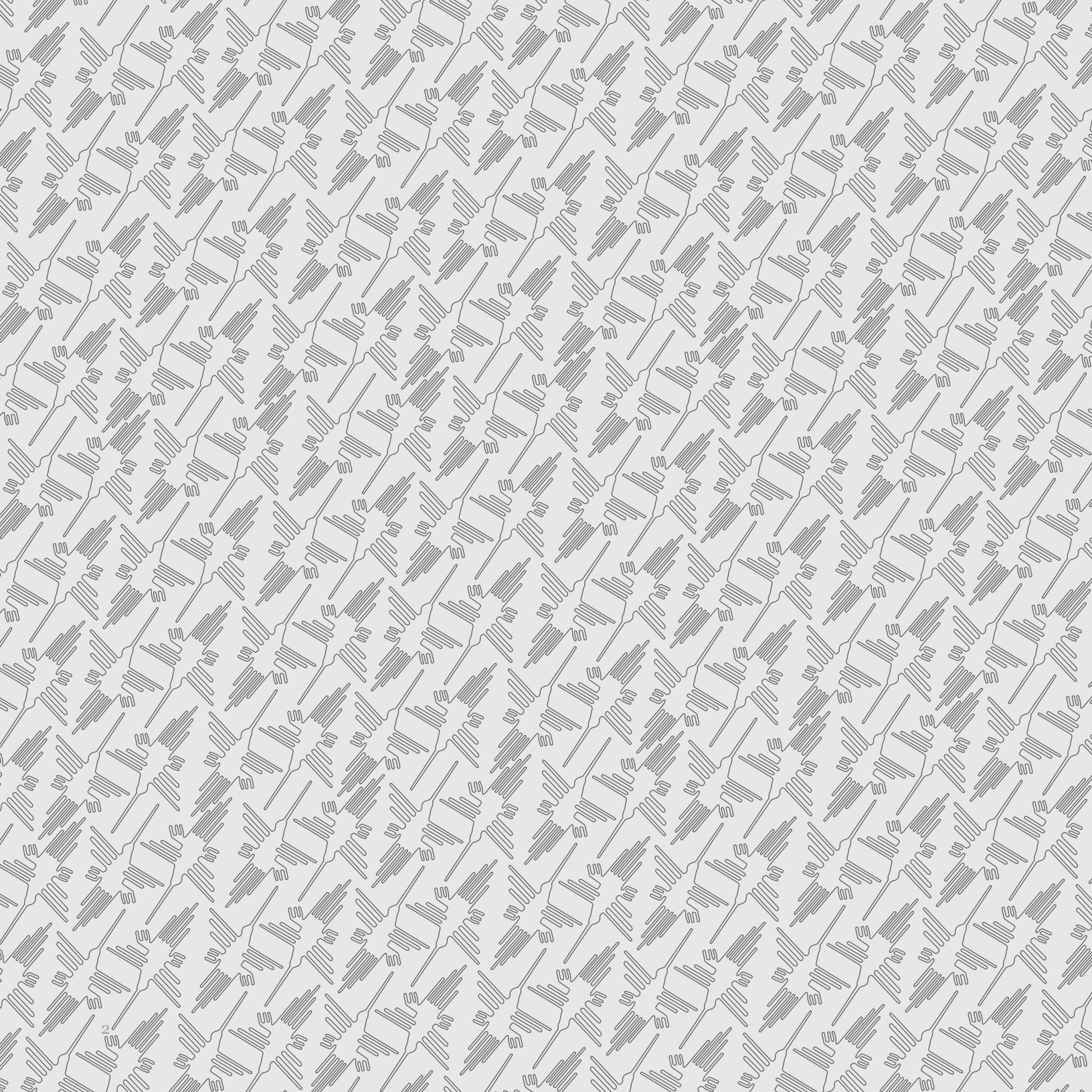


The Hummingbird & The Narwhal



an illustrated tale by
Annie Higbee



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This page is dedicated to all the creatures on planet earth.
May we all learn to deeply listen and respect the vast and different
worlds of others that share this round planet and celebrate the
preciousness of how we are all connected.



Please share this journey and message with your loved ones.

To: _____

From: _____

Date: _____

The magic of the gift of kindness.



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Editor: Ralph Scott Penza
Graphic Design: Gabriela Diaz

First edition, 2023

Published by Just2Be, Owls Head, Maine

ISBN 979-8-9850283-0-0

Printed in Canada

www.hummingbirdnarwhal.com

CHAPTER 1

In the sunny southern Hemisphere, the Hummingbird hovered above the bright red flower to sip in the sweet nectar it offered. Her iridescent colored wings flapped so fast she was just a blur... a buzzing sound of whirring. She remained unseen and only heard by those who listened.

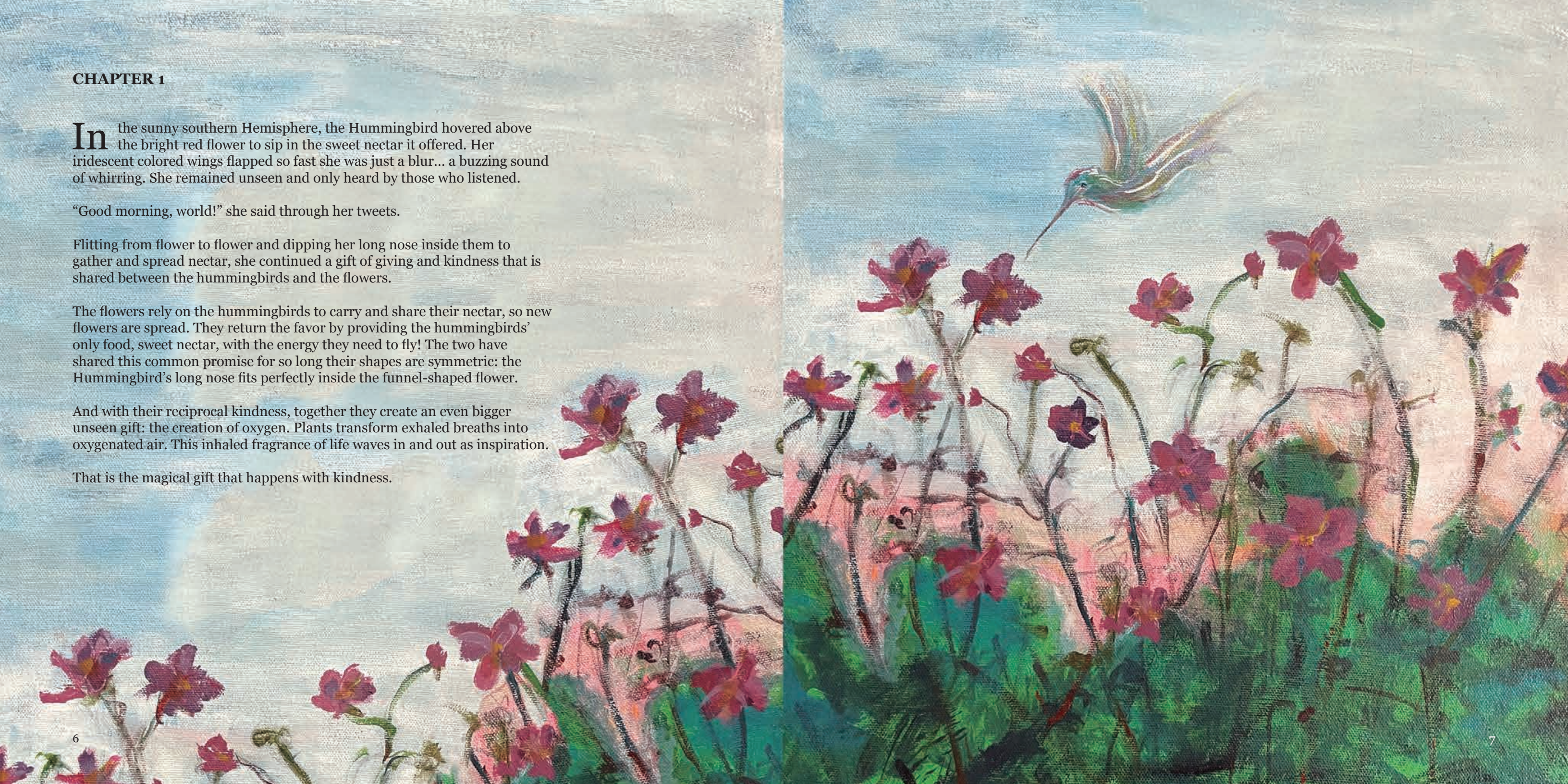
“Good morning, world!” she said through her tweets.

Flitting from flower to flower and dipping her long nose inside them to gather and spread nectar, she continued a gift of giving and kindness that is shared between the hummingbirds and the flowers.

The flowers rely on the hummingbirds to carry and share their nectar, so new flowers are spread. They return the favor by providing the hummingbirds' only food, sweet nectar, with the energy they need to fly! The two have shared this common promise for so long their shapes are symmetric: the Hummingbird's long nose fits perfectly inside the funnel-shaped flower.

And with their reciprocal kindness, together they create an even bigger unseen gift: the creation of oxygen. Plants transform exhaled breaths into oxygenated air. This inhaled fragrance of life waves in and out as inspiration.

That is the magical gift that happens with kindness.



On the other side of the big round planet, in the Northern Latitudes, the Narwhal, under the surface in the icy cold waters of the Arctic, was also beginning his day. The Narwhal is rarely seen and unknown, a gigantic whale with fins, a tail, and a long, twisted horn sticking out from his nose. He has colorless skin that blends in and disappears into his surroundings.

Below the surface, the Narwhal makes clicking sounds, creates vibrations, and generates echoes, producing reverberations. He sends out these sound messages to locate what is out before him. The objects' shape bounces back to him, like a visual sound echo giving form to sound. This is also how he connects with his family group and others in the dark underwater world.

Feeling particularly lonely this day, the Narwhal clicked out to the universe,

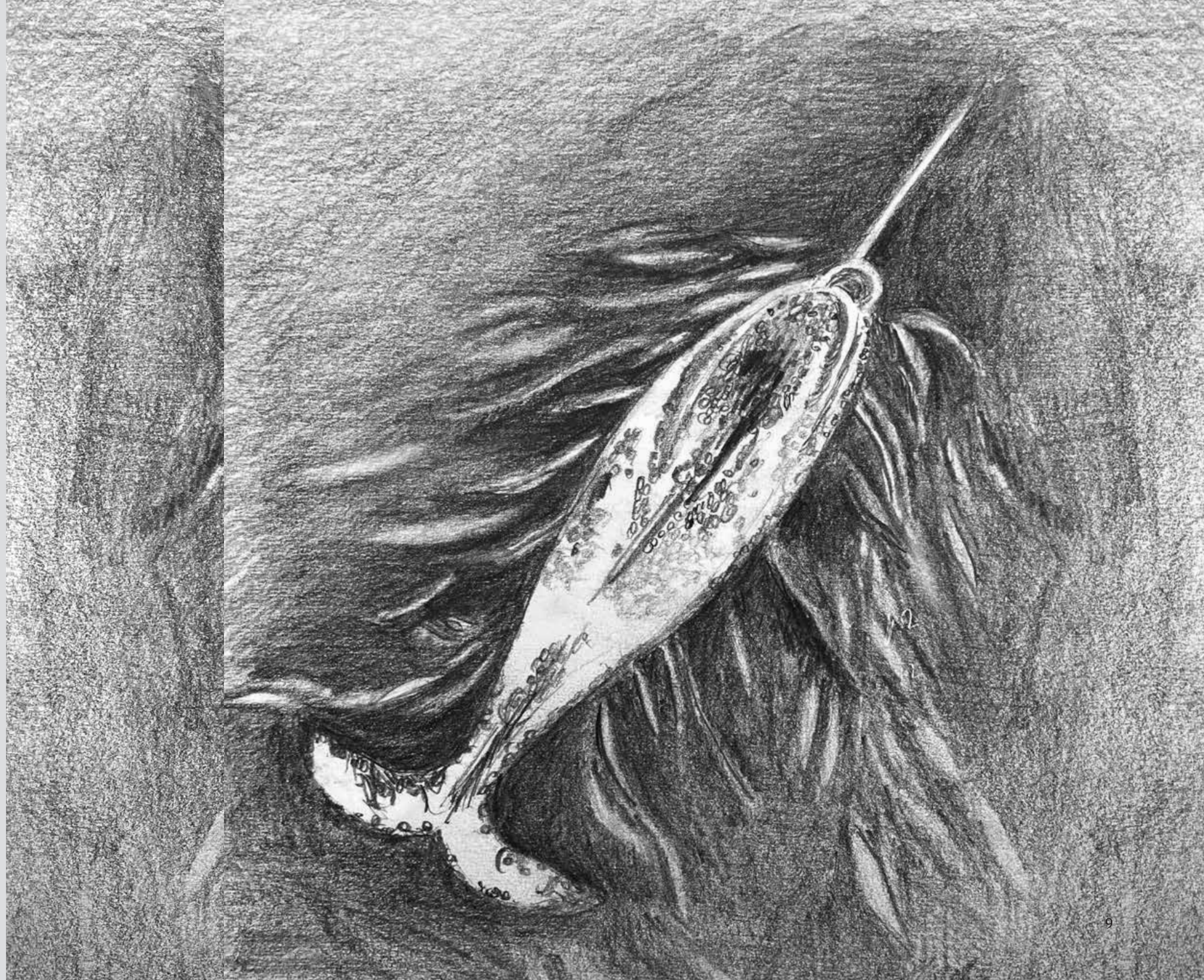
“Hello! Is anyone out there listening?” The sound rippled out in perfect circles.

He waited for a response. He felt lost and alone in silence in the deep dark ocean.

Not knowing why no one was responding to him, he anxiously kept swimming and diving, sending message after message and coming back up to the surface, where the water meets the air, to catch a breath.

He longed for the comfort of his family, the group of narwhals known as a Blessing, not unlike a flock of birds or a school of fish.

He whistled out again, sending the cry of a lonely heart. His loneliness sounded out in the shape of ripples and spread long distances through the sound waves of the water.



CHAPTER 2

Meanwhile, near Mexico, on the other half of the round world, the Hummingbird could tell the sun's angle was such that the early spring days were getting longer. Like every year before, the time had come for her to make the long trip north to Maine, crossing the open ocean to where those who visit might find the sweetest nectar on Earth.

She flew all alone, and with all her might, she flapped her tiny wings from 15 to 80 beats per second. Just a tiny speck and a blur in the sky.

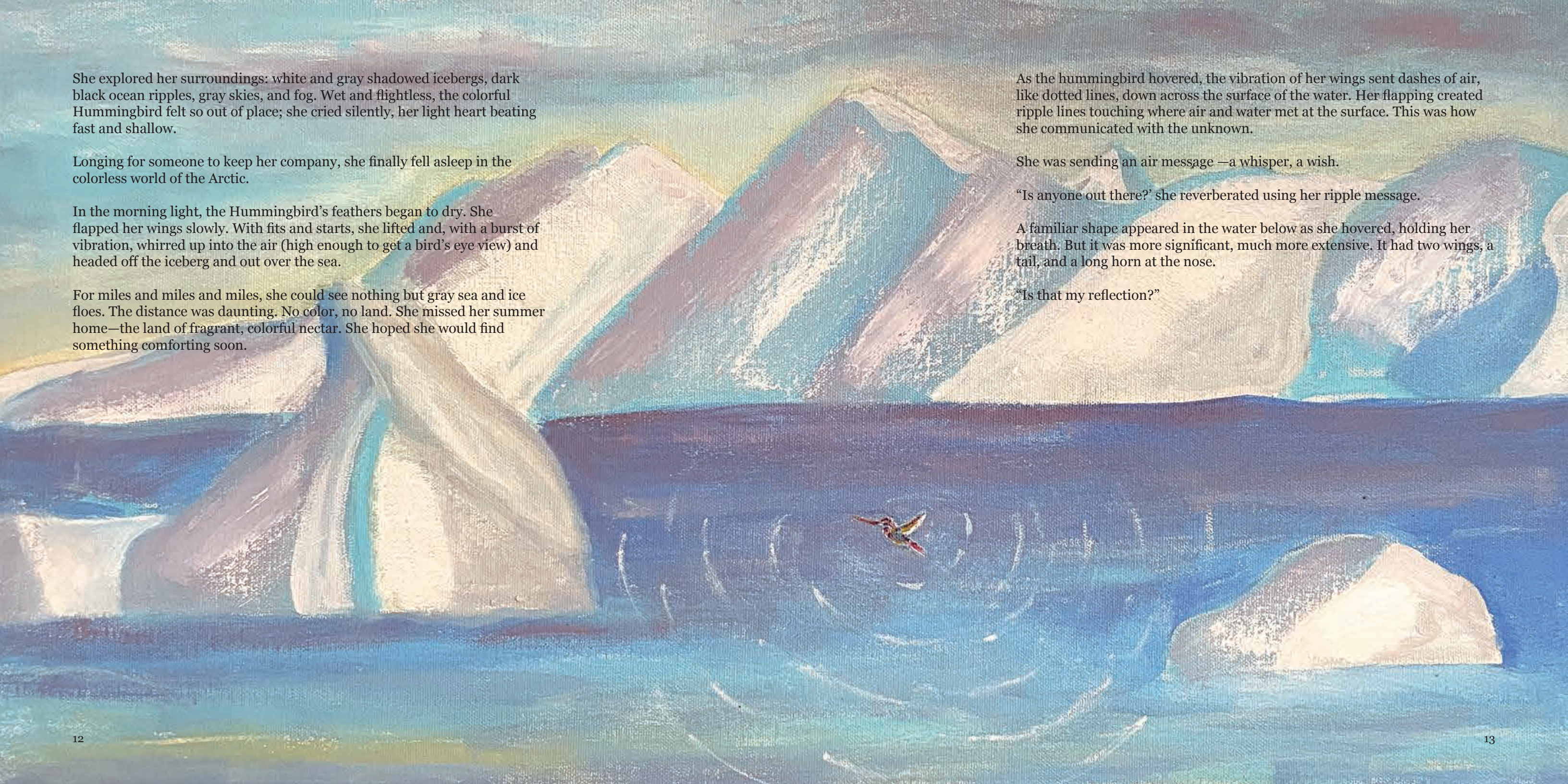
She flew all day and into the evening, followed by the brightest star and then another and another as they formed a trail of lights that twinkled all the way until the morning sun peeked above the horizon.

“Good morning, world!”

This new migration day quickly darkened as the clouds obscured her pathway, and the wind whipped up and blew so strongly that the tiny Hummingbird could not stay on track. Large gusts pushed her further and further north as they tattered her little wings. She was worried she would be tossed into the sea.

She was frightened and lonely, and as it became darker and colder, she quickly lost her energy. She checked her wings to see if she might lower herself but not sink into the water. She could not see anything under her, but she could hear a crashing sound that blended into a mingling of receding waves and water. Within inches of her landing place, she discovered she felt the movement of an iceberg floating in the middle of the ocean. She landed awkwardly and took a deep sigh of relief.



The background is a painting of an Arctic landscape. In the foreground, a small hummingbird with iridescent wings is in flight, its wings spread, creating concentric white ripples in the dark blue water below. The water is a deep, dark blue, contrasting with the lighter, textured icebergs in the background. The icebergs are rendered in shades of white, gray, and light blue, with visible brushstrokes giving them a sense of volume and texture. The sky is a pale, hazy blue, suggesting a foggy or overcast day. The overall mood is quiet and contemplative.

She explored her surroundings: white and gray shadowed icebergs, dark black ocean ripples, gray skies, and fog. Wet and flightless, the colorful Hummingbird felt so out of place; she cried silently, her light heart beating fast and shallow.

Longing for someone to keep her company, she finally fell asleep in the colorless world of the Arctic.

In the morning light, the Hummingbird's feathers began to dry. She flapped her wings slowly. With fits and starts, she lifted and, with a burst of vibration, whirred up into the air (high enough to get a bird's eye view) and headed off the iceberg and out over the sea.

For miles and miles and miles, she could see nothing but gray sea and ice floes. The distance was daunting. No color, no land. She missed her summer home—the land of fragrant, colorful nectar. She hoped she would find something comforting soon.

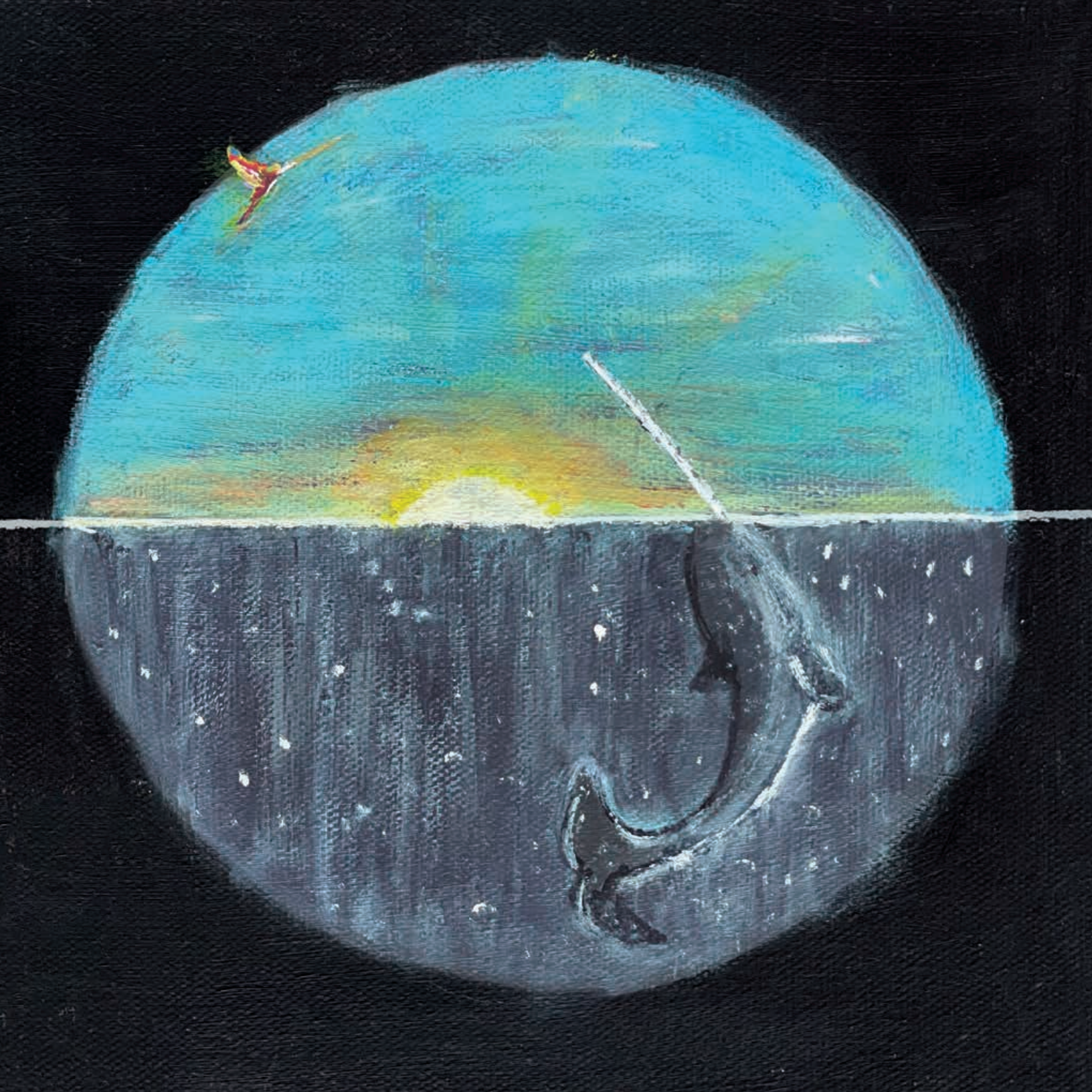
As the hummingbird hovered, the vibration of her wings sent dashes of air, like dotted lines, down across the surface of the water. Her flapping created ripple lines touching where air and water met at the surface. This was how she communicated with the unknown.

She was sending an air message—a whisper, a wish.

“Is anyone out there?” she reverberated using her ripple message.

A familiar shape appeared in the water below as she hovered, holding her breath. But it was more significant, much more extensive. It had two wings, a tail, and a long horn at the nose.

“Is that my reflection?”



“Hey!” the Hummingbird called out, sending another buzz message between air and water. Flapping her wings so fast created another set of ripples on the ocean’s surface.

The shapely figure in the water tilted its head to listen. A colossal eye peered out just above the surface.

Perplexed as well about the vibrations, the creature thought:

“What was that? It looks like me, but it’s much, much smaller!”

Well-equipped to listen, the Narwhal raised the volume on his sonar wave sound tools. Then he held his breath to see if the faint twitter was something he should take notice of.

But he heard no sound. No response.

“I must be imagining things.” he doubted.

As the rays of light sparkled like diamonds on the rippling sea, the Narwhal pointed his twisted horn towards the sky, just enjoying, as he does, being a Narwhal.

The Hummingbird, tired of hovering, messaging, and getting no response, saw a branch sticking out of the water. It seemed to be bobbing strangely up and down and even disappearing from moment to moment. Still, the Hummingbird was tired, so, she landed and grasped onto the stick.

“Helloooo? Helloooo?” sonared the Narwhal.

The Hummingbird felt shaken by the loud ‘Hello’ which vibrated through the water and air. It shuddered through her small airy body like a volcano.

“Hello?” peeped the Hummingbird shyly. “Who’s that calling?”

“It’s me; I’m a Narwhal: I am known by my tribe as ‘The One who Points to the Sky.’”

“I didn’t realize there was a creature attached to this stick,” the Hummingbird said, filled with surprise. “Do you always swim with a stick in hand?”

“Oh, are you talking about my Narwhal horn?”

“You mean,” clarified the Hummingbird, “there is more of you beyond this stick?”

“Yes, most of my body is underwater, and I’m a whale. You just landed on my long, twisted horn.”

“Who and what are you, little one?” said the Narwhal.

“I’m a Hummingbird. I fly above the surface and through the air from flower to flower. I dip my long nose inside each one to sip and share nectar so there will be more colorful flowers to create oxygen so that creatures can breathe.”

“A flower?” asked the Narwhal.

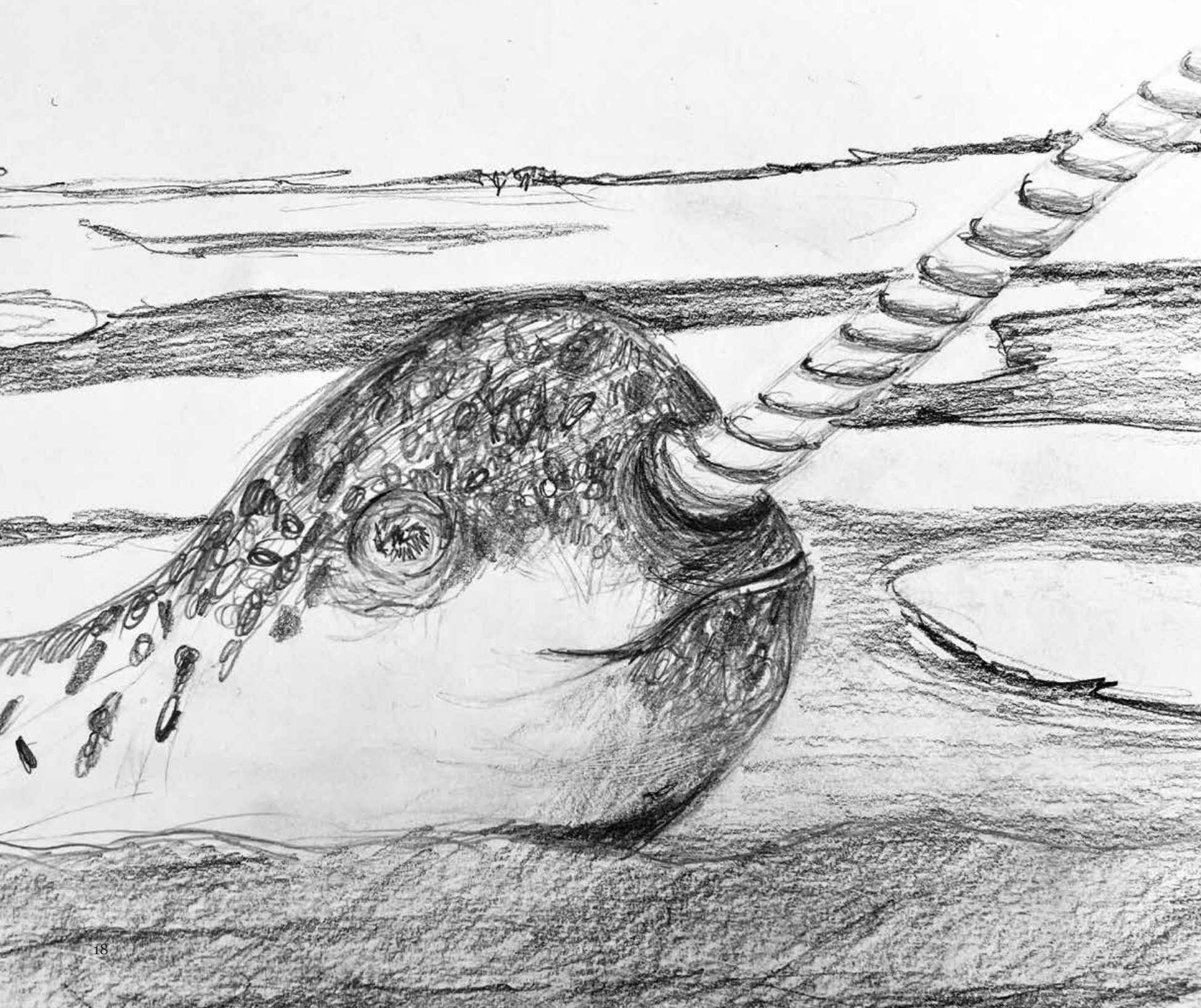


“Yes, of course, a flower is the color part of a plant that grows out of the ground. It blooms with beautiful colors when it’s ready to share nectar. That’s why my horn is so long, to reach inside the flowers for the nectar.

The shape of your long horn is like mine! What does yours do?” asked the Hummingbird.

“I don’t know!” answered the Narwhal. “This twisted thing just seems to get in the way, and other whales and sea creatures make fun of us for our long horns. I just point mine towards the sky and hope for an answer to my purpose, my calling in life.”

“I know what it’s like to feel lost and to not know,” said the Hummingbird.



“I got blown off course in a storm during my annual migration from Mexico to Maine, and here I am in the land of black and white,” the Hummingbird said with a sigh.

“Yes, I can see by your bright colors that you don’t seem to belong here.

And what do you mean by ‘annual migration?’” asked the Narwhal.

“Well,” answered the Hummingbird, “we hummingbirds move our homes seasonally. The light and climate temperature help us to stay warm and survive.”

“We migrate too,” said the Narwhal, “we depend on the water temperature and seasons to find fish.

Narwhals usually migrate together, but somehow I got separated from my family Blessing.” the Narwhal said sadly.

“I didn’t know that a Narwhal group is called a Blessing. I know another meaning of the word blessing!” said the Hummingbird. “It’s a blessing to meet you! I was hoping to meet someone, and I was getting a little worried I wouldn’t be so lucky.”

“I’m glad to meet you too, Hummingbird. We can keep each other company.”

“Yes!” agreed the Hummingbird, “and when I fly high in the sky, I can see really far, and my wings lift me up and beyond to the magical world. From that perspective, I can help you find the purpose of your horn.”

“Thank you for your offer, wee Hummingbird. Yes, I would like to know more about what you can see and discover my calling. I’d also like to know more about flowers and colors. I’ve never experienced anything like that; I’ve only seen black and white colors.”

And without another word and without notice, as Hummingbirds do, she flew upwards, determined to fulfill the request. Like magic, she was gone to the uppermost level of the sky.

CHAPTER 3

The Narwhal waited and hoped patiently for the Hummingbird to return. He played in the water. He made circles and figure eights, rolled over and over many times until he got exhausted, and fell asleep vertically just underneath the water's surface.

As he floated upright, the Narwhal dreamed he was flying in a field of flowers, so sweet and colorful, just as the Hummingbird had described them. And other hummingbirds were buzzing all around him. In his dream, he heard a poem.

“Take a breath and carefully listen that you might hear the calling. You asked that your wishes become true. Awaken the dreams and follow them. My wings will flutter your heart, and the stars will light your way.”

The Narwhal awoke with an inkling of hope and looked up to the sky. To his delight, he could just make out the shape of the Hummingbird hovering and buzzing just inches over his head.

“You’re back! I’m so glad you’re back. Why did you go?” the Narwhal said.

“I went to the magical part of the sky, where birds can fly and where we can retrieve messages for earthly creatures.” explained the Hummingbird.

“What message did you retrieve from the sky world, Hummingbird?”

“The message I bring you is this:

You are a magical creature. A unicorn of the sea! You bring color and joy to the world.”

“Color?” the Narwhal responded with a hint of doubt in his voice. “I’m black and white and gray all over, and as I told you, others make fun of me for this long, twisted horn that just gets in the way.”

“Say it out loud, Narwhal, so it doesn’t disappear!”

So the Narwhal called out and vibrated to the universe the message he received from the Hummingbird.

“I’m a magical unicorn of the sea! My calling is to point my unicorn to the sky of possibilities and share color and joy with the world!”



And within an instant, the power of his words began to unfold the magic right before their eyes. It was one of the most amazing things either of them—the Narwhal or the Hummingbird—had ever seen.

Stars began shooting and showering effervescent light patterns like comets from the upper skies. A green-yellow shade of backlit color engulfed the dark skies and moved side to side like a dangling blanket. And a perfect crescent moon hung patiently, pointing at the center.

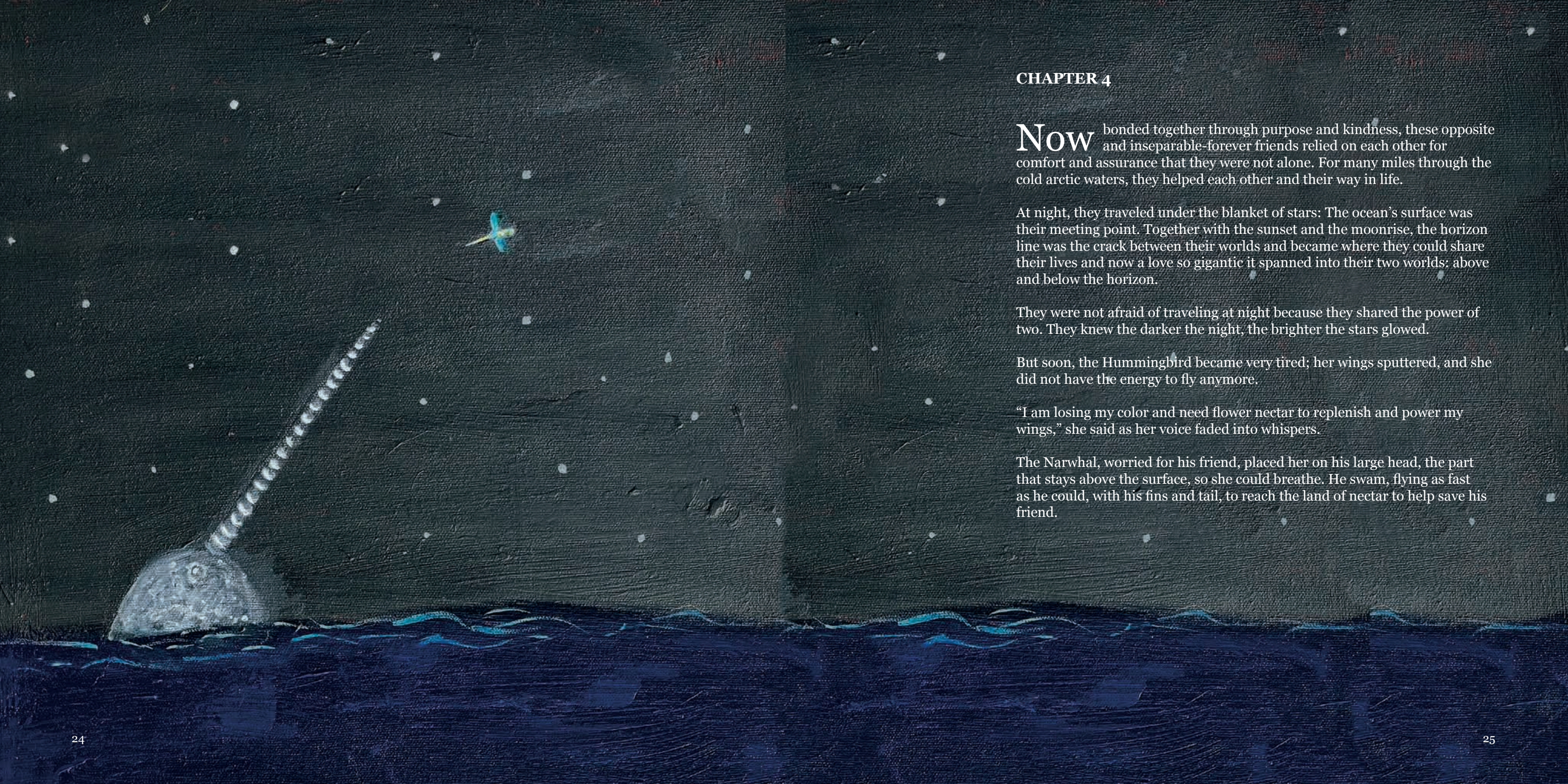
The Narwhal was so excited at the light show he breached high into the air, flipping his tail and flapping his fins. With the movement, the water sprayed a sparkling phosphorescent light across the waves making glistening swirls all around them! His body was bedazzled with twinkling lights, and his horn became a bright, spiraled, glowing golden unicorn.

“The magic is everywhere!

I found my calling!

I am a unicorn of the sea!”

“Yes, Narwhal! Your sparkling body and golden unicorn are real and just an opening to what is possible as wishes come true. Your wish to share color and joy with the world was said out loud, and I promise, but I don’t know how; you will find your magic to help you fulfill your calling,” the Hummingbird cheered.



CHAPTER 4

Now bonded together through purpose and kindness, these opposite and inseparable-forever friends relied on each other for comfort and assurance that they were not alone. For many miles through the cold arctic waters, they helped each other and their way in life.

At night, they traveled under the blanket of stars: The ocean's surface was their meeting point. Together with the sunset and the moonrise, the horizon line was the crack between their worlds and became where they could share their lives and now a love so gigantic it spanned into their two worlds: above and below the horizon.

They were not afraid of traveling at night because they shared the power of two. They knew the darker the night, the brighter the stars glowed.

But soon, the Hummingbird became very tired; her wings sputtered, and she did not have the energy to fly anymore.

"I am losing my color and need flower nectar to replenish and power my wings," she said as her voice faded into whispers.

The Narwhal, worried for his friend, placed her on his large head, the part that stays above the surface, so she could breathe. He swam, flying as fast as he could, with his fins and tail, to reach the land of nectar to help save his friend.



It was a perfect summer morning, and the Narwhal believed he had arrived at his destination.

“I’m not certain, but I think we finally reached the land of Nectar,” he whispered to his friend.

The Narwhal could see what he thought was a colorful field of flowers in the distance, just as the Hummingbird had previously described. He also recalled the colors and flowers he had dreamed about. He paused just a whale’s length from the shore, but he could not bridge the gap between himself and the land to give his friend, the Hummingbird, the flowers she needed to be energized.

The Narwhal called, clicked, and echoed, but no one responded to his wavelength. The two waited a long time for any response. He splashed his tail and waited and waited, but still...nothing. No one called back. No one appeared. Perhaps whoever might be out there was too far away to hear him.

Then out of nowhere, he spotted a small animal. He had never seen a dog before, but as he watched the creature run, stop, then run again, he assumed the animal must be having fun as it ran along the shore.

The dog halted, stopped short in her tracks, and turned her head. Her ears flapped up. She began barking incessantly at the sea. The Narwhal was unsure what the sounds meant, but he thought,

“It seems the smaller black creature can hear my sounds? But that other creature, the one walking on two feet, does not seem to react?”

The dog’s companion, a girl with yellow boots on, noticed her furry companion barking. Still, she did not understand what the dog was hearing. So she decided she should investigate.



The girl walked toward the direction of the barking and waded into the water to take a closer look. A prominent dark figure was hidden before her, like a shadow just below the surface. The Narwhal waited for her approach, floated, and exhaled loud sounds in the shallow water.

“Hello?” the human asked. “Who are you?”

“I am a unicorn of the sea, and since I do not have legs, would you be so kind as to carry my tiny friend here, who looks a lot like me, to a flower with nectar? She needs the nectar to get her color energy back.”

The girl carefully inched further into the shallow waters. She could now make out a tiny creature on the Narwhal’s head, just a speck of a being looking very much like a tinier unicorn.

“This small unicorn found me,” the Narwhal explained, “when we were both lost and helped me to discover my calling, and now I am returning the favor of kindness.”

Scooping the Hummingbird into her hands, the girl walked carefully up the rocky Maine shore to a nearby field of colorful flowers. The dog followed alongside, ensuring the Hummingbird was transferred safely.

When the girl arrived at the field, she spotted a perfectly shaped flower. She walked up to it. She held the limp Hummingbird gently upwards to funnel her long nose into the flower’s deep trumpet, the one purposefully shaped for their common promise. The Hummingbird sipped and sipped until the nectar worked inside her like a magic potion. First, her eyes became bright again, and little by little, as the color infused her body, her wings fluttered and then hovered. Her body was awakened, and she was good as new!

“Thank you!” peeped the Hummingbird to the girl and the dog. “Thank you for answering the call with your kindness.”

The dog pawed at the ground, wagged her tail, and barked upwards, elated that the Hummingbird was revived. The girl smiled, contently realizing with the dogs’ help, she could also give a gift of kindness.

CHAPTER 5

With the replenishment of her color and the return of her vibrating wings, the Hummingbird hovered and buzzed upward, left the helpful girl and her dog, and flew through the field of flowers, then headed back to the seashore where the Narwhal was anxiously awaiting details of her adventures on land.

On the way, she gathered all her hummingbird friends, (called a charm) from the field of flowers, and they flew buzzing together like a swarm, to meet the Narwhal at the shore.

A charm of hummingbirds is a rare sighting, and the Narwhal was astonished at how many friends she had and what might happen.

Flying together, their tiny bodies spun and buzzed around the Narwhal and worked busily weaving a unique colorful coat. They transformed the Narwhal's entire body into a bedazzled unicorn of the sea—just as he had wished and had said out loud that he had wanted. His body was now vibrating with rainbow colors and even some colors beyond imaginable.

“See, Narwhal, magic does happen, and wishes come true!” the Hummingbird peeped.

“I truly am a unicorn of the sea! I share color and joy with the world! Just as I wished and called out to the universe.” shouted the Narwhal.

Elated, now that he had this coat of color and his golden unicorn, the Narwhal swished his colorful tail, the waves splashed upward, and it was a spray of celebration. In this manner, the Narwhal thanked the charm of hummingbirds for their gift of color. He wished them well as they waved a winged goodbye and vanished, heading back to their life at the field of flowers by the shore.

“You look charming,” the Hummingbird winked, “but I see a longing in your eyes.”

“I love my coat of color!” said the Narwhal. “Thank you for sharing the charm of hummingbirds! But, I miss my family, the Narwhal Blessing, and I wish to return to the Arctic to find them.”

The Hummingbird understood the longing as she had had the same feeling while being lost in the Arctic. The Hummingbird agreed to return the gift of kindness and help the Narwhal on his return journey. The two colorful-unseen creatures left the Maine shore together, the Narwhal diving deep under the surface and the Hummingbird rising up, just a speck in the sky; both headed in the same northerly direction with a common goal to help the Narwhal return to his Blessing where he might share his transformation.

A few days and nights later, the Hummingbird and the Narwhal reached the Arctic Circle, where the Unicorn of the Sea was reunited with his Blessing. His whole family spun in infinite circles and swam side by side, thrilled to see him again. And he was relieved to be back home. And the wee Hummingbird twirled and danced in the sky, celebrating the reunion.

“Welcome back home! The One that Points to the Sky!” the Narwhal Blessing called out like a chorus. “We missed you so much! “Is that really you? With those shimmering colors and golden unicorn?”

“Yes, it’s really me under here!” the Narwhal replied, a satisfied smile appearing on his face. “My dear Blessing,” he continued. “I’m so glad I am reunited with you all! May I present my tiny friend, the Hummingbird, The Unicorn of the Sky! She helped me navigate back to you with her bird’s eye view. She showed me flowers, and her family charmed me with a coat of many colors. I discovered that I am a Unicorn of the Sea! And most of all, she taught me that with kindness and friendship, all kinds of magic can unfold.”

The Blessing admired the Narwhal’s golden unicorn. They swam round and round in circles, inspecting every inch of his coat of many colors.

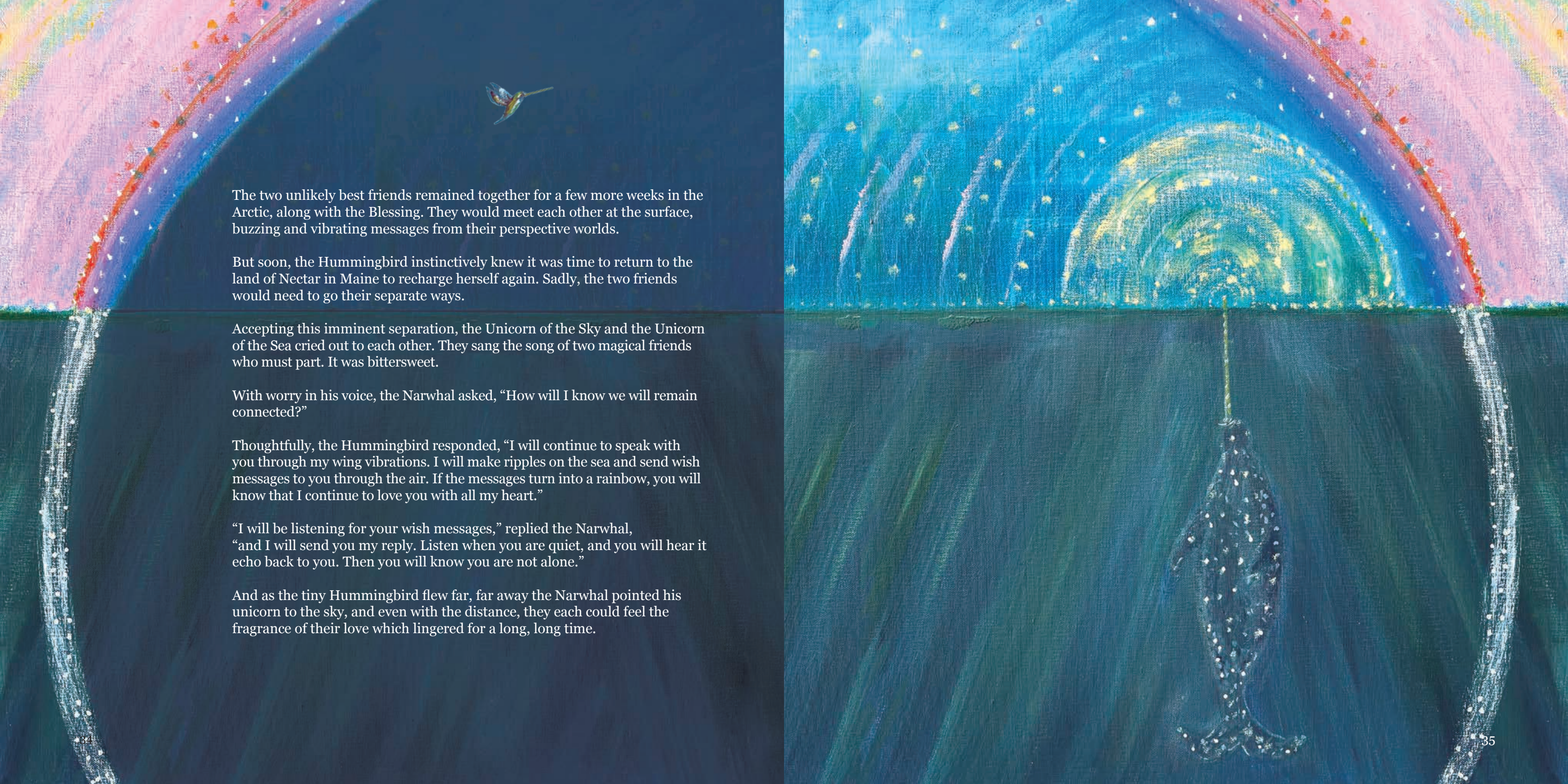
One member of the Blessing announced, “This is an amazing gift the Hummingbird has given you. Now it is time for the Hummingbird to receive a blessing for helping our Narwhal.”

The Hummingbird flew down and hovered above the circle of Narwhals to receive her honorable gift...a blessing from the Narwhal Blessing.

The Blessing swam round and round, and as they did, they created a swirl of pure energy that expanded upwards through the air and into the sky. The unseen blessing wafted through the Hummingbird’s body like perfume. And later the power transformed into a brilliant-colored rainbow arcing in the Northern Sky. The Hummingbird felt the vibration and, for the first time, saw the colors spanning across the Arctic, transforming the land of black and white into waves of color!

All she could say was, “Thank you!” as she was overwhelmed by the blessing.





The two unlikely best friends remained together for a few more weeks in the Arctic, along with the Blessing. They would meet each other at the surface, buzzing and vibrating messages from their perspective worlds.

But soon, the Hummingbird instinctively knew it was time to return to the land of Nectar in Maine to recharge herself again. Sadly, the two friends would need to go their separate ways.

Accepting this imminent separation, the Unicorn of the Sky and the Unicorn of the Sea cried out to each other. They sang the song of two magical friends who must part. It was bittersweet.

With worry in his voice, the Narwhal asked, “How will I know we will remain connected?”

Thoughtfully, the Hummingbird responded, “I will continue to speak with you through my wing vibrations. I will make ripples on the sea and send wish messages to you through the air. If the messages turn into a rainbow, you will know that I continue to love you with all my heart.”

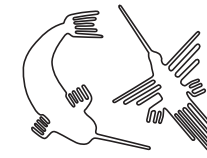
“I will be listening for your wish messages,” replied the Narwhal, “and I will send you my reply. Listen when you are quiet, and you will hear it echo back to you. Then you will know you are not alone.”

And as the tiny Hummingbird flew far, far away the Narwhal pointed his unicorn to the sky, and even with the distance, they each could feel the fragrance of their love which lingered for a long, long time.

This is the first edition of *The Hummingbird & The Narwhal*,
an illustrated tale by Annie Higbee.

The printing was done by Sure Print Ontario, Canada in 2023.
The font used was Georgia Regular 11 pt. The graphic design
was done by Gabriela Diaz Arellano, Oaxaca, Mexico. The book was
edited by Ralph Scott Penza, Petaluma, California.

Special thanks to Belanie Dishong, Houston, Texas for coaching me
in the process.



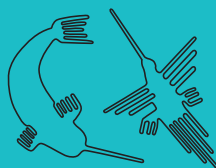
Share the Books' Message:

**Respect for planet earth and its inhabitants. Listening and
celebrating the preciousness of how we are all connected.**





This is the story of two creatures who resemble each other in shape but come from completely different worlds. Their unlikely meeting on the horizon is a miraculous opening to the experience of deep listening and the gifts of kindness, the kind of magic that, if any creature is willing, can be shared.



Always encouraged by her mother to write, Annie Higbee's first job after college was writing for her hometown newspaper in Westchester County, New York. She worked on feature articles and stories about the environment. One of her articles won Best Feature Article Award in the New York State Press Association. She continued on to work with The New York Times and Gannett Newspapers. Annie is a self taught artist and her mediums include photography, drawing, painting, digital art, and sculpture. Her art has been exhibited in galleries in Maine and New Hampshire.

Annie cares deeply for animals and is committed to helping them express their sentiments to the world. "Humans are not the only inhabitants on the earth and all creatures have a message that need to be heard."

Annie lives in Maine, USA and Oaxaca, Mexico with her daughter, Cecile, and her doggie Bella, who is portrayed as the dog in this illustrated book. This is her first children's book. And Bella's first appearance.

