

Crow Takes the Stage



Crow flies all **day**. His wings feel like wet rags. But Crow is not sad. He has a plan. A big, grand plan.

'I **aim** to get some **mates**,' he says to himself. 'And then I **aim** to wow them with my singing voice.'





Crow spots them from the sky. A rabbit, a rooster and a lizard, under a big tree.

'Yay,' Crow says low. He dives down with his best grin. 'Hello! I am Crow! I **came** to sing a grand song!'

Rabbit jumps. Rooster blinks. Lizard just grins on a hot rock. No one says no. And to Crow, that means yes.

Crow opens his beak
and sings. It is not
grand. It is a big,
loud **wail**. Rabbit
makes a face.

Rooster gasps. Even
Lizard, all smiles just
now, looks like she
bit a **lime**.

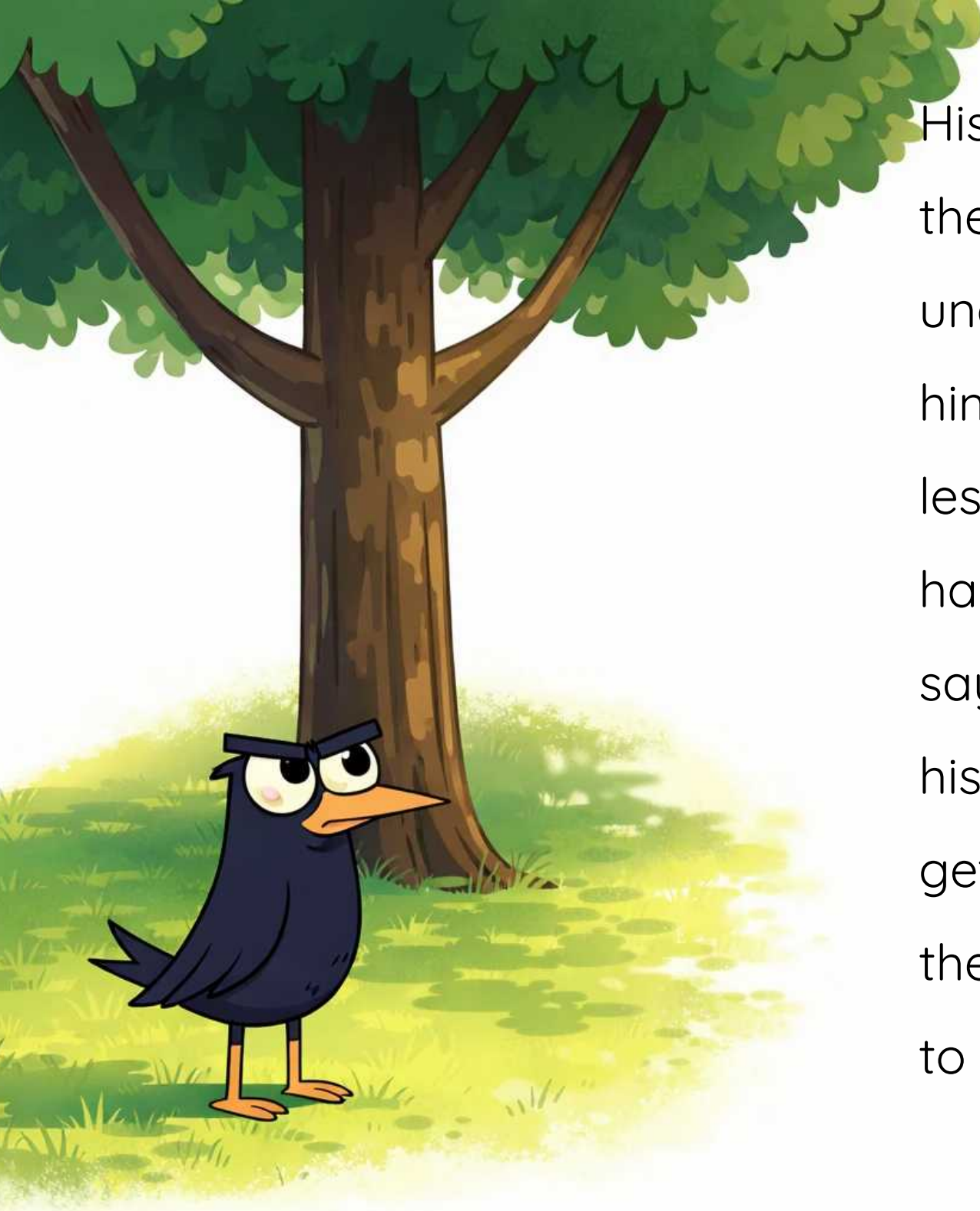




Crow hops up to the top branch and really lets it rip. Wings out. Beak up. What a loud **wail** it is! **Way** up here, Crow can not **make** out a thing but his own voice. That is **fine** by Crow. He sounds grand. Or so he tells himself.

Down under the tree, the animals run. Rabbit bolts up the hill fast. Rooster dashes off with a loud cluck. And Lizard? Off in a blink, like a magic trick. Crow ends his big **note** and looks down. 'Hmm,' he says. 'My **mates** did not **make** out my song. Next **time**, I must sing louder.'





His new **mates** are not there. Not one. Crow stands under the big tree by himself. The sunshine feels less hot now. 'They just had to go some **place,**' he says, low. Then he puffs up his chest. 'I will **train!** I will get so good that next **time,** they will **stay.**' Off he hops to get the perfect spot.

Crow tries one branch.
Not **safe**. He tries the
next. Too leafy. On the
third branch, bonk! A
nut drops on his beak.
'Not a fan, I **take** it,'
says Crow. He keeps
looking. Some **place** out
there is the perfect spot
for the perfect song.





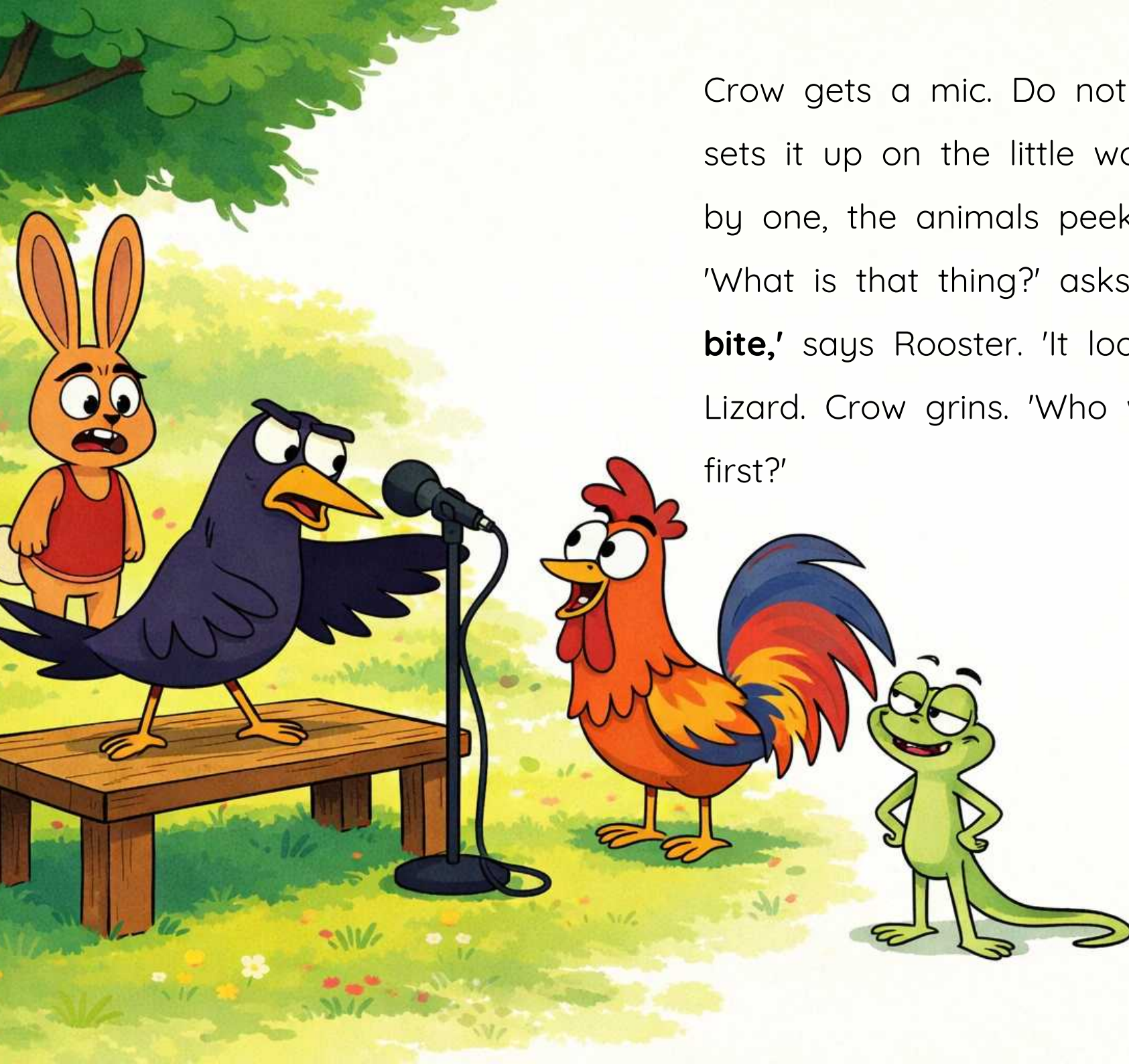
Crow lands **way** up in the treetop and **gazes** down. There, in the sunshine, he spots a thing. A little wood thing, all by itself. Just sitting there, as if it **waits** for some one. Crow blinks. '**Wait** a bit...'

Down there sits a bench.
'That is not a bench,' Crow
gasps. 'That is a **stage!**'
He can see it all. Lights!
Tunes! Fans that chant his
name!

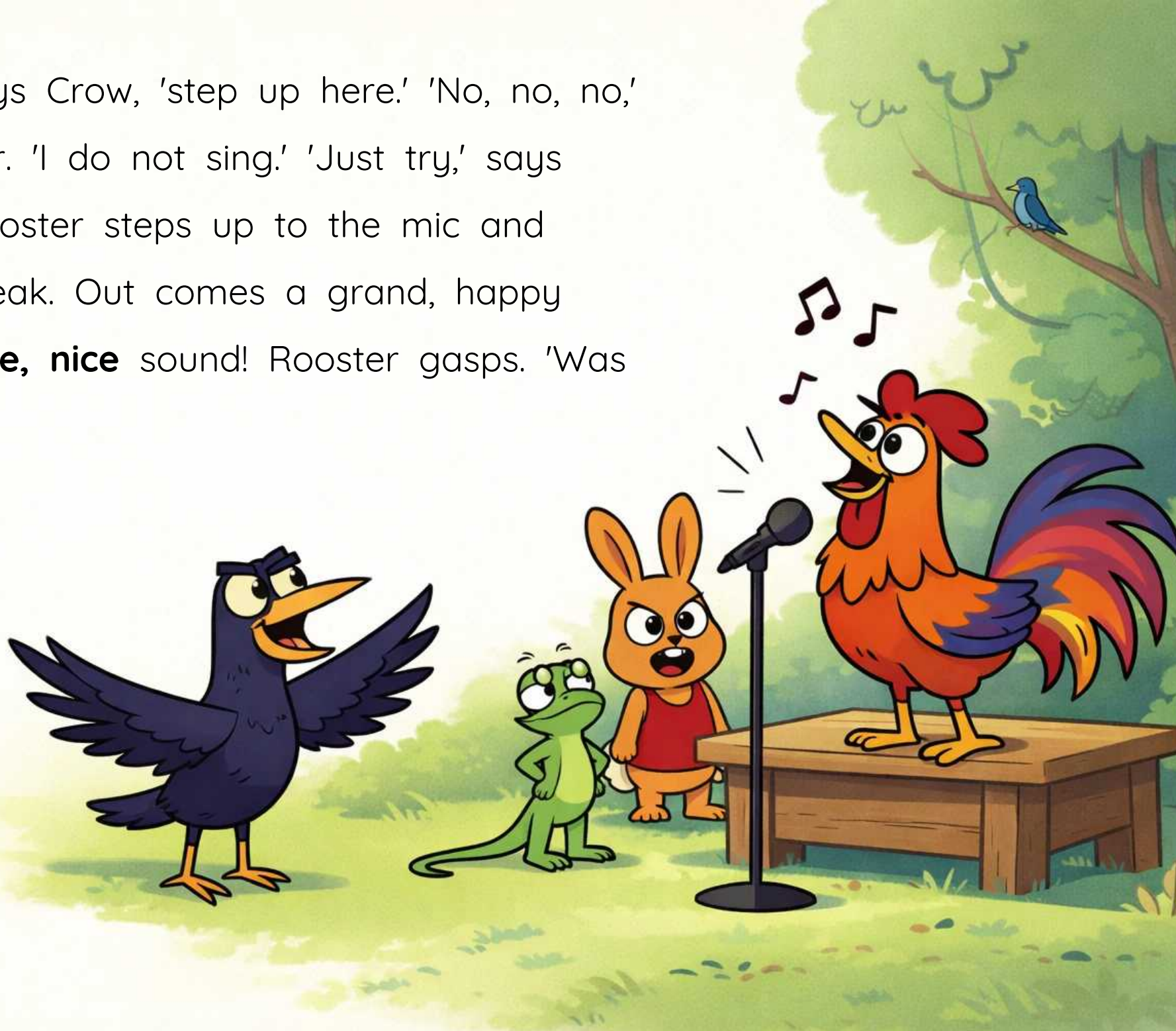
Then a new plan pops up.
A plan Crow never had
before. What if he does
not just sing at his **mates?**
What if they sing too?



Crow gets a mic. Do not ask where. He sets it up on the little wood **stage**. One by one, the animals peek down the path. 'What is that thing?' asks Rabbit. 'It **may bite,**' says Rooster. 'It looks fun,' says Lizard. Crow grins. 'Who wants to go first?'



'Rooster,' says Crow, 'step up here.' 'No, no, no,' says Rooster. 'I do not sing.' 'Just try,' says Crow. So Rooster steps up to the mic and opens his beak. Out comes a grand, happy sound. A **nice, nice** sound! Rooster gasps. 'Was that me?'



'My turn!' Lizard hops up on the **stage**. She starts soft. Just a peep. 'More!' yells Crow. She sings louder. Then louder still. Then Lizard **lays** down a beat so fun that Rabbit's foot thumps and thumps. 'I can not stop it!' yells Rabbit, hopping in **place**. 'My feet will not quit!'



Then Rabbit spots the drums. 'Ooh,' she says. 'Ooh, yes.' She **takes** the drumsticks and lets it rip. Boom, tap, boom, boom, tap! She sings and drums at the **same time**, like a star. 'How can she do that?' yells Rooster. Rabbit grins. 'No clue!'



Then all three turn to Crow. 'Crow's turn,' says Lizard. Crow blinks. For the first **time**, he feels shy. What if his **mates** run off, like before? 'Sing!' they all yell. So Crow steps up. The spotlight is on him now. Rabbit taps her drum. Rooster flaps his wings. And Crow opens his beak and lets it all out. No one runs. Not even a bit.



And that is the **way** the band starts. Rooster sings. Lizard strums. Rabbit smashes the drums as if she is mad at them. And Crow? Crow dances. Wings out, feet flying, notes all round him.

Crow's **wail** never gets **nice**. But his **mates** are not sad, not one bit. Because Crow does not get **mates** by being the best singer. He gets them by giving them the mic.





Crow Takes the Stage

Crow has flown all day, and his wings feel like wet rags, but he's got a plan: wow some new friends with his singing voice. He spots a rabbit, a rooster and a lizard under a big tree and swoops down with his best grin. Will his big, loud wail win him any mates? Written for Jolly Phonics classrooms (Step 3, Unit 4: /ai/ mixed), this book practices words like 'wail', 'mates', 'aim', 'gazes', 'stage'.

Phonics Focus: <mixed>

aim, bite, came, day, dive, face, fine, gaze, gazes, hope, lays, lime, make, makes, mate, mates, may, name, nice, note, place, pope, rage, safe, same, say, site, stage, stay, take, takes, tape, time, train, wail, wait, waits, way, yay

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