

BRAMBLE AND WOODFER

Bramble and Woodfer are squirrels. They live together in the Old Oak Tree with their three other brothers and sisters. They all look just the same. They have sparkly, black eyes and long fluffy tails.



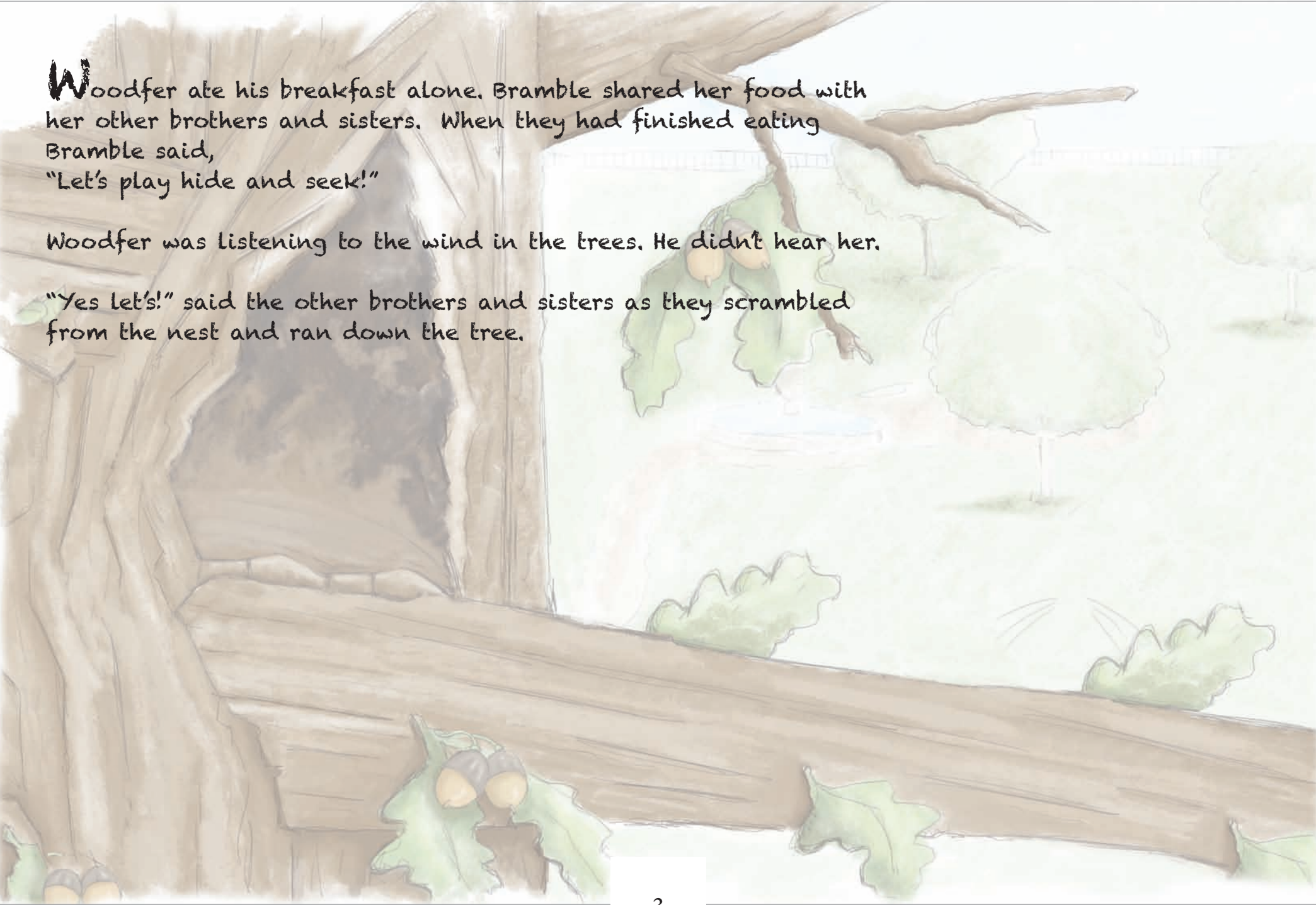
It was nearly morning. Far away, a buzzard squawked as she left the forest to go in search of food.

Bramble snuggled up to her brothers and sisters in the middle of the nest. They were all together except for Woodfer. He lay alone at the very edge of the nest. Bramble opened her eyes and saw him. She shivered as she thought how cold and lonely he must be.

Woodfer looked at his four brothers and sisters. They were lying so close to each other that they looked like a pile of tails, and heads and tummies and legs.

"URGH how horrible," he thought. The sun rose and light shone into the nest and covered the squirrels with its golden light.





Woodfer ate his breakfast alone. Bramble shared her food with her other brothers and sisters. When they had finished eating Bramble said,
"Let's play hide and seek!"

Woodfer was listening to the wind in the trees. He didn't hear her.

"Yes let's!" said the other brothers and sisters as they scrambled from the nest and ran down the tree.

Bramble looked at Woodfer. He was alone - looking at the shadows moving on the bark of the tree. She ran to him and put her arm round him.

"Come and play hide and seek with us," she said. Woodfer pushed her away.

"Be like that," she said. "We don't want to play with you anyway." She ran after her other brothers and sisters.



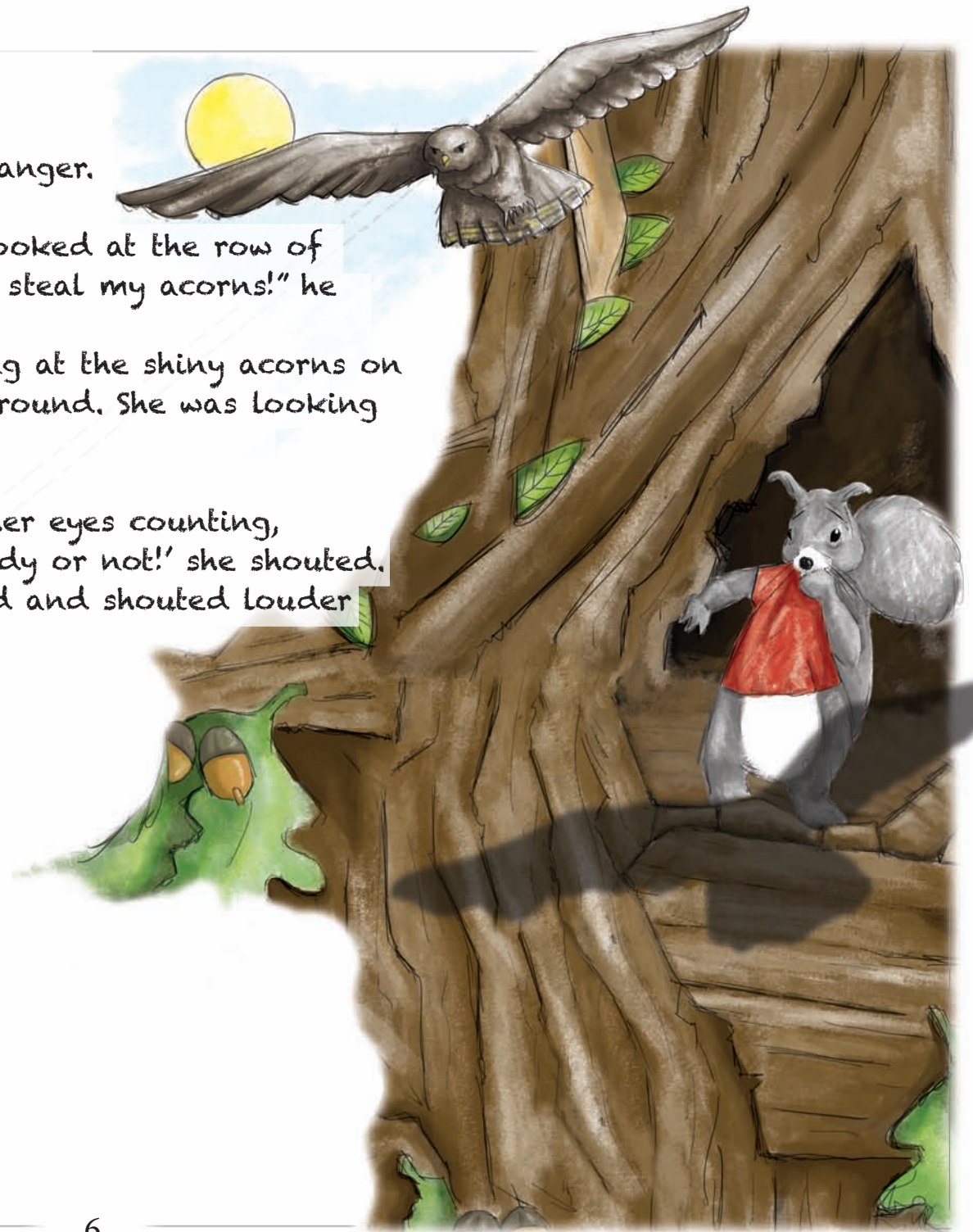
Woodfer went to his acorn collection in the hole in the tree. He picked out his favourites. He polished them on the soft white fur of his tummy, carried them out of the hole and put them in a row on the branch next to the nest. The sun shone on their brown shells. They were so beautiful.



A shadow fell over Woodfer. He sensed danger. He hid in the hole and peered out. He saw Buzzard hovering over the tree. Woodfer looked at the row of acorns on the branch. "Oh no, Buzzard will steal my acorns!" he thought.

But then he saw that Buzzard wasn't looking at the shiny acorns on the branch. She was looking down to the ground. She was looking at Bramble.

Bramble was standing with her paws over her eyes counting, "... eighteen, nineteen, twenty. Coming ready or not!" she shouted. Woodfer had to do something. He screamed and shouted louder than he had ever shouted before. "Bramble, run!"



When Bramble heard Woodfer's screams she looked up. She saw Buzzard sweep out of the sky towards her. She ran as fast as she could. Buzzard's strong, sharp claws stretched towards Bramble! Just in time she reached the prickly blackberry bush at the bottom of the Old Oak Tree.



Bramble peeked out from the bush and saw Buzzard fly up into the sky with six grey hairs from her tail in her sharp claws.

"Woodfer, you saved me!" Bramble shouted. She ran up the tree and ran towards Woodfer. She was going to put her arms round him. But she saw his face. He was scared - scared of her!



Then she had an idea. She ran into the nest and came out with a big shiny acorn. It was her favourite. She polished it on the soft white fur on her tummy and put it with Woodfer's acorns - on the end of the line.

Woodfer looked at the acorn. He turned it - a little to the right, then a little to the left until it looked just right. He smiled.

"Thank you!" he said.

