

TABOR

Mel Fell

Corey R. Tabor

Mel Fell

Sometimes, you might fall down, down, down,

before you learn to fly up, up, up . . .

A charming and innovative tale about a plucky little bird, from the award-winning author of *Fox the Tiger*.

Ages 4–8

BALZER + BRAY

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Corey R. Tabor is the author and illustrator of *Snail Crossing*, *Fox and the Jumping Contest*, *Fox and the Bike Ride*, *Fox Is Late*, *Fox versus Winter*, and the Theodore Seuss Geisel Award–winning *Fox the Tiger*. Corey lives in Seattle with his wife and son and spends his time making pictures and stories. You can visit him online at www.coreyrtabor.com.

Jacket art © 2021 by Corey R. Tabor
Jacket design by Dana Fritts

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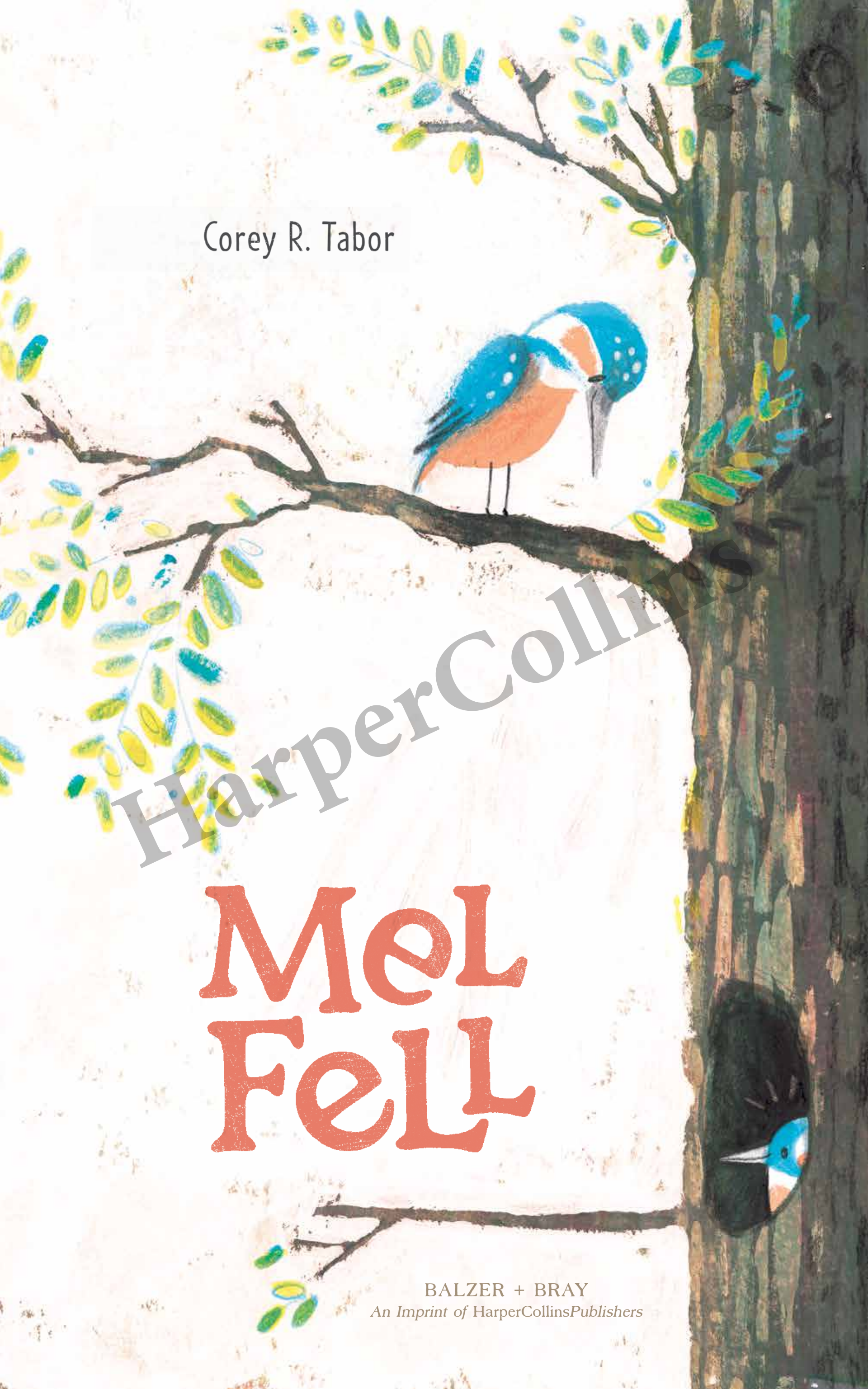
US \$17.99 / \$21.99 CAN

ISBN 978-0-06-237801-4

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\$17.99



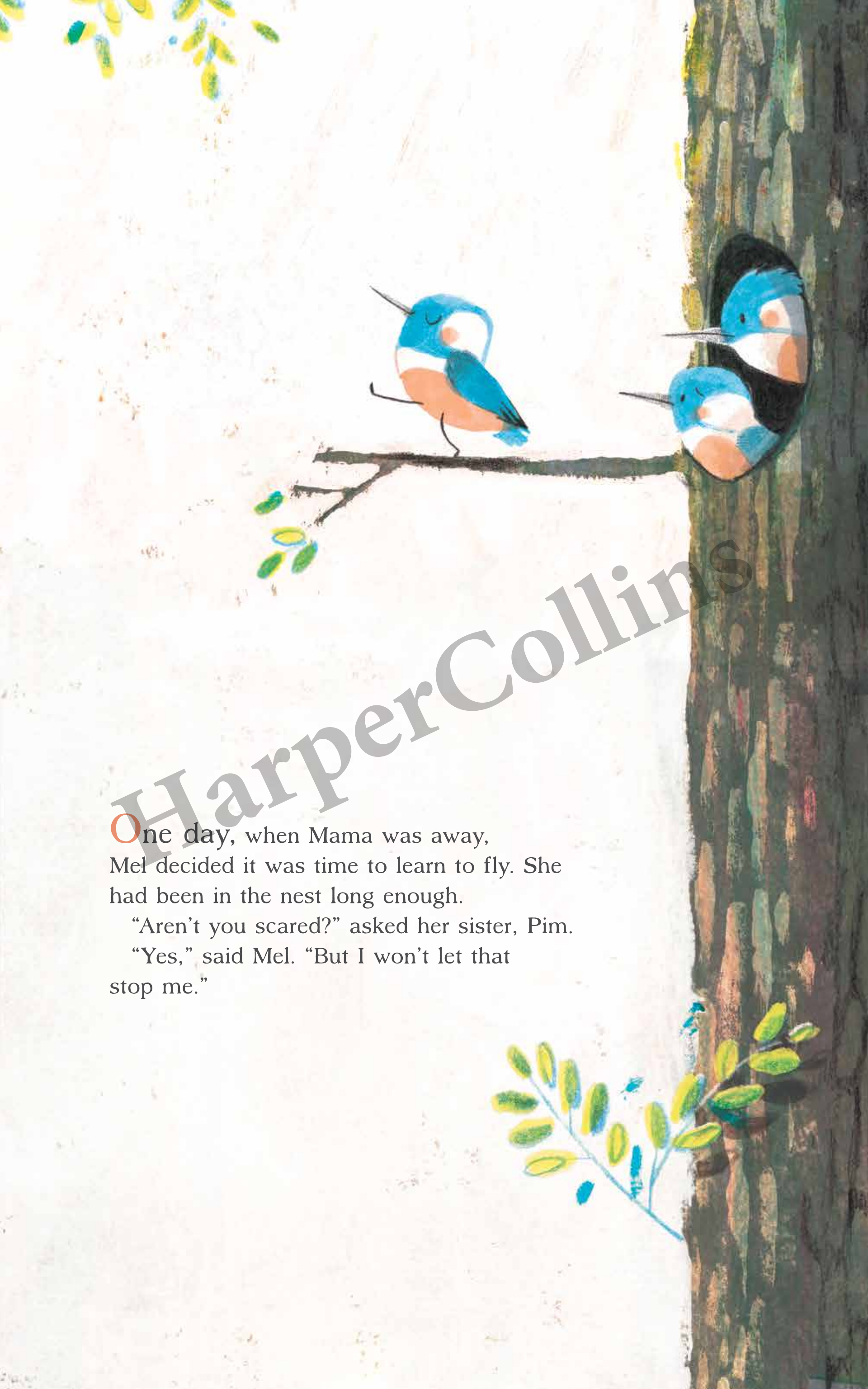


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An illustration of three small birds with blue heads, white chests, and orange bellies. One bird is perched on a dark branch, looking towards the left. Two other birds are perched on a tree trunk to the right, looking towards the left. The background is a light, textured wash of white and yellow. There are some green and yellow leaves at the top left and bottom right corners.

One day, when Mama was away,
Mel decided it was time to learn to fly. She
had been in the nest long enough.
“Aren’t you scared?” asked her sister, Pim.
“Yes,” said Mel. “But I won’t let that
stop me.”



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She looked down.

“It sure is a long drop,” said her brother, Pip.

“Well,” said Mel, “I’ve got wings.”

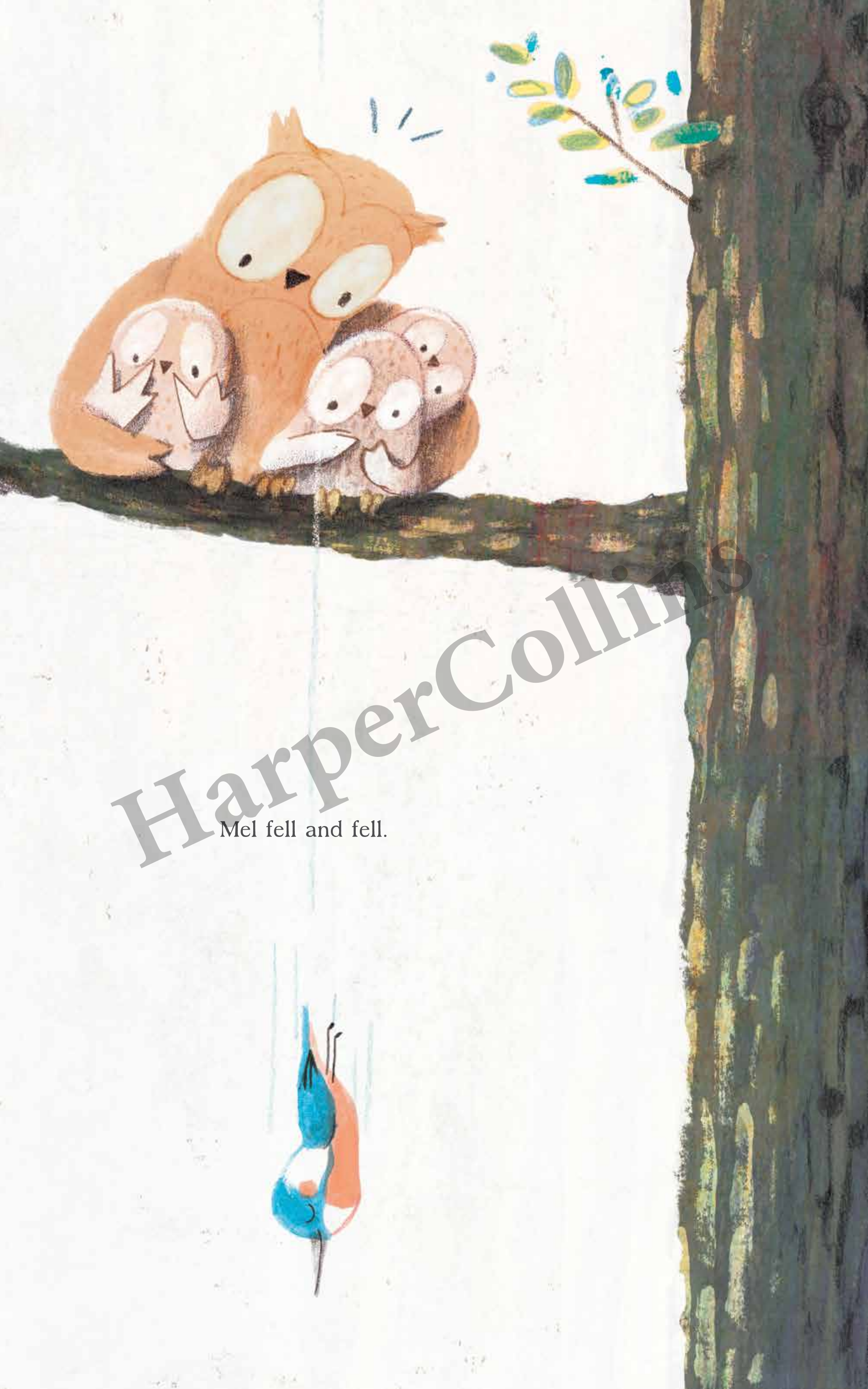
Mel was scared and it was a long drop, but today was the day she would fly.



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“See you soon!” she told her siblings.
She jumped. She flipped. She spread
her wings. And then . . .

she fell.



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Mel fell and fell.

The squirrels tried to catch her. They really did. They'd grown quite fond of those squeaky little chirpers upstairs.

Blast!

Nuts!

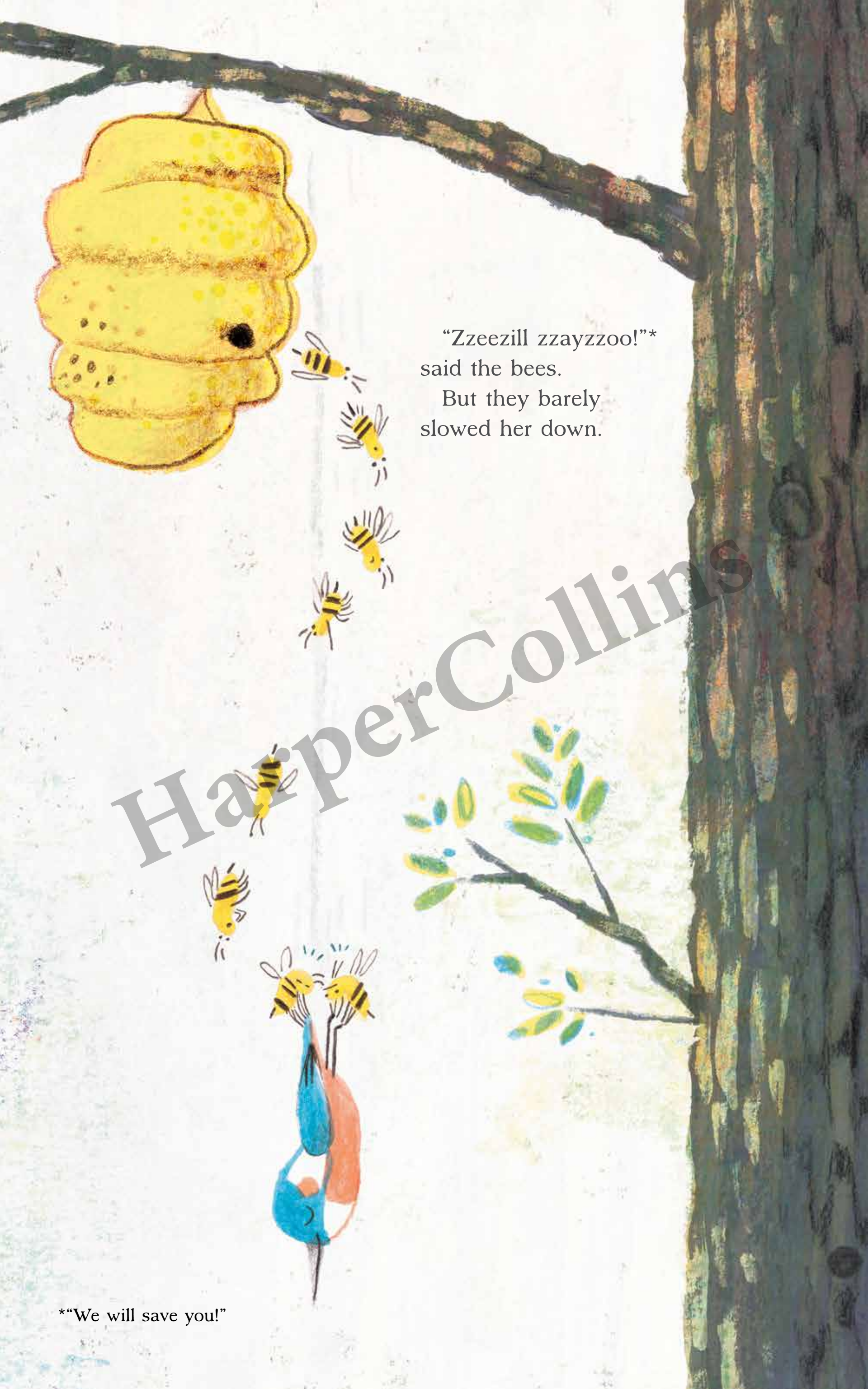
Oof!

Aieeeeeeee!

But it was no use. They missed her by a whisker.



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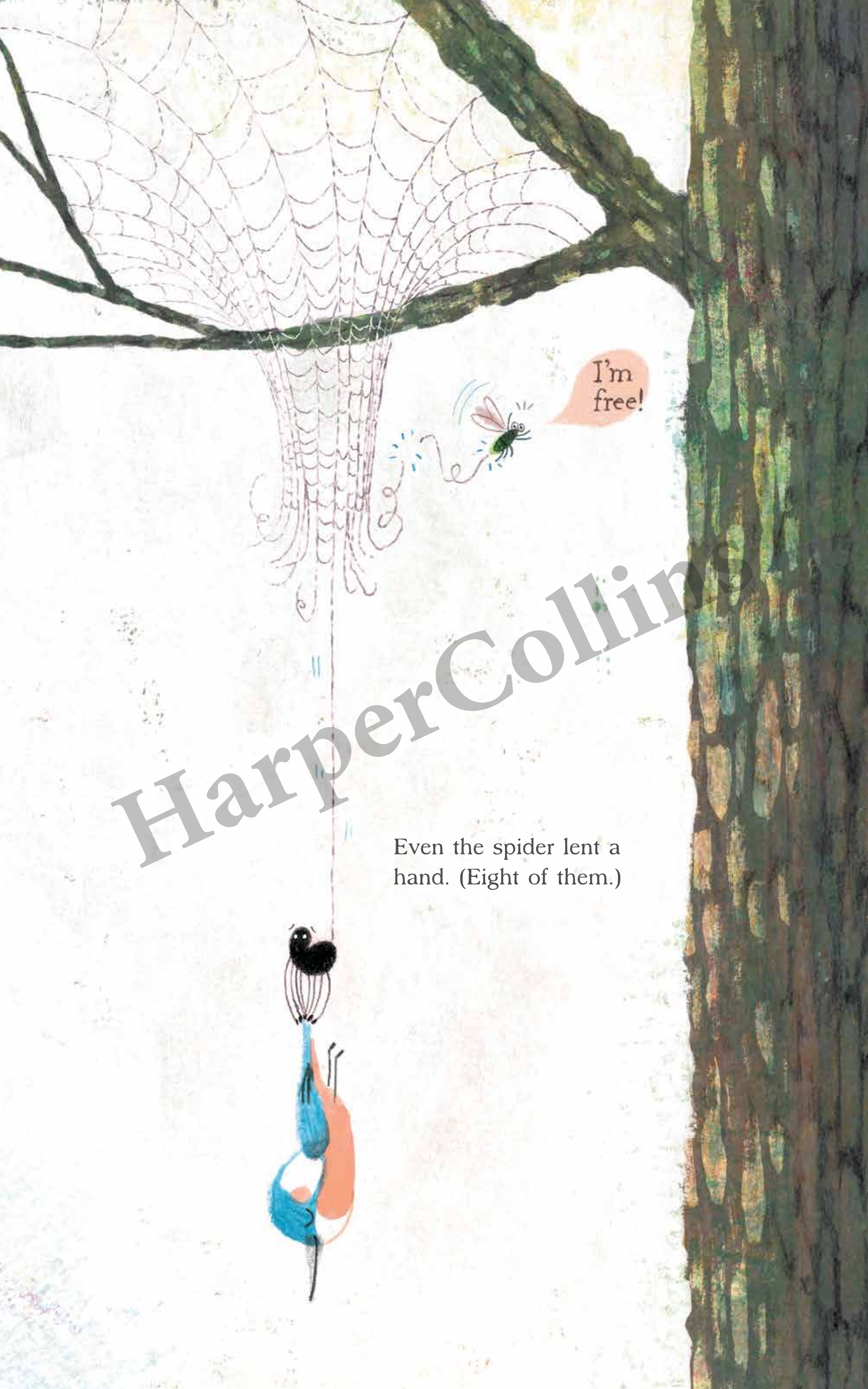


“Zzeezill zzayzzoo!”*
said the bees.

But they barely
slowed her down.

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*“We will save you!”



I'm
free!

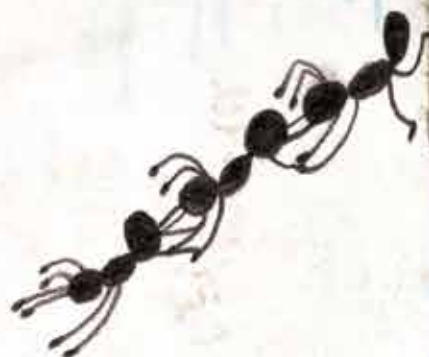
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Even the spider lent a
hand. (Eight of them.)

But still, Mel fell.



Do...not...fear...
helpless...little...
bird,...*I*...will...
catch...you...!



She fell and fell.



Oh no!



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SPLASH

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Mel dived into the water.

She snapped her beak and
caught a fat little fish.

turn the book!

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She kicked her legs.
She wiggled her tail feathers.
She spread her wings. And then . . .

this way



She flew!





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Mel flew and flew.

As Mel flew by, the
spider clapped her hands.
All eight of them.



garg

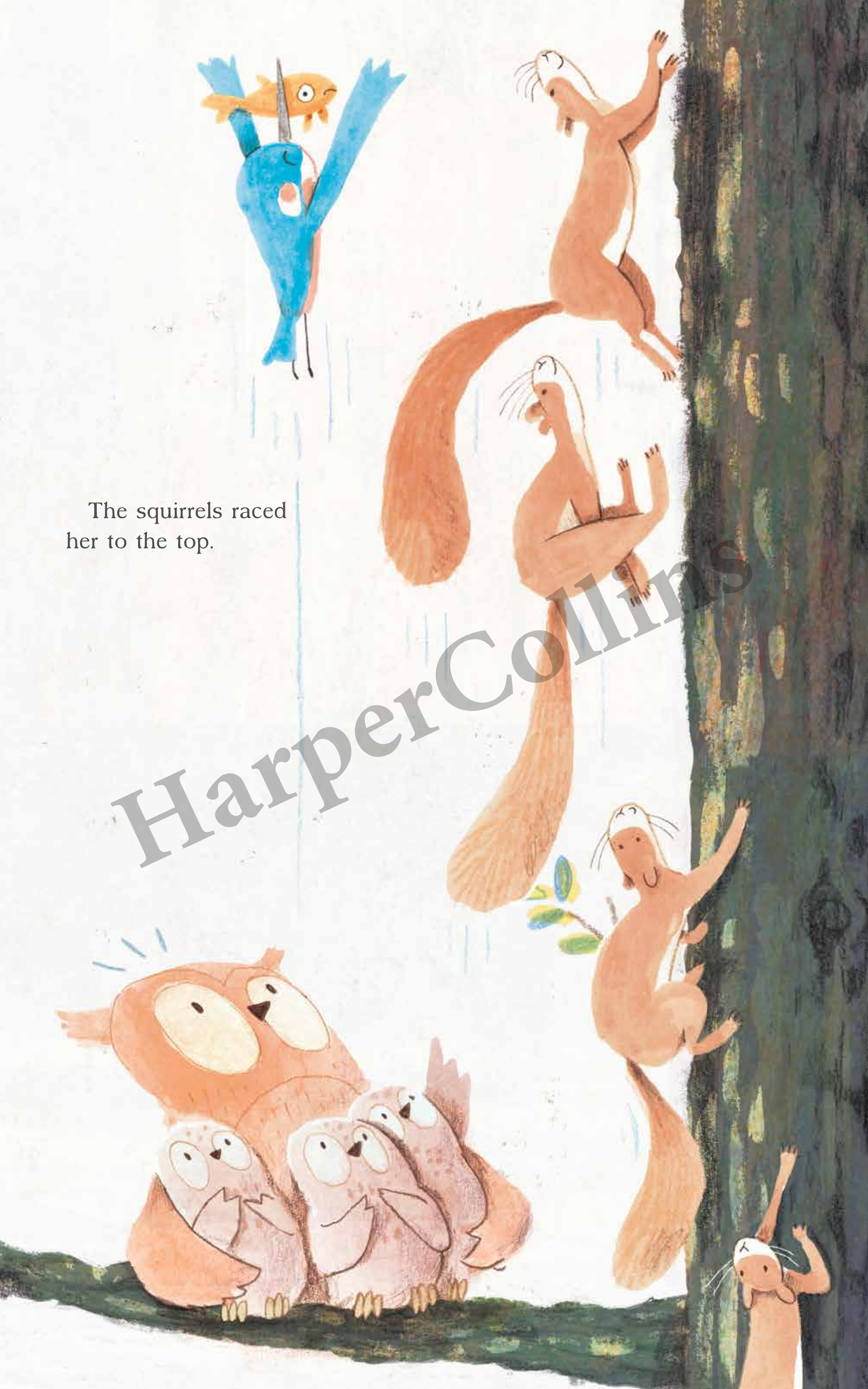
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The bees said,
“Huzzzzzah! Huzzzzzah!”

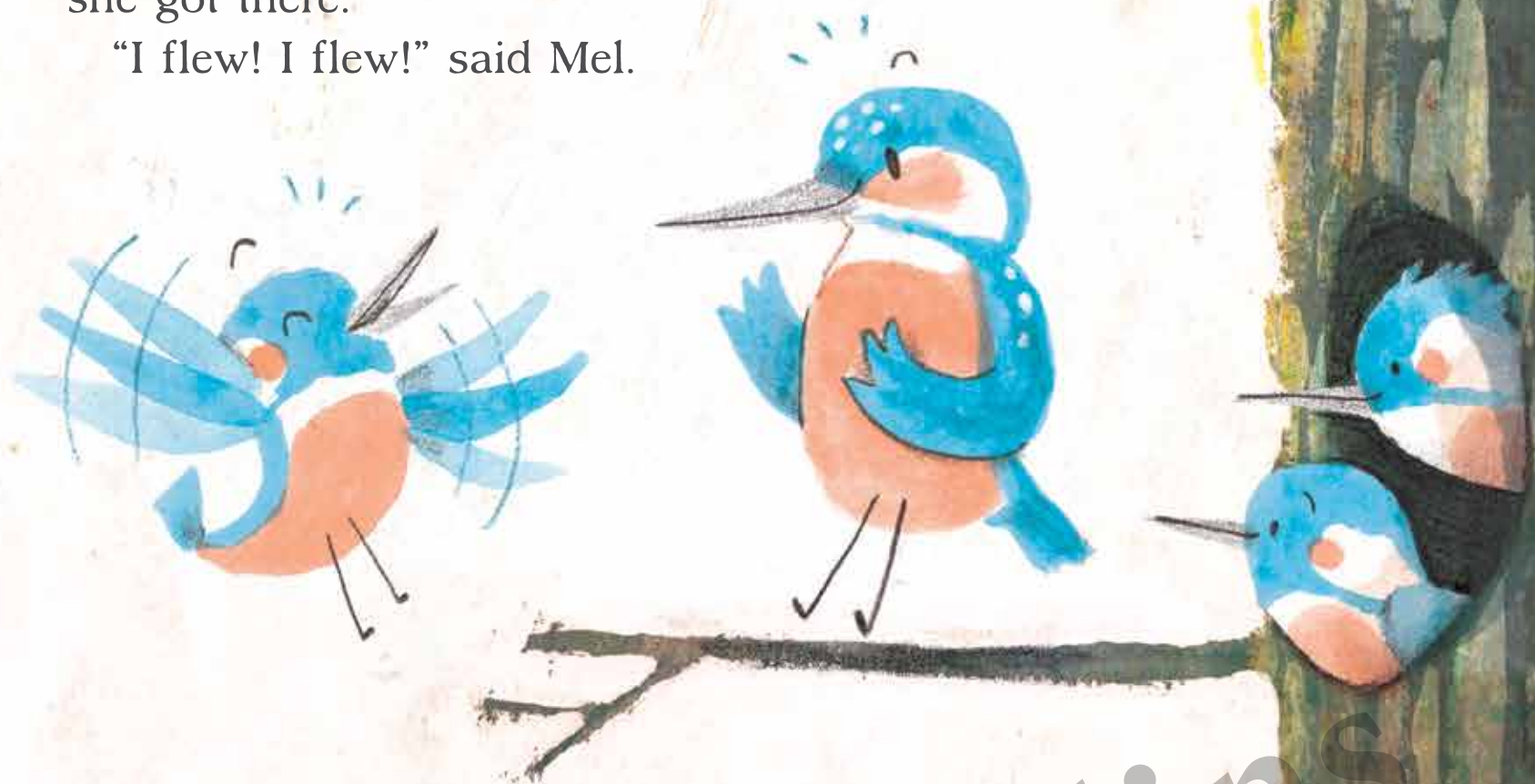


The squirrels raced
her to the top.



Mama was waiting when
she got there.

"I flew! I flew!" said Mel.



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I'm flying!
I'm flying!





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"I knew you could!" said Mama.

"I knew I could, too," said Mel.

Do...not...fear...
helpless...little...
fish...I...will...
catch...you...!

SPLASH

AUTHOR'S NOTE

Mel is a kingfisher. Kingfishers catch fish by diving into the water from tree branches or wires. Many kingfishers nest in tunnels they dig in earthen banks near water, while others nest in tree hollows (some even live in old termite nests). A young kingfisher probably doesn't catch a fish the first time they leave the nest. But then, Mel is a very special bird.

For Mandy and Will



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ISBN 978-0-06-287801-4

The artist used pencil, colored pencil, and acrylic paint, assembled digitally, to create the illustrations for this book. Typography by Dana Fritts

20 21 22 23 24 SCP 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 ♦ First Edition