



# The Adventures of **Mo**

**Chapter 46**

By Carol Patton

## Chapter 46

### Finders Keepers

It was early in the morning when Mo felt the delivery truck move. He wondered where Finchy and him would be headed next. They had already visited so many states. How many could there possibly be? Where was Florida?

Alex, the truck driver, drove for nearly five hours, partially along Interstate 49 North. Along the way, they passed a city called, Shreveport, crossed a state line, and saw highway signs for Texarkana, Hope, and other cities. Mo and Finchy grew curious when they entered Crater of Diamonds State Park in Murfreesboro.

They looked at each other. What were diamonds?

Alex pulled into the parking lot in front of a building and was met by a tall man. While chatting about their jobs, the man told Alex that lots of people come to the park to search for diamonds. But only one out of every two hundred and fifty-three visitors find one. If they do, they get to keep it.

“Hardly seems worth the effort,” whispered Mo to Finchy. “Can you imagine if we found food once out of every two hundred and fifty-three times we searched? We’d starve.”

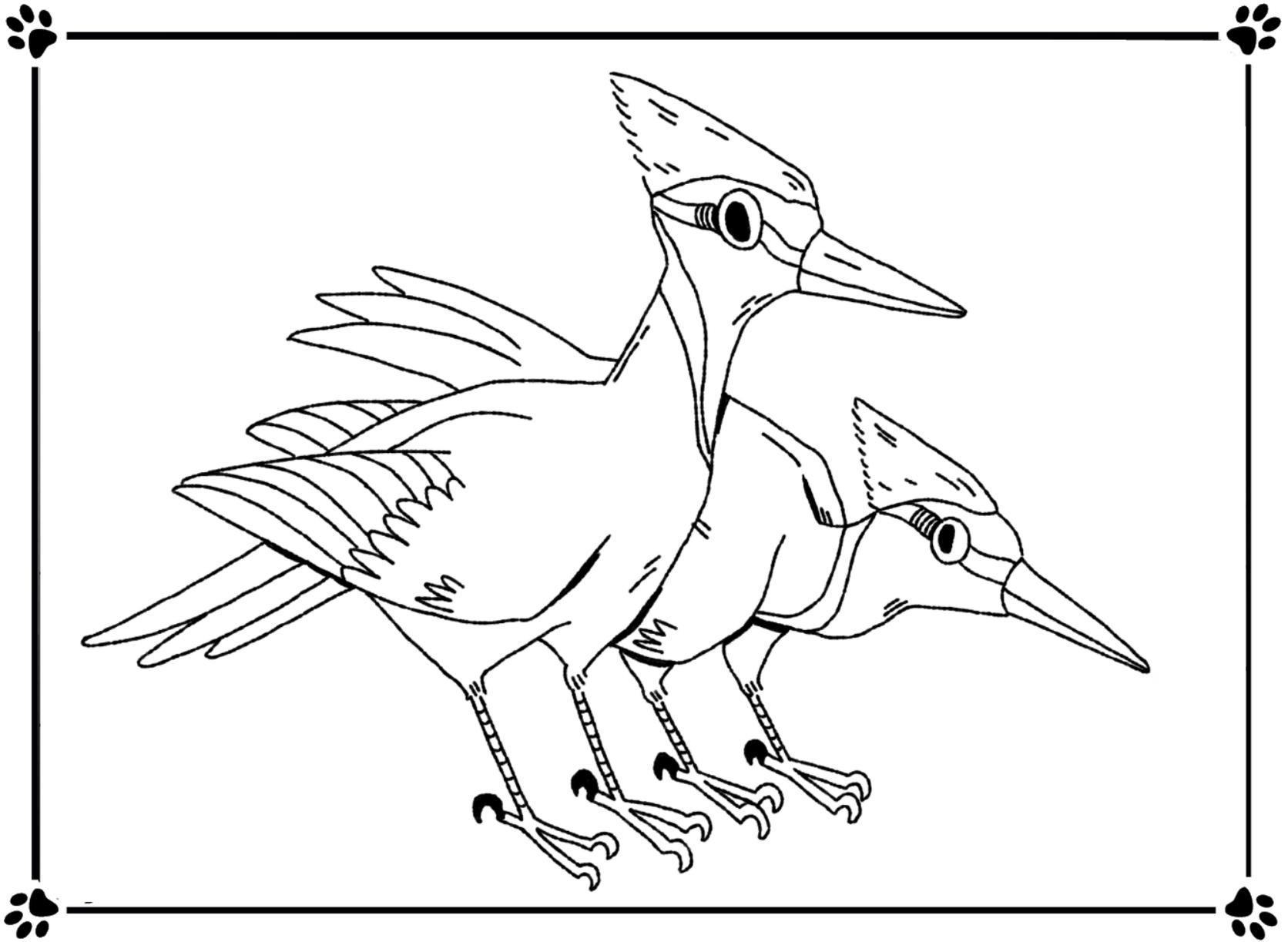
Mo and Finchy didn’t know what made diamonds so special. Why did people search for them? Did they taste good? Did they keep you warm? Maybe they had magic powers.

They began walking around the park while Alex delivered supplies. They followed a group of humans who were going to mine for diamonds in a big field.

“I’m going to find so many diamonds that I’ll be rich, filthy rich,” said a young boy. “Then I can buy anything I want!”

Mo and Finchy now understood. People searched for diamonds because they were worth lots of money. They could sell them and then use the money to buy things. But why did people need so much stuff?

They continued walking toward the field when two woodpeckers suddenly landed in front of them.



“Hi, my name is Darby and this is my sister, Adley,” said one of the woodpeckers.  
“Welcome to our home.”

Mo and Finchy introduced themselves and told them about their mission to return a lost key to someone who lived in Florida. The sisters then told them about the state park.

“Humans are so strange,” said Adley. “They come here to search for diamonds. They sell them and buy expensive things that they lock up so no one else can enjoy them. So why buy them in the first place?”

The animals agreed. Humans were a mystery.

The sisters asked Mo and Finchy if they wanted to search for diamonds. They knew of a secret place, far away from this crowd.

“That depends,” said Mo. “What exactly are they?”

“Diamonds are precious stones,” said Darby. “They’re also a mineral, the hardest mineral on this planet. The Earth has about four thousand minerals.”

Adley added that diamonds are at least one billion years old. She said the ancient Greeks believed they were pieces of stars that had fallen to earth.

Mo and Finchy thought it would be fun to spend the afternoon searching for diamonds. Would they glow or shine like stars?

“What do diamonds look like?” asked Finchy.

The sisters flew back home and quickly returned with several diamonds, dumping them on the ground. They looked like clear pebbles or round pieces of glass.

“I just finished cutting and polishing this one,” said Adley, pointing to a super bright diamond. “I like the way it shines. But I can’t figure out what to do with it. We use the other diamonds as footstools. Very comfortable.”

Mo and Finchy were ready to start their search. The sisters told them to dig twelve inches into the ground and then sift through the loose soil for anything that looked like the stones they had just shown them. Mo used his front paws to dig up the soil while Finchy poked at it, turning the soil over and over with his beak.

After nearly one hour, Mo and Finchy found lots of diamonds. Well, maybe. They put

the stones aside and kept digging. Before they knew it, there were about fifty stones in a giant pile next to them. But how could they tell if they were real?

“Place the stone in front of your mouth and breathe on it, which will fog it up,” said Darby. “If it’s real, the fog will clear up after a second or two because your breath won’t stick to its surface. But if it stays fogged for more than three seconds, then it’s fake.”

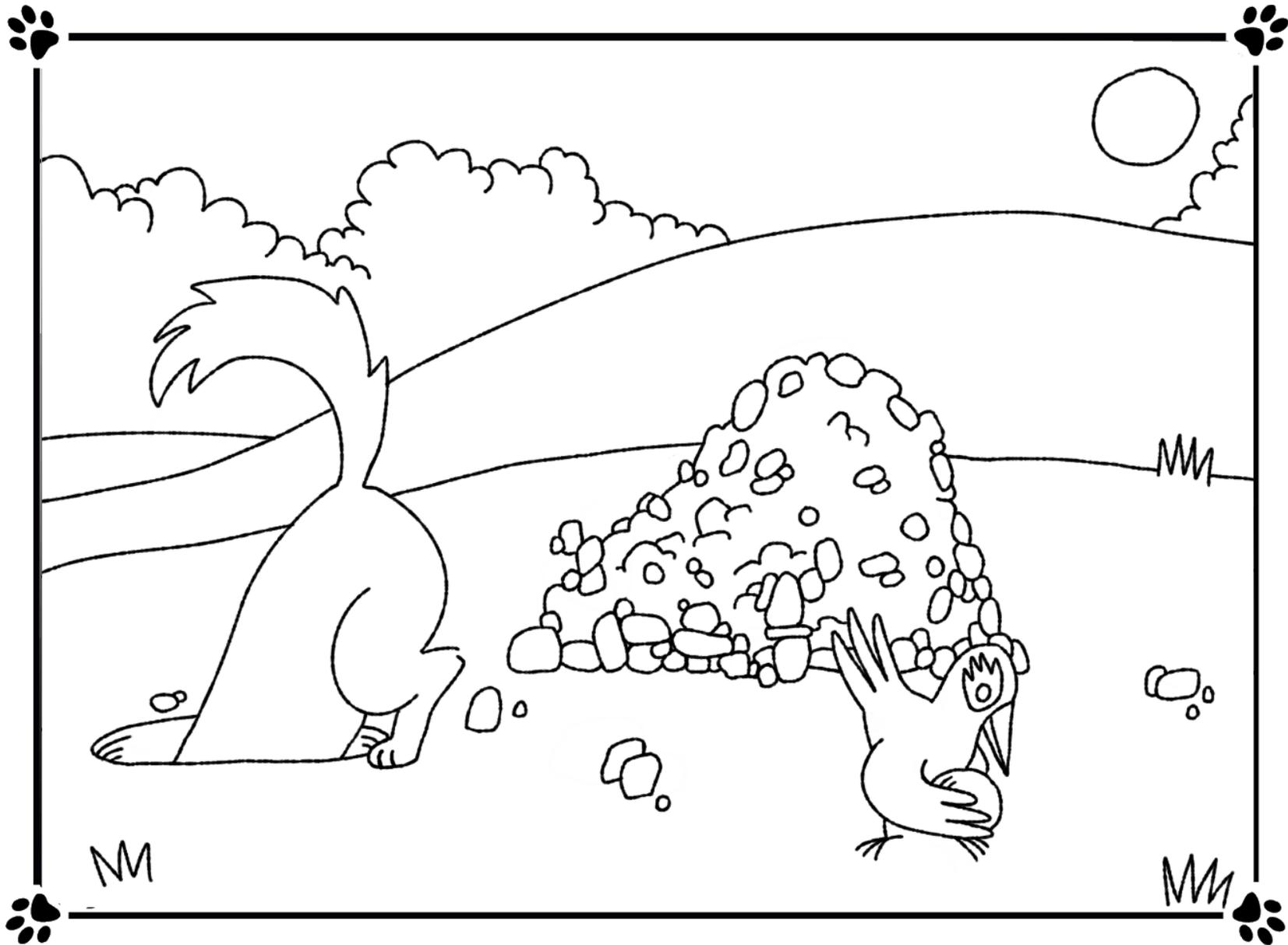
Mo and Finchy tested every stone in their pile.

Only one of the stones passed the test. Mo handed it to Adley. She dropped it into a glass of water. It sunk.

She smiled. “Congratulations!” she said. “You just found your very first diamond!”

Mo and Finchy were thrilled even though they had no idea what to do with it.

By now, everyone had worked up an appetite. The sisters spread out a blanket on the grass for a picnic. There was plenty to eat. They found all sorts of food in nearby trash cans.



After a wonderful meal, Mo and Finchy asked the sisters if they knew the name of their state. They had no idea.

“But this state has plenty to offer besides diamonds,” said Adley. “We make more rice than any other state. And cheese dip was invented by a restaurant here. I love to eat it with crackers at night.”

Darby then mentioned the Fouke Monster.

“He lives here,” she said. “I think Bigfoot is his cousin. Anyway, our friend saw him once. He’s at least eight feet tall, has hair all over his body, and weighs twice as much as humans. Even the big ones! But our friend doesn’t like him. Thinks he’s a troublemaker!”

Mo told them that Finchy and him had met Bigfoot and his family.

“I don’t know anything about his cousin, but Bigfoot is very nice and friendly,” Mo said. “We shared a meal together and then watched his kids compete in a canoe race.”

The sisters seemed impressed and asked Mo and Finchy about their journey. What

kinds of things did they see? Did they make new friends? What did they learn?

Mo and Finchy shared many stories about the different animals they had met and their experiences in different places.

“We’ve been to so many places but still don’t understand one thing,” said Mo. “Why do humans need so many clothes, toys, and other things? Animals don’t. Why do humans care more about what others wear or own rather than how nice, smart, or helpful they are?”

The sisters agreed. They said many birds in their community have also asked each other the same questions but no one could come up with any answers that made sense.

It was getting late. Mo and Finchy thanked the sisters for helping them find a real diamond. They promised to put it to good use.

After Mo and Finchy came back to the delivery truck, they decided to use the diamond as a footstool until they came up with a better idea. It was way too small for Mo but perfect for Finchy.



Finchy was quiet for a very long time, which was unlike him.

“Anything wrong?” asked Mo

“I was thinking about what you said – why humans need so much stuff and animals don’t,” said Finchy. “I think I figured out why. People need clothes because they don’t have fur to keep them warm. Since they aren’t as attractive as animals, they buy stuff to make them feel or look handsome or pretty. I guess you just have to feel sorry for them. They’re not made perfect like we are.”