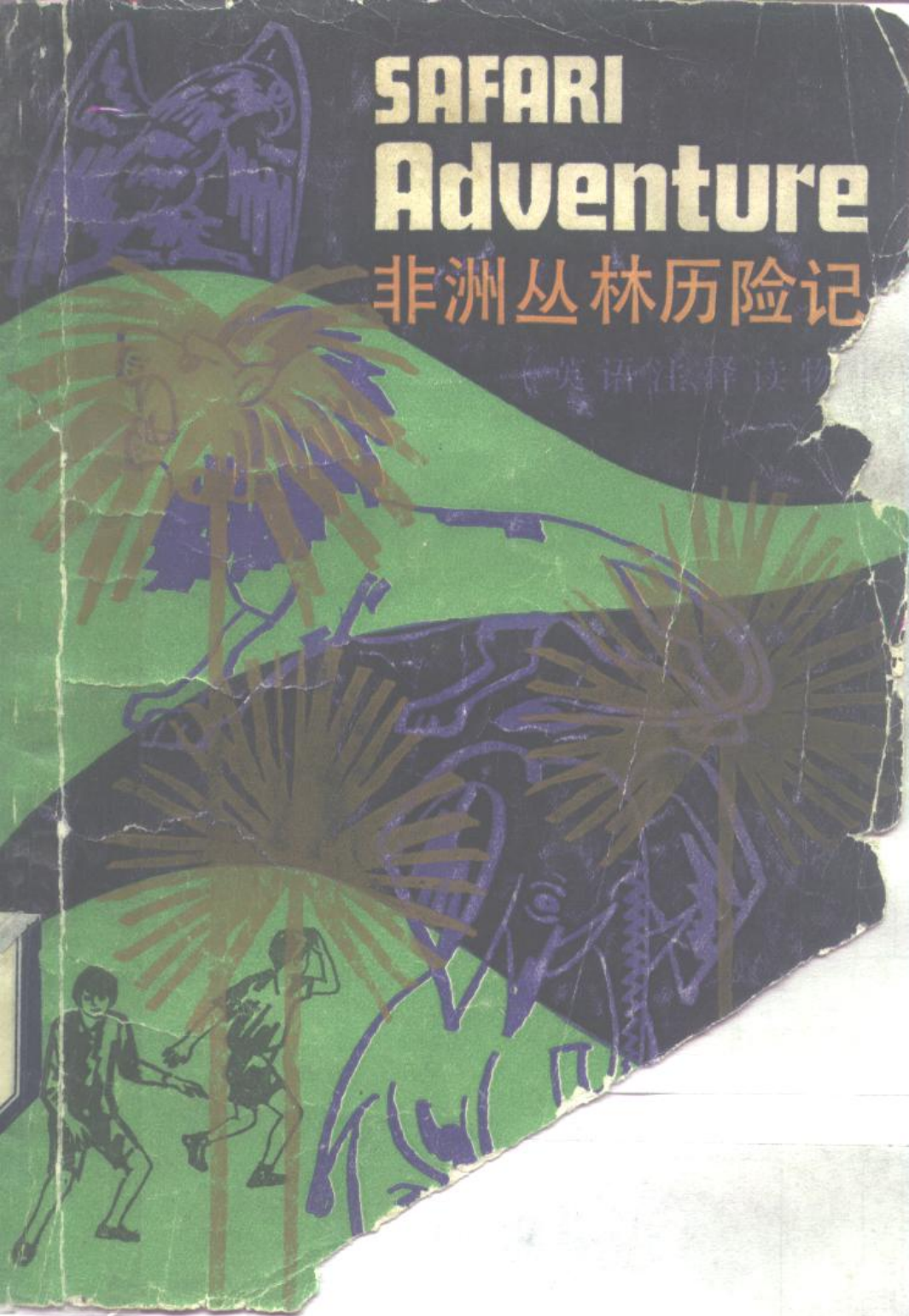


SAFARI Adventure

非洲丛林历险记

（英语注释读物）



Safari Adventure

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Willard Price 著

杨性义 注释

上海教育出版社

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内 容 提 要

在肯尼亚有一座规模巨大的国家公园——札沃。少年兄弟豪尔和罗杰的父亲是美国的一名动物收藏家，兄弟俩经父亲同意不远千里来到札沃。在札沃，偷猎集团为了牟取暴利，使用种种残忍的手段恣意捕获和杀伤动物，大量的珍禽异兽面临灭绝的威胁。森林总监克罗斯贝的守卫队员也遭杀害，余下的十名队员，却要对付数百名偷猎匪徒；他们因寡不敌众，对这触目惊心的偷猎罪行束手无策。法官辛格是克罗斯贝最忠诚的朋友，他对总监的处境深表同情。豪尔和罗杰志愿协助克罗斯贝开展反偷猎的斗争，兄弟俩机智、勇敢，临危不惧，在三十名黑人队员的配合下，经过同偷猎集团反复较量，终于将他们一网打尽，偷猎头子黑胡子也被缉拿归案。克罗斯贝万万没有料到残忍、狡诈的黑胡子竟然就是法官辛格。

注 释 者 的 话

本书原著 Safari Adventure, 是英国当代作家威勒特·普拉埃斯 (Willard Price) 所著。普拉埃斯编著了一套《少年英雄历险记》丛书, 本书是其中的一册。

本书歌颂了少年英雄豪尔和罗杰, 从一个侧面生动地反映了保护野生动物、反偷猎集团的斗争。内容健康, 对青年有积极的教育意义。

本书情节曲折, 引人入胜, 语言规范, 通俗流畅, 适合高中生、大专英语专业低年级学生、中小学生英语教师以及广大英语爱好者阅读。

注释者对本书作了注解, 特别对读者阅读中可能碰到的难点、难句详加注释或翻译, 书末附有词汇表, 供读者备查。

一九八二年十二月

Contents

1	Poachers' Paradise	1
2	Poisoned arrows	8
3	Race with death	15
4	The judge	23
5	Friend or enemy?	29
6	Leopard comes to call	38
7	Blackbeard appears.....	51
8	Blackbeard disappears	63
9	The tiger-horse.....	67
10	Roger's cheetah.....	78
11	Mischief	87
12	Rescue.....	93
13	Red dust	100
14	A cheetah's dinner	107
15	The trial.....	116
16	Old Harbour.....	126
17	Thirty million years old	133
18	The treehouse	138
19	House of whispers	146
20	Men live, animals die.....	154
21	Tear gas.....	162
22	Massacre.....	168
23	Crash of the Stork	175
24	Fall of Blackbeard	181
25	Man-eaters.....	190
	Notes	193
	Vocabulary.....	231

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Poachers' Paradise

for trouble

They were heading for trouble. But Hal, nineteen, was too old to show fear and his brother Roger, thirteen, was too young to realize what he was getting into.

Both felt the tingle of new excitement¹ as the small plane soared above the Mountains of the Moon and pointed its nose east by south-east for Tsavo.² Tsavo, home of murder and mystery. Tsavo, Africa's largest national park, where animals should be safe — but were not.

Gangs of poachers were killing the elephants, rhinos, giraffes, hippos, and other wild creatures of Tsavo by the hundred.³

What is a poacher? In Africa it means a thief who kills animals without a licence and sells the tusks, horns, or other valuable parts.

Warden Crosby could not stop the killing. He had a force of only ten rangers. How could ten men hope to patrol eight thousand square miles of jungle?⁴

Worry had bitten deep furrows into Mark Crosby's forehead⁵. He sat in the pilot's seat with his hands on

the controls, but he paid slight attention to Lake Victoria⁶ slipping by below, the source of the Nile,⁷ the spot where Stanley met Livingstone, the vast Serengeti lion country, the snow-capped Mount Kilimanjaro.⁸ His mind was on the land beyond — the scene of blood, horror, torture, and death.

'It's a war,' he said, 'a war against big odds⁹. We're losing it. We have ten men on our side. Ten men against hundreds of poachers. We no sooner drive them out of one place than they pop up in another.'¹⁰ It's pretty hopeless.'

'Have any of your men been killed?' Hal asked.

'We had twenty-two rangers. Twelve have been killed.'

'Poison arrows?'

'Yes, all the poachers are armed — most of them with bows and poison arrows, some with spears and bush knives, some with muskets. Two of our men were caught in traps that the poachers had set out¹¹ to catch animals. Those two died a horrible death. We didn't find their skeletons until a month later.'

'Skeletons?'

'That's all that was left of them.'

'I suppose they died of thirst,' said Hal. 'Then the hyenas picked their bones.'

'I doubt if it was that comfortable. Hyenas don't wait till you're dead. They're afraid of you as long as

death controls death
you can fight. But if they find you trapped and help-
less, they gang up on you.¹² Those two men were eaten
alive.'

Hal winced at the thought of the slow and terrible
agony of the two unfortunate rangers.¹³ Roger shivered
and began to be sorry that he had come.

'Why do you think it was hyenas?' said Hal. 'Why
not lions or leopards?'

'A lion is usually a good sport.'¹⁴ He seldom attacks
unless he is attacked. A leopard isn't such a gentleman.
He might attack without provocation. But he has an
odd little habit. After he has eaten as much as he can
hold, he drags the rest of the carcass up into a tree
where it will be safe from other animals until he comes
back for another meal. He's very powerful. He could
break a body loose from a trap¹⁵ and carry it up even
if it was twice his own weight. But nothing like that
happened. No, it must have been the work of hyenas.
And perhaps vultures. They usually come round after
the hyenas have finished and take any scraps that are
left.'

Hal and Roger exchanged glances. Their enthusiasm
for this adventure had suddenly cooled. They had
welcomed Warden Crosby when he had flown to the
Mountains of the Moon to get their help. It had seemed
a good chance to have a lively adventure, and to save
wild animals from death at the hands of the poachers.

Besides, in a way, it was part of their job. Their father, John Hunt, was in the business of collecting wild animals and selling them to zoos where they would have good care and furnish education and entertainment to thousands of spectators.¹⁶ He had taught his sons to love animals and gone with them on their first take-'em-alive journeys. But what would be the use of such journeys if the wild game were all killed off by poachers?

So when the boys and their thirty black helpers had driven out a gang of killers from their hideout in the Mountains of the Moon, Crosby had come to them for aid in his battle against the poachers of Tsavo. They had phoned their father at his animal farm near New York and gained his consent. Now they began to wonder if they had bitten off more than they could chew.¹⁷

Crosby guessed their thoughts.

'I hope I haven't scared you,' he said.

'Scared us? Of course not,' said Hal stoutly.

'When will your men get here?'

'Well, it's six hundred miles by road. Our jeeps and Land-Rovers aren't built for speed. But they should be here by noon tomorrow.'

'I can't thank you enough for coming in with me on this job.'¹⁸

'Don't thank us until you see what we can do — if anything.'

4: if we can do *any* something.

‘There it is.’ Crosby pointed past an elbow of the snow mountain. ‘That’s Tsavo.’

It was a lovely sight. Who could believe that this beautiful land was a valley of death? It seemed a peaceful paradise of forest and plain, gentle hills, silvery rivers, quiet lakes, bright sun, and dreaming shadow.

Roger, who had a keen appreciation of the beautiful,¹⁹ exclaimed, ‘Man! That’s cool!’ ~~Elbow~~

His older brother said it a little differently. ‘Looks like a bit of heaven.’ ~~shadow~~ elbow elbow

‘It could be just that,’ said Crosby, ‘if we could get rid of those poachers. It should be a safe refuge for animals and a grand park for visitors. Now it’s a death-trap. Do you see that place where the river widens into a sort of lake? We have an underwater observatory there. You can go down into a submarine chamber and look out through port-holes and see crocodiles swimming under water and hippos walking on the bottom. But recently the poachers slaughtered dozens of the hippos and all you could see through the port-holes was a huge heap of rotting corpses. The decaying carcasses polluted the river, and the smell was terrible. Some hippo babies left alive were nudging their dead mothers and dying of starvation. But they didn’t suffer long — the crocodiles snapped them up.’

‘What good did it do the poachers to kill the hippos and then leave them to rot?’ asked Hal.

corpses
stop

'Oh, but they got what they wanted. They took the heads — each of them would be worth a couple of thousand dollars. And strips of the hide had been cut off.'

'What could they do with them?'

'Make whips. The hide is very thick. They dry the strips in the shade²⁰ for several weeks. It becomes as hard as a board. Then each strip is sawed, like wood, into rods about three feet long. These can be used as canes. But generally they are shipped to South Africa where the Boers²¹ trim the edges to make them sharp and use them as whips, called *sjamboks*. A sjambok will cut the ~~flesh~~ like a knife. Cattle are afraid of it, and men too. You don't pick a quarrel with²² your boss if he's armed with a sjambok. Many a man has been killed by a hippo whip.'

'It all sounds pretty cruel to me,' Hal said, 'murdering a hippo to make a murder weapon.'

'It's a beastly business. And a *big* business. Of course poaching is as old as history. But it has always been a small business — until now. A native who needed meat might go out and kill an antelope. But now it's organized on a big scale.²³ What they're after now is not just some meat for supper, but millions of dollars, and instead of a lone poacher here or there we now have armies of poachers directed by a man they call Blackbeard — because of his black beard and

because he's a pirate like the original Blackbeard, only he steals tusks and tails, horns and hides, instead of gold. And he's guilty of²⁴ more torture and killing than the first Blackbeard ever was.'

'Who is this Blackbeard?'

'I wish I knew. He's a man of mystery. I don't believe he's a native. We've done a lot of guessing but we get nowhere.²⁵ Perhaps you can solve the mystery. We've wondered if he might be a big merchant down in Mombasa, the port city. We know great quantities of hippo heads, elephant tusks, rhino horns, valuable skins of leopards, cheetahs, monkeys, pythons, and all that are shipped out from Mombasa to cities all over the world. Somebody is making a fortune out of this racket.²⁶ Perhaps he's *not* a merchant. Perhaps he's a military man who knows how to rule this army of poachers. Just guesses. We really have no idea who he is. Until he's caught, this thing will probably go on.'

Sawed shape *Blackbeard*
merchant down
See

Poisoned arrows

The plane was now gliding down towards the troubled paradise. It was a Stork — a German-made four-seater.¹ It had dual controls — one joystick was gripped by the pilot and Hal, sitting in the co-pilot's seat, watched the other stick moving restlessly in front² of him.

He longed to get his hands on it.³ But he wasn't sure that he could fly this crate. He had flown his father's Navion over Long Island, but that was a quite different machine. Here, every dial on the instrument board seemed to be in the wrong place.⁴ And everything was in metres and kilometres and Centigrade and European symbols, and words were in German.

Besides, every plane handles differently. One will be as steady as a cart-horse, another as skittish as a bucking bronco.⁵ He hoped that some time he would be allowed to pilot the plane, but first he must have full instructions and plenty of practice with Crosby at his side.

'That sharp-pointed hill with the pavilion on top,' said Crosby, 'is called Poachers' Lookout.'⁶ A telescope

is mounted in front of the pavilion. We keep a ranger there all day, every day, watching for poachers.'

'How far can you see from that point?'

'Not far enough. You can spot anything within a few miles but then the hills and forests cut off the view.⁷ It would take at least a hundred such lookouts to cover our eight thousand miles of territory, and that would mean a hundred watchers. Of course that's impossible. So we do what we can with this movable lookout.'

'You mean this plane?'

'Yes. But I'm the only one who can fly it. And I can't be in the air all the time — I have other things to do. When I locate some poachers I fly back to camp, get together any rangers who are not out on duty and we drive in a Land-Rover to the place where I have seen the poachers. If there are only one or two, ^{dead} we may be able to arrest them. But if it turns out to be a gang⁸, we're lucky if we can get back to camp with only one or two dead rangers. Now you can see our camp — just beyond Poachers' Lookout. ^{now}

Hal could make out a cluster of thatch-roofed cabins above five miles ahead.⁹ So this was the famous Kitani Safari Lodge where visitors from Europe and America might spend a few days enjoying the thrilling experience of being completely surrounded by wild animals. He was surprised to see that there was no wall or fence

Now

Machine 30. 8. 10

around the camp.

‘How do you keep the animals out?’

Crosby laughed. ‘We don’t. We could never afford to build a wall strong enough or high enough. Leopards or lions could scramble over the top of it. Elephants can push down big trees — they could push down a wall. Rhinos are irritated by anything that gets in their way¹⁰ — they would charge a wall and drive a hole straight through it. Buffaloes have heads as hard as battering rams.¹¹ They smash heavy trucks and lorries. A stampede of buffaloes would make short work of a wall if they took a notion to see what was on the other side.¹² No, a wall wouldn’t be practical, and as for a fence, it would be trampled down in one night.’

‘So you let the animals come right into the camp?’

‘Right. They seldom come in during the day. But every night we have visitors. We advise our guests not to go walking in the moonlight, but stay in their cabins after sunset. And keep their windows closed — leopards like to climb in. Elephants come looking for water. One wily old rascal has learned how to turn on the taps in the garden — but doesn’t bother to turn them off again. He drinks his fill¹³ and wanders off and I have to go out and turn off the tap.’

Roger’s sharp eyes had been scanning the landscape.

‘Speaking of fences,’ he said, ‘that looks like one

over there — on the left. What could that be?’

The warden took one look, then swung the plane about and headed for the thing that looked like a fence.

‘Nothing the matter with your eyes,’ he said to Roger. ‘You’d make a good ranger. That’s a trap-line.’

‘Trap-line?’

‘A line of traps set by the poachers.’

‘But it looks like a fence or a hedge.’

‘Exactly. The poachers pile up thorn bushes to make a fence. This one appears to be about a mile long. But you notice there are gaps in the fence. In every one of those openings they put a trap.’

‘What’s the idea?’

‘Well, suppose you were an animal. You come up to this fence and you want to get to the other side. It’s too wide to jump over. You don’t wish to plough through it because you know you’d get stuck¹⁴ by thousands of thorns, sharp as needles, each one about three inches long. So you run beside the fence hoping to find a way to get through. You come to one of these gaps. You dash in and suddenly find yourself in trouble. Your head passes through a wire noose that tightens round your neck. The more you pull the tighter it gets.¹⁵ You struggle and twist and the wire cuts deeper and deeper into your throat and the blood attracts the carnivores which proceed to eat you alive.’

‘But if I am eaten, then the poachers don’t get