



I Wouldn't Tell a Lie

Hans Wilhelm









Waldo
presents

I Wouldn't Tell a Lie

After you have done something wrong, it sometimes seems easier to tell a lie instead of the truth. But people usually find out and then things can become even worse.

Monty, the little raccoon in our story, also learned that lying was not a good solution. Not only did he break a precious gift from his friend—but he also broke the trust his friend had in him.

How would you have acted if you were in Monty's place?

Your friend,
Waldo



A MERRITALE Book

I Wouldn't Tell a Lie

Written and illustrated by
Hans Wilhelm



GROLIER ENTERPRISES CORP.



For his birthday, Fritz received a new watch. He proudly showed it to his friends.

"Gee, it's also a stopwatch!" said Monty the raccoon, admiring the gift. "Let's have a race and you can time us!"





The friends
decided to run once
around the meadow.

They took their
places and Fritz
counted, "One, two,
three, go!"

Everyone ran as
fast as he could.

Fritz stayed
behind to check
their time. He
cheered them on.
"Faster! Faster!
Faster!" he cried.







Exhausted, the friends crossed the finish line.
"Two minutes and fifty-five seconds!" said Fritz.
"Maybe tomorrow we can make it a little faster."



Then Fritz asked, "Who wants to come with me to the top of that mountain? I've never climbed it before. There must be a great view of the valley. With my new watch we can check the time, so we won't be late for dinner," he added.

The friends were still tired from the run, but Monty said that he would like to join the climb. Fritz was happy, because Monty was his best friend.



With snacks in their backpacks, the two friends began their walk.

It was a perfect day. Fritz's new watch sparkled in the bright sunlight.



When they came to a big forest, Monty asked, "Do you think there are monsters here?"

"Nonsense," Fritz said, laughing. "Monsters don't live in forests. They only live in our minds as make-believe."

After the two friends had walked for a while, they decided to take a break.

"I'm hot!" said Monty as he looked at the sun high above them. "I could go for a swim." And Fritz agreed.

He left his new watch on a rock so it wouldn't get wet.







After their swim Fritz checked his watch. "We still have lots of time," he said. "Let's take a little nap before we walk on."



Fritz soon fell asleep. But Monty was not tired. He looked at Fritz's brand-new watch sparkling in the sunshine.

"I wonder how it would look on me," thought Monty, and he carefully picked it up. But as he tried to close the straps the watch slipped off his arm and fell onto the rock. The glass broke into dozens of pieces.

Monty was horrified. What had he done! His best friend's birthday gift was broken! What would he do? Fritz would not want to be his best friend anymore.







When Fritz woke up and saw his broken watch, he became very angry. He looked at Monty, but before he could say anything, Monty said, "I don't know what happened. It wasn't me! Maybe you accidentally crushed the watch during your sleep," he lied.

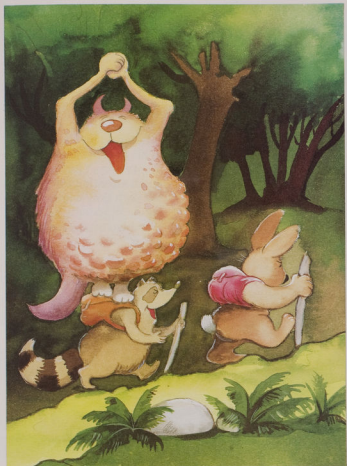
But somehow Fritz didn't seem to believe him. Scowling angrily, Fritz put the watch in his backpack.



"I wouldn't lie to you!" said Monty as they marched along through the woods. "I'm your friend! Maybe you just had a bad dream and hit the watch by mistake. These things can happen, you know!" he continued. "Or maybe a monster came and broke it. Or maybe it was an earthquake!"

Monty tried to sound as calm as possible, but it took a lot of effort. Deep down in his heart he felt that Fritz knew that he wasn't telling the truth. Monty felt awful.







Being so involved
in his own lies,
Monty wasn't paying
much attention to
the path they were
taking. Suddenly he
stumbled over a rock
and fell down.





And the more Monty invented new stories and made excuses, the heavier his heart became.

"Ouch!" Monty cried, and got up slowly. He felt tired and exhausted.

"Wait! I think I have to tell you something," he finally said to Fritz.



Then Monty poured out his heart. "What I said wasn't true. I was lying. You didn't break the watch. I did it when I tried the watch on while you were sleeping. It slipped off, and then the glass broke." With every word Monty's heart got lighter and lighter. He added, "All the time, I was too afraid to tell you. I thought if I told you, you wouldn't want to be my friend anymore!"



"You are absolutely right!" Fritz said. "I will not be your friend anymore. You have not only broken my watch but you have also lied to me! Real friends don't do that. I will never forgive you. You are no longer my friend. I'll go alone to the top of the mountain. I don't want to see you again. Ever!"

With that, Fritz marched off and left Monty behind.



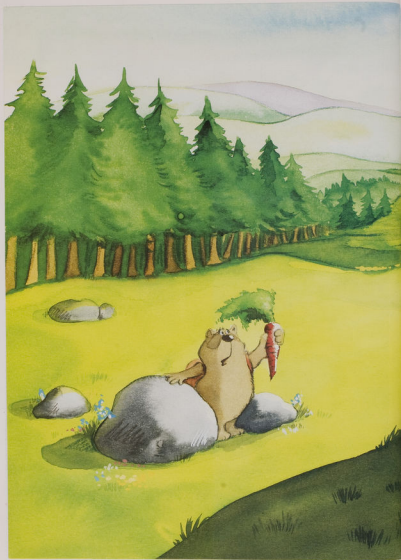




Fritz was so mad that he reached the mountaintop only with great difficulty. When he finally arrived, he was unable to enjoy the view on his own. He thought of Monty the whole time.



Although Fritz was very angry with Monty, deep down he wished that Monty was with him so they could talk about everything. Suddenly Fritz heard a voice behind him.





"Here!" said Monty. "I brought you my biggest carrot. Let me take your watch to the watchmaker tomorrow to have it fixed. Will you please forgive me? I'm very sorry about what happened!"



"Of course I'll forgive you!" Fritz cried, and the two friends hugged each other.

Then Fritz added, "We won't let a stupid broken watch break our friendship, too—will we?"

Now both of them felt very relieved and happy. They laughed and enjoyed the wonderful view from the top of the mountain together.





On their way back they passed through the forest again.

"Maybe you are right," said Fritz. "Maybe there are monsters in this forest."

"What kind of monsters could they be?" said Monty. "I wonder. . . ."





