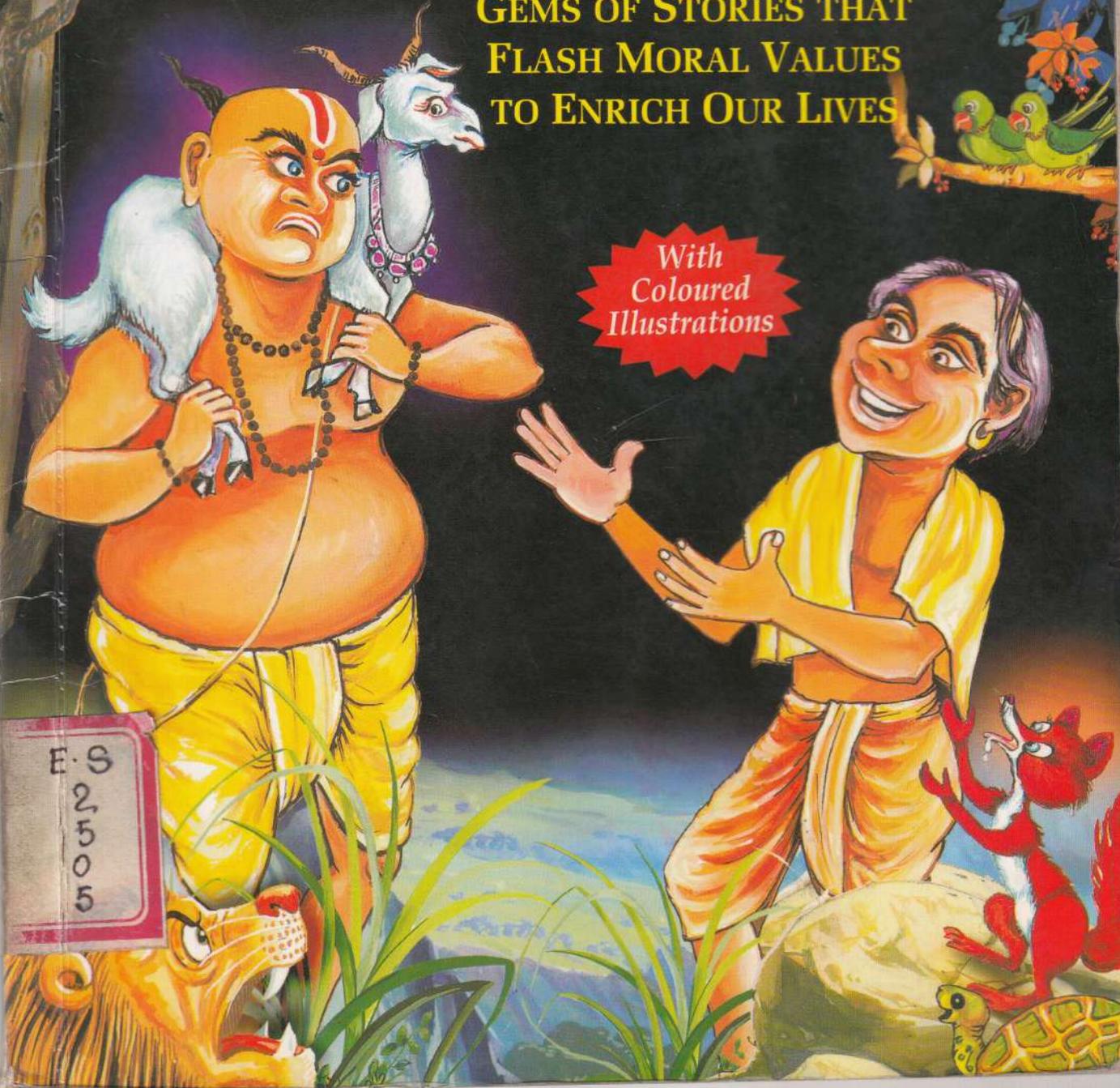


Moral Stories from

Panchatantra

GEMS OF STORIES THAT
FLASH MORAL VALUES
TO ENRICH OUR LIVES

With
Coloured
Illustrations



E.S
2505

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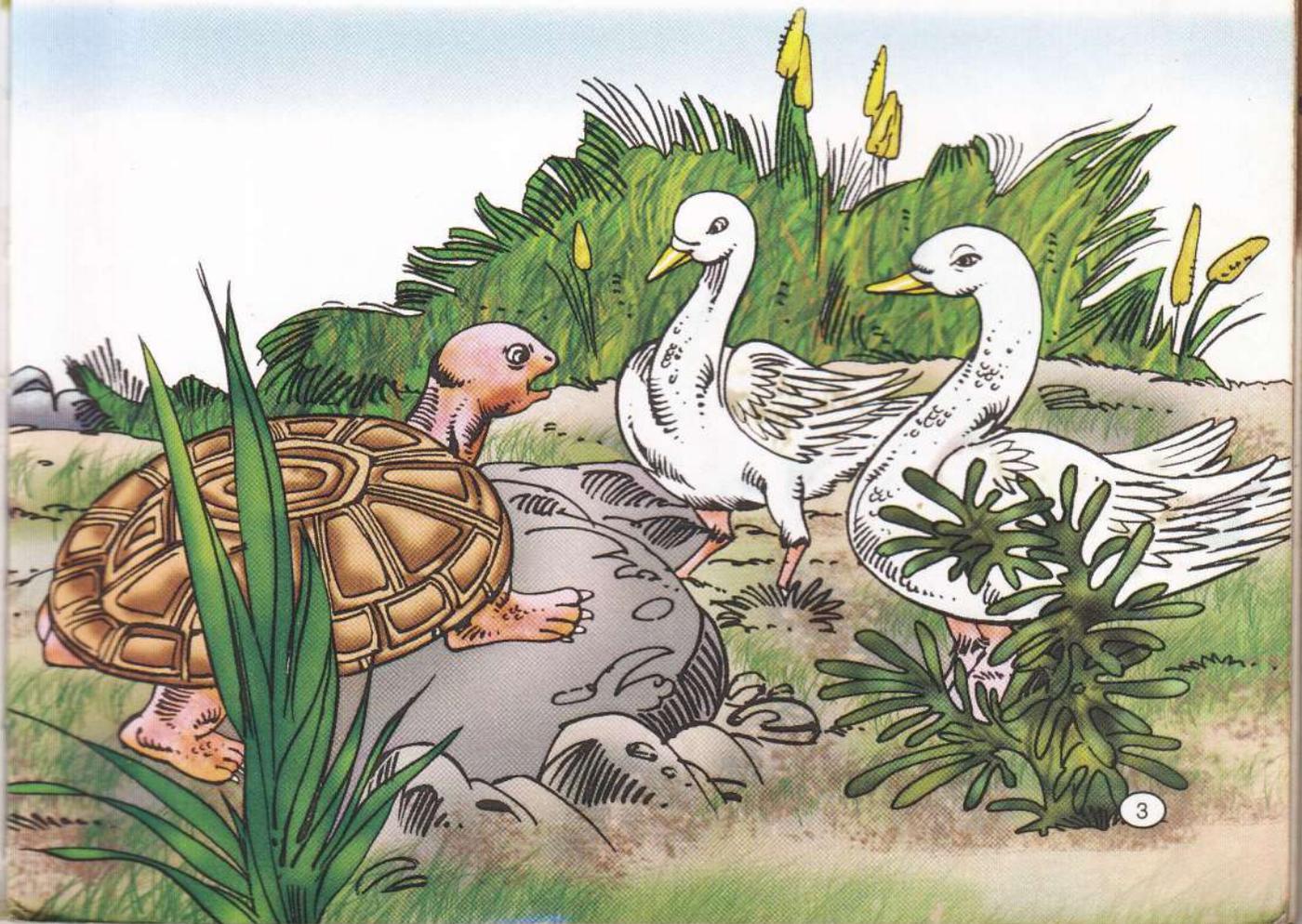
THE TALKATIVE TORTOISE



ONCE upon a time, two geese by the names of Sankata and Vikata and a tortoise by the name of Kambugriva lived near a river. They were good friends. Once, due to drought in the region, all the rivers, lakes and ponds went dry. There was not a drop of water to drink for the birds and animals. They began to die of thirst.

The three friends talked among themselves to find a solution to this problem and go out in search of water. But despite their best efforts they could not find water anywhere around.

Having no alternative the three friends decided to go to some distant lake, full of water, to settle down there forever. But there was a problem in shifting to so distant a place. While it was easy for the geese to fly, it was difficult for the tortoise to cover that distance on foot.

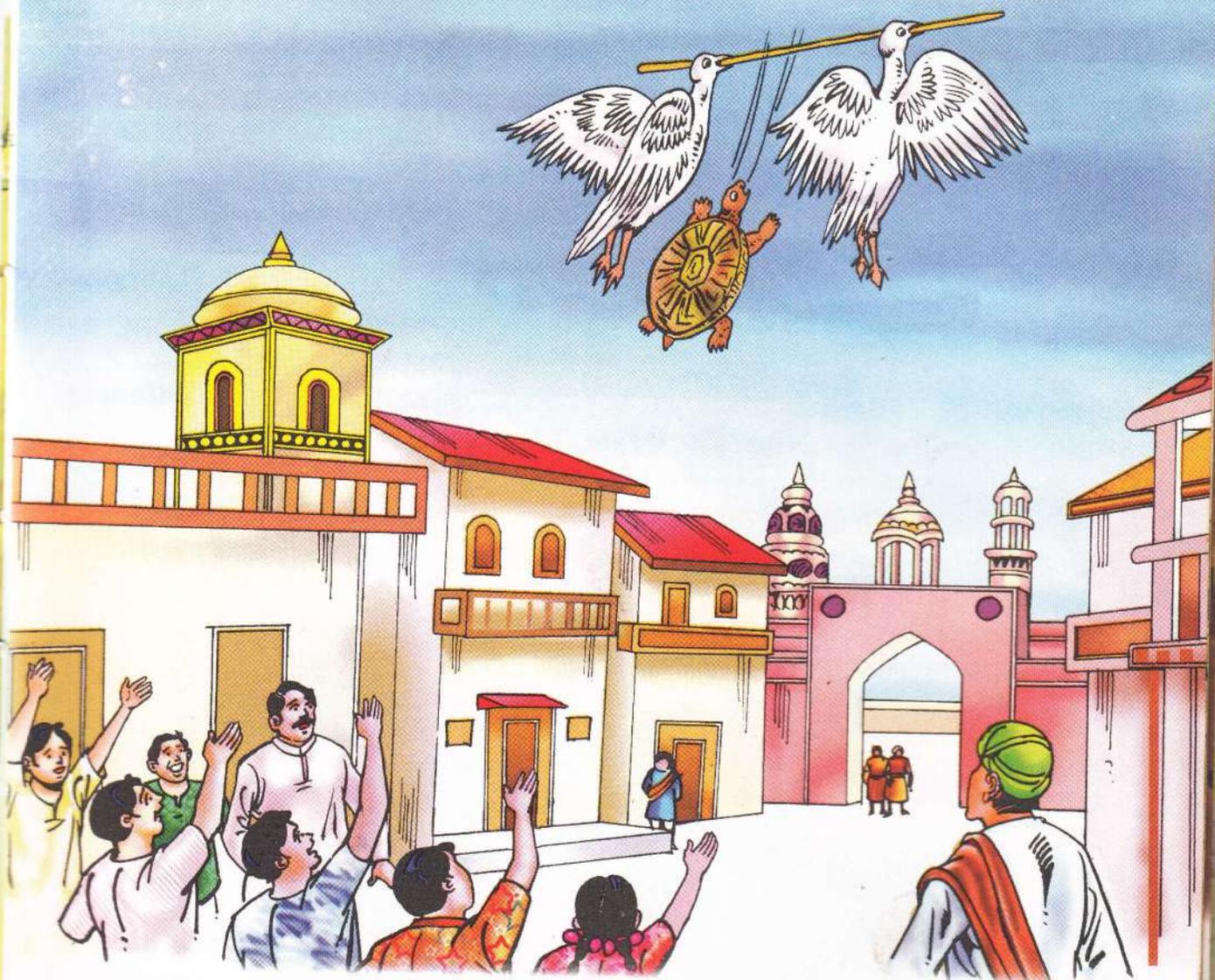


So the tortoise put up a bright idea. He said, "Why not bring a strong stick? I will hold the stick in the middle with my teeth and you two hold both the ends of the stick in your beaks. In this manner, I can also travel with you."

Hearing the suggestion of the tortoise, the geese cautioned him, "It's a very good idea. We will do as you say. But you will have to be very careful. The problem with you is that you are very talkative. And if you open your mouth to say something, while we are flying, it will definitely prove to be detrimental to you. So, don't talk while you are dangling by the stick, otherwise you will lose your hold and go crashing down on the ground and die."

The tortoise understood the logic and promised not to open his mouth during the entire journey. So the geese held the stick ends in their beaks and the tortoise held the stick in the middle with his teeth and thus, they began their long journey.





They flew over hills, valleys, villages, forests and finally came over a town. While they were flying over the town, men, women and children came out of their houses to see this strange sight. The children began shouting and clapping. The foolish tortoise forgot that he was hanging precariously. He became so curious to know the reason behind these clappings that he opened his mouth to ask his friends—“Friends, what is this all about?” But as soon as he opened his mouth to utter these words, he loosened his hold on the stick and fell down on the ground and died instantaneously.

Moral—Always listen to friendly advices.

THE SAGE AND THE MOUSE

THERE lived a famous sage in a dense forest. Everyday, the animals of the forest came to him to listen to his spiritual preachings. They would gather around the meditating sage and the sage would tell them the good things of life.

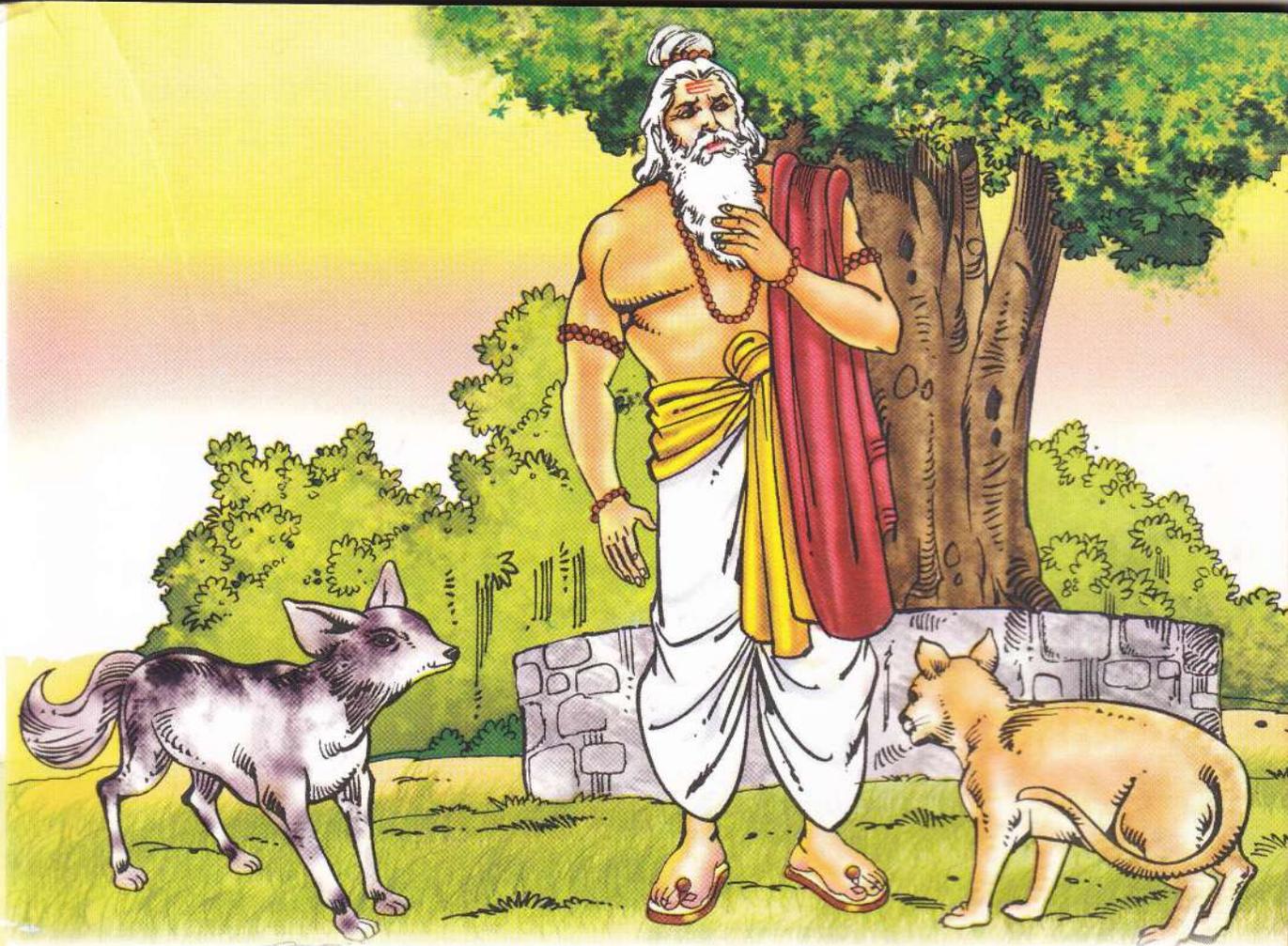
There was also a little mouse living in the same forest. He too used to go to the sage daily to listen to his preachings.

One day, while he was roaming in the forest to collect berries for the sage, he was attacked by a big cat, who was watching him from behind the thick bushes.

The mouse was scared. He ran straight to the *ashram* of the sage. There he lay prostrate before the sage and narrated to him the whole story in a trembling voice. In the meantime, the cat also arrived there and requested the sage to allow him to take his prey.

The sage was in a fix. He thought for a moment and then with his divine powers transformed the mouse into a bigger cat.





Seeing a huge cat before him the other cat ran away.

Now the mouse was carefree. He began to roam about in the forest like a big cat. He meowed loudly to frighten other animals. He fought with other cats to take revenge on them and in this way killed many of them.

The mouse had hardly enjoyed a few carefree days of his life, when one day, a fox pounced upon him. This was a new problem. He had never taken into account that there were yet bigger animals who could easily maul him and tear him into pieces. He ran for his life. He, somehow, saved himself from the fox and ran straight to the sage for help. The fox too was in his hot pursuit. Soon both of them stood before the sage.

The sage seeing the plight of the mouse this time, transformed the mouse into a bigger fox. Seeing a big fox before him the other fox ran away.

The mouse became more carefree and began roaming about in the forest more freely with his newly acquired status of a big fox. But, his happiness was short-lived.

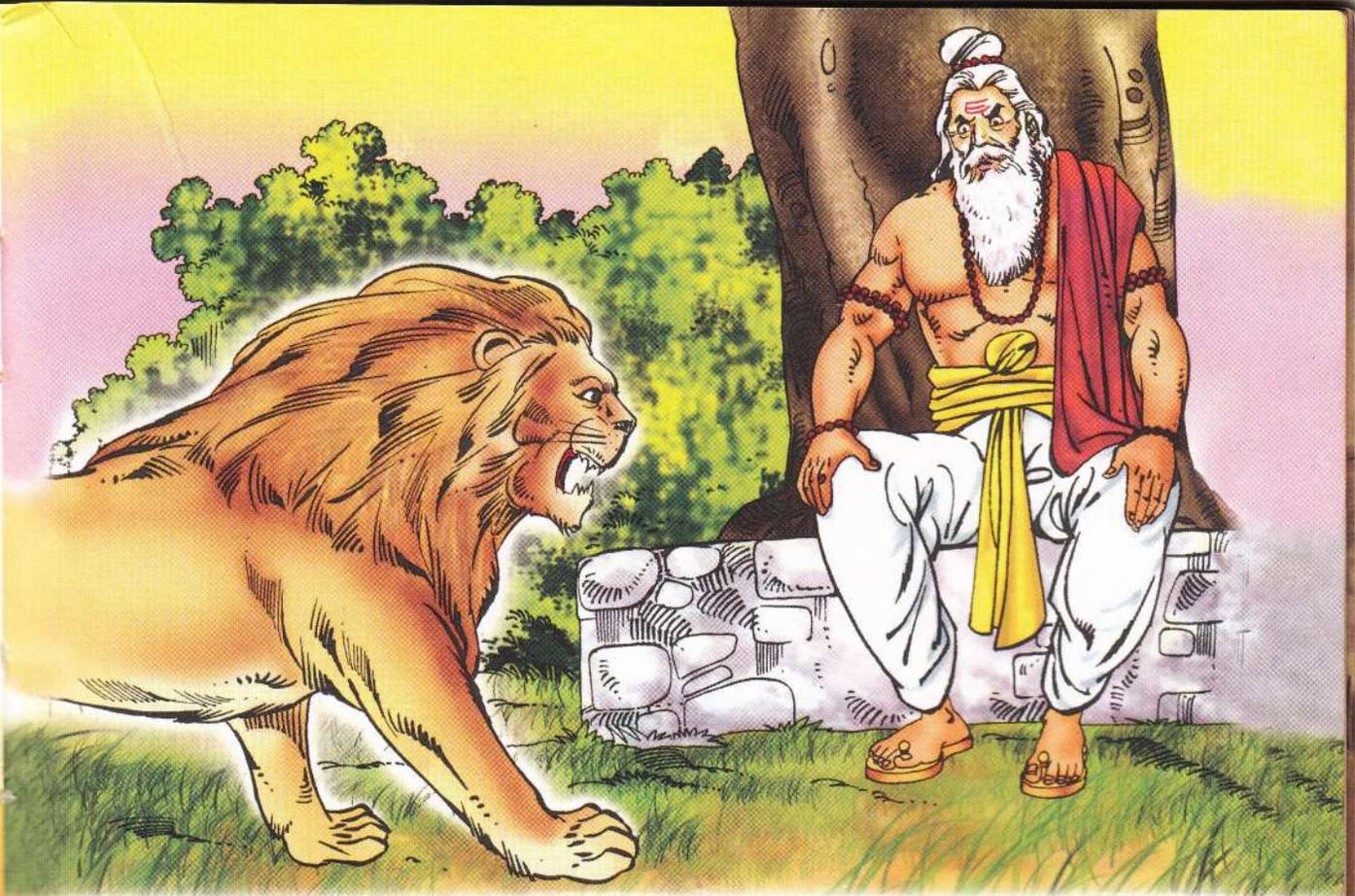
One day, while he was moving around in the forest freely, a tiger pounced upon him. The mouse, somehow, managed to save his life and as usual ran to take shelter in the ashram of the sage.

The sage, once again, took pity on the mouse and transformed him into a tiger.

Now, the mouse, after acquiring the status of a tiger, roamed fearlessly in the forest. He killed many animals in the forest unnecessarily.

After having been transformed into a tiger, the mouse had become all-powerful for the forest animals. He behaved like a king and commanded his subjects.





But one thing always bothered his mind and kept him worried; and that was, the divine powers of the sage. "What, if, one day for some reason or the other, the sage becomes angry with me and brings me back to my original status," he would think worriedly. Ultimately, he decided something and one day, he came to the sage roaring loudly. He said to the sage, "I'm hungry. I want to eat you, so that I could enjoy all those divine powers, which you do. Allow me to kill you."

Hearing these words the sage became very angry. Sensing tiger's evil designs, he immediately transformed the tiger back into the mouse.

The worst had happened. Now the mouse realised his folly. He apologised to the saint for his evil actions and requested him to change him again into a tiger. But the sage drove the mouse away by beating him with a stick.

Moral—*However great one may become, one should never forget one's roots.*

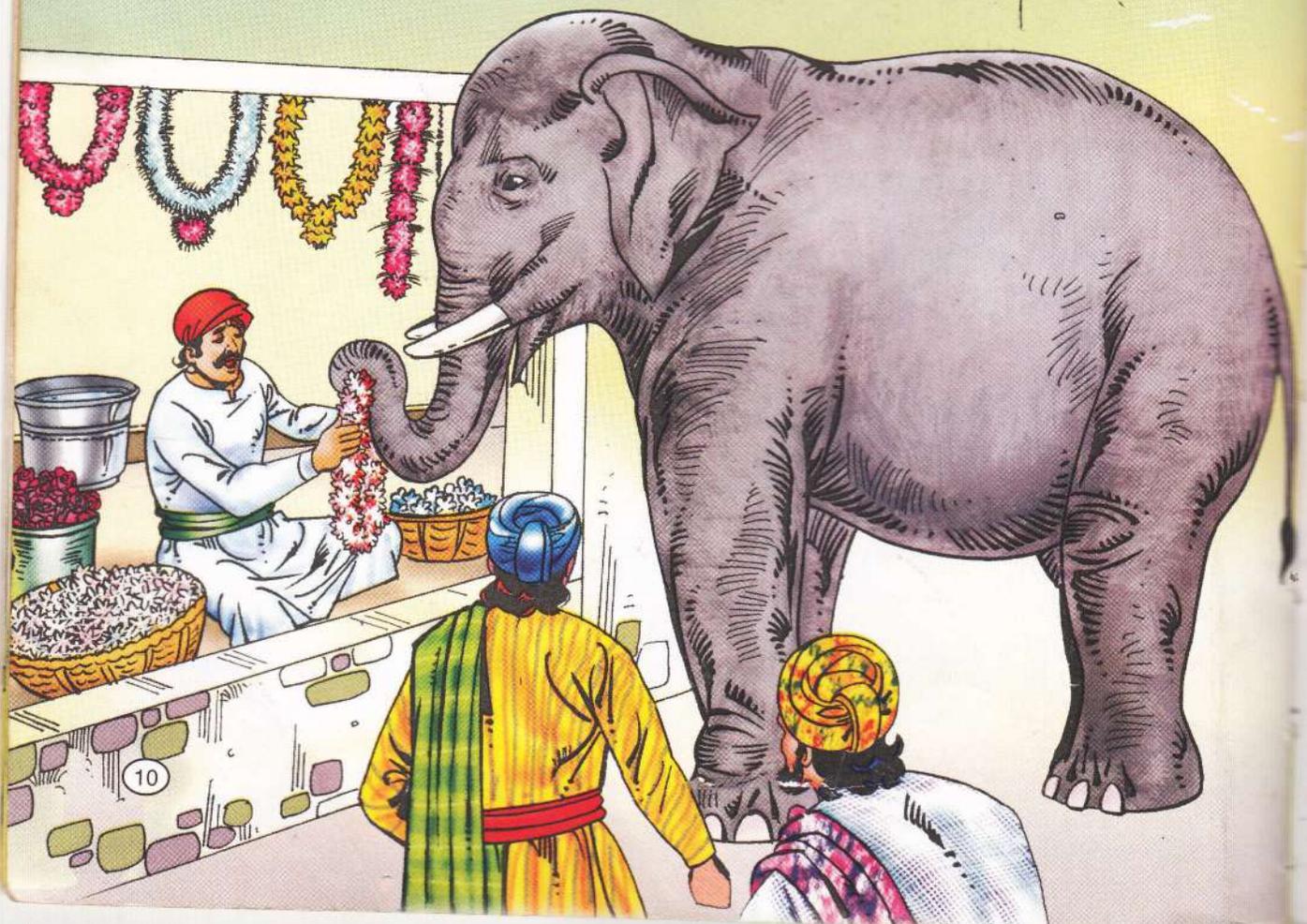


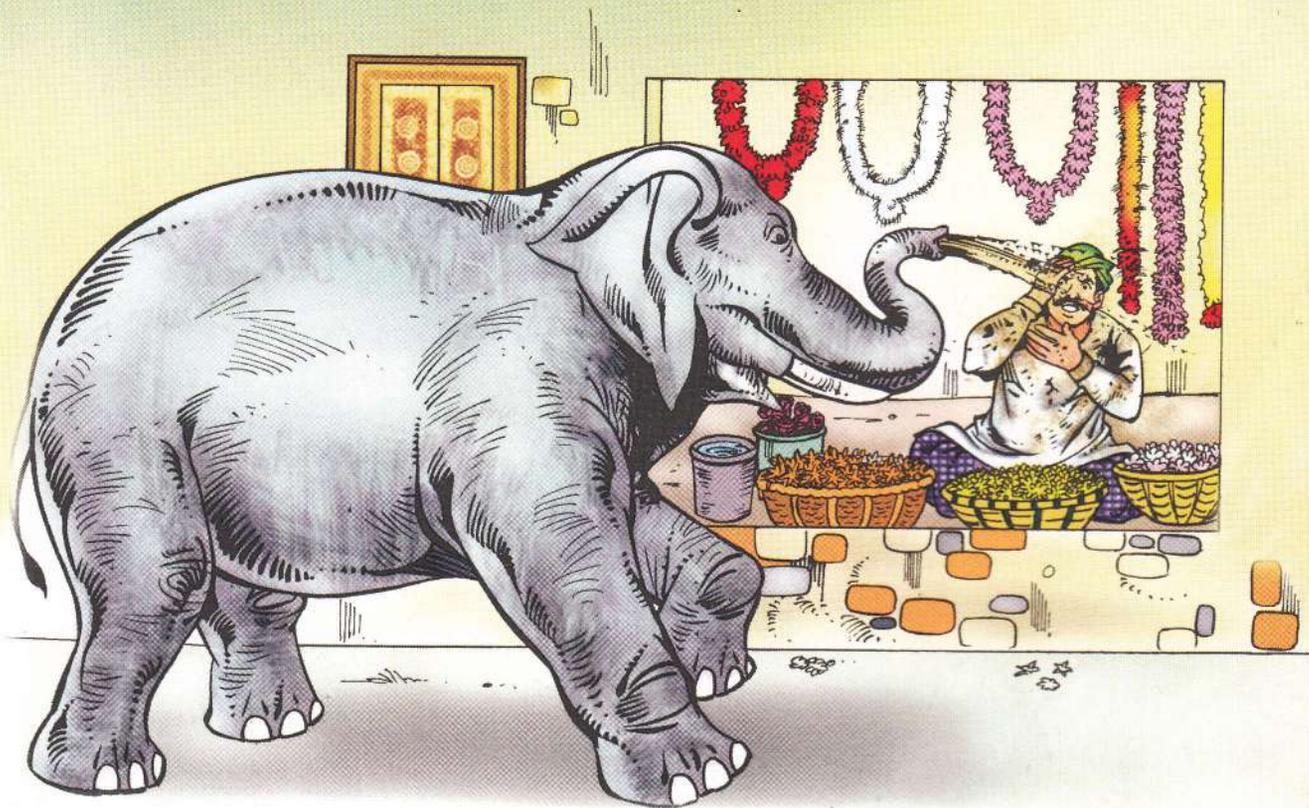
THE REVENGE OF THE ELEPHANT



LONG, long ago, there lived a big elephant in a small town. The elephant was of a religious nature and used to perform puja in front of a temple. Despite his enormous physique, he was a very loving creature. People loved him and offered him delicious fruits to eat.

While going to temple, the elephant had to pass through a busy market place. There a florist would give him a marigold garland everyday, while a fruit seller would offer him fruits. The elephant was very grateful to both of them for these presents. The people in the market place would gather around the elephant and show their affections by patting him gently. They had a lot of respect in their hearts for him.





One day, the florist thought of playing a little joke on the elephant. When the elephant arrived at his shop the next day, as usual, he, instead of offering him a garland, pricked his trunk with a needle, which he used for making garlands.

The elephant writhed in pain and sat on the ground. Some people gathered around him and began to laugh.

This made the elephant very angry with the florist. That day he didn't visit the temple, but instead, went to a nearby dirty pond. At the pond he collected some dirty water in his long trunk and came back to the florist's shop. There he emptied his trunk by spewing dirty water upon the florist and the garlands and flowers kept in the shop. The flowers and garlands became dirty and could not be sold in the market. Thus the florist had to suffer a heavy loss for his mischief.

Moral—*Tit for tat.*



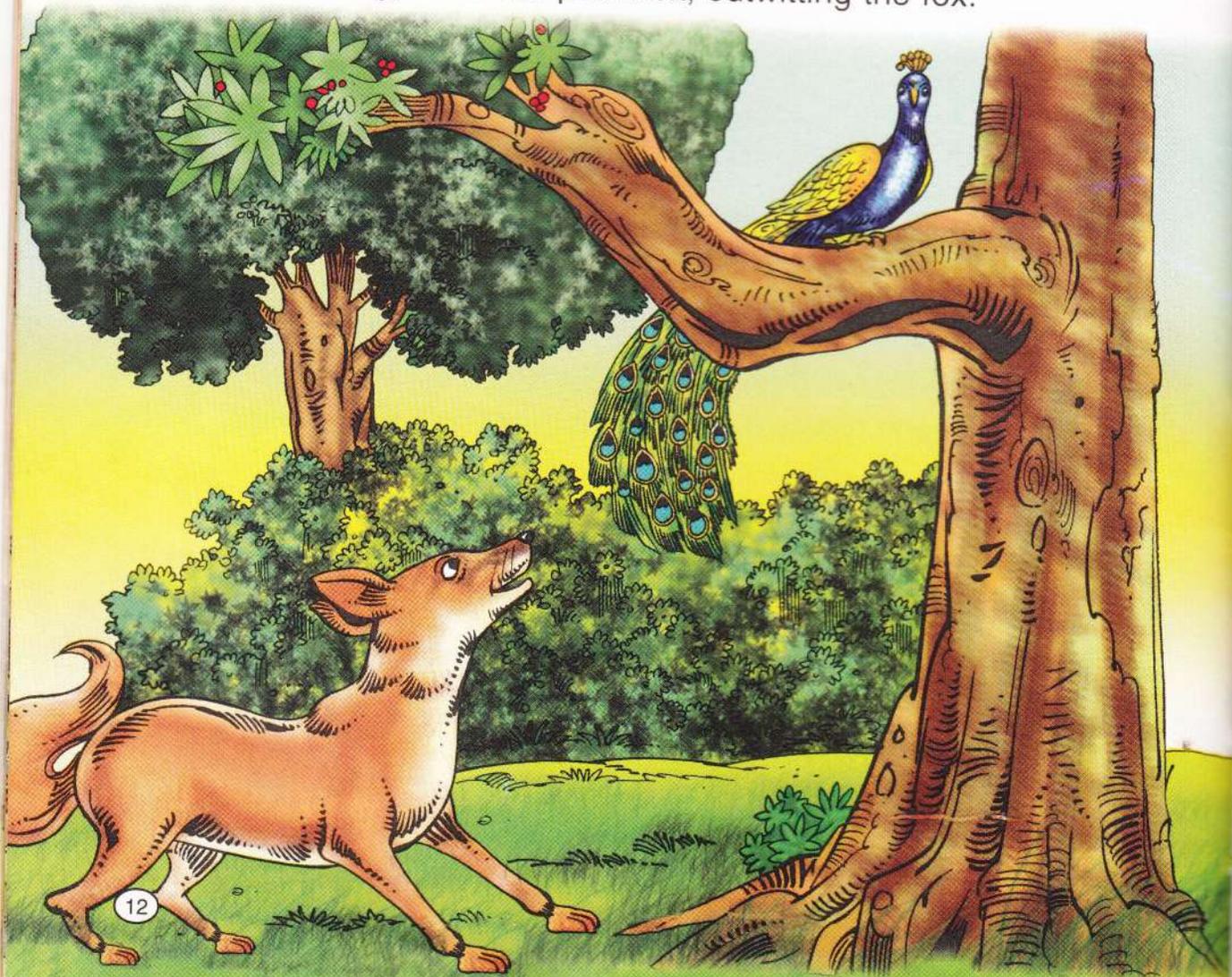
THE PEACOCK AND THE FOX

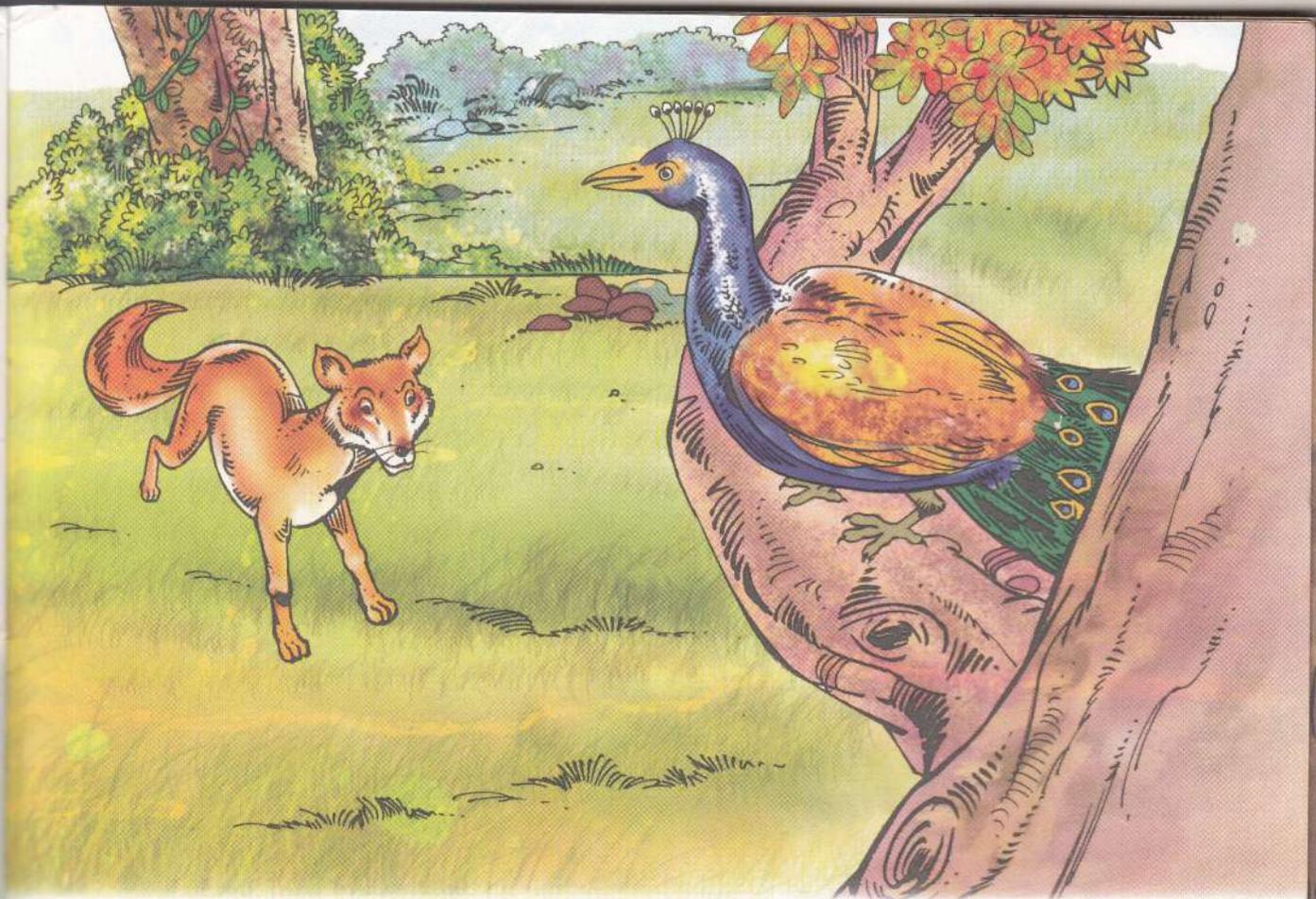


ONCE a fox was wandering in a forest. He saw a beautiful peacock sitting on the branch of a tree at a considerable height: 'How can I have this peacock for my meal,' thought the fox to himself. He knew, he could not climb up the tree to kill the peacock.

Applying his stratagem, the fox said to the peacock, "How is it that you are sitting in the tree? Don't you know that it has been decided in a meeting of animals today that from now on animals and birds will not kill each other for food. Bigger fish will not eat smaller fish."

"That means the king lion, tigers and leopards shall start eating grass from today," said the peacock, outwitting the fox.





But, the fox wasn't ready to give up so easily. "This point needs clarification," said the fox cunningly. "Come down, we'll go together to our king and request him to clarify this point."

"We needn't go there," said the peacock. "I can see some of your friends coming towards this tree."

"Who are they?" the fox asked in surprise.

"Hounds," the peacock replied.

"Hounds!" the fox repeated the words in fear and sprang up on his feet to run away.

"Why do you run away? You have just told that all the animals and birds have become friends to each other," the peacock said laughing.

"But, perhaps the hounds might not have heard of this meeting," the fox replied and ran away into the deep forest.

Moral—*Presence of mind outwits cunningness.*

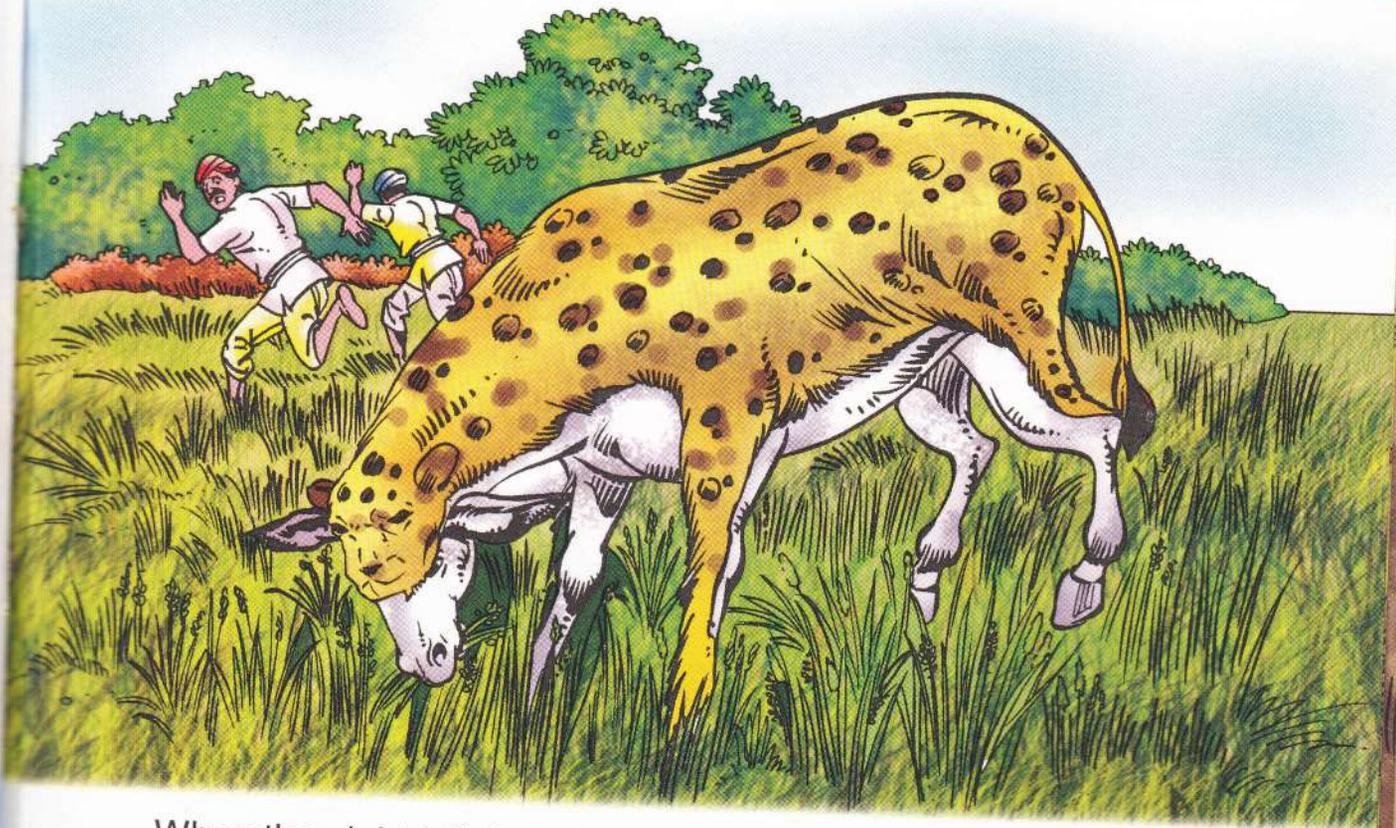


THE DONKEY AND THE LEOPARD'S SKIN

THERE was a washerman. His name was Shuddhapata. He had a donkey. The donkey had an insatiable appetite for food, but was least interested in doing his master's work. And Shuddhapata was very poor. It was not possible for him to feed his always-hungry and lazy donkey. Therefore, as a result the donkey became lean and thin.

Once the washerman had to go to the town to purchase soap etc. for washing clothes. He had to pass through a jungle on his way to the town. While returning from the town, he found a leopard's skin in the jungle. He immediately thought of a plan to feed his lazy donkey.





When the night fell, he donned his donkey with the leopard's skin and drove him to the nearby fields. The farmers were frightened to see a leopard roaming in their fields and ran away. The donkey ate his fill and returned home in the early hours of morning. This continued for months together. Soon the donkey became fat and healthy. No farmer ever dared come near him. The donkey passed his days and nights happily.

One night, as the donkey was feeding itself in a neighbouring field, it heard another donkey braying in a nearby village. The donkey became very happy to hear it and instinctively started braying in reply, "Dheecheon, Dheecheon". Soon the farmers realised that the animal they were frightened of was not a leopard but a donkey. They became very angry. They came out of their houses with lathis in their hands and beat the donkey so badly that it died on the spot.

Moral— *You cannot fool all the people all the time.*





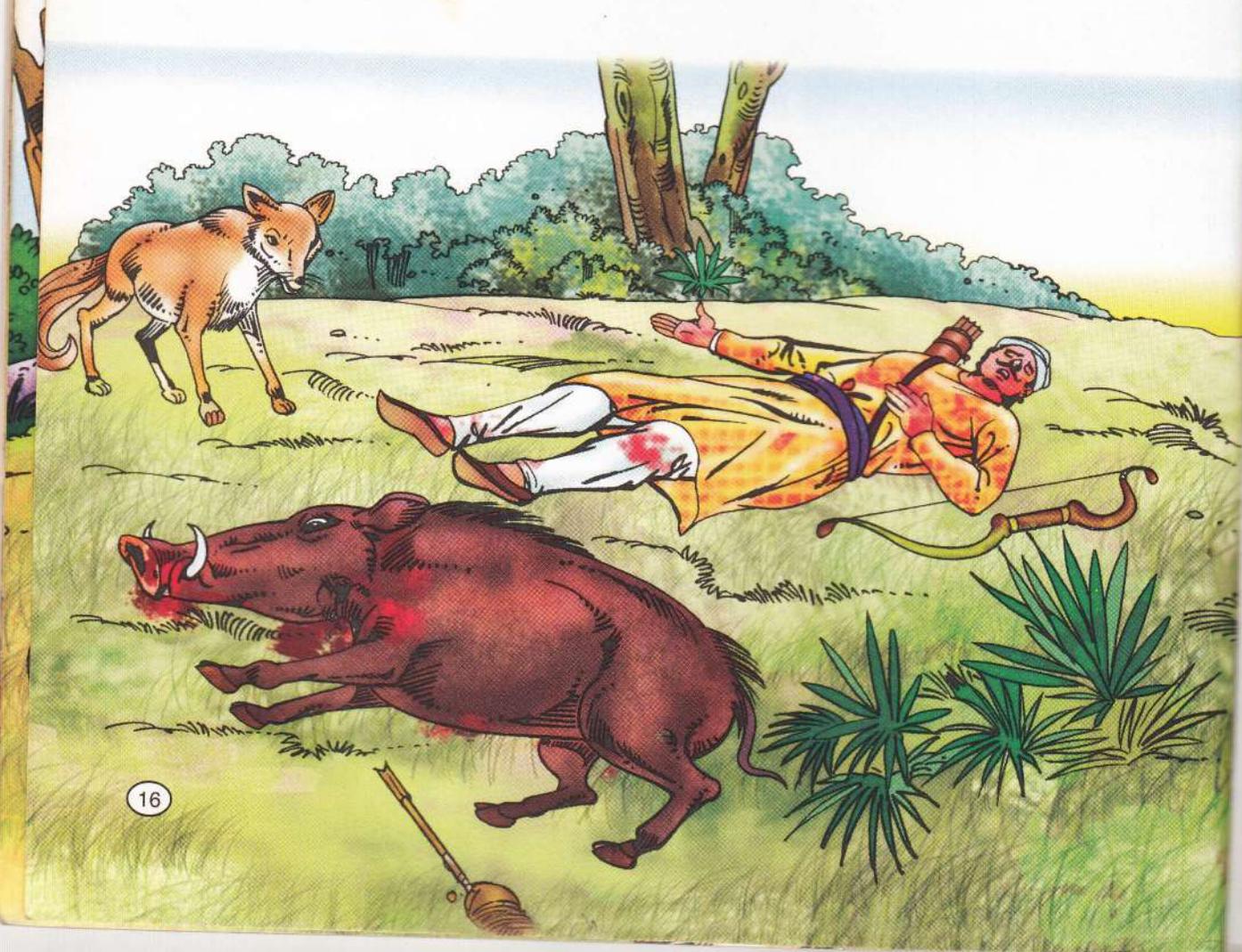
THE JACKAL AND THE ARROW

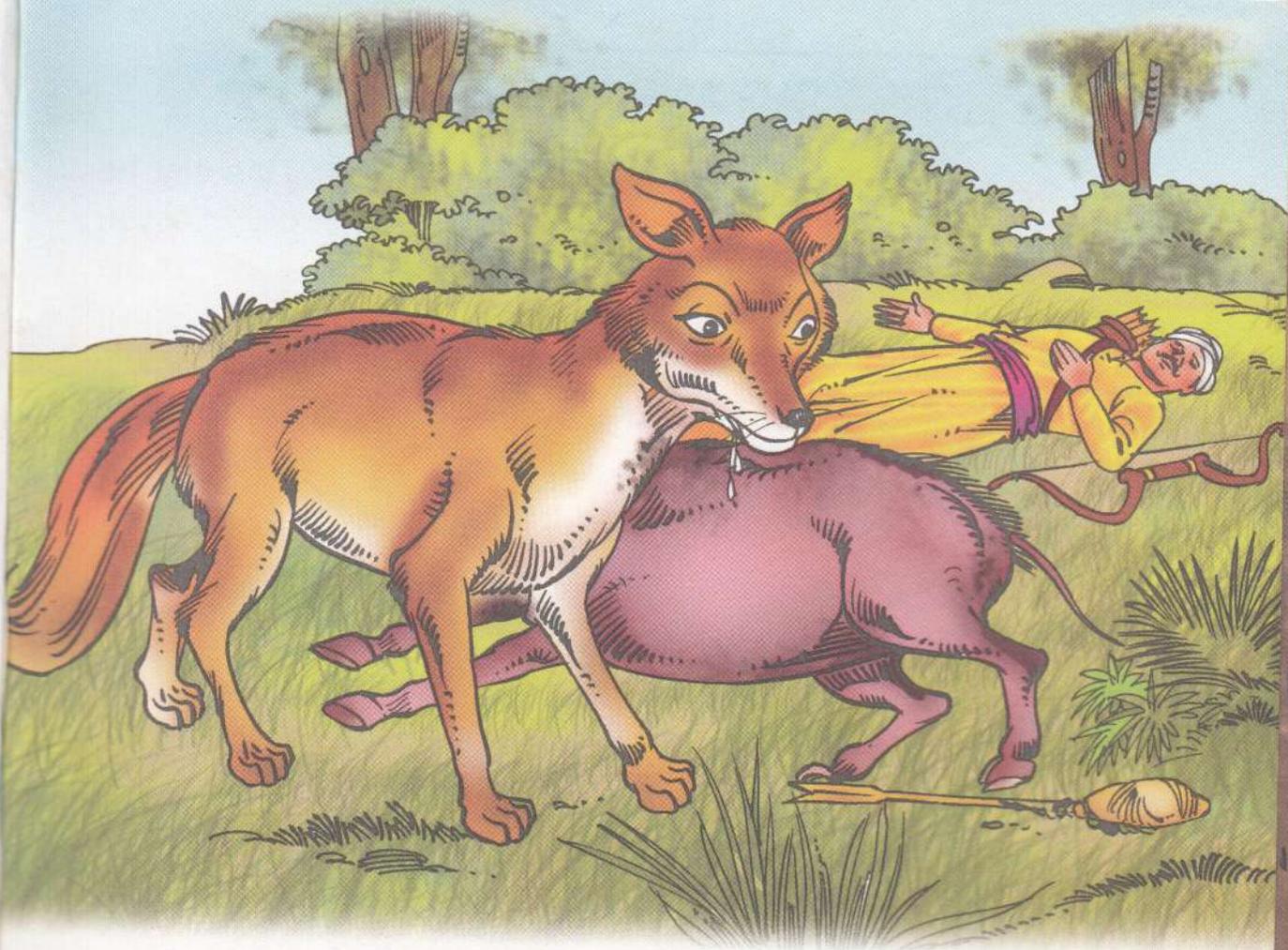


ONCE a hunter was hunting in a forest. After sometime, he felt hungry. He saw a wild boar coming towards him. He shot an arrow at the boar. The arrow pierced the boar's neck and protruded at its back.

But the boar, before falling on the ground, killed the hunter with his pointed tusks. Soon the hunter and the boar both were lying dead at the same spot.

At the same time, a hungry jackal happened to pass through that place. He saw a man and an animal, both lying dead there. 'What a good luck I have? So much food to eat for days together', thought the jackal to himself. He began to think whose flesh to eat first—the man or the animal.





He decided to go slow at the eating, so that the food would last for a longer period.

The jackal decided first to lick the blood and eat a little flesh stuck round the tusks of the boar. But, as soon as, he put the pointed tip of the boar's tusks in his mouth it pierced his jaws and went through his head. The jackal died on the spot.

Moral—*Greed never pays.*





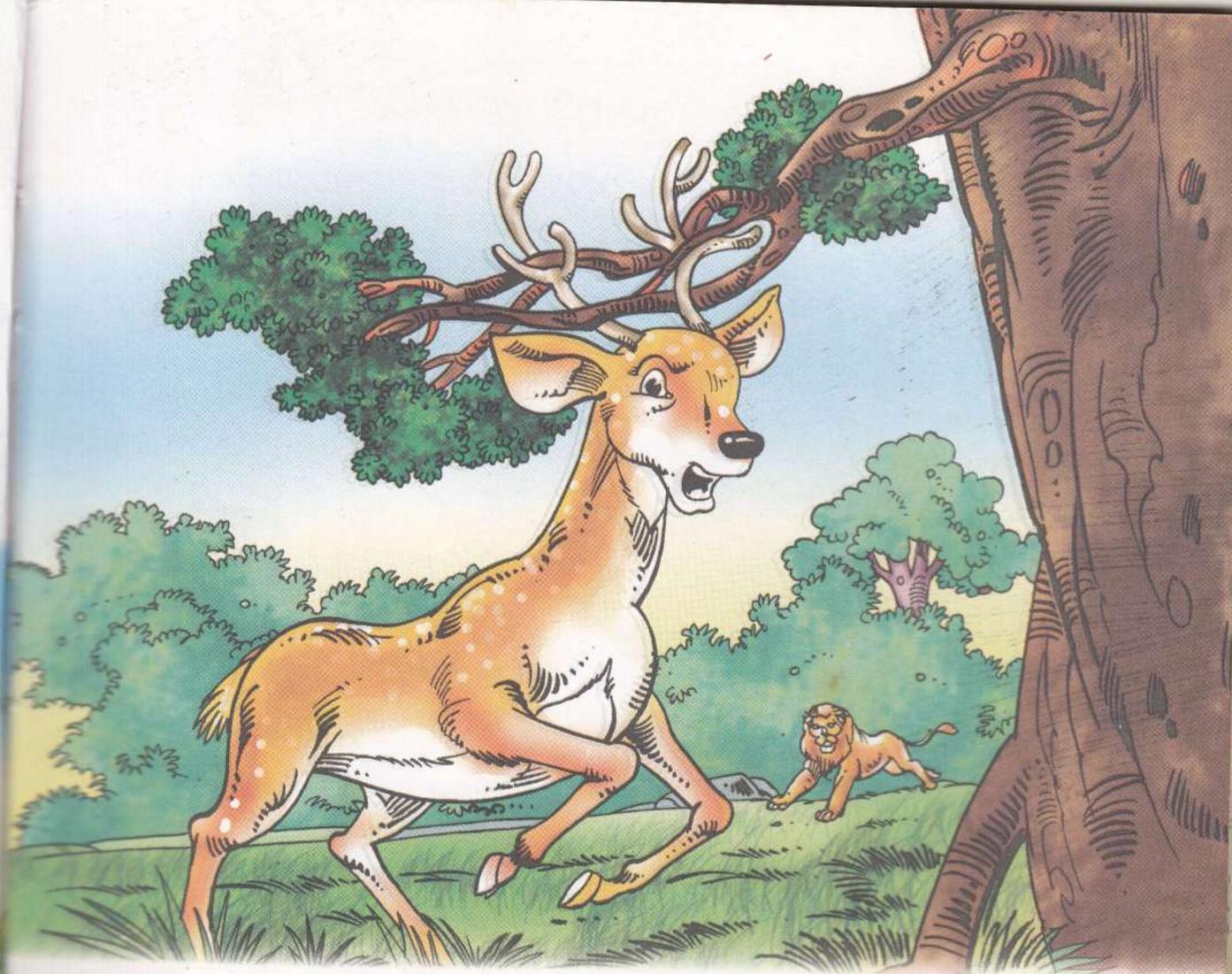
THE STAG AND HIS ANTLERS



ONCE upon a time, there lived a stag in a dense forest. One day, he went to a nearby lake to quench his thirst. There he saw his reflection in the water and thought to himself; 'I've got beautiful antlers, but my legs are ugly. I can't understand, why God has given me such thin legs.'

Just then, he heard a lion roaring at a short distance. The stag knew that if he stayed there, the lion will kill him. So he started running. The lion too started chasing the stag.





The stag ran faster and faster and soon he outdistanced the lion. But alas! all of a sudden, the antlers of the stag got entangled with the overhanging branches of a tree. The stag struggled hard, but could not free his antlers from the branches. He thought to himself, 'My thin legs helped me get away from the danger, but my antlers proved dangerous for me.'

By that time the lion had already reached there. He pounced upon the stag and killed him.

Moral—*A beautiful thing might not be useful also.*





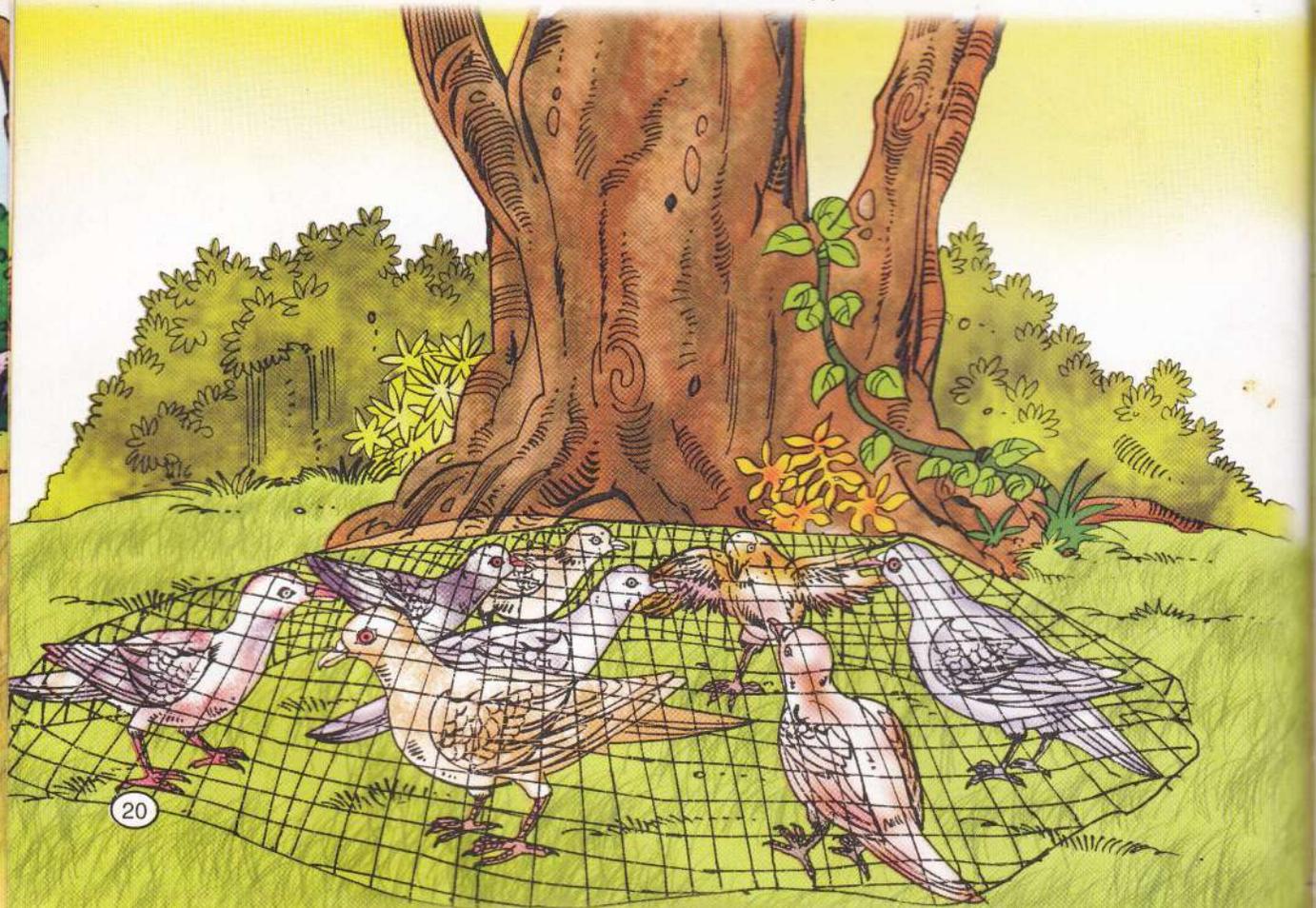
THE HUNTER AND THE DOVES

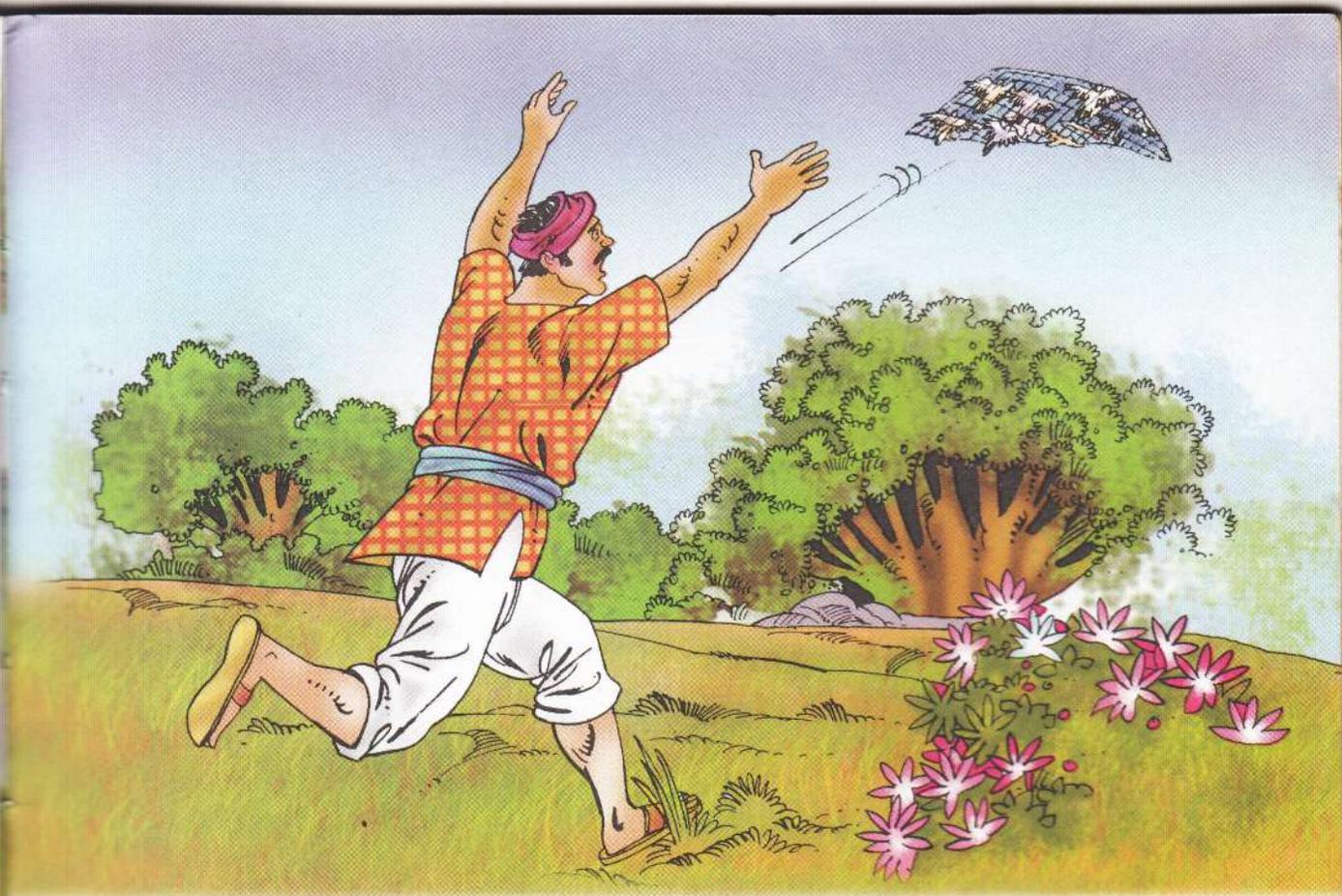


THERE was a huge banyan tree standing on the outer boundaries of a village. All kinds of birds had their homes in this tree. Even the travellers would come and relax under its cool shade during the hot summer days.

Once, a fowler came to take a rest there. He also had a huge net with him. He set his net under the tree and strewed some grains of rice to lure the birds. A crow living in the tree saw it and cautioned his friends not to go down to eat the rice.

But at the same moment, a flock of doves came flying over the banyan tree. They saw grains of rice strewn around and without losing a moment, descended on the ground to eat the grains of rice. As soon as they started eating the rice, a huge net fell over them and they were all trapped. They tried everything to come out of the net, but in vain. They saw the fowler coming towards them. He was very happy to find a large number of doves trapped.





However, the king of doves was very intelligent and clever. He said to other doves, "We must do something immediately to free ourselves from the clutches of this fowler. I've an idea. We should all fly up together clutching the net in our beaks. We will decide our next course of action later. Now, come on friends, let's fly."

So each dove picked up a part of the huge net in his beak and they all flew up together. Seeing the birds flying along with the whole net, the fowler was surprised. He could never imagine this. He ran after the flying birds, shouting madly, but could not catch them. Soon the birds flew out of his sight.

When the king dove saw that the fowler had given up the chase, he said to his friends, "Now we all have to get out of this net. There lives a mouse on the nearby hillock. He is my friend. Let's go to him for his help."



All the doves flew on to meet the mouse. When the mouse heard the doves making noise in front of his hole, he got frightened and hid himself deeper into the hole. He came out only when he heard the king dove saying, "Friend, it's I, the king dove. We're in great difficulty. Please come out and help us."

Hearing the dove, his friend's voice, the mouse came out of his hole and saw the king dove and his friends trapped in the net.

"Oh!", said the mouse, "Who's done all this to you?"

The king dove narrated the story. The mouse immediately started nibbling at the net around the king dove. The king dove said, "No, my friend. First set my followers free. A king cannot keep his subjects in pain and enjoy the freedom for himself."

The mouse praised the king dove for his nobleness and nibbled at the portion of the net, which would set free the other doves first. And only at last, he freed the king dove.

All the doves were very grateful to the mouse. They thanked the mouse and then flew to their destination happily.

Moral—*Unity is strength.*

THE FAKE KING

THERE lived a jackal in a jungle. His name was Chandarava. One day, he hadn't eaten anything since morning and was so hungry that he wandered and wandered across the jungle, but couldn't find anything to eat. He thought it better to walk a little farther and find something to eat in some village. He reached a nearby small village. There on its outskirts he ate some food, but the quantity was not sufficient and he was still very hungry. Then he entered another village with the hope of getting some more food.

As soon as the jackal entered the village, a few dogs roaming there charged at him barking loudly. The jackal was terribly frightened. He began running through lanes in order to save himself from the dogs. Soon he saw a house. The door of the house was open. It was a washerman's house. 'This is the right place for me to hide', the jackal thought to himself and ran into the open door.

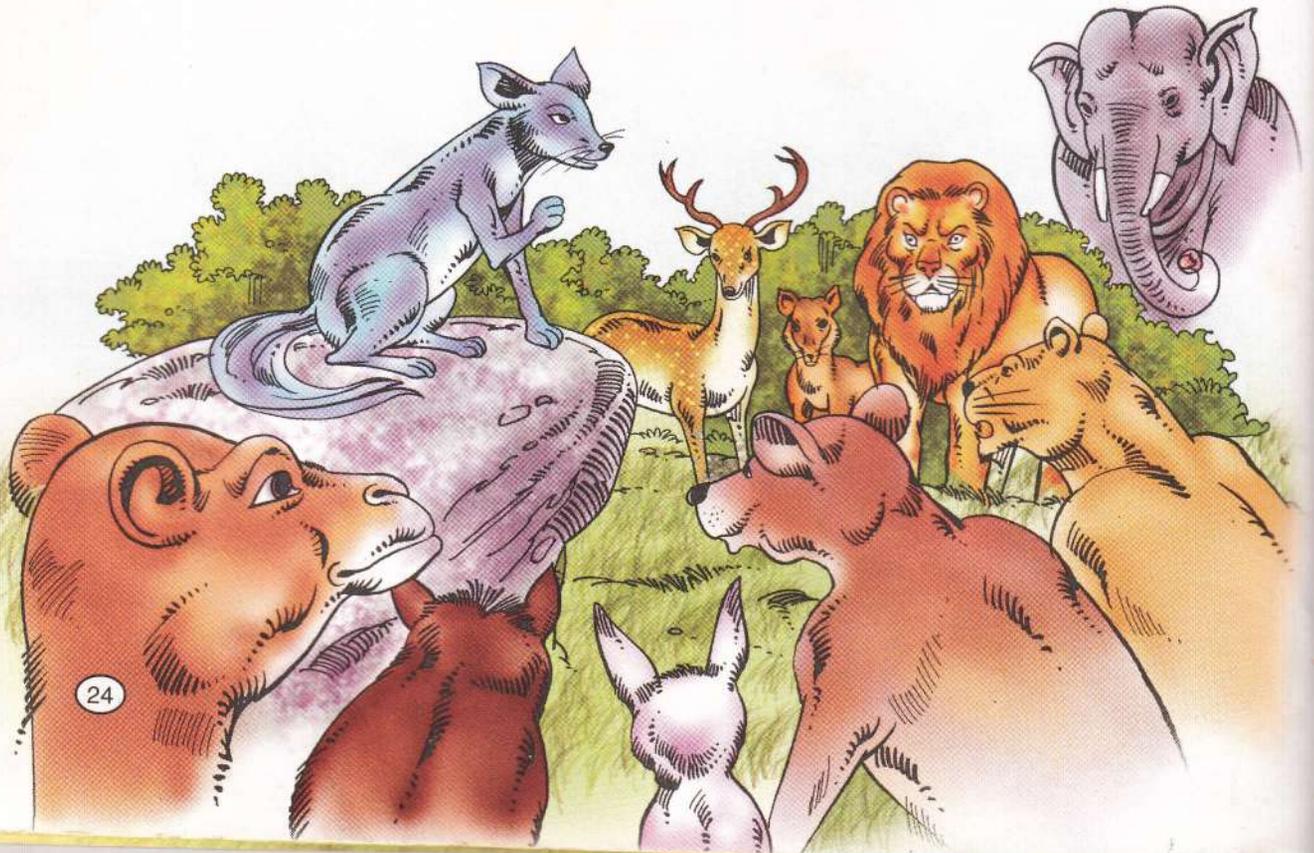


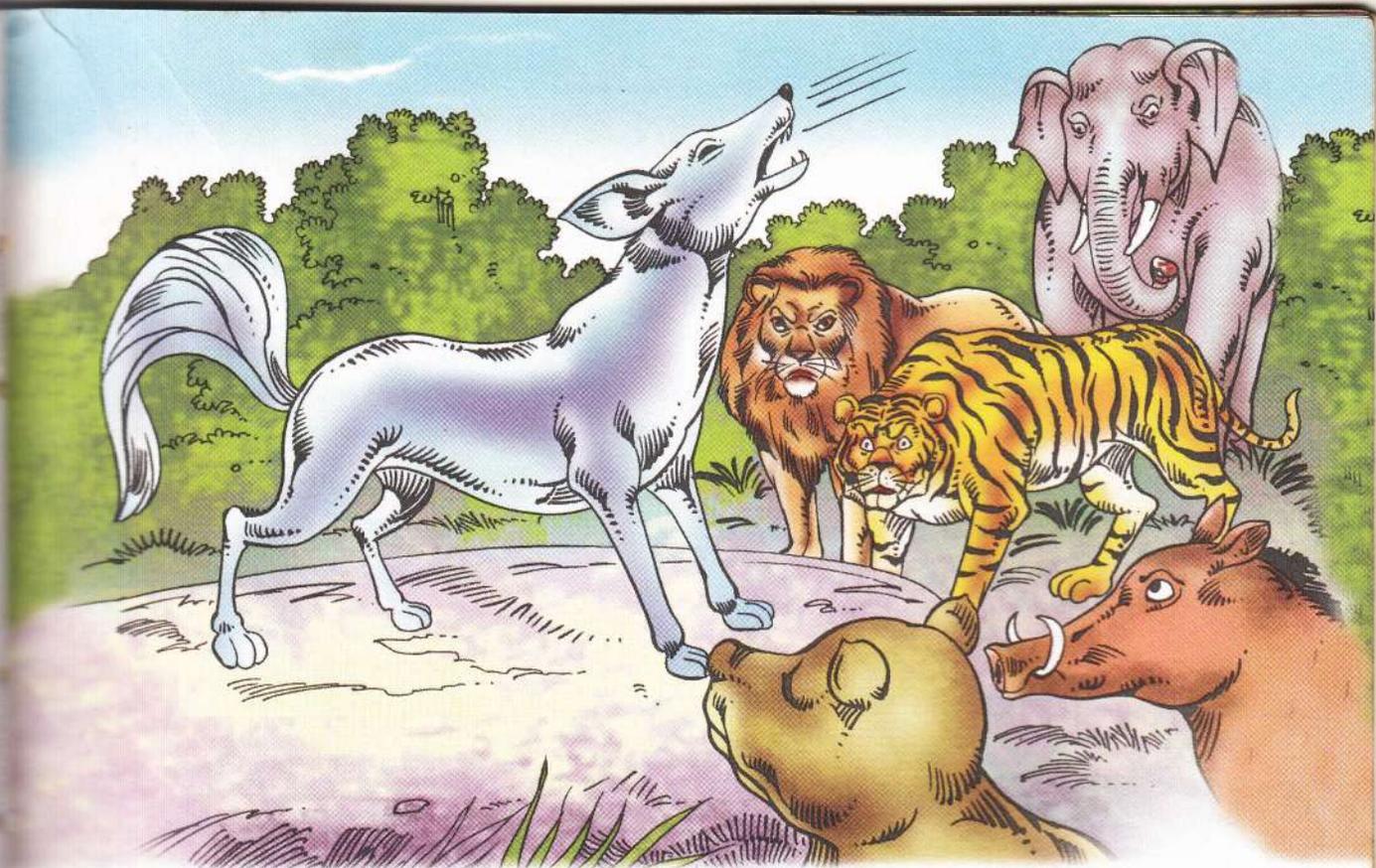
While trying to hide himself, the jackal slipped and fell into a tank full of blue colour, which the washerman had kept ready to dye the clothes. Soon the barking of the dogs ceased. The jackal saw them going away. He came out of the tub. There was a big mirror fixed on a wall of a room. There was no one around. The jackal entered the room and saw his image in the mirror. He was surprised to see his colour. He looked blue. He came out of the house and ran back to the jungle.

When the animals of the jungle saw the blue jackal they were frightened. They had never seen such an animal. Even the lions and tigers were no exceptions. They too were scared of the seemingly strange animal. The jackal was quick to realise the change in the behaviour of the other animals. He decided to take advantage of this funny situation.

"Dear friends", said the blue jackal, "don't be afraid of me. I'm your well-wisher. Lord Brahma has sent me to look after your well-being. He has appointed me as your king."

All the animals of the jungle developed unshakable faith in the blue jackal and accepted him as their king. They brought presents for him and obeyed his commands. The blue jackal appointed the lion as his commander-in-chief; the wolf was appointed the defence minister and the elephant the home minister.





Thus, the blue jackal began living in luxury with the lions and tigers also at his command. What to talk of the smaller animals? The tigers and leopards brought him delicious food everyday.

The blue jackal now was ruling the jungle. He used to hold daily darbar. All the animals were like his servants. Even the lion hunted small animals and gave them to the blue jackal to eat.

Once, when the blue jackal was holding his famous darbar, he heard a pack of jackals howling outside his palace. Those jackals had come from some other jungle and were howling, singing and dancing. The blue jackal forgot that he was a king and not an ordinary jackal any more. Instinctively, he too began howling, singing and dancing. All the animals were surprised to see their king howling like a jackal. Soon the word spread around that their king was simply a jackal and not a representative of Lord Brahma. He had fooled the animals. All the animals, in a fit of rage, killed the blue jackal immediately.

Moral—*One cannot fool all the people all the time.*

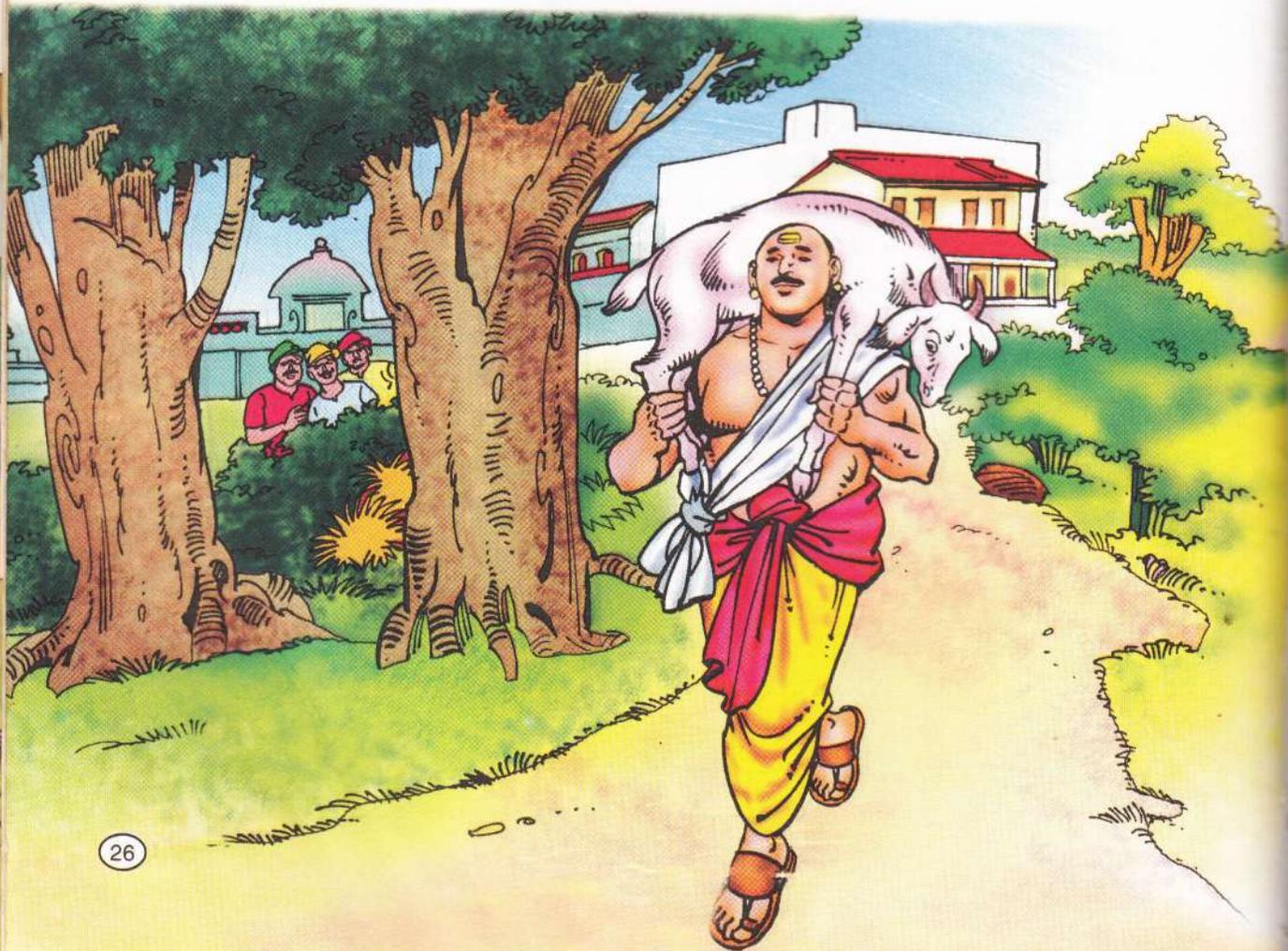


THE BRAHMIN AND THE THREE THUGS

LONG, long ago, there lived a Brahmin in a small village. His name was Mitra Sharma. Once his father told him to sacrifice a goat according to some ancient Hindu rites. He asked him to visit the cattle fair in a nearby village and purchase a healthy goat for that purpose.

The Brahmin visited the cattle fair and bought a healthy and fat goat. He slung the goat over his shoulder and headed back for his home.

There were three thugs also roaming in the fair, with the sole intention of cheating the shopkeepers and other customers there. When they saw the Brahmin going back to his home with the goat, they thought of a plan to get the goat by employing the methods of thugery.





"This goat will make a delicious meal for all of us. Let's somehow get it." The three thugs discussed the matter amongst themselves. Then they separated from one another and took hiding positions at three different places on the path of the Brahmin.

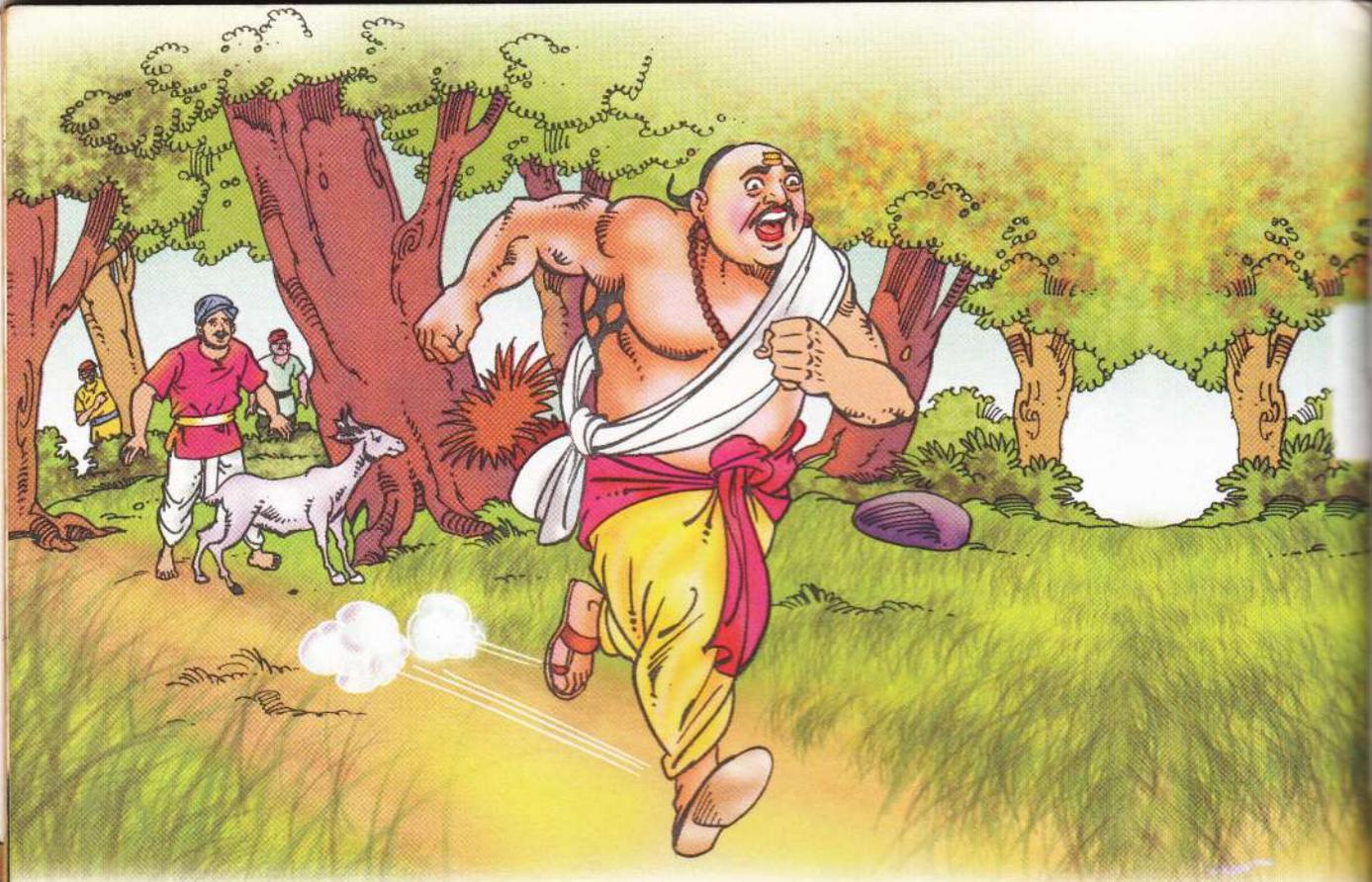
As soon as the Brahmin reached a lonely spot, one of the thugs came out of his hiding place and said to the Brahmin in a surprised tone, "Sir, what's this? I don't understand why a pious man like you should carry a dog on his shoulders!"

The Brahmin was shocked to hear these words. He shouted back, "Can't you see? It's not a dog but a goat, you fool."

"I beg for your apology, sir. I told you what I saw. I am sorry if you don't believe it," said the thug and went away.

The Brahmin had hardly walked a hundred yards when another thug came out of his hiding place and said to the Brahmin, "Sir, why do you carry a dead calf on your shoulders? You seem to be a wise person. Such an act is sheer foolishness on your part."

"What!" the Brahmin shouted. "How do you mistake a living goat for a dead calf?"



“Sir,” the second thug replied, “you seem to be highly mistaken in this respect yourself. Either you come from such a country where goats are not found, or you do it knowingly. I just told you what I saw.” The second thug went away laughing.

The Brahmin walked further. But again, he had hardly covered a little distance when the third thug confronted him laughing.

“Sir, why do you carry a donkey on your shoulders? It makes you a laughing stock”, said the thug and began to laugh again.

The Brahmin hearing the words of the third thug became highly worried. ‘Is it really not a goat!’ He began to think. “Is it some kind of a ghost!”

The Brahmin got frightened. He thought to himself that the animal he was carrying on his shoulders might certainly be some sort of a ghost, because, it transformed itself from goat into a dog, from dog into a dead calf and from dead calf into a donkey.

The Brahmin was then terrified to such an extent that he flung the goat on to the roadside and fled.

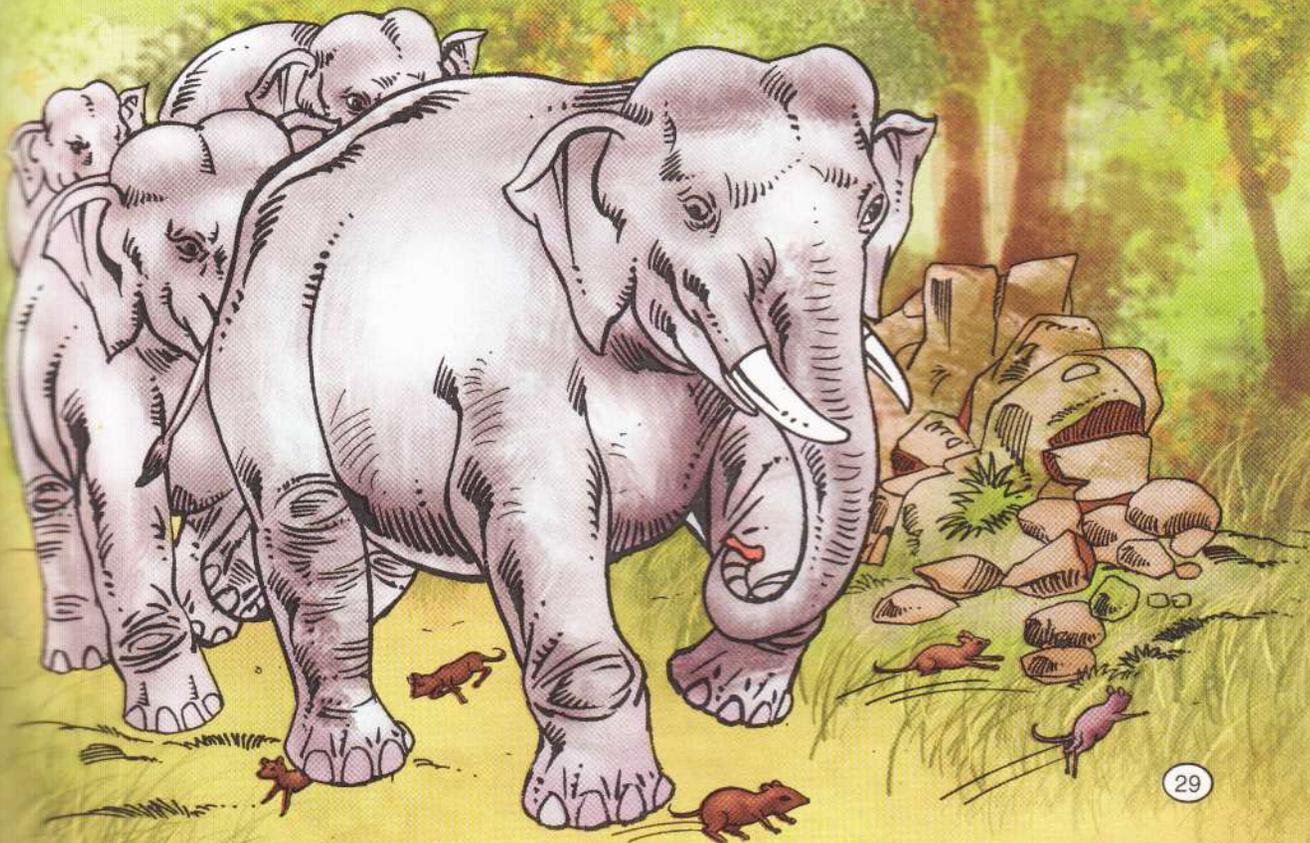
The thugs caught the goat and feasted on it happily.

Moral—*One should not be carried away by what others say.*

THE LITTLE MICE AND THE BIG ELEPHANTS

ONCE upon a time a village was devastated by a strong earthquake. Damaged houses and roads could be seen everywhere. The village was, as a matter of fact, in a total ruin. The villagers had abandoned their houses and had settled in a nearby village. Finding the place totally devoid of residents, the mice began to live in the ruined houses. Soon their number grew into thousands and millions.

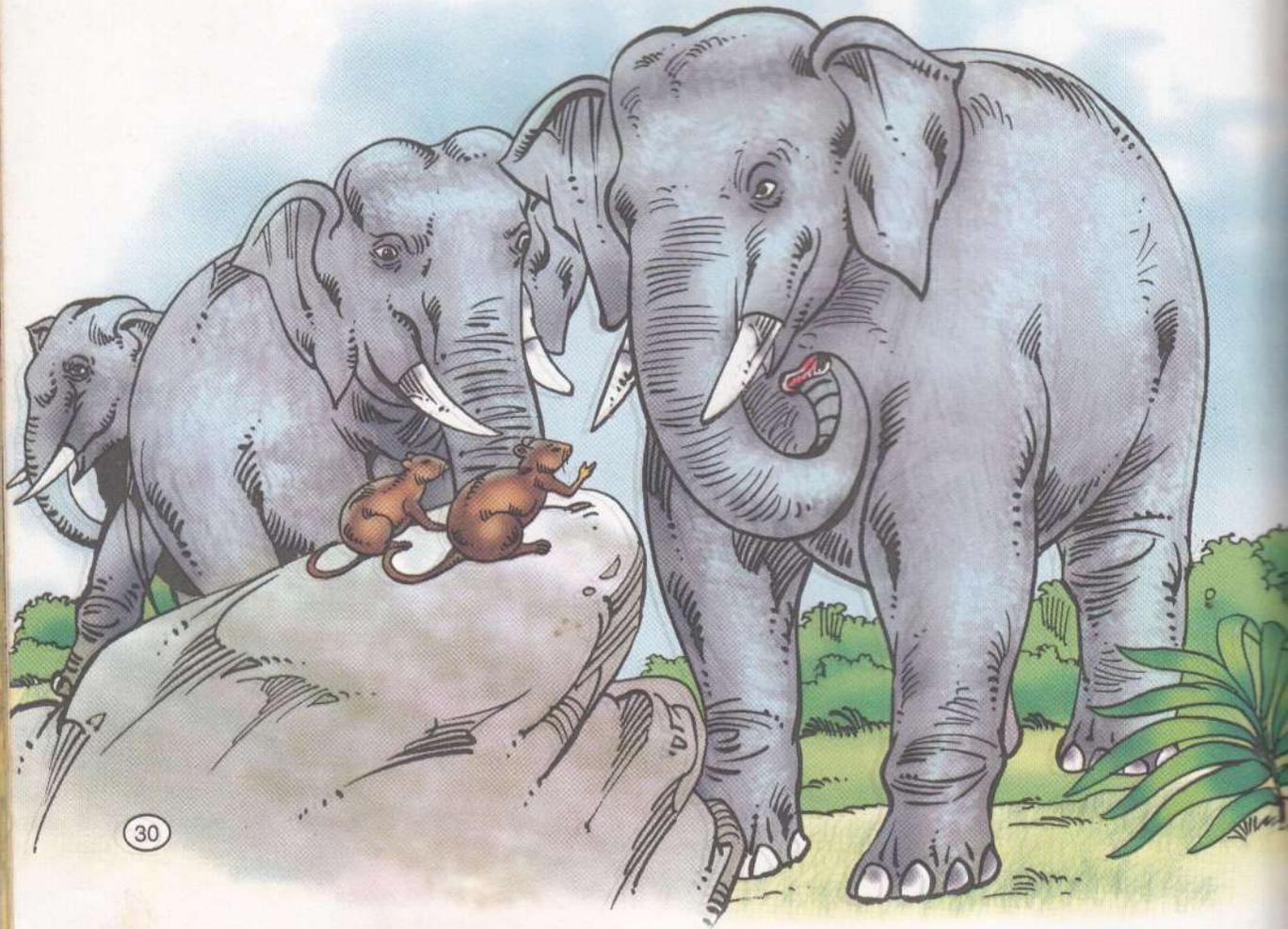
There was also a big lake situated near the ruined village. A herd of elephants used to visit the lake for drinking water. The herd had no other way but to pass through the ruins of the village to reach the lake. While on their way, the elephants trampled hundreds of mice daily under their heavy feet. This made all the mice very sad. Many of them were killed while a large number of them were maimed.

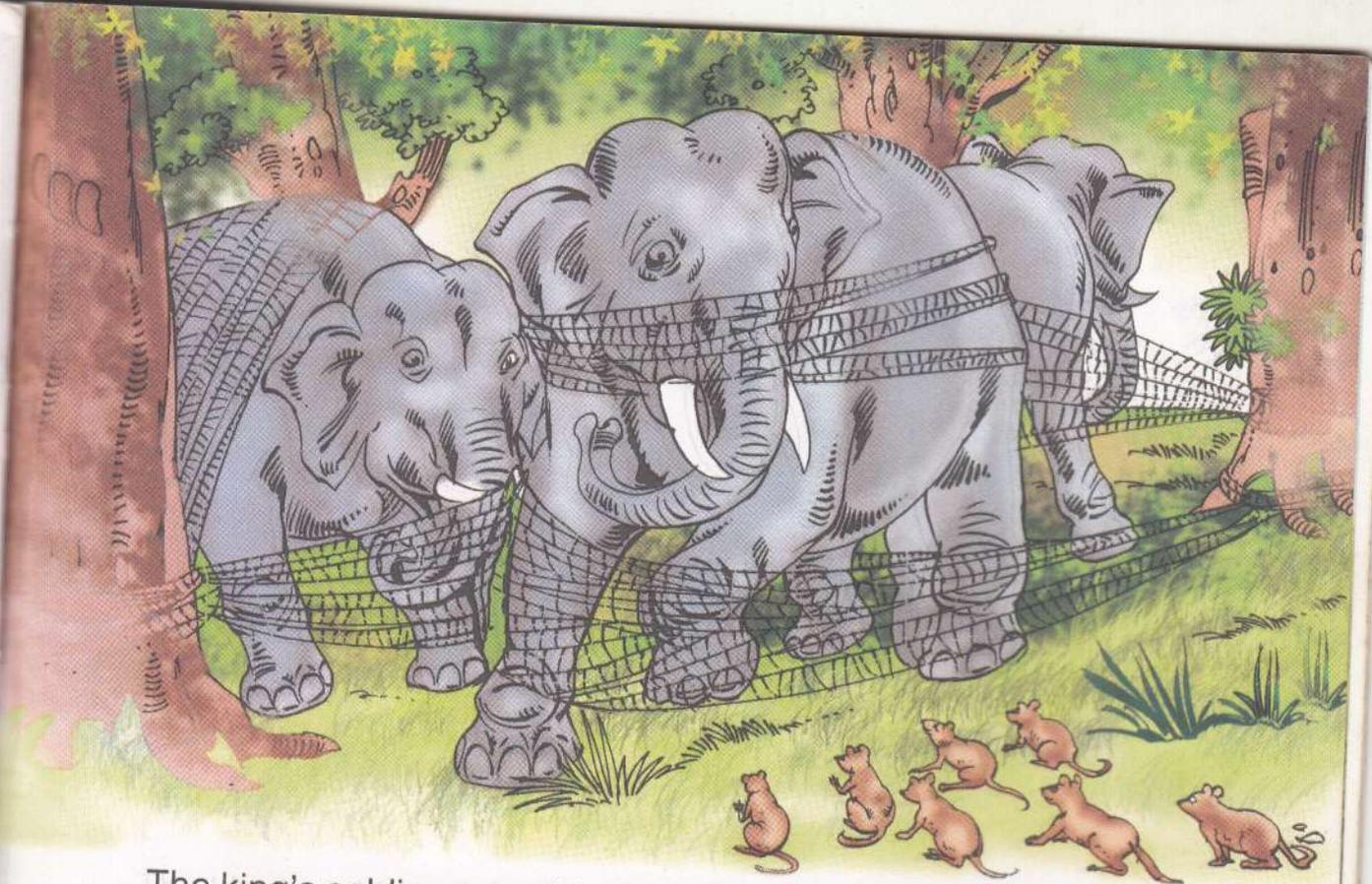


In order to find a solution to this problem, the mice held a meeting. In the meeting, it was decided that a request should be made to the king of elephants to this effect. The king of mice met the king of elephants and said to him, "Your Majesty, we live in the ruins of the village, but everytime your herd crosses the village, thousands of my subjects get trampled under the massive feet of your herd. Kindly change your route. If you do so, we promise to help you in the hour of your need."

Hearing this the king of elephants laughed. "You rats are so tiny to be of any help to giants like us. But in any case, we would do a favour to all of you by changing our route to reach the lake and to make you more safe." The king of mice thanked the king elephant and returned home.

After sometime, the king of a nearby kingdom thought of increasing the number of elephants in his army. He ordered his soldiers to catch more elephants for this purpose.





The king's soldiers saw this herd and put a strong net around the elephants. The elephants got trapped. They struggled hard to free themselves, but in vain.

Suddenly, the king of elephants recollected the promise of the king of mice, who had earlier talked about helping the elephants when needed. So he trumpeted loudly to call the king of mice. The king of mice hearing the voice of the king of elephants immediately rushed along with his followers to rescue the herd. There he found the elephants trapped in a thick net.

The mice set themselves on the task. They bit off the thick net at thousands of spots making it loose. The elephants broke the loose net and freed themselves.

They thanked the mice for their great help and extended their hands of friendship to them forever.

Moral—*Sometimes a weak looking person may prove stronger than others.*



THE BRAHMIN AND THE SNAKE

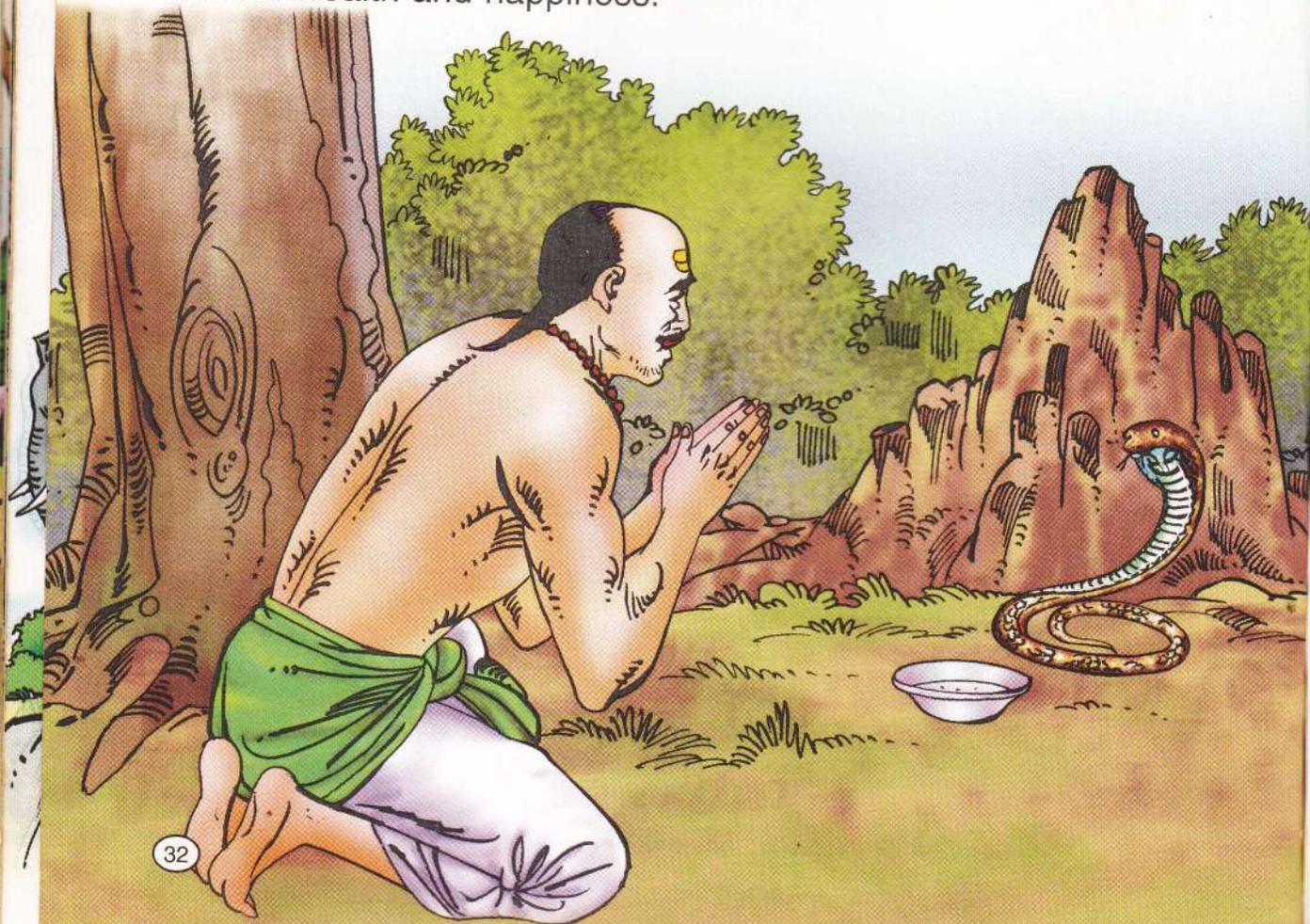


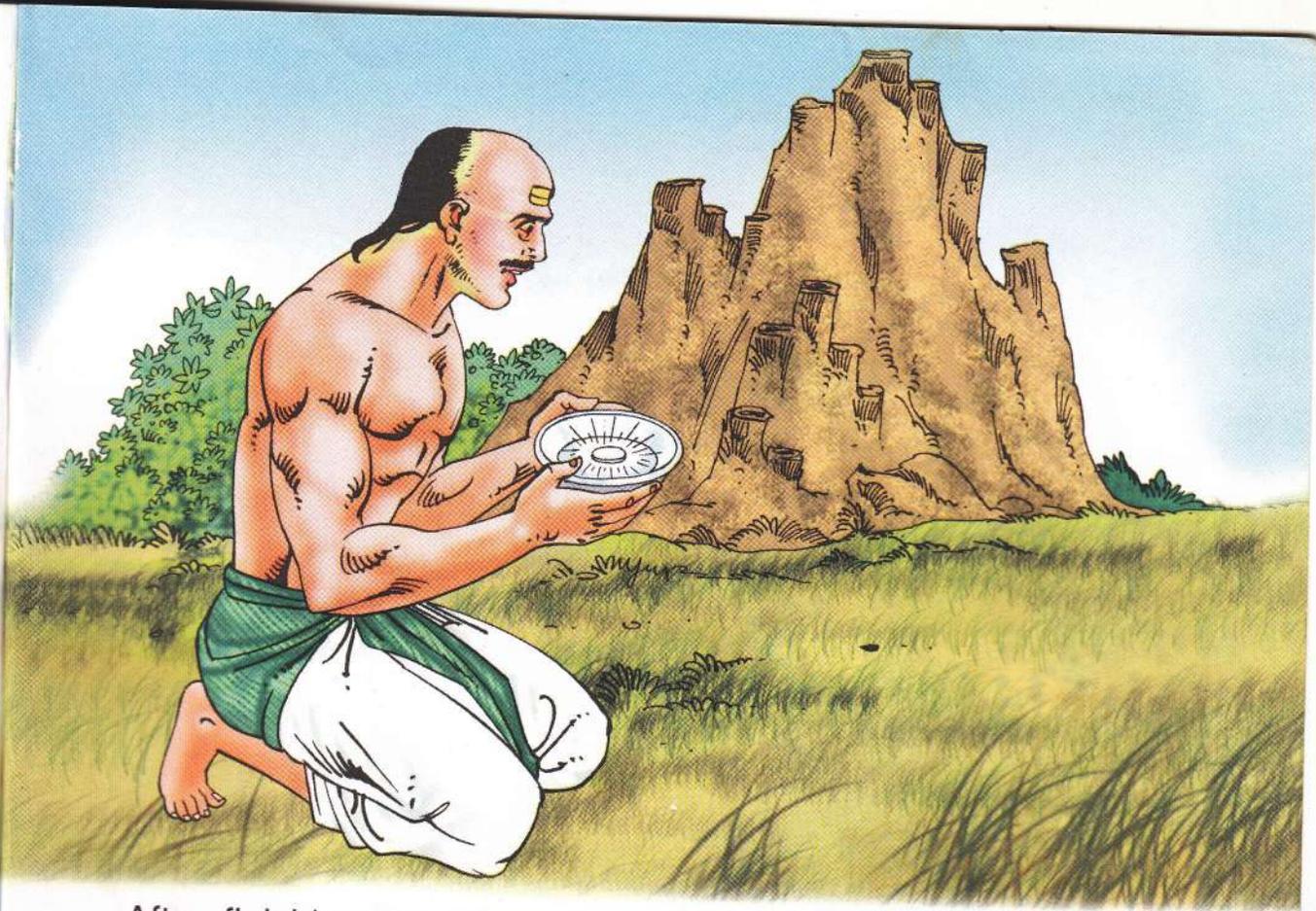
THERE lived a poor Brahmin in a village. His name was Haridatta. He had a small farm to till, but in spite of all his hard work nothing grew in his farm.

Once, after finishing his work in the farm he felt so much tired that he fell asleep under a tree. When he woke up, he saw a snake sitting outside a hole at a little distance from him. Seeing the Brahmin the snake hissed loudly. The Brahmin became frightened.

He thought to himself: 'It must be lord cobra who is highly annoyed with me, because I never offered him milk. This might also be the reason, why nothing grows in my farm. So, I must offer milk to lord cobra and pray to him.'

The Brahmin offered a bowl of milk to lord cobra and prayed to him for wealth and happiness.





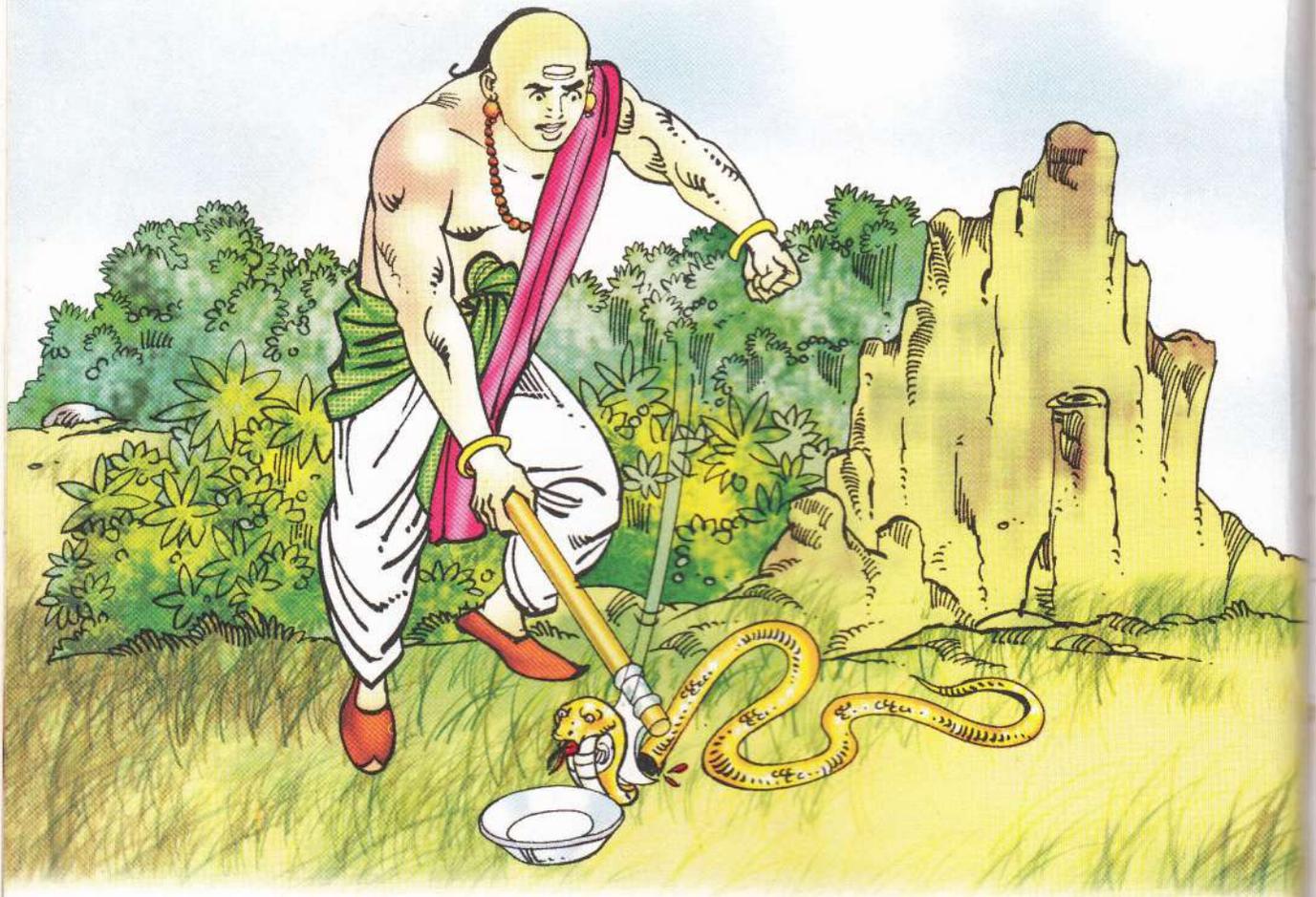
After finishing the milk, lord cobra said to the Brahmin, "I'm pleased with you. Bring a bowl of milk for me daily." Then he crawled back into his hole.

When the Brahmin went to collect the empty bowl of milk, he was astonished to find a gold coin lying in it. The Brahmin became very happy to get that gold coin. He thought it to be a blessing from lord cobra. Thus, he offered a bowl of milk everyday to lord cobra and each day he collected a gold coin in return from the bowl. In this way, the Brahmin collected hundreds of gold coins. His barren field began yielding a lot of crops. His days had changed.

Soon the Brahmin became a rich man. He started a big business in the neighbouring town. But he continued tilling his farm, as before.

Once the Brahmin had to go to a distant town for purchasing seeds of fruit and vegetables. He told his son to look after lord cobra and offer him a bowl of milk everyday.

The Brahmin's son offered a bowl of milk to lord cobra everyday as instructed by his father. Lord cobra drank the milk and soon thereafter, a gold coin appeared in the bowl, as usual.



One day, the son of the Brahmin thought to himself: 'There must be a lot of gold coins in the stomach of lord cobra,' what a fool my father was to collect only one coin a day.'

The next day he kept a bowl of milk outside lord cobra's hole and waited at a distance with an axe in his hand.

As soon as lord cobra came out of his hole to drink the milk, the son of the Brahmin cut off the neck of lord cobra with his axe.

Lord Cobra died. The son of the Brahmin slit the stomach of lord cobra, but he could not find any gold coin inside it.

After a few days, when the Brahmin returned home, he found lord cobra dead. He said to his son, "Oh! my foolish son, why did you do this? You killed lord cobra. Now we won't get even a single gold coin. It is better, you get out of my sight.

Moral—*Unthoughtful actions have no value.*



THE CLEVER JACKAL

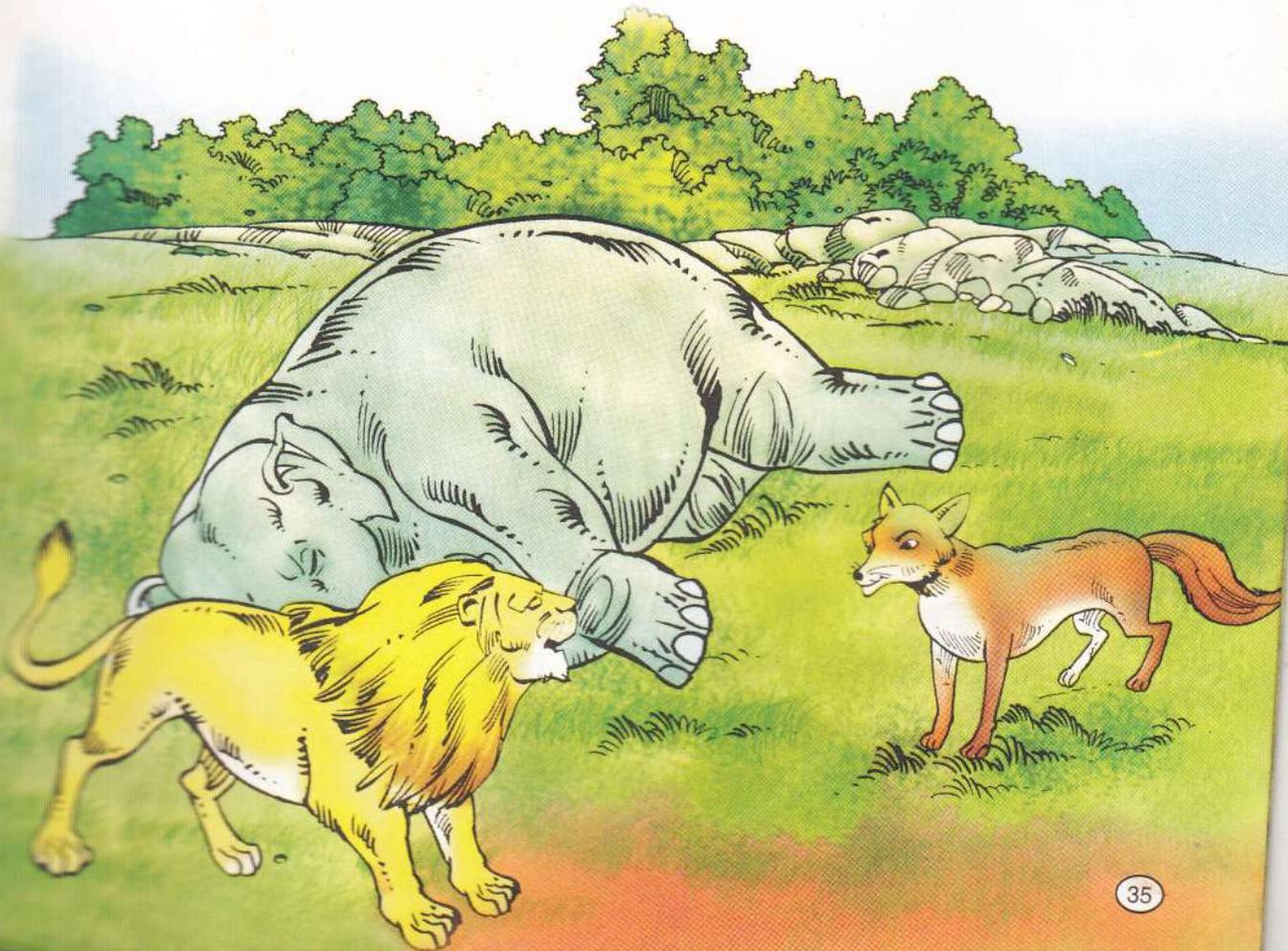


ONCE upon a time, there lived a jackal in a dense forest. His name was Mahachaturaka. He was very clever. One day, while he was wandering in search of food, he came across a dead elephant. He wanted to eat its flesh, but his teeth were not strong enough to cut through the tough hide of the elephant. So, he waited patiently for someone to come around.

In the meantime, a lion came there. The jackal said to him, "Your Majesty, please have a taste of the elephant. I have been guarding it for you only."

"I eat only fresh animals, not the stale ones," said the lion and went on his way.

The jackal became happy. He had still the full dead body of the elephant intact in his possession.

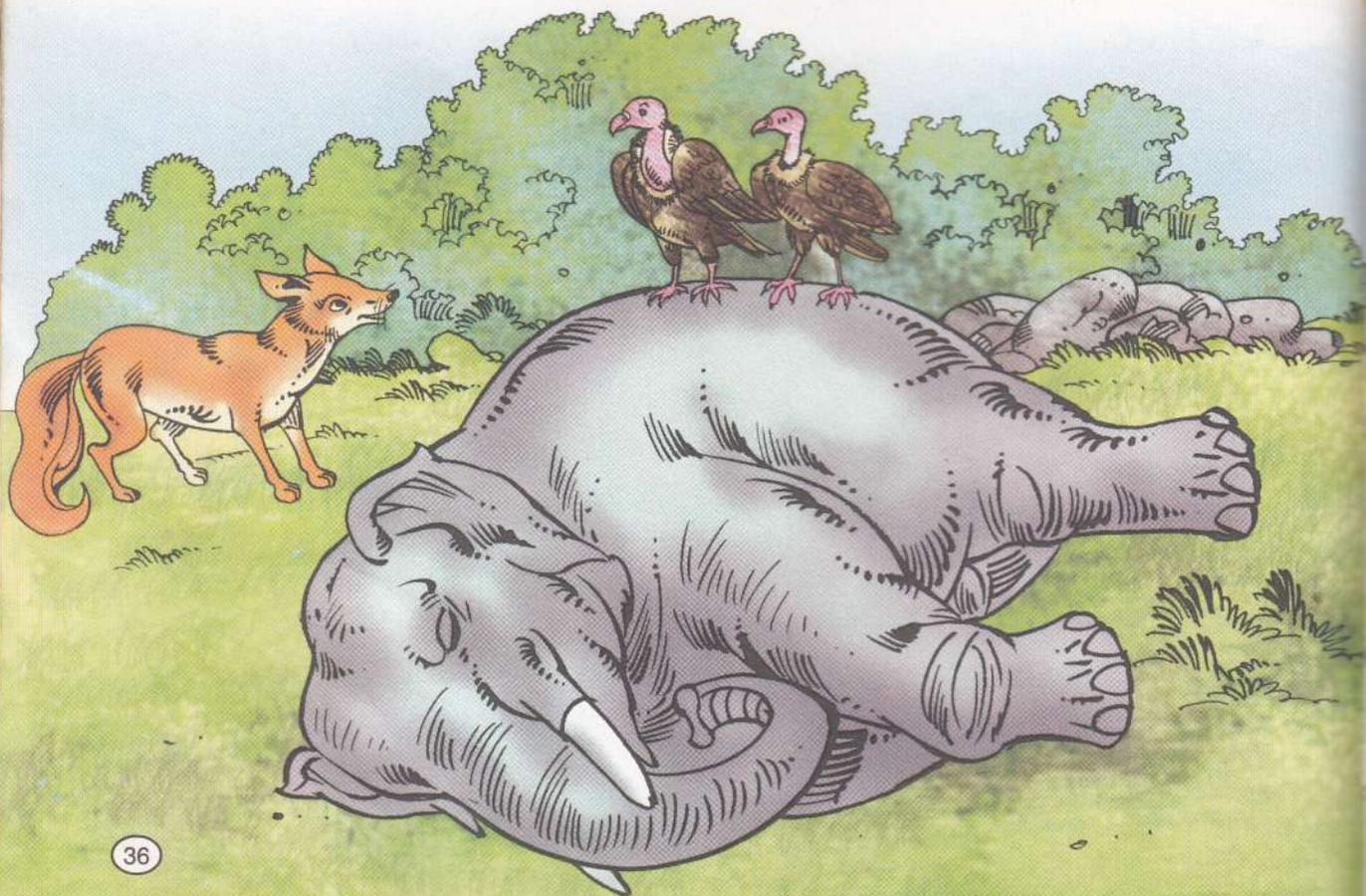


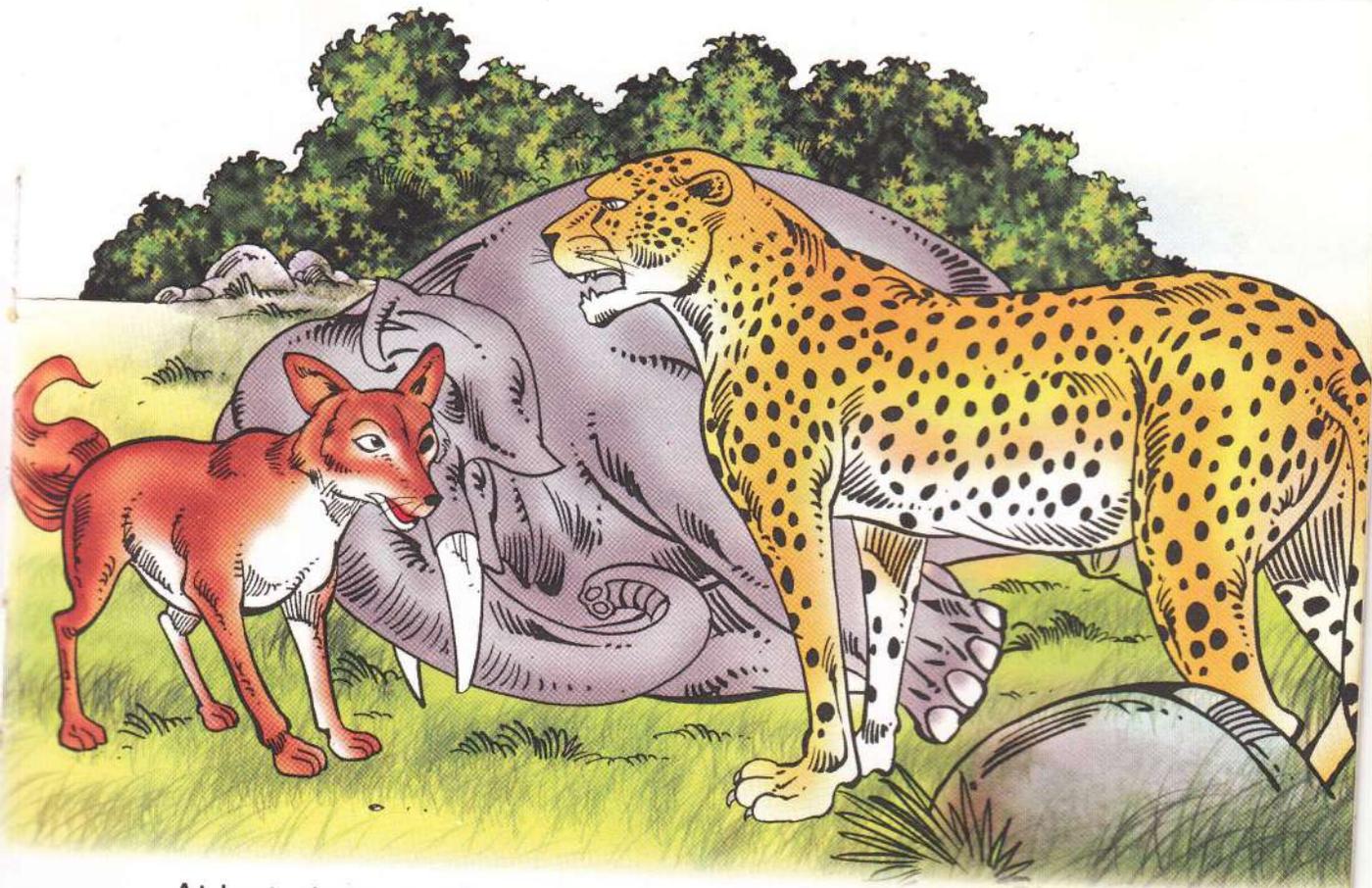
Next, there came a tiger. The jackal became afraid. He thought to himself that the tiger might eat up the whole elephant. So, he said to the tiger, "A hunter has killed this elephant with a poisoned arrow. Whosoever eats its flesh would die due to food poisoning. I'm guarding it to save the life of others."

The tiger got frightened and soon disappeared into the dense forest.

As soon as the tiger went away there came two vultures. They sat over the dead body of the elephant. The clever jackal did not want them to eat the elephant. So he said to them, "I've hunted this elephant and have sold its skin to two hunters. If they ever see you eating the elephant, they'll kill both of you."

The vultures became frightened and immediately flew away. But the jackal still looked for someone who would cut the tough hide of the elephant to make it easy for him to eat its flesh.





At last, there came a leopard. The jackal knew that the leopard had a sharp teeth. He could cut through the elephant's hide. He said to him, "Friend, you seem to be hungry. Why not take a bite on the elephant. It has been killed by a lion. He has gone home to bring his family. When I see him arriving, I'll make a warning sign and then you can run away."

The leopard agreed. He immediately sat down to cut open the elephant's hide. As soon as the jackal saw that leopard had cut through the elephant's hide and was about to eat its flesh, he shouted, "There comes the lion."

The leopard sprang up on its feet and quickly disappeared into the forest.

The jackal happily enjoyed the flesh of the elephant for many days together.

Moral—*Cleverness has its own advantages.*

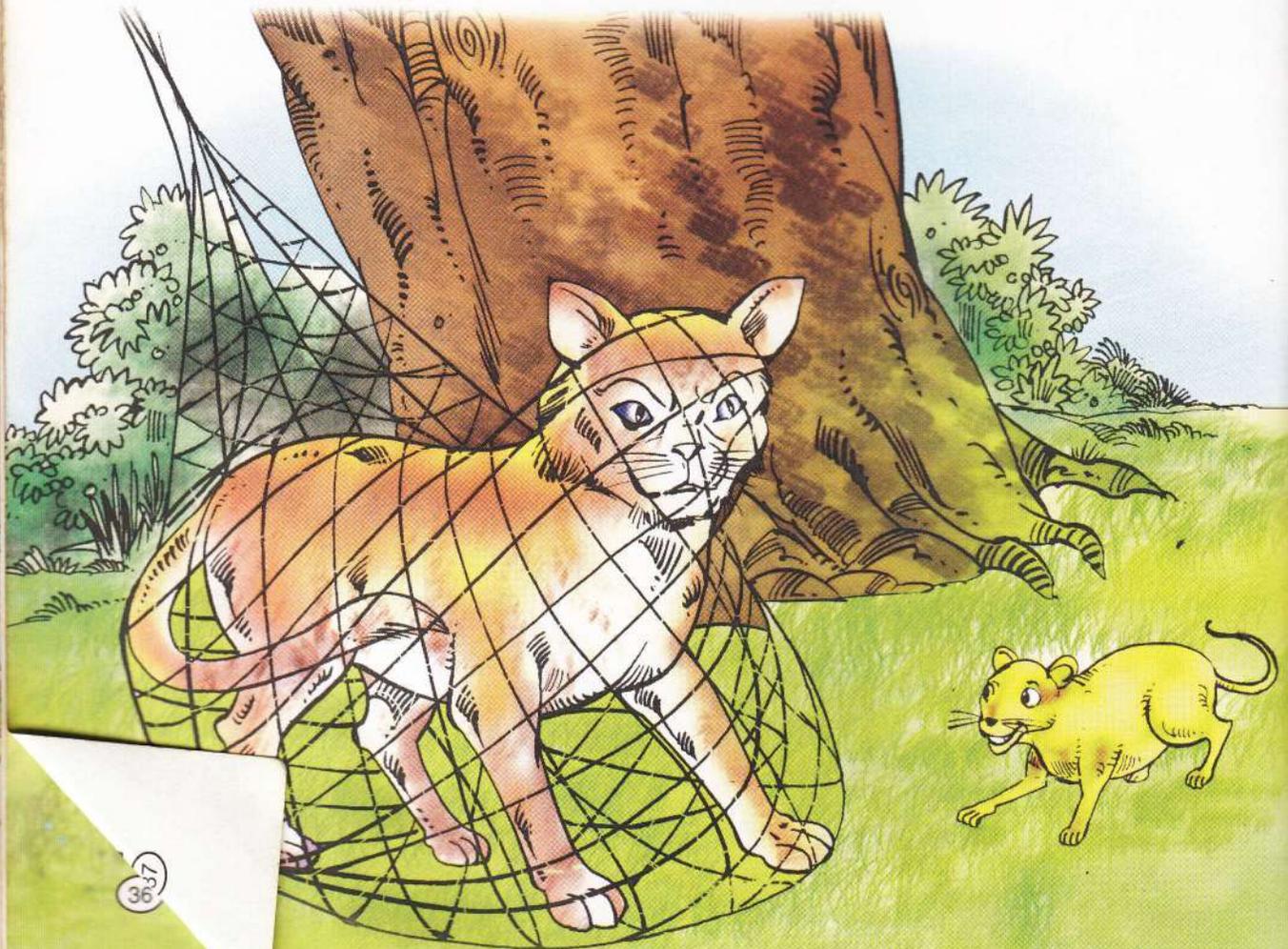


THE CAT, THE RAT AND THE HUNTER



ONCE upon a time, there lived an owl on a big banyan tree. A mouse, a cat and a mongoose also shared his neighbourhood. They all feared each other. The owl was scared of the cat. The mouse would be frightened to see the owl, the cat or the mongoose. The owl and the cat were the enemies of the mongoose. But despite all these problems, all of them continued living at the same place.

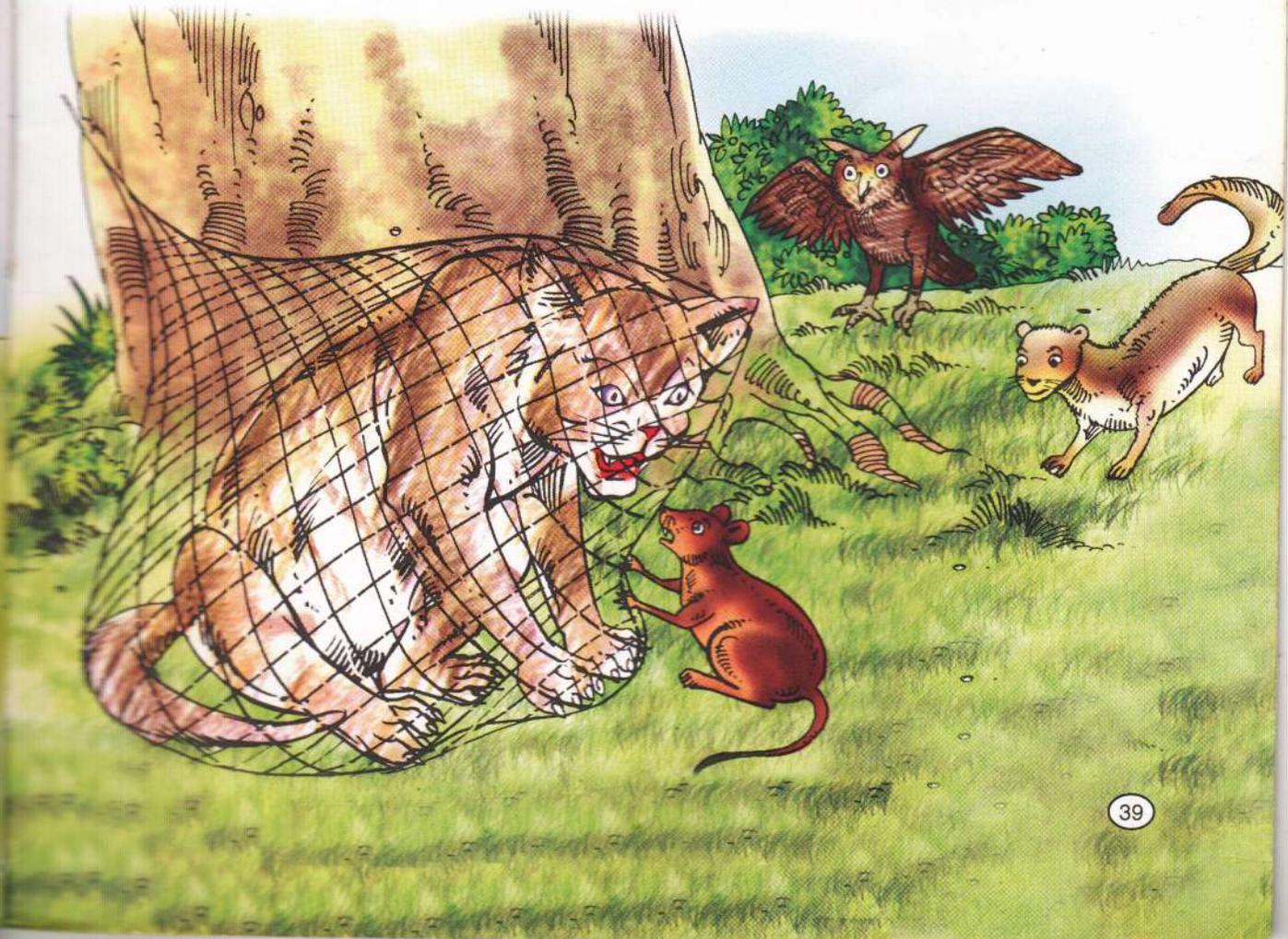
Once a hunter came under the banyan tree. He spread his snare there and waited at a distance for some animal to be trapped in. After sometime, the cat came there looking for the mouse. She stepped on the snare and got trapped. Seeing the cat in the net the mouse became happy and came out of his hole and began taking rounds of the trap in great joy.

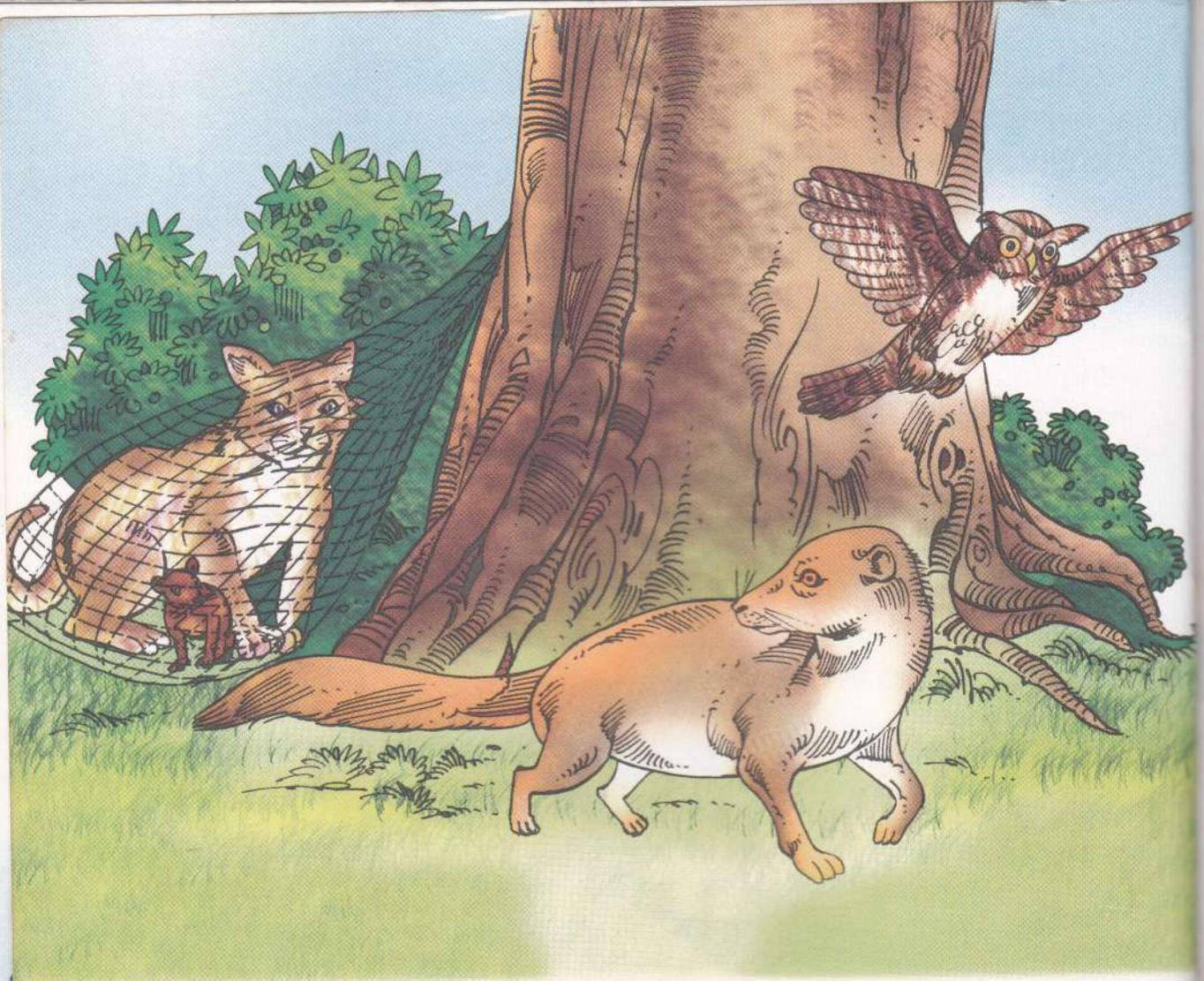


Seeing the rat dancing, the owl and the mongoose began to look at him with greedy eyes. The rat got frightened. 'The owl and the mongoose would surely kill me and eat me', thought the rat to himself. Also there were no chances for him to re-enter his hole, as both of his enemies were very near him.

The rat became nervous. He had to take a quick decision anyhow, lest he should be killed by the owl or the mongoose. At this dangerous stage, there was but one hope of survival, that he entered the trap and sat beside the cat and then request her to spare his life. If the cat did so, he would as a matter of his gratitude, nibble at the net at a hundred places to make it loose enough to set the cat free.

The rat took the chance of his life and ran into the trap beside the cat. The cat was about to pounce upon him, when he said to her, "Please don't kill me. If you spare my life, I'll bite off the trap at a number of places to set you free."





The cat agreed to the proposal of the rat and let him remain inside the net. Seeing the rat and the mouse together, the owl and the mongoose went away.

Then the mouse nibbled at the net at a hundred places. The cat came out of the trap and ran away into the dense forest. So did the mouse. He too ran into his hole.

The next day, when the cat wanted to meet the mouse, the mouse refused saying that enemies will be enemies; everything else like friendship between them will just be a temporary affair.

Moral—*Friendship with an enemy is a temporary affair.*

