

The Peculiar Land Animal (The Pike)

One day, an angler caught a very large pike. He was pleased at the thought of how envious his friends would be when he told them the size of his catch, but then he thought that his friends might not believe him when he told them how big the pike was.

He was thinking over the problem when he got an idea. Instead of killing the pike and eating it, he put it in a bowl with a little water in it. "Who knows," he said to himself, "maybe I can break the pike's habit of being a creature of the water. Maybe I can train him to be a pet that follows me around like a dog, then the whole world can see what a mighty fish I have caught."

No sooner had he said it than it was done. Every day, he took a little water out of the bowl and before long; the pike acclimatized itself to living in another element and became a land animal. The proud angler cuddled the pike so often that it soon became familiar with him and followed him around wherever he went.

Alas all good things must come to an end.

One day, when the angler and his strange pet were out on a stroll, they came to a ditch. The angler leapt over it, but when the pike tried to follow him, the ditch was too wide and it fell with a splash into the water. And because it had forgotten how to swim, the pike drowned.