

**Chapter 1 : Mr. Turtle's Flying Adventure: Hollow Tree Stories by Albert Bigelow Paine**

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Albert Bigelow Paine Illustrator: February 25, [EBook ] Language: English Character set encoding: Turtle fishes a good deal, and makes most of his living that way, and knows all the best places, so when his friends came he said that perhaps they would enjoy fishing a little—which they could do and sit in a pleasant place at the same time, and talk, and look out over the Wide Blue Water, which was especially blue at this season. That just suited the Hollow Tree people, for they enjoyed fishing when they had somebody to pick out a good place, and Mr. Crow caught a "punkin-seed," which made the others laugh, because it is a funny little fish; while Mr. Turtle said that Mr. Eagle enjoyed a good many kinds of food, and that he was reminded of an adventure he once had himself with Mr. Eagle, when he Mr. Turtle, of course was quite small. Then they all asked Mr. Turtle said it was—quite a good deal like it, in some ways—then he said: Very likely you have already heard how once, a long time ago, I thought I could fly, and persuaded an eagle to take me up in the air to give me a start. That old story has been told a good deal, and I believe has even been put into some of Mr. Turtle paused, and the others all said they did remember something of a story of that sort, but never thought it had really happened, because, knowing Mr. Turtle, "it did really happen, though not in the way you have heard. You are right about " thinking my family would not care to experiment in that way, and would not do it unless somebody else arranged it for them and gave the experiment a good start. Turtle went on to say that in this case it was Mr. Eagle and one of the ancient ancestors of the little water-snake he had just carried off that had started the experiment, though he thought none of it had been really planned. Turtle went on, "about the size of Mr. Frog, and young turtles like me, and even some older ones. My mother used to warn us children all the time, and scold us every day about going away so far from the house and not keeping a good watch-out for Old Man Moccasin, who would surely get us, she said, unless we were more careful. Then she would tell us to look out for Mr. Eagle, too, who was likely any time to come soaring about, and would pick up any food he saw lying handy. Old Man Moccasin was seven feet long, and I judge about half a foot thick. He could lift himself two feet out of the water when he was swimming, and with his far-sighted glasses on could see a mile. We tried to keep a lookout in several directions, but, of course, as we got older without accidents, we grew careless, and our mother used to count us every night and be surprised that we were all there, and give us a good scolding to go to bed on. Eagle could have handled me with one claw and Old Man Moccasin could have swallowed me like a pill and enjoyed the operation. I kept on farther than I intended, for it was a nice summer day and the water felt good. He was a good two feet out of the water and had on his far-sighted glasses, and I knew he was after me. He was coming, too. He was swimming with a wide, wavy motion, and making a little curl of white foam in front, and leaving a long trail behind. I began to paddle for dear life toward the other side of the Wide Blue Water, which was a long way off, with Old Man Moccasin gaining fast. I was too worn out to swim another stroke. Old Man Moccasin was only about twenty feet away, and when I looked back at him over my shoulder I saw that he was smiling because he was so sure he had me. But just as I said those words, something did happen—and about the last thing I would have expected. Eagle bad names and threatening him with everything he could think of. Eagle and I were good friends, and asked him how he liked the trick we had played on him. I even sang out to him: Eagle, he heard it, too, and said: Eagle please give me a lesson. Eagle laughed, and said: I knew those meadows were soft in places, for I had been there once to a spring overflow picnic. There were also a great number of little hay-piles, which Mr. Man had raked up, getting ready to make his big stacks when the hay was dry. So I said, as quick as I could: Eagle, I am certain I could fly this minute. I never felt so much like it in my life. Just give me a big swing, Mr. Eagle, and let me try. Eagle heard that, he laughed, and said: You people always are a tough proposition for my young folks. Much obliged for the suggestion. Eagle quit flying straight ahead and started to circle around, as if he were looking for something, and pretty soon I saw down there a flat stone, and Mr. Eagle saw it, too, and stopped still in the air right over

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it, as near as he could judge, making all the time a big flapping sound with his wings, until he got me aimed to suit him, and I could feel him beginning to loosen up his hold on my hind leg and shell. Then, all of a sudden, he let me go. It seemed to me that I struck bottom almost before I started from the top; still, I must have turned myself over, for I landed on my back, exactly in the center of that flat stone, Mr. Eagle being a center shot. Eagle had never had much practice in pitching hay. He just clawed at it on different sides and abused me as hard as he could for deceiving him, as he called it, and occasionally I called back to him, and tried to soothe him, and told him I was sorry not to come out and thank him in person, but I was so shaken up by the fall that I must rest and collect myself.

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