



“Think what we’ve done,”
said Poodle. “We’ve traversed
a prodigious plane of sand dunes.

It would take Sidney days
to cross that vast space.
We’ve traveled over the desert,
across the sand, under Polaris,
into the wind, past the rock,
down the dune, and beside the turtle.”

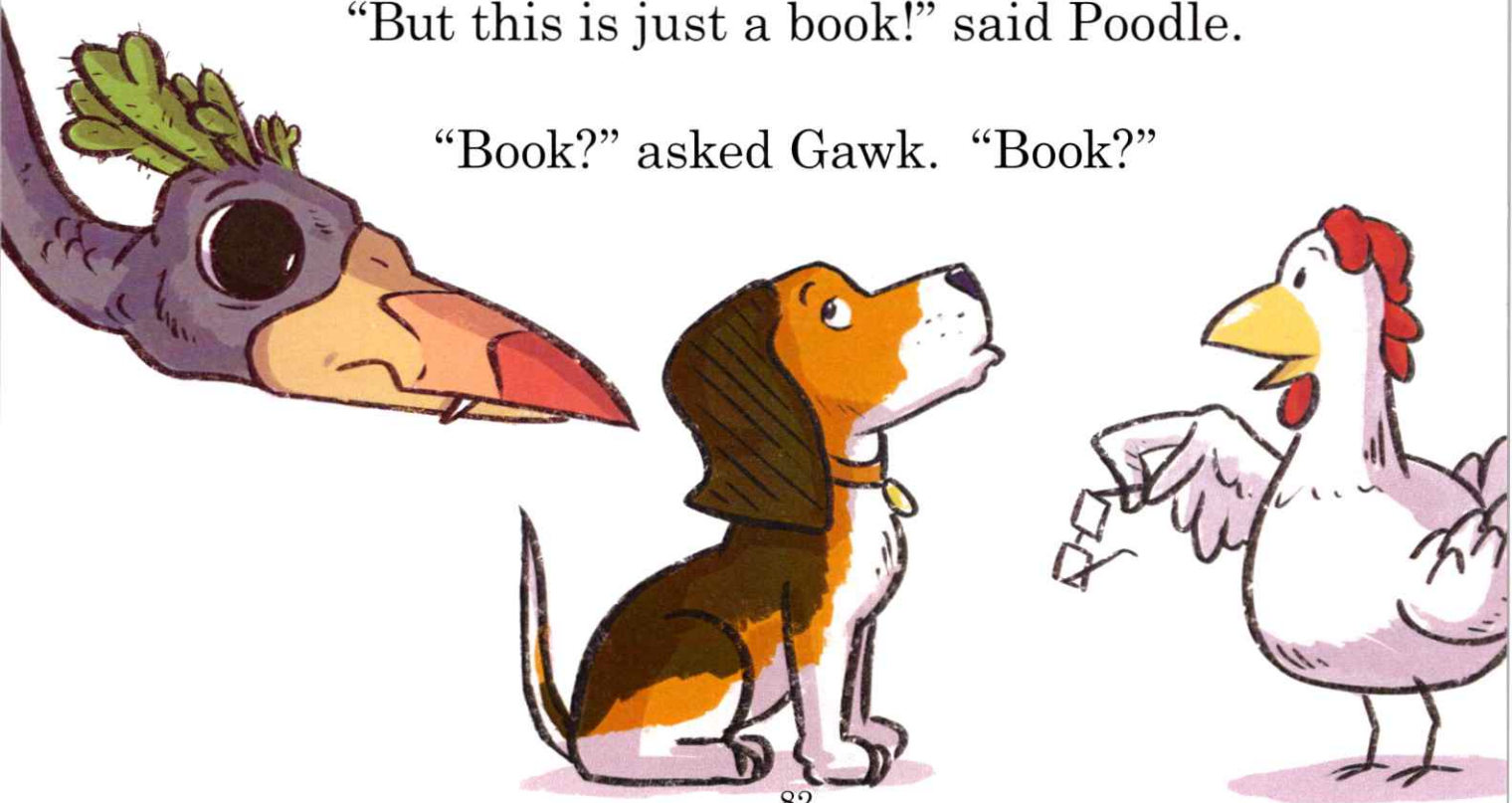
“Did we hurdle a turtle?” asked What?
“I don’t remember a turtle.”

“What?, it’s just an example,” said Poodle.

“But there was no turtle,” insisted What?.

“But this is just a book!” said Poodle.

“Book?” asked Gawk. “Book?”



“I’ll write him a turtle,” said the author,
his voice coming from somewhere.

“I’ll go back a chapter
and write What? a turtle.”

“Please,” said Poodle,
“you’re not a character.
You’re not allowed to talk.”

The author was only trying to help.

“But there was no turtle!” said What?.

Poodle looked at What?.
“Pffrrgrr,” he thought, but he didn’t say it.
“Let’s move on,” he said.

