

AFRICAN TALES

Why Mongoose
Eats Snakes



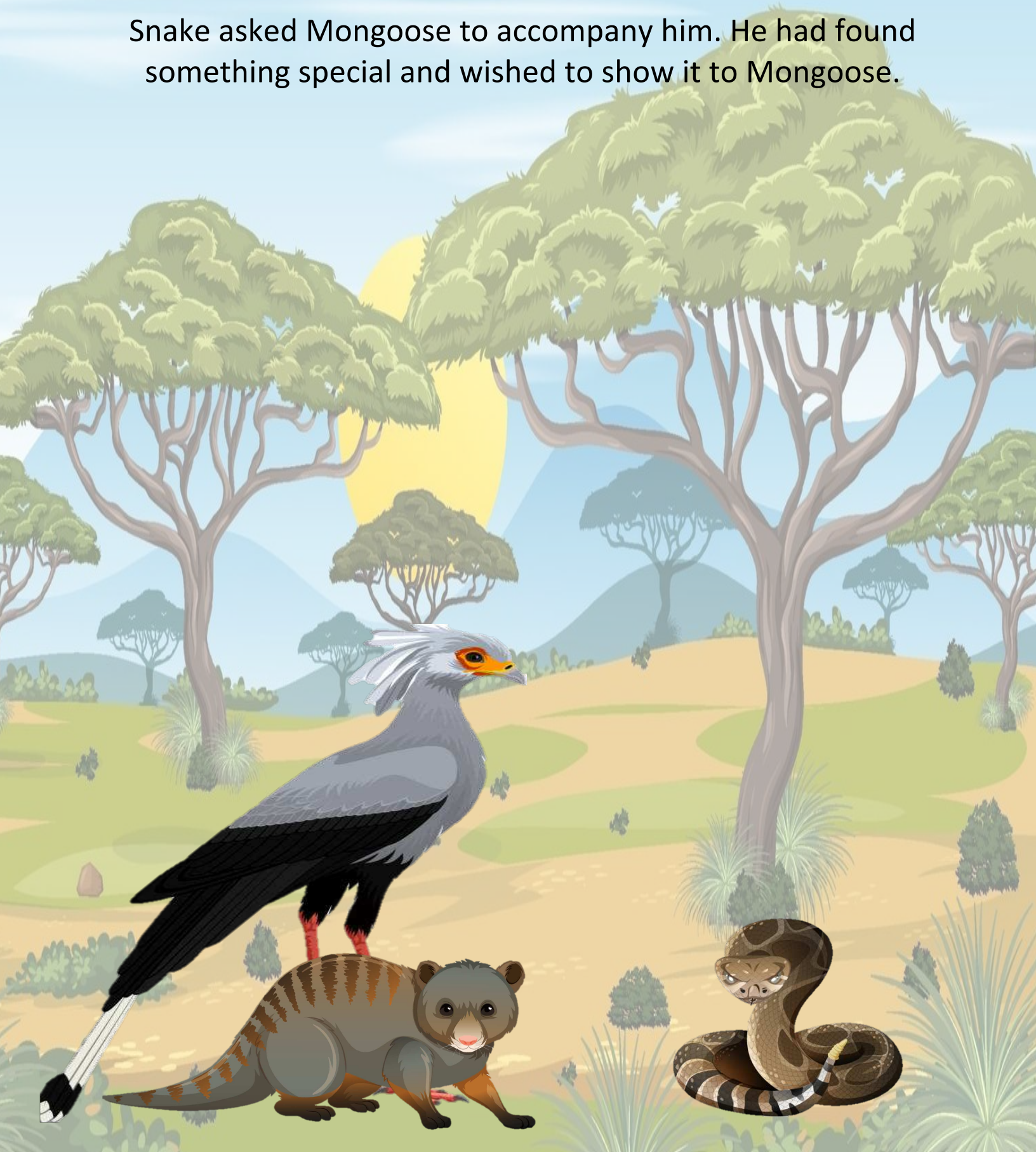
A Bushman Legend

In ancient times, Mongoose and Secretary Bird were great friends.



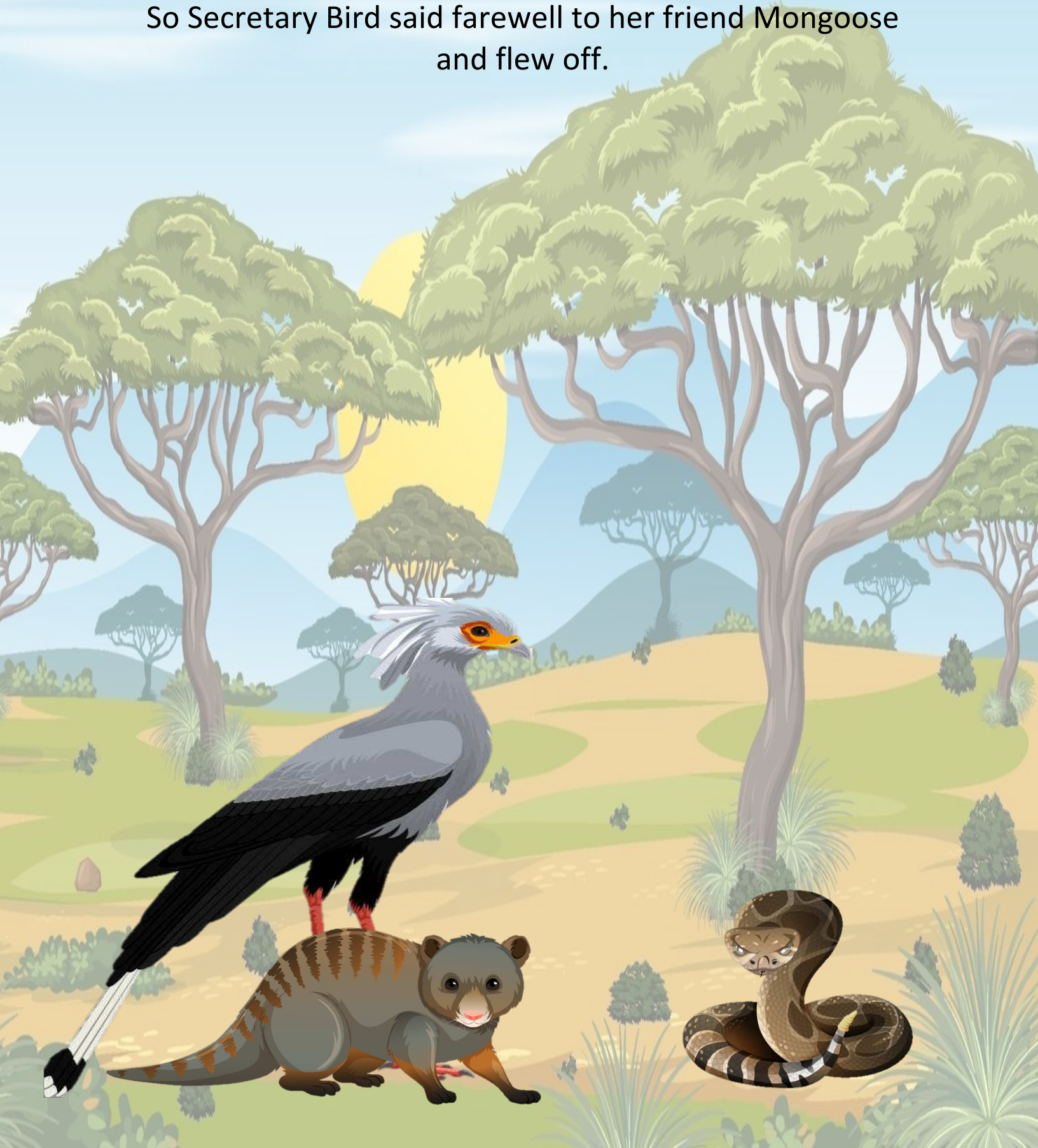
One day they were walking through the bush when they came upon a large snake.

Snake asked Mongoose to accompany him. He had found something special and wished to show it to Mongoose.



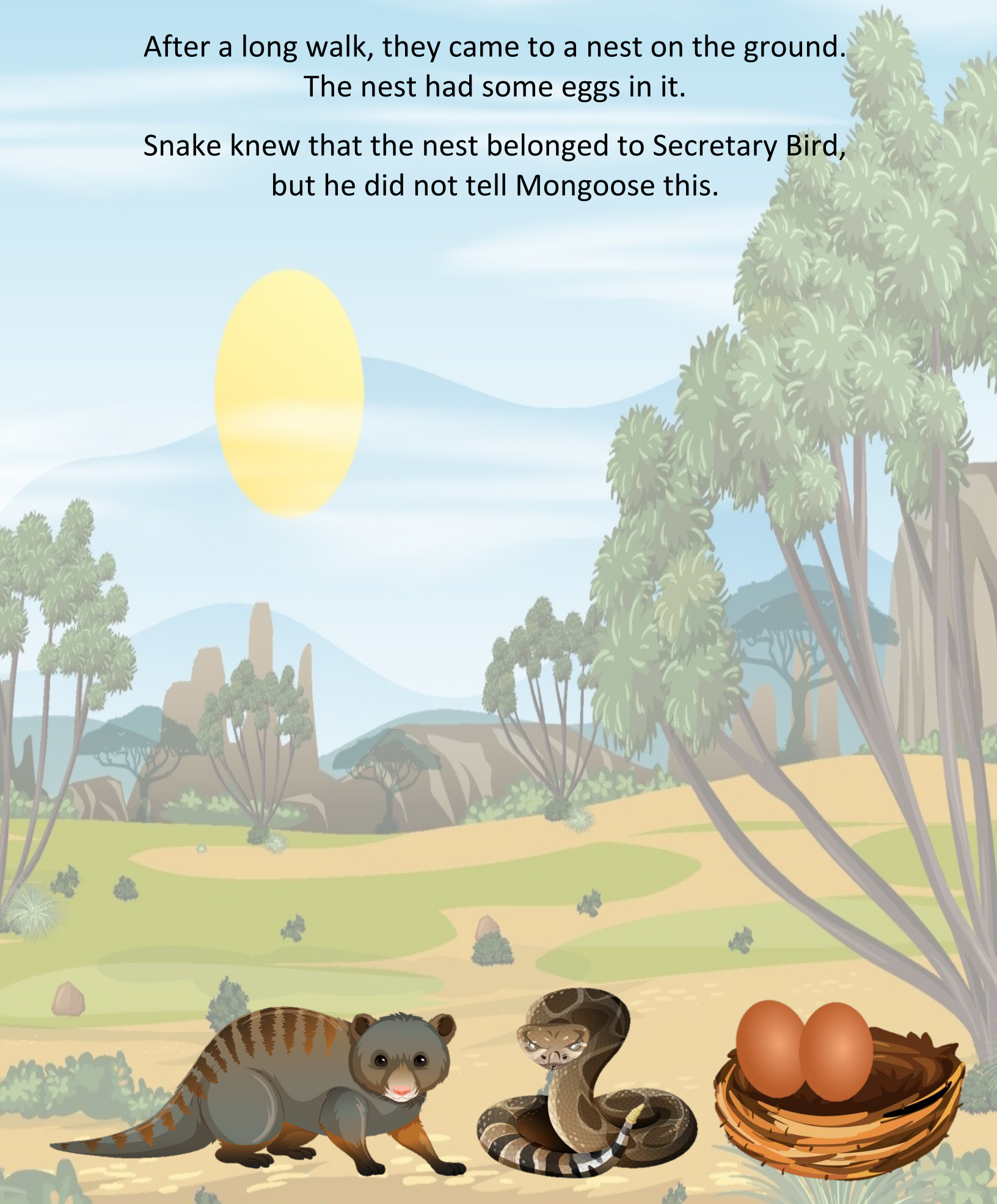
Secretary Bird said she was hot. She wished to bathe and drink at a water hole some distance away.

So Secretary Bird said farewell to her friend Mongoose and flew off.



After a long walk, they came to a nest on the ground.
The nest had some eggs in it.

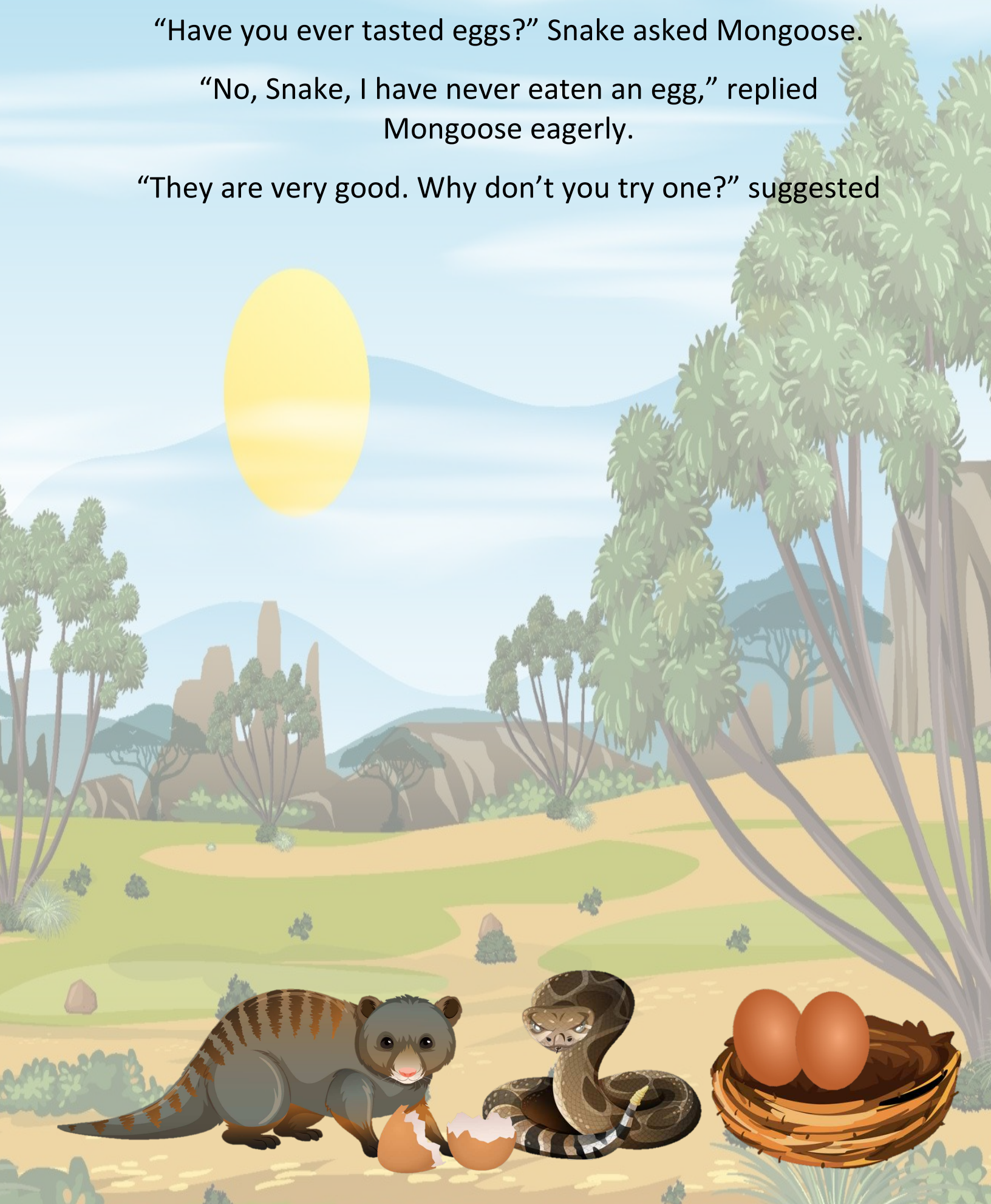
Snake knew that the nest belonged to Secretary Bird,
but he did not tell Mongoose this.



“Have you ever tasted eggs?” Snake asked Mongoose.

“No, Snake, I have never eaten an egg,” replied
Mongoose eagerly.

“They are very good. Why don’t you try one?” suggested



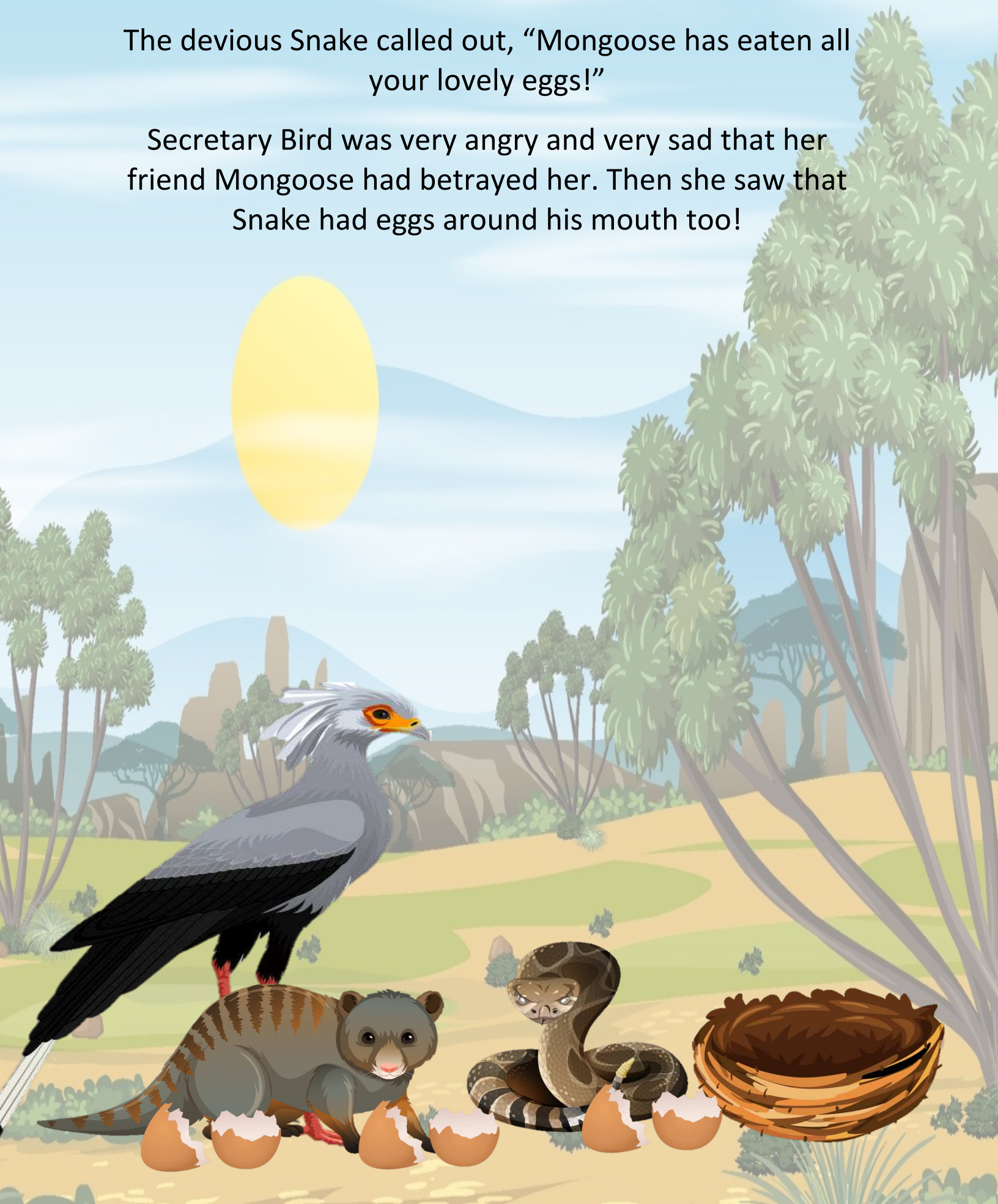
“Both Mongoose and Snake started to eat the eggs.
Mongoose agreed that he never knew anything that
tasted so good.

Just as they had gulped down the last egg, they saw
Secretary Bird approaching.



The devious Snake called out, “Mongoose has eaten all your lovely eggs!”

Secretary Bird was very angry and very sad that her friend Mongoose had betrayed her. Then she saw that Snake had eggs around his mouth too!



“You have both eaten my eggs,” Secretary Bird said furiously. Mongoose explained to Secretary Bird how Snake had tricked him.

Then both Secretary Bird and Mongoose set upon the deceitful Snake and killed him.

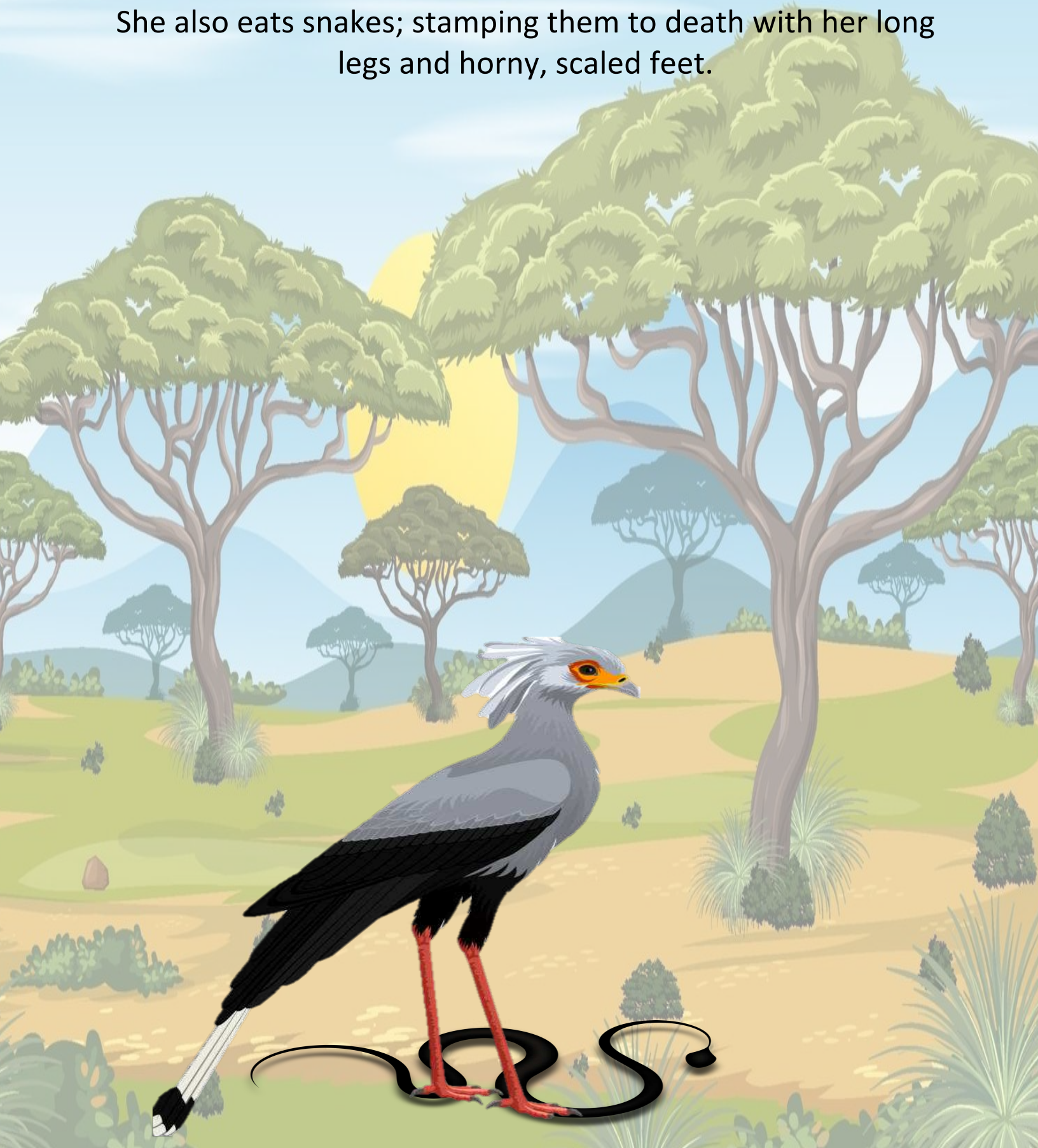


“From now on, we shall both watch for snakes and kill them,” said Mongoose and Secretary Bird – and they have done so ever since.



Secretary Bird learned how to build her nest atop thick, thorny trees to protect her eggs and young from predators.

She also eats snakes; stamping them to death with her long legs and horny, scaled feet.



Mongoose eats snakes, too. He is able to kill them by being quicker than lighting and faster than even the speediest snake.



But Mongoose never forgot the lovely taste of the eggs and whenever he can find any he will always eat them.

Extracted from: "When Lion Could Fly and Other Tales From Africa."



FUN FACTS

About the Mongooses

- The plural is 'mongooses,' but it's ok to say 'mongeese'
- There are about 30 mongoose species around the world.
- They have a few tricks for defeating venomous snakes.
- Mongooses have diverse diets.
- Some species of Mongoose are semiaquatic.
- Some are loners, some live in mobs.



DID YOU KNOW

This About Snakes?

- Snakes smell with their tongues.
- Some snakes find their prey in the dark by sensing heat..
- Snakes have hundreds of ribs.
- They shed their skin.
- Snakes hear using vibrations in their jaw bones.
- There are over 3,000 different species of snakes.





THINK
DIGITAL ACADEMY