

THE CANARY CHICKS





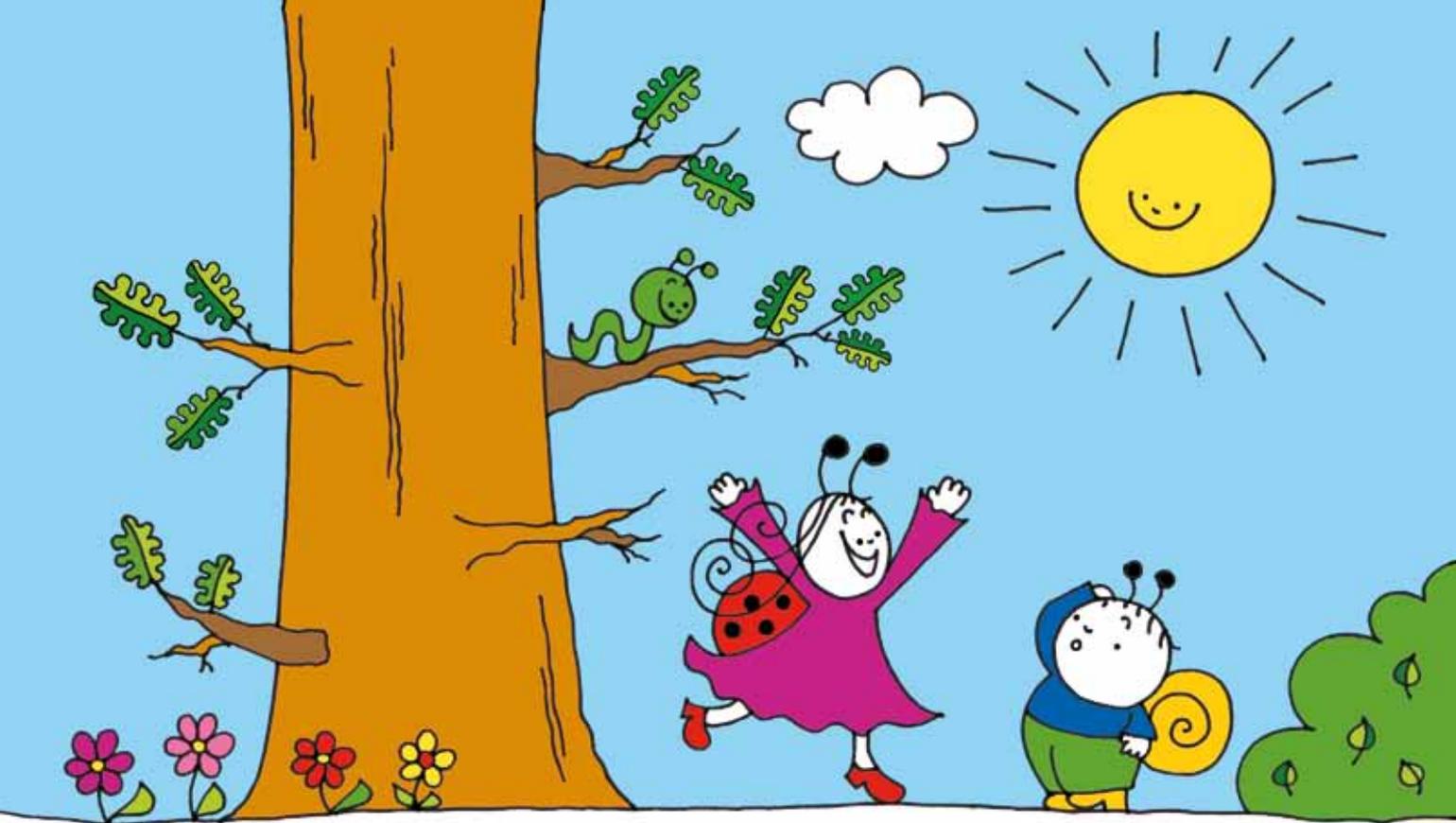
One day, Christopher the canary met Chloe and they fell in love. Chloe lived in an oak tree not far away from Dolly's house. The new couple built a nest on the most beautiful branch of the tree.



Berry and Dolly watched them building their nest from the ground.

"Look, Chloe's been sitting on the nest for days. Do you think she could be sick?" the little snail asked. He was worried.

"No, Berry. I'm sure she's going to lay eggs and they'll hatch into canary chicks," Dolly told him enthusiastically.



"Eggs, chicks?" Berry was confused.

"Of course! Chloe will lay the eggs in the nest and she'll keep them warm until they hatch open," the ladybird said.



And Dolly was right. A few days later, Chloe stood up, and as she was arranging things in the nest, Berry noticed three tiny eggs.
"Three! They'll be three chicks," he said to Dolly cheerfully.



From that day on, Berry and Dolly didn't leave the oak tree. They couldn't wait to see when the chicks would hatch.



They didn't have to wait for too long. One morning, they heard excited tweeting coming from the oak tree. Christopher and Chloe were very busy. They were collecting moss and grass to make the nest softer and warmer. Berry and Dolly listened hard and soon heard the chicks cheeping.



"Hurray! The chicks have hatched!" Dolly exclaimed and gave Berry a big hug.



"Can we take a look at them?" Dolly asked Christopher excitedly.

"Of course you can, but please be careful. They're still very tiny," the proud daddy replied.



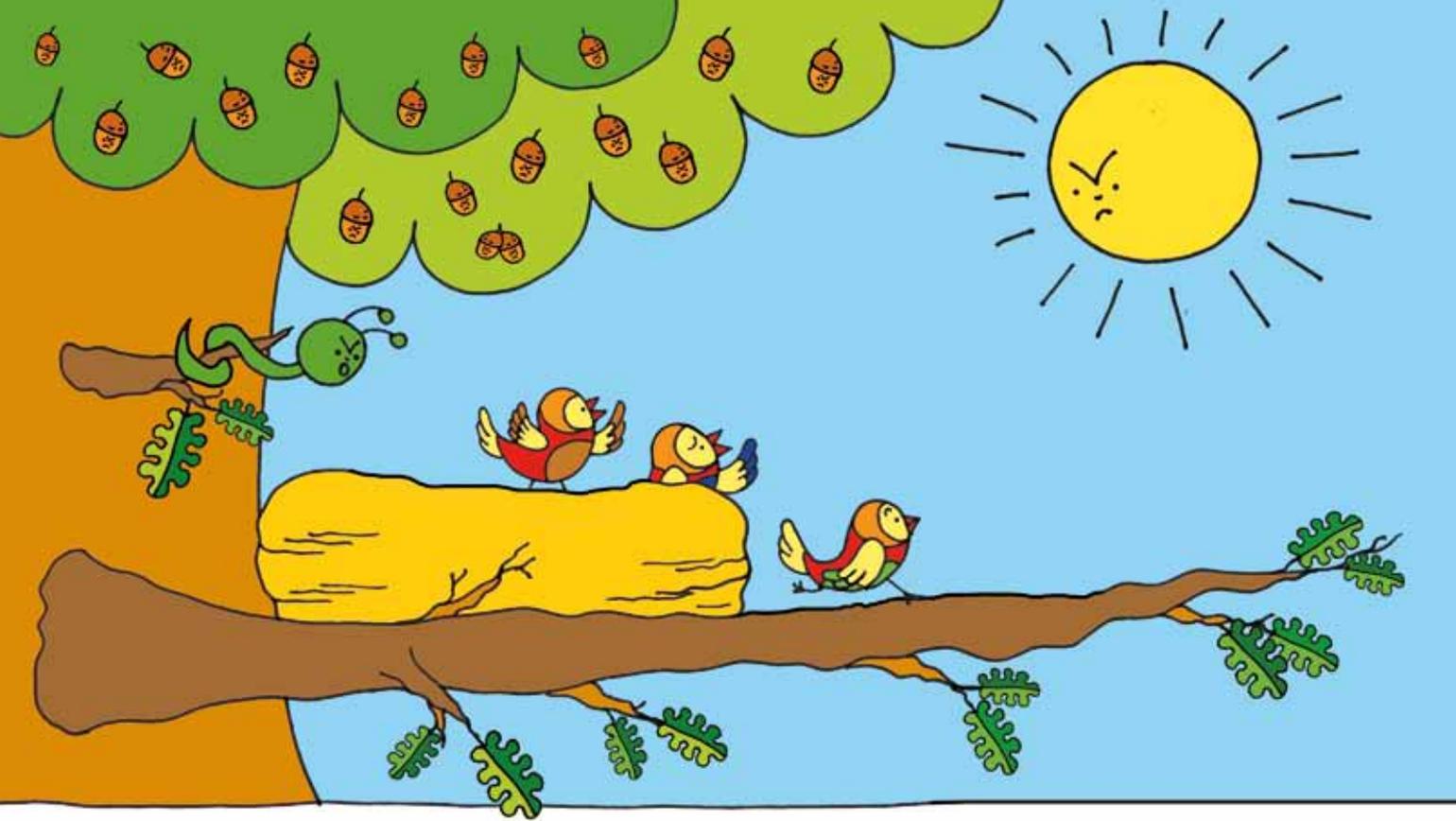
Christopher let Berry and Dolly hop on his back and he flew up with them to the nest. "They're so cute," Dolly said cheerfully. The snail and the ladybird carefully patted the baby canaries. "You'll be able to come and play with us when you're bigger," Berry told them.



The little birds grew very quickly. They were soon ready for flying lessons. Chloe was their teacher and they got better by the day.



"We've got to go and get some food. Be good," Christopher told the chicks one morning. "Don't even think about flying out of the nest without us! You're still very small and can only fly with us," Chloe added.



But the smallest chick was rather naughty.

"Nonsense! I'm very good at flying. I'm going to try it on my own," he said and jumped out of the nest.

"You're not allowed, you're not allowed!" tweeted the other two, but they couldn't stop him.



The two chicks were hopping nervously around the nest when their parents arrived back. "He flew off! Our little brother flew off," they tweeted. "Oh dear! But he's too small! He could be in all kinds of trouble!" Chloe cried.



Berry and Dolly heard all the fuss and set out to find the naughty chick.



They looked for him everywhere: on the hill, in the mountains, by the lake, in the forest and in the meadow but he was nowhere to be found. It was getting dark. "How are we going to find him when it's dark?" Chloe asked and she started to sob.



But then little lights appeared in the sky. The fireflies had come to help the canaries. "We can make light. We'll help you find him," they said.



The fireflies lit up the night and the little friends started their search again.



"There he is! There he is! In the bush," Berry shouted suddenly, and they all ran to the bush. The little canary had fallen asleep in the bush. He was exhausted and shivering. Chloe took him in her wings and hugged him happily. "There you are!"



"I'm so sorry. I promise I'll never do anything like this again. I flew out but couldn't find my way back to the nest. I got lost and tired and then I must have fallen asleep," the little canary tweeted.

"You should always do as you're told," Christopher said.

"But the most important thing is that we've found you," Chloe added.



Chloe flew back to the nest with her chick on her back and the fireflies danced around them like stars in the sky.



The canaries were soon back together again. Chloe kept the chicks warm under her wings.
"Goodnight, little chicks" Berry and Dolly whispered.