

HAPPY DAYS

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ANDROcles AND THE LION.

Androcles was a slave of a noble Roman. He had been found guilty of a fault for which his master was going to put him to death, but he found an opportunity to escape and fled into the desert. As he was wandering among the barren sands and almost dead with heat and thirst, he saw a cave in a rock. Finding just at the entrance a stone to sit upon, which was shade from the fierce heat of the sun, he rested for some time. At length, to his great surprise, a huge lion stood before him, which upon seeing him, immediately walked towards him. Androcles gave himself up for lost; but the lion, instead of treating him as he expected, laid his right paw on his lap, and, with a low moan of pain, licked his hand. Androcles, after having recovered himself a little from his fright, plucked up courage enough to look at the paw which was laid on his lap, and observed a large thorn in it. He immediately pulled it out, and by squeezing it very gently made a great deal of poisonous matter run out, which probably freed the lion from the great pain he was in. The lion

again licked his hand, and with a brighter look in his eyes, left him, soon returning however, with a fawn he had just killed. This he laid down at the feet of his benefactor, and went off again in pursuit of more prey, not limping now as he did when Androcles first saw him, but bounding along as if his paw had never had anything the matter with it.



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Androcles, after having subsisted upon the fawn, and other food which the lion had brought him, for several days, at length got tired of his frightful solitude and savage companionship, expecting that at any moment the lion might forget his act of kindness and devour him. So he resolved to deliver himself into his master's hands and suffer the worst effects of

his displeasure. Now his master was at that time collecting together a present of all the largest lions that could be found in the country in order to send them to Rome, that they might furnish a show for the Roman people, and upon Androcles, his slave, surrendering himself, he ordered him to be carried to Rome as soon as the lions were sent there, and that for his