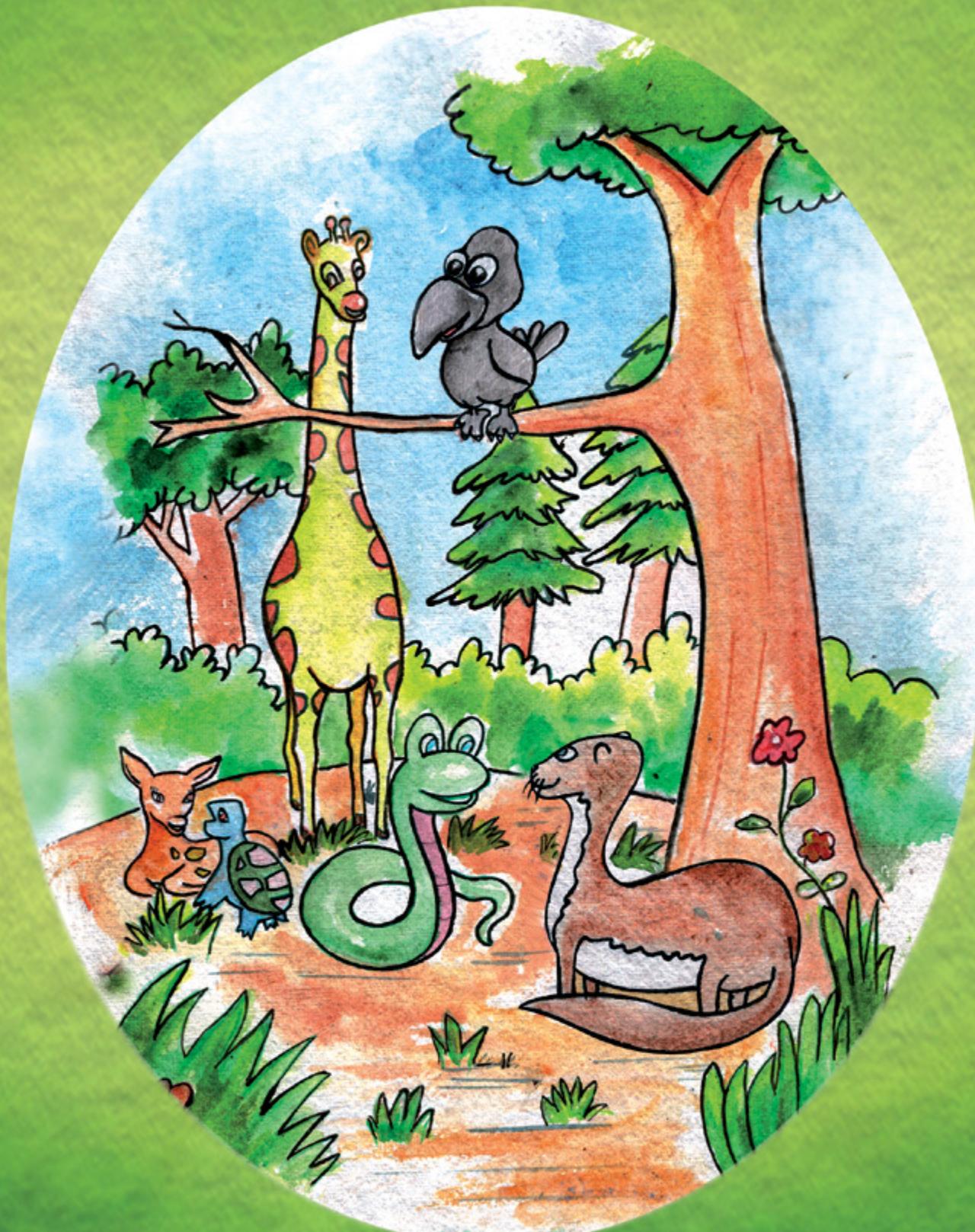


The Way of the Woods



By T. Albert

Illustrated by: maaillustrations.com

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The Way of the Woods

A memorable tale about friendship, with delightful characters like Paw-Paw the bear, Dillard the dog, Willard the weasel. A story that will be read and reread by little readers at bedtime.



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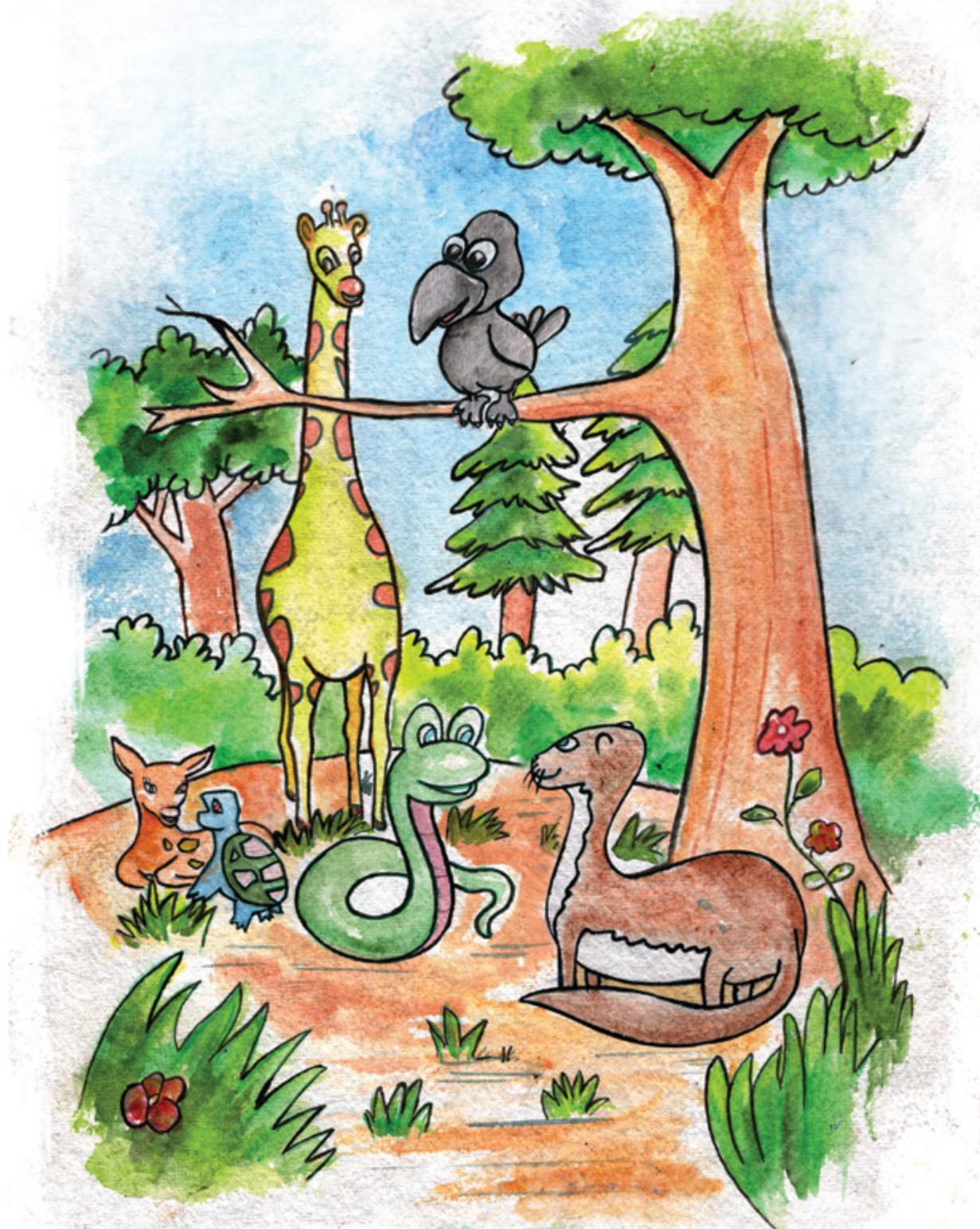


Many years ago, deep in the North Woods,
lived a great bear named Paw-Paw.



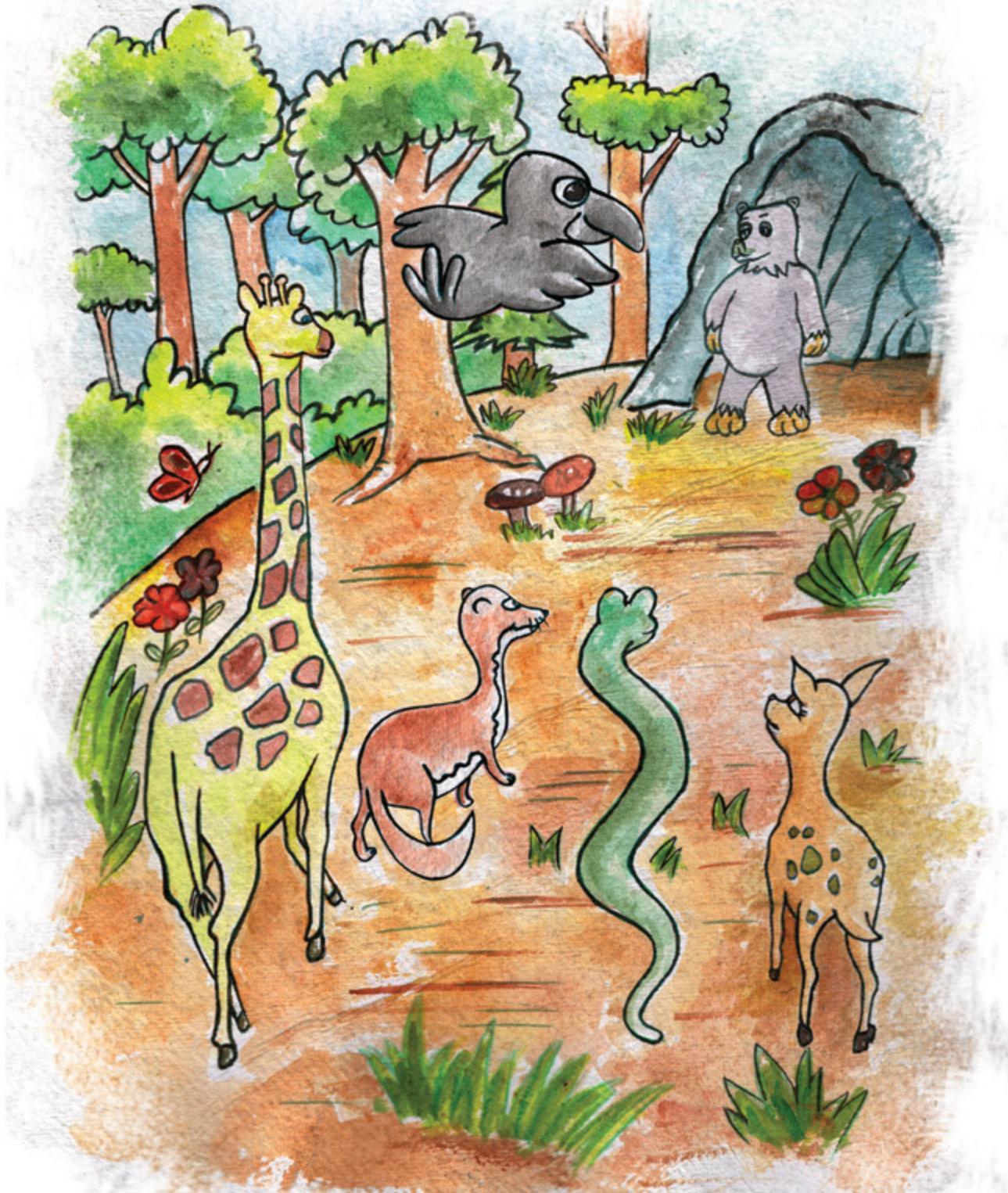
He was the strongest and bravest bear
alive and respected by all the forest creatures.

One day, all the animals gathered together
to discuss some changes in the woods.



A new animal that walked on two legs and was
covered in strange fur was making
its home nearby. They needed a leader
and could think of no one better than Paw-Paw.

They all marched to Paw-Paws' cave
and asked if he would be the king of the forest.



Paw-Paw was thrilled and even though
he didn't know what being a king was all about,
he gladly accepted.

Paw-Paw then said
"I will need some helpers and I want
Crowly Crow and Willard Weasel
to be my advisors."



Well, Crowly and Willard were honored,
and both agreed to work with King Paw-Paw.

One day, Slither, the snake visited King Paw-Paw and told him of a strange animal he saw close by. Paw-Paw asked, "Where did you see this animal?"



Slither replied.
"It lives with the strange, two-legged creature
at the edge of our woods."

Paw-Paw thought for a moment and said.
"Willard and Crowley - go to the edge of the woods
and see what this animal is."



Within moments,
his two helpers were on their way.

Some time later, Willard and Crowly returned and excitedly told King Paw-Paw that there was indeed a strange animal at the edge of the woods.



It was small, maybe the size of Bobby Beaver, and it had a strange, barking voice instead of a yelp or a howl. All three sat for a long time thinking about the strange newcomer that lived so close to their woods.

Finally, King Paw-Paw said,
"We must go and meet this animal."



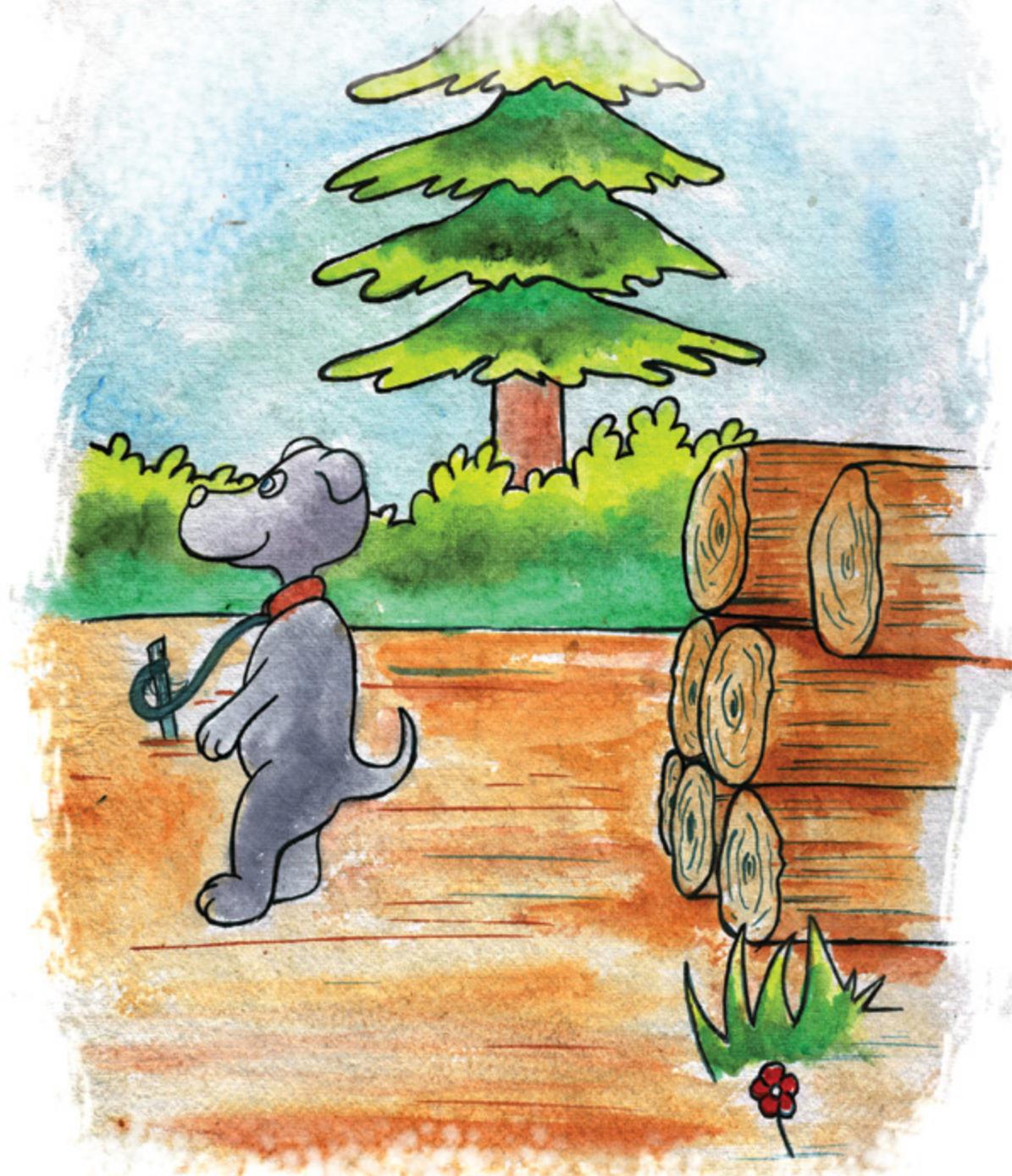
All three got up and left King Paw-Paws' cave.

In a short while, they were at the edge of the woods
watching the strange animal.
King Paw-Paw said,



"Willard, go to the animal and ask what he is
and why there is a rope tied around his neck."
Without hesitation, Willard scampered across
the field and hid behind some
piled wood close to the strange animal.

"Psst!" said Willard.
The strange animal looked around.
"Psst! I am over here behind the woodpile,"
Willard said in a louder voice.



The strange animal stretched the rope as far
as it would go but not being able to see
who was speaking said,
"Please come out so that I can see you.
My master isn't around."

Willard came out slowly from behind the woodpile and cautiously approached the strange animal. "What type of an animal are you?" asked Willard. "I am a dog. And my name is Dillard." He replied.



"And what are you?" he then asked. "Me ... I am Willard, the Weasel representing King Paw-Paw, ruler of the forest."

"Why are you bound to that stake in the ground?" asked Willard. "My master keeps me tied so I cannot go into the woods," replied Dillard.



"No animal should be tied," Willard shouted. "I shall bite through the rope to set you free. You can then come into the woods and live with me."

In one mighty bite, Willard set Dillard free.

Then the two of them ran across the field and into the woods.

After Willard introduced Dillard to King Paw-Paw and Crowley, they all left. When they got to the center of the woods, King Paw-Paw introduced



Dillard to all the other forest creatures. Dillard especially liked meeting Wayne Wolf and Carl Coyote who seemed to be his cousins.

As the summer passed, King Paw-Paw fattened himself on berries and salmon,



Dillard and Willard became good friends.

One day, Willard sniffed the air.
Oh, what a marvelous smell was being
carried on the breeze.



"Chicken eggs ... Fresh chicken eggs,"
Willard thought to himself.
"I must find them and have a snack." In seconds,
he was off running through the woods and
following his nose to his favorite treat.

His nose lead him to the strange creature's house, where he had first met Dillard. He looked around ... All was clear.



He followed the wonderful smell of eggs into a strange cave. He looked around and couldn't believe his eyes. There were chicken eggs, hundreds of chicken eggs all around him.

As he reached for an egg,
a chicken saw him and sounded the alarm.



Soon all the chickens were clucking,
squawking, and making a fuss.

Then he heard something behind him. As he turned,
he saw the strange creature that lived there.



The one that Dillard called master.
There was no escape and Willard was terrified.

The strange creature looked at Willard and said,
"You varmint! You are the weasel that set Dillard free.

"Why I ought to ..." But before he could finish
Willard yelled out. "Wait! Don't do anything to me."

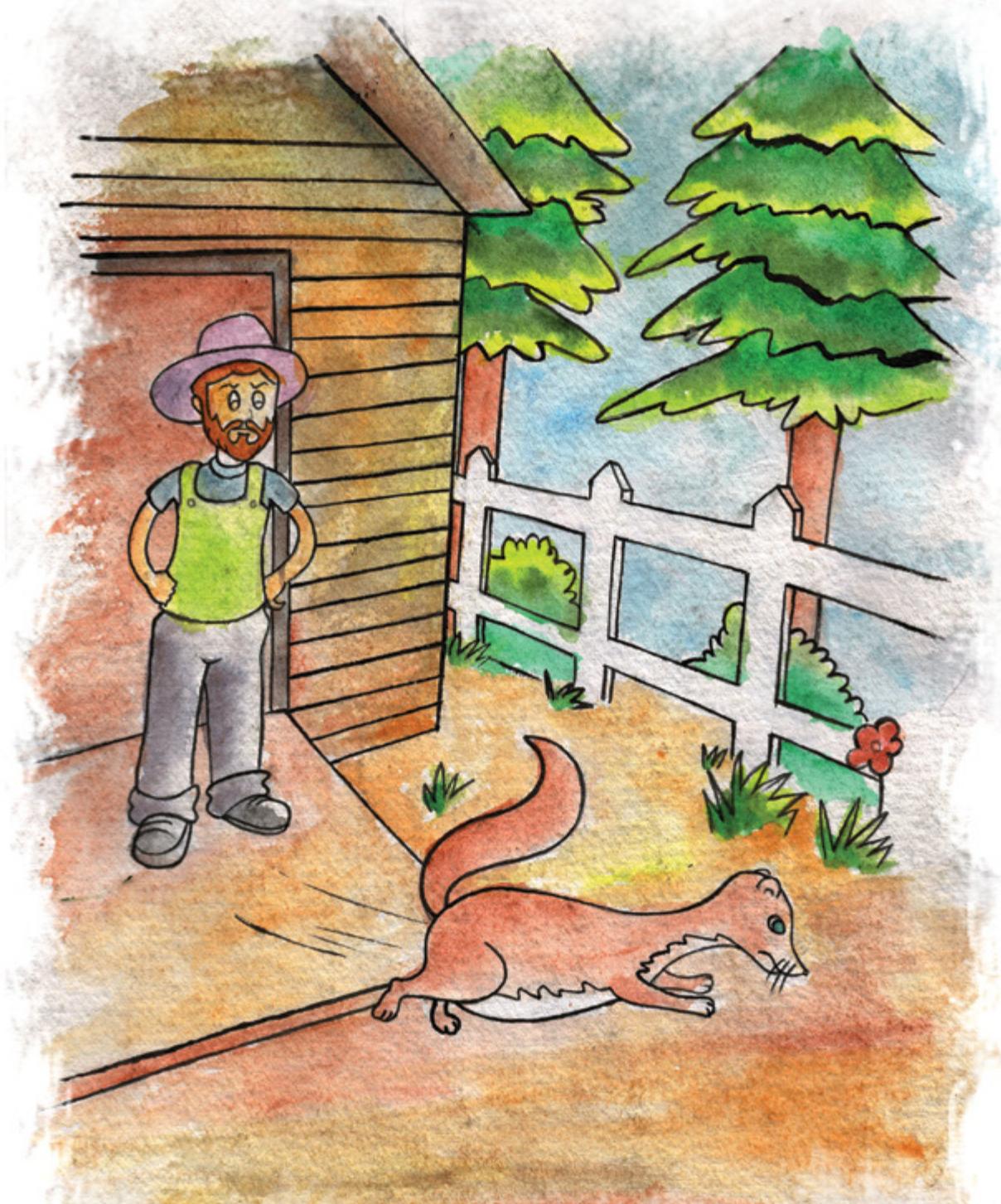


"I can return Dillard to you.
Just let me pass and Dillard will be back
in a very short time."

The strange creature stepped aside and let Willard free.



When Willard returned to the woods,
he ran to his friend. "Dillard!
Quick follow me. I need your help."

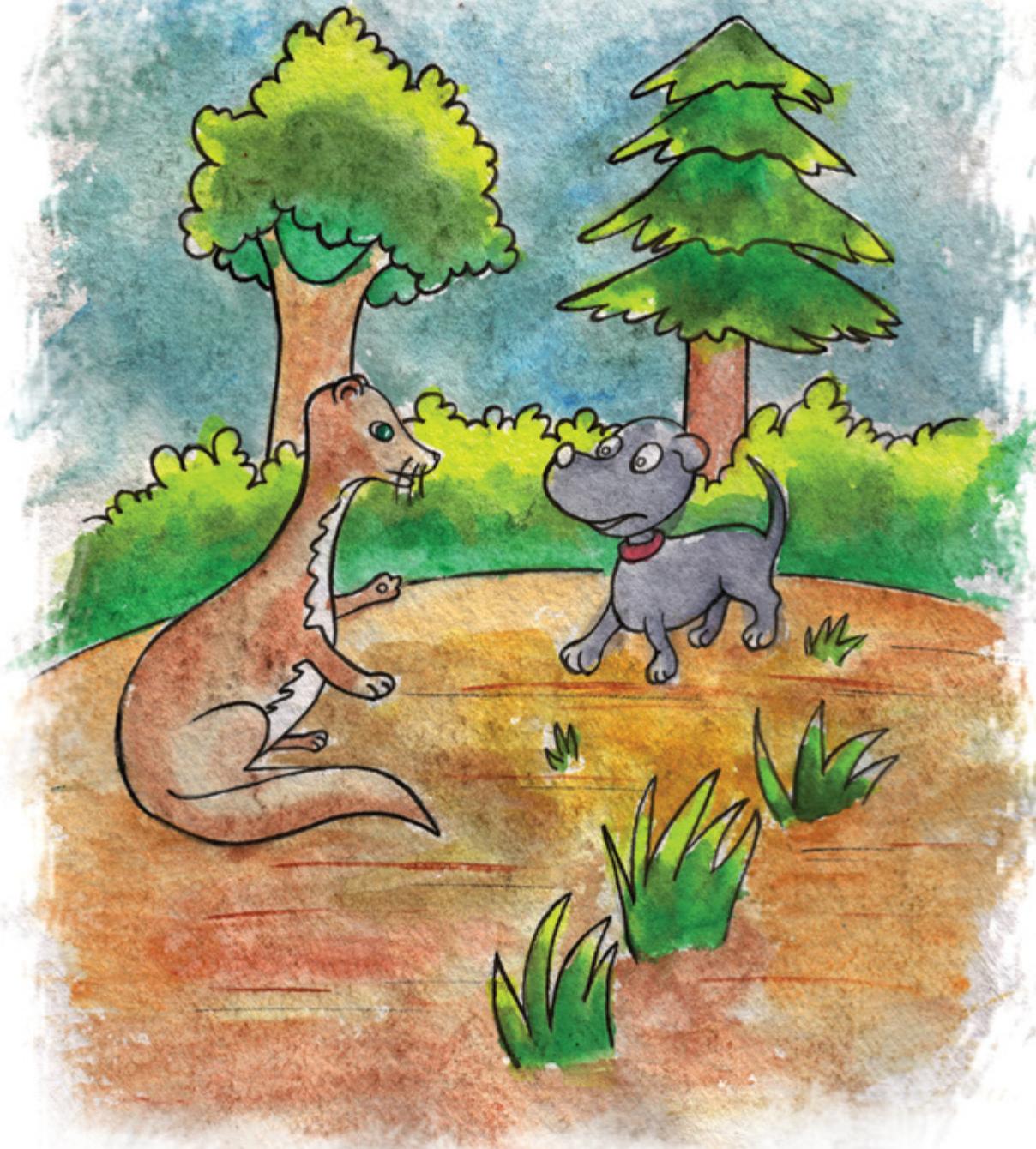


Well, Dillard didn't hesitate to help his friend
and off they ran- with Willard in the lead.

As they crossed the field, Dillard stopped.

"What's wrong?" asked Willard.

"My master lives there and I am afraid to go any further." Dillard replied.



"Don't worry," said Willard. "Your master is not there." Again, Dillard followed Willard right into the cave with all the chickens.

In a flash, the master had a rope
around Dillard's neck.



He then looked at the weasel,
tossed him an egg, and said
"Thank you for returning my dog."

Willard left for the woods without saying a word.



Dillard remained with the farmer, making
sure no weasel or any other varmint ever
bothered his livestock.

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