

The Colourful Tree



Story by
Natasha Rrapun Burarrwanja

This book is for my grandmother Shirley Walpulay Bukulatjpi

The Colourful Tree by Natasha Burarrwaja

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Story by
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Illustrated By
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The Burarrwaja family lived
in a house in Galiwin'ku.

Next to the house
was a big colourful tree.

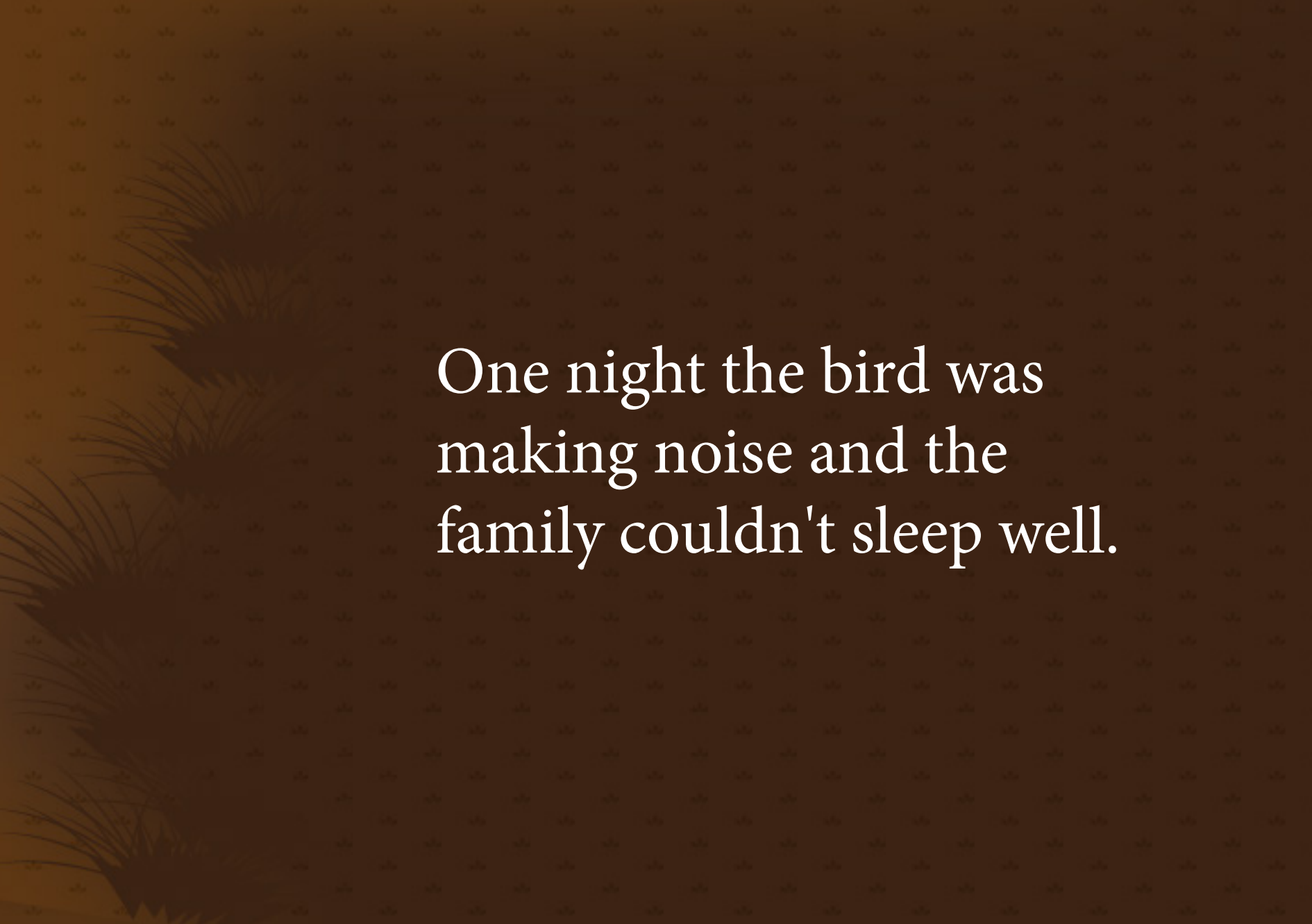






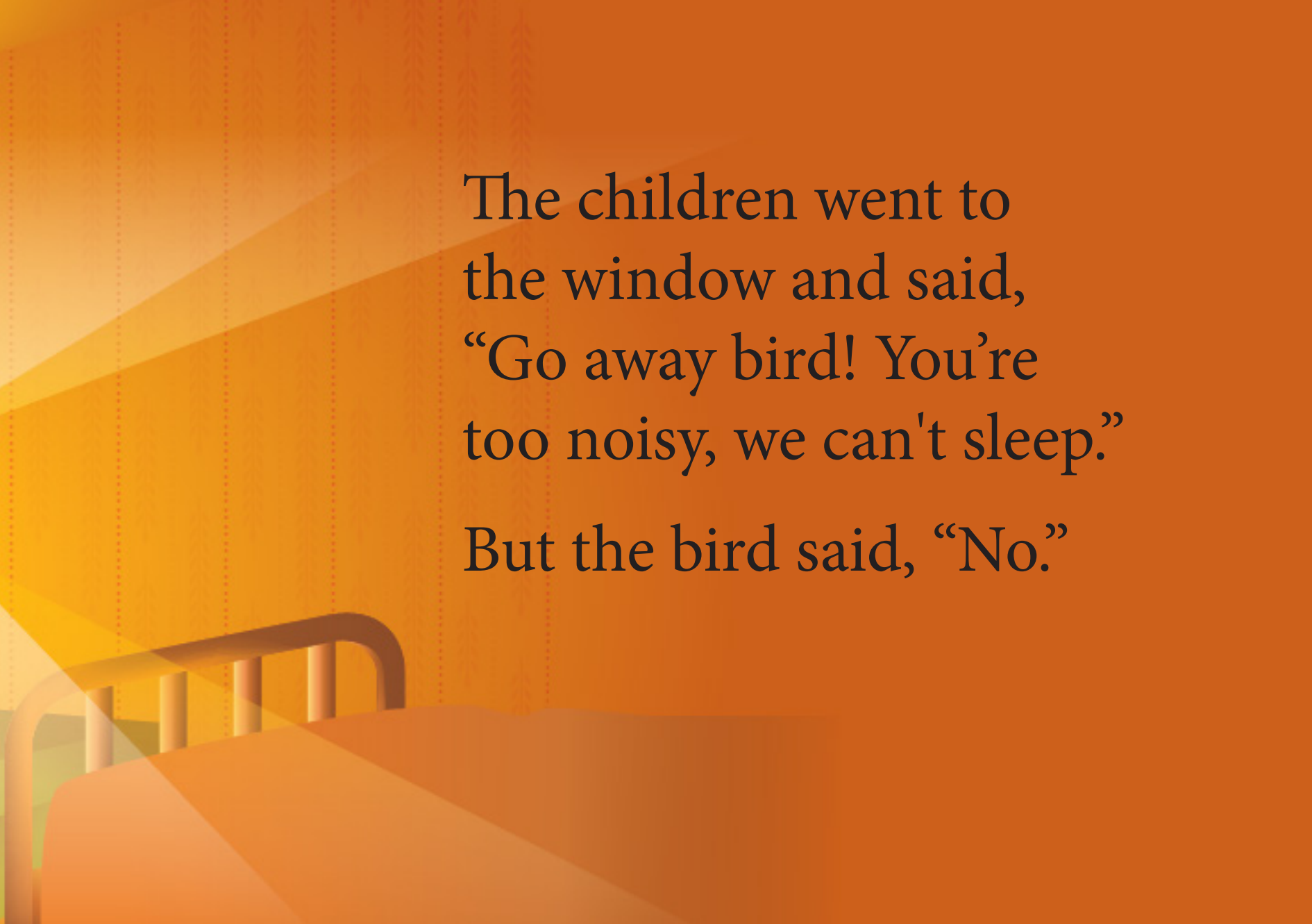
In the tree lived a bird
who liked to sing
LOUDLY!





One night the bird was
making noise and the
family couldn't sleep well.



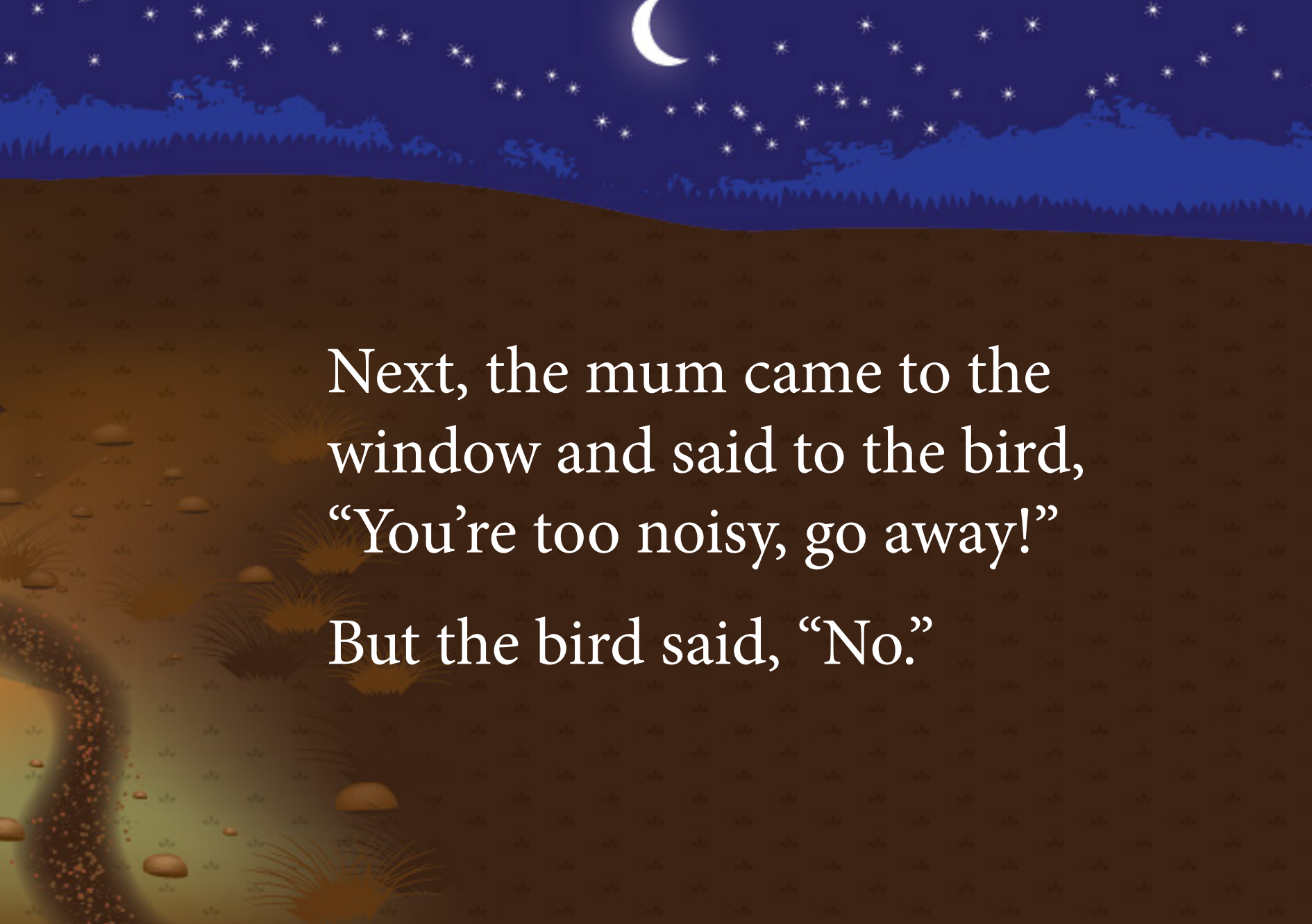


The children went to
the window and said,
“Go away bird! You’re
too noisy, we can't sleep.”

But the bird said, “No.”



No!

A night scene with a dark blue sky filled with stars and a crescent moon. Below the sky is a dark brown, hilly landscape. In the foreground, there is a stream of water with a sandy bank on the left, scattered rocks, and some reeds or grasses. The overall atmosphere is quiet and serene.

Next, the mum came to the window and said to the bird, “You’re too noisy, go away!”


But the bird said, “No.”



Finally the grandma came to
the window and said,
“Go away bird! You’re too noisy!”

But the bird said, “I don’t want to
go away. This is my home.”





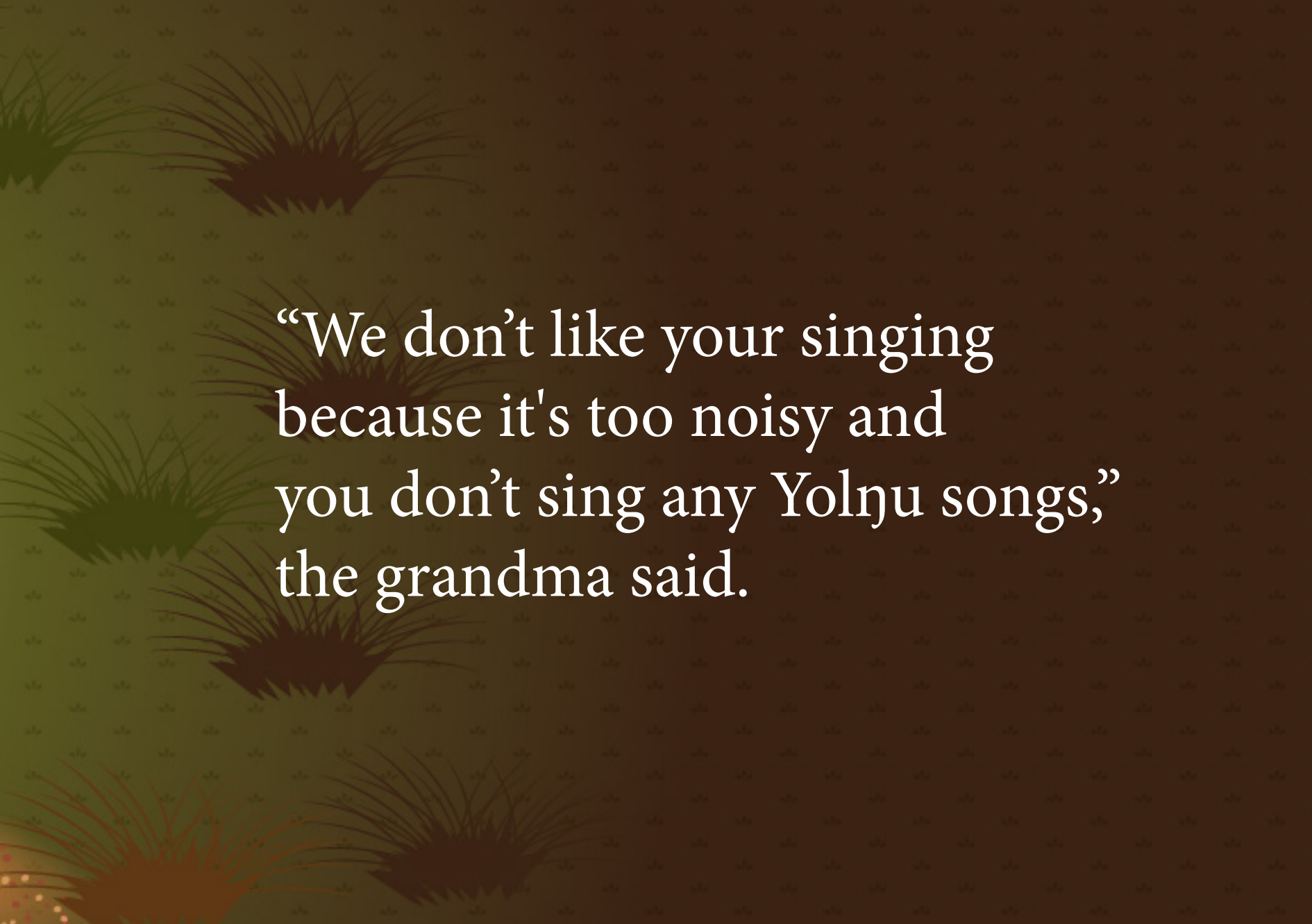
The grandma said to the bird,
“If you stay in this tree making
that loud noise, I’ll get the hose
and wash you away!”



“If you try and do that I will just fly to a higher branch where you can’t reach me,” said the bird.

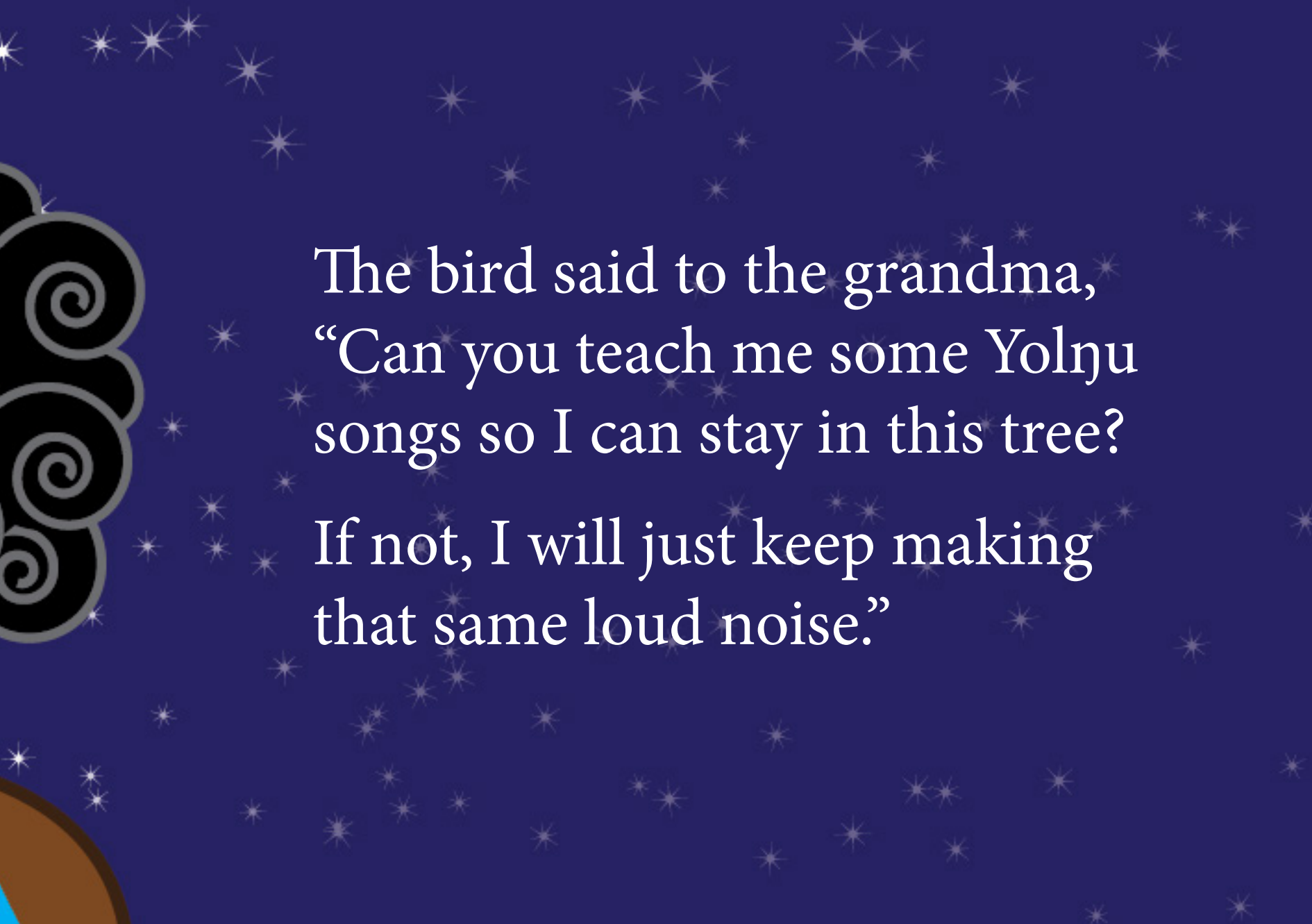
“And... why don’t you like my singing?” asked the bird.



The background features a dark brown color with a repeating pattern of small, light-colored stars. Overlaid on this are several stylized, spiky grass-like plants in shades of green and brown, scattered across the frame.

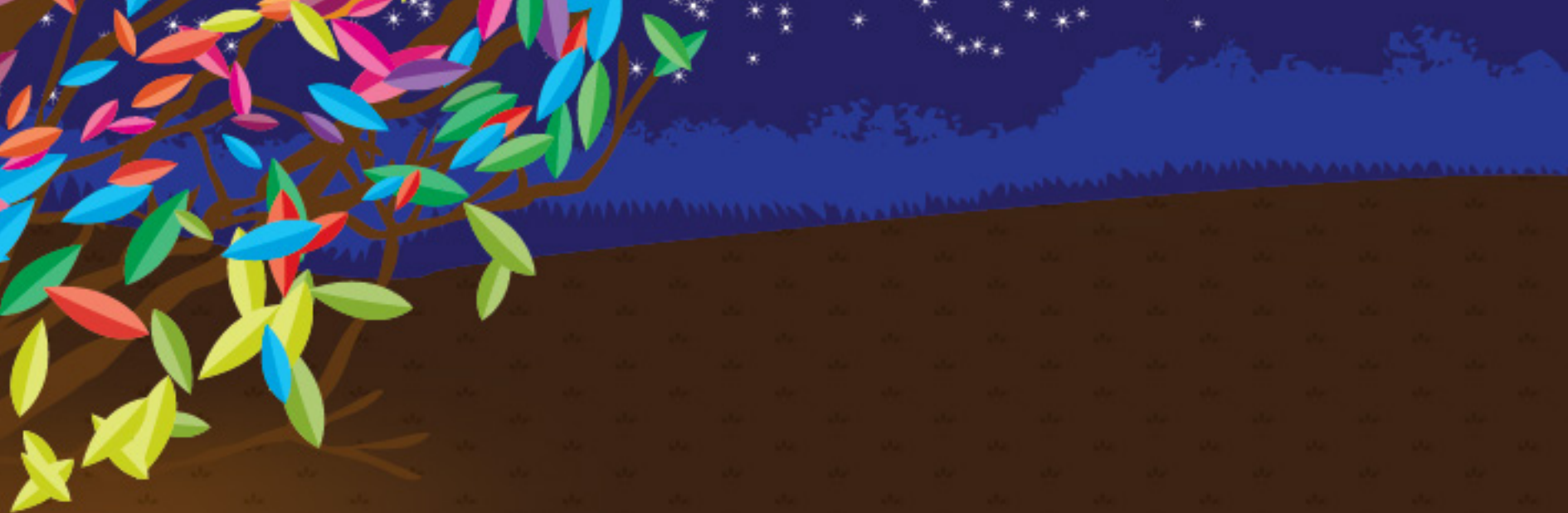
“We don’t like your singing
because it's too noisy and
you don’t sing any Yolŋu songs,”
the grandma said.





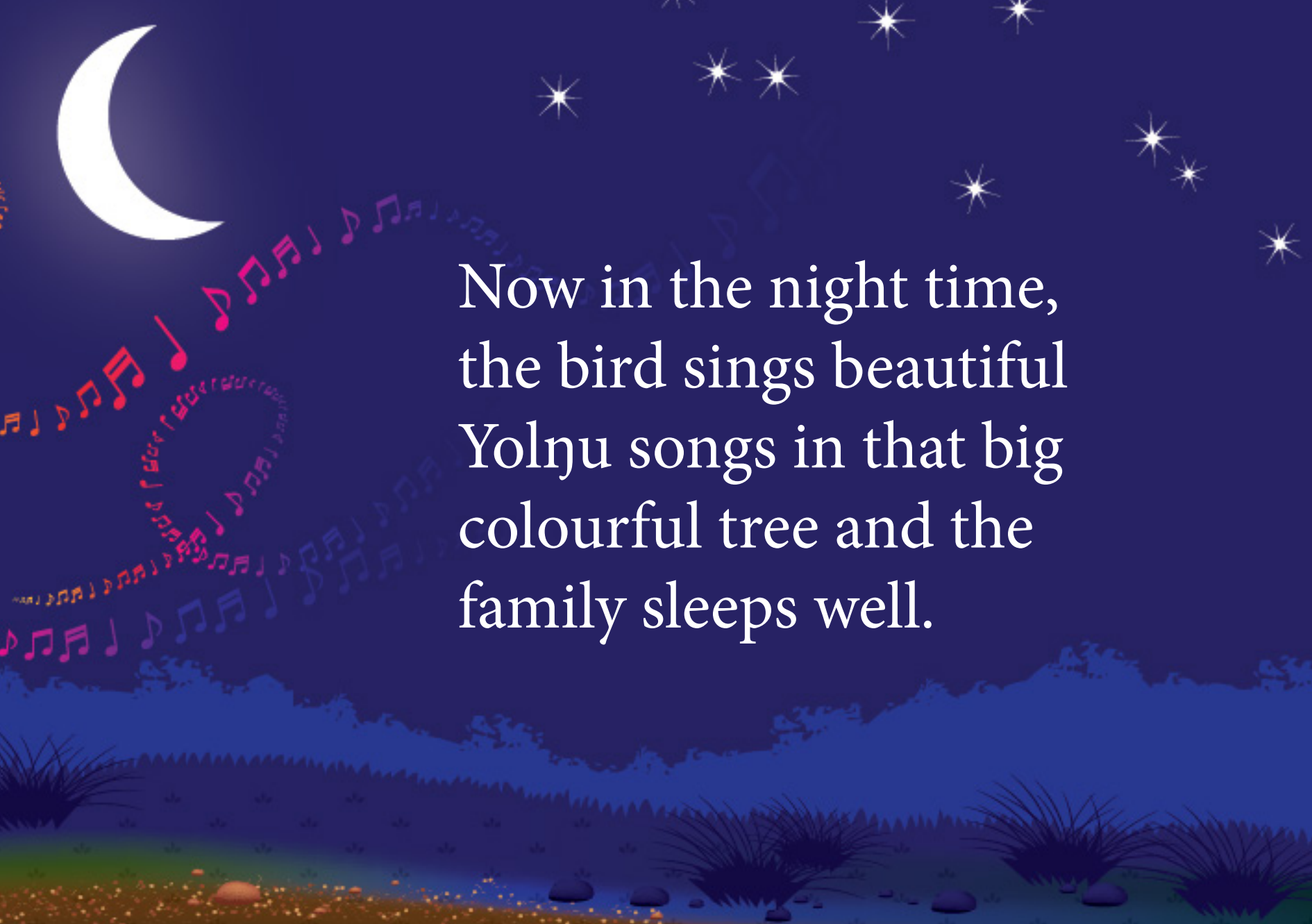
The bird said to the grandma,
“Can you teach me some Yolŋu
songs so I can stay in this tree?
If not, I will just keep making
that same loud noise.”





The grandma thought this was a good idea. So she sat with the bird and taught him how to sing some Yolŋu songs.



A night scene with a dark blue sky. In the top left, a white crescent moon is visible. Scattered across the sky are several bright, multi-pointed stars. A large, faint watermark of a musical note is visible in the background. In the foreground, there are silhouettes of grass and rocks. The text is centered in the middle of the image.

Now in the night time,
the bird sings beautiful
Yolnu songs in that big
colourful tree and the
family sleeps well.





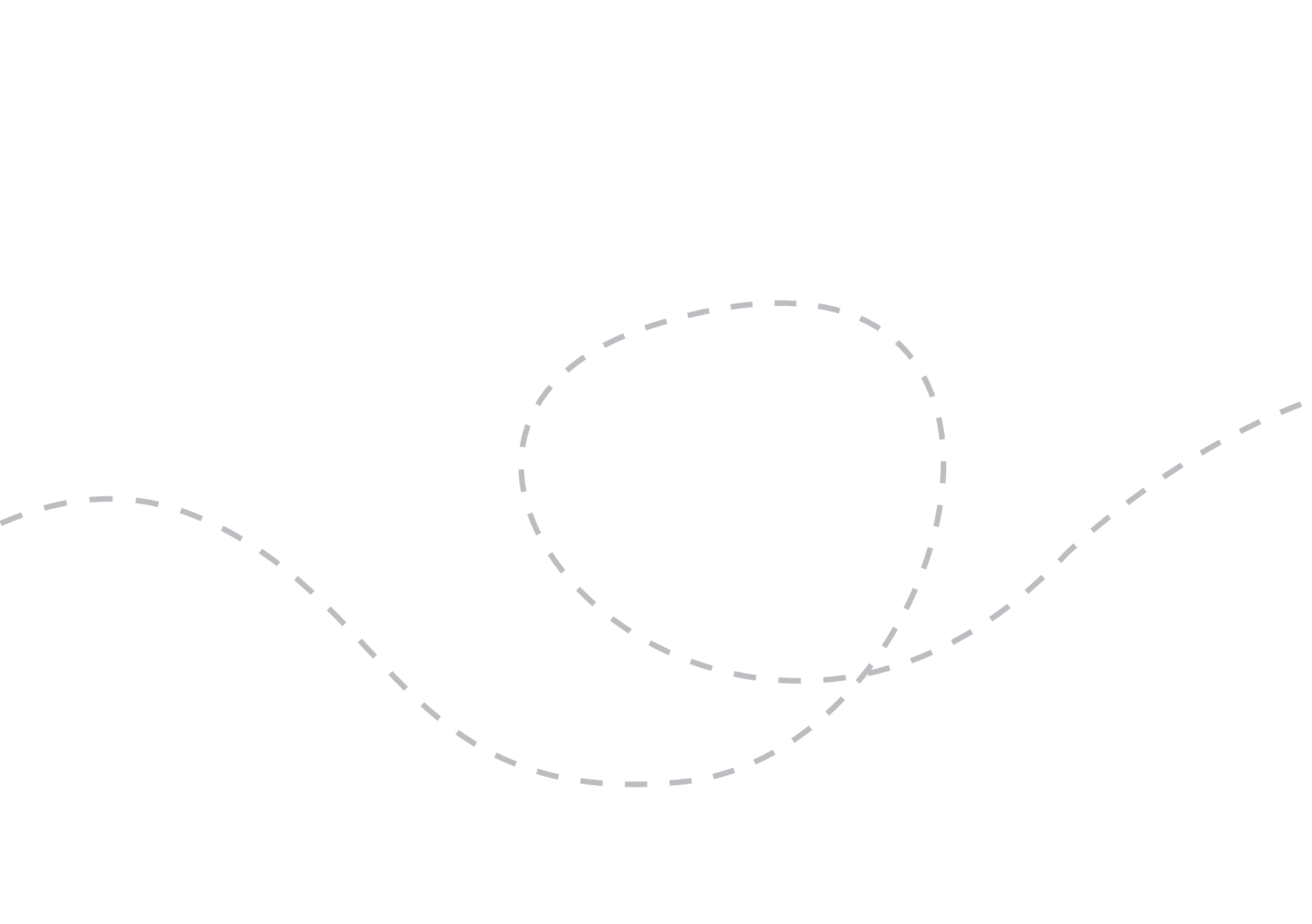


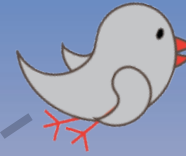
This story was written by Natasha Rräpuṅ Burarrwaja and was the winning entry in the first annual Galiwin'ku Writing Competition hosted by Shepherdson College.

Natasha is a Yolṅu woman from the remote island community of Galiwin'ku, North East Arnhem Land, in Australia's Northern Territory. She is seventeen years old and currently in Year 11 at Shepherdson College. Natasha attends school everyday. She walks to school with her grandmother, Walpulay Bukulatjpi.

When Natasha is not at school she likeṣ to go out with her family to collect bush honey, wild apples, oysters, crayfish, stingray and crab. One of her favourite foods is damper and golden syrup.

When Natasha finishes school she would like to work in her community and save some money so that one day she can attend university.





This story is written by Natasha Rräpuṅ Burarrwaja who is a seventeen year old student at Shepherdson College, Galiwin'ku in North East Arnhem Land.

Natasha's story is about a bird that keeps her family awake at night.

