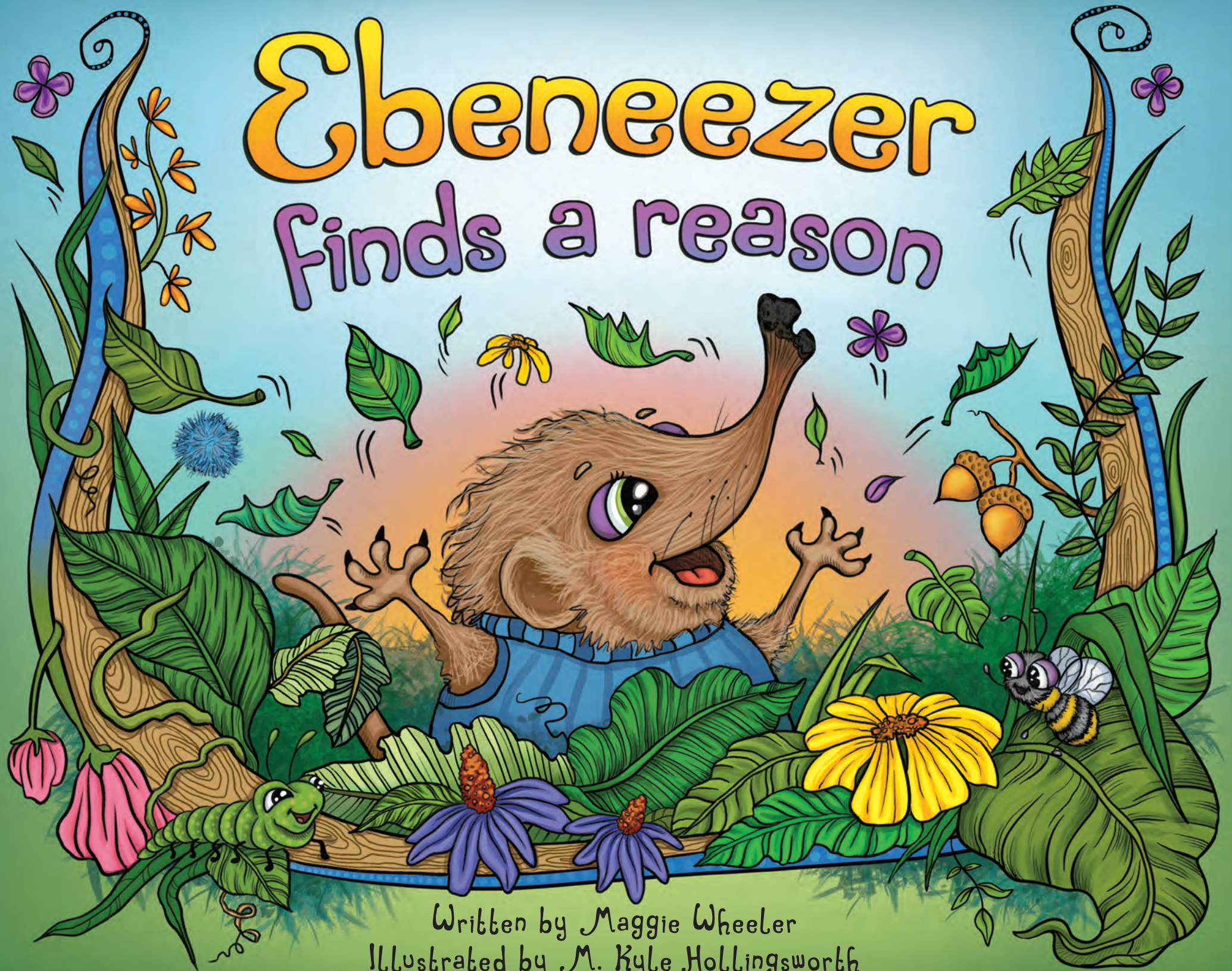


Ebenezer finds a reason



Written by Maggie Wheeler
Illustrated by M. Kyle Hollingsworth

Ebenezer Finds A Reason

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Ebenezer Sneezer was a tiny little shrew.

The reason for his sneezing
he sorely wished he knew,
for he would sneeze all day and night
and then when he was through,
he'd pause and take a little rest
and suddenly ... **ACHOOOO!!!**





Ebenezer's mother was entirely confused.

There was no single remedy
she had not already used.

The latest was a special tea
from Ebenezer's Aunt,
made from the tiny purple leaves
of an anti-sneezing plant.



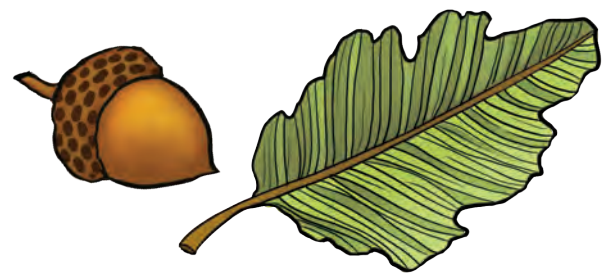
The leaves were
dried for seven days
in bundles by the door.

and after that, kept in a jar
to sit for seven more.

A teaspoon full of berry juice
to sweeten it a bit.

and then poor Ebenezer
had to drink each drop of it!

Ebenezer's mother watched her boy most anxiously
and dearly hoped his wheezing sneeze
was cured by Auntie's tea.



It seemed to make a difference
for a portion of the day,
and that little shrew was longing
just to go outside and play!



So, he asked his mother if he might ...
and she finally said, "O.K."



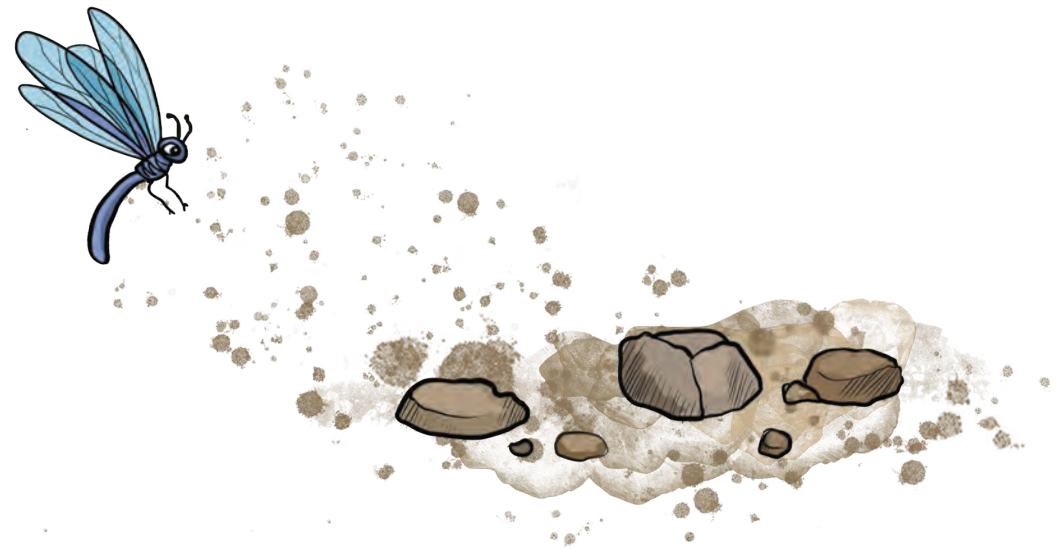
Ebenezer skipped and jumped! He danced among the flowers.
"This is so much fun!", he laughed. "I could play out here for hours!"



He decided to go burrowing
(pure heaven for a shrew)

when faintly from down underground his mother heard ...

ACHOOO!!



Up came Ebenezer with a look of sheer dismay and said, "I can not stand this sneezing, Mother,

not for one more day!

It is time to solve this mystery,

we have to see this through!

I cannot spend my days this way,

I need relief" ...





Ebenezer's mother gathered up her little son.
She marched right out the garden gate saying,
 "Something must be done.
 We will visit every doctor,
 every healer in the Land.
We will find a cure, I promise!"
And she took his little hand.

For the next two weeks they met with many interesting teachers,
for in the forest where they lived were many caring creatures.

The owl suggested chasing mice for
strengthening the body.

Old Mother Squirrel prescribed a brew
she called an "Acorn Toddy."



They even had a meeting with a mystical raccoon, who only met with patients on the eve of the full moon.


The raccoon scattered special herbs 'round Ebenezer's toes.

and made a spicy ointment to put underneath his nose.

The raccoon felt quite confident he had helped our friend the shrew, but then, there came without a warning an echoing ...

ACHOO!!






Ebenezer and his mother
headed sleepily for home,
when Ebenezer tripped and fell
upon a jagged stone.


As tears rolled down his tiny cheeks, his mommy by his side,
someone poked his head out of a hole they had not spied.

A little hairless mole appeared
and he asked them both inside.



They told him of their troubles with
this endless stubborn sneezing
and the mole just sat there
smiling as if he found the
story pleasing.

"Ah yes", he laughed,
"when I was young they blamed
it on the season. I do believe that
you my friends have met me
for a reason!"



"Now, Mother Shrew look closely, and if you are not careless, you will notice I am missing something."

"Why yes, my dear, you're hairless!"

"Consider," said Mole, "a haircut for this sneezing little shrew. For what you are allergic to my lad, just might be you."

The hairless mole explained how he had finally cured his wheezing, his runny nose, his itchy eyes, and yes, his endless sneezing.

"Now mind you, going hairless is not everybody's cure, but for you dear Ebenezer it will work, I'm almost sure!"

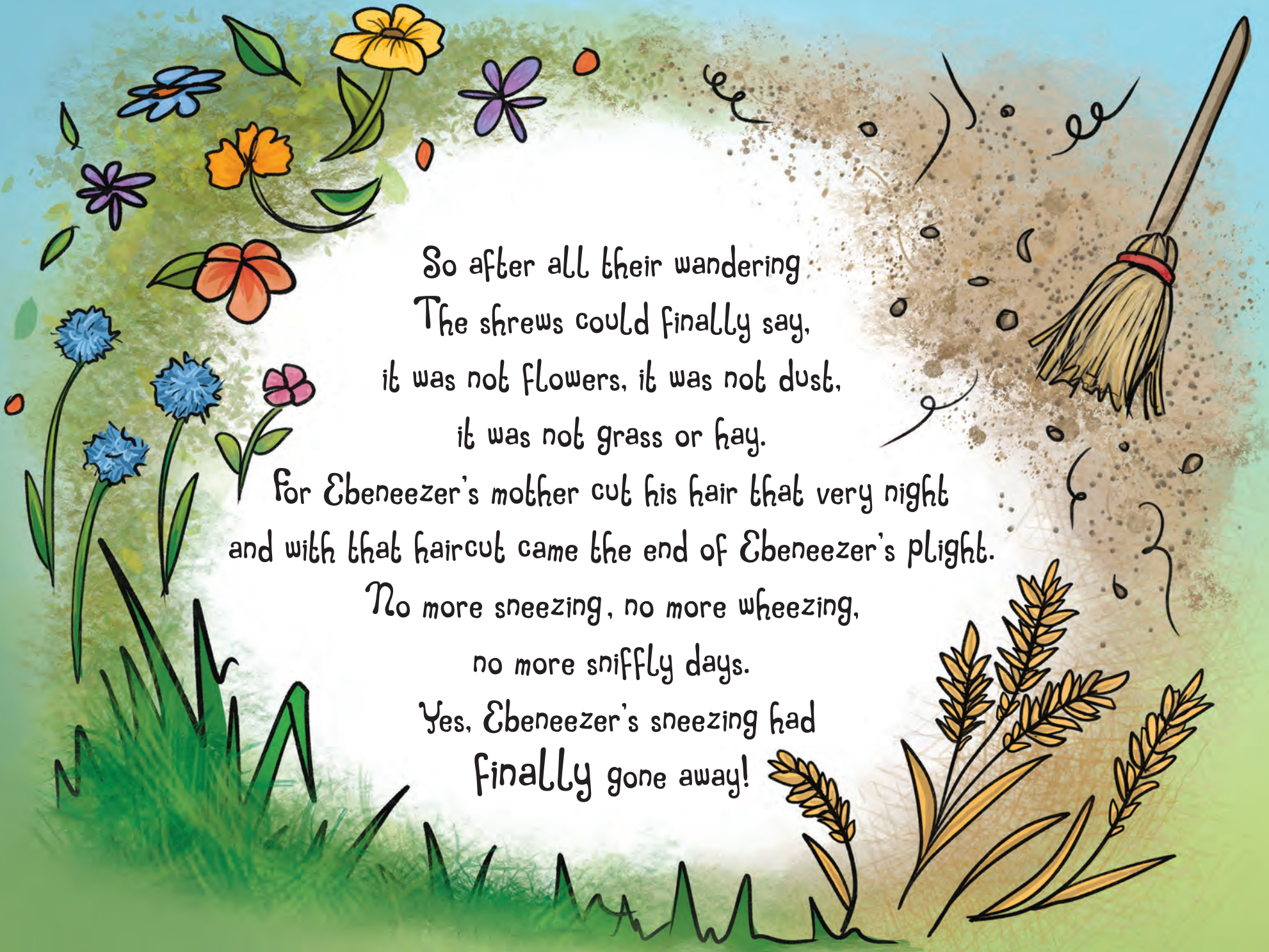
Ebenezer and his mother said, "Thank you," and "Goodbye,"
and promised to come back sometime to share some earthworm pie.
They walked together side by side as the sun began to rise.
They marveled at their fortune after oh, so many tries.



"So you see my dear," said Mother Shrew,

"One must never stop their search,
from down below on the forest floor, to the owl's highest perch.
For somewhere someone knows the special magic that you need
and when it's finally found, there will be happiness indeed!"





So after all their wandering
The shrews could finally say,
it was not flowers, it was not dust,
it was not grass or hay.

For Ebenezer's mother cut his hair that very night
and with that haircut came the end of Ebenezer's plight.

No more sneezing, no more wheezing,
no more sniffly days.
Yes, Ebenezer's sneezing had
finally gone away!



HOORRAAY!!

Things were peaceful in the shrew's house now,
the nights were warm and cozy.
The days were full of play and everything was rosy.



But when winter came and Mother Shrew could feel it in her body,
they would snuggle 'round the fire and sip hot acorn toddy,
remembering their forest friends and all the magic potions,
giggling about the ointments, teas,
and all the special lotions.
And feeling ever grateful that her son was finally better,
Ebenezer's mother knit him another sweater.





To listen to an audio version of *Ebenezer Finds A Reason* recorded by Maggie Wheeler, please scan the QR Code below.



Ebeneezer finds a reason



Maggie Wheeler is best known in the U.S. and internationally for her work as an actress in film, television and voice-over and most notably as the character of Janice on NBC's hit series Friends. As a voice-over artist she has lent her voice to many animated characters from The Addams Family to Captain Underpants and beyond.

A long time lover of story telling, Maggie is thrilled to share Ebeneezer Finds a Reason with children and their parents. She says, "Children come into your life with particular needs and difficulties that are new to you and the desire to help can sometimes be confusing and imperfect. To me parenthood often feels like a mystical quest to help your children find the information they need to be well and whole in body, mind and spirit. Ebeneezer's story is about just such a quest."

Maggie lives with her artist husband in Los Angeles where they raised their two daughters.

Alongside her work in film and television, Maggie is director of the Golden Bridge Community Choir in Los Angeles.

MaggieWheeler.net



M. Kyle Hollingsworth is an illustrator, fine artist, and designer whose work has garnered recognition including an Emmy-nomination, a Society of Illustrator's award, and a variety of exhibitions of her fine art. Kyle has illustrated and designed a number of books for children and adults, working in both traditional and digital formats, often combining the two in her playful and colorful style.

A longtime resident of Los Angeles, Kyle began living a nomadic lifestyle in late 2022, traveling in the U.S. with her musician husband and her two pups. The desire to explore, be more in tune with nature, and expand their horizons landed them in Placitas, New Mexico where they now live and work.

With a life-long love of picture books of all kinds, Kyle feels, "A good story accompanied by illustration creates worlds that delight, teach, inspire, and bring joy. I love Ebeneezer and his journey, and I hope this book brings all those things and more to kids and parents alike."

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