



THE SLOW TORTOISE AND THE FAST RABBIT



NED—03

The Slow Tortoise and the Fast Rabbit

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Dedicated to my three wonderful boys!

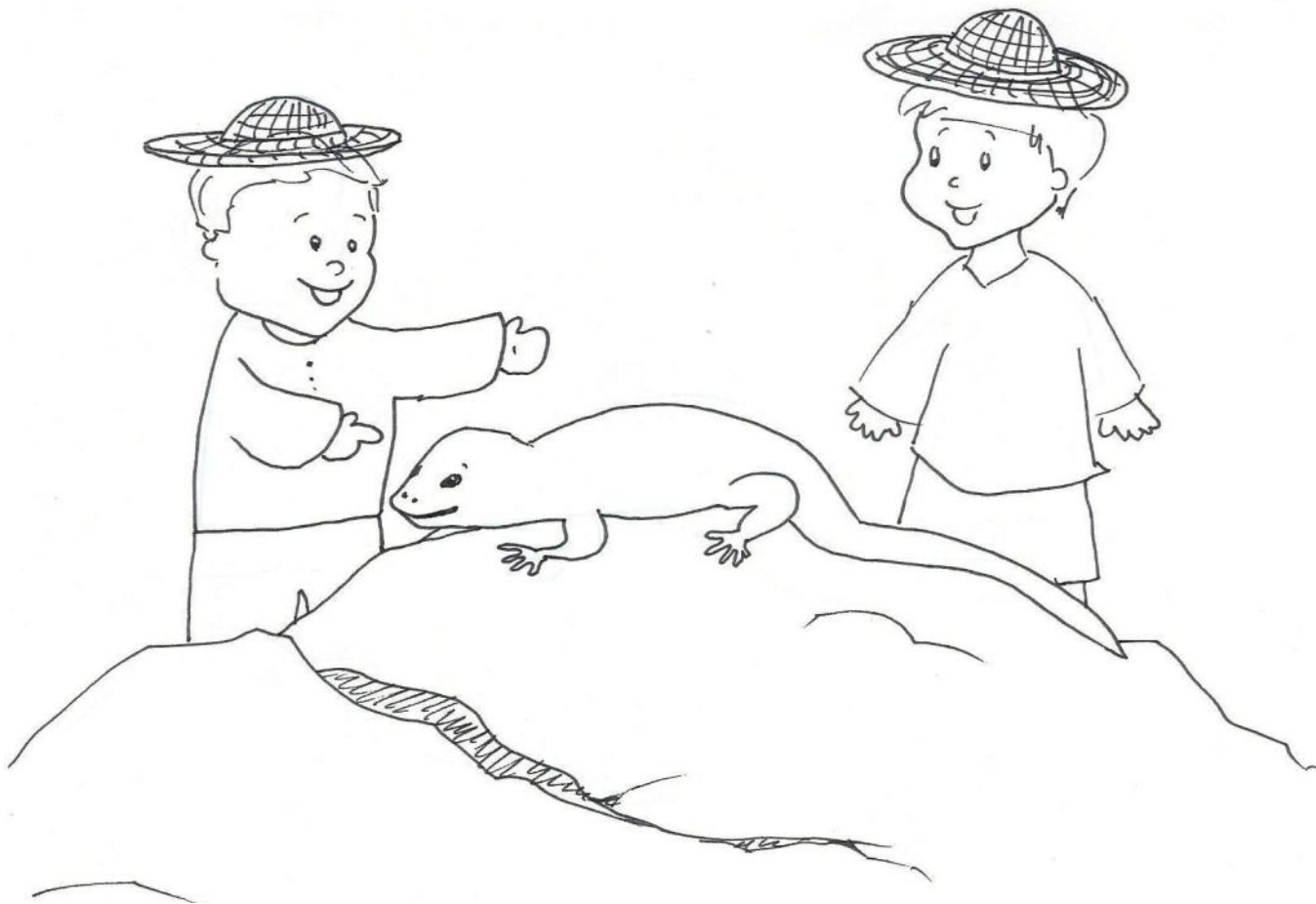
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“Oh, cool! Look at that!” Tony said, pointing out a large lizard to Ned. They were out hiking with their daddy on a mountain trail.

It was summer, and the lizards liked to sun themselves on the rocks and get warm. Their thick skin didn't get sunburned, so they could sit in the sun for a long time.

“Wow! What an interesting lizard!” Ned said. “He's grey with a bit of brown too. And pretty big. He must be quite old, maybe like a grandfather lizard.”

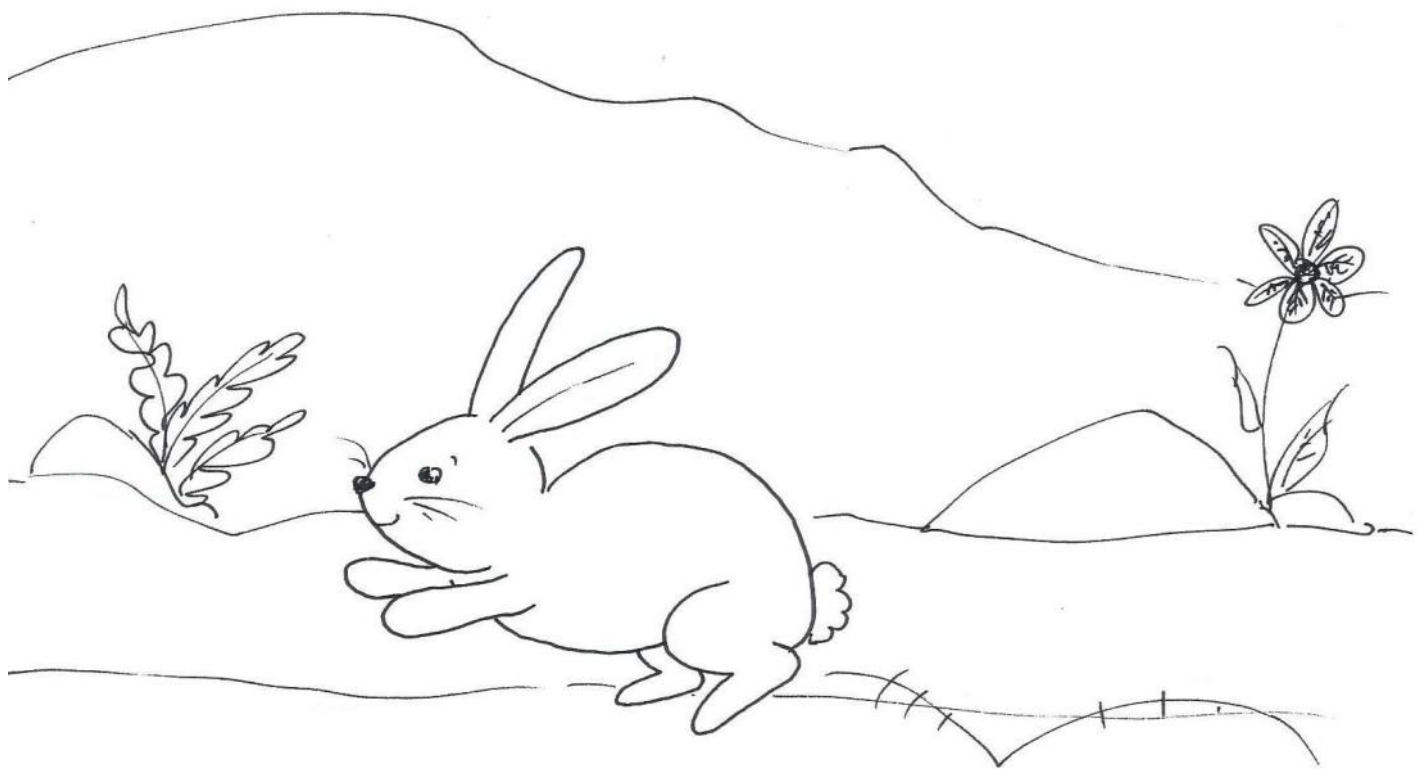


“I wonder how many there are on this mountain trail?” Tony wondered.

“Daddy can you take a picture of the lizard, please?” Tony asked daddy.

Then he and Ned walked a bit closer, and Daddy came with the camera to take a picture. But before he could take it, the quick lizard slipped into a crack between the huge rocks and hid.

Just then, however, a rabbit hopped across the path.

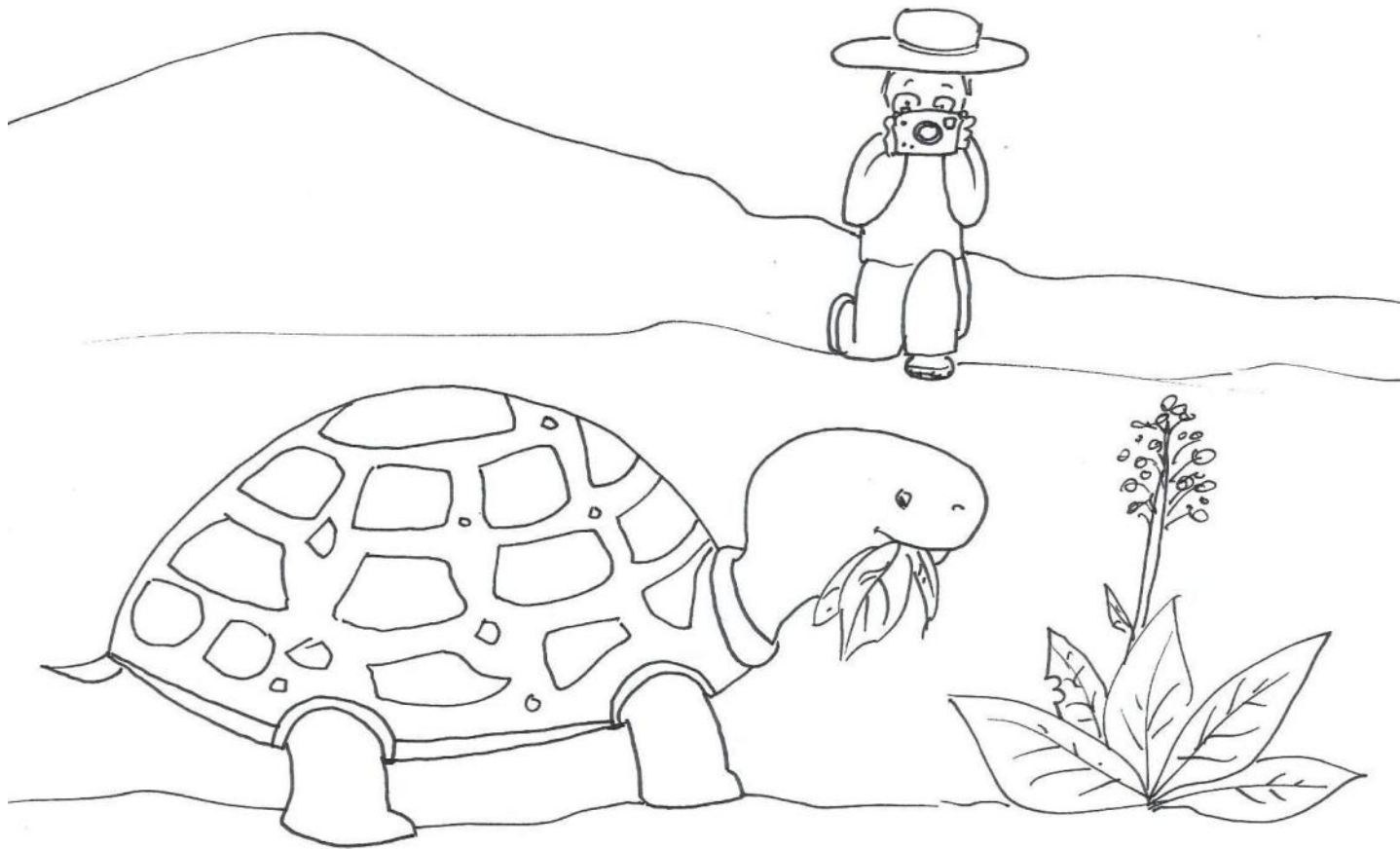


“Did you see that?” Ned asked.

“What was it?” Tony wondered. He hadn’t been looking that direction.

“It was a brown rabbit, and very fast, too!” said Ned. “Do you think we’ll also see a tortoise?” he wondered.

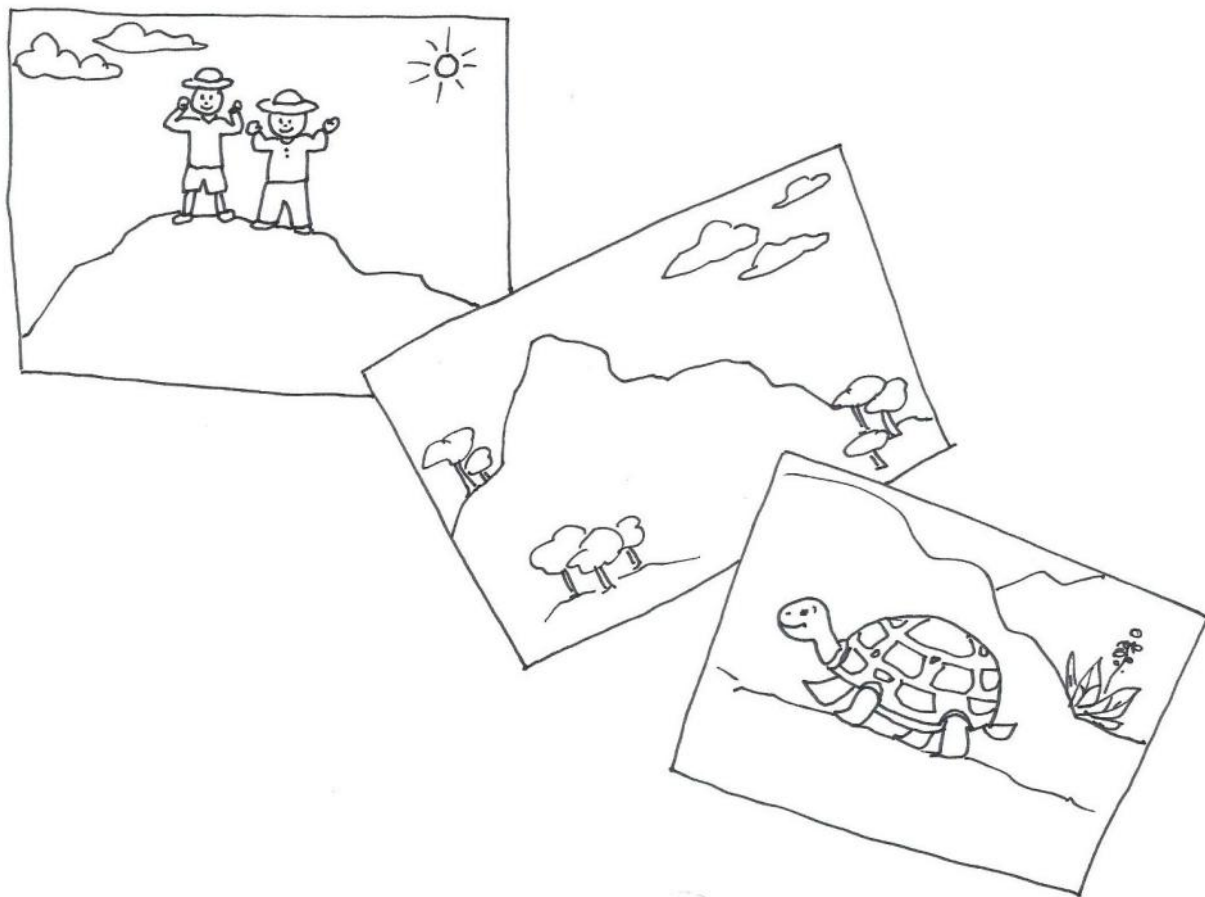
“Maybe they are having a race,” joked Tony, and they laughed. They kept their eyes open for any signs of a tortoise.



It was a while later, as they were walking back down the trail again when Daddy said,

“Oh, there he is! I wonder who won the race?”
Dad pointed over to a bush, where a tortoise was munching on some leaves, but then began to run away as the boys were getting closer.

But since tortoises don't usually run that fast, they were able to take a picture of him.

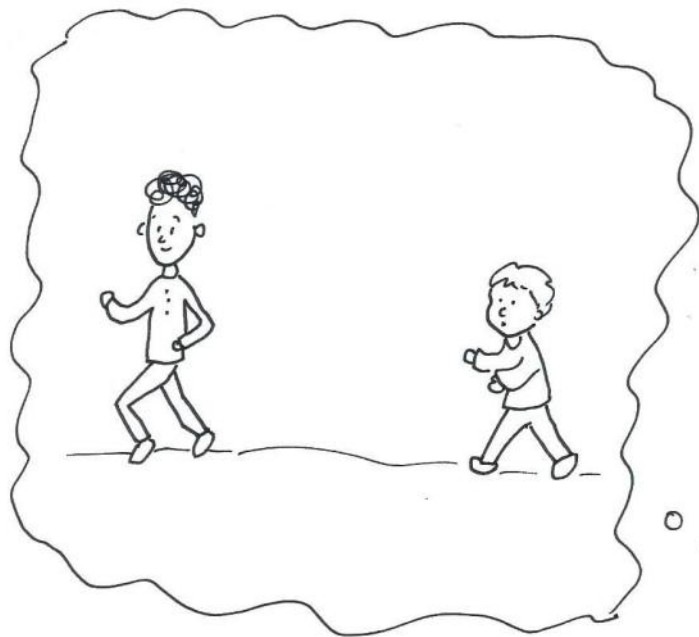


When they got home and washed up for bed, they had some time to look at the pictures on their digital camera from their fun outing on the mountain trail.

There were pictures of trees, mountains, the hiking boys, and of their picnic sitting on some rocks. Then there were funny pictures they took of standing on a huge rock, looking very tall and strong.

But the only animal they were able to get a picture of that day had been the tortoise.

The others had just been too fast.

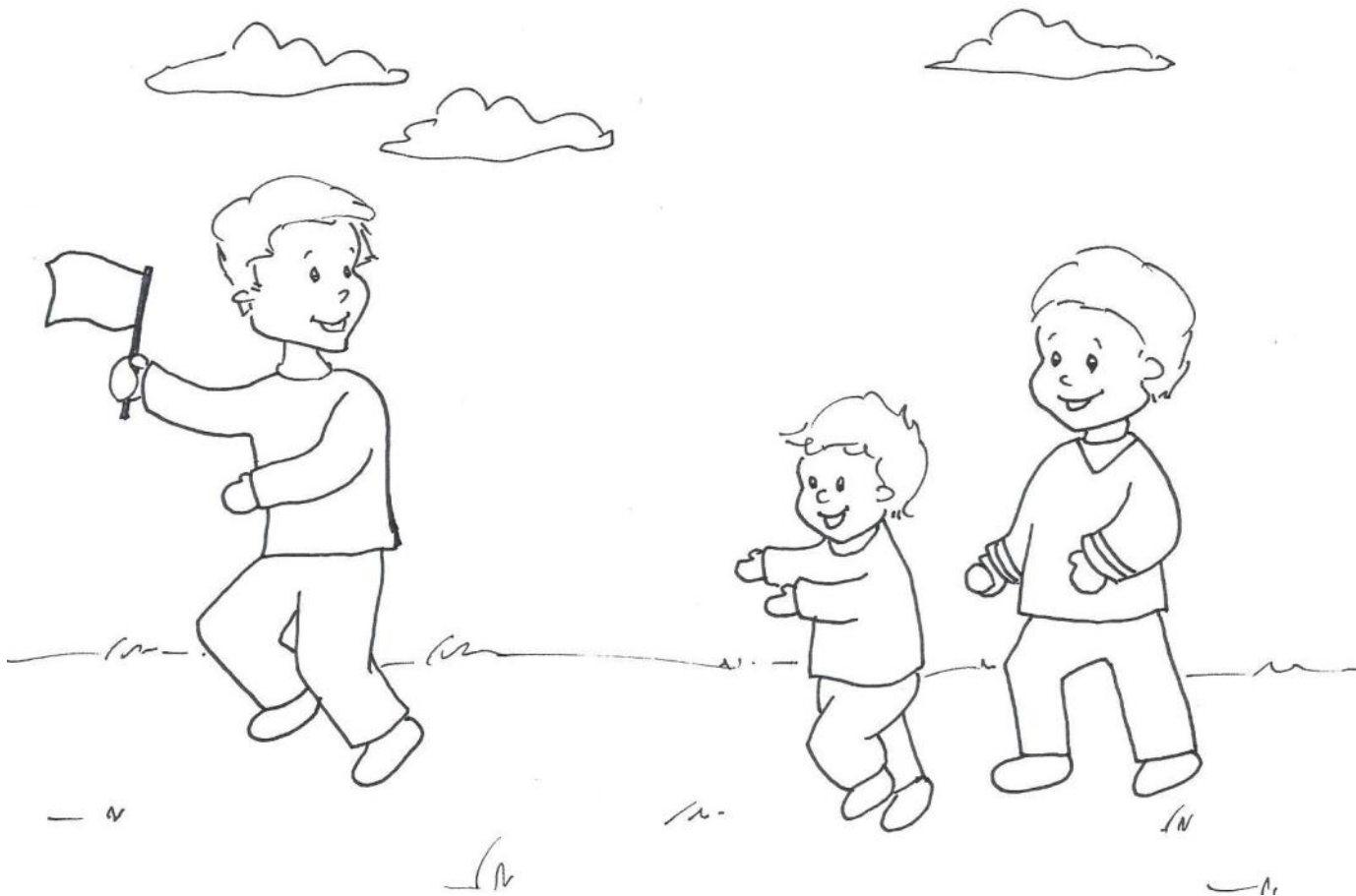


Ned thought as he went to bed, and said,

“Daddy, I was thinking about how it was nice that the tortoise was slower than the other animals. If he could have been as fast as he wanted to go, we wouldn’t have any pictures of any of the animals we saw today.”

“That’s true,” said his daddy.

Ned continued, “Sometimes I can’t do things so well, or just the way I’d like to. I can’t run as fast as some other older children, and it’s hard to build things with blocks so that they don’t ever fall, or with Lego so it doesn’t break.”



“Hmm, so you are learning to be happy with the things you are able to do instead?” Daddy asked.

Ned continued his thoughts: “Sometimes maybe I feel I’m like the tortoise who can’t do things just the same as some of the other animals. He can’t go so fast, even when he really tries. I also can’t do things as well or as fast as I’d like to be able to. But, maybe there is something good about it.”

Ned began to think. “Oh, I know! When I can’t run the fastest, then my younger brothers want to play games with me, because they can keep up better with me when we play.”



“Yes, that’s right. And don’t worry,” said Daddy, “You’ll soon run very fast.”

“Also, maybe when I can’t build things as strongly with the Lego as you can, Daddy, then you can come and help me, and then we have fun playing together,” Ned said.

“And you are learning, Ned. The other day you made a very nice helicopter-port, as well as an airport tower. And it’s fun playing with you, and even helping you too,” Daddy encouraged him.



“One day you’ll be a daddy, and you’ll be able to help your children even better, because you’ll know what it feels like to try to make nice things, and need some help. You’ll be a better daddy because you’ll understand what it’s like, and then you’ll try to make it fun for your children also,” Daddy explained.

Ned smiled. He was glad he had a fun daddy who liked to play with him and take him on hikes, and go camping sometimes, too.

Just then, Tony who was having story and talk-time with Mother, came in the room and climbed into his bed as well.



Daddy smiled at Tony and then gave them each a good-night hug, and prayed with them for the night.

Daddy looked over at Teddy who was already fast asleep. He had gone instead to the playground with Mother, and had a great time there.

Then Daddy said in a whisper to his older boys,

“Did you have fun today?”

“Yes,” they nodded, and were soon asleep. It had been a good hike, and now they were glad to be in their cosy beds to rest.

