

For my wife, Sarah;
Croaky's biggest fan.

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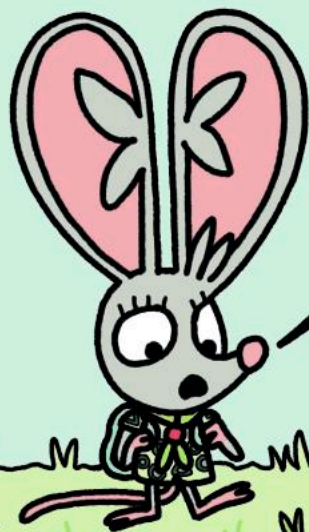
CROAKY



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'Sheena, THE FLOOR IS LAVA!' cried Croaky Hopper as he clambered up a tree and swung from the branches. 'Hurry, or you'll BURN!'



I think I'll be fine.

‘Winston is revealing our next expedition today,’ said Sheena. ‘I thought you’d want to head straight inside the Woggle Scout hut to find out what it is.’

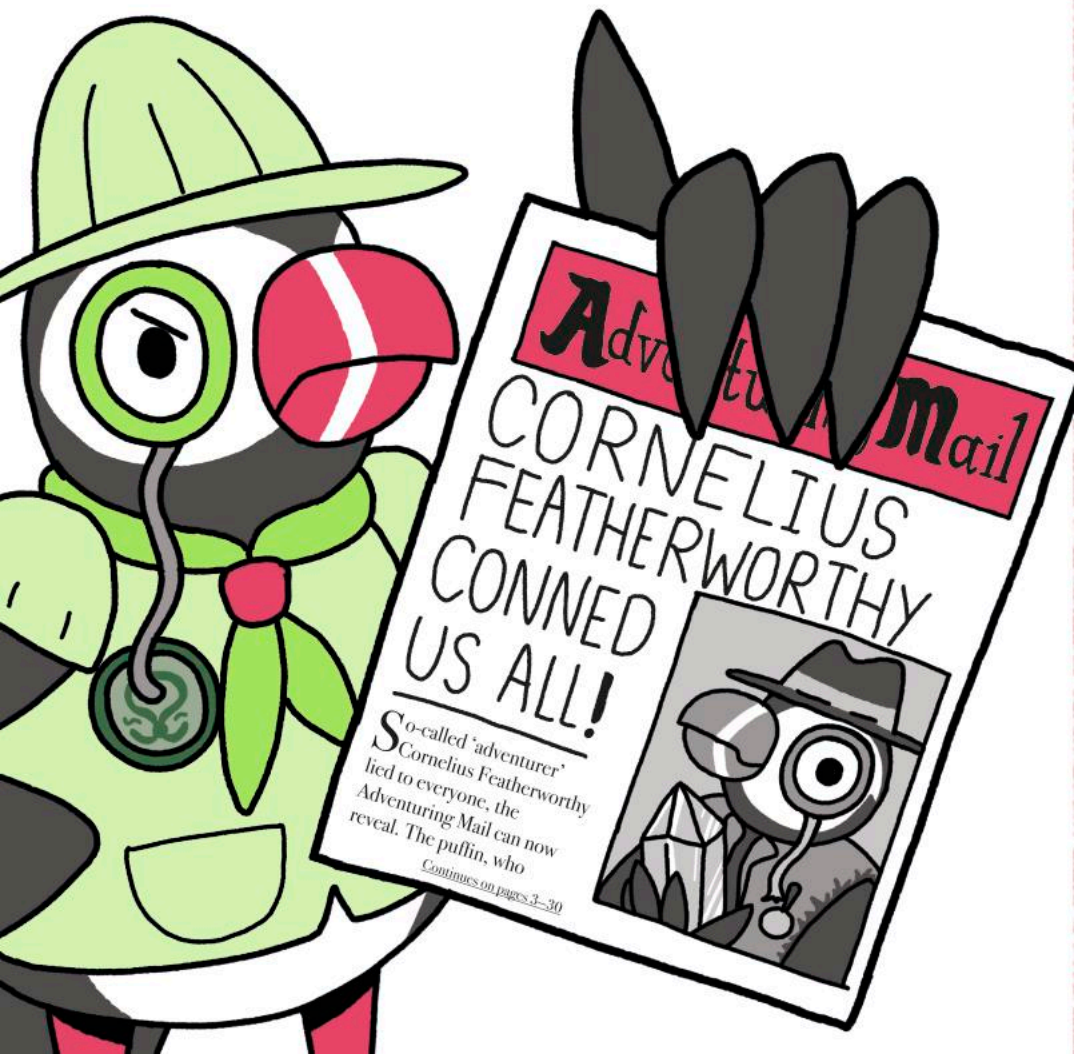
Croaky’s eyes went wide. He dropped from the tree and bolted for the door.

‘It’s preposterous! An outrage!’ cried Winston, leader of the Woggle Scouts 7th Patrol. Croaky and Sheena found him pacing around the basement of their scout hall.



Is this about that crossword puzzle again?

The puffin picked up a newspaper from the table. 'Just look at this nonsense!'



‘Who’s Cornelius Featherworthy?’
asked Croaky.

‘My grandpa,’ said Winston. ‘And
he was a great adventurer!’

Sheena was already online and
tapping away on her laptop. ‘It says
here he found a . . . creature made of
gemstones deep underground?’

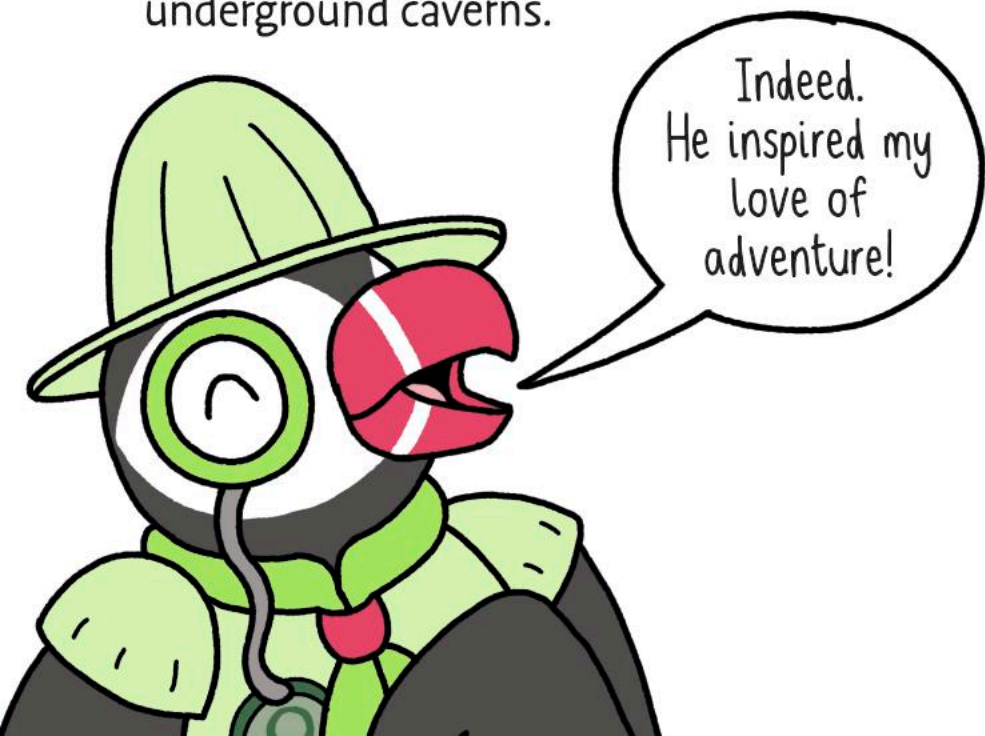
‘Awesome!’ gasped Croaky.

‘The *Gemosaurus*,’ declared
Winston, proudly. ‘That was his
discovery, long ago. Now, the
Adventuring Mail has published an
article saying it has found no evidence
that the creature exists. They say
my grandpa lied and are calling him

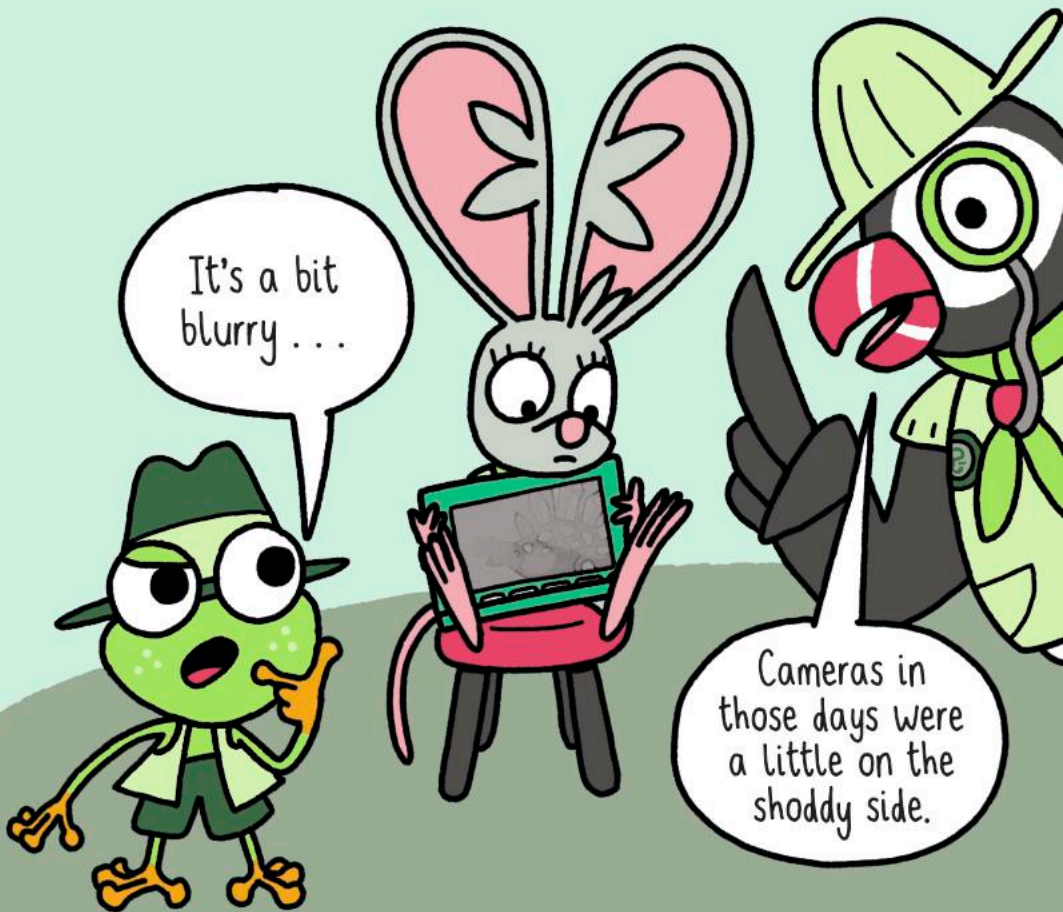
names like CONelius Never-worthy and ... and ... FRAUDNELIUS!’

Winston slammed the paper down and sighed in frustration.

‘Wow. He must have been an amazing adventurer,’ said Croaky, his mind doing loop the loops at the thought of rare creatures in underground caverns.



‘Winston, it’s not that I don’t believe any of this,’ said Sheena, ‘but how can you be so sure? The only evidence was *this* photo. Look.’



It's a bit blurry . . .

Cameras in those days were a little on the shoddy side.

‘Besides, that’s not the only piece of evidence of the Gemosaurus...’
said Winston.

He hovered over an item on the table, hidden under a cloth.

Then, in a dramatic flourish, he whipped it off.



‘Grandpa Cornelius gave me this on my thirteenth birthday,’ said Winston. It is a gemstone given to him by the Gemosaurus itself!’

Croaky and Sheena had never seen anything like it.



‘Maybe!’ laughed Winston. ‘But to me, this crystal is *priceless*.’

Croaky was overcome with the urge to find a treasure just like it. Maybe he could be a bajillionaire and use the money to go on all sorts of far-flung adventures.

‘I know! Why don’t WE find the Gemosaurus?’ he cried.

Winston chuckled.

