

*This story is about what happened to a tree in a hurricane.  
A hurricane is a big storm with strong winds.*

# The Hurricane Tree

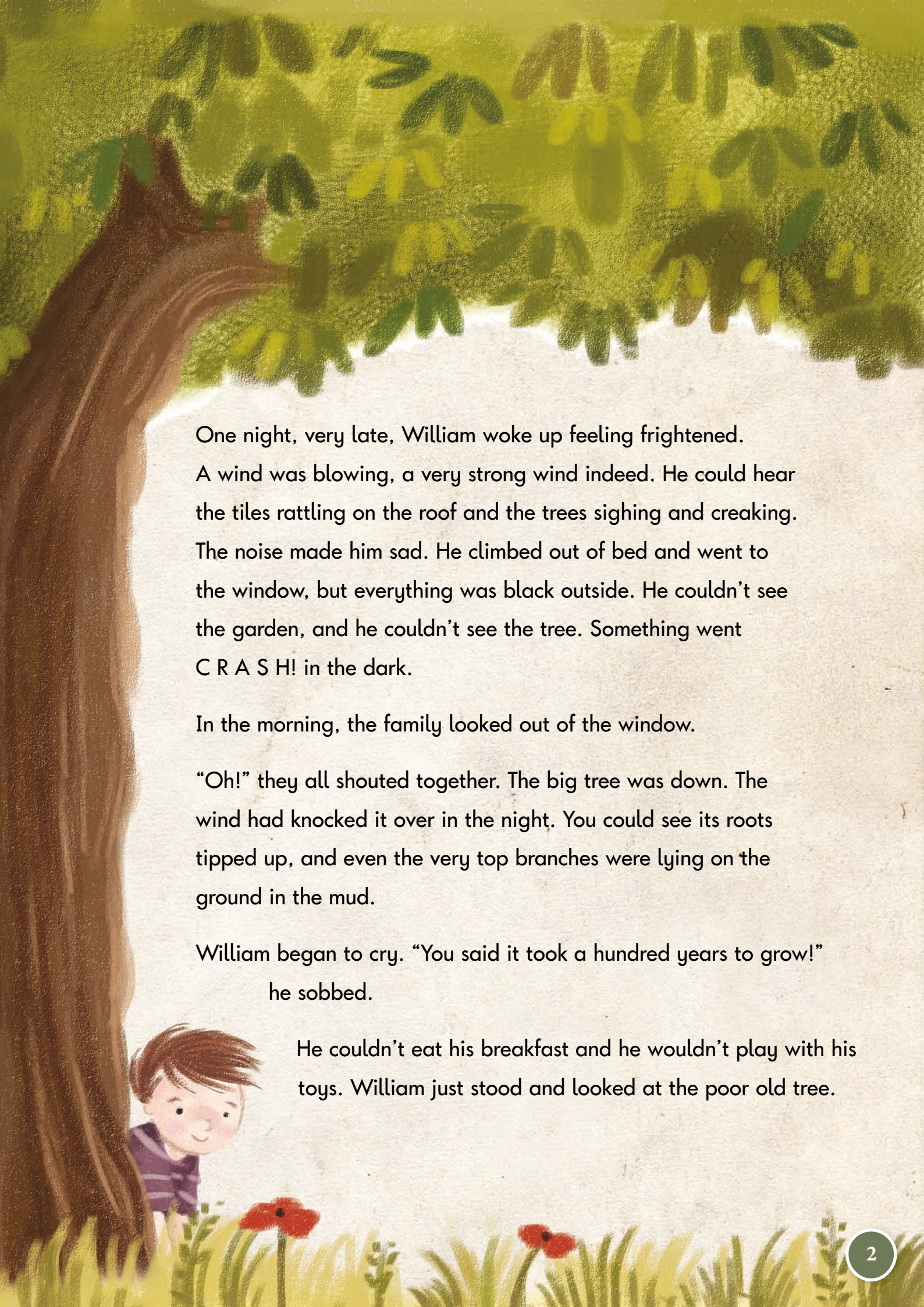
Once there was a boy called William, who lived in a house underneath a tall tree.

William's mummy sometimes took him to the window at bedtime to see the big yellow moon through the top of the tree.

"When I'm big," said William, "I'm going to climb right up that tree and sit next to a bird's nest and look at the stars."

"It's a very old tree," said William's daddy. "It's more than a hundred years old. Someone must have planted it in the old days, and looked after it to help it grow straight and strong. When that tree was a new shoot, there weren't any cars or aeroplanes. And people didn't have electricity. They cooked their food on wood fires."

"They didn't have electric lights, either," said Mummy. "Children had candles to light them to bed."



One night, very late, William woke up feeling frightened. A wind was blowing, a very strong wind indeed. He could hear the tiles rattling on the roof and the trees sighing and creaking. The noise made him sad. He climbed out of bed and went to the window, but everything was black outside. He couldn't see the garden, and he couldn't see the tree. Something went C R A S H! in the dark.

In the morning, the family looked out of the window.

“Oh!” they all shouted together. The big tree was down. The wind had knocked it over in the night. You could see its roots tipped up, and even the very top branches were lying on the ground in the mud.

William began to cry. “You said it took a hundred years to grow!” he sobbed.

He couldn't eat his breakfast and he wouldn't play with his toys. William just stood and looked at the poor old tree.



William played on the tree all day. When it was dark, Mummy lit candles in the kitchen. William did a painting of the tree, and said to his daddy, “Can we plant another tree, just like the old one?”

“Yes.” Daddy was pleased. “We’ll plant a young tree. We’ll have to look after it properly while it’s little. In a hundred years, your great-grandchildren can play under the tree with all their friends. Every year the tree will get bigger and stronger and more beautiful.”

“Will the hundred-years children know it was us who planted it?” said William.

“Well,” said Daddy, “they might guess it was someone who loved trees.”

