

Jarvis the Duck

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The Oracle's Vision

Jarvis is a young duck that lives on a small pond in The Great Poplar Forest. These are the chronicles of his adventures.

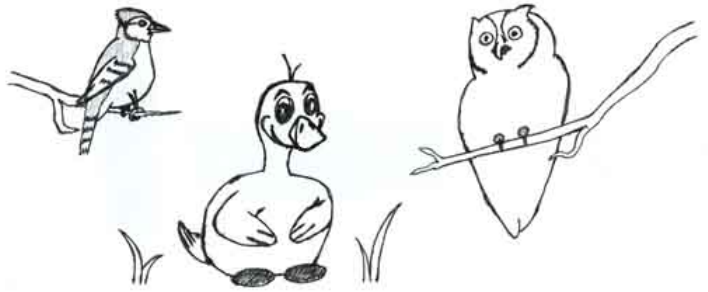
The party traveled north, guided by Talon. They kept low, just above the tree canopy. After seeing the sad and frightening spectacle at The Great Lake, the mood had been grim. The travelers didn't talk much. They just flew, in "V" formation, taking turns as point bird. Little of note transpired for five days. On the morning of the sixth day, the group was gathered together on the forest floor and on low branches. After they had bowed to Ra at sunrise, Jarvis addressed the others.

"Guys, Angeldown, I just wanted to say something before we started off again," began Jarvis.

"Sure, Jarvis," replied Angeldown.

"I feel like we've been down since we left The Great Lake," and Jarvis paused, then continued, "which is understandable, of course, but we can't stay down." The others looked at him quizzically. He continued, "The joy within our hearts is the greatest gift of Ra; if we lose that, then we are already dead."

The others stood quietly, considering these profound words. Jarvis finished, "We have to just be ourselves. That's the only way we can get through this. Why, Jay hasn't even insulted me in five days." This last remark brought little chuckles and smiles.



Talon replied, "Jarvis, you are indeed a Seer," and after a brief pause, "and a gentleman."

"Jarvis may be a Seer, but the term 'gentleman' may be being applied a little loosely," responded Jay with a smile.

"Thank you for that, Jay," said Jarvis.

"Any time."

Sage continued brightly, "While we're hanging out here, on this little breather from our trek, I've been wondering if you could tell us something about yourself, Talon. We don't know you very well yet, man."

"Of course, anything," replied Talon, who was not overly talkative but always very polite and sincere.

"What about where you're from?" asked Sage.

"I grew up in Heliopolis, the city of the sun, which is to the north. The northern lands are populated by my kind, the Falcons, along with the Snowy Owls and, of course, the Harpies. At Heliopolis, we devoutly worship Ra, and our patron is Horus, the falcon god. Horus is the son of Osiris and Isis. His task is to help Ra watch over the world by guiding earthly leaders to do the right thing. The symbol of Horus is the

golden falcon egg. My parents are the high priest and priestess of Heliopolis.”

“Man,” exclaimed Sage, and after a pause, he said, “Man,” again. After recovering from his surprise at what he had heard, he became articulate again, “But I thought you lived at The Great Lake.”

“The Great Oracle of Heliopolis had an astounding vision when I was a young man. She learned from Horus that I must leave my home and journey far to the south to live at The Great Lake. One day, the Oracle said, I would return to save Helopolis from what would seem to be certain destruction. So, I have lived for many years at The Great Lake, as my highest aim is to serve my people, Horus, and Ra.”

“Thank you very much for sharing these things about yourself, Talon,” said Angeldown kindly.

Just as she finished uttering these words, a loud rustling began, which quickly turned into a roar of wind and flapping. Huge shadows passed over them. The party

looked up to see five enormous winged forms pass overhead, traveling very fast.

“Holy crap,” blurted out Jay.

“Those things were huge,” said Jarvis. He had never seen birds that big before.

“Man,” and after a pause, “Man,” said Sage for the second time that morning.

“My friends,” said Talon in a low voice, “those are Harpy Eagles, though I did not expect to see them this far south. That is strange.”

“Strange? Dudes, those things are freakin’ insane,” said Jay.

“Indeed,” said Talon, “We must fly very low and keep a sharp eye out now at all times.”