

fishing *the* stars

by Mariam El Jabiri

Illustrated by Sarah Rosenberg





fishing *the* **stars**



by Mariam El Jabiri

Illustrated by Sarah Rosenberg

Dawson College, Illustration Program
3040 Sherbrooke St. West
Montreal, Quebec H3Z 1A4 Canada

Text Copyright © 2019: Mariam El Jabiri
Illustrations Copyright © 2019: Sarah Rosenberg
All rights reserved.

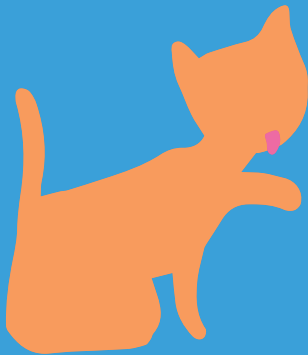
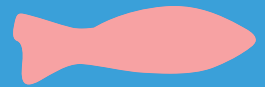
All rights reserved. No part of this book may be used or
reproduced in any manner whatsoever without written permission.
For more information, address the author and illustrator.

First Printed Edition: February 2020



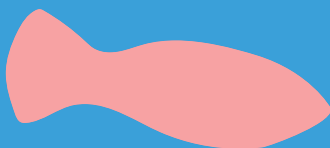
Dedicated to Zayne and
May-- keep shining brighter
than the stars.

- Mariam



To my family and Ian for
their constant support.

- Sarah



There was once, in a fishing village by the Arabian sea, a boy named Hakim, who was lonely as could be.

“That boy has his head in the clouds” all the villagers would say.



But they were all wrong.








His head was in the stars.

Every night, Hakim gazed up at them.

The stars reminded him of Jedo, his grandfather, who one day had gone to the sea with his nets in his tiny boat, leaving Hakim with nothing but a handwritten note:

A stylized illustration of a purple palm tree with a thick, purple trunk and several long, dark purple fronds. The background is a solid blue sky. Scattered throughout the sky are several yellow stars of different sizes and shapes, including some with long, thin tails, suggesting shooting stars or distant galaxies. The overall style is simple and graphic.

“Whenever you miss me, look to the stars.
Remember that I will be looking up at them,
too, following them home.”



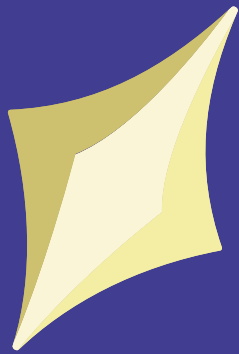
But simply staring at them was not enough
for Hakim. He was becoming too lonely.

So, one night, when all the other children were lying in their beds, he took out a ladder and one of Jedo's old fishing nets. He climbed the ladder and swung his net as high as he could.



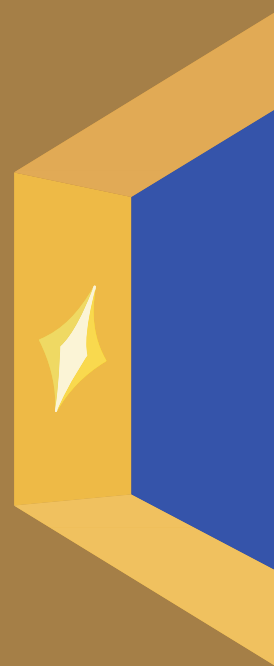


Swoosh!



When he pulled down his net, inside was
a gleaming, glimmering star.

That night, as the star sat by his window like a warm honey cookie, Hakim slept with a big smile on his face. Surely Jedo would see the star and follow it to Hakim.



But in the morning, Jedo still had not returned.





Hakim waited for the sun to set and ran outside with the ladder and the fishing net. This time, he swung the net over and over.

The background is a solid light purple. Three dark purple fishing nets are shown, each with a white oval mouth and a white line handle. The nets are positioned diagonally across the frame. The top-left net contains four yellow four-pointed stars. The top-right net contains three yellow four-pointed stars. The bottom net contains a mix of yellow and pink four-pointed stars. Scattered throughout the background are various star shapes: yellow four-pointed stars, yellow five-pointed stars, purple five-pointed stars, and pink five-pointed stars.

Swoosh! Swoosh!

In his net shimmered ten stars.

“Now,” Hakim said to himself, “now Jedo
will surely come back!”



But the next morning, Jedo still had not returned. And Hakim was terribly lonely.



He couldn't wait any longer. After all the village was in bed, Hakim climbed up his ladder and swung his fishing net across the entire sky.





Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh!

He kept swinging and swinging until his
net was filled with every last star.

For the first time ever, the sky was
starless. That night, nobody in the village
was able to sleep.






Hakim stayed awake, waiting and waiting.
But Jedo didn't come home.

At last, Hakim ran to the sea, clutching a lantern. The night had never been so dark.



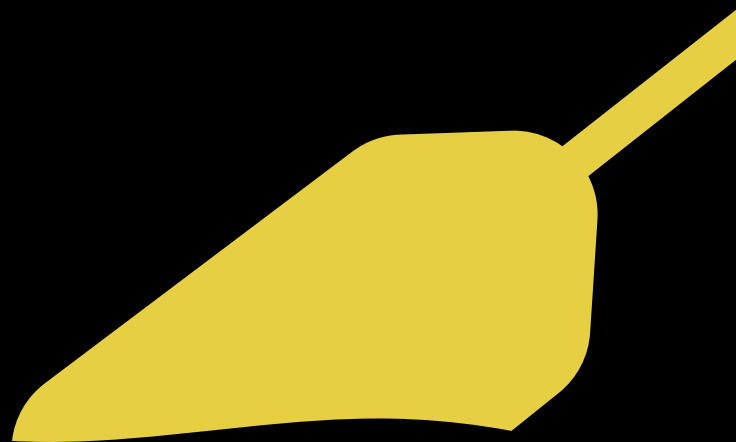



Then, far, far out on the water, he heard
someone crying out his name.

“Hakim!


Hakim!

Hakim!”



A stylized illustration of a man with dark skin and short dark hair, seen from behind, paddling a small green raft. He is wearing a dark blue long-sleeved shirt and is using a long yellow paddle. The background is a solid blue sky, and the water is represented by a black area. A yellow lantern with a black handle is visible in the bottom right corner of the raft.

“Jedo!” shouted Hakim. He leaped onto his own small raft and desperately paddled out to sea.



When he finally reached the voice, he saw
that it belonged to Jedo, who was all wet
and shivering.

“I couldn’t find my way back,” said his
grandfather. “I looked to the stars to guide
me home. But every night more stars
went missing.”




Hakim's cheeks turned red.
He hugged Jedo.

"I'm so sorry, grandpa!" Hakim exclaimed.

"For what?" Jedo asked.

"I have something to show you," Hakim said.

The background of the entire page is a deep blue night sky. In the upper right, a white full moon is visible. Several dark blue, stylized clouds are scattered across the sky. The text is centered in the upper half of the image.

As they approached the beach, Jedo
began to stare in awe.

“The stars!” Jedo exclaimed.

“I thought if I had them all, you would have
to come home,” Hakim said.



Jedo laughed.

“Stars are a map in the sky. That is how they guide me,” He explained.



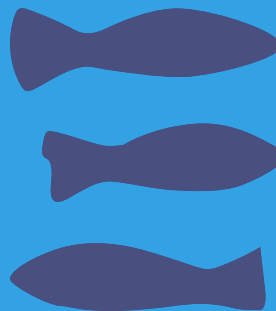
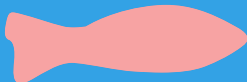
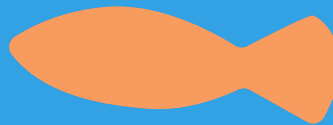
The boy and his grandpa walked up a hill in the dark, dark night, side by side, and released the stars back into the sky, tossing them higher than anyone could ever reach.

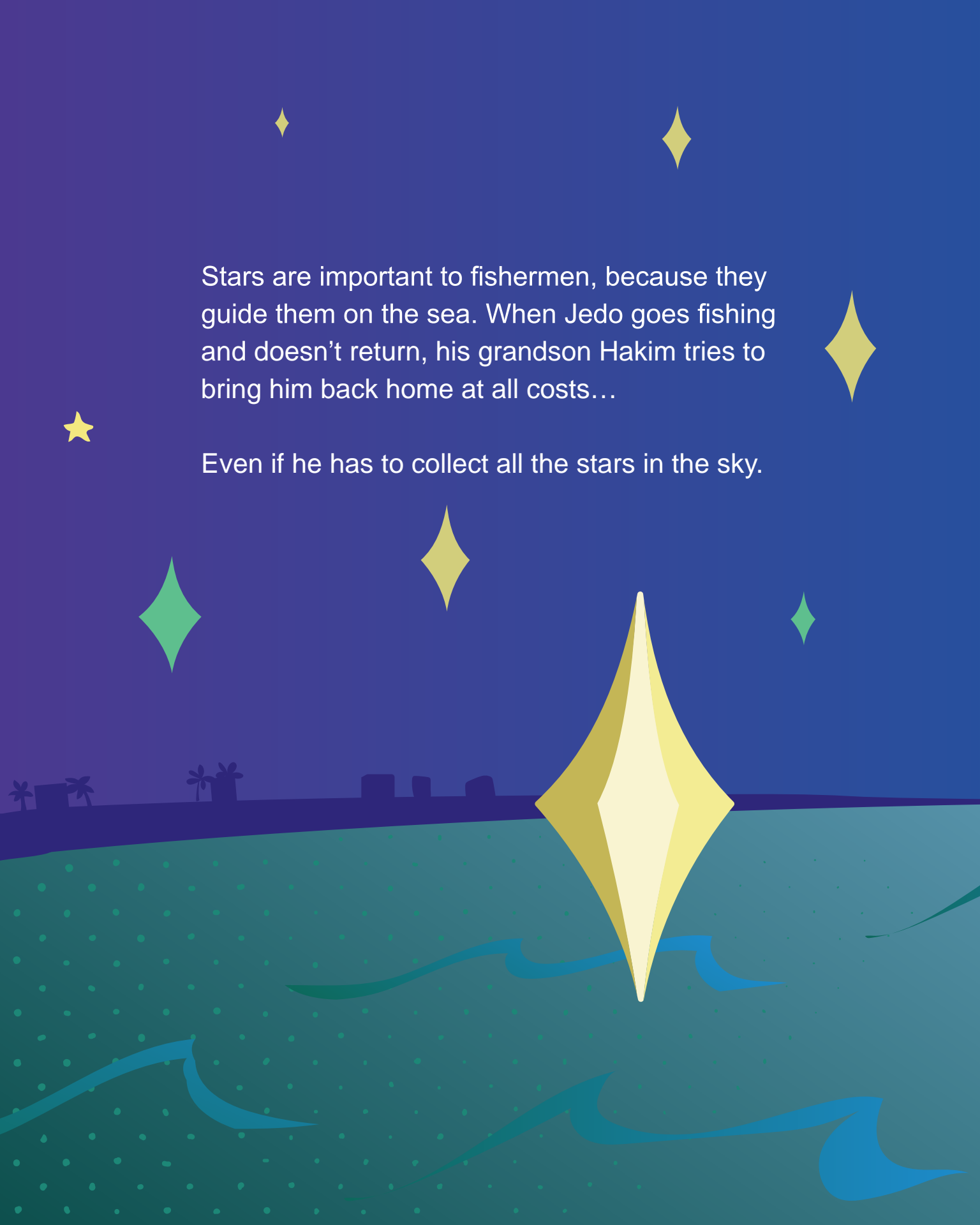


And ever since that day, the stars have
stood so high that no human can ever
catch them again.

Not even with a fishing net.







Stars are important to fishermen, because they guide them on the sea. When Jedo goes fishing and doesn't return, his grandson Hakim tries to bring him back home at all costs...

Even if he has to collect all the stars in the sky.