



29-The Flim Flam Bird

Final -le

“Rat,” Dan said one day as they sat at the table, “there is an ad in the paper. They want two brave people to go deep into the jungle and catch a wild Flim Flam Bird.”

“Can't we just watch it on TV?” Rat asked.

“Rat,” said Dan, “*you* are always the brave one. It is usually *I* who must keep *you* from getting into a big mess. Does this mean that

the Flim Flam Bird scares you? Is that why you don't want to go into the jungle?”

“Well, Dan,” said Rat, “my reason is simple. I am not scared of a Flim Flam Bird, but I am scared of the rest of the jungle. There are things in the jungle that can mangle and cripple you in a second. There are things that like the flavor of a little cat like me. Dan, I was made to cuddle, not to mangle and cripple. I am brittle. I hope that will settle it.”

“Ha!” said Dan.

The next day Dan and Rat took a plane to the edge of the jungle. A man led them to a car, then the man drove Dan and Rat deep into the jungle, to a small farm. It was raining — a soft drizzle.

The man told Dan, “There is a stable by the

barn that has a horse for you. Her name is Mable. On the wall of the stable you will find a saddle, a bridle, and a riding blanket. I think you should hustle, for the Flim Flam Bird is hard to catch!”

So Dan and Rat saddled up Mable the horse and got up into the saddle.

“One last thing,” said the man. “Beware of the headhunters!

They prey on the weak and capture the humble,

They jump from the trees the moment you stumble;

You can't hear them coming, they sneak through the drizzle,

Then throw you in fires that crackle and sizzle!

Beware of the headhunters!”

Dan and Rat rode off on Mable. Mable had bells that jingled. They rode all the way to a stone temple.

When they reached the temple, Rat got up on the temple and said, “Dan, I know I have made a mistake or two, but this is the MOST STUPID thing we have done yet! *Headhunters*, Dan! *Headhunters*! And the way Mable jingles they can hear us coming for miles!”

Dan just smiled. “You will live, Rat,” he said. “You are too furry to eat. Headhunters don't want hairballs.”

Dan gave Rat a bugle and told him, “Blow this if you see headhunters or a Flim Flam Bird.”

“What does a Flim Flam Bird look like?” Rat asked Dan as they rode.

“Oh,” said Dan. “It will dazzle you! It is red, blue, yellow, and orange, and it says *Flim! Flim! Flam! Flam!*”

“Are you sure the Flim Flam Bird isn't just a fable?” Rat asked.

“Flim Flam Birds are real, Rat” Dan answered. “As real as headhunters.”

“By the way,” said Rat, “what do headhunters look like, Dan?”

“Like me, but with no shirt,” said Dan. “And they never smile.”

“BLEEEEEEEEEEEPPPP!!!” Rat blew the bugle so loudly that Dan fell off Mable.

“*HEADHUNTERS!*” screamed Rat.

The headhunters grabbed Rat and tied him to a stake. From the stake Rat watched as the headhunters gave Dan a seat under a big tree. Dan talked with some of the headhunters while

others made a fire. Rat could hear the fire crackle and sizzle.

Now Rat saw the headhunters but a big pot of water over the fire, and soon the water in the pot began to boil and bubble.

“Oh no!” said Rat. “That pot is a kettle! The headhunters are going to boil me and eat me! I told Dan I had good flavor! DAN! HELP! DAN! HELP!”

Dan came over to Rat The Cat.

“Dan, they're going to boil me in that big kettle!” Rat cried. “You have to help me!”

“Well,” said Dan, “It's not nice to meddle with the natives. It could make for a big battle, a real mess. Plus, they say you stepped on their temple.”

“What about you, Dan?” Rat asked.

“Well, they seem to think I am some sort of god. They keep giving me bottle after bottle of pop to guzzle. *Grape* pop – the best!”

Now the headhunters gathered around Rat.

“Soup is on!” they all yelled. Rat screamed.

Suddenly a bunch of men in trucks burst from the jungle. All the headhunters began to laugh. One man came up to Rat and cut the ropes that held him.

“Welcome to The Flim Flam Show!” the man said. Rat was puzzled.

“You are ON The Flim Flam Show!” the man continued. “There is no such thing as a Flim Flam Bird. There was a hidden camera in Mable's bridle and a microphone in her saddle horn. The whole world is laughing at you right now!”

“Excuse me while I bite Dan,” Rat said.

“And here is your check for ten-thousand dollars, Rat The Cat!” the man said, handing Rat a check.

“Excuse my while I kiss Dan's feet,” said Rat.

Vocabulary

-le after short vowel, doubled consonant

puzzle	cuddle	sizzle	fizzle
bubble	cattle	saddle	apple
bottle	riddle	rattle	settle
battle	guzzle	dazzle	hobble

-le after short vowel, two consonants

jungle	sample	pickle	crackle
rumble	grumble	uncle	mangle
hustle	simple	humble	crumble

-le after long vowel, two consonants

table	cradle	staple	able
fable	stable	bugle	cable
bridle	Mable		

Weird Words

suddenly	laugh	headhunters	second
continued	shirt	capture	prey
laughing	loudly	through	barn
camera	tied	furry	shirt
microphone	they're	gathered	catch
ten-thousand	always	usually	don't

Dictation

Can you hear the fire crackle and sizzle?

Did Dan guzzle the bottle of apple pop?

Rat put a saddle on Mable and rode to the jungle.

You look like a pickle when you grumble.

Rat was made to cuddle and nuzzle.

There is a bugle in the stable.

Can Rat reach the table from the cradle?

My uncle Fred is a simple man.

A jungle beast can mangle a little cat.

The train made the jungle rumble.

Do not guzzle pop or you will get a gas bubble.

The gas bubble will make you rumble.

Mable is in the stable.

Can I sample the pickle?

Rat is able to settle the bill.

Rat is humble. Ha!

If I hustle I can feed the cattle.

I like to cuddle with my cat.