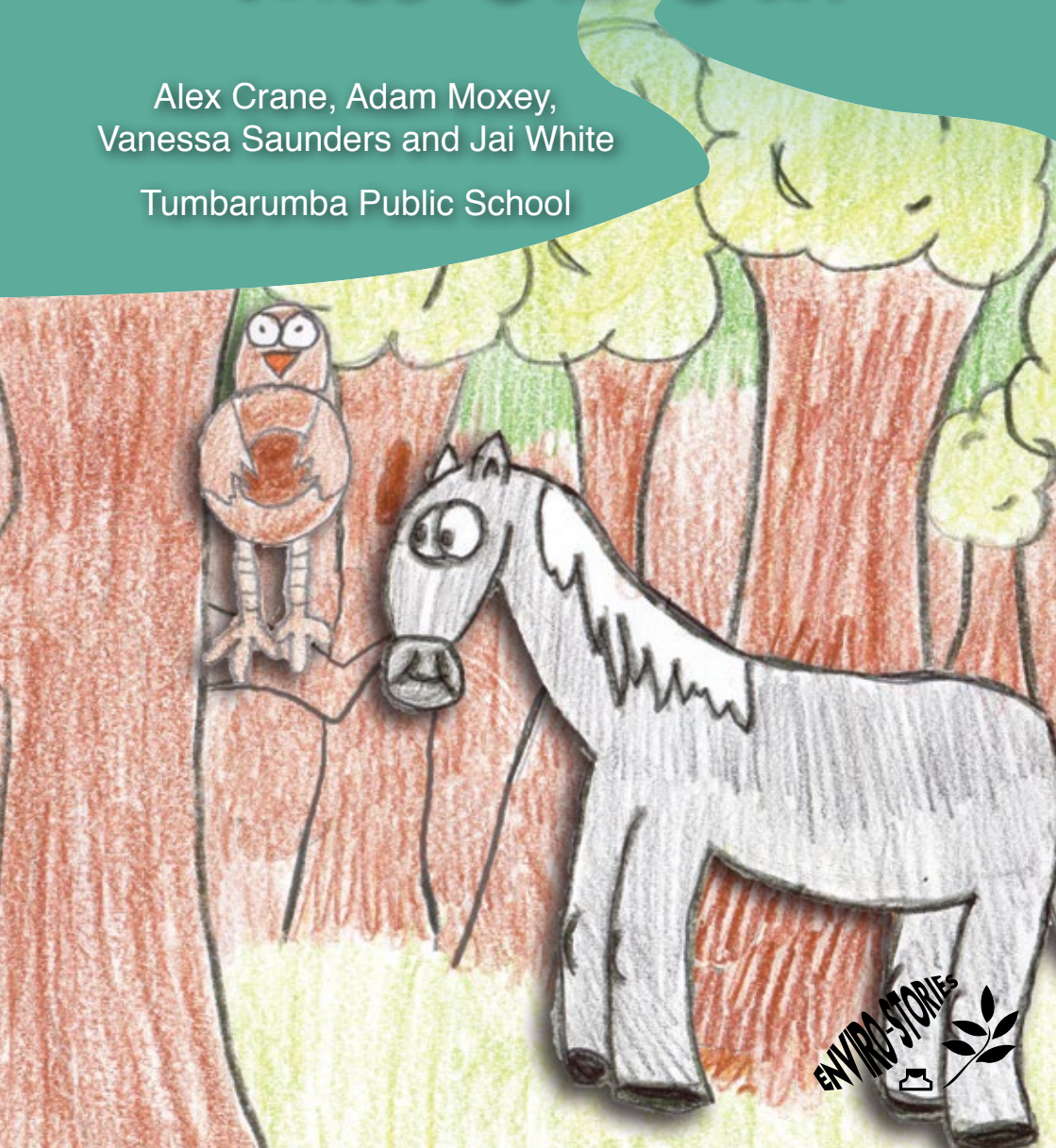


Belinda and the Wise Old Owl

Alex Crane, Adam Moxey,
Vanessa Saunders and Jai White
Tumbarumba Public School





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



www.envirostories.com.au

This program provides an education and learning experience for kids through their active engagement with natural resource and catchment management issues. The final product is a published story written about local issues, by local kids, for local kids and future generations.

Belinda and the Wise Old Owl

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“Biodiversity of the Murray Catchment” Enviro-Stories Education Program

In 2012, the Creative Catchment Kids program delivered the “Biodiversity of the Murray Catchment” Enviro-Stories Education Program. The project was initiated by the Murray Darling Association and Burrumbuttock Public School. It was generously funded by the Murray and Murrumbidgee Catchment Management Authorities, the Murray-Darling Basin Authority and Teys Australia, Wagga. Additional support came from the Wirraminna and Riverina Environmental Education Centres.



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Murray



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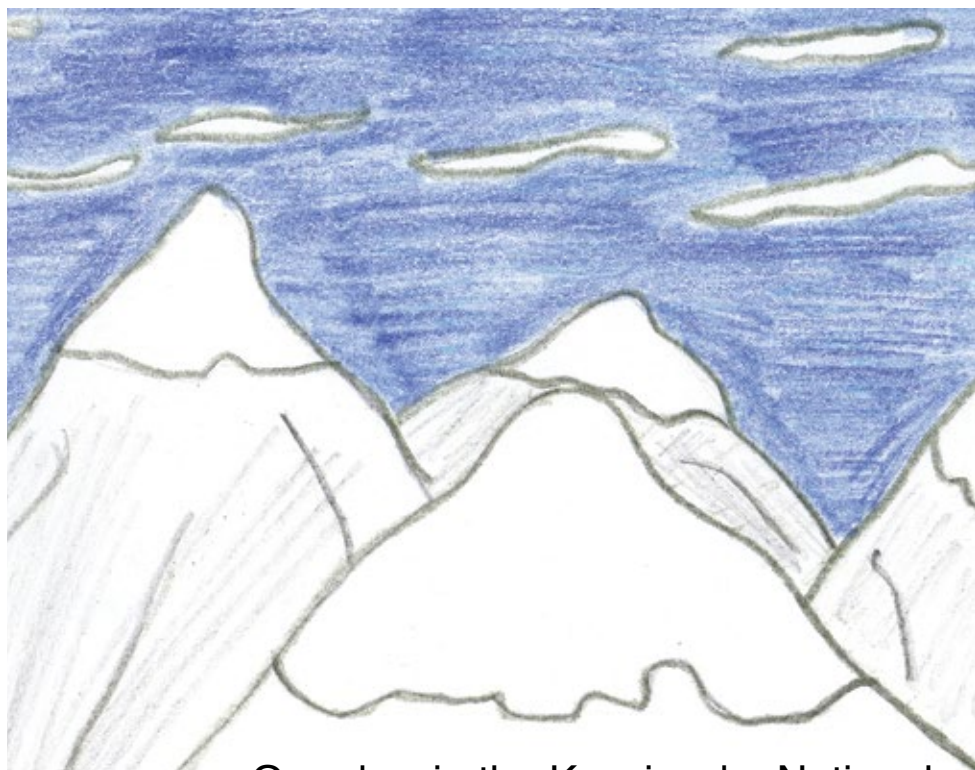


RIVERINAEEC
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One day, in the Kosciuszko National Park, Belinda the brumby was eating grass off the river bank.

She swayed her head and luscious mane, keeping a lookout from the corner of her big brown eyes for danger.

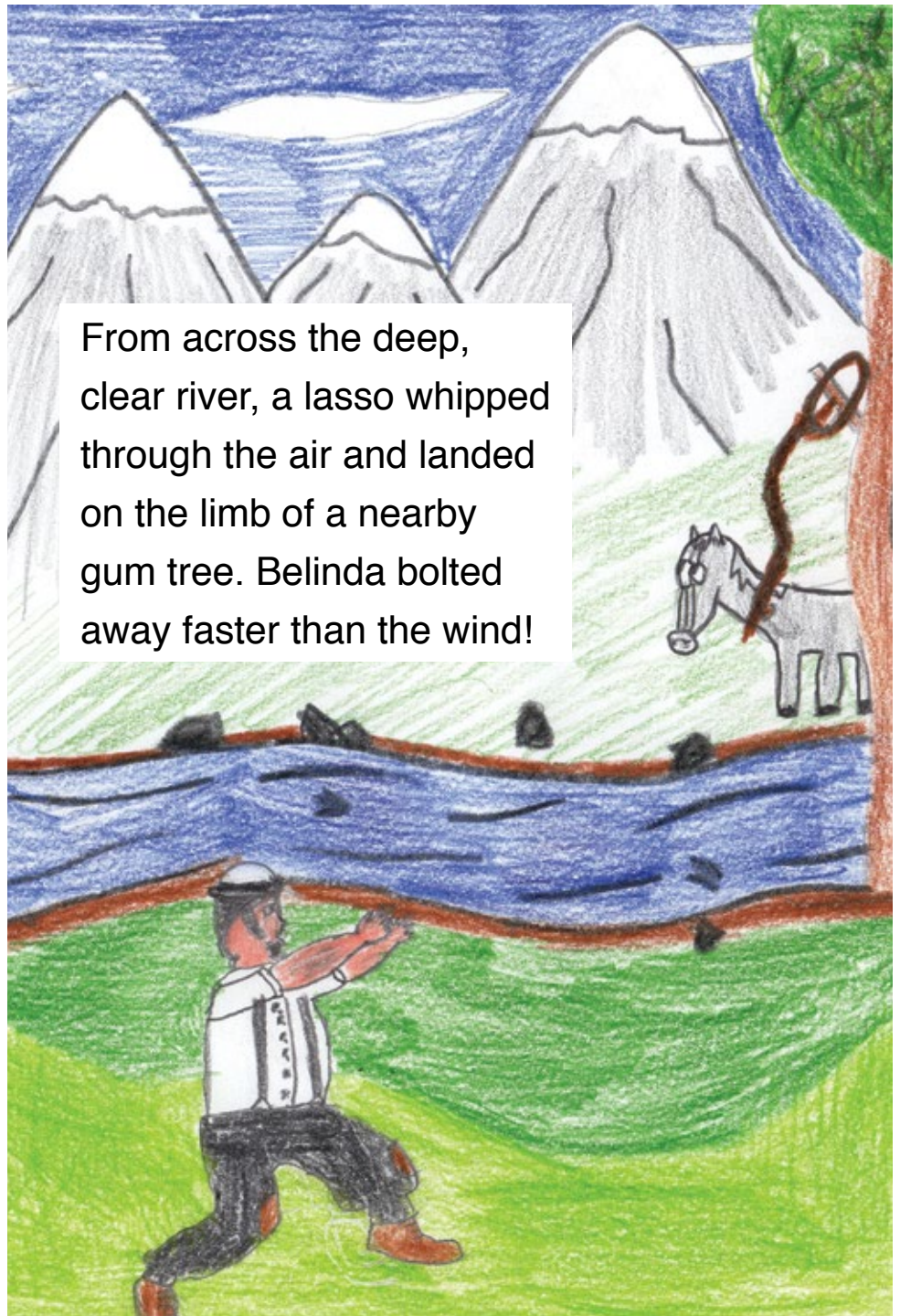




She glanced up when she heard the crunching of some twigs. She looked around and spotted a camp of pioneer settlers in the distance.

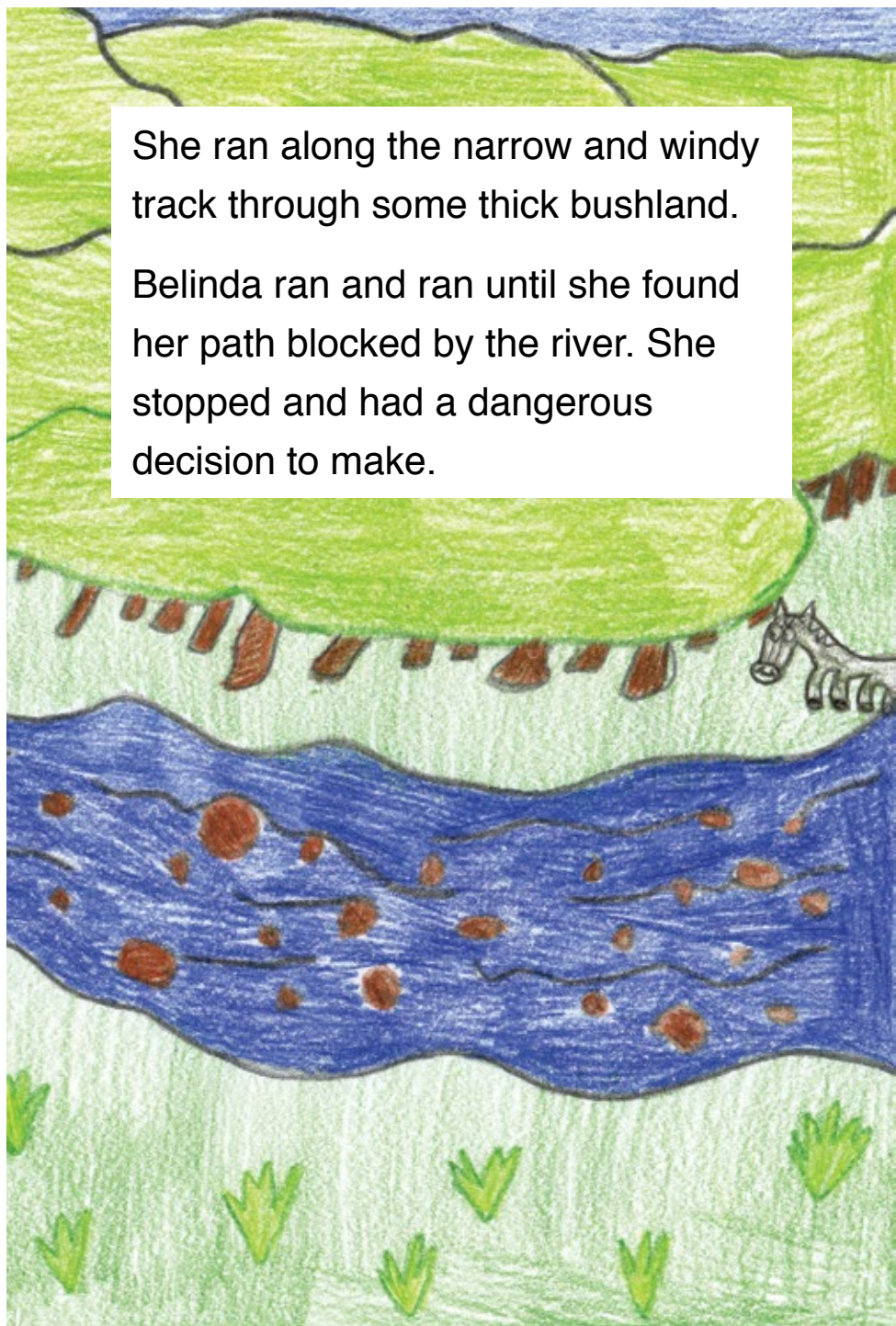
Belinda slowly and carefully moved backwards feeling a sense of danger.

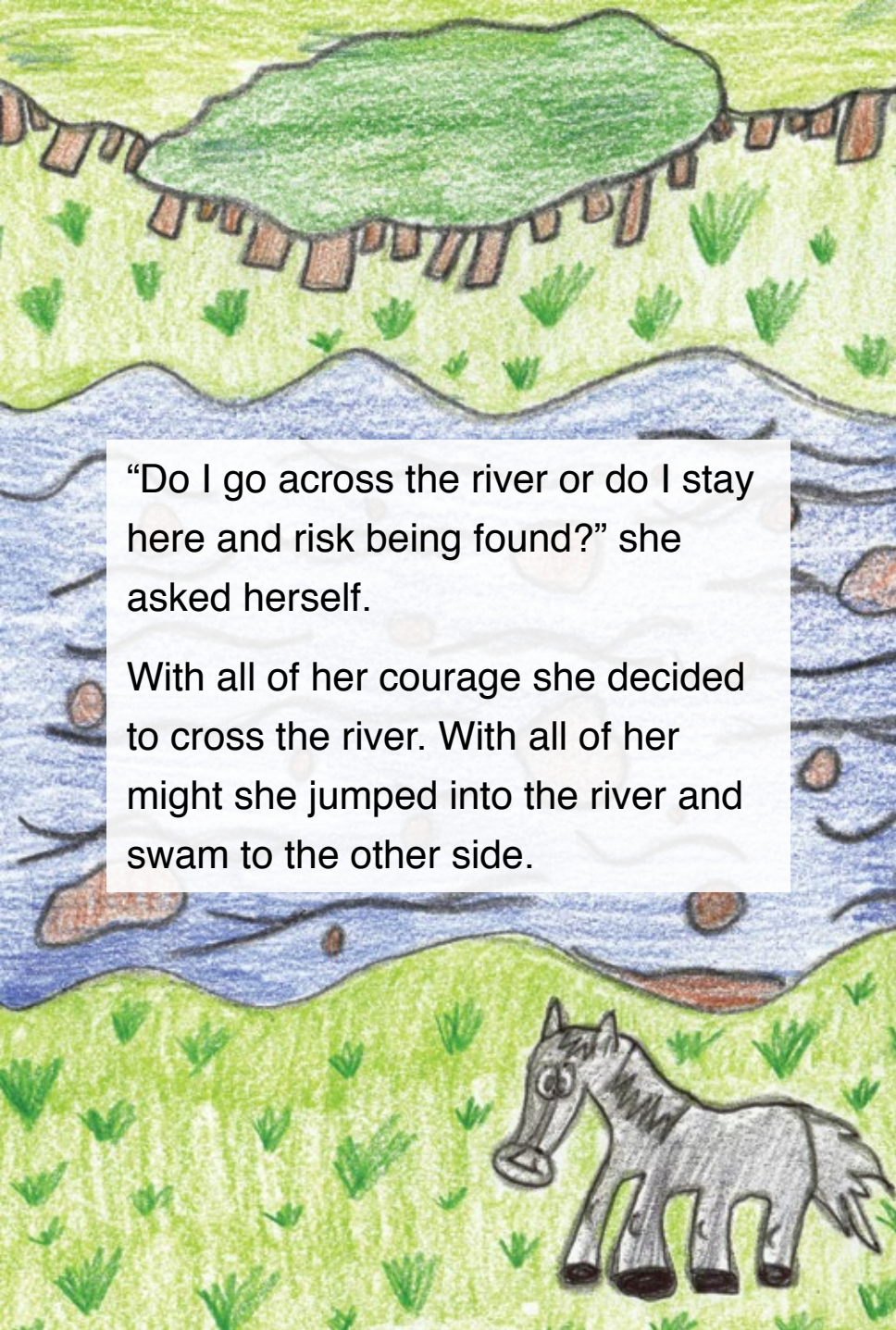
From across the deep,
clear river, a lasso whipped
through the air and landed
on the limb of a nearby
gum tree. Belinda bolted
away faster than the wind!



She ran along the narrow and windy track through some thick bushland.

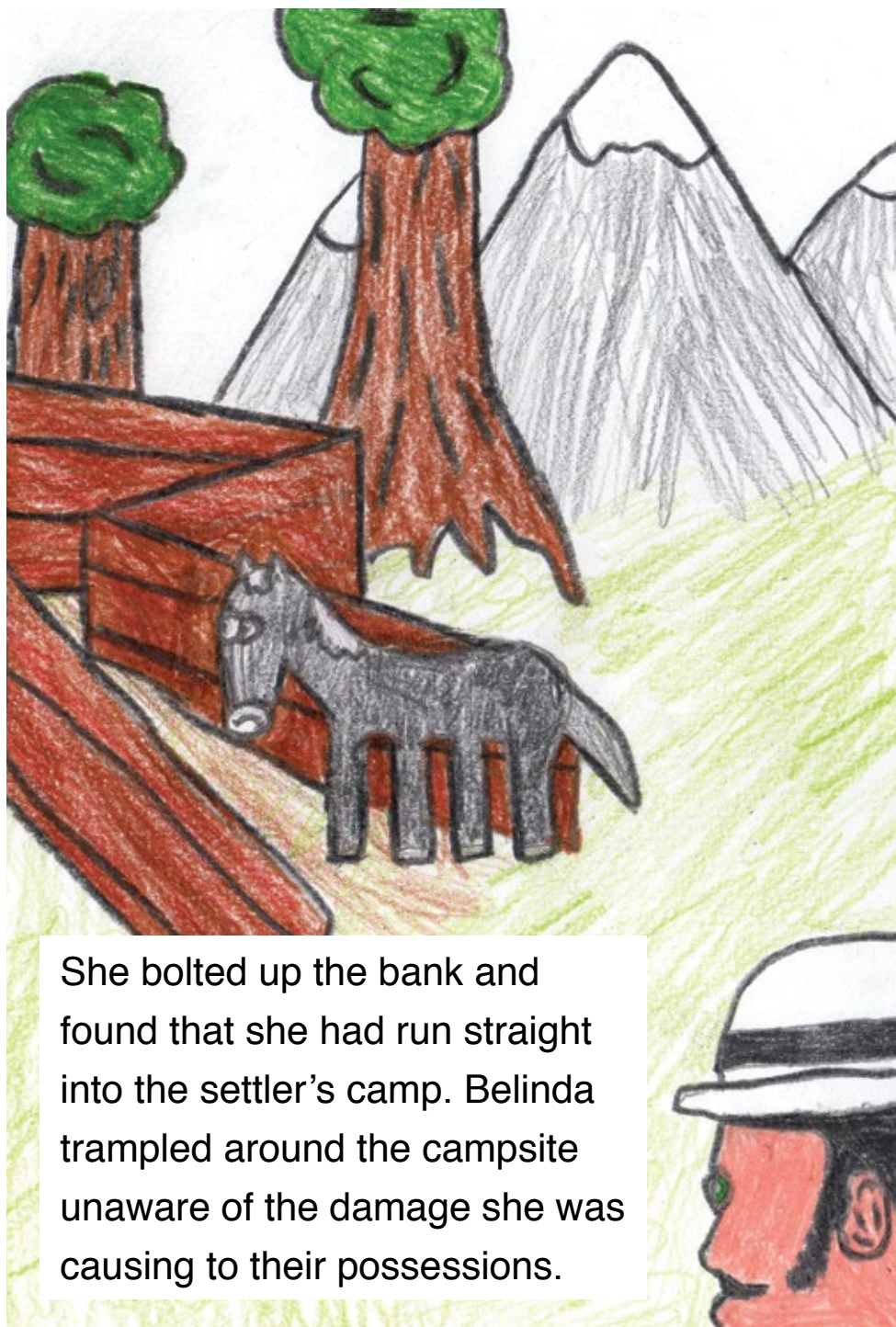
Belinda ran and ran until she found her path blocked by the river. She stopped and had a dangerous decision to make.



A colorful illustration of a landscape. In the foreground, a grey horse with a white mane and tail stands on a green grassy field. In the middle ground, a blue river flows from left to right. In the background, a green hill is visible, and a bridge made of brown wooden planks spans across it. The sky is a light blue color.

“Do I go across the river or do I stay here and risk being found?” she asked herself.

With all of her courage she decided to cross the river. With all of her might she jumped into the river and swam to the other side.

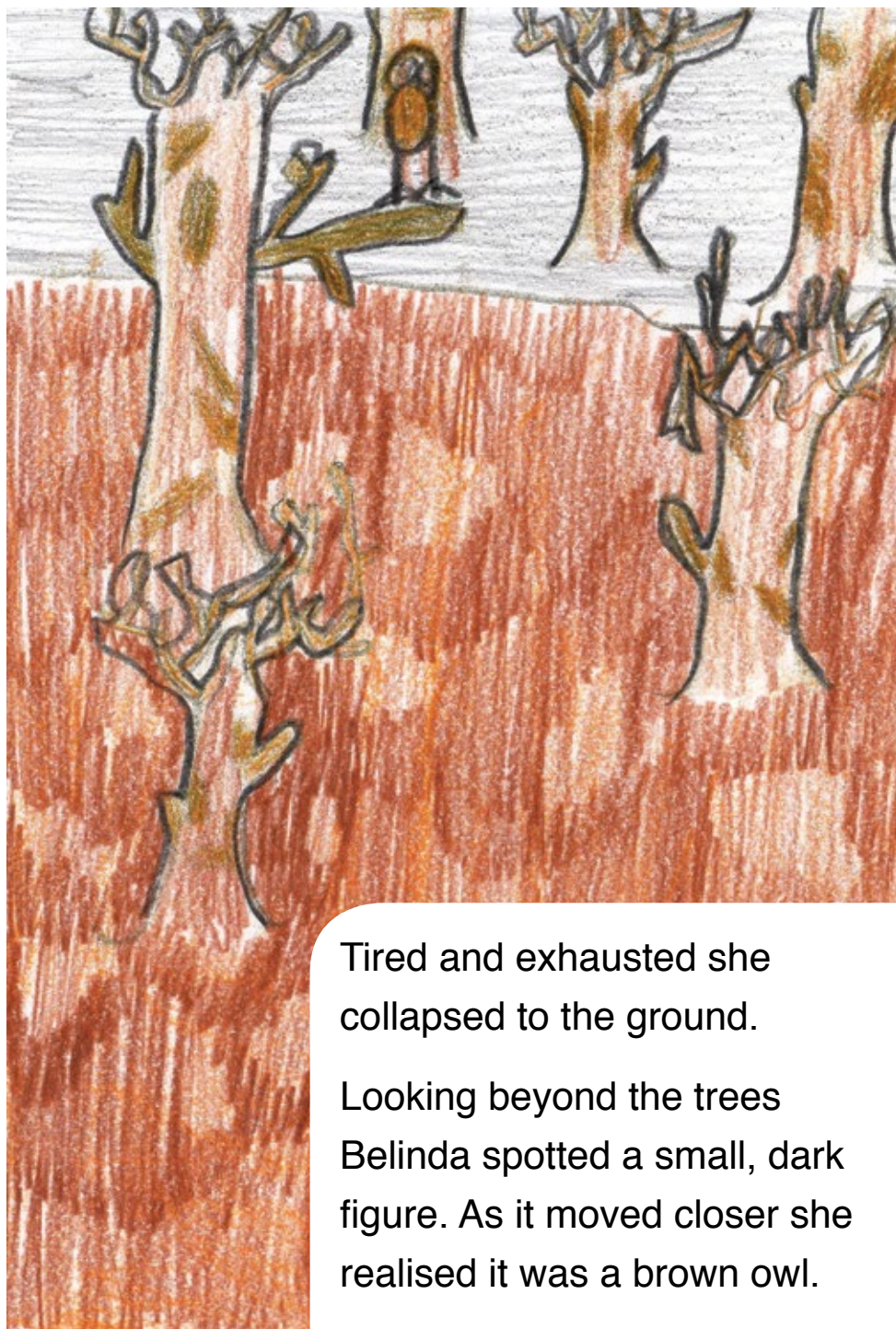


She bolted up the bank and found that she had run straight into the settler's camp. Belinda trampled around the campsite unaware of the damage she was causing to their possessions.

The pioneer settlers became furious and frightened, and they frantically corralled Belinda towards their horse yards.

Petrified, Belinda's instincts told her to try and jump the fence to escape. She failed to clear the corral clipping her hind leg. Trembling, she stumbled out of the camp, limping to the safety of the bush.





Tired and exhausted she collapsed to the ground.

Looking beyond the trees Belinda spotted a small, dark figure. As it moved closer she realised it was a brown owl.

Oliver was a wise old owl who had magical powers and was able to heal the wounded. He came closer to Belinda and his assistants Terry and Jerry the blow flies buzzed all around her.





The two flies looked at Belinda and said,
“What’s the matter with you little horsey?”

“I accidentally trampled the settlers’ camp and they got angry and tried to catch me. I injured my leg escaping their corral,” replied Belinda.

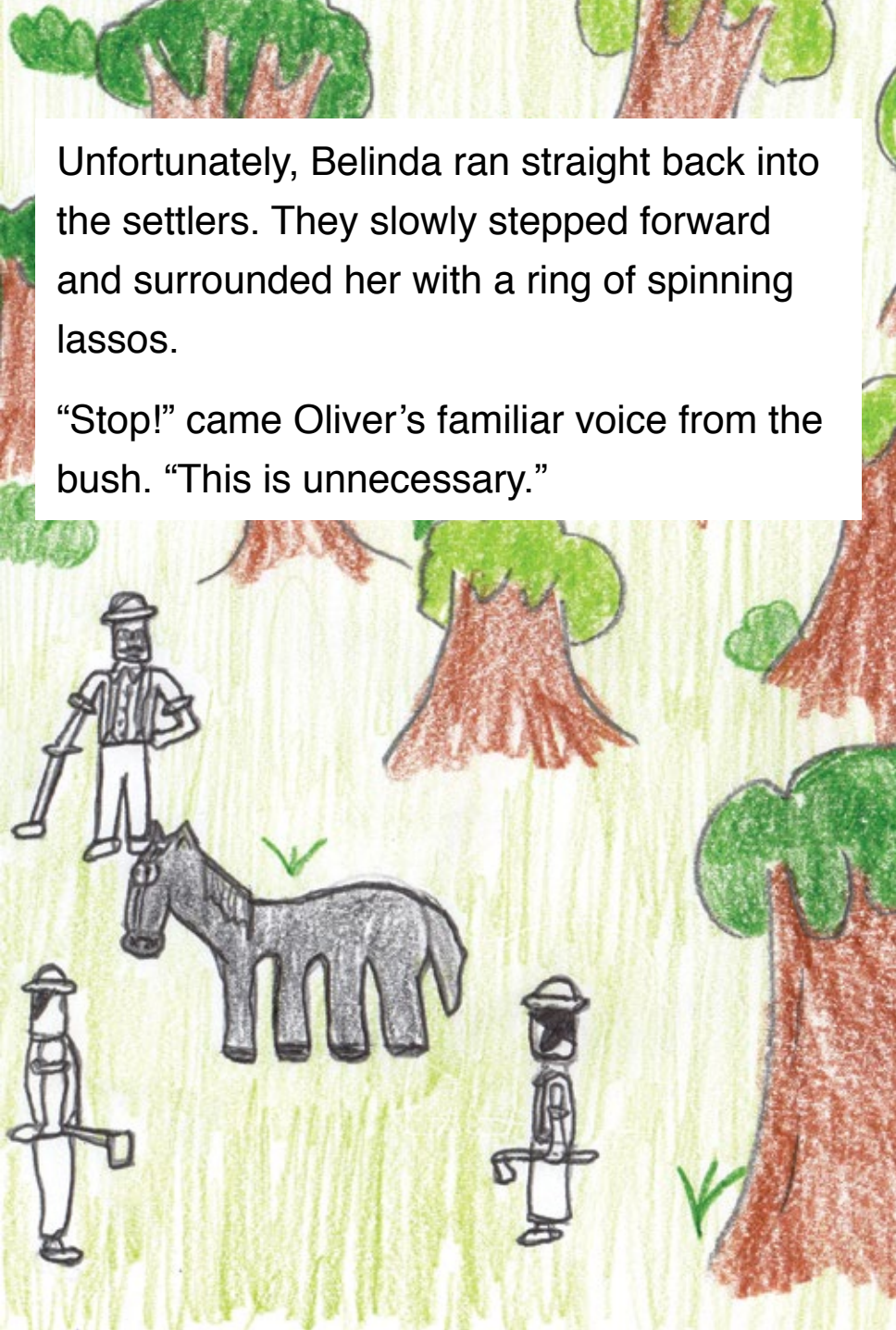
“Don’t worry I am here to help you,” Oliver said in a calm voice.

Oliver started to flap his magic wings and a small tornado appeared. The tornado hovered over Belinda's leg. She felt a sudden burst of energy and looked down at her leg that had been magically healed.



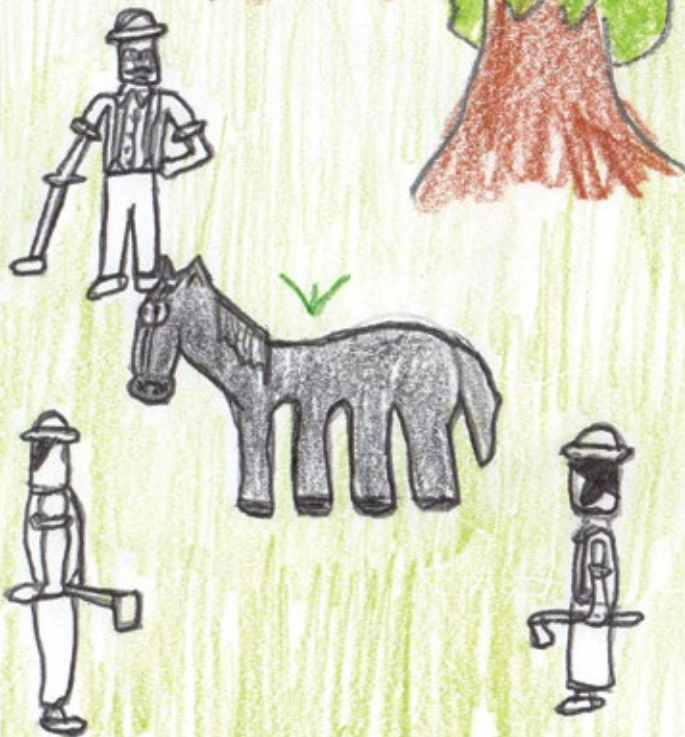
Belinda stood up and pranced around relieved that her leg had been healed. She thanked Oliver, Terry and Jerry for helping her. She galloped off into the bush to try and find her way home.





Unfortunately, Belinda ran straight back into the settlers. They slowly stepped forward and surrounded her with a ring of spinning lassos.

“Stop!” came Oliver’s familiar voice from the bush. “This is unnecessary.”



Both Belinda and the settlers stopped and turned in amazement to listen to what the wise old owl had to say.

“Do you think you should be living your lives like this? We will all have much better lives if we learn to live together in peace,” cried the irritated owl. “Animals and humans can learn to coexist and share this wonderful place.”

The settlers and Belinda both looked at each other and nodded their heads in agreement. The animals and the settlers looked around them and then all joined together to help to rebuild the destroyed camp.



The animals and humans decided to all live peacefully together. They found they could share the Kosciuszko National Park and build towards a better future for all.

The settlers often left out food and water for Belinda when she was around. In return, she would occasionally let one of them ride her when they needed to travel large distances.





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