

An extract from 'How the Rhinoceros Got His Skin'
by Rudyard Kipling

ONCE upon a time, on an uninhabited island on the shores of the Red Sea, there lived a Man. And the Man lived by the Red Sea with nothing but his hat and his knife and a cooking-stove of the kind that you must particularly never touch. And one day he took flour and water and currants and plums and sugar and things, and made himself one cake which was two feet across and three feet thick. It was indeed a Superior Comestible (that's magic), and he put it on the stove because he was allowed to cook on the stove, and he baked it and he baked it till it was all done brown and smelt most sentimental. But just as he was going to eat it there came down to the beach from the Altogether Uninhabited Interior one Rhinoceros with a horn on his nose, two piggy eyes, and few manners. In those days the Rhinoceros's skin fitted him quite tight. There were no wrinkles in it anywhere. He looked exactly like a Noah's Ark Rhinoceros, but of course much bigger. All the same, he had no manners then, and he has no manners now, and he never will have any manners. He said, 'How!' and the Man left that cake and climbed to the top of a palm tree with nothing on but his hat. And the Rhinoceros upset the oil-stove with his nose, and the cake rolled on the sand, and he spiked that cake on the horn of his nose, and he ate it, and he went away, waving his tail, to the desolate and Exclusively Uninhabited Interior which abuts on the islands of Mazanderan, Socotra, and Promontories of the Larger Equinox. Then the Man came down from his palm-tree and put the stove on its legs and recited the following song, which, as you have not heard, I will now proceed to relate:—

*Whosoever takes a cake
That a Man has baked
Makes a dreadful mistake.*

25

And there was a great deal more in that than you would think.

Because, five weeks later, there was a heat wave in the Red Sea, and everybody took off all the clothes they had. The Man took off his hat; but the Rhinoceros took off his skin and carried it over his shoulder as he came down to the beach to bathe. In those days it buttoned underneath with three buttons and looked like a waterproof. He said nothing whatever about the Man's cake, because he had eaten it all; and he never had any manners, then, since, or henceforward. He waddled straight into the water and blew bubbles through his nose, leaving his skin on the beach.

35 Presently the Man came by and found the skin, and he smiled one smile that ran all round his face two times. He rubbed his hands. Then he went to his

camp and filled his hat with cake-crumbs, for the Man never ate anything but cake, and never swept out his camp. He took that skin, and he shook that skin, and he scrubbed that skin, and he rubbed that skin just as full of old, dry, stale, tickly cake-crumbs and some burned currants as ever it could possibly hold. Then he climbed to the top of his palm-tree and waited for the Rhinoceros to come out of the water and put it on.

And the Rhinoceros did. He buttoned it up with the three buttons, and it tickled like cake crumbs in bed. Then he wanted to scratch, but that made it worse; and then he lay down on the sands and rolled and rolled and rolled, and every time he rolled the cake crumbs tickled him worse and worse and worse. Then he ran to the palm-tree and rubbed and rubbed and rubbed himself against it. He rubbed so much and so hard that he rubbed his skin into a great fold over his shoulders, and another fold underneath, where the buttons used to be (but he rubbed the buttons off), and he rubbed some more folds over his legs. And it spoiled his temper, but it didn't make the least difference to the cake-crumbs. They were inside his skin and they tickled. So he went home, very angry indeed and horribly scratchy; and from that day to this every rhinoceros has great folds in his skin and a very bad temper, all on account of the cake-crumbs inside.

But the Man came down from his palm-tree, wearing his hat, packed up his cooking-stove, and went away in the direction of Orotavo, Amygdala, the Upland Meadows of Anantarivo, and the Marshes of Sonaput.

1. Which of the following is the best antonym for 'uninhabited' in line 1?

- ☐ a. forsaken
- ☐ b. desolate
- ☐ c. populated
- ☐ d. plundered
- ☐ e. untouched

2. Which two of the following items did the Man have with him?

- 1. a scarf
- 2. a bottle opener
- 3. a hat
- 4. a knife

- ☐ a. 1 and 2
- ☐ b. 1 and 3
- ☐ c. 1 and 4
- ☐ d. 2 and 3
- ☐ e. 3 and 4

3. What was peculiar about the cake?

- ☐ a. the ingredients
- ☐ b. the colour
- ☐ c. the proportion of fruit
- ☐ d. the size
- ☐ e. the smell

4. '...one Rhinoceros with a horn on his nose, two piggy eyes, and few manners.'
(lines 10-11)

Which of the following options best characterises this phrase?

- ☐ a. alliterative
- ☐ b. factual
- ☐ c. ironic
- ☐ d. descriptive
- ☐ e. onomatopoeic

5. Why did the Man leave the cake?

- ☐ a. He was not hungry.
- ☐ b. He was on a diet.
- ☐ c. He wanted to share it with the Rhinoceros.
- ☐ d. He enjoyed climbing trees.
- ☐ e. He was afraid of the Rhinoceros.

6. How did the Rhinoceros feel after eating the Man's cake?

- 1. unapologetic
- 2. remorseful
- 3. smug
- 4. anxious

- ☐ a. 1 and 2
- ☐ b. 1 and 3
- ☐ c. 2 and 3
- ☐ d. 3 and 4
- ☐ e. 1 and 4

7. Which of these is the best synonym for 'recited' in line 21?

- ☐ a. recorded
- ☐ b. concealed
- ☐ c. applauded
- ☐ d. decided
- ☐ e. performed

8. Which of the following is the best definition for 'dreadful' in the context of line 25?

- ☐ a. causing fear
- ☐ b. idiotic
- ☐ c. very serious
- ☐ d. careless
- ☐ e. without shame

9. Which of these best characterises the Man's song?

- ☐ a. alliterative
- ☐ b. metaphorical
- ☐ c. informal
- ☐ d. formal
- ☐ e. rhyming

10. What was the main message behind the Man's song?

- ☐ a. Rhinoceroses should not be trusted.
- ☐ b. The Rhinoceros would regret his actions.
- ☐ c. The Man would bake another cake.
- ☐ d. The cake would make the Rhinoceros ill.
- ☐ e. The Rhinoceros would shrink.

11. How did the Man feel when he found the Rhinoceros' skin?

- ☐ a. ecstatic
- ☐ b. remorseful
- ☐ c. pensive
- ☐ d. sceptical
- ☐ e. brave

12. Why did the Rhinoceros fail to get rid of the cake-crumbs?

- ☐ a. He could no longer take off his skin.
- ☐ b. He did not know how to remove them.
- ☐ c. He was not smart enough.
- ☐ d. They were multiplying too quickly.
- ☐ e. He did not know the cake-crumbs were there.

13. For which of the following were the cake-crumbs responsible for?

- ☐ a. The Rhinoceros' bad temper and loose skin.
- ☐ b. The Rhinoceros' good temper and grey skin.
- ☐ c. The Rhinoceros' tight skin.
- ☐ d. The Rhinoceros' tight and crumbly skin.
- ☐ e. The Rhinoceros' thick skin and long horn.

14. Which of these statements is true?

- ☐ a. The story is non-fictional.
- ☐ b. The story is autobiographical.
- ☐ c. The story is fictional.
- ☐ d. The story would belong in a biology textbook.
- ☐ e. The story is a advertisement.

15. Why are the words 'Man' and 'Rhinoceros' capitalised throughout the story?

- ☐ a. It is a mistake.
- ☐ b. They are the only names for them in the story.
- ☐ c. Common nouns are always capitalised.
- ☐ d. They are verbs.
- ☐ e. They are titles.