



Happy as a Hen

Author: Reena I. Puri

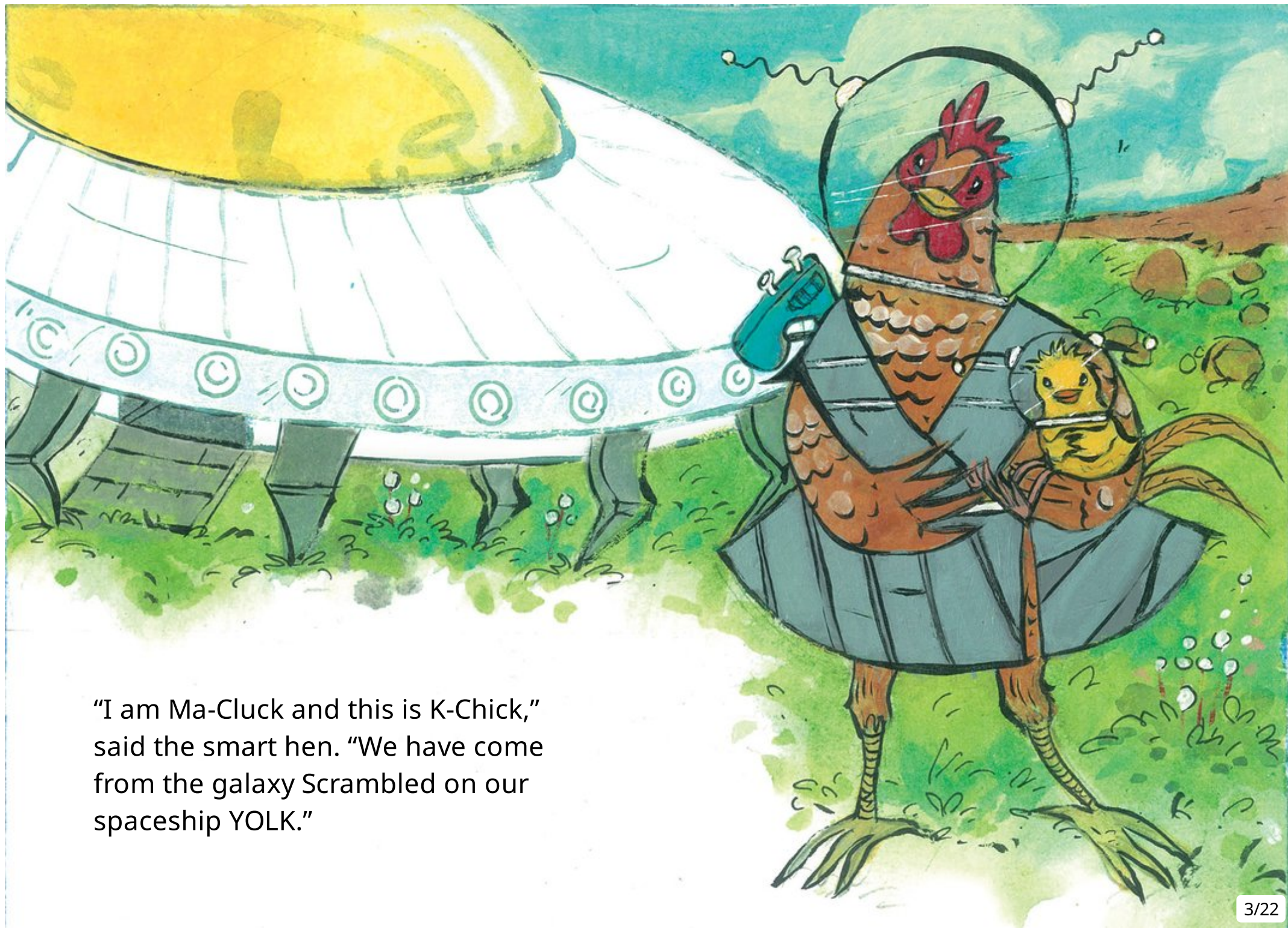
Illustrator: Aratrika Choudhury

Level 4

Ra Ra Rooster rubbed his eyes. He could not believe what he saw.
There was a fried egg coming down from the sky.
It landed on four spidery legs on the green grass.



"Oh my comb and feathers!" exclaimed Ra Ra. "Who are you?"
For out of the fried egg had come a smart hen and a very smart chick.



"I am Ma-Cluck and this is K-Chick,"
said the smart hen. "We have come
from the galaxy Scrambled on our
spaceship YOLK."

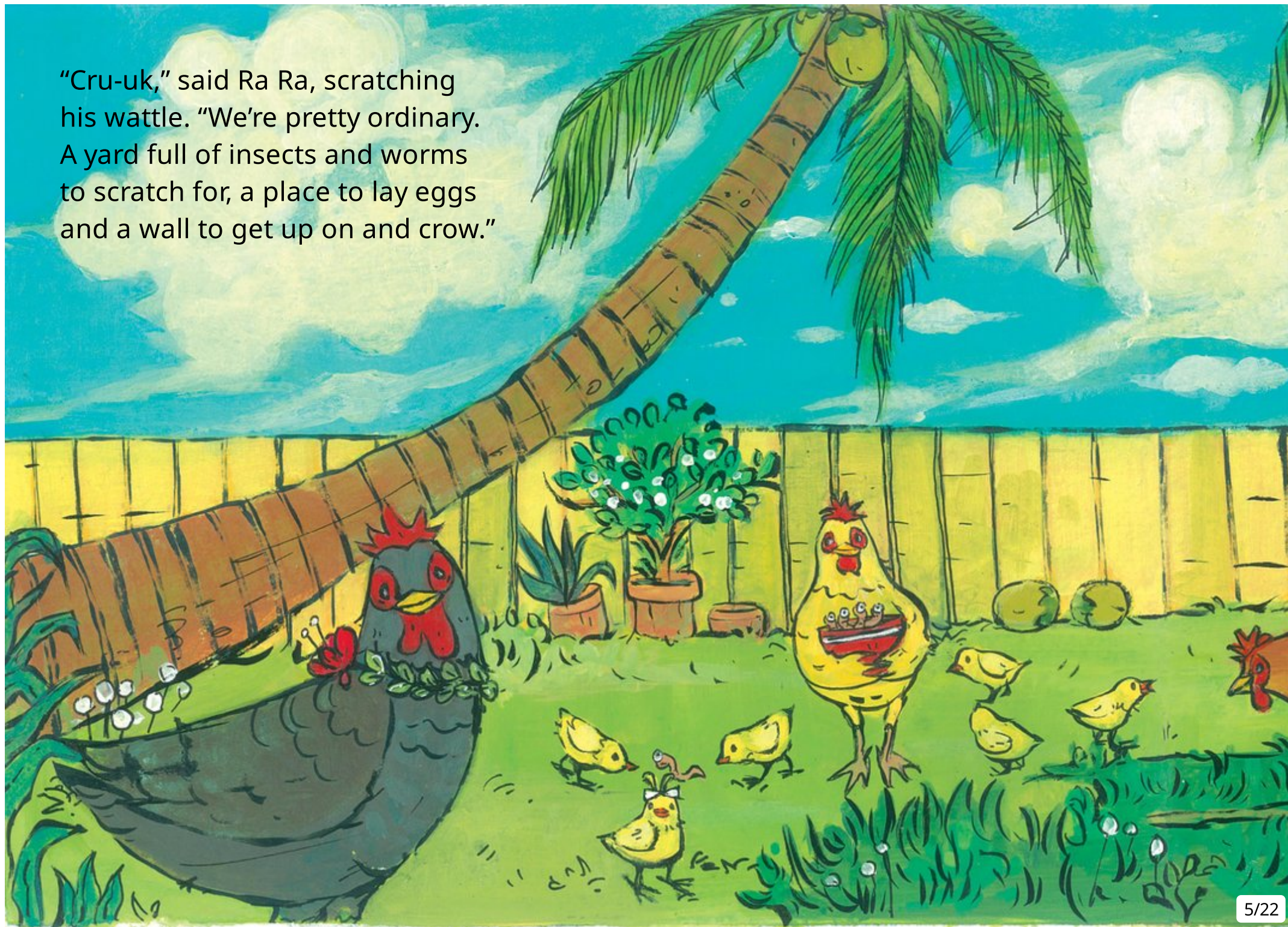
There was a rush of feathers and Ra Ra's family of four Mama Hens and six Little Chicks came tumbling out of the bushes.

"Is it an alien invasion, Papa Ra Ra?" asked Chiki Chick.

"Oh no!" exclaimed K-Chick. "We've just come to learn about Earth Hens. We've heard that you have a wonderful life here."



"Cru-uk," said Ra Ra, scratching his wattle. "We're pretty ordinary. A yard full of insects and worms to scratch for, a place to lay eggs and a wall to get up on and crow."

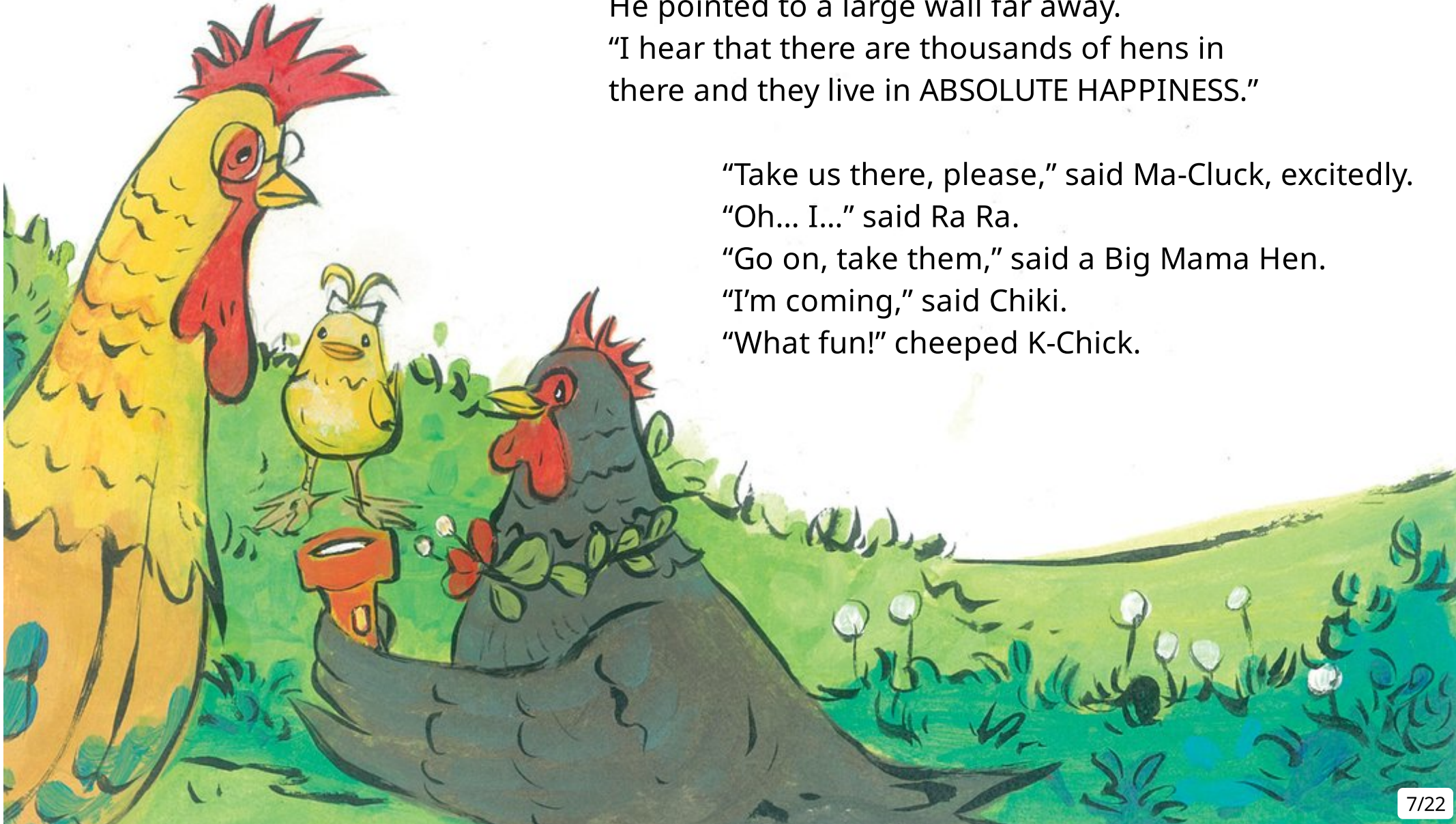




"Nothing special?" asked Ma-Cluck.
She was disappointed.

"Special lies over that big wall there," said Ra Ra.
He pointed to a large wall far away.
"I hear that there are thousands of hens in
there and they live in ABSOLUTE HAPPINESS."

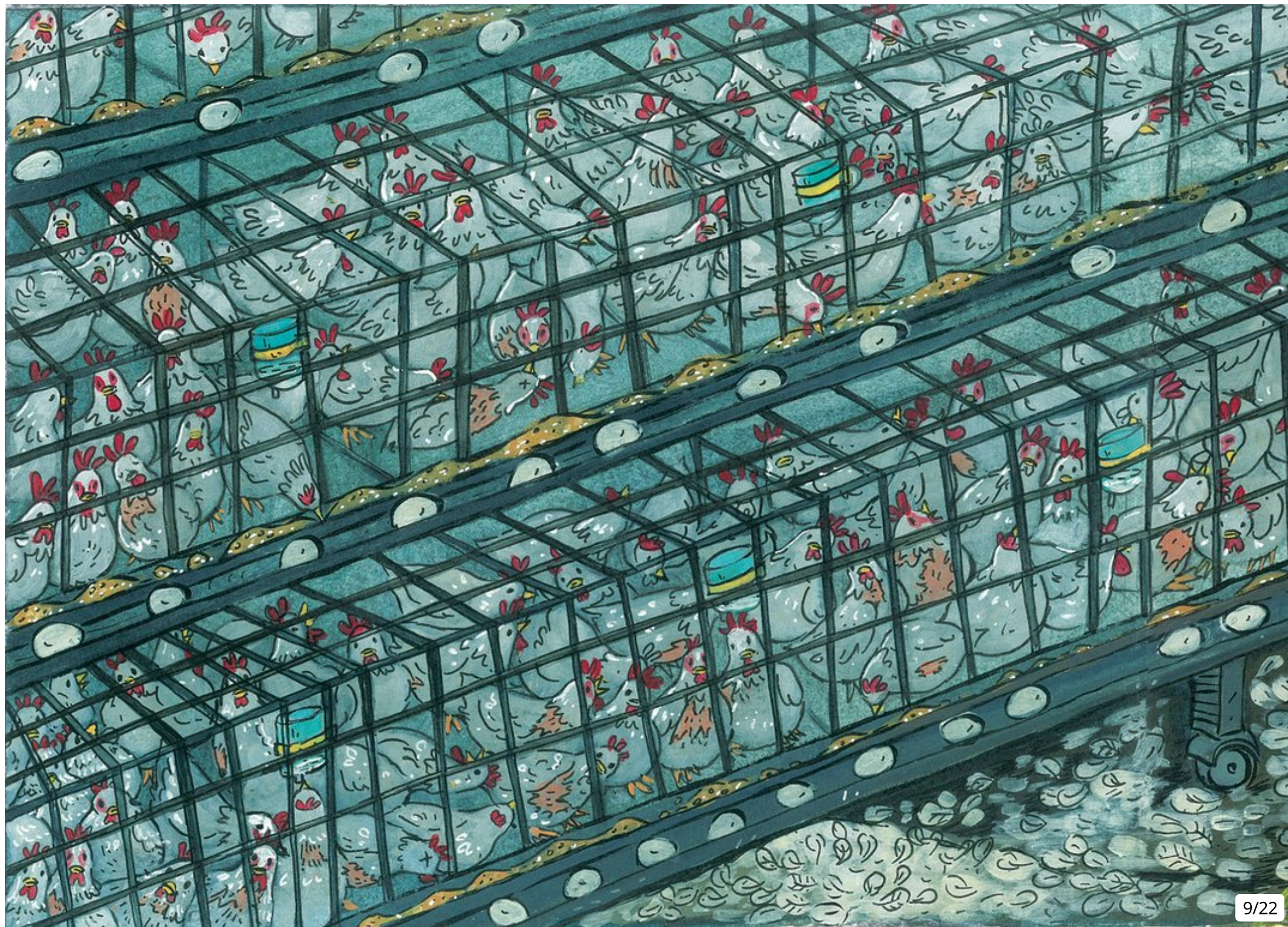
"Take us there, please," said Ma-Cluck, excitedly.
"Oh... I..." said Ra Ra.
"Go on, take them," said a Big Mama Hen.
"I'm coming," said Chiki.
"What fun!" cheeped K-Chick.

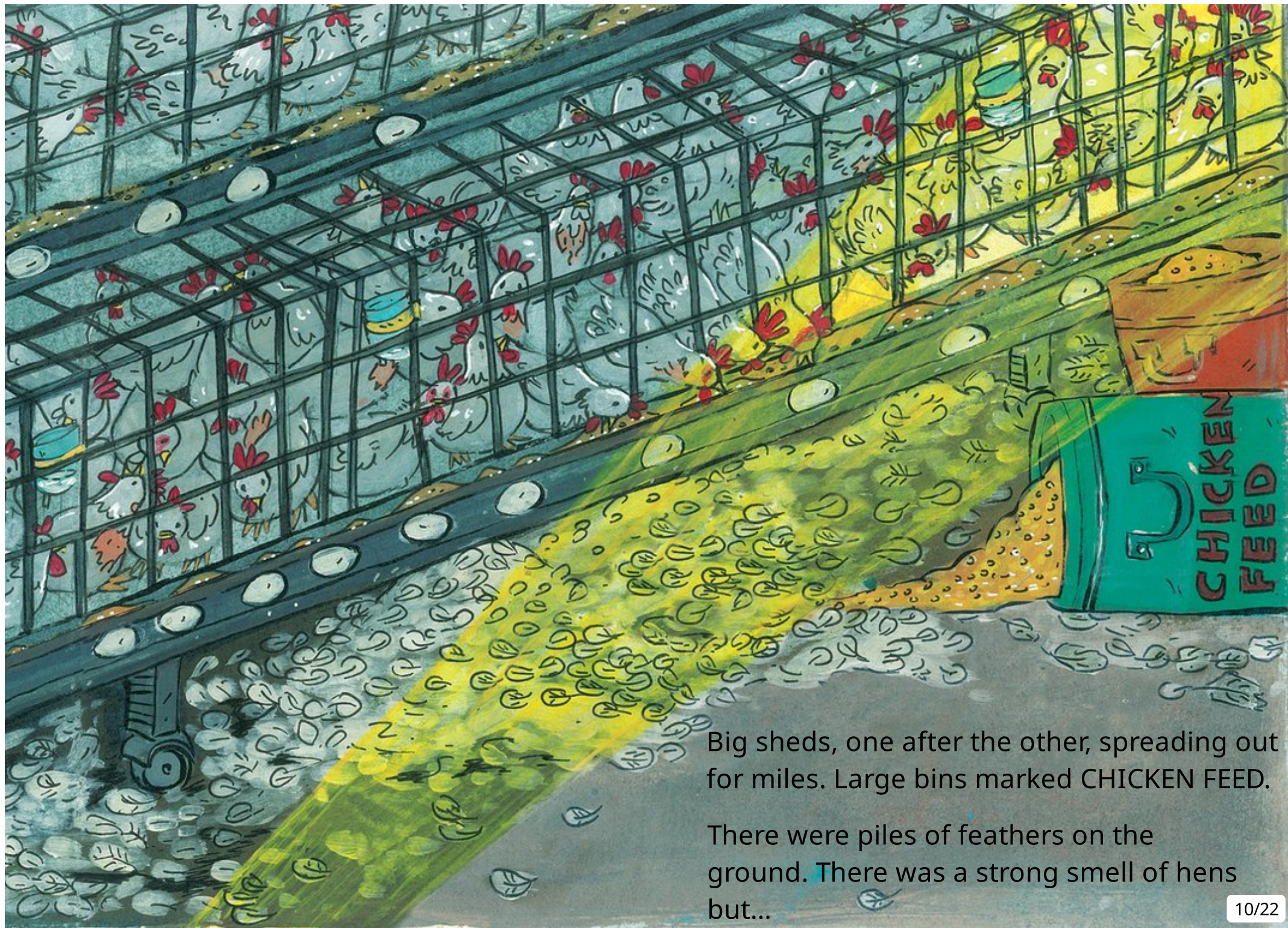


After a bit of a search, Chiki found a hole in the wall. One by one, they all crept through the dusty hole.

They shook the dust off their feathers and looked up. What did they see?



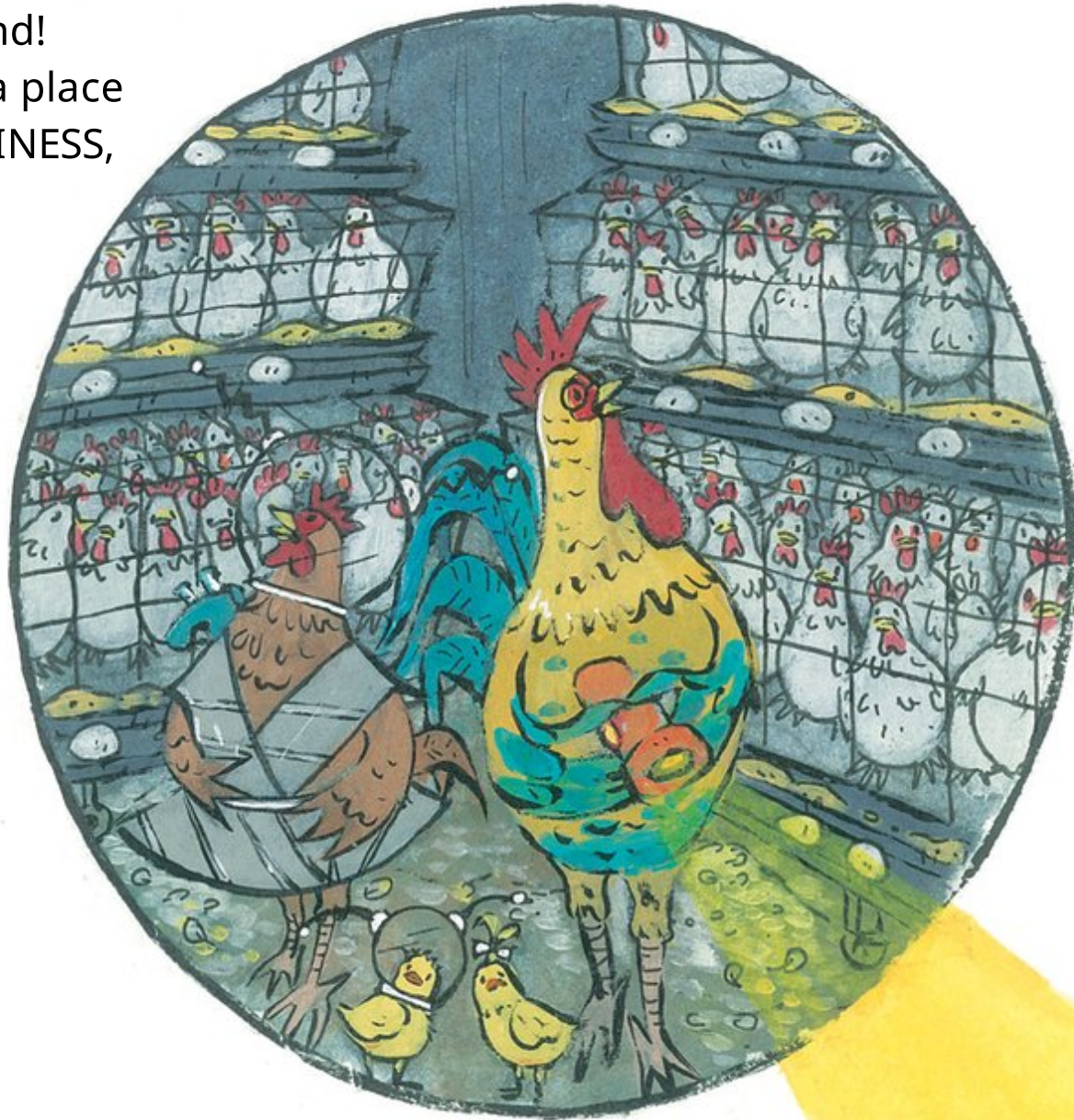




Big sheds, one after the other, spreading out for miles. Large bins marked CHICKEN FEED.

There were piles of feathers on the ground. There was a strong smell of hens but...

There wasn't a sound!
It did not look like a place
of ABSOLUTE HAPPINESS,
at all!



Cheep... cheep... cheeeep.

The faint sound came from a big shed nearby.

"Sounds like little chicks," whispered Ma-Cluck.

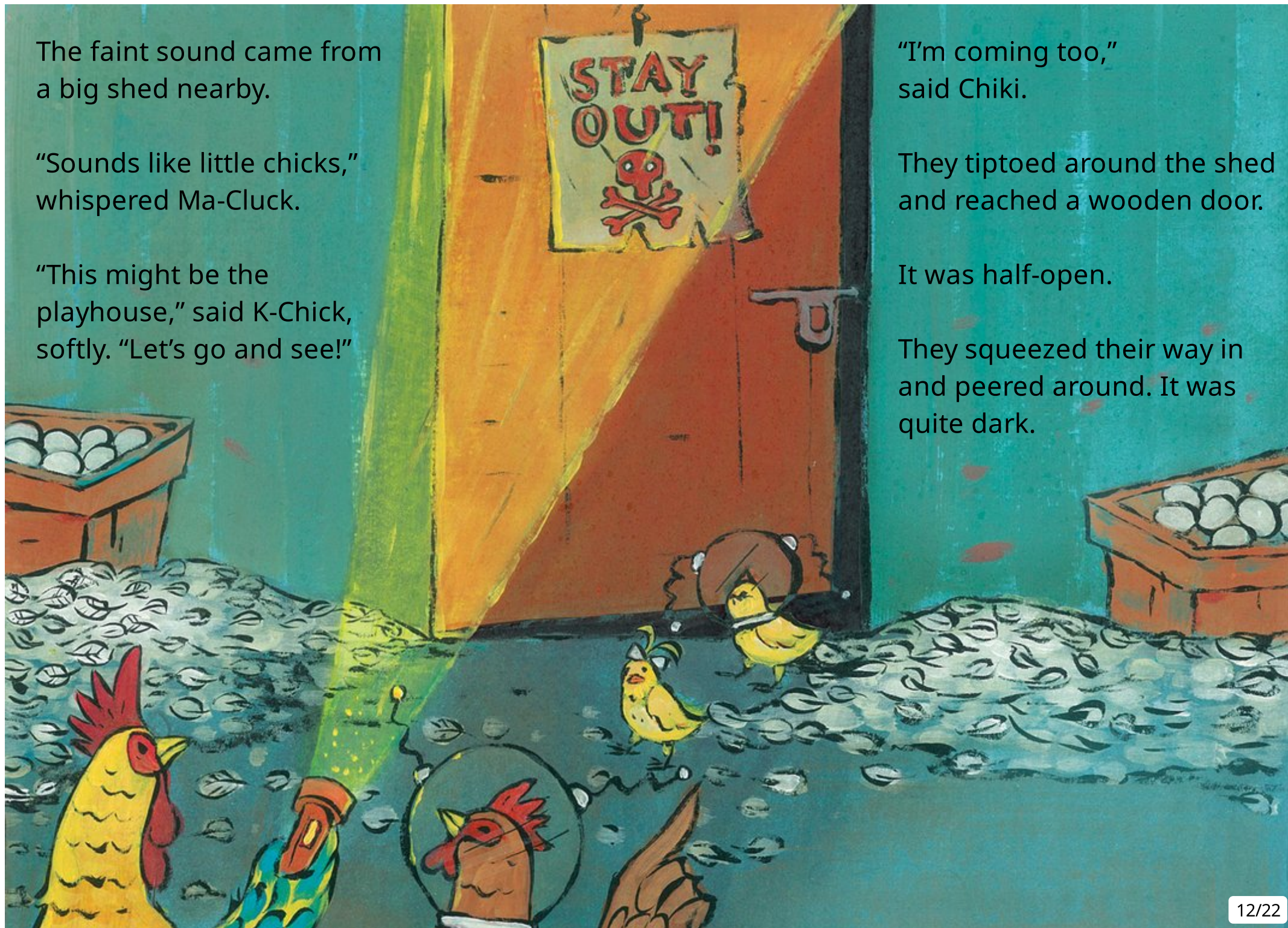
"This might be the playhouse," said K-Chick, softly. "Let's go and see!"

"I'm coming too," said Chiki.

They tiptoed around the shed and reached a wooden door.

It was half-open.

They squeezed their way in and peered around. It was quite dark.

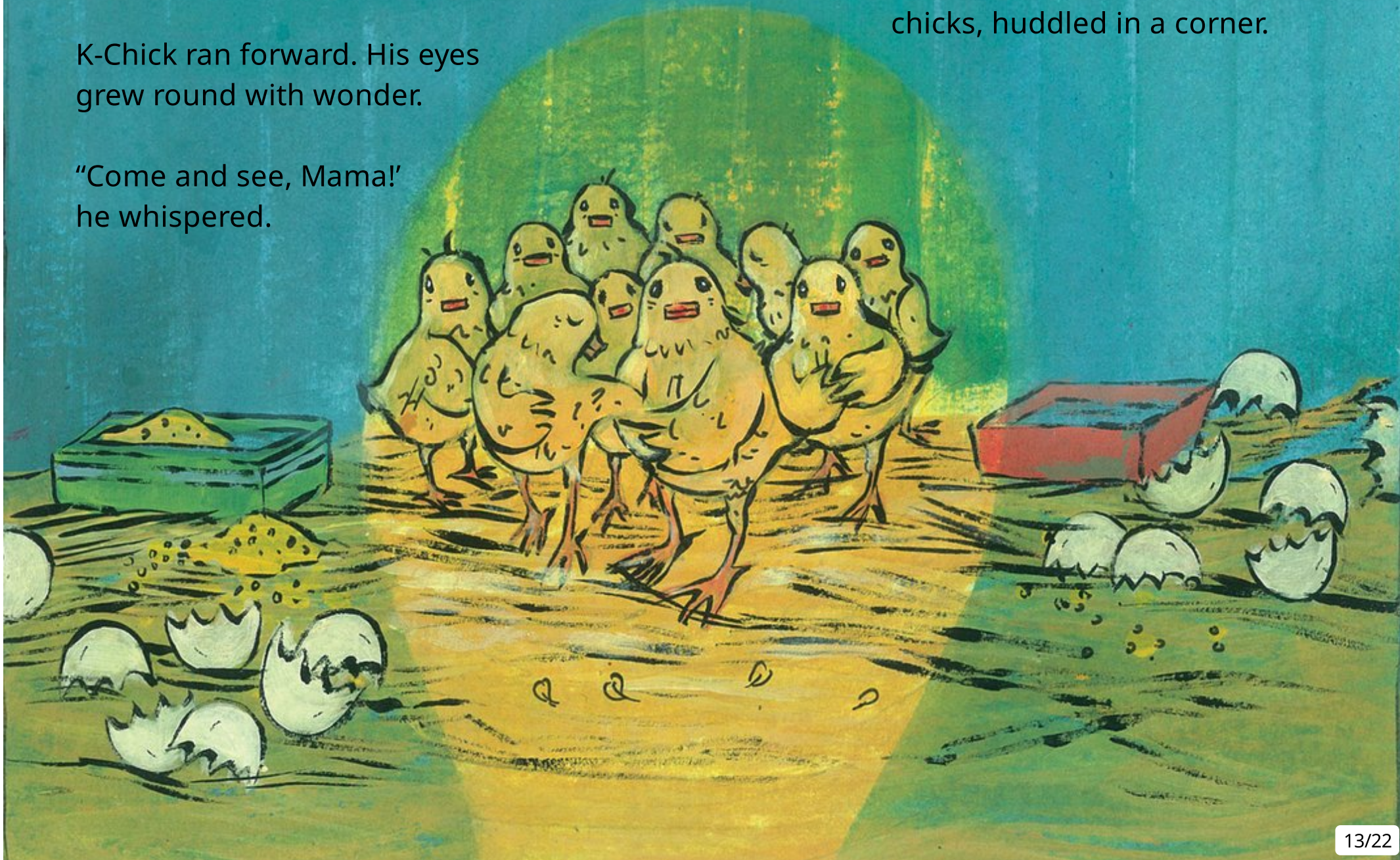


Out of the corner came a little voice, "Have you come to save us?"

K-Chick ran forward. His eyes grew round with wonder.

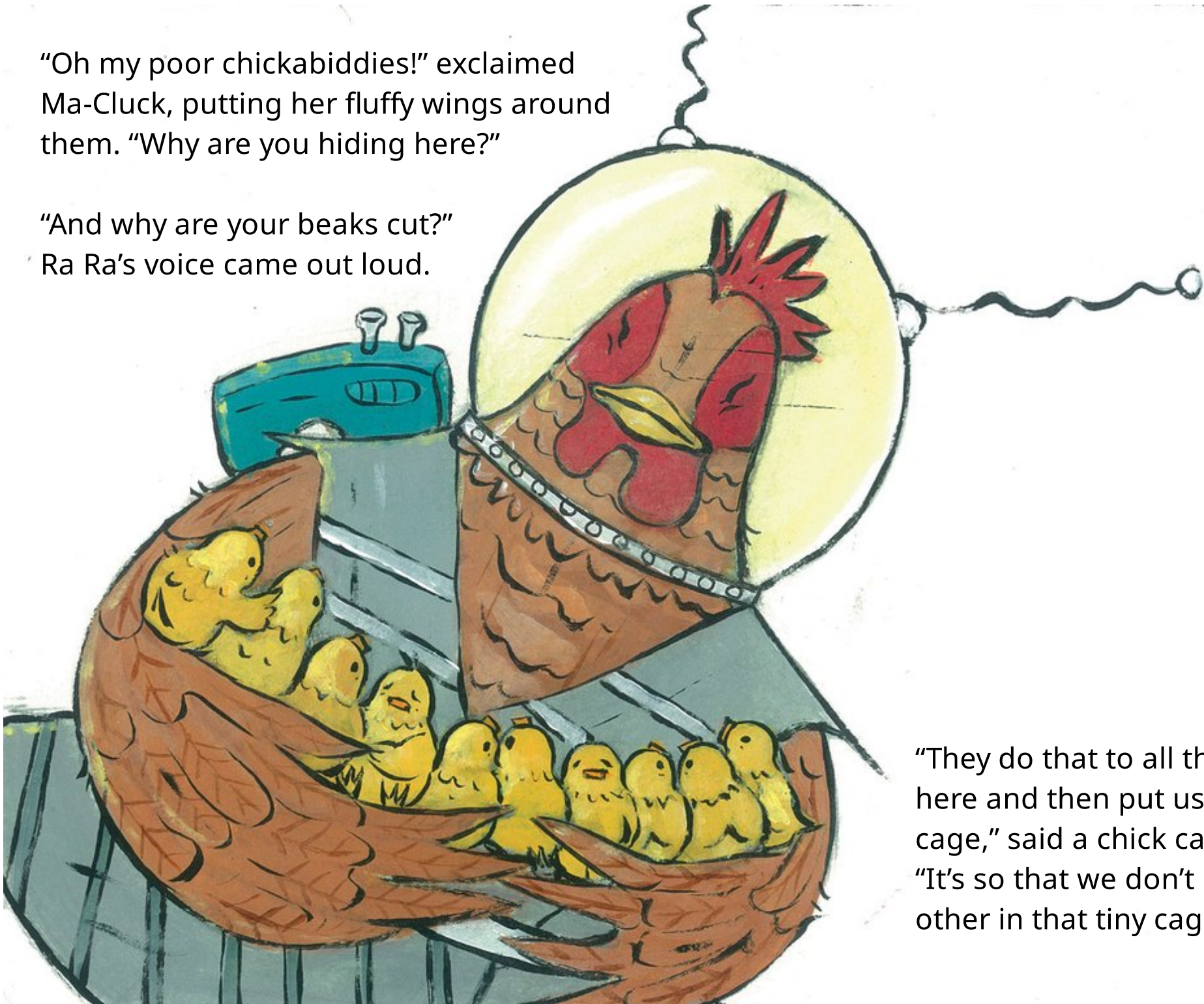
"Come and see, Mama!" he whispered.

The other three came forward. There were ten frightened little chicks, huddled in a corner.



"Oh my poor chickabiddies!" exclaimed Ma-Cluck, putting her fluffy wings around them. "Why are you hiding here?"

"And why are your beaks cut?"
Ra Ra's voice came out loud.



"They do that to all the chicks here and then put us in a small cage," said a chick called Droopy. "It's so that we don't peck each other in that tiny cage."

"BAD!" crowed Ra Ra. "Very BAD! What is this place called?"

"The Cheery Chicken," said Droopy, sadly.



Just then, there came a shout from outside. "Check in the shed for the chicks. I think a rooster has got in."

"Humans!" Ra Ra was alarmed.
"We need to go before they see us."

"Mama, we cannot leave these chicks here," cheeped K-Chick. "We have to take them with us."

"We will, son," said Ma-Cluck, pulling out a shining rod from behind her neck. "All of you stand at the door. When those humans open it, run straight to the hole in the wall and get out."

"But..." said Ra Ra.



"No time for 'buts'," said Ma-Cluck, sternly. "Do as I tell you. Take them and go straight to the YOLK. I will follow."



Ra Ra took charge. He and Chiki, along with K-Chick, took the ten chicks to the door.

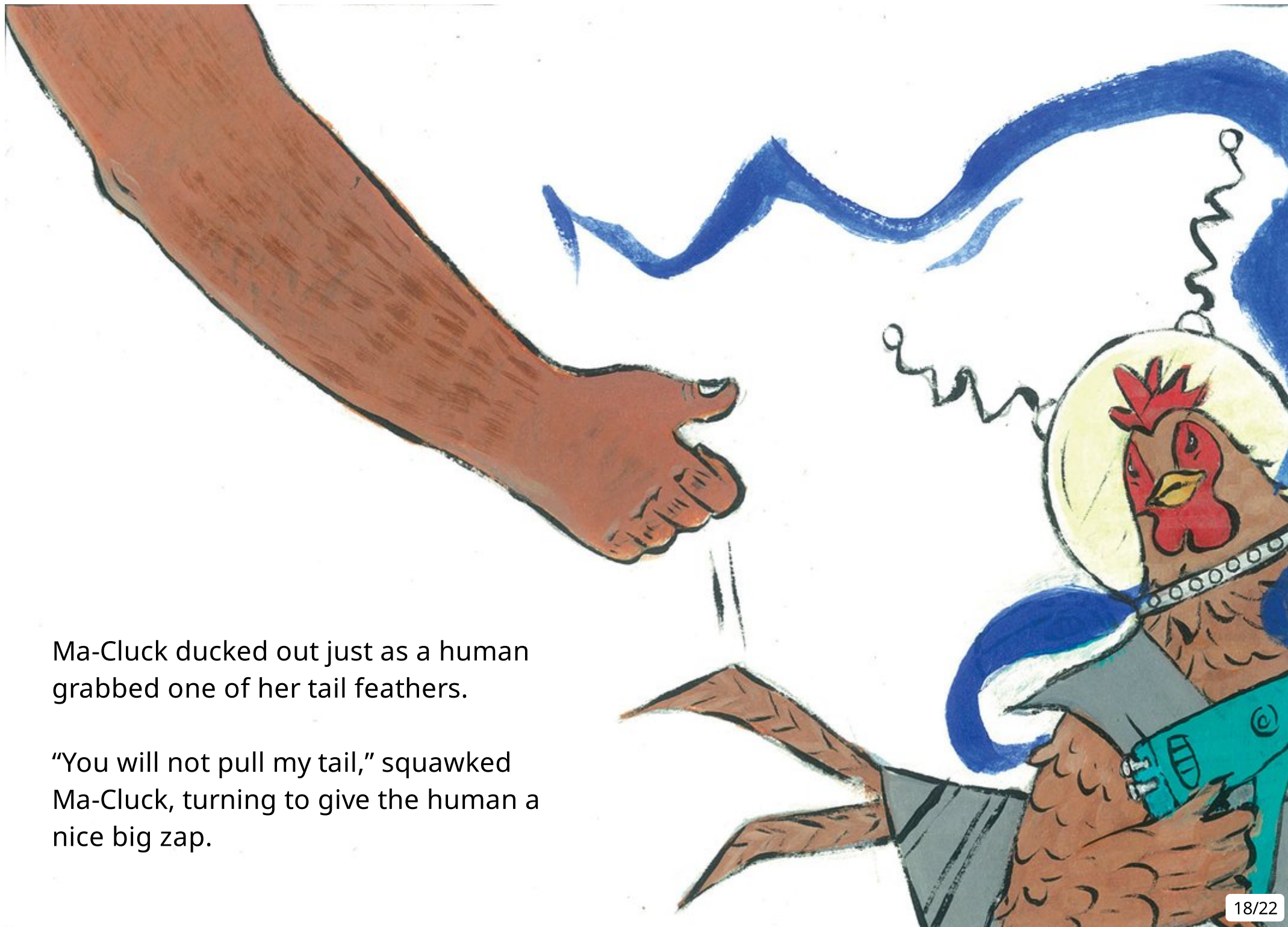
The door swung open. A large human stood there with a torch.

"What is this? Where are the chicks? Who are you?" he shouted.

As Ra Ra and the chicks scooted out of the shed, Ma-Cluck let out a stream of blue light from her special Zapper. It curled around the human's legs and caught them tight!

"Ooh, oh! Ooh... OUCH!" shouted the man. Ma-Cluck shut off the Zapper and ran out of the door.

"Quickly, Mama!" yelled K-Chick, from the hole.
"More humans coming!"



Ma-Cluck ducked out just as a human grabbed one of her tail feathers.

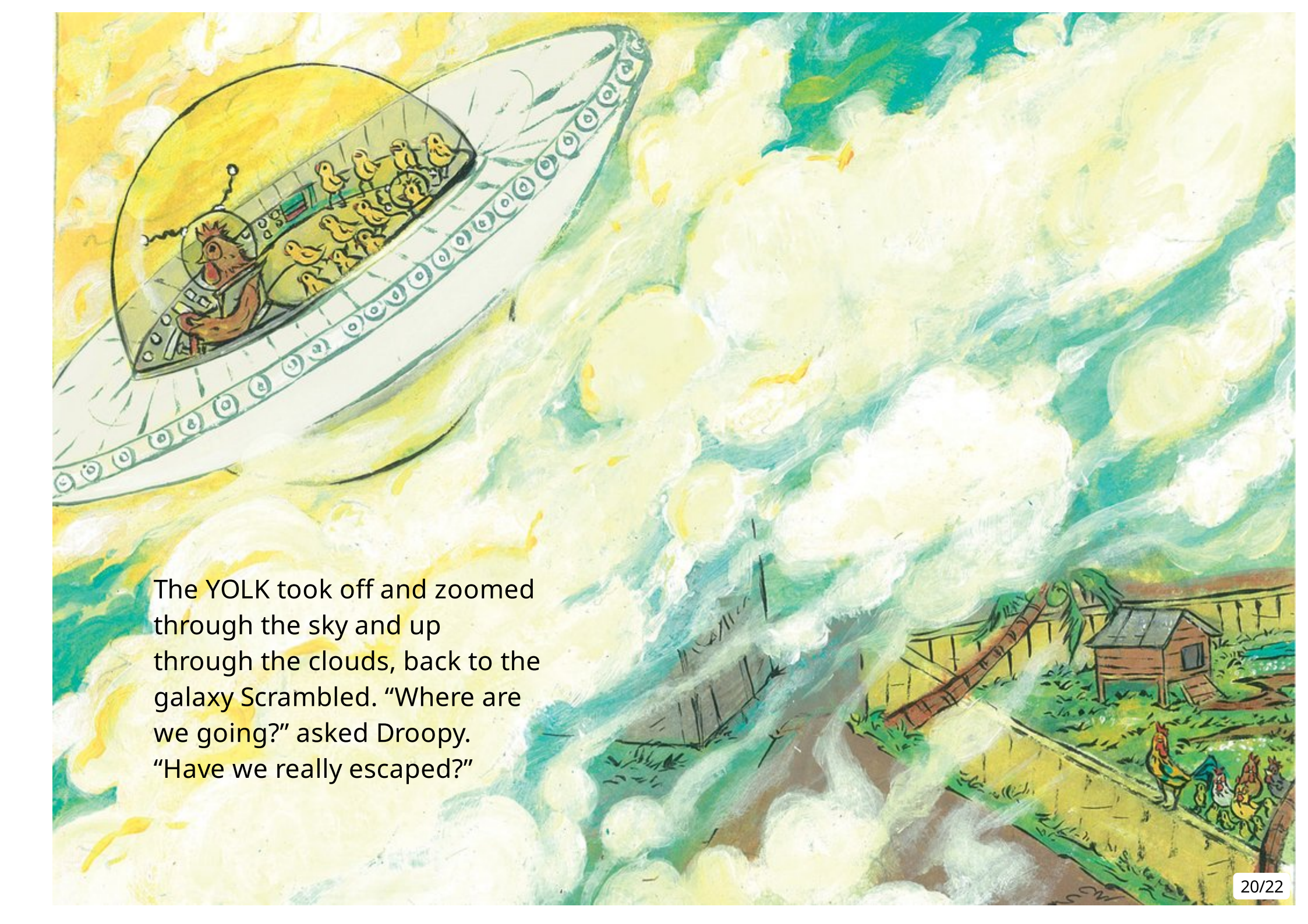
"You will not pull my tail," squawked Ma-Cluck, turning to give the human a nice big zap.

They rushed to the YOLK. All the chicks scrambled in.
K-Chick gave Chiki a quick hug and jumped in himself.



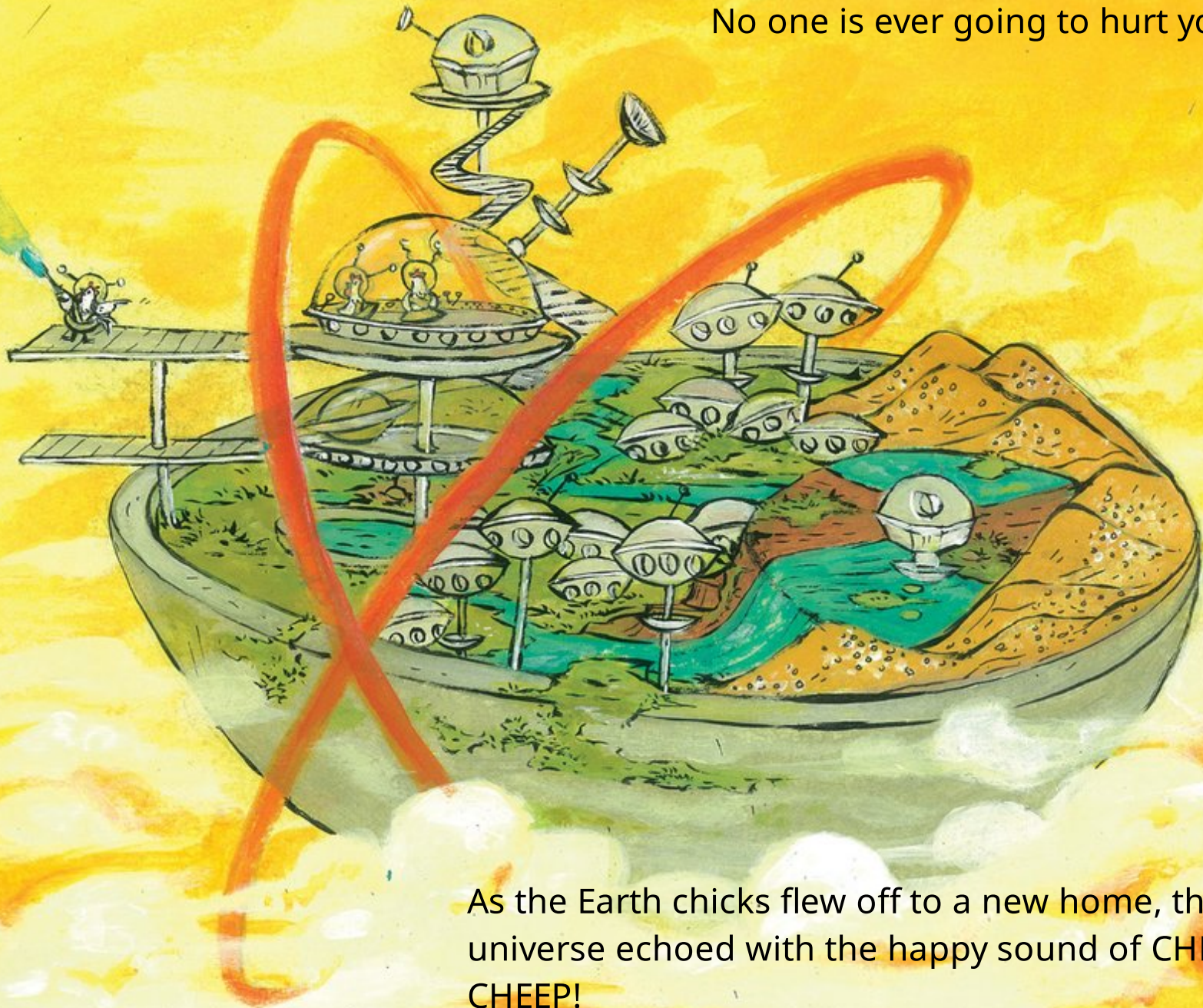
“Thank you for rescuing those poor chicks,” crowed Ra Ra.

“Wish I could have done more,” said Ma-Cluck. “Someone must help the chicks there.
See you, Ra Ra and family. Your yard is the absolute happy place.”

A vibrant, painterly illustration depicting a whimsical scene. In the upper left, a white spaceship with a rounded nose and a row of circular portholes along its side is shown in flight. Inside the cockpit, a brown chicken with a red comb is piloting the vessel. The cabin is filled with several small yellow chicks. The spaceship is moving upwards and to the right, leaving a trail of white and yellow clouds behind it. Below the spaceship, a farm scene is visible, featuring a wooden fence, a small brown house with a grey roof, and a group of chickens, including a large rooster, standing in a grassy area. The sky is filled with large, billowing clouds in shades of white, yellow, and green, suggesting a bright, sunny day. The overall style is that of a children's book illustration, with bold outlines and a rich, textured color palette.

The YOLK took off and zoomed through the sky and up through the clouds, back to the galaxy Scrambled. "Where are we going?" asked Droopy. "Have we really escaped?"

"Yes, you have," said K-Chick. "You are coming home with me to Planet Egx. No one is ever going to hurt you again."



As the Earth chicks flew off to a new home, the universe echoed with the happy sound of CHEEP CHEEP!

The Earth Hens



Hens and roosters are fun to have in a nice big yard.

They need lots of space to run about and cluck.

They also need a lot of space to scratch the ground and look for worms. Yum!

Mother hens love their chicks and protect them all the time. Her chicks listen to her every cluck and obey her always.

We must always be kind to hens and chicks and never hurt them in any way.

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Happy as a Hen

(English)

Ma-Cluck and K-Chick have come to Earth to see the wonderful life that hens lead here. When Ra Ra Rooster takes them to the place of Absolute Happiness, the group realises that it isn't as happy as they first thought.

This is a Level 4 book for children who can read fluently and with confidence.



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