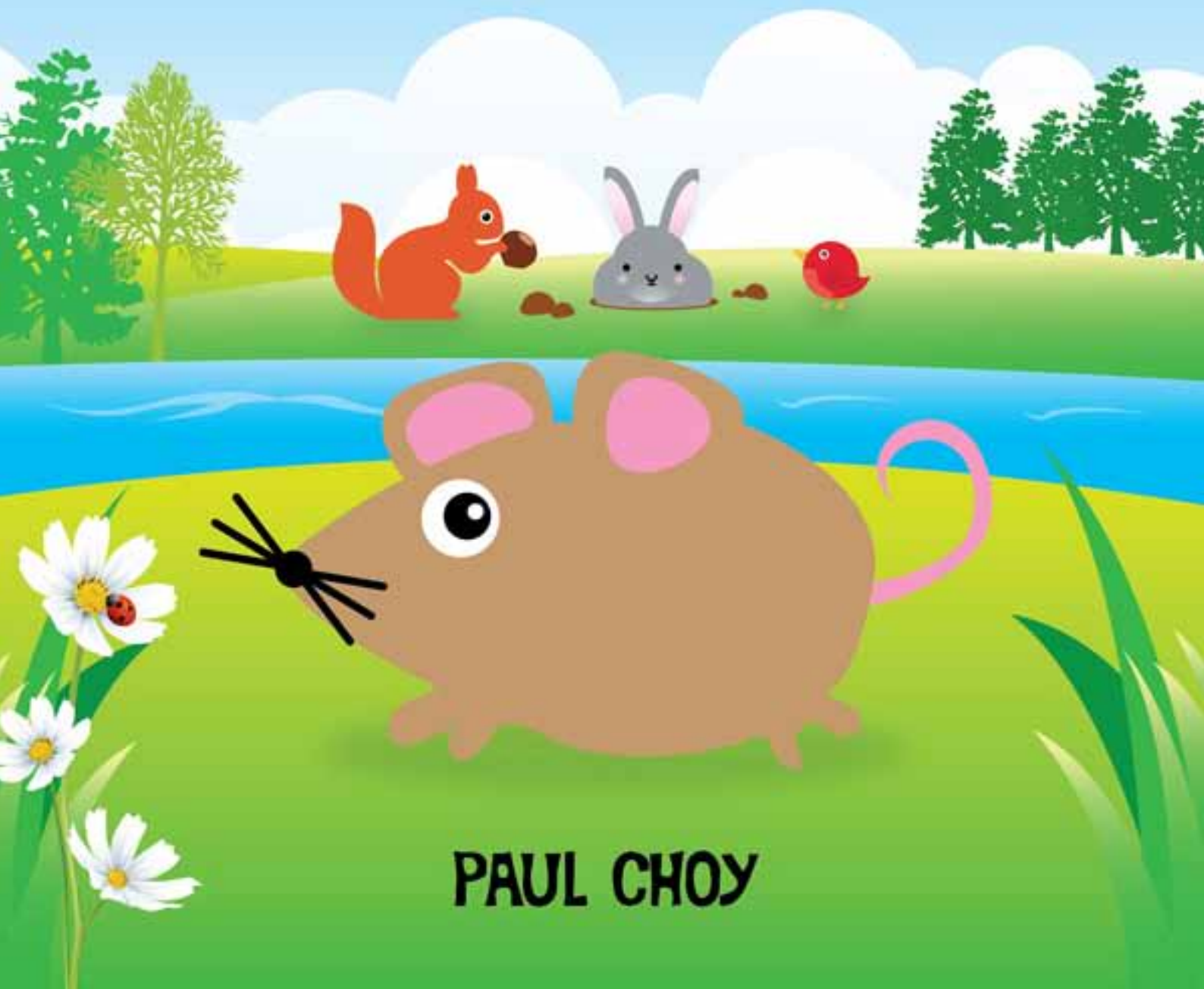


THE MOUSE THAT SHOULD...



PAUL CHOY

The Mouse That Should
Second Edition
Paul Choy



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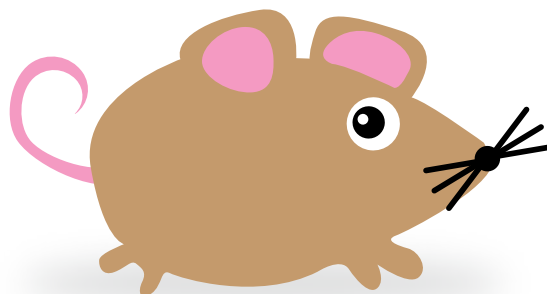
**For all the children
who read this story.
Don't ever grow up.**

**Thank you for downloading this short story, part of my
Modern Fables series.**

Although I wrote the stories in the Modern Fables series for children, they offer a message that has meaning and resonance for all of us, young and old. After all, the simplest wisdom is often seen through the eyes of children.

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About the Author

For many years of my life, I had one single focus: achievement.

Whether that achievement was in business, running a busy International company; or in sport, winning four World Karate Championships, while coaching thousands of people to fitness success.

But, in 2010, I decided to simplify my life and focus on the things that really matter. I moved from the UK to the beautiful island of Mauritius in the Indian Ocean.

Today, I lead a quiet life. I spend time with my family. I walk on the whitest sands and surf and dive in the bluest waters. And I enjoy creative pursuits like writing stories like this.

I actively encourage questions or feedback and would love to hear your thoughts, so feel free to get in touch at www.paulchoy.com.



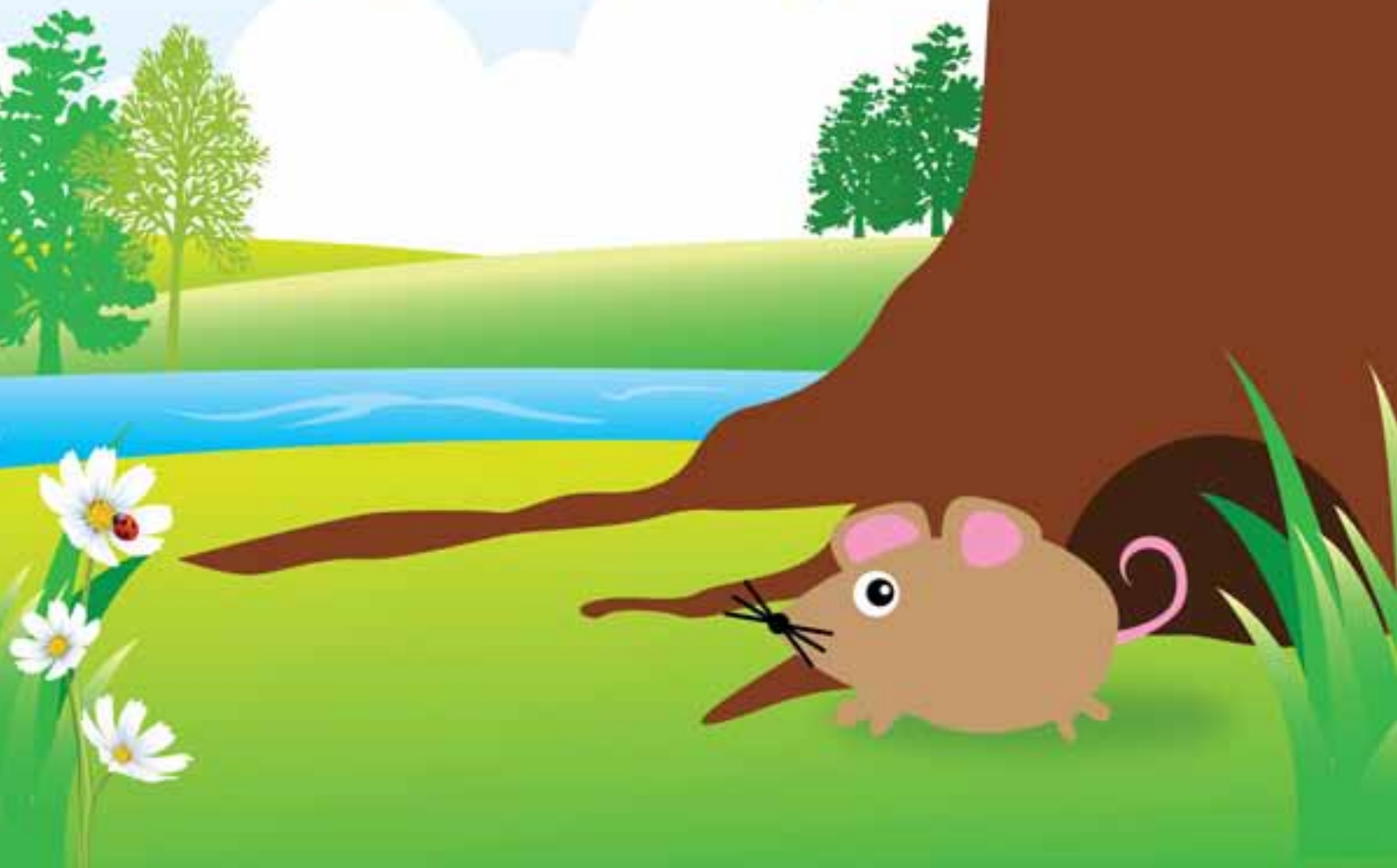
**This is the story of a little mouse
who learned that he should never
leave for tomorrow, the things he
could do today.**



There was once a little mouse who lived in a little hole. The little hole was in a little tree, and the little tree was in a little wood.

Summer was always such a wonderful time in the little wood. The sun would shine brightly in the sky, bringing warmth and light to everything below. Colourful flowers of all shapes and sizes would spring up from every nook and cranny, and the water in the little stream would sparkle and twinkle in the sunlight that beamed through the leaves in the trees above.

It was enough to put a smile on the little faces of all the animals who lived in the wood, especially Little Mouse, who just loved the summer time.



Without doubt, Little Mouse's favourite summer pastime was lazing away the warm days, snug in his little hole, watching all the creatures go about their busy lives. There would always be such a buzz of activity, with everyone coming and going, taking care of all sorts of important jobs and chores.



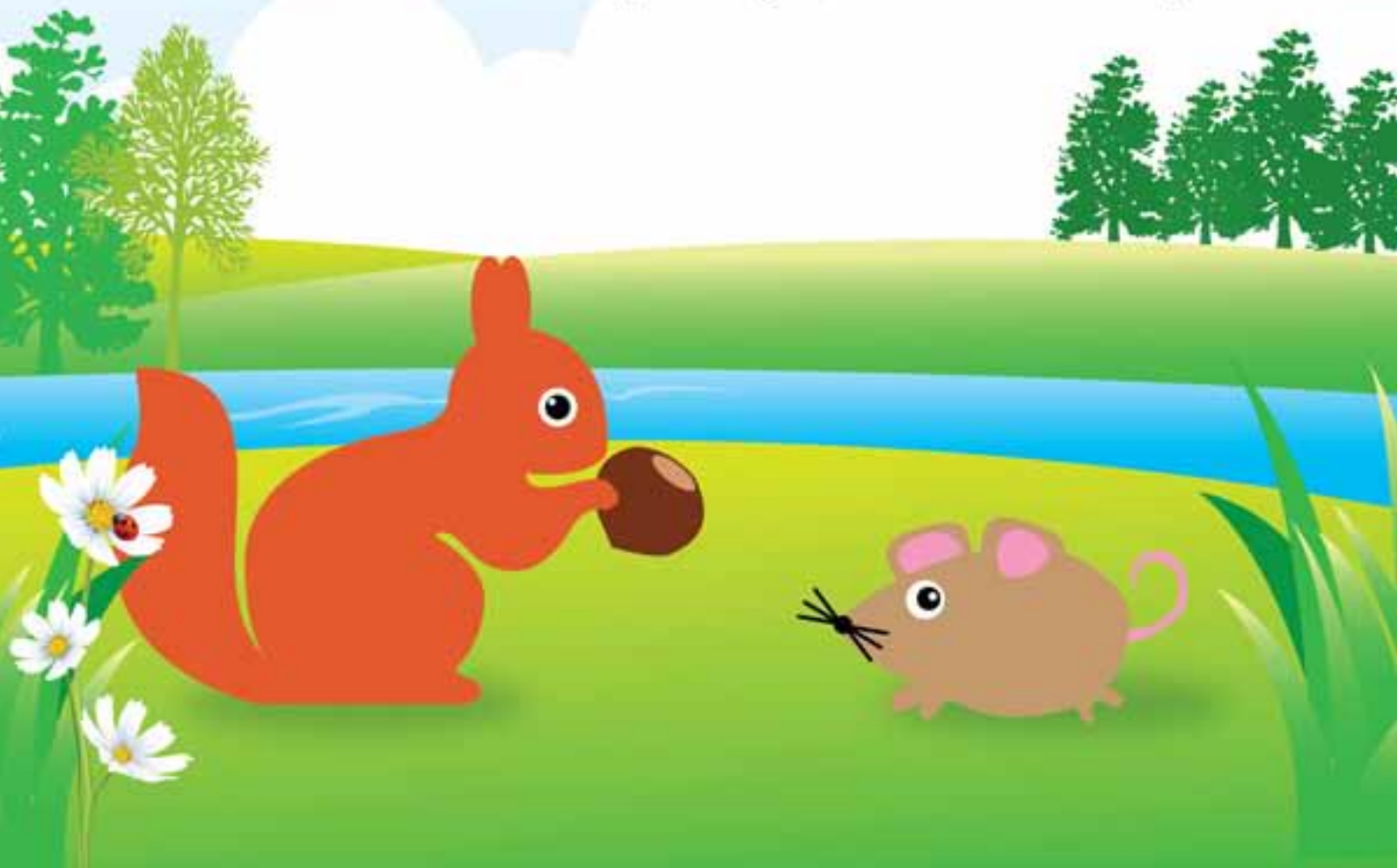
It was on just such a lazy day that Little Mouse noticed a squirrel running back and forth, back and forth, scurrying between his home and the field just beyond the edge of the wood. The squirrel stopped every now and then to bury something in the ground.

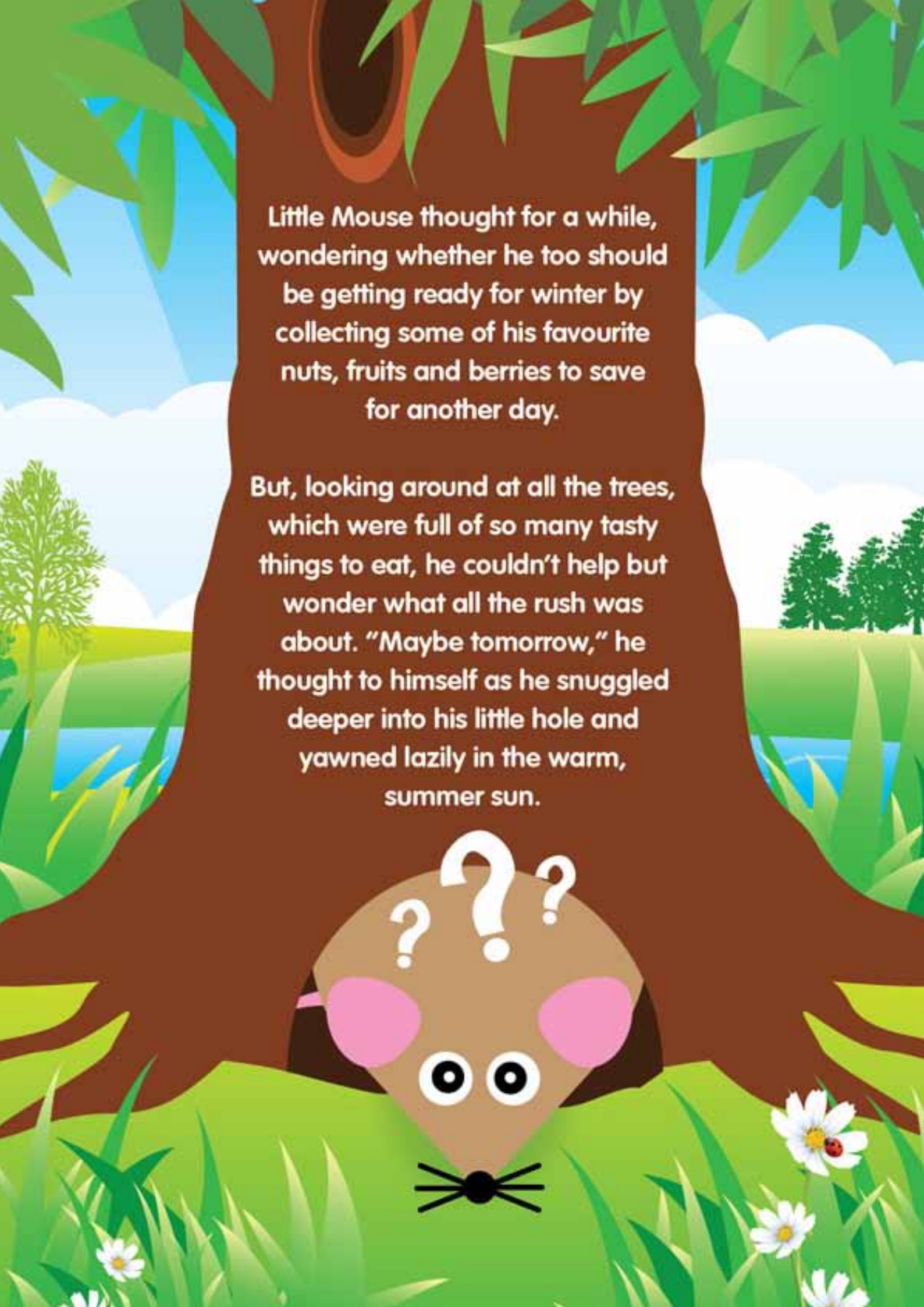
“What are you doing, Mr Squirrel?” called out Little Mouse, curious as to what the squirrel was up to.

“I am collecting nuts,” replied Mr Squirrel, twitching his little squirrel nose sharply, slightly annoyed at being interrupted.

“Why?” asked Little Mouse. It was such a nice day, after all – much too nice to be collecting nuts.

“For the winter, of course, so I have plenty to eat when the cold weather arrives,” said Mr Squirrel, as if this was the most obvious thing in the world. And, with a swish of his bushy tail, he was off to collect more nuts to bury, saving them for another day.





Little Mouse thought for a while, wondering whether he too should be getting ready for winter by collecting some of his favourite nuts, fruits and berries to save for another day.

But, looking around at all the trees, which were full of so many tasty things to eat, he couldn't help but wonder what all the rush was about. "Maybe tomorrow," he thought to himself as he snuggled deeper into his little hole and yawned lazily in the warm, summer sun.

Soon, Little Mouse was startled from his daydreams by a rustling noise outside his little hole. Looking out to see what the commotion was, he saw a bird flying busily back and forth, back and forth, between her nest and the soft woodland floor.

“What are you doing, Mrs Bird?” called out Little Mouse, wondering what the bird was in such a hurry for.

“I am collecting leaves and twigs to repair my nest,” replied Mrs Bird, flapping her wings, more than a little surprised at such a silly question.

“Why?” asked Little Mouse. It was such a nice day, after all – much too nice to be collecting twigs.

“For the winter, of course, so I have somewhere nice and dry to sleep when the cold weather arrives,” said Mrs Bird, as if this was the most obvious thing in the world. And, with a flick of her feathery tail, she was away to find some soft moss to use as a comfy mattress for her nest.



Looking around his little hole, Little Mouse wondered whether he too should be busy getting ready for winter, repairing all the holes and cracks in the little tree.

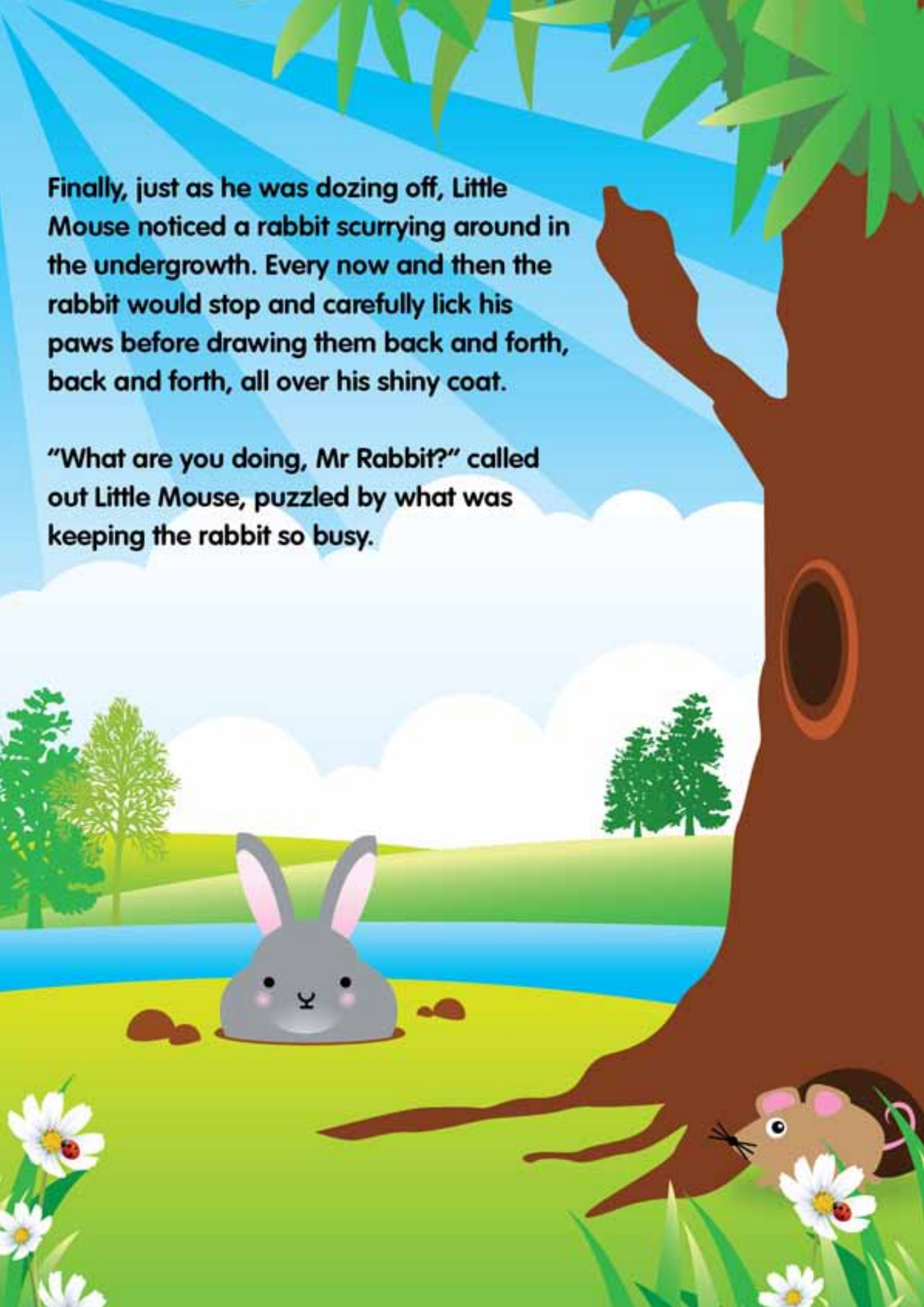
But, feeling the warmth of the sunlight streaming through the holes, he couldn't help but wonder what the rush was about. "Maybe tomorrow," he thought to himself as he snuggled deeper into his little hole, stretching out his little mousey paws to bathe in the warmth of the summer sun.



**MAYBE
TOMORROW**

Finally, just as he was dozing off, Little Mouse noticed a rabbit scurrying around in the undergrowth. Every now and then the rabbit would stop and carefully lick his paws before drawing them back and forth, back and forth, all over his shiny coat.

“What are you doing, Mr Rabbit?” called out Little Mouse, puzzled by what was keeping the rabbit so busy.



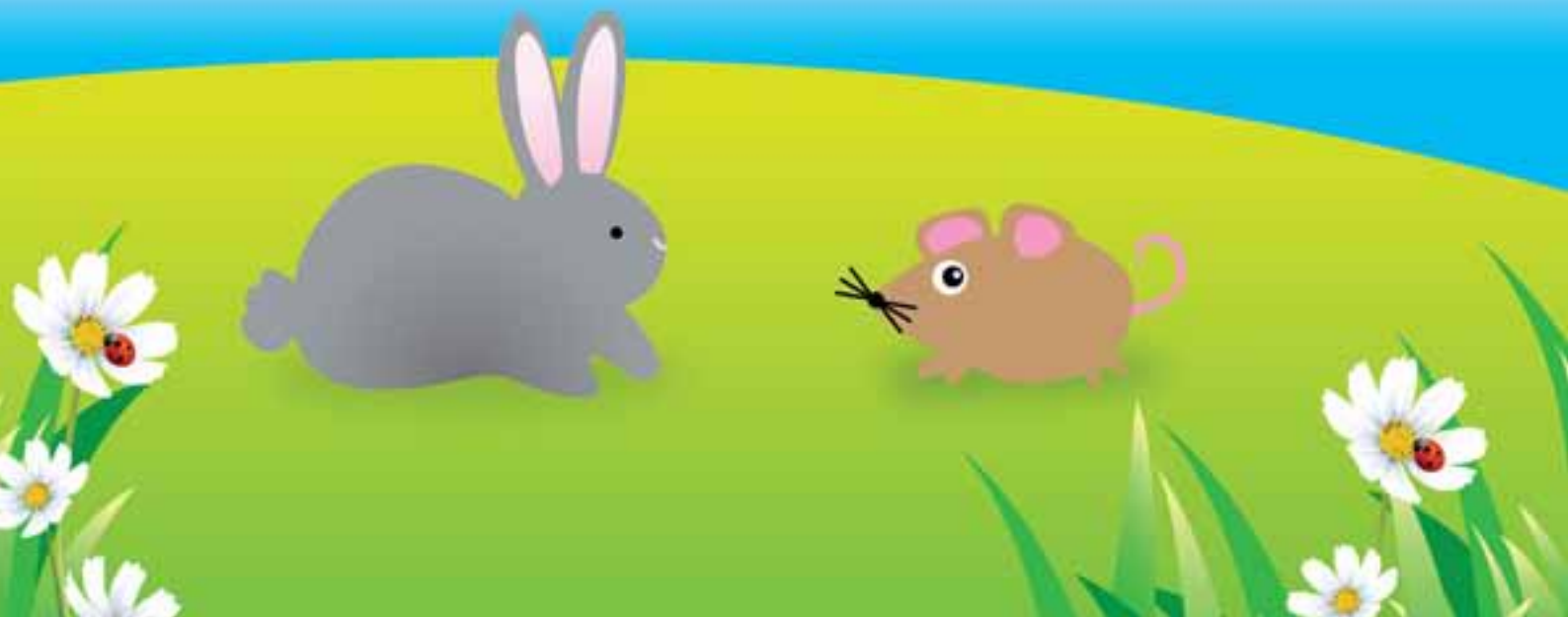
"I'm cleaning my fur," replied the rabbit, wagging his bunny tail to make it all fluffy, much too busy to give a longer explanation.

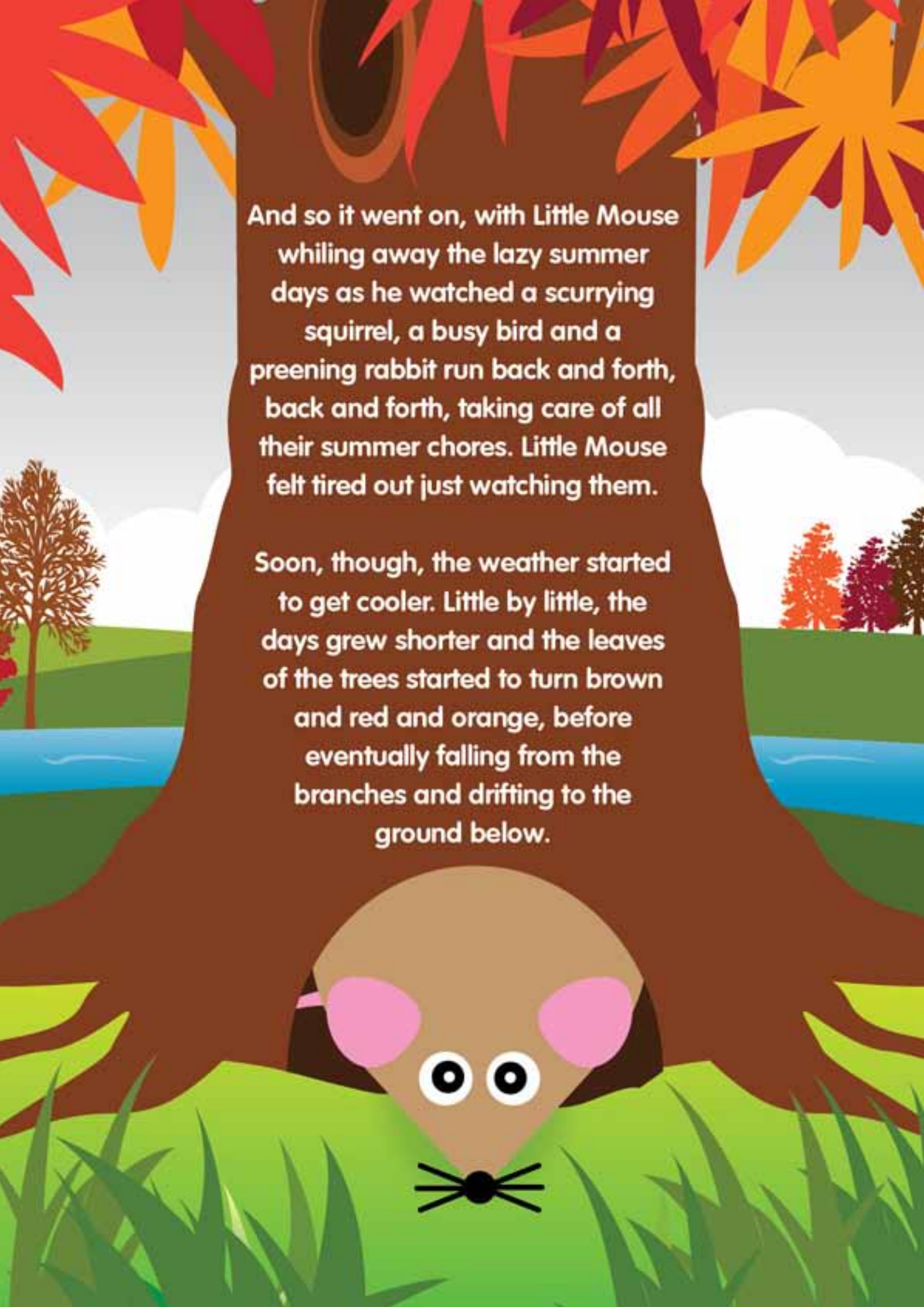
"Why?" asked Little Mouse. It was such a nice day, after all – much too nice to waste cleaning your fur.

"For the winter, of course, so my fur will keep me warm when the cold weather arrives," said Mr Rabbit, as if this was the most obvious thing in the world. Then he hopped away to find somewhere quiet to finish cleaning his coat without being asked questions by a nosey little mouse.

Looking at his own fur, which was full knots and tangles, Little Mouse wondered whether he too should be spending some time looking after his scraggly little coat.

But, having seen how much effort it took Mr Rabbit to keep his coat clean, Little Mouse couldn't help but wonder what the rush was about. **"Maybe tomorrow,"** he thought to himself as he closed his little mouse eyes for a well-deserved afternoon nap.





And so it went on, with Little Mouse
whiling away the lazy summer
days as he watched a scurrying
squirrel, a busy bird and a
preening rabbit run back and forth,
back and forth, taking care of all
their summer chores. Little Mouse
felt tired out just watching them.

Soon, though, the weather started
to get cooler. Little by little, the
days grew shorter and the leaves
of the trees started to turn brown
and red and orange, before
eventually falling from the
branches and drifting to the
ground below.



Autumn quickly turned to winter. The wind began to howl through the trees, then the snow fell from the sky above, covering all the trees and the hard, frozen ground in a fluffy white blanket.

All the animals, who just a short while ago had been hard at work in the wood, quickly headed back to their little homes, warm and safe from the cold and damp outside.

It wasn't long before Little Mouse felt his tummy starting to rumble, but the trees were bare and he had nothing tasty to eat. The wind whistled through the cracks in his little hole, and the melting snow dripped through onto his threadbare, matted fur.

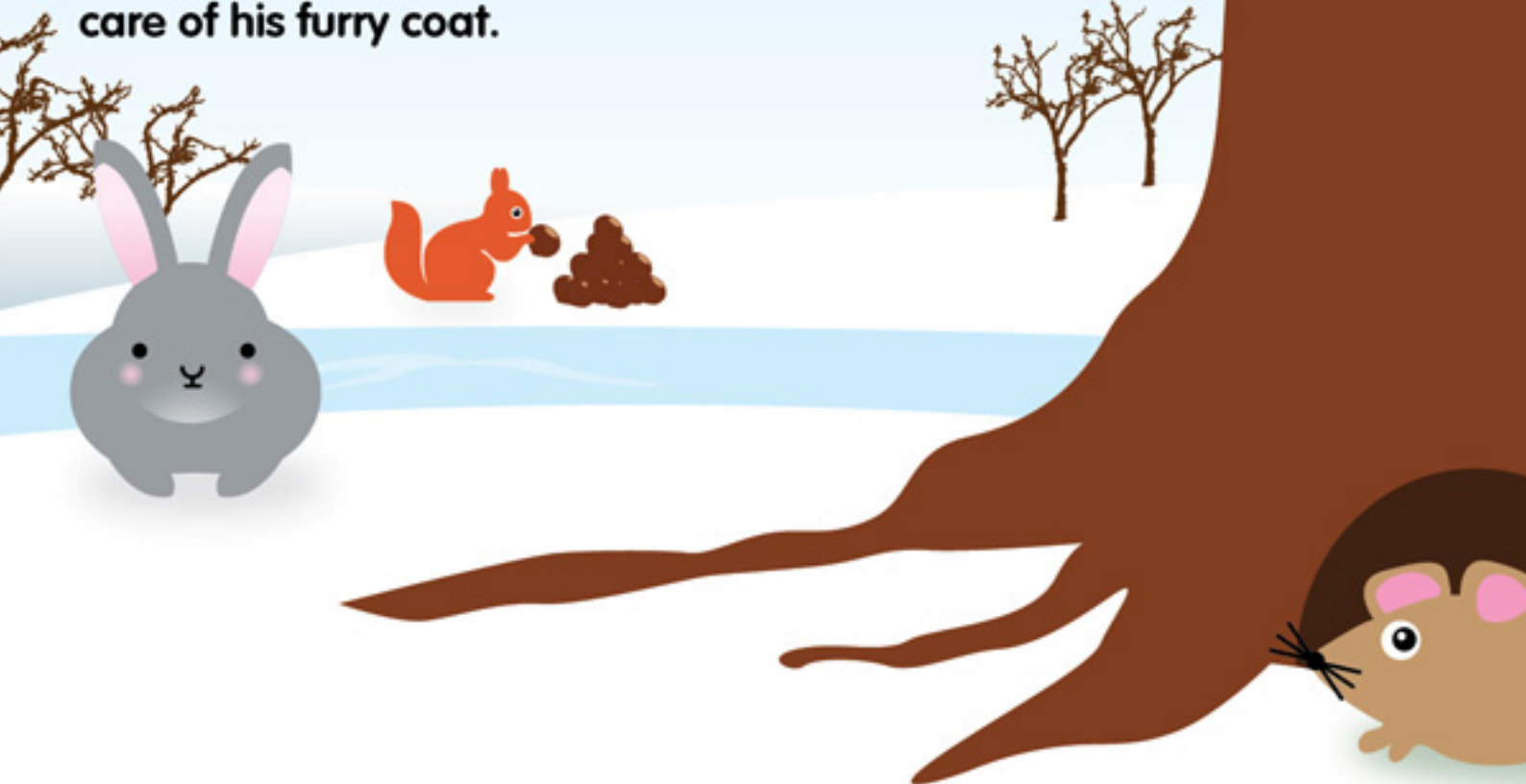


Cold, wet and hungry, Little Mouse was feeling thoroughly sorry for himself when, peeking out from his little hole, he noticed Mr Squirrel nibbling contently on one of the nuts he had collected during the summer.

Little Mouse also saw Mrs Bird sitting happily on her soft mattress of moss, sheltered from the cold and wet by the nest she had carefully repaired during the summer.

And he saw Mr Rabbit, warm and protected from the howling wind by a soft coat of neat fur that he had taken the time to clean during the summer.

All at once, Little Mouse realised what a mistake he had made, snoozing away the summer instead of finding a little time to collect some tasty nibbles for winter, repair his little hole and take more care of his furry coat.



Just when Little Mouse was beginning to wonder what he would do, there was an unexpected knock at the door. Looking up, he saw Mr Squirrel, Mrs Bird and Mr Rabbit peering in at him, as he sat shivering in the corner of his little hole.

He must have really looked a sorry state, because Little Mouse's new friends immediately got to work. Mr Squirrel dashed off to raid his secret store of nuts and berries, hidden away for just such an emergency. Mrs Bird fixed up the cracks and holes in the walls, while Mr Rabbit showed Little Mouse how to clean his coat, using his teeth and paws to comb through the really tangly bits.



Before Little Mouse knew it, he was proudly stroking his soft fur, snug and warm in his patched-up little hole and surrounded by a winter feast of nuts and berries.

Little Mouse had certainly learned his lesson, and was very grateful to his new friends for helping him. He promised them that, from that day forward, he would never put off until tomorrow the things that should be done today.

And with that all four friends tucked into their feast, laughing and joking together, as they waited for the summer to return.



**I HOPE YOU ENJOYED
THIS SHORT STORY.**

**Discover more stories featuring the adventures
of Little Mouse at paulchoy.com**

