

LORD OF THE FLIES—CHAPTER 6

He handed the conch to Eric, the nearest of the twins.

“We’ve seen the beast with our own eyes. No—we weren’t asleep—”

Sam took up the story. By custom now one conch did for both twins, for their substantial unity was recognized.

“It was furry. There was something moving behind its head—wings. The beast moved too—”

“That was awful. It kind of sat up—”

“The fire was bright—”

“We’d just made it up—”

“—more sticks on—”

“There were eyes—”

“Teeth—”

“Claws—”

“We ran as fast as we could—”

“Bashed into things—”

“The beast followed us—”

“I saw it slinking behind the trees—”

“Nearly touched me—”

Ralph pointed fearfully at Eric’s face, which was striped with scars where the bushes had torn him.

“How did you do that?”

Eric felt his face.

“I’m all rough. Am I bleeding?”

The circle of boys shrank away in horror. Johnny, yawning still, burst into noisy tears and was slapped by Bill till he choked on them. The bright morning was full of threats and the circle began to change. It faced out, rather than in, and the spears of sharpened wood were like a fence. Jack called them back to the center.

“This’ll be a real hunt! Who’ll come?”

Ralph moved impatiently.

“These spears are made of wood. Don’t be silly.”

Jack sneered at him.

“Frightened?”

“ ‘Course I’m frightened. Who wouldn’t be?”

He turned to the twins, yearning but hopeless.

“I suppose you aren’t pulling our legs?”

The reply was too emphatic for anyone to doubt them.

Piggy took the conch.

“Couldn’t we—kind of—stay here? Maybe the beast won’t come near us.”

But for the sense of something watching them, Ralph would have shouted at him.

“Stay here? And be cramped into this bit of the island, always on the lookout? How should we get our food? And what about the fire?”

“Let’s be moving,” said Jack relentlessly, “we’re wasting time.”

“No we’re not. What about the littluns?”

“Sucks to the littluns!”

“Someone’s got to look after them.”

“Nobody has so far.”

“There was no need! Now there is. Piggy’ll look after them.”

“That’s right. Keep Piggy out of danger.”

“Have some sense. What can Piggy do with only one eye?”

The rest of the boys were looking from Jack to Ralph, curiously.

“And another thing. You can’t have an ordinary hunt because the beast doesn’t leave tracks. If it did you’d have seen them. For all we know, the beast may swing through the trees like what’s its name.”

Source:

Golding, W., & Lowry, L. (2016). *Lord of the flies*. Penguin Books.