



If...

25th-Anniversary Edition



Sarah Perry

The J. Paul Getty Museum Los Angeles

If cats could fly...



If mice were hair...



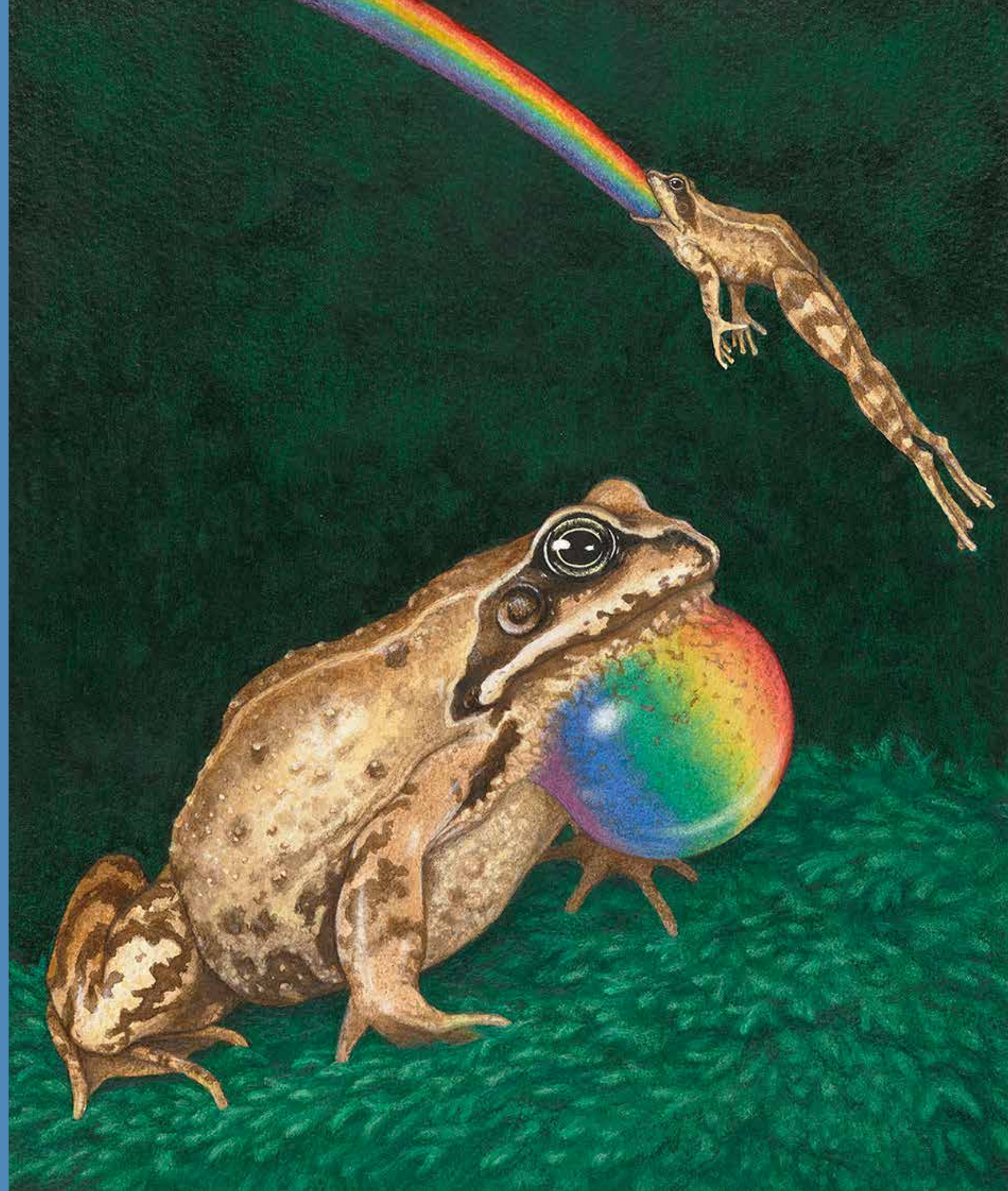
If turtles were magnetic...



If worms had wheels...



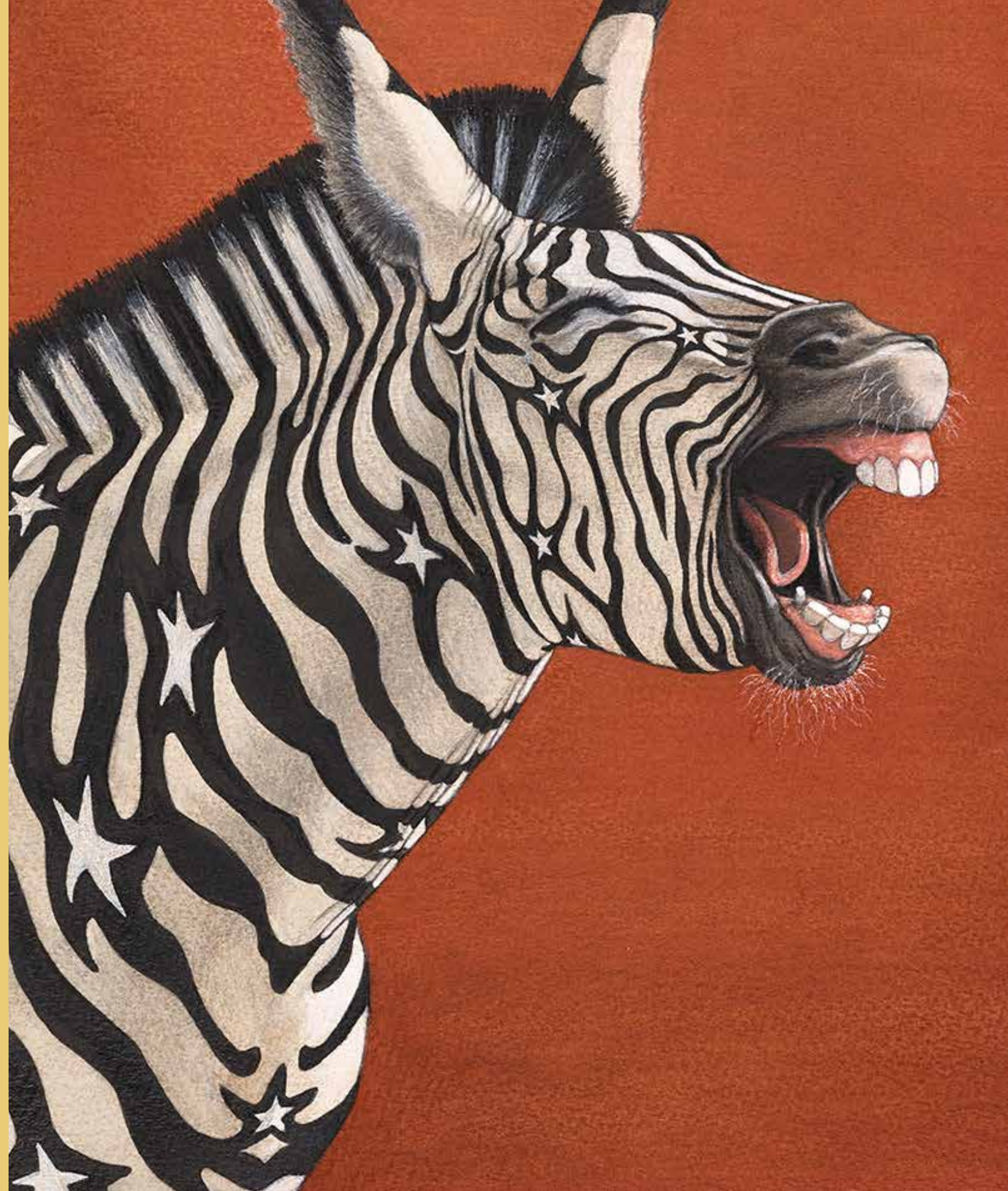
If frogs ate rainbows...



If dogs were mountains...



If zebras had stars and stripes...



If music could be held...



If ugly were beautiful...



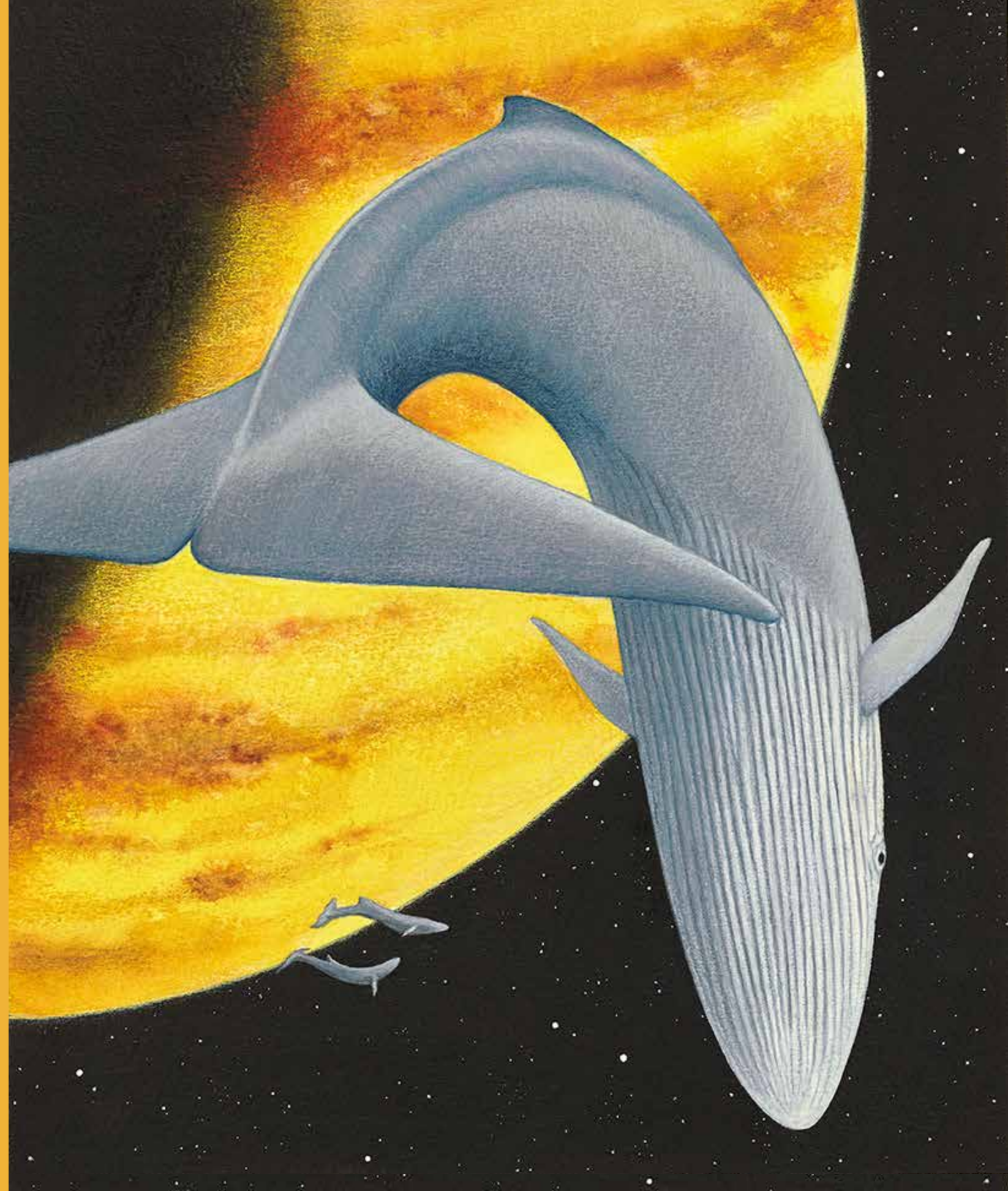
If toes were teeth...



If caterpillars were toothpaste...



If whales lived in outer space...





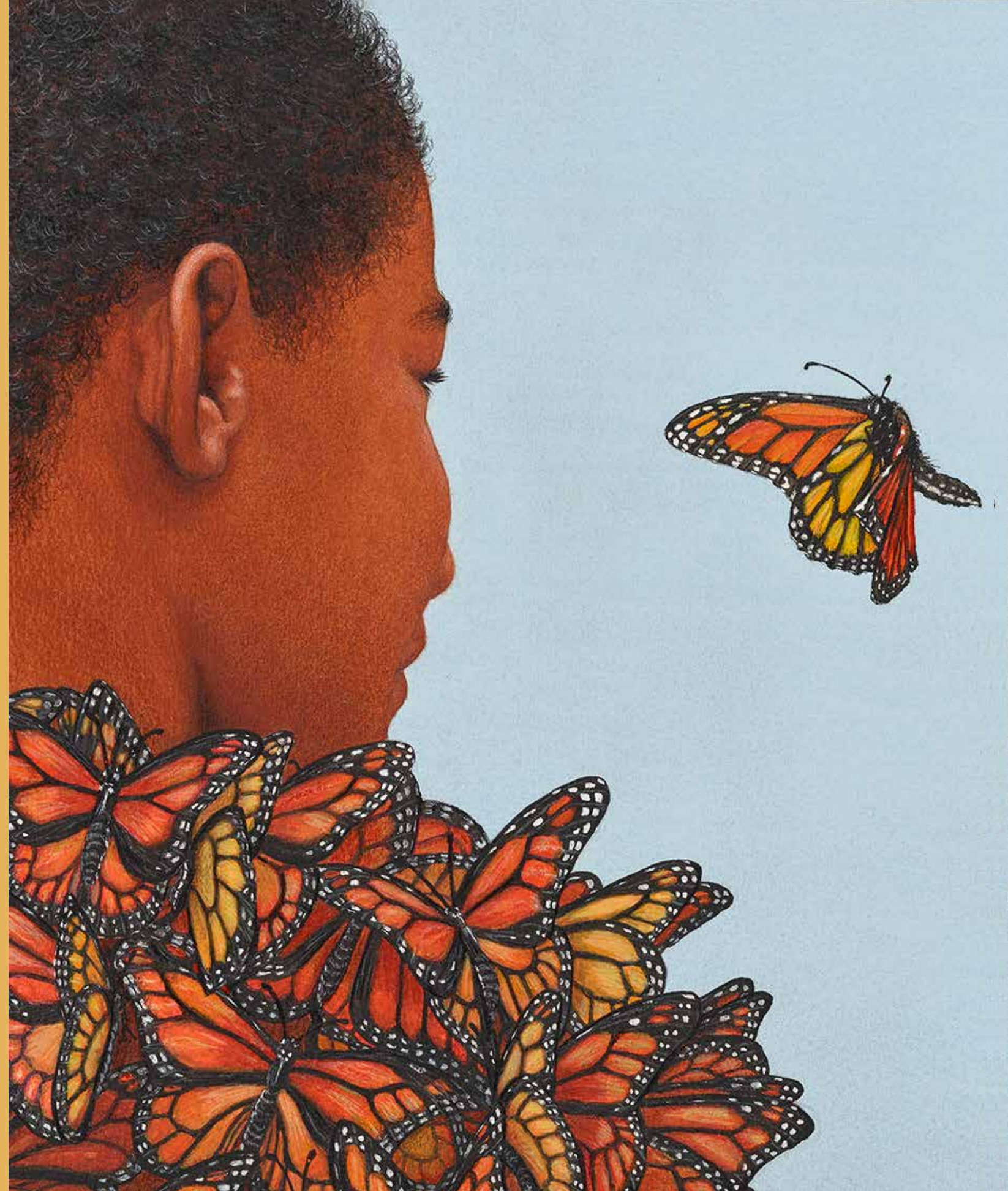
If leaves were fish...



If clouds were spirits...



If butterflies were clothes...



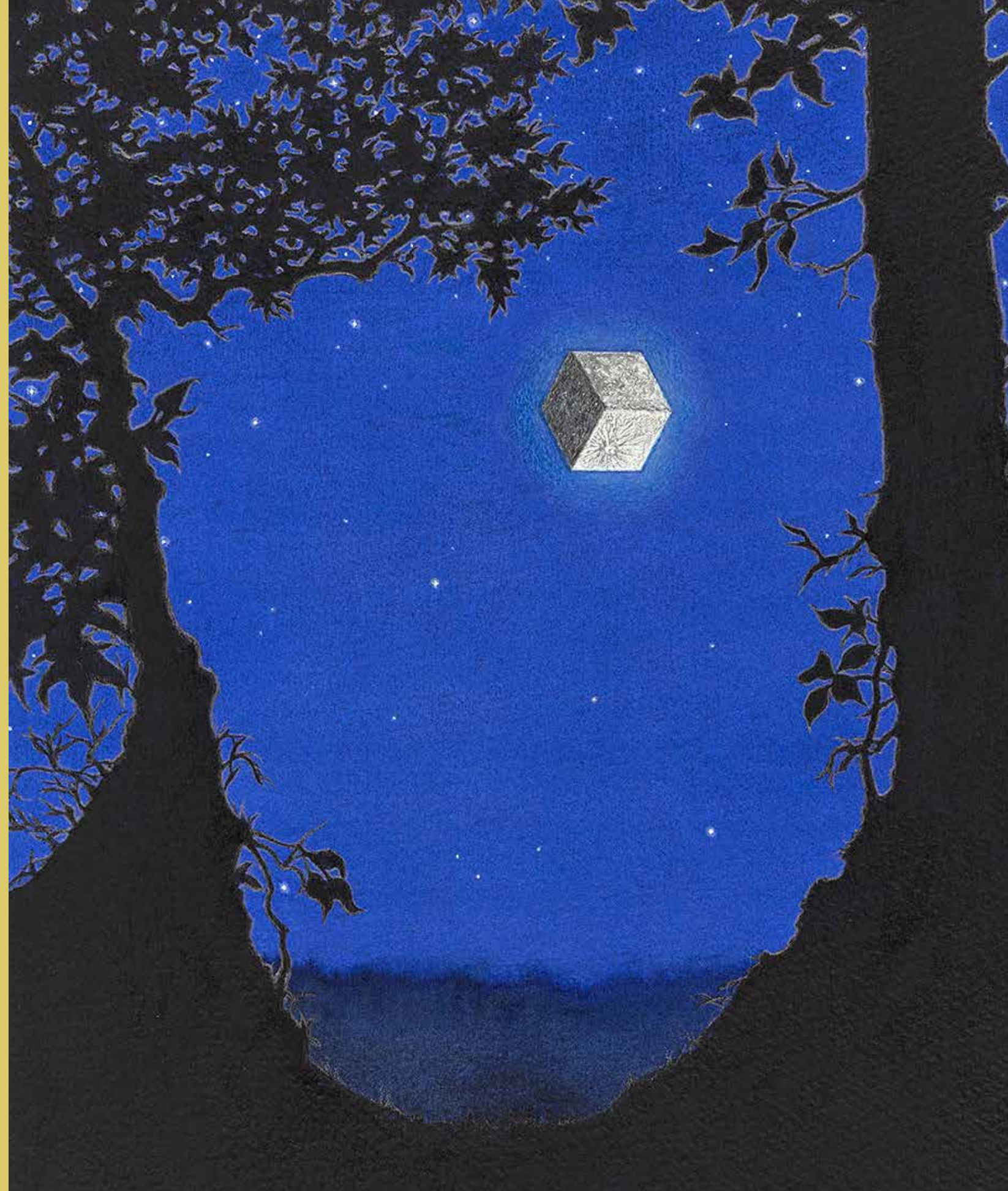
If lightning made rhinos...



If ants could count...



If the moon were square...



If kids had tails...



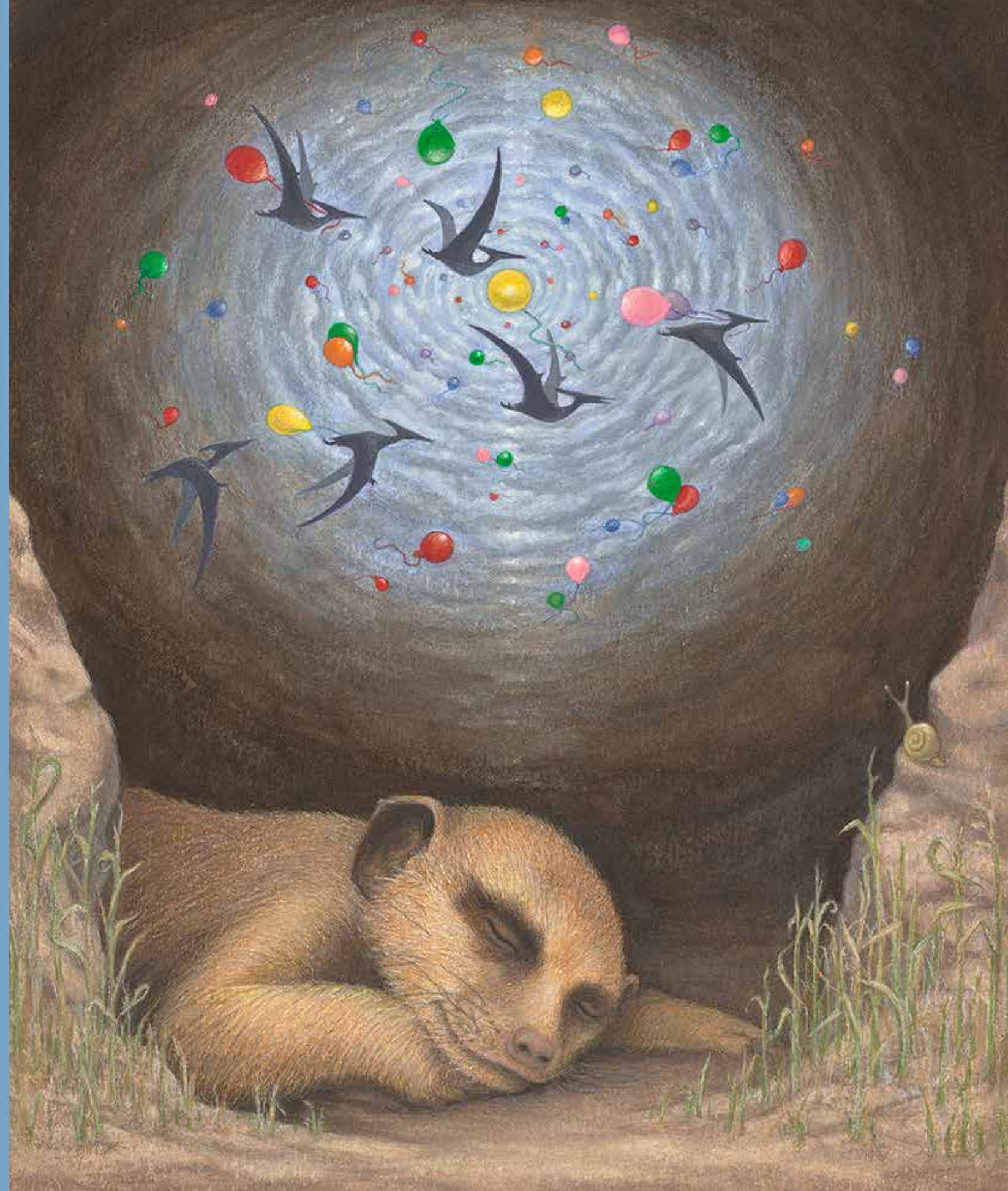
If spiders could read braille...



If hummingbirds told secrets...



If dreams were visible...





If this is the end...
Then dream up some more!



Readers' Guide: The Secrets of *If...*

If... is a book of surreal possibilities. It can be explored in many different ways. You can use a single illustration or combine several to create your own stories. For example, *If frogs ate rainbows...*, what would their croaks sound like and what would they say? *If cats could fly...* and *If mice were hair...*, what then? In contrast, you can perceive each painting as a complete story in itself.

The twenty-fifth anniversary edition of *If...* includes two brand-new stories, together with a sprinkling of freshly added spot illustrations. If you were familiar with the book in its original version, see if you can spy the differences (hint: keep an eye on those monarch butterflies)! My hope has always been that this book will trigger a smile (either private or shared) and help readers experience the real wonders that surround us all: water can become solid, bees do dance, and birds can truly soar.

Over the years, many children and adults have shared with me their own creative stories and observations about *If...* I thought it might be fun to share here a few of my favorite secrets hidden away within the pages of the book. For instance, there are animals hiding in plain sight throughout the book. How many different critters can you count?



If turtles were magnetic...

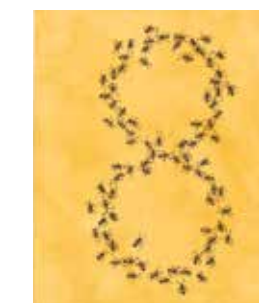
Have you ever imagined how a turtle might experience the passage of time?

All tortoises are turtles, but not all turtles

are tortoises. And some can live for more than a hundred years! When life unfolds in slow motion, it might seem as though time is going backward. That is why the face of the wristwatch stuck on this turtle's shell has numbers that run counterclockwise.

If clouds were spirits...

Look at the foothills in the distance. Notice anything unusual? *If you're feeling a sense of déjà vu, here's a clue: remember If dogs were mountains...?*



If ants could count...

How many ants does it take to make the shape of the number 8? Count and see for yourself!

Hint: what's 8×11 ?

If spiders could read braille...

What do you suppose that furry spider is reading?

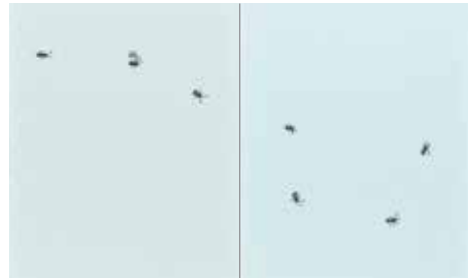
Allowing for a little artistic license, the page is open to one of my favorite quotes from an ancient Chinese text called the Tao Te Ching by Lao Tzu: "Existence is beyond the power of words to define... From wonder into wonder, existence opens.... The way to do is to be."



If dreams were visible...

What strange birds are flying through the meerkat's jolly dream? *They are not birds at all, in fact, but Pteranodons! These amazing creatures*

lived some sixty million years ago in North America. Their favorite food was fish, but I bet they would have loved batting around balloons with their toothless beaks!



Endsheets

Endsheets are the first and last pages that are glued to the covers of a book. Is there anything familiar about the shapes created by the clever crawling ants on this book's endsheets? If you have learned the constellations of the night sky, you might recognize that the insects on the front endsheet assume the positions of the stars of Ursa Major, also known as the Big Dipper, while the ants on the back endsheet take the shape of Ursa Minor, the Little Dipper. But why is there a second, lighter-colored bug perched above the second ant on the handle of the Big Dipper? *Those two ants correspond with Mizar and Alcor, two Ursa Major stars that are so close together, only those with the sharpest eyesight can perceive the fainter Alcor. In ancient times, this was used as a sort of vision test. See if you can spot Alcor the next time you are stargazing!*



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