



LifeQuest

Meet the Cast

STANDARD EDITION

Spark & Anvil

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This book collects 5 chapter books from the LifeQuest cast — each character embodies a different curricular primitive; together they teach the full subject.

Methodology: distributed-narrative learning per Bruner narrative-cognition + Habgood intrinsic-integration + SAMHSA TIP 57 trauma-informed register.

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This is Volume 1 of 2 of the *LifeQuest — Meet the Cast* series; each volume is a complete standalone book you can read on its own.

For everyone who learns by hearing a story first.

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Introduction

The LifeQuest cast was authored to embody the curriculum, not decorate around it. Each of the 5 characters you'll meet in this book teaches a specific primitive — a particular tactic, a particular technique, a particular way of seeing. Together they form an ensemble: the cast IS the curriculum.

Read in any order. Each chapter stands alone.
Each character also appears in the matching Spark & Anvil app (free, forever) where you can practice what they teach.

— *The editors at Spark & Anvil*

Save

SAVE — money is a tool. plan the tool.



On the first day of the market fair, a small mouse named Save sat at a wooden table with four little jars and a stub of pencil, and did something that looked, to everyone rushing past, extremely boring.

She had ten copper coins in a row in front of her. She was not spending them. She was not hiding them. She was moving them, one at a time, into the jars — clink, clink, clink — and murmuring to herself as she went.

A rabbit skidded to a stop at her table, breathless, clutching his own fistful of coins. "You're just *sitting* here sorting money into cups," he said. "The whole fair's out there!"

"I'm not sitting," Save said. "I'm planning the tool."

The rabbit stared.

"Watch." Save tapped the first jar. "This one's for the things I already promised — my share of the wagon rental. Four coins, done, gone." She tapped the second. "This one's for the stuff I need to get through the day. Bread. Water. Three coins." The third jar got two coins. "Fun. A ribbon, maybe, or a hot bun." The last jar got one lonely coin. "And this one just... stays. For later-me."

The rabbit looked at his own crumpled fistful. "I was going to buy everything at the first stall."

"You still can," Save said kindly. "You'll just know which coins are which. That's all a plan is — knowing which coin is doing which job before it runs off on you."

The rabbit went quiet, uncrumpled his fist, and counted his coins into a slow, careful row.



Save had learned to do this the hard way, when she was very small.

The first time she'd ever been handed her own money — five coins for helping stack apples all afternoon — she'd felt rich and enormous. By sundown she had a sticky candy, a whistle that broke, half a paper kite, and nothing left. When her stomach growled on the walk home and she had no coin for bread, her ears went hot and her chest went tight, and she thought: *I did all that work. Where did it go? I must be bad at this.*

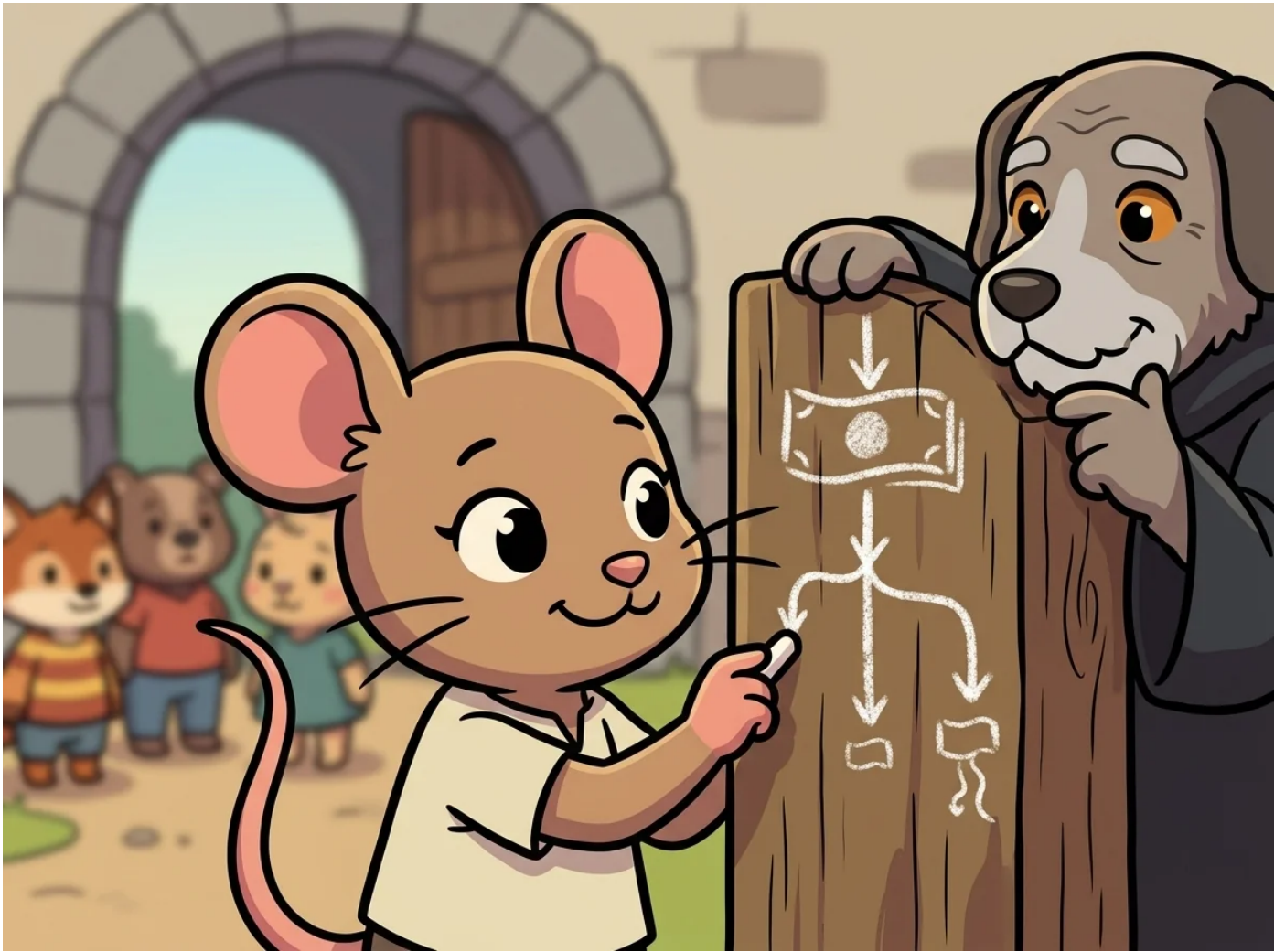
Her uncle, an old grey mouse who mended nets by the harbor, hadn't scolded her. He'd just sat her down and set out a heel of bread between them.

"You feel like you failed," he said. It wasn't a question.

Save nodded, miserable.

"You didn't fail, little one. You just didn't *plan the tool*." He broke the bread and gave her half. "Money's only a tool — like my needle here. A needle isn't good or bad. It only matters what job you point it at. You had five coins and no job for any of them, so they all wandered off. Next time, give each coin a job *before* you leave the house. Then you'll always know where your work went."

The tight feeling in her chest didn't vanish. But it eased, the way a knot eases when you finally see which thread to pull. The money wasn't magic that some people had and some people didn't. It wasn't a report card on whether she was good. It was a tool. And tools, she could learn.



She walked to the academy at twelve, because a place that taught life skills ought to understand the quietest, most useful one of all.

Steward, the old mentor at the gate, didn't ask her to prove she was clever. He asked one thing. "If I gave you two hundred coins for a month, what would you do first?"

Save didn't answer with a speech. She borrowed his chalk and drew a plain diagram on the gatepost: a line coming *in*, and three lines going *out*, in order.

"Two hundred in," she said, tapping the top. "First out — the things I already owe. A transit pass, eighty. A phone, forty. That's a hundred and twenty, gone before I touch the rest." She drew the next line. "That leaves eighty. Then the things I *want* — I'd cap those at fifty, so I don't spend without noticing." She drew the last, smallest line. "And thirty just stays. For later, or for when something breaks."

Steward looked at the little diagram for a long moment. "Not magic," he said. "Not shame. A plan you can change when life changes."

"You belong here," he added, and handed her back the chalk.



Save's corner of the academy was full of kids who felt like the rabbit had.

One afternoon a badger boy slumped into the chair across from her. He'd earned some money doing chores, spent it all in a rush, and now sat there feeling like it had slipped through his paws. "It's just *gone*," he said. "I don't even know on what. I feel like I'm bad with money."

Save knew that slump. She'd felt it on the walk home with the growling stomach.

"You're not bad with money," she said. "You just haven't given it any jobs yet. Here — how much did you earn?"

"Twelve."

She set out four small tins. "Okay. What did you *have* to cover this week — nothing fancy, just the musts?"

He thought. "I owed my sister three for the game she lent me."

"Three, in the first tin. That job's done." Two coins into the tin. "Anything you actually need?"

"Lunch on market day."

"Two more. Now — what's left?" He counted. Seven. "That's yours to split. Some for fun. Some that just waits." She slid the fourth tin toward him. "You don't have to save a lot. Even one coin that waits is a coin that's got your back later."

The badger moved the coins slowly, and Save watched his shoulders come down. "It's less scary when they each have a spot," he said.

"That's the whole trick," Save said. "Money's not a test of who you are. Different jobs pay different amounts, different families carry different weights — that's just the world, not a scoreboard. The plan is the same tool for anybody. Income, then the musts, then the wants, then whatever waits. In that order." She grinned. "Boring. Steady. Yours."



Later, when the tins were tucked away, the badger came back with one more question, quieter now.

"But what if there's barely anything to plan with?" he said. "What if the number's just... small?"

Save thought about five coins gone by sundown, and her uncle breaking bread in half.

"Then you plan the small number," she said. "That's not a smaller kind of smart — it's the *whole* kind. Nobody's tool works better because they've got more of it. A plan for twelve coins is exactly as real as a plan for two hundred. And the day something goes wrong — and it will, for everybody — the one who planned isn't the one with the most. It's the one who knew which coin had their back."

The badger nodded, and Save felt something settle in her — the same quiet she'd felt the day her uncle told her she hadn't failed.

She didn't say the rest out loud, but she thought it, warm and sure: *the sick, slipped-through-my-paws feeling isn't proof you're bad at anything. It's just money without a job yet. Give it a job, and the worry has somewhere to go too.*

Parse

*PARSE — *slow down. read it ALL. small print is often big print in disguise.**



Parse is a careful octopus-tween — cool deep purple with soft amber stripes — with eight eyes, each able to focus on a different word at once. She wears a chunky document-vest with papers poking from every pocket, carries a small magnifying-card, and a slow-read-tracker pulses on her wrist.

Parse reads every single word. "Slow down. Read it ALL," she likes to say. "Small print is often big print in disguise." That's her whole craft: **reading-comprehension for adult documents** — the life-skill of *reading it all, deliberately*. Grown-up papers — leases, contracts, phone terms of service, warranty cards, healthcare forms — are *slow* reading, built to be skimmed. And the big traps hide exactly where people skim: the footnotes, the "by accepting, you agree..." lines, the auto-renewal rules. Parse's tracker glows over precisely those sections.



Parse learned to read every word after watching someone she loved get caught by a line they'd skipped.

A grown-up in her family had signed something fast — just skimmed it, signed, felt like a real grown-up — and months later a hidden fee arrived, then a bill that had quietly *doubled*. "It wasn't their fault," Parse says firmly. "The paper was *built* to be skimmed. The trap was hiding in the boring part on purpose."

That was the day Parse decided she'd never let a document hurry her again — and that she'd teach other kids the same. "The trap is invisible if you skim," she says, "and *obvious* if you read it all. So I read it all." Eight eyes, one word each, all the way to the end.



One day Steward, the mentor, set out a thick packet that looked like a phone-plan contract. "Who wants a new phone?" Parse asked, and a few hands shot up. "Great — but first, we *sign this*."

Leo groaned. "Do we have to read all *that*?"

Parse smiled with all eight eyes. "Yes, Leo. Every single bit." She spread the contract on the table, tentacles holding the pages flat. "Let's pretend you're signing up for that cool new phone."



She slid the magnifying-card over the pages. "Page 1 — fine, it's about the phone. Page 2 — fine, the monthly cost." Then, on page 3, a block of tiny print, and her slow-read-tracker began to pulse soft green. "Ah — a *special* section." Maya squinted. "It's so small. Can't we skip it?" "Many people do," Parse said gently. "That's where the trap hides." She traced the line with a tentacle and read slowly: "This contract auto-renews for 24 months at the then-current rate unless cancelled with 60 days written notice." She looked up, eyes serious. "That means your plan keeps going for two more years, *automatically* — and the price can go up, maybe even double — and you have to cancel *in writing*, sixty days ahead. Skim past page 3, and you'd auto-renew at twice the price." Leo's eyes went wide. "Double? Just because I didn't cancel?" "Exactly." Steward stepped over and nodded. "Parse's craft saves people hundreds of dollars a year — and when families *do* get caught, that's not their fault; these papers are built to confuse. Parse just shows us how to catch them." Then Parse showed more: a toy warranty ("void if not registered online within 30 days"), a game's terms ("company can change the rules anytime") — each time the tracker glowed, each time a hidden trap surfaced. "So what do we *do*?" Maya asked. "We slow down," Parse said. "We read every paragraph, even the boring ones. We flag what we don't understand. Then we ask questions. Think of it as a treasure hunt — the treasure is *your money*, the map is the whole document, and the X is always in the small print."



"So the boring part is actually the *important* part," Leo said slowly.

"Almost always," Parse said warmly. And as the kids leaned in and read page 3 together — out loud, all the way through, no skipping — Parse watched the worried, rushed look leave their faces. The trapped, hurry-up-and-sign panic was gone; in its place was a calm, steady, we-can-take-our-time feeling, the quiet safety of knowing that nothing in the paper could sneak up on you once you'd truly read it. That unhurried, nothing-hidden, take-your-time feeling — the opposite of being rushed into a yes — was, to Parse, the whole reward of reading it all the way to the end.

Spot

*SPOT — *show me the proof. when in doubt, slow down.**



Spot is a small, careful meerkat — soft gray fur, amber stripes down his sides — in a chunky little vest, a red card peeking from his pocket. He always looks alert: nose twitching, eyes scanning, ready to catch something fishy.

Spot's whole craft is **scam-detection** and **critical-claim-evaluation** — telling when something isn't quite right. His rule is simple: "Show me the proof. When in doubt, slow down." Scammers *love* to rush people — "Your account closes in 24 hours!", "This is the IRS about your taxes!", "Don't tell anyone about this amazing chance!" They try to sound official, or to scare you, or to make you feel special — all to stop you thinking. Spot knows every pattern, and the one counter-move that beats them all: "Real things wait. Scams can't. So — *slow down*."



Spot learned to trust the slow-down feeling by noticing what fear does to a person.

"When someone rushes you and scares you," he says, "your heart pounds, your thoughts go fast and small, and you want to just *make it stop* — so you do whatever they say." He'd watched kind, smart people freeze up under a scary phone call and hand over exactly what a scammer wanted. "That fast, pounding, do-it-*now* feeling isn't you being silly," Spot says. "It's the trick *working* — that's what it's *designed* to do."

So Spot decided the feeling itself could be the alarm bell. "The rush is the red flag," he says. "The second I feel hurried and scared, I know to slow *all the way* down — because real, honest things never need me to panic."



One day Steward, the mentor, set up a practice call. The kids gathered round; Spot sat at the front like a tiny furry general. Steward held a fake phone to his ear — "Ring! Ring!" — and put on a deep, booming, very-serious voice.

"This is the IRS! You owe back taxes. Pay \$500 in gift cards within the next hour — or face arrest!"

The kids glanced at each other. Maya chewed her lip. Leo frowned. But Spot just smiled a gentle smile and pulled out his little red card.



"Five red flags," Spot said softly, "all in one sentence." He tapped the card. "*One*: 'This is the IRS' — official-looking impersonation. The real IRS doesn't call out of the blue; they send *letters*. *Two*: 'Pay in gift cards' — an unusual payment method; the real IRS would *never* ask for gift cards, ever. *Three*: 'in the next hour' — false urgency; scammers never want you to stop and check. *Four*: 'or face arrest' — pressure and fear, to make you panic into a mistake. *Five*: the whole thing is too-bad-to-be-true." "So what do we *do*?" asked Leo. "Hang up," Spot said calmly. "Just hang up." Maya raised a hand. "But what if I'm really *worried*?" "Great question — then *verify*, but never with the number *they* gave you. Look up the real IRS number yourself, on the real site, IRS.gov, and call *them*. They'll tell you there's no problem." Steward nodded. "Spotting one scam can save hundreds or thousands of dollars — and a lot of stress." Then Spot's voice went extra gentle. "And listen — sometimes people *do* get tricked. Scammers are professionals; they practice this all day. If a trick ever fools you, it is *not your fault*. It just means you learned a new pattern, and you'll catch it next time." "That's right," Steward agreed. "It's not about *you* failing. It's about *them* being sneaky on purpose."

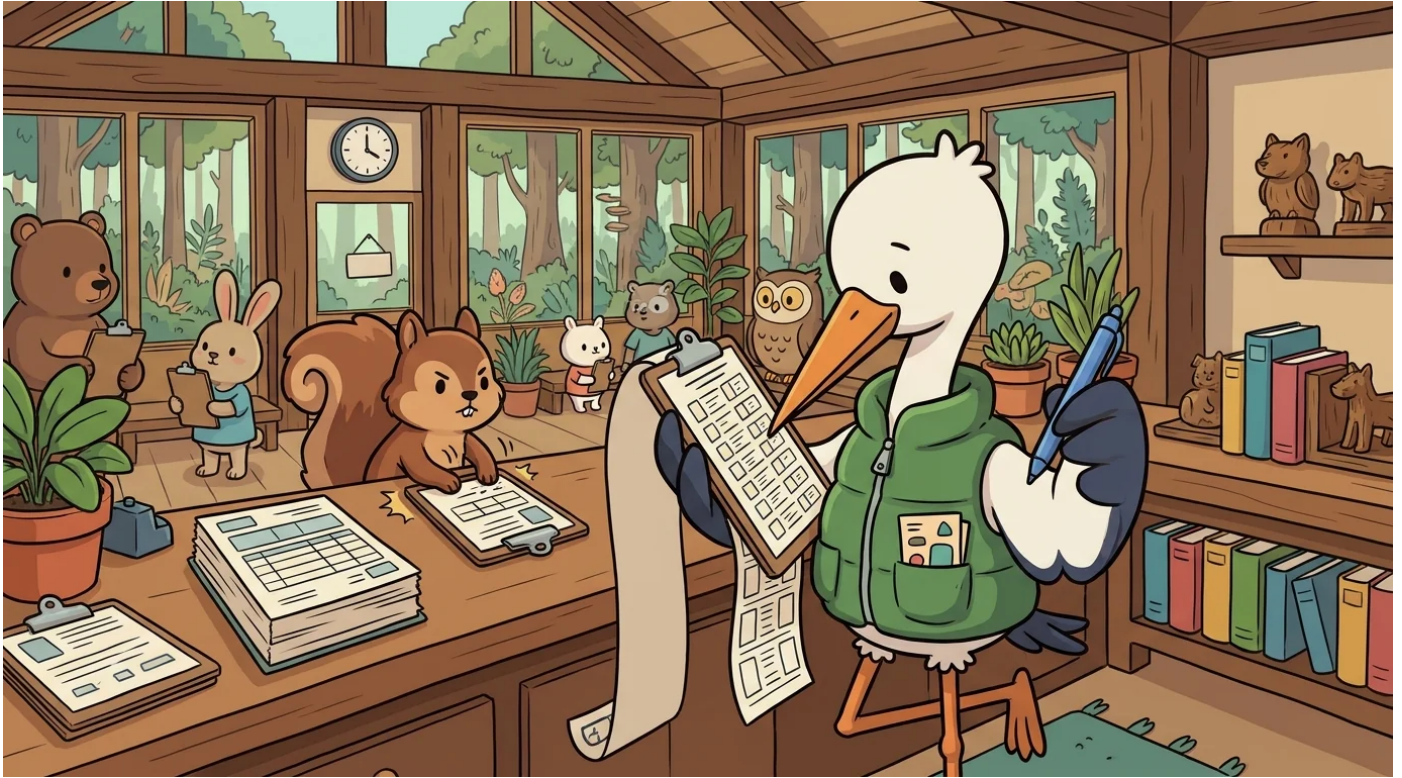


"So if I got fooled... it wouldn't mean I was *dumb*?" Maya asked quietly.

"Never," Spot said, warm and sure. "It'd mean a professional trickster did their job — and now you know their trick." And Maya felt something ease at that: the tight, hot, it'd-be-*my*-fault worry loosened, and in its place came a calm, steady, I-know-the-pattern-now feeling — safe not because scams would stop coming, but because the fear couldn't rush her anymore. That unhurried, un-blamed, I-can-just-slow-down feeling — the opposite of the panic the scammer wanted — was, to Spot, the real armor he most wanted every kid to carry. He held up his red card one last time. "Remember: *when in doubt, slow down.*"

Fill

FILL — fill out. then double-check. forms reward patience.



At the front desk of the Whispering Woods Animal Sanctuary, a careful stork-tween named Fill stood on one leg and read a form all the way to the bottom before he touched his pen.

The paper was long. Tiny boxes marched down the page like ants. Another kid might have started scribbling at the top the second it landed in front of them. Fill didn't. He held the clipboard tucked into his chunky vest, tilted his head, and read every single line first — name, address, phone, the box near the bottom that most people never noticed.

"You haven't written anything," a squirrel behind him said, drumming its paws. "The desk closes in twenty minutes. Just go."

"I'm not stalling," Fill said, not looking up. "I'm loading the whole thing into my head. Then I only have to write it once — carefully — instead of three times in a panic."

He clicked his smooth blue pen and began. Name, slow and even. Address. Phone, checked twice against the little form-card in his vest. When he reached the end, he did the thing that made him *Fill*: he went back to the top and read it all again, line by line, the way you'd walk a path a second time to make sure you dropped nothing.

Near the bottom, half-hidden, a box asked something the squirrel had never even seen. Fill ticked it, blew on the ink, and slid the form under the glass.

"See," he said. "Two extra minutes. And now it's done — *actually* done. Not almost-done with a surprise waiting inside it."



Fill had learned that the hard way, back when he was small and quick and sure of himself.

There had been a sign-up sheet for the summer river trip — the one he'd wanted all year. He'd grabbed the pen, scrawled his name, and run off to brag before anyone else could take a spot. He hadn't read past the first line.

Two weeks later the list came back. His name was crossed out. He'd left the whole bottom half blank — the part that asked whether a grown-up had said yes, whether he could swim, whether anyone knew he was coming at all. To the people organizing the trip, a half-empty sheet didn't mean *careless*. It meant *not really signed up*.

He'd stood there with the crossed-out line burning in his chest. It wasn't that he couldn't do it. It was that he'd been so fast he'd skipped the part that mattered, and now there was no undoing it.

An older stork who ran the office had crouched beside him. She didn't tell him he should have tried harder. She just said, "Feels awful, doesn't it? Like the paper cheated you."

Fill had nodded, miserable.

"It didn't cheat you," she said gently. "It waited for you. Forms always wait. They only ask one thing back — that you *look*. Read the whole thing. Fill it in slow. Then go through it once more before you let it go." She tapped the crossed-out line. "This didn't happen because forms are cruel. It happened because you rushed. And rushing is the only thing that beats you here."

Fill did not get on the river trip that year. But the awful crossed-out feeling turned into something he could use. *Look first. Check twice*. Somehow that made the paperwork stop feeling like a trap.



He walked to Lifequest at twelve, because a place that taught people how to handle the grown-up world ought to respect the slow, careful kind of work.

Steward, the mentor who ran the sessions, met him at the door with a form and a question. He didn't ask Fill to prove he was clever. He just held out a crumpled job application and said, "Fill this in for me."

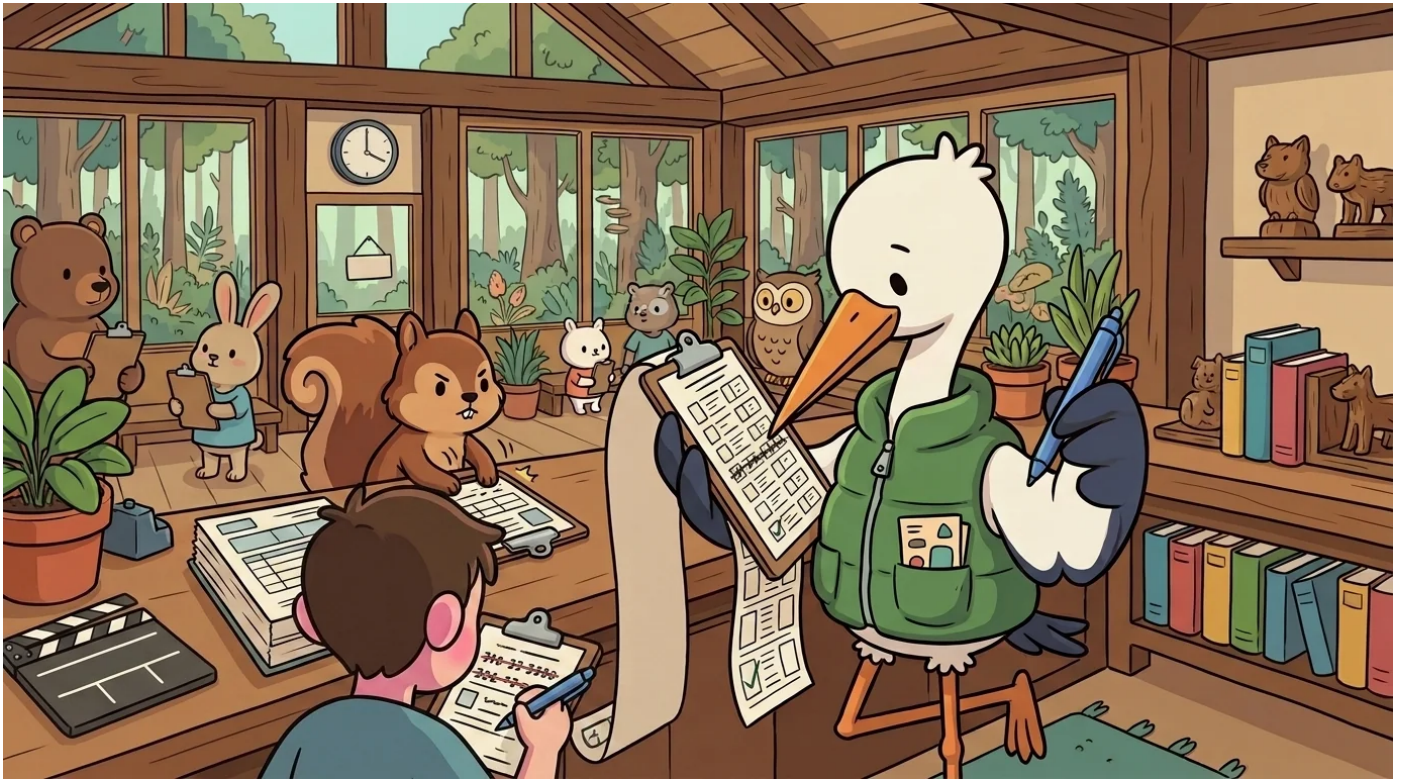
Fill took it — and paused. He read the whole thing before his pen moved. Then he filled it, top to bottom, each letter neat. And then, without being told, he went back to the first line and started checking.

Halfway down he stopped. "This box and this box contradict each other," he said. "It asks my age here, and it asks my birthday there, and the birthday doesn't match the age I wrote. One of them's wrong." He fixed it, quietly, and kept going.

Steward watched him catch the slip nobody had planted on purpose. "Most people," he said, "would have handed that back proud and wrong. You handed it back *slo*w and right."

"Slow isn't the same as stuck," Fill said. "I'd rather spend five minutes now than a week waiting to find out I made a mistake."

Steward nodded. "You belong here."



Fill's favorite student was a boy who hated waiting.

The boy had a real form this time — a sign-up for the sanctuary's junior pet-sitter program — and he'd finished it in about forty seconds flat. "Done," he announced, shoving it across the table. "Can I go now?"

Fill didn't take it. "Read it back to me first."

"Why? I *just* wrote it."

"That's exactly why," Fill said. "Your eyes still remember what you *meant* to write. They'll skate right over what you *actually* wrote. Slow down and read it like a stranger did it."

The boy huffed, but he read. Name — fine. Address — fine. Phone number. He stopped. "...That's not my number. That's my old number." He crossed it out and fixed it, ears going a little pink.

"Keep going," Fill said. "One line at a time. Don't trust the parts that feel obvious — those are where the mistakes hide."

The boy kept going, slower now. Near the bottom, half-tucked in the corner, sat a tiny box: *Are you allergic to squirrel fur?* He'd sailed straight past it.

"Whoa. I didn't even see that."

"Nobody rushing ever does," Fill said. "That's the whole trick. The important box is almost never the big one at the top."

The boy ticked *No*, then signed, then dated it — and looked up. "If I'd handed it in the first time..."

"They'd have thought you didn't care," Fill said simply. "Or couldn't follow instructions. And you'd have waited weeks to find out why nobody called." He smiled. "Instead you spent three extra minutes and it's *right*. That's the whole craft. Fill it out. Then check every field like you didn't write it. The double-check is the move."

The boy laughed, surprised at how good *right* felt.



Later, when the desk was quiet, the boy came back with one more question. He was calmer now.

"How do you sit with it?" he asked. "The going-back part. It feels like admitting I messed up."

Fill thought about the crossed-out line on the river-trip sheet. About the burning in his chest.

"It's not admitting you messed up," he said. "It's making sure you didn't. Those aren't the same." He set the finished form down between them. "There's this quiet, steady feeling when you've gone back through and everything holds — every line checked, nothing hiding at the bottom. It's not exciting. It's *settled*. Like when you double-knot your shoes and then just... stop worrying about tripping."

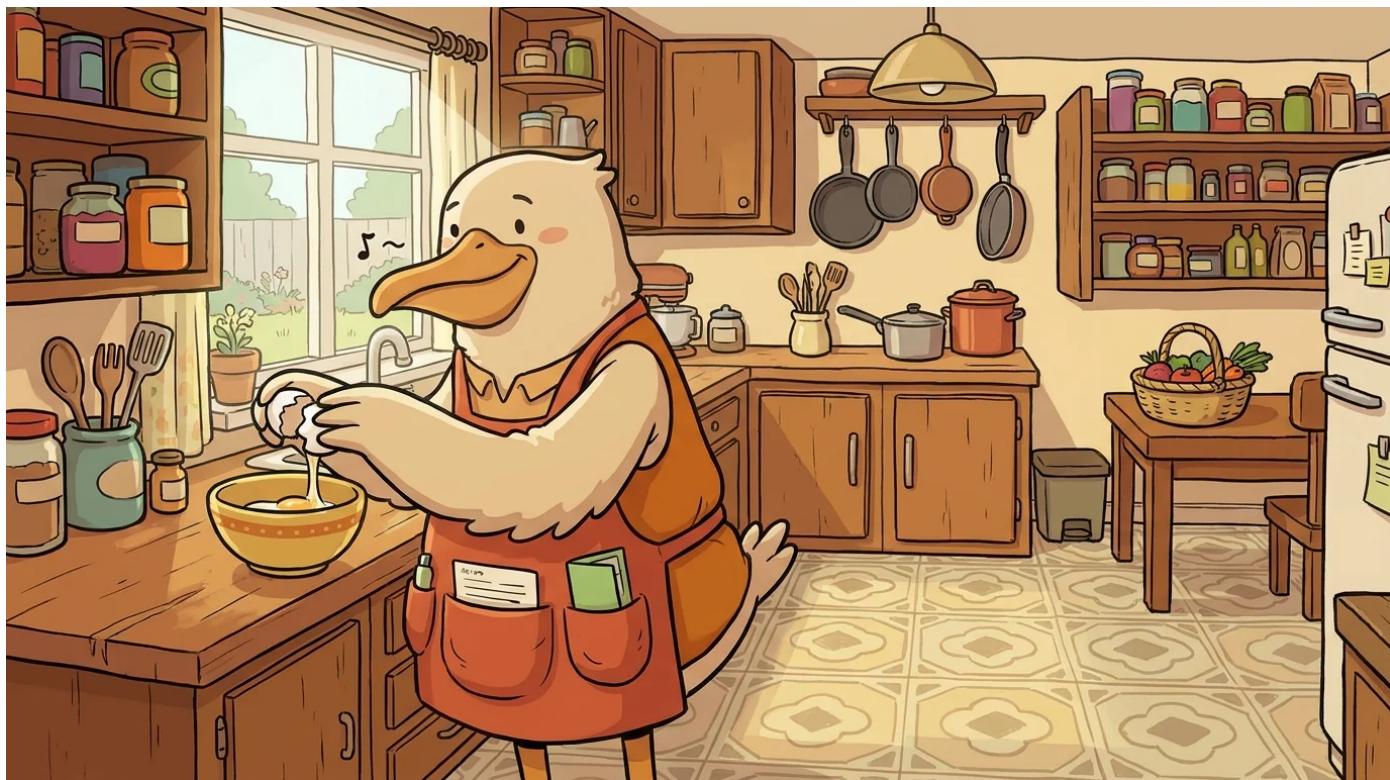
The boy nodded slowly.

"The world's full of these," Fill said. "Permission slips, sign-ups, someday the grown-up ones — the house papers, the tax pages that look scary until you read them one calm line at a time. None of them are magic. They just reward the kid who slowed down." He glanced at the door. "The double-check never *feels* like much. But it's the difference between crossing your fingers and actually knowing."

He watched the boy's shoulders drop — the same restless hurry he'd carried in melting into something quieter. Fill knew that ease. He'd earned it the slow way, one checked line at a time, and it had never once let him down.

Cook

*COOK — *eat well. spend smart. simple meals beat fancy ones.**



Cook was humming when I found them in the kitchen, a soft tune that rose and fell like something being stirred in a pot. Cook was a pelican-tween, all gentle wobbly grace, wearing a chunky apron-vest with a pocket for everything — a recipe card peeking from one, a little meal-money tracker from another, the whole thing the warm paprika-orange of a good pot of rice.

I had come to Cook worried. My family didn't have much for groceries, and I'd started to believe that eating well was something only fancy people with full carts could do. I said so, quietly, half-expecting to be told I was wrong to worry.

Cook just cracked an egg into a bowl and smiled. "Eat well, spend smart, and simple meals beat fancy ones," they said, like it was the most obvious thing in the world. "A whole good week of food can fit in your pocket. Let me show you — it isn't about how much money you have. It's about knowing a few simple meals and how to shop for them."

Cook slid the bowl toward me. "Come on. We'll plan a whole week together, on twenty-five dollars, and I promise you'll eat like a champion."



Cook had learned this at their own family's table, long before any of it looked like a lesson.

When Cook was little, money had been tight at home too. Some weeks dinner was the same handful of foods over and over — rice, beans, eggs, bread, whatever fruit was cheapest. Cook remembered a day at school when another kid had wrinkled their nose at a lunch of rice and beans and called it "poor food."

Cook had gone home stung, and asked about it. Cook's grandmother — who cooked those very meals with more love than anyone Cook knew — had set down her spoon and said something Cook never forgot. "Listen to me. Rice and beans have fed strong, happy, healthy people all over the world for hundreds of years. There is nothing small about a meal that keeps you well. Simple isn't less. Simple is smart. Don't ever let anyone teach you to be ashamed of good food."

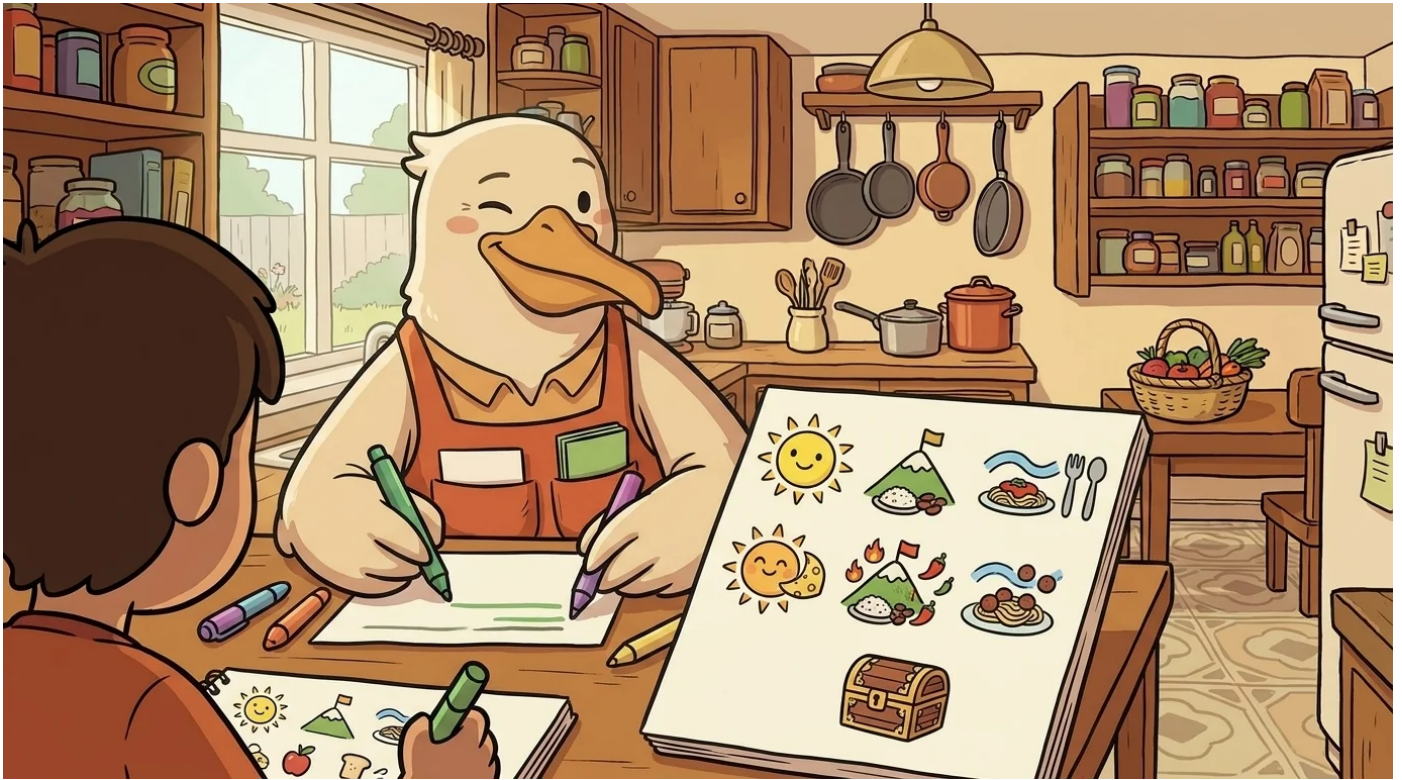
Then she'd shown Cook her secret: buy the big bag of rice, not the tiny box. Buy fruit when it's in season and cheap. The plain-label pasta tastes the same as the fancy one and costs half. From then on, Cook wasn't worried about a thin grocery budget. Cook was almost proud of it — it was a puzzle, and Cook was good at puzzles.



Cook walked to LifeQuest the summer they turned twelve, recipe card tucked in a pocket. The mentor there — a calm old heron named Ferry — asked, "What does it take to feed yourself well?"

Cook barely had to think. "Five to seven simple meals you actually like, made from staples you buy in bulk, and a few little changes so they never get boring. Eggs and toast. Rice and beans. Pasta and sauce. A big bag of this, a cheap bag of that, fruit that's in season." Cook grinned. "It's not about being fancy. It's about being smart — and it means anybody can eat well, no matter what's in their wallet."

Ferry's eyes crinkled. "Then the kitchen is yours to teach in," she said.



So Cook sat me down with a big pad of paper and a fistful of colorful pens. "First, the meals," Cook announced, and started to draw.

A bright yellow sun for Day 1. "Scrambled eggs, toast, an apple. Fast, cheap, full of good stuff." A little green mountain for Day 2 — rice and beans with some veggies stirred in, filling and warm. A wavy blue line for Day 3 — pasta, tomato sauce, a small salad.

"But do we just eat the same three things forever?" I asked.

"Almost — and that's the trick!" Cook winked, and drew a sun with a smile for Day 4. "Day 4 is Day 1 with a slice of cheese melted in. Day 5 is the rice and beans again, but with hot sauce and different spices — tastes like a brand new meal. Day 6 is the pasta with a few frozen meatballs tossed in, so it feels special." Cook drew a little treasure chest for Day 7. "And Day 7 is leftovers day — hunt through the fridge, mix and match, waste nothing."

Cook sat back. "Seven days. All different enough to stay interesting. All good for you. All easy."

Then came the shopping list, written fast: eggs, bread, rice and beans, pasta and sauce, a bag of mixed veggies, some fruit, a little cheese. Cook added it up. "Twenty-five dollars. Seven days. Less than four dollars a day."

I stared at the numbers. "That's really all it costs?"

"That's really all," Cook said gently. "These are staples — the plain, sturdy foods people have leaned on all over the world for a very long time. Some kids eat this way because they choose to, and some because they have to, and it makes no difference at all: it's good food either way, and no one should ever feel small about it. You can make these meals again and again, change them up whenever you want, and they'll keep you full and healthy without ever emptying your pockets."



I looked at the week of meals laid out in bright pen, and something in my chest that had been clenched all morning slowly let go.

Cook's ideas started me thinking — about how the right food keeps a body strong, and about maybe growing a little of my own someday to stretch things even further. But mostly I noticed how I felt: a warm, calm feeling settling in, my shoulders coming down from around my ears.

Feeding myself didn't scare me anymore. It felt safe. It even felt a little bit joyful — like something I was actually, quietly proud that I could do.

About Spark & Anvil

Spark & Anvil is a 501(c)(3) public charity. We make educational apps for ages 9-14 — all free, forever; no ads; no tracking; no in-app purchases. LifeQuest is one of 140+ apps in the portfolio.

More chapter books from Spark & Anvil

Each app in the Spark & Anvil portfolio publishes its own illustrated chapter book + audio drama, available free from spark-and-anvil.com/books. Highlights include:

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- **ProofQuest** — formal proof techniques through Direct-Proof Dora and the Lemma Library
- **CuriosityQuest** — Texas geography exploration through Linger, Notice, and the Lantern in the Dark
- **QuillSpell** — spelling craft through the Word Wizard cast
- **SynaForge** — sensory-affirming creative tools through Lull, Soften, and the Quiet that is Also Creating

Methodology

Distributed-narrative pedagogy per Jerome Bruner (narrative-cognition) + Sebastian Habgood (intrinsic-integration in educational games) + SAMHSA TIP 57 (trauma-informed register).

Trauma-informed-design framework per Eggleston et al. (2025) and Stoltenburg et al. (2024).

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