

THE LION INSIDE

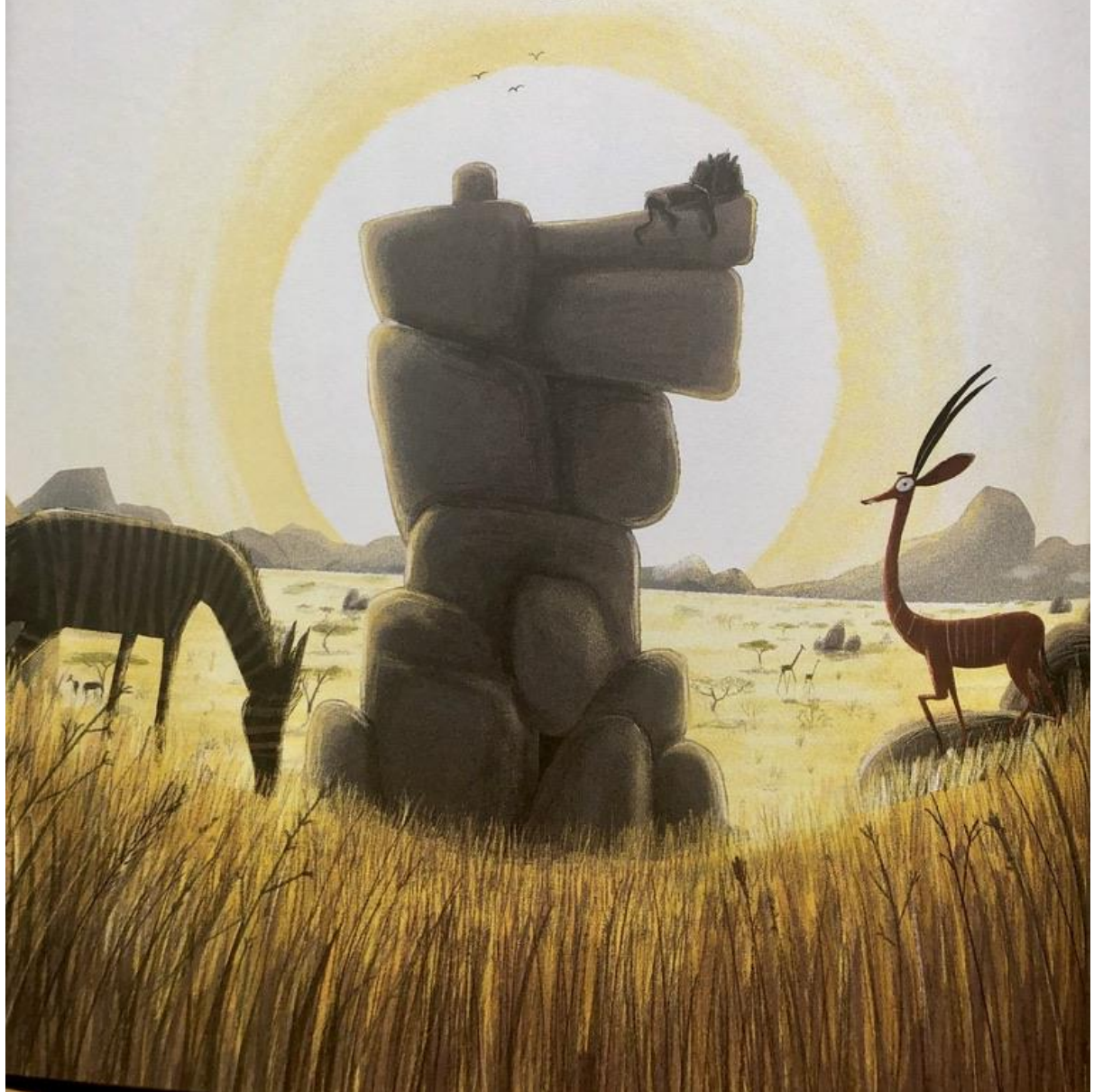
Rachel Bright

Jim Field

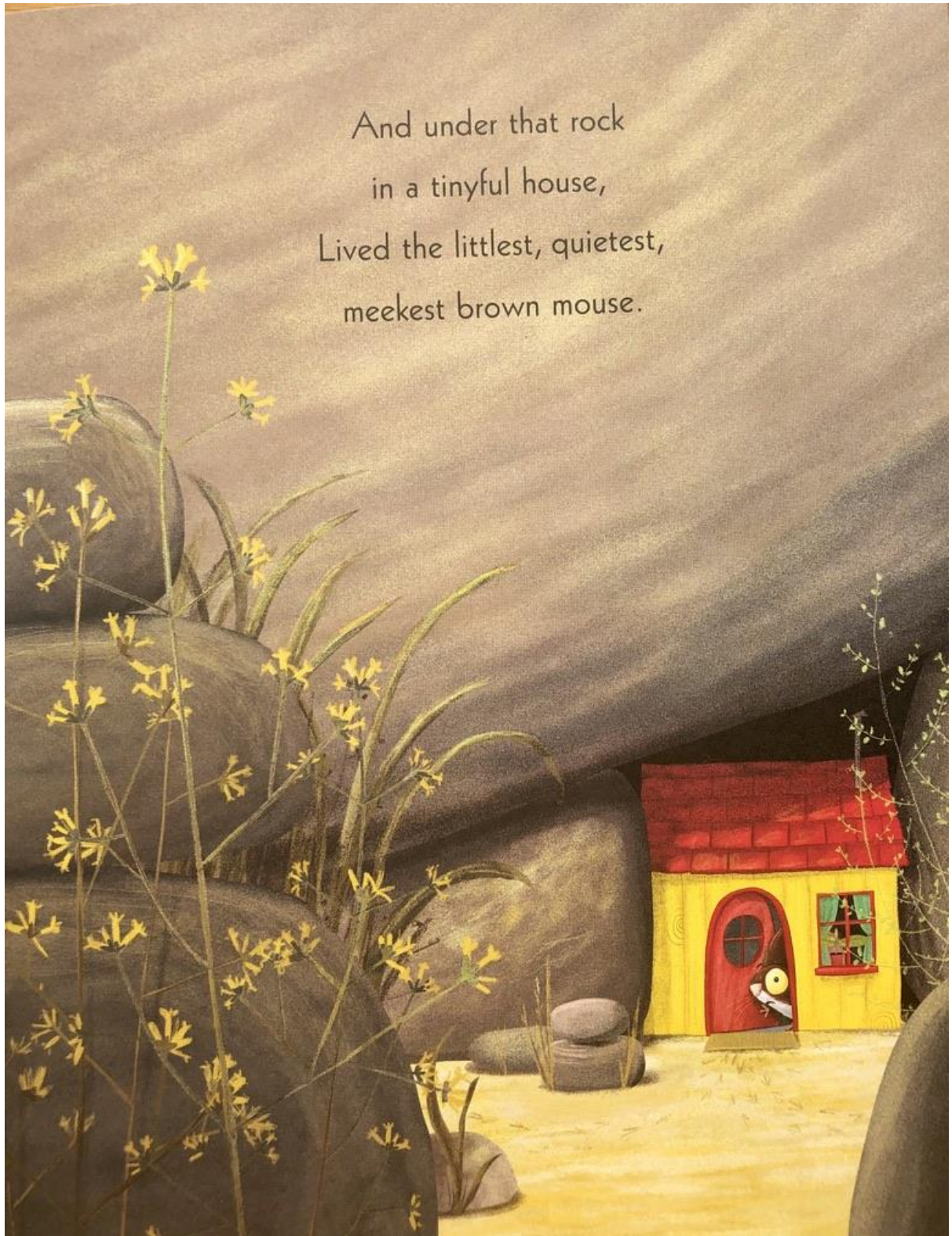


ORCHARD

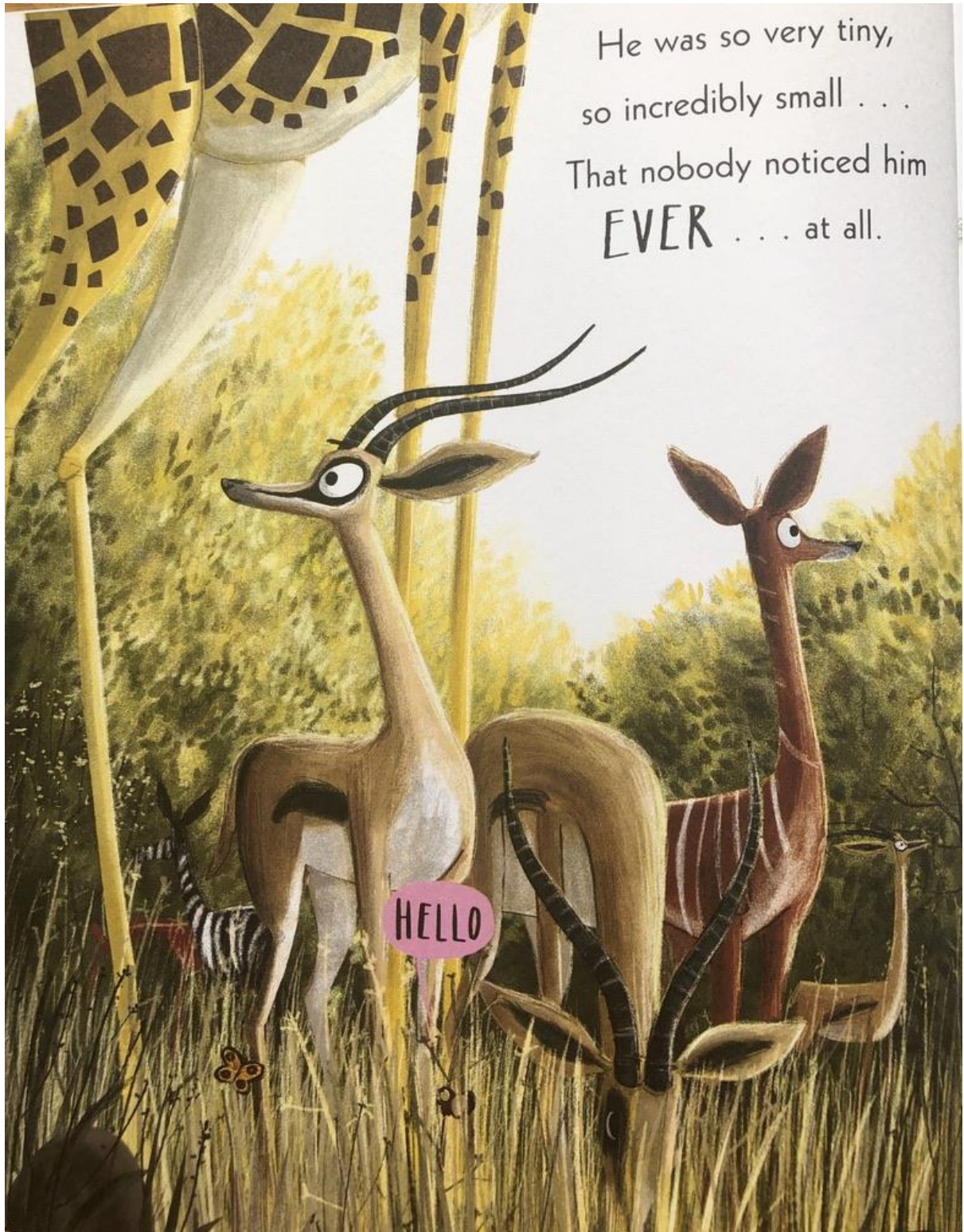
In a dry dusty place where
the sand sparkled gold,
Stood a mighty flat rock —
all craggy and old.

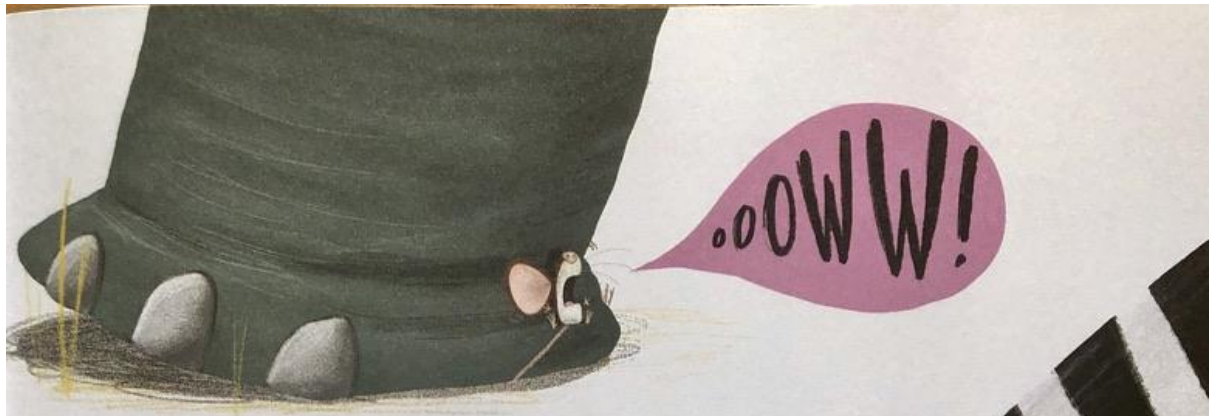


And under that rock
in a tinyful house,
Lived the littlest, quietest,
meekest brown mouse.

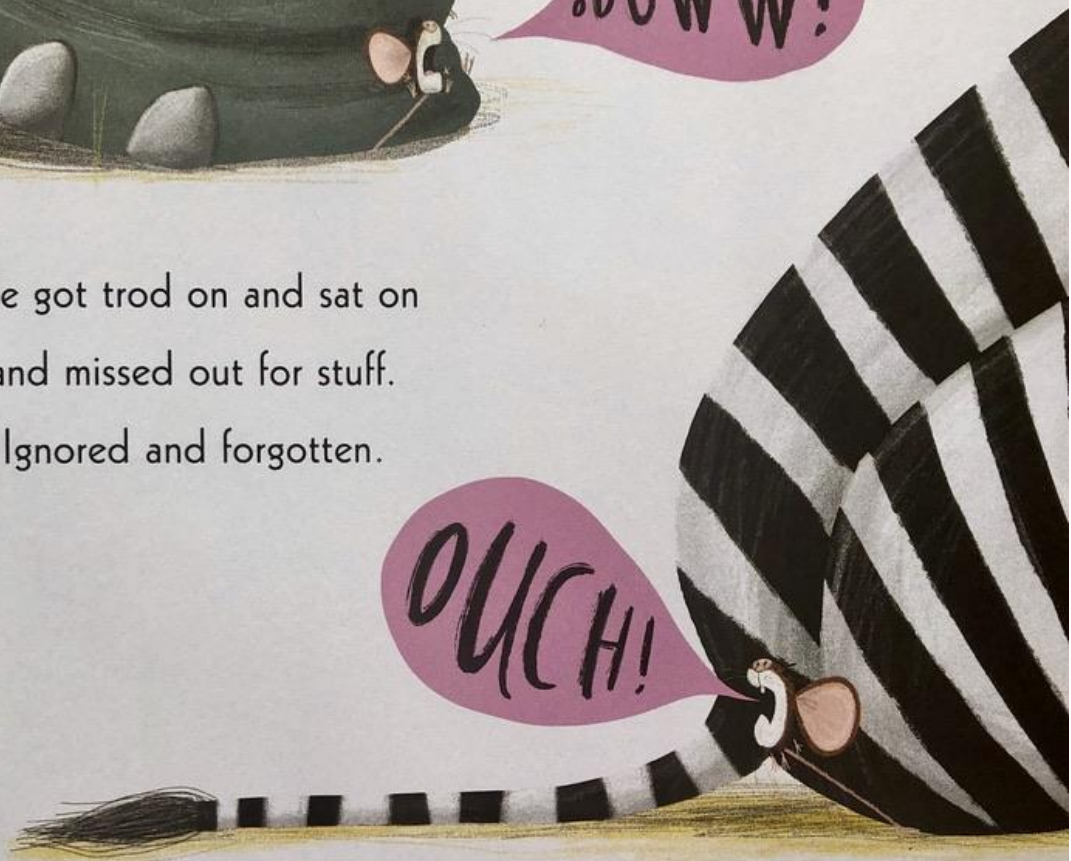


He was so very tiny,
so incredibly small . . .
That nobody noticed him
EVER . . . at all.



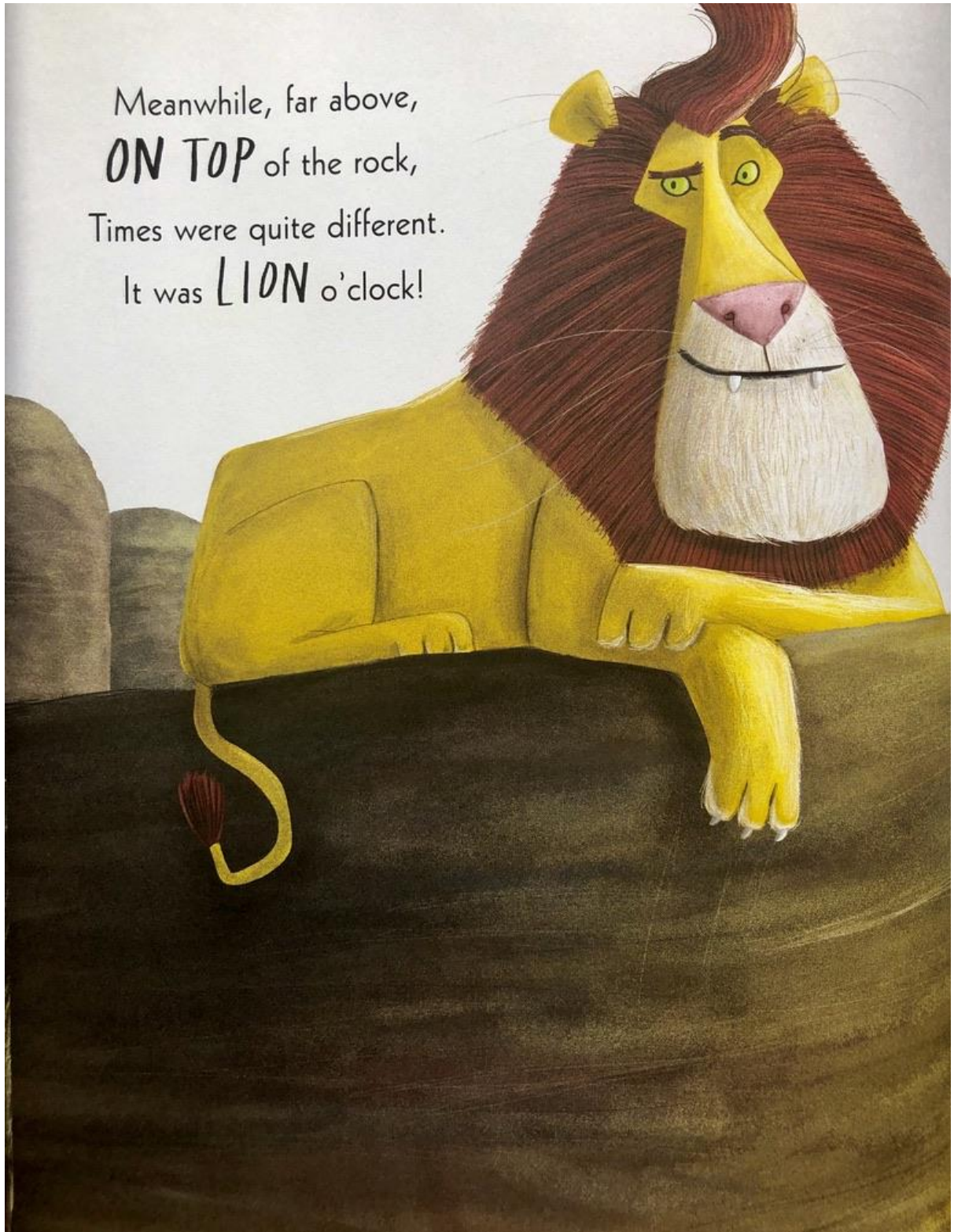


He got trod on and sat on
and missed out for stuff.
Ignored and forgotten.



Yes . . .
mouse-life was tough.

Meanwhile, far above,
ON TOP of the rock,
Times were quite different.
It was **LION** o'clock!



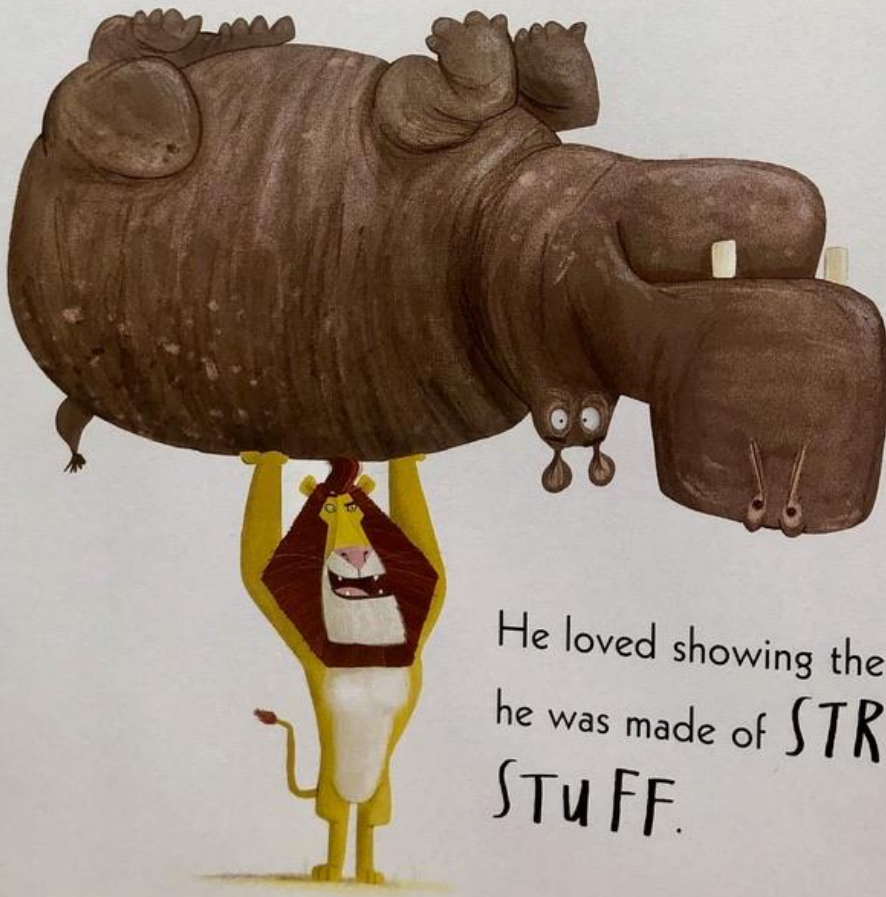
This huge, toothsome creature
made sure **EVERYONE** saw
How **IMPORTANT** he was
by how loud he could . . .





He was **HEAD**
of the pack.

He was **SHOUTY**
and **TOUGH**.

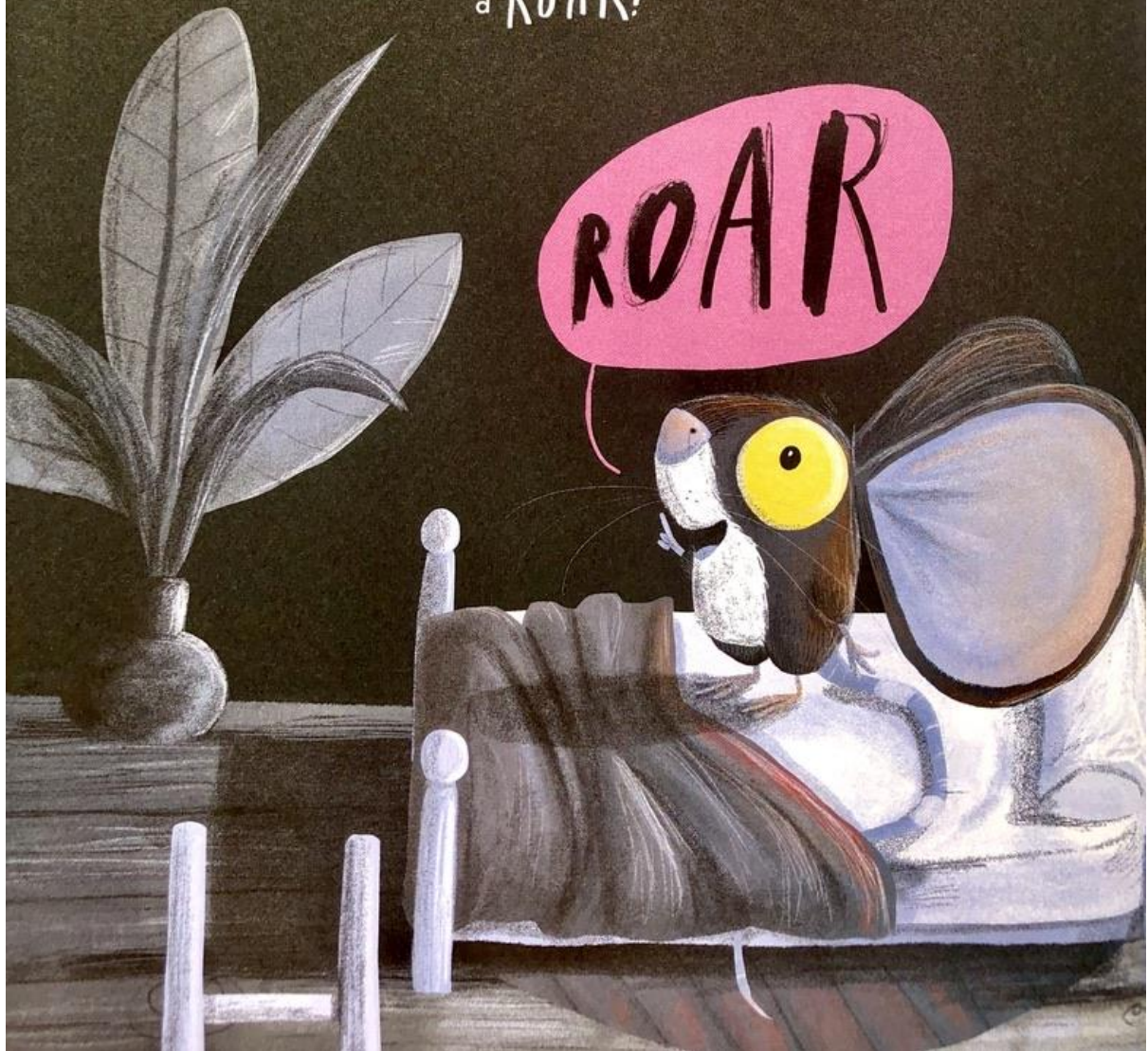


He loved showing the crowd
he was made of **STRONG**
STUFF.

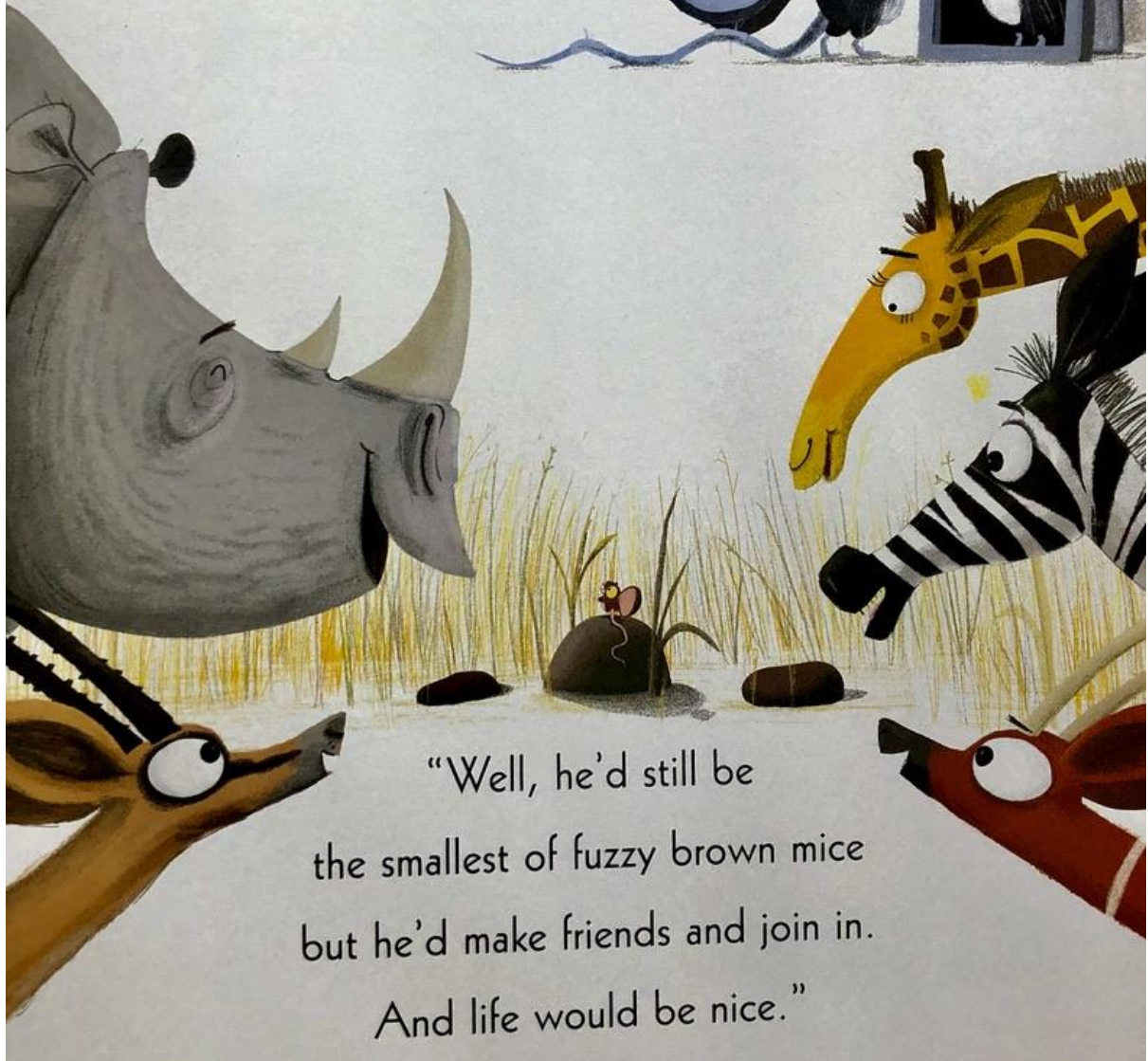
Yes, **ALL** were impressed
by this mighty King Cat.
“If only,” thought Mouse,
“I could be more like that”



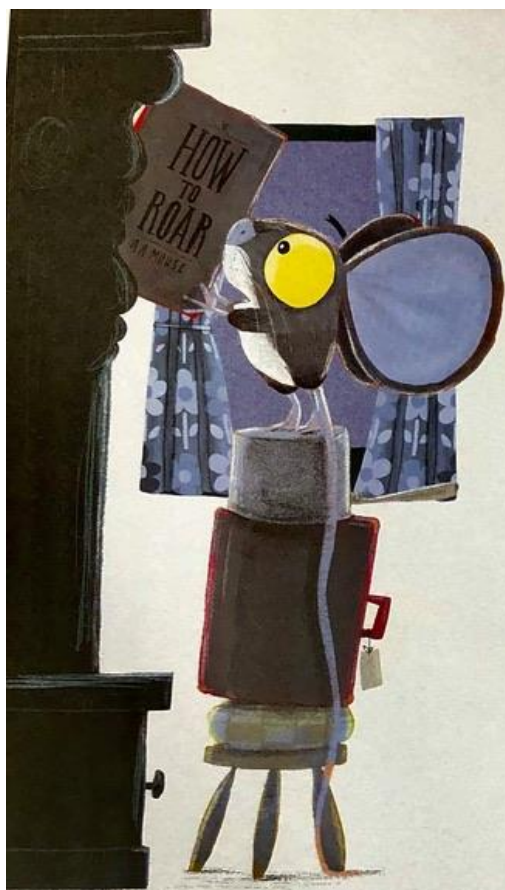
Then, late one dark night, in his mini-mouse bed,
the cleverest thought popped into his head.
He jumped from the covers and held up a paw.
"I've got it!" he said. "What I need is
a **ROAR!**"



“ . . . I mean, what if this mouse
with the weeniest squeak
Was a little more **GRRrrrrrrr**
and a little less meek?”



“Well, he’d still be
the smallest of fuzzy brown mice
but he’d make friends and join in.
And life would be nice.”



"Yes!" thought the mouse.

"I **MUST** find out how!

I will learn how to roar and

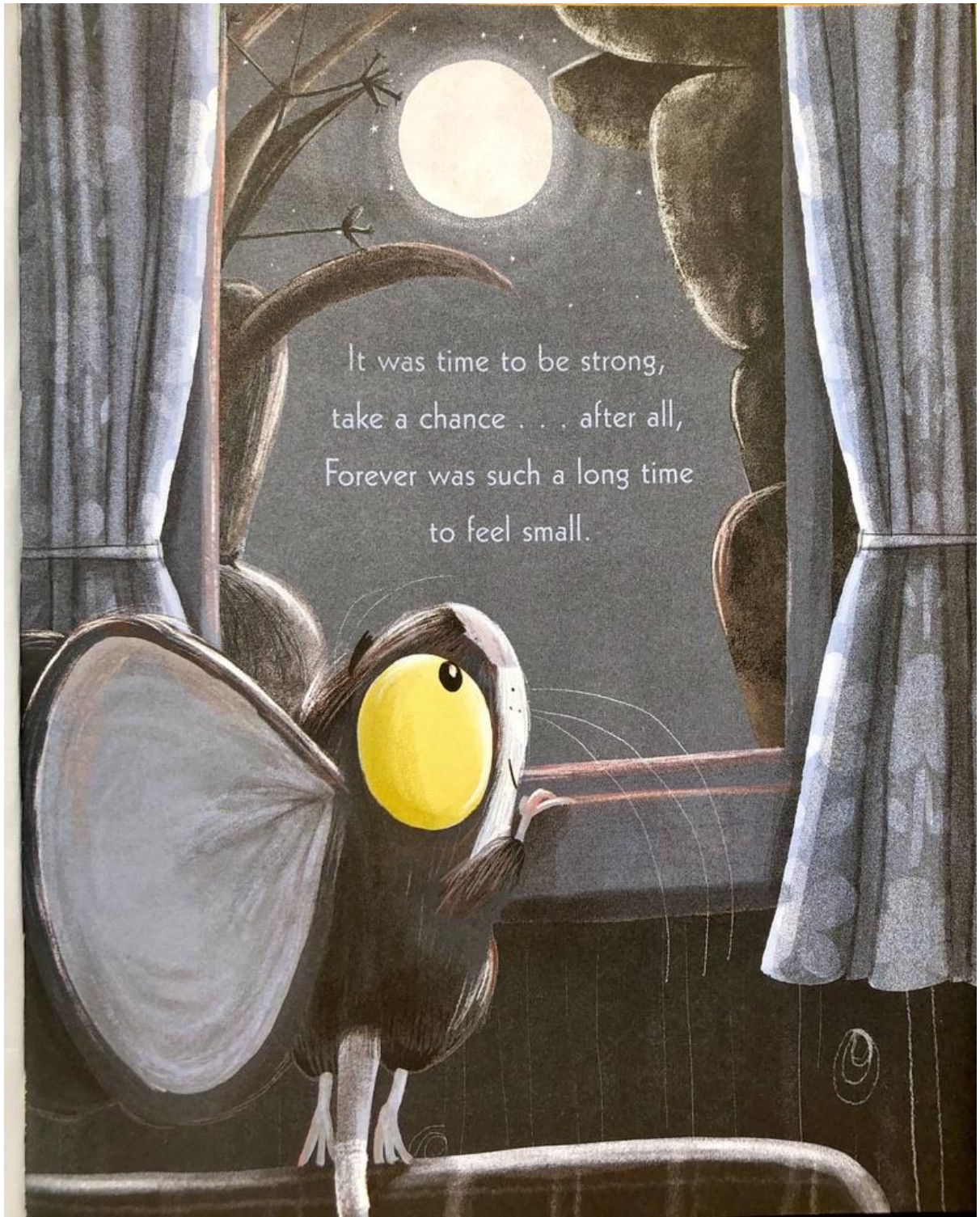
I **WILL** learn it **NOW!**"

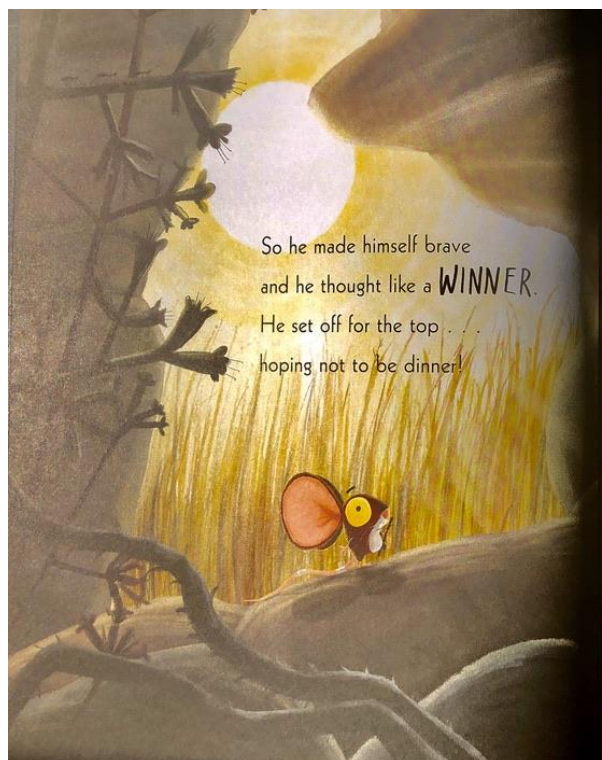


But –**GULP**– oh my gosh,
there was only **ONE** beast
who could teach him this thing
BUT might make him
... a **FEAST!**

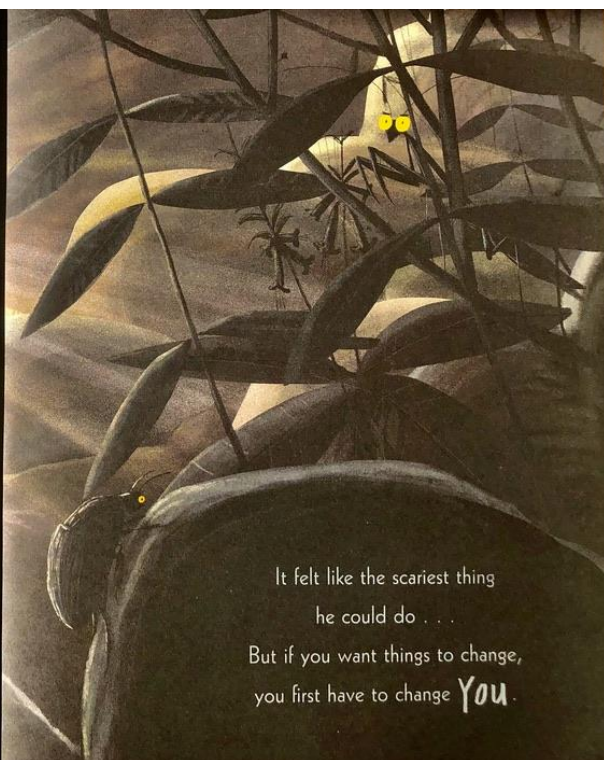


It was time to be strong,
take a chance . . . after all,
Forever was such a long time
to feel small.



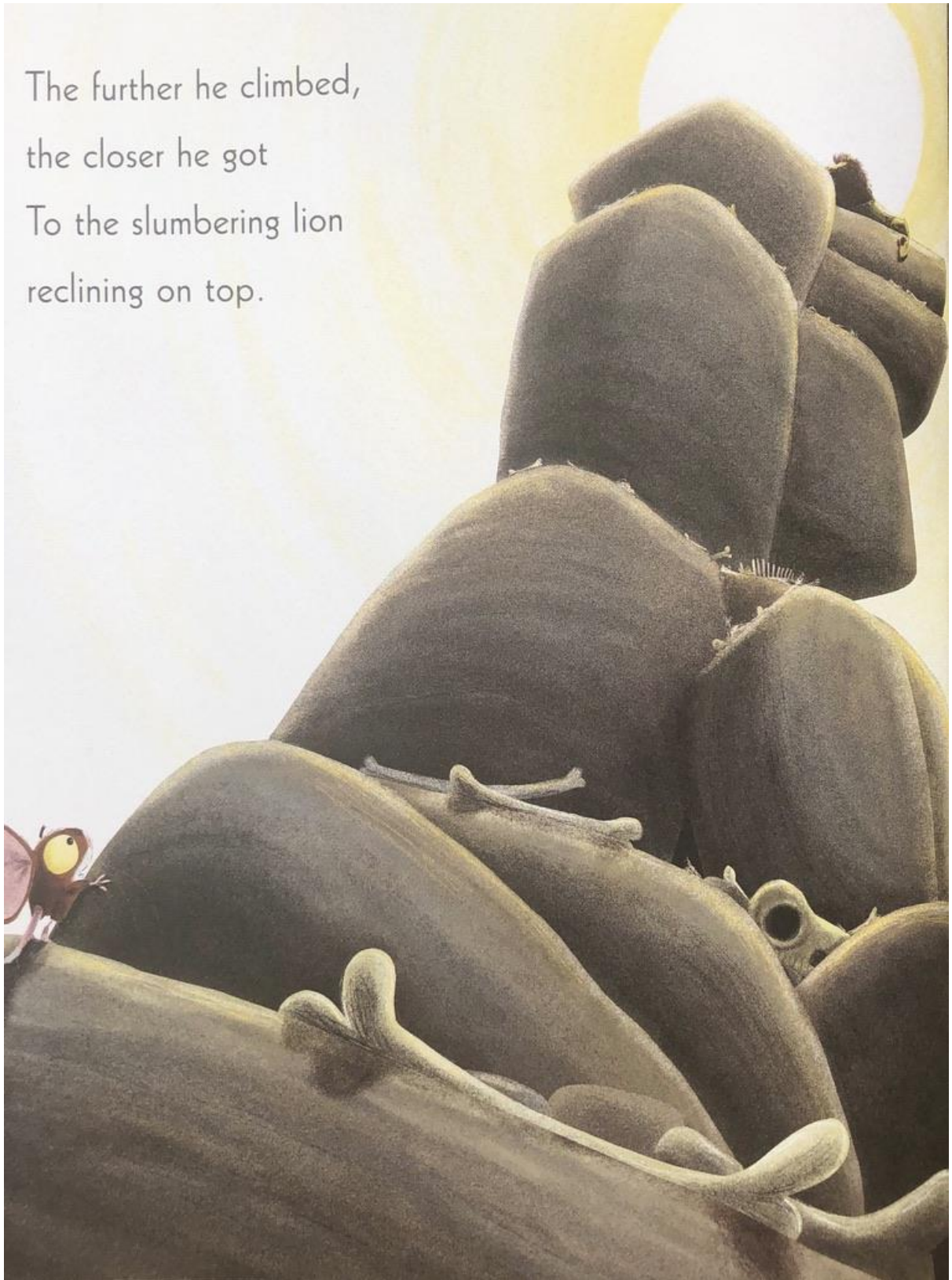


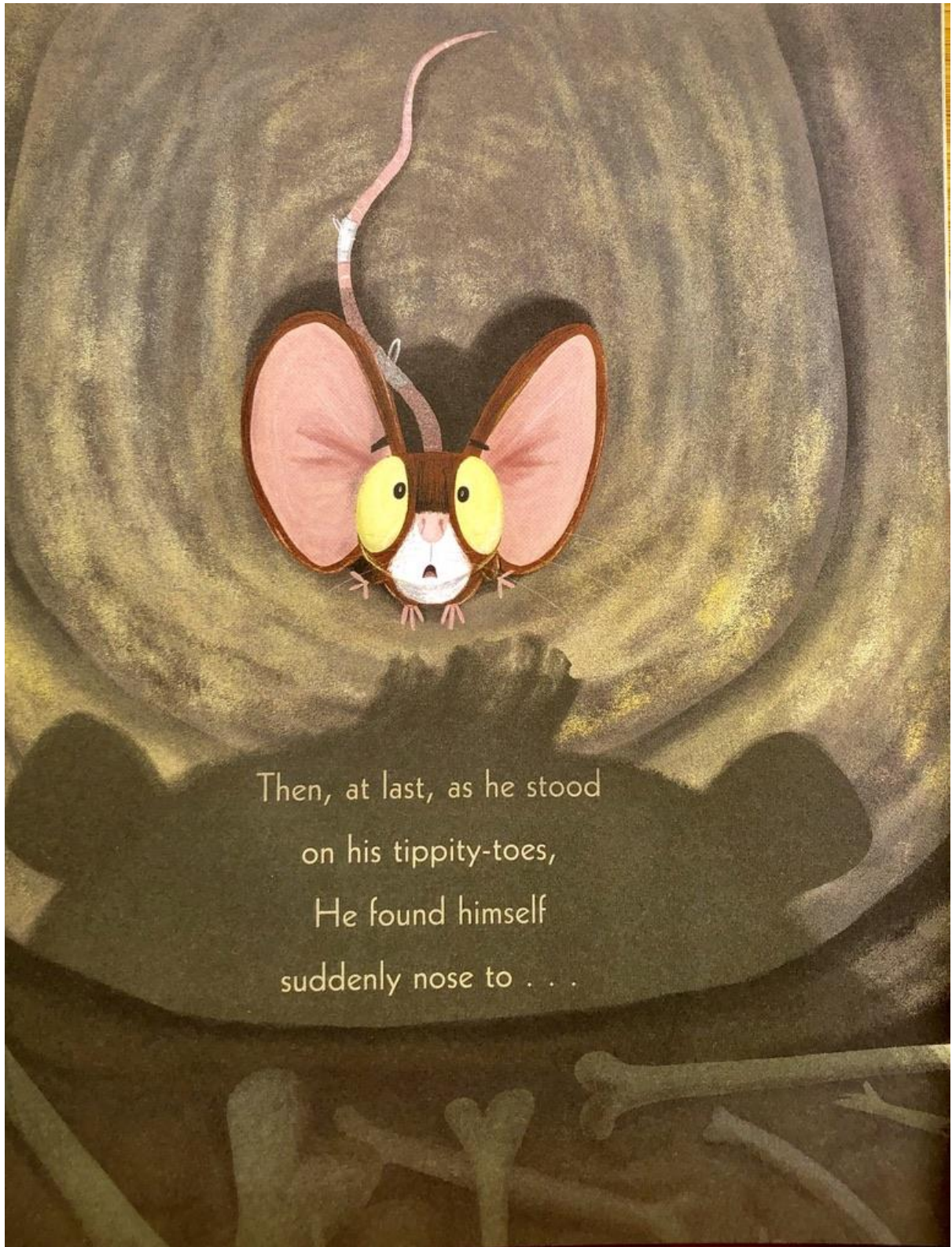
So he made himself brave
and he thought like a **WINNER**.
He set off for the top . . .
hoping not to be dinner!



It felt like the scariest thing
he could do . . .
But if you want things to change,
you first have to change **You**.

The further he climbed,
the closer he got
To the slumbering lion
reclining on top.





Then, at last, as he stood
on his tippity-toes,
He found himself
suddenly nose to . . .

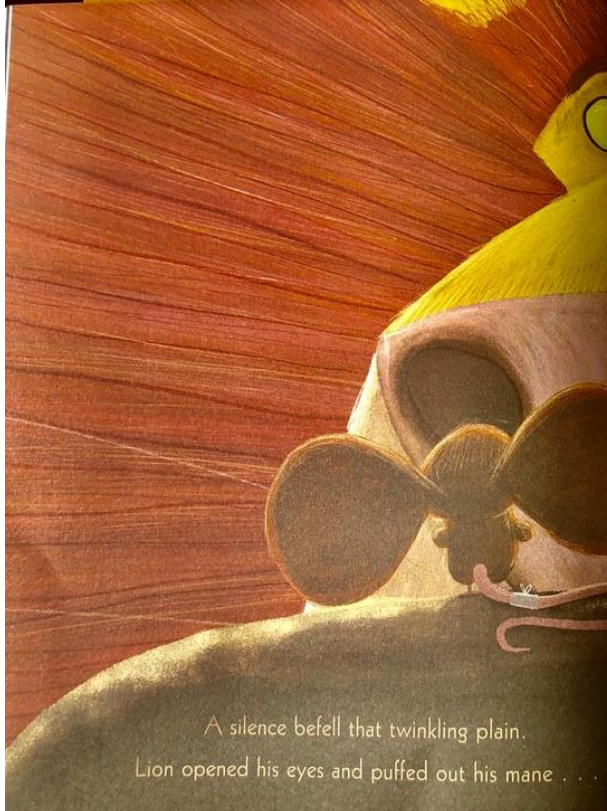
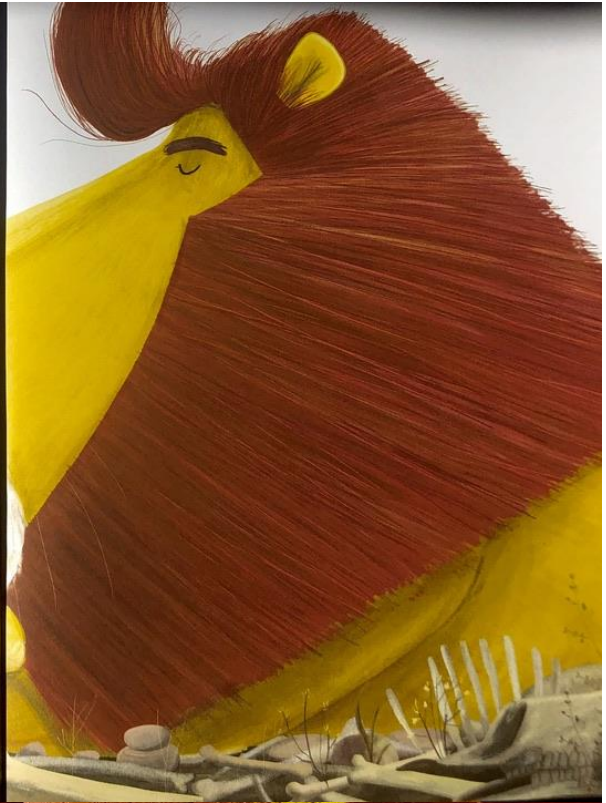
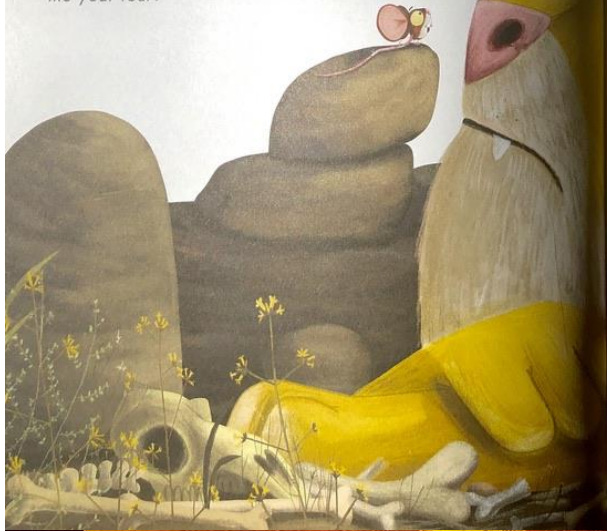
... NOSE.

"Ahem, *GULP*, pardon me.

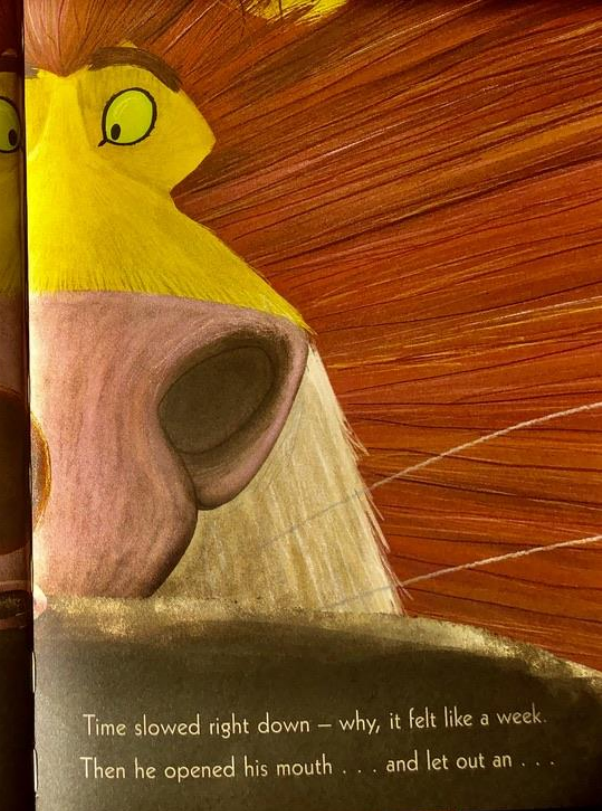
Wake up, Mr Lion, you've got company!

Um, *SQUEAK*, Mr Lion, what I've come to you for

Is *SQUEAK* . . . do you think you could teach
me your roar?"



A silence befell that twinkling plain.
Lion opened his eyes and puffed out his mane . . .



Time slowed right down — why, it felt like a week.
Then he opened his mouth . . . and let out an . . .



The lion was shaking. His paws all a-fumble.
He was backing away with a scrambling tumble.
“Don’t hurt me,” he whimpered. “Oh! Try to be nice.”
Well, my goodness, this lion was frightened of mice!

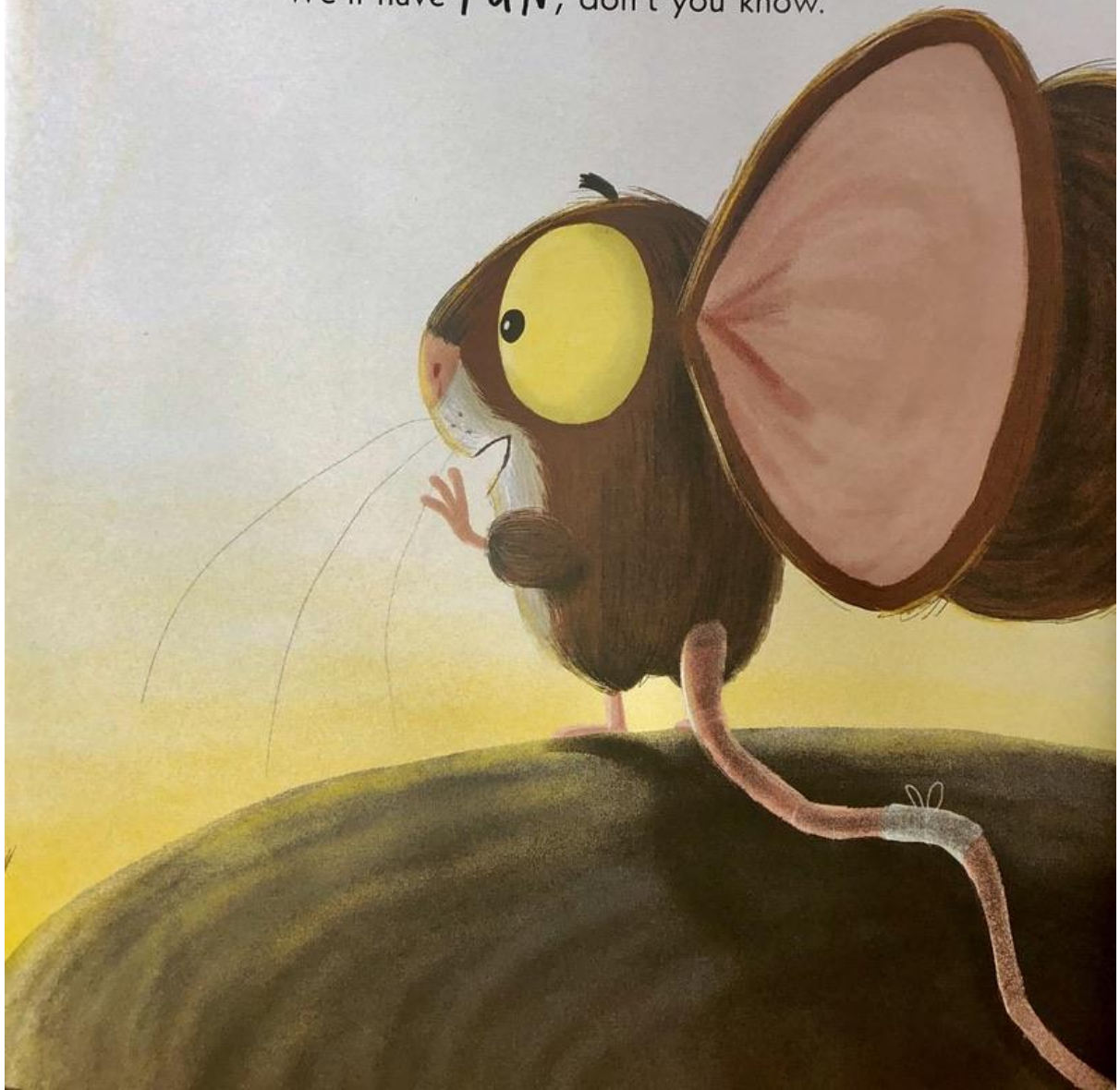


"Don't worry," Mouse peeped.

"I'm a friend, not a foe.

Let's **ROCK** this together.

We'll have **FUN**, don't you know."



That was a magical moment for sure . . .
when mouse didn't feel **AT ALL** small any more.
He had found his true voice and learned to speak out,
and for **THAT** you don't need to roar or to shout.



And from that day and always, the two were a pair.
They both liked that rock better, now that rock was to share.

The mouse, while still little, felt **BIG** in his head.
And Lion? He still roared . . . but with laughter instead!



Yes, that day they **BOTH** learned
that, no matter your size,
We all have a mouse
AND
a lion inside.

