

Albert Makes New Friends

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"Mother, I'm off out now" said Albert,
"I'll be in the woods all day,
Got me cap and me stick with the 'orses 'ead 'andle."
Mother said "just don't go loosing your way."

Albert had just read *The Wind In The Willows*
And he was off to meet Ratty and Mole,
To tell them of his adventures with Wallace
And his escapade with gentle giant Floe.

Albert was certain if he sat down by the river
And quietly wispered "Ratty", "Mole"
Sure as eggs are eggs and toads are toads
They'd poke their noses out of their holes.

It wasn't long before Ratty was about
And Mole wasn't far behind.
And Badger surfaced to see who was making the fuss
And was surprised it was Albert he did find.

Albert spoke first and said "I've got some stories to tell
And I know you'll be happy to listen.
They're about a lion in a zoo and a whale in the ocean,"
And Rattys eyes started to glisten.

"What's a lion" asked Mole always innocent,
"Is it like a weasel that lives in the Wild Wood?"
"Don't be silly" said Ratty with impatience
"A lion's a big cat, I thought you understood."

"Don't know what a whale is either"
Said Mole feeling very unworldly.
"A whale's a big fish" piped up Albert
"With a girth the size of that old oak tree.

"Well" said Albert,
"I have been swallowed by a lion, and I have been swallowed by a whale.
Of course it all ended well
As I'm here to tell the tale."

"Were you mother and father worried?" asked Mole
"Had they given you up for dead?"
"Yes, Yes" replied Albert
"You see, there was nothing poking out
Not even me head."

"Extraordinary" exclaimed Ratty
"What a brave chap you've been.
Here amongst the willows
Is a quieter life it would seem."

"O, there's Mr Toad" said Mole
"Musn't tell him what you've been up to,
Or he'll have Ratty and I pack a picnic basket
And take him on a trip to the zoo!"

"Do join us for lunch" said Ratty
"There's plenty in our basket to eat,
It's been rather nice to make your acquaintance,
Do stay a while, it will be a real treat."

Albert accepted the invitation
And they shared stories with squeals of delight,
While the afternoon wore on and the shadows grew longer
And day nearly turned into night.

"Well" said Albert with a weary sigh,
"I'd better be getting off home."
They all shook his hand and waved good bye
And Ratty said "mind how you go!"

Albert set off with a skip and a jump
And when he turned for one last good bye,
There was nere a sign of where they'd been
Just green fields and blue sky.