

The Transformation of Bayal the Porcupine.

(Continued from page 2)

pains and fears, was gone, and Bayal found himself standing alone in the wilderness and wearing the likeness of a great bear—black and shaggy and strong and muscular.

Bayal was pleased, and shook his furry coat with great joy.

"Oh, ho!" he cried; see what great claws I have! And these teeth. Now, indeed, I am of some importance in the wilderness!"

At a jog trot he mounted the low hills and made for the mountains beyond. The smaller animals scattered wildly at his approach, and it made his heart glad to realize how terribly he was feared.

His instinct led him to seek a cave, and the mountains would have many caves. He was near them now.

"When I have found a cave I will hide until evening cools these rocks," he thought; "then I will go forth and hunt."

A glance showed him a jaguar crouching beside his path. Had he still been a porcupine Bayal would have instantly rolled himself into a ball. Even jaguars avoided porcupine quills. But he was a bear now the jaguar, master!

So he tramped proudly on, with a low growl.

The jaguar's tail lashed the ground. He waited until the black bear was great and launched its tawny body in the air and settled firmly upon the bear's haunches, clinging stubbornly.

Bayal whirled his great body around with a growl of mingled surprise and jaguar was not to be shaken off. Fear entered the soul of the black bear—which was the soul of Bayal the Porcupine. He wondered what he could do to escape—what a bear ought to do in such a terrible crisis. But he had not been a bear long enough to know; so he turned coward and ran.

Dreadful pains streaked through all the vast bulk of his body, and then he stumbled on a loose stone and fell, rolling over and over. When he regained his feet the jaguar still clung to his flank—motionless, evilly intent upon his death.

With great strides the frantic bear plunged forward. At last he saw a dim opening in the face of the cliff—the mouth of a cavern. It did not seem quite large enough for his body to enter. But Bayal was desperate. Summoning his last strength he dashed through the opening.

As he did so he uttered a cry that was almost a scream. For although the hole proved large enough for his own carcass it was not big enough to admit the jaguar. The brute stood up and peered within the cave, which showed black in the shadow of the cliff, then he slunk away and disappeared.

Bayal had found that the cavern widened from its mouth, but as he staggered from the vaulted chamber beyond, his senses left him, and he swooned and fell lifeless upon the damp floor. When the awful consciousness of his plight came back to him he swooned with pain.

The suffering was at first too great to admit of thought, but in the midst of his agony he remembered Athlos, and called upon her name. Again the fairy responded, and gazed sadly into the bear's pleading eyes.

"I was—wrong—to—wish—to be a bear!" said Bayal, gasping painfully the words. Give unto me another form—good Athlos—and quickly—or I shall die!"

"Do you wish to be a porcupine again?" she asked, looking upon her foolish charge with tender sympathy.

"No, no!" he cried, trying to crawl to the fairy's feet, and sobbing with pain and longing; "not that, dear Athlos! But take away this shape of a bear. I beseech you! It is too big, and too ungainly. And the bear has dreadful enemies to maim and destroy him. I would have a form slender and fleet—a form fitted to prey not to be preyed upon. Transform me into a jackal, fair Athlos!"

The fairy slunk back with a disappointed gesture; but she gave him his wish, and Bayal became a jackal, and then Athlos vanished from his sight.

To the former porcupine his new shape seemed perfect. Relieved from his suffering, Bayal gave vent to a joyous yelp and darted from the cavern, not even remembering to be grateful to Athlos for her favor in saving him from death.

He was lean and muscular and sped with wonderful fleetness down the mountain and into the grim forest. Night had fallen, and as the jackal ran the moon rose over the wilderness and lent to all things therein a soft and mellow radiance.

Bayal paused, squatted upon his haunches, and barked at the moon. The jackal is but a wild dog, and has a dog's instincts. He longed to sit there and bay the moon forever, but presently his insistent hunger urged him on.

"This is the true life, after all," he

mused, clicking his teeth. "To be wild and free; to prey upon all other animals; to fear nothing; to hide by day and hunt by night—ah! why did I not choose in the beginning to be a jackal!"

He heard a far away yelping in the depths of the forest and headed toward the sound. Jackals hunt in packs. The coward streak is their nature, too, and they know they are more powerful when banded together.

After a long run Bayal entered a clearing in the forest and saw a score of fellow jackals leaping about, quarreling, snapping at one another hungrily—but each fearful of engaging in open fight. Near them squatted their leader, old and gray, thinner than the rest, perhaps more hungry—and surely more wise. He caught a glimpse of Bayal and darted toward him.

"A stranger!" he snarled, with defiant, blood-shot eyes flashing an evil light. "Where do you come from?"

"Why are you here?" the leader inquired suspiciously.

"To join your pack, and hunt in your company," said Bayal.

"Will you obey my word?" asked the leader.

"Then you may join us."

That pleased Bayal. There seemed more chance of securing prey in company with these fierce-eyed jackals surrounding him than in hunting alone. And he was hungry.

None of the band welcomed Bayal or even noticed him except to snarl and snap if he came too near; but he was as powerful as any among them, and they had respect for his size and took care not to provoke him openly.

Before long a scout came darting in with good news. A few miles away he had tracked a wounded stag.

With joyful yelps the pack was off, following their leader in a swift lunge toward the trail of their victim. And Bayal ran with the rest, his strong limbs keeping him close in the wake of the gray chieftain.

Such speed covered the ground quickly, and before long they came upon the stag who limped painfully down a woodland path and was unable to increase his pace as he heard the hungry yelps of the jackals.

"Look out!" cried the leader to his pack; for the stag, trembling and terrified, turned suddenly upon them, and throwing up his antlered head stood at bay.

Most of the pack drew back on the instant, yelping wildly; but Bayal did not understand. The sight of the prey roused him to fury, and his hunger made him careless of danger.

He launched his body at the stag's throat; but he never reached it, for the prongs of the antlers met him.

Shaking his head fiercely, the stag dislodged his foe and trampled him under foot. Then he turned threateningly upon the circle of howling jackals which summoned him to death yet feared to venture near.

The body of Bayal quivered and presently he found strength to creep away from the feet of the maddened stag. But now every member of the pack turned greedy eyes upon the maimed and helpless jackal, licking their hungry jaws as the leader said:

"He disobeyed me, and death is his portion. Fall upon him my braves! He may hold our hunger in check until we are able to pull down the stag."

Bayal listened in horror, and shrank back toward the stag, seeking refuge where the jackals dared not tread. To be devoured by his own kind seemed a fate more dreadful than to be gored to death by the Forest King himself.

"Athlos!" he cried, terrified at the approach of death. Athlos, come to me!"

"I have been wrong, Athlos," he moaned, "wrong and wicked in my wish to wear a form other than my own. I have been punished, and I repent. Farewell, Athlos, for I die!"

Indeed, his eyes were already glazing as the fairy reached out, and touched him pityingly. But at the touch his pain passed from him, his heart gave a sudden throb of joy, and he stood up, full of health, and bowed low before the guardian of his race. His long quills trailed low upon the ground; his small black eyes looked happily upon the dawn of the coming day; his soul swelled with peace.

For the kind fairy had befriended him in spite of his folly and rebellion, and had given him back his own form.

In a lonely part of the wilderness Bayal the Porcupine has won the reputation among his intimates of being a wise philosopher. Indeed, he is known to envy no other animal that exists, and often declares he is glad to be an insignificant porcupine. Also, he is considerate of his neighbors, and has developed a most genial disposition.

A gray lizard that suns itself on a dead branch often converses lazily with Bayal, and listens with much respect to the porcupine's gossip.

"There goes a jackal!" the philosopher will say. "Poor creature; he lives in fear of his life, and is always hungry."

When a bear slouches along the path Bayal says to the lizard: "He looks big

and strong; but he has his troubles, that fellow! I am sorry for the poor bears."

As for the elephants, he laughs at them, shaking his quills merrily.

"How awkward they are!" he cries, "and how they suffer if they are hurt! For the bigger the beast the bigger his pain, since there is more of him to ache. I'm glad that I am small and peaceful."

With that he curls himself up into a ball, with his quills spreading in every direction, and goes to sleep. And the lizard looks at him pityingly and whispers to herself.

"Poor thing! It's not very grand to be a porcupine and root for beetles and ants. But if Bayal is happy in his lowly condition it's no use regretting he is not a lizard!"

A Considerate Fellow Was Inventor Fixem

THERE goes Fixem, the celebrated inventor.

"Who? That little man across the street?"

"Yes. The one with the dent in his hat. Did you ever hear about his consideration for his wife?"

"No, but of course he would be kind to her."

"Sure. But she complained he staid out so late at night and caused her to lose sleep waiting up for him. So he invented a photograph attachment for the clock so that every hour after midnight it would recite for fifteen minutes: 'John Henry Fixem, this is a pretty time of night for a respectable person to be coming home! Where in this world have you been? Don't tell me that. I know you haven't been at the office. If you ever dare to come home this way again I shall go home to my mother. What will the neighbors say? And a whole lot more like that.'—Chicago Tribune.

Shrewd Move.

Mrs. Fox—Great news! George is engaged to Miss Roxley.

Mr. Fox—What! Our son engaged to Miss Roxley? I must object!

Mrs. Fox—Nonsense! Are you out of your mind?

Mr. Fox—Not at all, but if we don't kick a little the Roxleys will think we don't amount to much, and they'll probably call it all off.—Catholic Standard and Times.

Hopeless Case.

Mr. Sappbedd—Charles Hillro has actually disgraced his family by going into trade.

Miss Sulfuric—Let me see. He had already committed forgery, embezzlement and one or two other things, had he not?

Mr. Sappbedd—Yes.

Miss Sulfuric—Well, what could you expect of a fellow like that?—Pittsburg Post.

Poor Fellow.

Hicks—For goodness' sake, look at Salladay shoveling in his dinner! I thought he was a dyspeptic.

Wicks—So he is; the worst sort. He's burdened with an optimistic appetite and a pessimistic digestion.—Catholic Standard and Times.

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TOO DIFFICULT
In a Pennsylvania town where the friends of a young girl looked over at her with a longing smile.

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"Tell me why you never married, Aunt Polly," he said, leaning back.

"That is even told, William," said the old Quaker, calmly. "It was because I was not so very pleased as thy wife was."

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This is the season that tests the quality of your blood, and if it is not good, then evidences of it will begin to show as the weather grows warmer. Carbuncles and boils, pimples and blotches, and numerous itching and burning skin eruptions will make their appearance, and are sure indications of bad blood. If spring-time finds you with impure, sickly blood, then you are in poor condition to withstand the strain upon the system which always comes at this time of the year. A failure to look after your physical welfare now, by purifying the blood and toning up the general system, may result in a complete breaking down of health later on; and you will find yourself weak and run down, with no appetite, and a prey to indigestion and nervousness. It is poor blood that makes weak bodies, for it is this vital fluid that must supply vigor and strength to our systems, and upon its purity rests our chances for health. Any impurity, humor or poison in the blood acts injuriously upon the system and affects the general health. It is to the morbid, unhealthy matter in the blood that chronic sores and ulcers are due. The pustular and scaly skin eruptions so common during spring and summer, show the blood to be in a riotous, feverish condition, as a result of too much acid or the presence of some irritating humor or acrid poison in the blood. A large per cent. of human ailments have their origin in a polluted, diseased blood, and can only be reached by a remedy that goes into the circulation and uproots and expels the poison and restores the blood to a healthy, natural condition. If

you have any symptoms of bad blood, and are thinking of a blood purifier, then think of S. S. S., a remedy with a long-established reputation and that has proven itself to be a specific in diseases of the blood, and a superior tonic and system builder. S. S. S. contains no mercury, potash, arsenic or other mineral, but is composed exclusively of vegetable ingredients, selected for their medicinal properties and gathered from nature's store-houses—the fields and forests. The thousands who have used S. S. S. and know from experience what it will do in blood troubles, do not need to be reminded of a blood purifier now, for they know no better can be found than S. S. S. If you are thinking of a blood purifier, think of S. S. S., which has been sold for nearly fifty years, while the demand is greater now than ever in its history. No remedy without merit could exist so long and retain the confidence of the people. Write us if in need of medical advice, which is given without charge.

Springfield, Ohio, May 14, 1903.
On two occasions I have used your S. S. S. in the spring with fine results. I can heartily recommend it as a tonic and blood purifier. I was troubled with headaches, indigestion and liver trouble, which all disappeared under the use of a few bottles of your great blood remedy, S. S. S. My appetite, which was poor, was greatly helped. I can eat anything I want now without fear of indigestion, and my blood has been thoroughly cleansed of impurities and made rich and strong again. As a tonic and blood purifier it is all you claim for it.

MRS. GEORGE WIEGEL.
771 E. Main St.
Wheeling, W. Va., May 28, 1906.
I have used your S. S. S. this spring, and found it to be a blood purifier of the best order. My system was run down and my joints ached and pained me considerably, and I began to fear that I was going to be laid up with Rheumatism. I had used S. S. S. before, and knew what it was; so I purchased a bottle of it, and have taken several bottles, with the result that the aches and pains I had are gone; my blood has been cleansed and renovated, my general health built up, so that I can cheerfully testify to its virtues as a blood purifier and tonic.

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