That would never do! The milk must be warmed, and it must be diluted with an equal part of water. There was another outburst of ill-directed action, during which Bobby and I collided, spilled the milk, dropped the bottle (but, fortunately, did not break it), and placed another pan of milk on the stove but forgot to start the fire. Judge Norton retreated into a corner where he wouldn't be run down, and where he could laugh at our miniature riot.

Finally, after what seemed an age, the milk was ready, many times tasted and tested, and Bobette was presented with her first dinner at the Sanctuary. She liked it right well, and never stopped until the bottle was drained down to the last drop.

Then came the problem of housing our little charge. There were wild cats, bears and wolves in the wide forests about the Sanctuary. Bobette was too young to cope with them. Her woods-wise mother would have known what to do to provide a measure of safety, but that protection had been snatched from her. No pen or cage was available, so we assigned to her a little sleeping cabin which stood a short distance away from our main lodge. We cleared out the furniture, built a fire in the little wood stove to take out dampness and chill, spread some old coats in a corner as a bed, and invited Bobette into her new home.

She walked in willingly enough—and promptly fell flat! She wasn't hurt in the least, but certainly looked embarrassed. Her chin and stomach were flat to the floor, and her legs spread to indicate the four points of the compass.

"Get up, Bobette! You look like a rug!" said Bobby as he hurried to help her.

Bobette simply could not stand up on that floor. It had been oiled, and her little hoofs could not grip the slippery boards. We stood her outside among the balsam trees, while we rushed about the Sanctuary assembling some fiber rugs for Bobette's boudoir. Then she was invited in once more, this time entering with more success and certainly more dignity. We gave a shout of triumph as she confidently walked across the floor and promptly curled up on the bed prepared for her.

"Where is all this smoothness and calm you were talking about?" Judge Norton asked later.

At the moment we couldn't remember such a condition.

But we soon learned we were only beginning our new hectic experience. Bobette was problem number one—there were more coming.

Suddenly the world seemed to have broken out with an epidemic of sending us orphaned baby animals to raise! Not many hours had passed when a tiny groundhog, or woodchuck, was brought to us. It was so young its eyes had not opened as yet. The only one of a family of eight to survive a tragedy, we were told by the person who brought it to us. Would we take it in, protect it and raise it?

Would we! Bobby insisted this creature was to be his special pal, and that proved to be true. But what to name it? One suggested Woody, another suggested Chuck, but neither met with much enthusiasm. Finally Judge Norton struck the right idea.

"What do you generally call *ground hog?*" he asked, with meaning. And thereupon we named it Sausage! We padded up a box as a nest for her, and moved her in beside Bobette. Our family was growing, so were our worries!

Two days later, from another source, came two little raccoons. Everyone should look upon a baby raccoon! I don't believe there would be a spark of cruelty or meanness left if this were done. The words *cute* and *adorable* are much overworked, but they should be in the human language if for no other reason than to describe those funny, furry little fellows. Like Sausage, the baby raccoons had not yet opened their eyes when they arrived at the Sanctuary. And they, too, were the only ones of their family to survive a tragedy. Would we take them in, protect them and raise them?

Yes, we would! We now unwittingly had opened an orphanage and it might as well be full. We padded up another box for the latest comers, named them Rack and Ruin, and moved them in with Bobette and Sausage. The names Rack and Ruin proved to be most appropriate as time went on.

Now let It be known that each new arrival brought with it as much excitement and confusion as had Bobette. And each one brought its own problems and complications. When, how, and what to feed the baby animals and the many other cares that came up every hour of the day—and at night—in their behalf kept us in a whirl of bewilderment. Judge Norton pretended to be much disgusted with Bobby and me because of the way we fussed and worried over our charges. Yet, in the middle of one night when Bobby awakened and slipped down to see if the animals were all right, he found the Judge sitting up with them. Then I slipped down to inspect things, and found them both there!

Just as we seemed to have caught the hang of things, and began to feel that we were masters of the situation, the most upsetting event of all took place. Inky the porcupine arrived.

It was the same old story. Through a tragedy, Inky had been left motherless. Would we take him in, protect him and raise him?

Would we! One look at that funny little fellow and he was ours, and we were his. He was black as ink (hence his name) and about the size of a baseball—with a tail on it. His eyes were like shoe buttons. Though only three days old, he was bristling with those aggravating, needlelike quills, and was amazingly strong and independent. Immediately he climbed up my arm under his own power, settled on my shoulder, and began chewing on my ear—a habit he has retained ever since.

Inky moved into the orphanage. He was assigned a box, but he would have nothing to do with it. From the very start, he was provokingly independent. While he liked us, he let us know he could do without us very easily. He made an inspection tour of his new home, looked over the other animals, and decided he was superior to everything he found. He pawed Rack and Ruin to see if they were alive, bit Sausage to hear her squeal, and with a quick move fastened a quill in Bobette's nose when she tried to be friendly. Then he waddled across the floor, tucked his head in a corner, and went to sleep.

The evening following Inky's arrival, after the five little fellows had been fed and put in their respective nests, we slipped up to their cabin, flashlight in hand, to have another look at them. We shall never forget the picture we saw! They all were assembled on Bobette's bed, snugly cuddled against her warm body, sound asleep. How Rack, Ruin

and Sausage got out of their nests it was hard to conceive, but someway, in their yearning for mothers who were no more, they had sought until they found this comfort and care.

Inky, too, had left his cold, cheerless corner, and forgetting his assumed superiority, joined the little furry cluster. And Bobette, tiny baby that she was, seriously assumed her role as foster mother. As we came in, she looked up at us with something of pride in her face. Then, even as we watched her, she licked first Rack, then Ruin, then Sausage—and started to lick Inky, but changed her mind at first contact with his quills.

We were deeply moved by what we had seen. As we came back to our main lodge, Judge Norton spoke: "Now, doesn't that repay you a hundred times for all the trouble you've had?"

It did, we agreed.

"I'm not sure how much we are doing for them," added Bobby, "but I know what they are doing for me. It is the first time I have realized that kindness is something you do for yourself. Boy, I feel good inside."

As the Judge was preparing for bed, we heard him improvise another verse for his favorite song. The mistakes in English can be forgiven in the light of the truth of his message.

Oh, a man can learn to figure,
He can learn to read and write;
And he can learn just how to play,
And work with all his might.

Yes, he can learn a lot of things,
And feel quite proud, you bet!
But till he knows how to be kind,
He don't know nothin' yet!

III. INDIVIDUALITY
With Feathers and Fur and Skin on It

MORNINGS always were attended by the wildest scenes in our orphanage. All were hungry at once, all demanding attention. Bobette would be bleating; Rack and Ruin crying incessantly, seeming never to stop long enough to breathe; Sausage would be squeaking; and Inky grunting! The effect was something like that of a machine shop badly in need of oil. And the louder they yelled, the more furiously we rushed about, trying to meet their demands. It is hard to believe that five such tiny things could keep

three full-grown men so busy—but they could, and they did. There was never a dull moment; neither was there a day without its lesson for us.

I suppose the most startling discovery a student of nature makes is that there are never two things created alike. In all this great world about us, and all the universe which has no limit, no two things are alike. Not even two grains of sand are exactly the same, not two grass blades, not two trees, not two animals—and above all, not two human beings.

We began to see this demonstrated anew in our young animal friends. Rack and Ruin were similar, but they were not the same. Even as babies we could see differences in their behavior. And so were Inky, Sausage and Bobette strictly individual—nothing just like them had ever lived before, nothing ever would again.

It was interesting to see how this individuality asserted itself. Certainly, from the first our little charges wanted to be just themselves, and nothing else. They insisted upon it and, even if we had wanted to change them, we couldn't have done so. They didn't cry alike, they didn't eat alike, they didn't bite alike, though let it be understood they did plenty of all these things. Each had a mind of his own, instincts of his own, a way of his own. Moreover, each wanted his own way.

As we studied them, we came to realize how much trouble we human beings would save ourselves if we would learn this one lesson those simple little tikes knew instinctively. For we may know that each one of us is new in nature, his talents are new, his energies new, his opportunities new, and furthermore that the full measure of his power is found only in using his individuality in service to the world. Some may think it too good to be true—yet, it is true! For we see here the proved pattern of creation.

Certainly, under this knowledge, no one ever could have an inferiority complex. Inky never felt inferior. He stepped right out into the world to use the talents the Creator had given him. Inky didn't wonder if some other porcupine were more talented than he—he didn't think of that at all, he just lived his best. Whether he ever thought of it that way or not, he knew instinctively that he was individually equal to any problem and was master of his own destiny. Nor could a human being ever question his own importance, that there was a place for him in the world that he could succeed and be happy, so long as he himself realized that he was distinctly original and that his whole life was within himself. He would just live his best, as Inky does, and his best would be good enough.

Now what we are saying does not imply that each animal is a new species. Inky is a porcupine. There are millions of porcupines, yet there is only one Inky. Rack and Ruin are raccoons, Sausage is a woodchuck, Bobette a deer. They have the ways and appearances of their fellow creatures, live in like manner, but they are not identical.

Thus as we study living things —plants, animals, or human beings—we find in each one *characteristics* in which it resembles its kind, but also *character* which makes it original and individual.

Porcupines sometimes seem to be a joke nature has played. Those remarkable quills of theirs—they offer a strange method of defense! Porkies say to the world, "We don't want to hurt anyone, but you had better let us alone." They are born with quills, the baby spines being about the size of needles and just as sharp. As porcupines grow older, the quills become coarser and more numerous.

At one time the story was widely believed that a porcupine shoots or throws his quills at his enemy. That has been proved untrue. I told the story to Inky, and he walked away in high disgust! But no animal has better protection from the common dangers of the woods than the porcupine. It is often said that the spines are barbed like fishhooks, but that description does not *begin* to tell the story. It isn't just one barb, but a thousand or more on a single quill, and so arranged that after the quill has entered the flesh these barbs keep the quill from being easily withdrawn.

We never felt worried about Inky when he began wandering about the forest. Most animals know enough to let porcupines alone, and those who don't have a severe lesson to learn. Those quills are fierce weapons, and there are plenty of them, too! It is estimated by good authorities that a large-size porcupine will have as many as thirty-six thousand quills, covering every bit of the body except the legs, underparts, and region of the nose. What a pin cushion! No wonder Inky has inherited such provoking independence. He and his kind have perfect confidence in their defense. They have not bothered to develop an ability to move fast, be clever, to hide well, or to depend on biting in combat. Yet they have fine teeth. When Inky first came to us he already had four front teeth—two uppers and two lowers—amber in color and sharp as razors. It was necessary to feed him through the side of his mouth, as his teeth would cut the rubber nipples as fast as they were presented to him. We had much experience with those teeth. They are designed for taking the bark from trees, so Inky sometimes took the bark off us, too! A porcupine does not eat meat, yet he never really lacks food.

In summer, green plants and green leaves make up much of his diet; in the winter, bark, winter buds, and twigs interest him most. He is especially fond of salt, a fact which makes him rather unpopular with farmers and woodsmen when he chews the sweat-soaked handles of their axes, pitchforks, et cetera.

The severe northern winters hold no terrors for porcupines. Although they do not hibernate, they seem to be immune to the cold. On days when the temperature would be many degrees below zero, porcupines have been observed far out on the ends of limbs, not even seeking shelter. They are good-humored creatures, and are quite playful. Yes, Inky has a good ancestry. His people didn't come over on the *Mayflower*, but they got into history many times just the same. The earliest records of pioneers show that porcupines attracted their attention, and wherever explorers went, from Central America almost to the Arctic Circle, porcupines were there to greet them.

Rack and Ruin come from interesting lineage, too. Raccoons like southern climates best, though they refuse to be limited, and have been found as far north as the Hudson Bay region. They are closely related to bears, and possibly proud of the fact, for the bear is king of the woods. Rack and Ruin certainly could tear up a room in bear fashion, and proved this on several occasions.

The little gray faces of raccoons, for seemingly no reason at all, have a single black stripe across the eyes. They look like masked bandits, and they sometimes act like them, too! It may be that they had one stripe left over from those that ring their tails, and didn't know where else to put it. A hollow tree is the raccoon's favorite home. It didn't take Rack and Ruin long to find one for themselves as soon as they had outgrown their babyhood—though we have been searching ever since and have not located their apartment.

No creature ever has fitted more perfectly into the solitude of nature than has the raccoon. "They make no more noise than moonbeams," Bobby once said. The raccoon's little feet are supersensitive. These animals literally feel their way about at night. If they have one dominant characteristic, it is curiosity. They run their little feet into every corner and crack, examining through sense of touch the things they find. Bobby was the victim of this curiosity one night during his sleep. He was sleeping with his mouth open, and snoring. Ruin probably couldn't understand what was causing all the racket, for Bobby was awakened rather abruptly to find a raccoon foot in his mouth reaching for his tonsils!

Sometimes this little curiosity-habit of raccoons is used to their detriment. Trappers place steel traps in hollow logs or hollow trees, under brush, or in holes in the ground. The unsuspecting raccoon comes feeling his way along, reaches innocently

into the hidden trap, and finds himself suddenly in the painful grip of merciless steel jaws.

Raccoons are very happy and sociable creatures. Snooty old Inky and his kind live pretty much to themselves, and are generally seen singly. Not so with raccoons. One night there were nineteen of them on our porch at one time! It is certainly no problem to know what to feed raccoons; their interest is more in volume than variety. They have preferences, but will eat almost anything, and lots of it! Frogs, fish, flesh, fowl, insects, reptiles, corn, fruit, grain, vegetables and, unfortunately, farmers' chickens are on their menu. Sweets of any sort are in high favor. Rack and Ruin preferred cooked oatmeal sweetened with honey to all other food.

Sausage and her kind do not rate so highly with the human race. They have a habit of eating the food we raise for ourselves, and that is a serious offense—at least people think it is. Judge Norton had a peculiar grudge against little Sausage. Although he tried to conceal the fact, we learned that he fancied he did not like woodchucks. During his boyhood in Indiana these little rodents had battled with him for the possession of his garden. "Those varments are just pests!" said the Judge, and he pretended a much greater hatred for them than he really felt. One day when Sausage was partly grown, Bobby beckoned to me to come to him. He pointed to the Judge, sitting on a log holding Sausage in his arms, and talking baby talk to her! I guess she had been forgiven for what her ancestors had done.

One could love the woodchuck for its courage, even if for nothing else. While shy when human beings are around, woodchucks seem to have no fear of other creatures. They will fight animals many times their size. I have seen one attack a police dog. They are fast-moving, powerful, and have marvelously strong jaws and sharp teeth. Their favorite dwelling place is a hole in the ground which they dig for themselves, though space under a building is all right, too. They are hibernators, and work harder at it than any other creature of the north. As early as October they enter this peculiar sleep. It is their way of going south for the winter. They do not arouse from their stupor until warm weather has returned in the spring. During that long period they do not awaken even to eat. Sausage was so fat she could roll faster than she could walk, when it came time for winter sleep. That fat would be used up by her body as food during the months to come.

Had Bobette been inclined toward pride, she would have had plenty of reason to boast about her family. Throughout history, the deer family has been famous for beauty. Hunting the stag was the sport of kings—though the kings were not always such good sports. But the sight of a great old buck along the shore of a wilderness lake probably will always remain the most appealing scene in nature. Only the male deer has antlers, and he seems quite proud of them. At least he is always trying to improve them! He grows a new pair every year, shedding the old ones, and they become larger and more beautiful each season. The story that one can tell the age of a buck by the number of

points on his antlers is untrue, however. For the first two years only this is possible. The first year the buck grows fingerlike horns—they are called *spike horns*. The next year the antlers will have two points or *fork horns*. But after that, it is uncertain how many points will develop.

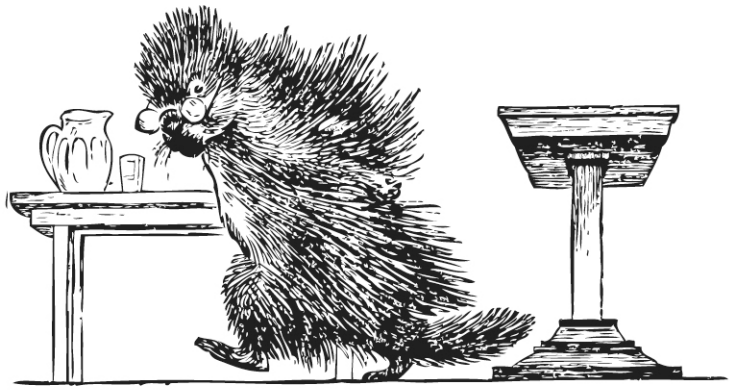
Bobette wore a red-brown coat speckled with light-colored spots when she came to us. That is what the best-dressed fawns wear. The spots generally disappear in the autumn, though we have known of the little fellows retaining them through to the next spring. The winter coat is dark gray, blending nicely with winter landscapes. But that baby coat of theirs is a masterpiece of protective coloration. In baby days, especially during the first week of life, the fawn spends most of its time curled up on the forest floor. That permits the mother to forage for food, since a fawn in this position is almost impossible to see. There is reason to believe, too, that at that age fawns have no odor that dogs or wolves can detect. Woods-men have seen these predatory animals pass within a few feet of fawns and never know of their presence. Apparently at that age the entire safety of the little fellows is entrusted to their protective coloration and absence of odor. Fawns have no strength or tendency to run. Foresters often find them in quiet, hidden spots, and walk right up to them. Still they will not move. Unfortunately, sometimes those finding fawns in this way believe they have been deserted by their mothers, and take them in. That should not be done, unless it is known for sure that something has happened to the mother, for otherwise she will return. It is best by far for both doe and fawn that they be left together. While we reared Bobette successfully, we always realized she would have been better off with her mother, had her mother been spared her.

The main defense of deer is in flight. No one knows just how fast they can run, but we have timed them on a roadway at thirty-five miles an hour. When Bobette took a notion

to do so, she could disappear so quickly it would seem the ground had swallowed her up. But deer will fight when cornered and fight very effectively. They strike forward with their front feet. In that way they have been known to kill wolves and other creatures attacking them. However, there are many creatures in the forest more powerful and more clever than they, and their life is a severe one. Their food is plant life generally, though there are very definite records of certain ones eating fish!

Deer love the company of their own kind. While Inky was satisfied to climb a tree by himself and make no effort to find other porcupines, Bobette was more socially inclined. Very soon she had made friends among her wild relatives of the forest. They would come to see her within sight of our cabin, but no closer. Someway she knew when they were there and would go to them, be with them awhile, but then return home. There is that individuality again! She was one of them, yet still an individual, still herself.

Inky sat before the fireplace one night looking most wise and self-reliant. At the time, he was still less than four months old. Yet he had full possession of his selfhood. He was the very picture of individuality and unoffending independence.



I laughed aloud as a fanciful thought came to me Inky should be a lecturer—helping the human race, where faith is needed so badly! How grand if he could speak before schools, give young people renewed confidence in themselves!

In imagination I pictured him on the platform in a great auditorium. Of course he would wear important-appearing eyeglasses—and as certainly he would look over the top of them at his audience. He would stand there in perfect composure until everyone quieted down, and then begin as if he had all eternity for his talk.

"Young folks," he would say, "what I have to say, I can say in mighty few words. But I'm going to tell you something some folks are afraid to tell you, just because it isn't the style to say such things. But I don't care about style, and I'm not afraid of anybody!" And with this he would probably raise his quills until he looked like a prickly pear, and glare defiantly over his glasses to see if anyone challenged him. "You fellows are tryin' to live unnaturally, and that's not natural—I mean, it isn't possible. You're just kiddin'

yourselves. You're forgettin' how to be yourselves and are always tryin' to be someone else. Now the Creator had just one plan for everything He made. The same One made you as made us porcupines. He did a little better on us than He did on you, but that doesn't make any difference. His plan was to make everyone different so they wouldn't get in each other's way. Then He wanted each one to be complete, original, so He gave each one some special ability, some talent. He says then, 'Go on and be yourselves, all of you—have faith in what makes you different from the rest, for that is you. Don't go reachin' for what someone else has, or tryin' to be like him. I'm givin' each one of you a job to do, a place to fill, and if you just be yourselves you'll know what it is!' But what have you folks been adoin'?" Here, no doubt, Inky would fold his paws behind his back and pace back and forth while he thought it out "Let me tell you! You been livin' accordin' to styles and plans someone thinks up, everyone tryin' to be like the style. And you haven't been natural! Suppose us porcupines would get together and decide we should all be alike, and then go goose-steppin' around thinkin' we were smart. Who would do our work in the woods? Life isn't built that way, folks! You have to be yourselves! The Creator knew what He was doin' and He doesn't make mistakes. Not one of you is a mistake. When you get home tonight, sit down in some quiet place and just ask yourself, 'What can I do better than anything else?' And when you answer that honestly, make up your mind to do it! Nobody else can do it as well as you. And for the love of a salt lick, don't do somethin' else just to be like somebody you're jealous of. Be yourself! Every animal in the woods knows that much; be yourself! That's the way to live, and it's the only way!" That's a pretty long speech for Inky, but I'll wager before he left the platform he would say, "And sometime chew the bark off a pine tree, it'll do you good."

Well, Inky can't go out and give lectures. But if he could, what he would say would be true, for he would speak out of his own *naturalness* . Happiness in this world does lie in following nature's pattern: that is, for each one to be the finest and purest individual he can be!

Judge Norton expressed it well one night with another verse of his song:

When nature makes each one of us,
She throws away the mold;
She never made two things alike,
At least, so I've been told.
So don't be like some other guy,
It can't be done, you see;
Just try the very best you can
To be the one you be!

IV. PATIENCE IS NATURE'S PASSWORD
You Get Nowhere Without It

IT WAS fascinating to watch the day-by-day change in our five little fur-covered orphans as they grew through their babyhood, and dragged us with them.

And it was just as fascinating to see how this experience affected Bobby!

Bobby had lived most of his life in a great city. He attended schools that accommodated thousands of students. Big buildings, crowded sidewalks, and tangled traffic he had known ever since it was said of him, "It's a boy!" The city was in his blood; its haste, hurry, impetus and impatience were a habit with him.

Hence, when he first came to the Sanctuary, impatience was stamped over his brow, and under it, too. He wanted everything done with a whoop and a holler, a gush and a rush.

Patience, he thought, meant a doctor's customers. Bobby tried to lead nature around by the nose, and it took him some time to learn that nature just won't be led!

That attitude of impatience brought him a quick, but not final lesson when he first came north. He was in the bow of a small boat as it was coming up to a pier. The boat had lost much of its momentum, and wasn't arriving as fast as Bobby's impatience thought it should. So he jumped from the boat to the pier. Or, perhaps it is better to say, he jumped from the boat *toward* the pier. For one doesn't really jump from a small boat—he merely kicks the boat backward and stays where the boat used to be. That is what Bobby did. He made his leap—and disappeared under the surface of the water. It was a drenched, cold, and wiser boy who came up sputtering, and climbed out dripping onto the pier. The laughter of his companions did not console him much.

Nature never hurries. She moves steadily, always arrives on time, finishes things on schedule—but she never hurries. Those who live with nature—woods-men, lumberjacks, rangers, guides—learn to know patience, and to synchronize themselves with nature's pace. Haste just doesn't fit in the forest; and in truth, it doesn't fit anywhere!

Judge Norton had a song for this, too—

Oh, there was a little feller
And he thought he was so smart,
He always tried to get some place
Before he'd even start;
Yes, he talked when he was sleepin'
And when he walked he ran.
His story now is ended
And he's right where he began!

But Bobby learned patience and he learned it well. Much credit for this accomplishment goes to those five little orphans, but much goes to Bobby, too. Among his many virtues was the fact that he had no mercy on errors or weaknesses he found within himself. If he discovered something in his character that needed correction, he didn't hide it behind a sense of pride and indifference as some do, but demanded of himself that it be changed. So it was when he became fully awake to the fact that he had the habit of impatience. That must be corrected; he would not have it otherwise. He saw in the presence of the five orphans an opportunity to work out this problem with himself. Explaining his purpose first, he asked that he be given charge of feeding and caring for the little ones. His request was granted, and thereafter neither Judge Norton nor I took a major part in this work.

Often we would slip up to the little cabin and peek through the window to watch Bobby at his process of self-discipline. Sometimes it seemed he had attempted too much. Especially did this seem true at mealtime—and mealtime at the Orphanage was every three hours!

Bobby became quite expert at the routine; he needed to be, for it was a task in those early days when all food was administered by means of a baby's bottle and a rubber ear syringe. First he would prepare a large pan of milk, diluted properly, and warmed. Next he would fill the bottle for Bobette, and the syringe which was used for the others. Then he would draw one long, deep breath and enter the little cabin as if he were headed for some inescapable fate. Sometimes it seemed he was. What a hullabaloo would break lose when he stepped through that doorway! Each one of the five wanted to be fed first, and each one kept informing the world about it in screams and screeches.

Bobby would make his way across the room with difficulties aplenty: a raccoon always just where he wanted to step, a porcupine biting his ankle, a deer nudging him impatiently with her nose, and a woodchuck trying to climb up his pants' leg! Bobby would seat himself—that is, unless Sausage got into the chair first, and she generally did. In that case, Bobby would push her and implore her to get out of the way, usually to no avail. When finally seated, he would hold the bottle out to Bobette and insert the syringe into one of the four other mouths, which were gaping at him. Thereupon two voices would be silenced, except for sounds like a cow walking through deep mud, while the three others, offended and self-righteous, would emit shrieks of ear-splitting quality and roof-raising volume!

One day we looked in on Bobby when this dinner-riot reached calamitous proportions. Bobette was going after the bottle as if she meant to swallow it whole. Her unusual vigor probably was due to the fact that Sausage was out on Bobby's arm trying desperately to get the bottle herself. Rack got first chance at the ear syringe, as he generally did, and his enthusiasm looked and sounded like Bobette's. But Ruin, feeling a bit neglected, had climbed up Bobby's shirt and was nibbling on his nose! Nothing he could do about it, because both hands were busy. He might have jerked his head away, except that Inky had climbed to his shoulder and was chewing persistently on his ear!

Poor Bobby! What a picture of fatherly martyrdom he presented!

"Inky! Sausage! Aw, Ruin! Let a fellow alone, will you?" he pleaded. There was no response, except that Inky did turn to the other ear—and scratched the back of Bobby's neck while making the change.

No doubt at that moment there was a wee small voice deep down in Bobby suggesting he start a revolution. But he was learning patience, and learning it fast.

Just then Bobette let out a heartbreaking bleat, and Rack a cry of disappointment. The milk in the bottle and syringe had given out! As Bobby started to refill them, he found the milk in the pan was cold. Thereupon he had to put all the orphans down and place the milk on the stove.

All noise made prior to that moment was deep silence compared to what now broke loose. From the screams one would think a lumberjack with hobnail boots was standing on each one of five tails. The little fellows thought the meal was ended. They followed at Bobby's heels, crying with all their lung-strength, pulling at his trousers, climbing up and falling down. He talked to them, calling each one by name, pleading with them, but he might as well have talked to a tornado. They wanted food right then—and plenty of it! Explanations did nothing for their stomachs.

During all this Bobby had a great fear that he would step on one of the little orphans. He said once that he did not take one wholesome, full-length step in weeks. Every time he put his foot forward he would remain balanced for a few seconds until he was sure he had really reached the ground. That particular day Bobby had so much trouble keeping the little fellows from under his feet, he let the milk stay on the stove overlong, and it was too hot to use. That resulted in another delay, which couldn't be explained to the ones so vitally concerned, and the outcries reached a new and more annoying crescendo.

After what seemed an age to the orphans and an ordeal to Bobby, the milk was right, the utensils refilled, and feeding was going forward once more. Inky climbed up to resume his ear-chewing. Ruin got a chance at the ear syringe much to Rack's discomfort, and Sausage, for some reason, had retreated into a box. Suddenly she discovered what was going on, and came on the run to Bobby, tipped over Rack and pushed Ruin away from her dinner. Ruin, much grieved, started a battle and, in doing so, stepped on the rim of the pan of milk, which had been placed conveniently at hand on the floor, and tipped it over. Then a fresh riot began. The whole dinner had to be delayed until Bobby obtained more milk, diluted it, warmed it, filled the utensils, and returned. And. the roof and walls vibrated with violently voiced objections.

Not all dinners at the Orphanage brought that much trouble, but each had its own peculiar problem. And throughout all, Bobby never wavered.

But a day came which tried Bobby's newly developed patience to the limit. During the midday hours of that particular day he had taken the animals out into the sunshine. For a long time he dashed this way and that to retrieve one or another of them from some threatening circumstance. Then, somewhat exhausted, he returned them to their cabin, shut the door (all too carelessly!) and went away for a little rest and relaxation. When he returned an hour later, he found the door had blown open and the orphans had disappeared!

This, of course, was a job for everyone, and Judge Norton and I joined Bobby in an anxious search. We called and called the names of our pets, while weaving our way through underbrush and trees, looking in every nook and corner—but for a long time not one of the animals did we find.

After an hour of frantic search, Bobby chanced to pass the door of the little cabin, and there stood Sausage looking out at him, as if asking what all the rumpus was about. She had returned of her own volition, and seemed somewhat surprised and a little bit offended that her ability to take care of herself had been questioned.

"Sausage, you little scamp!" Bobby scolded. "Where have you been? Where are Rack and Ruin?"

As if she understood him, Sausage turned and went into the cabin. Following her, Bobby found Rack and Ruin in their nest, acting as if nothing had happened.

But Inky and Bobette were still at large, very much at large. We searched and called, and called and searched, until we all were at the point of despair. At several places we found Bobette's tiny track, but among leaves and pine needles it disappeared without giving us any real clue. We had begun to feel that she had taken to the woods and was already hopelessly in the land of predators, when Bobby suddenly grabbed my arm.

"Do you see what I see?" he asked.

Yes, I saw what he saw—and we called the Judge so that he might see, too.

There, within thirty feet of us, curled up in a little depression under some little balsam trees, lay Bobette, her big eyes watching us interestedly as if she were wondering how long we would be so stupid. We had passed that place a dozen times during our search. No doubt she was there all the while, but her protective coloring was so effective we had not noticed her. Bobby said one of her ears had moved and his attention was drawn by that action, otherwise he would not have found her when he did. She was given a severe lecture (to which she paid not the slightest attention) and returned to the Orphanage.

Now only Inky remained to be found.

Once more we circled through the woods, calling for our porcupine, and looking up every tree. It was late, and we were getting tired. But Bobby's newfound patience was bearing up well. There was no lack of enthusiasm and hope in his voice as he kept calling, "Inky! Inky!"

And finally the answer came. From the top of a tree, which we had passed numerous times, Inky's voice responded in friendly grunts. But he didn't come down—not immediately. Of a sudden he realized that he was master of the situation. All of his infinite impishness came to the surface. No one could doubt that he was deliberately taunting us, and having a wonderful time at our expense. The tree was too small for us to climb, so we had to coax him to come to us. He would answer our pleading in his most affectionate tones, but not make a move in our direction. Lying flat on a branch, he reached his front feet toward us, and then with a smart twist of his head and flick of his tail, he climbed higher in the tree.

"Inky! Inky! Come on down," Bobby pleaded. "All is forgiven, come on down!"

Inky grunted—and climbed still higher.

"Aw, Inky!" Bobby added pathos to his voice. "You remember me, how I fed you milk and even put honey in it! Come on down!"

Inky went to the topmost branch and looked higher for more worlds to conquer. He seemed to like our pleading, however, and when we tired and were silent for a few moments, we suddenly discovered that he had descended to within about twelve feet of the ground.

"Atta boy! Inky, old pal, old pal, old pal," we cried, in chorus. "We knew you would come to us. Atta boy!"

And Inky promptly climbed to the top again!

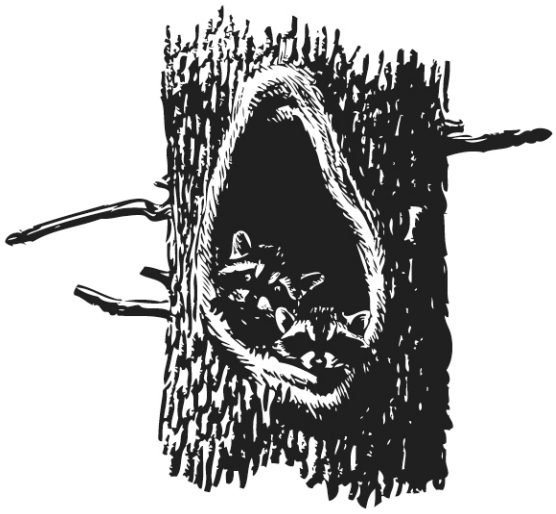
There were other things to be done, so Judge Norton and I left persistent and patient Bobby at Inky's tree. We could hear Bobby alternately using pleas, endearing terms, and threats on the obstinate porcupine, all to no avail. Inky never felt more important in all his life. The whole world was at his feet, and he was not going to surrender so long as there was any acknowledgment of his sovereignty.

After a time, Bobby tired, and in helplessness sat at the foot of the tree, leaning against it. He dozed off for a few moments, but was awakened suddenly by a familiar sensation! Inky was perched on his shoulder, chewing on his ear!

Inky then was restored to the Orphanage—without punishment. What would you do to punish a porcupine? It is no use to scold him for he won't listen. Try to spank him, and the old saying becomes emphatically true: "This hurts me more than it does you." So

Bobby gave him a cookie, at the same time saying something about returning good for evil, or praying for those who despitefully use you. Inky was so impressed he didn't do that again—that day!

But this experience had been more than a test of patience. It marked a turning point in the lives of the orphans. A door had been opened to them, and they had had their first look at the great world about them. The little cabin, in which they had spent their babyhood, could never completely contain them again. They were ready for the next stage of their growth, ready for greater liberty. And thereafter the cabin door was left open so they could come and go as they pleased.



Bobby looked upon this development with just a tinge of sadness. His long period of responsibility and intense care was ended. The animals were learning to feed themselves, and taking more and more to natural food. They did not need him to administer to them constantly as in the weeks now past.

"I guess I feel the way some parents do when their children go away," he said one day. "I just don't like to have these little fellows not need me any more."

"But they do need you, Bobby," I assured him. "You are doing as much for them when you give them liberty as when you give them milk. You will get new joy out of watching them grow and learn. Parents always must learn this. The animals still have much to give you, and you have much to give them!"

"It is impossible to measure how much they already have given me," Bobby said quietly.

That evening, as darkness was just coming on and sacred silence ruled heaven and earth, I found Bobby, seated on a log, watching the fading hues of the western sky.

"I have watched a sunset through," he said, with obvious satisfaction. "For over an hour I have been here watching every change in a wonderful display of beauty. Do you know I have never done that before? I never had the patience, until now. I would look at a

sunset, take a glance at it, but I couldn't look long, for something inside me would make me want to go somewhere and do something else. So this is a part of life I had missed—the beauty of a sunset. Do you see what those little animals have done for me?"

I did. I had long seen it. And since the moment was favorable to serious thought, I told Bobby how important I believe is the attainment of patience. Its presence enriches all other virtues, its absence deepens vice. Some seem to take pride in impatience, as if it indicated a certain superior energy or intelligence in them. But impatience is always weakness, not a strength. Many crimes of men and nations arise from impatience. We all feel instinctively the coming of great good and accomplishment in our lives. No doubt the instinct is true, and, in the way of natural unfoldment, the goodness will come But impatience leads to grabbing things, taking them from others . . . it leads to crime and injustice. Patience is not slowness, nor is it tolerance of slowness. *It is simply living contentedly within the laws of life!* And patience is power; it is peace; it is culture.

That night Bobby composed a verse to the Judge’s song and it wasn't bad—

Yes, I'm the little feller
That the Judge once sang about;
I surely was impatient
But at last I found it out.
Now I sit and watch a sunset
And I want it understood,
I'm as patient as they make 'em
And, Oh boy, but it feels good!

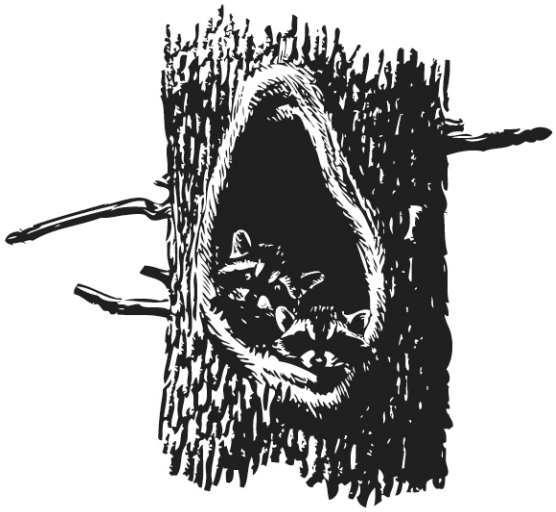
V. HOME: There's No Place Like It As Every Creature Knows

SUMMER came, like some rich, warm spirit that sets all nature yawning, stretching, and sometimes dozing a little. Leaves had spread to their fullest, with their green magic drinking deeply of sunshine, rain, and the nectar of the winds. Birds had lost some of their springtime zest, their first families were raised, food was plentiful, and now they had time for leisure. Deer were wearing their red coats, and fawns were now large enough to care for themselves with just a few helpful hints from their mothers. Antlers of the bucks had reached impressive size, but were still covered with the soft skin of growth called the *velvet*.

At night there was the song of the whippoorwill—the strange and useful bird who is really so mild but is always wanting poor William punished. There were the coarse calls of the great old bullfrogs that sound something like a slide trombone out of repair.

And back of all other nocturnal notes was that throbbing, throbbing, throbbing of insects, which seems to measure the mystery, depth, and antiquity of the forest. On

certain nights, when the mood was right, northern lights played in the north sky, their long white fingers reaching upward as if nature were pointing with pride to the stars. And on certain days, when again the mood was proper, great clouds in fantastic forms floated through the blue as though nature were now daydreaming, imagining things.



Summer found the five orphans maturing rapidly. We could see a day-by-day change in them. They were growing in size, wisdom, beauty, and interest. About them was a great ocean of life, the forest, and the time had come when they were becoming an important part of it.

Now, one of the most compelling laws of nature was tugging at the orphans' hearts—*the law of home*. How that call of home echoes through the land of living things! Whatever knows life must know home, and sometimes the love of home seems even greater than the love of life. Whatever the plant or creature, there is a certain place that suits it best, a place where it feels a measure of abundance, security, comfort, and familiarity. Such a place becomes home.

The little cabin given the orphans never really had been home to our five little friends. It had been a good place to pass their days of babyhood; and it was a good provision so long as they could not provide for themselves. Certainly, they had learned to care for the cabin, as well as for the human beings who gave it to them. But now had come another stage in the orphans' growth, and the little cabin no longer fitted. Their hearts yearned for a natural home, a home suited to their normal way of living, their instincts and dispositions. Home is as individual as the one who lives in it, and our little friends wanted homes that fit, homes that really belonged to them. Therefore, they spent their time exploring, searching first for home.

Sausage did not have to go far in her search: she simply dug herself a home right under our cabin. And if it were so placed that it threatened to undermine part of the foundation, that was nothing to her! It was quite a remarkable cave she dug. The main

entrance to it was eight inches in diameter, and there were two other entrances, smaller than the main one, but usable. Under other buildings a little distance away, she had dug several additional cave dwellings. Whether these were built for use or just for the love of the work, we could not tell. She was generally in the one under the house, and seemed very proud of her new residence. At times she would play a game of peek-a-boo with us, peering out until she would catch us looking and then suddenly jerking her head in out of sight. She would pretend great fright when we approached, literally diving into her "bomb shelter." Yet we could reach in after her and drag her forth unresistingly to have her nestle in our arms and enjoy the petting given her.

We were highly curious about that home of Sausage's, but we would not do her the injustice of digging it up. Woodchucks make remarkable homes, and I have no doubt that Sausage lived up to the standard. Underground these busy little creatures construct an amazing network of halls, rooms arid galleries, designed with definite purpose and with excellent regard for proper drainage and sanitation. One woodchuck home unearthed revealed tunnels totaling forty-eight feet in length. The homes generally have two or more doors. Sometimes when Sausage had disappeared into her main entrance, we would call her, only to discover that she already had come out through some hidden exit and was standing near at hand watching us and probably laughing in silent, groundhog fashion.

Bobette chose a quiet little woodland valley, one-quarter of a mile from our cabin, as her home. She loved that little retreat, and we could usually find her there. We saw less and less of her at the Sanctuary as the season unfolded, yet during these summer days she would run up to us whenever she saw us in the woods, plainly delighted that we had paid her home a visit. She loved to feed along the slopes of the hills that circled the valley, and to lie quietly in the sunshine. Her wilderness friends were with her frequently, and it is probable they all lived in that valley.

In the north country a little protected spot like that becomes very sacred to deer, and it has been hard for human beings to understand the deer's attachment to it. Where snows are so deep, such a valley home becomes a *yarding* place, where a small herd of deer can band together in winter to their mutual advantage in the battle if wolves come upon them. At times, men who work at conservation have been concerned because deer, yarding in that manner, exhaust the available winter food. Since the deer would not go elsewhere voluntarily, the men have endeavored to take them to other valleys where there was greater food and, they supposed, greater happiness for the deer.

Such a move always has been most difficult to carry out, and laughably futile. At one place men worked a number of days, catching deer and crating them, in a valley where it seemed they would starve, and taking them to another valley eight miles distant where there was abundant food. At last the deer were liberated in the new home selected for them-and it took them but a few hours to get back to the old valley again! A

simple and limited diet at the place they knew as home was preferable to rich living in a strange land! While at first thought we may think animals stupid in their determined devotion to home, in the broadest sense the instinct does much for them. It keeps their population spread widely and prevents congestion and its many attendant evils.

The home of Rack and Ruin remained hidden to us, though we feel that we know *what* it was, even if we did not know *where* it was. A hollow tree somewhere in the forest vastness back of the Sanctuary—that would be their instinctive selection. Perhaps it was somewhere near Bobette's valley. We hoped so, for we wanted our orphans to retain their friendship with one another, and to a large extent they have done so. The raccoons were still quite young when they located a much-loved home—somewhere. We saw them go into the woods time and again, always by the same route, and though we tried hard to follow them, or to track them, we never did find their lair. We felt defeated in that respect, and not a little disappointed. Bobby and I wanted the satisfaction of peering into their secluded mansion, seeing them huddled in a little furry heap, and yelling: "Yeah! Thought we couldn't find you, eh? What do you think now?" But that moment of triumph never came.

Inky made no secret of his home. It was just the woods—although he did have preferred nooks and corners. A tall white birch within a few feet of our cabin door seemed to be a favorite. Yet, if Inky were not in that tree, he might be in the black spruce that grew in the swamp, or in the aspen at the lake shore, or in the red pine on the hilltop, or in the hemlock along the trail, or in any balsam, maple, wild cherry, white pine, or whatnot that was handy. This does not imply any lack of home instinct, however. Inky loved the little part of the earth that was his, and he did not fancy being moved. Once we took him to an island for a short time, and he was plainly discontented and unhappy. When we returned him to the region he knew so well, he went about talking in his happiest manner. More than all the others, Inky retained his love of human society. He was never happier than when he could gain admittance to our cabin and be in the family circle.

Sometimes he was allowed to remain inside overnight. Sometimes he stayed in without being allowed. So it was the night I found him in my bed—and had to use pliers to pull the quills out of the foot that first discovered him. This staying inside was brought to an abrupt end, however, when he had spent one whole night chewing up my favorite boots and then, for the sake of variety, biting a few holes in Bobby's hat and in Judge Norton's leather suitcase!

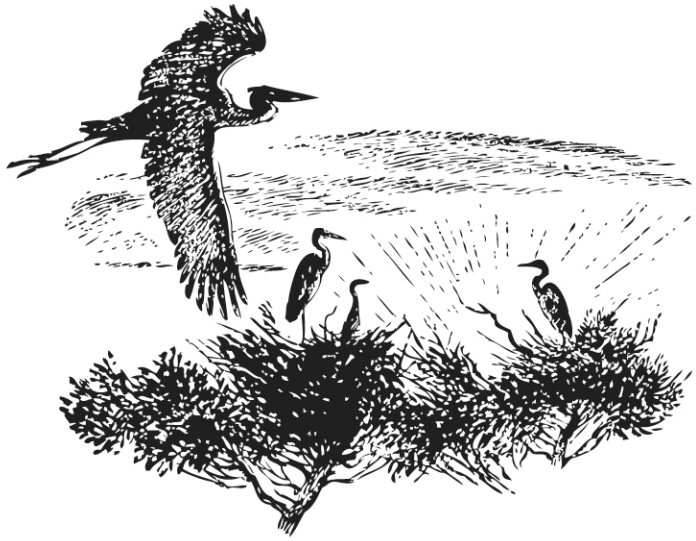
We gave our little friends absolute freedom to work out their own salvations in the teeming world about them. What an exciting, adventure-filled life it must have seemed to them, with the great areas and myriad living things! Yet the orphans never forgot us, and a new and deeper sense of our friendship with them dawned. It had been a thrill to hold them in our arms and care for them while they were tiny, but to see Rack and Ruin come to us when we were on a trail, to have Bobette appear suddenly beside us as we sat on a log, to have Inky call a greeting to us as we passed under a tree, or for Sausage to scratch at the screen door in the middle of the night asking for food—this was joy many times multiplied. In their baby days, the orphans had to accept us. There was no choice. But now they were at liberty. They had their own homes and were independent. Now they came to us because they *wanted* to!

"We are still a part of their homes!" said Bobby, voicing a happy thought. "They have not left us, nor deserted the Sanctuary. They have just built new rooms onto their old homes. This is a larger way of living that includes the old way, too!"

I believe we all gained a clearer sense of what home means, as we watched the animals adjust themselves. We noted with new appreciation the infinite variety of homes of creatures all about us. Never before had we realized how much the homes meant to the little things that lived in them. In the top of an old stump at the water's edge was the nest, the home of kingbirds, cleverly made of little sticks, grass, and moss. When we first saw it, there were five small eggs, creamy white, with reddish-brown dots. How those courageous little parent birds had loved and guarded that home! Let another bird come close, and the kingbirds were a-wing to proclaim their rights. No potential enemy is too great for them to tackle. We have watched them drive away crows, ravens and even eagles. No one is really hurt during such combat. The kingbird is so fast, he darts in and pecks the large bird on the head without the slightest danger of retaliation. The large bird is very happy to move on. Inky tried to climb that stump one day, but the kingbird convinced him that he had better choose another. When, in early July, the little birds had hatched out, I believe those parent birds would have tackled ostriches, or even elephants, had they come too close to that nest!

Deep in the forest, back of the Sanctuary, is a heron rookery, the community home of scores of great blue herons. These enormous birds (which some people erroneously call cranes) build nests fully as large as a bushel basket and high in good-sized trees. We came upon this rookery while hiking through the woods one day, and were amazed

at its 'size. In one tree there were nine nests, and many trees held four, five or six. We had known there must be such a bird village near by. In early evening we often had seen several of these great, stilted creatures wading along the shallow shores of our lake, feeding on small fish, frogs, crayfish and the like. Then the herons would rise on wing, looking like great airplanes, and fly into the setting sun. Somewhere out in that direction must be the herons' home, and we knew there would be many nests, for they do not build singly. But when we found their home, it was much larger than we expected. It extended over several acres of ground, each suitable tree having some nests in it—and each nest was filled with squawking youngsters! There is no word that fits their cry other than squawking. The birds did not know of our approach at first, and so we listened to their normal family conversation. Such a wild and persistent jabbering! It made the cries of our five little orphans seem like a soft lullaby by comparison. Strangely, when the sentinel of the rookery, perched high on a tree, discovered us and let out a cry of warning, the tumult suddenly ceased. Every young bird froze in the position he was holding. Some were on limbs of trees and so still they might easily have been mistaken for dead branches. There was such silence that if we had not known better, we would have concluded we had come upon a deserted village.



And this enforced quiet reigned as long as we were near.

One can see here how forcefully the law of home governed the lives of these creatures! This spot they loved, developed, protected. During wintertime they would fly perhaps fifteen hundred miles to the south, but in spring they would return to that same little spot in the forest. And each day during nesting season parent birds would fly far and wide in search of good fishing grounds, but each evening they would return to their home.

At the crest of a hill on a neighboring lake stands a wildlife home, which we often watch in silent admiration. It is the great nest of the bald eagle, built at the top of a dead white pine, fully ninety feet from the ground. For many years the same pair of birds has occupied this nest, adding to it by way of repairs each season until the mass of good-sized sticks, roots, twigs, vines, bark and grass is estimated to be eight feet high. Sometimes we see the birds making great, majestic circles about their home, their white heads and tails appearing in sharp contrast against the rich blue of the northern sky. How these magnificent birds love their home, their family, and each other! An eagle mates for life. Eagles never leave their homes for long, or to go far. In the far north they fly away for a period when lakes are frozen over, making food hard to get, but they go no farther than necessary, and return at the first thaw.

On the lake where the eagles live are other notable homes. In the marshy shallows muskrats have built their peculiar little houses made of mud mixed with grass. A dozen of them can be seen, scattered among the reeds. The houses are built in water about a foot deep, the tops rising about two feet above the surface. It is inside these mounds of mud that the muskrats live. The houses have little, snug rooms above the water level, and the entrances are long tunnels beginning at the bottom of the lake. On another shore, close to the water's edge is another home, not unlike that of the muskrat. From a distance it looks like a pile of brush, but closer examination shows it to be a planned arrangement of many forest materials—moss, mud, leaves, grasses, sticks, stones and logs. Here lives the wisest of woodland creatures, the beaver. Within that mound there is a well-constructed, well-ventilated room, and the entrance, like that of the muskrat home, is a long tunnel coming from the lake bottom. How these little fellows carry out this remarkable construction work, with no tools but teeth and feet, is one of the grandest stories of nature.

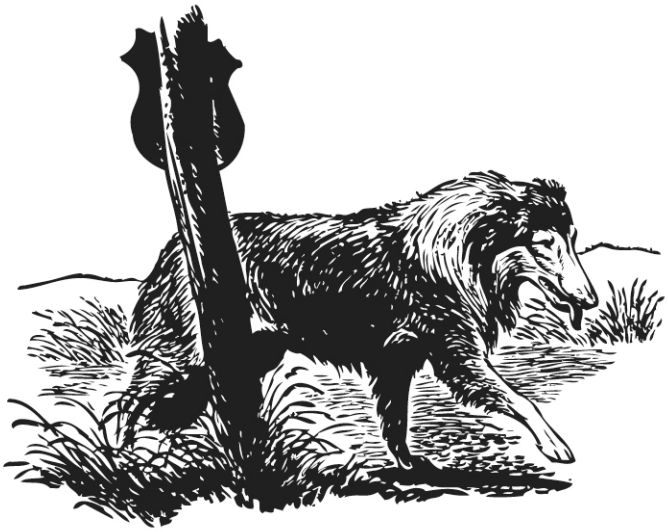
On a hillside is an overturned tree, its roots now reaching up into the air, leaving a protected hollow beneath. This is the home of a bear, where it has slept through the winter. And not far away is a good-sized hole dug under an old stump—the home of a red fox.

Homes! Homes! Homes! The woods, prairies, lakes, streams, rocks, hills, mountains, valleys are filled with homes—and are themselves homes. As a law, home is just about as positive as gravity. In fact, it acts a bit like gravity among living things. Home has a pulling power, an attraction, that leads to overcoming great problems and difficulties.

There are few who have not learned something of this marvelous instinct in the homing pigeon. Going home is a religion with it. While waiting for radio to be discovered, the human race used this little feathered home-goer to carry communications. Let one of the little fellows loose anywhere, and he rises on wing, circles about until he gets his bearings in some unfathomed way, and then straight home he goes. If there is a message tied to his foot, that goes with him. Sometimes these homeward flights are

little short of miraculous, such as that of the bird which was taken from New York to a point along the Orinoco River, in Venezuela. One day the door of his cote was left open, and he escaped. A few days later he showed up at his New York home, and was feeding among other pigeons as if nothing had happened. But he had flown at least two thousand miles to complete his journey! Another bird, during a homeward flight, encountered hunters who shot away most of his feathers, but did not wound him fatally. He couldn't fly—so he walked home! The distance of the walk is unknown, but it is certain that it was over many miles, making necessary the crossing of busy highways, railroads, and flowing streams.

But pigeons hold no monopoly on this homing ability. The historical case of the collie dog who, to return to his home, made his way alone across the width of America, shows us something more of this instinct. This dog was lost by his owners somewhere in the east. After much searching, they despaired of finding their pet, and returned without him to their home in the far west. Two years later the dog came to them—thin, tired, and bedraggled, but his tail was wagging, for he had come home!



There was a shepherd dog taken from St. Clair, Michigan, to a point one hundred miles beyond Aberdeen, South Dakota. He traveled almost all the way in a boxcar, so that he saw little of the country through which he passed. Yearning for his old home, he disappeared one October day. In August of the following summer, the dog reappeared at his Michigan home. What a glorious epic of heroism, persistence and devotion is hidden in those intervening months—what difficulties, dangers, hunger and complicated problems must have confronted the creature every hour.

No less remarkable is the authenticated story of a Persian cat which was taken from San Diego, California, to Phoenix, Arizona, a distance of three hundred and eighty miles. He returned to his California home after fourteen months of travel, during which he must have crossed a blistering desert and the Colorado River.

Innumerable are such Stories. Horses, cattle, sheep, birds and fish have demonstrated this amazing homing ability. Even an old toad has been known to hop ten miles to return to his favorite garden, after he had been carried away in an experiment.

Perhaps when we see this instinct operating so powerfully and universally, we understand why the building, the maintaining, and the defense of homes are so much a part of our own history. The Judge asked a question about this:

"Why then, do you suppose, have the people of our times come to neglect homes so much?" The Judge continued, "Why, I know fellows who won't go home until there isn't any other place to go. And if they have to stay home for an evening, they figure they are being punished."

That is sadly true. Among other mistakes of our day, we have tried to push home aside, to forget it. But that is not to our credit, and certainly explains some of the unhappiness of our generation. There are those who say with pride that they cannot stay in, cannot Sit down and spend an evening in conversation or reading a book at their own fireside. That is a confession of weakness! And nature will never let us alone in such an error.

The same call of home that beckons Rack and Ruin, Sausage, Inky and Bobette to find a spot called home, and to live forth from there, is speaking to us, and wisdom bids us respond. It says to us, "Find yourself a home, make it the seat of your affections, respect it, cultivate it, appreciate it. For in the spirit of home do you find all that is good and decent in life. Homes build communities, communities make nations, nations of home-loving people make civilization!"

One evening at the Sanctuary we had an experience which has remained in our memory ever since. In it was presented a true picture of home. It was storming outside, rather cold, and Bobby, Judge Norton, and I were enjoying the ruddy warmth of a crackling grate fire. There was such a happy feeling present, something so substantial and comfortable! We had passed some time reading, talking of various matters, and occasionally singing campfire songs, when there came a scratching on the screen door. Bobby went in response to it and, as he expected, found Inky, wet and cold. The little

porky was brought in by the fire, where he grunted forth his gratitude, and soon was dozing in the friendly warmth.

Then came another scratching—a bit more violent and commanding this time. Bobby responded once more, and there were Rack and Ruin, also showing marks of the weather. They were welcomed, petted, and soon sleeping contentedly at our feet. Within a few moments we heard the little voice of Bobette at the door. Bobby again played butler. And as he patiently held the door while Bobette took her own time to enter, Sausage came out of the darkness, and darted in After we had made the conventional fuss over the newcomers, Bobette lay down on a rug and Sausage crawled into Bobby's pocket—a favorite place!

Now *there* was a scene to remember: three men, two raccoons, a porcupine, a woodchuck, and a deer gathered before a grate fire! It rather pictured the millennium, the way life is seen when love rules. Out in the forest the rain was coming down in torrents, the wind whipping the trees, and those storm sounds made the cabin more cozy, the fireside more cheery.

The evening was built on wholesome, satisfying joy. It wasn't the shouting and hilarity sometimes mistaken for happiness. The very atmosphere was charged with friendship, security and good will.

The Judge told some of his famous stories, and it seemed to us they had more flourishes than ever before. Bobby popped some corn over the fireplace coals, and all of us, the five orphans included, happily partook of it. We read some thoughts and descriptions from favorite books. We sang songs again. And thus an evening passed in what is probably the greatest single joy the Wise Creator has provided his Creation—*hut happiness!*

Presently we noticed a little nervousness on the part of Bobette. She arose and made her way to the door, looking into the night, alert to something she saw or heard beyond the realm of our dull senses. The door was opened to her and she went out, no doubt to join her wild friends of the forest. We found now that the rain had ceased, and the forest was dark, dripping, cool and mysterious.

Next, Rack showed restlessness. Something was calling him in tones we could not hear. He trilled a little, in raccoon fashion, and Ruin wakened and came to his side. The door was opened again and these two went out on missions they alone understood. Sausage followed a few moments later, dashing silently and swiftly into her cave home under the cabin.

Now of our visitors, only Inky remained. He still dozed, his nose alarmingly close to the fire. We had not the heart to put him out, and had decided that this might be one of those nights when he would be allowed to remain inside. But he had some ideas of his

own about what he should do. He roused, looked about him, shook his quills, and started talking as if asking where everyone had gone.

We always referred to his funny conversation as “honking”—though that is a very poor description.

No terms we could find describe the sound very well. It is like the sound a human being makes when he doesn't want to say, "What?" "Why?" or "Huh?" He keeps his lips closed and says, "Hm-m-m?" with a rising inflection. Well, Inky does that, and keeps repeating it. It is awkward to say he is "hm-m-ming," so we say he is "honking"!

Well, Inky came honking to the door and scratched in his original way, asking that it be opened for him. He didn't scratch on the screen directly in front of him, as an animal would be expected to do. Inky always reached above his head, in a most clumsy and comical manner, and scratched down toward his own nose. We hesitated long enough to laugh at his posture, and then opened the door for him.

"Where are you going, Inky?" asked Judge Norton.

"Honk! Honk!" Inky answered, looking up.

"Want to go out and get your feet wet?"

"Honk! Honk! Honk!"

"All right, old fellow, you asked for it," and then Inky was ushered through the door. He honked and honked as he went down the steps, disappearing into the darkness.

“Inky, are you there?" called Bobby, looking aimlessly into the night.

"Honk, honk, honk, honk," came the reply from the darkness.

By the sound, we could trace his progress to his favorite birch tree, and knew by the same means when he had started to climb. Time and again we called his name. Each time he answered with a honk or two. He must now have been quite near the top, for his voice sounded well overhead.

"Guess Inky must have gone home," said the Judge.

"Honk, honk!" Inky assured us.

"Good night, Inky!"

The joy we had experienced in that evening of fireside companionship and home atmosphere was the subject of much comment as we prepared for bed The Judge was quiet in his room for a few moments, and then came out asking our attention.

"See how you like this one!" he said. He began patting the floor with his foot to set the rhythm of "Turkey in the Straw." We knew another verse was coming, and here it is:

Oh! bars don't make a cage,
And a home ain't made by walls;
Build a house upon the sand,
And pretty soon it falls.
But nail some boards together,
Make a window and a door,
Fill it full of loved ones,
And it's home forevermore!

The Judge should know—he made a home just that way!

VI. COURAGE
How Living Things Meet Life's Problems

EARLY during another evening, sometime later, Inky scratched at the cabin door, asking admittance. Now Inky was always welcome, but on *that* particular evening—well, at least we had been wishing that he would not want to come.

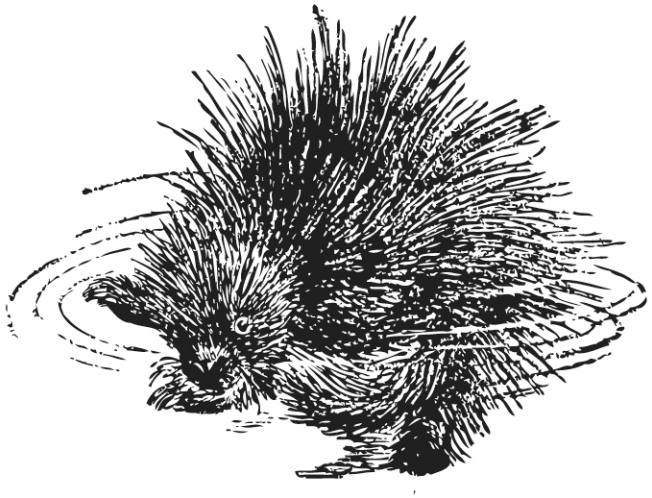
There were two reasons for that wish of ours and one was that Inky had developed a sense of humor that was almost sinister.

It was autumn, and the frostbitten air had stirred Inky to such life that he was simply irrepressible!

We had made some mistakes in training Inky—if training is the right word. Bobby said we might as well try to train lightning. We endeavored to show Inky the things he shouldn’t do—and thereafter those seemed to be the only things he really wanted to do. For instance, we tried to get him to understand the difference between the wood in our furniture and that in trees. Immediately he developed a passion for chewing the legs

off chairs and tables, and trees were hardly nibbled! Then he discovered that we did not like to have him climb up on things in the kitchen. It was a wonderful discovery, and forthwith that was his favorite place to climb!

But one stunt revealed Inky's impishness more than all others. He found that it annoyed us exceedingly when he suddenly would grab one of our legs, cling to it like a super-sandbur—and *bite!* In fact, that was his most trying trick, so it was the one in which he most persisted. He would sit aside in apparent contentment and innocence until someone would walk or stand near him, then make a sudden lunge for the nearest leg, and cling to it with all his fiendish might.



Inky really never bit hard—it was just the sensation of the whole maneuver that kept us on edge. There was such a threat to it. It gave one the feeling of standing on the edge of calamity with both feet on banana peelings. True, Inky wasn't very large, and we were the more powerful. Thus it would seem that we should have taken him off easily. But did you ever try to pick a porcupine off a tree? Just where are you going to take hold? It would be as pleasant to gather a bouquet of cacti! We could get Inky off, all right, but it was a painful operation. One foot after the other would have to be released, during which time he would make marvelous use of teeth and quills, crying resentfully all the while as if *he* were the one being abused! Then he would sit, grumbling, in a corner for a time—until the next opportunity came along. The story of that particular evening at the Sanctuary has much—very much—to do with this fiendish fun of his.

Now the other reason we hoped Inky would find suitable use for his time in the woods that night, was that we were having guests. In all there were twelve of us assembled for dinner—forest rangers, naturalists and their families. This was a sort of traditional dinner of ours, held each autumn to celebrate the passing of summer, the coming of fall, or something. At least, it was an excuse to get together in that spirit of good-fellowship which is found in nature. The food of the occasion was prepared over the grate fire. Our conversation was of the trail, the happiness and freedom of life in the open. This was

our time to share our adventures and experiences with each other, that our joy might be greater through the sharing. Hence, our hopes were that Inky wouldn't interrupt this dinner.

Since that was the thing which we least wanted Inky to do, that was what he did—and as usual, he did a thorough job of it. We just had been seated about the table, a platter of sizzling steaks had been taken up from the broiler, and everyone was bubbling with conversational happiness—when came the ominous scratching on the screen door! We tried to ignore it, but it persisted. Bobby looked at me, and the Judge coughed because he didn't know what else to do. Our guests ate on in innocent bliss, little knowing what was in store for them. When the scratching had reached the point where the screen was about to be ripped asunder, Bobby quietly left the table and went to see what could be done. That statement is a bit misleading. It sounds as if more than one thing *could* be done! Inky wouldn't go away, and he wouldn't quit scratching—so that either we must let him in or he would let himself in. We let him in. Bobby set him in the corner, by way of bribery surrounding him with cookies, apples, crackers, bread and milk then in futile waste of breath asked him to "be a good boy"—and left him. The guests laughed at the presence of a porcupine at the dinner, and said they were delighted that our famous pet had come in while they were there. We made no comment, but secretly prayed that nothing would happen to change their minds.

To our relief, Inky took to his food, and seemed content with his corner. Our dinner went forward with the usual tone of good cheer. Judge Norton was bubbling over with wit, and kept everyone laughing until food was somewhat neglected.

But suddenly a forest ranger lost his smile, and in place of it came a look of surprise somewhat mixed with alarm.

"Ouch! Good heavens, what's that?" he exclaimed, as he pushed his chair back and made an effort to get to his feet.

Bobby looked at me, nodding his head knowingly. The Judge looked as if he suddenly had received some very bad news—and he had!

"It's Inky!" said Bobby, and then to the distressed forester, "Here, I'll take him!"

But Inky did not intend to be taken! Never had he seen such an array of feet before, and he was out to make the most of it! Giving the forester a final bite, Inky turned to the naturalist next to him. This man wisely climbed up on his chair to be out of reach. That was fine with Inky, so he tried the next guest. He, too, climbed up on his chair. The Judge was next in line, and he stood on his chair, telling Inky what he thought of him, his family, and all his ancestors. Bobby and I were trying to catch up with him, but were having little success. The little invisible terror went the rounds of that table until everyone there was standing fearfully and precariously on some article of furniture!

If that didn't present a pretty spectacle! Here was our annual dinner; a dinner for those who have learned to love the peace, quiet and utter tranquillity of nature—thrown into high confusion by one porcupine!

In the meantime Inky was wholly triumphant. Every foot had been chased off the floor, and he had come into the open, acting tough. This "acting tough," as we called it, was a most amusing little act of his. When he had done something that pleased him especially, such as the present riot, he would raise all his quills, then whirl around, and 'round and 'round, chattering his teeth and lashing about with his tail as if he were surrounded with enemies. Literally, it was porcupine shadow-boxing, for this is the way Inky fights. His tail is well-stocked with quills, and when it strikes an enemy it does much damage, driving quills in deeply. Of course Inky was just playing at this in our circle. We were never hurt by it, though that evening our feelings were offended, for it looked too much like a dance of triumph.

Bobby and I finally captured the provocative porcupine and carried him outdoors, to give our guests a chance to come back to earth. They resumed their dinner, and from their laughter we knew that the event had passed without serious injury. Inky was finally flattered into climbing a tree. We praised him, told him how tough he was, what a fine climber, until, showing off and still feeling the effects of his triumph, he went to such altitude it would take him a long time to return. Then Bobby and I returned to our banquet—and to cold food!

But the spice of autumn affected all creatures as much as it did Inky. All nature is stirred to purpose and activity in these lovely, colorful, cool days. October had come, with all its brilliant loveliness, and winter was barely over the horizon.

How these little living things know the season of cold is at hand, no one knows. But they know it.

Squirrels, born that spring, never having known winter before, were busy storing mushrooms in carefully selected places in the trees, there to dry and be available when snows were deep and food scarce. Chipmunks were carrying nuts, cones and seeds down into their remarkable underground homes to be available when needed. Beavers were felling trees nightly, taking branches into the water and making piles on the bottom of the lake, weighing them down with stones and water-soaked logs, so that they might swim under the ice and feed on this bark when other food was difficult to get. With larger sticks they were making their dams and houses stronger. Bears were growing fat and lazy, beginning to gather cedar bark, grass, and leaves, into selected hollows and caves, making beds on 'which they would sleep soundly until winter was gone. Deer had taken on their thick dark gray coats, and were feeding heavily to store up reserve energy within their own bodies. Indescribable beauty adorned the forest. No one ever has described adequately the beauty of the north woods in fall, the color of

the leaves, the blue of the skies, the reflections in the lakes. When one sees all this he does not know what to say, and to depict it he would not know what to write. It is just one of those things created for experience, yet beyond the realm of human expression.

One day the Judge, Bobby and I stood noting the whirl of activity about us. The world was seething with preparation. Blue jays were calling loudly as they flew about their tasks. In the distance we could hear the call of crows and ravens. Chipmunks and squirrels fairly raced across the ground. Woodpeckers were drumming furiously. A ruddy joy was on the face of nature, joy in vital, powerful activity.

"This whole thing teaches one grand lesson every single human being should know!" said the Judge, pushing his hat back on his head as he did when he was sure of his point.

"What is that, Judge?" asked Bobby.

“Courage!" snapped the Judge, with an affirming nod of his head. "Every little scamp in these forests is facing things that are mighty difficult. They know it, and look at them tear in! Not a slacker in the outfit, not one whimpering—all of them standing up to their problems and looking them right in the eye! I tell you everything about us is packed to the brim with *courage!"*

The Judge was right. Nature boils with courage. And it would be well for every human being to cultivate that quality to the highest possible extent. This life is so planned that it calls for courage. The thing we generally do not realize until we study nature closely is that courage is one of the best protections from evil. It doesn't get one *in* trouble, but gets him *out* of it. There is no problem these little creatures of the woods face but that is solved better and more quickly because of their natural courage. The same is true in the world of human beings. Courage is an armor that deadens the blows of difficulties. It is fear that invites calamity, both in the animal world and ours.

Our own little orphans were wise and courageous as the rest of nature's creatures, and instinctively were preparing for winter, though they had never known one before. Sausage already had entered hibernation. Somewhere in a specially prepared room of that remarkable underground home of hers she had curled up her fat little self and would live in a land of dreams for six or seven months. Bobette came to us no more. The wilderness now had claimed her completely. We missed her, and yet this is the way we wanted it. We wanted her and the others to live natural lives.

Once, when the first few snowflakes were falling and we were taking an early-morning hike, we came upon a fawn we believe was our pet We were rather close to the valley Bobette had chosen for home when we saw the fawn. At the time it had been several weeks since we had seen Bobette. We startled a herd of five or six deer, and they raced through the brush. All save one—one who was about the size of Bobette, and who had some of her mannerisms. That one bounded away for a few feet, and then came to a stop and looked back. We called "Bobette!" repeatedly, but she just stood regarding us

with intense interest, though making no move toward us. We began advancing toward her, a step at a time, talking in the tones she had known through the spring and summer. Once she took several steps in our direction, and our hearts gave a bound. But from the distance came that peculiar and stirring whistling snort—the alarm cry of the deer. This was the voice of her people. The appeal was irresistible. Without another moment's hesitation, she whirled about and was gone, herself repeating the cry of her kind.

"Good-by, Bobette, and good luck!" we called after her.

Inky, in addition to his mounting impishness, was showing other effects of the seasonal change. His coat of quills and hair was getting so thick it seemed difficult for him to carry it. While he returned to us frequently to upset our dinners and give us something to worry about, the forest was claiming more of him, too. Instinctively he was locating trees that would be useful during the problem-packed days ahead. Besides, he had now taken unto himself a wife. We saw Mrs. Inky frequently, but did not gain her friendship.

Rack and Ruin were more beautiful than ever. Their fur coats were so thick we felt no concern over their comfort during the long winter now approaching. Through the most severe cold they would huddle in their tree home and sleep, for they are hibernators. Yet they do not sleep as continuously and for such a long period as does the bear or woodchuck. Before the winter is far spent, in late February or in March, raccoons are active again.

It was during these October days that we had a little adventure with Rack and Ruin which showed us they were not forgetting us, even if the business of living in the forest was taking more and more of their time and attention. Ruin was injured. We do not know how the injury occurred, but believe that she might have fallen from a tree. When first we saw her, she was dragging herself along the trail toward our cabin, unable to use

her hind legs. Her tracks showed she had been traveling in this manner for some distance. As we came to her, she looked up at us, and reached up one foot to be taken. In her trouble she needed the care of her human friends once more, and for this purpose she had come to us.

We took her up gently and carried her back to the cabin. Rack soon appeared and stayed close at hand. We could find no bones broken, and prepared to give Ruin protection and rest until she regained the health and strength natural to her. She seemed to understand that we were doing our best for her. Never did she complain in any way, nor did she make any effort to leave us. She was cared for in the cabin for nearly two weeks. During that time Rack called nightly. When admitted to the cabin, he would go directly to Ruin, stay for a few moments while greetings were exchanged in silent language, and then enter the forest again. We shall never forget the quiet courage and patience of Ruin during that time of trial, much less forget the confidence and faith she had in us. Once she had begun to mend, she improved rapidly. She tried out her strength a bit more each day until she was completely recovered and able to join Rack again in their life in the forest.

And now for all the sparkling joy there was in the forest world about us, our spirits were heavy. The day was approaching when we must leave the Sanctuary—the Judge to return to his home in the city, Bobby and I to go on a lecture tour which would keep us traveling all winter. It wasn't that we were sad just at leaving the forest. This good old world is all of one piece! The Judge would be happy at his city home, and Bobby and I love the lecture field almost as much as we do the woods itself, as it gives us an opportunity to share the things we experience at the Sanctuary, and to help others see more clearly how life should be lived in harmony with nature's pattern.

All our heaviness came from one source. It was Inky! We never had the least doubt of his ability to take care of himself, nor did we anticipate that there was any enemy among predators that could harm him. It was just that he still clung to our companionship so determinedly. We were not fearful lest he be hungry or cold, for he was constitutionally equipped to meet those problems. But we did not want to think of him being lonely.

Of course, we realized later that all our worry was for nothing. Inky was as capable of meeting that problem as he was of finding food. In truth, our worry was not how Inky would feel, but rather how we imagined we would feel if we were porcupines and had been left behind.

Once for a brief moment we talked of taking Inky with us. We could have done so. And no doubt he would have known a large measure of happiness to remain in the company of his human friends anywhere. But we quickly put that thought from us. Inky, who was born for the silences, whose instincts called for the even, unexciting routine of forest

life—take him into the city in the midst of all that dust, smoke and politics? No, it was unthinkable! So we faced the unavoidable proposition of leaving him behind.

Our sympathies ran amuck during the remaining autumn days at the Sanctuary. Poor Inky—all he had was a porcupine paradise to live in, but we couldn't believe it was good enough. We built a little shelter for him under our cabin, and lined it with an old mattress. Beside it we placed a mound of dehydrated dog biscuit, enough to feed all the porcupines in that part of Wisconsin. Inky calmly and methodically looked over our work, nibbled on a dog biscuit, bit his autograph in a corner of the shelter, and then climbed a tree as if to say, "Thanks, fellows, for your thoughtfulness, but I'll choose my own home." However he did use the shelter at times, and the dog biscuits disappeared during the winter. No doubt raccoons, bears, squirrels, and other creatures came here to dine, but certainly Inky got his share.

Then came the hour of departure. All our baggage had been loaded in the boat, in which Judge Norton was seated, and Bobby and I had made a final tour of inspection to see that everything was all right. The first of November was just at hand. Leaves had dropped from the deciduous trees, and the courageous forest stood gaunt, strong, defiant, awaiting the coming of winter. There would not be long to wait. Each night ice was freezing along the shore lines—each night was heard the call of the wolf, as though it were the voice of winter itself.

As Bobby and I returned to the boat, Inky followed us. That was the one thing we did not want. Several times we had spoken of it—if only we could go away without seeing him there reaching after us. We talked of it again as we walked toward the boat. "Won't you please turn back, Inky? Won't you go and crawl up your tree until we are gone?"

But the Judge startled us with a sharp and deserved reprimand.

"What's the matter with you fellows?" he demanded. "Here you go around praising nature, and showing how much courage there is--and then you soften up like a cream puff! Nature does what she has to, doesn't she? And she does it in the right way. You don't hear her whimpering, do you? Inky hasn't whined, and for all you know he may be glad to get rid of you. Now tell him good-by in a manly way, and let's get going!"

Bobby and I looked at each other, a bit startled, and smiled. Why, certainly, the Judge was right! This was something that had to be done. Why soften ourselves in doing it? Inky had everything in him that he needed. Even if he *were* lonely, he could meet that, too. That was what we had been watching all these months—the completeness of the individual, and likewise the courage of every living thing. Did we think Inky had lost these qualities? Did we think we had lost them?

That realization was all we needed.

"Inky, old boy!" Bobby said, picking up the porcupine and holding him high. "We have a little job to do. You expect us to do it. You have a job to do here, and we expect you to do it. What do you say, old boy, we part with a smile, eh?"

Bobby passed Inky to me, and I played with him for a few moments. Then, as if to forestall any softness, Inky started getting tough! We had seen him get tough before, but never quite that tough! He ran at us and bit at our legs, and he whirled and whirled as if he meant to whip us right off the Sanctuary! He chased us back and forth, up and down, and we laughed until tears came. It seemed as if he had decided it was up to him to handle this mournful occasion, to make the parting easy and free of sorrow. And suddenly it seemed to strike him that this parting should not be drawn out too long, for he started away on the run in the direction of his birch tree, his quills all raised, still vehemently acting tough!

"Good-by, Inky!" we called in chorus.

"Honk! Honk! Honk!"—one for each of us.

"We'll see you in the spring, Inky!"

And the last thing we heard as we pulled away was Inky's incessant honking, as much as to say, "Go on, and don't think for a moment you'll be missed!"

But that porcupine had really put us in jubilant mood. We sang and laughed as we went our way. And the Judge added one more verse to his ever-growing song:

Don't be afraid, my little man,
Have courage in your heart!
There's no ghost or bogeyman
To give you a bad start.
So when trouble comes along,
Just laugh and then yell "Boo!"
You will find out every time
It's really 'fraid of you!

VII. FRIENDLINESS
We Find It As We Give It

Now came that marvelous blanket of snow to the north country—like a great white silence spread to deepen the hush and peace. One who has not seen it cannot picture in imagination its clean, sparkling beauty. In the sunlight it seems as if nature had gathered the leftover sparkles of all the diamonds in the world, and cast them about here. Lakes are so thickly frozen they would bear up a railroad train, and on still nights this ice cracks of its own weight, at times sounding like the booming of cannon.

But this seasonal loveliness we had to see through our memories that year, for we were many, many miles away.

We heard of Inky several times while the winter was yet young. Friends living in the north visited the Sanctuary and found him there, fat, healthy, and happy. He was making good use of the shelter and food provided for him. During those first days there was evidence of the two raccoons, also, their tracks mingling in the snow with those of Inky. But the tracks of Rack and Ruin disappeared in later days, as the ever-deepening cold rocked them into a sound sleep, and kept them there.

Then came a period of a few weeks when we were entirely out of touch with our Sanctuary. Our lecture schedule was very intense, and Bobby and I traveled constantly, telling listening audiences of our little friends of the forest. It was good to see how people everywhere loved the simple little creatures. The pictures we had made, and which illustrated the lectures, could in no way appeal to the highly developed love of excitement prevalent today. Wide has spread the notion that "wild" animals are a threat to the life of anyone who enters forest or jungle. In this belief, many have come to expect the half-painful thrill of charging bears, lions and tigers, where the subject of primitive nature is pictured. But the hairbreadth escapes associated with nature are all in our imaginations. Life in nature is simple and calm. So far as man is concerned, there is little danger, really none if he uses common sense.

Our lecture message was of the real goodness and friendliness we had found in the forest. We had photographed no bloodthirsty wolf packs, plotting the destruction of woods travelers—for we had never seen any. In truth, neither has anyone else.

Now let me say this plainly: In all the years I have lived in the forest, in constant contact with animals of all kinds native to the north country, I never have seen one creature make a move to attack me. Wolves, coyotes, wildcats, lynx, pumas—at some time or other I have been very close to them all. Yet I have seen them do but one thing—run away in the quickest possible manner.

Once when we were camped on a remote lake, I was picking blackberries in a large patch we had discovered. The bushes were unusually tall and heavy so that it was difficult to see ahead as I worked through them. One bush was holding its best berries high in the air. I took hold of it and bent it over so I could pick them—and got the surprise of my life! There stood a great black bear, so close I could have touched him had I wanted to. I didn't want to. He was *too* close! While I knew the bear would not hurt me, for the moment I wondered if *he* knew it.

There is a rule to follow in dealing intimately with animals: *Make no sudden move!* Give them no cause to think you are attacking them, for they will fight furiously in self-defense. Hence, I froze in my position when I saw the bear. Blackberry briars were pricking my fingers, but I must not move. Mosquitoes were having a grand free meal on

the back of my neck and on my nose, but I must not move. A deer fly was circling about my head, and a bee zoomed past my ear, but I must not move.

The bear froze in his position too, and it was a case of who would thaw out first. Then things happened that made me feel I was just a little better at this game than the bear. The bee, which had just failed to get a rise out of me, went over to the bear and circled his great black head. He swatted at the bee with his paw. The bee kept at him. Possibly that bear had raided that bee's home recently, and taken the stores of honey, as bears often do. The bee circled again, and the bear swatted again. Perhaps it 'was because the bee was too close to the bear's eyes that he was striking at it, for bears are not concerned about little things like bee stings. When bears are raiding hives, bees swarm all over them, and they show not the slightest concern. In fact, they eat bees!

One old trapper insists that the sting of the bees has the same effect on bears as pepper has on us. It is a sort of seasoning. Nevertheless, that bear in the blackberry patch didn't like that bee near his eyes. It looked so funny to see that great creature striking so awkwardly at such a little insect I could not keep from laughing. "Why, you big sissy, you!" I said aloud.

At the sound of my voice the bear showed new concern about me! He seemed astonished to discover that I was alive and bent his head from side to side as if trying to get a better look at me. On his face was an expression of mixed surprise, bewilderment and concern. Then with a great *whusch!* blowing his breath in my face, he whirled around and raced away—clearing a path through the blackberry bushes as he went.

I had enjoyed the experience, though I was quite thankful that it was over. Nevertheless, it showed again the attitude common to wild animals on meeting man—to escape, not to attack.

Surely there is a certain caution in creatures which makes them shy at the presence of man, makes them evade him, stay out of his sight—but not attack him. That is what we see when we first approach nature. The living things are avoiding us, for they distrust us after the ages of savage abuse they have suffered from our traps and our weapons. But there is also deep in the creatures' natures that sacred friendliness which is revealed when we approach them with kindliness, consideration and understanding. It is this quality of *friendliness* that we uncovered in Inky, Rack and Ruin, Sausage, and Bobette. We befriended them, and that released a friendship which already must have been in their hearts. They were not *tame*, but they were normal animals living naturally in their woods, meeting their problems as do others of their species—but they had received friendship from us, and they paid us back in kind. Thus it is demonstrated again that "like begets like."

And it was this tender quality of friendliness which we found in nature that Bobby and I took to the public in pictures and lectures.

How grand it was to see that people everywhere accepted with gratitude our unexciting but wholly honest presentation of the world of nature! We found it raised our own faith in the human race to see this. Before every manner of group, in all parts of America, we took our simple message from the Sanctuary. And that which gratified us most was to see that people were not amazed or incredulous at what they saw. They were pleased, happy as they saw the friendliness that is in little wild things, but they were not astonished. Why?

Let me answer that question carefully, for I consider it most revealing and important. The answer is because within our human hearts we know, instinctively, that this world and life are of the highest order. We never cease to be astonished at the appearance of evil, for something within us expects only good. Friendship is what we actually anticipate in nature. Deep in our thoughts we do not truly believe that nature is savage. Hence, when we hear stories such as a lion cub playing with a lamb, a wolf caring for a baby, a cat and a bird in friendship, a fish that will come when called—we are highly gratified. Such true stories are numerous, and we find they prove to us something we already know. We feel that is the way things really are, even though we are afraid something may hinder and alter this natural order.

It is with our *love* that we see things truly, discerning actual natures. Our fears show us a sort of false world, wherein we live a false state of existence. With our love we see the real character of Inky and the other orphans. There is presented the type of nature we instinctively expect. With our fears, we see the fictional ferocity of animals—charging, attacking, rending, destroying.

But our love sees *Reality!* Therefore, when we see revealed the natural friendship of animals, we say, "That is the way we have always thought it to be, that is the world *God*

made!" Look to the young child, before our faulty education in fear has spoiled him. Everything that lives he expects to be friendly. He will reach out his little hand to the wild bird, and wonder why it does not perch there and sing to him. By instinct, the child expects harmony, goodness, and friendliness to fill the world about him.

It is this same instinct that makes our audiences grateful to find demonstrated the goodness, friendliness and gentleness of our five fur-covered orphans. And this shows clearly that by nature *we* are friendly. Friendliness is in our blood, in our very constitutions, in our hopes and faith. The wars and meanness we experience arise not from our natural, better selves—but from our fears. It is not too much to hope that someday, ere long, we may live by our deepest nature, and know the happiness which it is possible for us to have in that way only.

Once during the winter we found time available for a quick trip to the Sanctuary. We snow-shoed over the silent, frozen lakes, and over drifts of glistening white snow, seeking news of our pets, and a glimpse of the place we love so deeply. How we enjoyed that adventure—the musical *swish* of snowshoes as they sent sprays of frozen particles ahead of each step, the exhilarating cold that kept nipping playfully at our cheeks and fingers, the sharp shadows of shore-line trees cast by a slanting sun, the blue sky overhead, the cry of blue jays, the dainty voices of chickadees, and flocks of goldfinches with their amazingly brilliant plumage, the rich solitude that reached from horizon to horizon—all things combined to show us a fact we have known for years, that though winter is not the greatest of seasons, there is no season greater.

But we did not find Inky! Not even one of his tracks could we discover. There was still quite a little food present, and we replenished the stock with some we had brought in packsacks. But Inky was not around. We called and called, and looked in all his favorite haunts, but he was not there. No doubt he had searched out a place more suited to the season, a place which remained his secret.

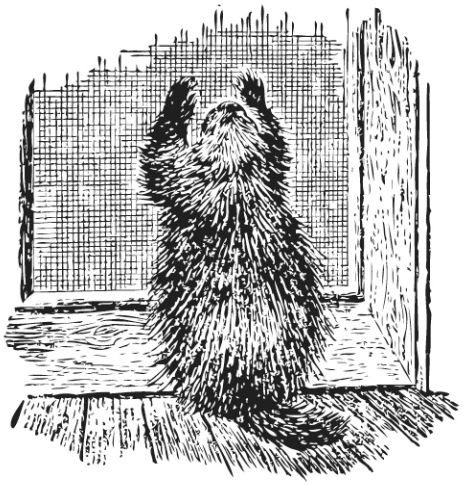
Despairing of finding our pet, our thoughts turned to food. We were so hungry that Inky's food might have been appropriated had we not brought our own with us. During the preparation of the meal, we repeated a mistake made once in the past. We built a fire in the cabin fireplace, and set out various food thereon to fry or boil. We had forgotten that the fireplace chimney would be packed with snow. As soon as the heat of the fire rose it loosened the snow, which fell down in our skillets and kettles, flooding them and putting out the fire! That caused a delay which was serious but not beyond remedy. Soon the mess was cleared away, the fire rekindled with dry wood, and dinner under way again.

I wonder if food ever before tasted so good I It made no difference if there were ashes in it, if some parts were cooked too much and the rest too little. Bobby said no king ever dined as well as we—for no king ever got that hungry!

The sun had set when we started away from the Sanctuary. But a full moon was mounting in the sky, and in the clearness of the air and the reflection from the snow its light seemed almost equal to that of the sun. As we snowshoed through groves of birch trees, the effect was truly magical. Bobby said he felt as if we someway had slipped into another world where there was beauty unknown to earth. We had been disappointed at not having seen Inky, but with all the beauty and wholesome joy we had experienced on that brief winter sojourn, we felt that our lives were much enriched.

It was spring when next we saw the Sanctuary, and we came quivering with excitement. How many of our little friends would be there? How many would remember us? As we approached, the Judge, who had joined us again, improvised a verse to his song, just to start the season right:

Oh, now I see a birch tree,
And a balsam and a pine,
And now I see a cabin
Where we three will sleep and dine.
We've traveled north, we've traveled south,
We've traveled east and west,
And here we are back home again,
The spot that we love best.



We had not long to wonder about certain of our little friends. We had just landed from the boat and were unloading our baggage when two chipmunks came running toward us, as if they were having a race. Without the slightest hesitation they climbed up on outstretched hands and partook of the peanuts we offered them. Within a few moments a red squirrel and a blue jay had come close enough to show they remembered us. But no Inky! We called for him repeatedly as we went about the task of setting the cabin in order. We walked through the forest imitating his honking (very poorly, no doubt), but still there was no response. All during the evening we kept hoping

he would return, and just before we went to bed we took one last look about the cabin, still calling him. But no Inky!

The first gray tones of dawn were in the sky the next morning when Bobby awakened the Judge and me with a happy shout.

"Wake up, you fellers, and listen!" he called, hardly able to control himself.

We listened.

Scratch! Scratch! Scratch!—something was at the screen door. No need for us to question who it was! We all knew that sound too well. I believe the three of us must have jumped out of bed at the same instant. There was just as much confusion and excitement as that day when Bobette first arrived. Out to the door we went together, and found just what we had expected. There was Inky, in his same old awkward position, reaching above his head, and scratching for admittance.

I doubt that any animal ever received a greater welcome than did that porcupine! All three of us shook hands (or feet) with him at once, leaving him only one foot to stand on. We offered him cookies, cake, wholewheat bread, apples—all at the same time. But he was as excited as we were, and wanted no food. Once inside the cabin he raced from one familiar spot to another, in most obvious happiness. He honked and honked. He grabbed Bobby by the leg, but Bobby offered no objection, just saying, "Go on, Inky, please bite hard, so I'll know it's really you!”

Then Inky acted tough! He whirled and whirled and whirled, all quills standing on end, and his tail lashing back and forth most violently. I believe he reached a new high in toughness. The three of us laughed at him until our sides ached. Next, he began chasing us. We led him out into the forest, where he ran up and down, back and forth, until he was so exhausted he simply dropped to the ground, and stayed there breathing heavily.

I have always been impressed by the way animals show happiness. No one who has watched a dog (when his master has come home or something else has pleased him greatly) tuck his tail between his legs and race aimlessly about can doubt the ability of these creatures to be wonderfully joyful. I have seen cats in positive ecstasy at the return of someone much loved, and birds that were no less expressive. But never have I looked upon another such display of happiness as that of our porcupine!

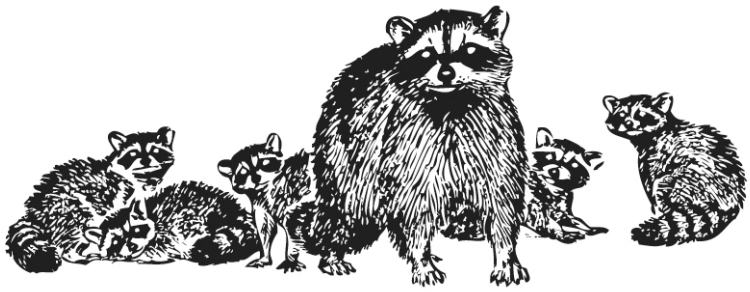
And Inky did not quickly lose his enthusiasm either. Later in the day he did something I would not have believed of a porcupine if I had not seen it. He had been resting for a while after his strenuous time when we decided to walk back to little Vanishing Lake, a tiny lake about one-half mile from the cabin. The trailing arbutus was in bloom, and we planned to take a picture of it. Imagine our surprise when we were several hundred yards down the trail to hear behind us "Honk, honk, honk, honk, honk!" There was Inky, his little legs fairly flying to catch up with us. We paused and greeted him. Then, as we

went on, he followed at our heels, after the manner of a dog. All the way to Vanishing Lake he went—and that was a long journey for such an animal. In fact, doing such a thing was contrary to all the instincts of his kind! Porcupines are not travelers. Their legs are built for climbing trees. Generally, one will live his entire life within a very few acres of ground.

Then why did Inky break all the rules and regulations of his forest people to go with us on that long hike? Was it for food? No, that would be a misinterpretation of his motive. He had not been fed by a human hand for six months when this remarkable thing occurred. Furthermore, he was passing his natural food every foot of the way out to the lake.

There was one reason, and one only, that this interesting little creature should do this. He did not want his human friends to get away from him again! It was companionship, friendship, that he wanted.

He sat patiently waiting while we took pictures of the arbutus. Probably he thought we were wasting our time, but he said nothing about it. Then, as we started home, he followed once more, honking forth his happiness, staying as close to our heels as his little legs would let him. He kept up the pace until he was so tired he staggered, and finally lay down under a bush and would go no farther. We picked him up and carried him back to the Sanctuary. Once there, he climbed up his favorite birch tree—to the first branch only—and slept for the rest of the day.



Now, there is a story of wilderness friendship that should lead us to new appreciation of the world in which we live. In a simple porcupine, a creature that some nature students erroneously call "stupid," this precious quality is found. Not only did Inky form a friendship when conditions were right and trouble-free, but he retained memory of his friends over a long period of time. If he had had some of the frailty we too often permit to enter our human friendship he might have been very resentful. He might have felt hurt that we left him alone for those long, cold months. But he did not. Only one thing mattered—we were back again! He asked nothing more.

But other pleasantries were awaiting us. Several nights later we heard a noise on the back porch, and went with our flashlights to investigate. There was Ruin—and with her,

five raccoon babies! But her return was not quite as complete as that of Inky. Perhaps it was out of fear for her young ones that she held aloof from us. She would come and take bread from our hands, but she would not permit her young ones to do it, nor would she permit us to pet her.

However it was enough that she had returned, and we enjoyed her none the less because we could not pick her up. Rack, always the more shy of the two, was riot seen for some days after Ruin first returned. And then he was only viewed from a distance, apparently having lost his desire for human companionship. He was such a magnificent creature, though, we drew our joy just out of seeing him occasionally.

Then Sausage came back! She, too, had a family to care for, and would not give us a full measure of friendship. But she would come to us for food, and in case she did not receive it, would climb all over the screen door until a few cookies would bribe her to stop the racket.

Bobette alone, of our orphans, failed to return. Doubtless she was one of the fine, beautiful deer we saw back at her valley home, but there was no way to distinguish her. Though we no longer had her close friendship, still all her kind seemed closer to us. By knowing one deer well, we understood all deer better! Maybe that is the real gift of friendship.

As the final paragraphs of this chapter are written, the second summer in the Reign of Inky the Porcupine is half gone. His bequilled majesty is sitting, head in a corner, dozing peacefully. But the Sabbath calm may be broken at any moment, for each day has increased his love of mischief, and his talent for it, too.

Bobby is back of the cabin arranging a midnight meal for the raccoons, and Sausage is sitting close by, sampling everything Bobby puts down. Near at hand, awaiting his attention, are a young red fox and a young coyote—recently sent us by someone who explains that these two have been orphaned by a tragedy. Would we take them in, care for them and raise them?

Would we! Long ago we answered that question for all time. We will take in any wild creature from a mouse to a mastodon! The newcomers are most welcome, and we shall do our best to give them a good start in the world. Who knows, maybe they will be as delightfully troublesome as Inky! And maybe some day another book should be written to tell of their growth, intelligence and peculiarities.

Judge Norton has been working at another verse for his song, and I have no doubt I shall hear it shortly.

Now Inky stirs and comes over to me. I cringe in anticipation as he comes close to one leg, expecting him to fasten on in his annoying way—but he does not. He is not in the mood for frivolity. Instead, he climbs up on my lap, and then on to the typewriter,

inspecting critically the last few typewritten lines. Apparently there is nothing of interest, for he turns around and Sits down on the roller, looking me squarely in the face. What a big help that is! Hence these lines are being written first in long hand, as the typewriter is now useless.

But Inky is in serious mood. He seems to want to tell me something, and I believe I could guess what it would be.

"Sammy, old boy," he looks as if he would say, "you and I have had a wonderful friendship. We are havin' it right now! Don't think for a minute I don't appreciate it. I bite you on the leg, and I chew up anything of yours I can get—but I don't need to tell you that even in that way I'm sayin' how much you mean to me. Your human people and my porky people seem to be a long way apart, and yet, in truth I guess we are all the same. The real things are with us animals, just as they are with you. Friendship is one of those real things. Now you and I have shown the world something about friendship. We have shown there's no limit to it, that any two things that know life can be friends."

"Friendship is the greatest thing in the world, Inky," I said, stroking his quills (very carefully, the *right* way).

"Nope," he said, "I can't agree with you there. *Life* is the greatest thing! It is one grand thing just to be alive. But friendship is part of life; and life wouldn't be much without it. Now if a fellow hasn't any friends, I figure it's his own fault. To have friends you have to start bein' one inside yourself. Look at that grouchy old porcupine I meet sometimes back in the woods. I can't get a smile out of him. All he thinks of is himself, and if he says anything about anyone else it's somethin' mean. Why, he hasn't a friend in the whole forest! Yes, sir, if you want a friend, you have to *be* a friend, and if you are so blamed busy thinkin' about yourself that you can't enjoy the others around you, and don't like to do things for them, then someday you're going to be pretty lonesome!"

Inky turned around and bit a few pieces out of the paper in the typewriter.

"Writin' a book, aren't you?" he said. "Wish I could write one for your folks!"

"Why, Inky, what would you write?"

"Oh, a lot of things! But mostly just what we've been talkin'. I think a lot of you human bein's have the wrong notion about friendship. Either you think it’s ownin' somebody or you think you're always tradin'—if someone does somethin' for you, you have to do somethin' for him! Or else you *lean* on friends! Now maybe you can get this in your book some way: Out there is that forest of trees, and just look at 'em! can you imagine any finer friendship than you see there? Each one is helpin' the other someway, givin’ out moisture, droppin' leaves to make good soil, reflectin' sunlight, and storin' up rain! Trees don't grow so well alone, you know. But look at 'em now! Do you see any one of

'em leanin' on the other, except where some kind of accident has happened? In their natural order they are all agrowin' up, growin' toward the light!

Each one is doin' his own growin'! And because each one is doin' his own growin', the trees can stand side by side the best of friends! Bein' friends isn't the first object in their lives; livin' and growin' and bein' the best trees they can be is the first object, and then this wonderful companionship is the result. Do you see what I mean? It is the same way with you folks. In the best book you human bein's ever printed, it says, 'Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.' That is the law you live under—to grow, to seek light, to evolve for yourselves the finest characters you can, just as trees do! And then you find yourselves surrounded by fine companions and friends who are all doing the same thing. Friendship for everything and everyone just naturally follows when you live right toward *God!”*

"Right, Inky!"—And I promised him I would try to get his idea into my book—someway.

But now Judge Norton interrupted our imagined conversation. "Say, you two, quit sitting there just looking at each other, and listen to this!"

The Judge's foot started to beat time, and I had never heard it beat harder. He was mighty well satisfied with his new verse, and he had reason to be:

How’s Inky?

Oh, folks Sure have a lot of wars,
They're fightin' fools, and how!
If that's the milk of kindness,
Then I'll take mine from a cow.
Let's learn in the beginning,
What we must learn in the end:
To stop our foolish hating,
And learn how to be a friend!