

Classic Tales

Big Book



Core Knowledge Language Arts • New York Edition



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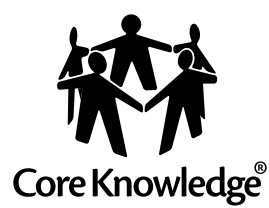


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Table of Contents

The Lion and the Mouse.....	1
The City Mouse and the Country Mouse.....	9
Goldilocks and the Three Bears	19
The Gingerbread Man	31
The Shoemaker and the Elves	45
The Little Red Hen	57
Thumbelina	67
How Turtle Cracked His Shell.....	85
Why Flies Buzz	95
The Three Little Pigs	111

The Lion and the Mouse



A Fable by Aesop
Illustrated by Gail McIntosh



One day a little mouse was scampering about. The mouse accidentally ran across the paw of a sleeping lion.



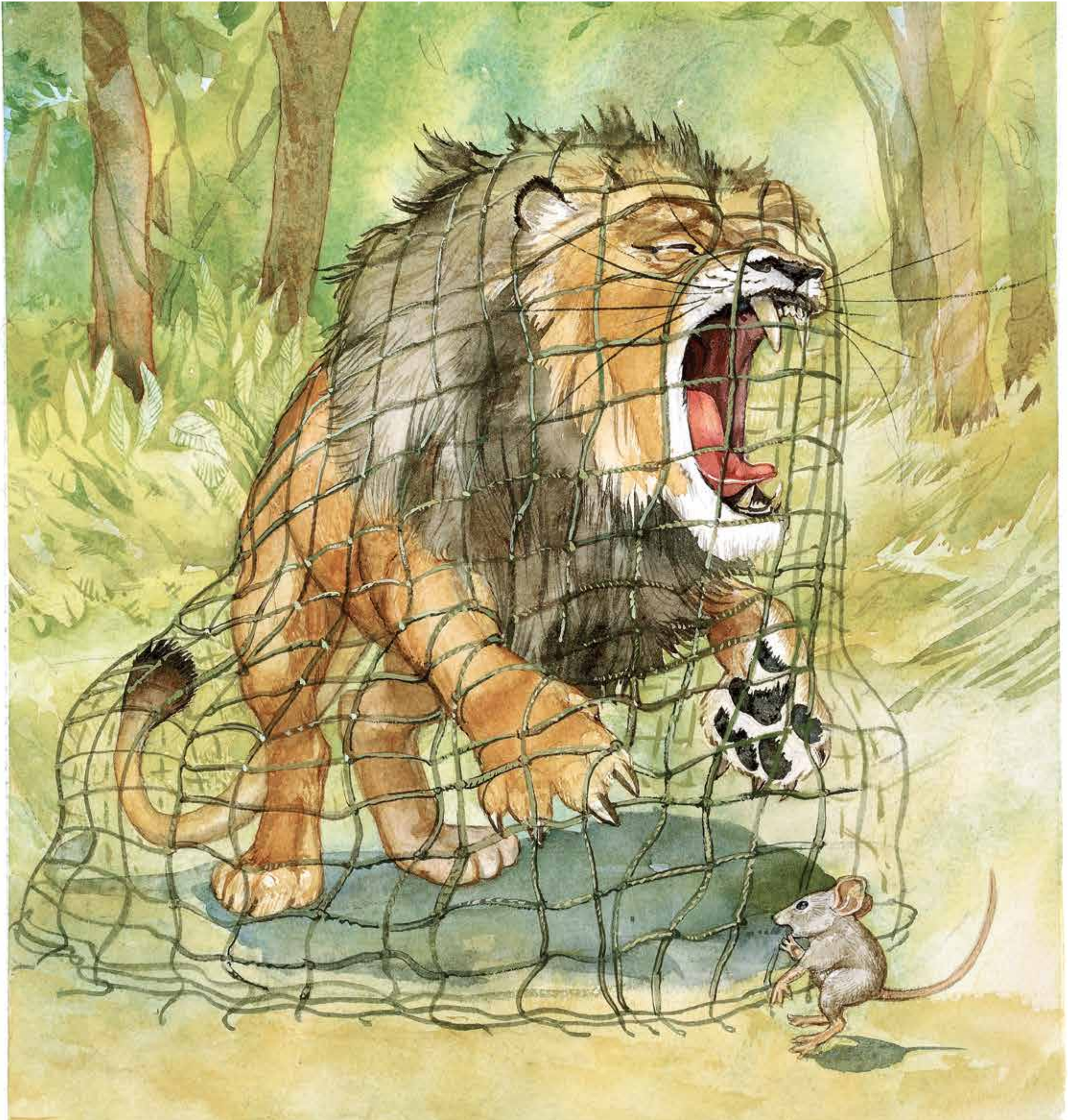
The angry lion awoke and captured the mouse in his great, big, furry paws.

The lion was just about to eat the mouse when the tiny creature cried out, "Please set me free. One day I will return your kindness."



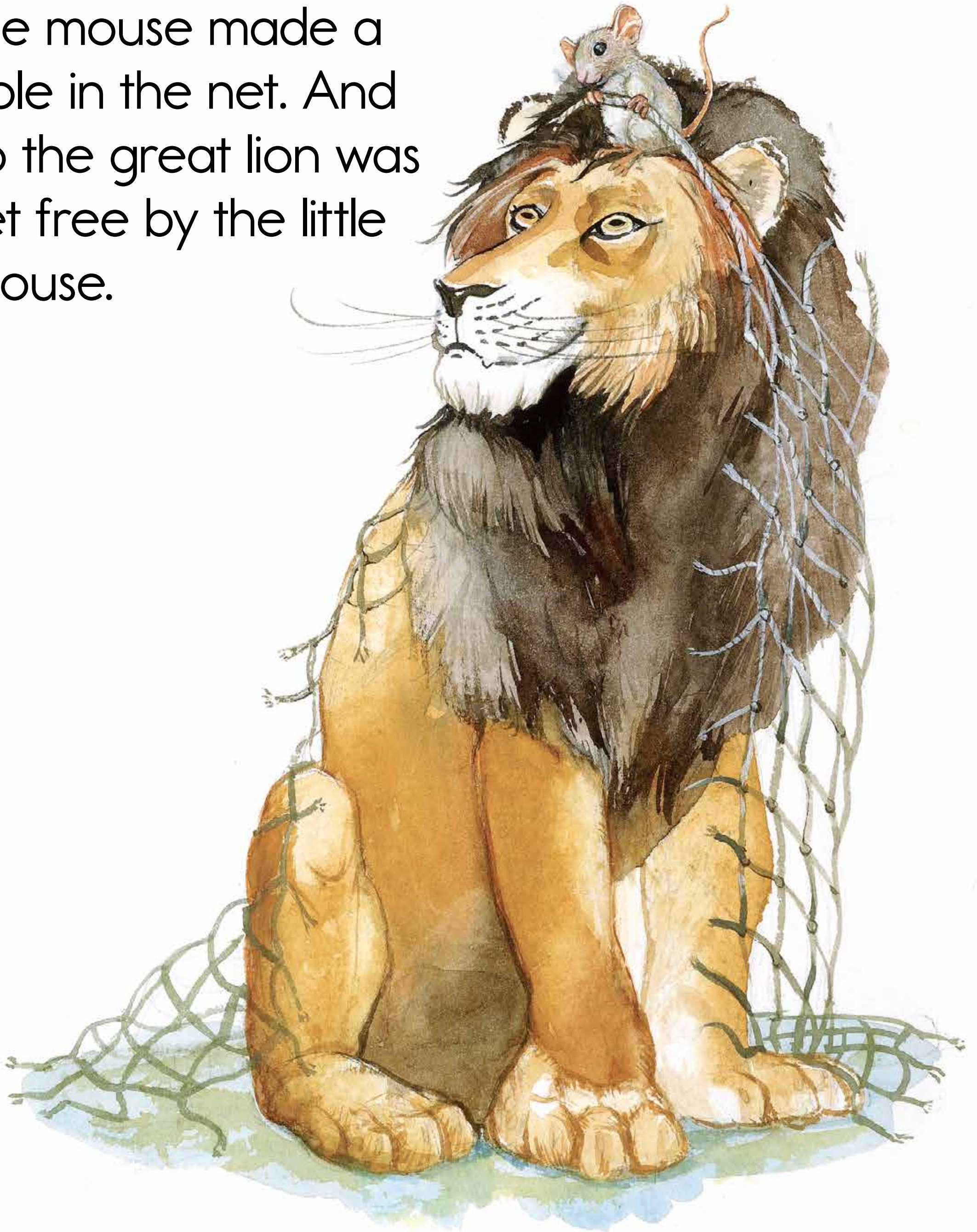
So the lion released the mouse.

A little while later, the mouse heard what sounded like angry roars. The mouse followed the sounds and discovered the lion trapped in a net made of ropes.



Though frightened, the mouse was determined to keep his promise.

Using his sharp teeth,
the mouse made a
hole in the net. And
so the great lion was
set free by the little
mouse.



*The moral of this story is:
Friends who are little in size
can still be great friends.*

The City Mouse and the Country Mouse



A Fable by Aesop
Illustrated by Gail McIntosh



One beautiful summer's day, the City Mouse went to visit his cousin the Country Mouse.

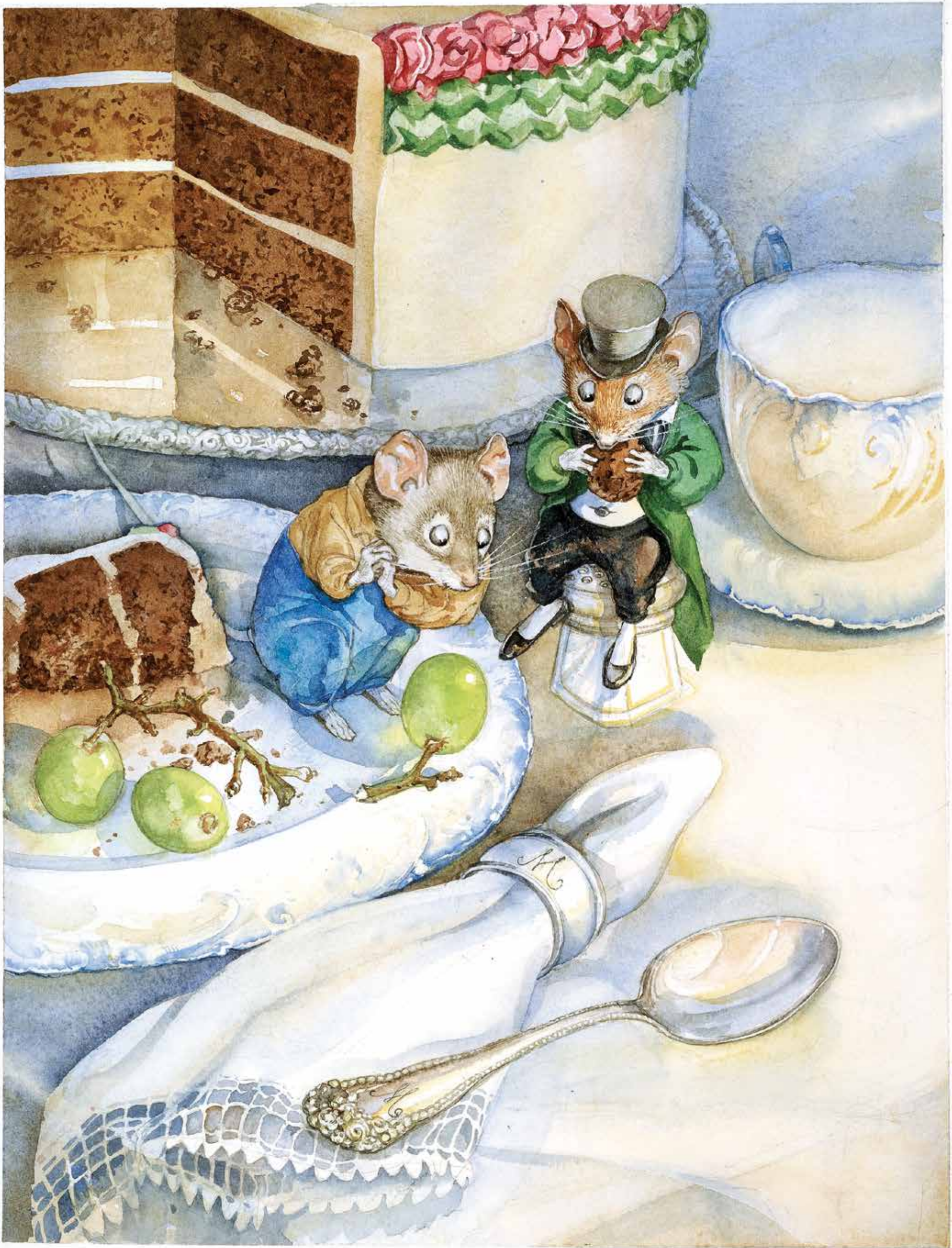


The Country Mouse had a humble home. He ate plain food like corn and peas. The City Mouse was not impressed. No, Sir!

“Cousin, come with me to the wonderful city,” said the City Mouse. The Country Mouse agreed, and they set off together.



“Oh my!” said the Country Mouse when he saw his cousin’s grand home.



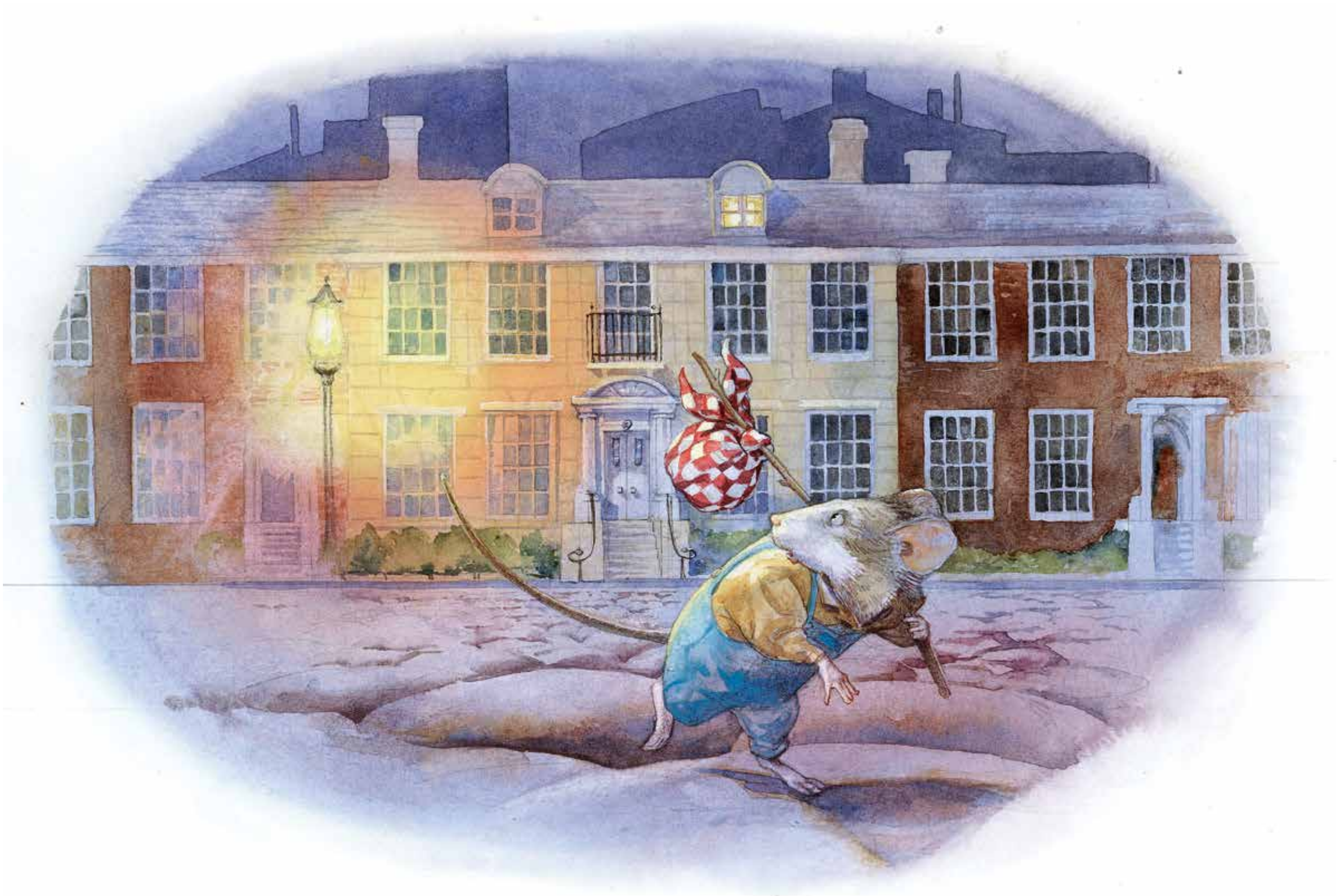
“A feast awaits us!” said the City Mouse proudly. The cousins secretly began to eat wonderful, delicious foods like ham and chocolate cake.

Suddenly, they heard noises. A cat with sharp claws appeared.



Just in time, the mice escaped inside a small hole in the wall.

The Country Mouse decided that the city was not for him. He made his way back to his simple home where he was safe and happy.





*The moral of the story is:
There's no place like home.*

Goldilocks and the Three Bears



Retold by Rosie McCormick
Illustrated by Gail McIntosh

One morning, Papa Bear made some steaming-hot porridge for his family. He poured his porridge into a big bowl. He poured Mama Bear's porridge into a middle-sized bowl.

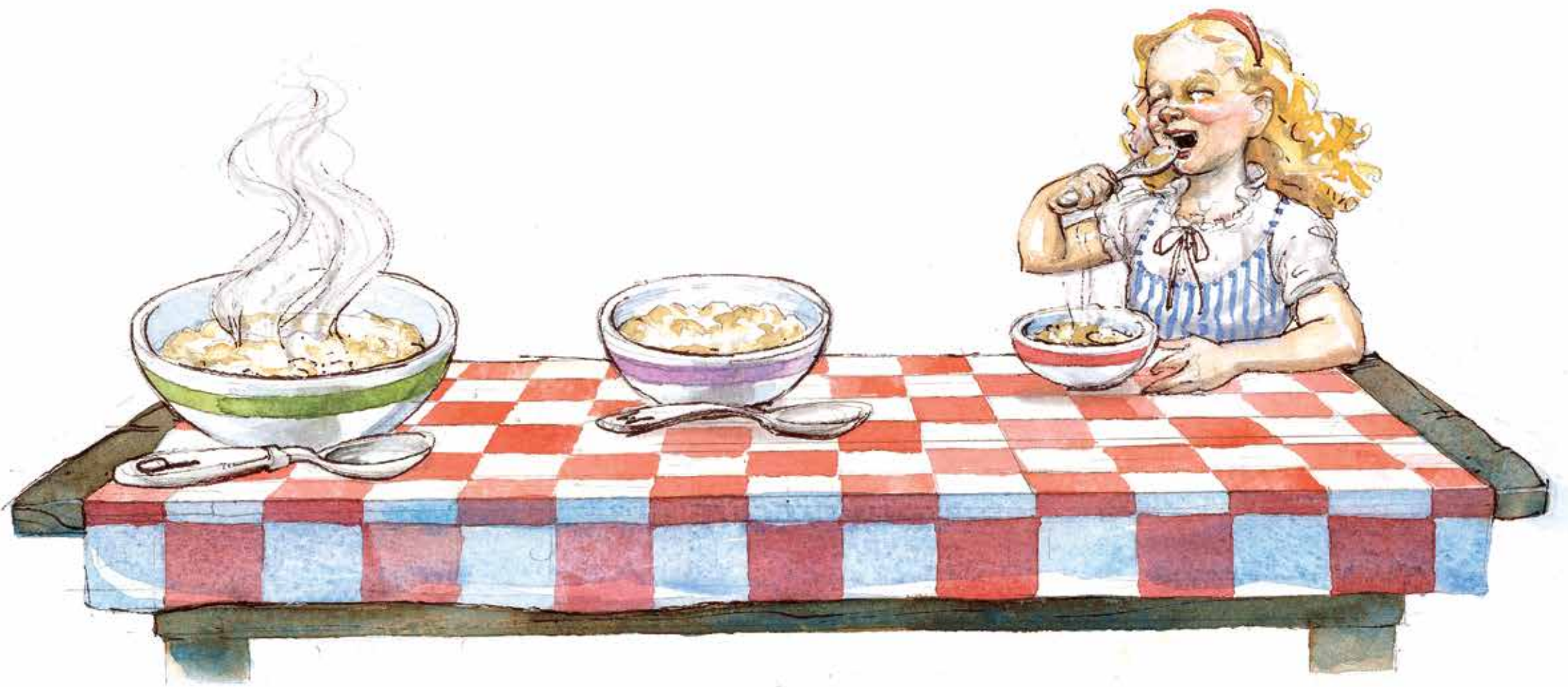


Finally, he poured Baby Bear's porridge into a tiny bowl. While the porridge cooled, the Three Bears went for a walk in the forest.



That very same morning, a little girl named Goldilocks had also gone for a walk in the forest. However, Goldilocks lost her way and came upon the Bears' cozy cottage.

Goldilocks was hungry. She stepped inside the cozy cottage. There, she found the three bowls of porridge.



Goldilocks tasted the porridge in the big bowl—too hot! She tasted the porridge in the middle-sized bowl—too cold! Then she tasted the porridge in the tiny bowl. It was just right, so she gobbled it all up.

Goldilocks began to feel tired. She looked around and saw three chairs. She tried sitting in the big chair. It was too hard. *Ouch!*



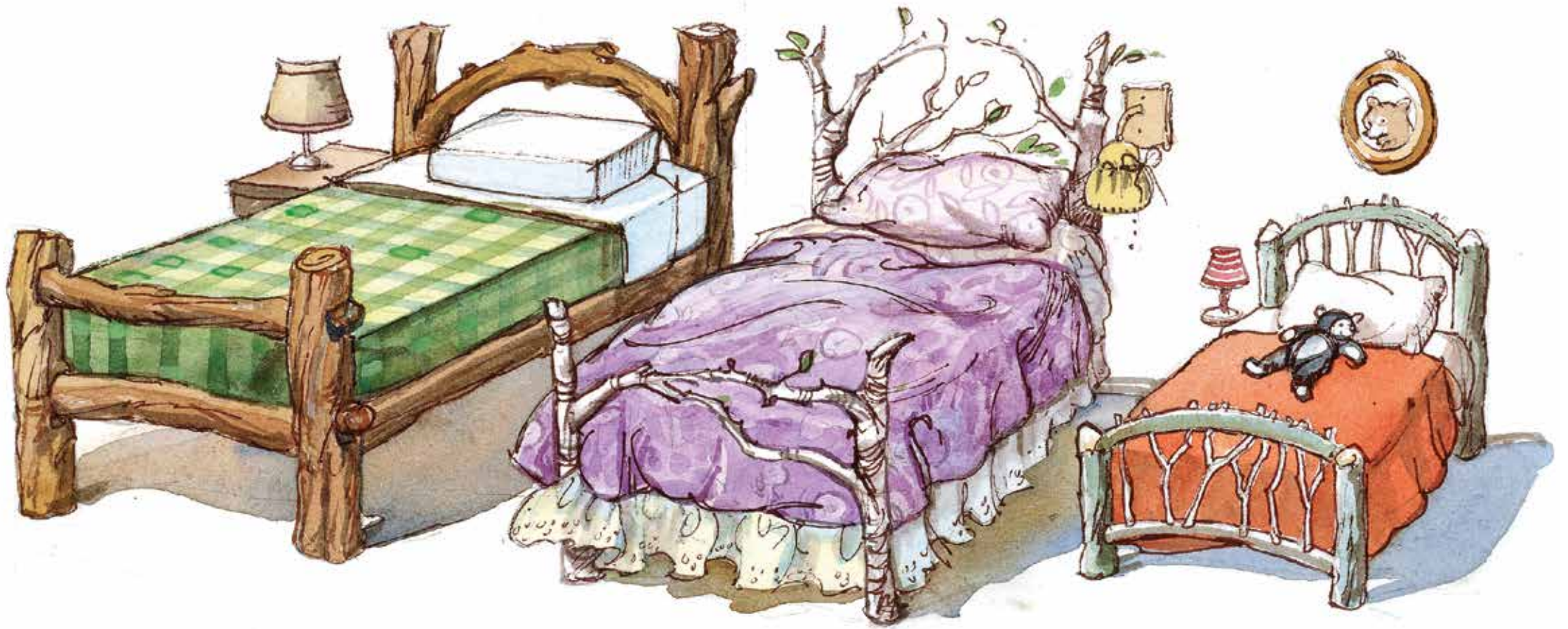
She tried sitting in the middle-sized chair. It was too soft. *Plop!*





She sat down in the tiny chair. It was just right. But, suddenly the chair broke and Goldilocks fell to the floor! *Crash!*

Goldilocks went upstairs
and found three beds.



She was still tired, so she tried the
big bed. It was too smooth. She
tried the middle-sized bed. It was
too lumpy. She tried the tiny bed.
It was just right. Goldilocks fell
fast asleep.

While Goldilocks was sleeping, the Bears returned home. They saw that someone had been eating their porridge. They saw that someone had been sitting in their chairs.



Baby Bear said, “Someone has been sitting in my chair—and has broken it all to pieces!”

The Bears went upstairs and discovered that someone had been sleeping in their beds. Baby Bear said, “Someone has been sleeping in my bed—and here she is!”



Goldilocks was startled when she woke up and saw the Bears.



Goldilocks ran out of the cozy cottage as fast as she could. The Three Bears never saw or heard from her again.

The Gingerbread Man



Retold by Rosie McCormick
Illustrated by Gail McIntosh



One day, a little old woman decided to make a delicious gingerbread man cookie.

She put the cookie dough on a cookie sheet and baked it in the oven. To her surprise, when she opened the oven, the Gingerbread Man jumped out!





The Gingerbread Man ran out of the house. The little old woman and her husband ran as fast as they could, but they could not catch the Gingerbread Man.



A cow grazing in a field sniffed the air. The smell of ginger made the cow want to eat the Gingerbread Man. The cow could not catch the Gingerbread Man either.

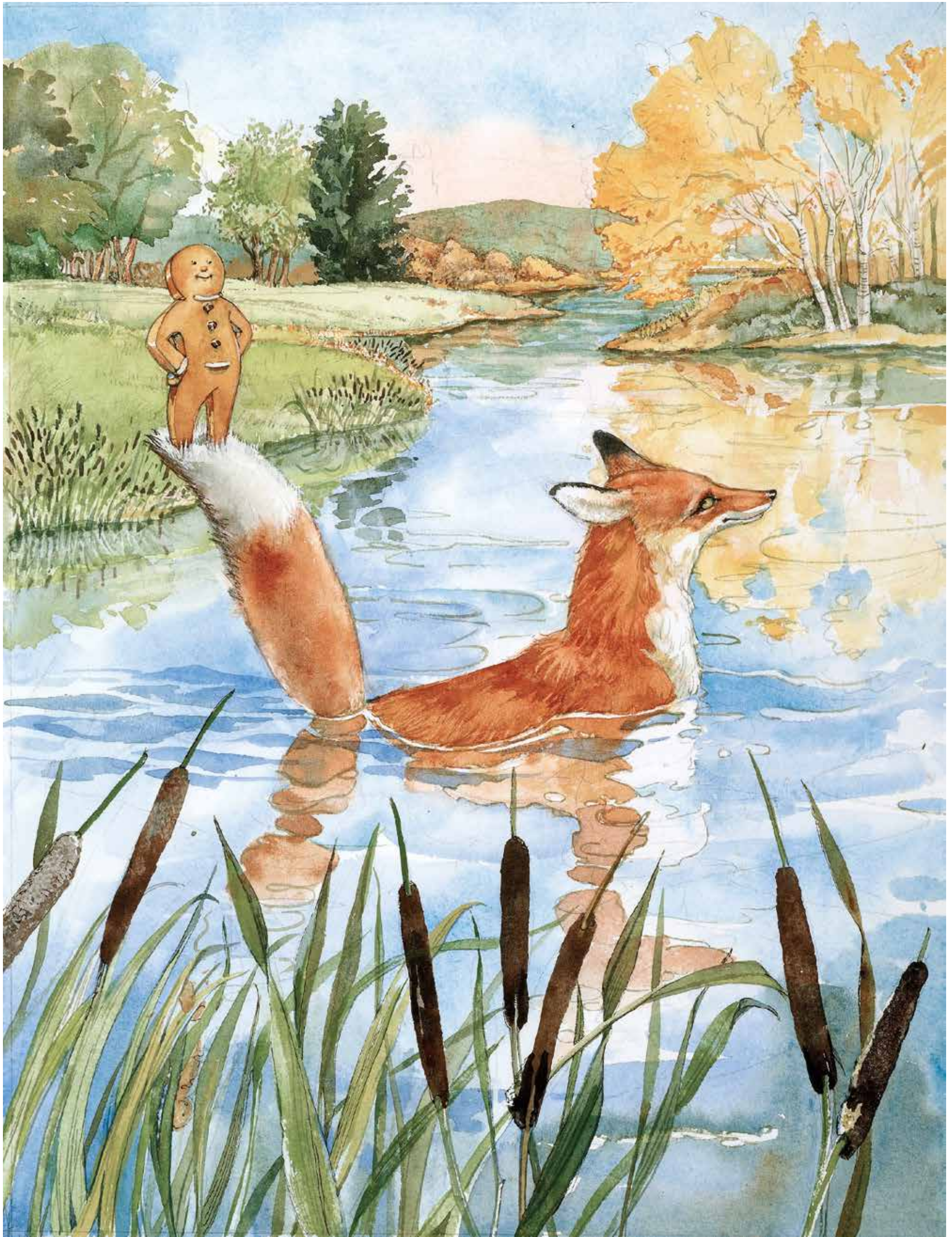
A cat sleeping in the warm sunshine thought that the Gingerbread Man would make a tasty treat. Not even the cat could catch the Gingerbread Man.



Then the Gingerbread Man
met a clever fox.



The fox pretended that he was not
hungry and therefore did not want
to catch the Gingerbread Man.



The clever fox said that he would be happy to help the Gingerbread Man cross the river.

As they were crossing
the river, the fox said,
“The water is getting
deeper. You should ride
on my head.”



Moments later the fox said,
“Now you should ride on my nose.”



Before the Gingerbread Man could even say, “Thank you for your kindness,” the fox ate him—every last bite.

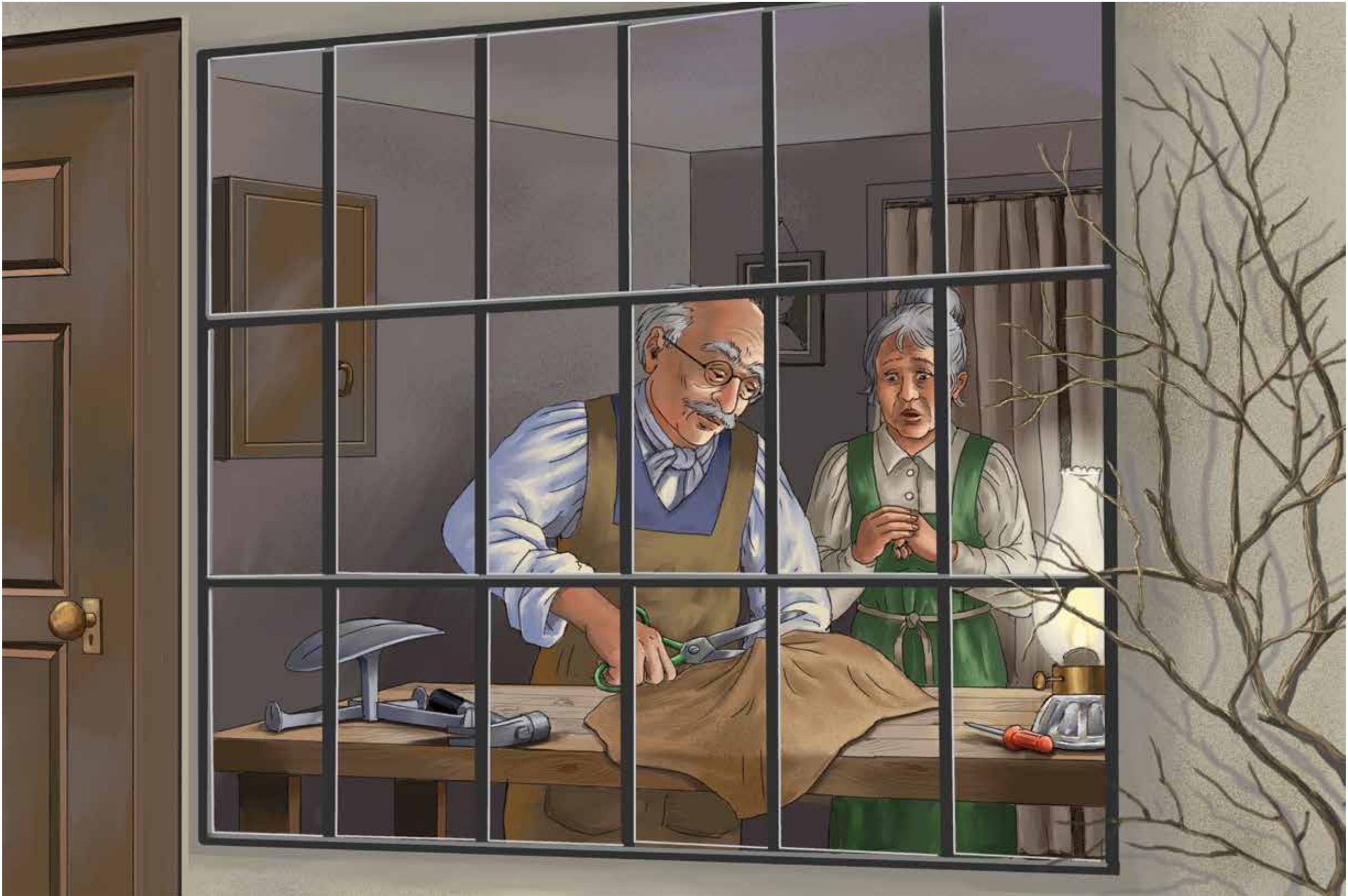


Chomp! Smack! The clever fox licked his lips as he crossed to the other side of the river.

The Shoemaker and the Elves



Retold by Rosie McCormick
Illustrated by Barbara L. Gibson



Once there was a poor shoemaker and his wife.

“We only have enough leather left to make one pair of shoes,” said the worried shoemaker to his wife.



That night, the shoemaker left the leather on his workbench and went to bed. He decided he would make his last pair of shoes in the morning.

When the shoemaker woke up, he was shocked to find a beautiful pair of shoes on his workbench.



He puzzled and puzzled over who could have made such beautiful shoes.

Later that day, a customer came into the workshop and admired the shoes. They fit his feet so perfectly that he paid double the money for them!



“We now have enough money to buy dinner and to buy leather for two more pairs of shoes,” the shoemaker said happily.



That evening he cut leather for two pairs of shoes and left it on his workbench.

Amazingly, the next morning, there were four pairs of new, fancy shoes. The shoemaker and his wife sold all four and made more money.



“I must discover who is making these shoes,” said the shoemaker to his wife. So, they decided to stay awake and watch the workbench all night.



That evening, two tiny elves in tattered clothes tip-toed into the workshop. They began to sew the leather into beautiful shoes.

“Those poor elves must be freezing in their ragged clothes,” said the wife to the shoemaker.



So, they decided to sew new clothes and shoes for the poor little elves. That evening, they left the gifts on the workbench for the elves to find.

When the elves returned, they discovered the beautiful clothes and shoes. They were so happy with their new clothes that they danced out of the workshop and were never seen again.

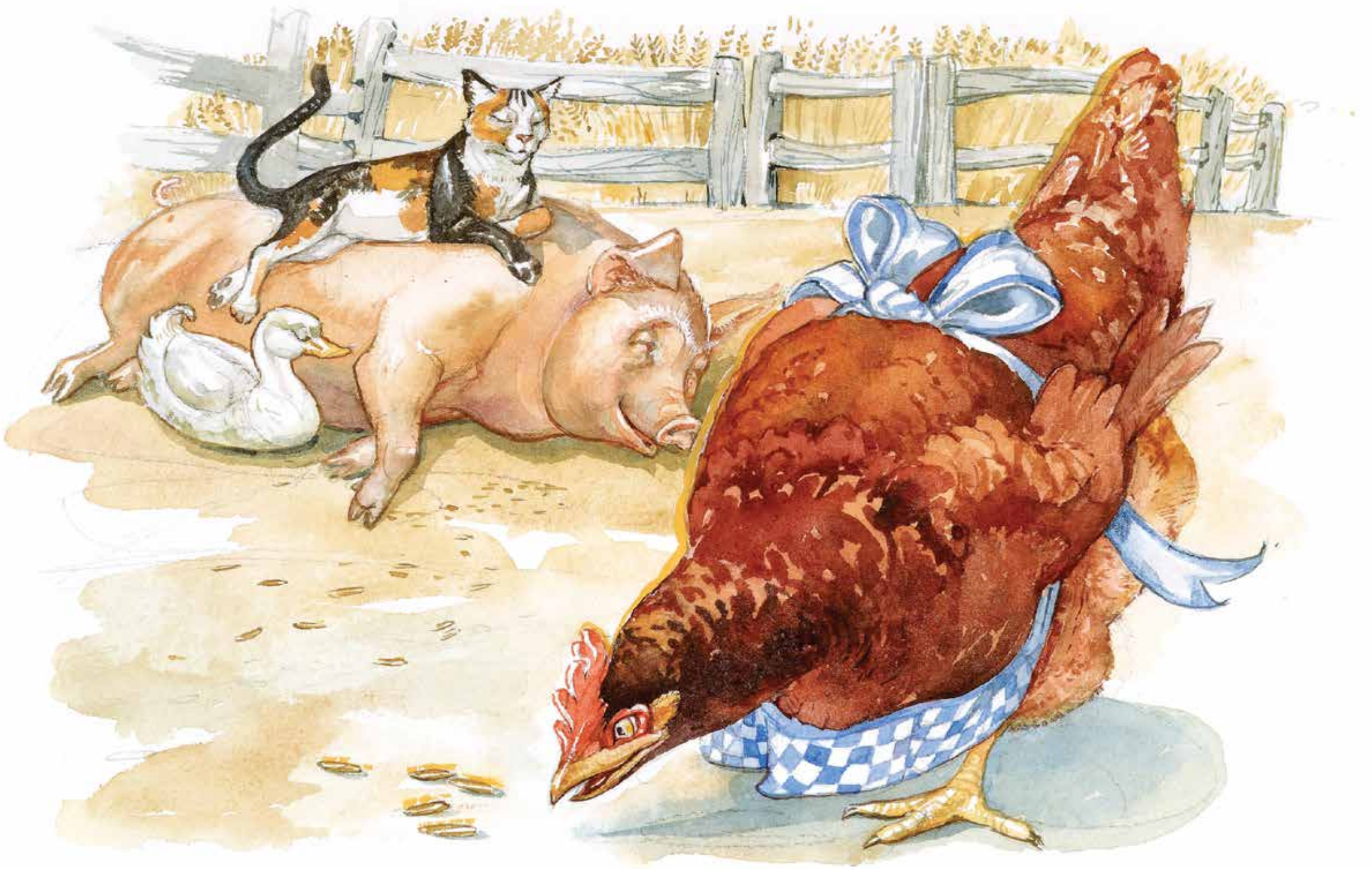


From that day forward, the shoemaker and his wife lived a happy life with plenty to eat.

The Little Red Hen



Retold by Rosie McCormick
Illustrated by Gail McIntosh



There once was a little red hen who lived with her friends on a farm. She was not a lazy hen. She worked harder than all of the other animals.

The Little Red Hen wanted to plant some grains of wheat. She asked for help, but her friends refused.



So she planted the grains herself.



In the summertime, the wonderful golden wheat was ready to be harvested. Once again, with no one to help her, the Little Red Hen did all the work.

The Little Red Hen
had to grind the wheat
into flour.



As usual, her friends did not want to
do any hard work. So the Little Red
Hen ground the flour herself.

The Little Red Hen used the flour to make bread dough. With no one to help her, she kneaded the dough all by herself.



The Little Red Hen's friends had completely abandoned her. So she baked the bread all by herself.



When the smell of freshly baked bread rose up into the air, the Little Red Hen's friends appeared.



They were willing to help eat the bread, but the Little Red Hhen ate it all by herself. She had done all the work!

Thumbelina



by Hans Christian Andersen
Retold by Rosie McCormick
Illustrated by Gail McIntosh



Once upon a time, there was a woman who was very sad because she did not have any children. One day, she planted a magical seed. That night, the seed grew into a flowering plant.



“What a beautiful flower,” said the woman as she kissed the petals. At that moment, the flower opened. Inside the flower sat a tiny girl.

The girl was no bigger than a thumb. The woman named her Thumbelina.



At night, Thumbelina slept in a polished walnut shell.

One night, a mother toad came
and took Thumbelina away.



The mother toad
wanted Thumbelina
to marry her son.

The mother toad and her son placed Thumbelina on a water lily leaf in the river. Then they set off to plan the wedding.



Thumbelina was very sad.
She began to cry.



A fish heard Thumbelina's sobs. It nibbled on the stem of the lily pad until the leaf broke free. Thumbelina floated down the river.

Summer disappeared, and winter came. Thumbelina was cold.



A field mouse took pity on her.
“My dear, you must come home with me,” the field mouse said.



Thumbelina spent the rest of the winter in the mouse's snug burrow. They became good friends.

In a burrow nearby lived Mr. Mole.
He liked to visit in the evening and
hear Thumbelina sing.



One evening, while visiting Mr. Mole, Thumbelina found a swallow. The bird was cold and hurt.



Thumbelina cared for the swallow and brought him food every day.

Mr. Mole had fallen in love with Thumbelina. He wanted to marry her.



Thumbelina did not want to marry Mr. Mole. Once again, she was very unhappy.

One day, the swallow that
Thumbelina had cared for
came to help her escape.



Together, they
flew south to
warmer lands.

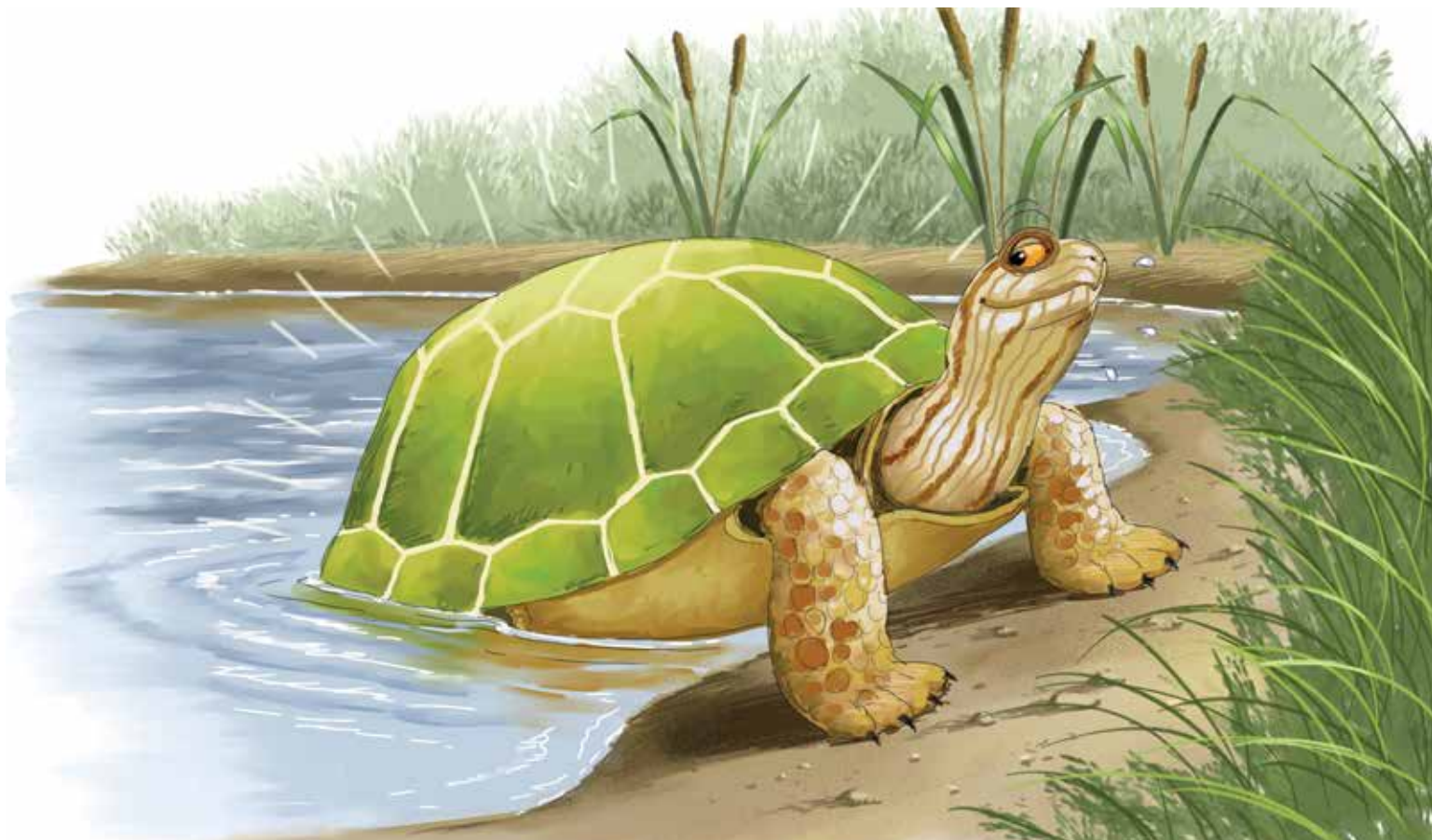


In a new land filled with flowers,
Thumbelina met a king. He was
tiny, too!



Thumbelina became the queen. She and the king lived happily ever after.

How Turtle Cracked His Shell



by Joseph Bruchac
Retold by Rosie McCormick
Illustrated by Gail McIntosh
and Barbara Gibson



One autumn day, Turtle was talking with the birds. They said, “Winter is coming. Soon it’s going to be very cold here. We’re getting ready to fly south where it is warm.”

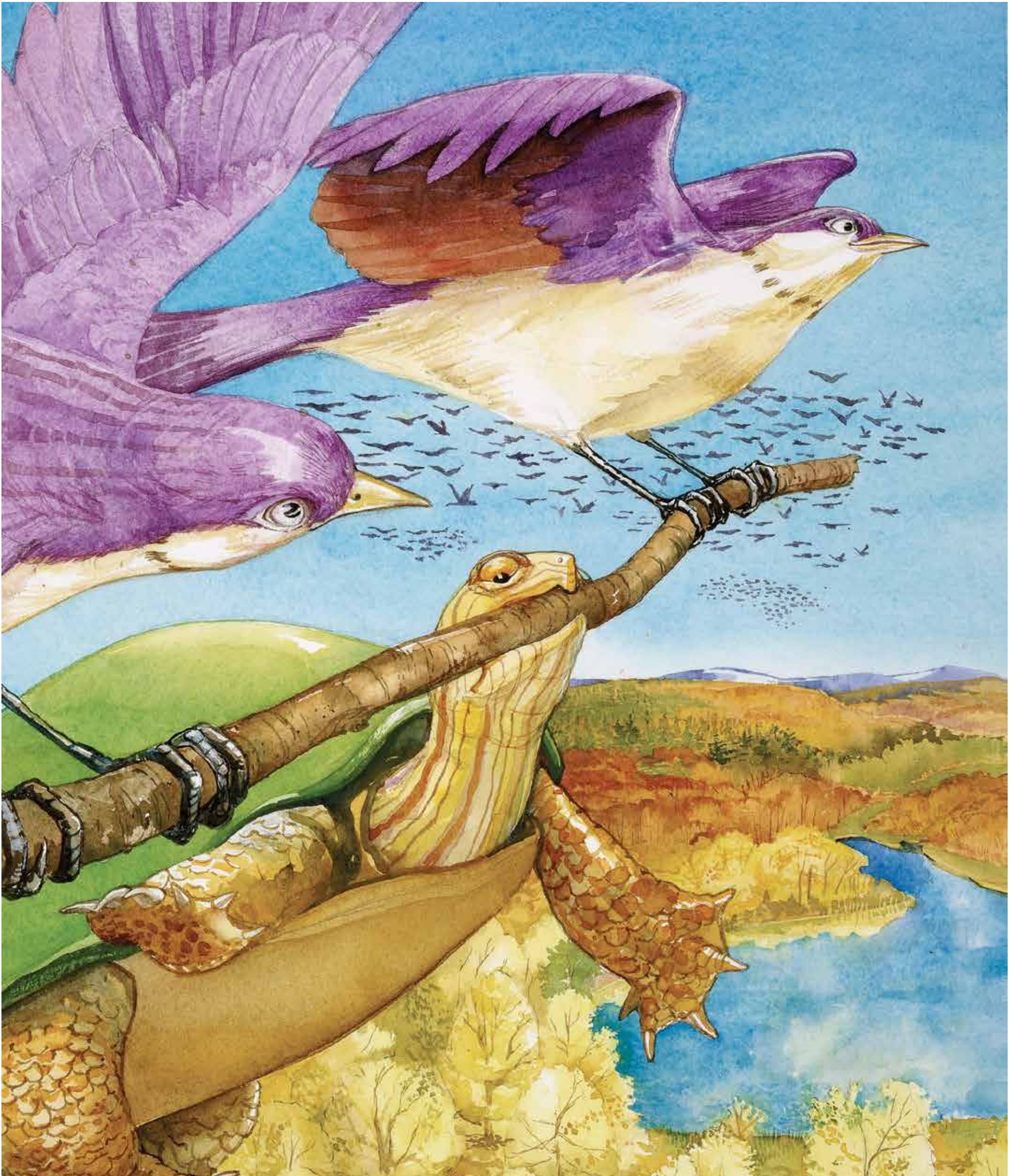


“Can I come with you?” asked Turtle. At first, the birds said, “No!” Turtle pleaded, “There must be some way I can go with you!” Finally, the birds agreed.

“Use your mouth to hold on tightly to this stick,” the birds explained. Turtle did just that.



Then the two big birds grabbed the ends of the stick. Soon they were all high in the sky—including Turtle.



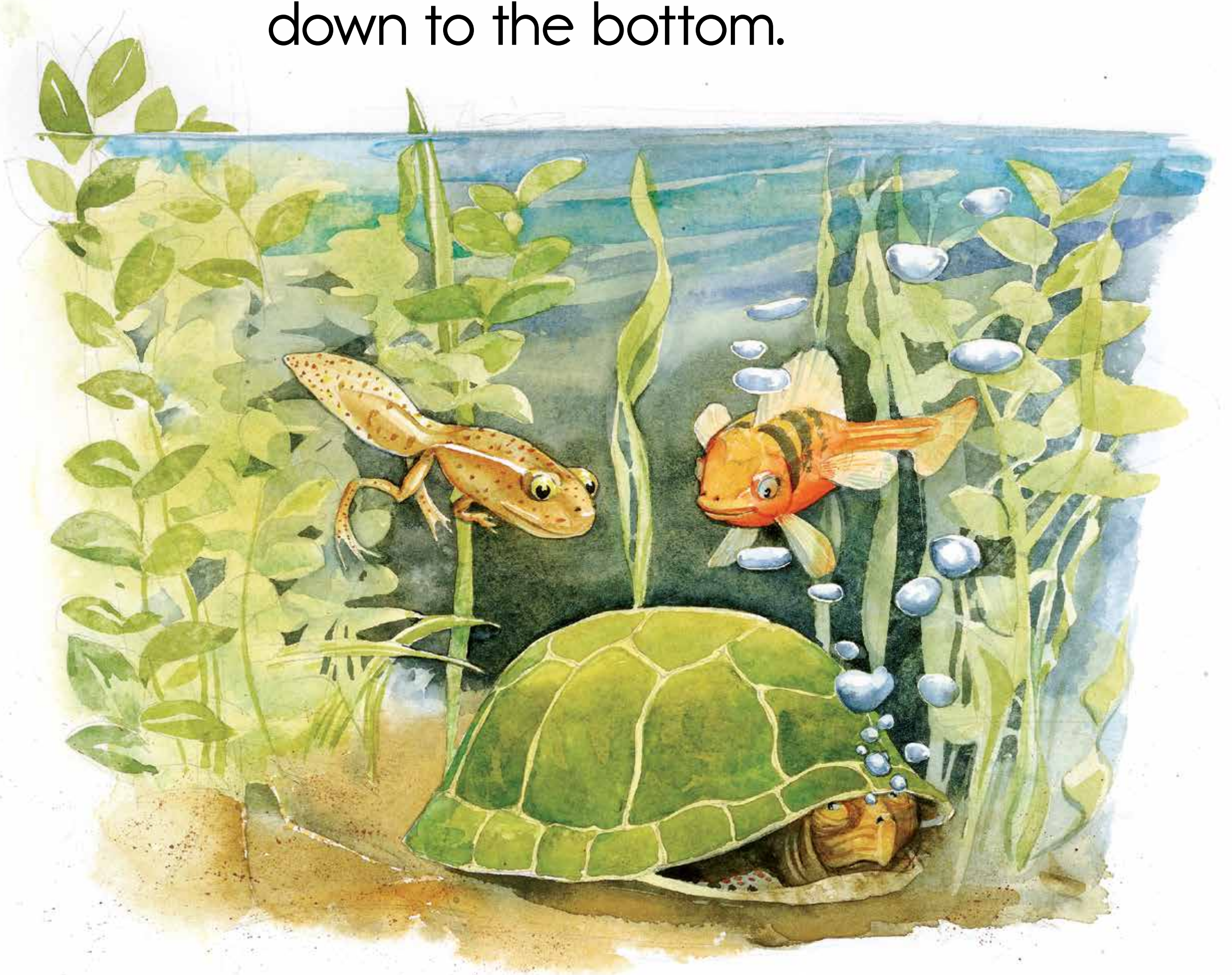
Turtle had never been so high off the ground before. He could look down and see how small everything looked. He wondered how far they had come, and how far they had to go.

Turtle tried to get the birds' attention. He rolled his eyes at them, but they did not notice. He waved his legs too.



Frustrated, Turtle opened his mouth to speak. At that moment he let go of the stick and began to fall! He fell down from the sky and hit the ground hard.

Turtle's body ached. He ached so much he did not notice that his shell had cracked all over. He crawled into a pond and swam down to the bottom.



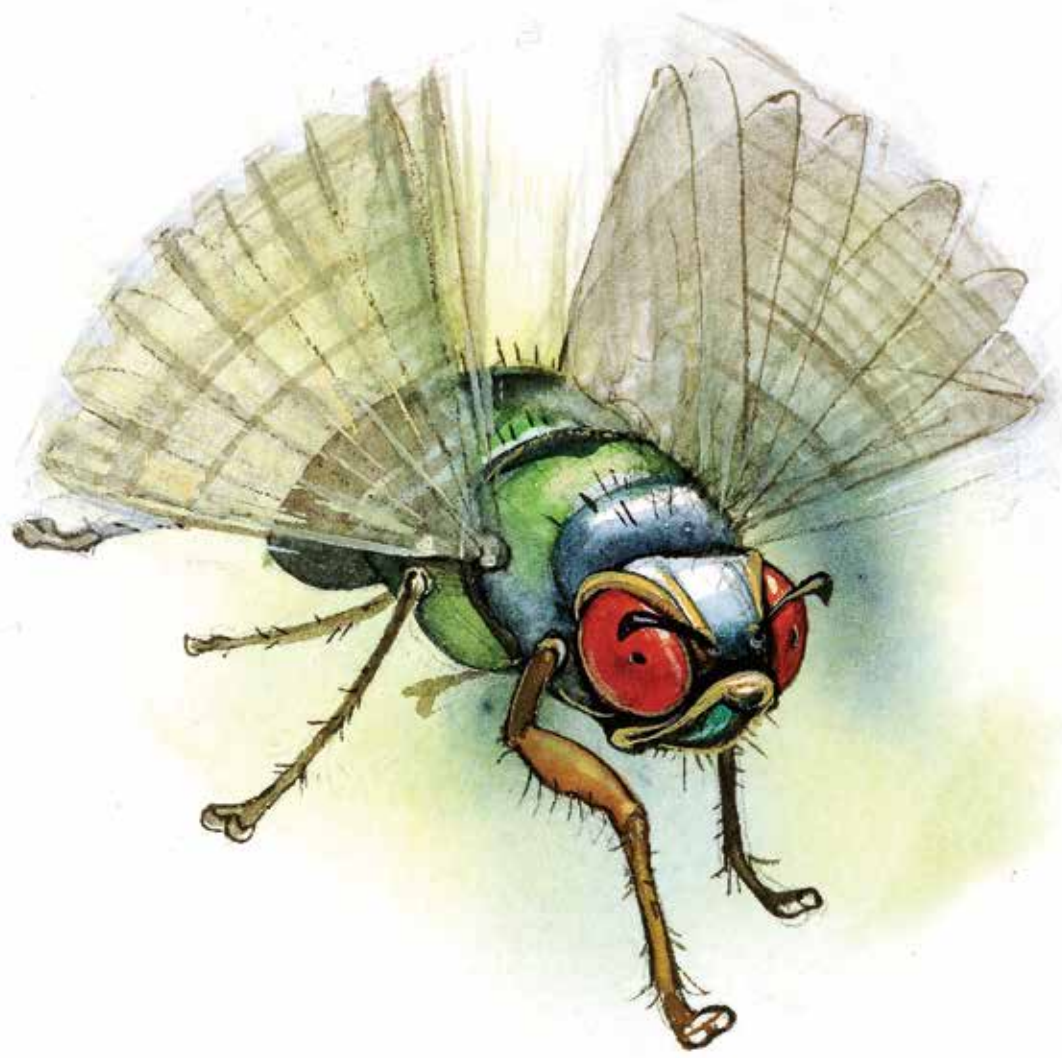
There he dug a hole in the mud and slept all winter long.

In the spring, Turtle woke up. He was very proud of the cracks on his shell.



Ever since then, every turtle's shell looks like it has cracks all over it.

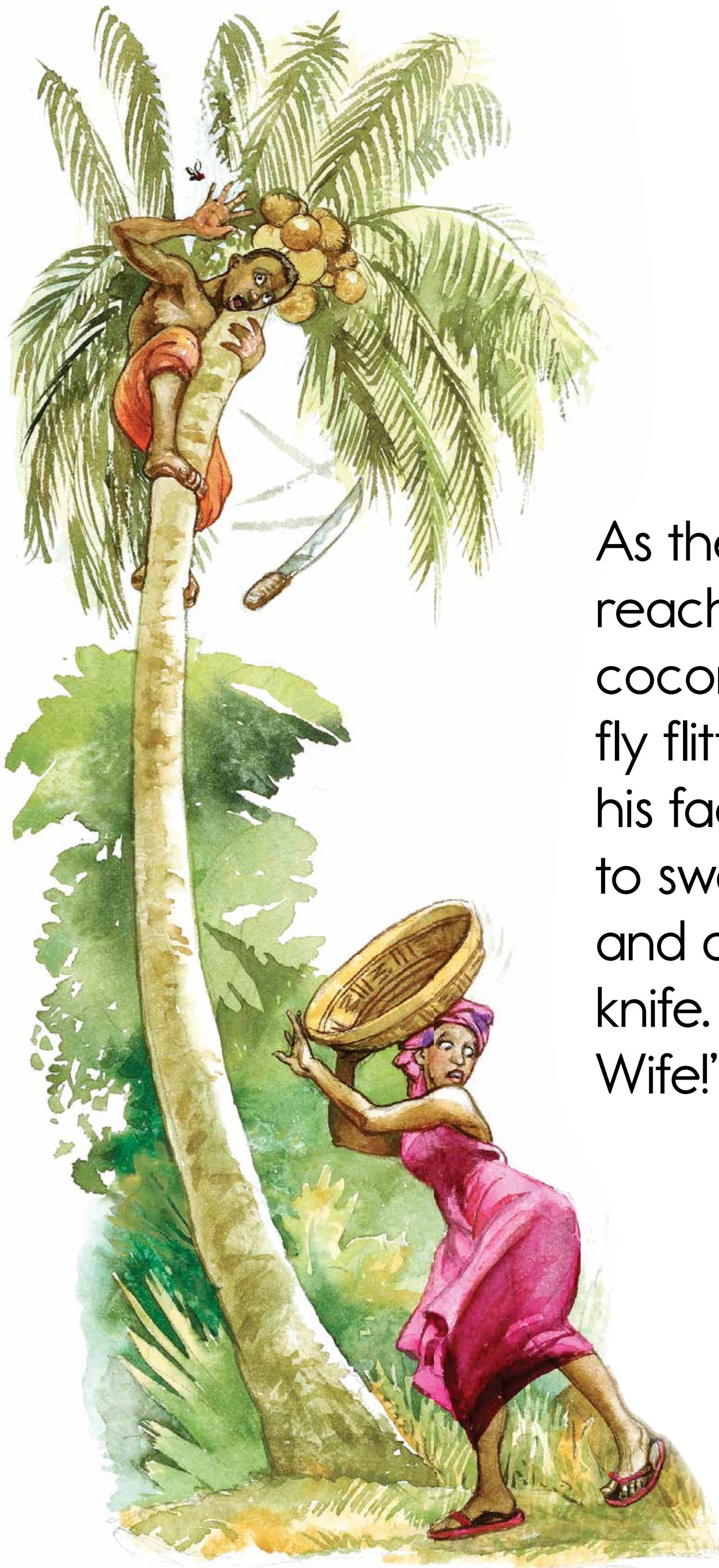
Why Flies Buzz



Retold by Rosie McCormick
Illustrated by Gail McIntosh



One bright, sunny day, a man and his wife went into the jungle to gather food. When they reached a coconut tree, the man took out his knife. The man climbed up the tree to cut down some delicious coconuts.



As the man reached for a coconut, a black fly flitted around his face. He tried to swat the fly, and dropped his knife. “Watch out, Wife!” he cried.

The wife jumped out of the way. As she jumped, she kicked a crocodile that was sleeping beneath the tree.



The angry crocodile's tail went—*swack! swack! swack!*

Nearby, a jungle bird was looking for bugs to eat. As the crocodile's tail came down, the bird squawked—*screee! screee! screee!*



The bird soared to a branch in a tree and landed right next to a monkey. The monkey was peeling a juicy mango.



The monkey, startled by the bird, dropped his mango. It fell on the head of a hippo—*splat! splat! splat!*

The hippo thought he was being attacked by hunters. He tried to escape—*stomp! stomp! stomp!*



As he did, he trampled on a bushfowl's nest. The nest was full of eggs.

“My eggs are all broken!” wailed the bushfowl. She began to cry—*sob! sob! sob!* And there she stayed, beside her nest, for many days and nights.



She did not awaken the sun with her familiar call—*kark! kark! kark!* So the sky remained dark for several days.

The jungle animals were worried. They went to talk to the wise lion.



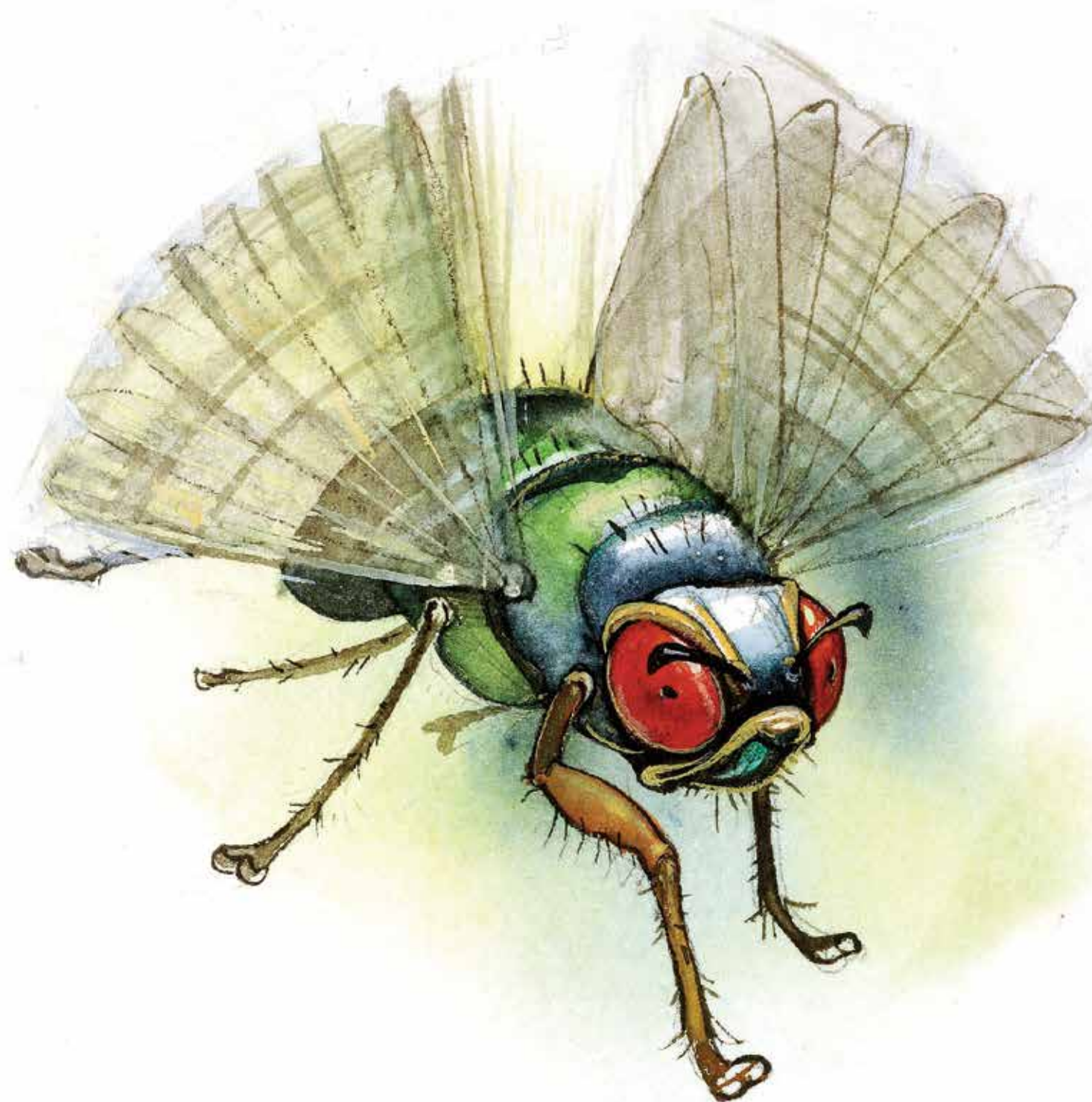
The lion gathered all the animals together to find out what had happened.

Everyone blamed each other.



The last to speak was the man. He said, “Wise Lion, I dropped my knife because a black fly was annoying me.”

“Aha!” said the lion. “Then it is the black fly’s fault!” said the lion. But the black fly answered back. “*Buzz! Buzz! Buzz!*” said the fly.



“Have you nothing else to say?” asked the lion. The fly ignored the lion and continued saying “*buzz! Buzz! Buzz!*”

The lion was angry with the fly and decided to punish him. “Black Fly!” he bellowed. “Since you refuse to answer, I shall take away your power to talk.”

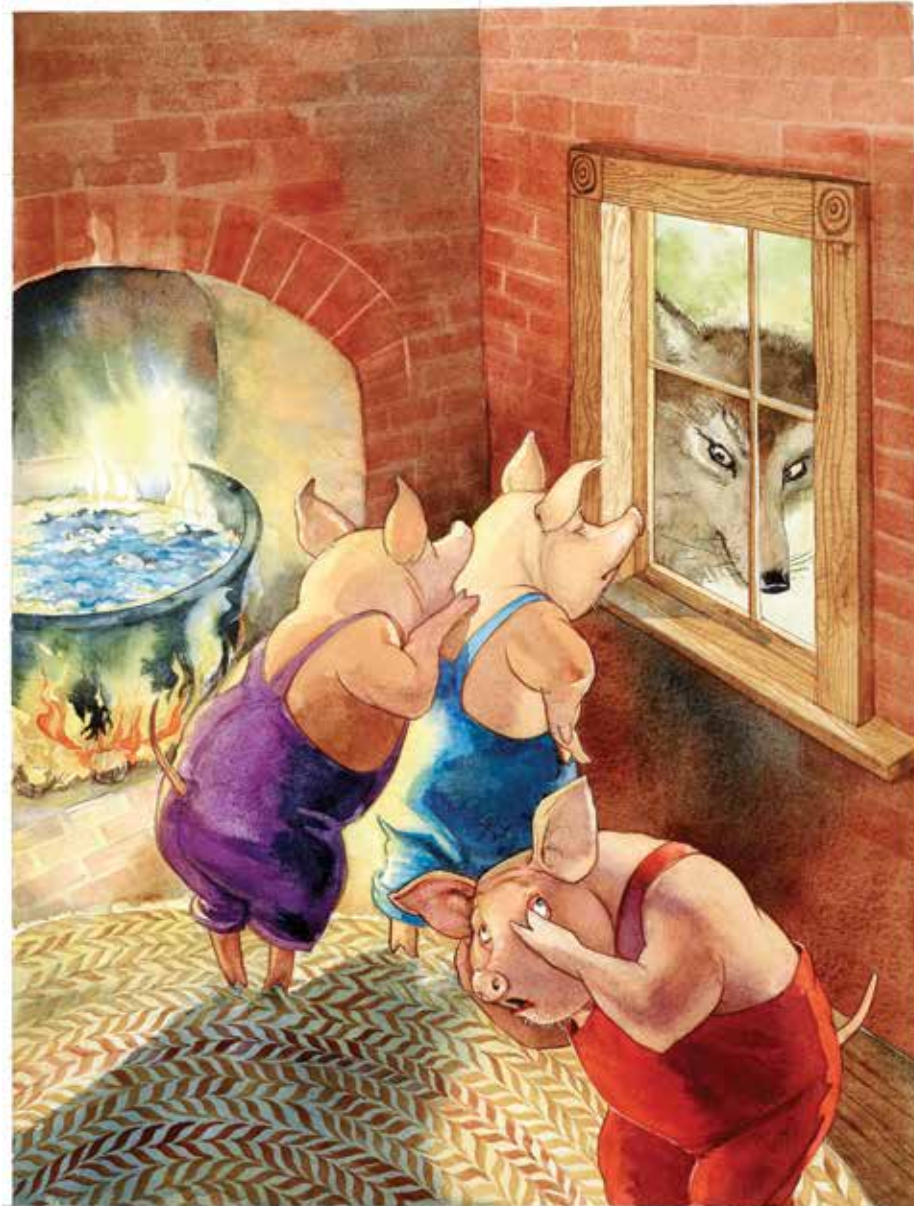


The fly tried to speak, but all he could say was, “*Buzz! Buzz! Buzz!*” To this day, flies all around the world can only say, “*Buzz! Buzz! Buzz!*”



The bushfowl was satisfied. The fly that had caused all the trouble had been punished. And so she agreed to once again call the sun to begin the day.

The Three Little Pigs



Retold by Rosie McCormick
Illustrated by Gail McIntosh



Once upon a time, there were three little pigs. They lived with their mother. One day, Mama Pig said, “You are all grown now. It is time for you to go out into the world and live on your own.”

The pigs said good-bye
and went on their way.



The First Little Pig decided to build
a house made out of straw. Before
long, he was finished. He had time
to relax in the shade.



The Second Little Pig built a house made out of sticks. He worked hard, but he still had time to relax in the shade.

The Third Little Pig decided to build a house made out of bricks. He worked very, very hard.



It took him a long time to finish building his house. He did not have time to rest in the shade.

Soon after, a big, bad wolf came along. He saw the First Little Pig napping in the shade.



‘That little pig would make a tasty bite to eat,’ thought the Big Bad Wolf to himself.



The little pig saw the wolf coming and ran inside his straw house. The wolf said, “Little pig, little pig, let me come in.” The little pig replied, “Not by the hair of my chinny-chin-chin.”

“Then I’ll huff, and I’ll puff, and I’ll blow your house down,” said the Big Bad Wolf. And that is what he did! As the straw blew everywhere, the First Little Pig ran away.

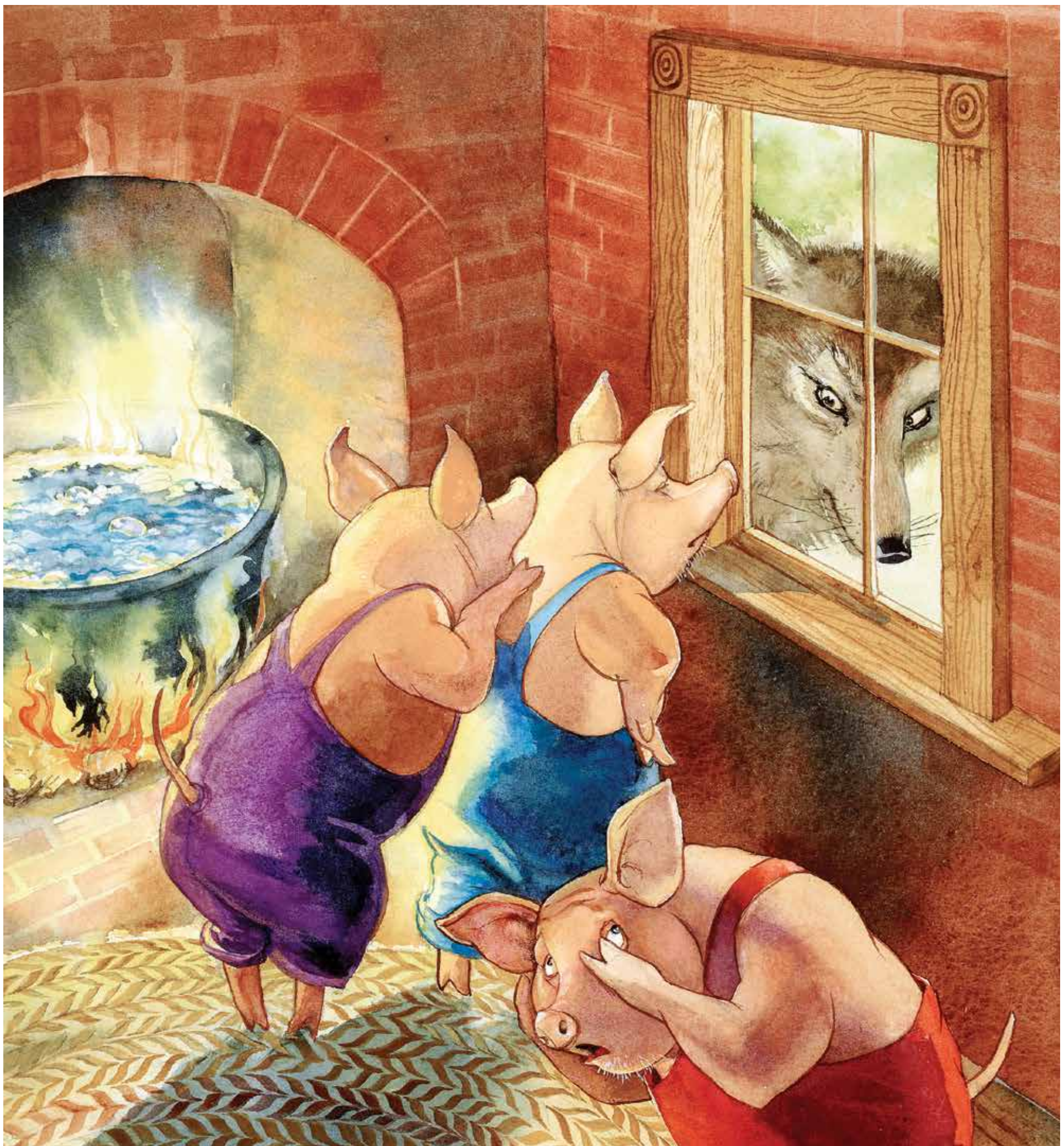


The Big Bad Wolf soon came across the Second Little Pig home made of sticks. The Big Bad Wolf knocked on the door and asked to come in.



“Not by the hair of my chinny-chin-chin,” said the Second Little Pig. “Then I’ll huff, and I’ll puff, and I’ll blow your house down,” replied the wolf.

The two little pigs ran to their brother's brick house. Right behind them was the wolf! Once again the wolf asked to come inside. "Not by the hair of my chinny-chin-chin," replied the Third Little Pig.



The wolf did not give up.
He climbed up onto the roof.
He jumped down the chimney.

And he fell right into a pot of water that was heating on the fire. That water was so hot that the wolf jumped out and ran away.



The Three Little Pigs lived happily ever after.

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