

**S** ay that he Lion would get up each and every mornin. Stretch and walk around. He’d roar, “me and myself , me and myself ,” like that. Scare all the little animals so they were afraid to come outside in the sunshine. Afraid to go huntin or fishin or whatever the little animals wanted to do.

“What we gone do about it?” they asked one another. Squirrel leapin from branch to branch, just scared. Possum**1**playin dead, couldn’t hardly move him.

He Lion just went on, stickin out his chest and roarin, “me and myself , me and myself. ”

The little animals held a sit-down talk, and one by one and two by two and all by all, they decide to go see Bruh**2**Bear and Bruh Rabbit. For they know that Bruh Bear been around. And Bruh Rabbit say he has, too.

So they went to Bruh Bear and Bruh Rabbit. Said, “We have some trouble. Old he Lion, him scarin everybody, roarin every mornin and all day, “me and myself , me and myself, ” like that.

“Why he Lion want to do that?” Bruh Bear said.

“Is that all he Lion have to say?” Bruh Rabbit asked.

“We don’t know why, but that’s all he Lion can tell us and we didn’t ask him to tell us that,” said the little animals. “And him scarin the children with it. And we wish him to stop it.”

“Well, I’ll go see him, talk to him. I’ve known he Lion a long kind of time,” Bruh Bear said.

“I’ll go with you,” said Bruh Rabbit. “I’ve known he Lion most long as you.”

That bear and that rabbit went off through the forest. They kept hearin somethin. Mumble, mumble. Couldn’t make it out. They got farther in the forest. They heard it plain now. “me and myself. me and myself. ”

“Well, well, well,” said Bruh Bear. He wasn’t scared. He’d been around the whole forest, seen a lot.

“My, my, my,” said Bruh Rabbit. He’d seen enough to know not to be afraid of an old he lion. Now old he lions could be dangerous, but you had to know how to handle them.

The bear and the rabbit climbed up and up the cliff where he Lion had his **lair** . They found him. Kept their distance. He watchin them and they watchin him. Everybody actin **cordial** .

“Hear tell you are scarin everybody, all the little animals, with your roarin all the time,” Bruh Rabbit said.

“I roars when I pleases,” he Lion said.

“Well, might could you leave off the noise first thing in the mornin, so the little animals can get what they want to eat and drink?” asked Bruh Bear.

“Listen,” said he Lion, and then he roared: “me and myself. me and myself. Nobody tell me what not to do,” he said. “I’m the king of the forest, *me and myself.* ”

“Better had let me tell you something,” Bruh Rabbit said, “for I’ve seen Man, and I know him the real king of the forest.”

He Lion was quiet awhile. He looked straight through that scrawny lil Rabbit like he was nothin atall. He looked at Bruh Bear and figured he’d talk to him.

“You, Bear, you been around,” he Lion said.

“That’s true,” said old Bruh Bear. “I been about everywhere. I’ve been around the whole forest.”

“Then you must know something,” he Lion said.

“I know lots,” said Bruh Bear, slow and quiet-like.

“Tell me what you know about Man,” he Lion said. “He think him the king of the forest?”

“Well, now, I’ll tell you,” said Bruh Bear, “I been around, but I haven’t ever come across Man that I know of. Couldn’t tell you nothin about him.”

So he Lion had to turn back to Bruh Rabbit. He didn’t want to but he had to. “So what?” he said to that lil scrawny hare.

“Well, you got to come down from there if you want to see Man,” Bruh Rabbit said. “Come down from there and I’ll show you him.”

He Lion thought a minute, an hour, and a whole day. Then, the next day, he came on down.

He roared just once, “me and myself. me and myself. Now,” he said, “come show me Man.”

So they set out. He Lion, Bruh Bear, and Bruh Rabbit. They go along and they go along, rangin the forest. Pretty soon, they come to a clearin. And playin in it is a little fellow about nine years old.

“Is that there Man?” asked he Lion.

“Why no, that one is called Will Be, but it sure is not Man,” said Bruh Rabbit.

So they went along and they went along. Pretty soon, they come upon a shade tree. And sleepin under it is an old, olden fellow, about ninety years olden.

“There must lie Man,” spoke he Lion. “I knew him wasn’t gone be much.”

“That’s not Man,” said Bruh Rabbit. “That fellow is Was Once. You’ll know it when you see Man.”

So they went on along. He Lion is gettin tired of strollin. So he roars, “me and myself. me and myself. ” Upsets Bear so that Bear doubles over and runs and climbs a tree.

“Come down from there,” Bruh Rabbit tellin him. So after a while Bear comes down. He keepin his distance from he Lion, anyhow. And they set out some more. Goin along quiet and slow.

In a little while they come to a road. And comin on way down the road, Bruh Rabbit sees Man comin. Man about twenty-one years old. Big and strong, with a big gun over his shoulder.

“There!” Bruh Rabbit says. “See there, he Lion? There’s Man. You better go meet him.”

“I will,” says he Lion. And he sticks out his chest and he roars, “me and myself. me and myself. ” All the way to Man he’s roarin proud, “me and myself. me and myself !”

“Come on, Bruh Bear, let’s go!” Bruh Rabbit says.

“What for?” Bruh Bear wants to know.

“You better come on!” And Bruh Rabbit takes ahold of Bruh Bear and half drags him to a **thicket** . And there he makin the Bear hide with him.

For here comes Man. He sees old he Lion real good now. He drops to one knee and he takes aim with his big gun.

Old he Lion is roarin his head off: “me and myself. me and myself !”

The big gun goes off: pa-looom !

He Lion falls back hard on his tail.

The gun goes off again. pa-looom !

He Lion is flyin through the air. He lands in the thicket.

“Well, did you see Man?” asked Bruh Bear.

“I seen him,” said he Lion. “Man spoken to me unkind, and got a great long stick him keepin on his shoulder. Then Man taken that stick down and him speakin real mean. Thunderin at me and lightnin comin from that stick, awful bad. Made me sick. I had to turn around. And Man pointin that stick again and thunderin at me some more. So I come in here, cause it seem like him throwed some stickers at me each time it thunder, too.”

“So you’ve met Man, and you know zactly what that kind of him is,” says Bruh Rabbit.

“I surely do know that,” he Lion said back.

Awhile after he Lion met Man, things were some better in the forest. Bruh Bear knew what Man looked like so he could keep out of his way. That rabbit always did know to keep out of Man’s way. The little animals could go out in the mornin because he Lion was more peaceable. He didn’t walk around roarin at the top of his voice all the time. And when he Lion did lift that voice of his, it was like, “Me and Myself and Man. Me and Myself and Man.” Like that.

Wasn’t too loud at all.