

Animal Children eBook

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Animal Children

The Friends of the Forest and the Plain.

[Illustration]

By
Edith Brown Kirkwood

Drawings by
M.T. Ross

[Illustration]

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Ninth Edition

To all children who find friends in the Forest or on the Plain, and especially to Samuel and to Gilbert, this book is lovingly dedicated.

FOREWORD

When God made the world He planted the flowers and the grass and the trees to make things beautiful to look upon; He swung the sun and the moon and the stars in the sky to make things bright; He put the birds in the trees to fill the air with music, and when He made the animals we believe that he intended them to be the friends of man.

Why, isn't the dog the best playmate that a boy can have? Did any one ever hear of Towser or Gyp being false friends? And the soft, dainty, cunning bit of a fluffy ball of a kitten who comes rubbing its downy sides against the tiny girl's skirts begging for a return caress, is there a play-fellow more lovable? And the squirrel who comes begging at the window for nuts; the bunny rabbit who snuggles its delicate nose, trustingly, under the little boy's chin; the horse who has been man's friend in times of trouble and of peace, bearing his burdens or scampering with him over the fields and roads in play; the



cow who has sent her good milk to the babies of all time; the sheep and the goats who have given of their wool to keep us warm,—we love them all dearly.

In this volume we have tried to make friends and playmates of all of the animals. You have loved the “Flower Children” and the “Bird Children” whom the publisher already has made your playmates.

We feel that you are going to be just as happy to know the “Animal Children.” Therefore we add to “The Little Cousins of the Field and Garden” and “The Little Playmates of the Flower Children,” this volume—“The Friends of the Forest and the Plain.”

Edith brown Kirkwood

M.T. Ross

ANIMAL CHILDREN

Sometimes I am so sorry that my papa is a king,
It's really most annoying and hurts like everything
To have the little girls and boys all want to run away,
For if I am a Lion prince, I'm a baby, anyway!

Some jungle boys, by mischief made quite bold,
Once took the baby Tiger, so we're told,
And in broad stripes they smeared his coat so fine,
And 'round his neck they hung a “Fresh Paint” sign.

This monkey thought the Leopard's spots
Were pasted on for polka-dots,
He asked her how much it would cost
New ones to buy if those were lost.



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In her red and white gown Miss Weasel's so pert
We are very afraid she's a gay little flirt;
She is fearful of no one—beast, reptile or man,
Just winks and cries gaily: "Catch me, if you can."

This dapper young chappy is Dude Ocelot,
With coat trimmed in many a dash and a spot;
He's graceful and elegant, sly, too, as well,
Just what he'll do next no one ever can tell.

The chetah is a great big cat
But very quick, for all of that,
She's cunning but she's gentle, too,
And if you're good she's good to you.

The little Bobcat and Canadian Lynx
Just must be related (so everyone thinks).
Except for their ears they're alike as two pins,
And look every whit as if they were twins.

A dainty, fastidious man is Lord Otter
Who can live just as well on land as in water,
He'll eat but the flakiest part of a fish,
And this he considers his favorite dish.

"It really is a bother to be sought by everyone"
The vain young Ermine boasted. "Why, it keeps me on the run
To get away from kings and queens and peers and ladies great—
It truly gets me all fussed up and in a dreadful state."

Young ferret, detective, said: "I'll show you where
To track the bold rabbit right into his lair."
Then he never saw bunny right under his eyes,
But went swaggering off looking wondrously wise.

"Now, Johnnie, my child," said wise Mamma Sable,
"When you see a trap run as fast as you're able,
Or else, ere you know it, your skin will be gone
As a beautiful fur for some lady to don."

Mother opossum says she'd like to ask
Just why other mothers should find it a task
To care for one baby. Why, here she has four,
And there's plenty of room on her tail for some more!



Mr. and Mrs. Mongoose are popular as can be,
The reason being very plain, as you will all agree,
They are cunning and affectionate and clean and very nice,
They kill all snakes and insects and naughty rats and mice.

It must be very easy for the busy Beaver mother
To feed the Beaver sister and her little Beaver brother,
For when they beg: "We're hungry, give us something to eat, please!"
She sends them off to nibble at the bark of the big trees.

The puma is a bandit who'll not meet you face to face
But waits to spring upon you from some well-hidden place.
He'll strike you when your back is turned, but away he's sure to fly
If you should turn to look him right squarely in the eye.

Lemur stays in bed all day
And waits until the night to play;
That's why his soft feet make no sound
And why his eyes are big and round.

The bowery boy of the woods is young Mink,
His coat is so lovely one never would think
That'd he do naughty things, but we've often been told
He is tricky and wicked and saucy and bold.



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“I’m not so very big around and not great as to length,
But one thing Peccaries have learned—in numbers there is strength.
Now, if you do not bother me I will not bother you,
But all my friends and family will help me if you do.”

who is this boy in clothes so neat?
Young Spring-bok, Africa’s athlete.
He lives up in the mountains tall,
And as a jumper beats them all.

The Long-Eared Bat and the Flying Fox and the Flying Squirrel, too,
Decided to give an aero-meet just to show what they could do.
So they formed a club and went around and invited everyone,
Then up they flew and did their stunts, and had a lot of fun.

She is dainty as snowdrops that fall from the skies,
Is this dear little Kitten with bright, shiny eyes
And velvety ears and pretty pink nose
And lovely white suit of soft, furry clothes.

Baby raccoon takes all his food and goes straight to the pool,
He eats not one small bite of it until it’s wet and cool.
Now, although you may think this strange and stop to wonder why,
He, no doubt, thinks it just as queer for you to like yours dry.

The greatest of travelers that one can meet
Is the little Deer-mouse with the pretty white feet;
North, south, east or west she will go at her will,
And never, no never, is known to keep still.

The baby zebra ne’er should roam
So very far away from home,
Lest someone, thinking her striped gown
Was candy-stick, might eat her down.

“I’m stopping for a moment just to say ‘How-do-you-do?’
I’ve just been decorated with this ribbon of deep blue
Because of all the gracefulness with which I trot and prance—
No wonder that you give Sir Horse your most admiring glance!”

This tale is not so very new,
And, no doubt, has been told to you,
But Donkey went to school to play,
And now he sits dressed up this way.



Here is the only baby who never makes a noise
(Which must be very puzzling to little girls and boys).
Yet the Giraffe is happy 'though he cannot shout or sing,
For with that great long neck of his he can reach anything.

The tapir feeds on leaves and fruit
He's very, very hard to suit,
For boys who don't like bread and meat
Have to find other things to eat.

He has climbed to the top of a rocky throne
To look down on a land once so proudly his own,
His people are scattered, he has no place to go,
He is weary and sad, poor King Buffalo.

"Lemonade, lemonade," the bold monkey cried,
"It's only five cents, and it's cooling beside."
Miss Camel just sniffed and tossed high her head,—
"I drink only every nine days, sir," she said.

Milk or meat or leather for shoes,—
Almost anything that we choose,—
We'll find the good Cow gives with joy
To every nice little girl and boy.

I wonder where the names come from (I'm sure that you do, too).
For instance, there's the animal that has been called the Gnu.
His race is just as strange, too, for no one seems to know
Just what he is—an antelope, horse, bull or buffalo.



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Big moose came boldly from behind the tall trees,
And said in loud voice: "Who called, if you please?
I'm ready to meet any one who says 'Fight,'
But we'll come in the open and do the thing right."

I am not sure I'd care to meet
This Big Horn Goat upon the street.
Not when his eyes and smile and air
Just seem to shout: "Come, if you dare!"

Brave soldier ibex stalks before the mountain fortress high,
And watches eagerly to note a stranger passing by.
"Who's there?" he calls, and to his friends he whistles the alarm,
And off they go to mountain tops where they are safe from harm.

The chamois lives in the mountains high,
He's ever and ever and ever so spry;
He leaps and he plays with never a fall—
I'm sure that you never could do that at all.

Billy Goat and Nanny Goat went out one day to tea.
They promised Mother Goat they'd be good as they could be,
But on the way they passed some goats who cried: "Oh, see the dude!"
And then they had to go back home for Billy got real rude.

Her coat is soft as velvet, of a lovely yellow-brown,
With a bit of fawn for trimming and a lining white as down.
Her eyes are large and kindly, she is gentle, too, as well,
You would love a little playmate as sweet as Miss Gazelle.

A sturdy young American is Rocky Mountain Goat
With big, strong horns upon his head, and shaggy, furry coat;
He loves to scramble over rocks or leap a mountain brook,
And should you chase him he will fly into his hidden nook.

"We reindeer come straight from your own Santa Claus,
In our gallop of joy we never will pause;
We eat from the mountain-tops, drink from the dells,
And use for our skipping-ropes merry sleigh-bells."

A large and handsome personage is the Most Noble Yak,
His mantle is a fringe of hair that drapes his sides and back;
He's very, very grand, indeed, when he stands up, you see—
In fact, he's just as noble as a noble ought to be.



When young Mrs. Kangaroo goes for a hop,
To call or to market or, perhaps, out to shop,
She has no nice carriage where baby can ride,
So he creeps in a pocket that hangs at her side.

He does not care when the sleet comes down, or the chilly wind blows strong,
For he wears a hat that is made of horn and a fur coat, warm and long.
He never gets frostbitten toes 'though in snow and ice he plays;
Now being a MuskoX can't be bad in the long, cold winter days!

"The very best I have, sir, fine and a whole yard wide,
It wears, and has no bother of a right and wrong side;
I'm sure she'd like a dress of it—it will not spot or pull."
Then Miss Alpaca added: "I know—it's my own wool."

This dear little Sheep has lost Bo-Peep,
She wandered away as he lay asleep,
He has found her bonnet and shepherd's crook,
But for little Bo-Peep in vain does he look.



Page 5

Young Miss Rhinoceros gave a beach party;
She greeted her friends with a welcome most hearty.
They laughed and they joked and they swam in the sea,
And the party was gay, as a party should be.

She comes from Spain, this proud, proud Dame,
Mistress Merino is her name.
Her wool weaves into dress goods rare,
Her skin makes gloves the ladies wear.

Merry guinea pigs one day
Went out in the fields to play.
Daisy smiled and wished that they
Would never, never go away.

Here is a Sister Piggy and a Brother Piggy, too,
The story they are telling here would not apply to you,
For selfish little sisters who make their brothers cry
Do not belong in houses but with piggies in the sty.

Now here's a little lady who seems a wee bit shy,
Or is it that a teardrop is trembling in her eye?
Well, I am sure that you or I would make an awful fuss
If we should have to have her name—"Miss Hippopotamus."

In animal land, as everywhere, there lives a Mr. Boar
Who never is contented unless he holds the floor;
His fellows all may frown at him but he cannot refrain
From pushing into everything—he's so selfish and so vain.

Mother and father and little Miss Bear
Went out for a walk and a bit of fresh air,
Not through the dark woods (the old tale to repeat)
But in their best clothes, right down the front street.

When little Miss Polar Bear goes out to skate,
She never is bothered by having to wait
Until mother wraps her all snugly in fur,
For those are the clothes that she carries with her!

Just look about and see if you
Can find a friend who's quite as true
As this old Doggie that you see
A-smiling here at you and me.



I'm just a little Puppy and good as good can be,
And why they call me naughty, I'm sure I cannot see,
I've only carried off one shoe and torn the baby's hat
And chased the ducks and spilled the milk—there's nothing bad in that!

The mandrill looks so very queer
I'm glad he lives way off from here;
He's purple, blue, red, black and brown,
I'm sure he is the jungle clown.

The baby gorilla, of the family called Ape,
Is very like you in size and in shape,
But he lives in the jungle with black hair for clothes
And he gets very naughty the older he grows.

This cute little brother and sister you see
Seated cosily high on the limb of a tree
Are the Marmoset twins, whose appealing round eyes
Look from flower-like faces in wond'ring surprise.

"I've climbed up here to smile at you and, oh, what do you think?
I've scattered master's papers and upset all of his ink,
But then if little Monkeys always were so very good
They'd not be little monkeys who just can't act as they should."

He is so very lazy that he is even loath
To walk upon his own feet—this funny boy named Sloth.
He swings upon the branches from morning until night,
And eats the leaves about him with laziest delight.



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He works on tunnels night and day,
This Marmot boy from far away.
When winter comes then in he creeps,
And there until the spring he sleeps.

The woodchuck resides in a hole in the ground,
He is surly and cross, and he never is found
Out in the bright sunlight unless it's to see
If he can't make more winter for you and for me.

This naughty boy just eats and eats until he is a sight,
He eats until he cannot hold another tiny bite.
Of course, he's just an animal—they call him Wolverine—
But does he make you think of boys that you have ever seen?

Old Mr. Walrus climbs out of the deep
For a breath of air and an hour of sleep.
You will note that he isn't much on looks
But his skin we make into pocket-books.

He sits on the top of a gay wooden stand,
He stands on his head or he shakes your hand,
He dances a jig or he trumps a chant—
This jolly old circus Elephant.

Naughty, naughty Squirrel baby, just as mother has you dressed
In your ribbons and your laces and your go-to-meeting best,
Then to run and grab an apple and get yourself all mussed!
Are you not afraid that mother will be very, very fussed?

To market, to market, with baskets of eggs,
Jack Rabbit goes hurrying on his long legs;
He'll buy him some colors—red, green, yellow, blue,
And when Easter comes 'round you know what he'll do.

Chipmunk is a jolly lad,
Always friendly—never sad,
Shares with friends his wheat grains yellow,
He's a genuine good fellow.

The coney lives in Palestine
But he is very seldom seen.
You see he is so small and shy
He hides when folks are passing by.



They call this boy the Coati,
His name is strange, and so is he.
He laps to drink, digs with his snout.
On ground or trees he runs about.

The cute little dogs that live on the prairie
Were having a party and making quite merry,
When Big Dog, on watch, heard a noise and called "Hush!"
And into their holes went the guests in a rush!

What do you suppose is in Gray Wolf's pack
He carries so stealthily over his back?
Some chickens, a lamb and an old mother hen
He has stolen to hide away in his den.

His manners are so charming and his eyes so very bright,
I do believe that we might call young Fox a gallant knight;
But then when he is cunning and just a little pert,
I'm not so sure but we should call this same young fox a flirt.

We just want to ask if you ever have seen a
Much dirtier boy than this little Hyena?
He has played in the street at making mud pies
Till nothing is clean save the whites of his eyes.

Beau coyote sings a nightly tune
To his lady fair in the big, round moon.
She smiles and throws moonbeams to him
And he serenades till her light is dim.

Tommie and Tillie Badger went out in the field to play.
Said Tommie: "Here, I'll teach you—put down your head this way,
Then toss your heels into the air and give a little twirl—
You can't help turning somersaults although you are a girl."



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Miss Leopard Spermophilus, with her high-sounding name,
Says just to be called "Gopher" is really a shame,
And she's right here to tell you—if this knowledge you should lack—
She's the only one who wears the stars and stripes upon her back.

Doggy barked and said: "What fun
To make that Porcupine girl run;
Girls for boys to tease were meant."—
But girls with pins are different.

Sir Knight Armadillo, from tail tip to nose
In armor that's sure to bring terror to foes,
Goes forth with his weapons to his battle ground,
And looks like a pineapple walking around.

Away in Australia the Echidna stays.
He is noted because of his strange little ways;
His claws are so sharp that in manner quite tragic,
When frightened he sinks in the ground as by magic.

Miss Ant Eater's mouth is so dreadfully small
It scarce seems it could be a real mouth at all,
And her long, furry tail is her blanket at night,
It covers and tucks her in all snug and tight.

This queer little Mole has a star for a nose
Just the shade of the pink in a dew-wet rose.
He lives down in the ground where 'tis always like night,
So perhaps his star nose is to twinkle for light.

Here we have Mr. Duckbill of no little fame;
His mouth, you will see, is what gives him his name.
He can walk, swim or burrow and (so we have heard)
His wife, Mrs. Duckbill, lays eggs like a bird.

Such a dainty little person in her coat of pale, clear gray,
Is this maiden, Miss Chinchilla, and the hunter-folks all say
She is so clean she's exquisite and never dreams of harm
When they go to take her silken fur which helps to keep her warm.

The circus fat lady is big Mrs. Whale
With her very large head and her very long tail,
And her ears and her eyes almost covered from sight
In the folds of thick skin that wraps her up tight.



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