



**Gloria Goose Says Aloha!**

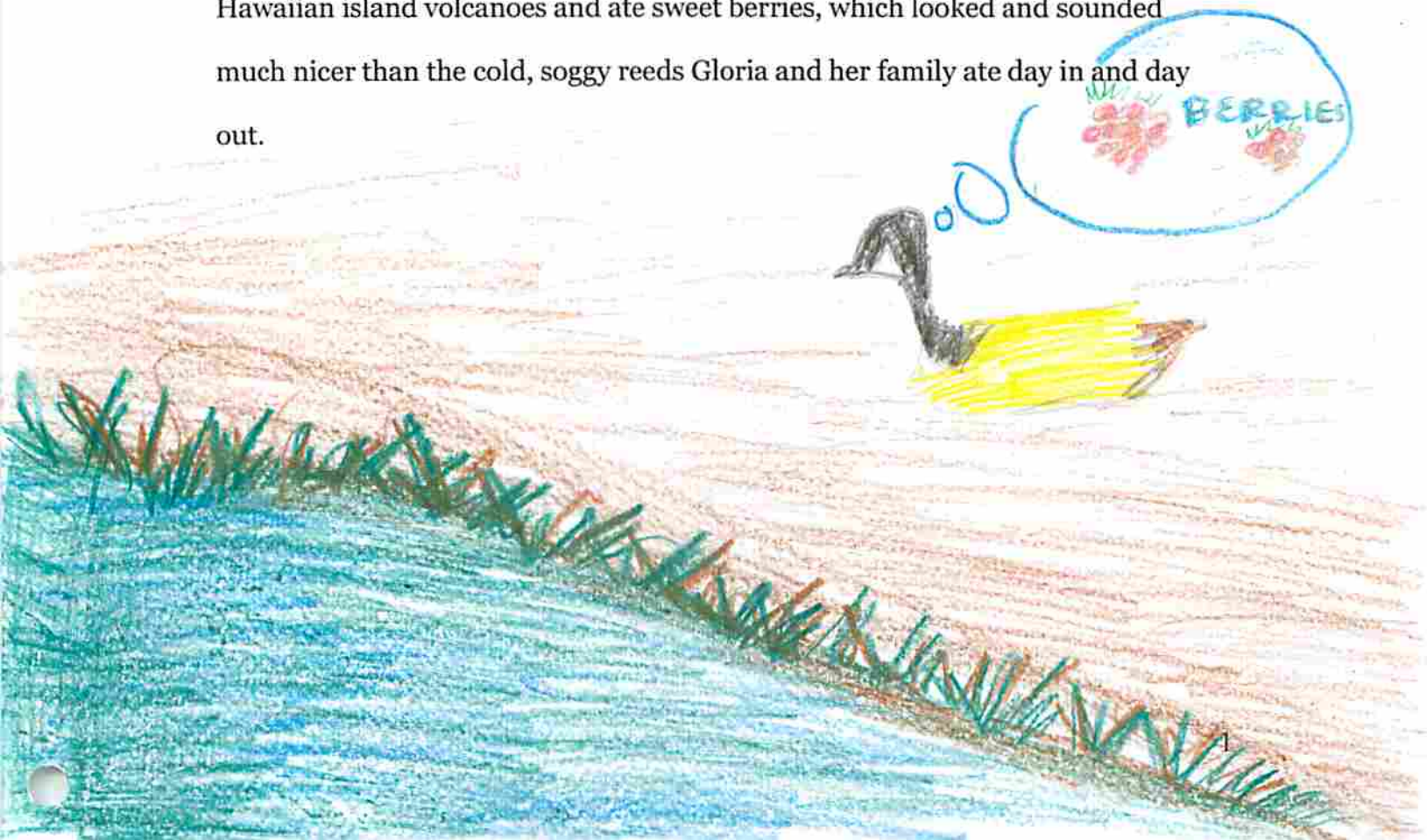
**By Hayley Beckett**



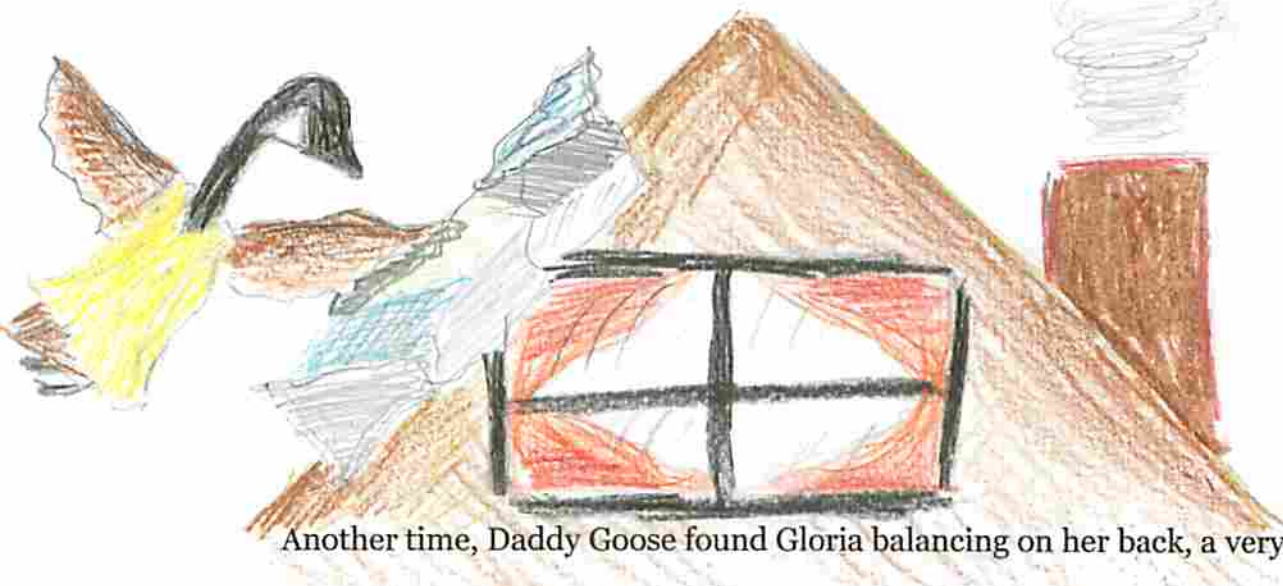
ALOHA!

There was once a village of geese that lived on the banks of a river in a very cold part of Canada. Even during the summer, their feathers would become coated with icy dew in the mornings and chilly fog in the evenings. These geese had initially tried to block the cool winds out of their homes with stacked reeds, but the harsh breeze had knocked down the walls. The geese soon gave up and learned to ignore the cold and go about their business, swimming in the river and going to choir practice to improve their goose calls.

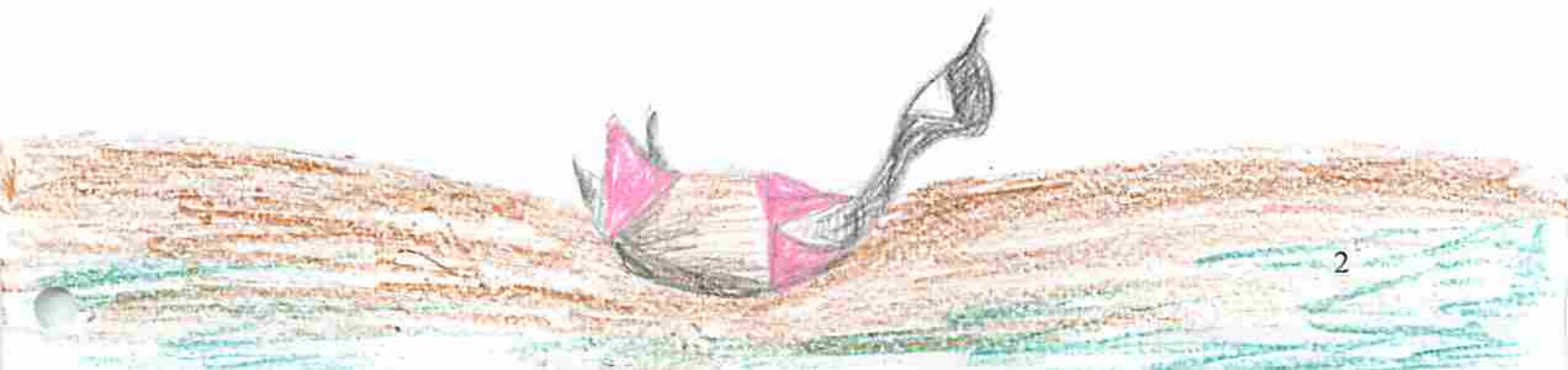
All of the geese learned to ignore the cold except for one, a young gosling named Gloria Goose. Gloria had heard that there was an exotic world far, far away where warmth was celebrated, not ignored—*Hawaii*. Every day after gool (school for geese), Gloria would go straight to the library, which consisted of washed up advertisements and brochures, and research Hawaiian Nene geese. According to one bird-watching expedition brochure, the Nene geese lived on Hawaiian island volcanoes and ate sweet berries, which looked and sounded much nicer than the cold, soggy reeds Gloria and her family ate day in and day out.



Gloria decided that she wanted to incorporate their sunny lifestyle into her own. First, she began to improvise with methods of staying warm. One day, Momma Goose came home from her Migration Planning Committee to find Gloria putting together bits of metal trash she'd found, creating a sort of metal mirror that would trap heat in their home. Gloria, needless to say, had to put all the trash back outside.



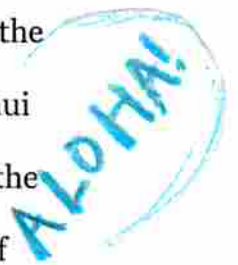
Another time, Daddy Goose found Gloria balancing on her back, a very difficult task for a goose, trying to tan her white stomach feathers. She looked pretty silly.





Gloria would also shoot off Hawaiian Nene goose facts at whoever was around, and spent the majority of her time thinking about Hawaii. Once, while waiting in line to hop in the river for swimming class, she turned to her cousin and said, “Did you know that Hawaiian geese don’t swim in this disgusting green water? They swim in warm, clear ocean waves.” Then she let out a long, angry sigh and rolled her eyes. Her swimming teacher wasn’t too pleased, to say the least. Another day, she was found creating “towels” of leaves on the bank and asking people to come enjoy her Hawaiian Beach Club. Nobody joined the club.

Gloria even taught herself whatever Hawaiian phrases she could learn at the library. “Aloha,” she’d whisper to herself as she walked home at sunset. “A hui hou,” she’d say, instead of goodbye, to her parents when she left for school in the morning. Gloria even asked to be called Gilana, a Hawaiian name, instead of Gloria. “It means ‘Joy,’” she said to the girls in her class when they giggled behind their hands. They didn’t believe that Hawaii really existed. Nobody did.



Gloria often overheard her parents discussing her when they thought she was sleeping.

“But sweetie,” her mother would whisper, “she doesn’t have any friends. All she does is traipse around talking about those Nude Hawaiian geese, or whatever they’re called. It’s humiliating.”

“It’s just a phase. All she wants is attention,” her father would say.

Gloria would plug her ears, roll her eyes, and daydream about eating berries on sunny Hawaiian volcanoes.

Finally, an announcement came from the mayor goose that it was time to migrate south for the winter. The geese took off in clumps, flying together through the wind currents. As her flock took off, Gloria looked down at their little town, smiling. She was finally going to be warm!

They flew together, calling "Left! Right! Left! Right!" and swooping above and below clouds.

Unfortunately, the chief of flying, Mr. G, dropped his compass several miles into the trip. He was so embarrassed that he didn't tell anyone, instead guiding the trip himself. He began to fly slightly westward, then more so, and then more so, until all the geese were extremely off course. They weren't flying south at all.

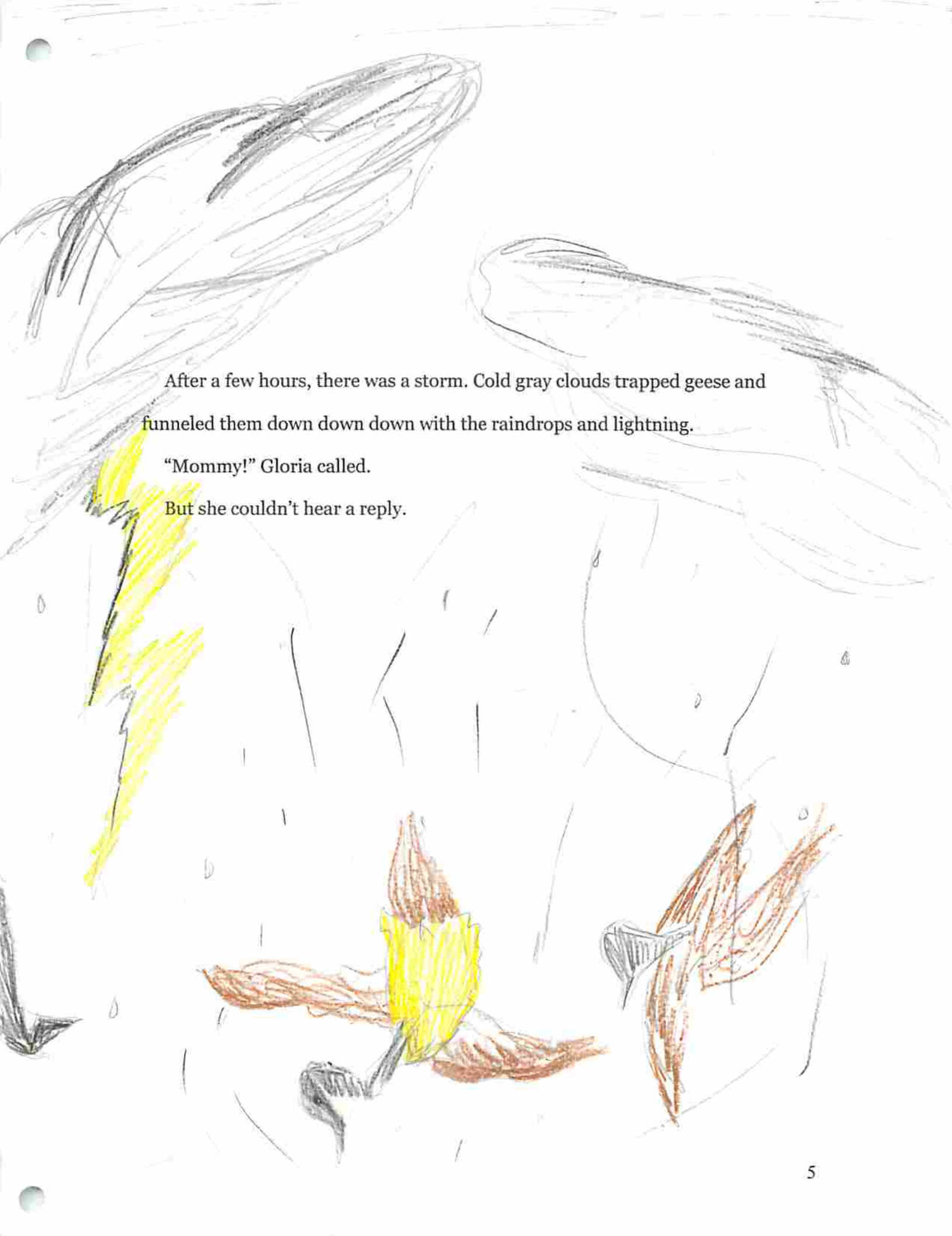
Eventually, they all realized they were in the wrong wind current.

"Where's land?" one goose called.

"All I see is ocean!" another bellowed.

And he was right. They were trapped in the ocean breeze far from shore and there was no way to turn back.





After a few hours, there was a storm. Cold gray clouds trapped geese and funneled them down down down with the raindrops and lightning.

“Mommy!” Gloria called.

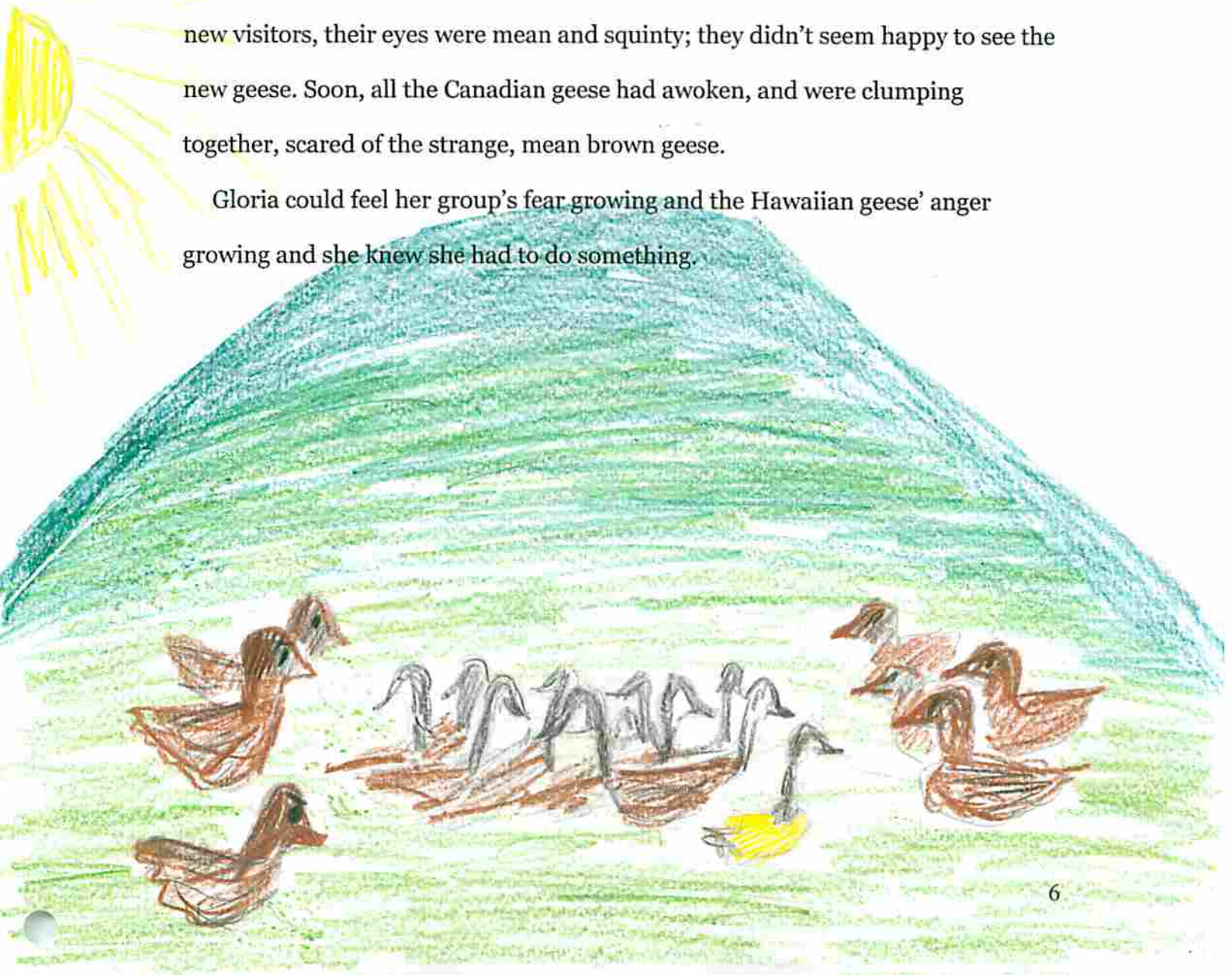
But she couldn’t hear a reply.

Gloria awoke to warmth. Her body felt like it was full of sunshine, from her feathers to her heart. She opened her eyes and glanced around. Her geese family and friends were all lying around her, snoring loudly. *Phew*, she thought to herself, *they're all safe*.

They were on a green volcano, surrounded by a ring of white sandy beach, leading to clear blue waves. The sun shone down, and there wasn't a cloud in the sky. Were they in...Hawaii?

Suddenly, Gloria noticed a large group of brown geese circling their group. They looked like the Nene geese from the pictures! But instead of smiling at their new visitors, their eyes were mean and squinty; they didn't seem happy to see the new geese. Soon, all the Canadian geese had awoken, and were clumping together, scared of the strange, mean brown geese.

Gloria could feel her group's fear growing and the Hawaiian geese' anger growing and she knew she had to do something.



She stepped forward, reached out a wing to shake with a large brown goose, and said confidently, "Aloha."

The goose stared at her and then slowly smiled a wide grin. "Aloha," he said. "E komo mai. Welcome."

Suddenly all of the brown geese relaxed and stepped forward towards their visitors, calling out "Aloha" and giving them big hugs.

"You are part of the family now. Welcome to Hawaii," said one of the Hawaiian geese.

So the Canadian geese began to join in with Hawaiian goose activities. They learned to find the ripest berries, to swim in the warm ocean, to lay on the sand or the volcano and just enjoy the sunlight and the company of their friends. And they all thanked Gloria for bringing the two groups together with her knowledge of Hawaiian geese and their language and culture. She would just smile and close her eyes, soaking up the warmth of their new home.



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