



The forest animals invite you into their world of challenges through a series of ten “Character Builders” books. These books will inspire children and have a positive impact on their lives. The purpose of this series is to provide parents and teachers with the proper tools to develop healthy character traits in children. The blessing of starting while they are young is seeing established strong, solid fundamentals, developed values and shaped character in your children when they become young adults.

The second volume in the series, *The True Friend*, is focused on friendship. Each of the forest animals has its own unique character and values. Through their attitude and choices their character is revealed which affects their friendship relationships. This story helps children to distinguish between real and good weather friends.

This book contains guidelines for parents and teachers. Discussion questions are provided which link the story with biblical principles. This will help to shepherd the child’s heart enabling him or her to think through situations and to make wise decisions.



Justyna D. Wacławik is a very talented and imaginative author who is admired by children. With her special sensitivity, she can easily visualize a child’s world. Her stories captivate the attention of young readers and cultivate ethical morals as well as the best traditional Christian values. In a compelling manner, her books aid parents to help develop individuality and positive character in their children. Justyna resides in Phoenix, Arizona.

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The True Friend

Justyna D. Wacławik

Parental Guidelines by  
**GARY  
CHAPMAN**

Justyna D. Wacławik

# The True Friend







*This book is a gift for:*

.....

*From:*

.....

*For:*

.....



*I dedicate this book to my loving friend  
Alexandra on whom I can always rely.  
Thanks to her the word friendship  
means so much to me.*



*Thank you, Alex!*

**Justyna D. Waclawik**

# **The True Friend**

**Parental Guidelines by Gary Chapman**

**Illustrations by Jakub Kuźma**



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Phoenix, Arizona



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*B*unny lived far, far away in the forest. He was known for his kindness. Whenever he had an opportunity to help others, he was always happy and eager to do it. When Mama Bear asked him to get medicine for her child, he immediately ran to old Owl to get it.



*W*hen Deer broke his leg, Bunny ran to the hospital to get help for him. Later on, Bunny visited Deer every day to help him with chores around the house. When Beaver got a contract to build a dam on the river, Bunny hauled in branches all day long so Beaver could finish his project on time.







During the freezing winter, Kangaroo, the postman, became sick. When nobody else wanted to go outside, Bunny helped him deliver Christmas postcards and packages to everyone.







Every single animal in the forest liked Bunny, and was grateful for what he had done. Each of them told Bunny many times:

“I really appreciate your help. You are such a good friend. If you ever need help, you can always count on me.”

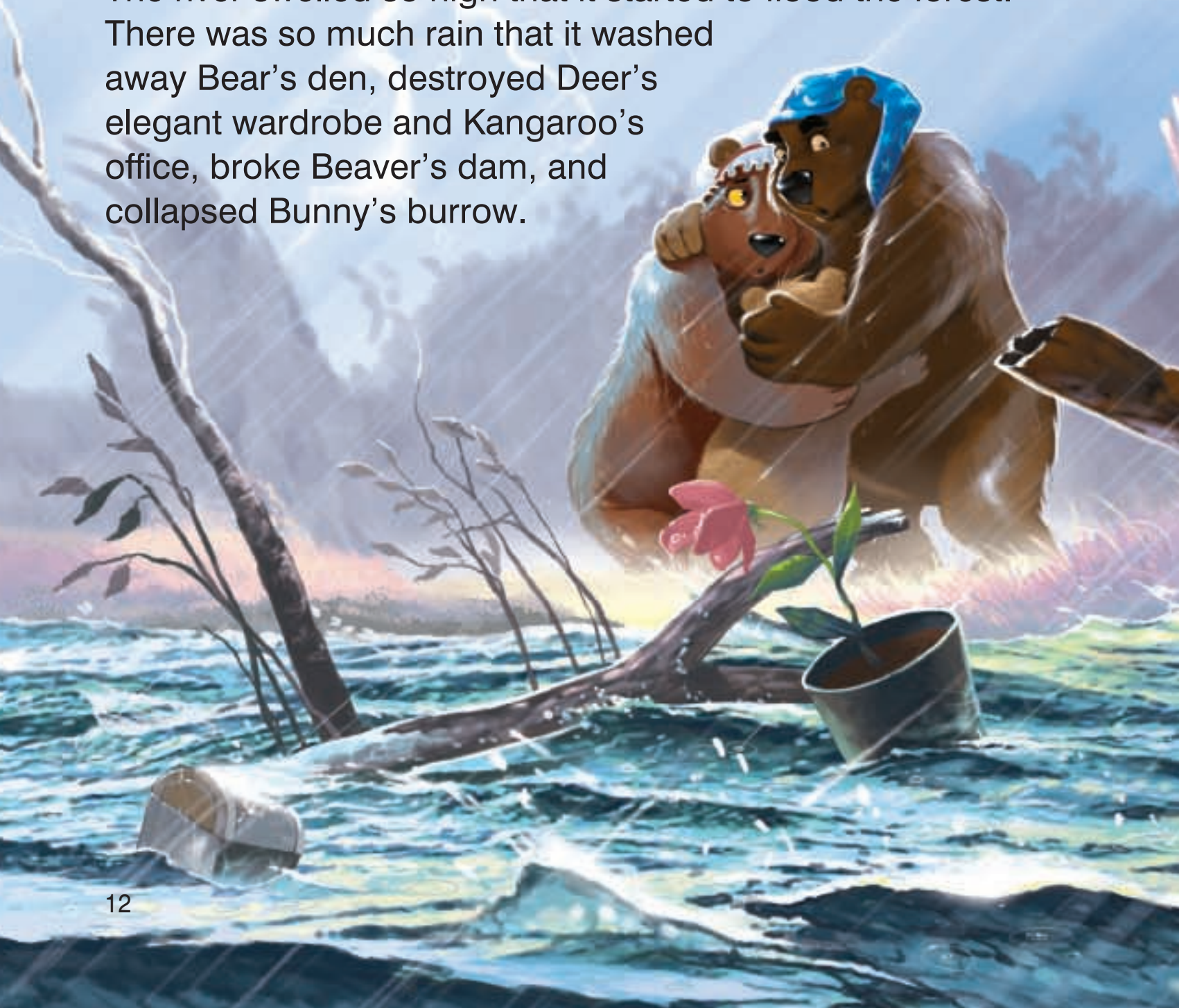




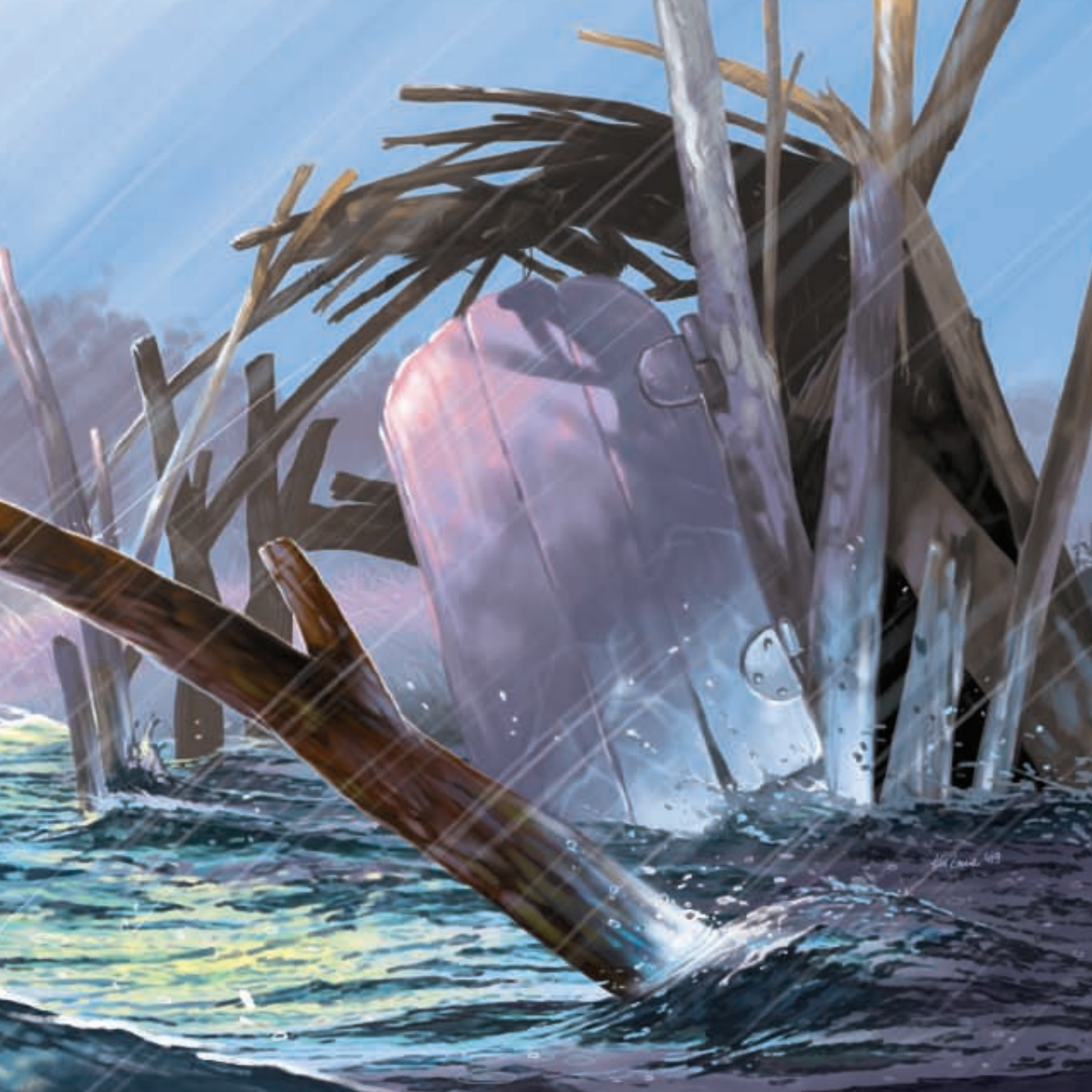
One night, dark clouds loomed over the forest. A heavy rainstorm forced all the animals to hide in their homes. It continued to rain all night, all day, and throughout the next night.



The storm raged, and the rain poured down in torrents. The river swelled so high that it started to flood the forest. There was so much rain that it washed away Bear's den, destroyed Deer's elegant wardrobe and Kangaroo's office, broke Beaver's dam, and collapsed Bunny's burrow.









The undercurrent was so strong it began to wash away one of Bunny's children. Little Bunny clutched tightly to a floating branch, but the water level from the flood kept rising. It looked like he might possibly drown at any minute.







*D*esperately Bunny jumped along the riverbank. There was no way he could save his child because bunnies cannot swim. He decided to run to Bear.

“Bear, Bear, you are so big and strong and you’re so brave. You are not afraid of water at all. Please help me rescue my child!”

“Bunny, come on!” Bear answered. “Don’t you see that my den is destroyed? I need to rebuild it before night, or my family will not have a place to sleep. Come back tomorrow and I will see what I can do.”



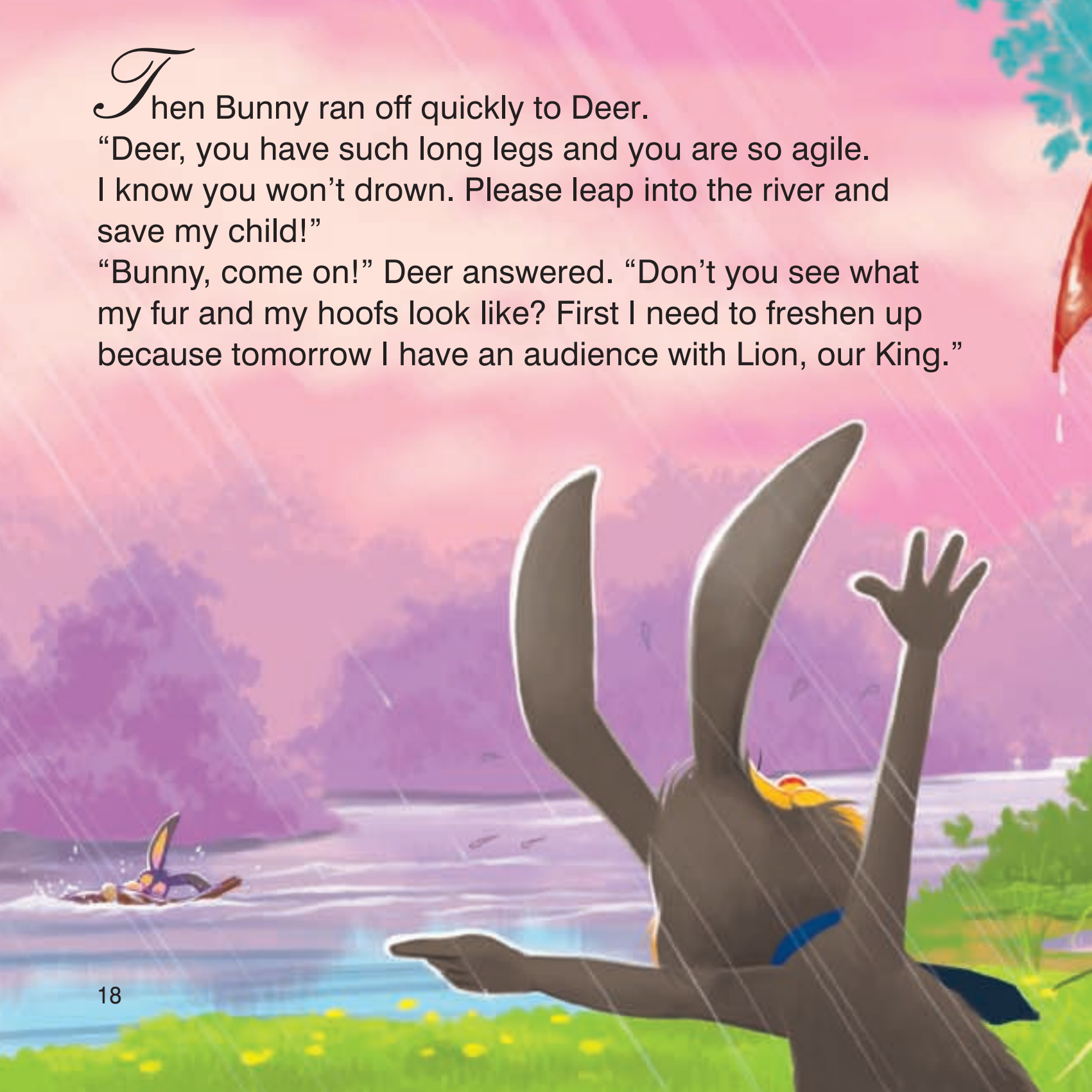




Then Bunny ran off quickly to Deer.

“Deer, you have such long legs and you are so agile. I know you won’t drown. Please leap into the river and save my child!”

“Bunny, come on!” Deer answered. “Don’t you see what my fur and my hoofs look like? First I need to freshen up because tomorrow I have an audience with Lion, our King.”





“You wouldn’t want me to go see the King dressed sloppily, would you? I will be able to help you after I see the King! After all, I need to secure my future first.”



*I*n a panic Bunny ran to Kangaroo.

“Kangaroo, Kangaroo, you jump so well, and you are so strong. Please jump into the river to rescue my child! The river has swept him away and he can drown any minute!”

Kangaroo was in the middle of moving mail to a dry place.

“Bunny, come on!” Kangaroo answered. “Don’t you see that the roof is leaking and the mail is getting wet? What would all the animals think of me if I delivered damaged letters and packages to them?”

Come back tomorrow, then I will help you.”







*B*unny then ran to Beaver and screamed with despair in his voice:

“Beaver, my dear Beaver, you are such a great swimmer and the swift water will not bother you. Please swim quickly and save my child!”

Beaver was busy rebuilding his dam.

“Bunny, come on!” Beaver answered. “Don’t you see that I need to repair this dam? If I do not do this now, my whole effort will be for nothing.

The river will wash away my business and I will have to start all over again.”





La casa '09



*H*earing this, Bunny sat down under a bush and started to cry. He was losing hope. He could see his baby desperately holding onto the branch, gasping his last breaths as the current washed him further away. Beaver did not feel good about the decision he made. He knew he needed to complete his dam before it all washed away, but his heart was touched by the news about Little Bunny. After a few minutes he finally decided that Little Bunny's life was more important than any business. He plunged into the water.

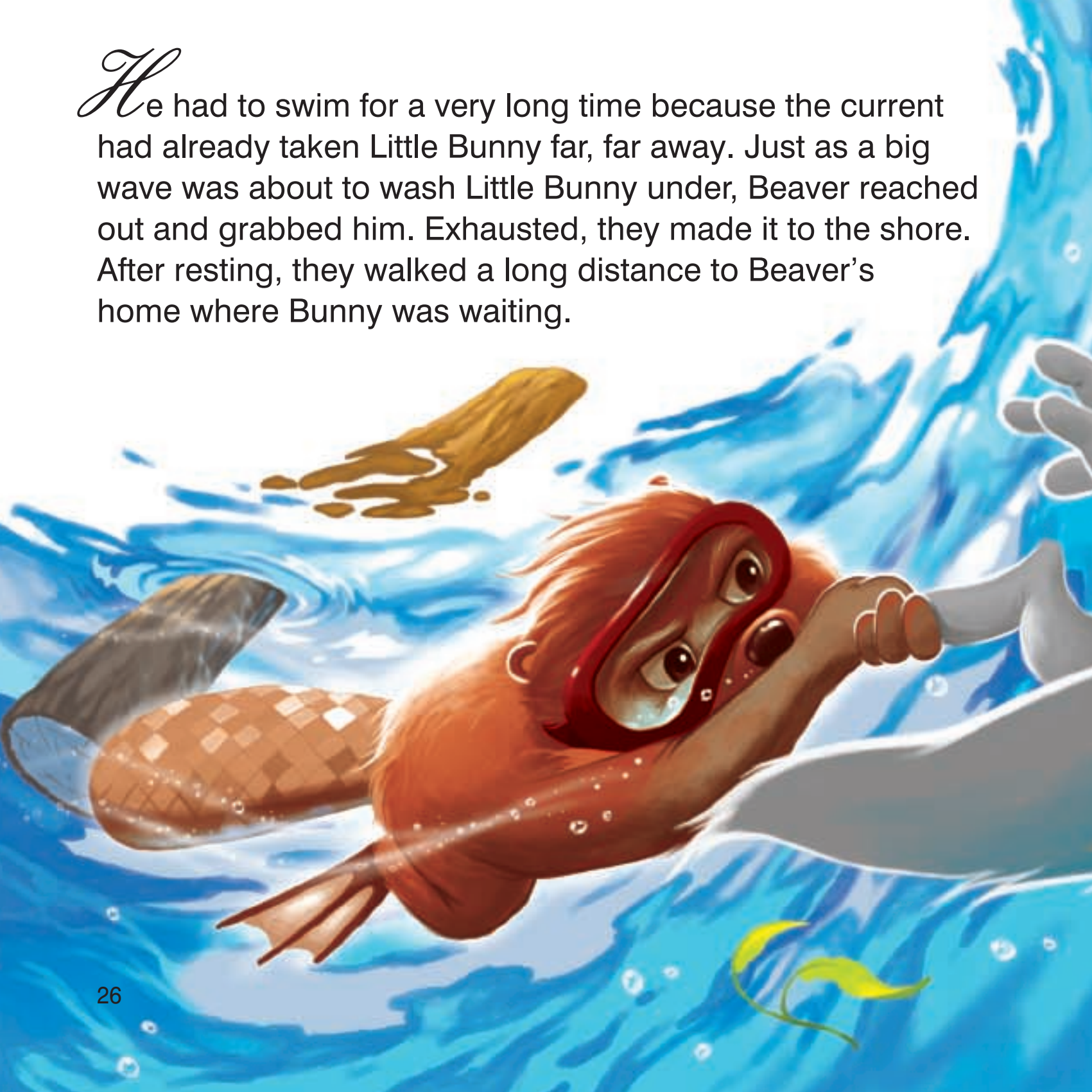








*H*e had to swim for a very long time because the current had already taken Little Bunny far, far away. Just as a big wave was about to wash Little Bunny under, Beaver reached out and grabbed him. Exhausted, they made it to the shore. After resting, they walked a long distance to Beaver's home where Bunny was waiting.





Richard '09



*B*unny's tears turned to joy as he hugged his baby. He could not have been happier. Bunny thanked Beaver over and over again. He knew that the river had destroyed the dam and that Beaver lost everything to rescue Little Bunny.

“Dear Beaver,” Bunny said. “I am deeply thankful to you. I will never forget what you did for me. You are a true friend!”, and they scampered off to rebuild the dam together.









# **PARENTAL GUIDELINES**

**by Gary Chapman**

The need for friendship is deeply embedded into the human psyche. We are born with it and it stays with us throughout our life's journey. Mature friendships help us become full-grown adults ready for life's many surprises. Friendships are instrumental in helping us become responsible, compassionate and capable of sacrifice for the sake of others.

Everyone needs genuine friendships, especially the youngest children who can't develop properly without them. Everyone needs help from time to time! Too often, false friendships leave our children deeply hurt with their souls affected for years to come. For this reason, parents must see to it that their children are capable of discerning between healthy friendships and those that are just surface friendships.

It is true that we cannot prevent many of the disappointments life itself will bring into our children's lives. It is also true that our children will often experience firsthand what it means to be hurt by someone they consider a friend. However, it is pertinent that as parents we have the responsibility of equipping our children with proper knowledge before they reach adulthood. We need not only to prepare them for the many situations they will have to face, but also train them to properly judge and respond to these situations.

Parents are not only their children's caretakers and guides, they are also coaches. With that in mind, let us spend time teaching our children how to avoid false friendships, and most of all, how to develop qualities which will enable them to become valuable, loving friends.

Many adults, who themselves were not properly trained as children, have problems with friendships. Often, they are incapable of forming healthy friendships or they get involved in toxic relationships. For that reason, at every stage of life, it is crucial to look at the One who—in His wisdom—created friendships. Applying God's wisdom, which teaches us a great deal about friendships, is instrumental in the proper development of a young person's character and personality.

In this respect, the Bible is an inexhaustible source for the best information one can find. Its pages introduce us to a diverse group of people and allows us to discover their souls' secrets and learn how God Himself looks at them. The Word of God will also provide us with many valuable instructions on how to conduct ourselves so that other people desire our friendship, and shows us how to evaluate the relationships we are in.

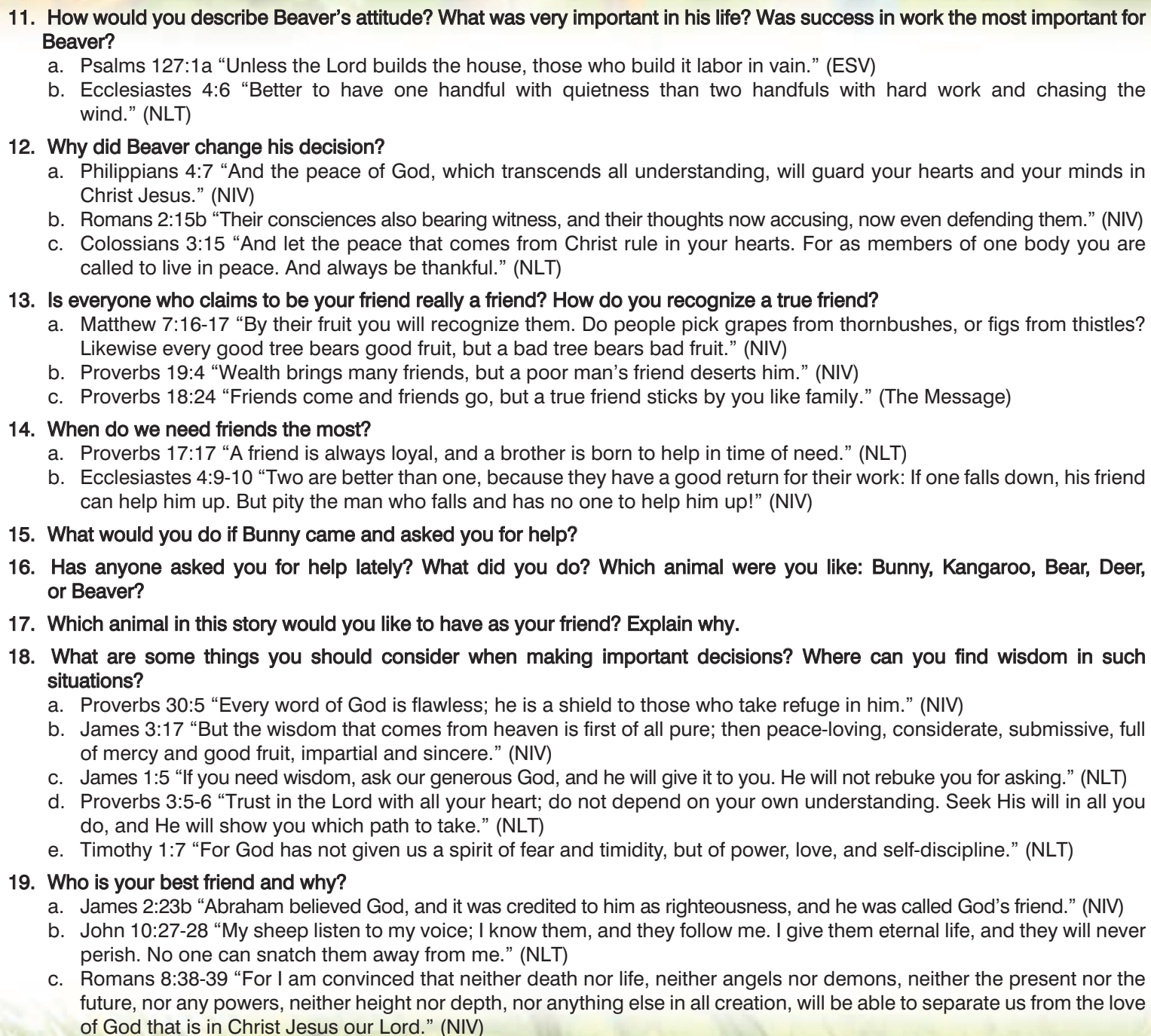
This book is a tool you can use to work with your children. The suggested questions you can ask your children upon finishing a story and the accompanying Bible verses will provide very practical help.

Reading this book with your child, followed by a conversation about the attitudes displayed by various animals, will help you and your child understand each other's worlds better, all in an ideal and harmless setting. This setting can encourage your child to be open and willing to learn, to boldly ask questions, and to accept answers with joy. We must, however, do our best to make sure that our children learn how to put their knowledge into action. What they learn needs to turn into practical wisdom for daily lives. This cannot be achieved without investing our time, discussing our children's real life situations, comparing them with the relationships described in this book, and calling on the authority of the Bible. Once we see our children apply the practical instructions from God's Word in their everyday lives, we will be able to enjoy the first taste of success in building up their character.

# QUESTIONS:

- 1. How would you describe Bunny's way of life? When and how did Bunny help the other animals?**
  - a. Matthew 7:12a "Do to others whatever you would like them to do to you." (NLT)
  - b. Romans 15:2 "We should help others do what is right and build them up in the Lord." (NLT)
  - c. 1 Thessalonians 5:15b "(...) always try to do good to each other and to all people." (NLT)
- 2. What was Bunny's motivation in helping others? Did he expect any benefits?**
  - a. 1 Corinthians 10:24 "Don't be concerned for your own good but for the good of others." (NLT)
  - b. Galatians 6:9 "So let's not get tired of doing what is good. At just the right time we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don't give up." (NLT)
  - c. Matthew 6:33 "Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need." (NLT)
- 3. What would you do if you were in Bear's position?**
- 4. How should you develop friendships? Give some examples. Did Bear do it right?**
  - a. Philippians 2:4 "Don't look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too." (NLT)
  - b. Colossians 3:23 "Work willingly at whatever you do, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people." (NLT)
  - c. Galatians 6:2 "Share each other's burdens, and in this way obey the law of Christ." (NLT)
- 5. Is it always easy to make smart decisions? Why or why not?**
  - a. Ephesians 5:16 "Redeeming the time, because the days are evil." (ASV)
  - b. James 4:17 "So whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin." (ESV)
- 6. Should decisions be based on a situation? Explain.**
  - a. Ecclesiastes 11:4 "Whoever watches the wind will not plant; whoever looks at the clouds will not reap." (NIV)
  - b. 1 Corinthians 14:8 "Again, if the trumpet does not sound a clear call, who will get ready for battle?" (NIV)
  - c. Colossians 4:5 "Live wisely (...), and make the most of every opportunity." (NLT)
- 7. What was the most important in Deer's life? Do you agree this is important? Why or why not? Would you like to have Deer as your friend?**
  - a. Ecclesiastes 7:1a "A good reputation is more valuable than costly perfume." (NLT)
  - b. 1 Samuel 16:7b "Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart." (NIV)
  - c. James 3:16-18 "For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice. But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere. Peacemakers who sow in peace raise a harvest of righteousness." (NIV)
- 8. How did Kangaroo let everyone's opinion impact his decisions?**
  - a. Proverbs 20:6 "Many a man proclaims his own loyalty, but a faithful man who can find?" (RSV).
  - b. Ephesians 5:15 "So be careful how you live. Don't live like fools, but like those who are wise." (NLT)
- 9. What do you think is more important in life, work or friendships? What do you think was Kangaroo's opinion?**
  - a. Matthew 7:12a "Do to others whatever you would like them to do to you." (NLT)
  - b. Matthew 25:40b "When you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were doing it to me!" (NLT)
- 10. Did Bear, Deer, and Kangaroo really listen to what Bunny asked them for? How would you explain your answer?**
  - a. Proverbs 3:28 "If you can help your neighbor now, don't say, Come back tomorrow, and then I'll help you." (NLT)
  - b. Proverbs 21:13 "Those who shut their ears to the cries of the poor will be ignored in their own time of need." (NLT)
  - c. Proverbs 13:12 "Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but a dream fulfilled is a tree of life." (NLT)



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- 11. How would you describe Beaver's attitude? What was very important in his life? Was success in work the most important for Beaver?**
- Psalms 127:1a "Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain." (ESV)
  - Ecclesiastes 4:6 "Better to have one handful with quietness than two handfuls with hard work and chasing the wind." (NLT)
- 12. Why did Beaver change his decision?**
- Philippians 4:7 "And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." (NIV)
  - Romans 2:15b "Their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts now accusing, now even defending them." (NIV)
  - Colossians 3:15 "And let the peace that comes from Christ rule in your hearts. For as members of one body you are called to live in peace. And always be thankful." (NLT)
- 13. Is everyone who claims to be your friend really a friend? How do you recognize a true friend?**
- Matthew 7:16-17 "By their fruit you will recognize them. Do people pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? Likewise every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit." (NIV)
  - Proverbs 19:4 "Wealth brings many friends, but a poor man's friend deserts him." (NIV)
  - Proverbs 18:24 "Friends come and friends go, but a true friend sticks by you like family." (The Message)
- 14. When do we need friends the most?**
- Proverbs 17:17 "A friend is always loyal, and a brother is born to help in time of need." (NLT)
  - Ecclesiastes 4:9-10 "Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work: If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up!" (NIV)
- 15. What would you do if Bunny came and asked you for help?**
- 16. Has anyone asked you for help lately? What did you do? Which animal were you like: Bunny, Kangaroo, Bear, Deer, or Beaver?**
- 17. Which animal in this story would you like to have as your friend? Explain why.**
- 18. What are some things you should consider when making important decisions? Where can you find wisdom in such situations?**
- Proverbs 30:5 "Every word of God is flawless; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him." (NIV)
  - James 3:17 "But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere." (NIV)
  - James 1:5 "If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and he will give it to you. He will not rebuke you for asking." (NLT)
  - Proverbs 3:5-6 "Trust in the Lord with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Seek His will in all you do, and He will show you which path to take." (NLT)
  - Timothy 1:7 "For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline." (NLT)
- 19. Who is your best friend and why?**
- James 2:23b "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness, and he was called God's friend." (NIV)
  - John 10:27-28 "My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish. No one can snatch them away from me." (NLT)
  - Romans 8:38-39 "For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (NIV)