

# Happypotamus and Friends

## Twelve children's stories Inspired by the parables of Jesus

*"Stories of animals with funny names where bad things happen but it ends up good."*

This was the brief my four year old granddaughter gave me when I offered to write and tell her stories. I was thinking of five or six stories but it ended up with 52 !!

The stories in this series are inspired by the parables of Jesus. They are not literal interpretations of the Bible stories. Changes have been made often to meet the need of a 'happy ending'. Minor comments are made on the Bible source at the end of each story. Let's now meet the characters.

### The Characters

Down at an ocean beach if you look out to the sea, just over the horizon, is the island of Hannimal. It is a happy island with lots of food and shelter. Only animals live there. These are the stories of six very special animals.

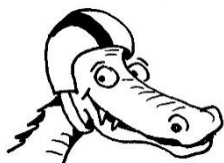
Let's meet them.



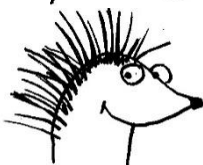
**Happypotamus** is the largest of the animals. She walks slowly and talks in a soft voice. She lives on a farm with her two sons. She is a very good cook and often has her friends around for a cup of tea, a glass of lemonade and some freshly baked cakes or scones.



**Geelaugh** is rich - very rich. He owns a large house with high ceilings and his house has a beautiful garden. Geelaugh loves cars but he doesn't like cleaning them. As soon as they get dirty he buys a new one - always a different colour to the last.



**Crocosmile** rushes around Hannimal on her motorbike. She loves motorbikes and rides her favourite one whenever she can. Her teeth are very sharp but there is no need to worry. You only see her teeth when she is smiling and that's usually when she is riding her motorbike.



**Cupine** is the smallest animal. He is very shy and thinks that none of the other animals like him - but they all do. Lots of bad things happen to Cupine but that doesn't seem to worry him. He will always be there - trying to help and trying to be liked.



**Wombrat** is not very friendly. He always wants what others have and sometimes he takes things without asking. Wombrat loves chocolate. He doesn't want friends - just chocolate. Some say he is mean, greedy, selfish, sneaky, dishonest and lazy. He disagrees - "I am not lazy", he says.



**Dog** is very clever and very good at making sick animals better. She knows what fruit to eat to ease a tummy ache and what to drink to cure a headache. She knows what to rub on cuts and bruises to make them better. Dog is the only animal who has a second name. Her second name is **Taw**.

Story 1 follows. Enjoy.

## Story 1. The Good Happypotamus

“Apples, apples, I’m off to pick some apples for my friends,” said Cupine as he set off down the narrow track, across the rickety bridge, around the giant tree and into the orchard. He knew exactly where there was a special apple tree and he knew its apples would be ready to pick.

When Wombrat saw Cupine heading off into the orchard he suddenly became very hungry. He guessed that Cupine was off to pick some apples and his mouth started watering just thinking about them. Chocolate was by far his favourite food, but today apples would almost be as good - especially if someone else picked them for you. Huffing and puffing, he waddled down the narrow track across the rickety bridge and hid behind the giant tree.



When Cupine reached the apple tree he picked six large shiny red apples. He put them in his bag and started to walk home. As he passed the giant tree Wombrat jumped on his back, grabbed his bag and hurried away across the rickety bridge. He waddled, huffing and puffing, up the narrow track back to his home.

Cupine had fallen down heavily and was left lying in the mud, dirty and bleeding. Worse still, he was on his back and couldn’t stand up. He didn’t see the rascal who had attacked him. Poor Cupine.

It wasn’t too long before Cupine heard a car approaching. It was his good friend Geelaugh who had just bought a brand new blue car. Geelaugh’s black car was dirty, and although it sounds silly, he preferred to buy a new car rather than wash his old one. He sold the black car.

Geelaugh saw Cupine lying on the ground - his car screeched to a stop. He popped his telescopic neck out of the sunroof and asked, “What’s going on here?”

“Someone attacked me and stole my shiny red apples,” said Cupine still lying on his back. “Please take me to Dog. I’m injured and she will make me better.”

“Take you in my car? No way,” said Geelaugh. “Don’t expect me to take you in my brand new blue car. I don’t want mud and blood on my white leather seats. I’ll tell Dog that you are in trouble and she’ll come out and help you. Good luck. See ya!”

“Bu-bu-bu-bu-but,” Cupine started to say. But it was too late. Geelaugh’s wheels spun and sprayed mud all over him as his car sped away across the rickety bridge and up the narrow track. Poor Cupine.

Not long after, Cupine heard the roar of a motorbike approaching. He knew that it would be his good friend Crocosmile.

‘What’s going on here?’ Crocosmile asked as she hopped off her powerful motorbike.

“Someone attacked me and stole my shiny red apples,” said Cupine. “Please take me to Dog. I’m injured - she will make me better.”

Crocsmile turned Cupine onto his feet. “That’s all I can do for you today,” she said. “I’m on my way to buy a trail bike. What’s more with those sore legs you wouldn’t be able to hang on. I’ll phone Dog. I’ll tell her that you are in trouble and she’ll come out and help you. Good luck. See ya!”

“Bu-bu–bu–but,” Cupine started to say. But it was too late Crocsmile’s back wheel sprayed mud all over him as she sped away on her noisy motorbike across the rickety bridge and up the narrow track. Poor Cupine.

Cupine started to walk to Dog’s house. Dog was his friend. Her other name was Taw. She would fix him. But as he walked down the track he heard someone coming behind him singing a cheery song. Cupine had never met this animal before. Her name was Happypotamus.

“Hello, my name is Cupine. Someone attacked me and stole my shiny red apples. I’m injured. Please take me to the Dog Taw. She will bandage my cuts and put my spikes back in place.”

“I will take you,” said Happypotamus as she knelt down so that Cupine could crawl onto her huge back.

“Bu-bu–bu–but, I’m all muddy and bleeding, I will dirty your pretty dress,” said Cupine.

Happypotamus put her wet nose against Cupine’s muddy face, focussed her large eyes on his beady little eyes and said firmly, “Do as I say. Get on my back. Now! Straight away!”

So Cupine climbed on her back. Her pretty white dress with pink spots was soon stained with the mud and blood from Cupine, but she didn’t seem to care. She continued to sing her cheery song as she walked across the rickety bridge and down the narrow track.

When they arrived at Dog house, Happypotamus greeted her and said, “Please look after my new friend Cupine. Give him a hot bath, clean his wounds, bandage his cuts and put his spikes back in place. Whatever it costs, I will pay.”

The Dog Taw was very clever and it was only five days before Cupine was better. His cuts were healed and all his spikes were back in place. Happypotamus visited Cupine every day and they became very good friends. But now it was time for him to go home.

As Cupine walked home, he heard a car approaching. It screeched to a stop next to him.

It was Geelaugh in a new aqua coloured car. “Oh dear,” he said. “I was so busy buying this car that I forgot to tell Dog. Sorry about that. But you’re better now so it doesn’t matter. Good luck. See ya!”

Further on, he heard a motorbike approaching. It skidded to a halt in front of him.

It was Crocsmile on her new trail bike. “Oh dear,” she said. “The batteries of my mobile phone went flat so I couldn’t phone Dog. Sorry about that. But you’re better now so it doesn’t matter. Good luck. See ya!”

Nearer to his house he met his good friend Wombrat who burped, spat apple seeds onto the ground and said, “I hear you had some problems last week. Sorry about that. You should be more careful next

time you pick apples in the orchard. Never know who might be hiding there. But you're better now, that's all that matters. Good luck. See ya!"

As Wombrat strolled off he pulled the last apple from his pouch. "Best apple I've ever tasted," he said to himself. "Yummy".

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## **Source Notes & Discussion**

The following gives the Bible reference of the source parable together some thoughts that might prove helpful when reading the stories to children and for subsequent discussion.

### **Story1. The Good Happypotamus**

#### **Parable of the Good Samaritan: Luke 10: 30 – 37**

The Priest and the Levite have been replaced with good friends who should have helped Cupine. The Samaritan becomes a relative stranger – Happypotamus. For children the question is possibly not "who is my neighbour" but rather "who is my friend." The answer is the one who is prepared, irrespective of status and circumstance, to love and be kind at all times – good and bad. Jesus had such love he was prepared to die for his friends.

Illustrations: Julie Smith

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