

SYNOPSIS

TATANKA AS A BEAVER.

”The trunkrace.”

Owl lands on the measuring pole and informs that the snow is melting on the mountaintops. There is a chance that the river might run over. Owl is glad to know about the Chief’s plans of building a new dam.

Tatanka runs to the measuring pole to measure himself. He must be tall today. He wants to join the elders in cutting trees and collecting lumber for the dam. Sadly, he seems to be no taller than yesterday. The teasing youngster laughs. “Small Indians like Tatanka can’t even build small boats of bark”.

Tatanka want’s to prove to himself that he can build boats of bark. He walks down to the river and makes two boats, one small and one big. He lets them race down the river while running on the side watching. Tatanka wants the little boat to beat the big one.

The boat race is suddenly interrupted, when the little boat gets lifted by the head of a surfacing beaver. Seconds later, another beaver does the same thing with the big boat. The two beavers laugh at each other, until they realize that both have a boat of bark on the head. Tatanka laughs and wants to be a beaver too.

The, now three, beavers hear Tatanka’s laughter and ask whether he too is building a summerhouse in the river. Tatanka says he would love to build a summerhouse, if he only had the lumber to build it. The beavers say they have loads of lumber Tatanka could use, but in order to get it he must beat them in a trunk race down the river. The beavers quickly cut four large trunks of wood and place them side-by-side in the water.

The race is off. The beavers are obvious masters of trunk racing, and like to show off their skills. One beaver takes the surfing position, another is balancing on one leg, and the third one imitates a horseback rider. Tatanka struggles with his trunk, spinning around in circles. When he finally gets the hang of it, and manages to take the lead, he turns around to make a face - but fails to see the branch coming up in front of him. Tatanka is caught by the branch and soon finds himself kicking about in the air, while his trunk carries on down the river. Tatanka finally gets loose, leaps down in the water, and manages to get back on his trunk - which has been blocked by a rock further down the river.

The finish line is right by the Wa-Mo camp. Tatanka finishes last, and is completely exhausted, as opposed to his beaver components who have all been chilling out on their trunks for quite a while. Tatanka wants to know who won the race. The beavers laugh at his question. Obviously, it is the one who manages to pass the most obstacles who wins a trunk race.

A baffled group of Wa-Mo Indians watch as the beavers reward Tatanka (as beaver) with an enormous amount of lumber. The beavers want to get back to work, and ask if Tatanka would like to help. Beavers like teamwork. Tatanka appreciates the offer, but says he believes he has

more than enough workers all ready. The beavers swim back up the river while waving good buy to Tatanka. Tatanka waives back, but must hurry so the other Indians don't see him as a beaver. He goes under water, saying "I am Tatanka", and returns to the surface as himself. "We have received a gift from the beavers!" Tatanka shouts out to the Wa-Mo Indians. In the evening, Tatanka tells his grandfather in the clouds that he would want to share with the whole tribe how he got hold of all the lumber. But then he would have to reveal his secret, and he does not dear to do so - not yet.