

“Ah saw some little red lights, but dey wasn’t *movin’*,” Jasper declared, his voice sounding hollow in the dark. “*Nuttin’* was movin’ till y’all used yo’ *gun*. Why’d y’all do dat, Zebbie? Y’all didn’t hear no growlin’, did ya?”

“No . . . but Ah knowed Ah *would* if’n Ah didn’t shoot him *first*,” Zebbie defended.

“Zebbie, you must try not to use your gun so quickly,” admonished Wigwah. “I’ve no idea what you saw, but I don’t see *anything* now. Remember, we must *think* before we act — who knows what *else* may happen if we act rashly?”

“Ah begs yo’ pahdon, Mistah Wigwah,” Zebbie said in a stricken voice.

“There now,” the Giant said more gently. “The result was certainly more than any of us expected, wasn’t it? Let’s concentrate on finding the matches.”

Long minutes passed while they felt around in their packs without success.

Unable to help, Solomon grew nervous and lamented loudly:

“A mess, a mess, a *pretty* mess,  
No matches can we find!  
It’s *awful* to be caught like this.  
We might as well be *blind*.”

While fumbling around in the dark, Crow Foot stumbled, falling against the wall of the cave. As he began to rise, something long and thin dangling from above swung against his head. With the nimbleness of a cat, he sprang to his feet, muffling a startled cry, his arms flailing about his head trying to rid himself of the serpentine form. Then his hands discovered only a thick, but harmless, rope. Thoroughly disgusted, he took hold of it and yanked with all his might.

To his astonishment, the thundering toll of some huge bell sounded from high above, so startling the companions that all search for matches was forgotten. The rest of the party rose in confusion while the echo of the chime ricocheted from every wall.

What would happen *next*, they all wondered.

Hardly had the sound begun to fade when, without warning, a spotlight shot through a peephole in the secret door, its long finger of white light stretching across the darkness to reveal a small trapdoor high on the opposite wall. Squinting in the sudden light, they watched the small door open.

To their utter surprise, out flew a miniature airplane!