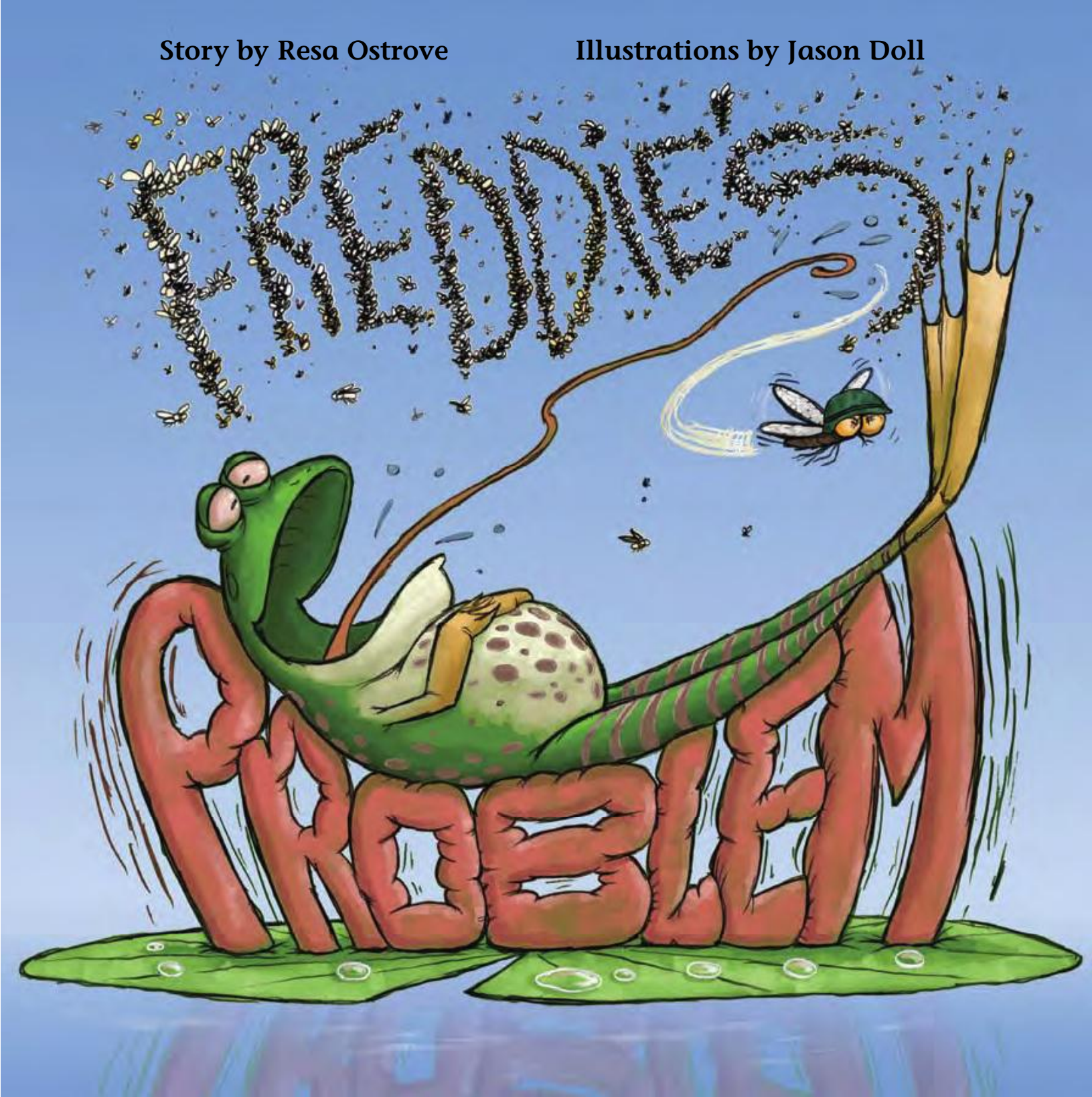


Story by Resa Ostrove

Illustrations by Jason Doll



Freddie's Problem

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Peanut Butter Press

For my son, Zach - R.O.

***For my children,
Edtie, Sophie, and Jorel - J.D.***



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Peanut Butter Press
9-1060 Dakota Street, Winnipeg, MB, R2N 1P2
www.peanutbutterpress.ca

Designed by Lee Huscroft
Edited by Cynthia Guinn Yablonowski

Printed and bound in Canada by Premier Printing Ltd.

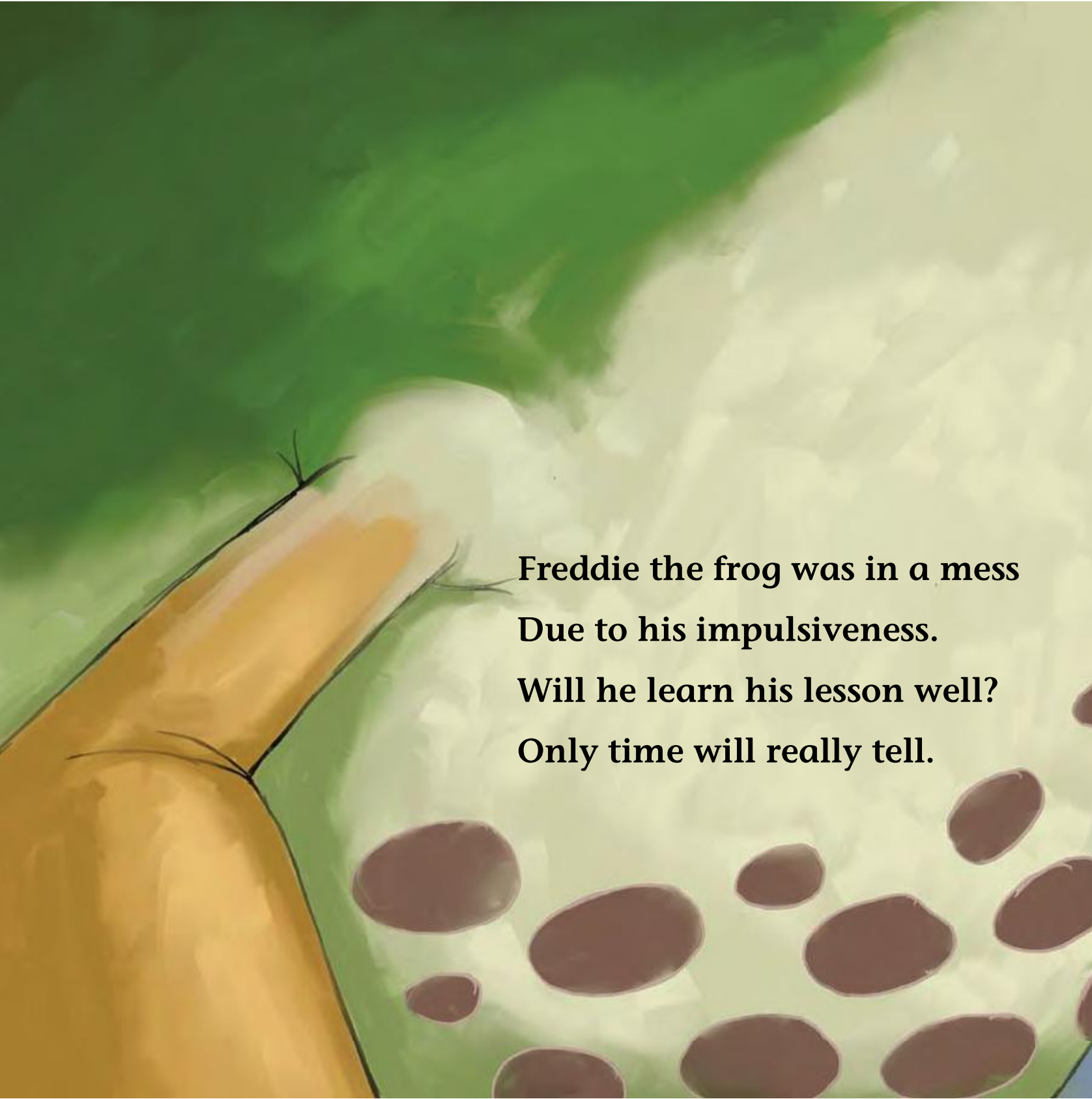
Library and Archives Canada Cataloguing in Publication

Ostrove, Resa, 1954-
Freddie's problem / written by Resa Ostrove ; illustrated
by Jason Doll.

ISBN 978-0-9735579-8-5

1. Frogs--Juvenile fiction. I. Doll, Jason, 1970- II. Title.

PS8629.S59F74 2009 jC813'.6 C2009-904864-7

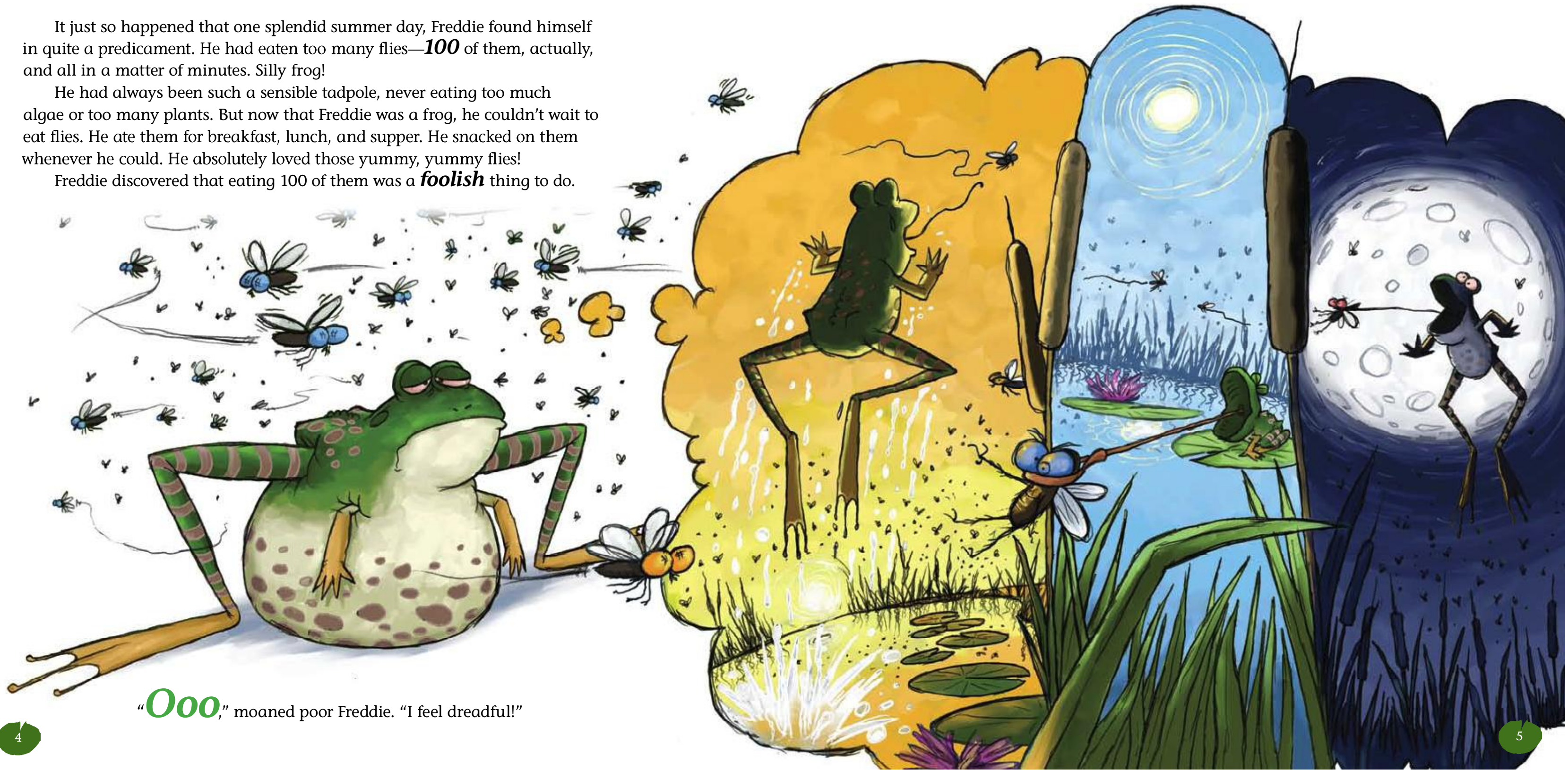


**Freddie the frog was in a mess
Due to his impulsiveness.
Will he learn his lesson well?
Only time will really tell.**

It just so happened that one splendid summer day, Freddie found himself in quite a predicament. He had eaten too many flies—**100** of them, actually, and all in a matter of minutes. Silly frog!

He had always been such a sensible tadpole, never eating too much algae or too many plants. But now that Freddie was a frog, he couldn't wait to eat flies. He ate them for breakfast, lunch, and supper. He snacked on them whenever he could. He absolutely loved those yummy, yummy flies!

Freddie discovered that eating 100 of them was a **foolish** thing to do.



“**Ooo**,” moaned poor Freddie. “I feel dreadful!”

He didn't look so good either. His spotted belly was bloated and heavy, and he was enormously uncomfortable. He couldn't leap from lily pad to lily pad without landing on his bulging belly, and it hurt! Every time he tried to lie down, he rocked back and forth and side to side, and all that motion made him dizzy. Even seeing another fly caused him to feel downright sick, and that had him really worried because *frogs love to eat flies*.



But what annoyed Freddie the most was the sloshing and gurgling and the horrible battle going on in his stomach. An army of gas bubbles was driving him crazy!

Freddie had a real problem.





All day long, he sat on the same lily pad watching the other frogs playing their favourite leaping game. The more fun they were having, the more miserable Freddie became.

Day turned into night and night turned into another glorious day—which was more than could be said for Freddie's mood.

"This is ridiculous," he muttered to himself. "I can't sit on this lily pad feeling sorry for myself forever."

That was true, of course, because the lily pad was slowly sinking from all his added weight.

Freddie was becoming desperate. ***He had to get help.***



Just then, he caught a glimpse of his delightful friend, Fiona, swirling near the surface of the water. What a fish! Besides being *beautiful*, she always had an answer for everything. Freddie figured he could ask her for suggestions.

With a grunt and a groan, he plopped into the pond and slowly made his way over to her. After catching his breath, he joined her underwater.

"Fiona, I'm in a terrible mess," Freddie said glumly.

Fiona stopped swirling and asked him what was wrong.

Freddie described just how much trouble the gas bubbles were giving him. "I can't seem to get rid of them," he sighed. "Can you help me?"





Well, being a fish and not a frog, Fiona had to give the matter some thought. Then her mouth formed a perfect ‘O’ and she fluttered her tail.

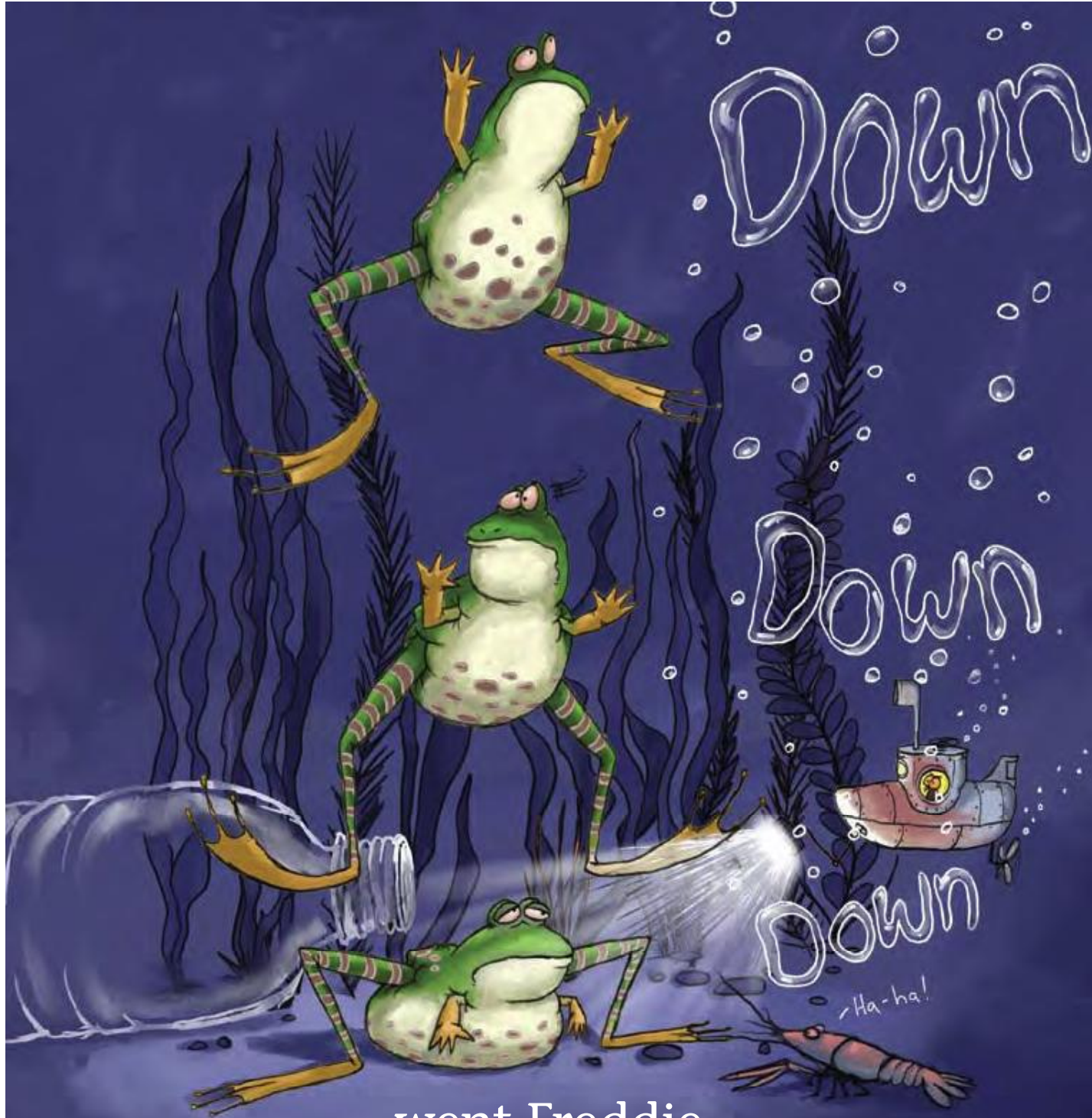
“Listen carefully, Freddie. When I take in oxygen from water, it gets all mixed up in my body and then sometimes I can blow out bubbles,” she explained patiently. “What you need to do is take in the biggest breath you can, and then maybe—just maybe— you’ll be able to blow out those bothersome gas bubbles.”



With this advice and a swoosh of her fins, she swam away.
“That seems like a good idea,” thought Freddie. “I’ll try it!”

Freddie was so eager to follow Fiona’s instructions that he completely forgot he was still underwater. Being a frog and not a fish, Freddie opened his mouth and wound up swallowing a gigantic amount of water, instead of taking in a mouthful of air.





...went Freddie
as he sank
to the bottom of the pond.

Coughing
and
Sputtering...

he fought
his way
back to
the surface.

Much to Freddie's dismay, his stomach still gurgled
and those nasty gas bubbles still pushed and pressed.

"This isn't good," he said sadly.

Freddie was about to climb back onto his lily pad to brood when his buddy, Dirwood, paddled by. The duck appeared to be distracted. He was an expert paddler and would soon be out of sight. Freddie had to act quickly to get his attention.

“Dirwood,” Freddie called out. “I’m in an awful mess!”

Dirwood turned around and swam over to his friend.

The unhappy frog told him all about his unfortunate situation and how things had gone terribly wrong. “Can you help me?” asked a frustrated Freddie.

Well, being a duck and not a frog, Dirwood wasn’t sure that he could. He swam around in circles to help himself think. Freddie was getting dizzy again just watching him.



“Aha!” Dirwood finally said, winking at Freddie. “This should do the trick. If you paddle powerfully using only your back feet, the water will push against your belly and force the gas bubbles out.”

Immensely satisfied with his answer, Dirwood ruffled his feathers and continued on his way.

“It couldn’t hurt to try,” thought Freddie. “I’ll do it!”

