

were left. The Government had been building a bridge over the great river and making a road, and there had been money earned, and money meant food.

There was more money to be earned that day by the villagers, too, for the magistrate had news of a tiger afoot in the great thick jungle across the stream. So he got up a shooting party. He sent for his friends, the other European officials of the district, to come with their elephants, and ordered out all the villagers to come and beat the jungle. At early dawn next day the shooting party set out. On each elephant rode a sportsman, but on the last, along with her husband, rode Bobbie's mother, eager to see a tiger slain. It was too dull, now her boy was gone, to be left behind in the camp all alone.

Such a jiggle-joggle! Nashiban, the magistrate's elephant, a well-trained and wise old beast, rocked to and fro in her lumbering walk like a ship at sea. Mother had hard work to keep her white umbrella from thrusting off father's big white sun hat. It was very hot as they proceeded slowly across the plain, and mother longed to reach the shade of the thick jungle; but there was the river to be crossed first, a deep, sluggish stream, flowing stealthily along over its sandy bed.

Three of the elephants had waded safely across and Nashiban had nearly reached the further bank, when, for some reason or another, she got out of the straight line and walked into a dangerous quicksand. First one foot, then the other sank down, as fast as she tried to find a firm footing. She staggered and stumbled, and father and mother were in danger of being pitched off. The cowardly mahout or driver had slipped off the elephant's neck at the first sign of danger and half-swam and half-waded ashore. But to get out of the howdah was no easy matter, especially as the animal's hind legs were sinking up to her hocks and her back was an inclined plane.

From the safe shore the natives shouted, encouraged, implored. But the elephant is the wisest of beasts and she hit upon a device to

save herself from being sucked in; but a horrible one!

Her curling trunk came whirling over her back. It snatched off father's sun hat, mother's white umbrella, and flung them down at her feet, where she trampled on them to gain a firm foothold. Round came the cruel trunk again in search of fresh material. In another moment it would have snatched off helpless father and mother and made use of them, when a warning cry came from the bank.

Ere Bobbie's parents quite realized their imminent danger or had time to slip out of the howdah beyond reach of the trunk, a native, bearing a big bundle of hastily cut grass and branches, plunged into the water and brought it to the elephant, who, seizing it in her trunk, laid it at her feet, and with its help struggled safely on to dry land.

The native was the father of the little children Bobbie boy had fed!
—*Little Folks.*

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