

Excerpt from

The Legend of Hobbomock: The Sleeping Giant

by Jason J. Marchi

(From pages 14-22)

WHILE BLACKBIRD watched the slow river, he felt a mystical presence. He felt like he was one with the Spirit World.

Suddenly his peaceful feeling was shattered when the earth shook for a moment, followed by silence.

The land shook again after the sound of a distant boom.

The booming sound continued and drew closer. The earth shook more violently after each boom.

Blackbird was about to run when the booming sounds stopped.

The earth was still again.

Blackbird stood very still for he thought he saw something move among the trees at the edge of the river.

The thing that moved did not look like a squirrel, or a deer, or even a bird. In fact, Blackbird could not tell what it was among the trees until he heard a loud cracking sound overhead—the sound of large tree branches snapping—and he looked up.

There, towering overhead, high above the trees, was a giant man made of stone!

“Hobbomock?!” Blackbird blurted out loud.

The stone giant heard the human voice, and turned his dark and angular face to look down at Blackbird.

Blackbird began to tremble.

The giant reached for the boy with a stony fist the size of a boulder and Blackbird ran. He ran like a frightened deer, away from the river and into the forest.

Hobbomock followed, his giant stone feet smashing trees like they were twigs.

For every twenty running strides Blackbird took, Hobbomock drew closer with a single, giant step.

Blackbird stopped, drew an arrow from its quiver, and fumbled to place it on the bow string.

Hobbomock stopped and looked down at Blackbird who had dropped the arrow and was now frozen still, like a startled rabbit.

“Why have you come to the edge of this river?” thundered Hobbomock's voice.

Blackbird hesitated a moment then puffed out his chest to make his tiny body look bigger.

“I have come to explore and to hunt,” Blackbird said.

“You cannot hunt along this river!” Hobbomock thundered. “This is my river and your people no longer respect it. You no longer speak the same language as the birds and the animals.”

“I do respect the river,” Blackbird said. “I respect the squirrel I followed, and the deer in the forest, and the hawk that flew here to the river.”

“I will hear no more!” the giant's voice boomed, and he stomped his foot. The ground shook and Blackbird fell backward. He jumped back to his feet, unharmed, and ran.

Hobbomock stomped the ground again and again, crushing tree after tree, looking for Blackbird. But the boy was gone.

When Blackbird arrived back at his clan he ran straight to his mother and father.

“Where have you been?” his mother asked. “We heard great thunder in the distance. We were concerned about you, Blackbird.”

“It's not thunder you heard. I went to the river and I saw him. I saw the stone giant, Hobbomock. He was angry and stomped his feet and he told me I could not hunt by the river because our people no longer respect the land and the animals. Where is Rakarota? I must tell him that Hobbomock has returned to punish us.”

Hearing the commotion, Rakarota had come to Blackbird's longhouse and he was already standing in the doorway.

“Rakarota, Rakarota,” Blackbird panted, “that was not thunder you heard. The stone giant Hobbomock has returned, just as you said he would.”

“Hobbomock tried to hurt you?” Rakarota asked.

“He tried to grab me but I ran. And he stomped the trees with his giant stone feet and tried to crush me.”

“Did he see which way you ran?”

“I don’t think so,” Blackbird said. “I ran like my father taught me. I ran like the rabbit, in a circle, and then I went off in the opposite direction and came home.”

“That will give us some time,” Blackbird’s father said, “but we must stop Hobbomock before he finds us.”

“There is only one thing we can do to stop Hobbomock,” Rakarota said. “We must summon the good spirit Keitan and ask for his help.”

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