





Rebecca Wexelsen · Camilla Kuhn

# Ulf is unwell

ULF IS UNWELL  
By Rebecca Wexelsen & Camilla Kuhn  
Children's Book  
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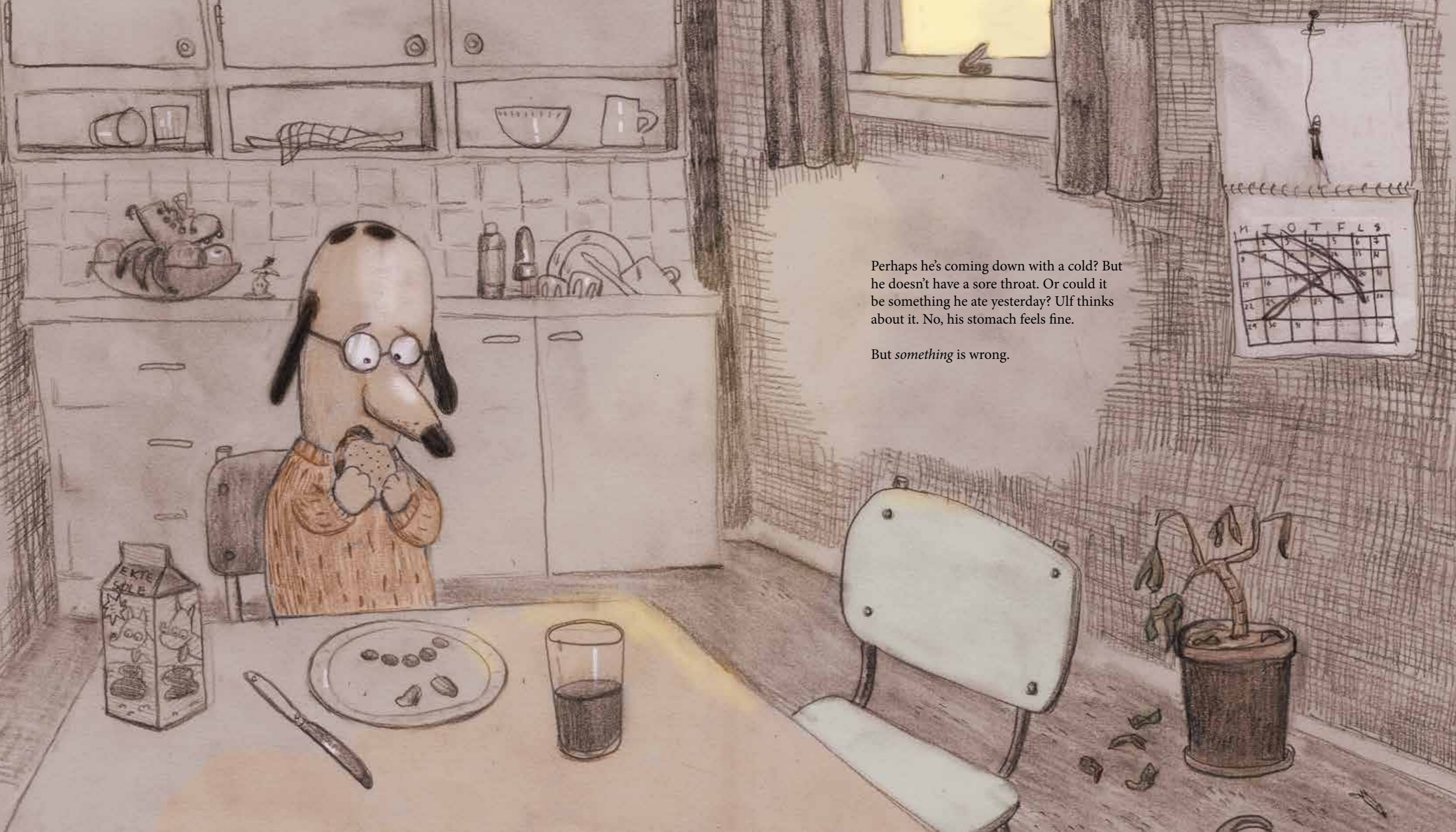
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Vigmostad & Bjørke





Ulf stands in the bathroom. He doesn't feel well. He looks at himself in the mirror. His face is exactly the same as it was yesterday. But something is not right. Ulf washes, then goes out into the kitchen.





Perhaps he's coming down with a cold? But he doesn't have a sore throat. Or could it be something he ate yesterday? Ulf thinks about it. No, his stomach feels fine.

But *something* is wrong.





It's a beautiful day. The sun is shining  
and the birds are singing.  
But Ulf is concerned.



He meets his aunt by the big tree in the park.  
'Do I look any different today?' Ulf asks.  
His aunt looks at him.  
'Not that I can see,' she says. 'New shoes?'  
'Ehm, no,' Ulf says.  
'New haircut?'  
'No.'  
'New glasses?'  
Ulf shakes his head.  
'I give up then. Do you want to come to the beach?'  
'Not really,' Ulf says. 'I'm not feeling well.'





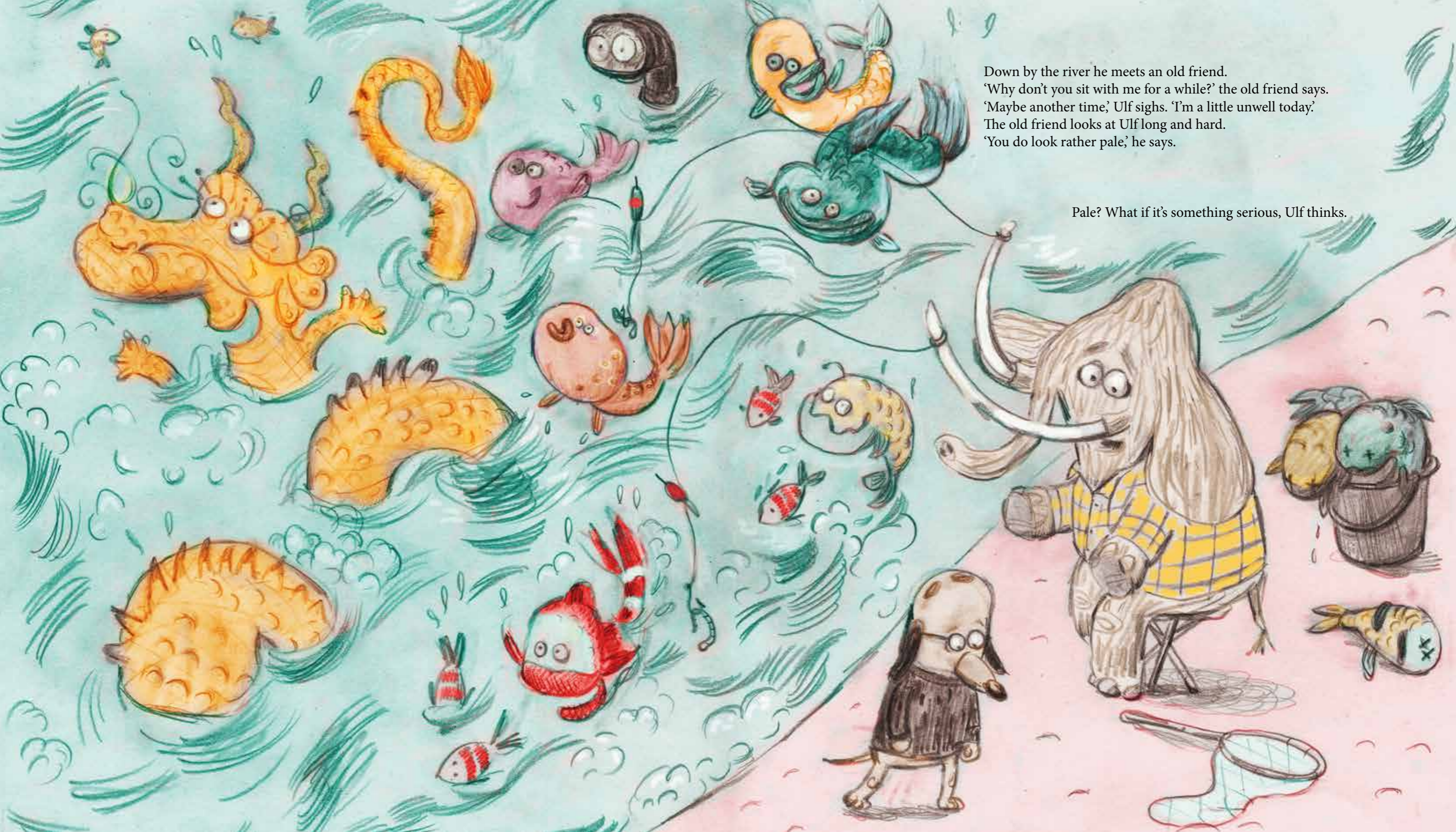
The King's Guard are standing guard in front of the palace. They have black hats with big plumes and all look the same. Ulf goes over to one of them.



–‘I’m not quite myself today,’ Ulf says.  
The guard studies Ulf from top to toe.  
‘Who are you then?’ he asks.  
Ulf has no answer.  
‘You can keep me company, if you like. It gets very boring standing here,’ the guard says.

‘Thanks, but no,’ Ulf says.



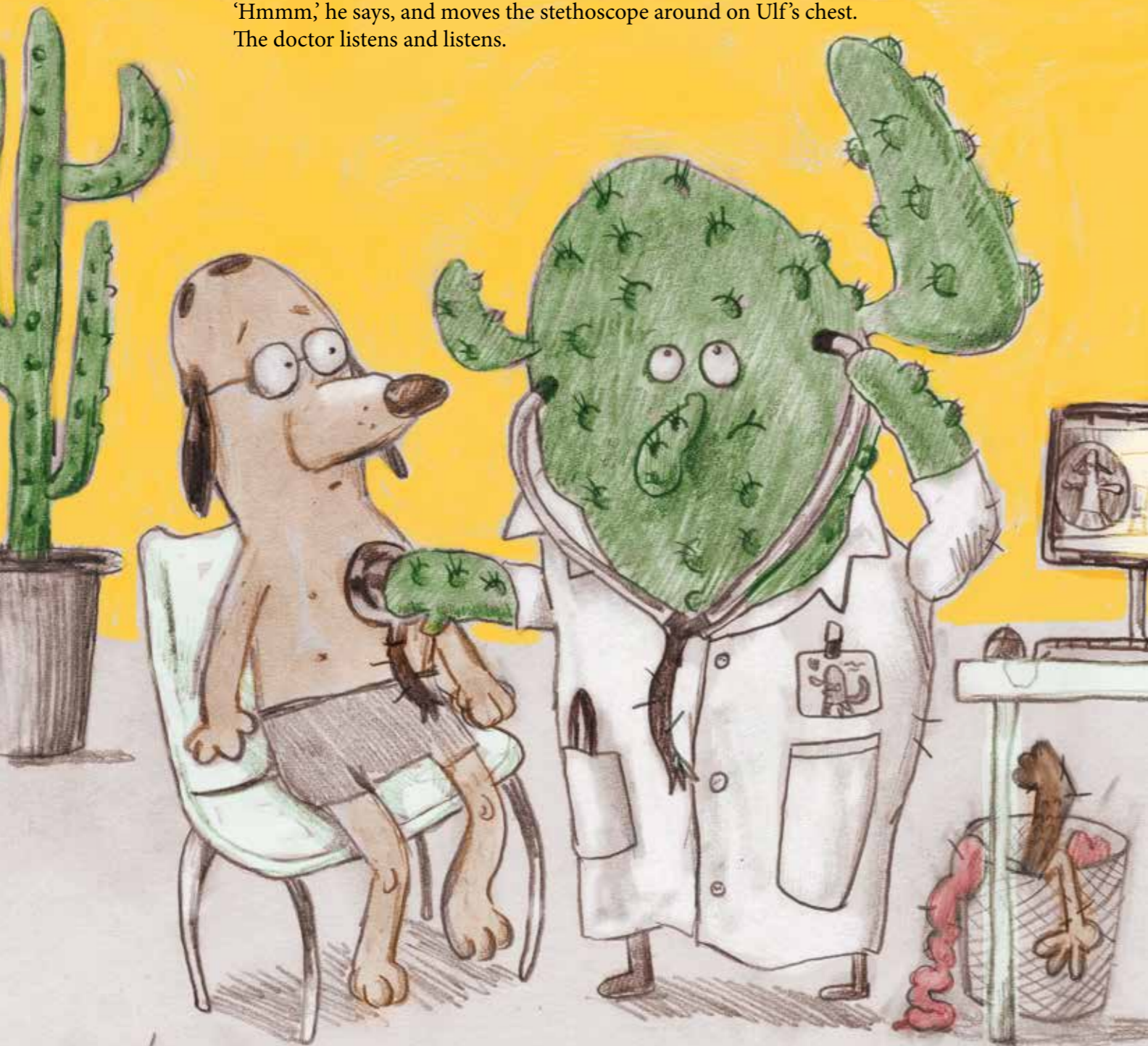


Down by the river he meets an old friend.  
'Why don't you sit with me for a while?' the old friend says.  
'Maybe another time,' Ulf sighs. 'I'm a little unwell today.'  
The old friend looks at Ulf long and hard.  
'You do look rather pale,' he says.

Pale? What if it's something serious, Ulf thinks.



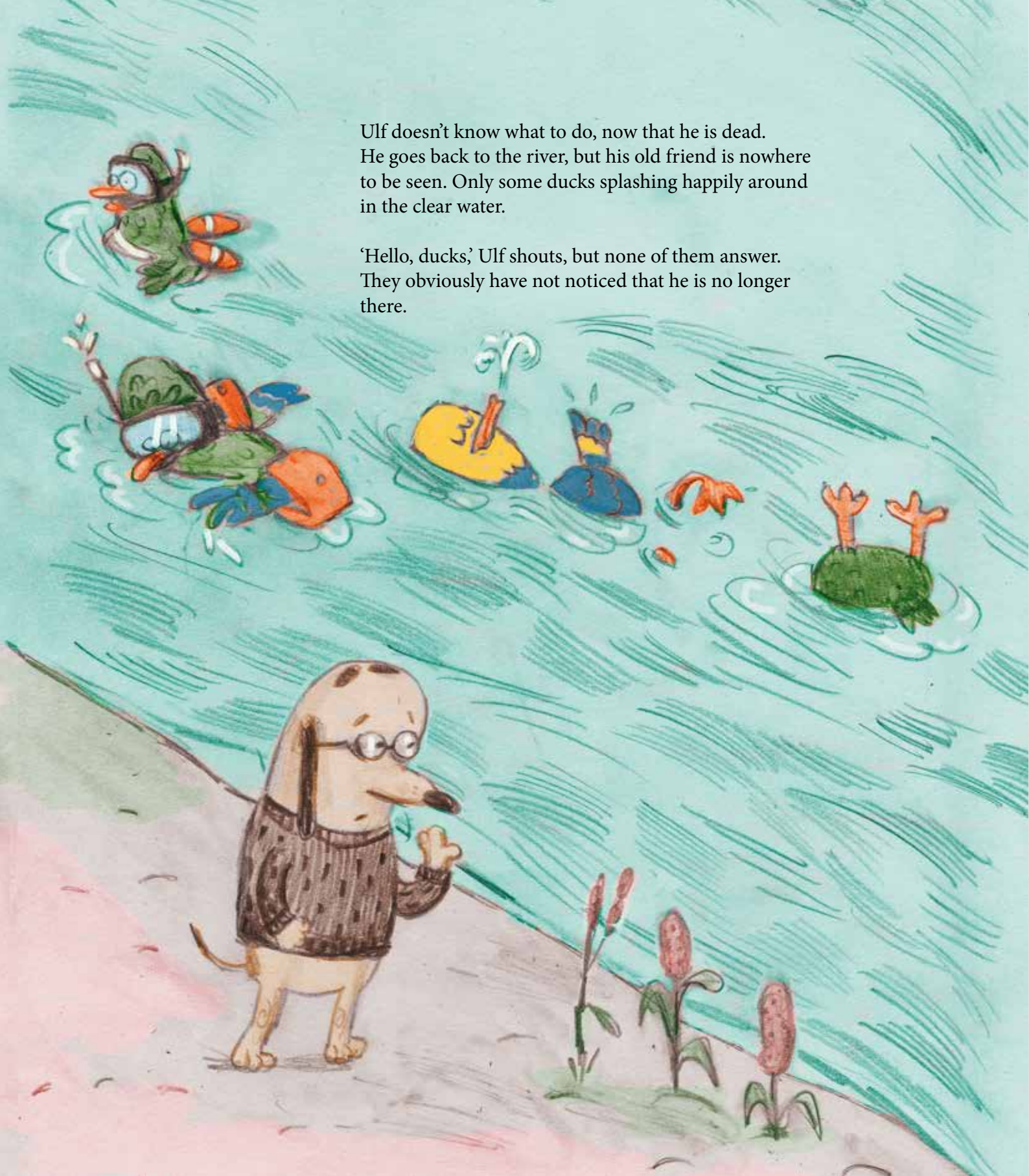
Ulf goes to the doctor.  
The doctor places his stethoscope on Ulf's chest and listens to his heart.  
He listens for quite some time.  
'Hmmm,' he says, and moves the stethoscope around on Ulf's chest.  
The doctor listens and listens.



'I think you are in fact dead,' he says, in the end.  
'Am I completely dead?' Ulf says in surprise.  
'Sadly, yes,' the doctor says. 'I'm afraid you are.'

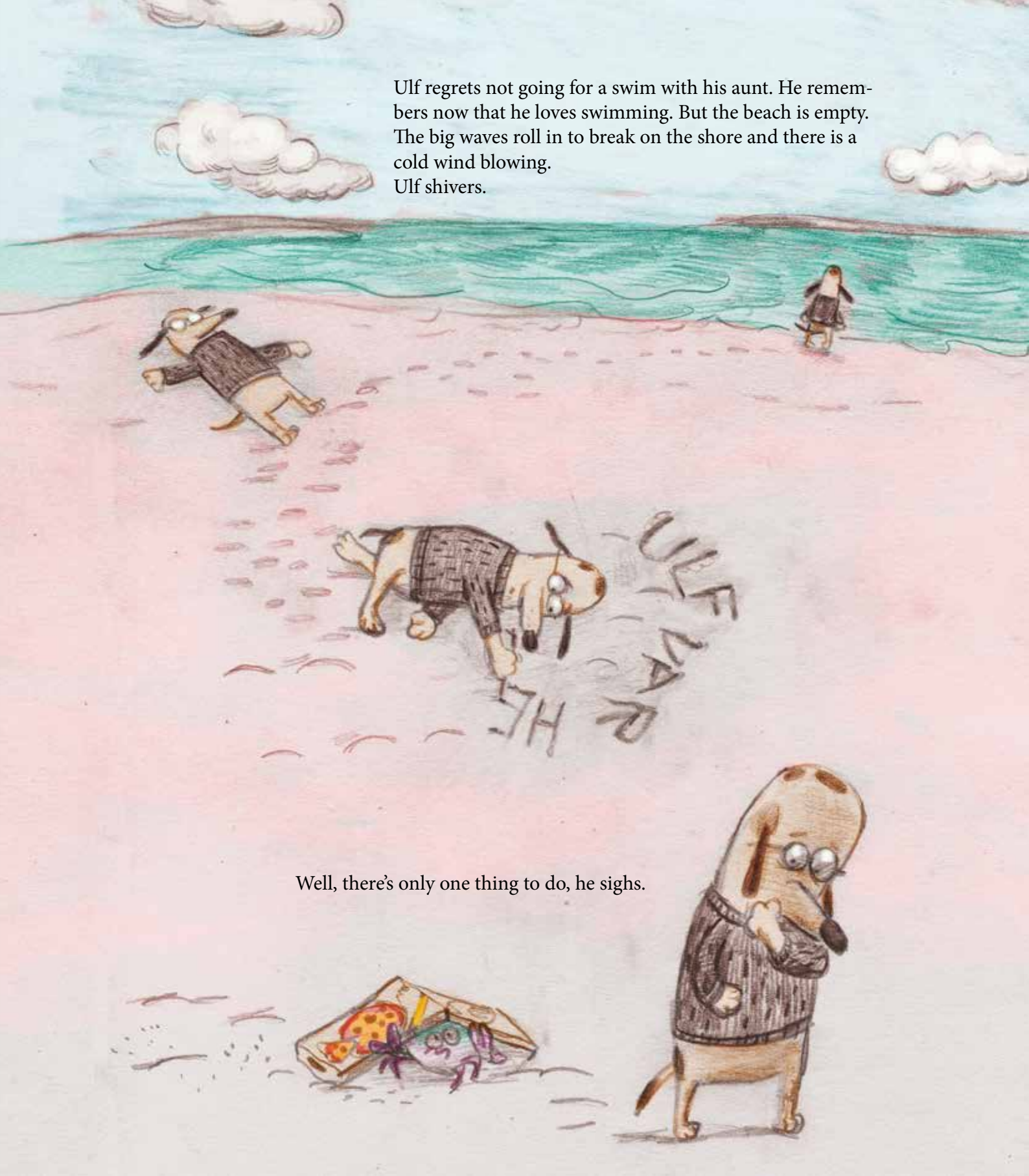




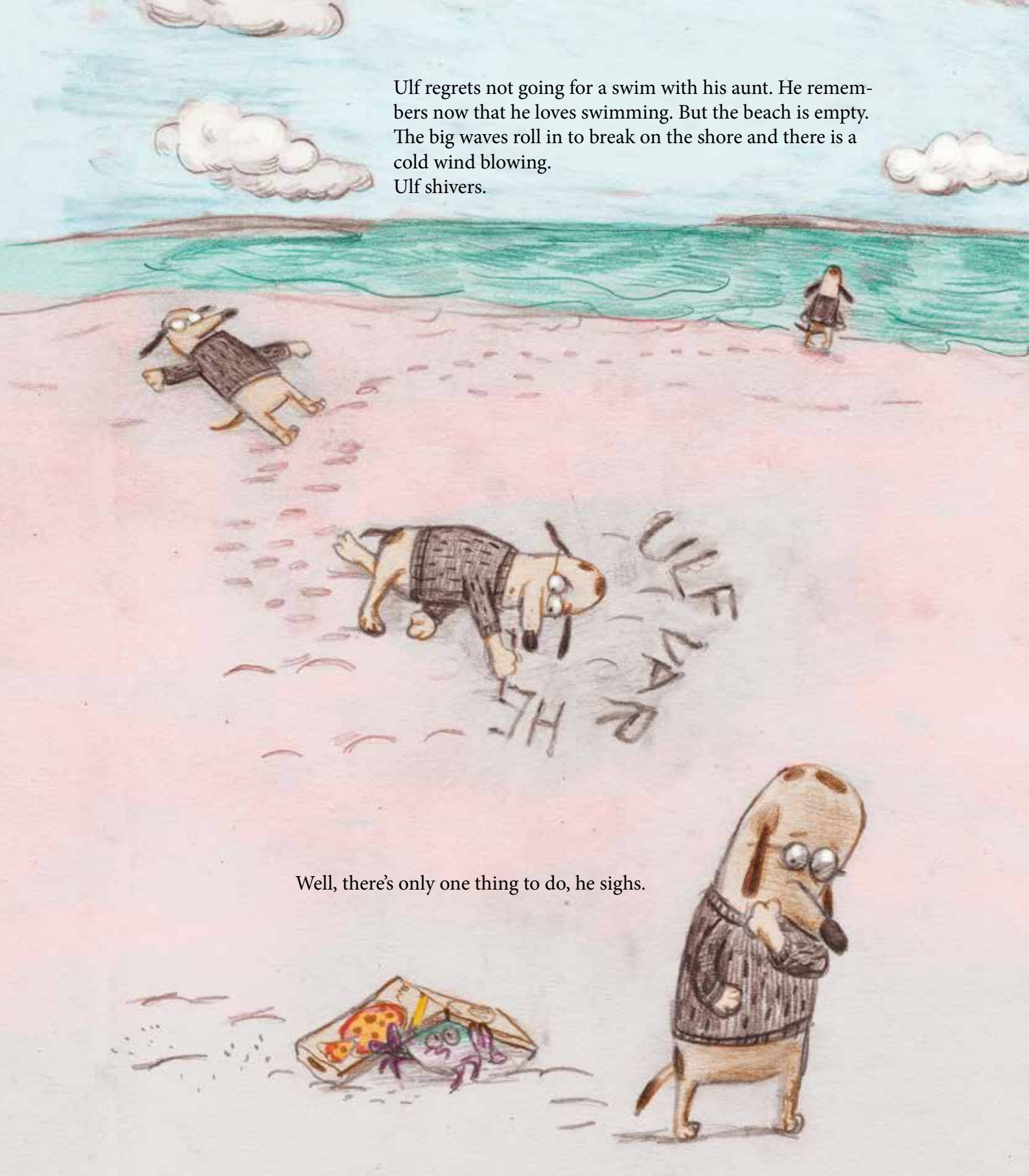
A cartoon illustration of a dog named Ulf, wearing glasses and a brown sweater, standing on a sandy bank. He is looking across a river where several ducks are swimming. One duck is wearing a green and orange life preserver, another is wearing a green hat and goggles, and another is wearing a yellow life preserver. The water is a light blue-green color with some ripples.

Ulf doesn't know what to do, now that he is dead.  
He goes back to the river, but his old friend is nowhere  
to be seen. Only some ducks splashing happily around  
in the clear water.

'Hello, ducks,' Ulf shouts, but none of them answer.  
They obviously have not noticed that he is no longer  
there.

A cartoon illustration of a dog named Ulf, wearing glasses and a brown sweater, walking on a sandy beach. He is looking towards the ocean. In the background, there are waves breaking on the shore and a few clouds in the sky. A small figure of a person is visible in the distance near the water's edge.

Ulf regrets not going for a swim with his aunt. He remem-  
bers now that he loves swimming. But the beach is empty.  
The big waves roll in to break on the shore and there is a  
cold wind blowing.  
Ulf shivers.

A cartoon illustration of a dog named Ulf, wearing glasses and a brown sweater, standing on a sandy beach. He is looking down at a pizza box on the ground. The pizza box is open, and a slice of pizza is visible. There are some small insects or bugs near the pizza box.

Well, there's only one thing to do, he sighs.



Ulf buys the finest planks and most expensive nails. Perhaps it's not so bad. After all, he has always liked making things.



Ulf saws and hammers. And eventually he has a solid coffin. Just think of all the things I could have made if I was alive, he muses.

Dressers and cupboards and small dolls' houses.

And now it's too late.





When the coffin is finished, Ulf lies down in it to see if it fits. It's a little hard. And there is a bit of a draught. Ulf gets some cushions and blankets.



It's sad to be dead, Ulf thinks. He had imagined that when it happened, it might be a bit more dramatic.

And it's particularly sad to be dead when no one has noticed.



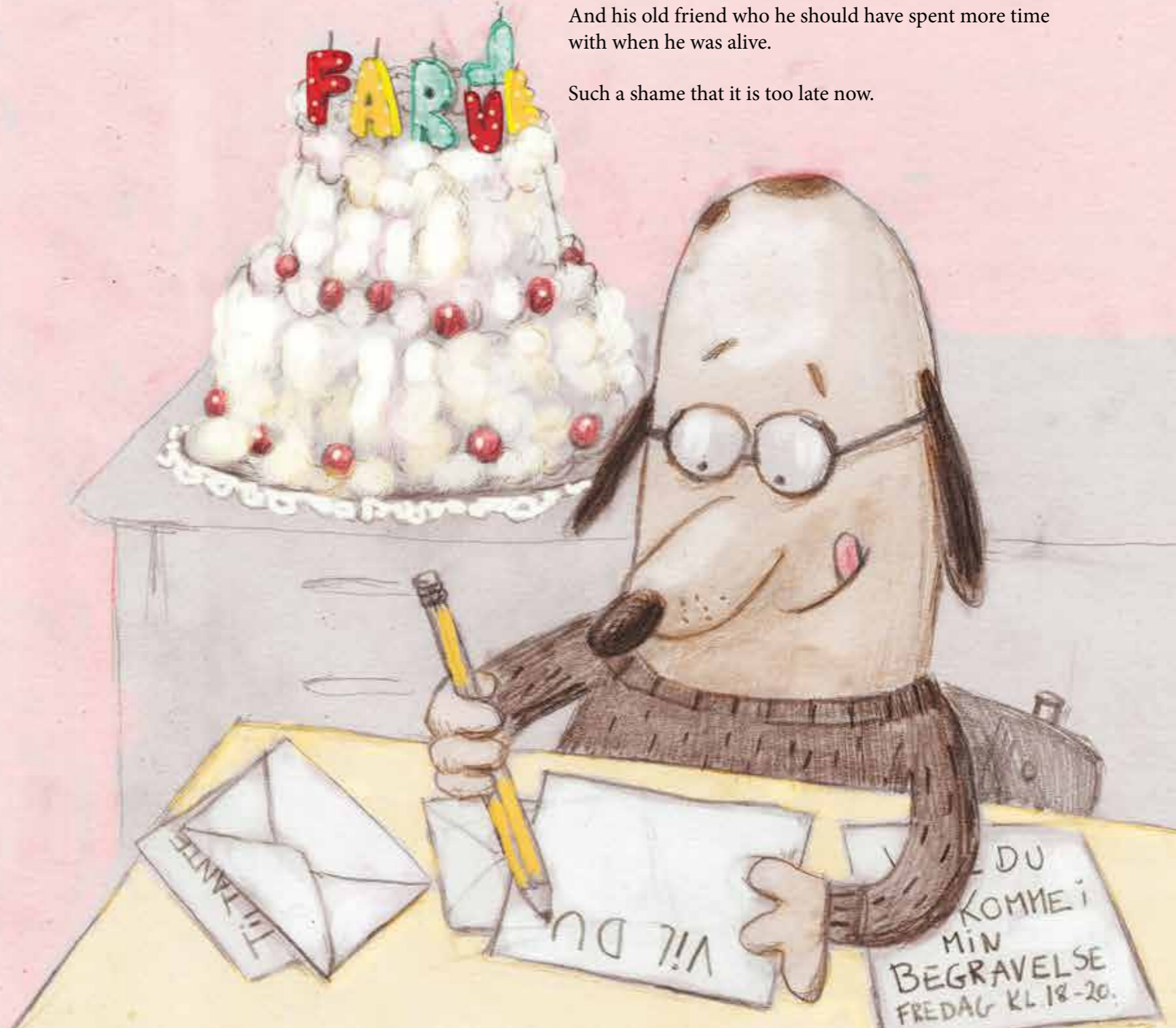


Of course, Ulf thinks. I have to have a funeral. Then everyone will notice that I am no longer there.



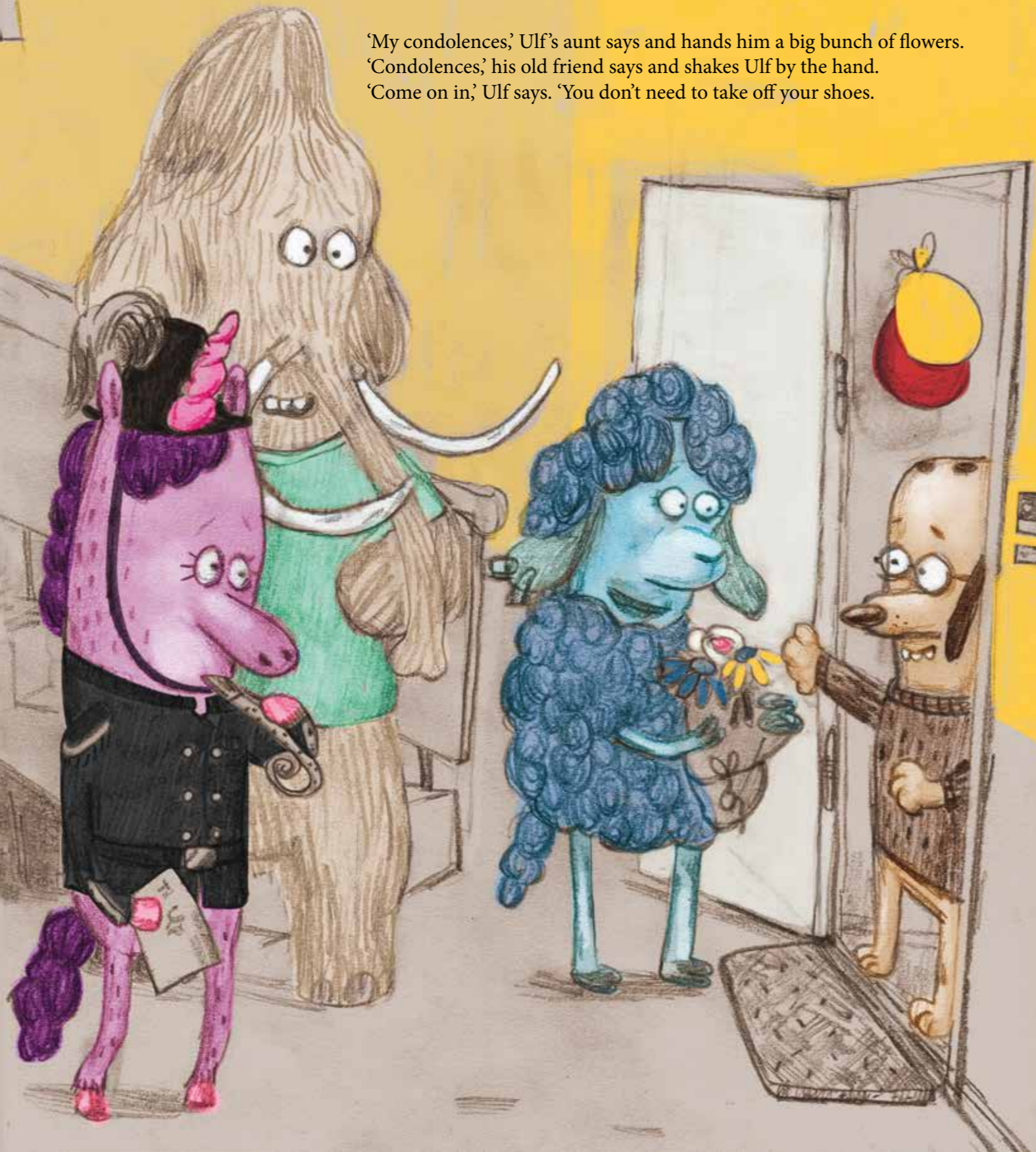
Ulf makes a big cream cake. He writes invitations. He busies about with butterflies in his tummy. He is looking forward to it. He thinks about his kind aunt. And his old friend who he should have spent more time with when he was alive.

Such a shame that it is too late now.

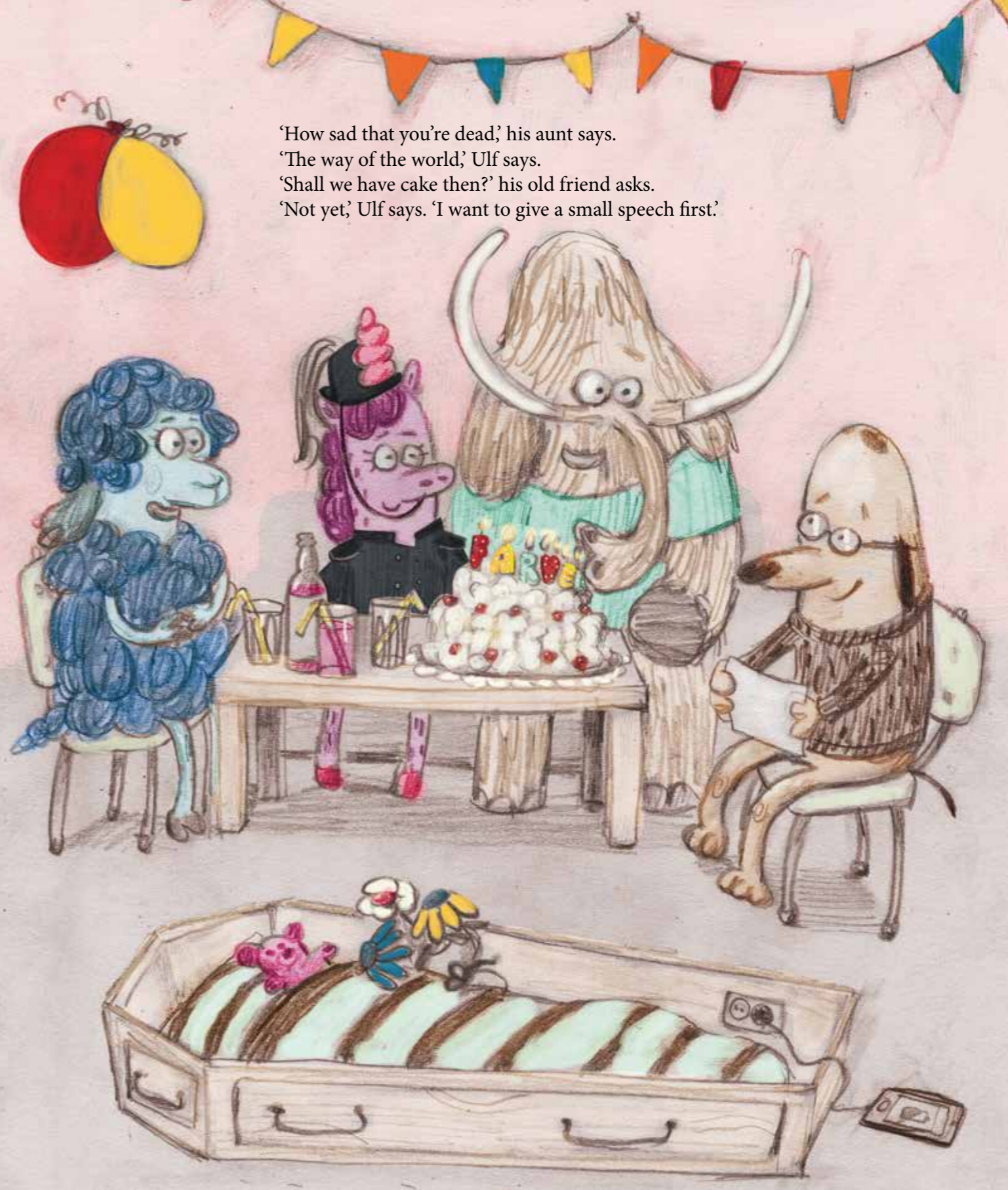




'My condolences,' Ulf's aunt says and hands him a big bunch of flowers.  
'Condolences,' his old friend says and shakes Ulf by the hand.  
'Come on in,' Ulf says. 'You don't need to take off your shoes.'



'How sad that you're dead,' his aunt says.  
'The way of the world,' Ulf says.  
'Shall we have cake then?' his old friend asks.  
'Not yet,' Ulf says. 'I want to give a small speech first.'





Ulf stands up.  
'Farwell, dear friends and family,' he says, very formally.  
His aunt sobs and the guard takes off his hat.  
His old friend sheds a polite tear.  
'Can we have the cake now?' the old friend asks.  
'I guess so,' Ulf says.



While they are eating the cake, there is a knock at the door.  
It's the doctor.  
'I do apologise,' he says. 'I'm afraid there's been a mistake.'





'A mistake?' Ulf says.  
'My stethoscope was broken,' the doctor says.  
'But we're in the middle of my funeral,' Ulf says.  
'That's a shame,' the doctor says.  
'I've baked a cake and everything'  
'Cake, now that sounds good,' the doctor says.







Ulf is happy. It's nice to have people around.  
'What a delicious cake,' the doctor says.  
'What a fine coffin,' the old friend says.  
'What a lovely funeral,' his aunt says. 'We should do this more often.'  
'My condolences, once again,' the old friend says. 'And now, farewell.'

'Wait a minute,' Ulf says. 'Perhaps you could all come back again tomorrow?'  
His old friend hesitates.  
'Could we really?' he says.  
'Well, there's plenty of cake left,' Ulf says.



Ulf lies awake in bed. It was nice to have guests. He is looking forward to have them all back again tomorrow. And he no longer feels unwell. A little sick perhaps. But that is largely because he has eaten too much cake.









