

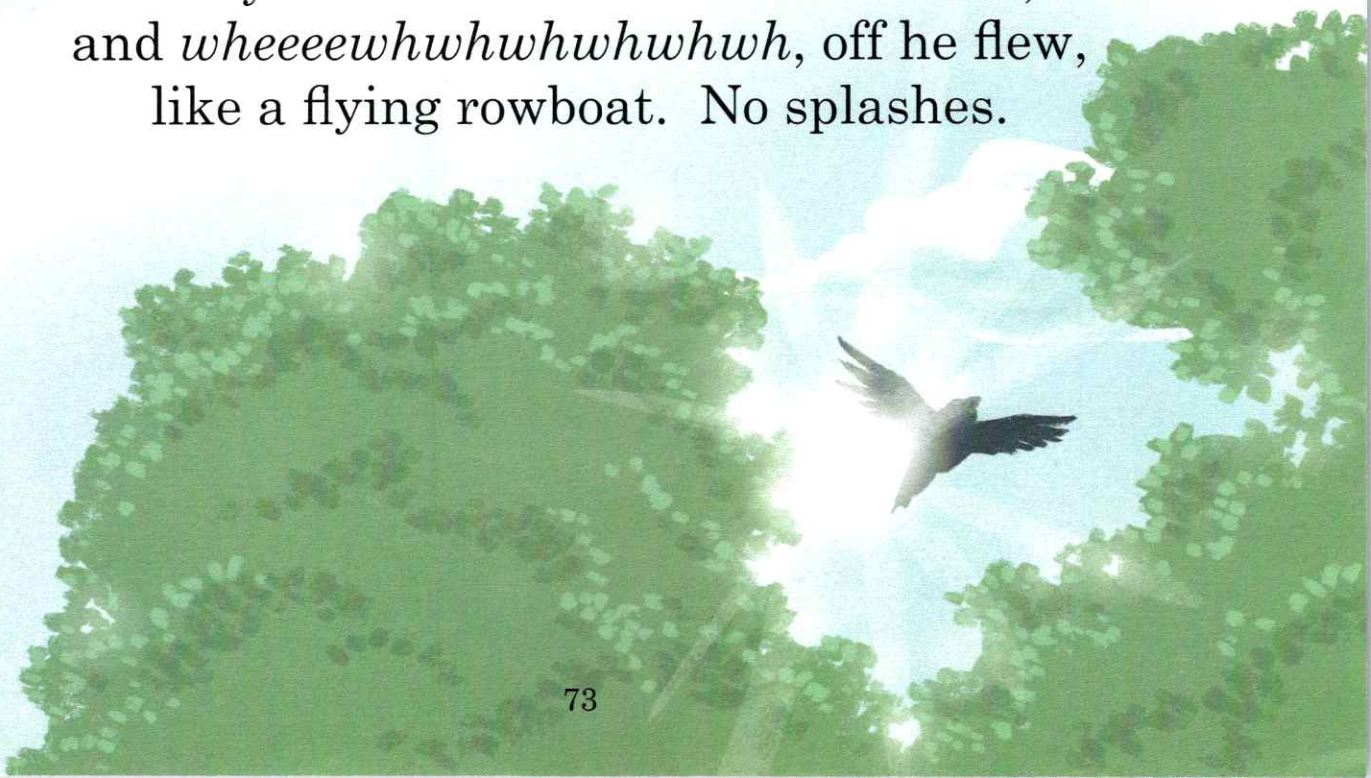
“Look,” Emily said, “I can appear and offer this bird—my imagined bird—a crumb. What do you think he will do?”

“Eat the crumbbrk,” said Burgull.

“No,” Emily said.
“I made him out of words—he’s a word-bird—
but his eyes look like frightened beads—
and he will unroll his wings and fly away,
like a flying rowboat. His wings will be his oars,
and they will be plashless as he flies.
Plashless means splashless.”

“Try it,” said Poodle. “I think he’ll stay and eat the crumb. Word-birds eat word-worms, and he’ll eat the crumb, too.”

Emily offered the word-bird a crumb,
and *wheeeewhwhwhwhwhwh*, off he flew,
like a flying rowboat. No splashes.





Emily still held the crumb.

“See?” she said.

“He’s an Emily-bird, a part of my mind.
He does what I think.”

“May I ask you something?” asked Poodle.

Emily looked at him.

“Didn’t you live a long time ago?”
Poodle asked.

“Well,” she said, “yes and no. Now I live
in my words. I’m still here in my words.
You can find me here. Forever.
The poem *is* my mind.”



Poodle had never thought about
living forever in poems.
What an adventure this was!
He could get used to these portals.

“You know, Emily,” said Poodle,
“we got here through a portal of
Robert Frost’s poem about a road
that diverged, and we chose the road
less traveled by, and that choice
led us to you and your garden.
It has made all the difference,
as Robert said.
I love this garden.”

