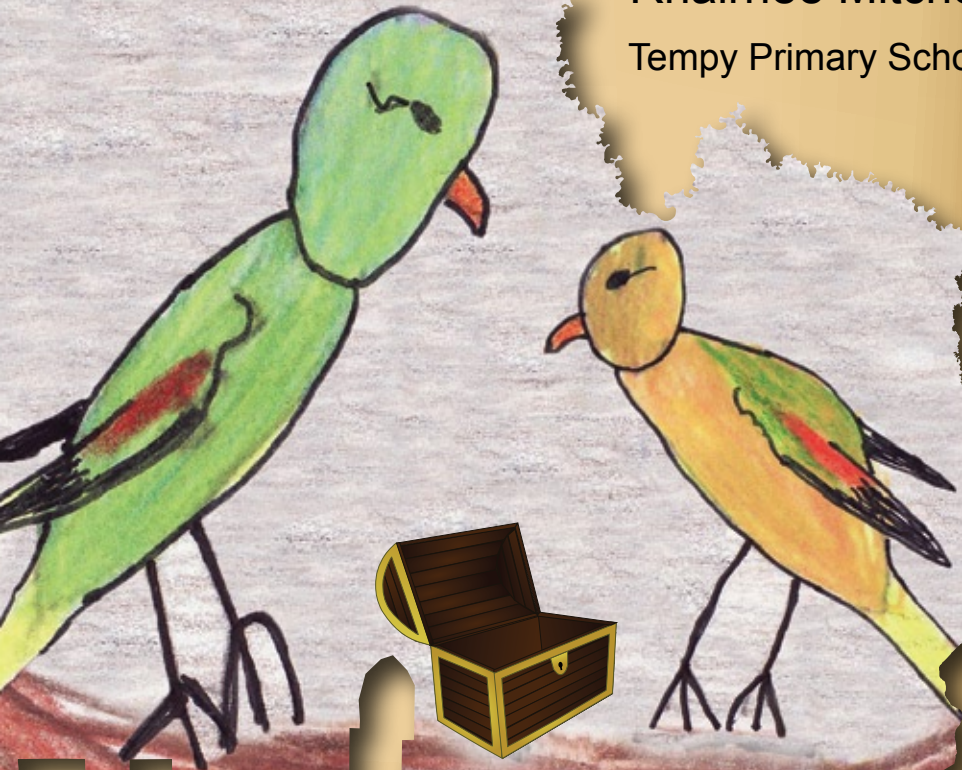


Mallee's Hidden Treasures



Spike the Parrot

Alana Linklater &
Rhairnee Mitchell
Tempy Primary School





Enviro-Stories is an environmental education program that has been developed by PeeKdesigns.

www.envirostories.com.au

This program provides an education experience for kids through learning about the environment. The final product is a published story written about local issues, by local kids, for local kids and future generations.

In 2011, the Mallee Catchment Management Authority provided local kids with the opportunity to join in on this exciting and innovative program with their competition "Mallee's Hidden Treasures".

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The Mallee Catchment Management Authority sponsored the Enviro-Stories Education Program in 2011. "Mallee's Hidden Treasures" celebrates the unique biodiversity of the region, while raising awareness for its threatened species. It is important the youth of today learn about the natural environment so they can protect and preserve it for future generations.



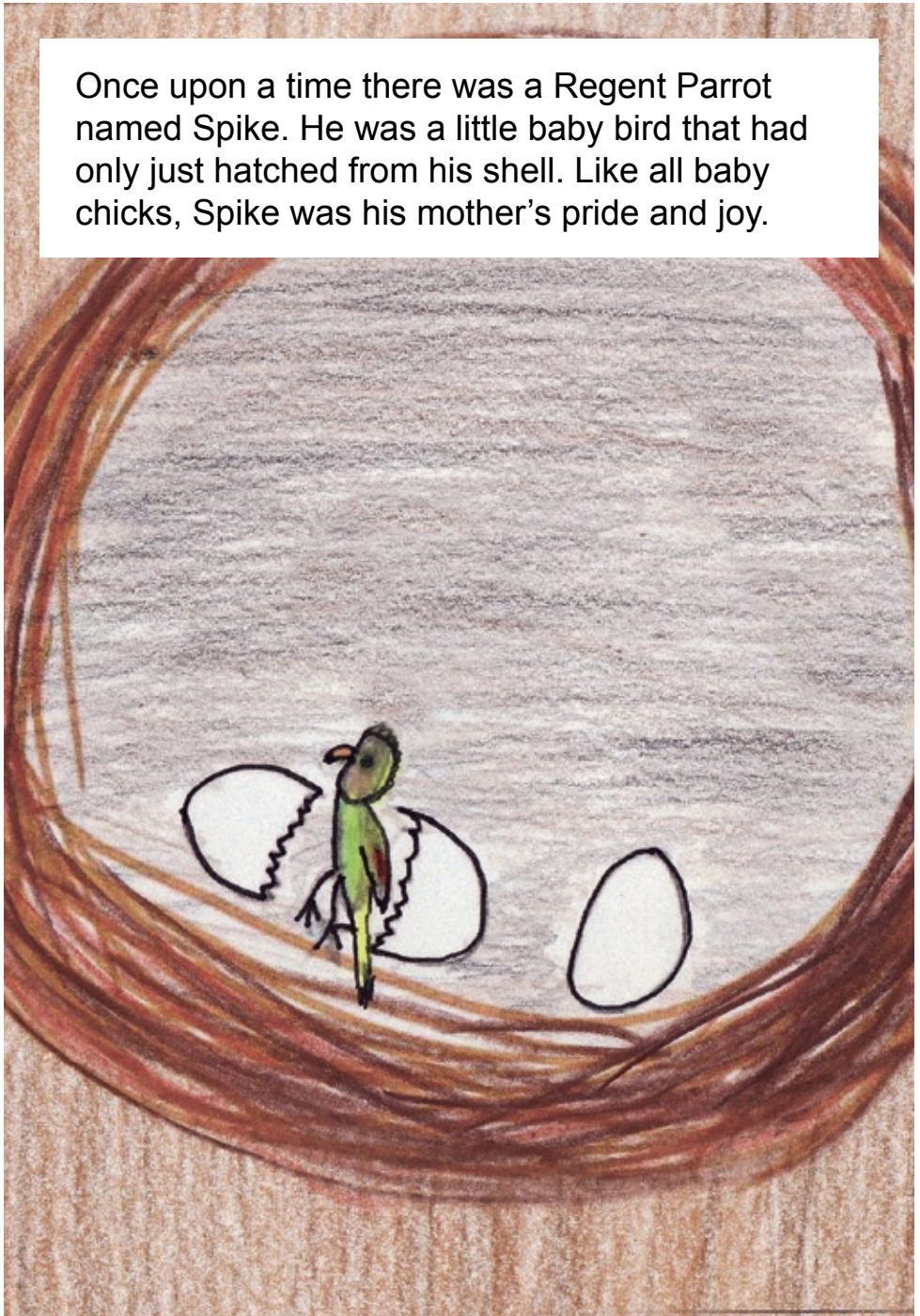
ISBN: 978-0-9871559-7-9

Design by PeeKdesigns, www.peekdesigns.com.au

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Once upon a time there was a Regent Parrot named Spike. He was a little baby bird that had only just hatched from his shell. Like all baby chicks, Spike was his mother's pride and joy.



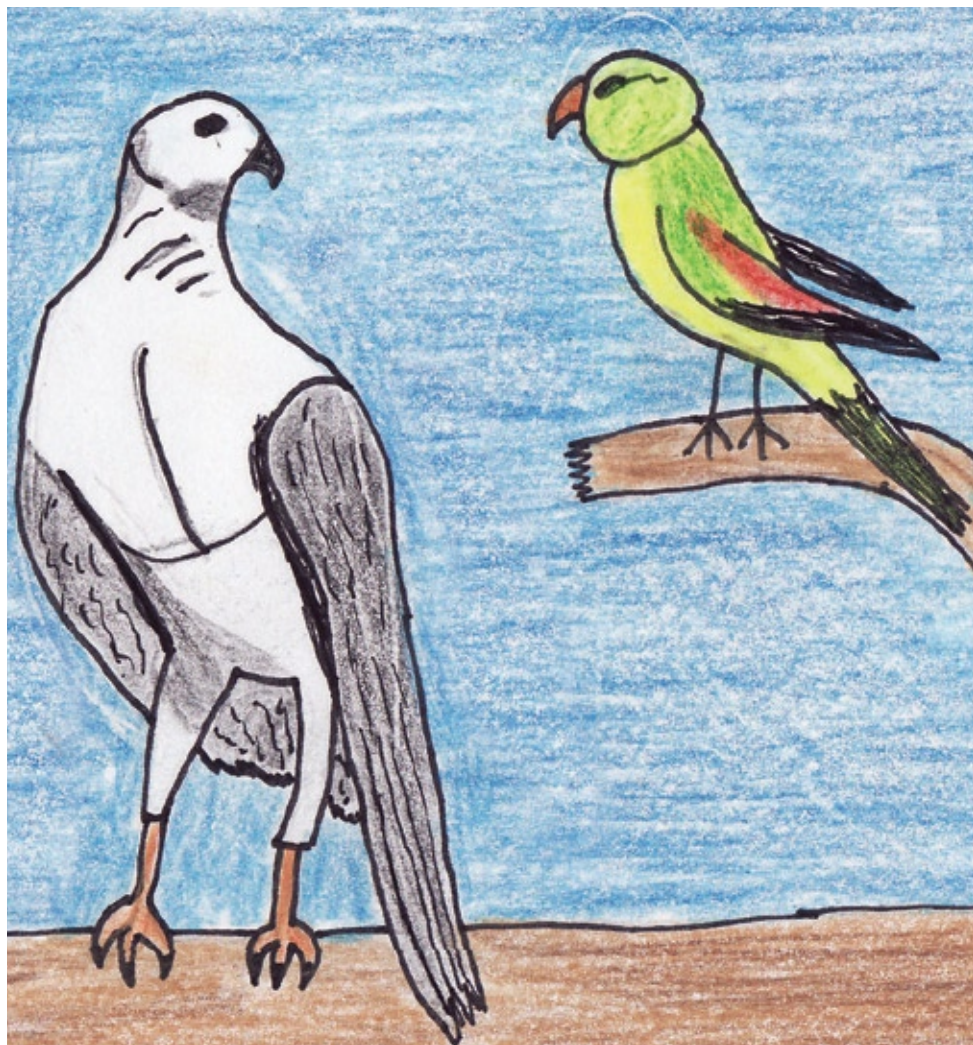
Spike was a very curious chick and even though he was only young, he was very interested in the world beyond his River Red Gum hollow.

Spike's father would visit their nest often, bringing delicious seeds and insects for them to eat.



One day Spike's father stopped returning to the hollow. He had gone missing. Spike's mother asked Rose the White-bellied Sea-eagle to help search for her husband.

Spike's mother was forced to go out and search for food. She did not like leaving Spike alone but they had to eat.



Spike began to get bored with being left alone in the hollow. He was a mischievous little chick.

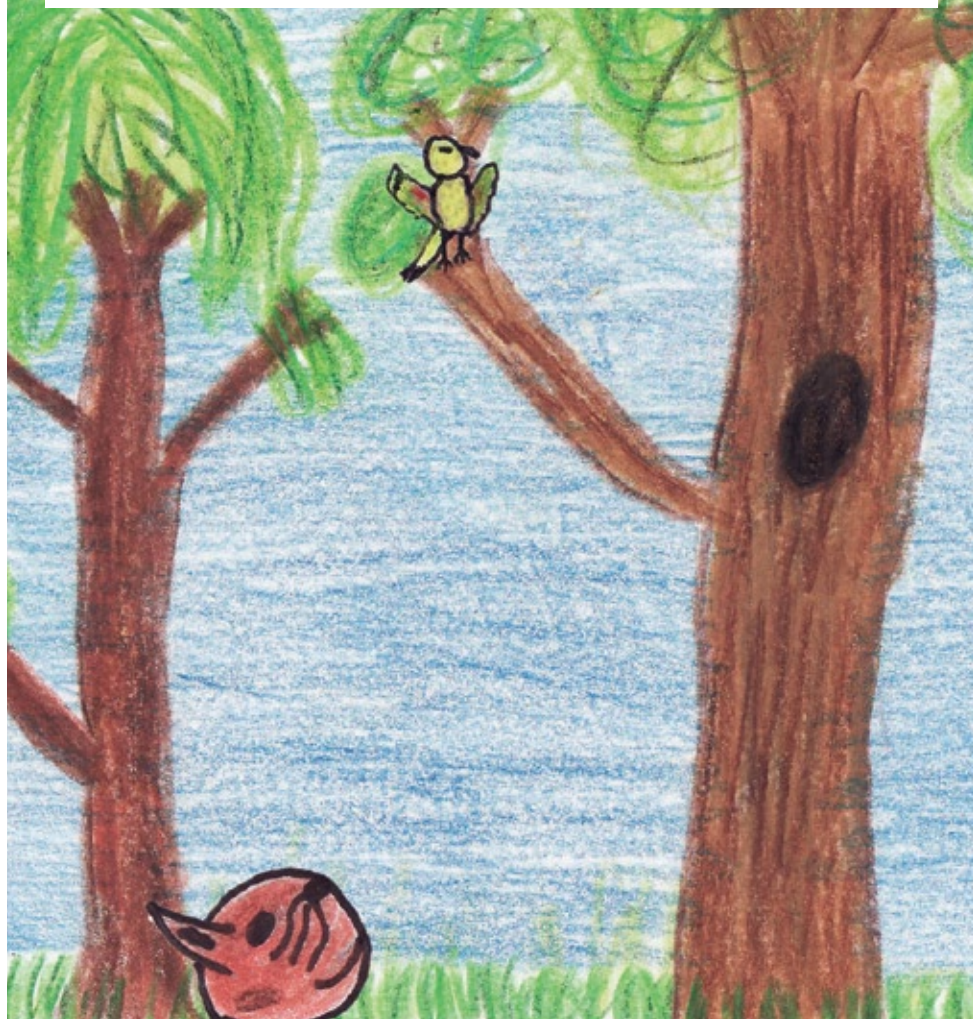
One day he thought he was smart enough to try and fly. He crept out of his hollow to look around.

“The ground doesn’t seem too far down,” he thought. “Perhaps I can fly over there to that nice Buloke tree!”



Flying may be easy for a fully grown bird but Spike was still covered in fluffy feathers. He still thought he should try and do it.

What Spike didn't realise was that he had attracted someone else's attention by leaving the hollow. He was now being watched.





Far below, lying on her favourite mat, was Crystal the farm cat.

She looked up and saw the plump, fluffy parrot on the branch of the tree.

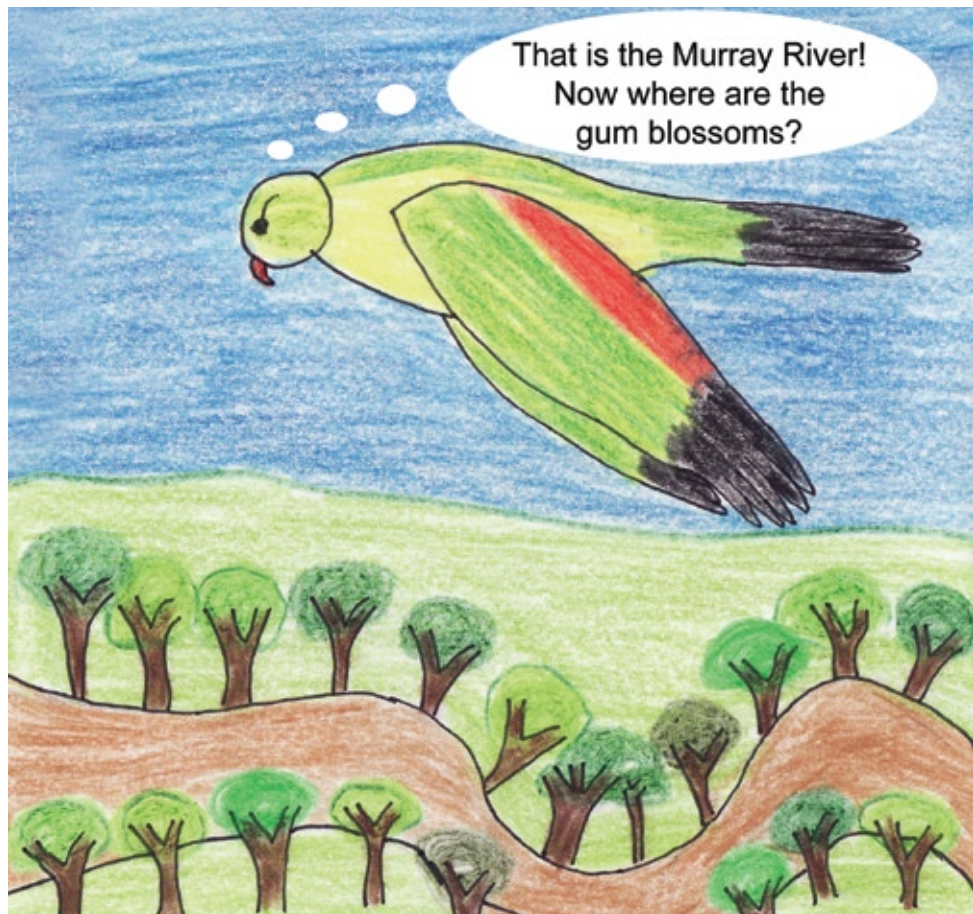
She thought that he looked yummy. Spike was in trouble!

His mother had decided to treat Spike by going and finding him some special gum blossom that grew along the Murray River.

When she was young this blossom was her favourite food. Her parents used to occasionally take her to find some of this blossom.

Finding this food meant that Spike's mother was away from their hollow longer than usual.

She had no idea that Spike was in danger.

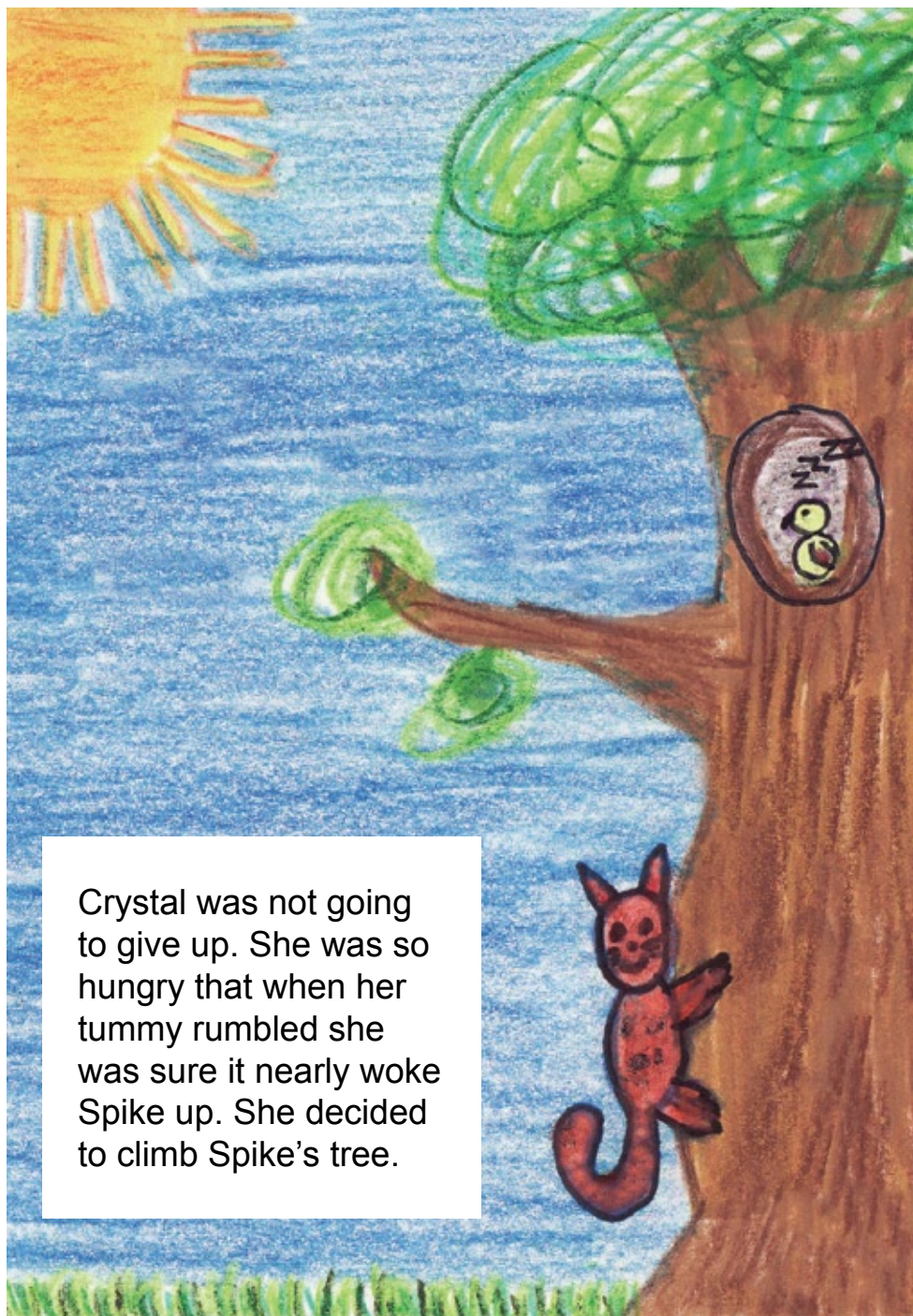




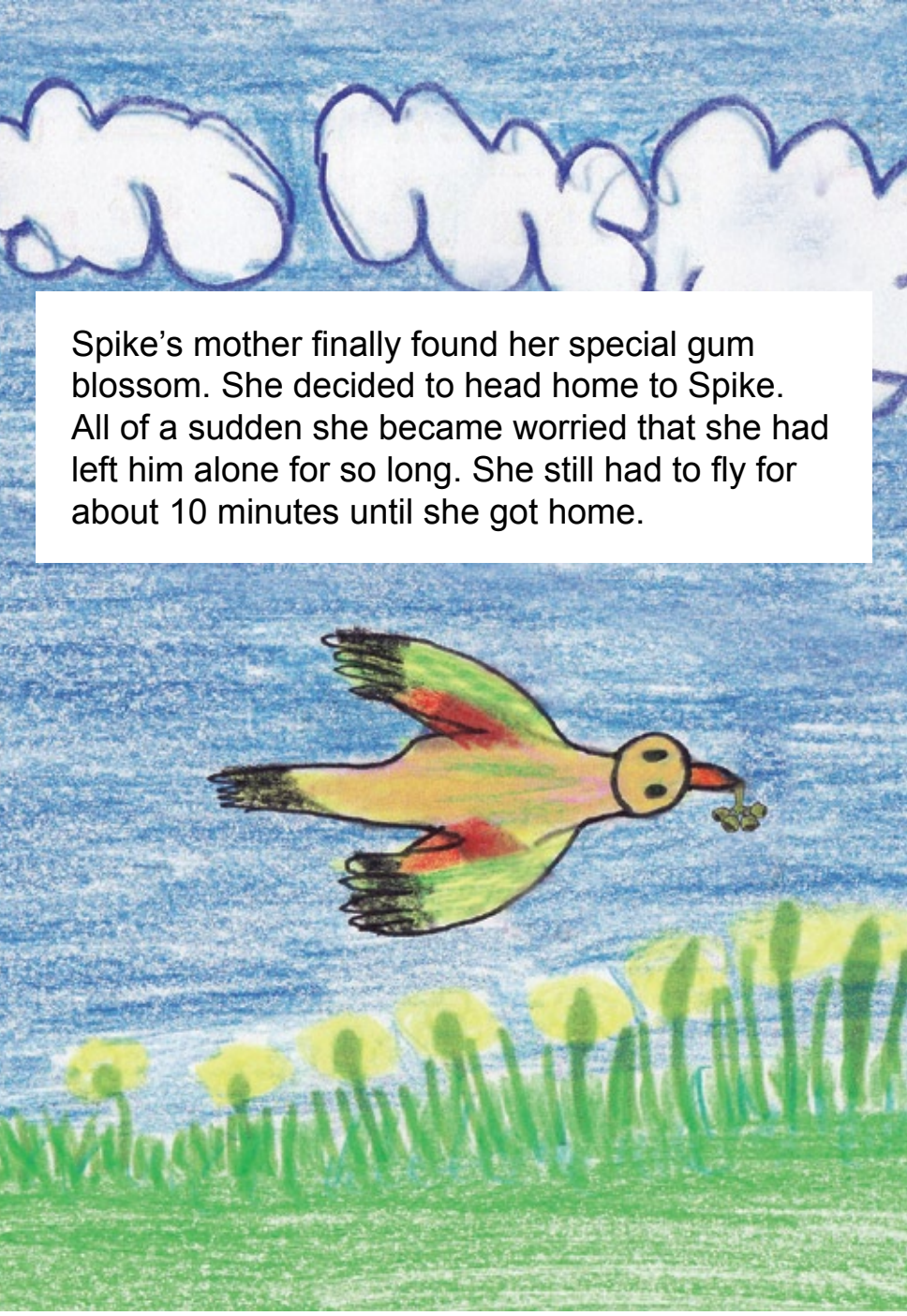
Spike tried to jump and fly across the branches of his tree many times.

Crystal the cat was licking her lips, watching and waiting for Spike to fall.

Eventually Spike got very tired and decided to go inside for a little nap.



Crystal was not going to give up. She was so hungry that when her tummy rumbled she was sure it nearly woke Spike up. She decided to climb Spike's tree.

A colorful illustration of a bird flying over a field of yellow flowers under a blue sky with white clouds. The bird is yellow with green and red wings, and a simple face with two dots for eyes. It is holding a small object in its beak. The background features a blue sky with white clouds and a green field with yellow flowers.

Spike's mother finally found her special gum blossom. She decided to head home to Spike. All of a sudden she became worried that she had left him alone for so long. She still had to fly for about 10 minutes until she got home.

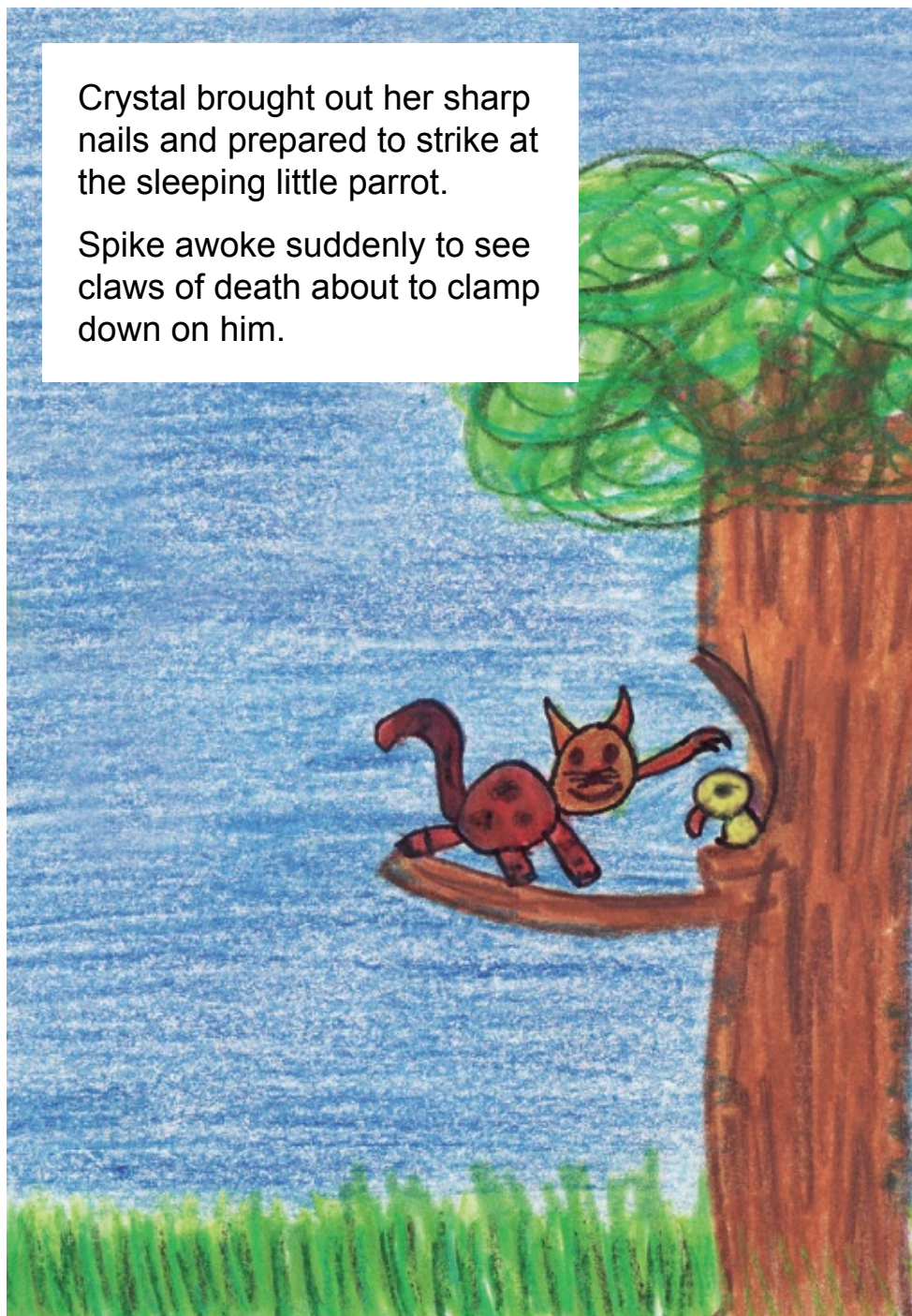
Crystal climbed Spike's tree. She took it very slowly as she didn't want to wake him up or attract any other attention.

She crept closer and closer to the hollow. Eventually she reached it and could hear the sound of Spike snoring.



Crystal brought out her sharp nails and prepared to strike at the sleeping little parrot.

Spike awoke suddenly to see claws of death about to clamp down on him.



All this time Rose, the White-bellied Sea-eagle had been watching from far above. She swooped down, plummeting towards Sam and Crystal.

Just before Crystal could strike, Rose grabbed her in her talons and flew towards the pond.

Rose dumped Crystal in the pond to teach her not to try and eat her little Regent Parrot friends.





Spike's mother arrived home and thanked Rose for saving her chick. She told Spike that he was a very naughty bird for leaving the safety of their hollow and that he was not allowed to try and fly for another few weeks.

Spike agreed and was then given his blossom treat.



Regent Parrots and White-bellied Sea-eagles are recognised as threatened species in the Mallee region.

Cats, foxes and other introduced species can cause a lot of damage to our native environments.

If you own a cat, it should be kept inside at night and wear bells on its collar to try and stop it hunting native animals.

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