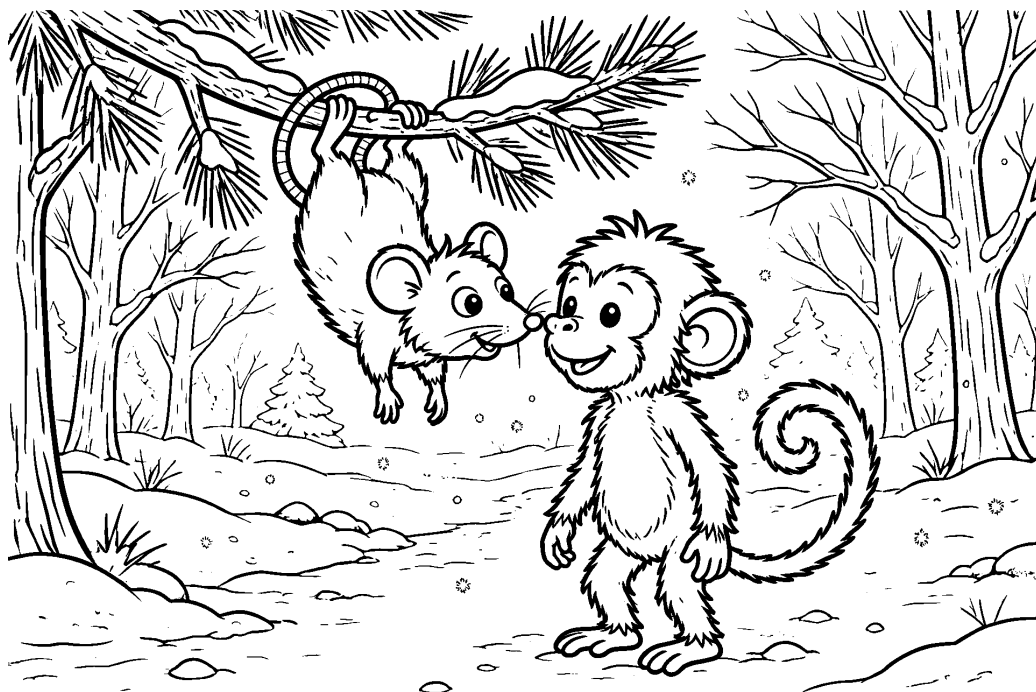


Percy Comes Down

 COLOR THE PICTURE



The morning after the Overflow Feast was soft and bright, and the snow was so sparkly it looked like somebody had sprinkled sugar over the whole woods. The air still smelled a little bit like cocoa.

There was a LOT left over from the feast. Pies and bread and honeycomb and nuts. So the friends had a plan: the Leftover Parade. They loaded everything into baskets and carried them through the woods, home to home, giving leftovers to everybody.

Bruno carried the biggest basket on his head. Hazel carried two, one on each side. Dottie carried a pie in her mouth, very, very carefully, and didn't eat it, even though her tail was wagging so fast it made a little breeze. And everybody they passed came out to see the parade and get some pie, until the path was crowded with friends and neighbors from one end to the other.

Mr. Monkey was at the front, of course, leading the way. And that's when he saw him.

Up in a pine tree by the path, peeking out between the branches, was a very small, very thin pack rat with a long tail and big shiny eyes. His name was Percy. He lived by himself in a nest at the bottom of the hill, and he was too small to see over the crowd, so he had climbed the tree to watch.

He was trying to stay hidden. But the branch he was on was very thin, and Percy was holding on very tight,

and slowly, slowly, the branch began to bend. It bent lower. And lower. And lower. Until Percy was hanging right in front of Mr. Monkey's face, upside down, nose to nose.

"Hello," said Mr. Monkey.

"...Hello," said Percy, upside down.

"Hee hee hee!" went Mr. Monkey. "Percy, your tree is bowing!"

And then he heard the grumbling behind him.

"That's Percy," whispered Hazel. "He took my blue ribbon last summer."

"He took my good spoon," grumbled Bruno.

"He took my ball," said Dottie, through the pie.

"He takes shiny things," said Ricky. "All the time." Then he said, a little quieter, "I used to grab things too. Before I learned to ask."

Percy heard all of it. He looked down at the ground, which, since he was upside down, was really looking up. He didn't say anything. He started to climb back up his branch, to go.

Mr. Monkey felt it in his chest, all at once. Nobody ever invited Percy anywhere. He was always on the outside, up in a tree, watching. And the Leftover Parade was going right past him.

"Mr. Moose," he whispered. "He was watching us. He wanted to be in the parade."

Mr. Moose looked at Percy, climbing away. He thought about it. Percy did take things. Everybody knew that. But Percy was also all alone. If nobody ever came to Percy's house, Percy would always be up in a tree, watching.

"Then the parade should go to Percy's house," said Mr. Moose slowly. "And stay a while."

"Percy!" called Mr. Monkey. "Come down! The parade is coming to YOUR house today!"

Percy stopped climbing. He looked down at Mr. Monkey. "My house?"

"Your house," said Mr. Moose. "All day, if that's okay."

Percy came down so fast he slid the last part of the tree on his tummy. "Okay!" he said. "Yes! Okay!"

Some of the friends were still grumbling a little. But they all followed anyway, down the hill, to Percy's nest.

Percy's nest wasn't a nest at all. It was a mountain. A giant, glittering mountain of shiny things: buttons and bottle caps, spoons and keys, beads and a little bell and a whole lot of shiny paper. It sparkled in the sun so much that everybody had to squint.

"Whoa," said Ricky.

Bruno walked over to look, and he put one paw on the bottom of the pile, and the whole thing slid down on top of him, *KA-SHHHHHHH-CLINK-CLINK-CLINK*.

Bruno sat up out of the pile with a pot on his head and three spoons in his fur.

"I found my spoon," said Bruno. He held up one of them. "Haw haw haw!"

"Hee hee hee!" went Mr. Monkey. "Bruno, you're wearing the whole pile!"

Then Percy showed them his very best treasure, right at the top. It was a little round piece of mirror. "This is my friend," said Percy. "He's always here. When I smile, he smiles too."

Dottie looked into the mirror. Another dog looked back at her. "HELLO!" barked Dottie, wagging. "Who are YOU?" She licked the mirror. The other dog licked it back.

"Ha! Ha!" barked Dottie. "He's friendly!"

"Hee hee hee! Dottie, that's YOU!" said Mr. Monkey.

Mr. Moose looked at the little mirror, and then at Percy. "Now you have lots more friends," he said. "Not just one."

They didn't go home. They stayed, just like Mr. Moose had said. They ate leftover pie on top of the shiny mountain. They played hide-and-seek in it, and Benji hid so well under the shiny paper that it took everybody an hour to find him, because every time somebody got close, he just looked like more shiny paper. Ricky showed Percy his jars, and Percy showed Ricky his bottle caps, and they lined them all up in rows. Hazel taught Percy to gallop, and Percy galloped exactly one step and fell over, and then got up and did it again.

All afternoon, Percy didn't stop smiling.

And then, when the sun was getting low, Percy climbed right up to the very top of his shiny mountain, and stood there, and his whiskers were shaking.

"I took things," he said. "Lots of things. I took them because they were shiny, and nobody ever came over, and the shiny things kept me company. I shouldn't have taken them. I'm sorry. I won't take things anymore. And I want to give them all back."

Everybody looked at Percy.

"Not just give them back," said Percy. "Give back MORE."

And he did. He dug through the mountain. He gave Hazel back her blue ribbon, and three more ribbons besides. He gave Dottie back her ball, and three more balls. He gave Bruno back his spoon, and three more spoons, so now Bruno had four, and Bruno held them all up in his paw at once like a big shiny flower.

Bruno looked at Percy for a long moment. Then he said it.

"Yeah, I didn't like that. But we all make mistakes. Thank you for apologizing. I forgive you."

"Me too," said Hazel.

"Me too," said Dottie, wagging her whole back half.

Percy's eyes went shiny, shinier than anything in his whole pile.

Then Hazel tied one of her four ribbons onto the very end of Percy's tail, in a bow. Percy looked at it in his little mirror for a long time.

"Will you come back?" asked Percy. "Tomorrow, maybe?"

"Tomorrow," said Mr. Monkey. "And the day after that. And the day after THAT."

"Okay!" said Percy, and he tried to gallop in a circle and fell over again, with his ribbon waving.

"What a day!" said Mr. Monkey, walking home in the pink sunset with Mr. Moose. "We had the Leftover Parade. Percy's branch bowed down till he was upside down in my face. We went to his house and stayed all day. Bruno knocked down the shiny mountain and wore a pot. Benji turned into shiny paper. And Percy said sorry and gave everything back, and three more of everything."

Mr. Monkey whistled, and Mr. Moose hummed, and together they sang:

*We are better together,
Moose and Monkey forever.*

And at the bottom of the hill, Percy's nest sparkled in the last light of the day, with a little bit less shine in it than before, and a lot more footprints all around it in the snow.

Let's Talk

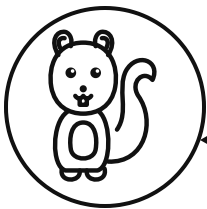
- 1 Percy always watched from up in a tree. What did the friends do for him?
- 2 Who could you spend time with who doesn't get invited very much?

Your Turn

Give your time! Draw who you will spend time with and what you will do together.

I will give my time to _____.

SAMMY'S JOKE

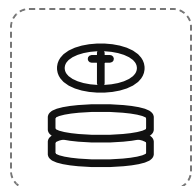


Where does a snowman keep his money?

Unscramble the letters to finish the joke. The picture is a clue!



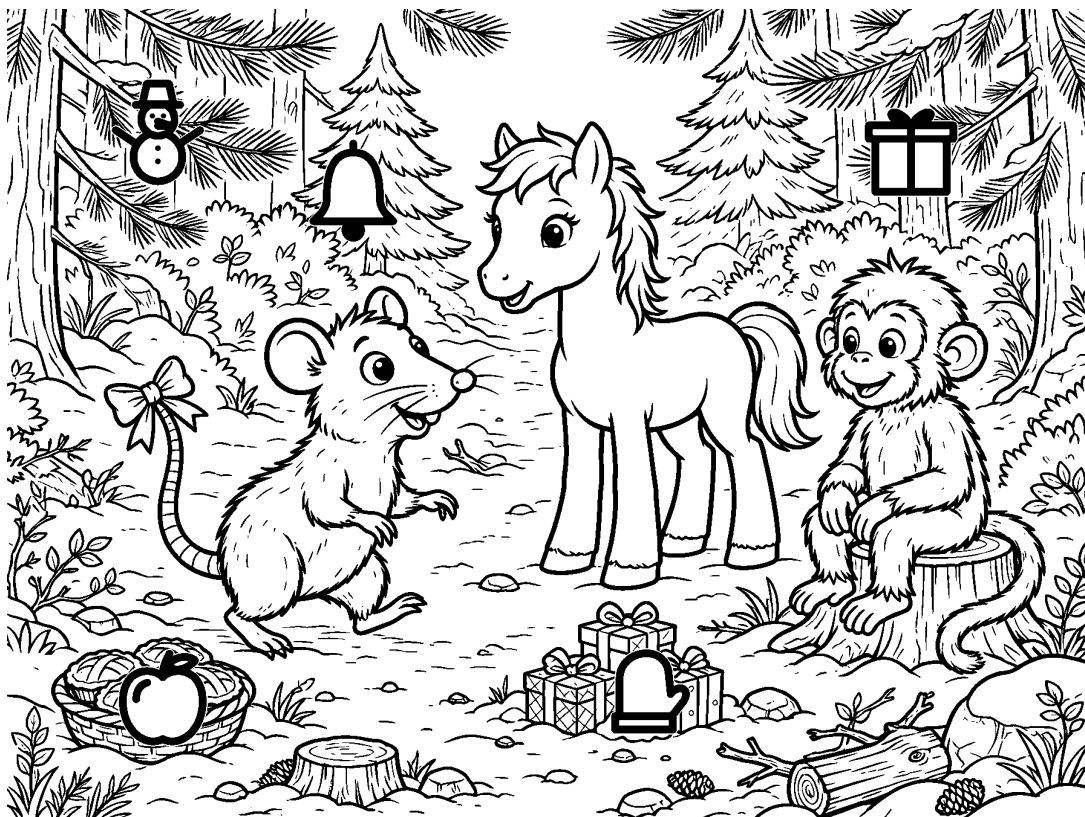
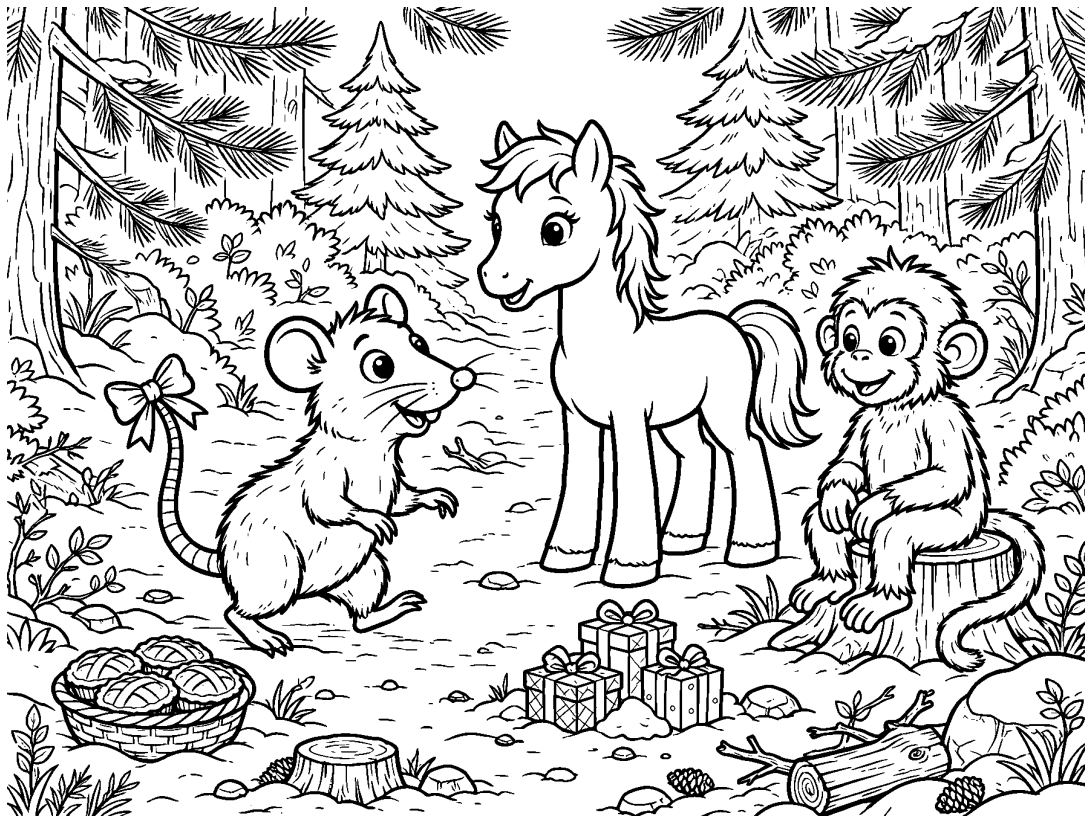
CLUE



In a snow _____!

Spot the Difference

Look closely. Can you find 5 differences?



 Read With Me

DRAW THE STORY

The Pack Rat

A pack rat hangs from a tree.

“He has my sash!” says . “He has my cup!” says .

“Let us go to his nest,” says .

His nest is a big stack of things that glint and wink!

 bumps it. Clink! Clank!  has a pot on top of him!

The rat says, “I am sad I did that. I will send it back.

And I will send back a lot!”

PICTURE WORDS  Hazel  Bruno  Mr. Monkey

For grown-ups: New sounds: ng and nk (sing, pink). New words to learn by heart: my, tree.



Color a star each time you read it.

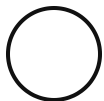
My Gift

Trace the dark word. Then trace or write the light words. Who did you give your time to?
Write their name on the line.

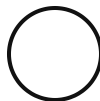
I gave my time to _____

What Happened First?

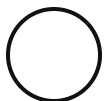
Write 1, 2, 3, 4 in the circles to put the story in order.



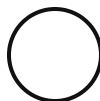
A



B



C



D