





About the artist **LISA BETA**

Russian artist Lisa Beta had the best start an illustrator could want – her father was both an illustrator and animator. She learned how to draw from him, and grew up surrounded by illustration and animation work. These rich creative roots have served her well, and can be seen in her cartoony, character-led imagery. She loves to travel, and being a freelancer gives her the freedom to visit other countries while keeping up with work.

Lisa gained all her drawing skills growing up, but graduated after studying art history and criticism at Lomonosov State University in Moscow.

Like many artists, Lisa prefers drawing by hand rather than by using a graphics tablet to start off one of her images. Rough sketching on paper just feels more natural than using the monitor. Her sketches are scanned and worked up in 2D using Adobe Photoshop.

Lisa's images are cartoonish, colourful and fun, and she gives each of her characters life and their own backgrounds. Although they're created in 2D, there's a 3D feel to them thanks to the careful way she uses lighting to give them depth.

THE LIFE TREE

Illustrations by Lisa Beta

Words by Anon.

4	Prologue
6	Stork Delivery
8	Youngsters marvel at the new flower
10	Dad flies in with lunch
12	Ducks all swimming, having fun
14	Mummy rabbit and baby
16	Slides and having fun
18	Little monkey looking puzzled!
20	Elephant Dad and son
22	Snake and the sands of time
24	Winners and losers
26	Grumpy hedgehog
28	Mr Raccoon and Miss Fox
30	Raccoon is growing up fast!
32	Pizza Delivery Cheetah
34	A sheep stands out from the group by looking different
36	Laughing Hyenas
38	Red Panda looking very proud
40	Job, Money, Booze and Birds
42	Destined for the top!
44	First home for little pig
46	Raccoon proposes to Fox!
48	The Slow Sloth
50	Travelling Monkey
52	Bullying Bulldog!
54	Creative Mrs Badger
56	Grandad Gorilla and his family
58	Raccoon and Fox growing old, Mr Turtle is their friend.
60	Mrs Mole in a Wheelchair
62	With age and experience, comes wisdom
64	Raccoon is all alone
66	Little Mr Mouse climbs the final staircase

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This is a picture which appeals to both adults and children.

On one level, the picture is so full of fun and excitement that the young viewer will delight in looking at the characters again

and again and again: "More, please!" the delighted child will exclaim, as the "verses of wisdom" are read out.

Your child will find sheer joy following the characters through life!

However, like many great animation films, this wonderful picture also has a deep and meaningful story embedded within it, recognisable and understood by adults or by the 'big child' which exists within us all.

The Life Tree begins with the start of life itself.

You will observe that all of the characters at the base of the tree are young. Follow them through life to old age and beyond, and you too will be spellbound and emotionally moved by the magic of The Life Tree.

The tree itself is also passing through the seasons. Spring is at the base, then comes summer with bright green leaves. Autumn follows, and the leaves start to take on an amber colour. Finally comes the winter of life with snow topping the now naked branches; even The Life Tree is ageing!

The picture was produced by Russian artist Lisa Beta (known as Bean to her friends) in 2016, a period in our history where technology seemed to be moving into

areas of incredible capability. Lisa acknowledges Apple, Microsoft and Google within the picture. Google is represented by the multi-coloured hair chosen by the sheep who likes to look a little different; Apple and Microsoft are easier to spot.

The verses of wisdom, like the picture itself, can be read on two levels. At a simple level, they are amusing verses about each section of the picture; however, they can also be interpreted at an allegorical level.

By way of example, the hyena eating a chilli refers to a teenager's desire to show off, to impress others and to try new things like alcohol, smoking and drugs; it's a testing time in anyone's life. The sloth may seem lazy and laid back, but you will also find reference there to the evils of greed and desire for material things.

If you buy the picture as an adult, or for an adult, you can look back to the start of your own life. Do you recall some of the key messages contained within The Life Tree, and do you reflect, regret perhaps, look forward, or maybe decide to make some changes? The Life Tree does not provide any answers; it simply maps out events, and how you interpret them is down to you.

And of course there is a secret contained in every picture. Play hide and seek to find the name of the picture's original owner embedded within it!

No one ever really owns this picture; you are its guardian, agreeing to adopt it, care for it and hand it on to future generations. After all, this is The Life Tree; it has no start and no end; it is eternal.

STORK DELIVERY

A NEW LIFE GENERALLY BRINGS GREAT JOY!

Poor Mrs Fox – she's been waiting quite a while.

Now here comes Baby Fox; she looks up and gives a smile!

Even though our lives are often full of strife,

Most of us will smile when we see a brand new life.

And out pops a head from a tiny little house,

“Welcome, little fox!” says the tiny little mouse.



YOUNGSTERS MARVEL AT THE NEW FLOWER

NATURE IS WONDERFUL

The friends all gather round, much interest
do they show,

A little flower pops from the ground; like
them it's time to grow.

A tiny seed breaks cover and looks up to
the sun,

Food, drink and warmth: this is what
nature will supply, and then her work is
done.

And this is what we all will seek, laughter,
fun; hardship, pain, trouble and strife,

All these things will come to us – all these
things are LIFE!



DAD FLIES IN WITH LUNCH

THE ROLE OF ANY PARENT IS TO
PROVIDE FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY.

Dad is flying in; he knows just what
they need,

Hungry mouths are open; they all
just want a feed!

“Only one worm?” they cry; they all
must wait their turn,

Dad flies off again but soon he will
return.

With open mouths they squawk, the
worm just out of reach,

But each will get their share; this
lesson Dad must teach.



DUCKS ALL SWIMMING, HAVING FUN; MUM WATCHES CLOSELY!

PARENTAL PROTECTION

Three little ducks a-swimming and
playing with their mum,

Three little ducks a-swimming,
everyone having fun,

But mum knows who is watching, her
kids she won't neglect,

Her job is to watch over them and
always to protect.



MUMMY RABBIT AND BABY

LETTING GO STARTS EARLY!

Taking tiny steps, no fear does
bunny show,

Mum is very anxious, but she must
just let her go.

A worried look is on her face; it shows
a real concern,

But this is what life's all about, this
is how we learn.



The full version of 'The Verses of Wisdom' is available from our website, www.thelifetree.co.uk



WHEN YOU FEEL DOWN REMEMBER THIS:
'THE SUN IS ALWAYS SHINING
ABOVE THE CLOUDS'.

