

The Escape

By Marion Strauser

“Where are we heading?” Called out Grey Fox, from the rear.

“I don’t know yet, first we need a good head start.” Said Brown Horse, in the lead.

“Can’t you run faster?” Snarled Yellow Cheetah, “You’re so slow.”

“If we run faster, we will leave some behind” answered Silver Rabbit.

Grey Fox called again “We’re getting ahead, I think.”

“I wish we’d waited until dark,” said White Elephant

“I know,” Said Gold Lion, “but Manager’s been putting the gate up since those hooligans sprayed that wet stuff on us that left marks.”

“Yes, that was horrible! Those stiff brushes Manager and Lazy Bums used to get it off hurt!” moaned Black Panther.

“You’re SUCH a baby,” Yellow Cheetah rolled his eyes. “I’m glad to be out of there now. I don’t think I could stand one more minute of that tinny music!”

“I know! And the whiny kids! Either they didn’t want to ride or they kicked,” agreed Pink Pig.

Tabby Cat nodded. “I hate the ones that want to stand in the saddle the most.”

A voice called out from above, “Oh no, I think they are going back for one of those noisy animals with round feet!”

Brown Horse dared to look behind for just a moment and sighed. Was Green Dragon right? The magic lady had brought them life to help them escape from the harsh Manager, but she could only do so much. It was up to them now.

“Let’s cut left up the beach here and hide in the trees. We have a head start right now, and maybe we can get hidden before Manager gets back,” Brown Horse directed.

White Elephant called up to Green Dragon, “Can you flap your wings behind us and hide our trail? The water has been moving up, so I think our other prints will be gone soon.”

“I’ll try, and I’ll hide in the tree tops and keep watch. I don’t want to be caught any more than you do.”

Quickly, they raced up the beach to the trees, finding cover. Green Dragon flew behind and fanned the sand, creating small whirlwinds that soon formed new hills and valleys until the dry sand looked untouched.

The animals waited and watched. It wasn’t long before they heard the roar of an engine and saw a vehicle racing up the shoreline. It continued past their hiding place and on into the distance until they could hear it no longer.

Tabby Cat stretched and licked absently at a pale spot on her back saying, “I think we should stay here until full dark. They will come back this way, and if we continue now, he will find us. Waiting will give us a better chance later.”

“I agree with waiting” nodded White Elephant. Looking at Tabby, he continued, “It’s so strange to see you without that pole sticking through you. I suppose we all must look a little strange now.”

Several others also nodded in agreement at both Tabby and White Elephant. They all looked around at each other, scratching or licking at newly healed skin on their backs and bellies. Soon the odd companions settled down to huddle together and nap while Green Dragon kept watch from above.

