



The Incredible Animal Race

By Lois Lewis

NARRATOR 1:

Creatures large and small have gathered in the main square of Animal Kingdom. They are eager to find out who will participate in this year's Incredible Animal Race.

NARRATOR 2:

Each year, the King and Queen choose two teams of animals to compete in a challenging race across the Animal Kingdom. The rulers have promised that this contest will be different from any other.

NARRATOR 3:

The animals clap and whistle as King Lawrence the Lion and Queen Lavinia the Lioness step to the microphone. Let's listen to what they're saying.

KING LAWRENCE: (waving to the crowd)

Greetings everyone! I know you are excited to meet the teams for this year's race, so I won't keep you in suspense any longer. Team 1 will be Andrea Antelope and Charlie Cheetah!

NARRATOR 1:

Andrea and Charlie step forward and wave to the cheering crowd.

QUEEN LAVINIA:

Team 2 will be Sabrina Sloth and Ted Turtle!

NARRATOR 2:

The crowd gasps as Sabrina and Ted step forward. Andrea and Charlie look at each other in surprise.

ANDREA ANTELOPE:

They're our competition? Everyone knows the sloth and the turtle among the slowest animals in the kingdom.

CHARLIE CHEETAH: (laughing)

We're sure to win against those slowpokes.

ANIMALS IN CROWD: (together, in a teasing tone)

Slowpokes! Slowpokes! Slowpokes!

KING LAWRENCE: (angrily)

Silence! Enough! The Queen and I will not tolerate such name calling!

NARRATOR 3:

Immediately, the animals are quiet.

KING LAWRENCE:

Queen Lavinia, please tell everyone the rules for the contest.

QUEEN LAVINIA:

The race will begin tomorrow at sunrise, here in the main square. The first team to cross the Great Stream, climb the High Hill, and reach the finish line in the Grand Stadium will be declared the winner.

KING LAWRENCE: (holding the prizes)

Each member of the winning team will receive a trophy and a bag of gold. Both teams are encouraged be creative in their plan to win.

QUEEN LAVINIA:

Good luck to you all.

NARRATOR 1:

The King and Queen congratulate the teams and leave the square. As the royal carriage pulls away, Patsy Parrot, Animal's Kingdom's popular television reporter, interviews the teams.

PATSY PARROT:

Andrea and Charlie, what are your plans for the competition?

ANDREA ANTELOPE:

Hah! We don't need a plan. All we need is our natural speed.

CHARLIE CHEETAH:

We're among the fastest animals in the land. We *will* win the contest.

PATSY PARROT:

Sabrina and Ted, you've got tough opponents! How will you win?

SABRINA SLOTH:

We've got a few ideas that we think will surprise everyone.

TED TURTLE:

We'll certainly do our best.

NARRATOR 2:

Team 1 spends the rest of the day celebrating, while Team 2 spends the day trying to create a plan for the race.

TED TURTLE:

Okay, Sabrina, what's our strategy?

SABRINA SLOTH:

I'm thinking! I'm thinking!

NARRATOR 3:

At that moment, Sabrina's cell phone rings. Her worried frown turns into a smile as she talks to a voice at the other end of the line.

SABRINA SLOTH:

Ted, I think we've found a unique way to win the competition.

NARRATOR 3:

Sabrina presses the speaker button so Ted can listen too. He nods and smiles as they and the mysterious voice work out a plan.

NARRATOR 2:

It's dawn on the day of the race. A crowd waits in the main square as King Lawrence arrives. Both teams are at the starting line.

KING LAWRENCE:

Teams, are you ready?

TEAMS 1 AND 2:

Yes, sire!

KING LAWRENCE:

Then let the race begin!

NARRATOR 3:

The King blows the royal whistle and the teams take off. As expected, Team 1 -- Andrea Antelope and Charlie Cheetah -- soon have a huge lead.

NARRATOR 1:

Team 1 quickly reaches the first checkpoint. As they approach the water, they are surprised to see that Sabrina Sloth and Ted Turtle are already there!

SABRINA SLOTH: (smiling)

Hi, guys.

CHARLIE CHEETAH: (turning to Andrea)

How . . . How'd they get here before us?

NARRATOR 2:

The teams race off again. Team 1 is in the lead. As they reach the second checkpoint at the High Hill, however, Andrea Antelope and Charlie Cheetah can't believe their eyes. Once again, Team 2 has beaten them!

TED TURTLE: (waving)

Glad you made it!

ANDREA ANTELOPE: (turning to Charlie)

What? This must be a trick!

NARRATOR 3:

The teams take off on the final leg of the race. Team 1 is running faster and harder than ever.

NARRATOR 1:

Just before sundown, Team 1 reaches the entrance to the Grand Stadium - just as Team 2 crosses the finish line.

NARRATOR 2:

To the amazement of everyone, Team 2 has won the race! An exhausted Team 1 collapses on the ground.

CHARLIE CHEETAH: (catching his breath)

How . . . How . . . did . . . you . . . do . . . it?

SABRINA SLOTH:

The King and Queen said to be creative in our plan for the contest. Meet our plan.

NARRATOR 3:

A bird with large wings swoops in and lands at Sabrina's feet.

TED TURTLE:

Meet Fredericka Falcon, founder and president of Falcon Airlines.

FREDRICKA FALCON:

I was watching television when the teams were announced. I became so angry when I heard the name calling and bragging, I offered my fleet of birds, free of charge, to Sabrina and Ted.

TED TURTLE:

With planning, Fredericka's airline helped us reach each checkpoint quickly and safely.

FREDRICKA FALCON:

Yes, we did. Falcons, you see, are even faster than antelopes and cheetahs.

QUEEN LAVINIA:

Well! Congratulations to Team 2 on a very creative competition.

NARRATOR 1:

Queen Lavinia and King Lawrence present the prizes to Team 2.

KING LAWRENCE:

All hail Sabrina Sloth and Ted Turtle, the winners of this year's Incredible Animal Race!

NARRATOR 2:

The Royal Trumpeters blow their horns. The crowd applauds as the Royal Carriage parades Team 2 around the stadium.

NARRATOR 3:

From that day forward, no one ever again called the sloth and the turtle mean names.

