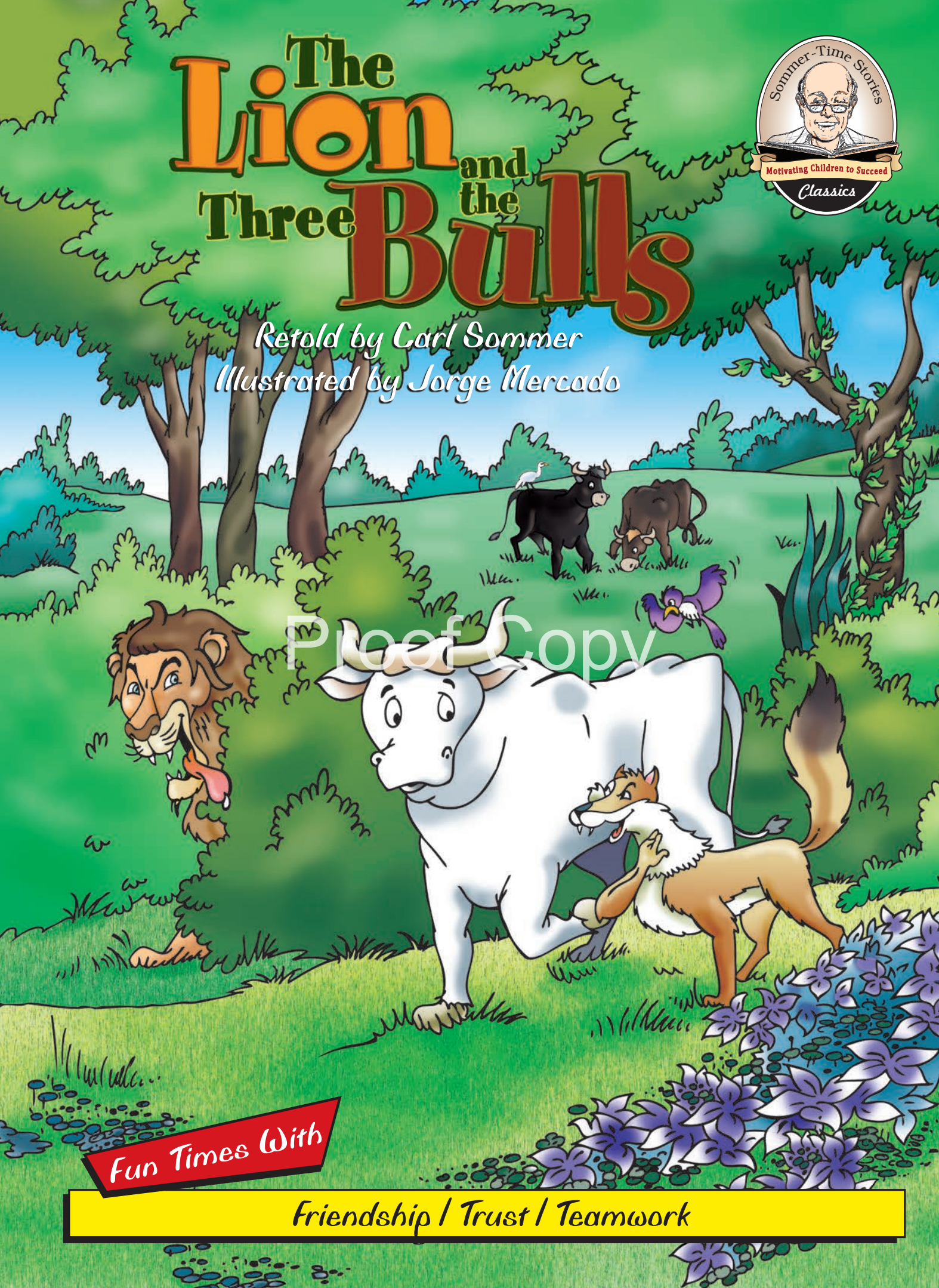


The Lion and the Three Bulls

*Retold by Carl Sommer
Illustrated by Jorge Mercado*



Fun Times With

Friendship / Trust / Teamwork

Sommer-Time Stories—Classics
Sommer's lively retelling of this classic Aesop fable.

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First Edition

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Sommer, Carl, 1930-

The lion and the three bulls / retold by Carl Sommer ; illustrated by Jorge Mercado. -- First edition.
pages cm. -- (Sommer-time stories-classics)

Summary: "The three bulls are unbeatable as a team, but a clever fox divides them with rumors and lies. The furious bulls separate and become an easy prey for the hungry lion. After a narrow escape, the bulls realize their strength comes from sticking together"-- Provided by publisher.

ISBN 978-1-57537-083-5 (library binding : alk. paper) -- ISBN 978-1-57537-445-1 (epub)

ISBN 978-1-57537-483-3 (k8) -- ISBN 978-1-57537-496-3 (pdf)

[1. Fables. 2. Folklore.] I. Mercado, Jorge, 1945- illustrator. II. Aesop. III. Title.

PZ8.2.S635Lk 2014

398.2--dc23

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2012037801

 **Advance**
PUBLISHING



In the beautiful grassy plains lived three strong bulls, one white, one black, and one brown. They were the best of friends.

The three bulls enjoyed eating the rich green grass together, but they always had to watch for wild animals wanting to attack them. One day a pack of hungry hyenas raced towards them.



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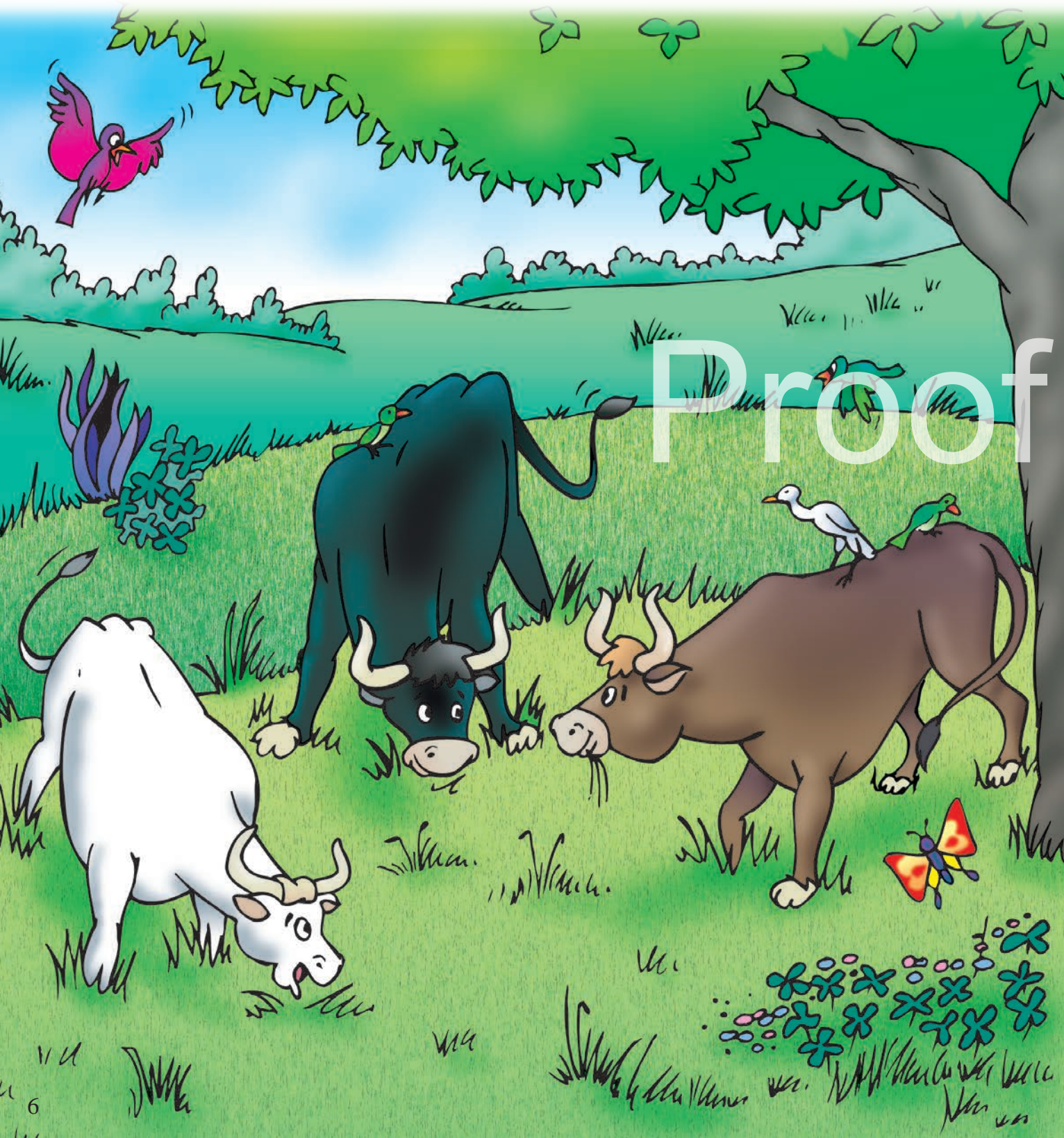
The hyenas first attacked the black bull. “Help!” the black bull screamed. “I’m being attacked!”

“We’re coming right away!” the white and brown bulls yelled as they dashed towards him.

The three bulls knew that when they were together they were strong, so they quickly banded together and faced their enemies. When the bulls did this, no hyena dared to attack them.

Whenever a bull found a rich patch of grass, he called out to the others, "Come over here! Look at the rich green grass I've found."

The other two bulls always came and ate the grass together. Since they were best of friends, the bulls always shared.



A great big lion also lived in the grassy plains. He often crept up on the bulls and groaned, "Ohhhhh! If only I could catch a bull to eat!"

But whenever the bulls saw him, they banded together. The lion never attacked. He knew he was no match for the bulls when they defended one another.



The lion thought and thought. "What can I do? Together the bulls are much too strong for me. I must get one of them alone, but how? I would love to feast on a bull. Ohhhhhh! That would be

such a tasty meal!"

Suddenly, the lion got an idea. He quickly jumped up and said, "I'll ask the sly fox. He's full of good tricks."



The lion went to the fox and said, "Good morning. I've come to ask for your advice."

"What's your problem?" the proud fox asked.

"There are three bulls that are the best of friends. I would do anything to catch one of them to eat. But whenever I try to get one of them, they always band together. When they act like this, they're much too strong for me to attack. What

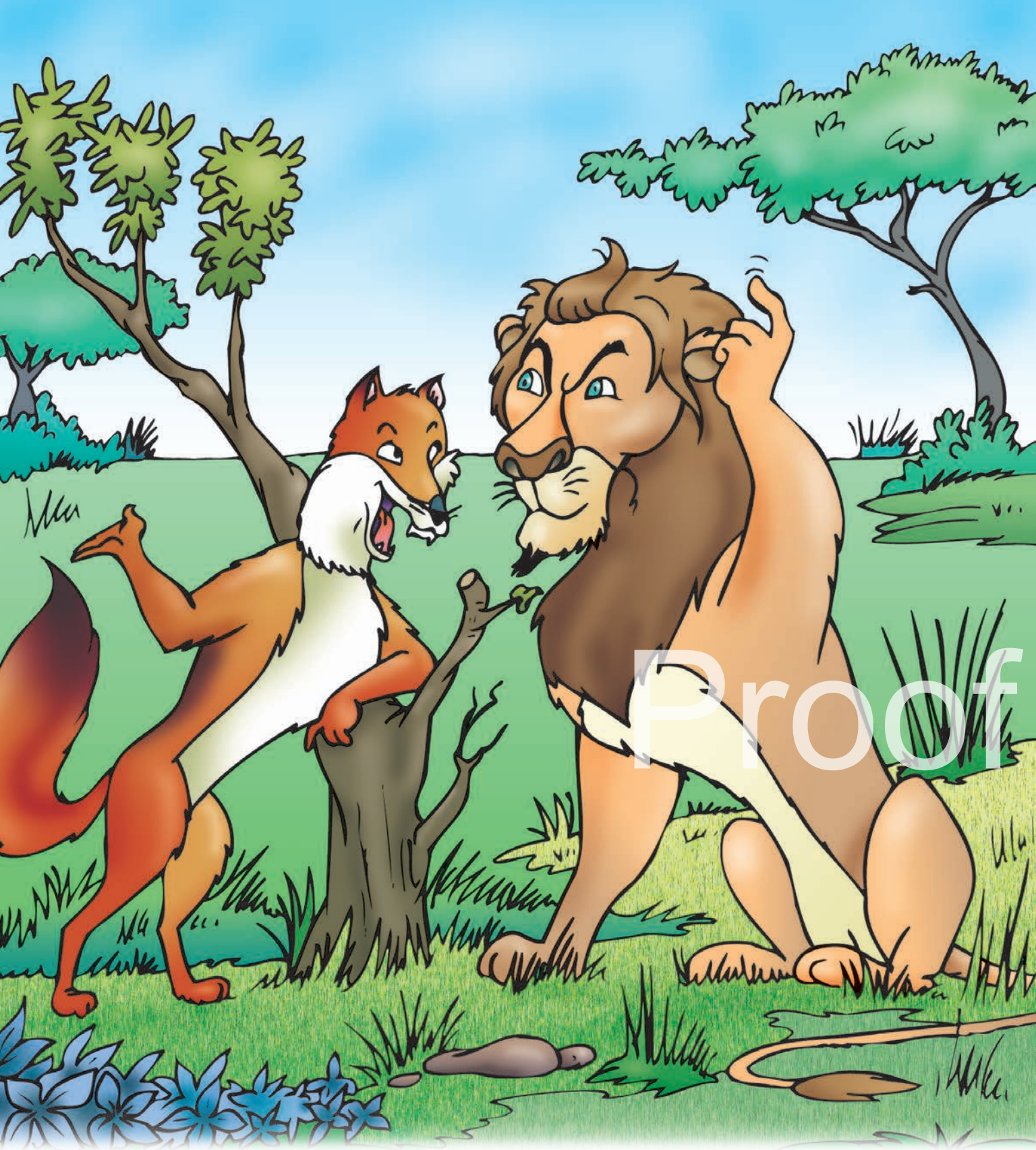
can I do?"

The quick-thinking fox grinned, "What will you give me if I help you?"

"I'll give you a leg from a bull if you promise me I'll capture one."

"You can mark my words," the proud fox said. "I promise you that you will capture a bull."

"It's a deal," the lion said.



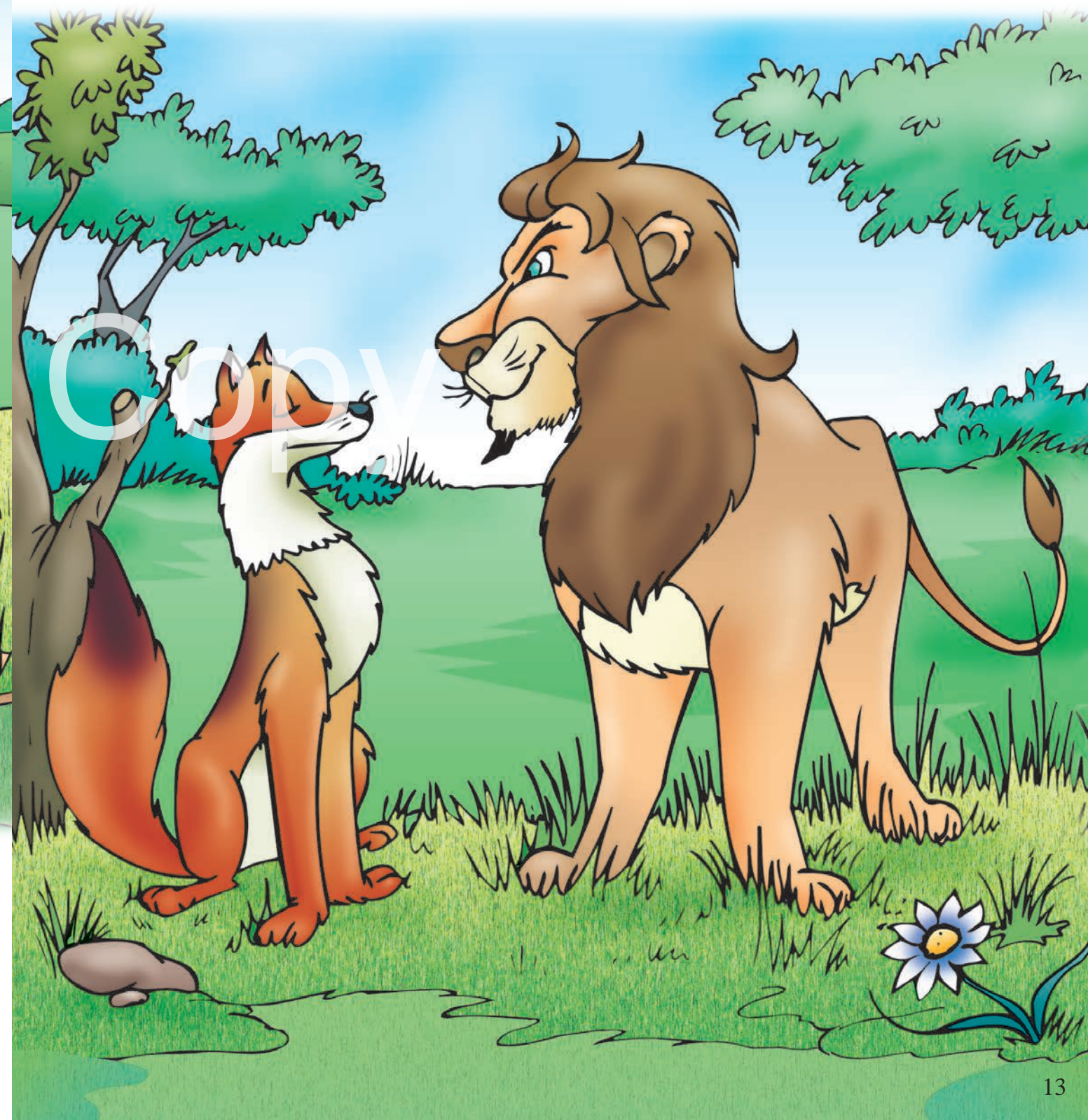
“This is what we must do,” the fox said. “We must get the bulls to hate each other so they will break up their friendship.”

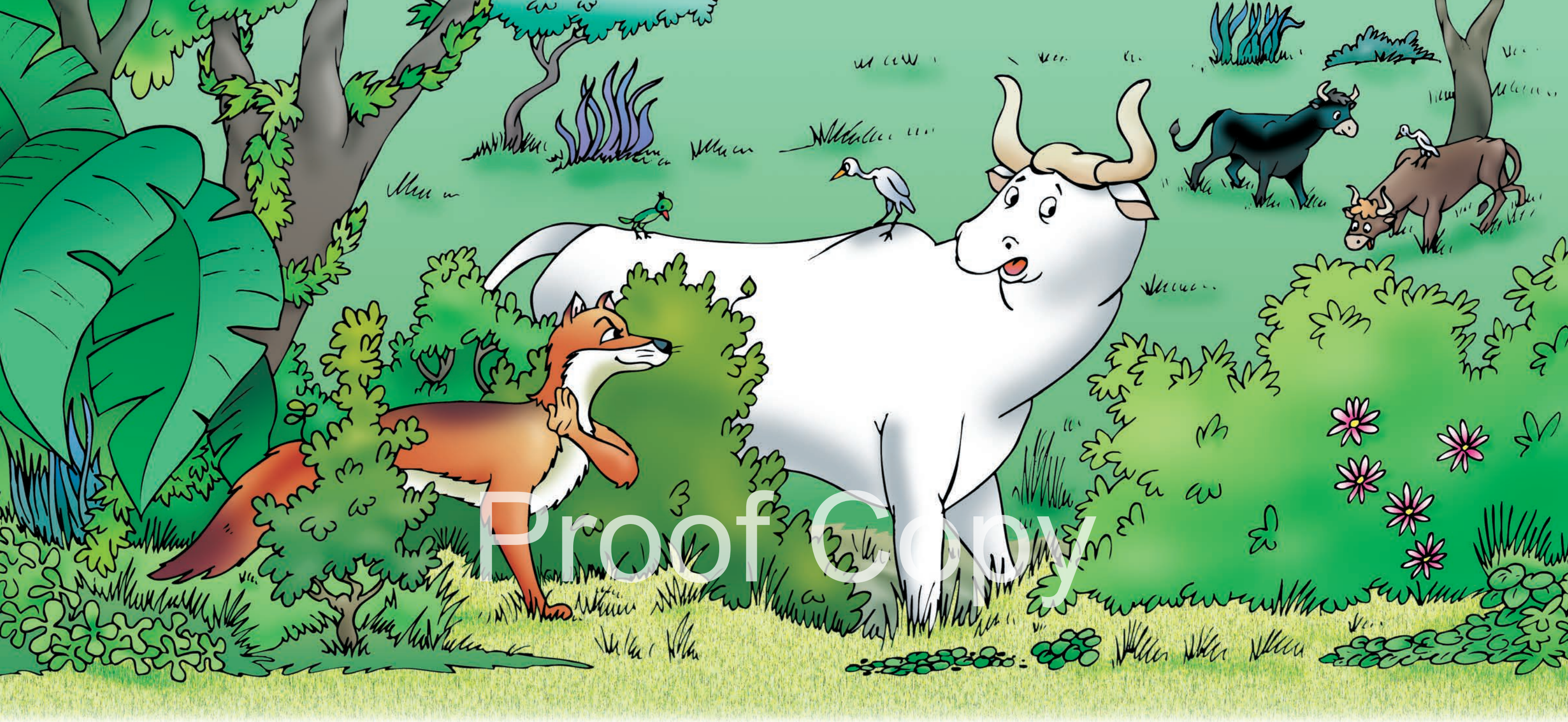
The lion scratched his head and said, “That’s a good idea, but how can we do that?”

The fox stuck out his chest and with a great big smile boasted, “Just let me take care of it.”

“It’s a deal,” the lion said. “But I can’t see how you as a little fox can get three strong friendly bulls to hate each other.”

“You’ll see,” the smiling fox said as he strutted away.





Early the next day the sly fox went to where the bulls were grazing. The sneaky fox crawled behind a bush where only the white bull could see him. He motioned for him to come. When the white bull came, the fox pointed and said, "Over there is some rich grass."

"Thank you," the white bull said. "I'll tell my two friends."

"By the way," the fox whispered, "I shouldn't tell you this, but the other day I heard your two

friends say terrible things about you."

The sly fox started to leave. "Wait!" the white bull begged. "Please tell me what they said."

"Promise me you will not tell," the fox said.

"I promise."

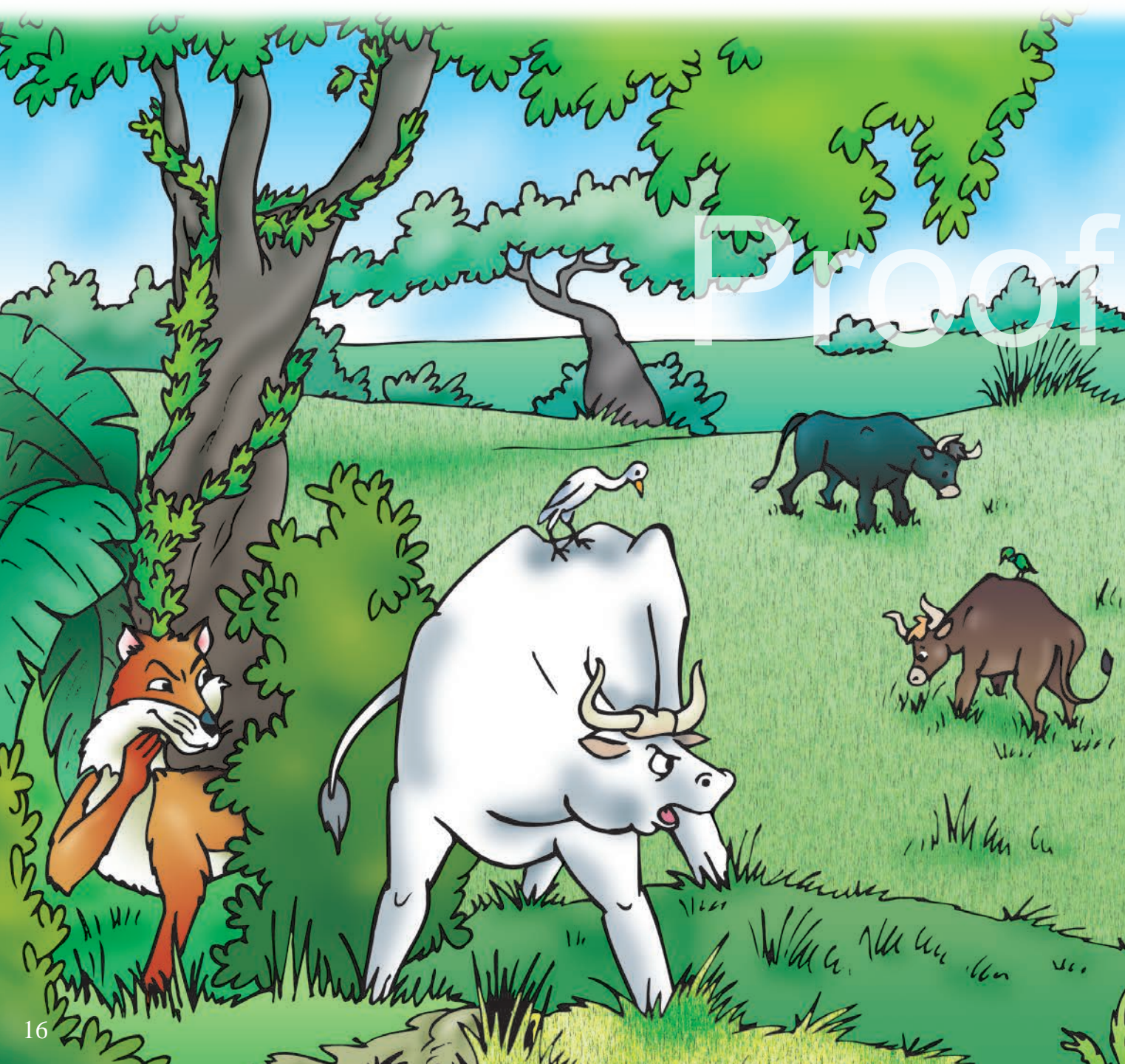
"I heard the brown and black bulls say that you're stuck up and you think you're better than everyone else," whispered the fox. "On top of that they said white bulls are dumb, and that you're stubborn and proud."

The white bull looked into the eyes of the fox and asked, "Are you sure you heard them say that?"

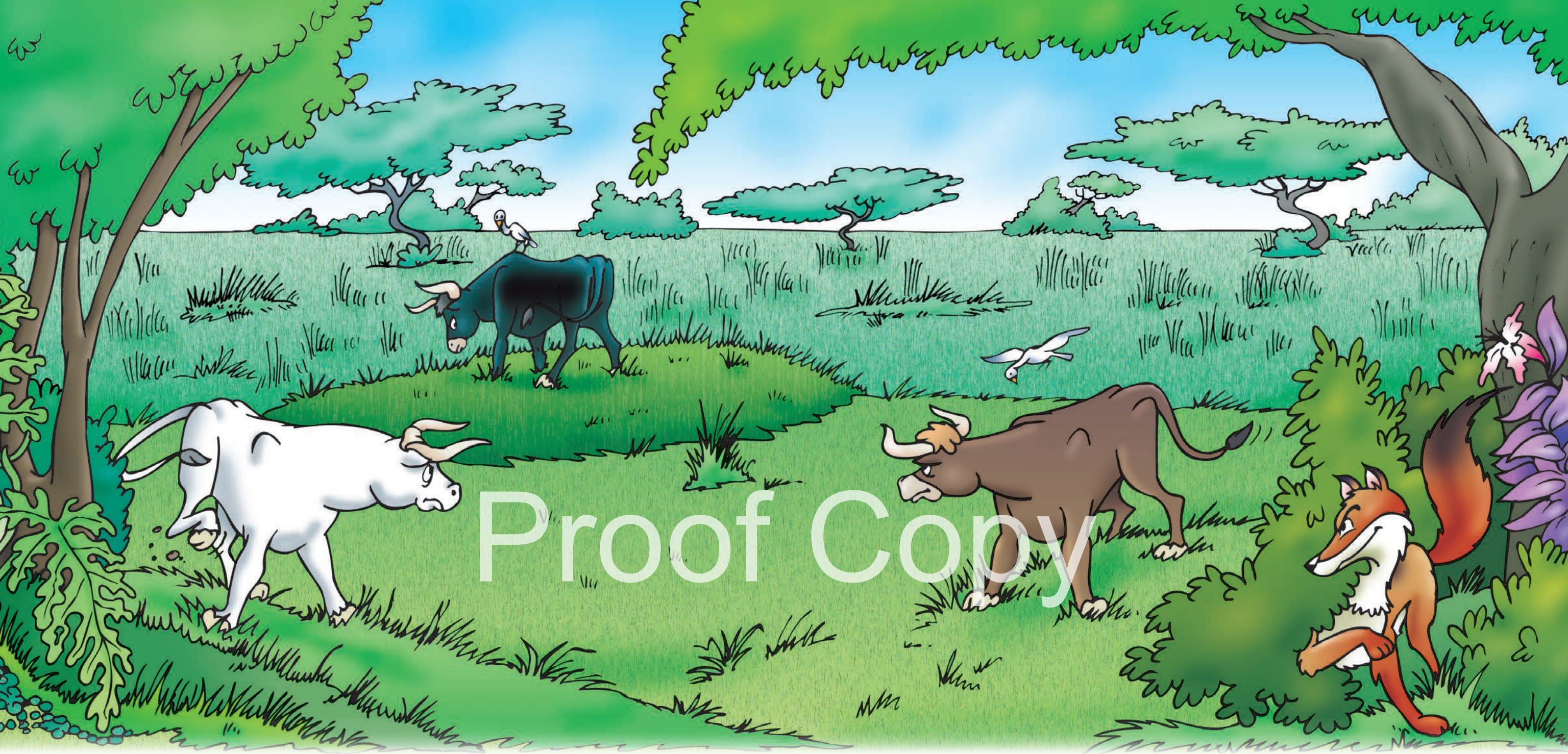
The fox never flinched. "I promise I did. I always tell the truth!"

The white bull turned around and stared at the two other bulls and said, "How dare they talk that way about me behind my back?"

The more he thought about what the fox had said, the angrier he became.



The sly fox went to each of the other two bulls and told them the same thing. Now all three bulls were furious at each other.



As the three angry bulls grazed, they began thinking evil thoughts about each other. The white bull stared at the two bulls, kicked his hoofs into the ground, and snorted, “Some rotten friends they are, talking behind my back and thinking white bulls are dumb and stubborn!”

The brown bull glanced at the other bulls and sneered, “I’m not proud and stubborn and dumb. They are! Who do they think they are? I’ll never

talk to them again!”

The black bull glanced at the other two from the corner of his eye and also snorted, “That’s some way for friends to talk. I’m not dumb; they are! They’re the ones who are rotten, proud, and stubborn!”

The more the bulls thought about what the fox had said, the farther they grazed from each other.



As the sly fox watched the bulls graze farther and farther apart, he exclaimed with a great big smile, "It worked!"

The grinning fox dashed through the woods to tell the lion.

When the fox met the lion, he proudly declared, "I have wonderful news! My plan worked! I got the three bulls hating each other. Go out tomorrow and get your easy meal."

"Great!" the lion roared. "I'm hungry."

"Remember," the sly fox sneered, "don't forget my leg."

"You'll be getting what you earn," the lion promised.





That night the three bulls went to their place to rest. Before this they always had a wonderful time talking with one another, but tonight they did not say a word. It became very quiet. Then the white bull made a slight noise.

“Keep quiet!” the brown bull yelled. “Don’t you know I’m trying to sleep?”

“You keep quiet!” the white bull shot back.

“You’re making more noise than I am.”

“I didn’t start making noise,” the brown bull shouted. “You did!”

“You’re making noise now,” the white bull yelled.

“Why don’t both of you be quiet?” the black bull cried. “I want to get some sleep.”

The bulls kept yelling late into the night.

The next day after having very little rest, the three grumpy bulls went out into the grassy plains to eat. As they went along, the black bull happened to bump into the white bull.



“Who do you think you’re hitting?” the white bull snapped.

“I didn’t hit you!” the black bull sneered.

“Yes, you did!” the white bull snorted as he put his head down and kicked up dirt with his hoofs. “You wanted to hit me!”

“You’re a liar!” the black bull roared.



“Don’t call me a liar!” the white bull snorted. He put his head down and slammed his horns into the black bull. “Bammmmm!” He hit the black bull head on.

“I’ll show you what a hit is,” the black bull sneered as he put his head down and ran into the white bull.

“Slammmmm!” A fight was on.

“Let the proud and stubborn bulls fight,” the brown bull said. “I’m getting something to eat.”

When the hungry lion saw the brown bull walking alone, he exclaimed, “Excellent! Here comes my tasty meal.”

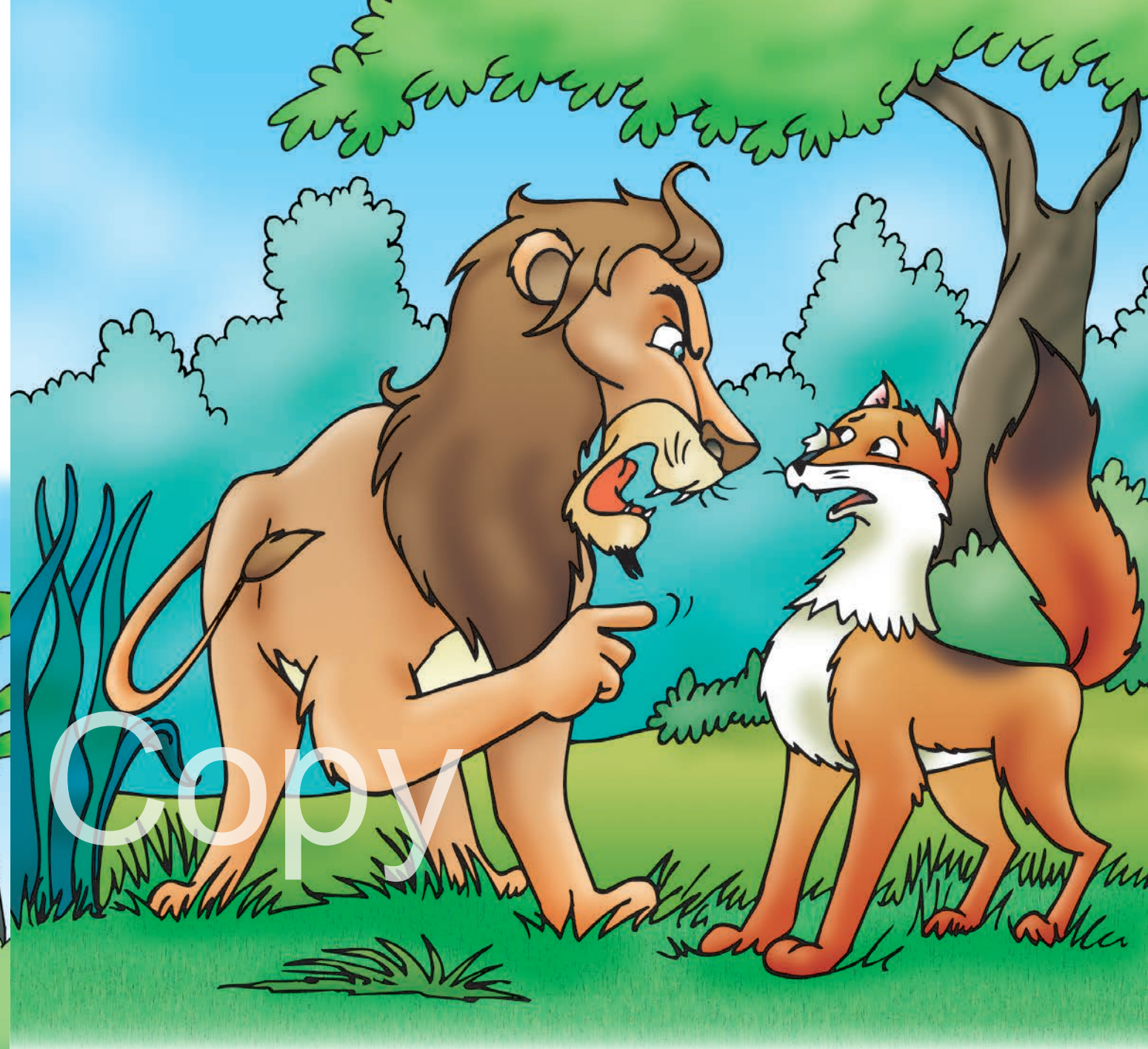
When the brown bull got close, the lion leaped from the bushes and jumped onto his back. The brown bull jumped and kicked to throw off the lion, but he could not.

“I need help!” the brown bull said to himself. With the lion on his back, he ran as fast as he could to his two friends shouting as loud as he could, “Help me! Please! Come and help me!”



When the black bull heard the brown bull yelling, he stopped fighting and ran as fast as he could to help. When he saw the lion, he charged at the lion and threw him off the brown bull. The white bull also came charging.

The three bulls quickly banded together. When the lion saw the bulls together, he was furious. "It's now hopeless for me to get my meal. But I'll get even with that proud fox!"



When the proud fox met the lion, he sneered saying, "Where's my leg?"

"Didn't you promise me that I'd get a bull?" the angry and hungry lion asked.

"I did," the fox answered as he stuck out his chest.

"You lied to me!" the lion roared. "I didn't get my bull! Now you'll get what you earned."

With that the hungry lion jumped on the fox and ate him.



The brown bull said to his friends, "Thank you! Thank you! You saved my life."

"I'm wondering," the black bull said. "Did you say I was dumb, stubborn, and proud, and that I thought I was better than everyone else?"

"I never said that," the brown bull said. "The fox told me that you said that about me."

"He said the same thing to me about you two!" the white bull exclaimed.

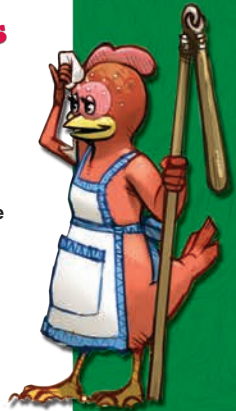
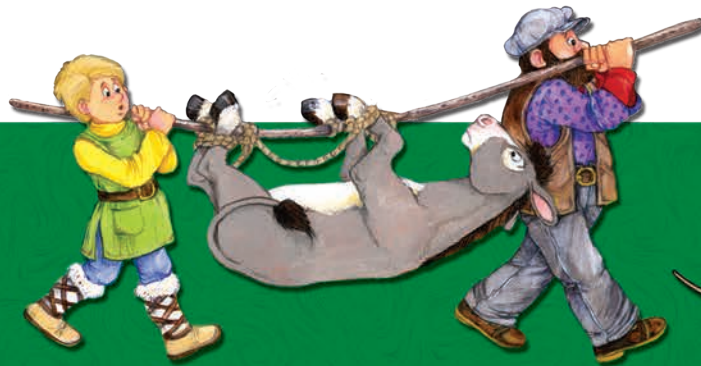
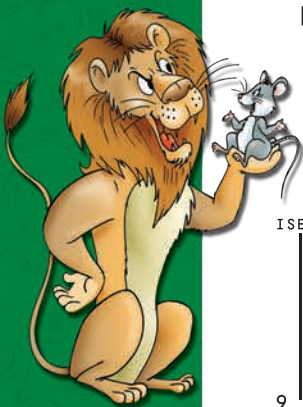
"Ohhhhhh!" the bulls groaned.

"How foolish we were for listening to the lies of that sly fox," the brown bull said. "He tricked us into hating each other so we wouldn't be friends."



The three bulls said they were sorry to each other and once again became best friends. Then they made a promise, “We will never again listen to those who want to destroy our friendship.”

From that day on, they looked out for each other and lived happily together.



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ISBN 978-1-57537-083-5



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