

JOCK By George Ethelbert Walsh

The Story of a Great Peril Which Was Averted by the Instinct of an Animal of Comparative Worthlessness

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JOCK isn't a dog story, but come to think of it a little brindley mongrel cur figures pretty prominently in it. Jock never posed as a hero, and I guess he isn't one. I've seen him run from a bigger dog, yelping for fear life and curling that tail between his legs like an ostrich burying its head in the sand.

Jock simply came to me, and I tolerated him because he showed so much affection for a forlorn, homesick engineer doing duty in a distant land. Without chick or kin in a half civilized country a man's bound to take to something—dog, horse, mule, cat or pet bird. I've even seen stranded derelicts in the Philippines make a pet of an ugly water buffalo and lavish an amount of affection on him sufficient for a whole household of children.

Jock and I went everywhere, slept together, ate together and tramped the country like two old outcasts. But he wasn't good for much else than a companion. He was too lazy to keep awake at night to watch out for danger and too big a coward to stand between me and another man or animal.

Still, Jock was what he was made, and nothing more. I don't think you can ask for anything greater of any creature. He was just simply a little homeless cur, and he was honest enough to realize it and grateful enough to lavish his affection upon me for protecting him.

When I was commissioned to inspect the new docks and piers that the government was having built in Manila bay, Jock and I prepared for sundry little excursions along as pretty a coast as any man laid eyes on. It was a sort of holiday for both of us. We had ample time on our hands to fish and loaf.

On the fifth day out from Manila we reached the new government dock where heavy supplies for the army were to be landed for shipment to the interior. This was a large wooden affair running 500 feet into the bay. The contractors had just finished their work, and the government was waiting for my final report before accepting it.

The dock was firmly built of huge piles driven into the soft mud and sand and boarded up on both sides to keep the floating debris from collecting under it. There was an entrance under the dock at the extreme end, but one could enter it only at low tide.

It was a very hot day, and, after

making a close examination of the dock, I decided at noon to eat lunch under the cool shade of the mammoth wooden floor and then take a quiet sleep.

Jock made no objection to this unspoken proposition, but wagged his tail with intuitive appreciation of my plans. I pushed the small, flat bottom boat, which carried our day's supplies, under the dock and proceeded to enjoy myself.

The tide was very low, and I pushed the boat halfway up the shelving shore and left it with anchor thrown over the bow. Jock ate all the dinner I could not swallow, and then patiently snuggled up to my side and blinked his eyes sleepily.

"You lazy dog," I said, patting him on the head. "You know how to enjoy life in this part of the earth."

The place was very conducive to slumber, and I was soon fast asleep, and Jock was no better off. We must have slept for hours. I woke with a start and found darkness around us.

For a few moments I was too puzzled to make out my position. I could



I PUSHED THE SMALL, FLAT BOTTOM BOAT UNDER THE DOCK.

not believe that night was upon us, for it had been high noon when I lay down to rest. This impression was confirmed by a few stray beams of light filtering through the roof over my head.

Jock at first sleepily wagged his tail, then scenting danger he whined and sniffed the air. I, too, was beginning to feel the presence of some evil.

When fully awake and mental faculties alert, I comprehended the danger of our situation at a glance. The tide had risen rapidly, and the entrance under the dock had been closed to us. The light which had flooded the place when we went asleep was thus shut out, and we were dependent upon a few feeble rays that made their way between cracks in the boards overhead.

"Hello, Jock. We're in a pickle!" I exclaimed.

Jock wagged his tail and tried to bark, but it only ended in a mournful whine.

"You little coward," I added in disgust. "You're a brave one to give a man moral courage!"

But I had little time to devote to moralizing or lecturing. I knew that the tide frequently rose to an extreme level, and I remembered that a series of unusually high tides had been running into the bay. If the water rose up to a level with the lower floor of the dock the situation would become very serious for both of us.

Now, I'm a fresh water man, hailing from one of the inland states where a puddle of water up to the ankles is considered a lake and a stream three feet deep a river of mighty volume. Therefore, I confess with shame, I hadn't learned the gentle art of swimming.

I've reformed since. I can swim and dive with the best of them, but at that particular moment I couldn't do either. I knew it, and Jock seemed to know it. I think he commiserated with me, for he could do both with the skill of a water rat.

I pushed the boat toward the end of the pier, bumping my head repeatedly against the boards overhead. There, ten feet below the surface, I could see a path of light which showed me where the entrance to our prison was located. A good diver and swimmer could easily reach it and come up on the other side.

Jock looked down and wagged his tail, inviting me to dive. It was dog talk just as plain as day. I smiled with chagrin and shook my head.

"No, no, Jock; I can't do it," I said patting his head. "But you go. I'll sit here and trust to luck that the tide won't drown me like a rat in a trap."

But Jock was no quitter. He looked longingly at the greenish white water below and wagged his stumpy tail. It might have been cowardice that kept him from diving down to freedom, but I liked to consider it something else.

I was not a kind to die easily, and while I had a few minutes of respite I exhausted every possible study of the situation. I pushed around the piles and shook the boards, hoping to find one loose, but the contractors had performed their work well.

There was no use calling for help,

for there was no possibility of any one being within five miles of the place. So I didn't waste much strength in that way.

There was only three feet of space between the boat and the boards overhead. At the rate the tide was rising I should have nearly an hour before the climax could be reached. I tried to console myself with the thought that I was safe. The water would force the boat up toward the roof, but by lying down in it we could wait for the turn of the tide. I took measurements and found that with six inches of space we could escape if we took care not to rock the boat.

On the other hand, if the water crept up beyond that point the boat would



THE BOAT SUDDENLY TIPPED AND ROLLED STRAIGHT OVER.

be swamped, and I would have no choice other than to sink like a log. Jock might swim around and eventually escape, but for me there was no escape.

The thought of such an end sent the cold shivers down my spine. It was difficult to sit there and wait for the end. I lit my pipe and tried to smoke, but my courage oozed out slowly, and twice the pipe went out. Then I put it away and took another measurement.

I turned pale with apprehension. The tide had gained a foot and a half. By aid of the dim light I looked at my

watch. The time for high tide was still half an hour off.

I realized then that my fate was sealed. The water would reach to a level with the floor of the dock and I would drown. I tried to picture the scene of the final struggle. In fancy I experienced all the sensations of death.

Jock must have been thinking of the same thing, for he suddenly grew nervous and excited. He whined and whined and chased up and down the boat. I tried to grab him to stifle his cries, but he avoided me and finally leaped overboard.

That splash in the water brought more alarm to me than anything else. Jock was deserting me, and, like a drowning man clinging to his support of straw, I grabbed for the dog to haul him back.

I must have leaned heavily on the side of the boat, for it suddenly tipped and rolled straight over, turning turtle so quickly that I was in the water before I could think. Fortunately I had presence of mind enough to grasp the sides. I clung to this support and gasped for breath.

I tried in vain to turn the boat over. It would have been a stupendous job in that narrow space for an expert swimmer; for me it was absolutely impossible.

The top of the boat was within a few inches of the dock overhead, and I could not climb upon it. I simply clung to it and shivered. Jock swam around and around the overturned craft, whining and begging me to leave it. But there was no alternative, and I clung desperately to the slippery bottom.

The water rose inch by inch. First the bottom of the boat bumped against the boards overhead. Then it was held firmly in position, and the tide climbed higher, marking the rise on the sides.

When there was only six inches of space in which to breathe I began to lose all hope. At five inches the lapping waves frequently slapped the briny water in my mouth. I craned my head backward, forcing my mouth and nose as near the boards of the roof as possible. Jock was by my side doing the same.

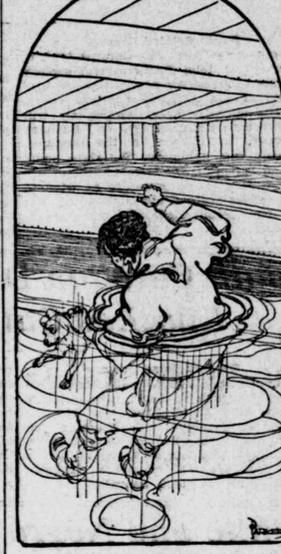
But he took it less silently and calmly. He spluttered and whined and made frantic efforts to bore his nose through the obdurate boards. I was fast losing control of my muscles, for horrible fear was paralyzing my will. The frantic terror of the drowning man was taking possession of me.

The water was now filling my mouth and nostrils with every gentle undulation of the surface. I spluttered and gasped and made more frantic struggles than Jock.

My senses were deserting me when Jock suddenly slipped from my side and disappeared. My first thought was that the poor dog had succumbed and was dead. Then I concluded that he had made a strike for life and liberty at the final moment.

This impression was apparently verified a moment later. I heard Jock's bark in the distance. The sound was far away and muffled, but it seemed to come from overhead. He had escaped!

Then the impossibility of it dawned upon my mind. There had been no



I REACHED UNDER THE BOAT.

time for him to dive under the dock and reach the top of it. But, if not, the dog had found a place of security. His natural instinct had led him to some safe nook which I had overlooked.

This thought possessed me and brought renewed hope to my falling spirit. I would follow Jock's lead and then yield to the inevitable without a murmur.

But where was Jock? That puzzled me. I tried to locate his muffled cry. It sounded so near and yet so distant!

Something impelled me to strike out under the boat with one arm, and my hand came in contact with something soft and furry. It was Jock, and had I not heard his constant and persistent bark I should have concluded he was strangling to death under the boat.

A man's wits act quickly in moments of great danger, or at least they do sometimes. Mine worked with lightning-like rapidity then. I reasoned that I could live where Jock could, and I plunged my head under the boat and grasped upward for support.

I found myself a moment later clinging to the seat of the overturned boat, with my head bumping against the bottom, but with more space for breathing than I had enjoyed for some time. It was total darkness there, but the air was fresh and invigorating. Jock was fawning by my side and whimpering with delight.

I reasoned out the explanation of it in a flash. In turning over so suddenly the boat had imprisoned a lot of air and the rising water had held it. The bottom and sides of the boat were both air and water tight. Jock had found the place of escape either accidentally or by instinct.

I breathed easier and found my position more comfortable. There was a good six inch space for the head, and I could rest my elbows under the seat of the boat. It was all a question now of whether there was sufficient air to support the two of us for half an hour or less. By that time, I judged, the tide would turn, and we could crawl out.

The water could not rise up higher under the boat on account of the imprisoned air, but our breathing steadily exhausted the oxygen of the latter and added to our discomfort.

Slowly, but surely, I realized how quickly the human lungs exhaust the air of its life supporting principle. I vaguely thought that if I ever escaped I would never live in a closed room again. Nay, more, I should live forever out of doors in the fresh air where the lungs would never pant for oxygen.

My nerves grew tense and snappy and my senses began to reel. Jock, too, ceased to bark and whine. A great stumber appeared to possess us. How long we had been there I had no way to judge, but when my head seemed ready to split I could stand it no longer. I must have fresh air!

I ducked my head under the gunwales of the boat and crawled out. There was a moment of spluttering and gasping and then a deep breath of fresh air that sent the blood tingling through my whole body.

The tide had turned, and there was space enough under the dock to live and breathe in comfort. I filled my lungs until they ceased their panting. Then remembering Jock, I reached under the boat and hauled his nearly lifeless body up to the fresh air.

When the tide fell low enough for us to crawl upon the bottom of the boat I flung myself at full length on it and rested. Jock spread himself out by my side ready as ever to rest and sleep.

Later I examined the high level of the tide under the dock and found that the water had come up to within half an inch of the boards. No man could have lived there, and had Jock not found the fresh air under the boat neither of us would be here to testify to the truthfulness of this tale.

But Jock doesn't pose as a hero, and I'm not saying that he is one, but you must admit I owe my life to him.

For Children and Those Who Are Interested In Them

Queer Ways Some Creatures Have of Carrying Their Young

By ALBERTA PLATT

A TOAD is really a most intelligent creature. Flower and vegetable gardeners protect toads and sometimes have whole families of these creatures in their grounds to eat the insects so destructive to plant life. The garden toads become quite tame.

Many batrachians, as toads and frogs are learnedly called, show a care for their young that might well be a lesson to human parents. One of the strangest of living creatures is a toad found in Surinam. It is about the size of our common garden toad, but not even as handsome as that is. When the Surinam mother toad lays her eggs the male takes them in his paws and puts them upon the female's back, sticking them fast there by a sort of glue, which also covers them like a coating. The Surinam toad's skin is half an inch thick and very soft and flexible.

As the eggs grow they push their way into the loose skin and make depressions that in time come to be like real pockets. Wherever the mother



AUSTRALIAN MOTHER BEAR AND CUB.

toad travels or jumps she carries these pocketed eggs upon her back till they hatch. They swell and become larger and larger. The young toads' legs and

arms form and begin to wriggle. Finally they wriggle so much and grow so large that they burst through the covering that pastes them in and stick



OPOSSUM AND HER CHILDREN.

their heads up out of the pockets that hold them. They are like human babies that have outgrown their cribs. No stranger sight can be imagined than a Surinam toad hopping about with a swarm of young ones thrusting their tiny heads and arms out of holes all over her back.

When they get big enough to take care of themselves the Surinam toad babies just jump out of their mother's back pockets and go about their own business. The walls of the depressions in the mother's skin, having nothing to fill them any more, gradually level down even with the rest of the skin again, and there is only left the smooth back of the mother toad. These facts about the Surinam toad are some of the most curious and interesting in natural history.

In the Seychelles islands, in the Indian ocean, is a queer little frog that carries its tadpoles upon its back in the funniest way.

A remarkable fact in connection with batrachians is that many frog fathers take on themselves the whole care of

the young. The female's work appears to be done when the eggs are produced. In Europe is a little creature called the "nurse frog." The nurse frog's eggs are laid in long strings or chains. The male winds these chains about his hind legs and sits with them in some shady place all day. When the dew is on the grass at evening the nurse frog comes out with his leg loads of eggs and rubs them over the dew to moisten them, just as a person would moisten hens' eggs hatching in an incubator. Isn't it queer?

Not the least odd of these careful frog fathers is one found in South America. This frog has a small pouch in his throat. If one did not know better he might think this pouch was a musical organ, for when filled with air it gives out a sound like the tinkle of a little bell. But in the springtime it is found that the pouch serves a purpose quite different from just making music. When the female of this species of frog lays her eggs the male gathers them carefully up and thrusts them into his throat pocket, there to carry them till they hatch.

The eggs soon begin to increase in size, and the throat pocket of papa frog has to stretch out to accommodate them till it extends down each side of his body, often as far as his hind legs.

ONE OF THE SMALLEST PONIES IN THE WORLD.



I expect most of you have heard of Shetland ponies and perhaps wished that you had one of your own. Isn't the pony in the picture a dear, shaggy little animal, and wouldn't you like to be the little girl who is just giving it some hay to eat? These dwarf ponies are only twenty-eight inches high, and six of them belong to a naturalist who has a number of rare animals.



SURINAM TOAD. SEYCHELLES FROG.

It is an odd sight to behold him hobbling clumsily about with the great egg pouches swelling out his sides. Even after the eggs are hatched and their place is taken by young tadpoles, papa frog carries the wiggling little creatures in his side pockets till they are able to hustle for their own living.

A not uncommon sight in Africa is

a huge and savage hippopotamus swimming a river with a baby hippopotamus upon its back. The baby can swim naturally as well as its mother, but if it were allowed in the water a fierce crocodile might grab it, haul it under and make a meal of it in a twinkling. In Australia is a kind of bear called the koala. It is the habit of the mother koala to carry her baby upon her back wherever she goes, till it becomes quite a big bear.

One would hardly think of a stupid bat as capable of much parental affection, yet the female bat holds her young against her soft furry breast and flits about with them. They cling with their sharp little claws to her body, and sometimes she flies abroad with as many as four young ones clinging to her. Bats rest by hanging head downward from a tree twig, and even here the children hold fast to the mother's breast and hang their tiny heads downward along with hers.

But for making a funny family show the opossum beats all the rest. In some species of this tribe mother opossum loads her children upon her back, curls her prehensile tail up over it, the young ones grab her tail with their prehensile ones, hold on tight and away they go for a ride. They must be a heavy load for mother opossum.

What is the difference between a brewer and a flea? One buys and the other takes hops.

BIRDS CAUGHT BY SPIDERS.

A curious spider lives in the Ceylon mountains. It spins a web of bright yellow silk, the center net measures five feet in diameter, and the lines that support it (called guys) measure ten or twelve feet.

This spider rarely bites or stings, but will do so very severely if any one makes him angry, and although not poisonous, his jaws are as strong as a bird's beak.

His body is very pretty, bright gold and scarlet underneath, the upper part being of a delicate slate colored fur. The webs are so well made that birds the size of larks are often caught, and even lizards have been known to fall victims. This is surprising, for they are so strong that one would think they could escape from the spider.

These poor creatures are caught in a very clever way: The spider first winds the threads firmly round the head of its victim until the prisoner is blinded and finally choked.

In many dark crevices skeletons of birds can be found that have unfortunately fallen into these cruel snares.

A Palmist's Puzzle.

It is a very simple matter to palm coins in the palm of the hand, but there are certain muscles of the human hand which will not assist in the trick



and which could easily allow the coins to drop. These lines are indicated in white on the hand. Cut out the coins and see if you can palm all of them without running over the edge of the hand or the white lines marked upon it.

LOOKING UP AND LOOKING DOWN.

The little flower set in the grass, Where it doth lowly lie, As one by one the bright hours pass Looks upward to the sky. So must a child's thoughts upward soar, So must my soul take wings And to grow wiser than before, Reach up to lofty things.

The little stars set in the sky, As night by night they show, Though shining in their home on high, Look down to earth below, So I must stoop to lowly things, To gentle deeds of love, 'E'en though my thoughts soar upon wings And climb to heaven above.

A Moorish Magic Square. Among Moorish Mussulmans seventy-eight is a mystic number. Here is a cleverly constructed magic square,

40	10	20	8
7	21	9	41
12	42	6	18
19	5	43	11

to which this number is the key. Can you find out in how many different ways and directions and combinations seventy-eight may be counted up?

Useful Chinese Children.

The Chinese are a wonderfully industrious people, and their children learn very early to make themselves useful.

In the streets of a Chinese town it is no uncommon sight to see two children, who are so young that they can hardly talk, trotting along with a bamboo pole on their shoulders by which they are carrying home a pail of water. If one child is stronger than the other the pail is hung near his shoulder, for thus he takes the "heavy end of the pole."

Cleaning House.

Dolly's clothes are on the line; Dolly's dishes fairly shine; Dolly's home is swept all through. Chairs and tables look like new. Dolly's little mother, May, 'Twas been cleaning house today.