The Adventures of Terlilik

Tales from the Old Forest

FRIENDS

A large raindropfell on little bear Terlilik's nose. It interrupted his afternoon nap under the raspberry bush in the Old Forest. He growled, annoyed at the thought that this was one of his friends' jokes. The hedgehog Eji and the dog Sharik were always playing tricks on him and this happed exactly while he was sleeping so sweetly! Especially when it was such a wonderful afternoon, after the sun had promised a lovely day in the morning.

It was so generous and kind, warming gently all the inhabitants of the Old Forest. Unfortunately, this time it was the playful rain.

The little bear Terlilik loved to sleep under this exact raspberry bush, because it was beautiful, piled with raspberries. It offered long day-dreams and a short nap.The little bear was dreaming a lot – usually to become a champion in bear dancing. No one knew about his love of dancing, except for his closest friends.

He woke up because it started to rain harder. He looked at the cloud and told to himself that unless he ran for cover immediately, he would become a very wet little bear.

He hurried home with heavy steps where Mother Bear was baking forest cookies. He had only just reached the entrance, all tired and panting, when the rain stopped all of a sudden as if it was making fun of him. Only three raindrops remained hanging on a branch above.

- What a joke! – Terlilik cried out in a temper.

As soon a he said it, the three raindrops fell on his nose.

Plop-plop-plop.

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- Hello, Terlilik!- Eji's voice reached him from a distance. He was in a hurry, as always, carrying a big blue envelope with bright postage stamps on it.
- What is it? – grunted the bear, still cross with the rain.
- Look at this! A letter!
- Where did you get this? – asked Terlilik with excitement.
- Hippo, the postman, delivered it.
- In-vi-ta-tion for par-tici-pation at the Fo-re-stolypmic games.
- Invitation! To all inhabitants of the Old Forest!- exclaimed Eji and looked at his friend. - Are you going to participate?
- Me? How? I am not good at sports – replied the bear.

I am the best at eating.

- Ah! There is no such competition!-Eji burst into laughter and his thousands of spikes moved lightly as he giggled. - Otherwise there will be many champions! Eji gave him a knowing wink. But you are the best at bear dancing.
- Yes, this is true but you have never seen me. How do you know, I wonder?
- You told me once. I do not know for sure.
- A-ha! I get it! But you know…right now- began Terlilik and obviously he was thinking about something very hard. " I could take part, but on the other hand…" and he started thinking about the big " if".

Fortunately Mother Bear brought a whole plate of delicious cookies. It was enormous and there were so many of them.

Oh, how delicious they smelled! That brought immediate consolation to Terlilik. Eji sat down and decided that he should not waste any time.

He decided that Terlilik would have to reach his own conclusions and nibbled at his cookie. He was used to his old friend's moments of indecision.

- I think that Sharik and I could help you prepare for the forest Olympic games. That's what friends are for! You will train and we will give you good advice! We're very good at that.
- I can do it then!-replied Terlilik and a tiny hope lit him inside as a firefly. He felt much better.

The blue tit perched on Terlilik's window woke him up. The morning was smiling cheerfully to all inhabitants of the Old Forest. The bird was singing tirelessly since early dawn. In the end Terlilik rolled off his bed, had a glass of milk and a whole bowl of raspberries for breakfast.

After he yawned several times, the little bear wondered if he could return to the warm bed but then he remembered and sighed deeply:

Time for training!

His friends Sharik and Eji were already waiting for him. A little later the snail Ogi appeared. He was out of breath because he was in a hurry. He was always in a hurry and the training had already started. Terlilik was jigging about briskly, dancing with skillful steps, somersaulting and waving his paws enjoying every minute of the dance. He kept on inventing new and more interesting moves.

The Badger, that ill-tempered old fellow, appeared out of the blue. He made fun of Terlilik telling his friends what a funny surprise it was to see a large bear participating in the forest Olympic games!

The bear was embarrassed. He tried to make excuses. He mumbled quietly with a lisp:

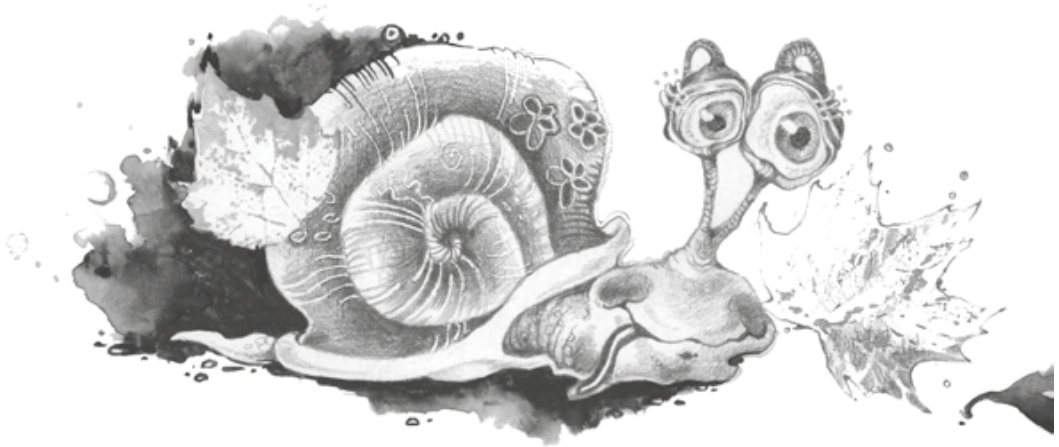
- Yes. I …on the Olympic game…why?
- Look at you. Don't you see your massive body?- the Badger mocked.
- I just wanted to dance a little bit – muttered Terlilik.

Terlilik went quickly back in his den, jumped in his bed and buried his muzzle in the pillow. The bed squeaked in disapproval. His friends worried that this incident would have a bad effect on Terlilik's training.

We need new motivation; otherwise there is no point trying – Sharik concluded.

What is "motifation"?- asked Ogi surprised.

- A big wish! As big as our bear!
- I can show him the "hero" album of my snail friends who were winners in different sports - Ogi proposed.



The snail began to tell the story of an old fellow-snail who crossed the mountain north of the Old Forest in only 5 months, overcoming the bad mountain weather and beasts. When he started the expedition, it was an early spring, because he saw the first birds flying back from the south. When he was descending on the other side of the mountain, the leaves were shining with beautiful autumn colors and the birds had gone. But we were speaking about the wish!

Just then something timely happened. As he was sitting and thinking, Terlilik saw a small paper ball fly by and land on the floor. The bear kneeled clumsily, took the paper ball and unfolded it. There was another ball inside it and another one in that one, and another one in the third one. Finally there was a little note inside on which it was written: "Good luck, Terlilik! Me, the duck Pete and pals" written in messy handwriting.

This put a quick end to his suffering. His friends! He had forgotten about their support! The little bear got up, smoothed over his fur and decided to continue with the training. This was a remarkable moment…

So Terlilik began to train again, helped along by his friends' advice. Eji was playing the tambourine, Sharik was playing the castanets, and the snail was testing super-effects for the dances.

- What are these "super-effects"? - asked Eji curiously.

- Something with light and sound – explained the snail briefly. But for the moment the super-effects have no light and sounds. Only simple effects.

Two weeks passed quickly and the long-expected day arrived. The ladybirds played enormous trumpets to create festival mood. The pigeons flew up carrying colorful bands, to create a bright rainbow over the forest glade. Giraffes, zebras, cheetahs, beavers, Emu birds and all kinds of small and big animals lined up. The Old Forest Olympic games began. This was the most exciting event in the woods!

A tense moment lowered over the glade. It looked like a sullen cloud but it dispersed quickly as the blue tits began the singing competition. The rock band "Forest Rockers" blew up the field with the most famous rock songs but their music thrilled only half of the inhabitants of the Old Forest. The rest were waiting impatiently for the end of the concert but this is what usually happens at concerts, doesn't it?

An explosion of confetti marked the beginning of the competition. The speedy antelopes were at the front. They were incredible racers. Behind them the team of fast swimmers fell in line – otters and fishes. After the swimmers impatiently-waiting were:

The high jump giraffes – team 1

The cheetah marathon runners – team 2

Emus, the hurdle racers – team 3

Somewhere among them were the dancing teams. Terlilik was there too!

"Go, Terlilik, Go!", shouted enthusiastically his classmates. And then something strange happened. As he was standing there and worrying, Terlilik felt that his friends' and classmates' support gave him confidence and strength. The worries began to disappear.

A great moment! – the little bear exclaimed with gratitude.

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Start! The judge, an old and reputable rhinoceros, gave the signal and the air was pierces by trumpets. The Olympic games began with the competition of the fast antelopes. The judge took his place, especially strengthened with two thick tree trunks so that he could not fall down from there. His small eyes looked sternly through his glasses at all the participants and warned them loudly:

- Fair Play! The Rhino was a polyglot. And he loved to express himself in a more special way.
- Did he say "Fairy May"? What does it mean? – Terlilik scratched his head. What a mess! I've got so confused now.

Meanwhile "puffs of smoke" crossed the line. These were the antelopes. The antelope Donatela won the competition as expected. While the crowd shouted her name, the spotted cheetahs, called the "Invincible", took their places on the starting line.

- These are the marathon runners! – whispered the snail. - No one is better than them! I am their biggest fan!

The cheetahs began the race and were the fastest. Pete, the duck, looked into their eyes and he saw flames! Their nostrils were enlarged by tension.

They were running lap after lap until the fastest runner the cheetah Rori reached the final first, outrunning the rest by a great distance. He was the rising star in the marathon team.

After them were the Emu birds. With a few huge steps of their long, long legs they leaped across the hurdles. One of the birds tripped and pushed down the hurdles, so it became much easier for the rest. Anyway who needs hurdles on his way? The birds stretched their long necks, and their small heads crossed the final minutes before their huge bodies reached the finishing line.

The sailing-on-barrels race followed and it was more than amusing. Two turtles were lying in the sun on top of a big old barrel and slowly rowing with their wrinkled feet. It wasn't obvious if they were racing or dozing quietly but it wasn't obvious that they were rushing to get to the final! It meant that they most certainly were dozing in the sun.

The audience roared with laughter because it decided that these two competitors had confused racing with an outing on the river. Finally the turtles awoke and waved their umbrellas, outraged that their afternoon snooze was interrupted. Behind the turtles a small elephant was floating with the tide. He was probably weighing too much on the barrel, which had sunk under his weight. He used his trunk as a paddle and rowed to the final because the next barrel was already catching up with him.

It was mounted by a small bison. He was very ambitious but came second. There was no third place, because the turtles did not reach the final as they continued arguing with the audience.

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The judge announced the beginning of folk-dancing" Bright World". "Bright" because various animals were participating. Terlilik stood among the exited dancers.

- Oh, oh, well now! - he was moaning quietly. Am I going to manage all the complicated dance steps which I invented with Eji, Sharik and Ogi? I am not made of elastic ...
- I have practiced for two weeks, so I must have remembered something!-comforted himself Terlilik. He tapped from time to time with one foot or the other.
- Calm down, you are so good that all are going to see this! And the super-effects will help you! – his friends were telling him.
- If they don't see how good you are, they must have poor eyesight. - someone said wisely.

First in dancing appeared Mr. Peacock, old and very famous artist who had performed on many glades. He waved majestically his tail, bowed gracefully to the audience and all the animals applauded him. The peacock opened a huge fan of colorful feathers and swept the stage with proud peacock steps. At the end, Mrs.

Peacock turned up out of nowhere with a huge broom and quickly chased him from the stage. This was the end of the "proud" number!

Two pigs in folk costumes came on the scene after Mr. Peacock. They were from the South-West end of the forest. They had green trousers with pockets full with sweets, brought just in case. They had pink glasses, fixed on their snouts, which gave them a pink outlook on things, of course. The pigs began their funny dancing, spinning their tails, looking through their rose-colored glasses and gobbling sweets from their checked pockets. They thrilled the audience with their spectacular costumes, very practically crammed with important things, and with their charm!

After the pigs bowed and dusted the stage with candies and wrappers fallen on the stage from their pockets, Hari, the donkey, appeared unexpectedly. Who is Hari? He was a naughty donkey jumping, kicking and braying loudly! After many "donkey" tricks, the audience was wondering if this was really a donkey or a mule; and what a mulish creature this was! Only the donkey's big family was joyful and amused by his tricks and brayed out of pleasure. Monkey tricks of all kinds!

Finally it was Terlilik's turn. As the bear came on the stage and the audience cheered. He bowed and began his incredible bear dance. After the bear's first steps all could see that behind the clumsy and hairy figure there was a splendid dancer. Terlilik sweeped the stage with such lightness and grace that the audi-

ence became entranced. The bear was a miraculous dancer indeed. The animals could not even see if his feet touched the ground. His dance captured the hearts of all. As he finished, the audience burst into loud applause.

He was called back on the stage four times.

- More dancing! - the audience shouted. What grace is hidden in that clumsy, large figure! – everybody gasped.

This was a little bear with a big heart. The music was felt in every movement he made. Only he knew how many times he had practiced every stepwith love and patience. He danced again and

again, although he was very tired,because his friends were next to him.

The audience was delighted and clapped tirelessly.

- Well done, little bear! - yelled the Judge Rhino, who was jumping on his judge's place. Despite the reinforcement, the stand collapsed. It could not withstand a jumping Rhino! The honorable judge fell down, smashing the whole stage to pieces.

After that the dancing was possible only in the air. The ladybirds flew in all directions and the sky was covered with red wings and black dots. Everyone was joyful except the Badger who was sitting amongst the audience and was muttering. After the ladybirds, the blue tits flew in the sky, followed by the robins and the sparrows.

Terlilik won the dancing competition. Every animal came to congratulate him. He replied modestly, that this triumph belongs to all, especially to his friends who had helped him train from dawn to dusk for two weeks!

The magpie, a famous journalist for the OldForest newspaper "Gossiping news", pushed the others aside and as she reached Terlilik she asked him curiously:

- How do you feel now, when you have a medal in the dancing competition?
- Oh,…I feel wonderful! - said the bear. – I could not believe it! But even more incredible are my friends! We all love winning, but who loves to train others? - he said, as if to himself.

The magpie did not understand the last sentence, blinked, adjusted her glasses on her beak and began to ask more precise questions. Because she was a journalist!

The Judge, who had managed to free himself from the debris of the broken stage, brushed off the dust, coughed for greater effect and announced the end of Old Forest Olympic Games and the beginning of the party.

There were three huge barrels of ice-cream – vanilla, strawberry and chocolate as well as a bucket of wild raspberries. Everyone was eating so much and no one could imagine a better ice-cream feast. Of course there was nothing left at the end. Everyone from the OldForest confirmed that it was unforgettably delicious!

THE KIND INVITATION

The weather was getting cooler unnoticeably. The leaves were dancing in the air. After the dance they fell down and covered the earth with a brightly colouredblanket. The walnuts from the big walnut-tree were disappearing surprisingly quickly, because the squirrels filled up their baskets and nests tirelessly.

One morning Terlilik woke up, opened one of his eyes and closed it afterwards. Then he opened the other one. What a surprise! During the night a fluffy, sparkling blanket had covered the wood which now was quietly sleeping. The little bear's den was colored in white as well.

When had the snow fallen down? I have not played yet all the autumn games. What about building birdhouses with the hedgehog Eji and dog Sharik and hanging them up for the winter? Last year I had the same plan – the bear told himself.

As he found out that he was late, just as every winter, he stretched out. This is what plans are for! He looked through the

den's window and thought that he wanted to do something nice for someone. But who? Three sparrows chirped outside and left funny tracks on the snow with their skinny legs. They talked without even listening to each other:

- How I want to eat several crumbs of biscuit, and even better of cake -chirpedthe first sparrow.
- There is nothing to eat, especially with this thick snow cover!
- I am only dreaming…
- Hungry sparrow dreams of crumbs!

They were talking and skipping back and forth. The third sparrow who was looking on the bright side of things proposed:

- If we start searching we will find something for sure.

They continued to jump up and down the snow and to argue.

Terlilik was trying to hear the quarrel. Suddenly he had a good idea for a good deed: I can invite them for lunch. I have a warm den, delicious food and friendship to offer. I can invite them with a nice invitation. He sat down and wrote it:

"Hello, dear sparrows! As you fly tuday, could you pflease turned out of the way and come for a lanch? Here, in my den."

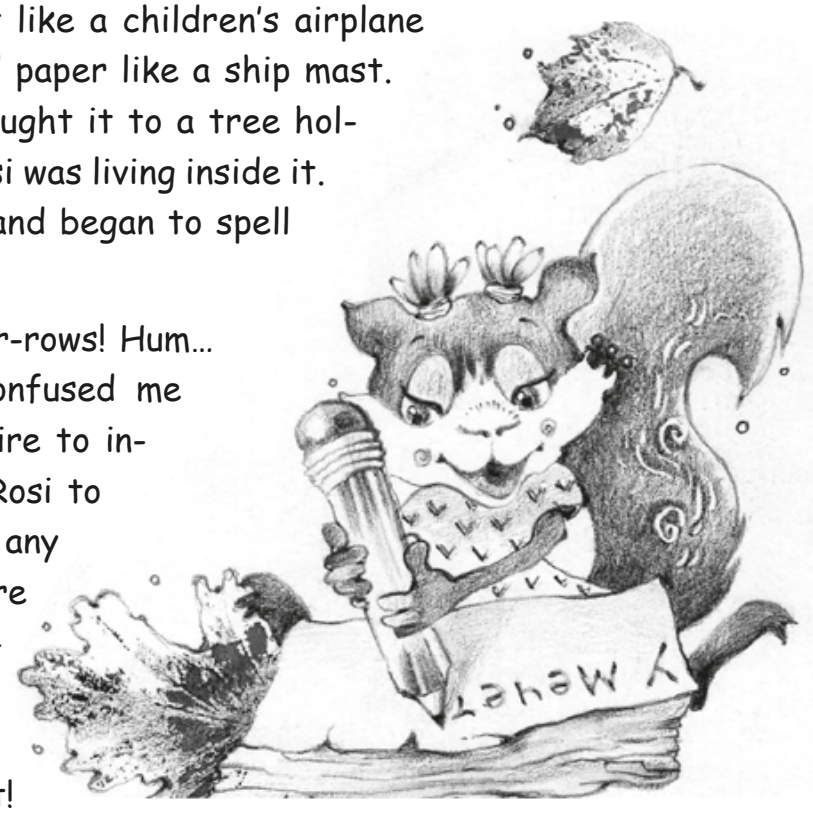
Yours M.T.

After that he folded it carefully and went to the front door. There was such a strong wind outside that his invitation and hat flew away!

The wind carried off his invitation and hat. The invitation flew freely in the forest. The sparrows saw that the den's door had opened and thought that someone would chase them away with a broom and flew away in various directions. Just like all sparrows, these were cowards.

- Hey, that is a really strong wind!- cried out Terlilik and scratched his head. Where shall I find the sparrows now?

The invitation was flying in the forest. The wind was playing with it. He threw it like a children's airplane and blew the folded paper like a ship mast. Finally the wind brought it to a tree hollow. The squirrel Rosi was living inside it. Rosi took the note and began to spell out the words:



- He-llo, dear spar-rows! Hum… Someone has confused me in his great desire to invite me! – said Rosi to herself without any doubt. And there are a few mistakes. That's why I have difficulties reading it!

She continued to stutter:

- "lanch" or "lunch"?!? I am a bit confused. But otherwise he is so kind. I will certainly invite not only the whole family but all cousins and friends as well.

Rosi sat, took out two boards and wrote a message to all her relatives and friends in the Old Forest: " At Terlilik's place! For delecious lunch. Yours Rosi. I will wait you"!

She hanged the first board on a forest field and the other one in front of her nest. In a while all her relatives and friends knew about the invitation and prepared feverishly.

The sparrows walked around because they were very hungry. From the hollow across a playful smoke was coming from the chimney. May be someone will bring some food to them?

Meanwhile so many friends were gathering in front of Rosi's nest, some of the invited and some not.

Terlilik was sitting glumly at home, dangling his legs and thinking what to do after the wind had grasped his invitation. Out of fear the sparrows scattered in all directions. The gloomy mood in the den did not pass. Lunch-time came.

Suddenly the cheerful doorbell rang: "Ding-dong-ding-dong"

Perhaps the sparrows had received somehow my invitation - thought Terlilik and ran joyfully to open the door singing :" Tin-ti-ri tin-ti-ri-ri"! He tried to open the den's door but he couldn't. He tried again and fell down in surprise! All the sparrows in the world were in front of his door and greeted him:

- Hello, Terlilik! We don't know each other but so kind of you to invite us! - they had brought with them goodies – walnuts, hazelnuts, seeds, pieces of biscuits.

When the bear stood up and beat the dust off his coat, he tried to explain:

- There must be a mistake. I did not invite you for lunch. I invited…but the wind that…blew…

No one heard him because the sparrows' joyful noise reached the forest upper end. Rosi stepped up holding the invitation and said quietly to Terlilik:

- A wonderful invitation, I almost did not notice the mistakes. That's what friends are for - to understand you, even when you make mistakes. I invited a few freezing sparrows – said Rosi proudly, happy that she thought of everything.

Terlilik was listening amazed: What a mess!?! – he said to himself.

It was very good that all were settled comfortably in the den which was going to explode from being so overcrowded. They occupied every free space impatiently. The volume of the merry chatter was occasionally increasing and decreasing.

- Did you hear the latest news? –asked a very big and well informed squirrel and she did not wait for the answer but began to gossip with her neighbor.
- Is that right? – her neighbor was marveling. – What happened?

All were listening till mother bear brought delicious surprises!

The squirrel's news was that a "small" hippo had appeared in the forest library! His name was Hippi. He had travelled from Africa with his parents but instead of taking the plane to Kongo, they had taken the flight to the Old Forest. They had come down wearing slippers and beach shorts and the cold winter wind had been biting their bodies! The hippo Hippi had feelt confused, frozen and amongst strangers! He had been used to his African friends and the warm wind of the equator.

Here he had been stepping into something white and cold that had been falling down from the sky on and off.

The squirrel explained that the plane from Kongo was in 2-3 weeks and till then… May be she could invite them to her nest and treat them with walnuts. Why not?

The three squirrels were listening to the story standing in front of the den's door. When Terlilik saw them he rejoiced from the bottom of his heart. Finally he was able to really invite the freezing sparrows for whom he wrote the invitation which made him unexpectedly the host of a winter feast.

When he thought again, he realised that it was so wonderful to organise a feast! It was also so exiting to find new friends, a "whole forest" with friends.

All this happened because he wrote the kind invitation to three sparrows stranded in the cold. May be next time when he decided to write such a kind invitation all the animals from his and neighboring forests will come.

What a merry winter holiday it will be!

RORI

Rori was a small cheetah, very fast, with numerous spots and soft paws. He loved running on the stadium where the big cheetahs, panthers and other animals were training. Usually when he got tired from running, he lied down on the grass and observed. There were so many interesting wood dwellers exercising on the stadium! First we need to explain that there was a signed truce among the all the animals that the sportsmen will not attack each other. Naturally, the zebras would not attack the panthers but the panthers could get hungry and then…a sandwich with zebra meat, please! Here the antelopes and wild goats were jogging peacefully on the running track, next to lions and cheetahs. You don't believe it?

Rori was training intensely. He was just at the "start" position when he almost fell down in surprise! This was a view he had not seen before – a snail and a large bear were drifting along the running track, obviously coming to train. They were walking slowly and clumsily. They looked as if they were at the wrong place.

The large bear was Terlilik and the snail was Ogi. Their attention was so absorbed in a vivid discussion that they did not notice what was going on around them.

- Terlilik, are we going to run?
- Hm, a bit! Not much!
- But you know I am a slow runner, because I can't hurry.- reminded the snail
- Well, you just need to start in front of me to show me the course and I will follow you!
- How can you follow me when I run so slowly! – Ogi was bewildered.
- H-m, this is a problem…yes - Terlilik confessed.
- I can jump in your pocket and show you the direction – suggested the snail.

The proposal was accepted because there wasn't a better one. The friends continued their way, absorbed by their conversation and did not notice at all the cheetah Rori in the grass.

- Terlilik, you know that I live to draw – the snail shared quietly because this was s big secret for him. I draw incredible things. Secretly.
- Strange hobby! What things?- asked the bear.
- Houses.

- Houses?- asked Rori as he realised that he didn't hear well.
- Elephants' houses – the snail specified.- And other things.

Suddenly it crossed his mind that he didn't know Rori and asked:

- How did you drop in our conversation and my secret?
- I didn't drop in. You included me in somehow. I am the cheetah Rori. I was having a rest. But how do you draw elephants' houses?
- It's easy. I leave the paper blank – the snail explained simply.
- And why?
- Because elephants live in the open, not inside a dwelling. They don't live in closed spaces – Ogi explained to Rori and Terlilik.- They are too big and couldn't fit inside a house.
- This is very clever!-Rori was surprised.- I could also leave the paper blank and to say that this is an elephant's house.
- Yes, you can - Ogi replied.
- It didn't dawn on me – Terlilik marveled.-Well done, Ogi!
- You can draw a whole village in this way – Rori thought to himself.

The snail let out a small but very important secret. There was a sign on the bottom right corner of the picture "Elephant's dwelling N.1", and another sign on picture 2 "Elephant's dwelling N.2". Thus it was easier for the elephants to distinguish their hoses and there would be no arguing about that.

The evening had fallen unnoticeably while they were talking about elephants and houses. The outlines of the stadium faded into the darkness and the animals were gone tired from the busy day. The Old Forest was hushed in an evening doze.

- We completely forgot about running! – Rori exclaimed.- I have to go now.

However, he continued to show them positions of the paws on the starting line, some special balance and co-ordination exercises. He was a good trainer but this was hard work for Terlilik and Ogi – two very non-athletic creatures.

And then in the evening silence they heard something like: "Chika-boom-boom-boom, chika-boom-boom!" The song was coming from an enormous gray something…with a drum. This was Hippi, the hippo from Africa who had landed by mistake in the Old Forest instead of Kongo. He was playing an old African song:- Chicka-boom-boom-boom, chicka-boom-boom-boom!

He remembered his native savanna. It was so far from here! He remembered his friends in the savanna. He recalled the flaming savanna sun and the warm wind in his motherland. The African song was a little sorrowful but lovely.

- You can make Hippi happy with your drawings.
- Shall I draw a house? Ogi warmed as he talked about this.
- No, these houses are specially for elephants, right?- Terlilik reminded him;
- Yes, this is exactly what is written on the bottom right corner.

- You better draw a tree from the Old Forest and write down "Savanna 2". Thus Hippi will know that this is a home place for him as well.

The snail Ogi managed to draw a tree like this : and to write down

They hanged the drawing on a neighboring bush when it was ready. May be Hippi was going to walk past the bush.

His new friends were going to wait for him there, exactly there.

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