

# The Turtles' Picnic

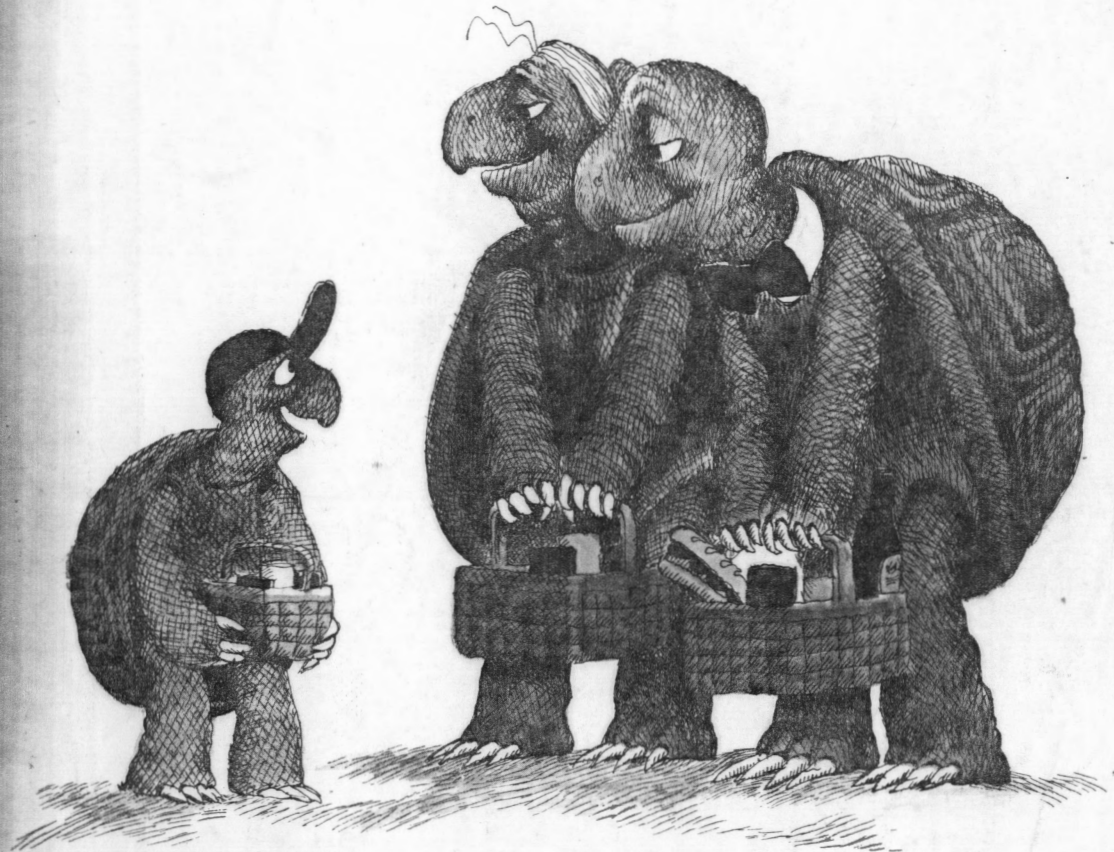
and Other Nonsense Stories

adapted by Terry Berger • pictures by Erkki Alanen



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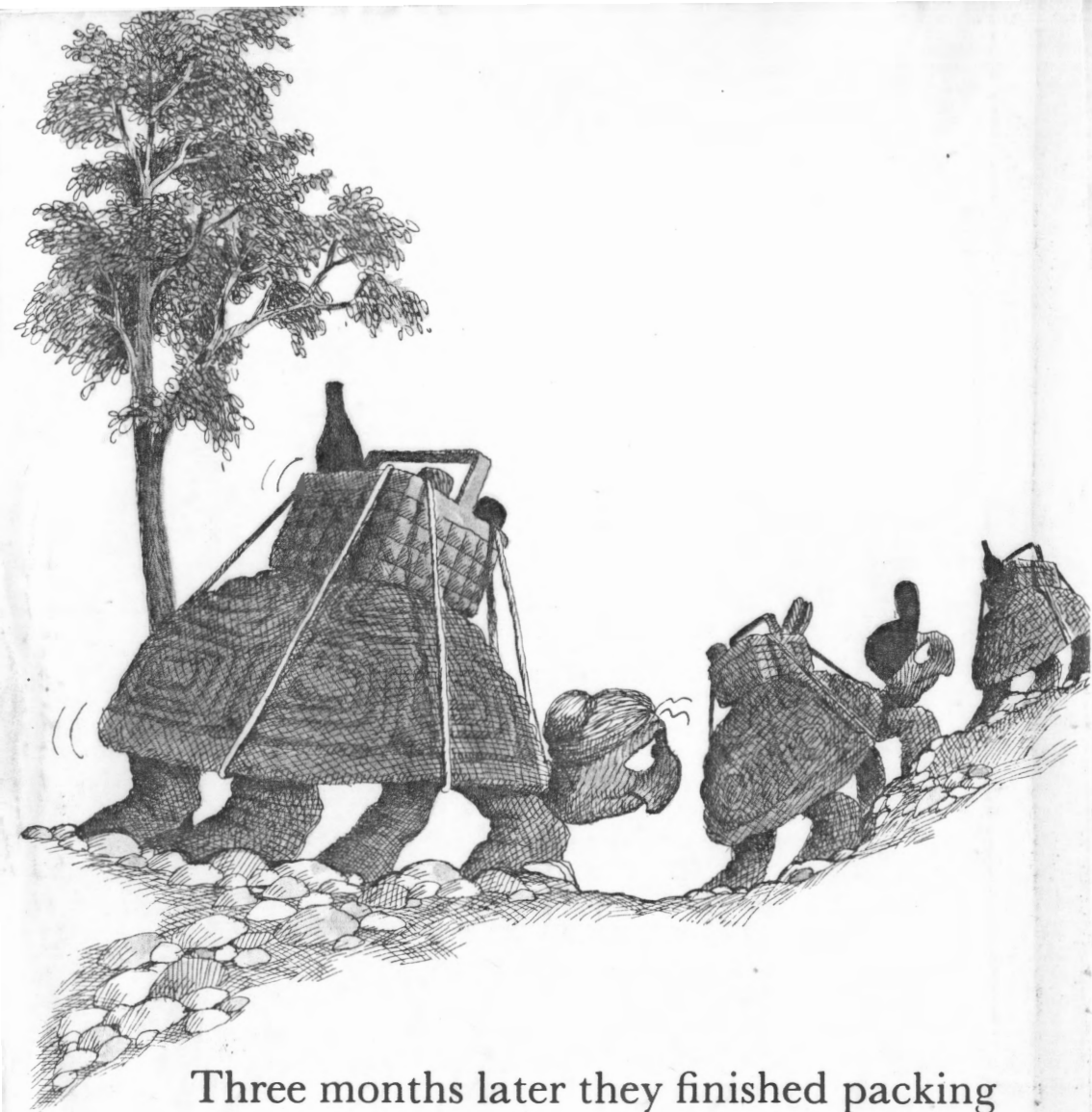
# The Turtles' Picnic



Once upon a time there were three turtles, Father, Mother, and Baby. One fine day they decided to have a picnic. First they agreed on a place to go, a forest, far, far away.



Then they began to pack their baskets with cans of tuna and cans of beans and cucumber sandwiches and blueberry ices and everything else they could think of.



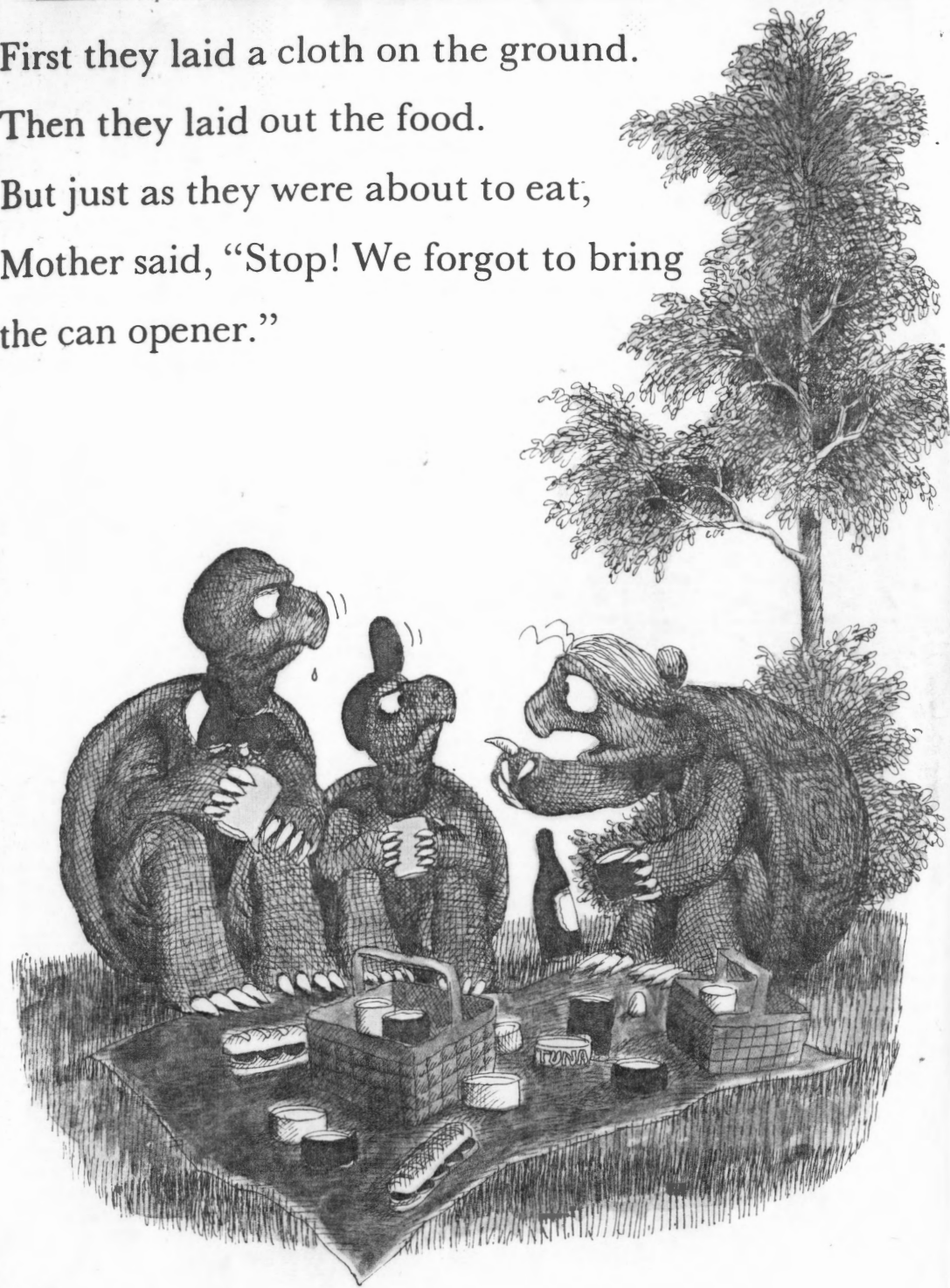
Three months later they finished packing  
and started on their way.

They walked and walked.

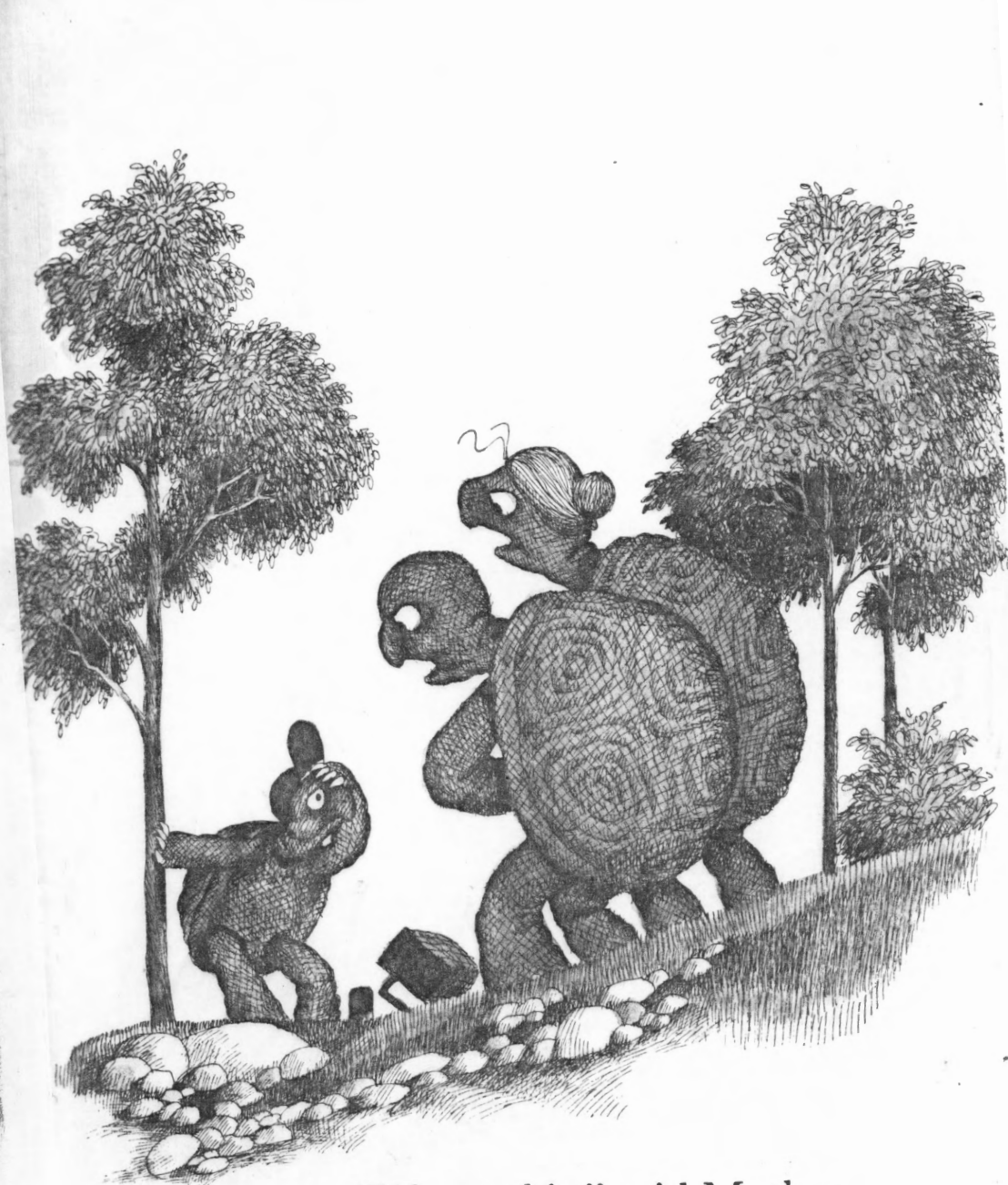
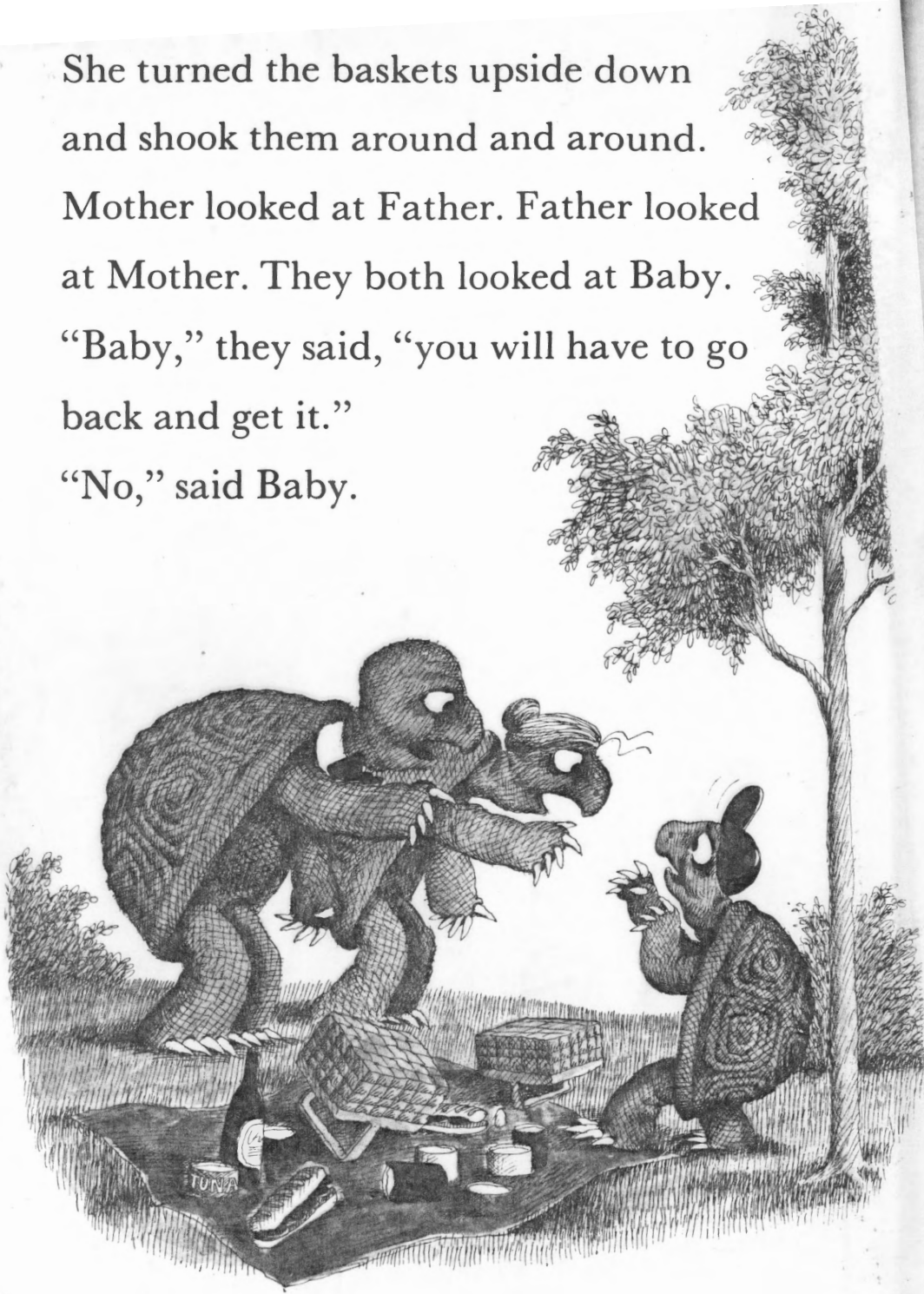
Three years later they reached the forest.

They began to unpack their baskets.

First they laid a cloth on the ground.  
Then they laid out the food.  
But just as they were about to eat,  
Mother said, "Stop! We forgot to bring  
the can opener."



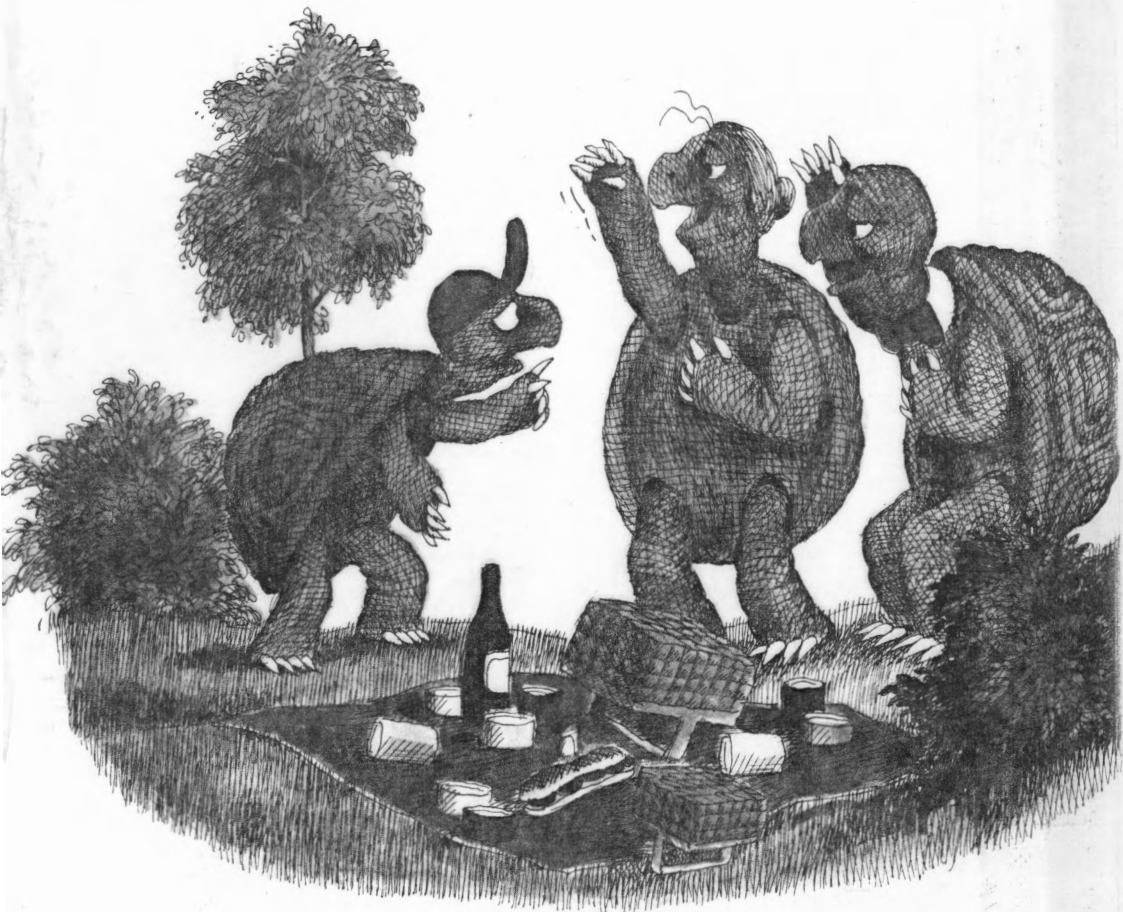
She turned the baskets upside down  
and shook them around and around.  
Mother looked at Father. Father looked  
at Mother. They both looked at Baby.  
“Baby,” they said, “you will have to go  
back and get it.”  
“No,” said Baby.



“We need it,” said Mother.  
“It can’t be helped,” said Father.

“Then,” said Baby, “do you swear, do you promise, that you won’t touch a thing until I get back?”

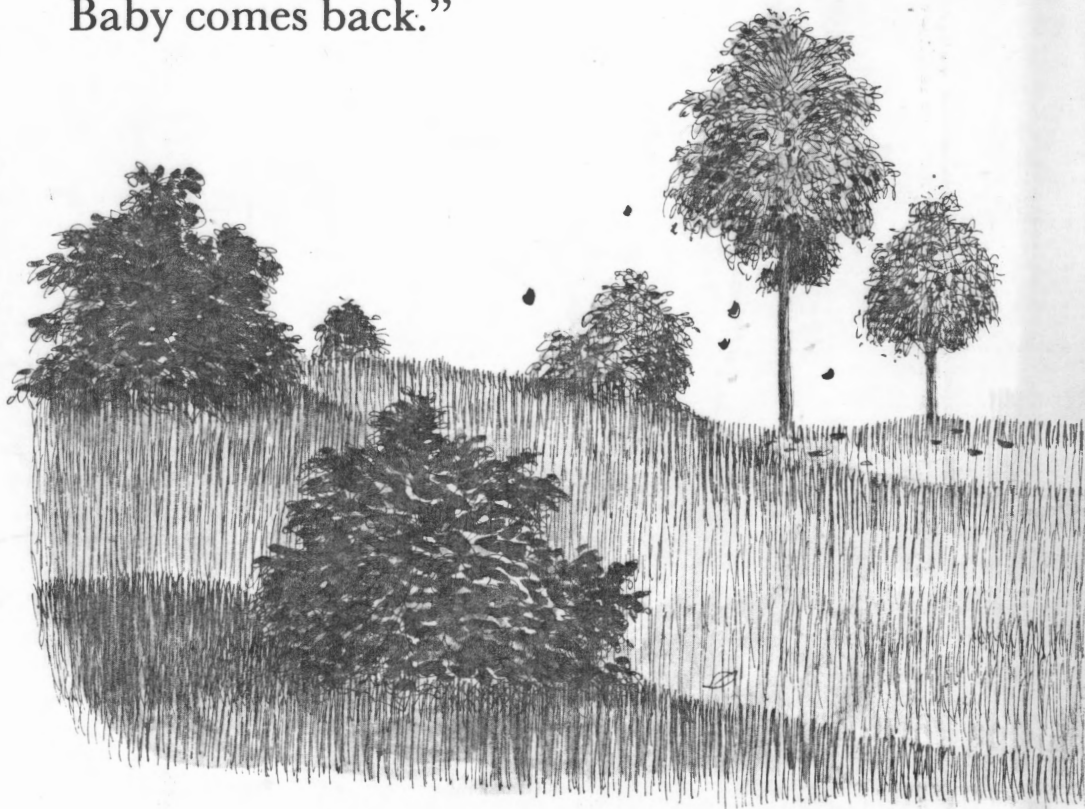
“Yes,” they said. “We swear and we promise that we won’t touch a thing until you come back.”



Baby crawled away as fast as he could. Five hours later, he could no longer be seen through the bushes.



Mother and Father waited. And waited.  
After a year they began to get hungry.  
But they kept their promise to Baby.  
Another year passed. And then another.  
They grew hungrier and hungrier.  
Finally Mother said, "One sandwich won't hurt."  
"No," said Father. "We promised to wait until  
Baby comes back."





Another year passed and then another.  
They began to get ravenous. Still they waited.  
At last Mother said, "It's been six years.  
We have to eat *something!*"  
"Well," said Father, "I guess Baby won't mind."

They each reached for a sandwich, but just as they were about to start eating, Baby popped his head out of the bushes.  
"Aha! I knew it!" he said.  
"I knew you would cheat!"



It's a good thing I didn't go back for  
that can opener!"

