

Whose Feather Is This?



Written by Lúcia Williams
Illustrated by Karen Lybrand

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Early Childhood
Hands-On Science



A curious little girl was at church one Sunday morning. Everywhere she looked, there were people with fancy clothes and feathers in their hats.



When the people stood up to sing, a colorful feather fell softly to the floor. She picked it up and put it in her purse.

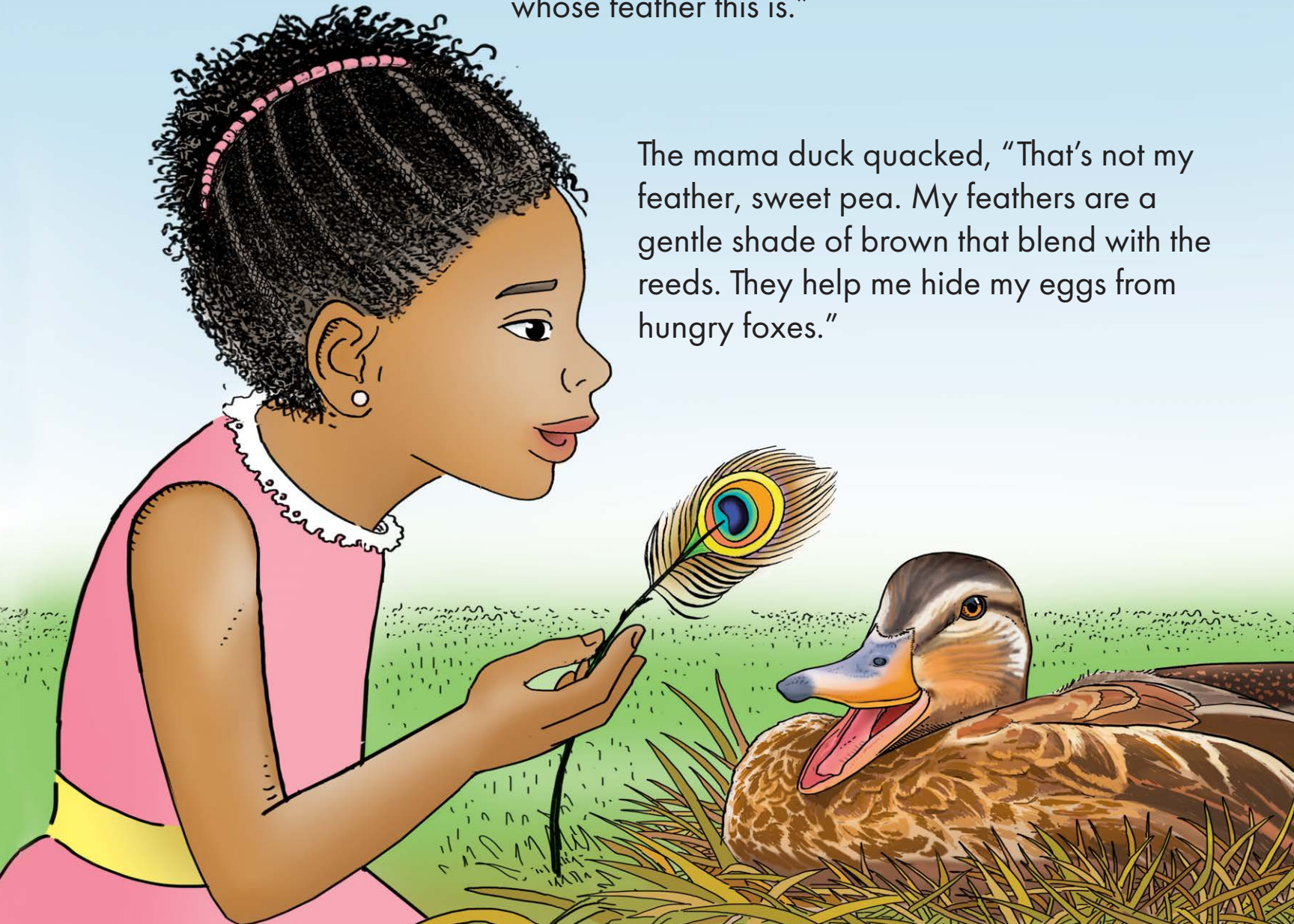
Later, she asked her grandma whose feather it was. The wise old lady said, "Let's go to the park and ask the birds."

"There's a duck on a nest by the pond. Let's go ask the mama duck."



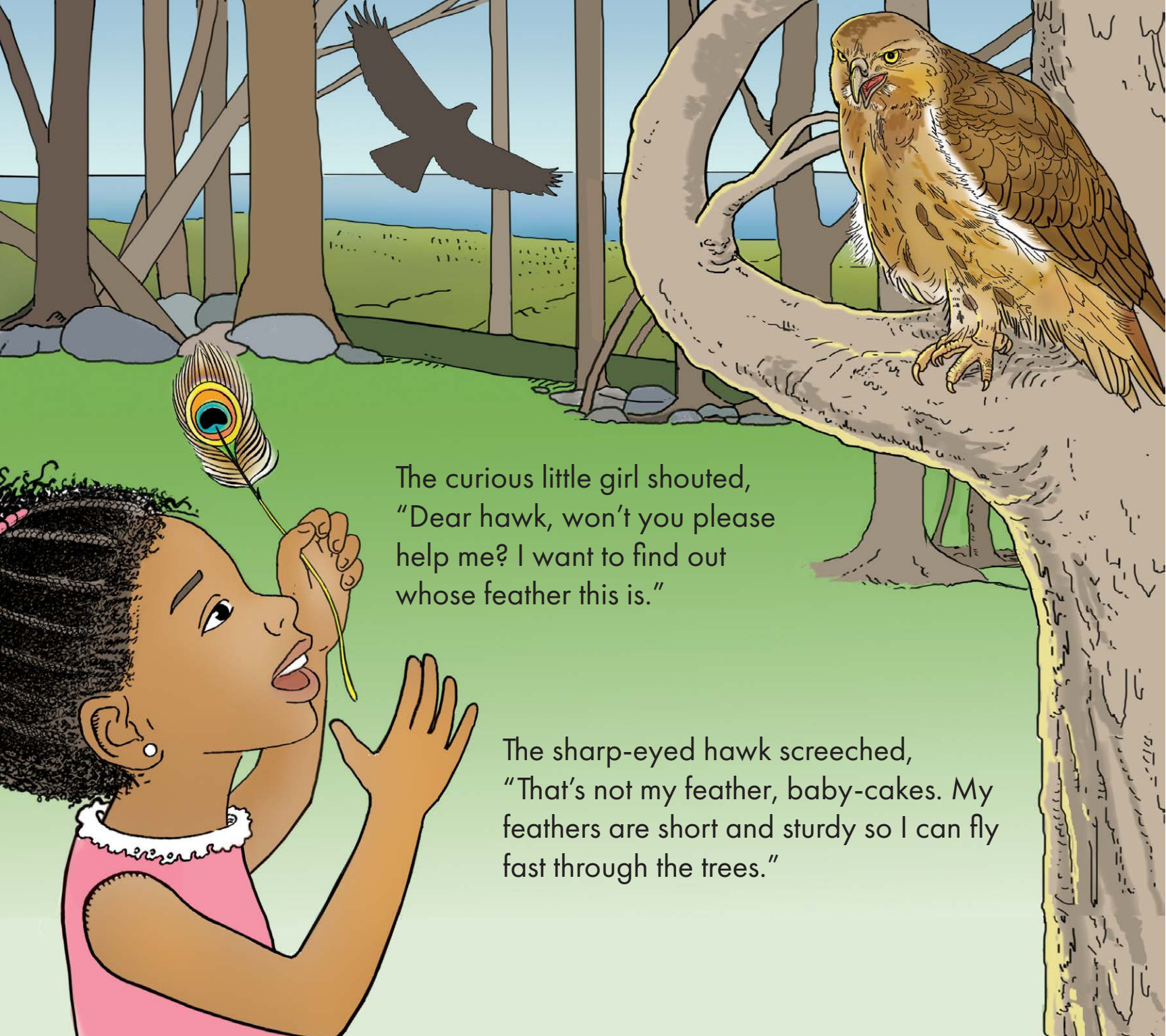
The curious little girl said, "Dear mama duck, won't you please help me? I want to find out whose feather this is."

The mama duck quacked, "That's not my feather, sweet pea. My feathers are a gentle shade of brown that blend with the reeds. They help me hide my eggs from hungry foxes."





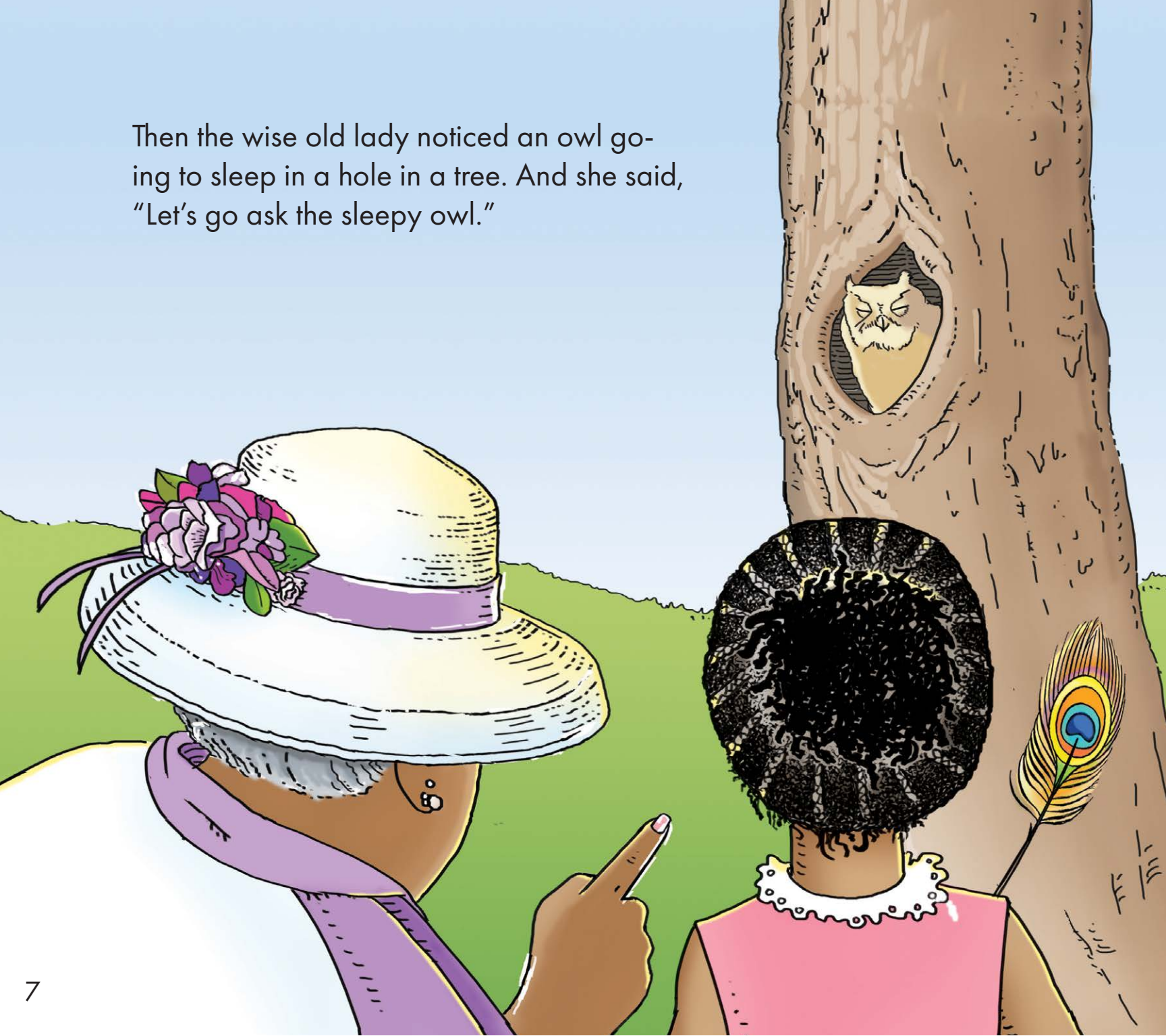
Then the wise old lady spotted a hawk watching them from high up above. And she said, "Let's go ask the sharp-eyed hawk."



The curious little girl shouted,
"Dear hawk, won't you please
help me? I want to find out
whose feather this is."

The sharp-eyed hawk screeched,
"That's not my feather, baby-cakes. My
feathers are short and sturdy so I can fly
fast through the trees."

Then the wise old lady noticed an owl going to sleep in a hole in a tree. And she said, "Let's go ask the sleepy owl."



The curious little girl asked quietly, "Dear owl, won't you please help me? I want to find out whose feather this is."



The sleepy owl hooted softly, "That's not my feather, little one. My feathers are fringed like a comb so I can fly silently and sneak up on mice." And she blinked her big eyes and went back to sleep.





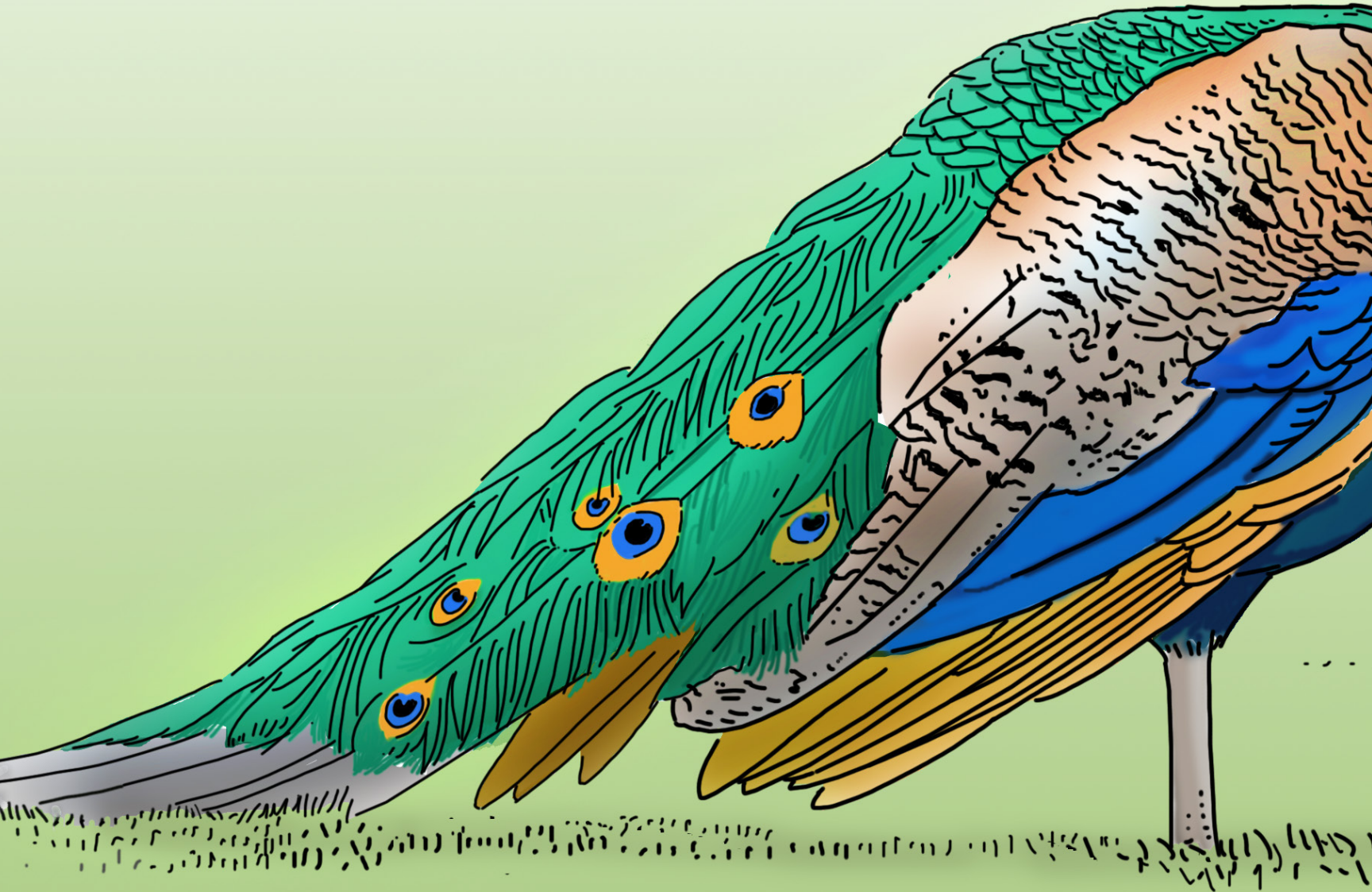
Then the wise old lady heard a noisy blue jay cracking an acorn. And she said, "Let's go ask the hungry blue jay."

The curious – and now tired –
little girl asked wearily,
“Dear blue jay, won’t you
please help me? I want to
find out whose feather this is.”

The hungry blue jay
whistled, “That’s not my
feather, sugar plum. My feathers
are bright blue. They help me show my
family I belong with them.”

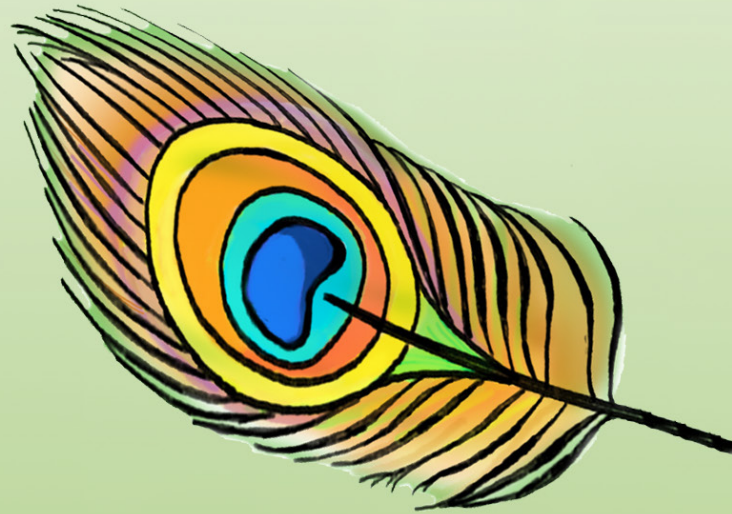


Then the wise old lady set eyes on a large and dazzling peacock strutting by. And she said, "Oh my! Let's go ask the peacock."





The curious little girl rejoiced. She asked excitedly, "Dear peacock, won't you please help me? I want to find out whose feather this is."



The peacock answered proudly, "That is my feather, darling! My feathers are so very colorful. They help me attract attention to myself."

"Would you like your feather back?" she asked.



"No, dear!" squealed the peacock, "Birds shed their old feathers and new ones grow in. Keep that feather to remember me."

The curious little girl could not believe her ears!
"Thank you! I will take it home and keep it in my treasure box."



She was so pleased for having asked all those questions. She reached for her grandma's hand and she thought about all the different birds she met and their wonderful feathers.

Then the wise old lady smiled and thought, "How fortunate we are for curious little children!"

