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IMAGINATION OVER KNOWLEDGE

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The Tale of Fatty Coon: The Loggers Come (18/20)

Fatty Coon was frightened; he had just waked up and he heard a sound that was exactly like the noise Farmer Green and his hired man had made when they cut down the tall chestnut tree where he was perched.

"Oh, Mother! What is it?" he cried.

"The loggers have come," Mrs. Coon said. "They are cutting down all the big trees in the swamp."

"Then we'll have to move, won't we?" Fatty asked.

"No! They won't touch this tree," his mother told him.

"It's an old tree, and hollow—so they won't chop it down. It's only the good sound trees that they'll take."

"But I thought this was a good tree." Fatty was puzzled.

"So it is, my son! It's a good tree for us. But not for the loggers. They would have little use for it."

Fatty Coon felt better when he heard that. And he had a good deal of fun, peeping down at the loggers and watching them work. But he took care that they should not see HIM. He knew what their bright axes could do. When night came Fatty had still more fun. When the loggers were asleep Fatty went to their camp in the woods beside the brook and he found many good things to eat. He did not know the names of all the goodies;

but he ate them just the same. He 'specially liked some potatoes which the careless cook had left in a pan near the open camp-fire. The fire was out. And the pan rested on a stump close beside it. Fatty Coon climbed up and crawled right inside the pan. And after he had had one taste of those potatoes he grew so excited—they were so good—that he tipped the pan off the stump and the potatoes rolled right into the ashes.

Fatty had jumped to one side, when the tin pan fell. It made a great clatter; and he kept very still for a few moments, while he listened. But no one stirred. And then Fatty jumped plump into the ashes.



WHEW! He jumped out again as fast as he could; for beneath the ashes there were plenty of hot coals. Fatty stood in them for not more than three seconds, but that was quite long enough. The bottoms of his feet burned as if a hundred hornets had stung them. He stood first on one foot and then on another. If you could have seen him you would have thought Fatty was dancing. And you might have laughed, because he looked funny.

But Fatty Coon did not laugh. In fact, he came very near crying. And he did not wait to eat another mouthful. He limped along toward home. And it was

several days before he stirred out of his mother's house again. He just lay in his bed and waited until his burns were well again.

It was very hard. For Fatty did not like to think of all those good things to eat that he was missing. And he hoped the loggers would not go away before his feet were well again.