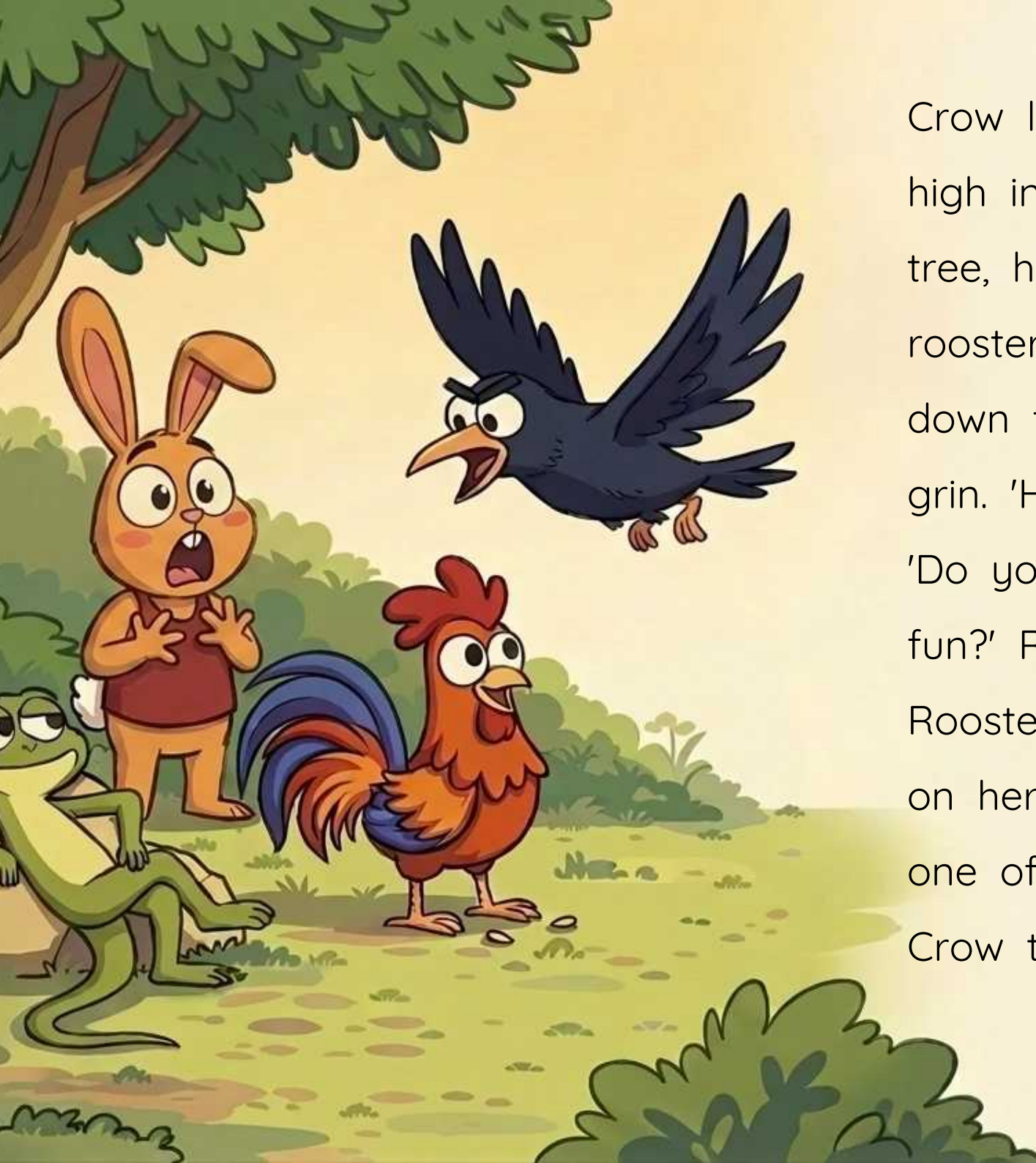


His Big Gig



Crow had been flying since sunrise, and his wings felt flat and tired. He flew **slower** and **slower**, but he did not stop. Crow had a big plan, and it made him grin. 'I will find some friends,' he said, 'and I will wow them with my song.'





Crow looked down from up high in the sky. Under a big tree, he saw a rabbit, a rooster, and a lizard. Crow flew down fast with his **boldest** grin. 'Hello! I am Crow!' he said. 'Do you want to see something fun?' Rabbit jumped up, and Rooster just blinked. Lizard sat on her rock and smiled. Not one of them said no, and to Crow that was a yes.

Crow opened his beak wide and sang a loud song. 'Caw! Caw! CAW!' It did not sound good at all, and it got **louder** and **shriller**. Rabbit shut her eyes tight. Rooster's feathers stood up stiff on his back, and even Lizard looked like she had licked a lemon.

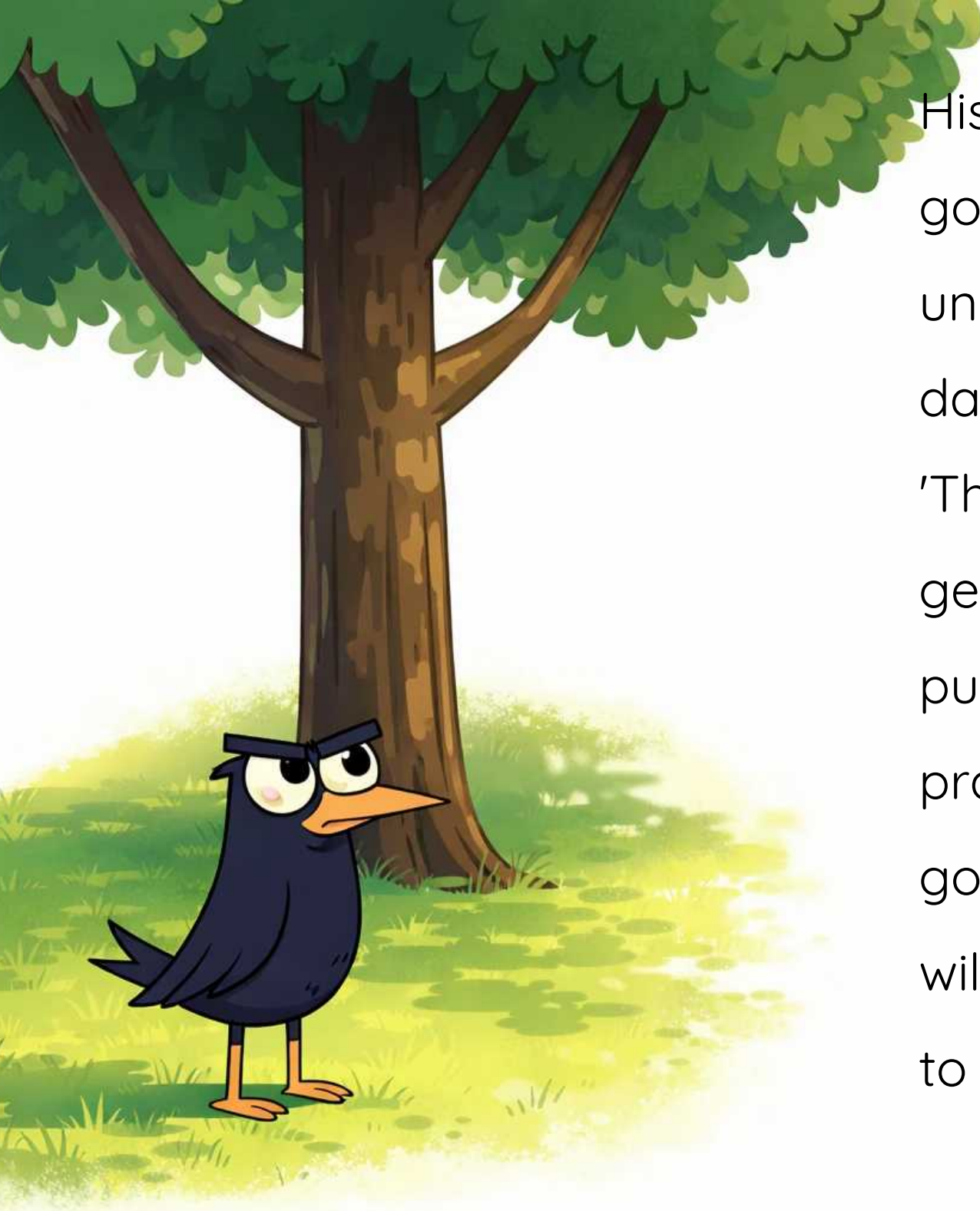




Crow flew up to the **highest** branch and stood tall. He closed his eyes and put his wings out wide. Then he sang his song as loud as he could. Up so high, Crow's own voice was the **loudest** thing of all. It sounded so good to him, and that made Crow feel like the **best** singer ever.

Down below, the animals ran so fast. Rabbit ran up the hill, **faster** and **faster**, and Rooster ran down the path with a loud caw. Lizard vanished, and soon they were all gone. Then Crow sang his last note and opened his eyes. 'They must have missed my song,' said Crow. 'Next time I will sing much **louder!**'





His new friends were all gone. Crow stood alone under the big tree. The day felt **duller** than before. 'They just had a spot to get to,' said Crow. Then he puffed up his chest. 'I will practice, and I will get so good that next time they will stay.' Crow jumped up to find the **best** perch.

Crow tried the first branch, but it shook too much. The next branch was too leafy. He tried a **higher** branch, but it shook even more in the wind, so Crow flew off fast.





Crow landed high in the **tallest** tree, and he looked way down at the ground. There, in a spot of sun, sat a little bench all alone. It looked like it was waiting for a friend. Crow leaned in, and his eyes went wide.

'That is not a bench,'
Crow said. 'That is a
stage!' He could see it all:
the **brightest** lights, the
loudest song, and lots of
birds calling his name.
Then a new plan came
to him. What if he did
not just sing for his
friends? What if he let
them sing too?

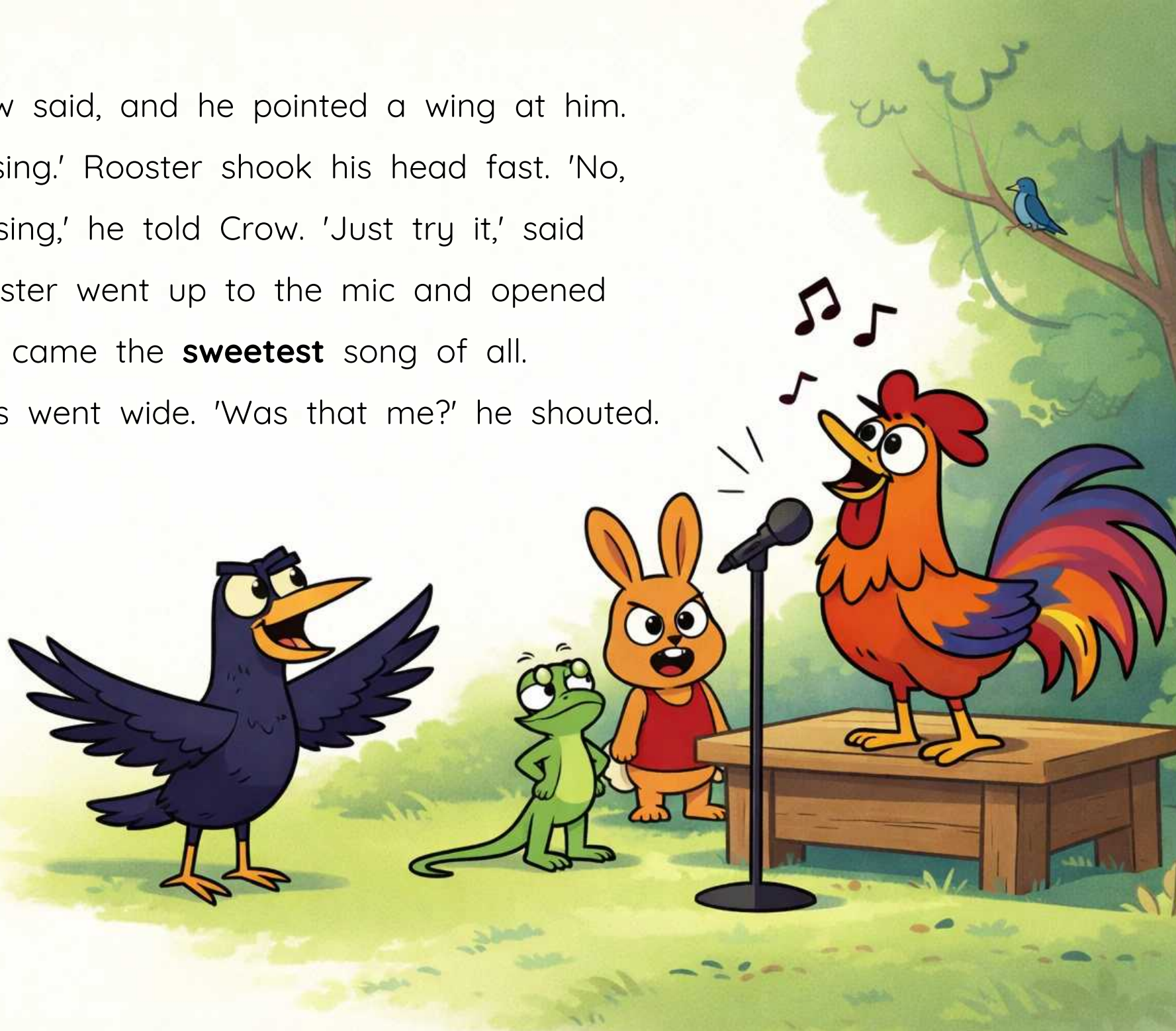




Crow found a mic and set it up on the stage. One by one, the animals peeked down the path to look. 'What is that thing?' Rabbit asked. Rooster stood back with big eyes, but Lizard was **bolder**. 'It looks like fun,' she said. Crow smiled. 'Who will go first?'



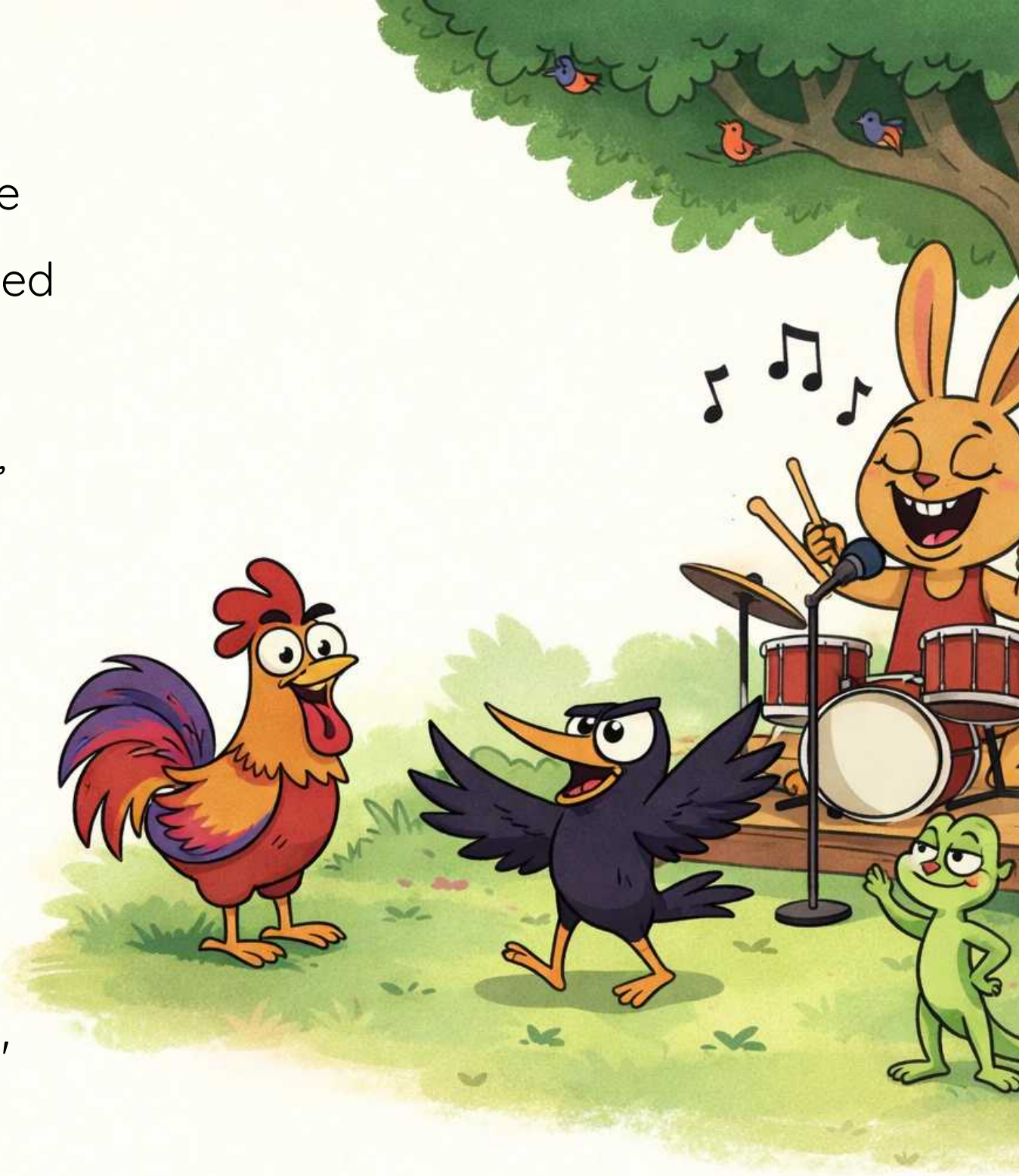
'Rooster,' Crow said, and he pointed a wing at him. 'Get up and sing.' Rooster shook his head fast. 'No, no. I do not sing,' he told Crow. 'Just try it,' said Crow. So Rooster went up to the mic and opened his beak. Out came the **sweetest** song of all. Rooster's eyes went wide. 'Was that me?' he shouted.



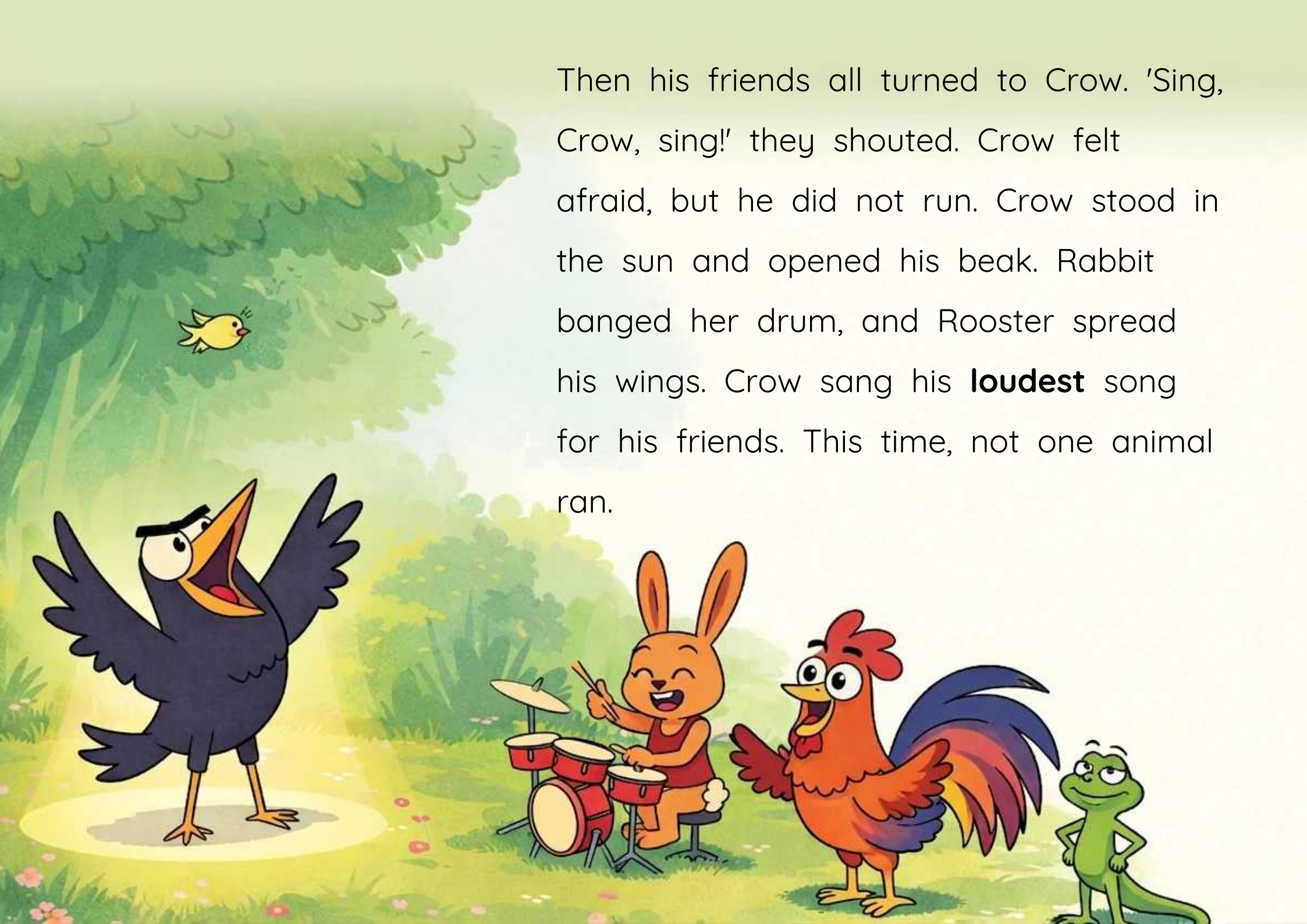
'My turn!' Lizard jumped up on the stage and sang a soft, low song. '**Louder!**' Crow shouted, and he spread his wings wide. Lizard sang **louder** and **louder**, and then her song got so loud that Rabbit's feet started to tap and hop. 'My feet will not stop!' Rabbit said with a big grin.



Then Rabbit saw the drums. 'Yes!' she said. She picked up the sticks, closed her eyes, and played **faster** and **faster**. Boom, tap, boom, boom, tap! Rabbit sang and played the drums at the same time. 'How did you do that?' Rooster shouted. Rabbit opened one eye and said, 'I do not know!'



Then his friends all turned to Crow. 'Sing, Crow, sing!' they shouted. Crow felt afraid, but he did not run. Crow stood in the sun and opened his beak. Rabbit banged her drum, and Rooster spread his wings. Crow sang his **loudest** song for his friends. This time, not one animal ran.



And that is how the
backyard band was born.
Rabbit banged her drums,
Rooster sang a loud song,
and Lizard played her string
box. Crow's song did not get
sweeter, but his friends did
not mind. Crow spread his
wings and danced in the sun.
Crow did not find friends by
singing. He found them when
he let his friends sing too.





100

His Big Gig

Crow has a big plan: wow some new friends with his singing voice. But when he lets loose his loudest song from the highest branch, everyone runs away instead of cheering. Alone under the tree, Crow decides to practice until he's the best singer ever, but will a bolder new plan finally bring his friends back together? Created to align with the UFLI Foundations scope and sequence (Lesson 100: -er/-est), this book practices words like 'louder', 'faster', 'loudest', 'highest', 'best'.

Phonics Focus: -er/-est

best, bolder, boldest, brightest, duller, faster, higher, highest, louder, loudest, shriller, slower, sweeter, sweetest, tallest

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