

# WHAT AM I?

a collection of short stories

second edition

by  
**Marie Rippel**  
and  
**Renée LaTulippe**

 ALL ABOUT *Reading*  
Level 2 Vol. 1

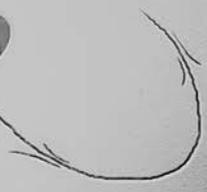
**This book belongs to**

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# WHAT AM I?

a collection of short stories



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Stories:

Marie Rippel: "The Grump" – "The Bantam Spy Club"  
"The Bake Sale" – "Matt the Musk Ox"  
"Whale Songs" – "Champ" – "Pine Tree Pet Shop"

Renée LaTulippe: "An Elf in the Swiss Alps" – "Broken Robot" –  
"Skunk Hotel" – "Jake the Snake" – "What Am I?"

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"The Bake Sale" – "Whale Songs" – "Skunk Hotel"  
"Champ" – "Pine Tree Pet Shop"

David LaTulippe: "An Elf in the Swiss Alps" – "Broken Robot"  
"Matt the Musk Ox" – "Jake the Snake" – "What Am I?"

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*To the reader –*

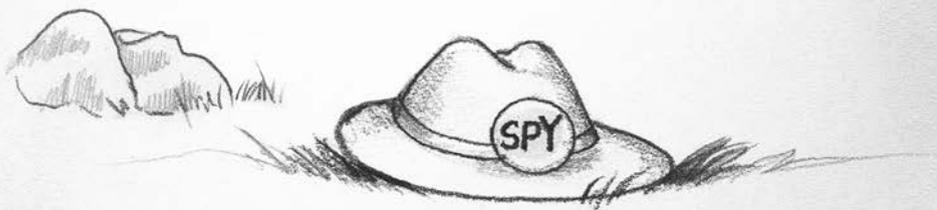
*between these covers  
you will find  
silliness and facts  
of every kind...*

*especially for you*



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# The Bantam Spy Club



I am Ellen, and this is Dennis.

We are in the Bantam Spy Club.

We have a big problem.

The club mascot, the Bantam Chicken,  
is lost.

We are upset.

We think the Muskrat Club has him.



Can you help us?

Can you be a spy?



Can you run fast?

Can you be sly?

Can we trust you?

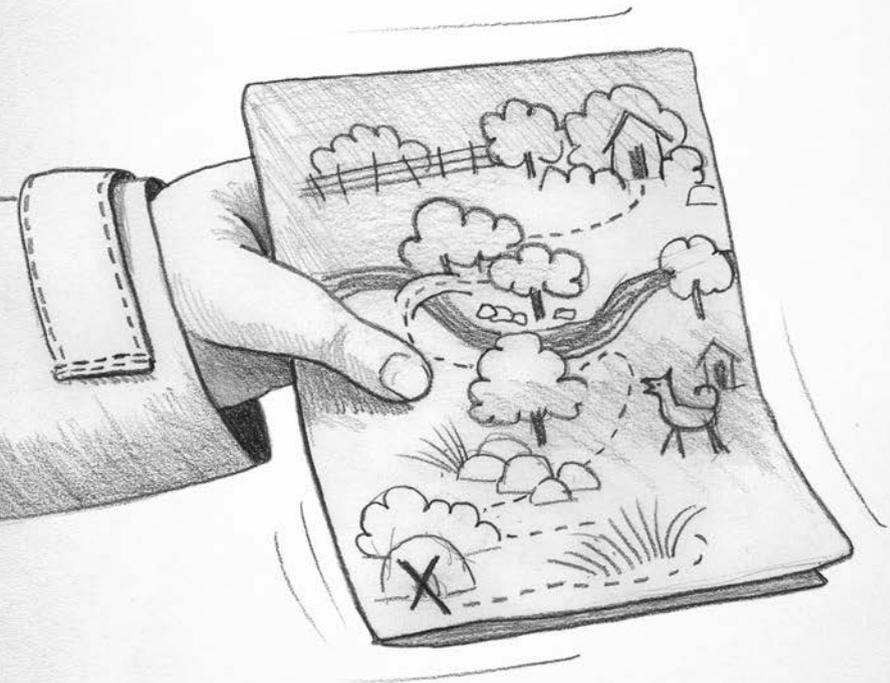
If you said “yes,” take this spy hat  
and get set to go!



We intend to get the Bantam Chicken back.

We have a plan.

The plan is on this napkin in my hand.



Dennis will flap and cluck  
and quack.





Sit still until Dennis quacks.

Then...run!

Go to the wigwam of the Muskrat Club.

Grab the Bantam Chicken.

Tuck him in your spy hat.

Then run back to us. Be quick!

Run as fast as you can!



Go! Run! Run!

You got the Bantam Chicken back  
from the Muskrat Club!

You are the best spy!

This is a spy pin just for you!





**The End**



# Skunk Hotel



In the pale and silent dusk,  
a skunk crept into an open shed.



It is spring, and it is time for the  
skunk to fix up a home for himself.

This broken crate will make a fine nest! The skunk begins his tasks.



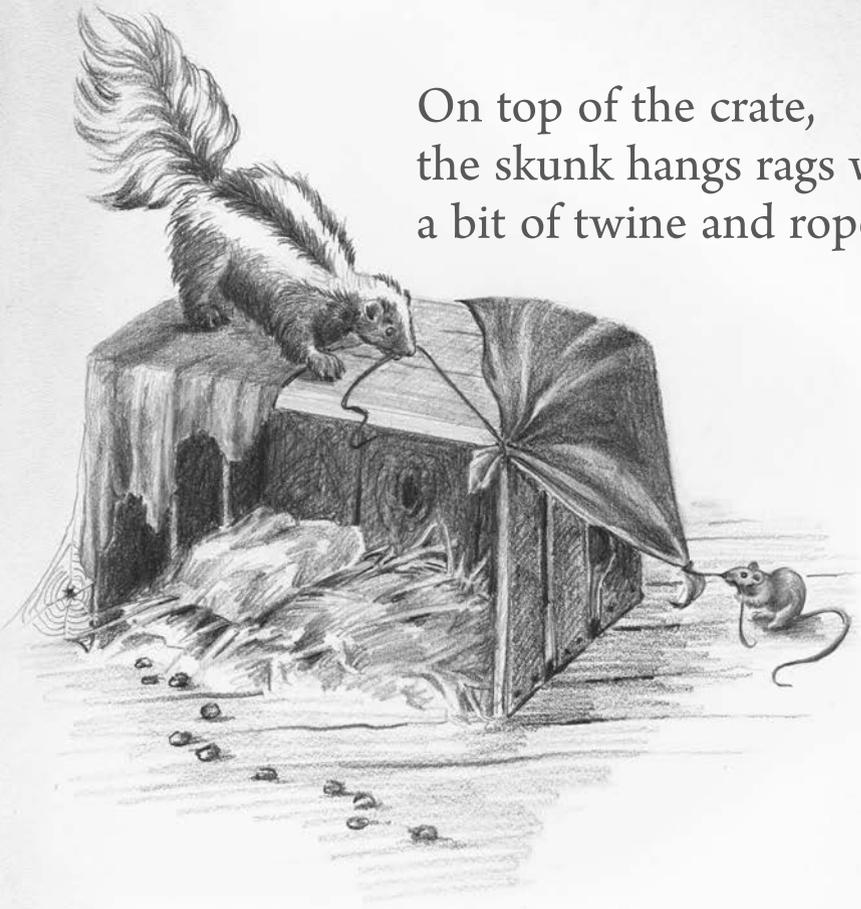
He cuts twigs to size to make a bed frame. A pile of grass will finish the bed and protect it from damp drafts and frost.

The skunk can use these rocks to  
pave a wide path to the front of  
his home.



He taps them with his nose.

On top of the crate,  
the skunk hangs rags with  
a bit of twine and rope.



He is content with his safe home.  
Time to doze for a while!





But then...what is this? A human opens the shed! The skunk and the man stare, frozen for a moment.

“Is this a skunk?” the man asks.  
“It is black with a white stripe on its back. Yes, it is a lone skunk in a crate! But why?”

“You do not belong in here!  
My shed is not a skunk hotel!”

“But you are so cute!” the man admits.  
“Do not hide from me.”



“I like you,” the man tells the skunk.

“A lone skunk is not a problem.  
You can use this shed for a home.”





The skunk is glad that the man is not upset.

But the man is not so wise...

for the next time he opens the shed, the skunk will have five kits and a wife!



**The End**

# Pine Tree Pet Shop



Miss Finch runs Pine Tree Pet Shop on Reed Street. She broke her leg last week.

I have been at the store a lot to help her. I sweep, ring up sales, and help with odd jobs.

“I need to go home to rest my leg,” said Miss Finch. “Can you run the store?”

“Yes, I will be glad to help!” I said.

Miss Finch gave me a pat on the back. “Thanks. I am glad I can trust you.”

Then Miss Finch left to go home. I get to run the store by myself!

# Pine Tree Pet Shop



“What jobs can I do?” I ask myself.

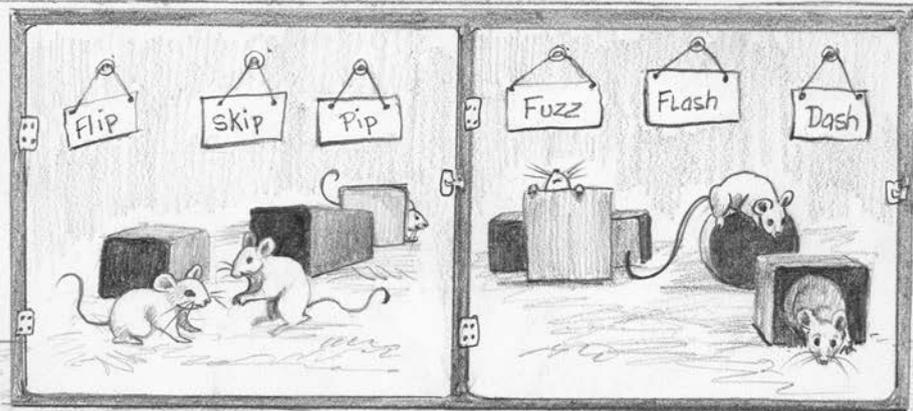
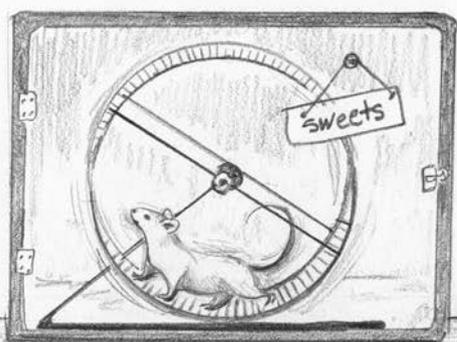
I check on the pet rats.

When the rats came to the shop last week, my job was to hand-tame them. I gave them names: Flip, Skip, Pip, Fuzz, Flash, Dash, and Sweets.

The rats need more seed.  
I feed them.

Next, I set boxes in the tank for them to shred and nest in.

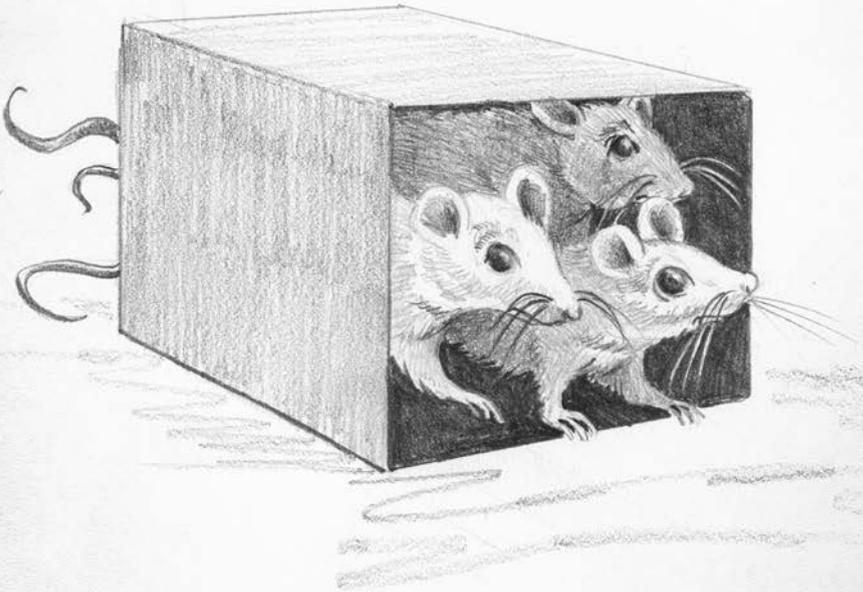
Sweets runs on the wheel, while the rest of the rats sniff the boxes.

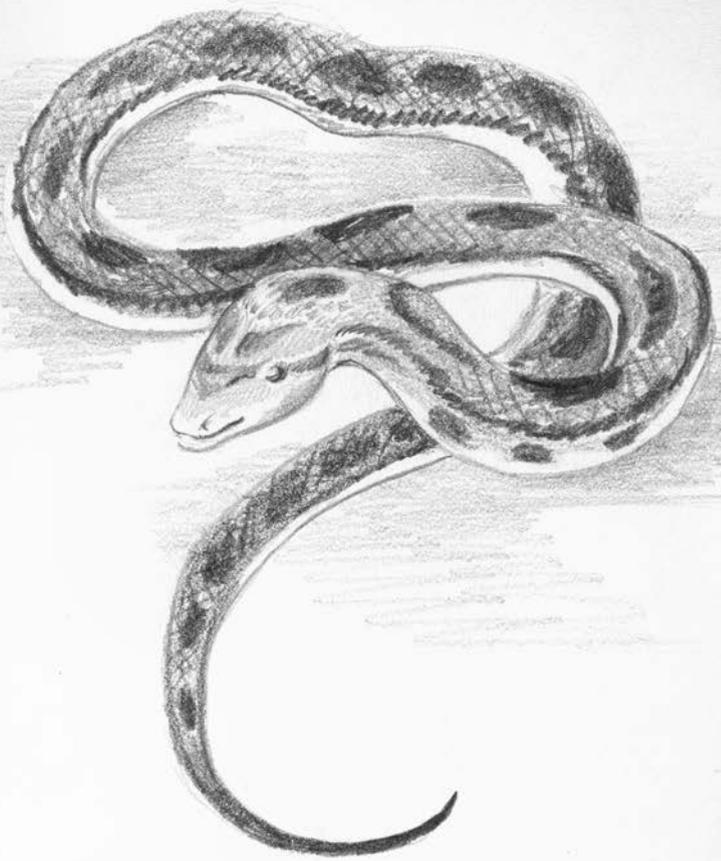


Then the rats stop.

Quick as a wink, the rats dive into  
the boxes.

Why did the rats hide?





No! I see what made them hide!

I freeze. A green snake stares back at me.

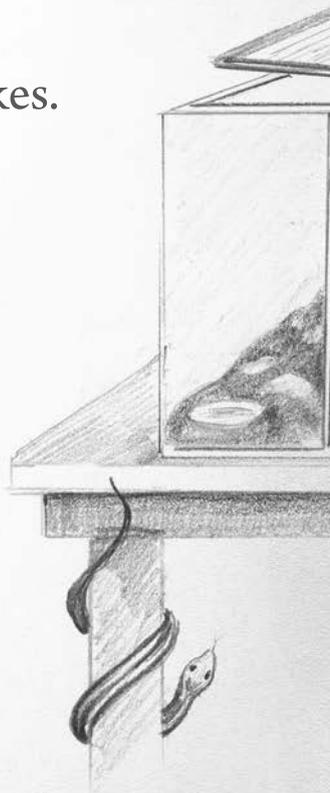
A snake—not in his tank!

I must get that snake back in his tank!

But I cannot. I cannot make myself pick up the snake and set it back in its tank.

The snakes at Pine Tree Pet Shop do not bite, but I do not like snakes.

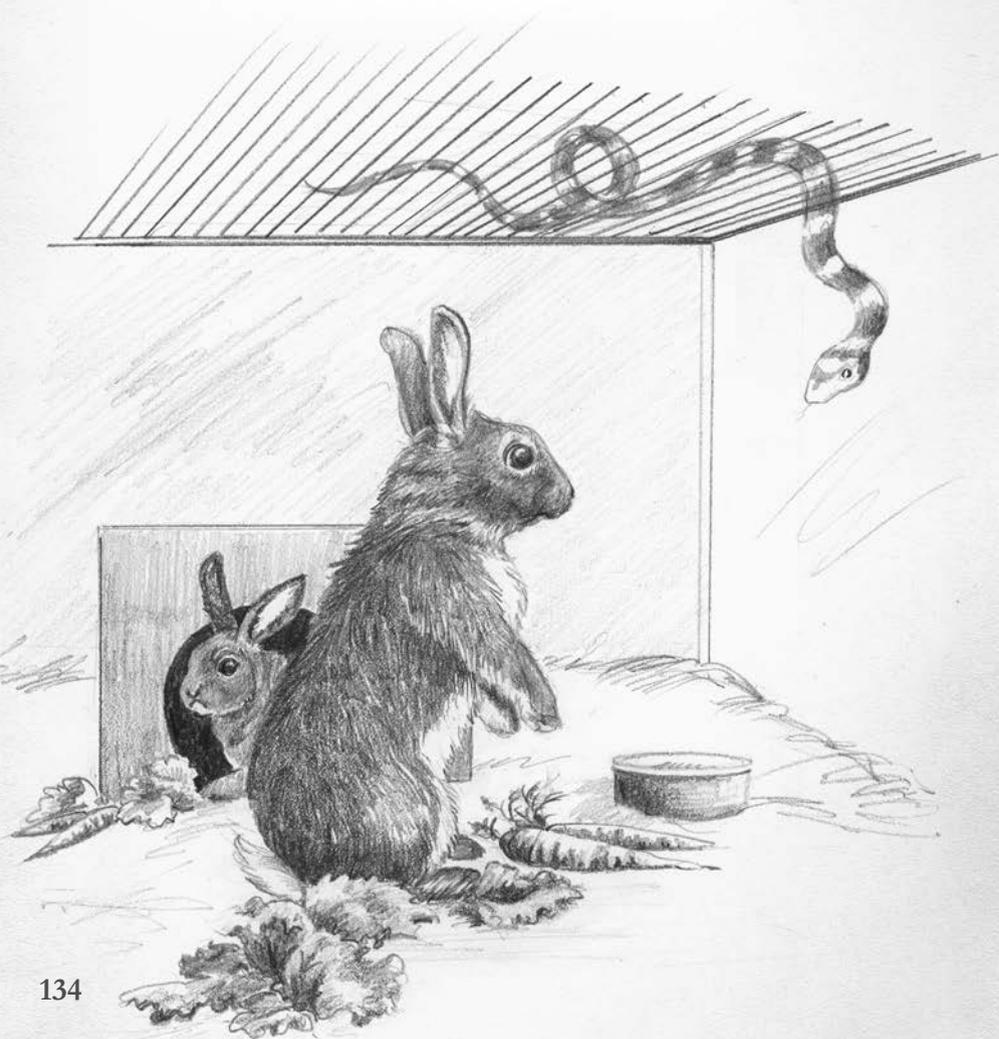
But I must. Miss Finch thinks I can run the shop, so I must do it. Even if that job includes snakes.



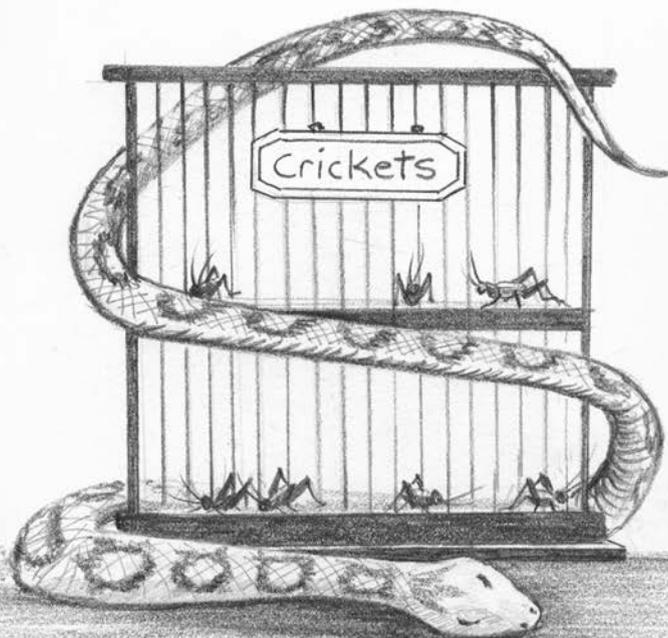
I peek into the tank. Not a snake is left! Six snakes are free! I feel my skin creep.



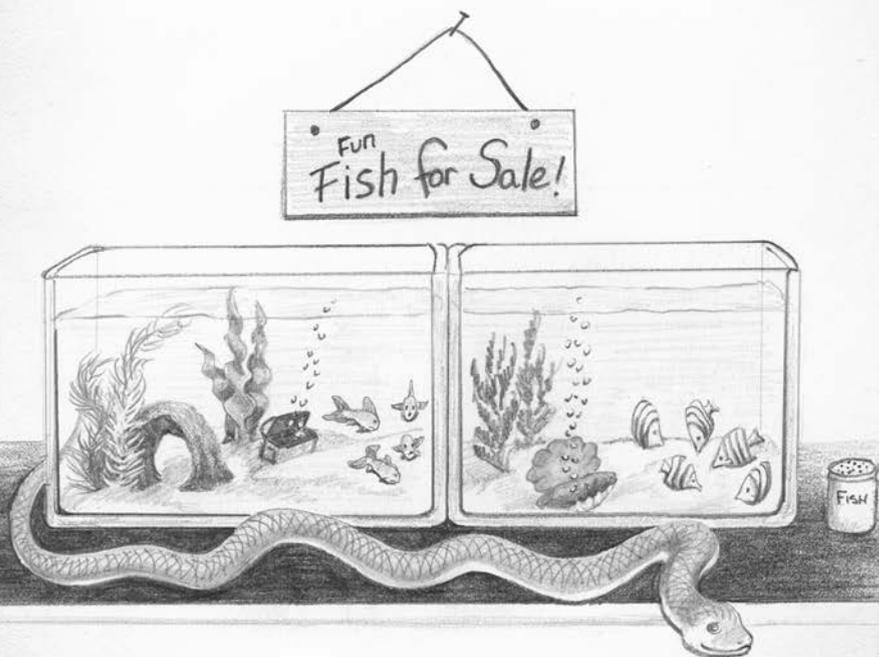
A snake greets the rabbits.



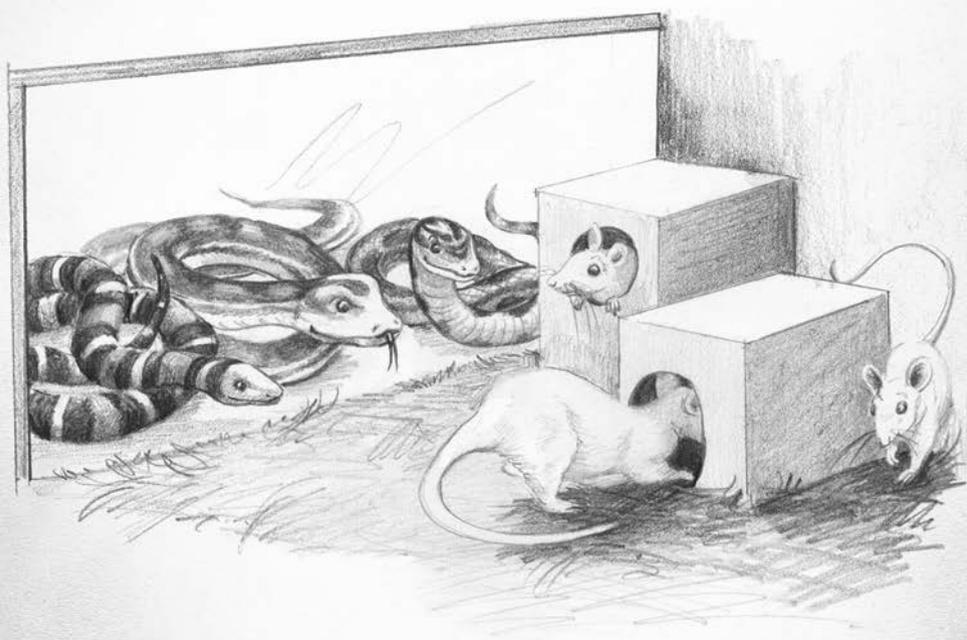
A snake sleeps by the crickets.



A snake is by the fish tanks.

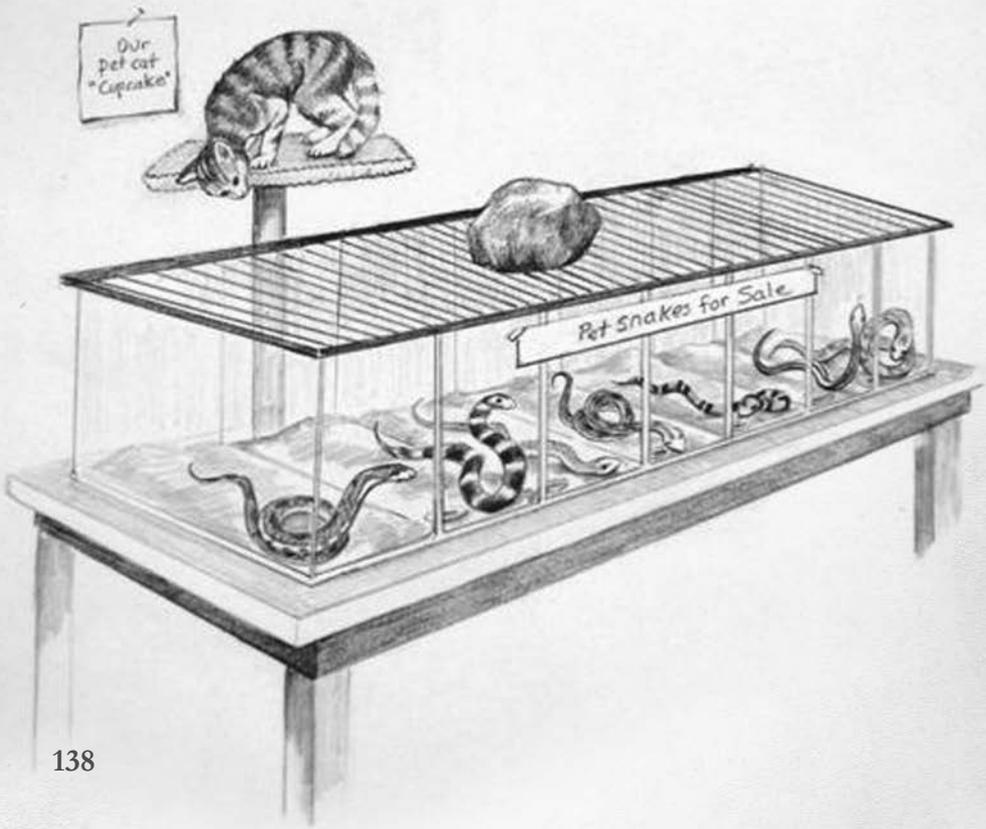


And three snakes peer at the rats.



It scares me, but I grab the snakes  
and set them back in the tank. I set  
a big rock on the lid of the tank.

I like to take care of the pet shop,  
but I do not like those snakes! I  
think my next job will be to make  
a strong lid from a sheet of steel.  
Then those snakes cannot get free!



The End



## What happens when...



...a boy visits an elf in the Alps?

...a broken robot throws figs?

...a smelly musk ox goes for a swim?

...a family of skunks moves into the shed?

...a bunch of snakes escape their cages?



## Find out inside!

  
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