



storytime

Africa

The Giraffe Who Got in a Knot

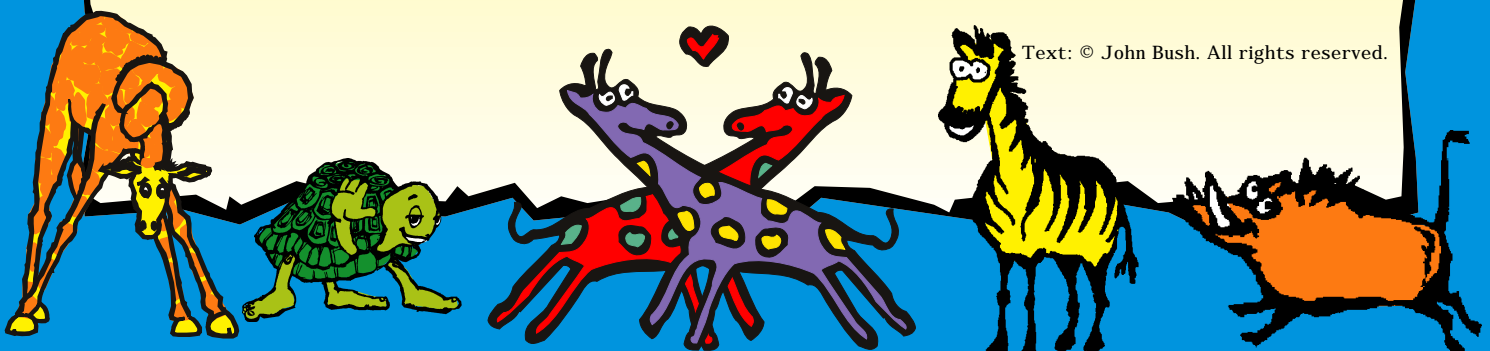
The sun was ablaze in the African sky,
When Cardwell Giraffe happened to spy
A quite irresistible camel thorn tree,
The sight of which made Cardwell weak at the knee.
“Ooh! Bless my spots! To think I was born
To feast upon such a fine camel thorn.”

Without further bother, or fuss, or ado,
He opened his mouth and he started to chew.
Out curled his tongue and in went the leaves
Of that fine camel thorn, most delicious of trees.

In a rapture of eating his eyes slowly closed.
In a rapture of eating he followed his nose.
Sniffety-sniff, chomping here, chomping there,
With the scent of fresh camel thorn filling the air.

He chewed and he chewed and he carried on chewing.
Pity he couldn't see what he was doing,
For he bent and contorted himself such a lot,
That he tied his neck up in a big spotted knot.

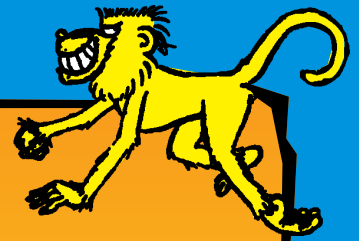
“What have I done?” he cried. “What shall I do?
I wish I had kept my eyes open to chew.
How funny I look. My friends will all laugh.
Oh who will undo such a knotty giraffe?”



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By now, all the beasts of the African jungle
Had gathered around to observe Cardwell's bungle.
"Cardwell's a shorty, a shorty," they teased,
"From now on he'll have to find much shorter trees."
Cried Cardwell, "Please help me untie myself, please!"
Said Zebra, "You might come undone if you sneeze."

So they tickled his nose till he sneezed with such power
That Ostrich's feathers blew off in a shower.
But the sneeze did not work. Its only effect
Was to tighten that big spotted knot in his neck.

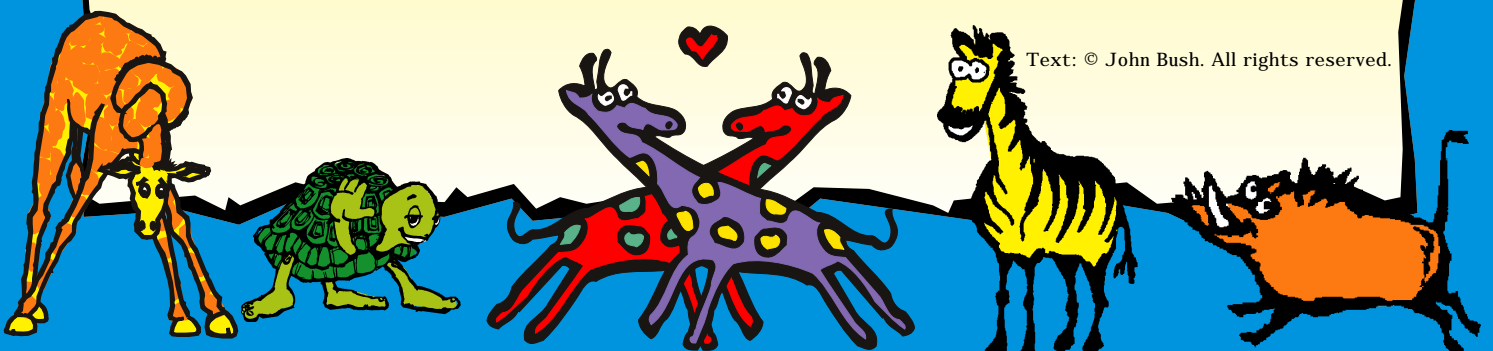
Then, tugging and twisting, the elephants tried
With all of their strength to get Cardwell untied.
"Stop it!" yelled Cardwell. "Oh stop it, please do!
If you keep on much longer, my spots will turn blue!"

At this stage, Bundu Bird hopped on his head.
"Now, Cardwell, just do as I ask you," he said.
"Wherever I fly, let your head follow me.
Don't worry, I'm sure this will work, wait and see."

Then he fluttered and circled around Cardwell's head
While Cardwell's eyes followed wherever he led.
When Bundu Bird stopped, the spectators' faces
Told Cardwell his neck now had knots in three places!

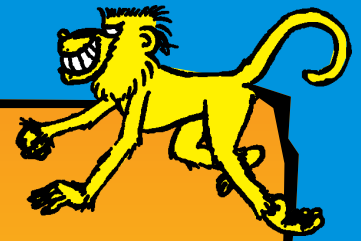
At last Lionel Lion, who was usually right,
Growled, "What Cardwell needs is a jolly good fright."
So he sat before Cardwell, then opened his jaws
And let out the most ferocious of roars.

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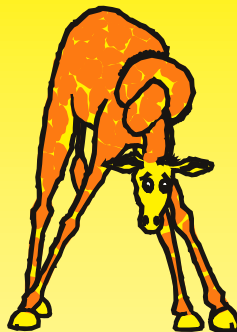


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Cardwell recoiled. He shuddered and shivered
From the shock of the roar that Lionel delivered.
His teeth rattled loose. His eardrums were shattered.
BUT...
His neck was quite straight and that was what mattered.

The animals burst into joyful applause.
A tumult went up from their hooves and their paws.
“Now, Cardwell,” said Lionel, “The next time you're chewing,
Keep your eyes open and watch what you're doing.”
“Yes, sir,” said Cardwell. “Just as sure as I'm spotted,
That's the very last time ever I shall get myself knotted.”

The End



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