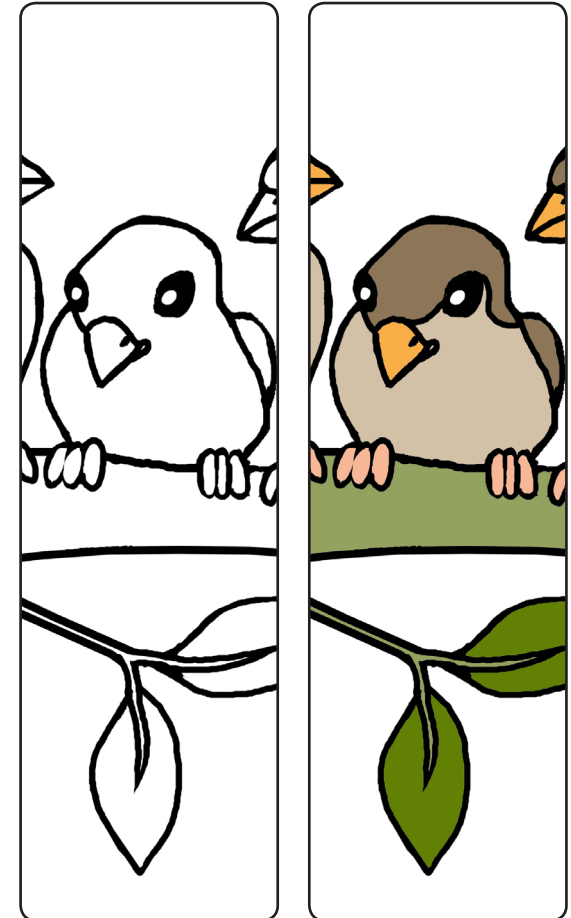




## Sparrow Book

### This file contains

1. The story in Maltese *Ċips iż-Żgħir*
2. The story in English *Little Ċips*
3. Outlines of five pictures for colouring
  - a sparrow
  - a nest
  - five sparrow chicks
  - the cat
  - the boy
4. The five pictures in colour



# Ċips iż-Żgħir



Darba waħda kien hemm żewġ għasafar tal-bejt, raġel u mara, li kellhom bejta ġo sigra. F'din il-bejta kien hemm ħames bajdjet żgħar. L-għasfura kienet kuljum toqgħod fuqhom biex iżzommhom sħan sakemm ifaqqsu.

Ġurnata waħda l-għasfura semgħet *Krakk!* u l-ewwel bajda nqasmet. Minn ġo fiha ħareġ l-ewwel fellus, imbagħad *Krakk! Krakk! Krakk!* faqqsu tlieta oħra. L-erba' flieles bdew ipespsu għax kienu bil-ġuħ. Fetħu ħalq daqsxiex.

Il-Papà u l-Mamà kellhom ħafna x'jagħmlu issa għax riedu joqogħdu jiġru 'l hawn u 'l hemm ifittxu l-ikel għat-tfal tagħhom.

“Dejjem jieklu dawn iż-żgħar,” qal il-Papà wara ġurnata jiġri wara d-dud u jnaqqar biċċiet tal-frott. “Dejjem ħalqhom miftuħ beraħ.”

“Dak għax iridu jikbru malajr,” qattlu l-Mamà, “Għalhekk jieklu ħafna. Nixtieq ngħinek issib l-ikel imma baqagħli bajda x'insahħan għax għadha ma faqqsitx.”

L-għada l-għasfura semgħet *Krakk!* u rat xaqq fil-bajda. Il-Mamà bdiet ittektek fuq il-bajda biex tgħin lill-fellus il-ġdid ifaqqas. Fl-aħħar ħareġ.

“Kem hu żgħir!” qalet, “Dan ha nsemmih Ċips. Ċips iż-Żgħir.”

Il-Papà tgħidx kemm feraħ bil-fellus il-ġdid. Feraħ ukoll għax issa l-Mamà setgħet tgħinu jitma' lill-familja.

Iż-żewġ ġenituri kellhom ħafna x'jagħmlu, il-ħin kollu ġejjin b'munqarhom mimli dud u insetti għaž-żgħar, u jdeffsu kollox f'kull ħalq miftuħ li jsibu.

Il-flieles bdew jikbru ġmielhom imma miskin Ċips ma tantx kien jiekol għax kien żgħir wisq. Hutu kienu jimbuttawh 'l hawn u 'l hemm biex jieklu huma u Ċips kultant kien jispiċċa b'xejn. B'hekk baqa' żgħir.

Wara ftit ġranet il-Mamà qalet lill-Papà: “Issa kibru mhux ħażin it-tfal tagħna. Naħseb aħjar ngħallmuhom itiru issa, xi tgħid?”

“Veru,” qal il-Papà, “Ara kemm kibrilhom ir-rix fuq il-ġwienah.”

“Ejjew tfal, qumu minn hemm. Ġejja lezzjoni li għandkom bżonnha ħafna.”

Il-flieles ħarġu kollha mill-bejta, wiehed wara l-iehor, u qagħdu fuq zokk iferfru ġwinħajhom. Ċips ukoll ħareġ, allavolja kien għadu żgħir wisq biex itir. Il-Mamà u l-Papà bdew jimbuttawhom bil-mod u juruhom kif jiftu u jferfru l-ġwienah.

Wara ftit ħin jaqbzu minn zokk għal zokk tgħallmu mhux ħażin, u wiehed wiehed taru 'l isfel lejn l-art. Imma Ċips miskin flok tar waqa' mal-art b'tisbita għax kellu l-ġwienah żgħar. Imma ma wegġax.

Wara dak it-trejning kollu reġa' qabadhom il-ġuħ u bdew ipespsu u jferfru biex il-Mamà u l-Papà jinzlu jagħtuhom l-ikel. Imma dak il-ħin minn wara ħajt tfaċċa qattus, u mar biex jaqbadhom.

“Ar'hemm! Tiru! Tiru!” bdew jgħajtu, imma miskin wiehed minnhom ma leħaqx tar u l-qattus qabdu.

Ċips leħaq daħal jistaħba taħt xitla u qagħad hemm jirtogħod bil-biża'. Wara ftit sema' l-passi ġejjin. Kien tifel jismu Shaun. Shaun ra lil Ċips fl-art u waqaf.

“Ara jaħasra, dan l-għasfur naħseb waqa' mill-bejta u ntilef. Kemm hu żgħir miskin!”

Shaun kellu qalbu tajba u ma riedx iħalli lil Ċips waħdu. Għalhekk ġabru f'idejx bil-mod biex imur id-dar ħalli jrabbih hu.

Imma dak il-ħin sema' t-tpespis fuq rasu u ħares 'il fuq. Fis-sigra ra żewġ għasafar tal-bejt iħarsu lejx u jpespsu. Fil-pront Ċips ukoll beda jpespes minn ġo idejx Shaun.

“Naħseb dawk il-Papà u l-Mamà ta' dal-fellus. Mela allura mhux veru mitluf. Ha nara x'jiġri jekk nerga' npoġġih fl-art.”

Shaun poġġa lil Ċips fl-art u mar jistaħba wara l-ħajt. Wara ftit il-Mamà u l-Papà ta' Ċips niżlu ħdejn it-tifel tagħhom. Tgħidx kemm ferfer ġwinħajx bil-ferħ meta rahom.

“Hsibtkom insejtuni,” qalilhom Ċips.

“U ma tarax, inti t-tifel tagħna wkoll u m'aħniex se ninsewk.” U Ċips telaq jaqbeż wara missieru u ommu biex isibu lil hutu l-oħra.

Kemm feraħ Shaun meta ra hekk.

“Sewwa ħsibt,” qal. “Dak l-għasfur ma kienx mitluf imma kien għadu qed jitgħallem itir. Imnalla ma ħadtux id-dar għax mhemmx aħjar mill-ġenituri tiegħu stess biex jieħdu ħsiebu.”

Bil-ferħ Shaun mar jiġri d-dar jgħid lil Mamà tiegħu x'ra u x'tgħallem.

# Little Ċips



Once upon a time there were two sparrows, a Daddy Sparrow and a Mummy Sparrow, and they had a nest in a tree. In the nest there were five little eggs. Mummy Sparrow sat on the eggs every day to keep them warm until they hatched.

One day Mummy Sparrow heard *Crack!* and the first egg broke. A little chick hatched from the egg. Then she heard *Crack! Crack! Crack!* and three more chicks hatched. The four chicks began to cheep because they were hungry. They opened their mouth wide.

Daddy and Mummy sparrows were very busy now. They flew here and there looking for food for their chicks.

“These chicks are always eating,” said Daddy Sparrow after flying around all day catching worms and caterpillars. “Their mouth is always open!”

“That’s because they need to grow up quickly,” said Mummy Sparrow. “That’s why they eat so much. I cannot help you because one of the eggs hasn’t hatched. I must sit on it to keep it warm.”

Next day Mummy Sparrow heard *Crack!* and she saw a hole in the egg. Mummy Sparrow tapped the egg with her beak to help the new chick to hatch. At last he came out.

“How small you are!” said Mummy Sparrow, “I’m going to call you Little Ċips!”

Daddy Sparrow was very happy. Now Mummy Sparrow could help him find food for the family.

The chicks began to grow, but Little Ċips was

not very strong. His brothers and sisters pushed him about and sometimes they ate his food. Little Ċips didn’t eat much and stayed small.

One day Mummy Sparrow said to Daddy Sparrow “How big our children have grown. It’s time they learned to fly.”

“Yes,” said Daddy Sparrow, “They have many feathers on their wings now.”

“Come on, kids, get up! Today you’re going to learn a very important lesson”.

One by one the chicks hopped out of the nest. They sat on the branch fluttering their wings. Ċips was still too small to fly, but he hopped out too. Mummy and Daddy sparrows began to push them gently and show them how to use their wings.

The chicks flapped their wings and jumped from branch to branch. Soon they could fly and they flew down to the floor. Poor Ċips had small wings and he couldn’t fly well. He landed on the floor with a bump, but he wasn’t hurt.

Now the chicks were hungry again. They began to cheep for Mummy and Daddy to come and give them food. But suddenly a cat jumped out from behind a wall. He tried to catch the chicks.

The chicks shouted “Look out! Fly away! Fly away!” but one of them was not quick enough. The cat caught her and ran off.

Little Ċips was lucky. He hid under a plant and the cat didn’t see him. He stayed there, trembling and scared. Soon he heard footsteps. It was Shaun, a little boy. Shaun saw Ċips and he stopped.

“Poor bird,” he said. “Have you fallen from your nest? Are you lost? How small you are!”

Shaun was a kind boy. He didn’t want to leave Ċips alone, so he picked him up gently. He wanted to take Ċips home to look after him.

But just then he heard a lot of chirping in the tree. He looked up and he saw Mummy and Daddy sparrows looking at him and chirping. Ċips too began to cheep in Shaun’s hand.

“Hey, I think those two birds are the Daddy and Mummy of this chick” said Shaun. “This little bird isn’t lost after all. I’ll put him down again and see what happens.”

Shaun put Little Ċips down and went to hide behind the wall. Soon Mummy and Daddy sparrows flew down near Ċips. Ċips was very happy and he fluttered his wings and chirped.

“I thought you forgot about me,” he said.

“Of course we didn’t forget you,” said Daddy Sparrow. “You are our son.”

Little Ċips hopped after his parents and they went to find the other chicks.

Shaun was very happy.

“I was right,” he said. “That little bird was not lost. He was only learning to fly. It’s a good thing I didn’t take him home, because his parents will look after him much better than me.”

Shaun ran home to tell his mother all about it.

