

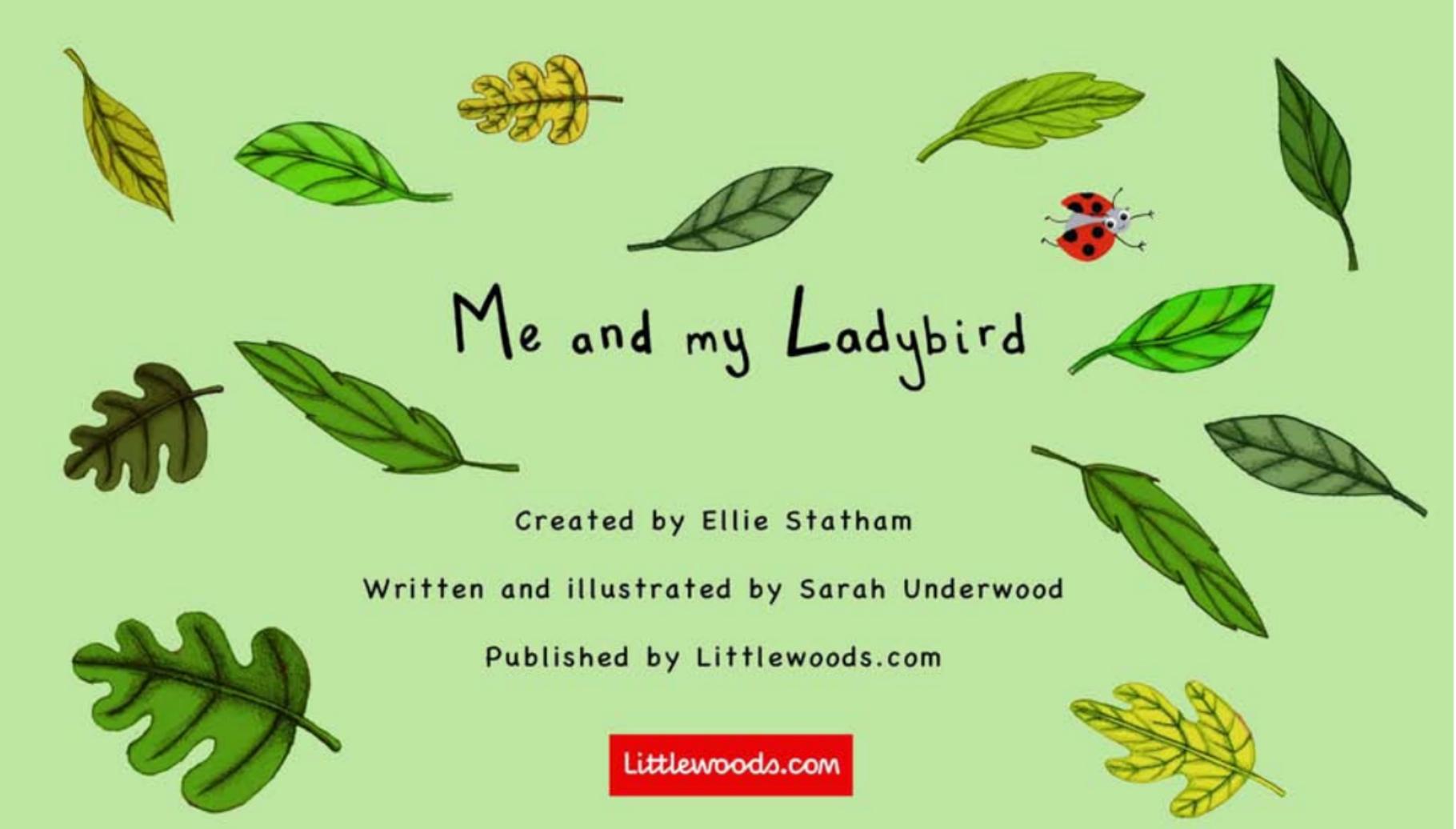
# Me and my Ladybird



By Ellie Statham

Aged 6

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# Me and my Ladybird

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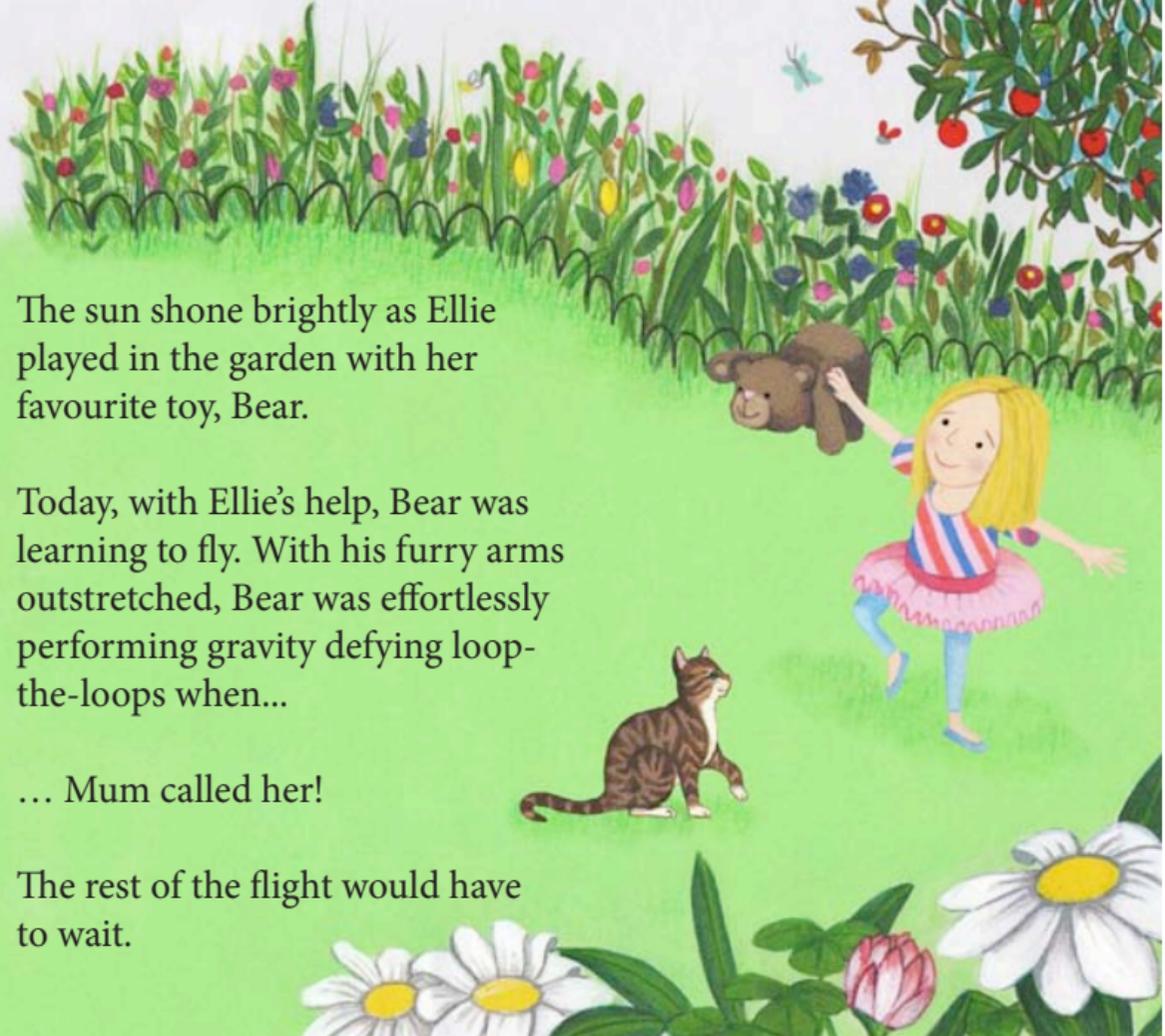


The sun shone brightly as Ellie played in the garden with her favourite toy, Bear.

Today, with Ellie's help, Bear was learning to fly. With his furry arms outstretched, Bear was effortlessly performing gravity defying loop-the-loops when...

... Mum called her!

The rest of the flight would have to wait.



Later that day, Ellie couldn't wait to get outside again, but to her horror, Bear had disappeared.



She just couldn't find him.



Searching all across the lawn,  
into the flower beds, up the apple tree



and even in the vegetable patch.



Mum was in the kitchen making lunch.  
'No, Ellie, I haven't. Don't worry, he'll show up.'



Just then a little voice squeaked  
nearby: 'Ahem, excuse me.'  
Its owner was tiny, bright red,  
with big black spots...  
It was a ladybird!



Taken aback, Ellie whispered,  
'Who are you?'

'I couldn't help overhearing your problem, I can help.  
My name is Lily.'

Ellie thought a talking ladybird was almost as amazing  
as Bear.

'Would you like to fly with me and we can search the  
garden together?' Lily went on.

Ellie was very confused, but had always dreamt of flying.  
'Yes please,' she replied, 'but I'm going to ask Mum first.'

Ellie asked Mum if they could search the garden together.  
Her mum giggled. 'With a ladybird? Of course!  
But I'll be watching you from the kitchen.'



'Yay!' Shrieked Ellie. She told the ladybird  
the good news and ran out to the garden.

‘If you’re going to fly with me,’ said Lily, ‘you’ll need special powers. These will do the trick. They’re...



Funky,  
Lightweight,  
Inverse,  
Gravity,  
Height-reducing,  
Trousers,

that’s **FLIGHT**’ for short,’ whilst dropping them into Ellie’s hand.

‘What should I do?’ Ellie asked.

‘Just put them on,’ replied the ladybird.



Ellie knew they would never fit her but amazingly the trousers seemed to be growing in her hand.

Then she realised that the trousers were not getting any bigger – she was getting smaller!

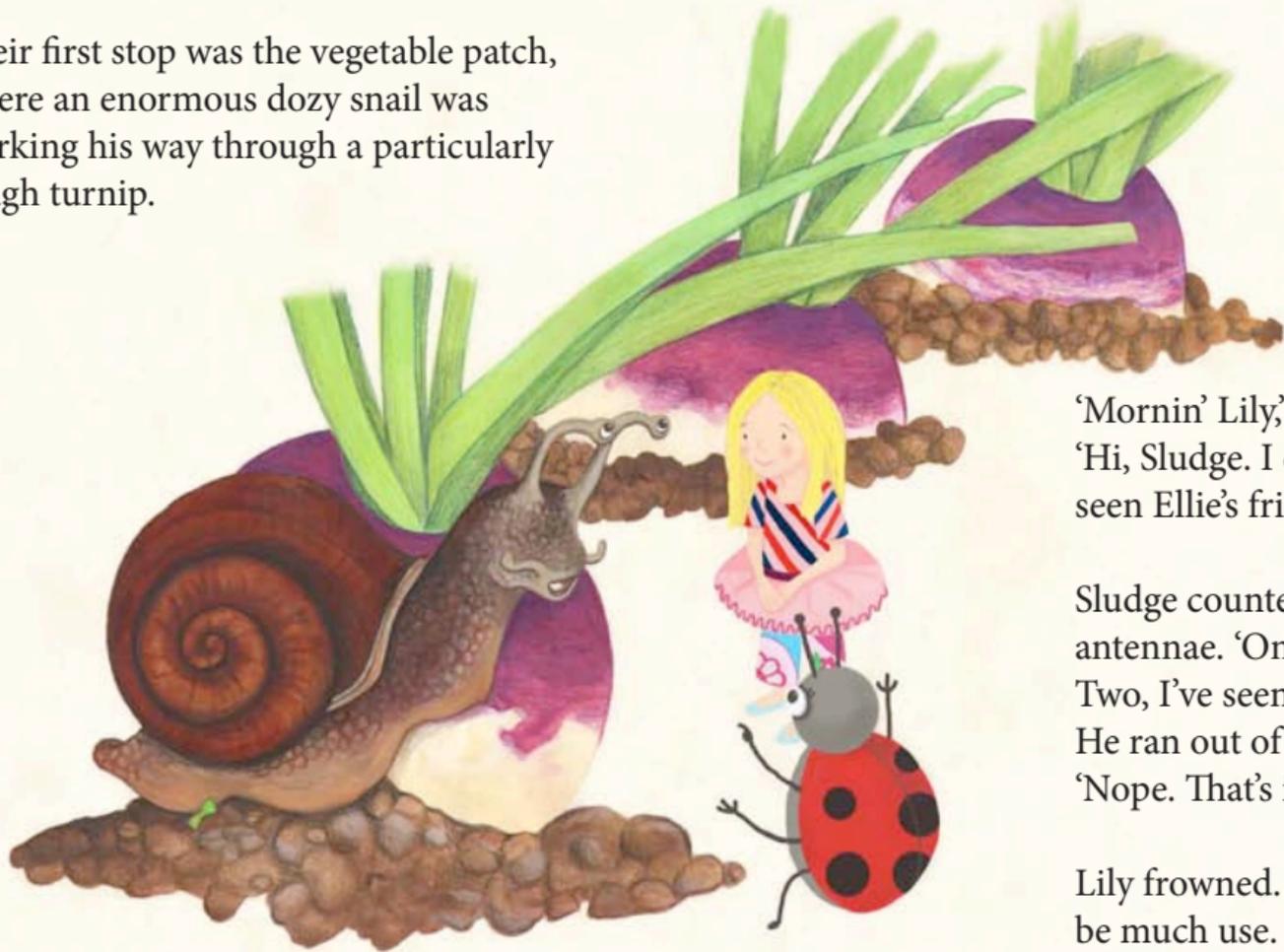
‘Now,’ said Lily, flourishing a wing, ‘let’s find Bear. Just make a wish to fly and follow me!’

Ellie closed her eyes, made a wish and before she knew it she was hovering above the ground!

‘I can’t believe I’m flying,’ said Ellie.



Their first stop was the vegetable patch, where an enormous dozy snail was working his way through a particularly tough turnip.



‘Mornin’ Lily,’ said the snail.  
‘Hi, Sludge. I don’t suppose you’ve seen Ellie’s friend Bear, have you?’

Sludge counted carefully on his antennae. ‘One, I’ve seen a cabbage. Two, I’ve seen a turnip.’ He ran out of antennae to count on. ‘Nope. That’s it.’

Lily frowned. Sludge wasn’t going to be much use.

Leaving Sludge, they flew high into the air, giggling through a confetti trail of falling leaves and landed softly on a branch.  
They'd reached the apple tree where Swampy the worm was eating his tea.



Again, Lily asked if he had seen Bear.



‘Funny you should say that,’ Swampy said between munches,  
‘I’m usually ‘Under-apple’, you see.  
It’s a full time job, being a tunnelling worm and that.

I was up here yesterday, having my break, like I am now you know,  
and I sees this enormous bear flyin’ about! Can you imagine?  
A flyin’ bear? No, it’s all wrong, and he just flies off towards the  
fence. I don’t know where he landed though.  
I was on my break, see?’

Lily had a feeling that Swampy spent a lot of his time on his break.  
But this was useful information, and they flew off once more.





They landed by the fence, just behind the shed.  
Lines of ants were busily building their home.

‘There was a new animal nearby earlier,’ said one.  
‘Yes, a huge new animal!’ chirruped another.

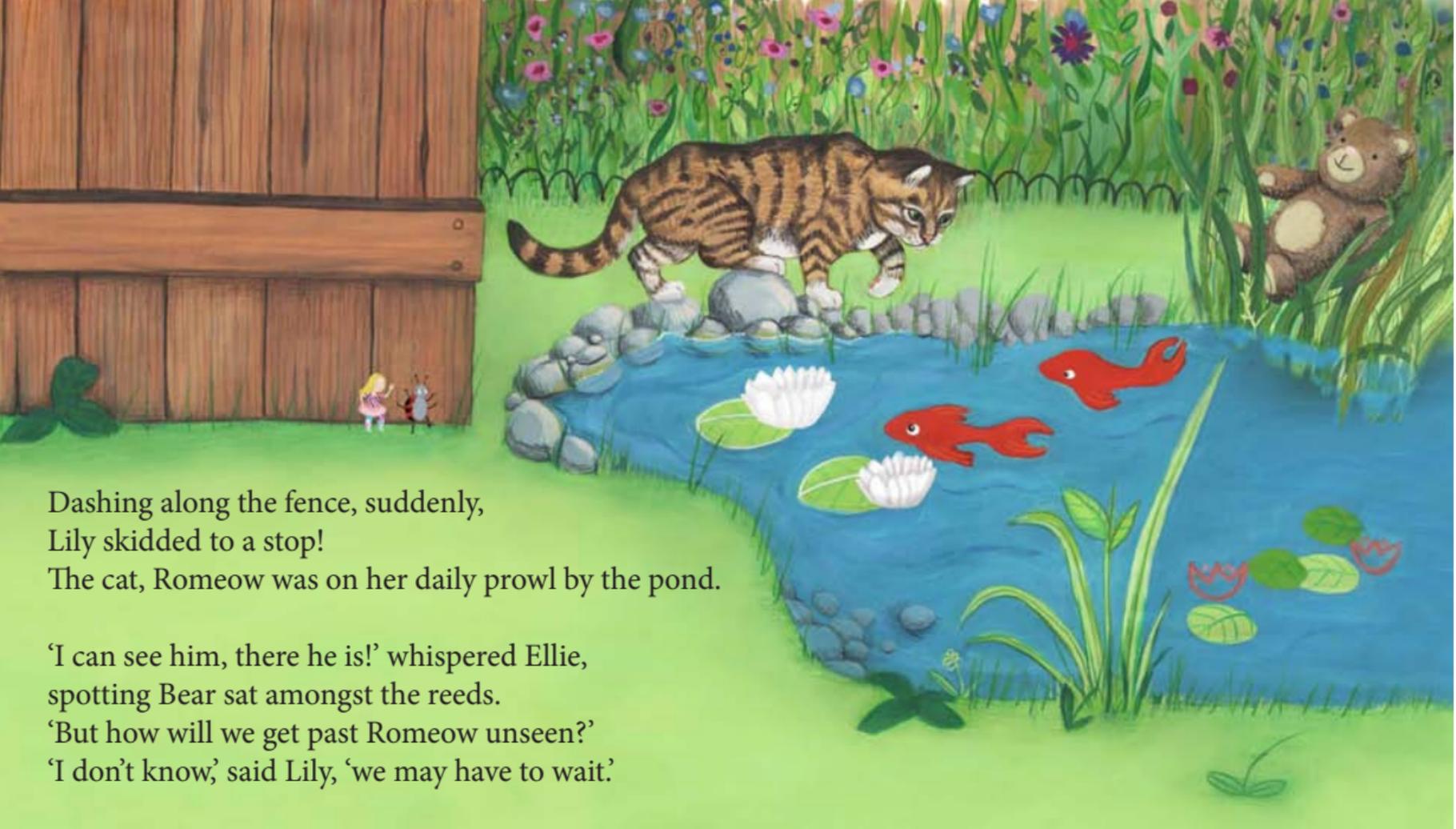


‘Wouldn’t help us build though,  
just ignored us,’ said the first.  
‘Just ignored us!’ squeaked the second.  
‘Not so much as a good morning,  
very rude.’ explained the first.  
‘Very rude!’ echoed the second.



‘Quick,’ shouted Ellie, ‘I know it’s him!’





Dashing along the fence, suddenly,  
Lily skidded to a stop!  
The cat, Romeow was on her daily prowl by the pond.

‘I can see him, there he is!’ whispered Ellie,  
spotting Bear sat amongst the reeds.  
‘But how will we get past Romeow unseen?’  
‘I don’t know,’ said Lily, ‘we may have to wait.’

But as if by magic, drops of rain started falling and Romeow, who hated getting wet, sped away at top speed.

It wasn't easy navigating their way



through the large drops of water.

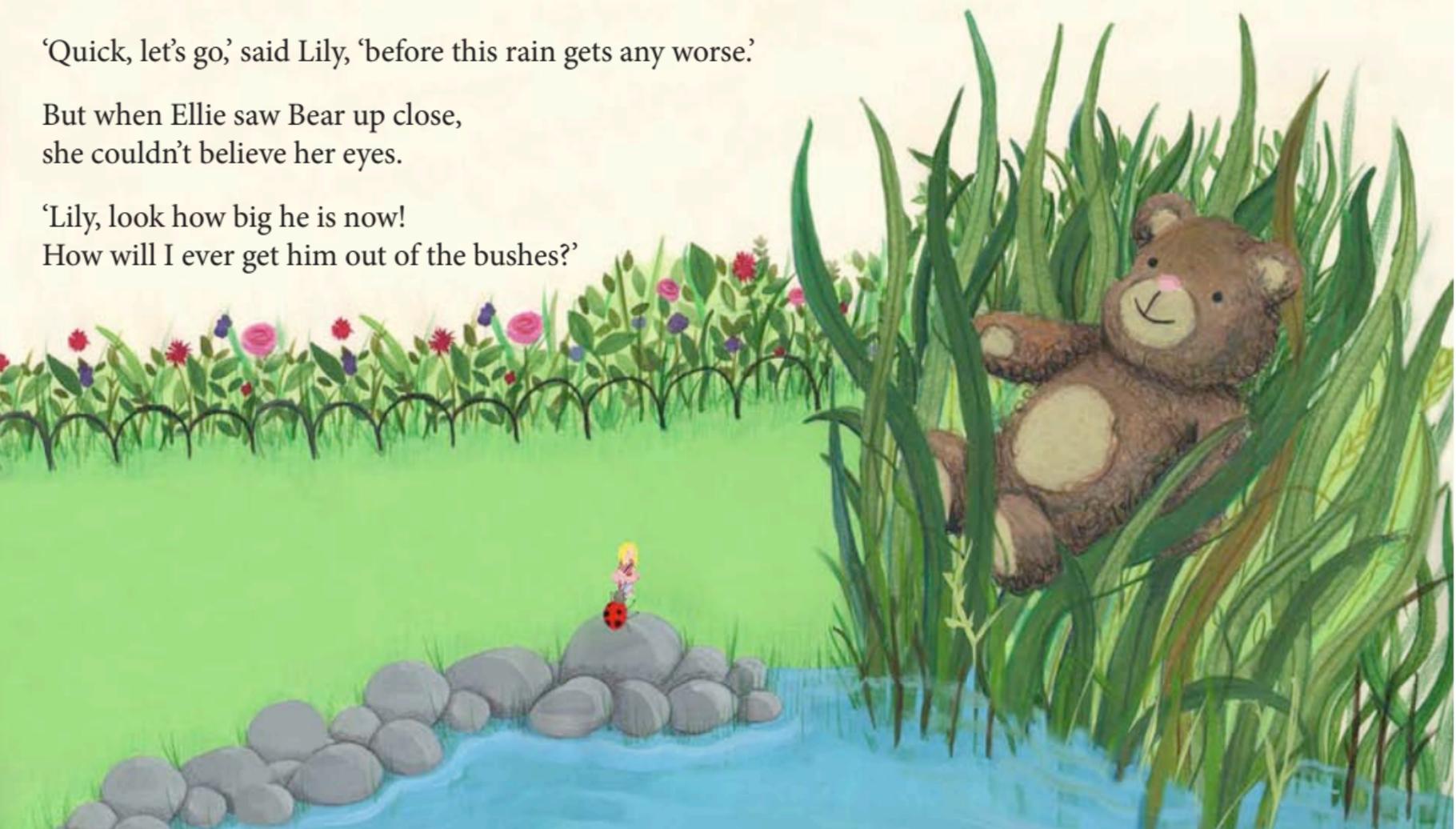
But luckily, by now Ellie had lots of flying practice.



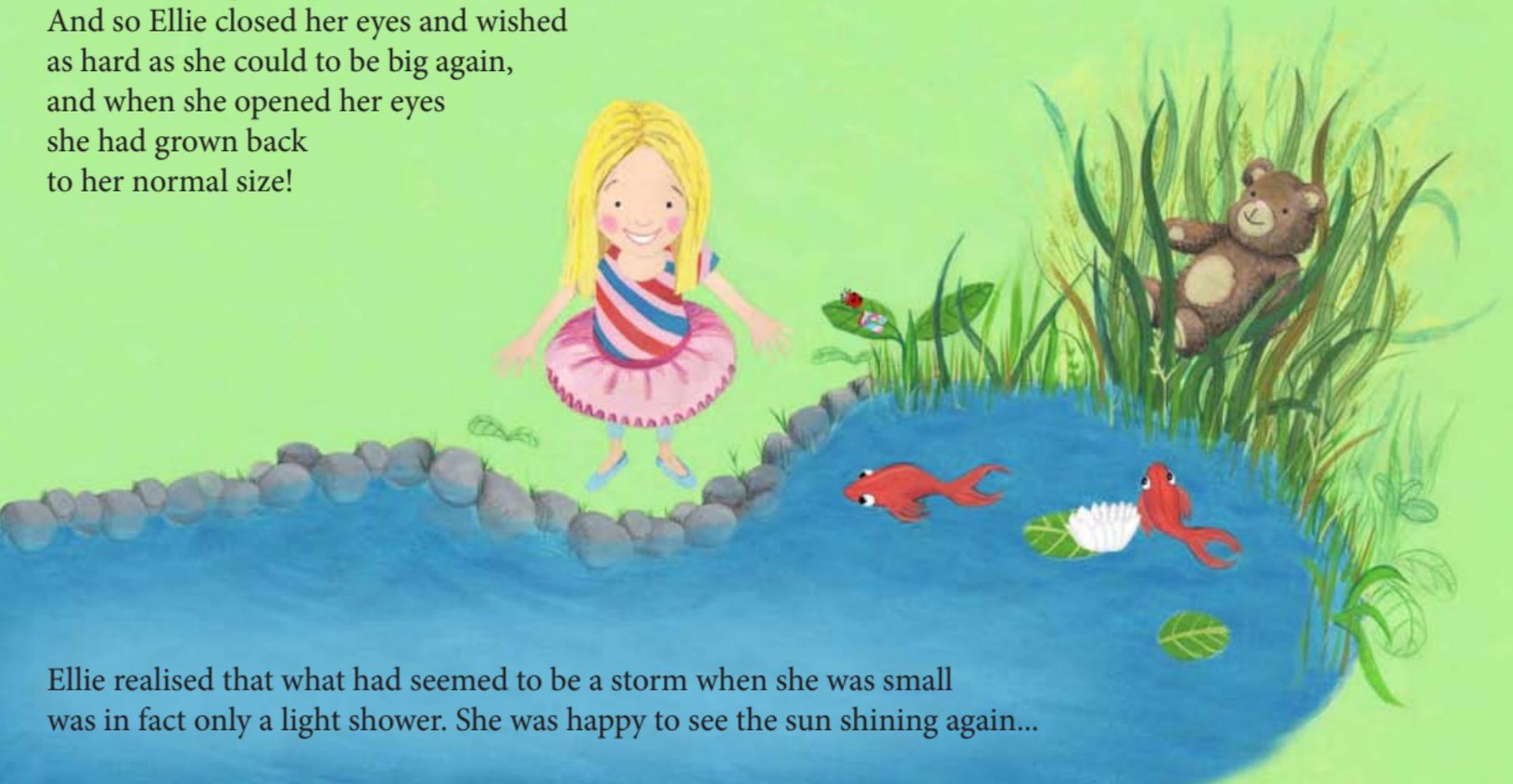
‘Quick, let’s go,’ said Lily, ‘before this rain gets any worse.’

But when Ellie saw Bear up close,  
she couldn’t believe her eyes.

‘Lily, look how big he is now!  
How will I ever get him out of the bushes?’

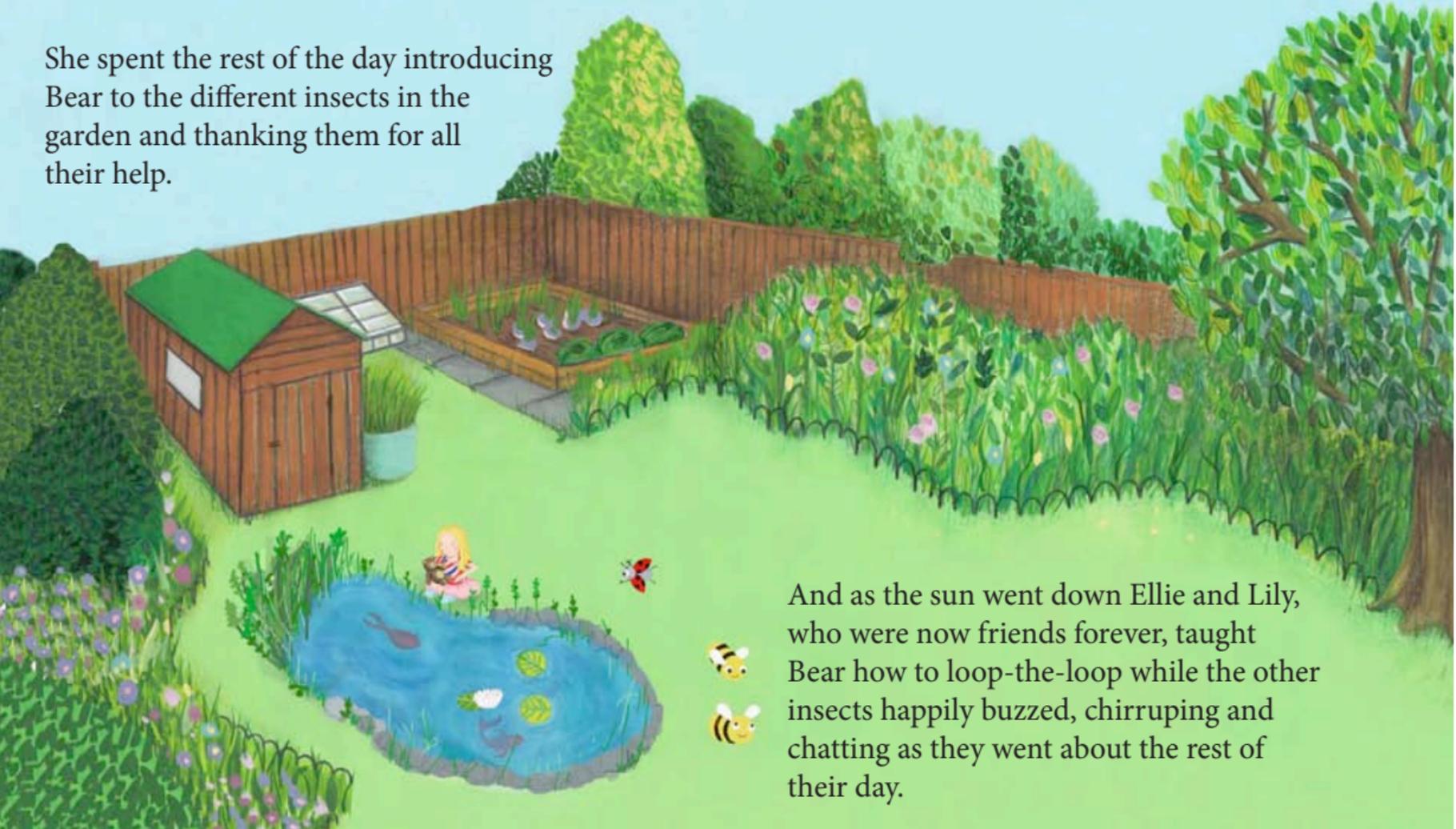


'Easy,' Lily laughed, 'just make a wish.'  
And so Ellie closed her eyes and wished  
as hard as she could to be big again,  
and when she opened her eyes  
she had grown back  
to her normal size!



Ellie realised that what had seemed to be a storm when she was small  
was in fact only a light shower. She was happy to see the sun shining again...

She spent the rest of the day introducing Bear to the different insects in the garden and thanking them for all their help.



And as the sun went down Ellie and Lily, who were now friends forever, taught Bear how to loop-the-loop while the other insects happily buzzed, chirruping and chatting as they went about the rest of their day.

