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FOR THE YOUNG FOLKS

The Sincerity of Fred's Bravery.

Fred declared he was not afraid of anything in the shape of man or beast. But Fred was only talking big—bragging a bit (as boys are sometimes wont to do) to his little sister Jenny.

"What, not afraid of elephants?" asked the astonished Jenny.

"Elephants!" repeated Fred with a shrug of his shoulders. "Well, I guess not. W'y, what's there about an elephant to be scared of?"

"His trunk," ventured Jenny.

"Trunk and valise and traveling grips—all wouldn't scare me," said Fred disdainfully. "Uh, I'd ride on an elephant if I had one."

"Nor a camel, nor a—a—a big black bear?" continued Jenny, in tones of awe.

"Of nothing, I tell you," asserted Fred. "Besides, there ain't any animals in these woods now. Only squirrels and chipmunks. I only wish there was something big and dangerous. It's tame round here now for boys and men. Of course—girls

ones trudged on over the wintry road towards home. They were returning from school and had to pass through quite a heavy timber that spread across their way.

After a brief pause Jenny continued to speak: "So you don't think it could happen then?"

"What couldn't happen?" asked Fred. "W'y, a stump turned into an awful beast what de-vours children," explained Jenny.

"Now, don't be silly," advised Fred, looking at his sister pityingly. But just as he spoke a noise was heard behind them and both children quickly looked backwards. As they did so they saw plainly a great, dark object running through the thick underbrush a few feet away from the road.

"Oh, goodness gracious!" exclaimed Jenny, her eyes starting from her head as she took to her heels. "It must be that—a-fairy—has—turned—a-stump—" But she could say nothing more. fear



"W'Y IT'S A R-H-I-N-O-C-E-R-O-S" YELLED FRED.

and women—they wouldn't be safe if big animals roamed these woods; but girls and women could stay at home." Then Fred swaggered along the road chewing a bit of bark and looking wise.

"But if some fairy was to call a big black bear out of the forest, I guess that wouldn't be so funny," said Jenny, whose mind was ever full of fairy lore. "I read once of a boy who didn't believe in fairies and, to make him change his mind, the fairy queen turned a stump into a huge animal, unlike anything that ever lived before, and sicked it on the boy who didn't believe in her. And that awful beast eat the boy up at one gulp. N-o-w, what do you say to that Mr. Fred?" And Jenny shook her head by way of emphasis.

"I think that you are silly to read and believe such stuff," answered Fred, sarcastically. "As for fairies—well, they live only in books and foolish kids' minds. I never saw a fairy—nor nothing like one."

This put a stop to their conversation for a few moments, and the two little

fairly choking off further utterance. And what most frightened her was the appearance and conduct of Fred. His face was white with terror; he was running with all his might and panting for breath. "You—are—a-d-u-n-c-e!" he articulated, "to—talk—of—such—things—away—out—h-e-r-e!"

"What is it?" wailed Jenny dropping one of her schoolbooks, but not stopping to get it again.

"W'y, it's a r-h-i-n-o-c-e-r-o-s!" yelled Fred. "What did you suppose it is?"

"A rhino-cer-os?" And Jenny doubled her speed, praying under her breath for protection from the pursuing beast. And on—the two sped, never once looking back, but supposing the animal was at their very heels. Just as they were on the point of collapse there appeared in the road in front of them—coming over a hill—their own father, accompanied by his hired man. Fred, being the faster runner of the two, reached his father first, grasping his hand, he panted out, hoarsely: "Papa, there's a rhinoceros—coming—after us! Look—" and