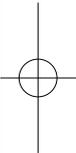
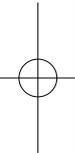
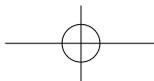
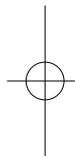
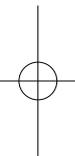
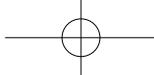
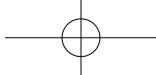


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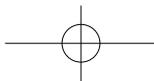
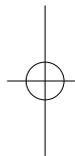
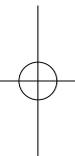
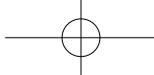
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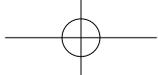
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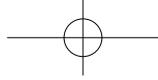






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EDITOR'S PREFACE

Dear Readers:

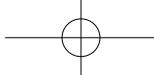
If I announced at the beginning of every issue that this issue featured the best art from Taiwan that I had ever seen, you would eventually stop believing me. I hope we haven't reached that point yet, because this time, it's true.

Issue Five of *Books from Taiwan* will astonish you through image, sound, and word. Our children's section is an explosion of colorful activity, featuring the work of handfuls of Taiwan's best artists. The two-part collection *Little Things* pairs one artist with one story, while the lively, vivacious illustrations of *Aaron the Fox* are the work of an illustrator not yet ten years old. While these stories pair busy illustrations with rich narrative, other titles, like *Silhouettes* and *Adventure at Night*, allow their pictures to speak entirely for themselves. The technology of the book may be unitary, but its voices are diverse.

Similarly, our adult fiction titles catch the eye and ear with brilliant – sometimes cacophonously so – descriptive prose. *Once Upon a Time in Hong Kong* drags the reader through the wildest corners of British-held Hong Kong, where bright lights and bad deals hide injured minds. *Hometown at Dusk* draws us into a strange synesthesia, as the lonely main character experiences a reality integrated with memory.

Taiwanese literature speaks. It sings, it shows, it tells. The talent on display in this issue will amaze you.

Canaan Morse
Editor-in-Chief



MINISTRY OF CULTURE, REPUBLIC OF CHINA (TAIWAN) TRANSLATION GRANT PROGRAM

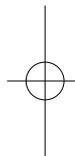
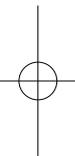
Books from Taiwan supports the translation of Taiwanese literature into foreign languages with the Translation Grant Program, administered by The Ministry of Culture of Taiwan. The grant is to encourage the publication of translations of Taiwan's literature, including fiction, non-fiction, picture books and comics, and help Taiwan's publishing industry to explore non-Chinese international markets.

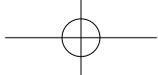
- Applicant Eligibility: Foreign publishers (legal persons) legally registered in accordance with the laws and regulations of their respective countries, or foreign natural persons engaged in translation.
- Conditions:
 1. Works translated shall be original works (including fiction, non-fiction, picture books and comics) by Taiwanese writers (R.O.C. nationality) in traditional Chinese characters.
 2. Priority is given to works to be translated and published for the first time in a non-Chinese language market.
 3. Applicants are not limited to submitting only one project for funding in each application year; however, the same applicant can only receive funding for up to three projects in any given round of applications.
 4. Projects receiving funding shall have already obtained authorization for translation, and be published within two years starting from the year after application year (published before the end of October).
- Funding Items and Amount
 1. The subsidy includes a licensing fee for the rights holder of original work, a translation fee and a production fee.
 2. The maximum funding available for any given project is NT\$ 500,000 (including income tax and remittance charges).
- Application Period: From September 1 to September 30 every year.
- Announcement of successful applications: Before December 15 every year.
- Application Method: Please apply via the online application system (http://booksfromtaiwan.tw/grant_en.php) after reading through the Translation Grant Application Guidelines (available online).

For full details of the Translation Grant Program, please visit

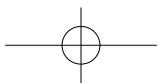
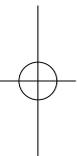
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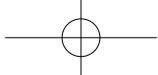
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BOOKS FROM TAIWAN





HOMETOWN AT DUSK

黃昏的故鄉

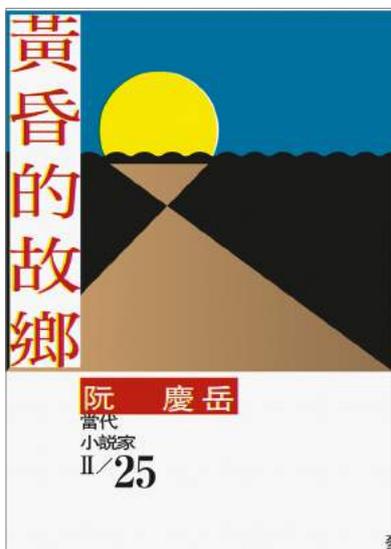
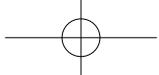


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ROAN CHING-YUEH 阮慶岳

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-

Roan Ching-Yueh is a master of many trades. An acclaimed architect as well as a writer, Roan was the curator of the Taiwanese pavilion at the Venice Biennale in 2006. He's written many books, including novels, essay collections, and monographs on architecture. His novel *Victory Song* won the 2004 Taipei Literary Award, and *Lin Xiuzi and Her Family* was long-listed for the 2009 Man Asian Literary Prize.

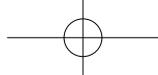


*** 2016 Asia Weekly Top Ten Chinese Novel of the Year**

In this piece of contemplative psychological fiction, touched with an almost Raymond Carver-esque flavor of self-alienation, a young woman from southern Taiwan uproots herself and moves to the North to marry a man she hardly knows. He forces his desire for solitude on her, and very soon she is a stranger in a strange land, an unintentional recluse with two children to care for and only tenuous ties to her own vital past.

Her two sons grow up, one a model child, the other a rebel. Just as the two of them start out on their own paths, their father travels to mainland China to visit relatives and never comes back. With her family scattered to the four winds, where can they call home?

Roan Ching-Yueh perfects his characteristically translucent authorial voice to this new work of introspective fiction, which observes a quotidian family from a metaphysical standpoint, penetrating as deeply as it can the mysteries of desire, memory, and attachment.



HOMETOWN AT DUSK

By Roan Ching-Yueh. Translated by Jennifer Feeley.

But this wasn't the first time this sort of thing happened. The man was very concerned with appearances; for him to ask for help was almost completely impossible – just sending him to borrow a spice or two from the neighbors felt worse than a death sentence. This had to do with his proud and aloof personality; he didn't like dealing with people, including coworkers and neighbors, and even hinted that Hui-Chun should limit contact with them as well.

“Anyway, staying away from people is always a good decision. You never know what's going on in other people's minds – who knows what they're really thinking! Even if *we* have no intention of preying on others, there's no guarantee *they* won't take advantage of *us*! It's best to keep some distance and talk less. There definitely won't be any cons; you must definitely believe me on this.”

Hui-Chun unconsciously did pull away from others. When she and her neighbors came across one another, they simply smiled politely, and almost never visited each other's homes. The man went to even greater extremes, not socializing with his coworkers at all. The couple's life gradually became simpler, bordering on reclusive.

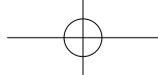
Once, Hui-Chun had been running errands in the city and was delayed on the return. She rushed to squeeze onto the overcrowded bus, concerned about whether she'd make it home in time to fix dinner. The bus shook from side-to-side as it drove onto a large bridge, where it ended up stuck in traffic. Hui-Chun turned her head

to peer out the window; to her surprise, she saw the man leaning motionless against the railing, looking so solitary and lonely as he stood gazing at the river.

She didn't know why the man had stopped by himself atop the bridge, nor had she any idea what he might be thinking about. She didn't bring it up after she got home, but the image of the man standing all alone there, so utterly alone, often surfaced in her mind.

Limited contact with people made Hui-Chun feel somewhat estranged and lonely, especially as she was actually a southerner, an outsider in an unfamiliar place. She didn't pay too much attention to it, as if it were an inevitable consequence. She had contact with fewer people, but ultimately there was nothing bad about that, and in fact she liked having the time to take her son to the river.

She initially went to the river because her almost one-year-old son often woke from his afternoon nap screeching incessantly. Hui-Chun had to wait till the sun had gone down, and the scorching heat receded, to put him on her back and walk alongside the river. One day, as she happened to pass the outer wall of someone's house, her ear caught what seemed to be extremely familiar music coming through the window sash shaded by the courtyard trees. It was a Japanese song, sung in a deep male voice – someone inside must have been playing records. She stopped walking and listened closely, en-



tranced by nostalgia.

The seemingly familiar melody and tone brought back memories of Wakako, whom she hadn't seen in years, along with all the associated images of her childhood. She didn't know how the grown-up Wakako was doing – was she all right? Where had she ended up? Was she also married? She should also have kids, right?

When she'd hung around Wakako's home as a child, her ears often resounded with the poignant sounds of the gramophone. Though she couldn't understand the lyrics, the music still captivated her. Sometimes Hui-Chun would steal glances at the beautiful men and women on the album covers, imagining them in that mysterious and far-off country of Japan.

The walks began as a way to console her restless son, yet she found that she always ended up following the same route, as though trying to hear that record music again. But in the days that followed, the house no longer broadcast that same Japanese music. Hui-Chun couldn't help but wonder if she'd really heard it in the first place. Or had it merely been the distracted, foolish self-imaginings of that particular day? It seemed impossible that one would hear this type of Japanese song in this alley populated entirely by government officials who'd emigrated from mainland China. Even the Taiwanese language in which she was most proficient could scarcely be used in everyday dealings here.

Reflecting on the incident only confused her further. Was it this endlessly meandering stream, where she sometimes found comfort, that made her abruptly decide to settle down in a strange land and start a family with a man she didn't really know? Or was it a combination of Wakako, already distant in her childhood memories, and her own yearning to move to far-off Japan? Did the strange place where Wakako now lived have a stream that she could walk to every day? *Wakako, are you like me, suddenly a mom of a few kids, and do you miss me sometimes? Wakako, are you really...are*

you really all right?

By then she'd had two unexpected back-to-back pregnancies, which made her apprehensive, and the emotions brought on by the stream and the familiar Japanese song, as well as the memories of Wakako and the small town, were the only things that gave her peace of mind and made her feel anchored.

During that period, she often cried for no reason. Worried, the man took her to see a doctor of traditional Chinese medicine who said it was just morning sickness – the temperament of the child in her stomach. First she should pan-fry some medicinal herbs and eat them to bring down her internal heat, then rest, and she'd get better. But Hui-Chun knew that wasn't how it worked. The source of her sadness must be somewhere else, a knot of distressed emotion hidden deep in her own inscrutable inner being – as bottomless as a black hole, and as unpredictable and untamed as a volcano.

This inscrutability could drive Hui-Chun to tears at any time and without any reason.

Sometimes, she wondered: was it because she'd never considered this place her real home that she had no peace of mind and couldn't just quietly pass the days?

She would ask the man questions such as: "Do you feel like this is your *real* home?"

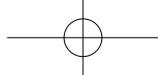
"Huh, what'd you say?"

"I mean, you've been moving around and living in different places all your life. So do you really feel settled down, and you won't want to move again?"

"Who can know for sure? Especially for a wanderer like me, who'd have guessed I would end up bringing my mother across the sea to come here, and that I'd now be settled down and married to you!"

"So do you feel settled down now?"

"Honestly, I don't know yet. I only know that every time I see that dim front porch light in the



distance when I come home, I feel truly at ease.”

Hui-Chun hadn't been able to understand why the man insisted that she never turn off the little bulb on the porch, day or night. Even on summer days, when dazzling white sunlight illuminated everything, she still wasn't supposed to turn it off. She'd thought that perhaps he thought of it like an altar lamp, but later she observed that the man didn't believe in Buddhism, which puzzled her further. Only now did she realize that the man saw it as a sign that he had a home to return to, and it gave him peace of mind and a sense of relief.

And me? Where will my peace of mind come from?

It flustered Hui-Chun to think that she didn't have something dependable like the small porch light to rely on. Later, she thought of her daily ritual, after the man left for work. She'd wash the clothes and hang them to dry, then light coals for that day's fire, which would burn throughout the day, heating water for food and drink, cooking all three meals, and providing their bath water.

Yet as Hui-Chun made the fire, her heart was incredibly calm. First she'd clean up after the previous evening's fire, then use old newspapers and thin pieces of wood as kindling, slowly adding larger and larger pieces of coal while she fanned the flames. At this time, she'd start to become dazzled by the faint sparks, enthralled as she watched the flames gradually spread, little by little, dyeing the dark coal briquettes a transparent red, emitting crackling sounds, and giving off warmth.

The process often gave Hui-Chun the feeling that she was on the verge of falling into a dream-land, or a beloved memory.

For her to become pregnant so quickly was entirely beyond the couple's expectations.

Their wedding night had been rather hurried. On her first day, Hui-Chun had arrived at dusk. The man had made simple arrangements, saying he wanted to take her out for

what was both a welcome dinner and a banquet with good friends. “You know how things are after my mother's passing – the funeral home has just finished handling things, and it's not a good idea to make such a big show of entertaining. So we'll hold a small gathering, have a meal with some close friends, and later we'll find time to make up for the other traditions and ceremonies, okay?”

She said nothing, just nodded her head in silence.

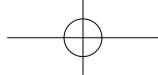
Before they went out, Hui-Chun was unsure whether it would be appropriate to wear the *qipao* that she'd just gotten that morning, and she'd wanted to ask the man's opinion. Upon seeing that he was only ordinarily dressed, however, she decided to leave it behind and instead wear it the next day when they went to the notary. The man's two co-workers, who also were the two witnesses who would accompany them to the court notary the following day, dined with them that night. Initially the atmosphere was awkward and uncomfortable: everyone was overly polite and hesitant as the two coworkers first cautiously sized up Hui-Chun, not daring to say anything, while the man was of few words. The entire meal was exceptionally stuffy. Later on, everyone drank some alcohol and eventually relaxed, daring to engage in a bit of mischievous banter.

“Brother, eat as much of this garlic and chili as you can, ha-ha, so as not to disappoint Sister, ha-ha!”

“Brother and Sister, make sure to let loose tonight! The wedding night is one of the ‘three great pleasures’ in life, don't let it go to waste!”

“Don't worry about sleeping in tomorrow; we've asked for the day off. Sleep as late as you'd like. We'll definitely keep you company right to the very end. Don't worry.”

The man blushed and didn't respond, other than urging those two to drink. “Drink up, drink up. Talk less, drink more.”



When they returned home, the man was definitely a little tipsy.

But he insisted on boiling some water. “Rest for a bit, and then you can take the first bath. Leave some water for me; I’ll bathe, and then we’ll go to bed early.” A slightly embarrassed Hui-Chun walked into the only bedroom. The wooden bed was covered in red sheets, a few small bedside lamps flickering unsteadily. She took the clothing that she might wear tonight out of her suitcase, and also dug out a piece of cotton cloth that she’d been instructed to use to collect the red stain.

The man called out to her to go ahead and take her bath. She went into the corner of the kitchen, squatted down and carefully used her hands to scoop out some water, quietly washing her body, unsure of how she should feel in anticipation of all that was about to happen. When she’d finished, she changed into a pink robe. Hui-Chun felt the man’s eager gaze as he moved past her. She entered the room and sat on the edge of the bed, waiting. The man finally returned, dressed in baggy underwear, his torso naked and strong. Without any shyness whatsoever, he pulled the door shut, walked right to her, and explored her breasts through her robe with his palms. He then undid her clothing with his hands, looking straight ahead without any hesitation.

Hui-Chun shifted nervously, and motioned to the man to turn off the flickering lamps. The man got up and turned them off, and when he came back they both climbed into bed, their bodies starting to twist together. Suddenly, the man stopped and got up, turning on the lights to look for something. Hui-Chun asked, “What is it?” He said it was nothing, just that he needed to remember to put on a condom. When he came back again, he lay down so that his entire body completely covered and pressed into her, concentrating on the state of his rising and falling. Hui-Chun had no idea how she was supposed to

react at that moment, as though she were outside it all.

And then her thoughts drifted. At first she heard the noise of many insects chirping in the courtyard outside the wooden lattice window – how different this was from the night sounds she often heard in her hometown far away in the South! Here, the noise of the dark night seemed faint and mysterious. It made her feel slightly afraid. These weren’t the night sounds of the small town, which generally were sweet and warm, like peaceful lullabies, and even the sounds of quickly falling rain or howling wind felt safe and familiar, like family and old friends coming to visit.

Memories of that childhood weekend by the sea suddenly appeared again. First the sun shining full in her face, so that Hui-Chun could almost not open her eyes. Then the rise and fall of surging waves. Their roaring made her body sway, so much that she unconsciously shouted, “No—o, no—o, no—”

Like the sea, the man’s waves were never-ending. At first she panicked, and then like a boater who’d become familiar with the rhythm of the swell, she forgot the motion, clutching the man’s body with both hands as though afraid that she would fall into an abyss.

Suddenly, it was over.



ONCE UPON A TIME IN HONG KONG

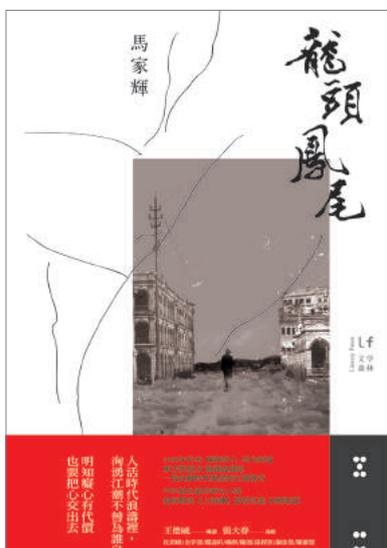
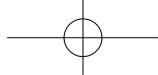
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MA KA-FAI 馬家輝

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-

Ma Ka-fai has a cosmopolitan background: he grew up in Hong Kong, studied psychology at National Taiwan University, and obtained his Master and PhD in Sociology in the U.S. (University of Chicago and University of Wisconsin). He had worked in advertising, publishing, news media and film, and currently teaches media and creative writing at City University of Hong Kong. He has published over 20 books of essays, many of them bestsellers. *Once Upon a Time in Hong Kong* is his debut novel.



*** 2016 Asia Weekly Top Ten Chinese Novel of the Year**

Luk Pa-Choi runs to Hong Kong to escape poverty, brutality, and sexual abuse, having no idea that a future just as treacherous awaits him there. The young man begins by pulling a rickshaw and working as a bouncer in brothels, but fate pulls him deeper into the world of the Chinese criminal underground, and he begins to establish himself as a gangster. Yet he has a lover of no small significance – Morris Davidson, an officer in the British police force in Hong Kong. The two feed each other information, and provide each other comfort.

Yet when the Japanese army takes over Hong Kong, and British officers are thrown in jail, Luk Pa-Choi must learn to deal with this new enemy. As his situation becomes more dangerous, Luk faces betrayal and the bitter price of love as he tries his best to rescue Davidson.

Set in the tumultuous period of WWII and Japanese occupation, *Once Upon a Time in Hong Kong* tells the story of a young Chinese gangster’s dramatic rise in Hong Kong’s underworld and his forbidden love affair with a British police officer. Meticulously researched and artfully told, it is at once a crime epic, a heart-wrenching love story, and a sex-charged spy thriller.



ONCE UPON A TIME IN HONG KONG

By Ma Ka-Fai. Translated by Jeremy Tiang.

Chapter Seven: You Bloody Chinese!

He muddled through his days as usual, but Luk Pak-Choi felt that something inside him had been transformed. He felt a dull itch, one he couldn't scratch himself. He required another hand, a strange hand. Yet he didn't want to look for it himself; he would wait for it to reach out to him.

He began waiting for customers outside the newly-opened Luk Kwok Hotel on Gloucester Road, watching the bar girls stroll by, arm in arm with their foreign-devil clients. Most were scrawny, dark-skinned women in gaudy cheongsams, with hair piled into little hillocks and scarlet lipstick, as if their mouths were stained with blood. He didn't understand how the foreign devils found this appetizing. Of course, Cindy was an exception. Luk Pak-Choi enjoyed her mature beauty – a shame she was a woman.

One evening, Luk was waiting outside the hotel when a familiar figure scuttled from the building next to Wing Cheong Pawnbrokers, looking distracted and holding his head low, as if trying to hide – but that pale skin was too visible, even in dim light. Luk froze, then steadied himself and looked more closely. It was him, Morris Davidson, Henry's good friend. On this muggy summer's evening, Davidson wore an olive-green shirt buttoned all the way up. His chest hair was so abundant it poked out the collar, mesmerizing as it glinted faintly in the streetlight – bright yellow one minute, dull brown the next, then gold-

en once again.

Davidson's sharp, police-officer eyes picked out Luk Pak-Choi at a distance. Stepping swiftly over the tram line, he came close and said in a low voice, "Ah Choi, I want you to take me home."

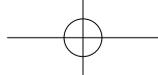
To have Morris Davidson suddenly appear before him, standing so close, and murmuring so gently made Luk feel disoriented, as if he'd slipped into unreality. He looked up at Davidson, whose face was completely silhouetted by the neon lights of the pawn shop behind him, like an enormous, demonic shadow enveloping Luk, and leaving him helpless.

Without waiting for a response, Davidson jumped into the rickshaw and pulled down the green shade, sinking into the canopy's shadows. "Let's go!" he called.

Luk Pak-Choi bent to grab the rickshaw's wooden handles, and with a burst of energy, began jogging along. He came back to reality as he drove. He managed to stay silent for a couple of minutes, but at the turn off for St. Francis Street, finally couldn't stop himself. Turning his head slightly, he said, "Long time no see, sir. Didn't you return home? When did you get back?"

Davidson stayed silent for a while before replying, "I did go home, and took care of some official business while I was there. Now that's over, I'm back here to start work again. There's a lot going on. Your Hong Kong is giving us more and more trouble."

Luk smiled, "That's why you definitely



shouldn't leave us." Davidson didn't respond; Luk chuckled awkwardly, then went on. "On a case so late at night? There's a few white powder stalls at the football field, everyone knows about them."

More silence. Luk Pak-Choi took the hint and stopped talking. A moment later, he heard Davidson's voice. "How well do you know the white powder guy?"

"So so, I guess." The white powder guy sold opium, and the football field was part of his territory. "I see his gang more often. Ah Muk, Ah Sing, Sandung Wing. They pop up all over the place, giving people a hard time. Damn them. You know what I mean by that?"

Davidson laughed. "Of course I do. Bastards!"

"Right! Shitheads!" Luk Pak-Choi chuckled too.

All the way, Davidson kept asking how things were going with the households around Southorn Playground. Recently, hordes of people had surged into Hong Kong every day, fleeing the war on the Mainland. He wanted to know who'd come to Wanchai, what nefarious business they were up to, what the word on the street was. Luk Pak-Choi and the rest were used to calling this place "bo dei", playing field. According to Buck-toothed Bing, Southorn was some foreign devil's name – he'd been an official in Hong Kong, but the field was actually named after his wife, not him, just like the newly-built Violet Peel Health Centre next door, dedicated to the devil governor's wife, not the man himself. Luk had a strong sense that while Chinese men occasionally feared their wives, Westerners actually had a fearful respect for theirs.

Davidson peppered Luk with questions, some of which he knew the answers to, and some of which he didn't, but he answered anyway. In fact, the less certain he was, the more detail he went into, as insecurity persuaded him that not knowing made him lose face. So he went ahead and made things up, spicing up the narrative, creating a great pile of nonsensical supposition.

Lies were an effective sedative, for the teller as well as the listener. You had to believe in them yourself in order to speak them convincingly, and the more often you said them, the more you believed. Yes, that's how it was. No other way was possible.

Luk Pak-Choi's legs pumped away as he pulled his rickshaw that night. He leaned forward as he gripped the handles firmly, so hot air smacked his face then swept past his ears, over his earlobes and their backs, like being caressed by countless formless hands. Suddenly, he felt sore, waves of heat radiating from his hands throughout his entire body as the thick wooden handles rubbed constantly against his palms. He'd never felt like this before. Changes came fast that summer night.

The rickshaw kept moving forward. Luk spoke, and Davidson listened, responding every few seconds with an indistinct "mm-hmm."

Luk talked on without being asked, one story, one character after another. It was strange: he normally mumbled when he talked, but now the words poured out of him, Cantonese studded with English, faster and faster, like a reprimand, as if he needed to purge his heart of all that he knew and all he didn't, like emptying a basin of water – filthy water, yet also comfortingly warm.

Each grunt of acknowledgment from Davidson lashed him like a whip. If Luk were a horse, Davidson would be his rider. A person on horseback doesn't need to hit the rump with every twitch of the whip. All that's necessary is to let it slice through the air next to the tail; the sound is all it takes for the animal to understand it needs to speed up. Onlookers imagine that the horse is afraid, but the rider knows it's more excited than anything else.

He didn't know how long he'd been moving – all sense of time had disappeared. As if fleeing for his life through the darkness of night, Luk Pak-Choi kept his head down, charging ahead with his rickshaw. Step after step, as if tapping



out a beat for his monologue, or applauding, comforting himself, he pulled a stranger along – and also himself, even less familiar, working hard to burst through the world swirling urgently around him.

Finally, Davidson's voice came from behind him. "We're here."

Luk abruptly halted, and the world stopped spinning. His breath came in gasps, and his torso was covered in sweat. Davidson lived at Phoenix Terrace on MacDonnell Road, a five-story tenement with a short flight of white steps leading up to the yellow front door. A streetlamp poured foggy yellow light into the summer gloaming, adding murk and mystery to a world it was supposed to illuminate. Davidson leapt from the rickshaw and stood with his back to the light, his features as indistinct as when he'd got in. Looking up at him, Luk could see only his lips moving as they said, "Thank you for telling me all this. I'll be sure to look you up for another chat. Good night."

As Davidson handed over a banknote for the fare, their fingertips brushed. They froze for a moment, then pulled their hands away at once.

Reaching into his pocket for his keys, Davidson climbed the stairs, went inside, and shut the door behind him. Even though this hardly made a sound, it roared mightily in Luk's ears. Perhaps because he'd spent so long talking, or because he was perspiring so heavily, he felt like he'd been hollowed out, his chest and belly completely empty, the numb parts of his body even more numb now. His legs trembled, and he remained where he was, unable to move. Looking up at the building, he saw the lights come on in the third floor window. Davidson had reached his apartment. The windows remained shut, keeping out the city's cicada chirps. In that room were locked secrets Luk Pak-Choi longed to know.

After standing there a while, Luk had just taken up his rickshaw and turned to leave, when the yellow door swung open again, and he heard Da-

vidson's voice: "Ah Choi, would you like a glass of—"

Without turning around or waiting for him to finish, Luk yelled out, "Yes!"

Davidson came forward and placed his hands on the wooden handles of the rickshaw, where Luk's hands were still in position, so Davidson's fingers rubbed lightly over them, crawling like ants from his palms all the way up to his elbows. Luk felt a wave of pain running all the way into his chest, then let out a burst of laughter and let go. The wooden poles dropped to the ground with a crash, startling both men. Davidson looked down at Luk. "Come. Don't be afraid."

He pulled open the yellow door and they went in, entering a world that wasn't completely unfamiliar. The difference was that this time, Luk Pak-Choi was no longer confused, no longer being forced, yet not taking the initiative either, because a hand had indeed reached out, like a bouquet of yellow roses blooming before his eyes, its fragrance filling his nostrils and dizzying him. Nor did this scent belong to Henry, but to Henry's good friend, which made Luk even more eager to breathe it in deeply. It gave him a sudden sense of revenge, as if he'd picked up a stone and flung it hard at Henry's head, the way Medicine King Kin beat him up that day. Davidson's appearance made Luk feel he had a mysterious connection to Henry, as if they were sharing this man. Luk was no longer the betrayed – he'd gone in the other direction, and was now facilitating someone else's betrayal.

That night, when he left Morris Davidson's home, Luk Pak-Choi felt lighter than ever before. It wasn't just his body that felt empty, but his mind too. The madness that had oppressed him so long suddenly smashed to fragments, boiled away, so his frame seemed completely weightless, and even the rickshaw he was pulling felt like nothing at all. He sprinted back to the Wanchai tenement, so quickly that he shocked even himself. Then he understood – this was



the speed of a winner. Moving without burdens, without pressure, with nothing but the contentment of having achieved victory.

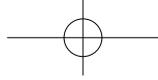
The sensation was addictive, and Luk began meeting Davidson more and more frequently. It was Davidson who usually sought him out by Southorn Playground, getting into the rickshaw and telling him to go north along Luard Road, down Gloucester Road to the sea, then turn left and head west, swinging round to Queen's Road Central before doubling back to MacDonnell Road. Along the way, Luk followed his passenger's instructions, pulling the rickshaw slowly so he'd have plenty of time to ask about the latest news. Mostly he just wanted to know what was going on around the playground, what the hooligans had been fighting about, and whether any suspicious characters had suddenly shown up. Sometimes, Davidson would toss out a name or two and ask Luk to pay special attention to these individuals. Recently, he'd been keeping an eye on White-haired Wing from the Hung Wing Triad, as well as the movements of the Japanese in Wanchai, and he hoped Luk could help him find out more. Hong Kong was a broken pail in a vacant lot – whenever a storm came, it filled with rainwater, and let it run everywhere. In two or three years, the population had swollen from six hundred thousand to seven, then from eight to nine hundred thousand, and then to a million. The worse the fighting got on the Mainland, the more refugees poured into the city, and the harder it became to keep order – which made Davidson's inquiries all the more urgent.

Naturally, that wasn't all he asked about. Their destination was always Davidson's house on MacDonnell. As soon as they stepped in the front door, they'd embrace, and the much-anticipated events would take place. Afterwards, lying in bed or on the floor, the two men would chat. Luk Pak-Choi enjoyed listening to Davidson's stories, of which he had an endless supply – stories of India, Southeast Asia, Canton, everywhere

he'd been before. Davidson had an older brother, a highly accomplished fellow who was accepted to Cambridge, but unfortunately succumbed to lung disease before school started. His father started drinking heavily after his son's death, and would beat his wife and children after he got drunk, so Morris decided to leave his home at the first opportunity, and go as far away as necessary. He was lucky enough to gain a place at London University. After graduation, he returned home to marry and have children. He taught for two years, then entered the civil service, and was posted to Ceylon, India, and Malaya, then Canton and Hong Kong.

Four months ago, during the Easter vacation, he'd returned home to Scotland to visit his father, who was seriously ill. At this point in the conversation, Davidson mentioned his wife, son, and daughter. Luk listened without asking questions until he could no longer restrain his curiosity. He stammered: "She, they—why not come to Hong Kong with you?"

"She didn't want to come," said Davidson expressionlessly. "She said it would be better for everyone this way."



BURNING BRIGHT

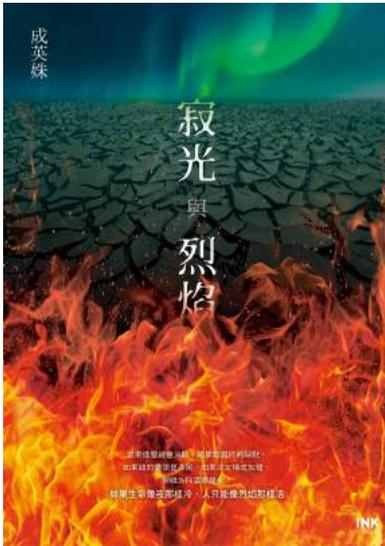
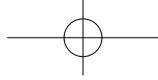
寂光與烈焰



CHENG YING-SHU 成英姝

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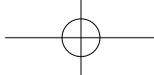
One of Taiwan's most celebrated authors, Cheng Ying-Shu is a master of multiple genres, including fiction, essays, and reviews. She has been a star of Taiwan's literary world since 1994, when her short story collection *The Princess Did Not Sleep All Night* broke on the scene to critical acclaim. Her previous works include the prize-winning novel *A Cappella Requiem* and *The Male Soubret*, the story of a hermaphroditic courtesan in early Taiwan. She's also made a splash with her photography collections, as well as her non-fiction book on Tarot augury and psychology, *The Hand of God*.



A man wakes up in a prison cell, his body aching and his memory totally gone, just at the very moment someone comes to get him out. His saviour is a street racer and a con man, and he is as suspicious of his charge's amnesia as our protagonist is of him. The terror and the courage that come with total memory loss drive the protagonist to stick with him – if only he could remember who he is.

Eventually, he finds evidence of a name – Yan Ying – that appears to be his. He's told that he is also a street racer, and an even bigger hustler than his partner. Though he remembers nothing about driving, his partner is taking him to a race in the desert anyway. In an effort to trigger a recall, our protagonist dives into the practice of racing, and unearths everything he can about his own past. He tries re-building his own story, until one day he discovers that the name Yan Ying might not be his at all. Reclamation may lie in deeper, more dangerous stimuli.

The book that took author Cheng Ying-Shu five years and a racing license to write transports the reader on a red-lined ride into the empty deserts of the mind, where every sharp curve and sudden precipice threaten to throw us into the unknown.



BURNING BRIGHT

By Cheng Ying-Shu. Translated by Petula Parris.

The man stared in apparent disbelief, eyes piercing and alert, like a bird of prey. “Yan Ying?” the man cried out. “*Yan Ying...*” He repeated the name to himself, almost certain it must be his own.

Yet his heart sank the moment he realized he felt no connection with it whatsoever.

He desperately wanted to question the man, if just to shed some light – even the faintest glimmer would do – onto the total blankness of his mind. But asking questions was too strenuous a task right now. His head was pounding so much he wished he could dig his eyes from their sockets before they exploded. His body screamed with pain, and his tongue flat-out ignored every order to speak. The skin and flesh of his face smarted like freshly kneaded dough, and his skeleton felt like it might fly into pieces at any minute.

The man walked on ahead, paying him no attention, as if even a quick glance back in his direction risked being too charitable. One leg felt dull and heavy as he struggled to keep up. At first sight, he had thought the man scrawny. But now, from behind, he saw he was in fact tall, lean, and broad-shouldered. The contours of a muscular physique pressed against the man’s tailored shirt, sleeves rolled up to the elbow.

He lumbered on as the man kept up his brisk pace, almost skipping down a flight of stairs. Though his hearing was muffled by a constant buzzing in his ears, he could clearly make out the distinct tapping of the man’s polished leather shoes on the ground. *Maybe I’m hallucinating*, he

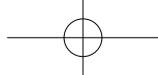
thought.

He had been utterly disoriented ever since coming around. The weight of his head continually dragged him down like a bowling ball. An unpleasant sensation lingered in his chest, and he was careful to fill his lungs no more than two-thirds full, lest he collapse in spasms of pain. Yet what suffocated him most was not the pain in his chest, but the pressure in his skull. He had no memories or recollections, and he found this barrenness intolerable. Adding to this distress, of course, was the realization that he had woken up in a prison cell.

Losing your memory is not a pleasant experience. Yet in his numbness, the rational panic response – to not knowing who or where you are, or what on earth has taken place – had still to kick in. What he was experiencing was more instinctive: the frustration of being unable to get his brain to move when he tried to recall something, anything. Forgetting even trivial things can be irksome – a person’s name, some snippet of gossip you meant to share, or that joke you were dying to tell. You have it on the tip of your tongue, and your mind goes blank. And here he was having forgotten his entire goddamned life!

Panic can often bring about hyper-vigilance and fear, which gradually transform into all-out rage. But there was no one on whom to unleash any anger – no remembered faces, no names, just an anonymous figure who had come to liberate him.

Once they were outside, the starless, soot-col-



ored sky told him it was nighttime. He climbed into the car and gently set his head against the window, taking comfort in finally having something to prop up his throbbing skull. Through the corner of his eye, he saw his reflection in the glass, blurry and faceless.

The dimly lit landmarks they passed were completely alien. When their obscurity started to get to him, he was shocked how familiar irritability felt. Even so, the sensation was fleeting, and slipped away before he could comprehend anything more by it.

Maneuvering the steering wheel with one hand, the man loosened his navy blue tie and tossed it onto the back seat. He pulled a pack of cigarettes from his pocket, took one between his teeth, and lit it before lowering the car window an inch. “Fu told me to come get you out. Well, he didn’t actually say who it would be...He’d taken care of everything by the time I arrived. Boy, was I surprised to see you!” The man paused to chuckle, his eyes gleaming in the darkness like a nocturnal animal. “And I thought nothing could surprise me these days!”

His passenger was silent. He had questions to ask, but was unsure of even how much he wanted to know. He waited for the man to say more, but nothing came.

He ascertained from what had just been said that he and the driver already knew each other. He was pondering the merits of disclosing his amnesia, when he became aware of a warm liquid running from his nose. He raised a hand to it: blood. His T-shirt, too, was covered with blotches of dark red. Up until this moment, it had not crossed his mind that there might be anything untoward in his appearance, not having been near a mirror since coming round. He noted how his liberator had failed to take any notice of – let alone express concern for – his injuries, and from this concluded that he and the man could hardly be close. After spending some time to choose his words carefully, he finally

opened his mouth: “I should probably know who you are...and this is going to sound strange...but I don’t remember anything. It’s freaking me out... But, hey, I’m sure it’s just a temporary thing. So... would you mind if I asked your name?”

The driver turned on him with a cold, intense stare, his thick eyebrows furrowed in a menacing frown. His passenger recoiled, and then panicked that he had said the wrong thing. “I’m dead serious,” he said hastily. “If I knew your name before, what’s the harm in a gentle reminder?” The passenger’s head fell back onto the window with a clunk as he massaged his eye sockets and mumbled. “It’s not much fun sounding retarded, you know...”

“Duan Fei,” the man said tersely.

There was a silence before the passenger realized this was a reply to his question.

“That’s new. Not a name I recognize.” He tilted his head to one side and thought, despondently, how these two syllables sounded as irrelevant to him as his own name had moments earlier.

The driver shook his head slowly, which his passenger interpreted as either bemusement or deep contemplation. The streetlights took turns to illuminate the driver’s face as the sides of his mouth grew tense. Or was it in fact a smile?

“I was about to ask where the hell you’d been these past five years. How come we never heard anything...But I figured you’d probably want to tell me yourself and, if not...Well, then what would be the point in asking?” The man tossed his cigarette stub and wound up the car window. “And here you are telling me you don’t even know yourself!”

“Five years? So it’s five years since you last saw me?”

The man remained silent, suggesting an answer in the affirmative.

He longed to take a deep breath, but his sinuses had swollen and his body frantically objected whenever he allowed his ribs to expand.



He split one breath into a series of shorter inhalations. "Well, that's good," he said, his voice strained and sarcastic. "If I know you saw me five years ago, that's already a piece in the puzzle!" He gazed out the car window. "Where are we?"

Duan Fei glanced back at him, a smile darting across his lips. "This is where my partner and I started racing for bucks six, seven years ago. Right here on these mountain roads..."

"Oh..." he mumbled, signaling his lack of interest.

"We started out small. Never won much to begin with. Then we made a point of challenging the rubbish drivers in their flashy cars. My partner was quite the provocateur. That's one of his innate talents really, working people up...We strung those imbeciles right on. We'd let them win something small first so they'd up the stakes. Some nights we'd walk away with a good few hundred thousand..."

There was something mesmerizing about the tone and rhythm of Duan Fei's sonorous voice, which seemed to resonate even when he spoke in a whisper. Every now and again he'd glance back at his passenger, offering up a sly, short-lived smile.

"Sometimes the losers didn't want to cough up, which brings us to another talent my partner had. He always knew how to...or should I say *enjoyed*...yes, he enjoyed getting people to pay. The only problem was that he could get a little heavy-handed, and he put somebody in the hospital. Turned out that somebody was the county magistrate's only son, just twenty years old. Couldn't even get his dick up anymore, let alone move his legs. So naturally his father set out to avenge him."

Duan Fei stopped speaking and turned to look at his passenger once more. It could have just been a reflex, or gauging his reaction.

"Anyway, who'd have known that my partner had been out using my name instead of his own? So you don't need to ask who the county magis-

trate sent his henchman after..."

"Why?" his passenger asked.

"Why what?"

"Why was he going around using your name?"

"You tell me..." Duan Fei said, curling up the corners of his mouth. A light glinted in his dark eyes, but again the passenger was not sure if it was supposed to be mocking or intimidating.

"You want me to guess? Well, I'd say it's easy to be brave when you're unaccountable." The passenger spoke softly, closing his eyes.

"I see. So that's how it works..." Duan Fei arched his eyebrows before falling silent.

Something about Duan Fei's silence ruffled his passenger's confidence, cancelling out the initial satisfaction he had felt from having given such an insightful answer.

"So you know who I'm talking about?" Duan Fei suddenly blurted out.

"How would I? I told you, I don't remember anything—" The passenger tried to quell the anger rising in his throat. Fortunately, Duan Fei interrupted him before he could go on.

"It was you."

Not quite comprehending, the passenger slackened his jaw as he slowly processed Duan Fei's words. "You mean to say, we're enemies?" he asked, trying in earnest to make sense of the situation.

"Well, not exactly," Duan Fei said coolly. "Believe me, you've done a lot worse."

This cannot be happening, the passenger told himself. He thought to pinch his arm to see if he were dreaming, only to realize immediately the futility of the idea: *What's the point of pinching yourself when your whole body hurts?* He started to feel dizzy.

"Where are you taking me?"

"Why, where do you want to go?"

"How do I know?"

"Well, I'll give you two options. You can come with me and stop the questions. Or get out right



now, and do whatever the hell you want.”

“Huh?” his passenger replied, neither option appealing.

“To be honest, I don’t give a shit what you decide. I’ve got my own decisions to make. I also have two options, you see. Do I keep driving, or do I take you back to jail?”

“But I don’t—”

Duan Fei cut him short. “Are you deaf? I’m talking about *my* options. You can deal with your own problems yourself.”

“You’re being a bit harsh...”

Duan Fei let out a bewildered sigh.

“Don’t you remember what got you locked up in the first place?”

His passenger didn’t bother replying. How could he remember? He would have responded with a nonchalant shrug, but didn’t have the energy.

“So I guess you’ll be surprised to learn that this wasn’t your first time?”

“First time doing what?” his passenger asked confusedly.

Duan Fei glanced around once again, seemingly clocking his passenger’s expression.

“Well, lucky you for not remembering,” Duan Fei said dryly. “If I were you I’d prefer not to remember too.”

“I guess you’re right. Can’t be anything good, can it? Considering it landed me in jail.”

Duan Fei shook his head and smiled, “You make it sound like none of this has anything to do with you!”

“Well, you’re right...I have no idea what you’re talking about. I’d like to say I’m upset, but I can’t.”

“Is that so?”

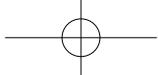
Well, not exactly, the passenger said to himself. He knew he should feel bothered by all this, and in some ways he was, since even in his impaired state he could tell that the situation looked dire. The problem was the alarm bells in his mind were sounding out in slow motion, his mind

moving like a slug travelling leisurely along its slippery trail of slime. He wished he could evoke just a few memories, something to prove that his current stupor was a simple malfunction – some kind of performance by his normal, quick-witted self, rather than the way he actually was.

He wearily transferred his attention to the mounting tightness in his chest. There was also a persistent drumming in his head that, though inaudible, rattled his brain like a ship in rough seas.

His thoughts were rudely interrupted by a sudden, shrill noise. Before he realized what the sound was, he saw Duan Fei shift his weight to one side, heave his backside off the seat, and retrieve a mobile phone from his pocket.

After a gruff “Hello,” Duan Fei’s tone softened. “I went there this afternoon...Well, I always say treat others as you’d like to be treated, eh? His wife is a right handful, I couldn’t exactly send you morons there, could I? It was better I went myself. Anyway, turns out I was lucky. By the time I arrived, she’d already driven off in her new Escalade. She ended up completely losing control and trashed a whole row of parked cars! I mean, what kind of bloke gives his wife a Cadillac Escalade for her birthday? He’s not right in the head. And now even his daughter blames me for what happened...What? No, I couldn’t get a word in edgeways. He just waved me away, told me to get lost...He said he couldn’t cope with any more bad news...What? No, who do you think I am? How am I supposed to remember everything? No, I can’t look just now. I’m driving...I’m a good 160 kilometers from Zhangjiakou. I’ll reply to you later. Oh, and make sure Li speaks to Customs in the morning...Right then...”



AARON THE FOX

狐狸阿聰



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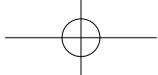
Over the course of more than twenty years, Wang Mei-Hui has published over a hundred books, as well as sixteen titles for children. A lover of rural life, her children's books emphasize loving what one has and the ability to share with others.



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-

Chen Pin-Rui is nine years old. He loves to draw, collect model cars and play soccer. This is his first illustrated book.



Have you ever been told that you're "too smart for your own good"? Aaron the fox fits that description perfectly. He's a clever little fellow, especially adept at getting what he wants with the minimum of effort, no matter how hard his elders try to teach him. His teacher, the wise Master Fox, possesses many magical objects that can do incredible things – things Aaron really wants – but at a price.

In this multi-part tale reminiscent of *The Sorcerer's Apprentice*, we watch Aaron get his hands on all sorts of powerful devices, like the Magic Menu Pencil and the Heart's Desire Hat, then learn all too late what happens when one lets one's desires extend beyond the reach of self-control. Whether or not he'll learn from his mistakes isn't the question, however; the question is, how will the rest of the village stand him?!

Wang Mei-Hui's delightful story, brought into living color by the illustration prodigy Chen Pin-Rui, excites and entertains as it spins a parable about self-control and forbearance.



AARON THE FOX

Text by Wang Mei-Hui, illustrated by Chen Pin-Rui.

Translated by Eleanor Goodman.

1. The Magic Menu Pencil

Aaron the fox had walked a long way to come pay his respects to his teacher, Master Fox. Master Fox had given him a pencil as a present.

“Master, can I have something else?” Aaron said unhappily. “I don’t need a pencil.”

“This isn’t any ordinary pencil,” Master Fox said, shaking his head. “Once you’ve carried forty-nine buckets of water for me, it will become a Magic Menu Pencil.”

“A Magic Menu Pencil?” Aaron said incredulously.

Aaron wanted to see the pencil’s magic, so in just five days, he carried forty-nine buckets of water, filling all five of the water basins in the courtyard.

Having fulfilled his duty, Aaron asked Master Fox how to use the Magic Menu Pencil.

“All you have to do is draw what you want to eat on a piece of paper.”

“I’ve been drawing for days, and it doesn’t work.” Thinking himself very smart, Aaron had long since tried to make it work, but without success.





Master Fox replied calmly, “There’s no such thing as a free lunch. Before the pencil’s magic can be activated, a price has to be set.”

“I’ve already carried forty-nine buckets of water!” Aaron thought that was quite a heavy “price.”

Master Fox laughed. “That was just your master testing you.”

Did that mean all his work had been for nothing? Aaron hid his annoyance and pretended to ask humbly for advice, “Master, please tell me!”

“The ‘price’ is an exchange of one thing for another, and it has to be something that you have on you.” Master Fox couldn’t help but remind him, “When you use the Magic Menu Pencil to create food, you’ll pay whatever ‘price’ you set. And what you owe will accumulate. Don’t forget that.”

“Oh, so that’s how it works.” Aaron nodded knowingly, then looked down at his body. “Hey, I’ve got lots of fur on my body. Let’s set fur as the price.”

With Master Fox’s guidance, Aaron the fox performed a spell on the Magic Menu Pencil. After he had set a “price,” he impatiently drew a steak on a piece of paper and said a few magic words over it. To his surprise, a real live steak appeared before his eyes. “Wow! It worked! Master, the Magic Menu Pencil really works!”

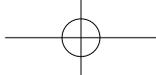
Wild with joy, Aaron drew a cake on the paper and said the magic words. A cake appeared.

“Aaron, remember, all of this food comes at a cost. It’s best not to use it if you don’t really need it.” The master smiled at Aaron’s pleasure.

“I know, Master.”

“Then stop messing around. Go up into the mountains and bring back some firewood.”

“Ouch, Master, my stomach really hurts. I’m going to the bathroom first.”



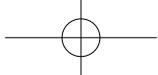
Pretending that he was going to the bathroom, Aaron grabbed the Magic Menu Pencil, and snuck away while Master Fox sipped his tea.

With his pencil in hand, Aaron didn't go back to learn from his teacher Master Fox. Each day he ate his fill, slept late, and lived the good life. He thought: I'm not going to be dumb enough to go work for that old fox spirit again.

In just one month, Aaron got very fat. As soon as he woke up, he'd draw something to eat, and as soon as he took a bite, he'd think of something else he wanted. He drew and drew and ate and ate, and wasted more and more food.

"Let me think...what else is there to eat...hey, how about some chocolate!"





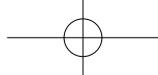
But this time, no matter how he drew or how many times he said the magic words, it was no use. He had to search through the piles of old food to find something that hadn't gone spoiled. When all of the food that had been blocking his full-length mirror was gone, to his great surprise he caught sight of a fat, hairless "pig" in the mirror.

"Hey pig! What are you doing in my house? Get out!" He cursed furiously. Then he saw that his opponent made the same gestures he did, and he realized that he was the pig!

Totally hairless and so fat he looked like a pig, Aaron hurried to Master Fox to beg for his help.

Showing great mercy, Master Fox said, "Aaron, be a good boy and stay here and train with me. From now on, each time you carry a bucket of water, I'll help you get one hair back. How about it?"

So in order to get his fur back, Aaron could only accept his fate and start carrying water for Master Fox again.



LITTLE THINGS I, II

小東西 I、II



Jay Yeh writes beautiful children's stories that are heavily influenced by ancient Chinese culture. Some of his best-known books include *A Child's Chuang Tzu*, *Jingjing and the Peach Blossom Spring*, *Stories from the Dragon's House*, and *Little Things*.

Little Things is a collaborative illustration of a group of stories. Award-winning author Jay Yeh imagined the various characters and their tales – the bottle cap, the button, the cup – and worked with a different illustrator for each one, as best suited the artist's interest and talents. Prize-winning illustrator Bei Lynn, who is known for her lively, energetic illustrations, brought that distinctive enthusiasm to "The Cup," while young illustrator Yu Chia-Chi brought out the resonance and deep fantasy of the ancient setting in "The Pebble" through thick lines and culturally rich idioms. For "The Little Bottle Cap," a story of displacement, the publisher invited another young illustrator, Tai Pera, to bring the story to life through collage.

AUTHOR:

JAY YEH 哲也

ILLUSTRATOR:

BEI LYNN 林小杯、
TSUI LI-CHUN 崔麗君、
YANG LI-LING 楊麗玲、
CHIEN YIN 錢茵、
TAI PERA、
YU CHIA-CHI 達姆、
HO YUN-TZU 何雲姿、
CLAIRE CHENG 克萊兒、
 TSAI CHIA-HUA 蔡嘉驊、
LI YI-TING 李小逸

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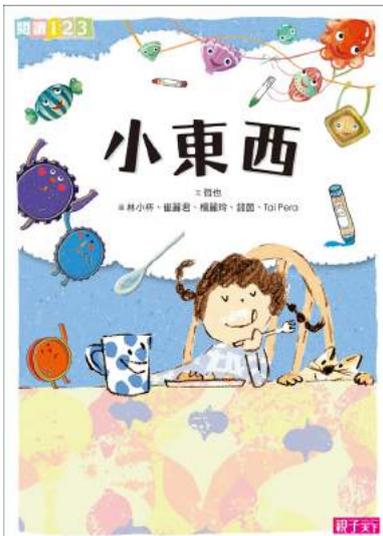
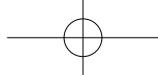
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· Pages: 108; 120

· Length:

6,600; 7,000 characters
(approx. 4,500; 4,900 words
in English)



Every chapter in this lovely two-book series tells the tale of a small participant in daily life – a bottle cap, a button, even a bonsai – and describes how they find their own happiness and utility. A blue crayon teaches a little girl how to be patient and unlock her own creativity, even as he wears down to nothing. A tiny bottle cap, most ephemeral of things, becomes vitally important when he keeps a message in a bottle safe.

Masterminded by Taiwan’s much-beloved children’s writer Jay Yeh, *Little Things* brings together a star-studded cast in a colorful celebration of the everyday. Each story features its own unique protagonist and message, brought to life by the eye and hand of a different illustrator.



The word “anthology” originally means “a gathering of flowers.” In *Little Things*, that is truly what Jay Yeh has given us.



THE LITTLE CRAYON

Text by Jay Yeh, illustrated by Yang Li-Ling. Translated by Roddy Flagg.

Today, Nini is going to do her homework for the summer holiday. She's going to draw a picture.

But as soon as she picks up a blue crayon and starts to draw, something strange happens.

"That's not straight."

Nini looks to the left, then to the right. Who said that?

"You've drawn it squint," says the crayon.

"Who asked you!?" shouts Nini. "Anyway, you're a crayon, you can't talk!"

"I couldn't help it," the crayon says. "You weren't drawing properly."

"Who says I'm not drawing properly?" Nini brushes some biscuit crumbs off the paper.

"You're not concentrating."

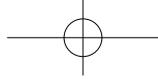
"Who says I'm not concentrating?" asks Nini, picking up the remote control and turning off the television.



"We crayons don't live very long," sighs the crayon. "Use us and we disappear. I don't want my life to be wasted on your scribbling."

"Fine, fine. I'll draw properly." Nini picks up the crayon and presses down hard on the paper, hoping to use up this strange crayon as soon as she can.





She draws, and draws, and draws. Then she draws and draws some more.

“Oh, now you’re drawing very well,” the crayon says.

“Of course,” says Nini, wrinkling her nose.

“What a beautiful lion.”

“I’m not drawing a lion, that’s my dad!”

“And what a beautiful mane it’s got,” says the crayon.

“That’s not a mane, it’s his hair and beard!”

“But what a poor lion, locked up in a cage like that...”

“That’s not a cage! That’s my dad’s striped shirt!” shouts Nini, holding her head in her hands. “Am I really so bad at drawing?”

“No, no, you draw very well.” The crayon was worried Nini would snap him in two. “But could I make a suggestion?”

This crayon really did go on a bit...

“Go on then...”

“Add in a baseball cap, then it’ll look more like your dad,” the crayon says. “Your dad likes to wear a baseball cap.”

“Fine, if you say so.” Nini picks up the crayon and draws. “Ok, finished!”

“Is that a baseball cap?” The crayon starts to shout: “It looks like a pirate’s hat!”

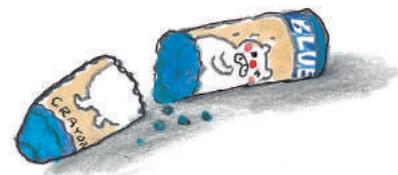
“Oh,” says Nini, tilting her head to one side. “The more I draw the less it looks like him.”

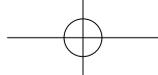
“Never mind. Draw a car around him, so he’s sitting inside it, then it’ll look like your dad. Your dad likes to drive.”

“Good idea!” With a smile Nini picks up her crayon and starts to draw. “I’m finished!”

“That’s not a car! That’s a pirate ship!” the crayon shouts.

“Fine, I’ll just make him a pirate,” laughs Nini, continuing to draw. “Look, this is the sea.”





She draws, and draws, and draws. Then she draws and draws some more. She draws a big blue sea. Soon only a little bit of the crayon is left.

“And there’s a desert island on the sea,” says Nini as she draws.

“And a mountain on the island,” says the crayon, helping.

“And a cave on the mountain.”

“But there’s a gate at the entrance to the cave, and it’s locked.”

“Oh no. What should we do?”

“Just draw a key,” says the crayon.

“Good idea,” says Nini, drawing happily. “Now the door’s open and there’s a treasure chest full of gold coins.”

“Are those gold coins? They look more like bombs.”

“Yes, you’re right, bombs disguised as gold coins. Boom! Bang!” Nini laughs and laughs. Drawing with this talking crayon is lots of fun.

“The pirate’s hurt,” says the crayon. “What should we do?”

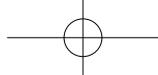
“A beautiful spirit appears in the sea and saves him,” says Nini.

“What does the spirit look like?”

“Like my mother. I remember my mother was very beautiful.” Nini picks up the crayon to draw, then stops. “But I can’t remember what she looked like...”

Nini stops talking. She feels sad.

“I remember,” says the crayon.



“What?” Nini looks at the blue stub in her hand. “You remember?”

“Yes,” says the crayon. “Come on, hold me, I’ll show you.”

“Okay.”

“But before we do that, I have to say good-bye.”

“Why?”

“Because I’ll disappear when we finish this.”

“Don’t go! I like playing with you,” thinks Nini. But she doesn’t say it.

With the last of his strength, the little crayon starts to draw.

And when he finishes, Nini’s spirit mother stands next to her pirate father. They are both smiling.

But the crayon is gone.

And then the door opens. Nini’s father is home. She runs over and hugs him.

“Did you draw this?” Nini’s father asks, picking up the picture. He feels sad when he sees



Nini’s mother. “It’s very good. It looks so real it could talk.”

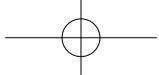
“It could talk,” Nini sighs. “But I’ve run out of that kind of crayon.”

“You’ve got lots of crayons,” says Nini’s father as he left the room, wiping his eyes. “Why don’t you try using some different colors?”

“Yes, I’ll color it in!”

Nini opens her crayon box and looks down in surprise for a moment. Then she smiles. All the crayons in the box look up at her, and cry: “Me! Choose me!”





THE SQUIRREL AND THE BANYAN TREE

小松鼠與老榕樹

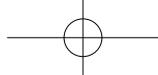


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ZHOU JIAN-XIN
周見信

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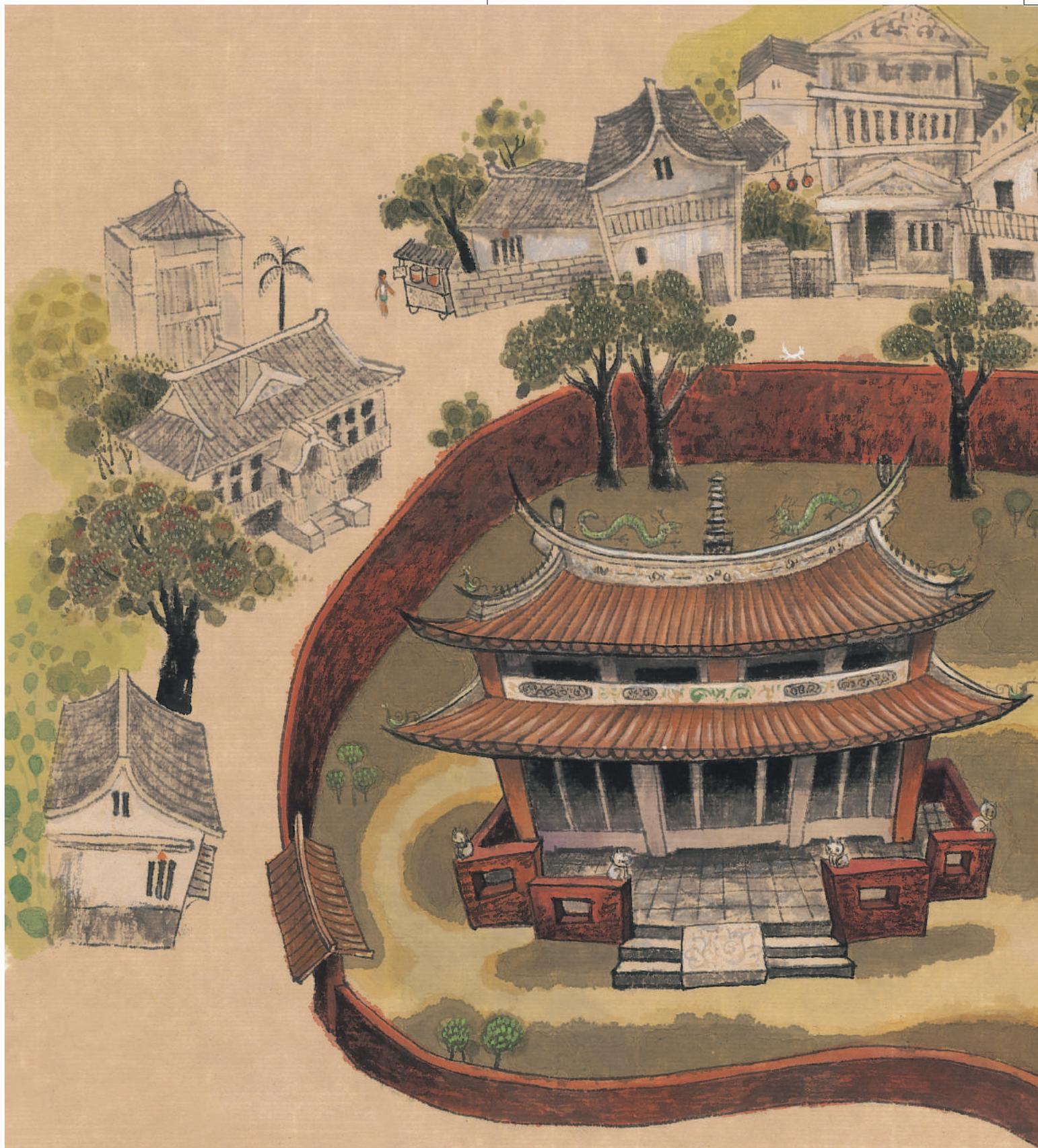
Zhou Jian-Xin has recently established himself as one of Taiwan's up-and-coming illustrators. His first illustrated title, *The Maroon Oriole*, won the 2014 Taiwan Golden Butterfly Award for Best Book Design and honorable mention from the International Design Awards. His collaborative works with Kuo Nai-Wen have also been very well received: their title *The Lost Cat* also won honorable mention in the Hsin-Yi Children's Literature Award in 2012, and *Little Bai*, the story of a boy and his dog, won first prize for an Illustrated Publication at the 2016 Hsin-Yi Children's Literature Award, a position that has remained empty for eight years.



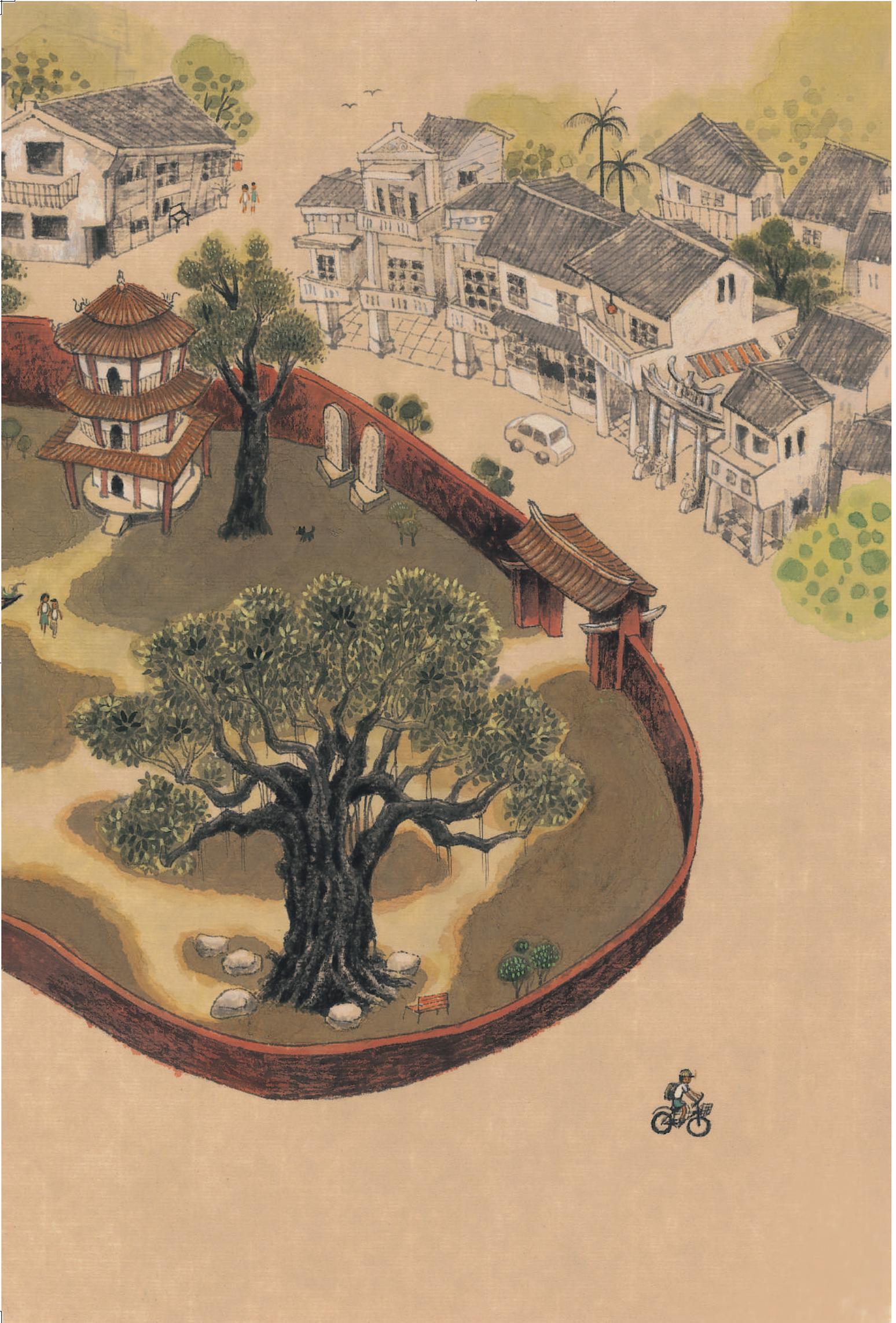
A lone albino squirrel finds refuge in the branches of a banyan tree – an old, wise banyan tree that has watched the hope and heartbreak of life unfold beneath its branches. The young squirrel asks the tree about many things, but foremost in his mind is the question of love and attachment. Should we try to hold on to the things we love? How do we cope when they are gone?

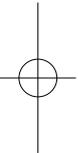
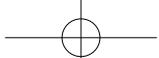
As the old banyan tree begins to drop its leaves and shed its branches, the squirrel realizes he will have to find this out for himself. How will he live without the banyan tree, and who will he tell its story to?

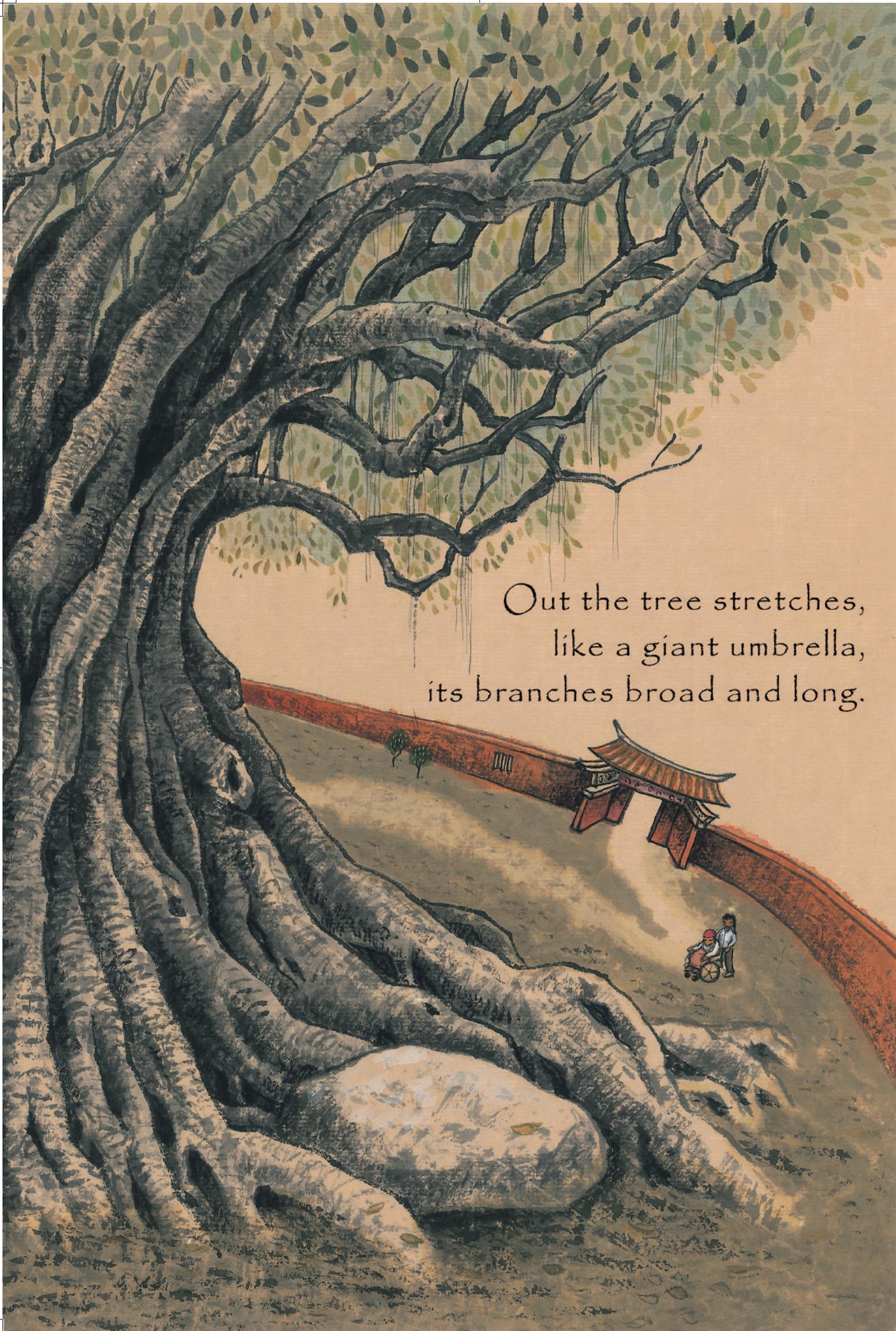
Zhou Jian-Xin's wonderfully crafted ink-and-watercolor illustrations bring the reader into a world of emotionally charged imagery that intensifies the themes of this simple yet moving story.



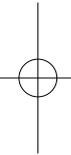
In the city
stands a temple.
Beside the temple
grows an old banyan tree.

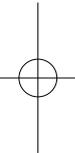






Out the tree stretches,
like a giant umbrella,
its branches broad and long.





One day, a squirrel scurries by.

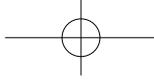
“Hey, little fellow!”

“Who’s that?” asks the little squirrel,
looking around.

“It’s me.”

“Oh! It’s just Old Banyan Tree!”,
the squirrel sighs in relief.





SILHOUETTES

背影

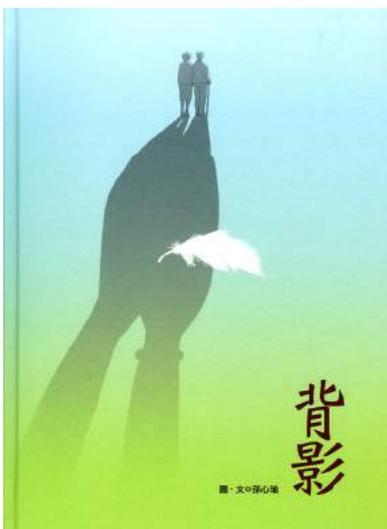
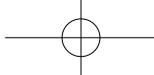


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SUN HSIN-YU 孫心瑜

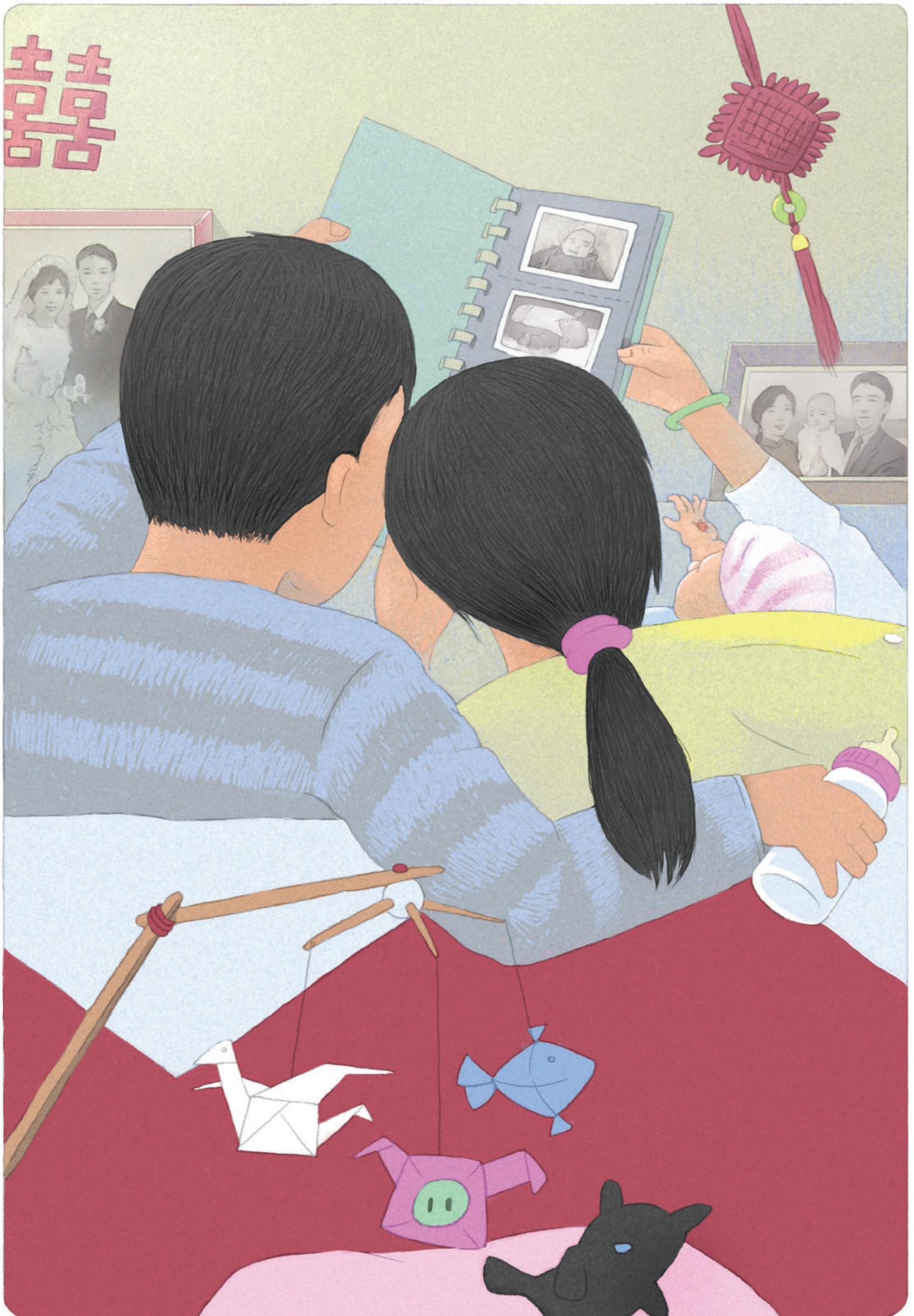
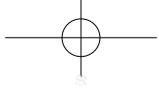
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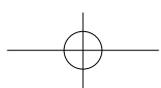
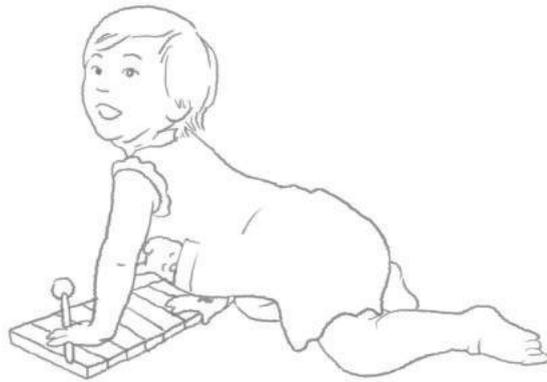
The incredibly talented Sun Hsin-Yu was such a prodigy, she was sent to college on a full scholarship to study fine art. Yet, after graduation, she moved on not to education but into commercial design, and in 1998 she began engaging in creative work as a side project only. After ten years of submitting projects to the Hsin-Yi Children's Literature Award prize committee, her first award came in 2008, for the wordless picture book *The Day Trip*. From then on, recognition increased, and she won several prizes in Taiwan and abroad, including the 2015 Bologna Ragazzi Award in non-fiction. Her best-known works are all pure illustrated stories, including *Traveling Around Paris*, *Traveling Around Hong Kong*, *Going Home*, and others.

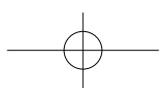
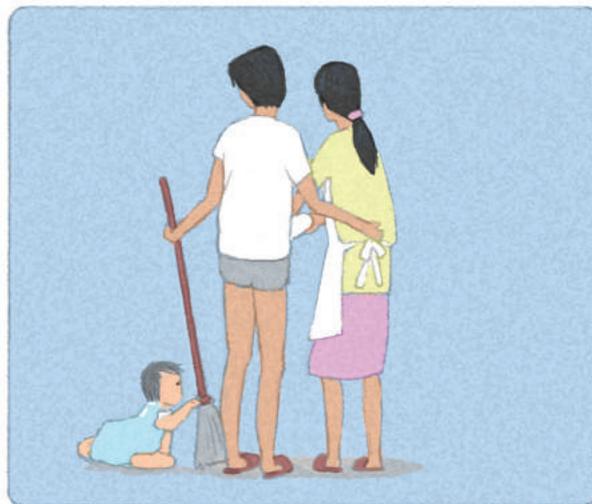
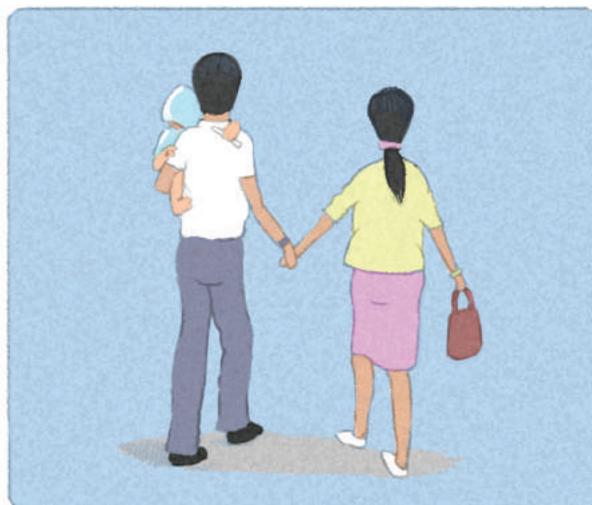


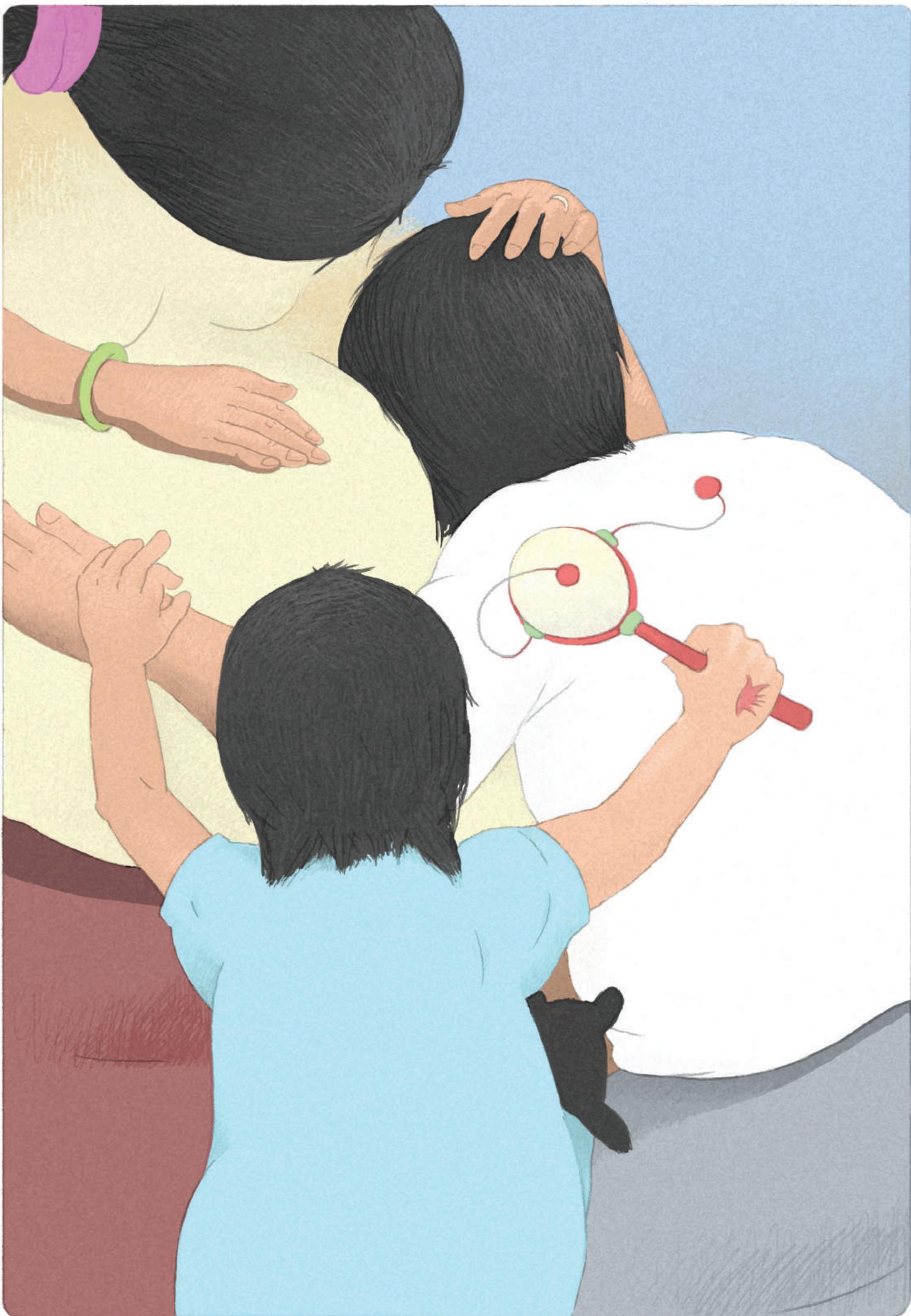
We claim that “a picture is worth a thousand words” because the uncaptioned, independent image invites us to enrich it by imagining its story. By this arithmetic, Sun Hsin-Yu’s *Silhouettes* is a full novel. A young girl is born into a happy family; she goes to school and learns to play the piano very well; lives abroad, gets married and has kids of her own, then is seized by a sudden illness and dies. Throughout the story, Sun Hsin-Yu’s understated yet affecting images fill with the sounds of voice and action under our reading eye.

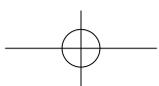
While the wordless picture book is not a new form, it retains incredible power. For those who wish to experience a story on a level beyond the power of words, *Silhouettes* is a perfect choice.

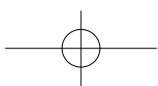
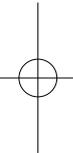


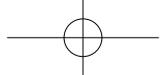






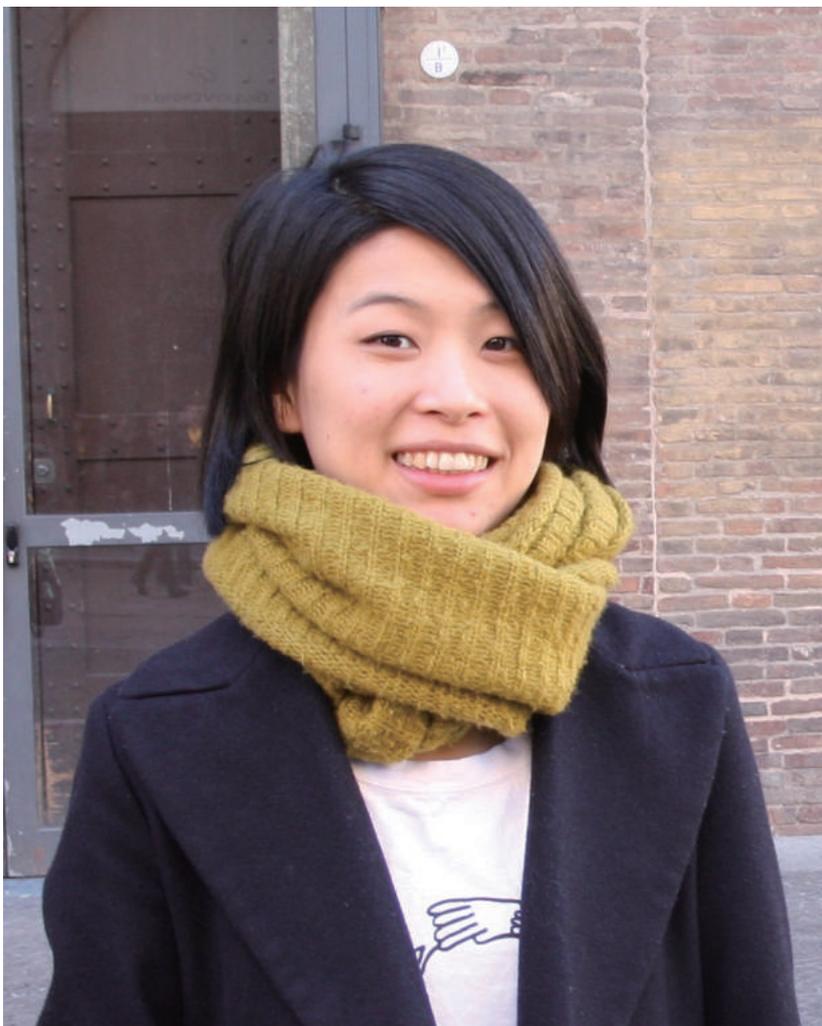






ADVENTURE AT NIGHT

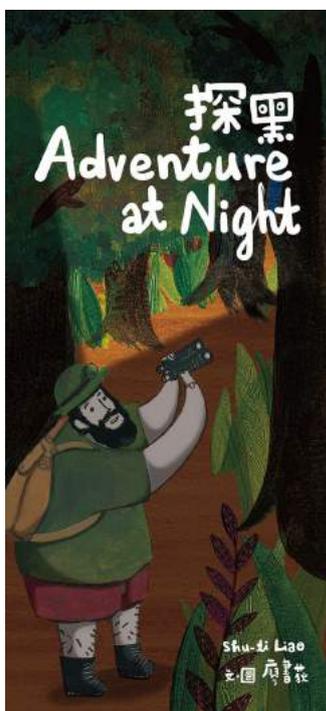
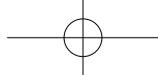
探黑



LIAO SHU-TI 廖書荻

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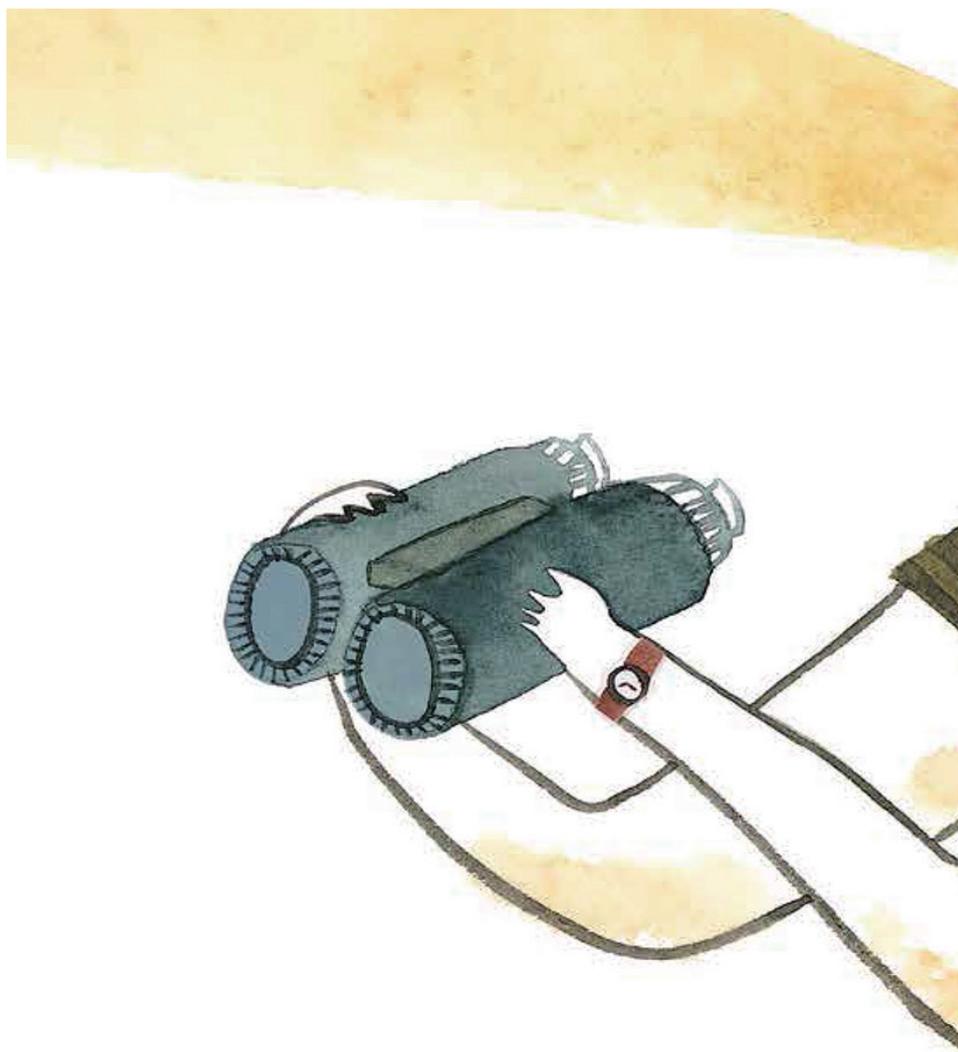
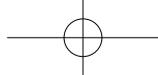
A graduate of the Cambridge School of Art, professional illustrator Liao Shu-Ti has proven herself a master of several artistic media, and a genius at making an illustrated page do much more than one ever thought it could. Many of her illustrations end up on her Facebook page, which has accumulated a truly considerable following. *Adventure at Night* was awarded the prestigious Macmillan Prize in 2015.



*** 2015 The Macmillan Prize**

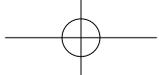
When you turn on your flashlight in the dark, what are you looking for? More importantly, how much are you missing? *Adventure at Night* is the story of Joseph, the daring, enthusiastic night-time explorer, who dives into the deepest oceans and the darkest caves to see whatever it is that lives down there. Yet wherever his light shines, he finds nothing. What's happened? Joseph has no idea – until the battery in his flashlight dies, and the world around him immediately changes...

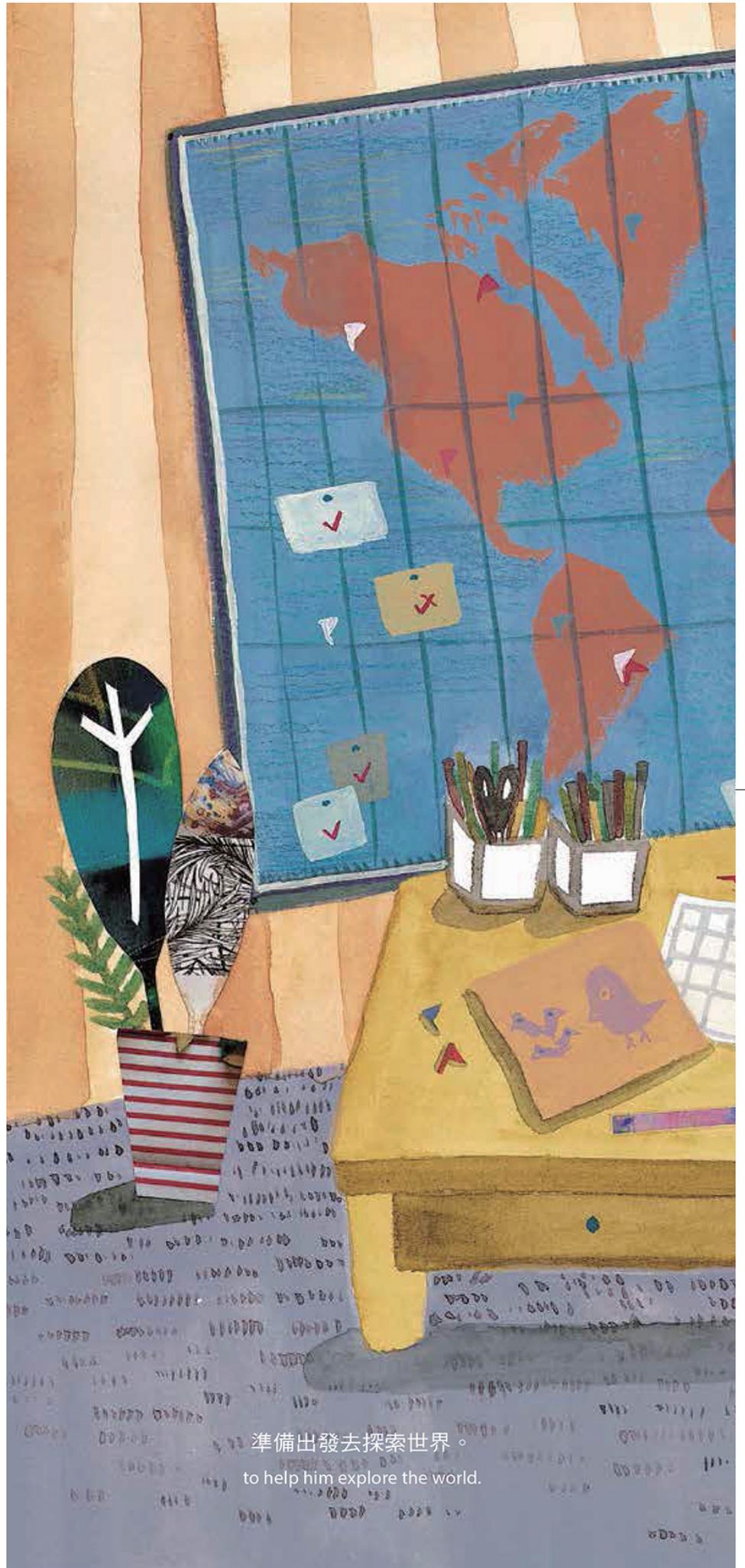
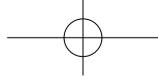
This beautifully illustrated story, presented in Chinese-English duotext, prompts us to think twice about how we look at things by reminding the reader how much lives just outside our perspective, and how much we ourselves might be pushing away as we pursue our ostensible goal. The vast oceans and endless caverns of the world are always home to more than just what meets our eye at first, and only when we step back and learn to be silent that it allows itself to be seen.



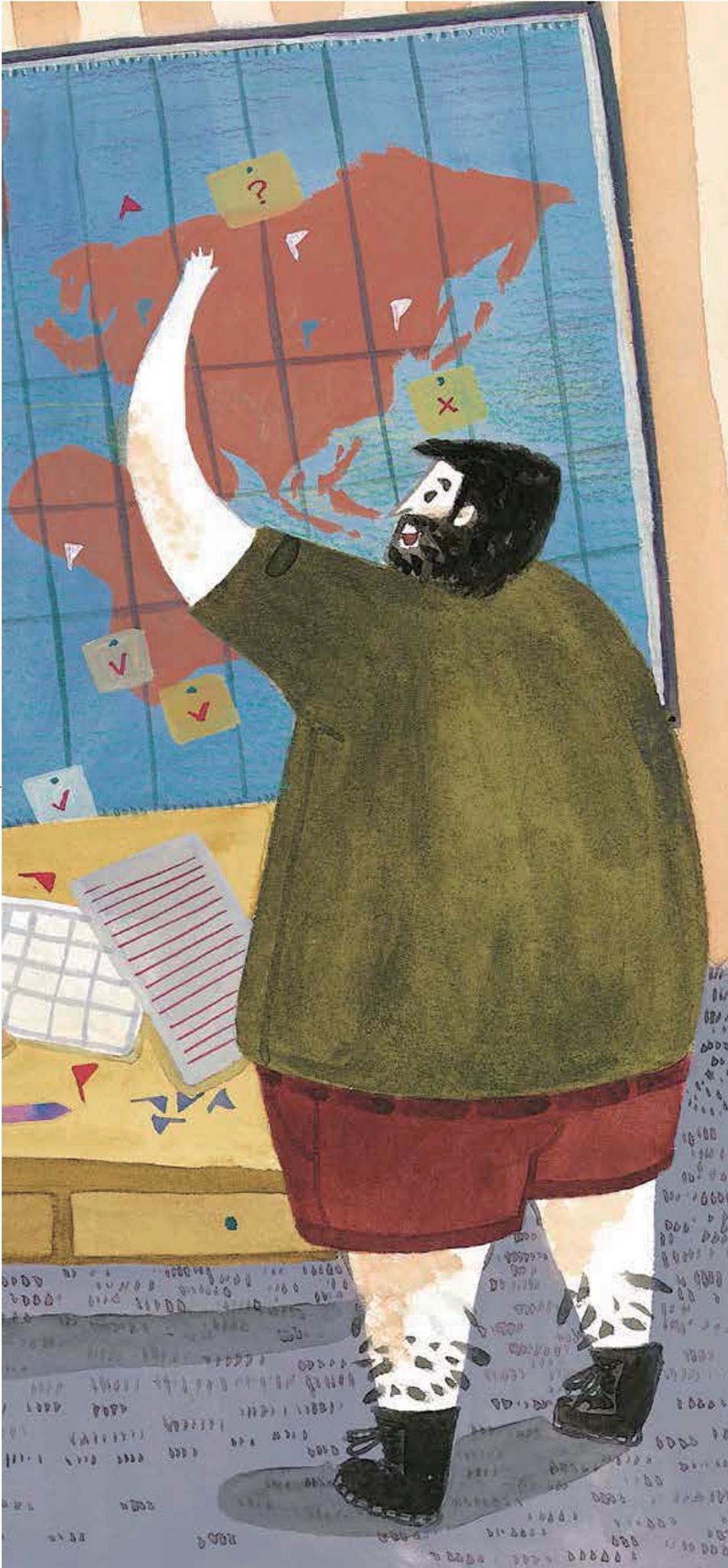
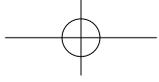
他備齊了工具，
He prepared everything he needed

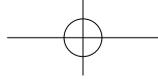




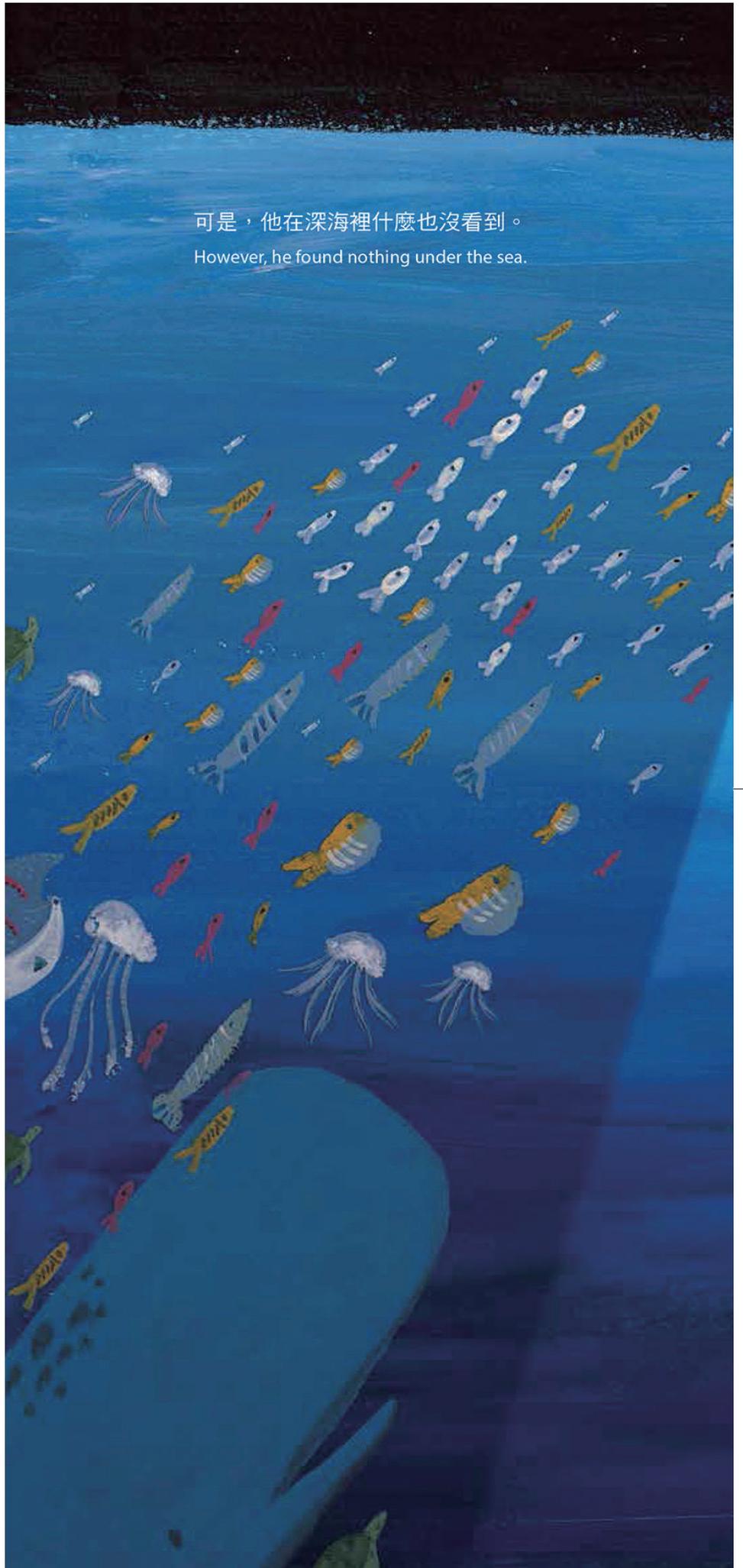


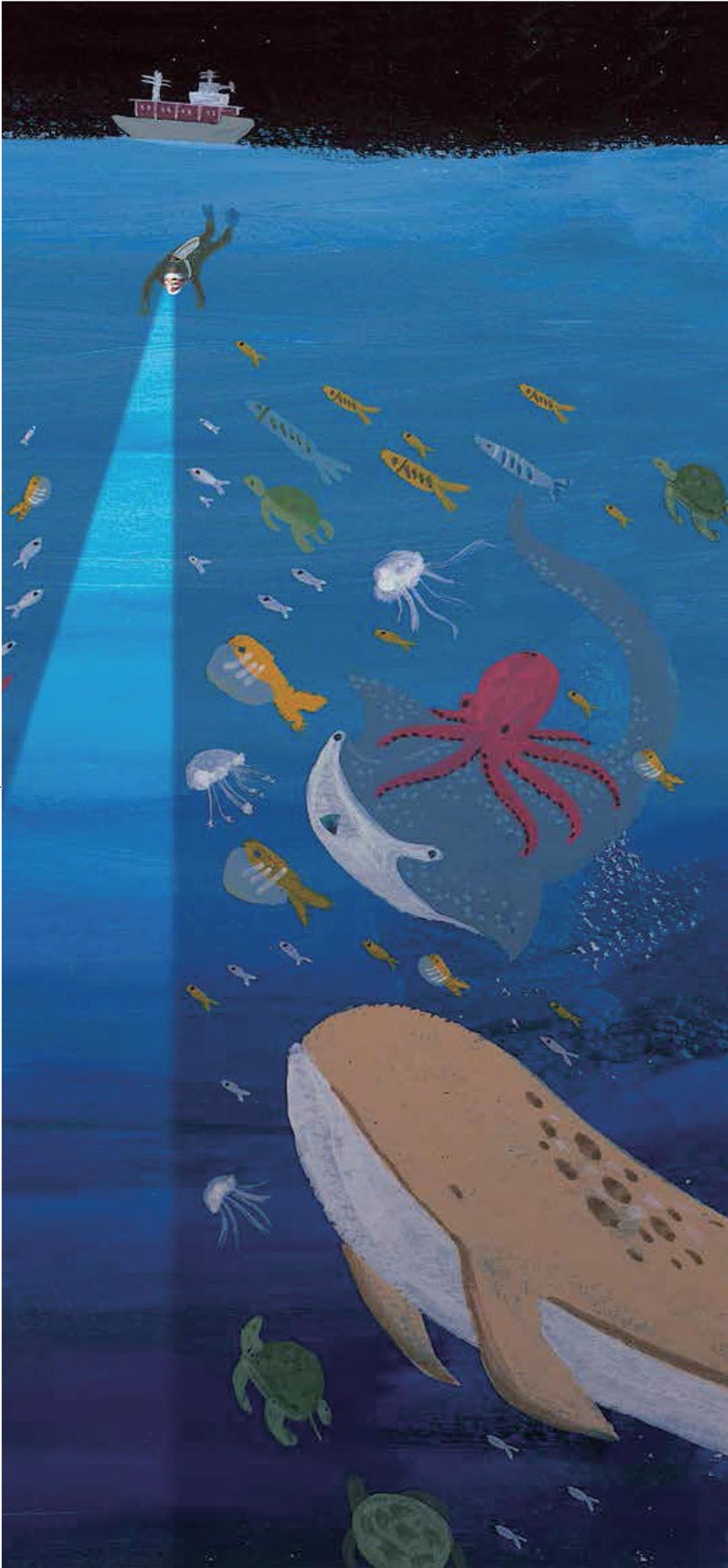
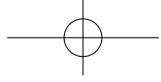
準備出發去探索世界。
to help him explore the world.

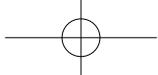




可是，他在深海裡什麼也沒看到。
However, he found nothing under the sea.

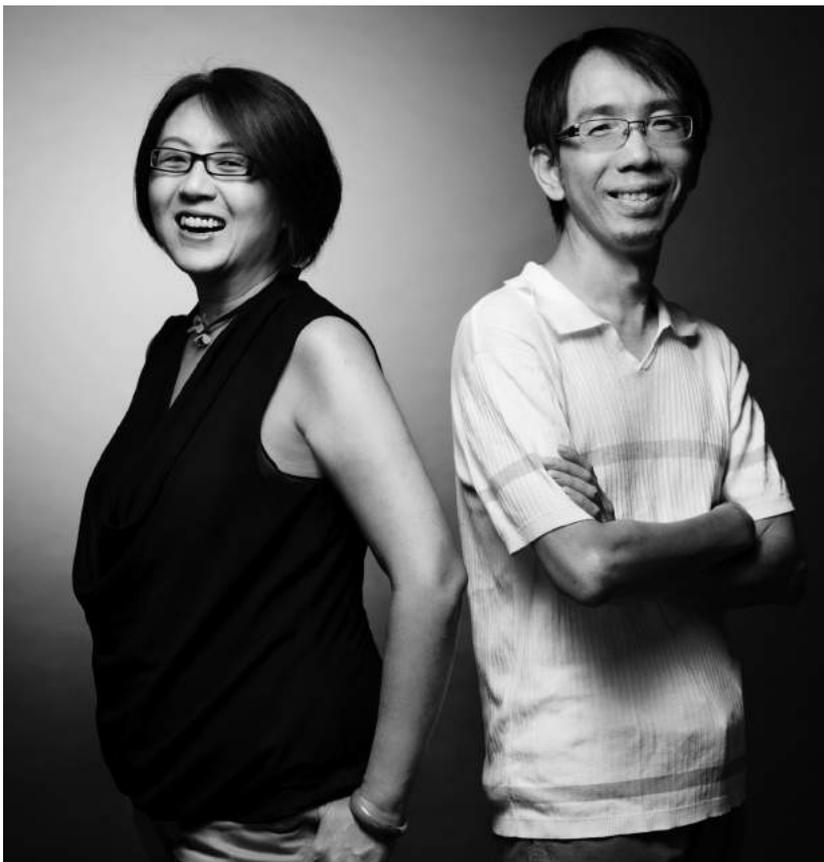






I WANT SOME! AND DO YOU WANT SOME?

給我咬一口；給你咬一口



©Lulke Huang

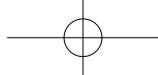
From left: Tsao Juei-Chih; Huang Yu-Chin

HUANG YU-CHIN
黃郁欽
TSAO JUEI-CHIH
陶樂蒂

- Category: Picture Book
- Publisher: CommonWealth Education
- Date: 9/2014; 6/2016
- Rights contact: Grace Chang (Books from Taiwan) booksfromtaiwan.rights@gmail.com
- Pages: 34; 48
- Size: 19.2×20cm
- Rights sold: Simplified Chinese (People's Oriental)

Huang Yu-Chin has been an active creator of children's literature for almost thirty years. The career TV editor co-founded the "Picture Book Club," a group of illustrators came together in 2015. His work has been featured at the Bologna Children's Literature Exhibition, and he has won the Chen Kuo-Cheng Children's Literature Award. He produces books independently and together with his wife, Tsao Juei-Chih.

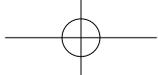
Though she initially studied law, Tsao Juei-Chih's desire to illustrate was irresistible. Also a member of the "Picture Book Club," she illustrates her own titles, collaborates with her husband, and handles art and cover design for several other authors. Her work has won the Chen Kuo-Cheng Children's Literature Award, and the Hsin-Yi Children's Literature Award.



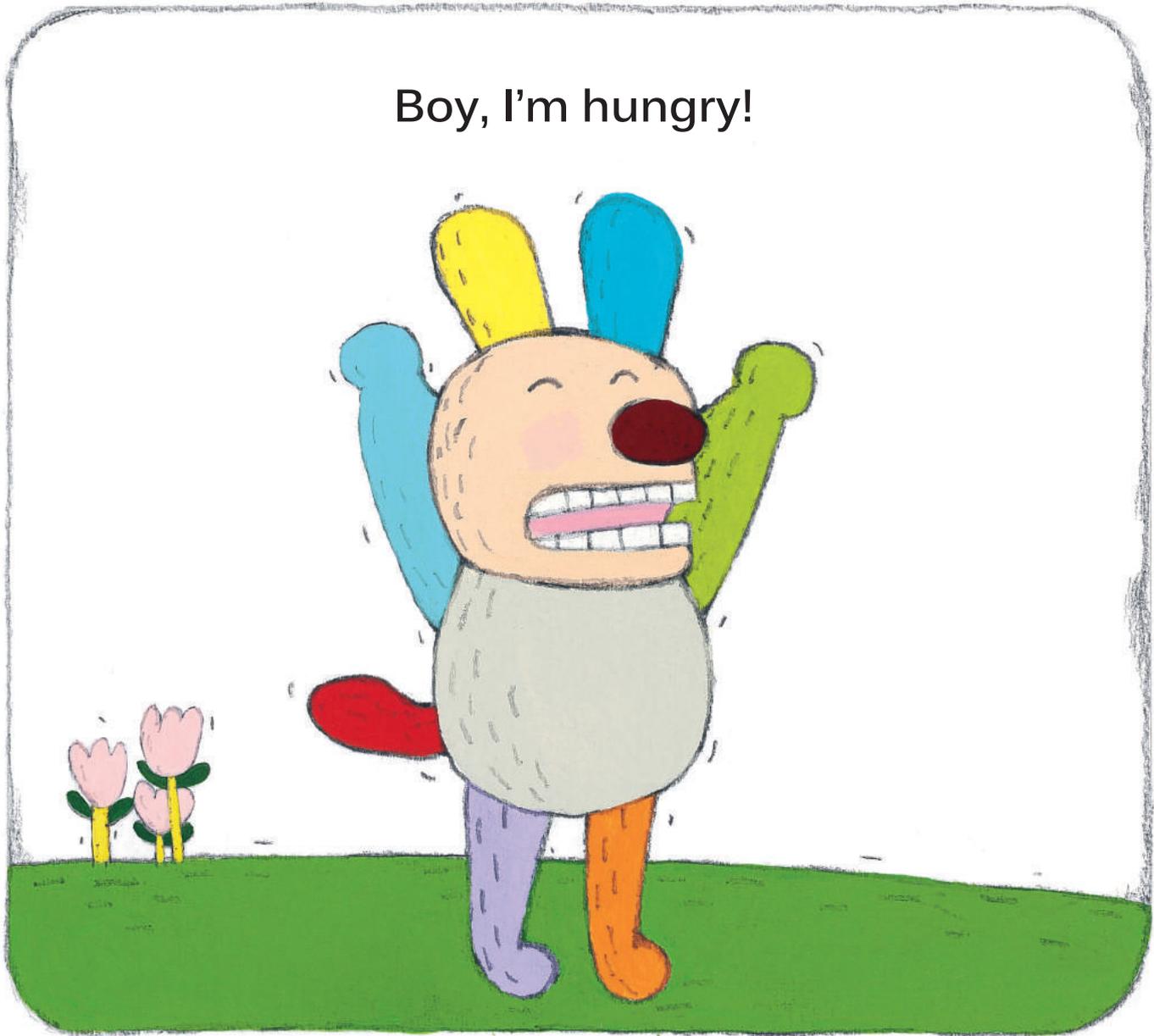
I Want Some! and *Do You Want Some?* are a pair of children's books by a husband-and-wife creative duo on the importance of sharing. Little Alu, the main character in both stories, gets caught in two different situations. In the first book, his growling tummy sends him off asking other animals for food. But the other animals are hungry themselves! Finally, when he finds something to eat, a hungry mouse appears by his side and asks to share. What should he do?

In the second book, Alu is the lucky one: he's found a really nice apple, which he thinks is so delicious he just has to share with everyone else. The problem is, no one wants a bite – not the pig, not the cow, not the fox, not anyone! A confused Alu trips and falls, and the apple flies out of his hand into the grass! What now? Yet here come the animals...they're going to help him look!

These books approach the lessons of asking and sharing from a simple yet fresh perspective, presenting them as real yet approachable problems. The language is straightforward and active, the illustrations endearing. With its romping pace, it's the perfect book for children to learn without knowing they're learning.

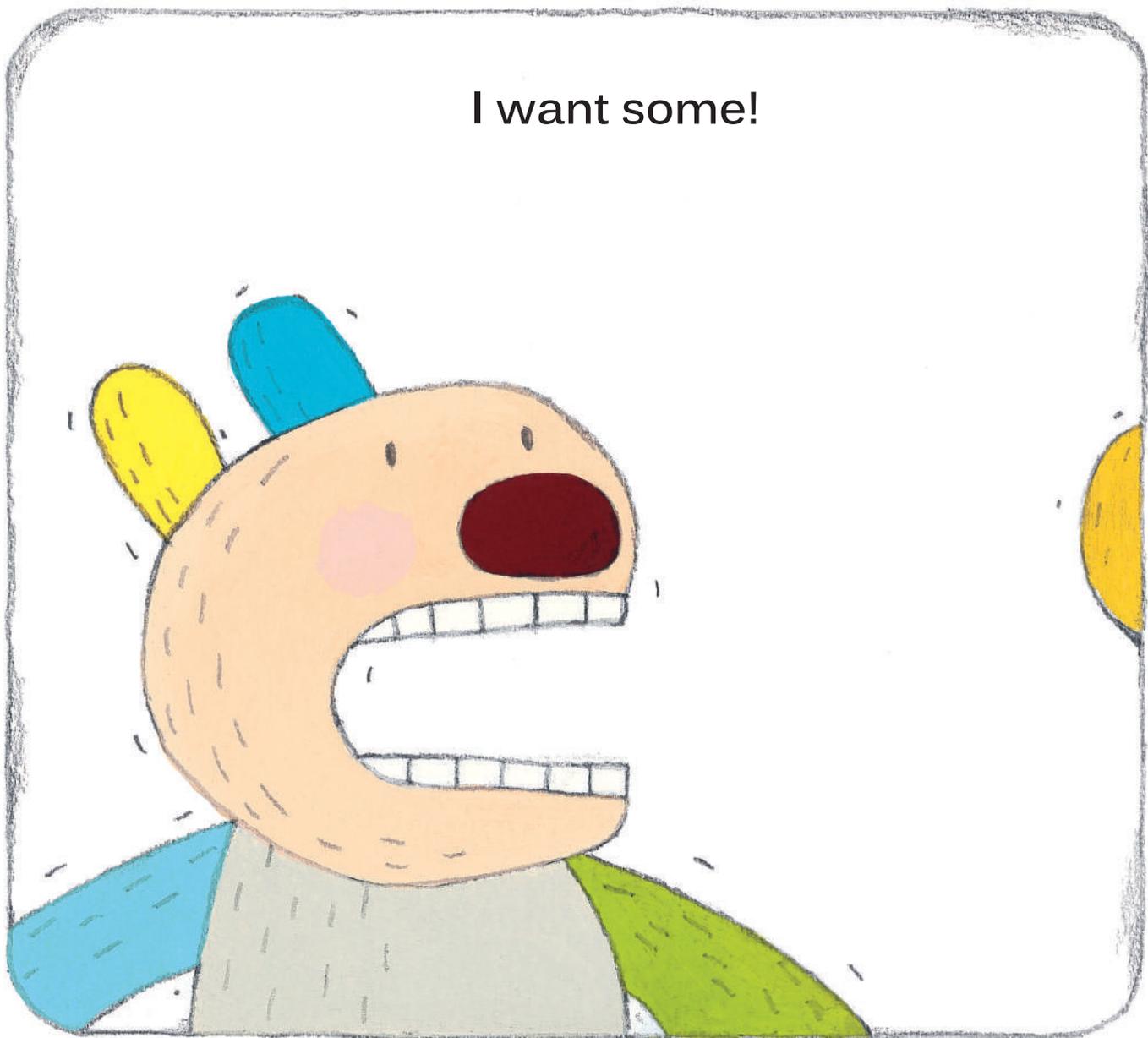


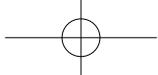
Boy, I'm hungry!



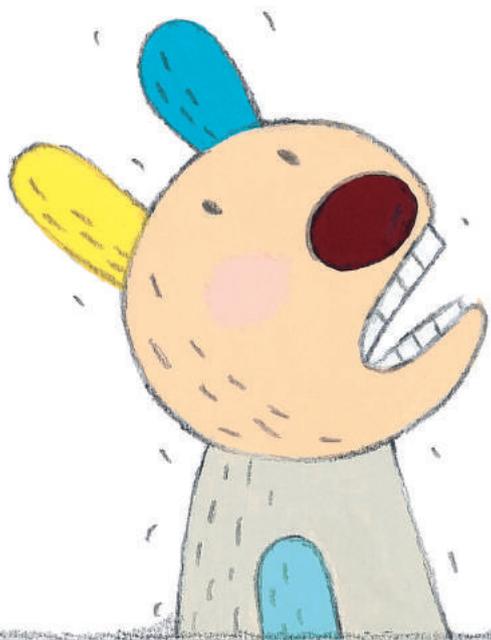


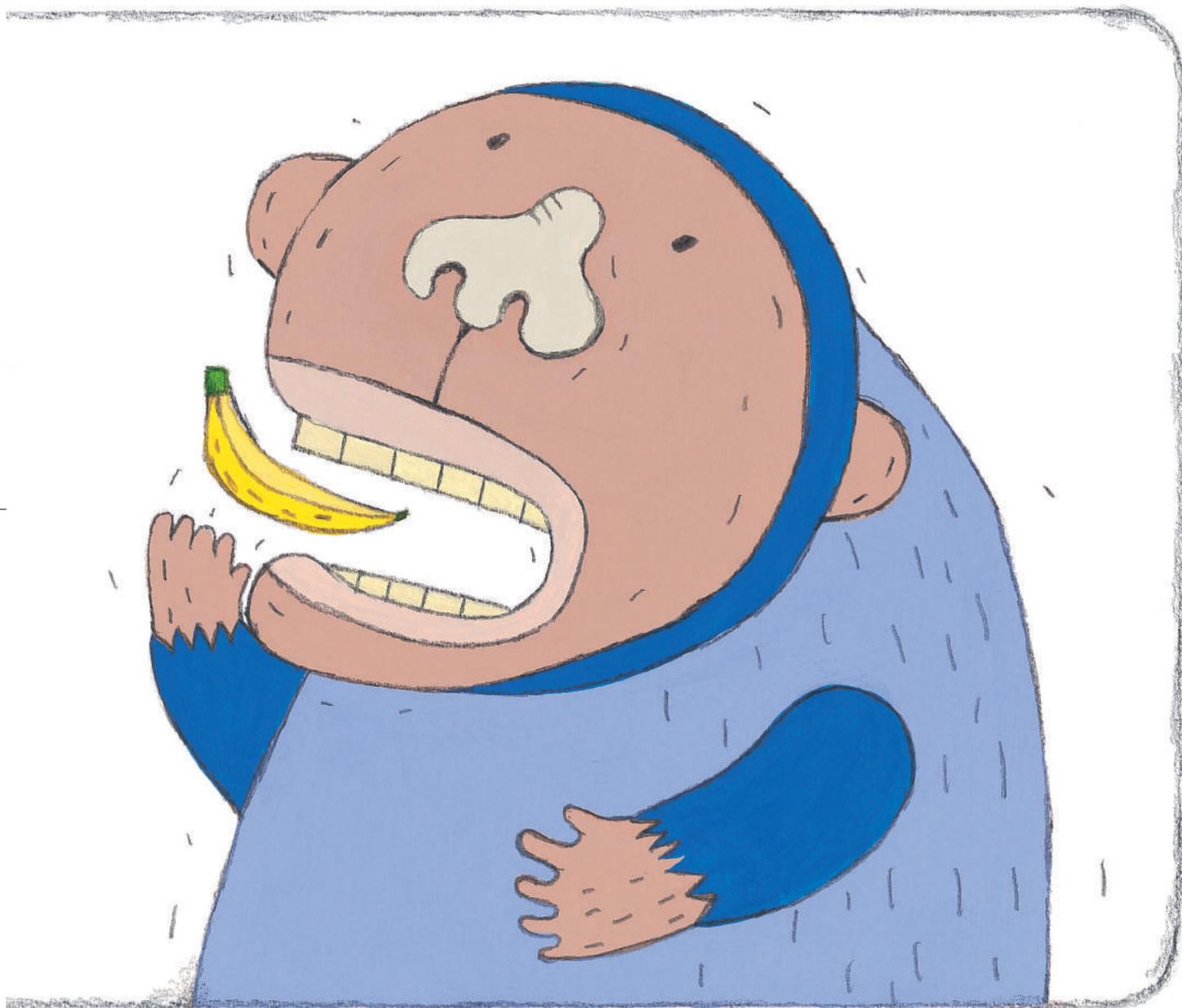
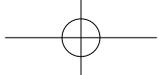
I want some!

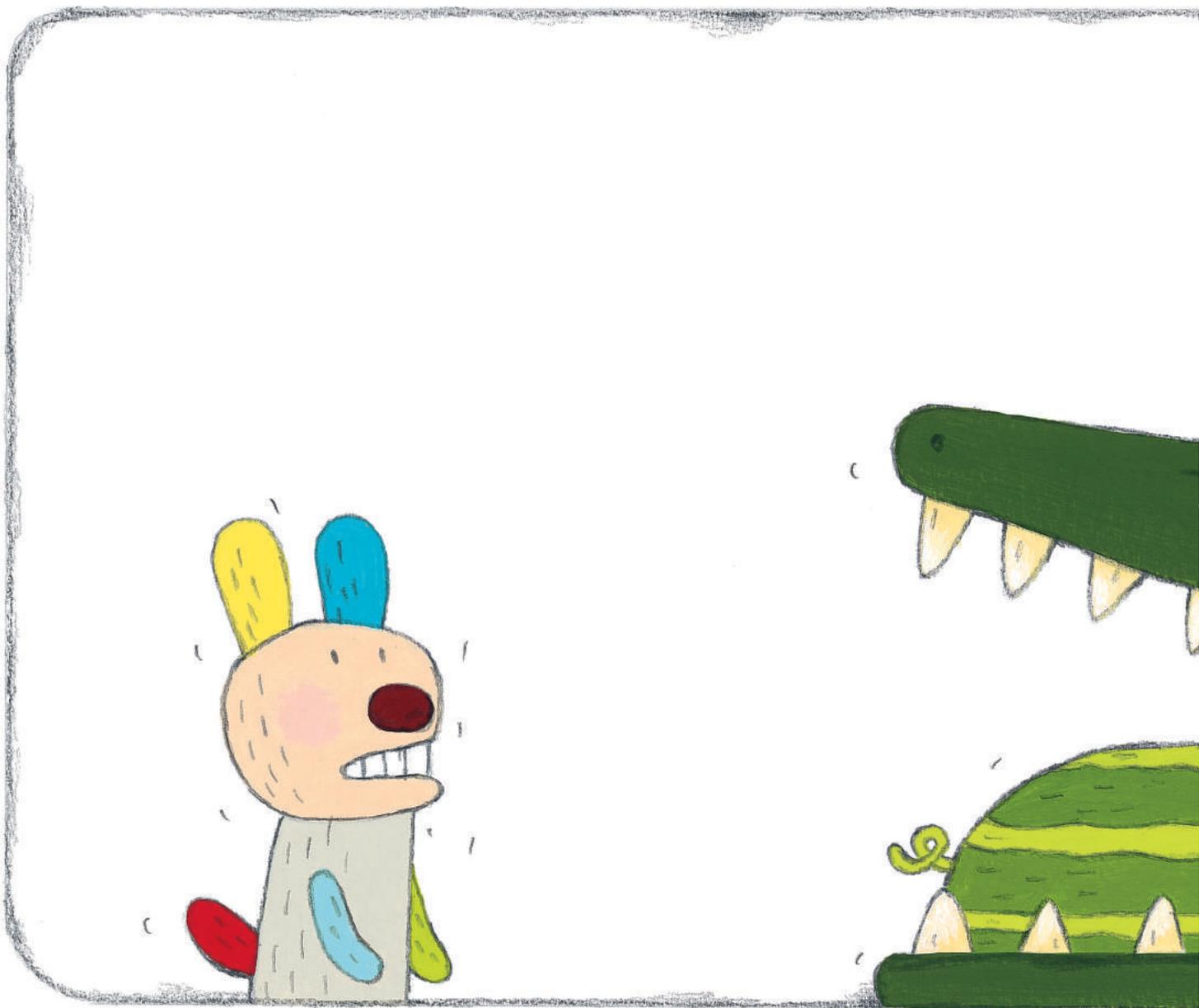
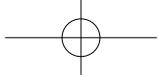


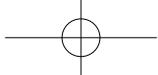


No!









Have a bite, if you dare!



