

*The Tale of Brownie Beaver*  
CHAPTER 6: A HAPPY THOUGHT

by *Arthur Scott Bailey*



Brownie Beaver liked to know what was going on in the world. But living far from Pleasant Valley as he did, he seldom heard any news before it was quite old.

“I wish—” he said to Mr. Crow one day, when that old gentleman was making him a visit—“I wish someone would start a newspaper in this neighborhood.”

Mr. Crow told Brownie that he would be glad to bring him an old newspaper whenever he happened to find one. “Thank you!” Brownie Beaver said. “You’re very kind. But an old newspaper would be of no use to me.”

“Why not?” Mr. Crow inquired. “They make very good beds, I’ve been told. And I suppose that is what you want one for.”

“Not at all!” Brownie replied. “I’d like to know what’s happening over in Pleasant Valley. It takes so long for news to reach us here in our pond that it’s often hardly worth listening to when we hear it—it’s so old. Now, what I’d really prefer is a newspaper that would tell me everything that’s going to happen a week later.”


Mr. Crow said he never heard of a newspaper like that.

“Well, somebody ought to start one,” Brownie Beaver answered.

Mr. Crow thought deeply for some minutes without saying a word. And at last He cried suddenly:

“I have an idea!”

“Have you?” Brownie Beaver exclaimed. “What is it, Mr. Crow?”



“I’ll be your newspaper!” Mr. Crow told him.

At that Brownie Beaver looked somewhat doubtful.

“That’s very kind of you,” he said. “But I’m afraid it wouldn’t do me much good. You’re so black that the ink wouldn’t show on you at all—unless,” he added, “they use white ink to print on you.”

“You don’t understand,” old Mr. Crow said. “What I mean is this: I’ll fly over here once a week and tell you everything that’s happened. Of course,” he continued, “I can’t very well tell you everything that is going to take place the following week. But I’ll do my best.”

Brownie Beaver was delighted. And when Mr. Crow asked him what day he wanted his newspaper Brownie said that Saturday afternoon would be a good time.

“That’s the last day of the week,” Brownie Beaver remarked, “so you ought to have plenty of news for me. You know, if you came the first day of the week there would be very little to tell.”

“That’s so!” said Mr. Crow. “Well say ‘Saturday,’ then. And you shall have your newspaper without fail—unless,” he explained—“unless there should be a bad storm, or unless I should be ill. And, of course, if Farmer Green should want me to help him in his cornfield, I wouldn’t be able to come. There might be other things, too, to keep me at home, which I can’t think of just now,” said Mr. Crow.

Again Brownie Beaver looked a bit doubtful.



“I hope you’ll try to be regular,” he told Mr. Crow. “When a person takes a newspaper he doesn’t like to be disappointed, you know.”

Old Mr. Crow said that he hoped nothing would prevent his coming to Brownie’s house every Saturday afternoon.

“There’s only one more thing I can think of,” he croaked, “that would make it impossible for me to be here. And that is if I should lose count of the days of the week or have to see a baseball game or fly south for the winter.”

“But that’s three things, instead of only one,” Brownie Beaver objected.

“Well—maybe it is,” Mr. Crow replied—“the way you count. But I call it only one because I said it all in one breath, without a single pause.”

“I hope you won’t tell me the news as fast as that,” said Brownie Beaver, “for if you did I should never be able to remember one-half of it.”

But Mr. Crow promised that he would talk very slowly.

“You’ll be perfectly satisfied,” he told Brownie. “And now I must go home at once, to begin gathering news.”