

LEVELED BOOK • G

The Legend of *Nian*



Written by Karen Mockler
Illustrated by Chengcheng Hu

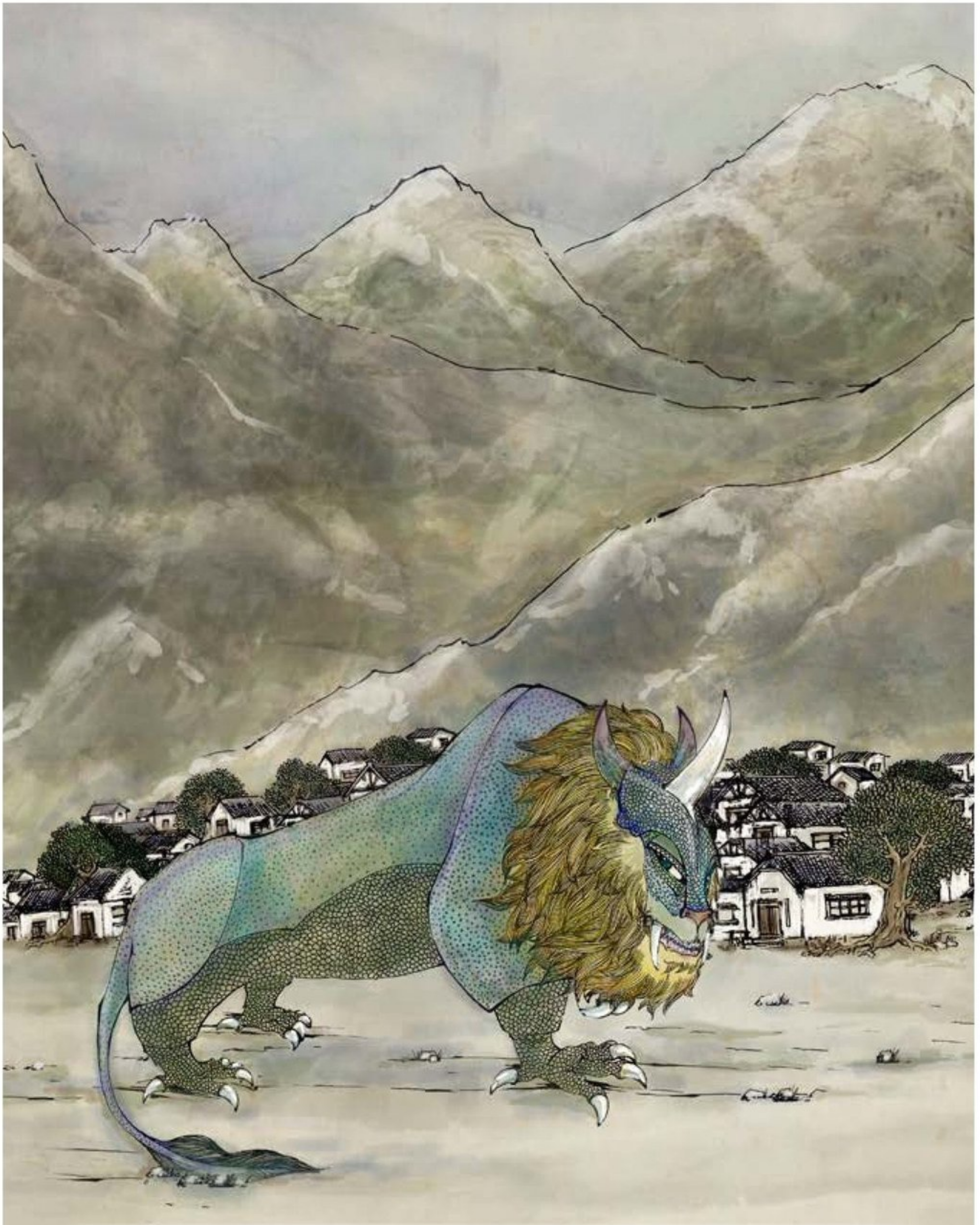
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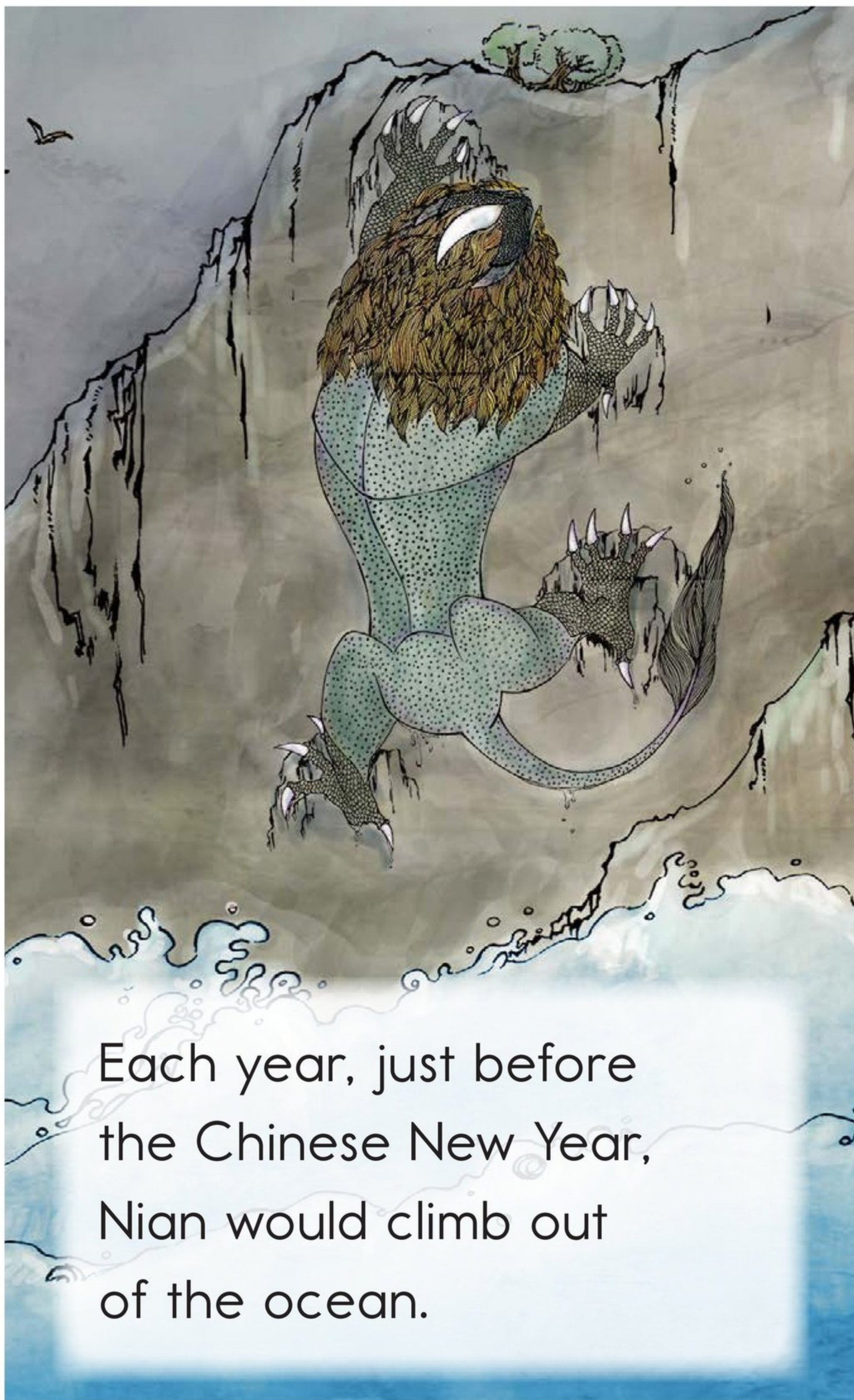
Long ago in China,
people were afraid
of Nian, the dragon beast.



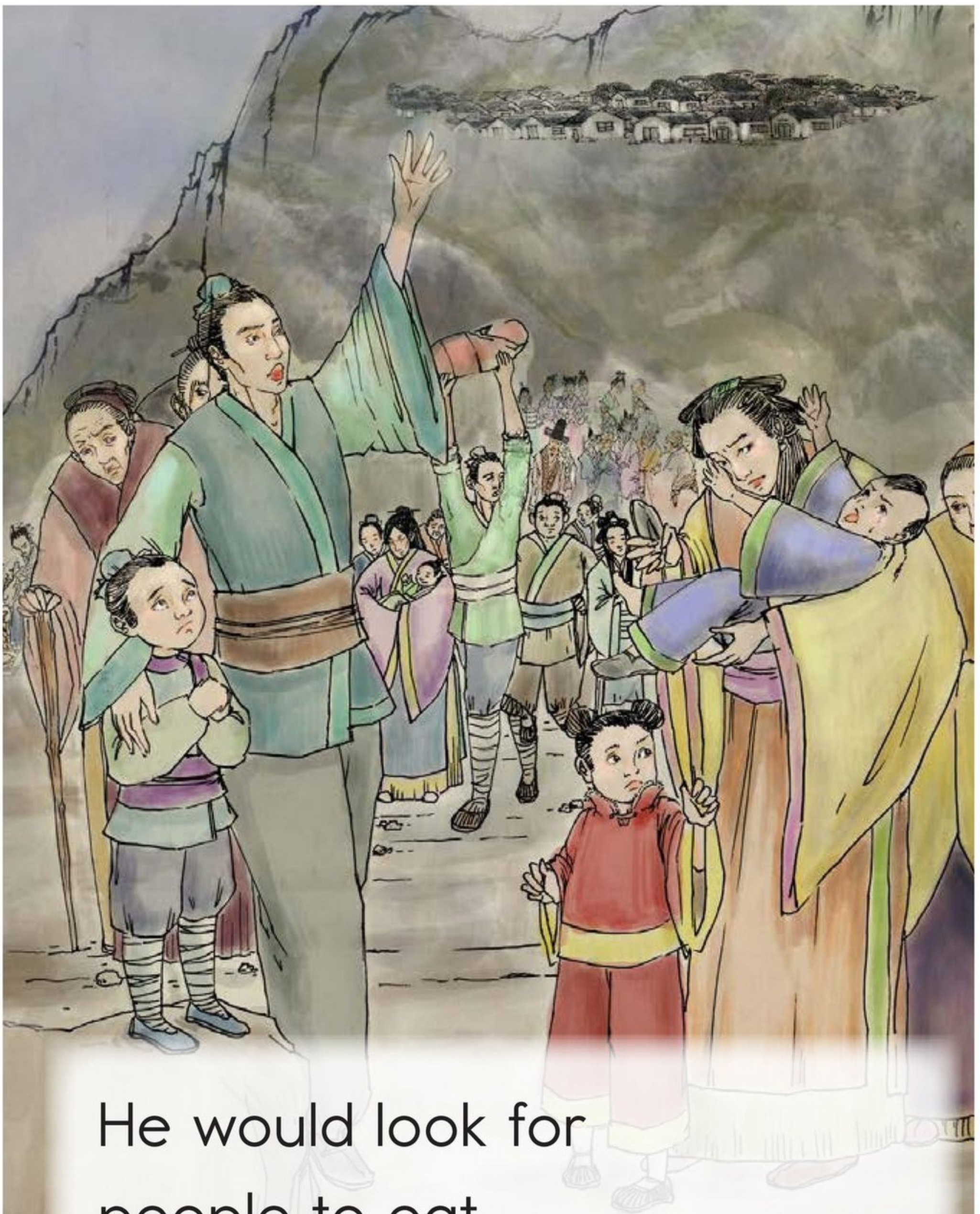
Nian had a sharp horn
and a huge mouth.
He could eat five people
in one big bite!
Glump!



All year long, Nian slept
deep in the ocean.
By the end of winter,
he was very hungry.



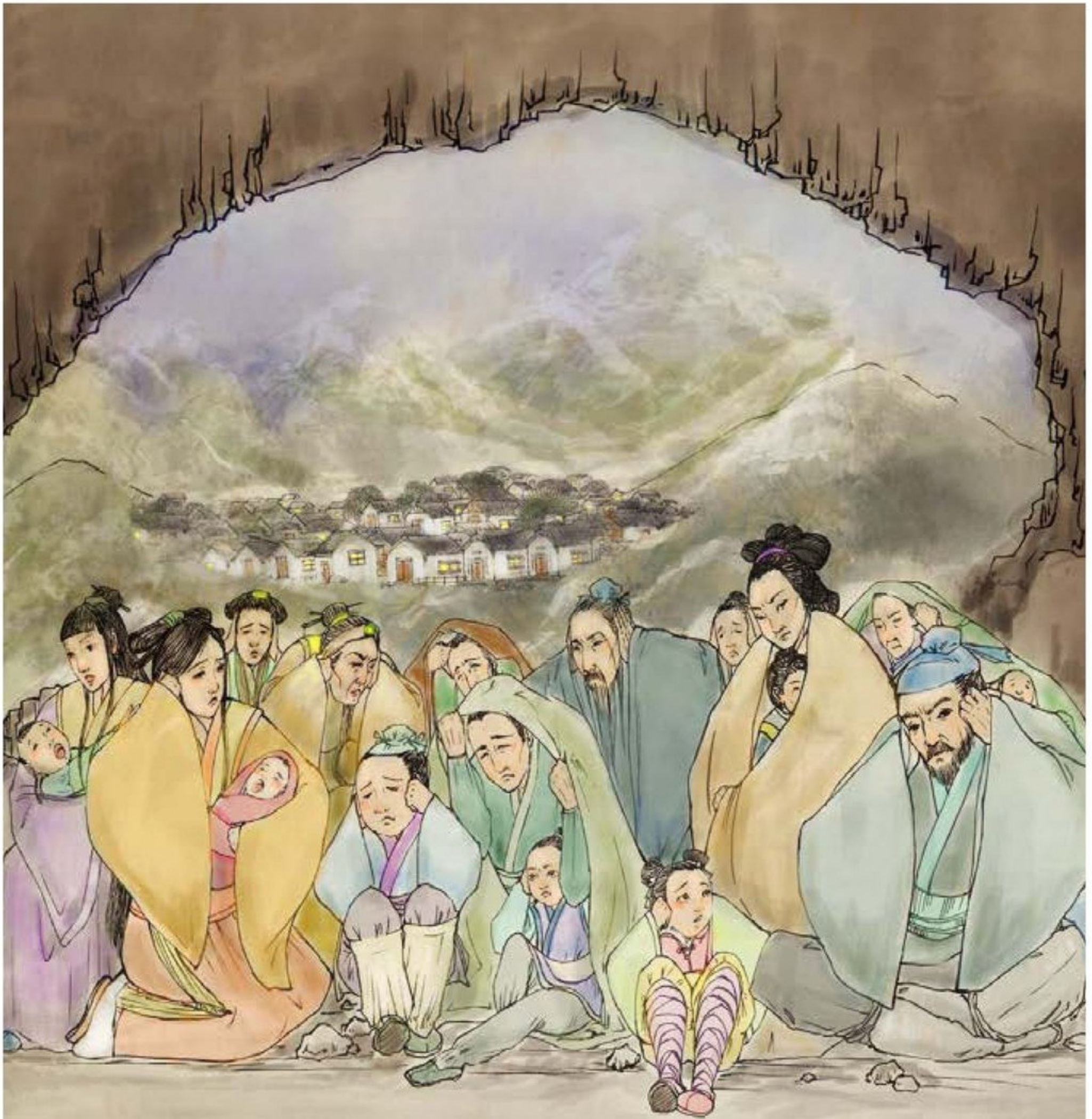
Each year, just before
the Chinese New Year,
Nian would climb out
of the ocean.



He would look for
people to eat.
Nian liked to eat children best.
People would run away
and hide in a cave.



One New Year's Eve,
a very old man came.
He said he could
scare away the beast.



No one believed him
so they hid in the cave.
That night, people heard
boom, bang, and clang.
They heard Nian roar.



On New Year's morning,
the old man was gone.
Nian was gone, too—and
he never came back again.



The old man had left
a bag for them.
Inside, they found
red shirts, firecrackers,
tin pans, and sticks.
Nian was afraid of noise
and the color red!



Now, on New Year's Eve,
people know how to
keep Nian away.
They wear bright red,
light firecrackers, and
make noise all night long!

A Note on Pronunciation:

In the Mandarin Chinese language, the closest pronunciation of *Nian* is: nee-YEN. The word *nian* also means year.

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