

# Celebrating Writers and Writing in our Communities

---

Volume 3

Article 30

---

2020

## Why Beaver's Tail is Flat: Why Change Can be Good

Corrina Ellison

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.humboldt.edu/rwc>

---

### Recommended Citation

Ellison, Corrina (2020) "Why Beaver's Tail is Flat: Why Change Can be Good," *Celebrating Writers and Writing in our Communities*: Vol. 3 , Article 30.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.humboldt.edu/rwc/vol3/iss1/30>

This Narrative is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at Digital Commons @ Humboldt State University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Celebrating Writers and Writing in our Communities by an authorized editor of Digital Commons @ Humboldt State University. For more information, please contact [kyle.morgan@humboldt.edu](mailto:kyle.morgan@humboldt.edu).

# Why Beaver's Tail is Flat: Why Change Can be Good

By Corrina Ellison

Poopsock, who lived with his father in his dam, was supposed to be collecting sticks for the dam but he didn't want to. He shouldn't have to do his dad's work; it's his dam after all. Poopsock sat there, ignoring the fact that his dad will probably yell at him if he is not doing anything. Poopsock got up unenthusiastically and left the dam. While walking, he found a patch of sticks where a tree must have fallen down; he gathered the small sticks and bark. When he reached the dam, he saw his dad standing there, glaring at him. Poopsock put the sticks down and wondered if his dad would yell at him, his dad made a small beaver growl, very unthreatening, but he knew what it meant: his dad was angry.

"You're such a disappointment! You can't even collect a few strong sticks." His dad angrily took the sticks and snapped them in half, scattering pieces of wood and bark around them. "These are weak! What have I told you about collecting sticks from fallen trees. The tree fell for a reason, it's clearly not strong enough!"

"Sorry, I forgot..."

His dad cut him off, "You always forget! You're so useless!"

His dad angrily snapped his sharp teeth at Poopsock's face; Poopsock backed up, surprised. His dad screamed, "Get out, you stupid, worthless, disappointment of a son!"

"But, I don't have anywhere else to go...! I won't have a home!"

His dad turned away from Poopsock. "Then find one!" His dad walked off, his back turned away from Poopsock. Poopsock waited; he waited for his dad to turn around and say he was sorry, that he could stay, but nothing happened. He waited and waited. It was starting to turn dark, so Poopsock decided he needed to find a place to stay. As he started off towards the forest, he looked back at his home. Since he was a baby, he lived there. He didn't go anywhere else, and he mostly stayed at home; how was he supposed to live by himself?

Poopsock turned away angrily, "He is a horrible person. If I ever see him again, I will..!" he wasn't sure what he would do. All he knew was that he never wanted to see him again.

It took Poopsock about a week of walking to find a nice river spot: it wasn't too deep; it wasn't too wide; and it was calm enough that it wouldn't sweep away his dam. It was a perfect place for him to live. The travel was rough, it was cold, wet, and dangerous. The most dangerous thing he encountered was a sharp stick that poked him, he was very scared and ran away in fear. Somehow he lived.

Poopsock walked around next to the riverbed where he had decided to build his dam. He started chewing away at the bark and small branches at the bottom of a tree. Then he hunted around for twigs, stones, leaves, branches, grasses,

uprooted plants, or anything else he managed to find that could strengthen his new dam. He made sure to only gather the strongest and the biggest branches so the dam would be strong. He grumbled, his legs, teeth, and claws were sore. It was dark and he hoped the dam would hold for now.

Further down the river, the water level was lower. The hippos, who could normally swim in the water, could only dip their toes in. The hippos were overheating and their skin was cracked and dry from the sun. They decided to send their friend, Elmo the elephant, since all the hippos were too shy to check what was blocking the water. As Elmo traveled up the river a few miles, he noticed a few floating sticks in the water. He continued walking up the river and found Poopsock's dam. The beavers and the hippos promised they would never build dams on this river. Elmo angrily stomped over to the dam, ready to confront the beaver who had built it. She tapped the dam lightly with her tusk. A confused grumble came from inside the dam, Poopsock had just woken up and was not very happy.

"What do you want?" Poopsock asked, annoyed.

"What do I want?! You're the one that decided to build a dam right here! Don't you even care what's happening to the hippos?"

Poopsock looked confused. "I didn't know that there were hippos down there..., but I don't care; this is my home, and this is where I live now, so leave!" Poopsock yelled.

Elmo shook her head, "You don't care?"

Poopsock turned away, "I don't care."

Elmo walked out of the river sadly. Elmo wanted to help the hippos, but he didn't want to kick anyone out of his home. Then he would be just as bad as Poopsock. He couldn't break the dam; Poopsock would have to do it willingly.

It had been a few weeks since Poopsock built his dam. The water on the blocked-up river was getting shallower and shallower, warming up as well. Mud, leaves, and small pieces of bark floated around the water. The hippos were not going to survive long like this; they needed Poopsock to break his dam, or the hippos were going to have to go. One of the hippos, Harry, had sent Elmo back to confront Poopsock. They needed that dam gone! When Elmo arrived, Poopsock was away gathering small sticks and bark, so Elmo had to wait. While Elmo was waiting for Poopsock to return, a thought ran through his head, "What if the hippos had to leave? What if Poopsock did not agree to break his dam?" Elmo's thoughts were interrupted by Poopsock's voice.

"You again."

Elmo turned, "The hippos are going to die! You need to break your dam! Any longer than this, and the hippos are going to have to leave."

Poopsock shrugged. "Why should I care? The hippos aren't my problem. They can figure it out."

Elmo was getting agitated. "Why don't you understand that you're taking the hippos' home away! Do you even know how far away the next river is?!" Elmo stomped her feet "You're so selfish! Have you ever even cared for anyone but yourself?!" Elmo ran at Poopsock.

Poopsock's eyes widened. He was too distracted to run. "Did I ever think of anyone but myself?" Poopsock thought, watching Elmo run at him. Deciding to book it, he ran towards the dam but felt the slam of weight on his tail. Poopsock squeaked, "Get off!"

"The hippos are leaving! Hope you have fun all alone!" Elmo ran off, stomping her way back to the hippos.

Poopsock screamed in pain. He looked at his tail. It was flat! "Ok." he felt a surge of pain in his tail and screamed. He looked over where Elmo disappeared.

Elmo sulked, he was sad that he wasn't able to convince Poopsock to move his dam, but also because he had hurt Poopsock. How was he going to convince him to move when he had hurt him like that? He felt very guilty and disappointed in himself. He looked up as he felt a raindrop fall on top of his head. He stopped, the hippos were going to have to move, and he couldn't do anything about it.

As he reached the hippos home, he sighed. All the hippos were looking up at him; all wondering if they were going to have to leave. He walked over to Harry. "Gather everyone who wants to leave."

Harry nodded and gathered all of the hippos who wanted to go, forming a small group. Some who had decided to stay said goodbye; the rest followed Elmo and Harry. Elmo led the group up the river, passing Poopsock's dam. Elmo felt terrible about what he had done to his tail, passing the dam quickly. He led the hippos farther up the river, bringing them to a shallow swamp where they spend the night since it was getting darker.

Elmo heard the small murmur of the other hippos, some saying they should've just stayed. He even heard that some just wanted to get rid of Poopsock and his dam.

Meanwhile, Poopsock watched the hippos leave, feeling guilty. Wasn't he just as bad as his father, maybe even worse? He felt angry. Everything would've been easier if his dad had never kicked him out. He had kicked the hippos out, and he felt terrible about it. Even if he said he didn't care, he knew deep down inside he could've easily remade his dam further down the river. Why did he have to be so selfish?

He went to bed that night feeling terrible. He hoped he would wake up to Elmo asking him to break his dam. He knew what his answer would be. He would say yes, that the hippos could stay. Everything would be great, and Poopsock wouldn't feel so terrible about what he had done to them.

Poopsock walked for days trying to find them. He wasn't sure if he would ever find them, or if he would even find his way home. Well, his old home. He had already broken the dam and freed the water. He was hoping he could get the water up to the normal level before he returned with the hippos. He was hoping he could bring them back. He wasn't sure if they would even follow him back, but he had to find them. He was not used to his flattened tail, but he was working on it. When he would walk in the water his tail would slap the surface, reminding him of what Elmo had done to him. He was mildly annoyed, but he agreed, he deserved it. He had been mean. He had kicked the Hippos out of their home, just as his dad had done to him. While walking, Poopsock noticed a familiar river, with a

familiar dam. He froze, he never wanted to see his dad again. He was not expecting to ever be near his father again. He tried to avoid the dam, moving around it so his dad couldn't spot him.

Unfortunately, the next thing he heard was. "Poopsock, is that you?"

He got nervous, "Nope.... Who's Poopsock? Never heard of him. I don't know who you're talking about. Not me!"

Unsure, his dad responded with, "Ok, get moving, then." He continued with his tasks.

Poopsock continued on his journey to find the hippos. He left his old dam feeling good. His dad was mean, and he was glad his dad couldn't even recognize him anymore. He walked for about three more days, each day feeling longer than the last. He was cold, sleepy, and his feet hurt. His newly changed tail was proving to be very annoying when he walked, although when swimming it was very helpful. It was almost like a paddle, swiftly guiding him through the water. While walking, it dragged on the ground, getting caught on things every once in a while. He knew he would be spending more time in the water now that his tail was like this. He walked on, reaching a big river spot. The water was still shallow, but it was better than it was before Poopsock broke the dam. He could tell it was definitely a downgrade from the previous water stop before Poopsock built his dam.

He heard an elephant noise similar to that of a trumpet. Was it Elmo? He looked over -- it was! He swam over making a beaver chattering sound. He watched Elmo turn.

“Why are you here, Poopsock? I thought you hated me for destroying your tail.”

“Whatever, it’s fine, I deserved that. I broke the dam. You guys should come back. I’m sorry I kicked you out. I feel terrible.”

Elmo glanced to the hippos, “I’ll talk to Harry.”

Two weeks passed. Poopsock, Elmo, and the hippos were living peacefully together. The hippos would protect Poopsock, and in return, Poopsock would build his dam farther down the river, letting the water rise and improve the water whole the hippos were originally living in before Poopsock arrived....

**THE END**