

The background is a textured, light orange surface. On the left, a large green circle is partially obscured by a purple, scalloped-edged shape. Scattered around are various eyes: some are simple black dots, some are almond-shaped with black pupils, and some are more complex with white highlights. There are also red, curved shapes and a red shape with three white dots. The word 'MORTY' is written in large, colorful, hand-drawn letters at the top right.

MORTY

A large, textured blue circle with a slightly irregular edge, containing the title text in white.

The Day
Morty's Face
Fell Off



Australian
Childhood
Foundation

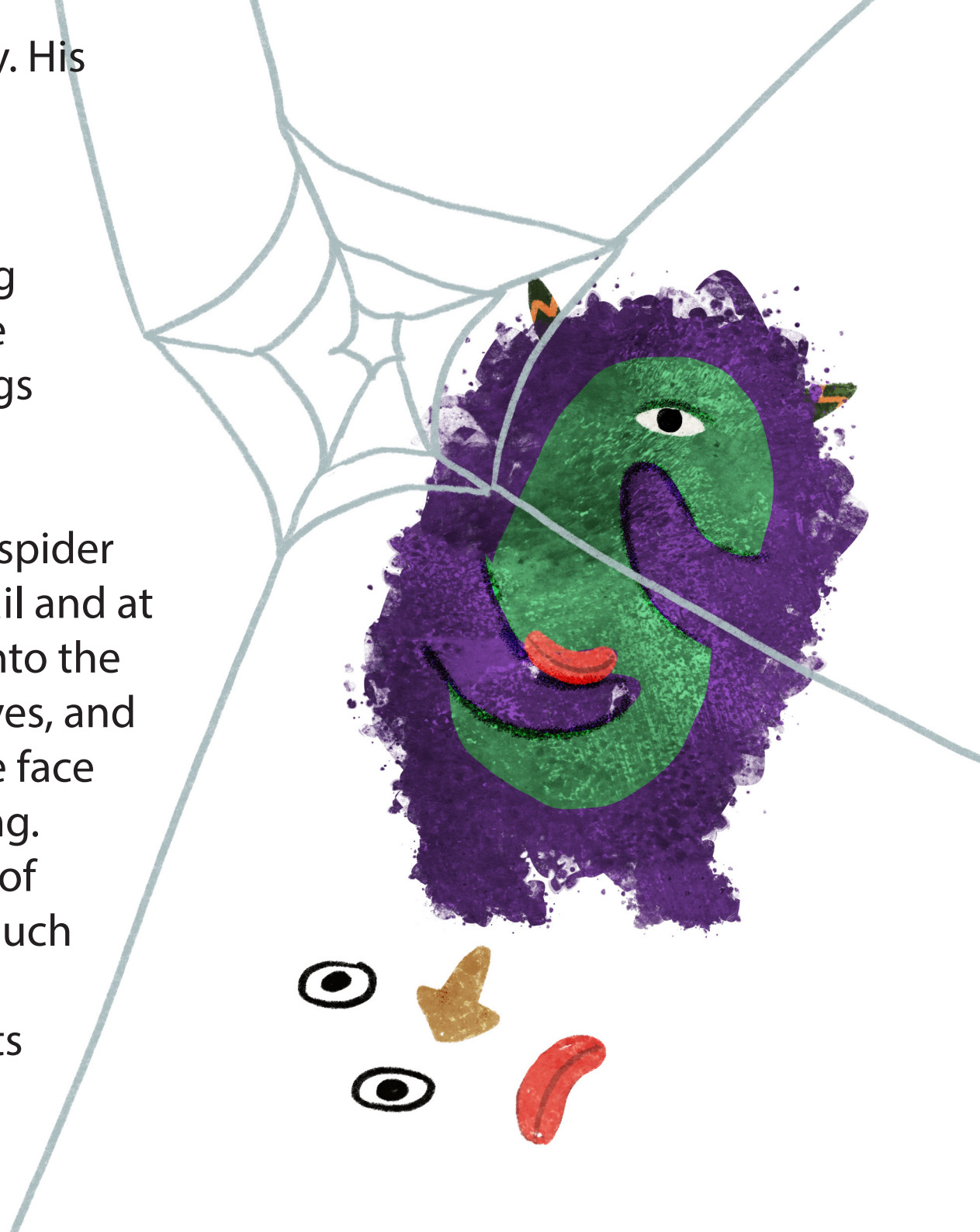
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Morty Monster was having a bad day. His face kept falling off. Has that ever happened to you?

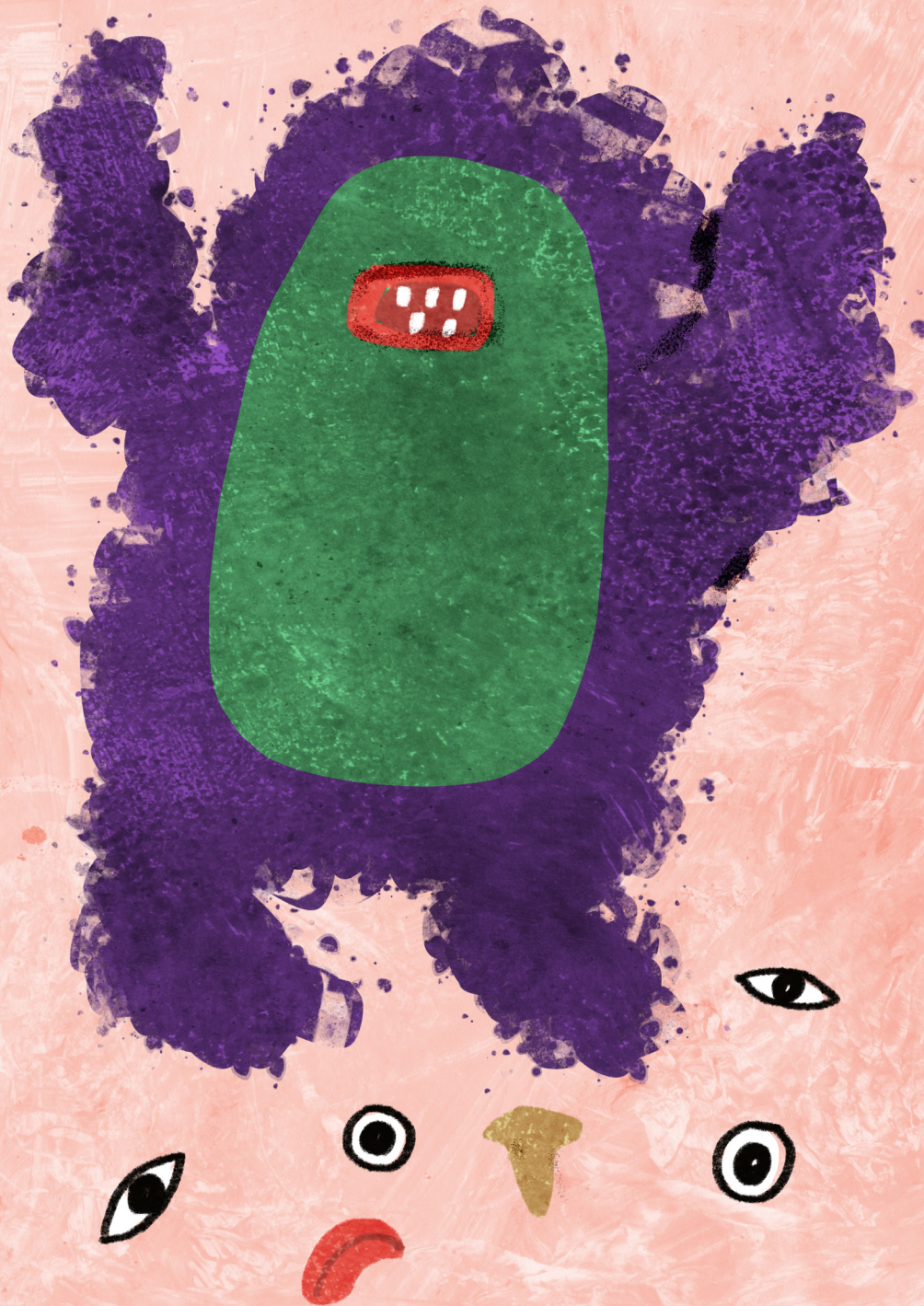
When Morty left his Hollow in the Big Tree that morning it had seemed like the perfect day for a walk. Then things started going wrong.

Morty ran into an enormous, empty spider web on a quiet stretch of walking trail and at that moment his face parts fell off onto the ground. Gone was his mouth, and eyes, and nose. He had to feel around for spare face parts in his back pocket to keep going. That was where he kept a collection of spare face parts useful in situations such as this. He re-arranged his face and scooped up his dusty fallen face parts that were lying on the ground.





Morty continued on until he reached an orchard beyond the bendy river. It was wet season and the trees were bursting with delicious looking apples. He plucked one from the closest tree and took a big bite before realising a tiny grub had gotten to his apple before him. Oh, fiddle sticks thought Morty as his face parts fell off again, and once again he needed to remake his face.

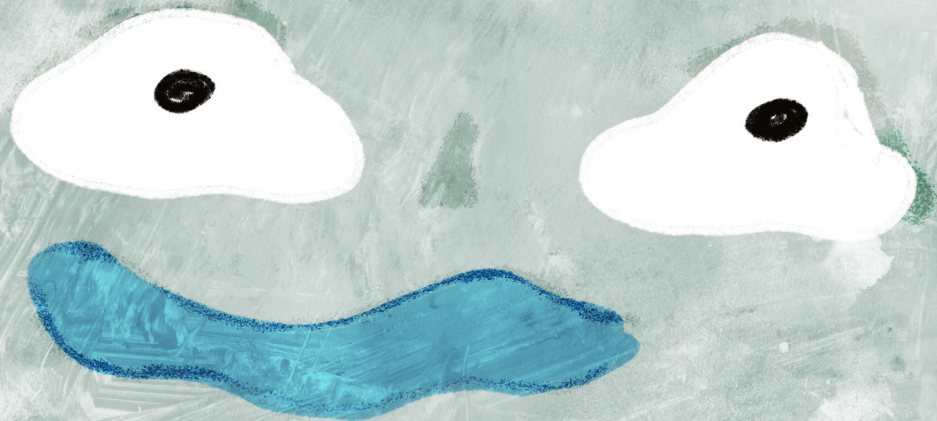


Morty was getting sick of this. He pulled out his face parts from his back pocket and held them in his hands. "Why do you keep falling off?" he shouted at them. "Why can't you just stay the way I arrange you when I get up in the morning?" He was feeling angry now.

Plonk, off they fell again.

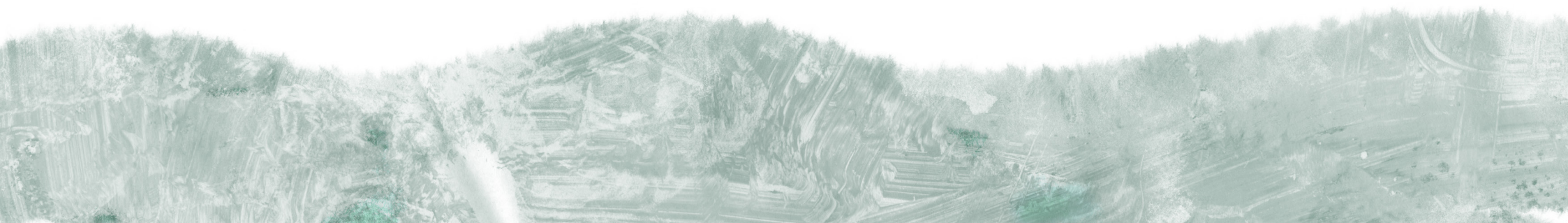


After he had put his face back together again, Morty turned to leave. He stepped onto a bridge over the bendy river, when he heard a voice below him. "Psssttt". Morty looked down, but no one was there. "Down here!" the voice called. Morty looked again and was astonished to realise that the river was talking to him. "I couldn't help but notice that you were talking to your face parts over there". Morty nodded. "I might have some answers" the river said. "I happen to have lots of experience looking at faces".



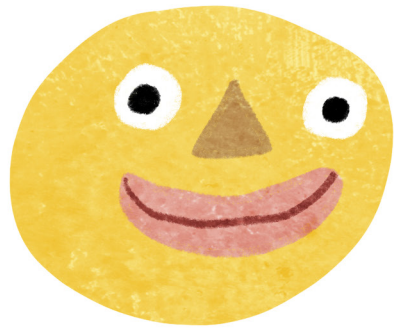


“I think your face keeps falling off because of your feelings” said the river.
“I think that when your feelings change so does your face, or maybe it’s the other way around, I haven’t worked that out yet. What I do know is that different feelings seem to go with different faces. For example, scrunched up faces seem to go with feelings like anger or frustration. Big, wide, smiles and sparkly eyes go with excited or happy. There are many other combinations”.





“Why don’t you try it out for yourself?” said the river. “Use me for reflection”. Morty had a go. He thought about a happy memory and his face became arranged with a big wide smile and his sparkliest of eyes. Then he turned his smile upside down and that was enough for him to begin feeling sad.



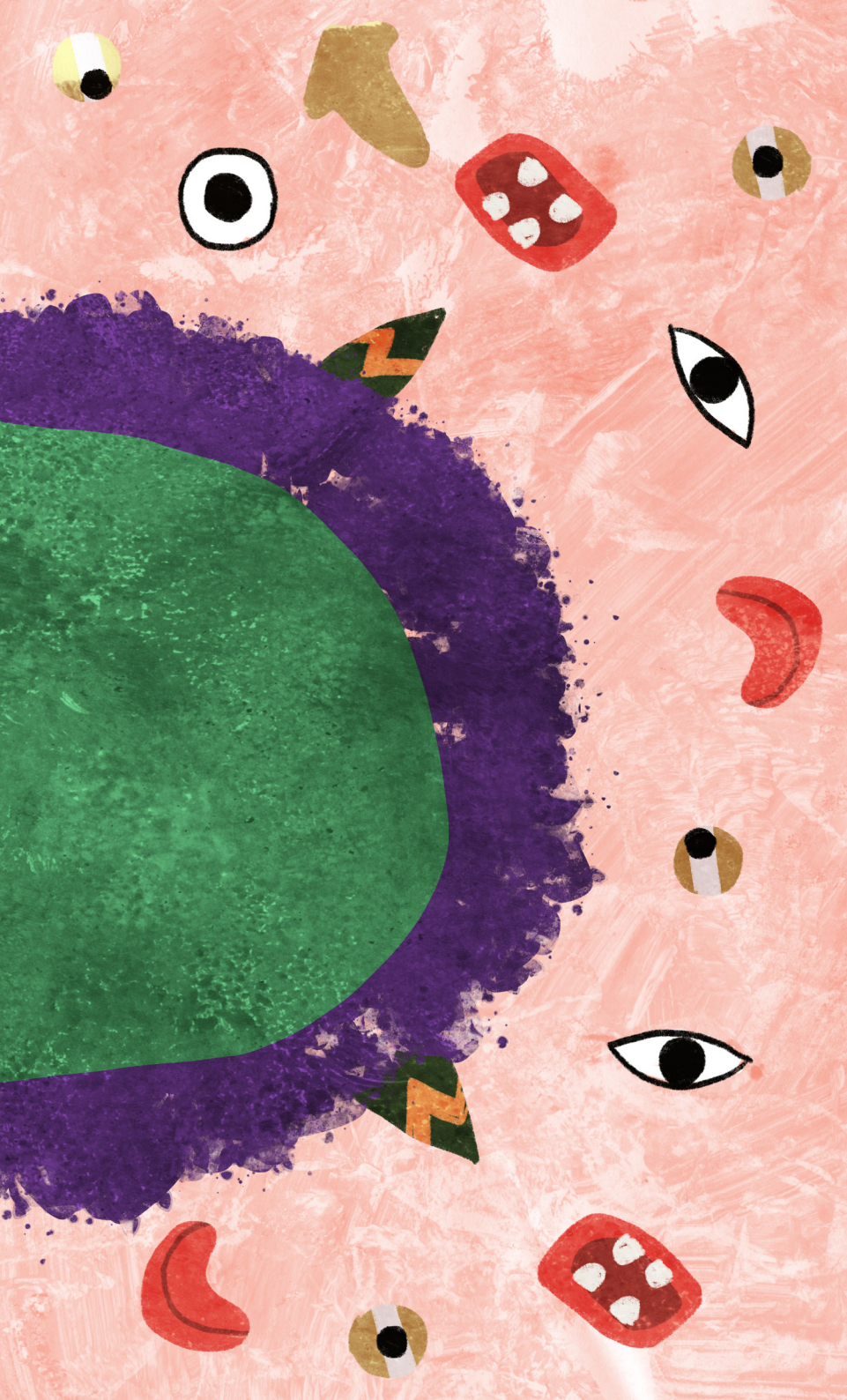
Morty thought back and tried to remember what had happened when his face had fallen off earlier that day. When he ran into the spider web he had felt shocked, and when he bit into the bad apple, he had felt disgusted. It was suddenly obvious to him, his surprises from earlier that day had led to strong feelings and that meant he needed completely new face parts- quickly. "So, that's why I have so many facial features" said Morty, "because I need them to go with my changing feelings."



Morty's mind was ticking over at one hundred miles per hour. What an amazing discovery. His shifting face suddenly felt incredible instead of a pain and his face parts felt like a gift. There was so much to feel he thought to himself. He was going to try out as many feelings as he could with his shifting face. "Thank you, River. I can't tell you how helpful you have been." Morty skipped off in the direction of the Big Tree. He was off home to experiment with feeling faces in his mirror. Morty's heart sang, and he felt a pang of joy.....

Plonk. After a quick face re-arrange, it was written all over his face.





Have you ever experimented with your feeling faces? How many do you think you might have?

How good are you at reading feelings on other people's faces?

Sometimes people try to hide their feelings behind a face that doesn't match their feelings on the inside. Have you ever noticed this? What were the clues?