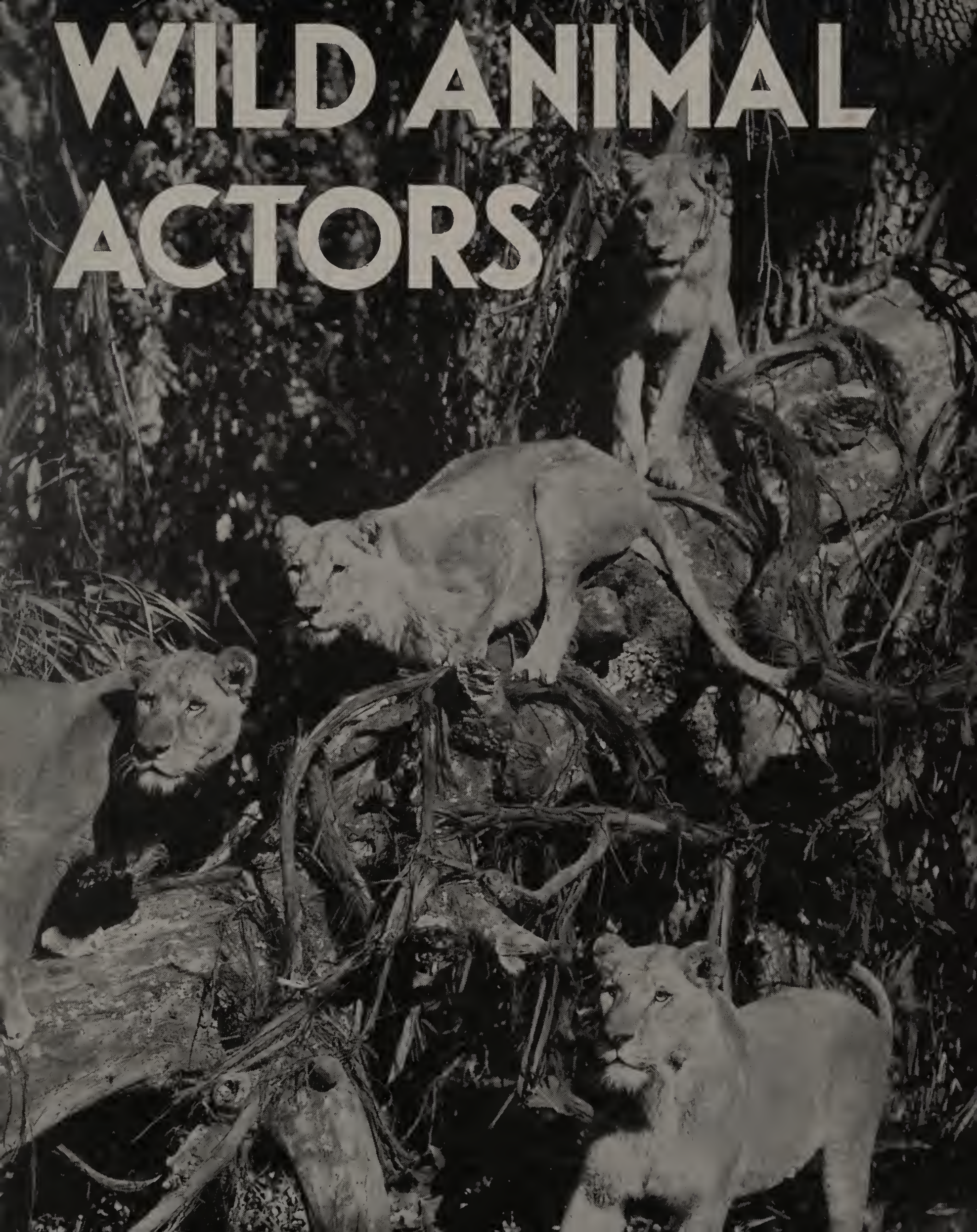
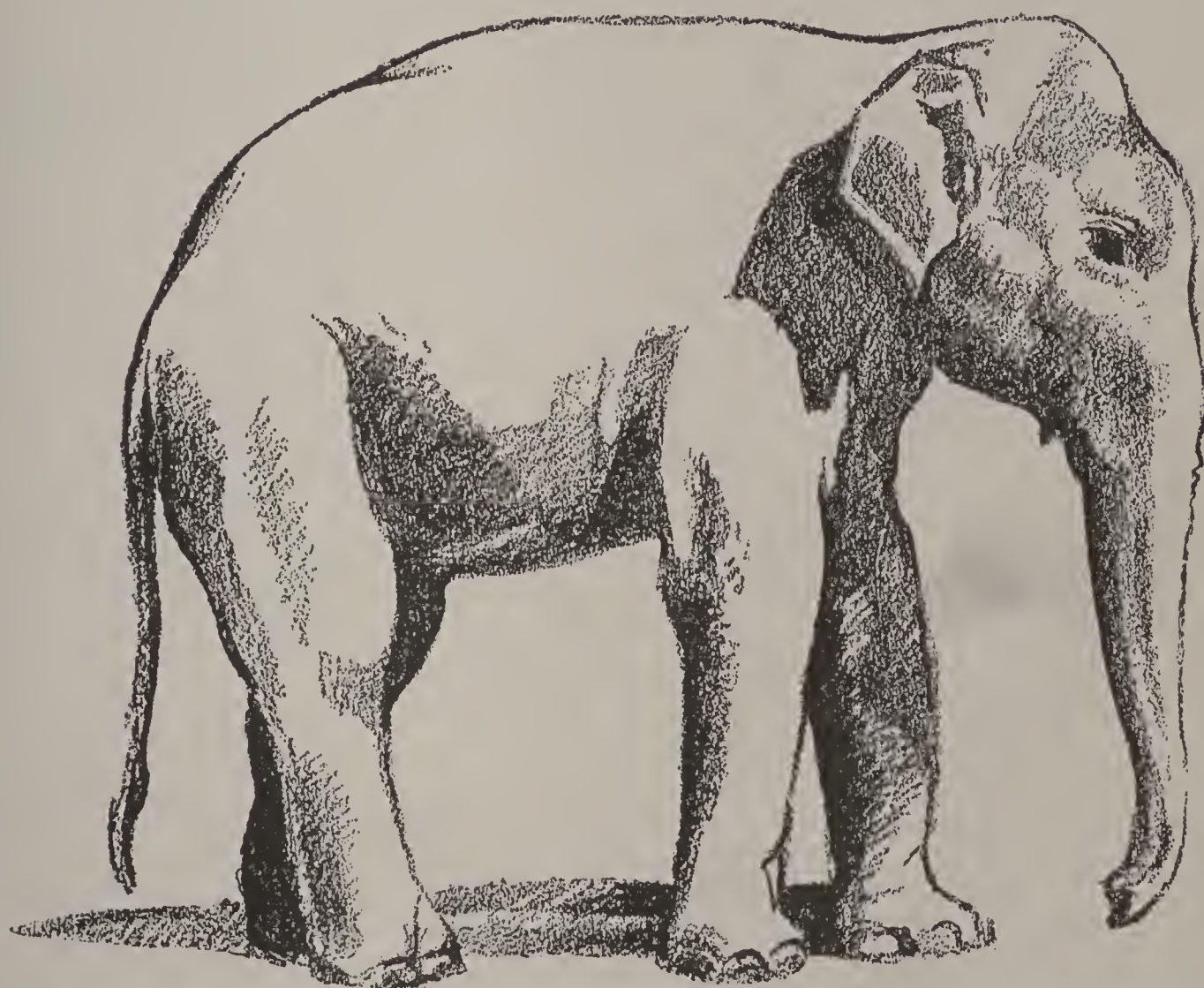


# WILD ANIMAL ACTORS





# WILD ANIMAL ACTORS







*A baby lion motion picture actor*



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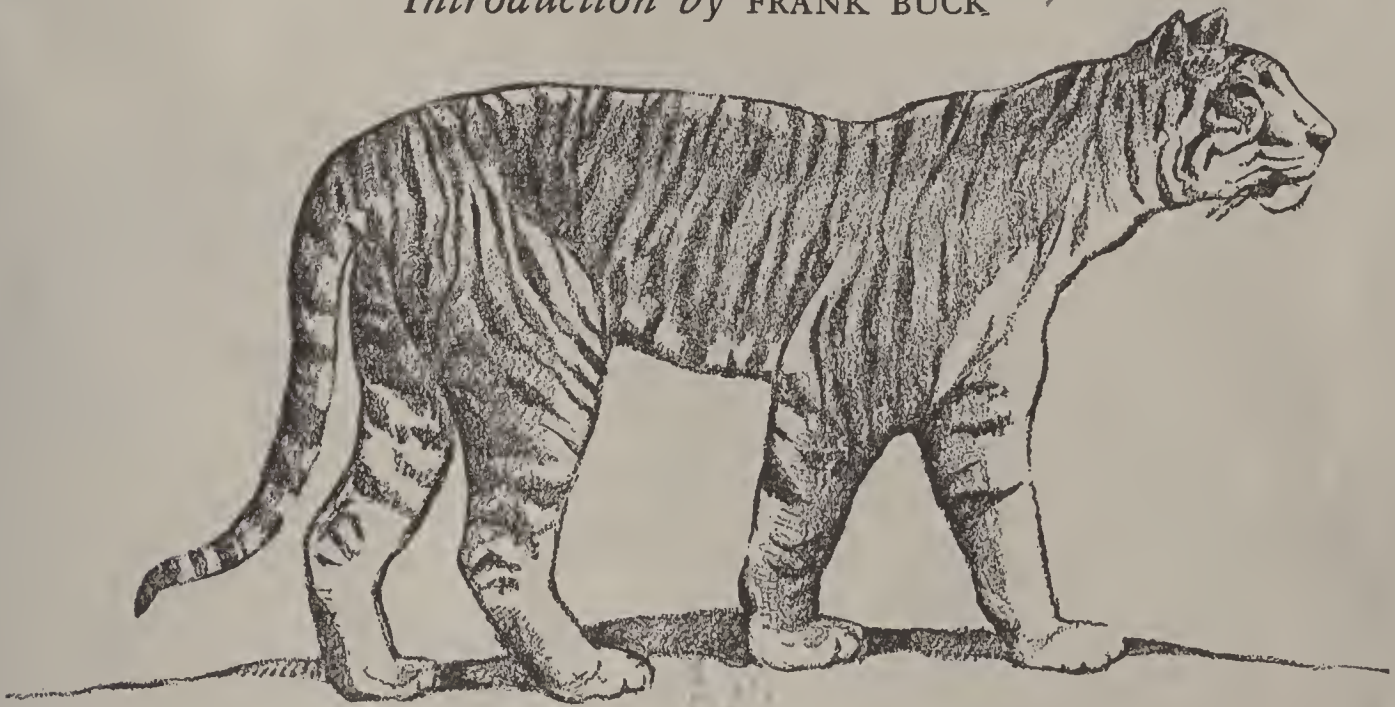
# WILD ANIMAL ACTORS

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by

F. M. AND H. M. CHRISTESON


*Introduction by* FRANK BUCK



Illustrated with Photographs

Decorated by  
KAY LITTLE

JUNIOR PRESS BOOKS

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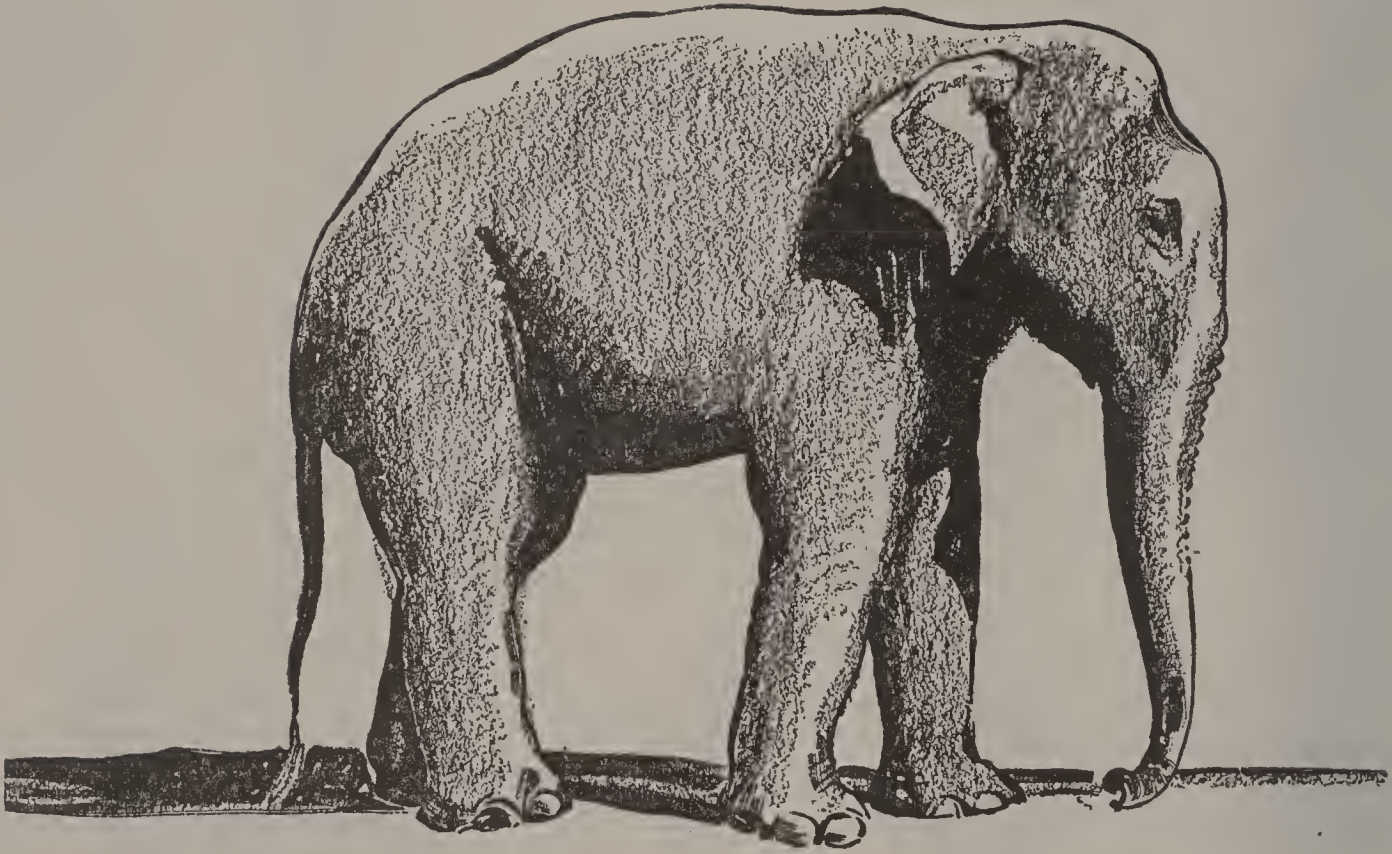
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*To*  
*Father and Mother*



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We are grateful to Mr. Frank Buck for introducing the wild animal actors we have written about. To the owners, the trainers and the friends of these animals, we wish to express our appreciation for their invaluable help and guidance; Mr. R. C. Rupp, Mr. W. J. Richards, Miss Olga Celeste, Mr. Joseph Metcalf, Mr. Melvine Koontz, Mr. William Foix, Mrs. A. Goldberg, Mr. and Mrs. Tony Gentry, Mr. George Emerson, Mr. A. Camp and Mr. "Slim" Thompson.

For their encouragement and helpful criticisms, we are indebted to Dr. Edwin D. Starbuck, Mrs. Herbert Searles and the Staff of the Institute of Character Research at the University of Southern California; to Herbert Searles, Jr.; to Miss Louise Rowlands and to Miss Grace Dick.

To Paramount, RKO and Fox Studios we express our appreciation for the photographs they have so generously contributed. Other photographs appear with the permission of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Studio, Principal Pictures and United Artists Corporation. We thank Miss Olga Celeste, Mr. Melvine Koontz, and Mr. and Mrs. Tony Gentry for loaning pictures and Mr. Elmore Brauer and Mr. Ellis Dungan for the photographs they took for us. Other photographs appear through the courtesy of Bob Wallace and Eyre Powell.

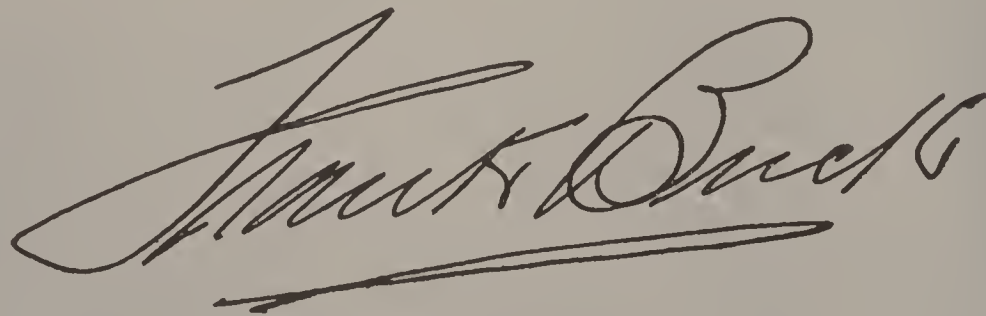
We would like to say "thank you" to the animals themselves, if they could understand!

F. M. and H. M. Christeson

I have known and respected Olga Celeste, the woman trainer, since she first came to Chicago to join Big Otto's Circus in Riverside Park when she was just a girl of fourteen or fifteen. I have seen her take a savage leopard straight from the jungle, and through kindness and patience make a splendid actor of the animal. So far as I know, she is the only person who has ever been able to train a black leopard, the most vicious animal for its weight in the world.

Jackie, the famous lion described in this book, was a tiny cub taking his milk from a bottle handed him by Melvine Koontz when I first saw him; and I watched him grow under Melvine's clever guidance into the greatest of all wild animal actors.

So I have found this book intensely interesting, and it seems to me that these "wild animal actors" deserve more credit than some of the Hollywood stars who get their names in lights. While these stars seemingly are as temperamental as some of the animals, their directors don't run the dangerous risk of fangs and claws that comes constantly to the trainers of these animal actors.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Frank Buck". The signature is written in dark ink and features a long, sweeping underline that extends across the width of the name.

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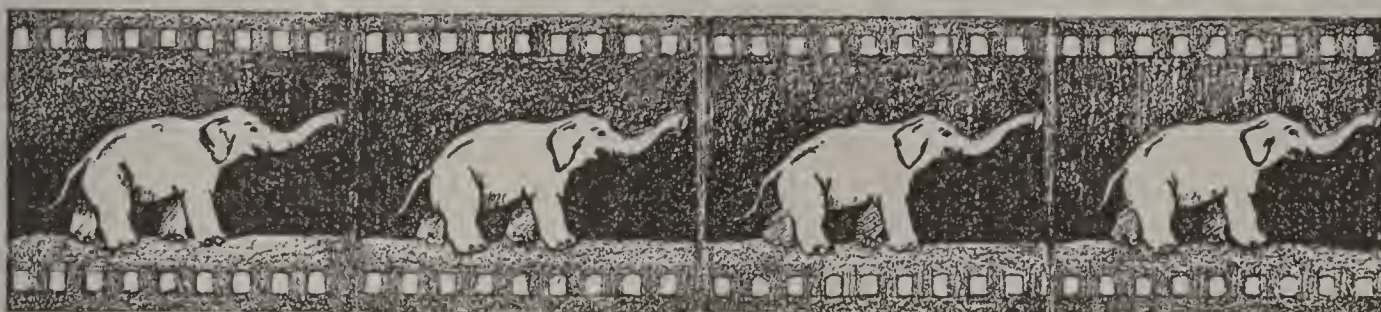
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*Anna and I visited Buster Cribble - from "Jaggon the Fearless" T1934*



## CHAPTER ONE

### ANNA MAY THE ELEPHANT

**A** PINKISH BABY ELEPHANT, scarcely two years old and barely three feet high, sailed away from her native India for America and a motion picture career. That was twenty-five years ago. Today, Anna May is a veteran screen actress among hundreds of wild animal actors.

When the script, as the written story of a film is called, is placed in a director's hands and he sees that an elephant appears in the cast, he thinks of Anna May.

## WILD ANIMAL ACTORS

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This is natural, since Anna May has worked in more motion pictures than any other elephant in the United States. Her intelligence, her willingness to work and her long record of experience are well known in Hollywood.

Every day in the year, old residents of Los Angeles and groups of out-of-town sightseers, make their way to the California Zoological Gardens on Mission Road.

### HOME OF ONE HUNDRED WILD ANIMAL MOVIE ACTORS

Visitors read this legend as they turn into the main driveway, pass a large, high, stone block surmounted by a life-like group of father, mother, and baby elephants, and enter the open gates of the Zoo grounds.

Colonel Selig, now a retired veteran motion picture producer who was the first to put wild animals in front of a motion picture camera, founded the Zoo in 1910. He had been filming his pictures at his studio in Chicago, renting the wild animals he needed from "Big Otto's" menagerie. With the decision to move to Southern California, where climate and scenery are ideal for picture work, Colonel Selig bought Big Otto's collection and made arrangements to transport his newly acquired animals to the Pacific Coast.

## WILD ANIMAL ACTORS

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Fifty acres were purchased in what is now East Los Angeles, and a group of workmen was employed to divide the Selig Wild Animal Farm into sections and to prepare it for immediate occupancy. To help create a natural environment for each kind of animal, trees, grasses and shrubs were imported from their native countries, Africa, Asia and Australia. Gravel walks were laid out under shade trees and vine-covered trellises, and a large, rectangular plot of ground at the rear of the farm was enclosed with high, strong wire fencing.

Inside the enclosure were planted tropical trees and grasses and it was not long until the jungle growth flourishing under the California sun, transformed it into a perfect natural setting for the filming of jungle pictures. It was the first jungle set in the picture business. The only other set of its kind to be found today is the one located near Hollywood, on the lot of the Universal Picture Studios at Universal City.

Close to the jungle set, stands a big, gray, frame barn—Anna May's shelter from wind and rain, and her bed at night. When she is not working in a picture she is usually staked out in the stockade in front of the barn where she suns herself at the side of her old friend Jenny.

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While Jenny is older in years than Anna May, sixty-five, the prime of life for an elephant, she is no wiser. Charlie Murphy, who used to train animals for Universal Studios, brought her out to the west coast from Kansas City and started her working in pictures at Universal City. Jenny at that time had a horse for a companion, but she has Anna May now and the two hate to be separated.

On Sunday afternoons when Mr. Metcalf, their trainer, takes Jenny out of the barn, she trumpets piteously as though she were never going to see her friend again. It is Jenny's duty to stand just outside the Zoo entrance on Sundays while Anna May is performing her part of the day's work. Their trainer claims that anyone can see by the way Jenny fidgets and fusses that she is impatient to be back again with Anna May. When the two are reunited, they trumpet and throw their trunks over each other's backs as though they were welcoming one another after a long parting.

Mr. Metcalf stations Jenny at the gates, returns to the barn and takes down a red velvet elephant blanket from its hook on the wall. At the command, "Down, Anna," Anna May slowly sinks to her knees. The dust



*Mr. Metcalf stations Jenny at the zoo gates*

*Mr. Metcalf led Anna May down Hollywood Boulevard*





## WILD ANIMAL ACTORS

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particles are carefully brushed from around her button-like eyes, and every vestige of straw is swept from her back. Then the velvet blanket is spread across her broad sides and the howdah, that box-like seat, is swung up into place on her strong back and firmly strapped on.

She is ready now to be led out to the grassy plot where she slides in between two high platforms, each reached by a set of steps. On one platform, Mrs. Metcalf stands and calls, "Right this way for an elephant ride. Come and ride the elephant for only ten cents. Right this way, boys and girls. If you have never ridden an elephant now is your chance. Step right up, please!"

The first two or three children to reach one platform are helped into the howdah and strapped in by a silken cord. The children on the opposite platform step cautiously into the "howdy" as circus people call the seat, and sit with their backs against those who were seated first. When all is ready, at the proper signal from her trainer Anna May moves off in her rhythmic, lumbering gait, carrying eight slightly bobbing but delighted passengers on her gently heaving back.

Back and forth, back and forth, over the same short route, Anna May's trainer leads her every Sunday and

## WILD ANIMAL ACTORS

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gentle Anna May never complains. She may remember and wish for the days when, as a baby elephant, she was allowed any place on the Zoo grounds, with a cowbell tied on a cord about her neck to tell of her whereabouts.

Madame Olga Celeste, the first woman trainer to work with animals in front of a motion picture camera, trained animals for Colonel Selig's first wild animal productions. When her employer moved his business to California, she came with him and has been a trainer on the Zoo staff ever since.

"I remember when Colonel Selig sent to India for an elephant to play in the first serial picture ever filmed in this country—*The Adventures of Kathleen*," the little Swedish trainer will tell you when she is urged to talk about Anna May's babyhood. "Anna May was only eighteen months old when she arrived here on the coast. I can see that little thing now, painted white from trunk to tail for her role of the sacred white elephant of India. She was a darling. We all grew very fond of her, and she of us. She was allowed to roam the grounds, but we always knew where she was by the tinkle of her cowbell. She liked to follow people and would trot along in back of any one of us, and if she thought we were trying to

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leave her, she would stop and angrily stamp one of her little feet.

“The Zoo office over in the eucalyptus grove was one of her favorite haunts because she frequently found someone there who would give her sweetmeats. It was on one of these porch visits that Anna May learned a lesson she will never forget. It was like this. One of the windows had been left open and in front of it, on a desk, stood a newly filled inkwell. Anna May clambered up the steps and nosed around the porch. Usually, if she waited for a few minutes and no one appeared, she would stand in the doorway—she couldn’t get through but she would squeeze in as far as she could—and stamp and squeal to attract attention.

“On this particular day, she lumbered up the stairs and before she had become impatient for someone to appear, she discovered the open window. In less time than it takes to tell it, her little trunk felt over the desk and came to rest upon the inkwell, a new and a very strange object. Naturally curious, as all elephants are, she picked it up and tipped it at such an angle that the contents spilled straight into her trunk! What a sight she was, standing there helpless, squealing at the top of her voice

## WILD ANIMAL ACTORS

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and dripping blue ink. Of course we hurried to wash out her trunk for her and you may be sure that she never again tampered with an inkwell. But her curiosity is still and always will be keen."

From Madame Olga we learn that a Mr. Lang was Anna May's first trainer. He was given full charge of her when she first arrived at the Zoo after her long journey from India. He gave her the best of care. A shed was built for her to sleep in, and several times during the night someone looked in to see that she was safe and comfortable. Her food, rice cooked in milk, was given to her in a bottle made from a stalk of bamboo. One end of the hollow bamboo section was sharpened and filled with the gruel. Then Mr. Lang tilted Anna May back on her hind legs and let the mixture pour down her throat. She lived on this soft diet until she was about three years old when hay and vegetables were gradually added so that she was forced to eat with her trunk.

About this time, she was taught a clever little act which she performed for Zoo visitors. She was seated at a table, and given a bell to ring when she was ready to be served. When she picked up the bell with her trunk and gave it a vigorous ring, Mr. Lang appeared as a waiter,

## WILD ANIMAL ACTORS

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with a tray of bananas. These she ate with great relish and then rang for more—and still more. At last she rose from the table, walked over to a small bed that had been constructed for the act, lay down on it and pulled up the covers with her trunk. She seemed to be sleeping peacefully. All at once she sat up and trumpeted distressingly as though she were in great pain. Her trainer rushed in.

“What in the world is the matter with you, Anna May? Are you sick? Do you want to see a doctor?” he anxiously asked.

Anna May nodded weakly and lay back. Mr. Lang then reappeared as a doctor carrying a little black bag. He walked over to the patient, leaned over the bed, shook an accusing finger at her and said, “You aren’t sick. All the matter with you is, you want your bottle.” He then produced the bamboo bottle and when he gave it to Anna May she lay back to drink her gruel, completely cured.

Madame Olga has many fond and amusing recollections of her old friend’s first moving picture experiences.

“Something happened during the filming of *The Adventures of Kathleen*, which was her first picture, that almost proved a tragedy at the time, but it is amusing to tell about now,” she will tell you. “In those days, the ele-

## WILD ANIMAL ACTORS

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phants were housed in some old car barns that used to be across the street from the main entrance to the Zoo. On this particular day all the elephants but Anna May and an old male were being used. They were the only two left in the barns. We were all back on the set, dressed in flowing Indian robes, ready for the director's signal, when all at once we heard loud trumpeting from the barns. Tillie, an old elephant that had taken quite a fancy to Anna May, started off. Whether or not she thought the old male was chewing up her friend, we'll never know; but off she dashed.

"Her excited exit served to start the other elephants on a stampede. Away they went, crashing into and breaking down every thing in their path. Kathleen and her leading man were riding in a howdah on one of them, and when the herd suddenly swung along under some trees, the low branches beat the howdah to pieces and knocked them both out. Miss Williams, who was playing the part of Kathleen, afterward said that she and her companion owed their lives to Curly Steckler, one of the trainers, who managed to keep their elephant in the rear so that when they fell off there were no elephants coming to trample them.

## WILD ANIMAL ACTORS

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“When the stampeding herd came to the lagoon in front of the Zoo office, they rushed around the end of it—that is, all but one. He slipped in head first and when the confusion was all over, it took the combined efforts of the others to pull him out of the mud and water. I can laugh at the whole thing now, but when I was clinging desperately to one of the elephants and being tossed about like a piece of paper in the wind, it wasn’t so funny. And Anna May was responsible for it all!

“But she is a darling,” Anna May’s friend will conclude. “She has a lovely disposition, is as gentle as she can be because she has always been around people who have been kind to her and who have made a pet of her. She is a patient creature too. A few years ago, Miss Agnes Campbell of the University of California at Los Angeles, sculptured an elephant and used Anna May for a model. She was surprised to find that Anna May could hold a pose for from five to ten minutes without moving. We appreciate this trait of being able to wait patiently in picture work for there are times when patience above everything else is demanded.”

Motion picture actors and actresses are often called upon to make personal appearances and Anna May is no

## WILD ANIMAL ACTORS

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exception. When the picture, *Gabriel Over the White House*, was shown at Grauman's Egyptian Theatre, Anna May was taken by truck from her home at the Zoo, to the door of the Hollywood theatre. The afternoon of the opening, Mr. Metcalf led her down Hollywood Boulevard with Mrs. Metcalf and one of the theatre usherettes riding in the howdah. Placards on Anna May's broad sides advertised the screen attraction. One is likely to see unusual sights at any time on this famous thoroughfare, and Anna May received the customary interested stares from pedestrians and passing motorists.

At the theatre, it was her duty to carry passengers up and down the long, open forecourt. One of the platforms used on Sundays at the Zoo had been brought along and placed at the front end of the court. Mrs. Metcalf as usual, assisted customers into the howdah and reported after their engagement was over that the many adults who rode on Anna May enjoyed it as much as the children did.

During Anna May's rest periods, she stood in one corner of the court, a good Republican elephant, while across the way, in an opposite corner, two donkeys browsed in a pen bearing signs, "We Are Democrats."

Anna May's trainer is a slow-spoken, kindly man who



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says, "People often ask me what I do to prepare Anna for a scene when we are working in pictures. If she is to walk from here to that tree, stop, trumpet, and then pick up the man lying on the ground, I rehearse her a couple of times. I walk along beside her and show her just what I want her to do, let her do it once or twice, and then when the cameras are ready, she will go right through with the same action. If the sound apparatus is not on, I can call to her. They sometimes take a silent shot and put the sound in later. They often have to shoot a scene two or three times before they are satisfied with it, but Anna will work as long as we want her to.

"Man has never found a more willing, intelligent worker than the Asiatic elephant that for centuries has been broken and trained by natives called "mahouts." In India, these native trainers break the elephants to every kind of work imaginable, from carrying hunters to the jungles and their royal masters in parades, to pulling logs out of rivers and stacking them in neat piles in the lumber yards.

"There is a lot of difference between the elephants that come from Asia and those that are natives of Africa. The African is bigger, his trunk is longer, his ears are

## WILD ANIMAL ACTORS

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much larger and flop back and forth like sails on a ship. His back slopes up from his tail to his shoulders, his hide is tougher, his forehead curves out, and he has three toes on his front feet and four on his hind feet. Indian elephants, like Anna and Jenny, are somewhat smaller, their foreheads curve inward above the eyes, they are higher in the middle of the back than at the shoulder and they have five toes on their front feet and four on their hind feet.

“Both the male and the female of the African species have tusks, but only the male of the Indian has tusks of any size; those of the female are very short. When we want an elephant to play in a picture with an African background, we use Anna, clamp a pair of big artificial ears and tusks over her smaller ears and tusks, and presto—she is an African elephant!

“That is what we had to do when she played the part of Jumbo, P. T. Barnum’s famous elephant, in the picture *The Mighty Barnum*. They were all ready to shoot a scene when they decided that Anna wasn’t large enough, for Jumbo was known the world over for his size. They gave me five minutes to make Anna bigger! The only thing I could do was to strap a mattress over her

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back and down her sides and cover it with a big elephant blanket. We tried it and it worked. But let me tell you it's a puzzling job to make an elephant bigger—and in five minutes.”

“People wonder why we see so few baby elephants in captivity. The reason is that elephants seldom breed outside the jungles. That doesn't bother circuses and zoos, for they would rather import mature elephants than have the care and the feeding of young animals. Their attitude is easily understood when you stop to realize that elephants don't mature until they are from thirty to thirty-five years old. It is less trouble and much cheaper to let someone else keep them until they are full grown.

“An elephant's grocery bill for a year is no small item in an expense account! Anna eats a bale of hay every twenty-four hours, a wash tub full of oats and bran with salt and soda mixed in, and very generous helpings of fruits and vegetables. One of her favorite vegetables is onions and she will eat the strongest kind until the tears come to her eyes. She likes tobacco too, and picks up every cigar and cigarette stub she can find. A smoking cigarette is easily taken care of. She puts one of her big feet on it, puts it out and then picks it up and eats it.

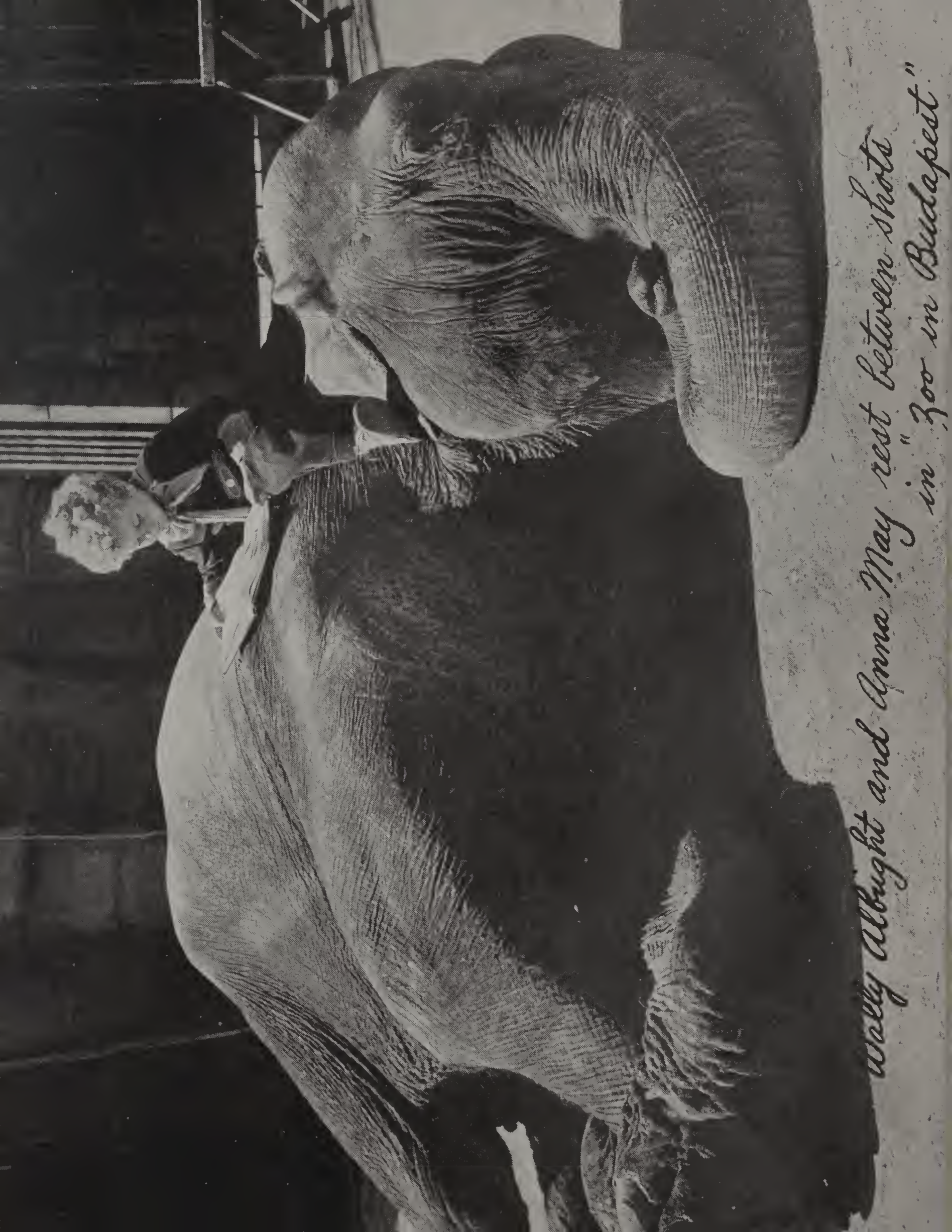
## WILD ANIMAL ACTORS

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In the picture *Hypnotized*, with the Two Black Crows, she took a plug of tobacco out of one of their pockets.

“Anna’s picture career has only begun when you stop to realize that elephants in captivity live to the average age of about eighty years. She is now only a few years past twenty-five but she has a long list of pictures to her credit already. You saw her in *Tarzan of the Apes*, *Zoo in Budapest*, *Tarzan the Fearless*, *Tarzan and His Mate*, *The Mighty Barnum*, and *The Lives of a Bengal Lancer*.”

If Anna May’s trainer were asked if his years of experience with elephants have not taught him a great deal about them he would reply, “I know a lot about elephants but a person could never learn all there is to know about them. I have worked with them for thirty-seven years and have broken one hundred thirty-one, but there is always something new to learn. A day never passes that Anna doesn’t do something new, some little thing I have never before seen her do. Elephants are like monkeys that way—always up to new tricks. Anna has been unusually successful in pictures because she is very intelligent, has a fine disposition, remembers what I teach her and works willingly. I have known close to five hundred elephants in my day and Anna beats them all!”



Wally Albright and Anna May rest between shots in "Zoo in Budapest."



"Lift your head and I'll scratch under your chin,"  
says Madame Olga



## CHAPTER TWO

### COLONEL THE LEAPING TIGER

**T**WENTY years ago Lady, Colonel's mother, lay in the shifting jungle shadows in Bengal, a province of British India. The dark stripes on her tawny coat made her almost invisible as she crouched against the broad blades of yellow grass.

At sundown she crept from her lair and slunk through grass and underbrush to spring upon an unsuspecting deer, antelope, or peafowl for her evening meal. Her

## WILD ANIMAL ACTORS

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thirst was quenched by the cool waters of the nearest waterhole.

But Lady was not destined to spend her life in this wild state. The day came when she was captured, put into a cage and placed aboard the steamer that was to carry her across the ocean to her new home in the United States. In California Colonel Selig was importing wild animals to appear in the motion pictures he was producing, and Lady was to be one of the first tigers to be photographed by the motion picture camera.

She came to the Selig Zoo without a name, but all who became acquainted with her agreed that she should be called something that typified her poise, grace, and gentle manners and that no name could be more fitting than "Lady."

Lady's training was begun as soon as she felt at home. Then followed years in which the beautiful, intelligent, young tigress proved that she was not only an apt pupil and a dependable worker, but an actress of no little ability as well. When the story of a picture called for a tiger that could be petted, Lady was given the part. Her mild, even disposition insured the safety of anyone who worked



## WILD ANIMAL ACTORS

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with her, providing he treated her kindly and with respect.

During the last few months of her life, Lady suffered from rheumatism in her hind legs. But up to the time of her death in November, 1933, she was never too lame to limp to the front bars of her cage when she sighted her old friend Madame Olga coming. The old tigress always affectionately sniffed the little trainer's fingers and fairly purred with delight whenever her visitor said, "Lift your head, baby, and I will scratch under your chin. Now turn around so I can reach your back."

Lady was a proud mother when she gave birth to Colonel, a pound-and-a-half ball of sandy fur that did nothing all day but drink her warm milk and snuggle up beside her in the clean straw. Then the natural changes in the tiny cub's development came; his pale yellow eyes opened, his little legs that at first were wobbly underpinnings grew stronger and stronger until he was scampering from one end of the cage to the other; he was ready now to be weaned from his mother and placed in the "kindergarten," a sunny ground pen set aside for the baby cat animals.

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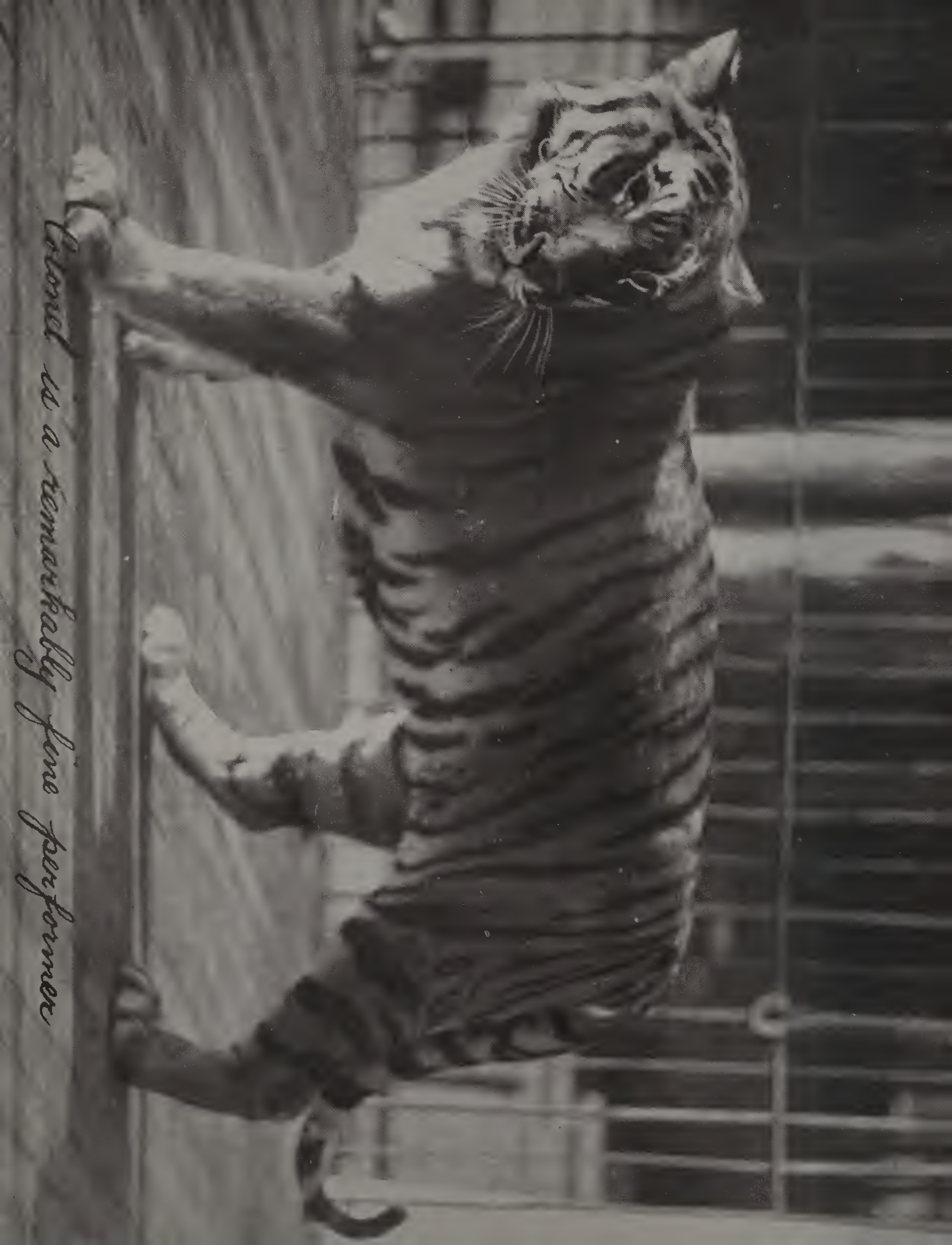
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Baby pumas scrambled over one another in one section of the roomy enclosure; baby lions licked each other, blinked and yawned as they sunned themselves in their section of the kindergarten; spotted leopards scampered up and down an old tree trunk that stood in one corner of their pen. In the space next to the leopards, some frisky little tigers paid little or no attention to their new playmate who had come to join their kindergarten class.

Every day a trainer stepped into each section of the pen, sat down and quietly watched the lively youngsters as they played and rolled about on the logs, stumps and discarded wooden arena balls. These daily visits accustomed the animals to the presence of a human being and to the sound of a friendly voice. They gave to the trainer the opportunity of studying and becoming acquainted with the habits, characteristics and natural abilities of each animal. As the months passed, the trainer noticed that Colonel possessed remarkable jumping ability, that he delighted in jumping from stump to log and back again. And so, when Colonel's term in the kindergarten was over and he was old enough and ready for his first lessons in the course that every performing wild animal



*Colonel will sneak through jungle grasses*



*Colonel is a remarkably fine performer*

## WILD ANIMAL ACTORS

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must pass, he was taken into the arena for his course.

When Colonel had been introduced to his seat, or pedestal, and had learned that when he was given the command "Seat," he was to jump up onto his pedestal and stay there until he was told to get down, he was ready for the next lesson to be mastered. From the first day of training, Colonel displayed keen intelligence and his readiness and ability to learn was a constant source of pleasure and satisfaction to his own special trainer.

Colonel soon became known as the "jumping tiger" and for the past nine years, Colonel has earned the praises and admiration of the Zoo visitors who watch his performance in the out-of-doors steel arena. There is indescribable beauty and grace of movement in the play of the powerful, supple muscles beneath his beautifully striped, reddish hide, as he faultlessly executes his thrilling jumping feats.

In pictures, as in the arena, Colonel is a remarkably fine performer. On the proper cue he will sneak through the jungle grass, walk just so far and stop, climb a tree up to a certain spot, make a high leap (he recently jumped out of a twelve foot pit), carry a dummy down the jungle

## WILD ANIMAL ACTORS

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trail, or do anything that he is told to do within a tiger's ability.

If the action of the story calls for him to chase a man across a clearing and up a tree, the bit is rehearsed several times. Colonel is let out of his temporary cage on the jungle set. He runs across the clearing to a tree from the branches of which is dangling a piece of meat, tied onto the end of a stick. The person holding the stick can raise the meat higher and higher which forces Colonel to climb in order to reach the tempting morsel. After the rehearsal, he is put into his cage and the piece of meat is given him.

Then when the cameras are ready, a closeup is taken of the actor running panic-stricken across the clearing. The next shot is a closeup of Colonel covering the same ground. Another of the actor, this time in the act of climbing the tree. This shot is followed by one of Colonel at the foot of the tree growling at the piece of meat he would like to have. But it appears that he is growling menacingly at the man who is supposed to be up in the branches. Colonel remembers that he climbed the tree after the meat and so he climbs again. These shots of the Colonel and the actor may be taken on different days,

## WILD ANIMAL ACTORS

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but when they are strung along together and reeled off in a film, it looks for all the world as though the tiger chased the man into the tree.

“We barely missed having some serious trouble in just such a scene one time,” says Madame Olga. “A number of people were standing around ready for the next shot which was to follow Colonel climbing the tree. As long as the cameras are grinding he is not supposed to have the meat. This time, one of the assistant trainers lowered the piece too far, and Colonel grabbed it. That was the first mistake, and the second was that it contained a bone. I cautioned everyone to stand motionless while he charged around the lot with it and then settled down to eat the meat. For the next fifteen minutes, we all stood perfectly still while he chewed on that bone.

“When he had finished, I called to him and indicated with my whip that he should go into his cage. He obediently and calmly walked over to it and when we heard the door click shut behind him we all took our first deep breath. One false move on someone’s part might have given him the impression that the meat was going to be taken from him, and there is no telling what his reactions

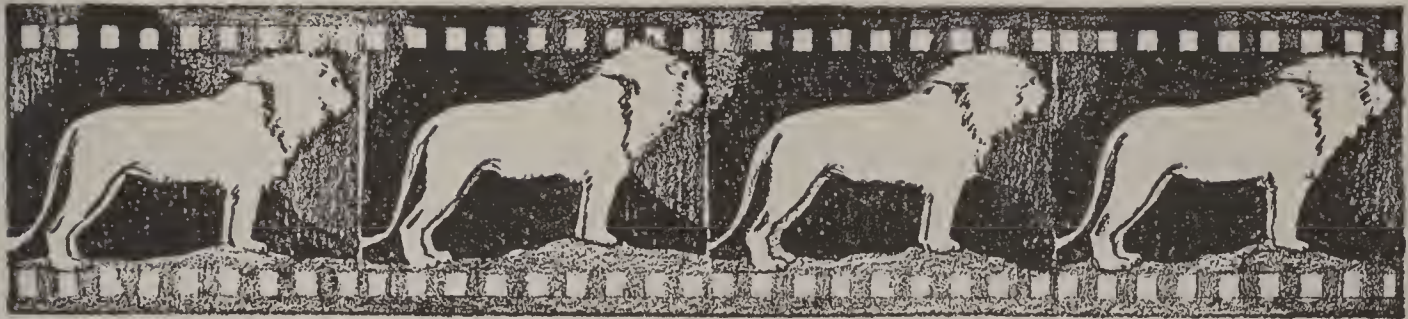
## WILD ANIMAL ACTORS

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would have been. It is at a time like that when a soothing voice, good judgment, and steady nerves are absolutely necessary.”

Under ordinary circumstances, when there are no mistakes made by the persons working with him, Colonel can always be depended upon for a perfect performance. He is intolerant of just one thing. He will not allow anyone, not even his old friend Madame Olga, to touch his head but he does enjoy, or at least he does not mind, an affectionate pat on the back or hind quarters. From his famous mother he inherited a fine disposition, intelligence, and abilities that have enabled him to earn a recognized place in arena performance and motion picture work alike. Colonel is affectionately referred to by the trainers at the Zoo, as a “grand old trouper.”





### CHAPTER THREE

## JACKIE THE WRESTLING LION

**A**T three o'clock there will be a wild animal performance in the outdoor steel arena," announces a voice over the loud speaker every afternoon at the California Zoological Gardens.

Picnic parties under the tropical shade trees gather up their baskets, fathers and mothers call their children from the merry-go-round and the pony rides, and the last peanut in the bag is fed to the monkeys. By three o'clock,

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the green park benches set row upon row facing the arena, are filled with Zoo visitors, watching the men inside the large, steel barred enclosure carry in and arrange the stage properties that are to be used in the performance. On the stroke of the hour, all eyes are fixed expectantly on the low door which opens into the passageway leading to the rows of cages.

Again the voice of the announcer. "We will now present the most unusual wild animal act ever presented anywhere. We will now introduce Jackie, the world's most famous lion and incidentally the most valuable lion in history. Jackie is a full grown, light-maned Nubian lion, eight years old. He has been trained since he was a cub only a few weeks old by Mr. Melvine Koontz, his present trainer. I call your attention to the fact that Jackie is the only lion in the world today that any trainer would permit to slap him with his open paw. Such a slap usually means a serious accident or certain death. We now take pleasure in presenting Mr. Melvine Koontz and his wrestling lion, Jackie!"

A young man in spotless white shirt and trousers steps into the arena and acknowledges the introduction

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with a bow. Madame Olga at her post outside the bars, pulls a lever which raises the arena door and through the opening walks—Jackie.

The strains of a familiar tune float out of the radio as Jackie bounds over to his master, rises on his hind legs and throws his front legs over his trainer's shoulders. There they stand, the man with his face and head buried in the shaggy mane of the lion that towers above him.

"That's right, love me a little," coaxes Jackie's trainer as he affectionately pats the lion's sleek sides.

"Oh, you want to box, do you?" when Jackie suddenly flashes a huge paw in the air. The paw and a hand meet with a resounding smack. They exchange fast, playful blows. The man slaps the beast on the head, ribs, hind quarters or any place that presents an opportunity. The lion responds with nips at the man's shirt and trousers and delivers well placed blows that send his opponent sprawling upon the floor. The triumphant Jackie stands over his prostrate trainer with a comical "just-try-to-get-up" expression on his solemn face.

"Each time the man attempts to gain a footing, the wily Jackie knocks or pushes him back to the floor and

## WILD ANIMAL ACTORS

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then pounces upon him. One hundred fifty pounds of man and four hundred fifty pounds of lion lock legs and the wrestling match is on. A flash of white on top and then on the bottom as the two roll over and over, back and forth across the arena floor.

It is plain to be seen that the lion thoroughly enjoys the rough tussle but when his completely disheveled master cries, "Quit it, Jackie, that's enough," the beast is smart enough to take his cue and stop.

"Let's play wheelbarrow," suggests Mr. Koontz as he playfully picks up Jackie's hind legs and steers him across the arena floor. All four feet on the ground again, Jackie takes a sudden notion to play dead, or perhaps his master tells him to in a tone not audible to the audience. At any rate, the animal flops down, stretches out full length and lies without moving a muscle.

His trainer walks over to him and holds a piece of a whip in front of the lion's nose. "See this little piece of whip, Jackie?" he says. "I'm going to throw it and I want you to get it and bring it back to me. Now get up lazy bones, I'm going to throw it. Here it goes!" But Jackie lies still, disinterested and undisturbed.



*Jackie pounces upon his trainer*

"Jump in, and I'll give you a ride," says Jack's ~~brother~~ Turner



## WILD ANIMAL ACTORS

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“Aren’t you going to get that stick?” demands the man. No response. He takes a few steps forward and just before he reaches the disobedient Jackie, the lion slowly and deliberately rises to his feet, walks calmly over to the piece of whip and trots back with it in his mouth.

“Thank you. Now I will do something for you,” promises the man as he rewards Jackie with a pat. “See this?” as he rolls out a small wagon from the rear of the arena. The cart is painted red and white and specially constructed with a seat towards the back and the front half left open.

“Jump in,” directs Jackie’s playmate, “and I will give you a nice ride.”

Jackie stands for a moment as though considering the advisability of getting into such a contraption, but at the command, “Hurry up, jump in,” he leaps into the cart. His trainer picks up the shafts and starts on a dog trot around the arena, looking back every now and then at his passenger. Jackie sits with his hind quarters and tail in the bottom of the wagon, his forelegs resting on the seat, his tawny head and one paw hanging limply over the side.

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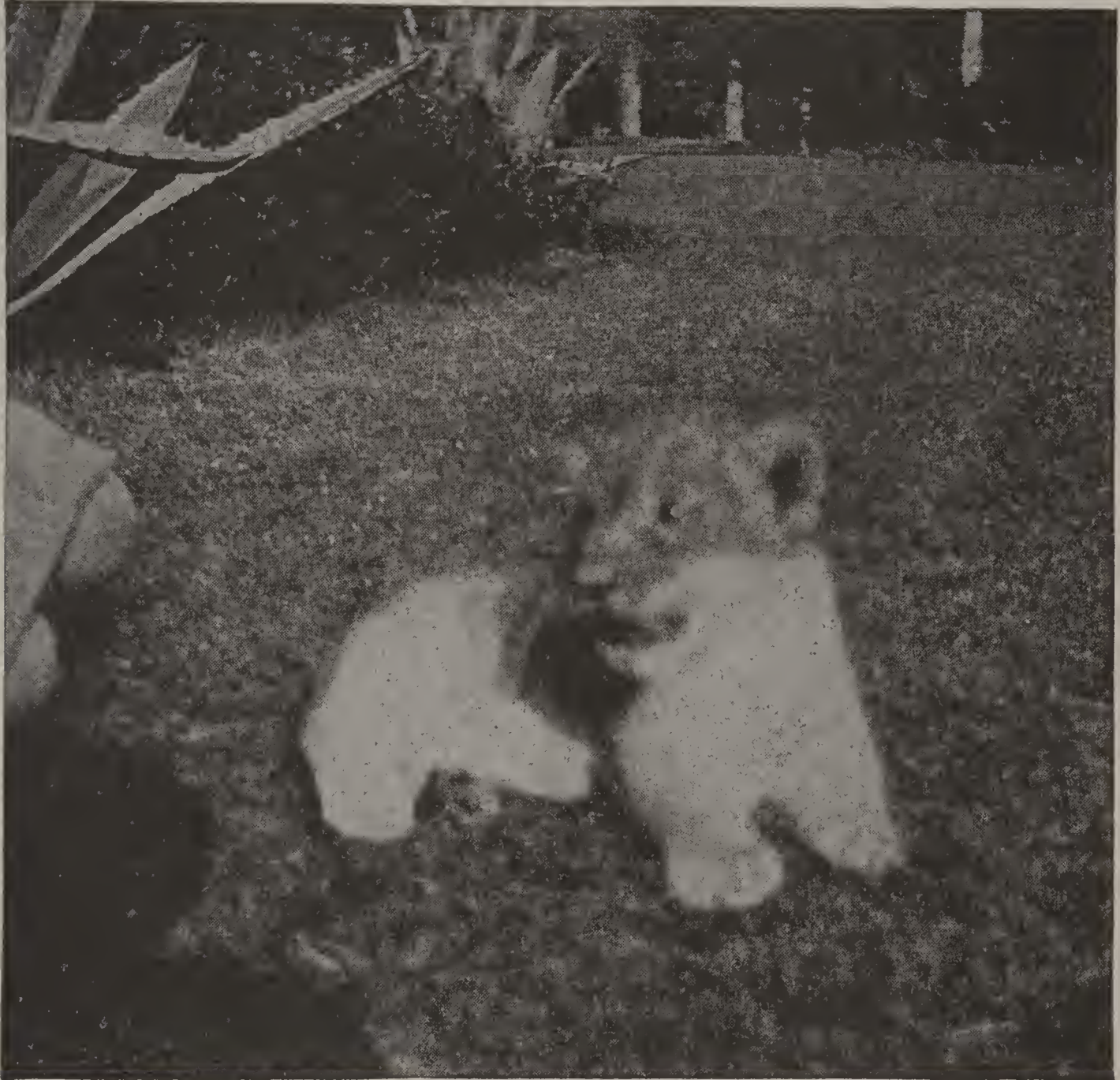
The children in the audience giggle and clap for who among them has not given a cat or a dog a ride in a wagon or doll buggy; and here was a wild animal, a lion to be exact, being hauled about in this familiar fashion.

“That’s all now,” Jackie is informed as the cart is brought to a standstill in the center of the ring. “Now I would like a ride,” announces Mr. Koontz. “Get out, will you please?” But Jackie refuses to budge. He sits comfortably back with an expression on his face that seems to say, “I’m having a fine time, thank you and I am not ready to get out.” The man takes hold of the stubborn animal’s tail but no amount of pulling has any effect. Jackie refuses to move until his trainer makes a threatening advance which must be his signal, for he then loses no time in jumping out.

“Now I’ll get in front and steer with the shafts,” suggests Mr. Koontz, “and you put your big feet in the back of the wagon and push me.”

Jackie thinks the arrangement quite satisfactory for he walks around to the rear of the cart, rises on his hind legs, places his front feet against the back of the seat, pushes, and starts the wheels moving. The mischievous





JACKIE WHEN HE WAS THREE WEEKS OLD

## WILD ANIMAL ACTORS

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Jackie dutifully pushes as he walks along on his hind legs, but he slyly leans forward to nip the seat of his trainer's trousers as he steers the wagon.

"It's time now to show the people out there what a big baby you are," reminds Jackie's trainer as they end their ride. "Come over here to the front of the arena." Jackie obediently walks to the front bars of the arena, stands on his hind legs, slips his front legs through the bars and rests his elbows on a crossbar with his paws hanging limply outside. The audience laughs heartily at Jackie's innocent pose.

Jackie's remarkable act draws to a close when his master straddles his strong back and rides him to the arena door.

Isn't such a demonstration dangerous? How does the man dare treat the lion as though he were a big dog? people in the audience ask each other. How indeed? That is a question to ask the animal's trainer and he replies, "People who watch our act get the impression we are just playing and that is perfectly true. I didn't train Jackie to do any of those stunts. When he was only a few weeks old I began taking him out every day for a

## WILD ANIMAL ACTORS

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romp on the lawn. I didn't teach him to wrestle, that just developed in our play. Jackie has grown up in that spirit of play.

“When he was about four months old, a studio wanted a lion cub to play in a picture and they chose Jackie. It was time for him to be weaned from his mother so that it was all right to take him from her. He was given to me to care for because he was used to me. I took him from Stubby, his mother, one morning and put him in a little red cage on wheels. I went at noon to see how he was and the sight of me coming excited him so that he banged his head against the bars as he paced back and forth. The scars on his forehead today are from those bruises.

“He gradually became used to his own cage but he was never in it very long at a time. I figured I would have to be with him as much as possible until he was over missing his mother, so I let him run loose and he followed me every place I went. If I had work to do up at the front of the grounds, he was right there and if I was busy at the back, he was at my heels. He was with me even at night for awhile! I had put a bed for myself

## WILD ANIMAL ACTORS

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in one corner of a shed and a box of straw in another corner for him. The first night we slept in our makeshift bedroom, I had no sooner dropped off to sleep than I awakened with a start. There was Jackie on my bed. From then on, for a month, he slept in the same bed with me and would curl up as close to my body as he could get.

“He used to be with me when I went to the lunch stand we had at that time, and this is an example of how smart he is. He saw me open the refrigerator door to get milk and in some way he learned how to open that door. He would stick in a paw and pull out a bottle of milk onto the floor. Whenever we found broken bottles and spilled milk we knew who had been there. I of course had to put a stop to that sort of thing!

“Jackie’s first motion picture experience came as I said before when a studio wanted a cub for a role. In this picture, a comedy, a man comes home late at night, opens the front door and stumbles over a cat. Then he comes to Jackie,—a little larger animal, and in the next room he enters he finds an animal a bit bigger than Jackie. The animals he encounters as he walks from one room into another keep growing bigger and bigger until he comes



JACKIE AND HIS SECOND BIRTHDAY CAKE

## WILD ANIMAL ACTORS

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to the largest of them all, Duke, a big old lion we used to have here at the Zoo. That was Jackie's first appearance in front of a movie camera and from then on we had plenty of calls for him to play similar roles. We didn't decide on a name for him until he worked in a picture with Jacqueline Logan. We took the first part of her name and called him Jackie."

It was not surprising, in fact it was rather to be expected that Jackie should become a motion picture actor since Stubby his mother, so named because of her short, stubby body, and Mamie, his grandmother, had both been stars in Colonel Selig's early wild animal troupes. Mamie played in the first wild animal picture ever filmed in the United States, *The Lion's Bride*, which was Colonel Selig's initial wild animal production. Jackie was merely living up to the family tradition!

About the time the first few long hairs in his mane began to appear, soon after his second birthday, Jackie's owners noticed that Zoo visitors flocked around the young lion and his trainer whenever they rolled and wrestled on the lawn. Why not make something out of this innocent play? After all, who had ever seen a man and



Jackie plays dead - from "King of the Jungle"



*Jackie with Melvina Hornby as Jorgan*



## WILD ANIMAL ACTORS

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a lion slap each other, push one another around in a cart and then engage in as lively a wrestling match as was ever staged between two human beings? No one. Here was something entirely new—a wrestling lion!

This amazing part of Jackie's act soon became known in the studios after people had witnessed it in the arena. From that day to this, whenever such action can be used it is written into a story. Of course it is understood that although Jackie works safely with people there are some stunts that only his trainer dares do with him, namely, ride on his back, jump onto his back from a height, and wrestle with him. If and when such action is desired, Melvine Koontz doubles for the actor.

"Jackie will work with anyone," explains his master, "if I am there to tell him what to do. In *King of the Jungle* during the shot of Buster Crabbe taking out the bullet from Jackie's back, I was offside calling to Jackie, telling him what to do. When he walked into camera range, I told him to play dead. After Tarzan had supposedly removed the bullet, I called to him from the other side of the set and he walked out of the scene. Jackie and I wrestled in that picture too.

## WILD ANIMAL ACTORS

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“One day while we were working on the same picture on the Paramount lot, I let him run loose for a little while before I took him to lunch. In the commissary he sat up to a table and quietly ate the bread and milk the waitress brought him. He can't have his raw meat when he is dining out. After lunch, Buster and I drove him over to the Hollywood Athletic Club. You can imagine how he startled the members who were in the swimming pool when he appeared at the end of the diving board and looked down on them. Later that day, we went down to the ocean and took pictures of Jackie and Buster playing on the beach.”

When the film *King of the Jungle* was released, Jackie's owners decided to send him and his trainer on a personal appearance tour to San Francisco, Jackie's first long trip. He was put into his red cage on wheels and rolled into the trailer attached to his master's sedan. Then away they drove up the Coast.

Arriving in the Bay City, Jackie was driven to the stage door of the Golden Gate Theatre and left on the back stage in care of the night watchman. He was ready for a good night's sleep after his four hundred mile ride. The next morning Mr. Koontz took him out in back of

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the theatre for a work out. At the appointed time that afternoon, they were ready for their vaudeville debut.

They were enthusiastically received by their first theatre audience and a San Francisco newspaper of May 4th, 1933, paid them the following tribute:

“The vaudeville feature at the Golden Gate Theatre is Jackie, the \$50,000 lion. Jackie and his trainer furnish the best animal act I have even seen as far as enjoyment goes. There is none of the nerve-wracking tenseness that accompanies the usual animal offering. Instead, Jackie and his trainer appear behind a six-foot flimsy wire screen and go to work with as much enjoyment as the average man with a dog. When Jackie balks on a trick, he gets cuffed and he cuffs right back!”

If the driver of the taxi cab that Melvin Koontz ordered one morning during their visit, turned pale and trembled in his shoes when a full-grown lion bounded out of the theatre door into his cab, he was needlessly alarmed. No passenger ever sat more primly on a seat than did Jackie while he and his master were being driven to a newspaper building for an appointment with news photographers.

Was it politeness alone that prompted the people wait-

## WILD ANIMAL ACTORS

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ing for an elevator to step aside and allow the visitors sole use of the elevator? Or was it fear of a jungle beast that made them unwilling to be fellow passengers?

Jackie may have been a little glad when the strenuous trip was over and he was back in the familiar surroundings of the Zoo, with a chance to rest up before beginning work on his next picture—*Central Park*. Because any group of lions will now and then fight among themselves, Jackie has never had to share his quarters with other lions. He never appears in the arena with them nor is he allowed to work with them during the filming of a picture for he has such a fine disposition that both his owners and his trainer wish to do all they can to help him keep it.

Speaking of good dispositions, Tanner is another good-natured lion. He is a member of Captain Foix's group of trained lions that perform in the arena following Jackie's act. Tanner has starred in many screen roles during his time but his motion picture work now consists mainly of doubling for Jackie.

"Tanner is about eighteen years old," says Mr. Koontz who accompanies both animals when they go on location. "He is a fine performer and often doubles for Jackie when

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the action in the story calls for something that he can do better than Jackie. For instance; I can't use Jackie in a scene where people are running, because he chases them. He thinks anyone who runs is inviting him to play. Tanner won't do that. If he is to go from one side of the set to the other, he starts out and never gives a look at anything until he reaches the place he is headed for. Any number of persons running will not distract his attention. He has a one track mind!

"Something very funny happened while they were filming *Central Park*. In one place in the story the lion is supposed to run wild in a night club. He upsets tables and chairs and people run to get out of his way. I knew I couldn't use Jackie in this scene, so prepared for Tanner to play the role. I placed Tanner's cage on the opposite side of the set from where he was going to enter so that he could run across, straight into his cage.

"He entered the scene at the proper time, scrambled over tables and chairs and ran from the set. But he was so intent upon getting into his cage that he mistook the camera cage for his, and rushed in. It was barely large enough for the camera man, his assistant and the camera,

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so that when Tanner bolted in, all they could possibly do was to sit on him until he broke through some loose boards and reached his own quarters. We couldn't tell who was the more surprised, the men or the lion.

“Tanner has worked in many pictures during his eighteen years, and his image will no doubt be used long after he leaves this earth, because he is the lion that now shakes his head and roars on the screen at the beginning of every Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer technicolor picture. He is a veteran motion picture actor and one of the best workers we have.”

As for Jackie, he is always in demand. His work in earlier pictures and in the more recent ones—*I'm No Angel*, *Hollywood Party*, *The Circus Clown*, and *Tarzan and His Mate*—justifies the boasts his trainer makes when he says,

“There never was a lion as tame and nice to work with as Jackie. I can do anything with him. He is like a big dog and I treat him as one. I don't mean to say that I never have to call a halt on him. I do. On cold, brisk mornings when he is feeling particularly lively and I have him working in the arena, he sometimes tries his strength

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against mine. It is then I ask the boys to keep an eye on us because several times he has put his front legs around me and pulled tighter and tighter. I have yelled at him to stop and the sound of my angry voice has made him release his hold—that is, it has so far. Jackie is a marvelous animal. There isn't another lion like him in the world!"



#### CHAPTER FOUR

### ECKIE

### THE LEOPARD

**E**CKIE, the leopard, lies in his cage, eyes closed, supple body relaxed, legs outstretched, his front paws gracefully crossed.

“Hey there!” calls a distant voice. Eckie starts, straightens up, presses his nose against the bars, his dainty ears pricked to catch the sound of the familiar voice, his pale yellow eyes strained to catch a glimpse of the figure he knows and loves so well. Madame Olga is hailing



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someone. Suddenly she appears around the corner of the row of cages and stops in front of his cage. Eekie purrs a welcome as he sniffs and licks the fingers that gently scratch his nose and stroke his soft, velvety paws.

If you should ask Madame Olga about Eekie, wishing to know something of his history and of how he got into pictures, she would begin by telling you of Olga, Eekie's mother. While Colonel Selig and his company were making silent pictures in Jacksonville, Florida, one winter before they moved to California, a ferocious, young leopardess arrived one day from the jungles of India.

Since Madame Olga had chosen to specialize in the training of leopards, the spirited young beauty was given to her to break and to train. It was very evident that the responsibility was going to be anything but easy, for when anyone so much as approached her cage, the leopardess threw herself against the bars and by her low, throaty, cough-like growl, issued a warning not to come any closer.

If the slim, nervous leopardess wished to frighten the little trainer who spent so much of her time standing quietly observing her new charge, she was disappointed. If, on the other hand, she herself was afraid of this strange

## WILD ANIMAL ACTORS

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two-legged creature, her fears were slowly dispelled. This daily visitor brought fresh meat, and cool water—surely she could mean no harm!

Little by little the untamed beast lost her viciousness as her new friend worked and coaxed to gain her confidence and affection. It was a long, hard struggle, with the leopardess more than once charging the woman as they faced each other in the arena. But Madame Olga knew from past experiences that her efforts would be rewarded. They were. Olga gradually became adjusted to her new surroundings. She learned to obey commands and could at last be trusted to work with the other leopards in the leopard act and in pictures.

The move to California interrupted picture making for a time, but it was not long after the animals had all been established at the new Selig Zoo, that lions, tigers, leopards and pumas were again running, climbing and leaping for the motion picture cameras.

Olga, who had at first been so difficult and dangerous to handle, now displayed an even, gentle disposition, a high degree of intelligence, and complete confidence in her trainer. In fact so deep was this confidence and trust,



*Madame Olga displays Olga's claws to a nature study class.*



*Essee meets the Captain of the U.S. Emma Alexander*

## WILD ANIMAL ACTORS

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that whenever the least little thing happened to frighten or confuse the leopardess, she ran to Madame Olga, and if she could rub against the little trainer's legs or put a paw on her knee, she regained her poise and became perfectly calm.

This implicit trust was strikingly demonstrated to a Los Angeles dentist one day, when Madame Olga appeared in his office with Olga and asked him to look at a tooth which she felt sure was paining the leopardess.

"Jump into the chair," directed Madame Olga. The animal obeyed. "Now I'll hold open her jaws while you work in her mouth. See," smiled the woman as Olga rested her paws on her trainer's arms and allowed the man to drill in the cavity and then to fill it with gold. "As long as I am close to her she is not afraid." The work completed, Olga jumped down from her chair and was led out to the waiting automobile, leaving an astonished, admiring dentist staring after her.

A few more years of picture making and then came the glorious opportunity to sail away to the inviting Hawaiian Islands. It was in May, 1923, that seven leopards in their cage were placed aboard the trim ocean liner in a

## WILD ANIMAL ACTORS

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corner of the hold that would be easily accessible to their trainer. Every day, Madame Olga brought food and water to her pets and carefully watched over them. Because she could always depend upon Olga to be well behaved, she several times slipped a studded collar about Olga's lovely spotted neck, and took her for a stroll upon the sunny deck.

Every day for seven weeks, the "Leopard Lady" and her leopards gave their famous arena act in the beautiful Aloha Park. When they were not working, Madame Olga and Olga were to be found on the beach. A full-grown leopardess playing about was a fascinating sight so that whenever they sunned and romped on the sands they found themselves the center of attention.

Rested and refreshed from their vacation under tropical skies, the travelers arrived home just in time to begin work on their first picture of the new season.

July, August, September, October, slipped by and when November came, a piece of canvas was hung over the front of Olga's cage to shield her from the light and from curious, prying eyes.

On November seventh, when Madame Olga lifted a corner of the cage covering and peeked inside, she found

## WILD ANIMAL ACTORS

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Olga lovingly licking first one and then the other little ball of breathing fur that nestled in the straw beside her. One baby leopard did not live to see the outside world and the other had to be taken from Olga when it was discovered that she did not have enough milk to nourish the hungry cub.

Whenever a four-footed mother at the Zoo refuses to care, or for some reason is not capable of caring, for her babies, they are taken from her and given to Olga Celeste. Her practical knowledge and the loving care she gives animals, fit her for the role of foster mother that she is so often called upon to play.

The tiny spotted kitten with his wrinkled nose, squeaky mew and shaky legs, curled up contentedly in the warm, soft bed Madame Olga provided for him in her home, and opened wide his little pink mouth each time the teaspoonful of diluted milk was offered him.

The naming of the baby leopard was left to his foster mother, who decided to call him Jack, for Jack Dempsey. And Jack it would have been had not the broad Swedish accent of a young relative of Madame Olga's changed the "Jackie" to "Eckie."

The first six weeks of Eckie's life were uneventful, eat-

## WILD ANIMAL ACTORS

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ing and sleeping being the natural daily program for animal and human babies alike. Suddenly, out of a clear sky, the helpless baby leopard developed a severe case of pneumonia. During the two and a half weeks that Eckie lay desperately ill, Madame Olga watched over him constantly. For two days and two nights, when she most feared for his life, she went without sleep, so that she might rub him again and again with camphorated oil, and turn him first on one side and then on the other, in an effort to ease his breathing. Eckie was born a healthy little leopard so that with good care he soon showed signs of improvement. But his woolly flannel sweater was kept on him until he was entirely well again.

Eckie's first birthday found him weighing one hundred pounds and loosing his baby teeth. Baby that he was, his foster mother wondered whether or not she should take him on the Canadian tour she was planning for the leopard act. To leave him at home was really unthinkable, so when the Leopard Lady and her spotted cats set sail from Los Angeles, Eckie was, in his estimation, an important member of the troupe.

Had Eckie been human, he no doubt would have be-



## WILD ANIMAL ACTORS

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come excited over his first press notice which appeared in a San Francisco newspaper upon his arrival there. A good big piece of raw meat would have been more to a leopard's liking than was the article which read,

"When the S. S. Emma Alexander pulled into San Francisco harbor today, there was a full passenger list. Among the arrivals were scores of Southern Californians and Olga Celeste with Eckie, her pet leopard. Eckie is the property of Madame Olga, an animal trainer who arrived at this port on the Alexander, en route to Victoria, B. C. Eckie became the pet of two hundred passengers for his behavior was exemplary.

"Eckie is one of a troupe of a dozen leopards bound for a Canadian tour. Soon after the steamer left the southern port, his leopardship was taken for a walk on the deck by his owner. The utter friendliness of the beast endeared him to the passenger list and his day was one of caresses without limit. Eckie is a year old and was raised by Madame Olga from the time he was a week old."

At every stop on their tour, Madame Olga and the leopards were enthusiastically received. While Eckie could not claim a share in the honors heaped upon the per-

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formers of the leopard act, he was perfectly content to be his mistress' constant companion. He did, however, make a great hit with newspaper reporters who had never before petted and played with a live leopard.

"I am sure Eckie likes you," Madame Olga told one writer during an interview in her dressing room in Portland, Oregon. "When anyone comes near him and he lays back his ears, look out—for then I know he does not like them. He only lets them alone. But my older leopards would attack. They immediately sense an enemy among people and form likes and dislikes very readily. A lion or a tiger will sulk and only attack when one's back is turned or when cornered. A leopard will fight at all times and charges as one faces them. They will often attack animals larger than themselves. They hate each other and are ever ready for a fight. I am a perpetual referee. After maturity, they always attack with claws extended and often tear each other's pads. Eckie has never been teased or harshly treated and he knows only play. He has no fear of human beings."

Eckie came home from the extended trip, an older and a wiser little leopard, but he was still too young to know

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the meaning of buggy whip, arena, camera, or pedestal. So he was again left at Madame Olga's home to romp in the back yard with an Airedale puppy for a playmate.

The two animals had great fun chasing each other and playing together, but the real treat for them was to be taken over to the Zoo where the boys tussled with them and let them chase a football across the broad lawns. "Sic 'em, Eckie," a player would say, pointing to another player, and Eckie the rascal, would be off in a flash to neatly trip the runner with one of his paws!

Another outing that Eckie always enjoyed was accompanying Madame Olga when she dined out. With the leash fastened onto his collar, he was led into a restaurant as one would lead a dog. Each new waitress doubtfully and timidly eyed the jungle cat when he jumped up onto a chair and sat waiting for his meal to be served. But her fear always turned to affectionate admiration as the gentle well-behaved Eckie sat quietly eating his milk and eggs.

These were happy, carefree days for Eckie. He was allowed the run of Madame Olga's house and yard and was a welcome visitor whenever he felt inclined to call

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upon the neighbors. That is, he *was* welcome until something happened which noticeably dampened their enthusiasm for his company.

Madame Olga had been invited to dinner at the home of friends who lived just two doors away, and had hurriedly left without hooking the back door screen. Eekie, the uninvited, became lonesome, discovered the open door and slipped out. He tracked his mistress to the neighbor's home and when his repeated scratchings at the door failed to bring a response, he climbed a fig tree outside the dining room window which was at the front of the house. From his high perch on a strong limb, he could look down into the room and observe all that went on. How to attract their attention was another problem.

Along came a young man to call for the young lady of the house. Being a bit late, he cut across the lawn and passed directly under the bough on which the watchful Eekie crouched. A leap, a shriek, and out rushed the diners to find the caller stretched out on the lawn in a faint. There was not a scratch on his body, but the shock of feeling a wild animal on his back had caused him to faint from sheer fright. Right then and there Madame Olga decided



*Midnight is a rare black leopard*

*Maame Oga produced a plate of raw meat*



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it was high time Eckie moved to the Zoo where she could keep her eye on him.

With young animals as with children, the first few years of their lives are very important ones in their physical and mental development. They must have plenty of fresh air, nourishing food, and healthful exercise. Then when they have reached the required age—with leopards it is from five to six years—they are ready to be introduced to the work they are capable of doing.

Eckie's training at the hands of his foster mother began when he was five years old. He must learn to shift from his cage to the arena and back again; to mount a pedestal and sit there until given the command to jump down; to take every cue given him in the arena act and to master special tricks that suited his abilities.

One of Eckie's feats in the leopard act as it is given today, is to jump up onto a pedestal eight feet high and leap across a space ten feet wide to another pedestal of the same height. Eckie and Midnight, a beautiful, rare, black leopard are the leapers of the act. New stunts are learned to replace those that have been used for a number of seasons, so that the animals are in constant training.

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For a long time a feature was included in the act which never before had been attempted by a leopard trainer anywhere. In it, when Madame Olga called them to a table in the center of the arena, Eckie shared the spotlight with Princess, Bozo, Sugar and Lovey. After each cat had taken his seat, their trainer produced a plate of raw meat and with her bare fingertips took a strip of meat at a time and fed each animal in turn. It was a hazardous feat, for if two of the leopards had fallen to fighting over the same piece, the lives of all would have been endangered.

“We must eliminate all fear and nervousness in the arena,” says Madame Olga. “Close study and love for the animals helps us in this but the ability to command them is largely a gift. They instinctively respect people. I love the animals, those who are good because they try to please and those who are bad because they have so much spirit. And I guess after all, that is the real secret of my influence over them.”

Under Madame Olga’s careful, understanding guidance, Eckie was introduced to the motion picture camera. One of his first screen appearances was with Sid Chaplin in *The Missing Link*, where he made several daring leaps.



## WILD ANIMAL ACTORS

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Eckie worked with Jacqueline Logan in *The Leopard Lady* and again in the spectacular film, *King of Kings*, in which Miss Logan played the part of Mary Magdalene. The setting for the opening scene was the beautiful gardens of Mary Magdalene's palace, with Madame Olga, dressed as a slave girl, leading Eckie, her mistress' pet leopard, down a flight of marble stairs. Everything was going nicely as the two descended the steps but as they neared the bottom, a swan in the pool ahead sighted the leopard and flapped his wings in alarm. Eckie responded with a lunge towards the swan and pulled so hard on the leash that the strain of holding him back broke off both heels of Madame Olga's shoes.

The courts of the Roman emperors were as splendid and as costly as their owners' imaginations could make them. Anything new, and therefore expensive, anything rare, and therefore costing a great deal of gold, was brought to grace the palace of the emperor. Some of the wild animals known today were very familiar to the people of Nero's time. A leopard was not uncommon, but still rare enough to be selected by Poppea, Nero's wife, for a pet. In the motion picture *Sign of the Cross*, Poppea,

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played by Claudette Colbert, had Eekie for her pet leopard and expected nothing more of him than to allow himself to be led about in a jeweled harness, and lie on an enormous velvet pillow, adding his bit to the beauty and elegance of Nero's court.

As any actor who does his work well is apt to be called for a similar part, Eekie was again cast as member of a royal household, the favorite of Cleopatra, in the picture named for the Queen of the Nile. Mr. Cecil B. de Mille directed this film and as far as Eekie was concerned, was the most attractive person on the lot. Mr. de Mille and Olga, Eekie's mother, had worked together in many pictures and had been the best of friends.

So it was quite natural for Mr. de Mille to transfer his affection's to Olga's son and for Eekie to recognize an old friend of the family who is an animal lover. During the periods when actual shooting was not going on, Eekie strained at his leash, begging Madame Olga to allow him to visit Mr. de Mille. Sometimes the famous director had difficulty keeping his footing, so hard did Eekie rub against his legs wanting attention and showing his affection for the man.

## WILD ANIMAL ACTORS

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“Working animals in pictures is harder than working them in any exhibition or circus,” explains Madame Olga who has more experience than most trainers in the picture business. “The reason is that the animals must really act for the films, not just go through mechanical stunts rehearsed many times before. Many of our animals are excellent actors. Talent varies with them as with human actors. As a rule, I think wild animals have more ability than domestic animals. They get your idea more quickly, and if they wish, are more clever in working it out.

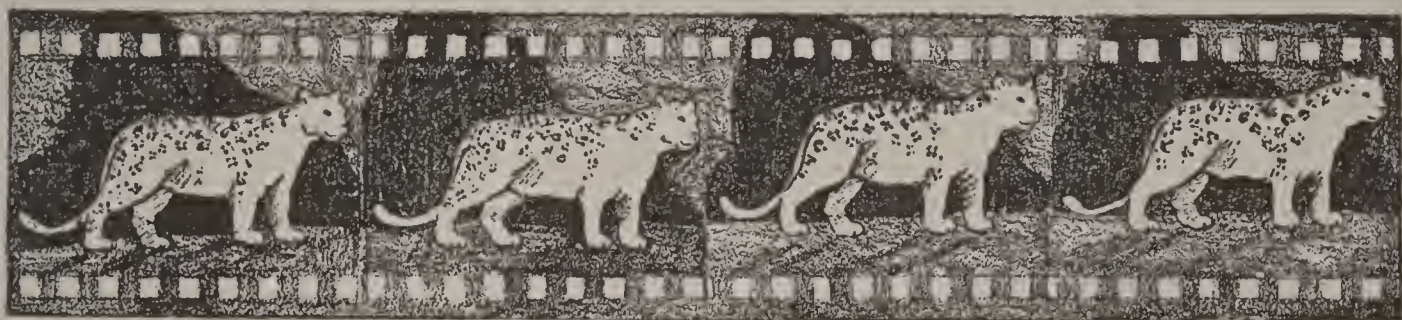
“Leopards are usually good actors. They are willing to use their originality and frequently invent bits of stage business. For instance, in the comedy *The Boarding House Ham*, the players rushed madly from the room when the leopards appeared and one of the men accidentally dropped a roll of bills. To the surprise of us all, Olga picked up the money and gave it to one of the players.

“Olga lived to be thirty years old and I have hopes that Eckie will also reach a good old age. I have many nice pictures to remember Olga by, but Eckie’s beauty has been preserved in something even more lasting. Last spring, Mr. Wheeler Williams, the well known sculptor,



ECKIE POSES FOR MR. WHEELER WILLIAMS

modeled a life-size statue of Eckie in bronze and gold, for the Museum of Natural History in New York City. I was given a small model of the figure and it will always occupy a prominent place in my home. It was a lovely honor," and Eckie's proud foster mother strokes him affectionately, "but I prefer the live Eckie and shall keep him as long as I can. We've been through a lot together, Eckie and I!"



## CHAPTER FIVE

### GERTIE THE JAGUAR

**I**F the small, black and orange sign which reads, JAGUAR — SOUTH AMERICA, were taken down from the bars of Gertie's cage, most Zoo visitors would remark when they pause to look at her, "Leopards are beautiful creatures, aren't they?"

In circuses, leopards and jaguars are called "fool 'em cats," because circus goers invariably confuse the two. It is little wonder, for at a glance they do look very much

## WILD ANIMAL ACTORS

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alike. The public is more familiar with leopards because they are more frequently pictured by artists and photographers, more has been written about them and they are more often on exhibition. Therefore every spotted animal in a zoo or circus is a "leopard" and few know a jaguar when they see one.

They are however, easily distinguished when observed at close range. Gertie, the jaguar, is bigger than Eckie, the leopard. Her body is heavier, her head wider and rounder, and her legs shorter and stockier. Her tail is thicker, not as long, and does not taper off toward the end as Eckie's does. The most interesting variance is their markings. Both animals have tawny, spotted coats but Eckie's black spots are solid rosettes, while Gertie's are inclined to be angular and broken, each ring enclosing several dark spots.

It seems strange that two wild beasts that inhabit such widely separated parts of the globe should be so much alike in appearance and have similar habits. Leopards belong to the Old World, living in Africa, Asia and some portions of China and Japan. Jaguars are natives of South America where they are most plentiful, Central America and Mexico.

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Both animals are remarkably agile and are alert, cunning and dangerous, attacking their victims in much the same fashion. The jaguar is the most versatile of all the cat animals, for he preys upon deer, cattle, horses and dogs, climbs trees and eats monkeys and birds. Because he is a swimmer and fond of water, rivers are additional hunting grounds for him where he catches fish, turtles and alligators.

A cab driver was called upon one night by Madame Olga Celeste to drive her and her jaguar pet to KFI Radio Station in Los Angeles. He was much too eager to be rid of his wild animal passenger to be at all interested in whether the beast was an Indian leopard or a South American jaguar. His consternation was mild however, compared to that of the trembling musicians who hastily laid aside their instruments and excused themselves when Gertie appeared in the broadcasting room.

“But they had nothing to fear,” laughs Madame Olga in telling about the incident. “Gertie is a lovely animal and pays no attention to people. She works in closeups in front of the camera and many stars have posed with her because we can safely use her in making publicity stills. We were at KFI to bring our greetings to Mr. Frank

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Buck who was the guest speaker on the program. His jungle picture, *Bring 'Em Back Alive*, had just been released and we had come to wish him success with it. I said a few words, and then when we put Gertie on a stool so that her head was close to the microphone, she made her little speech. Yes, she really did speak, that is, in her own jungle language! To get her to talk, I stroked her head and whispered to her and her answers to me sounded to the people who were listening in as though she was speaking to them!"

While Gertie does enjoy the distinction among the other animals at the Zoo of having broadcast over the radio, she has not had as much motion picture experience as her neighbors have. Most jungle pictures call for animals that are natives of Africa, but whenever a story with a South American background is to be filmed and a jaguar is needed, Gertie, a willing dependable actress, is ready for the role.





*Artie rehearses her radio speech  
for Mr. Frank Buck and Madama Olga*

*Fabre and the guest of honor at the luncheon*





## CHAPTER SIX

### JALMERS AND JOCKAMO SOUTH AMERICAN PUMAS

**I**T takes a vicious, strong cat to kill a bull," said Mr. William Foix, wild animal trainer, when he read the following newspaper item:

**MOUNTAIN LION KILLS FINE BULL:** Newhall, California.—The menace of the mountain lion has not been altogether eradicated in this section. It is reported today from the Charles Tunstall ranch in Pelona Valley that a lion got into the cow lot and killed one of Tunstall's finest pedigreed bulls.

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The last lion that made a raid in this section picked a fight with a ranch bulldog. The latter was killed with a blow of the lion's paw before he fled back into the mountains.

"Such reports are not uncommon in this region," Mr. Foix continued. "The mountain lion, or puma, as we trainers call him, is the most fierce, destructive enemy the ranchers have.

"Jaguars and pumas are the two great felines of the American continent. Here at the California Zoological Gardens, we have only the one jaguar, Gertie, but we own ten pumas. Lions, tigers and leopards come from the Old World across the water, but both jaguars and pumas are natives of the New World, the Americas.

"The early explorers of the Atlantic Coast thought the puma with his smooth, reddish coat and great strength was a lion, and that is what they called him. The early settlers gave him the name 'panther,' but still the name 'lion' survived and was carried out to the Pacific Coast and throughout the states along the Canadian boundary.

"It is in the Rocky Mountain and Coastal states that these great cats live in such numbers today, and are com-

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monly known as mountain lions because they live in the mountains and hills. I have heard that they are almost extinct in the eastern part of the United States. In South America, they are called 'pumas,' a name given them by the Peruvians. 'Cougar' is another name, of French origin, used to refer to these lion-like creatures. But whether we call them cougars, panthers, mountain lions or pumas, they are still the same animals that range over the largest territory of any wild cat. They may be found in the less civilized regions from Canada, south into Mexico, Central America, and down into the most southern portion of South America."

The trainer stepped over the guard rail and up to the puma's cage. "As far as I have been able to observe, the puma is the only wild animal of the feline family that purrs like a house cat. Perhaps I can get Jalmers to purr now. Hello, Jalmers old boy," he said. "How would you like to have your head scratched?"

In answer, the slender cat pressed his nose between the bars. Then as the familiar fingers scratched on first one side and then on the other side of Jalmer's small, shapely head, a low, steady rumble was distinctly audible

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—exactly like the soft purring of a contented tabby on a warm hearth rug.

Few persons can experience such a demonstration by a captive puma, but stories are told of travelers who have heard the purring of a contented wild puma. An official of British Guiana tells such a tale.

While on a trip up one of the big rivers in his steam launch, he stopped to take aboard an elderly miner who asked for passage to a certain gold mine. The stranger took his meals on the boat but slung his bed at night between two trees on shore as did the crew so that the captain could have the cabin. One morning there was a good deal of laughing and talking when the crew brought aboard the miner's hammock.

“What is the joke?” asked the captain.

“Tiger sleep with old man last night,” said one of the Indians pointing to a hollow in a mound of leaves between two trees. There was little doubt that a puma had been lying under the hammock. The owner of the boat turned to the miner.

“Didn't you hear something in the night?” he asked.

“No,” replied the old man shaking his white head. “Only the low croaking of frogs awakened me.”

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This sound imagined by the sleeping man was without doubt, the soft purring of the friendly puma enjoying the companionship of a sleeping man.

In different sections of North and South America, the puma is regarded with varying respect. The Gauchos and Indians of the southern plains and the Central American forests are firm in the belief handed down to them from the days of the first Spanish conquests, that he is the only wild cat friendly to man. In fact, the name given him by the Spaniards of old was "amigo del Cristiano," meaning "the Christian's friend."

The first settlers in the eastern part of the United States held no such friendly feelings for this "lion," as they called him. To them he was a dangerous and ferocious enemy and they told terrifying tales of his stealth and cruelty as he would lie hidden on a branch and then spring swiftly down upon some passing traveler.

Today, in western United States he is still an enemy to man. Experience has taught the ranchers of this section of the country that the mountain lion, or puma, is fierce and destructive. He preys not only upon deer and other wild game, but he is especially fond of young colts, cattle and sheep. Not content with stealing into a flock

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of sheep and killing just one, he kills right and left and is known to have destroyed as many as one hundred sheep in a single night's raid on a sheep fold.

Jalmers and Jockamo, captive pumas, do not have to forage for their food as do their wild relatives who roam the hills and mountains about Los Angeles. Fresh meat and water are brought daily to their respective cages and every effort is made to keep them healthy and contented.

Of the two, Jalmers is by far the more noted motion picture performer. Like Jackie the lion, and Colonel the tiger, Jalmers' parents were screen stars long before he came into the world. Boy, his father, and Babe, his mother, were veteran performers for many years in Colonel Selig's screen attractions. It was natural then for at least one of the cubs born to such gifted parents, to carry on the family talents.

A strange fact relating to puma family life is that mother pumas frequently kill their babies in moments of fright when they think a human is going to harm them. For this and other reasons, it is sometimes necessary to take the babies away from their mother. At such times Madame Olga plays the role of foster mother.



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When the baby Jalmers, his brother Buddy and his sister Betty, were given to her to care for, she took them to her home. There she arranged a soft bed for them and every two and a half hours fed them an ounce and a half of milk from an ordinary nursing bottle.

The three little pumas grew and thrived. The black spots on their coats and the black rings on their tails, Nature's protection for them in their natural environment, gradually faded away. Soon they were old enough to begin the lessons that lay ahead of them.

Pumas mature more rapidly than lions, tigers and leopards. They are full grown when they are about two and a half years old. That is why they must be broken and trained at an earlier age than other cat animals.

According to Madame Olga, who worked many hours with him, Jalmers was an apt pupil from the very beginning. His dependable disposition which is remarkable, for pumas are notoriously high strung and skittish, endeared him to everyone. He gained his first screen laurels as a comedian in a hilarious comedy called *Tell It To The Judge*. Throughout the picture he popped up in all sorts of surprising places. A particularly funny scene was laid

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in a Pullman car with Jalmers poking his head between two curtains and licking the smooth, bald head of a sleeping passenger.

Jockamo is an actress in her own right although she isn't regarded as a very dependable one. Her chief claim for mention in a book about motion picture wild animals is based on the fact that she is the mother of two young pumas that appear in pictures. Her babies, born in March, 1934, were scarcely two months old when they made their first appearance before a camera in a film called *Young Eagles*. This was a story in serial form of two American Boy Scouts traveling in South America. The boys find one of the babies caught between two branches of a fallen tree and while they are trying to release it, the mother puma appears, thinks the boys are harming her baby, and so springs at them. Of course they escape her attack.

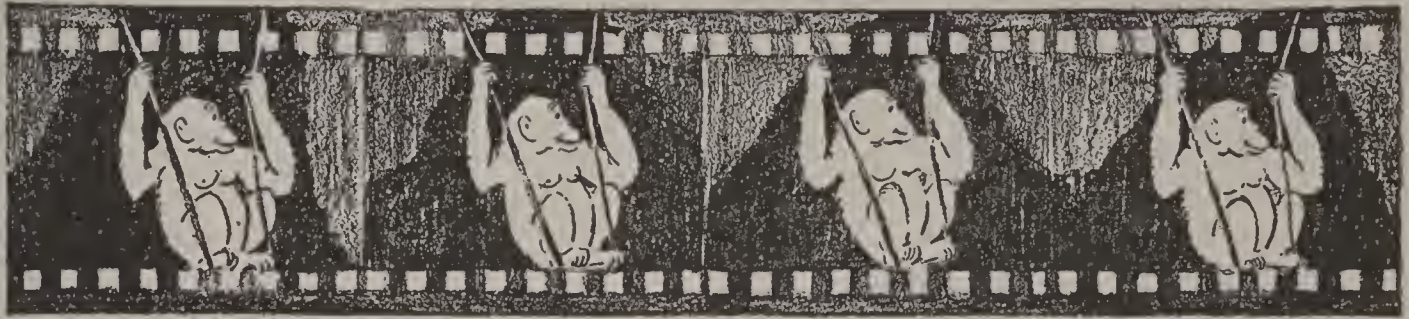
The two captive pumas, Jalmers and Jockamo, know nothing of the wild carefree lives their untamed brothers lead. They will never meet death from a blazing gun in the hands of a revengeful rancher. They will continue to enjoy their safe, pleasant home at the California Zoological Gardens, among persons who treat them kindly.



*Yockamos babies hide behind their mother*

*Peggy with Mr. and Mrs. Bentley*





## CHAPTER SEVEN

### JIGGS THE CHIMPANZEE

**H**IGH above the heads of swimming hippos, slinking tigers and stealthy lions, the chimpanzees swing through the trees of African forests in search of food and fun. They travel in families, or groups of families, chattering, shrieking, howling, as they fling themselves from tree to tree seeking the fruits on which they live.

Next to the gorilla, the chimpanzee is the largest of

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the man-like apes. He is usually about four feet tall. That is, he would be if he stood up straight. But he hunches over like a little old man, for he uses his long arms and hands for support when he is hurrying along the ground. He is heavily built, with powerful chest and arms, developed by his constant swinging from branch to branch.

Jiggs is as sturdy a little chimpanzee as ever swung through the jungle. He was one year old when he was captured in the Belgian Congo, and was so small he had to be fed from a bottle. He grew steadily in size, but unfortunately his kindergarten days were spent with a man who did not understand or care for animals and who could not see in Jiggs the clever, intelligent chimpanzee he was capable of being. He thought him dull and stupid. He did not try to teach him anything and Jiggs sat in his cage neglected, howling his protest at being unappreciated. Each prolonged howl brought a ducking in a bucket of water. Altogether, those were unhappy days.

Today, Jiggs lives with Mr. and Mrs. Gentry, his owners, in a home where he is treated with all kindness and respect. Surely memories of those sad days can have no place in his recollections.



JIGGS RESTS ON A BENCH

The Gentry home is a low rambling house with a yard which is Jiggs' particular province. At one end is another house, a small one, but Jiggs' own. It is built of strong, durable materials and has a living room with a fire place, and a bedroom with a built-in bunk. In the closet in his bedroom hang the clothes that he sometimes puts on for special occasions. He usually wears only the black, shaggy suit Mother Nature gave him. But if he is to do some impersonations or his owners want him to look fun-

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ny, he selects some suitable clothes from his well-stocked wardrobe.

Here in his own quarters, Jiggs lives a happy existence. Not that he spends much of his time indoors. After all, he is an animal and the happiest when he is out-of-doors. It is only at night that he is willing and glad to go indoors to his bed. In fact he doesn't wait until dark, but retires at four-thirty in the afternoon and sleeps until morning when he hears someone astir in the big house.

Many of Jiggs' days are spent at some studio or away on location. But when he is at home there are tricks to be practiced and new ones to be learned. Mr. Gentry spends long hours teaching Jiggs to do certain things when he tells him to do them. It has taken much patience on the part of both of them for Jiggs to learn what his trainer means when he says, "Walk like a little old man," and Jiggs clasps his hands behind his back and paces up and down; or when Mr. Gentry says, "Turn a flip," and Jiggs turns a neat handspring.

Some of his tricks other chimpanzees have learned too, but there is one that Jiggs alone can do—jump from a flying trapeze. Mrs. Gentry's sister, a trapeze artist known



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as Rosalie, performs this trick with Jiggs by hanging by her knees high in the air on a large trapeze and holding a small one. She swings slowly back and forth while Jiggs stands on a platform twenty feet away and waits for just the right second when he can leap and catch the little trapeze Rosalie holds. It takes great skill for men and women trapeze experts to execute this trick so that it is a great accomplishment for a chimpanzee too. Jiggs even goes his human companions one better, for he can hang by his toes on the swinging trapeze.

Another unusual trick and one that Jiggs likes to perform is the slant wire slide. For this, a wire is stretched from the balcony in a theatre down to the stage. At the top, Jiggs carefully gets his balance so that when the signal is given him, he can glide swiftly down the wire high over the heads in the audience, to a perfect landing on the stage. Mrs. Gentry, thinking he would look comical wearing a little tarlatan skirt while doing this trick, made him one. The stiff, pink skirt did look very funny, but when it tickled Jiggs' sides so that it made him chuckle, she decided it might be the means of his losing his balance, and so gave up the idea.



JIGGS STREAKED UP THE POLE

Mr. Gentry tells of an amusing experience he had with Jiggs one day while they were practicing their pole trick in the back yard. Mr. Gentry holds the twenty-five-foot pole and has Jiggs climb up and stand on his head on the cross beam at the top. Jiggs streaked up the pole when commanded, but just as he rested the top of his head on the beam, he happened to look down and saw himself mirrored in the fish pond close to where his trainer stood. It was either his reflection that startled him or the thought



JIGGS PAUSED HALF-WAY DOWN THE POLE

that he might fall into the water. He scrambled down the pole as fast as he could slide, forgetting all about the other half of the trick, which was to pause about ten feet down, keep his head close to the pole, and stretch out his body at right angles to the pole.

There is no special routine to the tricks Jiggs has been taught to perform. He has learned to associate certain sounds, that is words, with what he is supposed to do, and does the tricks in whatever order they are given him. No

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commands are needed however, when his tricycle, bicycle or scooter are brought out for him. He is very fond of these toys and whirls around the garden path to his own pleasure and to the grief of anyone who gets in his way!

Much as he enjoys his bicycle, his greatest pleasure comes in riding in the family car. When he thinks there is the slightest chance that a drive is in the offing, he sets up a great clamor until he is seated in the back seat all by himself. Jiggs never wears a collar or restraining chain, but sits calmly, waving his hand at anyone who will wave to him.

Fortunately for Jiggs, there are many opportunities for him to ride. There are calls from studios that often mean long trips to the location where the picture is being filmed. There are engagements too, such as the one not long ago when he appeared on the assembly program of a Junior High School near his home. The most famous motion picture star could not have made a greater impression. Jiggs' fan mail for the next few weeks was impressive, for every boy in the school wrote him a letter. Robert Schelb in the 9th grade wrote the following tribute to Jiggs' performance.

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“When I saw Jiggs the chimpanzee on our Starr League program last Friday, March 16th, I at once recognized him from the movies. I have seen him in *Tarzan* and in *Dirty Work*. Mr. Gentry, the owner of Jiggs, can handle him very well. He is a well-trained chimpanzee and every one of the boys I talked to liked him. When he was performing, a hush fell over the auditorium so that you could have heard a pin drop; and when his act was over the applause was so loud you couldn't have heard a cannon go off. Jiggs could walk on his hands and turn a back flip better than lots of boys in Mr. John's tumbling class here at school.

“I am very glad that Mr. Gentry promised to bring Jiggs back to Thomas Starr King with his trapeze and let him perform a little longer for perhaps the whole school instead of just the boys. Mr. Gentry is a lucky man to own a chimpanzee for I know that I would like to have one as a pet myself. I am now closing with the hopes that Mr. Gentry brings Jiggs back again.”

And Mr. Gentry did bring Jiggs back again, this time for a father and son banquet. The fathers did not write any letters to Jiggs, but from the applause after his per-

## WILD ANIMAL ACTORS

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formance, they enjoyed it every bit as much as their sons did. And Jiggs himself? He loved it! He always has a fine time performing his tricks and ordinarily behaves himself like the well-mannered little chimpanzee he is being taught to be.

Of course there are regrettable times when he does not behave, when temptation in the form of a jam jar for instance, gets in his way. One morning he was in the big house playing around while Mrs. Gentry was preparing his breakfast. His own breakfast consists of bread and milk, his luncheon fruit, whatever is in season, and his supper raw vegetables. Jam, such as Jiggs saw on the dining room table, a large jar of it, has no place in his menu. But he likes it and wanted some. Suddenly, although he knew the jam was not for him, his desire became uncontrollable. Making one flying leap across the table, he gathered up the jar under his arm, and was out the front door, running down the street with it hugged close to him in the curve of his arm like a football. With his free hand he dipped up the jam and transferred it to his mouth as fast as he could. But it ran out of the tilted jar faster than he could catch it, and dripped stickily all over him.



*"Is my costume all right?" asks Jiggs of Our Gang*



*Jiggs and Buster Crabbe from "King of the Jungle"*



## WILD ANIMAL ACTORS

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Of course Mrs. Gentry was after him in a few seconds, but by the time she caught him several houses down the street, huddled in a basement doorway feverishly eating jam, the damage was done. It was a sorry little monkey that was taken home to be punished. It was almost punishment enough for Jiggs to endure the discomfort of getting the sticky mass out of his long hair. Perhaps he remembers the sad day when he tried to make a touchdown with a jam jar. To be on the safe side now, the Gentrys never leave a jam jar where it can tempt him.

Another extraordinary occasion, the opening of a Tarzan picture in Ventura, California, found Jiggs in trouble again. There had been interviews with newspaper reporters, for Jiggs had played a very prominent part, there had been speeches in his own mysterious language over the radio, there had been all sorts of forbidden things to eat. In fact, Jiggs was doing just about as he pleased that day, for rather than reprove him before his admirers, Mr. and Mrs. Gentry withheld the restraining hand.

Before the evening performance at the theatre at which Jiggs was to make his personal appearance, a banquet was in progress at a large hotel. Many dignitaries and

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city officials were seated at long tables with Jiggs in all his glory as one of the honored guests. He sat between his owners. By the time the main course was served, Jiggs seemed to be trying to think up things he shouldn't do just to see how far he would be allowed to go. He wanted something of everything his human fellow diners were eating, paying absolutely no attention to his own bowl of bread and milk.

At home, he sits at his own table and eats his bread and milk with a spoon as nicely as you please, even pausing at the suggestion of Mr. Gentry, to daintily wipe off his mouth and chin with a napkin. But now he reached rudely for food not meant for him, until, his patience tried to the breaking point, Mr. Gentry took him back to the theatre and put him in their dressing room. The door was closed and a watchman stationed outside, his chair tilted back against the door. Mr. Gentry returned to the hotel.

It took Jiggs but a few minutes to make up his mind what he was going to do about his plight, and but a few minutes more to open the door, knock the chair out from under the astonished watchman and scamper down the stairway. A picture was being shown on the screen, but

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all eyes were turned in astonishment on Jiggs as he dashed up the aisle from the front of the theatre making for the door, with the watchman in pursuit.

There were only a few blocks to the hotel. Jiggs remembered where it was and was bound for it as fast as he could go. The amazement of the theatre audience was nothing compared to the wonderment of people on the streets of the town to see a chimpanzee fleeing down the main avenue as though all the beasts in the jungle were after him.

About half a block from the hotel, a sense of how naughty he had been and visions of the spanking in store must have overtaken him, for of all unexpected things to do, he suddenly sat down in the middle of the sidewalk and began to cry! The worried, panting watchman caught up with him and was surprised to have Jiggs tearfully beg to be picked up and carried. He was like a tired little boy who had had too much excitement for one day. Knowing nothing else to do with the whimpering little chimpanzee, the man carried him on to the hotel.

Installed once more in his chair between Mr. and Mrs. Gentry, Jiggs became the picture of good behavior. He

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meekly ate his bread and milk, his head downcast and although one could see his eyes look longingly sideways at what others were eating, not another false move did he make.

It was this memorable occasion that ushered in Jiggs' first personal appearance in connection with a film in which he had played. He had appeared in other Tarzan pictures; a comedy with the Two Black Crows in which he had great fun hurling cocoanuts down on the men below; with Laurel and Hardy in *Dirty Work*; in a Charley Chase comedy; and with the beloved Our Gang in one of their pictures. He played roles in the more recent *Zoo in Budapest*, *The Fire Chief*, *Tarzan and His Mate* and in *King of the Jungle*.

He enjoys his work before the camera and veteran actor that he now is, he knows what is meant when the director says "Cut." It means, "Stop the cameras, the scene is over." When Jiggs hears this familiar call he swings down from the jungle set trees to rest and play about until the next scene.

Jiggs played in more scenes than any of the other animals used in *Tarzan and His Mate*. A number of his tricks

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were worked into the story. Everyone who saw the picture remembers one—when he crawled along the ground on his stomach, keeping well hidden by the tall grass so that Mary, the rhinoceros, who was supposed to be chasing him could not see him. It was Jiggs who climbed down from the tree where the apes had taken the wounded Tarzan and picked the wild plant filled with white healing milk for Tarzan's head. Jiggs was the leader of the band of monkeys, Tarzan's friends. He had a prominent part, he played it well, and endeared himself to Johnny Weissmuller and to Maureen O'Sullivan who shared many scenes with him.

Sometimes it is difficult to think of Jiggs as an animal, so adept has he become at performing the ordinary accomplishments of man. At home, when he comes into the big house, he often goes to the radio, turns it on, twists the dial until he finds something to his liking, and then sits and listens attentively. He doesn't listen for more than a few seconds at a time, but is off to some other pastime—perhaps pounding on the piano as hard as he can pound. Even *he* seems to prefer the radio music to the terrible din he makes. He likes too, to play with the typewriter,

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hitting the keys squarely, but puzzled as to what is wrong when he hits the spacer key and no little black marks appear on the paper!

He is the delight of the people in studio offices when he comes in and amuses them with his clever antics. He does one thing of his own accord that never fails to send them off into gales of laughter. Upon entering any waiting room where magazines are lying about, he invariably picks up one, seats himself with knees crossed, and thumbs through it looking at the pictures. He is a nuisance in the opinion of the telephone operators at the studio however, for he takes mischievous pleasure in picking up the receiver, holding it to his ear and listening to them vainly asking what number he is calling! This little trick of Jiggs always brings an operator flying to the telephone expecting to find that some one has left the receiver off the hook. Instead, she finds a delighted little chimpanzee having the time of his life.

Because he is altogether an obedient worker, an amusing companion, and a lovable little fellow, it is no wonder that Mr. and Mrs. Gentry regard him as a member of the family. They frequently invite him to eat at the table



Jiggs and Baby Boy with Johnny Weissmuller  
from "Tarzan and His Mate"

Johnny Weissmuller rides Mary from "Tarzan and His Mate"





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with them and try very hard to restrain their amusement when he spills something on the tablecloth and then quickly covers the spot with his hand until he can slyly lower his head and lick it up when they are not looking at him.

Jiggs is the center of their family festivities when, on Christmas Eve his Christmas tree is lighted for him. He jumps about in his glee and is as excited as any child could be. And on Easter morning it is difficult to tell who is having the more fun—Mrs. Gentry, hunting for the Easter eggs hidden for her, or Jiggs scurrying about looking for the oranges tucked away here and there for him. At work, or at play, the Gentrys and Jiggs have a good time all of the time.



## CHAPTER EIGHT

### MARY THE RHINOCEROS

**O**N the lot of any motion picture studio the importance of an actress may be judged by the unusualness and the size of the room which is provided for her dressing room. Some of the larger studios are most generous in setting aside small bungalows, complete miniature homes, beautifully decorated where even the most temperamental actress is satisfied to rest, to have luncheon served, and to dress for whatever scene may be

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on the call-board for that day. One must be *very* important to have a bungalow dressing room.

The Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Studios boast of many prominent actresses, but if their importance be decided on the basis of the unusualness of their studio home, then Mary, the nine-year-old rhinoceros, is the biggest star of them all.

On Lot Number Two is the trim grey bungalow with fenced-in patio, or small yard, which is Mary's home. The furnishings of the main room which is a living room by day and a bedroom by night, are very simple. On the freshly-scoured floor in one corner, a fresh pile of alfalfa hay is arranged each evening for her. This is the extent of the furniture in this part of the house, as nothing more is needed for her comfort.

The kitchen is a bit more elaborate. It is separated from the living room by a crossbar fence, and boasts a low stool, several large, clean, shining buckets, a very big round, red, tub with low sides, and seven square wooden boxes which serve as a kitchen cabinet. These boxes hold the vegetables and fruits from which Mary's chef prepares her meals.

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Each day, if Mary could read, a menu like this might be put before her.

Beets	}	BREAKFAST 7:00 A. M.	}	Bran mash Clear, cold water.
Carrots				
Onions				
Apples	}	DINNER 3:30 P. M.	}	Bran mash Clear, cold water.
Oranges				
Bananas				

But since it is not possible for her to select her own dishes, her meals are put before her in the combinations which are best for her. It is probably just as well that she cannot pick and choose, since she might be like her sometimes foolish human friends who eat too much, or neglect their spinach!

The large buckets are the measuring cups into which the chef cuts up the vegetables or the fruits according to which meal he is preparing. Breakfast is always vegetables: dinner is always fruits, but not always the same kind of vegetables or the same kinds of fruits. Bran mash is combined with whatever else is on the menu, and the whole concoction is poured into the big, round, low tub.

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Mary knows very well when the cook is in the kitchen. She stays close by waiting for the table to be set. This is a simple operation too—the tub is set on the floor of the room which is not only a livingroom-bedroom, but now breakfast nook as well. Her big, heavy-horned head is lowered eagerly over the tub even before her meal is brought in, so that the minute she is served the fingerlike tip of her upper lip is busy pushing the food into her mouth. This little fingerlike tip resembles an elephant's trunk in miniature, although it is not noticeable when she is not eating.

She eats daintily and carefully, not gulping down her food as so large an animal might be expected to do. She eats slowly, raising her head now and then to make sure that the waiter is bringing her the drink of water with which the repast is brought to a close. It takes two buckets of clear, cool water to satisfy Mary's thirst before she leaves the dirty dishes for someone else to worry about and waddles sedately from the room to sun herself in the patio.

If Mary were at home in her native country, Africa, her menu would be similar, since leaves, roots and grains

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are her natural diet. But she would have to look for her food herself, and then go down to the river Congo or the river Lompoco, for a drink. She would do this at night however, since the rhinoceros, like the hippopotamus, forages for food at night, and sleeps, suns himself, or hides in his lair by day.

It is a long way from Africa to Hollywood. Mary arrived there by way of Hamburg, Germany, the home of the great Hagenbeck Zoo and animal dealers. One of their representatives came all the way with Mary in September, 1933, to see her well established in her new home on the M-G-M lot. Here she was to star with Johnny Weissmuller and Maureen O'Sullivan in *Tarzan and His Mate*.

So far, this is Mary's only appearance as a motion picture actress, but since she is the only rhinoceros in California, or for that matter, on the Pacific Coast, she is apt to be cast as often as one of her kind is needed in a picture.

She played her part so well, and has proved herself to be of such a comparatively amiable temperament, that she will no doubt be in demand frequently. Her trainer, Mr. George Emerson, sings her praises. She is the third

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rhinoceros he has worked with and he finds her most responsive to his kindly treatment. When he enters the fenced-in yard of her home, she comes to him for a pat of greeting. To other persons outside the fence she pays scant attention.

A rhinoceros in its native haunts would charge at a man who came this close. In fact any noise is enough to start a charge in the direction from which it comes. The poor rhinoceros takes no chances on his naturally weak eyesight, but relies on his sensitive hearing and sense of smell to detect danger. He then can charge toward it.

When Mary is acting, she can be made to charge this way, just as she charged at Cheeta, the chimpanzee in *Tarzan and His Mate*. On the jungle set at the studio, accommodations similar to her permanent home are maintained. Here she whiles away the time until her scenes are ready to be filmed. Then she is led from her quarters through the jungle, but always over the same path and in the same direction, so that when she is sent running through the jungle as the cameras are whirring, she will follow the path which it has become a habit to follow and will be led by it back into her pen.

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This plan takes advantage of the rhinoceros' natural habit of always following a certain path through the jungle on its way to eat or drink. Hunters tell of having whole camps destroyed because some inexperienced person who couldn't recognize the trail of a rhinoceros had pitched his camp immediately across his path. When a rhinoceros finds something in his way, there is no side-stepping. He goes straight through, scattering the obstacle to the four winds. He is impulsive and fearless, but with his huge head lowered, the horn on his snout well-placed to do as much damage as possible, he is a formidable enemy and a fast one in spite of his great bulk and short, thick legs. A quick side-step is his enemy's only escape. His short-sighted eyes cannot see what he is charging quickly enough for him to change his course and suddenly step aside to catch his victim.

So far, Mary has seen fit to behave herself, but there is always the danger that she may suddenly act the part of the wild animal she is. Before she was brought to the United States, she had become well acquainted enough with man not to charge at him in fear and in anger. She has even made friends with Teddy, a small dog who comes



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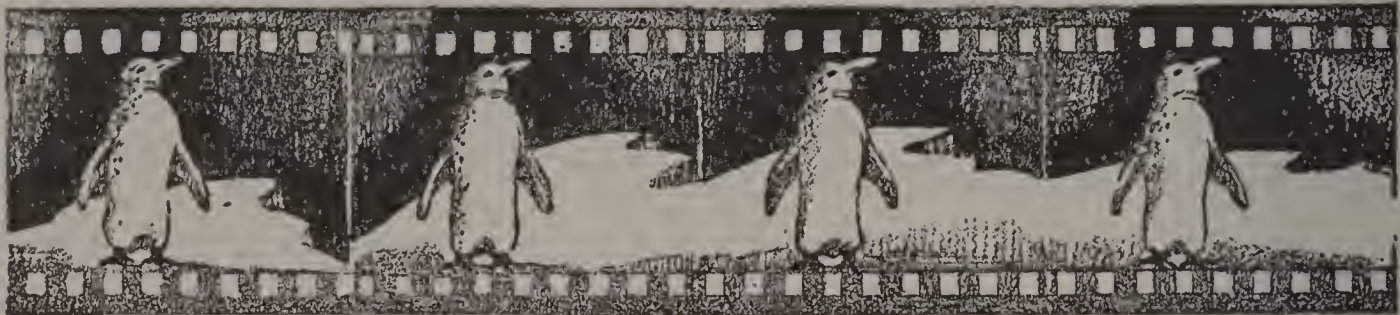
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calling on her every day. But after all, she is not many months removed from the jungles, and might readily develop into a wild animal, very strong and ungovernable, should she really take occasion to act like one.

Mr. Emerson has broken her so he can ride on her back, but riding her is always dangerous even for him. So when in *Tarzan and His Mate*, Johnny Weissmuller jumped on her back in the scene which follows Mary's attack on the chimpanzee, it took a great deal of courage on his part.

Mary is an excellent representative of her family, the common, or black rhinoceros of Africa, and although she differs in several ways from her cousins who live in India, Java and Sumatra, she probably will at some time represent them too in a motion picture.

In her way, Mary is the studio's most individual actress. There is great rivalry among the large studios as to which one has the most popular star, but no one can gainsay the fact that the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Studios has the biggest one. There is none to compare with Mary.



## CHAPTER NINE

### OSCAR

### THE PENGUIN

**I**T was inevitable that Oscar should become a motion picture actor. He lives very near Hollywood for one thing, for his home, the Ocean Park Fishing and Amusement Pier, is not many miles away from the studios. Then too, since Admiral Byrd returned from the South Pole bringing among other treasures the reels of film in which the little penguins were such willing actors, people began to be familiar with the sight of these plump, merry birds. They became favorites of the screen imme-



*A personality portrait of Oscar*



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diately, and the motion picture producers judged, and rightly too, that people would enjoy seeing them more often.

But right here arose a difficulty. The penguin's home is at the South Pole, never at the North Pole, and the South Pole was eight thousand miles from Hollywood. Penguins do come as far north as the Galápagos Islands off the coast of South America. The cold Humboldt Current entices them that far, carrying them along with it as it flows northward from the Antarctic Circle. But even the Galápagos Islands are many miles from the United States. So it is not to be wondered at that we in North America had never seen or indeed heard very much about them. It has been only in the last few years that penguins have been added to the larger aquariums and zoos in New York, San Diego and San Francisco.

Of course it couldn't be that Oscar knew of this shortage of penguin actors when he appeared one day swimming in the surf of Santa Monica Bay. No one knows how this sturdy little fellow came to be there all by himself some eight thousand miles away from home. Perhaps he may have wandered off a ship bringing him to a new home in the San Francisco aquarium. But Captain Oe-

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finger, one of his devoted owners, did not stop to figure this out when he sighted Oscar. He hurried to pick him up out of the water with a net and carry him back to the pier which is now his home.

One of the fishermen who came daily to the pier was a little short man who walked with a peculiar rolling motion, his feet spread far apart, spanking the pavement as he flopped along in his heavy shoes. His name was Oscar, and for him Oscar was named, so much did they resemble each other in their gait and in the awkward management of their big feet.

Captain Oefinger is president of the company which owns one of the fishing barges anchored some distance out in the ocean. Men, women, and often children are taken out by fast launches to these large barges. These are anchored far enough out to make it possible to catch the deep sea fish that do not come in close to shore—barracuda, big tunas and deep sea bass. The bait used to catch these large fish is live bait—little herrings and sardines. The men who own these barges, like Captain Oefinger, supply this bait to the people who fish from their barges. For this purpose, large tanks filled daily with fresh salt water have been built at the ends of the

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piers, and these are kept well stocked with the shining, silvery little fish.

This sort of tank is Paradise for a penguin, for the delicacy he likes best in all the world is herring. If Oscar felt the least bit lonesome and forlorn, he must have been ready to bray with pleasure when this feast was set before him. Salt water to swim in, and all the herring he could eat! What bliss for a penguin! And this is the secret of Oscar's well-being and contentment. He has the things which are natural for him to want. This is why he is in such excellent health, and lives so happily away from his antarctic home.

From the day he was lifted from the water in a small net and brought to his ocean view home, he made many friends, hosts of people who come to visit him regularly. A large room at the end of the pier, the office of his owners, is where he may be found when he is not on location playing in a picture. It is an interesting place, smelling strongly, but naturally of fish. Great coarse nets hang about on the walls, their cork floats forming a diagonal design of dark spots against the grey-white of the nets. Racks of fish poles, long ones and very stout ones, stand at the ends of the room. Boxes of tackle are arranged

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neatly on the shelves. Everything is kept in readiness for the sportsmen who sally forth to do battle with the spirited barracuda and tuna.

A long counter separates the office from the rest of the pier. At one end is one of the tanks where swim the tiny herring and sardines destined to be bait or a meal for Oscar. At the other end are rows of bottles which hold specimens of all sorts of deep sea oddities preserved in alcohol—baby octopuses, sea horses and many other curiosities known only to people who live by the sea.

Fish scales are scattered over the floor of the office, and among them in one corner is Oscar's own private domain, a pen about four feet square fenced around with wire netting. It seems a small place in which to pen up an active individual like Oscar, but the truth of the matter is that he is seldom in it.

For the men who work with Captain Oefinger are devoted to Oscar, especially Mr. Camp, Mr. Hodge, and Mr. "Slim" Thompson who at present is his guardian. They welcome every opportunity to fetch him from his little wire pen and set him on top of the counter to strut before admiring visitors, or waddle up and down the pier.



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He flaps his flippers happily when one of these men approaches his pen, and stretches himself forward eagerly ready to settle comfortably onto the hand of the person who lifts him out. He knows this means a swim in the tank and the opportunity to feast on herring which he loves to catch head first and swallow whole. He learned very early when his mother taught him to catch them that even a very tiny fish swallowed tail first means trouble and great discomfort, for when swallowed that way, the scales scrape his throat.

Once that friendly hand stretched down to him had meant a swim in the ocean, for he was often allowed this privilege. He was content with his new home and was always ready to be brought back onto the pier. But one day while he was swimming in the ocean near the pier, something frightened him and he dove under water and disappeared. Penguins are swift underwater swimmers. It is their protection from their natural enemies—seals, sharks and sea leopards—whose meals consist largely of a generous supply of plump penguins.

Captain Oefinger thinks it was a motor boat putting in at the pier that looked to Oscar like a shark. At any

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rate, Oscar was missing for ten days and great mourning settled down over the pier. Not only were his friends sorry he was gone, but his owners were dismayed beyond measure for Oscar had been engaged to make a picture, *The Penguin Pool Murder*, and here he was running off like a temperamental star.

He had already broadcasted over the radio, braying a greeting in his donkey-like voice. Now the radio was enlisted in the search for him. On the tenth day of grieving, a telephone call came from La Jolla, one hundred ten miles down the coast from Los Angeles. Oscar had been found perched disconsolately on some rocks just off shore. A man swam out to him and Oscar presented every evidence of delight at renewing acquaintance with a human being. One of his owners hastened to La Jolla and brought the wanderer back in time to fulfill his contract with the RKO Studios, co-starring with Miss Edna May Oliver and Mr. Jimmie Gleason.

Since then, Oscar doesn't go swimming in the ocean. He is too valuable now to be subjected to anything which might frighten him. A motion picture star whose salary is one hundred twenty-five dollars a week must be care-



Oscar has his voice tested at RKO studios



*"What's that?" asks Edna May Oliver of Oscar*

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fully guarded. His big tank, well stocked with his favorite food seems to satisfy him, and if he misses the broad sweep of the ocean, he never complains.

In fact he seems to prefer water in smaller portions. Not long ago when he was on location with a company from the Paramount Studio making a picture called *No More Women*, his valet and constant companion, Slim Thompson, took him to a secluded cove along the beach for his bath, which to Oscar is a very important event in his daily schedule. But Oscar refused to bathe, just swam about playing.

A large tub was borrowed from a fisherman and filled with clean sea water as his tank at home is filled daily. Then, and then only, did he proceed to the business at hand which resulted in a clean, shining Oscar, every silvery-white feather in his vest in place, nicely combed by his long bill. Oscar is most particular about his appearance.

The list of pictures to Oscar's credit at present is brief, but each one finds him with a longer part to play, so successful an actor has he become. Following his debut in the *Penguin Pool Murder*, *Blue Blackbirds*, featuring Moran and Mack, the *Two Black Crows*, was his next venture.

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During the filming of this picture he earned the name of "One-take-Oscar" because he always does his bit perfectly the first time, but refuses to go through that same bit again that same day. This name has stuck to him, for the truth is demonstrated every time he appears in a picture cast. Where another star must have rehearsals, and shot after shot taken until he goes through the action properly, one is all Oscar needs.

The man who directed the picture *No More Women*, Mr. Albert Rogell, didn't realize that at last he had before him the perfect actor who required no rehearsals, who did what was expected of him from the moment the cameras started grinding until the end of the scene. He wanted Slim Thompson to try him out first in a scene in an hotel hallway. Oscar was supposed to waddle the length of the hall all by himself and go into a certain room four doors down the hall. But it was explained that Oscar worked better with no rehearsal, and so, after much persuasive talk on the part of Mr. Thompson, the scene was shot. Unfortunately it was not used in the completed picture, but Oscar did his part so well he must be given credit for it.

He was held at the head of the stairway while Slim,

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carrying a nice, fresh herring, walked up the stairs, rounded the corner and walked down the hall to the fourth doorway where he went in and closed the door. This of course was not part of the action to be shown in the picture and was done before the cameras were set to turning. Then, when the cameramen were ready, Oscar was released to meander into the picture. He looked about at the head of the stairs as though getting the lay of the land, and then started his march down the hall. He came to the first door, stopped and looked inquiringly at it, then went on shaking his head. He paused at the second and at the third doors, but when he came to the fourth, he stopped and waited while Slim opened the door. Then Oscar hurried in as though that was where he meant to go all the time. It was perfect.

Of course he had seen where Slim, who at that moment meant a fresh herring to him, had gone, and he had heard his name called when he reached the fourth door. But to those fortunate people who saw this scene in the projection room before it was taken out of the final negative of the film, he seemed to be doing it completely on his own. He was supposed to appear in only four scenes in this picture, but so successful an actor was he that a

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longer part was written in for him, and he came home with makeup on his beak, a full-fledged star.

A great deal of credit for Oscar's success must be given to these men who are devoted to him, who study every move he makes naturally and who devise means to make him do these things when they want him to. Their patience, as in the case of anyone who works with animals, must be infinite. It is amusing to see how attached the people who work with him have become. As Slim Thompson says, "Why, when we're on location and we've had a hard day, I find myself sitting in our hotel room talking to Oscar as though he were a person. And he just waddles around the room paying no attention to me."

Of course Oscar does not understand words, but as all animals and birds do, he associates sounds with certain things. Slim can stand at the end of the tank while Oscar is swimming and feasting, and talk himself blue in the face trying to get him to waddle up the gangway built for him up from the water to the edge of the tank. But Oscar goes on blissfully swimming, diving and chasing fish. However just let him say, "Want to take a walk?" and Oscar shambles hurriedly up the gangplank and stands



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hunched forward ready to squirm onto the hand which he has come to know will carry him out onto the pier for a shuffling saunter in the sun.

As for talking himself, he raises his voice only when he is happy or is expecting something he especially likes. In the morning the first duty of one of the boys is to chop or saw up some kindling wood. Immediately after that he fills Oscar's tank with fresh sea water. Oscar knows now what is to follow this wood sawing, and he stands in his corner doing his best by his harsh squawking to hasten the woodsawing process and get on with the important business of tending to him.

Soon after this the small boat comes in with the morning's catch of live bait. The hoist squeaks with the weight of the big net full of wiggling, silvery little fish. This is sweet music to Oscar's ear for it means a nice lively breakfast. So again he brays forth in his loud voice, urging haste in getting them within his reach.

So accustomed has he become to raising his voice in anticipation of these two events, that his friends play a joke on him sometimes when they want to get him to bray. They saw industriously on a piece of wood. He isn't always fooled by it, but very often, perhaps when he

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forgets it is not morning and the right time for wood-sawing, for he will straighten up, throw back his head, and bray long and loud.

There is something so ridiculously human about a penguin. He seems to be a miniature of ourselves with his waddling walk and droll movements of his head. His friendliness too, in contrast with the timidity of other birds, makes him especially lovable. No wonder Slim thinks of Oscar almost as another person.

The quaintness of penguins has appealed to explorers of the Antarctic for many years, men who laughed at them, enjoyed them, looked forward to seeing them on their trips to the frozen South, but never molested them. Penguins have never had cause to fear what may seem to them to be just another kind of penguin, much larger than themselves but very much the same shape and not a little unlike themselves in behavior. Man has been kind to the penguin.

Explorers have been writing about these little birds who greet them year after year on their expeditions, but few of us ever see the technical reports of scientific expeditions. Dr. Racovitza, a famous naturalist of the Belgica Expedition in 1896 wrote this about them.

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“Imagine a little old man, standing erect, provided with two broad paddles instead of arms, with a head small in comparison with the plump, stout body; imagine this creature with his back covered with a dark coat spotted with blue, tapering behind to a pointed tail that drags on the ground and adorned in front with a glossy white breastplate. Have this creature walk on his two feet, and give him at the same time a droll little waddle and a continual movement of his head, and you have something before you which is irresistibly attractive and comical.”

A report of the Smithsonian Institution for 1912 explains how the word penguin originated. The name was given these birds by the Spanish navigators of the seventeenth century. They called them penguins from the word Penguigo, meaning grease, a name which fits them well because of the abundance of fat which at a certain time of the year covers these little birds.

These Spanish navigators must have seen the penguins just before their moulting time, the sad day when they lose their full-dressed appearance and become dejected bits of bird life. This loosening and dropping of their feathers makes them buoyant in the water, so that they cannot dive for their food. So they must store up as great

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a reserve as possible against this most uncomfortable period when they would starve to death if they had not laid up a supply of fat. During this deplorable seven or eight weeks, the poor penguin can do nothing but sit and mope, grouchy and touchy. He is about as sick as a penguin could be and there is nothing he can do about it but wait.

Oscar is no exception. There are any number of persons who would gladly catch his food for him if he cared to eat, but the years of habit, and the instinct which makes this a period of starvation are too much for him, and he mopes just as dejectedly as do any of his relatives in the Antarctic. He is very sensitive about his appearance too for during the process he loses every feather he has to his name.

His owners, respecting his natural reluctance to be seen in this state of full undress, put a large cardboard box at the end of the tank runway, and at the approach of anyone, even his best friends, he retires hastily with downcast eyes into the seclusion it affords him. Every once in a while, a head peeps out at the end of a scrawny neck that resembles the neck of a little old man who has lost his collar. It is a sad time. All of Oscar's friends are just as

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happy as he is when moulting is over for another year and he is his own cheerful self once more.

There are many different kinds of penguins. Oscar belongs to the species called "jackass" penguins because of their voices which do sound like nothing more than the bray of that long-eared animal. Scientists can name the rest of them, distinguishing them by their size, coloring and varying habits, but to us who love them and enjoy them, they all look more or less alike.

Roland Young, another actor and a comedian too, is very fond of penguins. He has a large collection of them, made of wood, glass, porcelain, even a real one stuffed to a speaking likeness of Oscar. He has written a little verse with which this story ends:

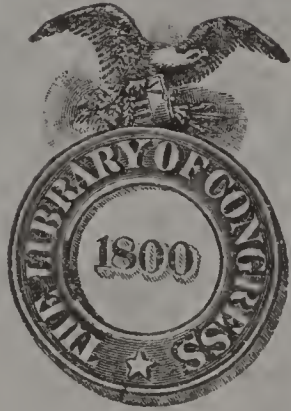
"The little penguins look alike,  
Even as Ike resembles Mike.  
They are so gentle and so nice,  
God keeps these little birds on ice."











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