

# Wildfire Ready Raccoon



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# *Special Thanks*

*To all the firefighters, policemen and volunteers who came to California in our time of need. You will never be forgotten.*

*Special thanks to our corporate sponsors for without them this book would not be published.*

**R**esting in the foothills of Northern California, lays the little town of Paradise.

And in that little town, on a little street, in a little house, lived a raccoon named "Ready."

Everyone called him Ready because he was always ready for everything.



D. Thompson



He gathered wood for winter, raked up all his leaves in the fall, got his garden ready for spring, and put up an umbrella on his picnic table for the summer sun. Each morning, Ready would take his dog for a walk...

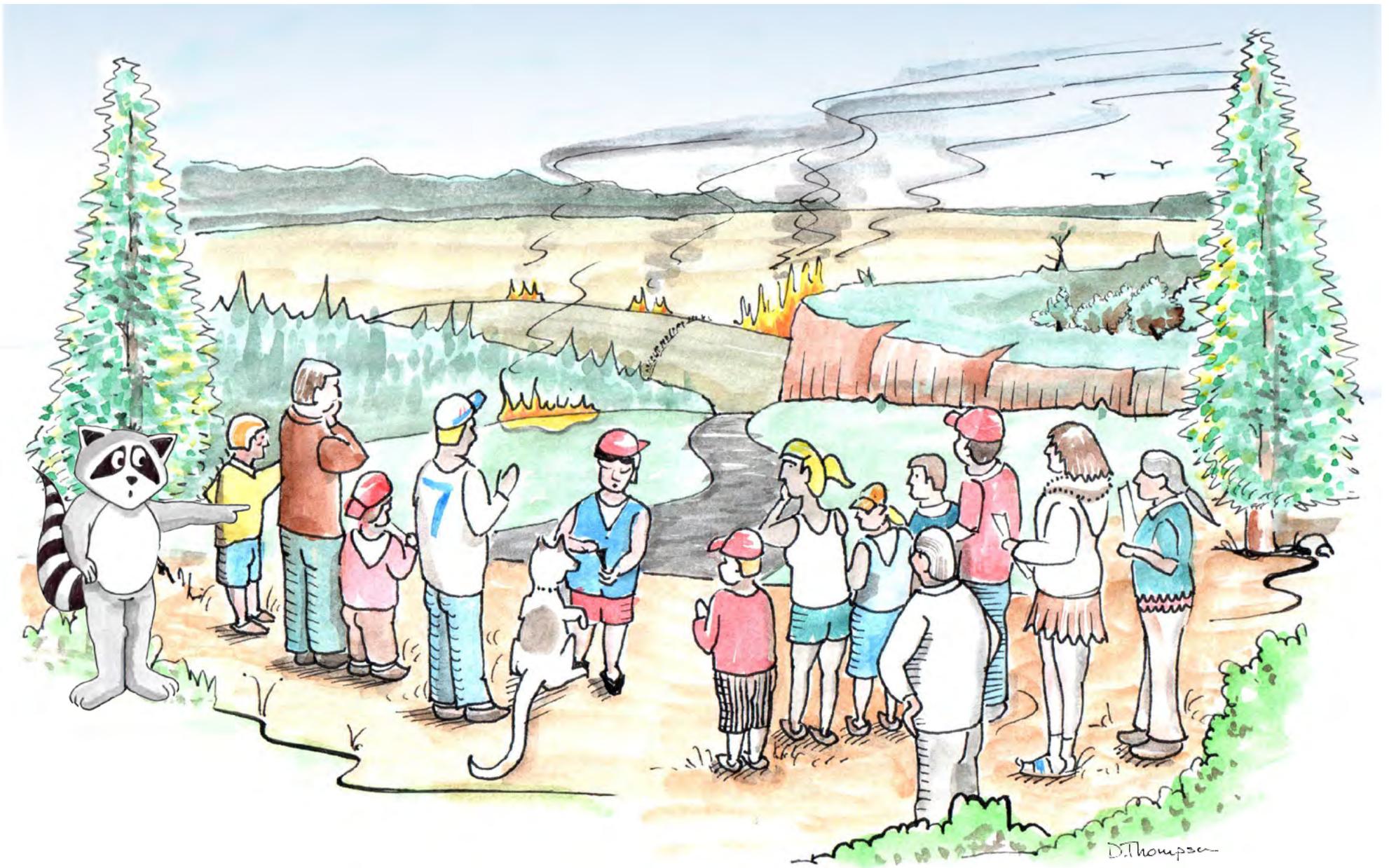
He would say hi to all his forest friends.  
“Good Morning, Mr. Owl” - - - “Hoot, hoot,” Mr. Owl would call.  
“Good Morning, Mr. and Mrs. Turkey and all the little Gobblers” -  
“Gobble, Gobble,” they’d all respond.



As he passed his human friends Ready would say "Hello" to them, too... "Good Morning, Dr. and Mrs. Jones."  
"Hi, Ready, nice day isn't it?" they answered.

"Good Morning, Mr. and Mrs. McDonald."  
"Good Morning Ready," they called back.

Ready loved his little house on his little street in the little town of Paradise, and he loved all his friends, his forest friends and his human friends too.



One morning, when Ready woke up, he smelled something very scary. It was smoke! Ready gathered with all his neighbors, the animal ones and the people ones, and watched the fire burning towards their little town.

The smoke was thick and black, and they could see flames shoot up from the trees as the fire grew and moved closer to their homes. Sirens were screaming everywhere as the firefighters rushed in to try to stop the fire.



Soon, helicopters and planes were in the sky, pouring water and some strange orange stuff on the flames, which helped a lot.

Ready watched with his friends as the fire kept coming closer, and they were all very afraid.

The police came and told them they needed to pack some of their belongings and get ready to evacuate!

As the sun went down, and the sky grew dark, Ready watched from his window and could see the flames still burning and worried that they might get to his little house before the night was over.



D. Thompson

That night and the next morning, firefighters had come from all over California, even one from Beverly Hills! They had come from other states as well, and even other countries!

They fought and fought the fire, and soon got it under control. But several of Ready's neighbors in the little town of Paradise had lost their homes, and he was very sad.



Ready went over and tried to help them, searching through the rubble for pictures, or any family heirlooms, but most everything was destroyed. He went home to his little house and was very grateful

that the fire hadn't destroyed his home, but felt very sad for his neighbors. Ready lay awake for several nights, hoping not to smell new smoke and worrying that the fire might come back.



Then one morning, Ready called his friend, Firefighter Jim, and asked him to come over for tea. When Firefighter Jim arrived, Ready made him a cup of tea then asked him for a big favor.

“Jim?” Ready asked, “I’m very worried about my little house and my little dog and was wondering what I could do to help prepare us for another wildfire.”



“That’s a great idea Ready,” Jim replied. “As you know, we’ve had many wildfires near our little town and I can assure you we will have more. That’s what happens when you live near the wild land as we do.”

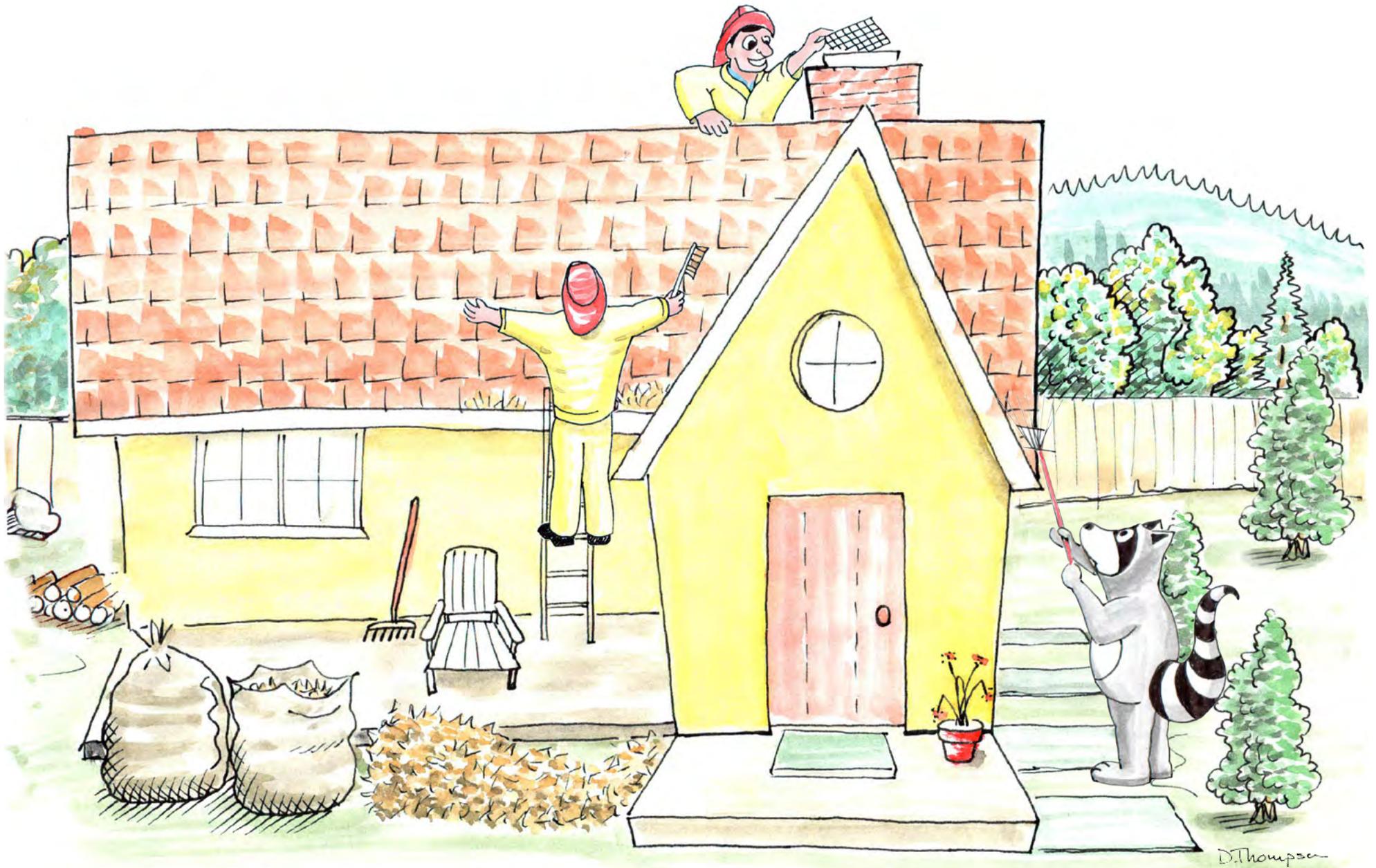
So Firefighter Jim and Ready Raccoon decided to get together that weekend and clean up Ready’s little house and yard.



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First, they cleaned all the pine needles and oak leaves off of Ready's little roof. Then Firefighter Jim helped Ready clean out all the needles and leaves in his rain gutters.

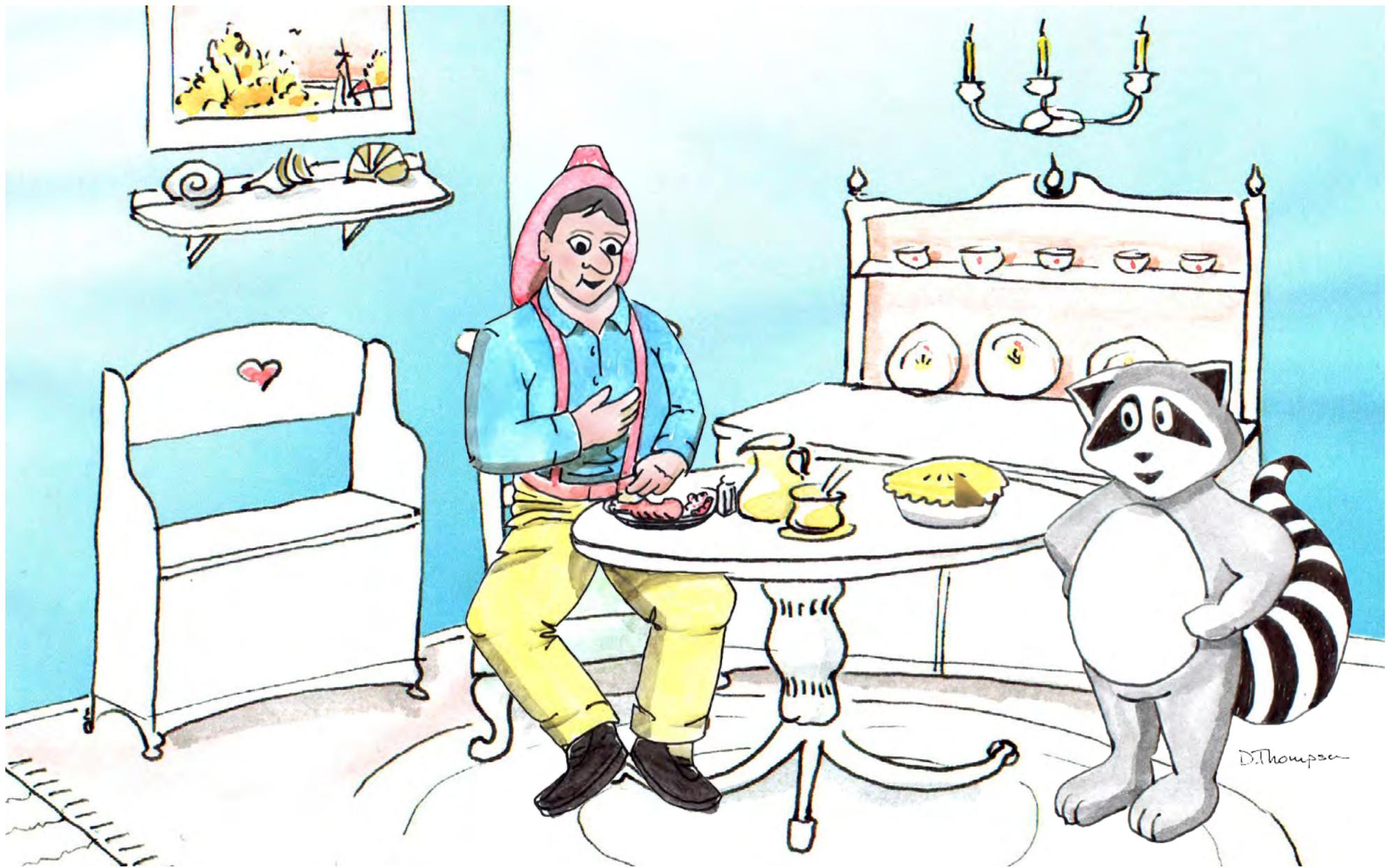
Next, they raked up all the dead leaves and needles that had gathered under Ready's little deck and stairway.



D. Thompson

Firefighter Jim helped Ready move his stacks of firewood a safe distance away from his little house. Then he took a tree saw and cut off all the limbs on Ready's trees that were close to the ground.

Ready pulled out some plants that were up against his little house and moved them a safe distance away, while Firefighter Jim used a weedwacker to cut down all the tall dead grass and weeds around Ready's little house.



At the end of a very long day, Ready and Firefighter Jim sat down to enjoy a well-deserved dinner. “I think your little house is better prepared for future fires now, Ready,” said Firefighter Jim. “I can never thank you enough, Jim, but I’m worried about my neighbors.

How can I help them prepare their homes for future wildfires?  
“I’ve got it, Ready,” responded Firefighter Jim. “You can join me and many of your neighbors on the Paradise Fire Safe Council.



Then you could help us spread the word about being wildfire-safe and show our Paradise neighbors how to clean up their homes and properties and help protect their homes from wildfires.”

That sounded like a wonderful idea to Ready, so he went with Firefighter Jim to the next meeting of the Paradise Fire Safe Council and asked to become a member.

Not only did they let him join, but the Paradise Fire Safe Council asked Ready if he would become their mascot!

A few weeks later, Ready got his new red vest, and his new name:

**WILDFIRE READY RACCOON**

Now Ready goes to fairs and parades in Paradise and says hello to all his friends and neighbors and passes out Wildfire Ready Raccoon trading cards to all his little friends.

**I'M READY - ARE YOU READY?**



California Department of  
Forestry and Fire Protection

