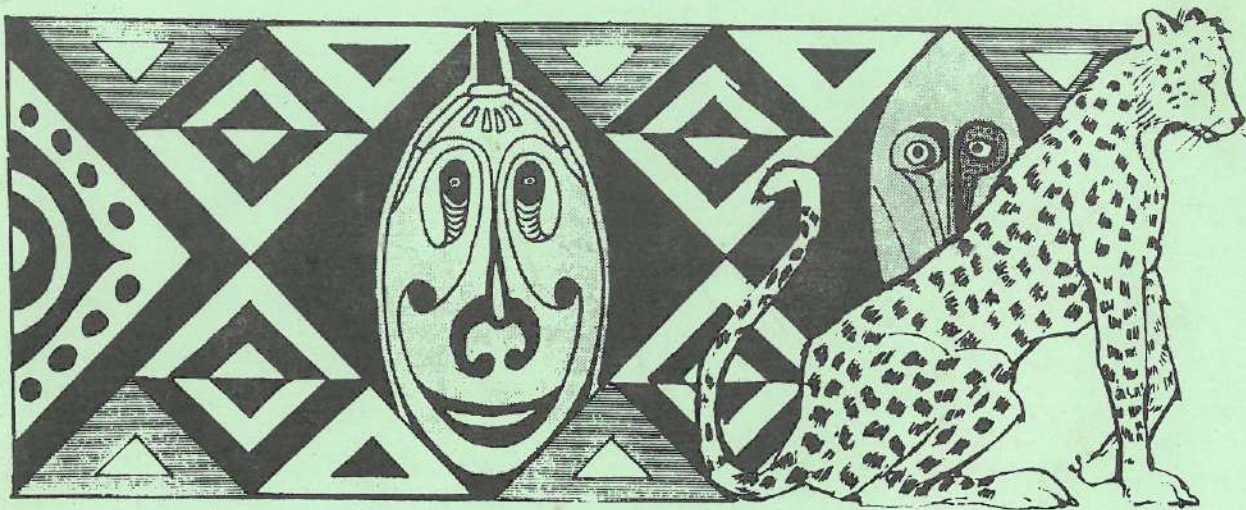


Coyote meets Cheetah



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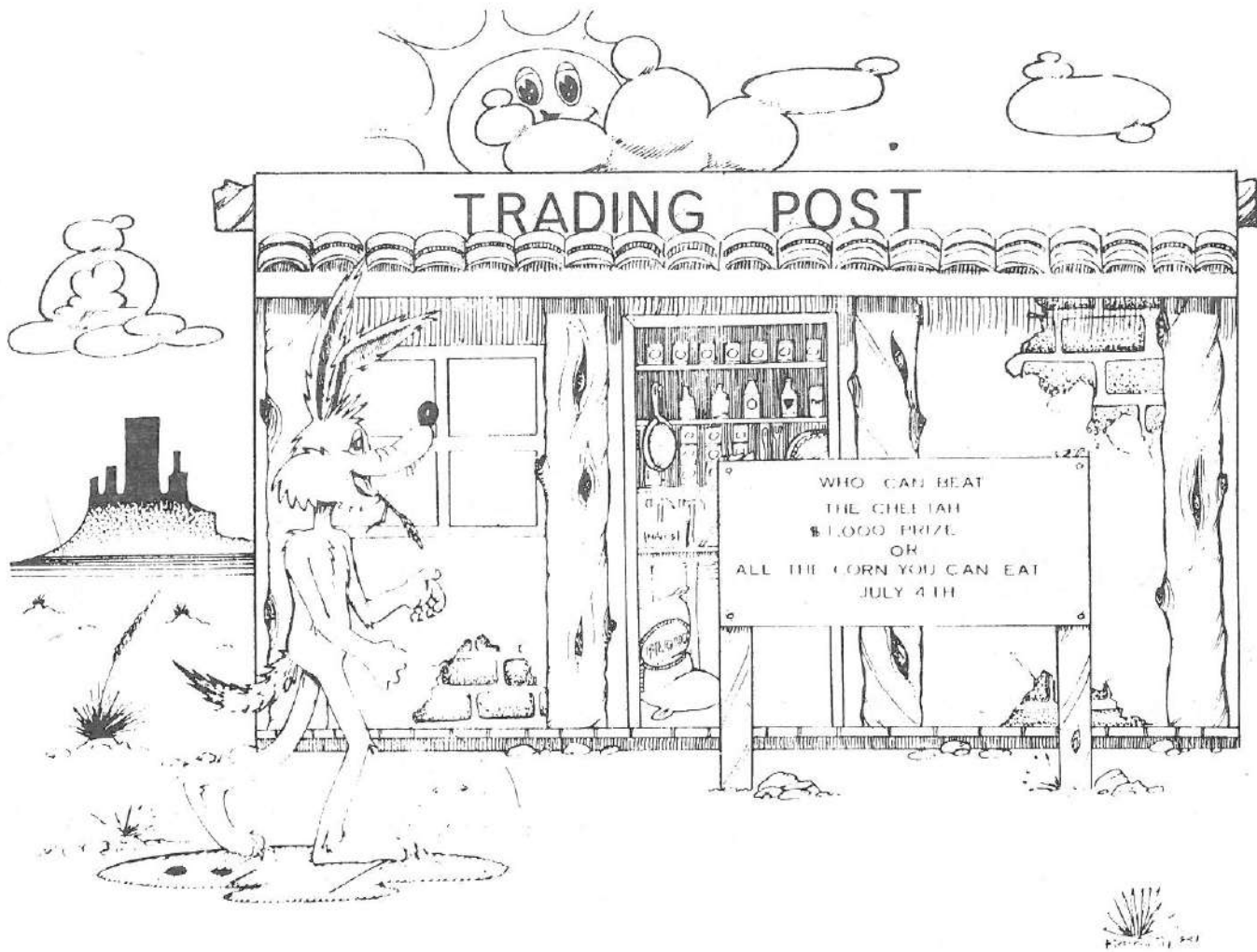
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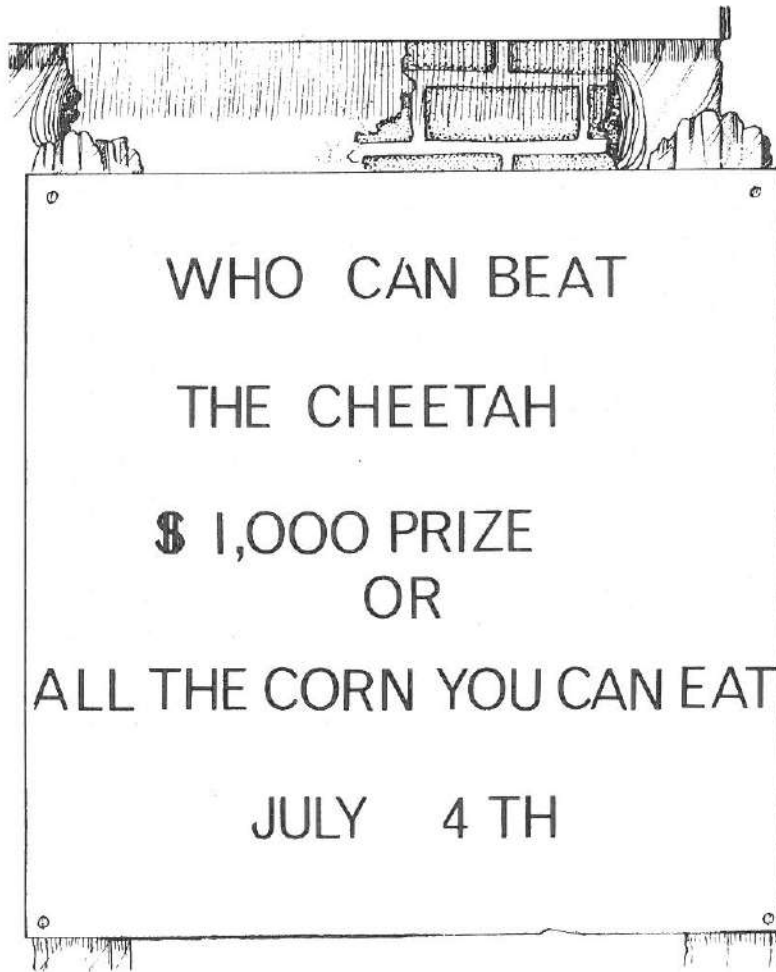
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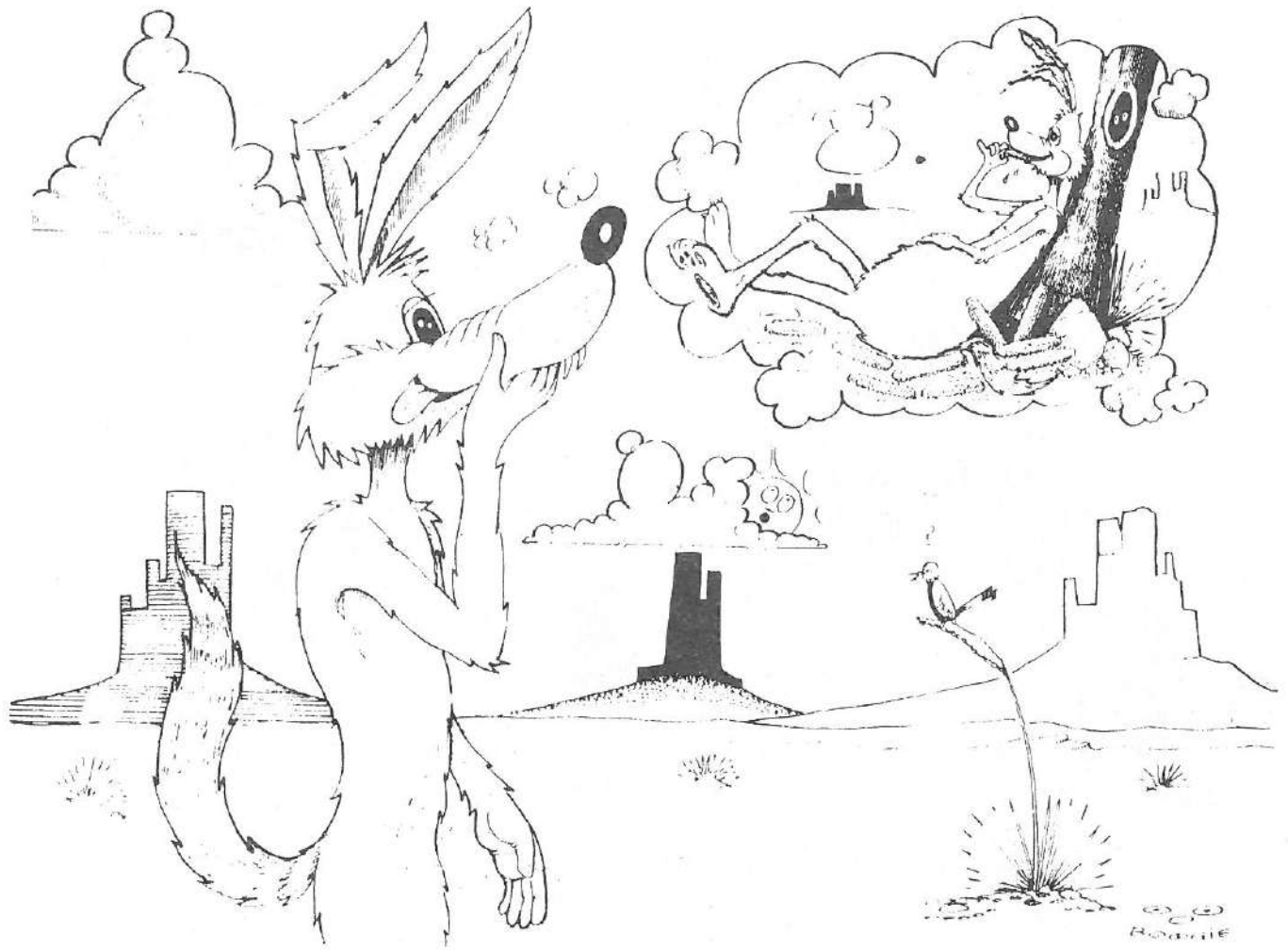
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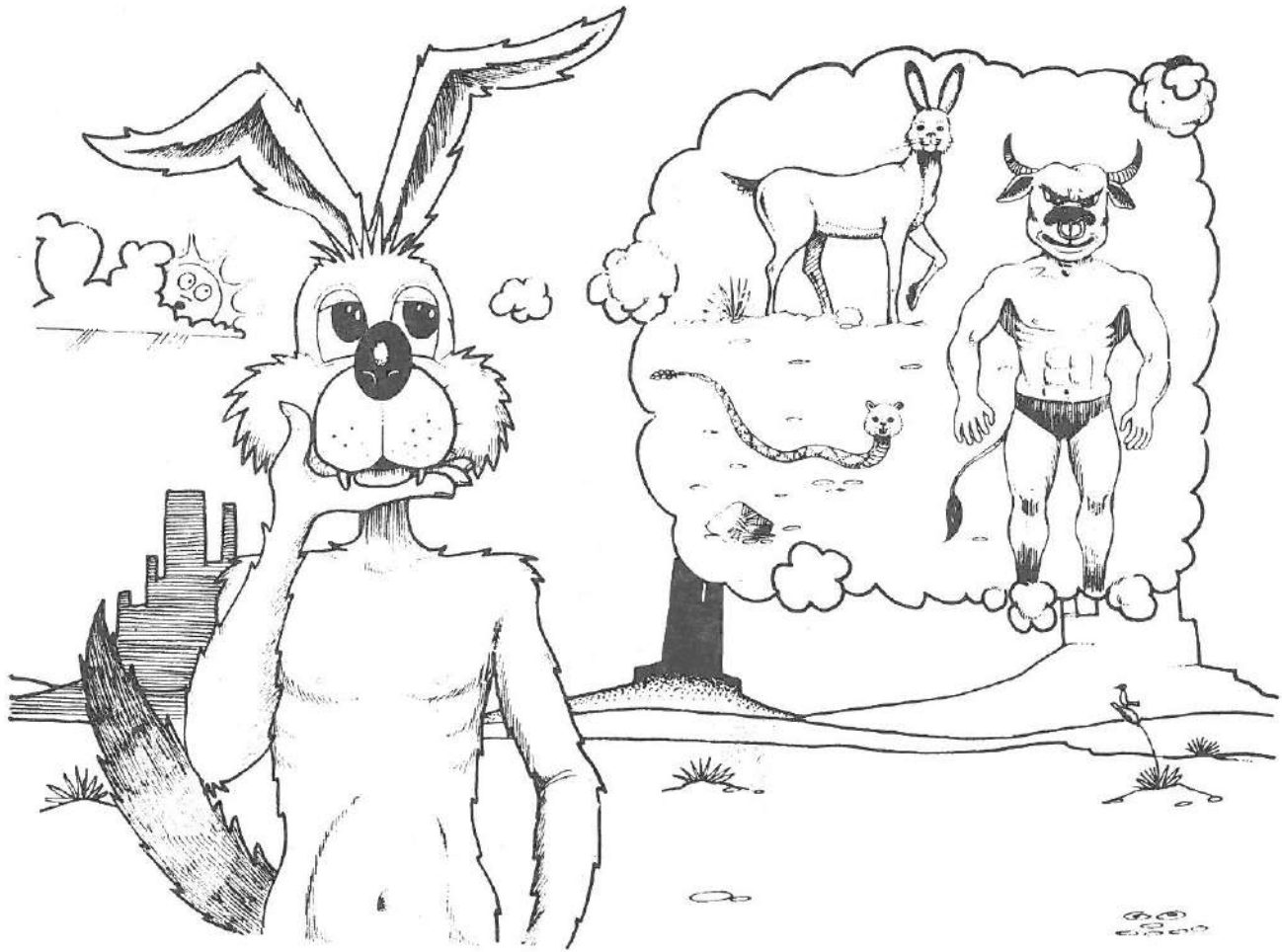
One summer morning Coyote was walking by the trading post when he saw a sign.



"One thousand dollars or all the corn you can eat! That's some prize!" thought Coyote, patting his empty stomach. "I'd sure like to win that race."

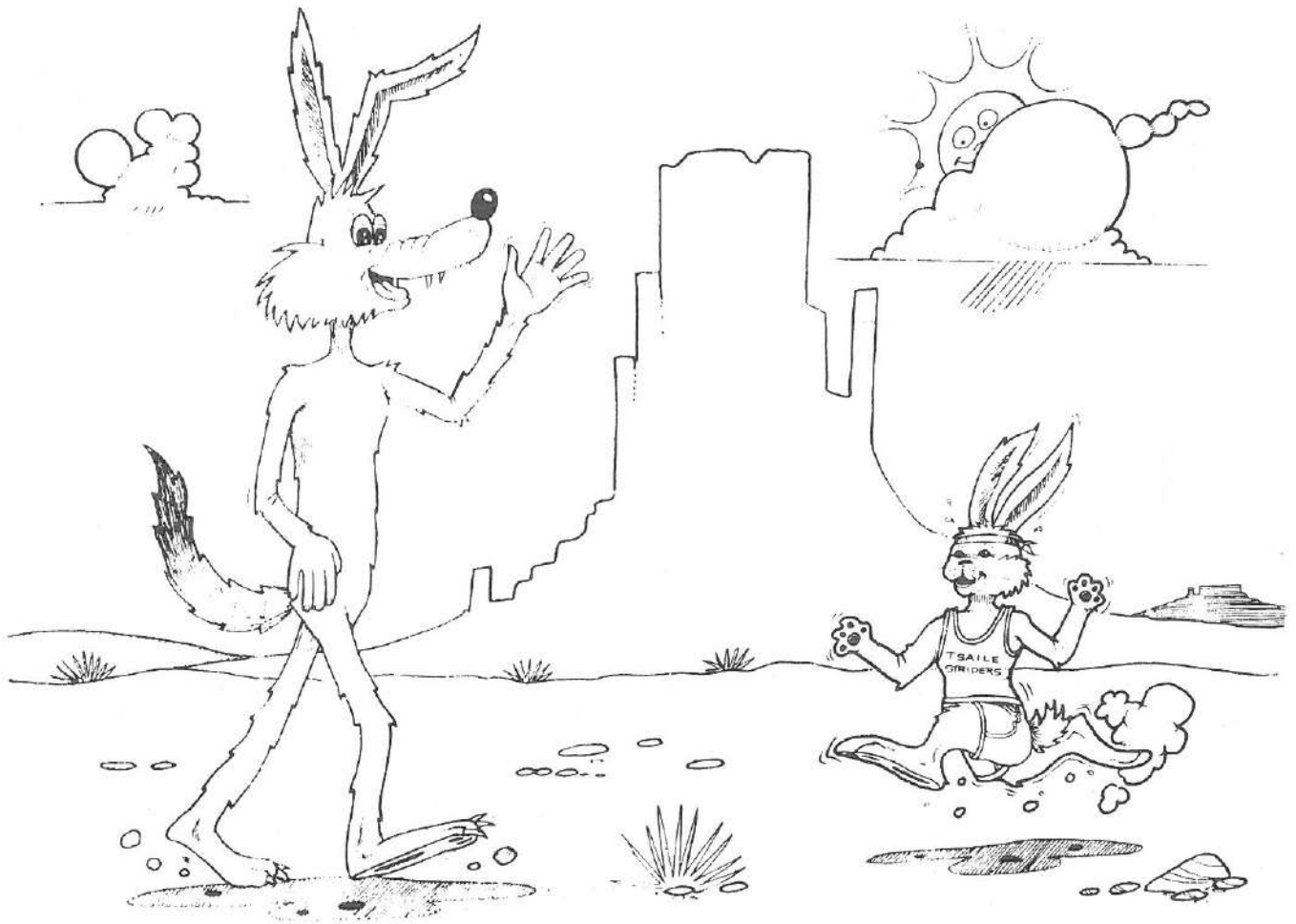


But Coyote was lazy. He didn't want to run a race unless he was sure he could win. And if he wasn't sure he could win, he was going to find a way to make sure. Because Coyote wanted that corn. He wanted it badly. Already he could taste the sweet kernels melting in his mouth. And all he could eat!



One thing really bothered Coyote. He didn't know what a cheetah was. He didn't know if it was as big as a bull or as small as a prairie dog. He didn't know if it ran on two legs like a human or on four legs like a deer. Maybe it crawled on its belly like a snake! Is it fast or is it slow?

"What is a cheetah and where does it come from?" wondered Coyote.



Coyote decided to talk to some of the other animals. Maybe they could tell him more about this strange animal called cheetah.

First, Coyote went to see Rabbit.

"Ya'at'eeh, Cousin!" greeted Coyote. "Are you going to enter the big race on Saturday?"

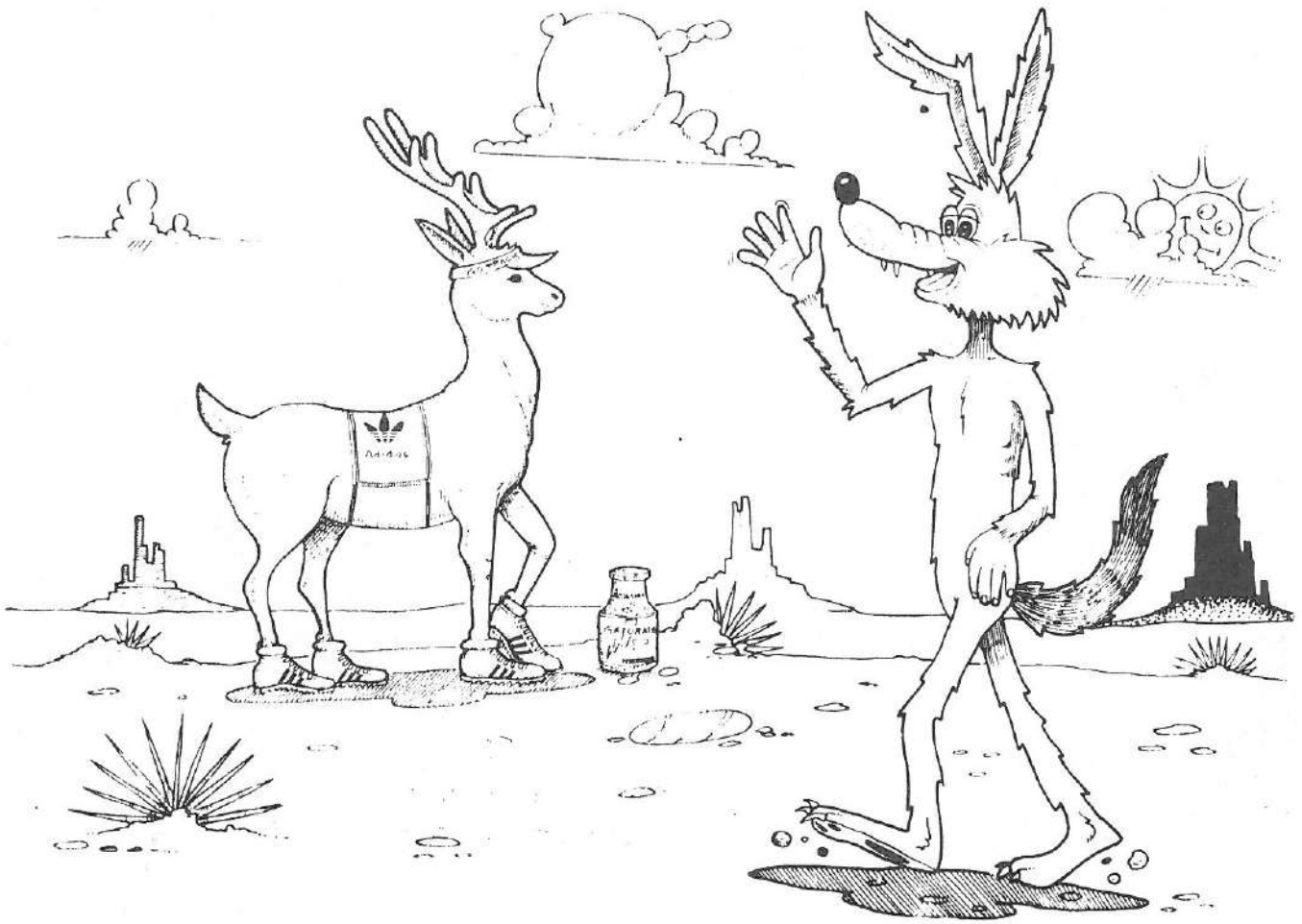


"Of course! Everyone knows that I'm the fastest animal on the Reservation," said Rabbit.

"Oh? Are you faster than the cheetah?" asked Coyote.

"The cheetah? I don't even know what a cheetah is! But I don't care if it runs on two legs or four legs or six legs or a hundred-and-six legs. I'll beat it anyway because I'm the fastest!"

"We'll see about that," said Coyote.



Next Coyote talked to Deer.

"Ya'at'eeh, Cousin! Are you going to run in the big race on Saturday?" asked Coyote.

"Of course! Everyone knows that I'm the fastest animal on the Reservation," said Deer.

"Is that so? I just talked to Rabbit and he says he's the fastest," said Coyote.



"Nonsense! I'm much faster than Rabbit," insisted Deer.

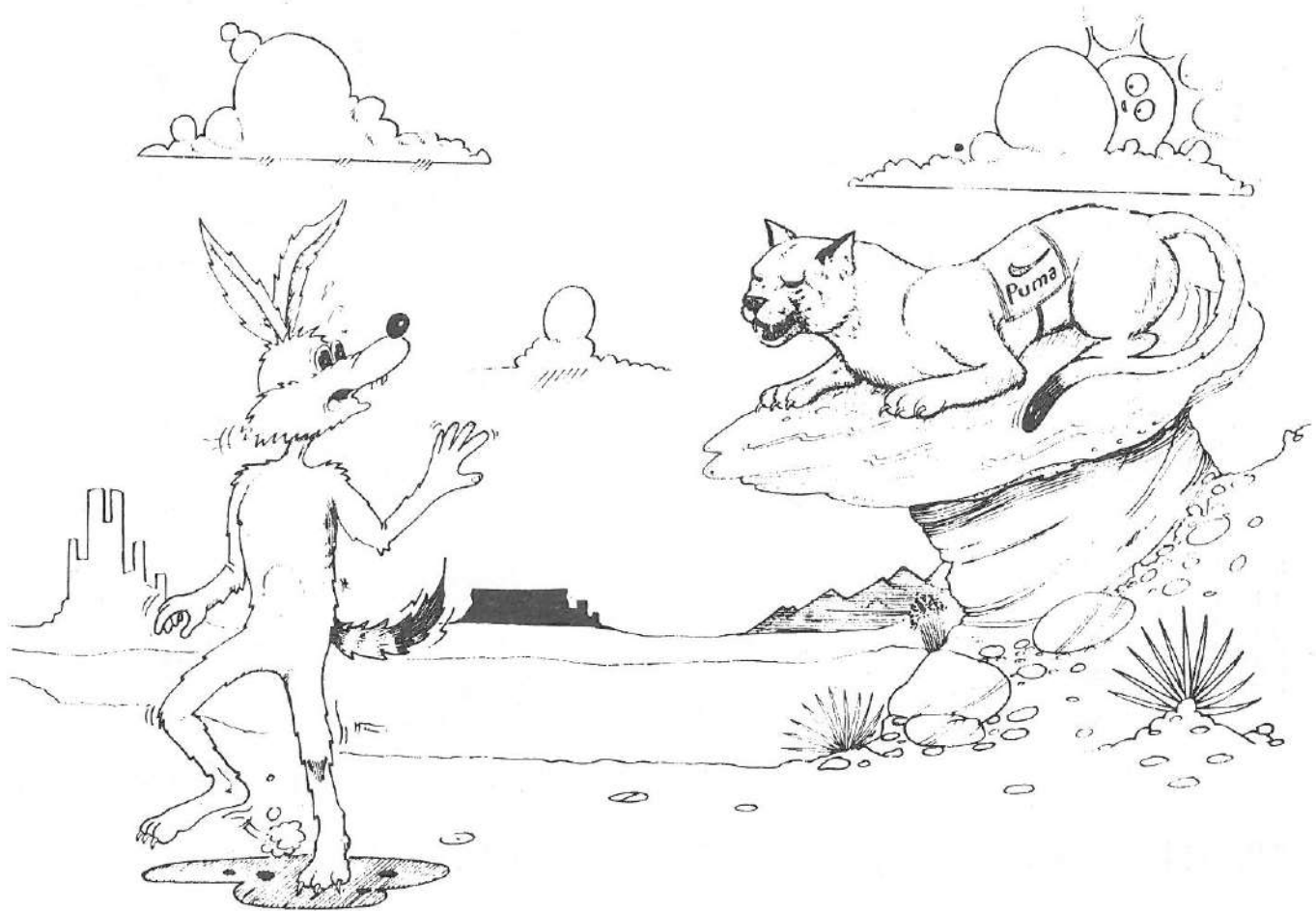
"Yes, but are you faster than the cheetah?" asked Coyote.

"What's a cheetah?" asked Deer.

"I don't know. That's why I'm asking you," said Coyote.

"Well, whatever it is, I can outrun it any day of the week and twice on Sunday," boasted Deer.

"We'll see," said Coyote.



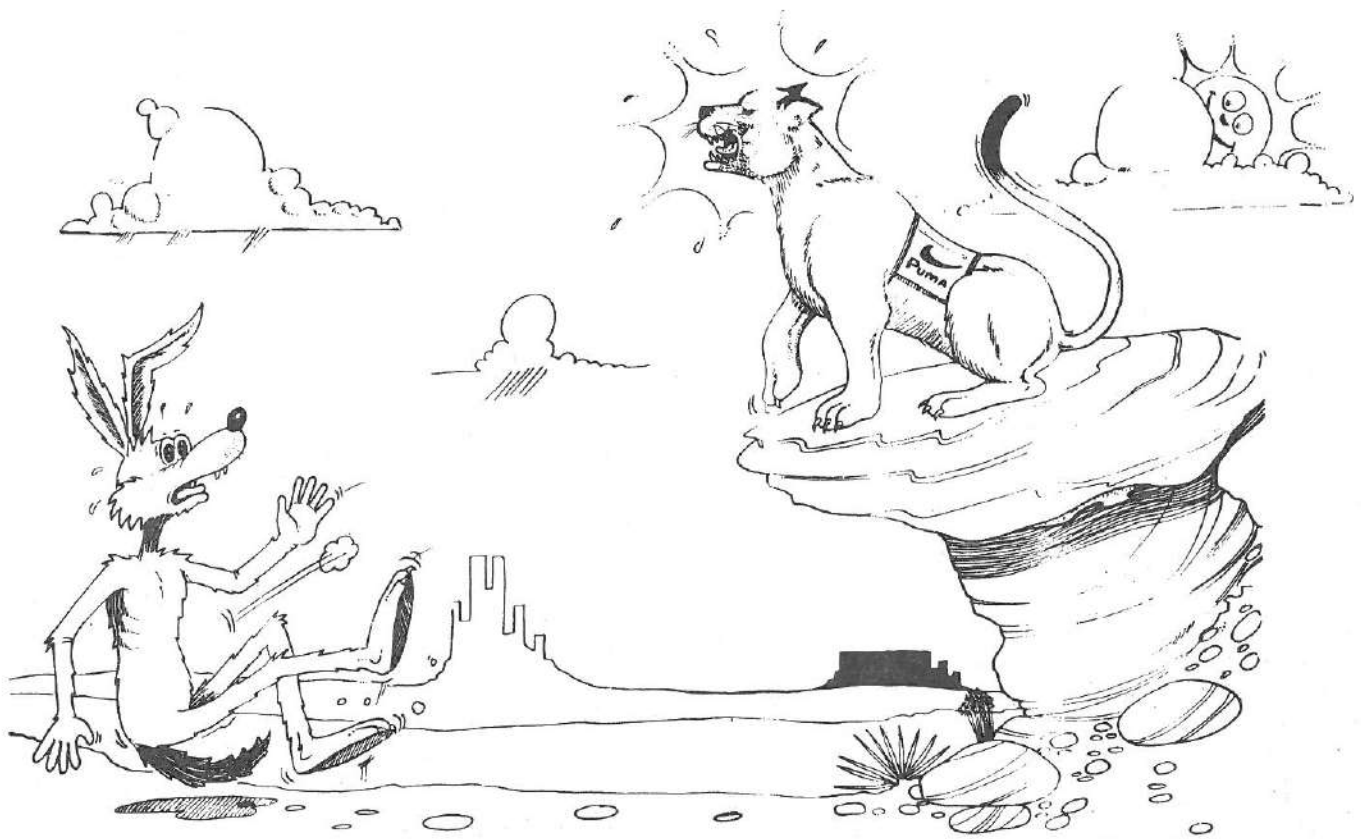
Next Coyote talked to Mountain Lion.

"Ya'at'eeh, Cousin!" said Coyote.

"Get out of here, Coyote, before I make a meal out of you!" warned Mountain Lion.

"Cousin, I just wanted to know if you're going to enter the race on Saturday," said Coyote.

"Of course! What kind of race would it be if the fastest animal on the Reservation didn't run in it?" said Mountain Lion.



"Are you so sure you're the fastest?" asked Coyote. "Rabbit says he's the fastest. And Deer says he's faster than Rabbit."

"Well, I'm faster than both of them put together," grumbled Mountain Lion.

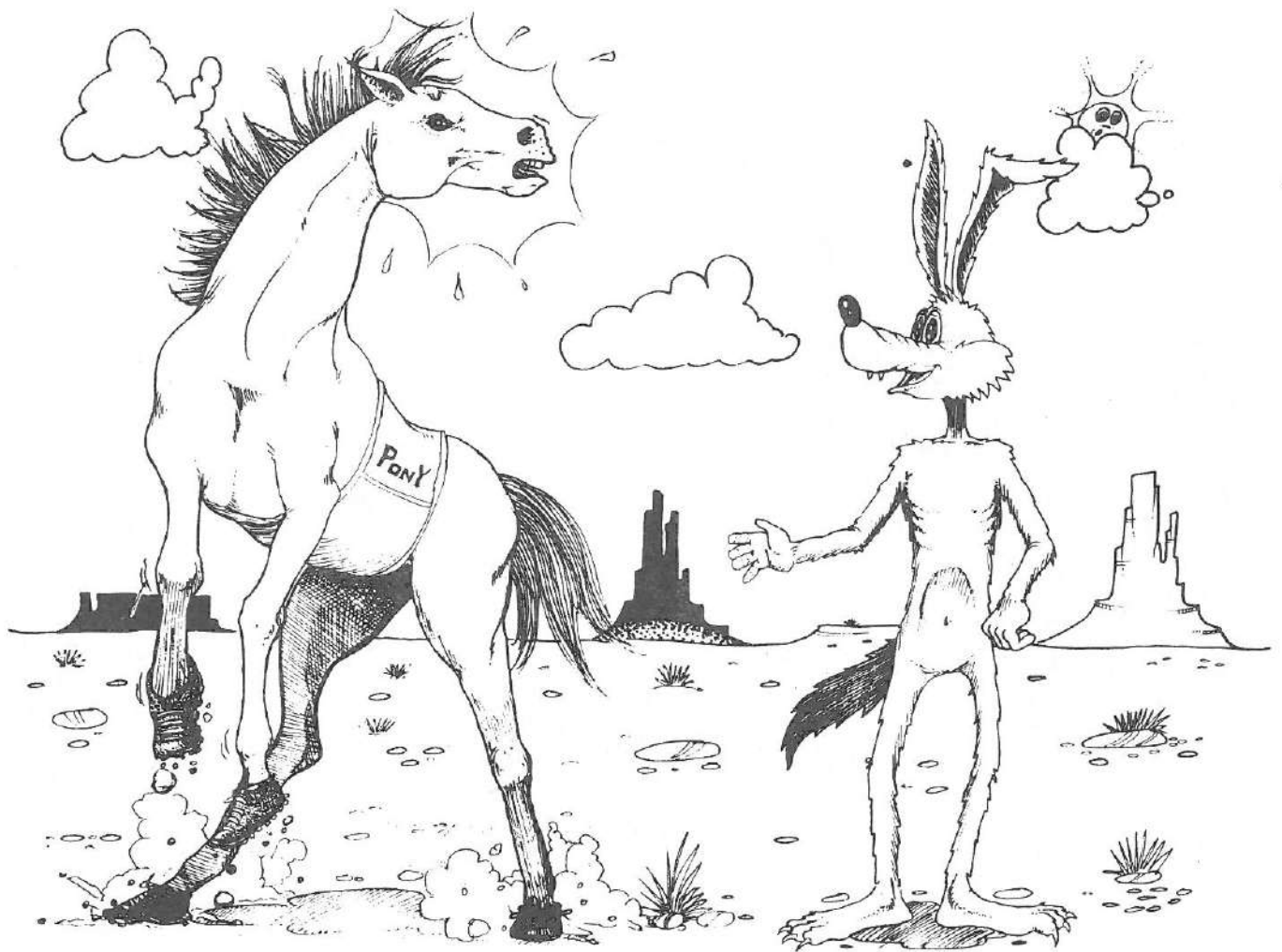
"Possibly, but are you faster than the cheetah?" asked Coyote.

"Of course I'm faster than the cheetah -- whatever that is!" growled Mountain Lion.

"You mean you don't know what a cheetah is?" asked Coyote.

"No! But that doesn't matter. I'm the fastest and I can beat anything on the Reservation!" said Mountain Lion.

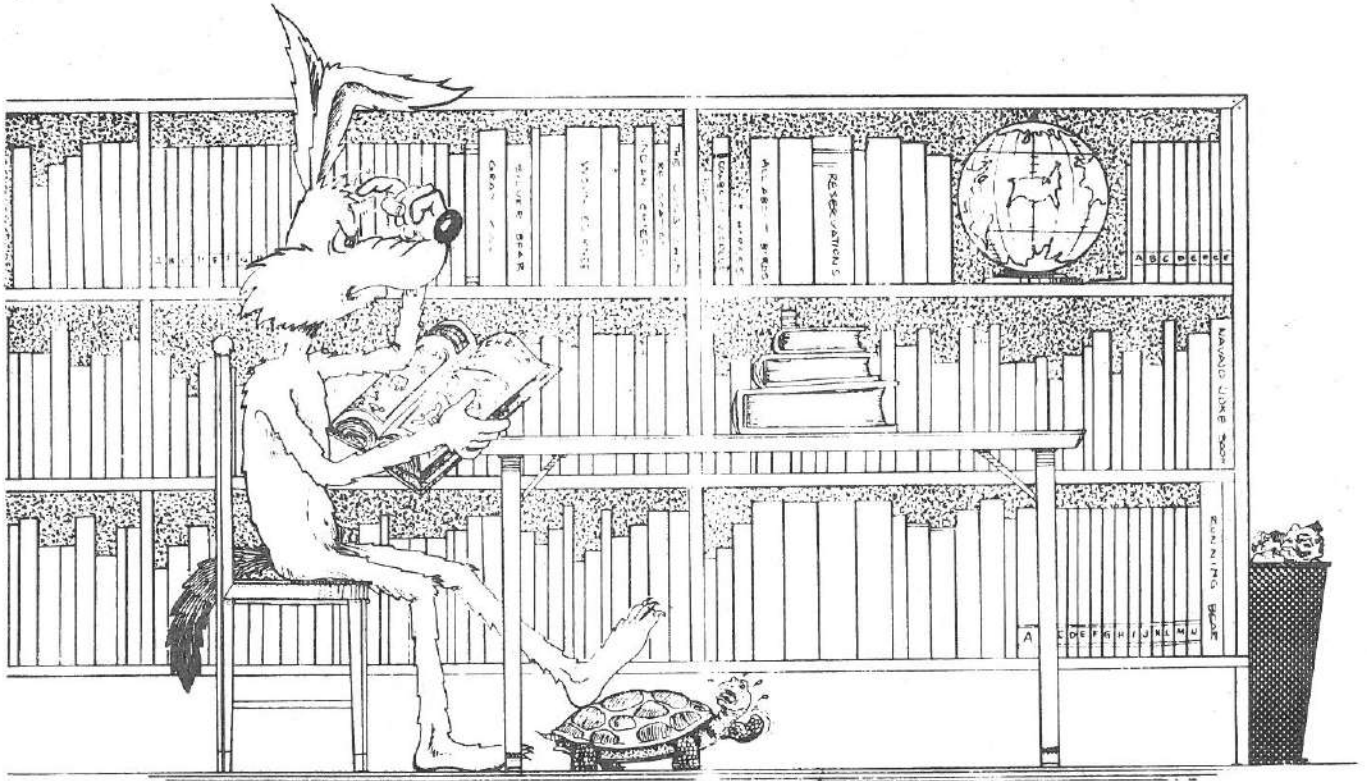
"We'll see," said Coyote.



Finally, Mr. Coyote went to see Horse. When Horse saw Coyote coming, he said, "Yes, Coyote, I am going to enter the race on Saturday. No, I don't know what a cheetah is. But that makes no difference because I'm the fastest -- faster than Rabbit, faster than Deer, faster than Mountain Lion, and faster than any other animal on the Reservation, including you, Coyote."

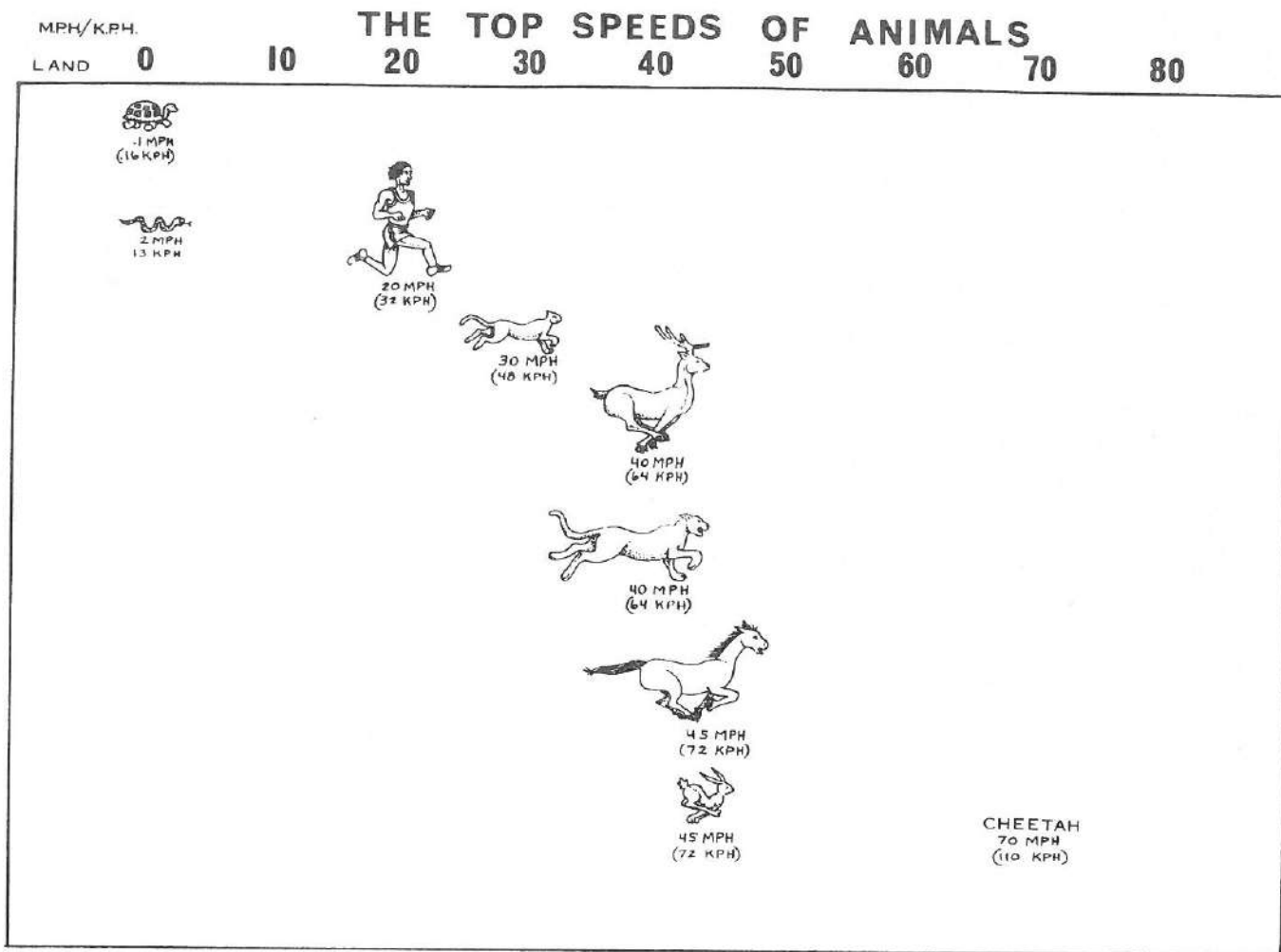
Horse took a deep breath. "And I'm certainly faster than this cheetah everyone keeps talking about."

"We'll see," said Coyote, wondering how Horse could answer his questions before he had even asked them.



Coyote wasn't satisfied. No one seemed to know what a cheetah was, yet everyone was sure they could outrun it.

So Coyote went to the library and looked up ANIMALS in the encyclopedia. He found a chart that showed all sorts of animals and how fast each could run.



Tortoise was the slowest animal. He could only go 1/10 of a mile per hour. Snake was a little faster. He could go 2 miles an hour. Deer and Mountain Lion could run 40 miles an hour. But Horse and Rabbit could run 45 miles an hour, so they were faster than Deer or Mountain Lion. Of the six animals, Horse and Rabbit were the fastest.

Coyote wasn't even listed on the chart.



At the bottom of the chart, Coyote saw a picture of a cheetah. It looked like a great big cat with big hind legs and black spots.

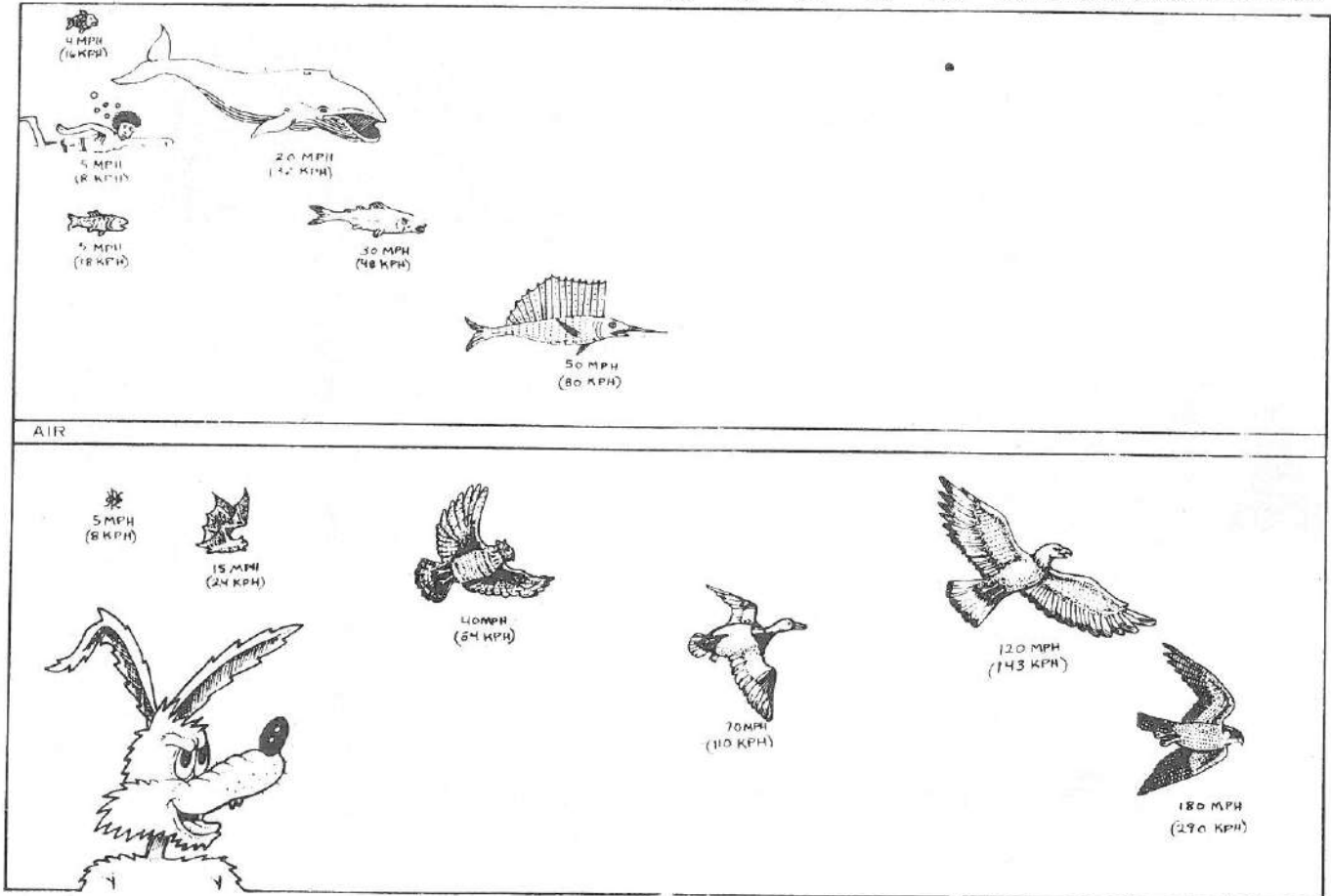
"No wonder no one's ever seen a cheetah before! They come from Africa and Asia!" Coyote thought aloud.

"And look at that -- 70 miles per hour. That's much faster than any animal on the Reservation. That's faster than any animal in the world! How am I ever going to outrun a cheetah?" Coyote wondered.

MPH KPH WATER

THE TOP SPEEDS OF ANIMALS

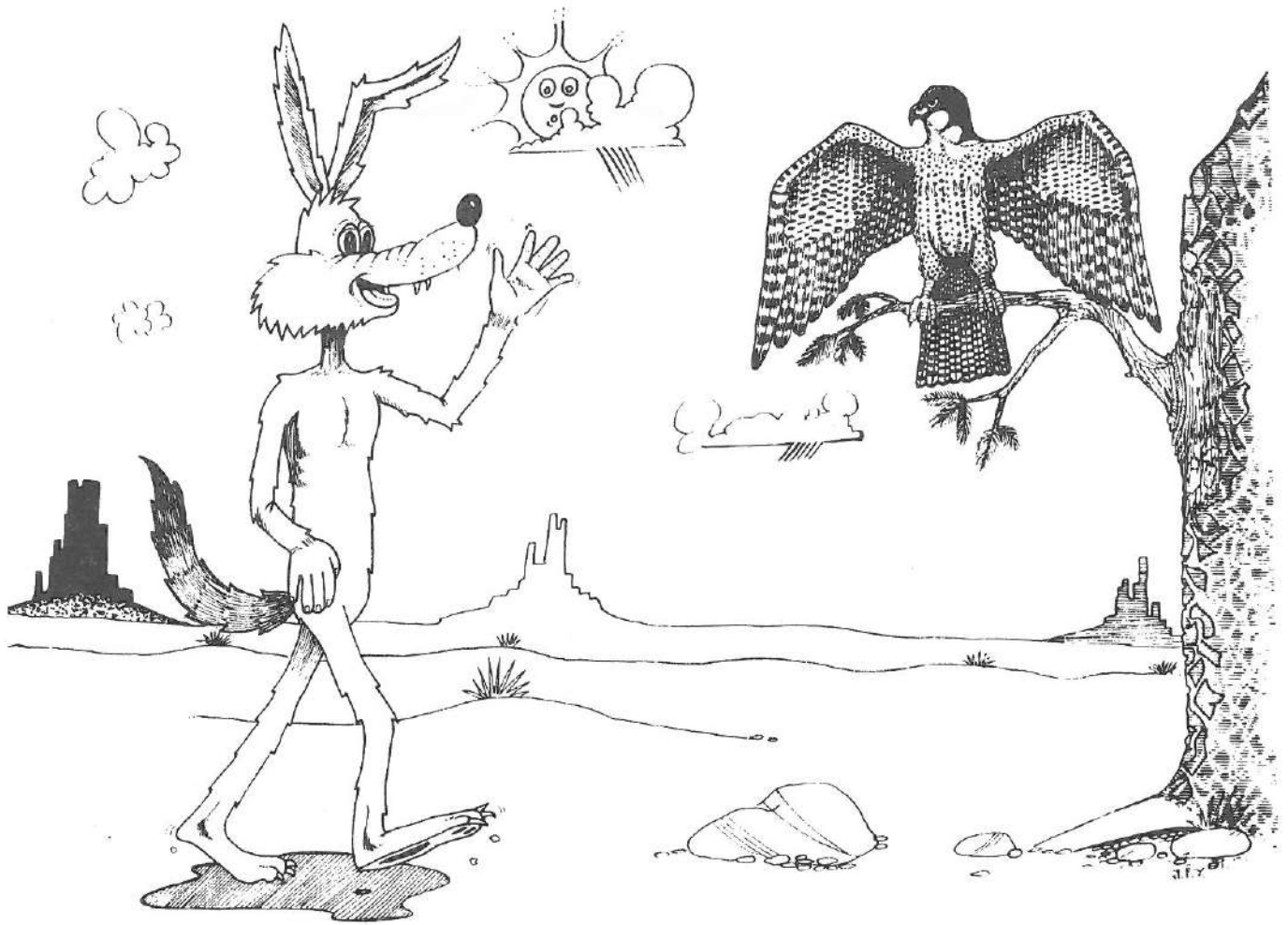
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Then Coyote had an idea. The chart showed not only animals that traveled on land, but also animals that traveled in water and in the air. Trout, for example, could swim 5 miles per hour. Owl could fly 40 miles per hour.

Coyote noticed that Hawk could fly 180 miles per hour.

"That's 110 miles per hour faster than Cheetah," thought Coyote. "HMMMM."



The next day Coyote went to see his old friend Mr. Hawk.

"Ya'at'eeh, Cousin!" said Coyote.

"What do you want, Coyote? Some food I bet," said Hawk.

"No, no, Cousin. I've come to make a little deal," said Coyote.

"I don't like your kind of deals, Coyote," said Hawk.



"You'll like this one, Cousin. How would you like all the corn you can eat?"

"You know I hate corn; Coyote. I like to eat field mice -- fat, juicy field mice," said Hawk.

Coyote thought this over a moment. "Ok, Cousin. How would you like to win all of the field mice you can eat?"

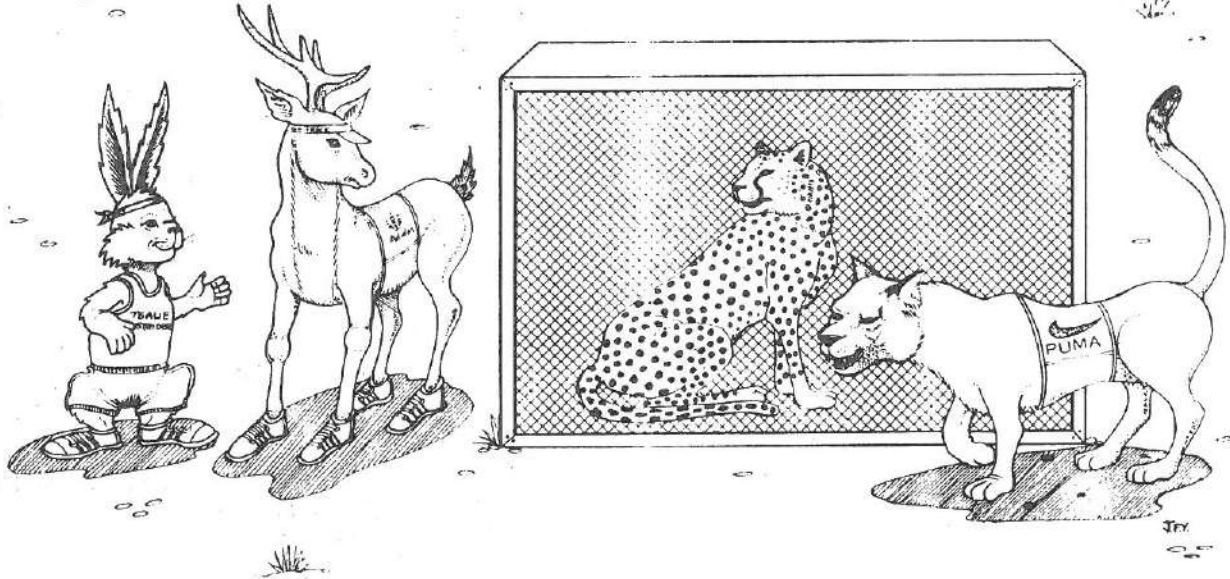
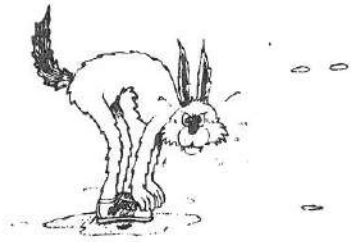
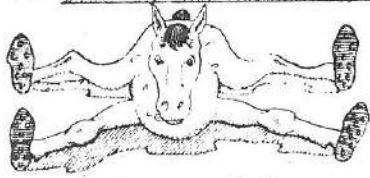
"No tricks?" questioned Hawk.

"No tricks," assured Coyote.

Hawk nodded his head. "OK. What's the deal?"

Coyote told Hawk his plan.

START



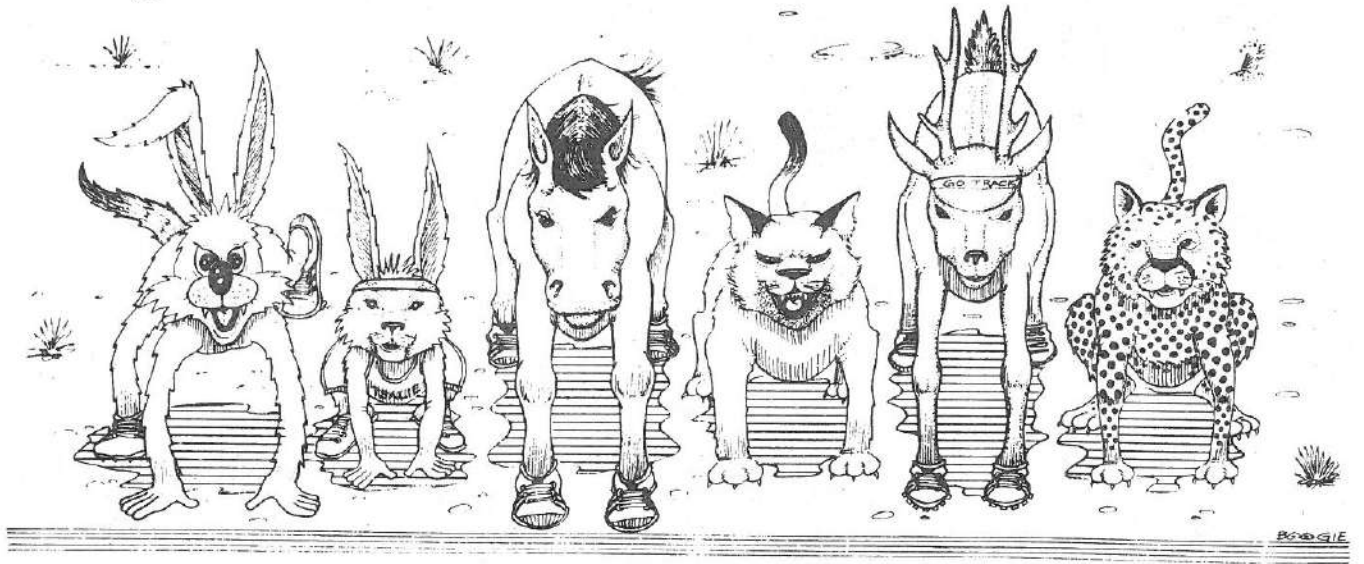
The day of the big race arrived. The contestants were all busy warming up. Near the starting line was a cage, and inside the cage was Cheetah.

"So that's a cheetah!" said Rabbit. "He looks like you, Mountain Lion. Except he has spots."

"Look at those long hind legs," said Deer. "They're longer than his front legs. No one can run with legs like that!"

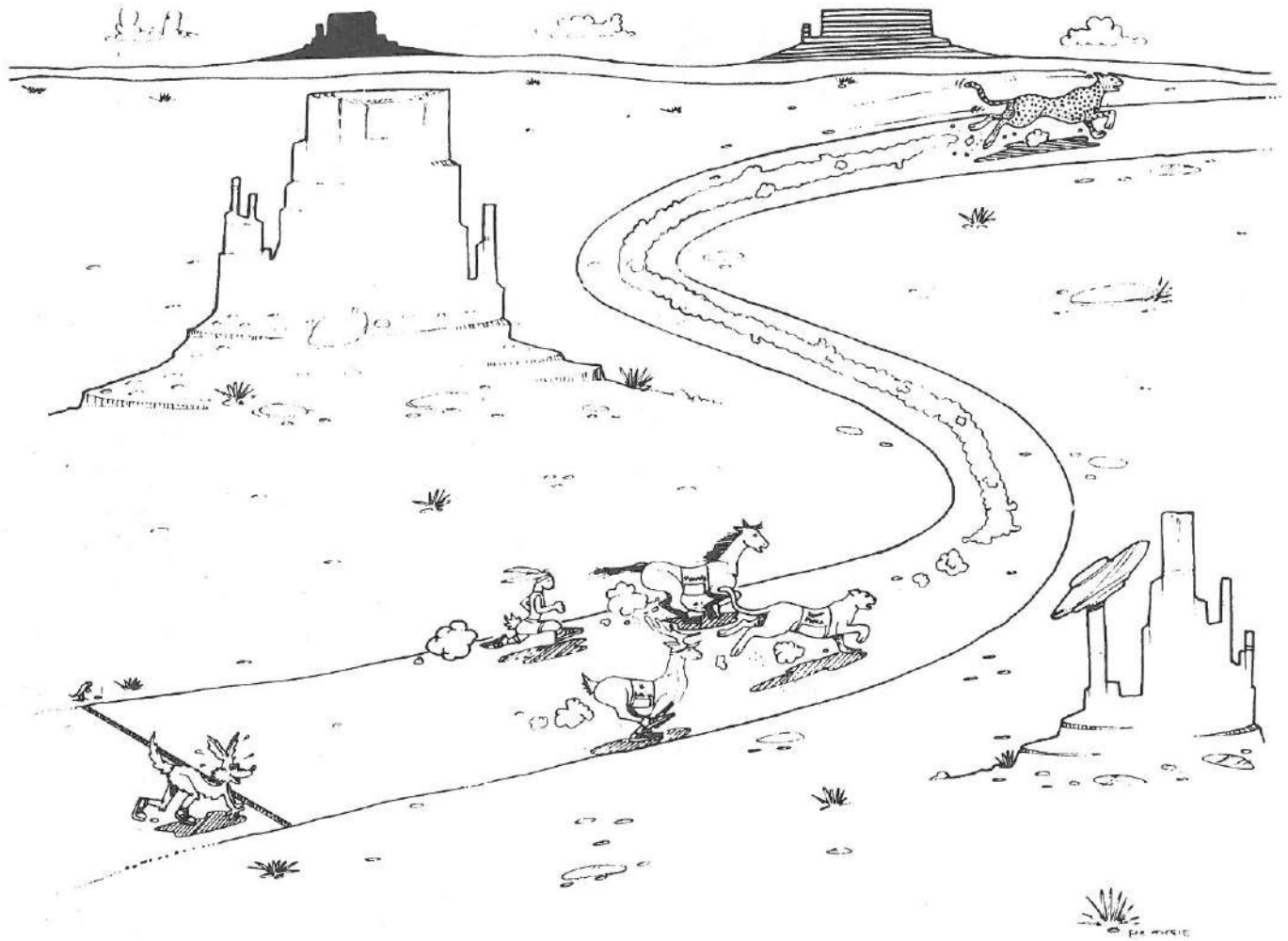
Cheetah looked at Deer and growled.

START



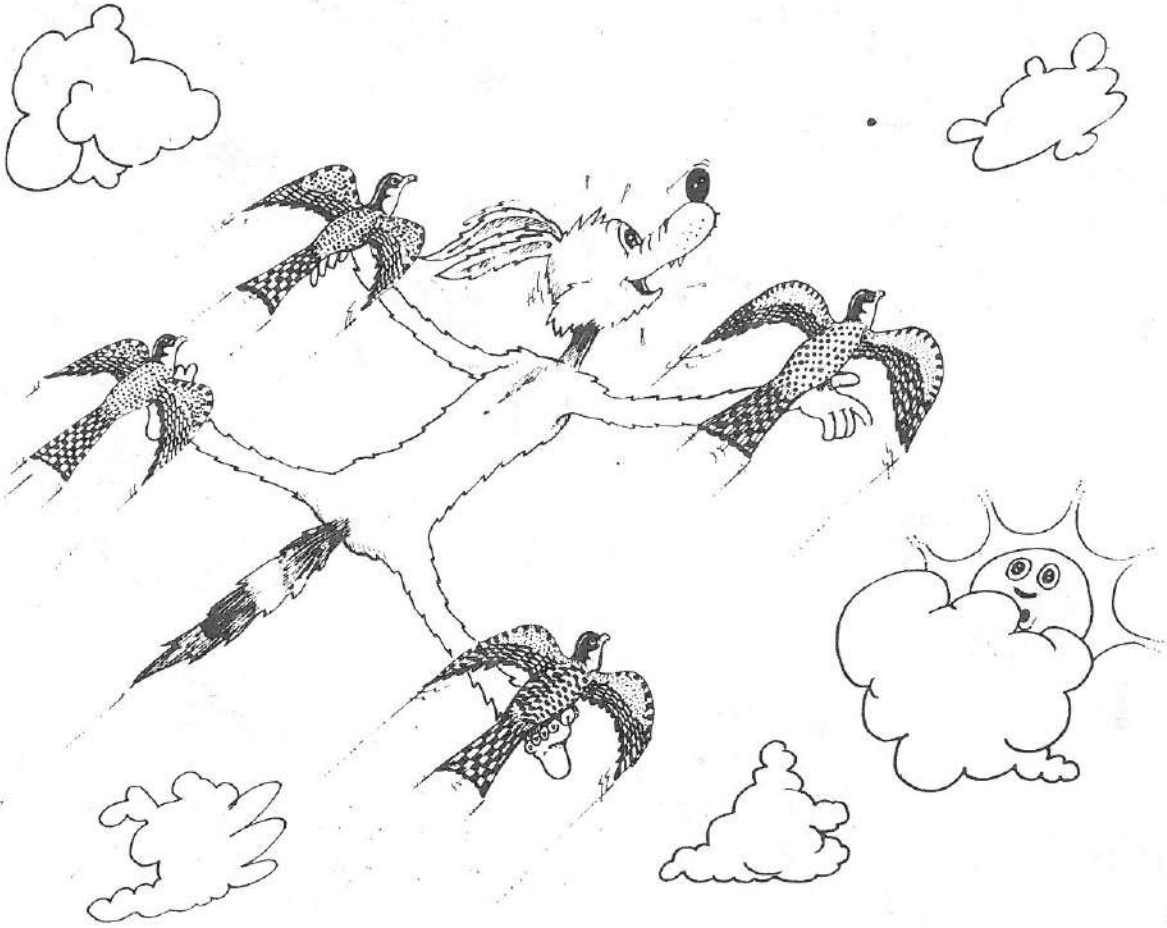
At 10:00 o'clock sharp the big race was ready to begin. The contestants lined up and waited for the starting gun.

"On your marks ... get set ... BANG!"



The runners were off!

Cheetah quickly took the lead with Mountain Lion far behind in second place. Compared to Cheetah, the other runners looked as if they were running in slow-motion.



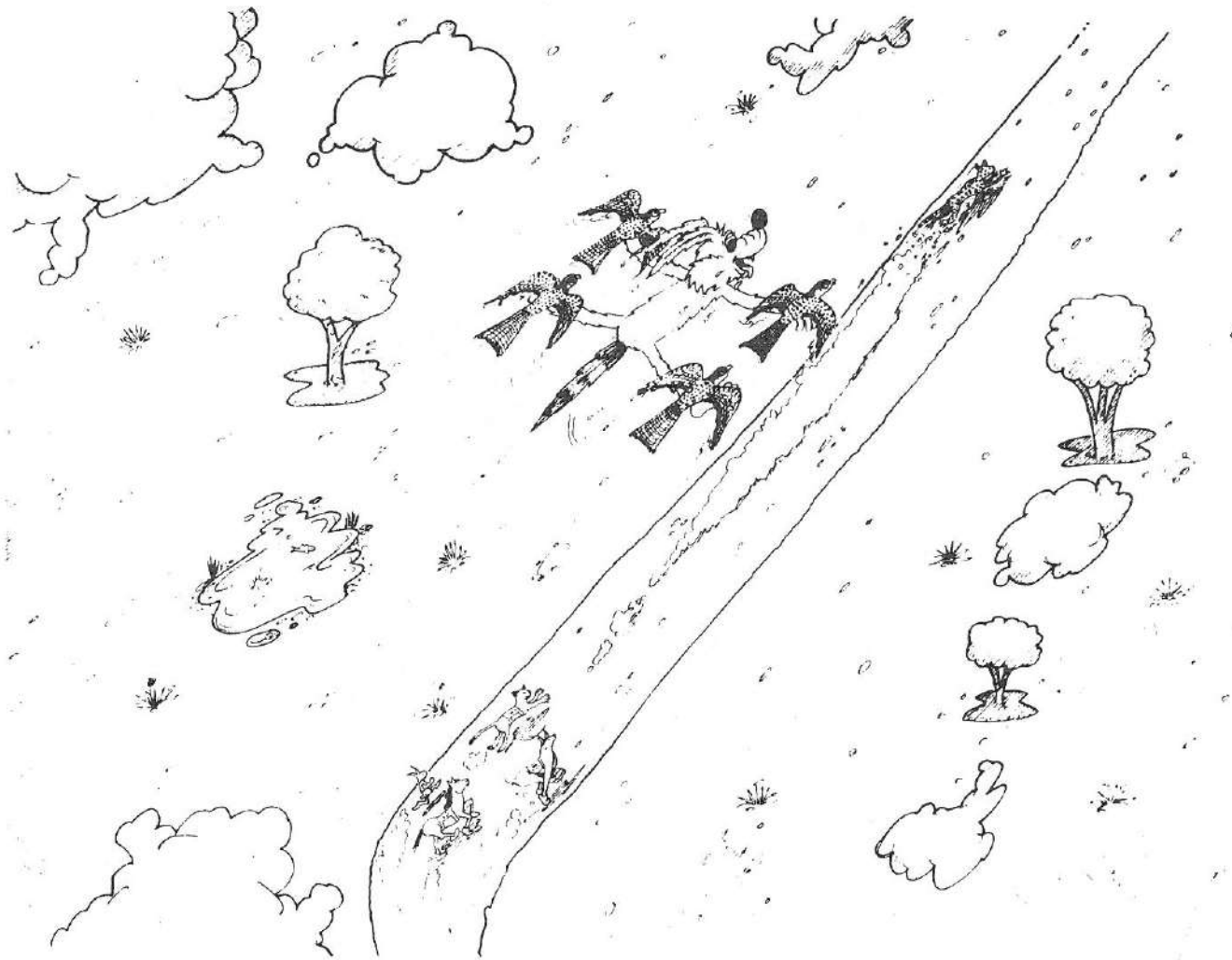
Coyote was in last place, but he didn't seem to mind. He waited until all of the other runners were out of sight. Then he ran behind a rock where Hawk and three of his friends were waiting.

"Ready Cousins?" asked Coyote.

"We're ready," said Hawk. "You'd just better be ready with all the field mice we can eat."

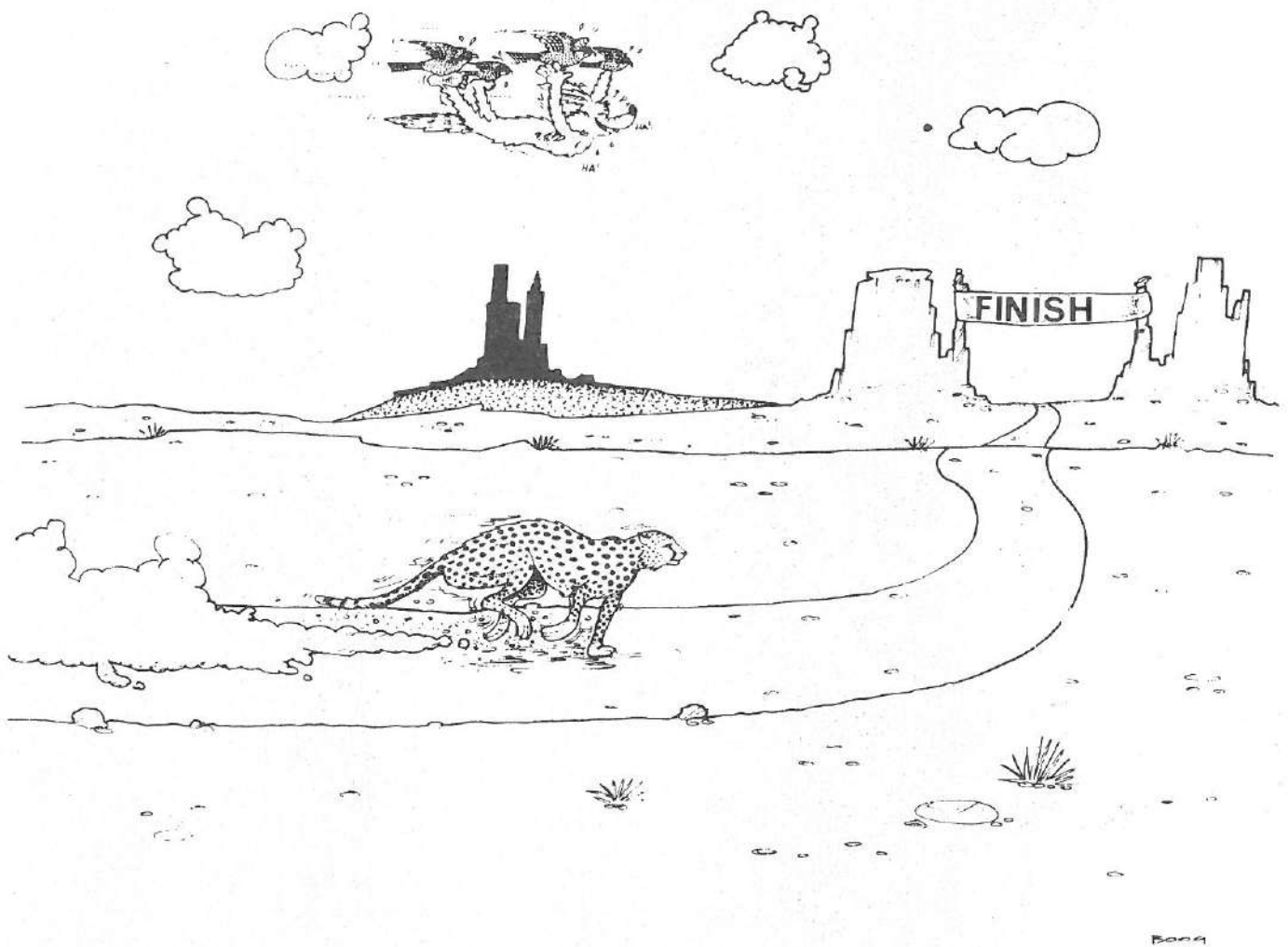
"Don't worry, Cousins!" said Coyote.

With that, each of the four hawks grabbed one of Coyote's legs. Together they flew Coyote high into the air.



The four hawks flew Coyote past Rabbit, Horse, Deer, and Mountain Lion. But all Coyote could see of Cheetah was a long trail of dust far ahead.

"Faster!" cried Coyote. "Faster!"



The four hawks beat their wings faster than they ever had. Soon they were flying right above Cheetah.

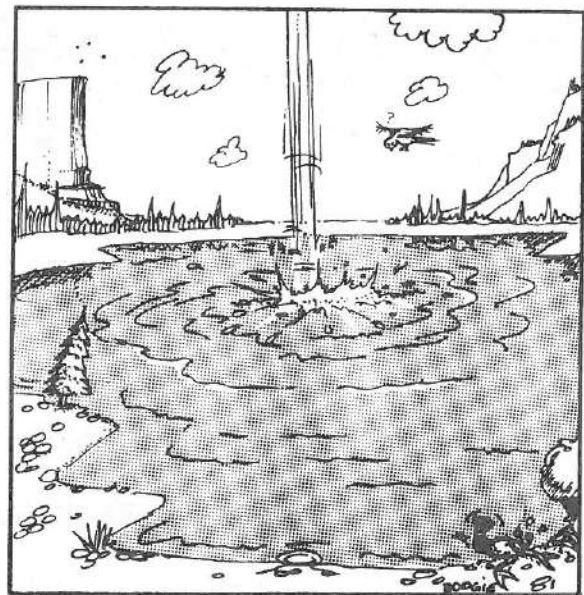
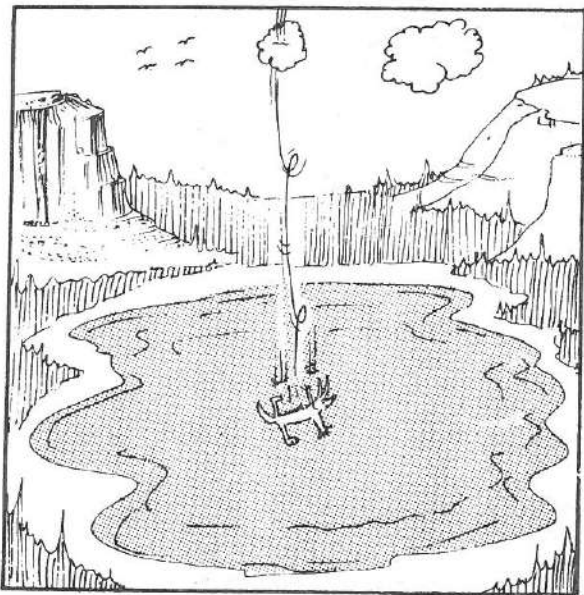
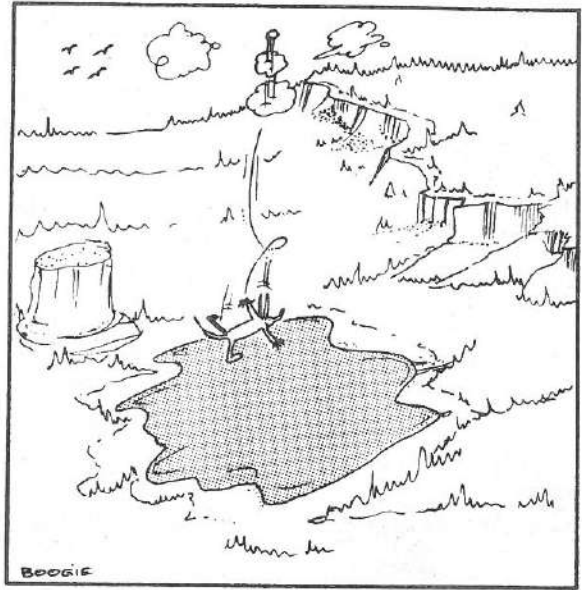
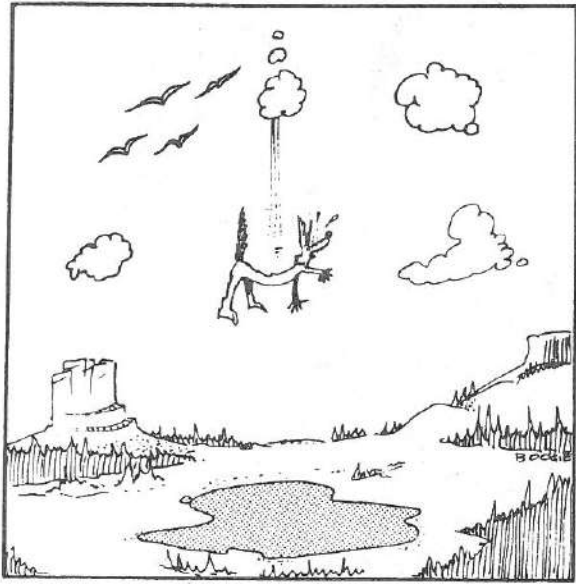
Coyote could see the finish line. As he pulled ahead of Cheetah, Coyote cried out, "Ha! Ha! We win! We win!"



"Wait a minute, Cousins!" cried Coyote.

But the four hawks wouldn't listen. They turned around and flew north towards the Lukachukai Mountains. They flew high above Wheatfields Lake.

"OK, Cousins, are you ready?" asked Hawk. "One... two... three... Let go!"



"AHHH - 0000!" howled Coyote as he fell
through the sky. "AHHH - 0000!"



Meanwhile, Cheetah was crossing the finish line. Behind him came Deer, Mountain Lion, Horse, and Rabbit.

After the race, all of the animals had a party -- all except Coyote. They ate mutton stew, fry bread, and *bobotie*, a special dish Cheetah had brought over from South Africa.

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