



How the Tortoise Built Her House

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Once upon a time, the tortoise had no shell.



It was very difficult for her
on hot, rainy, and cold days!



She wished she could build herself a house. So, she started collecting materials.

The tortoise moved quite slowly. She was never able to collect enough tree branches to build a proper house.





She sat down and thought about what to do. After thinking for a long time, she decided to go in search of a house that was already built.



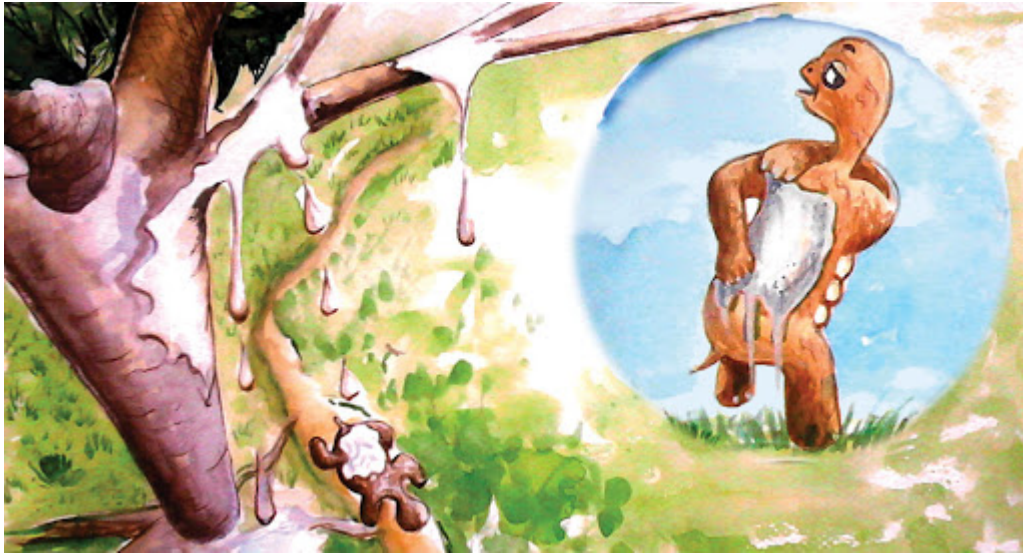
One day, she saw a cave.
She peered inside. It looked
warm and dry! But the cave
belonged to a rabbit and
her children.



She climbed up a tree. But, she was chased away by birds chirping and cawing noisily in their nests. The tortoise walked away sadly, sweating in the heat of the sun.



One day, as the tortoise was wandering about, she found a cow in its pen. She was with her calves. "Can I join you, please?" asked Tortoise. 'I'm sorry,' said the cow, 'but we can't help you. It's full in here already.'



As the tortoise left the pen, she passed under a tree. Drops of gum from the tree fell on her. The tortoise loved the cool feeling of gum sliding all over her back. Since it was quite hot, she stopped there for a while to rest. Her back got soaked with gum.

As she walked away, she noticed a piece of tree-bark stuck to her back. It was stuck firmly in place.





The tortoise picked up another piece of bark and placed it on her back. Then another piece, and another. She flipped on her back to press them firmly into place.



When she walked in the hot sun, none of the pieces came off.

She jumped into water and splashed around, cool at last. Best of all, the pieces remained firmly stuck to her back!





Tortoise played in the sand.
The pieces of bark remained
stuck to her back.



Now the tortoise felt comfortable, no matter what the weather. She was no longer afraid of the heat, rain, or cold. The pieces of bark remained stuck on her back forever. Finally, the tortoise had built her home. She carries it around proudly to this day!

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