

Twinkling Stars



Written by: Xinran Meng

Illustrated by: Jiajun Wang

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

Text Copyright © 2020: Xinran Meng
Illustrations Copyright © 2020: Jiajun Wang
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 authors and illustrator.

First Printed Edition: January 2020

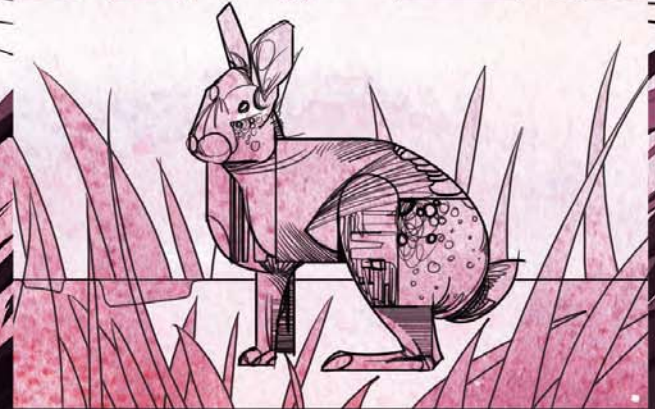




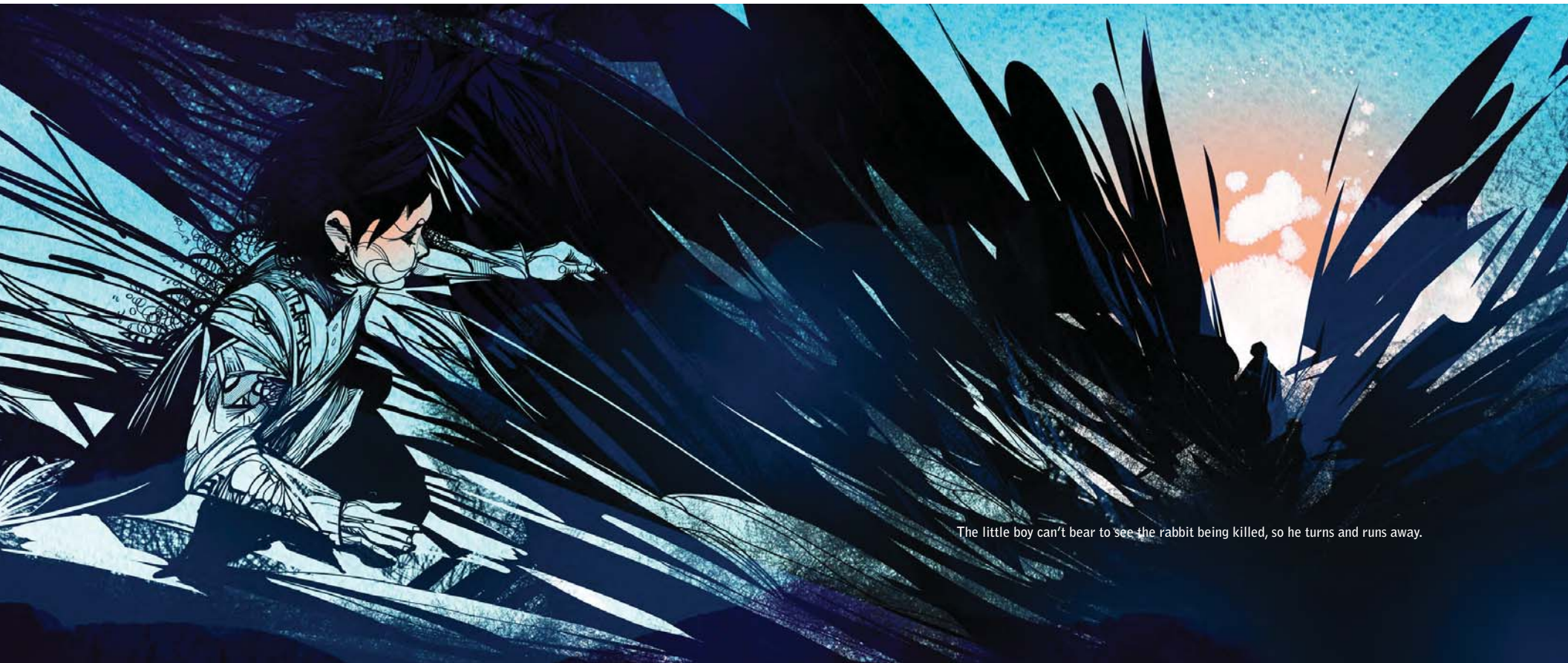
Near a boundless forest, there is a little boy who lives with his grandpa. This boy loves the mysterious forest, and one day, he goes to hunting with his old hunter grandpa as usual.



Grandpa hacks the shrubs and branches that block his way, fallen leaves and slender grasses breaking under his heavy steps. His gun is looking for its prey. The little boy follows behind his grandpa, carefully, quietly. He gently moves the branches away from his face.



"Shhh... let's see if we can catch this little guy."



The little boy can't bear to see the rabbit being killed, so he turns and runs away.

The boy runs to an empty field where there are flowers and wild seeds, and birds chatting on the trees. He adores this place.

The sky in-between the branches seems closer to the boy now.





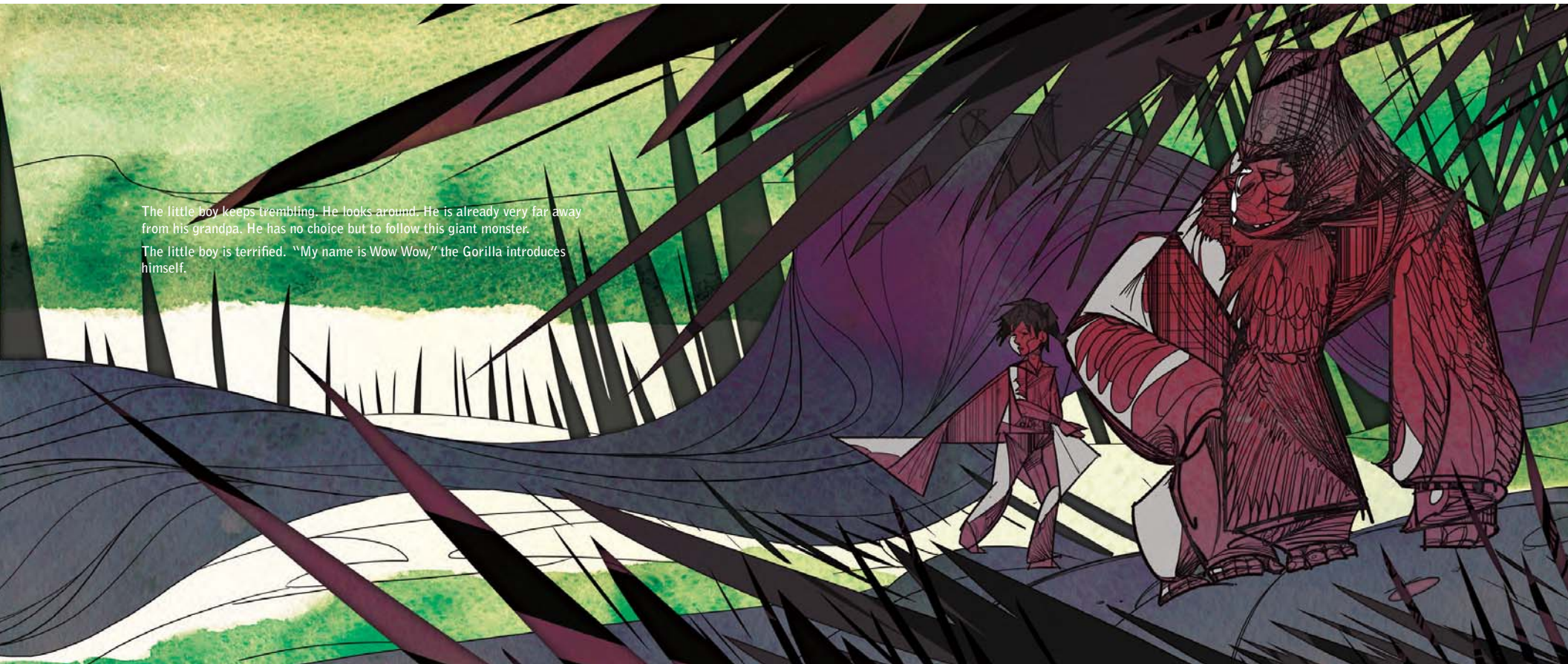
Suddenly, there's subtle movement coming from the bush behind the little boy. Colourful leaves drift down from trees like thousands of flying butterflies. "Wow!" says the boy.


"Wow Wow!" roars the giant figure as it leaps out of the shadows. He has black fur and white teeth: he must be a big wolf!

The little boy can't stop from shaking. "Please don't eat me!"
"I will not eat you," it says slowly. "But... You. Must. Come. With. Me."

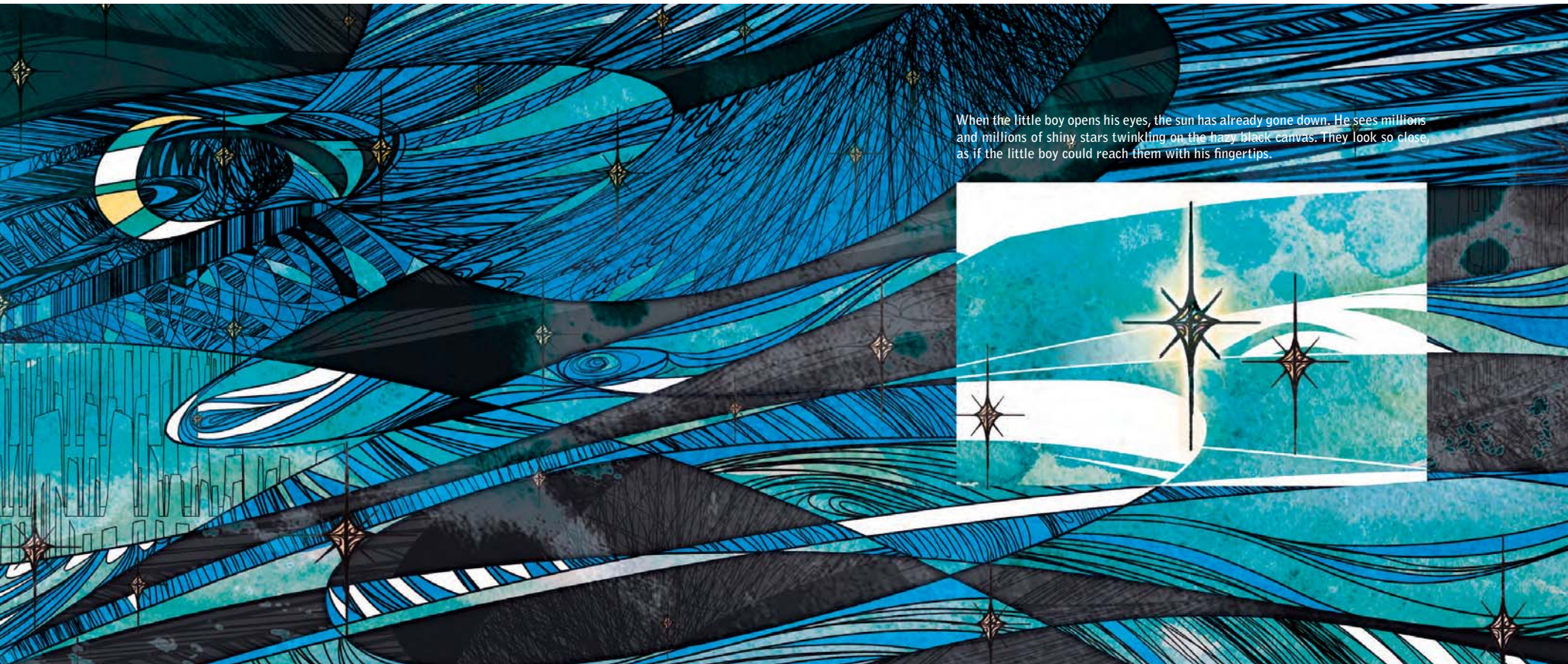


The little boy keeps trembling. He looks around. He is already very far away from his grandpa. He has no choice but to follow this giant monster.
The little boy is terrified. "My name is Wow Wow," the Gorilla introduces himself.





The little boy doesn't respond; he has no idea where they are going. But the gorilla's fluffy and warm hug is unexpectedly comfortable, and the little boy gradually falls asleep.



When the little boy opens his eyes, the sun has already gone down. He sees millions and millions of shiny stars twinkling on the hazy black canvas. They look so close, as if the little boy could reach them with his fingertips.





A breeze blows by, the little boy's favourite smell of wood passes through his hair. Wow Wow and the little boy are on the mountaintop.

"I'm sorry... I just wanted someone to watch the stars with me," Wow Wow says, his big shining eyes blinking under the night sky.

"Watching the stars is my favorite thing, but my family thinks it is a waste of time and wouldn't spend their time watching with me. On a sunny day like this, I figured there would be a lot of stars!" Wow Wow scratches his head with his vbig fluffy hand.




"I thought you were going to eat me!" The little boy opens up his eyes wide to pretend to be angry.

"My dad says all humans are scary, with their guns pointing at us all the time. But I don't think that. I saw that you were looking at the sky too."



"Yes, it's beautiful." They hug each other and feel the sweet warmth of the embrace.



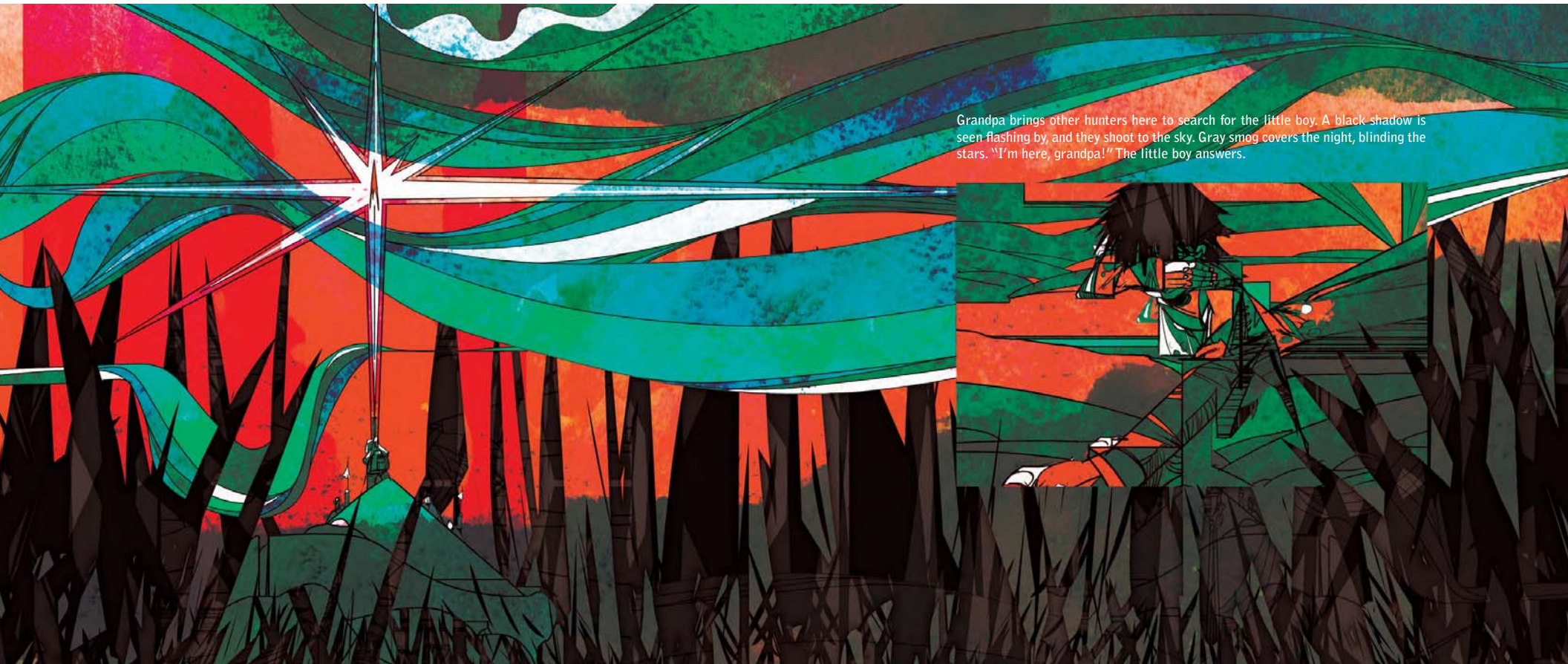


They do not know how long they've been sitting on the mountaintop when a harsh gunshot rings out and resting birds flee away. The little boy hears the voice of his grandpa calling his name. Flames gleaming in-between the trees.

Wow Wow vigilantly scans around. The little boy looks sadly at Wow Wow. "You should go, fast!" They give each other a big hug.



"I will tell my family that not all humans are bad." Wow Wow then disappears in the bush.



Grandpa brings other hunters here to search for the little boy. A black shadow is seen flashing by, and they shoot to the sky. Gray smog covers the night, blinding the stars. "I'm here, grandpa!" The little boy answers.

