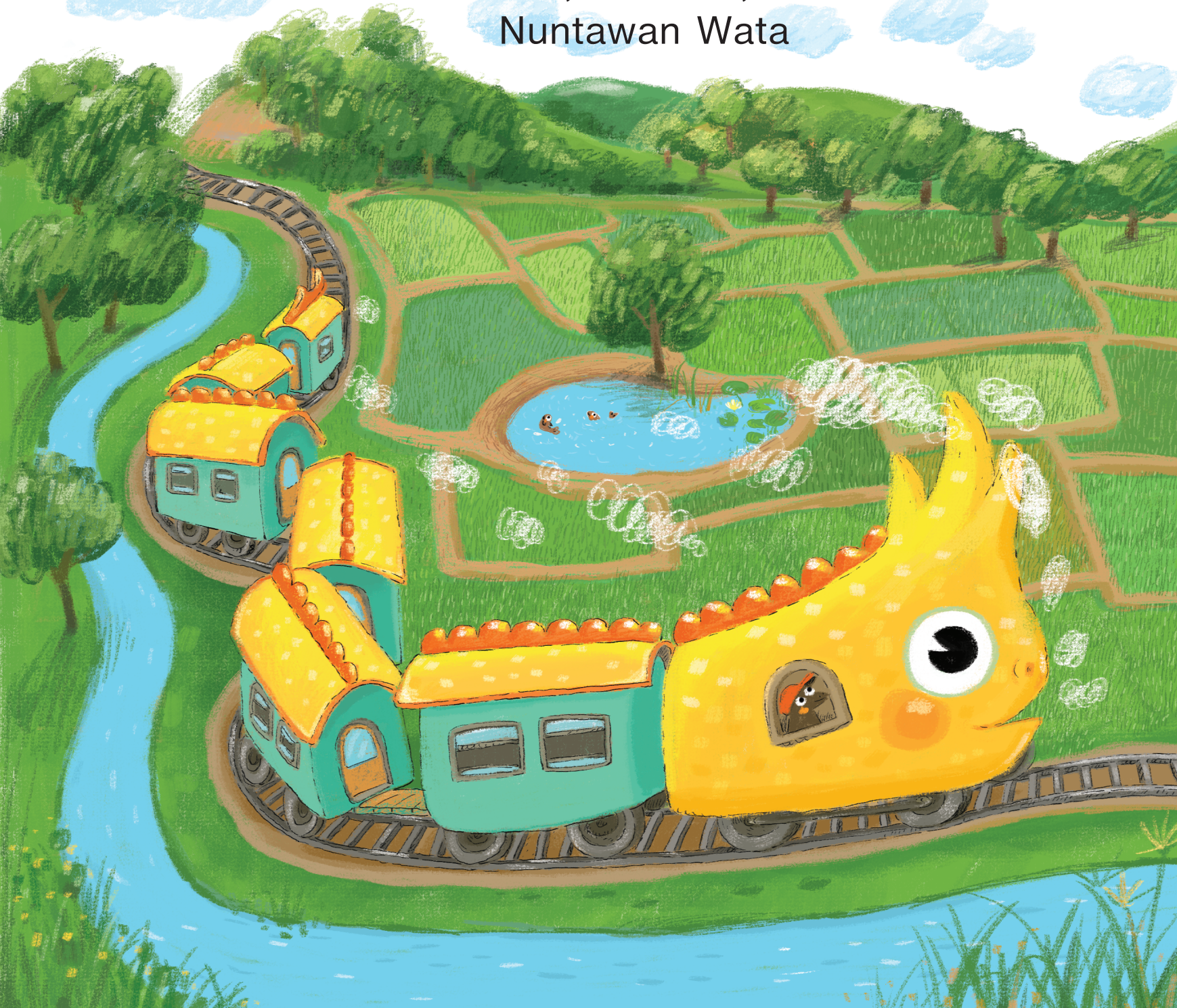


# Choo Choo to Korat!

Story and Illustrations by  
Nuntawan Wata



Local Knowledge Book Series



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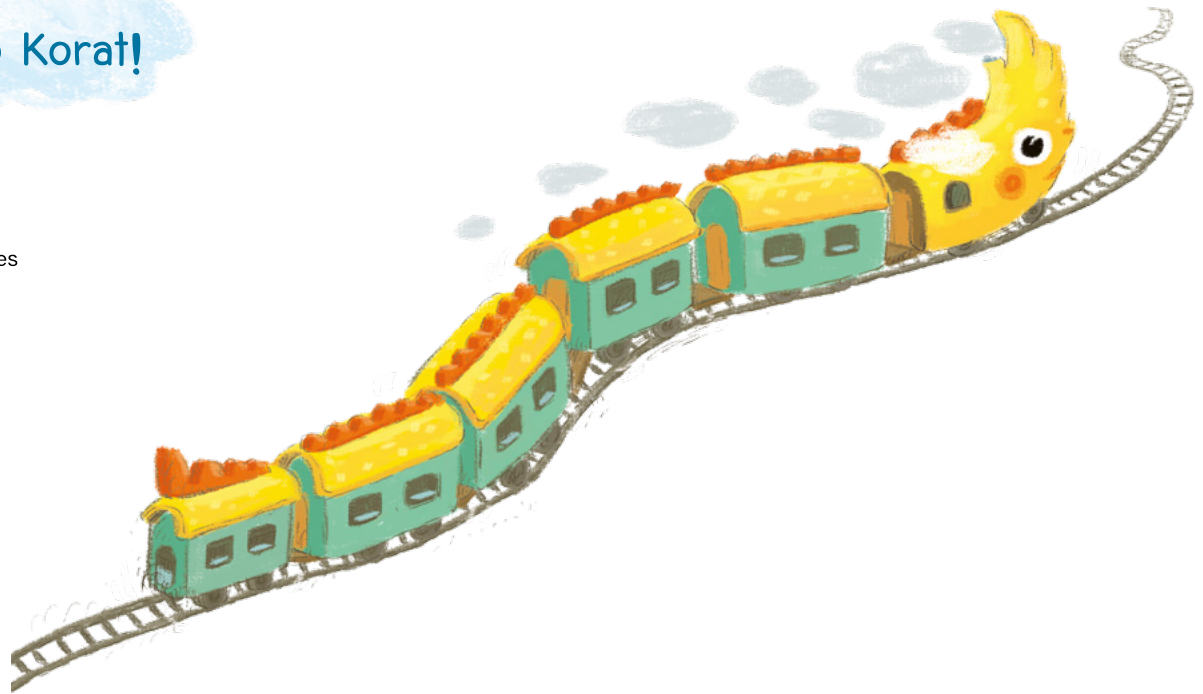
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## Preface

Thailand Knowledge Park (TK Park) important mission in society is to develop a love of reading and give people equal opportunities to experience modern learning centers which speak to their interests. Thailand Knowledge Park has been cooperating with local administrators in many regions of Thailand to build living libraries as a way to achieve its mission.

Bringing local knowledge to children, in a modern and fun way, is an important tool which could inspire them to read and explore more. The idea is to create books which reflect local wisdom, together with morality and ethics, for children aged 0-12.

The books in the Isaan Exploration Set were developed by TK Park, scholars, and local writers. Children and adults will get to know about the northeastern region of Thailand and be proud of the unique traditions found there. Moreover, the books also foster better understandings and tolerant attitudes toward others from different cultures and societies.

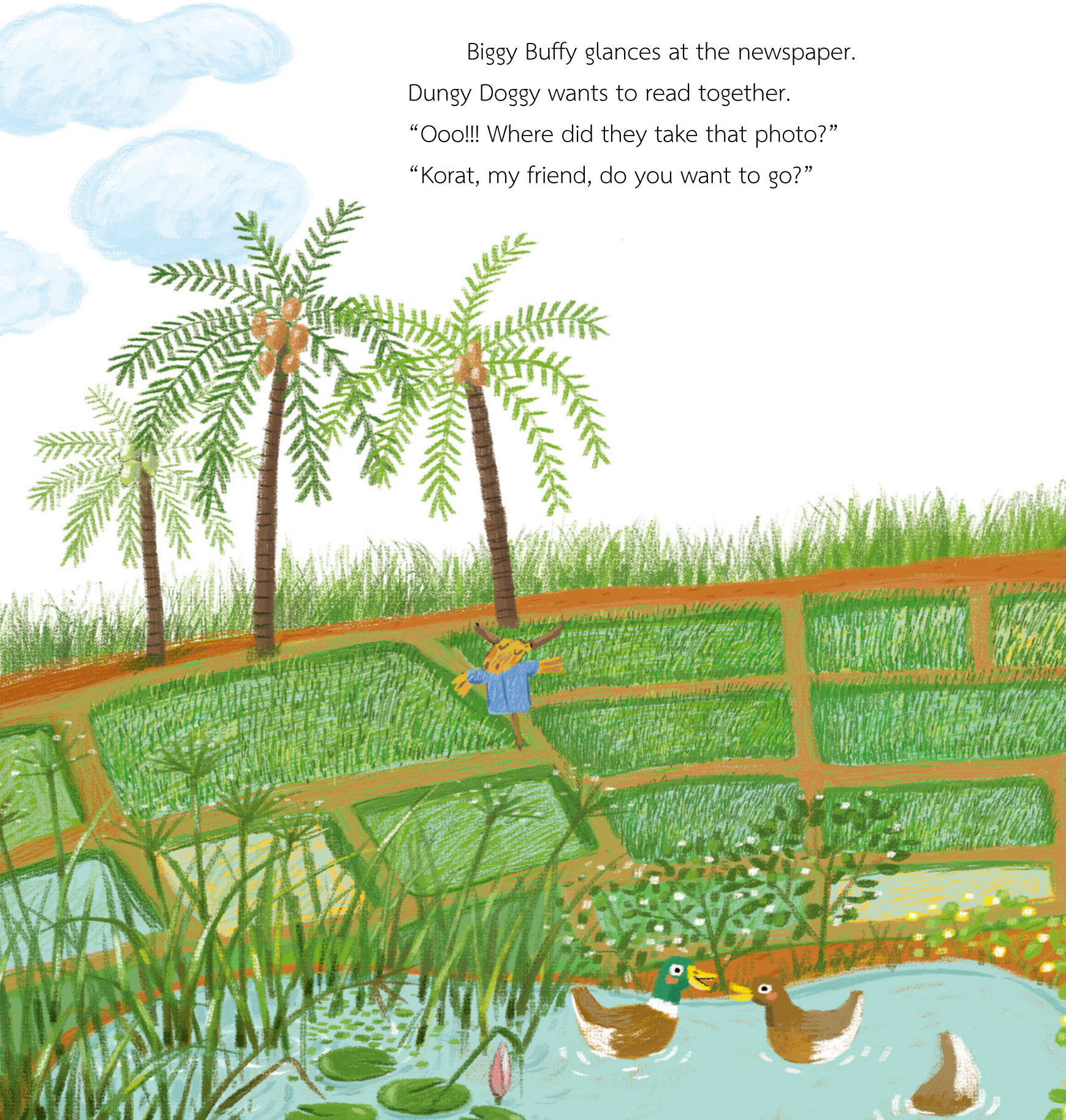
Thailand Knowledge Park (TK Park) hopes that the books would be another learning tool which encourages Thai people to read more and maximize their learning. TK Park aims to make the books fun and easy to read. The readers can enjoy reading them and appreciate their own hometowns, regions, and Country.



Thailand Knowledge Park



Biggy Buffy glances at the newspaper.  
Dungy Doggy wants to read together.  
“Ooo!!! Where did they take that photo?”  
“Korat, my friend, do you want to go?”

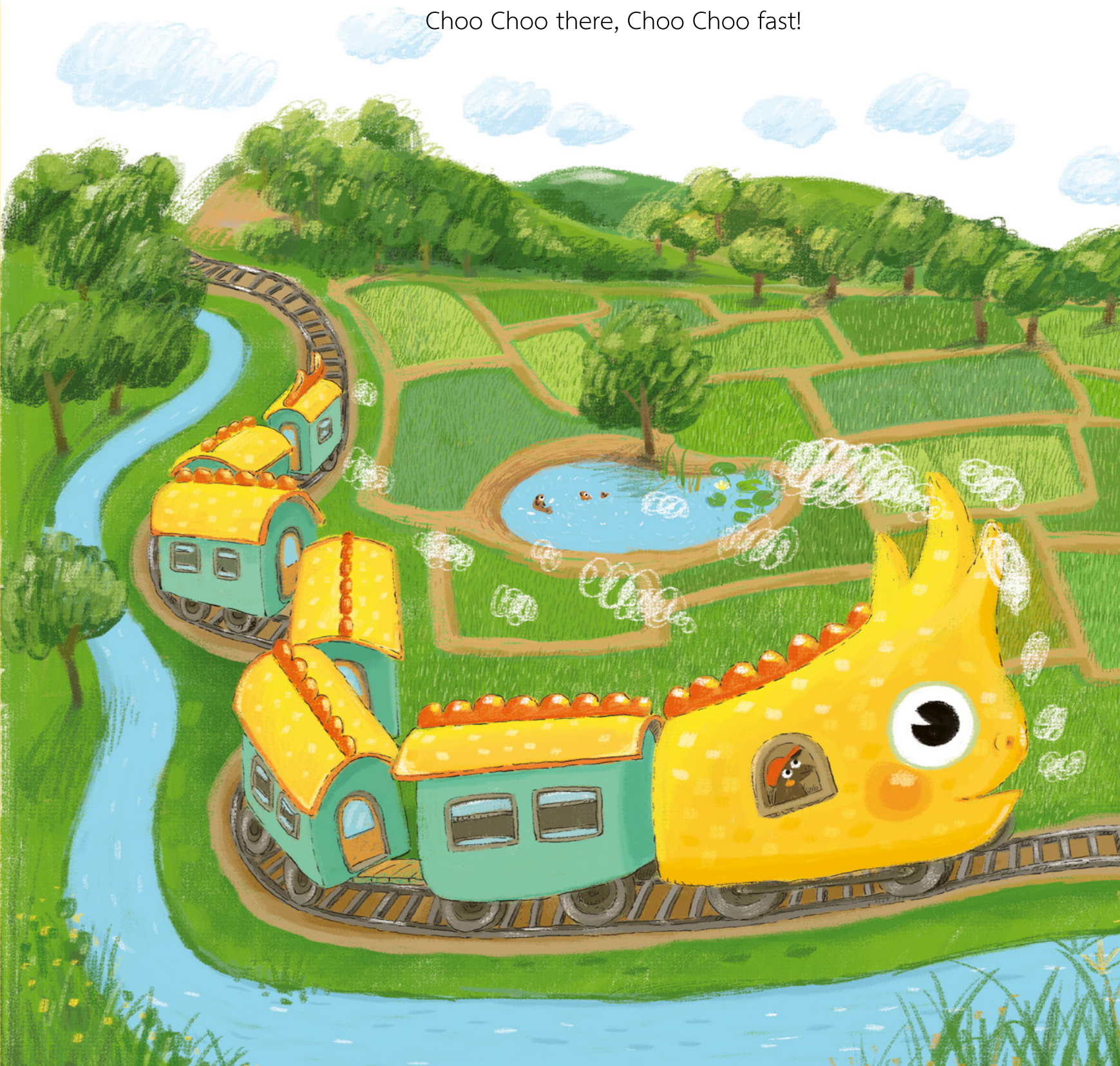






It is Dungy Doggy's first time on a train.  
He is so excited that he doesn't want it to end.  
The Naga line takes them to Korat.  
They enjoy making new friends from the start.

Choo Choo to Korat!  
Choo Choo there, Choo Choo fast!





สถานีรถไฟ



Dungy Doggy clings to Buffy's knee.



“Hey Biggy Buffy! Long time no see!”

“Hi! Glad to see you again, Keeny Kitty!”

“This is Tiny Toady, my little fellow.”

“And enormous Earny Elfy; you know!”



“First thing to do in Korat,  
Pay respect to Ya Mo in our hearts.”





Dungy Doggy gets thrilled by the Thai dance.  
Ya Mo looks so great and so grand.

papaya salad



sticky rice



fermented fish



roasted chicken



spicy sauce

stirred fried Korat noodles



grilled sticky rice



Now that we're in Korat,  
we can't miss them!



calabura



gooseberries

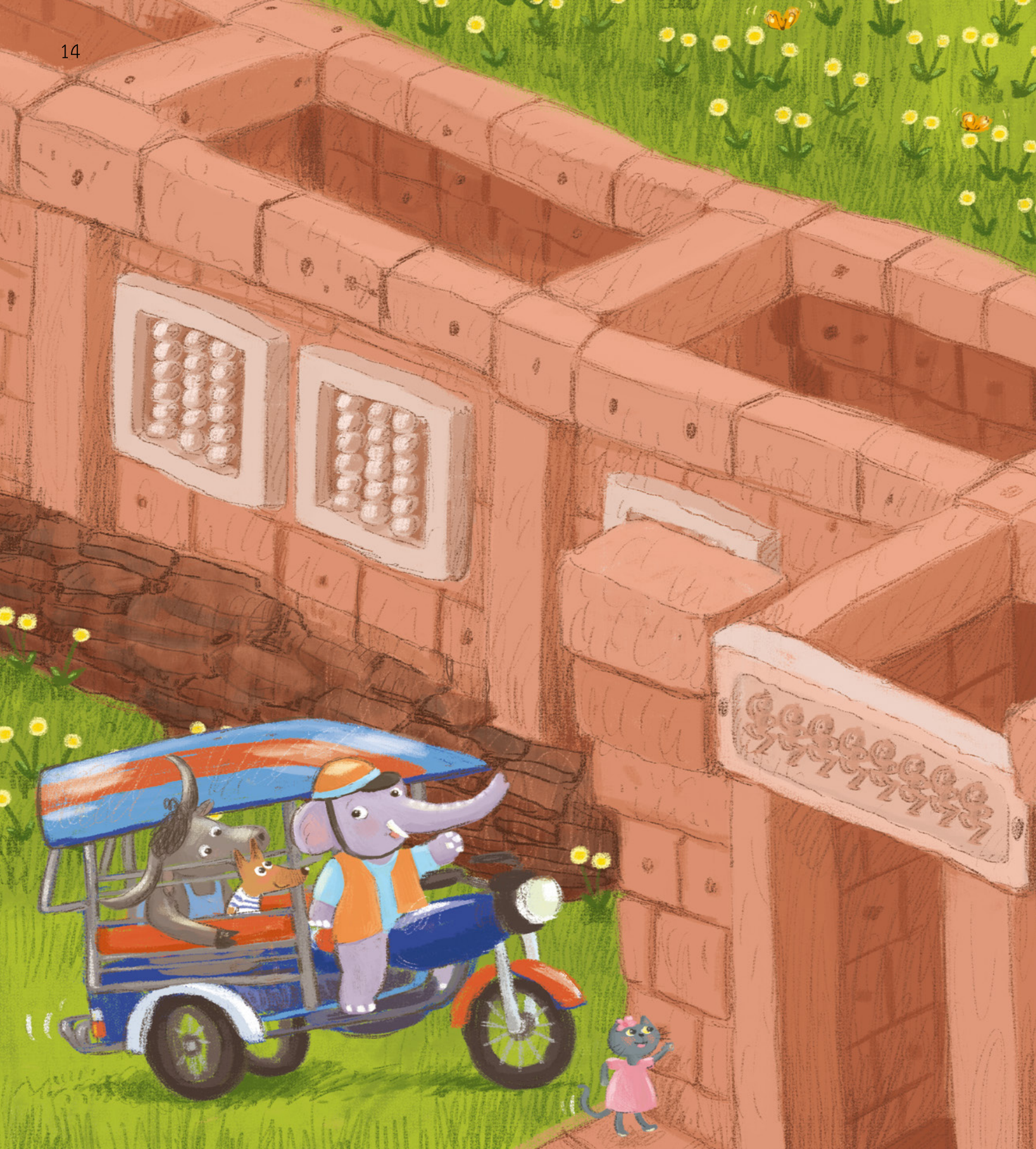


custard apple

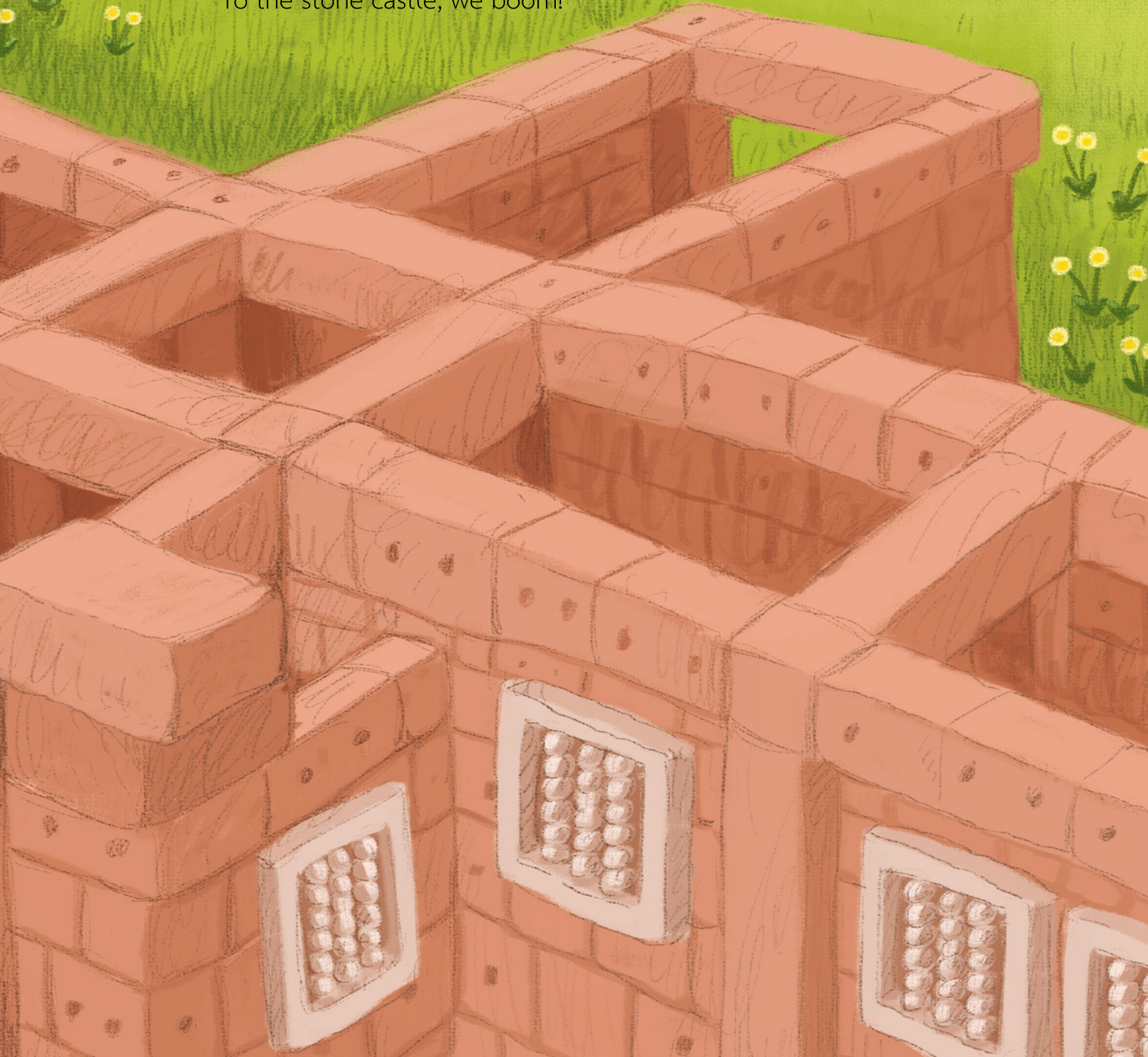


deep-fried insects





We are full and ready to go.  
Our driver, Earny Elfy, is pleased to do so.  
Beep beep! Vroom Vroom!  
To the stone castle, we boom!





Children are playing under  
the shade of the trees.  
Let's play together, Buffy, Elfy, Kitty!

playing the reed flute

walking on stilts

coconut shell shoes



# Sinsai, The Great Prince



There's a shadow puppet show.  
What's the story? I'd love to know!

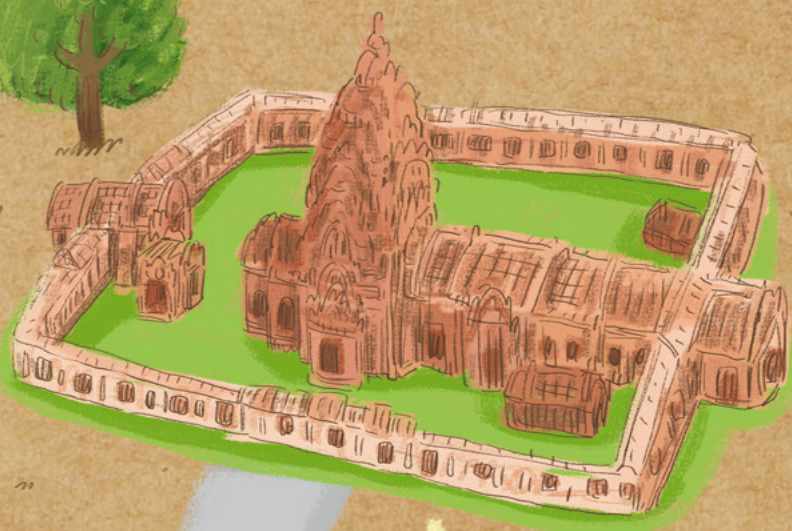


wheel racing

Sikhoraphum Castle  
Surin



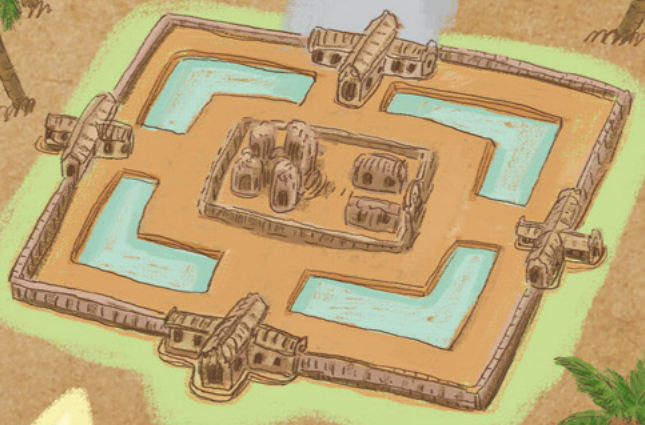
Phanom Rung Castle  
Buriram



Ta Muen Castle  
Surin

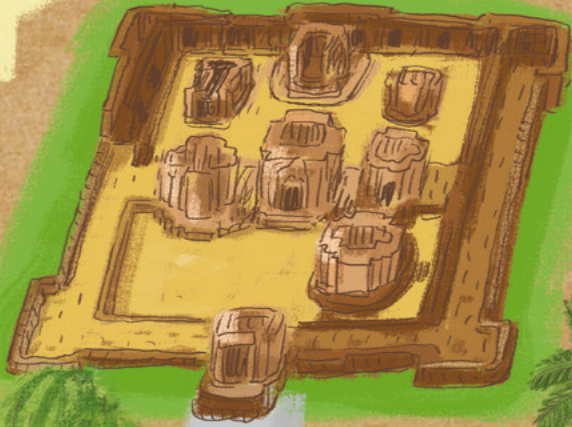


Muang Tam Castle  
Buriram



\* 'Castle' here refers to a Khmer-style Buddhist temple in Thailand.

Srakampangyai Castle  
Sisaket

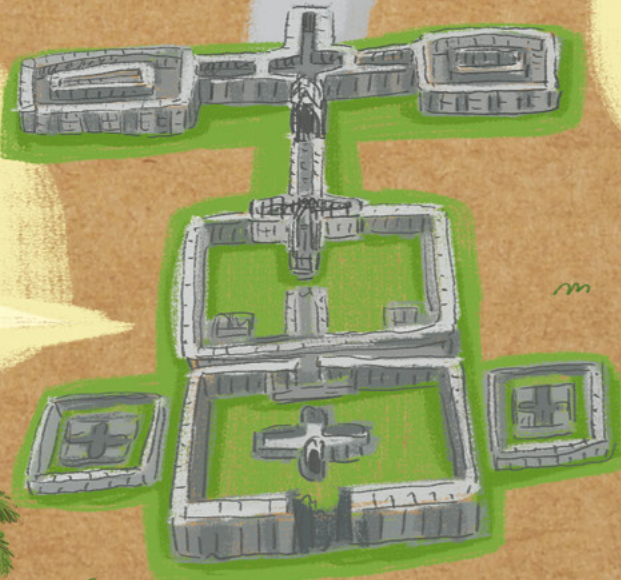


Phimai Stone Castle  
Nakhon Ratchasima



In the south of the  
Northeastern region  
lay many stone castles

Preah Vihear Temple  
Sisaket and  
Cambodia



We play until we can't walk further.  
Elfy takes us to rest near the river.





“Look! The Naga is swimming!”  
“Well, our Naga train is coming!”



The friends see off Biggy Buffy and Dungy Doggy.



“We promise to visit you and all of us will be happy.”



Buffy and Doggy are looking forward to seeing Kitty, Elfy and Toady again.



## Further Explanation

The picture book, Choo Choo to Korat, is designed for kindergarten children. The title is based on a well-known Thai nursery rhyme and when the teacher reads the title, the students would surely complete the rhyme.

The story is easy for kindergarten children to understand. Part of the fun is that the leading characters are animals which commonly appear in Isaan legends and folktales, for example: toads have appeared in many folk tales; Korats or silver-blue cats originated in Korat; buffaloes help work in the field; and elephants live with the Suay, the local people of Surin.

Biggy Buffy read the newspaper and asked Dungy Doggy to join his trip. They took a train to Korat. Dungy Doggy was so excited because it was his first time on a train. Keeny Kitty, Tiny Toady and Earny Elfy picked them up at the train station. They then went to pay respect to Ya Mo at the monument, had some local foods, and explored the stone castle. They had a great time and said goodbye to one another.

### Using Choo Choo to Korat to Develop a Love of Reading

The reading habit should be developed at a time when children cannot yet read. Adults are supposed to read it out loud to them. Do not wait until they have mastered reading! By that time children would be distracted from the peaceful world of reading. Children's first picture books are meant to be listened to and looked at. Therefore, reading out loud is the easiest way to develop a love of reading in children.

### Benefits of Starting Right Away

1. Students can absorb the use of language as the teacher reads.
2. Students see their teacher as a reading role model.
3. Students are impressed and happy when reading.





## Profiles

**Nuntawan Wata** went to the College of Fine Arts and furthered her studies in Communication Art and Design at the Faculty of Fine and Applied Arts, Burapha University. Nuntawan Wata also got a Master's Degree in Education, majoring in Art, Music and Dance from Chulalongkorn University.

**Nuntawan Wata** began her career as a carpet designer at Thailand Carpet Manufacturing Public Co., Ltd. (Tai Ping). Later she became a freelance artist.

**Nuntawan Wata** received an award for the best illustrated children's book from Foundation

for Children for **"Joi tam ha prajan"** (The boy who searched for the moon) in 1996. Her **"Mae Poe-sob"** (The Goddess of Rice) also won a consolation prize from the 4th Annual Childrens' Book Illustration Award by the Publishers and Booksellers Association of Thailand for nonfiction books for children aged 9-12. **"Chan ja keb bang na"** (I'll take some tool), which she illustrated, won the second prize from the Stock Exchange of Thailand in the project entitled **"Roo keb roo chai"** (Save & spend smart).

At present, Nuntawan Wata enjoys writing and drawing for many publishers. Some of her work are **"Kratat Tong ha prong"** (The rabbit who looked for its den) and a dhamma book in commemoration of the Venerable Buddhadasa Bhikkhu's 100th birthday, and Thailand Knowledge Park's local knowledge book series (southern Thailand): "Every day is a fun day!" and "It's yummy every day!" She also writes for Bangkokbiznews: Body and Mind, Sarakadee Magazine, and Real Parenting Magazine (Thailand).

## Translators

**Peeriya Pongsarigun** got a master's degree in English linguistics from the Faculty of Arts, Chulalongkorn University. She teaches English at the University and is also the deputy head of the extracurricular activities unit. She leads her students to play and to learn English outside of the classroom. She has a passion for children's books. She wrote one book called **"Chan ja keb bang na"** (I'll take some too!) and now she writes for "Realparenting Magazine/Thailand" and it's one of her favorite hobbies.

**John Viano** first came to Thailand as a Peace Corps volunteer in 2006. Since then he has used his passion for the Thai language to communicate with Thai people via English language training. He has used his Thai skills to write a short grammar textbook for Thai English language teachers. John has taught English at most levels of the Thai education system and at Thai businesses. He was a coach at the creative writing camp and has been an editor of the Children's Day book for two years. He has experience translating many kinds of documents from Thai to English and vice versa.

## Local Knowledge Book Series

