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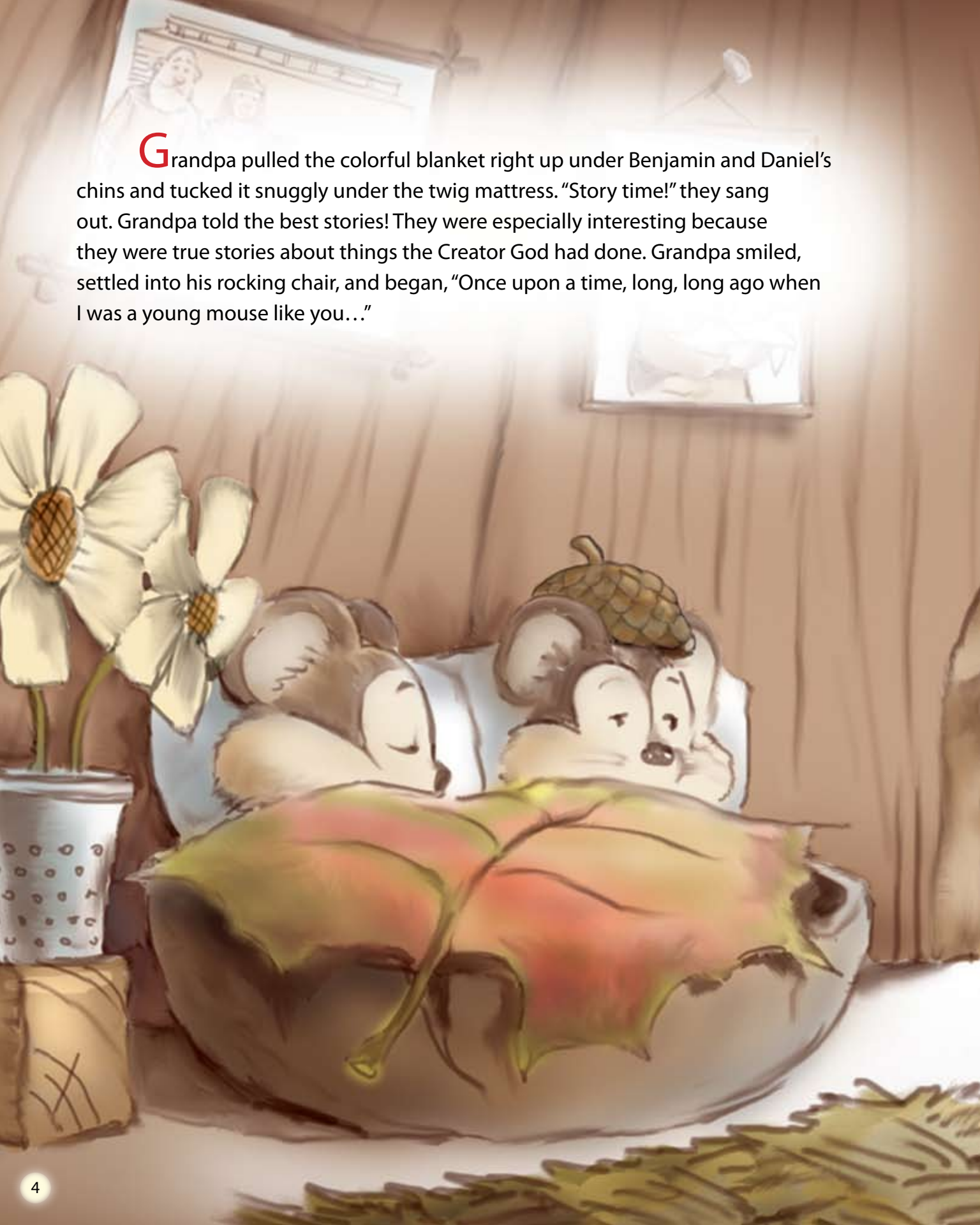
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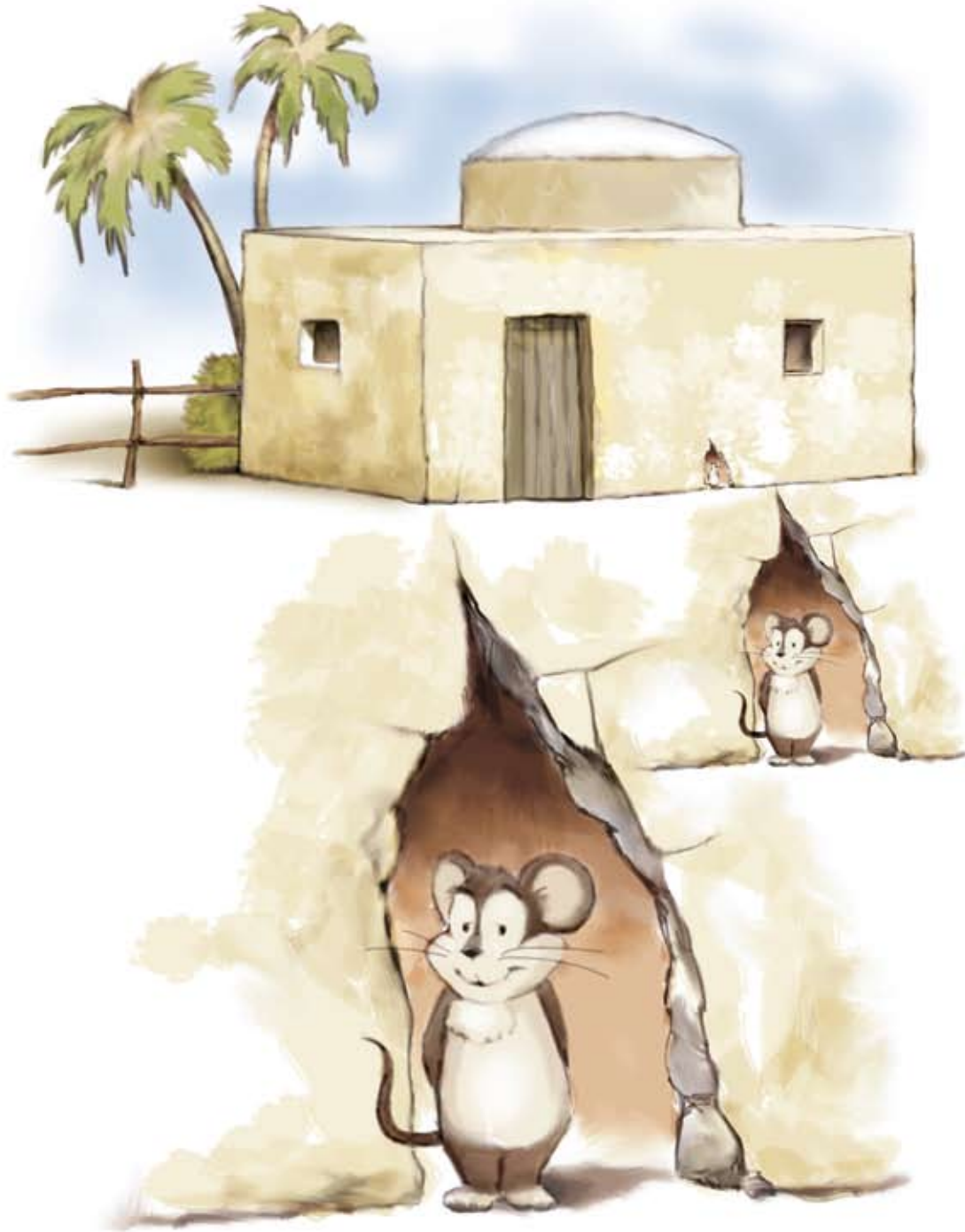


**G**randpa pulled the colorful blanket right up under Benjamin and Daniel's chins and tucked it snugly under the twig mattress. "Story time!" they sang out. Grandpa told the best stories! They were especially interesting because they were true stories about things the Creator God had done. Grandpa smiled, settled into his rocking chair, and began, "Once upon a time, long, long ago when I was a young mouse like you..."



He was interrupted by a tap at the little door. A large brown eye appeared, then disappeared, and a finger pushed a large piece of cookie into the room. "Goodnight," a voice whispered. "Sleep tight!" "Thank you Mrs. Noah!" Benjamin and Daniel cried. They loved visiting Grandma and Grandpa's house. Grandpa broke off a piece of cookie for each of them and they munched happily as he continued.





“When I was young, I lived alone in a small hole in a house in the city. I was very shy and I was afraid of everyone and everything — especially the dinosaurs! Even the smallest of them was much bigger than I was! But what bothered me the most was that all the other animals seemed to have some important job to do.

"The dogs helped their masters guard the sheep during the day and herd them into the fold each night. The oxen worked hard, muscles straining, pulling plows in the field so their masters could plant the seeds that would yield crops to feed the village. The birds flew busily from tree to tree gathering worms to feed their chirping families. Everyone had a very important job to do.



“One day, I decided that I was going to learn how to do all the things that the other animals did. The next morning I got up early and went out to the pasture with the dogs. They were friendly and said they would teach me to herd sheep. ‘You just circle around them and if they start to leave the flock, you bark a little,’ one explained. ‘If they still don’t listen, you may have to nip at their heels,’ said another helpfully.



"I watched them for a while before I got up the courage to try it. I ran into a small straying group and was immediately surrounded by a mass of moving legs. I squeaked as ferociously as I could, but those sheep wouldn't listen to me! My squeak was much too soft, and when I tried to bite them, they just stepped on my head and my tail!"





"The next day I went out to the field with the oxen and asked them to teach me to plow. They just laughed and said, 'You're much too small! It takes a special animal to do this job.' I tried to follow them anyway, but I got stuck in the oozing mud and had to go home and take a bath.



“The next day I went into an orchard and found some birds looking for worms. ‘You can’t help us with this,’ one said kindly, ‘But we’re building a nest for our new babies. Maybe you can find some soft grass for it.’ I searched and searched the orchard floor for the softest, greenest pieces of grass. But when I tried to climb up to the nest I lost my balance, fell off the fence, and rolled down the hill. I was very discouraged. Maybe the oxen were right. I was too small to do anything important.”



"The kind bird flew down to the grassy spot where I lay and landed softly beside me.

"Are you all right?' she asked. 'I think so.' I mumbled, testing my legs. 'We have been very busy,' she said, 'and I appreciate your help. But why do you want to build a nest?' 'Well,' I hesitated, but then my story came tumbling out. 'I'm too small. I finished. 'I'll never be able to do anything useful.'





“The bird thought for a second and then said, ‘Yes, you are young and you are small, but God the Creator made you! And do you know why?’ I shook my head. ‘To glorify himself,’ she said, her wings flapping excitedly. ‘Look around you! See how all the things He made work together? Look at the sun and the moon and the stars. They glorify God by serving the purpose for which He created them. You are a mouse. You cannot be the sun and you cannot warm the earth with your rays. You cannot be the moon or the stars. It would be ridiculous to try! Neither can you be a dog or an ox or a bird! God made you a mouse and He loves you just the way you are!’

“The kind bird was right, and her words were comforting. God the Creator had made me a mouse for a reason. That night I went to bed and slept more peacefully than I had for a long time.

**T**he next morning I woke as the sun came peeking up from behind the hills just like every other day, only this was no ordinary day. I could feel that something exciting was going to happen. I yawned and stretched and washed my face as usual, but I was alert and waiting. I began to eat my breakfast when suddenly I knew that God the Creator wanted me to go down into the valley where Noah and his sons were building an enormous wooden structure that they called an ark.

