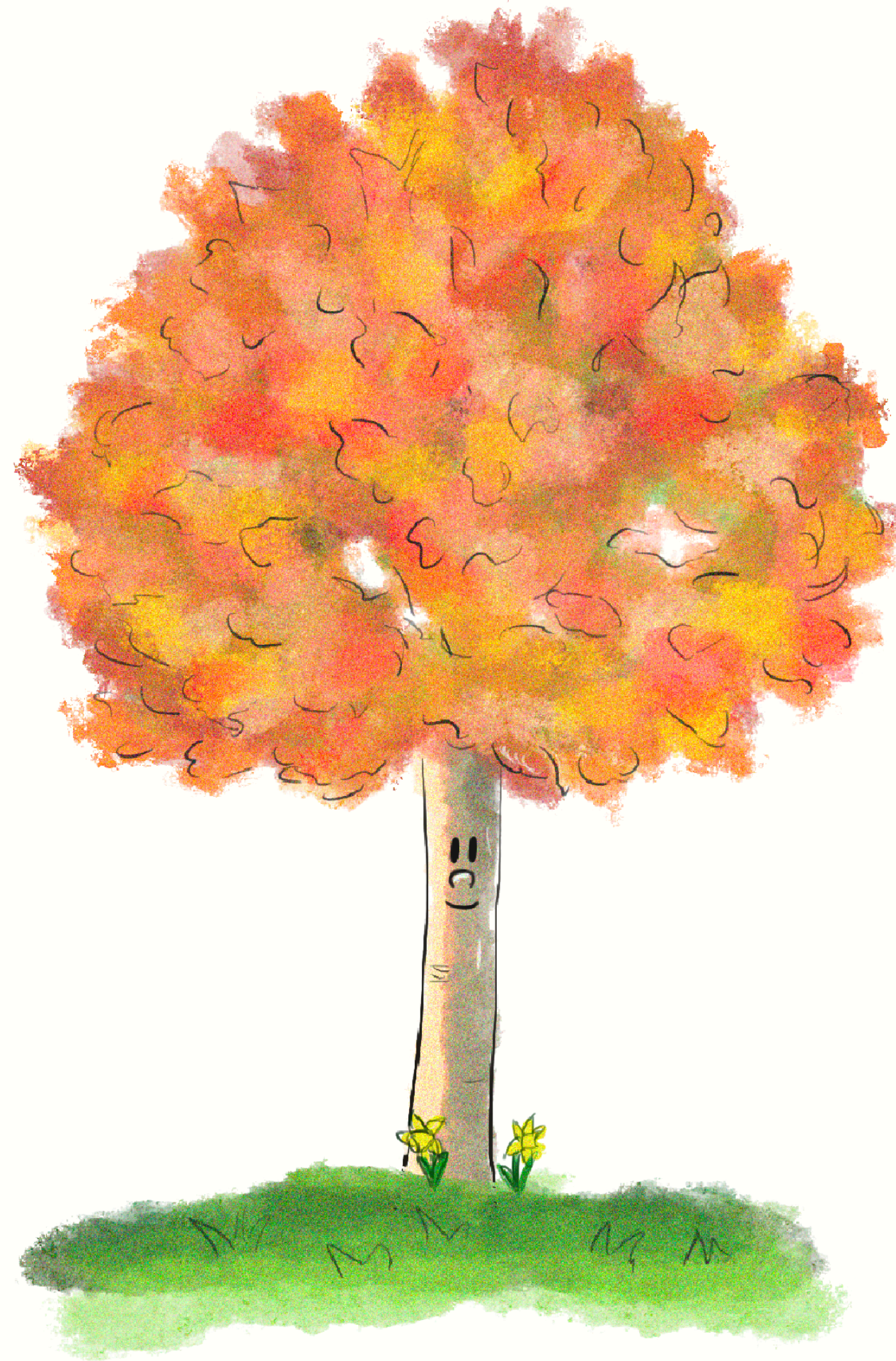


Marvin
The Maple Tree



Richard Littledale
Illustrated by Tara Simmons

A note to parents & carers

To lose a person we love is a seismic shock at any age. With the loss of that person, the world changes in an instant. When a child loses an adult, whether it is a family member, a neighbour, or a friend -it can be hard for them to process what has happened and harder still to articulate it. This story is designed to help you have that hardest of conversations. As children read this tiny tale of Marvin's loss - Maybe they can reflect on their own...

This is story of Marvin the
Maple.

Marvin lives in a small grove
of trees just on the edge of
the park. On Summer days, he
loves to watch the children
play on the swings and on
Winter days they come to
gather snow from beneath the
trees and roll them up for
snowmen.

In the Spring, his little
roots tickle when the
daffodils come up between
them, and in the Autumn, he
adds his tiny leaves to the
pile from all the big trees
around him





Marvin is not alone. Around him there are other trees.

There is a big old hornbeam, whose branches creak in the wind and whose leaves catch the morning sun just so.

There is a very old beech whose smooth trunk and strong branches seem to reach all the way up to the sky.

There is an old oak too. He never says much, and the children don't climb on him as much as they used to, but sometimes when the wind is rustling his leaves, Marvin feels like he can hear all the wisdom of the ages drifting down to him from that big old oak.

Today, Marvin is sad.

If you've never seen a sad
tree - then you maybe need to
look a little closer.
Sometimes it's in the branches
- they droop a little, as if
someone were pulling them
down.

Sometimes it's in the leaves,
as they seem to curl up a
little bit at the edges.





April, a blackbird, has seen it
though, and she has fluttered down
to ask him what is wrong.

‘Everything’ he says.

‘I woke up this morning and I knew
something was wrong. The whole
world felt different. I should
have been in the shade from the
old oak tree – but instead I felt
the heat of the hot, hot sun.

I should have heard the wind
waking up his rustly leaves – but
I heard nothing.

I should have looked up through
his branches to see little patches
of the blue, blue sky– but now I
can see it all.

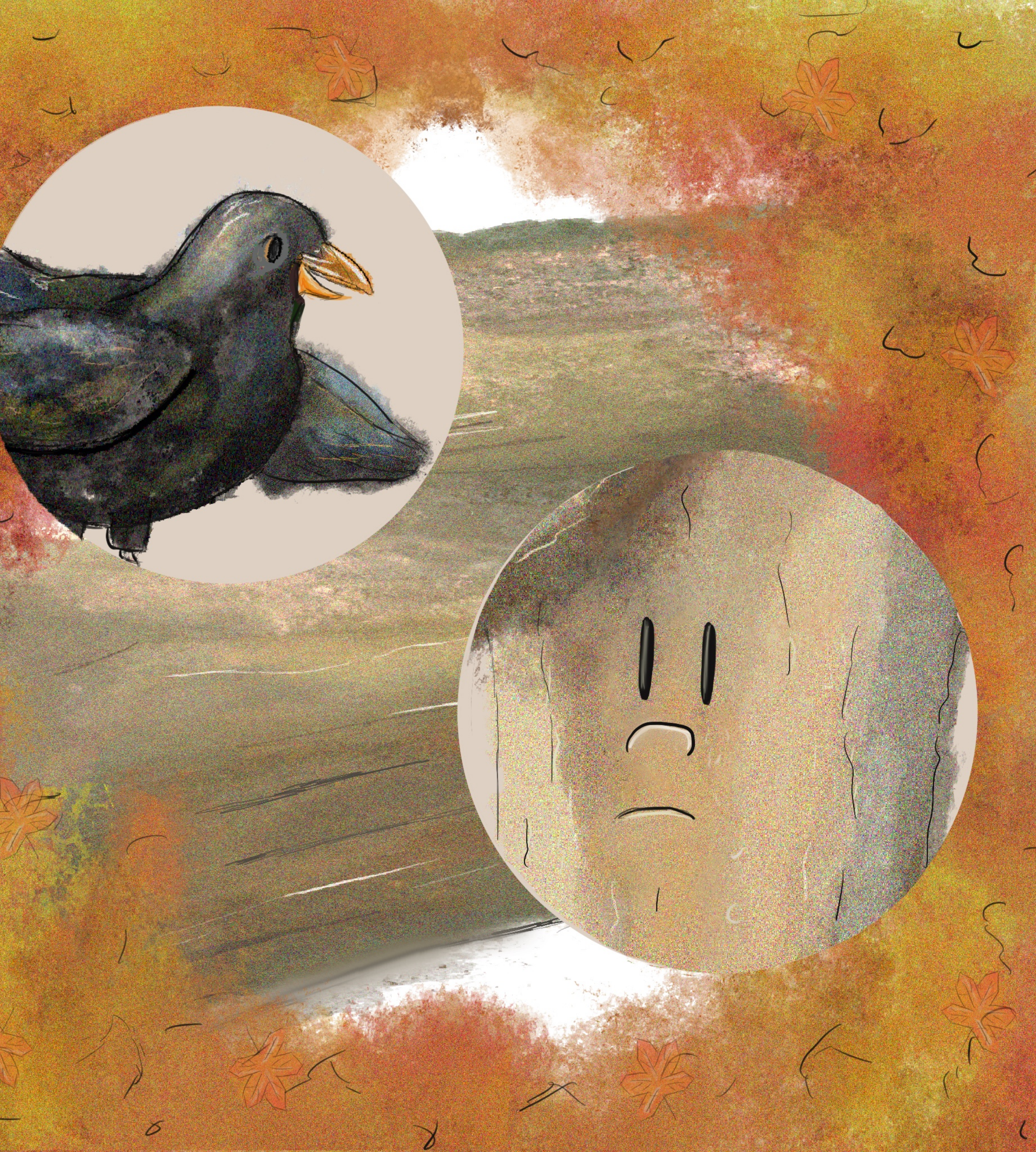
I felt safe with him there to
watch me’. The little tree seemed
to droop even further down

April put her head on one side, the way blackbirds love to do - and she could see the problem.

In the night, the old oak had fallen - and it would not stand tall again.

There would be no more snow building up on it's branches, and there would be no golden leaves when the Autumn came.





Landing gently on Marvin's
lowest branch, which bent
beneath her weight - she tried
to explain.

'I think he was tired', she
said.

'Maybe it was time for him to
lie down now, instead of
standing up'. The little tree
shivered at the thought. 'Even
the biggest of trees fall
sometimes Marvin' she chirped
gently.

'You're the one the children
will see first when they come to
play. Come Autumn, they'll all
be playing with your orange-
golden leaves'

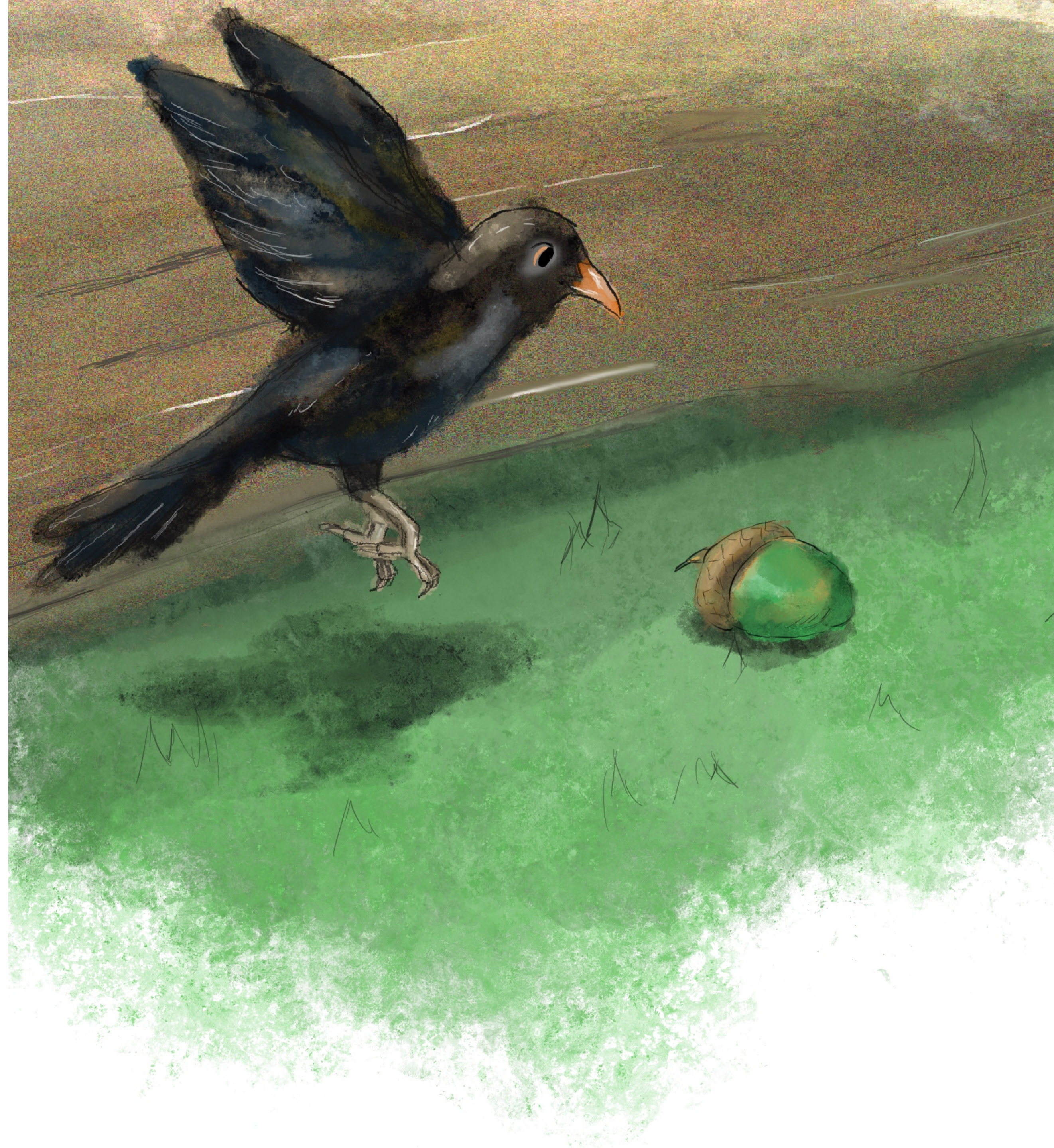
Marvin brightened, just a little
at the thought of that.

The branch bounced up and down
as April flew off to where the
great tree lay.

Coming back with something in
her beak, she wedged it
tightly in a little V between
Marvin's trunk and his biggest
branch.

It was a bottle green acorn,
bursting with life.

'Look Marvin' she chirped-
'all of him is wrapped up in
all of this. If you hold onto
it, he'll always be with you.



With that, she flapped her
wings and made for the clear
blue sky.

'I'll be back', she called.





Marvin stretched his branches
a little, being careful not to
drop the acorn-

and he reached out to hug the
big blue sky

