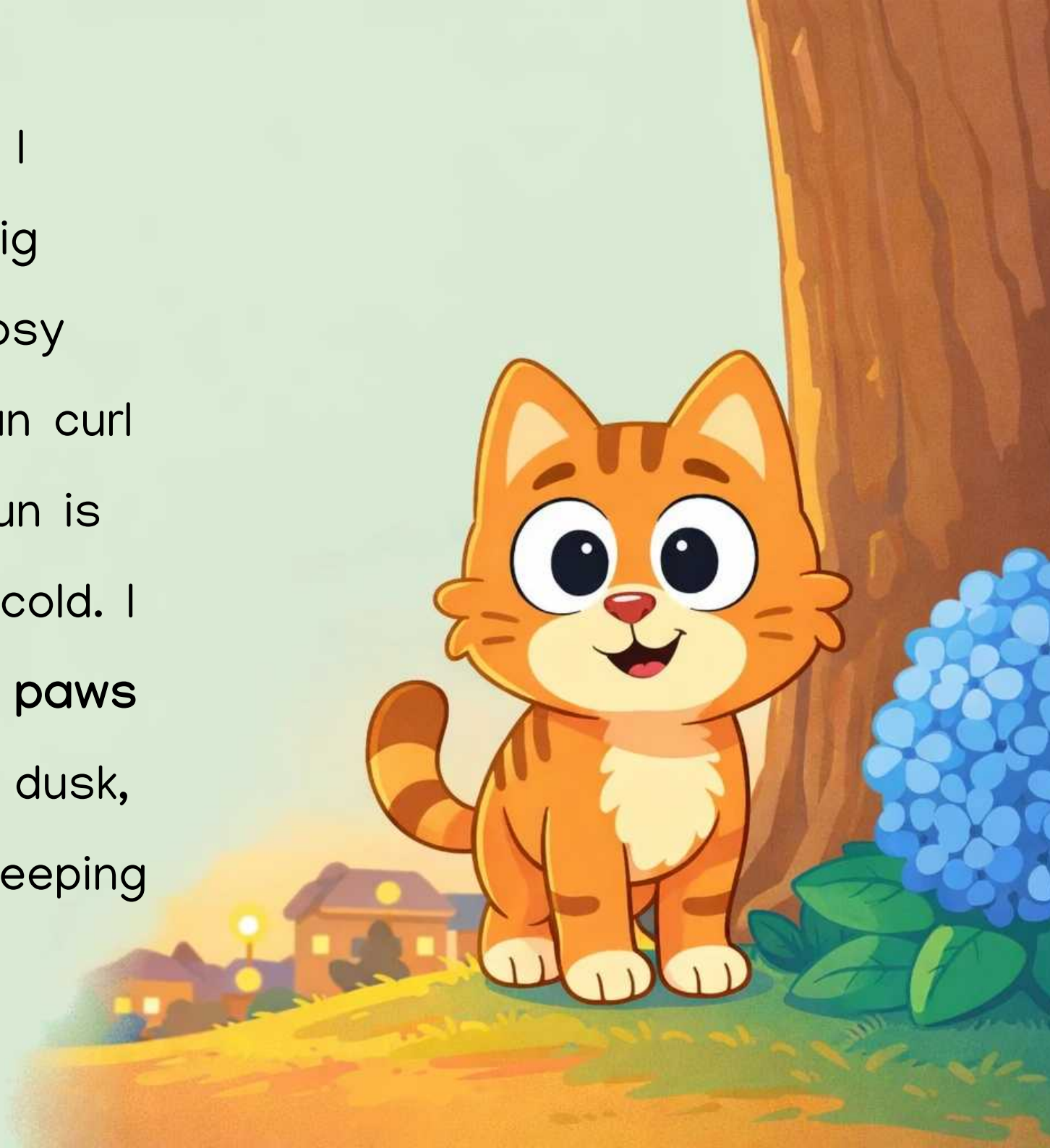


Get Lost, Pokey!



My name is Pip, and I
need a bed. Not a big
bed. Just a small, cosy
spot where a cat can curl
up and sleep. The sun is
low and the wind is cold. I
trot past a tree, my paws
cold on the path. At dusk,
I will find the best sleeping
spot on the street.





A big box on the path! I trot over and peek inside. I **gawk** at the pile: animals on top of animals, legs and tails past the rim. 'What are you looking at, Pip?' snaps the patch cat from deep in the pile. The pup pushes a **paw** at the rim and they all chant, 'No room for Pip!' Well. No need to be so rude.

Never mind. There are other spots!

I find a row of trash cans in the alley. If you ask me, a trash can is sort of like a bed with walls. I lift the lid of the first one with my claws.

Two big yellow eyes blink up at me from inside.





'This is my trash can!' snarls Inky.

'But we could both fit,' I say, leaning over the rim. 'If you just move your tail a little bit to the...'

'No room for you!' Inky snaps, and hauls the lid shut. Clang. That is two spots lost and zero spots to rest in. The sky grows darker by the minute.

Then it starts to rain.
Not a drizzle. Big, fat,
cold drops go splat right
on top of me. I sit in
the wet plants with my
jaw hanging open, and I
get soaked. No box. No
bin. No bed. And no dry
fur. Could this night get
any more grim?





Yes. Yes it could. But wait.
Up by that roof, there is a
hole. A cat-sized gap! I
dig my **claws** into the wall
and start to **crawl** up. The
rain makes my **paws** slip
and my legs shake. But I
keep going, bit by bit,
because that gap is
saying: come on, Pip,
there is room for you.

I made it! I flop on the ledge, panting. The spot is cold and hard. But it is dry, and dry feels like home. I **yawn**, curl up tight, and try to sleep. But my mind keeps poking at me. The patch cat and the pup are in that soggy box, and Inky is in that trash can. Are they safe?





Flash! Bang! Crack!

Lightning splits the sky
and thunder shakes the
ledge under my paws. I
see them in the storm:
the patch cat huddles
tight, the pup trembles,
Inky has no spot to hide.
'Run!' I yell into the storm,
but they can not catch my
call. 'Get to a safe spot!'

Then the lightning starts a fire. I slide off the roof and run to the gate. In the smoke, I can see the box burning and the trash can on its side. The patch cat, the pup, and Inky come **crawling** up the path, soaking wet. 'Up! Quick!' I call. They scramble to me with wide eyes. The box? Gone. The trash can? Gone. All the spots with no room for me. Gone.



'Pip?' says the pup, gripping the rail in the rain. 'Can we come up there with you?' I look at them. Three soggy animals who told me to get lost. Part of me wants to say it. You know the words. No room. No room for you. But I think of how cold and wet I was, with no place to go. I reach my paw to them. 'Come on up. Quick, before the next flash.'





All four of us fit under one tiny roof. The patch cat has an elbow in my fur, and the pup has a tail up my nose. Inky sprawls on top of us all. Water swirls below, but we are safe and damp. 'Pip?' whispers the patch cat. 'I am sorry we said no room for you.' 'No harm done,' I say. 'We are all safe.'

We are squished. We are stuffed. We are packed in so tight that no one can move a whisker and not bump a nose. It is the most cramped, most soggy sleeping spot on the street. And me? I yawn, and I close my eyes. There is room for us all.





Get Lost, Pokey!

Pip just needs one small, cosy spot to sleep, but every box and trash can on the street already has an owner who snarls "no room for you." When rain turns to a raging storm, will Pip find a dry place of their own, or be left out in the cold? Created to align with the UFLI Foundations scope and sequence (Lesson 93: au, aw, augh /aw/), this book practises words like 'paws', 'claws', 'yawn', 'crawl', 'gawk'.

Phonics Focus: au, aw, augh /aw/

claws, crawl, crawling, gawk, hauls, jaw, paw, paws, sprawls, yawn

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