

Pine Tree Pet Shop



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

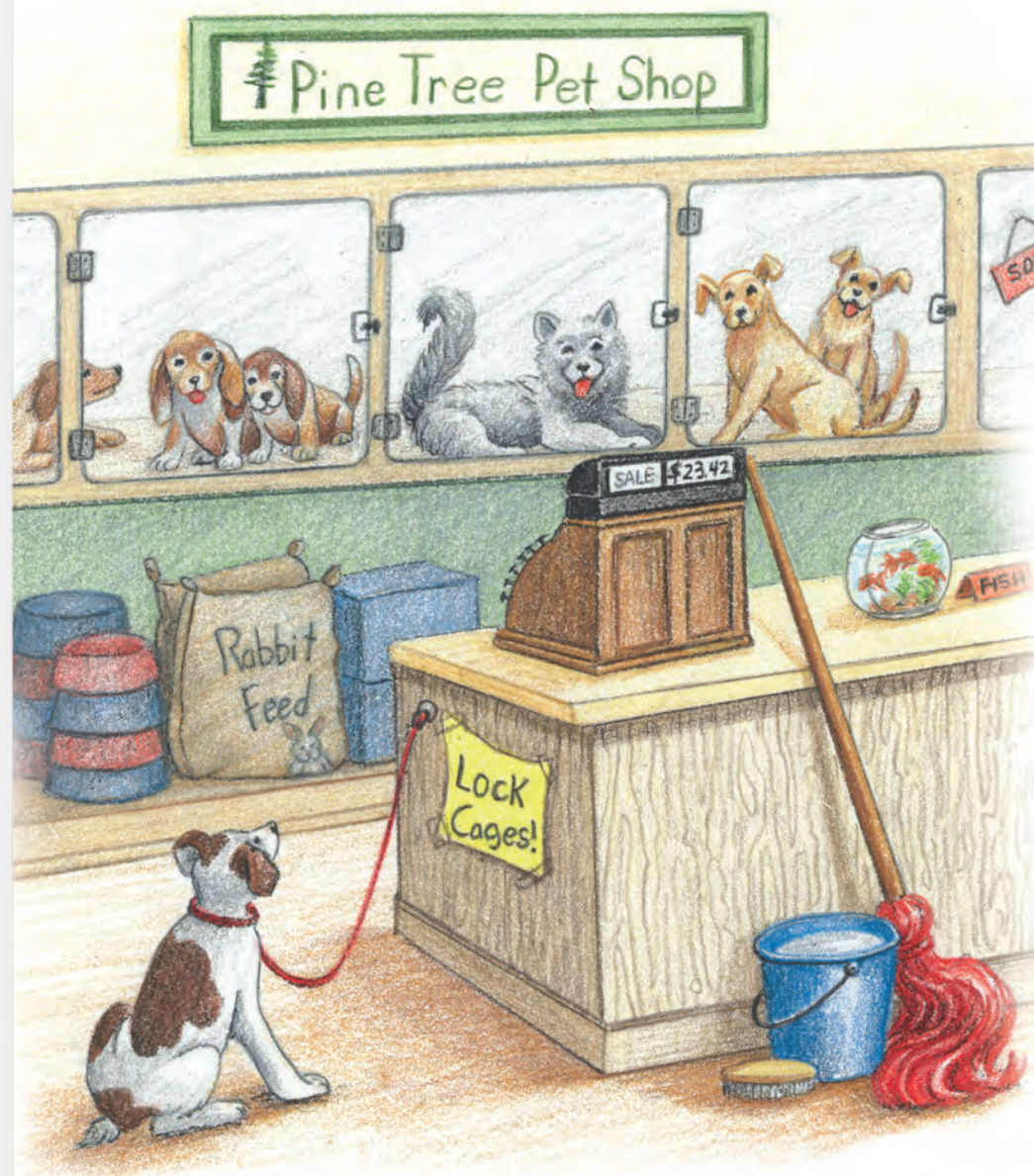
I have been at the store a lot to help her. I sweep, ring up sales, and help with odd jobs.

“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 pats me on the back.
“Thanks. I am glad I can trust you.”

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

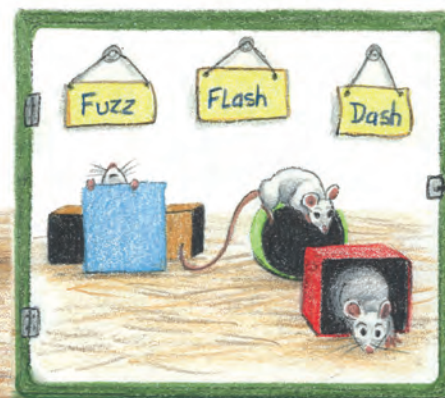
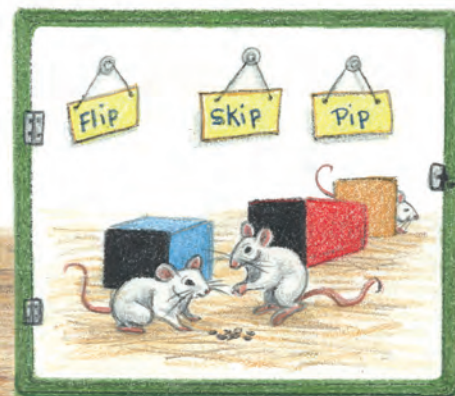
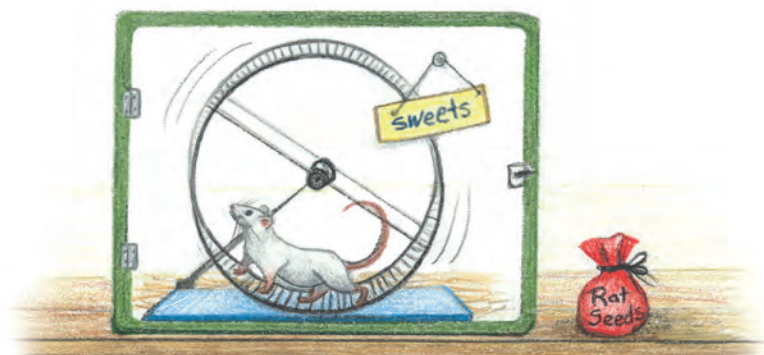


“What jobs can I do?” I ask myself.

I check on the pet rats.

I give them boxes to nest in, and then
I feed them.

A rat runs on the wheel while the rest
of the rats sniff the seeds and boxes.



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

Why did the rats hide?



I freeze. I see what made them hide!

A green snake stares at the rats.

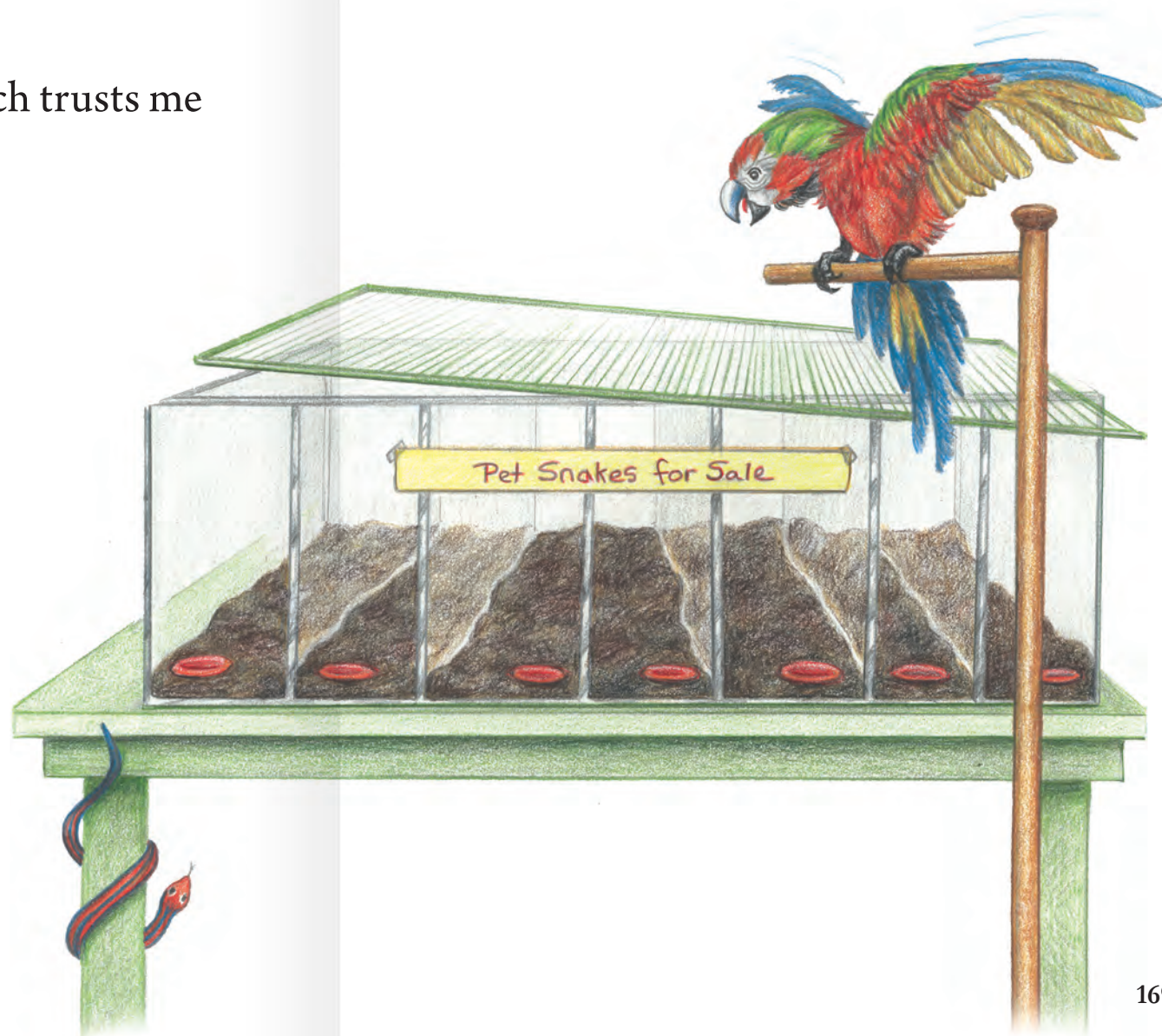
A snake—not in his tank!

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. I do not like snakes.

But I must do it. Miss Finch trusts me to run the shop.

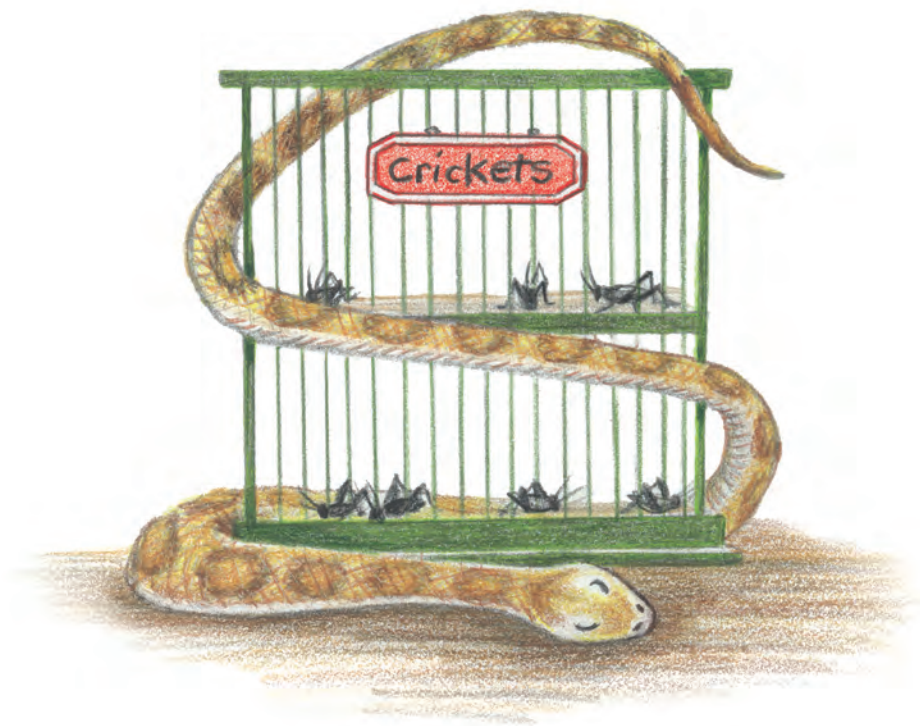
I peek into the tank. Not a snake is left! Seven snakes are free! I feel my skin creep.



A snake greets the rabbits.



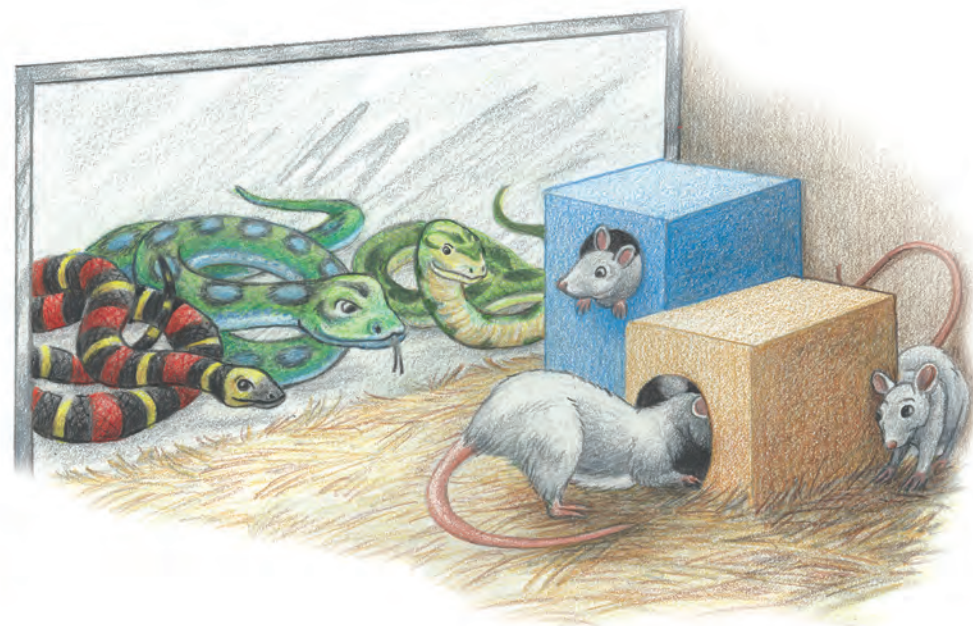
A snake sleeps by the crickets.



A snake slides by the fish tanks.

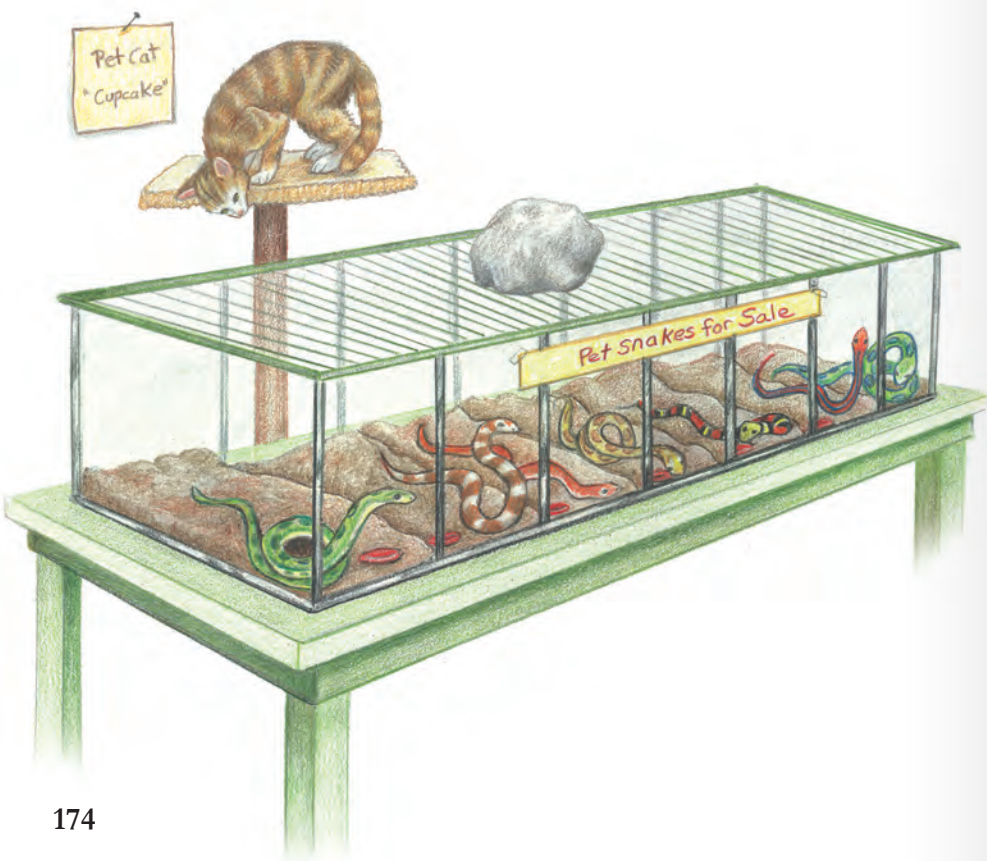


And three snakes peer at the rats.



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

