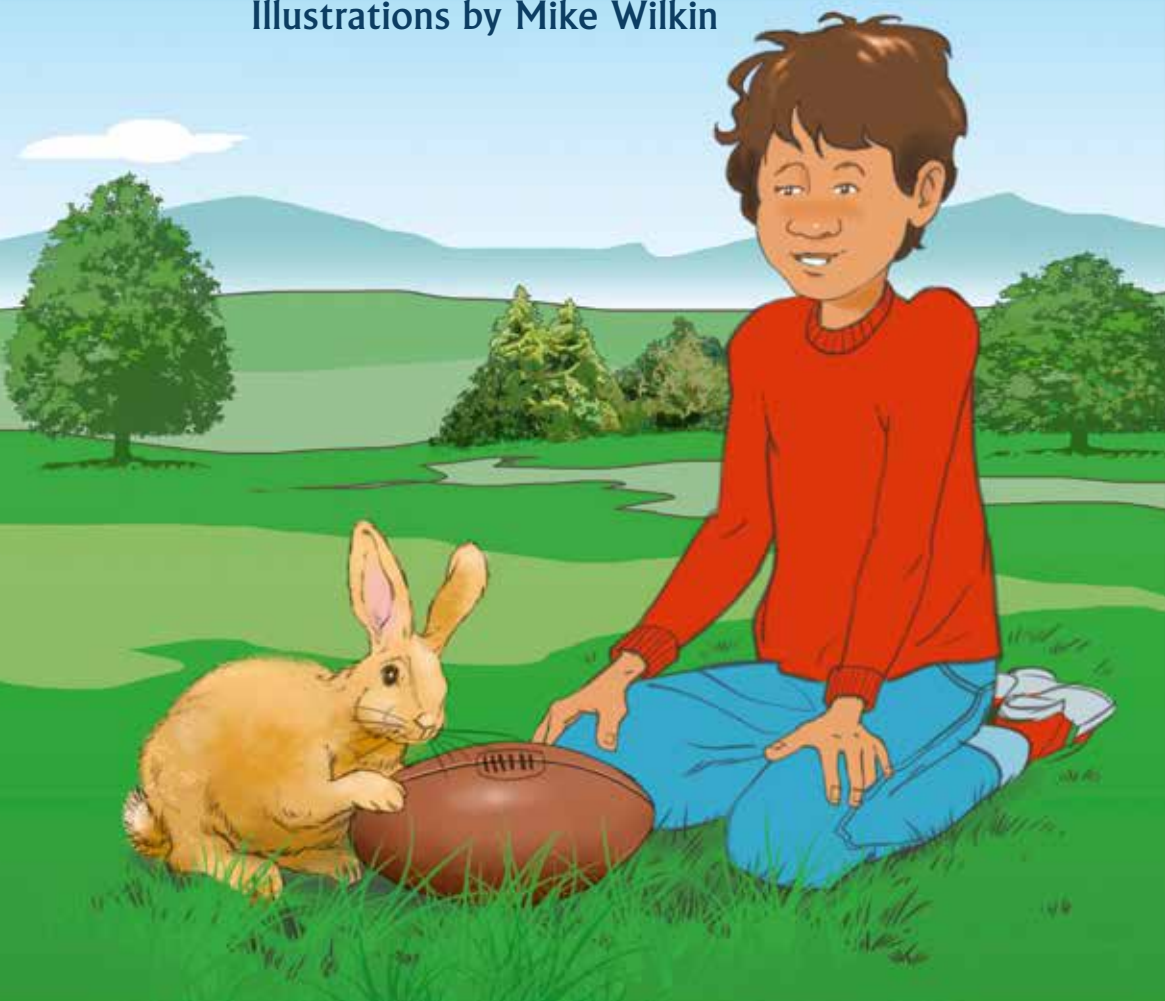


# The Problem with Sione's Spaghetti

Story by John Carr

Illustrations by Mike Wilkin



The Problem with Sione's Spaghetti

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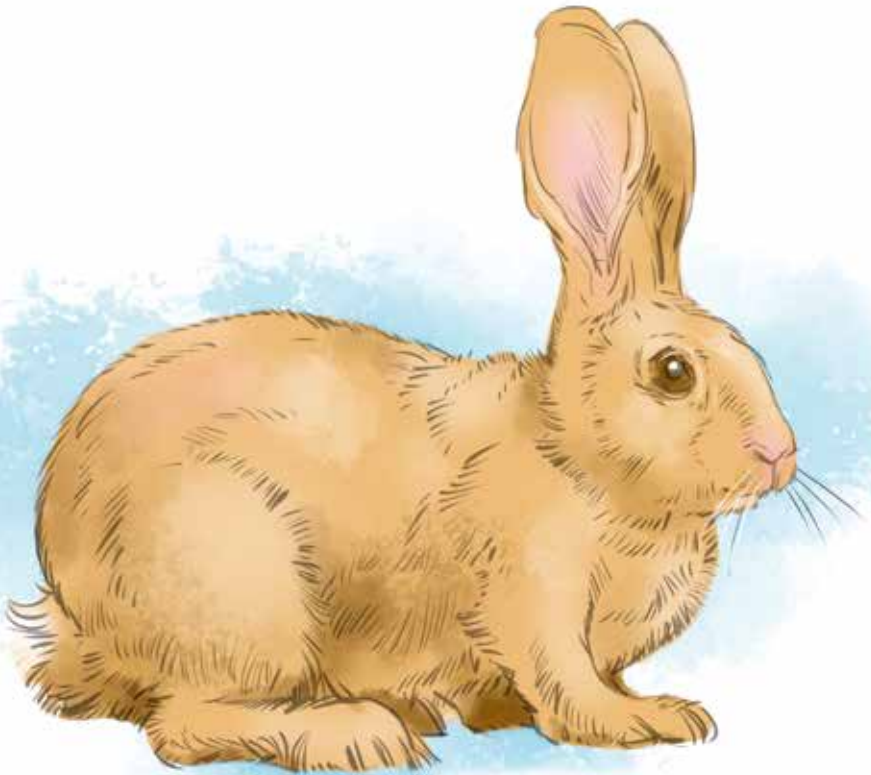
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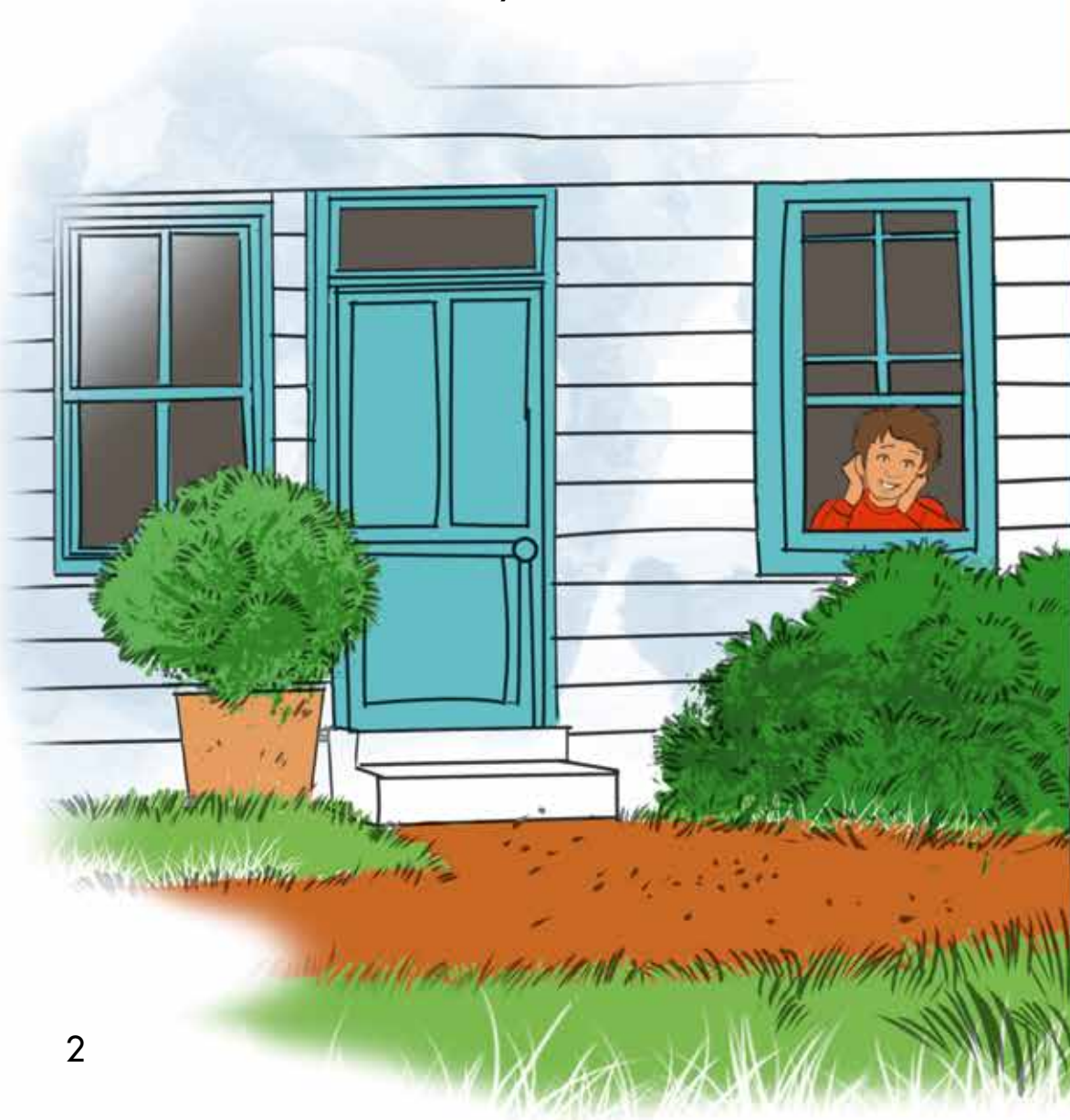
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# The Problem with Sione's Spaghetti



There were two things that Sione really loved,  
and one of them was Spaghetti – not spaghetti  
the food, but Spaghetti the rabbit who lived in an  
enclosure in Sione's back yard.



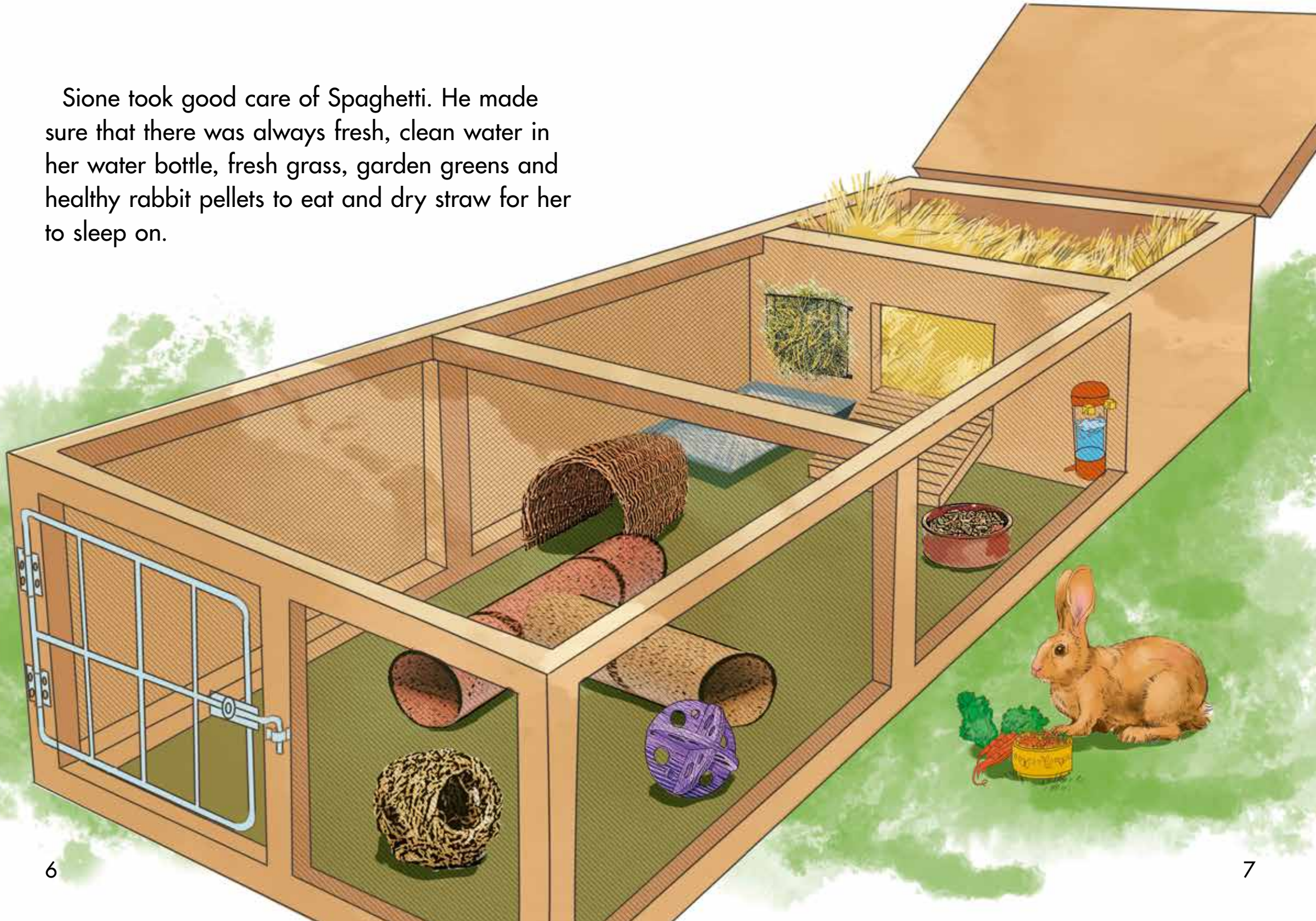
Spaghetti used to be called Fluffy but one day she escaped from her enclosure during a thunderstorm. The lightning and thunder frightened her. When Sione found her hiding under a bush in the park next door, she wasn't fluffy anymore. Her fur was wet and in a tangle.

“She looks like a bowl of spaghetti!”  
said Aunty Masina.

Fluffy had been called Spaghetti ever since.



Sione took good care of Spaghetti. He made sure that there was always fresh, clean water in her water bottle, fresh grass, garden greens and healthy rabbit pellets to eat and dry straw for her to sleep on.

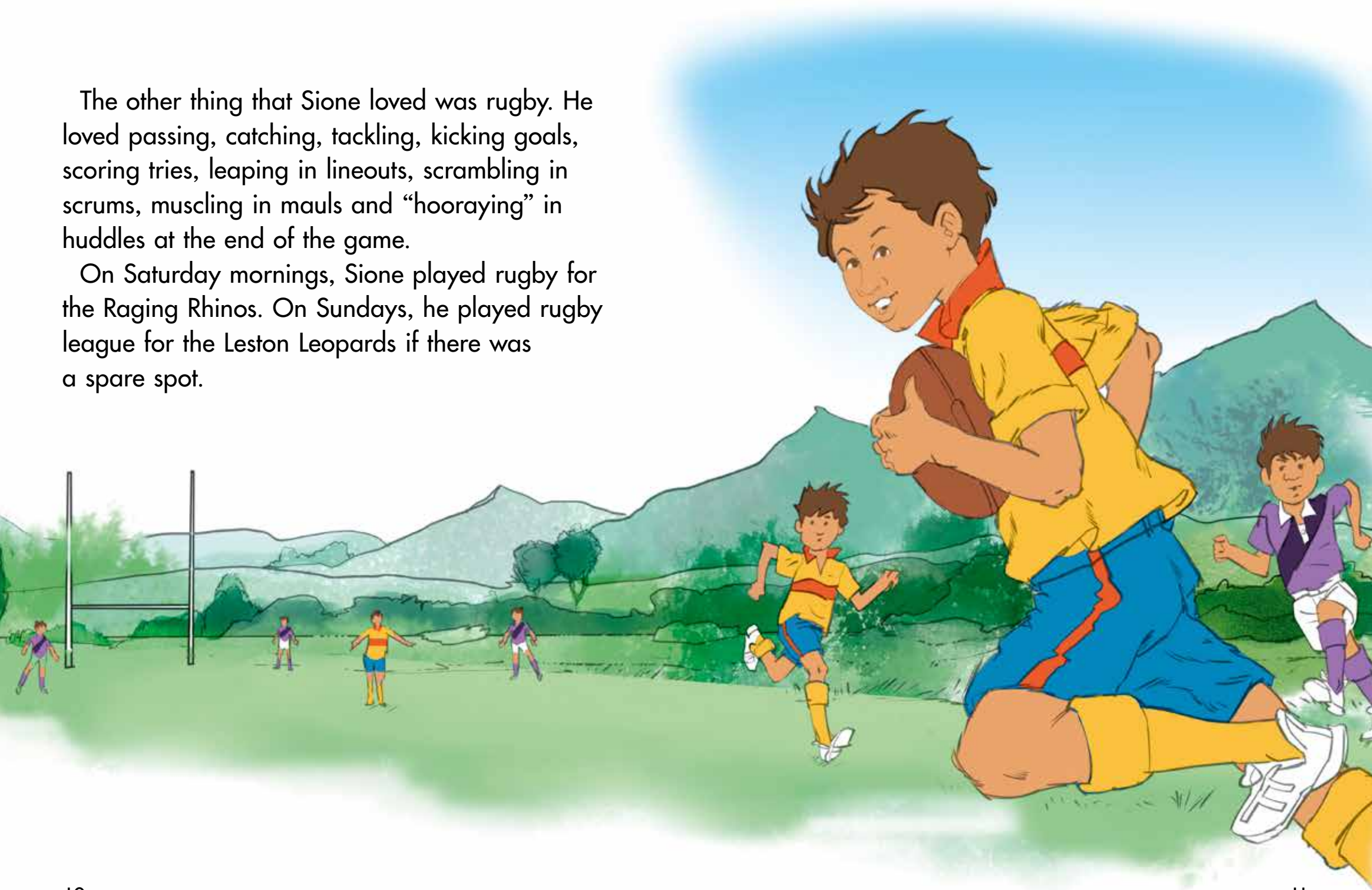


Sione also took Spaghetti out of her enclosure so she could play with him and his cousin Lelei.



The other thing that Sione loved was rugby. He loved passing, catching, tackling, kicking goals, scoring tries, leaping in lineouts, scrambling in scrums, muscling in mauls and “hooraying” in huddles at the end of the game.

On Saturday mornings, Sione played rugby for the Raging Rhinos. On Sundays, he played rugby league for the Leston Leopards if there was a spare spot.



One afternoon, before rugby practice, Sione was playing with Spaghetti as usual, but he felt that Spaghetti wasn't happy.

Just then Auntie Masina and Lelei came by.

"Spaghetti's sad," Sione said. "Her ears have gone floppy and her hop has lost its hippety."

"Maybe she needs a friend," said Auntie Masina, who knew a lot about rabbits and everything else as well.

"But I'm her friend," said Sione.

"I mean a rabbit friend," said Auntie Masina. "Rabbits like having friends around, just like you and I do. Imagine what rugby would be like if you didn't have friends to play with?"



Sione thought about it. Aunty Masina was right. He couldn't think of anything more lonely than a rugby scrum with one person in it.

"We need to get Spaghetti a rabbit friend right now!" he said.

"It's not that easy," said Aunty Masina. "Rabbits need time to get used to each other. At the start they need to be in their own enclosures. It takes time before they become friends and live together."



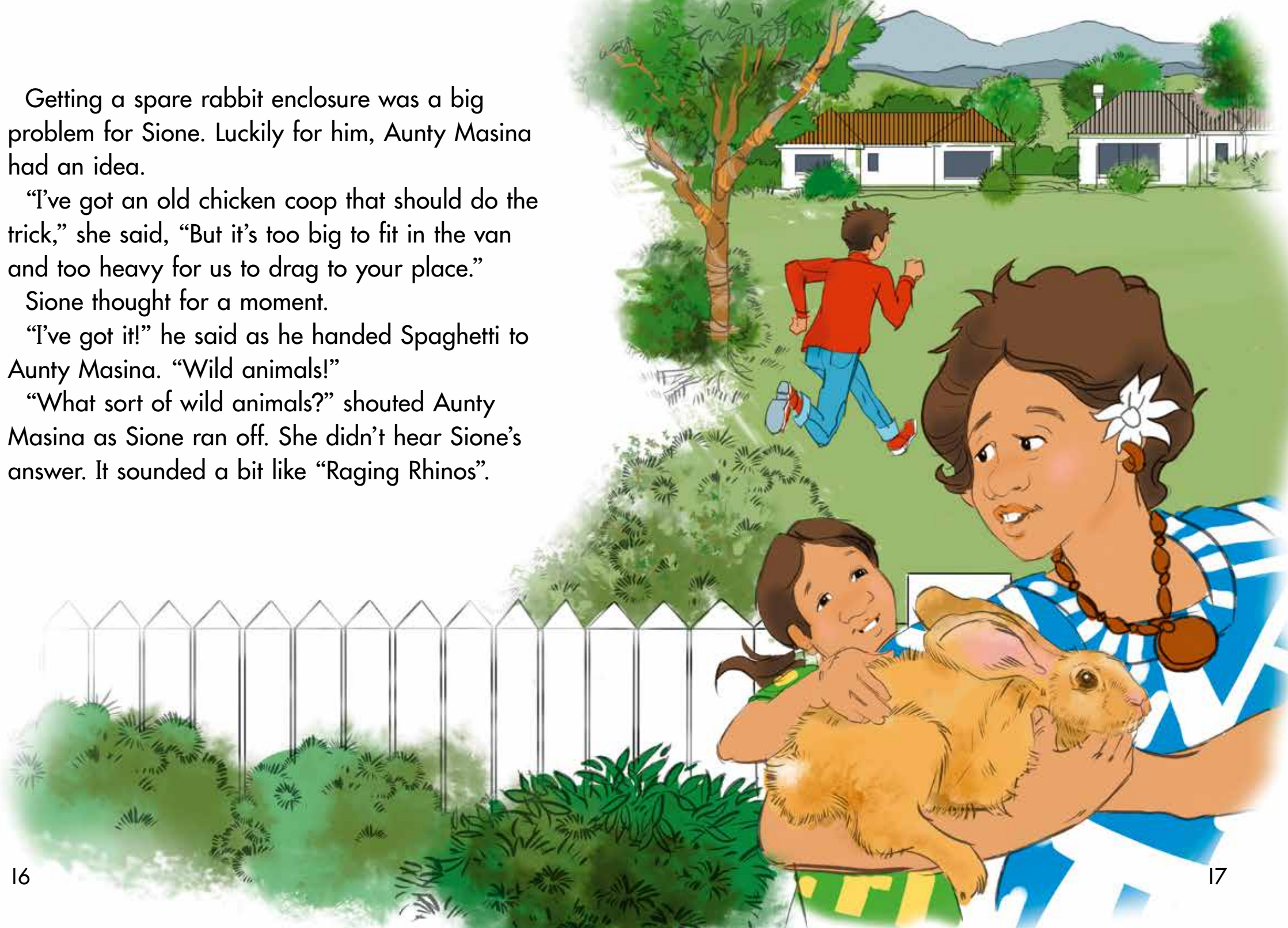
Getting a spare rabbit enclosure was a big problem for Sione. Luckily for him, Aunt Masina had an idea.

"I've got an old chicken coop that should do the trick," she said, "But it's too big to fit in the van and too heavy for us to drag to your place."

Sione thought for a moment.

"I've got it!" he said as he handed Spaghetti to Aunt Masina. "Wild animals!"

"What sort of wild animals?" shouted Aunt Masina as Sione ran off. She didn't hear Sione's answer. It sounded a bit like "Raging Rhinos".

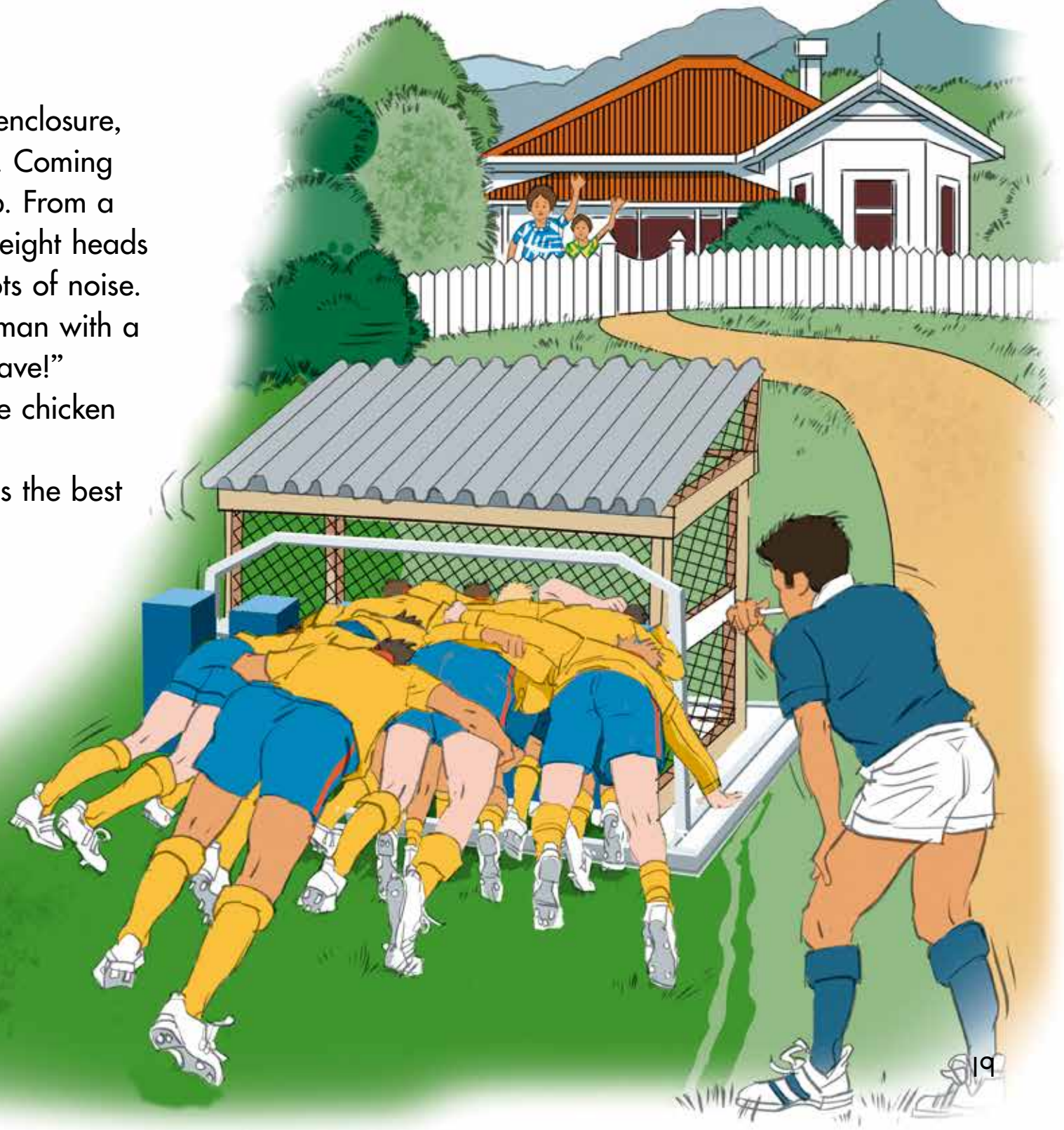


After putting Spaghetti back in her enclosure, Aunt Masina looked across the park. Coming towards her was her old chicken coop. From a distance it looked like a monster with eight heads and sixteen legs and it was making lots of noise.

Walking behind the monster was a man with a whistle. He was shouting, "Heave! Heave!"

"Thanks coach," said Sione when the chicken coop came to a stop.

"Don't thank me," he said. "That was the best scrum practice we've had all year!"



The next day Aunty Masina, Lelei and Sione went to the SPCA to find a rabbit friend for Spaghetti. The animal attendant showed Sione a brown-and-white rabbit. It had been left by a family that had gone overseas. It had a scratch on one ear from a fight with a cat.

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Sione loved him straight away.  
“I will call him Meatballs,” he said.  
“Meatballs?” said Aunty Masina.  
“Yes, Meatballs,” laughed Sione, “because  
Spaghetti and Meatballs belong together.”

# Happy Rabbit Hints



- Rabbits make great pets.
- In the wild, rabbits have lots of space. Make sure their enclosure has an exercise area that is large enough for your rabbits to run around and high enough for them to stand on their hind legs.
- Rabbits like to dig and hide in holes. Have some ramps, boxes, or tunnels in the enclosure where your rabbits can hide, explore and feel safe.
- Play with your rabbits every day and allow them to have some exercise outside the enclosure.
- Rabbits like toys. Place food in toys, like toilet paper rolls. Change toys often so the rabbit doesn't get bored.
- In the wild, rabbits climb up high to look out for danger. Have a place in the hutch that your rabbits can climb to look out for danger.
- Rabbits are social animals. They are happier when they have the company of people or another rabbit.

**Visit [kids.spcaeducation.org.nz](https://kids.spcaeducation.org.nz) to learn more  
about caring for rabbits**