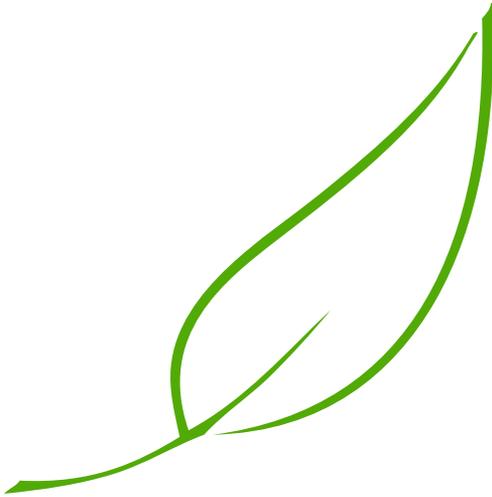


CHRISTOPHER TOODLE

by Ken Bradbury



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(The cast is six characters and a dying cat. Individual actors may play several roles. All parts may be played by either sex, including the cat.)

(As the narrators, Nabob and Boban, tell the tale, the action is acted out by the others.)

NABOB: In the faraway land of Kib-Kan-Kanoodle there lived a young prince, name of Christopher Toodle.

BOBAN: His father was King of the Kingdom of Kwalee and all of his subjects they feared him, by golly.

NABOB: For the King was a hero! A warrior! A fighter! And even his enemies shook when they spied him!

BOBAN: But Christopher Toodle, his son, was quite strange, for he cared not for fighting and killing and rage. He loved to make pictures and music and verse, and to draw little birds on the back of his nurse.

NABOB: But the King he insisted the boy learn to fight so he taught him to run and to jump and to ride. He taught him the ways of the warrior bold, of the methods to madden his enemies so.

BOBAN: The King taught his son how to wrestle and swim, and get the advantage, and fight on a whim. He showed him the way to make all men his lesser and conquer his foes, and crush the aggressor!

NABOB: And Christopher Toodle he learned all these things. He fought and he rode and he heeded the King. For though his young heart found in them no great joy, Christopher, was an obedient boy.

BOBAN: Then one day the King summoned Chris to his throne

...

KING: Soon you'll be King, my young son, on your own! So what will you do? What sort will

you be? What sort of King will you make after me? A scoundrel? A wizard? A brave, handsome knight? Come on boy, speak up! Have you learned how to fight?

CHRISTOPHER: I've learned all you taught me, I've learned all the rules. Of swordplay and battle you've made me well schooled. I can jump any moat, I can slay any beast. The soldiers all think that my footwork's real neat. Of dungeons and dragons I've learned what you've taught, and the harder you pushed me, the harder I fought. I know all the skills and the tricks and the trades that make a "King" king, and I now know the way.

NABOB: The King looked him up and the King looked him down, and the King looked around, then the King he sat down. He said,

KING: Very well! Let me give you a test! Say the BooBlops from Blooston had land that was best. They sat on their land and they licked their fine chops, and they wouldn't give you a small dollopy drop? So what would you do as they sat rich and fat ...? Would you smile? Would you hide? Would you up and attack?

BOBAN: Christopher stroked his young chin with his hand then answered as plainly as one plain Prince can ...

CHRISTOPHER: The BooBlops from Blooston! An interesting crew. You say it's their land?

BOBAN: Said the King ...

KING: Yes I do.

CHRISTOPHER: Then I'd make them my friends! I'd make them my mates! I'd have them all over for schnitzel and cake!

KING: What!!!!

NABOB: ... the King thundered, his face in a knot ...

KING: You wouldn't attack them and take what they've got?

CHRISTOPHER: Why ever would someone take what's not quite theirs? You called it their land. They're the first to be there. And though it might make me a hero at home. The BooBlops from Blooston seem reasonable blokes.

BOBAN: The King threw a tizzy ...

NABOB: The King threw a fit ...

BOBAN: The King tore his robe into wee tiny bits.

NABOB: The King threw his cat right into the deep moat.

BOBAN: Where she died with a small golden fish in her throat.

KING: I'm angry!

CAT: Meow!

KING: I'm furious!

CAT: Ugg!

KING: I'm livid! Irate! I am furious!

CAT: Blub! (*and the cat dies ... sorry*)

NABOB: The King was enraged, all perplexed and incensed!

His eyeballs protruded! He grabbed for his neck!

BOBAN: His pupils dilated, his breath came in jerks ...

NABOB: His wind was cut short and his tongue failed to work!

KING: You've made me so angry, you young son of mine!

BOBAN: Said the King ...

KING: That I think I'm about now to die!

NABOB: And quick as he said it ...

BOBAN: For he *meant* what he said ...

NABOB: He fell to the floor of the castle!

KING: (*now on the floor*) I'm dead!

BOBAN: And Christopher Toodle became Chris the King.

KING: (*coming momentarily to life*) Of all of the silly, ridiculous things!

CHRISTOPHER: There's nothing that's worse ...

NABOB: King Christopher said ...

CHRISTOPHER: Than a previous King who just won't stay quite dead.

NABOB: "The Kingdom of Christopher!" people proclaimed and all the world over they shouted his name.

BOBAN: Then one summer day, the fifth year of his rule, his mother the Queen came to talk ...

QUEEN: You young fool! Don't you see what you've done! I should have now guessed. You caused us the awfulest snofflest mess! You won't make a fuss over wars and Tomfoolery! You've given away all my jewels and my jewelry! You've opened our storehouse to feed all the



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