

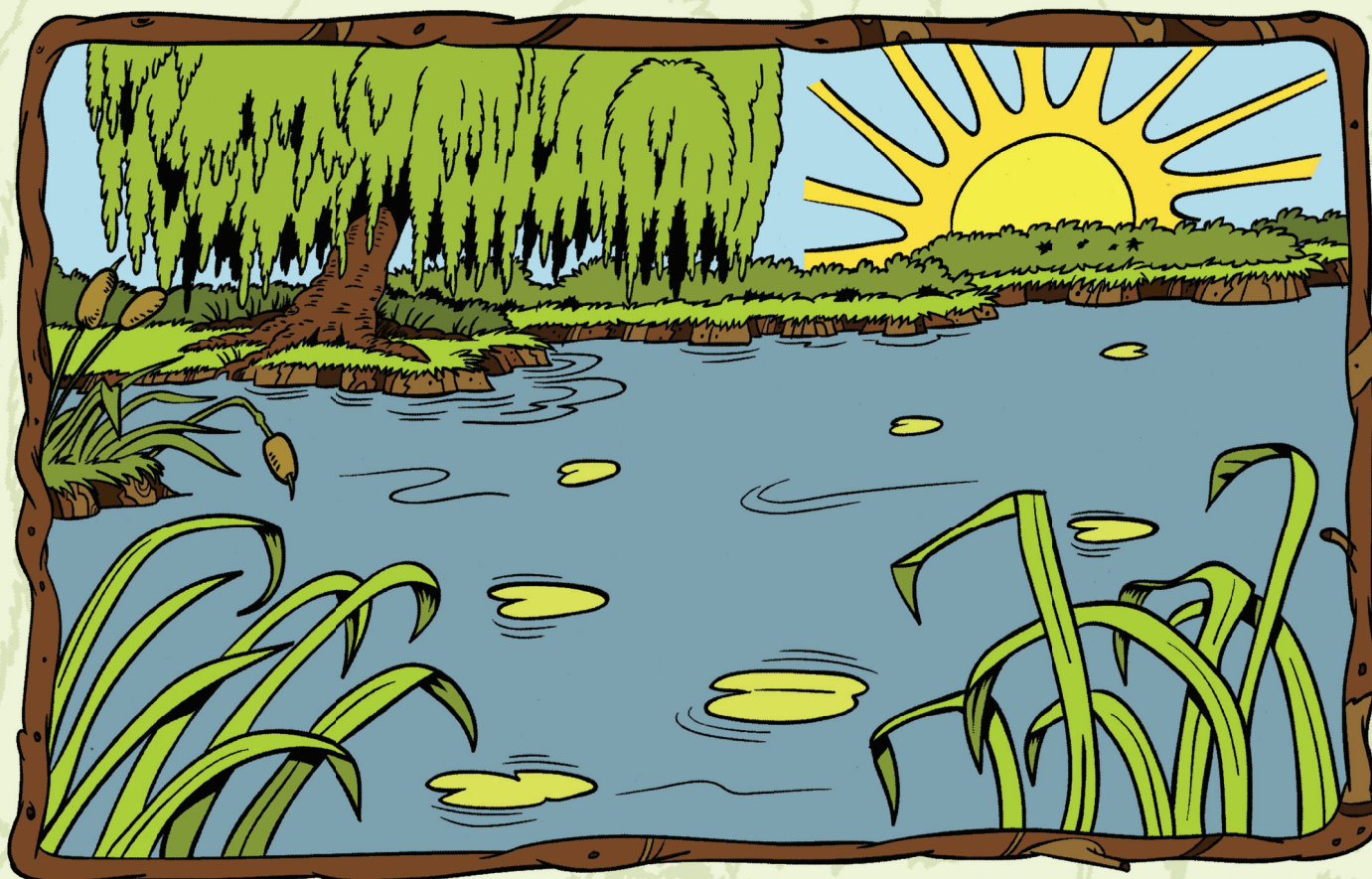
STORY TWO

A VISITOR



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A MARSH HAWK THREATENS THE ANIMALS AT WILLOW POND AND KELSO'S YOUNG FRIEND LILY LEARNS TO REPORT THE DANGER TO A TRUSTED ADULT



As the sun came up over Willow Pond, Kelso stretched and rubbed his eyes. He had spent the night floating on a lily pad near the cattails. With a croaky yawn, he blinked and looked around.

A light mist drifted over the water and the dew on the grasses twinkled in the sun. "Hmmm," Kelso thought to himself. "Another perfect day—hot and sticky!"



Even though it was early morning, Kelso could see that many of his friends were already busy. Several turtles were getting ready to sun themselves on a large flat rock and the ducks were preparing to set off in search of tender grasses and bugs.

On the sparkling water at the center of the pond, Kelso could hear Lily and a new friend playing. They were trying to get on top of an especially wobbly lily pad.

"Watch out!" Lily yelled, as the leaf flipped over. The two frogs croaked and tumbled into the water.

Lily laughed and told her friend, "If we crowd together, we'll just keep falling off. So let's each stay on our own side and see if we can balance our weight."

"OK, Lily," said the other frog. "Let's climb back on! But this time, we'll work together!"

Moving carefully, Lily and her friend scrambled onto the leaf. "We did it!" they cheered. "And all we needed to do was cooperate and share!"

As he watched the two frogs playing, Kelso noticed that mosquitoes were beginning to circle over the water. "Breakfast time!" he thought.

Hoping to nab one with his sticky tongue, he patiently sat very still as the swarm edged closer and closer. His stomach rumbled.

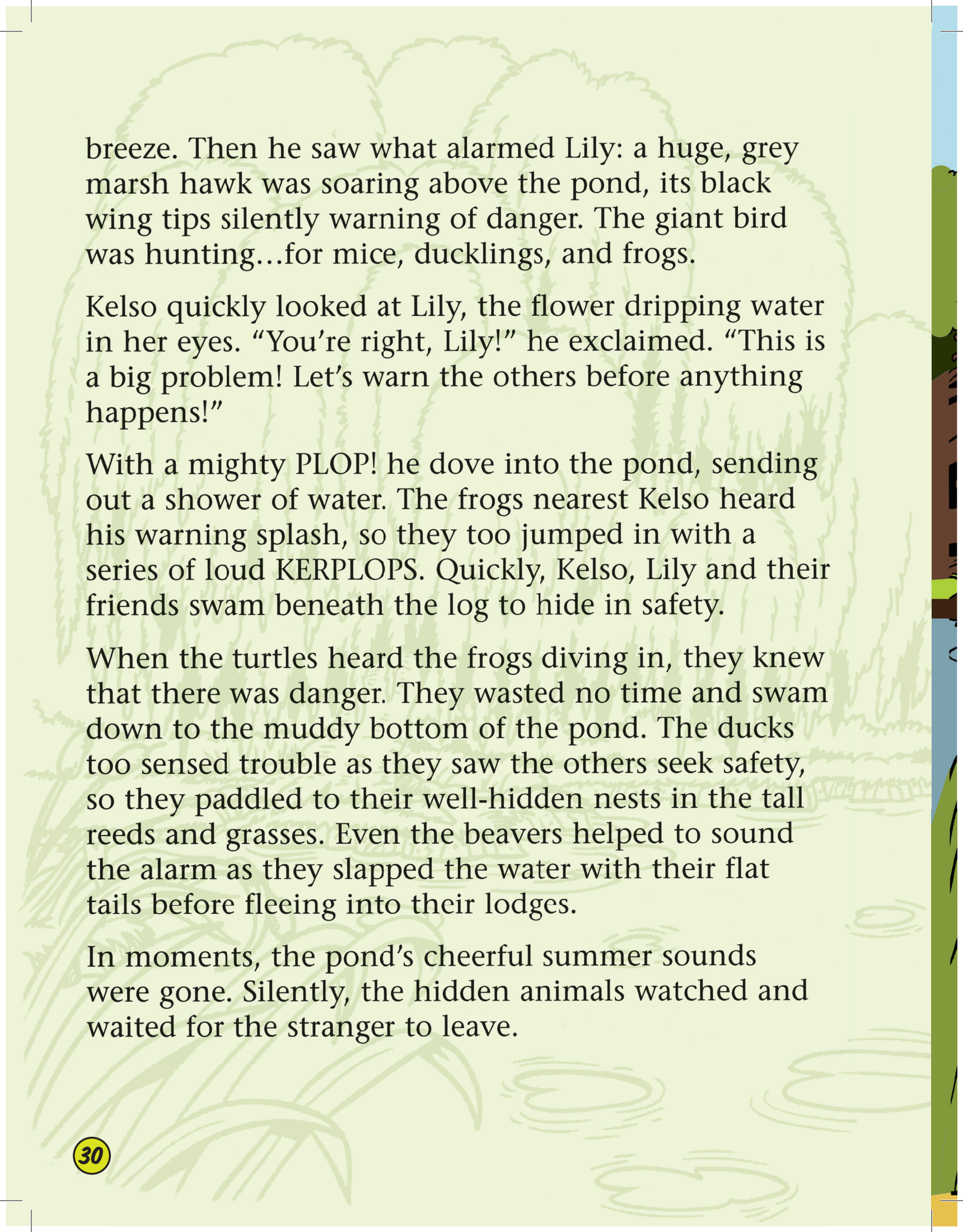
As Kelso intently watched the bugs, Lily suddenly poked her head out of the water. Startled, he jumped back a bit. She had come up out of the water so quickly that a pink lily flower was hanging upside down on her head.

Kelso looked at her closely, sensing that something was wrong.

"There's trouble, Kelso!" she warned. "Look, a visitor!"
She pointed to the sky over the blackberry bushes.

At first, Kelso saw nothing. The soft, blue summer sky
was empty except for a few swallows gliding in the





breeze. Then he saw what alarmed Lily: a huge, grey marsh hawk was soaring above the pond, its black wing tips silently warning of danger. The giant bird was hunting...for mice, ducklings, and frogs.

Kelso quickly looked at Lily, the flower dripping water in her eyes. "You're right, Lily!" he exclaimed. "This is a big problem! Let's warn the others before anything happens!"

With a mighty PLOP! he dove into the pond, sending out a shower of water. The frogs nearest Kelso heard his warning splash, so they too jumped in with a series of loud KERPLOPS. Quickly, Kelso, Lily and their friends swam beneath the log to hide in safety.

When the turtles heard the frogs diving in, they knew that there was danger. They wasted no time and swam down to the muddy bottom of the pond. The ducks too sensed trouble as they saw the others seek safety, so they paddled to their well-hidden nests in the tall reeds and grasses. Even the beavers helped to sound the alarm as they slapped the water with their flat tails before fleeing into their lodges.

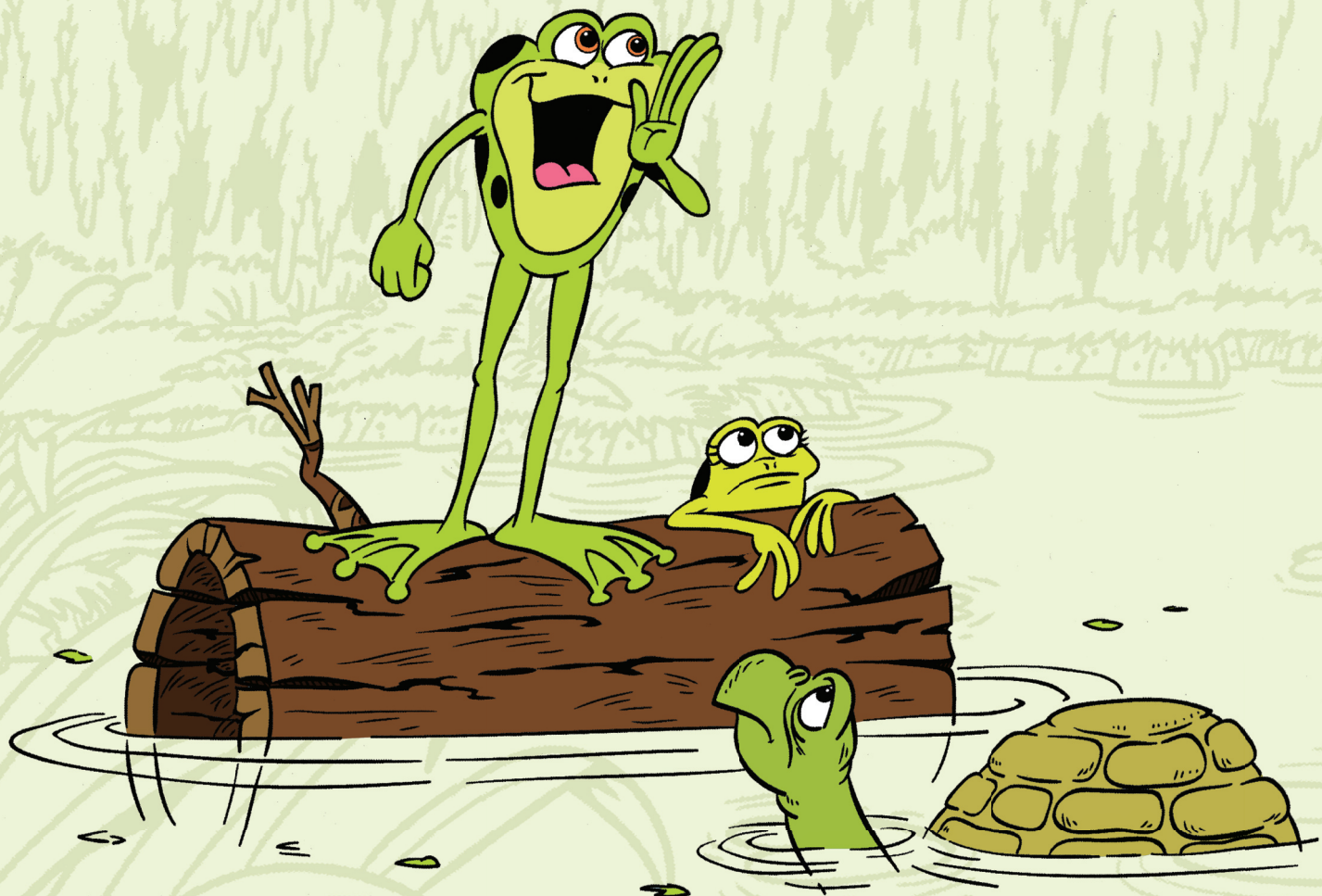
In moments, the pond's cheerful summer sounds were gone. Silently, the hidden animals watched and waited for the stranger to leave.



The hawk slowly circled the pond once more, but he soon realized that he had been spotted. It was useless to hunt any longer. With a sigh and a shrug, he flapped his huge wings and disappeared.

Kelso hopped onto his shady log. "He's gone, everybody! It's safe to come out!"

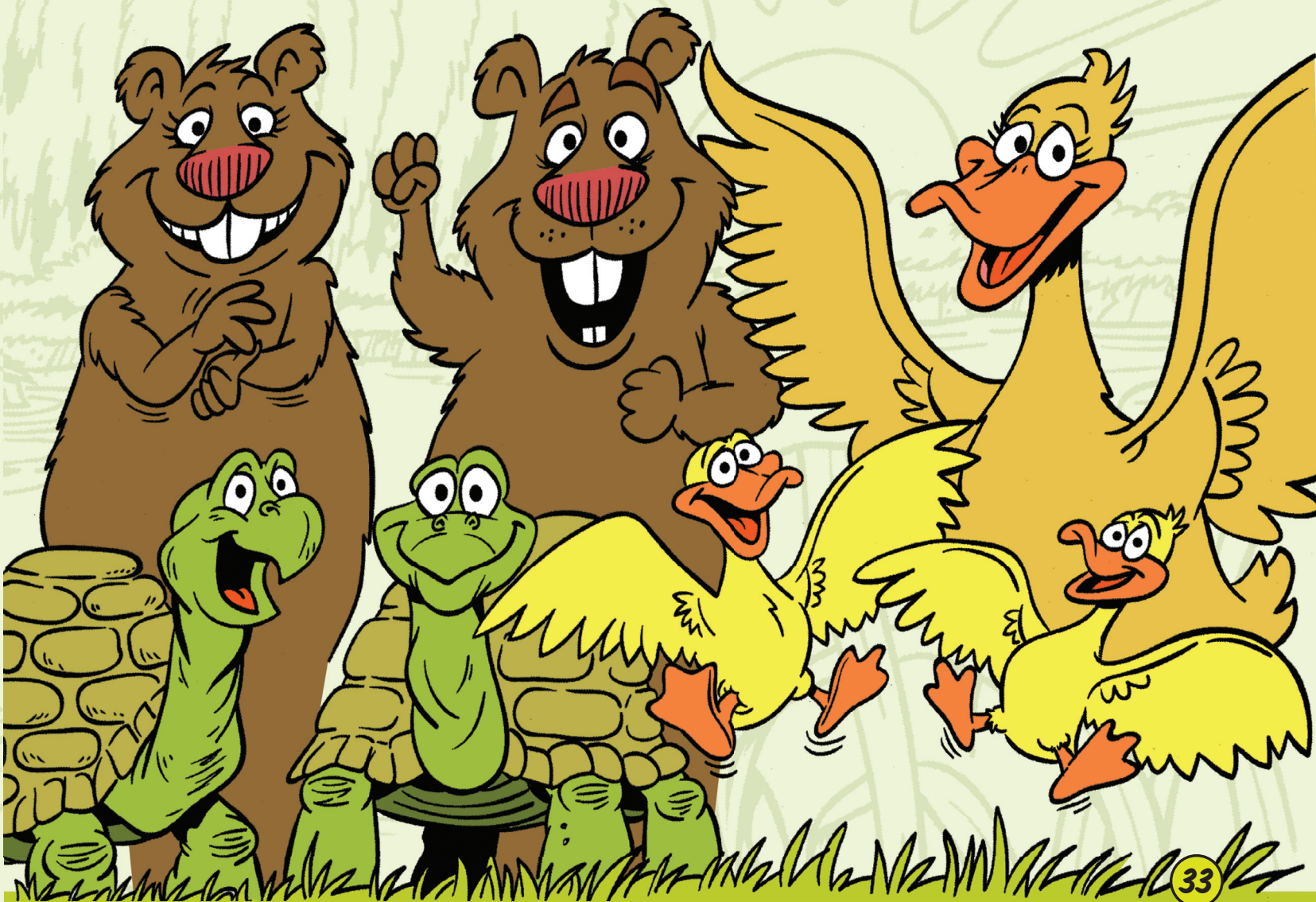
Soon all the animals of Willow Pond crowded around, feeling excited and relieved that they had escaped danger.



"Thank you, Kelso, for warning us of the marsh hawk!" they cheered.

"Hold on!" exclaimed Kelso. "I wasn't the one who spotted the hawk. Lily is the one who saw it first and she told me of the danger."

Lily hopped onto the log next to Kelso and told the crowd: "Well, when I saw that hawk, I got scared! Then I remembered that BIG problems have to be shared with someone older that I trust. Kelso was the closest, so I went straight to him!"



The animals cheered and decided to have a party that night in honor of Lily. By the light of the moon, dragonflies and moths, turtles and frogs, beavers and ducks danced and sang...and told stories of times when they too shared a big problem with someone they trusted.

