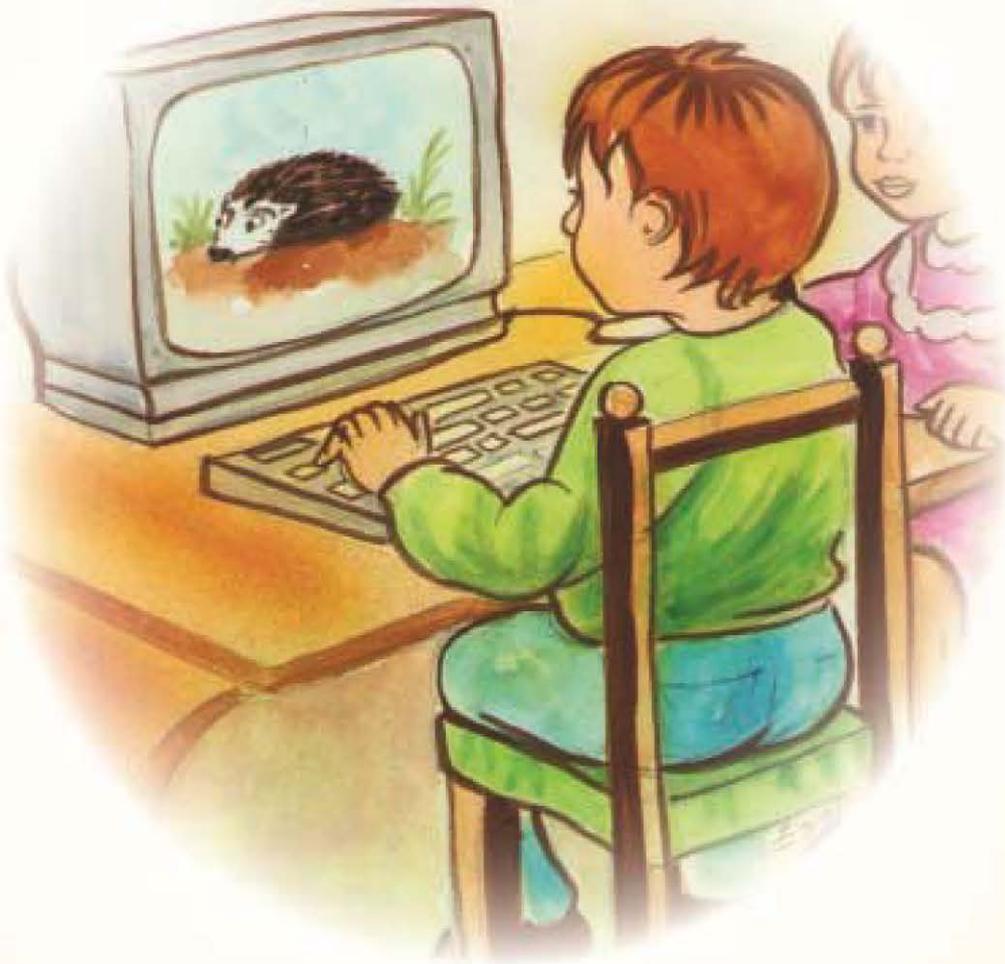


# THE FANTASTIC GIFT



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# THE FANTASTIC GIFT

*What kind of gift did the father offer to his son Zohir following his success at school? And what did he find inside it? This an exciting story adorned with beautiful and meaningful illustrations, animating at developing the imagination of the child and enhancing his creative thinking. It builds then the child's conscious mind and mature personality.*

Zohir put the wonderful gift on his desk. He then started beholding its parts with marvel. He said to himself:

- What a happy day! It is like a holiday, because I have earned this gift from my family as a reward to my success in school... A computer! Zohir was aged ten, in his prime years, highly mobile, very active, as if he were a fish in the sea of life. He loved his parents, his friends and his teacher. He was eager to know more about the secrets of his wonderful computer, like games and funny stories.

In his spare time, Zohir turned on his computer. The small screen displayed the names of the games and the activities, and the themes of illustrated stories for children. Actually, there were plenty of them.

Zohir clicked on one illustrated story. It bore the title *The Forest School*. He scrolled down the sequences of the story of the fantastic school. He saw a rabbit in sports suit singing:

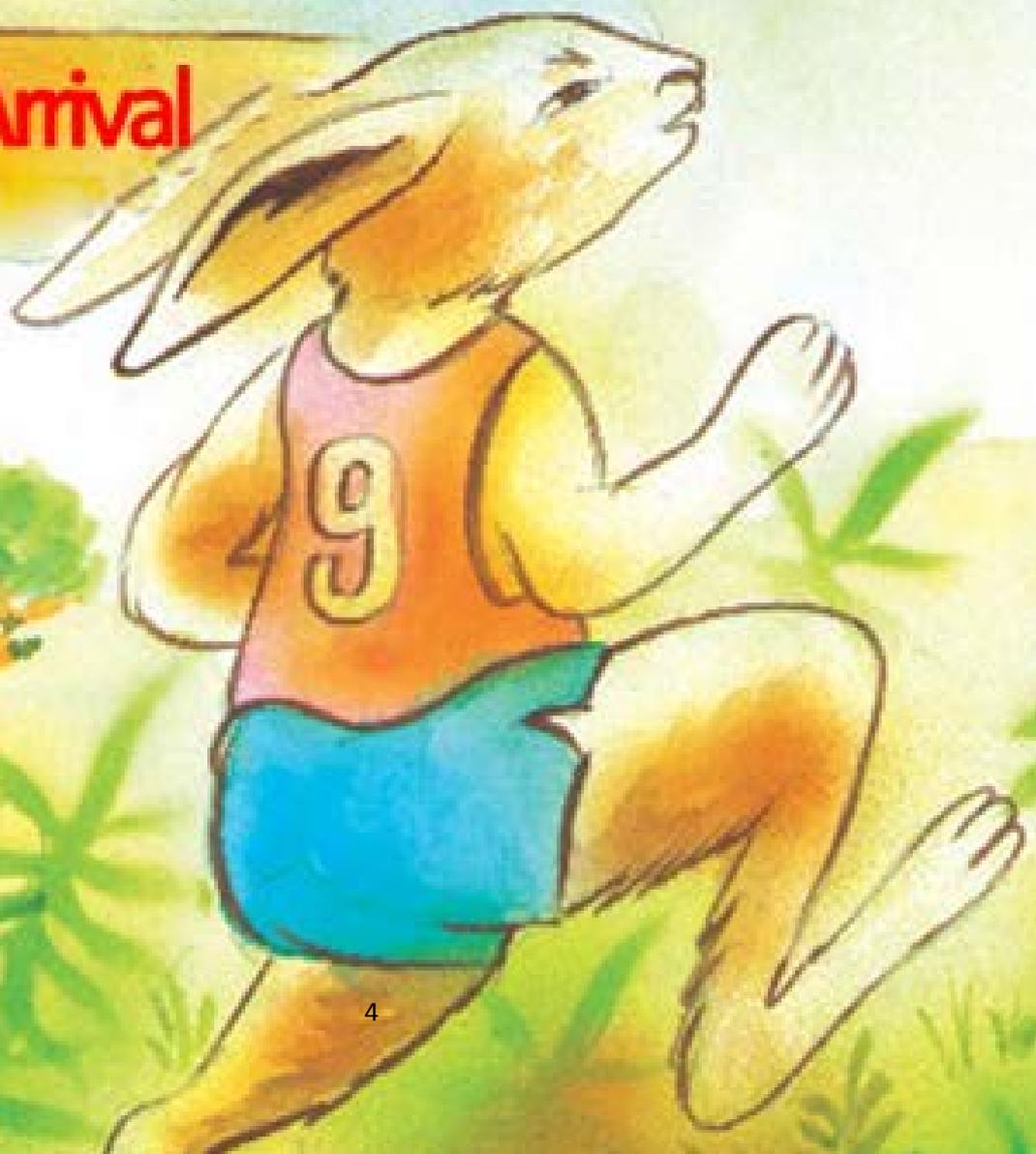
*The forest is my school*

*Wherein I meet my friends*

*Nature is my school*

*With its splendid sceneries*

# The Arrival



Afterwards, Zohir greeted everybody and shook the hand of the hedgehog.

After a short while, he asked the hedgehog:

- Who is teaching us this week? What is the name of the headmaster?

The obstinate hedgehog responded:

- Our headmaster is the gazelle, and then comes the camel. The names of the teaching board members are written in the school's newspaper, inscribed on the leaves of the willow tree...



Zohir followed that story with great interest. He learned a lot about the species of animals, as to how they would attend the lessons during the days of the week through an astonishing system. He enjoyed the quotes of the teachers through the cleverest animals in the world.

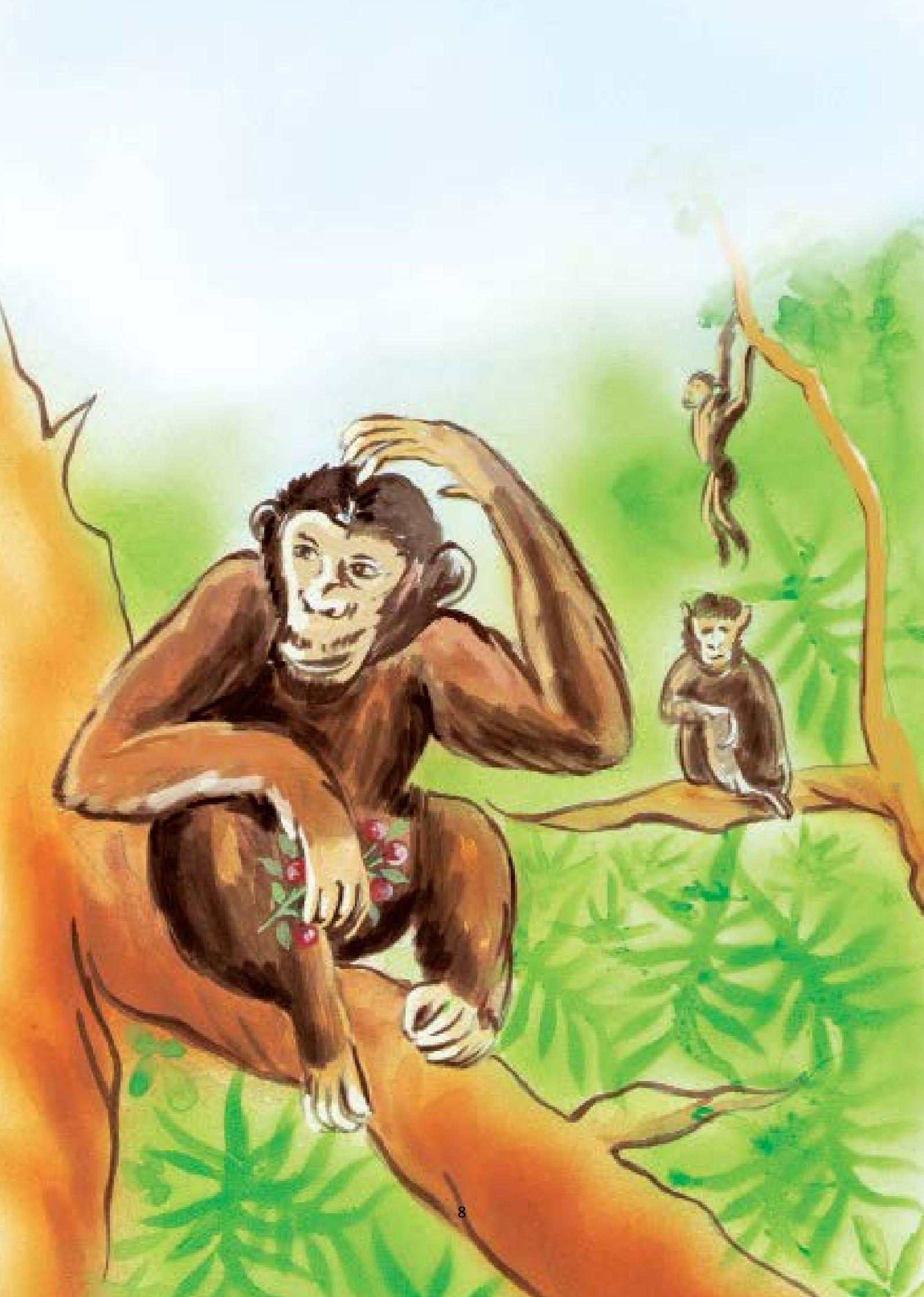
An idea came into his mind. He talked to his sister, Sana:

- I am going to ask the animals to answer the following question:  
*“What did life teach to you?”*

After a moment, he executed his idea, thanks to the encouragements of his sister.

He wrote the question using the keyboard. The words appeared on the screen, and then he said:

- What animal will be the first to be asked?



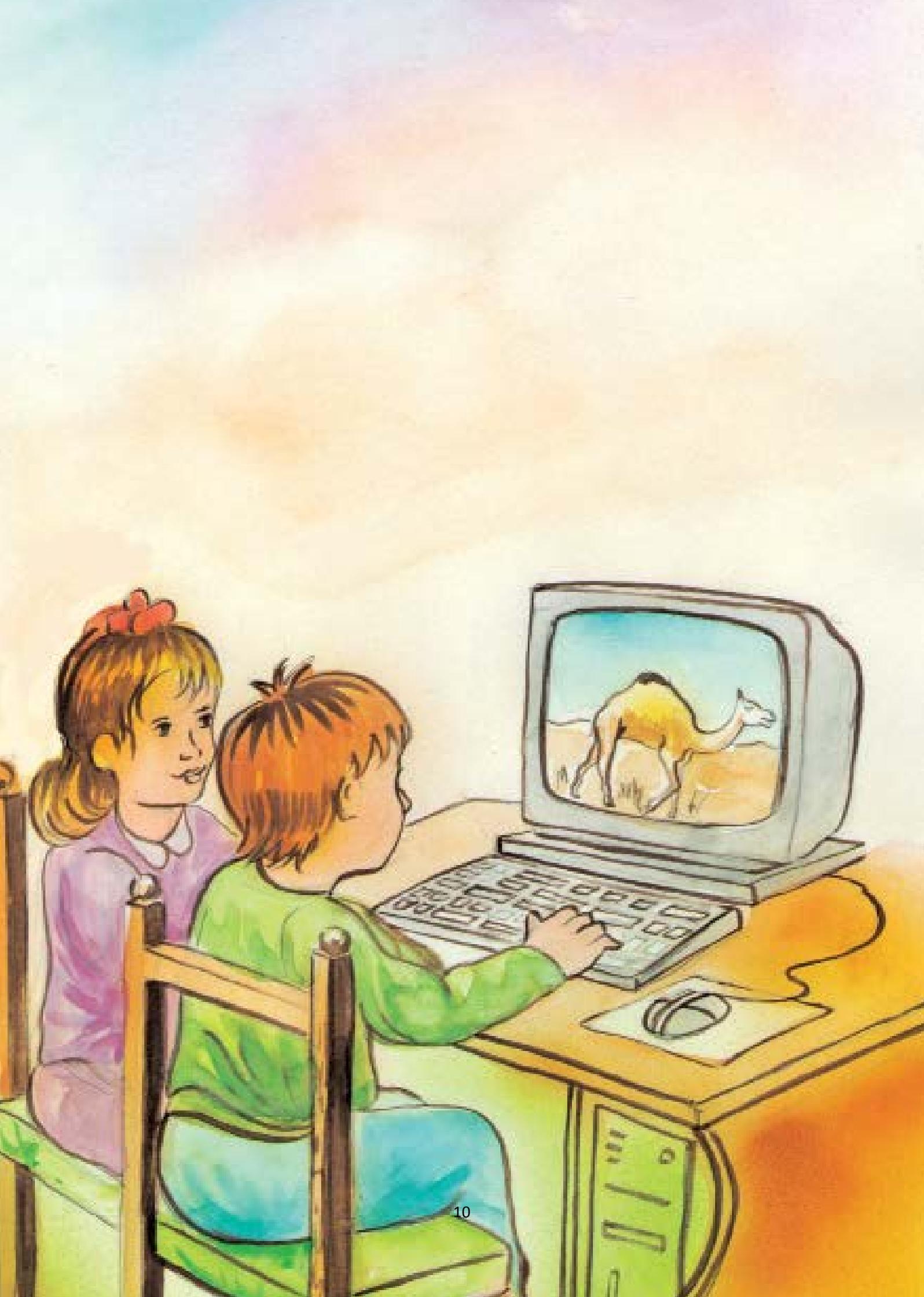
He thought for a while. He said:

- I found it! The monkey! The monkey!

He entered his name on the screen and waited for the answer...

Suddenly, the monkey showed up and jumped, staring at everyone, saying:

- Do you know who I am? I am the monkey, the bright spark! I am the one who had danced in the space. I am agile, light, kind, a friend of millions of boys and girls! I am skilled in computer. I like music, I do sports, and I love nature, my everlasting and cleanest and highest residence. Life taught me a golden wisdom: *“Take from life only what you need and from time only what is pure.”*



Zohir had been impressed by the answers of the monkey. He then said:

- Let me now ask the camel.

He typed it. It was soon displayed on the screen a sea of sand with its undulating dunes. The camel turned up with the two eyes bore oases of hope and the four hooves were covered by grains of sand. The camel talked on and on:

- The harsh life and the dry desert taught me that patience was the key of easing and a cure for all the throes of time. Hunger and thirst taught me the meaning of deprivation, and I therefore love the poor. My hump taught me the significance of the disability, and I took it as a secure storage in case of dire moments, to get from it a new strength. Despite of difficulties, I like the desert, because it taught me the meaning of life. What is more, it is my homeland. As the saying goes: *“Everything grows up before it decays. Yet, only the homeland remains small, in need of care.”*

Zohir was bemused. He then asked the same question to the ant. A few seconds later, the ant appeared on the screen, quiet and demure, walking shyly. She stood and said:

- You all know the story; that of me and the cicada. You have certainly learned from it the lesson and the moral. Truly it has been said: “*Who is industrious, will surely succeed, and who sows, will surely reap.*” But the dormant and lazy person will always feel regrets. I have another story with King Solomon!



The life of ants swings between ups and downs, coming and going, working and saving... Tribes learn from us, like the Japanese people. The ants are remarkable. They live in peace, worship work, always active and tireless. Life taught me that survival is for the most skilled individuals, and there is no welfare without work. Through pleasure we get our earnings. As a human poet said:

*Who fears climbing the mountains  
Will always live inside the holes*

Zohir asked the very question to the horse. His query was displayed in the screen, but the white horse was late, busy in galloping in the green meadows. When the horses came closer, Zohir told him:  
- Despite your long legs, you are one minute late. One minute equals centuries of our short lifespan! For this reason, I deny to you speaking today.

So, Zohir questioned another animal.

It was the elephant, who hurried up from quite a far-away land, carrying the flavors of India and Pakistan, and the breezes of Lake Victoria in the heights of the Nile and Ethiopia. The elephant stopped, whined, grazed, and then said:

- Listen to me carefully, my dear friends. There are two blessings in this life: good health and peace of mind. Thus, ivory and crown have no value! I hate oppression because it is sour, and the more it lasts, the more it swells. Life taught me that goodness is in contentment and safety is in tolerance. Making people feel good is both honorable and hard. Yet, pleasing to God brings total blissfulness.



Once the wise elephant vanished from the screen, Zohir commented:

- This computer is really wonderful.

He then asked for another animal:

- Let's see what the dog will say about life, which honored him a little and humiliated him a lot...

The dog appeared on the screen panting, his tongue dangling out because of the heat.

- *Haw! Haw!* I tell you a single word, a sentence, a maxim, a question, and then I end with an inquiry, before I leave, as the less said, the better:

*“Loyalty is the character of the nobility. People set me an example of loyalty! Who is the most faithful animal to humans? To conclude, I dare say: who did travel first to space, fellow living beings?”*



Zohir went on querying more animals, like the wolf, the lion, the ostrich, the hedgehog, the bear, the fox, and so on.

Zohir then moved to another activity. He started designing weird shapes and strange drawing. After a while, he switched off the computer to reflect seriously on this device. The computer had been his companion all the time, save during school and sleep and food. He even called it by “*my magic friend.*”

After one day of reflection and hesitation, Zohir decided upon doing something...

Do you wonder what Zohir had decided to carry out?

He said:

- I am going to open this device to discover its content and to see that wonderful world inside it. For example, the location of the animals, like the wolf and the monkey and the kind rabbit. I want to know more about the secrets of *Google* and *Facebook*. What a fantastic adventure!

Zohir cut off the electric supply from the computer. He then took a screwdriver and began to dismantle the device, piece by piece. The keyboard... The base... The case... The memory... The hard drive. He was astonished to find very complex and minute parts, unlike what he had expected to see!

Once he was finished beholding the parts, whenever he tried to restore the device back to its first functioning state, he failed. He almost regretted what he had done.

After a short rest, he tried again to mount the device, but he could not. As the confusion overwhelmed him, he went out to the balcony and stared at the horizon as if looking for an answer or a solution to his problem in the screen of space.

A period of silence and reflection seemed to him an eternity.

At last, the hope for Zohir was revived. The smile shone on his face.

He said to his mother:

- Only Uncle Rachid the repairman can solve my problem.

Zohir raced to his shop and found him very busy. He greeted him and told him the story of the device.

Uncle Rachid accompanied Zohir to his house. There, he reinstalled the computer in front of Zohir, who followed the operation with great intention till the end in order to learn all its secrets.

Zohir thanked Uncle Rachid for his much appreciated help. He said:

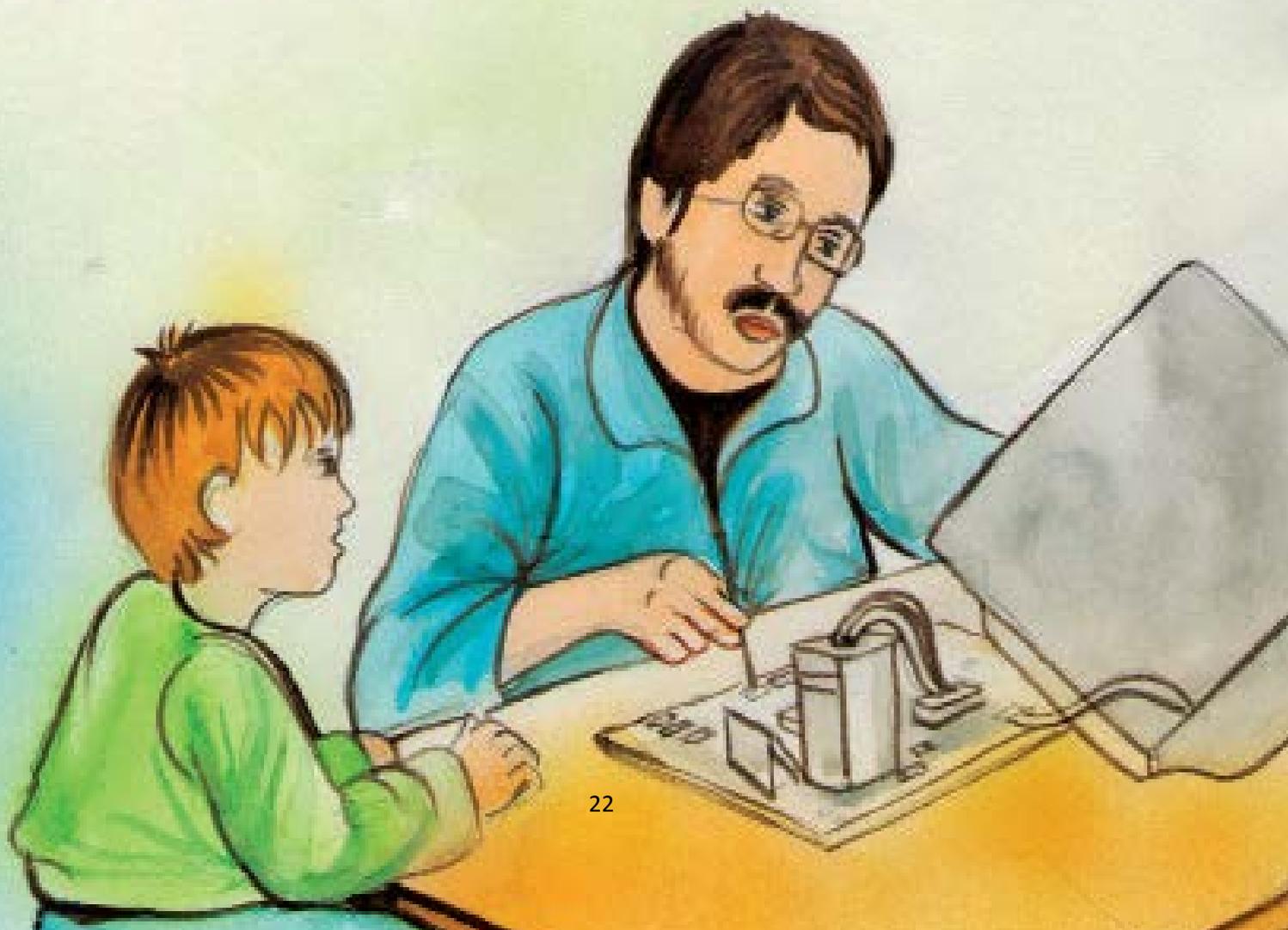
- Life taught me that knowledge comes after interrogations.

*“Necessity is the mother of invention.”*

Since then, Zohir could mount and dismount the device by himself.

In his higher studies, Zohir chose informatics. He was brilliant in that field and graduated as an engineer. He then established a small workshop for the installation of electronic devices. He recruited a few skilled workers to help me. It has been a resounding success in a short period of time.

Zohir has lived a delightful professional life ever since.



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