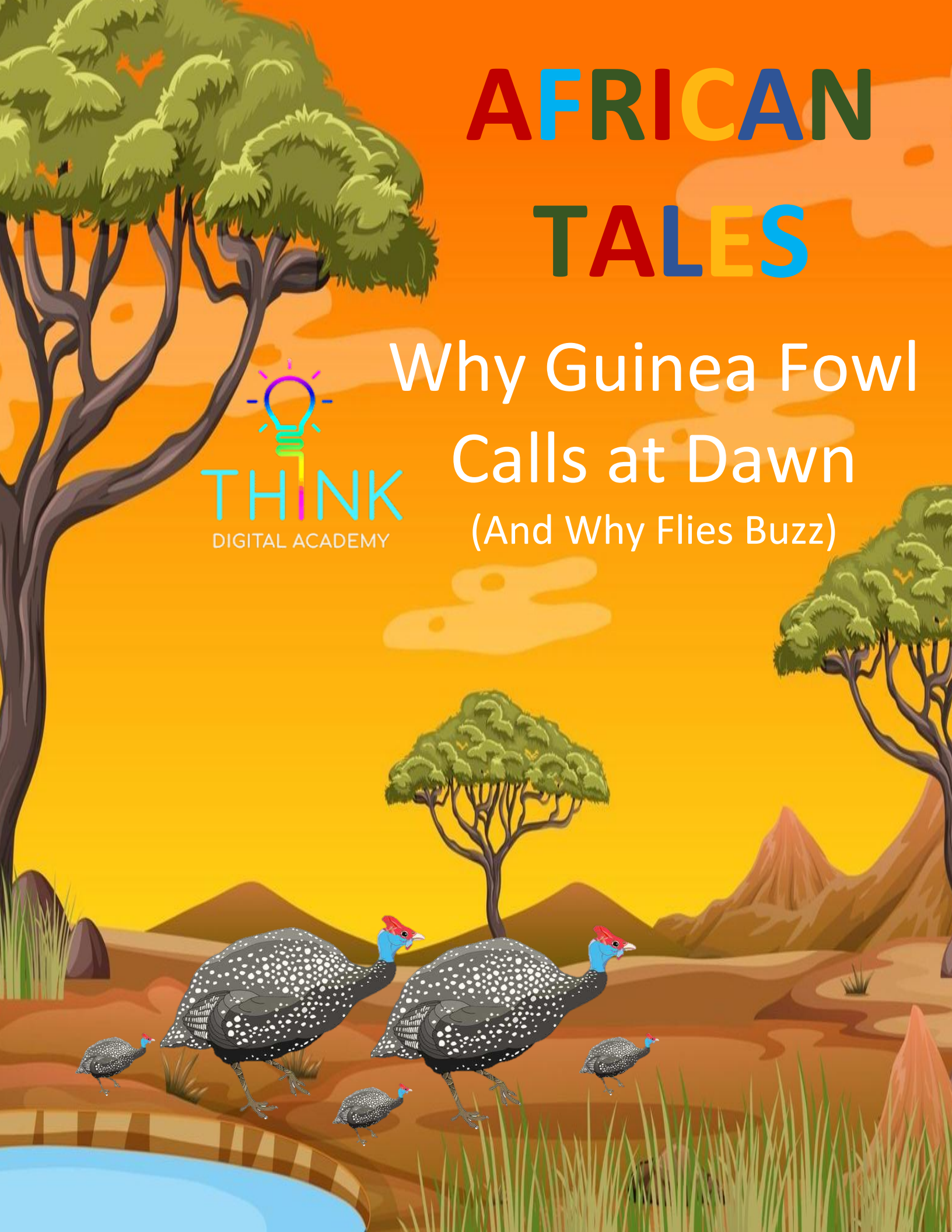


AFRICAN TALES



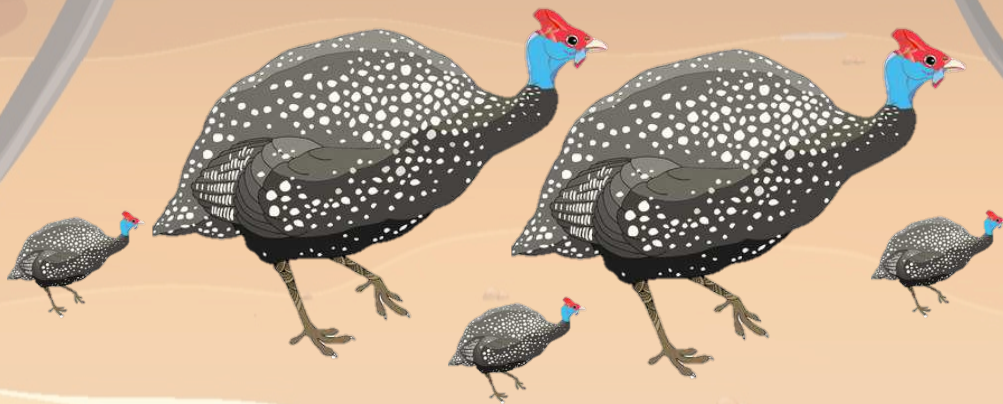
Why Guinea Fowl Calls at Dawn (And Why Flies Buzz)



An Ekoi Tale

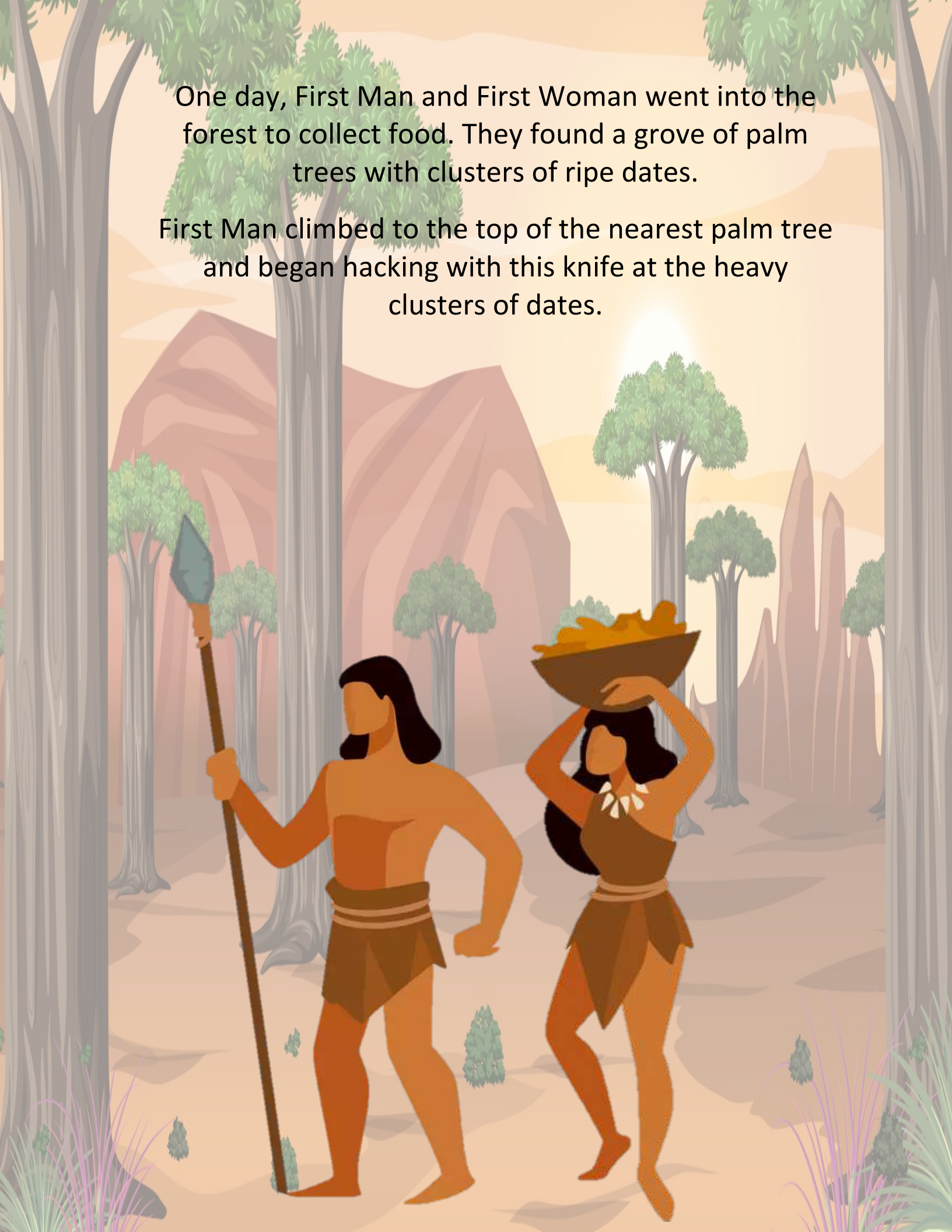
The Ekoi of Nigeria tell us that Guinea Fowl is always the first creature to wake among all the creatures of the bush.

Her raucous calls raise the sun from its nightly rest. Guinea Fowl then rises into the sky and a new day begins.



One day, First Man and First Woman went into the forest to collect food. They found a grove of palm trees with clusters of ripe dates.

First Man climbed to the top of the nearest palm tree and began hacking with this knife at the heavy clusters of dates.



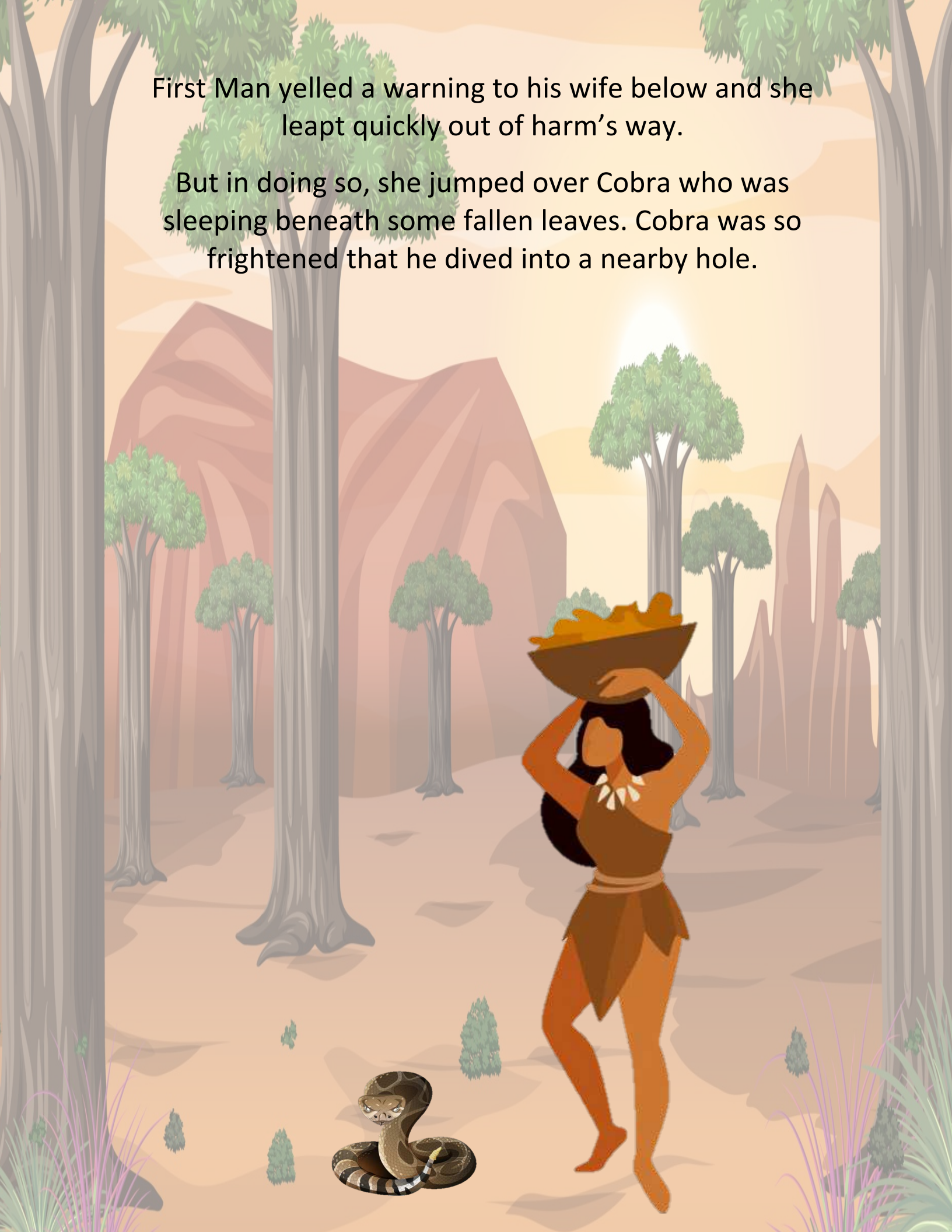
This disturbed a swarm of small black flies, which then buzzed annoyingly around First Man's face and tickled his nose.

First Man tried to brush them off, but he slipped and dropped his knife.



First Man yelled a warning to his wife below and she leapt quickly out of harm's way.

But in doing so, she jumped over Cobra who was sleeping beneath some fallen leaves. Cobra was so frightened that he dived into a nearby hole.



This hole was Rat's home. Poor Rat received such a scare from his unwelcome visitor that he dashed out of his hole and sought safety in the nearest tree.



Unfortunately, Rat chose the tree that Weaver Bird
nested in. fearing that Rat was trying to steal his eggs,
he set up a dreadful racket.



This screaming and cackling terrified the wits out of Colobus Monkey who was sitting in a neighboring tree. In shock, he dropped the juicy mango he was about to eat for lunch.

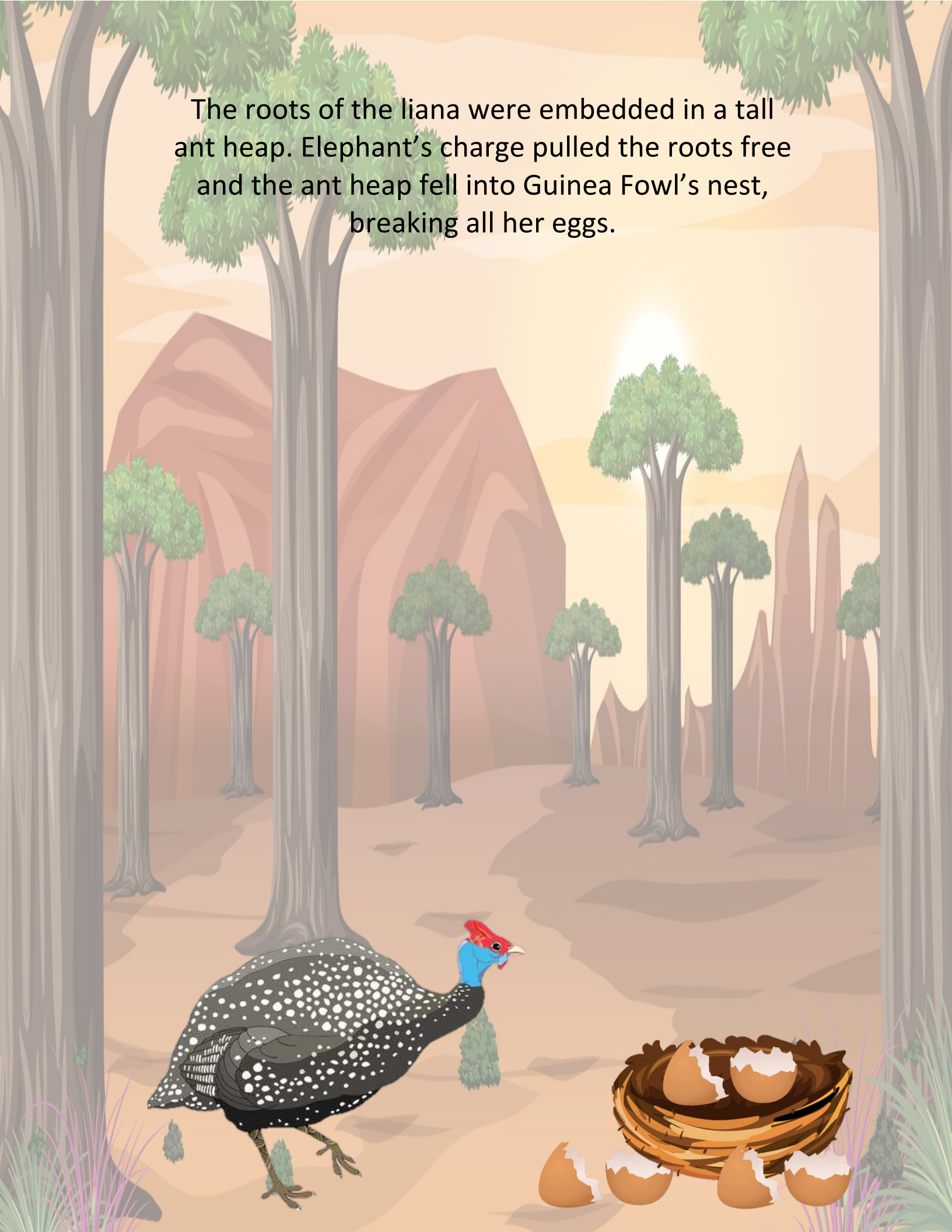


The mango fell and landed with a thud on Elephant's head, who was peacefully dozing in the tree's shade.

Thinking that hunters were after him, Elephant stampeded off. But Elephant had hooked a sturdy liana with his tusks. In his flight, he uprooted the tree and dragged it off through the bush.



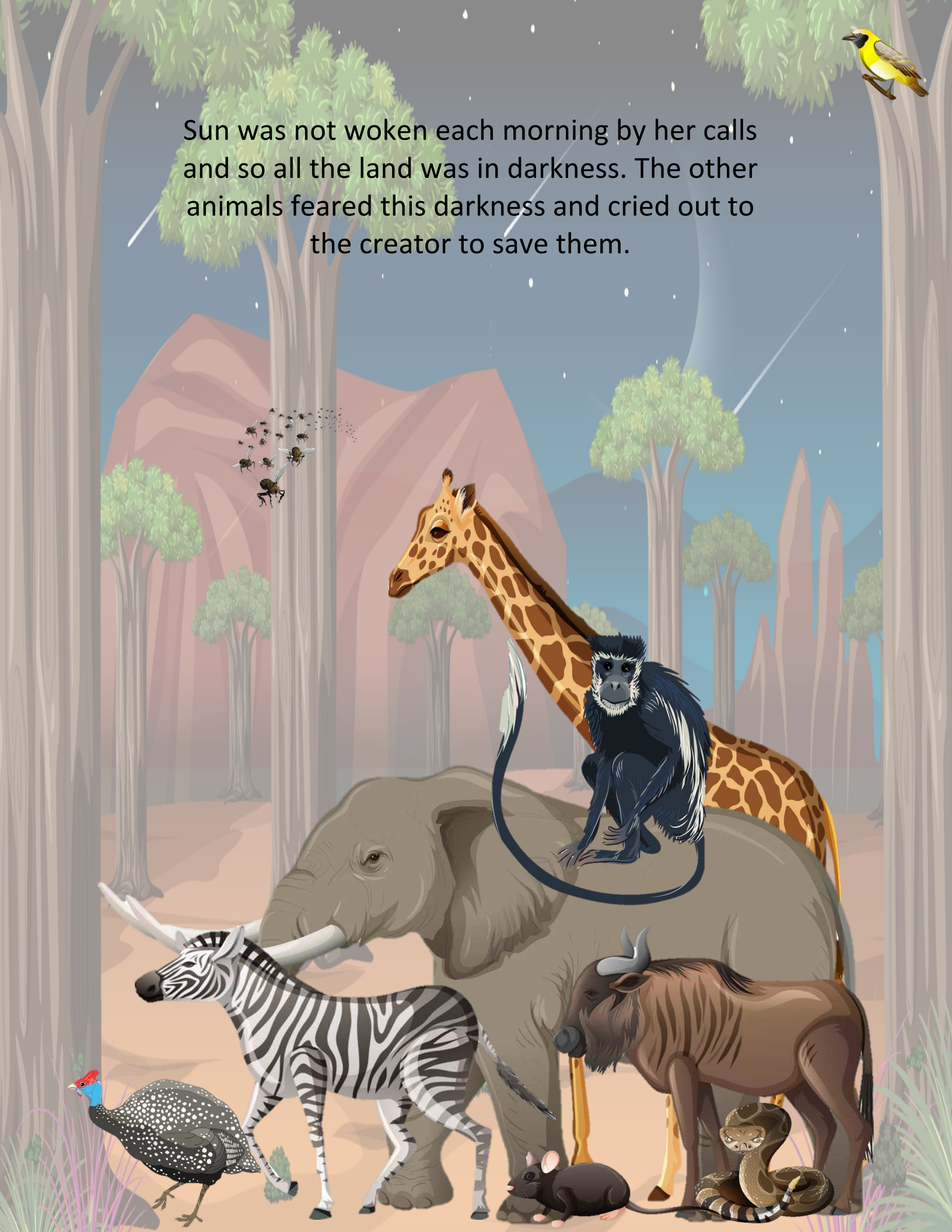
The roots of the liana were embedded in a tall ant heap. Elephant's charge pulled the roots free and the ant heap fell into Guinea Fowl's nest, breaking all her eggs.



Poor Guinea Fowl was so upset by the loss of her clutch of eggs that she spread her feathers out over the ruined nest and did not utter a sound for two whole days and nights.



Sun was not woken each morning by her calls
and so all the land was in darkness. The other
animals feared this darkness and cried out to
the creator to save them.



The Creator summoned all the animals together.
“Why have you not wakened the sun these past
two mornings?” the Creator asked Guinea Fowl.



“My eggs were broken by a falling ant heap, that was pulled over by a creeper, that was dragged away by Elephant, who was hit by a mango, that was dropped by Colobus Monkey, who was startled by Weaver Bird, who was frightened by Rat, who was scared by Cobra, who was woken by First Woman, who was avoiding a knife that was dropped by her husband, who was annoyed by some small black flies, who live at the top of a palm tree,” wailed Guinea Fowl.



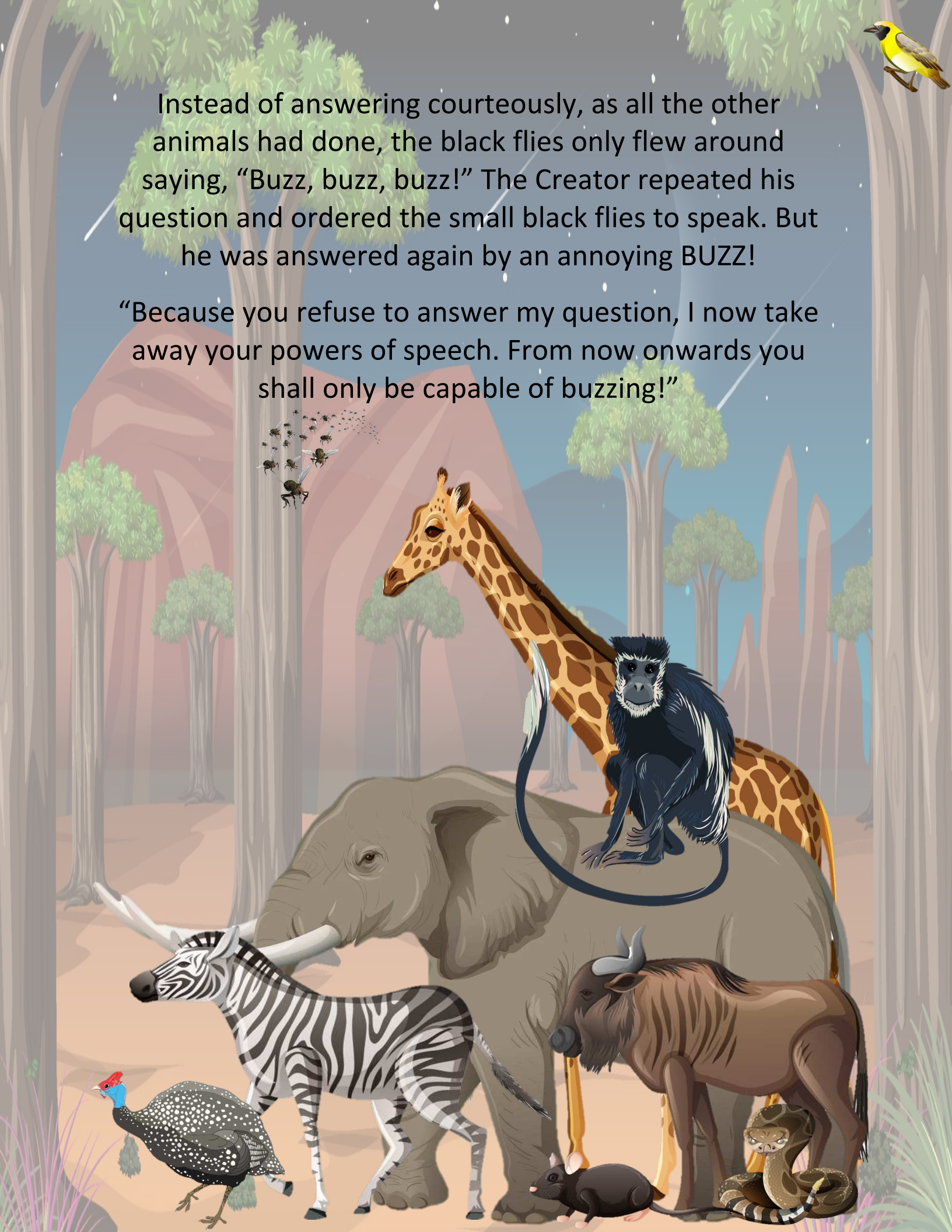
The Creator went back through the unfortunate chain of events, questioning each animal and confirming all the details. Eventually, the Creator came to the culprits, the small black flies.

“It seems to me that you are the cause of all the trouble,” said the Creator to the small black flies. “Why do you annoy First Man as he went about his food gathering?” he demanded.



Instead of answering courteously, as all the other animals had done, the black flies only flew around saying, “Buzz, buzz, buzz!” The Creator repeated his question and ordered the small black flies to speak. But he was answered again by an annoying BUZZ!

“Because you refuse to answer my question, I now take away your powers of speech. From now onwards you shall only be capable of buzzing!”



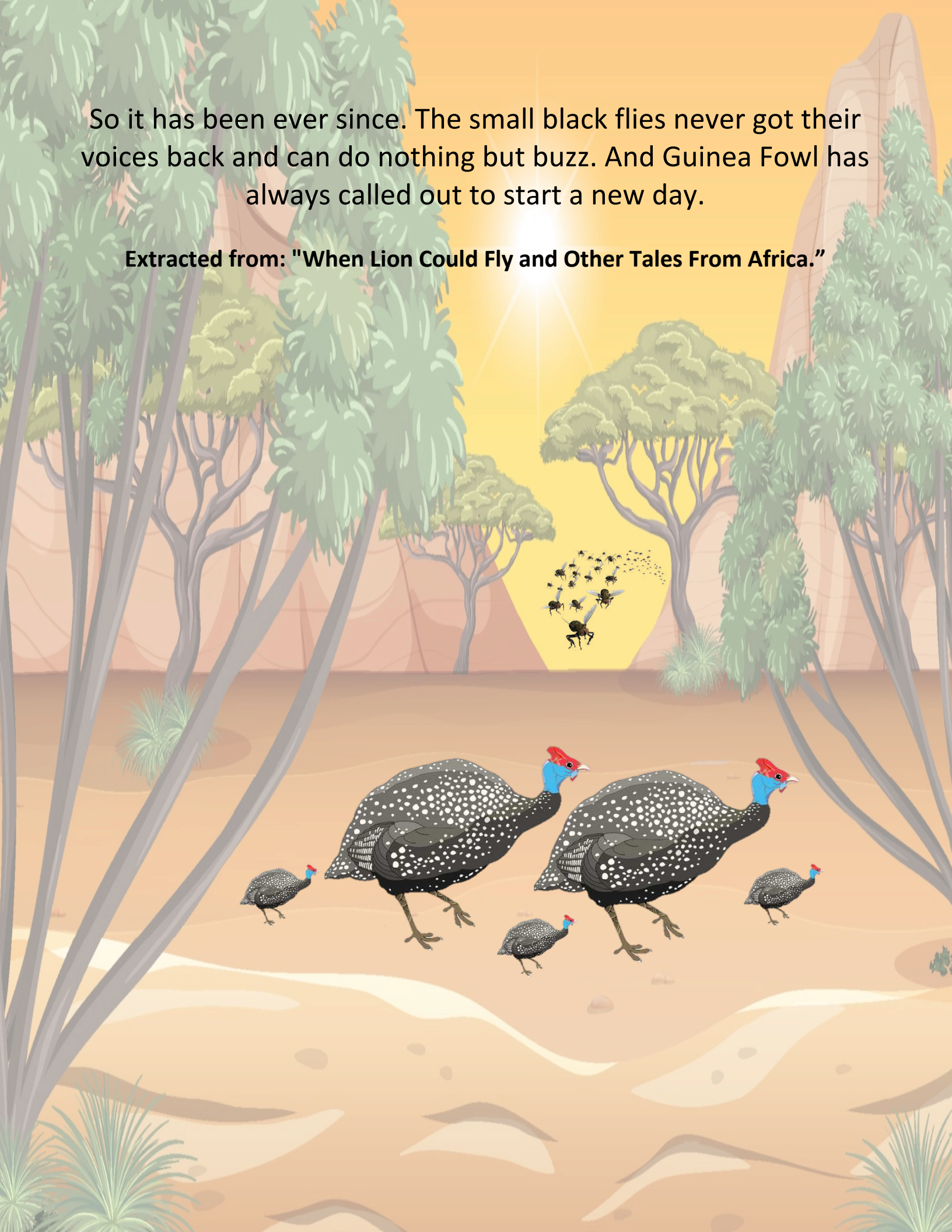


Turning to Guinea Fowl, the Creator said, “Never again must you neglect to call the sun at dawn, whatever may have happened to your eggs!”



So it has been ever since. The small black flies never got their voices back and can do nothing but buzz. And Guinea Fowl has always called out to start a new day.

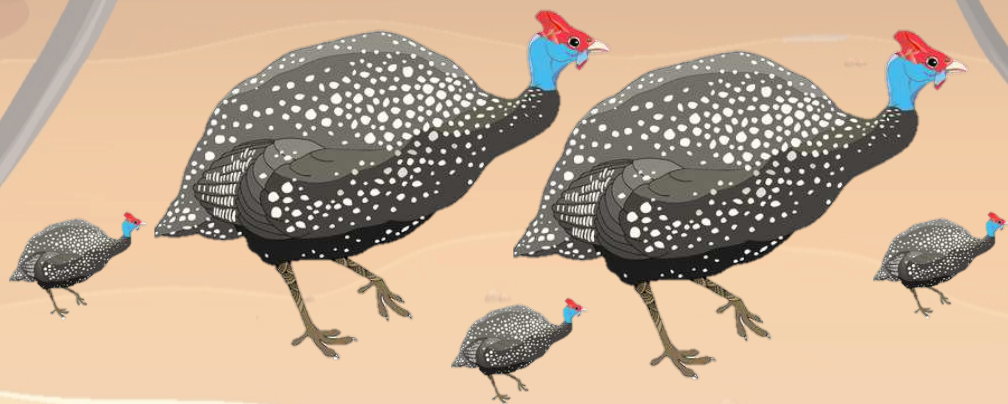
Extracted from: "When Lion Could Fly and Other Tales From Africa."



FUN FACTS

About Guinea Fowls

- Guinea Fowl choose to walk – even though they can fly.
- They're rather chatty.
- They make for great “watchdogs” because of their alarming cry when disturbed.
- They're mainly found south of the Sahara.
- Guinea Fowl are omnivorous game birds.



DID YOU KNOW

This About Flies

- House flies live on a liquid diet.
- They can taste with their feet.
- Flies can only live for about 30 to 50 days before they die if they are not provided with food source.
- House flies can walk upside down.
- Flies are able to see behind them.





THINK

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