

THE ADVENTURES OF JERRY MUSKRAT

CHAPTER 13: OL' MISTAH BUZZARD SEES SOMETHING



BY THORNTON W. BURGESS

“Wait for me!” cried Little Joe Otter to Billy Mink, but Billy Mink was in too much of a hurry and just ran faster.

“Wait for me!” cried Jerry Muskrat to Little Joe Otter, but Little Joe was in too much of a hurry and just ran faster.

“Wait for me!” cried Grandfather Frog to Jerry Muskrat, but Jerry was in too much of a hurry and just walked faster.

“Wait for me!” cried Spotty the Turtle to Grandfather Frog, but Grandfather Frog was in too much of a hurry and just jumped faster.

So running and walking and jumping and crawling, Billy Mink, Little Joe Otter, Jerry Muskrat, Grandfather Frog, and Spotty the Turtle hurried up the Laughing Brook to try to find out why it laughed no more. And high overhead in the blue, blue sky sailed Ol' Mistah Buzzard, and he also was looking for the trouble that had taken away the laugh from the Laughing Brook and the smile from the Smiling Pool.

Now Ol' Mistah Buzzard's eyes are very sharp, and looking down from way up in the blue, blue sky he can see a great deal. Indeed, Ol' Mistah Buzzard can see all that is going on below on the Green Meadows and in the Green Forest. His wings are very broad, and he can sail through the air very swiftly when he makes up his mind to. Now, as he looked down, he saw that Billy Mink was selfish and wouldn't wait for Little Joe Otter, and Little Joe Otter was selfish and wouldn't wait for Jerry Muskrat, and Jerry Muskrat was selfish and wouldn't wait for Grandfather Frog, and

Grandfather Frog was selfish and wouldn't wait for Spotty the Turtle.

“Ah reckon Ah will hurry up right smart and find out what the trouble is mahself, and then go back and tell Brer Turtle; it will save him a powerful lot of work, and it will serve Brer Mink right if Brer Turtle finds out first what is the trouble with the Laughing Brook,” said Ol' Mistah Buzzard and shot far ahead over the Green Forest towards that part of it from which the Laughing Brook comes. In a few minutes he was as far ahead of Billy Mink as Billy was ahead of Spotty the Turtle.

For wings are swifter far than legs,
On whatsoever purpose bent,
But doubly swift and tireless
Those wings on kindly deed intent.

And this is how it happened that Ol' Mistah Buzzard was the first to find out what it was that had stopped the laughing of the Laughing Brook and the smiling of the Smiling Pool, but he was so surprised when he did find out, that he forgot all about going back to tell Spotty the Turtle. He forgot everything but his own great surprise, and he blinked his eyes a great many times to make sure that he wasn't dreaming. Then he sailed around and around in circles, looking down among the trees of the Green Forest and saying over and over to himself:

“Did yo' ever? No, Ah never! Did yo' ever? No, Ah never!”