The Tug of War



An African Tale

Retold by Julie Ellis

Illustrated by Meredith Thomas

Flying Colours



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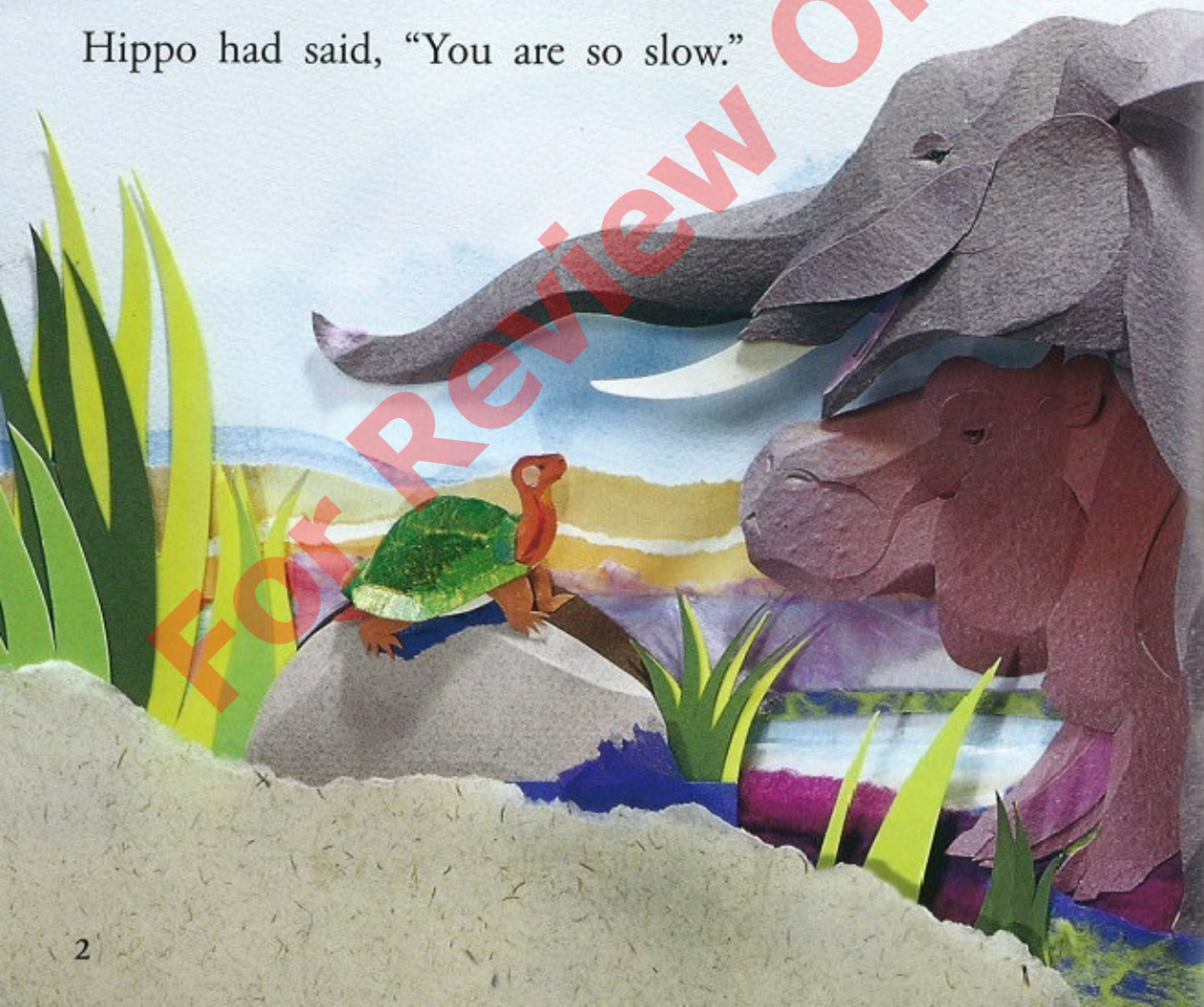
Chapter 1

Tortoise Is Angry

Tortoise was angry. He had been talking to Elephant and Hippo, and they had both been very rude to him.

Elephant had said, "You are so small."

Hippo had said, "You are so slow."



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"I may be small and slow," said Tortoise, "but I am clever. They will be sorry they were rude to me."

Tortoise sat and thought for a few days. At last he thought of a really good trick to play on Elephant and Hippo.



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Chapter 2

Tortoise Has a Plan

Tortoise went to visit Elephant. Elephant was sleeping under a big tree.

"Wake up, Elephant," yelled Tortoise. "I want to talk to you."

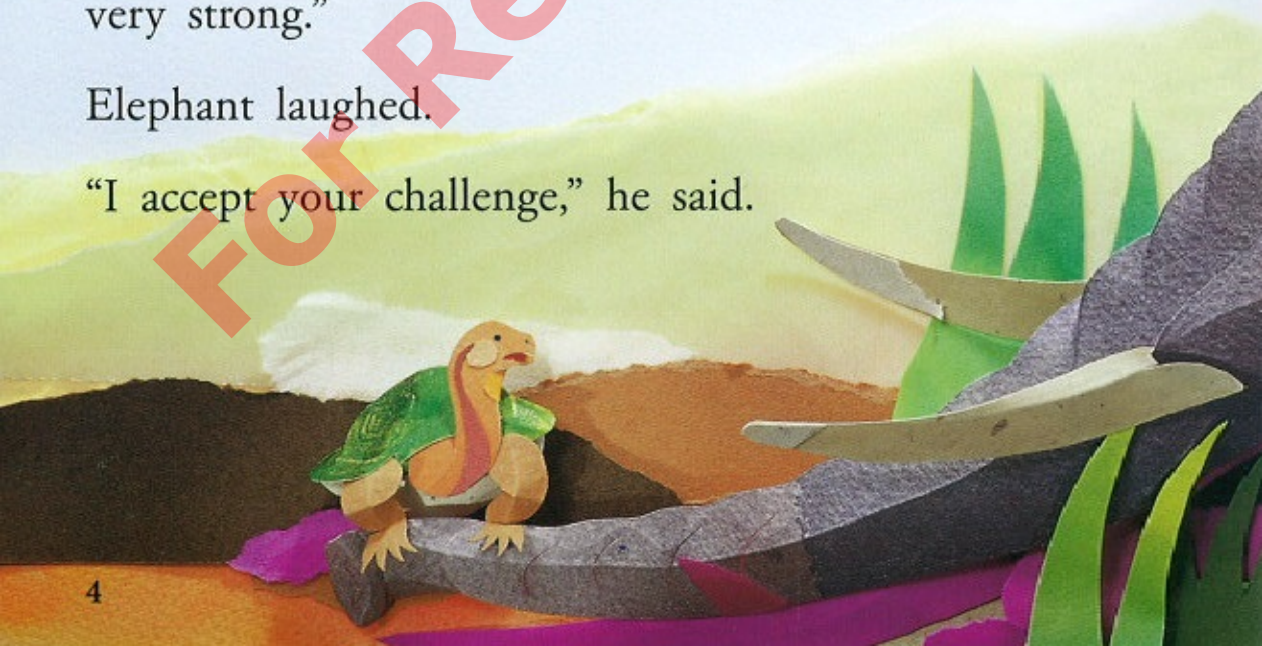
Elephant woke up. He was cross with Tortoise.

"What do you want?" he asked.

"I'm here to challenge you to a tug of war," answered Tortoise. "I may be small, but I am very strong."

Elephant laughed.

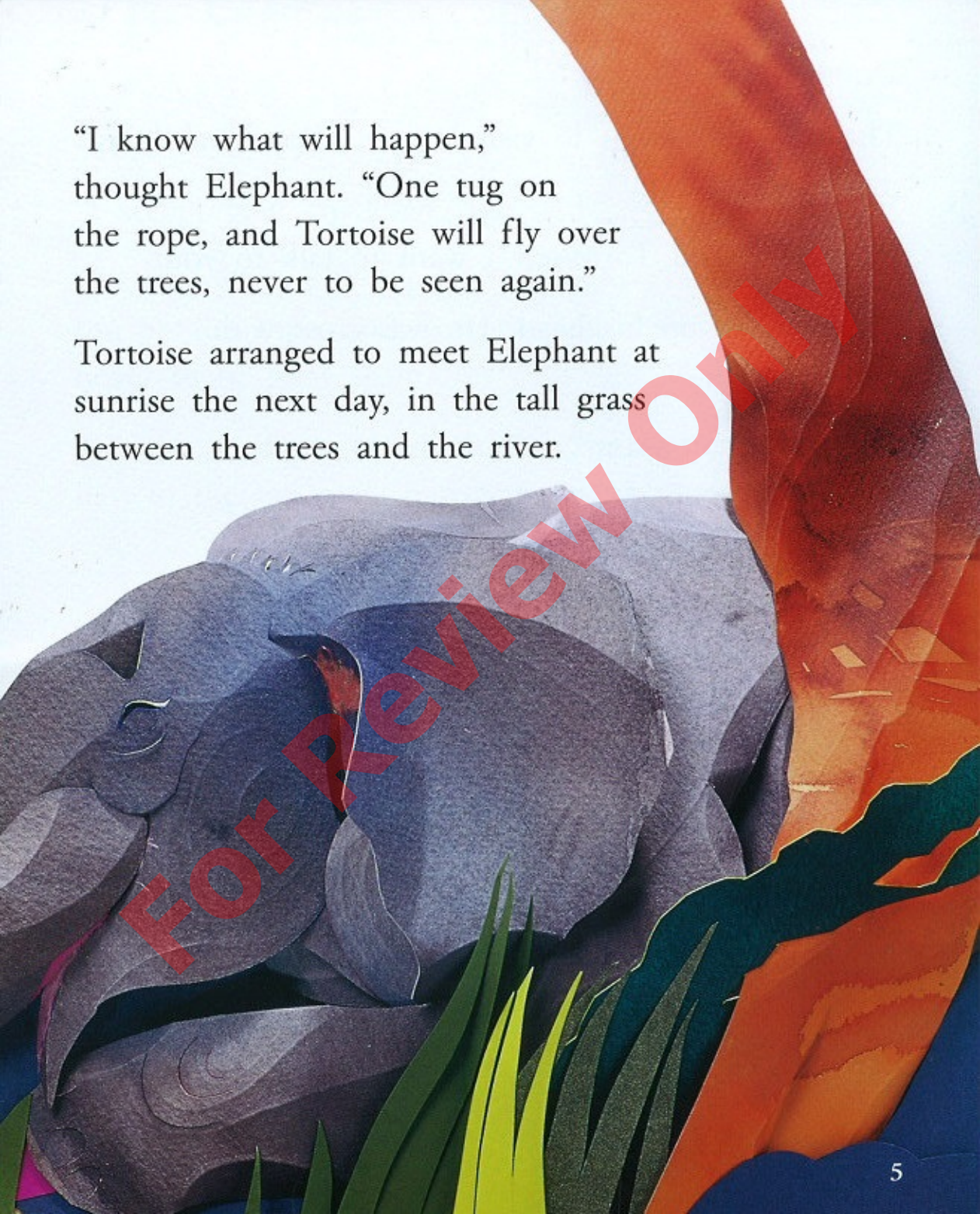
"I accept your challenge," he said.



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"I know what will happen," thought Elephant. "One tug on the rope, and Tortoise will fly over the trees, never to be seen again."

Tortoise arranged to meet Elephant at sunrise the next day, in the tall grass between the trees and the river.



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Then Tortoise went to visit Hippo. Hippo was lying in the cool water.

"Hippo," yelled Tortoise. "I want to talk to you."

Hippo lifted up his head. He was cross with Tortoise.

"What do you want?" he asked.

"I'm here to challenge you to a tug of war," answered Tortoise. "I may be slow, but I am very strong."



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Hippo laughed.

"I accept your challenge," he said.

"I know what will happen," thought Hippo. "One tug on the rope, and Tortoise will fly into the water, never to be seen again."

Tortoise arranged to meet Hippo at sunrise the next day, in the tall grass between the trees and the river.



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