

• THE TREE •  
THAT RAN AWAY  
HENRY BESTON

Once upon a time a great pine tree stood on a hilly pasture. Birds nested in its branches, rabbits and sheep rested in its shade, and they all talked of things they had seen on the other side of the hill. The lettuces were finer there; the grass was greener; it was a *wonderful* place. The pine tree was bothered and annoyed. Why couldn't it see these fine places, too?

One day a gnome suggested that it try. The pine tree pulled and pulled at its roots, and all at once, off it lumbered! The runaway tree went to an auction and attended a picnic and was present at a rendezvous with robbers. It had many remarkable adventures, but came home again and for many reasons was glad to stay on its own hillside. Now the tree could tell stories, too!

# **THE TREE THAT RAN AWAY**

*By* Henry Beston

FIVE BEARS AND MIRANDA

SONS OF KAI

THE TREE THAT RAN AWAY



**THE TREE  
THAT RAN AWAY**

*by*  
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TO Padre and Helen  
*remembering the picnics and  
pleasant talks under trees which  
did NOT run away*

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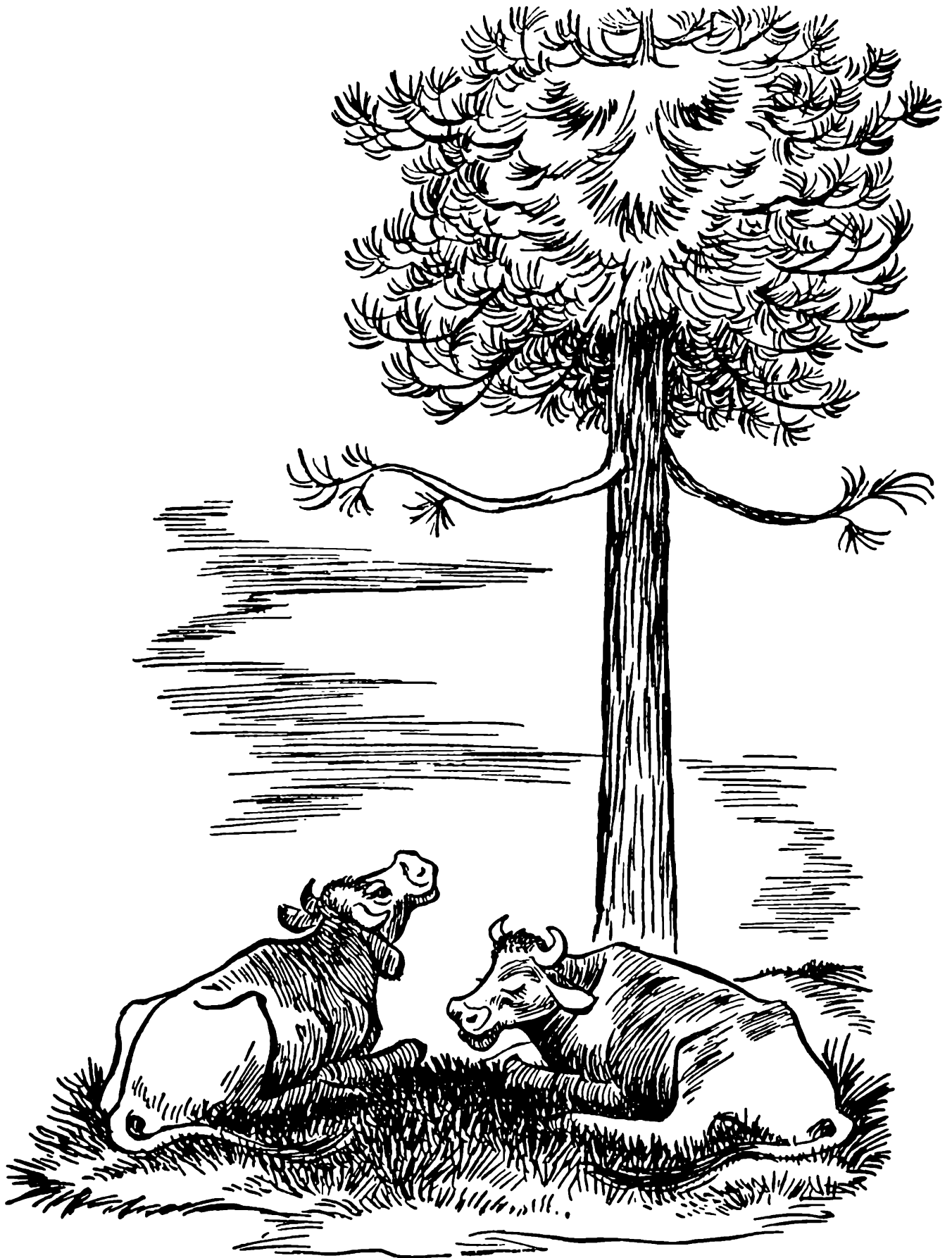
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CHAPTER ONE

**GOODBYE TO THE OLD FARM**





**T**

here was once a sizable pine tree that stood a little by itself in a hilly pasture. Its shade made a fine place for the cows and sheep to rest in when they grew tired of eating grass in the sun, and its branches were well shaped for building nests. The rabbits, too, stopped in its shelter on their way to the farmer's garden, and the squirrels raced up and down its trunk and flung themselves gaily from branch to branch. Altogether, the pine tree had a good

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deal of company and heard a good deal of talk.

One day a rabbit came hop-hop-hopping and stopped in its special corner between two roots.

“Where have you been, rabbit?” asked the tree politely.

“I’ve just been over the hill to the next farm,” said the rabbit. “It’s wonderful. Their lettuces are much finer than Jerubable’s and Mehitable’s on our farm. Their house is larger; their weather vane is brighter. Everything’s much nicer on the other side of the hill.”

“I’ve always thought ours was a very fine farm,” said the pine tree a little stiffly.



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Soon after that a bird settled in the branches.

“Where do you come from, stranger?” asked the pine tree with its usual politeness.

“I come from the north;  
Southward I fly—  
Over the hill  
And into the sky!  
Over the hill  
And far away  
To a starrier night  
And a brighter day!”

sang the bird, who, like other birds, always talked in poetry.

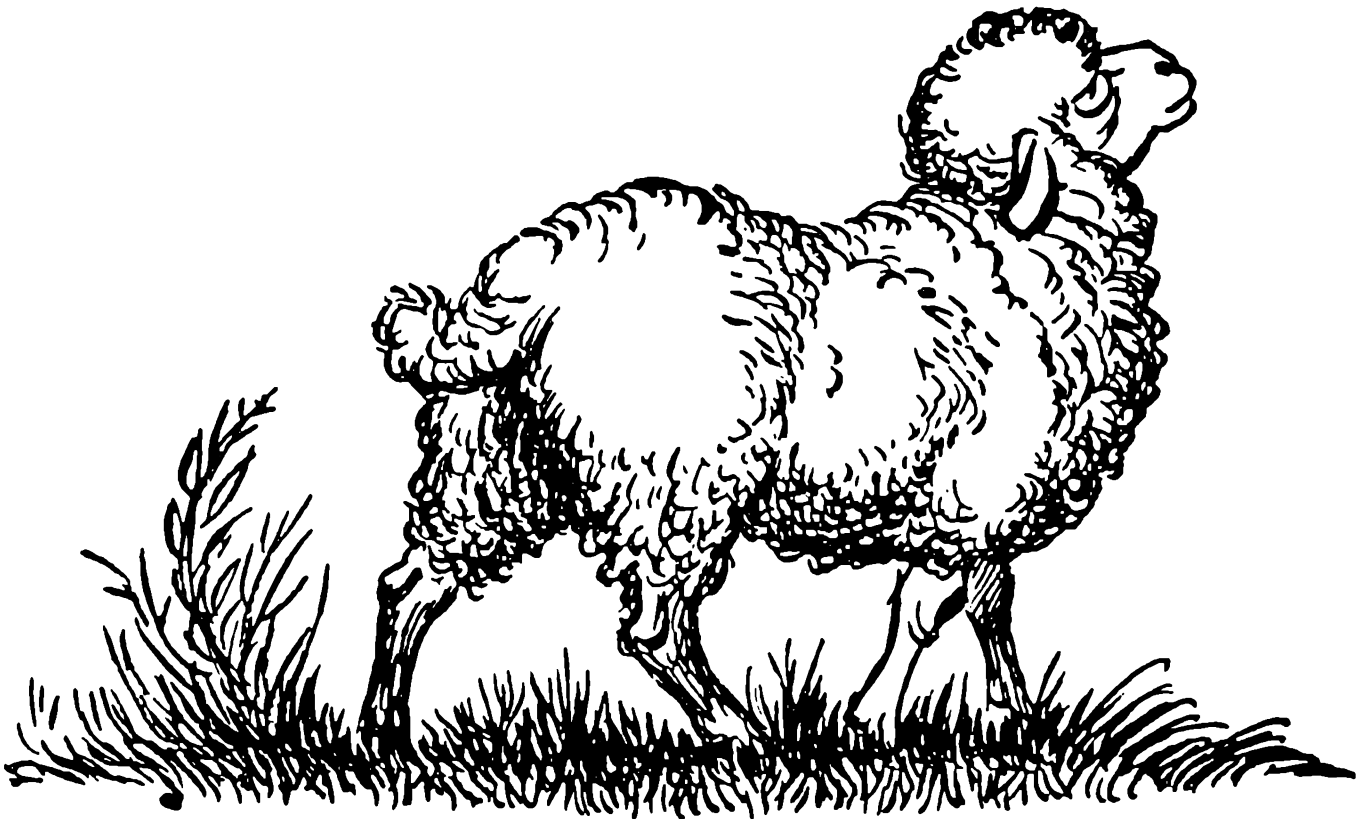
“I think very well of our own climate,” said the pine tree uneasily.

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Soon a sheep came to lie in the shade, staring out straight before her with her eyes like marbles.

“What are you thinking about, sheep?” asked the pine tree.

“I’m thinking how good the grass looks on the other side of the hill,” said the sheep.



“I’m just wondering if Jerubable has made the fence so tight I can’t get through it.”

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“I do wish you could talk about something except the other side of the hill!” cried the pine tree crossly. “Don’t you know that I can’t look over? It’s mean for all you creatures who have feet and wings to keep talking about things I’ll never see!”

“Hoity-toity!” said the sheep, rising. “What a temper you’re in, to be sure! You nearly made me swallow my cud. I’ll go to some shade where I can have peace, thank you.”

And the sheep walked off offended.

The tree wanted to apologize, but it didn’t exactly know what it had done that was so wrong; and, anyway, the sheep was soon out of hearing. The pine tree was left alone. Or was it alone?

A voice near by was remarking, “So you’d like to go over the hill, would you?”

It wasn’t the voice of bird, beast, insect, or creeping thing. The pine tree looked about

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with surprise. Then it saw what had spoken. It was a gnome sitting on a rock, under an umbrella made of glistening pine needles with small cones at the ends of the ribs. The gnome was eating blueberries from a bowl made of a large leaf.

“So you’d like to go over the hill, would you?” he repeated, taking another mouthful. “Well, why don’t you?”

“Because trees can’t move,” said the pine tree. “I wish you wouldn’t make fun of me, gnome.”

“You never know what you can do till you try,” said the gnome. “Try.”

The pine tree tried.

Something among its roots seemed to stir and move; some-

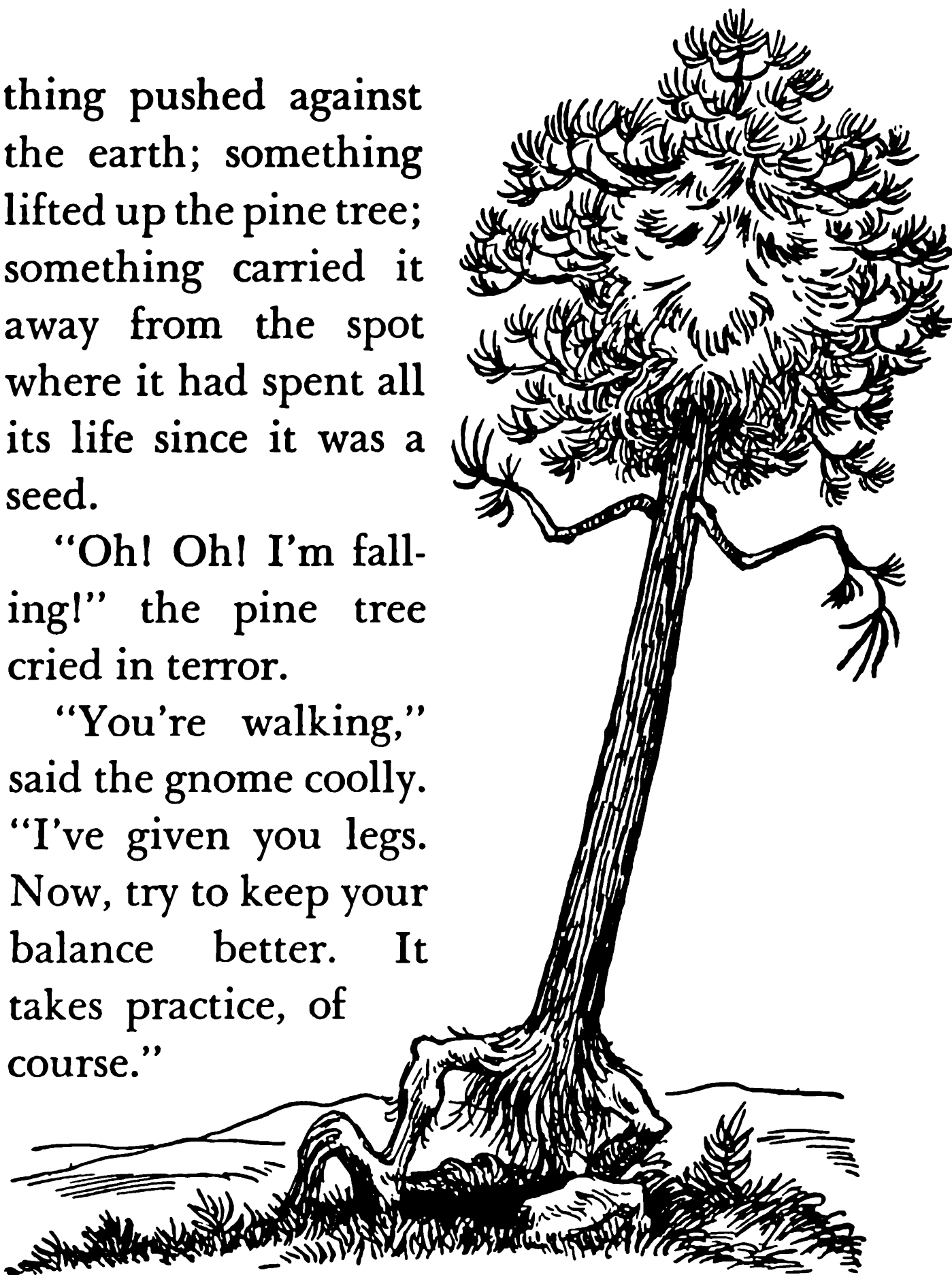




thing pushed against the earth; something lifted up the pine tree; something carried it away from the spot where it had spent all its life since it was a seed.

“Oh! Oh! I’m falling!” the pine tree cried in terror.

“You’re walking,” said the gnome coolly. “I’ve given you legs. Now, try to keep your balance better. It takes practice, of course.”



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By the end of the afternoon the pine tree could walk nicely.

The first place it went to was a pool, to see itself in.

“I do look rather funny,” it giggled.

It *did* look rather funny.

Above was the sizable pine tree, with its trunk and wide green branches—an unusually handsome tree. Then came a fringe of roots, gathered up neatly like a sort of petticoat, and then under that a pair of sturdy short brown legs that looked always ready to caper.

The tree went back to the gnome, who was still perched on the rock.

“Well, you’re off!” said the gnome. “Have a good time. I’ll see you when you come back.”

“I don’t believe I’ll ever come back,” said the tree.

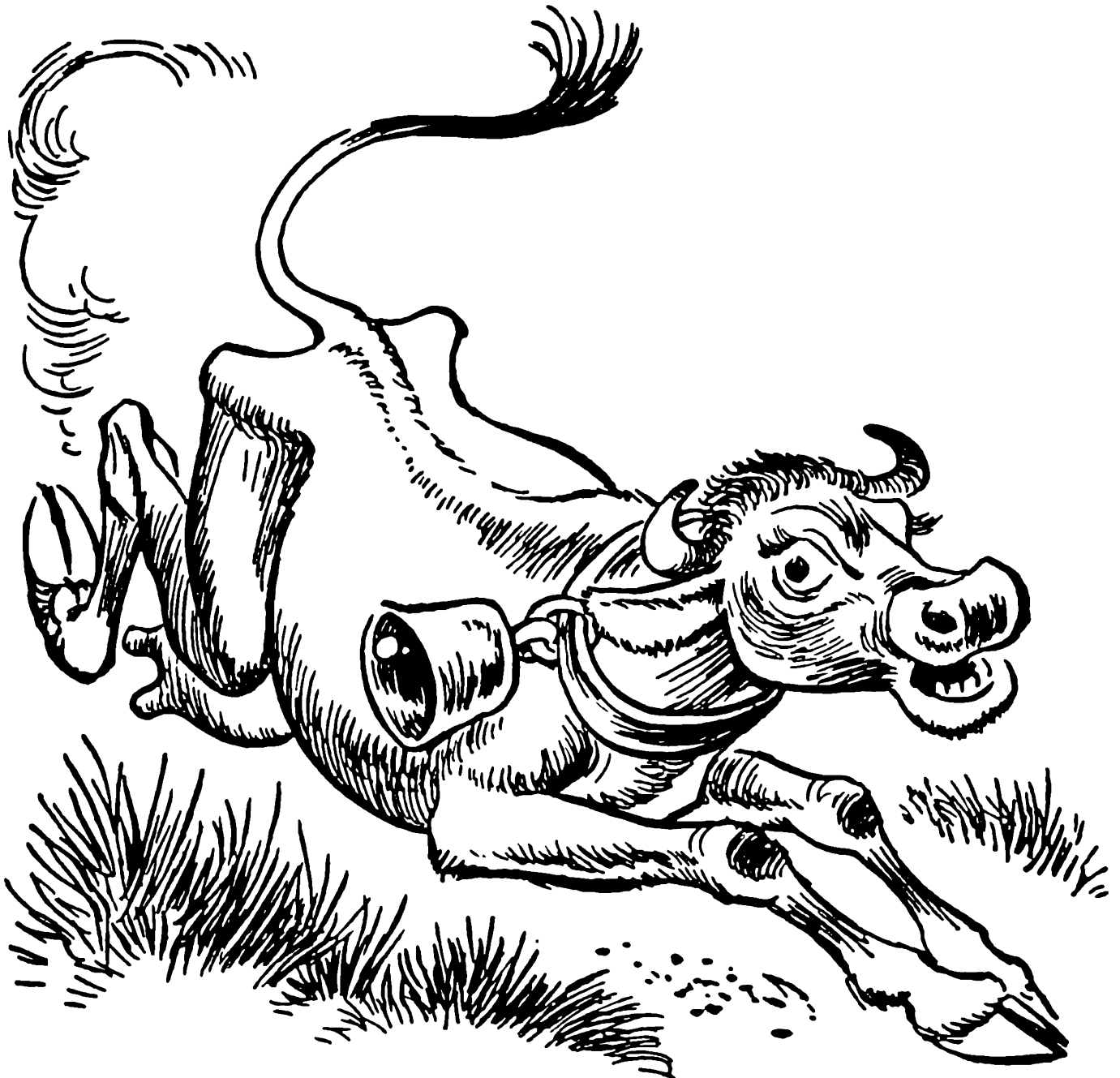
“We’ll see,” said the gnome, and waved as the pine tree started off to the top of the hill.

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The first thing that the wandering tree met was a cow grazing peacefully in the late afternoon light with a jingle-jangle bell at her neck.

“Hello,” said the pine politely.

The cow looked up, saw the pine moving toward her on its stout brown legs, uttered a



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moo of wild terror, flung up her tail, and bounded off down the pasture at a speed that would curdle her milk for a week.

The tree paid no attention to her but looked abroad over the landscape. There was the big farm the rabbit had told about, the bright weather vane, the green lettuces; and beyond these there were distant villages, white church spires, and farther hills with a road winding across them.

“Ah, I must see everything,” thought the tree, turning about to seek the road.

The cow was still running.

Down by the farmhouse Jerubable, the farmer, looked up at Mehitable, his wife, who was helping him in the garden.

“My!” he said. “I never heard Daisy’s bell ring so hard. I guess she saw something that frightened her.”

“There’s nothing round here to frighten



her," said Mehitable comfortably.

Just then they saw the pine tree walking down the hill toward the road. When it came to the fence, it had a little trouble climbing over. Its crest swayed now this way,

now that; but its little brown legs scrambled over the rails nimbly, and soon it was safely across and coming toward them at a trot.

"Do you see what I see, Mehitable?" asked Jerubable.

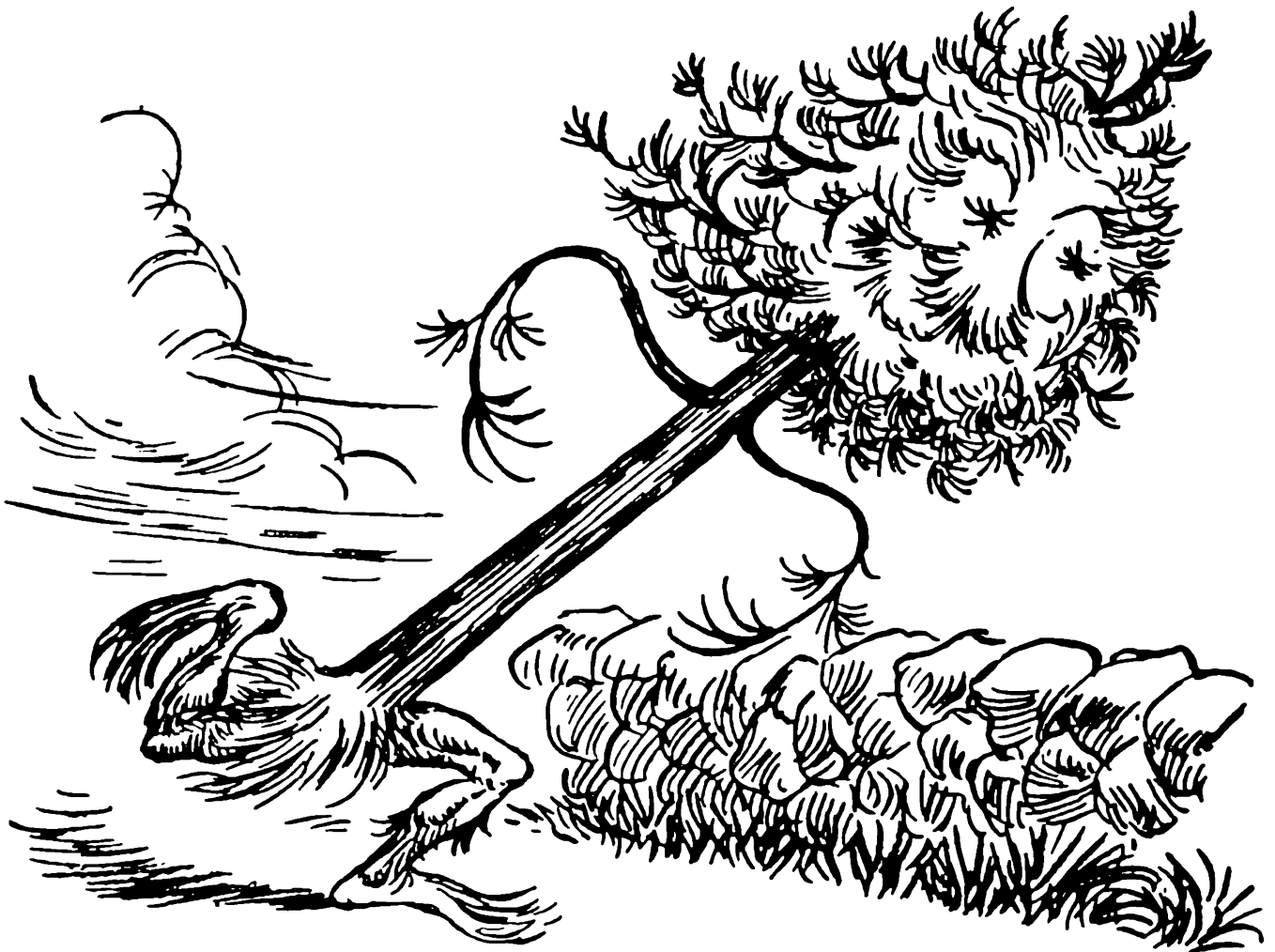
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“Yes, I do, Jerubable,” said Mehitable, “but I don’t want to talk about it,” and she went on picking corn rather nervously.

A minute later Jerubable said, “It’s turned and is going down our road, Mehitable.”

“I’m glad, Jerubable,” said Mehitable.

A minute later Jerubable said, “It’s almost out of sight.”

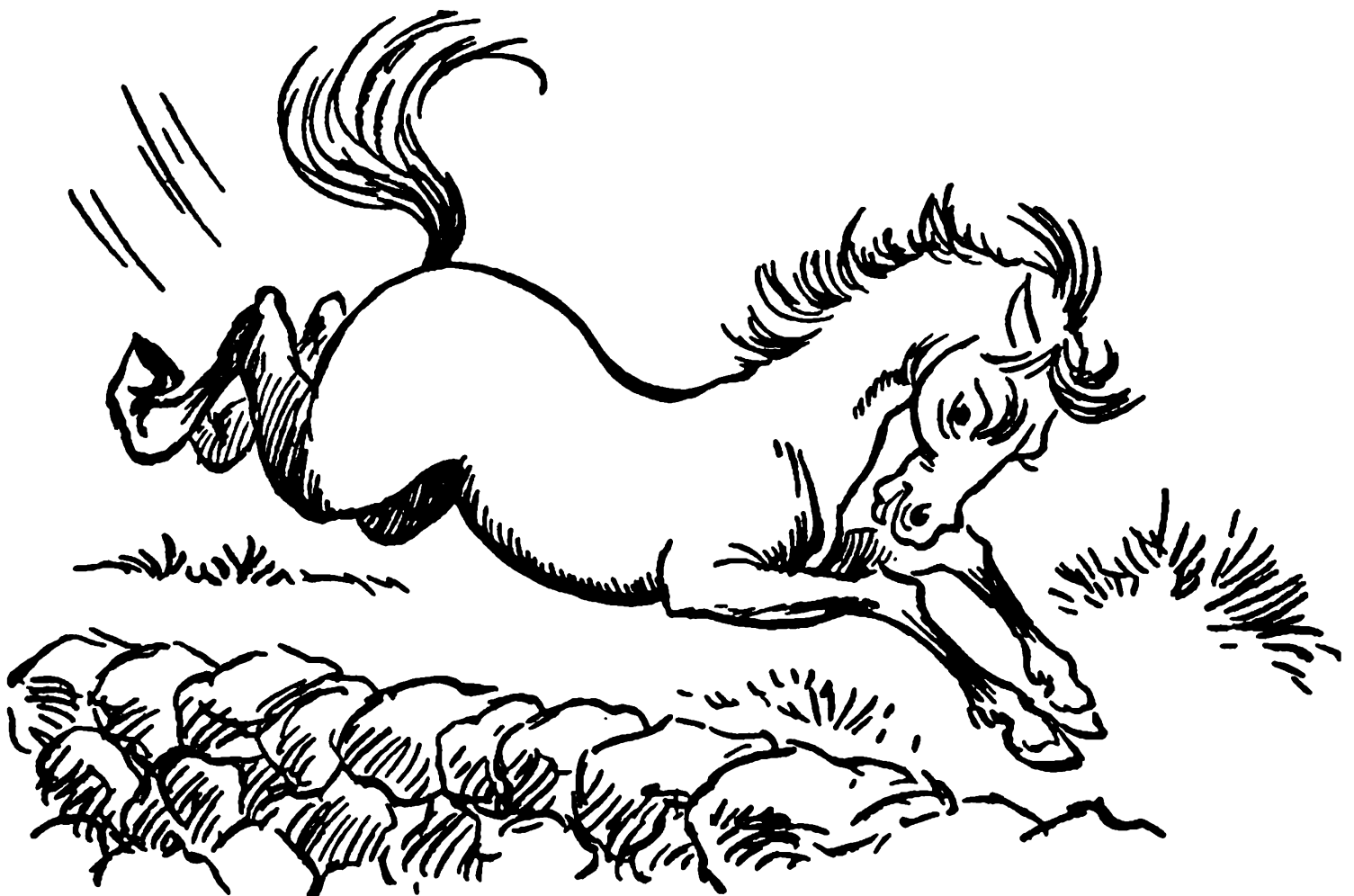


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Mehitable looked out between the rows of corn and saw something green and tall far off with a little dust about its feet.

“I hope nothing else round here takes to traveling, Jerubable,” she said, going back to work.

The pine tree ran on, very well pleased with itself. At the rate its legs were going, it was ready to race anything. A horse in a near-by



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meadow looked up, gave a neigh of terror, and galloped off along the wall. The pine put on speed, and beat it to the end of the pasture.

“Of course,” it said to the panting horse, “I had better footing than you did. But I’d have beaten you anyhow if we’d both been on the road, I think. Can’t you jump the fence, and we’ll have a little race as far as the railroad track?”

“I don’t want to!” gasped the horse. “I don’t want to come anywhere near you! Go away!”

“Oh, because I have legs, I suppose,” said the pine tree airily. “Well, you have four of them yourself, but I’m not afraid of *you!*”

Leaving the horse to think about this remark, the tree continued on its way. It walked rather jauntily till it heard a small angry voice remark from the hole high up in its trunk:

“Will you please stop jiggling my babies?”

It was the mother squirrel. The tree had





quite forgotten about her. It had remembered that the birds' nests were empty now, but it hadn't thought about squirrels.

"I'm sorry," it said, coming down to a less jouncy walk.

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“That’s better,” remarked the squirrel. “I have no objection to travel if it’s comfortable. My children have reached an age when it should broaden their minds. But no jouncing, *if* you please. And when you stop, see that we’re near an oak tree.”

The pine agreed politely. It wasn’t sure whether it was pleasant to have company or not. It decided it wasn’t. Those young squirrels were practically full-grown now. They didn’t need a nest, the tree decided.

It stopped near an oak.

“There’s your supper, squirrels,” it called genially.

The squirrels clambered down its trunk and into the oak, where they were soon merrily cracking acorns. The tree looked hard at the oak. Sure enough, there was a good hole in its trunk that didn’t seem occupied. The squirrels could use it or they could walk home.

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“So long, I’ll be seeing you!” called the pine, suddenly making off down the road as fast as it could go.

It heard an angry scurry behind it but paid no attention. It ran on for a mile or so and then stopped. There was no further pursuit.

“It’s not an adventure if there are too many others along,” thought the pine tree, settling down to a comfortable walk.



CHAPTER TWO

# CONVERSATION WITH A CAT





The tree spent the night in a pleasant meadow by a stream. It found that it was easy enough to uncurl its roots into the cool damp soil and to rest its feet, tired with so much walking. But when it woke in the clear freshness of dawn, it could scarcely wait to be off on its travels.

This morning it found that it could trot along without any topheaviness, and it climbed the fence like an acrobat. Once more it started



south. Nothing particular happened to attract its attention until, at the gate of a small weather-beaten farmhouse set well back from the road, it saw a red flag nailed to the gatepost beside the mailbox, and a poster fastened to the fence with the words "Auction Today" in large letters, followed by a list of household goods and farm implements to be sold—signed "Ron Ranter, Auctioneer."

The tree, of course, had never been to an auction, and its curiosity was stirred. It was still early and there was no one about, so it moved quietly up the lane and settled itself in the sunshine by the kitchen door. There was no smoke coming from the chimney and, peek-

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ing in the windows, the tree saw that there was no one in the kitchen. But the room seemed almost filled with cradles and tables and chairs, and tumblers and teacups and churns, and—on shelves—clocks and rusty spits and baking dishes and chipped bowls and goodness knows what else.

“Gracious! they must like furniture in this house!” said the tree out loud.

“Pooh!” came a voice from the step. “Mr. Hoe never had such a clutter when *he* was alive! It’s that auctioneer Ranter who has stuffed the place like a Thanksgiving turkey!”

The tree glanced down hastily and saw a large striped cat sitting on the step, looking disdainful.

“Hello!” said the pine. “I didn’t see anyone here when I came up!”





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“You didn’t see *me*,” replied the cat with a sort of smile. “But I saw you. I’m living under the steps nowadays.”

“Were you surprised?” asked the tree eagerly. It enjoyed the sensation it made among the animals.

But the cat only yawned.

“I mind my own business,” he said, patting his whiskers into place. “If you want to walk around, walk, I say. Though you do look rather peculiar. But I mind my own business. All the other animals were eager to get to other farms when Mr. Hoe died. But not me. I like it here and I can take care of myself. When I get ready, I may go visiting in the fall. But not now. The other animals all tried to argue me into going with them, especially Rover; but I said, ‘You suit yourselves, and I’ll suit myself’—and I have.”

“You must be very independent,” said the tree admiringly.

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“I am,” replied the cat, with a gratified look. “It runs in the family.”

Just then they heard the sound of a car turning into the lane.

“Well, tra-la,” remarked the cat airily, sliding through a small break in the lattice under the step.

When Mr. Ranter drove up, there was no sign of a cat but things looked a little odd to him. He tipped his hat over his eyes and remarked to his assistant, a thin young man with big wrists, “Say, Bill, d’ you remember that pine by the step?”

Bill squinted at it.

“I ain’t one to notice trees,” he said in a high squeaky voice, “but if it’s here today it must have been here yesterday. You can’t get round that, Mr. Ranter.”

“I suppose not,” agreed Mr. Ranter, but he looked puzzled.

In his business he had to notice things, and

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to one accustomed to noticing the smallest crack or the least nod of a lady's head in the seventh row, behind the big hat with the roses on it, it did seem funny not to have noticed a sizable pine.

“Must be losing my memory,” he thought. “Well,” he said out loud, “let's be going,” and clambered out of the car.

The tree was delighted at having puzzled Mr. Ranter, especially after the matter-of-fact way in which the cat had acted over its arrival. Now it watched with interest while Mr. Ranter and Bill carried chairs out of the house and set them in rows facing the back steps;

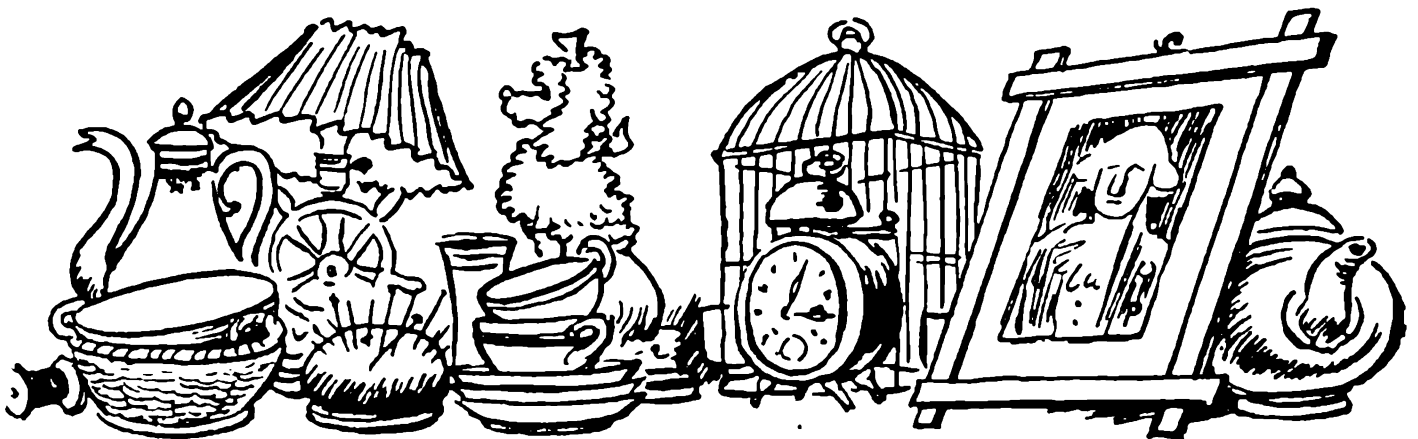


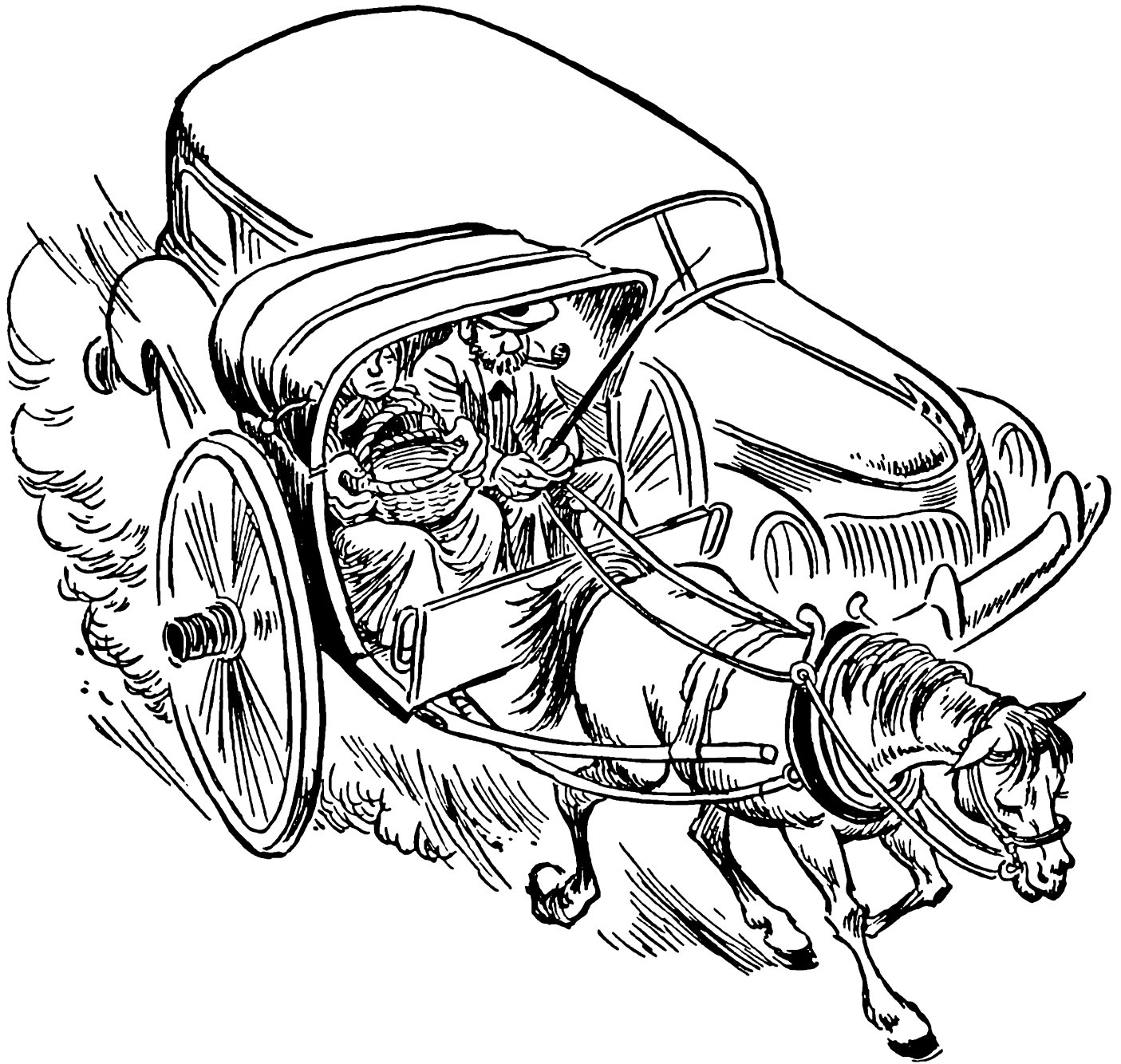
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and then brought out various tables and dishes and what-nots, and pictures of Indian maidens in canoes and Presidents of the United States in high collars, and quilts and water jugs, and stood them about opposite the chairs. Looking down toward the steps, the tree saw some whiskers, through the lattice, and a pair of eyes that were noticing everything.

Soon an old car drove up, and out of it came some ladies dragging baskets and a coffeepot and a lot of bottles in cartons. Apparently one of them was Mrs. Ranter, who was going to sell hot dogs and drinks at lunch time.

“It’s such a beautiful day lots of people will





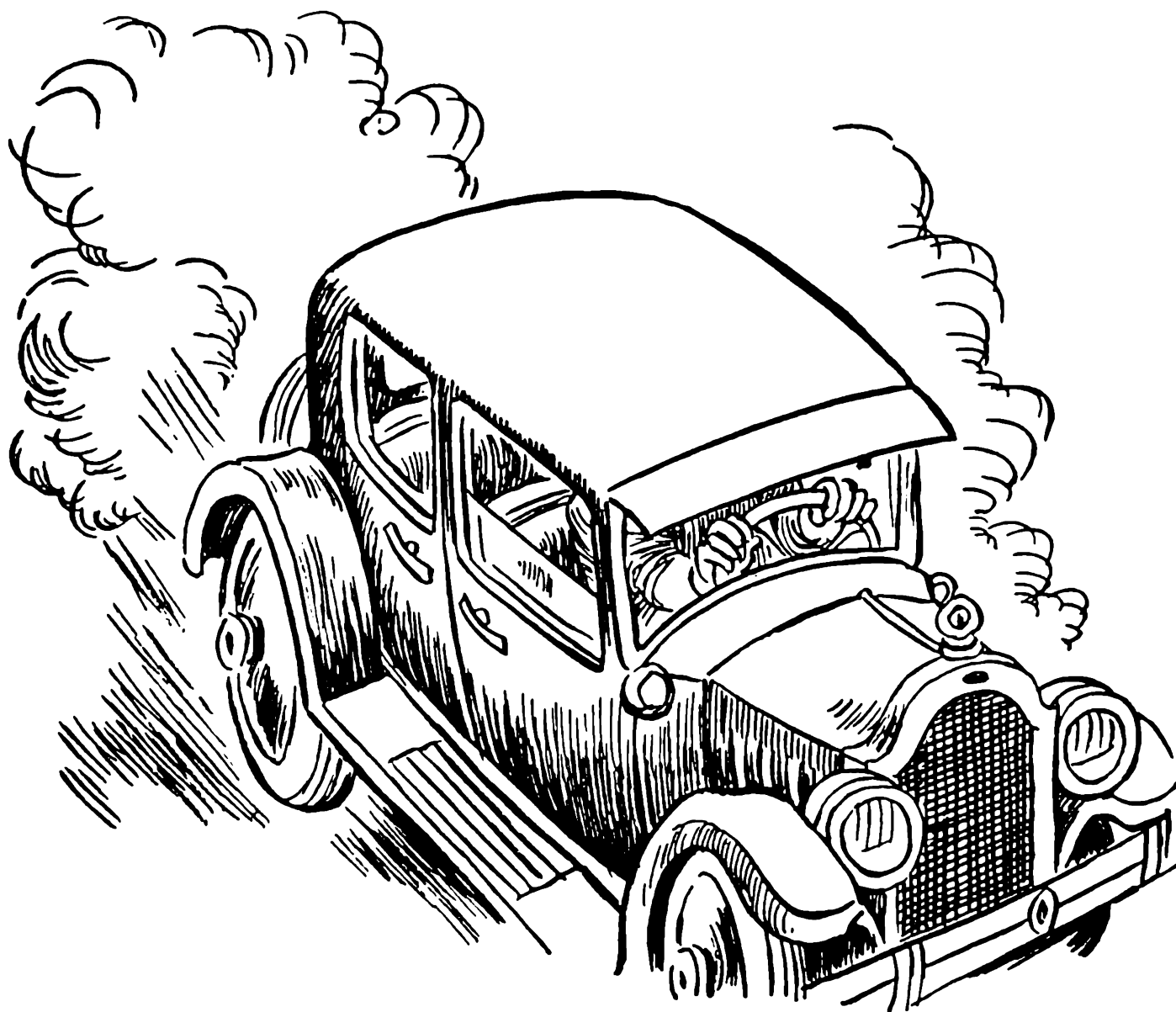
be sure to come," she said brightly to Mr. Ranter as she carried a basket into the kitchen.

"Can't ever be sure," Mr. Ranter answered

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gloomily. "Don't ever count on people. They're contrary."

But Mrs. Ranter was right. Lots of people *did* come. There were bright big cars, and little old dented cars, and even a buggy or two with a horse in it that looked as though he'd



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been forgotten in the barn and the moths had got after him.

The tree had never known so much excitement, with gears being shifted and horns tooting, and cars backing and people scuttling about, and ladies picking up things and putting them down again in the wrong places, and men peering solemnly at farm implements, and children running about while everyone told them *not to touch anything* (but they did). And all the time the tree could feel the cat watching what was going on from under the steps, making spiteful remarks to himself.

But the pine was enjoying itself except just for a few minutes when Mr. Ranter called out:

“Ladies and gentlemen! Take your seats! The auction is about to begin.”

Then they all took their seats in the sun as far as possible away from the tree, and that

hurt its feelings. But ten minutes later the sun began to get too hot, and a lady holding two vases, an old bucket, a table cover, and a bent canary cage moved over to sit in the shade, and soon everyone followed. Then the tree felt happy. Like all of us, it liked to be useful and it spread its shade just as far as it could as the sun grew hotter and hotter.



“What am I offered for this fine kitchen table? Abraham Lincoln probably ate at a table like this! What am I offered? Two dollars, says the lady in a red sweater. Three dollars? Am



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I offered three dollars for a table of white pine with four strong legs? Two dollars and a half? Two dollars and a half! Three dollars! Four, over there! Five! Six! Now this is something like. But that table is worth twenty dollars if it's worth a cent. You'll be proud of that table when it's been fixed up. Six dollars? Seven? Anyone say seven? Six dollars . . . six dollars . . . six dollars . . . going . . . going . . . gone! "Bill, the gentleman over there in the black hat gets the table. Now, let me have that blue sugar bowl. Ladies and gentlemen, I am now offering as fine a piece of china as ever I laid my eyes on."

Mr. Ranter's voice went on and on, and after a while the pine tree grew sleepier and sleepier. The warm sun shone down through its branches, glistening on all the needles. The voice of Mr. Ranter rose like a sort of windy lullaby, and, soothed by its sound, the pine

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tree went fast to sleep. It never knew who bought the clock which wouldn't go, nor the cradle which could be used as a woodbox. It never knew what the lady said when she looked closer at her tea set and found that the sugar bowl had lost a handle. It didn't see or hear what happened to the child who discovered the cat under the steps and tried to pull him out.

It didn't know when Mr. Ranter became silent and Mrs. Ranter and her friends began to sell hot dogs, coffee, and cold tonics. It didn't hear a lady remark to a friend, "Oh, I don't like my coffee so strong." But the next moment it *was* awake, and wide awake too! For a cupful of good steaming hot coffee had been poured carelessly over one of its roots.

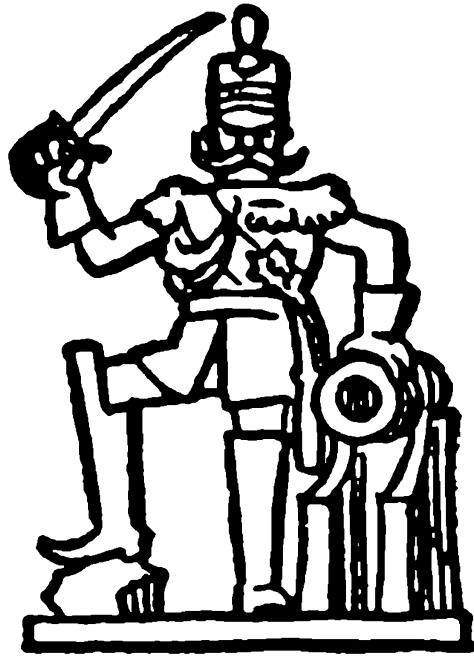
"Ouch!" cried the tree, more startled than hurt but mad clear through.

It pulled its roots angrily out of the ground

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and started off on its sturdy brown legs, running down the lane. Behind it rose screams and shouts. Ladies fainted and men turned pale. Children ran to their mamas through uproars of breaking china and crashing tinware. The old horses snorted and reared and broke their hitching straps and galloped wildly over the fields, and Mr. Ranter shouted "Stop thief! Stop thief!" and waved his arms.

Only the cat remained perfectly calm at its peephole under the steps.



CHAPTER THREE

**A SURPRISE IN THE PARK**





**A**ll afternoon the tree traveled. When it heard a car coming, it quickly moved over to the side of the road and stood still until the car had passed. No one noticed anything unusual at all except once when a dog from one of the farms came too near the pine, which cried “Scat” and chased it. The dog tucked its tail between its legs and ran off howling, and for weeks it kept looking anxiously over its shoulder every time it went out of the house, to see if any tree was after it.

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By nightfall the runaway tree had climbed over the mountains and come to the valley on the other side. It was growing tired and its roots were dry. They wanted the feel of the earth about them once more. Luckily, when it reached the town it was dinnertime and all the people were indoors about their tables, so no one noticed a tall rustling figure that stalked down their streets until it came to the park. There it chose a comfortable open place where it would crowd none of the other trees and settled down for the night.

The next morning early the superintendent of the park in a high silk hat and a sculptor in a beret and blue smock came to look for a good place in which to put a new statue of a great general which the sculptor had just finished.

“How does it happen I’ve never noticed this magnificent pine before?” the sculptor ex-

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claimed. "We'll put the new statue of General Buzz-Fuzz in front of this tree! It will look grand against the dark foliage."

The tree was very pleased. On Jerubable's farm there had been many pines just as fine, but here in the park it was unique. It had an interesting morning watching the trucks and workmen putting the base of the statue in place and finally hoisting the





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statue above it. Before they covered it with a large sheet, the tree had time to see that it represented a short squat man with long mustaches, up one of which an inchworm was moving slowly. In its right hand the statue brandished a large sword, while its left hand rested on the mouth of an attendant cannon.

Under the statue was written: "In Honor of General Bartolomé Buzz-Fuzz."

And then it quoted the general's own words: "I have met the enemy with cannons and with guns. I have met them with bayonets, swords, knives, and forks!"

On the reverse side of the base there appeared another saying of the general: "Whenever the enemy ran, I ran faster!"

After the statue had disappeared under its sheet, to which a stout rope was attached, braided with flags, the tree meditated for some

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time on the general's sayings but still could not be quite sure what they meant.

In the early afternoon it took a snooze but was wakened by the town band that came into the park playing martial music, followed by a crowd of citizens come to see the statue unveiled. The mayor gave a speech and the general's little granddaughter dressed in the wrong shade of pink, tripped forward to her place before the statue, lisped a few words from among her curls, and was about to pull the patriotic rope which would unveil her grandpapa's statue, when the tree began to feel the most awful tickling.

A boy was shinnying up its trunk to get a better view of the affair.

"Oh! Oh! I can't stand this!" giggled the tree as the bare heels gripped it in another place. "Oh! Oh!"

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Again the heels dug in, but then something happened.

The tree sprang to its feet and began to run.

A terrible astonishment held the crowd. Little Miss Buzz-Fuzz stood petrified and never pulled the cord nor unveiled the statue. Ladies fainted; gentlemen rubbed their eyes.

“Oh! Save my child!” a woman shrieked.

And gallantly the band responded—following in hot pursuit, their instruments banging at every step.





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But who could catch up with the runaway tree?

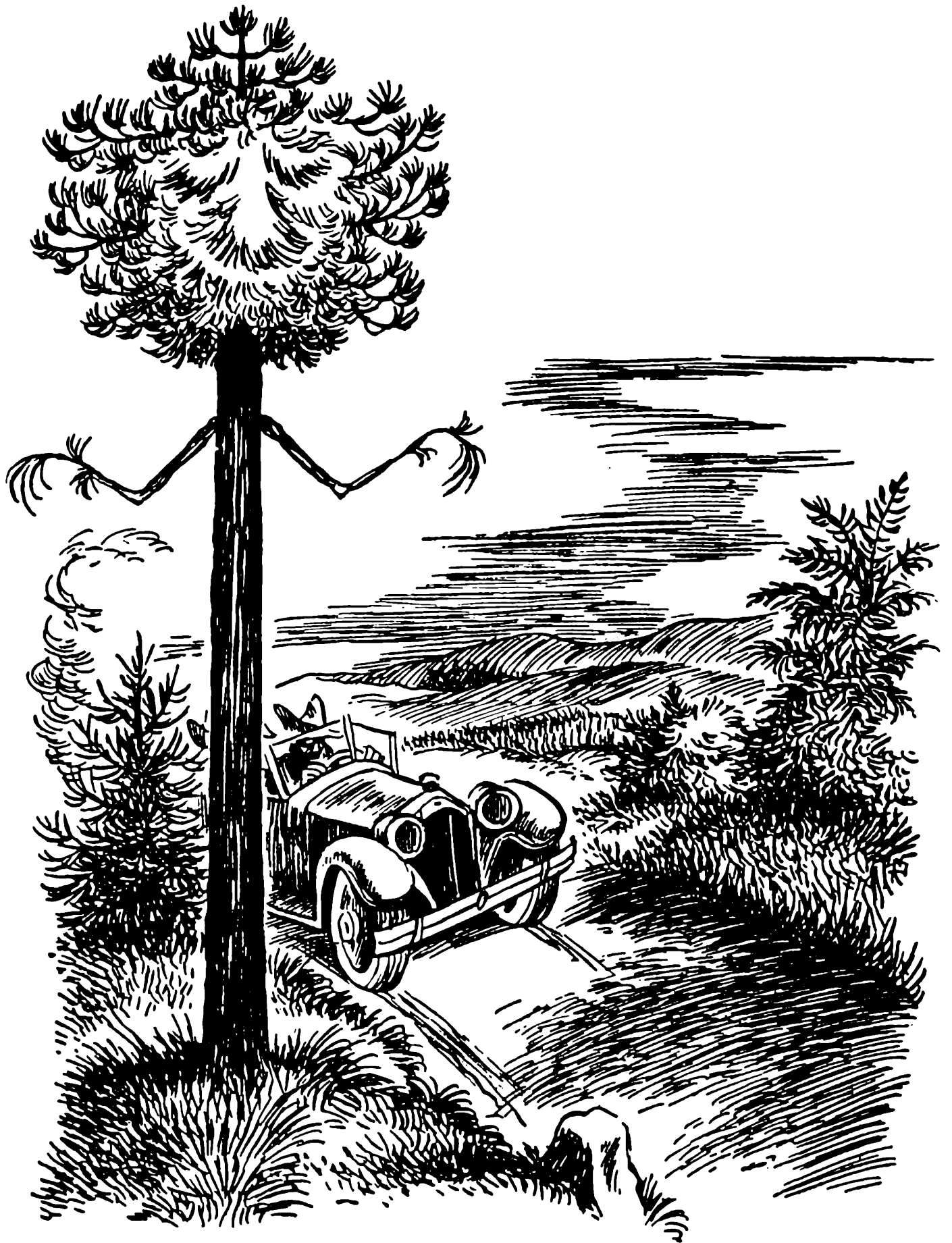
Though they panted and puffed, though they padded and sprinted, though they bounded and leaped, not one of them came near the pine, which capered along ahead. When it passed by a nice big soft haystack, it turned off the road long enough to toss the little boy onto it, and then ran on.

“I always seem to travel in the afternoon,” it said to itself. “I wonder where I’ll go now?”



**CHAPTER FOUR**

**HOME WITH PRESENTS**





**T**he tree traveled on aimlessly all day, now turning down this road, now turning down that. When evening came, it happened to be in a rather lonely place. It stepped to one side of the road, and in a few seconds its roots were once more deep in the earth and its sturdy brown legs were resting.

The night had become rather wild. A wind had risen, and now the black clouds raced across the face of the moon. At one moment



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the landscape would be almost as bright as day, and then the next moment one could not see ten feet through the darkness.

An owl passed by.



“I find this very confusing,” it complained in a small shrill voice.

The tree felt restless and did not sleep well. For the first time it began to be a little homesick for its own hillside and the animals which it knew.

Far off a clock in some unseen tower struck midnight. Hardly had the sound died away when the muffled whir of an automobile was heard coming down the road. The tree was wondering who could be driving so late when,

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to its astonishment, it heard the car stop right under its own branches.

The night at this moment was dark and, peer as it would, the tree could see nothing but some small shining spots which it took to be the whites of eyes. It was trying to count them when the moon came out and it saw seven men in black cloaks and black hats wearing masks on their faces and black gloves on their hands, getting out of a large old-fashioned open automobile painted black and without headlights.

“Hist!” muttered the man who appeared to be the leader. “Do you hear anything?”

The six others listened.

“Only the wind, captain,” they replied. “The pursuit has been outdistanced.”

“Ah,” said the captain, “as sure as my name is Whiskerandos Muggins, you are wrong! I hear the pursuit and we are being overtaken!”

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The others began to shake in their black shoes and socks.



“Oh, captain!” they cried. “Please, please tell us what we ought to do?”

The clouds crossed over the moon, leaving all in darkness once more.

“I think,” said the captain, “we ought to hide our loot somewhere. Then if we are overtaken we will say that we are not robbers but gentlemen riding out to take the night air. And who can then say that we aren’t what we pretend to be?”

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“What wonderful ideas you have, Captain Whiskerandos!” cried all the robber band in chorus. “But isn’t it a shame to lose the loot after the trouble we took to rob it and the strain of being pursued for nearly a month?”

“I’ve thought of that,” said their leader. “Trust Captain Whiskerandos Muggins to think of everything. We will come back later and get our valuables, when the pursuers have ridden off home again!”



“Hurray, hurray for the captain!” shouted the robber band, much relieved.

It was soon decided to hide the things in the

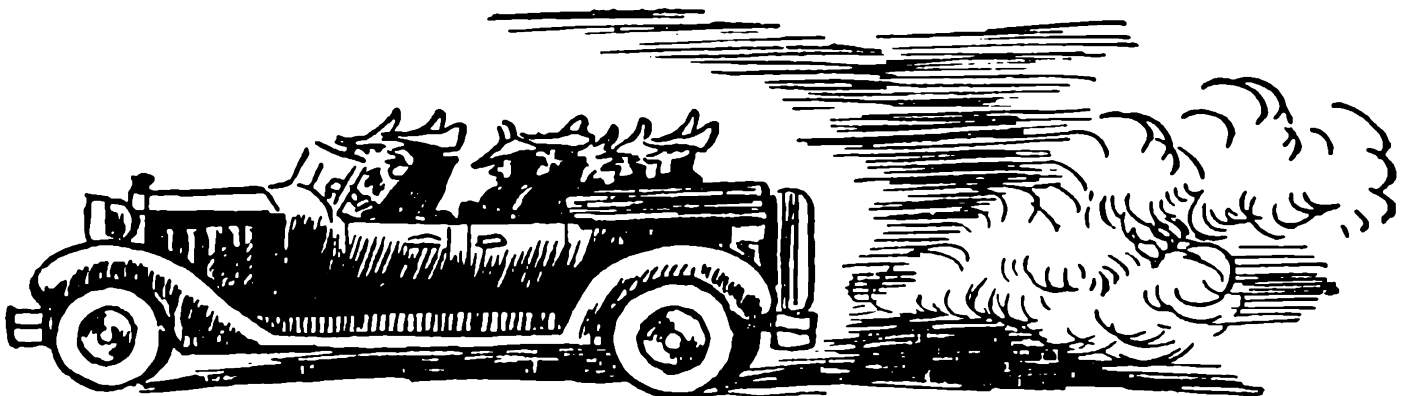
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branches of the near-by pine, since its needles were so thick that no one passing by would see them. The robber chief himself climbed into the lower branches and put bundles and purses in all the crotches and hung a few pearl and diamond necklaces over the twigs.

The pine wriggled a little, still feeling ticklish; but the captain never noticed it in his excitement, especially as the tree was swaying in the wind already.

When the last piece of loot was in place, he climbed down.

“Now, men,” he said briskly, “it’s up and away, come who may! We are innocent gentlemen today!”



## THE TREE THAT RAN AWAY

The robbers all laughed politely.

“Put your masks in your pockets, and I don’t think we need the gloves,” the tree heard Captain Muggins remark, and then the old engine coughed and spluttered and took hold and the tree saw the car disappear down the road during a fine burst of moonlight.

The moment the moon went under, the tree began running in the opposite direction. One or two of the jeweled necklaces joggled loose and fell, but the tree ran on. There were plenty of other necklaces.

“What will the robbers say when they come back?” it wondered. “They won’t think so much of Captain Whiskerandos Muggins’ fine plan then, I fancy!”



## THE TREE THAT RAN AWAY

The pine was so excited that it ran on and on without feeling the least bit tired. This time it knew where it was going. It was going home!

It ran all through the moon-dappled night. It ran through the rosy dawn. It ran through the bright morning with its clearing skies. And just before noon it reached its own hillside and with a sigh of contentment settled itself to rest. But this time it took a position a little higher up in the pasture, so that it might look over the hill any time it cared to.

Everything made a great fuss over the tree's return. There were so many rabbits and birds and sheep about that there seemed to be a regular meeting.





The gnome came, too, under his parasol  
and said, "So you're back?" in a friendly way,





and never added, “I thought you would be.”

At first the cow wouldn’t come, but she did when the tree promised not to stir.

“You gave me such a start!” she explained, and then added kindly, “But I know you didn’t mean to.”

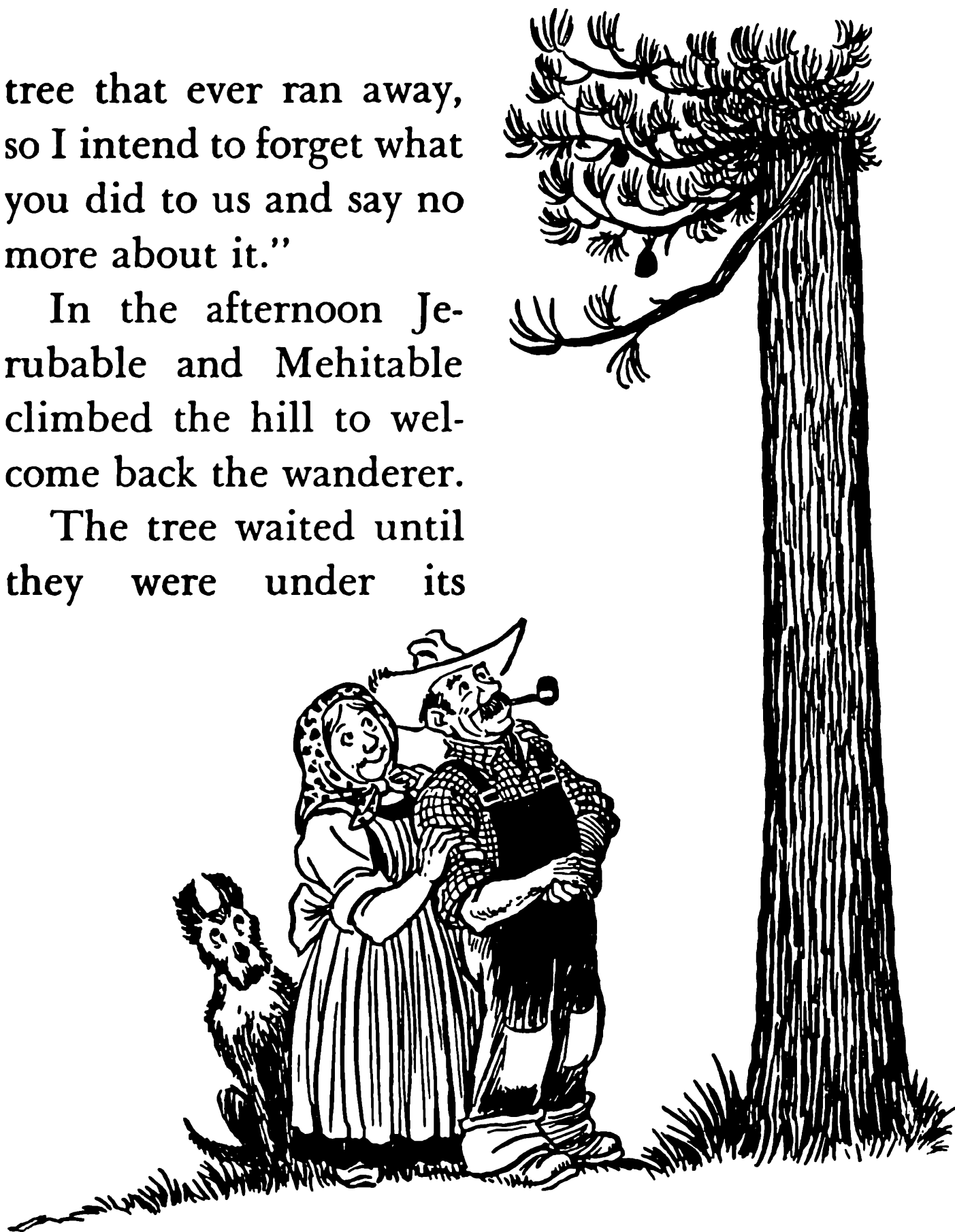
The squirrel came with her family and settled in the old hole.

“You were mean to go off without us!” she said. “We had to walk home. But it’s something to be able to say that you live in the only

tree that ever ran away,  
so I intend to forget what  
you did to us and say no  
more about it.”

In the afternoon Je-  
rubable and Mehitable  
climbed the hill to wel-  
come back the wanderer.

The tree waited until  
they were under its



## THE TREE THAT RAN AWAY

boughs and then shook loose a purse which nearly fell on Jerubable's head.

“What a big cone!” the farmer exclaimed. “Why, Mehitable, it isn't a cone. It looks like a purse!”

It *was* a purse, filled with gold pieces, a gold thimble, and half a dozen rubies. The farmer and his wife could scarcely believe their eyes. They looked and they counted and they put up a notice in the postoffice asking if anyone had lost any property. But the only person who paid any attention to the notice was a neighbor who was looking for a heifer which had strayed, and knew nothing about lost purses.

So Jerubable and Mehitable kept the purse and put up a new barn and painted their farmhouse and got lawn chairs and bought a cottage organ and a new car, and wore fine clothes to church and made presents to people

## THE TREE THAT RAN AWAY



who needed them, and sent for a green parrot—a thing Mehitable had always longed for.

On special holidays, like birthdays and Christmases, they always walked up to the tree in the pasture, and the tree always shook them down a present: sometimes a watch, or

## THE TREE THAT RAN AWAY

a mother-of-pearl opera-glass; sometimes a silver teapot, or a shaving mug painted with pink roses.

For the pine tree never left the pasture again. It was quite content; for now it could see over the hill and, if the birds and the animals talked about their adventures, the tree itself at last had its own adventures to tell about, much more exciting than any of theirs!