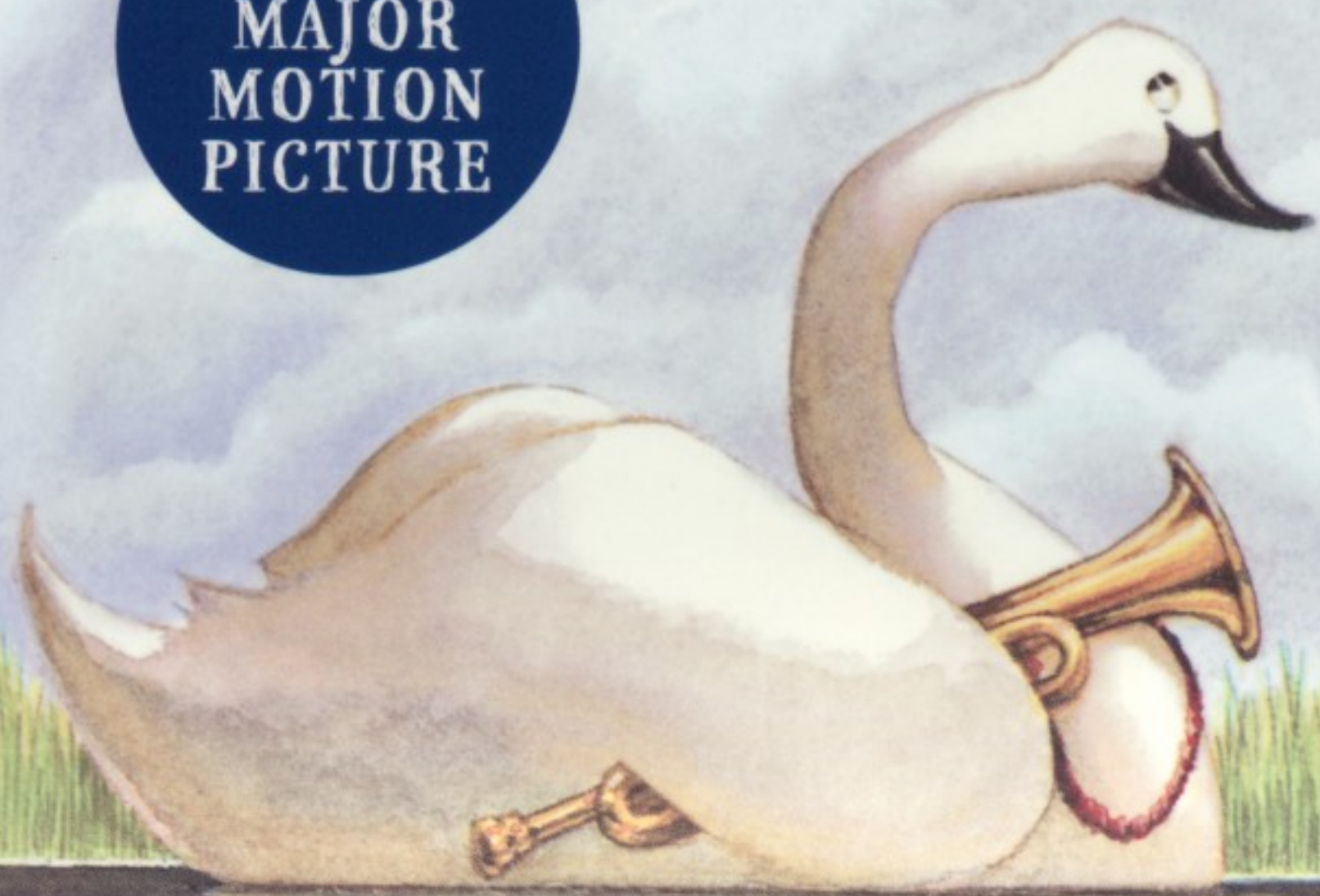


E . B . W H I T E

THE TRUMPET *of the* SWAN

Charlotte's Web
Now a
MAJOR
MOTION
PICTURE



illustrated by

F R E D M A R C E L L I N O

SAM



Walking back to camp through the swamp, Sam wondered whether to tell his father what he had seen.

"I know *one* thing," he said to himself. "I'm going back to that little pond again tomorrow. And I'd like to go alone. If I tell my father what I saw today, he will want to go with me. I'm not sure that's a very good idea."

Sam was eleven. His last name was Beaver. He was strong for his age and had black hair and dark eyes like an Indian. Sam walked like an Indian, too,

putting one foot straight in front of the other and making very little noise. The swamp through which he was traveling was a wild place—there was no trail, and it was boggy underfoot, which made walking difficult. Every four or five minutes Sam took his compass out of his pocket and checked his course to make sure he was headed in a westerly direction. Canada is a big place. Much of it is wilderness. To get lost in the woods and swamps of western Canada would be a serious matter.

As he trudged on, the boy's mind was full of the wonder of what he had seen. Not many people in the world have seen the nest of a Trumpeter Swan. Sam had found one on the lonely pond on this day in spring. He had seen the two great white birds with their long white necks and black bills. Nothing he had ever seen before in all his life had made him feel quite the way he felt, on that wild little pond, in the presence of those two enormous swans. They were so much bigger than any bird he had ever seen before. The nest was big, too—a mound of sticks and grasses. The female was sitting on eggs; the male glided slowly back and forth, guarding her.

When Sam reached camp, tired and hungry, he found his father frying a couple of fish for lunch.

"Where have *you* been?" asked Mr. Beaver.

"Exploring," replied Sam. "I walked over to a pond about a mile and a half from here. It's the one we see from the air as we're coming in. It isn't much of a place—nowhere near as big as this lake we're on."

"Did you see anything over there?" asked his father.

"Well," said Sam, "it's a swampy pond with a lot of reeds and cattails. I don't think it would be any good for fishing. And it's hard to get to—you have to cross a swamp."

"See anything?" repeated Mr. Beaver.

"I saw a muskrat," said Sam, "and a few Red-winged Blackbirds."

Mr. Beaver looked up from the wood stove, where the fish were sizzling in a pan.

"Sam," he said, "I know you like to go exploring. But don't forget—these woods and marshes are not like the country around home in Montana. If you ever go over to that pond again, be careful you don't get lost. I don't like you crossing swamps. They're treacherous. You could step into a soggy place and get bogged down, and there wouldn't be anybody to pull you out."

"I'll be careful," said Sam. He knew perfectly well

SWAN SONG

*L*ike the rest of his family, Louis is a trumpeter swan. But unlike his four brothers and sisters, Louis can't trumpet joyfully. In fact, he can't even make a sound. And since he can't trumpet his love, the beautiful swan Serena pays absolutely no attention to him.

Louis tries everything he can think of to win Serena's affection—he even goes to school to learn to read and write. But nothing seems to work. Then his father steals him a real brass trumpet. Is a musical instrument the key to winning Louis his love?

"We are lucky to have this book."

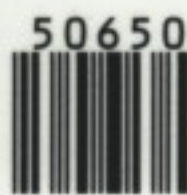
—John Updike, *The New York Times*



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