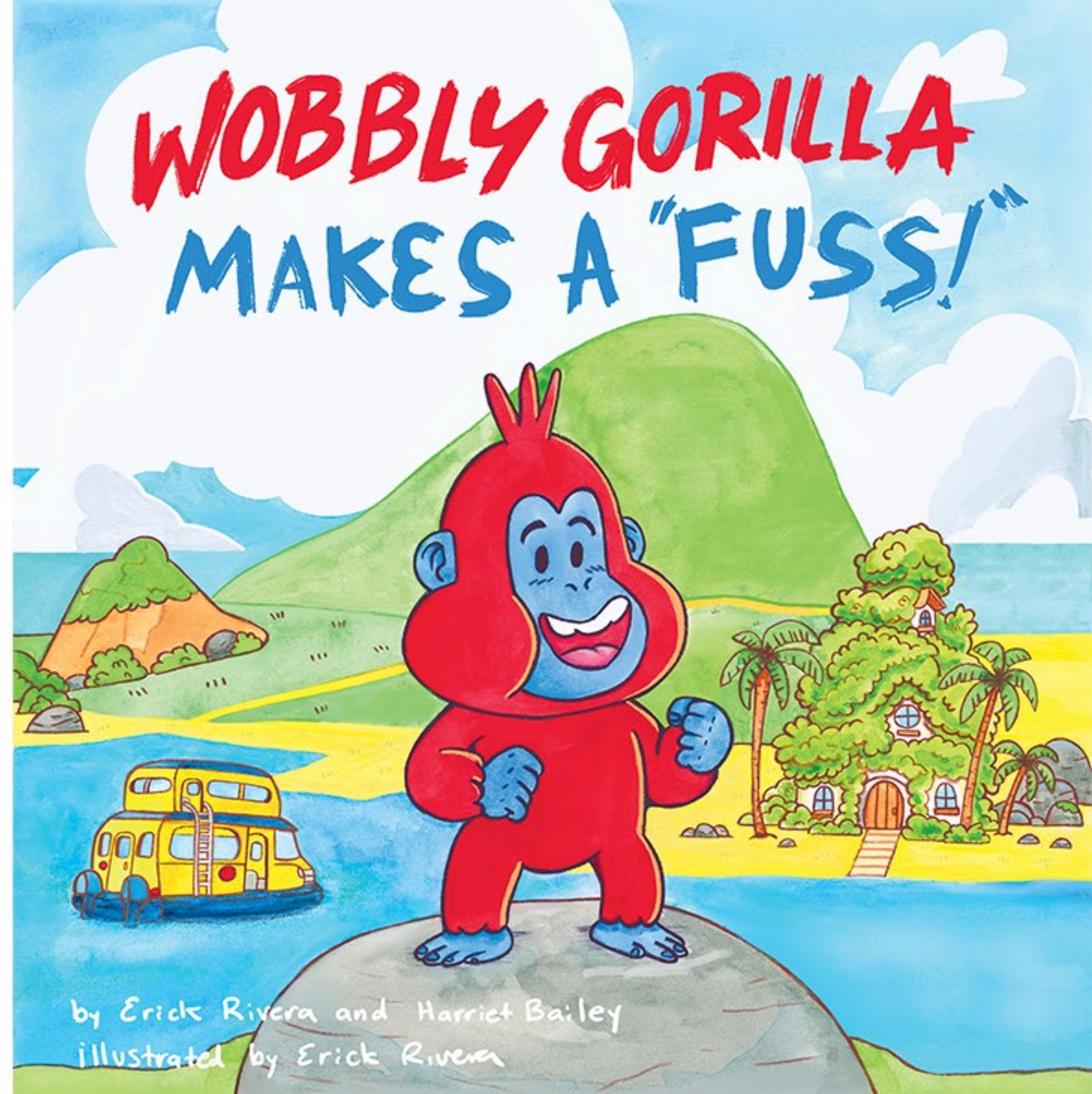
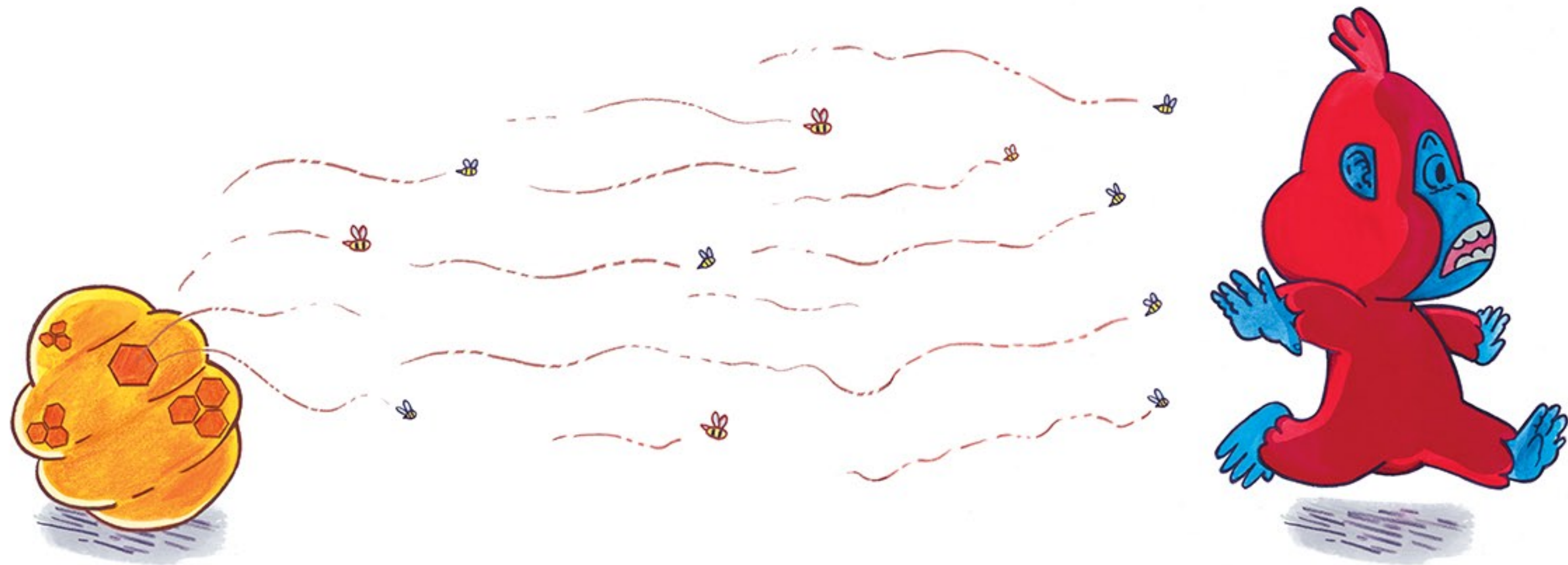


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WOBBLY GORILLA MAKES A "FUSS!"



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Dedicated to little gorilla at home,
Joaquin Rivera





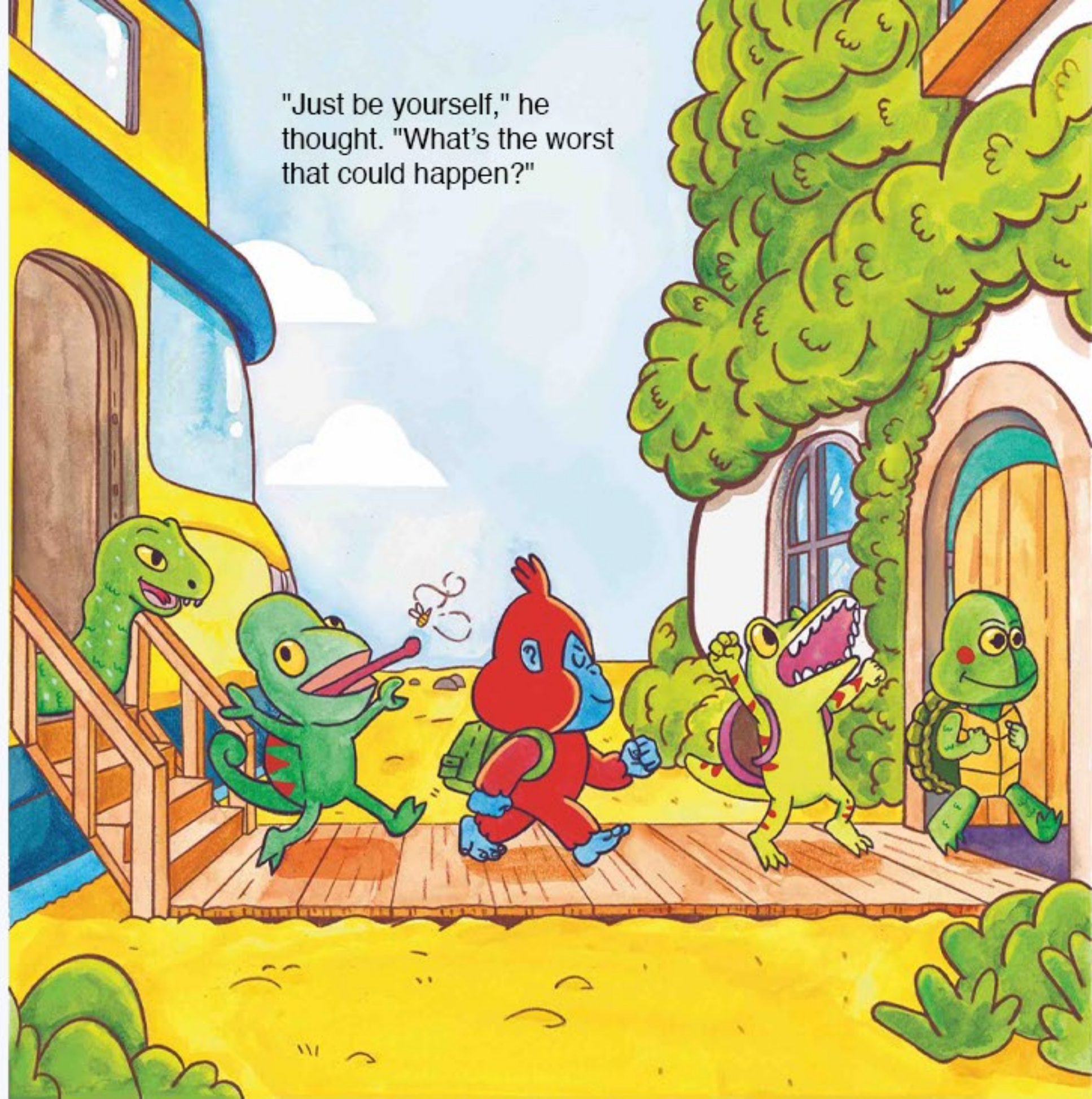
It was Wobbly Gorilla's
first day at his new school.

And seeing the crowd of green scales and tails
made him feel like he might have trouble fitting in.

He could've said something, but he didn't want to make a fuss.
So, he took a deep breath and marched into school, confident.

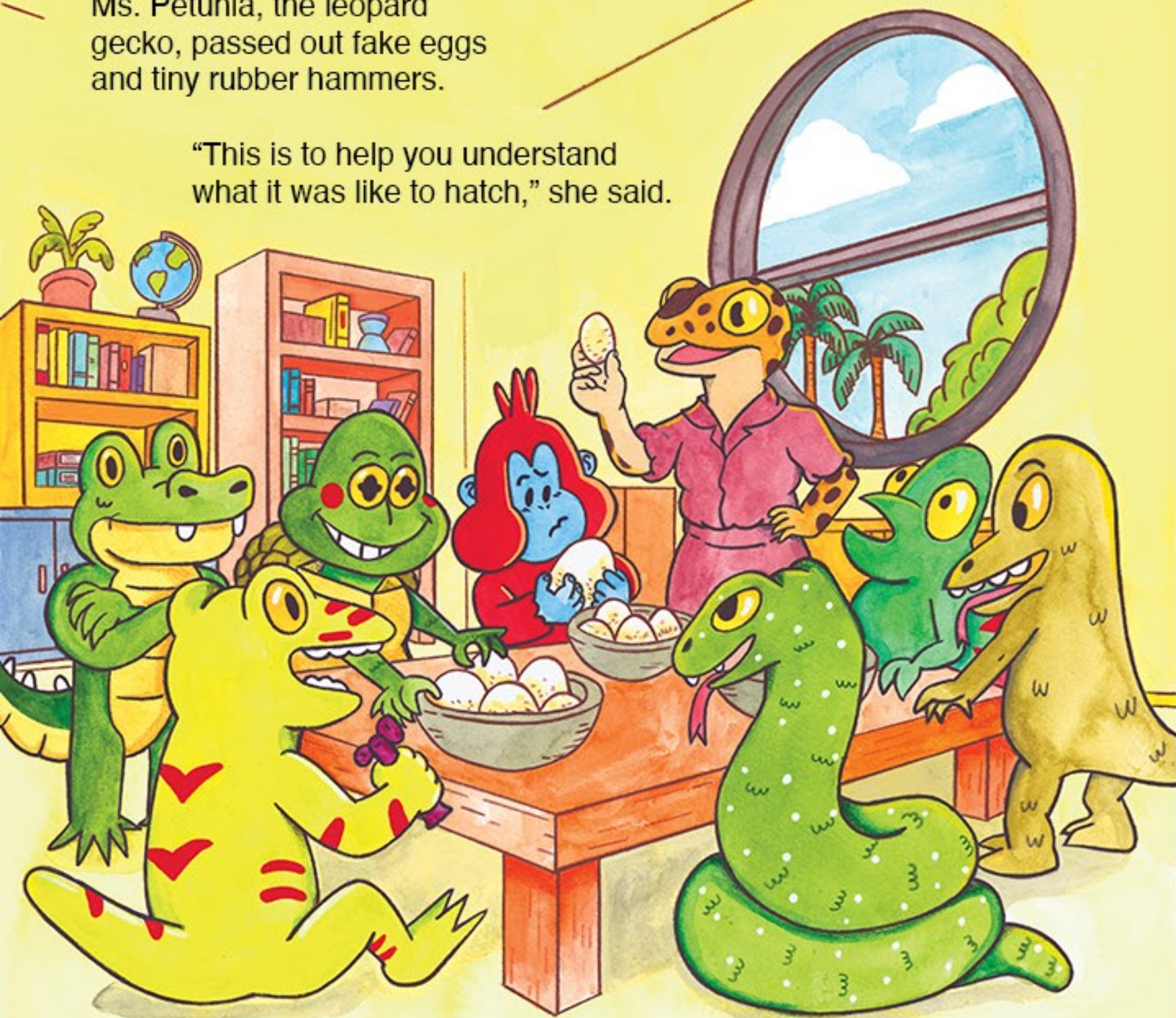


"Just be yourself," he thought. "What's the worst that could happen?"



In Wobbly's first class,
Ms. Petunia, the leopard
gecko, passed out fake eggs
and tiny rubber hammers.

"This is to help you understand
what it was like to hatch," she said.



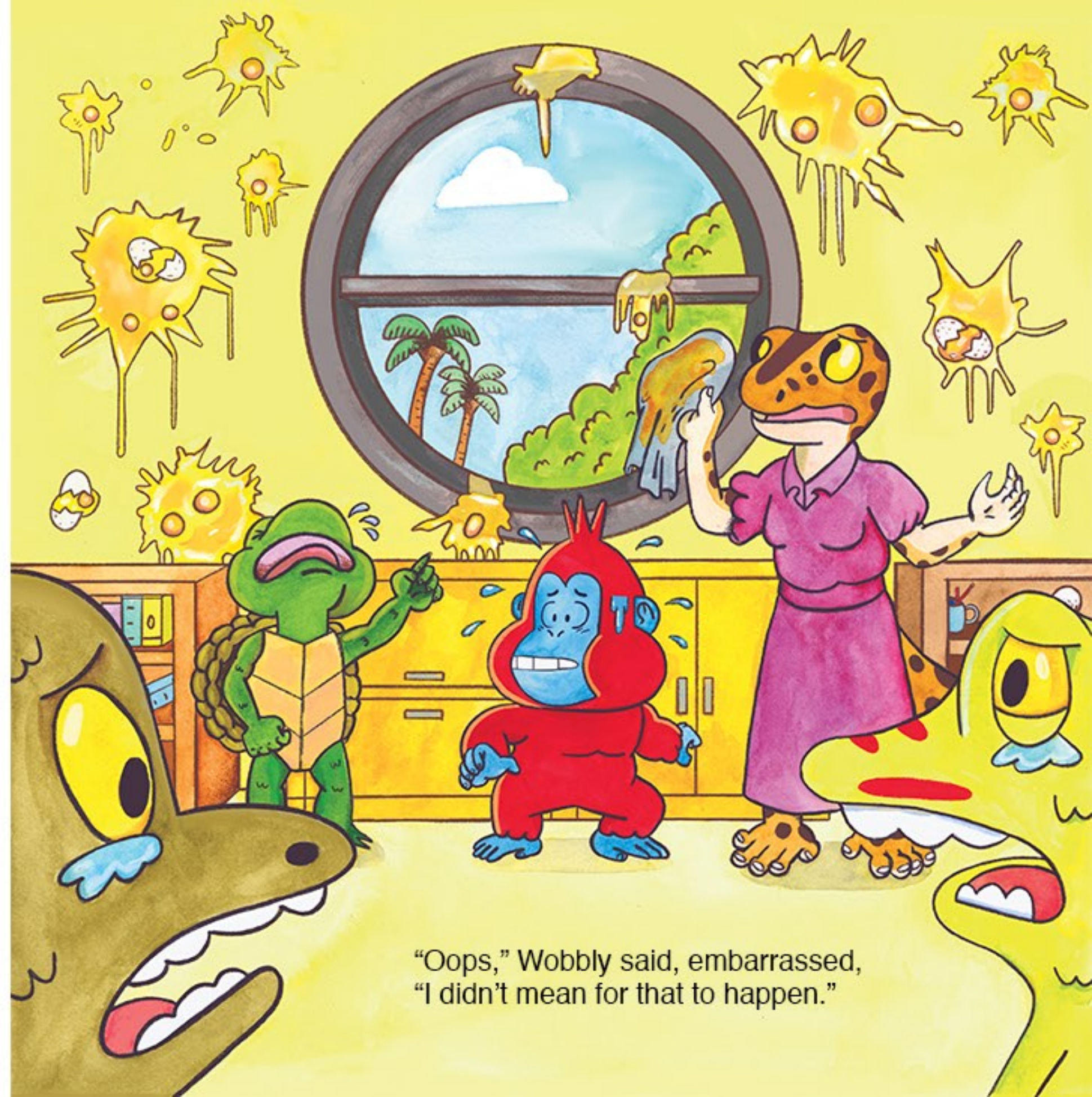
Wobbly was a gorilla. He hadn't hatched from an egg,
but he didn't want to seem different or make a fuss.
He would just tap the egg like he was told.



How hard
could that be?



His egg went flying,
and so did everyone else's.

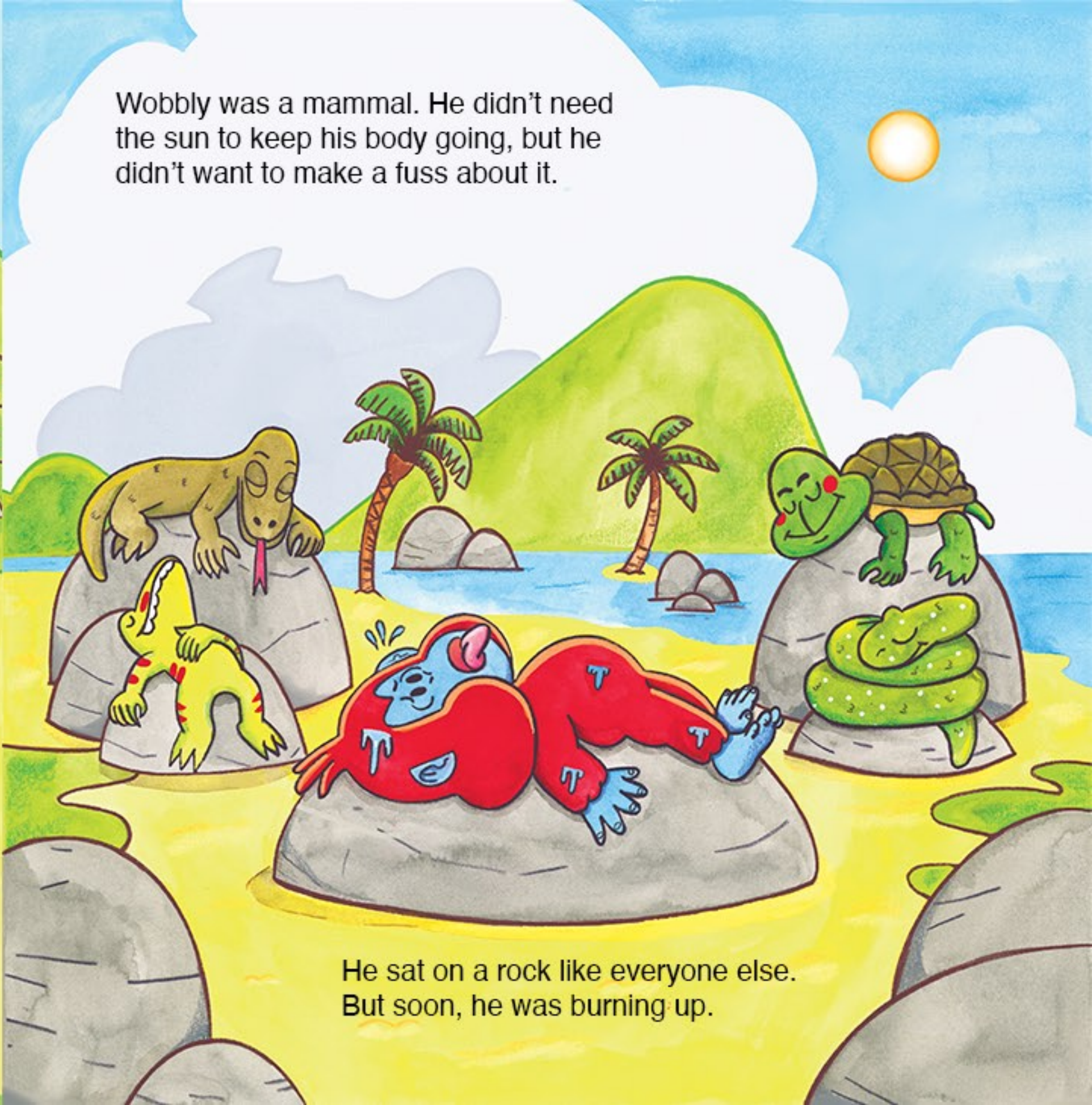


"Oops," Wobbly said, embarrassed,
"I didn't mean for that to happen."

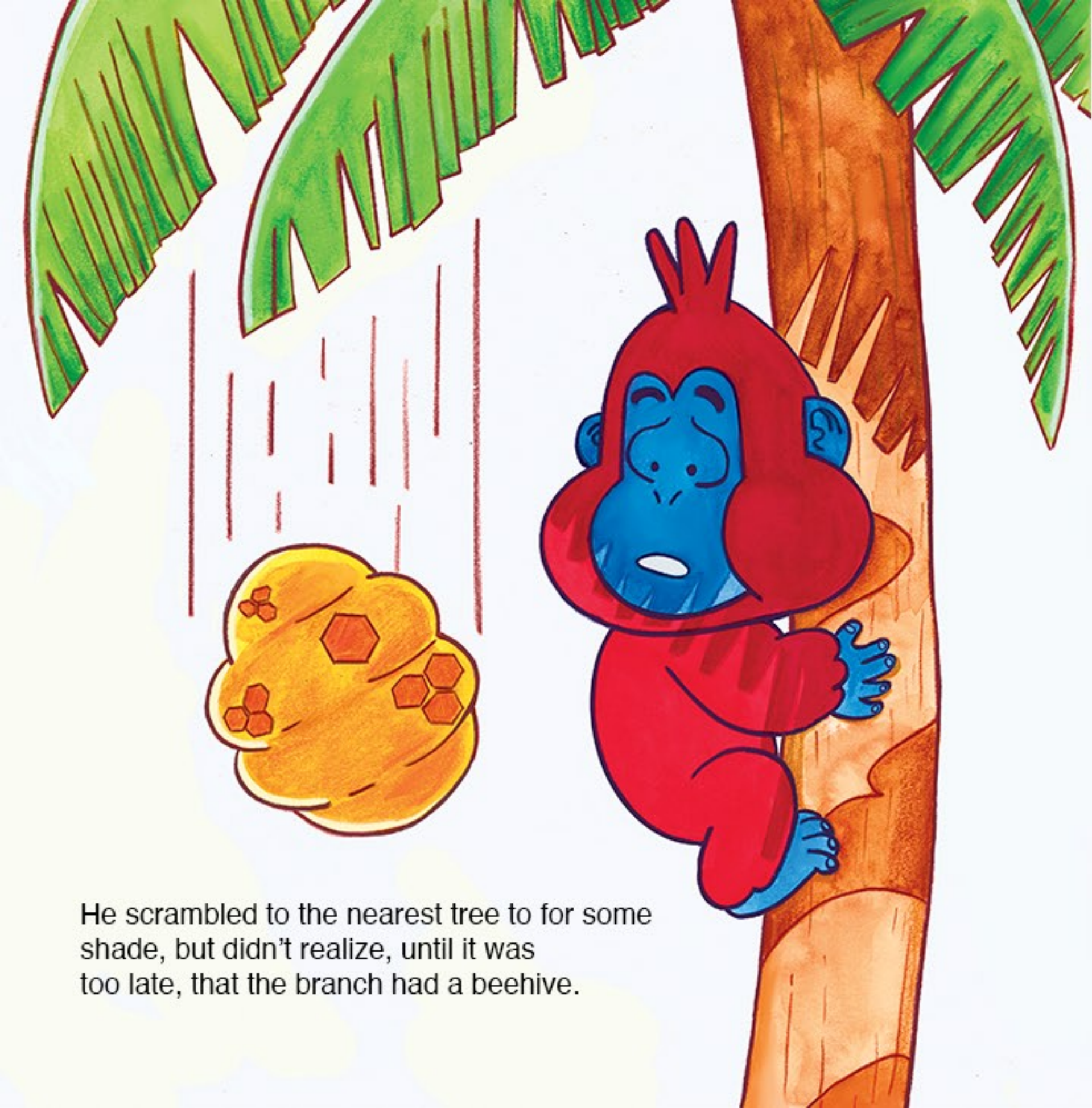
In his next class, Ms. Ratty, the red-eared slider, led everyone outside. "Sunning is something we all have to do because we're cold-blooded," she said. "The sun helps our bodies stay warm and working!"



Wobbly was a mammal. He didn't need the sun to keep his body going, but he didn't want to make a fuss about it.



He sat on a rock like everyone else. But soon, he was burning up.

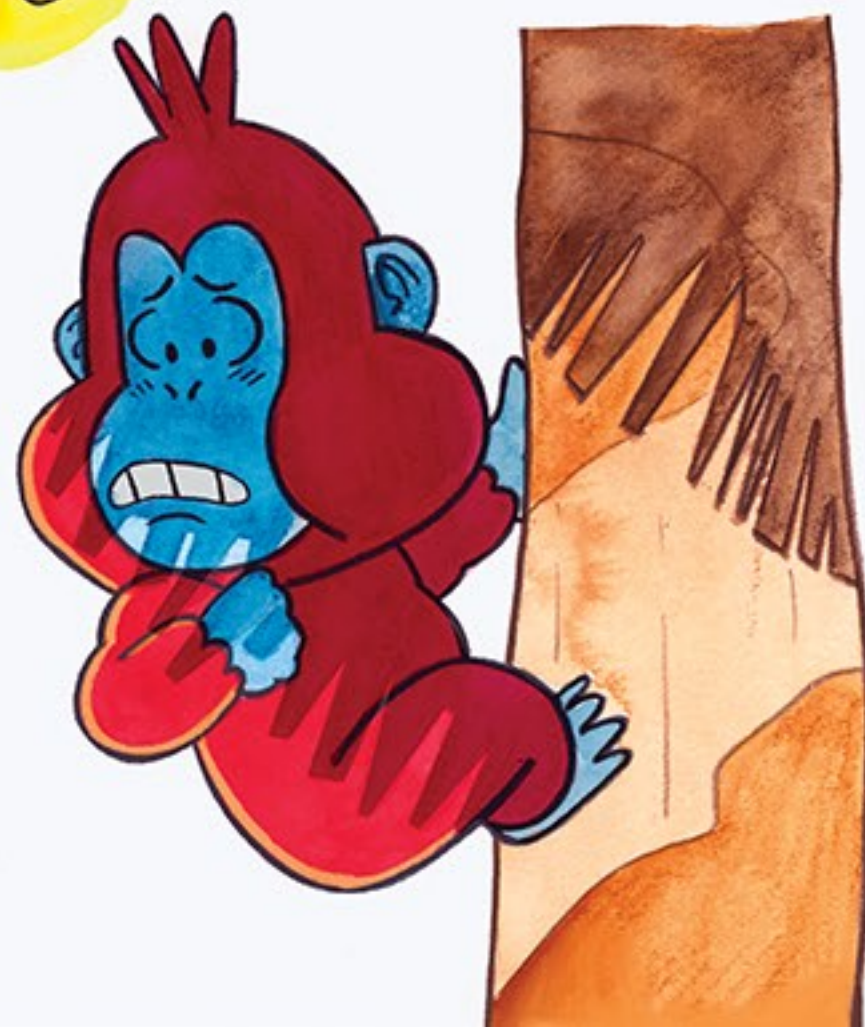


He scrambled to the nearest tree to for some shade, but didn't realize, until it was too late, that the branch had a beehive.



The hive cracked open. The bees buzzed and made everyone scatter.

"Oops," Wobbly said, embarrassed. "I didn't mean for that to happen."



In his final class of the day, Mr. Ziggy, the Komodo dragon, taught everyone about skin-shedding.

"As you get older," he said, "your old skin will shed away, and a new one will grow in its place."

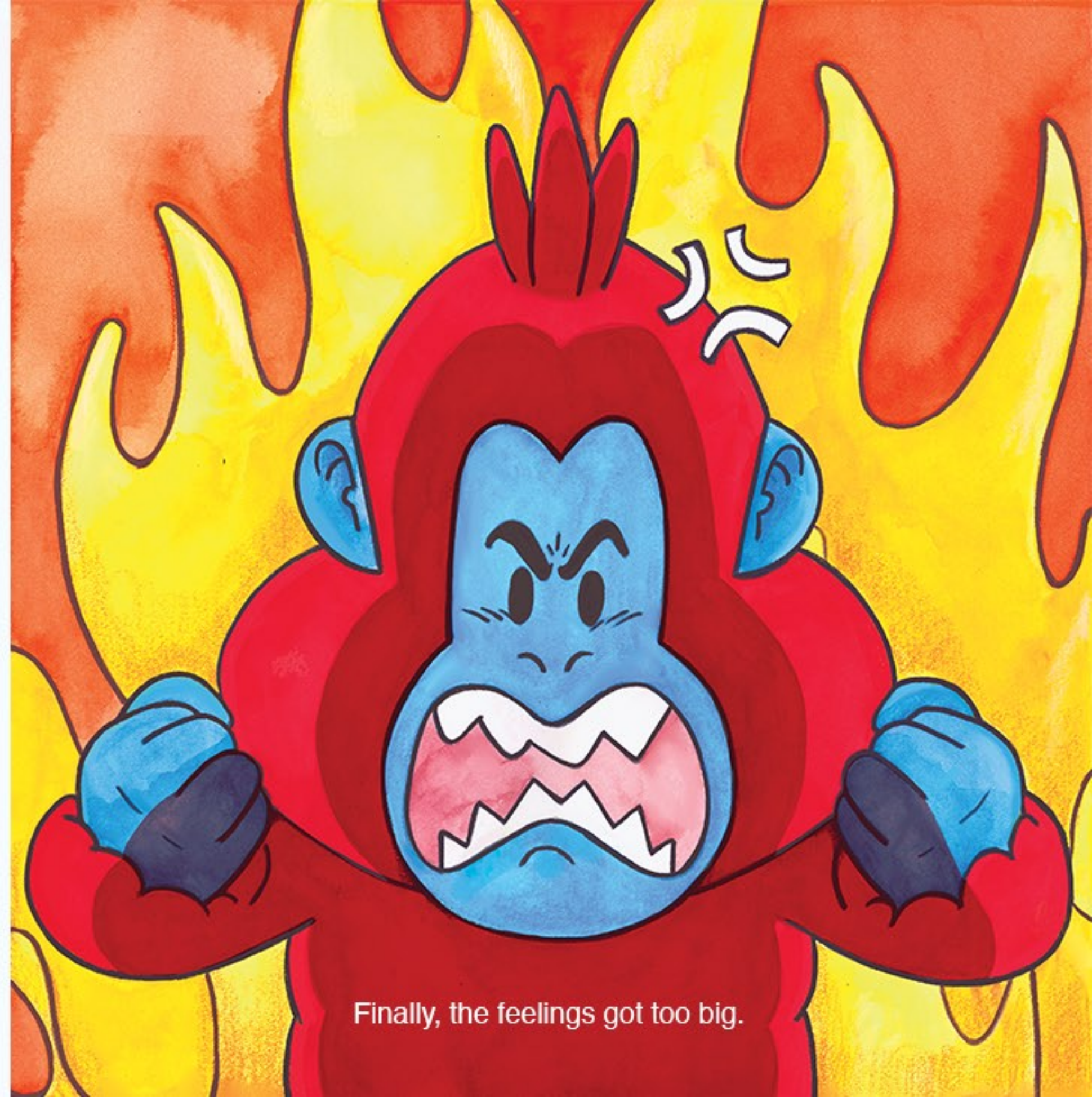


Wobbly liked his skin. He liked his fur.
The thought of losing them made him queasy.

He tried to stay calm, but the more
he tried not to think about it...



...the more the thoughts
spun around in his head.



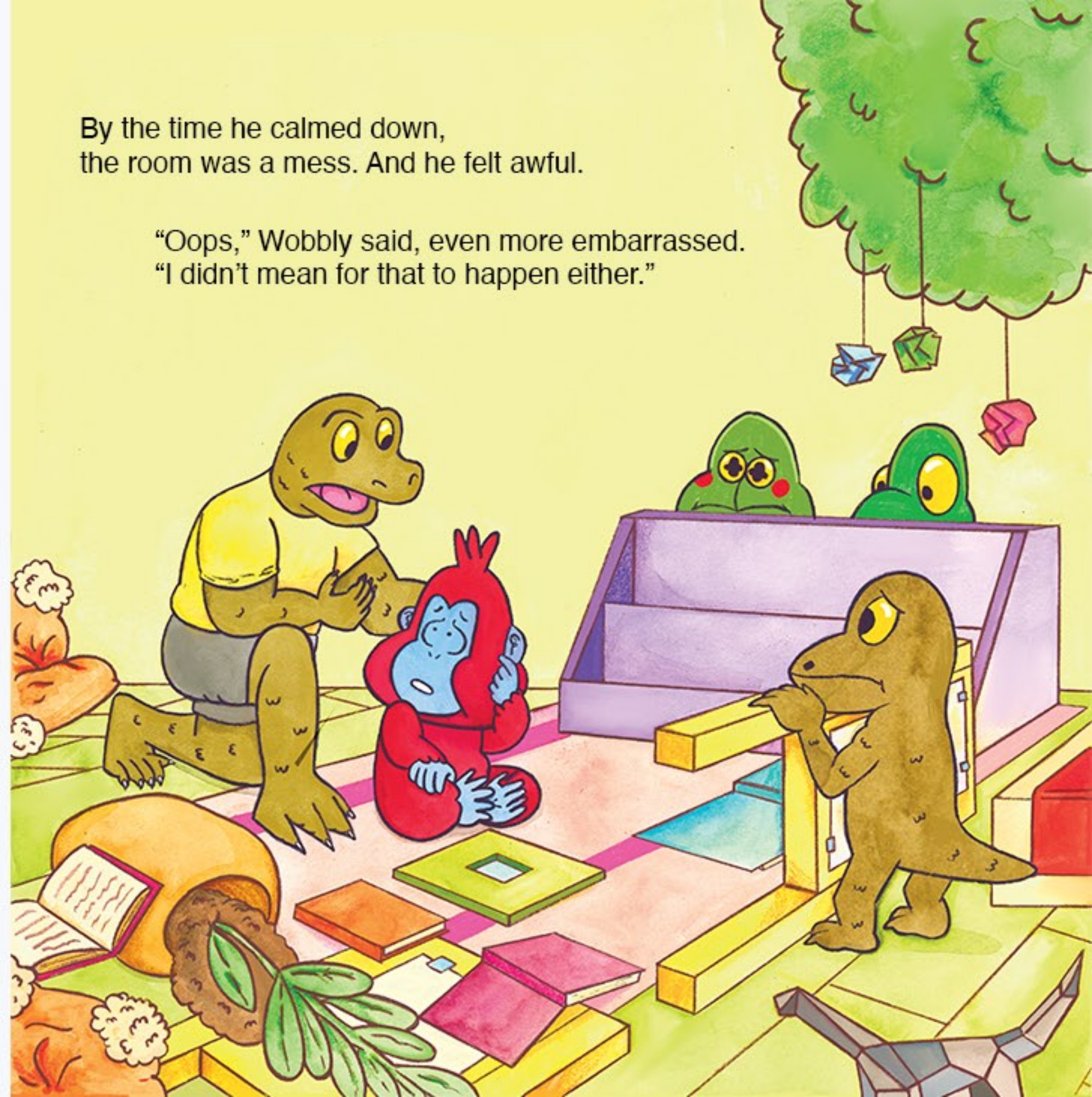
Finally, the feelings got too big.

Wobbly went wild!



By the time he calmed down,
the room was a mess. And he felt awful.

“Oops,” Wobbly said, even more embarrassed.
“I didn’t mean for that to happen either.”



That evening, Wobbly sat in silence. Mama Gorilla sat beside him.
“Wobbly, you can tell us anything. All your feelings are okay.”

Dada Gorilla agreed. “You don’t always have to stay quiet,
you know?”
“I just didn’t want to make a fuss,” Wobbly whispered.

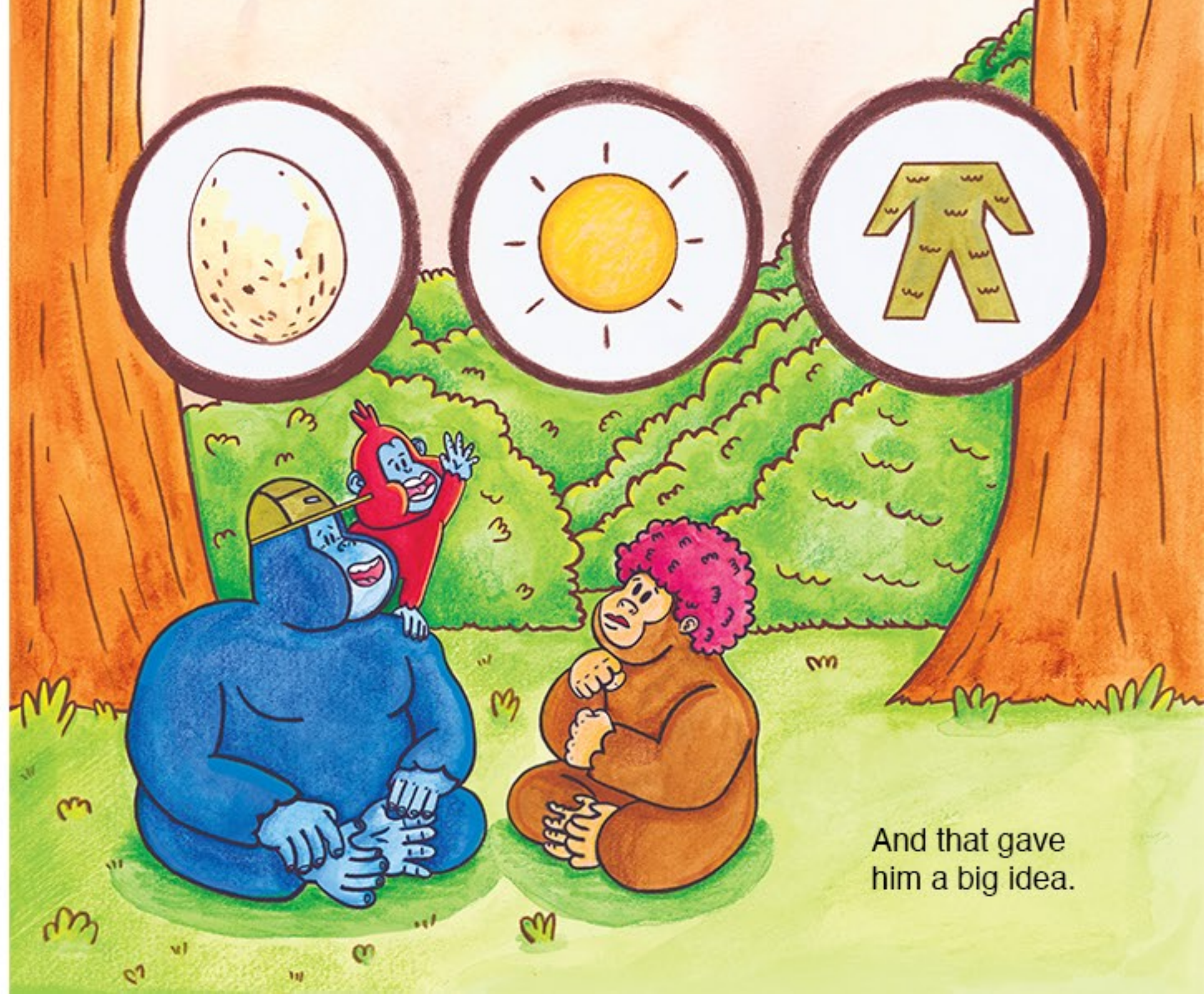


"Wobbly, when you keep your feelings inside," said Mama Gorilla, "they don't go away. They just get bigger and harder to handle."



"Sometimes making a fuss," said Dada Gorilla, "is the only way people know you need help."

Wobbly knew they were right. He told them everything. And the more he shared, the better he felt.



And that gave him a big idea.

The next day, Wobbly stood at the front of the class. "Hi, everyone. My name is Wobbly, and I'm a gorilla. That means I do things a little differently."

"Yesterday, I had big feelings, but I kept them inside because I didn't want to make a fuss. Holding it in just made it harder to control my body. I'm sorry for the bees, the eggs, and for the mess. Next time I need help, I'll ask, because speaking up helps everyone."



Everyone stayed quiet. Then one brave turtle stood up. "I didn't want to make a fuss either, but I can't climb like the geckos."



Then a gecko stood. "I don't change colors like the chameleons"



The chameleon added, "And I can't slither like the snakes!"



Wobbly smiled. "Wow! I guess we're all different, aren't we?" From that day on, Wobbly felt confident speaking up. And his classmates did too.



With everyone making a fuss,
the school began to change.



It even opened its doors to new
kinds of students, and made
everyone feel seen and heard.

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All because one little gorilla named Wobbly
learned it's okay to make a little *"fuss."*

