

Three Classic Franklin Stories

Franklin Wants a Pet



Franklin's Blanket



Franklin's School Play



Paulette Bourgeois • Brenda Clark



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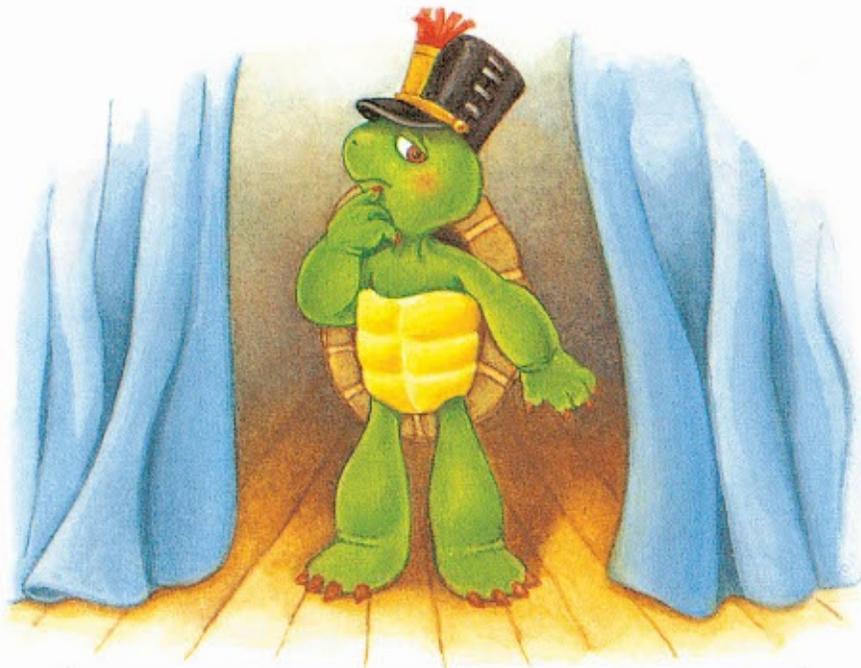
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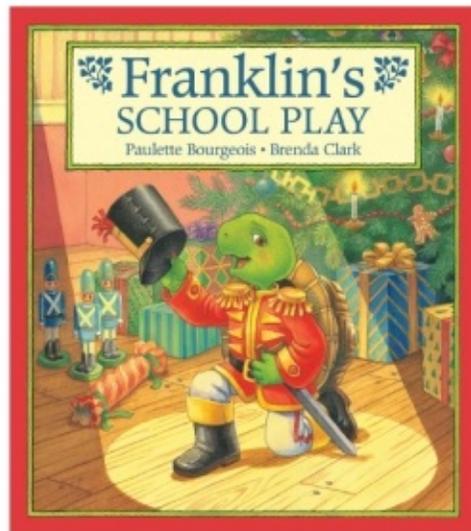
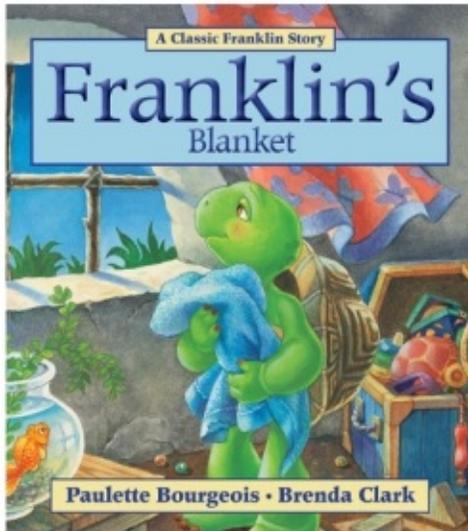
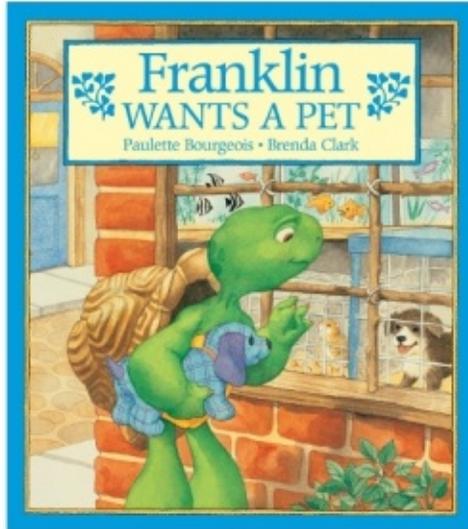


Franklin's School Play



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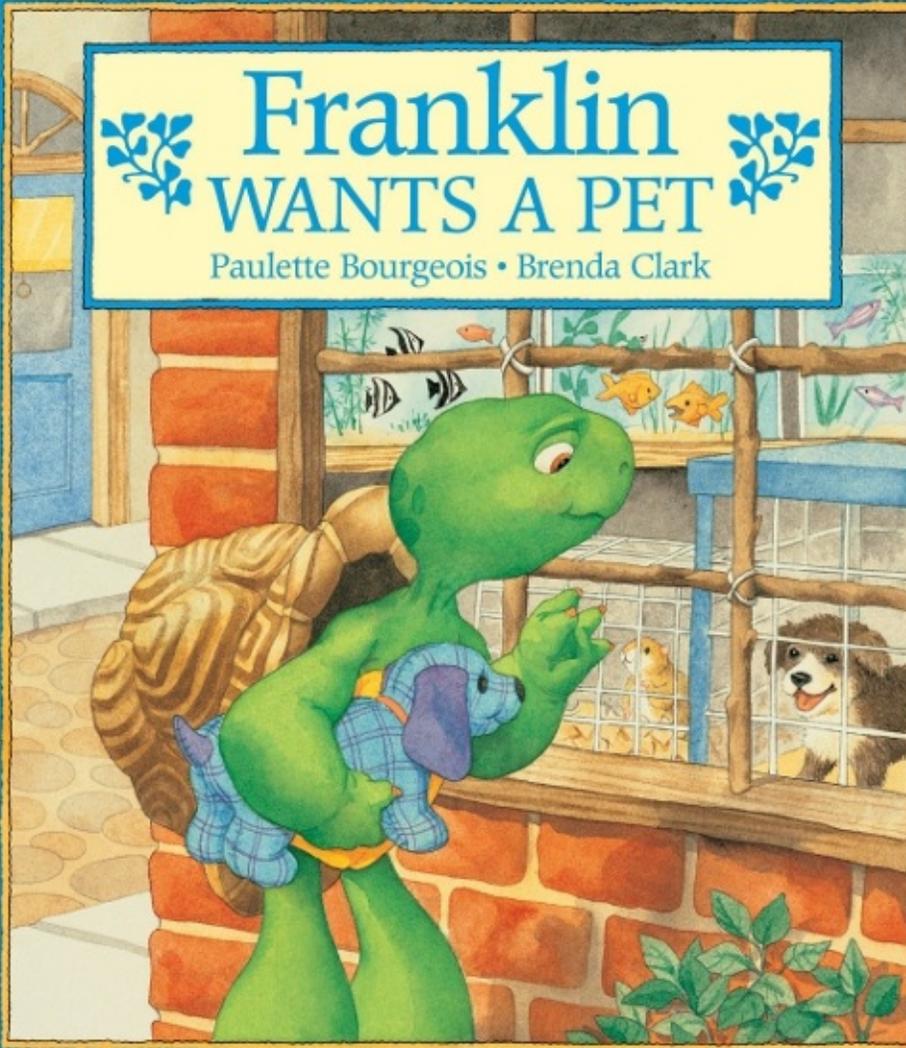
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Franklin WANTS A PET

Paulette Bourgeois • Brenda Clark





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Franklin Wants a Pet

Written by Paulette Bourgeois

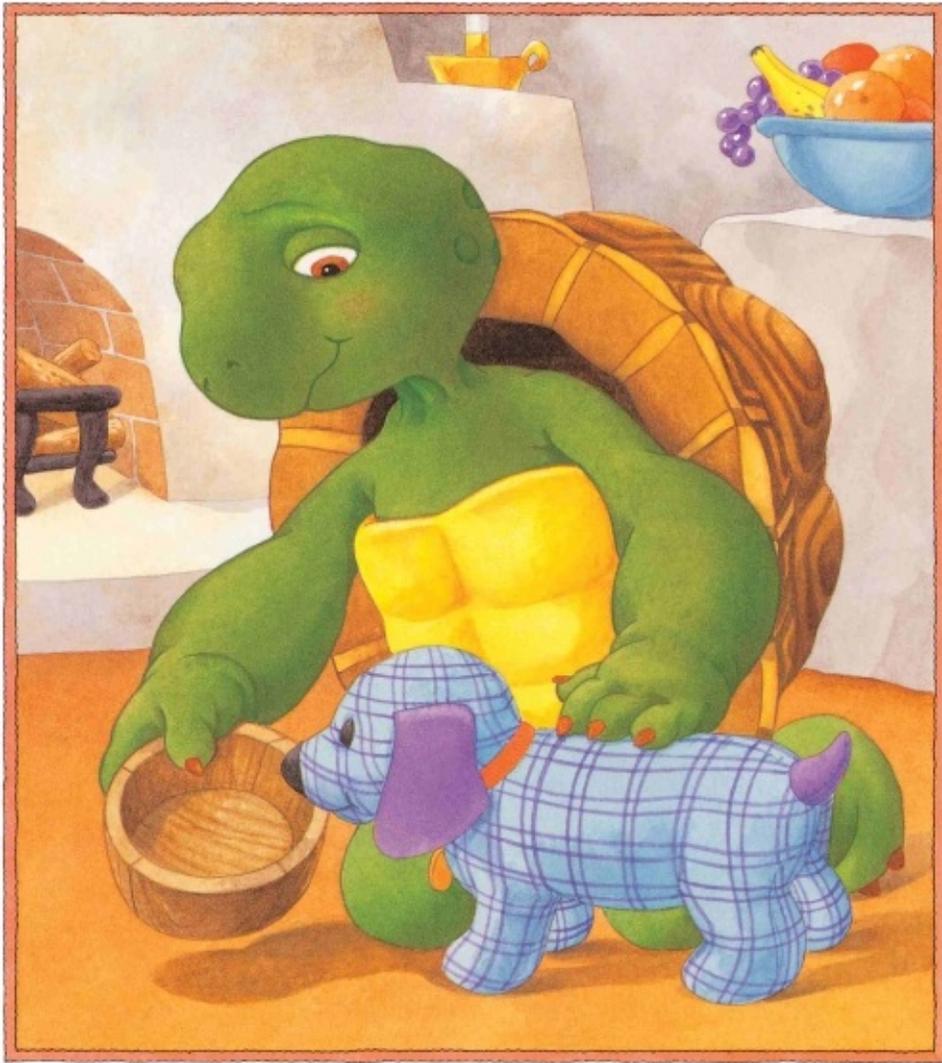
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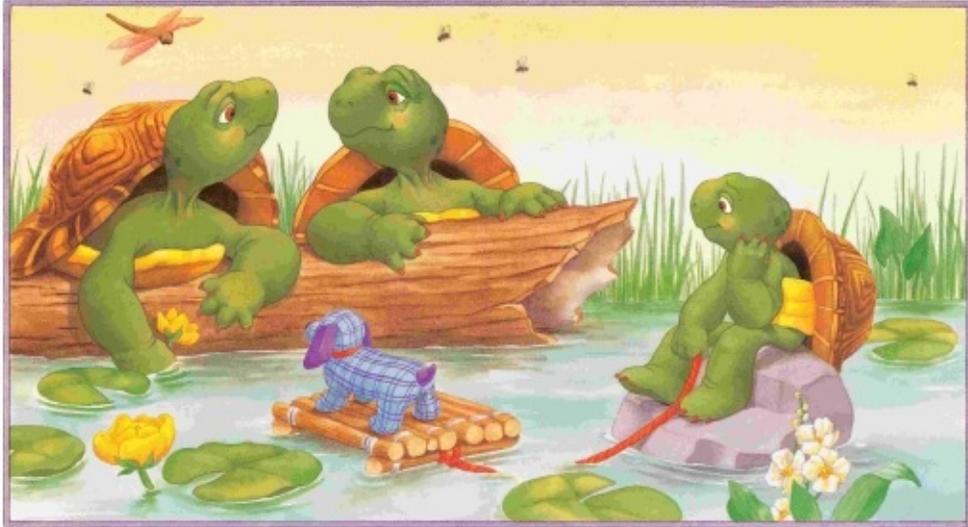
FRANKLIN could count by twos and tie his shoes. He could sleep alone in his small, dark shell. He even had a best friend named Bear. But Franklin wanted something else. He wanted a pet.





Franklin had wanted a pet since he was small. But whenever he asked, “May I have a pet, please?” his parents said, “Maybe someday.”

Franklin waited for a long time. He often pretended to have a pet. He took Sam, his stuffed dog, for walks. He taught Sam tricks. He even helped Sam bury some bones. But Sam wasn’t a real pet.

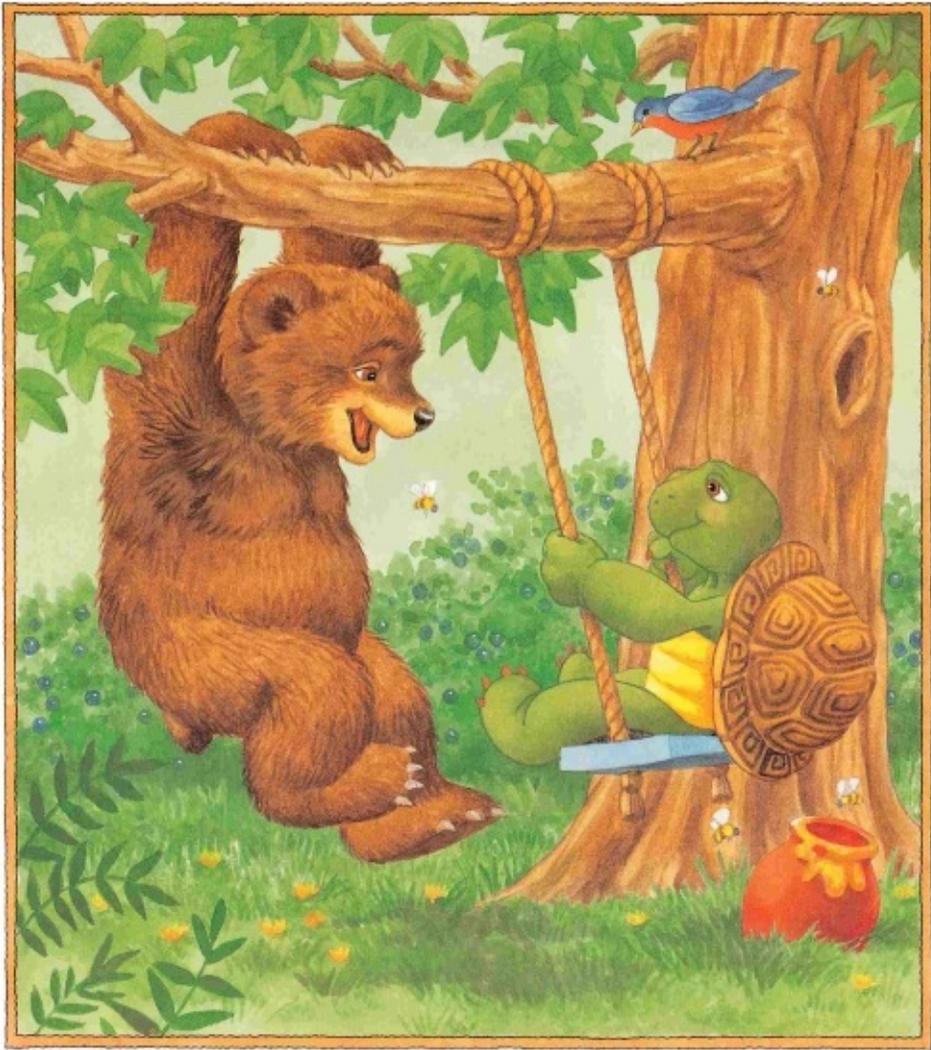


One day, Franklin asked his parents again, “May I have a pet, please?”

Franklin’s parents looked at each other.

“We’ll think about it,” they answered.

At first, Franklin was happy because they did not say, *No*. Then, Franklin became worried. His parents could think about things for days and days.





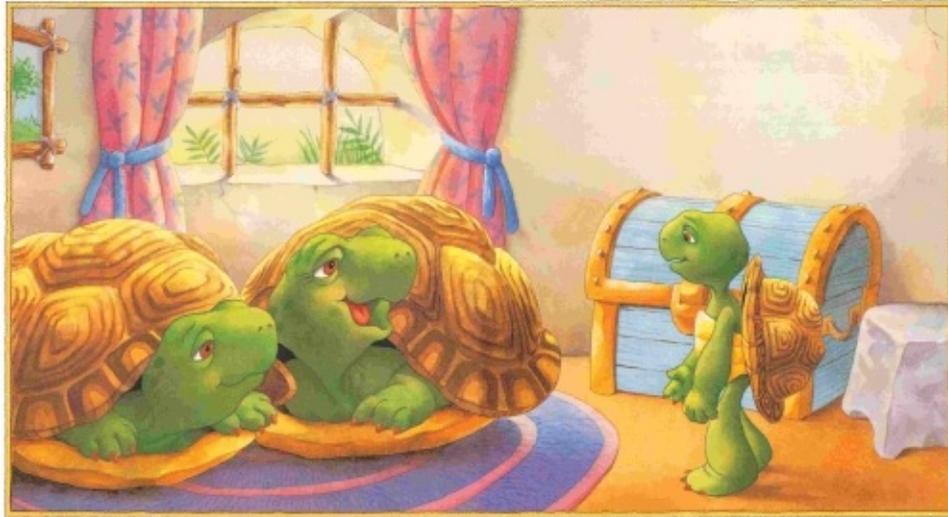
That day, Franklin visited Bear and told him all about the pet he wanted.

“If I had a pet, it would be a bird,” said Bear.

“Why?” asked Franklin.

“Because birds sing beautiful songs,” said Bear.

“Birds are nice,” said Franklin. “But their loud singing may wake me too early.”



Franklin waited until morning before asking his parents if they had finished thinking yet.

“Not quite,” said Franklin’s mother. “We need to know that you could care for a pet.”

Franklin nodded his head up and down.

“Could you feed your pet?” asked Franklin’s father.

Franklin nodded again. He almost said please one hundred times in a row but he stopped himself.



Franklin visited Beaver and told her all about the pet he wanted.
“If I had a pet it would be a cat,” said Beaver.
“Why?” asked Franklin.
“Because cats make purring sounds,” she answered.
“Cats are nice,” said Franklin. “But you never know where they are.”



Later that day, Franklin asked his parents, “Are you finished thinking?”

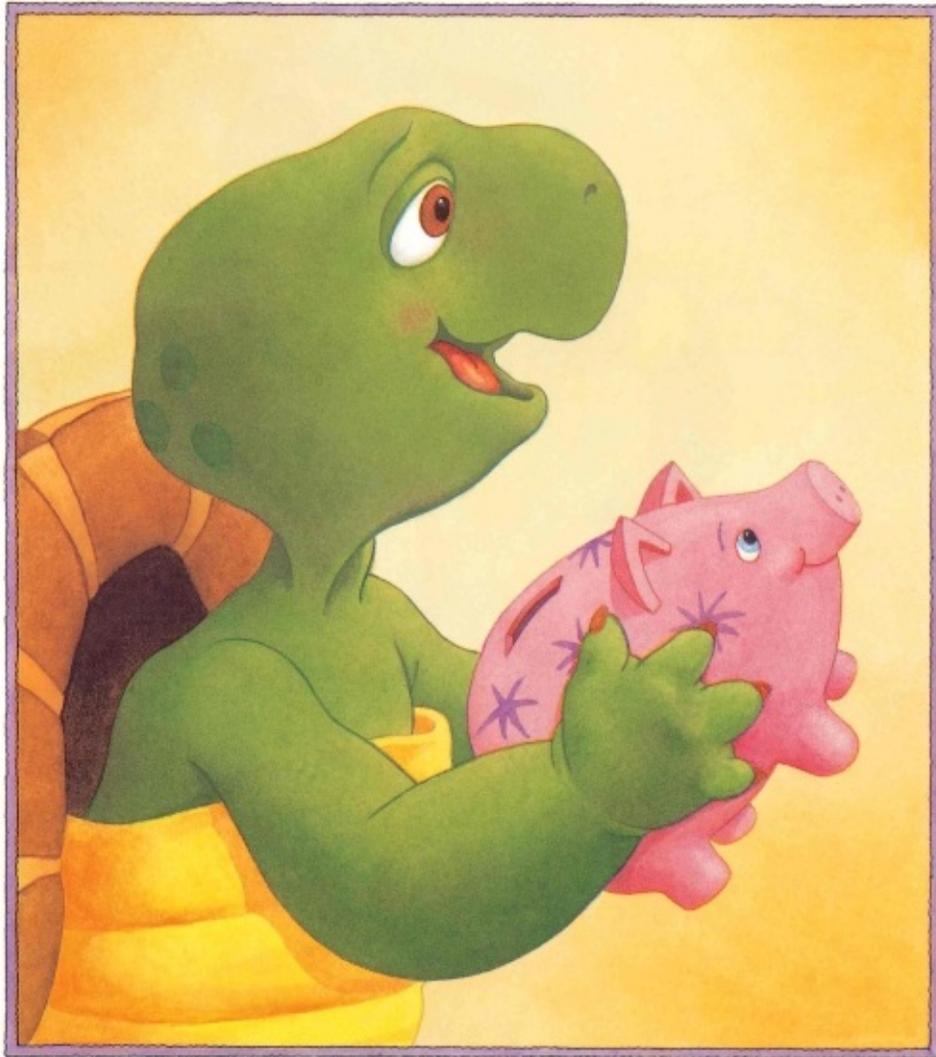
“Not yet,” they answered.

“Please hurry,” said Franklin.

His father sighed. “Franklin, this is a big decision. A pet costs money to buy and to keep.”

Franklin offered all the money in his piggy bank and hoped it was enough.







After counting his pennies, Franklin visited with Goose and told her all about the pet he wanted.

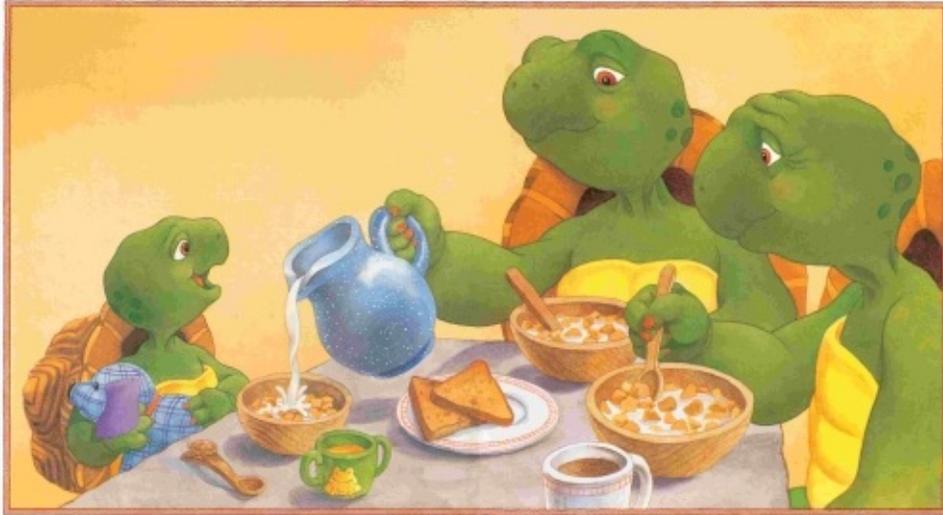
“If I had a pet, it would be a bunny,” said Goose.

“Why?” asked Franklin.

“Because bunnies have wiggly whiskers.”

“Bunnies are nice,” said Franklin. “But I think whiskers might make me sneeze.”





After three whole days, Franklin was tired of waiting for his parents to finish thinking. He had a plan!

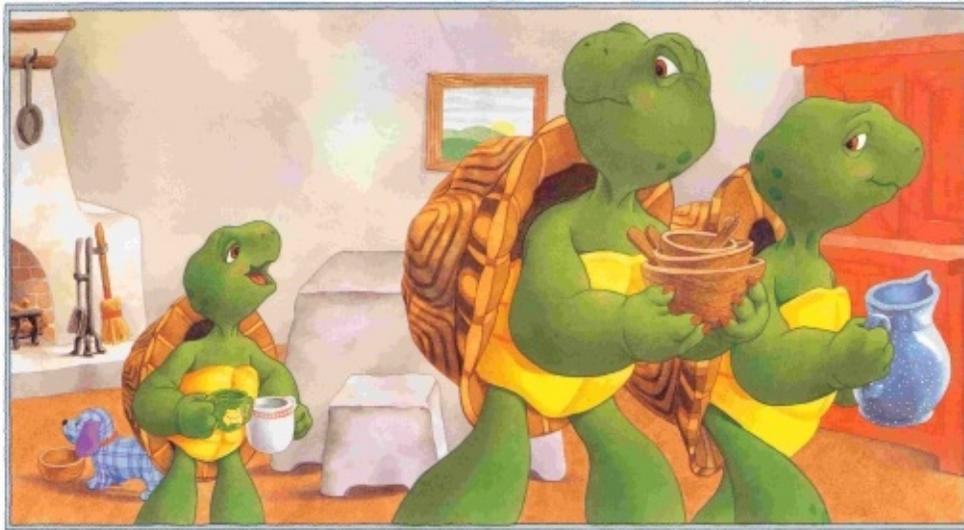
He brought Sam to the breakfast table. “I have been taking care of Sam for a long, long time,” he said. “I will take good care of a real pet, too. I will feed it. I will clean its house. We can take it to the vet if it gets sick.”

Franklin’s parents smiled. “It sounds as if you’ve been doing a lot of thinking, too,” they said.





“So may I have a pet, please?” he begged.
They whispered to each other. Then they nodded their heads up and down.
“Oh, thank you,” said Franklin. He wanted to go to the pet store right away.
“We’ll help you choose a puppy tomorrow,” said his father.



“No thank you,” said Franklin. “I do not want a dog.”

His parents were surprised.

“Dogs are nice,” said Franklin. “But I want a quiet pet.”

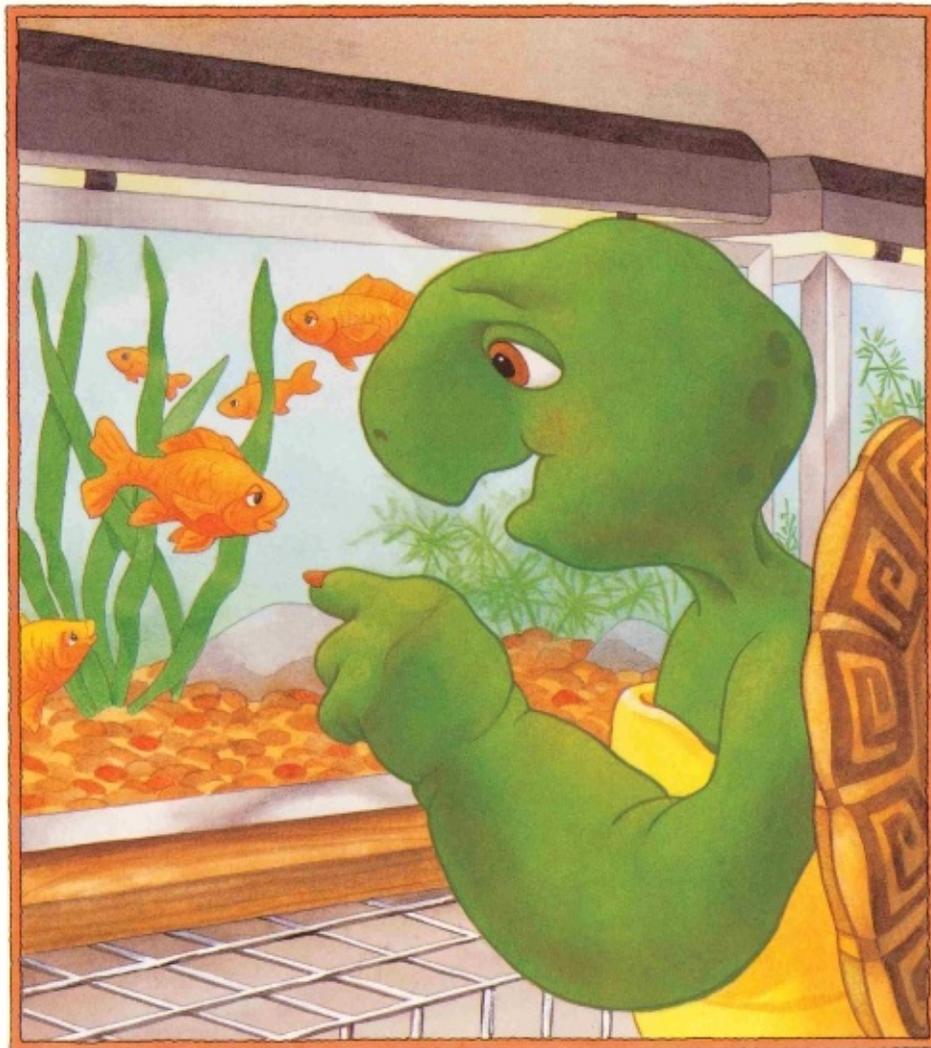
Franklin’s mother asked if he wanted a kitten.

“No thank you,” said Franklin. “Kittens are nice but I want a pet that stays close by.”



“Is it a hamster that you want?” said Franklin’s father.
Franklin shook his head. “No thank you.”
“A rabbit?” asked Franklin’s mother.
“No thank you,” said Franklin.
“What kind of pet do you want?” asked his parents.
Franklin smiled and said, “I’ll show you tomorrow.”





At the pet store, Franklin pointed to a fish.

“I want a goldfish,” he said.

“A goldfish!” they said. “Why? A fish cannot do tricks or play with you.”

So Franklin explained. He liked to watch fish swim slowly around and around. He liked their beautiful colours. And he liked the way they made him feel inside. Quiet and calm.

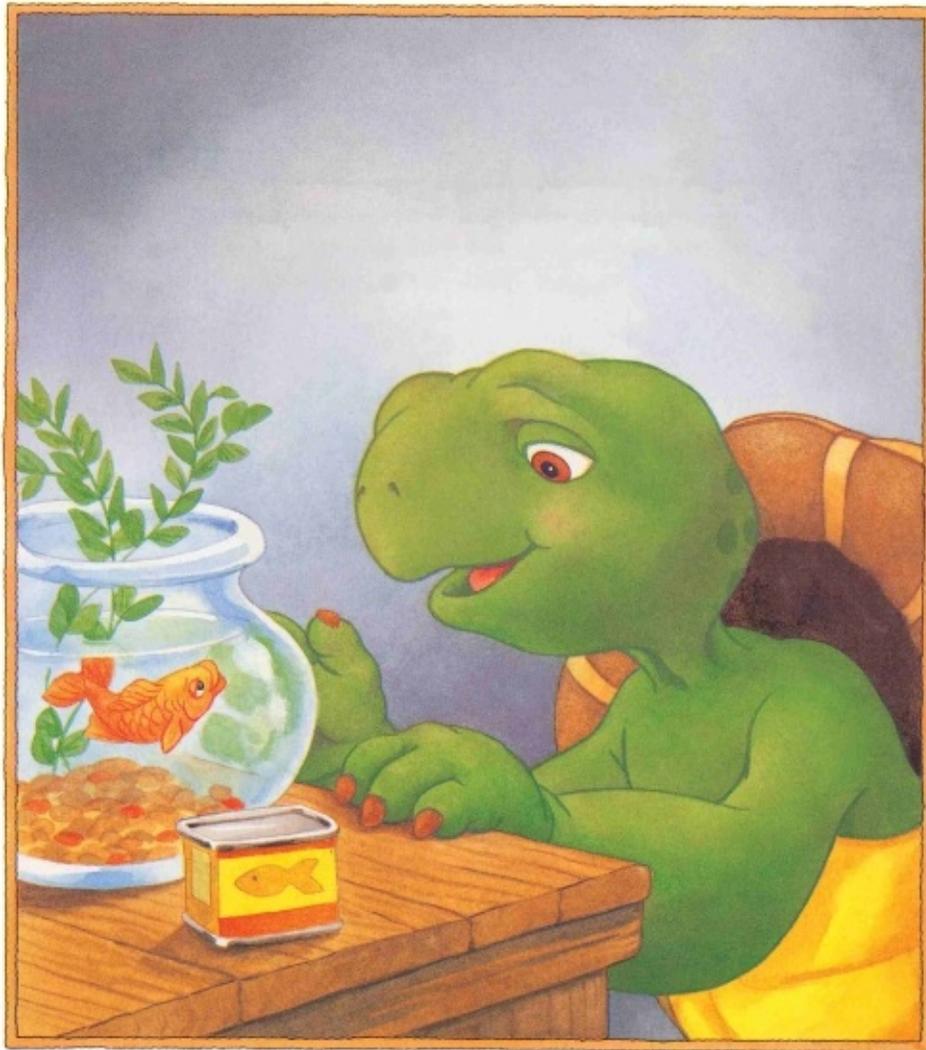




“Besides,” he said. “I love goldfish.”

“That’s the best reason of all,” said Franklin’s parents.

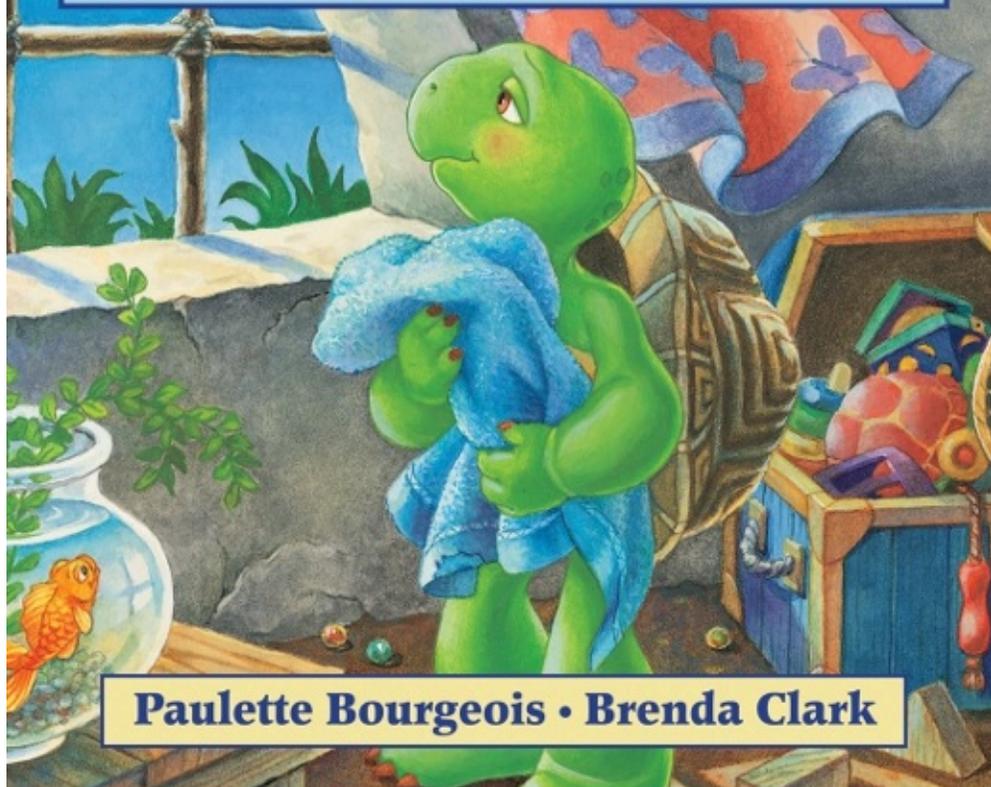
Franklin named his fish Goldie. He took very good care of her, just as he’d promised.



Every morning, Franklin watched Goldie swim around and around. And every night before he went to bed, Franklin blew a great, big fish kiss and whispered, "I love you, Goldie."

A Classic Franklin Story

Franklin's Blanket



Paulette Bourgeois • Brenda Clark

For two special children, Annie and Madeline – PB

For Linda, Derek and Stephanie, who had their own special blankets – BC



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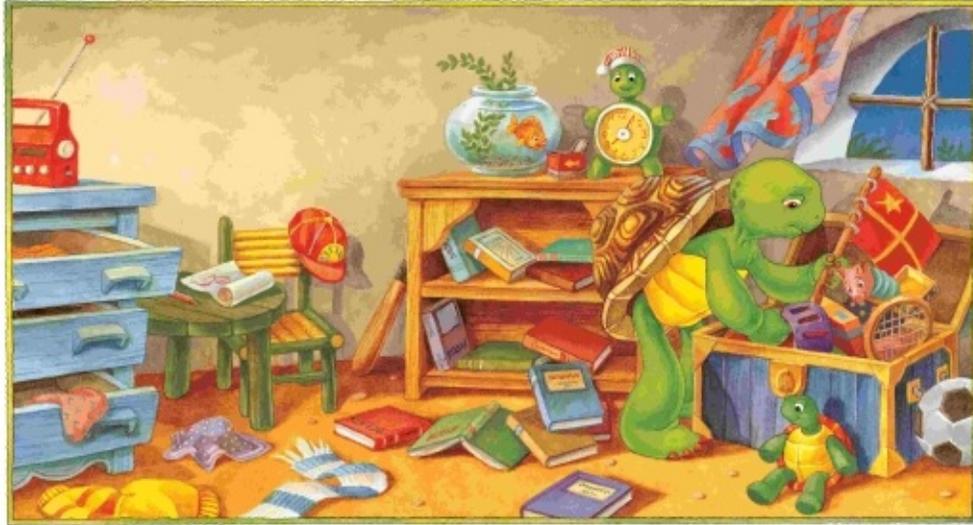


FRANKLIN could slide down a riverbank all by himself. He could count by twos and tie his shoes. He could even sleep alone – as long as he had a goodnight story, a goodnight hug, a glass of water, a night light and his blue blanket.

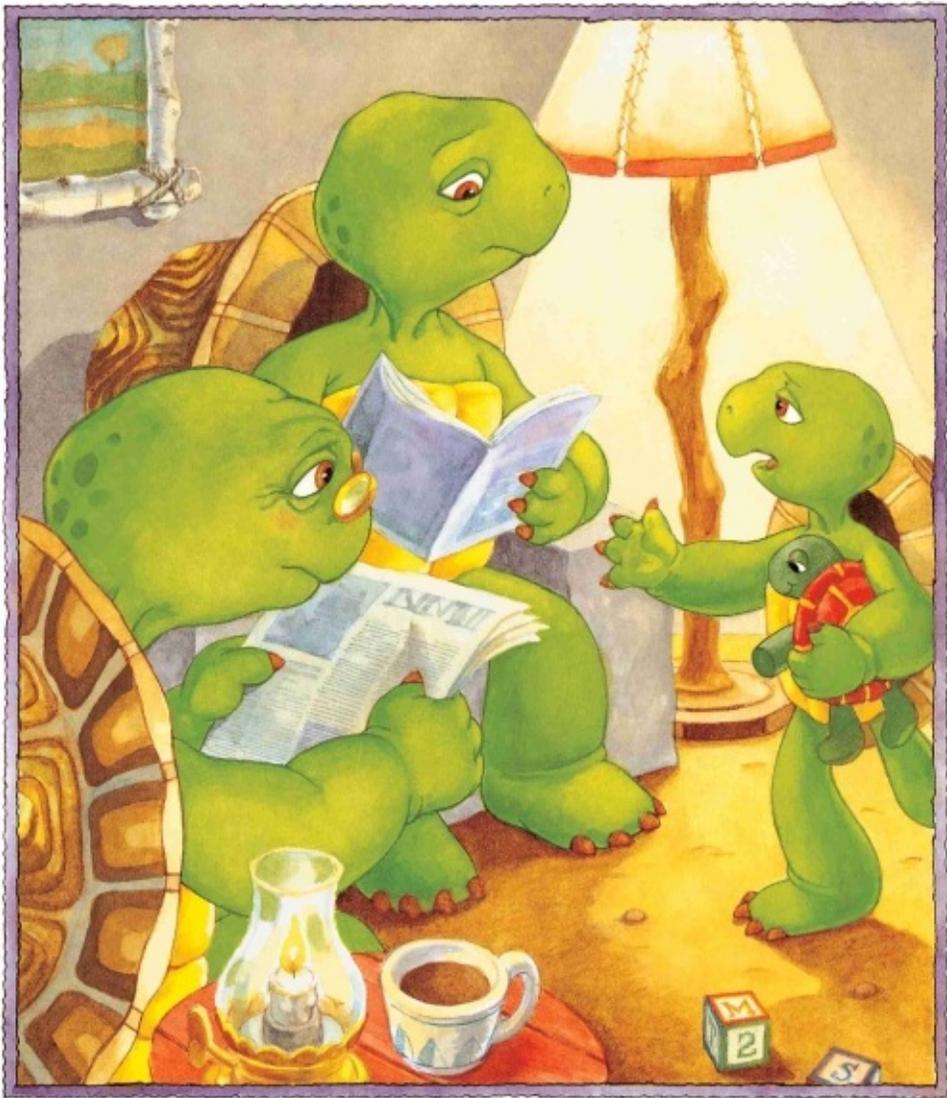




In the beginning, the blanket was big and soft and edged in satin. But with all the snuggling and cuddling, it now had holes in the middle and tatters along the edges. Every year, as Franklin got bigger, his blue blanket got smaller.



Franklin usually kept his blanket folded in his top drawer. One night it wasn't there. Franklin searched around his room. He rummaged through his toy chest. He took everything out of his drawers and his books off the shelves. But he could not find his blue blanket anywhere.



He ran to tell his parents.

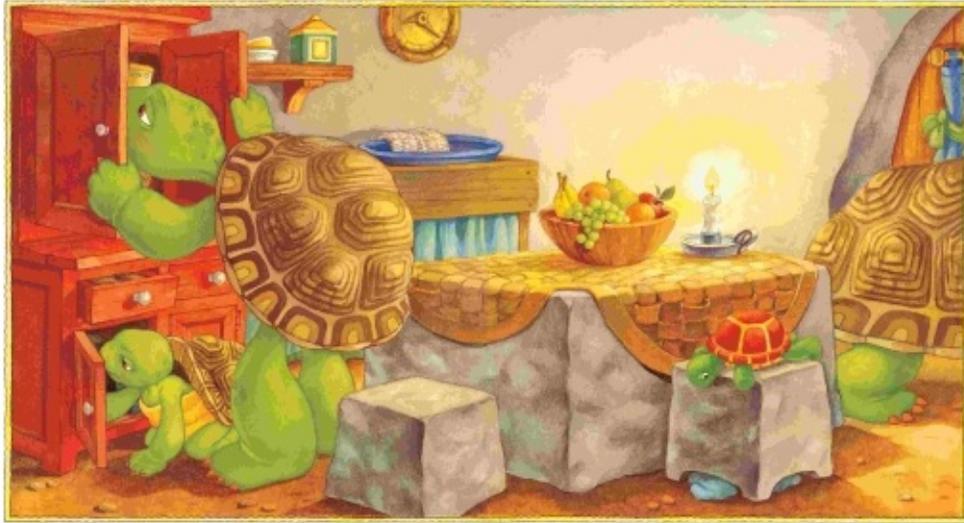
“Go back to bed,” they said as soon as they saw him.

“But, but ...” said Franklin.

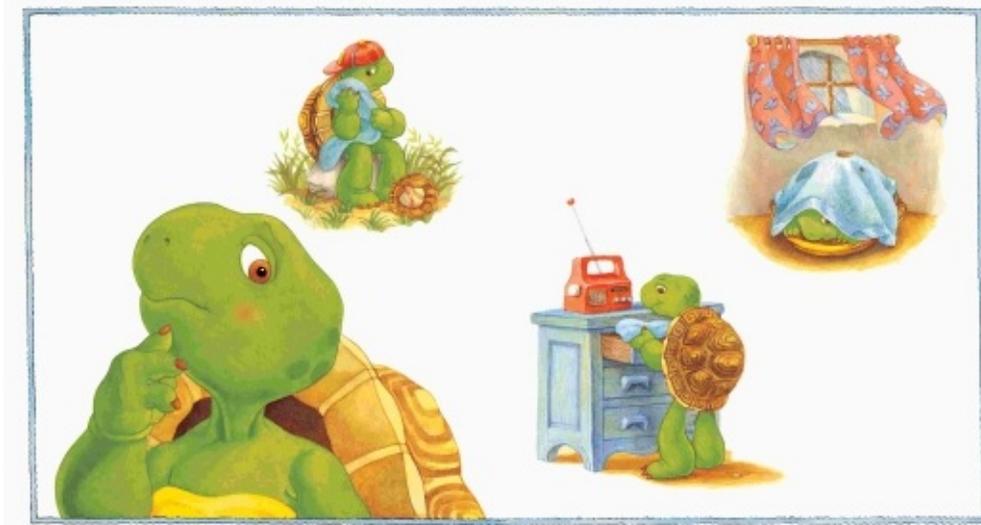
“No buts,” said Franklin’s father. “You have had a goodnight story, a goodnight hug, two glasses of water, and I turned on your night light myself.”

“But I can’t find my blanket,” said Franklin.





So Franklin and his parents hunted everywhere.
“Try to remember,” said Franklin’s mother. “When did you last have it?”



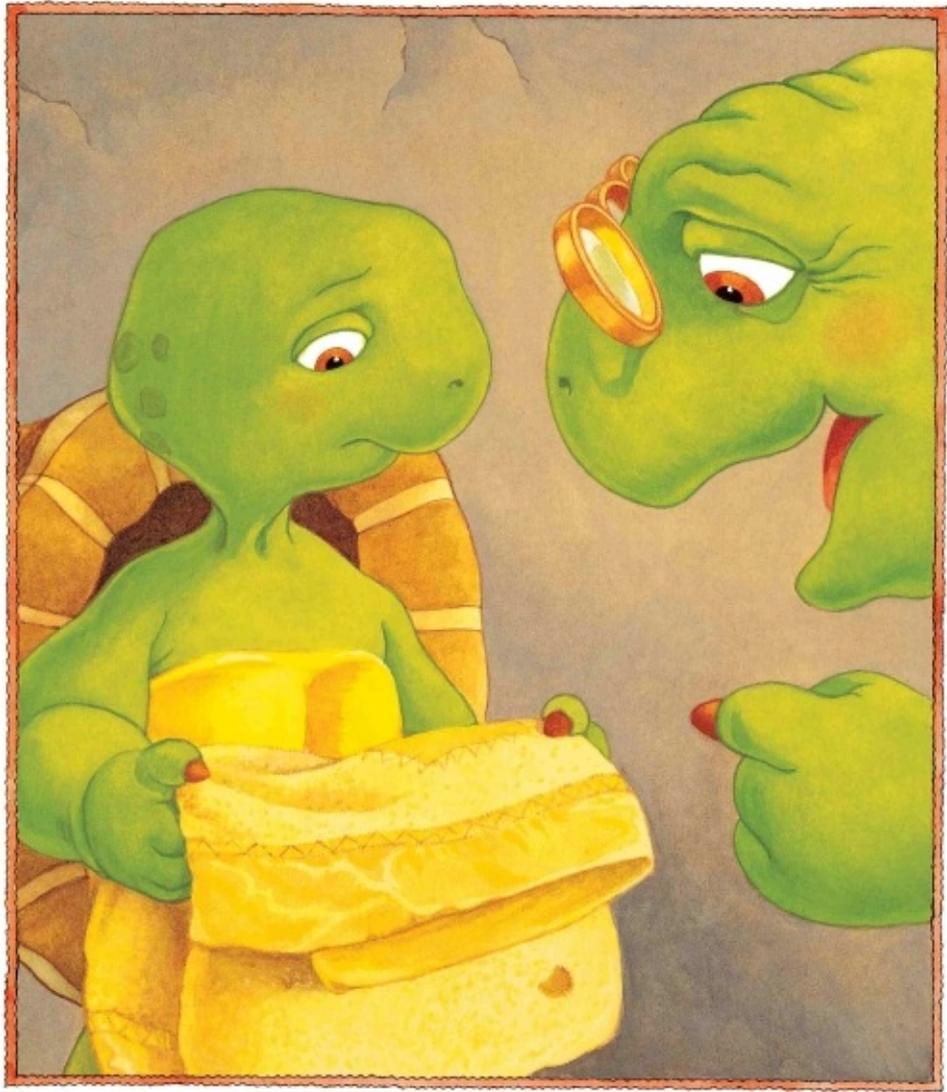
Franklin thought.

In the morning, after a fight with Bear, Franklin had snuggled with the blanket until he felt better.

In the afternoon, when thunder crashed and lightning flashed, Franklin had covered himself with the blanket until all was calm.

He was sure that after the storm he had put the blanket back where it belonged.

When Franklin and his parents looked, the blanket wasn't there.



“We’ll find it tomorrow,” said Franklin’s mother.

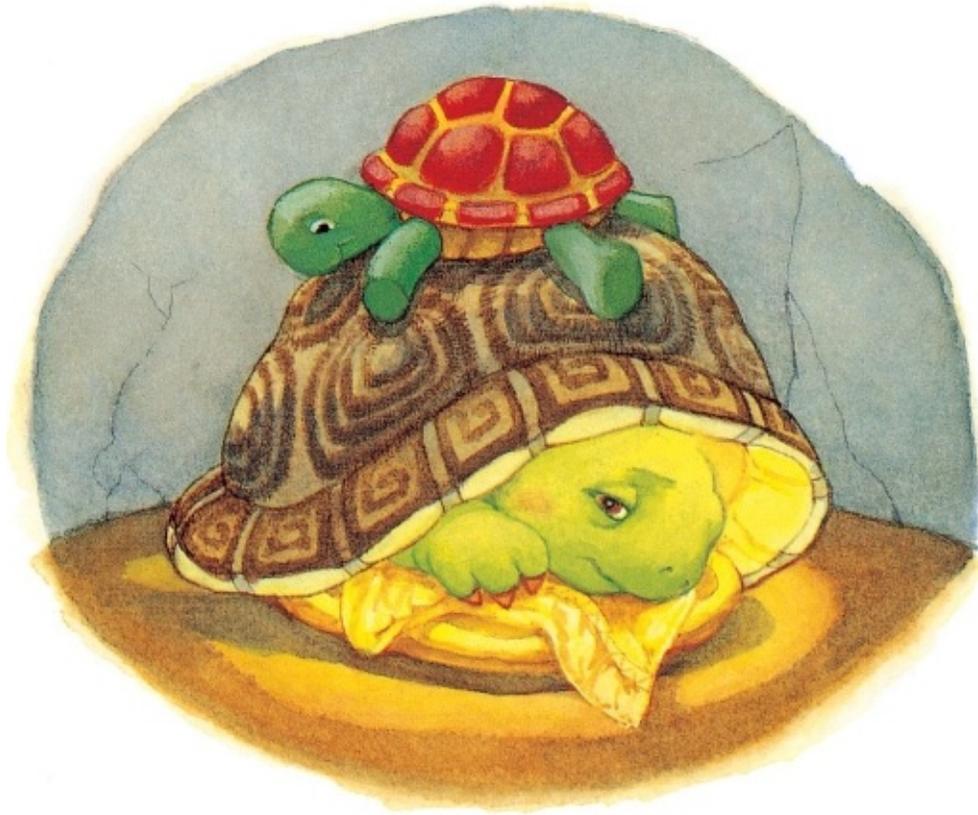
“I can’t sleep without my blanket,” said Franklin.

“I have an idea,” said Franklin’s father. He left the room and came back with an old, yellow blanket.

“What’s that?” asked Franklin.

“It was mine,” said Franklin’s father. “Maybe it will make you feel better.”

Franklin tried to snuggle the old, yellow blanket, but it wasn’t the same. He missed his own blanket terribly, and it took Franklin a long, long time to fall asleep.





The next morning Franklin began a search for his blanket. He went to Bear's house first. He looked so glum that Bear asked, "What's wrong, Franklin? Did your mother give you brussels sprouts again?"

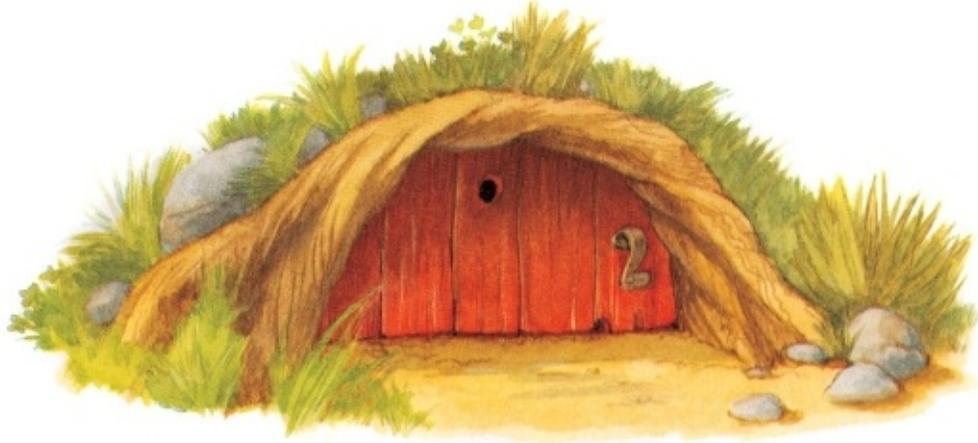
"Worse," said Franklin. "I can't find my blanket."

"It's not here," said Bear. "Besides, my mother says big bears like me are too old for baby blankets. Maybe you don't need a blanket."

Franklin knew that Bear always slept with his stuffed bunny. "What about your bunny?" asked Franklin.

"Bunnies are different," said Bear.





Next he tried Fox's house. The blanket wasn't there either.

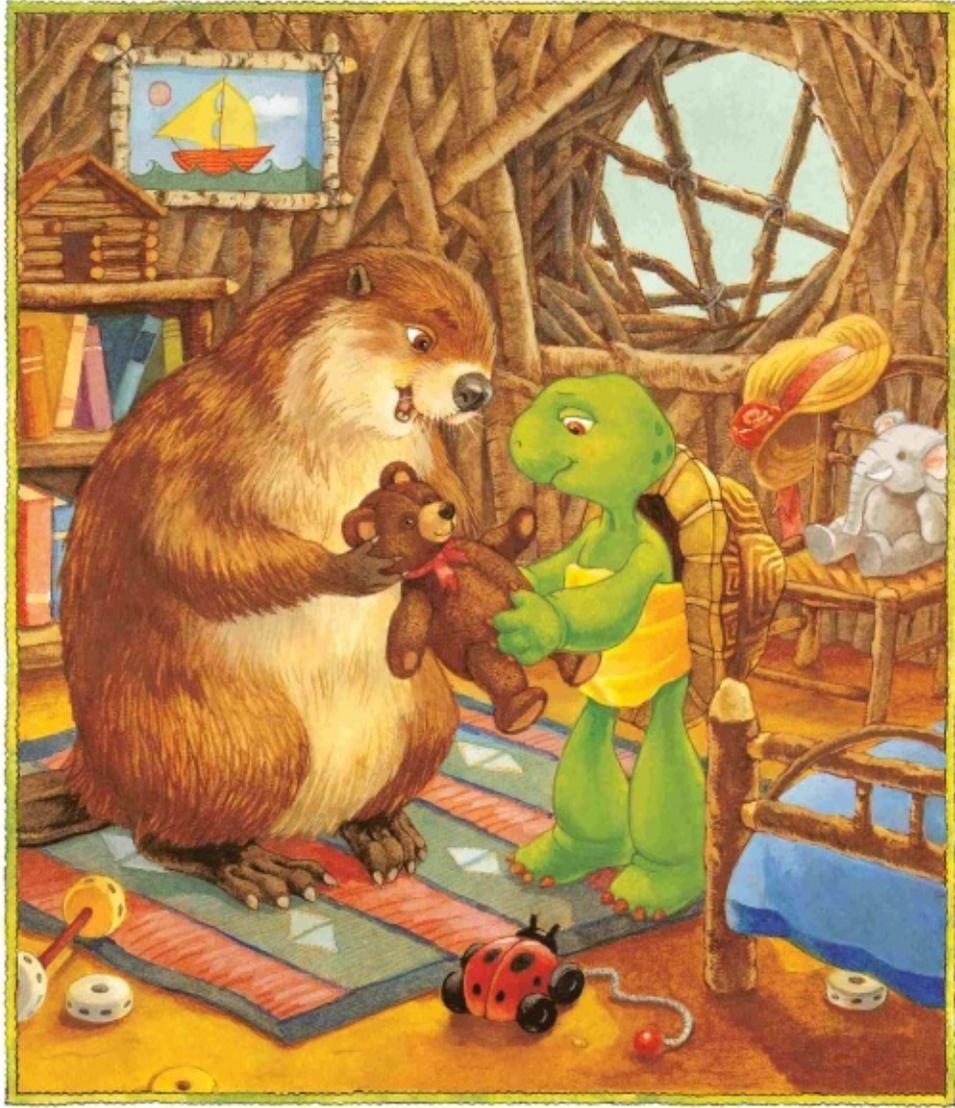
"Why don't we play?" asked Fox.

"No," said Franklin. "I want to find my blanket."

"My father says worn-out blankets are no good to anybody," said Fox.
"Maybe you should get a new blanket. I did."

"I like my old blanket," said Franklin.



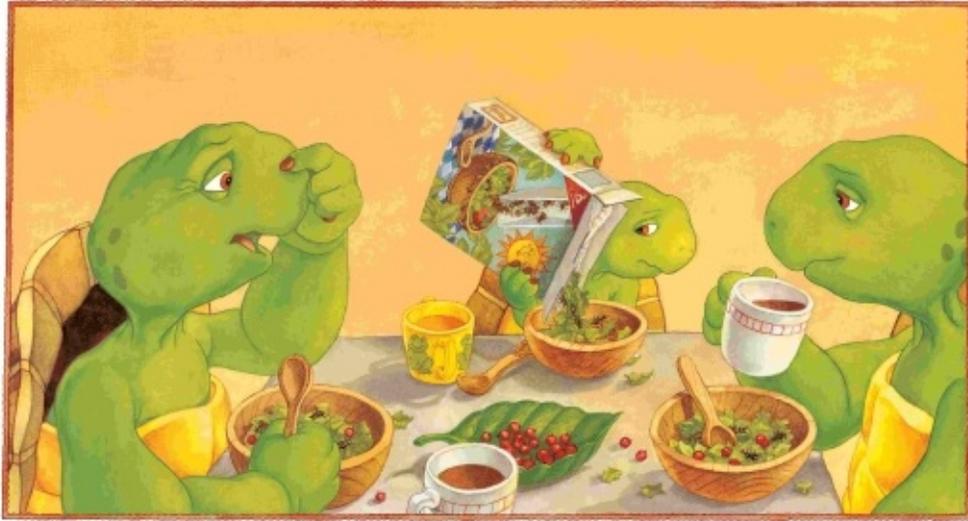




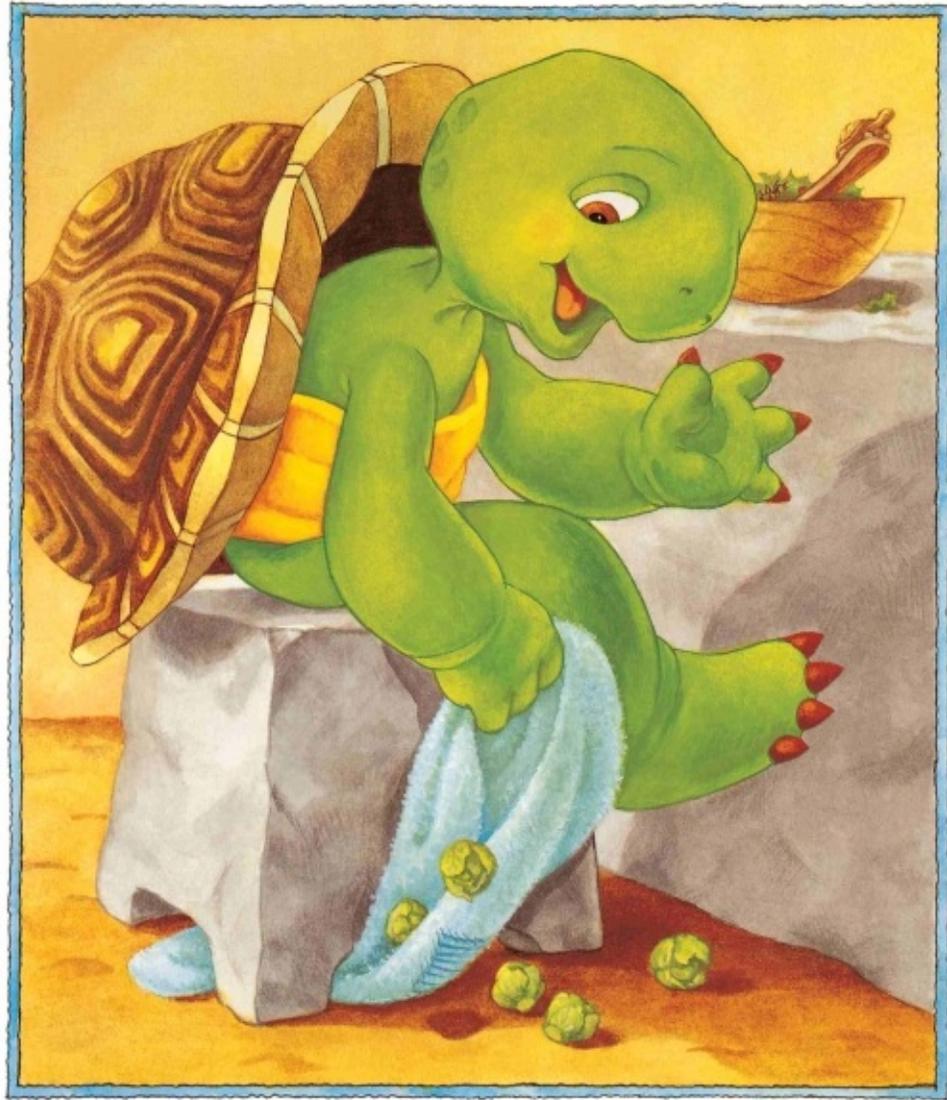
Then Franklin went to Beaver's house. The blanket wasn't there. Franklin looked so sad that Beaver said, "You can borrow my Teddy until you find your blanket."

"Thank you, Beaver," said Franklin, holding Teddy tightly.

That night when Franklin went to bed, he had his father's yellow blanket and Beaver's Teddy. But it wasn't the same as sleeping with his own blue blanket.



At breakfast, Franklin's father sniffed and pinched his nose. "Do you smell something odd?" he asked. "A sort of musty, old-sock smell?" Franklin and his mother sniffed, too. Then Franklin remembered. "I think I know what smells," he said.



Franklin reached under his chair and pulled out his blue blanket. Plop! A handful of cold, slimy brussels sprouts spilled out of the blanket and onto the floor.

His mother and father stared with amazement.

“Look!” said Franklin. “I found my blanket. I forgot I put it here.”

“You forgot to eat your brussels sprouts, too,” said Franklin’s mother.

“Whoops,” said Franklin, looking a little sheepish.



“Old, cold brussels sprouts sure do stink,” said Franklin’s father.

“All brussels sprouts stink,” said Franklin.

Franklin’s mother smiled. “I used to hate cabbage,” she said. “Now *that’s* a stinky vegetable.”

“Asparagus!” said Franklin’s father. “That’s even stinkier than brussels sprouts and cabbage mixed together.”

“Broccoli!” shouted Franklin. Then he stopped. He liked broccoli. “It stinks, but I wouldn’t hide broccoli,” he said.

“That’s good news,” said his father.

Franklin helped to tidy the mess.

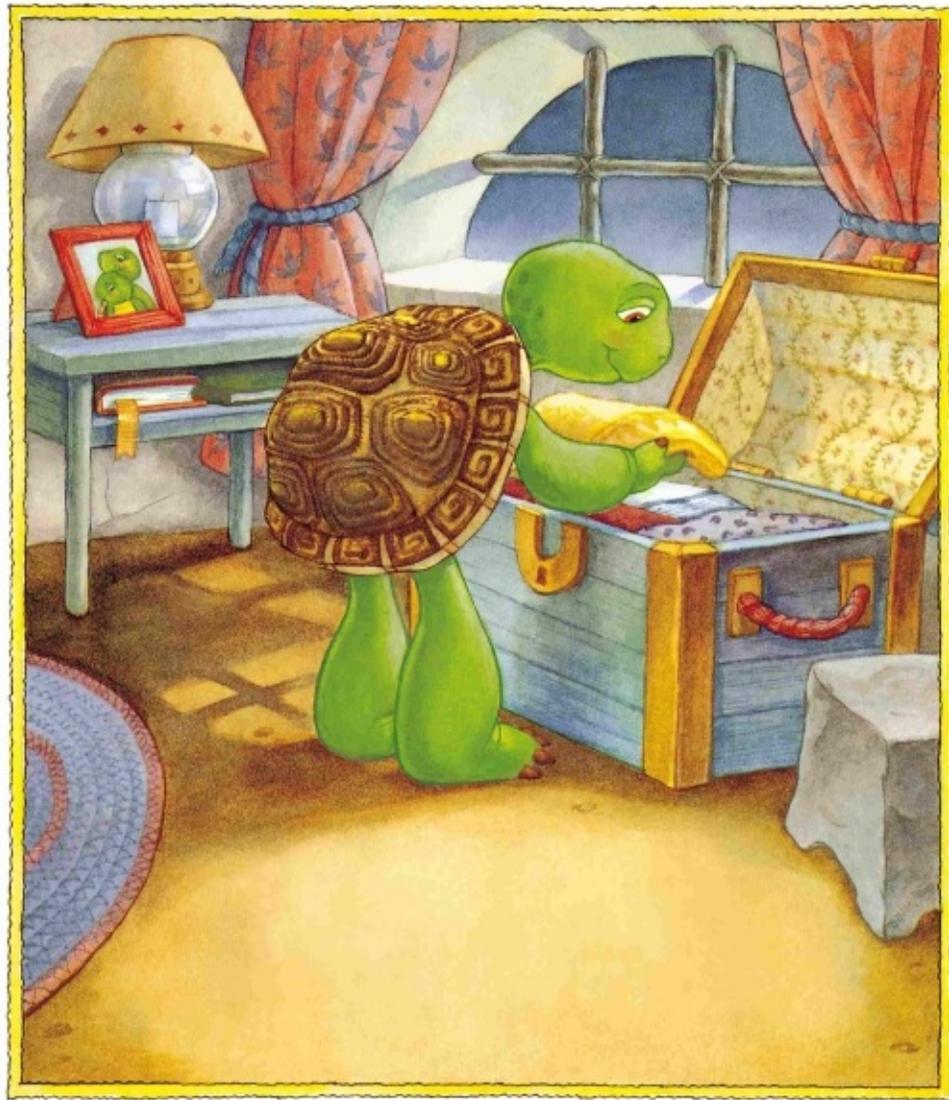






Then Franklin picked up his blanket.

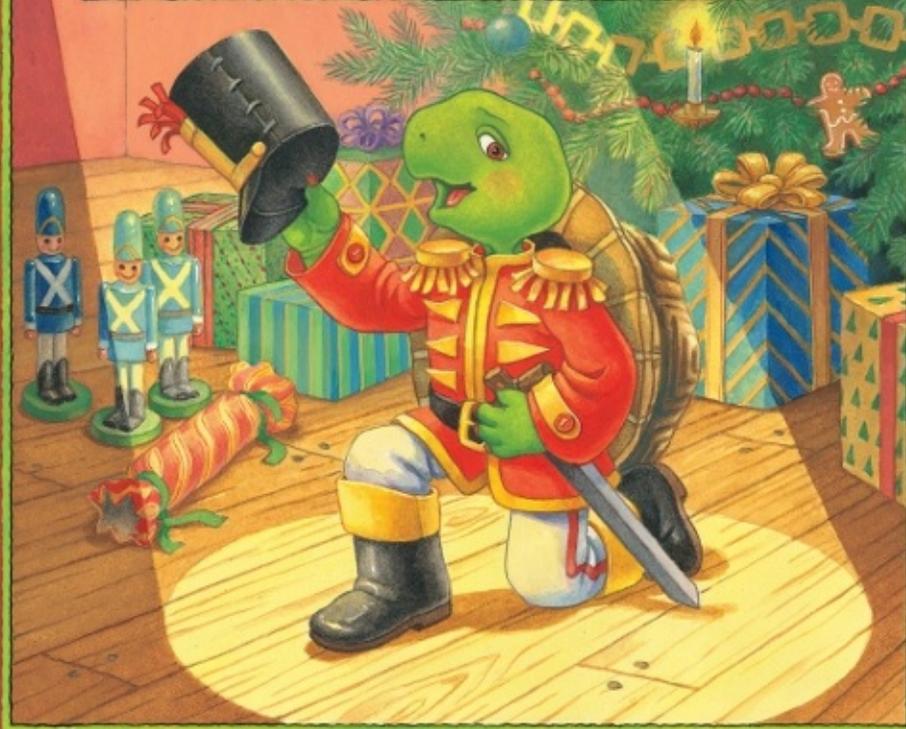
“I don’t care that you are old and full of holes,” he said. “But you sure do need a bath.”



That night, before his goodnight story, his goodnight hug and a glass of water, Franklin put his father's yellow blanket back where it belonged. He was glad he lived in a house where even old blankets had their special place.

Franklin's SCHOOL PLAY

Paulette Bourgeois • Brenda Clark



For Rachel – P. B.

For Sandi, who was born to perform – B. C.



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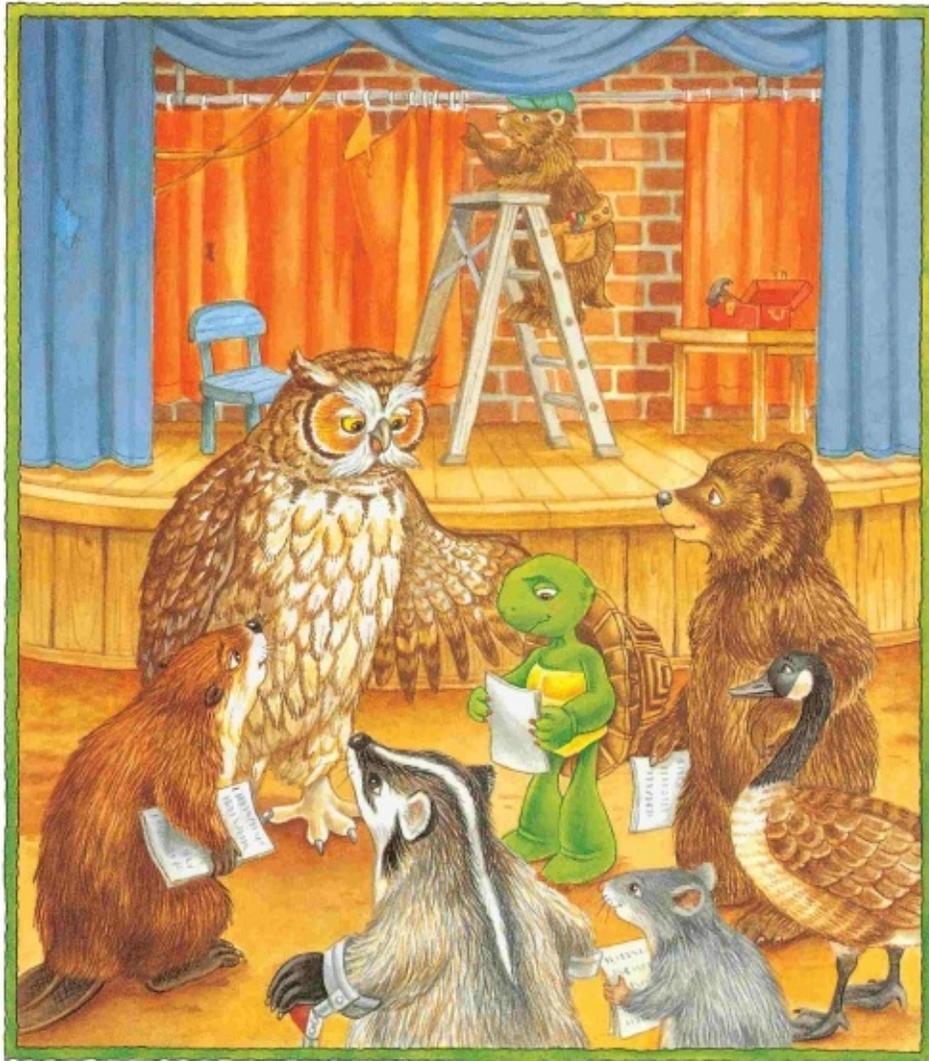
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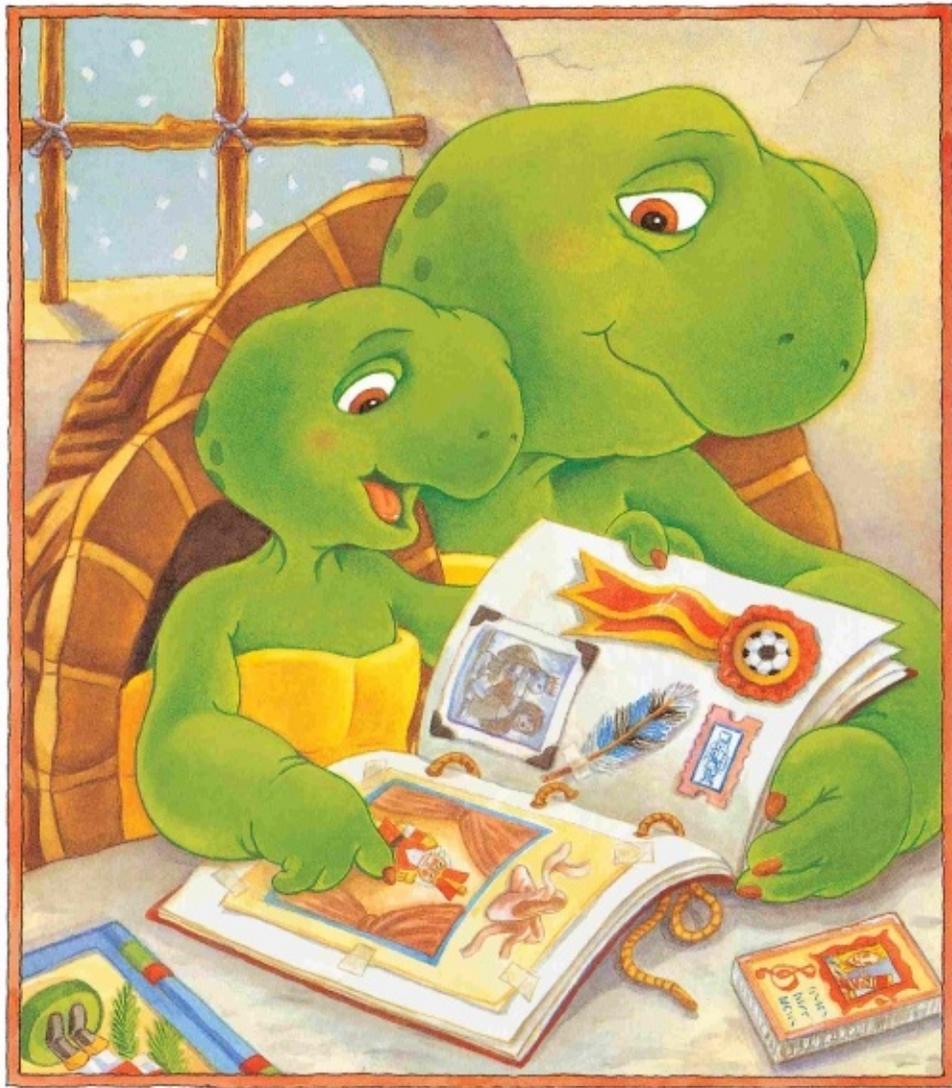


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FRANKLIN could count forwards and backwards. He could remember his phone number, his address and the names of six different shapes. But sometimes Franklin was forgetful. So he worried when Mr. Owl chose him play one of the lead roles in the class play. What if he forgot his lines?



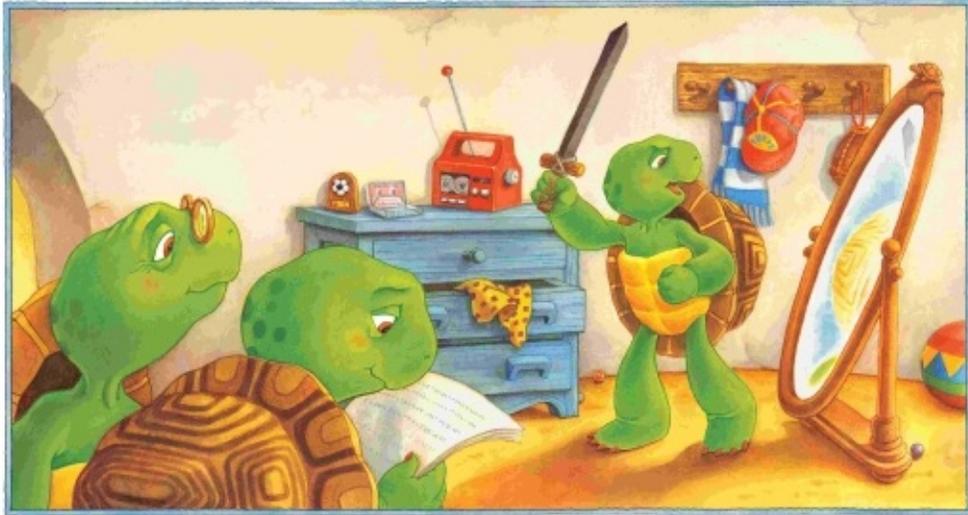




Every December, Mr. Owl's students put on a show that they made up themselves. This year they would perform A Salute to the Nutcracker.

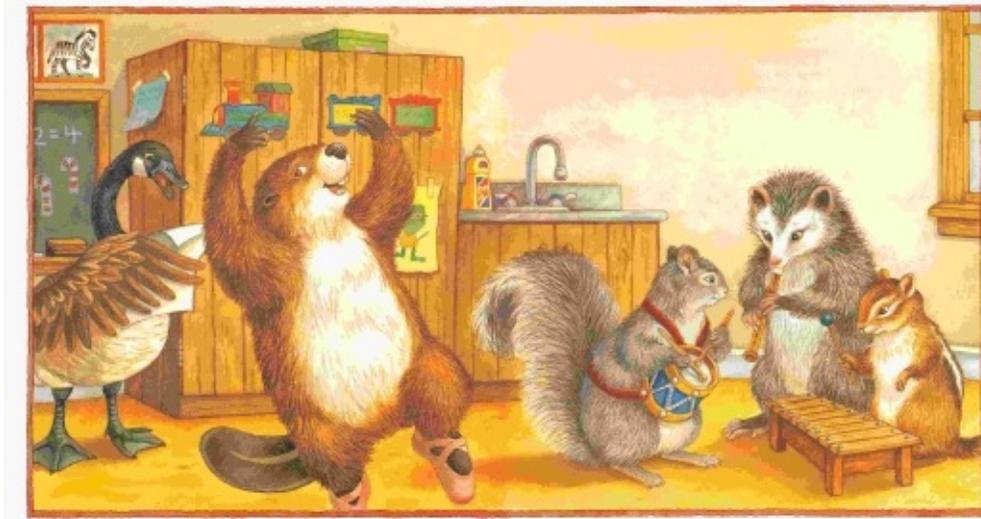
Franklin had seen the Nutcracker ballet with his parents, and he'd listened to the music at home. He loved the story about a little girl and the toy soldier who comes to life.





Franklin had a big part to learn. At home he said his lines over and over again.

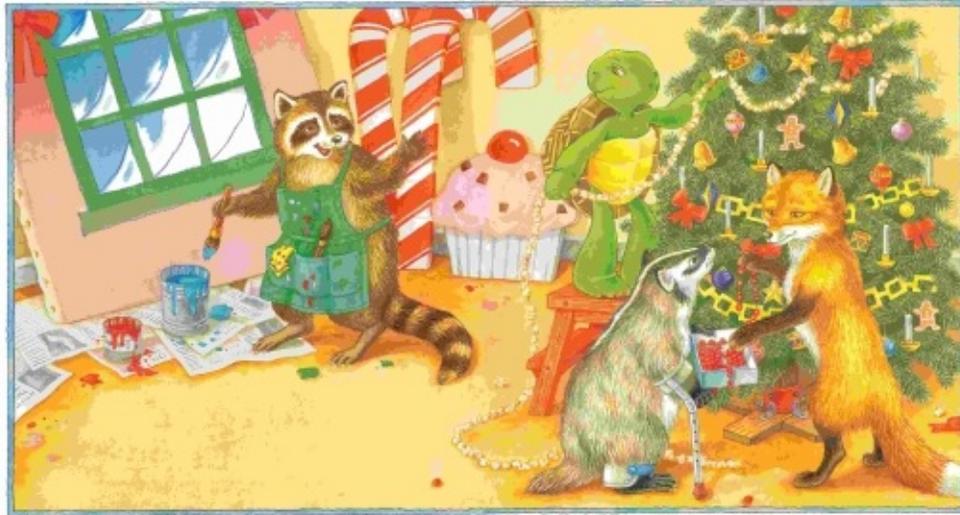
“I hope I don’t forget what to say,” he told his parents. They encouraged him. “If you practise, you’ll be fine.” Franklin wasn’t so sure.



The week before the show, there was a flurry of activity in the classroom. Everyone had an important job to do.

Goose studied her lines. Beaver practised her ballet steps. The musicians learned their songs.

“Lovely! Lovely!” said Mr. Owl.



Raccoon was in charge of building the sets. His team had already cut, glued, painted and decorated most of the scenery. Now they were busy trimming the tree. Mr. Owl thought it was spectacular.



Bear was the costume designer. He and his friends created wonderful costumes with bits of this and that.

When Mr. Owl saw what they had made, he clapped and said, "Delightful!"



The cast practised speaking loudly and clearly. Badger was the stage manager so she prompted the players when they couldn't remember their lines. "That's great," said Mr. Owl. "But where is Franklin?" Raccoon pointed to the art supply cupboard.

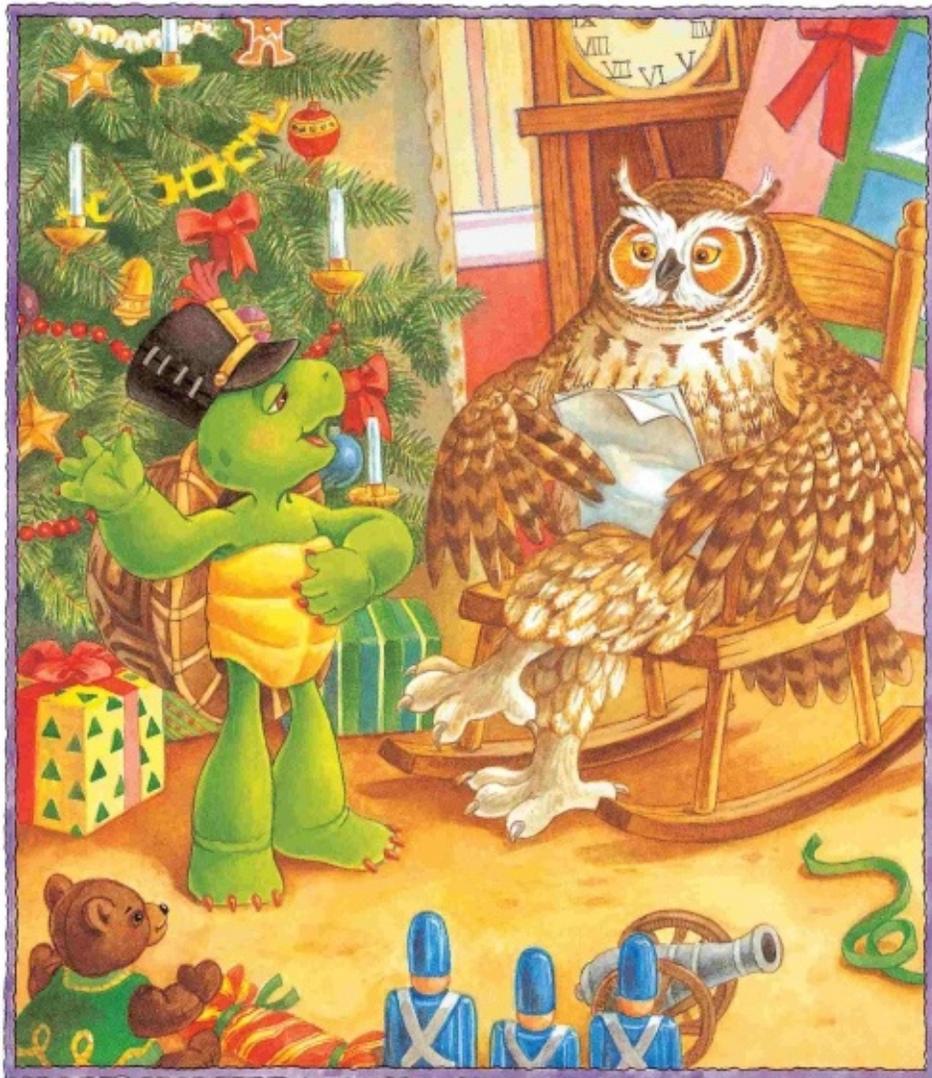


Franklin peeked out. “I need a quiet place to learn my lines,” he said. “I get to the middle and then I forget.”

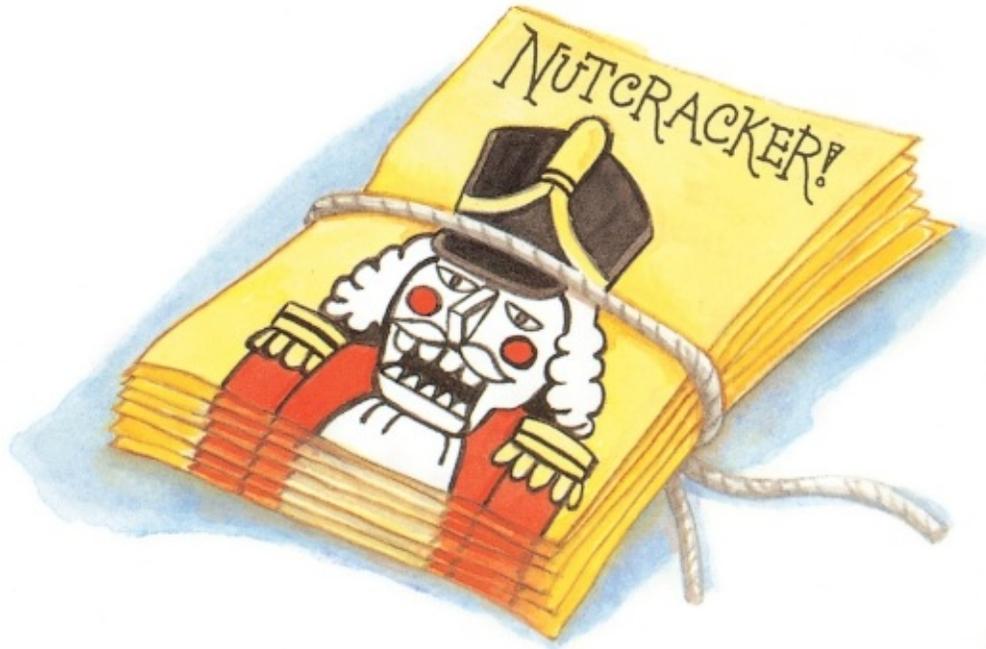
“Let’s work on them together,” suggested Mr. Owl.

By the end of the day, Franklin could say his lines without missing a word.

“Bravo!” said Mr. Owl.





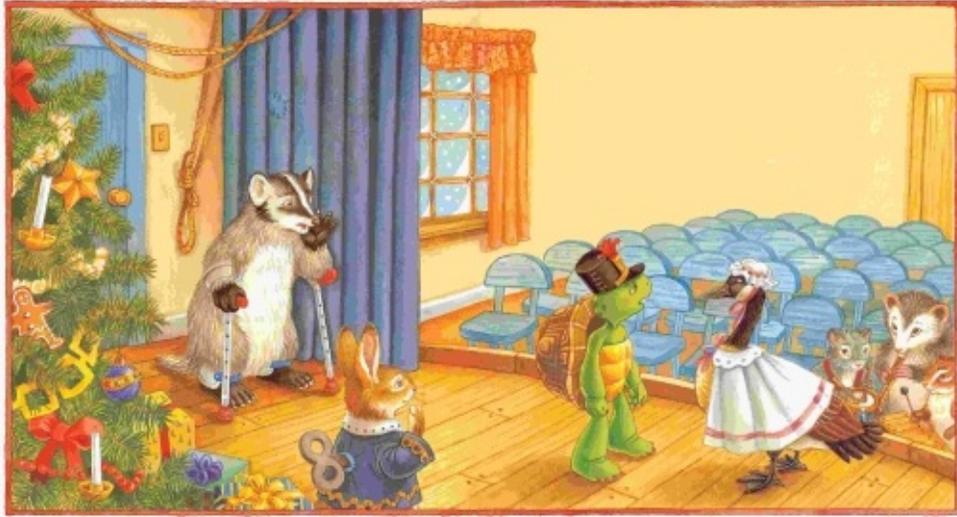


It was the day before the show. The programs were printed and the seats were set up. For the first time, the students would practise on stage. Mr. Owl directed everyone to their places.

Rabbit thumped his feet in excitement.

“Quiet please,” said Mr. Owl. “Curtain time.”

Franklin went over the lines in his head.



The curtain opened. Franklin was silent.

Mr. Owl whispered, "It's time to begin."

Franklin tried to talk, but his throat was tight. Every time he looked at the empty seats, he was scared.

"Psst," said Badger. "I'll tell you what to say."

But Franklin didn't need a prompter. He remembered the lines. He just couldn't say them out loud.



Mr. Owl talked to Franklin alone.

“Maybe you have stage fright,” said Mr. Owl. “Try not to think about the audience.”

Franklin tried three more times. But each time the curtain opened, Franklin’s mouth stayed closed.

He didn’t want to give up, but they were running out of time. So Franklin asked Mr. Owl if he could switch places with Badger. She could play the Nutcracker Prince because she knew all the lines.





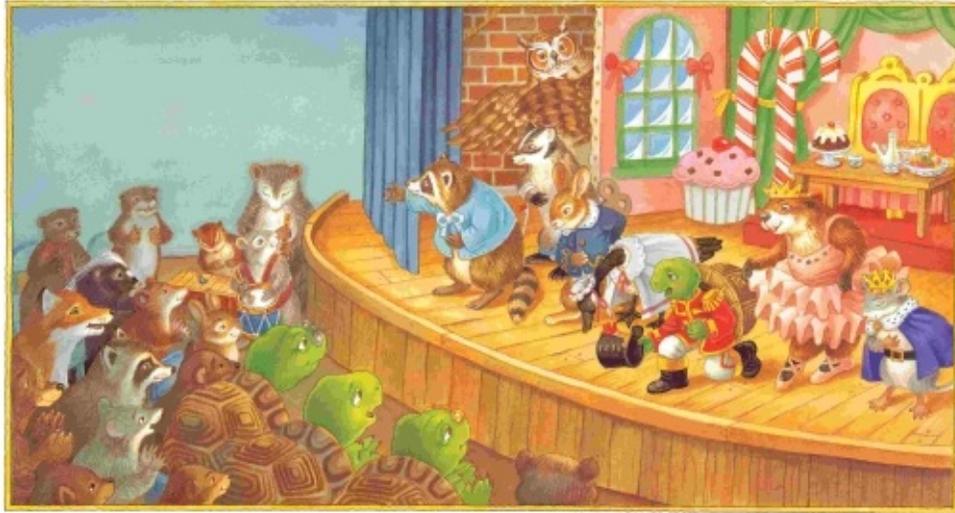
They started again. Badger couldn't be heard at the back of the room.
Mr. Owl nudged Franklin. "Why don't you help her out."
Franklin stood on stage beside Badger. "Try saying your lines like this."
Franklin spoke in a booming voice. He meant to say just one line. But
Franklin got carried away and said a whole speech.
When he was finished, everyone cheered.
"You got over your stage fright!" said Mr. Owl.
"I guess I did," laughed Franklin.
Badger looked relieved.



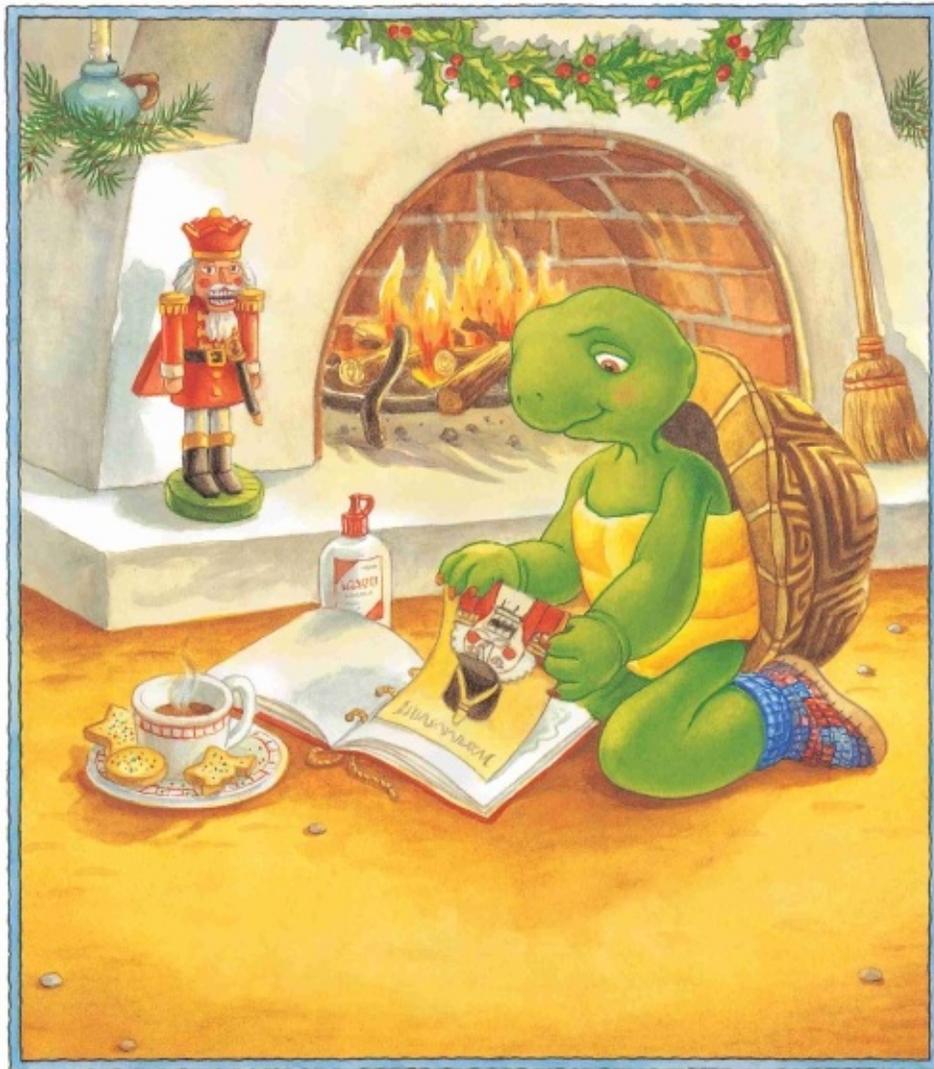


The next night, when the curtain opened, Franklin saw his family sitting in the front row. He took a deep breath.

Franklin's first words were soft and raspy. Keep going, he told himself. And he did. Franklin acted so well that he almost believed he really was the Nutcracker Prince.



It was a marvellous show. After the finale, the audience gave the class a standing ovation. Franklin and his friends bowed four times.



And that night, after a hot cocoa by the fire, Franklin pasted the show program into his scrapbook. It was a night he wanted to remember forever.

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