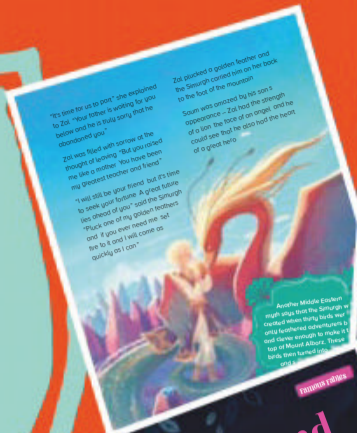
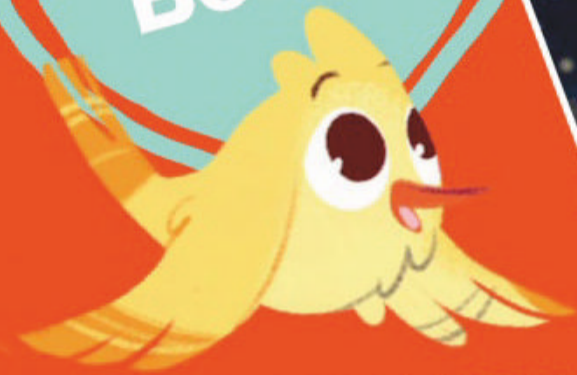


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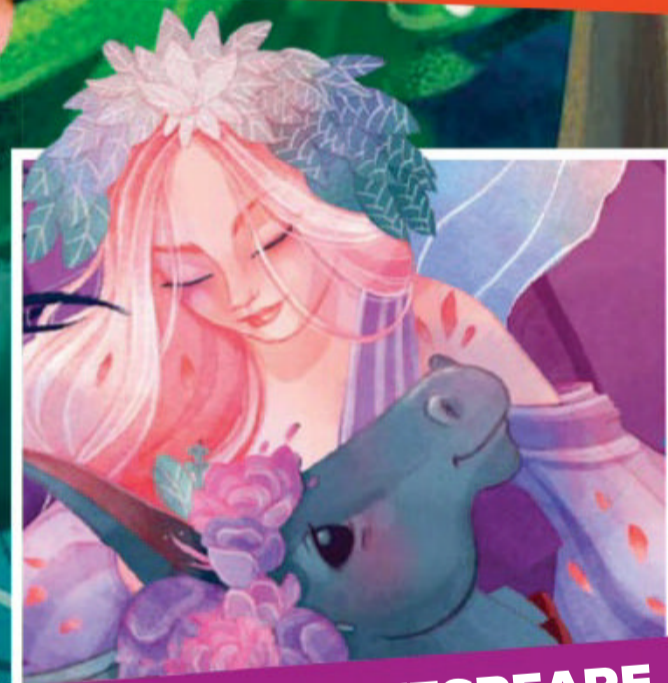
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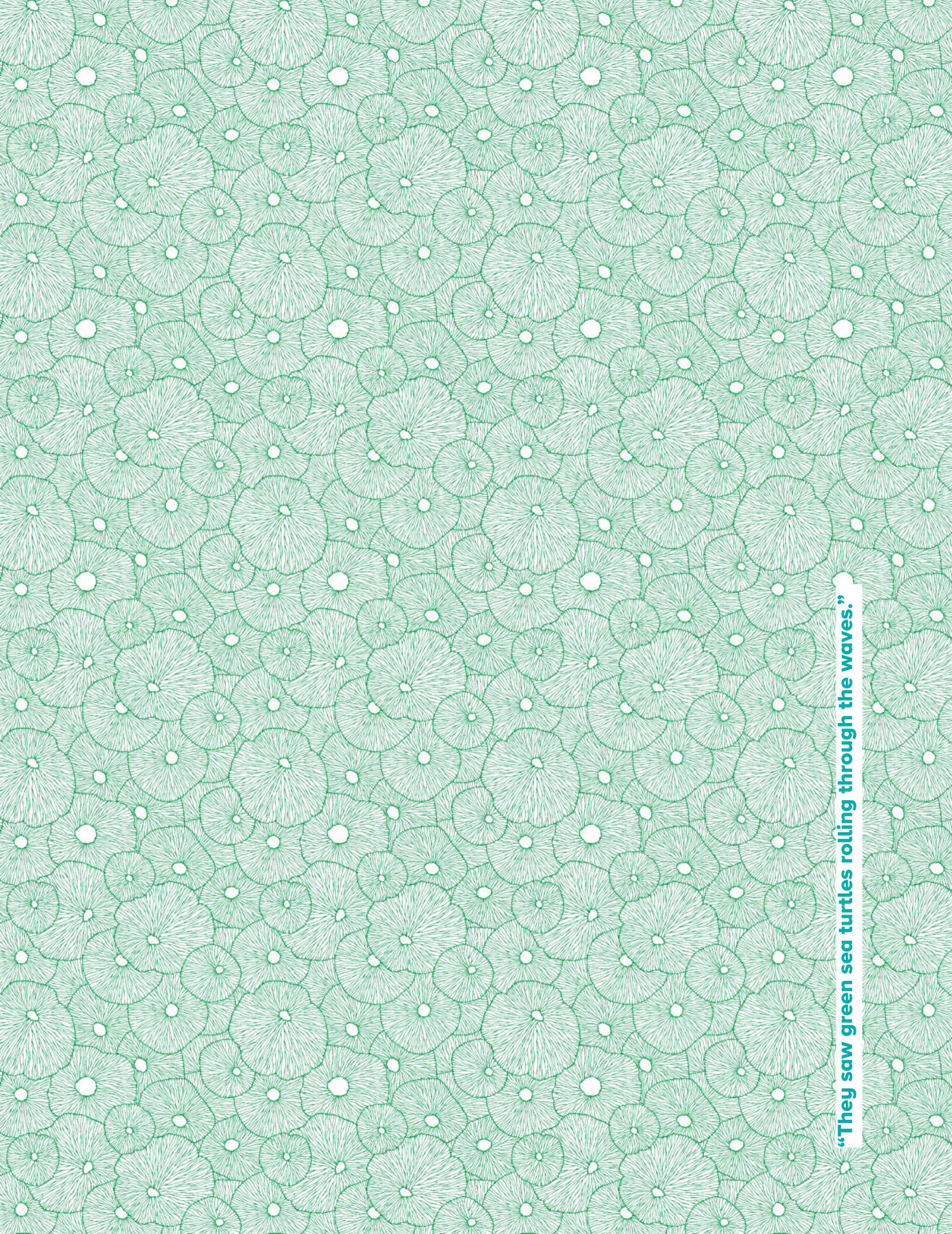
CALICO PIE It's time for an Edward Lear nonsense rhyme!



MAGICAL SHAKESPEARE
A Midsummer Night's Dream

Little Billy Goat Gruff

The Kangaroo's Pouch, The Pooka, The Owl
and the Echo, Magic Birds & TOYS GALORE!



“They saw green sea turtles rolling through the waves.”

**Stories are the place
where dreams come true!**

**Join us as we dream of toys that
come to life, dancing mice, brave billy
goats, animal gods, fairy celebrations,
magic birds and shape-shifters!**

This issue belongs to:

SPOT IT!
Can you find this
creepy creature
hiding in
a story?



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Alessia Trunfio *Zal and the Magic Bird*

**SUPER STORIES FROM AUSTRALIA,
IRELAND AND ANCIENT PERSIA!**

JOIN MY COLOURING CLUB ON PAGE 17!

Read happily ever after...



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Too Many Toys

As Mum opened the cupboard, a cascade of soft toys fell on her head. “Too many toys!” she cried. “Right, we’re having a clear-out. Anything you don’t want can go to the charity shop.”

Alice groaned. “But I want them all!” She didn’t want a clear-out. She loved her toys – every single one of them.

“Alice, just look at this cupboard! And there’s still a pile of toys over there from your birthday, plus that teddy you won in the school raffle. They need to go in the cupboard, which means we need to make space and tidy out the toys you don’t play with.”

“But I play with all of them,” said Alice.

“No, you don’t!” cried Mum, putting the toys on the floor in a big pile.

“I haven’t seen you play with this one for ages.” She prodded a little bear with a plaster stuck to its head.

“Yes, I have,” said Alice. “That’s Baby Bear. He’s a patient at the teddy bear hospital. He fell over and injured his head, so be careful with him.”



Mum sighed. "What about this one?" she said, holding up a camel. "I don't think I've even seen him before."

"Her. Humpy's a girl. She takes the other toys on adventures. Last week, we went to Egypt to see the pyramids. Humpy knows all about the world."

"Okay," said Mum, putting Humpy to one side. "But surely you don't want this one? Didn't you win it at the fair?" Mum grabbed a sad-looking bee with bent antennae and crumpled wings.

Alice clutched it to her chest. "Mummy! Bobby looks after all the flowers in our pretend garden. If it wasn't for Bobby, the flowers would die and that's very

bad for the whole world. Didn't you learn about bees at school?"

Mum was lost for words. "Alice, there must be some toys we can get rid of. What about this one?" Mum held up a teddy in a lifejacket.

"That's Jeffrey. He teaches the other teddies how to swim."

"This one?" Mum dragged out a multi-coloured crocheted owl.

Alice shook her head. "Nanny made it for me. I have to treasure it forever."

"Him?" said Mum, stroking the plushy fur of a leopard. ➡



“That’s Mr Tiger! Who’ll be in charge of the jungle animals if we get rid of him?”

“But he’s a leopard, not a tiger!”

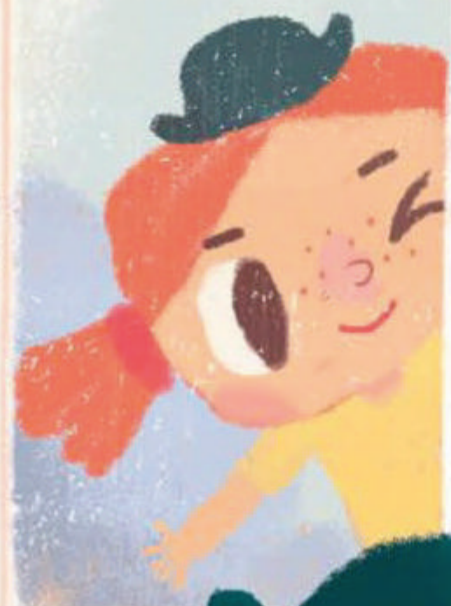
“Well, he wants to be a tiger when he grows up,” Alice protested. “He told me so.”

Mum couldn’t help laughing. She pulled a soft white bunny out of the pile and was about to suggest getting rid of it, then she remembered buying it for Alice on a trip to the seaside. Then she spotted Squishy Duck – Alice’s first soft toy as a baby – and Squiggle, a character from a show Alice had loved as a toddler.

Suddenly, Mum was filled with so many happy memories that she couldn’t bear to get rid of any of the toys either.

Sensing that she’d won the battle, Alice said, “Now the toys are all out, we might as well play with them. Do you want to play, Mummy? We could play hospitals or adventures – or Mr Tiger could have one of his tea parties!”

Mum smiled. “Yes, Alice, I’d like that very much. Let me get a cup of tea and I’ll be back in a second.” Mum stood up and as she left the room, she was certain she saw the toys wink at Alice. ★





WRITE IT!

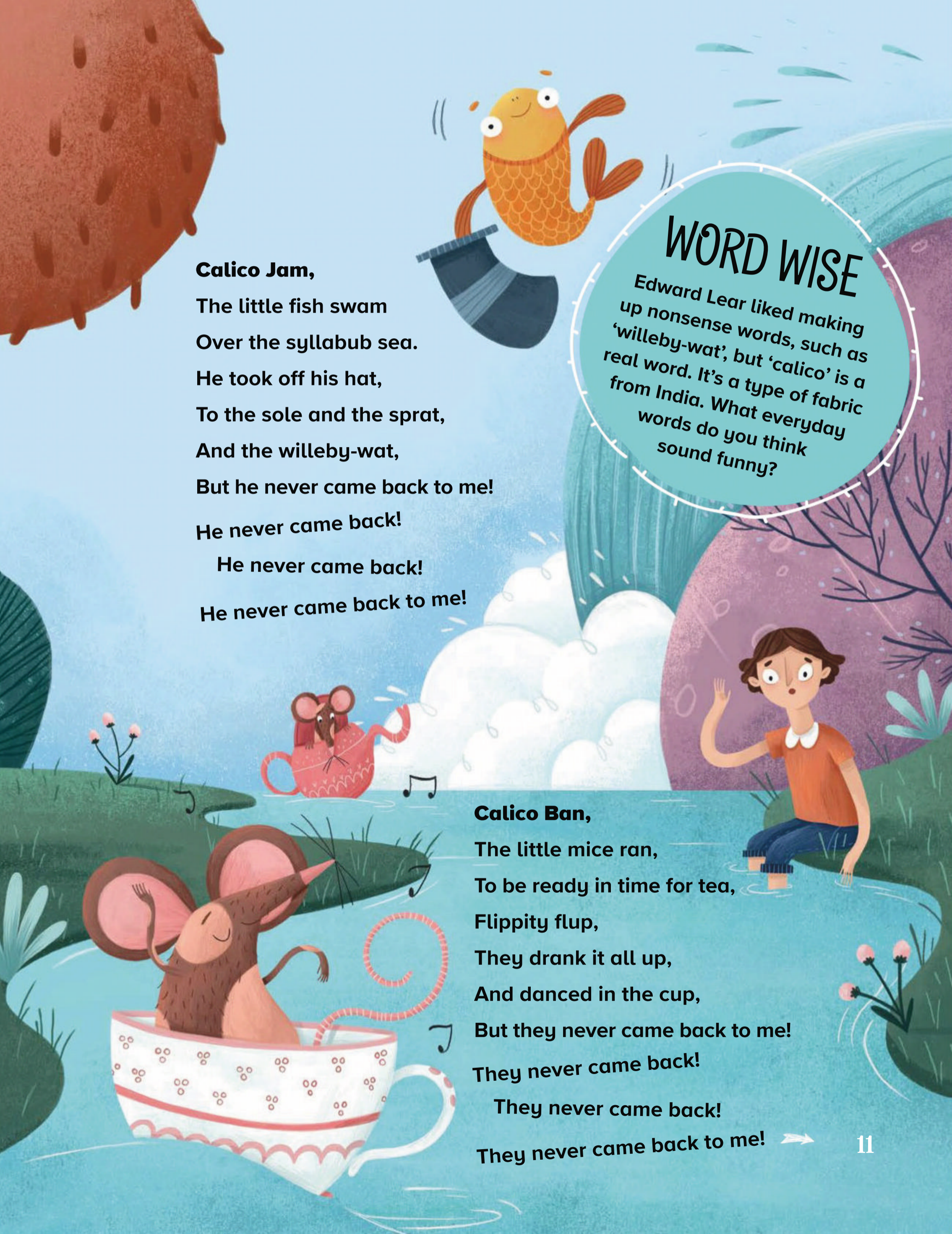
Write a short story about a toy you love and the games you like to play with it. It could be your favourite toy, a new toy or the first toy you ever owned.

Calico Pie

by Edward Lear

A whimsical illustration of a girl with long brown hair, wearing a pink shirt and blue pants, looking up at a large, brown, pie-shaped tree. The tree has a thick, dark brown trunk and a large, flat, brown top that resembles a pie crust with small brown spots. Several small, white birds with blue wings and orange beaks are flying around the tree. The scene is set in a green field with a blue sky and a large, stylized green bush in the background. In the foreground, there are yellow flowers and a small stream.

Calico Pie,
The little birds fly
Down to the calico tree,
Their wings were blue,
And they sang “Tilly-loo!”
Till away they flew,
And they never came back to me!
They never came back!
They never came back!
They never came back to me!



Calico Jam,
The little fish swam
Over the syllabub sea.
He took off his hat,
To the sole and the sprat,
And the willeby-wat,
But he never came back to me!
He never came back!
He never came back!
He never came back to me!

WORD WISE

Edward Lear liked making up nonsense words, such as 'willeby-wat', but 'calico' is a real word. It's a type of fabric from India. What everyday words do you think sound funny?

Calico Ban,
The little mice ran,
To be ready in time for tea,
Flippity flup,
They drank it all up,
And danced in the cup,
But they never came back to me!
They never came back!
They never came back!
They never came back to me! →



Calico Drum,

The grasshoppers come,
The butterfly, beetle and bee,
Over the ground,
Around and round,
With a hop and a bound,
But they never came back!
They never came back!

They never came back!
They never came back to me!

Little Billy Goat Brave

Little Billy Goat Gruff was the boldest, bravest and smartest of the Gruff brothers, but everybody in Storyland thought his big brother William was the hero, because he was the oldest.

What they didn't know was that when the three goats were hungry, it was Billy's idea to search for sweet green grass on the other side of Moon River – and he was the one who volunteered to cross Troll Bridge first. He even convinced the troll to let him pass – all part of his clever plan!

It bothered Billy that his older brother got all the praise, because what he wanted more than anything in the world was to prove how brave he was. ➔



The problem is it's hard being heroic when even the troll has turned friendly.

"How can I prove how brave I am when everything's perfect?" Billy grumbled to his middle brother, Liam.

Liam didn't like adventure – he much preferred staying at home knitting goat hair scarves. "Why don't you see if the Big Bad Wolf is up to no good?"

"I already did that."

"You could spy on the wicked witch."

"I just saw her fly off on her broom."

"Why not visit the mystery shack?"

The mystery shack was just along the river and nobody knew who owned it. In fact, people were too scared to go there. It was a creaky, spooky old house with cobwebs in the windows and ivy scrambling up the walls.

"But William told me to stay away from it," said Billy.

"Well, William isn't here and you said you wanted to prove you were brave."

Billy wasted no time. He packed his rucksack, grabbed a torch and set off for the mystery shack with a flutter of excitement in his tummy.



When he got there, the shack looked more rundown and spooky than ever. The windows were thick with dust and, as Billy stepped onto the porch, he was startled by a loud creak.

Billy thought he heard a noise inside, as though someone had stood up quickly. "Probably rats," he muttered, trying to quell his nerves. But then he was certain he heard whispers. There was definitely someone inside.

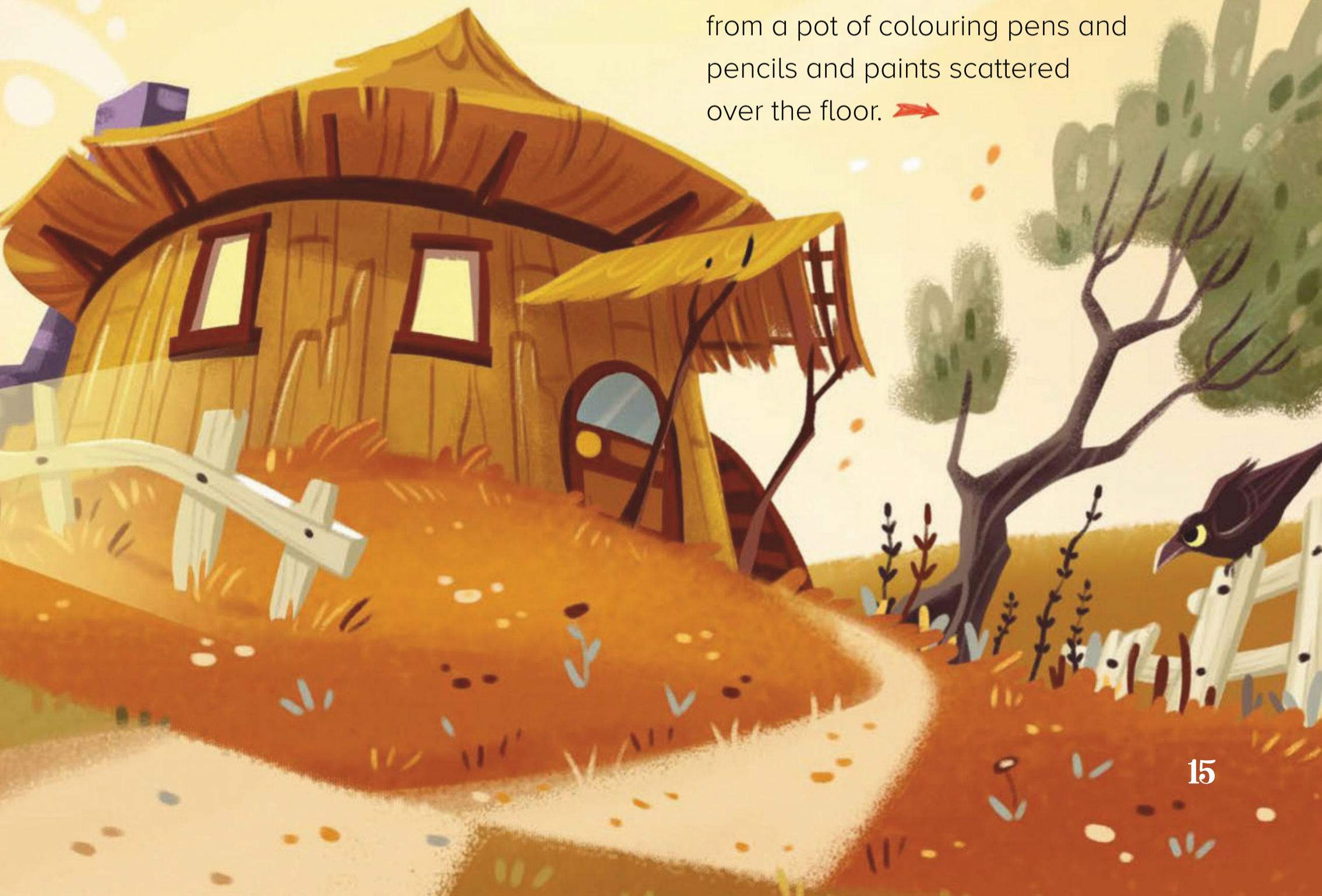
Billy's stomach flipped. "Be brave," he told himself as he rapped on the door. Nobody answered, but there was a scuffling noise and a crash.

"Hello! Is anyone home?" called Billy. No reply. "What if someone's fallen over and needs help?" he thought.

Billy took a few steps back, ducked his head and rammed the door open with his horns.

He tumbled head-first into the shack and was amazed by what he saw. It was perfect inside!

There were comfy chairs and sofas, which looked new. The furniture was sparkling clean and there were three colouring books, three mugs of tea and a plate of muffins on the table. Everything was neat and tidy, apart from a pot of colouring pens and pencils and paints scattered over the floor. →



Billy furrowed his brow. “Who’s here? Come out, whoever you are!”

He couldn’t believe his eyes when Prince Charming stepped out from the hallway cupboard. Then Snow White’s husband, Prince Moritz, popped up from behind the sofa and Sleeping Beauty’s husband, Prince Bernhard, peeked out from behind a curtain.

“Princes!” gasped Billy. “What are you all doing in the mystery shack?”

Prince Charming looked sheepish. “This is our secret meeting place,” he explained. “We’ve been coming here for years. It gets so tiring being heroes all the time. People are always asking us to fight off evil stepmothers.”

“Or cut our way through thorny forests to give people the kiss of life!” added Prince Bernhard.

“Or save kittens that have got stuck up trees,” agreed Prince Moritz.

“So every now and then we come here to escape it all,” said Prince Charming. “Colouring really helps us relax.”

“We call it our ‘Clandestine Colouring Club’, said Prince Moritz. “We’ve got some new pens. Will you join us?”

Billy was stunned. He’d never thought that being a hero could be tiring. He imagined it would be thrill-packed and exciting, with feasts and parades to celebrate how brave you’d been.



“But I wanted to be a hero just like you. It’s my dream!” he cried.

The princes smiled. Prince Bernhard said, “We’ve heard you’re already a hero for how you handled that troll.”

“But everybody treats William like the hero. He gets all the praise.”

“And William always puts them right,” explained Prince Moritz.

Billy hadn’t realised that.

“Real heroes don’t look for fame or glory,” said Prince Charming. “They stand up to bullies and try to help others. Do you understand?”

Billy nodded. “And I suppose even heroes need a day off.”

“Do you know how you can be a real hero, Billy? You can help us keep our colouring club a secret. Promise?”

“I promise!” said Billy.

“Now, help us finish this scene we’ve been working on.”

Little Billy Goat Brave grabbed a pen and, that day, became an official member of the Clandestine Colouring Club – a club for real heroes. ★

COLOUR IT!

Print out our **Clandestine Colouring Sheet** and be a real hero too! Visit storytimemagazine.com/free

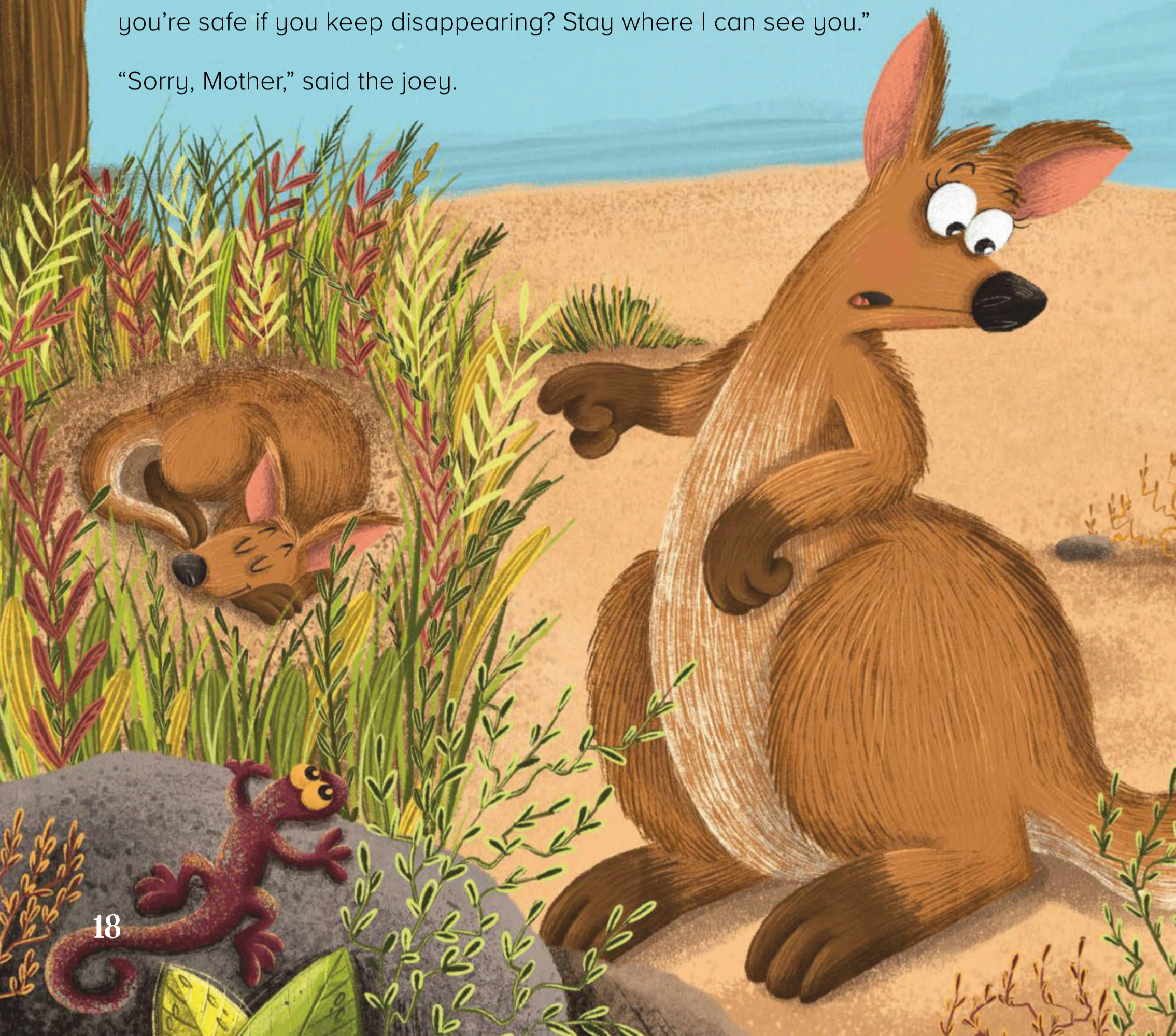
*Next time: Get set, go...
It's Storyland Sports Day!*

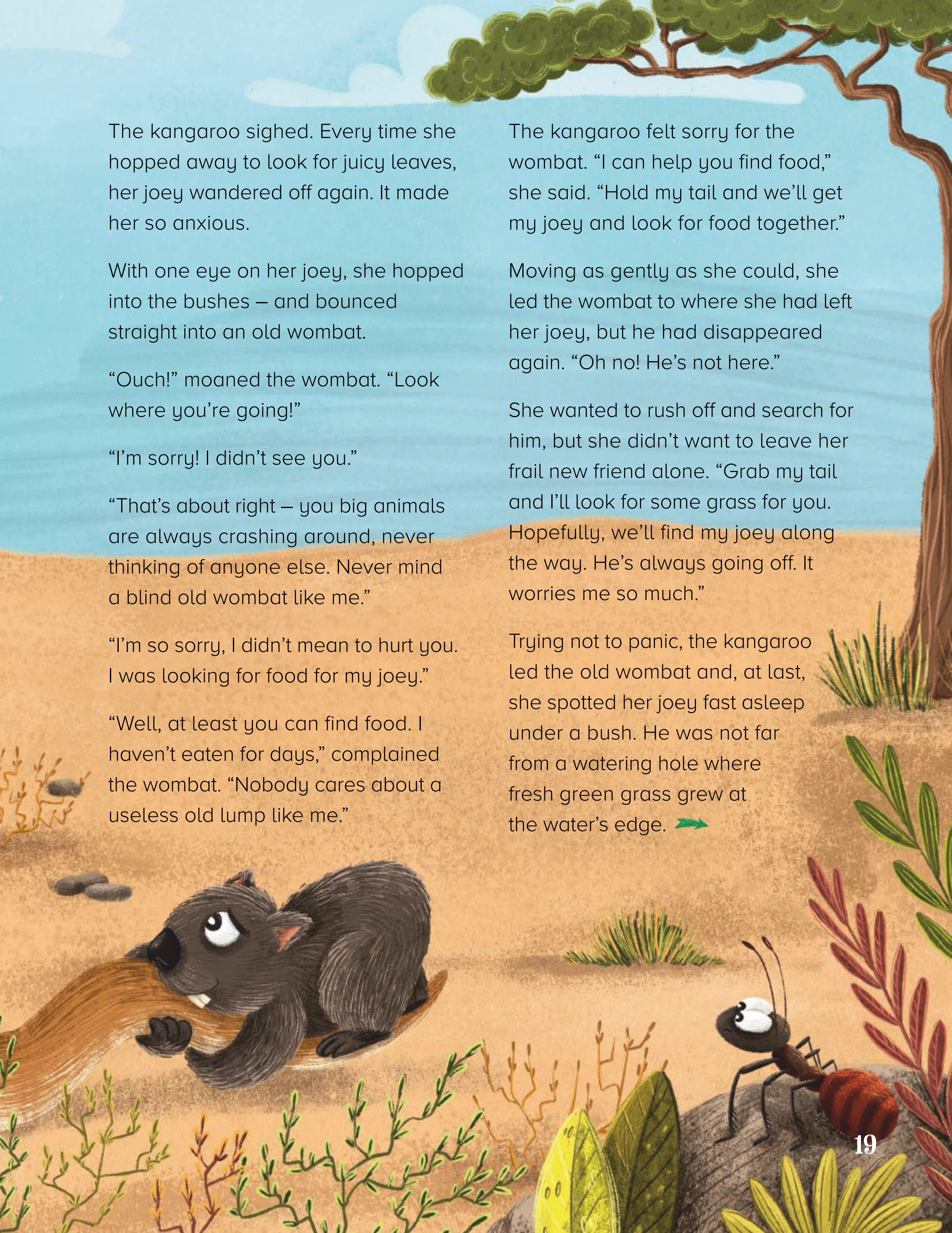
The Kangaroo's Pouch

In Australia's earliest times, female kangaroos didn't have pouches to carry their joeys inside, which made looking for food difficult and dangerous – especially as children can be so curious.

“Don't hop away again!” cried the kangaroo mother. “How do I know you're safe if you keep disappearing? Stay where I can see you.”

“Sorry, Mother,” said the joey.



The illustration shows a kangaroo with a joey in its pouch and an old wombat in a desert landscape. The kangaroo is on the left, and the wombat is on the right. The background features a blue sky with clouds, a tree on the right, and various desert plants and rocks on the ground.

The kangaroo sighed. Every time she hopped away to look for juicy leaves, her joey wandered off again. It made her so anxious.

With one eye on her joey, she hopped into the bushes – and bounced straight into an old wombat.

“Ouch!” moaned the wombat. “Look where you’re going!”

“I’m sorry! I didn’t see you.”

“That’s about right – you big animals are always crashing around, never thinking of anyone else. Never mind a blind old wombat like me.”

“I’m so sorry, I didn’t mean to hurt you. I was looking for food for my joey.”

“Well, at least you can find food. I haven’t eaten for days,” complained the wombat. “Nobody cares about a useless old lump like me.”

The kangaroo felt sorry for the wombat. “I can help you find food,” she said. “Hold my tail and we’ll get my joey and look for food together.”

Moving as gently as she could, she led the wombat to where she had left her joey, but he had disappeared again. “Oh no! He’s not here.”

She wanted to rush off and search for him, but she didn’t want to leave her frail new friend alone. “Grab my tail and I’ll look for some grass for you. Hopefully, we’ll find my joey along the way. He’s always going off. It worries me so much.”

Trying not to panic, the kangaroo led the old wombat and, at last, she spotted her joey fast asleep under a bush. He was not far from a watering hole where fresh green grass grew at the water’s edge. ➡

The kangaroo took the wombat to the water and helped him get a drink. But, just then, she heard movement in the bushes and saw the glint of a spear.

“A hunter!” she wailed. “We must hide. Grab my tail and don’t let go.” There was no time to wake her child – she just had to hope the hunter wouldn’t spot him under the bush.

The wombat gripped the kangaroo’s tail and she bounced into the bushes. “Duck down and don’t make a sound,” she whispered. Her heart pounded.

They waited in silence and, when the kangaroo was sure the hunter had gone, she led the wombat out again and leapt away, looking for her joey.

She breathed a deep sigh of relief when she found her child curled up in the same spot, still sound asleep.

She turned to thank the wombat for his patience, but he wasn’t there. Instead, the great creator Byamee was standing before her. The animals knew him as ‘the Father of All’.

Byamee smiled at the kangaroo. “I disguised myself as an old wombat because I was looking for the kindest animal in the world, and I found it – it is you. You led me to food and water, you cared for me like your own child, and you saved my life.”



He gave the kangaroo an apron made from eucalyptus leaves. "I have a gift for you. Tie this around your waist."

The kangaroo put on the leafy apron and Byamee waved his hand over it. Immediately, it transformed into a soft, furry pouch – her very own pocket.

"You can carry your joey in this and he will be safe whenever you search for food. You need never worry about him getting lost again. He can even sleep in it."

The kangaroo was delighted. She scooped up her sleeping joey and placed him gently in the pouch, where he nuzzled down, all snug. "Thank you, Father of All, but what about the other mothers?"

Byamee smiled – the kangaroo was truly kind-hearted. "Very well, I will give them pouches too," he agreed.

So that is how the kangaroo got its pouch – all because of one mother's kindness. ★

DRAW IT!

Byamee (also called Baiame) was like a god to some of the Aboriginal people who first lived in Australia. They say he created every animal, river, forest and mountain. In New South Wales, you can visit an ancient cave painting of Byamee. In it, he has bright eyes and very long arms. Do your own cave painting on our **Storytime Cave Drawing Sheet**. Download it from storytimemagazine.com/free

A Midsummer Night's Dream

Adapted from William Shakespeare

Once upon a time in Athens, there were four young people whose lives were about to be changed by fairy magic. They were called Hermia, Lysander, Helena and Demetrius.

Hermia and Lysander were deeply in love, but Hermia's father didn't approve of Lysander, so he was forcing Hermia to marry Demetrius.

No matter how much Hermia pleaded, her father wouldn't listen, so Lysander came up with a plan. "Hermia, meet me in the wood tomorrow night. We'll run away together and get married."

Hermia willingly agreed. She was so happy, she and Lysander shared their secret with Hermia's best friend, Helena.

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Helena was overjoyed – she loved Demetrius and was heartbroken when she thought he might marry Hermia. But Demetrius didn't share the same feelings for Helena, so to impress him, she told him Hermia and Lysander's secret plan. "He might not love me," she thought, "but at least he can thank me for helping him."



The next day, Hermia and Lysander sneaked away to the wood, followed by Demetrius and then Helena. All four had quite forgotten that it was midsummer night – a night famous for fairy celebrations.

Oberon and Titania, the king and queen of the fairies, were already in the wood.

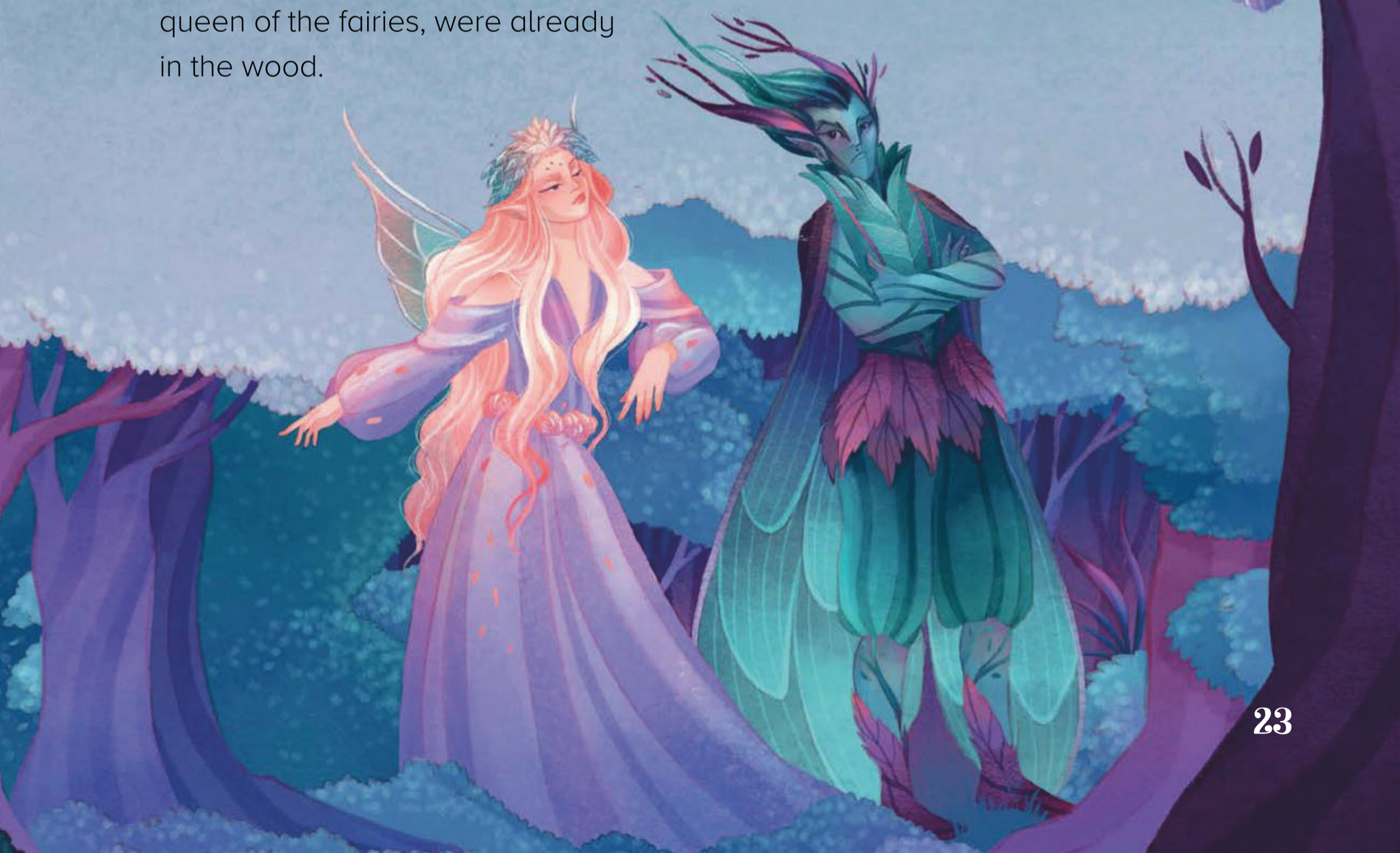
They had recently quarrelled and were still angry with each other.

When Oberon saw Titania he cried, "A bad meeting on this moonlit night!"

"Oh, jealous Oberon," replied Titania. "Let's skip away, my fairies. I don't keep his company any more."

"Ah, you headstrong creature!" snorted Oberon.

"If you will dance with us and join in our festivities, then come. If not, then steer clear of me and I'll avoid you," said Titania, and she pranced happily away, leaving Oberon stamping his feet in anger.



Oberon was so cross he called for Puck – a fairy famous for his tricks.

“Puck, get me the purple flower, love-in-idleness. I’ll squeeze its juice on Titania’s sleeping eyes and, when she wakes, she’ll fall in love with the first thing she sees – be it a bear or a bull!”

While Oberon awaited Puck’s return, he overheard Demetrius and Helena talking. Demetrius was shouting at poor Helena because he couldn’t find Hermia. “Stop following me!” he cried.

“But I love you!” said Helena. “Why can’t I fight for love like men do?”

Oberon was so moved by Helena’s plea that when Puck returned, he said, “I know a bank where violets grow and where Titania sleeps. I’ll touch her eyes with the flower’s juice, but you take a flower too. There is a man in this wood and a sweet lady who

loves him. When he sleeps, drop the juice on his eyes. When he wakes, he will love her too.”

“Yes,” said Puck, and off he flew.



Meanwhile, Lysander and Hermia had decided to stop and take a nap in a small grove.

Puck found them deep in slumber and, thinking that Lysander was Demetrius, he dropped the juice on his eyes and chanted, “Upon your eyes I throw all the power this flower owns.”

Just as Puck left, Helena ran into the grove where Lysander and Hermia were sleeping and shook Lysander to wake him. When he opened his eyes, because he was under the spell of the magic flower, Lysander fell in love with Helena instantly.

ACT IT OUT!

A Midsummer Night’s Dream was a play before it was a story, so why not act it out? We’ve got a **Donkey Mask** you can wear to pretend to be Bottom, and all you need for the other roles are fairy wings and everyday clothes. To download our mask, visit storytimemagazine.com/free



“Beautiful Helena!” he cried. “I would run through fire for you!”

Helena gasped. “What about Hermia?”

“It’s you I have always loved, not Hermia!” Lysander insisted.

Sure that Lysander was teasing her, Helena ran into the wood to escape him but Lysander chased after her, calling her name.

All this time, Hermia had been asleep. When she stirred and found Lysander was missing, she was shocked. “Why would he leave me?” she cried, and she ran into the wood to look for him.



Meanwhile, on the other side of the wood, Oberon had already dropped the enchanted flower juice into the eyes of Titania who was sleeping.

Not far from the fairy queen’s bed, some actors were rehearsing a play. When Puck passed them, he couldn’t resist playing a trick and used his mischievous magic to give an actor called Bottom a donkey’s head.

When the other actors saw Bottom, they were so scared, they shrieked, “Monster!” and ran away.

“I’m no monster!” said Bottom, and to prove it, he started to sing.

His loud song soon woke Titania, who looked at Bottom’s strange donkey head and fell head over heels in love with him! “What angel wakes me from my flowery bed?” she mused. “Your voice is as beautiful as your face. Oh, stay with me, my love.”

Bottom, who had no idea he had a donkey’s head, was very confused. ➔



“Stay with me and I’ll ask my fairies



SPOT IT! Tick off these details as you spot them in the picture.




to serve you, my love," said Titania.



**How many animals
can you count?
Write it here.**

**One fairy is playing an instrument.
What is it? Write your answer here.**

Answers: There are 6 animals. The fairy is playing a harp.



Titania called to her fairies, “Come, Peaseblossom! Cobweb! Moth and Mustardseed!”

Four little fairies suddenly appeared at Bottom’s side.

“Let’s lead him to my bower,” said Titania, and the train of fairies set off through the woods with Bottom.



Elsewhere in the wood, Puck told Oberon what he had done. It greatly amused Oberon that Titania had fallen in love with a donkey. “Did you enchant the young man too?”

“Yes,” said Puck proudly.

However, moments later, Hermia and Demetrius walked into Oberon’s clearing. They were arguing.

“That’s him!” whispered Oberon.

“No,” said Puck. “The lady is the same, but I used the juice on a different man.”

Hermia was shouting now. “Where is Lysander? Did you hurt him? Tell me!”

“I haven’t seen him!” cried Demetrius.

Hermia didn’t believe him, and was so furious, she stormed off.

“There’s no point in following her when she’s this angry.” Demetrius shrugged and, exhausted, he lay down to sleep.

“Puck, you used the potion on the wrong man!” cried Oberon. “Find the other young lady and bring her here.”

Puck set off again, leaving Oberon to spread juice on Demetrius’s eyes.

When Puck returned with Helena, Lysander was trailing behind her, promising his undying love.

The commotion woke Demetrius who saw Helena and immediately fell in love with her too. “My goddess! My princess!” he cried.

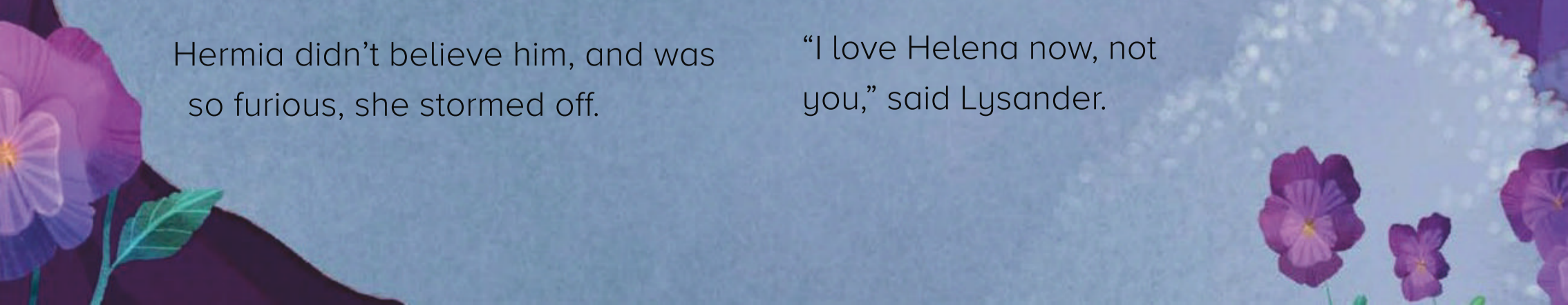
Now both Lysander and Demetrius were competing for Helena’s heart – but instead of being happy that Demetrius loved her at last, Helena thought that both men were making fun of her!

“What fools humans are!” sighed Puck.

At that moment, Hermia ran into the clearing to find the two men showering Helena with words of love.

“Lysander! Why did you leave me? Why are you talking like this?”

“I love Helena now, not you,” said Lysander.



“No, you don’t love Helena. I do!” cried Demetrius. “I will fight you to prove it.”

“Fine,” said Lysander angrily. “Let’s look for somewhere to fight.”

As Demetrius and Lysander stormed off, Oberon shook his head. “It’s time to fix this, Puck. Raise a fog to make sure the men can’t find each other. When they sleep, crush flower juice over Lysander’s eyes so that when he wakes, he loves Hermia again.”

Puck made sure that Lysander and Demetrius got lost and, at last, they fell asleep in a foggy clearing.

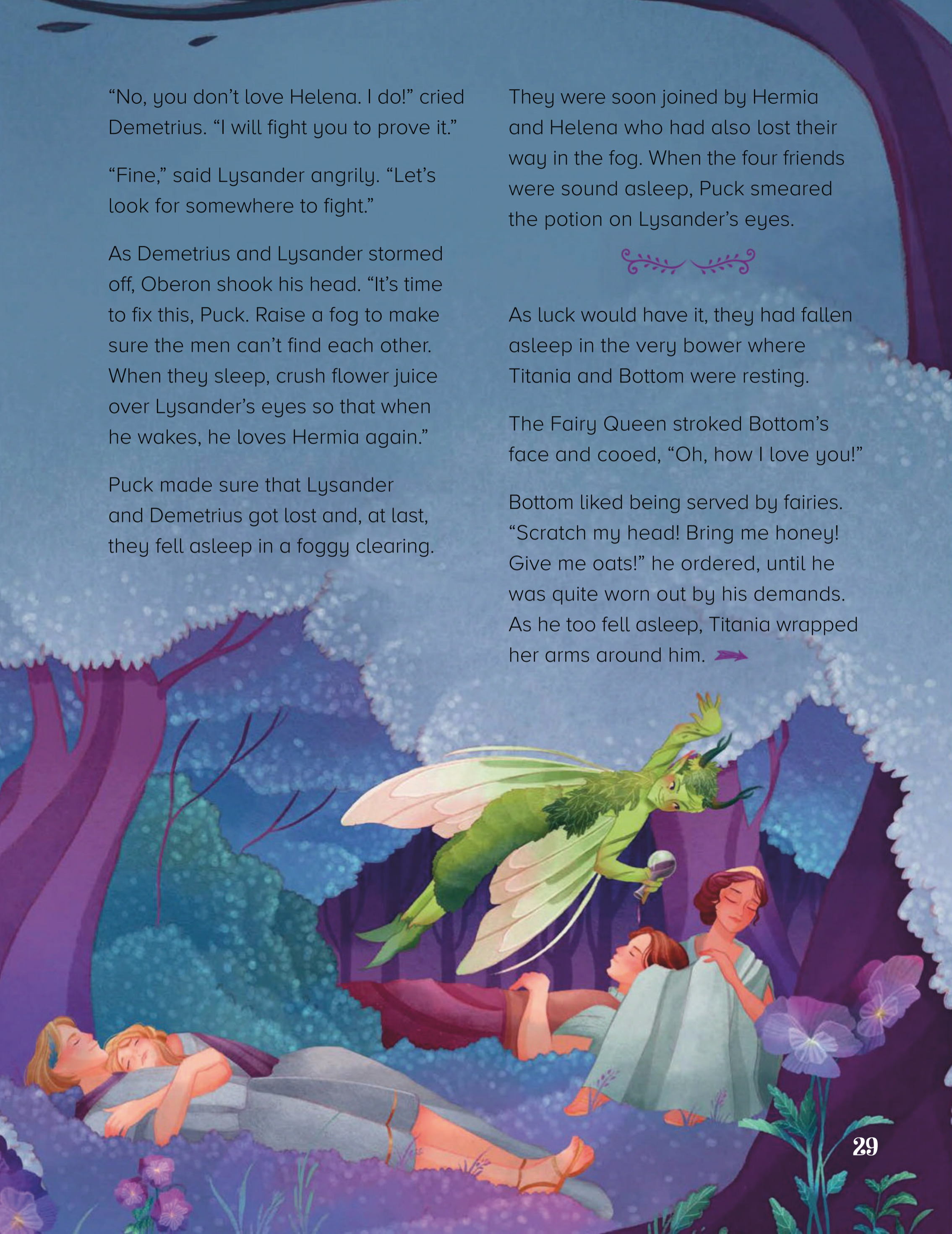
They were soon joined by Hermia and Helena who had also lost their way in the fog. When the four friends were sound asleep, Puck smeared the potion on Lysander’s eyes.



As luck would have it, they had fallen asleep in the very bower where Titania and Bottom were resting.

The Fairy Queen stroked Bottom’s face and cooed, “Oh, how I love you!”

Bottom liked being served by fairies. “Scratch my head! Bring me honey! Give me oats!” he ordered, until he was quite worn out by his demands. As he too fell asleep, Titania wrapped her arms around him. ➔



When Oberon saw them, he felt sorry for taking revenge on Titania. “Puck, turn this donkey into a man again and make sure everyone believes that tonight was just a dream.”

While Puck did this, Oberon released Titania from her spell.

“Oh, Oberon!” she cried. “I dreamt I was in love with a donkey!”

“There lies your love,” said Oberon, and he pointed at Bottom just before Puck transformed him into a man.

Titania scowled at Oberon.

“It’s almost morning,” said Puck.

“It’s time for us to fly,” said Titania, and she took Oberon’s hand and they fluttered away together.

At dawn, Bottom woke to find flowers woven in his hair. “What a wonderful dream!” he gasped. “I’ll turn it into a ballad and we’ll call it Bottom’s Dream.” Excited, he rushed off to find his acting troupe.

Shortly after, Hermia, Lysander, Helena and Demetrius also woke. They couldn’t remember why they were in the clearing, but everything was as it should be – Lysander loved Hermia again and Demetrius now loved Helena like she loved him.

They left the wood for Athens where Hermia’s father finally allowed her to be with her true love, Lysander.

All four lovers lived happily ever after – all thanks to the meddling and blessings of the fairy folk. ★



The Owl and the Echo



By the light of the moon, when every animal in the forest was still and quiet, the barn owl filled the darkness with a piercing screech.

“Everybody has fallen silent so they can hear my song better,” said the owl, puffing out her chest with pride and shrieking again. “It’s nice to know that when I sing, the whole forest listens!”

The night was so quiet, the barn owl’s voice carried all the way through the trees and bounced off a rocky mountainside, so an echo soon replied, “The whole forest listens!” ➔

The owl heard the echo and thought it was the animals replying to her. She felt so flattered, she screeched again and said, “Yes, forget the music of the nightingale. I am the queen of the night and my own tune is far sweeter!”

“Far sweeter!” agreed the echo.

The owl fluffed up her feathers some more and, full of self-importance, she added, “In fact, why must I only sing at night? I should add my beautiful voice to the birds’ choir. Why don’t I join the dawn chorus?”

“Join the dawn chorus!” said the echo, flattering the owl even more.

She didn’t need any more encouragement. She decided there and then to stay awake until the break of dawn and join the special choir of birds who begin each day with a wonderful song.



As soon as the owl heard the first chirp, she began her shrill shrieks. They were so loud, she drowned out the other birds' pleasant melody completely. Animals leapt out of bed in shock. Their fur stood on end and they covered their ears.

The owl's feathered neighbours flew over, begging her to stop. But the conceited owl thought they were coming to listen to her, so she screeched with even more enthusiasm. This made the birds so angry, they dived at her, flapping their wings. Eventually, they forced the vain owl back into her hollow and made her shut up.

“Stay there, be quiet and don't ever ruin our dawn chorus again!” chirped the song thrush – and the other birds joined in.

So that's why barn owls only screech when they really have to – and why it's never good to be big-headed! ★



Listen To It!

Not all owls hoot or 'twit-twoo'. Barn owls are also called 'screech owls' because of their high-pitched shrieks. Listen to them on the Woodland Trust website and you'll understand why the animals in this story were so annoyed! Visit: woodlandtrust.org.uk/blog/2017/12/owl-calls/

The Pooka

Long ago in Ireland, there were pookas everywhere. Some were bad and some were good. Like most magical beings, it depends on how you treat them, as Padraig O'Brien found out.



Imagine It!

Imagine you are a pooka. Which animal would you change into and why? Write a paragraph about it giving your reasons.

One chilly afternoon, Padraig was herding cattle on his farm when he felt something rush by as fast as the wind. He couldn't see anything, but he guessed it must be magical – perhaps even a pooka.

Quickly, Padraig cried, “Pooka, oh Pooka! Show yourself to me and I’ll give you my coat to keep you warm.”

Pookas rarely reveal their true form, so this one shape-shifted into a black bull before it appeared to Padraig. Padraig smiled and draped his thick coat over the bull’s back.

“Thank you for the gift,” said the pooka. “Come by your mill tonight and you’ll have some good luck.”

That night, Padraig hurried to the mill, but he found nothing except for the usual sacks of grain waiting to be ground into flour. He waited and waited, but the pooka didn't come, so Padraig fell asleep behind a sack.

At midnight, strange noises disturbed his slumber and, when he peeked out, Padraig saw several pookas grinding his grain into flour. The most ragged of the pookas said, “Hurry now, let’s get as much done tonight as we can. Padraig is a kind fellow – he gave me this coat I’m wearing.”



In the morning, Padraig woke again to discover that the pookas had ground most of his grain into flour. ➡





He was delighted – even more so when the pookas came back the next night and the night after that. In fact, every time Padraig had a huge pile of grain, the pooka and his fellow sprites gave him their magical help.

This went on for many months and Padraig grew rich from selling flour.

“How do you do it?” asked his friends. But Padraig never told a soul about the pooka, just in case he ran out of luck.

One night, Padraig climbed into a chest in the mill to watch the pookas work. As he peeped out, he felt sorry for his

pooka friend. His clothes were so old and tattered and he was so good at getting the other pookas to work.

Padraig decided to buy the pooka a smart new suit to thank him. He laid it on the mill floor and hid in the chest again to see what happened.

“What’s this?” cried the pooka when he saw it. “I’ll be a fine gent in this!” He put on the suit and paraded up and down. He ground the grain as usual, but when he spilt flour on his suit, he jumped back and cried, “What was I thinking? Fine gentlemen don’t grind flour! No more working in a mill for me.”

The pooka kicked away his ragged old clothes and left the mill without delay. Now he was no longer there to boss them around, the other lazy pookas turned into black horses and galloped away, never to be seen again.

Although Padraig missed his magical friend, he now had so much money, he was able to sell his farm and mill and buy a grand house. And a year after the pooka left, Padraig happily married his childhood sweetheart.

At the wedding, as everyone raised their glasses to toast the bride and groom, Padraig noticed that his glass had turned into a golden goblet. He guessed straight away that it must be a gift from his funny little friend, the pooka. ★

DID YOU KNOW?

Pookas can take on so many different forms, nobody knows what they really look like. Some say they look like pixies with animal ears or tails. In legend, Brian Boru, a former king of Ireland, was the only person who ever managed to tame and ride a pooka disguised as a horse.



Zal and the Magic Bird

Saum was the ruler of a state in Iran. He had all the riches he could ever wish for, but he had no child, so when his wife fell pregnant, he was overjoyed.

However, when his son was born, Saum was horrified. His child, Zal, had skin and hair as pale as snow. “My baby looks like an old man!” cried Saum.



Saum feared that if his enemies found out his heir looked weak and frail, he would be a laughing stock. He was so ashamed, he asked his guards to take the baby away and leave it at the foot of Mount Alborz – a mountain made of crystals with a peak that touched the stars. Saum knew that no mortal would ever set foot there and see his child.

However, the spectacular Simurgh nested at the top of Mount Alborz. The Simurgh was a giant bird with magical golden feathers and all the world's knowledge. She also had a kind heart, so when she heard the baby's hungry cries, she swooped down and carried the infant up to her nest, which was as fine as a castle.

“You are safe now, little one,” said the Simurgh as Zal snuggled down. →



From that moment, the Simurgh raised Zal liked her own child. She fed him only the finest morsels and shared all her knowledge with him.

As he grew older, Zal ran up, down and round the mountain chasing his feathered brothers and sisters. This way, Zal grew to be healthy and strong. And, in time, his hair turned silver in colour.



When he was older, Zal sometimes came down from the mountain to see the world, and news quickly spread of this intelligent, athletic young man with startling silver hair.

Soon, Saum heard about Zal too and felt riddled with guilt. He had grown old and had white hair and a white beard. “What have I done?” he wailed. “Why would I be ashamed of white hair when I have it myself?”

Saum was so filled with remorse he dreamt every night about his son. One morning, he summoned his guards. “We are going to climb Mount Alborz. I want to bring my son home.”

His guards were scared. The jewelled mountain was incredibly sharp and steep. No human had ever managed to climb it, but Saum was determined.

When they reached the mountain, they tried to find a way up its sheer face, but it was impossible. Their hands were soon covered in cuts. After hours of trying, Saum fell to his knees and begged.

At that moment, the Simurgh looked down from her nest and saw Saum’s despair. She knew then that Zal was ready to return to his rightful home.



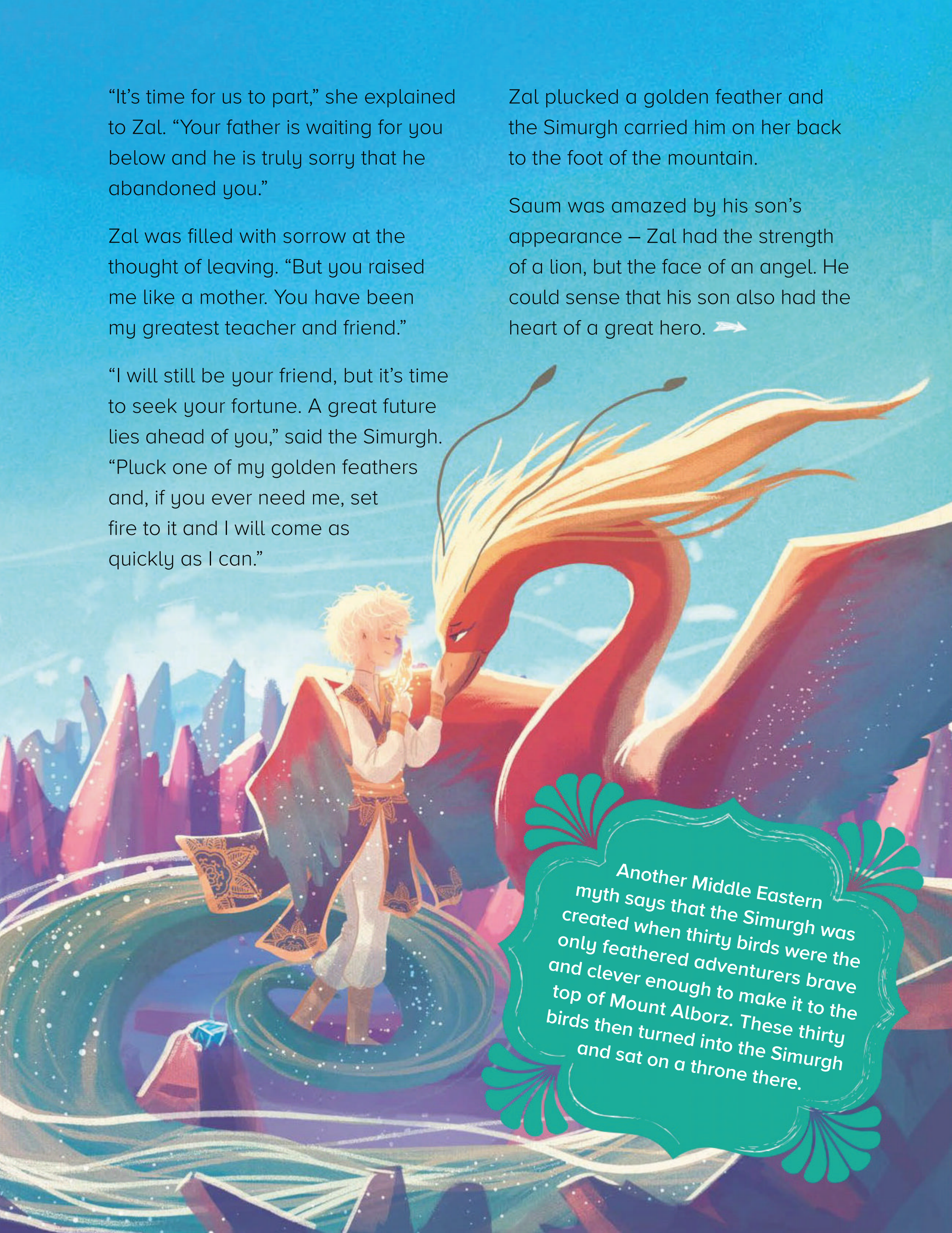
“It’s time for us to part,” she explained to Zal. “Your father is waiting for you below and he is truly sorry that he abandoned you.”

Zal was filled with sorrow at the thought of leaving. “But you raised me like a mother. You have been my greatest teacher and friend.”

“I will still be your friend, but it’s time to seek your fortune. A great future lies ahead of you,” said the Simurgh. “Pluck one of my golden feathers and, if you ever need me, set fire to it and I will come as quickly as I can.”

Zal plucked a golden feather and the Simurgh carried him on her back to the foot of the mountain.

Saum was amazed by his son’s appearance – Zal had the strength of a lion, but the face of an angel. He could sense that his son also had the heart of a great hero. ➔



Another Middle Eastern myth says that the Simurgh was created when thirty birds were the only feathered adventurers brave and clever enough to make it to the top of Mount Alborz. These thirty birds then turned into the Simurgh and sat on a throne there.

“Thank you for everything you have done, god of birds,” said Saum. Then he begged forgiveness from his son. “I promise I will feel nothing but pride for you for the rest of my life. Now, please come home with me.”

The Simurgh nodded at Zal and flew back up to her nest in the stars.

Zal’s heart was good, so he forgave his father and they travelled home in a joyous procession. The soldiers blew trumpets and beat drums so loudly, soon all of Iran knew about Zal’s extraordinary childhood – and they rejoiced to have him home again.

When the King of Iran heard the news, he summoned Saum and Zal to his court. As soon as he met Zal, he knew that this young man would be a great ruler one day, so he rewarded both father and son with many wonderful gifts. He gave them Arabian horses with golden saddles, golden swords, magnificent robes, spices, rubies, pearls and gold coins.

But none of these gifts was as rare or as precious as the Simurgh’s golden feather, which would one day save the lives of Zal’s wife and child. ★



Storytime

playbox

We're putting your creativity and your intelligence to the test in this issue's boxful of story-inspired brain-bogglers!

1 MIDSUMMER MIX-UP!

Puck has magically muddled these woodland animals. Draw lines to match each head to the correct body.



Unscramble the letters to work out the name of a character from **Midsummer Night's Dream**.

O M B T O T

2 HOW MANY MICE?

Follow the trail of Calico Pie mice as they 'flippity flap' across our puzzle pages. **Count them as you go and write your answer at the end.**

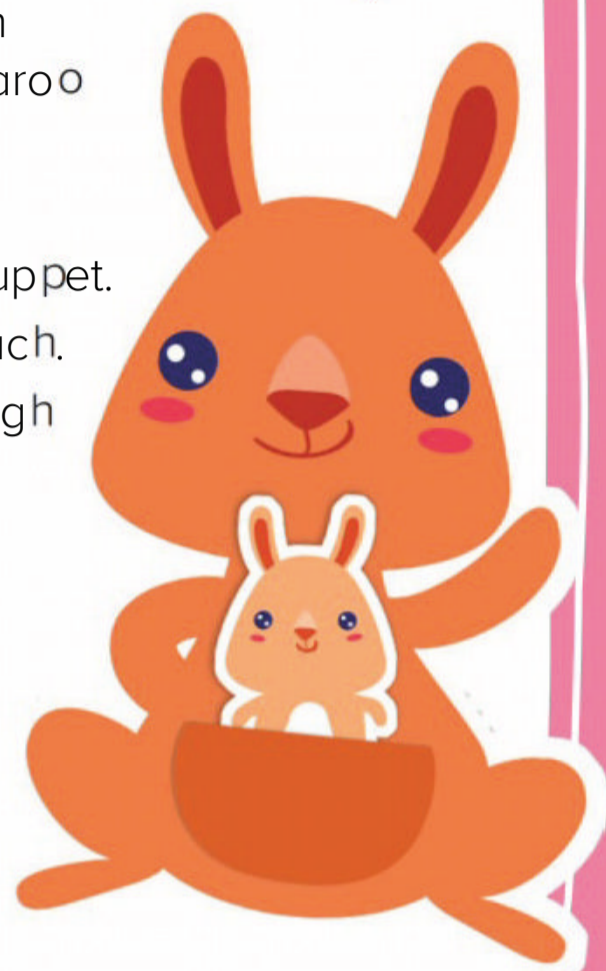


ASK A GROWN-UP!

5 MAKE A POP-UP POUCH

Make a little joey pop out of Mother Kangaroo's pouch.

- To get started, print out our **Kangaroo Pop-Up Pouch Sheet** from storytimemagazine.com/free – you can print out a mother kangaroo and a cute joey too.
- Colour in both kangaroos.
- Tape a lollipop stick to the back of the joey to turn it into a stick puppet.
- Cut along the dotted line at the top of the mother kangaroo's pouch.
- Place the joey behind the mother kangaroo and pop him up through the slot in the top of the pouch.
- Alternatively, you can turn the pouch into a pocket. Instead of cutting along the dotted line, cut a pouch shape from a different piece of paper and colour it in.
- Glue the bottom round edge of the pocket to the front of the mother kangaroo, and leave the top edge free.
- If you choose to make a pocket, don't tape a lollipop stick to the back of your joey. Instead, pop it in the pocket for a snuggle.



TIP!

If you make the pocket version, pin it to a noticeboard and pop little messages to each other in the pouch.



6

Read the clues to work out which character this is from our stories.

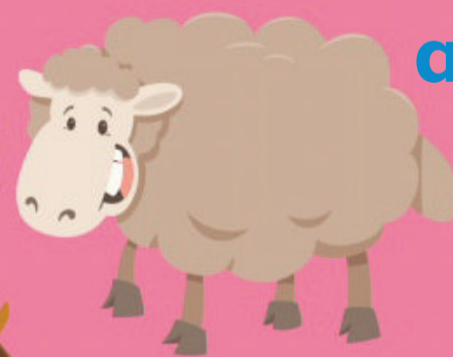
1. I can fly
2. I like the forest
3. I am a magical queen

7

Quick Quiz

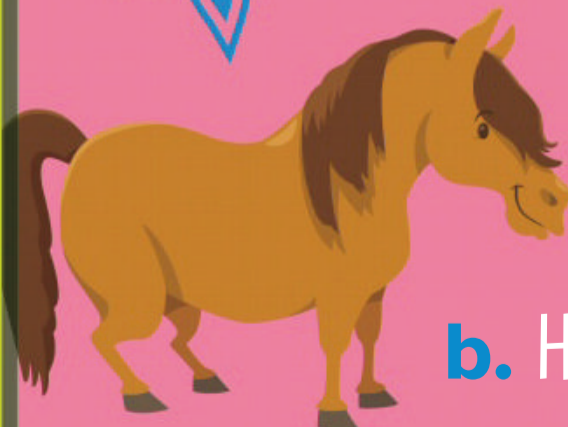
Which of these animals did the pooka first change into?

a. Sheep



c. Bull

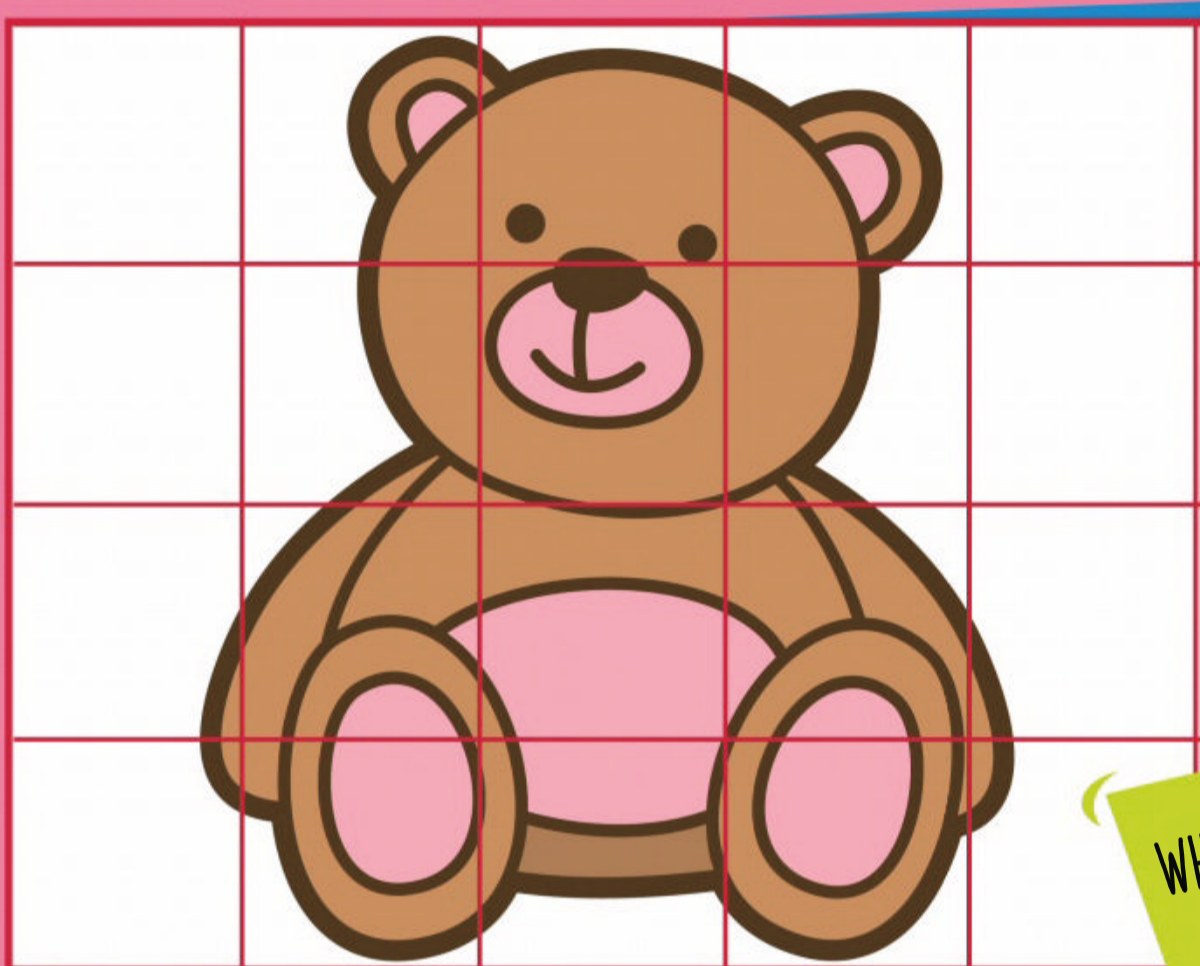
b. Horse



8

DRAW A TOY BEAR!

Draw a bear using the grid below to help you. Can you add details to make your bear look extra-special, like a bow, a waistcoat or a crown? Colour it in too!



TEE HEE!

Q. Why do bears have fur coats?

A. Because they'd look silly in anoraks!

WHY NOT GIVE YOUR BEAR SPOTS OR STRIPES?

HA HA!

Q. Why don't bears wear socks?

A. They like having bear feet!

Draw your dream toy on our **Storytime Drawing Sheet**.
Download it from:
storytimemagazine.com/free

There are mice on the trail.



Storytime WORD SEARCH

Find characters' names from this issue's stories in our word search. They run forwards, backwards, up, down and diagonally.

GOOD LUCK!



- ✿ ALICE
- ✿ MR TIGER
- ✿ BILLY
- ✿ PRINCE CHARMING
- ✿ BYAMEE
- ✿ KANGAROO
- ✿ BOTTOM
- ✿ OBERON
- ✿ PUCK
- ✿ TITANIA
- ✿ PADRAIG
- ✿ POOKA
- ✿ SIMURGH
- ✿ ZAL

One of the insects from our poem Calico Pie is hiding in this word search. Write its name here when you find it.

ANSWERS: 1. Midsummer Mix-Up! - 1E, 2C, 3D, 4A, 5B; The character is Bottom; 2. How Many Mice? 6 mice; 3. Take it to the Top - A; 4. Owl Howl - Sing a song of sixpence. The bird is a blackbird; 6. Who Am I? Titania; 7. Quick Quiz - c; Storytime Word Search - see right. The insect is a bee.

A	L	I	C	E
Q	B	C	Q	A
Q	U	E	L	Y
S	H	I	E	P
E	C	I	Y	Y
U	X	O	B	E
A	I	N	A	T
U	F	N	B	F
O	O	Y	W	D
P	O	L	L	T
A	J	R	V	L
D	B	J	A	U
R	R	J	M	G
A	L	I	Z	S
I	S	D	M	A
G	C	R	V	B

CLEVER COLOUR BY NUMBERS

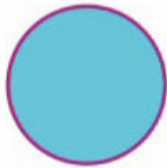



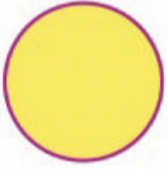

Little Billy Goat Gruff and the three princes have devised a colouring game with a maths twist. Roll the dice and work out the sums to colour in this Storyland picture.

How to Play

You need one player or several players working as a team, a dice and your best maths skills to complete this picture.

- ★ Roll the dice.
- ★ Now look at the number on the dice. If it's a 1, find a sum that adds up to 1 in the picture. For example, you could choose a section that says 4 - 3.
- ★ Colour in that section using the correct colour – see the Colour Key on the right for guidance.
- ★ You can only fill in one section at a time – so not all the number 1 sections at the same time.
- ★ Keep rolling the dice and working out the sums until the picture is finished.
- ★ When you've completed the picture, congratulations – you're now an honorary member of Storyland's Clandestine Colouring Club!

COLOUR KEY

1 -		4 -	
2 -		5 -	
3 -		6 -	





2+1
2+1
2+1
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2+1

6-4

4-3

6-4

3-2

3-2

6-4

5-3

6-4

6-4

2+1

6-4

2+1

5-4

2-1

3-2

4-3

2+1

3-2

5-3

6-4

6-5

2+3

3-2

2+4

3+3

5-1

6-4

2+1

6-4

6-4

2+1

6-4

3+3

1+5

6-4

2+1

4-2

6-4

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3-2

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3-2

2+1

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1+1

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3+3

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1+1

3-2

6-5

6-4

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2+3

2+2

4+1

5-1

2+3

2+2

2+3

6-4

2+3

6-4

2+3

1+5

3+3

2+2

2+1

STORY MAGIC

Our favourite books this month teach you how to be a good competitor and why being inventive (and recycling) is best!

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

IT'S A WINNER!

I REALLY WANT TO WIN by Simon Philip and Lucia Gaggiotti (Templar Books) is by the masterminds behind *I Really Want the Cake* and is just as enjoyable, if not more. This time it's sports day and our heroine is desperate for a medal or a trophy. However, when things don't go to plan, she has to accept that, sometimes, it's the taking part that counts – and enjoying the ride along the way.

SUZY ORBIT, ASTRONAUT by Ruth Quayle and Jez Tuya (Nosy Crow) is a celebration of imagination and ingenuity. When Suzy's boss, Captain Gizmo, discovers that aliens are close by, he needs to act fast. The trouble is, his equipment isn't working. Captain Gizmo's solution is to order new stuff, but Suzy has a better idea... if only the captain will listen!

CONGRATULATIONS to Sienna Drury, who is aged 6, for winning our recent *Draw a Dragon* competition, which was inspired by our story *Stan and the Dragon* in Storytime Issue 55. We can see that Bernard the Fire Dragon would have given Stan a fearsome challenge! Well done, Sienna – you win a set of Storytime books!



WIN BOOKS!

For a chance to win these amazing books, enter our competition:

storytimemagazine.com/win

FIND OUT WHAT I'M UP TO IN YOUR NEXT STORYTIME ISSUE!



