

Which Way Is Home?

by Elizabeth Trach

Anthony Ant had hundreds of friends, but sometimes he still felt alone. Anthony lived in an anthill in the crack of a sidewalk. All of his friends looked just like Anthony: small, and brown, with six legs and two wiggling antennas. Every day, Anthony and his ant friends lined up to march out of the anthill and across the sidewalk to the tall grass. There they looked for crumbs and seeds to bring back to the anthill for supper.

"Why do we always have to stay in line?" Anthony asked. "I want to go into the grass on my own and see what there is to see."

"I don't know," said Alice, the ant in front of Anthony. "This is the way we've always done it."

"That doesn't seem like a very good reason," Anthony said. "I'm going to turn left up here at the maple root."

And he did.

None of the other ants came with Anthony, because they always did what they were told. The long line of ants continued on into the grass for as far as Anthony could see.

On his own, Anthony had a much nicer view of the maple root and the grass beyond. He could see all the way to a distant flower bed, where colorful blossoms towered over the grassy space.

Anthony decided to walk to the flowers, but after an hour of walking, they seemed just as far away as ever. He had never been so tired. He decided to turn around.

When he did, Anthony couldn't see the path home. All of the tall blades of grass had closed in around him, and he was lost. Usually he just followed the ant line in front of him to find the way, but now he was all alone.

Anthony walked in the direction he thought was home, but he was starting to feel scared. A bird flew overhead. Anthony thought. Should he ask the bird for help, or should he hide? He knew that some birds ate ants, but he couldn't remember which ones were nice and which ones were hungry.

Anthony decided to keep walking on his own and hope for the best. It was getting darker, but he thought he saw a brown ridge in the grass up ahead. It looked familiar.

It was the maple root. Anthony climbed over the bumpy, brown bark and tumbled down the other side — right into a long line of ants!

"Anthony, where have you been?" asked Abby. She paused to let Anthony jump back in line in front of her.

"I took a walk alone," said Anthony. "It was really hard, so I'm very glad to be back with all my friends and

heading home!"

Questions

1. What makes Anthony different from his friends?
2. How did Anthony get lost?
3. What landmark help Anthony find his way back home?
4. Do you think Anthony will explore on his own ever again?