tiny tram

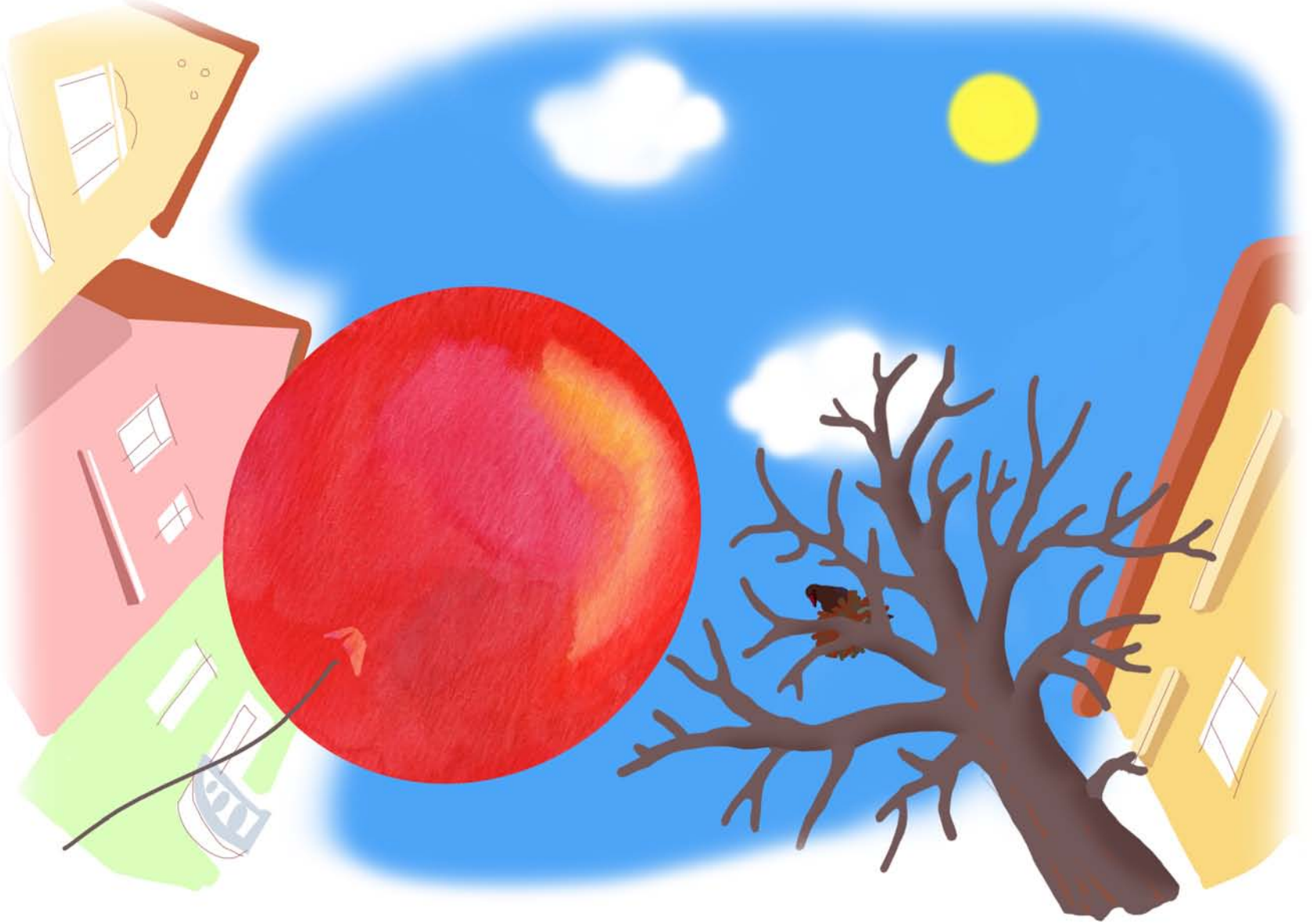
The Balloon

Story and illustrations by **Karina Kudymova**

http://tinytram.com

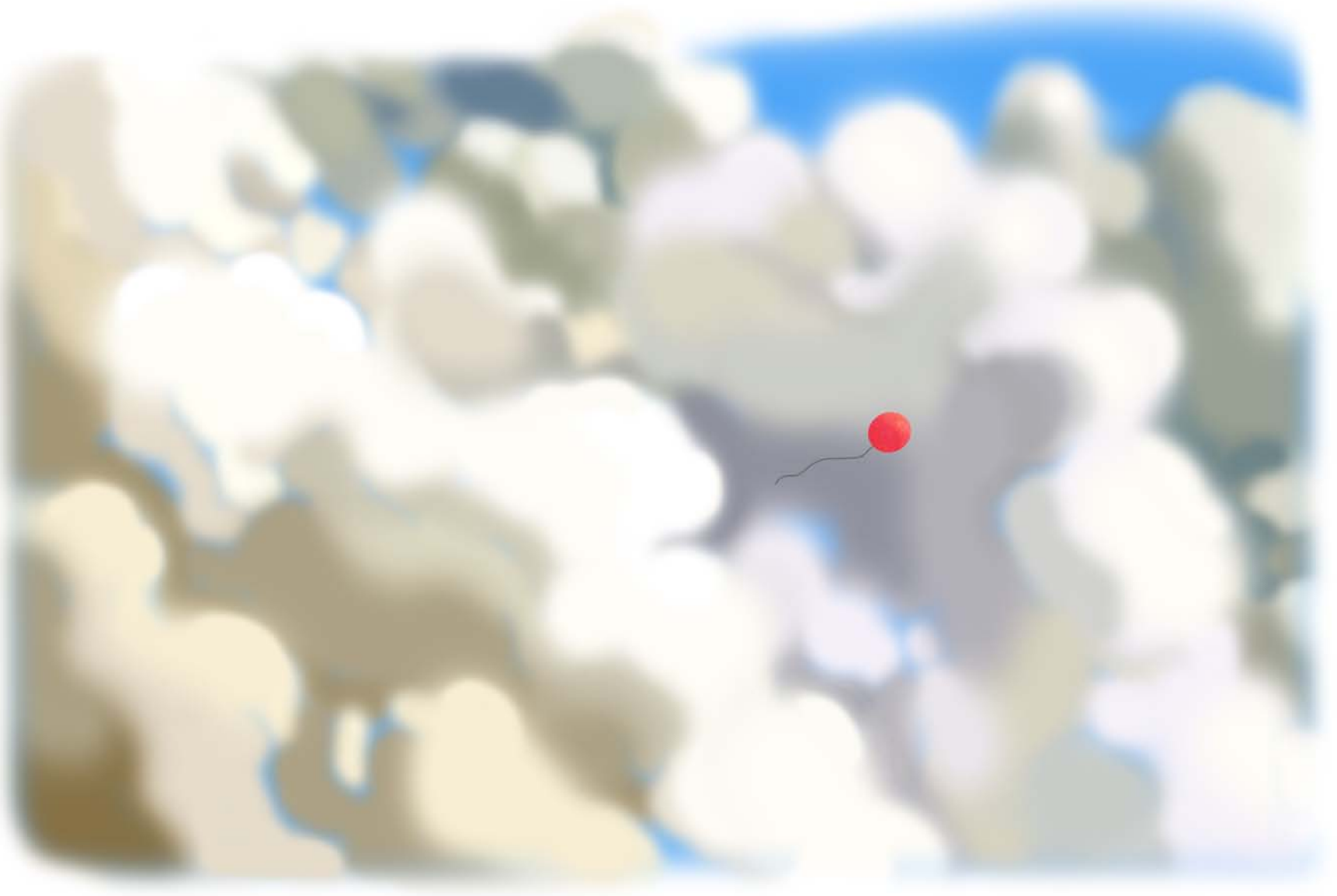
© Karina Kudymova, 2013

One glorious spring day, a bird was busy building a nest. Suddenly, she heard a loud happy song and looked down. A little girl was carrying a big red balloon, and singing a happy song about it. Balloon bounced, flew, and lunged just inches from the bird's nest. He liked everything! The birds, the trees, the clouds, and the buildings — all seemed so blissful to him.

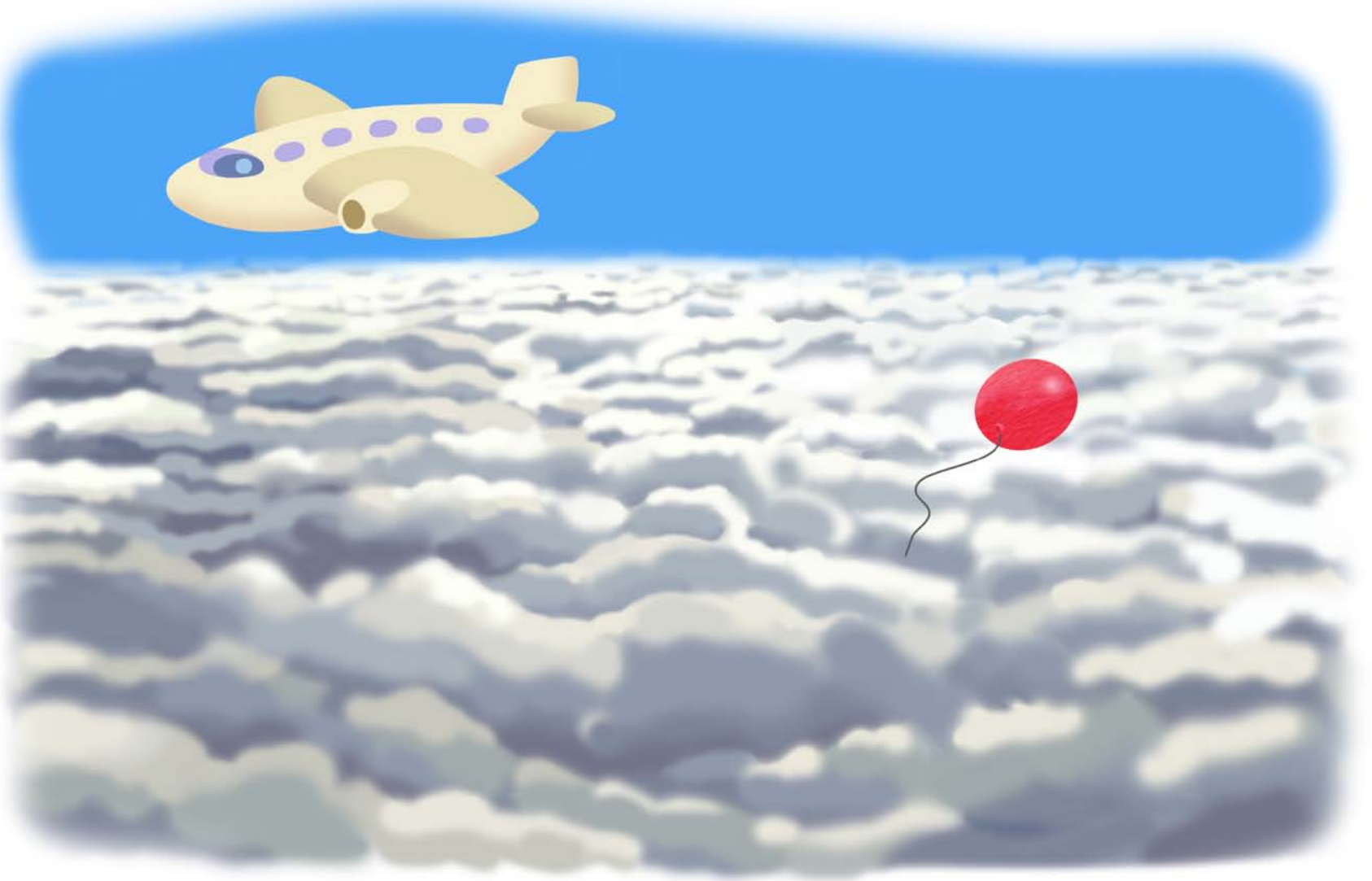


Suddenly, he saw another balloon. It was wedged between the clouds and its yellow shine was prominent against the perfect blue of the deep sky. Balloon wanted to join him in the heights and felt an instant need for freedom. He tugged and pulled and jumped from the string in the little girl's hands.

Balloon flew over all the trees and the buildings. He was so happy to be free, that he floated higher and higher.

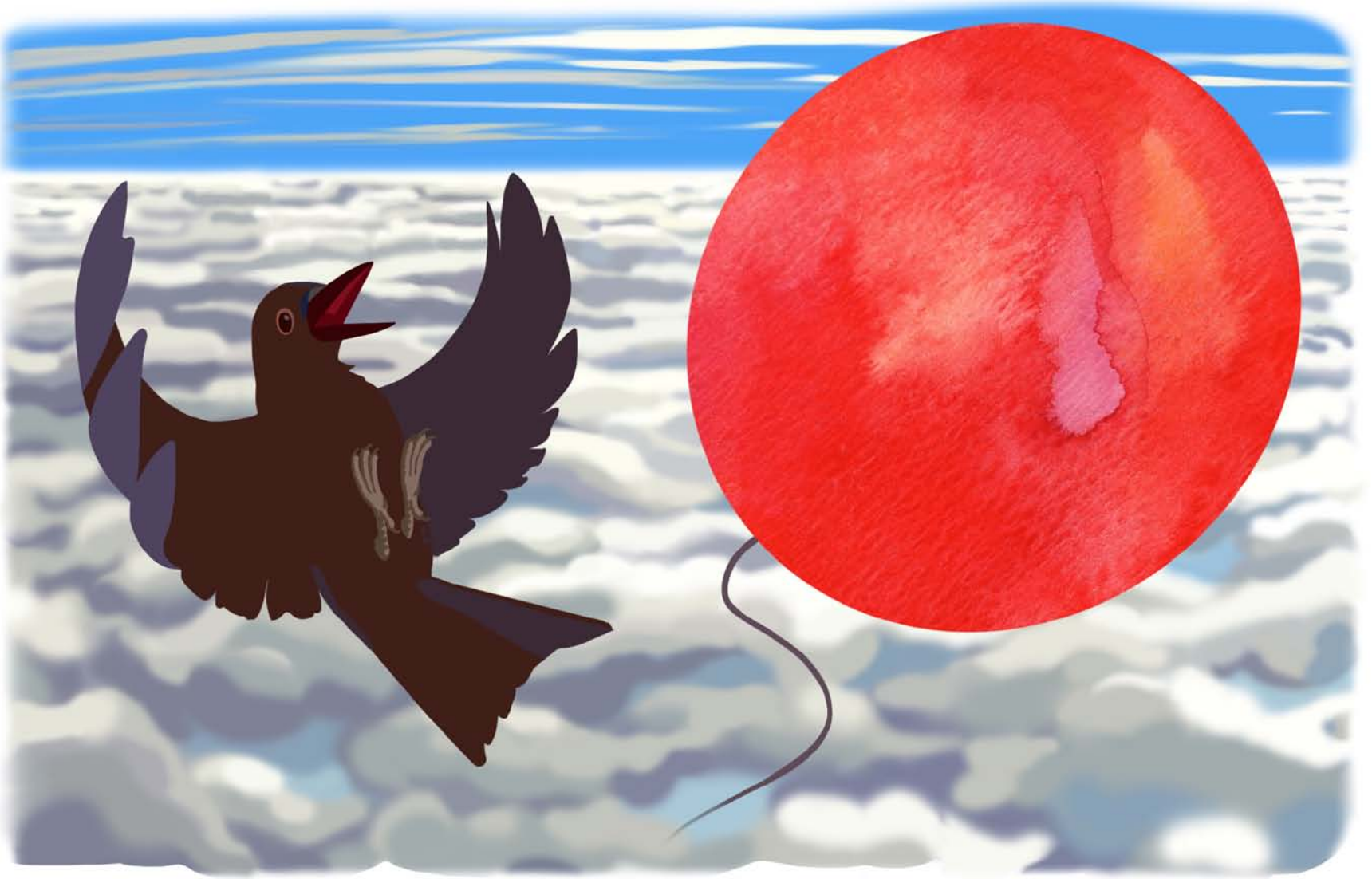


Soon, he was all alone above the clouds. The fluffy white clouds suddenly seemed like cold mountain tops, and a gust of wind tumbled Balloon around without mercy. The wind pushed him higher up and he began to get scared.



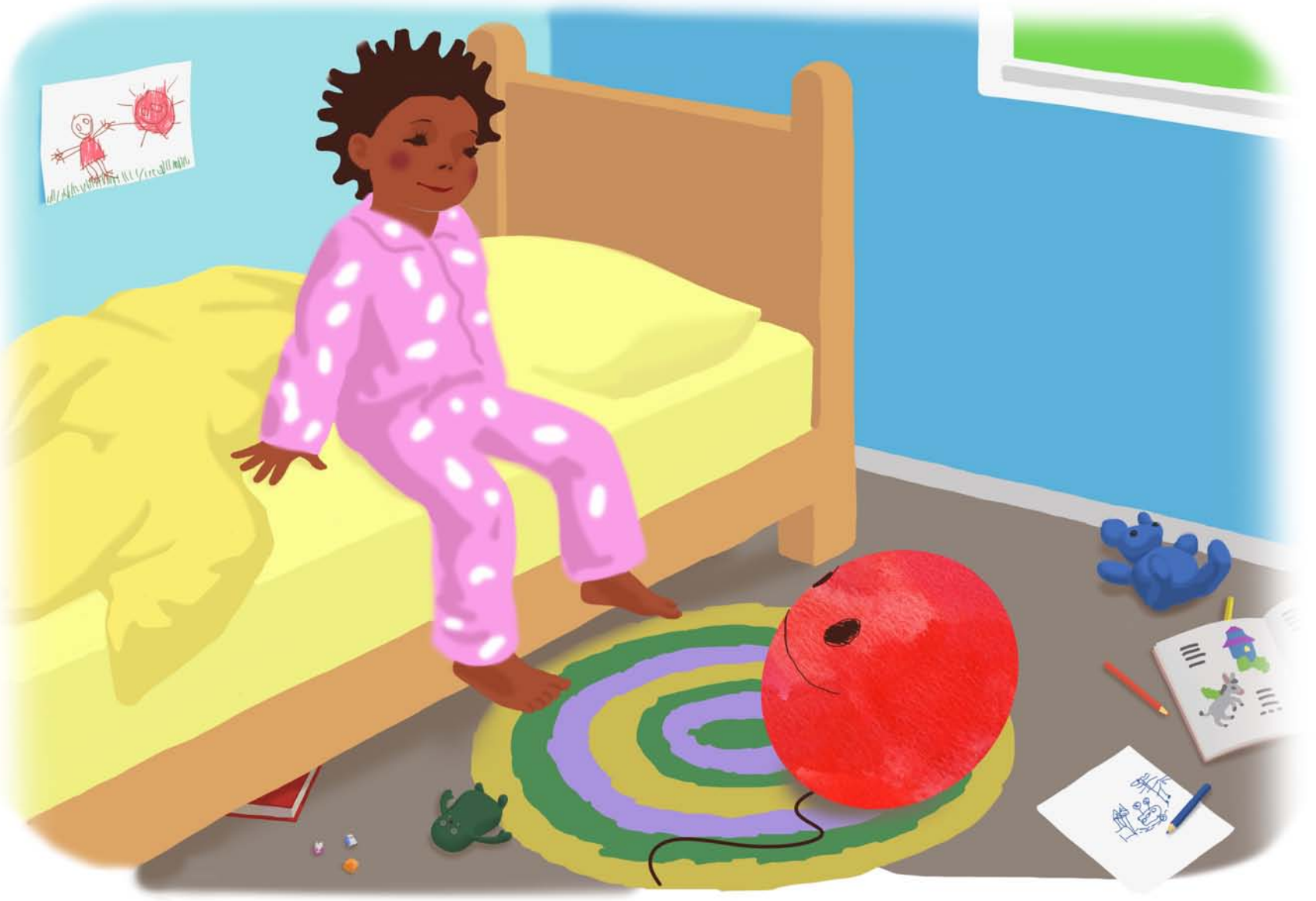
Then Balloon saw an enormous, loud bird. It was unlike any bird he had ever seen. Balloon felt wary yet curious, and wanted to play, but he soon felt hurt and rejection when the bird zoomed past him without paying any attention.

Balloon looked up and, to his sorrow, the yellow balloon was still far, far away. Though it was strange, the yellow balloon didn't seem as friendly as before. It seemed cold and nonchalant. Balloon was tired and scared and felt that if he could cry, tears would be rolling down his rubber body like rain on a window frame.



Then Balloon saw a black bird soaring by him in the wind. The bird was very surprised to see the red balloon. “What are you doing all the way up here?”, she inquired, “I just flew by the little girl you were with. She seemed so sad. Why did you leave her?” “Oh please, please,” pleaded Balloon, “Take me back to that little girl! There’s nothing in the world I’d want more than to see her again!”

So the kind bird flew down and reunited Balloon with the little girl. The girl was jumping with joy and spent all day playing. She drew a big, smiling face on him with a marker and brought him home. When it was time for her to go to bed, she took Balloon into her room. While she slept, Balloon danced and bounced on the ceiling with bliss.



When the girl woke up, she found her dear friend Balloon sitting on the floor by her bed. He didn't want to go anywhere anymore.