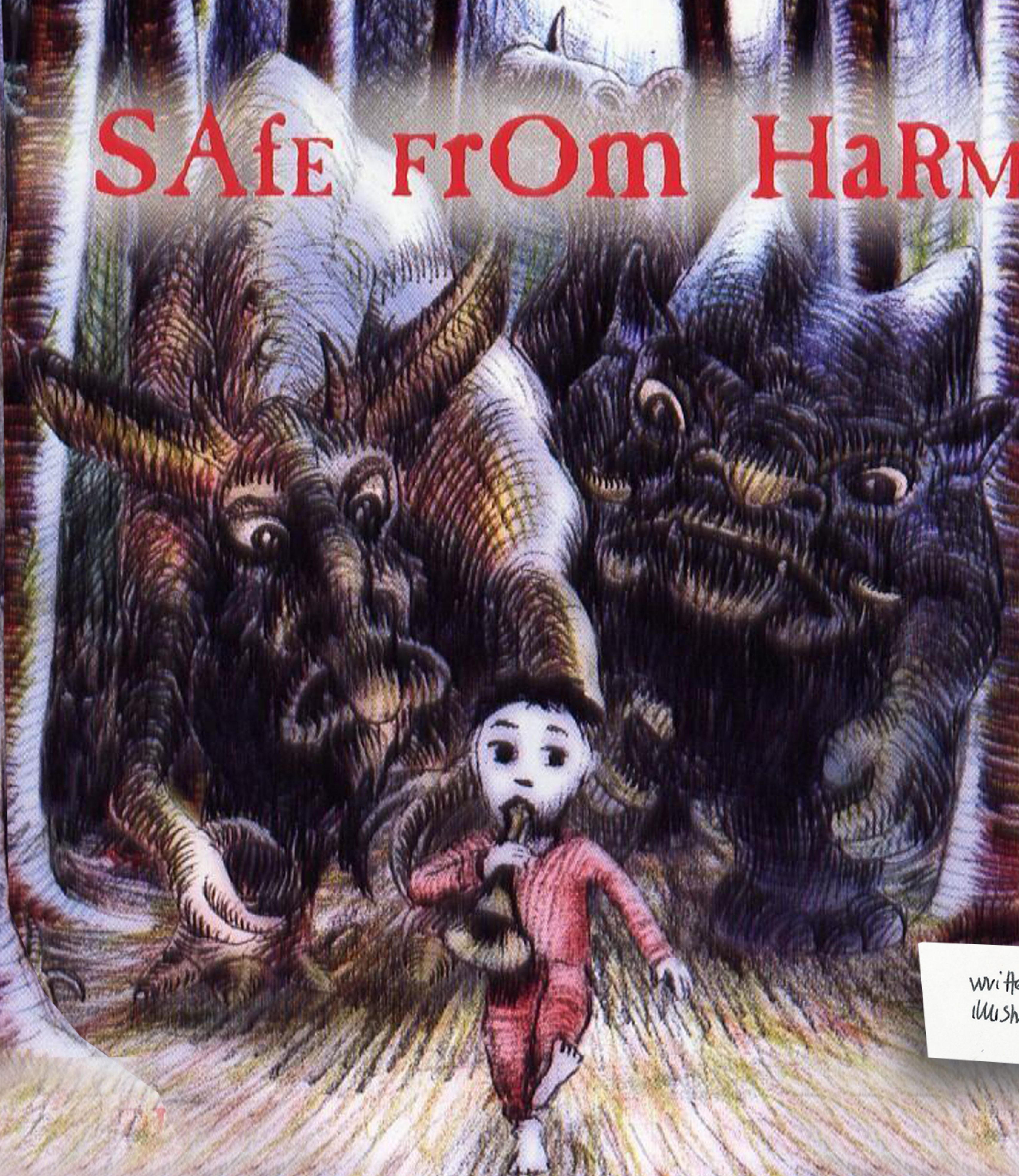


SAfe FrOm HaRM



written by RSoArmstrong
illustrated by Jason White



SAFE FROM HARM

written by R. S. O. Armstrong
illustrated by Jason White

(the best words in the best order)

All quotations contained in this
book are acknowledged at the end

What is sung at the cradle carries itself to the grave



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TO DAISY AND DALLY

A CHILD'S ANGER IS OFTEN BIGGER than HIMSELF

Children have little moments of very great power



Jack, aged nearly ten, decided
he was never going to eat again.

*Tender are a mother's dreams
But her babe is not what he seems
See him plotting in his mind
To grow up some other kind*



For many hours Mr and Mrs tried everything
to make Jack eat his vegetables and fishes.

It's easy to fly into a passion - anybody can do that - but to be angry with the right person,
at the right time, to the right extent and in the right way - well, that's not easy

Until finally,

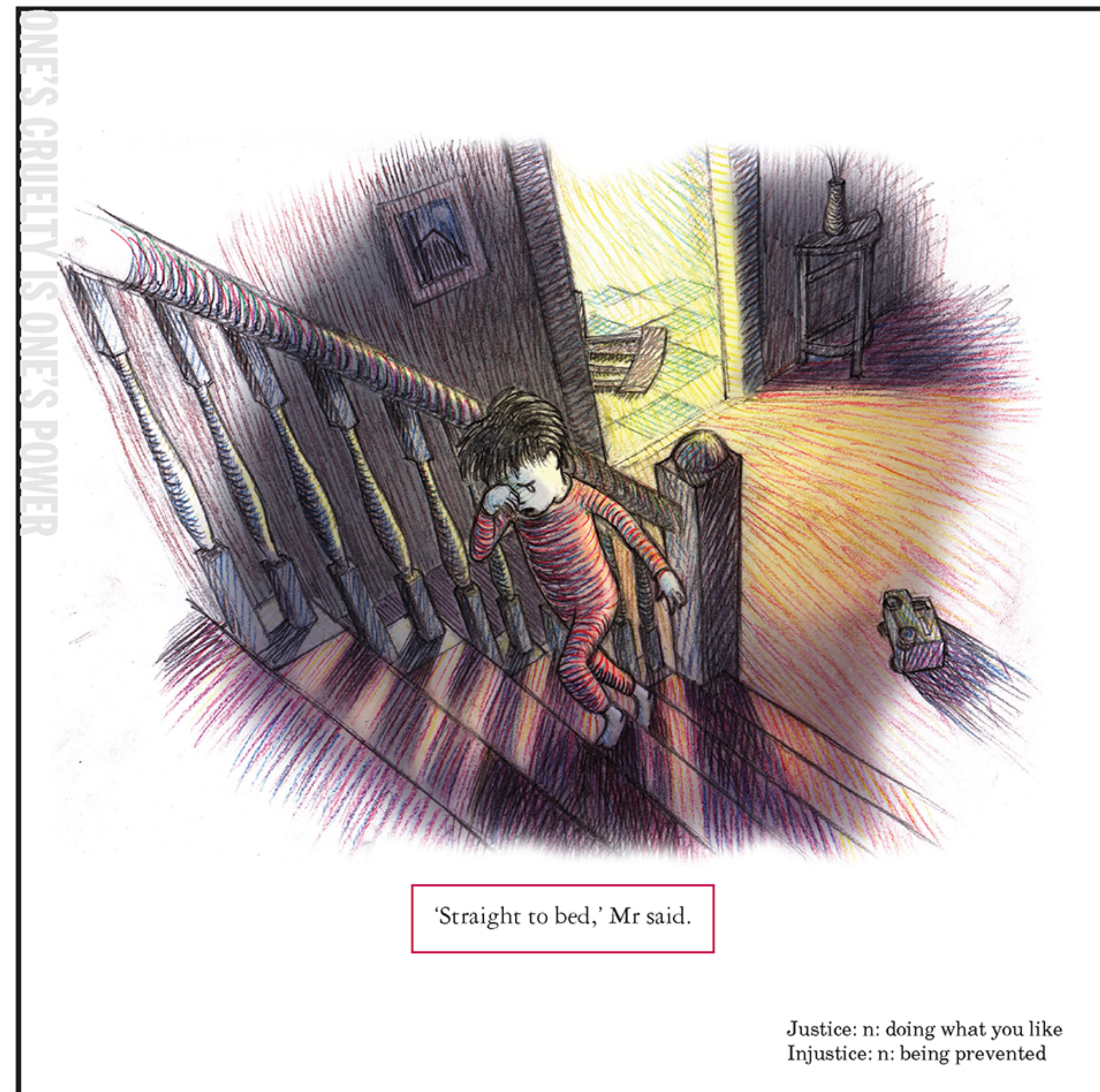


I HATE + LOVE:

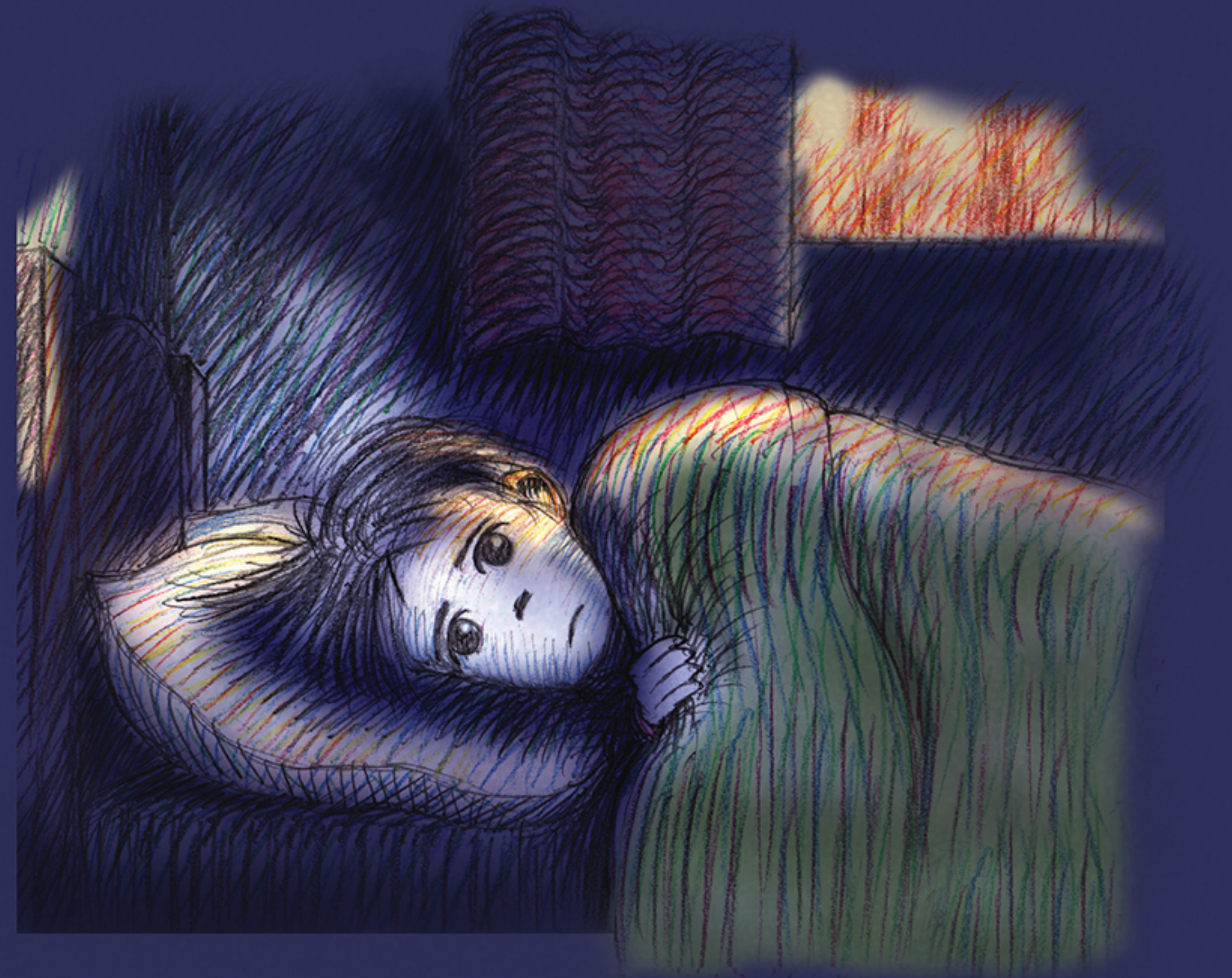
how can that be?

i don't know

i feel the agony



MYSELF AND ME
SEEM SOMETIMES TO ACT
QUITE DIFFERENTLY.
I SAY, 'DON'T CRY.'
HE SAYS, 'I'LL CRY A LOT.'
I SAY, 'LET'S SLEEP INSTEAD.'
HE SAYS, 'I'D RATHER NOT.'



And there Jack lay, feeling anger, sorrow, bitterness and dismay.

PERHAPS THE GREATEST CONSOLATION OF THE OPPRESSED IS TO FEEL SUPERIOR TO THEIR TYRANTS

THERE IS A SENSE OF BEING IN ANGER.
A REALITY AND PRESENCE.
AN AWARENESS OF WORTH.
IT IS A LOVELY SURGING

WHAT WE DO IS JUST
A SHADOW OF WHAT WE
REALLY WANT TO DO



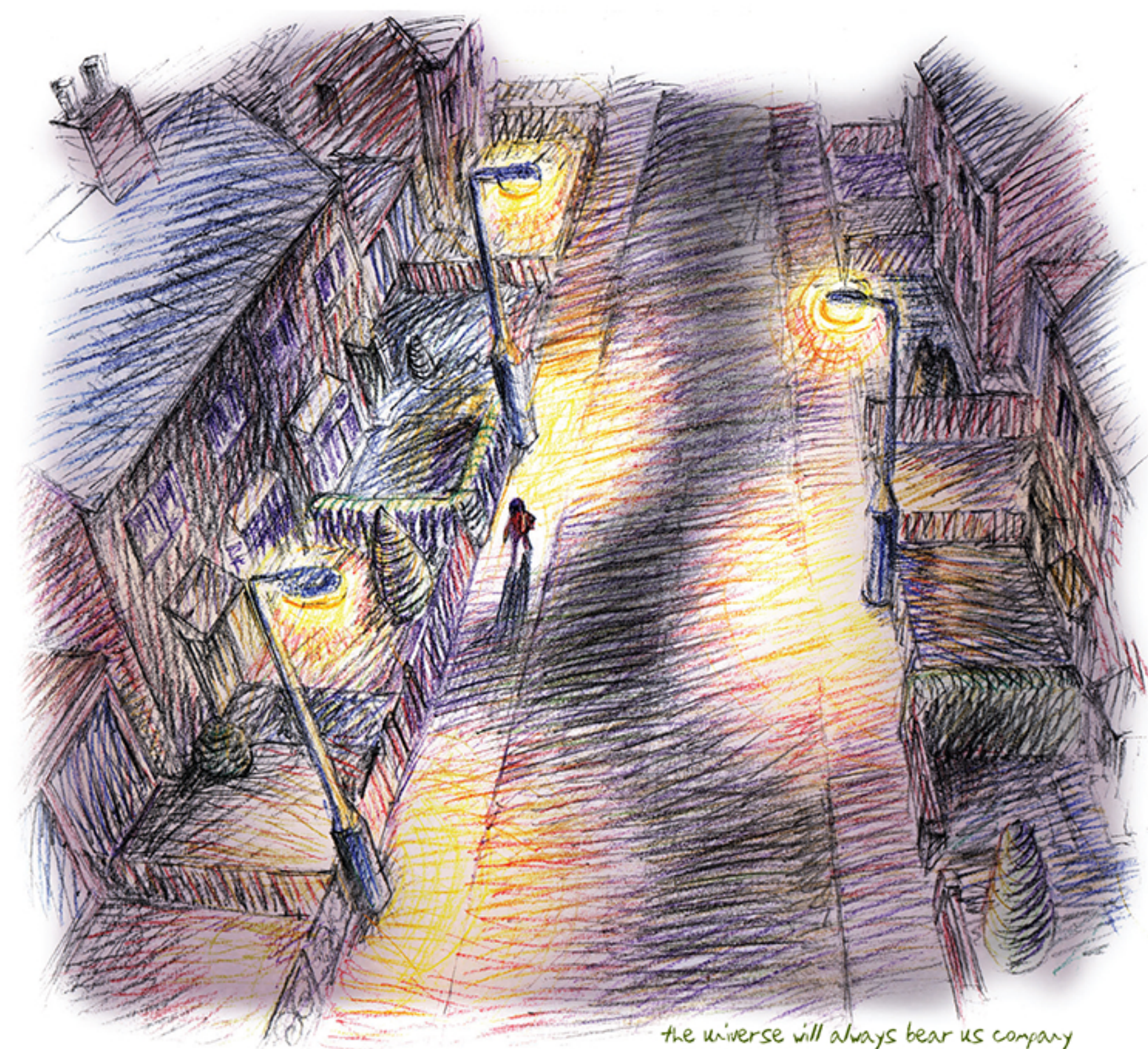
'I'm an orphan now!' he exclaimed.
'My ex-parents shall feel the loss and the shame.'

Against nature's silence I use action

GO BEFORE
YOU THINK



I shall run away.'



So from the house that was no longer his home

FEAR IS
Bigger
THAN god




Jack set out into the dark world alone . . .

The self is more distant than any star

As he walked the clouds cleared and
light fell across his path,

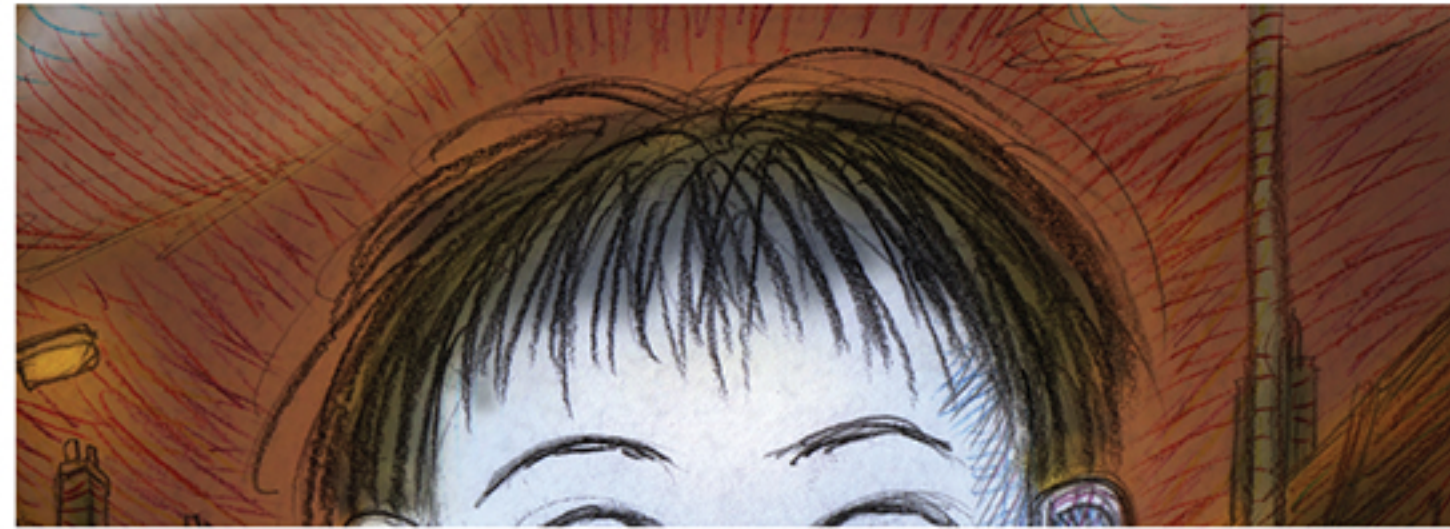
for there the moon now hung – so near,

Night, when words fade and things come alive



so bright, so full, so clear.

**JUST AROUND
the CORNER
IS A WORLD
OF THINGS that
DIDN'T HAPPEN**



You don't need eyes to see - you just need vision



Then, before Jack's eyes,
to his great surprise,



If we meet no strangeness, it's because we look for none

the lamps turned to trees and a forest, dark
and brooding, settled over the street.



The earth moved beneath Jack's feet and Jack noticed (wow!) where the moon's rays landed

as if all this fever of living were simplicity itself

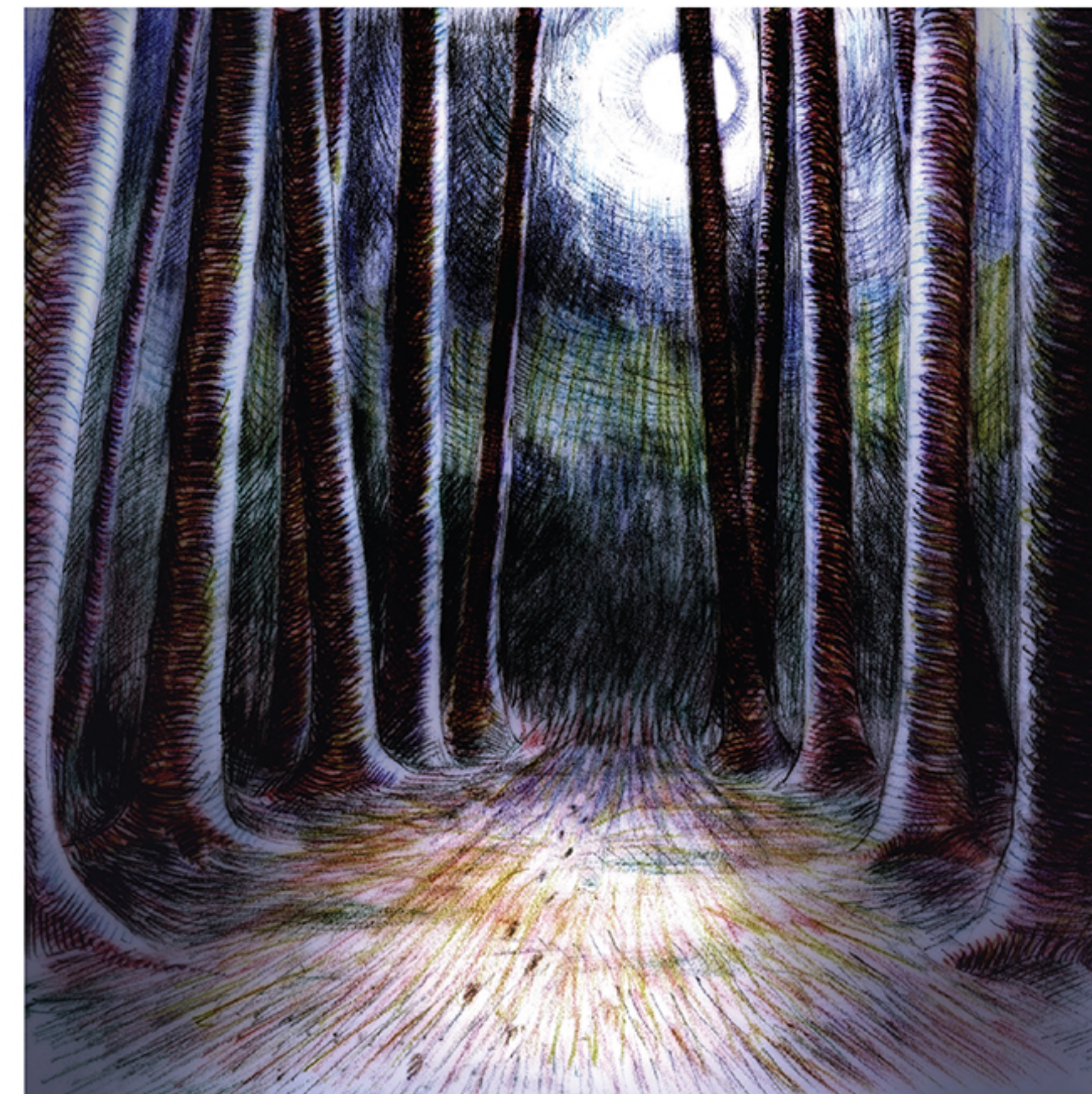
ART DOES NOT REPRODUCE THE VISIBLE, RATHER IT MAKES IT VISIBLE



the strangest animal sat.
Just as Jack regarded it,
it regarded Jack.



'Come follow me,' the monster said.
'Come follow me . . .'



And Jack did, far into the forest, where no birds are heard, no spiders or cobwebs, no mice with night-eyes, not a leaf that stirs. The trees that touch the clouds, the silence that is dense and loud: no wolves, no badgers, no foxes, no snakes, no water, no breeze – just the stillness, the closeness, just the moon and just the trees.

It's easier to stay out of the woods than get out

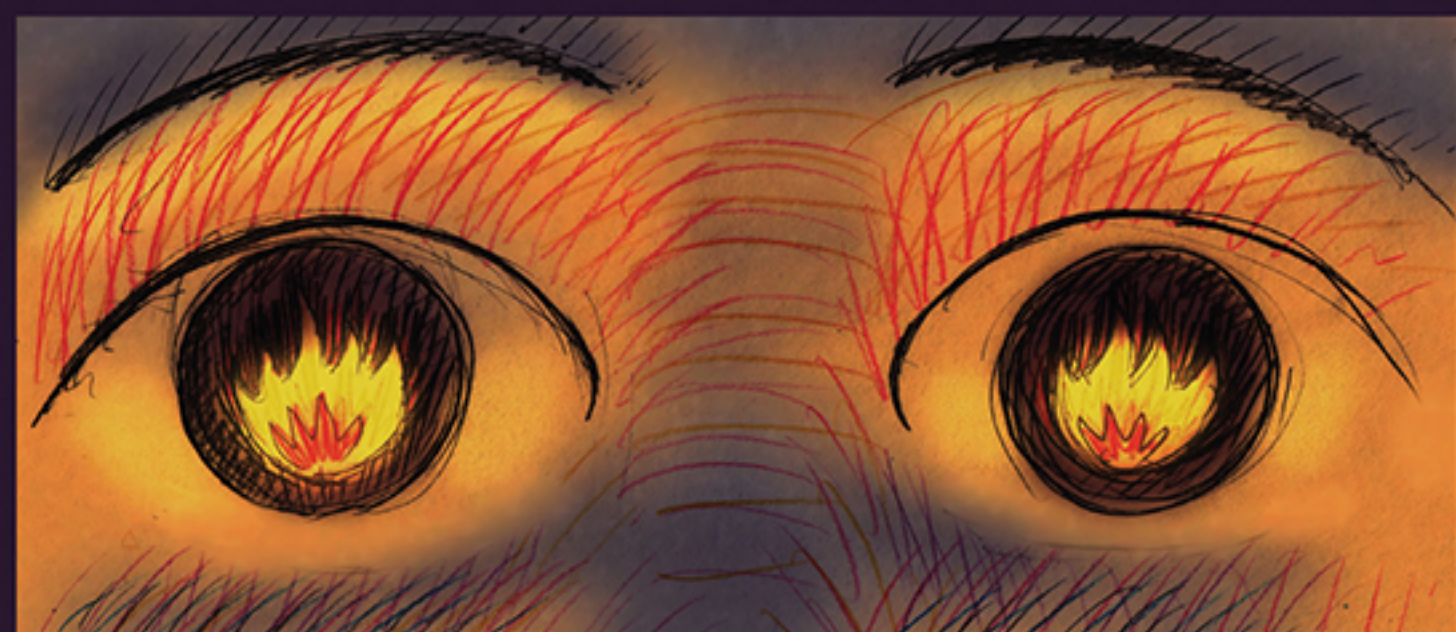
*There is no limit to how
complicated things can get –
on account of one thing always
leading to another.*

*everything is easier to recognise
than to define*



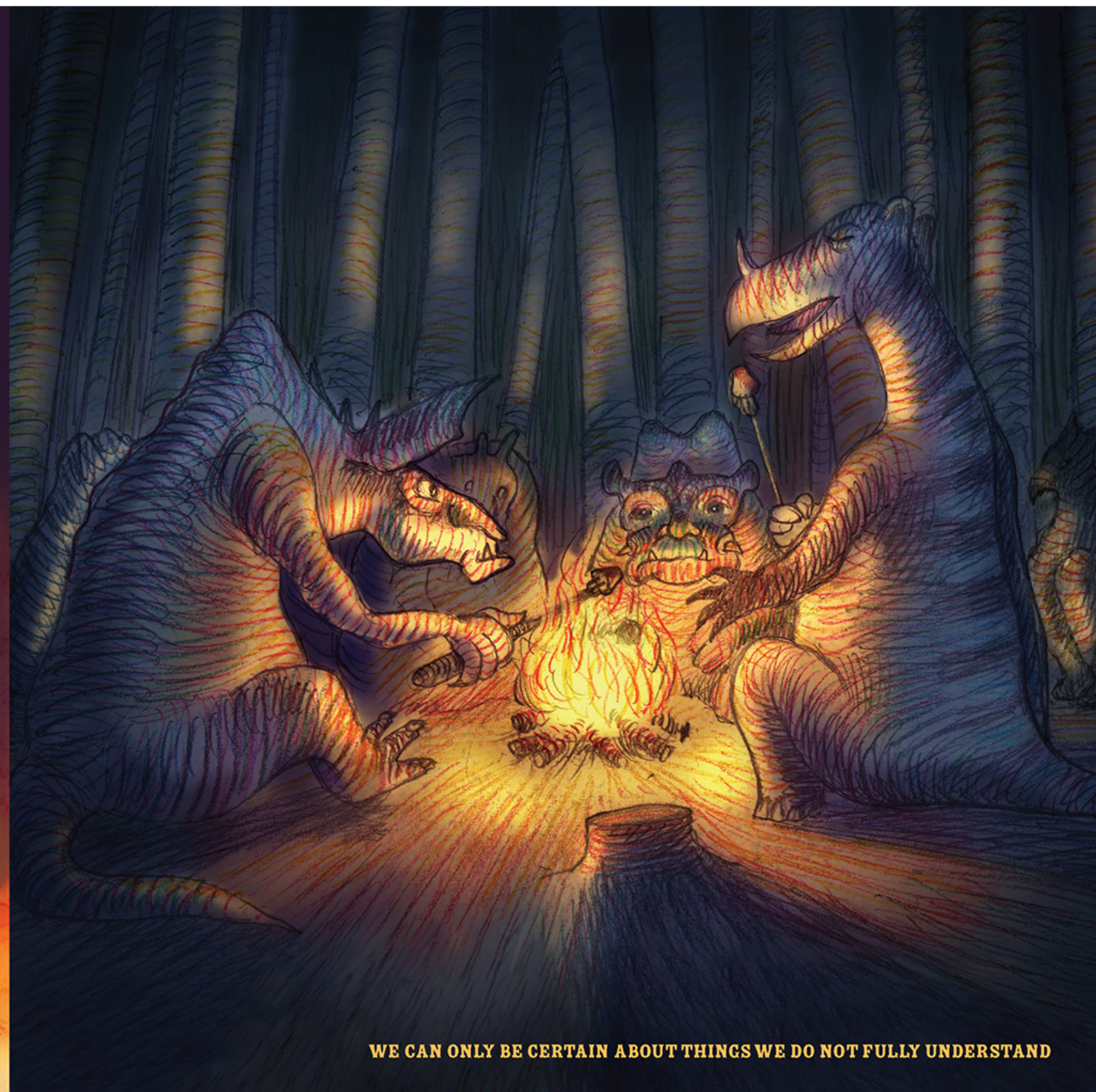
Down the street I didn't take along the road I never walked

'Look ahead, young man,' the small monster said and Jack saw a gentle glow, that as they came nearer seemed to grow – until the trees parted and Jack saw in the clearing a small fire had been started.

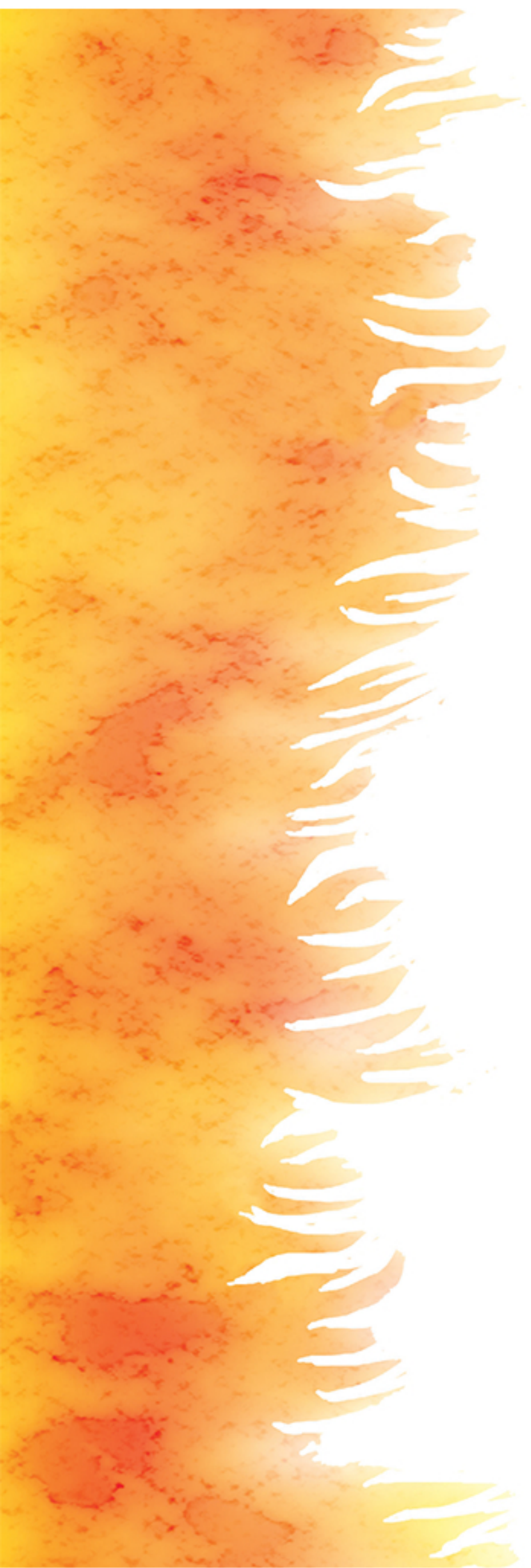


At the fire lots of big monsters sat
eating fried hamster and having a chat.

The secret thoughts of man run over
all things, Holy, profane, clean &
Obscene, monsters & Angels, grave &
light: without shame nor blame

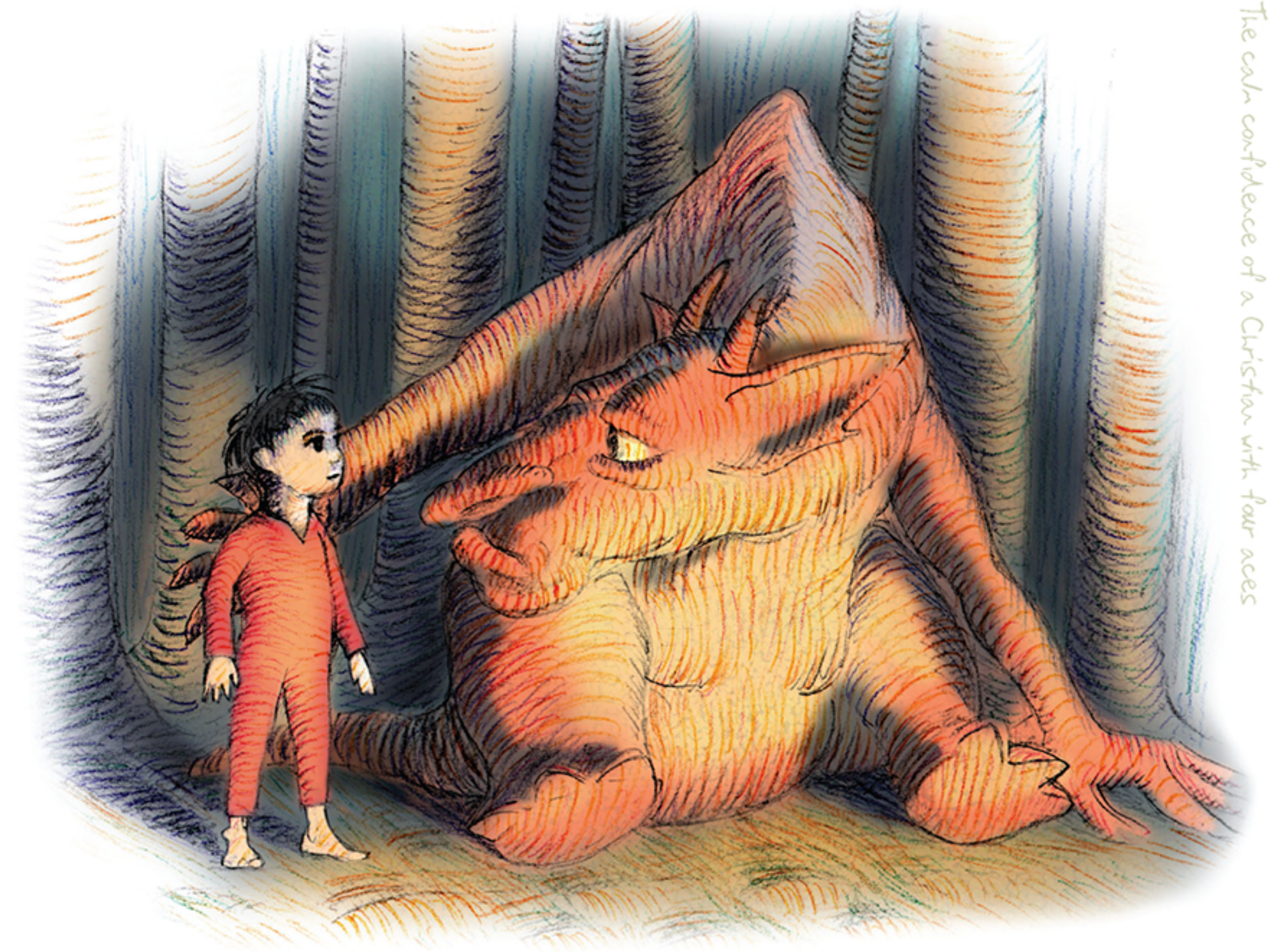


WE CAN ONLY BE CERTAIN ABOUT THINGS WE DO NOT FULLY UNDERSTAND



EVERY LIFE IS MANY DAYS, DAY AFTER DAY.
WE WALK THROUGH OURSELVES, MEETING ROBBERS,
GHOSTS, MONSTERS, GIANTS, OLD MEN, YOUNG MEN,
WIVES, WIDOWS, BROTHERS-IN-LOVE.
BUT ALWAYS MEETING OURSELVES

THOSE MOMENTS – WHAT MOMENTS – WHEN
EVERYTHING IS CLEAR: WHERE TO GO, WHAT TO
DO – IT ALL TAKES CARE OF ITSELF, AND ONE
DOESN'T HAVE TO ASK ABOUT ANYTHING



The calm confidence of a Christian with four aces

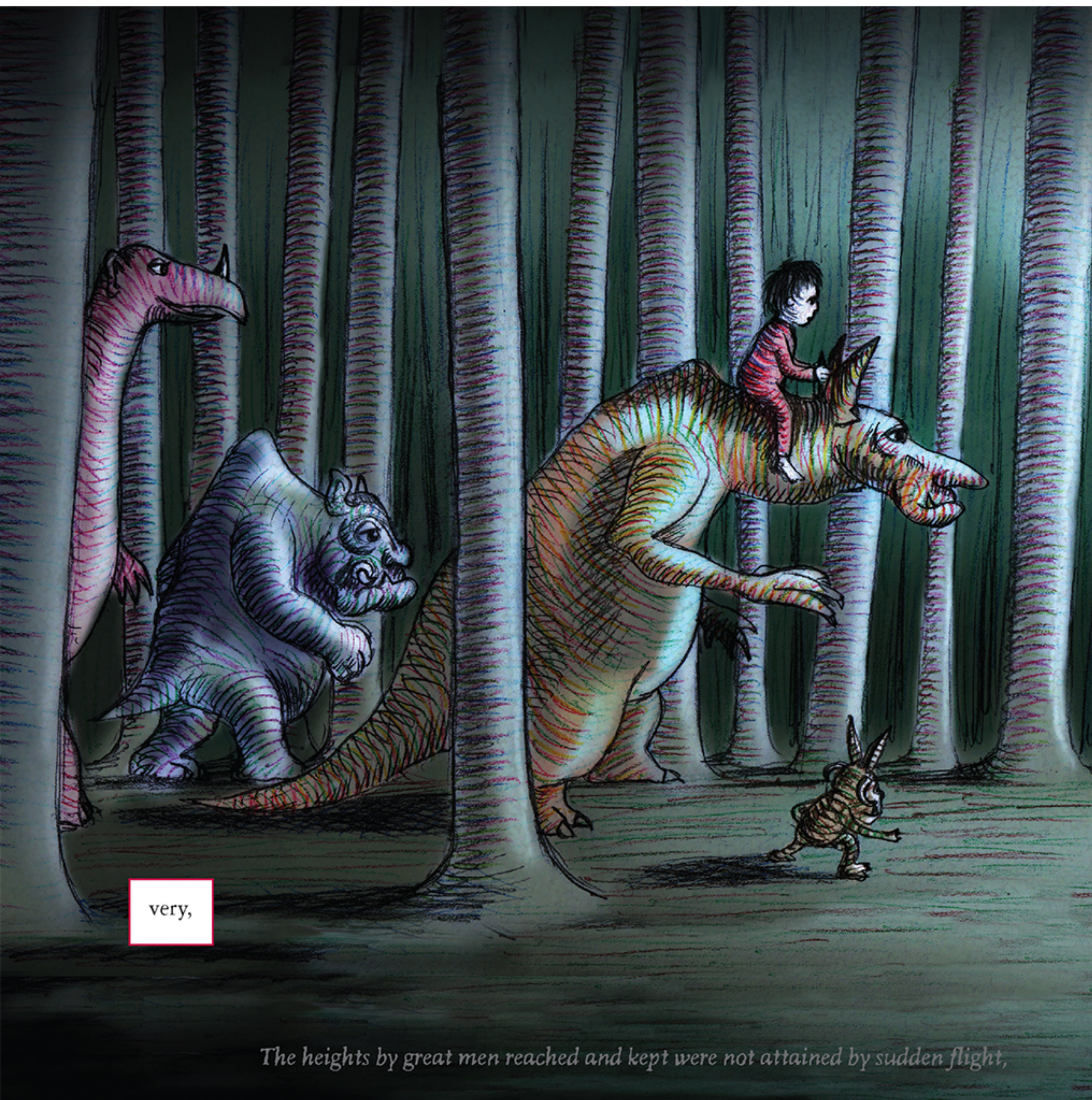
'We've been waiting for you, young man,' said Old Crooked Face,
the leader of the monsters' gang.



To make us feel small in the right way is a function of art

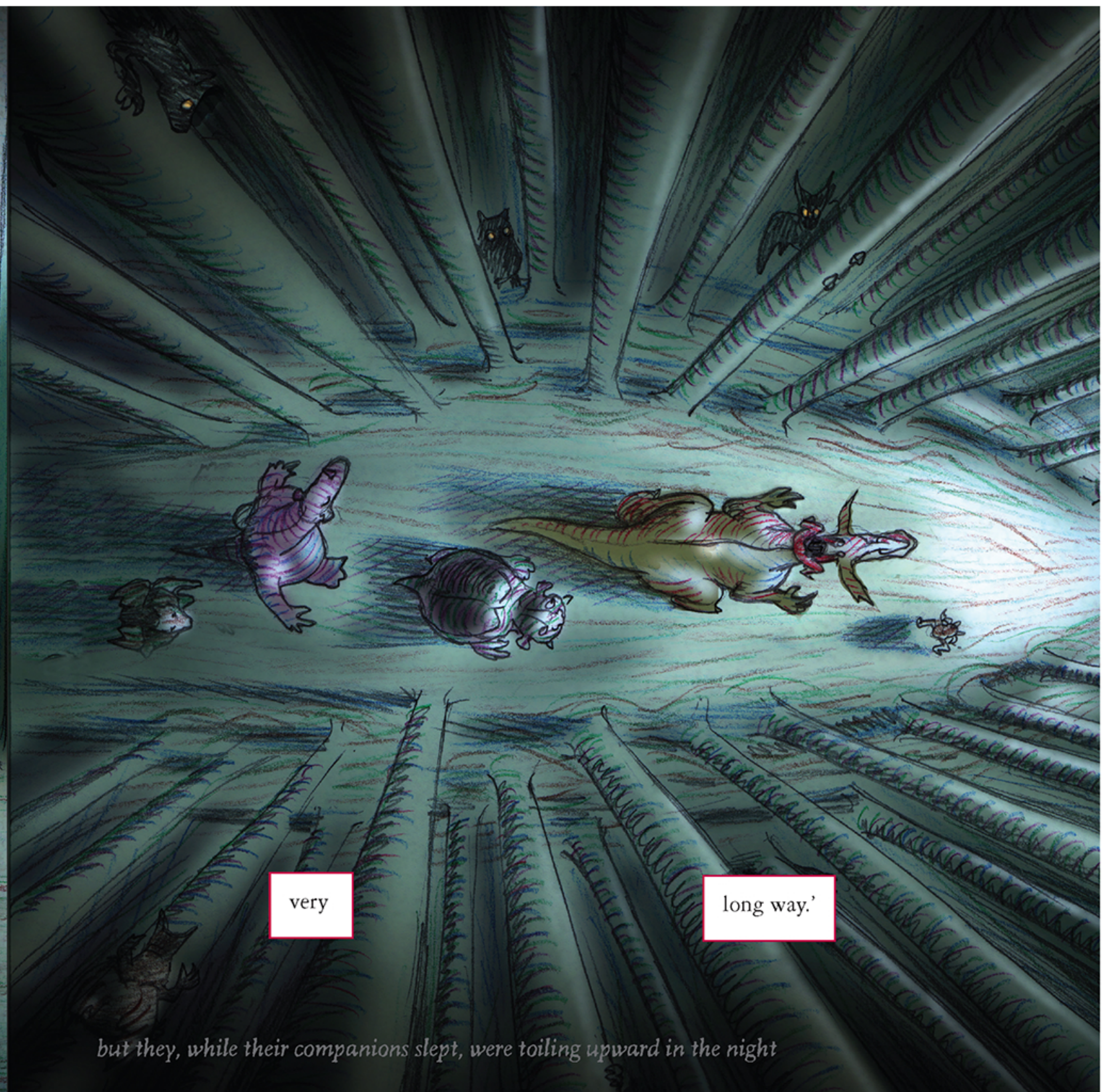


'All monsters to the ready – and you, young sir, climb up.
We have orders to take you to the mountain top.'
'Gosh, said Jack, 'that is a very,



very,

The heights by great men reached and kept were not attained by sudden flight,



very

long way.'

but they, while their companions slept, were toiling upward in the night

WHO ARE THOSE WHO WALK – ALWAYS – BESIDE YOU?



They walked for hours, rising above the forest and up the mountainside, sometimes singing monster songs,* but mostly serious and quiet.

* A Typical Monster Song

Piano

The musical score is written for piano in 4/4 time. It consists of five staves of music. The melody is simple and repetitive, using mostly quarter and eighth notes. The lyrics are written below the notes. The song is a typical monster song, with lyrics that are both threatening and humorous.

I am a mon ster

fi ddle did e dee i'll eat an y thing that's sma ller than me I am a mon ster

fi ddle did e dell big, bad and ug ly with a dread ful smell I love spi tting

yaw ning and far ting I love do ing pre tty much a ny thing as long as it's di rt y

I am a mon ster fi ddle did e doo I'll laugh to my self as i'm ea ting up you.

Avoiding danger is no safer, the fearful are caught as often as the bold



At the very top the monsters stopped: 'From here you go alone.'
So Jack slid off Old Crooked Face's scaly back.

A man has reasons that a man doesn't know



He slowly approached the stone, unsure but determined,
where a figure, still and silent, sat.



The infinite possibility of meaning and the impossibility of capturing it

The figure turned and Jack saw it was a boy –
and more than this: the boy's face was the same as his.

IT'S HARDER TO SEE YOUR OWN FACE THAN ANYONE ELSE'S



And the clothes he wore were as Jack's own,
and his manner, his look, his everything –
it was Jack or Jack was him!
In his hand this boy held a golden horn.

I DO NOT KNOW WHAT I HAVE GIVEN YOU
I DO NOT KNOW WHAT YOU HAVE RECEIVED
WHEN I GIVE, I GIVE MYSELF



He reached out and gave it to Jack.

Each feels himself most free where his feeling of living is at its greatest



Jack took a deep breath of the cold mountain air,
and blew a glorious, soaring fanfare.



The music filled the night, and as Jack walked the monsters fell in behind;
as if in a trance they rushed and danced down the mountainside.

OTHERS BREAK US, BUT WE MEND OURSELVES

I WANT
TO LIVE
OUT
LOUD!

Music is my first love and it will be my last



Back through the forest he led them all,
What had seemed like hours going
— coming back, felt like no time at all.

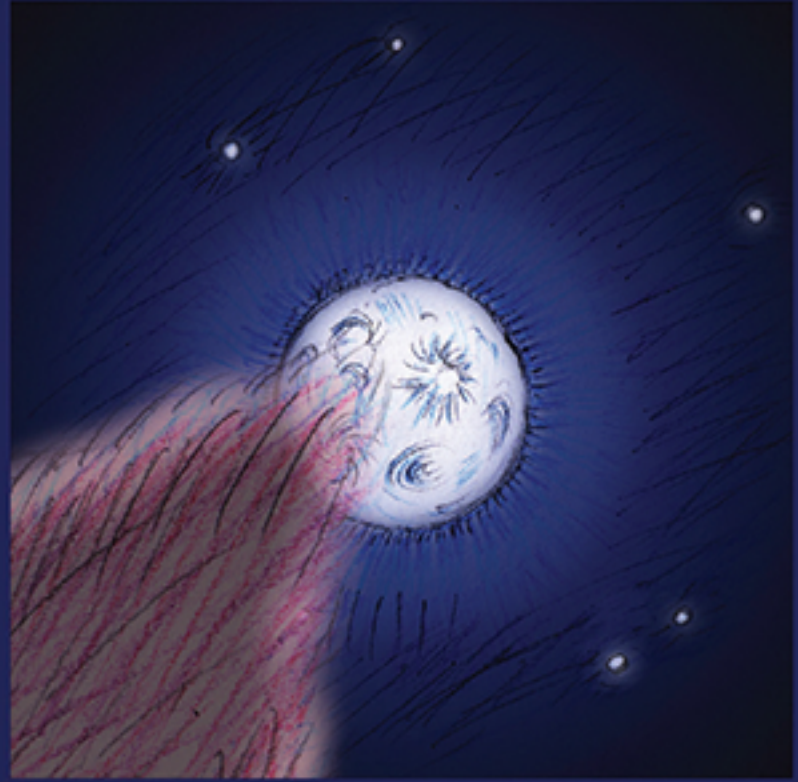
Out of nowhere Jack's house appeared;
no lights, no pavement, no road –
just the house in the forest, on its own.
So they all came to a stop.

I DID NOT KNOW WHAT I HAD LEFT
UNTIL I RETURNED

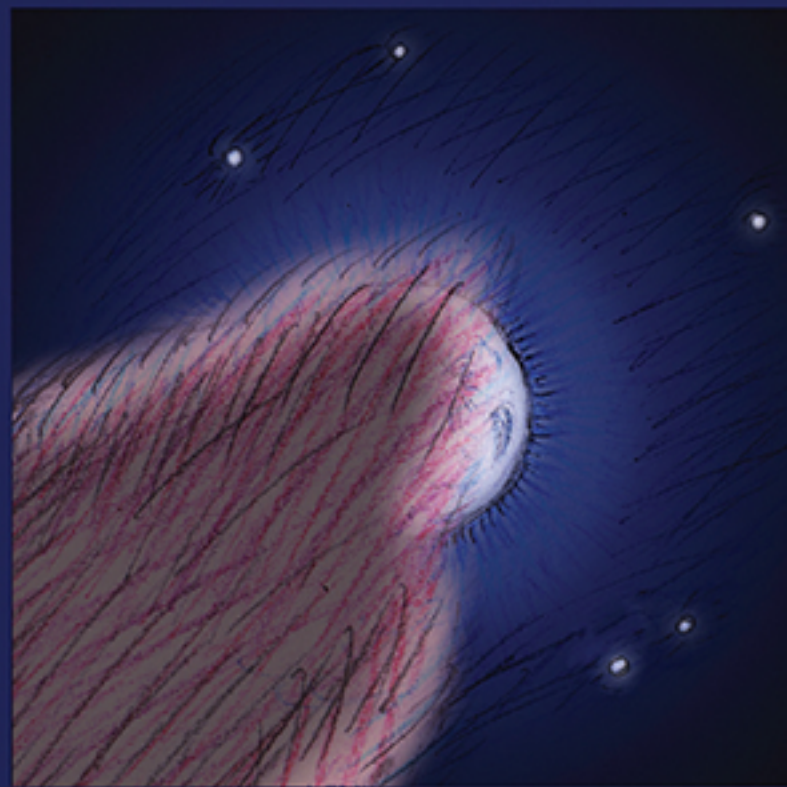
Each day contains many deaths and resurrections



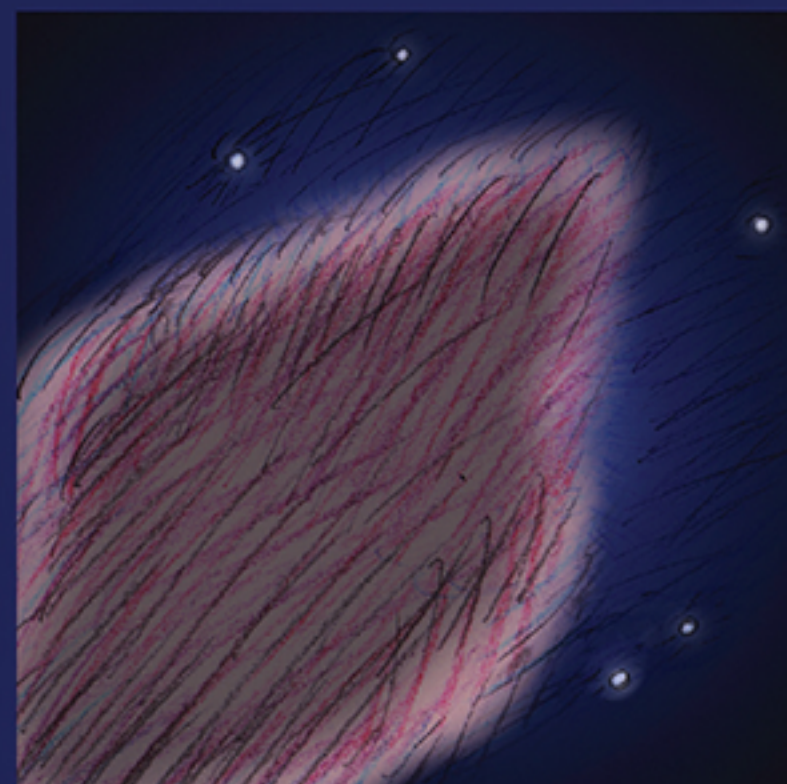
Houses contain us



TRUTH IS A PERMANENT
BLUR IN THE CORNER
OF YOUR EYE



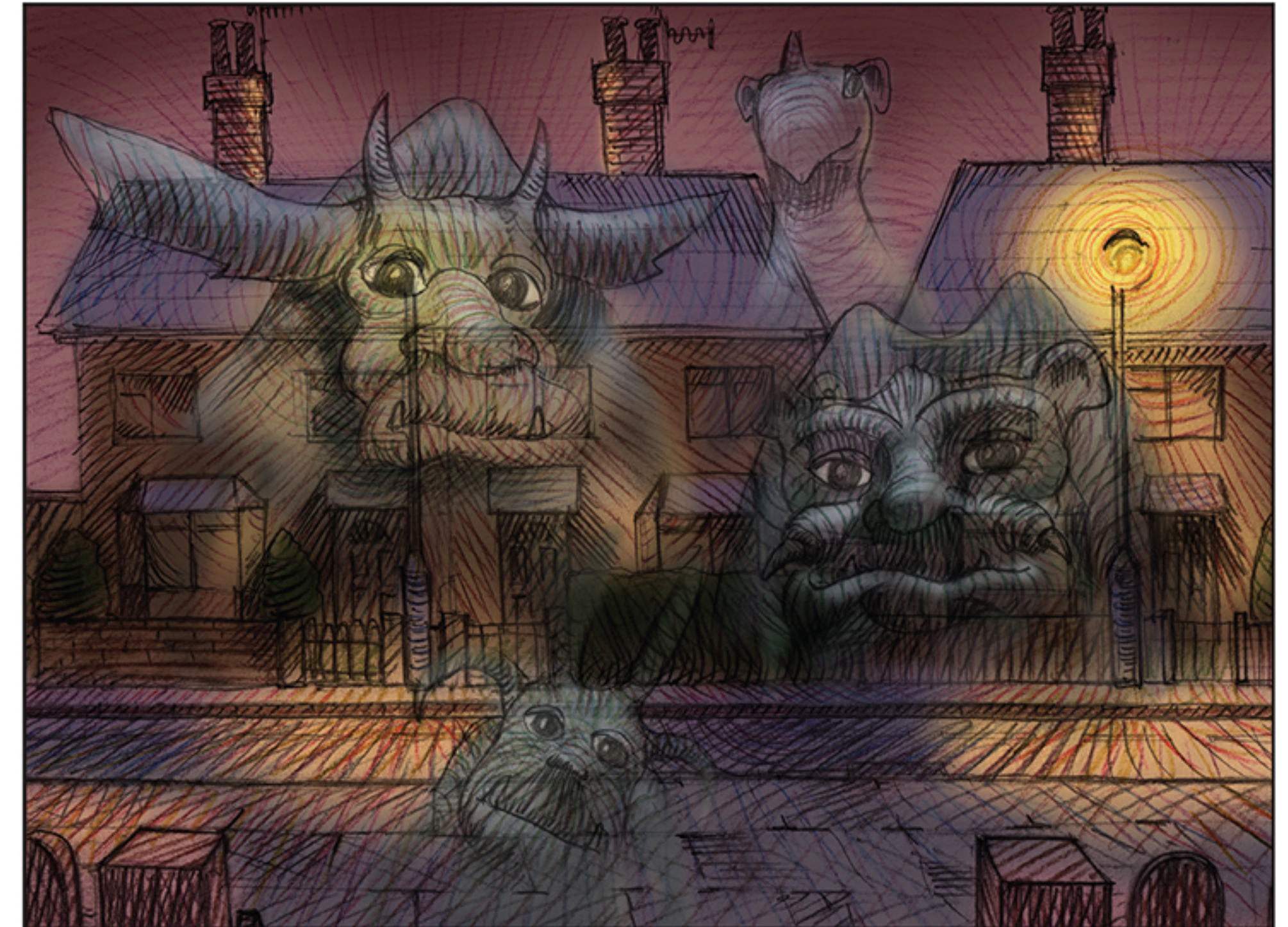
At that moment clouds passed across
the moon, until all the light was gone



and Jack turned to see

Insight: a gust of truth –
in one door, out the other

When you are gone
there's a silence that falls
not just on the leaves
& the trees
the cars
& the breeze -
No, my senses become
muffled,
my skin,
though soft,
feels old
When you are gone



the monsters and the forest disappearing silently.

If we do meet again, why we shall smile! If not, why then, this parting was well made

Love is
nature's
second
sun



In their place Mr and Mrs stood,
waiting for Jack at their door.



The eyes of my eyes were opened

And as Jack turned to face them
it was the strangest thing he saw.

Our life is what our thoughts make it



For Mr and Mrs, as – say – night turns to day, were slowly
fading away, and becoming the children they were previously:

There's no vocabulary

For love within a family, love that's lived in

But not looked at, love within the light of which

All else is seen, the love within which

All other love finds speech



in fact, the children they will always, always be.

NOTHING EVER ENDS

YOU CANNOT SAY
EXACTLY WHAT YOU
MEAN and EVEN IF
YOU COULD NO ONE WOULD
UNDERSTAND IT
AS YOU MEAN IT AND
ANYWAY THEY WOULD
all have their
OWN MEANING



IT JUST BEGINS AGAIN

Isn't It Enough

And as she talked of love that lived on after death
& spirits in the air & karma
& all the ghosts she had seen
And as she talked of Universal connections
& life's ebb and flow
& astronomy and tarot
I thought
'You fool'.

Isn't it enough --
The stars and the moon
The streets and the stones
Art and movies, books and coffee
And the way we build our homes
Isn't it enough--
The love between and within us
The love that is practical & small
Tender & sometimes hardly there
Aren't we enough?

How do planes fly,
Migration, alcohol,
How did we discover olive oil, or wine--
Milk with tea.
Isn't it enough --
Virginia Woolf or T. S. Eliot
Jane Austen or Nabokov
Frasier and the *Sopranos*
The ants at work
Tides and clouds
Space, history, time
Life, every moment of it, every drop of it



**IT IS NO SMALL THING
TO HAVE ENJOYED THE SUN,
TO HAVE LIVED LIGHT IN THE SPRING,
TO HAVE LOVED, TO HAVE THOUGHT,
TO HAVE DONE**

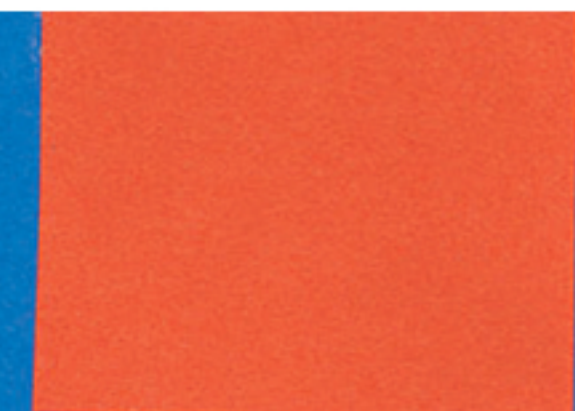
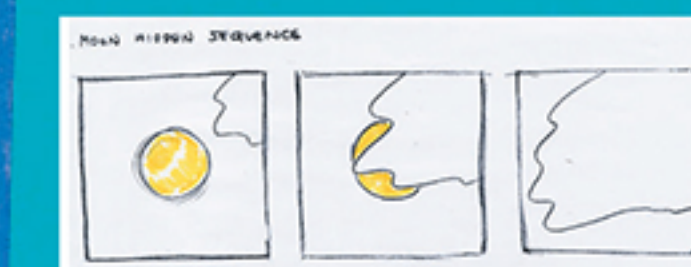


The stunning album *Safe From Harm*
by Dusted is in all good record shops.

www.dusted-music.com
www.safefromharm.info

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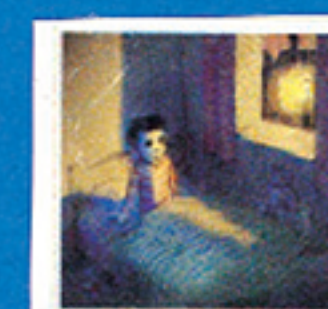
To know, to get to the truth of anything, is a mystic act of which at best logic can only bubble on the surface



I don't want the cheese anymore. I just want to get out of the trap



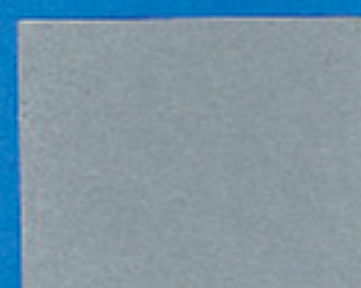
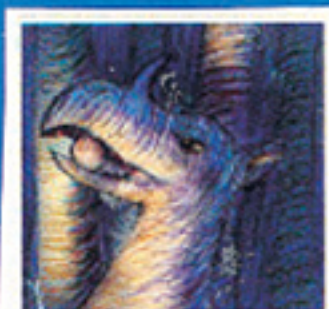
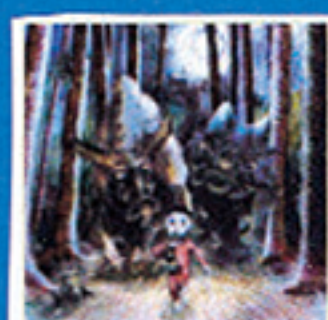
A good answer leads to a further question



YOU WILL BE VERY UNHAPPY IF YOU EVER LOVE SOMEONE MORE THAN YOURSELF



The real secret of patience is having something to do in the meantime



Beauty can be unbearable, driving us to despair, offering us for a minute a glimpse of eternity that we would like to stretch over the whole of time



DO I CONTRADICT MYSELF? VERY WELL THEN I CONTRADICT MYSELF, (I AM LARGE, I CONTAIN MULTITUDES)



TRUTH KEEPS WELL UNTIL DISTURBED

