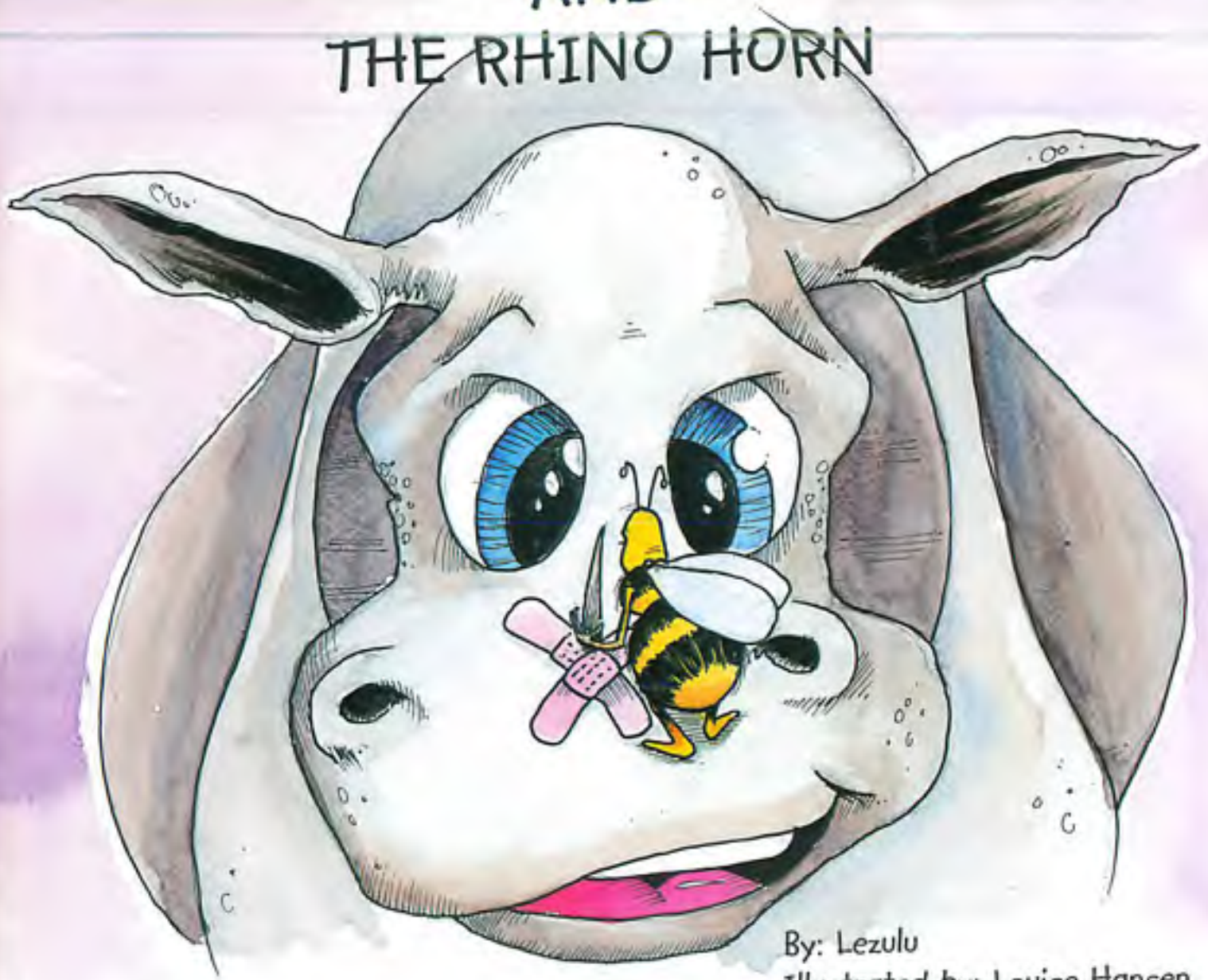
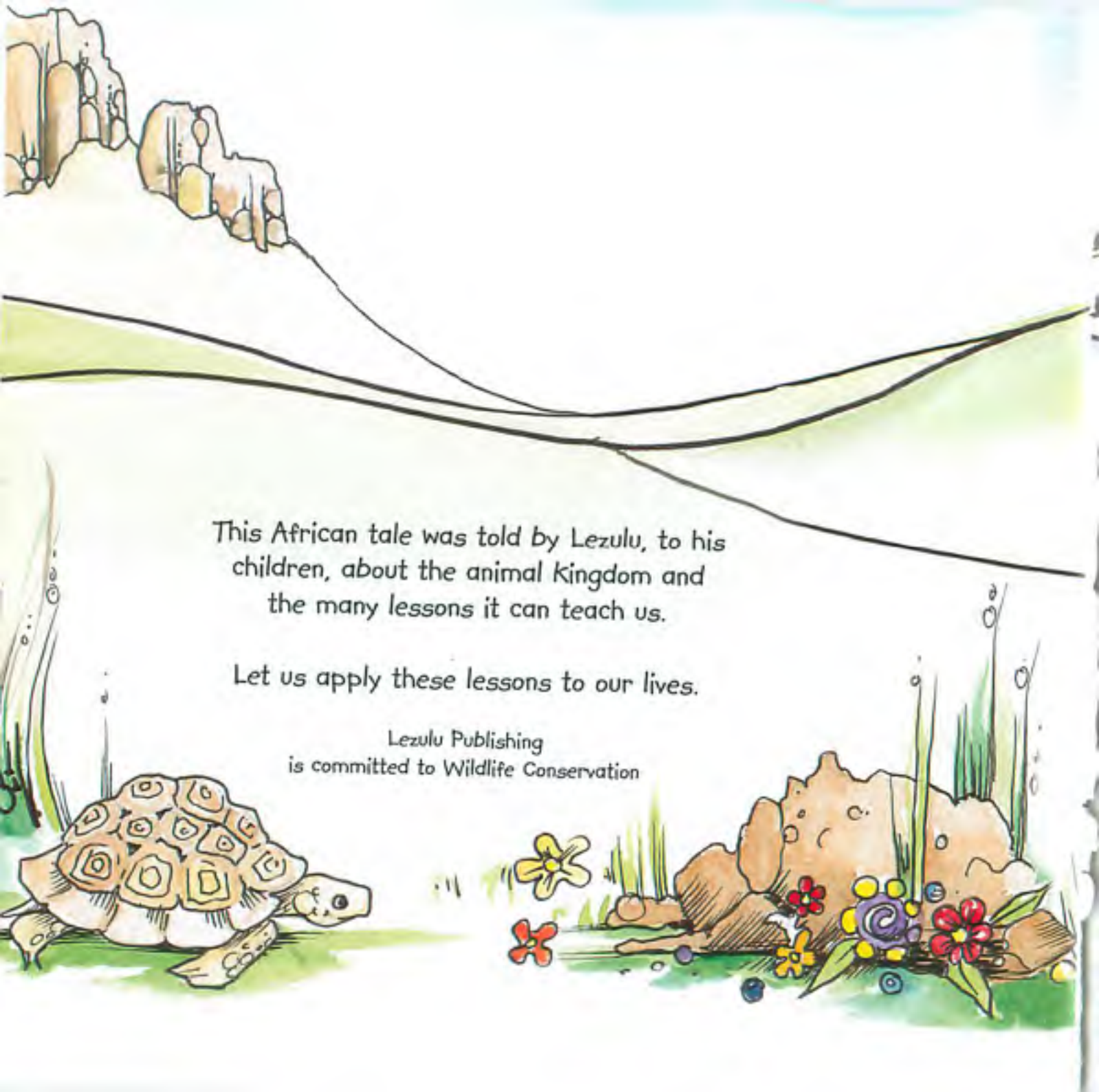


RONNIE AND THE RHINO HORN



By: Lezulu

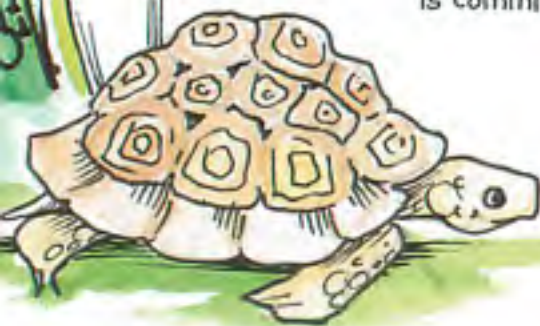
Illustrated by: Louise Hansen

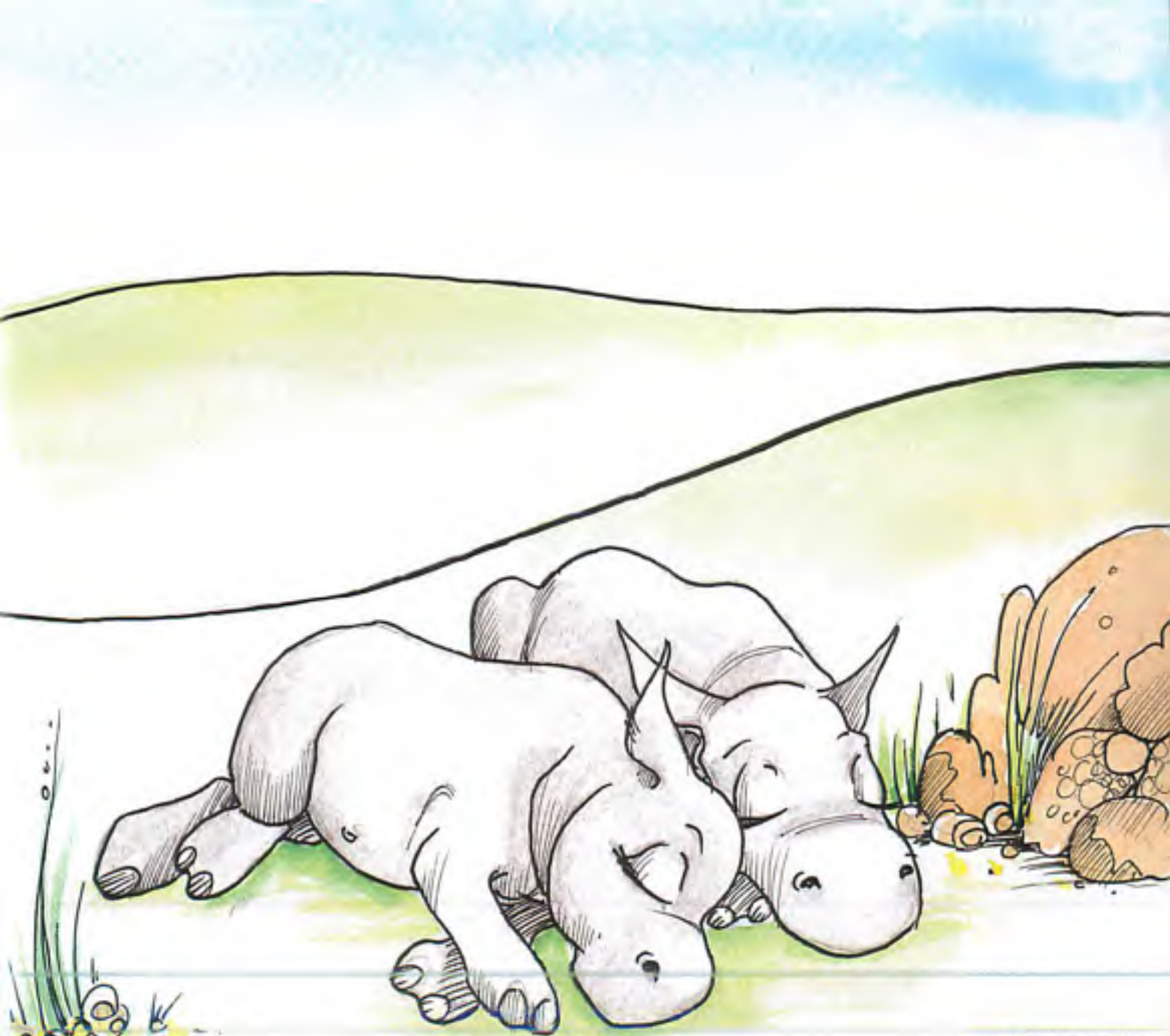


This African tale was told by Lezulu, to his children, about the animal Kingdom and the many lessons it can teach us.

Let us apply these lessons to our lives.

Lezulu Publishing
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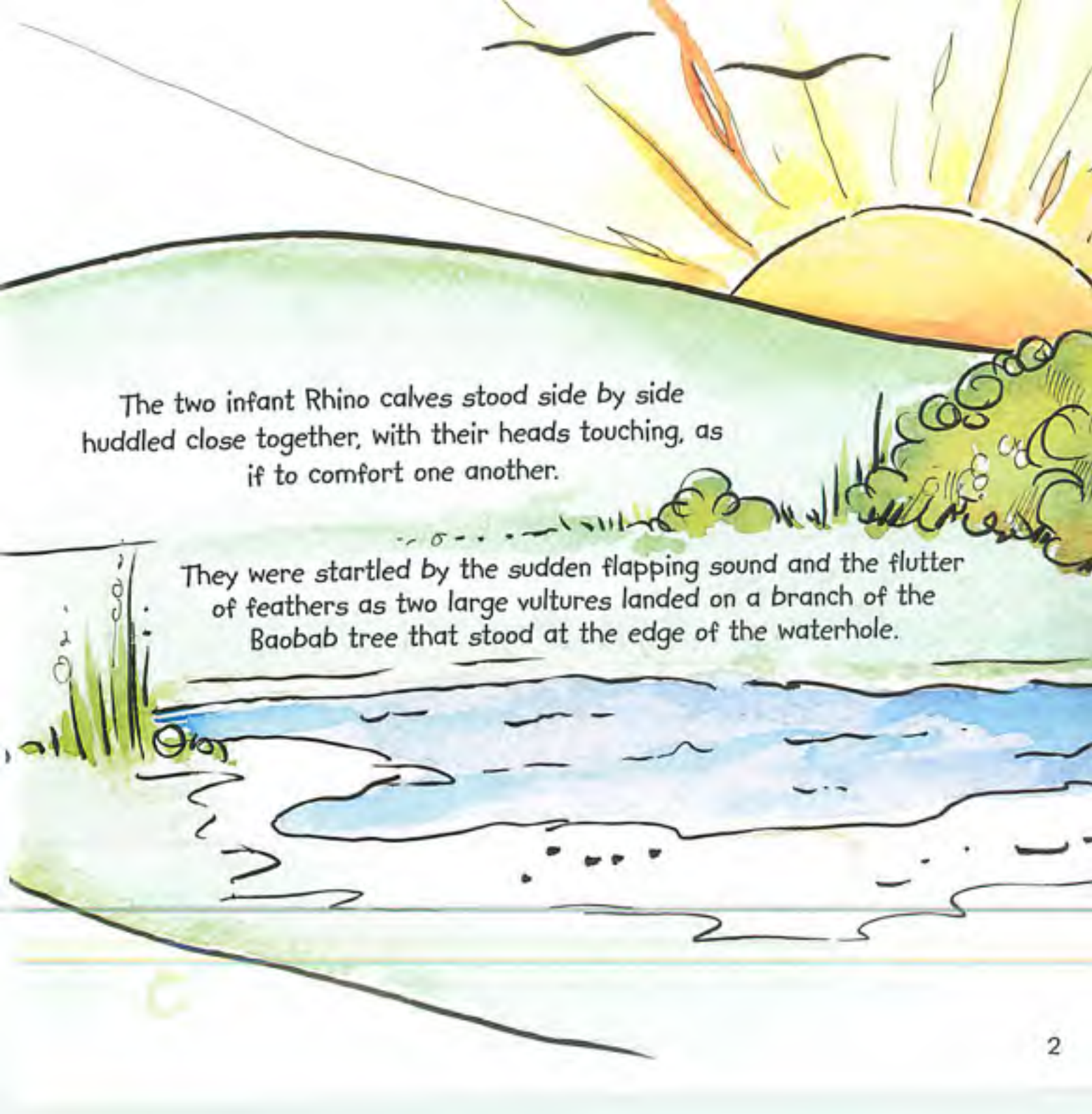
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Author: Lezulu



The dawn arrived early as the sun clawed its way into the African sky. It was mid-summer and somehow the air this morning seemed thick and tense.

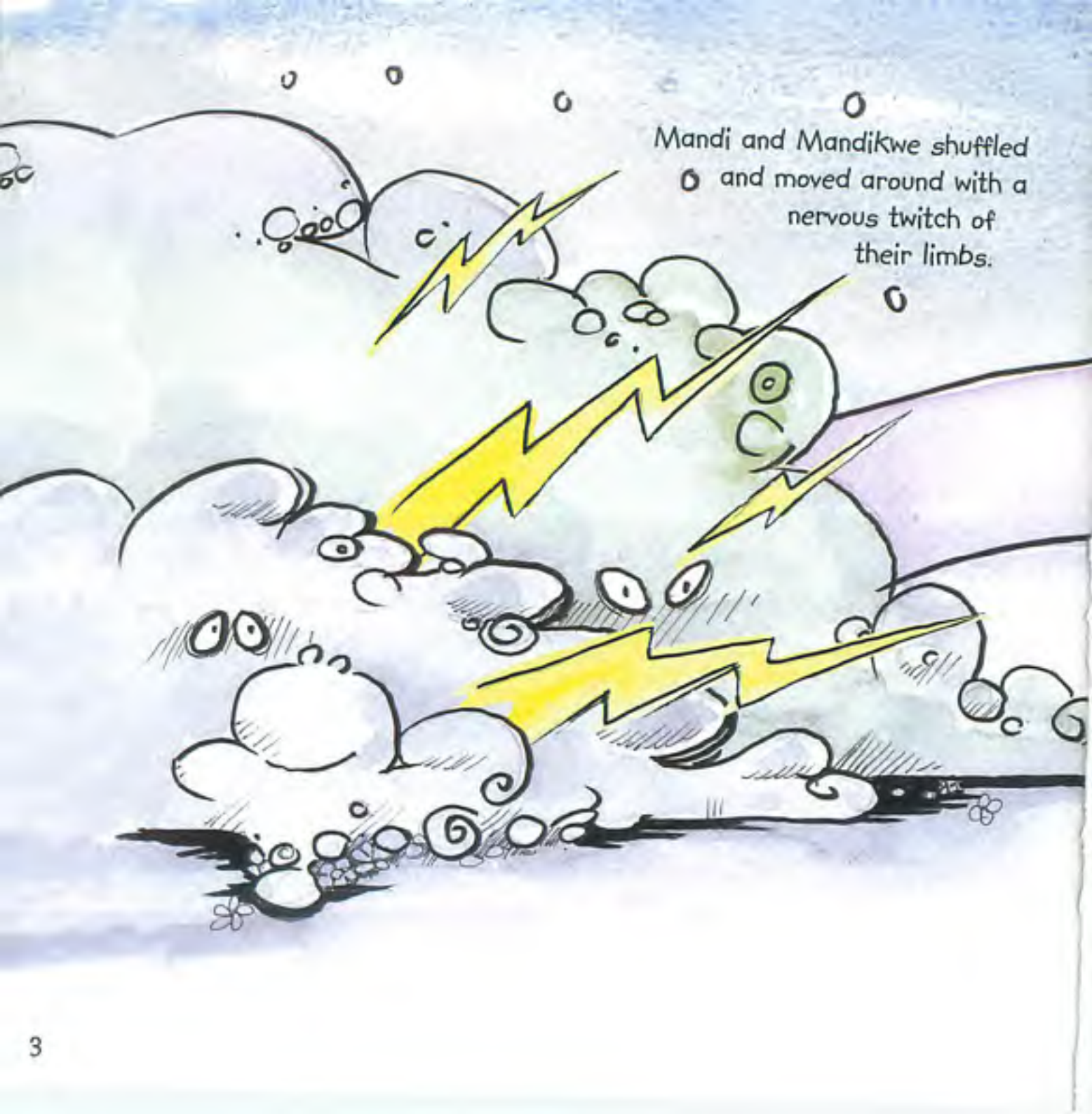





The two infant Rhino calves stood side by side huddled close together, with their heads touching, as if to comfort one another.

They were startled by the sudden flapping sound and the flutter of feathers as two large vultures landed on a branch of the Baobab tree that stood at the edge of the waterhole.

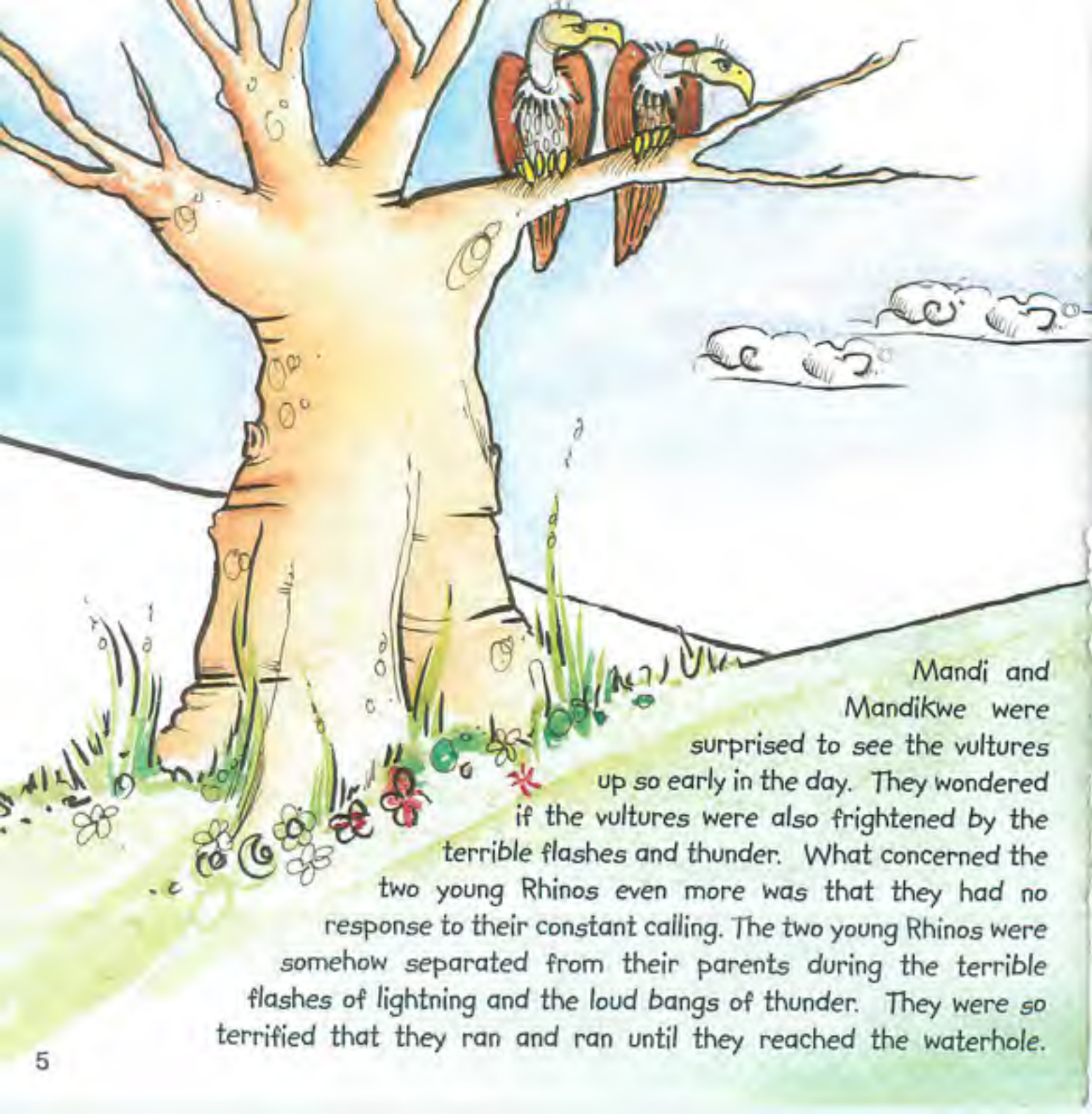
Mandi and Mandikwe shuffled
and moved around with a
nervous twitch of
their limbs.





They were both still in deep shock from the flashes of lightning and bolts of thunder that had ripped the silence of the dark African night sky, just before dawn.





Mandi and Mandikwe were surprised to see the vultures up so early in the day. They wondered if the vultures were also frightened by the terrible flashes and thunder. What concerned the two young Rhinos even more was that they had no response to their constant calling. The two young Rhinos were somehow separated from their parents during the terrible flashes of lightning and the loud bangs of thunder. They were so terrified that they ran and ran until they reached the waterhole.



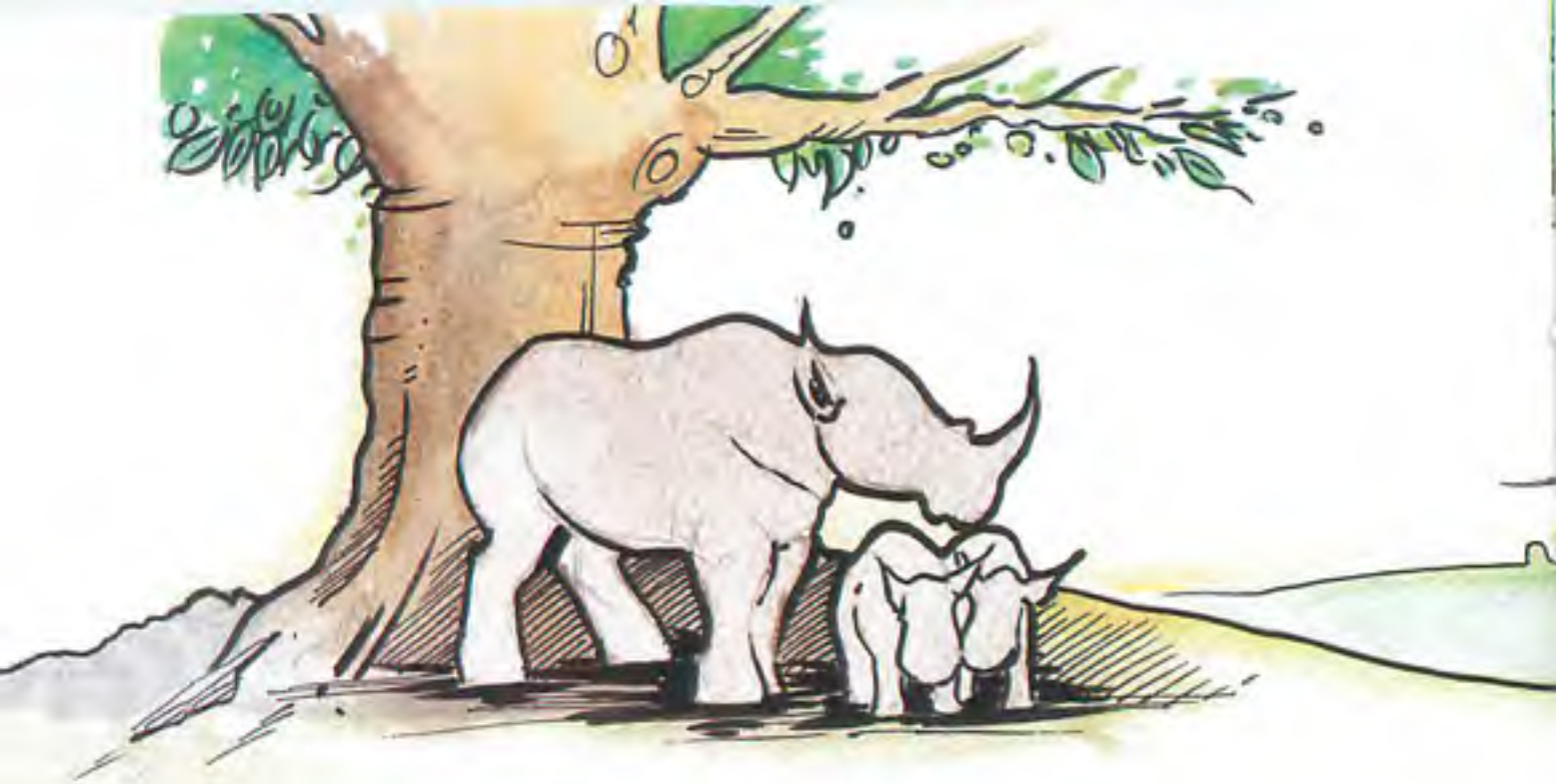
Today was going to be very different indeed, as they looked up and saw several more vultures circling in the sky above. They knew that the darkest hour in Africa is just before the dawn, and they were restless. The young Rhinos had been taught by their mother that if ever they were separated, or if any danger threatened them, they had to go straight to the waterhole. This was their place of safety.

Their mother had often found them there in the past four months. They loved to play and chase one another on the African Savannah.

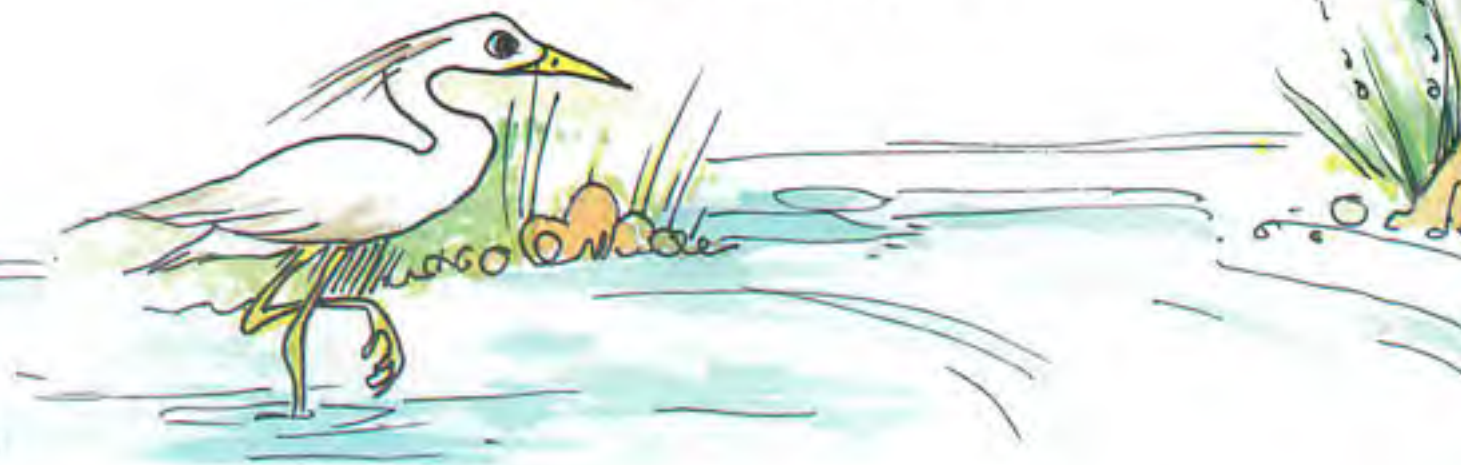
The summer rains had been good this year and the grass was green and lush with plenty to eat and the waterholes were full.







As the minutes turned to an hour they kept thinking about the many lessons their mother had taught them. She had taught them how to survive in Africa but still they were afraid and nervous.



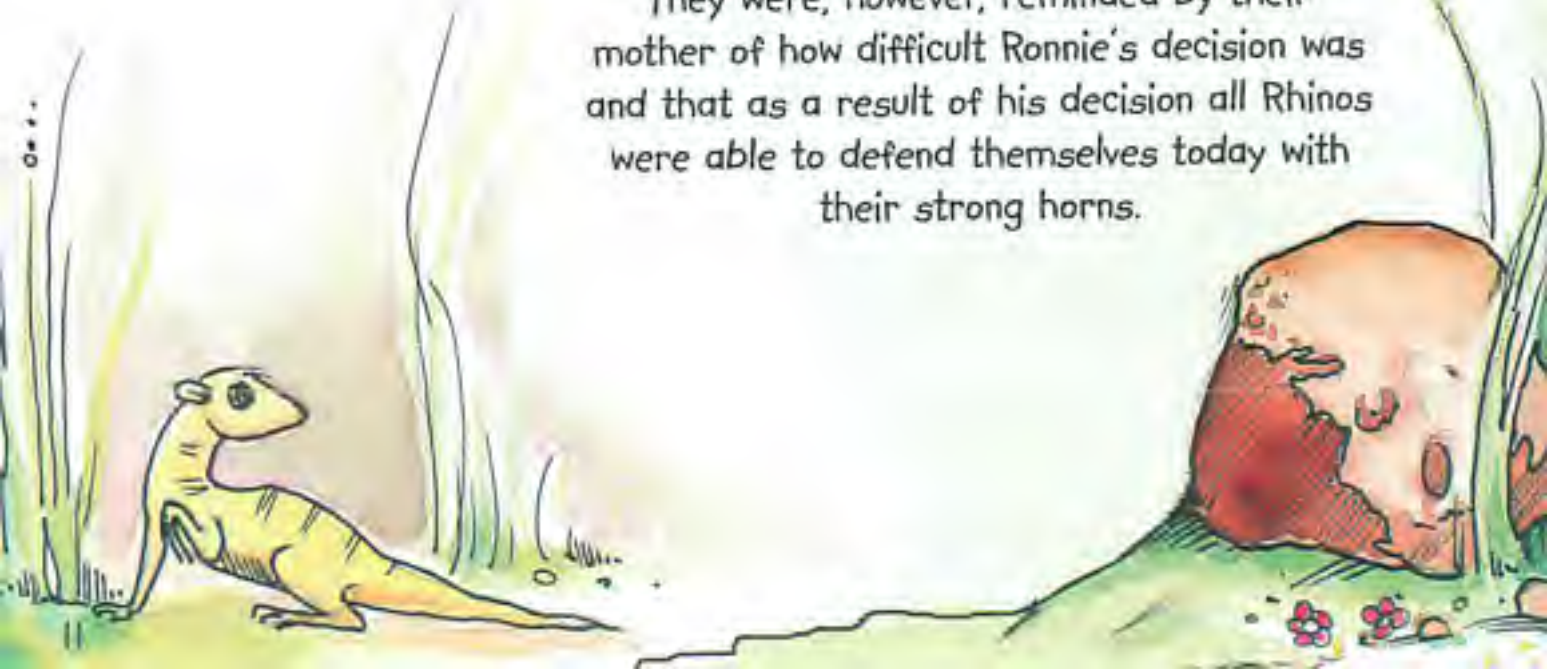
It was at this time of day that the leopards and lions would attack the weaker animals. Without the protection of their mother and her strong "horn" they would become easy prey to those predators.



Mandi remembered that it was at this exact same waterhole that their great, great Grandfather, Ronnie the Rhinoceros, had first chased off a lion with his horn. They had heard the tale of how Ronnie had obtained his horn from the Bumble Bee. The vultures would often chatter and gossip about all the details of how Billy the Bumble Bee had lost his sting...and Ronnie had grown a horn.

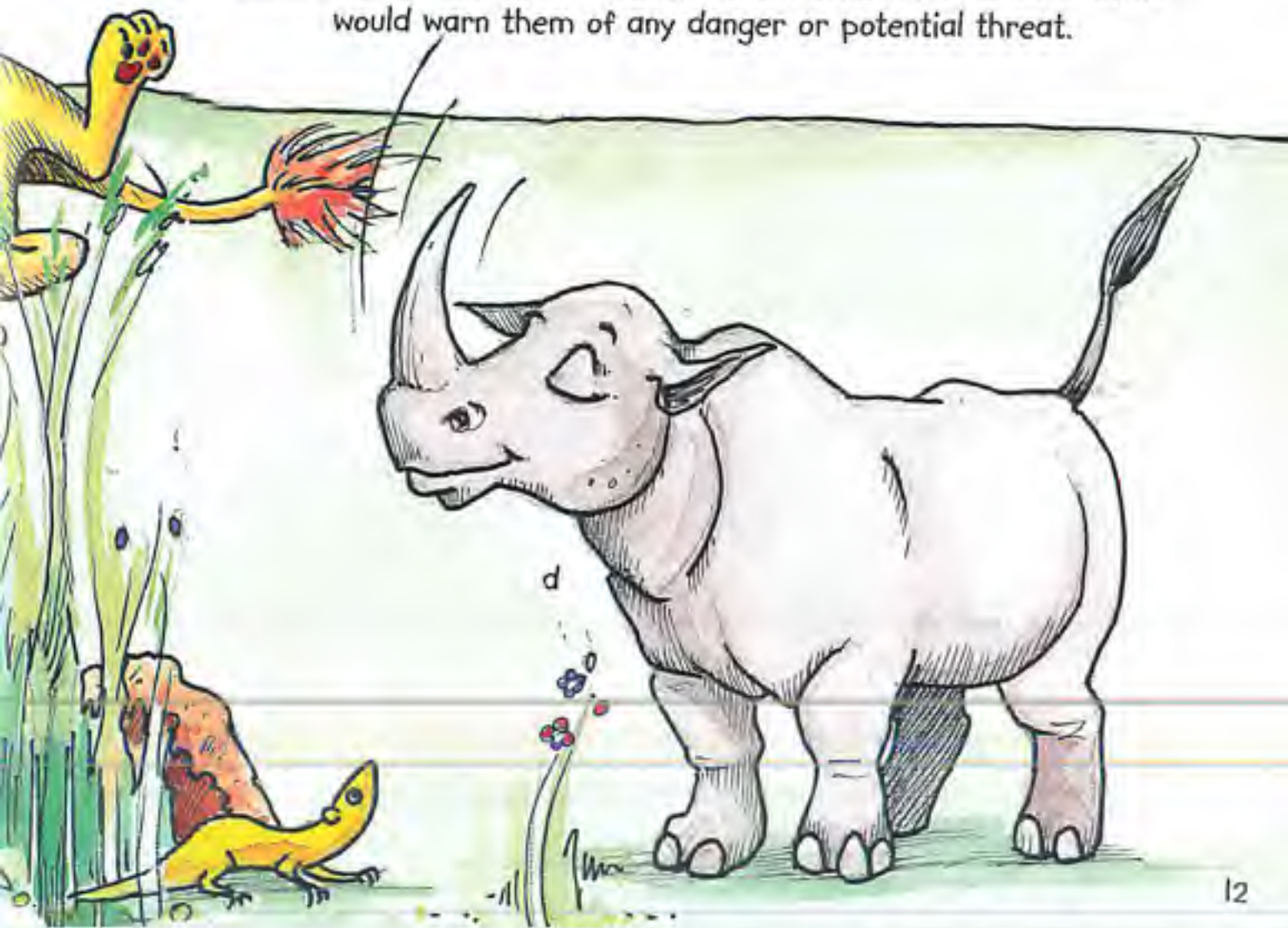


They were, however, reminded by their mother of how difficult Ronnie's decision was and that as a result of his decision all Rhinos were able to defend themselves today with their strong horns.



Unfortunately, they did not feel very strong and powerful right now. Their horns had not even begun to form yet. It would be at least 4 years before their horns would be grown and until they could defend themselves from the predators.

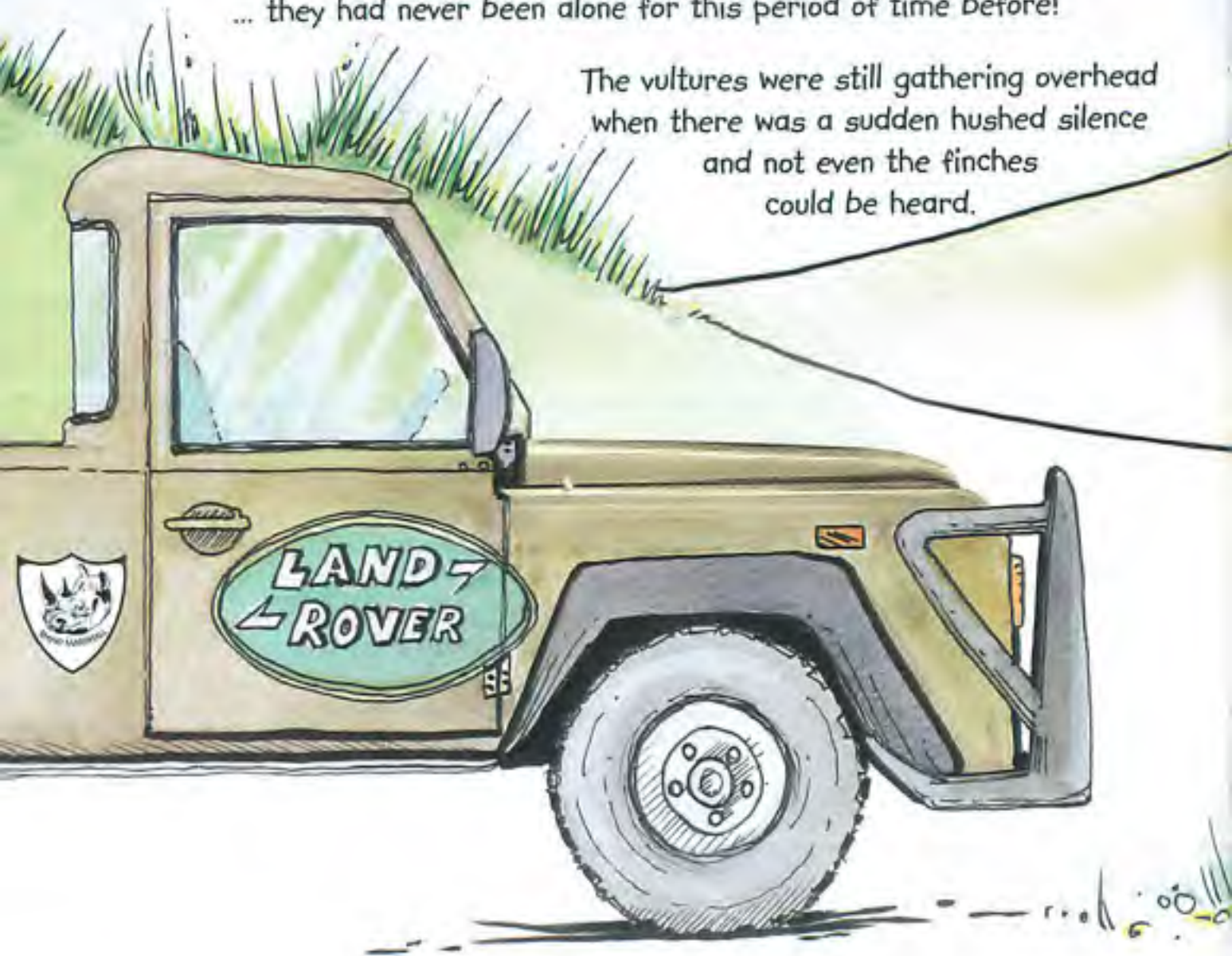
As a result of Ronnie's actions, all rhino's had been placed outside of the animal friendship circle forever. This meant that no other animals were allowed to befriend them ever. Not even the birds would warn them of any danger or potential threat.



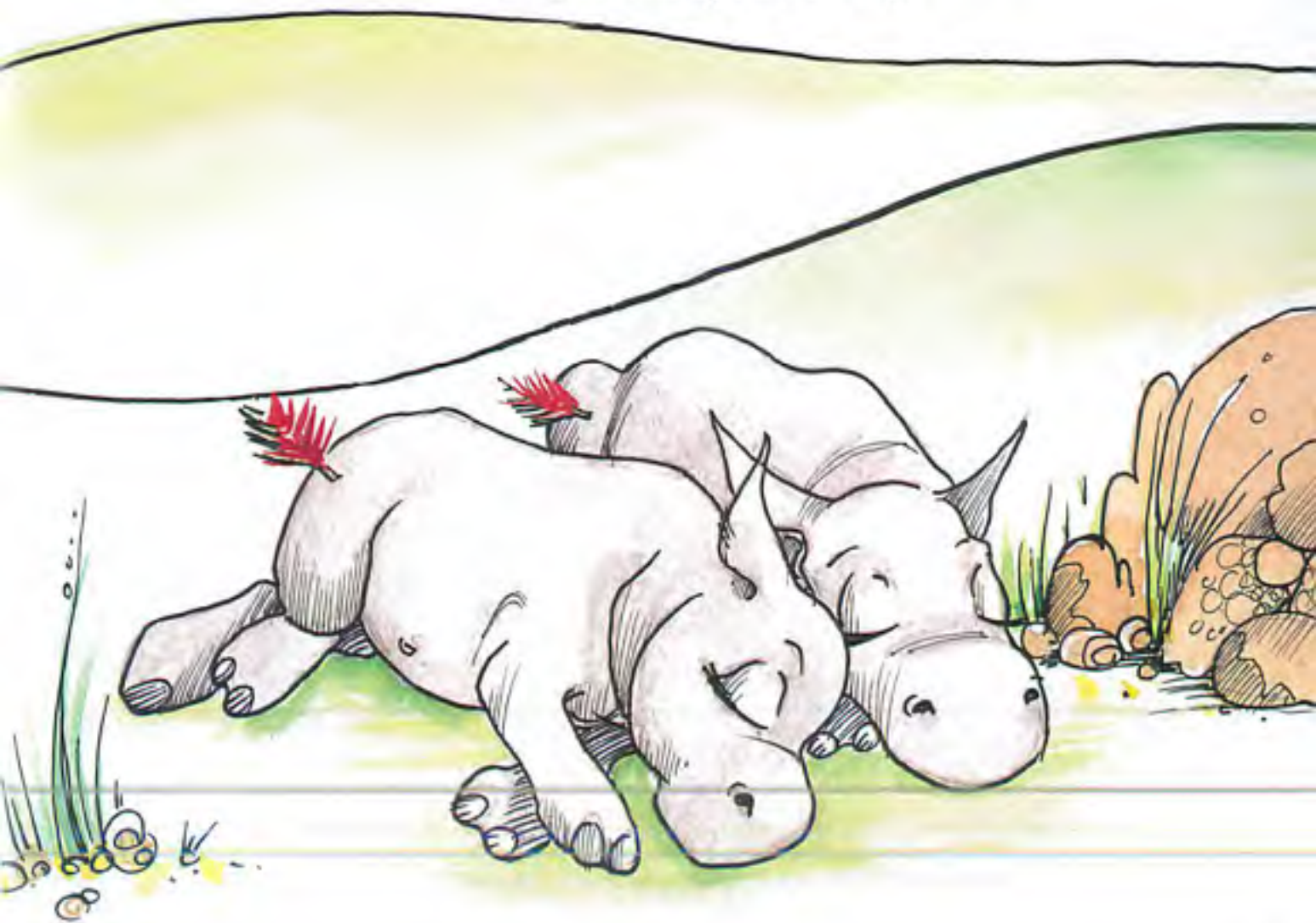
Mandi and Mandikwe became even more anxious as another hour passed and several more vultures had gathered in the sky above.

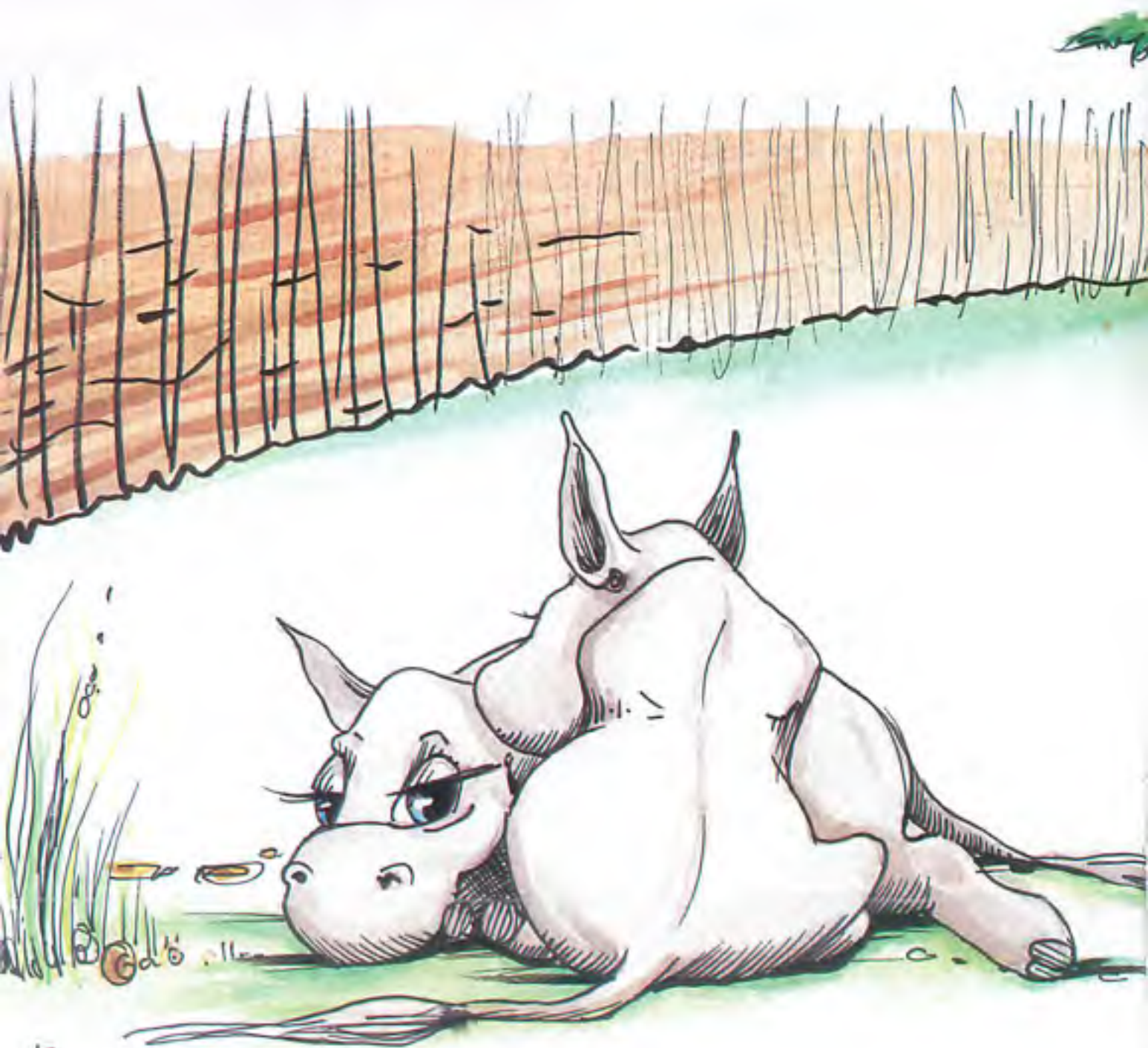
Where on earth could their mother and father be?
... they had never been alone for this period of time before!

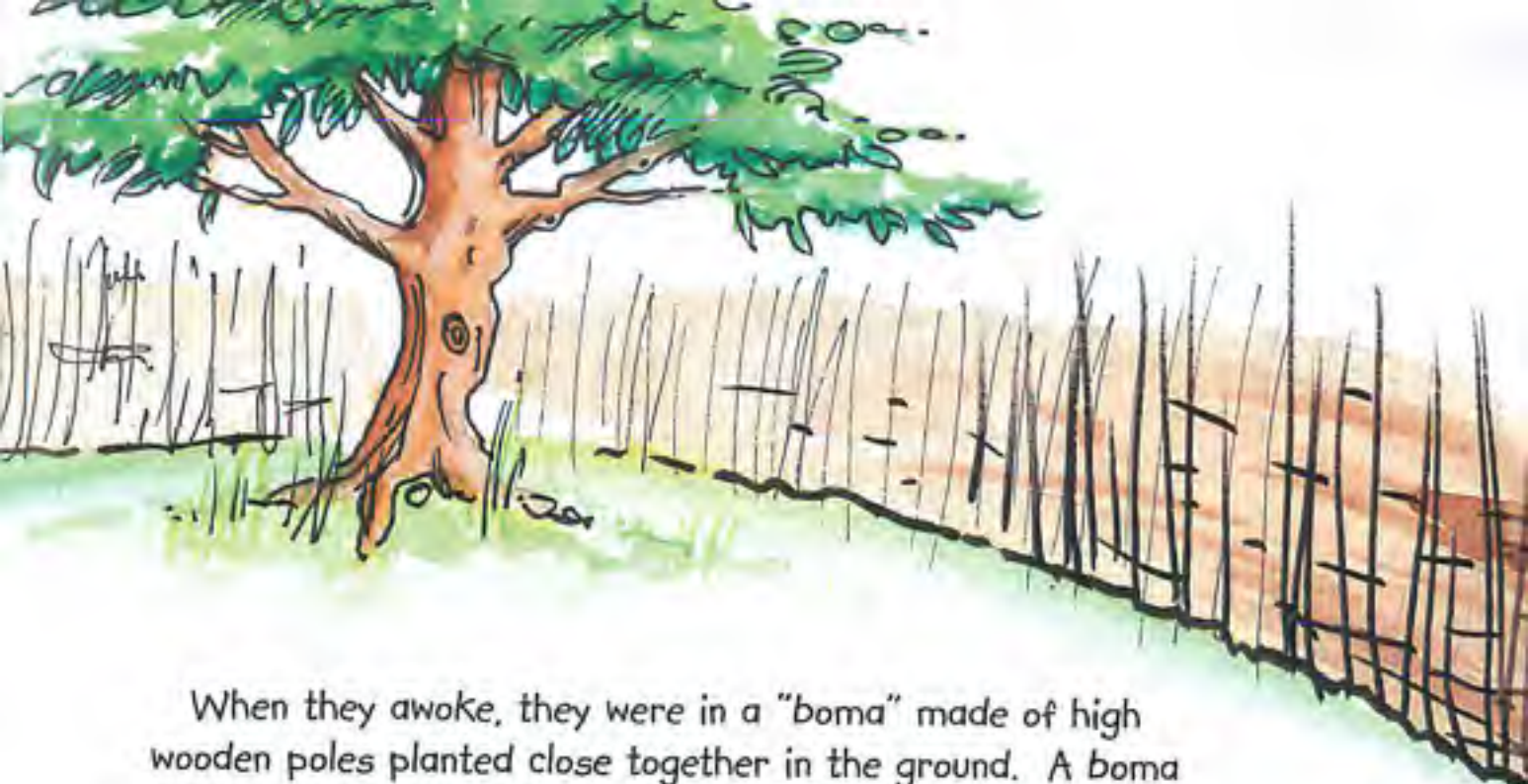
The vultures were still gathering overhead when there was a sudden hushed silence and not even the finches could be heard.



They sensed danger..... The next moment a dull thud broke the silence followed quickly by another. Both Mandi and Mandikwe felt a stinging sensation in their buttocks and almost immediately both slumped to their knees feeling very drowsy.



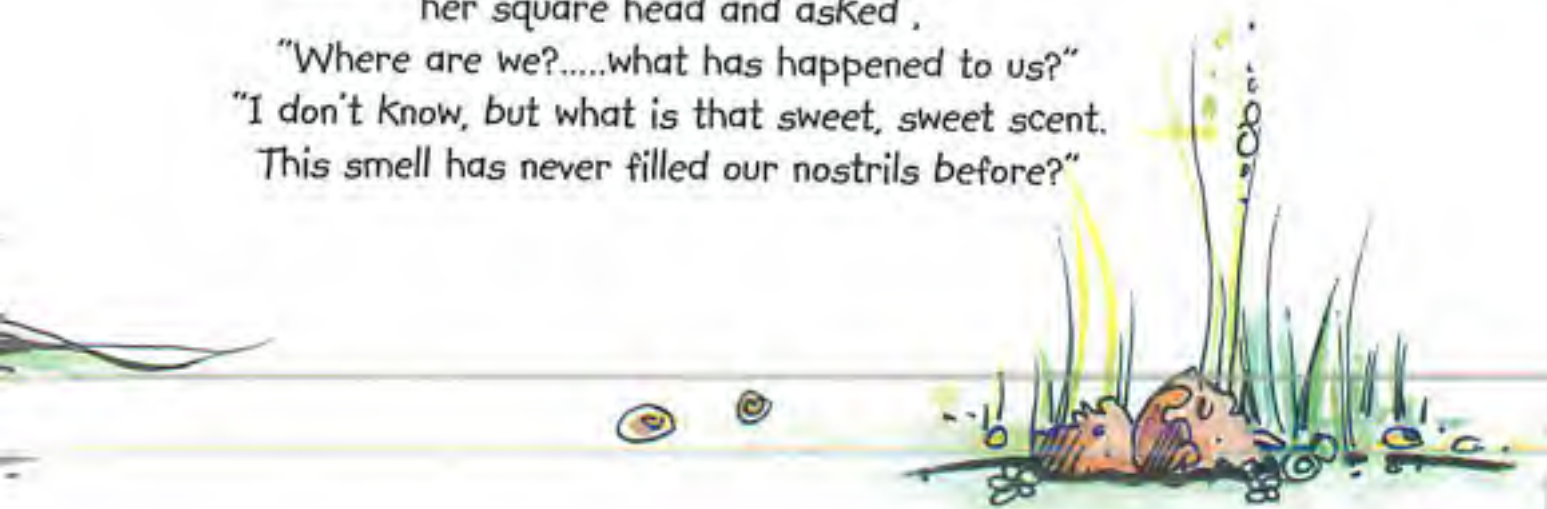




When they awoke, they were in a "boma" made of high wooden poles planted close together in the ground. A boma is the African name for a fenced wooden enclosure.

Mandi looked at Mandikwe, nudged him with her square head and asked,

"Where are we?.....what has happened to us?"
"I don't know, but what is that sweet, sweet scent. This smell has never filled our nostrils before?"



At that moment they both sensed the presence of another creature and as they looked up they saw "her". She was kneeling in the boma and she spoke to them both in a gentle whisper.

She reminded them of their mother. What they did not know is that Ruth was an expert in caring for "abandoned" or "orphaned" rhinos from the Rhino Marshalls









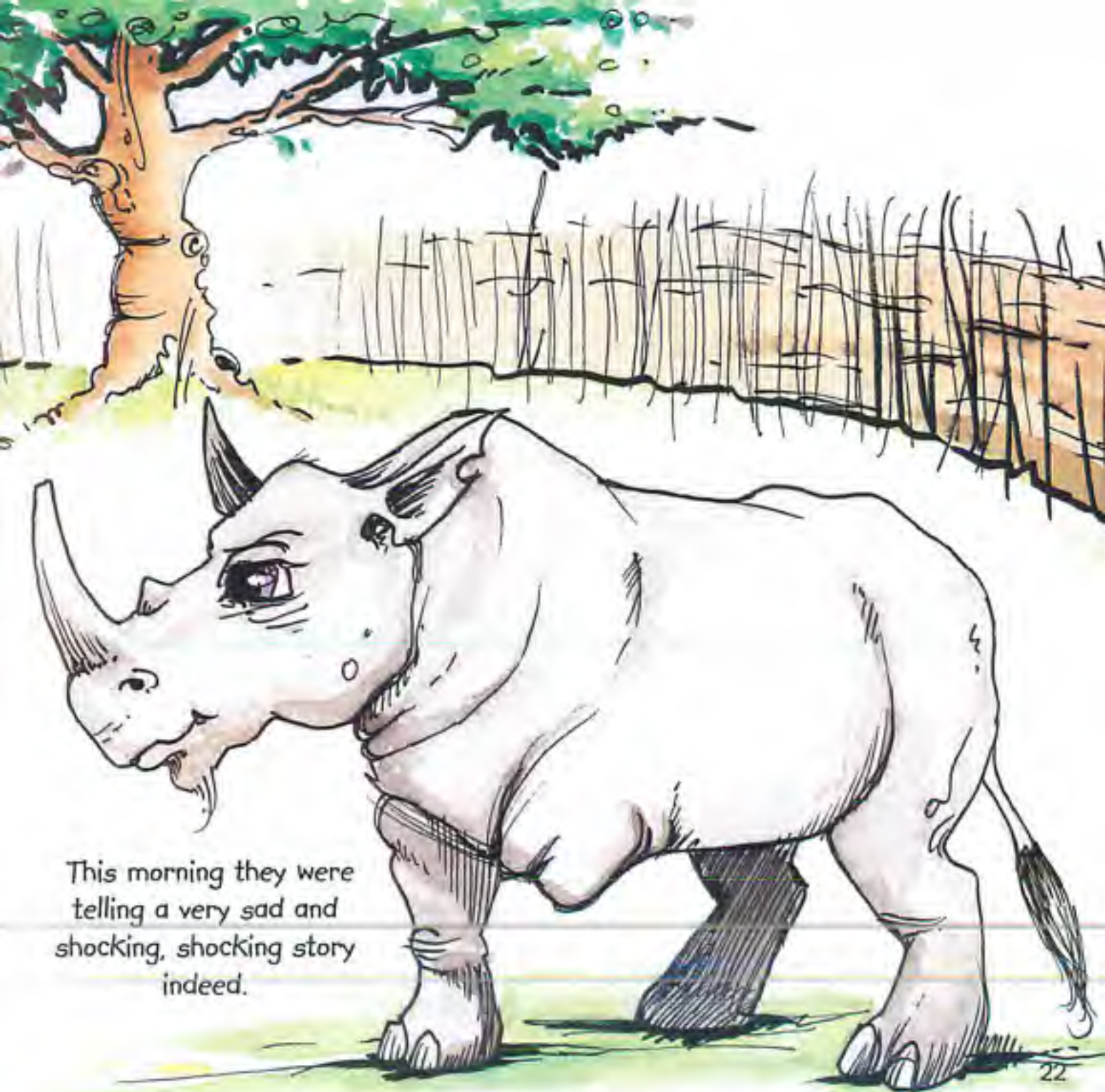
Over the next weeks and months they were fed warm milk and bales of fresh green grass and leaves every day. Why, for the first five weeks Ruth had cared for them and fed them through the night. She had even slept with them in the boma to comfort them and care for them. They really missed their mother though and wondered where she could be ?



One day they were introduced to another Rhino, who was also being cared for by the Rhino Marshalls. He was an adult male but he only had three legs. They were afraid to ask him why he only had three legs as he was often in pain and very grumpy most of the time. He reminded them of their father.

One morning however, while all three Rhinos were grazing on fresh bales of grass under the shady thorn tree, they overheard two vultures gossiping as they usually did.



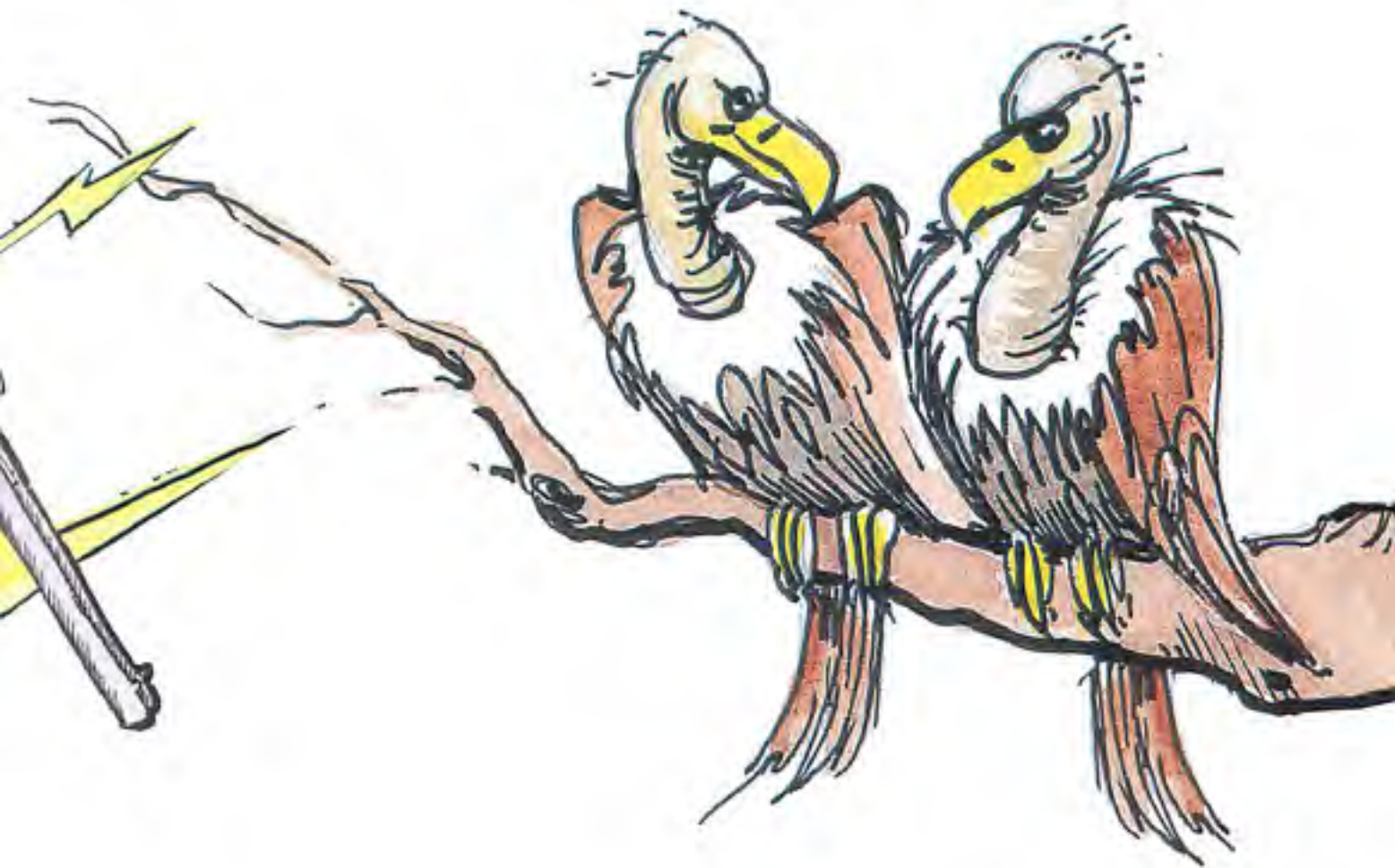


This morning they were
telling a very sad and
shocking, shocking story
indeed.



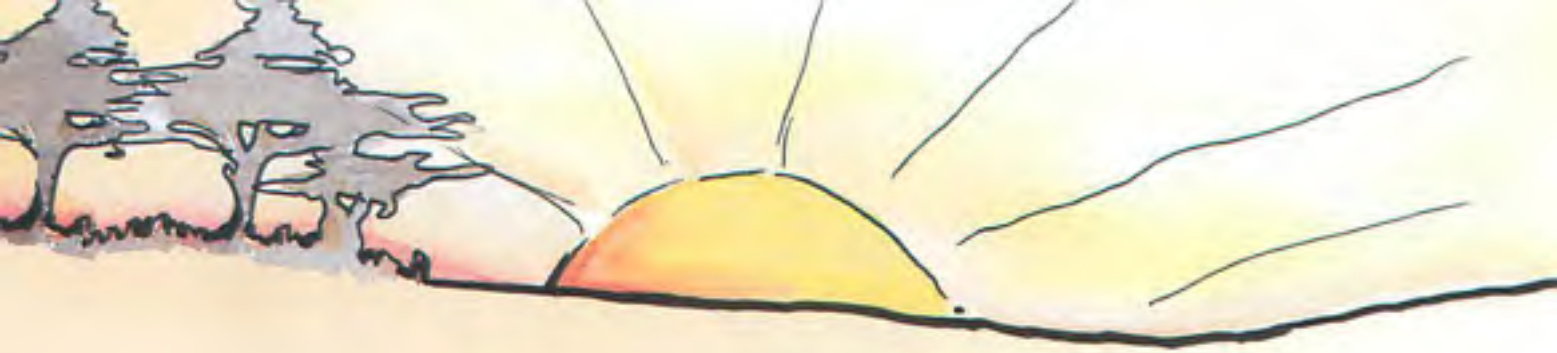
The vultures recalled that terrible evening when the lightning flashes and bangs of thunder separated Mandi and Mandikwe from their parents.

The thunder bolts and flashes of lightning were caused by the rifles of poachers that night and the bullets from the rifles had killed Mandi and Mandikwe's parents - both adult rhinos.



The vultures told of how Mandi and Mandikwe had not been shot by the poachers because they had not grown horns yet and were of no use or value to the poachers. The two had however been darted with tranquilizers by the marshalls and taken to a new place of safety.

They had now been drawn into a new circle of friends, the park marshalls and Ruth at "Rhino Marshalls" had not only taken them to a place of safety, but also taken them into their hearts.



The vultures were unaware of the Rhinos grazing in the shade of the tree as they continued to gossip.


Mandi looked at Mandikwe with a tear in her eye....
" But why did the poachers want to hunt the Rhinos only for their horns ? "she asked Mandikwe."

Old Three Legs", the grumpy old rhino cleared his throat and began to tell the young orphans the story:-









" It is said that many, many years ago a strong man from the East, who had defeated all the men who challenged him in a "strongman" competition had lied about the reason for his incredible strength and power.

He said that his strength came from the horns of Rhinos and that he ground the Rhino horn over his food like pepper.

After he had eaten his food spiced with Rhino horn, his power and strength would increase and he was able to defeat any man in a test of strength and power.

Because of the lie that he had told, men from all over the world still travel to Africa in search of Rhinos. When adult Rhinos are found with big strong horns, they are shot or trapped and are then killed to have only the horns removed. The carcasses of the slain animals are then left for the hyenas and vultures to feed on.". One Rhino horn sells for several thousand dollars to buyers from the East.

" Old Three Legs" told the painful story of how he had his front leg caught in a poacher's trap. He had been trapped for days and lucky for him, the Rhino Marshalls had saved him before the poachers could reach him. Unfortunately his leg was so badly injured that it had to be amputated just below his knee.

Mandi and Mandikwe were very fortunate rhinos indeed, they were saved just in time by the Marshalls. Now that they had a new circle of friends, they had a better chance of surviving in the African bush.

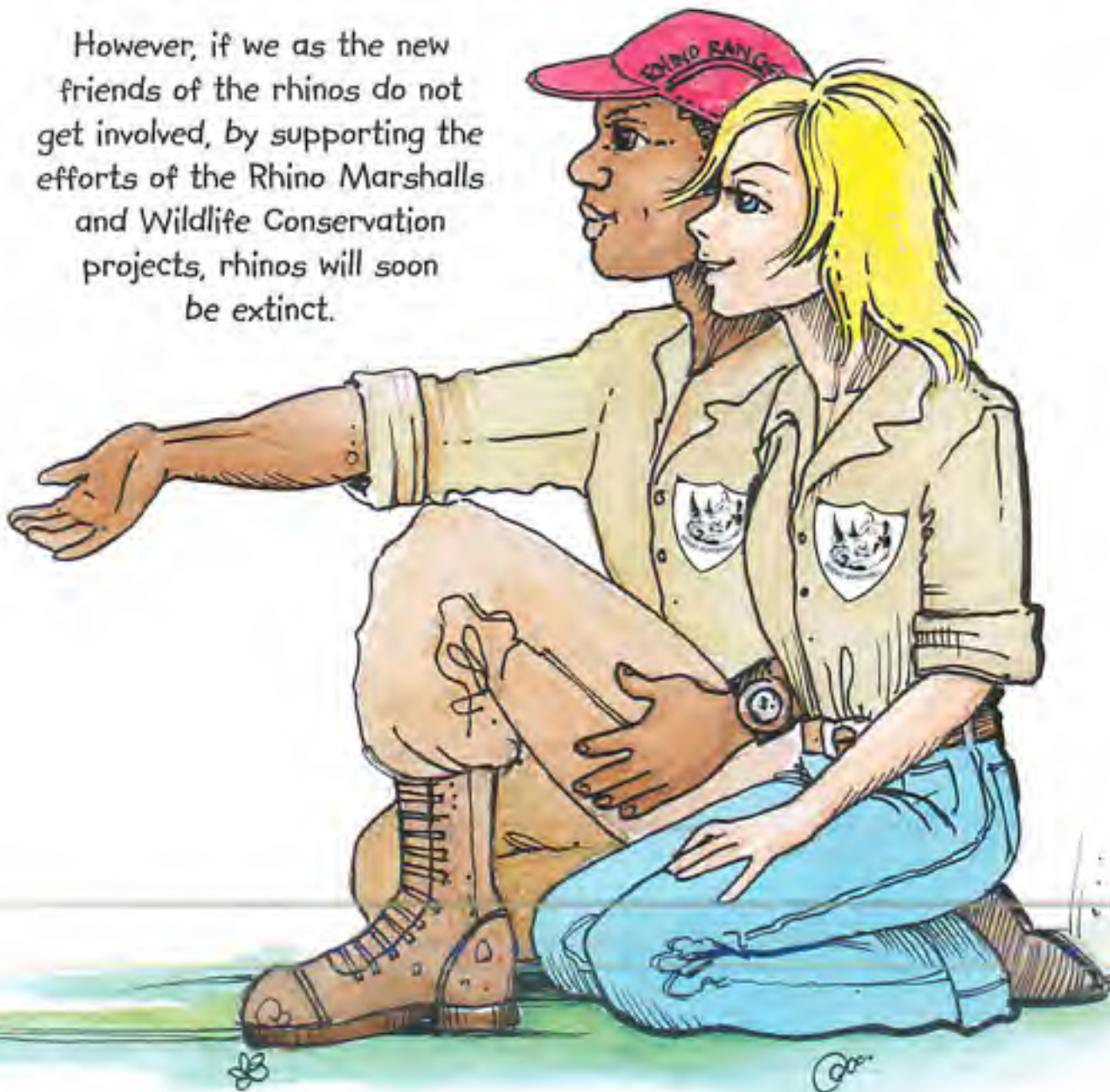
The two orphaned Rhinos, Mandi and Mandikwe, have a good chance of being placed back into the wild and once again will be able to roam the African plains. However, because of the evil minded and greedy poachers, this is only possible under the watchful eye of the Rhino Marshalls watching over them.

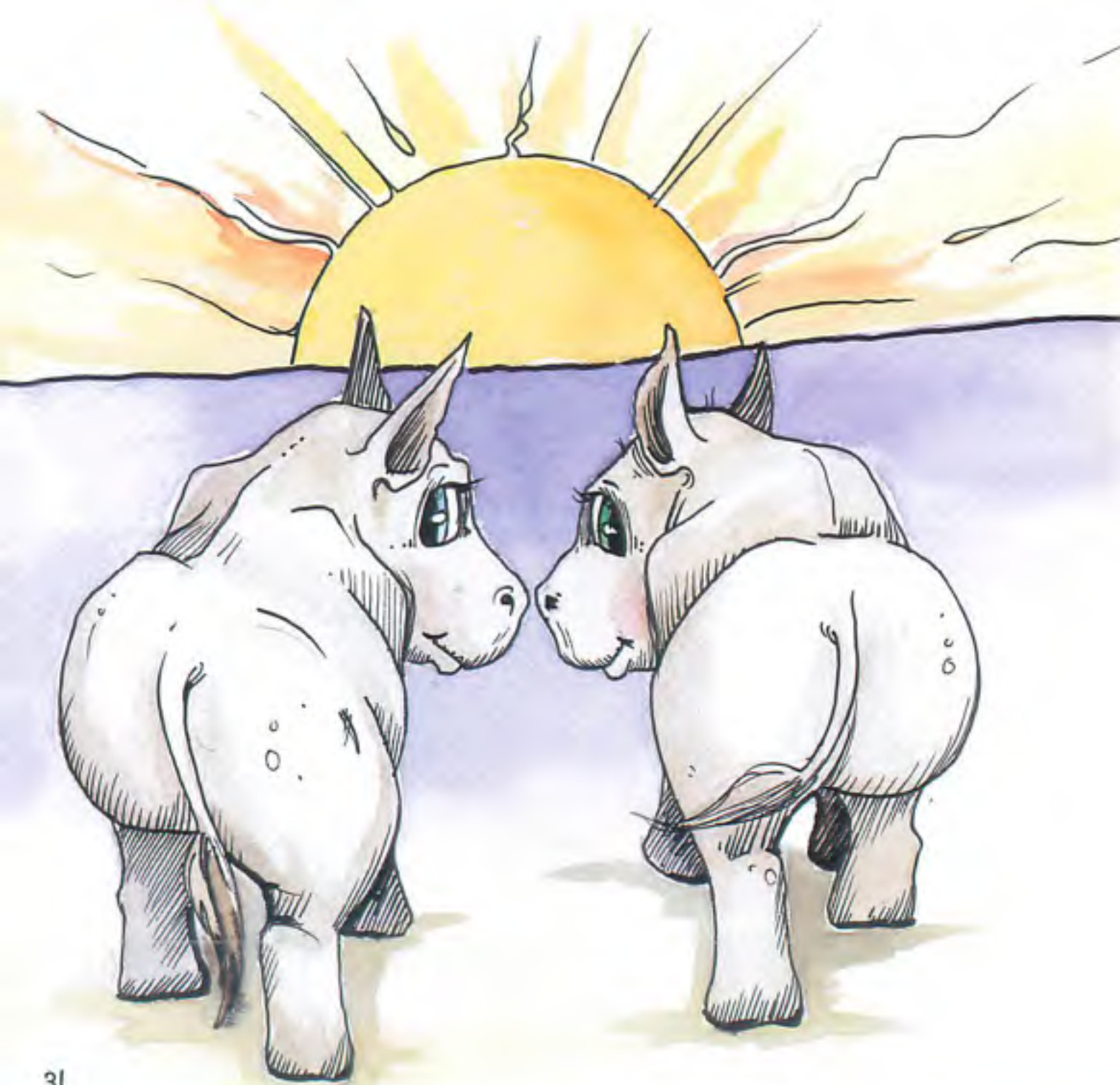
Rhinos are on the endangered species list and will be threatened with extinction, if not protected by mankind. Poachers still roam Africa in search of Rhinos and to this day we are horrified by ongoing reports of rhino poaching.



Ronnie the Rhino paid a very high price for his horn. He traded the companionship of his best friend Billy the Bumble Bee for his survival, independence and position of power in the animal kingdom.

However, if we as the new friends of the rhinos do not get involved, by supporting the efforts of the Rhino Marshalls and Wildlife Conservation projects, rhinos will soon be extinct.





THE RHINO MARSHALL'S ANTHEM

Ronnie the Rhino has
been very bad
He's kept the Bumble Bee's sting
And now he's feeling sad.

Today the Rhino Marshalls
have stepped in to save
the world he used to live in
The Marshalls have been brave.

Come join the Rhino Marshalls
To awaken a new dawn
The future of all Rhinos
Is today newly born

So now all of us must follow
In the footsteps that they've made
The future of all Rhinos
has forever now been laid.



Come join the Rhino Marshalls
To awaken a new dawn
The future of all Rhinos
Is today newly born

Together we can work
to stop the greedy men
To stop the Rhino poaching
For their precious horns they lend

Come join the Rhino Marshalls
To awaken a new dawn
The future of all Rhinos
Is today newly born

We urge you boys and girls, moms and dads
BECOME A RHINO FRIEND TODAY!
Join the Rhino Marshalls Club

Lezulu has adopted an orphan Rhino and has named him Ronnie!
You can follow Ronnie's progress and read all about his exciting adventures
with the Rhino Marshalls on the Lezulu Website: www.lezulu.com

Proceeds from this book go directly to caring for Ronnie and other
orphaned Rhinos, like Mandi and Mandikwe, under the care and
protection of the RHINO MARSHALLS.

Membership application forms to Rhino Marshalls Club and
fun Rhino Marshalls memorabilia like Caps and T- Shirts
and other outdoor kit can be ordered via our

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