



HANDY STORAGE PLACE - It's not a secret weapon... just a handy place for Pfc. Michael Lucas to store his rifle when going from the parade field to an outdoor concert at Pak Chong, Thailand. Wonder where Lucas, of Columbus, Ohio, stores the tube when the rifle's on his shoulder? (UPI)



Small Worlds Around Us

By LYNN M. WATKINS

(Register and Tribune Syndicate 1962)

They Wait With Patience And Should Be Rewarded

With uncomplaining stoicism the creatures of the wild must endure an endless series of waiting intervals. Fortitude and patience become virtues.

They are also essential to those animals which have come under man's domination. From the tolerance displayed by other living creatures, man could very well benefit if he would attempt to imitate.

The house cat will wait indefinitely by the mouse-hole, waiting for the appearance of the tiny pink nose. On its part, the mouse too will compose itself, with stoic unconcern, for the cat to give up and go away. The little rodent already has waited out the long day, probably looking forward to darkness and the attendant quietness.

Waiting too, are the raccoon, owl, flying squirrel, bat, and a host of others, for the sun to go, and the night to come. To all the nocturnal creatures the longer days of summer must be trying times; enough to strain patience to the breaking point, except that they can reconcile themselves to the long wait.

They may be very hungry; they may have gone to bed with empty stomachs this morning, but they will wait with tolerant calm.

Wait for Dawn

Conversely, those creatures that normally feed by day will resign themselves the best they can for the night to end. The bird in the upper boughs of the tree will be patient, but it will be apprehensive all night long. It will listen, and be alert to the slightest sound.

It must sort out, quickly, the sound made by one leaf

rattling against another, or the gentle thump of one limb bumping another; the varying noises made by even the very gentlest breeze, from the noise that will mean danger. It must listen for the sound of a claw on the bark of the tree. It must be alert to the sound of an unfamiliar step in the near vicinity.

The sound of danger has many voices, and each must be measured and balanced against the natural voices of the night. It must be adjusted to the sound of rain drops striking the canopy of leaves overhead. With what calmness it can muster it must wait out the night storm that may rattle and shake the tree in which it is sleeping.

Proof in Survival

It must be a frightening experience, that mysterious noise in the dark, whose origin or meaning is unknown. It may be necessary for the bird to blunder out into the outer darkness; this is always the decision it must make. The fact that the bird survives testifies that the decision was the right one.

Your dog, wholly dependent on you for shelter, food, and attention, must possess unlimited patience, when you are too busy to remember. One of his favorite playthings may be in a cupboard; he will know exactly where it is but he must wait until you get it for him. In the meantime he waits with calm patience.

He may wait there for hours, or for days for you to come home. He may lie awake at your bedroom door, all night long, just to greet you when you stagger out to greet the new day.

Too bad that such patience of the wild things that also wait in silence, should be all too frequently unwarded.

Dennis the Menace



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