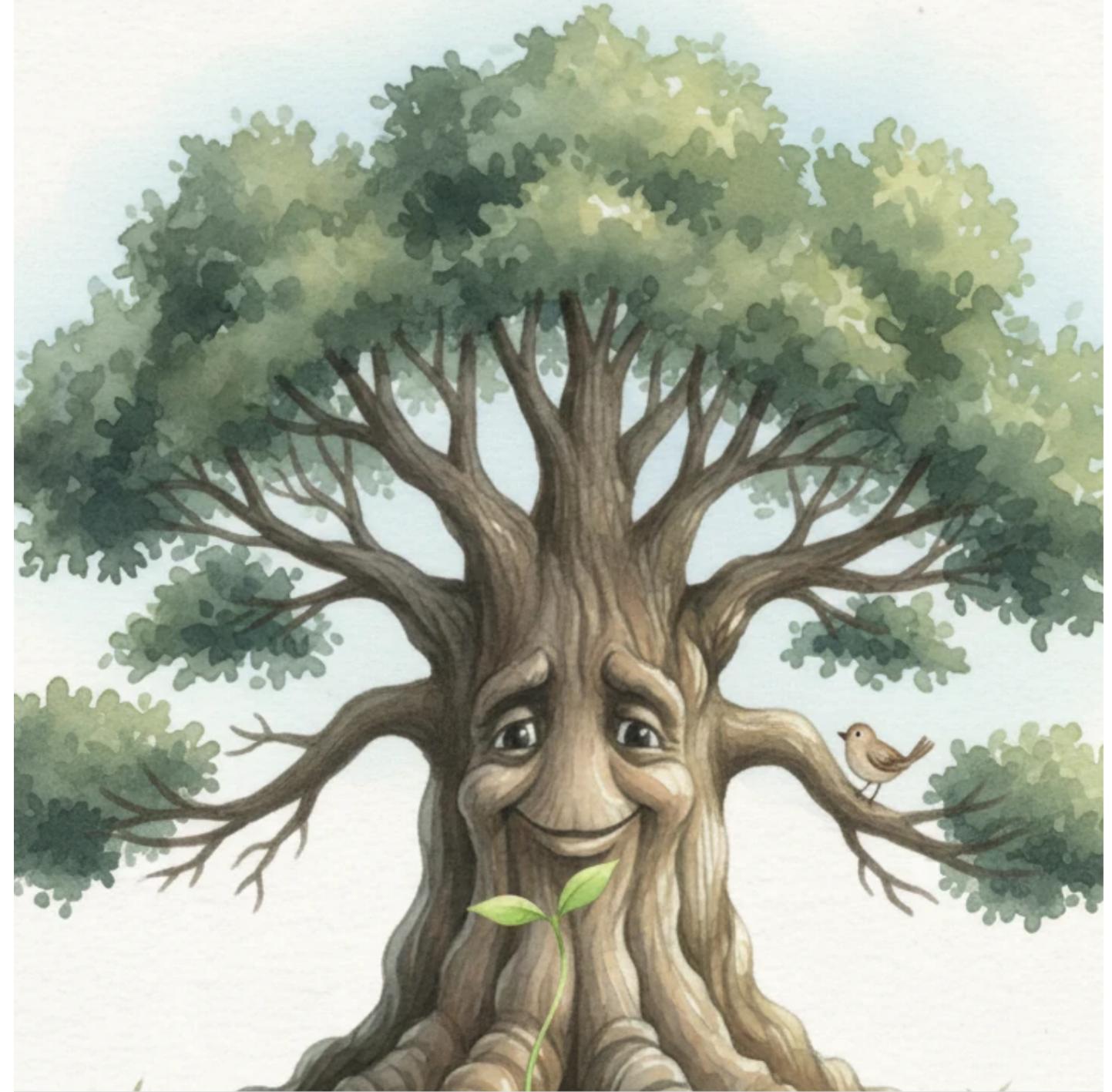


# PIPPIN & BARNABY



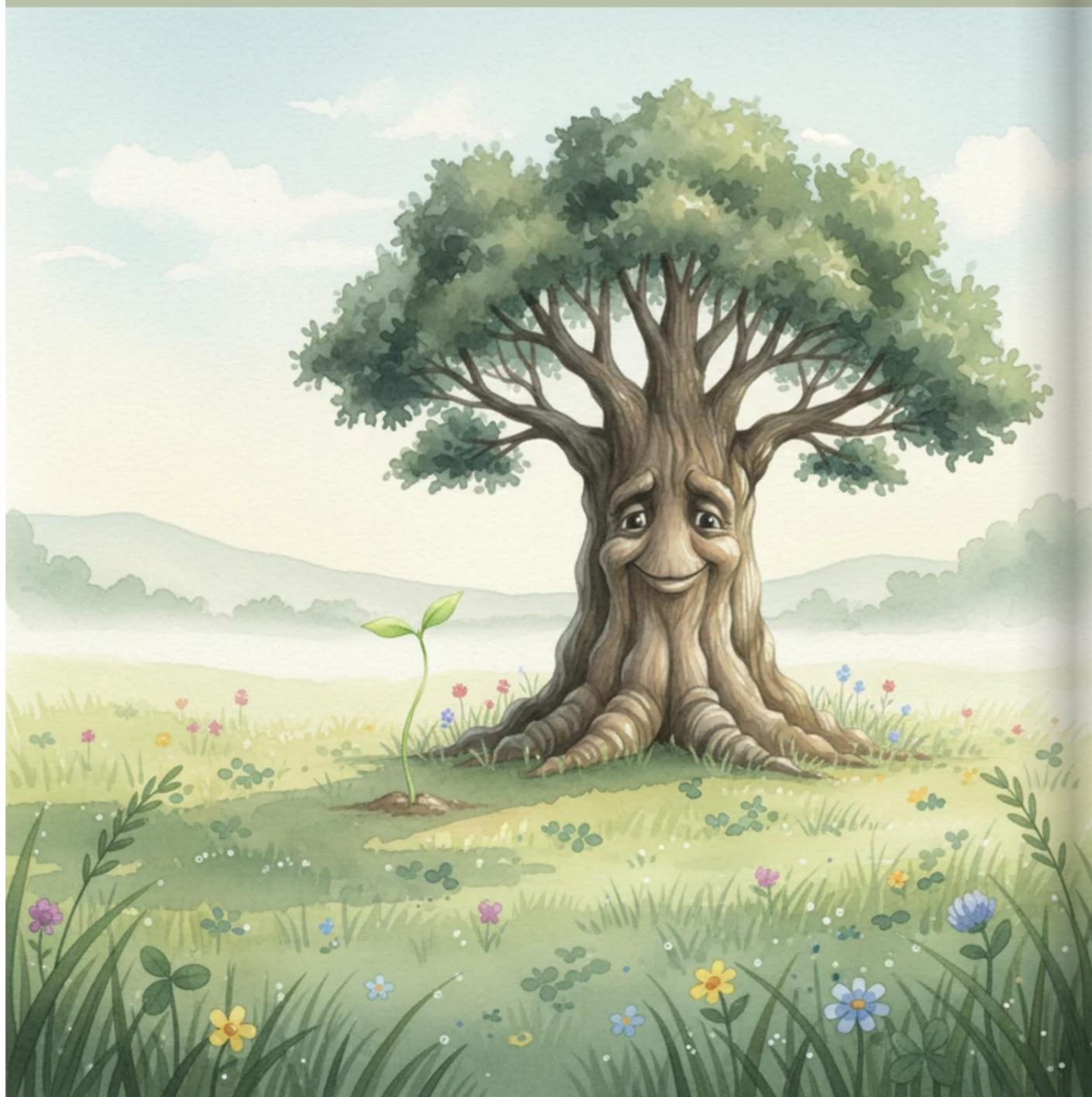
## The Patient Little Leaf

Vasileios Politeiadis

A TALE OF A TINY SHOOT AND A GRAND OLD ROOT



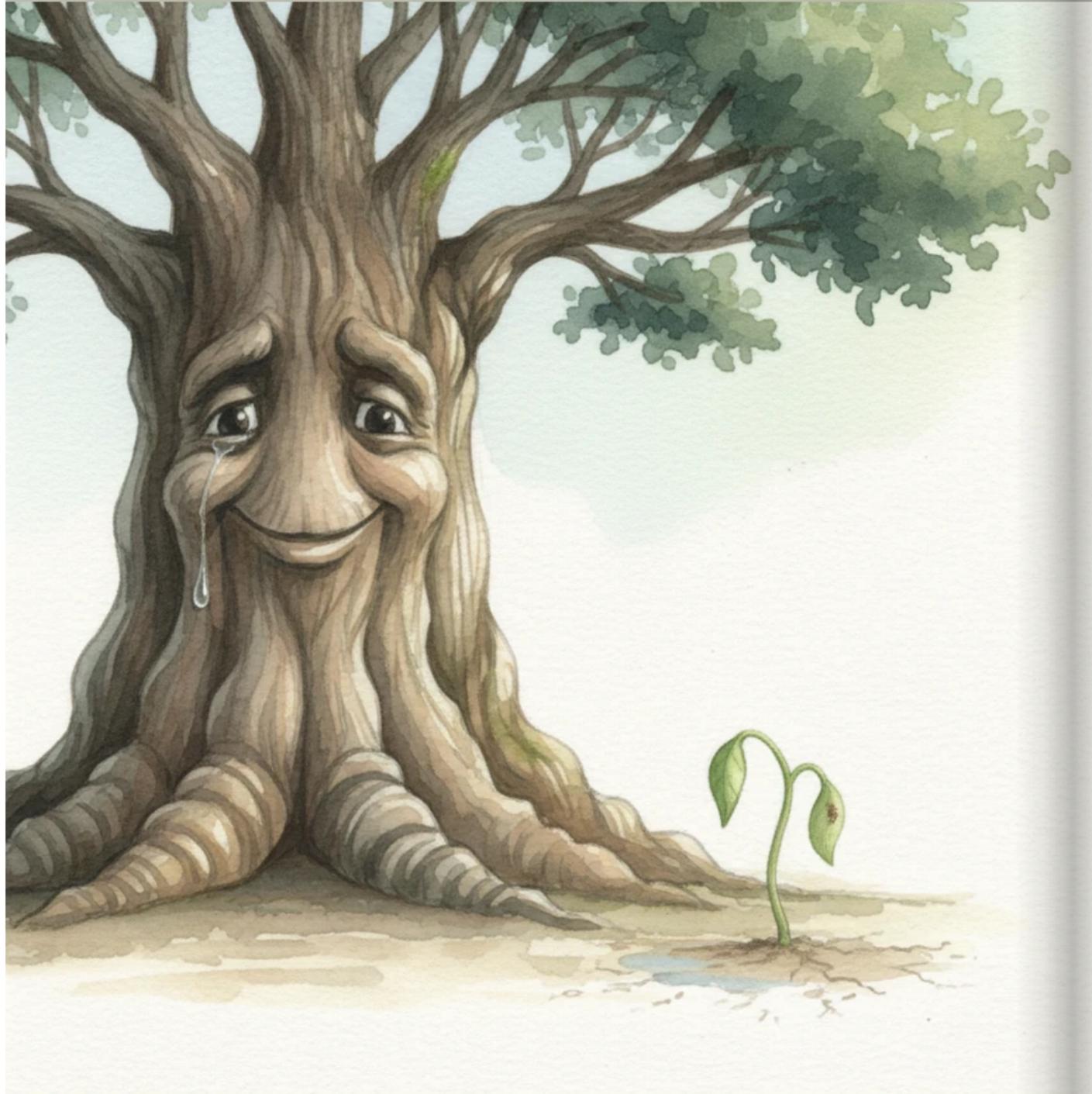
In the heart of a sun-dappled meadow, a tiny sapling named Pip wiggles his two small leaves. He is surrounded by giant trees that touch the clouds, making him feel like a tiny speck of green in a vast, towering world.



Every morning, Pip watches the golden sunlight hit the highest branches of the Great Oak first. He sighs, wishing he could reach the sky and see what lay beyond the tall grass and the colorful wildflowers.



Pip tries to stretch his tiny stem as hard as he can, holding his breath until his leaves tremble with effort. But no matter how hard he tries to reach upward, he remains exactly the same size as he was the day before.



Barnaby, the ancient oak tree with bark like wrinkled velvet, looks down with a creaky, kind smile. He tells Pip that the secret to being a great tree isn't how fast you grow, but how well you listen to the earth and the wind.



Barnaby explains that while the branches reach for the sun, the roots must slowly dance through the cool soil below. These hidden roots are the secret strength that keeps a tree steady when the world becomes wild and windy.



One afternoon, a gray storm rolls in, and the wind howls through the meadow with a mighty roar. Pip huddles close to the ground, watching Barnaby stand firm and strong, protected by a lifetime of slow, steady growth.



When the sun finally returns, Pip notices a bright blue butterfly landing right on his tiny leaf. If he had been as tall as Barnaby, the butterfly might have never found such a perfect, low-to-the-ground resting spot.



Pip begins to notice the beauty around his ankles, like the way the morning dew sparkles on the soft green moss. He realizes that being small means he can make friends with the beetles and the wildflowers that the big trees are too high to see.



As the seasons turn from vibrant green to shimmering gold, Pip stops counting his inches and starts counting the stars. He feels the cool rain and the warm sun, enjoying every moment of being exactly who he is right now.



Standing beside the wise old Barnaby, Pip is still a little sapling, but his heart feels as big as the forest. He knows that one day he will be a giant, but for now, growing slowly is a beautiful adventure all its own.