

About famous jumping frog from Calaveras

Mark Twain

[Translation of the above back from the Polish.]

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- 1 Accordingly with wish of good friend of mine, who wrote to me from east, I assembled visit towards good-spirited, chatty Simon Wheeler, and asked about colleague of my friend, *Leonidas W. Smiley*, so how requested, and here I append outcome. I have lurking-itself idea, that this *Leonidas W. Smiley* it myth; that my friend never not knew of such personage; and that he only supposed, that asking Wheeler about him, would remind him of his famous *Jim Smiley*, and he would start to bore me with some choleric memory of him, so long and arduous how for me ineffective. If it was intention, undoubtedly it reached success.
- 2 I touched myself on Simon Wheeler, napping comfortably beside of oven of old falling-itself-apart inn in ancient camp of mining Angel's Camp, and I noticed, that he was fat and bald, and had on peaceful face, face of gentleness and simplicity. He pulled himself up and me saluted. I told him, that my friend me requested, that I asked about valued comrade of his youth, called *Leonidas W. Smiley*—*father Leonidas W. Smiley*, young minister of Gospel, about whom he heard, that he sometime lived in Angel's Camp. I added, that if Mr. Wheeler

could tell something about this father Leonidas W. Smiley, it I would be to him obligated.

- 3 Simon Wheeler pushed me in corner and blocked me with chair, and then sat me and told monotonous history, who follows this paragraph. He never not smiled himself, not wrinkled of eyebrows, not changed of voice from fluid intonation of beginning sentence, not showed least track of enthusiasm; rather through whole unceasing history swam note of imposing sincerity, who showed me brightly, that not only he not felt whatever of stupid or funny in his history, he treated her as forsooth serious matter, and admired her two heroes as people, who had transcendent genius in finesse. Spectacle of human drifting peacefully through so strange tale, without of smiling himself, me seemed itself markedly absurdly. As I introduced, I asked him about that, what he knew about father Leonidas W. Smiley, and he replied with following paragraphs. I allowed, that he wandered himself, without of interruption.
- 4 Was here sometime guy after name *Jim* Smiley, with winter of fortieth ninth—or can with spring of fiftieth—I not remember exactly, somehow, but it, what inclines me to believing, that it was or one or second, is it, that I remember, that big canal was not finished when first he came on camp; in every case, he was most unusual human, as never you not saw, about betting himself on whatever thing, if he managed to convince someone to undertaking bet about second side; and if he not managed, he would select second side alone. Whatever method, who satisfied of second, satisfied *him*—whatever method, who got towards him bet. But always he had luck, uncanny luck; almost always he won. He was always prepared and sought of chance; not was of none mentioned thing without of it, that guy proposed bet about it; and he would select whatever side, so as I said. If was race equine, he stood or rich, or rinsed on end; if was fight of dogs, he risked about it; if was fight of cats, he risked about it; if was fight of roosters, he risked about it; well, if two birdies sat on fence, he risked about first, who would fly out; or if was gathering on camp, he frequented there, in order to risk about pastor Walker, about whom he judged, that he was best preacher, and so he was, and good person. Even if he saw beetle walking somewhere, he would undertake bet about how long

lasted his journey, and if you undertook second side, he would follow bug to Mexico, in order to find out himself his destiny and how long he was on road. Many from neighborhood knows this Smiley, and can tell about him. Well, never not was meaning *towards him*—he was willing to risk about everything—uncanny guy. Wife of pastor Walker lay very sick, through long time, and similarly she would perish; but of certain day pastor walked in, and Smiley asked about wife, and he replied, that she was markedly better—thanks towards God for His limitless mercy—and she improved so well, that with blessing of providence, she would recover at last; and Smiley, without of thinking, said, “Therefore, I will risk two and half, that she will not recover, despite everything.”

- 5 This Smiley had mare—she called fifteen-minute nag, but only jokingly, you know, because obviously, she was faster—he used to earn money with that mare, in front of it, that she was so slow and always suffered on asthma, or scrofula, or consumption, or something of similar. They customed themselves to give her advantage of two hundred or three hundred of yards, and then pass her in road; however always at end of race she became herself unnerved and like unreasonable, and she approached cavorting and gamboling, and throwing legs agilely, sometimes to mountain and sometimes to side before fences, and uplifting m-o-r-e of dust, and making m-o-r-e of noise with her coughing and sneezing and blowing herself her nose—and always she arrived to tribune almost neck earlier, or so close of it, as possible.
- 6 And he had little puppy, whose appearance gave out impression, that not he was worthy for nothing, besides to laze and to appear irritable, and to seek of chance of stealing something. However when money depended from him, he was second dog; his jaw stuck out like forecastle of steamboat, and his teeth exposed themselves, and shone sharply like ovens. And can, some dog beat him, and harassed him, and bit him, and threw him upon shoulders tw- or thrice, and Andrew Jackson—it was name of doggy—Andrew Jackson never not gave off nothing of different than of it, that *he* was satisfied, and not expected nothing of different—and stakes continually doubled and doubled from opposite side, until whole sum stood risked; and suddenly he seized joint of back leg of second dog and squeezed—not

chewed, you know, but only caught and held on himself until second gave up himself, even if it lasted year. Smiley always won from cause of this doggy, until to he touched himself on dog, who not had of back legs, because they were sawed off by circular saw, and when matter was well advanced, and whole sum stood risked, and he undertook to do his favorite mouthful, he gave himself matter of it, that played towards him trick, and as he stood driven in caprine horn, so speaking, and appeared surprised, and next he gave off himself like as discouraged, and stopped to try himself to win fight, and so sustained terrible defeat. He looked himself on Smiley, so as he wanted to express, that his heart was broken, and that *he* was guilty, for giving towards him opponent, who not had of none back legs for biting, who was his main possibility in fight, and he limped out upon piece of terrain and laid down and died. He was good puppy, this Andrew Jackson, and would be known if he lived, because spirit lived in him, and he had genius—I know it, because never not had of occasions worthy of telling, and not has of sense, that dog could fight so as he could, under circumstances, if not he had of talent. Always I feel myself regretfully, when I think about his last fight, and how herself she finished.

- 7 Well, this Smiley had terriers, and roosters, and tom-cats, and everything of this kind, so, that not possible to sleep, and not possible to find nothing, about which not he undertook bet. Of certain day he caught frog, and brought her to home, and said, that he intended to educate her, and therefore not he did nothing through three months besides teach towards frog to jump. And certainly towards her he taught, too. He gave towards her little punch from back, and next to see, that frog spun like wheel—that she performed somersault or pair, if she was well prepared, and fell flat on feet, whole and healthy, as cat. He trained her so well in field of catching flies, and practiced her so continually, that she caught fly every time, from so far, as she could see. Smiley ascertained, that frog only lacked education, in order to reach almost everything—and I believe towards him. I saw him, that he placed Dan'l Webster—Dan'l Webster it was name of frog—and shouted, “Flies, Dan'l, flies!” and faster from winking, she jumped in mountain, and snatched fly from this counter, and again flopped on floor, solid as clump of mud, and started to scratch herself side of head with back foot, so carefreely as if not she had idea,

that she did nothing of special for frog. Never not you saw of such modest and straightforward frog so as her, in front of her possibilities. A when it walked about direct jumping from well flat level, she reached to bigger area with one jump that whatever member of her kind, whom whenever you saw. Jumping from well flat level was her strong side, you understand; and if it walked about it, Smiley would increase stake, while he would have cent. Smiley was hugely proud from his frog, and not without of reason, because people, who traveled and were everywhere, everybody said, that she overtopped upon whatever by-*them*-seen frog.

- 8 Smiley kept creature in latticed box, and used to carry her to town, from time to time, seeking bet. Of certain day, guest—unknown on camp, he was—touched himself on him with his box, and says:
- 9 “What can be it, what you have in box?”
- 10 And Smiley says, as if indifferently, “It can, that it is parrot, or can, that it is canary. It can be, but it is not—it only frog.”
- 11 Guest took her, and examined himself towards her carefully, and turned her there and with return, and says, “Well—so it is. To what does *she* serve?”
- 12 “Well,” says Smiley, easily and carefreely, “She serves enough to *one* thing, I judge. She jumps better from whatever frog in Calaveras.”
- 13 Guest again took box, and again looked triflingly, and gave back her Smileyward, and says, very carefully, “Well, I not see of no properties of this frog, who are better from whatever other frog.”
- 14 “Maybe not,” says Smiley. “Maybe you know frogs, and maybe you not of them know; maybe you are experienced, and maybe you are not only amateur, as if. Despite everything, I have my opinion, and I will bet forty of dollars on it, that she jumps better from whatever frog in Calaveras.”
- 15 And guest thought through moment, and then says, a little regret-

fully, "I am here only stranger, and not have of none frog; but if I had frog, I would accept bet."

16 At once says Smiley, "In order—in order—if you will occupy yourself with box for minute, it I will bring towards you frog." Therefore guest bet his forty of dollars beside of those of Smiley, and sat on waiting.

17 Therefore he sat through moment thinking himself, and then took out frog and opened her mouth and with spoon filled her with shot—filled her almost to beard—and placed her on floor. Smiley, he walked out to swamp and dragged himself in mud, and at last caught frog, and gathered her, and gave her guestward, and says:

18 "And therefore, if you are ready, it place her beside of Dan'l, with front paws equal with Dan'l, and I will give command." Then he says, "Time—two—three—jump!" and he and guest touched to frogs from behind, and new frog jumped out, but Dan'l tried herself to lift herself, and shrugged shoulders—so—as Frenchman, but not she gave herself advice—not she could budge herself; she stood so solid as anvil, and not she could move herself farther, than as if she were anchored. Smiley became very surprised, and also felt disgust, but not had of none idea, what was matter, naturally.

19 Guest gathered money and took out himself; and when he walked out through door, he pointed upon shoulders with thumb—so—on Dan'l, and says again, very carefully, "Well, I not see of no properties of this frog, who are better from whatever other frog."

20 Smiley stood long, scratching himself head and looking on Dan'l, and at least he says, "But I wonder myself after what dogblood this frog gave up herself—I think myself if not has matter with her—she appears quite loose, somehow." And he lifted Dan'l for nape, and raised her, and says, "But, let me hell absorb, if not she weighs five of pounds!" and turned her to mountain with feet, and she belched two handfuls of shot. And he understood, what itself happened, and was maddest human—he set down frog and ran out for guest, but never not him caught. And—

- 21 [Now Simon Wheeler heard someone calling his name from yard, and stood up, in order to find out himself, about it walked.] Walking out, he turned and said, "Please sit, there where you are, stranger, and rest—I return at once."
- 22 But, if you will allow, I thought, that longer pull of history of ambitious vagabond *Jim* Smiley not would grant towards me much of information about *father Leonidas W.* Smiley, and from this reason I took out myself.
- 23 Through door I met sociable Wheeler returning, and he detained me and started again:
- 24 "Well, this Smiley had yellow one-eyed cow, who not had of none tail, only short stump reminding banana, and——"
- 25 "To devil with Smiley and his cursed cow!" I grumbled, good-spiritedly, and bidding farewell with old one, walked from."