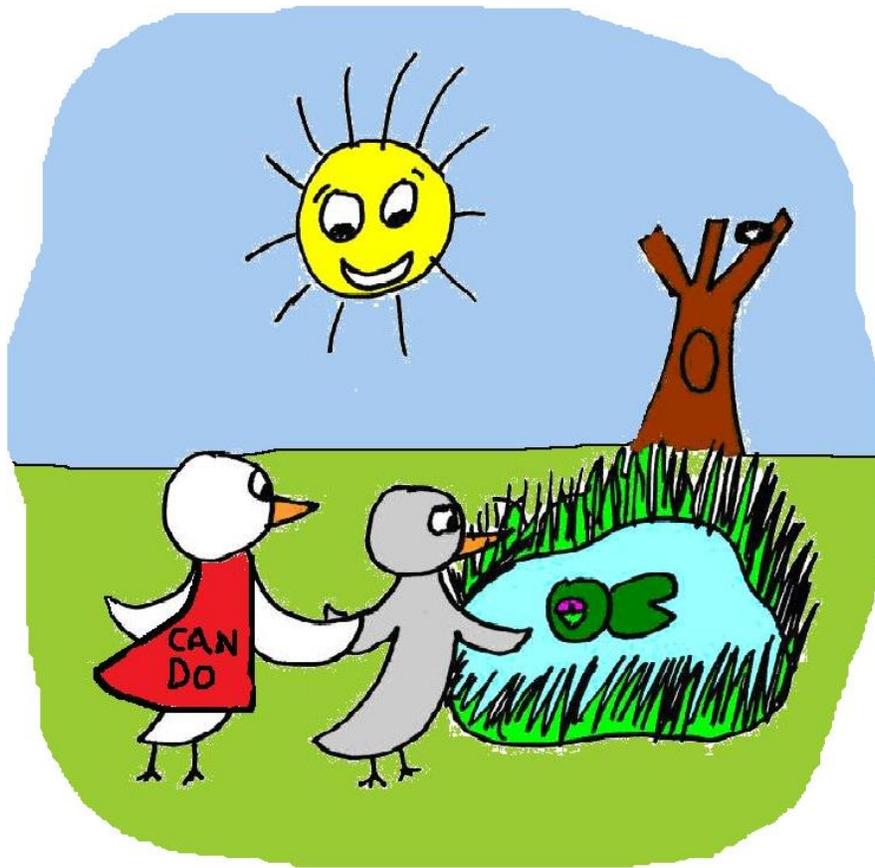


# Can Do and the Storm



**A story about new beginnings**

**By Ducktor Morty, M.D.  
with  
Esther Deblinger, Ph.D.  
Pictures by Arielle and Sarah**

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## Letter to parents and teachers

### **Can Do and the Storm: A Story About New Beginnings**

Many scholars of psychology, philosophy, religion, and even business have said that it is not so much what happens to us that shapes our lives – but it is how we think about our experiences and respond to them that most influences our futures.

“Experience is not what happens to you. It is what you do with what happens to you.”

– Aldous Huxley

“What lies behind us and what lies before us are but small matters compared to what lies within us.”

– Ralph Waldo Emerson

Children begin to develop attitudes and beliefs about themselves, others, and the world around them when they are very young. Children’s beliefs often develop as a function of experiences (both positive and negative) and frequently reflect the attitudes of those around them, particularly the adult role models in their lives.

It is not possible to protect children from all potential negative events nor can we predict or eliminate children’s emotional reactions to these experiences. In fact, many of these negative responses are normal and may be reactions influenced by children’s temperaments and other innate predispositions. However, we can help children cope with and interpret stressful experiences in ways that may reinforce healthier views of themselves and others, thereby encouraging feelings of resilience and personal strength.

***Can Do and the Storm: A Story About New Beginnings*** was written to help children who experienced the frightening and traumatic events of hurricanes and tornadoes. It was written by a child psychiatrist with help from a child psychologist who works with children who have been through traumatic experiences. The pictures were illustrated by children. This story is about animals who live through a storm. It is an uplifting story of hope, perseverance, working together, and new beginnings.

This story is meant to help children begin to think about and share their feelings regarding the frightening events they may have experienced. Many children find it much easier to talk about traumatic experiences in the abstract or in general terms before talking about their personal experiences. This story allows children to do just that. Children will likely relate to the experiences of the animals in this story. Reading this story ultimately may help children, who might otherwise be afraid to talk about the storms, feel more comfortable talking about

their own feelings, thoughts and experiences. This can be enhanced by engaging children in a more personalized discussion about their experiences during and after reading the story. Finally, the story is intended to inspire hope and optimism by highlighting the positive lessons the animals learned as a result of their experiences. Some examples of questions you might pose to your child include the following:

1. How do you think the ducks felt during the storm?
2. What did the ducks say or do to help the other animals get through the storm?
3. How do you think the animals felt about leaving their homes?
4. Did any of the experiences in the story remind you of something that happened to you?
5. What helps you to feel safe and strong?
6. What do you think is the most important message in this story?

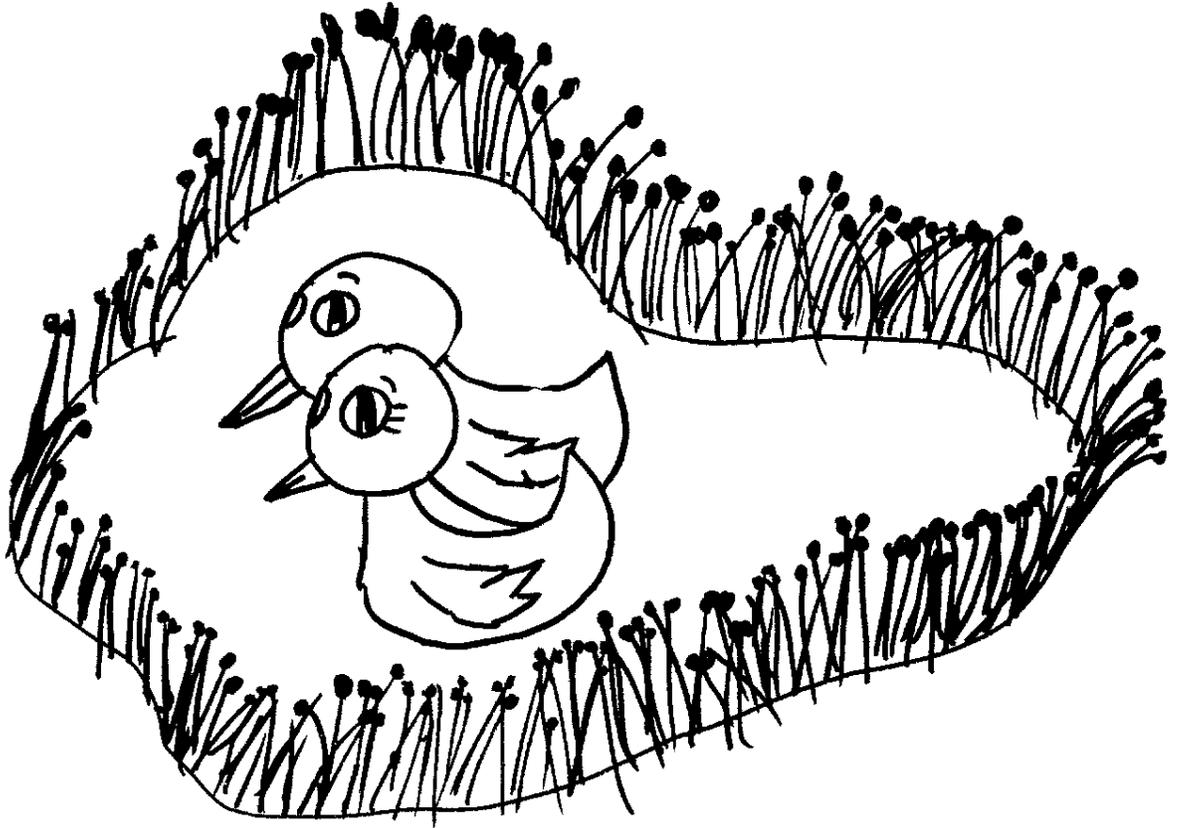
The above questions are relevant for all children. However, when appropriate, some of the questions may be personalized (ex: How did you feel during the storm? What did you do to stay safe during the storm?) to help children who have endured hurricanes or tornadoes themselves process their own thoughts, feelings, and experiences. You will probably come up with many other questions as a result of reading this story with your children. We hope that you and your child or student find this story helpful. Thank you for taking the time to read it. We think you will find that it is time well spent.

Please print out this file and share it with anyone you think it could help. The cover page is the only page in color so it can be used as a coloring book or you can also encourage children to draw pictures of their own. This book is also available in color as a Kindle E-book and the authors are donating all of the proceeds. Finally, we would like to hear from you. We would greatly appreciate any feedback you or your children or students would like to provide.

To send your comments or for further information,  
please contact

Ducktor Morty or Esther Deblinger at  
**DucktorMorty@TheCanDoDuck.com or [www.thecandoduck.com](http://www.thecandoduck.com)**

Ducktor Morty is the pseudonym of Morton D. Sosland, M.D. Dr. Sosland has written a series of positive, motivational children's stories about the CAN DO DUCK that appeal to children and adults alike, starting with **The Can Do Duck: A Story about Believing in Yourself**, which has recently been made into a children's musical. The books are available at **[www.thecandoduck.com](http://www.thecandoduck.com)**. Dr. Sosland is a graduate of Harvard College and Jefferson Medical College and is a practicing child and adult psychiatrist in New Jersey. Esther Deblinger, Ph.D. is a professor of psychiatry and co-director of the C.A.R.E.S. Institute at Rowan University-School of Osteopathic Medicine. Dr. Deblinger has been recognized as a "shining star" by Women's Day magazine for her work in helping children overcome post-traumatic stress. She is also a member of the National Child Traumatic Stress Network.



Here's the story of a duck named Can Do and his duck friend Lilac, too. They cared for others, as you'll see, and helped their whole community. So if you want to find out how let's begin the story now!

It seemed like just another day.  
The ducks and geese were hard at play.  
Swimming, splashing to and fro,  
that pond of theirs -- they loved it so.



And then the sky turned dark and gray.  
Was it night or was it day?  
A storm was coming very soon.  
The lovely day would soon be ruined.

Mayor Green came out to say,  
“A big storm is on the way.  
Go to a safe place right away.  
Go there now and don’t delay!”

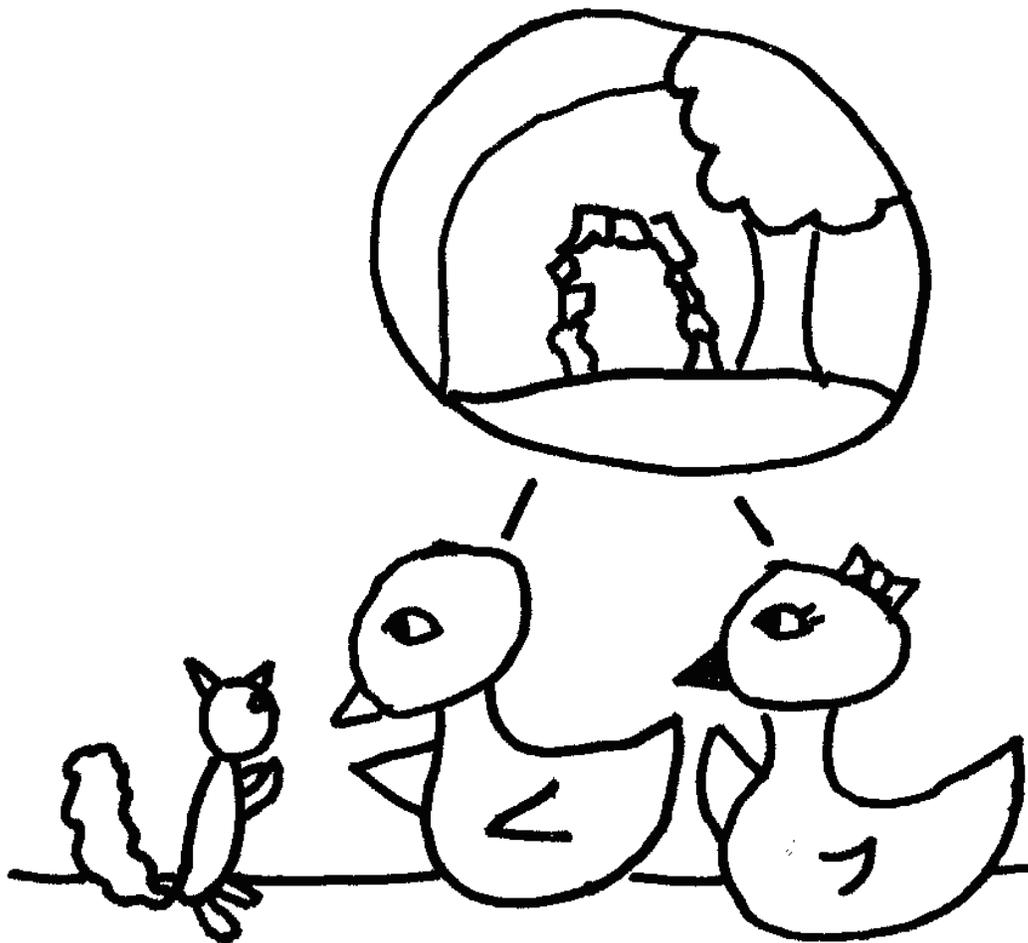


Can Do discussed it with Lilac.  
They knew that they had better act.  
They got together, ducks and birds  
and all together spelled out words.  
They wrote a warning in the sky.  
They made these words as they flew by.



**It's time to go  
before the wind starts to blow.**

Can Do and Lilac looked around.  
A safe place had to be found.  
Where could they wait out the storm?  
Where could they stay dry and warm?  
A squirrel told them about a cave  
where they could go and all be saved.



They told animals of every kind.  
It would be tight but they didn't mind.  
Ducks, Lizards, frogs, a bear,  
There even was a skunk in there.  
They were feeling rather scared  
so they planned and they prepared.



In a bird's nest overhead,  
A mama put her babes to bed.

“A storm is coming,” said Can Do.

“There's room inside the cave for you.”

“We'll be okay,” Mama Bird said.

“I'll keep my babies dry and fed.”

“But it's dangerous out there.

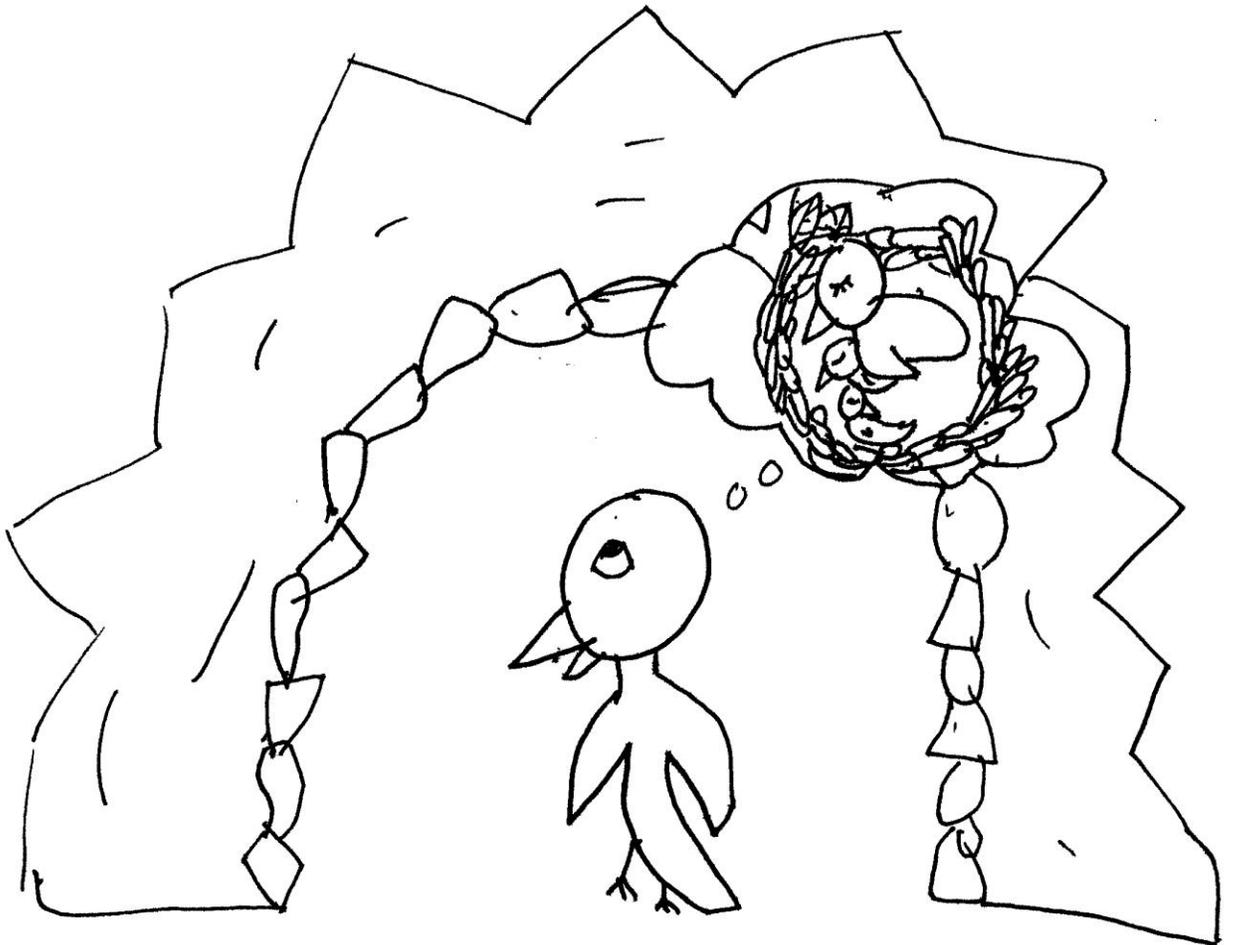
You better go in somewhere.”

“This nest and tree are very strong.

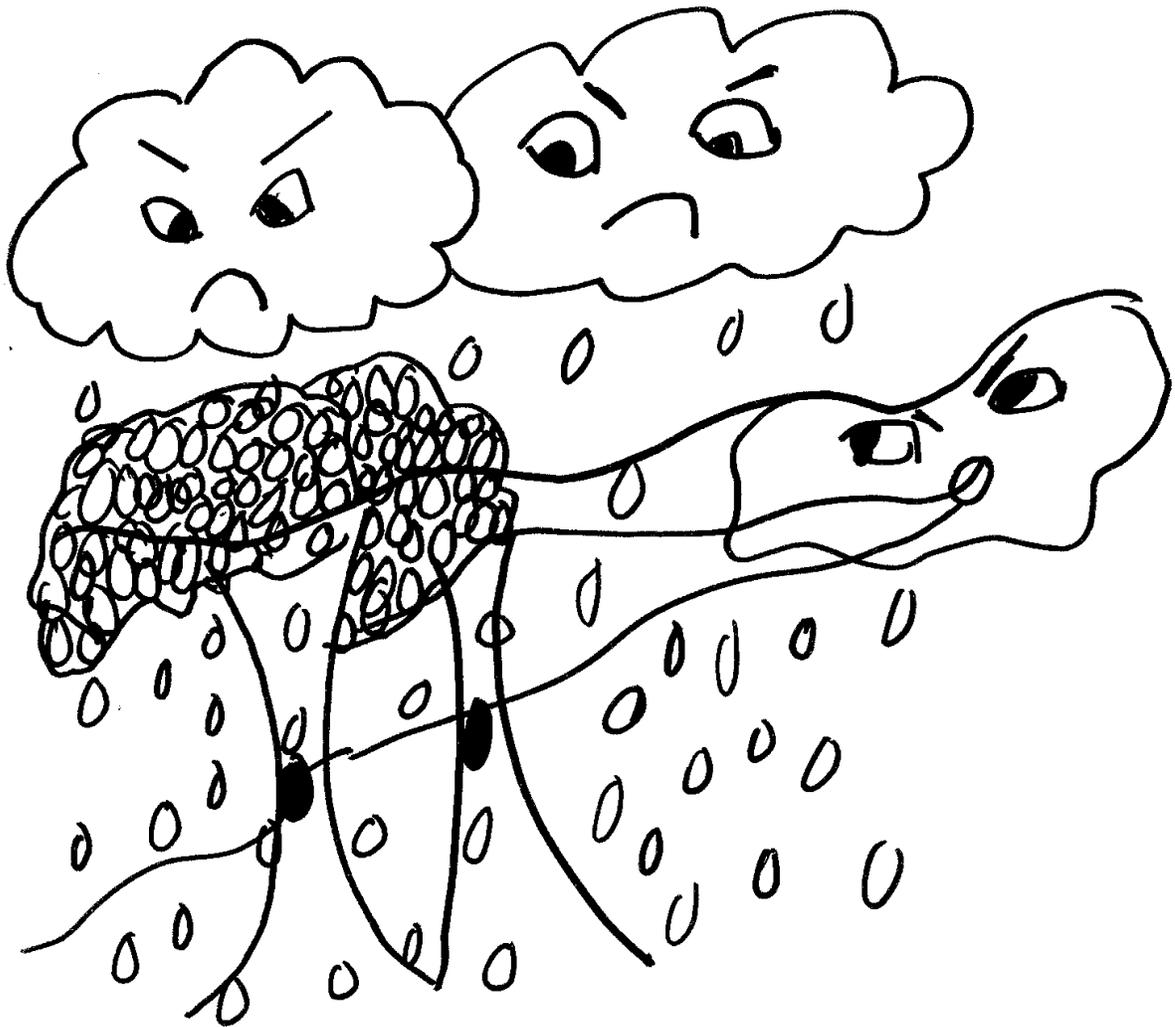
The storm will pass before too long.”



“Okay,” said Can Do with a sigh.  
“If you need us we’re nearby.”  
To the cave, Can Do hurried  
but inside he was worried.  
He hoped that they would okay.  
He wished that they would come and stay.  
As soon as Can Do had got in,  
he heard the sound of roaring wind.



The storm got stronger right away.  
The wind made the trees start to sway.  
Outside they heard the wind and rain.  
It sounded like a mighty train.



Then all at once the wind blew strong.  
They worried something would go wrong.  
And then they heard a sudden crack.  
A tree fell down. It was pitch black.  
And then more trees fell too.  
And the wind just blew and blew.  
They held each other very tight.  
They were feeling so much fright.

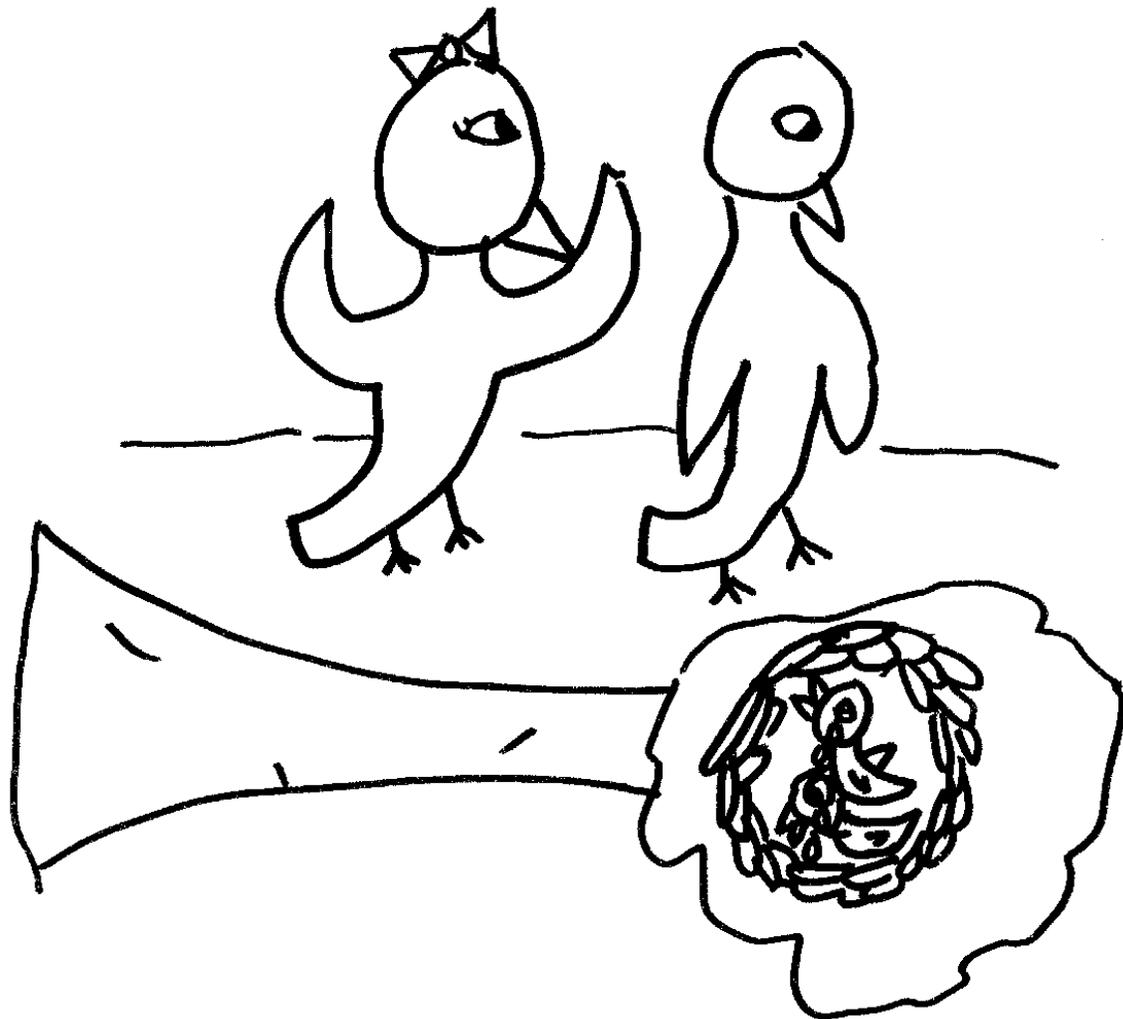


They read out loud to pass the time.  
They really loved the books that rhymed.  
Doctor Seuss. The Can Do Duck.  
They had them both. They were in luck!  
They sang old songs in harmony.  
They even had a spelling bee.  
The spelling bee was lots of fun  
and she did not sting anyone.



At last the storm had passed.  
Now they could leave the cave at last.  
Trees were knocked down everywhere.  
The forest really looked quite bare.  
There were trees that were uprooted  
and the whole pond looked polluted.  
The pond water was now so high,  
it seemed like it would touch the sky.

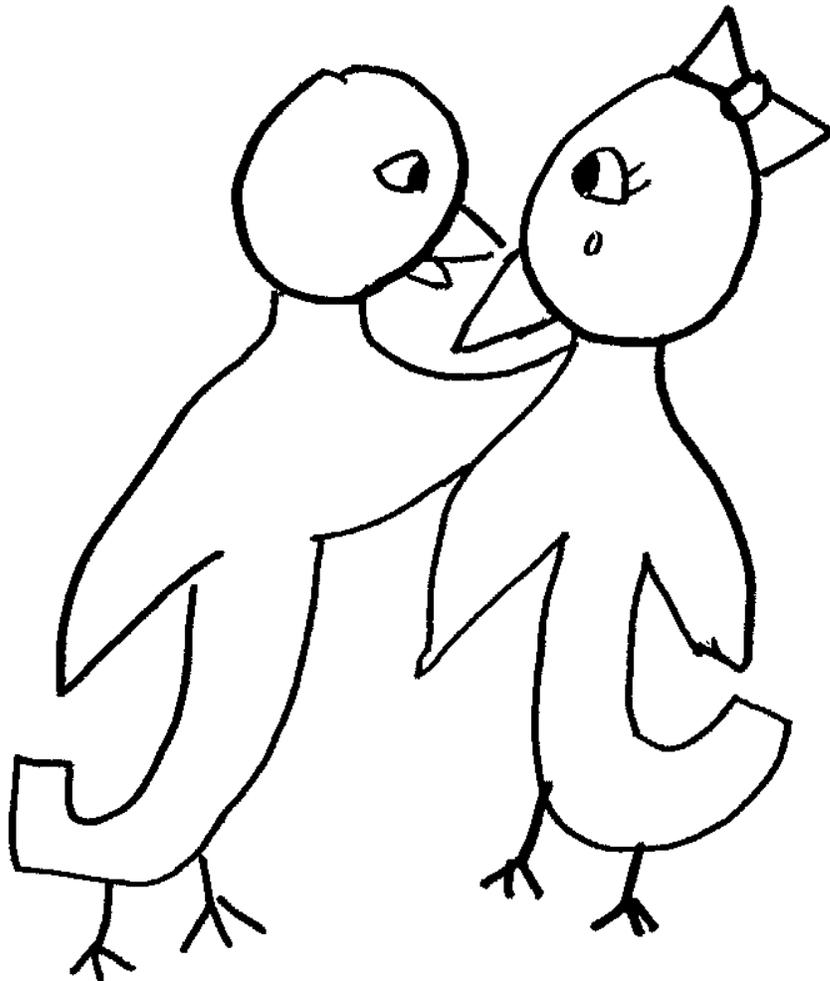




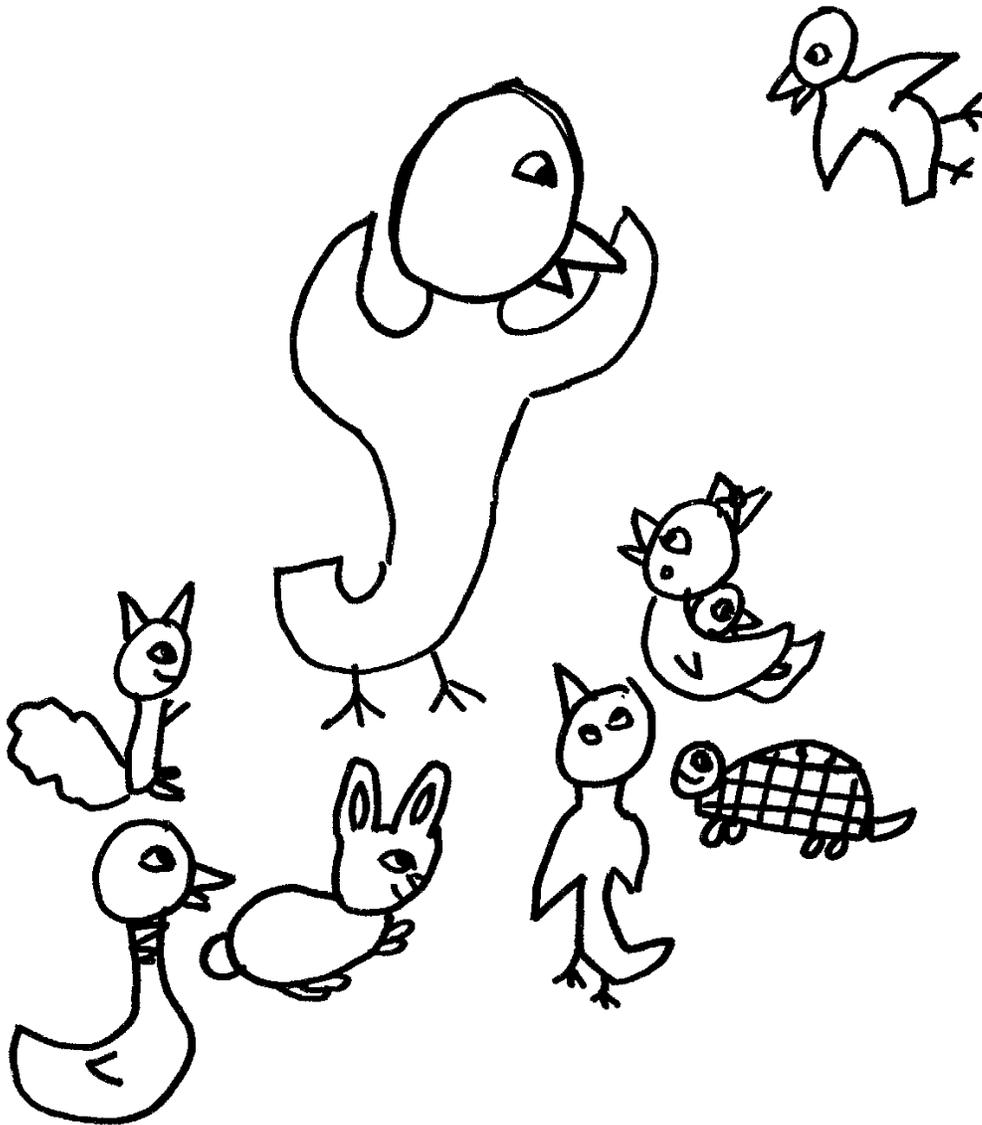
The tree and nest had been knocked down.  
The bird's nest lay there on the ground.  
The baby birds were still inside  
and they just cried and cried and cried.  
Can Do and Lilac looked around  
but Mama Bird could not be found.

Everyone was feeling sad.  
Things were really, really bad.  
“I don’t know what there’s to do,”  
Lilac whispered to Can Do.

Can Do patted Lilac’s wing.  
“I know one important thing.  
What we can do is just be there  
and show them all how much we care.”



Now Can Do spoke to the crowd.  
He spoke clear and he spoke loud.  
“We are all sisters and brothers.  
Now we all must help each other.  
If you’re scared then we’ll help you.  
Just tell us what we can do.  
Tell us if you’re feeling sad.  
Then it will not feel so bad.”



Please repeat these words with me,  
They'll make things better, you will see.

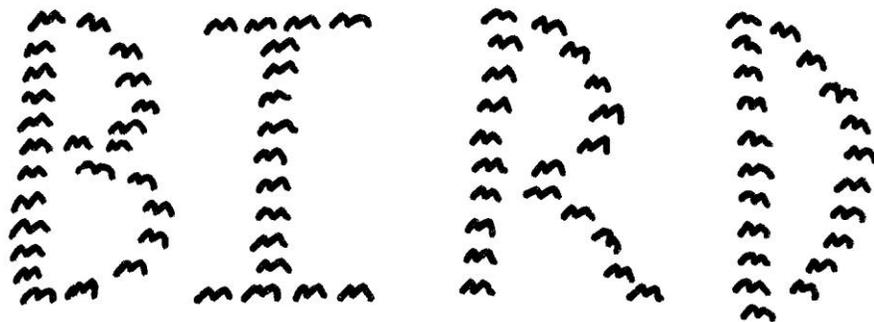
We say we can.  
We make a plan.  
We get right to it.  
And then we do it.

We'll solve our problems one by one,  
Step by step, we'll get things done.

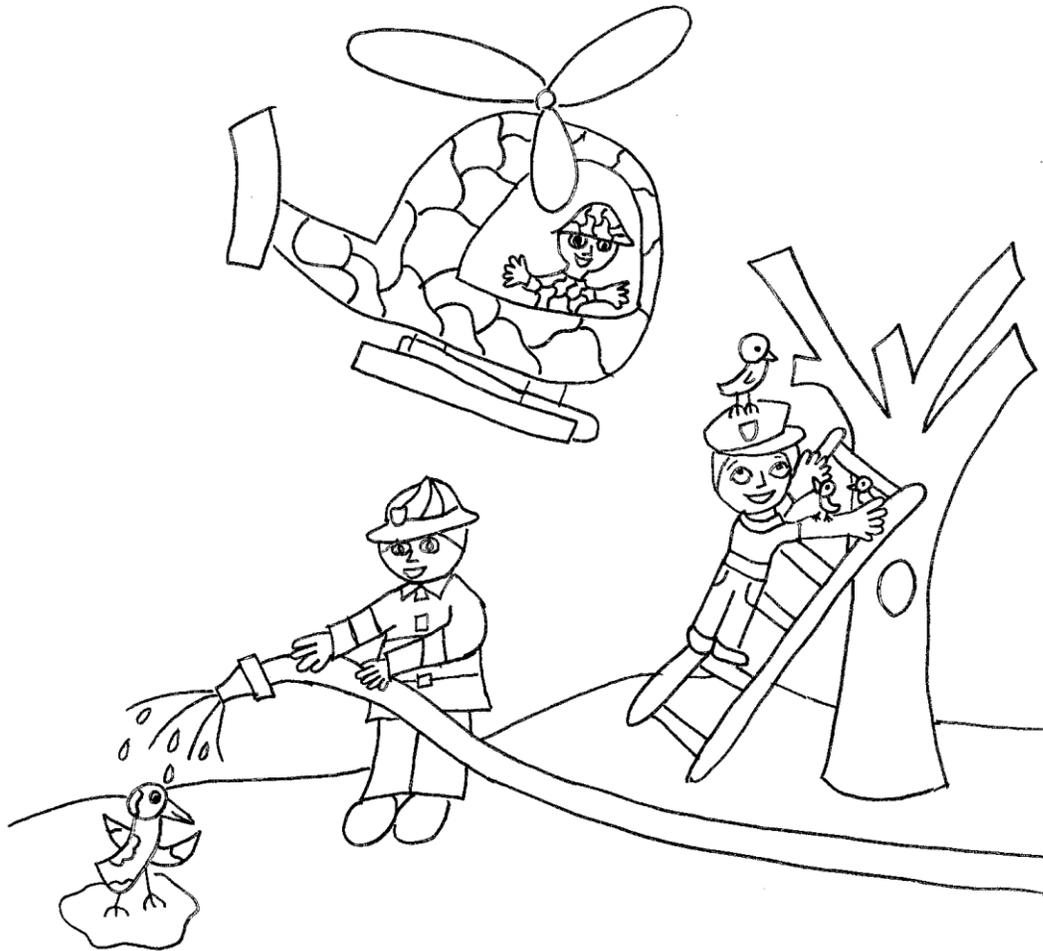


The animals, one and all,  
said the words from small to tall.  
They got started right away  
to find Mama Bird that day.  
Ducks flew and spelled out word by word

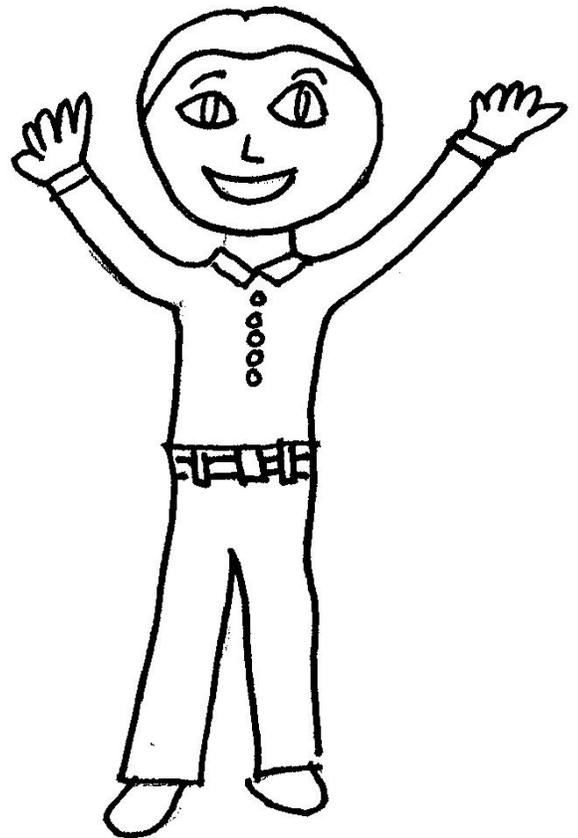
## ***HAVE YOU SEEN...***



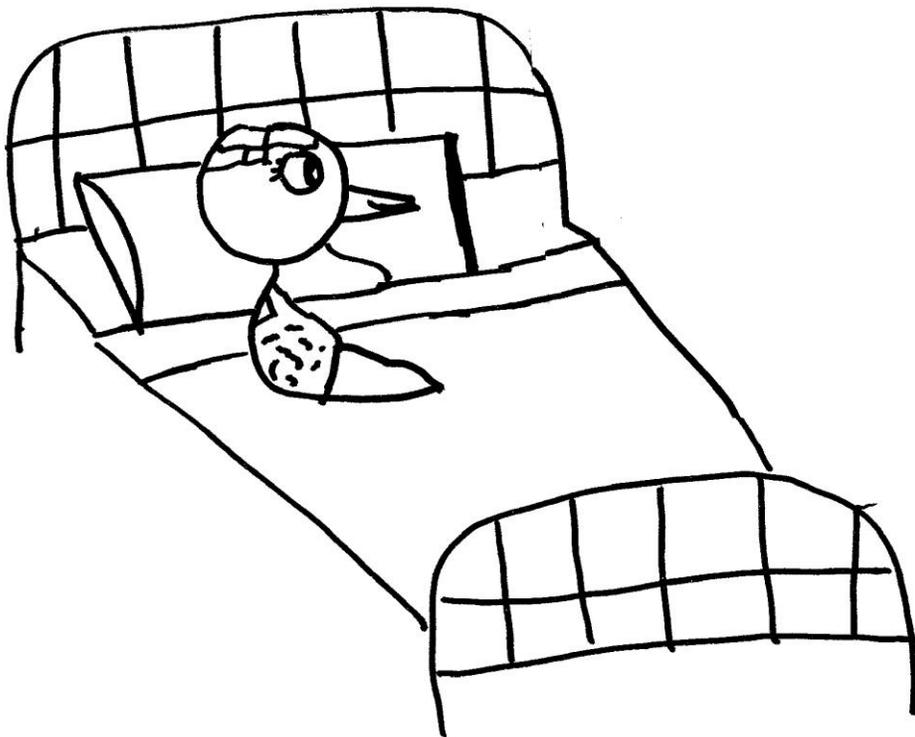
Firefighters, police, and the National Guard  
all were working very hard.  
They were the heroes of the day,  
making sure everyone was okay.  
Neighbors were doing what they could do.  
They were looking for Mama Bird too.  
Everyone was helping out.  
Let's give them all a great big shout!



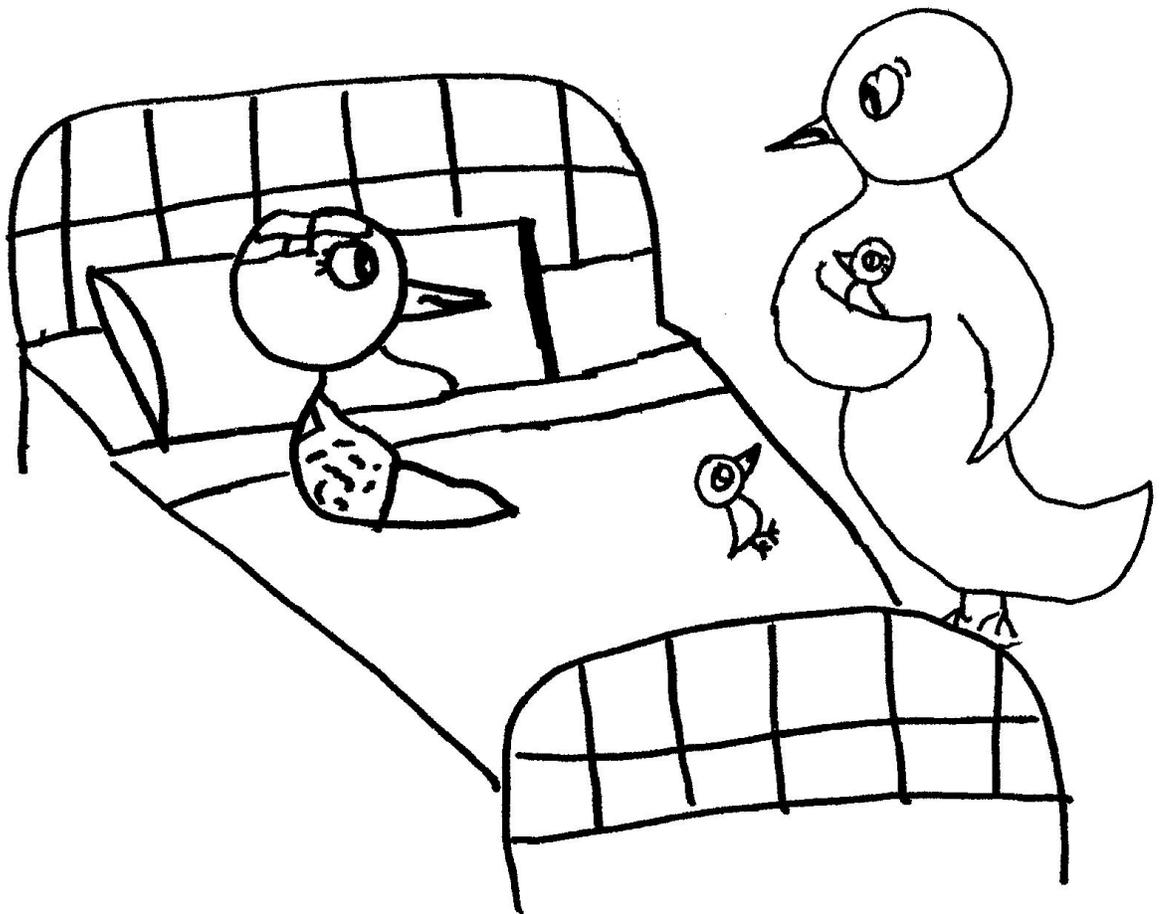
Just then a neighbor told Can Do,  
“I’ve got some good news for you.  
“The bird you’re searching for’s okay!  
I’ll take you to her right away.  
Someone must have carried her in  
to see the veterinarian.”  
Can Do had waited for these words.  
He ran and got the baby birds.



Animals were everywhere,  
a duck, a goose, even a bear.  
There was a baby squirrel who fell.  
A turtle who had hurt its shell.  
A goose who had a broken toe.  
An old frog with a sore elbow.  
And in a corner in a bed  
was Mama Bird who bumped her head.  
Mama Bird was full of joy  
when she saw her girl and boy.  
“Oh, my babies, how I’ve missed you.  
It’s been so long since I kissed you!”  
The baby birds kissed their mother  
and they all hugged each other.  
Mama Bird thanked everyone  
for everything that they had done.

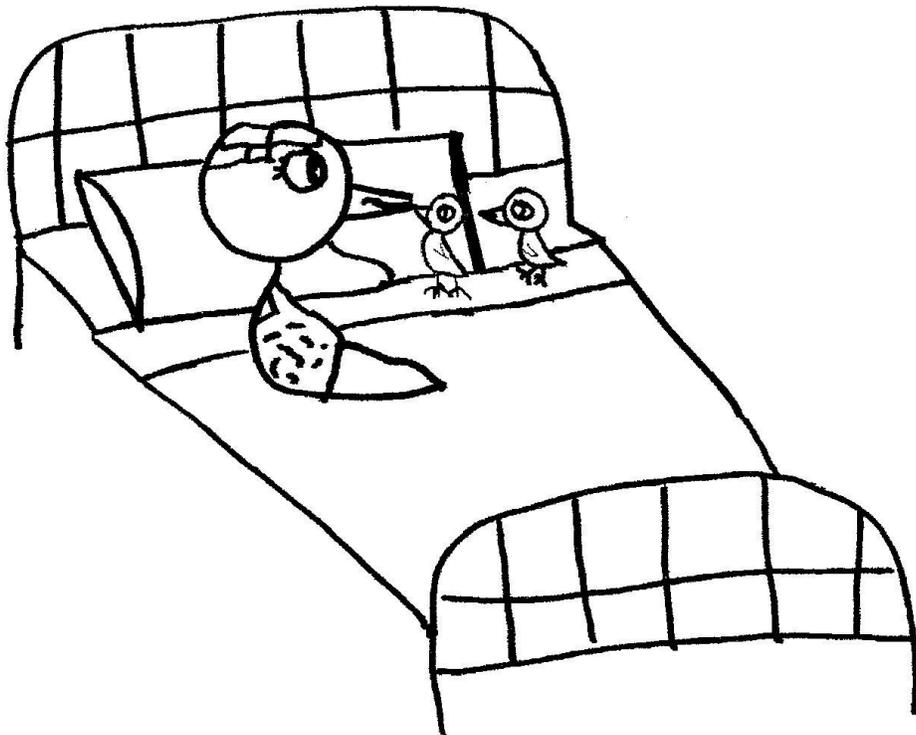


“Mama Bird,” said Can Do.  
“Now that we have found you,  
there is something we must do.  
We have to leave the homes we knew.  
Our pond is full of trees and logs.  
It isn’t good for ducks or frogs.  
We must go. We cannot stay.  
We have to leave our pond today.”



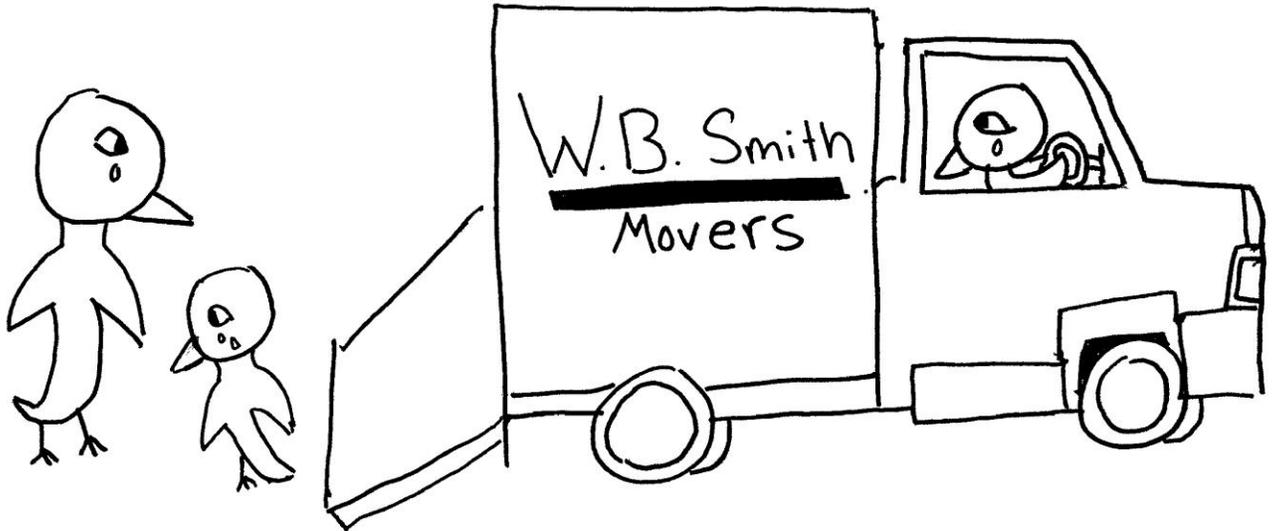
The little birds who were feeling glad,  
now were feeling sad and mad.  
“We don’t want to leave our nest today,”  
one of the birds began to say.

Mama bird gave them a kiss,  
and she said, “Now, remember this.  
A nest is made of grass and sticks.  
A house is made of wood and bricks,  
but a home is made of love, you see.  
Our home is wherever we may be.  
The storm has ruined our nest today,  
but thankfully we’re all okay.  
A home can be anywhere  
as long as we’re with those who care.

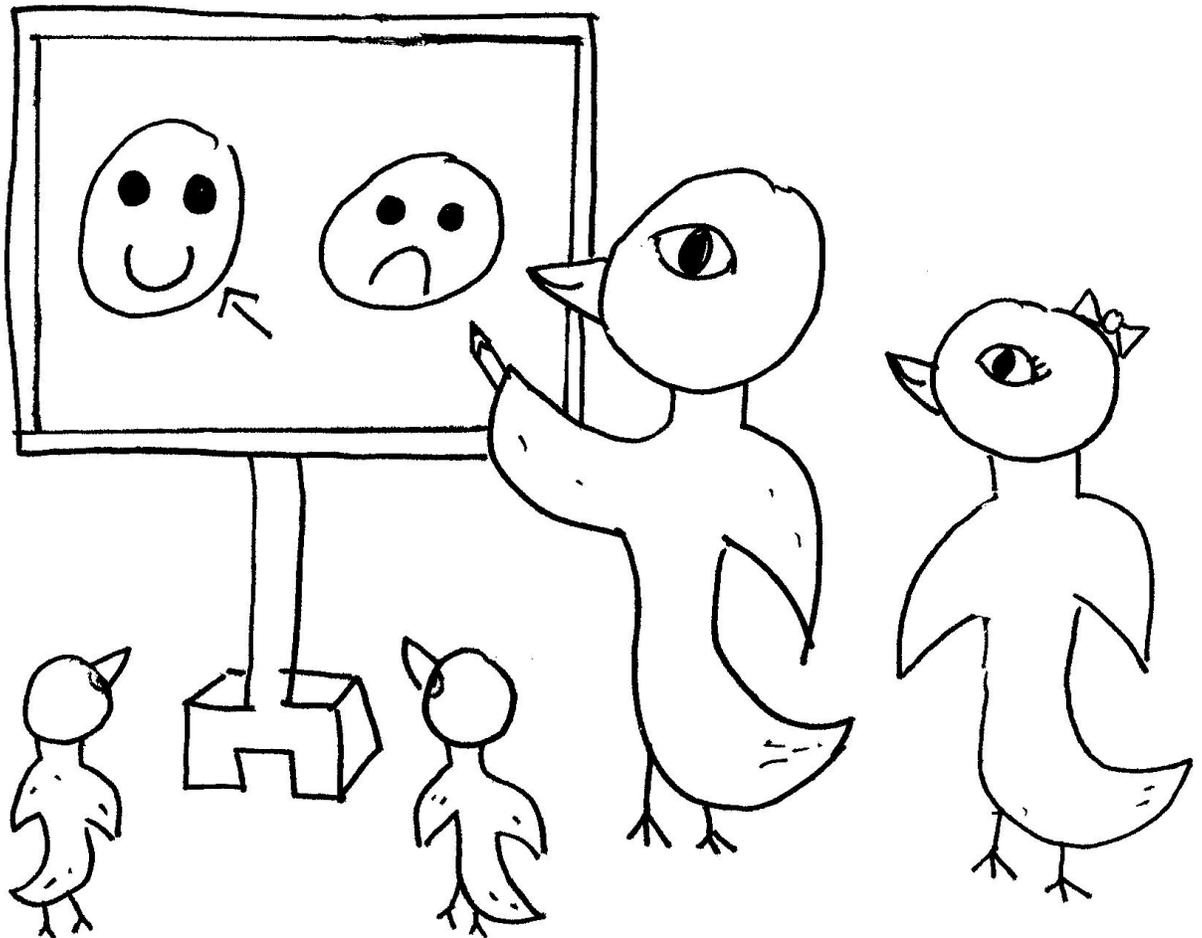


Mayor Green supplied the trucks  
for all the animals and ducks.  
Ducks from close and way beyond  
said they could stay at their pond.

They found a pond where they could stay –  
where they could fly and swim and play.  
But it was hard to be away.  
They felt so sad every day  
they did not even want to play.  
Would they always feel this way?



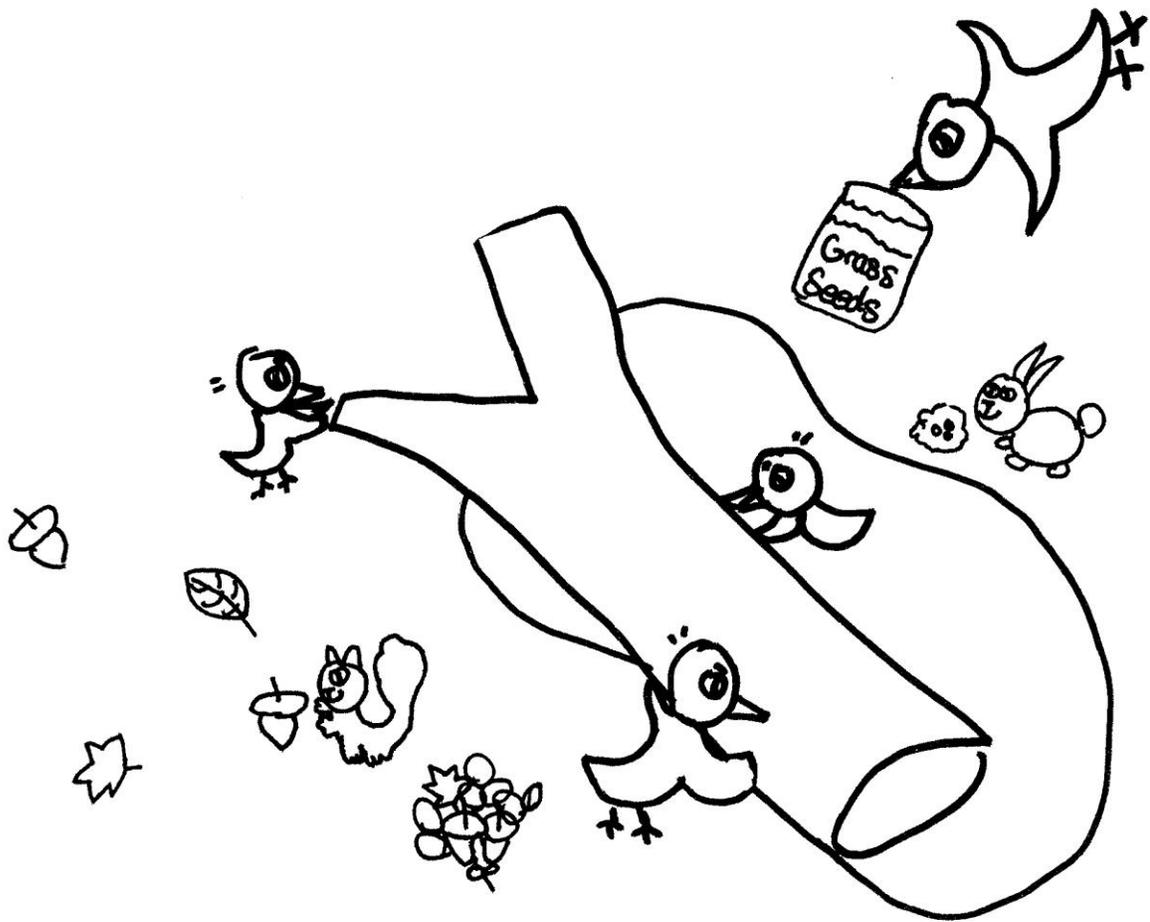
Now Lilac said to Can Do,  
"There must be something to do."  
Can Do thought and then he said,  
"We can be happy instead.  
It is sad to be away  
but let's be happy we're okay!  
We can be mad at the weather  
but let's be glad we're together!  
There is so much to be done.  
Let's begin and make it fun!"



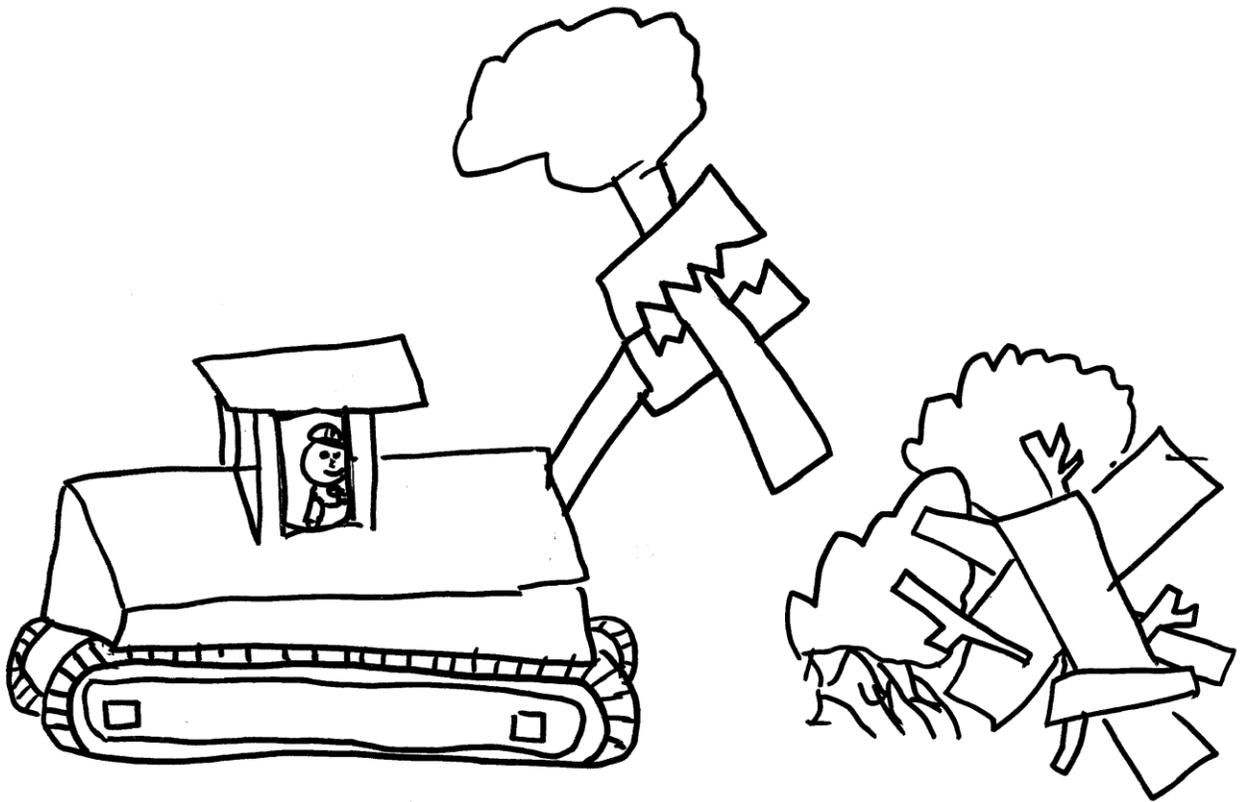
Little by little, day by day.  
Their sadness started to go away.  
They built new houses and built new nests.  
They felt at home and not like guests.  
They missed their pond, sometimes felt sad.  
But life was good. It wasn't bad.  
And then slowly after a while,  
one by one they started to smile.  
They made new friends in their new pond.  
They swam and played in fields beyond.



But the dream remained for some  
to go back to where they were from.  
For those for whom this wish was true  
there was a lot they'd need to do.  
So every day, those that could  
flew back to their pond and woods.  
They helped to build their pond anew.  
They did whatever they could do.  
The birds chirped a melody.  
It helped the work go easily.  
They worked together side by side,  
all of them so filled with pride.



One day some men in tractors came to make the pond again the same. The pond was filled with dirt and silt. They cleaned it out and they rebuilt.



Can Do came to them one day.  
He said he had something to say.  
“I’m glad to say the time is good  
to go back to our pond and woods.”

Some cheered and shouted out, “Hooray.  
We have waited for this day!”  
And others said, “Thank you, Can Do,  
but we’ve decided to start anew.  
We are happy here, you see,  
in our new community.  
Even though we’re not so near  
this is our new home right here.”

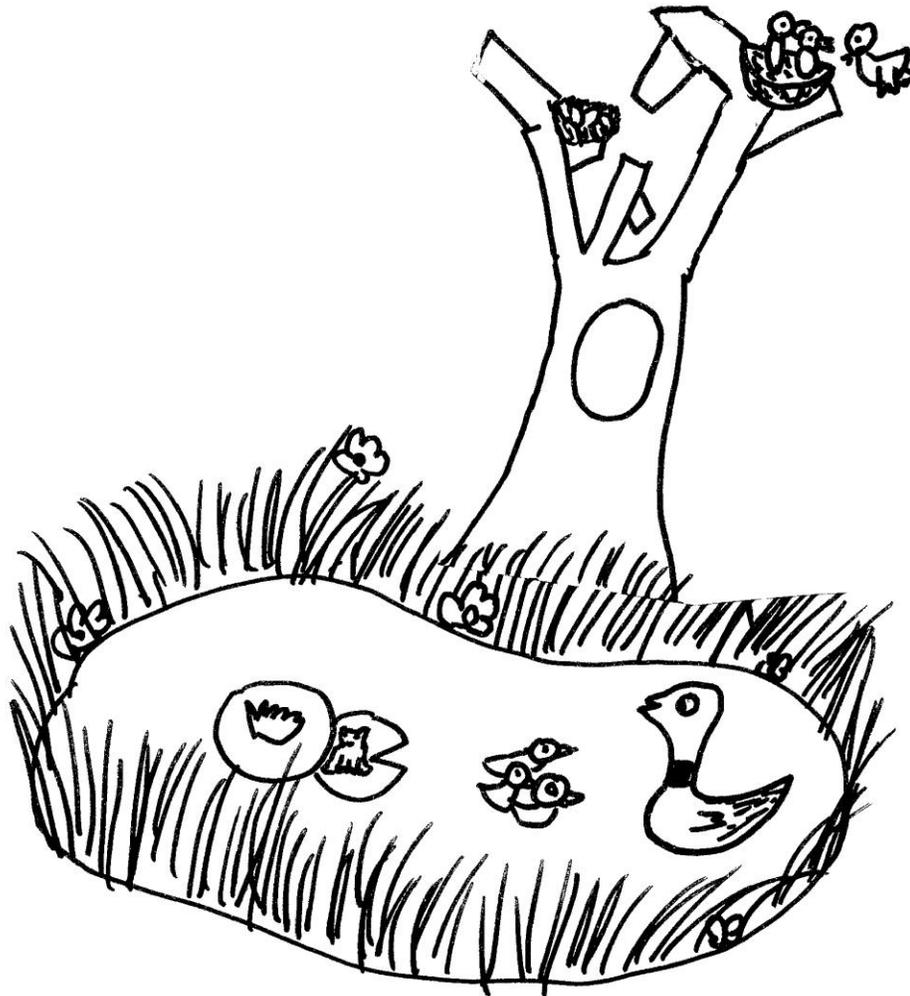


“It doesn’t matter where you are –  
or whether you are near or far.  
What matters most is that you know  
someone loves you head to toe.  
We will visit. We will write.  
We will make sure you’re all right!

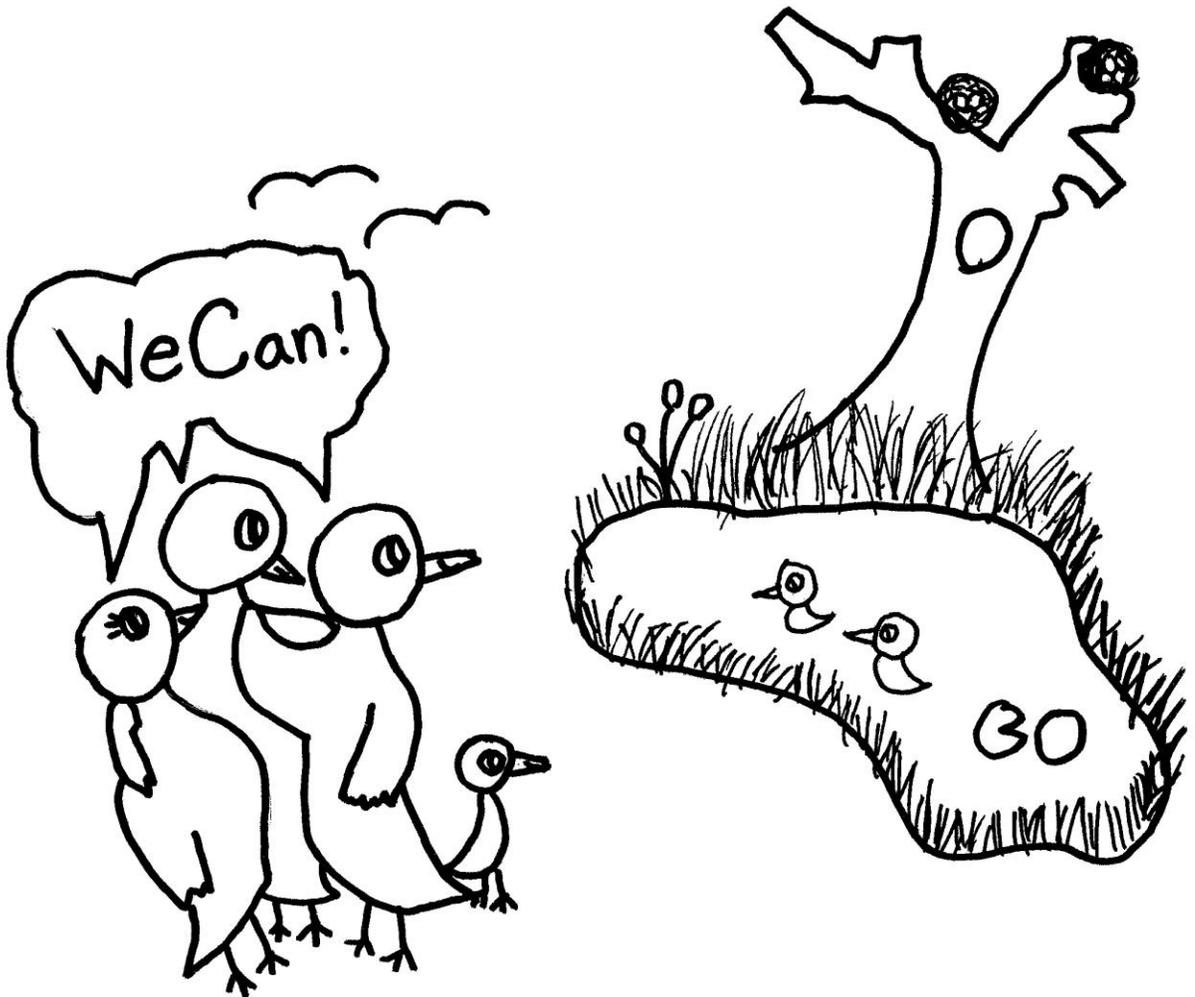
Can Do hugged them and said, “Goodbye.”  
He joined the others in the sky.  
“We are off to our old pond –  
that pond of ours of which we’re fond.”

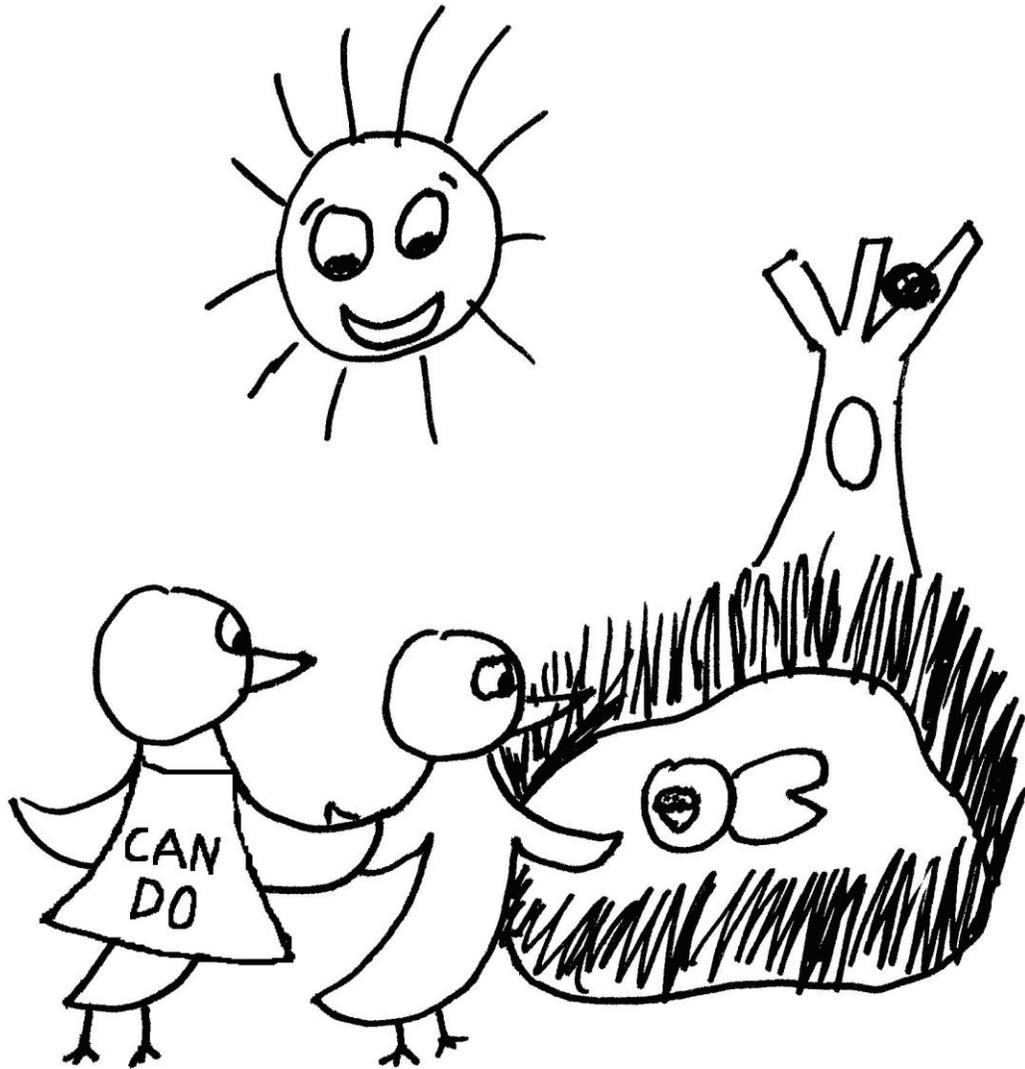


The old pond was now brand new.  
On the shore bright flowers grew.  
The water was as clear as day.  
The animals began to play.  
Ducks and geese and frogs and all  
that day rejoiced and had a ball.  
Most of the trees had been knocked down,  
but a few still stood their ground.  
Without their leaves, the trees looked bare.  
The little birds – they didn't care.  
Because at last, now, they could rest  
with Mama Bird in their new nest.



Can Do and Lilac looked around.  
They were back on their old ground.  
“We have made it,” said Can Do.  
“We’ve come back to start anew.  
We are all at home today  
whether here or far away.  
Mother, sister, father, brother –  
we have cared for one another.  
Ducks and birds, frogs and man –  
we have all shown that we can.”





Then they held each other's wings.  
"We have learned important things.  
When we all are together  
we can face any weather.  
No matter what may come along  
we have learned that we are strong!"

The End  
Or  
The New Beginning

# Can Do and the Storm

## A story about new beginnings

is the third book in the Can Do Duck series of positive, motivational children's stories. It is a tale about ducks and other animals as they overcome a storm and learn that when we are all together we can face any weather. Ducktor Morty is a child psychiatrist and Esther Deblinger is a child psychologist. Originally written after hurricane Katrina, this book was distributed for free to 30,000 children in Mississippi by Project Recovery and to 5,000 children in the Northeast by Butterfly Circle of Friends after Hurricane Sandy. The book is also available in color as a Kindle E-Book and the authors are donating all of the proceeds.

**Can Do And The Storm** should bring comfort and hope to kids. The text, which is rhymed, makes serious topics fun to read, as Can Do attacks the problems of being homeless, finding shelter, getting food and water, and losing track of a parent. Illustrated by the authors' daughters, the book will certainly appeal to young children.

**Dr. Marciene Mattleman, Education Reporter, KYW – News Radio**

The story uses endearing animals to cover the often traumatic events that are experienced during and following a natural disaster. Not only does this book provide an entertaining story for a child, but it also gives parents/caregivers, teachers, and therapists an opportunity to begin talking, in a non-threatening way, about the feelings a child is experiencing. This book will help build a sense of hope in children who have faced hurricanes and will hopefully be a fun and beneficial way for kids to think about, talk about, and grow from their experiences.

**U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, SAMHSA, website**

The storm book is great. Kids who went through the fear and insecurity will see their experience confirmed, but the book brings out the positive elements, reassuring all of us that people take care of each other. You're doing the work of the angels, Morty. Keep it up!

**Kathy Fackler, Founder, Kids-Can-Do.org**

I loved the book! It really reaches more than just Katrina. "Any" crisis can be a new beginning with love, support and hope. Thanks for your words of inspiration.

**Tina McGarvey, Gallagher Benefit Services**



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