

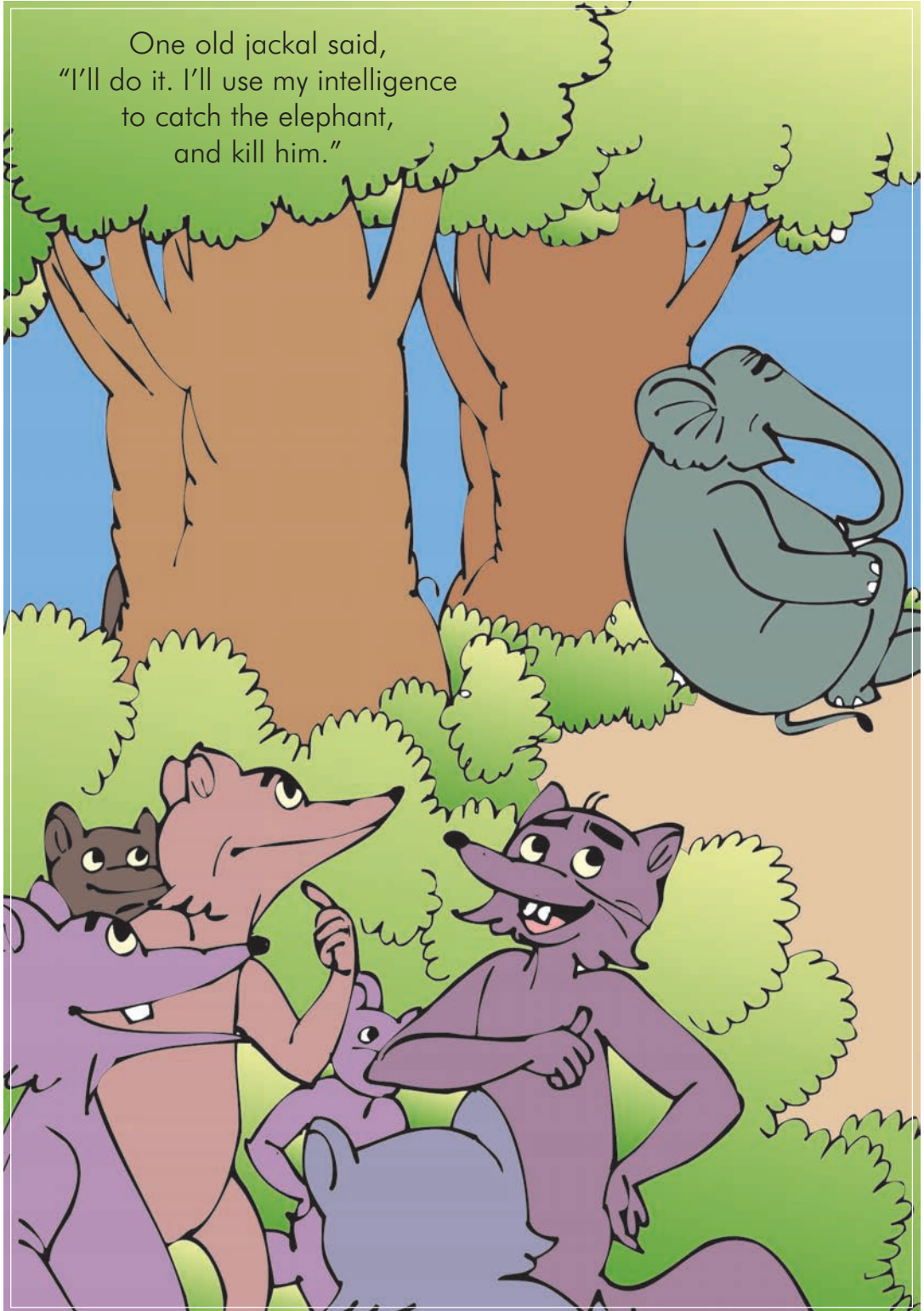
*Tales from the*  
**Hitopadesa**



*Retold and Illustrated  
by Krishna Shastri*

**EMESCO**

One old jackal said,  
"I'll do it. I'll use my intelligence  
to catch the elephant,  
and kill him."



## The Elephant and the Jackals

In a forest, there lived an elephant all by himself. Close by lived a large pack of jackals. One day, when they were looking for food, one of the jackals spotted the elephant resting under a tree.

“Look,” he said to his friends, “if we kill that elephant, we’ll have food for months and months.”

“That’s a great idea. But how can we trap him?” asked the other jackals.

One old jackal said, “I’ll do it. I’ll use my intelligence to catch the elephant, and kill him.”

The crafty old fellow walked up timidly to the elephant.

“O Mighty One!” he said, “could you spare me some time?”

“Certainly,” replied the elephant. “What is it?”

“Well, sir,” replied the old jackal, “the jackals in this forest would like to elect a king. We want someone who is not only brave and powerful but also kind-hearted and just. We have come to the conclusion that there is only one creature in this forest who fits that description. And that’s you.”

The foolish elephant was flattered. “I’m ready to be crowned anytime you wish,” he said.

“Follow me, then,” said the jackal, and set off at a run.

The elephant charged after him, eager to be king of the forest. He fell into a deep pit that the jackals had dug, and was killed.

And that was how the jackals got what they wanted.