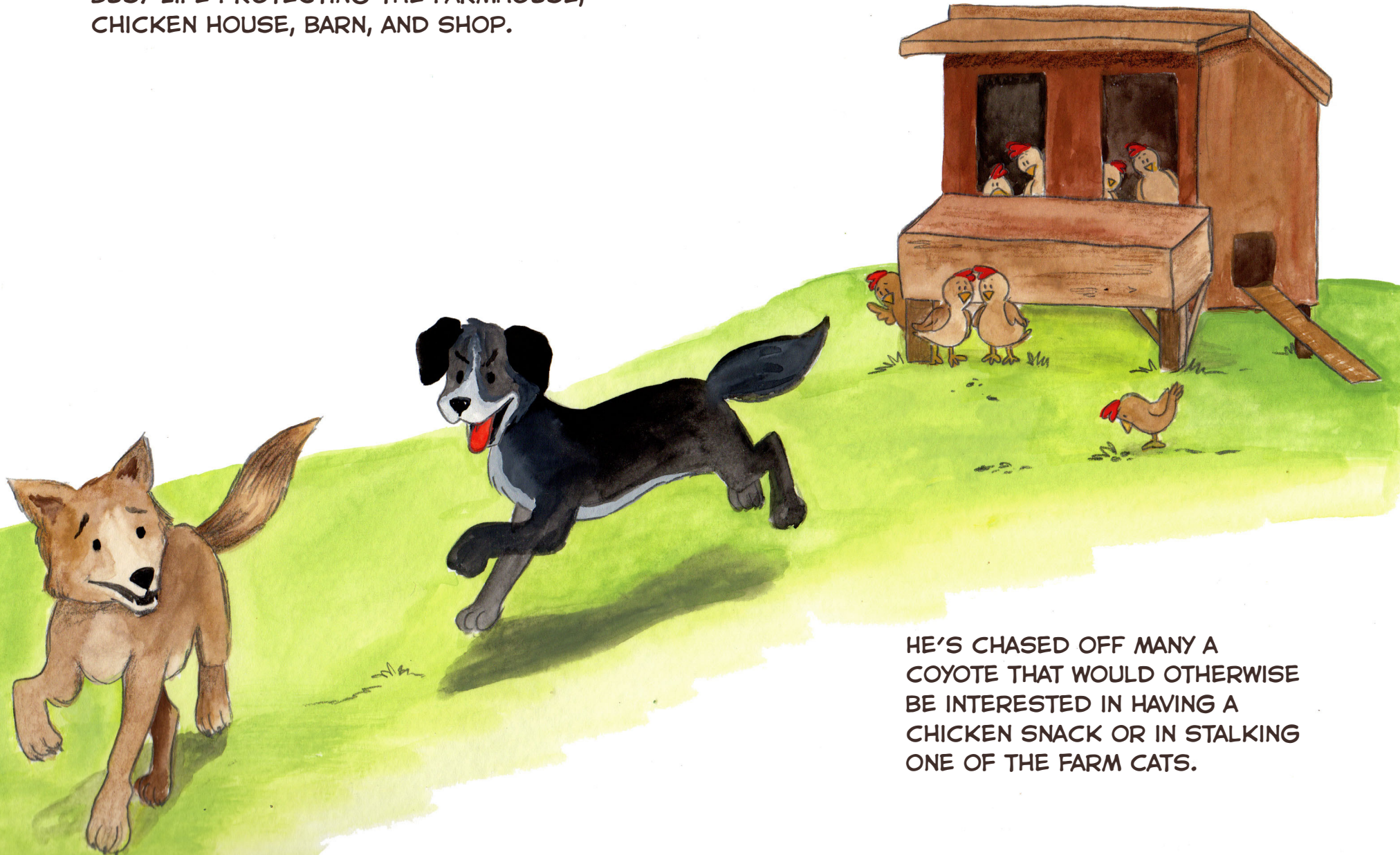


TALES OF FARM FRIENDS
THE FRIENDLY
DOG, SPOCK

SPOCK IS ONE AMAZING DOG, A CROSS BETWEEN A BEAGLE AND A BORDER COLLIE. SPOCK MIGHT NOT WIN A RIBBON FOR BEAUTY AT A DOG COMPETITION, BUT HE MAKES UP FOR HIS SIMPLE LOOKS WITH HIS INTELLIGENCE, AND HIS AFFECTION, AND LOYALTY TO HIS HUMAN COMPANIONS AND THEIR FARM.



SPOCK HAS LIVED ON MY BROTHER'S FARM FOR NINE YEARS NOW, WHICH MEANS HE'S FAIRLY OLD FOR A FARM DOG. HE'S HAD A BUSY LIFE PROTECTING THE FARMHOUSE, CHICKEN HOUSE, BARN, AND SHOP.



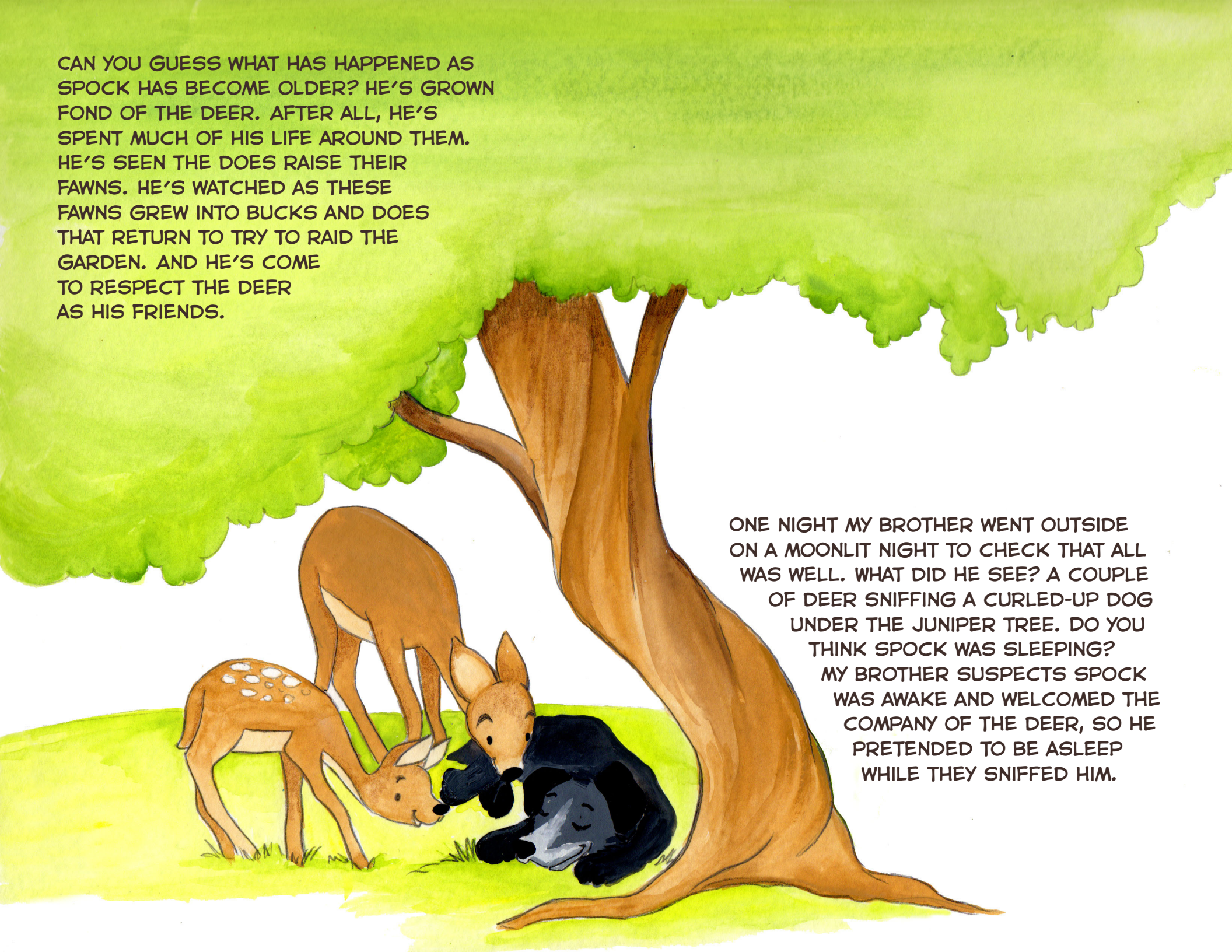
HE'S CHASED OFF MANY A COYOTE THAT WOULD OTHERWISE BE INTERESTED IN HAVING A CHICKEN SNACK OR IN STALKING ONE OF THE FARM CATS.

ONE OF SPOCK'S JOBS HAS BEEN TO PROTECT THE GARDEN FROM THE DEER. DEER LOVE TO EAT THE LETTUCE, PEAS, BEET GREENS, SPINACH, GREEN BEANS, AND EVEN THE NEW FRUIT TREES THE FARMER PLANTED NEAR THE GARDEN. AS BEAUTIFUL AS DEER ARE, THEY ARE NOT DESIRED IN GARDENS. SO SPOCK HAS BEEN GIVEN THE TASK OF CHASING THE DEER OFF WHEN THEY COME NEAR THE GARDEN.



THE DEER AREN'T AS SMART AS SPOCK, BUT THEY HAVE OCCASIONALLY OUTSMARTED HIM. THEY LEARNED TO WAIT UNTIL SPOCK WAS SOUND ASLEEP SO THAT HE DIDN'T HEAR OR SMELL THEM APPROACH. OF COURSE, IF HE WAS AWAKE, HE WOULD NEVER ALLOW THEM TO SNACK ON THE GARDEN.

CAN YOU GUESS WHAT HAS HAPPENED AS SPOCK HAS BECOME OLDER? HE'S GROWN FOND OF THE DEER. AFTER ALL, HE'S SPENT MUCH OF HIS LIFE AROUND THEM. HE'S SEEN THE DOES RAISE THEIR FAWNS. HE'S WATCHED AS THESE FAWNS GREW INTO BUCKS AND DOES THAT RETURN TO TRY TO RAID THE GARDEN. AND HE'S COME TO RESPECT THE DEER AS HIS FRIENDS.



ONE NIGHT MY BROTHER WENT OUTSIDE ON A MOONLIT NIGHT TO CHECK THAT ALL WAS WELL. WHAT DID HE SEE? A COUPLE OF DEER SNIFFING A CURLED-UP DOG UNDER THE JUNIPER TREE. DO YOU THINK SPOCK WAS SLEEPING? MY BROTHER SUSPECTS SPOCK WAS AWAKE AND WELCOMED THE COMPANY OF THE DEER, SO HE PRETENDED TO BE ASLEEP WHILE THEY SNIFFED HIM.

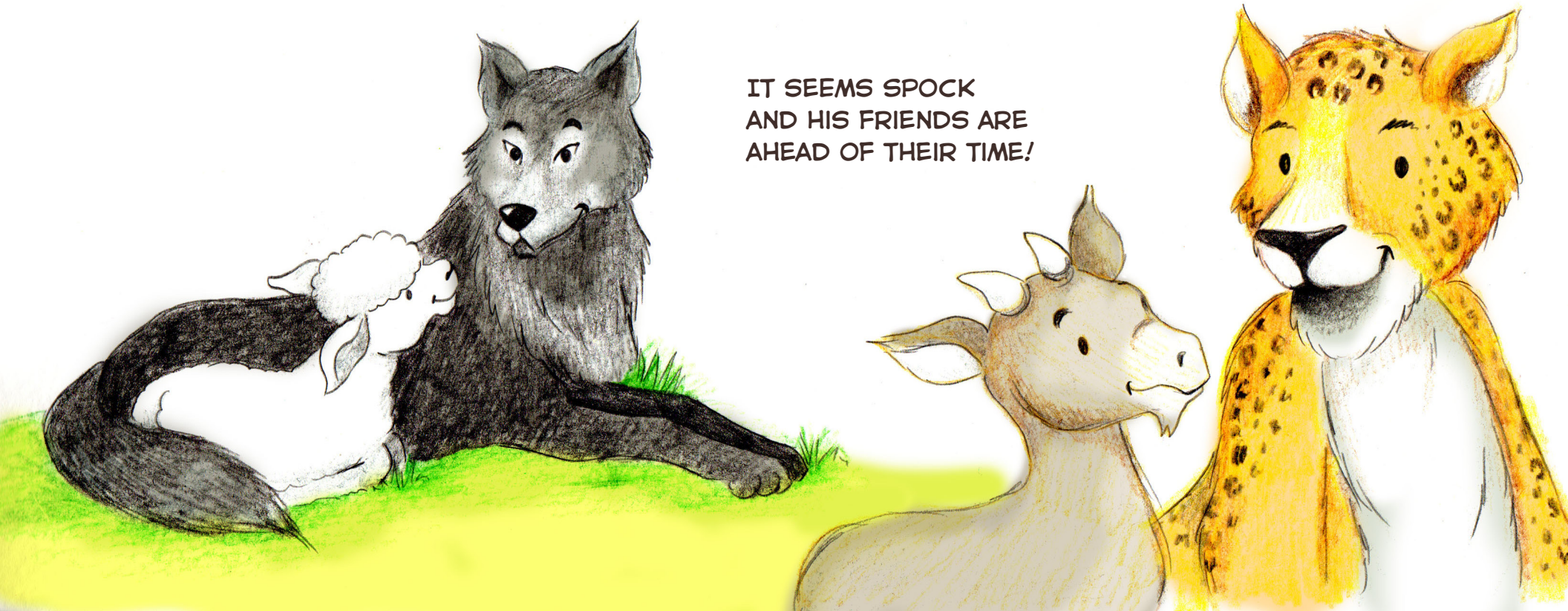
AND ONE MORNING AN EVEN MORE AMAZING EVENT HAPPENED. THE DEER WERE STANDING ON THE HILL OVERLOOKING THE HOUSE. SPOCK SIGHTED THE DEER AND RAN TOWARD THEM. MY BROTHER THOUGHT SPOCK WAS RUNNING TO CHASE THE DEER AWAY AS HE HAD DONE IN THE PAST. BUT INSTEAD, THE DEER STOOD STILL AND WAITED, UNAFRAID. ONCE SPOCK REACHED THE DEER, HE GREETED THEM BY SNIFFING NOSES WITH HIS FRIENDS!



SO THERE YOU HAVE THE TALE OF THE DEER AND THE WATCHDOG. OR MAYBE IT'S THE TALE OF SOME OF GOD'S GOOD FRIENDS!

DID YOU KNOW THAT THE BIBLE TALKS ABOUT HOW ONE DAY JESUS WILL RULE THE WORLD AND MAKE ALL THINGS WONDERFUL AND BEAUTIFUL AGAIN, LIKE IT WAS IN THE GARDEN OF EDEN? IN THAT DAY, THE BIBLE EXPLAINS THAT GOD WILL MAKE THE ANIMALS FRIENDLY WITH EACH OTHER.

“THE WOLF SHALL DWELL WITH THE LAMB, AND THE LEOPARD SHALL LIE DOWN WITH THE YOUNG GOAT, AND THE CALF AND THE LION AND THE FATTENED CALF TOGETHER; AND A LITTLE CHILD SHALL LEAD THEM” (ISAIAH 11:6 ESV).



IT SEEMS SPOCK
AND HIS FRIENDS ARE
AHEAD OF THEIR TIME!