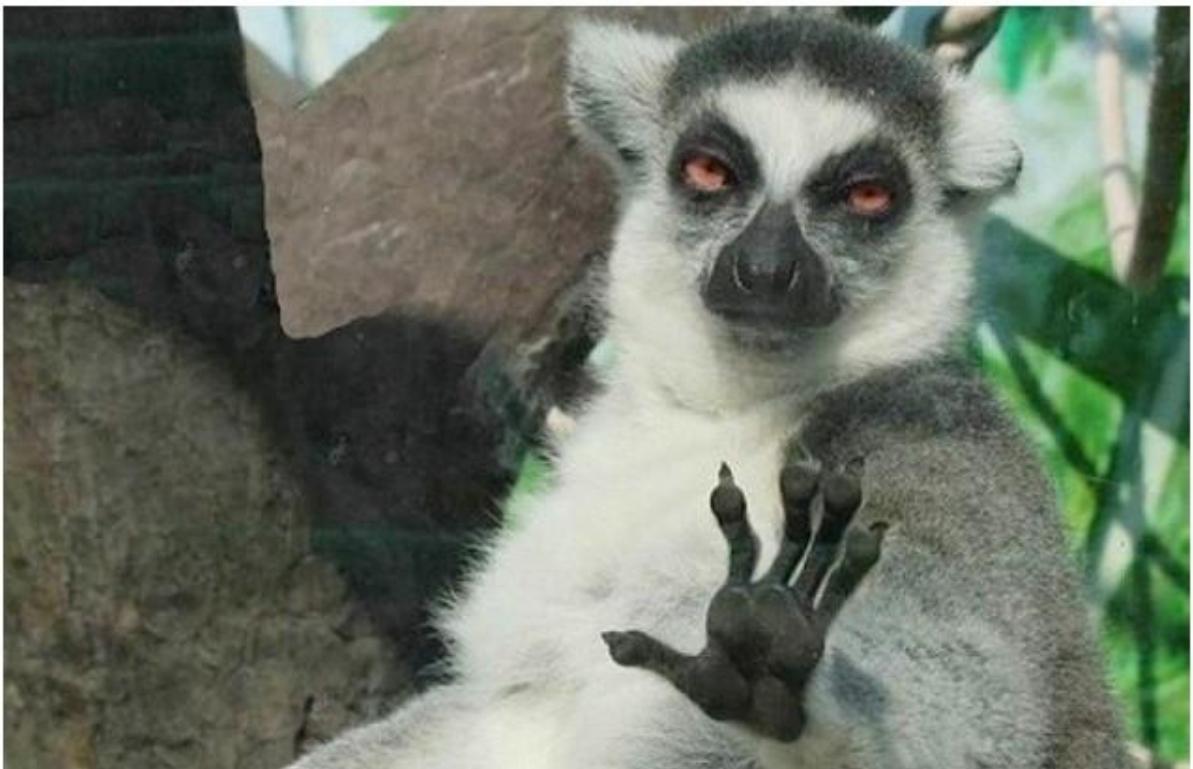


# The Poacher

By: Luke



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*Come on, walk along the log, right into the trap. You can do it, no hurry.* “Snap!” The branch shatters beneath the Archaeoindris<sup>1</sup> lemur, making it crash to the ground. I walk up to it, searching for signs of life. That must be a 40, 50 foot drop. I doubt it’s still alive. Wait, I haven’t introduced myself. I’m Latif Rakotomala, lemur poacher. I know, it doesn’t make a good title, but I swear I’m a good person (unless you think about what I do, illegally killing lemurs every day). My partner in crime is Antsa Rakotomala, my sister. I walk over to the dead lemur to pick it up, and I hear a loud hiss. Immediately I run at a tree to climb, and then I see I’m in the clear. It was just Antsa, scoffing at the walkie-talkie. I am approaching my camp, and I walk right up to my sister.

“No! I need that wire by tomorrow, not next month!”

“Antsa, quiet down, you’re going to get us found!” I scold, “You know you shouldn’t be that loud.”

“Okay, I get it. That’s the millionth time you’ve said that. I can’t get the extra wire we need for traps tomorrow, we have to wait until August.” She replies.

“Yeah, I kind of got that from the way you yelled and what you said.” I reply, “I think the last Archaeoindris in the area is dead. It fell out of a tree. He wasn’t even generous enough to fall into the trap!”

“Kyle! Come over here! There’s a really big one over here! It doesn’t look alive!” A voice says. I forgot to go pick up the body of the big one that fell from the tree!

<sup>1</sup> The Archaeoindris lemur is now extinct because of poaching. It was the largest lemur that ever lived, about the size of a gorilla.

“Lemur Patrol!” Antsa and I whisper in frustration. We work together to put out the fire, take down the tent, grab the cooler of fresh meat, and pack up while we hear,

“Good find, Serge! It’s recently deceased. There’s a trap over there. Somebody’s been here recently!” Kyle says, “Look at the smoke in the sky!” We decide to take a run for it, and we try to do it quietly.

“Kyle, hear the snapping? It sounds like twigs on the ground.” Serge says.

“Dang!” Antsa and I say in unison. We know that there’re probably headed this way, maybe 15 feet behind us through some trees. We silently decide to stop and see what happens. They keep walking towards us.

“Run!” I yell, not caring about how much noise I wake. All I want is to not go to jail. I have heard stories of lemur poachers who went to jail, and all I can say is that they were very unpleasant. I would rather be dead than go there. The L.P. draw their weapons and come after us.

“You there! Stop! We just want to ask some questions.” Kyle says. That’s not enough to make Antsa and me stop. We just keep running, running, running. By now, I’m very surprised that they haven’t shot at us yet, but then again we are innocent until proven guilty. It goes on for about an hour and a half. I think a helicopter is chasing us, but all I know for sure is that I need to keep running.

“Antsa! No!” I scream as she trips and falls to the ground. I keep running. Okay, I guess what I said in the beginning is not true. I am not a good person. As I keep running, I feel pain in my arm. That’s the last thing I remember.

Lemur poaching is a highly outlawed practice, and there aren’t many lemurs left in the world.