

CRAFTY RETURNS

Recapitulation:

The bush children called at Mangrove Mansion to visit the new owner - whom no-one has yet seen. The old house had not been occupied by anyone except Danny O'Canny, a bushranger, for 100 years. The children got no answer to their knocking or ringing - except that they heard, somewhere inside the house, a nasty laugh. They were beginning to feel a little scared. They were alone and far away from their faithful friend -

(singing) The Flying Dogtor

MAD LAUGHTER (faint)

Once again the bush children heard the nasty laughter. But it was so faint, they could not be absolutely certain that it was nasty laughter. Or rather, they didn't like to admit to themselves that it was nasty laughter. "Perhaps it was just a door hinge creaking," said Polly Possum.

"Maybe it was just the wind blowing the sugar-gums against the roof," suggested Liz Lizard. "Probably we just imagined it," said Katie Koala.

Just the same, they decided not to knock again or to ring the bell again, and instead they thought they would just walk around the old mansion and see if they could see anything or anybody, from the outside.

MUSIC

Meanwhile, back at the Hilltop Hospital, the Flying Dogtor thought about Mangrove Mansion again, and wondered again who could be living there. He was puzzled and a little suspicious, and a trifle worried that the bush children might get into trouble if they explored around the old homestead by themselves.

"But there's one good thing," he said to himself. "Whoever is there, it can't be Crafty Carson Carpetbag, for I left him with the police, and he must now be in gaol..."

MUSIC

But was he?

Not Crafty!

Let's go back and see what happened when Crafty dropped off the Dogtor's plane under the very noses of the policemen in the little desert town.

The policemen saw him fall to the ground and they raced to the spot in their powerful police car. They all jumped off and started to look among the salt bush and stones for Crafty. There was nowhere for him to hide, so they were sure they would find him at once.

But they did not know Crafty! They could not find him though they looked everywhere...

Everywhere, that is, except on the police car, where Crafty had jumped as soon as they had pulled up - and where he was waiting still, disguising himself as a spare tyre.

A long time after, tired and disappointed, the policemen returned to their police car and drove it back to the garage.

"He seems to have got away," sighed the Sergeant, and wrote out a report in a big black book.

Crafty waited patiently in the garage all the rest of the afternoon, but as soon as darkness came he slipped out unnoticed and disappeared into the scrub.

And so, hours later, tired and cross and feeling sneakier than ever, Crafty Carson Carpetbag slid back home to the old shearing shed.

He expected to find the Redback family there and hoped at least for a cup of swamp soup or a spidersweb sandwich after his long hot journey. But the shed was deserted, and he slid around it, gradually getting crosser and crosser.

And then he saw, scratched in the dust of the floor, some spidery writing.

"Gone to Mangrove Mansion," he read. "Follow us. Hate - Redback."

VOICE OVER END TITLE:

So Crafty too is going now to Mangrove Mansion! More shocks lie in wait for the bush children when they continue exploring in the next episode of -

(singing) The Flying Dogtor