

It's great to be involved!

A kid's book about community spirit



Cristina Falcón Maldonado / Josep Maria Cardona

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"Hey Floky, wake up!" Shouted Gru.
Floky looked at him from his nest, his eyes
half closed with sleep.
"Do you remember what day it is today?" Asked Pick.
The question seemed to wake him up suddenly...
"It's my birthday!"
"Follow us. We have a surprise for you," said Pick
and Gru encouragingly.



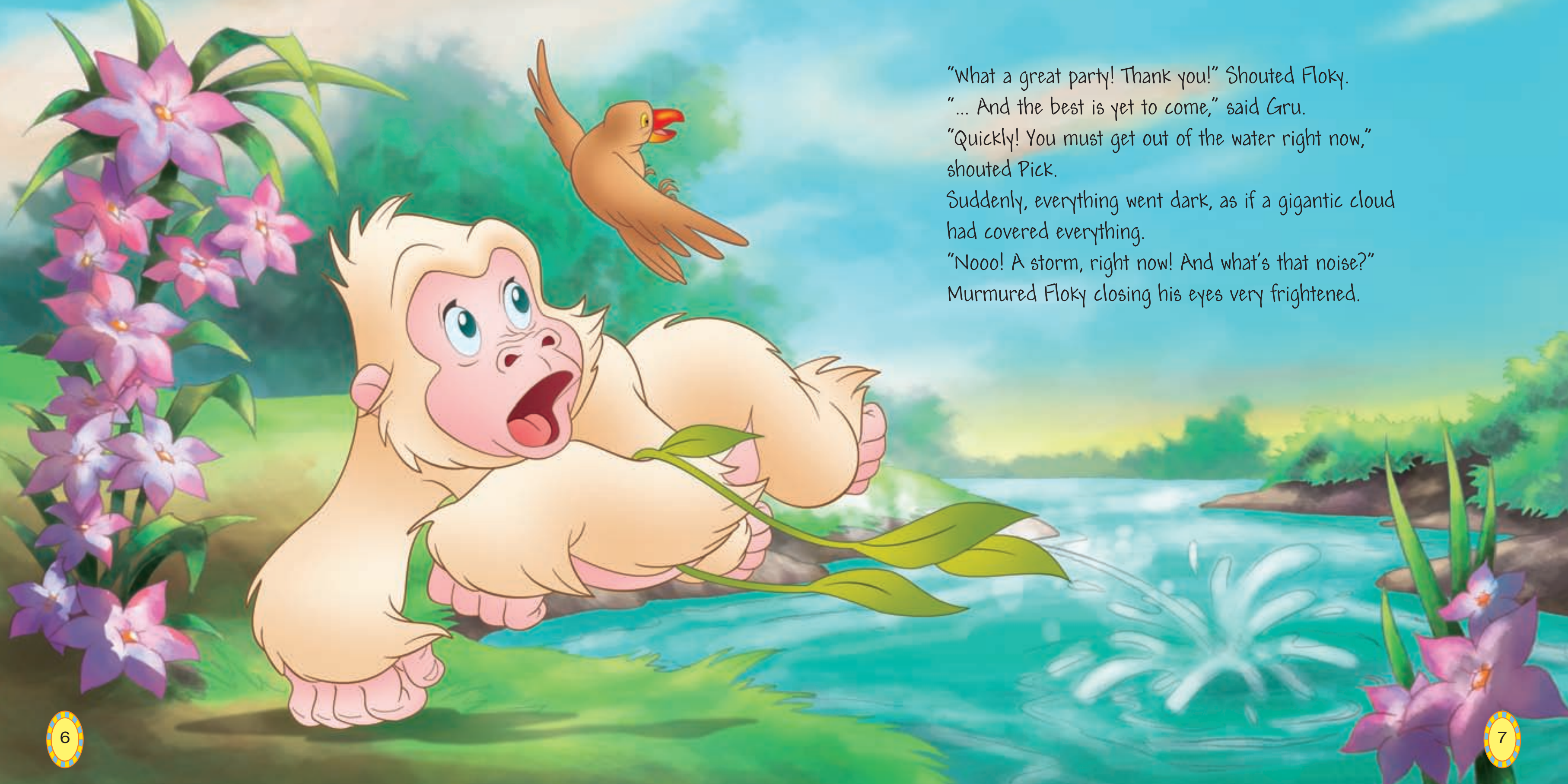
"Where to?" Asked Floky moved.

"Surprises can't be revealed!" Said Pick.

So, Floky, Pick and Gru went walking through the jungle until they reached the banks of the River Oubangoui, at the Bay of Moba.

"A picnic by the river? A dip and a snack!" Exclaimed Floky, before diving off in search of some riverbed plants, his favorites.





"What a great party! Thank you!" Shouted Floky.

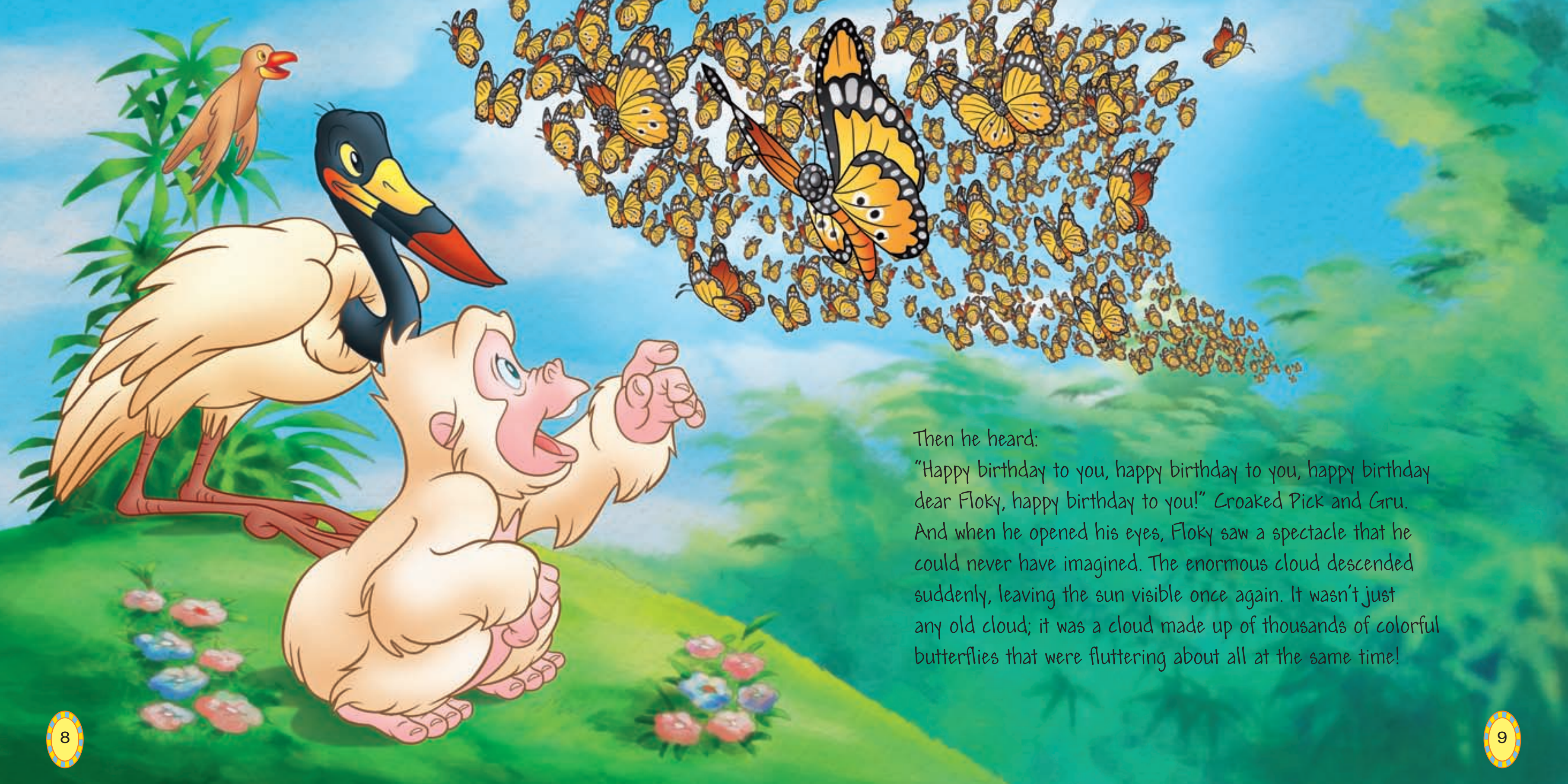
"... And the best is yet to come," said Gru.

"Quickly! You must get out of the water right now," shouted Pick.

Suddenly, everything went dark, as if a gigantic cloud had covered everything.

"Nooo! A storm, right now! And what's that noise?"

Murmured Floky closing his eyes very frightened.



Then he heard:

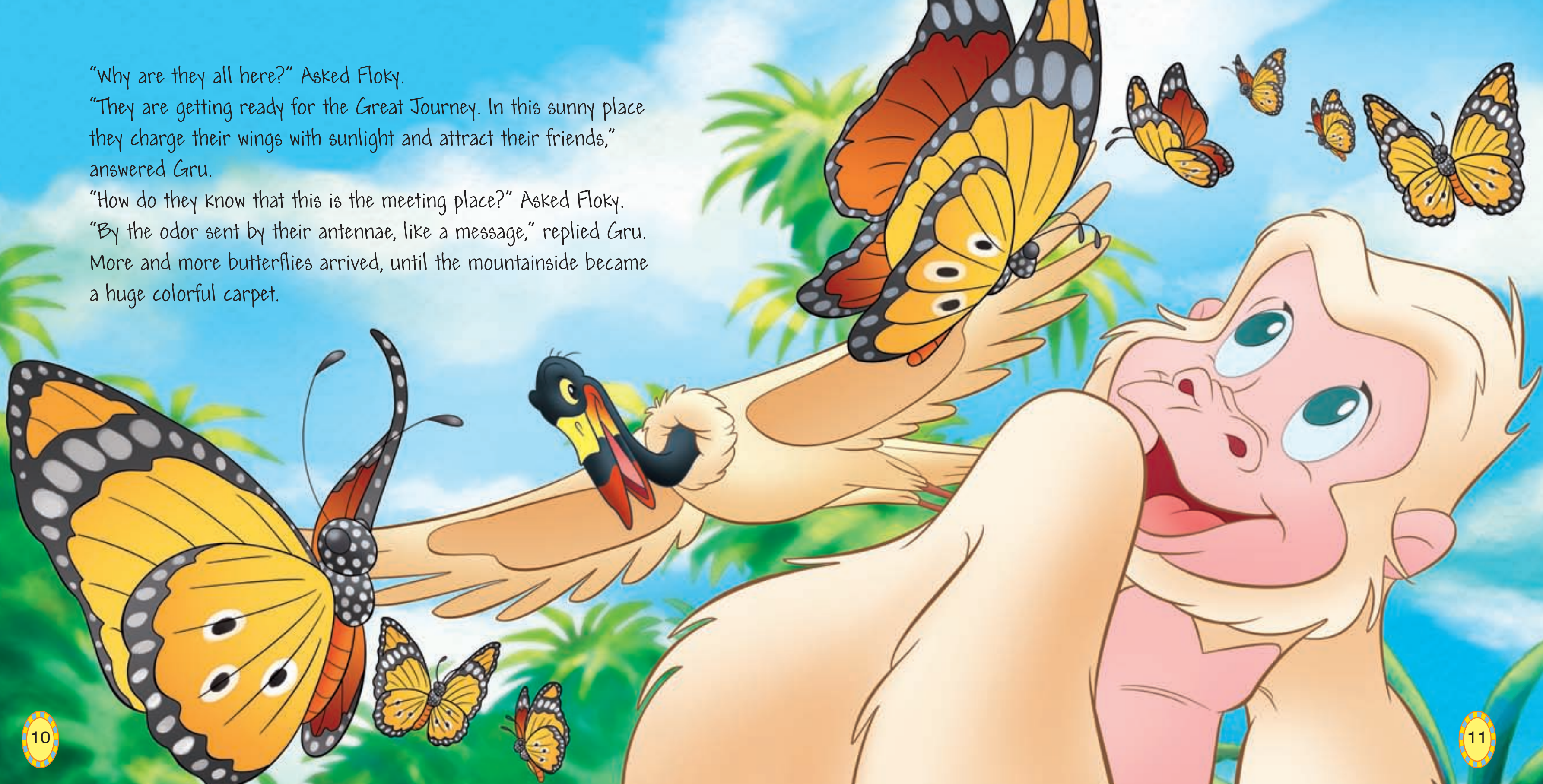
"Happy birthday to you, happy birthday to you, happy birthday dear Floky, happy birthday to you!" Croaked Pick and Gru. And when he opened his eyes, Floky saw a spectacle that he could never have imagined. The enormous cloud descended suddenly, leaving the sun visible once again. It wasn't just any old cloud; it was a cloud made up of thousands of colorful butterflies that were fluttering about all at the same time!

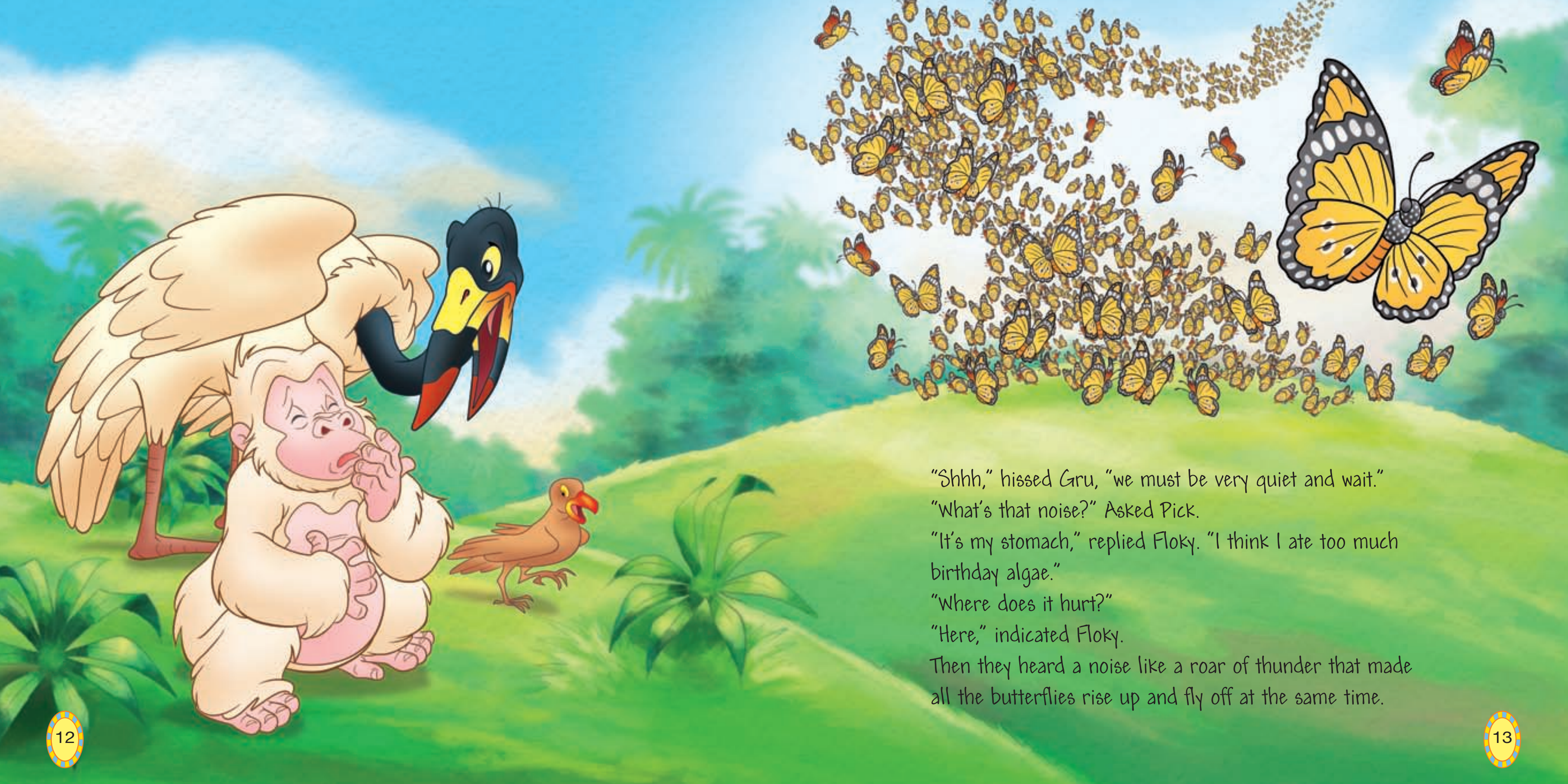
"Why are they all here?" Asked Floky.

"They are getting ready for the Great Journey. In this sunny place they charge their wings with sunlight and attract their friends," answered Gru.

"How do they know that this is the meeting place?" Asked Floky.

"By the odor sent by their antennae, like a message," replied Gru. More and more butterflies arrived, until the mountainside became a huge colorful carpet.





"Shhh," hissed Gru, "we must be very quiet and wait."

"What's that noise?" Asked Pick.

"It's my stomach," replied Floky. "I think I ate too much birthday algae."

"Where does it hurt?"

"Here," indicated Floky.

Then they heard a noise like a roar of thunder that made all the butterflies rise up and fly off at the same time.

"What was that?" Asked Gru, furiously. "They have left too early."
"I'm really sorry!" Confessed Floky in tears. "I couldn't help it."
"What indigestible algae!" Said Pick, jokingly. "Don't worry, Floky."

But explanations were no use to Floky. He couldn't stop feeling ashamed and he couldn't stop crying.



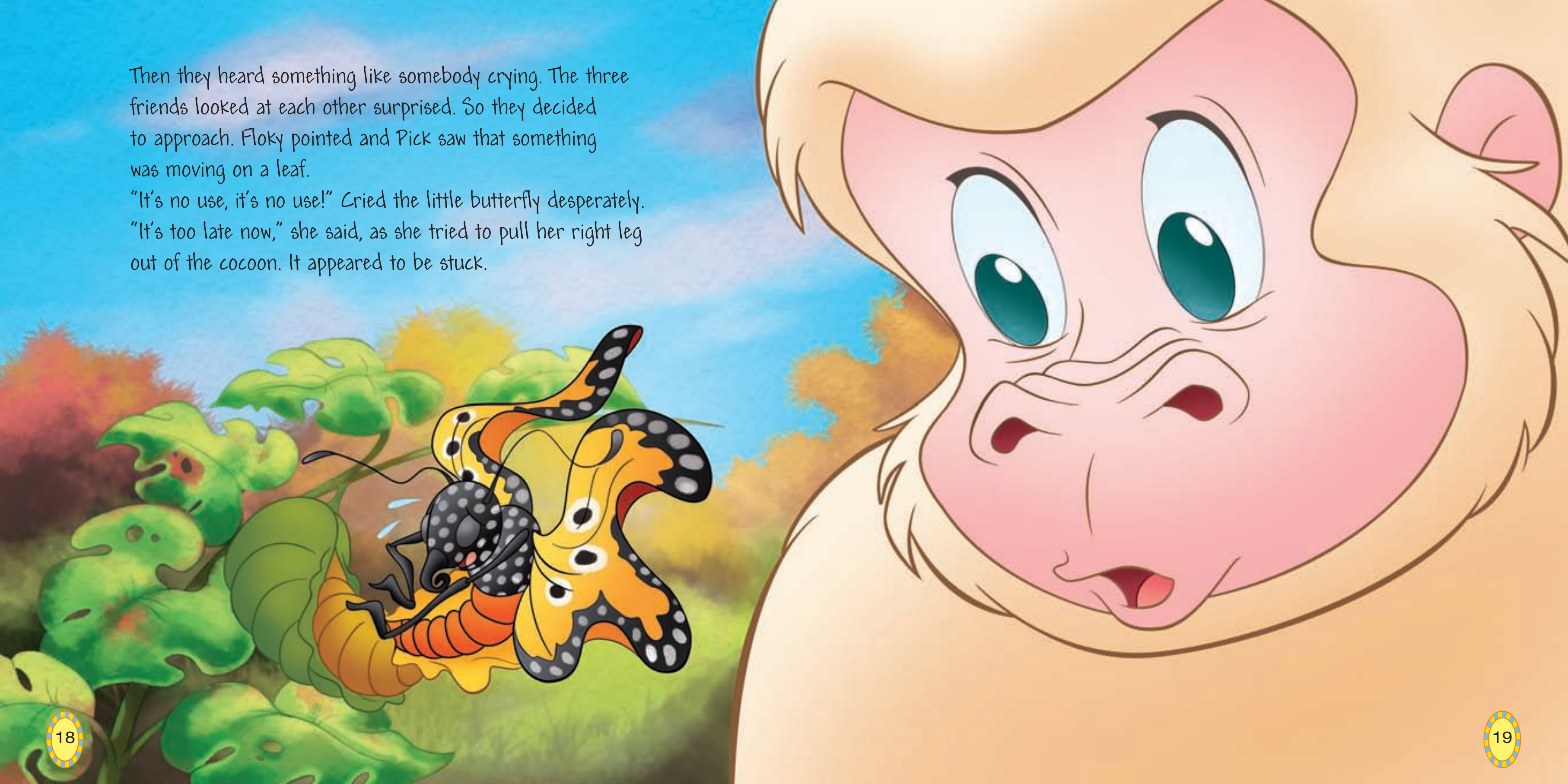


"I think the butterflies were waiting for a signal to set off on the Great Journey and you gave it to them," said Gru. The Great Journey is an endurance race for the butterflies, which must fly thousands of kilometers before reaching the forests in another continent. "Have a nice trip all of you!" The three of them shouted, as they danced a farewell and celebration dance.



Then they heard something like somebody crying. The three friends looked at each other surprised. So they decided to approach. Floky pointed and Pick saw that something was moving on a leaf.

"It's no use, it's no use!" Cried the little butterfly desperately. "It's too late now," she said, as she tried to pull her right leg out of the cocoon. It appeared to be stuck.



"Too late for what? Why are you crying?" Asked Pick. When the butterfly saw him, instead of calming down, she had a great fright and shot out of the cocoon bumping into Floky's nose... As she said over and over: "It's too late, it's too late now!"

"Hey! You're tickling me," laughed Floky. "What's the matter with you?"

"They've all gone and I'll never be able to go on the Great Journey," replied the butterfly between sobs.





"Why not? What can be done?" Asked Floky.
"I'm afraid that nothing can be done. They must be
hundreds of kilometers away by now," sobbed the butterfly.

"Well, let's catch up with them!
Flight squadron, are you ready?" Said Floky.
"Ready!" Replied Pick and Gru.
"Hold on tightly; Gru's feathers are a 'first class seats'."

"But what will you do?" Asked Pick. How will you get home?
You will be in the sun, you might get sick."

"That's true," said Gru. "And it's your birthday too."

"Don't worry. I'll wait until it gets dark and if you're not back by then, I'll go home. I know these mountains very well. I'll have other birthdays, but the butterfly will only have one Great Journey."



"Would you do that for me? Would you be separated from your friends? You are always so alone..."

"Who told you about me?" Grumbled Floky.

"Don't you recognize me?" Asked the butterfly.

"Well... Your wings don't look familiar to me," replied Floky.

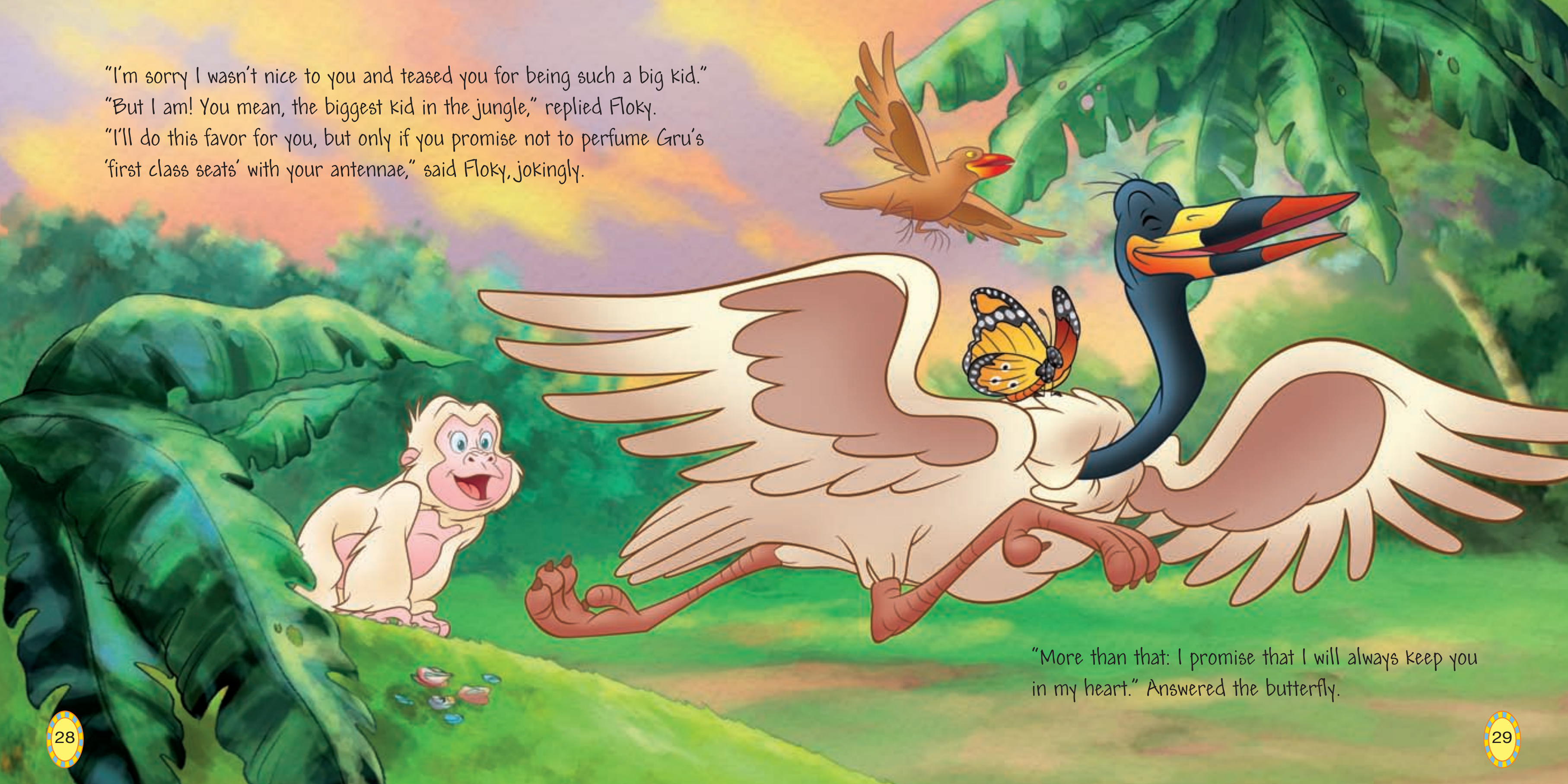
"Do you remember one night when you approached a caterpillar to ask it to play with you?" Asked her.

"Oh! It's you! The jungle is a small place, isn't it?"

Laughed Floky.

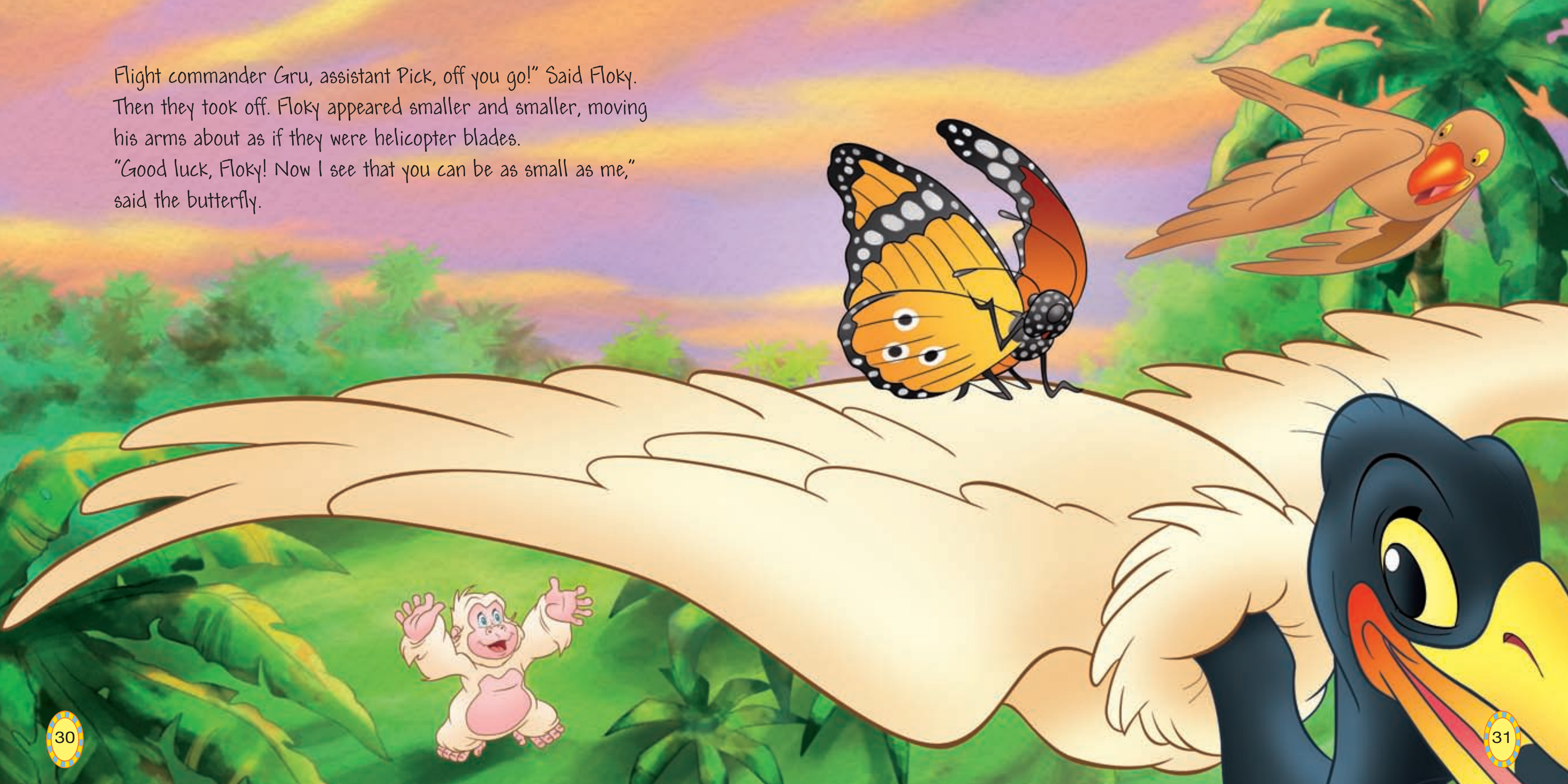


"I'm sorry I wasn't nice to you and teased you for being such a big kid."
"But I am! You mean, the biggest kid in the jungle," replied Floky.
"I'll do this favor for you, but only if you promise not to perfume Gru's
'first class seats' with your antennae," said Floky, jokingly.



"More than that: I promise that I will always keep you
in my heart." Answered the butterfly.

Flight commander Gru, assistant Pick, off you go!" Said Floky.
Then they took off. Floky appeared smaller and smaller, moving
his arms about as if they were helicopter blades.
"Good luck, Floky! Now I see that you can be as small as me,"
said the butterfly.



what is COMMUNITY SPIRIT?

It's what makes us help one another. When we do things not only thinking about ourselves or what interests us, but rather about what is most important, regardless of whether this is good or bad for us. Community spirit is what we feel when we manage to also think about those who are near to us: Our friends, relatives, neighbors and everybody who needs our help, cooperation or simply a smile. Although sometimes in order to achieve this, we must refrain from doing what we would most like to do, in order to help others. It's like when you make a sandcastle with lots of tiny mounds of sand, when maybe with the help of all your friends and a new friend, you could build a very large, strong and lovely sandcastle together.



Manual for the Perfect Adventurer

Choose your backpack carefully: It should be light, strong, have a lot of compartments and inside it, you should always have...

A hat, cap or helmet:

To protect you from the sun, heat, wind or the cold, depending on where you're going. You can find caps with visors to protect your neck from the sun, with vents and even with a water flask for drinking. You could wear a pith helmet like the ancient adventurers, in the style of Indiana Jones.

Camera:

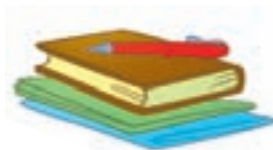
For taking photos of people, places and interesting things to share them with your family and friends later.

A small notebook:

For gathering all your travel impressions and for making your own logbook or travel album.

Trousers with a lot of pockets,

zips and detachable parts so that you can transform them into shorts in a flash.



Magnifying glass:

For seeing even the tiniest things in full detail.

Always wear a smile:

It makes everything easier.

Flask:

So that you always have fresh water with you.

Old and comfortable boots, trainers and sandals:

Your best allies on long hikes.

Always carry your own "provisions":

Dried fruit, biscuits, a bar of chocolate, some juice and mineral water.

Books, comics, magazines, cards and pocket-sized games:

To keep yourself amused during long waits and to brighten up long journeys. It's also a way to make new friends, if you swap them or ask them to play with you.

... Lastly and very importantly, **follow this piece of advice:** "When in Rome, do as the Romans..." This means letting yourself be surprised by new experiences, customs and flavors... In this way, you will be able to learn many good things, as you are lucky enough to be able to meet new people and discover new places and cultures.

*It's great
to be involved!*

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