

The Tale of Brownie Beaver
CHAPTER 8: MR. CROW IS UPSET

by Arthur Scott Bailey



Brownie Beaver couldn't help feeling that Mr. Crow had not treated him very well, because Mr. Crow hadn't told him all the news about Frisky Squirrel's tail. He thought that maybe there were things about a newspaper that even Mr. Crow didn't know.

Another week had passed. Brownie knew that it had, because since Mr. Crow's last call he had cut a notch in a stick each day. And there were now seven of them.

Late Saturday afternoon Mr. Crow came back again. He lighted on top of Brownie's house and called "Paper!" down the chimney, just as he had a week before.

Brownie Beaver came swimming up once more.

"Look here!" he said to Mr. Crow. "I don't believe you know much about being a newspaper, do you?"


That surprised Mr. Crow.

"What do you mean?" he asked.

"A newspaper—" said Brownie Beaver—"a newspaper is always left on a person's doorstep. I've talked with a good many people and not one of them ever heard of a paper being left on the roof."

Mr. Crow's face seemed to grow blacker than ever, he was so angry.

"How can anybody leave a newspaper on your doorstep, when the step's under water?" he growled.



Brownie Beaver did not answer that question, for he had something else to say to Mr. Crow.

“I’ve talked with a good many people,” he said once more, “and not one of them ever heard of such rudeness as shouting down a person’s chimney. If there was anybody asleep in the house, it would certainly wake him; and if a person had a fire in his house, shouting down the chimney might put it out.”

Mr. Crow looked rather foolish.

“I’ll try to think of some way of leaving your newspaper that will suit us both,” he said. Then he hemmed and began to tell Brownie the week’s news.

“On Sunday,” said Mr. Crow, “there was a freshet.”

“I knew that before you did,” said Brownie Beaver.


Mr. Crow looked disappointed.

“How?” he asked.

“Why, I live further up the river than you,” said Brownie Beaver. “And since freshets always come down a river, this one didn’t reach you till after it had passed me.”

Something made Mr. Crow peevish.

“I don’t believe you’d care to hear any more of my news,” he said. “You appear to know it already. Perhaps you’ll be kind enough to tell me the sort of news you prefer to hear.”



“Certainly!” Brownie Beaver replied. “Now, there’s the weather! I’ve talked with a good many people and they all say that a good newspaper ought to tell the weather for the next day.”

Mr. Crow cocked an eye up at the sky.

“Tomorrow will be fair,” he said.

“I’m told that a good newspaper ought to tell a few jokes,” Brownie Beaver continued.

But Mr. Crow sneered openly at that. “I’m a newspaper—not a jest-book,” he announced.


“Then you refuse to tell any jokes, do you?” Brownie Beaver asked him.

“I certainly do!” Mr. Crow cried indignantly.

“Very well!” Brownie said. “I see I’ll have to take some other newspaper, though I must say I hate to change—after taking this one so long.”

“I hope you’ll find one to suit you,” Mr. Crow said in a cross voice. And he flew away without another word. He was terribly upset. You see, he had enjoyed being a newspaper, because it gave him an excuse for asking people the most inquisitive questions. He had intended all that week to ask Aunt Polly Woodchuck whether she wore a wig. But he hadn’t been able to find her at home. And now it was too late—for Mr. Crow was a newspaper no longer.

As for Brownie Beaver, he succeeded in getting Jasper Jay to be his newspaper. Though Jasper told him many jokes, Brownie found that he could not depend



upon Jasper's news. And as a matter of fact, Jasper made up most of it himself. He claimed that the newest news was the best.

"That's why I invent it myself, right on the spot," he explained.