

Forest of Happiness

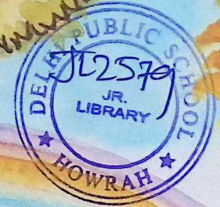
The Tortoise



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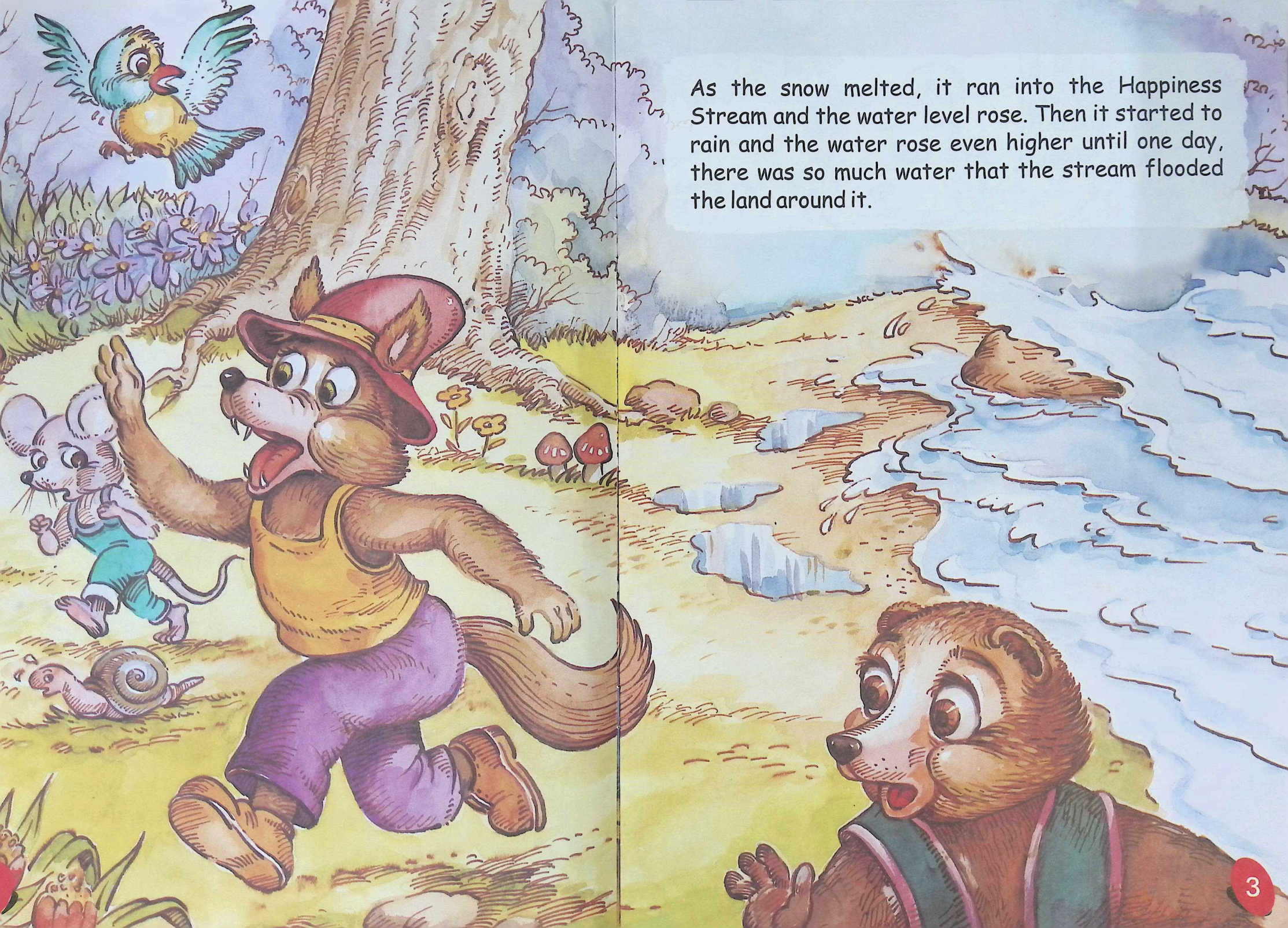


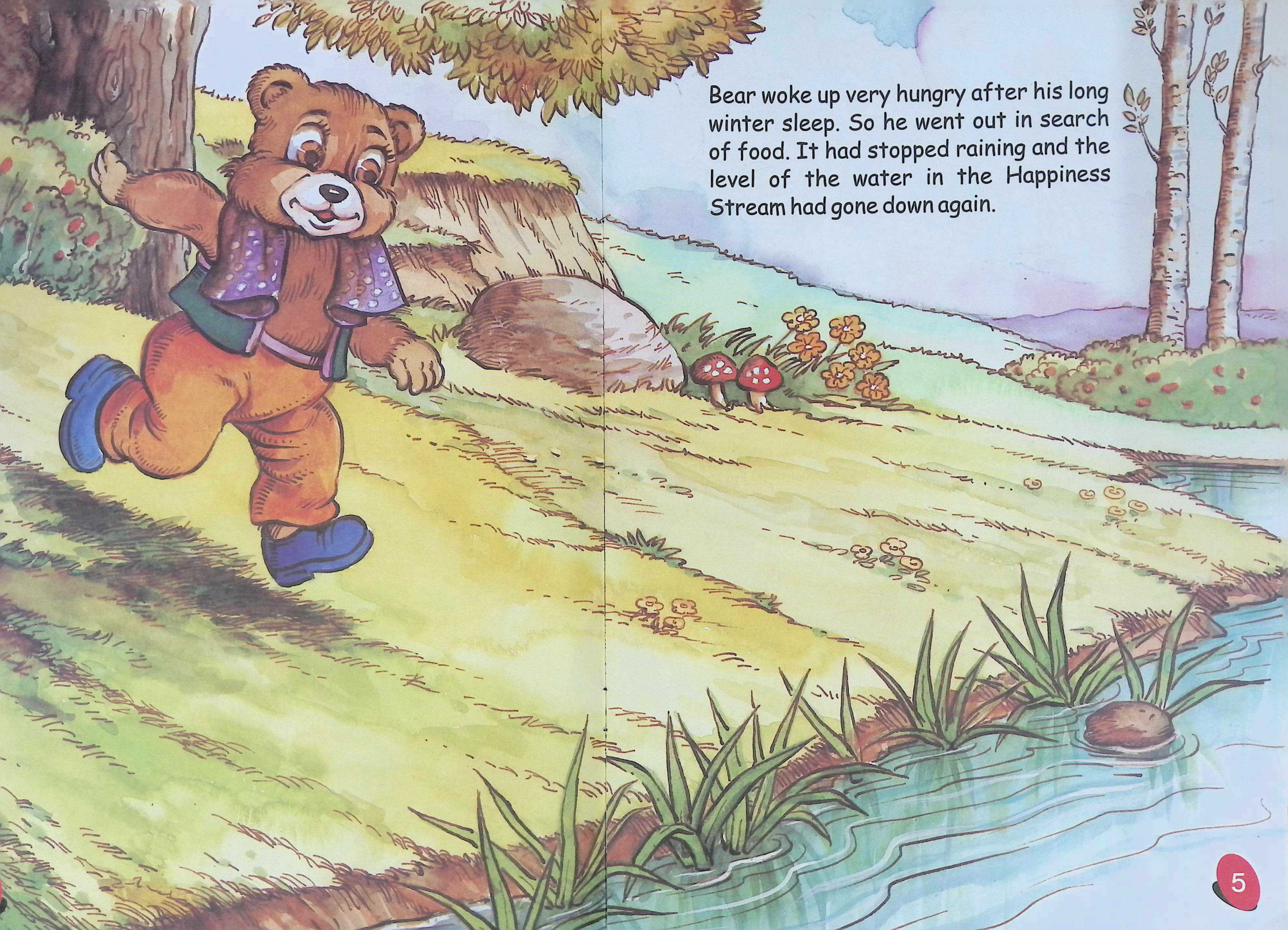
The Tortoise

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Spring came at last to the Forest of Happiness. The leaves on the trees had grown again and the flowers were all blossoming. The Happiness Stream was flowing more happily than ever.

As the snow melted, it ran into the Happiness Stream and the water level rose. Then it started to rain and the water rose even higher until one day, there was so much water that the stream flooded the land around it.





Bear woke up very hungry after his long winter sleep. So he went out in search of food. It had stopped raining and the level of the water in the Happiness Stream had gone down again.

First Bear walked down to the stream to wash his hands and face. It was a beautiful morning and he felt very happy. But when he reached the stream he saw his friend Tortoise sitting on an old tree trunk crying.



"What's the matter?" asked Bear. "Why are you crying?"

"I was collecting some food in my basket when it started to rain. I waited under a bush for the rain to stop and then I walked home. But I couldn't see my house. The stream had carried it away," said Tortoise.

"Don't worry. We will soon build you another house," said Bear.





Bear called all their friends and told them what had happened. They all agreed to come and help Tortoise build a new house.

But this time, they decided to build the house further away from the stream where it was safer.



They built the walls first. Then Squirrel made the roof. Monkey painted the walls. Woodpecker and Bear made a table and chair and Silkworm wove some new curtains.

Next morning, the house was ready and Tortoise invited all his friends to come and celebrate with him.

Everybody wore their best clothes and went to Tortoise's new house.

Tortoise had cooked lovely food. There were cakes and cookies to eat and some blackberry juice to drink.



At the party, Tortoise thanked everybody. "My dear friends," he said. "I couldn't have built this house without your help. When people work together, they can do things that they can't do on their own. Thank you very much, everybody."

Everybody had a wonderful evening together and they were happy that they had helped a friend.

