tiny tram

Lonely Dragon

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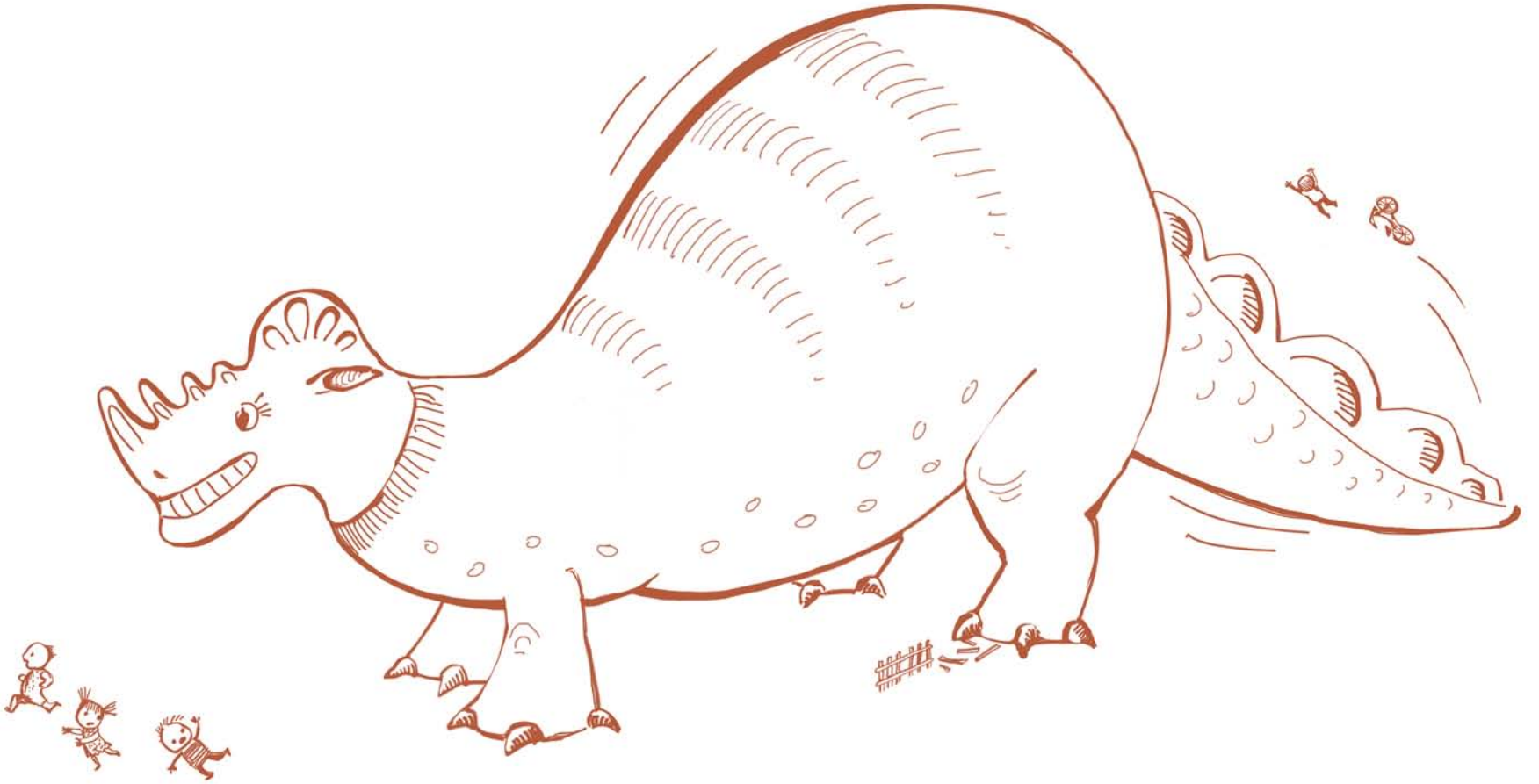
http://tinytram.com

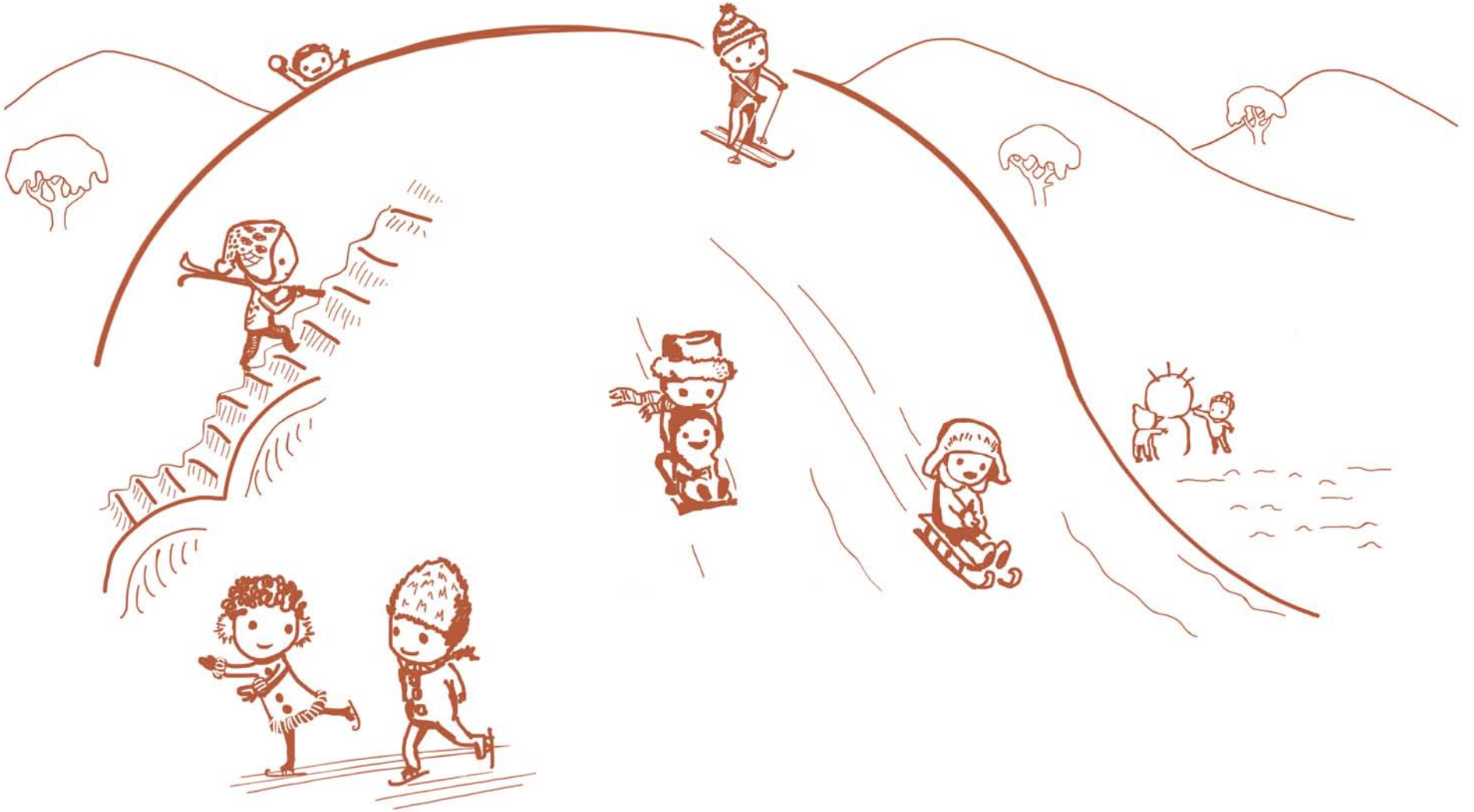
cc Karina Kudymova, 2012-2013



There was once a very, very large dragon who was very, very friendly, and was very, very clumsy. Every time he tried to make friends with people he would trip and accidentally step in their houses, or wag his long, scaly tail and wipe out gardens, bicycles, and everything else around him. People would see him coming, and shout, "Look out! Here comes the giant, house-stomping, fence-squashing dragon. He's going to eat me! Run, quick!!" and they'd run away and hide.

This went on for a while and the dragon got lonely and sad, until one day, great big tears squeezed from his eyes. The tears slid down his scaly nose, and fell to the ground with a huge PLOP. More and more tears fell, and soon a whole pool of them was running toward the town. "Run! Run!", the people cried, "It's a giant, tree-flattening, man-eating dragon! He's trying to drown us! Run quickly! Run away!" And so they all ran away. The poor dragon cried more and more until his bucket sized tears ran down the hills and into the muddy valley and filled it up. Then the sad, lonely dragon curled himself into a tight ball, tucked his big head under his tail, and fell into a deep sleep in his own puddle of tears.

When the villagers cautiously came out of hiding, they were very happy to see a beautiful lake at the bottom of the valley! They slowly tiptoed down the hill and quietly observed the sleeping dragon. “He looks more like an island than a dragon now!”, said one of the children from the town. “Shh,” whispered his mother, “maybe if we’re quiet enough, he’ll sleep for a long time.” And so he did.



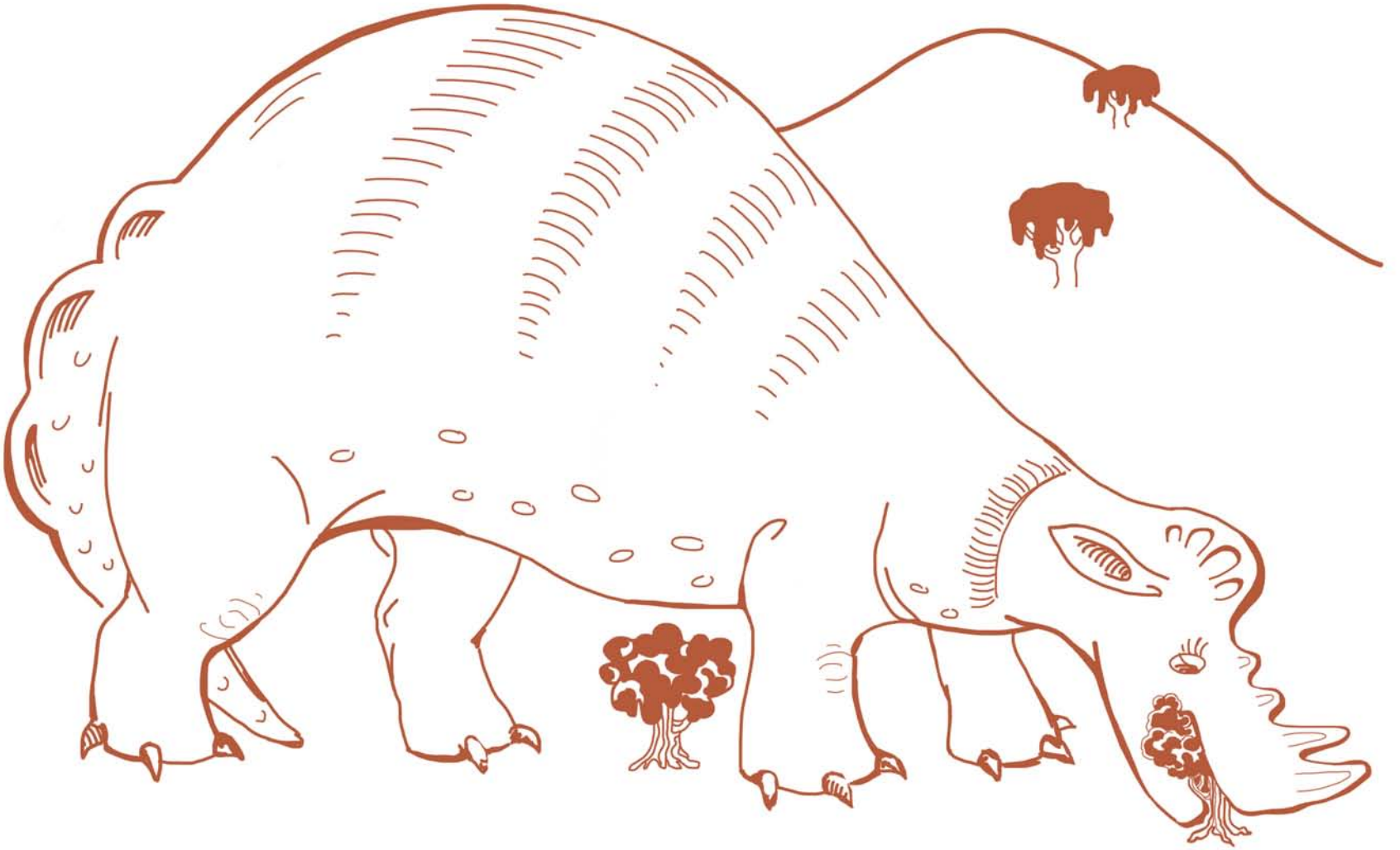
Many years went by, and gradually, the grass and trees grew around the lake. Dust and dirt settled thickly on the dragon's hide. A meadow with flowers covered the sleeping giant. After a while, people forgot that there ever was such a dragon, and he became nothing but an old legend. So they called the mysterious mound "Dragon Island". In the winter, children would ride their sleds down his icy back. And on warm summer days, they would pick flowers and have picnics on its top, overlooking the lake. All the while, the dragon slept peacefully.

One fine summer day, four young friends climbed to their favorite spot on top of the island. They picked many flowers, played tag, and rolled in the green grass. They took out their lunches and hungrily licked their lips. The spinach sandwiches smelled so good, it made everybody's stomach rumble. Everybody, including the dragon...

"EARTHQUAKE!!" shrieked the children, and ran as fast as they could.

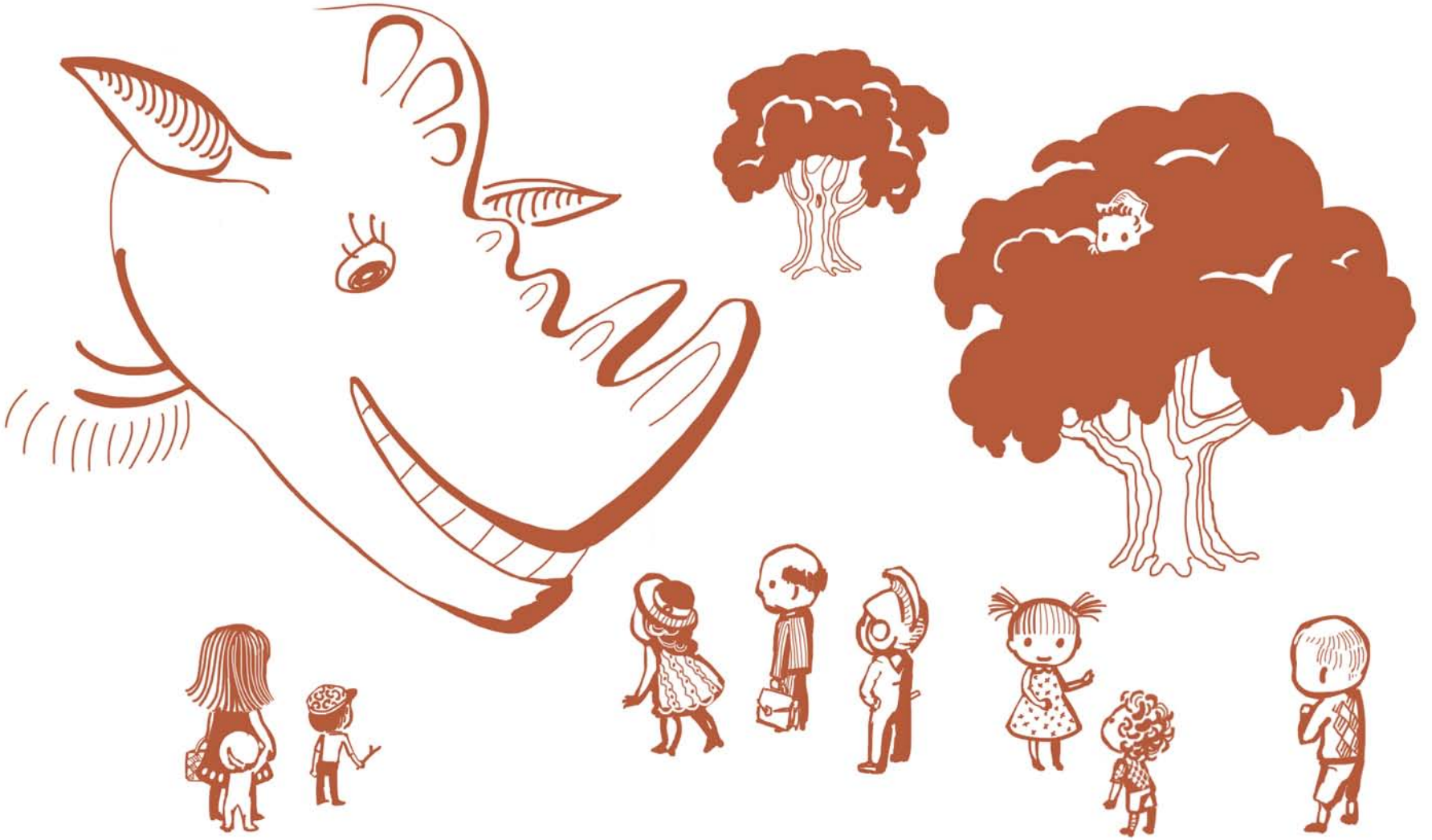
As they were running down the dragon's back, the mountain shook and heaved until it began to slowly unfold. The dragoon stood up from his long nap and stretched, wiggling off all the dirt and flowers from his back, at the same time tossing the four kids high up into the air.

Hearing their cries, the dragon looked up to see them start to fall toward the lake below. He quickly reached out, and scooped them up out of the air with his enormous paw. As he looked at them closer, the children pleaded, “Oh, please, don’t eat us Mr. Dragon! Please, please!”
“Well, of course I won’t eat you!”, replied the dragon, “Why on earth would I want to do that?”
And he slowly and carefully set the children onto the sandy shore of the lake. Just as he smiled at the children, his stomach rumbled loudly again. “I would hate to be rude, but I haven’t had any breakfast in about two hundred years. If you don’t mind, I would certainly like to have a quick snack.”



With those words he opened his cave of a mouth, over a medium-sized tree and bit it off the ground, neatly at ground level. He chewed for a bit and moved on to the next, and the next after that. Then he skipped one, ate two, skipped three and ate one more. By now, all the townsfolk (who had run for cover, when the dragon woke up), were peeking out of their hiding spots. "The dragon saved us!" shouted the four kids, "We were falling into the lake, but the dragon caught us and saved us! He didn't even eat us!"

"He seems to prefer trees", said the bus driver, who had crept a bit closer. "Yes", chuckled the fireman, "he bites them off like broccoli tops!"
"But isn't it strange", wondered the school librarian, "that he eats up certain trees and skips others that look just the same? Tell us dragon, what can be so different between one tree and another?"



The dragon, who had never known such friendly attention from people, blushed till his pale blue scales turned lavender. He cleared his throat and said, "Well, you see, I am a vegetarian and there was a squirrel in the fourth tree, a bird's nest in the eighth and ninth, and your mayor was hiding in the seventh."
Everyone laughed (even the mayor, who looked very relieved). They began to talk more to the dragon and learned that all he ever wanted was to make new friends!
He promised to be more careful where he put his feet, tail, and the rest of his very large self.

As many years passed, the dragon and the villagers became great friends. The townspeople brought the dragon all their garden weeds and trimmings for his very large salads and the dragon let them ride down his tail in the winter and jump off it like a diving board in the summer.
And they lived together for the rest of their days happily ever after.