Gecko and the Singing Cart

A little adventure about
trying another way

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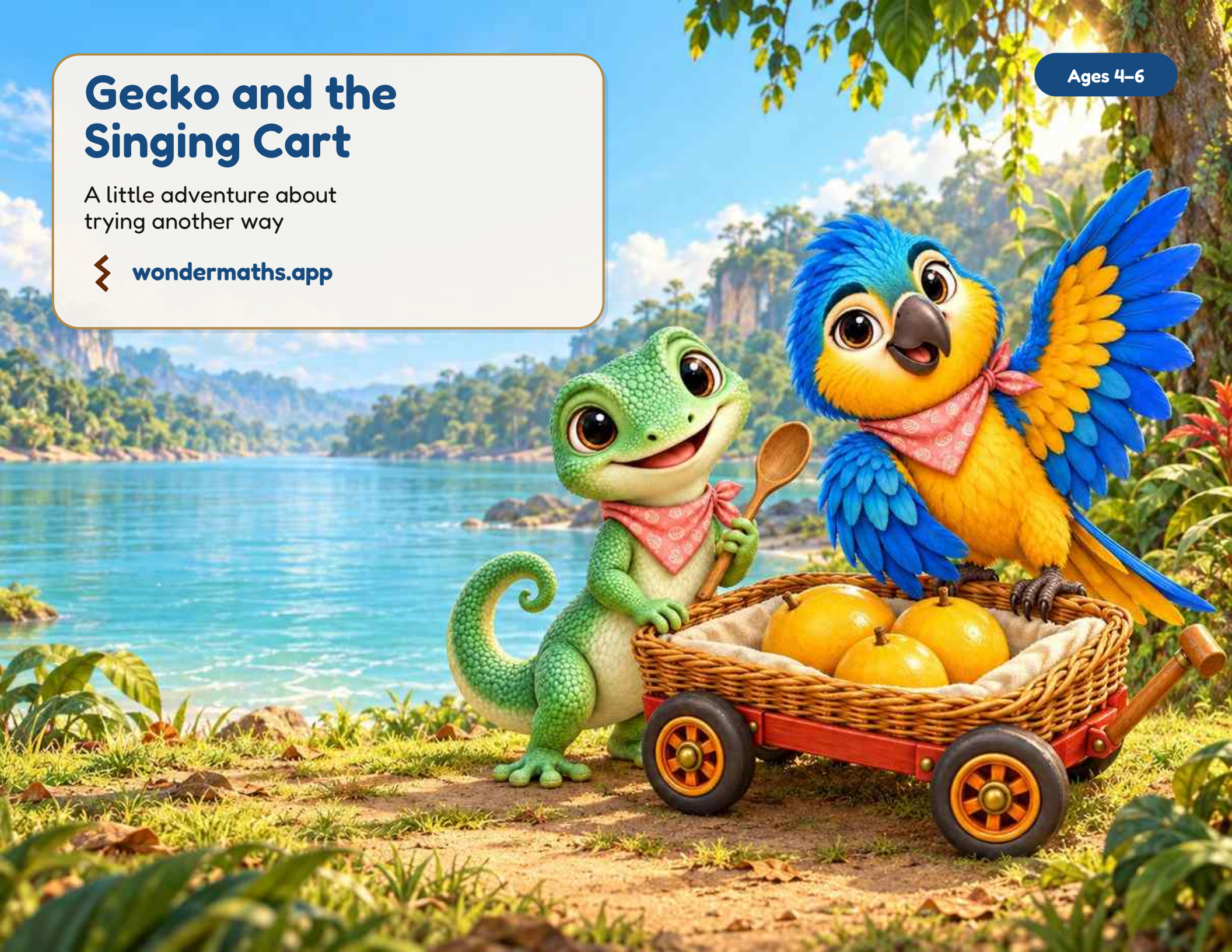
Ages 4–6





Oh! That little cart has something to say. Come closer. I'm Ori, and this morning, down by the Great River, Gecko was making a delivery. His cart had a soft basket, two wooden wheels, and one very squeaky opinion. “Three yellow fruits for Aro. Then we can have our picnic!”



The fruits were called abiu. Aro had set out three little bowls under a shady tree. Beside them lay a wooden spoon. Usually, Gecko checked his basket before he left. Today, he was already pulling the handle. He wanted to bring the fruit himself, all the way to the picnic blanket. “I'll bring the bowls. You bring the fruit!”



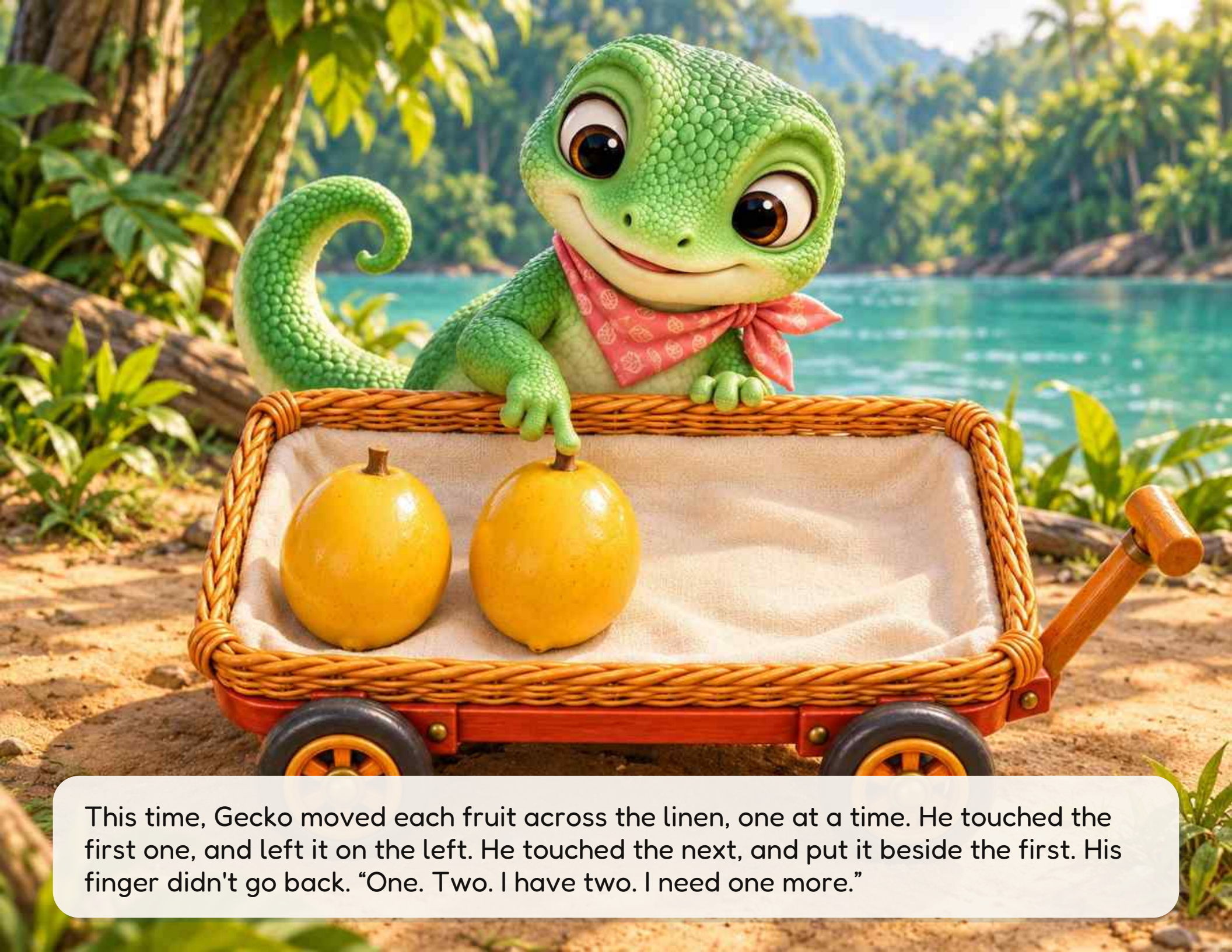
Gecko's tail made a happy curl. He peeked into the basket as he walked. There was a fruit near the front, and another near the back. Between them was a great big patch of empty linen. “That doesn't look like a whole picnic.” He stopped and spread the fruits apart. Now they reached from one side of the basket to the other. That looked better! Except the empty patch had moved to the middle. Gecko gave the basket a little wiggle. The fruits rolled together, and a small order card slipped out from underneath. “Oh. Spreading them out didn't give me another fruit.”



He picked up the card. It showed three dots. Three fruits for three bowls. One bowl would still be waiting if he took this basket straight to Aro. He needed to check what he actually had. Gecko tucked the card safely beside the handle and set off again, counting as he went. “One… two… Was that three?”



The wheel had squeaked right in the middle. Gecko looked down at it, then back into the basket. His finger was resting on the first fruit again. “Did I count you already? Oh, now I've lost my place.” He took another step. Another squeak. He stopped. The squeak stopped too. Gecko looked at the wheel. He looked at the fruit. Then he set the handle down very gently. “You can sing later, little wheel. I'm going to try this standing still.”



This time, Gecko moved each fruit across the linen, one at a time. He touched the first one, and left it on the left. He touched the next, and put it beside the first. His finger didn't go back. “One. Two. I have two. I need one more.”



Beside Aro's tree stood the little supply crate. There were more abiu inside. Gecko went over to his friend. “Aro, will you hold the crate steady? I'm adding one fruit to my delivery.” “Of course. I've got it.”



Gecko lifted one fruit out of the crate and nestled it beside the other two. He left the cart still and checked his basket again. “One. Two. Three. Three fruits. Ready for our picnic!”



He pulled the cart the last few steps to the blanket. This time, when the wheel squeaked, Gecko knew his counting was already finished. He placed one fruit in each bowl. No bowl was waiting anymore. “Thank you for bringing our fruit. Shall we start?”



Aro picked up the wooden spoon and tapped the empty edges of the bowls. Gecko rocked the cart just a little. The wheel answered. Three soft taps, one tiny squeak. A picnic band! “Now it's your turn to sing, little wheel.” They ate in the shade, with the cart resting beside them. When one way hadn't worked, Gecko had stopped and tried another. The picnic was ready. And the little wheel could wait until after the next bite.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A little pause.
A new way.
Ori says:
When one way isn't working,
you can stop and try another.
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