

A robot named Rody is shown in a savanna landscape. Rody is a small, round, metallic robot with large, expressive eyes, a small antenna, and a single large wheel for a leg. He is standing in tall, golden grass, looking up with a slightly sad or curious expression. In the background, there are acacia trees, a bright sun, and a blue sky with soft clouds. A bird is flying in the sky, and a speech bubble indicates it is shouting. The title 'Rody's Safari Surprise' is displayed in a brown, rounded rectangular box with a white border, set against a background of green foliage.

Rody's Safari Surprise

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Haa-haa-haa-de-dah

Rody the robot rolled through the tall, golden grass of the Kruger National Park. The sun was warm, the sky was big and blue, and a hadeda shouted, "Haa-haa-haa-de-dah"!

Rody loved the bushveld, but today his metal heart felt lonely. "Everyone has a herd or a troop," he sighed. "I want friends too."



Along the sandy track he
saw elephants splashing at a
waterhole, zebras trotting
together and giraffes nibbling
leaves.
“Maybe I can join one of them,”
Rody decided.



Too-oot!

Tooo-oot!

He rolled to the waterhole.
“Dumela, elephants! Can I play with you?” he asked.
The elephants lifted their trunks kindly. “Tooo-oot!”

Rody copied, “Tooo-oot! Tooo-oot!”
They sprayed muddy water and stomped in the pool.
It looked so lekker.

Rody edged closer, then stopped.
“If I get wet, I will be damaged,” he whispered.
He watched them splash, feeling left out, then
turned away, leaving a lonely line in the sand.



Roooooaaar!

On a rocky koppie, a pride of lions lay in the sun.

“They look strong and brave,” he thought.

“Maybe the lions will be my friends.”

“Sawubona, lions! Can I join your pride?”

“You may walk with us,” said the lioness.

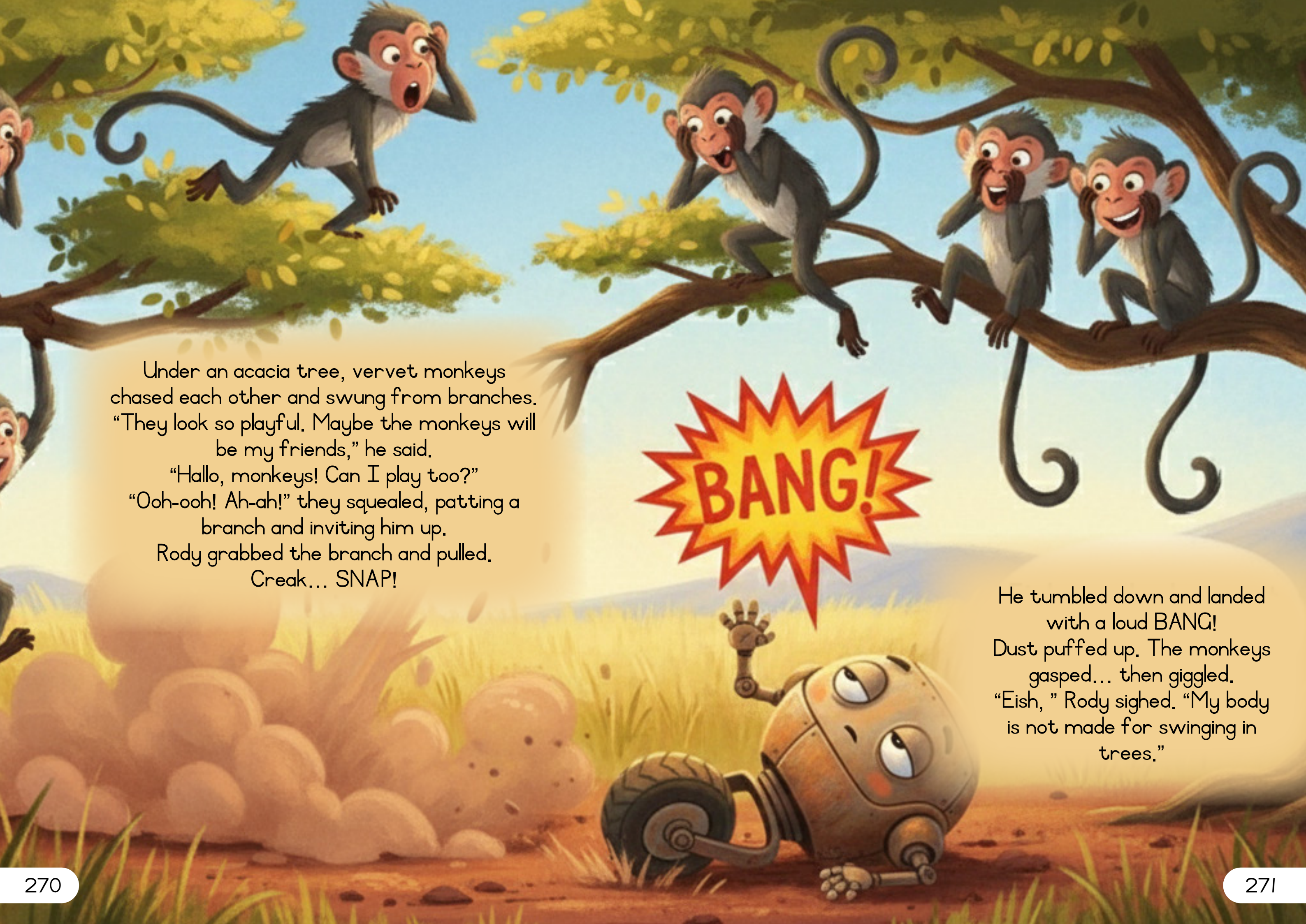
Rody tried his best roar. “Roooooaaaaar!”

He felt proud - until the lions ran off after a
springbok, dust flying.

Rody stopped.

“I cannot hunt or eat raw meat,” he thought.

Quietly, he rolled back down the koppie.



Under an acacia tree, vervet monkeys
chased each other and swung from branches.
“They look so playful. Maybe the monkeys will
be my friends,” he said.

“Hallo, monkeys! Can I play too?”
“Ooh-ooh! Ah-ah!” they squealed, patting a
branch and inviting him up.
Rody grabbed the branch and pulled.
Creak... SNAP!

He tumbled down and landed
with a loud BANG!
Dust puffed up. The monkeys
gasped... then giggled.
“Eish,” Rody sighed. “My body
is not made for swinging in
trees.”

He stopped under a marula tree. A squirrel
scurried past; a hornbill hopped nearby.

“Too breakable for water, too gentle
for hunting, too heavy for trees,” he said
sadly. “What kind of friend can I be?”
He looked at the clouds and gave a long,
lonely beep.

Then he heard something new.
Laughter.



A game-viewing bakkie stopped nearby, full of children on a school trip.
“Yoh! Look, a robot!” shouted a boy.
Three children climbed down: John,
Phindi and Lethabo.





“Hi, I am John. What’s your name?”

“I am Rody,” the robot said shyly.

“I am Phindi, and this is Lethabo. Do you want to play with us, Rody?”

“I would love to,” he beeped, “but I cannot splash like elephants, or hunt like lions, or swing like monkeys.”

"We do not need that," Phindi laughed.

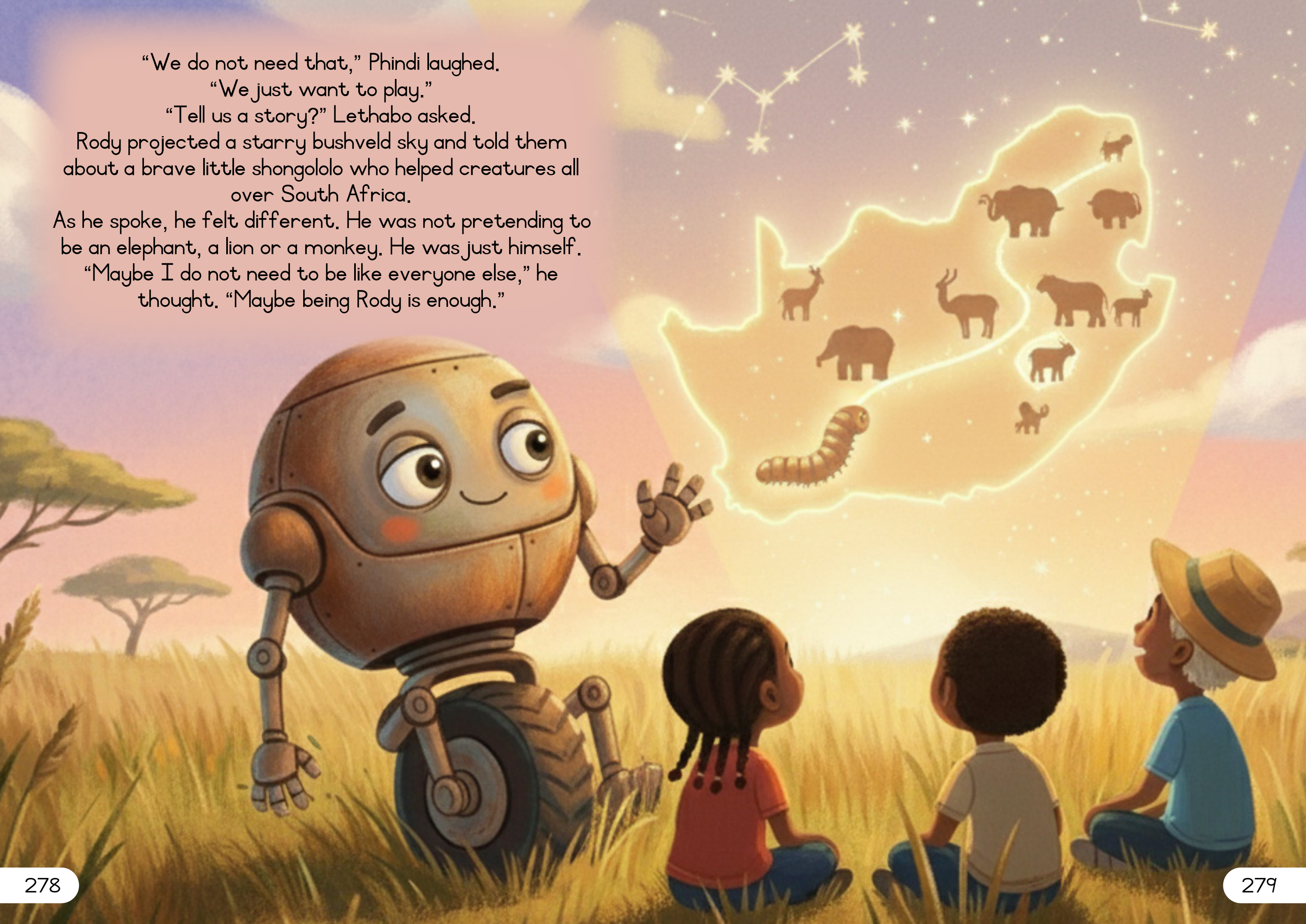
"We just want to play."

"Tell us a story?" Lethabo asked.

Rody projected a starry bushveld sky and told them about a brave little shongololo who helped creatures all over South Africa.

As he spoke, he felt different. He was not pretending to be an elephant, a lion or a monkey. He was just himself.

"Maybe I do not need to be like everyone else," he thought. "Maybe being Rody is enough."



The ranger called, "Okay, children, time to go!"
"Bye, Rody! Sala kahle!" John waved as the
bakkie drove off.

Rody's metal heart felt light and warm.
"I did not need to change to be liked," he
thought. "I just needed the right friends – and
the right way to help."



Did you know?

When lots of the same animals are together, we often have a special name for their group. In this story, you will learn a few of those fun group names!

A parade of elephants
A pride of lions
A troop of monkeys