

## AMONG THE WILD ANIMALS OF EAST AFRICA

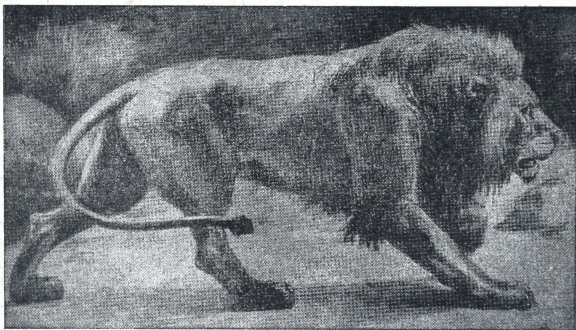
*True Stories Related by a Young Traveler*

### XI. CHASED BY A LION

MY YOUNG FRIEND was spending a vacation on the farm of his father. The school in Nairobi which he attended had closed for the summer vacation, and all the boys had gone to their homes. The father of the young man had gone to Nairobi to get the boy and he was now at home on his father's coffee plantation near Thika. The boy was sixteen years old and quite accustomed to the life on

then would become alive with wild animals. The young man knew that his father's warning was quite true; many times he had seen leopards and lions in the early African twilight hours. But on such occasions he had always been in his father's car safe from an attack by wild beasts.

The boy and his friend had an interesting day. They went out on their ponies,



*A lion will attack in defense of his mate.*

the plantation. He had his own pony; his father had given him a rifle and had taught him to use the weapon in case of an emergency.

One morning the lad went to visit one of his school friends who lived on a neighboring farm only a few miles away. He rode his pony and had his rifle with him. The father had warned the boy not to be too late in returning at night, as the jungle

riding about in the wild country. The morning had not been without adventure, for in East Africa a thrilling adventure may occur at any moment. As the boys were riding along the trail, suddenly a pack of wild dogs appeared. Such packs often attack cattle; they seize some of the calves and disappear before the herdsman has become aware of their presence. The two boys saw the pack of wild dogs

speeding over the plain toward a lonely cow. They spurred their ponies and rode after the dogs, hoping to save the cow from their savage attack. They were able to cut off the dogs, but were careful not to get into the path of the ugly and hungry animals. One of the boys shot at one of them and wounded it. The other dogs in the pack attacked their wounded companion at once, and tore the animal to pieces within a few seconds. This short interruption was sufficient to change the course of the herd of cattle from which the cow had strayed, so that the lone animal was able to rejoin the herd. The hungry dogs ran away without having attacked the cow.

The boys were glad to see the pack go away, for they are dangerous brutes. Sometimes they are driven by hunger to attack a native village and kill children and helpless old men who are unable to run with the women to safety. I once saw a pack of these dogs attack a leopard. The leopard was unable to defend himself with his strong and sharp claws against so many foes, and within a few moments the great cat was torn to pieces.

Late in the afternoon of the day of my young friend's visit to his schoolmate, he prepared to start home. He and his companion saddled their ponies, and the boy's friend rode part of the way with his classmate. The ponies galloped smoothly over the sandy ground, and did not seem tired on account of the long day's outing. Then my friend's companion turned back, and the boy rode on alone toward his home. Of course he had his rifle on his back, and it was loaded and ready for immediate firing. One never knows what enemy may be encountered in this wild country.

Suddenly the boy saw a lioness with

three cubs. The large cat was close to the jungle and the young man thought she would not attack him. Lions seldom attack a man; usually they run from a person. The boy was not afraid, therefore, when he saw this lioness with her cubs about her. But he knew that male lions often keep within the vicinity of females, so he kept a sharp lookout.

After a few moments the lioness disappeared in the dense jungle. Probably she had scented the boy and his horse, and so had taken her three cubs to safety. The boy rode on, and soon forgot about the lioness.

Suddenly he heard something behind him. He turned around. Less than a hundred yards away, the boy saw a large male lion sniffing the air. The wind was blowing the scent of the boy and pony directly toward the lion. The boy realized his danger. The lion must have been the mate of the lioness which he had seen, and would not hesitate to attack in order to protect the female from danger.

Quickly the young man bent over his pony's head and said strange words in the native dialect. The pony understood, and started to run as fast as he could. A glance backward showed that the lion was in pursuit. If the lion could catch up with the pony, he would attack.

The lion followed faster and faster. He was gaining upon the pony which was now straining himself to the utmost. The boy bent low over the neck of his pony, and urged him on. Still the lion was gaining. Only a miracle could save the young man and the horse from an attack of this savage enemy.

Suddenly the boy saw a corral fence. The pony tore along the narrow tail. He knew that death was behind him, and he

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## THE PRINCE'S HEIR

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seen before.

It was, indeed, a remarkable sight, and the people applauded loudly.

Anak was standing near the throne, and, at the call of the Prince, he stepped forward. But there was no retinue of followers behind him, and he held nothing in his hands except what appeared to be a little, insignificant piece of glass.

There was the sound of a short laugh here and there, at which the good Prince frowned, for he liked this dark, long-limbed peasant, whom he now feared had failed.

"Well, Anak, have you found the task impossible?" he said kindly.

"O Prince, I have for you the key which tells that, though the earth may be covered with abundant beauty, and the sea swarm with the marvels of life, yet without the white light of sky they cannot exist. The light of the sky holds the marvellous paints to which they must all come for their colors; while their beauty passes away, that of the light of the sky is everlasting, always renewing both earth and sea."

At the Prince's puzzled look Anak held up the piece of glass in his hand. It was a triangular, wedge-shaped

## HENNY-PENNY

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backing out of the hole, she ran off home as fast as her trembling legs would carry her.

And that is how it was the king never knew the sky was falling.—*Reprinted by Permission.*

object. Then he placed it in a ray of sunlight which fell on to the white steps of the throne.

Immediately on the steps there were the most marvellous shades of blue and green, of yellow and violet and red, and every imaginable color. A great cry of amazement went up, for no one in those days had ever heard of the spectrum or a spectroscope, and no one knew anything about the wonderful rays of broken light.

Then the Prince came down the steps and held his white robe in the wonderful colors of the rainbow. He took Anak by the hand.

"My heir—your future Prince," he cried to the people.

And the people shouted with delight. From their own number had been chosen their future ruler, for had he not proved himself to be the wisest man in the land?

## CHASED BY A LION

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ran with all his might. The boy spurred his pony on. Luckily they did not have to cross the grassy land. If they had come into the high prairie grass they would have been lost. The grass would have hindered the short legs of the pony.

The pony made for an opening in the corral fence, and in a few moments pony and rider were within the enclosure. The tall thorn bushes and branches, which made the fence, kept the wild animals out. The boy sprang from his pony and threw thorn branches into the opening. Then with his rifle in hand he awaited the appearance of the lion.

But the lion did not appear, although the boy knew the animal was somewhere near. He kept his rifle ready for instant firing should the beast attempt to penetrate the fence. Fortunately the corral was not very large, and the thorn fence was high enough to prevent wild animals from jumping over. The natives had been very careful in selecting this place in which to keep cattle during the night safe from attacks of wild beasts.

The boy knew that the lion was lurking outside of the enclosure but could not

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## CHASÉD BY A LION

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find a way through the thorn branches. In another hour darkness would come, and the boy was afraid that the lion might in some way effect an entrance then.

Once the young man saw the yellow hide of the lion through the thorn branches. Immediately he fired two shots through the fence. An angry roar answered him from the outside. Then there was quiet. "I must have scared the animal away with that shot," thought the boy.

For a long while he listened in the quiet of the evening. He heard no sound from the lion. He did not dare go outside the fence; the animal might be waiting, ready to attack him.

Presently the boy heard the drawn-out call of a native herdsman. He began to have hope. Perhaps this herdsman was bringing his cattle to the corral for the night. He listened and heard the sound of moving cattle. He fired two shots into the air to attract the attention of the herdsman.

The herd was coming toward the corral. All of a sudden the cattle stopped, and the boy heard their frightened sniffing and nervous pawing with their hoofs. Perhaps they had become aware of the pres-

## READING CLUB

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much improved by our Reading Club.

Once our club had a picnic. We went in a large bus to a beautiful cool place. We took our dinner with us, and ate it in picnic style. We didn't forget our reading, even on the picnic, for we took turns in reading to each other after dinner the stories and articles in the latest number of THE YOUNG CITIZEN.

ence of the lion. The herdsman called out to the cattle to quiet them.

The young man shouted to the herdsman. "There is a large *simba* (lion) out there," he called in the native dialect. But the herdsman had already seen the lion. Yes, there was a lion there, but he was dead. The boy's one shot had killed the animal. It was a chance hit, and the young man was greatly surprised that it had killed his savage foe.

Soon he started toward his home which was not far away. When he arrived home it was quite dark. The next morning father and son went out to get the skin of the lion, but the hyenas had been there already during the night, and so there was not much left of the "king of the forest."

## EARNING MONEY

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ful, because I have to train my "pupils" to be very careful.

My work is becoming so effective and so well known, that I am thinking of raising my price to twenty centavos for each half hour.

My teacher says that some day I will be a very good piano teacher. I hope I will be able to earn enough money so I can help pay my expenses when I go to college.

## FRIENDLY SOCIETY

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we do what we can to set him on his feet. We have parties and picnics to which new students are invited, so they soon become acquainted. We help students from out of town, especially girls, to find pleasant and comfortable places in which to live. If any student needs advice, he or she is encouraged to come to our club, and we soon put him on the right track.

There are many things for "The Friendly Society" to do. And we try to do at least some of them.

Any school can easily have a "Friendly Society" like ours, and it will make life brighter and happier for the entire school.