



# Stories From the Earth and the Stars

## Why Ants Live All Around

A Story From Myanmar



Lion was the king of animals. As King, he liked to treat his subjects by offering up a wonderful banquet every month. Of all the animals, Ant was always last to arrive because of her very short legs. She just couldn't move as fast as the others. When Ant arrived, the other animals had already started the banquet. They hooted with laughter as Ant took her place.



‘A little late, aren’t you, Ant?’

‘The party’s started Ant – what took you so long?’ they jeered.

Even King Lion joined in with the teasing.

‘What does it matter when Ant arrived. She’s too small that nobody notices her anyway!’



Ant was so embarrassed and upset that she crept away from the banquet table. She could hear the other animals laughing and making jokes as she made her slow way home. Lion's right, Ant thought sadly. Nobody even realised that I'd left the banquet. From now on, I shall stay out of everybody's way and keep to myself.



Ant went back to her nest and for a while was undisturbed. Then, one morning, King Lion woke with a terrible pain in his ear. He tried to ease it by rubbing, but his sharp claws only made it worse.



‘Somebody help!’ roared Lion. ‘Something has crawled into my ear and is biting me. I can feel it. somebody get it out NOW!’

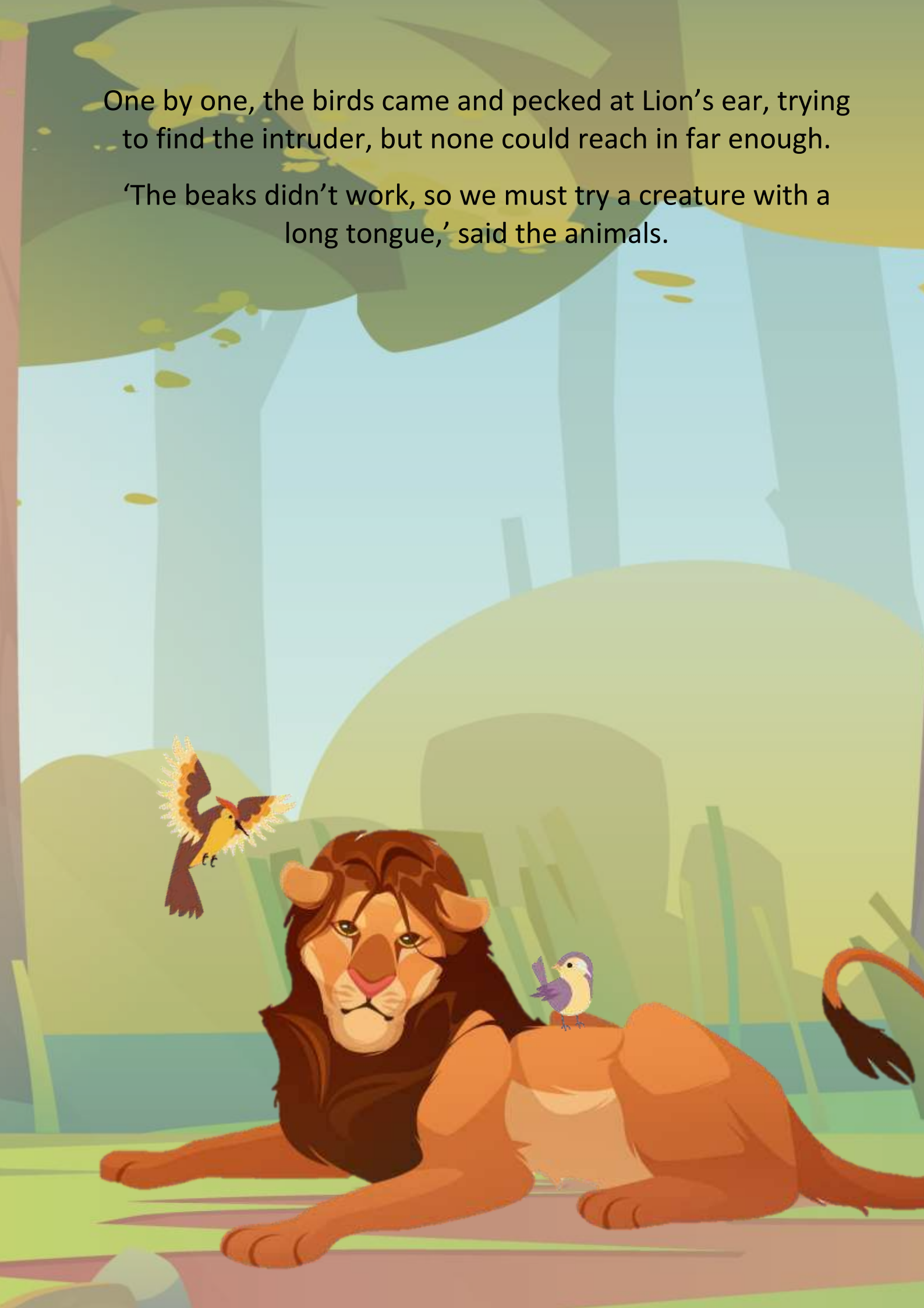
The animals quivered with fright. They all lived in fear of Lion’s rages.

‘We need someone with a long beak,’ they said. ‘We must call the birds.’



One by one, the birds came and pecked at Lion's ear, trying to find the intruder, but none could reach in far enough.

'The beaks didn't work, so we must try a creature with a long tongue,' said the animals.



They rushed to find the anteater. But his tongue wasn't long enough to reach the source of pain, either.

'Monkeys are good at nit picking,' said the animals.

'Perhaps one of them can help Lion.'





A monkey was found and she tried her very best, but she too was unable to help. Meanwhile, Lion was becoming more and more irate. Suddenly, Rabbit had an idea and bounded off. Where do you think Rabbit went? Why, straight to Ant's nest!



‘Ant, are you there?’ Rabbit called urgently. ‘Lion needs your help!’

It had not escaped Ant’s notice that none of the animals had visited her or apologised for the scene at the banquet.

Of course, now that they need something it was quite different ... Ant sighed. She was not a bitter animal, so she crawled out of her nest.

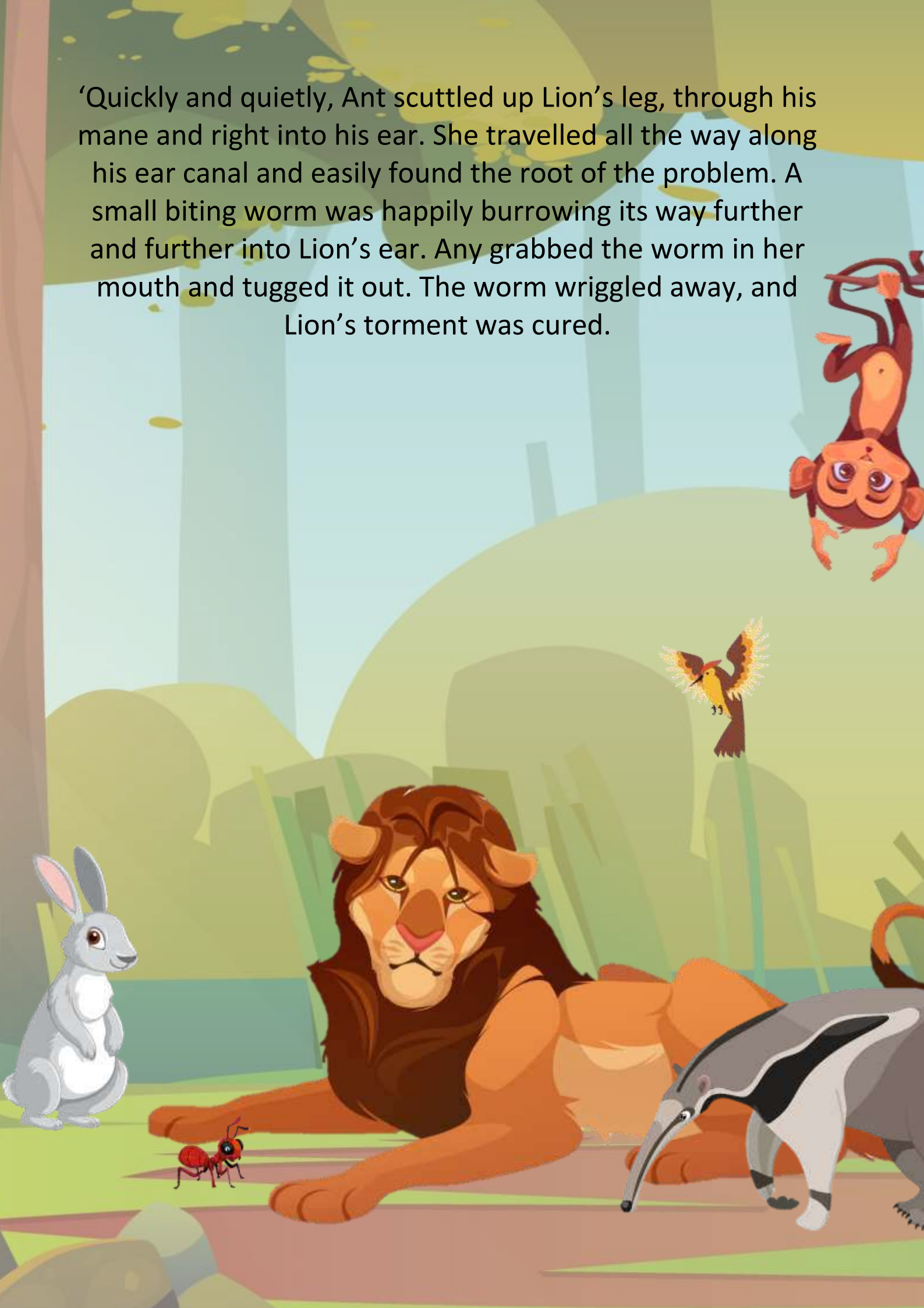
‘Get on my back. It will be quicker,’ said Rabbit.



‘What could that little mite possibly do to help King Lion?’  
But Lion silenced them angrily. He was ready to accept help  
from any quarter.



‘Quickly and quietly, Ant scuttled up Lion’s leg, through his mane and right into his ear. She travelled all the way along his ear canal and easily found the root of the problem. A small biting worm was happily burrowing its way further and further into Lion’s ear. Any grabbed the worm in her mouth and tugged it out. The worm wriggled away, and Lion’s torment was cured.



‘Ant, you have saved me from pain and madness. I will grant you anything you wish. What shall it be?’

‘My greatest wish is that I should be able to live wherever I please, Your Majesty,’ said Ant.

‘Well, so be it!’ said the king.



From that day on, Ant roamed about wherever she liked and made her home in many places. And this is why, wherever you look, almost anywhere in the world, you will find ants living there.





THINK

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