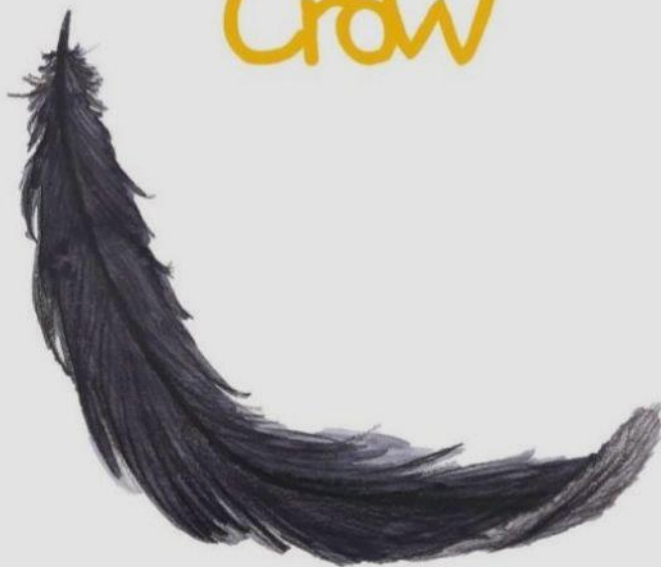


My best friend,

Crow



This is Rusty. A sweet girl, with her orange hair always messy, skin as pale as her grandma's rice cake, and blushed cheeks sprinkled with freckles.





Sometimes, when the sky is covered by clouds, and rain is pouring, you can find Rusty staring in the mirror connecting her biggest freckles with a red pen, creating new constellations which she dreams of exploring one day.



One autumn day, Rusty went
for a walk in the park with
her grandma to feed the
pigeons.







Grandma felt like it was her duty to feed the pigeons, and they seemed to love her.

But Rusty didn't like them, and they didn't seem to like her either. When Rusty was giving them a piece of bread, they flew away.





When Grandma gave Rusty another piece of bread to throw, she almost decided to eat it herself. But Grandma shook her head.

Those picky pigeons flew away before the piece reached the ground.



Then a flutter of black feathers caught Rusty's attention. This bird was big, had black feathers and a sharp beak...and it ate the bread thrown by Rusty!





Rusty started giggling happily, and threw another piece of bread. The crow caught it immediately.

But Grandma chased the crow, and it took flight in the tree's branches.



'We don't feed the crows!' Grandma explained to Rusty on their way home. 'They don't deserve bread. Crows are mean and sly.'

Rusty had other thoughts. She considered them beautiful, and they seemed to like her.





The next morning, on their favourite bench in the park, the crow was waiting for Rusty and Grandma.



Grandma chased
it with her bag,
but the crow
didn't leave.

It jumped from
side to side on the
ground, looking at
them with
curiosity.



Grandma chased it again, then threw a bunch of breadcrumbs on the ground for the pigeons. The crow flew on a branch and looked over to Rusty and Grandma. Rusty looked sadly to the crow and thought how unfair this was.





When the sun reached the middle of the sky, Rusty and Grandma started their walk back home.

The crow was following them, flying from branch to branch, flitting onto a streetlight, on the ground, and then high up above them.

Rusty was amazed. So
what if the crow was a
crow? It was beautiful, and
it didn't seem mean or sly.
When they reached home,
Rusty waved goodbye to
her friend.



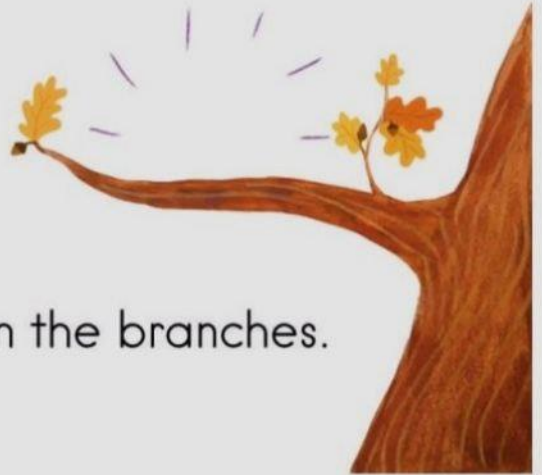
The next morning, Rusty prepared for her walk in the park. She filled her pockets with breadcrumbs, all for the crow.





It wasn't on the bench.

But where was the crow?
Rusty couldn't see it.

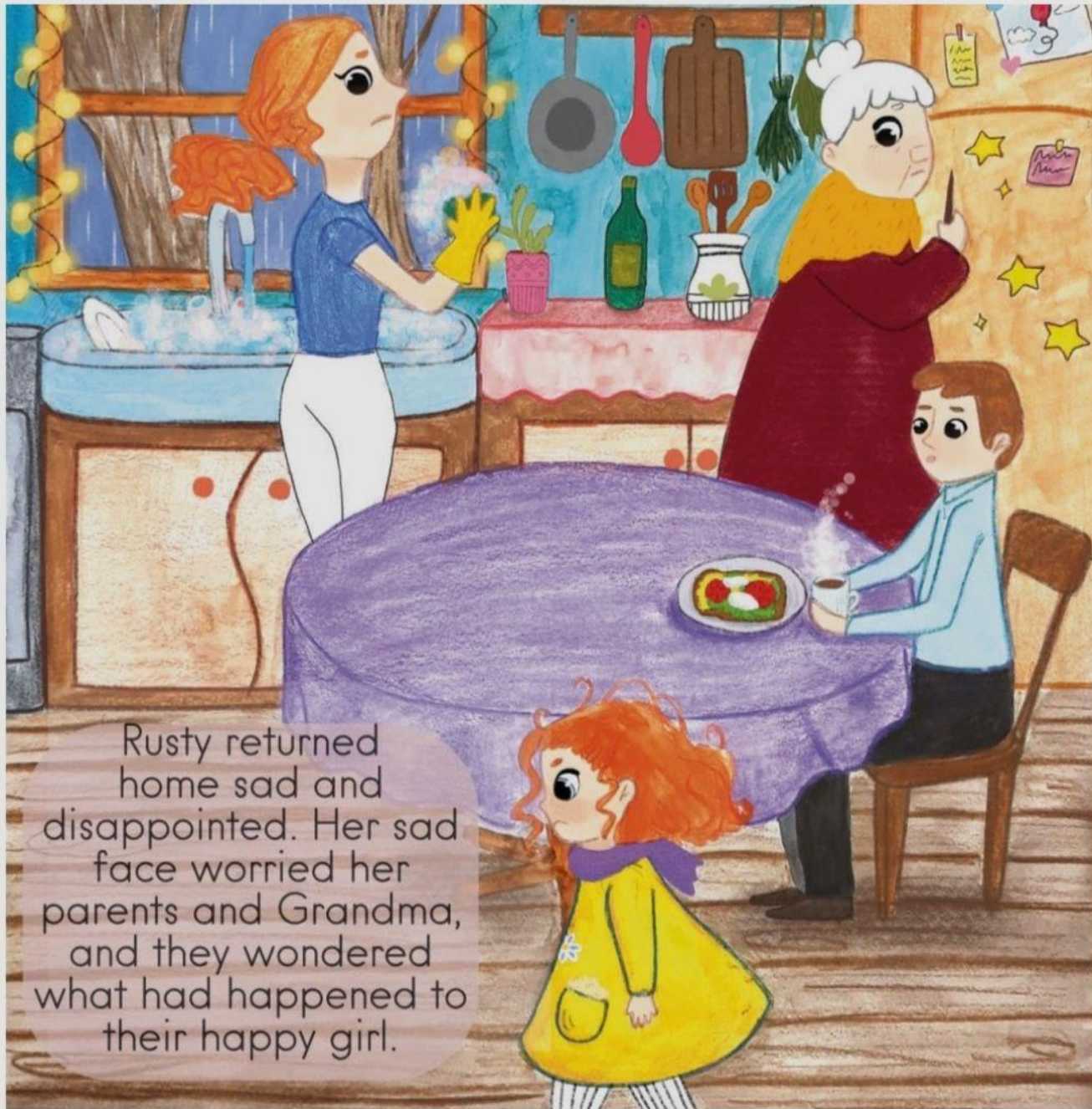


Or in the branches.

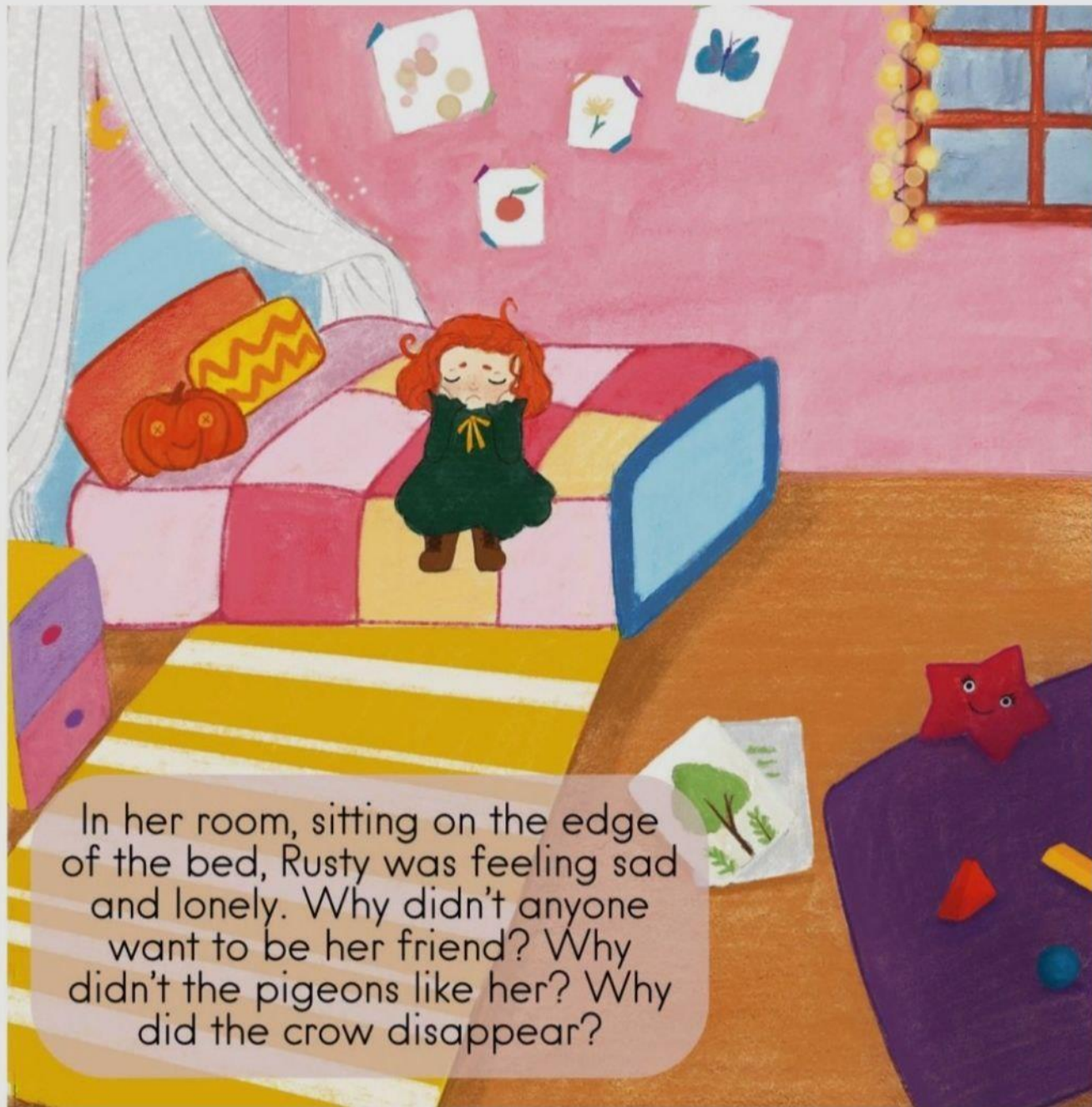


Nor in the sky
or bushes.



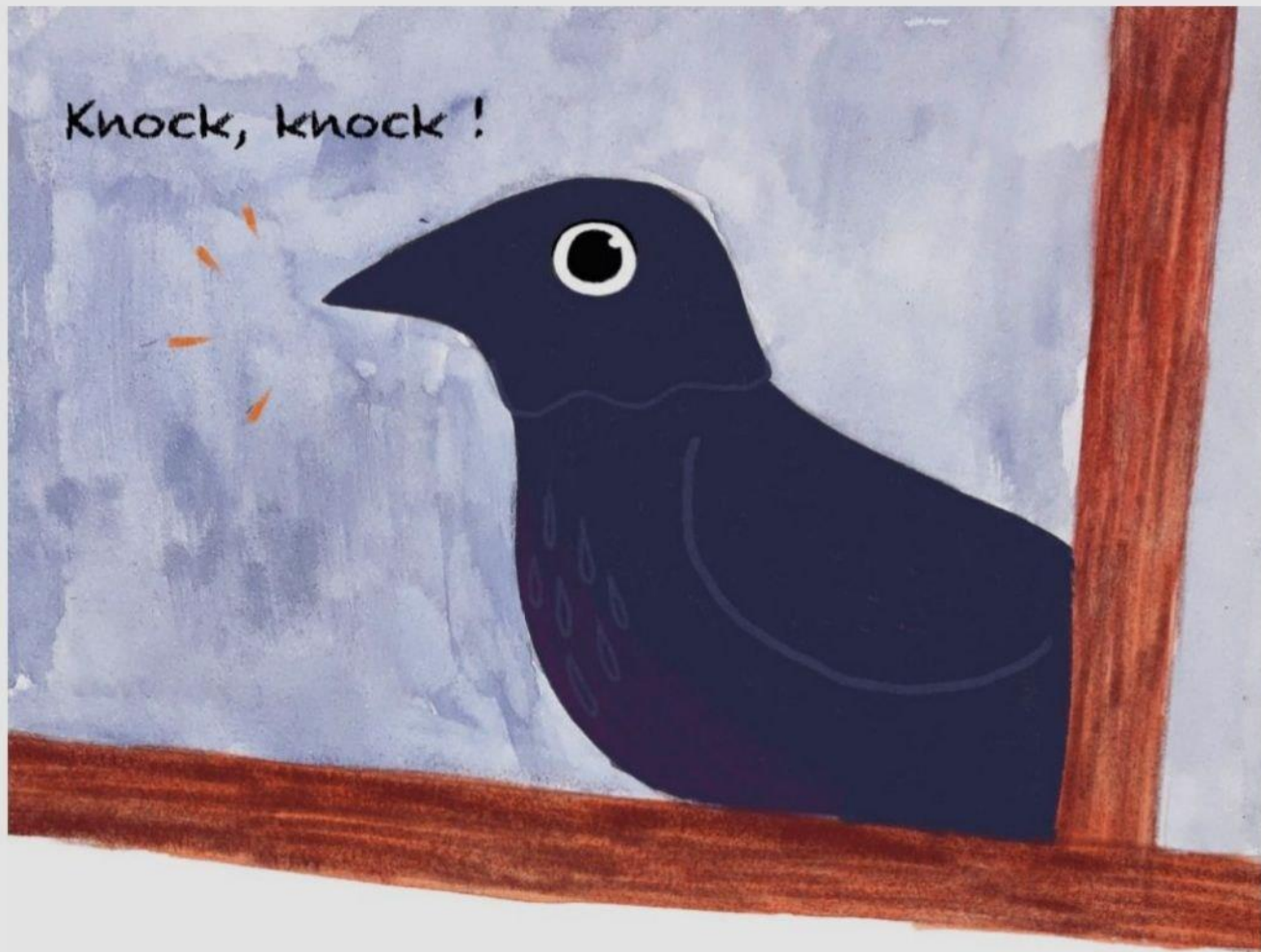


Rusty returned home sad and disappointed. Her sad face worried her parents and Grandma, and they wondered what had happened to their happy girl.



In her room, sitting on the edge of the bed, Rusty was feeling sad and lonely. Why didn't anyone want to be her friend? Why didn't the pigeons like her? Why didn't the crow disappear?

Knock, knock !



There was a noise coming from the window. Who was watching Rusty with its black shiny eyes?

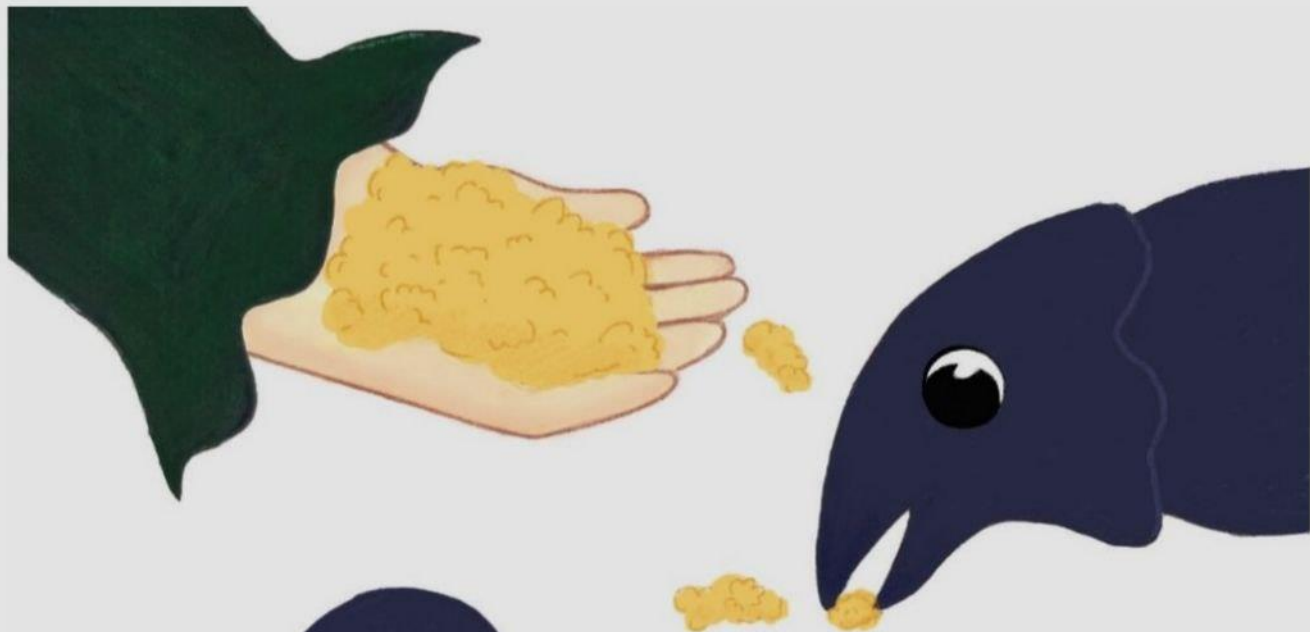
The crow!



Rusty took a chair
and climbing on it,
she opened the
window.

'I thought you left me!' said Rusty. She was smiling from ear to ear, super happy that her friend came back.





Rusty emptied her pockets
on the windowsill and the
crow started eating
happily.



With a little courage,
Rusty lightly and gently
petted the crow.



When the crow finished eating, it didn't fly away, but stayed to listen to Rusty's stories, and made funny dances to amuse her. How nice it was to finally have a friend!