

In the mining town of Bicknell, Indiana, a great parade nodded and beckoned down the main street. It seemed as if a garden of gigantic flowers were out for a walk. Children, men, women stepped joyously forward. At the head of the parade walked a small Shetland pony, nodding his small head, blinking his eyelids, sinking his small ruffled hoofs into the yielding cement of the street.

The parade was for the pony. The pony had just been rescued from a mine. Ten days this small creature had been interred in a gas-filled and perilous shaft. Near the Northside Coal Mine the pony had lived. His profession was a simple one. He was simply a pet. A pet for children. Then the mine had caved in. Three men were trapped. He had been trapped. The men were rescued. Mine officials decided that because of the dangerous condition of the shaft the pony could not be rescued. But the three men who had been saved held a memory of that pony. During the interment their food had been shared with the pony. When the available supply of oxygen had begun to wane the men had refused to kill the small horse.

Those three men talked to each other about that pony. The children began to talk of the pony. Then the entire town talked of the pony. How could a devoted and inarticulate small friend be left to die in a caved-in mine? The idea was absurd!

Mine officials consented to have men attempt to rescue the pony. None expected to find him alive. Children stood at the entrance of the mine. Their pet, their small friend with four legs, with a nodding head and without speech, had been shut in and was now dead! The thought was incredible!

Two hours later the children smiled and jumped up and down on their feet as if their small legs were made of rubber bands! For the pony was being hoisted to the top. His fringed eyelids fluttered, his small ruffled hoofs made vicious short plunges at the air.

And so the parade! News of the rescue flew from mouth to mouth.

A town and a countryside rushed out from their homes, leaving their tidy small cottages aghast.

A great parade like a garden of vast flowers walking, moved down the main street. The town square was made the vortex of a great flood of people. Cries leaped from the throats of men, of women, and children. And all the little cottages of miners up and down the countryside shook in amazement.

In the center of the vortex stood the pony, nodding his small head, drooping his long mane over the grass. With his hairy lips he plucked two dandelions and looked about him. He chewed the yellow flowers, and looked around.

He wondered what it was all about!

But all the men, women and, above all, the children, knew: a devoted dear and inarticulate friend had been brought back to them—almost from the grave!