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Barty Crusoe and His Man Saturday



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CHAPTER ONE

I HOPE you remember that I told you that the story of Barty and the Good Wolf was the kind of story which could go on and on, and that when it stopped it could begin again.

It was like that when Tim's mother told it to Tim, and really that was what Tim liked best about it – that sudden way it had of beginning all over again with something new just when you felt quite mournful because you thought it had come to an end. There are very few stories like that, – very few indeed, – so you have to be thankful when you find one.

This new part began with Barty finding an old book in the attic of his house. He liked the attic because you never knew what you might find there. Once he had even found an old sword which had belonged to his grandfather and which *might* have killed a man if his grandfather had worn it in war.

One rainy day he found the book. It was a rather fat book, and it had been read so much that it was falling to pieces. On the first page there was a picture of a very queer looking man. He was dressed in clothes made of goat skin; he carried a gun on one shoulder and a parrot on the other, and his name was printed under the picture and it was – Robinson Crusoe.

Now, Barty was a very good reader for his age. He had to spell very few words when he read aloud, so he sat down at once on the attic floor and began to read about Robinson Crusoe as fast as ever he could. That day he was late to his dinner and was late for bed, and as the days went on he was late so often that his mother thought he must be losing his appetite. But he was not. He was only so delighted with Robinson Crusoe that he could not remember the time.

That week the Good Wolf was away on very important business, and if Barty had not had his wonderful book to read he might have felt lonely. The Good Wolf had taught him a special little tune to play on his whistle when he wanted to call *him* without calling all the other animals.

The day Barty finished reading his book he tucked it under his arm and ran into the wood to his secret place and played his tune, and in less than two minutes he turned round and saw the Good Wolf trotting towards him out of the green tunnel.

Barty ran and hugged him, and while he was hugging him the book under his arm fell down to the grass. "What is that?" asked the Good Wolf, and he went to it and sniffed it over carefully.

"It is a book I have been reading," answered Barty. "It is about a man whose name was Robinson Crusoe. He was shipwrecked on a desert island."

"What is a desert island?" inquired the Good Wolf.

"It is a perfectly beautiful place with a sea all around it. Oh! I wonder if there are any desert islands around here!"

The Good Wolf looked thoughtful. He sat down and gently scratched his left ear with his hind foot.

"Do you want one?" he asked. "Let us make ourselves comfortable and talk it over."

So they sat down and Barty leaned against him with one arm round his neck and began to explain. "A desert island is a place where no one lives but you. There are no other people on it and there are no houses and no shops and you have to make yourself a hut to live in. And beautiful things grow wild – cocoanuts and big bunches of grapes. And there are goats and parrots you can tame so that they sit on your shoulder and talk to you."

"Do the goats sit on your shoulder and talk to you?" asked the Good Wolf, looking a little surprised.

"No, only the parrots," said Barty. "The goats follow you about and are friends with you. The only trouble sometimes is cannibals."

The Good Wolf shook his head. "I never saw a cannibal," he remarked.

"They are not nice," said Barty, "they are savage black men who want to eat people – but you can frighten them away with your gun," he ended quite cheerfully.

Then he told about Robinson Crusoe's man Friday and about everything else he could remember, and the story was so interesting and exciting that several times the Good Wolf quite panted. "Why, I should like it myself," he said, "I really should."

"If we only knew where there *was* a desert island," said Barty.

The Good Wolf looked thoughtful again and once more scratched his left ear with his right foot, but there was an expression on his face which made Barty open his eyes very wide.

"*Do* you know where there is one?" he cried out. "You look as if –"

The Good Wolf stood up and shook his pink ear *very hard*– and then he shook his blue one. "Nothing flew out," said Barty. "I saw nothing at all."

"What flew out did not fly out here," answered the Good Wolf. "It flew out in the place where it was wanted – ten thousand miles away."

Barty caught his breath and clapped his hands. "I know something nice is going to happen," he shouted, "and it's something about a desert island."

"Get on my back and clasp your arms around my neck and shut your eyes," the Good Wolf said. "This is not a trifling matter."

Barty scrambled up joyfully and did as he was told. The Good Wolf's fur felt soft and thick when he laid his face against it. He shut his eyes tight and then just for a few moments he felt as if they both were almost flying over the ground. They went so fast, indeed, and the air sung so in his ears as he rushed through it that it made him feel drowsy and he soon fell asleep.

When he felt himself waking he was quite warm, as if the sun were shining on him. There was a sound in his ears still; it was not the rushing of the air but a sound like rushing of water, which he had never heard before. He had never seen the sea and knew nothing about waves except what he had read in the story of Robinson Crusoe.

He sat up and stared straight before him and his eyes grew bigger, and bigger, and bigger. He was sitting on a snow-white beach and there before him was spread the great blue ocean, and its waves were swelling and breaking into snowy foam, and rushing and spreading and curling on the sand.

After he had looked straight before him for quite five minutes he turned and looked round about him. What he saw was a curve of beach and some cliffs rising from behind it. And on top of the cliffs were big leaved plants and straight, slender palm trees which waved and waved like spreading green feathers.

"I wonder if cocoanuts grow on them," said Barty. "That would be *very* nice: Robinson Crusoe found cocoanuts."

When he said Robinson Crusoe that made him remember. "Why, it's a desert island," he said. "It's a desert island!"

Then, of course, he remembered about the Good Wolf and he turned round to look for him. And there he sat on the sand a few feet away.

"Were we wrecked?" asked Barty.

"Well, not exactly *wrecked*," answered the Good Wolf, "but here we are."

"Where is here?" asked Barty.

"Ten thousand miles from everybody," said the Good Wolf.

"Oh," said Barty, and his mouth was very round.

"You *said* a desert island," remarked the Good Wolf, watching him.

"Yes," answered Barty, trying to speak cheerfully, because he did not want to hurt the Good Wolf's feelings by seeming dissatisfied. "And – and it is *very* nice and desert, isn't it?"

"It is," answered the Good Wolf. "I chose the kind – like Robinson Crusoe's, you know."

"It is a very nice one," said Barty, "and I am much obliged to you." Then he dug his toe into the sand a little. "I am just thinking about my mother," he said while he was doing it.

The Good Wolf looked as cheerful as ever. "I had something in my pink ear which I shook out as we passed your cottage," he chuckled. "It's a kind of scent like mignonette and it makes mothers forget the time. It's very useful in case of long journeys, because when you come back they never say 'where have you been?' They don't know how long you have been away. I shook out a whole lot when we passed your house and I heard your mother say 'how sweet the mignonette smells to-day!'"

Barty's face was quite cheerful by the time the Good Wolf had finished. "I'm so glad I know you," he said. "You can do everything, can't you?" The Good Wolf looked thoughtful again (which makes three times), and he scratched his ear with his hind foot more seriously than ever.

"Look here," he said. "There is something I shall be obliged to tell you."

"What is it?" asked Barty, feeling very much interested.

"I can't do *everything* on desert islands."

"Can't you shake things out of your ears?" exclaimed Barty.

"No," answered the Good Wolf. "I won't deceive you. I can't."

Barty could hardly gasp out "Why?"

"Just cast your eye on them, just look at them," said the Good Wolf. "You have been too much excited to notice them before. Do they *look* as if I could shake things out of them?"

Barty *did* look at them and he *did* gasp then. His voice was almost a whisper. "No," he answered.

The tall pink ear and the tall blue ear had dwindled until they were only ordinary Bad Wolf ear size. "There is something in the air of desert islands that makes them dwindle away," the Good Wolf explained. "I could not shake a pin out of them now."

Barty drew a long breath, stood up straight and dug his strong little hands into his pockets. "Well," he said cheerfully, "all right. I asked for a desert island and I've got one. We shall have to look for everything and make everything exactly like Robinson Crusoe did. I believe it will be more fun. Don't you?"

"Sure of it," chuckled the Good Wolf. "Quite sure of it. If we could shake everything out of our ears when we wanted it, it would be scarcely any fun at all. It doesn't make *me* feel mournful."

"It doesn't make me feel mournful either," said Barty. "Think what a lot of things we shall have to do."

"Yes," the Good Wolf answered. "We shall have to find a place to sleep in and things to eat and a fire to cook them with."

"I wonder where we shall find the fire?" said Barty.

"I don't know yet," the Good Wolf answered, "but on Robinson Crusoe's Desert Island you *did* find things somehow."

"It will be great fun looking for them – like playing hide-and-seek," Barty said.

There seemed so many new things to do that he did not know where to begin first. But the little curling edges of the waves which came spreading out on the white sand seemed just for that minute to be nicer than anything else. So he sat down and began to take off his shoes and stockings.

"I am going to wade," he said. "I never waded in my life. I forgot desert islands were the seaside."

It was so cool and lovely and splashy and it was such fun to pretend he was going to let a wave catch him and then turn and run, shouting and laughing away from it, that for a few moments he almost forgot about the Good Wolf. But at last as he was running away from a big wave, he saw him come galloping along the beach as if he had been somewhere and was returning.

"Where did you go?" called Barty.

"Come along with me," said the Good Wolf, "and I will show you."

They turned and went back to where the rocks were. There was a large circle of them and inside the circle was a pool of quiet, clear water. "Here is something better than wading," said the Good

Wolf. "I felt sure this was here. It is just the kind of a place you find on a desert island when you want to learn to swim. Take off your clothes and I will take you in and teach you."

Barty took off his clothes in one minute and a half.

"Come on," said the Good Wolf. "Catch hold of my hair and hold tight, just at first." And in he jumped and Barty with him.

The water had been warmed by the sun and was as clear as crystal. It wasn't too deep, either.

"Do exactly as I do," the Good Wolf said when they were splashing about together. He could swim splendidly, and Barty imitated him. At first he held on to his friend's thick, shaggy coat with one hand and paddled with the other, and kicked his legs. When he had learned what to do with his hands and feet the Good Wolf made him splash about in the shallower places until he began to feel quite brave, and actually swam a few strokes alone.

"I never, never thought I should learn to swim," he kept shouting joyfully. "See, I'm keeping up all by myself."

"Of course you will learn to swim," said the Good Wolf. "It is one of the first things you have to do when you are wrecked on a desert island." By the time they decided to come out of the water Barty knew that it would not be long before he could swim as if he were a little fish. He felt so proud and happy that he sang out loud as he ran up and down in the sun to dry himself before he put on his clothes again. There are no towels on desert islands.

"What shall we do next?" asked Barty when he had finished dressing.

"Well," said the Good Wolf, "supposing now that I could shake things out of my ears what do you think you should ask me to shake out first?"

Barty did not think many minutes.

"My belt," said Barty, "is rather loose by this time. If you could shake things out I think I should ask you to shake out some dinner."

"It's what I should have chosen myself," said the Good Wolf. "What Robinson Crusoe did on his desert island when he wanted his dinner, was to go and look for it until he found it."

"Yes," said Barty, "I suppose we shall have to go and look too."

"All right, it's part of the game," said the Good Wolf. Then he looked at Barty a little anxiously. "Are you very hungry?" he inquired.

"Yes," said Barty, quite like a soldier. "So was Robinson Crusoe. That's part of the game, too."

"Come on," said the Good Wolf. "You are a good companion to be shipwrecked with. There are boys of your age who might have cried and said they wanted to go home."

"Oh, but I said a desert island," answered Barty. "And I meant a desert island. And it will be splendid finding something good to eat when your belt is as loose as mine."

The Good Wolf smiled a smile which reached to his ears, and off they went towards the place where the trees were.

CHAPTER TWO

AS Barty and the Wolf walked along together they talked about Robinson Crusoe in the book.

"His ship was wrecked on the rocks and broken all to pieces," said Barty. "But *we* did not come in a ship, did we?"

"No," answered the Wolf.

"And barrels and boxes full of biscuits and things floated about in the water and he swam after them. It would be rather nice to see a box of biscuits now, wouldn't it?" Barty said.

"Is your belt very loose?" asked the Good Wolf.

"It never was as loose as this before," said Barty.

"Buckle it a little tighter," said the Good Wolf. So Barty buckled it one hole tighter.

They walked along the shore till they came to a place where they could begin to climb the green cliff. Then they climbed and climbed and climbed and the grass grew greener and thicker and there were flowers growing on every side and bushes with birds singing on them, and the birds were all sorts of lovely colors. Some of them stopped singing just to look at Barty.

"They have never seen any boys before," remarked the Good Wolf.

"Do you think they like them?" asked Barty.

"You ought to go and see," the Good Wolf answered.

On one of the nearest bushes a bird was sitting which was prettier than all the rest. It had a white body and breast and soft blue wings and crest. Barty crept towards it with gentle little steps. He hoped very much that he would not frighten it. It did not look frightened. It put its head on one side and watched him. Then Barty took his whistle out of his pocket and softly played the tune the Good Wolf had taught him. The bird put his head on the other side and listened as if he were pleased. He was very attentive until Barty had finished and then suddenly he flew up in the air and fluttered 'round and 'round about, singing the tune himself.

"He is answering me!" cried out Barty, joyfully. "He learned the tune in a minute."

"He is a clever bird," said the Good Wolf. "Perhaps he knows a whole lot of things."

"I believe he likes me," said Barty. "I believe he does."

"All birds know a good thing when they see it," was what the Good Wolf said with his wisest air. "All animals do. I am an animal myself. You never threw a stone at a bird, did you, by the way?"

Barty stood quite still and looked at the ground, thinking very hard.

"I never threw a stone at anything," he said when he looked up.

"Ah," said the Good Wolf. "Such a *good* plan that: Never to throw a stone at anything. In fact it's a good plan never to throw *anything* at *anything*. I shouldn't be surprised if you find your Desert Island ever so much nicer just because you're like that. Animals know, I tell you. So do fairies. Look at the bird!" Barty was looking at it. It flew a few yards ahead of him and perched on a slender young tree, making funny little chirping noises.

"It sounds – " said Barty, "why, it sounds as if it were saying 'Trot along, trot along,' just as you did when we went to the Snow Feast."

"I did not see it at the Snow Feast," the Good Wolf said. "But perhaps it had a relation there. If it says 'trot along,' let us trot. Perhaps it is clever enough to notice how loose your belt is, and it thinks it can show us something to eat which will make it tighter."

So Barty trotted along and the Good Wolf trotted with him. The bird with the blue crest flew before them and Barty was quite sure it was showing them the way somewhere, because every now and then it stopped and perched on a bough and sang its little song. They went up the hill and up and up until they came to a place where they suddenly found themselves on the edge of a green hollow, and the minute they saw it the Good Wolf cried out, "*There's* something we want," and trotted down as fast as he could to a big, clear pool which lay at the bottom of the hollow, and began to lap quickly.

"I want it, too," shouted Barty, and ran down the green slope himself.

He was just going to kneel down when he saw his bird fluttering about under a tall tree, and when he looked up he saw the tree was a very funny one. It was like a palm tree but it had great balls hanging from it and something queer was going on high up among the branches. The leaves were shaking as if things were moving about among them, and Barty was rather startled because he heard chattering, squeaking little voices. The sounds were so funny that for a minute he forgot that he was thirsty.

"That isn't birds," he said to the Good Wolf. "It isn't singing and it isn't chirping. What do you think it is?"

"Just watch a minute and you will see," the Good Wolf answered. Barty did not get up from his knees but he threw his curly head back and looked with all his might. What do you suppose he saw? First one little tiny black face with sharp eyes and sharp white teeth and a wrinkled nose, and then another little tiny funny black face with sharp eyes and sharp white teeth and a wrinkled nose, and then another, and then another. They peeped at him from under the leaves, and from over the leaves and round the big balls which hung from the branches. They gibbered and chattered and squeaked, and squeaked and gibbered and chattered. Barty's eyes got bigger and bigger and began to sparkle, and suddenly he jumped up and clapped his hands.

"They're monkeys!" he shouted. "They are little jet black monkeys, just like the ones that played in the land of the Snow Feast. Horray! Horray! Horray! Perhaps they are the very ones."

He put his hands up to his mouth and made a trumpet of them and shouted through it to the top of the tree. It was such a very tall tree and there were so many monkeys in it and they were making such a noise that they never could have heard him if he hadn't shouted.

"Hello!" he called. "Were you the ones at the Snow Feast? Did you play in the band?" There was such a lot of chattering and squeaking at this that Barty thought it must mean "yes." There was rustling and jumping and scuffling, and suddenly a tiny black arm and hand darted out and plucked off one of the big hanging balls and threw it down to the earth. It bounded and bounded and rolled, and Barty ran after it and caught it just as it was going to roll into the pool of water.

"What is it?" he cried out. "What can it be?"

"It is something that will make your belt tighter," chuckled the Good Wolf. "It is another thing we wanted. It's a big fresh cocoanut."

He gave a jump as he said it and so did Barty. "There comes another," he called out, "and another and another." They had to keep jumping about because the jet-black monkeys were throwing the big nuts down as fast as they could.

"They know we are hungry," said Barty.

When the monkeys stopped throwing they settled themselves on the branches and watched with their little bright eyes twinkling as if they were delighted. They evidently wanted to see what Barty would do.

The Good Wolf soon showed him what to do. He found a flat rock by the edge of the pool and laid the big nut on it and then looked for a stone heavy enough to break it open. When it was broken open Barty felt sure nothing had ever looked so nice before. He had never known what a fresh young cocoanut was like. It was soft and creamy and rich, like some new kind of wonderful breakfast food.

Barty took a piece of the cocoanut shell and used it for a spoon. He sat comfortably on the grass and made quite a good breakfast. The blue and white bird watched him and the jet-black monkeys watched him, and the Good Wolf watched him.

Presently the blue and white bird flew down from the twig she was sitting on and began to peck very hard at some green leaves growing among the grass. She was so busy that the Good Wolf stopped watching Barty and began to watch her.

"That is a very clever bird," he said in a few minutes. "I believe she knows more about desert islands than people who have been to school for ten years." Barty stopped his cocoanut shell spoon halfway to his mouth.

"I believe she is trying to dig up something," he said.

"Claws are stronger than beaks," said the Good Wolf. "I will go and help her." He went to the place where the green leaves grew, and the minute he came near her the blue and white bird hopped out of his way and hopped on to the nearest bush and sang the little whistling song she had learned from Barty. It sounded so like talking that Barty almost shouted with delight.

"She says 'all right,'" he cried out. "That is bird talk."

The Good Wolf had begun to be very busy himself. He was digging very fast in the earth with his claws. Soon Barty saw he had dug up the root of the green leaves and it looked like a nice potato. He looked quite pleased and excited and went on digging and digging until he had dug up six fine roots and then he sat down by them and panted delightedly, with his nice big red tongue hanging out of his mouth.

"Well," he said, when he found his breath again, "the intelligence of that bird is beyond everything. What would you think of a hot roast potato, when your belt got a little loose again?"

"I should *love* it," answered Barty. "Sometimes my mother lets me roast a potato for myself, and it is nicer than anything."

The Good Wolf looked down at his six roots and chuckled.

"Blue Crest has shown us something just like potatoes, only nicer. There are plenty of them growing about here. We can always dig them up, and when we have roasted them we can get some of the salt that has dried on the rocks by the sea to eat them with. What do you think of that?"

Barty was too joyful for anything.

"It is *just* like Robinson Crusoe," he cried out. "Just – just – just! He was *always* finding things."

"That's the advantage of a Desert Island," answered the Good Wolf. "You find everything when you have looked for it long enough to give you a beautiful appetite. Nobody could live on desert islands if they were not like that."

CHAPTER THREE

WHEN the Good Wolf made his remark about the convenience of desert islands, such a chattering broke out among the black monkeys in the high branches in the cocoanut tree that Barty threw his head back as far as he could to see what was happening.

"Why," he cried out the next instant, "they are all sitting together at the very top of the tree as if they were holding a meeting. I am sure they are talking to each other about something important."

"Perhaps they are talking about us," the Good Wolf said.

"I do think they are," laughed Barty. "They keep turning their heads to look down on us." Then he jumped up and stood on his feet and shouted out to them as he had shouted before. "Hello!" he said. "I don't know whether you are the ones who played in the band at the Snow Feast, but will you be friends? Let us be friends."

They all chattered so fast at this that it seemed as if they had gone crazy.

"You can't understand what they say," said Barty, "but I believe they mean that they will."

"Ah, they'll be friends," the Good Wolf answered. "You see, there is something about you that *makes* friends."

"Is there?" cried Barty, quite delighted. "I *am* glad. I wonder what it is that does it?"

"Well, you're a jolly little chap," said the Good Wolf. "You've got such stout little legs, and you always seem to be enjoying yourself."

"I *am* always enjoying myself," Barty answered. "I'm enjoying myself now 'normously. What shall we do next?"

The Good Wolf scratched behind his right ear, and Barty saw it was that thoughtful sort of scratch of his – the one he scratched when he was turning things over in his mind.

"Well," he said, after being quiet for a few moments, "Robinson Crusoe looked for a good many things that first day, didn't he?"

"Yes, he did," murmured Barty.

"Now what do you think we had better look for first?" the Good Wolf asked him.

"What do *you* think?" said Barty.

"I want you to tell *me*

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