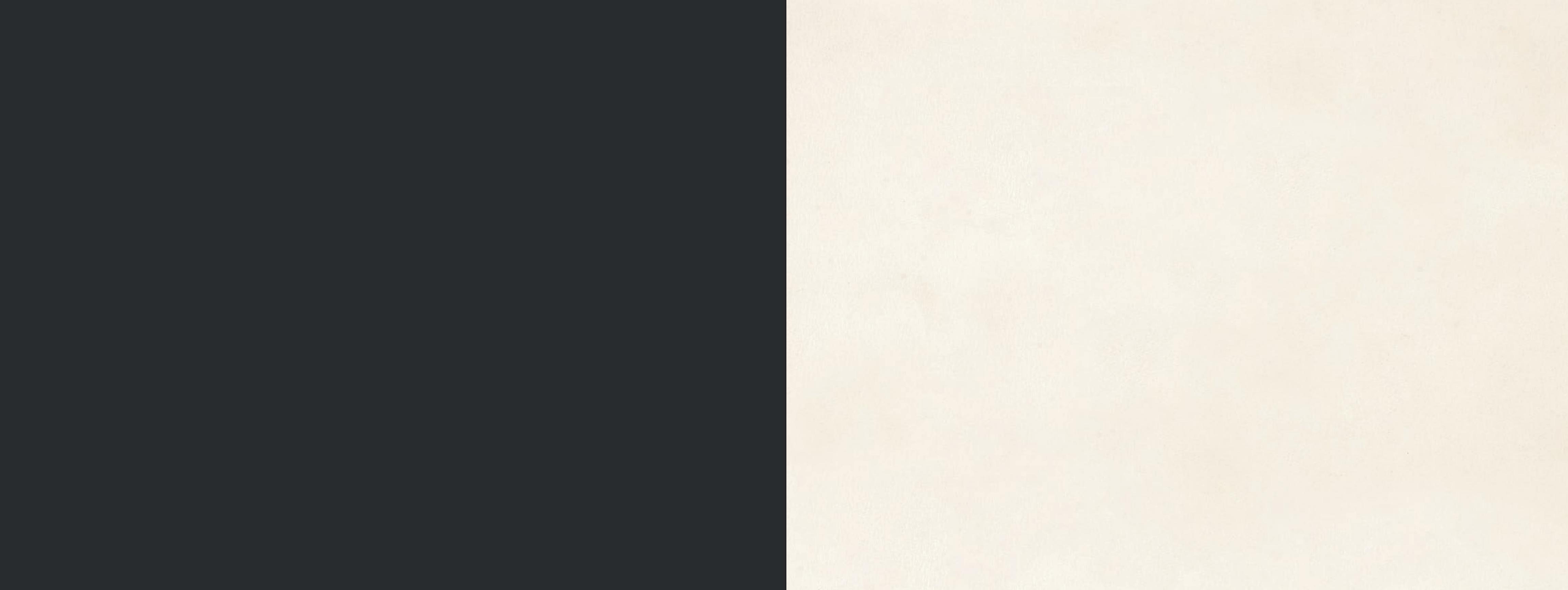


EVOLVE

a children's book for adults



by Jean-Pierre Weill





To Rachel

EVOLVE. Copyright © 2021 by Jean-Pierre Weill.
All rights reserved.

LCCN: XXXXXXXX

ISBN xxx-x-xxx-xxxxx-x (hardcover)

Cover and book design: Emmanuel Yadin Klein

Edited by Margaret Osburn and Emmanuel Yadin Klein

Scripture quotations at the end of the book are adapted from the New Living Translation.

First Edition: 2021

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

www.evolve-book.com
jp@evolve-book.com

EVOLVE

a children's book for adults



Written and Illustrated by Jean-Pierre Weill

Editors: Margaret Osburn and Emmanuel Yadin Klein
Designer: Emmanuel Yadin Klein

Jean Pierre Weill

*From so simple a beginning endless forms most beautiful
and most wonderful have been, and are being, evolved.*

- Charles Darwin

That love is all there is, is all we know of love.

- Emily Dickinson

We are storytellers. Our earliest stories come to us
from the beginnings of human consciousness.

This story emerges from the book of Genesis.





I see you are reading and looking.

Let's go on a journey together.



We'll travel through the stories from our childhood...



to the beginnings of human time.



Let us explore the world. Not merely its outside, about
which astronomers ask...

Of what is the world made?



but its inside, where the question is...

Who am I?



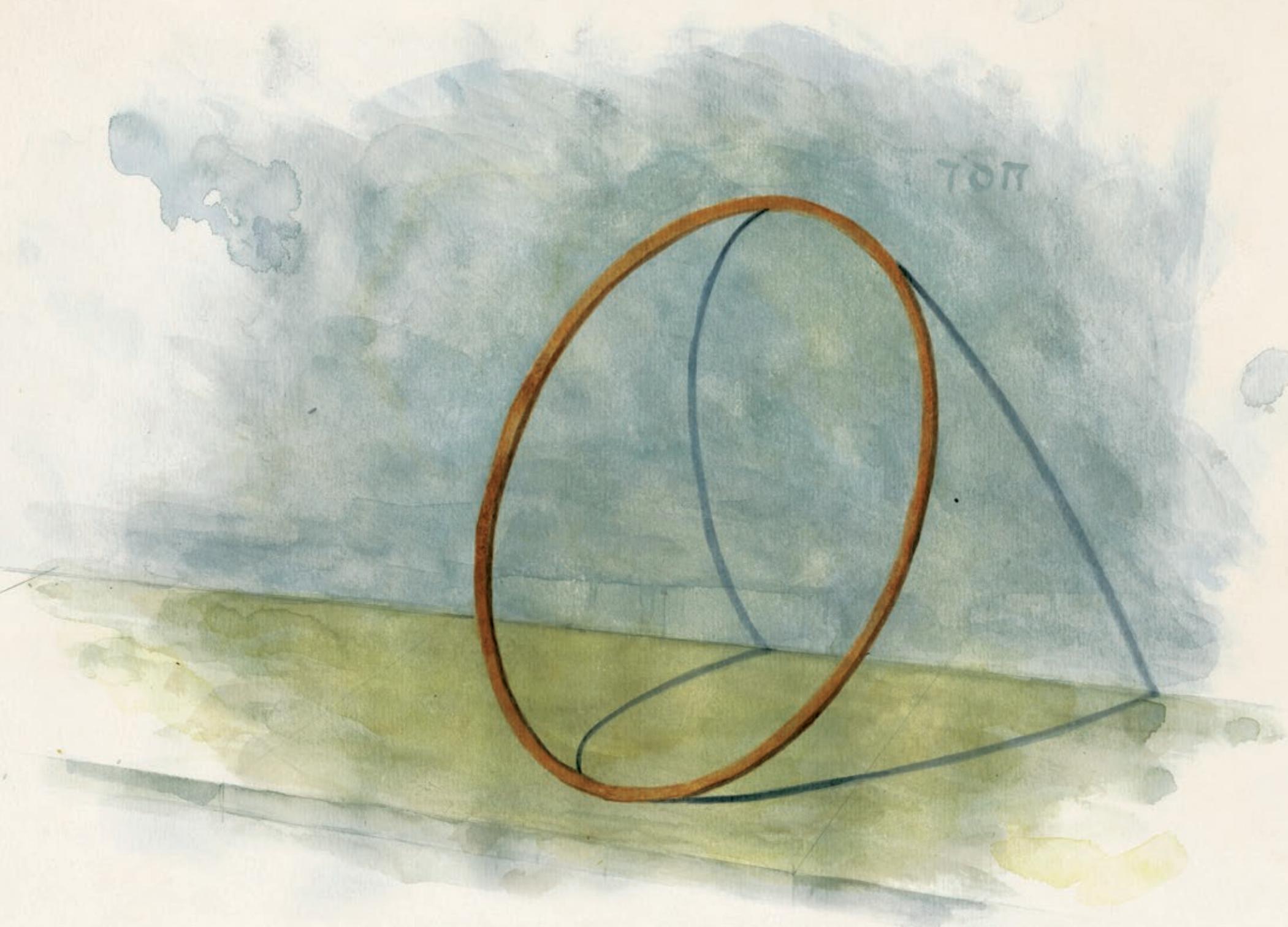
Of what is the world made?

Who am I?

These questions originate in a simple idea:



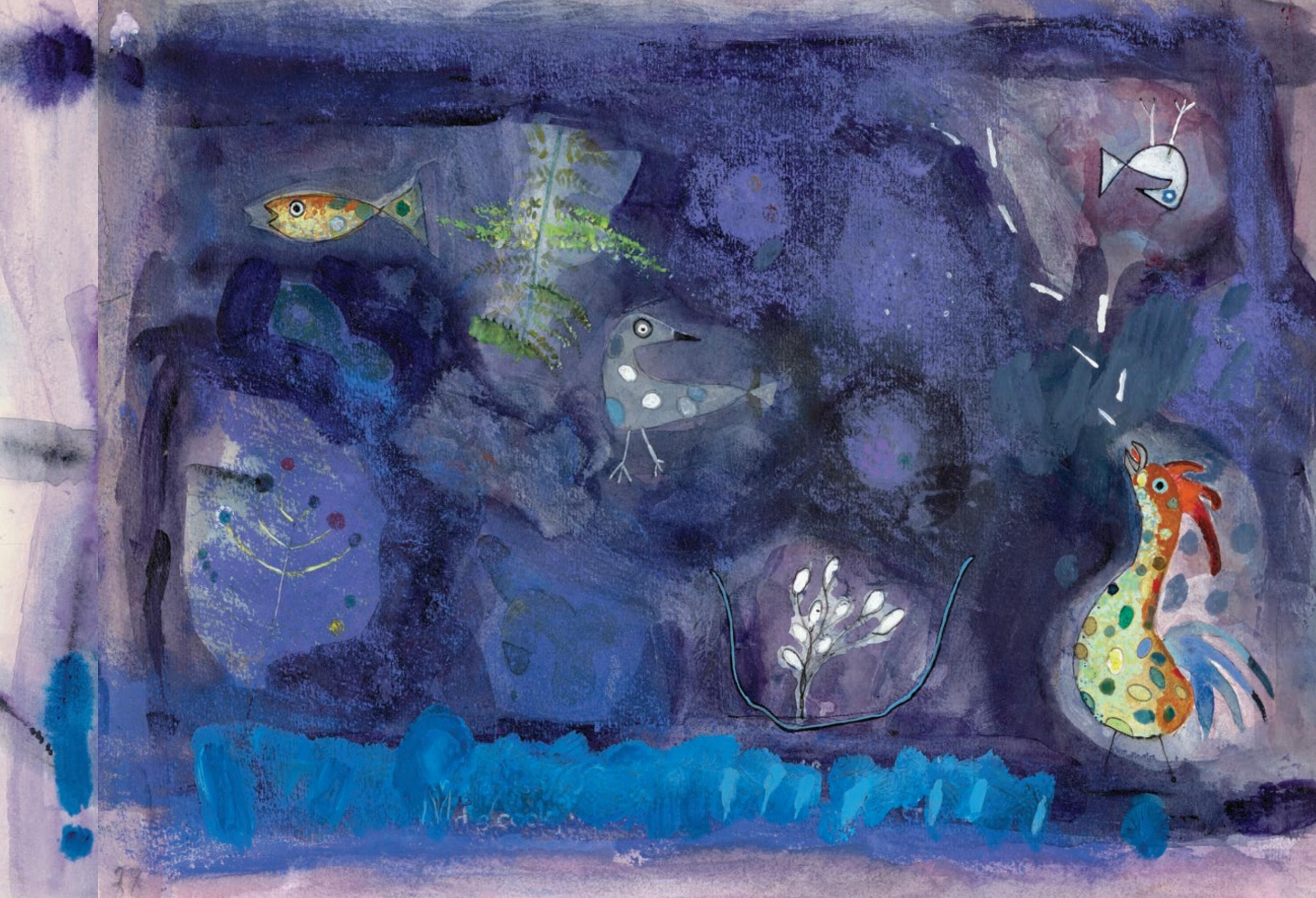
the idea that everything arose from O_h .



Everything arose from an incomprehensible desire that
summoned the light to slant through the chaos and void,
and orchestrated the world to emerge in stages.



The world evolved ever more complex forms...



forms of seeing



and forms of relating.



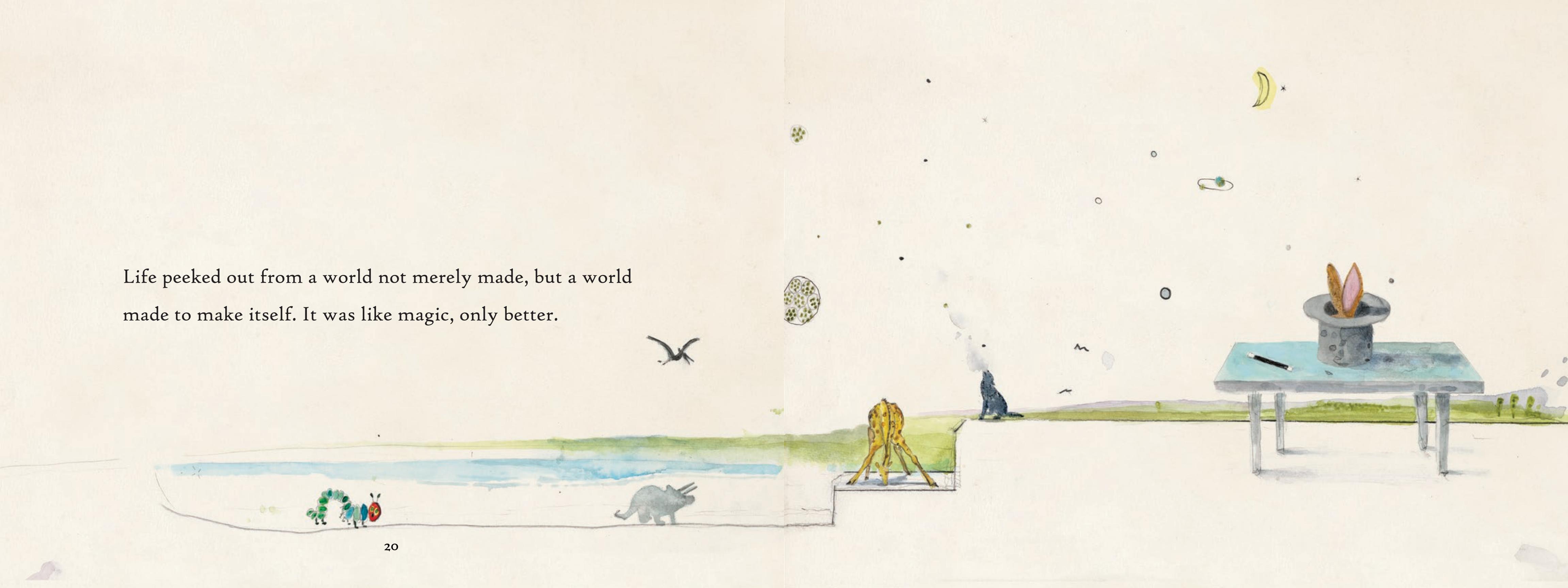
It was a garden of now, of nothing but now,



in which there was nothing—simply nothing—that
came from nothing



Life peeked out from a world not merely made, but a world
made to make itself. It was like magic, only better.



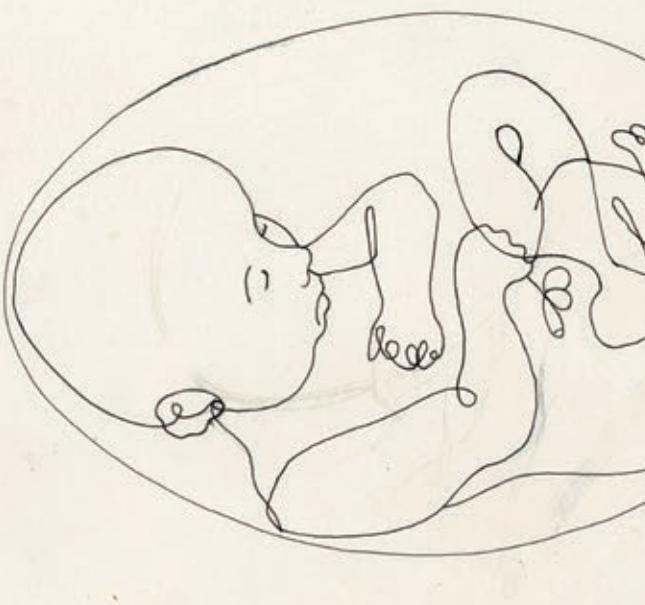
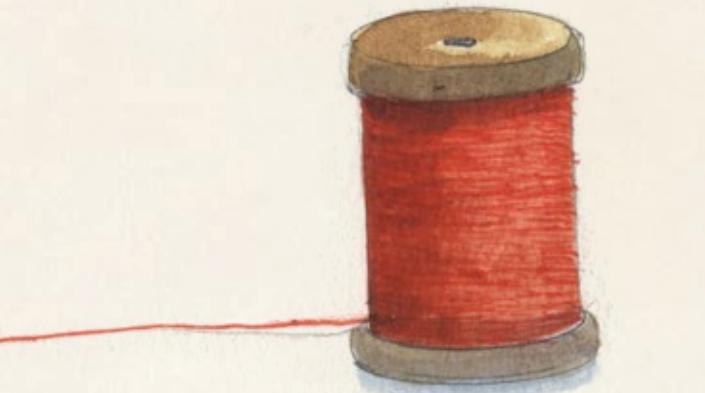
It was knowable.
It made patterns.
It rhymed.



Yet no one knew this was so.



Adam





when it came to a Place.

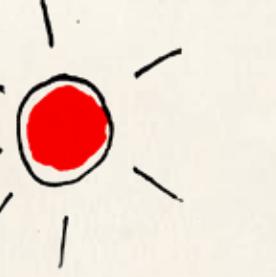
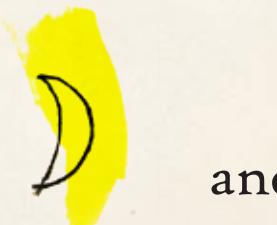
It could hear the other creatures

They *hoot-hooted* and *screeched*

to one another in friendship or enmity.



Our creature assigned names to the birds of the sky and to
the beasts of the field—

to the  ,  and  ,

to all that captured its attention. It named the world.

Oh, what had the creature done?



What is it to name a thing?



He looked and saw.
I am. I am Adam.



He danced with joy.

For having named himself he knew himself as separate.





He came to a with fruit that gave perspective. He now saw a world with relative values, a world where some things were better or worse, a world of

GOOD

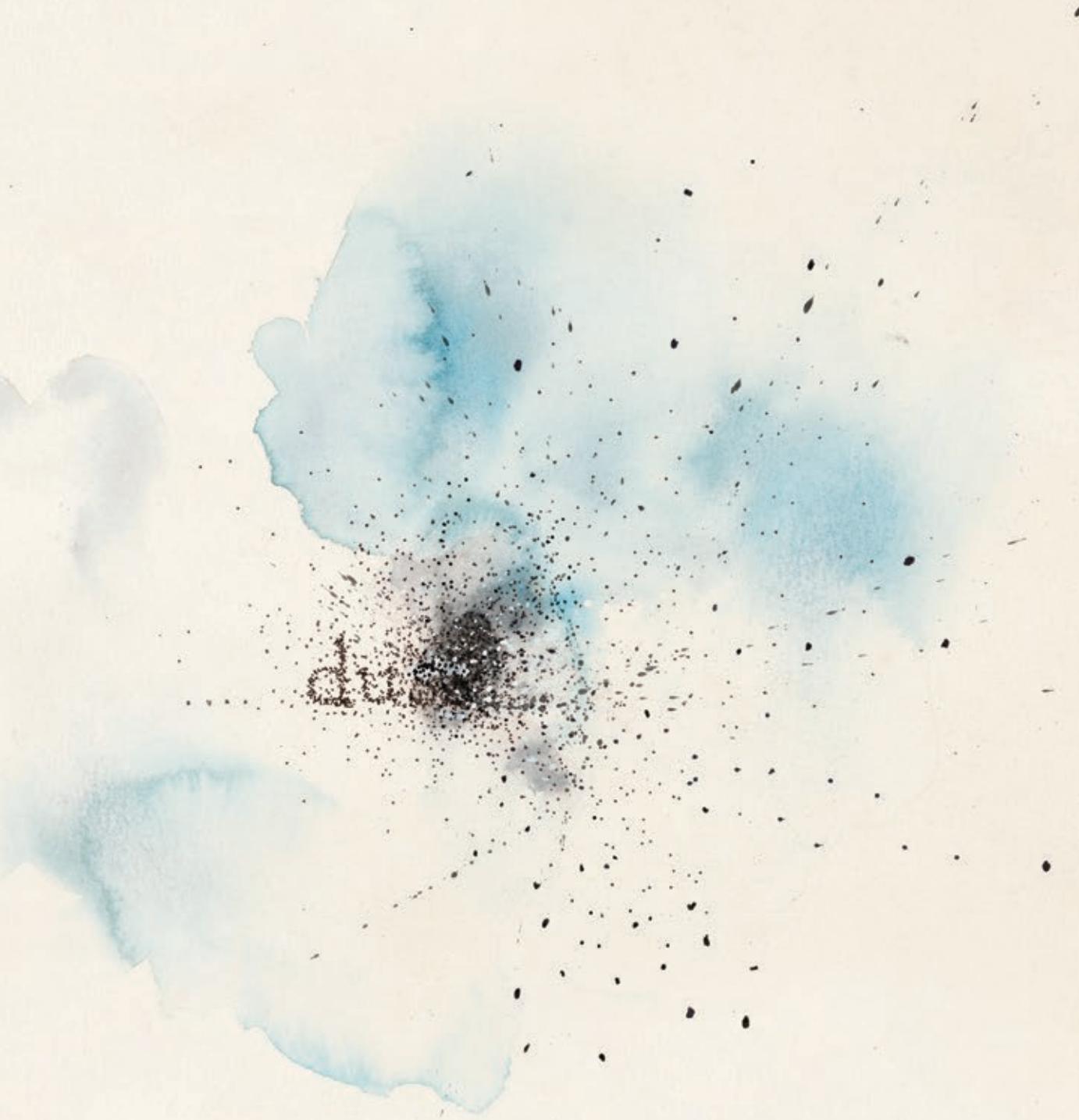
and

EVIL.



He felt naked and hid his face.





I am dust

in space





in time.

Thus, Adam was expelled from the timeless garden,



tossed into the world of yesterdays and tomorrows,
of elsewhere and otherwise,





tossed into history,

into suffering.



He cried...

*Is the world enough as it is?
Am I enough as I am?*



Whereas, before, Adam had experienced a single path,



choices



now appeared.

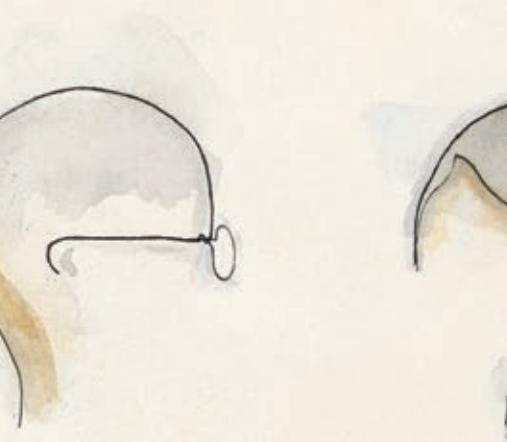


Some were simple.



Some were momentous.

Stakes can be high in a world of choosing.



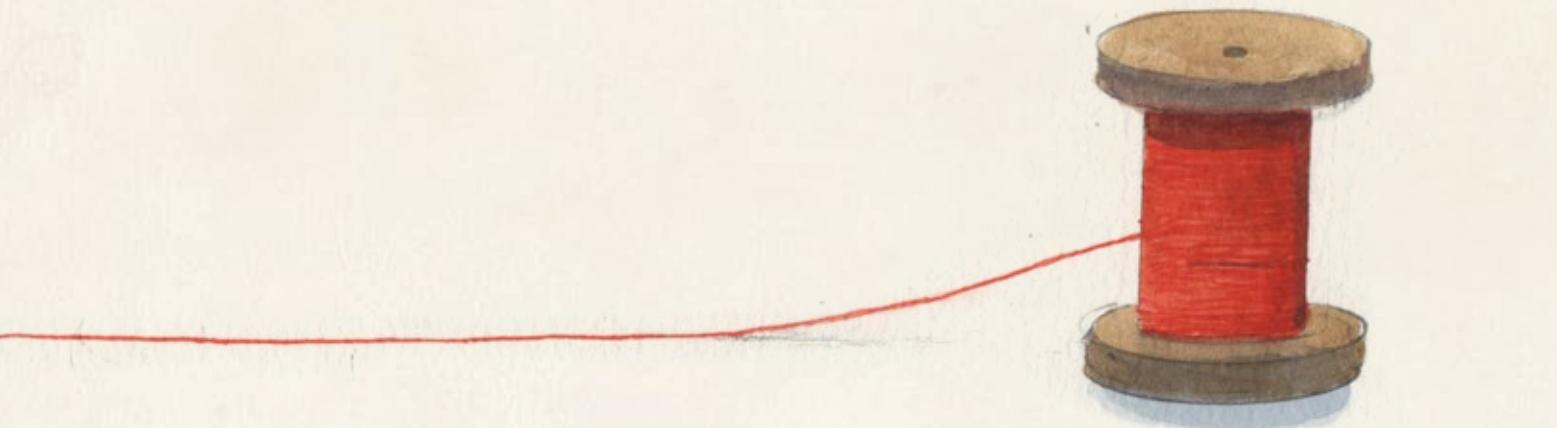
Is the world enough as it is?

Am I enough as I am?

Adam began to question, and all who followed did the same.

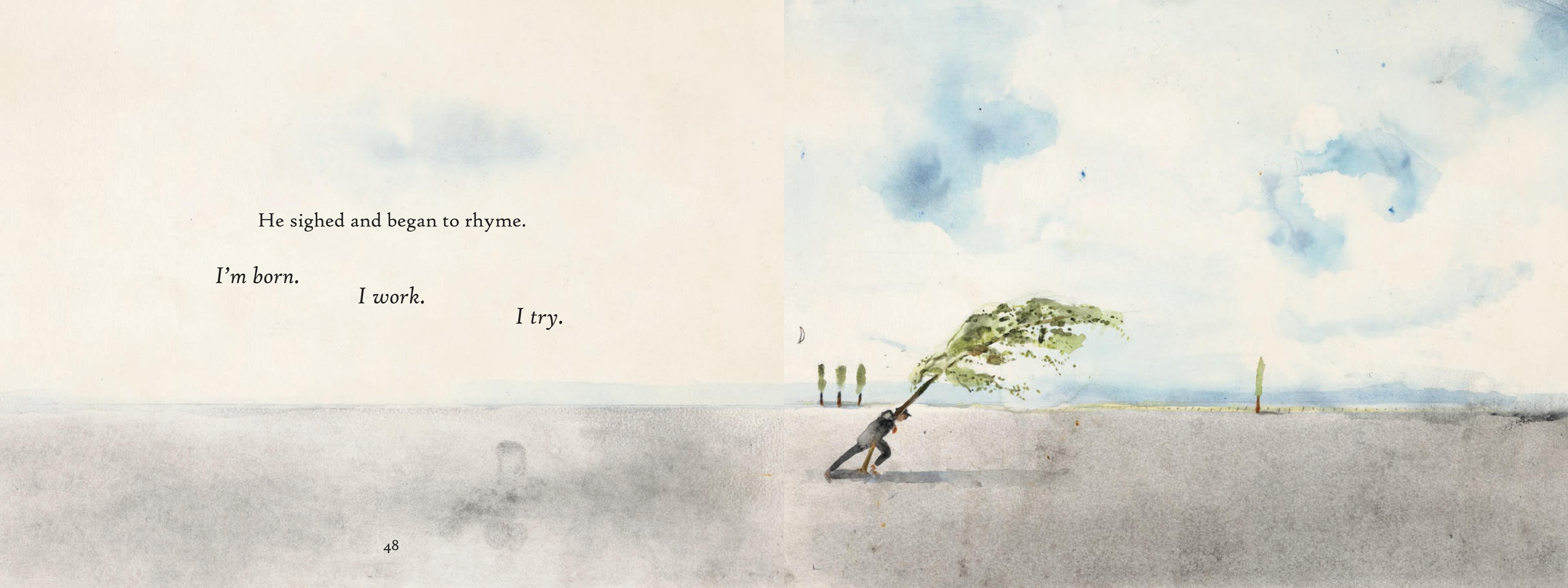


Cain



Adam had a son named Cain. Cain was born with this burden:
the burden of i.



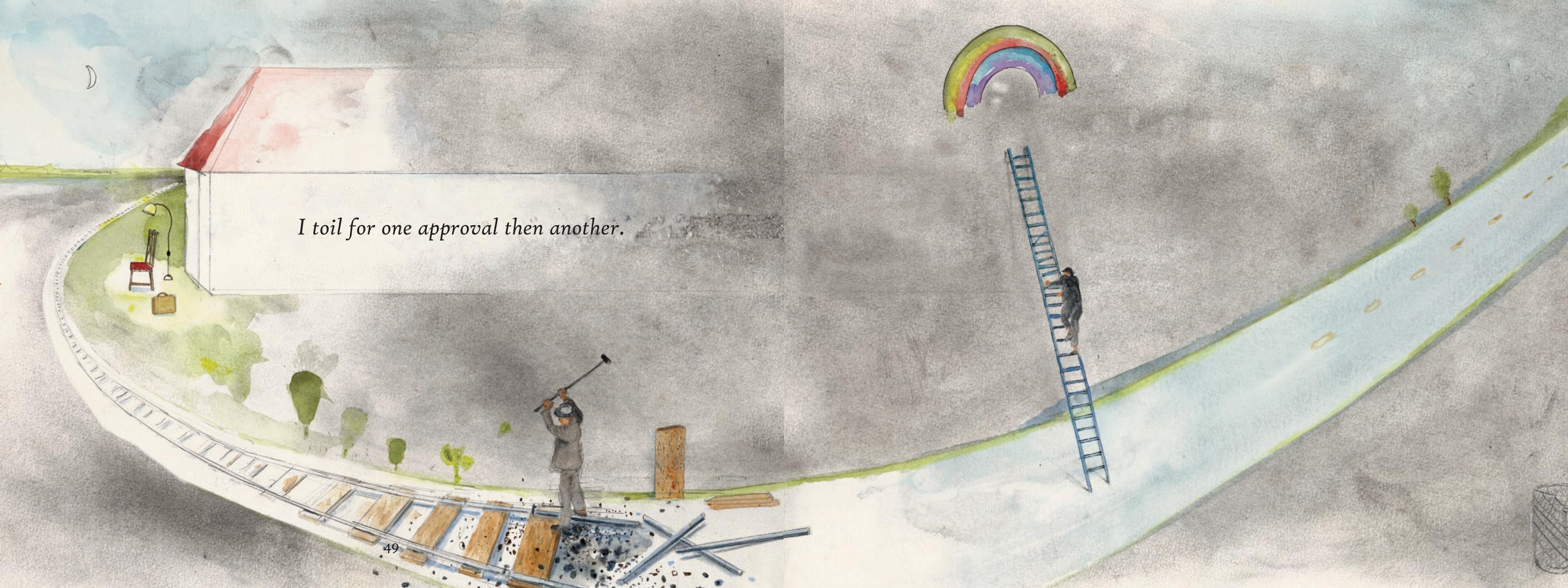


He sighed and began to rhyme.

I'm born.

I work.

I try.



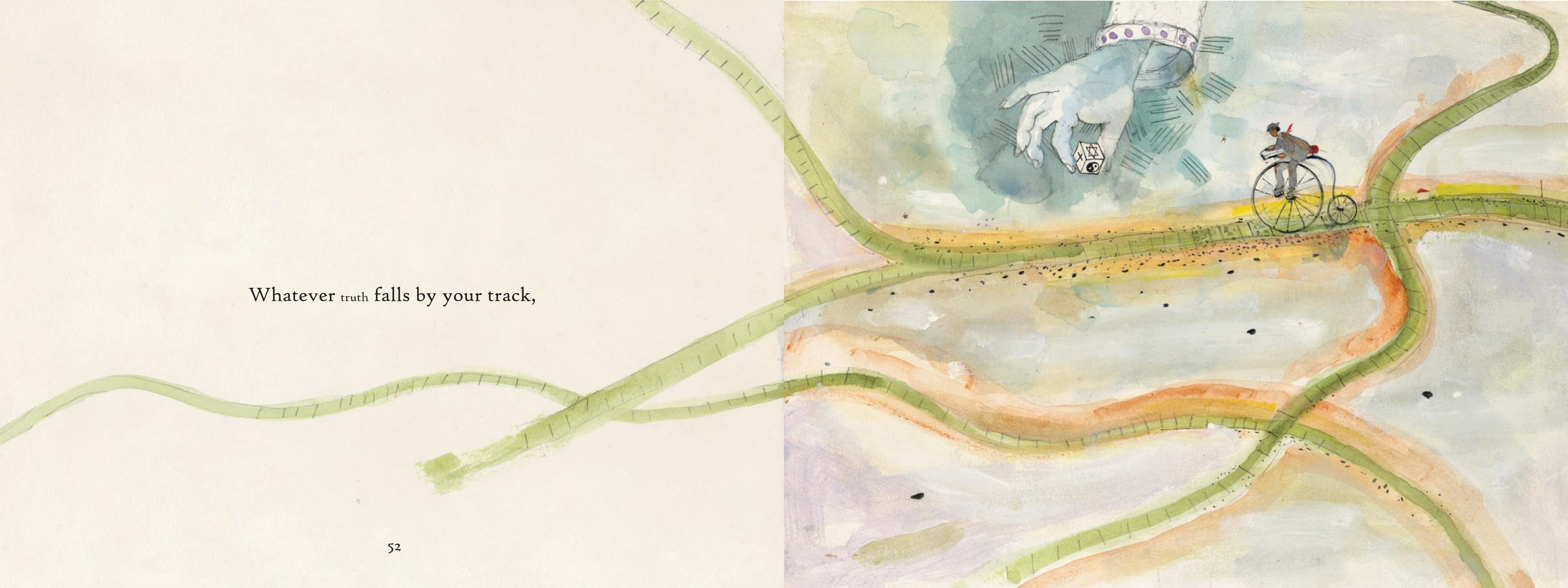
I toil for one approval then another.





So he rose up and murdered his brother.

– Genesis 4:8



Whatever truth falls by your track,

the world is a place where something seems wrong.



If you pray to a god do you hear something back...



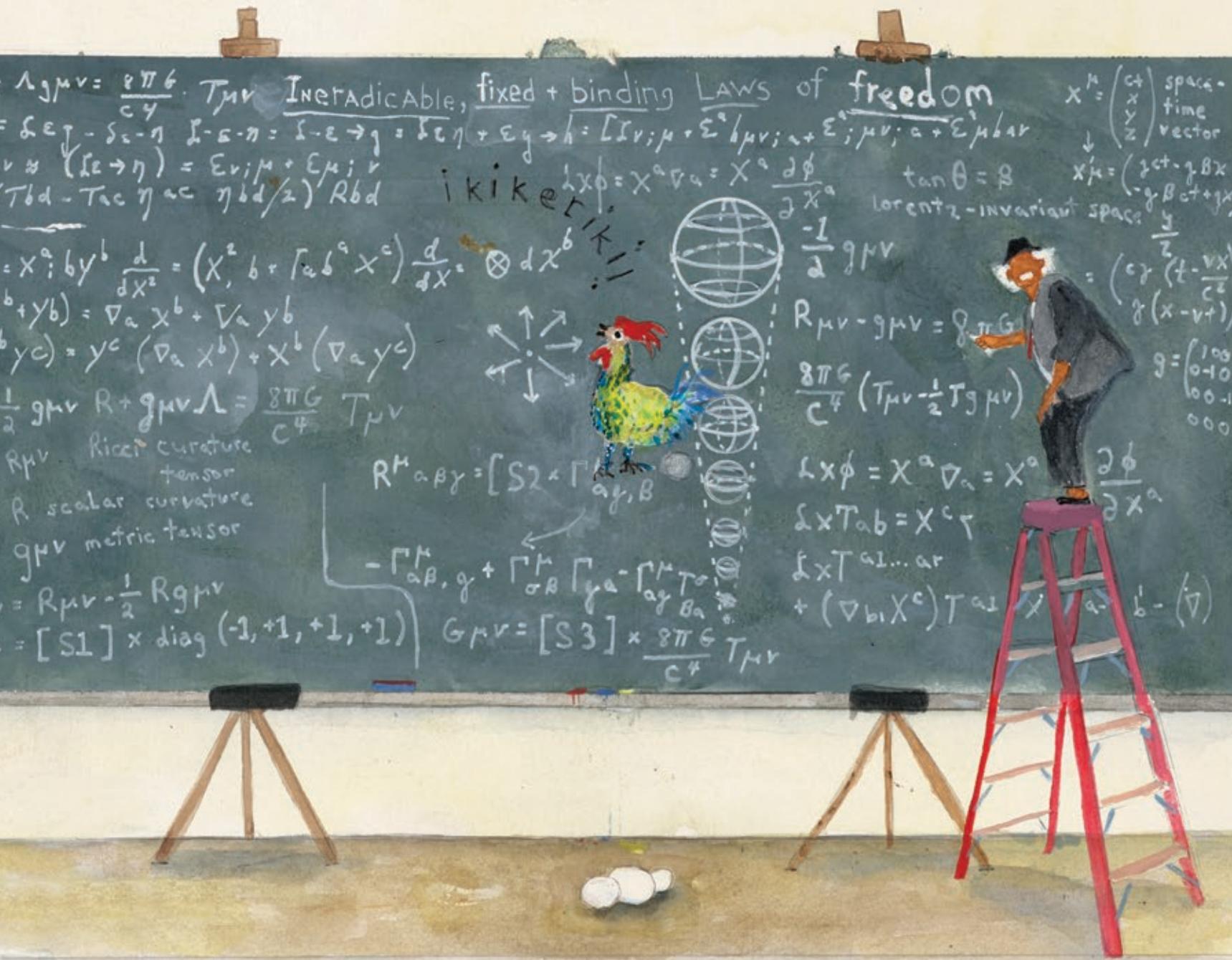
or just tumbling notes of your song?



Consider the tools from our hands that evolve



and the tools from our minds that inspire.



They're solutions to problems,
yet it's **yOU** you must solve.



Tools are just tools. They can't put out our fires.



59



When I stand at the mirror to examine my face
and I peer into eyes of concern,



I fear my life is a mechanical race,



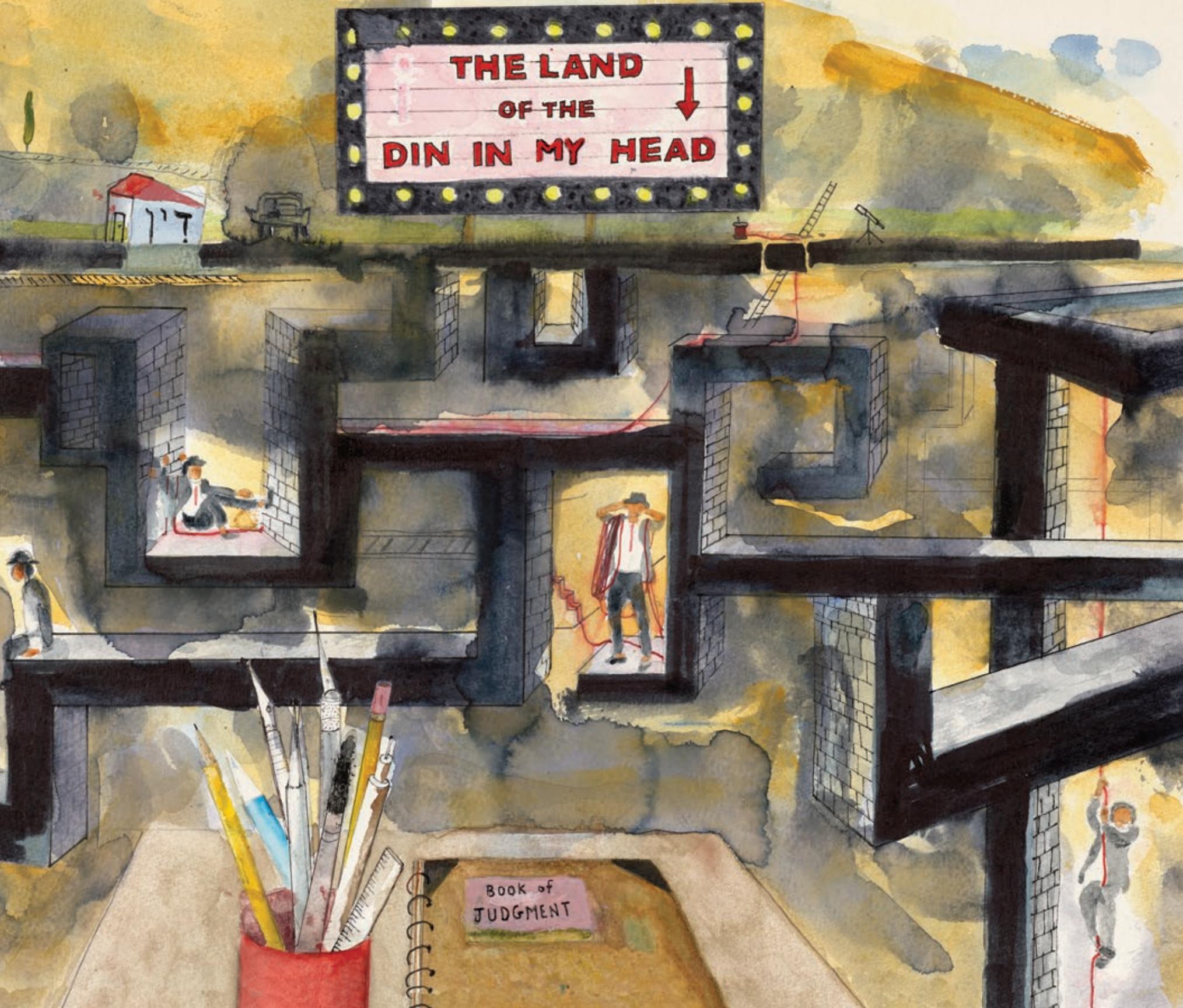


there's nothing to win and nothing to earn.

When I lower my ladder to the heart of the matter
and unspool my life's coil of thread,



I get lost in a maze of stairways and pathways in
The Land of the Din in My Head.



O the thunder and thwacks!



the finger-pointing attacks!



Am I the punchline in a satirical joke?

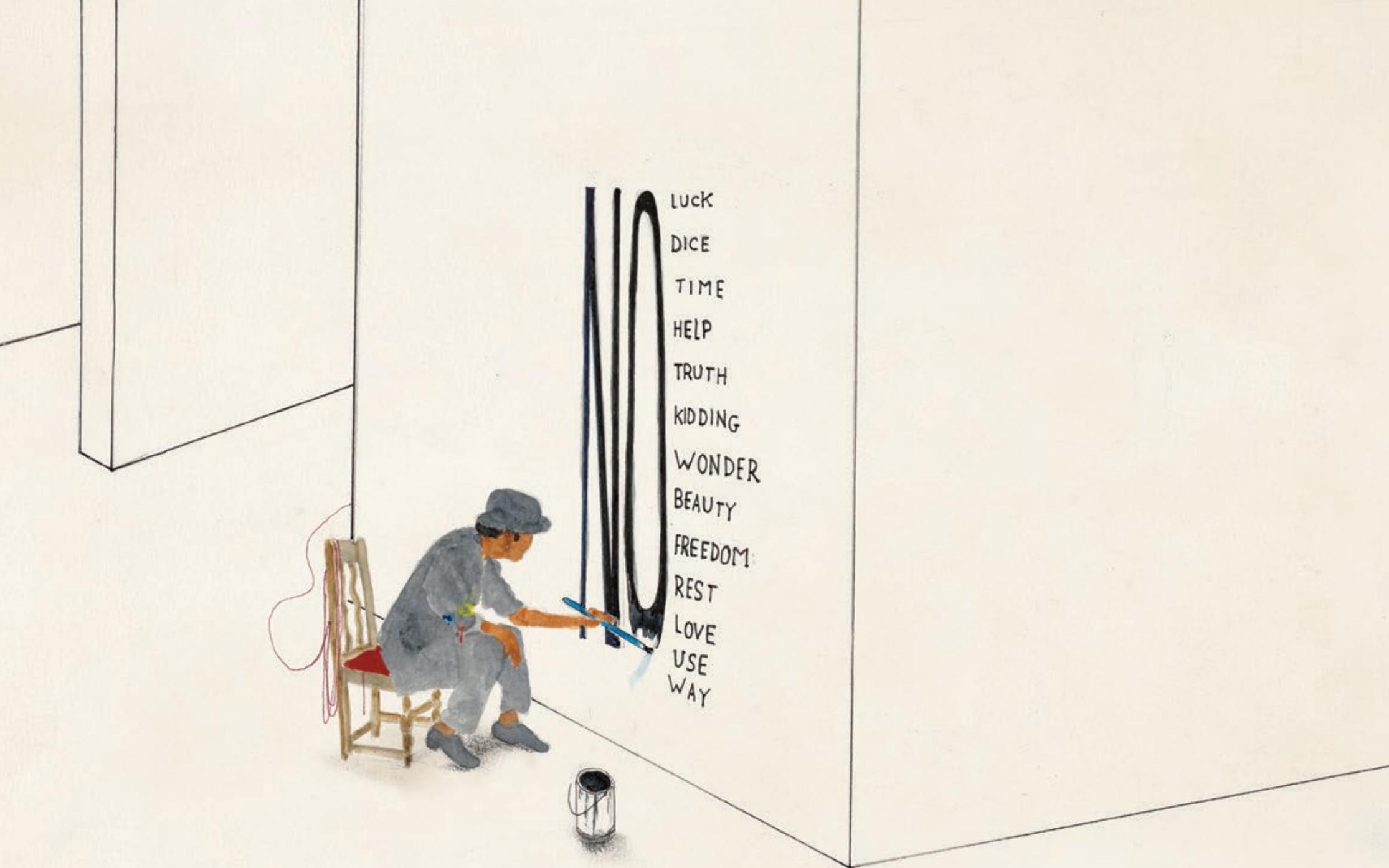


Do I bow down to form?



Do I paint my life

BLACK



as I trek through my me with my rope?



How Cain's nightmares repeat as I drift through his sleep,



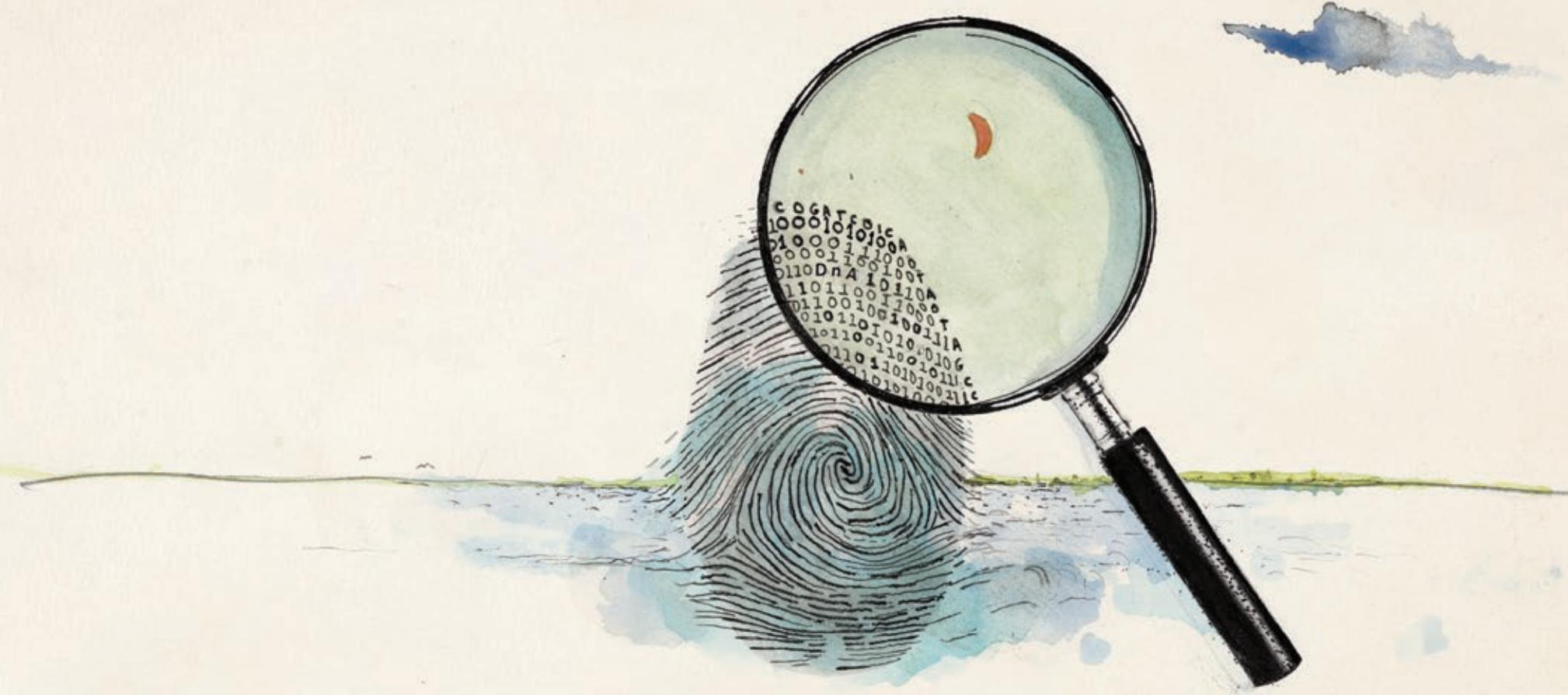


as I bob on great waves of unrest.

As creation's debris, I crawled out from the sea.



I'm but DNA matter possessed.



Freedom, some say, is to make things go
My Way!



Others shout,
Lose Inhibitions!

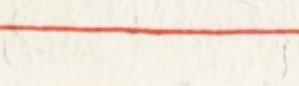
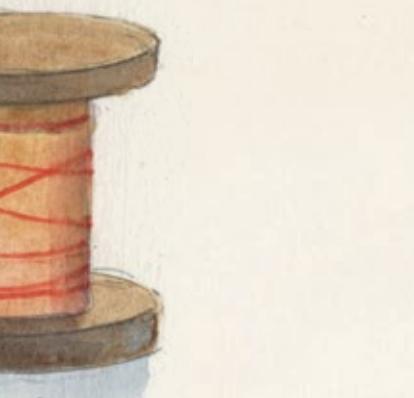
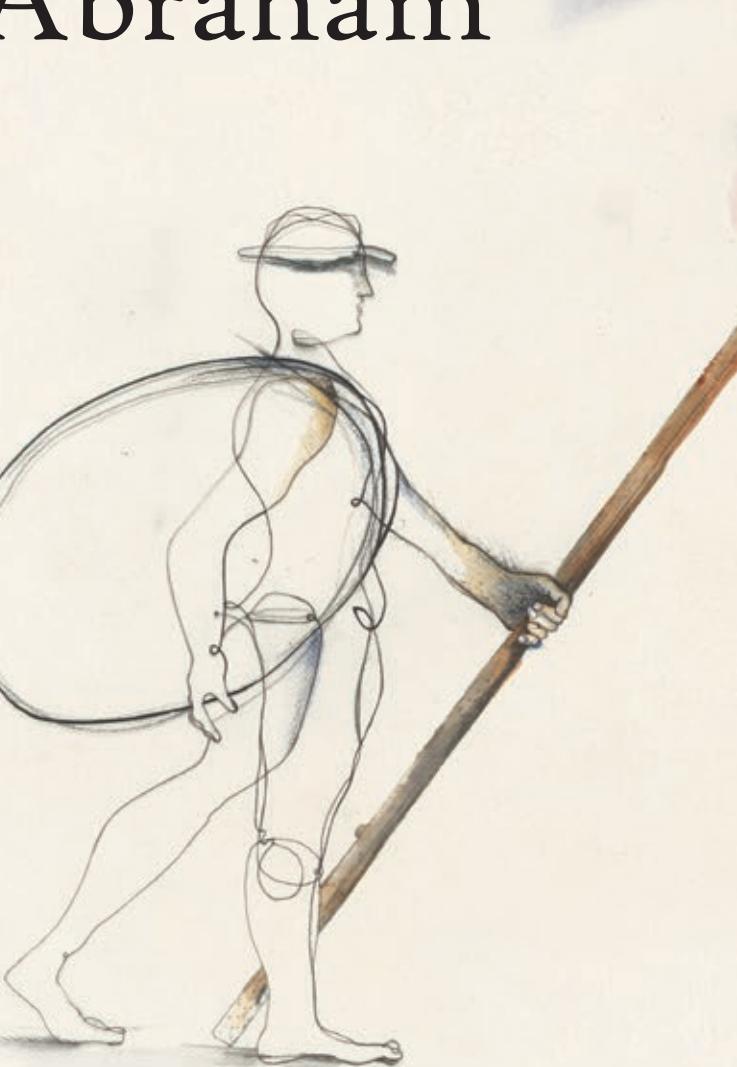




Let's find a way to co-author this play. Let's choose.
Let's compose our life's mission!



Abraham



We've arrived at the point in our biblical tale—a knock-knock from beyond or within—that calls to your i to encounter your I as you stride on your fragment of string.



Go forth from your home, from your land and your station,
on your horse with the flag you've unfurled. Choose and let go.
Drop all expectation. Journey your way through the world!



Abraham walked with his i up the slope for a dance—for a meeting
with time. It's that dance we'll perform at the end of our rope
at the tippy-tip of our line.



He bound in a bag all he'd gathered through life,
all his love, all his values and cares,



and he raised his voice as he lifted his knife...

All our dots are inflated with air!



An angel appeared. She grabbed hold of Abe's wrist as his i was about to
surrender. She told Abe the reason the dot must exist...



It's the path to become your inventor.



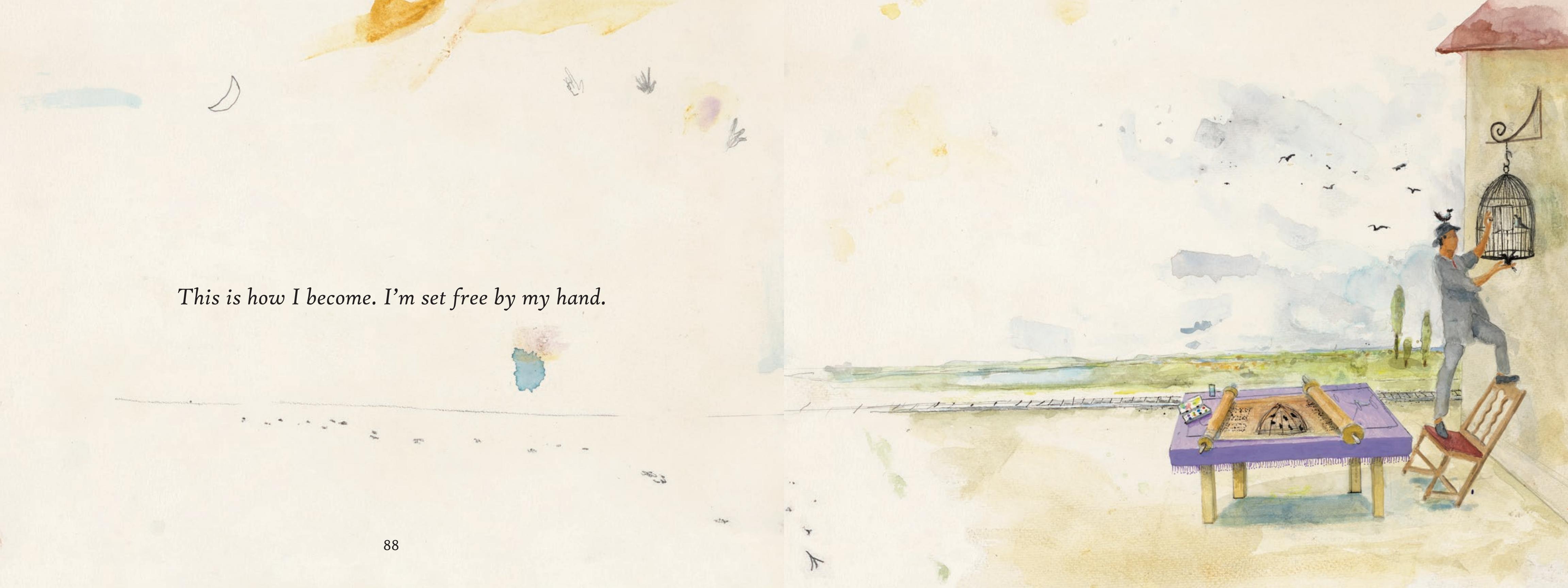
*Consider your values, all your venerable goals,
all the dreams that your i chases after.
They clatter beyond and behind your control,
which is why your son's name signals laughter.*



Might you say as you play as you twirl in your hoop
in the light of wherever you stand...

Through the choices I make it is me I create.





This is how I become. I'm set free by my hand.



We arise in a spiral with our arrows and bows.

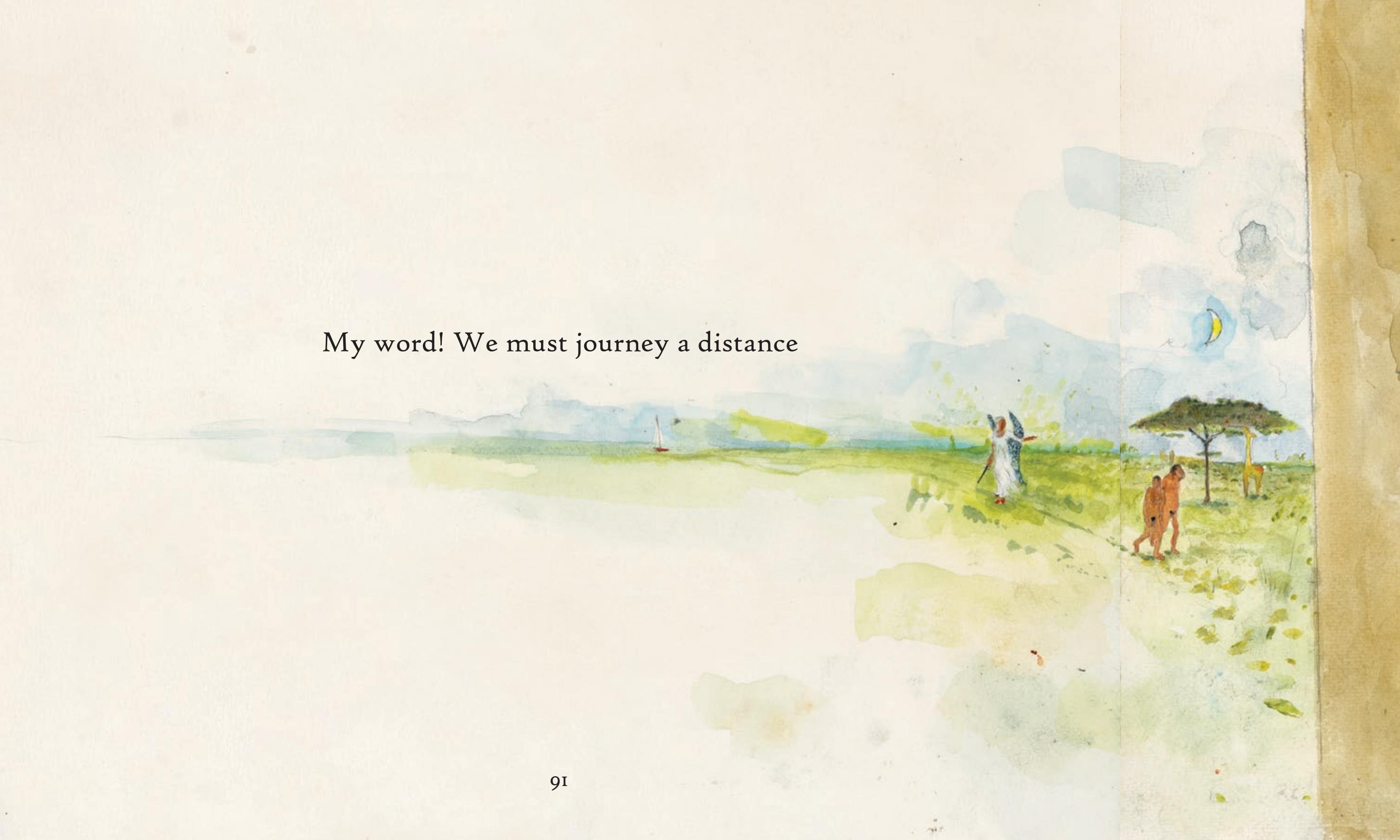
See that rainbow! Our target! Take aim!

କବିତା

It's you that you choose. This is how your self grows.

It is you. It is **yOu** you attain.





My word! We must journey a distance



as we toil with what choices require.



Let us search for our source in existence.



Who am I?

We'll face our primal desires.



Of what is the world made?

If asked to count all the stars up above,
you'd forever be just getting started.

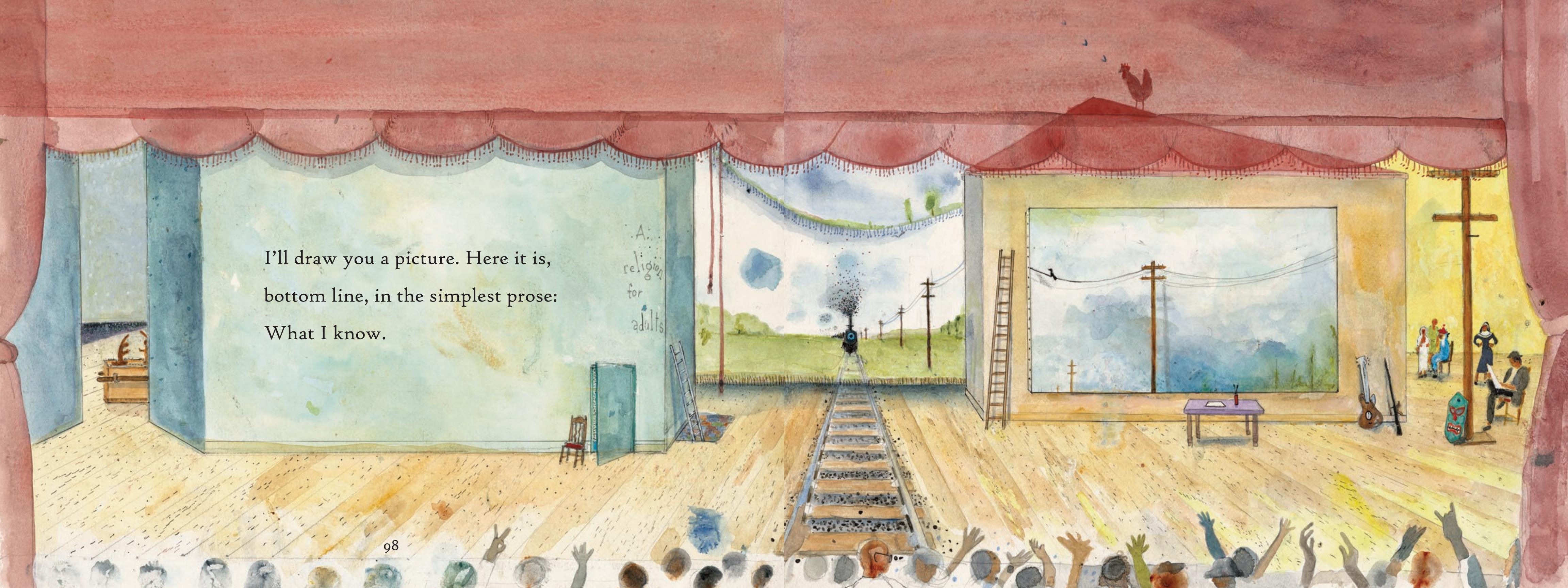


See how they flicker with an infinite love
from a Place that's designed to be charted.



Are you fixed to your script? Are your stars all aligned?
Do you wait for your cue here below?





I'll draw you a picture. Here it is,
bottom line, in the simplest prose:
What I know.

A...
religion
for
adults

What I Know

There will arrive a moment when you will let go of everything. Everything.

Your  will cease and your



will return to the

minerals. Sometime later your name will be spoken for the last time. There is

nothing to fear. Nothing.

Love brings us into the world and love takes us from it. During this interval

you form a partnership: you discover yourself through the world and the

world discovers itself through you. It names itself and bestows your values

upon itself. What an adventure! What a laugh! By choosing, you become a bit

more free to invent yourself, to become yourself...

an evolution of one.

I ate from the tree! And I would eat it again!

-Adam (B'reishit Rabba 19:12)

Endnotes

Note to reader: This picture book imagines the Old Testament stories as the journeys of the emergent self, or ego. It touches on three stages of that journey: the journey of Adam (infancy), the journey of Cain (adolescence), and the journey of Abraham (maturity).

page 8

If you want your children to be intelligent, read them fairy-tales. If you want them to be more intelligent, read them more fairy-tales. - Albert Einstein

page 13

Chesed (חסד) is a Hebrew word closely associated with the idea of loving-kindness. Chesed gives existence to each and every thing in the universe. It is regarded as a primary building block of creation.

page 17

The greater a thing's complexity, the greater its capacity for relationship.

Page 20

He [God] rested from all his work which God created to make itself. - Genesis 2:3

page 22

The fact that the world is comprehensible is a miracle. - Albert Einstein

Page 23

Adam arises in a timeless, preconscious garden of simple awareness. Like him, we leave our infancy and become exiled from the world's perfection. Adam awakens to his bounded self.

page 25

According to Jewish sources, the word place (מָקוֹם) in the Bible is the locus of divine presence.

Page 27

Try to imagine yourself with no language. Do you require language to imagine the experience?

page 28

God said, 'Let there be light,' and there was light. - Genesis 1:3 When humans name the world around them, the world is also illuminated.

page 30

For there is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so. - Hamlet

page 36

We avoid the present moment, escaping to a past that no longer exists or to a future that is never quite here.

page 37

Adam had two sons. Cain became a farmer. Abel became a shepherd. Their time-sensitive occupations required them to analyze the past and plan for the future.

Adam

Cain

page 46

Cain continues the journey of the egoic self. He feels frail and insufficient in the face of his brother and of his creator. He is angry and resentful, unable to bear his mortality. He lashes out at his brother and learns he must be accountable for his actions. How shall we face our own human frailties and responsibilities? Cain provides an answer—he runs and hides from himself and others.

page 48-98

Man's encounter with death takes place outside the Garden of Eden. Art and music are a human response to the awareness of death's inevitability. I have represented Cain's words in verse. It seems fitting as he represents humanity's first confrontation with death. The second half of the book is composed in rhyme.

page 49

What do you seek?

page 52

We are creatures of our time and place. Our truths are shaped by our cultures.

page 54

I talk to God but the sky is empty. - Sylvia Plath

page 56

Stone axes emerged at the dawn of humanity and remained virtually unchanged for tens of thousands of years. Then quite suddenly humans fashioned a vast assortment of tools that led humanity in many cultural directions.

page 59

Two things are infinite, the universe and human stupidity, and I'm not sure about the universe. - Albert Einstein

page 60

There are things we fail to notice about ourselves, including that we fail to notice things about ourselves. (paraphrased from R. D. Laing)

page 64

A human being experiences himself, his thoughts and feelings as something separated from the rest; it's a kind of optical delusion of his consciousness. It is a kind of prison for us.
- Albert Einstein

Here is a pun between English and Hebrew. The English word *din* is a loud unpleasant prolonged noise that may describe the stream of thoughts that operates just beneath the surface of awareness. The stream often provides our concrete experience of ourselves. The Hebrew word *din* (דין) is associated with the concept of judgment. *Din* (דין) provides each existent with definition. *Din* (דין) separates the existent from the rest of the world so that it can be itself.

page 70

Ok. Your life is a test you did not study for. The question remains: why do you keep making the same mistakes over and over? - Anonymous

page 71

What a long strange trip it's been. - Jerry Garcia

page 73

The West has discarded its religious myths. It has replaced them with secular, modernist myths. Here's one: There is no inherent meaning in the universe.

page 75-76

When you think about freedom as a movement, is it freedom from something or freedom toward something?

page 77

What is your mission? What is your highest value? That is your mission.

Abraham

page 78

In the story of the akeda, God invites Abraham, God's faithful warrior for justice, to sacrifice his beloved son. No mention is made, either by God or Abraham, about the immorality of child sacrifice. I therefore approach the story not as an encounter with the moral outrage of human sacrifice, but as an existential encounter with the ego.

Abraham may represent the spiritual seeker in all of us. God calls upon him to sacrifice his egoic self. Abraham, eager to nullify the bounded ego, is then told by God to retain it and direct it to a greater purpose.

page 85

The fundamental principle is that man must create himself. - Joseph Soloveitchik

page 86

The name Isaac (אַיָּצָק) means he will laugh.

page 96

The traditions that follow Abraham tell us that our job as finite creatures is to make the world a dwelling place for the Infinite. To earn its name, Infinity must experience everything, including finitude.

Adam

Genesis, chapters 2, 3

[2:7] Then God formed the man from the dust of the ground. He breathed life into the man's nostrils, and the man became a living person [2:8] Then God planted a garden in Eden in the east, and there He placed the man he had made. [2:9] God made all sorts of trees grow up from the ground—trees that were beautiful and that produced delicious fruit. In the middle of the garden He placed the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil... [2:16] And God warned Adam: "You may eat the fruit of every tree in the garden — [2:17] except from the tree of knowledge of good and evil. If you eat its fruit, you are sure to die." ... [2:19] God formed from the ground all the wild animals and all the birds of the sky. [He brought them to the man to see what he would name them, and the man chose a name for each one.](#) page 26 [2:20] He gave names to all the livestock, all the birds of the sky, and all the wild animals... [2:25] Now the man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.

[3:1] The serpent was the shrewdest of all the wild animals God had made. One day the serpent asked the woman, "Did God really say you must not eat the fruit from any of the trees in the garden?" ... [3:3] "No," the woman replide "it's only the fruit from the tree in the middle of the garden that we are not allowed to eat. God said, 'You must not eat it or even touch it; if you do, you will die.'" [3:4] "You won't die!" replide the serpent... [3:5] "God knows that your eyes will be opened as soon as you eat it, and you will be like God, knowing both good and evil." [3:6] ... The woman saw that the tree was beautiful and its fruit looked delicious, and she wanted the wisdom it would give her. So she took some of the fruit and ate it. Then she gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it, too. [3:7] At that moment their eyes were opened, and they suddenly felt shame at their nakedness. So they sewed fig leaves together to cover themselves. [3:8] ... They hid from God among the trees. [3:9] Then God called to the man, "Where are you?" [3:10] Adam replied, "[I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid.](#)" page 31 [3:11] "Who told you that you were naked?" God asked. "Have you eaten from the tree whose fruit I commanded you not to eat? ... [3:17] ... [Now the ground is cursed because of you.](#) page 39 All your life you will struggle to scratch a living from it. [3:18] It will grow thorns and thistles for you, though you will eat of its grains. [3:19] By the sweat of your brow you will have food to eat until you return to the ground from which you were made. [For you were made from dust and to dust you will return.](#)" page 32

Cain

Genesis, chapter 4

[4:1] Now Adam knew Eve, and she became pregnant and gave birth to Cain. She said, "With the Lord's help, I have produced a man!" [4:2] Later she gave birth to his brother and named him Abel. When they grew up, Abel became a shepherd, while Cain cultivated the ground. [4:3] When it was time for the harvest, Cain presented some of his crops as a gift to the Lord. [4:4] Abel also brought a gift—the best portions of the firstborn lambs from his flock. The Lord accepted Abel and his gift, [4:5] but he did not accept Cain and his gift. This made Cain very angry, and he looked dejected. [4:6] "Why are you so angry?" the Lord asked Cain. "Why do you look so dejected? [4:7] You will be accepted if you do what is right. But if you refuse to do what is right, then watch out! Sin is crouching at the door, eager to control you. But you must subdue it and be its master." [4:8] One day Cain suggested to his brother, "Let's go out into the field. "And while they were in the field, [Cain rose up and murdered his brother, Abel.](#) page 51 [4:9] Afterward the Lord asked Cain, "Where is your brother? Where is Abel?" "I don't know," Cain responded. "Am I my brother's keeper?"

Abraham

Genesis, chapters 12, 22

[12:1] The Lord had said to [Abraham], "Leave your native country, your relatives, and your father's family, and go to the land that I will show you..." page 80 [12:4] So he departed as the Lord had instructed ...

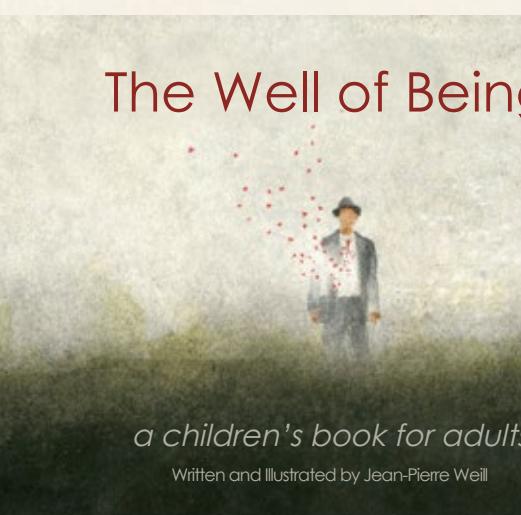
[22:1] Some time later, God tested Abraham. "Abraham!" God called. "Yes," he replied. "Here I am." [22:2] "Take, please, your son, your only son—Isaac, whom you love—and go to the land of Moriah. Go and sacrifice him as a burnt offering on one of the mountains, which I will show you." page 82 [22:3] The next morning Abraham got up early. He saddled his donkey and took two of his servants with him, along with his son, Isaac. Then he chopped wood for a fire for a burnt offering and set out for the place God had told him about. [22:4] On the third day of their journey, Abraham looked up and saw the place in the distance. [22:5] "Stay here with the donkey," Abraham told the servants. "The boy and I will travel a little farther. We will worship there, and then we will come right back." [22:6] So Abraham placed the wood for the burnt offering on Isaac's shoulders, while he himself carried the fire and the knife. As the two of them walked on together, [22:7] Isaac turned to Abraham and said, "Father?" "Yes, my son?" Abraham replied. "We have the fire and the wood," the boy said, "but where is the sheep for the burnt offering?" [22:8] "God will provide a sheep for the burnt offering, my son," Abraham answered. And they both walked on together. [22:9] When they arrived at the place where God had told him to go, Abraham built an altar and arranged the wood on it. Then he bound his son Isaac and laid him on the altar on top of the wood. [22:10] And Abraham picked up the knife to kill his son as a sacrifice. page 83 [22:11] At that moment the angel of the Lord called to him from heaven, "Abraham! Abraham!" "Yes," Abraham replied. "Here I am!" [22:12] The angel said "Don't lay a hand on the boy! Do not hurt him in any way," page 84 for now I know that you truly fear God. You have not withheld from me even your son, your only son." [22:13] ... The angel of the Lord called again to Abraham from heaven. [22:16] "This is what the Lord says: Because you have obeyed me and have not withheld even your son, your only son, I swear by my own name that [22:17] I will certainly bless you. I will multiply your descendants beyond number, like the stars in the sky and the sand on the seashore. page 95

Attributions

- page 20 Inspired by The Very Hungry Caterpillar, by Eric Carle
- page 26 Cave a Lascaux paintings are approximately 20,000 years old
- page 37 Napoleon Crossing the Alps, by Jean-Louis David
- page 38 Adapted from American-Romanian artist, Saul Steinberg
- page 45 From Michelangelo's The Creation of Adam
- page 45 From Ingmar Bergman's film, The Virgin Spring
- page 57 Einstein's General Theory of Relativity is displayed on the blackboard
- page 59 Inspired by Dr Seuss's Sneetches
- page 70 From a cartoon by Anonymous
- page 73 Francis Bacon; Paralytic Child Walking on All Fours (adapted by Bacon from Muybridge)
- page 74 Inspired by Roy Lichtenstein's Magnifying Glass series

Acknowledgments

Jean-Pierre Weill's previous work includes *The Well of Being: a children's book for adults*.



"The drawings are sublime – in their form, in their vision, in their wit, in their sly and yet overt allusions, in their understatement, in their expressiveness, in their beauty, in their use of emblems. It's as if Steinberg had mated with Tenniel, with Borges as shadchan! What shall we call this unique volume, this Invention? This landscape of the human psyche? It is a rapturous amazement. I think it is a Psalm."

-Cynthia Ozick

"With humour and with insight and poignancy, Jean-Pierre Weill uses concise, elegant drawings to gently convey a profound message. It is a book that can be visited over and over again, on good days or bad days. The Well of Being is a beautifully rendered reminder of what is important."

-Ram Dass

"Jean-Pierre Weill speaks straight to the heart in a voice at once profound and provocative. Weill's creative genius shines – as writer, artist and thinker. Everyone should read this book– it's a mind changer."

-Daniel Goleman

Back Of Book

