

# Skuggs

The Patriot Squirrel  
who Helped Save America

Written by  
Stephen A. Lawrence

Illustrations by  
Sophie Cayless

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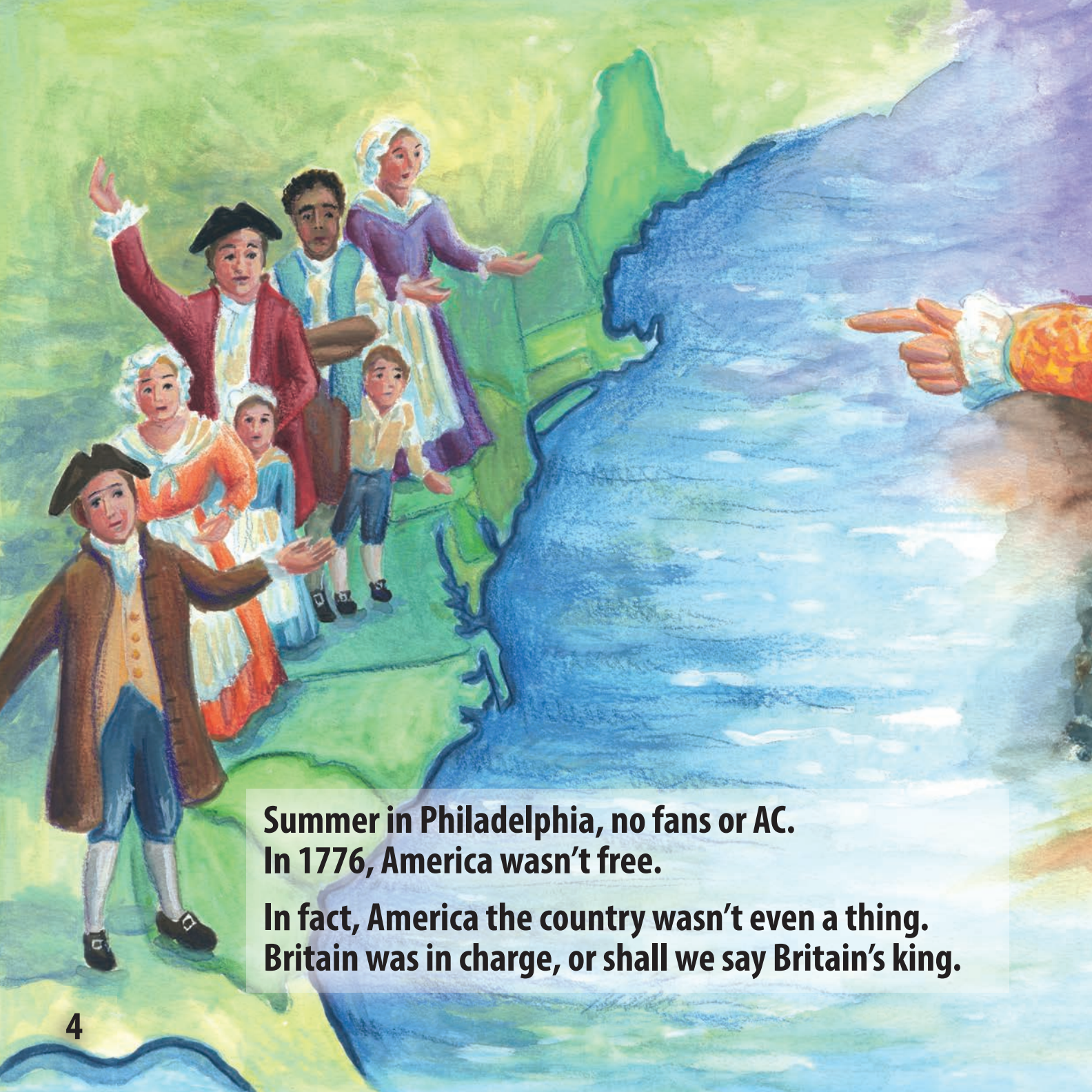


**Meet Skuggs the Squirrel, an important little guy.  
Without him there would be no Fourth of July.**

**Well, it would exist, but without all the fun.  
No fireworks or barbecues or parades in the sun.**

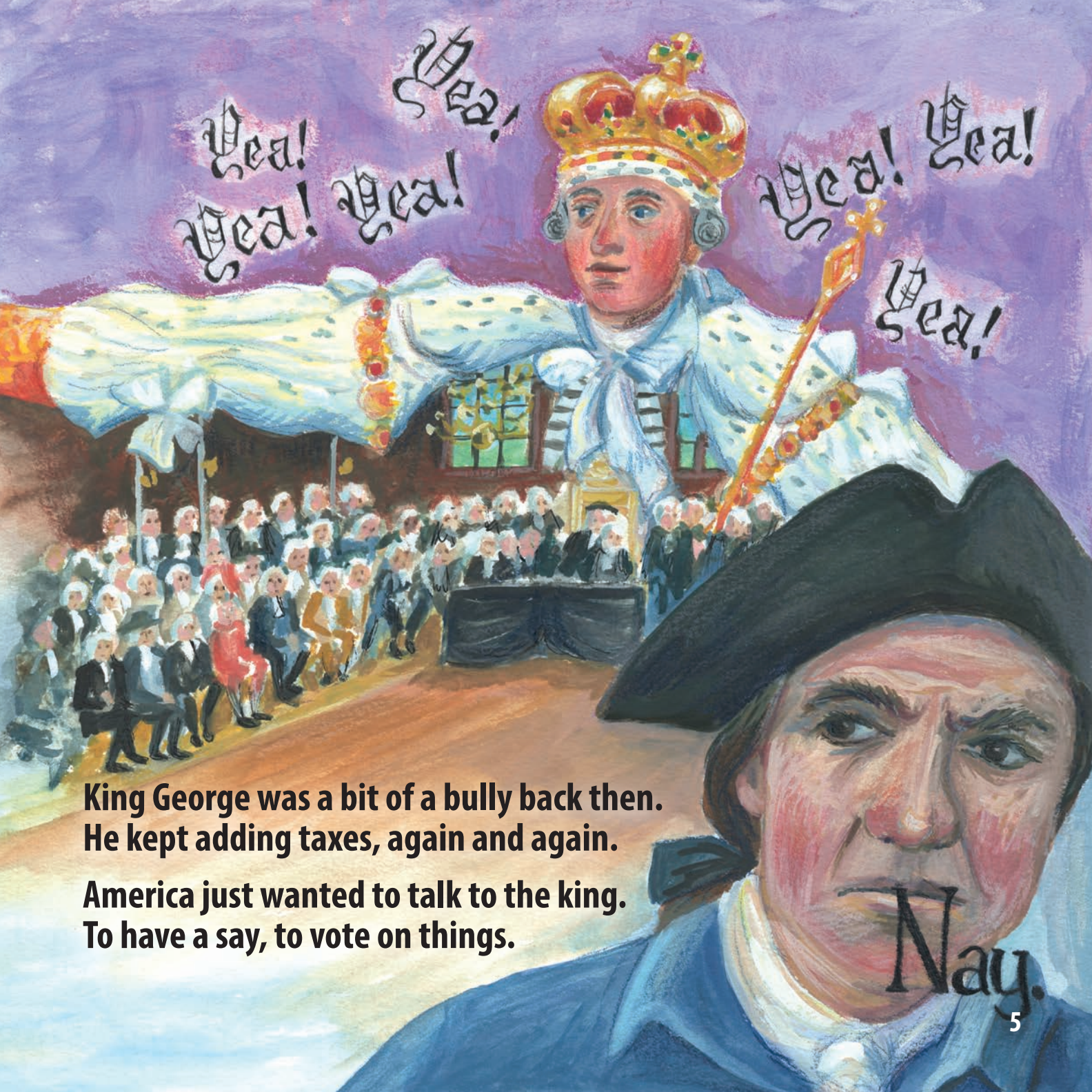
A squirrel character with a large, bushy brown tail is standing on a rooftop. The squirrel is wearing a red jacket with white trim and a black hat. It has its arms outstretched, looking towards a town below. The town is illuminated by streetlights and building lights, with a large red building visible. The sky is dark blue, filled with large, bright yellow and orange fireworks exploding. The overall style is painterly and vibrant.

**Why is this squirrel important, you ask?  
Because saving the country was no simple task.**



**Summer in Philadelphia, no fans or AC.  
In 1776, America wasn't free.**

**In fact, America the country wasn't even a thing.  
Britain was in charge, or shall we say Britain's king.**



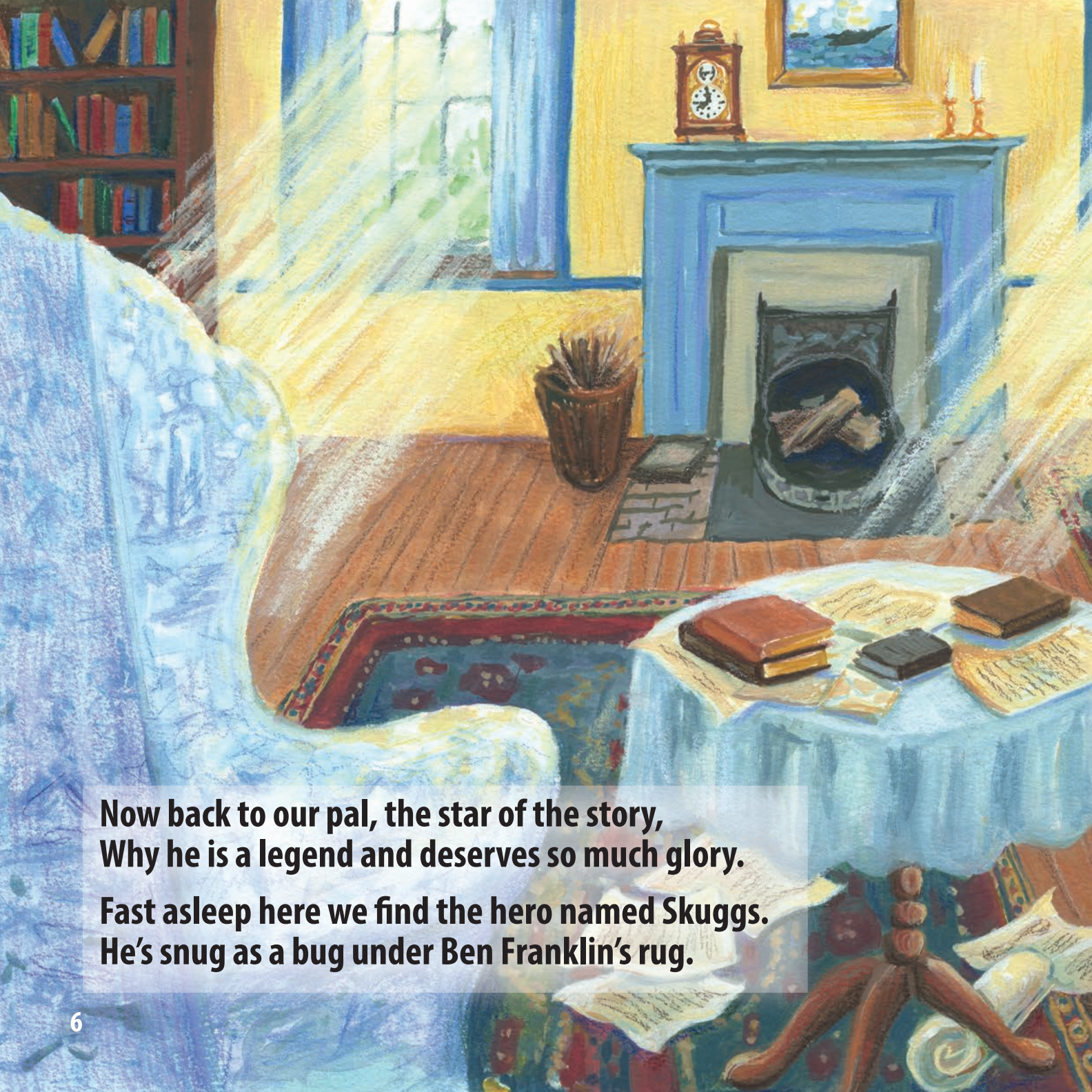
Yea!  
Yea! Yea!

Yea! Yea!  
Yea!

**King George was a bit of a bully back then.  
He kept adding taxes, again and again.**

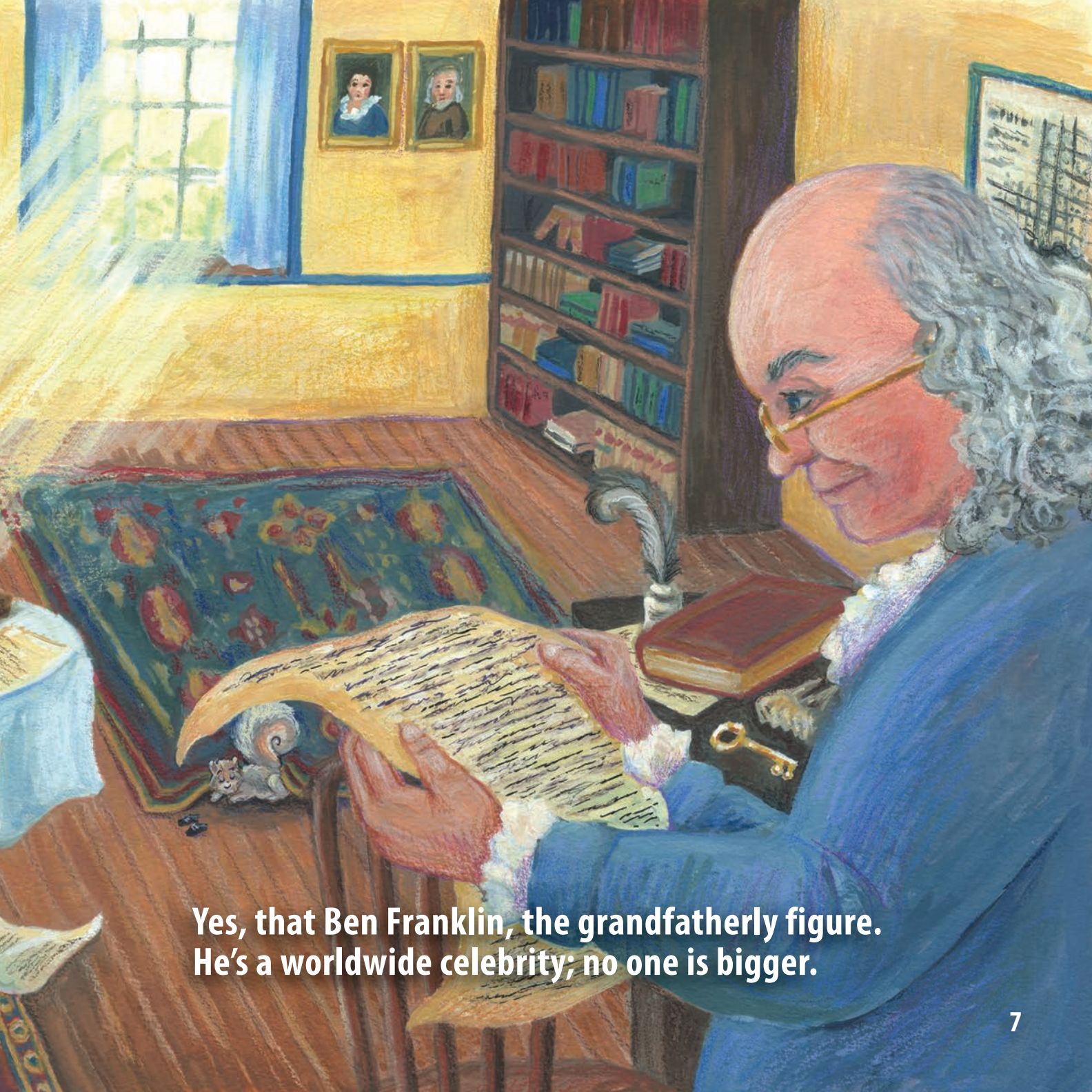
**America just wanted to talk to the king.  
To have a say, to vote on things.**

**Nay.**

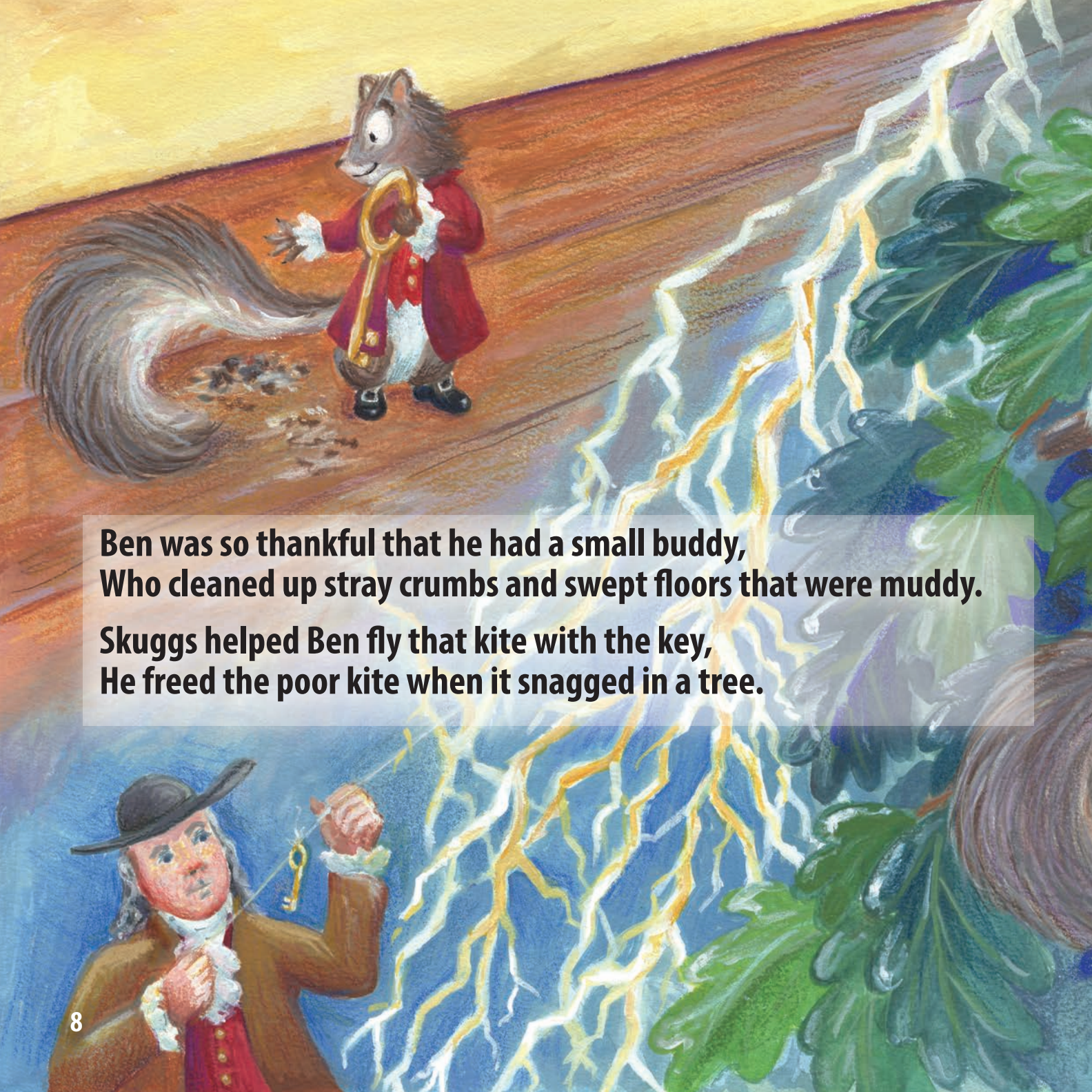


**Now back to our pal, the star of the story,  
Why he is a legend and deserves so much glory.  
Fast asleep here we find the hero named Skuggs.  
He's snug as a bug under Ben Franklin's rug.**



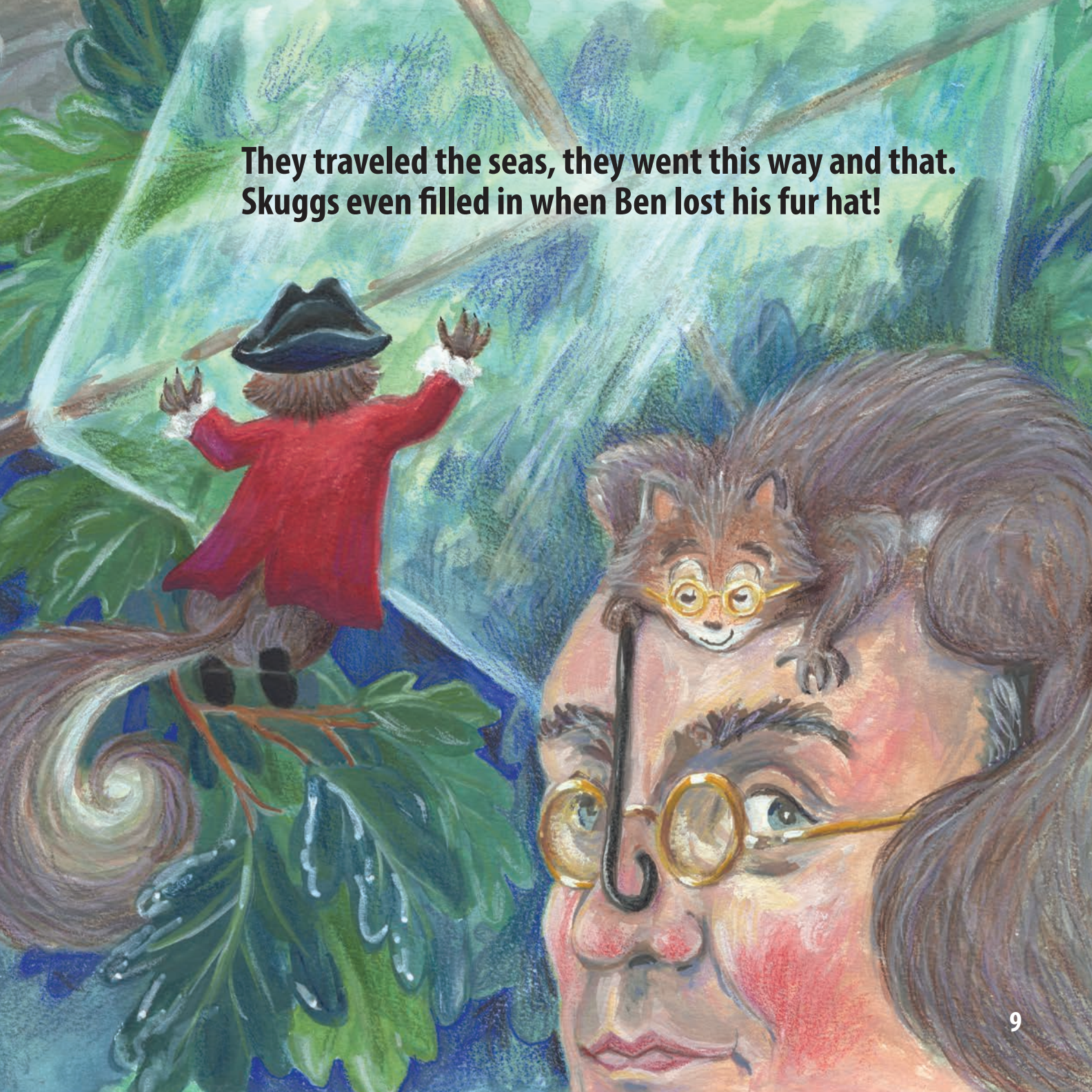


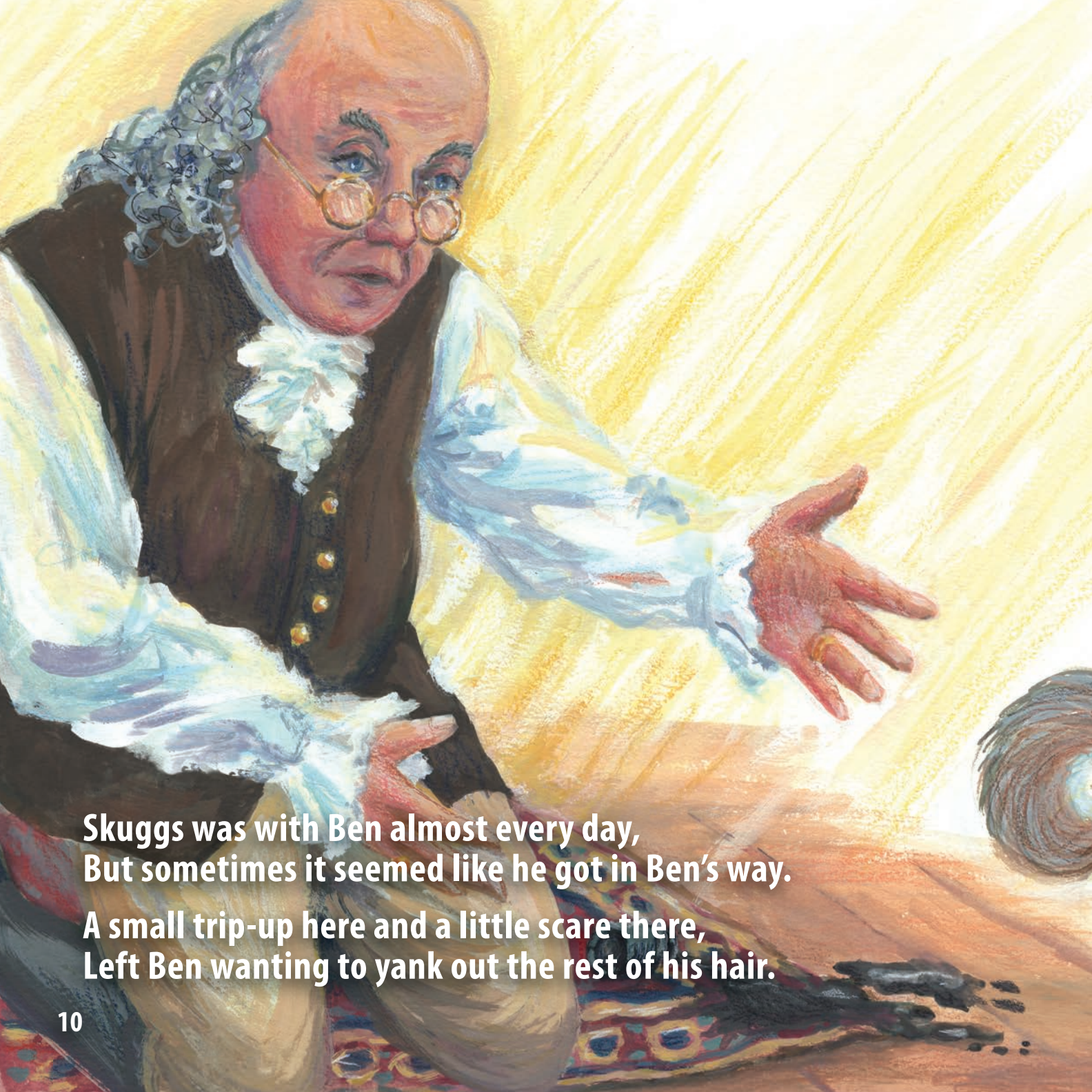
**Yes, that Ben Franklin, the grandfatherly figure.  
He's a worldwide celebrity; no one is bigger.**



**Ben was so thankful that he had a small buddy,  
Who cleaned up stray crumbs and swept floors that were muddy.  
Skuggs helped Ben fly that kite with the key,  
He freed the poor kite when it snagged in a tree.**

**They traveled the seas, they went this way and that.  
Skuggs even filled in when Ben lost his fur hat!**





**Skuggs was with Ben almost every day,  
But sometimes it seemed like he got in Ben's way.**

**A small trip-up here and a little scare there,  
Left Ben wanting to yank out the rest of his hair.**



**This morning Ben left without Skuggs even knowing.  
He forgot to tell Skuggs where he was going.**

**Skuggs dashed out the door and thought, "What a great  
day! Mr. Franklin's right there! He's not far away!"**

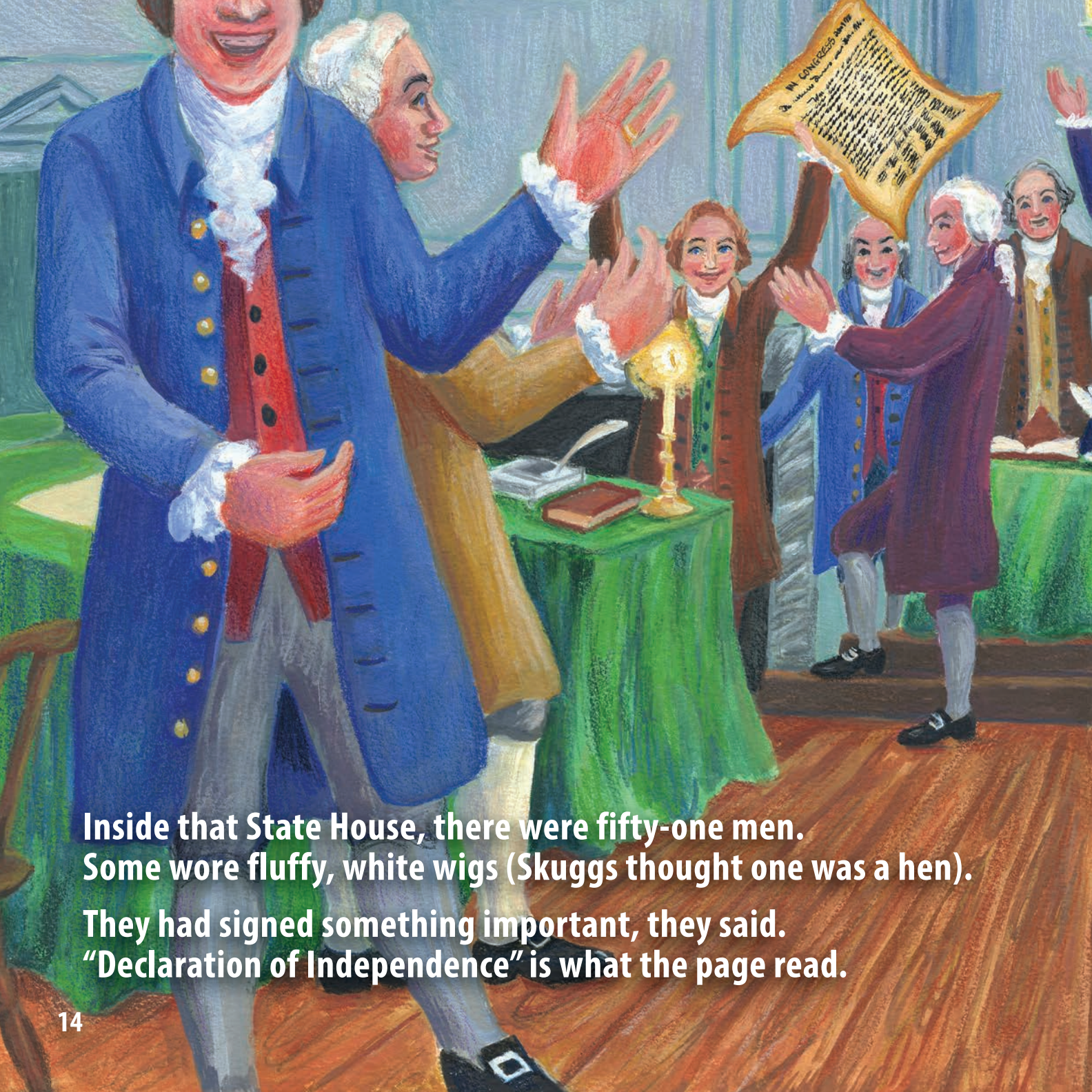
**The small squirrel scampered and caught Ben at last.  
He thought, "Good thing Mr. Franklin isn't too fast!"**



**They went to a building that stretched very high,  
With a bell in a tower that reached to the sky.**

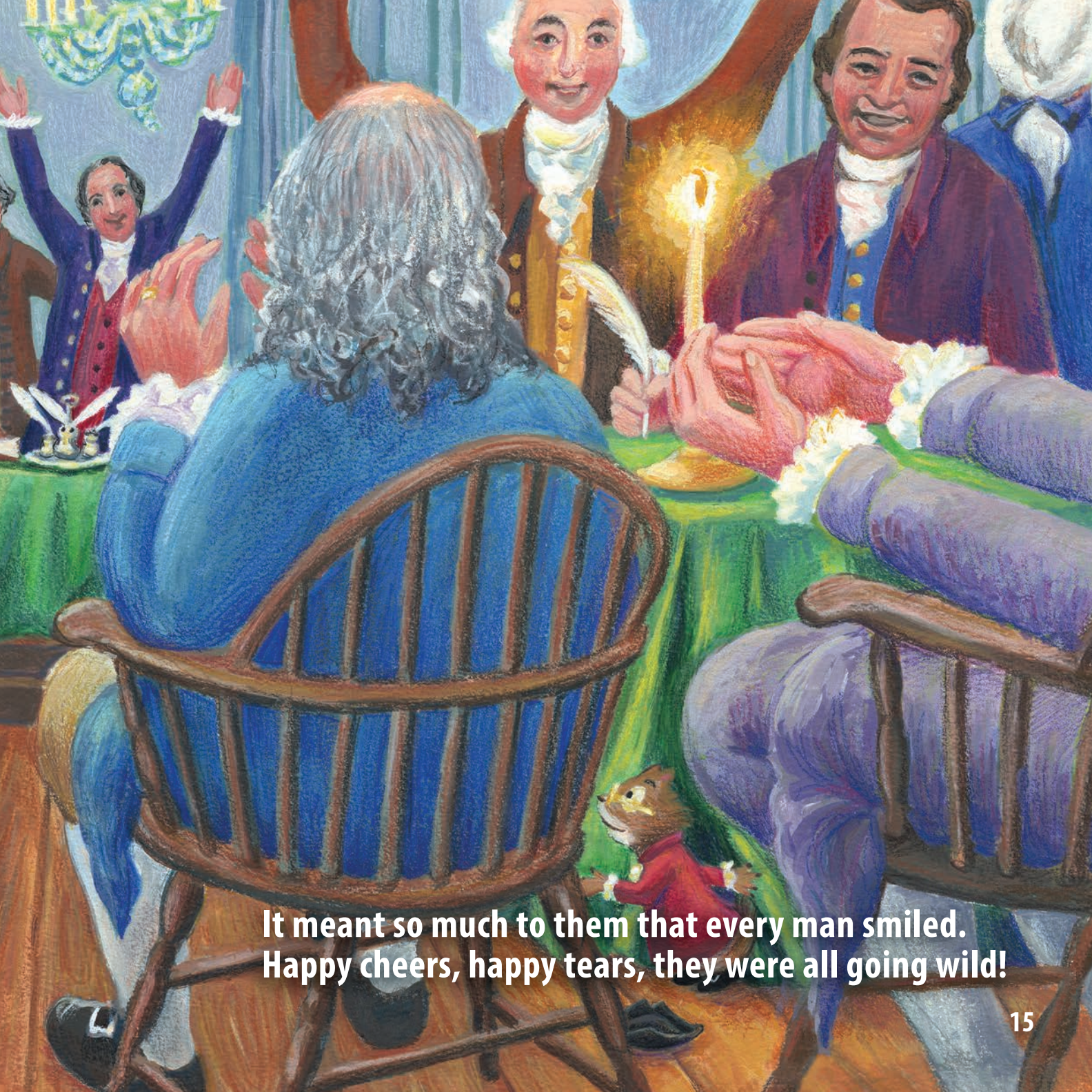






**Inside that State House, there were fifty-one men. Some wore fluffy, white wigs (Skuggs thought one was a hen). They had signed something important, they said. "Declaration of Independence" is what the page read.**





**It meant so much to them that every man smiled.  
Happy cheers, happy tears, they were all going wild!**

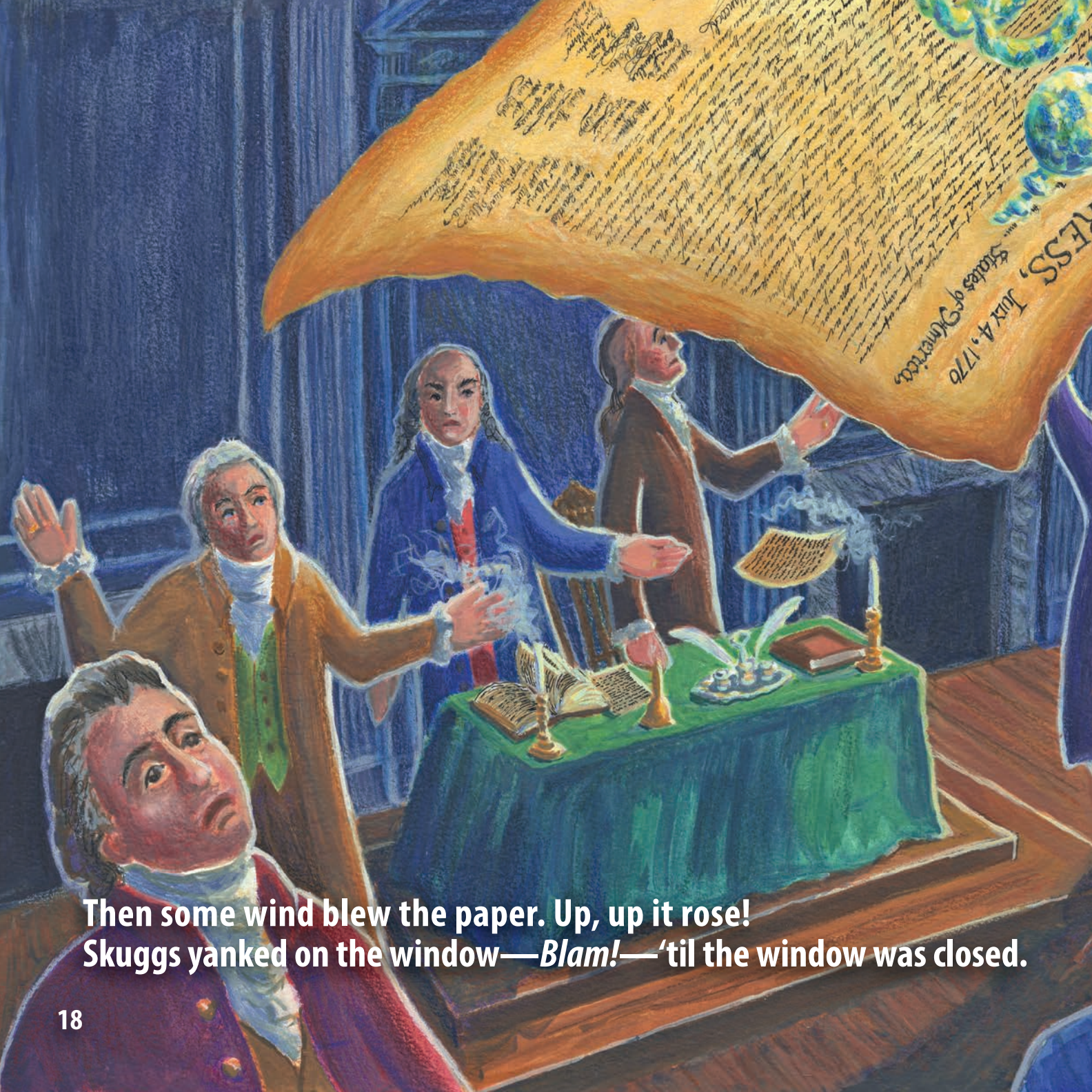


They waved it like a flag, they were so excited,  
But a chandelier candle was sure to ignite it.

Skuggs jumped on Ben's head, then jumped one more time.  
*Fwoosh!* He blew out the candle. The paper was fine!

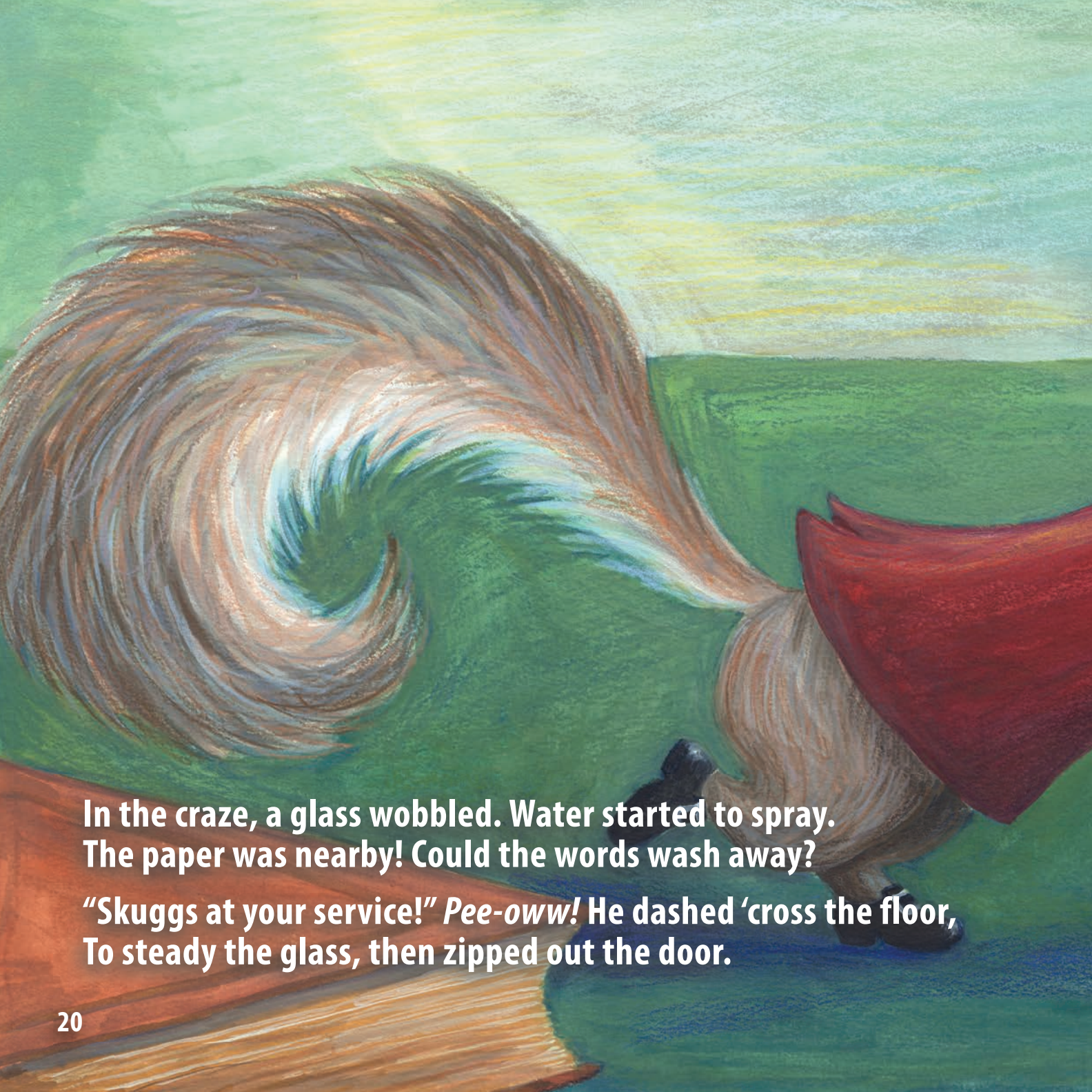
What a close call! Good thing Skuggs was there,  
No other squirrel can even compare.





Then some wind blew the paper. Up, up it rose!  
Skuggs yanked on the window—*Blam!*—’til the window was closed.






In the craze, a glass wobbled. Water started to spray.  
The paper was nearby! Could the words wash away?

**“Skuggs at your service!” *Pee-oww!* He dashed ‘cross the floor,  
To steady the glass, then zipped out the door.**



**Ben followed Skuggs out, still rubbing his head.  
“Thanks, little guy,” was all that he said.**



**We all should be thankful for the effort Skuggs gave.  
The Declaration of Independence was a great paper to save.  
Now it's naptime again for the hero named Skuggs.  
He's snug as a bug under Ben Franklin's rug.**





# HearYe, HearYe!

The following is a timeline of events surrounding the adoption and signing of the Declaration of Independence:

- On June 7, 1776, a resolution calling for independence from Great Britain was put forth to the Continental Congress, then meeting in the Pennsylvania Statehouse (Independence Hall).
- A committee of five was chosen to “prepare” a declaration of independence on June 11, 1776. The committee members were Thomas Jefferson of Virginia, Robert Livingston of New York, Roger Sherman of Connecticut, John Adams of Massachusetts, and of course, Pennsylvania’s own Benjamin Franklin.
- The committee presented their draft of the Declaration to the Continental Congress on June 28, 1776.
- Congress debated the June 7 resolution calling for independence on July 1 and passed it on July 2, 1776.
- After making over 80 changes to the Declaration, Congress approved the final draft on July 4, 1776 and ordered that printed copies be distributed to the 13 states and to the army in the field.
- The first public reading of the Declaration of Independence took place in Philadelphia, behind the Pennsylvania State House on July 8, 1776.
- The Continental Congress ordered that an official copy of the Declaration of Independence be engrossed on parchment on July 19, 1776.
- The signing ceremony for the engrossed copy of the Declaration of Independence took place on August 2, 1776.
- Though there were 56 signers of the Declaration of Independence, as many as 51 signed on August 2. The rest signed later.
- It is believed that the last person to sign the Declaration was Thomas McKean of Delaware, signing the document possibly as late as 1781.
- According to Thomas Jefferson’s weather log, it did not rain on August 2, 1776.

Thanks to the staff at Independence National Historical Park, Philadelphia, PA.

For more information about Independence NHP or our national parks, visit [www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov)

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**Charmingly illustrated, this is the delightful tale of Skuggs,  
a mischievous Squirrel who goes on adventures with  
Ben Franklin and helps save the Declaration of Independence!**



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