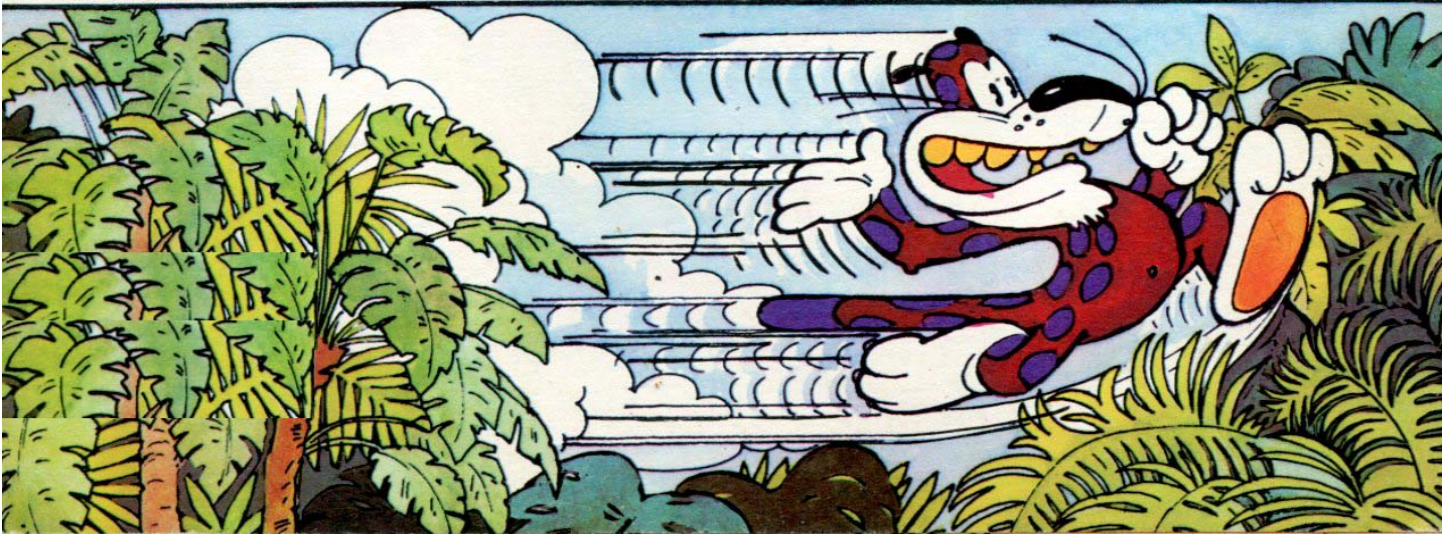
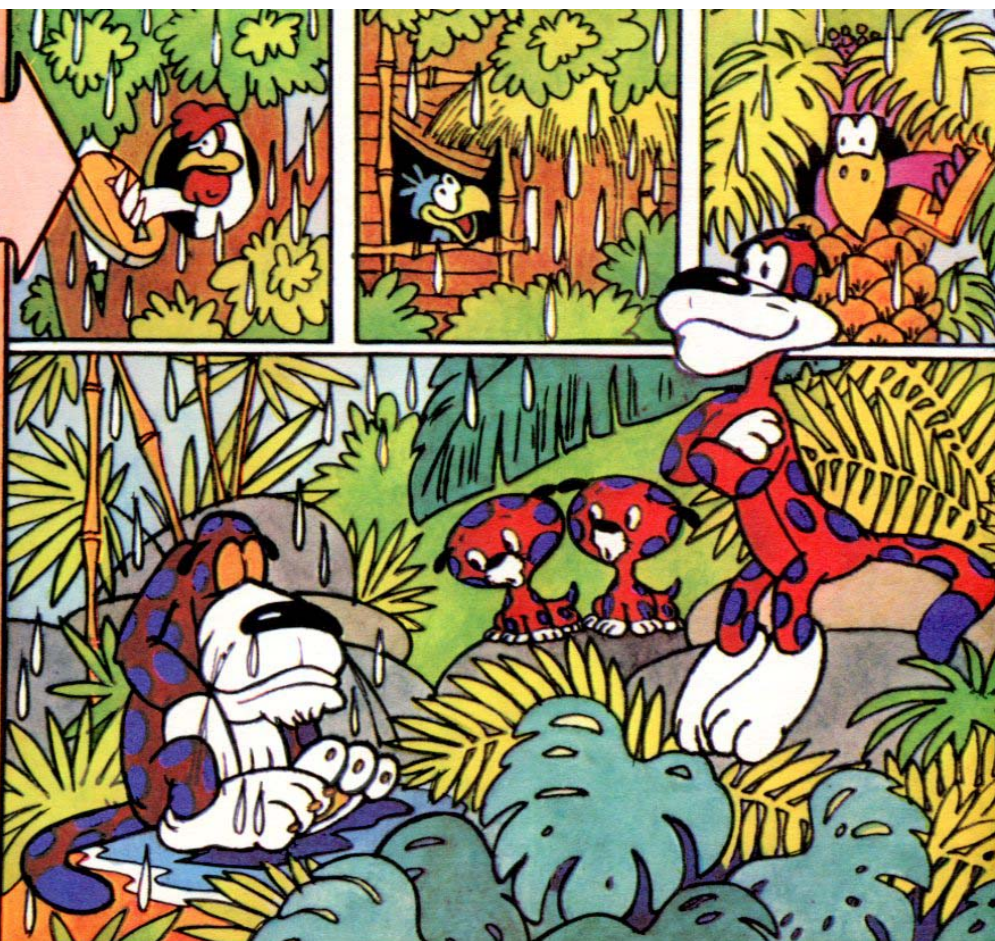
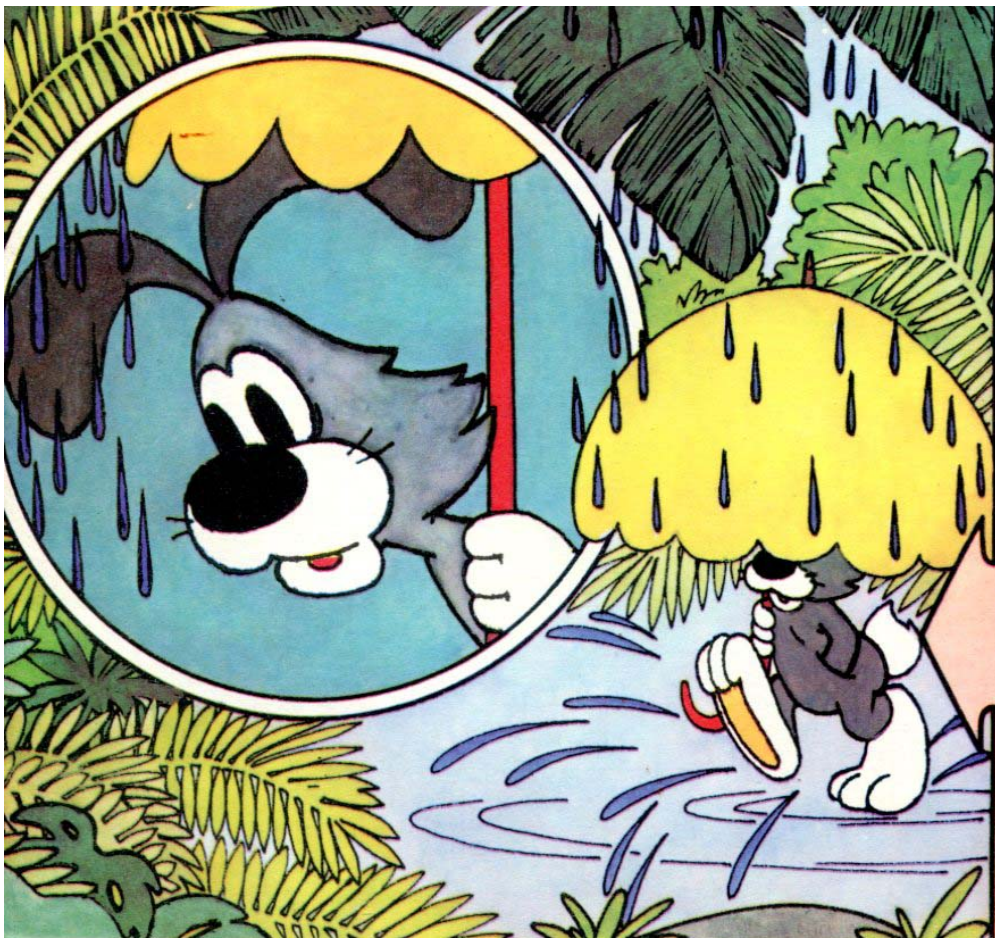


TAKE IT EASY, LEOPARD!



When it rains in the jungle it is a cheerless place to be in. All the animals hide in their holes and dens. Only the terrible Leopard's family stays in the open, soaking in the rain.

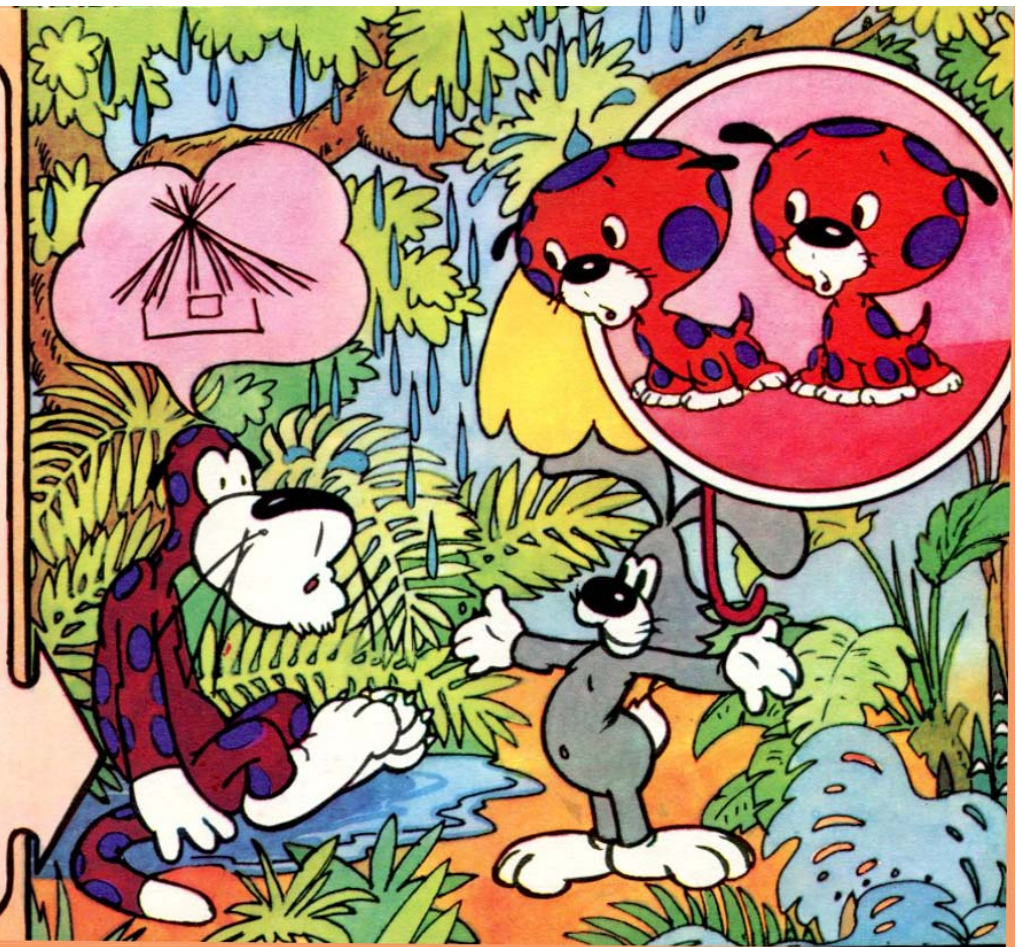


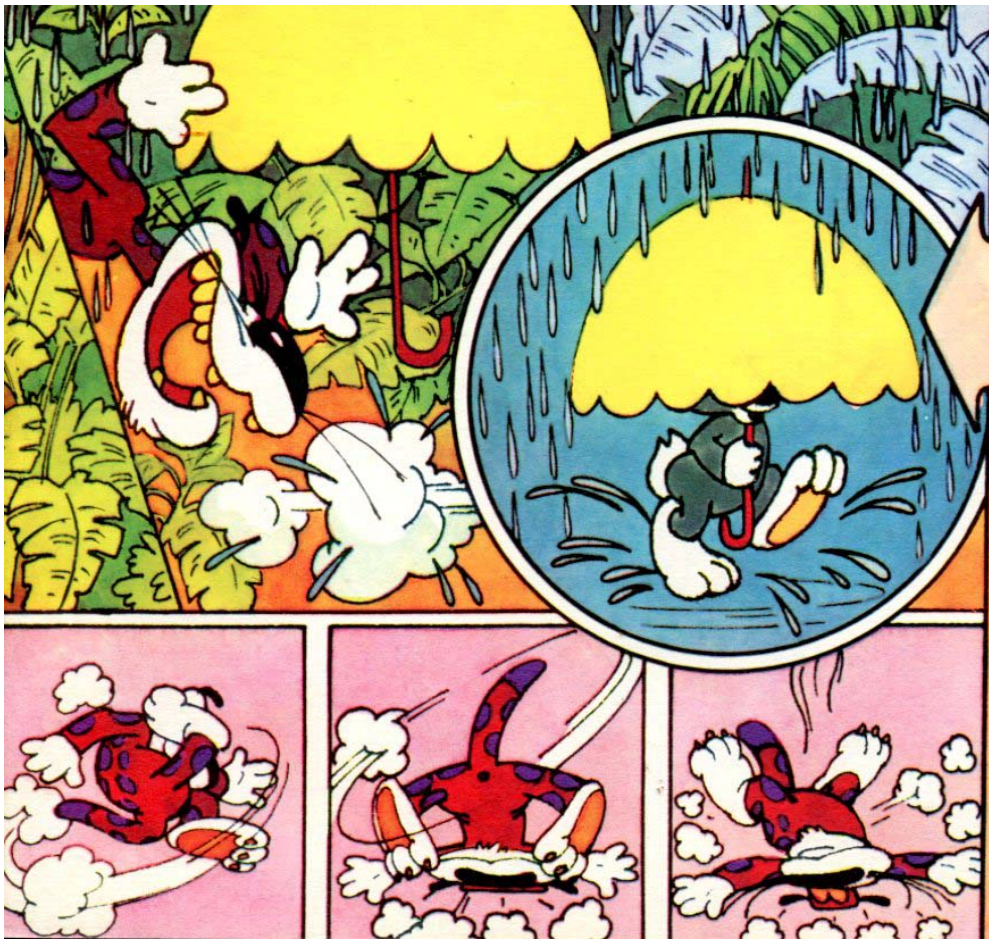


Bunny was walking by minding his own business. He saw little leopard cubs soaked to the skin and clinging to their mother. He felt sorry for them and shook his head.

"It's no good for kids to grow up in the open," said Bunny. "You should build them a house."

And he explained how easy it is to build a house and how nice it would be for the little ones.

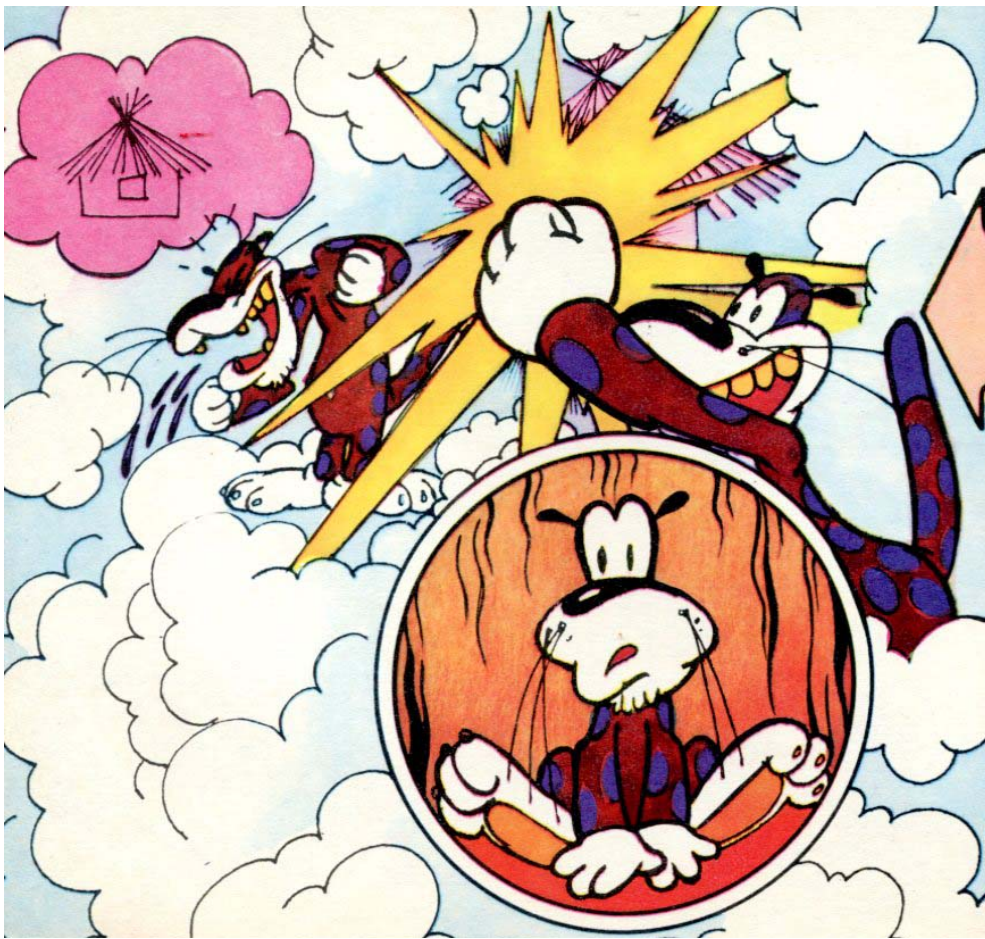




"That's none of your business," growled the ill-bred Leopard, and he tried to bash him one but missed and landed sprawled in a puddle.

"Bunny's right," interfered Mother Leopard. "You must build a hut. Why should our children run around like homeless waifs? Yes, you ought to build them a house."

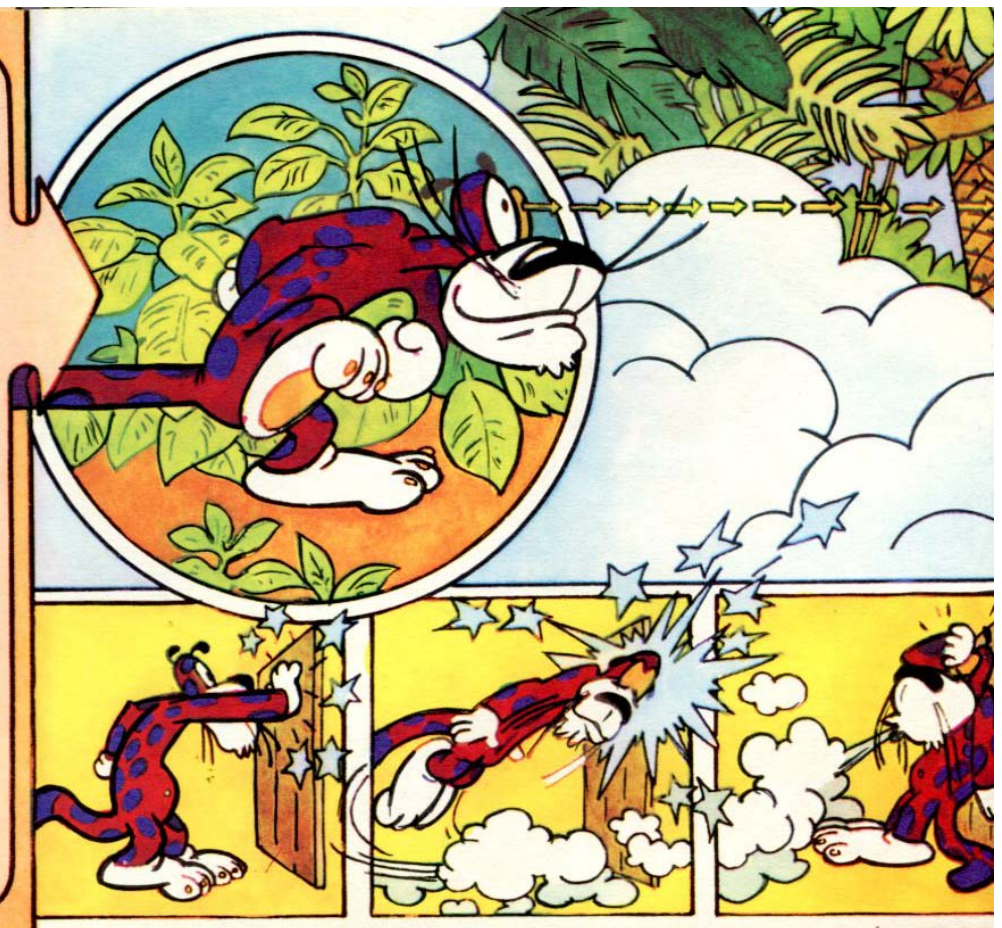


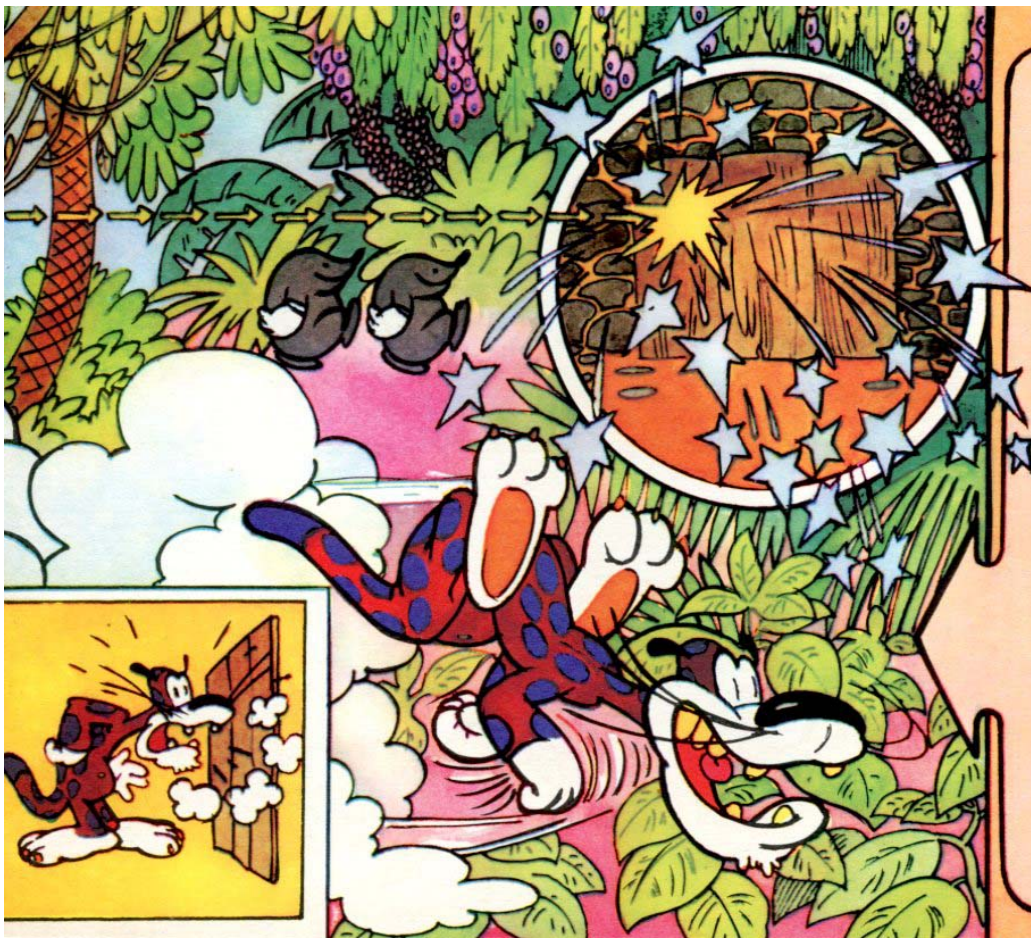


But Leopard was very lazy. So he decided to steal a hut rather than build his own. He knew that hardly anyone would dare resist him. There were plenty of huts in the forest – in the trees, underground, and in the thick shrubbery.

Leopard looked around and saw a small stone house behind the trees. It stood under palms with beautiful flowers all around it. It looked very pretty and comfortable.

"Excellent," thought Leopard. "Just the thing we need."

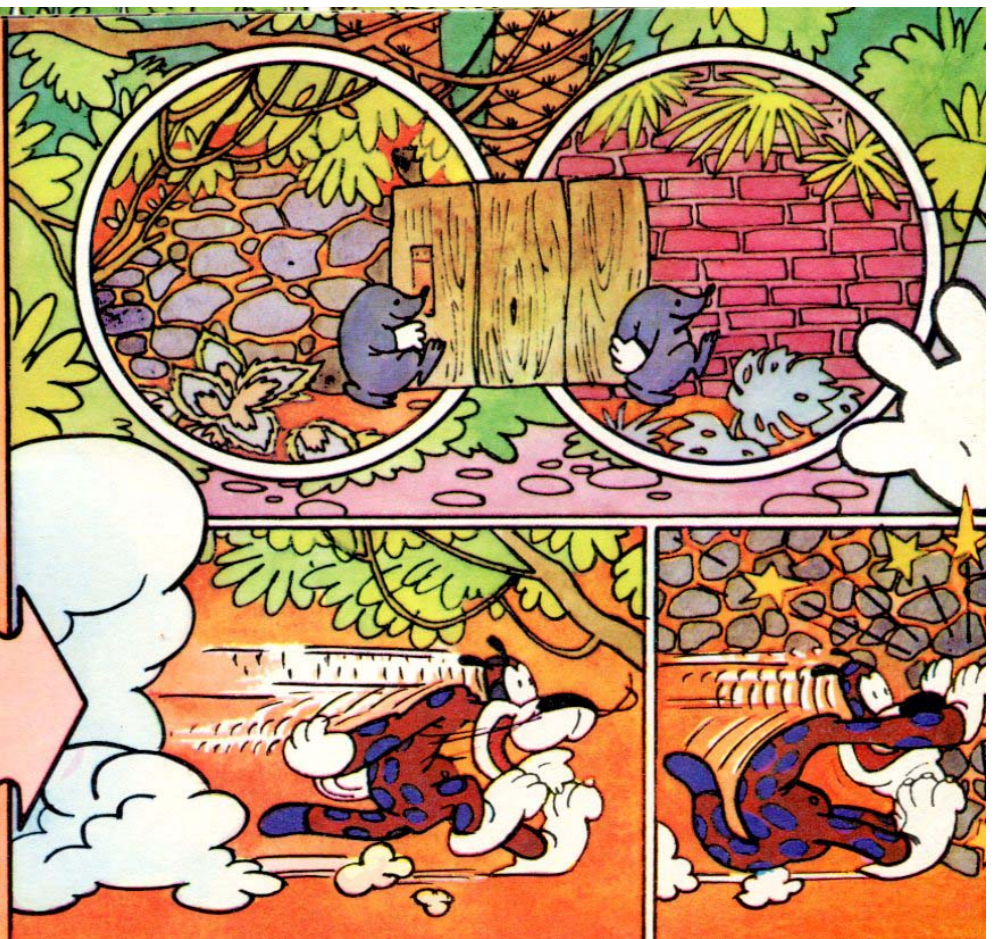




Without a second thought
he ran and banged at the door
with all his might.

"Hey! Who's in there? Get
out of my house!"

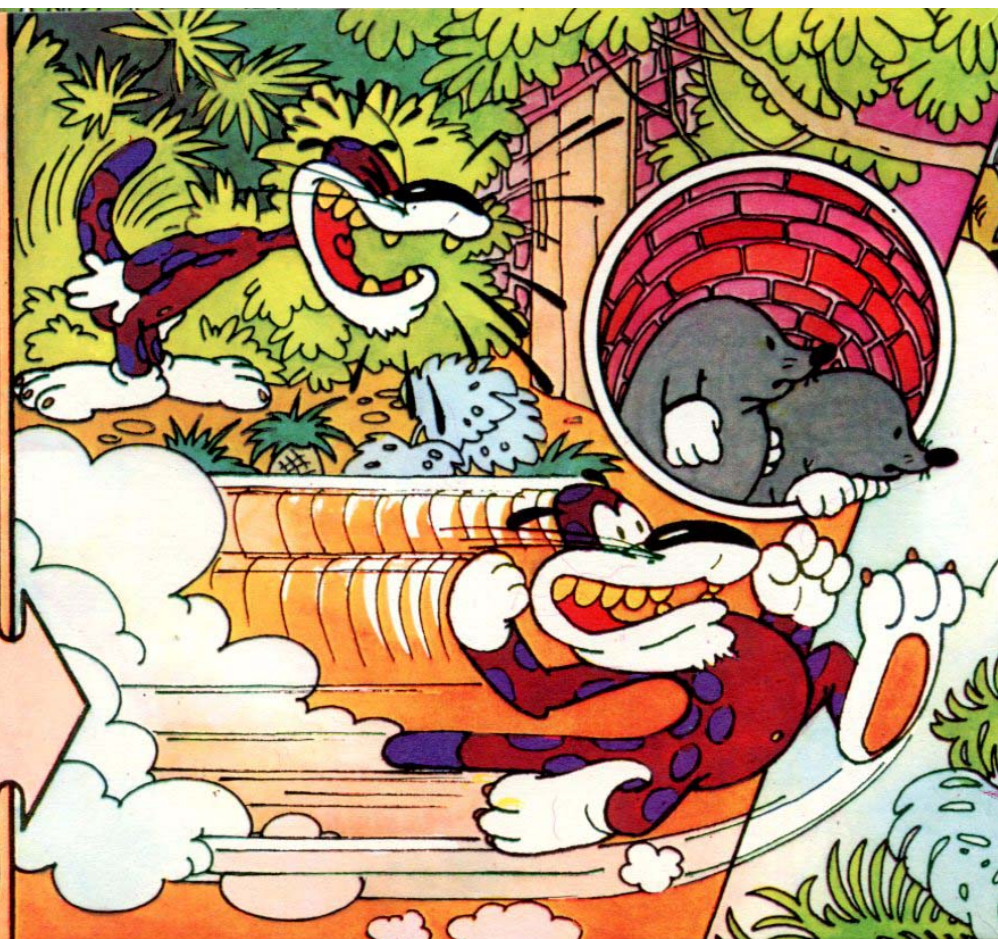
That house had been built by moles who are known as very diligent and sound builders. Above ground was only the roof and part of the walls. Most of it was underground with numerous long tunnels and crossings leading to store-rooms and larders.





Leopard didn't know about them and he couldn't care less. He relied on his strength. He pushed the door stubbornly, it creaked but didn't budge.

This made Leopard even more angry. He took a run and...





Bang!

The boards broke to pieces, the beams cracked. The frightened moles dived into one of the tunnels and watched in amazement what was going on.

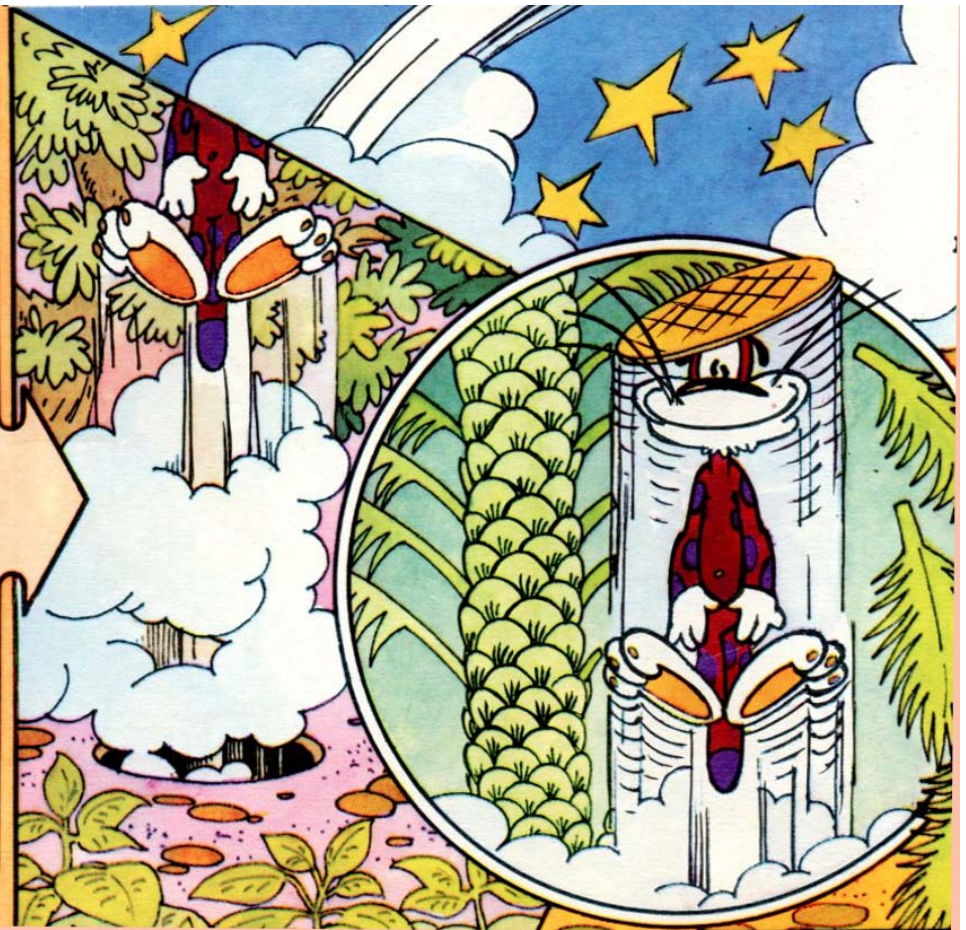
Leopard fell into the underground well. He saw stars as he fell. He covered his head with his paws and regretted that he hadn't thought twice before making a fool of himself.

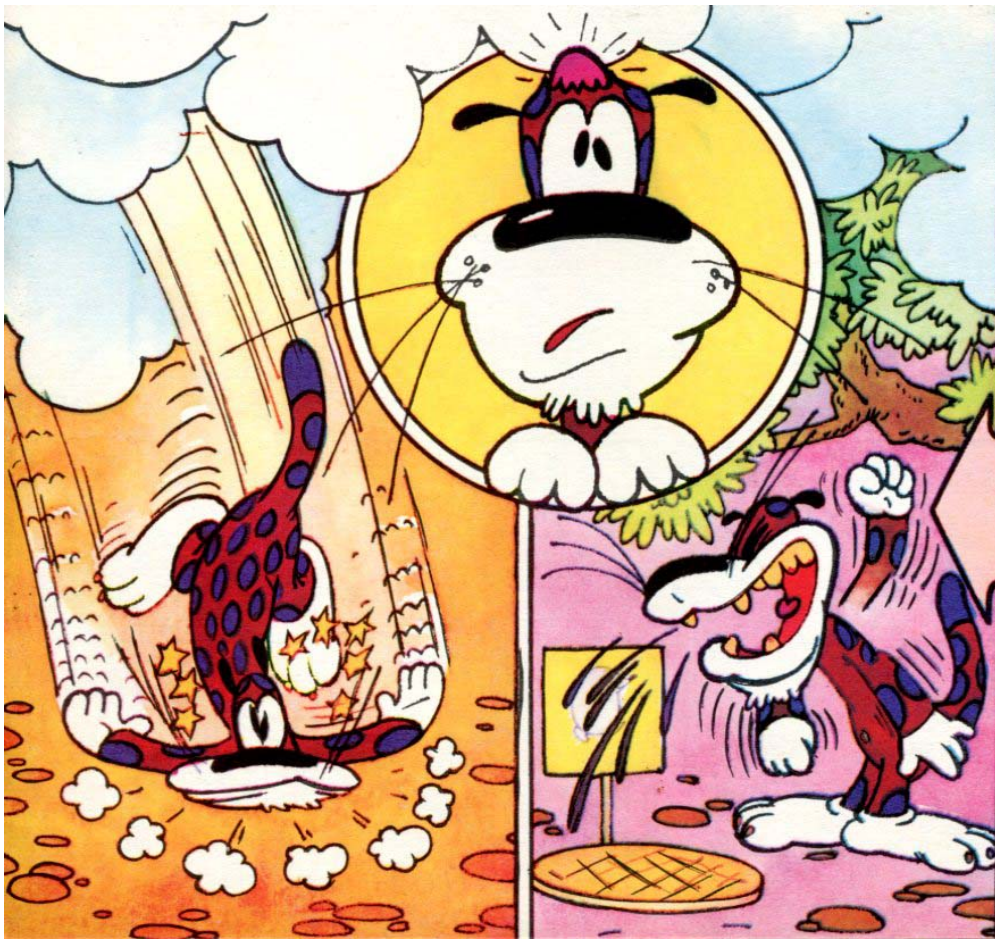




Leopard kept on falling down the tunnels, whining like a puppy, his eyes wide open with fear. He bumped against the walls as he turned, he bruised and scratched himself against the bricks, but he couldn't stop.

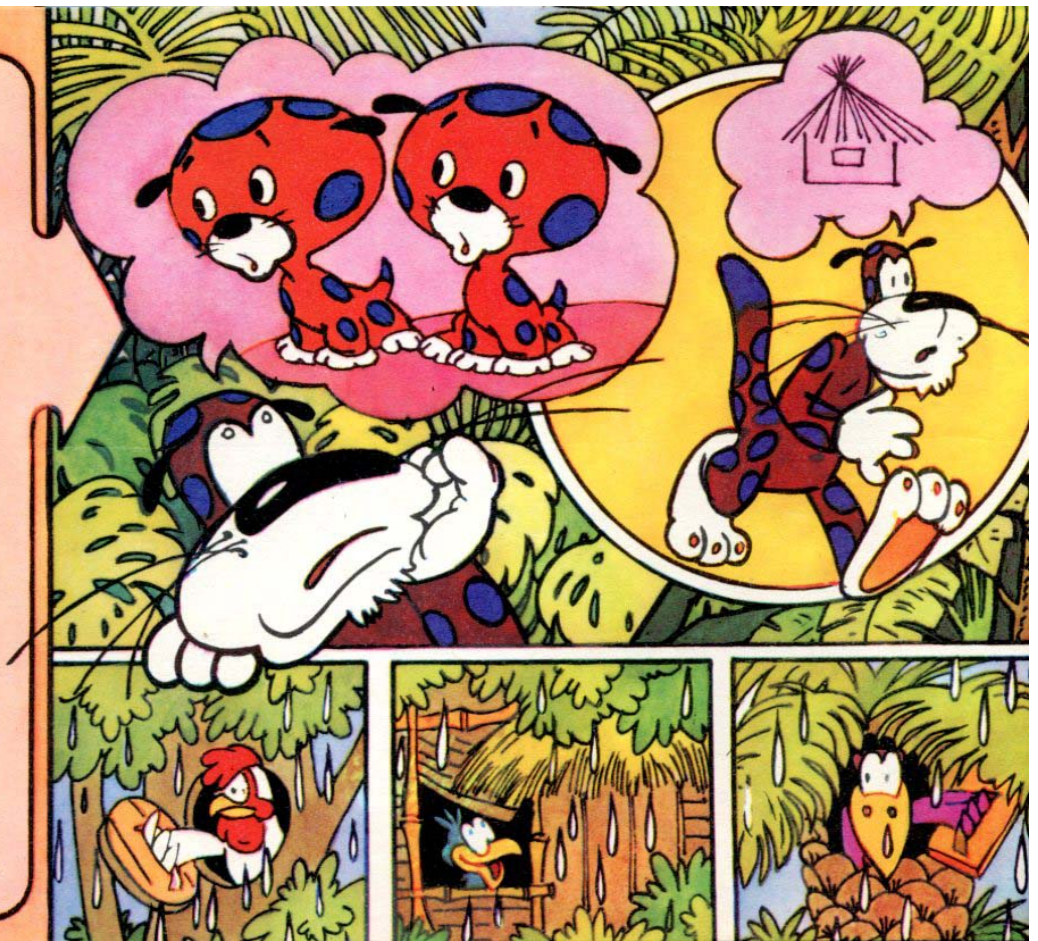
Finally, Leopard crashed head first through a cast iron cover, catapulted outside, and flew up above the palm trees. The rain had stopped and the sky was blue. But everything went black before Leopard's eyes.

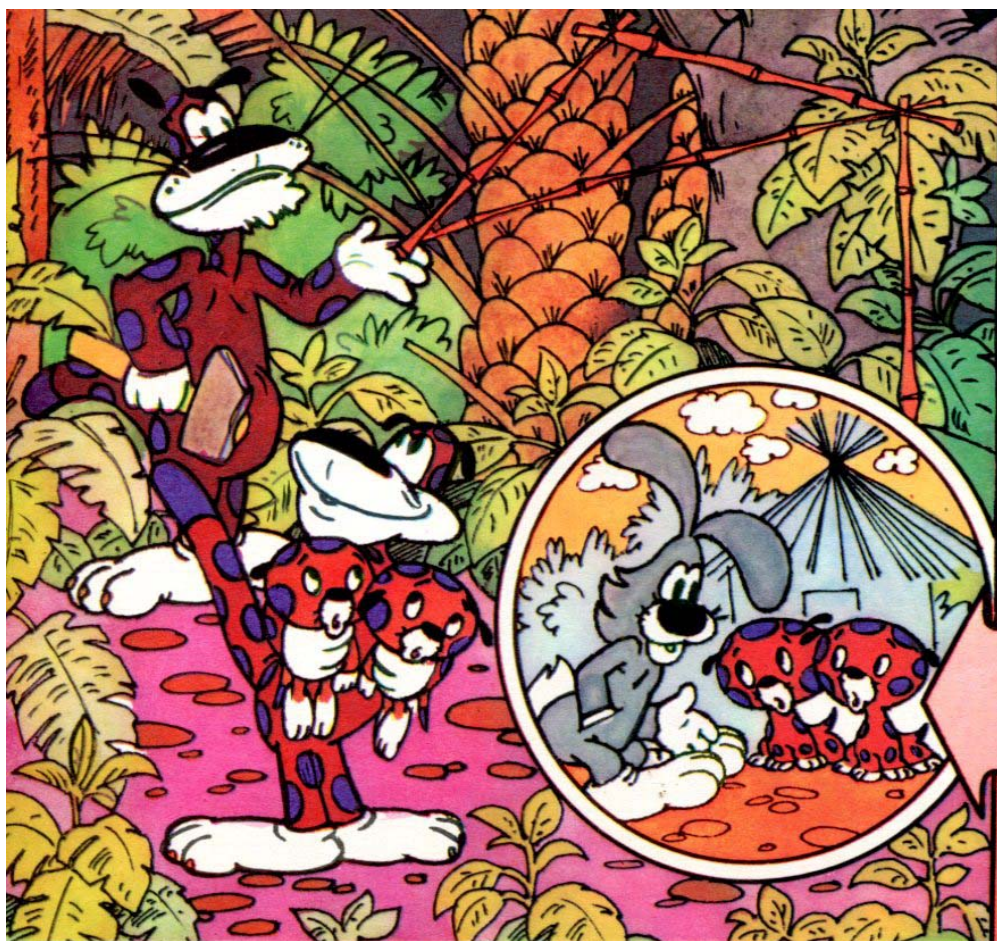




Leopard landed, shook himself and growled furiously with pain. There was a bump on his head and his skin was all dirty and rumped. He looked very unhappy.

It was a good lesson for Leopard. On his way back home he studied how other animals' homes were built, and tried to figure out what sort of house he'd build for his children.



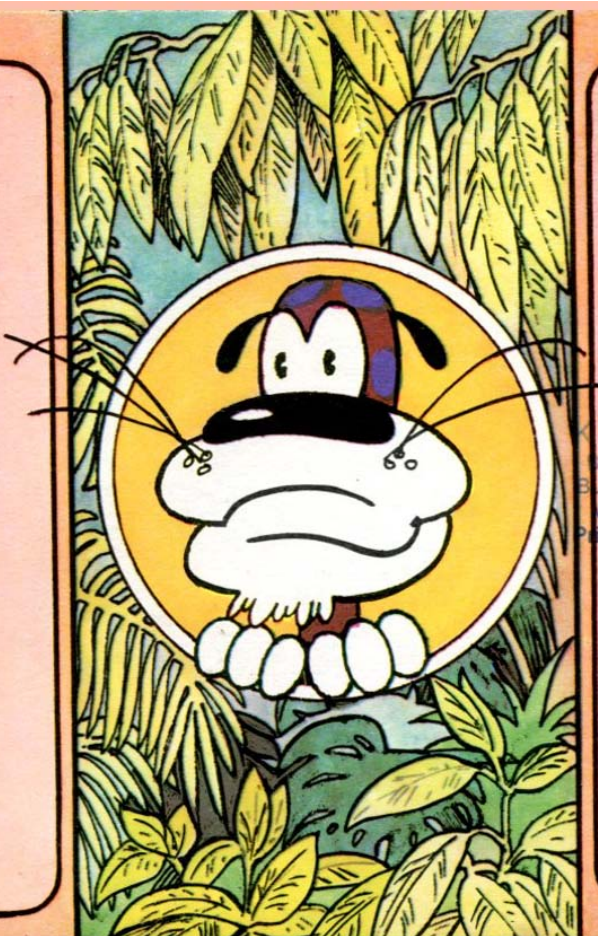


"Let's make a house out of bamboo and a roof out of palm leaves," Leopard suggested.

While they were building their house, their neighbour Bunny came along.

"Strength is not as good as brains," he observed.

"There's nothing better or prettier than a house built with one's own hands," thought Leopard.



НЕ СПЕШИ, ЛЕОПАРД!
На английском языке

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