

How the Tortoise Got His Shell

Come to my feast!

cried the great god Zeus.

Today I shall be wed!

And from each corner of the earth
all Zeus's creatures sped...

The fliers and the creepers,
The long, the short, the tall;
The crawlers and the leapers,
The feathered, furred and bald;
Hunters, biters, finders, fighters,
Hooters, whistlers, roarers;
Squeakers, screamers, squawkers, dreamers,
Nibblers, gulpers, borers.
Paws and claws from hills and shores
From south, from north, from west and east,
From mountain tops and forest floors
all Zeus's creatures joined the feast
except



the tortoise

They raved, they pranced, they feasted, danced;
six days and nights each creature stayed
to chatter, flatter, clap and cheer
at the great god Zeus's grand parade
except

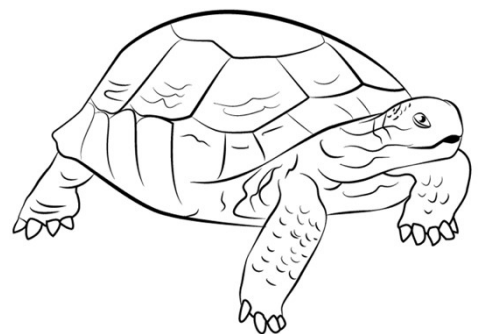
the tortoise

Next day...

*Why weren't you there, my friend, asked Zeus,
the day that I was wed?*

The tortoise smiled her small, slow smile
and raised her small, slow head.

*A wedding feast is fun, I guess,
But I'm a simple one.
I'm happy by myself, she said.
There's no place quite like home!*



*How dare you stay away! roared Zeus.
I'll show you just what for!
From this day on you'll carry your home
On your back, for evermore!*

*Judith Nicholls (The Works p57)
Unit 1 Day 3*