

Pembral Forgets

written by Steve Tubbs
illustrated by Sue Clancy





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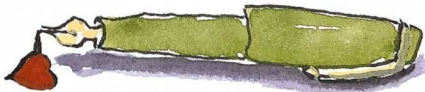


written by Steve Tubbs
illustrated by Sue Clancy

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this book was designed and published in
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Dedicated to my wife, Linda Tubbs,
my dear departed mother, Maxine
Tubbs and to all absent-minded kids
everywhere. - Steve



Dedicated to Judy, to Pearson, Jane,
to Tobin and to my adopted mother
Penny Hoke and all of her children
and grandchildren - Sue



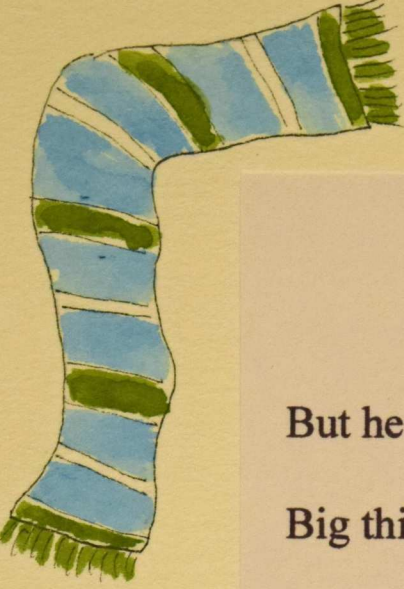
Pembral Forgets

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Pembral forgets.

Pembral was a good boy.

But he was always forgetting things.

Big things, small things, important

things, little things. It didn't

matter—he'd forget something,

whatever it was, at one time or

another. His mother was a patient

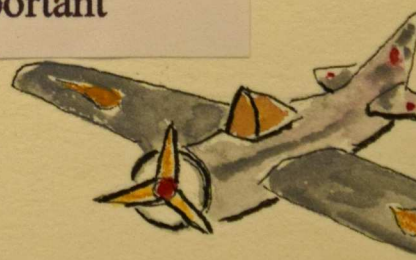




woman, which was a good thing.

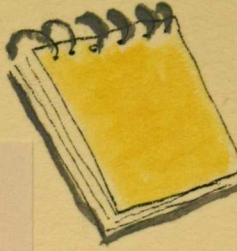

Pembral regularly tested her

patience. She learned early on to


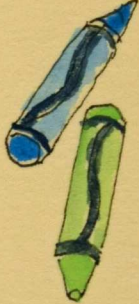
remind him of everything: big

things, small things, important








things, even the little things. Once in a while the little things that didn't seem important at the time became more important later.

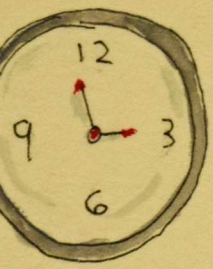


Sometimes she thought that Pembral forgot things on purpose—things like washing behind his ears; or picking up his toys; or feeding the dog. It bothered her to remind him of these sorts of things. However, for the most part, she knew that his mind just wandered off and it was her job to bring it back—to pay

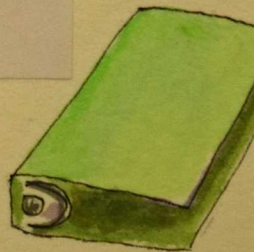
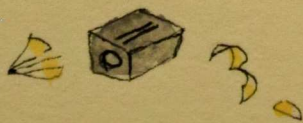
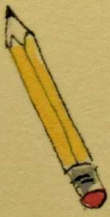






attention and think for a moment about where he was, and what he was about to do and why he was doing it.



“For Pete’s sake, Pembral”, she’d often exclaim when he’d forgotten something. Pembral was never really certain who Pete was, or why Pete’s name was called upon. But he knew that if he had done something, or more likely, not done something, he was in trouble whenever Pete’s name was called














out. And sometimes she'd complain,
"Pembral, I swear, you'd forget your
head if it wasn't connected to your
shoulders!"





Fall weather had arrived.




The air was cool and crisp,
especially in the morning, even if the
skies were brilliant blue and the sun
was shining brightly. The light of
the morning made wisps of fog come
up from the ponds, and frost on the
grass sparkled before it melted under
the sun's steady gaze. The trees



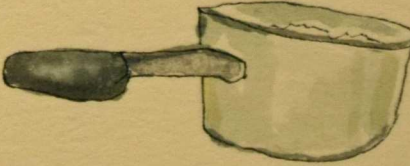







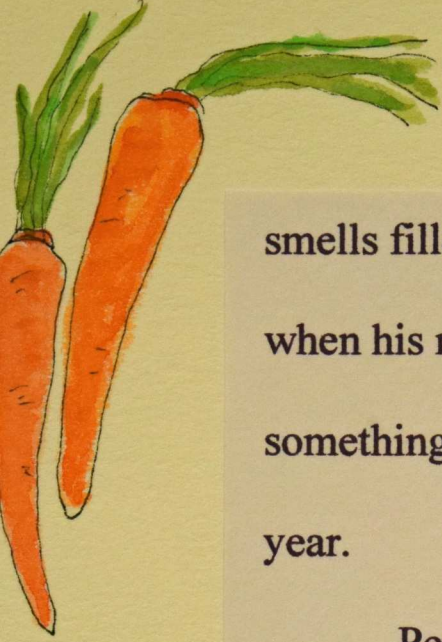
were swapping their summer greens
for coats of brilliant yellow, orange
and red.



This was a time when
Pembral's mother cooked things that
smelled and tasted really good. He
usually never really paid much
attention to his food, and sometimes
had to be told not to 'play' with it at
the table. But it seemed like he was
just hungrier in the fall or something,
and he liked how the windows
steamed up and how the kitchen

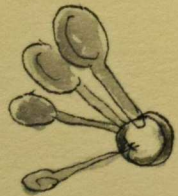


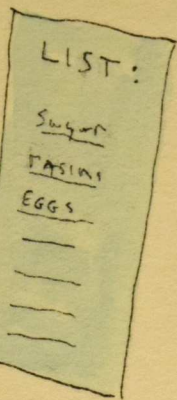




smells filled up the whole house when his mother was cooking up something good at that time of the year.

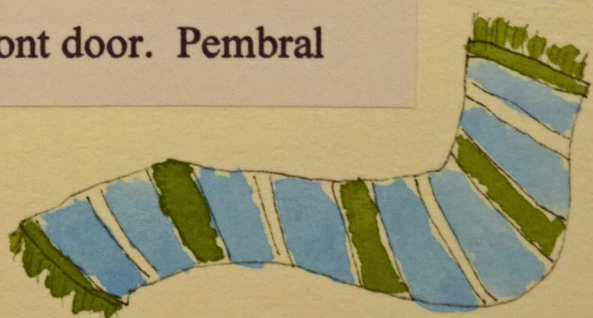
Pembral's mother was baking something special that day: a carrot cake. It was one of Pembral's favorites. She said that they needed it for Pembral's school that night. A 'cake walk', she said. But she needed some things from the store, and sent Pembral to get them. "I need eggs, sugar and raisins", she



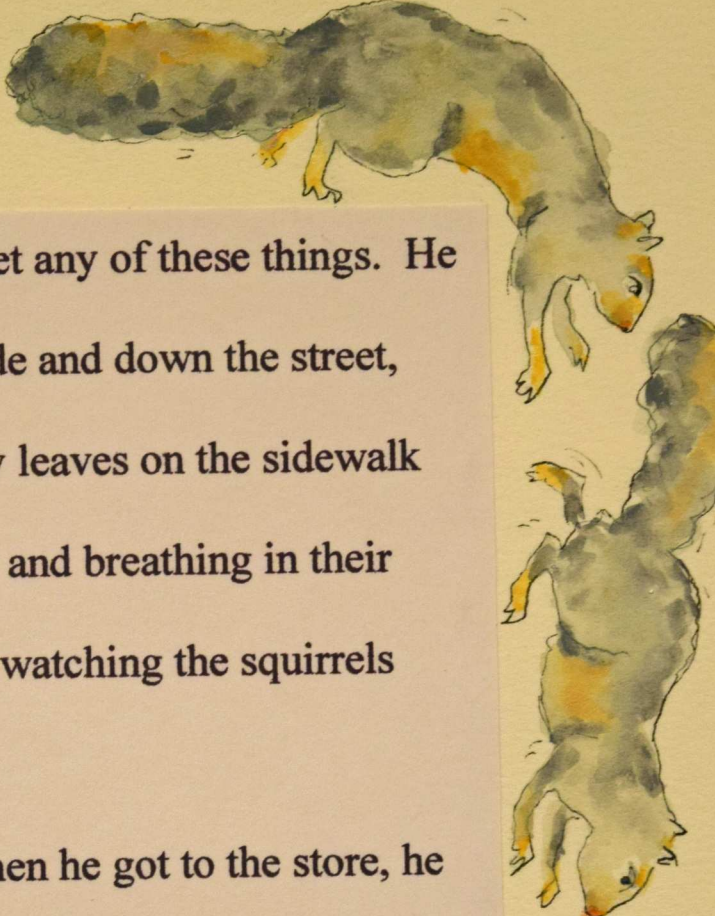


said. She gave him a list so he wouldn't forget. He put it in his pants pocket. "Here's some money", she went on, "Put it in your pocket where you won't lose it."

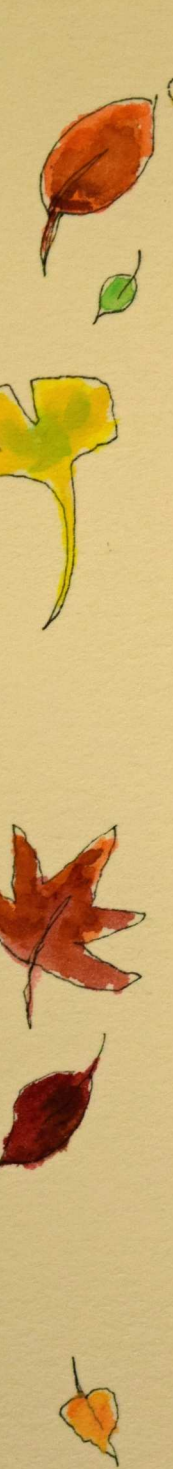
Pembral pushed the money into his pocket with the list, and headed toward the door. "Don't forget your coat!", his mother said. "Don't forget your scarf", she said added. "And don't forget your hat and gloves", she hollered as he headed to the front door. Pembral





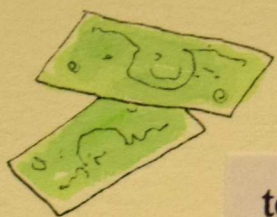
A watercolor illustration of a dog and a squirrel. The dog is at the top, looking down. The squirrel is below it, also looking down. Both are rendered in shades of grey, brown, and yellow.

didn't forget any of these things. He went outside and down the street, kicking dry leaves on the sidewalk into the air and breathing in their smell, and watching the squirrels play tag.

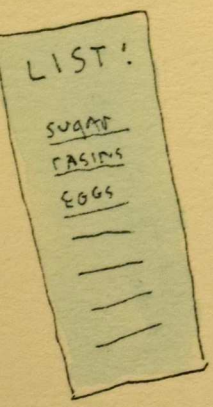
A collection of watercolor illustrations of autumn leaves in various colors: red, orange, yellow, and green. Some are simple shapes, while others have more detailed vein patterns.

When he got to the store, he picked up a basket and went about shopping. He found the sugar, and put it in the basket. It was heavy. He found the raisins, and it reminded him of how good the cake would taste. Pleased with himself, he went





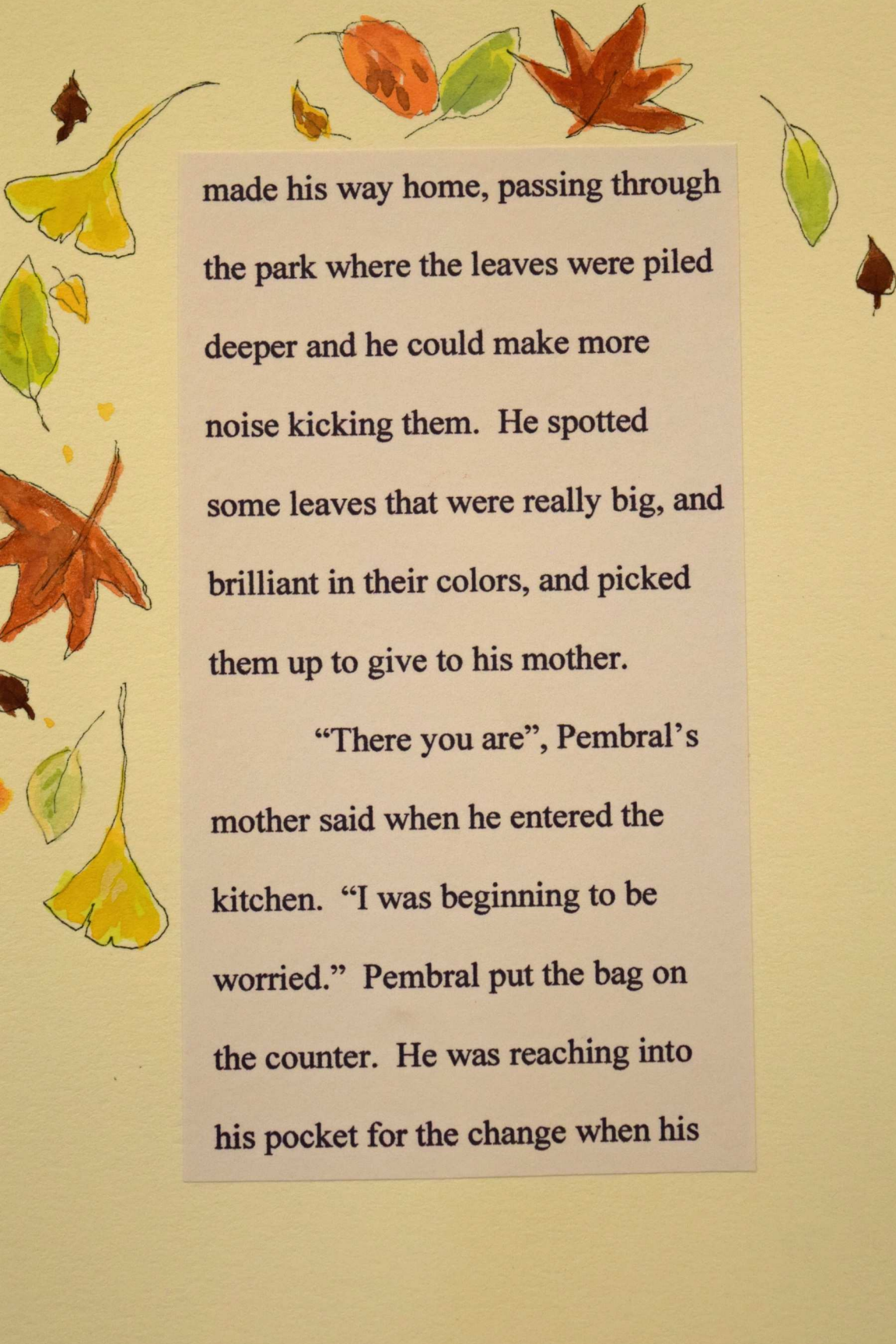
to the front of the store, where he put the sugar and raisins on the counter. The store clerk told him how much they cost, and he gave her the money he had been given. He didn't notice when the list that his mother had given him fell to the floor as he pulled the money from his pocket. He'd forgotten all about the list, thinking of the raisins and the carrot cake.



Taking the bag that the grocer gave him, Pembral slowly

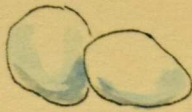






made his way home, passing through the park where the leaves were piled deeper and he could make more noise kicking them. He spotted some leaves that were really big, and brilliant in their colors, and picked them up to give to his mother.

“There you are”, Pembral’s mother said when he entered the kitchen. “I was beginning to be worried.” Pembral put the bag on the counter. He was reaching into his pocket for the change when his



mother said, "Where are the eggs?"

Pembral stopped. His heart

pounded. Eggs! He forgot the eggs!

He looked at his mother, and then at

the bag, and then said meekly, "I'm

sorry, Momma. I forgot."

His mother was unhappy.

"You forgot the eggs? What

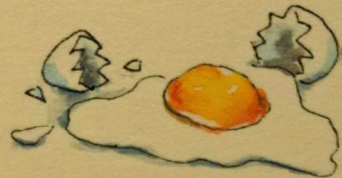
happened to your list?" "I don't

know", Pembral mumbled. He

reached into his pocket but the list

was gone. "I must have lost it".

"For Pete's sake, Pembral", she said.







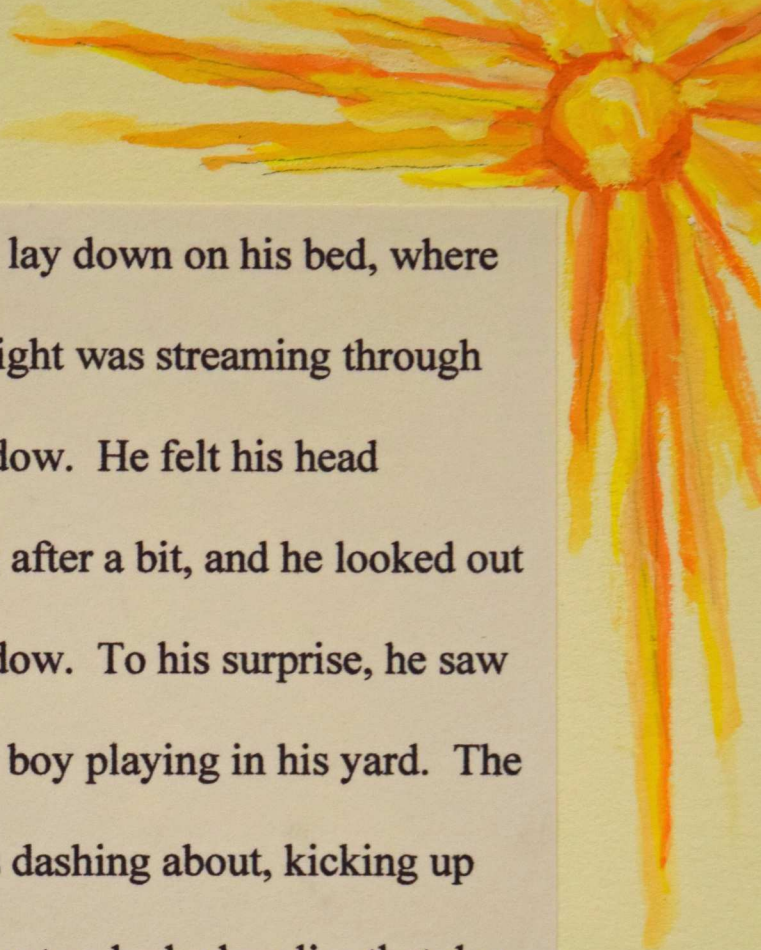


Then she added “I swear”, and
Pembral thought that just then she
might, although she never did.

“What am I going to do with you?”
she said as she grabbed keys from
her purse and hurried out the door.


Pembral climbed the stairs up
to his bedroom slowly, his head
hanging. He wished he knew why
he’d forgotten the eggs. What had
happened to the list? He knew that
he had disappointed his mother. He
didn’t get to share his leaves with



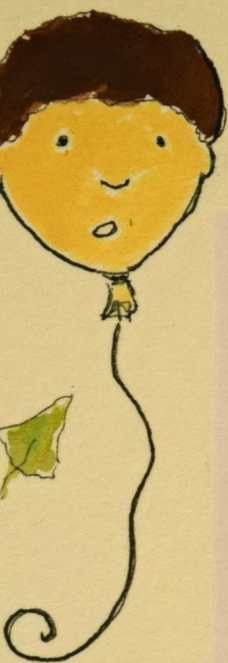


her. He lay down on his bed, where the sunlight was streaming through the window. He felt his head nodding after a bit, and he looked out the window. To his surprise, he saw a young boy playing in his yard. The boy was dashing about, kicking up leaves, just as he had earlier that day. Why was he playing in Pembral's yard?

Looking more closely, he realized that the boy was dressed just like he was. And suddenly, he saw in





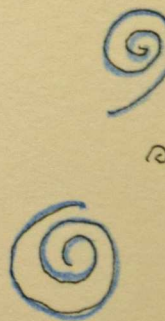


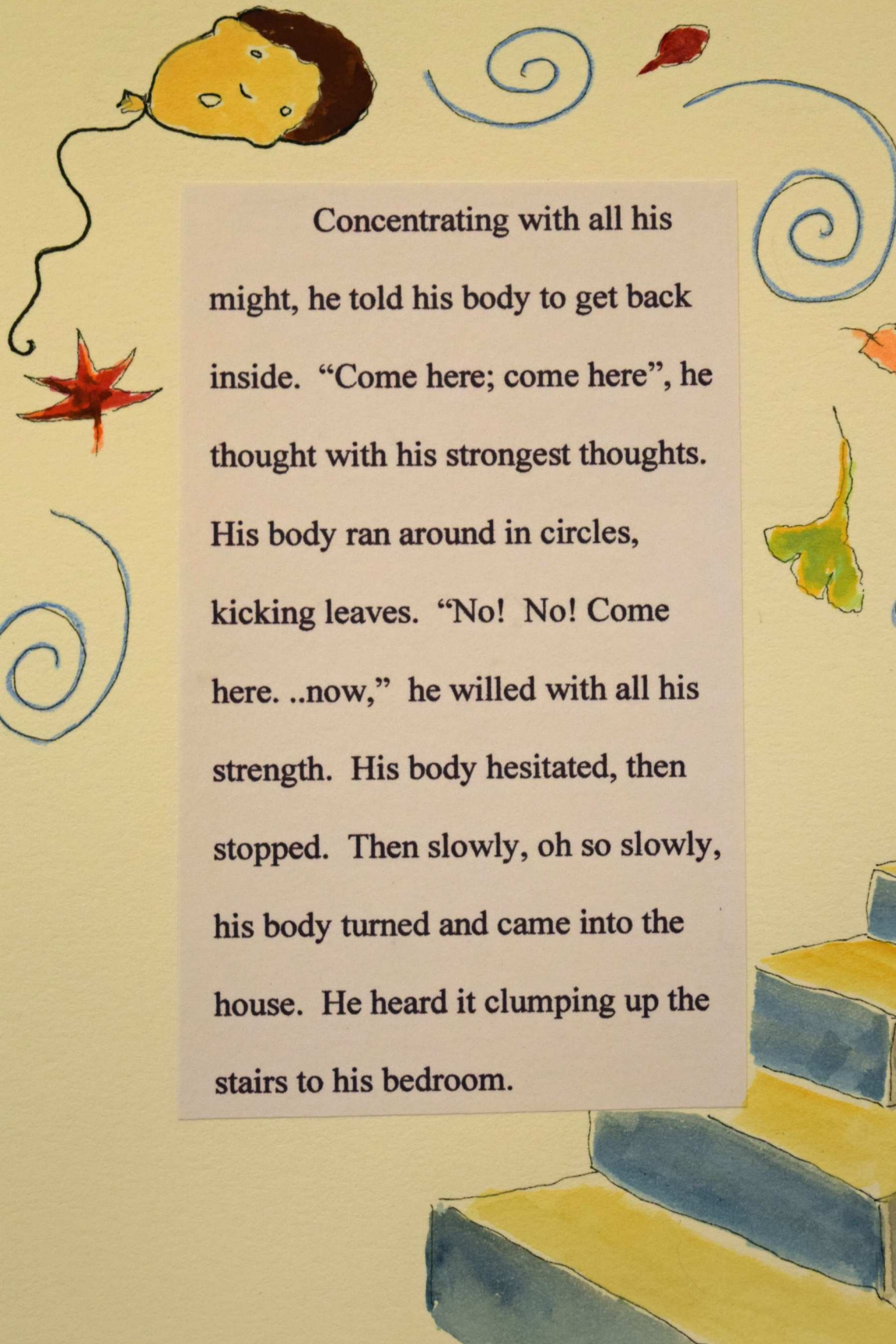
amazement that the boy had no head!

Astonished, he jumped up, or he tried to. But he could not. Looking down, he realized he had no body.

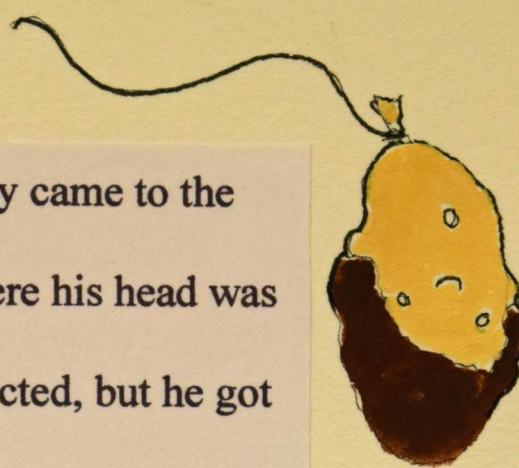
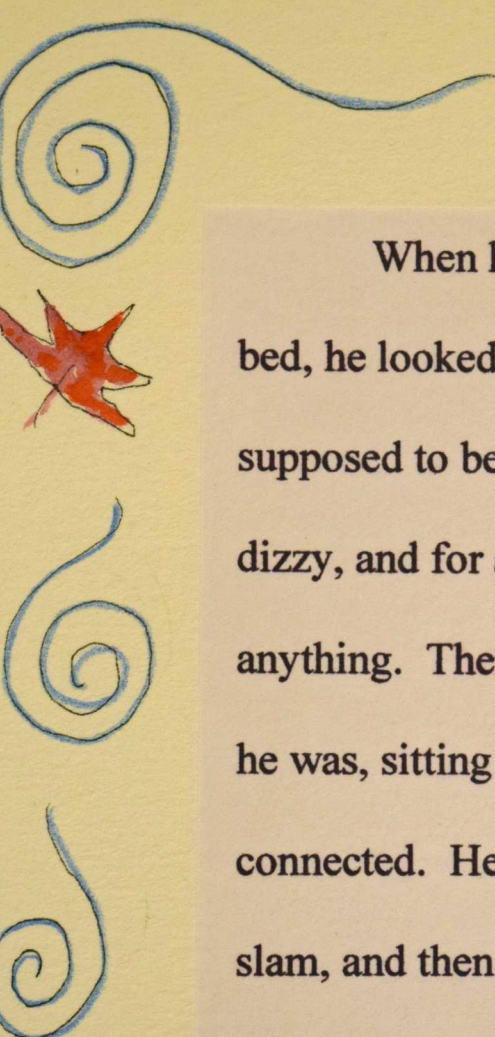
Only his head was on the pillow on his bed. His body was outside playing. "Help!", he cried. "Help!"

But his lips hardly moved. A low moan barely escaped from his lips. Somehow, he'd managed to get up and run outside but had forgotten his head!

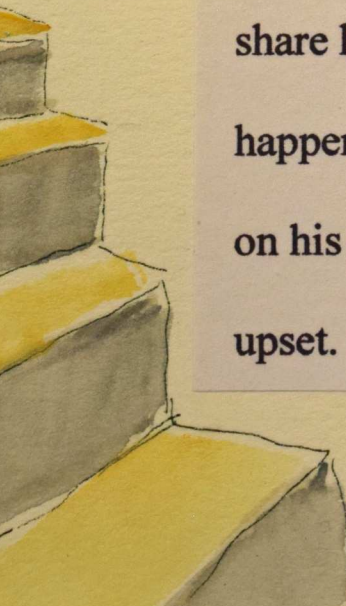
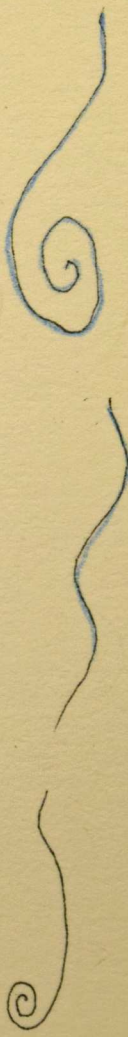













Concentrating with all his
might, he told his body to get back
inside. “Come here; come here”, he
thought with his strongest thoughts.
His body ran around in circles,
kicking leaves. “No! No! Come
here. ..now,” he willed with all his
strength. His body hesitated, then
stopped. Then slowly, oh so slowly,
his body turned and came into the
house. He heard it clumping up the
stairs to his bedroom.




When his body came to the bed, he looked at where his head was supposed to be connected, but he got dizzy, and for a moment couldn't see anything. Then, as if by magic, there he was, sitting up in bed, completely connected. He heard the car door slam, and then the house door, and he ran downstairs. He was going to share his excitement of what just happened when he saw the stern look on his mother's face. She was still upset. He forgot all about his story



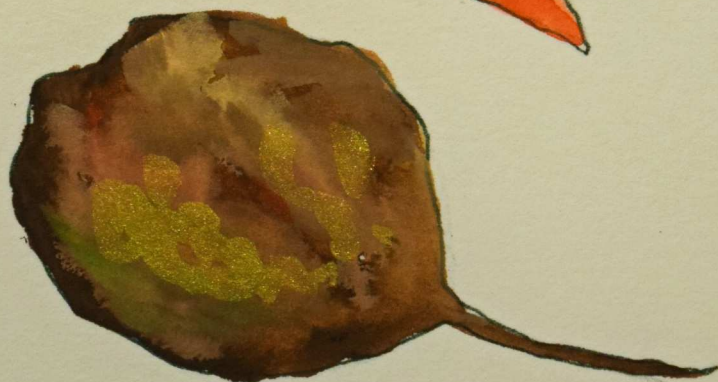


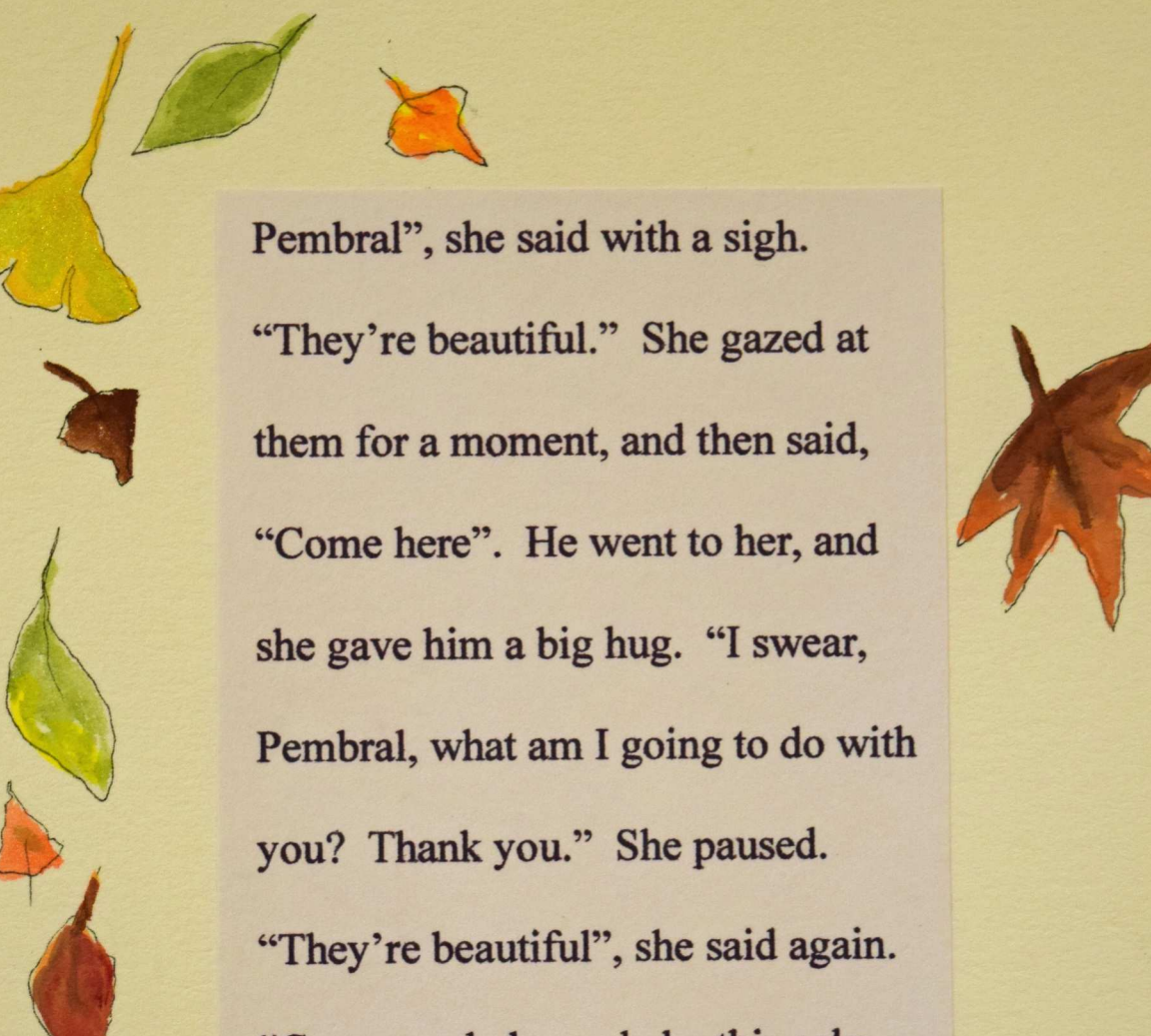
and hung his head again. “I’m sorry, Momma”, he said again. “I don’t know what happened. I.. I just forgot. I was kicking the leaves and watching the squirrels and...”. Just then he remembered the colorful leaves that he had gathered, and ran over to them. Picking them up, he handed them to her. “Here, Momma”, he continued. “I found these and brought them for you.”

Pembral watched as warmth and a smile spread on her face. “Oh,









Pembral”, she said with a sigh.

“They’re beautiful.” She gazed at them for a moment, and then said, “Come here”. He went to her, and she gave him a big hug. “I swear, Pembral, what am I going to do with you? Thank you.” She paused.

“They’re beautiful”, she said again.

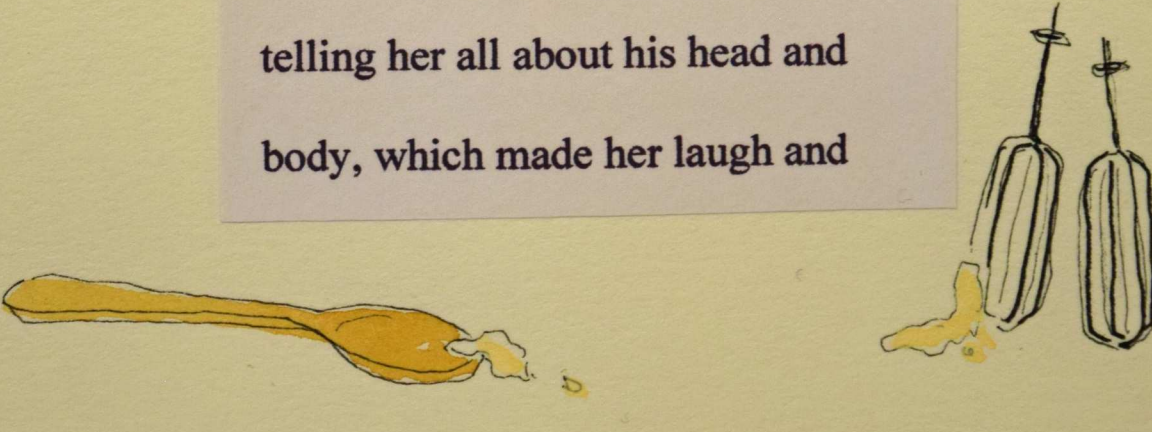
“Come on, help me bake this cake.

I’ll let you lick the beaters when

we’re done.” And Pembral did,

telling her all about his head and

body, which made her laugh and

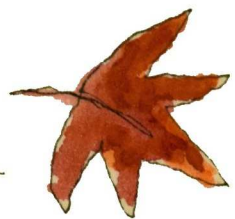


laugh, as the kitchen smells began to
fill up the house, just as it always
did.

The end.











Steve Tubbs is a lawyer by trade, whose annual holiday letters tickle the ribs of those on his list. His tale of Pembral is in part an ode to his dearly patient mother, whose son was known to his school teachers as a 'day dreamer'. Pembral Forgets invokes the hallmarks of fall with colorful leaves and frost on the ground, and, of course, the wonderful aroma of baking in the kitchen. This is Steve's first effort as an author.



Sue Clancy is a professional artist and illustrator known for her whimsical, timeless, comforting, quirky and oddly cute art images and artist books. She is the author and illustrator for five children's books and almost that many illustrated books for grownups. Fall is her favorite season and soup is one of her favorite things to cook. You can see more of her fine art and artist books at www.sueclancy.com



Pembral Forgets is a story about fall leaves, good food, and an absent-minded boy who forgets something very important but is loved anyway.

