



ELLEN

the Invisible
Caterpillar

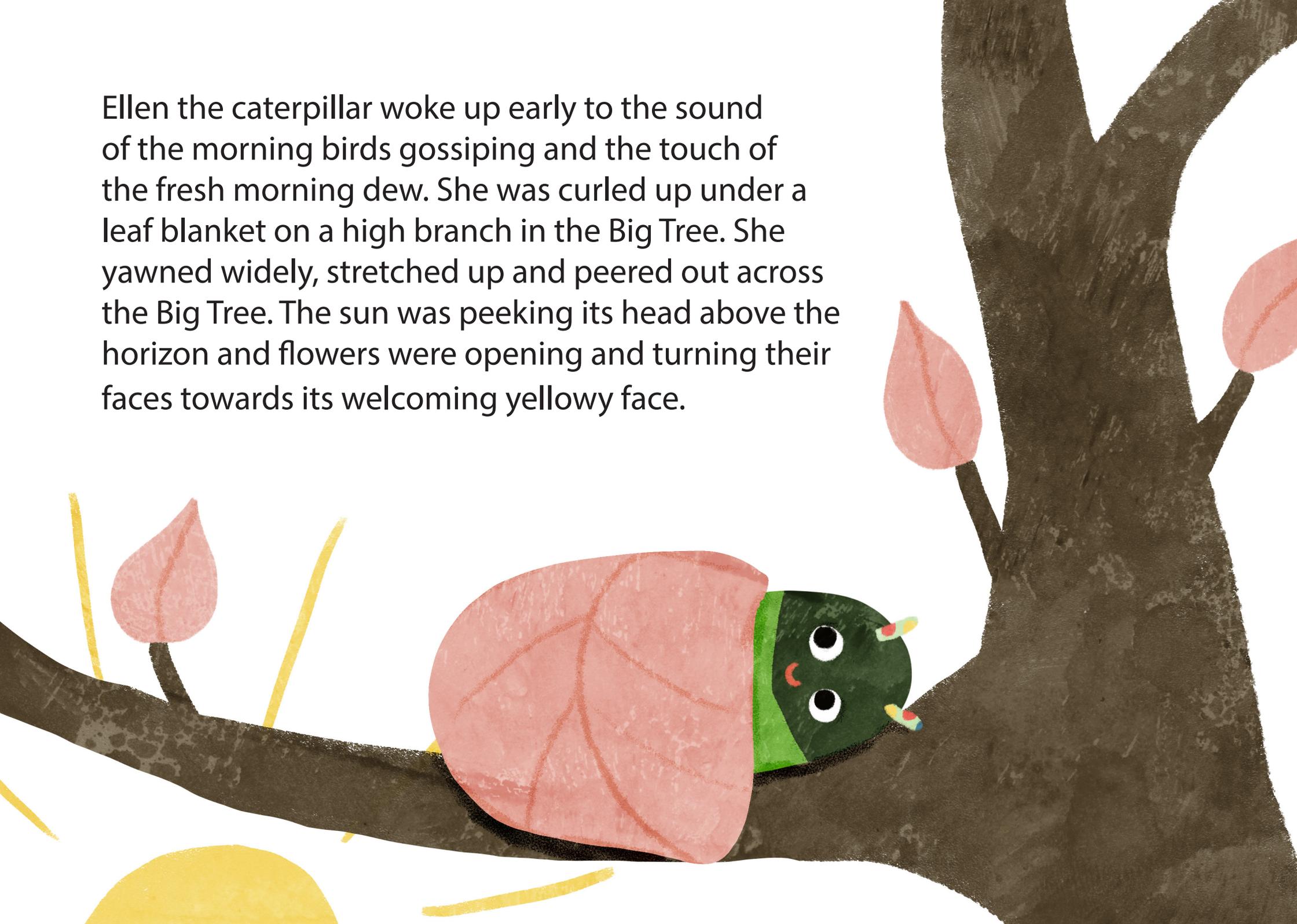


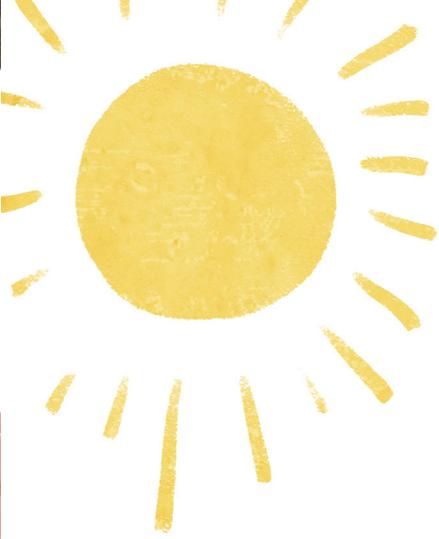
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Ellen the caterpillar woke up early to the sound of the morning birds gossiping and the touch of the fresh morning dew. She was curled up under a leaf blanket on a high branch in the Big Tree. She yawned widely, stretched up and peered out across the Big Tree. The sun was peeking its head above the horizon and flowers were opening and turning their faces towards its welcoming yellowy face.

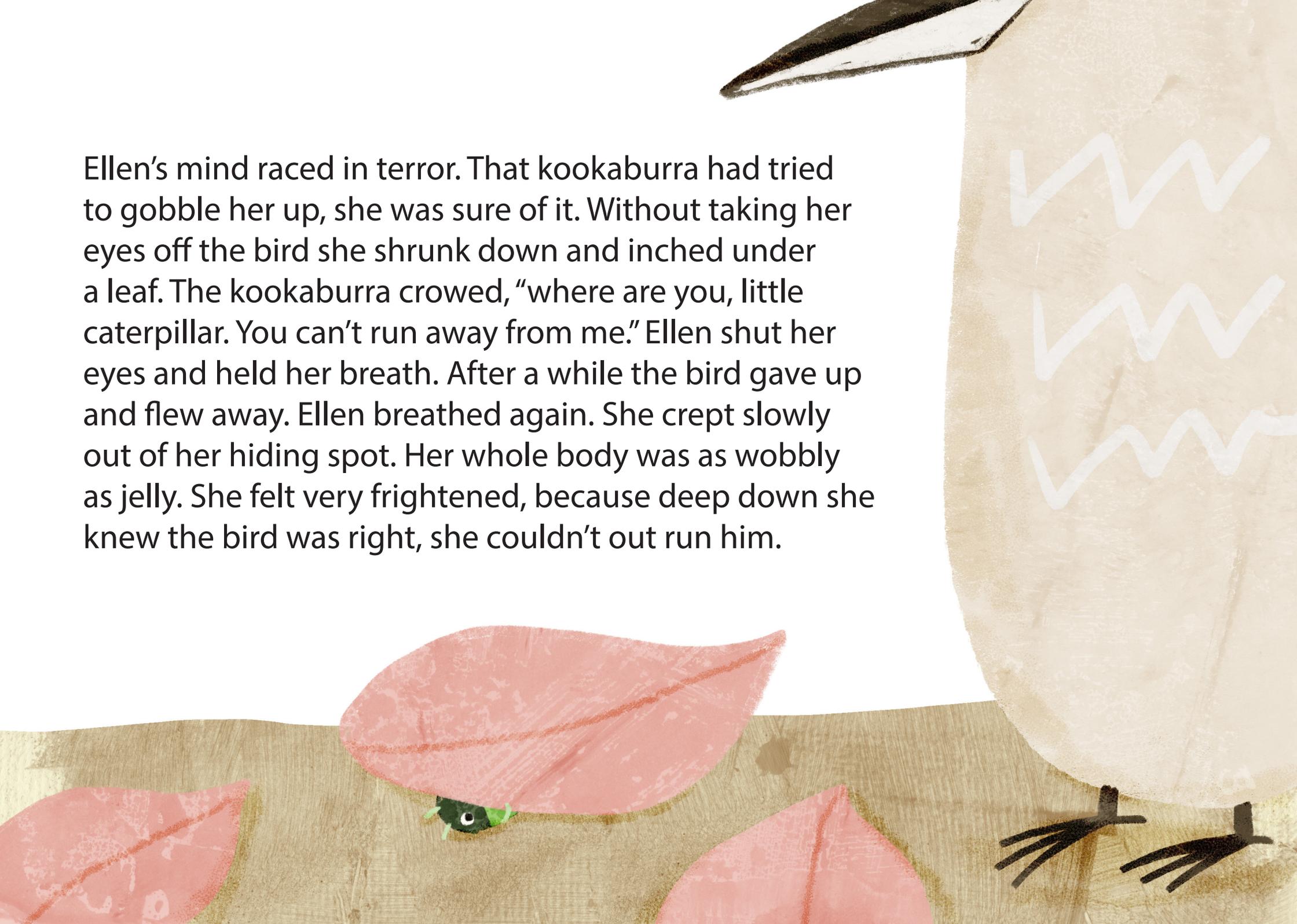




Ellen felt her tummy rumble. It was time to find breakfast. She set off in the direction of a particularly delicious looking apple. As she tucked in, an enormous bird flew by and nearly knocked her out of the tree. Stunned, she looked over to see a giant kookaburra looking hungrily in her direction.



Ellen's mind raced in terror. That kookaburra had tried to gobble her up, she was sure of it. Without taking her eyes off the bird she shrunk down and inched under a leaf. The kookaburra crowed, "where are you, little caterpillar. You can't run away from me." Ellen shut her eyes and held her breath. After a while the bird gave up and flew away. Ellen breathed again. She crept slowly out of her hiding spot. Her whole body was as wobbly as jelly. She felt very frightened, because deep down she knew the bird was right, she couldn't out run him.



Shakily, Ellen kept moving. She decided to head towards some branches that she knew well. As she set off, a furry, plump caterpillar crawled across her path. "Good morning" he said in a sing song voice. "It most certainly is not" she replied. She told him about her run in with the kookaburra. He listened. "That sounds terrible" he said. "I had a similar experience with a wasp last Tuesday. I had to sting him on the nose to get him to leave me alone." "Golly, you can sting things?" remarked Ellen in surprise. "Yep", he said, "that's why I'm so fuzzy. I can sting with my fur. We all have our ways of keeping safe and that's mine."

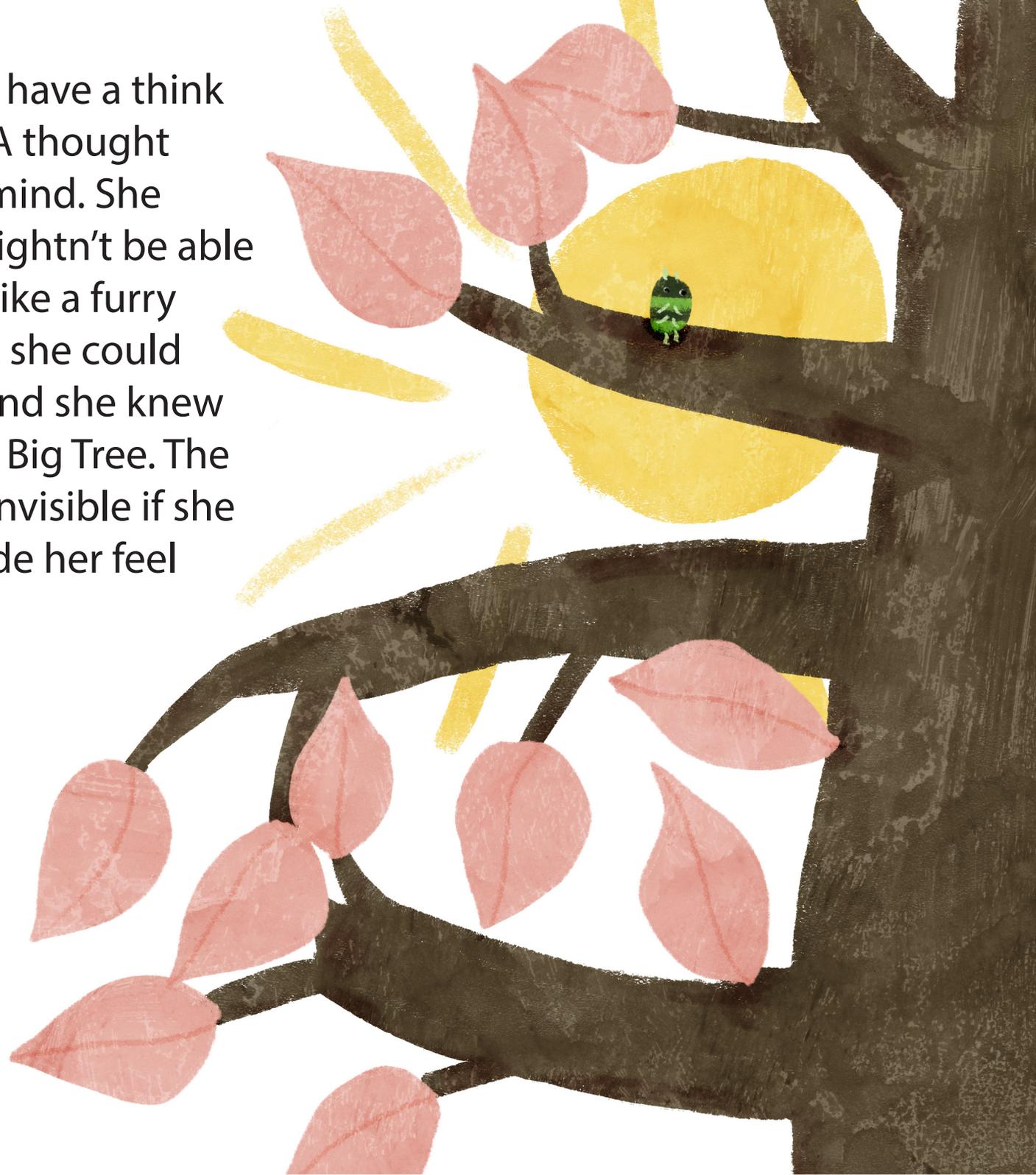
Ellen nodded. She wished she could have stung the kookaburra that morning.



Ellen moved on and tried to distract herself by eating through as many leaves in a row as she could. She felt jumpy and kept looking over her shoulder. It was at that very moment that a bee tumbled out of the sky and landed on top of her. "Hey! Get off!" she squealed. The bee stood up quickly beside her. "Sorry, I didn't see you there. This leaf just looked like a good resting spot on my way back to the hive. You gave me a fright little caterpillar, it's a good thing I didn't sting you." "Sting me," Ellen repeated. "You can sting and fly?!" she exclaimed. "Yes" said the bee. "I can't turn invisible like you though" he chuckled. Ellen nodded thoughtfully. The bee gathered up his pollen, apologised again and leapt off into the sky.



Ellen found a seat on a twig to have a think about what the bee had said. A thought dropped like a stone into her mind. She could keep herself safe. She mightn't be able to out-run kookaburras, sting like a furry caterpillar, or fly like a bee, but she could blend in better than anyone, and she knew all the best hiding spots in the Big Tree. The bee was right, she could turn invisible if she wanted to. This realisation made her feel happy, smart, and strong all at the same time. It was like she had a super power. That old kookaburra didn't stand a chance if he couldn't see her. Imagine, she thought to herself, if she could turn invisible, what else might she be able to do?!





Ellen discovers that animals have different ways of keeping safe. Are there ways that people try to keep safe?

How do you think Ellen feels when she realises she has more power to keep herself safe than she first thought?

Did you know that like Ellen, people's bodies have some inbuilt super powers that we can use to help keep us safe if we need them?

Have you ever felt unsafe? What was that like for you? Maybe you might consider talking with Ellen about it? She might understand? You might find out that you have a 'keeping safe' super power or 2 hidden within you.