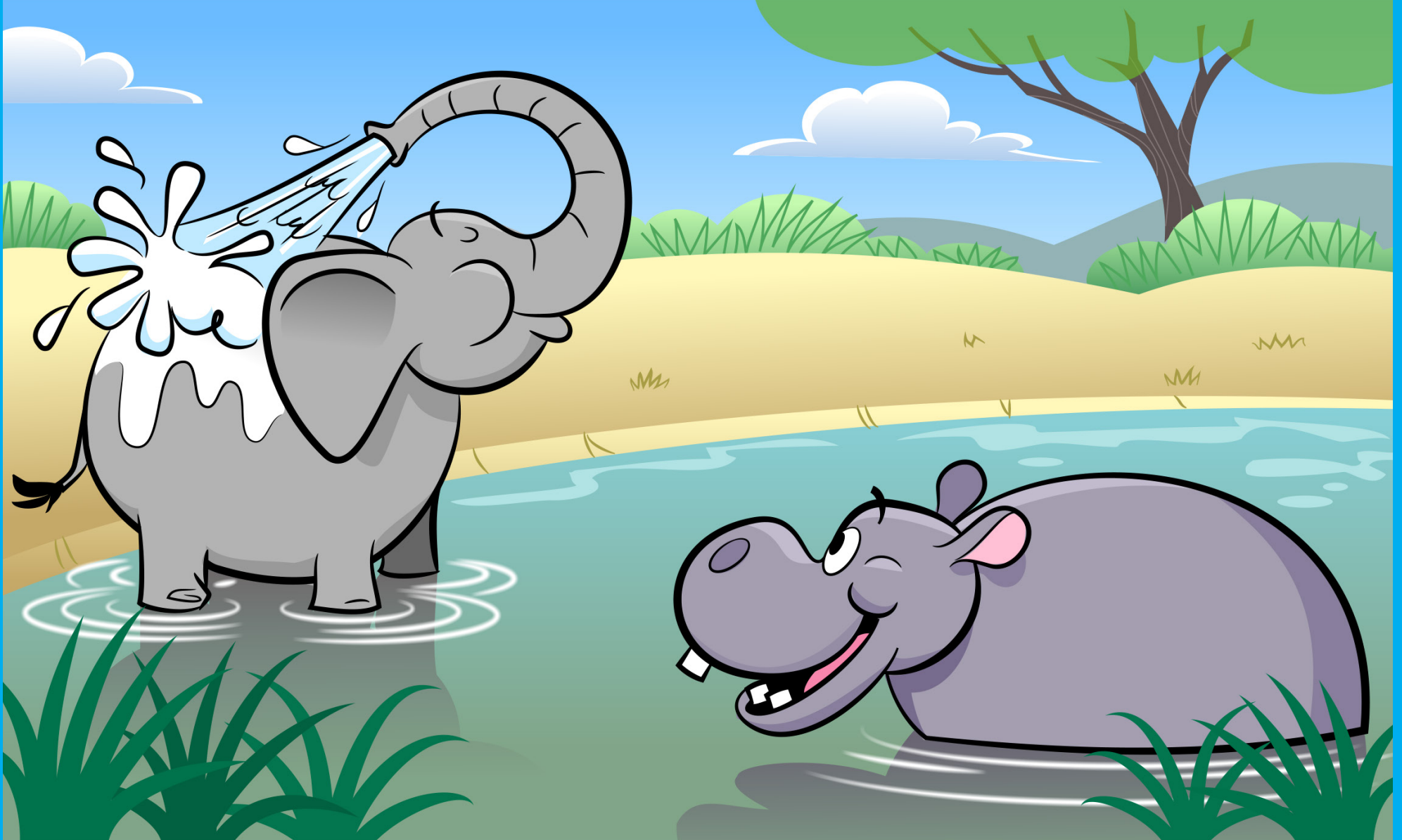


Many Trunks Make Light Work



There once was a little elephant named Tolongo. He grew up in the savannah with his mother and a couple of other elephant families. They would roam the grasslands in search of food, and when they found sufficient plant life, as well as a good water supply, they would stay for a while until the waterhole dried up or until the food became scarce.

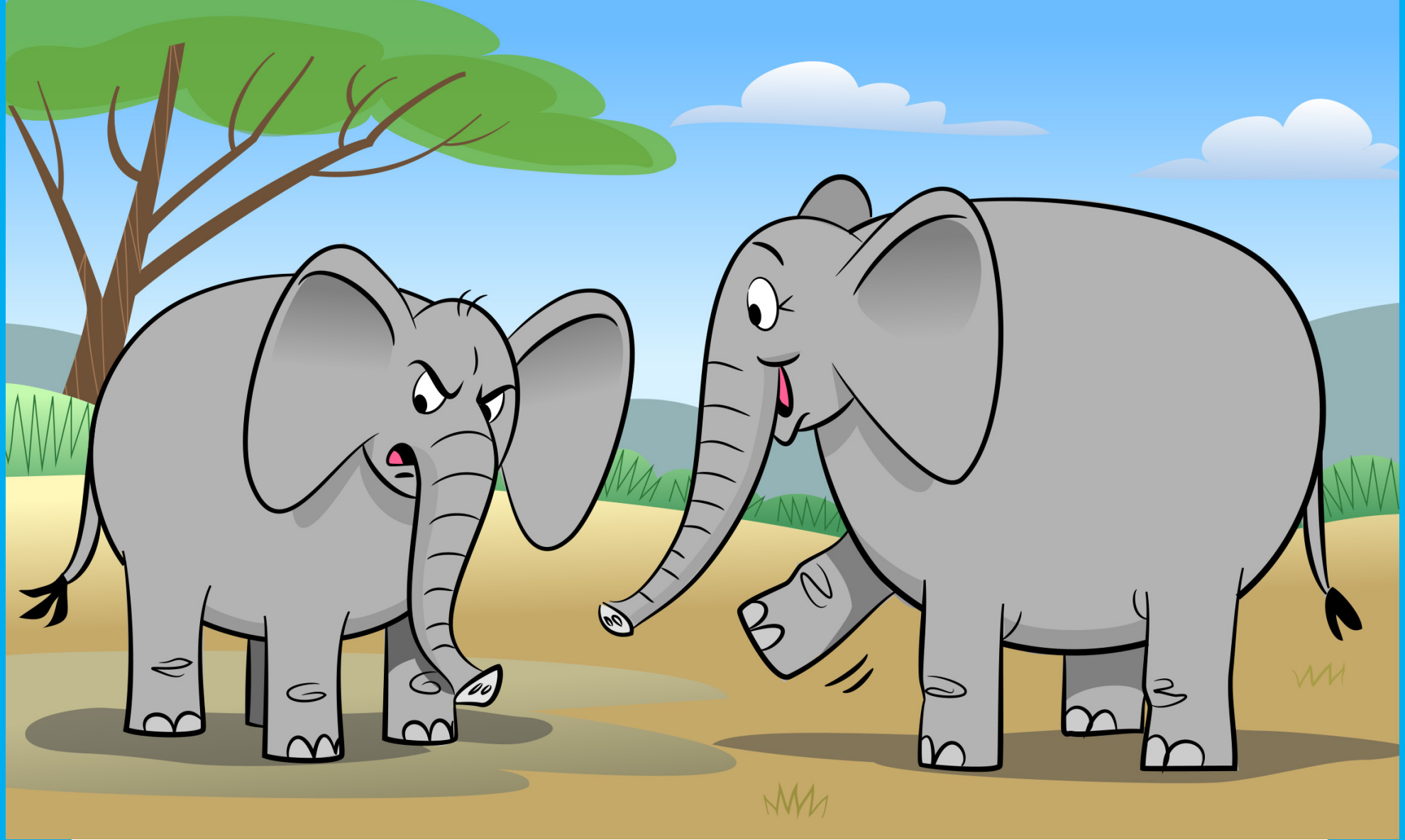
Tolongo was growing steadily by the day. When he was first born he had to learn how to stand up and walk, but now he was learning to use his trunk to do interesting things. He was learning to pick up heavy objects with his trunk, as well as spray water on himself when he got hot, not to mention drinking, eating and all of the other necessary things in an elephant's life.



He loved to bathe in the waterhole while talking to his hippopotamus friend Ringo. The days were hot and it was always refreshing to cool off in the water. But Tolongo couldn't stay in the water all day, as he had to work hard to learn all about how to be a good elephant.

Tolongo grew into a strong elephant, but

sometimes he was too self-confident and proud. He began to think that he could do everything on his own and that he didn't need anyone else to help him. It was true, he could often do things on his own, as he was a very capable elephant, but he learned one day that sometimes things are better done together.

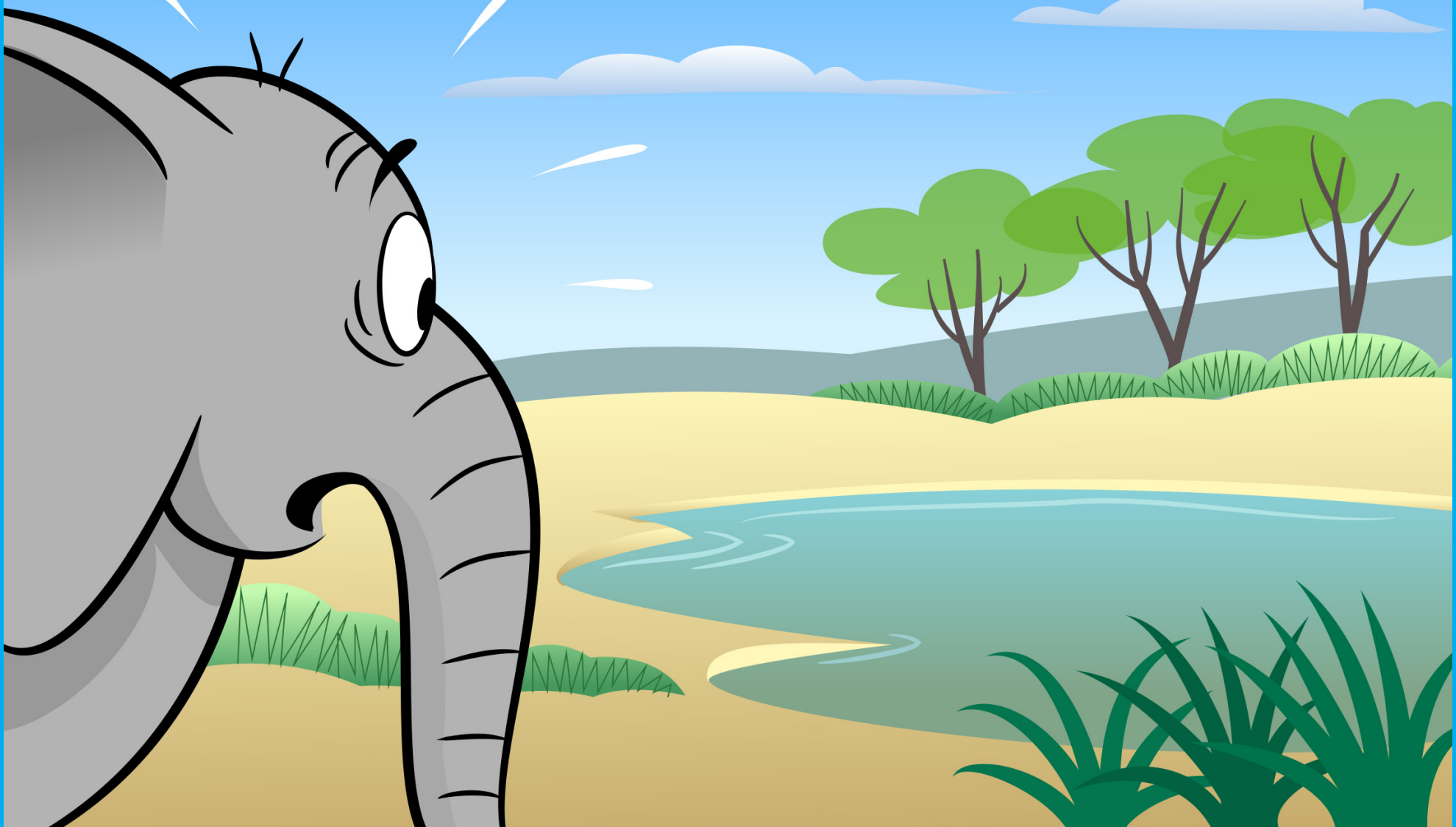


“Good morning, Tolongo,” said Kalana, his mother. “Did you sleep well last night?” “I did, thank you,” he replied.

“What would you think about helping your friend, Matali, with his chores today?” Mother asked. Matali was one of the other young elephants in their herd, and the two of them often

didn’t get along with each other. They were always trying to be better than the other; and they wanted all the other elephants in their herd to know who was the superior elephant—the strongest and the wisest.

“Why can’t he do his jobs on his own?” Tolongo whined.

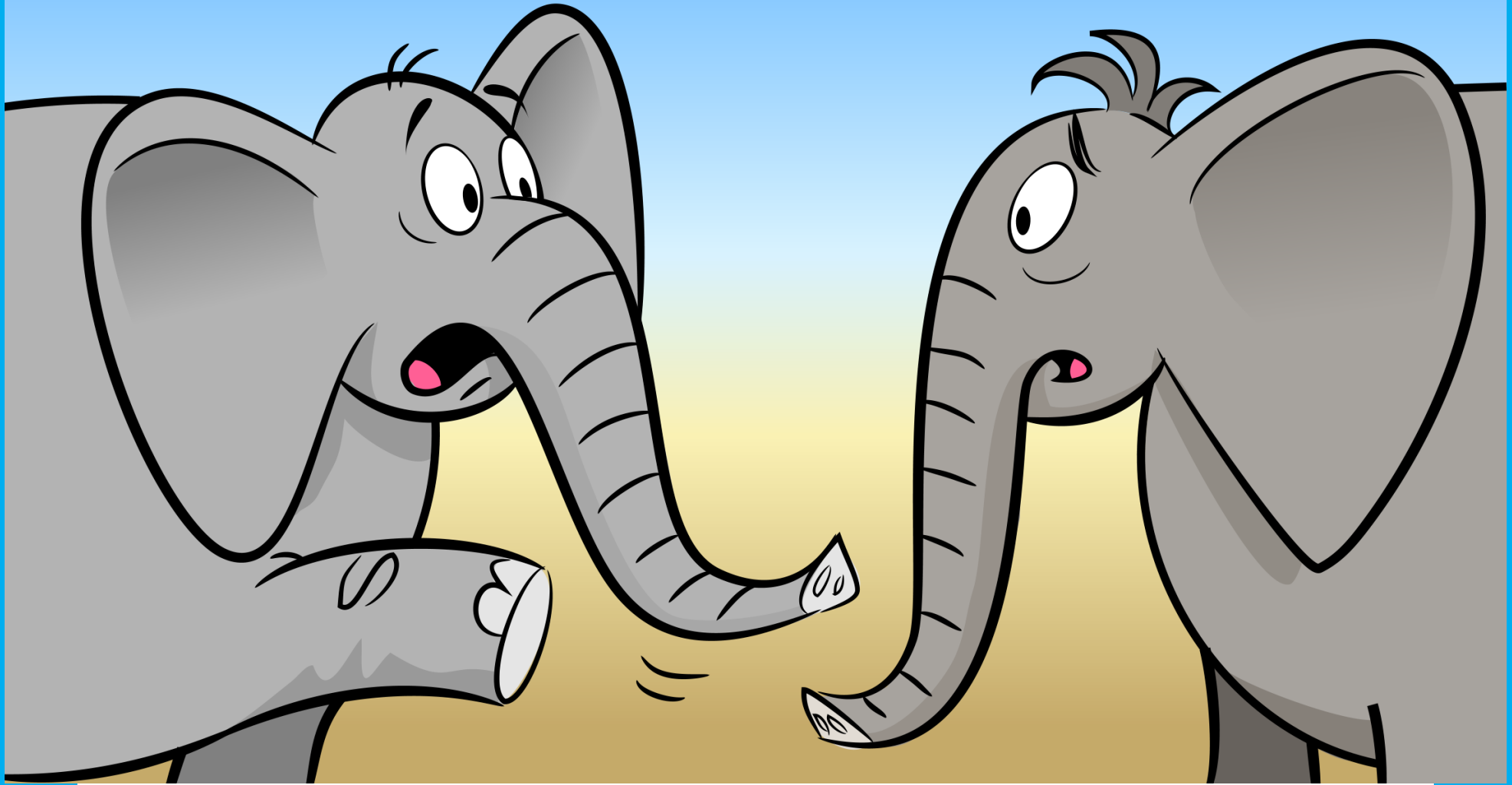


“Well, he usually does, but today his mother has asked if you would help Matali pull down some of the large branches for the younger elephants to feed upon. It’s a big job and the loads will be heavy. We just thought it would be nice if you two could work together and get the job done in half the time,” Kalana answered.

“Oh, all right, if I have to help him, I will. But first let me go down to the waterhole and take a swim with

Ringo,” Tolongo said with a tone of irritation in his voice. “I’ll see you later, Mother,” he called back as he swiftly headed off in the direction of the waterhole.

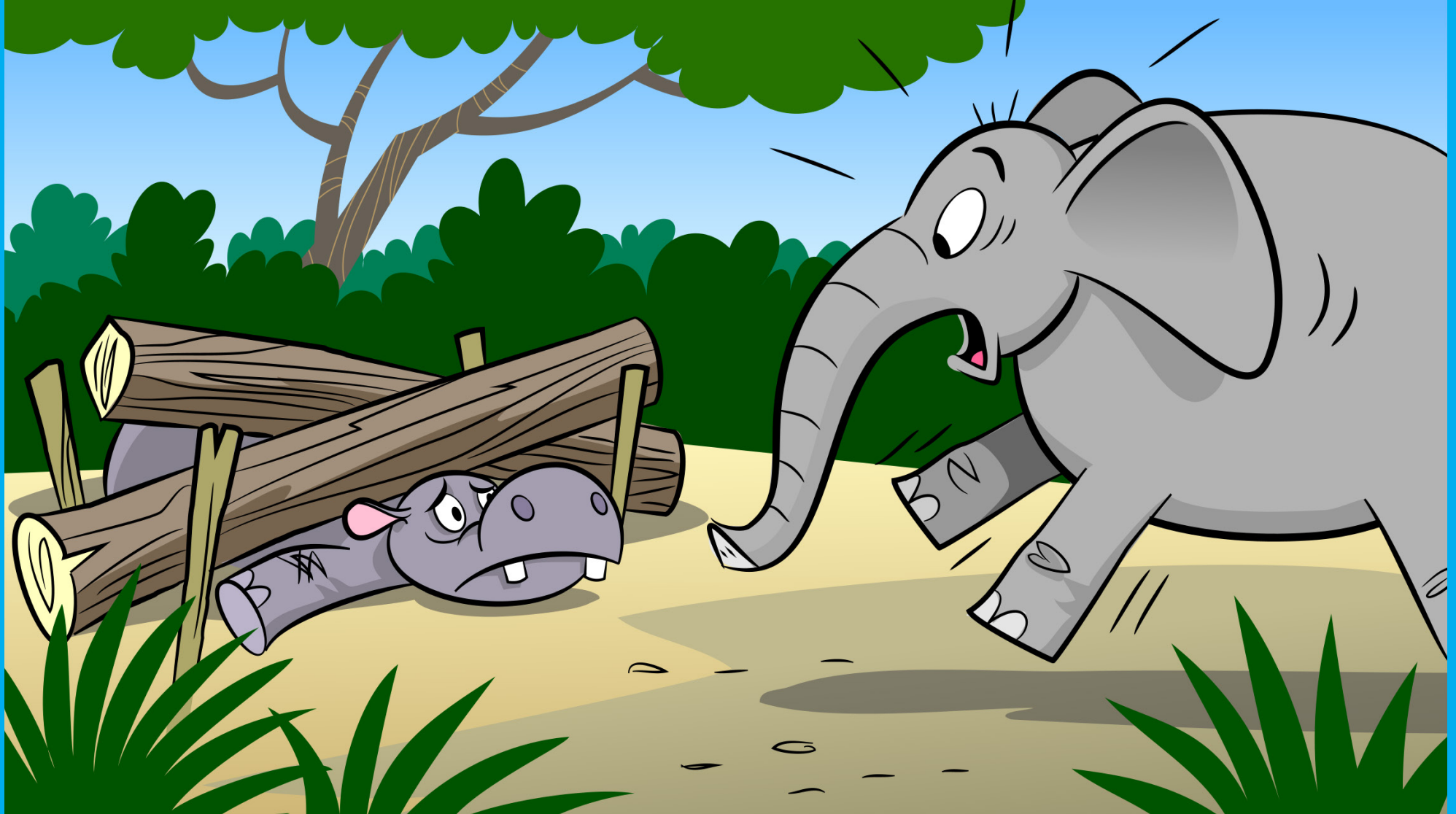
Upon arriving, he discovered that Ringo was nowhere to be seen. *What could have become of him?* Tolongo wondered. *He’s always here every morning, I never miss seeing him. He must be hurt. I’ll have to go and look for him to see if there’s anything I can do.*



Maybe Matali has seen him. Since he has explored different parts of the area that I've never been to, maybe he'd want to come with me to see if we can find him.

Tolongo quickly went back to the herd, found Matali, told him of the emergency, and asked him if he'd have the time to come with him to look for

Ringo. "I'd be glad to help," Matali said. "He can't be far, he never goes very far. Let's get to business right away. You go that way and I'll go this way, and we'll end up meeting each other somewhere in the middle. If you meet up with him and he's hurt, then stay with him until I meet up with you. I'll do the same if I find him first."



The two young elephants set out on their expedition to find Ringo. It wasn't long before Tolongo came upon the poor hippopotamus. There he was, caught in a poacher's trap; he couldn't move. He was a sad sight to behold, poor Ringo. Tolongo felt so sorry for him and wished that there was something they could do.

"How long have you been here, good friend?" he asked.

"I was peacefully wandering around last night, looking for some food, when suddenly I found myself in this trap. I've been here for quite a few hours now and don't know what to do. I'm hungry, I'm hot, I'm thirsty, I'm not as young as I used to be, and I'm just dying to get out from under this. Can you help me, good friend?"

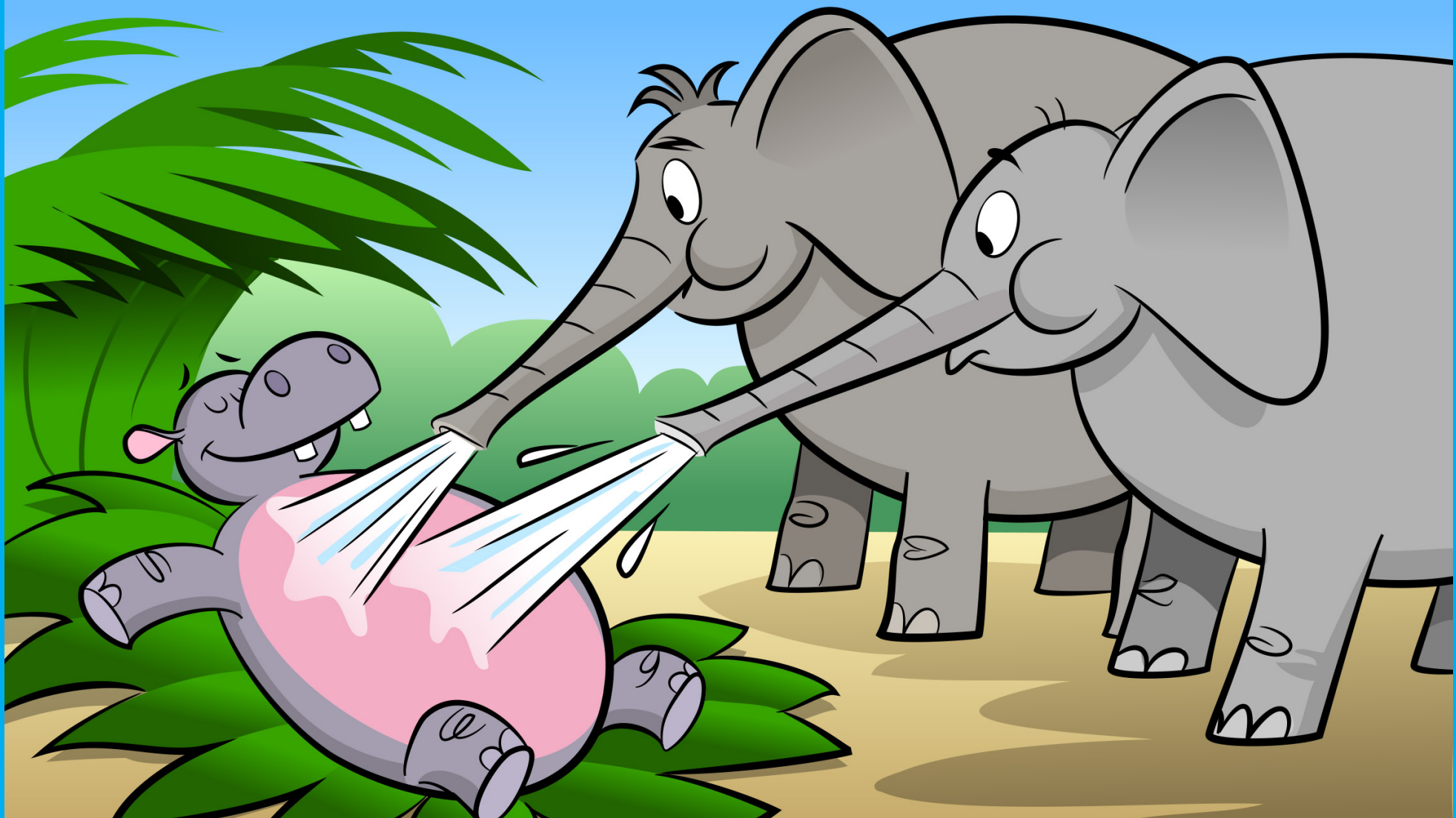


Tolongo wrapped his trunk around one of the logs that formed the trap and pulled with all of his might. It moved slightly, but he just wasn't strong enough to move it on his own.

How foolish of me to think that I can do everything on my own. I now see that there are times when we all need each other. There are some things that we elephants have to do together. I have been so proud to think that I don't need anyone's

help, and that others shouldn't need my help either, but I now see that I am helpless on my own. I hope Matali gets here soon, and together I hope that we'll be able to move this heavy log.

As soon as those thoughts left his head, he looked up, and to his happiness saw Matali coming in his direction. Within seconds he was at Tolongo's side, and together, with all of their strength, they moved the logs away and freed Ringo.



“Thank you!” exclaimed Ringo. “I’m so thankful that I have such good friends as you; thank you for finding me and helping me—together!”

Ringo had to rest for quite a few days. One of his legs had been hurt and had to heal. During that time the two new friends—Matali and Tolongo—were by his side the entire time. They’d

bring him food, and even fill up their trunks with water to give him a bath. They both learned a valuable lesson that day. They learned that they could get so much more accomplished when they worked together. They made one of the greatest discoveries of all: they discovered that they needed each other.