



As Different as Pythons and Peacocks

By Sheila Kindred
(Based on a true story)

"Every star is different, and so is every child" (Children's Songbook, 142-43).

Beat you to the gift shop!" Andrea said, running as fast as a **cheetah** past her older brother, Michael.

They were exploring the zoo with their parents. It was one of their favorite places, but for different reasons. Michael was fascinated by reptiles, like **lizards**, **snakes**, and **crocodiles**. Andrea was amazed by colorful birds, like **parrots** and **toucans**. She especially loved **flamingos** because pink was her favorite color.

As they got close to the shop, Michael put on a burst of speed, like a **gazelle**. He got to the shop first and held the door open.

"You're as slow as a **sloth**!" he said with a smile.

"But fierce as a **lion**," Andrea growled as

How many animals can you count in this story? Look for the bolded words!

they walked inside.

Michael knew exactly what he wanted to buy. He went straight to the reptile area and picked up a book called *Awesome Facts about **Alligators***. With the money he had earned this summer, he would have just enough to buy it. He was about to head to the cashier when Andrea called his name. She was in a section that looked like a giant princess party.


"Come here!" Andrea said, excited as a **chimpanzee**. "I want to show you something!"

Michael shook his head. "No way. I'd rather stay with the reptiles."

"Please? Just for a second. I need your help."

With a sigh, Michael walked across the aisle. He felt like a **goldfish** out of water surrounded by the fluffy feather boas and sparkly jewelry.





“That’s what I want to buy,” Andrea said, pointing to a book on a high shelf out of her reach. “Can you get it down for me?”

Michael stretched tall like a **giraffe** and grabbed the book. It was full of stickers of people in fancy ballroom costumes.

“Why do you want that?” he asked. “It doesn’t have anything to do with the zoo.”

Andrea flipped open the book. “It has a page with animals. See? **Unicorns!**”

Michael rolled his eyes. Of course his sister would pick the one book at the zoo with the *pretend* animals in it. Then he noticed the price. “Do you even have enough money?”

When Andrea saw the price tag, her eyes got wide like an **owl**, and her smile disappeared.

“Sorry, sis,” Michael said. “Maybe you can find something that costs less.”

“But this is the only thing I wanted,” Andrea said. “Oh well.” She handed the book to Michael so he could put it back. Then she tried to smile again. “What did you find?”

Michael looked at the two books in his hands.

Then he made a decision. “Nothing,” he said.

“That is, nothing I need right now. Wait

here for a second.”

Quick as a **rabbit**, Michael returned his book to the reptile section. When he got back to Andrea, he handed her the sticker book she wanted, along with some of his money.

“Here. Now you should have enough to buy it.”

Andrea looked as confused as a **chameleon** on a rainbow. “But why would you spend your money on that?”


“Because it’s important to *you*,” Michael said. “We might be as different as a **python** and a **peacock**, but that’s OK. God still wants us to show love to each other.”

Andrea gave him a big **bear** hug. “Thank you so much! You can use the stickers whenever you want!”

“Well, they’re not really my style,” Michael said. “But it might be fun!”

Then they walked to the cashier together, as happy as two **frogs** in a pond! ●

The author lives in Iowa, USA.



“Be kind to one another despite our deepest differences.”

President M. Russell Ballard,
Acting President of the Quorum
of the Twelve Apostles

“Doctrine of Inclusion,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2001, 38.