The Tortoise and the Hare

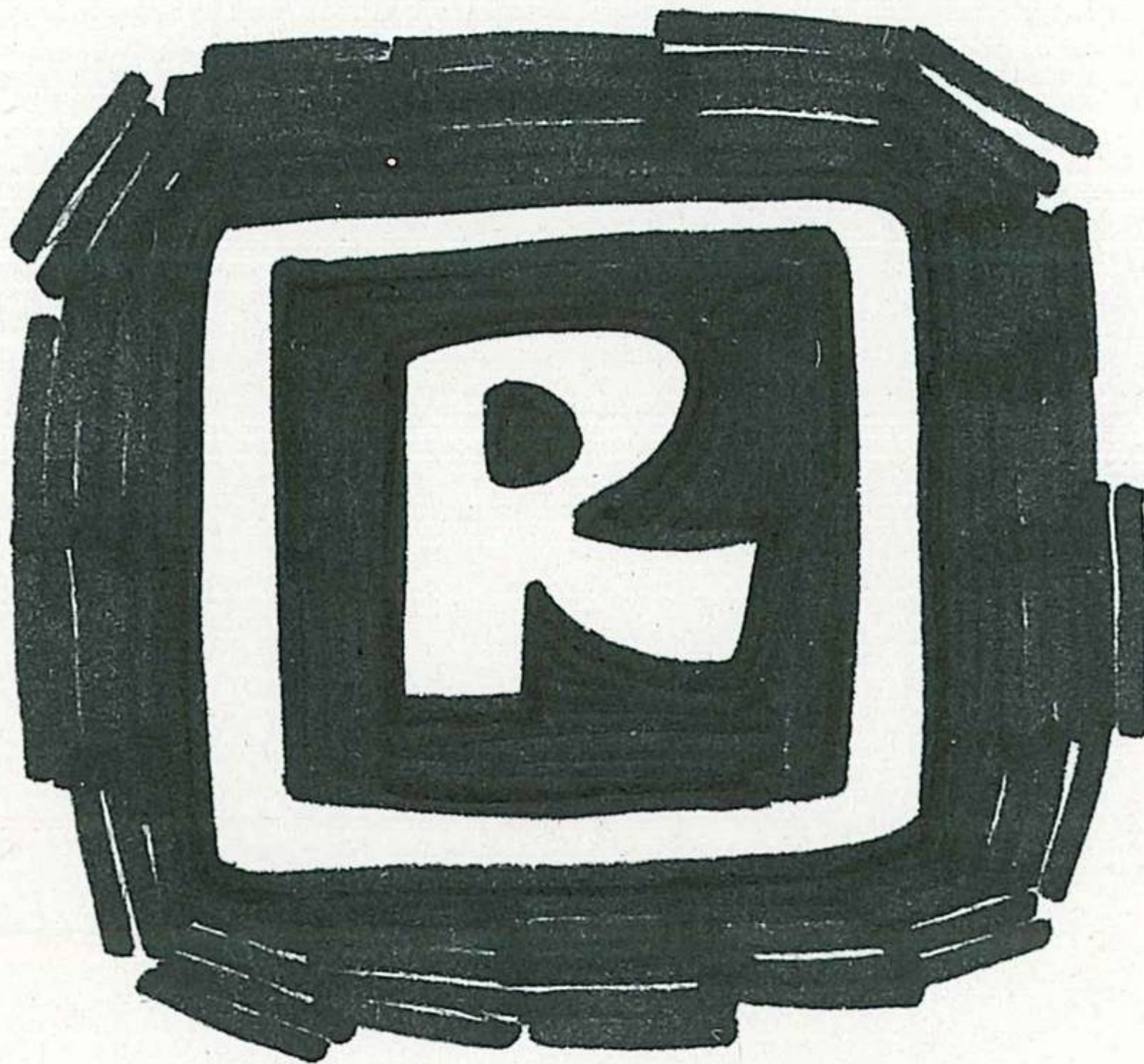## An African Folktale

HOPE *Hear*

Million word gap project

Children whose parents read to them have heard 30 million more words before they start school. Help your children prepare for school.

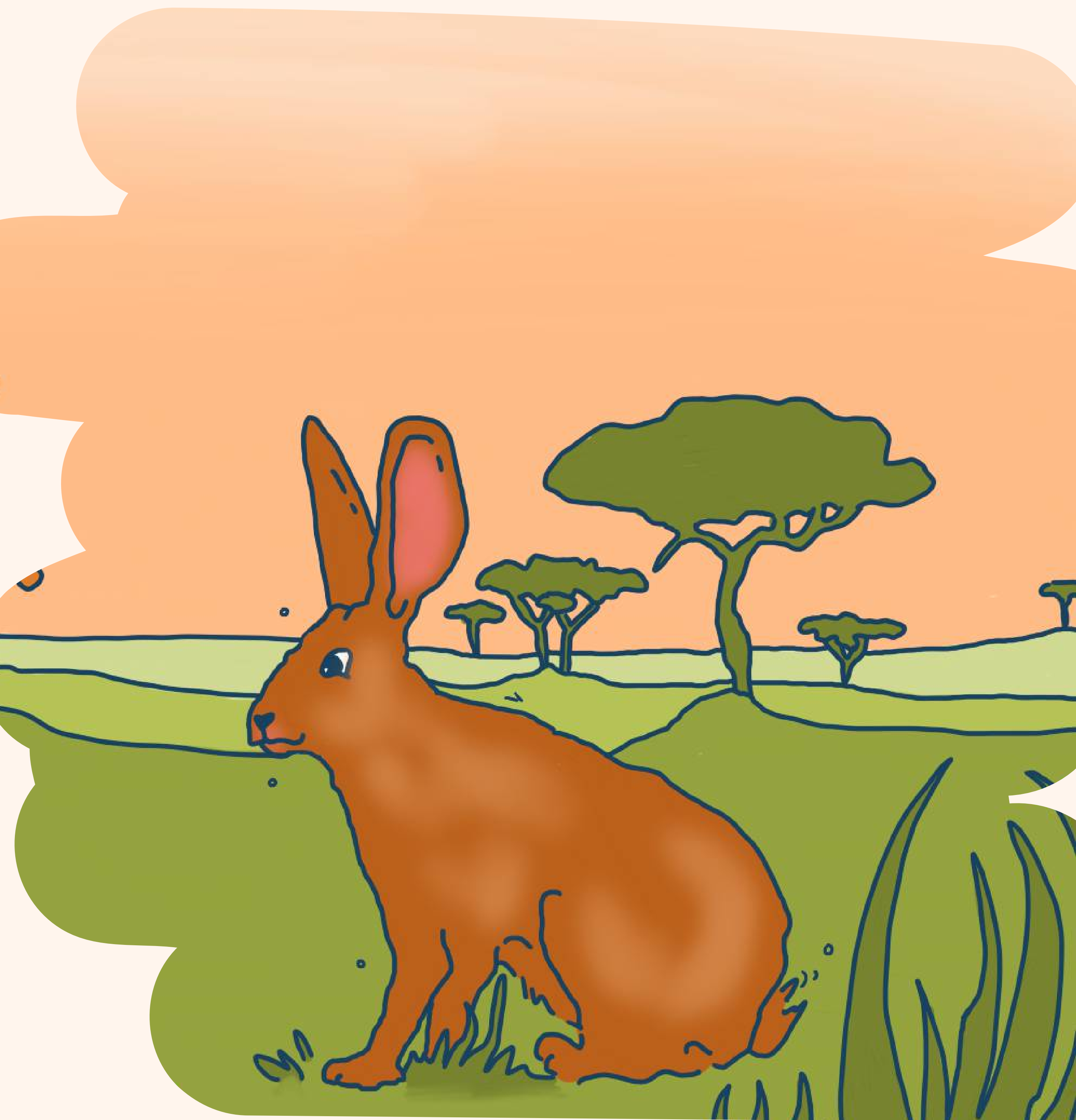www.hope-hear.org
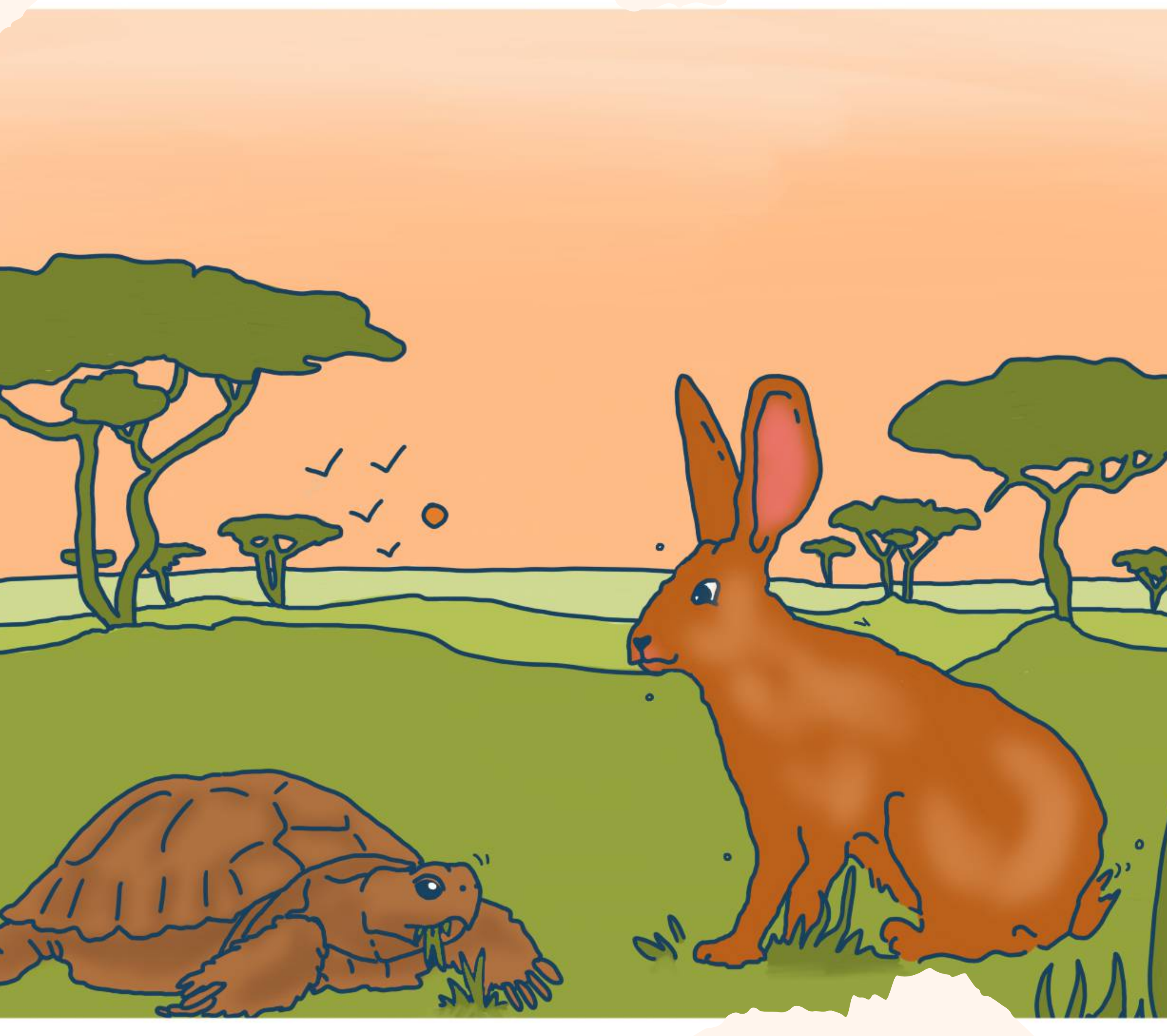#HOPE-learn

Illustrated by

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Once upon a time, in a bright, sunny African grassland, there lived a hare named Kazi. Kazi was as quick as lightning and loved to race! He was always hopping around, showing off his speed.
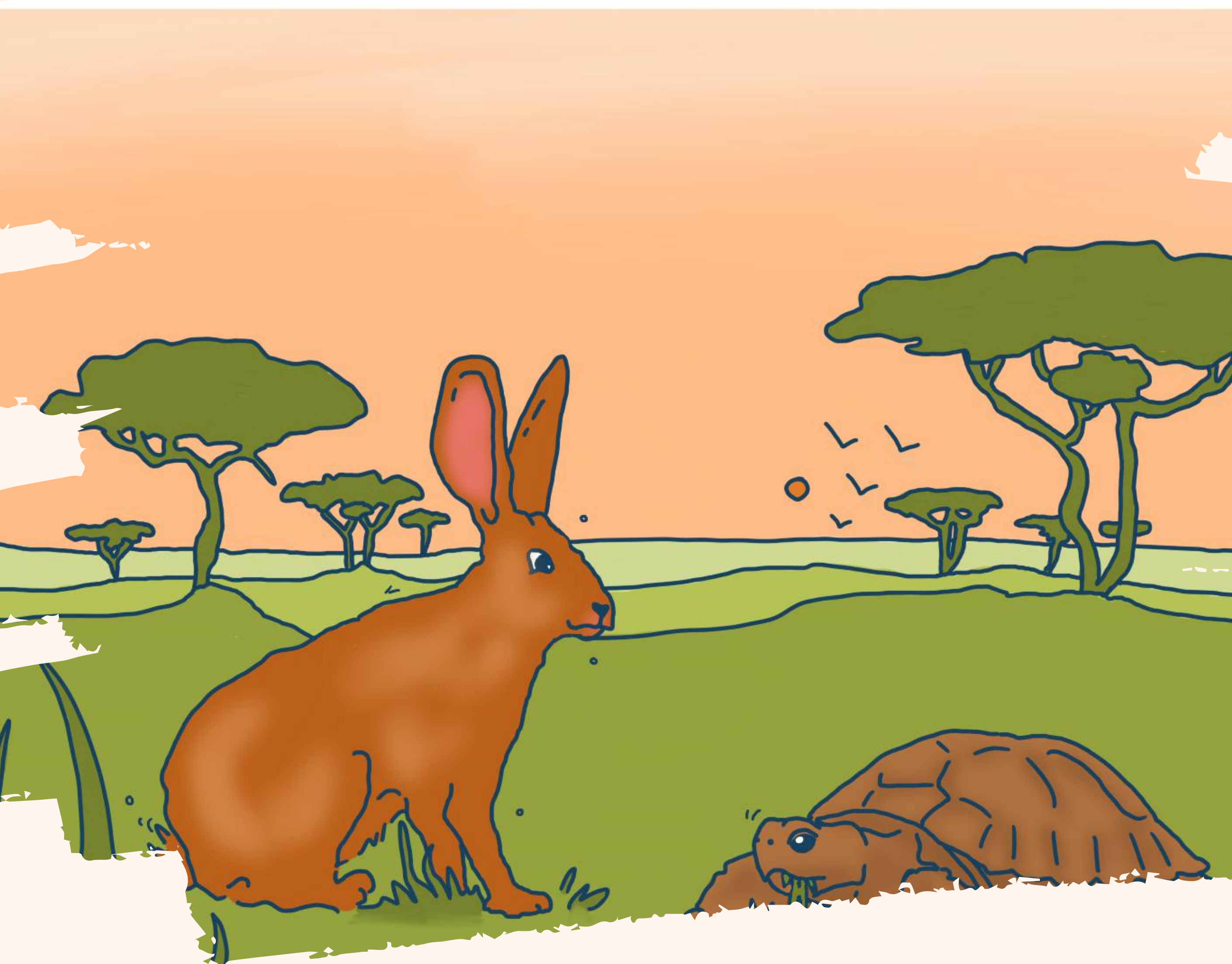
One day, while Kazi was racing through the tall grass, he came across Thomas, a slow-moving tortoise who was quietly munching on some leaves.
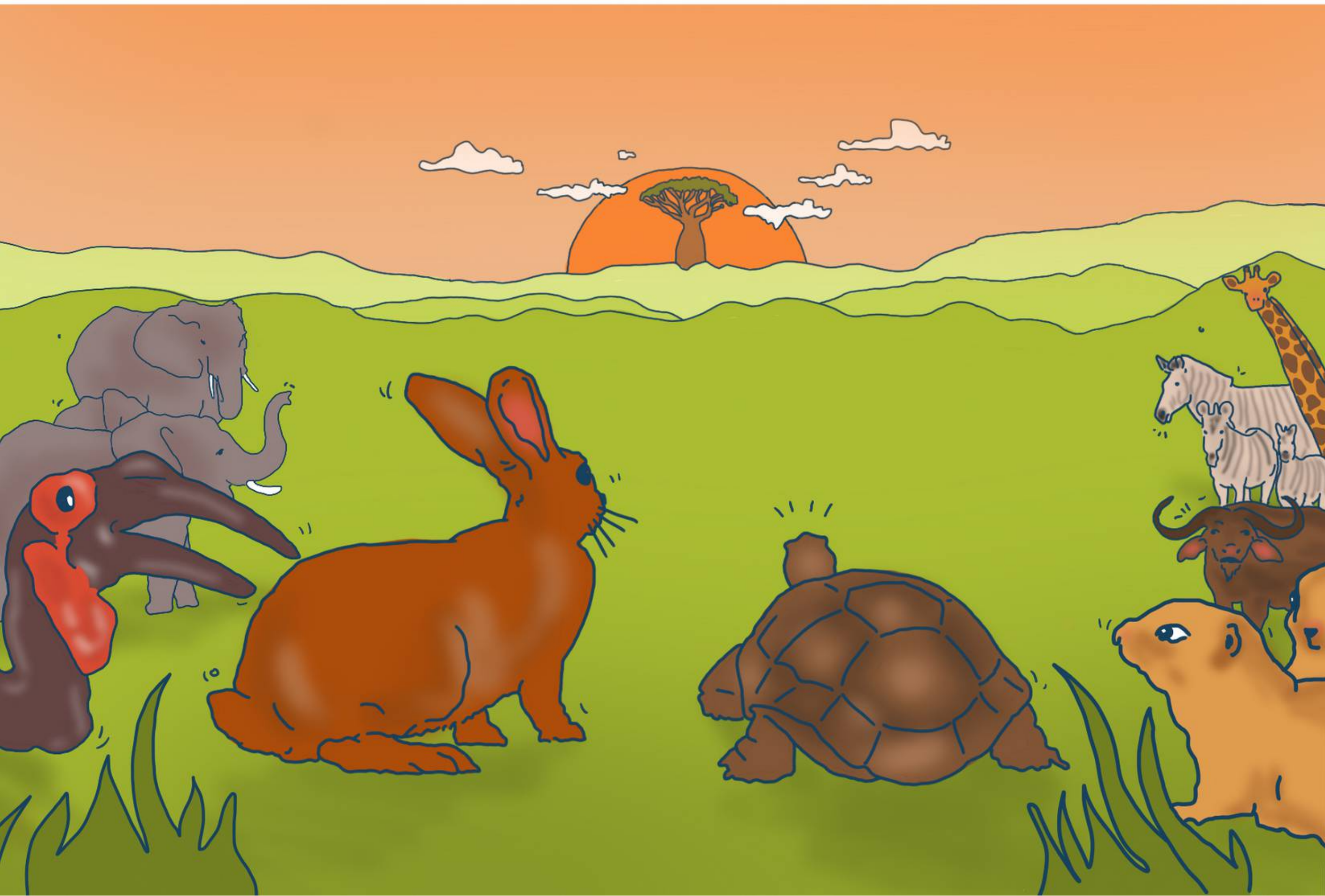
"Hello, Thomas!" Kazi said with a big grin. "I'm the fastest animal in the grassland! I can race all day and never lose. Do you think you can keep up with me?"

Thomas looked up slowly and smiled. "I may not be fast, Kazi, but I'm steady and determined. Let's have a race to see who reaches the big baobab tree first!"

Kazi laughed loudly. "You? A tortoise? I'll reach the baobab tree long before you even start moving!"
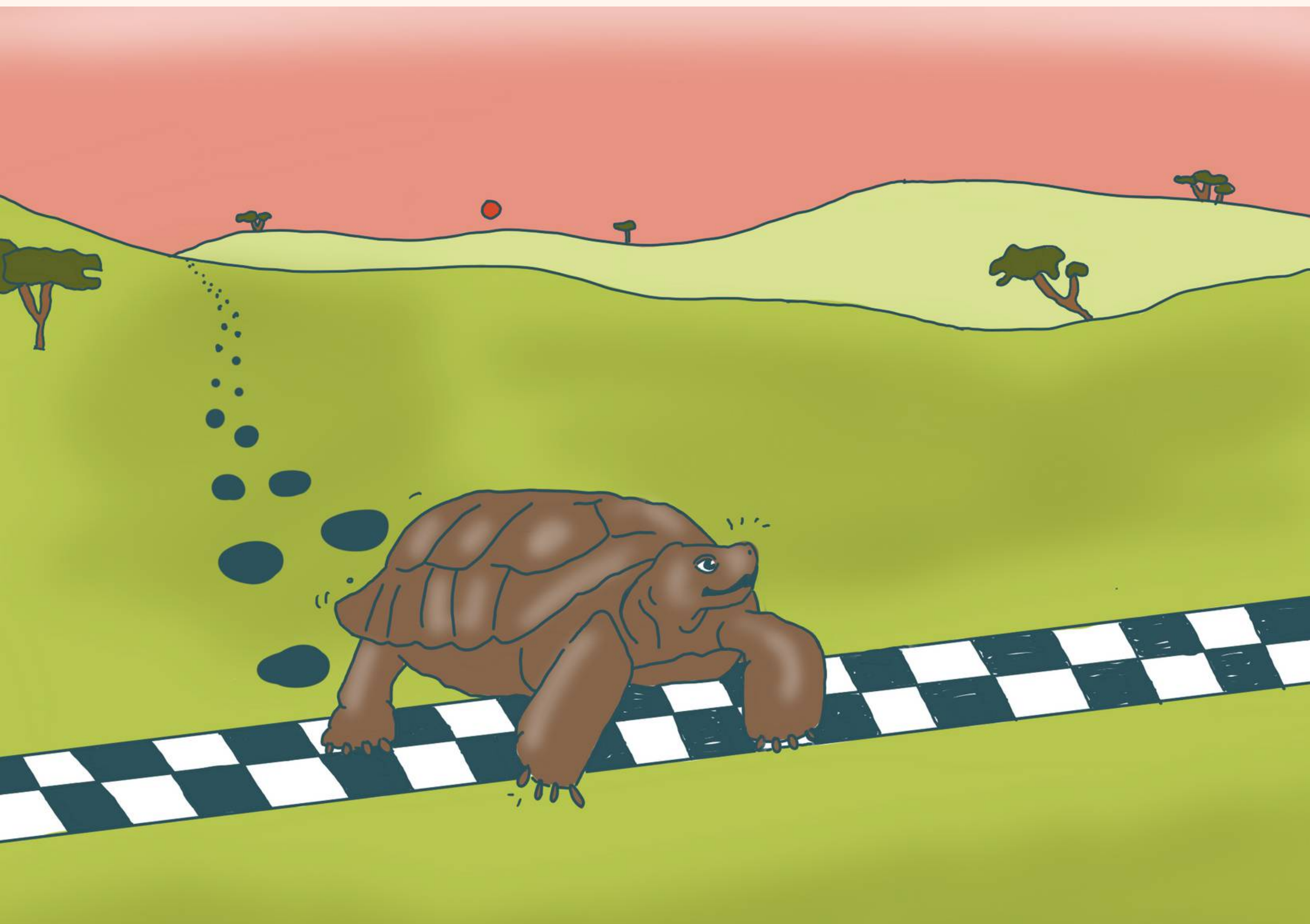
The other animals in the grassland gathered to watch. They all knew how fast Kazi was, and they thought Thomas was being very brave to challenge him.
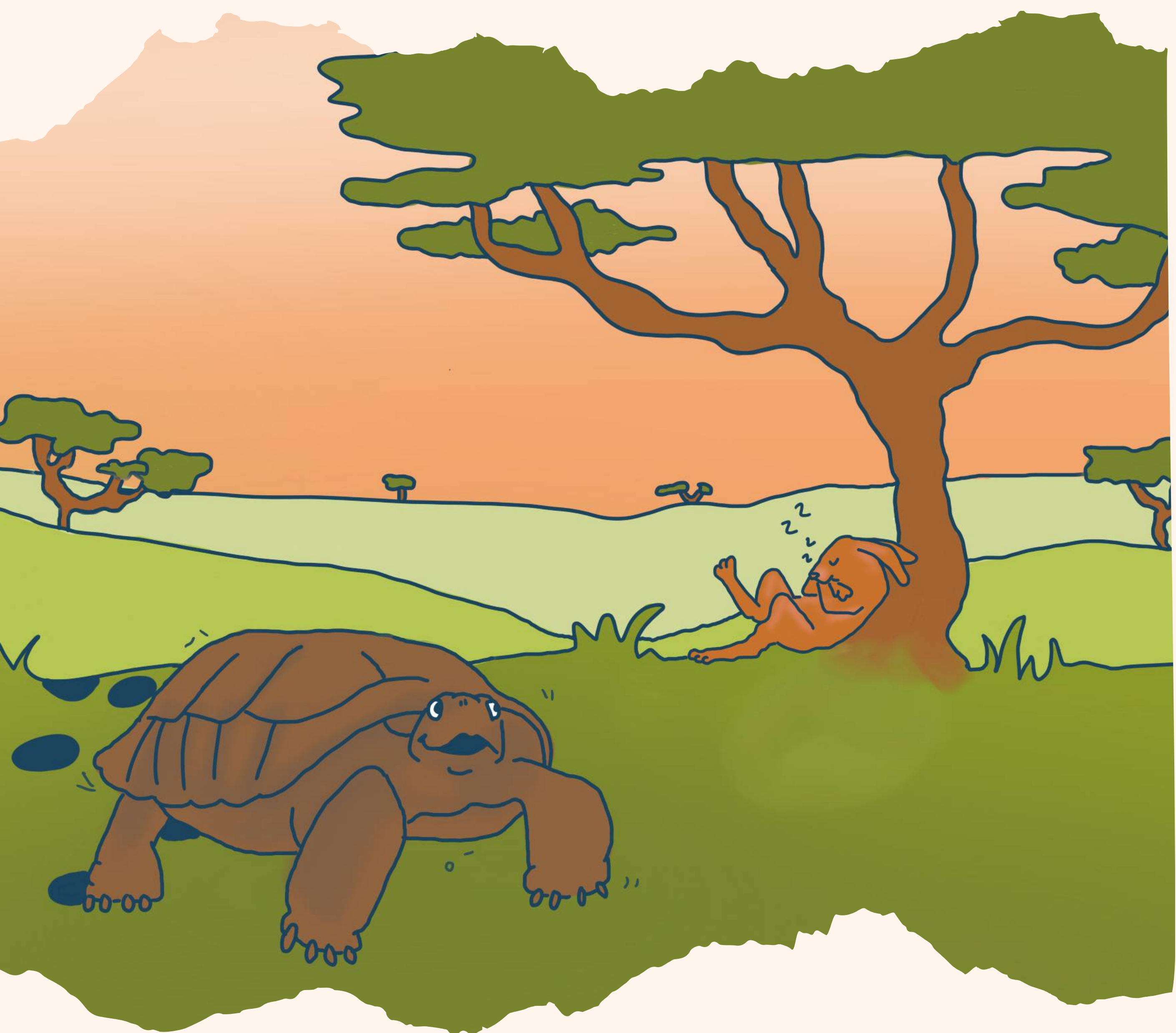
The race began with a loud "On your marks, get set, go!"

Kazi dashed off like the wind, his feet barely touching the ground. He was so fast that in just a few minutes, he was far ahead of Thomas, who was slowly making his way across the grass, step by step.
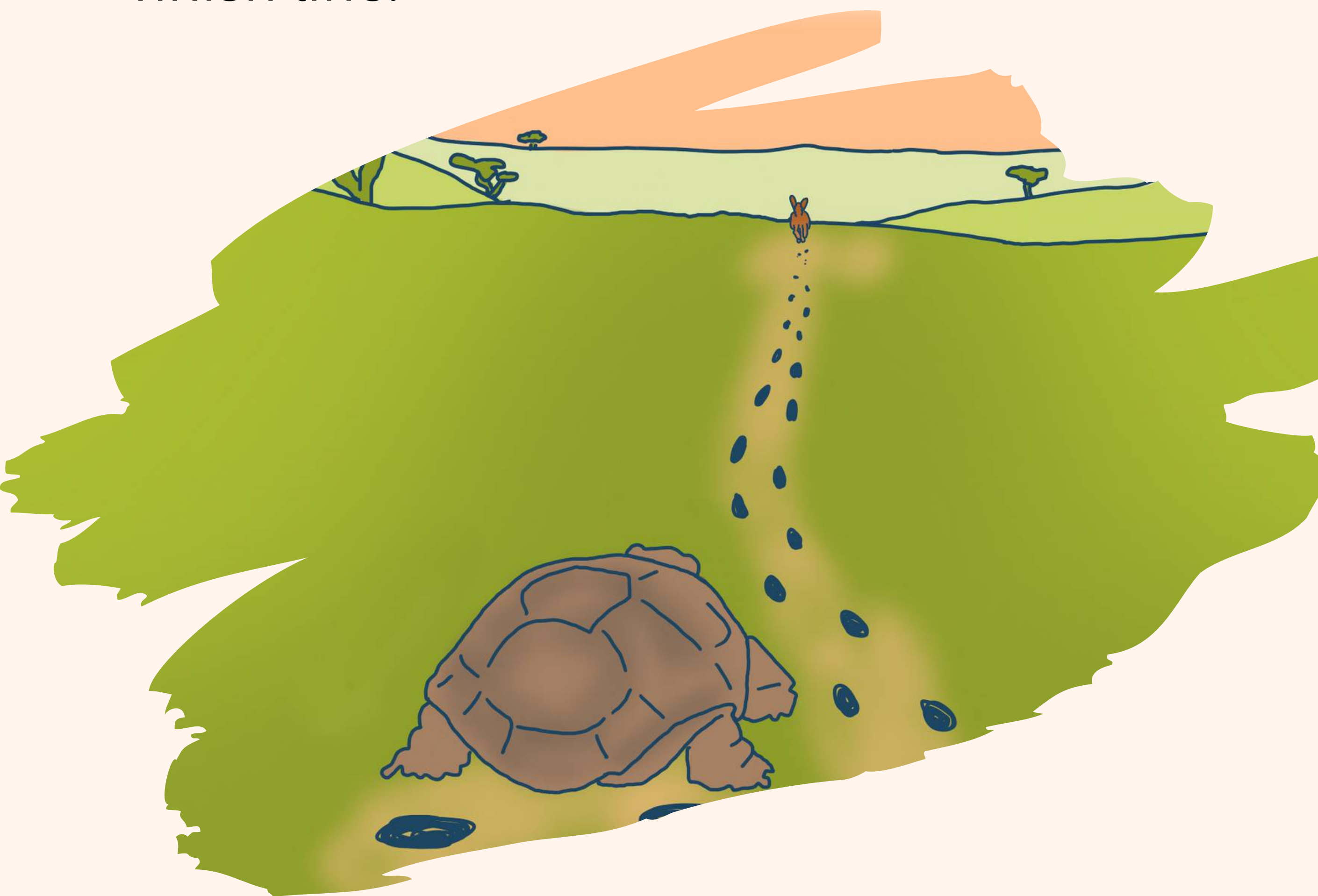
Kazi looked back and saw Thomas far, far behind. "I've got plenty of time!" he thought. "I'll just take a little nap under that tree and rest."

So, Kazi lay down in the shade of a tall acacia tree, closed his eyes, and fell asleep.
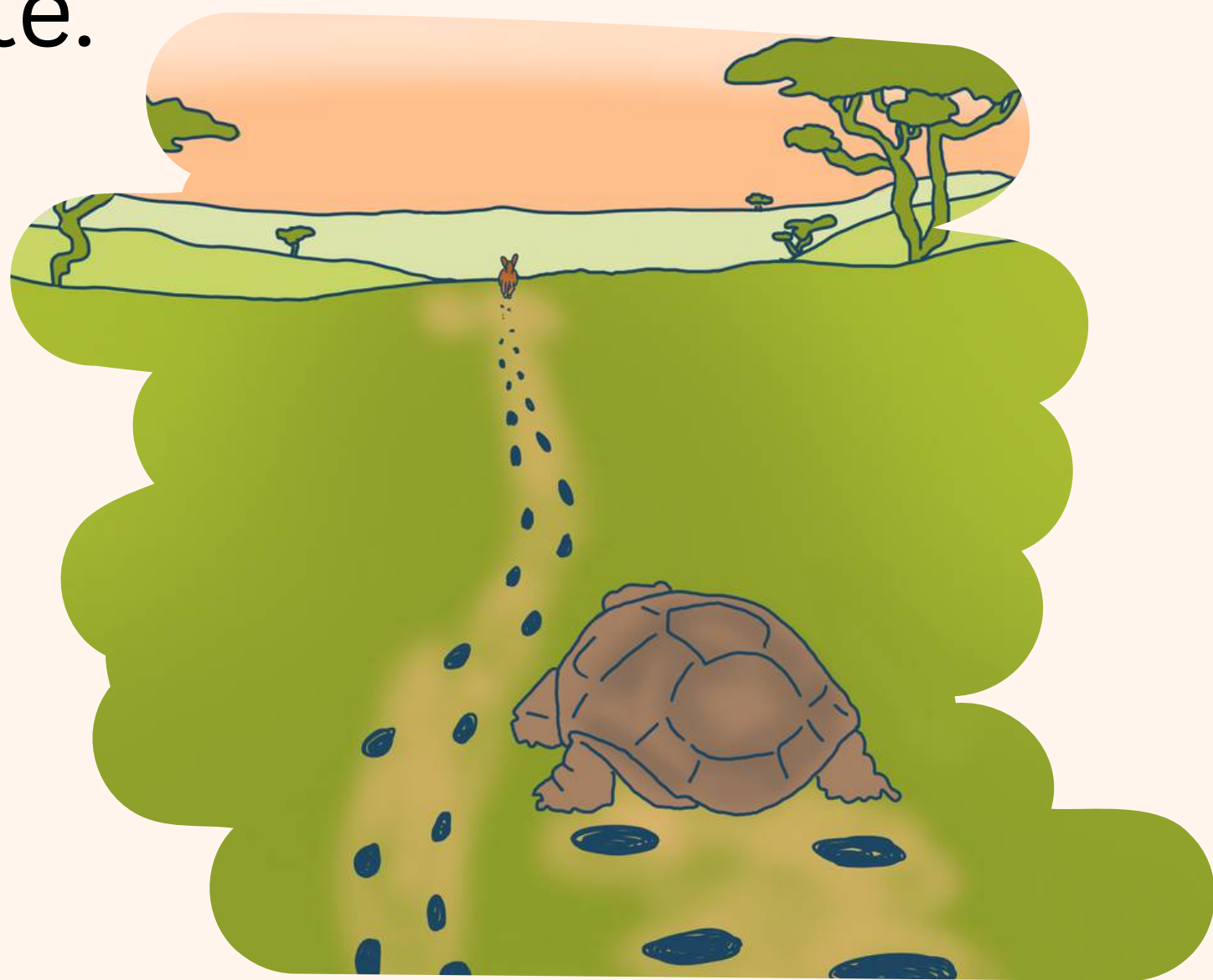
Meanwhile, Thomas kept moving at his own slow and steady pace. He didn't rush or stop. Step by step, he kept moving forward toward the baobab tree, never looking back.

Hours passed, and Kazi continued to sleep soundly, unaware that Thomas was getting closer and closer to the finish line.
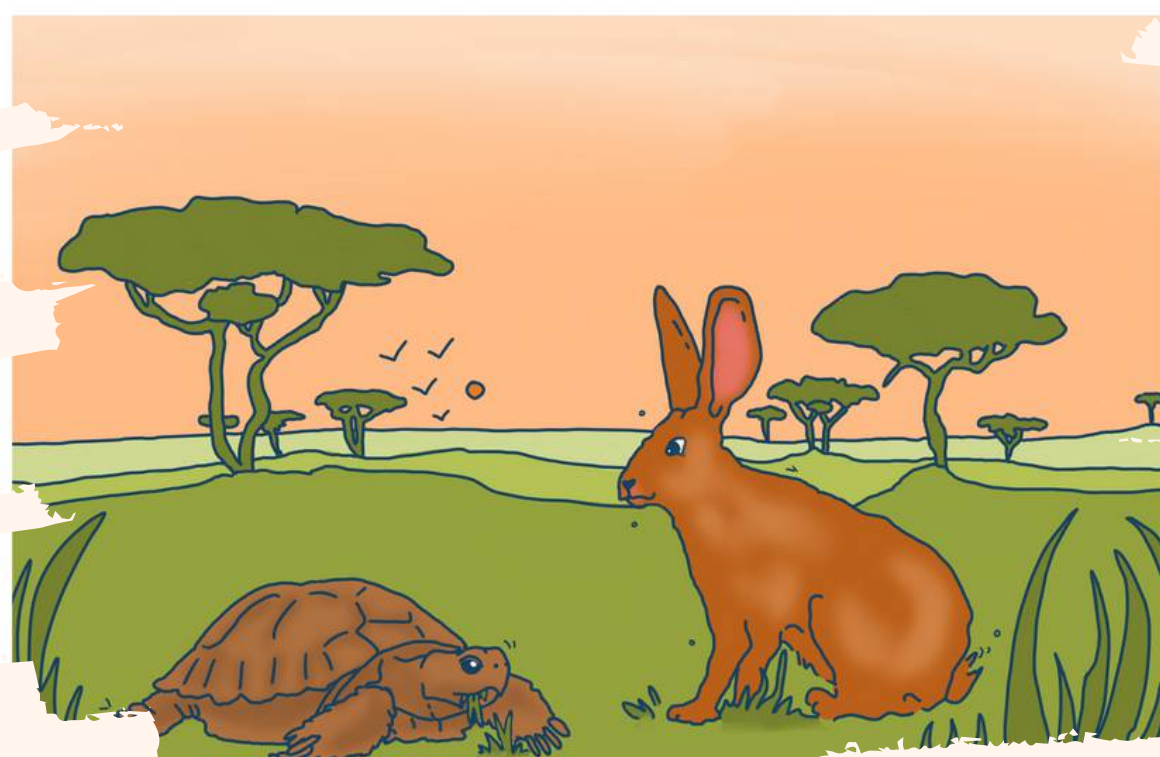
Finally, Thomas reached the baobab tree and crossed the finish line, just as Kazi was waking up from his nap.

Kazi jumped up and looked around. "Oh no! Thomas is already there!" he said, and he raced as fast as he could, but it was too late.

Thomas smiled and said, "You see, Kazi, it's not always about being the fastest. Sometimes, slow and steady wins the race."

All the animals cheered for Thomas, and Kazi realized that rushing and resting too much wasn't the best way to win.

From that day on, Kazi learned that patience and determination were the true keys to success, and that sometimes, it's better to go slow and steady.