

The Speaking Bird

is found.

FROM THE ARABIAN NIGHTS.

By
DONAHEY

SYNOPSIS OF THE TALKING BIRD.
The two elder sisters of the sultana of Persia become jealous of their royal sister and steal her babies, two boys and a girl, as soon as they are born. The sisters set each baby afloat in a basket on a canal, and all are found and adopted by the governor of the sultan's gardens. After they are grown an old woman tells the princess of three marvels, a talking bird, a singing tree, and the yellow water, and the brothers determine to get these for their sister, the eldest setting out in search of them. Before his departure he gives his sister a knife, telling her that as long as the blade remains bright he will be safe, but if a stain appears he will be dead. Some time after his departure a stain of blood appears on the blade.

(Continued from last Sunday.)

PRINCE BALMAN, after bidding his brother and sister good-by, traveled straight toward the east. On the twentieth day he met a horrible looking old man sitting near the road. His hair was snow white, and his beard hung down to his feet. His finger nails were long and sharp, and for clothes he wore a sort of shirt made from twisted grass. On his head was a broad, flat hat which threw a deep shadow over his face.

Remembering the old woman's directions to ask questions of the first person he met, the prince drew rein and shouted, "Good day, sir."

The old man tried to speak, but his words were so mumbled that Prince Balman could scarcely hear him.

Jumping from the saddle, the prince tied his horse to a tree, and, approaching the old man, said, "Good sir, your beard is so thick and heavy I can scarcely hear your voice. Let me cut some of the hair away, for you look more like a bear than a man, and, besides, I have a great many questions to ask."

The old man nodded his head, and the prince, producing a pair of shears, soon cut away the heavy beard.

"You now look quite handsome," cried the prince, stepping back and surveying his work.

The old man seemed pleased with the compliment, and, motioning the prince to sit down, he said: "You have been very kind to me, sir. All the people who have passed have never offered to do anything for me, although all of them have asked favors of me. Now, if there is anything that I can do for you I will be very glad to do it."

The prince then told the old man of the old woman who had informed his sister of the speaking bird and the other wonderful things. "The old woman's directions were," cried the

prince, "to travel twenty days toward the east and on the twentieth day to ask the first person I saw where I should find these wonderful treasures. Now, as this is the twentieth day and as you are the first person I have seen, I ask you where I am to find the speaking bird, the singing tree, and the yellow water."

"Ah, my son," said the old man, sadly shaking his head, "you had better give up this mad hunt. If you do not, you will surely go to your death. I have directed a great many young men to the place where the treasures are to be found, but none of them has ever returned. I did not warn the others, but as you have been kind to me, I ask you again, if you value your life, do not continue the search."

"I thank you for your kind advice," said the prince, "but I have firmly made up my mind not to return to my brother and sister until I have secured the treasures."

"Well," said the old man, taking a bowl from a bag that lay at his feet and placing it in the prince's hand, "if you will not listen to my advice, I will tell you. When you have mounted your horse take the bowl I have given you and throw it before you. It will begin to roll rapidly. You must follow, being careful to keep it in sight. It will lead you to the foot of a great mountain, where it will stop, but you must climb the mountain. As you climb higher and higher you will notice a great many large stones. You will hear a great cry of voices screaming at you and taunting you. They will hurl vile names at you, and you will hear footsteps coming up behind you. But, whatever you do, don't look back. If you escape this danger, keep on until you have come to the top of the mountain, where you will see a cage in which is the speaking bird. Ask the bird where you will find the singing tree and the yellow water, and it will tell you. That is all I have to say, and if you follow my advice no harm will come to you. But, remember, do not look back, or all will be lost."

Prince Balman thanked the old man and threw the bowl on the ground. It began to roll at a great speed, and, putting spurs to his horse,

he galloped after it, and soon disappeared from view.

When Prince Perviz and the princess saw the stains of blood upon their brother's knife they were filled with horror and grieved for some time, for they knew that Prince Balman was dead. Prince Perviz, anxious to get the treasure and to find out what had happened to his brother, now made up his mind to take the journey. The princess tried to persuade him not to make the dangerous trip, but despite her entreaties he was determined to go. As he was about to set out on the journey he gave to his sister a necklace and told her that as long as the beads were loose upon the string all would be well with him, but if the beads stuck and could not be moved she would know that he was dead.

Prince Perviz traveled for twenty days. On the twentieth day the first person he met was the old man his brother had seen. The prince questioned the old man and found that his brother had been there and had gone on up the mountain in search of the treasures. The old man gave the prince a bowl with the instructions for finding the talking bird, and, throwing the bowl before him, Prince Perviz followed it, disappearing down the same path his brother had taken.

It happened that shortly after Prince Perviz had disappeared down the path the princess, sitting at home and thinking of her brother and what he was doing, brought out the beads to see if all was well with him.

The beads moved freely when she touched them, but as she held them in her hand they suddenly became fastened to the string, and she then knew that her brother was dead. The princess did not give herself up to useless weeping, as some girls might have done, but determined to learn the fate of her brothers. She dressed herself in one of Prince Perviz's suits and followed in the direction the two princes had taken. On the twentieth day she came to the old man sitting by the roadside. Riding up to him, the princess described to him her two lost brothers and asked the old man if he had seen them.

"Yes," answered the old man, looking sadly at the princess, "I have seen them. In spite of my warning they have followed the fatal footsteps of all who have searched for the treasures."

The princess asked him which way her brothers had gone, and for a long time the old man would not tell her, for he knew that she



"Prince Perviz traveled for twenty days."

was a woman, in spite of her disguise, and that she was not strong enough to climb the mountain. The princess would not be put off, and finally the old man placed a bowl in her hand with the same instructions he had given her brothers.

"No matter what you hear," shouted the old man as the princess rode off after the rolling bowl, "don't look back."

The bowl rolled faster and faster, until it fairly spun over the ground, and it was all the princess could do to keep it in sight. At last the bowl stopped rolling in front of a narrow path which led up into the mountain. The princess had advanced along the path only a few steps when she heard some one calling her name, and just as she was about to turn around she remembered the old man's warning and kept straight ahead.

She heard footsteps sneaking quietly up behind her, and a voice screamed, "Kill her! Kill

her!" Trembling with fear, the princess kept on her way.

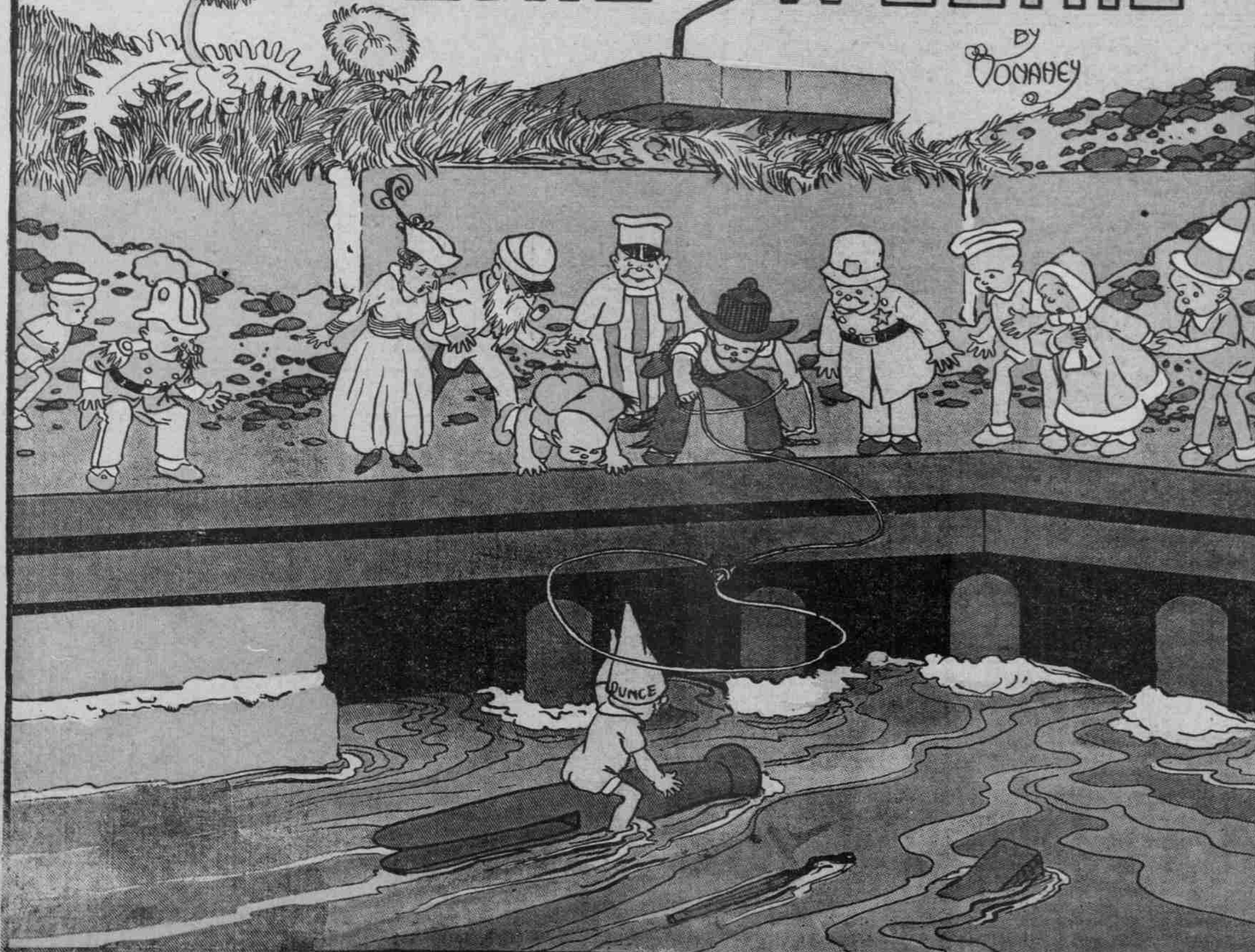
As she climbed higher and higher the voices grew louder and made such hideous sounds that the blood ran cold in her veins and a great fear seemed to freeze her heart. In spite of the old man's advice, she felt as if she could not stand it another minute, but must turn and run. Suddenly it occurred to her that by putting her fingers in her ears she would not hear so much of the terrible din of voices. In this way she soon passed the great noise, and presently all grew quiet about her.

Soon she drew near the top of the mountain, and hanging to the tree she saw the cage of the talking bird. As she stepped up to the cage the bird suddenly looked past her down the mountain with startled eyes and in a loud voice he screamed, "Princess, look, look! They are killing your brothers!"

(To be continued next Sunday.)

THE TEENIE WEEENIE DUNCE HAS A NARROW ESCAPE

By
DONAHEY



"MY, BUT that's a hard rain," remarked the Old Soldier, as he watched the rain drops splash against the sitting room window of the Teenie Weenie house.

"Say, fellows," yelled the Dunce, dancing up and down the room so gayly as to almost bounce a Teenie Weenie vase from the mantel, "when the rain stops, let's all go out wading."

"Yes—yes—let's go wading," cried several of the other Teenie Weenies, grabbing the Dunce and dancing around with him.

Presently the rain stopped, and most of the little people hurried out of doors. The Dunce and several of the children pulled off their shoes and stockings and began to splash about in the water.

"Say, dear," said the Teenie Weenie lover, putting his arms around his little sweetheart, "let's go over to the sewer and watch the water pour down there, will you?"

"Yes, I'd just love to," cried the Teenie Weenie sweetheart, and very soon they had made their way over to the drain. They sat down on the edge of the sewer and watched the yellow muddy water as it rushed by.

"How perfectly awful it would be to fall in there," shuddered the little sweetheart as she watched the swirling water.

"Look—look!" cried the lover, jumping to his feet and pointing wildly up the gutter.

On the raging water, sitting astride a clothes pin, floated the Dunce, being carried to a certain death. Instantly the lover jumped to his feet and as fast as his short legs could carry him ran for help.

Nearer and nearer floated the trembling Dunce, and as he saw the great yawning black sewer ahead, he turned pale with fright. Suddenly the lover appeared, followed by the Cowboy and several of the other Teenie Weenies. The Cowboy held his lasso coiled in his hand. Throwing it over the Dunce's head, the Cowboy pulled him from the clothes pin, just as it shot down into the sewer.

"How did it happen?" the Teenie Weenies asked the dripping Dunce as he was pulled to safety.

"Why—I—I—found the clothes pin and was riding it around the water, and—and—it got caught in the c-current, and I couldn't get off when I wanted to, 'cause the water was too swift, and—and—then you saved me," stammered the Dunce.

"O dear me, how perfectly dreadful," cried the Lady of Fashion, with tears of sympathy in her lovely eyes.

"You can bet I won't ride any more clothes pins," cried the Dunce as he was walked off to be put into dry clothes. "And—and—I think the Cowboy is a hero and ought to have a life saving medal, I do."

"So do we all," cried the Cook, as the Teenie Weenies cheered the blushing Cowboy.

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