

The vision

Save the Children works for:

a world which respects and values each child
a world which listens to children and learns
a world where all children have hope and opportunity

The mission

Save the Children fights for children's rights. We deliver immediate and lasting improvements to children's lives worldwide.

Acknowledgement:

This story was developed by a group of students from Baan Talae Nok School in Ranong Province with support from the Rabatbai Group under Save the Children Sweden's "Child-led Disaster Risk Reduction Programme" which was implemented in Thailand during 2006-2007.

This publication is dedicated to those who lost their lives and the survivors of the December 26, 2004 tsunami.

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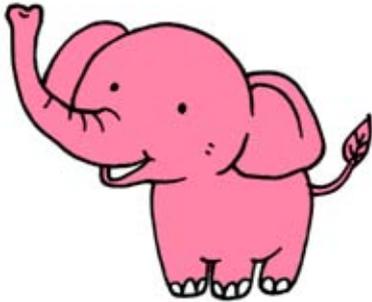
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Preface



Save the Children Sweden empowers children and young people to become actively involved in their community – especially in areas that affect them such as emergency preparedness and disaster risk reduction. Save the Children believes that if children are provided with sufficient support and opportunities to think, analyse, plan and take initiative, they will be able to contribute meaningfully to their communities and themselves. At the same time, adults are responsible for ensuring, encouraging and enabling children to take action to the fullest extent possible.

‘**The Alert Rabbit**’ tale – composed by a group of primary school students from Baan Talae Nok School in Ranong Province with support from Rabatbai Group, a partner of Save the Children Sweden in Thailand, is the result of working closely with children and teachers at Baan Talae Nok School under the Child-Led Disaster Risk Reduction Programme. This educational campaign provides knowledge to children about what they can do to prepare for a tsunami if it were to happen again.

Save the Children Sweden is proud to be part of this piece of work. We hope that this book will not only provide young readers with information on tsunami preparedness, but also concretely demonstrate that children are able to analyse disaster risks and proactively take action to help make a difference in their communities...and their own lives.

From Rabatbai



Rabatbai Group implemented the Child-led Disaster Risk Reduction pilot project in two schools in Ranong Province during August 2006 and December 2007. With support from Save the Children Sweden, the program was expanded to cover other schools during 2007.

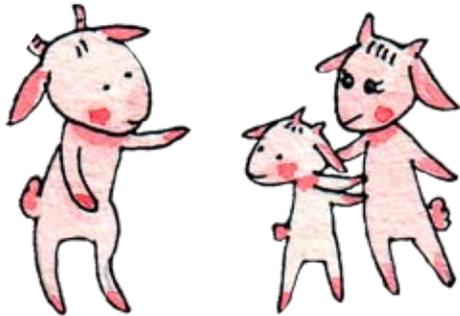
This project aimed to raise awareness among children and communities on disaster risk reduction. It focuses on strengthening the capacity of children and youth in tsunami affected areas to conduct risk assessment and educational campaigns in their communities.

Rabatbai Group truly wishes that young readers will enjoy reading the story. We also hope that the games in the latter part of the book will provide useful information as well as inspire readers to be more aware and participate in disaster preparedness activities.

We would like to thank the Baan Talae Nok school children, teachers, villagers and the invaluable support from Save the Children Sweden.

Rabatbai Group

From Baan Talay Nok School



The Alert Rabbit' coloring book is a result of a collaborative effort between Baan Talae Nok School and the Rabatbai Group in Ranong Province, under Save the Children's Child-led Disaster Risk Reduction Programme. Children in grades 4 through 6 created this tale as a tool to raise awareness among other primary school children about the importance of disaster preparedness activities.

The story of 'The Alert Rabbit' is inspired by, and based on the Baan Talae Nok school children and villagers' experiences during and after the tsunami on 26 December 2004 which claimed many lives and destroyed school and village property. The lessons in this book are invaluable as it teaches us the importance of being well prepared for disasters. Such knowledge is useful for our daily lives because if a disaster were to occur again, we would all be prepared and more likely to survive.

I truly hope that 'The Alert Rabbit' will benefit interested individuals and organizations wishing to use it as an educational tool.

Supawadee Nakwichian

Baan Talae Nok School Director

From friends to friends: Voices of Children



Adisak Padungchart (Anh)

After you read the tale of the Alert Rabbit, I would also like you to come visit our village. It is a very nice place with the sea, mountains and a tsunami warning system. You are always welcome!



Supaktra Khunpakdee (Som)

This book isn't just for fun but it also provides information about tsunami preparedness; how we should prepare, what we should prepare, and if a tsunami happens again; whether we should be the Alarmist Rabbit or the Alert Rabbit.



Sudarat Padungchart (Manah)

Talae Nok villagers have developed an evacuation route map and rehearsed evacuation drills. We helped each other produce evacuation route signboards and prepare survival bags. There is also a disaster warning system that makes all of us feel safer.



Chiraprapa Harnjit (Tiwa)

I think ‘The Alert Rabbit’ tale is so much fun and will also be very useful. I’ve gained a lot from participating in this Child-Led Disaster Risk Reduction Project. I learned how to develop an evacuation plan for tsunamis and how to map the hazardous zones and safe areas. We also conducted evacuation drills so that we know what to do if a tsunami does come again.



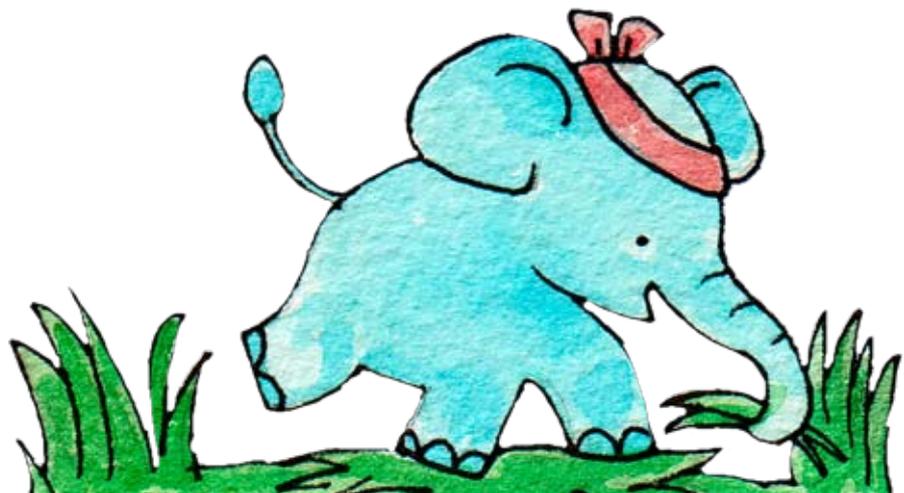
Kantana Madsaron (Ahchah)

We created this tale to pass on our lessons learned based on our experiences during the 2004 tsunami. We also performed ‘The Alert Rabbit’ puppet show for friends in other schools in tsunami-affected villages.



Wasana Wijitra (Nuta)

My village was severely hit by the tsunami. Many lives were lost and a lot of property was damaged. We didn’t want to face these losses again so my friends and I composed this tale with the hope that everyone will know how to stay safe if a tsunami were to occur again.





Jetsasa Wejasart (Paseet)

This tale is fun. There are games that you can play at the end of the book. It also gives the reader important information such as what to put in a survival bag (map, clothes, a torch, snacks, dried food, and important documents). We also developed an evacuation plan and led younger friends in evacuation drills. We took them to see all the hazardous and safe areas in the community too.

Chalermchai Suda
(Toto),

Malisa Khunpakdee
(Kwan)

and Usa Intan (Munoh)

*Also helped create this tale when they were in the 6th grade in Baan Talae Nok School.



Child-led Disaster Risk Reduction



Before ‘The Alert Rabbit’ was developed, the Rabatbai Group worked together with school children from Baan Talae Nok to facilitate learning sessions about disaster risk reduction concepts and activities – a new issue to everyone. Baan Talae Nok School fully supported the program because the teachers believe that such knowledge is directly relevant to all the children’s lives. The process and outcomes showed that children, even those in their early teenage years, are able to learn and understand issues that many adults would consider difficult! Moreover, they actively participated in disaster risk reduction activities. The activities were so enjoyable that they encouraged both children and adults to be more aware of disaster preparedness activities!

Disaster Risk Reduction Learning Camp



- Children learned about risk analysis and assessment.



- Children played fun games that stimulated their learning process and motivated them to learn more about risks during a disaster.



- Camp members included school children from Baan Talae Nok and Kuan Sai Ngam schools.

Situation Reviews



- Children looked at site survey pictures to assess the damages and impact that disasters have on children.



- Children reviewed what happened to the Baan Talae Nok Village after being hit by the tsunami.



- Children learned about the causes and effects of tsunamis.

Community survey ★ Disaster risk analysis



- During the community survey, children asked the villagers about their knowledge and experiences with disasters and risk reduction.



- Children summarised the information from their survey to determine what information they obtained and what else they needed.



- They analysed the risks, vulnerable groups and actions that could be taken to reduce such risks.

Educating younger friends about tsunami hazards and safe areas



- Maps were drawn to show areas considered hazardous and safe for children during a tsunami.



- Information sessions were held for younger friends in order to inform them about safe and hazardous zones during a tsunami.



- Explanations were given about the Baan Talae Nok Risk and Resource Map to younger children; telling them where to run if a tsunami comes.

Preparing a survival bag



- Children brainstormed ideas about what should be included in a survival bag.



- Children informed younger students about the benefits of a survival bag.



- Children helped the younger ones prepare their own survival bags.

The Alert Rabbit Puppet Show



- Baan Talae Nok students performed a puppet show to present their ideas to their friends from other schools.



- Information sharing activities after the show were appreciated by the audience.



- Children and adults enjoyed and gained knowledge from the games after the puppet show.

Tsunami evacuation drill



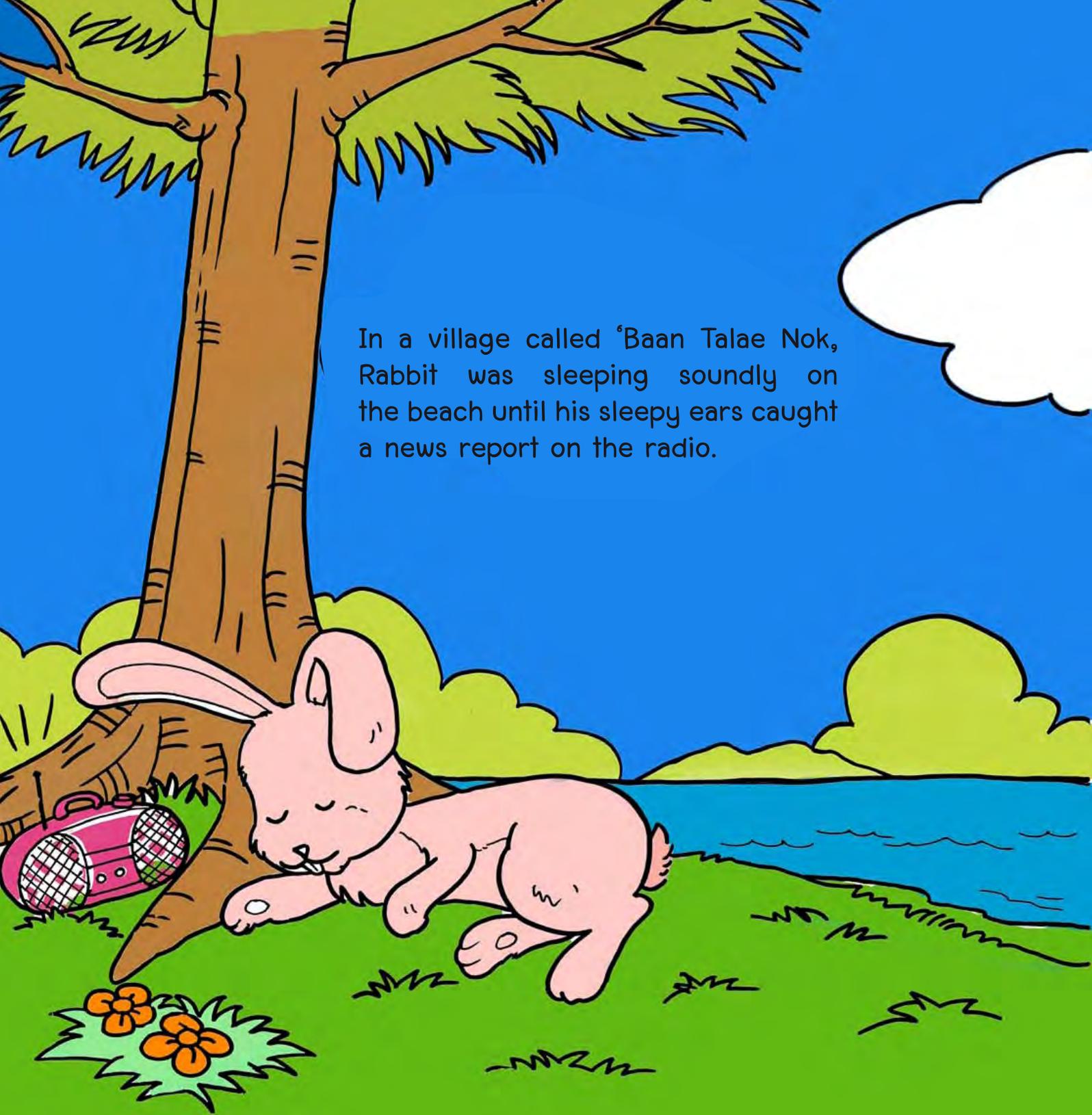
- The children organised a commemorative event for those who lost their lives and those who survived the tsunami on what was once their school grounds.



- During the two-year commemorative event, the children practiced the school's evacuation drill.



- Baan Talae Nok Village's evacuation drills were developed based on the real experiences of those who survived the December 2004 tsunami.



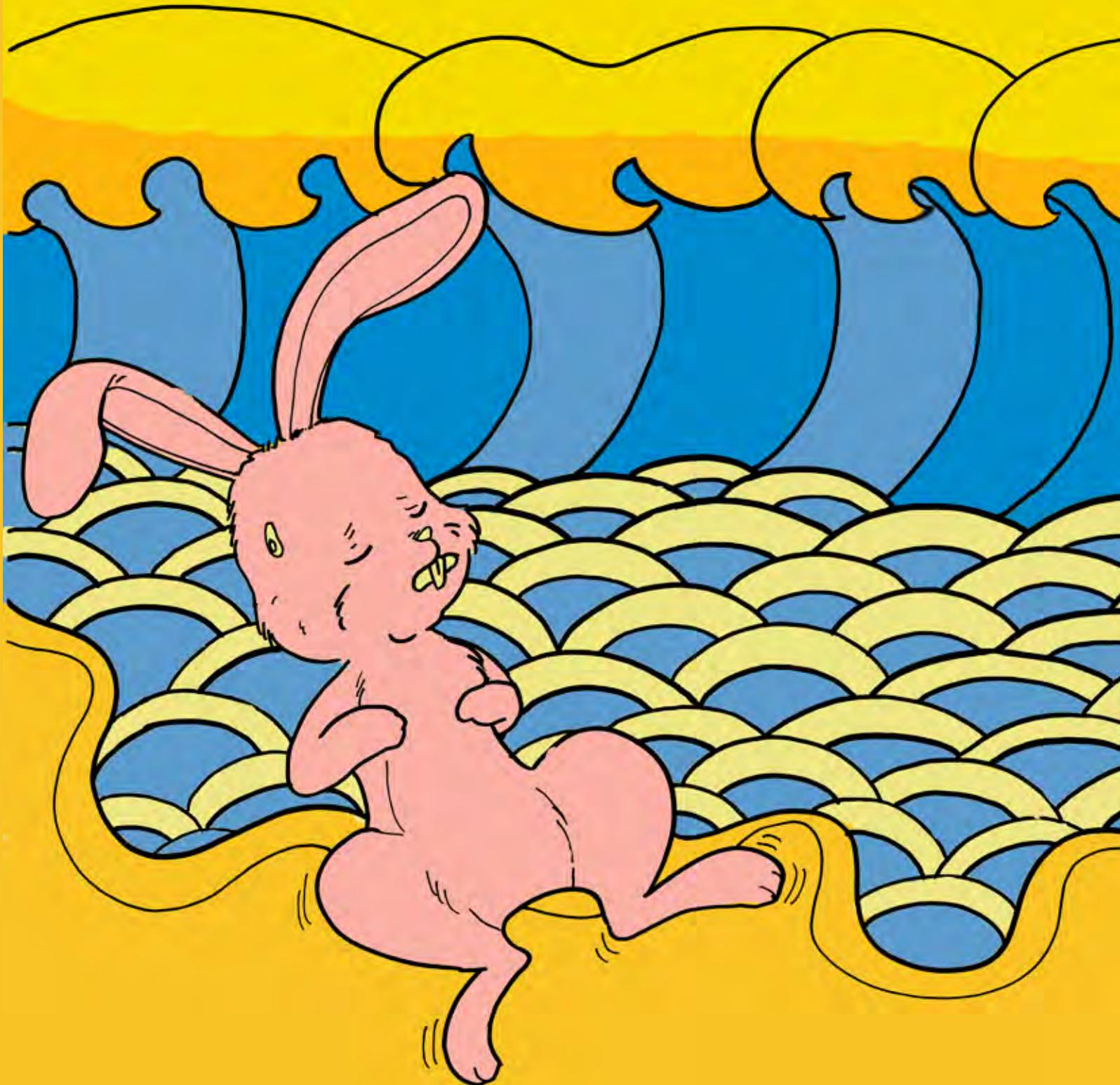
In a village called 'Baan Talae Nok, Rabbit was sleeping soundly on the beach until his sleepy ears caught a news report on the radio.

“This is the first tsunami warning system test. Please continue your activities as usual.”

“Today at 8.30 AM., an earthquake occurred on Sumatra Island. Its magnitude of 5.73 on the Richter scale did not cause a tsunami in Thailand... End of first test.”

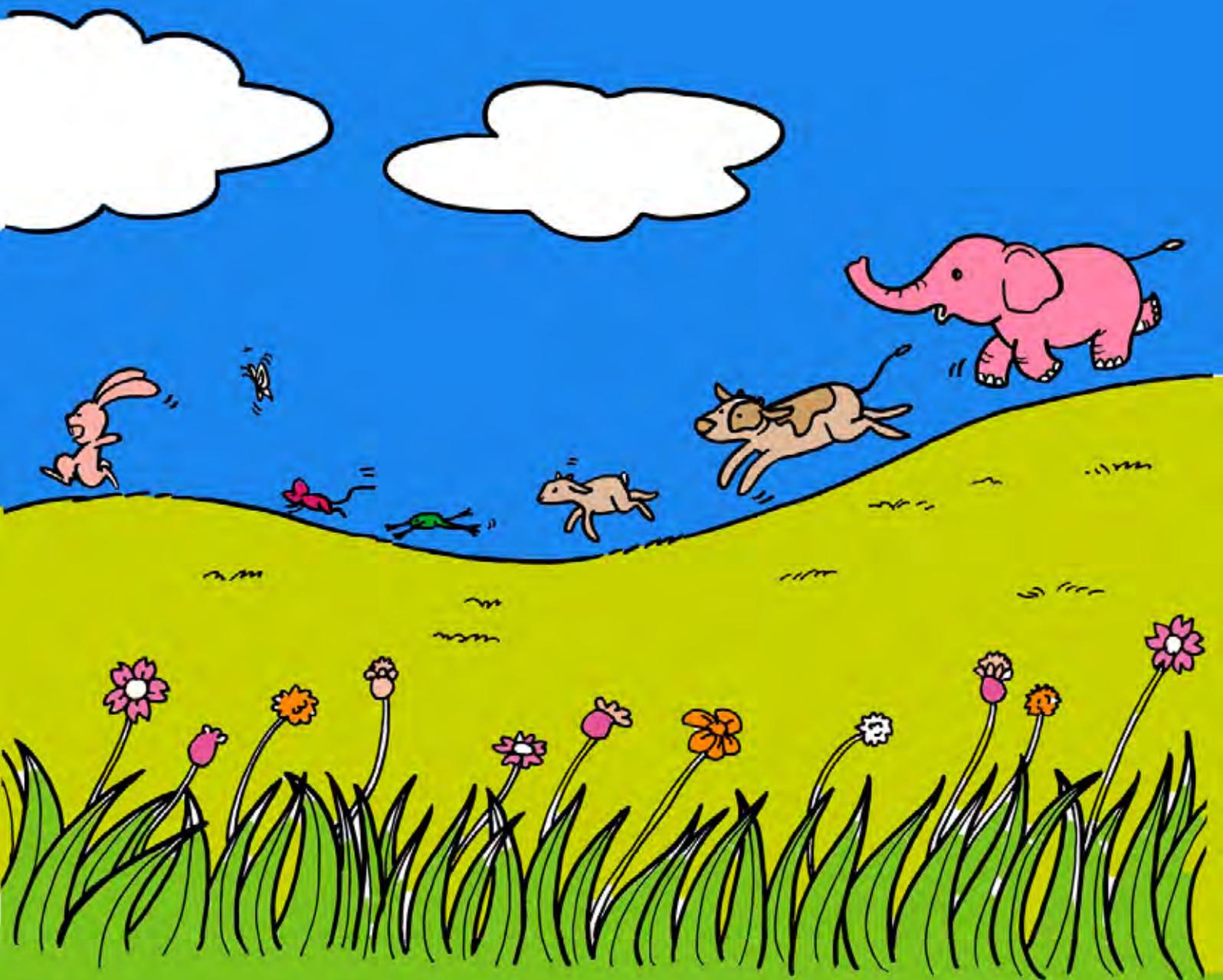
Since he was so drowsy,
Rabbit only heard the last part of the message,
An earthquake occurred on Sumatra Island...
cause a tsunami in Thailand...”

Rabbit was so frightened that his heart
started to beat really fast and loudly.



Rabbit shouted with all his might, “Oh God! A tsunami is coming. Run! Run for your life!”

All the animals who heard him were frightened. They ran away together in a large group and shouted the message to everyone they saw along the way.



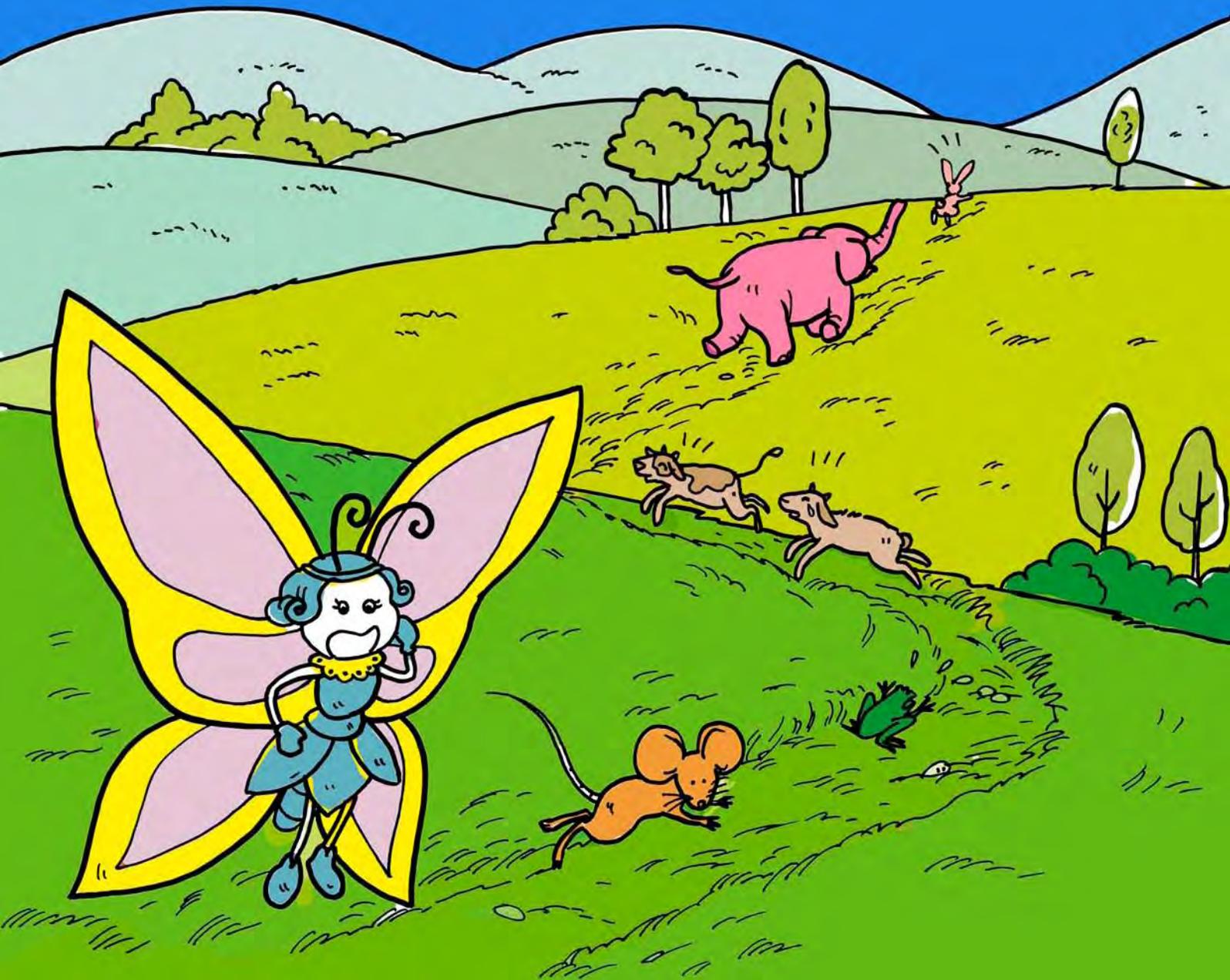
“A tsunami is coming! Run quickly!
Our village is going to get hit!”

A few seconds passed before Butterfly realised that she should go back to gather her belongings.

For the rats, they said they should run for their lives first.

Baby Goat ran around crying for his parents because they were not in sight. “Baa... baa...,” he cried.

When Mother Frog saw Baby Goat, she suddenly realized that her children were not with her and that she must go find them.



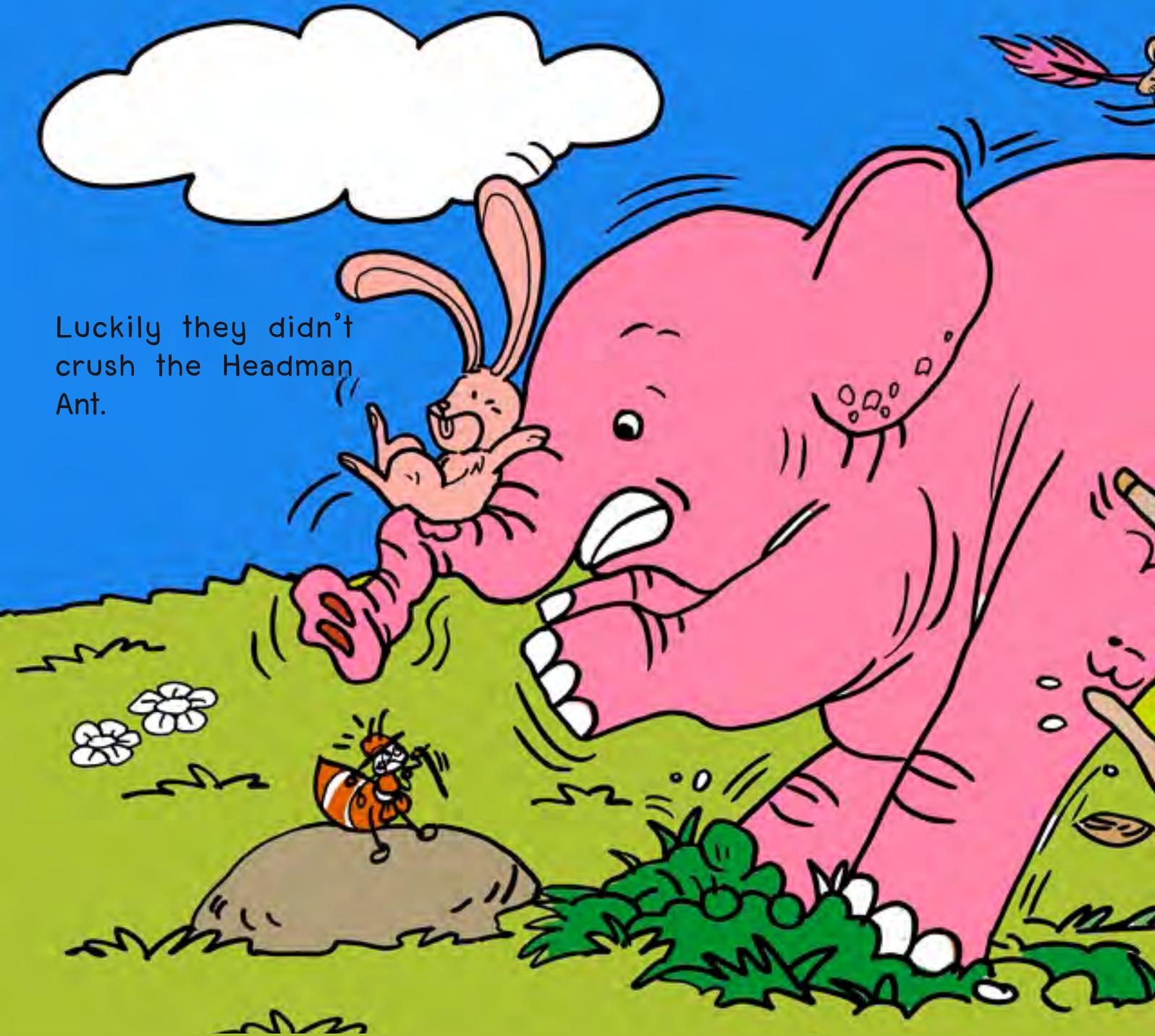
“What should I do?” Little Cow cried. “My grandparents don’t want to run away. I should go back and stay with them.”

All the animals seemed to be in a state of panic and worried about everything.

The animals kept running as fast as they could. They almost ran over Headman Ant, the village headman who was standing out front.

‘Bang!’ Everyone stopped immediately—crashed, fell and piled-up into a giant ball.

Luckily they didn't crush the Headman Ant.



Headman Ant asked, “What happened? Why are you running away like a mad crowd?”

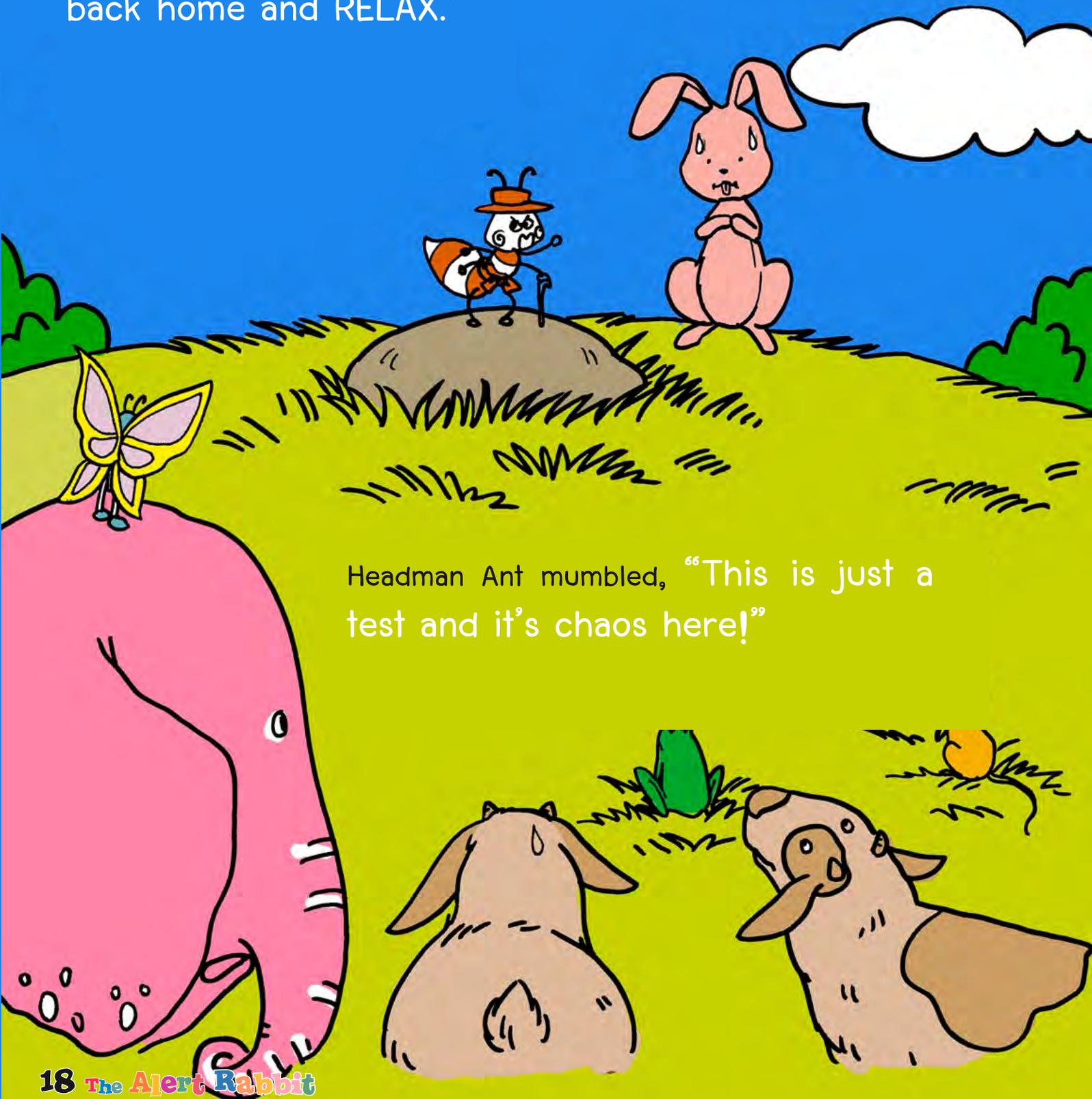
Rabbit said, “We’re running for our lives – from the tsunami! I heard the news report on the radio.”

Elephant quickly told Headman Ant to hop on his back so that they could flee together.



Headman Ant told the animals to stay calm.

He then explained, “Hey! They were just testing the tsunami warning system. It didn’t happen for real... Let’s have a meeting tomorrow. We will discuss how we should prepare for a disaster. Now go back home and RELAX.”



Headman Ant mumbled, “This is just a test and it’s chaos here!”

The next day at the village meeting, Headman Ant asked,

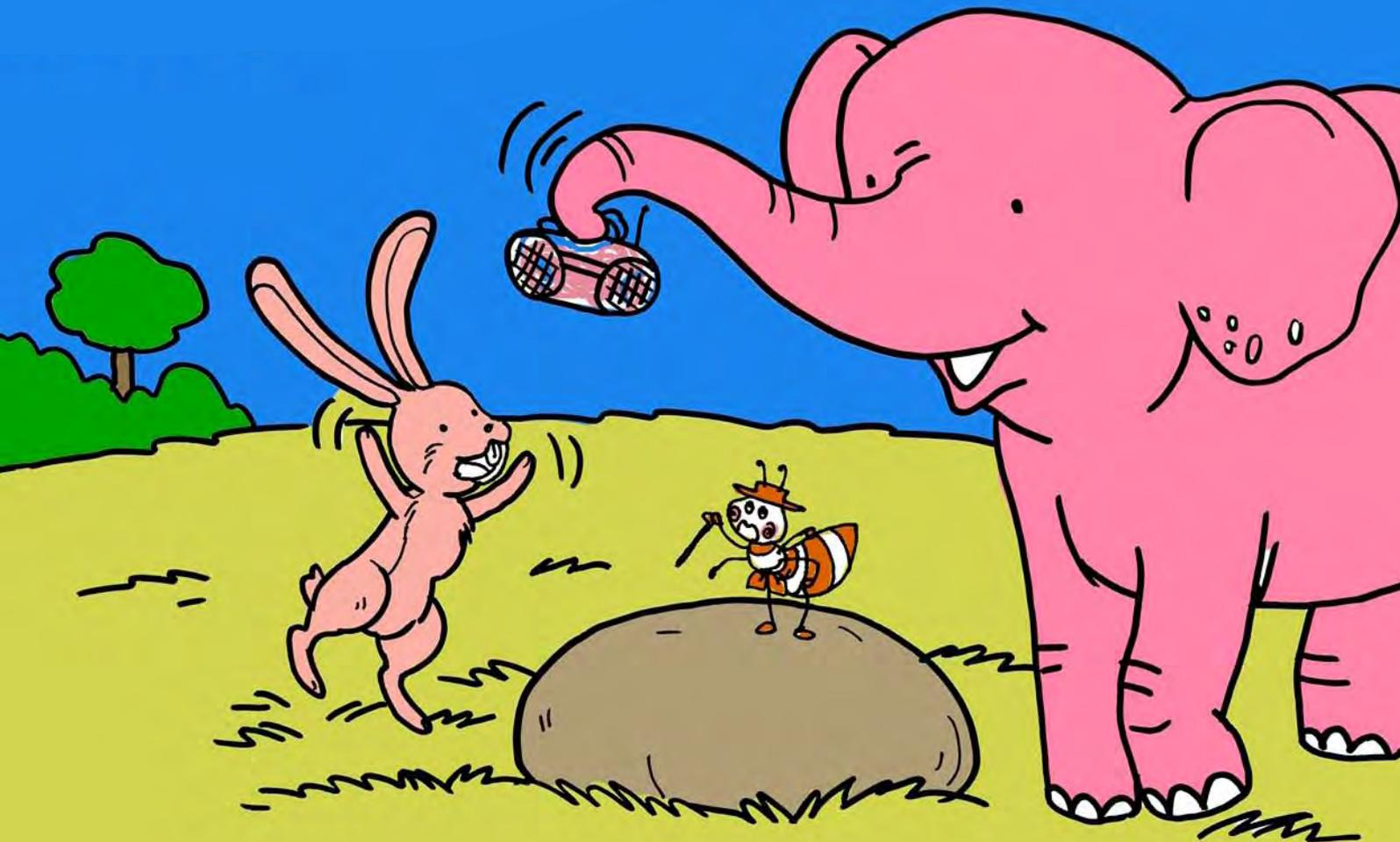
“If a tsunami were to happen for real, what can we do now to prepare for it?”

Elephant snatched the radio from Alarmist Rabbit and proposed that,

“We should always follow up on the news.”

Headman Ant added, “Yes, but if you can’t make heads or tails of the words, don’t jump to conclusions and smell, OK?”

“Err.... I think you probably meant, ‘don’t yell,’ right?” Elephant wasn’t quite sure.



Rabbit is relieved that his friends weren’t angry at him for all the chaos he caused yesterday. He was happy though that his radio was useful.



Butterfly then proudly showed her little basket. "I already put my valuable things away in a safe place so I don't have to be too worried."

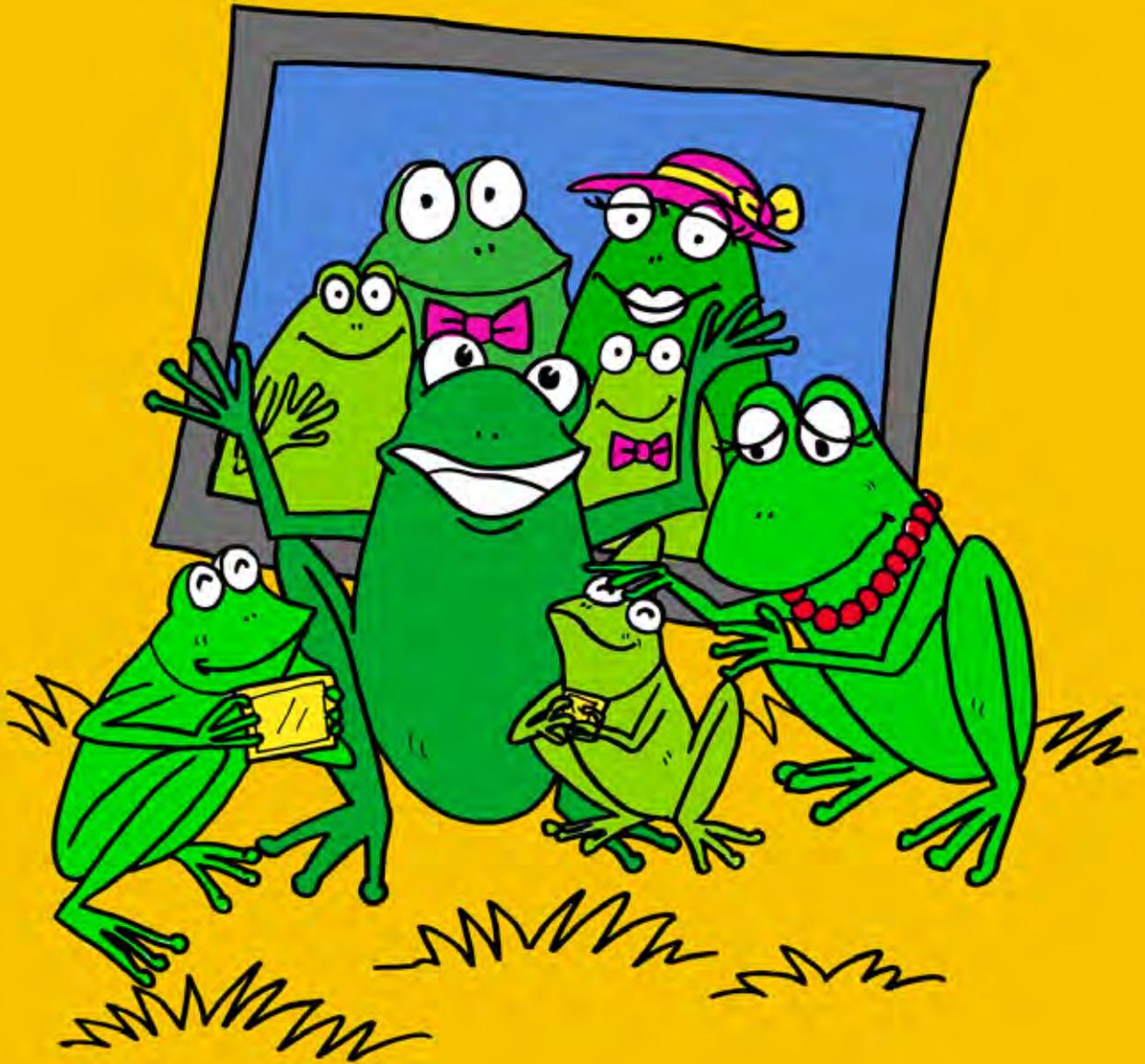
One of the rats was eager to present his favorite backpack too.

"Here's mine. I prepared it and always have it close to me. If anything happens, I can just grab it and run."

Inside his backpack there was a bottle of water, dried herbs, dried food, some beans and a handy radio for listening to the news.

Mother Frog looked at all her children and said,

“We agreed in the family that the kids will not go out to play by themselves in hazardous places. They will also tell us parents before going anywhere.”

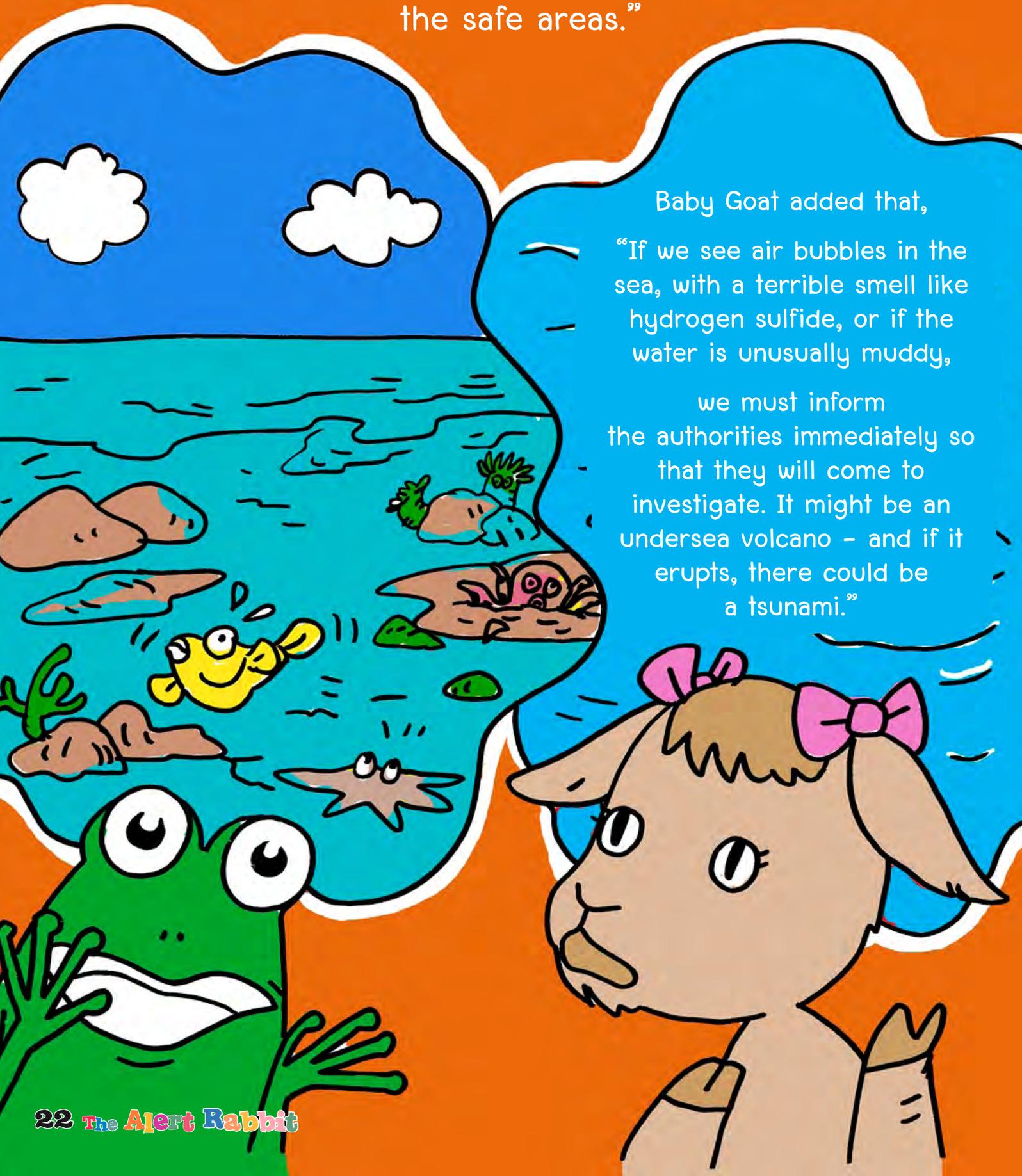


“And here is our family photo. This will help people find our kids in case they get lost during the run,” says Father Frog. He and the little frogs showed everyone their newly-taken photo.

Headman Ant then suggested that when the Frog Family prepares their survival bag, the family photo should be one of the things in there.

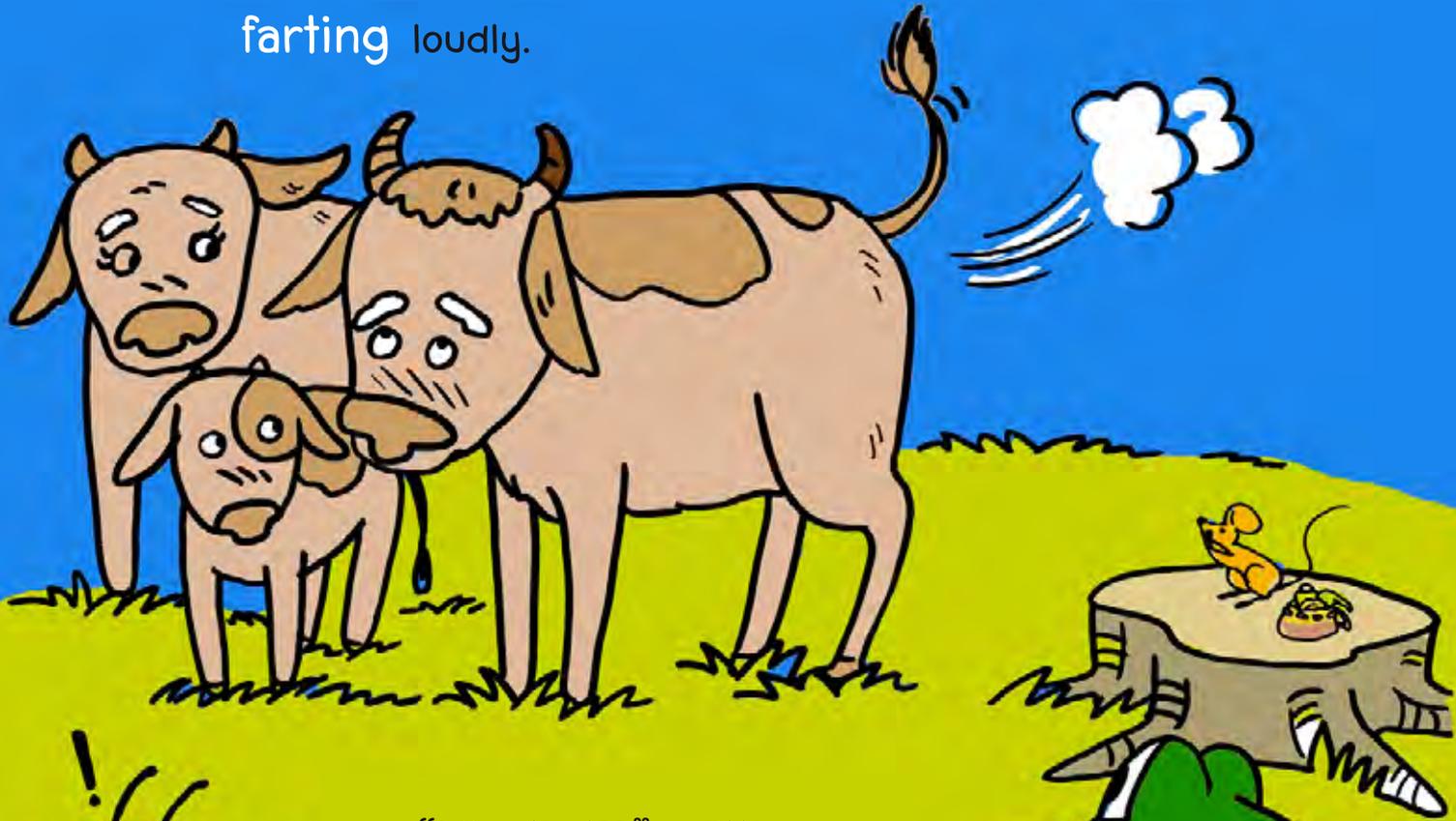
“My family always eats in the fields here so we discussed where we should run to if a tsunami does come” said Baby Goat. He then proudly presented a map that he drew with his father.

“If we see the water going down really fast,” said one of the little frogs, “we must run to higher grounds or to the safe areas.”



Baby Goat added that, “If we see air bubbles in the sea, with a terrible smell like hydrogen sulfide, or if the water is unusually muddy, we must inform the authorities immediately so that they will come to investigate. It might be an undersea volcano – and if it erupts, there could be a tsunami.”

Grandpa Ox took his turn by
farting loudly.



“Like that!?” a little
frog exclaimed.

“Hydrogen sulfide
smells stinky like
Grandpa Ox’s
fart – like rotten
eggs!”



Headman Ant asked Grandpa Ox, “I heard you and your wife agreed that you wouldn’t flee if a tsunami came?”

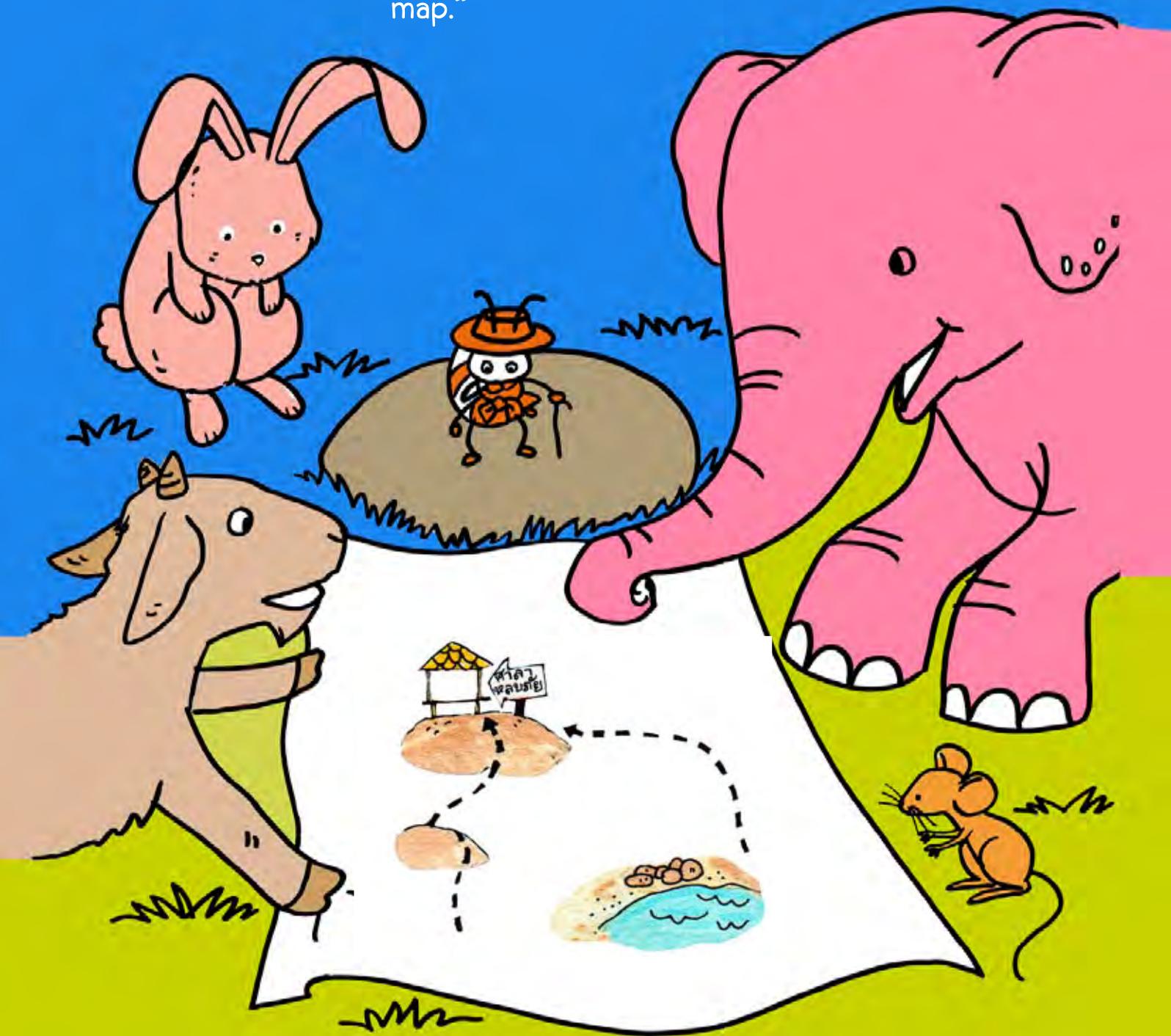
Grandpa Ox replied sadly, “We are too old. We don’t want to be a burden to anyone especially while everyone’s fleeing for their lives.”

Headman Ant said, “But that’s why we are here today, isn’t it? We’re here to discuss how we should help each other be more prepared. No one is a burden, Grandpa Ox! What would your little grandchildren do without you?”

“My family always eats in the fields here so we discussed where we should run to if a tsunami does come” said Baby Goat.

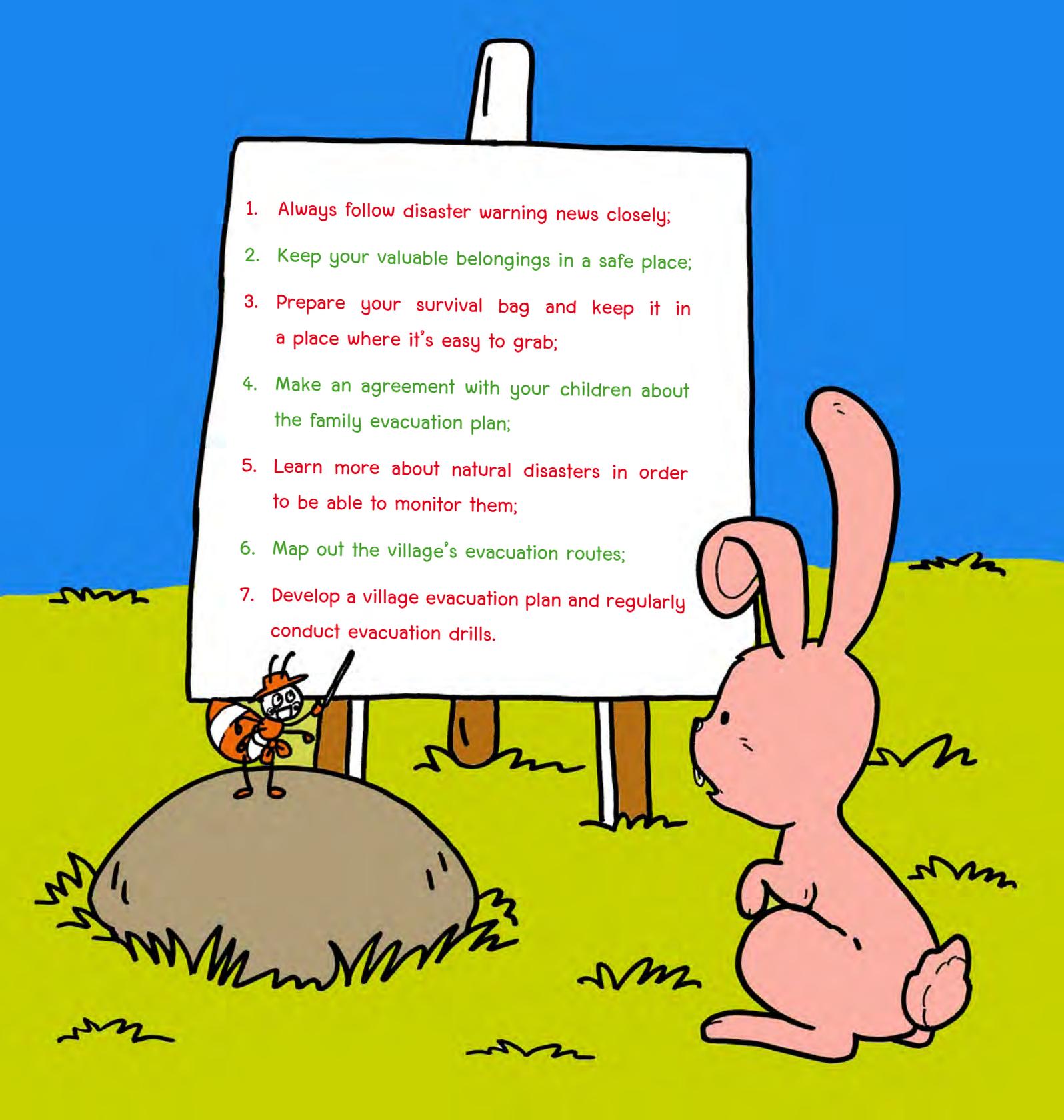
He then proudly presented a map that he drew with his father.

“Here. We put the routes on this map.”



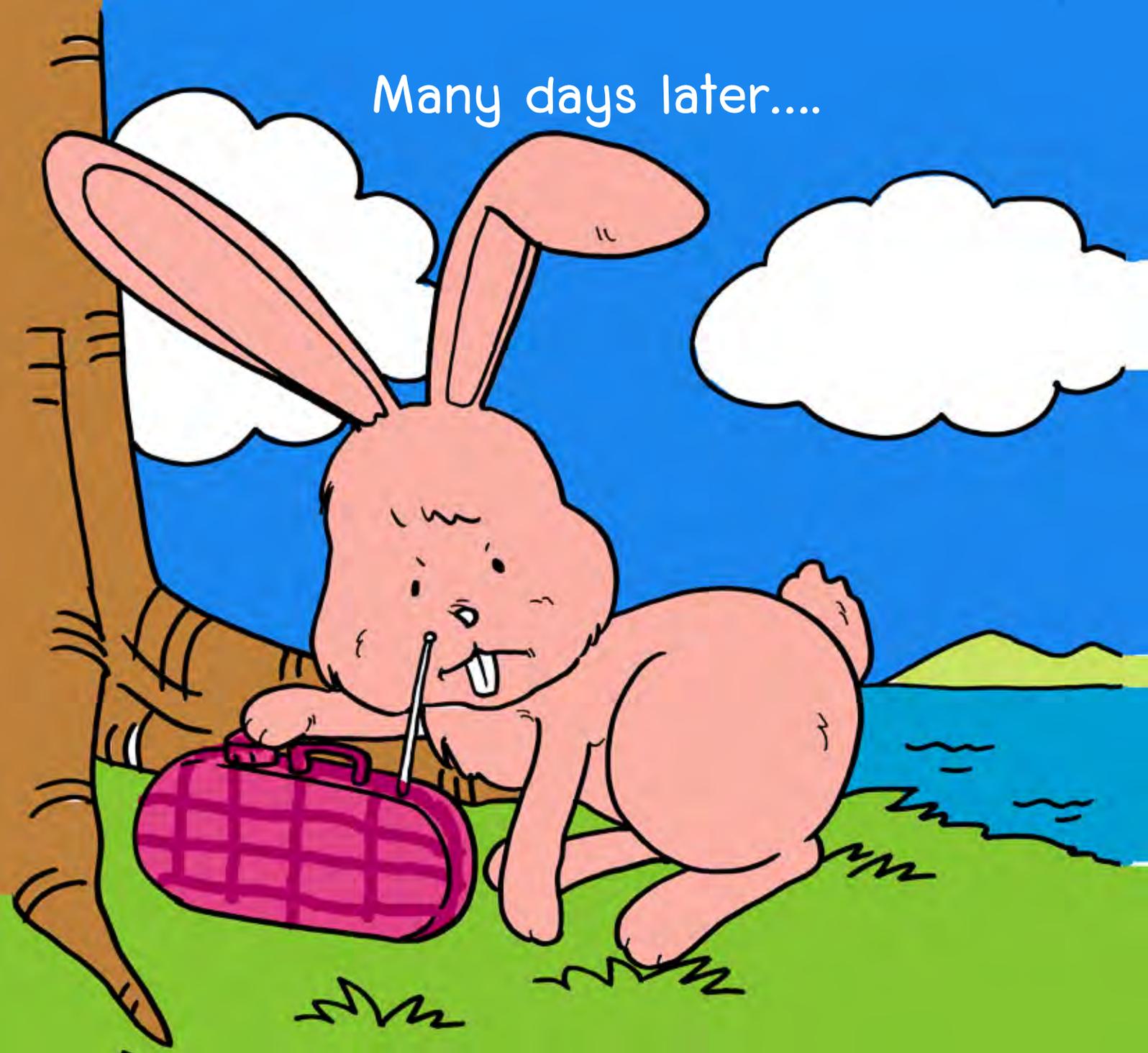
Headman Ant agreed that mapping it out was an good idea. He gleefully said that they should have a village evacuation route map showing safe areas and hazardous zones so that everyone knows where to go and what to do.

Elephant volunteered to do a survey and figure out the routes.

- 
1. Always follow disaster warning news closely;
 2. Keep your valuable belongings in a safe place;
 3. Prepare your survival bag and keep it in a place where it's easy to grab;
 4. Make an agreement with your children about the family evacuation plan;
 5. Learn more about natural disasters in order to be able to monitor them;
 6. Map out the village's evacuation routes;
 7. Develop a village evacuation plan and regularly conduct evacuation drills.

Headman Ant summarised all the suggestions, "These examples are very good. If we are prepared, we'll be safe from a tsunami. I think we should appreciate Rabbit's action the other day. Because he's such an alarmist, we learned a lesson that we have to prepare. Okay, next time we meet, we will have mapped out clear evacuation routes and will conduct an evacuation drill together."

Many days later....



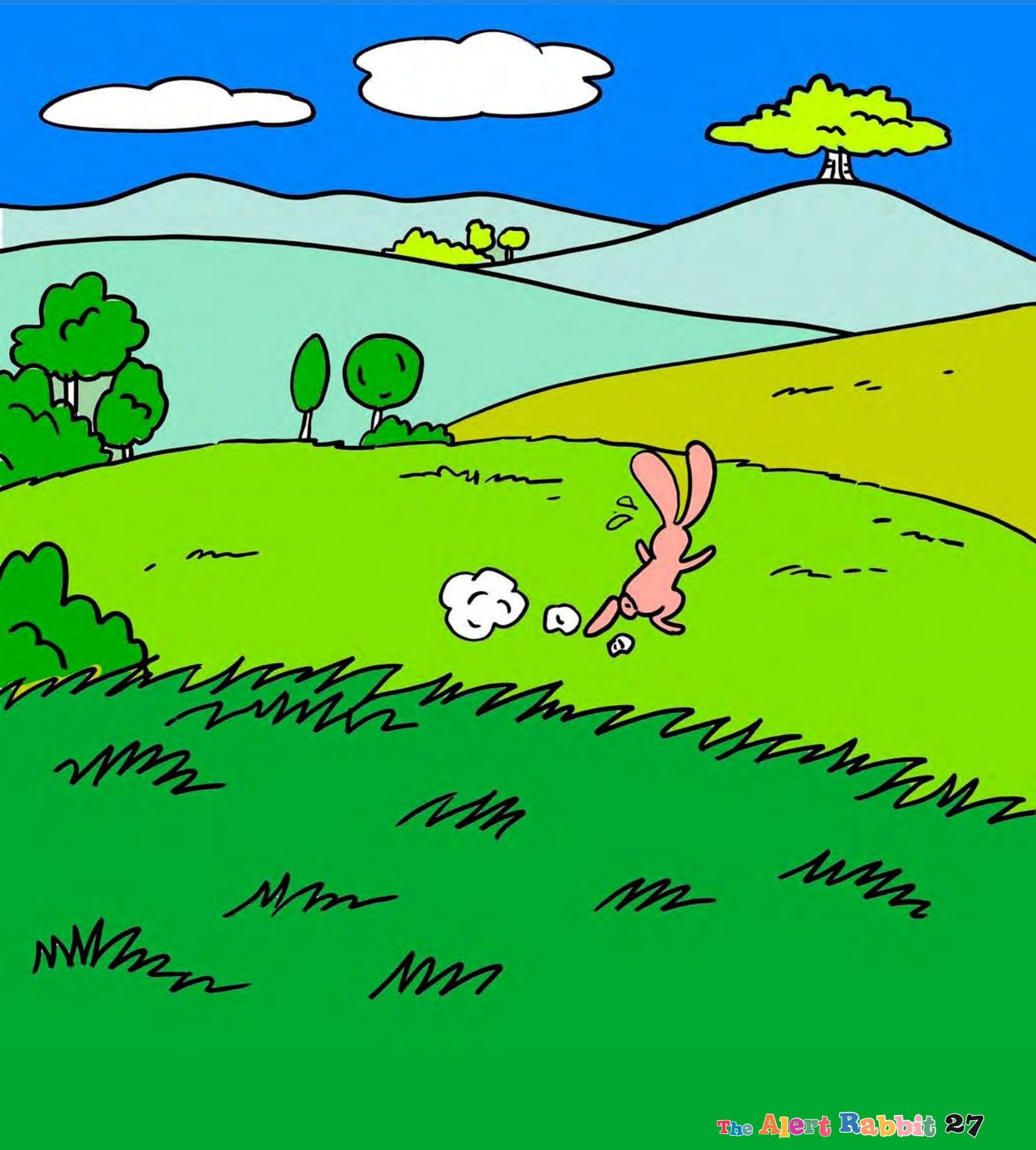
While sleeping under his favorite tree, Rabbit heard news from the Meteorology Department again.

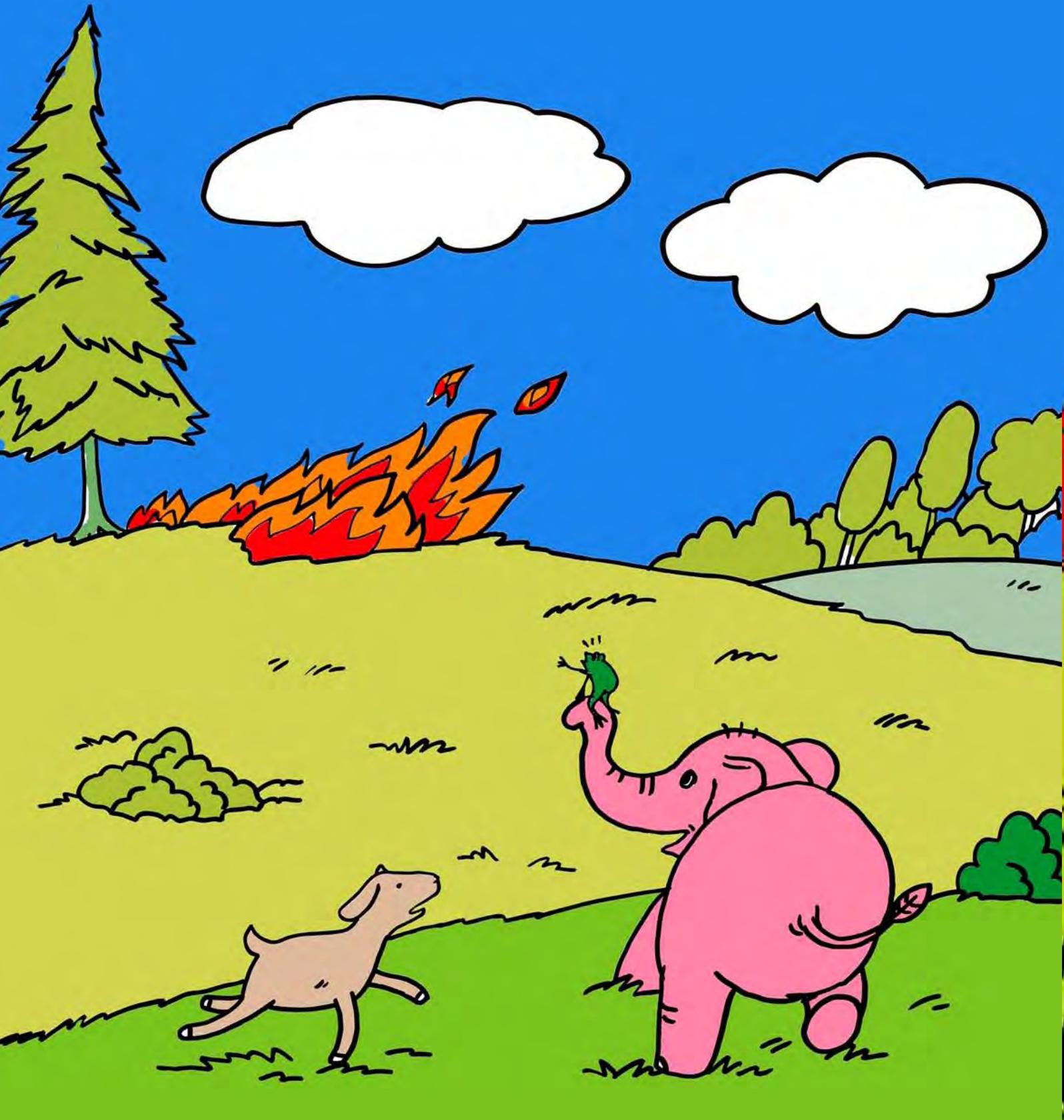
“An earthquake with the magnitude of 7.2 on the Richter scale just occurred on Java Island. At the moment, the death toll has risen to 668. No report yet on whether the earthquake could cause a tsunami in Thailand. However, all small boats should remain at piers during the storm...”

* Remarks: The news was quoted from a real incident on May the 27th, 2006.

Rabbit tried hard to stay calm, but his two legs were still shaking.

Rabbit hopped as fast as he could towards his friends. He wanted to talk about how they should prepare.





Only a short while after Rabbit disappeared from the scene, the little frogs, the little elephants and Baby Goat passed by. They saw a huge flame spreading towards the big forest.

The children ran and told the adults.

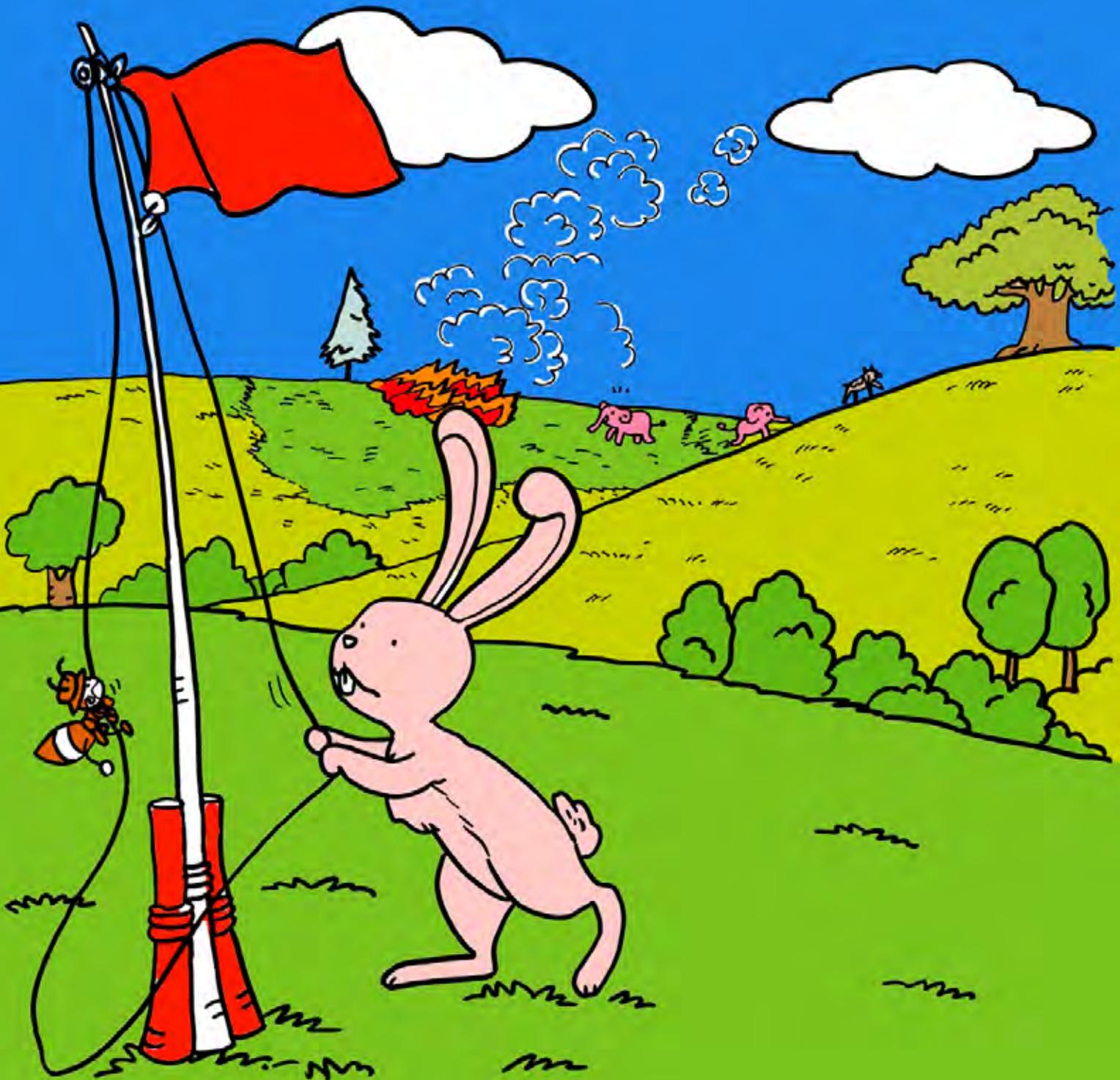
Within a few minutes, the other animals ran to make firebreaks. Headman Ant gave out instructions, “Come quick to this side. The firebreaks will prevent the fire from going further even if the wind blows this way!”



All the elephants trampled on the grass to make a clear long path. All the rats helped bite the long grasses so that the cows could carry them away. They burned the beaten grass so that there was nothing left to fuel the fire and make it go further.

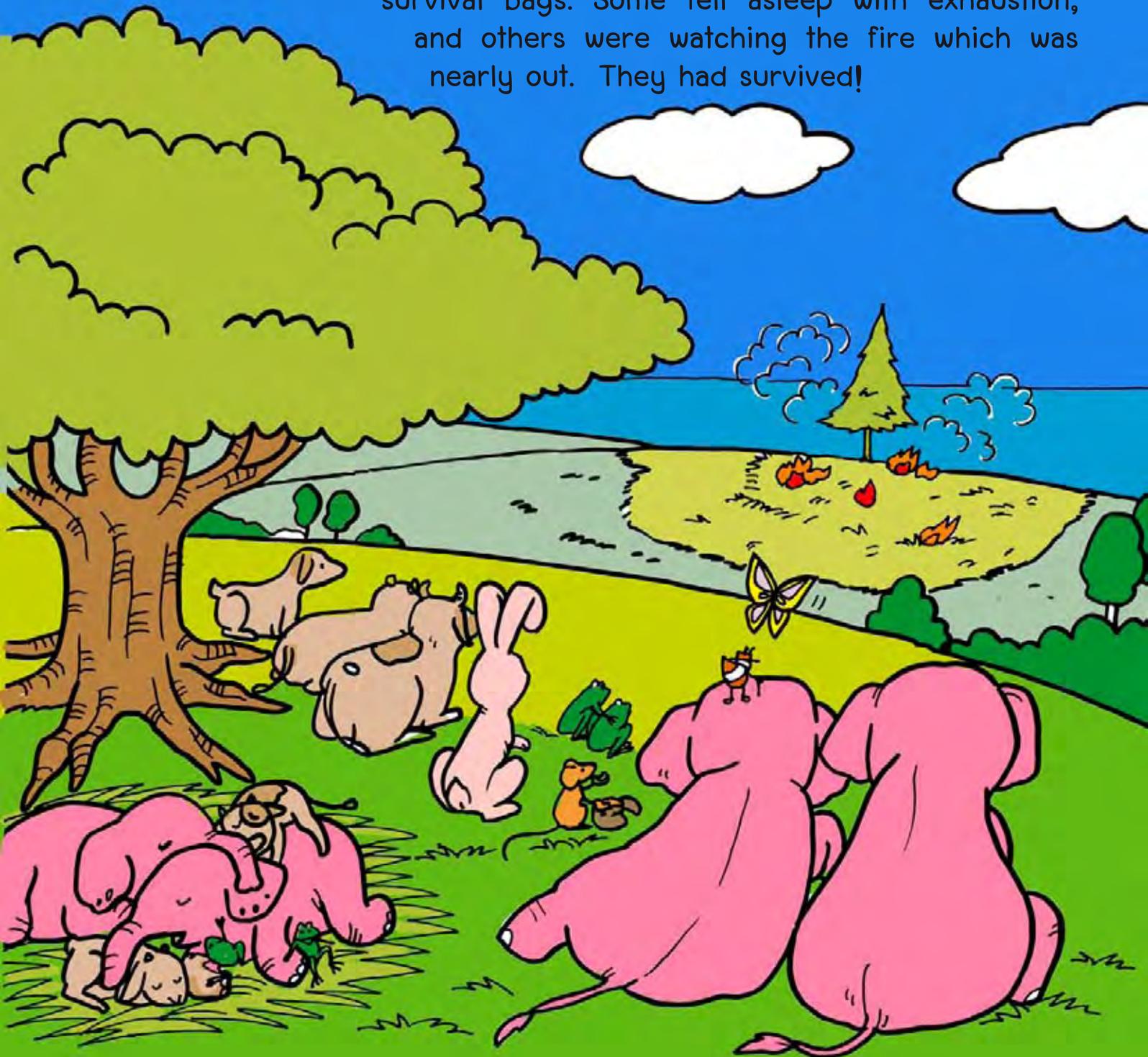
On the hill, Headman Ant and Rabbit quickly raised the warning flag up high.

The butterflies flew over the forest to see if there was anyone left in danger.



All the animals fled using the evacuation routes that they had prepared and finally joined each other at the safe area.

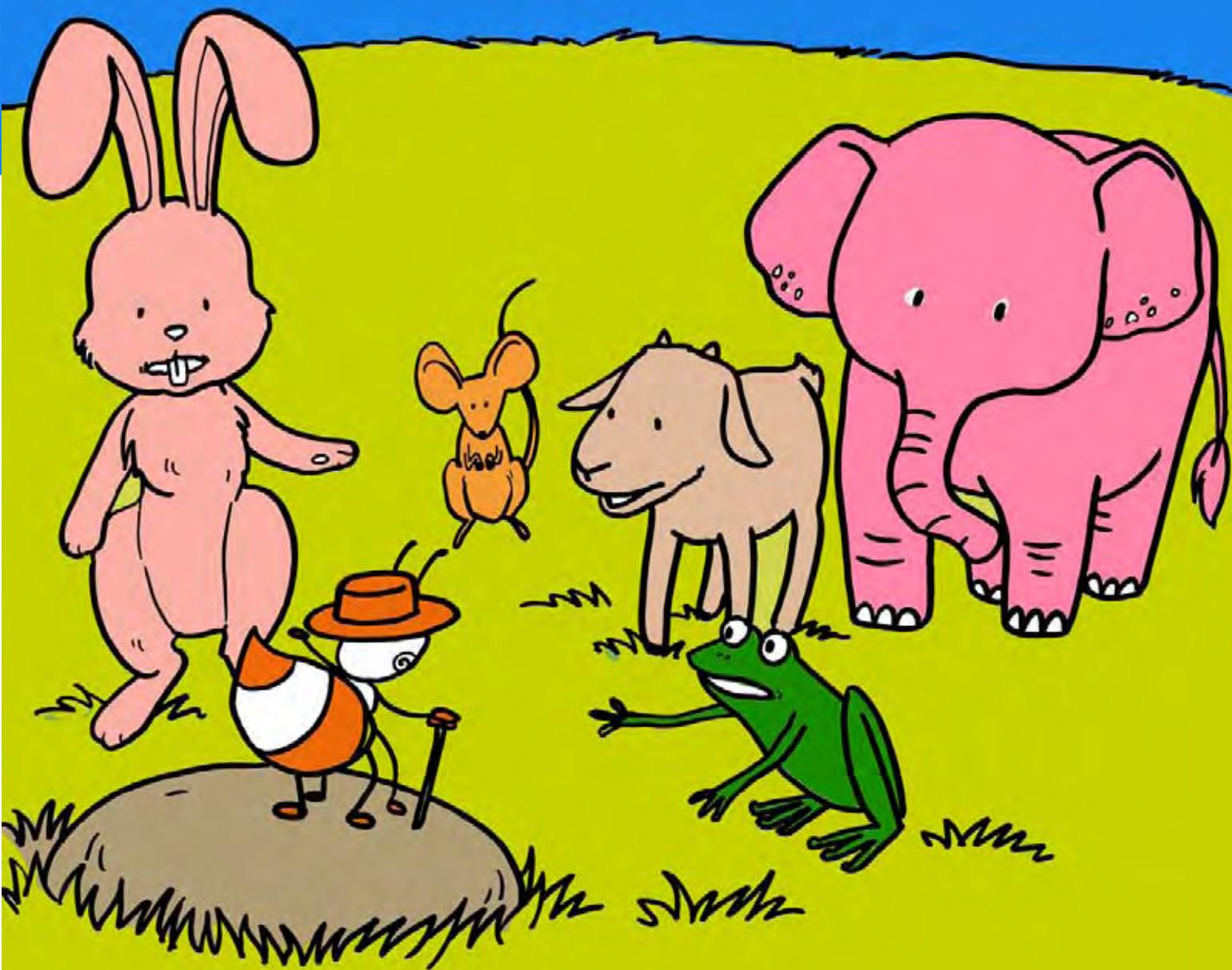
A few sat down and started to eat food from their survival bags. Some fell asleep with exhaustion, and others were watching the fire which was nearly out. They had survived!



Headman Ant then checked for damages.

The butterflies reported that, “There was not much damage. The fire only burned down some trees and grass but they will grow again soon. Anyway we stocked our food in a safe place and were able to grab all our necessities to take with us because we were well-prepared. So this did not turn out to be a big drama like last time!”

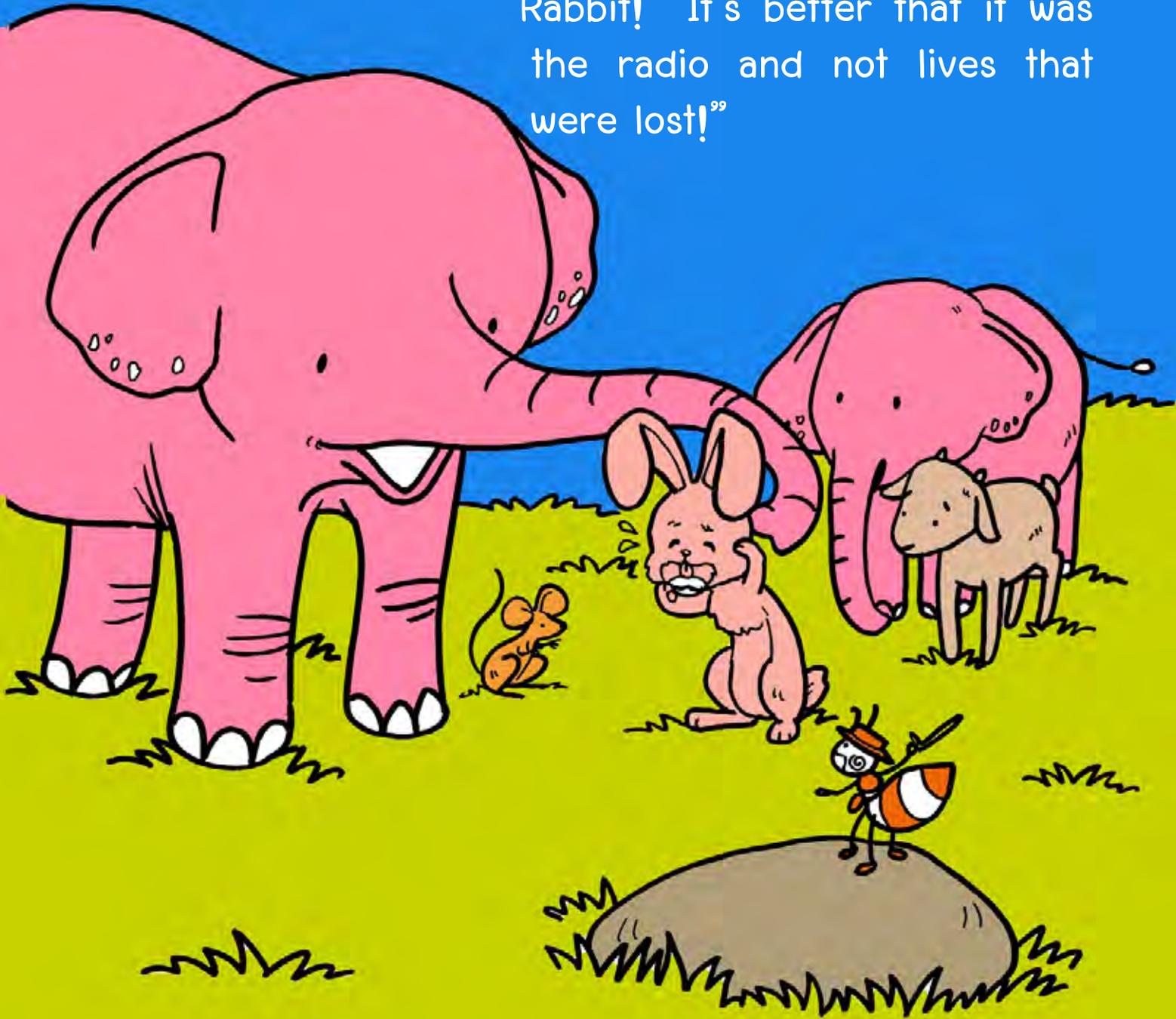
Alarmist Rabbit asked others about the cause of the fire.



Headman Ant explained that, “The official investigation reported that a spark of electricity came from an old radio left under a pine tree. We don’t know who left it there, but obviously the radio exploded. The children who were playing around there saw it and informed us.”

Rabbit's ears folded down embarrassingly. He exclaimed sadly, "No, no, no... It must have been my radio. Now it's gone. Will I be able to repair it?"

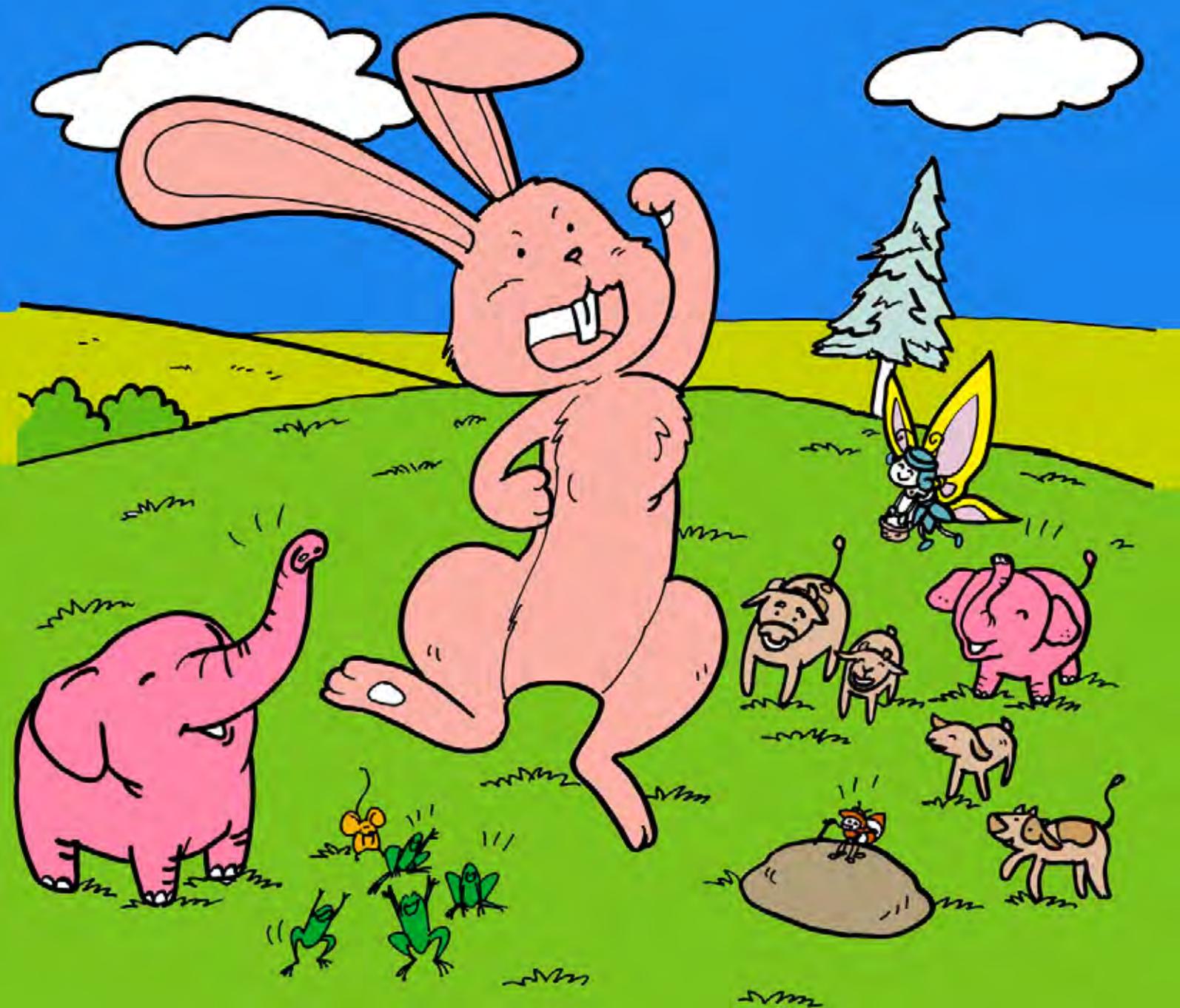
One of the rats said, "COME on! Rabbit! It's better that it was the radio and not lives that were lost!"



Headman Ant added, "We should regularly check our electrical equipment and repair it once we know something is wrong with it, otherwise we might die before we can even start running from the tsunami! Ha ha ha...!"

Father Elephant touched Rabbit's head with his long trunk and tried to comfort him.

Rabbit then made up his mind and jumped up to announce, “OK! From now on, this Alarmist Rabbit will change and be the Alert Rabbit!”



All the animals laughed heartily. Everyone was determined to be Alert Animals too; always well-prepared just like Rabbit. “Oh, yes, from now on we have to call him ‘Alert Rabbit,’ right?”