

Loyalty to Friends

By Jose Feliciano

HAVE you ever heard the story of "The Bear and the Travelers"? It is very short, but it has a great lesson to teach. If you wish to know this story, I shall be glad to tell it.

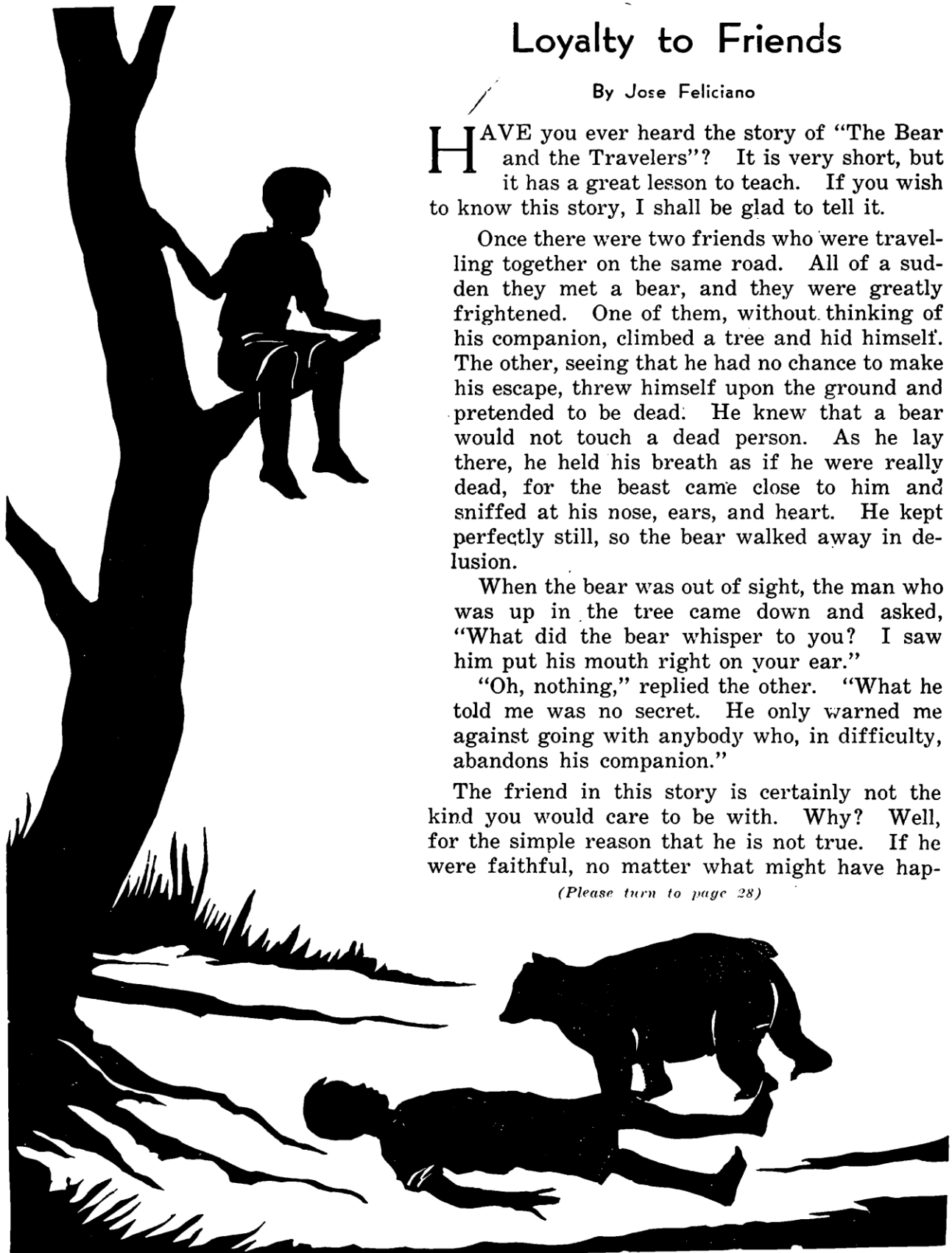
Once there were two friends who were traveling together on the same road. All of a sudden they met a bear, and they were greatly frightened. One of them, without thinking of his companion, climbed a tree and hid himself. The other, seeing that he had no chance to make his escape, threw himself upon the ground and pretended to be dead. He knew that a bear would not touch a dead person. As he lay there, he held his breath as if he were really dead, for the beast came close to him and sniffed at his nose, ears, and heart. He kept perfectly still, so the bear walked away in delusion.

When the bear was out of sight, the man who was up in the tree came down and asked, "What did the bear whisper to you? I saw him put his mouth right on your ear."

"Oh, nothing," replied the other. "What he told me was no secret. He only warned me against going with anybody who, in difficulty, abandons his companion."

The friend in this story is certainly not the kind you would care to be with. Why? Well, for the simple reason that he is not true. If he were faithful, no matter what might have hap-

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pened, he would never have deserted his friend. It was a time to test one's loyalty to the other, and each showed his true color without leaving a shadow of doubt in the other's mind.

You must be loyal to your friend, otherwise the friendship between you cannot last long. If you have a friend who trusts you, never betray his trust for anything. If he has told you something in confidence, keep it to yourself. There is nothing more painful and harder to forget than the knowledge that one's friend has played false. If you hear some one speak ill of your friend, and you know that person to be wrong, do not hesitate to correct him. It is your duty to defend the good name of your friend. If your friend has done wrong without any intention of doing you harm, forgive him. Loyalty to one's friend means keeping faith with him.