

CHAPTER X - The Circus Boys on the Mississippi

Chapter X of "The Circus Boys On the Mississippi" opens with the Sparling circus fleet preparing to journey down the Mississippi River to the Gulf. As dawn breaks, the boats, including the "Little Nemo," are ready to depart. Crew members and performers are called to finalize their boarding, and with the pilots' commands, the fleet casts off, initiating their adventure. Teddy, one of the Circus Boys, is exhilarated, though his companion, Phil, suggests they catch up on sleep to rejuvenate themselves for the journey ahead. Despite Teddy's protest that his looks need no enhancement, the boys eventually retire to their cabin for a rest.

Upon waking, the boys realize they've missed breakfast and debate their options, only to be invited to join Mr. Sparling, the circus owner, for a meal in his cabin. This invitation leads to a discussion about the next location for their show, Milroy, and the boys' experiences in small town performances. As they share breakfast with Mr. Sparling, the conversation turns to the challenges faced by the circus on the road, including the previous night's incident involving the elephants and a donkey.

Mr. Sparling praises Phil and Teddy for their quick thinking and resilience in handling the circus animals. He then probes Phil about the unusual behavior exhibited by Jupiter, an elephant, which Phil acknowledges seemed peculiar. The discussion hints at underlying suspicions about why Jupiter might have acted out, suggesting possible intrigue or misconduct by someone familiar with the circus.

Phil is hesitant to voice his suspicions about the identities of certain individuals he and Mr. Sparling noticed during the troubling events with the elephants. Despite Mr. Sparling's insistence on understanding the situation fully, Phil stands by his principle of

fairness, opting not to accuse without certainty. The chapter closes on this note of unresolved tension and mystery, leaving readers to ponder the broader implications of loyalty, justice, and the unseen challenges faced by the traveling circus crew.

This chapter beautifully encapsulates the adventurous spirit of the circus boys, their camaraderie, and the vibrant but challenging life on the road with a traveling circus, setting the stage for further developments and potential conflicts in their journey down the Mississippi.



Summary