

Otto's Tales



The

Let's Visit

HOOVER DAM

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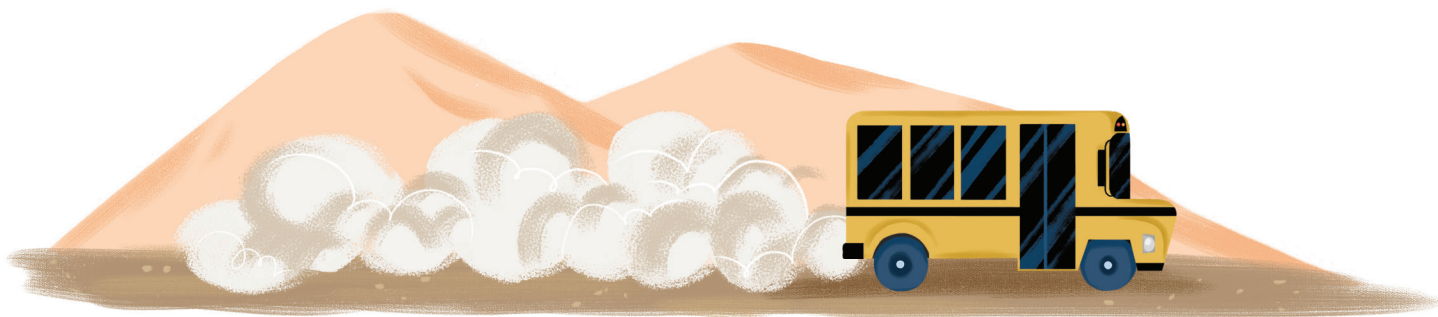
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Otto's Tales

Let's Visit
**The
HOOVER DAM**



The dusty road stretched out before the bus, and Otto the bulldog tried to get a better view out the window.



“Ruff Ruff!” Otto barked, nudging his best friend Dennis. “I want to see the view.”

Dennis yawned, “There’s not much to see, Otto. It’s just the Nevada desert.”

“Why is sleepaway camp in the desert?” Otto asked.

“My dad went to this camp when he was my age. It’s tradition!” Dennis grinned.

The bus slowed down, and a woman in the front row with a name tag reading “Counselor Rachel” called, “Pit stop!”



They pulled into a gas station, and the campers filed out.

“Come on, Otto!” Dennis said. “Let’s go stock up on snacks and drinks.”



“You forgot your backpack on your seat!” Otto realized. “I’ll grab it so we can load it up with treats.”

“Okay,” Dennis nodded. “I’ll head inside!”



Otto bounded back onto the bus and grabbed Dennis’s backpack. He heard a familiar *meow*. He unzipped the bag and out popped the fluffy head of a tiny kitten.

“Smidge!!!” Otto barked.



“Did Dennis say he was getting snacks? Because I already ate all the ones in his bag...” Smidge rubbed crumbs off her little pink nose.

“Smidge, you can’t just **stowaway** and eat Dennis’s food,” Otto scolded.

“Which is why I’m going to get my own.” Smidge leaped out of the bag and dashed off the bus.

“Wait up!” Otto chased after her.



Inside the gas station, Otto caught Smidge in the cookie aisle. "Here, hold these." Smidge stacked four packages of cookies on top of Otto's head.

"Smidge." Otto smiled. "You don't have money to buy these. We have to find Dennis."

"Oh, alright." Smidge sighed.

Otto looked around the store. "He came in here not long ago."

Smidge and Otto searched the aisles, but Dennis was nowhere to be found.

They ran outside. The bus engine roared as it **ZOOMED** down the road.

“Dennis!” Otto cried, but it was too late.



“Uh oh,” Smidge groaned.

“Dennis will come back for us,” Otto said hopefully. He watched the yellow bus shrink down the road. Finally, it disappeared.



“We’re going to STARVE!” Smidge wailed.

“We won’t starve, Smidge. Come on, if we get moving, we’ll either catch up with them at the next stop, or they’ll turn around and find us,” Otto urged. “It’s just a small **detour**.”

Forty minutes later, there was still no sign of the bus.

“My feet hurt,” Smidge complained, “and I’m covered in dust.”

Smidge's white fur was now light brown. “You look like brown sugar,” Otto chuckled.

“Sugar!!! Don’t remind me how hungry I am!” Smidge cried.



“But you’re *always* hungry,” Otto pointed out.

“Why is everything in the desert so brown?” Smidge asked.

“Not everything.” Otto pointed. “Look!”

Up ahead, they saw a wide, blue-green river. It looked like a snake winding through the rocky terrain. A giant wall held the water back and kept it from spilling down the cliffside.

“Let’s check that out,” Otto suggested.

“Okay, but I am NOT getting wet.” Smidge shuddered.

Meanwhile, on the bus, Dennis woke up from a nap. He noticed his pal wasn't on the seat next to him. "Otto?"

He checked under the seat and in the aisle. No luck. He stood up and shouted, "Has anyone seen Otto?"



The campers shook their heads.

He forgot Otto! Dennis ran to the front of the bus to talk to Counselor Rachel. She would know what to do.



Not too far away, Otto and Smidge stood at the top of a concrete wall, looking over. It was a long, long way down to where the water poured out of the sides of the canyon and into the river below.

“What is this place?” Smidge asked.

“It looks like a dam,” Otto guessed. “Let’s ask someone.”

“There’s no one around.” Smidge looked back and forth.

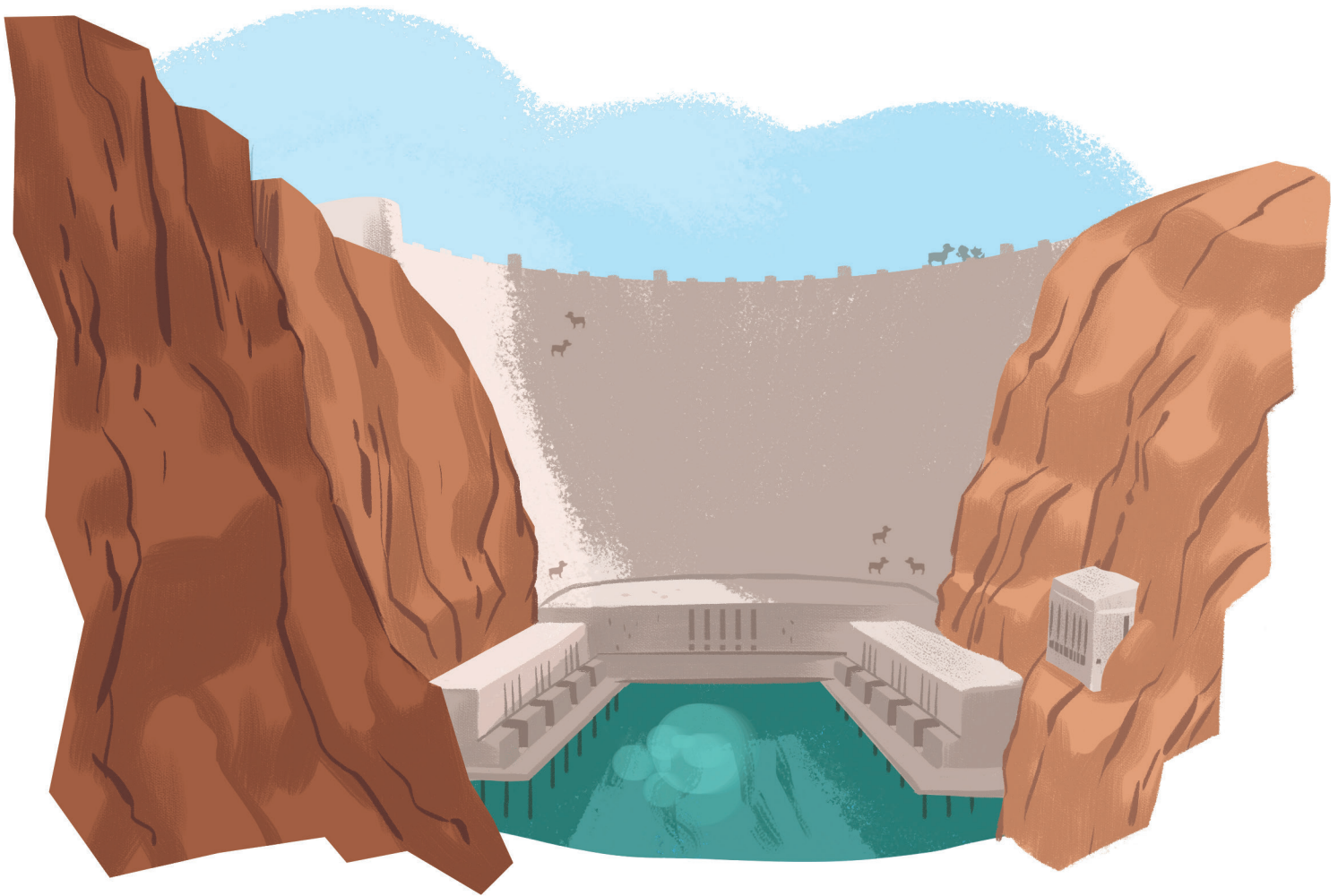


Otto pointed down, and Smidge's eyes nearly popped out of her face. A **bighorn sheep** was balancing on the exterior of the dam below them. He wore a construction hat, with his large, curly horns poking out the sides. The bighorn sheep was speaking in a loud and commanding voice to other sheep, "Let's pick up the pace! We have work to do. Report to me immediately if you find any cracks!"

"How are they standing like that?" Smidge gasped, pointing to the other sheep standing on the side of the dam. "I have pretty good balance, but *that's* scary!"

“Excuse us!” Otto called down to get their attention.
The sheep giving orders looked up. “Howdy, travelers!
What brings you to the **Hoover Dam**?”
“We’re lost,” said Otto. “Can you help us?”

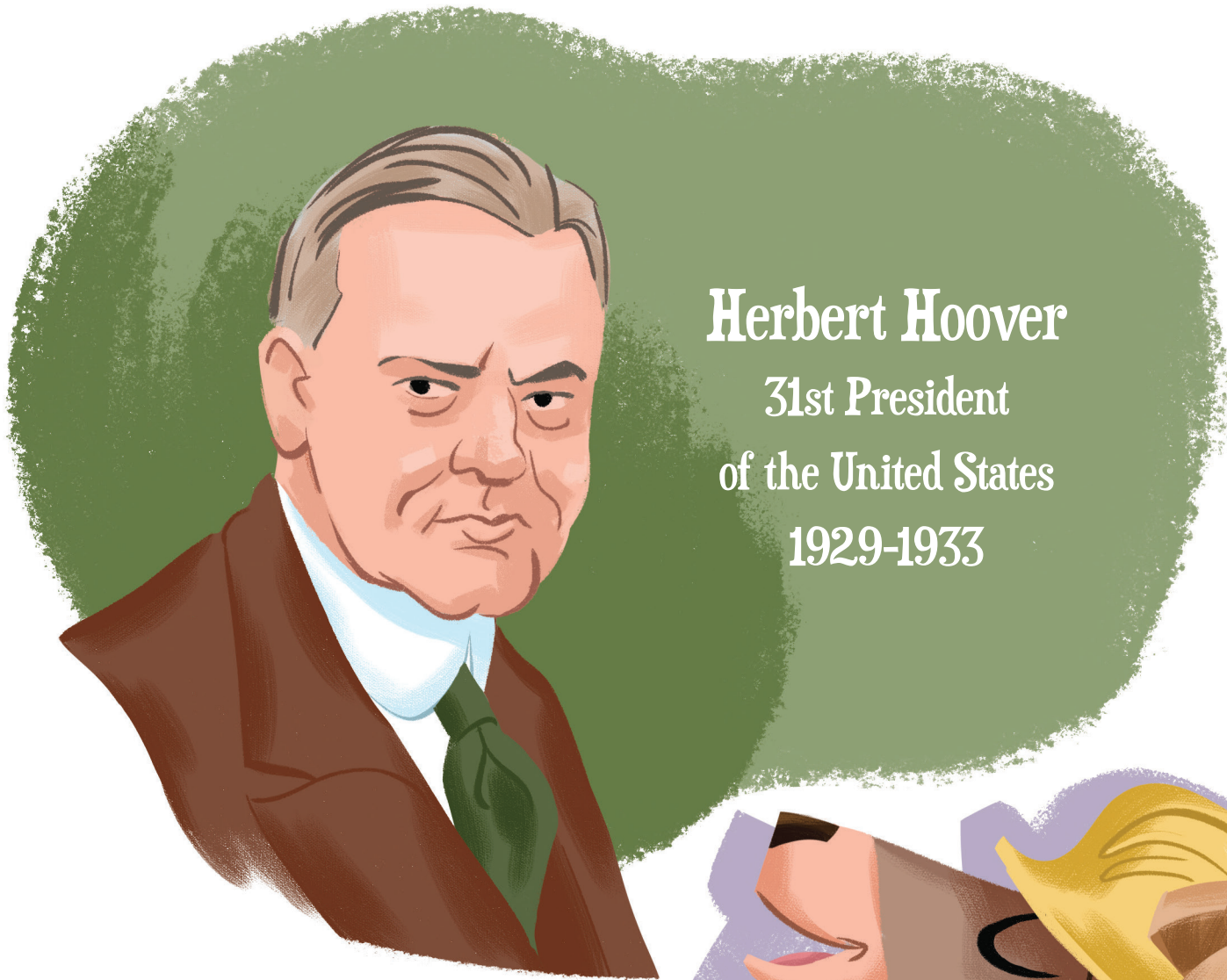




The sheep jumped on top of the dam to join them. “Herbert Hooper, at your service!” Herbert brought his hoof up in a salute.

“I’m Otto, and this is Smidge. It’s nice to meet you, Herbert. You called this place the Hoover Dam. Why is it called that?”

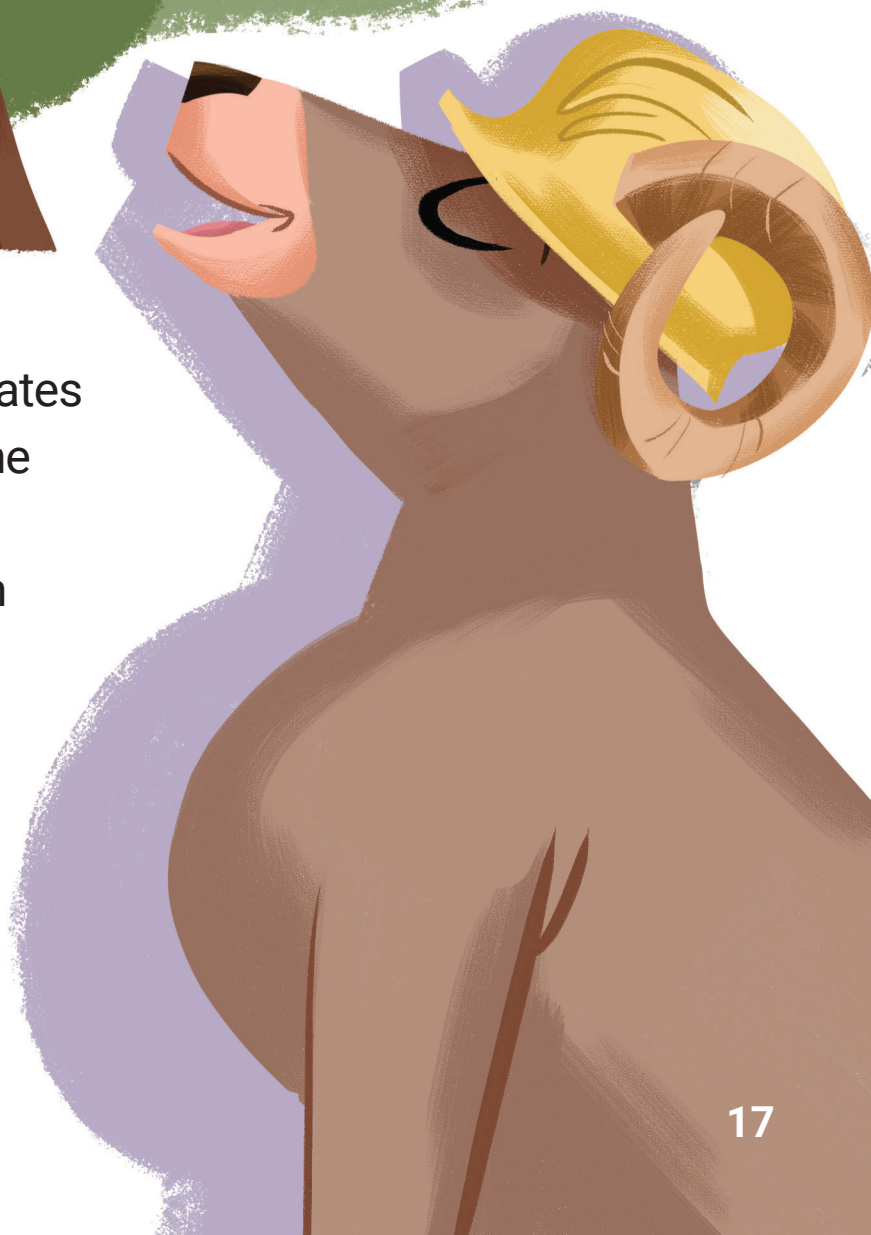




Herbert Hoover

31st President
of the United States
1929-1933

“It’s named after the President of the United States who worked hard to get the dam built—**President Herbert Hoover**. I’m named after him as well,” Herbert said, his chest puffing with pride.

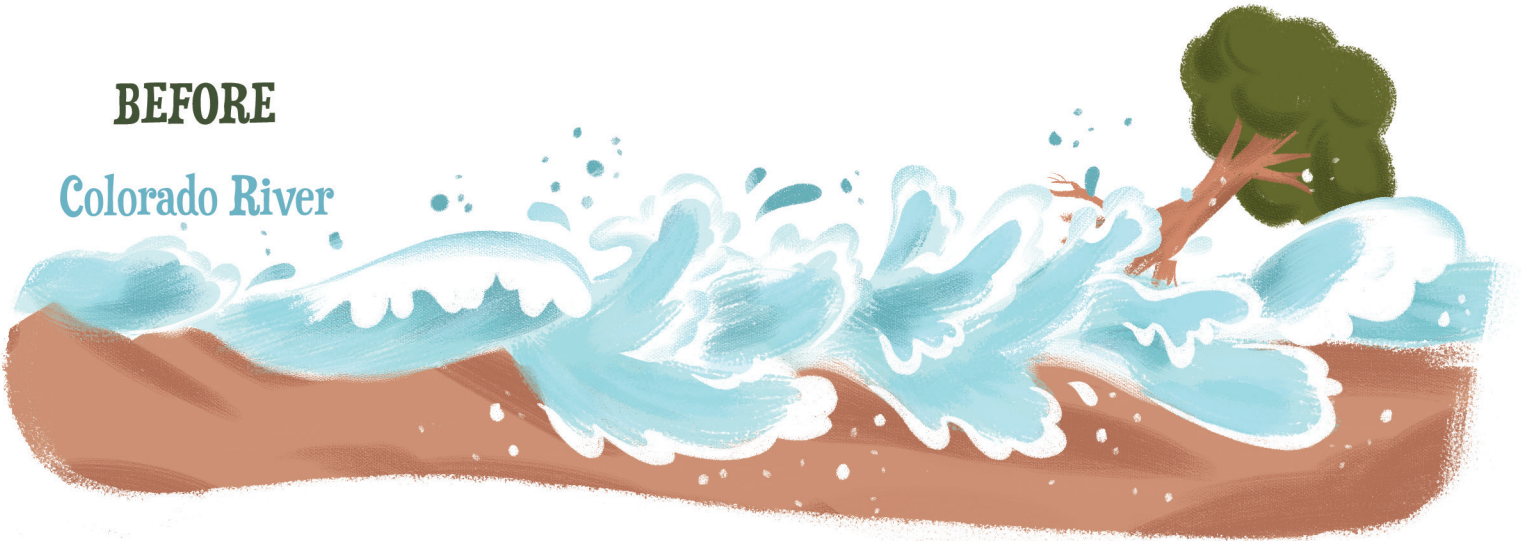


“Why would the president build a dam in a desert?” Smidge asked.

“An excellent question. This river here is called the **Colorado River**. Back in the early 1900s, it flooded a lot, destroying homes, crops, and roads, which wasn’t good for the people who lived here. A dam was built to control the flooding and to harness the water for crop **irrigation** and **electric power**,” Herbert explained.

BEFORE

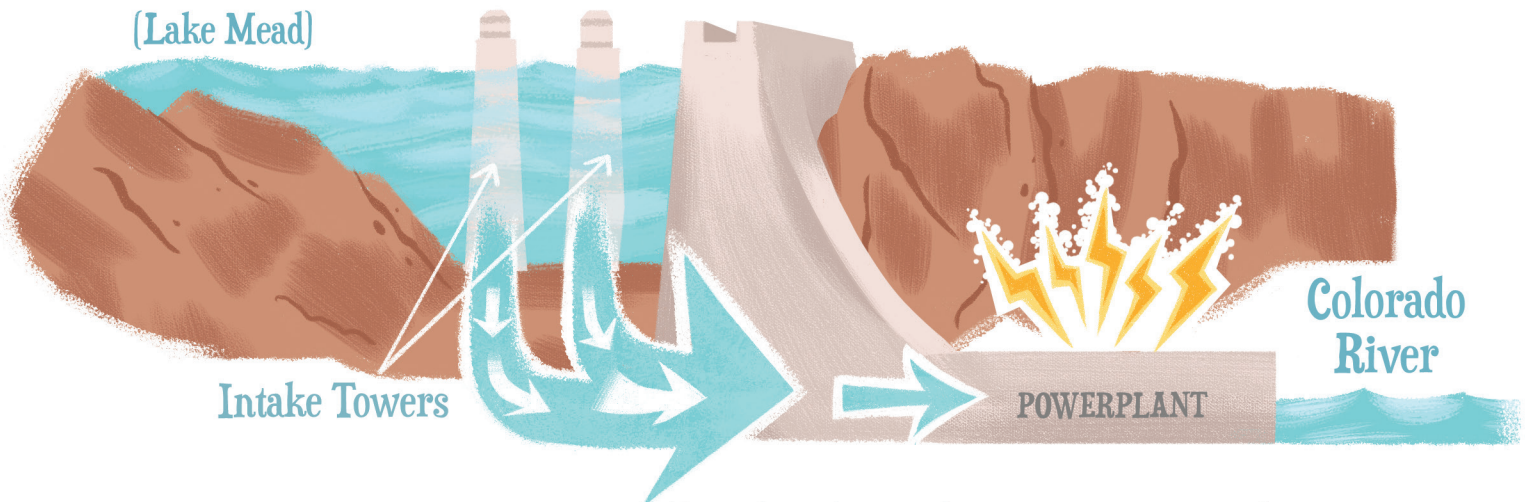
Colorado River



AFTER

Colorado River
(Lake Mead)

HOOVER DAM
(Side View)



Water collected in the intake towers is sent to the powerplant and converted into electric power!

“Wow, that must have been quite a project,” Smidge said.
“It was,” Herbert agreed. “I can give you a closer look if you like.”
Smidge and Otto took a step away from the edge of the dam.
Herbert laughed. “It’s quite alright. Hop on my back.

I’ve been doing this for years.”

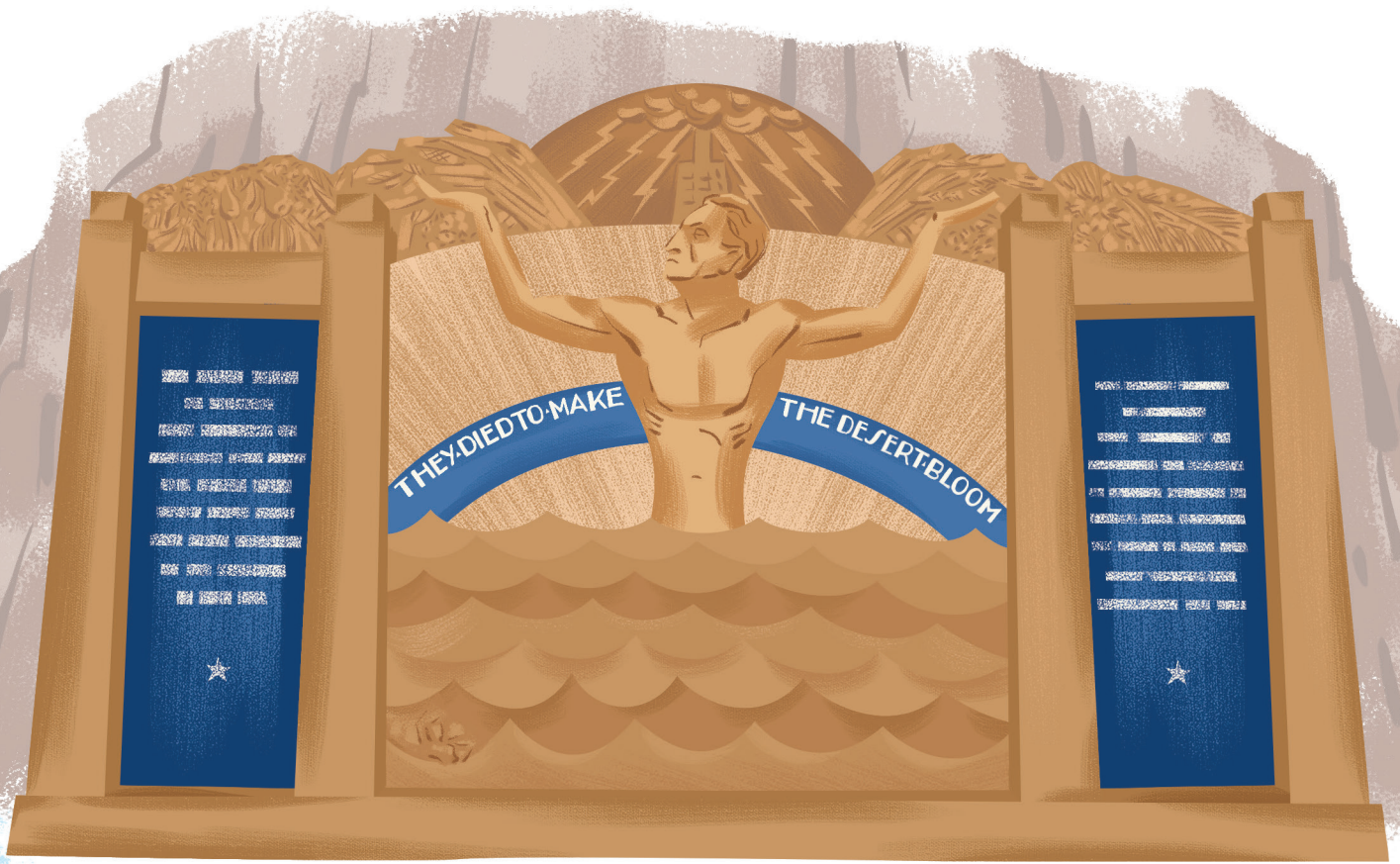
Otto and Smidge climbed on
and tightly gripped
Herbert’s horns.



“This dam has top-notch **integrity!**” Herbert assured them. He worked his way down the dam using the grooves as steps. “It’s made out of 5 million barrels of cement and reinforced with 45 million pounds of steel. That’s enough concrete to pave a road from San Francisco to New York City!”

Smidge was shaking. “Th-that’s...a lot!” She eyed the water below. “Sounds dangerous. Did anyone get hurt?”





“Yes, unfortunately, some did. It took five years to construct this masterpiece. Twenty-one thousand men worked on it, and 96 died. We’ve got a memorial here to honor their lives,” Herbert revealed.

“I’m glad those people will be remembered for what they did,” Otto said.

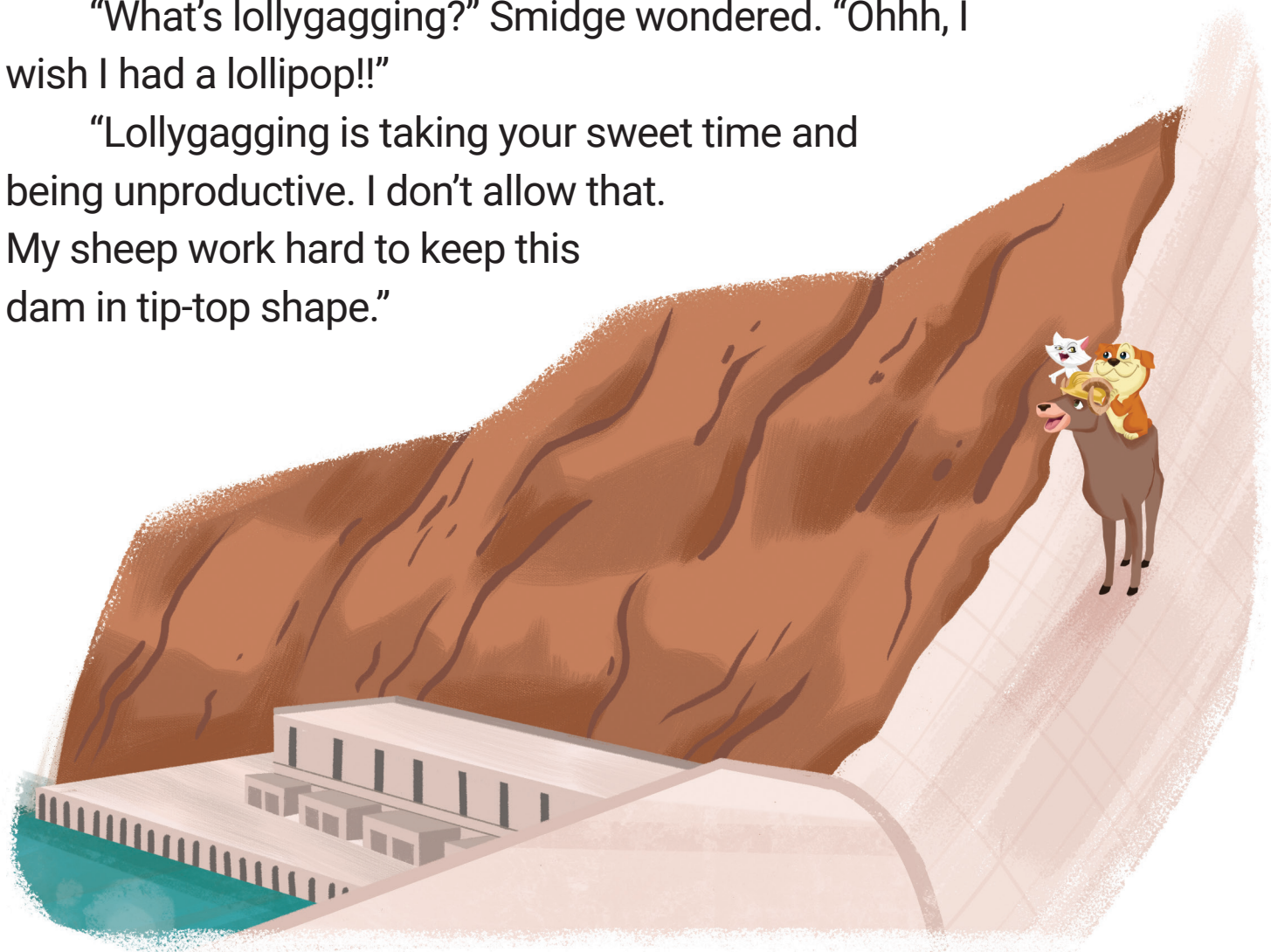
“Indeed. It took courage and sacrifice,” Herbert remarked.



“Hey!” He shouted up to his fellow sheep. “No **lollygagging!**”

“What’s lollygagging?” Smidge wondered. “Ohhh, I wish I had a lollipop!!”

“Lollygagging is taking your sweet time and being unproductive. I don’t allow that. My sheep work hard to keep this dam in tip-top shape.”



“Sweet...” Smidge licked her lips. “Is there any food here?”

“Hmm, there’s fish in the river. Cats like fish, right?” Herbert asked.

“You mean I have to catch it?” Smidge winced.

“Well, I can’t. Hooves aren’t great for grasping slippery fish!” Herbert explained.

“Humph!” Smidge pouted.

“If you want something, you’ve got to work for it, little lady,” Herbert reminded her. “The reward is much greater when you put in the effort to accomplish a task.”



“My best friend Dennis works really hard,” Otto said. “He would have loved learning about this dam.”

“Where is Dennis?” Herbert asked.

“He’s on a bus that left without us at a nearby gas station,” Otto explained sadly.

“Probably heading down river.” Herbert thought for a moment. “I know someone who can help. He’ll put you to work, though!”



“To find your friend, you’ll have to go down the Colorado River,” Herbert said, bringing them down to the bottom of the dam.

Otto jumped onto a ledge above the water. Smidge wouldn’t let go of Herbert’s horn. “I can’t swim, and I hate getting wet!”

“Who said anything about swimming?” A large beaver jumped out of the water. “Hola, I’m Señor Castor!” He shook their paws.

“I’m Otto, and the scaredy cat is Smidge.” Otto said.

Smidge finally released her grip on Herbert. “I’m not a scaredy cat. How can we get down the river?”



“You can do what beavers do—build!” Señor Castor pointed to a pile of floating logs, sticks, and leaves.

“That looks like a pile of junk. What are we going to build with that?” Smidge asked.

“A raft!” barked Otto. “This will be fun.”

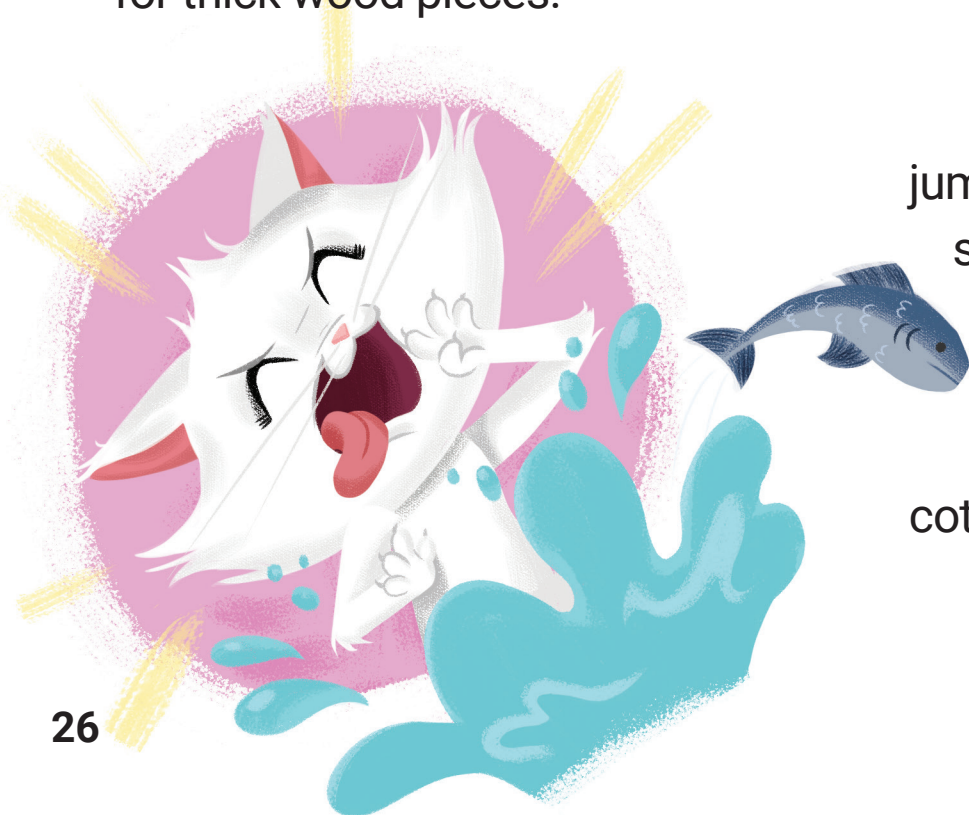
“Good luck and no lollygagging!” Herbert called. He climbed back up the steep cement wall of the dam.



Señor Castor helped them collect the materials from the water. Otto formed a raft with the logs, while Señor Castor gathered mud and clay from the river to glue everything together. Smidge tried to eat some leaves but quickly spit them out.

Otto noticed that Smidge needed a task. “Smidge, can you find something to paddle with?”

Smidge edged around the water carefully, looking for thick wood pieces.



SPLASH! A fish jumped out of the river, spraying her with water. “Ack!” Smidge shook herself dry and poofed up like a giant cotton ball.



Señor Castor surveyed their work as Smidge brought over two paddles. “That’s a beautiful vessel. Nice teamwork.”

“Let’s go find Dennis!” Otto yelled.



They climbed on the raft and set off, with their new friend using his broad, flat tail to steer. Otto paddled with his oar, but Smidge wouldn't get near the water.

"Smidge, put your oar in the river and paddle with me." Otto tried to motivate his friend.

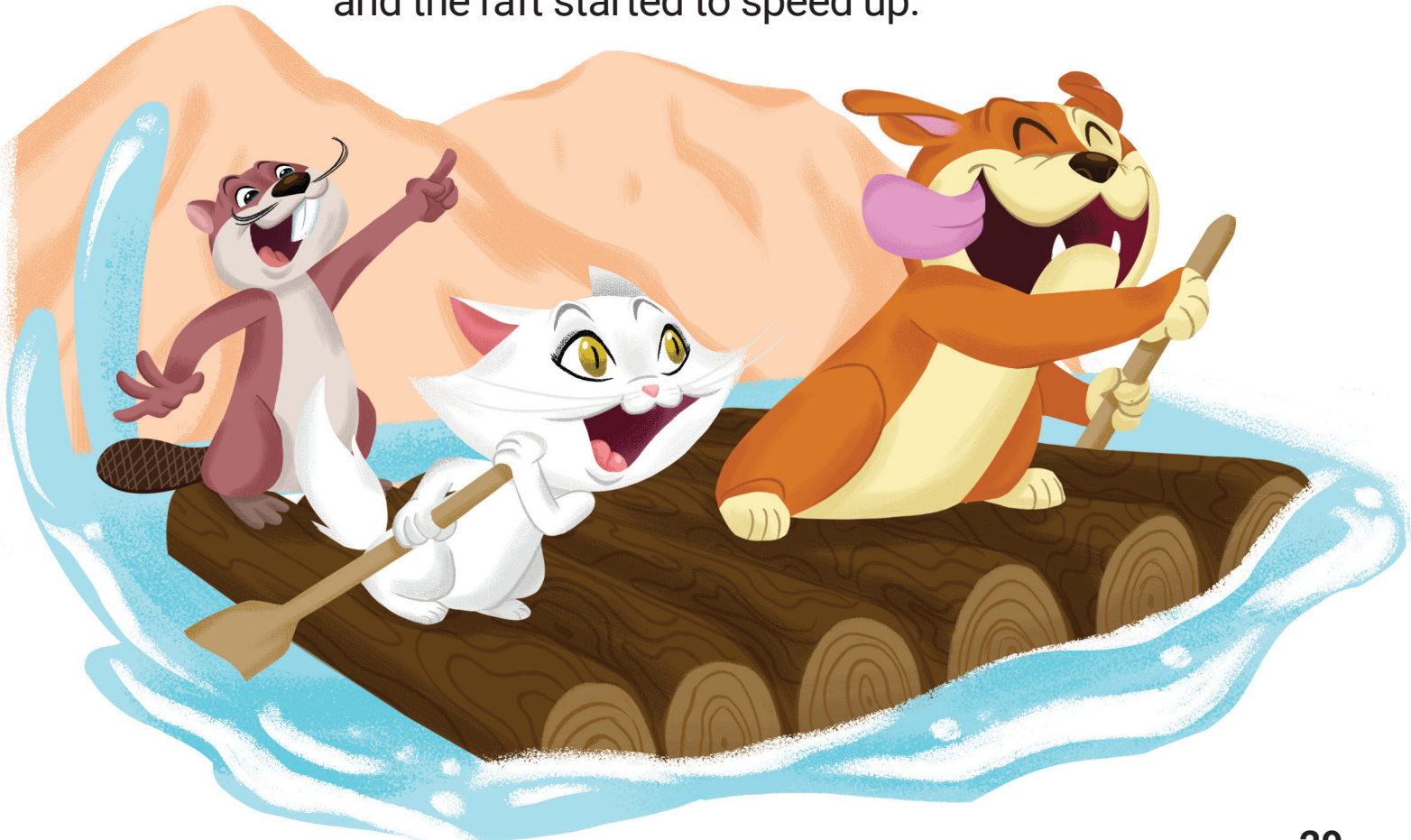
"But I might fall in," Smidge protested.



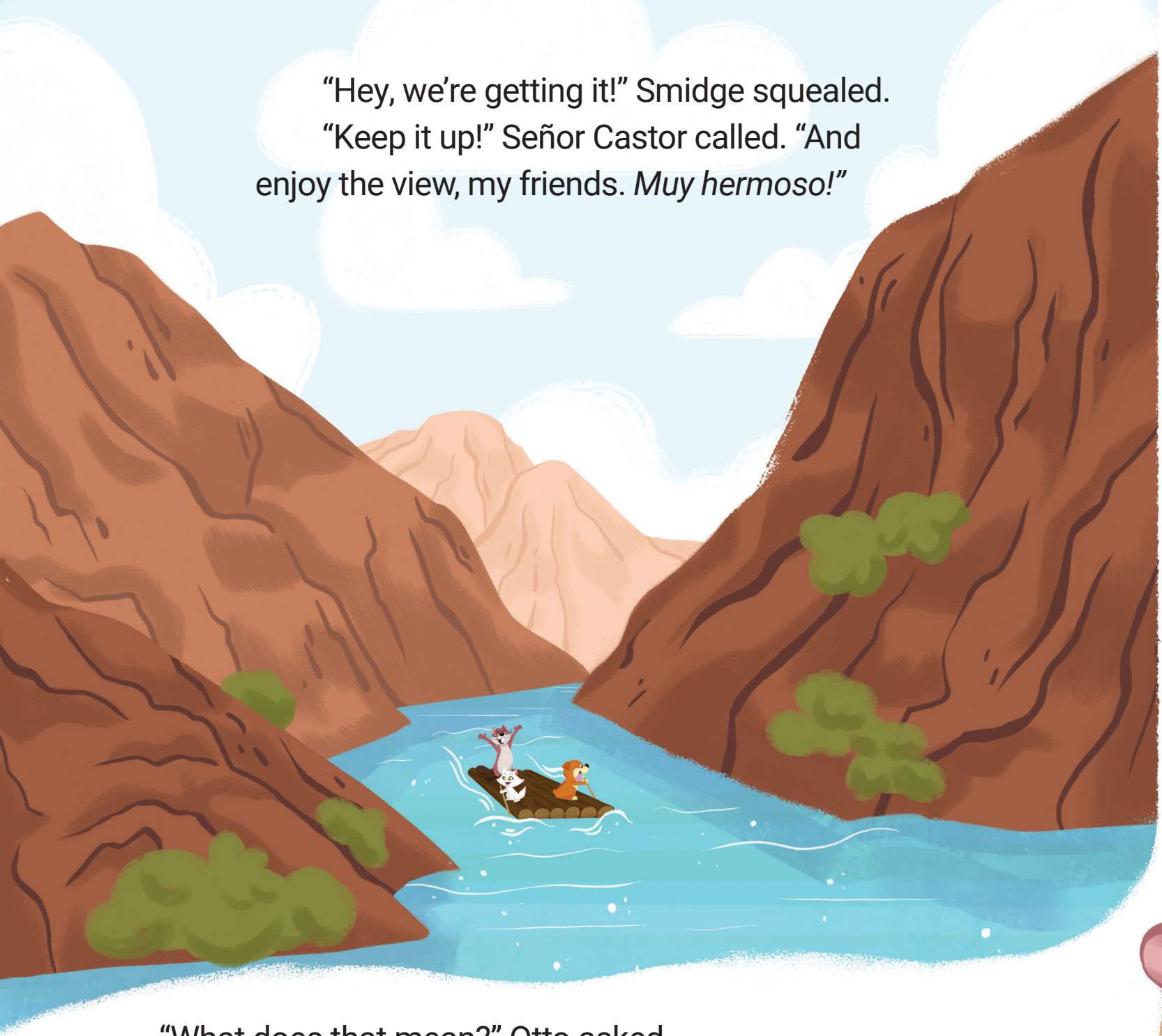
“Everyone must do their part,” Señor Castor reminded her. “Don’t be afraid.”

“Do it for Dennis, Smidge,” Otto urged. “We’ll never find him if we can’t paddle this raft. He has lots of snacks, remember?”

Smidge’s eyes lit up, and she dipped her paddle in the water. She copied Otto’s movements, and the raft started to speed up.



“Hey, we’re getting it!” Smidge squealed.
“Keep it up!” Señor Castor called. “And
enjoy the view, my friends. *Muy hermoso!*”



“What does that mean?” Otto asked.

“Very beautiful.’ It’s Spanish. Did you know the Colorado River gets its name from the Spanish language? It means ‘red-colored’ after the reddish-brown soil and rocks that turned the water red.”

“It doesn’t look red now,” Otto observed.

“That’s because after the **Glen Canyon Dam** was opened in 1966, a lot of the red **silt** got trapped behind the dam, and the river stopped looking so red,” Señor Castor explained.

“The dams play a really important part in this river, don’t they?” Otto realized.

“Yes! The Hoover Dam alone generates enough electric power for 1.3 million people in three different states!” Señor Castor revealed.

“Wow! Speaking of power, we need some more, Smidge.”

“I’m going as fast as I can!” Smidge whined.

“What’s that?” Señor Castor pointed ahead.

Otto wagged his tail. There was a large group of people along the river’s edge, and one of them was a boy with white hair and big glasses.





Dennis sat next to Counselor Rachel by the water's edge. She gave him a hug.

"We called the gas station, and there's no sign of Otto. I'm sorry, Dennis. I'm sure he'll turn up soon. Why don't you go fishing with the campers?" she suggested.

Dennis shook his head.

Then, a loud bark rang through the air. Dennis looked up and spotted Otto and Smidge, paddling toward the shore on a raft with a beaver. Dennis ran to greet them.

"Otto, I'm so glad you're okay!" He hugged his best friend. "I'm sorry I left without you."



"It's okay. Smidge and I got to go to Hoover Dam! We met some hard-working sheep, and then we built a raft to ride down the Colorado River with our new friend Señor Castor. It was an adventure!"



“Sounds more exciting than my trip so far.” Dennis smiled. “Hey, where did Smidge go?”

Otto and Dennis looked around.

“I caught one!” Smidge squealed...a shiny fish in her paws. She took a big bite. “Best snack ever! Herbert was right—it’s better when you work for it.”

“That was my favorite adventure yet,” Otto barked. **“Ruff Ruff!”** Dennis grinned. “You say that every time, Otto!”

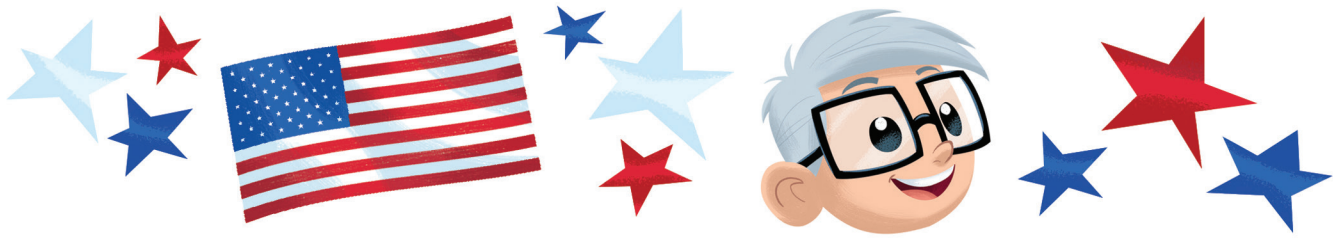
“Time to get back on the bus,” Counselor Rachel announced.

“This time,” Dennis added, “Otto and Smidge are getting on first!”

“No lollygagging!” Smidge ordered.

The trio settled in, dug into their snacks, and rolled along the dusty road towards camp.





We Love Our History

Stowaway: To hide on a ship, plane, or other vehicle in order to avoid being seen.

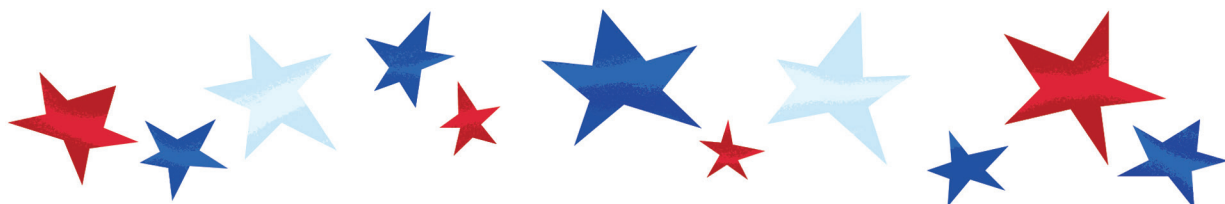
Detour: A longer and less direct way to get to where you're going, usually to avoid something or see something else along the way.

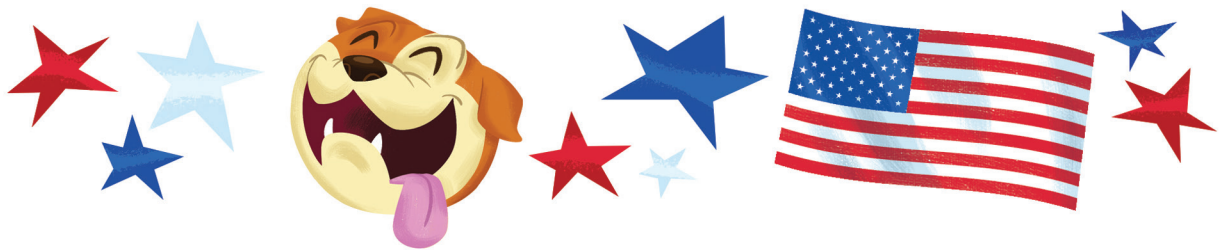
Bighorn Sheep: A grayish-brown wild sheep that lives in mountainous and desert regions of western North America.

Hoover Dam: A dam in the western United States on the Colorado River, on the border between Nevada and Arizona. It forms Lake Mead and was constructed between 1931 and 1936 during the Great Depression. It is 726.4 ft. tall.

President Herbert Hoover: Herbert Clark Hoover was an American politician and engineer who served as the 31st President of the United States from 1929 to 1933, holding office during the onset of the Great Depression.

Colorado River: A major river in North America. At 1,450 miles long, it's the sixth longest river in the nation. It runs through seven U.S. states and two Mexican states.





Irrigation: The process of applying controlled amounts of water to land to assist the production of crops.

Electric Power: Electricity is a form of energy that gives things the ability to move and work. Electric power is a measurement of the rate at which energy is used over a period of time. The unit for power is called the watt, and the unit for energy is the joule.

Integrity: Being sound in construction; without impairments or damage.

Lollygagging: To fool around and waste time.

Glen Canyon Dam: The second highest concrete arch dam in the United States, second only to Hoover Dam. It is 710 ft. tall.

Silt: Fine sand, clay, or other material carried by running water and deposited as a sediment, especially in a channel or harbor.



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**See you in
our *next* adventure!**

- Dennis, Otto
and Smidge

ABOUT

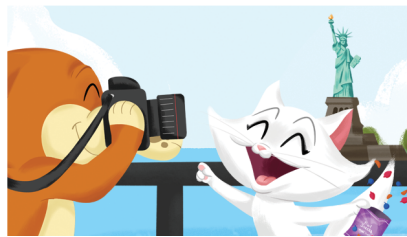
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TODAY IS
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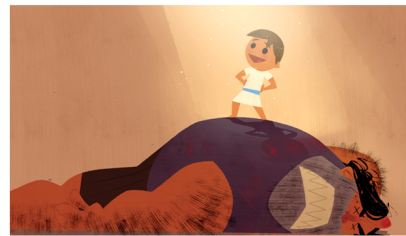
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