The Silent Pool

A STORY BY ARKEDELIC

BUILDING BEAUTIFUL INSIDE

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The jungle was loud that morning.
Birds screeched, monkeys chattered,
even the cicadas buzzed in noisy rhythm.

But one place stayed quiet:
the pool hidden deep among the reeds.

Milo the elephant calf stood at its edge,
trunk curled tight. His wide eyes stared at
the still water.

Plip. Plop.

Only a few drops fell from the trees above.

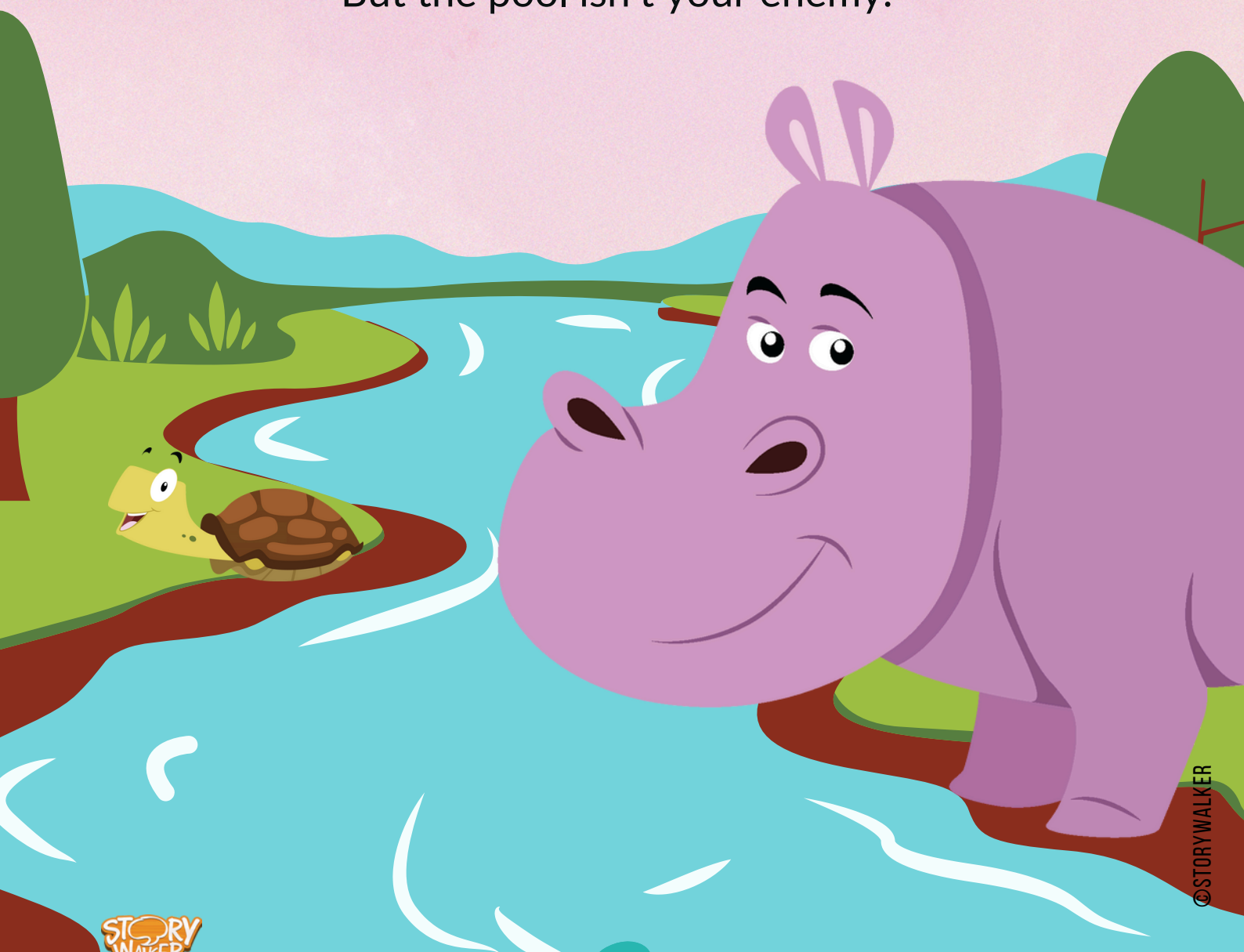
Mumbo, the great hippo guardian, waded nearby,
half his body sunk in the cool shallows.

“Come in, Milo,” he rumbled gently.
“The water is safe.”

But Milo shook his head, ears flapping nervously.
“No. Last time...I slipped. I thought I would drown.”
His little legs trembled. “I don’t want to go in again.”

Emily the tortoise ambled slowly to his side, her shell
catching the sun. “You’re shaking like a leaf, little one.”

She lifted her wrinkled face kindly.
“But the pool isn’t your enemy.”

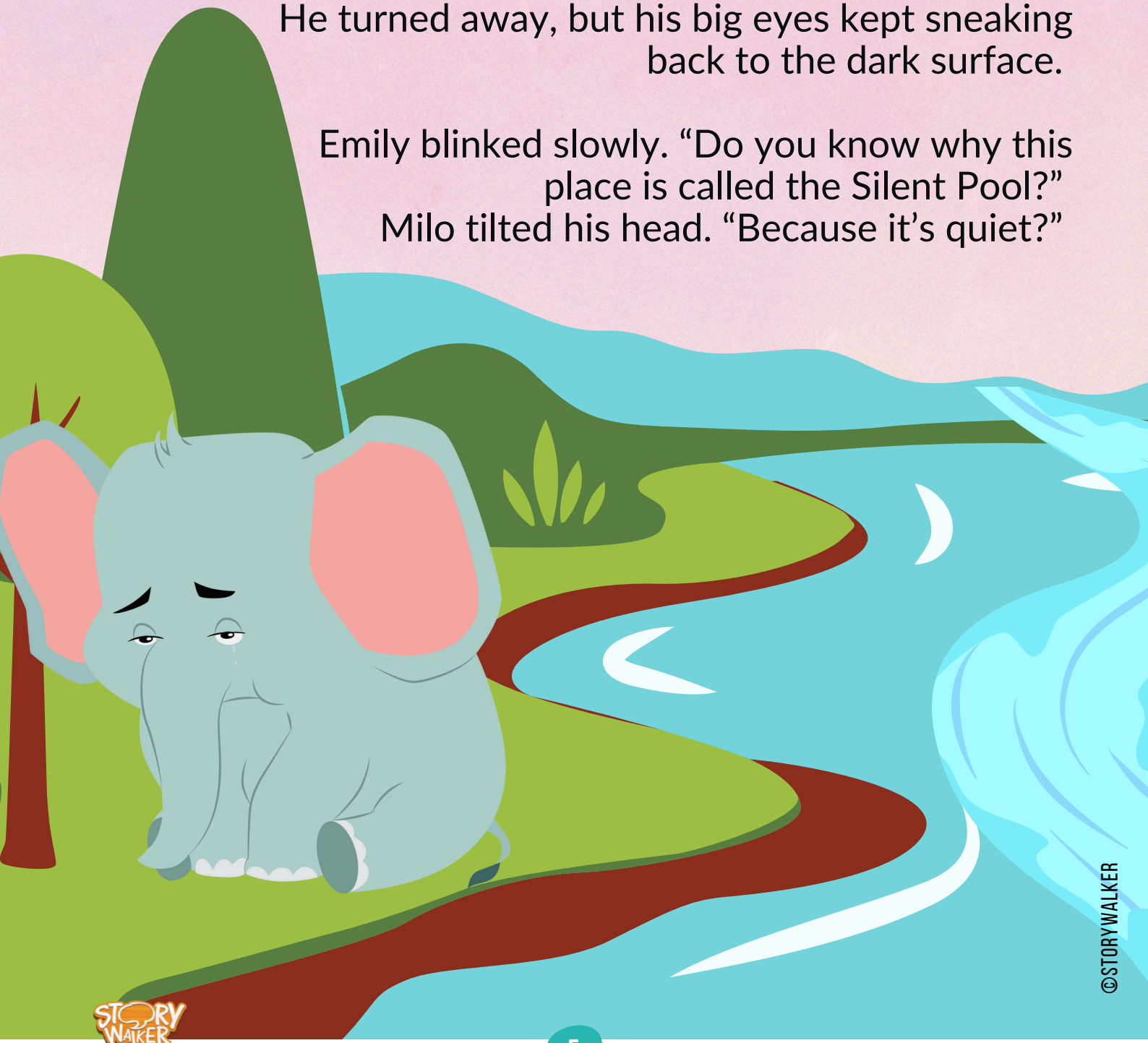


Milo stamped a foot. Thud! “It was scary!
Everyone laughed when I splashed.
And the fish touched my leg!”
His trunk wobbled as he squealed.

Mumbo snorted, sending ripples across the surface. “Rules keep you safe in water. If you follow them, the pool will never harm you.”
His voice was steady, like the earth itself.

Milo pouted. “Rules, rules, rules. Always rules!”
He turned away, but his big eyes kept sneaking back to the dark surface.

Emily blinked slowly. “Do you know why this place is called the Silent Pool?”
Milo tilted his head. “Because it’s quiet?”



“No,” Emily whispered.

“Long ago, when fire swept across the grasslands, many animals ran here. The pool gave them shelter. They hid in the water, and the fire passed. The silence after saved their lives.” Her eyes shone.

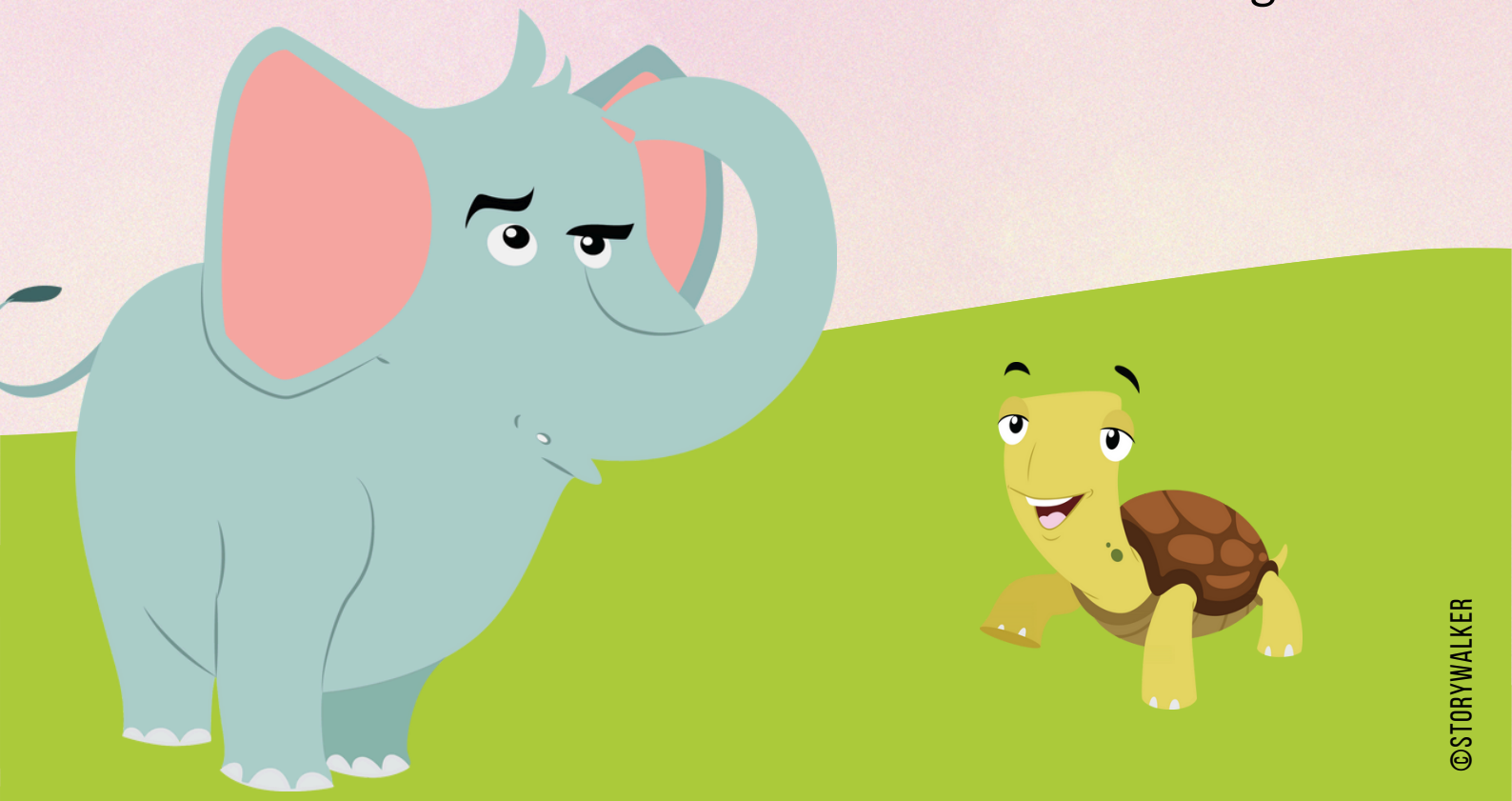
“This water has history. It remembers.”

Milo’s ears drooped. “Really?”

“Really,” Emily said, her voice like leaves brushing stone.

The calf’s fear shifted into curiosity, but only for a moment. A dragonfly skimmed the surface with a sharp zzzip!

Milo squealed and leapt back. “See! Even insects attack!” Mumbo let out a deep chuckle, bubbles rising around his broad head. “That’s no attack. That’s life buzzing.”



Then his voice grew firm.
“Milo, rules: Step carefully. Don’t rush.
Keep your trunk up. Stay near me.
Break these rules, and yes—you’ll slip.
Follow them, and the pool will hold
you steady.”

Milo shuffled his feet.
He wanted to believe.
But the memory of falling still stung.
His heart thumped, his little body torn between
fear and trust.

Emily stretched out her neck toward him.
“Courage isn’t forgetting fear.
It’s stepping forward even while afraid.
The pool is waiting to be your friend again.”

The tortoise's words settled softly, not sharp, not heavy — like a blanket draped across Milo's back.

He took a shaky breath.

Mumbo moved closer, his massive form like a wall of safety. "With me beside you, you will not fall."

Milo touched the edge with one hoof. Squelch.

The mud clung, cool. He lifted his trunk high.

Step by step, he waded in until the water touched his knees. The pool held him. The ripples danced around his legs. Nothing grabbed him. Nothing pulled him under.

Milo's eyes widened. "It feels...nice."
"Good," Mumbo rumbled. "Now breathe."

A fish darted past with a silvery flash. Milo squeaked, almost jumping, but then laughed nervously. "It tickled!"

Emily's old eyes softened.
"The pool has forgiven you.
And you have forgiven yourself."

Milo splashed his trunk, sending an arc of water sparkling into the air. "I did it! I'm not scared!"

His voice rang across the jungle.

Mumbo gave a proud snort.
“Remember, Milo: safety lives in listening to rules.”

Emily added, “And respect grows when you know the stories of places that came before you.”

Milo nodded, chest swelling.
“The Silent Pool saved lives. And now it saved me too.”

The pool shimmered quietly, holding not only water but memory, rules, and the courage of one small calf who had found his way back.

THE END

ACTIVITY

The Pool of Courage

YOU'LL NEED:

- A large bowl, tub, or small kiddie pool
- Floating objects like leaves, petals, bottle caps, or paper boats
- A few pebbles or marbles (for "the deep")
- A towel and a calm, quiet space (balcony, courtyard, or classroom corner)

HOW TO DO IT:

1. Fill the bowl or tub halfway with water — this is your "Silent Pool."

2. Tell your child that this pool has only one rule: Step slowly, listen to the water, and keep your hand steady.

3. Drop a few floating items in. Ask your child to gently move them with a straw, stick, or their finger — without splashing.

ACTIVITY

The Pool of Courage

4. Add a “story moment”: explain that each floating leaf represents a fear they once had — maybe falling, darkness, loud noises. Each time they move a leaf safely to the edge, they’re “guiding their fear to calm.”

5. Once all the leaves are gathered, have them take a deep breath, watching the water settle again — quiet, still, and safe.

What it builds:
This activity helps children reconnect calm with courage. By learning to move slowly, follow a small rule, and handle the water carefully, they recreate Milo’s journey from fear to confidence. It also builds sensory awareness and mindfulness — a gentle, peaceful way to show that control and safety often come through patience and steady effort.

5 FUN FACTS

About Secrets of Small Waters — Ponds, Pools, and Quiet Places

Little Worlds of Life

Even the tiniest pond can hold hundreds of living things — frogs, tadpoles, beetles, snails, fish, and plants. Some are so small they can only be seen through a microscope.

Imagine a whole hidden city under the water, busy even when everything above looks still!

The Water That Doesn't Flow

Unlike rivers or streams, pools and ponds stay mostly in one place. Because the water doesn't rush, it becomes a perfect nursery for eggs, tiny insects, and young fish to grow safely.

Imagine a quiet cradle where baby creatures learn to swim before facing the world!

Nature's Mirrors

When the air is still, the surface of a pool can reflect trees, clouds, and even the stars at night. Ancient people often called them "sky mirrors."

Imagine bending down to drink and seeing another world staring back at you!

5 FUN FACTS

About Secrets of Small Waters — Ponds, Pools, and Quiet Places

Rain's Resting Place

Many small pools begin as simple rain puddles that collect in low ground. Over time, leaves, soil, and seeds turn them into miniature ecosystems filled with life.
Imagine how one rainy day can give birth to a tiny jungle of its own!

Water that Remembers

In some cultures, still water is seen as sacred because it "remembers" — it holds reflections, cools the land, and quietly shelters life during harsh seasons.
Imagine a pool that keeps the stories of everyone who's ever looked into it!

The Quiet Lake

Complete the Story

When Rhea's family went camping, everyone rushed toward the sparkling lake — everyone except her. She stood far back, remembering the time she'd slipped in a pool at school.

"Go on!" her brother called. "The water's shallow!"
But Rhea shook her head, clutching her towel tight.

Her father walked over and placed a smooth pebble in her hand. "See this?" he said. "It was shaped by the lake — not in a day, but slowly, safely." He crouched down.

"How about we let the water touch just the stone first?"

Rhea knelt, her heart thumping. She dipped the pebble in. Ripples spread gently, and the cool touch felt kinder than she remembered.

She smiled a little and whispered,
"Maybe the water just wanted to say hello."

What happens next?

- Does Rhea find the courage to step in and join her brother?
- Does she keep the pebble as a reminder of her first brave step?
- Or does she discover something beautiful waiting under the water's surface?

See you next Monday
with another interesting story!

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