

THE ADVENTURES OF
SWAMP DOG SAM II
IN THE CITY

Chapter One

DANGER DETECTORS

“A-R-O-O... R-O-O... R-O-O!”

Swamp Dog Sam’s long, floppy ears stand at high alert in the evening sky. He paces the Okefenokee Swamp.

“Calm down, little buddy,” Husk says. “You really know how to scare a tortoise right out of his shell!”

“What’s all the fuss?” Misty Sue, a white-tailed pygmy deer, sticks her head out of her tree house door.

“Sam’s in a tizzy over something,” says Husk.

“Why are your ears doing that sticky-up thing?” Misty Sue scampers over to Sam, so she’s nose to nose with her friend.

“My brothers are missing! I just know it!”

“Your brothers never miss a meal,” Misty Sue says, “and it’s dinnertime. They’ll show up. You’ll see.”

“I haven’t seen them since last night. Look at this.” Sam pulls his ears down and they spring right back up. “This isn’t normal.”

“You’re right about that,” Husk says. “When did your ears turn into DANGER DETECTORS?”

“TODAY! Sensei’s been teaching me how to solve my problems and I think this is a side effect.”

“So, your ears aren’t flying up because you’re scared?” Misty Sue asks.

“Nope!” rowls Sam. “My ears are pointing to *trouble*.”

“Sensei’s students are famous for their magic. Are you sure those chameleons, Ying and Yang, didn’t make you drink a potion?”

“They wouldn’t do that, Misty Sue. You’re the one who took me there in the first place.”

“Alright, Sam. Calm down.”

“How can I calm down? Boss, Skippy, and Stinkie are in a mess. I can feel it! I can feel it! You know I can feel it!”

Sam hops around on his tree house porch, tugging on his ears to keep them down. But they bounce back up to attention.

“Sensei says my sixth sense is growing.”

“I think your *ears* are growing,” Misty Sue says. “But I think we’d better trust your new DANGER DETECTORS and start looking for your brothers.”

OKEFENOKEE SWAMP

FUN FACTS

(Small sampling of the real animals in the story)

What is the largest mammal in the Okefenokee Swamp? BLACK BEAR! Did you know the black bear is one of the most helpless and dependent creatures at birth? It weighs less than a pound, is blind, and hairless when it is born. The black bear can weigh up to 800 pounds and stands about eight feet tall, standing on its hind legs, when it is full grown. The black bear is omnivorous, eating both plants and animals, anything from berries, nuts, roots, insects, fish, eggs, and other small animals.

Did you know a black bear hibernates in the winter? This means it sleeps in a dormant state without eating. Hibernation is genetically predetermined based on the black bear's habitat and availability of food. The black bear lives off its fat reserves. When it wakes from hibernation, it's very hungry! You would not want to meet up with a black bear after hibernation! Yikes!

What kind of animals are Sensei, Ying and Yang? CHAMELEONS! They are not native to the United States. Most come from Africa and the island of Madagascar. People sometimes buy these creatures as exotic pets. Some escape captivity or are turned loose. Their offspring can be found living in the wild, in parts of the United States.

Did you know that chameleons have tongues that are over two times their body length? They shoot their tongues out of their mouths at a very high speed to catch

insects, their favorite meal. A thick, sticky mucus on the tip of the tongue holds prey captive until the tongue is retracted back into the mouth. Each foot has a tong-like appearance which helps it grip the branches it is climbing on. Chameleons can move each eye independent of the other eye, focusing on two things at once. Chameleons have colors that match their habitat. They turn darker to warm up and lighter to cool down.