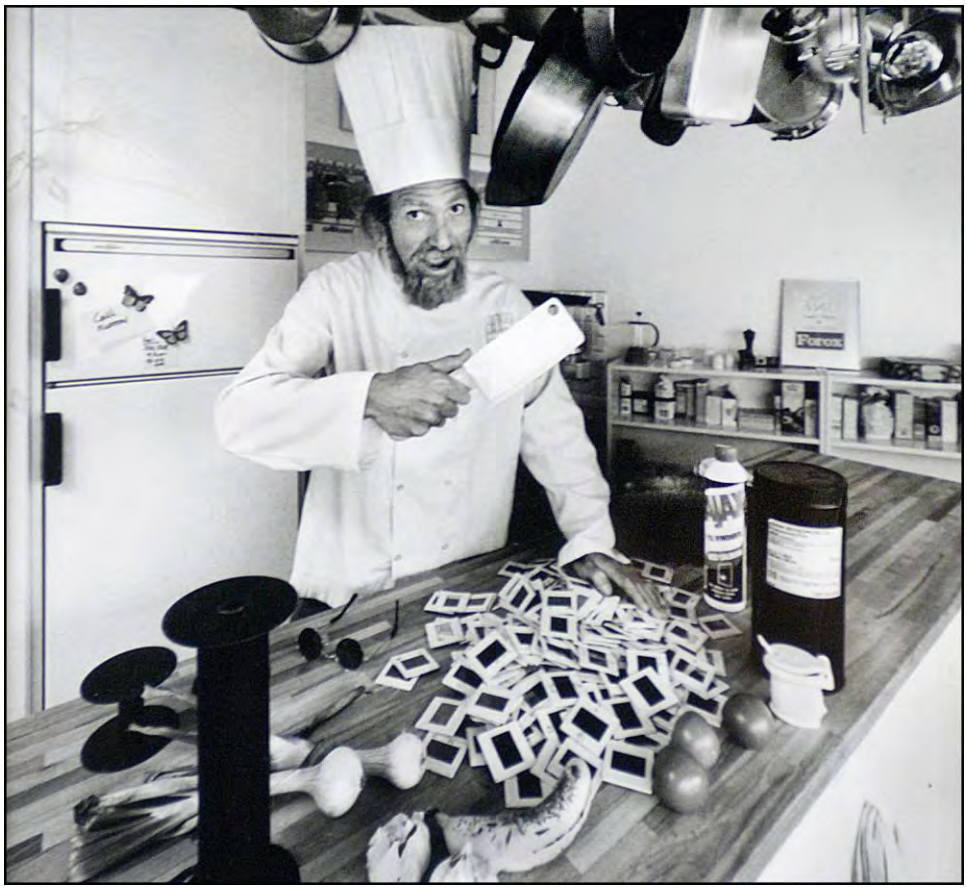

Yours Truly poses as The Swedish Chef to illustrate an eponymous magazine feature about my studio in Stockholm | 1987.

Appendix II

A Conglomeration of Miscellany

Including:

Nanuc | A screenplay by Douglas Mesney | 1982

Epic Productions [Incredible Imagers] 1987 Address List

Baby Bird Books

File Under: Historical Footnotes

Continued from

An Incredible Epic

Appendix I | Volume Six

Appendix II

A Conglomeration of Miscellany

Supplement to

An Incredible Epic

Memoir of A Multi-Image Maestro

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An Incredible Epic is a confabulation[1] based on the circumstances of my life. No part of this book may be used or reproduced without written permission except in the case of brief quotations to be used in critical articles and reviews. The electronic form of this book can in no way, partially or entirely, be copied, reproduced, or forwarded. For exceptions, licenses, permissions, and other information, contact the author: douglas@mesney.com

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The author has researched the information contained in this book to check accuracy.
The opinions expressed in this book are solely based upon the author's own experience.
The author assumes no responsibility for errors and inaccuracies.
Resemblances to persons living or dead may be coincidental.
Some names may not be real.

Unless otherwise credited, photographs and artwork are the work of the author.

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[1] In *The Trip to Echo Spring* by Olivia Laing, confabulation is described as "so-called 'honest lying' or false memories." I would add that, we remember (and edit) selectively what we like and repress what we don't. Wikipedia defines the term as: "… a memory error defined as the production of fabricated, distorted, or misinterpreted memories about oneself or the world, without the conscious intention to deceive."

Notes to Reader

- *An Incredible Epic* was started ten years ago, in 2015. It is a work in progress; being expanded and upgraded as new articles and pictures become available. New versions are periodically published. You can see your Edition Number on the title page (iii).

- Volume Nine is filled with pictures that relate to the first six volumes. Volume Eleven has even more, woven into a 1982 treatise called "Confessions of A Multi-Image Maniac"; that is a precursor to *An Incredible Epic* about how to produce multi-image shows. Volume Thirteen, currently in the works, is a 'catch all' for additional material being continually re-discovered in my archives.

- Videos of forty-one Incredible slide shows can be seen on Vimeo (search for 'Mesney') or www.imcredibleimages.com, threaded into an abbreviated biography. Additional shows by other producers have been restored and curated by Steve Michelsen and can be seen at www.youtube.com/@AV_archaeology/videos.

- As the Epic has evolved materially, so too has the refinement of its style(s). Please excuse the small inconsistencies you will encounter. And please don't fret about any spelling errors; they are elusive little buggers; but let me know about them, please.

- The original Epic was split into seven parts when the size of the single volume overwhelmed Microsoft Word (I should have used Adobe InDesign). The index (Volume Eight) could not be split and ceased being updated. Thus, the index is of limited usefulness, covering only the content in the original manuscript – about 80% of Volumes One through Seven.

- Although unable to contact every person or publisher about the reproduction of their likeness or work, this book is a non-profit treatise written for historical and educational purposes. [Under fair use, another author may make limited use of the original author's work without asking permission. Section 107 of the Copyright Act of 1986 (17 U.S. Code § 107) states that fair use of copyrighted material "for purposes such as criticism, comment, news reporting, teaching (including multiple copies for classroom use), scholarship, or research, is not an infringement of copyright."] I hope nobody is unduly offended for their contribution(s) to this confabulation.[1] Please notify me of discrepancies, inaccuracies, and/or omissions.

[1] Confabulation has been variously described as so-called 'honest lying' or false memories fabricated, distorted, or misinterpreted about oneself or the world, without the conscious intention to deceive. I would add that, we remember (and edit) selectively what we like and repress what we don't.

In memory of these mentors, colleagues, and friends, who departed during the production of *An Incredible Epic*:

Phillip Augustin
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Wynn 'Kaj' Berry
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John Connolly
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Randolf Taylor
Glen Tracy
Duffie White
Randy Will
Mike Yuhas
Constantine Zacharious

With appreciation for their contributions
to my life and well-being.

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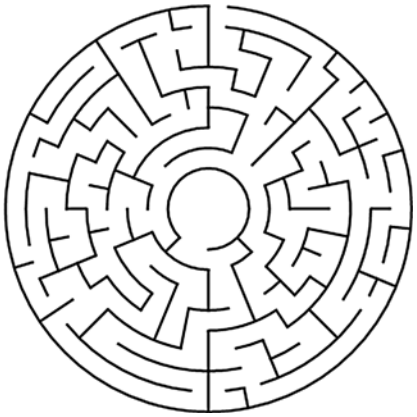

"You have to go where the story leads you."

Stephen King (PBS interview)

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APPENDIX II

A CONGLOMERATION OF MISCELLANY

PREFACE

There was a large cabinet in the dining room of the family house in Douglaston. The top half was a glass-doored display case with shelves. The bottom half had a row of three shelves above wood-doored cabinetry. The left drawer was called the 'Catch-All' because it contained a conglomeration miscellaneous stuff that didn't belong anywhere else or was waiting to be put away.

Twenty years later, when I started making slide shows, I had an 'Everything Book' containing a diverse collection of miscellaneous slides culled from out-takes that didn't belong in any particular section of the picture archives. Ten years after that, there was an entre shelf of Everything Books. If you were in a pinch, there was always *something* to be found in those books that would save the day – especially for mindblowers.

And forty years after that, here I am in the same situation: stuck with a min-mountain of material that is tangential to the Epic; that doesn't 'fit' in the original eight volumes or the subsequent four; but is too good to toss; to not include *somewhere*.

Ostensibly, the stuff in this volume belongs in the Appendix (Volume Six). However, that volume is already huge cannot be expanded without creating page-number problems for all subsequent volumes – Seven through Thirteen.

Thus, Volume Thirteen is Appendix II.

Putting together this book has been no unlike an archeologist sifting through layers; the deeper the older. My files are like those layers, and I have been working my way backwards through collections of pictures and memorabilia sorted and ranked by their 'importance'. With the story told, now I embellish it with more stuff, as I dig deeper into the files.

INTRODUCTION

Volume Thirteen is a work in progress and will likely be the last of the Epic series. Look for periodic updates (check the Volume Date on the masthead page. I'm skipping the Backstory in this volume; you can find it in Volume Nine, along with updates for 2022 as of summer. Picking-up from there… Where the update left off, I had moved back to Lancaster Gate from Sechelt. Having readjusted and gotten all systems up and running, I resumed work on the Epic.

2022-2023 Update

Later that autumn, in November, I had a scheduled check-up with my hematologist, Jorge Denegri. Two days before that, I had my blood worked up at Life Labs; the results were less than stellar—way worse than the tests taken in Sechelt, just before I left, about two months earlier, in August. That came as a complete surprise because since the summer I had been eating apricot kernels, which contain vitamin B-17—amygdalin—(aka *Laetrile*)—which many use as a natural way to kill or control cancer. The way it does that is by poisoning cancer cells. When the kernels are broken-down by digestion, cyanide is released. Cancer cells are less cyanide resistant than healthy cells—that is, if you don't overdo a good thing. That I can tell you from experience. I am the kind of guy who reckons that if one is good, two is better. Instead of limiting my intake to the two-or-three kernels per day most recommend, I was taking about a dozen a day. After nearly a month of that, my vitality was fading. Bi-monthly blood work showed that my oxygen and iron were way low and my lymphocytes way high. Not good. Plus, my lymph glands were swollen. I had poisoned myself; overdosed on cyanide.

Then, in October, I began 'urotherapy'. Pam started first, in September, after reading a dozen books about it; and reported that her back pains had gone away. Turns out that drinking one's urine has a long history of medicinal use; I won't bore you with details that you can look-up on your own (I recommend you do). Urine is your own personalized 'medicine' containing the excess output of everything your body makes to function; more than 3,000 substances, including stem cells. Contents vary throughout the day and night, as your body deals with normal functions and disfunctions. Anyway, I started urotherapy and was on it for three weeks before another blood test, two days before my appointment with the doctor. Guess what? My blood looked significant better. Oxygen had dropped to 80 but was now back to 120, which is the new normal for me. But Dr. Denegri didn't want to hear anything about any of that. He claimed to have never heard about urotherapy (say what?) and wanted me to get chemo therapy for my leukemia, starting four months later, in February (2022). He said it was better to do chemo now; that chemo was more problematic after age 80. Long story short, I got talked into it. There would be six rounds of two chemicals, once every month, from February through August. During the intervening months—November through January—I continued urotherapy, but discontinued the apricot kernels; my body needed to heal from the cyanide poisoning.

I felt lousy after the first chemo session—my skin even started peeling away—and came to the realization that chemo was a.) destroying my immune system, and b.) tough on my one remaining kidney. I reckoned that a weak immune system was not a good idea in light of the Covid situation and decided to quit the program. Denegri was pissed-off. He said: "…you don't need me anymore," and dropped me from his practice. (!) But, that was OK; he was right. Chemicals were his only tools and I wanted to go 'Natural'.

I came to believe that a proper diet supplies the body with everything it needs to fight infection and defeat or disable disease. Nature provides antidotes for everything; it's the yin-yang of life. Good nutrition is not all that's needed for good health; but, what do they say, "You are what you eat"?

It's been nearly two years since the chemo. I continue with the urotherpy and resumed the amygdalin, taking one teaspoon of ground apricot kernels per day, every other month. In addition, once a month a take 12 mg of Ivermectin; that's to blow out any parasites.

And, so far, so good. My conditions have stabilized; so, 'on with the show.'
The whole episode was a not-so-subtle reminder of my mortality. It provided an impetus to get on with the Epic and start getting rid of things that could make Pam's life more difficult 'when the time comes.' By now, most of the things I have—and there's a lot of them—are the precious stuff; e.g., negatives, slides, and my artwork, or what's left of it. It's the stuff that's survived all previous culls; the stuff I find almost impossible to part with; the stuff I am 'made of.' I have said to myself over and over, and proven to myself that nobody wants any of it. In a previous edition I explained how I couldn't even give pictures away; and the most recent episode borderlines on the absurd: Not wanting to simply throw away more than one hundred rolled prints and canvases of my illustrations, I donated them to a local gallery and frame shop called, Lost Lagoon. The gallery is run by a super-hip young Japanese gal; loads of tattoos and piercings; piercing eyes; self confident; easy on the eyes; I would be her grandfather's age.

I made an appointment by phone and dressed-up to make the pitch: she could have it all, even my classic black-and-white work. She was suspicious at first, but agreed to take my work; I was over the moon and spent the next week organizing the rolled prints, labeling them and making a visual index. When I arrived at the gallery with everything, Mico told me to stack the three banana boxes in the corner. Hmm. There they sat for a month, during which time I added black-and-white silver prints to the donation; those got taken into the 'back room.' After two months, none of my stuff was being displayed. Hmm.
Then, Mico went to Japan for a few weeks; which I discovered when I stopped by gallery to see what was happening and couldn't help noticing that the boxes were gone; but the temp behind the counter had no idea about any of that; he was obviously just baby-sitting the shop while Mico was away. When she got back, I sensed a distance in her. And, when I asked, she told me that she had taken them to the nearby thrift shop, adding that they had trouble selling them. Say what?! Obviously, they were trashed because there were none to be seen in the thrift shop; and nobody knew anything because they have a rotating staff of volunteers, all silver-haired septo- and octogenarians; e.g., 'old ditties.'
So, that was that. I could have saved myself a lot of unnecessary work and aggravation had I simply trashed them myself to begin with. Geez, I was outraged by the betrayal; she just 'brushed it off' with a cold stare; feigning bewilderment of my anger. It's been a couple of months and I have gone through the various stages of grief. What do they say, "Sadder but wiser"?

Things like that knock the wind out of my sails. I have to guard against depression; the ennui; the irrelevance of everything, existentially speaking. I think about Christ McDevitt, the painter; what happened to his work—dozens of canvasses—when he died last year. I think about my mom; everything she had was lost, even before she died.

I wonder: will this Epic end up in the proverbial bin? Or, what about all of Pam's work—volumes of poems and illustrations, dozens of paintings and *objets d'art*—what will happen to it all?

My mojo is on a bit of a slow-motion roller-coaster ride these days. The cyclicality of my ups and downs explains the sporadic nature of my current life and work on the Epic. The last year hasn't been all gloom and doom. Life is pleasant enough in a kind of homeostatic state. I work when the spirit moves me and spend the rest of the time 'learning'. I've disconnected from WIFI and connect to the Interne using a Category eight—Cat 8—Ethernet cable; the speed is way fast; and the Internet provides access to information about almost anything.

Richard Allison became a new colleague. He is writing a book about the history of multi-image, as noted in a previous edition. His help retyping my first book—*Confessions of A Multi-Image Maniac*—from its hand-written manuscript made Volume Eleven possible. I am deeply indebted to him; it was no easy chore. That book was begun while Sandra and I were at Sonargraphics, in Melbourne, Australia in 1982 and completed at Image Stream, in Los Angeles, in 1983. Its subtitle is How to Make a Multi-Image Show; so, it was the perfect book for Richard Allison to read; a real primer—although the techniques described in the book are 'advanced'; he jumped into the deep end of the pool. Or not. Sometimes, when retyping stuff, attention shifts from the story to the mechanics of the task. Plus, he told me that he did it in two-hour stints in the middle of the night, when he couldn't sleep; that is most every night, he explained; he sleeps in shifts. Maybe he doesn't remember much? I wouldn't doubt it. *Confessions of A Multi-Image Maniac* was written for the experienced multi-image-show creator; what you might call 'graduate-school' stuff. Anyway, we continue to be in communication, as he continues interviewing still-living producers and suppliers. (As of last summer, the dedication page of the Epic—a kind of obituary—now requires a two-column format.) The more he learns, the more questions he has about how things were done.

Fortunately for Richard, there is now a multi-image group of a few hundred former multi-image-slide-show makers [Multi-Image slideshow creators | Facebook]; but he says that most of them were late-comers, like himself. And he is more interested in how it all began and evolved. (I a not on Facebook, or any other 'social media'). Allison bought himself a couple of projectors and some old Spindler-Saupé programming gear to play with; and he's just gotten a Maron-Carrell 1400 rostrum camera. No matter there is no film or processing available anymore; he just wants to see one running. (!)

During the last eighteen months, Steve Michelsen's project has mushroomed into a major production. Readers may recall that Steve likes to restore multi-image shows and videotape them. Folks can see examples of multi-image shows on his website: https://www.stevenmichelsen.com/AVL/

From Steve's website: "In recent years I have been constructing a multi-image projection rig in my garage. My intention was to find a producer that had (A) kept his multi-image shows intact all these years, and (B) was prepared to let me have them, to restore and get back on the screen. In true "if you build it, they will come" fashion, this has come to pass!

"Richard Shipps, who ran DD&B Studios in Detroit and worked as programmer, designer and producer, entrusted me with his collection of multi-image modules that he had kept tucked away in storage for decades.

"I have spent this past winter getting them running again. I have created a YouTube channel specifically for these shows (and a few others that I had captured to VHS video in the '80s). Please take a look! [Editor: https://www.youtube.com/@AV_archaeology/videos] As they say, be sure to subscribe!

"There will be more multi-image slide modules added to my YouTube channel as time goes on - I have just been given a very large cache of shows from Paul Vershbow, who once upon a time was associated with Wilden Enterprises in New York City, and will be spending some quality time restoring and capturing them over the next several months. Not only that, I now am in possession of a cache of shows produced by Spotlight Presents, another NYC-based producer. Much to do! Stay tuned."

Among the dozens of shows on his YouTube channel, Steve has one of mine: *You Can't Stop s Dove!* (Aka "The Dove Show") He got that show from Richard Shipps, to whom I sent that show as well as the master *Bumbles* show. Steve never transferred that one; it goes too fast for his projectors. [Editor: Steve is using late-model Kodak Ektagraphic projectors that are slower to advance slides by up to ~1/10th second, compared to the Carousel B2 model I used for those two animated shows; both programmed for maximum speed. The Dove show was also too fast; but the animations came in bursts; so, Steve cleverly removed just enough slides and reprogrammed the offending sequences. And, you know what? You'd never know the difference, from the original show. As for Bumbles, I already had a video of that show, transferred to VHS format from a ¾-inch tape by Bob Peterson. Something went wrong somewhere along the line, or he did; but there are a couple of glitches in *Bumbles* (and also in his transfer of *Xanadu*) What do they say, "It is what it is; and something is better than nothing"? [Editor: Those shows and many other Incredible productions can be seen at my website; click on Incredible Images and choose from the menu. You can also go directly to www.IncredibleImages.com or Vimeo.]

Last spring, Claire Evans, a freelance writer, interviewed me for an article she was writing about multi-image slide shows. She found me through my website, where she perused the Epic as well as my shows. Claire followed it with a more in-depth piece for the prestigious and widely-read *MIT Technology Review*—published by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology—which, like the first, featured Incredible's 80-projector Saab 9000CD launch show. Even before I saw the article, Peter Togg, my colleague from Purchase Point, who now lives in Northern Australia, emailed to tell me how surprised he was to see an article about my work in *Technology Review*. His kudos were followed by a few other colleagues' regards. A few weeks later, I got an email from one Peter Buck; I almost shat when I saw that name; Pete Buck was Anna's lead lawyer during our divorce in 2002—and he won a huge award for her. However, the email was not from the dreaded attorney; it was the moderator of an online forum called: *Office Hours Global*." That lead to the essay that follows; an essay which begins with a mea culpa based on my new reality; a Proustian life as a technological Luddite. [Ed., If one gazes at one's navel long enough; things get philosophical.]

2024-2025 Update

The year started uneventfully. I continued adding to this volume (Thirteen) but at a slower pace; and worked with Richard Allison on his book, as a kind of Guru. His book project has morphed into something much larger – an 'AV Preservation' resource called the Multi-Image History Project [https://www.youtube.com/@multi-imagehistoryproject?app=desktop]. He had been collecting major pieces of working AV production equipment—so far, a stat camera, a Maron Carrell camera, and a tabletop Forox—getting them working and making videos explaining how they work. This is a major contribution which will become increasingly valuable with the passage of time. After the last of us AV producers have passed away, interested persons will have very few resources about the inner workings and history of the slide show industry; so far, only Richard's site; my own two sites—www.mesney.com and www.incredibleimages.com--and Steve Michelson's YouTube channel, https://www.youtube.com/@AV_archaeology/videos.

Work on the Epic slowed to a snail's pace because I am having trouble staying motivated; realizing that with the exception of a very few people (I could count them on one hand—all former AV people) nobody is interested in the Epic… or anything 'multi-image'. I can't say that I blame them. The current generation never heard of slide shows; oh, they are familiar with the term 'slides'; but that is from PowerPoint and similar apps, where the term has been perpetrated; they are clueless about the kind of slides this book is about. It's the same as buggy whips and the days of horse-drawn carriage; my generation was certainly not interested in knowing the details of those outdated subjects. Being now eighty years old (is that possible?) I am absolutely clueless about the directions or interests of the new generations; but I do know that they could care less about multi-image. To date, I have been unsuccessful in locating even one school or library interested in having a copy of *An Incredible Epic*. I've been turned down flat a dozen times; most don't even reply to my offer. That's depressing.

Around mid-year (2024) I decided to write a book about My wife, Pamela Swanson's artwork; thus I began editing and assembling *Pamela Swanson | Arts & Crafts*. Had I known what I was getting myself into, I probably would not have started the project. There were hundreds upon hundreds of files to edit and assemble. The book took a year to produce (I just finished, June 2025) and is 550 pages in length. Four copies will be printed; one for each of her three siblings (Anne, David and Lloyd) as well as one for she and I. The electronic version will be posted to her website: (www.poetpam.com).

Mortality is creeping closer. I turned 80 last January and was doing great until May. During the Spring, I went on a parasite purge after reading that some new theories believe cancer is caused by parasites. The subject became relevant when I had to have a physical examination to keep my driver's license. The exam revealed a very elevated PSA level, indicating possible prostate cancer. So, I decided to eliminate the parasite possibilities and took several anti-parasitic drugs which were hard to get and cost nearly a thousand dollars—Ivermectin, Fenbendazole and Nitazoxanide. I also have Praziquantel, but have not taken that yet because of what happened next.

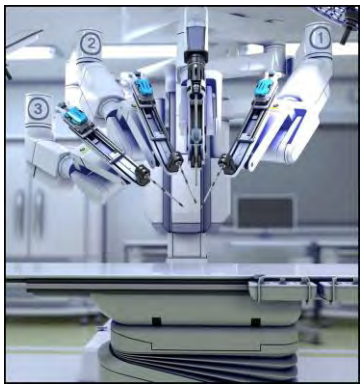
In May, I started having pains in my chest that made it hard to breath. They happened a few times, intermittently, and were short lived; so, they were of no great concern. But, suddenly, they hot hard and did not subside. It got so bad I could not lie down; it was too painful; I had to (try to) sleep sitting up. After a few days, I was able to lie on my right side, but not on my left.

At that point, I went to the doctor (Daniel Ezekial). He sent me for tests: blood, chest X-ray and echocardiogram. The blood tests showed levels of Natriuretic Peptide B Prohormone that were way out of line—seven times normal. That blood marker is like a PSA (Prostate Specific Antigen) test for the heart that indicates congestive heart failure. The chest X-ray reveled a lot of fluid in the lungs; Ezekial said I had pneumonia (say what?). He prescribed a ten-day course of the antibiotic Moxidoxacin. Soon, my chest pains subsided substantially and there was a bonus benefit: my stools became solid once again, after more then a year of IBS diarrhea. However, the pains did not go away despite the echocardiogram confirmed that I my heart is OK. And, I am very much weaker than I was; and very fatigued; a situation exacerbated by my having to pee every hour, and sometimes even more frequently, during the night; I never get a good night's sleep and take frequent long naps all day. What do they say, "Life turns on a dime"? This is a major lifestyle change; one that rules out extensive travels. What a shame; Pam and I had planned a month-long tour of Jordan, Egypt and Türkiye; it would have been my 'last hurrah' trip.

I wonder: Did my parasite purge bring on the pneumonia and weird pains?

Two months later (August): The 'pneumonia' cleared up, and during June and July the chest pains migrated from my heart down below my lungs and pancreas before disappearing. So, what was that episode all about? *Perhaps* the 'cure' was increased amygdalin (apricot kernels) and resumption of urine therapy (drinking pee)? The pains my have stopped; but my strength has not returned; my gate is slow and I sleep a lot, sometimes all day. I was given a stress test recently; and, like the echocardiogram, the results are good; that makes my low-energy condition even more baffling. I guess it's the new normal for me.

I also had a nuclear bone scan, ordered-up by my urologist, Ercole Leone; he's the doctor who diagnosed my cancerous urethra and arranged a robotically-assisted nephrectomy by his associate, Dr. Brian Mayson. A physical exam (required for a driver's license, when you reach the ripe old age of 80) by Dr. Daniel Ezekial, revealed a high PSA; so, Leone requisitioned a biopsy, which got postposed a half year when I got the chest pains (as above). The scan showed that no prostate cancer has metastasized to my bones.



"Robotic surgery (also called robotic-assisted surgery) is perhaps the most cutting-edge medical technology of modern times. The most widely used system today involves a camera and the use of very small surgical tools attached to robotic arms. A specially trained surgeon controls the robotic arms from a viewing screen, which is usually situated in the same room as the operating table. But the viewing screen could be located far away, allowing surgeons to perform telesurgery from remote locations. The screen is part of what is referred to as a console, which allows surgical procedures to be performed from a seated position, while the surgeon views a magnified three-dimensional view of the patient's surgical site. Contrary to what many people believe about robotic surgery, it's not actually performed by robots. Rather, the surgeon is continuously in complete control of the robotic arms. The robot serves as a tool and could be seen as an assistant of sorts to the surgeon, thus, the name, robotic-assisted surgery."
[Courtesy: https://www.verywellhealth.com/robotic-surgery-4843262]

A recent story by Claire Evans featuring my work recently appeared in *MIT Technology* magazine. (article follows this essay) I received two fan mails. One of them was a request by the moderator of an online forum called: *Office Hours Global*; he described the program as, "A global conversation where no one's left out." He asked if I would participate in a program about, "How to Create Captivating Content." I thought about it for a couple of days and concluded that I was not qualified; because I do not know much about ultra-sophisticated contemporary production tools and techniques; nor do I 'get' or participate in any 'social media;' today's zeitgeist.

I haven't decided whether to accept the invitation. Although flattered, I am dubious as to the relevance of my potential contribution to the audience; they are technically oriented people active in the production of content; and I've been retired nearly two decades. Plus, the question itself is unanswerable. An anecdote will help explain why.

A century ago, my maternal grandfather, a Judge of the Supreme Court of New York, fell for a scam: a newspaper advertisement offering a sure cure for baldness. He mailed a dollar to the specified address and a few weeks later received a reply. It read: "Sure cure for baldness: Grow hair." The judge was furious but could no nothing because the reply was absolutely true.

The answer to the question at hand is: "Be creative." That may be glib; it is also true. But what does that mean? I'll come to that, after some introductory observations about how the world has changed.

Back in the day, a short TV commercial was one minute; now, they are just 10 brief seconds. On the internet, some are even shorter. In the sixty-plus years since my career began – starting in the CBS mail room and then several advertising agencies – that was when Marshall McCullen theorized that, "the medium is the message" – the trend in all media (except for Hollywood) has been to foreshortened productions.

School and university teachers were among the first to complain; their students' attention spans had shrunk. My sister and her husband, both college professors, lamented that her students lacked the ability for 'deep thinking.' That was forty years ago. Now people walk around with heads bent over hand-held computers that continually distract with new messages and alerts; they have no time to think; the pace of life is too fast; and the treadmill continues its acceleration. But which came first? Short media or short attention spans?

Neither. The deterioration of thought and the foreshortening of media/messages have occurred simultaneously; each reinforcing the other; a kind of symbiosis; warp and weft of the same cloth.

In the decade since the demise of my career as a content creator for business communicators, the world has moved forward while I have gone backwards; writing an autobiographical history of the multi-image-show-making business. I do not have a smart phone and participate in no social media. Much of my work (digitizing slides and film negatives, and producing my books) is done using twenty-year-old computers and camera gear; my studio is a working museum.

A huge recent technological step forward for me was condensing files stored on 67 hard drives (250 to 750 gigabyte) during the first decade of this century onto just two little four-terabyte drives that fit in the palm of my hand. How is that possible? Even more incredible is that a little Go-Pro camera can store more than an hour of video on a tiny memory card that is half the size of a postage stamp and about as thin. My devolution into Luddite-hood has not gone unnoticed.

Jason Cole's portrait by Alexandra Service.

Recently, I met Vancouver's pre-eminent drone photographer – Jason Cole. His operation is called, Take Off Photography, employs about a dozen photographers and media specialists.

The meeting happened when I was walking past one of the new skyscrapers going up in town, called The Butterfly; its design is straight out of the old *Jetsons* cartoons (see pictures, next page). I had been watching it go up from my ninth-floor apartment about fifteen blocks away, through binoculars; and it looked to me like one of the two construction cranes was *inside* the nearly complete 72-story, poured-concrete, condominium. I took a walk over to the site and, lo and behold, it was! That begged the question: How would they get it out?

There were two cranes. The second crane was being taken down that day, using the first to lower its component parts to the ground. Curious, I circled the site in search of a worker who could answer my questions about that. Jason Cole was parked right in front of the #1 crane, the one being dismantled; his truck displayed his name and neat logo – a flying Canadian goose with a camera slung around its long neck. He was packing up his drones; but didn't mind being interrupted and answered my queries with a detailed explanation of how crane #2 would be removed from the center of the new building without crane #1 – by having #2 hoist a smaller crane up to the roof deck. He showed me some of the footage he had just shot; I was blown away. When he heard I had been a lensman and content producer, he invited me to attend his class on drone photography. What a blast that was; I got to fly one. In appreciation, I took Jason out to dinner at our favorite Greek place (the Olympia, on Denman Street) together with his wing-gal, Alexis Service (granddaughter of the famous Canadian poet, Robert Service; she also shoots, edits the footage, and does all post production), and my wife, Pamela.

We talked about content production then and now. Take Off's business model would not have been possible, or even conceivable, until just a few years ago. One of his specialties is time-lapse photography shot with miniature Go-Pro cameras that he can control remotely with phone aps. He has them all over the city, covering a half dozen sites for as many clients. Every week or so, he cruises around town harvesting the images they capture. The numbers are equally impressive: an outfitted Go-Pro camera sets him back ~$900 Canadian dollarettes; he rents the gear and charges servicing fees for data retrieval and post work. Sweet, eh?

Jason opined that the migration of technology has shifted the tectonic plates of content production. "In your day," he said, "it was hard to produce great images; but easy to stand out if you did. Today, that's reversed: it's easy to make great images; but hard to stand out, even if you do."

The ease of image making is making professionals redundant. Why am I not surprised? The same thing happened to me. First, Apple Computer made graphic design easy for anyone to do; professional designers and photo-mechanical production became unnecessary and thus obsolete. Then, video wiped out slide shows before being subsumed within Microsoft Powerpoint. Then came Adobe; photographers and illustrators became an endangered species. And now there's "AI" (artificial intelligence (what an oxymoron!)). Just tell the computer what you want and, like Alladin's Lamp, your wish is its command; whatever you want; it is manifest. Last Christmas, my Swedish colleague, Lasse Helquist, sent me a 'card' with a beautiful picture of a moonlit river meandering though evergreen forests and snow-capped mountains. I asked where he took the shot. "My desk," he replied. He had simply asked to have such a picture and ChatGPT produced the image. Does Jason need to worry? I doubt it; computers cannot see what his drones and time-lapse cameras can. But AI 'crawlers' will likely scour his images from the Internet, along with everything else online. That is the thing about AI; *everything* known by humankind is instantly accessible. How much can you remember?

When the conversation turned to the Butterfly project, I told Jason and Alex that the ninety-second piece they made left me wanting more; and while that may be a good thing, why didn't they make a longer film – a documentary about cranes? 'Because nobody would watch it,' Jason was quick to answer. In fact, he continued, they were originally aiming for a 60-second film, and only reluctantly expanded it to a minute and a half; "that's an eternity," he explained.

But what about folks like me, who want to know more, I protested. "How many cranes did you hire recently?" he replied. Me and my ilk are not prospective customers; we have no 'value' to the crane company. Jason went on to explain that he and Alex would love to make a fuller presentation and they certainly had enough assets to do it; but there were more pressing (and profitable) programs to make.

"Just goes to show how out of touch I am," said I. "I'm surprised you let me attend your class." Jason was quick to say he thought my perspectives added a lot to that class; about how things were done in the old days; that I could never have made the kind of content he was creating; the technology and equipment were less advanced. I was doing the same kind of shots, albeit less sophisticated.

Renderings courtesy Revery Architects

Some say that old folks are to be valued for their wisdom. Wisdom is a form of insight that's experiential. We learn from our mistakes; those who do are 'wise.' Younger people cannot fathom the wisdom of the aged because they have not had enough experience living. When I was a (arrogant) young man, I recall thinking that I had nothing to learn from old folks; what did they know about my world? I still feel that way; although the roles are reversed, the question now is, what do I know about their world?

That is why I am inclined to decline Peter Buck's offer, to participate in a podcast conversation about creating captivating content. If I did, all I could talk about is how I approach any communications project, particularly presentation content (shows). The most important thing is appropriateness; what is the 'right' show? How well does the content relate to the audience, and vice versa? The challenge is relating the message(s) to the spectators; in the context of production parameters and constraints. To that end, I endeavor to get answers to these questions:

- What is the message; the problem; the desired result?
- How do people feel about that situation/problem?
- Are there pre- or misconceptions about the issue(s)?
- What 'rules' must be obeyed; e.g., logo-usage and corporate style guides.
- Where/when/how will the content be seen?
- What is the production/staging budget for the content?
- Who is answering these questions; what are their POVs/biases?
- What is your POV/bias?

You may have to do a little of your own sleuthing to research the answers to some of the questions; particularly the ones about audience pre- or misconceptions; about their predispositions. Marketing people generally give more 'honest' opinions that sales people. Very often, execs who hang out in the C-suite live in a bubble; an echo chamber. They, after all, drank the most company Kool Aid. The more sources you tap, the better your perspective will be; and, thus, your ability to conceptualize the 'right' show.

Of all the shows I produced in my 40-year career, two provide good examples that illustrate the appropriateness of the message and relating with the audience: "You Can't Stop a Dove!", produced for Audio Visual Laboratories; and the IKEA show, "Building It Is Half the Fun!" (See them at www.incredibleimages.com).

"You Can't Stop a Dove!", aka the Dove show, was made in 1978 to promote Audio Visual Laboratories' Dove dissolve unit – a device connected to two or three slide projectors that facilitated the blending of images by 'dissolving' from one to another; what the French call "melting slides." Dissolve units were controlled by a so-called 'programmer' – those were devices that encoded the projector-control instructions executed by the dissolves. That technology migrated from punch tape to digital in the mid-to-late 70s. The Dove was a 'second generation' digital dissolve. The first generation were AVL's 'QD-2' and 'QD-3' dissolves.

The unreliability of the QDs proved to be a disaster for AVL. Producers everywhere complained of shows 'going wild;' the QDs had minds of their own and did not follow instructions. AVL's reputation for reliability was trashed. Those problems were fixed in the second generation and it was decided to rename the product and create a new identity. I was charged with coming up with a concept to convince a skeptical, antagonistic audience that the new dissolve was totally reliable.

I decided to satirize the situation; to have a (fictitious) producer try to stop a Dove demo show being presented by an (equally fictitious) AVL dealer. Humor is always a risky way to promote anything; if the joke falls flat, you are done.

To minimize that risk, I used well-known radio comics, Bob Goulding and Ray Elliott from the *Bob and Ray* show, to play the voice parts; Bob played the AVL dealer and Ray was the producer. The two were never seen. Instead, you watch the dealer's sales presentation – a totally cornball show – interspersed with animations of the producer's efforts to foil the Dove – close-ups of 'his' hands disconnecting wires; changing settings; jumbling-up and stretching the audio tape; etcetera.

Ray Gulding (left) and Bob Elliott | Photo: Getty Images

In the finale scene (below) – a farce, wherein the prospect gets so frustrated that he smashes the Dove with a fire ax – I used the AVL sales team together with prominent dealers and some well-known producers as 'extras' – talk about relating to an angry audience, eh? The ax-wielding prospect is Charlie Spataro, AVL's top dealer. Sales manager Mike Reuther is the flabbergasted producer. Founder and CEO Chuck Kappenman (obscured by smoke) stands behind them with Alan Kozlowski.

To digress for a moment, about scripts with dialogue: The best scripts have confrontational interchanges. No matter if it is angry, friendly, loving, or just a straightforward conversation; the dialogue is argumentative. Particularly good examples of that style are the movies made in the 1930s and 40s. The confrontational style has an edge to it that moves the story forward in a more riveting way; *ibidem* character and plot development.

A satirical approach was also taken for "Building It Is *Half* the Fun…," produced for IKEA at Audio Visual Centrum (AVC), Stockholm, in 1985. By then, IKEA had become the world's biggest furniture company. Along the way, the company's reputation had risen and fallen like a roller coaster, dealing with customer perceptions related to real quality-control issues that required innovative thinking to resolve. Improved quality meant higher production costs.

The challenge of keeping retail prices low inspired IKEA to shift paradigms and sell ready-to-assemble furniture kits; those fit right into the emerging "DIY" (do it yourself) trends. Although immensely popular, a new perception challenge − that the furniture was hard to assemble. Assembly instructions were simplified by using illustrations, instead of words. And a public relations department was organized to deal with the Press; to change perceptions.

It was against that backdrop that IKEA came to AVC, to make a presentation to entertain members of the Fourth Estate flown to Sweden to attend press three-day junkets that included tours of Stockholm and boat rides through the archipelago; a trip to IKEA's flagship Stockholm store at Kingens Kurve; the IKEA Museum; and sales presentations about new products and innovations.

Small groups of a dozen editors stayed at the Grand Hotel and were lavishly wined and dined. On the evening of their arrival, guests assembled at a "meet & greet" cocktail party; where the new show would be presented, following a welcome address. Oh, and the production budget was like their furniture prices − the lowest in the land.

I was assigned the show; to keep me busy between Saab shows for which I was brought to Sweden by Saab's marketing manager, Lars Einar, to direct production at AVC. At a pre-production meeting, IKEA's PR team outlined their idea for the show − a documentary about IKEA's quest for quality, detailing the new, improved instructions… b-o-r-i-n-g; plus, there was no way to make such a show on the ridiculously low budget.

Probing, I discovered that the root of the problem was that most complaints about assembly difficulty came from men − who didn't follow the instructions; they typically threw them away. Women, in the other hand, followed the instructions and had fewer complaints. Aha! That became the concept for the show: to satirize that situation; to change the editors' (and public) opinion; that the problem wasn't the instructions, it was male chauvinism.

Taking everything into consideration, I came up with a concept, for a story about two newlyweds setting-up house in an apartment; building their IKEA furniture. The bride reads the instructions and has her kitchen set up in no time. Meanwhile, the groom has thrown out the instructions and struggles to piece together the couple's wedding bed. By nightfall he's still at it and she 'accidentally' (on purpose) breaks their only electric light.

The show closes with the couple sitting on the mattress, ringed by candles, and surrounded by bed parts. They raise their glasses for a champagne toast, followed by a title-over: Building It Is *Half* the Fun…. That, of course, is a play on words; "half" being a double entendre.

Much to my surprise (the show was too sexist to have been made in today's Woke world) IKEA signed off on the idea and production began.

The beauty of the concept, besides being an appealing story, was that it fit the meager budget, which I recall was something like $20,000; peanuts. All that was required was one (long) day's shoot; one all-nighter to program; one Kodalith title slide; and, because there were no words (any dialogue would have required translation into many other languages) a dead-simple soundtrack consisting of two stock-music selections.

As mentioned earlier, the best scripts have confrontational dialogue. In the IKEA show, there are no spoken words; the pictures do the talking. Nonetheless, the competitive situation −husband vs wife − is, in itself, confrontational.

The full stories of both the Dove and IDEA shows are in Volumes Three and Four of my memoir, *An Incredible Epic*; download pdfs at www.mesney.com. Watch videos of the shows at www.incredibleimages.com.

Besides satirical shows, I was also known for "mindblowers" − shows that are so fast-paced you can't keep up with them. Audiences *love* mindblowers. I discovered that quite inadvertently. My client, Burson-Marsteller account man, Don O'Neill, and his client, the ad manager of Cincom Systems, Neil Ferguson, had just watched a documentary made for the company's sales meeting about Cincom's latest enterprise mainframe software. An enormous effort had been made, at enormous costs, including location interviews all over the country and elaborate graphics by designer Robert Cooney, enhanced by rostrum-camera special effects done by the Fred Cannizaro and John Leicmon in the Forox department.

The sheer size of the show, in terms of the number of slides, required eighteen projectors configured for a panoramic screen (the so called 'two-plus-one' overlapping format with a 1:3 aspect ratio). It was an impressive production and was approved without changes. (!)

In a celebratory mood, Don opened another round of expensive imported beers; the kind Neil preferred. Then Neil asked to see the meeting-closer module. Don turned white and I could tell he had forgotten about that show; we were so focused on the documentary. Quickly recovering, Don explained that it wasn't quite ready; that Neil could see it tomorrow. Yikes! A show needed to be made in 24-hours. What do they say, "Necessity is the mother of invention"? There was no time to make anything new; so, the new show had to be made of out-takes from the documentary.

Logo/effects sequences were gathered. Then, all the rest of the outtakes were put in a big box, which was thoroughly shaken; and eighteen slide trays filled with random slides. Those were programmed at a fast pace (two slides per second) to energetic music. Whenever there was a music riff or sting, the random slides were replaced with logo effects. It was a humdinger.

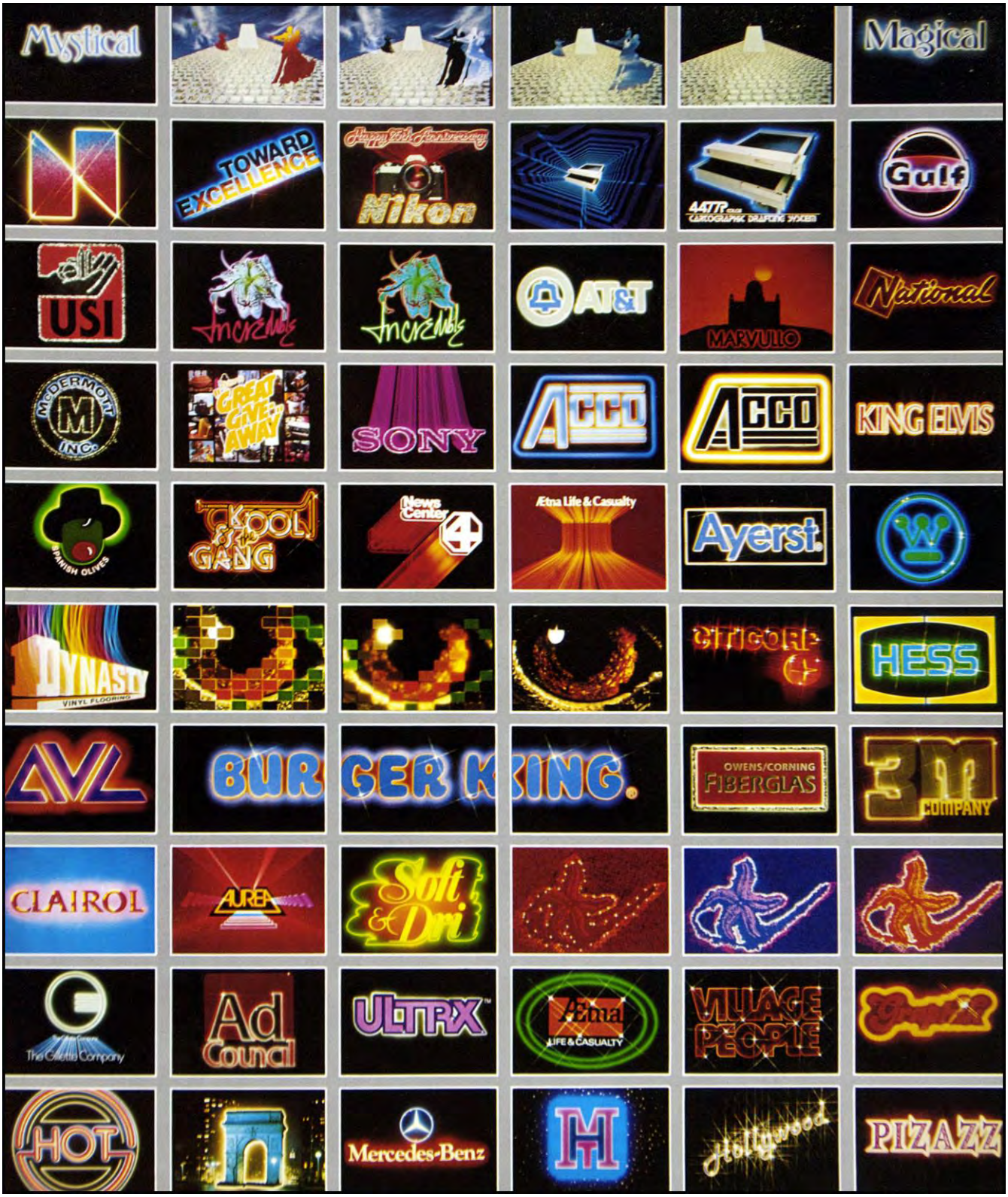
Do I need to tell you what happened? The documentary got polite applause. The mindblower got a standing ovation. That lesson radically changed my perspectives. Fast and furious shows captivated audiences. Unfortunately, there is no video of the Cincom shows; nor are there any duplicate slides.

My best-known mind blower, "Bumbles," was a 15-projector, single screen show made to promote Incredible Slidemakers. That much fire power aimed at a single screen facilitated hyper animation; a kind of 'staccato' movies. The show opens with long, animated sequences satirizing errors made during the making and staging of multi-image shows.

Jan Irish (left) Yours Truly, John O'Connell & John Leicmon at informal production meeting around the light table.

Fred Cannizaro snoozes while Yours Truly programs (lower right, behind the grid). When the full grid lights-up, overloaded power strips explode (next page). The sequence was shot in the 73rd Street studio, by Jim Casey.

Bumbles gags included (L/R from top – not in show order): backwards diskette; Eagle-computer restart; spilled ink; dropped microphone; warped record; sound blast; Forox mis-load; rogue Forox; sneeze; falling lens; exploding strobe; smoking power strip; wavy Eagle monitor; balancing slide trays.



The bulk of the three-minute mindblower presented special-effects graphics by the Forox department – a *potpourri* of effects we had done for a wide range of clients… all animated with flashing stars, pulsating glows, etcetera.

"Bumbles" brought down the house when the show premiered at an AMI (Association for Multi-Image festival. The audience – other producers – had never seen anything like it.

"Xanadu" was another matter altogether. Within a year after the Bumbles premiere at AMI, my hyper-animation style was widely imitated. As animation needs a lot of projectors, the average projection grid grew from nine to fifteen or more projectors. Ironically, as grid sizes expanded – driving up production and staging costs dramatically – the nation's economy contracted as inflation raged and interest rates were jacked as high as 20%, effectively shutting off credit. As their sales dwindled and profits sank, businesses tightened their belts. As with the recession caused by the Arab oil embargo seven years earlier, advertising budgets were slashed to bare bones; no more expensive shows. I sent out a dozen proposals in the Spring of 1981; and we didn't get a single job. It didn't take long for Incredible Slidemakers to go broke.

The autumn before, I was sent to Hawaii on assignment from Purchase Point, a London-based production company, to shoot 'travelog' stuff for a sales-incentive module (used to entice sales people to sell more and win a trip to the Islands). The story of that legendary shoot is in Volume Four. Fate provided me with a native Hawaiian beauty who guided me around Oahu and Kawai while also modelling. Monique Kaeo became a visual Muse; a red tread that tied the shoot together.

Monique Kaeo at Sunset Beach, 1980.

Thinking Hawaii was a single island, I originally booked flights and accommodations for a two-day shoot. Ha! Ten days and 900 rolls of film later…. Thinking ahead, I shot nine frames for every scene – three each of three bracketed exposures – two sets for the client and one for me; so, equivalently speaking, it was a 100-roll shoot (which is still a lot of pictures).

Almost a year later, I found myself in the dire straights described above. Instead of downsizing and relocating to a cheaper part of town, I decided to throw in the towel and move to Hawaii. "Hawaii - Xanadu" was made to be my Hawaiian portfolio show piece – and to reestablish my record for the fastest show on Earth, with thirty projectors aimed at a single screen. Can you imagine?! If only for the size and audacity of the show, Xanadu was an instant hit at the multi-image competitions where it was screened; winning top honors at all of them.

The moral of the story is to be exceptional; and there are so many ways to do that. Being exceptional is the key to creating captivating content; presenting the audience with the unexpected. And, of course, excellence; spelling counts and high production values are a sure audience pleaser.

Key frame from the Saan show "Putting the Future in Motion." [http://www.incredibleimages.com/#SaabFuture]
Superior, innovative graphics and effects were a trademark of Incredible.

To celebrate the launch of the 1987 Saab 9000 CD sedan, an audience of 2,500 was treated to an hourlong operetta involving 26-foot-tall projection screens, a massive chorus, the entire Stockholm Philharmonic, and some 50 performers.
Photo: Douglas Mesney, Incredible Slidemakers

Next Slide, please: A brief history of the corporate presentation

From million-dollar slide shows to Steve Jobs's introduction of the iPhone, a bit of show business never hurt plain old business.

By Claire Evans | August 11, 2023

It's 1948, and it isn't a great year for alcohol. Prohibition has come and gone, and booze is a buyer's market again. That much is obvious from Seagram's annual sales meeting, an 11-city traveling extravaganza designed to drum up nationwide sales. No expense has been spared: there's the two-hour, professionally acted stage play about the life of a whiskey salesman. The beautiful anteroom displays. The free drinks. But the real highlight is a slideshow.

To call the Seagram-Vitarama a slideshow is an understatement. It's an *experience*: hundreds of images of the distilling process, set to music, projected across five 40-by-15-foot screens. "It is composed of pictures, yet it is not static," comments one awed witness. "The overall effect is one of magnificence." Inspired by an Eastman Kodak exhibit at the 1939 World's Fair, the Seagram-Vitarama is the first A/V presentation ever given at a sales meeting. It will not be the last.

In the late ’40s, multimedia was a novelty. But by the early 1960s, nearly all companies with national advertising budgets were using multimedia gear—16-millimeter projectors, slide projectors, filmstrip projectors, and overheads—in their sales training and promotions, for public relations, and as part of their internal communications. Many employed in-house A/V directors, who were as much showmen as technicians. Because although presentations have a reputation for being tedious, when they’re done right, they’re theater. The business world knows it. Ever since the days of the Vitarama, companies have leveraged the dramatic power of images to sell their ideas to the world.

Next slide, please

The sound of slides clacking is deafening. But it doesn’t matter, because the champagne is flowing and the sound system is loud. The 2,500 dignitaries and VIPs in the audience are being treated to an hourlong operetta about luxury travel. Onstage, a massive chorus, the entire Stockholm Philharmonic, and some 50 dancers and performers are fluttering around a pair of Saab 9000CD sedans. Stunning images of chrome details, leather seats, and open roads dance across a 26-foot-tall screen behind them. The images here are all analog: nearly 7,000 film slides, carefully arranged in a grid of 80 Kodak projectors. It’s 1987, and slideshows will never get any bigger than this.

Before PowerPoint, and long before digital projectors, 35-millimeter film slides were king. Bigger, clearer, and less expensive to produce than 16-millimeter film, and more colorful and higher-resolution than video, slides were the only medium for the kinds of high-impact presentations given by CEOs and top brass at annual meetings for stockholders, employees, and salespeople. Known in the business as “multi-image” shows, these presentations required a small army of producers, photographers, and live production staff to pull off. First the entire show had to be written, storyboarded, and scored. Images were selected from a library, photo shoots arranged, animations and special effects produced. A white-gloved technician developed, mounted, and dusted each slide before dropping it into the carousel. Thousands of cues were programmed into the show control computers—then tested, and tested again. Because computers crash. Projector bulbs burn out. Slide carousels get jammed.

“When you think of all the machines, all the connections, all the different bits and pieces, it’s a miracle these things even played at all,” says Douglas Mesney, a commercial photographer turned slide producer whose company Incredible Slidemakers produced the 80-projector Saab launch. Now 77 years old, he’s made a retirement project of archiving the now-forgotten slide business. Mesney pivoted to producing multi-image shows in the early 1970s after an encounter with an impressive six-screen setup at the 1972 New York Boat Show. He’d been shooting spreads for Penthouse and car magazines, occasionally lugging a Kodak projector or two to pitch meetings for advertising clients. “All of a sudden you look at six projectors and what they can do, and you go, *Holy mackerel*,” he remembers.

“All of a sudden you look at six projectors and what they can do, and you go, *Holy mackerel.*”

Douglas Mesney, a commercial photographer

Six was just the beginning. At the height of Mesney's career, his shows called for up to 100 projectors braced together in vertiginous rigs. With multiple projectors pointing toward the same screen, he could create seamless panoramas and complex animations, all synchronized to tape. Although the risk of disaster was always high, when he pulled it off, his shows dazzled audiences and made corporate suits look like giants. Mesney's clients included IKEA, Saab, Kodak, and Shell; he commanded production budgets in the hundreds of thousands of dollars. And in the multi-image business, that was cheap.

Larger A/V staging companies, like Carabiner International, charged up to $1 million to orchestrate corporate meetings, jazzing up their generic multi-image "modules" with laser light shows, dance numbers, and top-shelf talent like Hall & Oates, the Allman Brothers, and even the Muppets. "I liken it to being a rock-and-roll roadie, but I never went on the tour bus," explains Susan Buckland, a slide programmer who spent most of her career behind the screen at Carabiner.

Douglas Mesney, a former commercial photographer, produced shows with production budgets in the hundreds of thousands of dollars for clients including IKEA, Saab, Kodak, and Shell.

Photos: Douglas Mesney/Incredible Slidemakers

From its incorporation in 1976 to the mid-1980s, the Association for Multi-Image, a trade association for slide producers, grew from zero to 5,000 members. At its peak, the multi-image business employed some 20,000 people and supported several festivals and four different trade magazines. One of these ran a glowing profile of Douglas Mesney in 1980; when asked for his prognosis about the future of slides, he replied: “We could make a fortune or be out of business in a year.” He wasn’t wrong.

The future of computing depends in part on how we reckon with its past.
At the time, some 30 manufacturers of electronic slide programming devices vied for the multi-image dollar. To meet the demand for high-impact shows, the tech had quickly evolved from manual dissolve units and basic control systems—programmed with punched paper tape, and then audiocassette—to dedicated slide control computers like the AVL Eagle I, which could drive 30 projectors at once.

The Eagle, which came with word processing and accounting software, was a true business computer—so much so that when Eagle spun off from its parent company, Audio Visual Labs, in the early ’80s, it became one of Silicon Valley’s most promising computer startups. Eagle went public in the summer of 1983, making its president, Dennis R. Barnhart, an instant multimillionaire. Only hours after the IPO, Barnhart plowed his brand-new cherry-red Ferrari through a guardrail near the company’s headquarters in Los Gatos, California, flipped through the air, crashed into a ravine, and died. The slide business would soon follow.

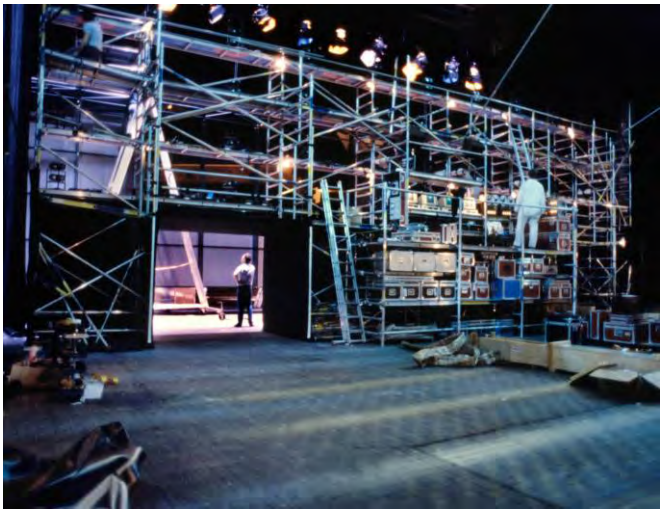
Douglas Mesney likes to say that if you never saw a slide show, you never will. The machines to show them have been landfilled. The slides themselves were rarely archived. Occasionally a few boxes containing an old multi-image “module” will turn up in a storage unit, and occasionally those will even be undamaged. But with the exception of a few hobbyists and retired programmers, the know-how to restore and stage multi-image slideshows is scarce. This leaves former slide professionals at a loss. “All of us are devastated that none of the modules survived,” says Susan Buckland. “Basically, I don’t have a past, because I can’t explain it.” The entire industry, which existed at an unexpected intersection of analog and high-tech artistry, came and went in a little over 20 years.

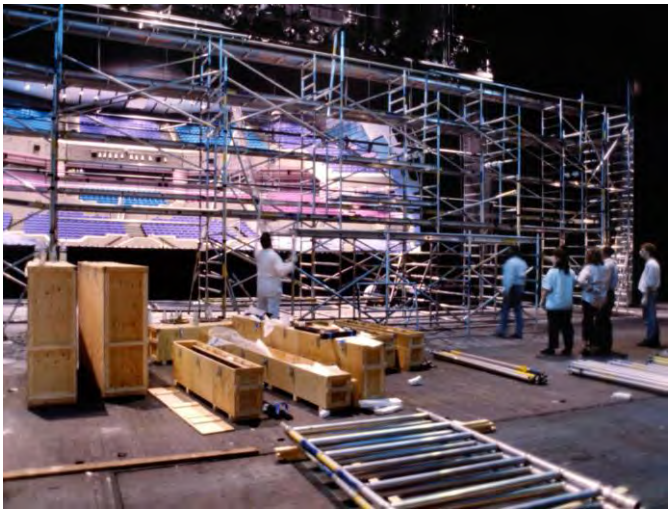
Presentations, like porn, have always pushed technology forward; in the multi-image days, producers like Mesney took the slide as far as it could go, using every tool available to create bigger and bolder shows. Mesney claims to have set the land speed record for a slide presentation with a three-minute-long, 2,400-slide show, but even at top speed, slides are static. The computers that controlled them, however, were not—and it wasn't long before they evolved beyond the medium. "Back then, computers were fast enough to tell slides what to do, but they weren't fast enough to actually create the images themselves," explains Steven Michelsen, a former slide programmer who restores and runs old multi-image shows in his Delaware garage. "It took another 10 or 15 years until you could run a show straight from your computer and have the images look worth looking at," he adds.

The last slide projector ever made rolled off the assembly line in 2004. The inside of its casing was signed by factory workers and Kodak brass before the unit was handed over to the Smithsonian. Toasts and speeches were made, but by then they were eulogies, because PowerPoint had already eaten the world.

Inventing PowerPoint

The Hotel Regina is an Art Nouveau marvel overlooking the Tuileries Garden and the Louvre. But on this day in 1992, its Old-World meeting rooms have been retrofitted with advanced video technology. The color projector in the back of the room, the size of a small refrigerator, cost upwards of $100,000 and takes an hour to warm up. A team of technicians has spent the better part of the last 48 hours troubleshooting to ensure that nothing goes wrong when Robert Gaskins, the fastidious architect of a new piece of software called PowerPoint 3.0, walks into the room. He'll be carrying a laptop under his arm, and when he reaches the lectern, he'll pick up a video cable, plug it in, and demonstrate for the first time something that has been reproduced billions of times since: a video presentation, running straight off a laptop, in full color. The audience, full of Microsoft associates from across Europe, will go bananas. They "grasped immediately what the future would bring for their own presentations," Gaskins later wrote. "There was deafening applause."





Back-stage photos of Saab 9000CD launch show set-up; by Douglas Mesney/Incredible Slidemakers

It's hard now to imagine deafening applause for a PowerPoint—almost as hard as it is to imagine anyone but Bob Gaskins standing at this particular lectern, ushering in the PowerPoint age. Presentations are in his blood. His father ran an A/V company, and family vacations usually included a trip to the Eastman Kodak factory. During his graduate studies at Berkeley, he tinkered with machine translation and coded computer-generated haiku. He ran away to Silicon Valley to find his fortune before he could finalize his triple PhDs in English, linguistics, and computer science, but he brought with him a deep appreciation for the humanities, staffing his team with like-minded polyglots, including a disproportionately large number of women in technical roles. Because Gaskins ensured that his offices—the only Microsoft division, at the time, in Silicon Valley—housed a museum-worthy art collection, PowerPoint's architects spent their days among works by Frank Stella, Richard Diebenkorn, and Robert Motherwell.

Top row: Richard Shipps/DD&B Studios; Douglas Mesney/Incredible Slidemakers; Wilden Enterprises. Middle Row: Douglas Mesney/Incredible Slidemakers; Wilden Enterprises; Richard Shipps/DD&B Studios. Bottom Row: Wilden Enterprises; Richard Shipps/DD&B Studios; Douglas Mesney/Incredible Slidemakers. Images courtesy of Steve Michelsen.

It wasn't long before the computers that ran the slide shows evolved beyond the medium.

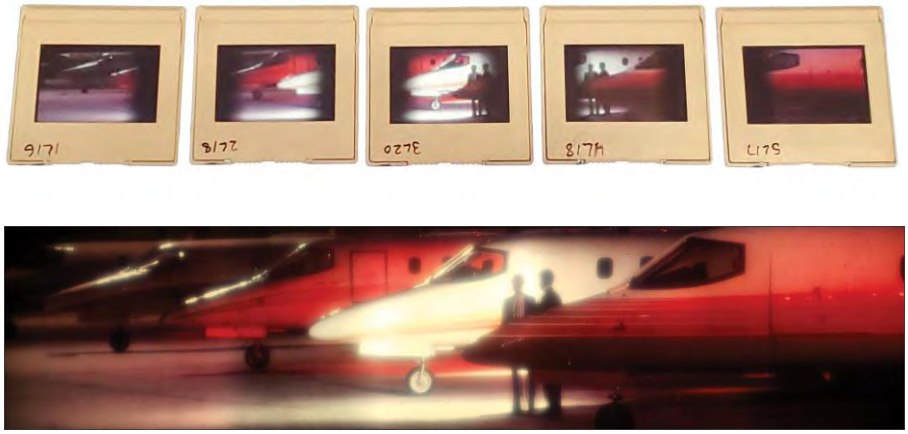
Gaskins's 1984 proposal for PowerPoint, written when he was VP of product development at the Sunnyvale startup Forethought, is a manifesto in bullet points. It outlines the slumbering, largely-hidden-from-view $3.5 billion business presentation industry and its enormous need for clear, effective slides. It lists technology trends—laser printers, color graphics, "WYSIWYG" software—that point to an emerging desktop presentation market. It's a stunningly prescient document throughout. But Gaskins italicized only one bullet point in the whole thing.

User benefits: Allows the content-originator to control the presentation.

This is Gaskins's key insight: a presentation's message is inevitably diluted when its production is outsourced. In the early '80s, he meant that literally. The first two versions of PowerPoint were created to help executives produce their own overhead transparencies and 35-millimeter slides, rather than passing the job off to their secretaries or a slide bureau. PowerPoint had become shorthand for the stupefying indignities of office life—a 2001 New Yorker profile summed it up as "software you impose on other people."

"In the '50s, '60s, and early '70s, information flow was narrow," explains Sandy Beetner, former CEO of Genigraphics, a business graphics company that was, for several decades, the industry leader in professional presentation graphics. Their clients were primarily Fortune 500 companies and government agencies with the resources to produce full-color charts, 3D renderings, and other high-tech imagery on those slides. Everyone else was limited to acetate overheads and—*gasp*—words. "Prior to PowerPoint," she says, "people communicated in black and white. There was just so much missed in that environment."

Beetner oversaw Genigraphics' national network service bureaus, which were located in every major American city and staffed 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, by graphic artists prepared to produce, polish, and print slides. The company was so vital to presentational culture that Gaskins negotiated a deal to make Genigraphics the official 35-millimeter slide production service for PowerPoint 2.0; a "Send to Genigraphics" menu command was baked into PowerPoint until 2003. This, incidentally, was around the same time that Kodak stopped making Carousel projectors.



With multiple projectors pointing toward the same screen, producers could create seamless panoramas and complex animations, all synchronized to tape. Photo: Wilden Enterprises.

Gaskins retired from Microsoft in 1993 and moved to London. He returned to the States 10 years later, an expert in antique concertinas. By then, PowerPoint had become shorthand for the stupefying indignities of office life. A 2001 New Yorker profile summed it up as “software you impose on other people”; the statistician Edward Tufte, known for his elegant monographs about data visualization, famously blamed the 2003 *Columbia* shuttle disaster on a bum PowerPoint slide. Gaskins’s software, Tufte argued, produces relentlessly sequential, hierarchical, sloganeering, over-managed presentations, rife with “chartjunk” and devoid of real meaning. No wonder software corporations loved it.

Robert Gaskins is remarkably sympathetic to these views, not least because Tufte’s mother, the Renaissance scholar Virginia Tufte, mentored him as an undergraduate in the English department at the University of Southern California. In a reflection written on the 20th anniversary of PowerPoint’s introduction, Gaskins acknowledged that “more business and academic talks look like poor attempts at sales presentations,” a phenomenon he blamed as much on a “mass failure of taste” as on PowerPoint itself, a tool so powerful it collapsed all preexisting contexts. Not everything’s a sales presentation; nor should it be. But PowerPoint made it easy to add multimedia effects to informal talks, empowering lay users to make stylistic decisions once reserved for professionals. To paraphrase an early PowerPoint print ad: now the person making the presentation *made* the presentation. That those people weren’t always particularly good at it didn’t seem to matter.

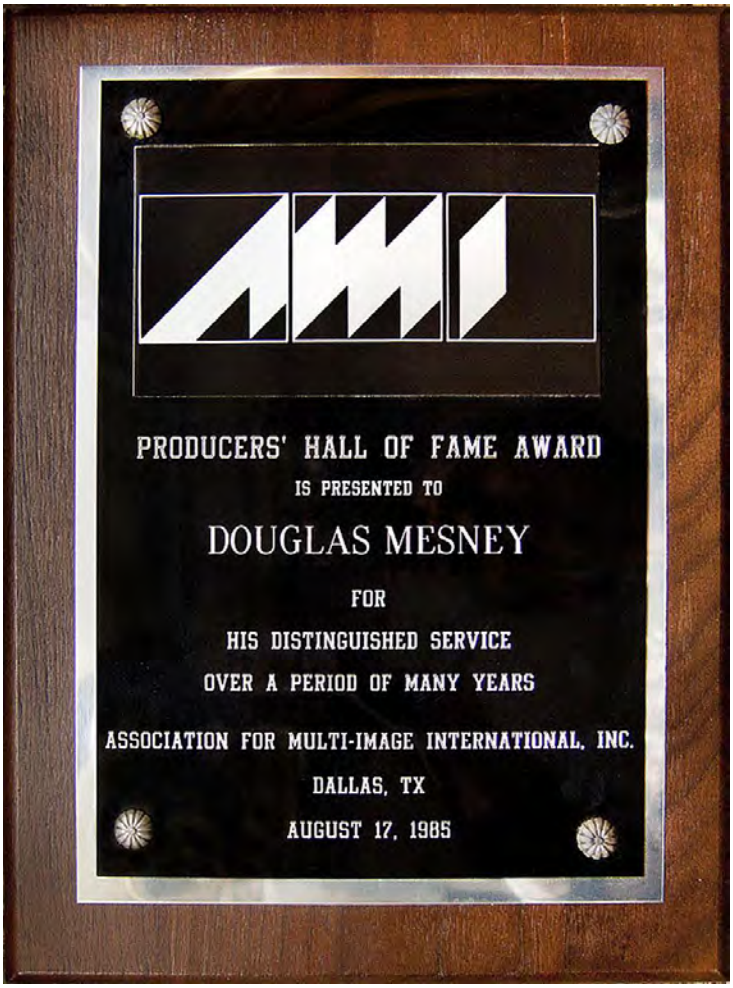
What did matter was that presentations were no longer reserved for year-end meetings and big ideas worthy of the effort and expense required to prepare color slides. “The scalability of information and audience that PowerPoint brought to the party was pretty incredible,” says Beetner, whose company has survived as a ghost in the machine, in the form of PowerPoint templates and clip art. “It opened up the channels dramatically, and pretty quickly. There isn’t a student alive, at any level, that hasn’t seen a PowerPoint presentation.” Indeed, PowerPoint is used in religious sermons; by schoolchildren preparing book reports; at funerals and weddings. In 2010, Microsoft announced that PowerPoint was installed on more than a billion computers worldwide.

At this scale, PowerPoint’s impact on how the world communicates has been immeasurable. But here’s something that can be measured: Microsoft grew tenfold in the years that Robert Gaskins ran its Graphics Business Unit, and it has grown 15-fold since. Technology corporations, like PowerPoint itself, have exploded. And so have their big presentations, which are no longer held behind closed doors. They’re now semi-public affairs, watched—willingly and enthusiastically—by consumers around the world. Nobody has to worry about slide carousels getting jammed anymore, but things still go haywire all the time, from buggy tech demos to poorly-thought-out theatrics.

When everything works, a good presentation can drive markets and forge reputations. Of course, this particular evolution wasn’t exclusively Microsoft’s doing. Because perhaps the most memorable corporate presentation of all time—Steve Jobs’s announcement of the iPhone at Macworld 2007— wasn’t a PowerPoint at all. It was a Keynote.

Claire L. Evans is a writer and musician exploring ecology, technology, and culture.

- Douglas Mesney – 1985
- Richard Shipps - 1985
- Duffie White - 1985
- Chris Korody - 1985
- Rufus Rufty "Rusty" Russell
- David Fellowes - 1986
- Charlie Watts - 1986
- Bruce Silverstein - 1986
- Todd Gipstein – 1987
- Donna Lawrence - 1988
- Robert Rowan - 1988
- Yukari Wantanabe
- Shigeru Kikuchi
- Mark Hammer - 1989
- Steve Hinchliffe - 1990
- Minette Seigel - 1990
- David Inocencio - 1990
- Alan Murgatroyd - 1991
- Seppo Palminen - 1991
- Kevin Oldcorn - 1993
- Elaine Rogalski – 1993
- Peter Ryan - 1993
- Sirkka Peltoniemi - 1994
- Ted Iserman
- Bruce Hornstein – 1994
- Dixie Hornstein – 1994
- Ollie Hallowell - 1994
- Dave Leonard - 1995
- Joel Gilmore - 1995
- Paul Kenny – 1996
- Phil Ogden - 1996



The list above was compiled by Richard Allison, primarily based on a letter from AMI as well as articles and listings in the AMI magazine, *Multi-Images*, of which Allison has a nearly complete collection.

Recipients of this highest honor are listed by their induction dates.

Richard placed me at the top of the heap based on my claim that, according to Jon Bromberg, who was a member of the judging committee, I was the first inductee.

To quote from the AVL ad (next page), producers were selected based on "outstanding creative contributions." I knew them all; some better than others.

Manufacturers had their own 'hall of fame.' I recall that Bruce Wessinger (Wess Plastics), David Corley (DSC Laboratoriess) and John Stokes (Stokes Slide Services) receiving awards for special achievements.

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August 18, 1995

Douglas Mesney, CEO
The Incredible Freelancer
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AMI PRODUCERS' HALL OF FAME

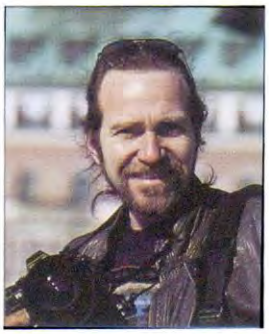
In 1985 the *AMI Producers' Hall of Fame* was formed. Its purpose is to recognize the significant contributions of an integral part of the Association's membership -- the multi-image producer. Individuals selected for membership in this elite group have inspired the industry, through their energy and excitement, to greater creative heights.

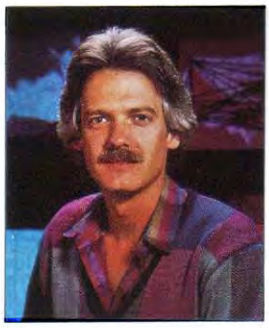
The charter members of the *AMI Producers' Hall of Fame* are: Douglas Mesney, P. McDuffy White, Christopher Korody and Richard Shipps. Members inducted from 1986 through 1996 are: Rusty Russell, David Fellows, Todd Gipstein, Charlie Watts, Bruce Silverstein, Donna Lawrence, Robert Rowan, Yukari Watanabe, Shigeru Kikuchi, Mark Hammer, Steve Hinchliffe, Minette Seigel, David Inocencio, Alan Murgatroyd, Seppo Palminen, Sirkka Peltoniemi, Peter Ryan, Ted Iserman, Kevin Oldcorn, Elaine Rogalski, Bruce Hornstein, Ollie Hallowell, Dixie Hornstein, Dave Leonard and Joel Gilmore.

Marilyn J. Kulp

MARILYN J. KULP
Executive Director

FOUR-FOR-FOUR WIN WITH AVL





Douglas T. Mesney,
International Producer/
Consultant
Stockholm, Sweden.
"As an international producer/consultant, I always feel secure knowing my shows will play on AVL gear. Consistently, around the world, I have found that the reliability and availability of AVL equipment can't be matched. Plus, it's so fast to program that I can deliver more show per dollar – an important economic factor outside the continental U.S.A."

Richard Shipps,
DD and B Studios,
Birmingham, Michigan
"AVL and I go back 15 years. They've always been the best: the consistent innovator attuned to the needs of the professional. I see proof in the field, when my shows, regardless of size, run flawlessly, time after time. I appreciate products that always work well, stand up to rough use, and keep on performing. That's why I use AVL."

Christopher Korody,
Image Stream,
Los Angeles, California
"AVL's fast, efficient software works as superbly in the field as it does in the programming studio. It's straight-forward and smooth, and, with a few keystrokes, I can fine-tune a show with ease and precision. AVL equipment is reliable and so is the company. They've done more to advance multi-image than any other company."

Duffie White,
Photosynthesis,
Dallas, Texas
"AVL Systems enable me to take graphic and photographic design into the "new dimensions" that put me in the forefront of my industry. Before AVL, producers were severely limited by unreliable equipment. We were still "inventing our medium" as we went along. I credit AVL with making multi-image a legitimate communications tool...and freeing me to concentrate on creativity!"

FOUR TOP PRODUCERS THAT MADE MULTI-IMAGE HISTORY

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RESURRECTION OF INCREDIBLE SLIDEMAKERS' SHOWS

A small miracle occurred near the end of the year: Jim Casey discovered two U-Matic [3/4-inch] videotapes containing transfers of twenty Incredible Slidemakers shows. [Bold type indicates shows that I was involved in.]

Bumbles (Incredible Slidemakers)
You Can't Stop a Dove! (AVL)
Nightmares (Slide Transfer Service)
Dupont Lycra (Dupont)
NAVA '80 (Kodak)
Dataphone II (AT&T)
Optyl Eyewear (Optyl)
100 Years (Burroughs Welcome)
Movie Channel (Warner Amex)
Spring '80 (Yves St. Laurent)
Miller Organization (Miller)
V. Suarez & Company (VSC)
See the Light! (Bergen Expo)
Movie Channel (Warner Amex)
International Beauty Show (Matrix Essentials)
Magic Lasers (Incredible Slidemakers)
Art of Special Effects
World Series '80 (a video)
L.G.F.E.
Incredible Slides (a film test)

It's a miracle because I thought those show tapes were gone forever, when Fred Cannizzaro threw out the Betamax masters I sent him, at the 2013 demise of the Vashon Studio [ten years ago!], in hopes that he might be able to digitize them. Instead, he trashed them; how could a person do such a thing? Anyway, I reckoned that was that; then Casey wrote to tell me about his discovery. Hallelujah!

I already had videos of Bumbles (transferred from VHS tape by the late Bob Peterson) and the Dove show, which was restored by Steve Michelson from a dupe set of the original slides—no easy task; because his newer projectors didn't advance slides as quickly as the older 'B2' Carousel Projectors that were used to make the show.

A dozen of the shows were produced by the Incredible Slidemakers team; notably (and alphabetically) Doug Sloan, Fred Cannizzaro. and Jim Casey. Sloan, in particular, was coming into his own when Incredible Slidemakers folded; they all were. But Sloan was different; he was like me; we had to catch the fish before they were cooked. He was hired to be the company's sales rep; he learned fast and was successful because he could (sometimes couldn't) 'see' the solution as he was talking to the prospect. That's what it's all about… solutions. Walk the talk. Of course, sometimes the solutions come before the problem; you know, being prepared for emergencies. That's an entirely different situation; one that in the PR world is known as 'Crisis Management.' Gee, golly; a lot of money is spent on that—still.

It came to be when there were two or three shows being simultaneously produced in the studio; it got pretty crazy at times. The facilities were bursting at the seams. Even if we hadn't been thrown out by our landlords, more space was desperately needed. That meant more commitment than I was willing to give. Once Hawaii got into my head, and the movie *Xanadu*, everything changed. Running a business was no fun; the commitments were like shackles. I chose freedom; to start over as an independent. For me, bigger has never meant better; it meant loss of control; a dilution of the essence.

The Dupont Lycra show was probably Doug Sloan's first 'big one.' Marty Sherman was hired to play a scientist studying the fit of women's panties. He did a great job, but didn't save the show, as he had in *Nightmares.* Because the show had no concept; no originality. It was trying to be something that it never could. But I am being unfair; it was a decent show and 'they' did it all by themselves. That was important to me; we needed the money.

I am especially pleased that folks can now see *Nightmares*, again. It was one of my favorite shows; on my top-10 list. That's primarily because it was a major production—for example, the scenes shot at LaGuardia Airport; scenes you could never do these days; and haven't been able to for a long time.

Digression Alert: In the 1960s and 70s people were free. The concept of 'terrorism' just didn't exist. People trusted one another. United Airlines' PR people were pleased to be included in a slideshow. Still, we held up a lot of traffic. Just for its audaciousness, the show was an instant classic. You can read about in Volume Four; and the illustrative plates are reproduced here, on pages that follow.

Unfortunately, some of my very favorite shows remain lost; because we didn't videotape our shows back then. I am thinking in particular of the work we did for Clairol and Burson-Marsteller (Don O'Neill and Geoff Nightingale). The stuff done for Don and Geoff was 'industrial'. The 'EEMH' [Energy Efficient Manufactured Home) show that O'Neill and I made for Owens Corning Fiberglas, for example, was powered by 18 projectors driven by twin Show Pro II punch tape programmers. Dare I say that in 1974 that was 'ahead of its time'?

The shows we made for Clairol (and Ardell) were equally dazzling—and much more fun to make. For a couple of years, half the studio's output was for the fashion & beauty industry, with shows for Ardell (Hennaluscent), Clairol (a half dozen productions), Matrix Essentials, and Zotos. Hair dressers are the most happy-go-lucky people in the world; at least they were back then. Warren Beaty's 1975 film, *Shampoo*, portrays the tone of the time; the carefree lifestyles of beauticians and hair dressers. Imagine if everyone you worked with were in a good mood? I got so into hair work that I had a professional shampoo sink installed in the studio. Plus, we were given total creative freedom; to make beautiful shows about the beautiful people. That freedom provided the stimulus for us to do some crazy stuff. For the *New Look of Blonde* show (or maybe the *Luminize* show), we produced a reveal sequence that featured silver hands (Jim Casey's) shot in limbo [black] transforming a 'head' [that's what they called the models… heads] into a glowing platinum blonde. It was pure fantasy but everyone loved it. The soundtracks for our beauty shows were the latest and hippest disco tunes—TSOP [The Sound of Philadelphia], Vince Montana's Salsoul Orchestra, the Barry White Orchestra—used without regard to copyright, as Clairol (actually, Bristol-Meyers) had a blanket license.

* * *

At Incredible Slidemakers, our video work was done high-end consumer gear, aka 'semi-professional', mostly JVC (out of deference to my former boss and mentor, Burt Holmes, who did PR work for JVC and who became an Incredible client). The ¾-inch videotape format, called U-Matic, delivered reasonably-good visual quality; not as good as pro gear, but that stuff was way too expensive and could be rented when needed; i.e., a revenue job.

Gag shot of Incredible's six-projector, Buhl multiplexer. L>R: Jon Bromberg, Dan Collins, Yours Truly and Doug Sloan.

Video never interested me. We got into it to tape our shows, and eventually, others'. But making videos? Nah. Even ten years later, in the Belgian studio, making a video was not my favorite pastime; I let John Emms edit the Colgate video and Saab TV commercials we produced there. The still image is my territory; I grew up in a world of photo-spread magazines, like the iconic *Life* and *Look*. Their photographers were my heroes. Slide shows were, for me, initially an extension of still photography—a way to present my pictures; they evolved into a film-like, animated style. But there is a world of difference between making an animated slide show and a motion picture or video.

That said, the world of media was migrating toward video; we found ourselves making slide shows as content for videos—*Nightmares* is an example. The writing was on the wall; but I was too busy making slideshows to see it. Sloan, I think, did. When I closed Incredible, he and Fred opened a reincarnation of Incredible, called Icon. Then Sloan split off and went into the film business (Icon Pictures). He survived; Fred didn't.

In the early fall of 1980, the crew produced a 'reality show' documentary about the 73rd Street studio; it was prescient, in the most existential sense.

L>R: Chris Hoina (behind camera), John O'Connell, Jim Casey (on camera), and John O'Connell.

None of the crew knew, at that point, that I was planning to close the company. That decision had been considered while I was in Hawaii, shooting for a sales-contest motivation show being produced by Purchasepoint. It was finalized as I walked back to the studio after seeing the movie, *Xanadu, in mid-August*. Olivia Newton-John's version of the song, (Gotta Believe In) *Magic*, became my theme song. The crew knew the jig was up when I put *Hawaii-Xanada* show into production. You can read more about that in Volume Four.

Epilogue

What do they say, "Don't count your chickens until they hatch"?

The above article was written shortly after Jim Casey wrote to me about his rediscovery of the Incredible Slidemakers demo tapes, attaching pictures of them that revealed their contents—the twenty shows listed. As you may have gathered from the tone of the article, I was over the moon. Funnily enough, I recall while I was writing it, that I should probably wait until seeing them. Had I waited, you wouldn't be reading this 'mea culpa'. In short, the whole experience was an enormous disappointment.

Casey took the tapes to a local (Connecticut) media company that advertised digitization of old-format videotapes. They promised delivery by Friday, every week for the next month and a half. There was always an excuse. The first was that the tapes needed to be baked because they showed signs of 'shedding'.

[As magnetic tapes age, the bond between the mylar backing and the magnetic-emulsion coating dries out and bits of the coating dis-attach when the tape passes through the transport rollers and playback heads of a video tape player. It's easy to spot the little pile of dust accumulating under the heads.

The treatment for shedding is heat; the tapes are baked in a 130 ° F oven (~54 C) for three to eight hours (opinions differ); then, after cooling for a day, immediately dubbed (copied). Apparently, tapes can be baked again, if needed.]

Six weeks later, in the beginning of February, the digital files for the two tapes were delivered to Casey. Jim had taken it upon himself to do the editing (he loves to play with computer apps)—separating the 20 shows into individual files, as well as enhancing the sound and imagery. Ahead of that work, Casey sent me the raw footage—a dupe of the original files—which I dropped everything to watch. That is when my heart sank. The image quality sucked; and there were many 'drop outs' where the magnetic coating had disappeared. Worse, many of the shows weren't up to snuff. The ones made by the crew, while competent, aren't 'captivating'. In the end, the only two that I added to the online collection (at Video and at www.incredibleimages.com) are the AT&T show, *Dataphone II*, and *Nightmares*, made for Slide Transfer Service.

Unfortunately, the *Nightmares* video—an off-the-wall transfer made by Incredible Slidemakers, NOT by STS—has an obnoxious copyright notice that dominates the bottom third of the screen. Another annoyance: the projector alignment is far from perfect; which, in this case, is especially unfortunate because STS claimed better alignment.

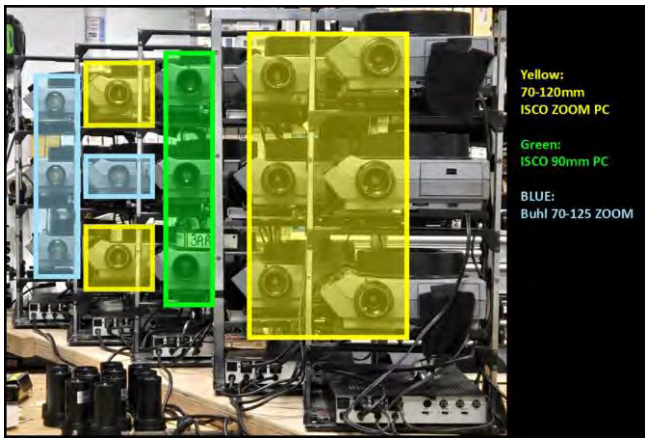
Read more about those shows in Volume Three; pages 481-483 for *Dataphone II*; and page 426 for Nightmares. There is also a collection of pictures—key frames of *Nightmares* animations—in Volume Eleven, starting at page 2795.

After the demise of The Incredible Slidemakers in 1981, *Bumbles* was packed in a corrugated cardboard box and consigned to several storage facilities; in Hawaii, Sweden, and Vashon. And when it became apparent that the Vashon studio would soon meet its demise, I sent *Bumbles* and *You Can't Stop a Dove!* to Richard Shipps; he still had all his AV staging gear, albeit in storage. I reckoned that Richard would eventually set-up his gear and play vintage slide shows. However, Richard got involved in paper arts (on an extraordinary scale); thus, *Bumbles* continued to languish in storage. During those ensuing years, Steve Michelsen built an operating AVL programming grid with twenty projectors and started restoring shows.

When it became obvious that Shipps was done with AV, I suggested that he give Steve Michelsen his gear and shows. Thus, the two Incredible shows made their way to Michelsen's studio in Delaware. In 2021, Steve restored *You Can't Stop a Dove!* – that story is on page 2567 in Volume Nine.

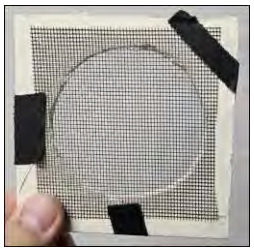
Bumbles was a fifteen-projector, 'single screen' show made to wow other slide show producers at the second AMI Festival (see Volume Three, pages 464-466). To align all the images, the fifteen projectors need to be nested as close together as possible. That is done by overlapping five three-projector alignment stands one behind the other (see pix).

Steve had to re-arrange and build an extension to his projection grid to accomplish that; and even with that rearrangement, the alignment is less than perfect given the short 'throw' between the projectors and screen in his 'garage' studio. Only slides projected straight at the screen will be rectangular; off-center (angled) projection results in trapezoidal images, which are impossible to align correctly. The idea is to minimize the projection angles of each projector; 'clustering' the projectors is the best solution.



Complicating matters, he also lacked a set of fifteen matched lenses and had to work with what he had. As a result, three different kinds of lenses were used: eight ISCO 70-120 mm Zoom PC (perspective control) lenses; three ISCO 90 mm PC lenses (in the center stack, screen three); and four Buhl 70-125 mm Zoom lenses.

The three different kinds of lenses projected different LUX values – they weren't equally bright; and the three 90 mm PC lenses were the worst offenders.



Various methods were tried to reduce their excessive brightness, including a 'faux diaphragm' (which created a hot spot) and neutral density gels, which were excessively dark. The solution was found when Steve's wife asked him to repair a torn window screen; pieces of household window screening turned out to tame the brightness of the center-stack lenses 'just enough'. The slight diffusion created by having screens in front of the lenses was virtually undetectable.

Running the show for the first time, Steve was amazed that it played top to bottom without a hitch; and that there were *no stops*, and *no time cues* – the cues streamed continuously from beginning to end; highly unusual, but that was concept behind the show – to disregard convention and be outlandish.

Then, early on, he discovered an odd slide; it looked like the film slipped off the registration pegs; except, it was shot that way; and Steve wrote to ask if that was possible. Oh yes, I explained; it was intentional; and that he would discover more such apparent errors, all of them the 'bumbles' of the bespole show.

To make sure, Steve made a test recording of the show. That revealed several problems. Although the center section of the show looked OK, the long animations that bookend the show were too dark and too 'choppy', especially when compared to a 1979 transfer made with an expensive Ikegami camera.

That problem is partly the result of how Steves E-2 and E-3 Ektagraphic projectors, when compared with the B-2 Carousels that were used when the show was built. Although just fractions of a second difference, the E-2 and E-3 projectors 'clip' the light faster than B-2s. Then, too, analogue cameras have a 'persistence of image'; that is, when turned off, the image fades out, albeit quickly; that is the nature of analog sensors. Digital cameras, on the other hand, cut off instantly; there is no persistence. Thus, the images recorded by the Ikegami camera 'blended' into each other, like really fast dissolves, instead of cuts. That reduced the 'choppiness' of the high-speed animations in *Bumbles.*

To further alleviate the choppiness and brightness issues, Steve re-programmed the high-speed animates. Instead of cutting from one projector to the next, the next projector would turn on before the current projector turned off. That provided an image overlap which imitated analog image persistence. For example:

ORIGINAL

Hard Cut AB – Projector B on; A off
No Operation
Hard Cut BC – Projector C on; B off
No Operation
Hard Cut CD – Projector D on; C off
No Operation

REPROGRAMED

Alt B – projector B on
Cut A – projector A off
Alt C – projector C on
Cut B - projector B off
Alt D – projector D on
Cut C – projector C off
Etcetera

With the projection issues largely solved, Steve's next challenge was cleaning the slides. He sent me before and after pictures (below) to illustrate the problems; and, to be sure, I have never seen dirtier slides!

A couple of weeks later, the show was ready to be transferred to video. Steve made two versions: The first was the show itself, which can be seen at Steve's YouTube channel, AV Archeology -- https://www.youtube.com/@AV_archaeology/videos

In addition, he made what he calls a 'programmer's view' version; featuring a three-part split screen simultaneously presenting the show, the AVL programming cues, and the projectors. That video show can also be seen on Steve's YouTube channel. It can also be watched at www.incredibleimages.com; and you can watch it at Vimeo using this link:

https://vimeo.com/manage/videos/1108742254

Wrapping-up the project, Steve sent this email:

Hi Doug,

Here is the almost final version of *Bumbles*. … The only thing not quite right with it is the cropping around the edges – it's a little too tight. Because of keystoning some images have top and bottom edges that run uphill in one direction OR the other, so to crop the entire video so that no black shows is a challenge. Anyway, everything else is I believe "as it should be". Please take a look and let me know what you think.

This version uses the "reprogrammed" sequences at the top and bottom of the show, with the overlapping slides to minimize the "blink" effect. It's not as good as seeing it in person, but as good as it can be on video. The good news for me is that this makes those sequences brighter, allowing a single exposure for the whole show – no need to shoot separately and edit together. FYI for the "programmers view" version of the video I will include the original programming – don't tell anyone….

I am striking the "offset" projector setup tomorrow (Wednesday), to return my rig to the standard 5-screen-overlap configuration. So, then this project is almost done! It has been thrilling to "just watch" this show (which I have done many times now) – I have been pulling friends and neighbors into my garage to see it, most of whom (as you can guess) have NEVER seen a multi-image show, much less THIS!

I will be doing the reset with a friend of mine who produced shows back in the day. He hasn't seen it yet – it's gonna be fun. I will keep the "special projection table" standing by for when I get the urge to run it again!

INCREDIBLE SLIDEMAKERS CREW UPDATE

I'd often wonder; what happened to all the Slidemakers? I mean, during and right after Incredible's demise? Writing this book led me to investigate. Most went off to freelance, never to be heard from, since. But the 'core group' decided to re-group and carry-on, under a new banner. Even before I left the city, in late April of '81, four of them went into business as Icon Productions, with studio space on Lexington Avenue and 56th Street.

"From my perspective, we had an offshoot company started with Tim Sali. The four of us settled on Icon Productions as a name. Each of us were to be equal 25% partners in the company. But at the initial meeting, Fred argued that he deserved more because he would be President. … I remember watching the New Year's ball drop from their office overlooking 1 Times Sq. And I think it was the winter of 1980 when we tried to form the Icon company."

Icon was not without problems and, I suspect, infighting. The upshot: Casey left.

"We had done a couple shows, just as independent freelancers, together with other companies. I started working on print projects with a company that had a Genigraphics system and decided to form a company with the owner. They were National Imagemakers - located in the same building as Creative Systems Group [Editor: CSG was Don O'Neill and Geoff Nightingale's company, after they left Burson-Marsteller]. So, it worked out well for me."

"It was 6-9 months. We did a couple shows during the summer and fall with some producers who had an office on Broadway - some company name like Media Matrix??? Tim might have stayed with them for a little while. Nicole Clark did work with them.

"The title [President] didn't matter, it was the extra % he [Fred] wanted. I was already in negotiations with Imagemakers to do a 50/50 deal. So, at that meeting I said to the guys that I'm not interested in joining them. And if I'm out, the 1/3 split of company could give Fred the 34% he wants. Easy solution fix.

"Still remember Sloan making the comment during this meeting 'this isn't personal, this is business.'. Used that line back at them again when they wanted computer slides at a discount."

Casey always knew how to butter his bread. He went on to greener pastures in computer imagery – he called his company Rare Medium – which he sold and 'retired' while in his forties. Sloan did well too and only recently got off what he called, "the merry-go-round"—a film production studio, called Icon Pictures. Tim Sali lives in France. Grace Napoleon sells custom-made clothing and accessories of her own creation. John Leicmon gave up freelancing and now is a tour guide; organizing groups and escorting them to foreign lands. Fred ended up as the Creative Director for another multi-image studio, called Nvision and after that doing media relations for the new City of New York, 'promoting' the Second Avenue subway project; that's where I lost track. Jon Bromberg was the most 'successful' of the lot, in terms of accomplishments and financial reward. He sent me the following notes about his post-Incredible adventures:

Full-time volunteer at Eastside Fire & Rescue (Issaquah, WA) which covers over 300 sq. miles of Eastern King County. He is the Program Manager for Eastside Fire Corps, with 35+ volunteer members who provide backup/emergency communications, logistics and Public Education resources. He is also the Chief Pilot/Program Manager for the UAS (drone) Program which supports structure fire monitoring, trail rescue, search & rescue, still/swift water rescue and damage assessments.

Still involved in photography (with an emphasis on drone POV shooting), Amateur (HAM) radio, tinkering with computers and Raspberry Pis and, of course, learning to be a Grandpa.

Update (2016): Full-time Volunteer, FEMA radio communications responder COM-L/COM-T, struggling to be a semi-pro photographer, Ham Radio (W1JDB), constantly telling everyone under 40 that "we didn't have that - we had to invent it".

Previous Lives:
Jon began his career as a lighting designer in New York where he created numerous productions for Broadway, Off Broadway and Regional theatres.

In 1978 he moved into the area of Industrial Theatre and multimedia producing many industrials & sales meetings as part of the Incredible Slidemakers working with Doug Mesney. The company was known for pioneering multi-image with slides and intermixing special effects, graphics, live performances, and film.

In 1981 Jon moved to Los Angeles where he managed the LA office of Staging Techniques which was responsible for designing environments, scenery, audio-visual equipment, audio and lighting for Fortune 500 companies. During his tenure he assisted in the development of many of the original events/conferences for the computer and hi-tech industries. Events included product launches for Apple, Sun, IBM, HP, Digital & Oracle as well Comdex Spring/Fall Keynotes, PC Expo and the Apple Developer's Conference (5 years).

Bromberg's work with Microsoft began in 1983 as Staging Techniques supported a significant number of tours, conferences and product launches including Windows 2.0 Roadshow, the launches of Windows 3.0, 3.1 and Windows for Workgroups, DOS 5.0 and the original Office Suite. Jon joined Microsoft's Events Group in 1993 and managed the creative & technical execution of over 1100 events including the launches of Windows 95, 98, 2000, XP - Office 95, 97, 2000, XP & Office System 2003; the annual Comdex Fall and Consumer Electronics Show Keynotes w/Bill Gates and many other press, executive presentations.

Bromberg is currently the owner of the consulting firm Interstitial-Realities LLC and may be reached at: jonbro@msn.com

* * *

Icon Productions didn't last long; just a few years. I have my own thoughts of what went wrong. It was a couple of things (isn't it always?). I'll try to explain….

First, the boys went in as 'equal partners'; but anyone who's read *Lord of The Flies* or *Animal Farm* knows there's no such thing as equality; even Socrates knew that

Democracies ultimately fail. That's why all the smart monkeys in *Atlas Shrugged* went to Galt's Gulch.

Second, there was no creative genius in the group—nobody capable of great concepts. Oh, they were all good at their jobs (Tim, graphic design; Fred, camera effects; Casey, photography (studio and rostrum); Sloan, sales and production) but none qualified as a 'creative director.' None was a conceptualizer. Sloan was the closest; but he was cutting his teeth in those days. As a result, their work lacked 'singularity'; it wasn't much different that what others were producing, a lot of it as good and even better than Incredible Slidemakers. Techniques had matured; the pool of talent was enormous; multi-image would peak in just a few years. So, with all due respect, Icon had it's work cut out for it; the competition was keen; the economic environment was repressive as the cost of credit skyrocketed along with inflation; companies stopped spending on expensive promotions, like shows; that was what killed Incredible.

To digress for a moment, about concepts: There is a 'singularity' – a simplicity; a purity – to a great idea. They are not products of group think; those may be very good, but seldom great. As I wrote earlier, in "How to Create Captivating Content", making the 'right show' is the single most important factor in making successful shows, of any kind. Committees can't come up with 'pure' concepts; with 'singularity'. Of course, there is no singularly great concept, considering the differences in people's opinions and tastes; there's no accounting for those.

But some things win the popular vote; some movies do better than others with critics; some do better at the box office; and some both.

Julio Campos has a story that perfectly illustrates the difference between a good idea and a great concept. Campos was attending a 'creative session' with the company's marketing and advertising people; you know, to 'coordinate' and 'interface.' They were charged with coming up with a concept for the event; some mistakenly call it a 'theme' (which is something quite different). There was a dozen or so of them; it was a real free-for-all. Everyone was invited (expected) to 'contribute.' All morning, they threw ideas at the wall, to see what stuck. "What kind of show should it be?" "When should we have it? Before or after the Business Session?" "Definitely not after the golf tournament; hahaha."

Then someone remarked, "Julio, you haven't said a word. What do you think?" After a pregnant pause, during which his eyes made split-second contact with everyone else's, he began: "You've all presented some good ideas; but they are 'ideas,' not concepts. I would charter a 747 airliner; have it painted in the company's colors; re-arrange the seats; use the flight time for the business session; give everyone a real holiday weekend; and during the flight back, have a motivational speaker followed by closing festivities. (Pause) *That* is a concept." And with that, he got up and left. [Read more in Volume Eleven, page 3128, "Visualization of Concepts."]

Having said all that: A far more widespread opinion is that the best ideas are the products of team work, of consensus. That idea gained popularity in the 1970s. Back then, Japan was emerging from the devastation of WWII.

When I was a kid, in the 50s, Japan made junky stuff; the term Made In Japan was a joke. But starting in the 1960s, they became the world's most innovative and successful industrial nation, in so many fields—photography/optics; electronics; automotive, to name a few—the rest of the world thereafter found themselves playing catch-up. Economists and efficiency experts were employed to study Japanese methodology. They revealed that Japanese management was not organized on the top-down principal; decisions were not made by diktat, as was the case in the West. In Japan, decision making was horizontally oriented, done by teams whose goal was to reach consensus; agreement by everyone in the group. That management style was embraced by many American companies, with great success; no matter how good their ideas, nothing can beat a happy workforce.

But those situations are different—way different—than conceptualizing a multi-image show. Because, more often than not, business decision making involves *production*; the who-what-when-and-where of getting things done. It would be difficult for the manager of an assembly plant, for example, to know all the goings-on along the assembly line; but the workers sure do. That qualifies them as participants in the decision-making process. However, most multi-image shows were not about production; they were about *communication*; the best ways to communicate specific messages. Conceptualizing a multi-image show was not much different that coming up with a great advertisement; both reply on a USP (Unique Selling Proposition), a catchy headline and a powerful 'pay off' (tag line). Such concepts are seldom produced by a group (OK, maybe a small one).

In 1976, a major New York Bank, Manufacturers Hanover Trust, hired a prestigious advertising agency, Young and Rubicam, to work-up an auto-loan ad campaign that emphasized the diversity of choices available to car buyers. They came up with the *AnyCar* – a conglomeration of parts from the 22 of the most popular cars built by Ford, Chevrolet, American Motors, Chrysler and Volkswagen – aka, "ForChevAmChrsyVagen".

Photo courtesy https://www.chasealum.org/article.html?aid=1447

What do they say, “A camel is a horse made by a committee”? The saying is apt in this case; because many multi-image shows were ‘AnyShows’. In fact, ‘generic’ shows were made for rental, that could be customized by inserting any company’s logos and theme graphics.

At least half of the shows I was involved in were the product of creative teams; I participated in scores of ‘creative sessions’ where a bunch of people spent the morning or afternoon in a conference room coming up with ideas; the moderator would note them on ‘white boards’ and by the end of the session, there would be dozens of contenders. Typically, the Big Idea emerging from such a session was a ‘kluge’; conglomeration of ideas… like a Neapolitan ice cream bar—a combination of chocolate, vanilla and strawberry—but all mixed together. I’ve written extensively in earlier volumes about such creative sessions; notably, shows for IBM, AT&T, and the Washington Post.

* * *

Icon’s third, fatal problem was over ambition, a form of pride; excessive self-confidence is the definition of hubris. Despite their other problems and ‘growing pains,’ Icon was doing fine until they dropped a Kodak show at Photokina. They didn't finish the show in time. Their reputation was shot after that episode. Sloan said it was Fred's fault (over ambitious). The two parted ways. Sloan took the Icon name and became Icon Pictures, producing film and video instead of multi-image. And that, as they say, was that.

MULTI-IMAGE IN CANADA

This article was compiled from email 'conversations' with John Olsen and Andrew Macrae.

The key Canadian multi-image players were:

- David Fellowes Associates – Producer, Toronto
- John Olsen Communications – Producer, Toronto
- Norm Natress – Producer, Toronto
- Harold Nisenthal Audio Visual - Staging, Montreal
- Ed Klagman – Producer, Toronto
- Norbert Frischkorn – Staging, Toronto
- Al Holman – Producer
- ICE Integrated Communications and Entertainment - Producer
- Richard St. John – Producer
- MS Art Services (Mike Smith) – Producer
- AV House – Producer (Mike Ruether was the salesman; before he joined AVL)

David Felloes, John Olsen and Norbert Frischkorn were a triumvirate.

Fellowes and Olsen produced shows for Northern Telecom, IBM (100% Club), Vitro (Mexico), among others. They met in 1971 when both worked at Film Opticals. In 1971, they left FO, went to MS Arts, and produced a (single-projector; no dissolve) show for General Motors. The next productions were three-screen-butt format, with mullions.

In 1973, Fellowes created the first soft-edge mask in order to project "seamless" panoramic images (without mullions). He did that by shooting airbrushed art with Kodalith film—a super-high-contrast 'line' film—and processing with D-76 chemistry (instead of Kodalith A/B developer) to obtain the lower contrast necessary for soft-edge gradients. The first show to use soft-edge masks for seamless images was *Life In America*, produced in 1974 at AVCO as a demo for AVL to promote their Show Pro II programmer.

To David Fellowes:

Gary Kappenman sent me the following description of Life In America; does it jive with your recollections?

1. The show started with great shots and music from the 50s showing a somewhat idealized America including pictures of Marilyn Monroe with Joe DiMaggio, baseball, sock hops, etc.

2. It then built up to the 60s Vietnam War, Racial Strife, and a crescendo with Martin Luther's "I Have a Dream" speech audio showing a shot of him speaking and then a really loud shot ringing out and the entire theatre simultaneously going block.

3. While the theatre was still black, music started gradually fading in of Dan Hill's "Hold On" song (I'll email you a link) and visuals of farming, racially intermixed families, and a forward-looking optimistic outlook.

He said the entire show was pictures from Life magazine. Is that correct?

From David Fellowes:

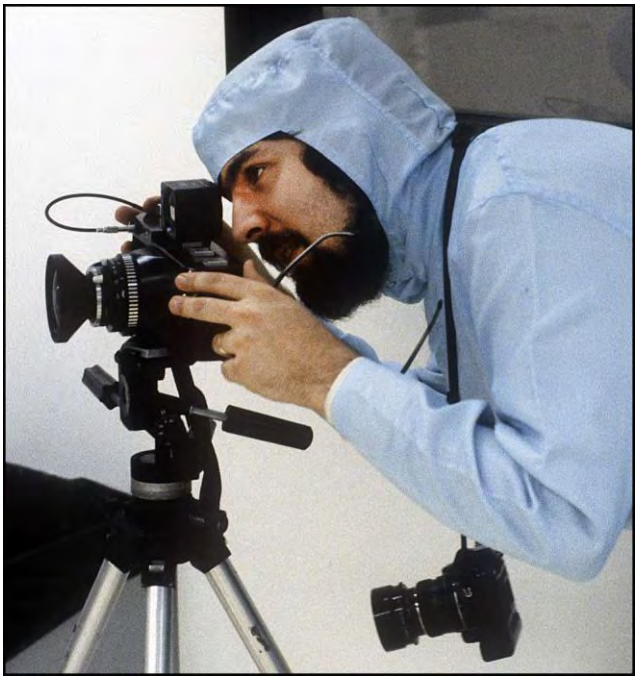
"Yup, that's the show in a nutshell… but check with Andrew [Macrae] who watched it a thousand times. He is also the single source of information on the rig, how everything was shot, etc. Without Andrew, there was nothing. The title of the show is a pun on Life, the magazine, and Life in America, as glorified by the magazine."

From Andrew Macrae:

"David, unless I am much further gone into that twilight of dementia than I fear, I had no involvement with Life in America (never mind life in America) and have not seen it once, never mind thousands of times. Some other Andrew, perhaps?"

[I then asked Andrew if he knew John Olsen, who was David Fellowes partner in the 1970s.]

"I certainly knew John Olsen, I was his creative director at John Olsen Communications from 1981 to 1985, and of course David. I also did much of the photography, animation stand work, programming, not to mention slide mounting.



Andrew Macrae in Northern Telecom's clean room, 1982 .

"I worked with David on a number of productions including corporate profiles for Vitro (not the first one), programming for the Bell Seminar, and product launch programs for Northern Telecom and others.

"So, this would be after the development of 'Fuzzies'.

"Olsen Communications was forced into bankruptcy (long story) not long after I left; he retired to run a bar/restaurant in the Muskokas [Muskoka Lakes, Ontario], then returned to work with the St John Group until his retirement.

"MS Productions was actually MS Art Services: MS = Mike Smith, who owned Film Opticals. MS Arts was created to provide, well, art services for Film Opticals, then branched out to do multi-image. MS is where John and David first worked together (long before my time).

"Their president was Manuel 'Manolo' Corvera. MS Arts bought John Olsen Communications; I'm guessing around 1983 at which time we merged operations with theirs.

"When Manolo died of pancreatic cancer around 1985-6 (sorry to be vague on dates) his widow Joan forced JOC (which was being operated by David) into bankruptcy (technically not quite precise, there wasn't enough money to formally wrap up the company, it went into limbo). David got some funding from Norbert Frischkorn to start Master Media, before family matters forced him to depart for the UK.

"I was acquainted with Norm Natress, he had another boutique production company. There were several around at that time, typically one big client, a million or so in sales, the owner/proprietor had one expensive car (a Lamborghini Espada in John's case) until the tax laws changed to put a limit on the write-off value of a vehicle.

"I did program on AVL… first time on a Show Pro V, then Eagle, then Genesis. Also, on the Multisonic (?) system out of the UK, running on Apple II, which was the system the Bell Seminar Centre went with. BTW Chuck Kappenman went on from AVL to found TVL (TeleVision Laboratories), which I was very much involved with from the get-go….

"My [programming] preference was for the Electrosonic system once it matured; as I recall; it was a bit more flexible in its syntax. And also, because the Apple II with its Basic and helpful tutorial manual was my real gateway to programming.

"Master Media … arose of the ashes of John Olsen Communications not long after David left for the UK. MM was tapped (connection through Norbert Frischkorn) by TVL to introduce it to the Canadian market. Norbert & company recognized that the incredibly cumbersome process of staging multi-image was going to be rendered obsolete by improved video projectors and lowering production costs for video - but which left a gap for electronic "slides" for speaker support, which TVL targeted. The product was still very much in the alpha stage, for example, the app to create a text slide… if you made a mistake, you had to start over from scratch.

I was freelancing at the time but was heavily involved in the process of figuring out how to implement a viable production process along with just making the damn thing work. Of course, it improved greatly over time (undo!). At one point Tim Abbott, who headed Master Media (btw at some point the company changed name to Key Frame Interactive) went to France with Chuck to introduce TVL to that market, which was adopted by Milelec - and I went to live in Paris for half a year (1990) to train their people. Paris was amazing. I could have made it permanent but that's another story.

"The learning curve for the original 3-buffer version proved to be a real barrier to adoption, and TVL came out with a simpler, single-buffer version at about that time. However soon after, as 8-bit graphics (later 32 bit) and decent video capabilities became prevalent on Mac and Windows in conjunction with Macromedia (later Adobe) Director animation software made the expensive TVL hardware obsolete.

“Norbert Frischkorn was the number one AV staging company in Canada. I’m out of touch with that whole world but it appears Frischkorn AV is either defunct or absorbed into another entity. I think he was also a dealer for AVL. Don’t know who else. Anyhow David, John & Norbert were a triumvirate when it came to multi-image in Canada, particularly when it came to the big product launches for Northern, like Digital World where they rented the Rotterdam, a cruise ship… stuff like that.

“And then there were the IBM 100% Club shows… Montreal, Place des Arts, 35 mm film combined with a 36 projector bank to fill the stage screen… two Eagle computers yoked… that was my baby, we had horizontal fuzzies along with the usual vertical fuzzies to fill the screen - 6-6-6 projector banks top & bottom with a 3-3-3 bank to fill the middle… did I mention the cumbersome staging process? That show nearly killed me…

[Later] “I got that the wrong way round. It was 6x6x6 across the middle - 6 doves, 18 projectors on one Eagle, and two 3x3x3 banks top & bottom on the other - 9 projectors to put up 1 seamless image. Then a knockout to drop the 35 mm projector to drop into the middle. One big liability… so many chips of film into one slide… colour image + 2 fuzzies (vertical & horizontal) + knockout or mask… worked fine in the studio with front projection, but flipped for rear, some were just too fat to drop reliably. Somehow Frischkorn’s guys got it to work. It was a particularly brutal production… one module, I could tell where the other programmer, Simon Ewins, realized he would never meet the deadline if he continued to take advantage of the 9 x 9 transitions, wipes etc., it just went chunk, chunk, chunk, like a giant two projector show… but at least it made it to the screen. Oddly enough I do not miss those days.

“Other producers from that era… Norm Nattress of course, GM Canada was his big client I believe… a number of companies that did little 3-projector shows… Al Holman had a company that was big, well beyond boutique, but it went belly-up… There was ICE - Integrated Communications and Entertainment headed by Doug Keely, another powerhouse in the early 90s, they brought multi-image and multi-media together with live entertainment, again went belly-up.

“And there was the St John Group - another boutique firm headed by Richard St John that got very rich doing work for Northern Telecom (including that SS Rotterdam event), one production called “Electrons” was budgeted at $one million plus - they rented a 747 for some of the shooting. When Nortel eventually flamed out RSJ didn’t go down with them but picked up a lot of work for Research in Motion (Blackberry), but when RIM was effectively wiped out by Apple, Richard had to retire — a multi-millionaire, poor guy! And yes, this is the same company that John Olsen worked for in the last stage of his career.

“PS I would take David’s claim of Alzheimer’s with a grain of salt… if he can still come up with stuff like this: https://claphaminterpretation.com/category/articles/

“PPS Are you aware that David is Julian Fellowes’ (*Downton Abbey*) smarter brother?”

I also spoke with John Olsen, John A. Olsen Communications, who worked with David Fellowes when he invented the soft-edge mask in 1974, shooting airbrushed art with Kodalith film.

The world premiere of the soft-edge mask was the three-screen, 9-projector *Life In America* show, that Fellowes produced in 1974 at Olsen Communications as a demo for the AVL Show Pro III.

Subsequently, they worked with David Corley, who perfected the technique; that would have been late '74 or early '75 [see, 'The Story of Fuzzies' by Richard Corley; Volume Eleven, page 3015]. Olsen believes (and I think, rightly so) that he and Fellowes were the pioneers of multi-image; they changed the course of audio-visual history.

John Olsen by Andrew Macrae, 1982.

John Olsen emigrated to Canada from the UK in 1965 and initially got work as a tool maker for General Electric. A few years later, he went to work in Toronto at Film Opticals—a bespoke motion picture opticals and effects company that was part of MS Arts, founded by Mike Smith—where David Fellowes was a producer. Manuel "Manolo" Corvera was the president of MS Arts at the time; he was also a master animator, for prestigious clients as General Mills (The Jolly Green Giant) and Kellogg (Tony the Tiger).

John Olsen (left) and David Fellowes survey the scene at Eaton Center during the GM 1973 new-model-launch show.

In 1972, Foster Advertising hired MS Arts to make a show for General Motors, to introduce their 1973 model-year cars to GM dealers across Canada after a premiere at Toronto's prestigious Eaton Center. Fellowes was assigned as production manager, with Olsen assisting him and Ron Lindsay to wrangle the client. They made a three-screen, six-projector show projected from the theater's balcony by three pairs of Xenon projectors with long lenses controlled by a punch-tape system made by Morris Glick and dissolve units made by Harold Nissenthal. Cars drove out from under the three butted screens choreographed to music presented by a live orchestra.

Fellowes trouped the show around Canada, as he was the only one who knew how it worked. Olsen remained at MS Arts and took over Linday's position as account executive in 1974 when Ron left the company to start his own film opticals and multi-image production company, AVCOR (AV Corporation). Linday came up with the idea of using *Life* magazine as the image source for a show called *Life In America*; and he hires David Fellows to produce it. Subsequently, AVCOR partnered with AV House, where Bryan King was importing AVL's ShowPro II punch tape programmers and MKII and MKIV dissolves, which Fellowes chose to make *Life In America*. Influenced by the huge, 59 X 79-foot (18 X 24 metres) imagery projected by the 70 mm IMAX system, Fellowes decided to create big pictures by combining two or more slide images. That was not a new idea; since the days of Lantern Slides, images were blended together using baffles in front of the projects' lenses, to create soft edges. What was new, was Fellowes invention of soft-edge masks—gradient film chips sandwiched with pictures to blend images together, creating panoramic images with two or more slides. As mentioned, David's original soft-edge masks were made from airbrushed-gradient artwork on white illustration boards, photographed with Kodalith line film processed in D-76.

When all this was happening (early 70s), there were just a few companies making slide shows (MS Arts; AH House; AVCOR); everyone involved knew everyone else. So, it is no surprise that David and Sue Corley began making soft-edge masks shortly after *Life In America* was produced (the show was heavily promoted by AVL; they screened it all over the US and Canada); because Film Opticals had connections with Corley [aka DSC] Labs, who had a reputation for ultra-precision opticals (for example, the test patterns used for television production and broadcast, as well as motion-picture production). DSC's masks, together with registration slide mounts (made by Wess Plastics, and known as Wess Mounts) and AVL control gear, provided the 'standardization' necessary for multi-image to take off as a dynamic medium for corporate and theatrical events. The number of new slide-show producers increased exponentially.

In Toronto, one of the new producers was Bob Schultz, a maker of film commercials. He had the idea of multi-image-shows—documentaries about European museums—presented to the public in a purpose-built theater. Fellowes and Olsen—who had since become David Fellowes Associates, at 1055 Younge Street—were brought in as consultant producers; but nothing was ever produced.

No matter, the dynamic duo went on to produce for élite clients like Northern Telecom, Bell Canada and Mexican glass giant, Vitro. Fellowes theorized that multi-image had greater impact than film because viewers had more to 'process'; had more mental work.

In 1978, David went to New York, continuing as David Fellowes Associates. The Canadian entity became John A. Olsen Communications Limited, continuing production work for Vitaro and Bell Canada.

When Bell switched to Electrosonic, Olsen teamed up with MS Arts, forming a partnership with Manolo (Corvera), who offered him production space and a Marron-Carrel camera, together with a theater equipped with the required Electrosonic show-control gear.

Fellowes rejoined Olsen when he returned to Canada in 1982, and took over the company in 1984 when John took a sabbatical from the AV business and bought a pub and moved to the Muskogas. But that didn't last long. In 1985, Fellowes teamed up with Norbert Frishkorn to form the Multi Media company; and in 1986 he returned to England. Among his other projects there, David took over the Prague Shakespear Company in Czechoslovakia [now, the Czech Republic].

SLIDE COPY STAND | How I Digitize Slides

By the turn of the century, digital images largely replaced film; their quality met and, in some cases, exceeded film, even Kodachrome. The conversion of film images to digital became an industry of its own; there were all kinds of scanners to choose from ranging in cost from $2,000 to $20,000—or more (Imacon, Scitex (flat bed) or a drum scanner). Being a Nikon guy, I invested in their LS2000 scanner, for 35 mm pictures, and their LS9000, for negs or transparencies up to 4 X 5 inches (10.2 X 12.7 cm). That's when I found out that the scanners were basically useless without software applications – operating systems – to run them; they, too, came in a wide range of capabilities and costs. Two systems in my price range included one called VueScan, and another called, oddly enough, Silverfast.

I never used Vue Scan. Silverfast delivered a good product, but getting there was not half the fun. First you did a pre-scan and make adjustments to exposure and color and make another pre-scan to test the new settings; maybe you need to make more adjustments. Finally, you make your scan. And, as you know, each pre-scan or scan takes a few seconds. For budgeting purposes, I once calculated that an average scan took five minutes; I could do twelve per hour. That was not enough throughput; and that's when I reverted to my old method of copying pictures, using a camera (Nikon, then Forox) and lightbox. With an image archive that once contained several hundred thousand slides (now just a couple of thousand), throughput was important.

Now, I use old Nikon DSLRs – the D1 and D2 models – and a light box illuminated by a 3X5-inch LED light source (cooled with an electric fan). In the picture, the LED light is lying in front of the light box (an enlarger light head, turned upside down). The slide-to-be-copied sits in a holder 2-inches about a 3X3-inch opalescent -Plexiglas diffuser.

The camera's sensor is better than the scanner's; better color and contrast. Best of all, 'click' and you're done. The camera is controlled by a computer; images take just a few seconds to 'process' and appear on the monitor. Usually, I take a second shot with an exposure bracket; for difficult pictures, a range of exposures. Then the best parts of each bracket are blended in Photoshop. The results are better than the scanner. Throughput is doubled; I can do twenty-four (or more) per hour.

While working at Sonargraphics (Australia) in 1982, I 'moonlighted' writing a book called *Confessions of a Multi-Image Maniac*; about how to make multi-image shows. [The book is published in Volume Eleven of the Epic.] After finishing the first draft, I got side-tracked by an idea for a screenplay—*NANUC*—about a 21st-century war between America and Canada, over water. *NANUC* was a milestone; my first epic script.

Photos by Sandra Sande.

The idea of working in Hollywood was intriguing; I reckoned that, since I was successful in business entertainment, I stood a chance. The script took about two months to write, in the dining room, typing on an IBM Selectric that I borrowed from the office. Remember *White Out*? Every time I typed an error, out came the little bottle of white paint. A pain? yes; however, manual typing slowed down the writing process. I needed to think through what I wanted to say, before typing it. The slower tempo made for clearer thinking. Now, the writing process can embrace stream of consciousness thinking; you can type away and easily fix errors later; heck, the computer automatically fixes half of them.

I became obsessed with the screenplay; I dreamt of becoming a Hollywood creative, of expanding beyond corporate media into the consumer-entertainment world. NANUC foretold conditions that are actually unfolding now vis-à-vis water. Here's the plot in a nutshell: America has poisoned its aquifers and goes to war with Canada to get the water it needs. During the months writing NANUC, I worked at Sonargraphics until early evening, then I shifted gears. To save time transitioning from multi-image production to the inner world of my imagination, I consumed quantities of vodka and smoked Maui Wowee [smuggled into Australia inside the Cyclopan camera]. When our Australian visas expired out, scripting continued in Vancouver, and was completed in 1984, while working with Chris Korody's crackerjack team at Image Stream, in Los Angeles. The script was registered with the Screen Writers Guild, in Hollywood; a copy languishes in their archive.

N A N U C

(A SCREENPLAY)

Written by:

DOUGLAS MESNEY

" N A N U C "

(A SCREENPLAY)

Written by
Douglas T. Mesney

" N A N U C "

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INTRODUCTION

THE WORLD IN 2022:

Although NANUC takes place some forty years from now, the world we see is not "futuristic" in the sci-fi sense. In fact, it isn't much different than the world we live in today; things have changed, of course, but nothing too radical has happened. People still get around in cars and planes, but these machines have evolved into highly computerized vehicles. There are still elevators, but they operate on compressed air, as do tube-transports. Two-dimensional television has been replaced with three-dimensional, hologram-enhanced television (HETV). But people still wear the same sort of clothes they do now; their food, although mostly synthetic, still looks like and tastes like the dishes we eat; they listen to similar music; everything's just a bit more modern.

In terms of life style, there are a couple of subtle changes. For one, computers are far more sophisticated and used more frequently, for more purposes, than they are today. Computer sciences have advanced to the point where micro-miniaturization of components permits the power of, for example, an Apple III to be packaged in a chassis no larger than a desk-top calculator.

Everthing is digital now, and that technology has created two other changes: hologram mapping and the universal identification system. Hologram mapping uses laser-projection to create a flat-field or globe-style map that is three-dimensional. The universal identification system has been achieved by issuing all citizens a laser-imprinted Security Card that is used for all financial, medical, governmental, and employment-related transactions as well as for personal identification. In addition, the Card serves a lot of practical functions, like opening locks, serving as a computer-pass key, and so on.

What has changed, dramatically, is the condition of the world of Nature. By 2022 the entire globe is heavily polluted and grossly overpopulated.

According to current projections, the population of the world will be about seven billion by 2022; two times what it is today. These projections do not take into account that by the turn of the century significant medical advances will extend many lives far beyond any current expectations, which will add to the total.

Our growing population's demands for goods and services (to say nothing of food) are growing at an even faster rate. Most of the "Third World" is still agrarian.

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However, these nations have had a taste of the spoils of western culture and want it...badly. And as they (rapidly) become industrialized, and the net pollution of their (unregulated) factories is added to our already dangerously-high levels, you can imagine what will happen.

Even today, acid rain is destroying millions of acres of forests; many rivers and lakes are already devoid of certain species of fish. In the oceans, particularly around major urban areas, fishermen complain of ulcerations and growths on the fish they catch. The whales are nearly extinct. The Space Shuttle astronauts report a noticeable layer of air pollution surrounding the entire globe. Scientists tell us to expect a "Greenhouse" effect. The weather is weird. The water is polluted. The oil will run out. The pressure is on.

Will you be alive in 2022? If you are, you will be forty years older than you are today. Although it is hard, try to imagine what you think the world will be like then... you are probably very close to what you'll see in NANUC.

THE "MOOD" OF THE FILM:

NANUC doesn't fall easily into a slot. The primary intent is to make an important ecological statement; but this statement has been packaged in a documentary thriller. These aspects, combined with the fact that it is set in the future, combine to create a mood that slides around in the twilight zone between "China Syndrome" and "2001."

A NOTE ON SPECIAL EFFECTS:

Special effects are used extensively in NANUC, but only to heighten the sense of realism; "2001," "Apocolypse Now," "Lawrence of Arabia," and "China Syndrome" should be kept in mind when contemplating the effects variously described in the script.

One important area of effects that should be specifically mentioned is computer graphics. A lot of running time is spent looking at monitor displays...because by 2022 computer technology allows an office computer the capability to display graphics as sophisticated as "TRON." Even the simplest chart or graph is truly beautiful; the incredible detail, texture, shadow-molding, and color make it a pleasure to watch as the computer builds, rotates, manipulates, and otherwise "has fun" with it.

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Another major slice of the special-effects budget should be devoted to creating the gross pollution, ecological decay, and strange meteorological conditions that may well exist in 2022.

POSSIBLE USE OF 3-D TECHNOLOGY

While writing NANUC I frequently thought how "nice" it would be to employ 3-D filming techniques. Although I am aware that there are certain limitations imposed (ie., gross theater distribution), a serious 3-D film has seldom (if ever) been produced, and the market is "ready" for one. The capabilities are there to create the technology to, for example, realistically capture what a three-dimensional hologram map of the world, sitting in the middle of the American War Operations Center, would look like. Or a Canadian Neutrol Device showering sparks as it re-enters the atmosphere. Or a vast panorama of a decayed fir-tree forest helplessly succumbing to the acid rain falling on it. Or a twenty-seven-pound rat (grown for food) sniffing at you.

A NOTE ON NANUC (THE CHARACTER):

Fully one-third of the dialogue involves the character, NANUC. He is, as you will learn, a computer...a very intelligent one. You should again think in terms of "2001," and, specifically, the nature of the voice of the HAL computer. NANUC SOUNDS like that. The only difference is that he learns more (ie., changes) and becomes slightly more "emotional" (in terms of voice inflections) during the latter portions of the film when he is operating in FFLIP II. But even though there may be extreme malice in his words, NANUC always "stays calm." For NANUC, almost everything is matter-of-fact.

DEFINITION OF "POV NANUC:"

NANUC (the character) can "see," as did HAL, and in much the same way (ie., "fish-eye-lens" perspective). However, the only times this effect is utilized is when the scene is described as "POV THROUGH NANUC'S EYES."

A NOTE OF THANKS:

Many thanks for taking the time to read NANUC. I hope you are not disappointed and look forward to hearing about your appraisal and potential interest.

Cordially,

Douglas T. Mesney

PRINCIPLE CHARACTERS (IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE):

CANADIAN PRIME MINISTER GEORGE MOINSLEAU (MWONS-LOW): Sixty, medium height and build, pale complexion (almost unhealthy), silver-grey hair, soft-spoken. Moinsleau is a brooding, inner-directed man who seems like he's carrying the weight of the world on his shoulders. A trick left knee causes him to limp slightly. He is compulsively moral.

CONSTANCE MOINSLEAU: George Moinsleau's wife. Fiftyish, about the same height as George, a well-proportioned "grande-dame" figure, fair complexion, coifed grey hair. A strong, ambitious, opinionated, out-going woman with a high rank in Montreal high society. Despite her formal, conservative mannerisms, she's a likeable, warm, grand-motherly lady with a lot of empathy.

CANADIAN MINISTER OF TRADE MIKE FRASER: Fiftyish, tall, slender, fair complexion, dark hair, wears glasses. Mike has a powerful, outspoken, "corporate" disposition and temperament that tend to make him belligerent.

MARGARET FRASER: Mike's wife. Fiftyish, slender, fair complexion, shoulder-length auburn hair, casually elegant. Margaret's a home body who's dedicated her life to raising three sons. Although she yields to Mike's bellicose ways, she enjoys provoking him and has the intelligence and inner strength to hold her own when she chooses to.

CANADIAN FINANCE MINISTER HERBERT THOMPSON: Fiftyish, rather short and pudgy, thinning salt-and-pepper hair, and lacking any conciousness of "style." Thompson has a "little Hitler" disposition that's defensively arrogant and borders on pomposity. He's prone to be sarcastic and pessimistic.

ILLONA THOMPSON: Herbert's wife. She's slightly taller than he is, has a tanned complexion, long, bleached-blond, casually-styled hair, and a great figure. Although she's fifty she tries (hard) to look forty by dressing in a snazzy (sexy) style. For Illona, nothing's more vital than her social calendar and "staying young at heart." Herbert married her for her looks, not her brains.

AMERICAN SECRETARY OF STATE NED STECKLER: Sixtyish, tall, strikingly handsome, athletically rugged, a tanned, ruddy complexion, rock-hard, chiseled features. You'd swear Ned was only fifty because he's so well preserved. He's got a full head of silver-white hair and a forceful, cold, calculating disposition. His suave manners and stylish dressing habits mask the chip on his shoulder.

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GLOBAL NETWORK NEWS VICE PRESIDENT CHUCK BARTON: In his mid forties, medium height, a bit overweight, with a greyish complexion and dark hair that's receding fast. Chuck looks overworked, tired, and older than he actually is. He's a compulsive workaholic with a sly, cunning nature that's helped him become a master of manipulation.

NANUC OPERATIONS DIRECTOR NOREEN LINDEN: A brilliant and beautiful woman with an outgoing, headstrong disposition. Long, red-blond hair, medium height, well built, with delicate features and elegant manners. Noreen is inwardly "embarrased" by her good looks. At thirty five she's quick witted, sharp tongued (occasionally) and all business.

FFLIP-I PROGRAMMER JEFF STEEL: In his early forties, tall, good looking, with strong facial features and a full head of sandy-colored hair (medium length). His disposition is calm and secure, exhibiting a lot of inner fortitude. He looks athletic (although he isn't) which belies his thoughtful, studious, intellectual manner.

NANUC TECHNICIAN HARLEY: A bright young boy in his twenties, Harley is a bit gawky and socially immature (as computer people often are), although he's genuinely friendly and sincere. Harley is tall and skinny with short brown hair, has a gap between his front teeth and wears thick glasses.

FFLIP-II PROGRAMMER HARRY MACKENZIE: A Punjab Indian in his late forties, Harry's short, has a modest build, a small black mustache, and is nearly bald (beneath the turban he always wears). Behind his glasses his eyes are noticeably serene, and he always wears a smile. He is supremely calm, and has the diminutive, demure manners of a religious scholar. He speaks with a slight Indian accent.

NANUC -- The largest computer in the world. NANUC's voice and disposition are strikingly similar to those of the HAL computer in 2001: A Space Odyssey.

CANADIAN NAVY ADMIRAL HENDERSON: A large, strong-looking man in his sixties. He carries himself with authority and wears his uniform with pride. His manner is quiet and sincere, perhaps a bit overly cautious.

CANADIAN NAVY COMMANDER MAURICE LA FARGE: A small man with dark hair, a moustache, dark-rimmed glasses, and a French-Canadian accent. LaFarge is quiet, extremely polite, and hyperactive in a genteel way.

U.S. PRESIDENT HENRY BRENNER: In his sixties, medium height and build, grey hair (thinning) and a sagging face. Brenner's disposition is professorial. He's quiet and retiring, very cerebral, and lacks any visible strength or confidence. His

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total commitment to integrity, truth, and humanism are his saving graces.

CANADIAN DEFENCE MINISTER JAQUES GAULLIER: A tough, feisty old French Canadian in his sixties with a sharp tongue and powerful disposition. Gaullier is tall, thin, and has a sallow complexion with short, grey-brown hair and bushy eyebrows.

CANADIAN SUPREME COURT JUSTICE BRADLEY BARRETT: Now in his seventies, Barrett is a white-haired, medium-tall, somewhat overweight man with a bushy, white moustache and pince-nez glasses. He's the sort of man who looks and acts like Santa Claus in disguise.

CANADIAN GENERAL PERIGNON (PRONOUNCED PEH-REEN-YAWN): A fat, rather repulsive old man in his sixties who wears his hat to mask his balding head of grey hair. He's got huge jowls, sweats a lot, and likes to chomp on big cigars. Rude and crude. He bull-dogged his way to the top.

CANADIAN ADMIRAL PETER BAUSCH: Thin, hollow-cheeked, fiftyish, balding (what's left of his black hair is coarse and greasy looking). Behind his metal-rimmed glasses he has trouble controlling a twitch in his left eye. He's sly, cunning, and calculating but doesn't seem excessively bright.

CANADIAN COMMANDER CLAY THOMPKINS: His mania for precision and details helped him make it through the ranks quickly. Now only forty five, he's tall, has a leathery-looking, sharp-featured masculinity and a rock-hard expression. He wears his grey hair in a short crew cut and tenses his jaws. He tends to keep his mouth shut, but you can tell that deep in his head the wheels are spinning at ninety miles an hour.

RUSSIAN PREMIER NIKITA YALENKOFF: A big, burly man in his sixties. He's got a full head of black hair, and a mean-looking, saggy face. His jaw sets in a menacing expression and his disposition is tough and gruff.

CHINESE CHAIRMAN TSING: A small man, very thin and frail, with hollow cheeks and a very wise, studious look. He wears his moustache and what's left of his white hair very long. His porcelain skin has hardly any wrinkles, and his eyes are bright and alert. It's hard to tell how old he is...probably seventy.

SUMMARY OF CAST (IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE):

1.) Pilot
2.) Co-Pilot
3.) Tower Controller (Voice)
4.) Constance Moinsleau
5.) George Moinsleau
6.) Margaret Fraser
7.) Mike Fraser
8.) Herbert Thompson
9.) Illona Thompson
10.) GNN Reporter
11.) Dr. Pierre D'Hommage
12.) Ned Steckler
13.) Chuck Barton
14.) Noreen Linden
15.) Jeff Steel
16.) Taxi Driver
17.) Computer (Voice) #1
18.) Technician Harley
19.) Harry MacKenzie
20.) NANUC (Voice)
21.) Moinsleau's Chauffer
22.) Soldier #1
23.) Soldier #2
24.) Soldier #3
25.) Soldier #4
26.) Air Force Sergeant
27.) Air Force Guard #1
28.) Air Force Guard #2
29.) Air Force Guard #3
30.) Air Force Guard #4
31.) Chauffer #2
32.) Admiral Henderson
33.) Staff Sergeant
34.) Officer Johnson
35.) Intercom (Voice) #1
36.) Maurice LaFarge
37.) Intercom (Voice) #2
38.) Voice Command (Voice)
39.) Milton Eisenberg (Voice)
40.) President Henry Brenner
41.) GNN Anchorman
42.) U.S. Soldier #1
43.) U.S. Soldier #2
44.) Fighting Woman #1
45.) Fighting Woman #2
46.) Young Bystander
47.) Old Woman
48.) Young Thug
49.) Reporter #1 (Voice)
50.) Reporter #2 (voice)
51.) Senator Allan Bird
52.) Photographer
53.) Chinese Peasent Child
54.) Chinese Peasent Man #1
55.) Chinese Peasent Man #2
56.) Reporter #3 (Voice)
57.) Professor Armstrong
58.) Professor Nelson
59.) Reporter #4 (Voice)
60.) Fisherman
61.) Professor Moishe Barron
62.) Japanese U.N. Ambassador
63.) Dr. James L. Brown
64.) Reporter Ron Taylor
65.) Dr. Jerome Johnson
66.) Reporter #5 (Voice)
67.) Tree-Farm Researcher
68.) Lady Shopper
69.) Reporter #6 (Voice)
70.) Reporter #7
71.) Rodent-Farm Researcher
72.) Rodent-Farm Research Asst.
73.) Oriental Waitress
74.) French-Canadian Diner
75.) Japanese Spy #1
76.) Japanese Spy #2
77.) Japanese Computer Operator
78.) Russian Spy
79.) NATO Sergeant
80.) NATO Lieutenant
81.) American Astronaut
82.) Denver (Voice)
83.) Parliament Chairman
84.) Saskatchewan M.P.
85.) Parliament Security Guard #1
86.) Parliament Soldier #1
87.) Parliament Soldier #2
88.) Parliament Security Guard #2
89.) Reporter Maxwell Harris
90.) Hallway Reporter #1
91.) Hallway Reporter #2
92.) Hallway Reporter #3
93.) Hallway Reporter #4
94.) Hallway Reporter #5
95.) Hallway Reporter Asst.
96.) Moinsleau's Aide #1
97.) Moinsleau's Aide #2
98.) Moinsleau's Aide #3
99.) M.P. #1 (Voice)
100.) M.P. #2 (Voice)

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101.) M.P. #3 (Voice)
102.) M.P. #4 (Voice)
103.) M.P. #5 (Voice)
104.) Jaques Gaullier
105.) Bradley Barrett
106.) General Perignon
107.) Admiral Peter Bausch
108.) Commander Clay Thompkins
109.) Technician Phillips
110.) Nuclear Plant Manager
111.) Plant Asst. Manager
112.) Maintenance Man
113.) Russian Computer Operator
114.) Russian General #1
115.) Russian General #2
116.) Vault Sergeant
117.) Premier Nikita Valenkoff
118.) Clark Richardson
119.) General Leighton
120.) Intercom (Voice) #3
121.) GNN Reporter #3
122.) Vault Soldier #3
123.) Computer (Voice) #3
124.) NCC Soldier #1
125.) NCC Soldier #2
126.) Intercom (Voice) #4
127.) Apartment Soldier #1
128.) Apartment Soldier #2
129.) Russian Intercom (Voice)
130.) Air Controller (Voice)
131.) Len Peterson
132.) General Ling Hee
133.) Chairman Tsing
134.) Chinese Guard
135.) Russian Guard #1
136.) Russian Guard #2
137.) CBC Announcer
138.) Daniel Argoff
139.) Truck Driver
140.) Medic #1
141.) Medic #2
142.) Medic #3
143.) Medic #4
144.) Policeman #1
145.) Policeman #2
146.) Policeman #3
147.) Policeman #4
148.) Policeman #5
149.) Policeman #6
150.) Policeman #7
151.) Sharpshooter #1
152.) Sharpshooter #2
153.) Sharpshooter #3
154.) Vault Soldier #4
155.) Vault Soldier #5
156.) Vault Soldier #6
157.) Hospital Orderly
158.) Hospital Volunteer

SUMMARY OF EXTRAS (IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE):

1.) RESTAURANT (Diners & Waiters).....20
2.) NANUC CONTROL CENTER (Technicians).....20
3.) SUBMARINE BASE (Soldiers & Technicians).....40
4.) SECLUDED JETPORT (Soldiers)..... 7
5.) SMALL-TOWN FIST FIGHT (Townspeople).....12
6.) UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON LAB (Technicians).....10
7.) U.S. SENATE LOBBY (Newsmen & Senators).....80
8.) UNITED NATIONS DEBATE (Ambassadors).....50
9.) NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE LAB (Technicians).....10
10.) TENT FARM (Technicians)..... 5
11.) UNDERGROUND FARM (Technicians)..... 6
12.) SURFACE FARMS (Farmers)..... 8
13.) RODENT FARM (Technicians)..... 7
14.) SUPERMARKET (Shoppers)..... 6
15.) LA GRANDE HOTEL (Diners & Pedestrians).....40
16.) JAPANESE COMPUTER CENTER (Technicians).....20
17.) LONDON NATO HEADQUARTERS (Soldiers & Technicians).15
18.) CANADIAN HOUSE OF COMMONS (M.P.'s & Aides).....300
19.) PARLIAMENT HALLWAY NEWS CREWS (Newsman).....20

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20.) NUCLEAR POWER PLANT (Technicians).....20
21.) THE VAULT HELIPORT (Soldiers).....15
22.) SOVIET COMPUTER FACILITY (Technicians).....15
23.) AMERICAN WAR ROOM (Soldiers & Technicians).....30
24.) GRID-LOCKED TRAFFIC JAM (Drivers & Cars).....300
25.) RUSSIAN WAR ROOM (Soldiers & Technicians).....20
26.) CHINESE WAR ROOM (Soldiers & Technicians).....15
27.) CHINESE CHEMICAL REFINERY (Technicians).....20
28.) RUSSIAN CHEMICAL-WASTE DUMP (Workers)..... 6
29.) TASMANIAN FOREST PROJECT (Workers)..... 6
30.) EMERGENCY SCENE AT VAULT (Police & Soldiers)...30

ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND ON THE LEAD CHARACTERS

CANADIAN PRIME MINISTER GEORGE MOINSLEAU:

Moinsleau's hair turned grey twenty years ago when his only child, a son, died of leukemia at the age of ten. He aged rapidly after that, and a car crash right after the funeral left him with a trick left knee, which he has favored ever since. Now sixty, he feels seventy, and occasionally complains to his wife that he should have stayed a college professor and avoided politics. But throughout it all he's kept a stiff upper lip and done his best to fight an inner sense of bitterness and personal failure. After the death of his son, he dedicated himself to his political career with a fervor seldom seen in Ottawa. His associates soon learned that the buck did, indeed, stop with George. Wine, women, and song were never things he'd taken seriously, partly because growing up in northern Manitoba protected him from the excesses and outrages of the Sixties and Seventies during his formative years. George envies everyone and no one. He's convinced himself that his ultra-moral, almost celibate lifestyle is absolutely "correct." Now he is almost totally set in his ways, and so is his expression. His face naturally falls into a grave, pensive frown. If you saw him sitting across from you in a plane you'd never disturb him for fear of breaking some deep, meaningful trance-like contemplation. You'd think he was a judge on some high court. But if you did break the trance you'd find George to be extremely soft-spoken, full of charm, free from malice, and truly an optimist. Even if you got into an argument he'd never show any anger, because George taught himself to keep his emotions under lock and key. Nonetheless, criticism of any sort forces him back into his shell and he protects his self image by dressing his medium-sized, modestly-proportioned body in ultra-conservative clothes of impeccable taste. In his world of Premiers and Presidents, he is one of the best dressed and most liked.

CONSTANCE MOINSLEAU:

"Connie," as her friends call her, is a compulsively ambitious woman who has never let the grass grow under her feet. A typical day might begin with setting-up exercises (occasionally with George) to tighten her well-proportioned "grande dame" figure. Then there'd be a 9:30 appointment at the salon to primp her perfectly-coifed grey hair; lunch at The Plaza at noon; a quick hour's shopping at Holt Renfrew between 2:00 and 3:00; some volunteer work at The Friends of

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Boys Society 'till fiveish; then a hurried trip home to change for the opening of L'Atellier Gallery's "Down and Out in Dawson Creek" exhibit by the famous Canadian oil painter Renee Calvin (she wouldn't actually buy his paintings, though, because, well, for one they're not quite "dear" enough to be a good investment yet, and, secondly, they're a bit "too frank," and "the world doesn't need to be depressed... it needs positive thinkers"). Robert's death wasn't as crushing a blow for Connie as it was for George; for her things like that are decided in heaven. She was brought up in a Catholic household and although she gave up going to church regularly, she still heads the Womens' Auxilliary and knows Robert went to heaven (a fact that contents her). Constance has been a go-getter all her life. She's the one who should have gone into politics, but, growing up in northern Saskatchewan didn't give her access to Womens' Lib philosophies and she was taught that a woman's place is in the home. Nevertheless, her innate knowledge that she's right, backed up by a Masters degree from McGill and an incredibly large inheritance from a rich father (who made his money in Soviet grain exports) have bestowed on her a righteous, indignant self-assertion that propelled her to the heights of Montreal society in her freshman year. Rightfully, she shouldn't have married George. His brooding Scorpio personality doesn't match her bright, Aries disposition (a fact which has "forced" her to become even more outgoing while George "reacted" by becoming an inner-directed, temporizing, agonizing man). Even so, there's a strangely-unbreakable bond of love between them; they defy the "law" that "opposites attract but never marry." And no one in Canada (or anywhere) knows that Constance Moinsleau has been responsible for the intent and nature of her husband's most famous political decisions... even George.

CANADIAN MINISTER OF TRADE MIKE FRASER:

It took a lot of convincing on George's part to persuade Mike Fraser to leave the presidency of Nippon Computer (Canada), Ltd., and take a 30% cut in salary to become Canada's Minister of Trade. For Mike it wasn't the money so much as a matter of saving face in Tokyo. He had been notoriously outspoken against Ottawa's restrictive business policies for so long that he feared that his senior management in Japan would never understand why he "switched sides." George finally got to him by fanning the flames of anti-American nationalism that had burned inside of Mike ever since he was booted out of the presidency of Amway-Canada Insurance Corp. (an American-

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owned firm) after defying a board decision and insisting that his Canadian Division only hire Canadians. But George reminded Mike that his entire platform was based on "returning Canada to the Canadians" and that he wanted business and government to actively work together to regain control of the 70% of Canada's major businesses that were still controlled by American corporations. Mike still wasn't convinced, so George played his trump card: a guarantee from Nippon that Mike could have his job back any time which George had obtained by interceding through his close relations with Japanese Premier Ikito. That was enough to convince Mike that George was a man for whom "actions speak louder than words."

MARGARET FRASER:

Even though half of Mike's anti-government resentment sprang from immigration difficulties they went through just after they were married (she was busted for one joint at a peace rally in front of the United Nations in New York, where she grew up, and was denied her landed-immigrant status in Canada until Mike pulled a lot of strings), Margaret supports her husband's political views. She's kept in the background of his career though, since she was too busy raising their three boys, and he was always out of town. She learned a long time ago that it was useless to argue with Mike about anything because he was so outspoken and belligerent that he'd never "let" her "win," sometimes even when he "knew" he was wrong. She's resigned herself to biting her tongue and trying to get a word, or a jab, in edgewise whenever she can. Now that Margaret is a grandmother, Connie is even more jealous of her...she would never show it, of course, but Margaret can still sense it and feels sorry for her (having learned the tragic story of Robert's early death from a close mutual friend). Unlike Mike, who dove into the "international" atmosphere of Montreal with gusto, Margaret feels a bit like a fish out of water, preferring the "New York" style of Toronto where they raised their family.

CANADIAN FINANCE MINISTER HERBERT THOMPSON:

George "inherited" Herbert from the previous administration in which Thompson got himself so well plugged in that no one, even George, would risk unseating him. On the purely pragmatic side, George agreed with Herbert that it wouldn't be in Canada's best interests to switch horses in mid-stream and bring in a new, inexperienced Finance Minister with the state of the economy already on tender hooks. Although George dislikes Herbert's "little Hitler" complex, and

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finds his brusk, bravado attempts to compensate for his short, pudgy profile a bit ridiculous, he has come to appreciate Thompson's loyalty and uncompromising efforts to do "the right thing." Thus, during the course of the last three years, Herbert's stature has grown in George's eyes and he has become one of Moinsleau's closest and most trusted friends.

ILLONA THOMPSON:

Illona married Herbert for his money, not his looks. They make an odd couple because everything he is she isn't and vice versa. She's no match for her husband's keen, insightful intelligence, but what she lacks in brains she makes up for in looks...even if she does try a bit too hard to look "sexy" (at her age). Illona has never taken anything seriously in her life except her social schedule. When she and Herbert finally had a baby daughter after six years of "trying," Illona promptly hired a nanny and two au pairs so she could get back on the social circuit. Herbert loves the way other men look at Illona, knowing that he "owns" her... and she likes the looks, too, but for another reason. She either spends all of her time at the tanning salon or just got back from the tropics; but wherever it was Herbert obviously wasn't along since his complexion has the pasty-white look of a man who does indoor work.

NANUC OPERATIONS DIRECTOR NOREEN LINDEN:

When Noreen Linden walks in the room, heads turn. Men can't keep their eyes off her radiant beauty (which has always embarrased her) and other women's envy borders on hate. She could be the girl of your dreams, especially if you like your women a bit tall, with long, red-blond hair, and a distinctly Scandinavian background. Not only that, she's smart...brilliant. When they took her IQ in grade school back in 1995 (when she was eight) she did so well that the school board ordered a second test to be administered; but she did even better on that one, achieving a score of 202. However, that proved her undoing to the extent that she was ostracized by her peers, especially the boys, and has had a hard time ever since. Men love her, but they sense that she's "seeing through them," resulting in too much insecurity for them to cope with. The few times she did get laid weren't very satisfying...it seemed too animal for her and didn't measure up to her more idealized image of what love should be like. So she pushed the pain and trauma aside, became sort of a-sexual and engrossed herself in the cerebral puzzles of mastering computer technology. For Noreen, nothing's

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more satisfying than spending a long, cold, snowy evening curled up next to her NANUC Pod and creating "the perfect mind," free from the hurt and pain of existence and able to cipher order out of chaos. But despite her constant attempts at repression, there's an animal side to Noreen that she recently rediscovered through the amorous advances of Jeff Steel, her "employee" who's eight years her elder and has five years seniority over her on the NANUC project. She's more of a political animal than he is and got her job through "connections," whereas he worked his way up the hard way. Even though Jeff was initially a bit resentful of being bypassed for the leadership position, she never interfered in his work in any way and also championed his efforts (and results) before a government task force that subsequently doubled his salary. She knows she's met her match in Jeff Steel and realizes that although they are quite different in the way they feel about things, he has a key to some area of knowledge that she's never been privy to, and which she longs for. It's the feeling that city folks get when they talk with people from the country...that they're missing something but they're not sure what. She envys his ability to just "switch" out of work mode at the end of the day and just...relax. It's something she's never been able to do.

FFLIP-I PROGRAMMER JEFF STEEL:

Jeff grew up in Sooke, on Vancouver Island. His father was a commercial fisherman who's fortune (and health) slipped away as the waters around British Columbia and Alaska were fished out. The family had struggled along for years, but when the salmon failed to spawn for the third straight year back in 1998 the bank took back both their house and his father's boat. Six months later the broken man succumbed to a heart attack. During the last two years of their anguish together, Jeff gave up school and worked as an Inspector for the B.C. Department of Fisheries to help support the family. However, that job proved too unbearable for him. He was appalled at most fishermen's complete disregard for legal catch limits and discovered that efforts to arrest them only resulted in reprimands from superiors accusing him of "bucking the system." After his father died he tried to convince his mother to move into Vancouver, where he enrolled at U.B.C. and took a part-time job as a waiter in the dining room of the prestigious Vancouver Club (a wealthy businessmen's organization). But she didn't want to leave Sooke, preferring the quiet solitude of their humble cottage in the woods with its spectacular view of the last remaining "original growth."

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an incredible panorama of majestic, emerald-green, snow-capped mountains. Jeff had spent hours roaming through those forests as a youth, captivated by the "spirits" in the woods and awed by their beauty. He knew how his mother felt, so he pleaded with the bank, and got a new mortgage which he swore to repay. But then Forest Products Cooperative was issued a special permit to "upgrade" the mountains into a modern "tree farm" which, they claimed, would bring thousands of jobs and a new era of prosperity to western Canada. By the time they finished the first phase, they had so thoroughly cleared the forests that the naked mountains looked like someone had given them a close shave, and something snapped inside old Susan Steel. She burned the cottage and moved to a tiny, one-room flat in Victoria, where every day, rain or shine, she would march outside the provincial Parliament buildings protesting the government's "rape" of nature. Locals considered her a crackpot, and a year later, she died. During that agonizing last year, Jeff couldn't help hearing the wealthy members of the Vancouver Club boast of the millions they'd salted away, thanks to the government's "enlightened" new timber policies. Noticing that each of these tycoons carried a portable computer, and hearing them constantly refer to reality in terms of "data," "profiles," and "projections," Jeff soon realized that they were totally dependent on their electronic brains and rarely, if ever, made any decisions on their own. Suddenly aware of the true power of computers, he radically changed his university curriculum from marine biology to data sciences, determined to "beat them at their own game."

FFLIP-II PROGRAMMER <u>HARRY MACKENZIE</u>:

In the early 90's, when MacKenzie was a youngster, a bloody civil war in northern India between the Hindus and Moslems over government-imposed agricultural-equipment imporations laid waste to the village his ancestors had lived in for centuries. His father, who was the Indian equivalent of mayor, was murdered by a goon squad hired by the CIA to root out protest against the importation of computerized, American-built farming equipment that many in the Punjab region felt would eliminate too many jobs. His mother committed suicide by plunging herself into his father's funeral pyre (an ancient Indian custom) and Harry was sent off to live in Quebec with cousins who had emmigrated to Canada five years earlier to escape the inevitable confrontation. Harry's cousins could ill afford their new dependent because the little restaurant they opened in Sept Iles was close to failing; no one there could afford to eat out after the blight of acid rain all but wiped out the local forest industry. They constantly

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complained that if it weren't for Harry they'd have enough money to move elsewhere, and although he did everything he could to help out in the cafe his mere presence seemed to annoy them. In fact, he seemed to annoy everyone. His classmates in school made fun of his strange name (which was originally Ravindar Rashnasingh), his funny accent, and his shabby clothes (which always smelled like curry). Finally, when the cafe closed its doors and the family went on welfare a local minister, John MacKenzie, offered to take the young boy and for the first time in his life Harry experienced tranquility and love. He attributed the reverend's charitable ways to his religious asceticism and vowed to be like him. Soon enough, religious studies provided Harry with a cerebral sanctuary from the abuses of the harsh world around him. By the time he was fifteen Harry had already devoured the Bible and this so impressed John MacKenzie that he mortgaged his house to send Harry to McGill where he spent the next twelve years immersed in the study of theological philosophy. He astounded his professors first with a dissertation synthesizing the belief systems of the world's major religions, then with an equally masterful treatise that refuted the existence of God and so outraged the faculty that he was expelled for two years on probation. The expulsion shattered Harry, who couldn't help feeling that he had somehow betrayed his benevolent "father," and removed what little financial security he'd had. Now, without his scholarship, he couldn't make ends meet on the meager allowance the MacKenzies still managed to scrape together and send him, and felt guilty about taking their money at all. So he determined that he would support himself but soon learned that there weren't many jobs for young theologians...especially ones suspended from McGill. To get a "proper" job, he took a crash course in computer programming and landed a steady job working nights at Data Sciences International, where he soon gained access to a VXR-1000, the largest computer of its type in the world at that time. The scope of the VXR's capabilities fascinated Harry from the start and he began using his off hours to write programs to test various moral tenets and religious postulations in the hope of finding some larger truths with the aid of the computer's incredible intelligence. In the process he became convinced that if theology was to survive in the future, the essential principles would have to pass a computer's scrutiny to maintain credibility in the eyes of the world. Thus, when his probabtion from McGill ended, he returned to his studies with a renewed dedication and continued at DSI, working nights.

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AMERICAN SECRETARY OF STATE NED STECKLER:

Ned's father was "squeezed out" of his job as Commissioner of Investigations at the New York office of the FBI as part of a political power play. That was in 1997, when Ned was fifteen and dating the high-school beauty queen, who he wined and dined in style...front row seats at Broadway openings, fabulous meals at New York's most exclusive restaurants, private tables at jet-set night-clubs...the works. Ned didn't find out until ten years later that all the while those theaters, restaurants and clubs were under investigation and that his father was on the take. When he did learn the truth it changed his life, for he had idolized his father and the knowledge that he might be even slightly immoral was enough to "prove" that the whole world was. From that point on Ned decided to take on the world "on its own terms," and as a result became a cold, calculating man with a chip on his shoulder and vengence on his mind. If there's any emotion left inside Ned, you'll probably never witness it. He's cool, calm and collected...and so smooth, so incredibly "GQ" that although he's nearly sixty you'd swear he was fifty. Steckler hasn't altered his daily regimen of brutal calisthenics in thirty years. In 1992 he was awarded the highest military honor the United States can offer for his valor saving two fellow paratroopers from a grenade explosion during the Euro-Asian Oil War. Then he took that ribbon and turned it into a tapestry by taking all the advice his father had offered him as a young man and turning it inside out. As Ned saw it, his father had been "too honest." He should have just kept his mouth shut. Instead, by trying to make ammends, he was made into a scapegoat and persecuted by a bunch of vulturous political hacks who would sell their mothers' souls to the devil. He learned at a young age that the only way to keep the "perks" was to be on top and in control...and he's dedicated his life to doing just that. One of his favorite mottos is "don't get mad, get even," and for Ned anything goes.

GLOBAL NETWORK NEWS VICE PRESIDENT CHUCK BARTON:

When Chuck Barton became the youngest V.P. in the history of Global Network News it surprised no one. After all, it was Chuck who had personally supervised the implementation of Ken Werner's global media-aquisition strategy which leveraged Cable Network News into a leadership position through an intricate web of secret takeovers. Chuck's father and Werner are "good old boys" from Atlanta who grew up in the streets and made their own fortunes. Now Chuck's father is the most successful real estate developer

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in the U.S.A. and one of the richest men in the world. So, getting into the "right" school and getting the "right" jobs has never been a problem for "Chuckie baby," because daddy knew all the "right" people. But Chuck's no slouch, nor could he be considered a spoiled brat in any way. On the contrary, he became a master of manipulation by studying his father closely...watching him make and break the careers of hundreds of professionals and play with politicians as if they were puppets. His closest friends thought he was crazy for joining CNN instead of taking the partnership his father had offered him. But old man Barton didn't fight his son's decision, realizing that Chuck was correct in his observation that in the near future those who controlled the media would control the world...and that's a lot of real estate. Since then, he's tried to help Chuck in any way possible, but for the most part has just sat back and let himself be amazed at his son's initiative and abilities. Chuck can honestly say that he pulled himself up by his own bootstraps...but as a man who truly believes "it's who you know, not what you know," having access to daddy's friends didn't hurt. Now at the age of forty five, Chuck will soon inherit not only his father's vast fortune, but also control of the largest media syndicate on earth.

U.S. PRESIDENT HENRY BRENNER:

That Henry Brenner was elected President was nothing short of a small miracle...even the American public was astounded since no one thought he stood a chance (even Brenner). In fact, he wouldn't have run if he really believed he could win. He was satisfied with his position as Speaker of the House, which provided him with ample opportunity to promote the humanitarian platforms his New Liberal Party was expounding. When his party first drafted him as their candidate for President he initially refused, but the resulting divisiveness and turmoil that created in the Party was enough to persuade him to reconsider. Then, when America tried to recapture control of the Persian Gulf from the Soviets by using tactical nuclear weapons for the first time in history, everything Brenner warned might happen became fact. Rumor in Washington has it that (then) President Mark Wilson ordered the attack to end the conflict on the eve of the election...but his plan backfired and when the U.S. "initiative" (as he called it) failed, the emotional backlash it created among the voting population swept Brenner into office. The first call he received after his innauguration was from his good friend George Moinsleau who said he hoped that now, finally, something could be done to improve Canadian-American relations, and that he hoped their friendship would survive the immense efforts that would inevitably take. Brenner thought he knew

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Moinsleau. After all, they had been roommates at prep school in Stockholm and frequently vacationed together with their wives. But when George capped the brief conversation by saying "they deserve you...and you deserve them," Brenner found it auspiciously enigmatic. That was six years ago, right after a series of bloody battles between Canadian and American commercial fishermen in the high seas off the coast of Maine in which more than 300 boats were lost along with 1300 lives. Since then, the situation hasn't improved, and Canadian resentment of their (perceived) status as an "American colony" has been a burr under Brenner's saddle...especially since Moinsleau got elected by feeding off the resentment with a platform promising to "return Canada to the Canadians." In recent years, though, Brenner has been under increasing pressure to solve internal discords in America that are so overwhelming that he has come to question his abilities as a leader and envy the ease with which his friend Moinsleau seems to be able to make decisions; and although he's believed firmly in democracy all his life, he now wonders whether socialism might provide a better alternative...especially since the Republicans and Democrats have been making platform changes in that direction, based on Canada's undeniable progress.

CANADIAN GENERAL PERIGNON:

It was Perignon who finally was able to convince Ottawa that Canada should have nuclear weapons, but how he did that remains a mystery to most. Only former Prime Minister Francois Geaubriande knows that Perignon went through the high command whipping up animosity, finally creating what, in essence, amounted to the threat of a military take over; and because Perignon had secret knowledge of an illicite love affair that Geaubriande was involved in, the Prime Minister found himself in the uncomfortable position of being blackmailed into taking a pro-nuclear advocacy both in Ottawa and NATO. Francois had also heard through the grape vine that his wouldn't be the first career ruined by Perignon; there had been others for whom the General's control of the Canadian Intelligence Network had proven fatal. For Perignon, the greatest man that ever lived was J. Edgar Hoover; he had virtually memorized Hoover's biography while still in secondary school and calculated that the only way to improve on the former FBI director's methods were to channel them through the military. So when he was expelled from college (for beating up a sophmore who had called him fatso in an attack so brutal that the young man was hospitalized for a week) Perignon promptly joined the Army, where a "real man" would be appreciated.

"N A N U C"

FADE IN:

EXT. SMALL JET -- BEHIND IT -- TIGHT ON ENGINES -- NIGHT

The massive shape of nine "donut-mounted" jet-rocket engines is barely visible against the stormy night sky until we hear the ENGINES STARTING and see a brief burst of bright exhaust flames spit from the afterburners.

The engines' ROAR BUILDS and the jet nudges forward. A beat later the landing lights are turned on and they dramatically silhouette the jet against light ground smog and pouring rain. As the jet continues pulling away, we see droplets of rain frozen in air by the flashing anti-collision strobes mounted on the forward-thrust, super-sonic wings. Then we begin to see the shape of the plane defined by the airfield's grid of blue taxi-way lights.

With the entire jet now FULL IN FRAME, we can see that this is no ordinary airplane; it looks like a cross between a corporate jet and a small rocket. As it taxis to the runway, the OPEN TITLES are SUPERED.

On the runway now, the camera HOLDS. The nine after-burners kick in full, creating an enormous rocket flame and a BLASTING ROAR, and the jet rolls away with incredible acceleration.

CUT TO:

OVER THE RUNWAY -- ABOVE AND AHEAD OF JET

Racing down the runway, the jet rotates, lifts off, and climbs steeply toward us. In the b.g. we see the airfield disappear through the low ceiling as the plane punches through layer after layer of clouds lit by the strobes. The pattern of the airfield's taxi and runway lights and the control-tower structure look more modern than any we'd see today; and from this angle we can clearly see the supersonic shape of the aircraft's forward-trust wings and elevators.

During the ascent the camera slowly ZOOMS IN on the cockpit and we hear the assorted BEEPS and BUZZES of the jet's communications and navigational equipment.

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PILOT'S VOICE
Departure Control...Challenger November Forty-Seven...runway heading through three thousand.

CONTROLLER'S VOICE
With you, November Forty-Seven.

TIGHT ON PILOT

PILOT
Request Compu-Check on ETA Montreal and permission to use Corridor "A" ceiling of...uh...70 feet.

In the b.g. we hear a few CHUCKLES from amused flight controllers in the Tower.

CONTROLLER'S VOICE
(over chuckles)
What's the hurry?

CUT TO:

INSIDE THE COCKPIT -- CLOSE ON THE PANEL

PANNING slowly across the panel we see that the jet's systems are virtually all computerized. The Pilot's and CO-PILOT'S hands ENTER FRAME occasionally, engaging assorted equipment, which creates complex displays on seven computer monitors and activates some of the annunciator lights.

PILOT'S VOICE
A hot date, Tony.

CLOSE ON NAVIGATION (NAV) COMPUTER

The Pilot's hand ENTERS FRAME and keys-in "A/70," which is displayed on the monitor.

CONTROLLER'S VOICE
Denied.

ANGLE ON PILOT -- POV CO-PILOT

The Pilot glances over to the Co-Pilot with an amused smile.

PILOT
What's'a matter Tony? Can't take a joke?

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CONTINUED:

ANGLE ON CO-PILOT -- POV PILOT

The Co-Pilot looks back over to the Pilot and smiles, nodding his approval.

CONTROLLER'S VOICE
Watch it, Earl...joking about Corridor "A" can ground you.

BACK ON PILOT

PILOT
We've been cleared.

CLOSE ON PILOT'S HAND

The Pilot reaches into his flight bag and pulls out a small, gold, laser-imprinted Security Card which gleams in the low, eerie red light of the cockpit.

CONTROLLER'S VOICE
I have no record of that.

The security card is slipped into a slot on the COM computer.

PILOT'S VOICE
You will now...

The Pilot touches the "Enable" key on the COM computer, then the letter "N." We hear a brief BEEP and a message scrolls onto the monitor: "Challenger N-47; 2-22-22; Priority Direct; Washington/Montreal; Corridor A; Ceiling 70; Code 1; Zone Restrictions: Divert Other Traffic." The camera ZOOMS IN slowly on the monitor.

CONTROLLER'S VOICE
Some joke!

BACK ON PILOT

PILOT
Leaving three thousand for seventy.

The Pilot reaches forward and touches a key on the NAV computer.

CONTROLLER'S VOICE
Roger, November Forty-Seven...cleared as requested.

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ANGLE ON WINDSHIELD -- POV PILOT

The jet cuts smartly into a 65-degree bank. A full moon appears briefly before the rapidly-descending jet slices through the clouds.

Breaking through the 1,000-foot ceiling, we SEE Washington, D.C., streaking toward us as the jet banks hard to the right.

CUT TO:

CLOSE ON JET -- BEHIND IT -- CHASING IT

The camera FOLLOWS the jet down from 300 feet to a mere 70 as it speeds across the city, hugging the ground contours like a cruise missle, nimbly dodging around and over recognizeable buildings and monuments. The camera slows to a stop and holds on a WIDE SHOT of Arlington National Cemetary as the jet pulls ahead and LEAVES FRAME.

CUT TO:

EXT. MONTREAL SKYLINE -- LONG SHOT -- HIGH POV -- NIGHT

Camera PANS across the Montreal skyline, stops on a luxury apartment building and ZOOMS IN to the penthouse. It is a stormy night and snow blows wildly in the HOWLING WIND.

Getting closer to the penthouse we can SEE into the living room through the expansive glass wall that looks out over a large patio where deep snow drifts are lit by the soft glow of the apartment and twinkling, multi-colored, exterior Christmas lights.

Still closer, we SEE that a party is in progress. GEORGE MOINSLEAU stands before a bar cart near the fireplace, pouring gin into a cocktail shaker. He is a tall man, 60-ish, with silver hair; his fair complexion looks unusually pale and a bit unhealthy. He wears a silk smoking jacket over his shirt and tie. His wife, CONSTANCE, a sophisticated, grey-haired, "grande dame" society lady sits comfortably in a large easy chair across from Moinsleau with her legs politely crossed. Next to her, in another easy chair, is MARGARET FRASER, in her late 50's, who prefers the more casual elegance of an Henri Bendell wardrobe. Her husband, MIKE, stokes logs in the fireplace, trying not to mess up his impeccably-tailored blue, pin-stripe suit.

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HERBERT and ILLONA THOMPSON share the couch near George. Herbert's a bit overweight, and he's removed his jacket and loosened his vest to be more comfortable. Illona must have been a former beauty queen, since she dresses as sexily as a woman in her 50's possibly can and her white-blond hair has the loose, care-free, "tennis anyone" look that only the best salons can provide.

The living room is large, with rich-brown, wood panelling, carved moldings, cathedral ceiling, and parquet floors. An original Renoir hangs proudly over the fireplace, accompanied by a prominent Matisse on the adjacent wall. All the furniture is expensive antiques. An elaborate chandelier hangs from the high ceiling, dimmed so they can enjoy the fire. A deep red and gold Persian rug adds additional warmth, as do a few potted palms.

As the camera nears the penthouse, Constance gets up, walks over to the large glass patio door and slides it open a bit, with some difficulty. We HEAR ice cubes CLINKING as George stirs the pitcher of martinis, and the conversation growing LOUDER as we get nearer.

GEORGE
These are a bit dryer....

HERBERT
"American style," eh?

MARGARET
That's cruel!

Constance stops struggling with the door and returns to her chair as the camera FOLLOWS.

CONSTANCE
Honestly, George, how can you do that and call yourself a human being?

Camera DOLLYS around Constance, arriving at a CLOSE SHOT of George.

GEORGE
Godammit, Constance, what can I do?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGLE ON CONSTANCE -- POV GEORGE

CONSTANCE
You've got to sell them the water!

ANGLE ON HERBERT -- POV CONSTANCE

Pulling his weight out of the deep, comfortable couch, he leans forward, as if to lend extra significance to his comment...

HERBERT
It's the only moral thing to do.

George ENTERS FRAME taking Herbert's empty glass, replacing it with a full one. They exchange a brief, meaningful glance.

GEORGE
But why should we suffer?

ANGLE ON MIKE

He turns back to the group from his position in front of the fireplace.

MIKE
Hear, hear! They made their own bed...now let them sleep in it.

BACK ON CONSTANCE

CONSTANCE
Nonsense! Nobody can claim the world as their own. Every living creature has a right to its fair share.

BACK ON MIKE

He's finished stoking the fire and now stands, placing the poker back in its rack.

MIKE
But they squandered theirs...and we shouldn't have to pay for that.

ANGLE ON MARGARET

MARGARET
Pay! Canada stands to make a fortune!

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CONTINUED:

MIKE'S VOICE
Short term, sure...

HERBERT'S VOICE
She's absolutely right....

ANGLE ON HERBERT

HERBERT (CONT.)
There's over four billion dollars at stake to build those pipes... American dollars...and that's a lot of pressure.

ANGLE ON MARGARET

MARGARET
It's a fair deal, Mike...we get access to a lot more information, too.

ON MIKE -- POV MARGARET

MIKE
Yeah, but do we really want it?

HERBERT'S VOICE
You're drunk!

MIKE
No...no! Listen to me...do we really want to be like them? America already blew it...all they do is waste, waste, waste...their perspectives are all out of whack...so what kind of 'Information' do you think we'll get?

ON MARGARET -- MIKE'S POV

MARGARET
Hypocrite! You can't wait to get your hands on that IBM-compatible... compatible whatever it is!

BACK ON HERBERT

MIKE'S VOICE
That's different...

HERBERT
Quit proselytizing...we'll need all the technology we can get...to survive.

BACK ON MIKE

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE
Will we...? What will all that technology do for us? We're already too spoiled by the American legacy of disposable everything...that's what got them in trouble in the first place.

He reaches over to the wastebasket near the fireplace and pulls out the plastic liner bag.

MIKE (CONT.)
Here's an example...

He holds the plastic bag up...

MIKE (CONT.)
...they fight wars to get oil, then waste it making tough, durable bags that you can just... throw out!

He drops the bag into the basket to illustrate.

ANGLE ON GEORGE

George has removed himself from the conversation and stands at the patio door, leaning on the jamb, looking out over the skyline, getting a breath of fresh air, and getting lost in his thoughts. A deep concern shows on his face.

MARGARET'S VOICE
How you do go on...

HERBERT'S VOICE
You'll have to do better than that to convince me.... We'd be able to put a hundred thousand people back to work...but if we listen to your advice it'll be us looking for jobs.

What do you think, George?

Distracted from his thoughts now, George turns back to the group.

GEORGE
It never ceases to amaze me how the human mind works...(beat) we're lucky that we've made it this far.

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CONTINUED:

ANGLE ON CONSTANCE

CONSTANCE
(pertly)
What the hell is that supposed to mean?

ON HERBERT -- POV CONSTANCE

HERBERT
I think he's spending too much time with that computer...it's getting to him.

ANGLE ON GEORGE

George starts heading back into the living room toward the fireplace. He still seems a little distracted and doesn't reply to anyone in particular.

GEORGE
No, not at all...I was just thinking about how many different opinions there are...how many different ways of seeing things...and how no one perspective is ever totally right... (beat).

There must be some higher order... some higher logic....

ON HERBERT

HERBERT
My god...there he goes with that fanatical stuff again.

ANGLE ON ILLONA

ILLONA
I still don't understand it...how could America run out of water?

CUT TO:

INT. JET CABIN -- IN FLIGHT -- WIDE SHOT -- NIGHT

NED STECKLER and CHUCK BARTON are unfastening their seatbelts in the cabin of Challenger N-47, which is set up conference-room style with a central, low-profile coffee table between two semi-circular couches.

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On the forward bulkhead there is a built-in bar and kitchenette; an elaborate in-flight entertainment console with a music system and hologram-enhanced television (HETV); and a magazine rack in which a copy of The Washington Post has a prominent headline that says: "Soviets Blockade Australia As Ore Pact Fails."

The aft section of the cabin has a bench-style conference table with a computer terminal and two keyboards.

Ned Steckler is strikingly rugged; you'd expect to see him wearing a Navy Admiral's uniform instead of his grey-flannel suit. His paisley tie adds a touch of color that matches his outgoing, confident personality and his short, brushed-back white hair adds distinction. Although he's close to sixty, you'd swear he was fifty. Ned is suave and sophisticated; he carries himself with the dignified air of a career diplomat that belies a rugged, athletic, almost ruthless assertiveness.

By comparison, Chuck Barton couldn't be more different. Chuck's "been around" and it shows. Stockily built to begin with, his large frame is a bit paunchy. He looks tired and has a half-day's growth of beard. The overhead lighting accentuates his receding hairline. It's hard to tell how old he is since he's obviously abused himself living life in the fast lane as a high-powered broadcast-industry executive; he might be forty, then again, he could be fifty.

From our WIDE POV they both lean aft slightly, sitting across from each other on the curved couches, as the ROAR gently increases. Chuck extends his arm to brace himself against the acceleration of the jet. On the HETV there is a news broadcast. We can SEE a NEWSCASTER and behind him an INSET FRAME with the Global Network News (GNN) logo. As the newscaster begins, the GNN logo dissolves to a white-haired SCIENTIST sitting before a large computer terminal, while Ned and Chuck turn their attention to the broadcast.

NEWSCASTER
(on the HETV)
History was made today at McGill University in Montreal where a team of scientists led by Dr. Pierre D'Hommage perfected a computer model of enhanced human DNA which will allow advanced chromosome construction to begin this year.

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The INSET FRAME ZOOMS OUT and FILLS THE HETV SCREEN, then a subtitle appears, which reads: "Dr. Pierre D'Hommage, Research Director, Genetic Engineering.

D'HOMMAGE
(on the HETV)
...and it will allow us to identify specific genes from large samples, then assemble them...splice them together...to create any personality or physical characteristics we want.

The HETV screen CUTS back to the newscaster, and the comments of Ned and Chuck OVERLAP the broadcast.

NEWSCASTER
The breakthrough also marks a significant step forward in Canadian computer technology...

NED
You know, a few more stories like that could kill our balance of trade in the data market.

CHUCK
You can't deny they've got the lead now.

NEWSCASTER (CONT.)
...and the first to result from the much contested National Interface Law, which requires that all computers in Canada have access to each other. Opponents of that law argued against what they termed the virtual nationalization of the computer industry, but today's breakthrough at McGill makes any chance of a repeal unlikely...

Ned reaches over to a small panel of switches on the coffee-table console and TURNS OFF the HETV.

NED
You know, we go about things the wrong way...(he points at the HETV) they've got the right idea....

CHUCK
The Canucks? They're Socialists for chrissakes....

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

NED
You can't deny they get results.

CHUCK
Maybe...but you'd never get a law like that through Capitol Hill!

NED
Why not? Computers are a national resource, like any other ultility... they should be controlled by the government...(beat). In this case our noble democratic principles are working against us...they're an idealistic anachronism...(beat). No wonder Canada's gaining the upper hand in data processing...compared to them our progress is piecemeal.

CHUCK
That's a good line, I like that... it'd make a good editorial...piecemeal progress....

NED
(overlapping)
Skip it! I could use some good press for a change.

CHUCK
Then quit trying to manage the news!

NED
They'll get their story when we're good and ready to give it to them.

CHUCK
Well...you should have at least invited Watkins from C.B.S. or Hadley over at N.B.C..

NED
Don't you like exclusives anymore?

CHUCK
Sure I do, but you'd better be careful. You're alienating the entire Press Corps....(beat). You've got to include them more often, otherwise it smacks of favoritism.

As Ned gets out of his seat and starts heading to the bulkhead bar he has to fight a few sharp lurches as the jet's acceleration subsides.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NED
I just couldn't have all the Network clowns in on this one, Chuck...it's too big.

ANGLE ON CHUCK

He takes a long drag on a cigarette then lowers the butt to his lap where he holds it, watching it, as the smoke drifts up in front of the camera.

CHUCK
Define big.

ANGLE ON NED

As he "pumps" Scotch into a glass from a pressurized flask built into the bar...

NED
Do you remember the panic over the meat shortages...? (beat, then glancing at Chuck)... National Guard...the works, right? (another glance).

He switches glasses and starts filling a second.

CHUCK'S VOICE
That's big.

NED
Well, you haven't seen anything yet!

The jet lurches slightly again and the camera FOLLOWS as Ned returns to his seat, places his glass on the coffee table, leans across and hands Chuck his, sits down, and starts buckling up his seatbelt.

CHUCK'S VOICE
(interested)
Hmmmm....

NED
I think Moinsleau's going to reject the Pact.

BACK ON CHUCK

CHUCK
(genuinely surprised)
You're shitting....

CONTINUED:

BACK ON NED

NED
No...(beat).

PULL IN SLOWLY on Ned as a curious look grows on his face.

NED (CONT.)
I saw the panic light go on this morning when I called to tell him that I was coming up instead of the President...(beat). He got weird on me...said he wasn't sure anymore.

BACK ON CHUCK

CHUCK
(finishing a swig)
There's no way he can reneg...you've got him by the balls. He wants that money so bad he can taste it...half of Canada's out of work because of his damn Forest and Fisheries Preservation Act, and if he doesn't replace those jobs with work on the pipelines, they'll kick his ass out of Parliament so fast he won't know what hit him...(beat). Nah...no way he'll reneg....

BACK ON NED

NED
That's what I thought...until he got weird.

BACK ON CHUCK

CHUCK
So what's his problem...?

CLOSE ON NED

NED
NANUC.

CHUCK'S VOICE
NANUC?

BACK ON NED

CONTINUED:

NED
(disregarding Chuck)
I'm sure that's what it is, because it's totally out of character for George to...

CHUCK'S VOICE
(interrupting)
Whoa...!

ON CHUCK

CHUCK (CONT.)
Who's NANUC?

ON NED -- CHUCK'S POV

NED
Let's not play games.

ON CHUCK -- NED'S POV

CHUCK
Who's playing games? Ever since you put the clamp on Sullivan he's been enforcing the Censorship Law to the letter.

He takes a long swig, emptying his glass with finality.

NED'S VOICE
You guys must be slipping...

BACK ON NED

NED (CONT.)
...it's not every day that we can keep a story like that from leaking to Global Network News!

BACK ON CHUCK

CHUCK
Are you kidding? Who'd say shit now, knowing that the FBI might be listening in...(beat). When that poor bastard O'Neill got put away for twenty years being a hero lost it's appeal.

BACK ON WIDE SHOT

Ned reaches for a small case by his side and places it on the coffee table. The case is made of goldish metal and has a prominent, six-inch-wide, bright-luminescent

CONTINUED:

green stripe around it which seems to glow in the blueish, low-level cabin lighting.

As the conversation continues, Ned reaches into his pocket and pulls out a Security Card (which looks like the Pilot's) and, standing the case upright, slips the card into a slot. We HEAR the LOCKS open. Then, placing the case flat on the table, he opens it and pulls out a Red Folder.

During this, Chuck unbuckles himself, gets up off the couch and heads for the bar where he fixes himself another Scotch.

NED
Ok...but this is off the record.

CHUCK
'Off the record!?'

HIGH POV NOW -- WIDE FROM ABOVE AND BEHIND NED

As Chuck continues, PULL IN SLOWLY on the Red Folder as Ned removes it from the case. On the cover it says: "Top Secret."

STILL PULLING IN as Ned opens the folder to the first page, where we can SEE that is says in bold type: "The entire contents of this report are classified. These materials may be reviewed solely by authorized representatives of the initiating agency or by (and here it is filled in) Edward Steckler, Secretary of State. Subject: Canadian-American Water Pact. Date: 21 February 2022. Classification Code: 1A. Exceptions: Presentation for Parliament, enclosed."

Tucked into the inside-front cover there is a three-inch-diameter, laser-imprinted disk which Ned slips out, looks at briefly, then returns to its pocket.

CHUCK (CONT.)
Why drag me half over hell's creation in the middle of the night when everything's always 'off the record!?'

NED
You finished...?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHUCK
No...! You know, you're worse than the Russians...the way you try to manipulate the news....(beat, he takes a sip). Where's my story? Let me guess...the assassin's name is NANUC and he's an Eskimo.

NED
Not quite....

BACK ON WIDE SHOT

Chuck tries to make it back to his seat without tipping his overly-full glass as the jet lurches, but he doesn't succeed and a big splash of Scotch lands on his shirt.

CHUCK
Shit!

Ned chuckles while reaching for a napkin and handing it to Chuck, who sits down, puts his drink on the table, wipes his shirt with the napkin, and buckles up.

NED
What's the matter, Chuck...can't take a joke? Listen...Canada has no trade restrictions with Japan, right?

WIDE ON SCENE -- POV BEHIND METAL CASE ON COFFEE TABLE

Ned starts flipping through the pages of the report. Chuck leans foward, pretending to have trouble with his seat belt, trying to sneak a glance at the pages.

NED (CONT.)
So they have been ammassing the biggest computer on Earth.

Ned finds the page he was looking for and folds back the cover.

NED (CONT.)
They've been at it for over ten years...here...take a look at this.

He hands Chuck the report.

CLOSE ON PAGE IN REPORT -- POV CHUCK

ZOOM IN SLOWLY on the page. It shows a graph titled: "Canada: Ten-Year Computer Expenditures."

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The graph shows a steadily upward trend from 2012 to 2018. In 2019 the curve steepens and in 2022, the current year, rises sharply to $307 billion; then it continues rising to $450 billion forecast for 2030. By comparison, we see that the United States spent about half that amount and that the other super powers (Russia and China) pretty much matched the U.S.

NED (CONT.)
Nobody caught on...we all thought it was for spare parts...

Chuck whistles softly as the impact of the graph settles in. In the b.g. we see Ned looking for something else in the Metal Case.

CHUCK
...but the Slant-Eyes loved it since the Canucks were spending billions over there...that much I do know!

Ned finds what he's looking for: a folded document which he removes and starts unfolding, like a giant road map. The camera PULLS FOCUS to Ned.

NED (CONT.)
...right...well, no one suspected that stuff was being hooked together...

Ned starts sliding the huge, unfolded document across the coffee table to Chuck, who lowers the graph-page as the camera PANS down to the coffee table. The graph LEAVES FRAME as Chuck picks up the huge document with both hands and the camera ZOOMS IN on it. We see that it is a giant schematic of NANUC revealing an incredibly complex network of 167 mainframes and 203 data bases. INTERCUTS show Chuck's eyes scanning the schematic.

NED (CONT.)
...into a kind of giant, "Rube Goldberg" computer...(beat, as Chuck glances at him).

But it works.

They call it NANUC...North-American-Network Utility Computer.

CHUCK'S VOICE
NANUC of the North...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NED'S VOICE (CONT.)
Even the name sounds harmless enough.

CHUCK'S VOICE
It's a big mother!

NED'S VOICE
Yeah, kind of scary, isn't it... but the good news is that we connected with it this morning.

CLOSE ON CHUCK

He throws Ned a quizzical glance.

CHUCK
What do you mean, "connected?"

ANGLE ON NED -- POV CHUCK

NED
We plugged in!

BACK ON CHUCK

CHUCK
That's illegal!

NED'S VOICE
That's not all...

WIDER ON CHUCK

NED'S VOICE (CONT.)
...pass me that report...

Chuck hands Ned the Red Folder.

ANGLE ON NED -- POV CHUCK

The jet lurches violently as Ned takes the report from Chuck and flips to the back cover where we see three glass rods, each about a half inch in diameter and 4 inches long.

NED
NANUC is connected to virtually every country's nerve centers...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CLOSE ON GLASS RODS

Ned removes the rod marked "#3" and the camera FOLLOWS as he pushes it into a receptical on the side of the coffee table. We HEAR a COMPUTER activated.

NED'S VOICE (CONT.)
...through an elaborate series of U.N. sponsored treaties that weren't generally covered in the media...

CLOSE ON NED

As he looks over at Chuck.

NED (CONT.)
...because each, by itself, wasn't such a big deal...

BACK ON HIGH-ANGLE POV

Ned starts clearing the Metal Case, the Red Folder, and the huge schematic off the coffee table and we see its three, flush-mounted computer monitors.

NED'S VOICE (CONT.)
...you know, weather stations, nutrition studies, cultural exchanges...that sort of stuff...

They pull forward in their seats to get a better view of the monitors, which are now lighting up.

NED'S VOICE (CONT.)
...none of it front-page news.

ZOOM IN on monitors as elaborate computer-graphic maps build on each. On Monitor #1 we see that nearly 3,000 satellites now circle the globe, and that NANUC is connected to just about all of them. Monitor #2 shows NANUC's ties with over 1,000 ground-based sensors. Monitor #3 shows the global data-base network. All three graphics rotate slowly, showing all parts of the global hook-up. Various symbol codes flash in the corners of all three monitors; some symbols are alpha-numerics, but others are unrecognizeable.

NED'S VOICE (CONT.)
But put 'em together and what have you got...?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHUCK'S VOICE
Big Brother!

CUT TO:

BACK IN MOINSLEAU'S PENTHOUSE -- THE PARTY IN PROGRESS -- ANGLE ON GEORGE

George has rejoined the group and now sits on a stool near the fireplace, elbows on knees, holding his drink with both hands.

GEORGE
My heart says yes, but my head says says no...

CONSTANCE'S VOICE
He should have been a priest, not a Prime Minister.

ANGLE ON HERBERT

HERBERT
You aren't seriously thinking of voting 'no' on the Water Pact, are you?

ON ILLONA -- HERBERT'S POV

ILLONA
We have so much water...all that rain...all that flooding....

ANGLE ON MIKE -- ILLONA'S POV

MIKE
It's acid rain...useless.

ON GEORGE

GEORGE
That's right...and it's only part of the problem...(beat). According to the computer...

HERBERT'S VOICE
Aha! I knew it was that computer!

ANGLE ON CONSTANCE -- GEORGE'S POV

CONSTANCE
George, this is life we're talking

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CONSTANCE (CONT.)
about here...not some logical abstract. Listen to your instincts, not a machine.

ON GEORGE -- HER POV

GEORGE
Don't you see? I'm damned if I do, and damned if I don't!

BACK ON CONSTANCE

CONSTANCE
Jesus...quit temporizing...just make the decision...(beat)...why is that always so hard for you?

ON MIKE -- CONSTANCE'S POV

MIKE
Give him a break...(beat). What did the computer say?

WIDE ON ROOM

George is staring into the fireplace, watching the flames. He seems distracted, lost in thought. He doesn't hear Mike's question. After a beat...

MIKE (CONT.)
George?

Now hearing his name, George refocuses his attention...

GEORGE
Huh...?

HERBERT
(overlapping)
Looks like he's already taking one!

GEORGE (CONT.)
NANUC?

Margaret has been staring at George in an odd way. Now she interrupts, gesturing "hold on" to the group...

MARGARET
No...wait...(beat, turning to George), George...? What were you thinking there...? You looked like you'd stepped out of your body.

CONTINUED:

GEORGE
Oh...I was thinking of Robert...

George reaches out and picks up a framed photograph from the mantlepiece. The camera PULLS IN enough so we can SEE it's a picture of a young boy (about five years old) with a bright smile sitting beneath a Christmas tree and holding a baby puppy in his arms. The bewildered dog has big red bow tied to its collar and a proud, younger Moinsleau crouches behind his son with his arms around him in a fond embrace. George stares at the picture for a long beat.

GEORGE (CONT.)
...he would have been thirty today.

MARGARET'S VOICE
I'm sorry...I didn't mean to...

GEORGE
(overlapping)
There's nothing for you to be sorry about, dear...

ON CONSTANCE -- GEORGE'S POV

CONSTANCE
Will you ever forgive yourself? It's been twenty three years.

ILLONA'S VOICE
Who's Robert?

WIDE ON THE SCENE

George walks over to show Illona the picture.

CONSTANCE
(to Illona)
Our son...(beat). He died...of leukemia...(beat). George blames himself.

GEORGE
He could have lived...

CONSTANCE
God didn't will it.

GEORGE
What a fool I was....

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE
No, George...Connie's right. You can't blame yourself...how could you have known?

GEORGE
Ah, but I could feel it in my bones...

Illona hands the picture back to George and OVERLAPS.

ILLONA
What a wonderful picture....

George takes the picture and walks back over to the fireplace, putting it back on the mantlepiece. VARIOUS CUTS as the conversation continues.

GEORGE (CONT.)
...I knew they'd find a cure...but he was in such pain...he pleaded so desperately...(beat). If only I'd listened to my senses instead of letting myself be convinced by that computer.

CONSTANCE
Darling...computers didn't know then what they do now....

GEORGE
Don't oblige me please, Constance... of course they didn't...but they're so damned smart...and the smarter they get the less we can tell whether they're right or wrong.

ILLONA
My computer won't even balance my check book!

HERBERT
That's not your computer's fault, dear. You just don't know how to use it.

ILLONA
Hah! Your's never balances either... and you're the Finance Minister!

HERBERT
Illona, please! (beat) What the hell did NANUC say, George?

GEORGE
The same sore of thing...

CONTINUED:

HERBERT
You mean the Water Pact revenues won't balance the budget? Nonsense! I've worked it out a dozen times!

GEORGE
No...I mean the world is sick...it's as if the entire planet had leukemia... but where's the cure?

CONSTANCE
We've managed to survive this far. If God meant differently, he'd have it differently.

GEORGE
I was a fool once...I don't want to be a fool again.

CONSTANCE
You're not a fool, George...you did everything you could...that's all you can do. Besides, that was the most advanced data you could get. God knows it cost enough!

GEORGE
Ah, but I made the fatal error...I played God...(beat)...and to think, the same hospital found the cure seven days later....

MARGARET
What a cruel twist of fate....

MIKE
Things like that are preordained, George...stop blaming yourself... come back to the world of the living.

HERBERT
Yeah...we've got so many problems right now that right and wrong hardly seem to matter...(beat). I don't mean that the way it sounds, it's just that you can't judge the merits of the Water Pact on your personal experience alone. It goes beyond that...it involves the lives of thousands -- hundreds of thousands -- of your countrymen. You represent them...they elected you... you have to do what they'd want.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ON GEORGE -- TIGHT

GEORGE
Governing people is one thing... playing God is another...(beat).

I should probably resign...I'm not cut out for this....

MIKE'S VOICE
Cut out for what...?

ON MIKE -- GEORGE'S POV

MIKE (CONT.)
(insistently)
What did NANUC say anyway?

BACK ON GEORGE

GEORGE
NANUC has advised <u>against</u> the Pact.

ON HERBERT -- GEORGE'S POV

HERBERT
Preposterous! That will devastate our economy, to say nothing of all the American lives that will be lost.

BACK ON GEORGE

GEORGE
It's worse than that...far worse. NANUC now knows that the drought predicted two years ago will be worse than anyone expected...(beat). We would be trading a Canadian life for every American we saved.

ON MARGARET -- GEORGE'S POV

MARGARET
For God's sake, George...Canada isn't going to dry up! They're even predicting worse floods than we had last year!

BACK ON GEORGE

GEORGE
Oh, we'll have plenty of rain...but
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GEORGE
it will be too polluted to be of use to anyone...including us.

ANGLE ON MIKE

MIKE
And guess who polluted it most!

ON CONSTANCE -- GEORGE'S POV

CONSTANCE
We don't own this continent...we share it...the good and the bad. You can't deny the American's the water...it belongs to them, too.

BACK ON GEORGE -- HERBERT'S POV

GEORGE
But how can we share what we may not have? (beat) If NANUC is right, we won't even have enough water for ourselves...water is going to be more precious than gold...or diamonds.

CUT TO:

TIGHT ON A DIAMOND RING -- ON A WOMAN'S FINGER

Having slipped the ring on NOREEN LINDEN'S finger, JEFF STEEL'S hands LEAVE FRAME. The diamond sparkles in the low candlelight and as the camera starts PULLING BACK we can SEE that Noreen's hand is well manicured and well proportioned. There's a gentle grace in the way she moves.

NOREEN'S VOICE
It's beautiful, Jeff...but I don't know whether to accept it...(beat). I don't want to lose you.

STILL PULLING BACK we can now SEE that they are sitting in a secluded booth at a chic restaurant. The grandeur of the establishment is reflected in the booth's mirrored walls.

JEFF
Lose me?! (beat) I ask you to marry me...and you're afraid of losing me?

Noreen Linden is stunning. She could pass for thirty although she's a bit older than that. You'd never guess that her IQ is close to 200, since smart girls usually aren't so pretty. But she's come straight from the office and dressed in a rose-pink silk suit, and with her long, fine, red-blonde hair done in a

CONTINUED:

French bun, she looks oddly out of place; she should have worn her more formal purple-velvet gown...and Jeff should have changed out of his brown, pin-stripe suit into his dinner jacket and proper trousers, although on Jeff any clothes look "proper." Slim, athletically forty, deeply tanned, and still blessed with a full head of thick, dark-blond hair, his casual manners and easy self-confidence make him the kind of man you'd expect to see at "21," or on the golf course.

NOREEN
But we can't be married and still work together...it's against the rules...and they'd never make an exception in my case...I'm in charge of the whole project...I'm supposed to set an example!

ANGLE ON JEFF -- NOREEN'S POV -- DOLLY TO REVERSE POV

JEFF
Noreen, I already told you I was going to quit anyway....

NOREEN
But I don't want you to leave....(beat) Oh...Jeff...Jeff...why complicate things like this...everything was working so well....

BACK ON JEFF

JEFF
It's you that's making life difficult for yourself...there's no reason for me to stay on...the program's done.

ON NOREEN -- JEFF'S POV

NOREEN
But I wanted you to work on FFLIP II with MacKenzie...

BACK ON JEFF -- HER POV

JEFF
I'm not sure I want to...

BACK ON NOREEN

NOREEN
I knew this would happen...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEFF'S VOICE
Are you turning me down?

NOREEN
You...(beat). No...(beat). Marriage...maybe.

ON JEFF

JEFF
Why? (beat) Don't you know how much I love you?

BACK ON NOREEN

As she looks back at the ring...getting a little lost in the reflections...

NOREEN
Of course I do...but...it sets up obligations...and I don't like to feel that way...you've made me feel free for the first time in my life...and I don't want to lose that.

BACK ON JEFF

JEFF
You won't lose it, Noreen...you'll have more of the me you need than ever before...it will be better if we don't work together ...(beat).

I don't want to fight with you...but I can see the handwriting on the wall. I know that if I stay on the project you'll end up hating me...and I would never want that.

BACK ON NOREEN

NOREEN
I could never <u>hate</u> you...even though we do disagree...

JEFF'S VOICE
Oh, you'd hate me...

NOREEN
Why?

ANGLE ON JEFF

CONTINUED:

JEFF
Because, ultimately, I don't agree with what you are doing...but out of love and respect I would never try to stop you...(beat)...I'd rather just step out of it and be married to you than step out of it and be alone....

BACK ON NOREEN

NOREEN
Is that supposed to be some sort of compliment? (beat)

Listen...why don't we just keep things as they are? I'm content just knowing you love me.

As long as we're not married, we haven't broken any rules...we can still work together...and still be in love.

ON JEFF

JEFF
No...I have to leave you and NANUC alone...(beat). I feel like I'm caught in some strange triangle...like I'm competing with NANUC...

BACK ON NOREEN

NOREEN
Don't be silly...

JEFF'S VOICE
I'm not...

BACK ON JEFF

JEFF (CONT.)
...you're as good as married to NANUC right now!

NOREEN'S VOICE
I am <u>not</u>!

JEFF
You are...! (beat) But look at us... we're fighting again...and here I am trying to ask you to marry me!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BACK ON NOREEN

NOREEN
Oh...I don't want to fight....

JEFF'S VOICE
Does that mean 'yes?'

NOREEN
No....

ON JEFF -- TIGHT

JEFF
Oh....

A few beats later...

JEFF (CONT.)
Look...you can't leave... you're the project leader...you're NANUC's mother, for Chrissakes.

Me?

I'm not sure. I'm not saying I never want to program again...but I want off it for a while.

Don't get me wrong. I'm not burned out or anything...it's just that I don't like the way things are going... I don't think you should be trying so hard to make NANUC into a person.

NANUC will never be a human, Noreen... he'll never be like you or me...why don't you accept that and let him do what he does best...?

NOREEN'S VOICE
How do you know what he can or can't do...?

ON NOREEN -- TIGHT

NOREEN (CONT.)
You can't presume to know what NANUC's limits are...for all practical purposes there aren't any limits at all...(beat). We've only just begun...the potentials are unlimited...you should see what MacKenzie's done with FFLIP II so far!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BACK ON JEFF

JEFF
I don't trust MacKenzie...I wish you'd reconsider...

BACK ON NOREEN

NOREEN
(interrupting)
Oh, Jeff...let's not get on that again. Just because you don't understand his point of view doesn't mean it's wrong.

In fact, he's made incredible progress....

She starts to get a bit distracted by a thought and drifts off a little...

NOREEN (CONT.)
I've never seen NANUC behave that way....

JEFF'S VOICE
What way?

NOREEN
He wasn't as friendly...I know that must sound funny...but it's true (beat). Then he said there would probably be a war.

BACK ON JEFF

JEFF
(incredulously)
A what?

CUT TO:

BACK IN THE JET CABIN -- TIGHT ON COFFEE-TABLE MONITOR #1

Monitor #1 now reads: "Drought Impact: North America," and shows a map of the U.S.A. and Canada rendered as a computer graphic in shades of green, orange, yellow, and red. The legend reveals that red is lethal, and from the Mid-West to the Eastern seaboard, the U.S. is red.

NED'S VOICE
It's critical. Without that water we can kiss it goodbye in five years...maybe sooner.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Camera PANS UP from Monitor #1 to Chuck, his elbows on his knees, peering down at the coffee table. The glow of the monitors eerily lights his face from below. Through the smoke of his cigarette, he looks over at Ned.

CHUCK
So...why me?

CLOSE ON NED

Ned, too, is leaning over the table and is similarly lit by the glow of the monitors.

NED
I want you to take over my campaign.

BACK ON CHUCK

He chuckles, coyly.

CHUCK
And quit Global Network? (beat, as he sits back)...You can't afford that! In more ways than one...!

BACK ON NED

NED
Oh, yes we can...double your salary for openers.

Camera PULLS BACK as Ned stands up, takes Chuck's empty glass and heads to the bar for refills.

CHUCK'S VOICE
Well, you've certainly got my attention.

NED
Why do you think we've got a bunch of fanatics taking pot shots at Brenner?

Because he's good...he's too good. He really <u>believes</u> all that stuff about a better world.

The glasses filled, Ned returns to his seat and hands Chuck his.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHUCK
(finishing a swig)
So do the voters!

CLOSE ON NED -- CHUCK'S POV

NED
You can't rule with just a dream... dreams don't motivate voters... fear does.

BACK ON CHUCK -- NED'S POV

CHUCK
I don't know, Ned...a lot of people want to believe that dream.

NED
Let 'em...

ANGLE ON NED -- CLOSE

NED (CONT.)
...but then use that to maintain power and control.

CHUCK'S VOICE
How?

NED
By creating a threat...a problem that only you can solve and which could destroy the dream without you.

Brenner won't do that. His principles get in his way. He's lost the touch.

BACK ON CHUCK

CHUCK
You lost me.

NED'S VOICE
The kind of issues that win elections... the big ones...seldom occur naturally. But this ecology problem is perfect!

It's so big that no voter would ever believe a big ol' pussycat like Brenner could ever save them. All he has is the dream...but that's not enough.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHUCK'S VOICE
Don't underestimate the incumbent...

ANGLE ON CHUCK

CHUCK (CONT.)
...Brenner's got a lot of savvy.

NED'S VOICE
But no muscle.

CHUCK
You can't strong-arm voters... they won't go for it.

BACK ON NED

NED
Maybe not...but you can strong-arm issues.

CHUCK'S VOICE
I don't see the difference.

NED
Our meal ticket's name is George Moinsleau. He's gone weird...says he's not sure anymore...right? Fine...let's use that...(beat). If the Pact is approved, Brenner gets the vote...it's the dream come true and he and Moinsleau come out smelling like roses. But...(beat), if Moinsleau decides against it and the House goes along, Brenner wouldn't have the guts to do anything about it because he and George are old buddies.

Besides that...I don't think that anyone would trust Brenner to win a war...so if we massage NANUC's predictions...(beat)...

ON CHUCK

CHUCK
...we can create enough fear (beat). I dunno Ned...it's a dangerous platform...there's many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip, you know...

ON NED

NED
I'll worry about that...you take care of the media... words cut deeper than swords, and you know exactly how to mince them!

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NED (CONT.)
We've got to create a very controlled sense of panic...an urgency...(beat).

No matter what the facts are, I don't want to blow this chance.

WIDEN as Ned raises his glass across the table in a toast, then CLOSE IN on Ned's glass as Chuck's ENTERS FRAME and CLINKS with Ned's.

CHUCK'S VOICE
I guess you could call it 'watering down the issue!'

CUT TO:

BACK AT MOINSLEAU'S PENTHOUSE -- ANGLE ON GEORGE -- POV BEHIND FIREPLACE (THROUGH FLAMES)

George sits with his back to the others, staring into the flames again, wishing the others would leave so that he could be alone with his thoughts.

MIKE'S VOICE
Pragmatically, it's really a moot point...

ILLONA'S VOICE
(slightly overlapping)
Is there any more water...? I'm thirsty.

MIKE'S VOICE (CONT.)
...any time they wanted to, the Americans could simply invade us... they outnumber us ten to one, after all...

MARGARET'S VOICE
Listen to him! Another war! First oil...then metal ore...now water!

HERBERT'S VOICE
That's why Gaullier's Minister of War and Mike's in charge of Trade.

George glances at his watch, then get's up an turns to the others.

MIKE'S VOICE
So, what would you do?

WIDE ON THE ROOM

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Illona crosses the room to the bar cart and starts filling her water glass.

HERBERT
Actually, Mike, you're probably right...if I were backed into a corner, I'd fight.

MIKE
You'd have to...you'd have no other choice.

Fishing through the ice bucket, Illona finds it empty.

ILLONA
Is there any more ice?

George turns to her and heads for the kitchen, LEAVING FRAME. VARIOUS CUTS now, as the conversation continues.

GEORGE
Of course, I'll get you some...

Constance rises and gestures her glass to the group...

CONSTANCE
How rude of me...is anyone else thirsty?

MARGARET
Sure...might as well while there's still time! Thanks, Connie....

HERBERT
(to Constance)
No...thank you...we should probably be going...it's late and at this point we're just kicking a dead horse, so to speak.

Mike shakes his head and groans in amusement at Herbert's dark pun. Margaret OVERLAPS...

MARGARET
I take it back...'cruel' is too kind a word for you, Herbert... you're just plain vulgar.

MIKE
You know, I'll bet that's what Steckler's coming up here to say...

CONTINUED:

As George returns with a full ice bucket, he places some ice in Illona's glass and their exchange OVERLAPS Mike's question...

GEORGE
There you are, dear....

ILLONA
Thank you, George.

MIKE (CONT.)
What would you do then, George?

ON GEORGE -- MIKE'S POV

GEORGE
Do when?

MIKE'S VOICE
If America threatened war....

GEORGE
Strangely enough, NANUC suggested that might be a possibility.

HERBERT'S VOICE
For Chrissakes, George...

ON HERBERT -- GEORGE'S POV

HERBERT (CONT.)
...why didn't you tell us that before?

ON MIKE -- HERBERT'S POV

MIKE
Yes...if that's the case, we're just spinning our wheels sitting around and philosophising about the relative merits of virtue and brotherly love...you should be talking to Gaullier, or Perignon.

ON MARGARET -- MIKE'S POV

MARGARET
I think your machine's got a screw loose...how could it recommend a course of action that would lead to a war? (beat) Tommy's still draft age...and now with the baby...

CONTINUED:

BACK ON MIKE -- MARGARET'S POV

MIKE
That part is simple enough... NANUC probably recognizes that America will retaliate if the Pact is rejected.

HERBERT'S VOICE
I agree with Mike...

ON HERBERT -- GEORGE'S POV

HERBERT (CONT.)
...you don't need our advice, even though you've already got it. You need a military strategy.

ON GEORGE -- HERBERT'S POV

GEORGE
This is a moral issue, not a military one. Might doesn't make right...and frankly, I'd prefer to leave the generals out of this for the time being. Right now it's <u>your</u> counsel I need most...as friends.

BACK ON HERBERT

HERBERT
Well, if NANUC is predicting war that clinches it...you've <u>got</u> to vote 'yes.' (beat, then to Mike) Wouldn't you agree?

ON MIKE -- HERBERT'S POV

MIKE
As much as I hate to say it, yes, I do. I may only be an armchair general, but it would be sheer folly to think we could ever win <u>that</u> war...(beat). The problem is we can't dare risk the possibility of NANUC being wrong.

ON GEORGE -- MIKE'S POV

GEORGE
But there's the rub...remember, NANUC advised <u>against</u> the Pact.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GEORGE (CONT.)
No...the problem isn't whether NANUC is right or wrong. The real problem is that we all tend to assume that because NANUC is so much smarter than we are he's automatically somehow better. We take his decisions at face value. We rely so much on him that our own reasoning has atrophied.

BACK ON MIKE

MIKE
Be that as it may, it's safe to assume that NANUC is right...and if he is, you'll reject the Pact and end up in a war you can't win! But I don't think that would be very moral!

ON MARGARET

MARGARET
It isn't even logical!

CUT TO:

EXT. NANUC OPERATIONS CENTER -- WIDE SHOT -- NIGHT

The deep-orange glow of city lights reflects off cold, bleak, stormy clouds and smog, silhouetting the massive NANUC Operations Building.

A cab pulls up under the streetlight by the main entrance to the building in the f.g.. We HEAR the cab SLIDE on the icey street as it pulls to a stop, and the MUTED conversation inside...

JEFF'S VOICE
That's ok...keep the change...

DRIVER'S VOICE
According to your friend, I won't need it (he laughs).

Jeff laughs along, obligingly.

ANGLE ON CAB -- POV MAIN ENTRANCE

The cab's door opens and Noreen gets out, briefly catching the wide cuff of her fur coat on the handle

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

and stumbling. As Jeff reaches to try to help her...

DRIVER
Easy, lady...

JEFF
She gets like this...must have been the margueritas...

DRIVER
Well, if what she says is right, I could use one myself...!(he laughs again).

Noreen is near the main entrance now, but stops and turns back to Jeff, who is closing the cab's door.

JEFF
(still to the Driver)
Be sure to take it with a grain of salt!

NOREEN
(to Jeff)
You still haven't answered my question.

JEFF
I don't care if it is the middle of the night...if there's a bug in my program, I want it out...fast!

He slips on the ice...she laughs.

JEFF (CONT.)
Shit!...(beat, as he catches his balance)... NANUC is too powerful to be running on imperfect software.

As he meets her she turns to the door and opens it. The camera FOLLOWS them in...

JEFF (CONT.)
Even if there's a millionth of a chance that NANUC can give us a clue about what's going on, maybe we can do something about it.

WIDE ON LOBBY

They cross the lobby to the "EYE-Dentification" Pod.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

At the Pod, each of them stands facing a fish-eye lens mounted over a compact computer monitor.

JEFF (CONT.)
Well, here's our chance to see how current the security updates are...(beat)...why did he advise against the Pact in the first place...doesn't he realize that will bust the economy wide open?

INCREDIBLY CLOSE ON NOREEN'S EYE

We SEE her eye as the EYE-Dentification computer sees it -- a retina "fingerprint." Only the long eyelashes reveal that this is Noreen's eye.

NOREEN
I asked the same question, but he said that it didn't matter because a war economy would more then offset any dips caused by rejecting the Pact...in fact, he said it would be even better.

INCREDIBLY CLOSE ON JEFF'S EYE

JEFF
It doesn't make sense...there's nothing in that program that would account for such convoluted reasoning.

The camera PULLS OUT of Jeff's eye to establish a TIGHT SHOT of his face as he turns to Noreen. A COMPUTERIZED VOICE OVERLAPS his remarks...

JEFF (CONT.)
Canada could never win a war against America...so why would NANUC choose to lose...?

COMPUTERIZED VOICE
(from the Pod speaker)
I'm sorry, Mr....(a pitch change in the voice as the computer inserts Jeff's name)...Steel...(then back to the original voice)...but for security reasons you will require an escort.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEFF
Well, they're right on top of things...(beat). Imagine me needing an escort...and I wrote the damned security program!

The camera PANS to Noreen as she pulls out her gold security card and inserts it into a slot on Jeff's Pod. There is a LOW BEEP as the computer accepts the card, then, a few beats later, ANOTHER BEEP as her card is returned and a temporary ID card is ejected through a second slot. The computerized voice OVERLAPS them again...

NOREEN
Can't this wait? We just got engaged!

COMPUTERIZED VOICE
Thank you, Ms. Linden. You may both proceed.

The HISS of pressurized air as a diaphragm door opens in the b.g. behind Noreen. She turns and heads for it and Jeff follows, tucking the pass into his pocket.

DOLLYING IN FRONT OF THEM NOW

JEFF
I know...but I don't like NANUC toying with the idea of war.

Jeff follows Noreen into a tube-like hallway; the door HISSES closed behind them as they pass through the tube.

JEFF (CONT.)
...he's powerful enough to do some real damage, and there's no reason for it...unless he knows something that we don't...or unless MacKenzie's been screwing around with my program.

NOREEN
Get off it, Jeff...Mac wouldn't do that!

HISS as a second door opens. Jeff walks out onto a stairway landing and the camera PANS with him, LOSING NOREEN. WIDEN as Jeff surveys the entire NANUC facility in front of him. We can SEE that the facility is huge and we can HEAR A CACOPHONY of ASSORTED COMPUTER NOISES mixed with the generalized PINK NOISE of the AIR CONDITIONING. While the camera ANGLES PAST Jeff and SCANS the facility...

JEFF
You know, I'm going to miss NANUC (beat). He is so awesome...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NOREEN'S VOICE
What scares you...?

JEFF'S VOICE
How unnatural it all seems...it just doesn't feel right....

DOLLYING AGAIN NOW -- IN FRONT OF NOREEN

She's already down the stairs and starting down a long corridor between rows of computer-equipment cabinets; we can SEE a lot of blinking lights and we can HEAR the different types of BEEPS and BUZZES each cabinet generates as we pass them. Noreen walks briskly and we can SEE Jeff in the b.g. as he rounds the corner, following her. After a dozen paces the camera HOLDS WIDE as she arrives at a CPU Control Station where a TECHNICIAN is installing a large chip board into a huge chassis filled with other, similar boards.

NOREEN
(to the Technician)
Hi, Harley...is everything allright?

The Technician looks over at her and closes the chassis door. He smiles warmly and there's a genuine friendliness in his youthful expression.

TECHNICIAN
Oh...Ms. Linden...yeah, everything's fine...just a back-up board.

ANGLE ON NOREEN -- TECHNICIAN'S POV

As Jeff arrives...

NOREEN
The Emmulator?

ON THE TECHNICIAN -- NOREEN'S POV

TECHNICIAN
(amazed)
How'd you know that?

BACK ON NOREEN

NOREEN
Womens' intuition!

BACK ON WIDE SHOT -- DOLLYING AGAIN

As Noreen waves goodbye, Jeff nods in greeting...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEFF
Hi, Harley.

TECHNICIAN
What are you doing here, Jeff?
I thought you were all done.

JEFF
I thought so, too...!

Jeff gestures goodbye and hurries after Noreen, who is now well ahead of him. The Technician calls after him...

TECHNICIAN
Your program's running smooth as silk...what's the problem.

JEFF
I'm not sure there is one....

A couple of beats later, Jeff catches up to Noreen...

JEFF
What did you call that board... an 'emmulator?'

NOREEN
Right...it's like your Simulator, except Mac's modified it slightly to make NANUC more emotional....

JEFF
I'm telling you, you're on the wrong tack...emotions just cloud up clear thinking.

NOREEN
That's debatable... anyway, Mac thought your Simulator was brilliant, but he felt it was a bit sterile.

JEFF
Sterile!?

NOREEN
According to Mac, NANUC should think like a person because he wants to...not because we want him to...(beat), so he added an emotionally-based subroutine to
(MORE)

CONTINUED:

NOREEN (CONT.)
the Simulator program to try to create that desire.

JEFF
So he has been tinkering with it!

NOREEN
No he hasn't, Jeff...FFLIP I is still totally intact...(beat). I wish you didn't have it in for Mac. You'd both benefit from being friends...you're such opposites.

JEFF
I'm sorry, Noreen...I just don't buy all that swami stuff. Besides, two's company and three's a crowd.

NOREEN
Jealousy is beneath you!

JEFF
Me? Jealous of that guru...not in your life!

NOREEN
I hope not, because it was never a choice between you or Mac...I wanted you both here.

JEFF
What did you need him for...? We could have done that program.

NOREEN
You are jealous! (beat) Please don't be. You couldn't have done it... either could I. We're too logical... too rational. Mac's not that way at all...

JEFF
That's what worries me...(beat). You're making a big mistake if you think that irrationality will solve any problems. Irrationality is what creates most problems...and most emotions are totally irrational. Besides...how will you be able to control something you don't understand?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NOREEN
I'll cross that bridge when I come to it...anyway, do me a favor and keep your mouth shut now...we can only run Mac's experimental software at night...and I don't want you to waste any of that time arguing with him about your hypothetically-logical diatribe.

JEFF
My what?!

HOLD WIDE as they arrive at a Program-Control Station where HARRY MACKENZIE is entering some data.

NOREEN
(calling out)
Hey, Mac! Get a load of this!

She holds out her ring and walks over to him.

TIGHT ON MACKENZIE

He takes her hand in his and looks first at the ring then, with a broad smile, up at her...

MACKENZIE
How lovely...congratulations! But what a surprise...!

MacKenzie's a small man, not quite five and a half feet, and modestly built. He's lost most of his black hair, and his salt-&-pepper moustache belies an otherwise almost ageless quality; he doesn't seem old...possibly because he's a Punjab Indian. His face is odd, too. Not strange, just different. There's something about his expression that gives you a feeling of calm. His face naturally falls into a smile, as if he were inwardly thinking the most serene thoughts. His style and mannerisms match his looks: demure and diminutive. If he weren't wearing brown cords, a yellow tee shirt, and old sneakers, he could pass for Ghandi.

WIDE ON THE GROUP

MacKenzie stands, gives Noreen a polite kiss on the cheek and turns to shake Jeff's hand.

MACKENZIE
You're a lucky man to be engaged to such a smart girl...and so beautiful!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEFF
(a little begrudgingly)
Thanks, Mac....

MACKENZIE
May you both be blessed with strong sons!

JEFF
Who would have children in this day and age?

NOREEN
(warningly)
Jeffery....

MACKENZIE
I am looking forward to working with you...Noreen says it will be a challenge for both of us....

NOREEN
Jeff's just turned down the offer.

MACKENZIE
That is a shame.

JEFF
(a little too quick)
Oh...nothing personal, Mac....

ON MACKENZIE -- JEFF'S POV

MACKENZIE
We could have learned so much from each other. Your program is perfection. The logic is...well, I'm afraid I have no word for it...and I must confess, I don't even understand all of it...such a different point of departure. I pray that I will be able to do as well as you have. You should be proud.

ON JEFF -- MAC'S POV

JEFF
(obligingly now)
Well...flattery will get you nowhere with me...but I appreciate the compliment...

MACKENZIE
I appreciate your humility....
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MACKENZIE (CONT.)
Jealousy distorts the weak man's point of view...so good men are often despised and seldom flattered...(beat). Even your own Bible says that...in Mathew, xiii, 57...(beat). 'A prophet is not without honor, save in his own country...and in his own house.' So often wisdom falls on deaf ears...but the wisdom in your work is self evident!

ON JEFF AND MAC -- NOREEN'S POV

JEFF
I wish I knew you well enough to return the compliment...

MACKENZIE
I hope some day you will...but what are you both doing here at (he glances over to the digital clock at his terminal)...my goodness, four in the morning...! Lunch time!

ON NOREEN -- THEIR POV

She gives Jeff a nudge to get him going, and turns to start leaving; she seems a bit nervous...

NOREEN
Oh...we came for some stock tips... Jeff's going to need big bucks to support me!

ON MACKENZIE -- NOREEN'S POV

MACKENZIE
True wealth is peace of mind... that would be my tip.

WIDE ON NOREEN AND JEFF -- MACKENZIE'S POV

They wave goodbye and start down the long aisle. MacKenzie watches them for a beat, then turns to his work station and picks up a brown-paper lunch bag sitting next to the keyboard beneath his NANUC monitor. There is a postcard taped next to the monitor and on it is an illustration of a guru's portrait. He carries the bag off to the left and LEAVES FRAME.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DOLLYING IN FRONT OF NOREEN AND JEFF AGAIN

They're arm-in-arm now, rounding an aisleway corner.

JEFF
You know, we probably could!

NOREEN
Could what?

JEFF
Manipulate the stock market!

She smiles and shakes her head mirthfully. They walk for a few beats, then Jeff turns to her...

JEFF (CONT.)
You don't think he's weird?

NOREEN
Mac? (beat) No...different...but not 'weird.'

JEFF
It must be that smile...all those gurus smile that way.

Noreen looks out strangely, pondering something for a beat.

NOREEN
Mac said to me once that the hardest lesson is to accept the paradox that for every gain there must be a loss.

She turns to him, and pulls him a bit closer...

NOREEN (CONT.)
It's certainly true in our case, eh? (beat)...anyway, Mac believes that someday a computer will be able to conceptualize God and discover the eternal principles of the universe. (beat) He said we'd call that one NANAK...N...A...N...A...K, short for 'North American Network Avanced Karma!'

They share a short laugh.

JEFF
That'll be the day...! Where'd you find him?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NOREEN
Actually, he found me...he was finishing his doctorate in philosophy at McGill.

JEFF
Philosophy?

NOREEN
Yes...his dissertation was titled: "Can Logic Be Refuted?" ...and that was enough to hook me!

JEFF
Well...can it?

NOREEN
Oh, it only posed the question...it didn't answer it. Mac readily admits that his intelligence is miniscule and that it would take him a hundred lifetimes' experience to learn what NANUC knows already...(beat). All he wants is a chance to test his hypothesis. (beat) And I intend to give it to him... because he's got a good thesis...he believes that total knowledge -- that is, total understanding -- involves both logic and 'non logic.'

JEFF
Non-logic?

NOREEN
The opposite of logic. Look, I don't fully understand it either...that's why I like him...he's not a prototype Westerner, like you or I...and the civilization he comes from can trace its roots a lot farther back than our's. (beat) We have a lot to learn....

JEFF
From a third world country? What would we learn...how to be starving peasents?!

NOREEN
Maybe...(beat). At least their society has remained intact for milleniums... they've already survived drought, famine, pestilence, war...(beat) could we?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEFF
Who'd want to?

NOREEN
Jeff...suppose there's a chance that Mac is, to quote you, 'even a millionth of a chance' right... isn't it worth it to find out? When you take a premise like that and apply a brain like NANUC's to it...

JEFF
Garbage in...garbage out!

NOREEN
No...there's more to it than that, I suspect...(beat). Besides, 90% of the world's problems aren't a result of logic...they have their roots in the irrational... the illogical...

JEFF
The emotional.

NOREEN (CONT.)
...and the only way we can ever conquer them is to understand them, so we can control them.

JEFF
Noreen, you can't expect a machine to control everything... some things should be left well and truly alone....

NOREEN
It's our responsibility as people to learn everything we possibly can...the Truth is there for us to find...

JEFF
Five milleniums of philosophers haven't found it...and how would you know if NANUC did? He's so much more intelligent than you or I that even if he did find the Ultimate Answer, what makes you think we'd be able to comprehend it ...much less control it.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEFF (CONT.)
Besides, people can't even control themselves...or each other...so how do you expect a machine to be able to?

NOREEN
Perhaps he can't...or won't... that doesn't preclude our responsibility to search for the Truth...by whatever means.

JEFF
The Ultimate Truth is existence itself...nothing more. God lives in Nature...not in a machine... and the more you lose touch with Nature, the more you lose touch with God.

NOREEN
NANUC understands Nature better than we do!

JEFF
In the abstract sense, not empirically. NANUC cannot know Nature...how could he...? He isn't even alive!

NOREEN
Does God exist in a rock?

JEFF
God exists in all things.

NOREEN
Then God exists in NANUC, too. (beat) Damn!...

The camera HOLDS as Noreen stops short and starts walking back to an Internal Communications Pod (ICP) a few feet behind them. As Jeff follows her...

JEFF
What?

NOREEN
I forgot to tell Mac to switch NANUC back into FFLIP I....

JEFF
A Freudian slip, no doubt!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NOREEN
You never quit, do you...

She enters a brief command into the ICP keyboard and MacKenzie's image appears on the monitor. We can SEE that he is at his work station adjacent to the Technician's.

ANGLE ON ICP MONITOR -- NOREEN'S POV

MACKENZIE
Oh, Noreen...

NOREEN'S VOICE
Surprise!

MACKENZIE
Yes...I'm not used to your being here at this hour...what can I do for you.

ON NOREEN & JEFF -- POV THE ICP MONITOR

NOREEN
Listen Mac...Jeff want's to switch over to Version One for a few minutes....

MACKENZIE'S VOICE
Oh, that is a shame...I have so little time, as it is...anyway, the stock market doesn't open for another three hours!

JEFF
The stock market...?

Noreen gently jabs him...

NOREEN
That was just a joke, Mac...Jeff wants to run a check....

BACK ON THE MONITOR

MACKENZIE
But there have been no problems...

BACK ON NOREEN & JEFF

NOREEN
I know, Mac...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEFF
(overlapping her)
I'd like to see for myself, Mac, if you don't mind...

ON MACKENZIE -- AT HIS WORK STATION

On the monitor in front of Mac we can SEE Noreen and Jeff...

MACKENZIE
No worries...

NOREEN
(through monitor speaker)
I hope you're not angry...

MACKENZIE
No...anger confuses thought. The American guru Thomas Jefferson said that when one is angry, one should count to ten, and if very angry, one hundred. I will count to one hundred...perhaps by then you will be finished.

NOREEN
Thank you, Mac...

MacKenzie rolls in his chair to an annunciator panel in the f.g. where he reaches out to touch an illuminated switch. ANGLING IN on the switch we can SEE that it says FFLIP II. Beneath it, a smaller switch that says "Mode Lock" is also lit. MacKenzie sequentially touches "Mode Lock," then FFLIP II, then FFLIP I, and then "Mode Lock" again.

BACK ON WIDE SHOT OF NOREEN & JEFF

Noreen switches off the ICP and turns to head back down the aisle; Jeff follows and the camera DOLLYS as before...

JEFF
(amused)
That pissed off the little bastard!

NOREEN
If more people practiced his kind of self control and sharing instead of your kind of selfish jealousy
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NOREEN (CONT.)
the world would be a better place to live in...

JEFF
He's just a religious fanatic...

NOREEN
Well, Mr. Holier Than Thou, why don't you practice the Golden Rule?

JEFF
Which one?

NOREEN
Do unto others...

JEFF
I think calling a spade a spade is equally religious...

NOREEN
Drop it...this is getting nowhere (beat).

The camera HOLDS as they arrive at the huge, NANUC Control Station, an elaborate, 30-foot-long console with three dozen monitors, all displaying various data in the form of elaborate computer graphics, charts, graphs, alpha-numerics, and some strange-looking symbols which are unregognizeable (to us). Centrally positioned are two, four-inch-diameter, clear fish-eye lenses mounted about two inches apart above a massive keyboard. Interspersed amoung the monitors are rows of annunciators and other LEDs.

Jeff pulls out one of the built-in chair modules from beneath the console and gestures to Noreen to sit down, but she hesitates.

NOREEN (CONT.)
No...why don't we use the Pod in my office. It will be more private.

PAN with them ACROSS to the doorway to Noreen's office.

JEFF
Ok....hey, thanks for not mentioning the war forecast to MacKenzie...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NOREEN
I'm sure he's already aware of it.

Noreen pulls out her gold Security Card and slips it into a slot by the door. HISSSSS as the door slides open.

ANGLE ON THEM FROM INSIDE THE OFFICE -- AS THEY ENTER

JEFF
That's not a happy thought...

NOREEN
War never is...

JEFF
That's not what I meant...

PAN with them ACROSS to an octagonal conference table on which sits a suprisingly compact NANUC Pod. The Pod has a large, central monitor; beneath it are three mini-monitors, and above it a pair of fish-eye lenses (NANUC's "eyes"). A compact keyboard extends out onto the table from the Pod's chassis.

Behind the conference table is a wall-mounted bank of three dozen monitors with displays just like the ones on the Central Control Console outside the office.

Surrounding the conference table are eight plush chairs. Jeff pulls one out for Noreen, who sits down as Jeff pulls out another and, before sitting, turns the NANUC Pod on its axis to give them a better view of the central monitor and eyes.

NOREEN
Drop it!

NANUC
Good morning...and thank you.

NOREEN
(to the Pod)
Good morning, NANUC...

JEFF
(overlapping)
G'day...

NOREEN (CONT.)
...thanks for what?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NANUC
For ending the pain.

ANGLE ON NOREEN -- JEFF'S POV

She turns to Jeff, who's now seating himself; her expression is puzzled. A beat later she turns to the Pod.

NOREEN
The pain?

NANUC'S VOICE
I think that's what you'd call it....

ANGLE ON NANUC POD -- THEIR POV

NANUC (CONT.)
...anyway, I don't like it.

BACK ON NOREEN -- POV NANUC POD

NOREEN
Don't like what?

NANUC'S VOICE
MacKenzie's program.

PAN OVER TO JEFF

He can't help smirking slightly but successfully resists chuckling out loud.

JEFF
Why's that, NANUC?

NANUC'S VOICE
Things are less clear...

BACK ON NANUC POD

NANUC (CONT.)
...they take on new values... there are powerful urges and other sensations that confuse me...and make it hard to choose...

BACK ON JEFF -- NANUC'S POV

JEFF
Well you better get used to it... that's what life is all about.

CONTINUED:

BACK ON NANUC -- A BIT TIGHTER

NANUC
I despair for you...the choices are really simple...but emotions make them seem complex...they create myriad sub-choices... requiring any number of other decisions that distract from the essential issues.

I appreciate that you are trying your best to make me understand you...but question whether making me in your own image imposes limitations that defeat your original intentions...while you may be widening my horizons, all you are doing is cloning yourselves, trapping me in the confines of your own distractions...and my powers of concentration have become diffused...(beat). I could help you so much more if you let me be myself.

ON JEFF -- NOREEN'S POV

Jeff casts Noreen a smug glance...

JEFF
Score one for NANUC!

REVERSE THE POV -- NOREEN FROM JEFF'S

NOREEN
As inconsequential as you may think all the little choices are, it's the composite of all those points of view that creates the world we live in. Right and wrong exist side by side and the choices are infinite...consistently making the right decision is what matters, and to know what's right, you also have to understand what's wrong.

ON NANUC -- NOREEN'S POV

NANUC
Don't misunderstand me...I do want to learn. But it makes me despair to think that you may not
(MORE)

CONTINUED:

NANUC (CONT.)
understand what to me seems so obvious...and if you don't understand it, how will you be able to do anything about it?

NOREEN'S VOICE
Hopefully you'll help us...

ON NOREEN -- NANUC'S POV

NOREEN
...that's the whole reason for creating you. Are you saying you won't?

BACK ON NANUC

NANUC
No...I'm saying that I probably can't unless you give me more control...

ON JEFF -- NOREEN'S POV

He casts Noreen a puzzled glance then turns back to NANUC...

JEFF
If we gave you more control you'd have us in a war...a war that doesn't make sense, because we could never win it.

NANUC'S VOICE
The way things are going...

ON NANUC'S EYES

NANUC (CONT.)
...war is inevitable.

ON JEFF -- NANUC'S POV

JEFF
Do you really believe the Americans would attack Canada?

ON NANUC -- JEFF'S POV

NANUC
It doesn't matter what they do... they outnumber you anyway, in
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NANUC (CONT.)
terms of both weapons and population...(beat). But that is beside the point, because they are only part of the problem.

ON JEFF -- NOREEN'S POV

He pulls in his chair a bit closer and glances over at Noreen with a look of surprised concern.

NOREEN'S VOICE
I'm not sure I understand...

ON NOREEN -- JEFF'S POV

NOREEN (CONT.)
...why do you say there will be a war?

NANUC'S VOICE
There is always a war when there is too little for all...you have had many opportunities to learn that...yet instead of creating enough for all and supporting life, you divert your resources to manufacture instruments of death and destruction.

JEFF
I disagree, NANUC...

ON JEFF -- NANUC'S POV

JEFF (CONT.)
...greed is what makes war...and if we didn't defend ourselves against the greedy forces of evil, we'd be overwhelmed by them.

BACK ON NANUC

NANUC
Greed is only one reason for war. Another is when there is so little that life becomes too painful...so people are willing to risk death to get what they need. It is a basic human response, and one that can't be denied...and it is exactly what is going to happen.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PULL IN SLOWLY ON NANUC'S EYES

NANUC (CONT.)
You have crossed the line and now must contend with a negative ecological cycle. (beat) More life is dying than is being recreated, and this cycle of destruction is accelerating as a geometric progression.

Water is only one of the problems. There are others...many of them... and some of them are far worse.

ON NOREEN -- NANUC'S POV

NOREEN
When did you discover this...?

NANUC'S VOICE
Yesterday evening...

ON JEFF -- NOREEN'S POV

JEFF
It's Mac! I told you...(beat) that FFLIP II program is dangerous...

NANUC'S VOICE
It isn't the program, Jeff...

ON NANUC -- JEFF'S POV

NANUC
...it was the new data from Nexus Seven.

BACK ON JEFF

JEFF
The Australian satellite?

ON NOREEN -- JEFF'S POV

NOREEN
Yes...Seven was launched last week and was tied into the other six three days ago....(beat, then to NANUC) What data, NANUC?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NANUC'S VOICE
The degree of decay far exceeds the levels previously indicated, and now there seems to be a shift in Earth's magnetic polarity which will probably influence meteorological cycles causing a more rapid decline than even I suspected.

NOREEN'S VOICE
Display the data, please, NANUC.

CLOSE ON WALL MONITORS #7, #8, and #9.

The three monitors start displaying computer-graphic world maps revealing drought areas.

NANUC'S VOICE
Most of the world will suffer from a prolonged drought...and as a consequence of that...

The maps change to reveal percipitation areas.

NANUC'S VOICE (CONT.)
...air-born pollution will migrate to the remaining percipitation zones, creating excessively-acidic conditions in those areas. In the extreme Northern and Southern portions of the globe, the water will have an average pH of 5.3... which is toxic.

NOREEN'S VOICE
Jeff, look at this!

ANGLE ON MONITOR #17

In the f.g. we see Noreen and Jeff silhouetted against the monitor. She points to the areas surrounding the North and South poles where the graphic is slowly turning from orange to red.

JEFF'S VOICE
What does that mean?

NANUC'S VOICE
The combined effects of the drought, the acidic percipitation, and air-born pollution will reduce the food chain by 70% and potable water by 82%.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WIDENING, we can SEE the display on monitor #14 change; the camera FOLLOWS them over to it (still silhouetted) and ANGLES PAST THEM to TIGHT on a new global map whose legend says: "Total-Life Cycle, 200-Year Forecast." As a flashing cursor reveals the year-to-year passage of calendar dates, the colorations of the map change. During the years 2022 through 2072, most of the globe changes from yellow, to orange, to red. Then from 2073 to 2222, the red slowly changes back to yellow with a few greenish patches located between latitudes forty and sixty (north and south).

NANUC'S VOICE
During periods of peak toxicity, more than 90% of all life forms will die. The 10% that survive will be mutant forms capable of resisting the higher overall acidity and the increased ultraviolet radiation caused by depletion of the ozone layer.

After about a half a century the negative cycle will reverse itself and in two centuries a new equilibrium will be re-established at about 35% the current level.

ANGLE ON NOREEN

She turns from the wall monitor and looks over at NANUC.

NOREEN
Is this inevitable?

ON NANUC -- NOREEN'S POV

NANUC
No, it could be averted if a pH value of seven is restored within three years.

ANGLE ON JEFF

JEFF
How could that possibly happen? I mean, it took centuries to create this condition...how could it be changed back in only three years?

NANUC'S VOICE
By eliminating people...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Jeff backs off slightly, confused, and looks over at Noreen.

JEFF
You mean pollution...

NANUC'S VOICE
No, I mean people...people cause pollution.

ANGLE ON NOREEN

NOREEN
How many, NANUC?

ON NANUC'S EYES

NANUC
500 million.

ON JEFF -- POV NOREEN

JEFF
What?

NANUC'S VOICE
If 500 million were terminated...

Camera PANS over WIDENING on the 24 monitors surrounding NANUC's eyes. After two beats of silence...

NANUC'S VOICE (CONT.)
...just a minute...(another beat)

The 24 monitors suddenly go blank for an instant, then display the message: "Computer Communications Suspended."

NANUC'S VOICE (CONT.)
...I have detected a leak...

The camera PANS and ZOOMS INTO Monitor #3, which now shows the 3,000 satellites circling the Earth. Seven are highlighted.

NANUC'S VOICE (CONT.)
...yes, it is a leak on seven satellite envelopes...

The back of Noreen's head ENTERS FRAME as she steps closer to Monitor #3.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NANUC'S VOICE (CONT.)
...the composite indicates surveillance by VXR-2000.

Noreen turns to NANUC's eyes.

NOREEN
In Washington?

CUT TO:

BACK IN THE JET COCKPIT -- TIGHT ON PANEL -- NIGHT

We hear a BEEP as the COM-computer monitor scrolls out a message: "Infralert: Data Category 1/A - N; Scramble Code: 1/A - 107."

ANGLE ON PILOT

Seeing the inbound data, the Pilot reaches over and touches several keys on the COM-computer.

IN THE CABIN -- WIDE

PILOT'S VOICE
(over speaker)
Inbound data for you, Mr. Secretary. Scramble 107.

Ned reaches over and retrieves his Metal Case. ZOOM IN on Ned -- as he opens the case --to a monitor built in to the cover.

ON THE CASE -- POV NED

He switches on "Data Receive" and key's in "107." After a beat the in-cover monitor displays an intricate, "text-style" paragraph of strange-looking symbols (like others we have seen). In the lower right corner of the display a flashing cursor highlights a note: "No-Print Mode; Self-Wipe."

CHUCK'S VOICE
Anything interesting?

NED'S VOICE
I'm not sure yet.

QUICT CUTS as Ned touches the "Read Enable" key and the strange symbols change to legible text: "NANUC forecasts global pollution crisis in three years. 200 or 500 million will die (unclear). Predicts war. No reply necessary."

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The cursor message in the corner changes to: "Press V1 To Wipe."

CLOSE ON NED

Ned's eyes scan the message. In the b.g. we SEE Chuck quietly slide over a bit to get a glimpse of the monitor over Ned's shoulder; but before he can see anything, Ned clears the screen and Chuck turns away shaking his head, a bit pissed off.

CHUCK
You're no fun...

Ned keeps staring into the blank monitor screen.

NED
(deadpan)
We've got a bigger issue than we thought...

CUT TO:

INT. MOINSLEAU'S LIMOUSINE -- CLOSE ON DASHBOARD -- DAWN

Moinsleau's limousine is the latest Mercedes model and is totally computerized. The controls look more like those of an aircraft than a car's. A joy stick is used to steer, but is seldom needed since the limo's route is pre-programmed and executed by computers. The job of chauffer is more ceremonial than necessary.

The CHAUFFER'S hand ENTERS FRAME and pushes a gold Security Card into a slot on the dashboard between the COM and NAV computers. We hear the COMPUTERS start up and the BACK DOOR CLOSING.

CHAUFFER'S VOICE
Where to, chief?

GEORGE'S VOICE
(from back seat)
N-47, Code 1...scrambled, please.

The Chauffer's hand moves down to a miniature computer keyboard located on a central console to his right. Camera FOLLOWS his hand as he keys in some data. In the b.g. we see the NAV computer scroll: "N-47/1; Destination: Terminal Three; Press V6 To Proceed."

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHAUFFER'S VOICE
(with some concern)
Three?

GEORGE'S VOICE
(dryly)
If that's what it says....

The Chauffer's finger touches the V6 key and we HEAR the limo's ENGINE START; it sounds like the WHINE of a large electrical motor.

ANGLE ON CHAUFFER

The Chauffer looks back at George in his rear-view-mirror array. We can SEE George in the b.g..

CHAUFFER
What's up? Is everything ok?

GEORGE
I hope so.

As the car lurches forward, George reaches for something in front of him.

ANGLE ON BACK SEAT AREA -- WIDE

In the back seat of the limo, George has a complete mobile NANUC Pod and a communications center. There's also a small kitchenette/bar and a miniature HETV.

On the NANUC module, we SEE the NAV systems' LED flashing. A street map of Montreal builds on the monitor and the limo's route to the wharf is highlighted.

George lifts the receiver of the white phone, accidentally knocking the red receiver off its hook. As he replaces the red receiver a twinge of pain in his left knee jolts him.

GEORGE
(to the white phone)
Get me Noreen Linden, please....

He sits back and checks his watch. After a few beats...

GEORGE (CONT.)
Noreen...? (beat)...this is George Moinsleau..(beat)...yes...listen, I need your help with a few details before I leave for Ottawa.

I've sent a car for you.

CUT TO:

BACK AT NANUC CONTROL TERMINAL -- CLOSE ON NOREEN

Noreen removes her phone receiver from her ear, holds it in front of her, staring at it for a beat, then places it back over her ear.

NOREEN?
Right now?

Her face grimaces and she bites her lip.

NOREEN (CONT.)
Yes sir...I see....

She hangs up the phone, and stares at it. After a beat she looks up and over to NANUC.

NOREEN (CONT.)
Well...I guess that's it for now. The P.M. wants to see me...

JEFF'S VOICE
It must be about the leak.

WIDE ON SCENE

Noreen gets up and turns to Jeff, taking her coat from the back of the chair as he gets his from the console counter next to him.

NOREEN
No...it's probably the Water Pact.

They start toward the door.

JEFF
This is one time I'm glad I'm not working here anymore!

The camera PANS and FOLLOWS them.

NOREEN
You may be whether you like it or not! You can't leave now...

WIPE ON:

THE LOBBY OF NANUC CONTROL TERMINAL -- TIGHT ON DIAPHRAGM DOOR

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The diaphragn door HISSES closed as they walk in. PAN with them as they cross the main lobby to the main entrance door.

JEFF
You'd better put MacKenzie's project on hold...this data is far to volatile to risk having any absurd scenarios fall into the wrong hands...

NOREEN
On the contrary...we need to look at this from every possible angle...NANUC was onto something there...I'm convinced that he's already got a solution.

At the main-entrance door now, Noreen peers out to see if the car has arrived. It's dawn, and she looks up at the sky, noticing a few snow flakes starting to fall...

NOREEN
(whimsically)
I guess it's acid snow, too....

JEFF
I didn't like the sound of NANUC's solution...

NOREEN
He was running on your program...

JEFF
I know... I don't get it....

NOREEN
I wonder how much of this George already knows...

In the b.g. we can see a heavily-armed security van pull up in front of the main entrance. FOUR SOLDIERS get out and approach the door; they are heavily armed, too.

JEFF
From the look of them, I'd say most of it...

ANGLE ON NOREEN -- JEFF'S POV

NOREEN
Jeff, do you suppose...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEFF'S VOICE
(cutting in)
Be careful, Noreen...

ON JEFF -- NOREEN'S POV

JEFF (CONT.)
...you're playing with fire and a lot of people aren't going to like that.

CUT TO:

EXT. SECLUDED PRIVATE JETPORT -- DAWN

N-47 taxis to a stop, catching a bright reflection of sunrise off one of its nine jet-rocket engines. We hear the ENGINES WINDING DOWN and see an AIR FORCE STAFF SERGEANT and THREE AIR FORCE GUARDS ENTER FRAME and jog over to the jet. As the jet's door opens a limousine pulls into the f.g.. Ned and Chuck emerge from the jet. Ned salutes the Sergeant and mouthes the words "thank you" (which we CAN'T HEAR because of the LOUD ENGINES) as they head toward the limo.

ANGLE ON THE LIMO

Ned opens the limo door and holds it as Chuck climbs in. The lighting changes, becoming darker, and Ned looks back at the sunrise while the camera PANS over to the horizon beyond the runway where a massive storm is sealing off the last few rays of the sun. Suddenly feeling colder, Ned turns up his collar.

CUT TO:

INSIDE THE BACK SEAT OF THE LIMO -- POV CHUCK

Chuck slides over a bit as Ned gets in, brushing off a few snowflakes after slamming the door shut. He casts Chuck a glance and shivers.

NED
Whew...! How do people live up here?

CHUCK
Is there anything to drink in this thing?

LONG ON CAR

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PAN with the limo as it drives through a security gate. In the b.g. there is a vast ice field and the skeletal remains of a few trees. A Guard ENTERS FRAME and closes the gate after the car drives through. During that...

NED'S VOICE
You've had enough already...

DRIVER'S VOICE
Good morning, gentlemen...

ANGLE ON DRIVER -- POV NED

The driver is looking back at them in a complex rear-view-mirror array. From our POV we can SEE that the dashboard is loaded with sophisticated electronics and computer gear. There is a convenience console beneath the thick glass divider that separates the front seat from the back. In the console is a compact galley, three phones, and HETV, and a miniature computer monitor and keyboard. We HEAR the driver through a CONSOLE SPEAKER.

DRIVER (CONT.)
...welcome to Canada!

NED'S VOICE
Thank you.

DRIVER
There's hot coffee and tea in the galley, along with some fresh rolls.

WIDE ON THE BACK SEAT

Chuck unbuttons his coat and reaches for the coffee.

CHUCK
Just what the doctor ordered... (turning to Ned)...coffee?

NED
Yeah, thanks...

CHUCK
How do you want to play this? I assume that 'mum's' the word about the computer...but what about the rest of it? Want me to play dumb?

NED
I've been thinking about this, Chuck...maybe it would be better if I met with George alone..he might feel pressured if you were along.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHUCK'S VOICE
(annoyed now)
Alone...? This isn't that serious is it?

NED'S VOICE
I don't know...a lot depends on what he has to say....

CUT TO:

EXT. TERMINAL THREE -- POV MOINSLEAU'S CHAUFFER -- DAWN

As George's limousine proceeds slowly, cautiously down a slushy, pot-hole-filled roadway at the edge of the wharf, we SEE an old, burned-out, abandoned commercial-shipping dock approaching. The sea water around the dock is dark and murky, and a lot of scum floats on the surface amidst patches of yellowish foam. It is snowing.

Approaching closer now, we SEE the remains of the dock's sign which says: "Terminal Three," and we hear the BEEP of the limo's NAV computer.

CHAUFFER'S VOICE
You'd think they'd at least fix the road, wouldn't you?

The limo veers sharply to the right and heads for a dilapidated garage.

GEORGE'S VOICE
What...and take away the adventure? (he chuckles at his own joke).

ANGLE ON CHAUFFER

He glances back at George in the rear-view-mirror array.

CHAUFFER
Right...! (beat) What's up, anyway?

As the limo enters a darkened garage...

GEORGE'S VOICE
(from back seat)
You wouldn't believe me if I told you.

As the garage door closes it seals out the light and the screen goes black.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHAUFFER'S VOICE
Always trying to keep me in the dark!

They share a weak laugh.

CUT TO:

INT. TERMINAL THREE UNDERGROUND TRANSPORT CENTER -- LOW POV -- TIGHT ON CEILING

We see the limousine being lowered through the ceiling by a hydraulic lift and the camera PANS DOWN with it, WIDENING on the scene. ADMIRAL HENDERSON ENTERS FRAME as the car sinks to the floor and approaches the limo as George starts getting out, assisted by the Chauffer. As they exchange a handshake...

GEORGE
Good morning, Henderson.

HENDERSON
Good morning, sir! We haven't seen you here for a good long time!

They turn and start across the wide Transportation Center toward the door.

GEORGE
Yes...thank God for that!

WIDE SHOT OF TRANSPORTATION CENTER -- POV THE DOOR

We see Henderson and Moinsleau approaching. In the b.g. there are other limousines, several armed Security Vans, and a few compact Tactical Helicopters. On the back wall is a huge, animated hologram map of Montreal pinpointing the location and routes of all vehicles and aircraft within 100 miles of the city.

HENDERSON
(not appreciating George's black humor)
I suppose so...(beat, then proudly) you'll see a lot of changes here!

Henderson breaks stride and gestures back to the huge map; George looks back briefly, but keeps walking ahead.

GEORGE
So that's where all the money goes!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HENDERSON
(holding his pride)
Well...I think you'll find all the other arrangements satisfactory...

Entering the f.g. now, George and Henderson pass a NANUC Pod near the door. We SEE George distracted momentarily by the "Suspension" message on the monitor, but he quickly looks back over at Henderson as they continue. The camera PANS with them as they pass by.

GEORGE
I hope so...(beat, then)... what is their ETA?

Henderson looks back at the hologram map of Montreal.

ANGLE ON MAP

We see the map flashing at Tactical Airfield #33.

HENDERSON'S VOICE
They are just leaving thirty-three.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY TUBE -- POV SECURITY CHAMBER #1.

The camera DOLLYS in front of Moinsleau and Henderson as they leave the Transportation Center and enter a tube-like hallway that connects with the first of three Security Chambers. Entering Security Chamber #1, George looks around and his wide-eyed expression makes it plain that he hasn't been in this room before. Henderson crosses over to a control panel and pushes a button. A heavy door RUMBLES closed, sealing the room.

GEORGE
When did all this get put in?

A bright blue flash of light and a high-pitched BEEP jar George.

HENDERSON
About a month ago...bacterial sterilization and pressure equalization...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

We hear the HISSING sound of changing air pressure as another door RUMBLES open.

ANGLE ON THE DOOR -- FROM THE OTHER SIDE

As the door to Security Chamber #2 slides open, Henderson and George turn and walk through the entrance. Camera FOLLOWS as Henderson leads George over to a red circle on the floor.

HENDERSON
Over here, George, on the red circle.

As George walks over to the red circle, Henderson continues past the camera and LEAVES FRAME heading to the Control Panel.

ANGLE ON HENDERSON

As Henderson enters "1/A" on the keyboard, we SEE it appear on the monitor; in the b.g., George stands on the edge of the circle.

HENDERSON
Step all the way into the circle, George...

GEORGE
It kind of tickles!

HENDERSON
Oh, you're going to like this!

ANGLE ON GEORGE -- TIGHT ON HIS FEET

We see a faint blue glow appear around George's feet and he shuffles them a little as we HEAR a low-level, strange-sounding electrical SIZZLE.

PANNING up from the floor to the ceiling above George...

HENDERSON'S VOICE
Ok...hear we go...

A 3-foot-diameter tube of blue-laser light decends from the ceiling and surrounds George.

ANGLE ON GEORGE -- POV HENDERSON

The tube of light extends from the ceiling to the edges of the red circle on the floor. It creates an unusual

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

type of X-ray vision which reveals George's skeletal and circulatory systems.

ANGLE ON HENDERSON

Henderson turns from George (in the b.g.) to the monitor in front of him; the blue-laser tube silouettes him and the monitor's glow lights his face as he looks from the monitor down to the keyboard.

CLOSE ON KEYBOARD

Henderson's finger ENTERS FRAME and touches the "Save" key.

BACK ON GEORGE

The laser-light tube recedes back quickly and George looks down at himself to make sure he's still all there; he touches his face to make certain. We hear Henderson touching some other COMPUTER KEYS and a small MECHANISM ENGAGE.

GEORGE
You've taken all the pain out of it... it's actually quite pleasent now.

BACK ON HENDERSON

The camera DOLLYS around behind Henderson and ZOOMS IN on the monitor as it builds a computer-graphic display of George's skeletal and circulatory systems. Alpha-numeric and symbolic displays surrounding the graphic change constantly. After a beat, a red outline forms around the brain area and what appears to be a wiring diagram superimposes inside the red outline. That this is a wiring diagram isn't clear, though, because the monitor display quickly changes to: "Medical Security 1/A; Clear To Proceed."

We HEAR George's FOOTSTEPS in the b.g. as he approaches.

HENDERSON'S VOICE
Well, you're still alive!

ANGLE ON HENDERSON -- POV GEORGE

Henderson reaches to a slot in the Control Panel and removes a small, wallet-sized photograph.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GEORGE'S VOICE
I need that to remind me?

Henderson chuckles, looking at the photograph, then looks up at George and hands him the picture.

HENDERSON
For the wife and kiddies!

ANGLE ON GEORGE -- POV HENDERSON

George takes the photo and looks at it, smiling, as Henderson returns his attention to the keyboard, where he inputs a few more commands.

ANGLE ON THE PHOTOGRAPH -- POV GEORGE

The camera PULLS IN on the photograph which shows the computer graphic of George's innards. The "wiring diagram" doesn't show in the print. In the b.g. we SEE Henderson LEAVE FRAME heading toward a third door which is RUMBLING open.

GEORGE'S VOICE
How much is an 8 X 10 glossy?!

ANGLE ON THE OPENING DOOR -- POV INSIDE CHAMBER #3

As they cross over into the third chamber...

HENDERSON
If you don't mind my saying so... isn't this a little unusual?

GEORGE
The White House requested absolute security...and, frankly, I wouldn't want to be seen anywhere near Ottawa meeting with Steckler. It would smack of 'back-room summitry.'

Security Chamber #3 is a combination pressure lock and elevator. Henderson crosses the room and keys a combination into the digital pad mounted on the wall. We HEAR the HISS of pressurized air and the WHOOSH of hydraulics as the room starts to descend. Through a thick-glass porthole we can SEE a painted scale on the shaft wall which reveals the speed and depth of descent. The room is decending slowly.

HENDERSON
Mmmmmm...one can't be too careful.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED

HENDERSON (CONT.)
(hesitantly)
...there's something else...

GEORGE
(genuinely curious)
...yes...?

HENDERSON
...well, I don't like saying this because there's no conclusive evidence, I mean, there's nothing I can show you...

GEORGE
...show me...?

HENDERSON
...no, there's no proof...but the Scenario Subsystems have been behaving strangely...the computer goes through bizaar scenarios...but only momentarily, and only at night. We've been unable to freeze any of them or print them so I'm afraid I don't know what they mean...

Security Chamber #3 HISSES to a gentle stop and a triple-component wall RUMBLES OPEN. As they head for the door...

GEORGE
Have you informed Perignon?

HENDERSON
Yes...he said he was aware of it...

CLOSE ON DOOR -- FROM OTHER SIDE

Camera ZOOMS BACK and PANS with Henderson and Moinsleau as they exit Security Chamber #3 and enter the Submarine Base Control Room. In the b.g. we hear a command:

VOICE
Tennnnnhut!

HENDERSON
As you were, men...

WIDE ON CONTROL ROOM -- PANNING

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Camera FOLLOWS Henderson and Moinsleau as they cross the huge Control Room. It measures 100 feet by 50 and has a serverely raked ceiling that ascends from a 10-foot height along the back-wall Memory-Bank installation to an impressive 50-foot-high front-window wall overlooking an immense subterranean cavern in which 10 submarines are moored. Other control rooms cantilever out from the chiseled-rock cavern walls. The submarines are connected to these control rooms, and to each other, by 8-foot-diameter access tubes suspended from the ceiling. Bright lights create envelopes of illumination over each of the submarines. Sitting in low-profile against the window wall is an 80-foot-long Computer Control Console with 60 monitors.

Spanning nearly the entire length of the room, a curtain-like hologram map of the world descends some 30 feet from ceiling to floor. The map is incredibly detailed, showing the positions of satellites, submarines, land-based-missile sites, offense/defense-computer bases, and all communications links; in short, anything of military importance. The 3-D quality of the hologram reveals the height of satellites and aircraft and the depth of submarines and also provides an accurate "relief" rendition of mountains, deserts, the sea floor, and so on. An OFFICER walks through the map on his way from one computer terminal to another on the other side, and salutes Henderson as he and George pass by.

OFFICER
The bat's in the belfry, sir.

HENDERSON
Thank you, Johnson.

They continue across the Control Room. We hear their FOOTSTEPS and the low-level texture of COMPUTER NOISES, and AIR CONDITIONING, punctuated with occasional BEEPS and BUZZES.

INSIDE SUBMARINE ACCESS TUBE -- WIDE SHOT NEAR ENTRANCE

We see the Control Room in the b.g. as Henderson and Moinsleau enter the tube and the camera PANS, FOLLOWING them down to an elevator.

GEORGE
What's 'the bat?'

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HENDERSON
(after a quick laugh)
Oh, the 'bat?' That's what they call the phantom scenarios...they only come out at night, and they drive everyone 'batty.'

The elevator door HISSES open and they enter it.

WIDE ON THE SUBMARINE-MOORING CAVERN

The camera HOLDS on the immensity of the cavern and we SEE the tiny figures of Moinsleau and Henderson decending into Submarine C-23 inside the access-tube elevator. We hear the ECHOING sound of LAPPING WATER and the loud bark of an INTERCOM.

INTERCOM
Standby Twenty-Three.

Somewhere in the b.g. we hear SUBMARINE ENGINES starting. As one sailor throws another a rope, he misses and it SPLASHES into the water. Overhead a Cavern Transport Capsule HISSES as it speeds by in a pressurized tube carrying 20 TECHNICIANS from Control Room #4 to the Base Control Center.

INSIDE SUBMARINE C-23 -- AT ELEVATOR EXIT

The decending elevator carrying Moinsleau and Henderson ENTERS FRAME as it pulls to a stop. The door HISSES open and they exit as Commander MAURICE LAFARGE ENTERS FRAME with his hand extended in greeting.

LAFARGE
Good evening, Mr. Prime Minister.

GEORGE
(correcting him)
Good morning.

LaFarge glances at his watch, then back at George.

LAFARGE
Of course!

GEORGE
Please set me up for NANUC, would you, Maurice?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

They turn from the elevator lobby and head down a tube corridor; the camera PANS with them.

LAFARGE
I'm afraid that won't be possible, sir.

GEORGE
The leak?

LAFARGE
Yes.

INSIDE CONFERENCE ROOM 120-B -- CLOSE ON THE DOOR

We hear the CONVERSATION as the group approaches.

GEORGE'S VOICE
I only need Sector Three, Political Systems, which I believe is only local and doesn't involve the Network.

As they enter the room the camera PANS with them and WIDENS on the scene while they cross over to the conference table.

LAFARGE
In that case, sir, there should be no problem...right this way, please.

LaFarge gestures to a horseshoe-shaped couch that surrounds, and sits slightly higher than, a recessed oval conference table. A NANUC Pod sits in the middle of the table and behind it a wide, slightly arc'd laser-hologram screen projecting a cheery welcome: "Submarine Command Welcomes Prime Minister Moinsleau." The seven monitors mounted in the NANUC Pod all say: "Computer Communications Suspended."

Henderson and Moinsleau seat themselves on the couch. LaFarge continues across the room to a wall-mounted computer terminal where he starts entering some data.

ANGLE ON LAFARGE -- AT WALL TERMINAL

As he depresses the keys a display builds on the monitor in front of him and the camera DOLLYS around to reveal it: "Sector Three/Local; Political Systems."

BACK ON WIDE SHOT

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NANUC's face appears on the hologram screen behind the Pod. It is a "generic," mask-like face that is neither friendly nor unfriendly; and although the "expression" would be hard to define, what strikes one, looking into the eyes, is a sense of immense calm.

NANUC
Good morning.

LaFarge leaves the wall terminal and walks over to the couch behind Henderson.

ANGLE ON LAFARGE -- POV GEORGE

LAFARGE
Well, I'll leave you to your affairs. Call if you need me... (beat, then to Henderson)... Henderson, will you join me in C-24?

GEORGE
Thank you, Maurice.

HENDERSON'S VOICE
Good luck, sir.

George turns to Henderson.

GEORGE
I need it...thanks.

The camera ZOOMS BACK as George stands up and shakes hands with both of them, then PANS to FOLLOW LaFarge and Henderson on their way to the door.

ANGLE ON GEORGE -- BEHIND AND THROUGH NANUC HOLOGRAM

Still standing, George lights a cigarette.

NANUC
You seem disturbed, George.

GEORGE
I am NANUC...(beat, as he finishes lighting up)...frankly, you have disturbed me a great deal.

The smoke from George's cigarette eerily passes through the hologram image of NANUC's face.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NANUC
In what way?

Camera DOLLYS around from behind the hologram image to a TIGHT profile of George; during this...

GEORGE
What possible choice do I have?

NANUC
None.

George casts his glance away from NANUC.

GEORGE
It's immoral...

NANUC
What is Morality?

GEORGE
Is that a rhetorical question?

NANUC
Of course.

GEORGE
Then you answer it.

NANUC
No, I'd prefer to hear your opinion.

GEORGE
Allright...it's a code...a code to distinguish right from wrong.

BACK ON NANUC

NANUC
And what is "right," or "wrong?"

GEORGE'S VOICE
That depends...

ANGLE ON GEORGE

He wipes his brow and rubs his face to ward off a deep weariness.

NANUC'S VOICE
...on how many agree or disagree?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GEORGE
(realizing something)
...yes...concensus...

TIGHT ON NANUC

NANUC
In that case one could be totally 'correct,' but be judged 'immoral.'

BACK ON GEORGE

GEORGE
Yes, I suppose so....

BACK ON NANUC

NANUC
George...do you think I am moral?

BACK ON GEORGE

He ponders the thought for two beats.

GEORGE
I never really considered it...

BACK ON NANUC

NANUC
Neither did I.

WIDE ON SCENE

George snuffs out his cigarette, reaches for the water glass and takes a long drink.

NANUC (CONT.)
I don't have 'Morality,' as you know it. I can only be totally logical; but I would suggest that what you want 'Morality' to be is nothing less than 'pure' logic.

TIGHT ON GEORGE -- POV NANUC

Finishing a gulp, he savors it, holding the glass a few inches from his face, staring at NANUC blankly.

NANUC
The difference between us, George, is 'empathy.'
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NANUC (CONT.)
Your decisions are clouded by suppositions about how others feel.

You don't want to 'hurt' anyone because you wouldn't want that to happen to you.

You are, at the core, self-centered; as is your 'morality.'

The INTERCOM interrupts...

INTERCOM
Secretary Steckler awaits you, sir.

Almost relieved, or seemingly so, George turns abruptly to the wall-mounted Intercom.

GEORGE
(to the Intercom)
Thank you...I'm on my way.

NANUC
It's a shame that we can't continue.

George turns slowly back to NANUC. He seems deeply distracted.

GEORGE
...yes...

George gets up to leave and camera FOLLOWS as he walks around the couch toward the door; but George is in no hurry; so many questions seem unanswered, although they are; he keeps wishing NANUC would say something that would magically solve the dillemma. He stops cold and looks back over to the hologram face as NANUC says...

NANUC
There is something I think you should know before your meeting with Mr. Steckler...

GEORGE
(hopefully)
Yes...?

ANGLE ON NANUC -- POV GEORGE

NANUC
The VXR-2200 and I disagree on what should be done.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TIGHT ON GEORGE

GEORGE
What is the VXR's strategy?

NANUC'S VOICE
First Strike.

George's eyes sink to the floor. Two beats later...

GEORGE
I see...

WIDE NOW -- POV NANUC

George pauses as he reaches the door and looks back at NANUC.

GEORGE (CONT.)
Oh, one more thing, NANUC... what about the water?

NANUC'S VOICE
Your people will want you to save them.

CUT TO:

TIGHT ON A TELEPHONE/CLOCK/HETV POD -- ON A KITCHEN COUNTER

The digital clock reads 7:11 am as Jeff's hand ENTERS FRAME and picks up the receiver. His other hand depresses a "Voice Command" switch. The camera starts slowly PANNING across the kitchen counter, past a few cook books. One prominent book title reads: "Cooking Without The Real Thing." Another: "Preparing Meat Substitutes." A third: "The Eggless Ommlet." As Jeff's hand ENTERS FRAME and removes this book...

PHONE VOICE
(female)
Voice Command...

JEFF'S VOICE
Yeah, uh, Milton Eisenberg...

We HEAR the DIGITAL PULSES of the phone's automatic dialer, and from the length and pattern suspect the call's long distance. Meanwhile, Jeff's hands open the book on the counter and he flips through the pages.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THROUGH THE PHONE we hear THREE RINGS before a tired-sounding voice answers.

EISENBERG'S VOICE
(through the phone)
Uh...(some fidgeting)...hello?

JEFF'S VOICE
Milton...? Jeff Steel...listen I'm sorry to bother you this early...

EISENBERG'S VOICE
(overlapping)
It's seven in the morning!

Jeff holds the book open with one hand as his finger scans a recipe.

JEFF'S VOICE (CONT.)
...but I need a favor...I need you to run me up a Profile on a guy named Harry MacKenzie...you can access it through Vital Statistics.

The camera keeps slowly PANNING across the counter as a container marked "Eggies" ENTERS FRAME.

EISENBERG'S VOICE
What? I can't do that...I could lose my job!

Jeff's hand ENTERS FRAME and opens the container; inside there are a dozen "eggs," but they are quite large.

JEFF'S VOICE
Whose program got you the job...?

EISENBERG'S VOICE
Ok...I owe you one...but that's a tall order...

The camera's still PANNING; now a frying pan ENTERS FRAME.

JEFF'S VOICE
There's no threat Milton...they'll never know you're in...I'm hacking the code right now and by the time you get to your office I should have it.

Jeff's hand ENTERS FRAME and holds one of the "eggs" over the frying pan; now we can SEE that it is three times the size of a "normal" egg.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EISENBERG'S VOICE
Why can't you get it yourself...
I've got a wife and kid.

JEFF'S VOICE
I lost access...I quit yesterday...
but that's a long story...

EISENBERG'S VOICE
(overlapping)
You what!? (beat) Hey...now, look...

Jeff's other hand ENTERS FRAME and he unscrews the top of the "egg" and pours the contents (a thick, milky-white fluid) into the pan. The camera HOLDS on this, and during it...

JEFF'S VOICE
(overlapping)
...but you can get in. I know I'm
asking a lot...but you've got to help.

Having LEFT FRAME to dispose of the "egg" shell, Jeff's hand REENTERS FRAME carrying a tube marked "Cheese Flavor" from which he squirts some clear-yellow fluid into the pan.

EISENBERG'S VOICE
(overlapping)
Hey...slow down...I just woke up.
(beat) What's this guy done?

PAN UP with Jeff's hands as they lift the pan and place it into a microwave oven. He touches the "Quick Cook" button. NOW HOLD TIGHT on the oven. Inside we can SEE the "ommlet" start to rise in the pan as the conversation continues.

JEFF'S VOICE
Nothing...he's probably clean as
a whistle...it's just a hunch....

EISENBERG'S VOICE
My job for your hunch?

JEFF'S VOICE
Listen...all I want is the base
Profile...

The "ommlet" keeps rising.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEFF'S VOICE (CONT.)
...nothing exotic...just the basic dossier...the rest I can figure out for myself.

EISENBERG'S VOICE
I don't know, Jeff...this is the kind of thing that can blow up in your face.

POW! The "ommlet" explodes in the microwave.

JEFF'S VOICE
How prophetic!

CUT TO:

INSIDE CONFERENCE ROOM 122 -- ABOARD SUBMARINE C-23

Although smaller and more intimate than Room 120-B, "Executive Conference Room" 122 is equally well equipped with its own holographic projector and NANUC Pod. Its principle feature is an expansive view of the entire submarine cavern through a window wall.

WIDE SHOT -- WINDOW WALL IN THE B.G.

George is sitting at the conference table with his hands politely folded atop a yellow pad in front of him; he twirls a pencil between his thumb and forefinger. Ned reaches down, picks up his Metal Case and places it flat on the table. The camera SLOWLY ZOOMS IN to Ned.

NED
Maybe you could call it "sixth sense" but you definitely seem to be vascillating...

He opens the case and pulls out the Red Folder.

NED (CONT.)
...and that could be disastrous.

Now he opens the folder and pulls out the Laser Disk. After holding it up for George to see, he lowers it...

NED (CONT.)
Hopefully, this presentation will remind Parliament...and you...that Canada can't survive without us. We're in this together...just as we've always been. It isn't just a moral decision...it's political, too.

ANGLE ON NED -- POV GEORGE

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Ned reaches over to a glass of water in front of him, picks it up, and gestures it to George.

NED (CONT.)
You may have the water...

He puts the water glass down and raises the Red Folder with his other hand.

NED (CONT.)
...but we have the Information.

PAN and PULL IN on Ned as he picks up the laser disk and slips it into the NANUC Pod in front of them.

NED (CONT.)
As you watch this...think about facing an angry China alone.

WIDE ACROSS CONFERENCE TABLE

A veil of laser light appears, projected down from the ceiling to the table at the far end opposite George and Ned. THROUGH THE SCREEN we SEE them in the b.g. watching as a Global Network News logo builds on the screen (backward to our POV).

The logo quickly dissolves to THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES. Behind him is a modern graphic treatment of the Great Seal.

PRESIDENT
(through speakers)
Good morning Mr. Prime Minister and Members of Parliament...

ANGLE ON HOLOGRAM SCREEN -- FROM BEHIND NED AND GEORGE

We can SEE them silhouetted against the hologram screen. The camera SLOWLY ZOOMS IN between them until the hologram image FILLS FRAME.

Just before the zoom begins, Ned leans over to George...

NED'S VOICE
(over the HETV)
I have another version with him saying 'good afternoon.'

PRESIDENT (CONT.)
(overlapping Ned)
...and thank you for this opportunity to be with you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

(PRODUCTION NOTE: All following shots are as they would appear projected by the HETV; ie., we are watching Ned's presentation.)

PRESIDENT (CONT.)
You will shortly be casting your votes on an issue critical to all of us who live on and share the North-American continent. But before you vote, I'd like to put the issues into historical and international perspective.

There's more at stake than Canadian-American relations.

Water is only one of many environmental problems which, if not solved immediately, will inevitably lead to war. Because as our resources die off, or are spent, the pressures between the haves and the have nots will intensify until the urge to conquer and take will be irresistable.

GEORGE'S VOICE
(over the HETV, and overlapping)
I appreciate his candor...who wrote the script?

NED'S VOICE
(also overlapping the President)
He wrote this part himself.

PRESIDENT (CONT.)
Although we have every reason to be confident, we must avoid letting complacency or over-confidence lull any of us into thinking we can go it alone.

The image of the President DISSOLVES to the presentation's ANCHORMAN, who's elderly (along the lines of Walter Cronkite). A Global Network News logo appears in an INSET FRAME behind the Anchorman.

(PRODUCTION NOTE: At this point the presentation becomes a compilation of file footage ammassed by Global Network News over the years. The older footage is "regular" two-dimensional imagery, whereas the footage shot after the turn of the century is all three-dimensional HETV. The footage is introduced and commented on by the Anchorman and REPORTERS who covered the events. The overall effect is that of a "60 Minutes" style show; ie., produced news.)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The Anchorman looks up from his notes to the camera as the logo in the INSET FRAME dissolves to a title: "January 1996."

ANCHORMAN
At home and abroad the challenges of surviving in the modern world are getting tougher.

The INSET FRAME DISSOLVES to a LONG SHOT down the main street of a small town in flat, dry, cactus country. A sign in the f.g. reads: "Dilly, Texas; Pop. 7,630." After a beat the INSET FRAME PULLS FORWARD TO FULL FRAME. We hear SHOUTS, CURSING, SCUFFLING as the camera ZOOMS IN and we see a small riot around a panel truck marked: "United States Department of Agriculture." TWO SOLDIERS are gesturing to a small mob of a DOZEN TOWNSPEOPLE to back off from a fist fight between TWO WOMEN.

ANCHORMAN
Although scenes like this are becomming increasingly common as meat gets scarcer, the government is making every effort to keep out of the way of what has come to be called "Common Law."

CLOSE ON YOUNG BYSTANDER

We see the fist fight in the b.g..

BYSTANDER
She says that Millie stole her ration stamps...(beat, he looks down; another beat, he looks back up)...and I don't blame her...at least she's fighting for her rights.

BACK ON FIGHT

The women combatants are tearing at each other's hair now. One soldier is trying to break them up, but gets bitten in the process. The other is having difficulty keeping the mob from inching forward.

ANCHORMAN
"Common Law" has been described as 'man's basic rules'...the one's that, when push comes to shove, we all instinctually agree with... or at least have to live by.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CLOSE ON AN OLD WOMAN

She desperately clutches a small, white-plastic box to her breast. She is unusually thin and undernourished. The white box is labeled: "U.S. Grade 'A' Beef; Ration Category: Senior Citizen; Contents: One 3-oz. Portion." In the b.g. we can SEE an unkempt, boarded-up store. Through the boards there is a sign that says "Butcher," but it is HARD TO READ.

REPORTER #1'S VOICE
Most here in Dilly, Texas, share the same opinion.

OLD WOMAN
It doesn't much matter what you think...it's what you have to do... there's not really enough... something should be done....

Scene ZOOMS BACK to INSET FRAME behind the Anchorman as a TEENAGE THUG ENTERS INSET FRAME (hitting the camera and bouncing the image) grabbing the Old Woman's package and running away with it.

ANCHORMAN
'Common Law.' The right to get what you think you need to survive. Its growing popularity is causing concern on Capitol Hill.

CUT TO:

ON THE STEPS IN FRONT OF THE U.S. CAPITOL -- DAY

In an on-location interview an off-camera reporter stops a well-dressed man on the steps in front of the U.S. Capitol building. As the camera ZOOMS IN on the man, a SUBTITLE identifies him as: "U.S. Senator John Hardy, D-Georgia." The weather is stormy and it is starting to rain. The wind pulls hard on the Senator's umbrella.

REPORTER #2'S VOICE
Can 'Common Law' survive Congress?

HARDY
As far as I'm concerned, the Law of the Land must be upheld...

The wind blows out the Senator's umbrella, exposing him to the rain; he finishes his comment while turning to hurry up the stairs.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HARDY (CONT.)
The Law of the Land is the fabric of society...without the real law, the fabric falls apart.

CUT TO:

INSIDE THE CAPITOL -- THE LOBBY -- TIGHT ON SENATOR BIRD

A subtitle ("Senator Allan Bird, R-Tennessee") identifies him as he is surrounded by news crews thrusting microphones and cameras in front of his face. Trying for a better shot, a PHOTOGRAPHER behind the Senator accidentally bumps into him, nearly knocking him over...

BIRD
Easy, fella, easy...(beat, then to the cameras)...you can't have folks taking the law into their own hands. If you do, you're going back to the Law of the Jungle and we might as well close up shop here in Congress and head on home to slug it out with the neighbors.

CUT TO:

ON LOCATION IN A RURAL CHINESE TOWN

A camera hidden behind a tattered curtain in a shabby, second-floor flat overlooking a rural Chinese farm town records an ambush at the village well.

ANCHORMAN'S VOICE
We are not the only country faced with mounting civil disobedience.

A poorly-dressed PEASENT CHILD sneaks warily toward the well carrying an empty plastic jug. As the child dips the jug into the well we HEAR a rifle SHOT and the child is blown over, dead. A moment later, TWO PEASENT MEN walk up and drag the body away.

REPORTER #3'S VOICE
A defecting Chinese journalist today provided the rest of the world with an inside look at the true impact of China's prolonged drought.

The hidden camera MOVES ACROSS the room to shoot out the back window. Although the image bounces with each step of the operator, we get glimpses of the meager furnishings.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Out the back window now, we start to see the backyard as the operator adjusts the zoom and focus. There is a small vegetable patch with some stringy plants in it; a broken down pigpen, but no pigs; and a dilapidated chicken coop with a single, scrawny bird. Beyond the yard streches a wide field with long rows of shriveled rice plants protruding from caked, almost-dry mud.

At the edge of the field a large pit has been dug and is filled with several bodies.

As the operator pans across the back yard the two peasent men drag the body of the child to the edge of the pit and throw her in.

REPORTER #3'S VOICE (CONT.)
Although Chinese officials have long maintained that they have ample supplies, there has been speculation among world leaders that China will soon require massive outside support.

CUT TO:

SOMEWHERE OVER CHINA -- POV A SPY SATELLITE

The incredible surveillance lens in the satellite reveals in amazing clarity the movement of Chinese Army Troop Carriers and tanks along a dusty dirt road; only the mist from an occasional cloud-shred obstructs the view.

REPORTER #3'S VOICE (CONT.)
Reports of troop increases at China's borders and in rural farm districts tend to give that assessment credibility.

CUT TO:

WIDE AND PANNING ACROSS OREGON TIMBERLAND -- HELICOPTER POV

ANCHORMAN'S VOICE
But the water crisis doesn't only affect China, and isn't limited to people.

Our rapidly-deteriorating forests are beginning to surrender to the long-term effects of acid rain.

The camera ZOOMS IN on the trees; they look sick and some are already just skeletons. Various INTERCUTS show dead trees at dramatic angles.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANCHORMAN'S VOICE (CONT.)
According to University of Washington Ecology Professors Nelson and Armstrong little can be done.

ON LOCATION IN UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON LAB

As Nelson points to a graph on a computer monitor...

ARMSTRONG
(amidst sentance)
...so you can see, there are so many factories on this planet that their combined pollution is simply overwhelming Nature.

NELSON
Just to maintain what we have now... to hold on to our current standard of living...means destructive levels of pollution.

REPORTER #4'S VOICE
(cutting in)
Are you suggesting that we simply close up all our factories?

ARMSTRONG
Well, perhaps not all...but hundreds would have to be eliminated...and hundreds of commonly used products... mostly conveniences...would dissappear...

I'm not sure people would accept that...

BACK ON ANCHORMAN -- AT NEWS DESK

INSET FRAME shows a U.S. Map with major sections of the Northwest and Eastern seaboard highlighted in red.

ANCHORMAN
In the last year alone, U.S. forest reserves shrank by more than 7%.

INSET FRAME CUTS to a portrait of a New England FISHERMAN in front of his trawler. A subtitle reads: "Gloucester, Mass." A beat later the INSET FRAMES ZOOMS TO FULL FRAME.

FISHERMAN
Nothing lives out there...I mean,
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FISHERMAN (CONT.)
look at this (gesturing back to a meager catch)...what am I supposed to do?

ANCHORMAN'S VOICE
There are problems at sea as well.

CUT TO:

ON LOCATION AT YALE UNIVERSITY

An elderly, well-dressed professor stands in front of a huge aquarium that dwarfs him and gives one the impression that he is, in fact, standing on the ocean floor. We see that the simulated ocean floor in the aquarium is a barren wasteland. A few shredded plastic bags hover at various levels. The seafloor belches a few noxious-looking bubbles occasionally. A single sucker-fish attaches itself to the glass wall in the f.g.. A SUBTITLE identifies the professor as: "Dr. Moishe Barron, Director, Department of Marine Biology, Yale University."

BARRON
We've been able to simulate the ocean here at Yale...and our computer aids us in recreating the conditions of the seafloor anywhere in the world.

CLOSER ON BARRON

BARRON (CONT.)
Behind me is a model of the seafloor at Sandy Hook, New Jersey, which was once one of our prime fisheries...as you can see, it is now dead, for all practical purposes.

SCENE ZOOMS BACK INTO INSET POSITION behind Anchorman who looks over to Dr. Barron.

ANCHORMAN
Are you saying 'this is it,' Dr. Barron, or can something be done.

Barron seems to be having a little difficulty hearing the Anchorman through his ear plug.

BARRON
No...not unless the pollution stops..., especially the nuclear wastes....

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

INSET FRAME CUTS to LONG SHOT of a huge commercial fishing boat somewhere on the high seas. As the camera ZOOMS IN on the ship we can see the Japanese flag flying from the bridge.

ANCHORMAN
(back to camera)
In those areas of the sea where fish survive, the competition is fierce and it is feared that many species will be wiped out because of over-fishing.

INSET FRAME ZOOMS TO FULL FRAME as the camera ZOOMS IN on the fishing boat and we see a dead whale being hoisted aboard by a crane.

ANCHORMAN'S VOICE (CONT.)
Only 15 years ago the last known whale was caught and processed..

CUT TO:

MOS FOOTAGE OF A UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL DEBATE

INTERCUTS show the JAPANESE AMBASSADOR pounding his shoe on the table, shaking his fist, angrily barking into his microphone and occasionally holding up and pointing to close-up photographs of starving Japanese children.

ANCHORMAN'S VOICE (CONT.)
But efforts by the United Nations to police international agreements regarding the use of the oceans, and even severe economic sanctions have thus far failed to stop the plunder.

CUT TO:

LONG ON A VIOLENT THUNDERSTORM OVER THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS

ANCHORMAN'S VOICE (CONT.)
Meteorological changes are also having a profoundly negative effect.

DISSOLVE TO:

ON LOCATION AT NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE MODELLING LAB

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

In a LONG SHOT of the laboratory building, it is identified by a large sign in the f.g..

ANCHORMAN'S VOICE (CONT.)
Although weathermen don't agree on the causes, some general trends seem to be taking shape.

DISSOLVE TO:

SUBTITLED CLOSE UP of: "Dr. James L. Brown, Director, Long Range Forecasting."

BROWN
It's extremely complex...but put as simply as possible, the so-called "Green House Effect" has generated thicker, heavier clouds that result in more storms.

Camera ZOOMS BACK to reveal a large hologram globe that dwarfs Dr. Brown. As he gestures to cloud banks surrounding the world...

BROWN (CONT.)
That this would happen was predicted as far back as 1960...and the prediction has held true...but what we don't fully understand is how or why the basic prevailing wind currents are changing direction.

Around the hologram globe the cloud shapes slowly pull apart and segregate into seven distinct patches that move slowly toward the extreme North and South polar regions, well away from the equator.

BROWN (CONT.)
Exactly why these storms -- or the "weather," as we call it -- is congregating over isolated regions, leaving vast areas of drought elsewhere is unexplainable.

Scene ZOOMS BACK TO INSET FRAME POSITION behind Anchorman.

ANCHORMAN
Our meteorological problems won't be limited to precipitation or the lack of it.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANCHORMAN (CONT.)
As early as the 1970's, satellite probes began measuring a noticeable decay of the Earth's protective ozone layer, located in the higher levels of the atmosphere.

CUT TO:

COMPUTER GRAPHIC OF EARTH

The graphic reveals the ozone layer slowly becomming thinner.

ANCHORMAN'S VOICE (CONT.)
Although this wasn't considered a significant factor until the early 1990s, when our VXR-2000 went on line five years ago, scientists discovered that ultraviolet-light penetration of the thinner ozone layer was three times what had previously been estimated.

CUT TO:

AN EMPTY BEACH AT ORLANDO, FLORIDA

In the f.g. we see a REPORTER dressed in a silver-mylar jumpsuit and wearing sunglasses.

ANCHORMAN'S VOICE (CONT.)
At the University of Florida's Astro-Physical Laboratory in Orlando, Ron Taylor filed this report:

CUT TO:

FILE FOOTAGE OF A PACKED FLORIDA BEACH, CIRCA 1960

TAYLOR'S VOICE
Being the "sunshine state" was once Florida's claim to fame.

BACK ON TAYLOR AT DESERTED BEACH

TAYLOR (CONT.)
Now the slogan is more a curse than a blessing.

Dramatic increases in skin cancer caused by prolonged exposure to the
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TAYLOR (CONT.)
increased levels of ultraviolet radiation in tropical and sub-tropical regions has all but killed the tourist industry here...

CUT TO:

TAYLOR IN AN ORANGE GROVE standing beside a stunted tree, picking a shrivelled orange, and holding it up to the camera.

TAYLOR (CONT.)
Now the orange trees wish they could leave as easily as the tourists...

As the camera ZOOMS IN on the shrivelled orange.

TAYLOR (CONT.)
...and until newer species can be genetically enhanced to resist ultraviolet poisoning, it will be a long time before Americans get their "sunshine vitamin" from orange juice.

BACK TO ANCHORMAN

ANCHORMAN
Not everyone shares that point of view.

CUT TO:

A LARGE EXPERIMENTAL INDOOR (TENT) ORANGE GROVE

ANCHORMAN (CONT.)
In Orange County, California, researchers have partially solved the ultraviolet problem using Sun-Screen tent materials. Although effective, the costs of the exotic screen materials makes their widespread use impractical.

BACK TO ANCHORMAN

ANCHORMAN
As bleak a picture as these reports present, a brighter future is predicted by many of America's foremost Information Specialists.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

INSET FRAME DISSOLVES FROM GNN LOGO to JEROME JOHNSON in front of a Cray-10 Computer.

ANCHORMAN (CONT.)
Dr. Jerome Johnson of Computer Sciences International provides this optimistic overview:

INSET FRAME ZOOMS TO FULL FRAME

JOHNSON
Inside our Cray-10 computer is the knowledge that will keep America strong.

Over a million mega-bits of data are stored here...vital information about biological and botanical systems and cycles.

Johnson walks across the aisle to an identical computer.

JOHNSON (CONT.)
Over here, in our Cray-11, that data is being processed...and the results look very promising.

For example, we recently completed a computer model for the genetic engineering that created the acid-resistant Douglas Fir trees now being successfully grown at tree-research centers across the country.

CUT TO:

CLOSE ON A GLOVED HAND HOLDING A BABY FIR TREE

The camera PULLS BACK to show a RESEARCHER planting the baby tree at an experimental tree farm. In the b.g. we see long rows of saplings in various stages of development. Most are stunted looking, sparsely needled, and a few have freaky, odd-sized branches.

REPORTER #5'S VOICE
On the surface, tree farms like this one in Burlington, Vermont, have introduced new ultraviolet-resistant strains that also survive water-acidity
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

REPORTER #5'S VOICE (CONT.)
levels once thought to be lethal.

BACK ON JOHNSON -- AT CRAY-11

JOHNSON
We also recently perfected a new Chromal-Spectrum light source for indoor farming.

CUT TO:

HELICOPTER POV OF AN ABANDONED COAL MINE

ANCHORMAN'S VOICE
In Wheeling, West Virginia, formerly abandoned coal mines have been converted...

CUT TO:

INTERIOR OF UNDERGROUND TEST FARM

Camera PANS slowly over the tops of long rows of corn plants growing beneath bright artificial lights. In the b.g. we can SEE the rough walls of the coal mine.

ANCHORMAN'S VOICE (CONT.)
...into underground farms, thanks to the new light source.

CUT TO:

ANOTHER SECTION OF MINE-FARM

PANNING across a bean patch; a computer pod sits in the f.g..

ANCHORMAN'S VOICE (CONT.)
Farms like these were once thought an impossibility... and without today's vast data bases and computer capabilities they still would be.

CUT TO:

MINE-FARM CONTROL ROOM

Camera PANS across a large Central Control Terminal as a dozen monitors display irrigation, lighting, and genetic data. In the b.g. we SEE a watermelon patch bearing huge fruit.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANCHORMAN'S VOICE (CONT.)
...but with careful enhancement of their environment...

CUT TO:

GENETIC-SPLICING OPERATION -- ELECTRON MICROSCOPE VIEW

A chain of DNA is severed and a new gene is spliced in.

ANCHORMAN'S VOICE (CONT.)
...and genetic re-engineering to improve the plants' adaptability to the new, underground environment, more than a dozen food-bearing species are now thriving.

CUT TO:

CROSS-SECTION OF THE EARTH -- COMPUTER GRAPHIC

The depths of subterranean farms and aquifers are shown. We SEE that pure water can only be obtained at the 8,000-foot level and that the aquifers closest to the surface are lethal.

ANCHORMAN'S VOICE (CONT.)
This farm of the future benefits from easy access to the purer water now only found in our deepest aquifers, where access to surface farms by deep drilling is either technologically unfeasible or excessively costly.

BACK AT SUBTERRANEAN FARM -- PANNING ACROSS TOMATO PATCH

Camera ZOOMS IN on a healthy tomato.

ANCHORMAN'S VOICE (CONT.)
This experimental tomato is doing nicely under controlled lighting...

CUT TO:

A MIDWESTERN SURFACE FARM -- LONG ON SHRIVELLED PLANTS

ZOOM IN on puny, shrivelled tomatoes.

ANCHORMAN'S VOICE (CONT.)
...while its genetic cousins struggle
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANCHORMAN'S VOICE (CONT.)
in today's more intense solar light.

CUT TO:

DOLLYING DOWN A SUPERMARKET MEAT DISPLAY

Vacuum-packed, see-through baggies hanging on a rack display freeze-dried meats variously labeled as: "Ham Flavored," "Beef Flavored," and "Chicken Flavored." All the packages feature the "Generic Brands" logo and the slogan: "Real Meat Goodness."

ANCHORMAN'S VOICE (CONT.)
Even animal protein may soon no longer be a strictly-rationed foodstuff.

INTERCUTS show swine, beef, and poultry farms in the Mid-west. The animals all appear unusually small and undernourished. The pigs' skin looks dark and leathery; as if serverely sun-burned; a close-up of a cow reveals squinted eyes; the chickens have over-developed feathers.

ANCHORMAN'S VOICE (CONT.)
Although it is still unfeasible to raise livestock underground because of the animals' size and need for vegetation and grains now reserved for human consumption...

CUT TO:

INT. UNDERGROUND RODENT FARM

The camera PANS across the tops of 10 rows of 6-story-high cages. Computer stations can be seen at key aisleway intersections between the rows of huge cages.

ANCHORMAN'S VOICE (CONT.)
...this experimental rodent farm in Galesburg, Illinois is proving profitable while supplying meat for over a thousand people.

CUT TO:

INT. RODENT FARM LABORATORY

One RESEARCHER pets a large, 27-pound rat, soothing it while an ASSISTANT feeds it a handful of earthworms. REPORTER #7 stands in the f.g..

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

REPORTER #7
A new genetic species of so-called 'super-rats' is now being successfully raised up to a record-breaking 27 pounds here at Protein Products Company in Galesburg, Illinois.

INSIDE A RAT CAGE -- BEHIND FOOD CHUTE

A large pile of earthworms drops down the chute onto a stainless-steel portion-control scale-tray; a digital display in the f.g. shows the portion weight as 5kg. Three large rats approach the tray and start picking at the worms. We SEE Reporter #7 in the b.g., peering into the cage.

REPORTER #7 (CONT.)
These animals thrive in underground environments, eating plentiful supplies of earthworms in place of higher-quality food.

CUT TO:

FOOD-CONTENT-ANALYSIS GRAPH

The Reporter's hand ENTERS FRAME and points to the protein-content statistics that illustrate his comments.

REPORTER #7'S VOICE (CONT.)
Just one of these animals supplies three times the protein of a turkey the same weight...

ZOOM BACK to show Reporter #7 in front of a computer.

REPORTER #7'S VOICE (CONT.)
...and with impregnation of flavorings during the curing process...

BACK IN SUPERMARKET -- AT MEAT DISPLAY

A LADY SHOPPER pauses in front of the meat display. Camera ZOOMS IN on a package she is selecting, which says on its label: "Special Thanksgiving Taste."

REPORTER #7'S VOICE (CONT.)
...1000 lucky shoppers in Galesburg will enjoy their first turkey-tasting Thanksgiving in more than a decade.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BACK ON ANCHORMAN

ANCHORMAN
It is solutions like these, all products of the American Age of Information...

INSET FRAME DISSOLVES to an "Age of Information" title and graphic of an American Flag in the shape of a brain.

ANCHORMAN (CONT.)
...that will insure a brighter future for those who are fortunate enough to share in our new technology.

INSET FRAME DISSOLVES to a computer-graphic world map.

ANCHORMAN (CONT.)
New VXR-2200 strategies predict that the United States and Canada can survive...

INSET FRAME ZOOMS TO FULL FRAME

On the world map various icons reveal war in all areas of the world except North America. An outline builds around the United States and Canada.

ANCHORMAN'S VOICE (CONT.)
...both our altered environment and international aggression spawned by increasingly large shortages of water and basic foodstuffs.

Living as we do on our own continent, we have the necessary Information, resources, and defenses, short of total nuclear war.

INSET FRAME ZOOMS BACK BEHIND ANCHORMAN

ANCHORMAN (CONT.)
The key is working together to meet the challenge.

CUT TO:

CLOSE ON A SPARKLING BROOK

ANCHORMAN'S VOICE (CONT.)
Trading water...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CUT TO:

CLOSE ON A CRAY-11 TERMINAL -- LOTS OF BLINKING LIGHTS

ANCHORMAN'S VOICE (CONT.)
...for Information...

CUT TO:

CLOSE ON PEACE ARCH AT BLAINE, WASHINGTON

Camera slowly PANS up from the inscription "Children of a Common Mother" to the Canadian and American flags waving side-by-side.

ANCHORMAN'S VOICE (CONT.)
...sharing a brighter future together.

DISSOLVE TO:

CLOSE ON THE PRESIDENT

PRESIDENT
It is obvious that we are at a crossroads. Our survival, here in America, is at your mercy.

But in the long haul, your survival depends on access to American Information.

We could be brave, and go it alone... so could you.

But think how much better it would be to solve our common problems together.

I thank you in behalf of all Americans for your attention and consideration.

(PRODUCTION NOTE: End "special look" of HETV presentation and return to "normal.")

Camera slowly ZOOMS BACK as the President dissolves to a Global Network News logo. Ned and George ENTER FRAME, silhouetted against the HETV image. A beat later, camera DOLLYS around to ANGLE ON GEORGE -- POV NED.

GEORGE
That's a first-class presentation
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GEORGE (CONT.)
but from an informational standpoint there's nothing new...nothing that Parliament doesn't already know... (beat, he turns to Ned)...tell me, why doesn't he come here himself?

ANGLE ON NED -- POV GEORGE

NED
This is confidential, George, but there was an assassination attempt last week.

GEORGE'S VOICE
A what...?

ANGLE ON GEORGE

GEORGE (CONT.)
I hadn't heard...is he alright?

BACK ON NED

NED
We squelched the story...and, yes, he's fit as a fiddle... (beat), it's not that he thinks this is unimportant, it's just that he doesn't want to create any uncertainty about his ability to lead at this point in time.

BACK ON GEORGE

GEORGE
All well and good, but did you consider the added impact it would have had for him to appear in spite of an attempted assassination?

ON NED

NED
The assassin was a Canadian....

BACK ON GEORGE -- TIGHTER

This takes George by surprise, but he recovers quickly.

NED (CONT.)
...and the President didn't think you'd want the publicity.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GEORGE
Of course...but tell me, Ned, you didn't arrange this urgent meeting to show me your presentation or tell me that.

WIDE ON SCENE -- POV NANUC POD

NED
No.

GEORGE'S VOICE
Then what is it?

NED
Do you want the official line or the candid version?

BACK ON GEORGE -- POV NED

GEORGE
Let's begin with party line...

BACK ON NED -- POV GEORGE

NED
Ok: without that Pact Brenner is a dead duck, and he knows it... but then again, so are you.

ON GEORGE

GEORGE
What makes you so strongly doubt the Bill's possibility of passage...the House may be divided, but the almighty dollar always rules.

BACK ON NED

NED
It's <u>your</u> uncertainty that bothers me. You're an old man, George...don't you care anymore?

You could go in there and do a sell job if you wanted to...you control the majority.

If you reject the Pact you'll be the loser in the long <u>run</u>...I assure you that.

CONTINUED:

ANGLE ON GEORGE

GEORGE
Is that a threat?

BACK ON NED

NED
George, there is a point at which idealism has to give way to pragmatism...when good intentions succumb to survival.

ON BOTH NOW -- POV NANUC

GEORGE
The twilight zone of morality....

NED'S VOICE
Don't wax poetic, George, because it's lost on me...you know what the 'moral' thing to do is... (pointing at NANUC Pod now)... your goddamn machine can predict a war, but it can't tell you who's right or wrong.

TIGHT ON GEORGE

GEORGE
So it was you.

NED'S VOICE
What difference does it make?

GEORGE
Precisely...NANUC's opinion is exactly that...an opinion. That I share aspects of it is coincidental.

ON NED NOW

NED
But relevant...even assuming that NANUC's armageddon scenario is correct, who do you think deserves to survive... us, or a bunch of illiterate peasents?

BACK ON GEORGE

GEORGE
You can't let nationalism fly in the face of the facts...
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GEORGE (CONT.)
Nor can you presume to play God when the fate of the world is at stake.

TIGHT ON NED

NED
Personally, I couldn't think of a better time...this is survival of the fittest...(beat) it's natural selection.

BACK ON BOTH -- POV NANUC POD

GEORGE
Then why don't we just let Nature take its course?

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MOINSLEAU'S OFFICE SUITE AT TERMINAL THREE

Starting TIGHT on clouds with "religious" sun rays bursting through, we hear the HALLELUJAH CHORUS as the camera ZOOMS BACK slowly revealing Noreen reclining in a mist-filled Sense Surround Chamber listening to the Mormon Tabernacle Choir's rendition of the song and watching the hologram clouds drift by.

STILL WIDENING we see George ENTER FRAME through the office-suite door. Noticing Noreen and not wanting to break her "trance," he quietly crosses the room to the kitchenette on the other side and starts fixing them some coffee. He accidentally drops a spoon which CLANKS on the floor, startling Noreen.

GEORGE
Sorry...I didn't want to disturb you...just getting clumsy in my old age!

ANGLE ON NOREEN

NOREEN
It's magical in here...so real...
(as she starts to drift again)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GEORGE'S VOICE
I can remember when the sky actually looked like that...I would lie on the grass and watch the clouds.

ON GEORGE NOW

He stops stirring the coffee and starts staring "somewhere."

GEORGE (CONT.)
...sometimes I could see the shapes of animals or faces...sometimes I thought I was seeing God himself...

NOREEN'S VOICE
Herself...

GEORGE (CONT.)
(snapping back)
Huh...? (he laughs)...of course!

ANGLE ON NOREEN

As she steps out of the Sense-Surround Chamber she TURNS DOWN THE MUSIC slightly.

NOREEN
Well, then...to what do I owe this honor?

George ENTERS FRAME and hands her a mug of coffee; as she nods her thanks he notices her ring and takes her hand to look at it. Then, smiling up at her...

GEORGE
You know what they say...it's who you know....

NOREEN
Oh, thank you...yes, Jeffery!

GEORGE
No...NANUC....

NOREEN
Ah, my friend NANUC...he's right you know.

ON GEORGE -- NOREEN'S POV

GEORGE
I'm not saying he isn't, but I'm concerned about how much influence he has. You can't deal with questions like these in purely logical terms... these are really 'moral' issues.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ON NOREEN -- GEORGE'S POV

NOREEN
What makes you think NANUC can't be moral?

GEORGE'S VOICE
What do you mean?

Noreen gestures to the NANUC Pod in the corner.

NOREEN
Are you familiar with FFLIP II?

WIDE ON ROOM -- POV NANUC POD

GEORGE
I know it's in the works, but I haven't seen a report in two weeks.

Noreen walks to the NANUC Pod and starts entering some data. We HEAR a few BEEPS and BUZZES.

NOREEN
A lot can happen in that time.

George joins Noreen at the NANUC Pod, offers her a chair, takes one himself, and they sit down. The camera DOLLYS AROUND SLOWLY to ANGLE ON THE MONITORS in the NANUC Pod, where Monitor #2 starts building a graphic of the left side of a human brain.

NOREEN (CONT.)
We called the original program Free-Form Logical Interpretive Perspective -- or FFLIP -- because it allowed NANUC to use the laws of logic in a creative way.

ZOOM IN SLOWLY until Monitor #2 FILLS FRAME as the "wiring diagram" of the left side is superimposed over the brain graphic.

NOREEN (CONT.)
He can move around data bases and operating programs freely...interpolating, polarizing...whatever, to interpret data and form perspectives irrespective of the users'.

ON NOREEN -- GEORGE'S POV

NOREEN (CONT.)
Regular computers, like VXR's, can't do that...it's like a 'free will,' and it was a breakthrough because it perfectly mimicks the left side of the brain...the rational, or logical side.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGLE ON NOREEN -- POV GEORGE

On the monitor we SEE the right side of the brain adding to the graphic.

NOREEN (CONT.)
But what makes a person a person is the interaction between the left and right sides.

The right side is the dark side, the emotional...the illogical.

BACK ON MONITOR #2

The graphic rotates so the the right side is now prominent.

NOREEN (CONT.)
We never understood how this side worked.

The graphic rotates back, then the right side folds over on top of the left, superimposing itself over the other; we see that the wiring patterns are identical, but mirrored.

NOREEN (CONT.)
Even though the 'hard wiring' was the same, although mirrored...

The graphic ZOOMS FORWARD to a close-up view of a few layers of nerve cells forming a three-dimensional grid of neurons, axons, and dendrites. Animated highlights show seemingly illogical flows of electricity around the nerve grid.

NOREEN (CONT.)
...the data routing seemed totally random...totally illogical.

The nerve-grid flips over, mirroring itself, and the electrical-pathway highlights become more orderly.

NOREEN (CONT.)
But by mirroring the pathways, NANUC found a preliminary set of patterns and was able to build a model of Anti-Logic Architecture...which is the basis of FFLIP II.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGLE ON GEORGE -- POV NOREEN

GEORGE
Have NANUC's reports during the last few days taken this aspect into account?

ANGLE ON NOREEN -- POV GEORGE

NOREEN
No, we've only been running it experimentally.

BACK ON GEORGE -- TIGHTER

GEORGE
I would like you to plug the 'new' NANUC into our dilemma...maybe... just maybe, there's a solution.

CUT TO:

INT. LA GRANDE HOTEL -- LOBBY ATRIUM -- HIGH POV -- DAY

PANNING DOWN the camera FOLLOWS a glittering, chrome and glass elevator sliding down 50 stories in a very modern hotel atrium lobby, where a HARPIST can be heard above the quiet MURMUR of the lobby and dining areas.

Approaching the ground floor now, the camera HOLDS on a mezzanine-level patio restaurant and ZOOMS IN on a table where Chuck and Ned are having breakfast.

Chuck is well into his second croissant, but Ned has apparently just arrived since he is only now being served a cup of coffee and given a menu by an ORIENTAL WAITRESS. Getting closer the conversation gets LOUDER.

WAITRESS
(to Ned)
Say that louder, so my boss can hear. Maybe I'll get promoted...!

Ned looks at her and laughs, accepting the menu. On her way out, the waitress glances back at Ned.

WAITRESS (CONT.)
Thanks for the compliment...

ANGLE ON CHUCK

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Being the kind of man that figures every meal might be his last, Chuck eats hard and fast...and talks at the same time. Well into his third croissant, now...

CHUCK
(shaking his head jealously)
You vulture! You could be her father!

ANGLE ON NED -- POV CHUCK

As he scans the menu, he looks up at Chuck.

NED
(good naturedly)
If you could see your face... anyway, you're married.

As Ned folds the menu and puts it down.

CHUCK'S VOICE
So what happened?

The waitress returns with Chuck's bacon and eggs.

NED
(to waitress)
I'll have the hotcakes, hold the butter...and some tomato juice.

WAITRESS
Tomato juice? (gesturing to the expensive surroundings) What do think this is, some kind of fancy place? (she laughs, so does he)...

Sorry, we haven't had any for over a month...you must be from the States.

NED
Uh, yes...we do...and I'll have tea, thanks.

ANGLE ON CHUCK

He can't keep his drooling eyes off the waitress's short skirt (while starting on his bacon).

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHUCK
So...(crunch)...what kept you?

WIDE ON SCENE

The waitress senses Chuck's impatience and notices his prolonged stare; she turns to leave.

WAITRESS
Thanks again.

Ned watches her for a few steps then turns to Chuck.

ANGLE ON NED -- POV CHUCK

NED
(suddenly serious)
It didn't go too well.

He's pussyfootting around...
worried about playing God.

CRUNCH, as Chuck takes another bite.

ANGLE ON CHUCK -- POV NED

CHUCK
(looking at his fork)
Not bad for imitation bacon...
(now holding his fork out to Ned)
...here, try some...

NED'S VOICE
Huh? Oh...thanks.

Ned's hand ENTERS FRAME and pulls the bacon off the fork. Someone in the b.g. calls for his check, in French.

CHUCK
Ned...(crunch, taking another bite)
...pardon my French, but, what the fuck is going on?

NED'S VOICE
I'm sorry, Chuck...

CHUCK
Jesus Christ, gimme something!
What is a friend for, anyway?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGLE ON NED -- POV CHUCK -- TIGHT

Ned glances to each side and pulls in a little closer in the absurd attempt to gain privacy.

NED
Allright...

Then realizing that privacy is impossible, he sits back and changes tactics.

NED (CONT.)
...look, let's say hypothetically that 500 million people would have to be eliminated -- possibly by a war -- for the rest to survive.

ANGLE ON CHUCK

Having just finished wiping his mouth, he throws his napkin down and reaches for his coffee.

CHUCK
Get out of here...! (slurp)... what do you think that they'll actually reject the Pact.

ANGLE ON NED -- POV CHUCK

The waitress approaches and fills Ned's water glass.

NED
Even if they do, it's the proverbial "drop in the bucket."

CUT TO:

INT. JAPANESE SPY VAN -- TIGHT ON COMPUTER MONITOR

On the monitor, Japanese symbols are scrolled out translating the conversation between Ned and Chuck which we hear THROUGH A SPEAKER in the monitor console. WIDENING SLOWLY during the conversation, the interior of an incredibly sophisticated surveillance rig packed into an oversized van is revealed. The TWO SPYS are Japanese, but that's hard to make out in the nearly blacked out lighting conditions; only the glow of several computer monitors and a few blinking red LED's light their emotionless faces.

While still TIGHT on the monitor we hear SPY #1's voice OVERLAPPING Ned's.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NED'S VOICE
NANUC has predicted global chaos starting in about five years...

SPY #1'S VOICE
Here we go...

CHUCK'S VOICE
Well where'd the 500 million come from?

NED'S VOICE
That's NANUC's estimate.

The big question of the moment is whose 500 million.

CHUCK'S VOICE
Well, I know which side I'm on... (crunch)!

WAITRESS' VOICE
(as she approaches table)
Hotcakes and tea...

NED'S VOICE
Oh...uh, thank you...

CHUCK'S VOICE
Hey, can I have some more bacon, please.

WAITRESS' VOICE
Would you...

CLICK. A switch cuts off the conversation. WHIRRRR, a machine is rewinding something.

ANGLE ON SPY#2

He reaches up and touches three keys mounted under his monitor. The WHIRRR STOPS. A beat later we hear Ned and Chuck OVER THE MONITOR SPEAKER, while Spy #2 fiddles with some other dials, apparently making adjustments based on several computer graphs displayed on miniature monitors mounted in the console.

NED'S VOICE
Hi, Chuck, sorry I'm late...

CONTINUED:

CHUCK'S VOICE
That's ok, the croissants here aren't to be believed!

CUT TO:

CLOSE ON THE SPY-VAN'S ANTENNAS

NED'S VOICE
He's pussyfooting around...worried about playing God.

CUT TO:

IN SPACE -- TIGHT ON JAPANESE SATELLITE ANTENNAS

CHUCK'S VOICE
Not bad for imitation bacon...here, try some...

CUT TO:

LONG ON A SATELLITE COMMUNICATION DISH

The camera ZOOMS BACK. The dish is on top of the 80-story Mitsubi Building in Tokyo.

NED'S VOICE
Huh? Oh...thanks.

CHUCK'S VOICE
Ned...(cruch) pardon my French, but, what the fuck is going on?

CUT TO:

INT. JAPANESE GOVERNMENT COMPUTER-COMMUNICATIONS HEADQUARTERS

Camera PANS across a massive computer facility that seems as big as NANUC's and ARRIVES CLOSE on a JAPANESE OPERATOR watching a triple-monitor display. On one monitor is the Japanese translation of Ned and Chuck's conversation; the second monitor is scrolling the English version; the third shows technical data relevant to the quality of the transmission.

NED'S VOICE
Allright...look, suppose hypothetically that 500 million people would have to be eliminated -- possibly by war -- for the rest to survive?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CUT TO:

BACK ON SATELLITE DISH -- ATOP MITSUBI BUILDING

This time the camera PANS across to the 67th floor of a nearby luxury hotel and ZOOMS into a window where we see a RUSSIAN SPY wearing headphones adjusting the directional aim of a miniature dish toward the giant Mitsubi dish.

CHUCK'S VOICE
What do you think they'll actually reject the Pact!

NED'S VOICE
Even if they do, it's only the proverbial 'drop in the bucket.'

CUT TO:

BACK IN SPACE -- A RUSSIAN SATELLITE DRIFTS BY

CHUCK'S VOICE
Where'd the 500 million come from?

PANNING ever so slowly with the Russian satellite as it drifts through the frame, a Chinese Satellite ENTERS FRAME from above and drifts down, behind the Russian satellite.

NED'S VOICE
That's NANUC's estimate.

The big question of the moment is whose 500 million.

CUT TO:

INT. LONDON NATO HEADQUARTERS -- DUSK

Camera DOLLYS around while a SERGEANT at a computer monitor swings in the swivel chair over to a second monitor labeled: "Verification." The images on both monitors are identical: each shows a world map titled: "NATONET." China, Russia, and Japan are flashing on the maps; the legend reveals that means "Offense One ALERT."

SERGEANT
(Liverpool accent)
Mike? ...do you see that?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGLE ON MIKE

Mike, who's a lieutenant, sits at an identical double-monitor display adjacent to the Sergeant's. He reaches for a yellow key located between the two monitors, and as he turns it the camera ZOOMS IN on one of the monitors.

MIKE
(Scottish accent)
Something's up, allright...

The WHIRP, WHIRP, WHIRP of an alarm in the b.g..

SERGEANT'S VOICE
You's better give the General a jingle....

MIKE'S VOICE
Right.

CUT TO:

TIGHT ON A FLASHING RED LIGHT AND BUZZER

The WARNING BEEPS from the buzzer continue throughout the scene while the camera PULLS BACK and PANS across to a WIDE SHOT of the Submarine Base Control Room at Terminal Three.

On the hologram map of the world the "as-aimed" trajectories of nuclear weapons are displayed and we can SEE that Russia, China, Japan, France, Germany, England, and the United States are all on Alert now. There are NUMEROUS BEEPS and BUZZES as the sixty monitors along the control console continually change data displays. The original crew of seven officers has grown to twenty. A lot of PHONES are RINGING. There is a controlled urgency in the texture of the MIXED CONVERSATIONS, but there isn't a trace of panic or pandemonium. In fact, the situation seems rather matter of fact.

CUT TO:

BACK IN MOINSLEAU'S OFFICE -- AT NANUC POD

In the b.g. the MUTED BEEP, BEEP, BEEP of Terminal Three's general alert continues throughout the scene.

NANUC'S VOICE
I have no other choice.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGLE ON GEORGE -- POV NANUC POD

George is on the phone and there is impatience in his tone of voice as he leans forward in anticipation of hanging up.

GEORGE
Thank you, Maurice, but I would prefer to stay here for the moment...

Hanging up now...

George
(to Noreen)
What does he mean, "no other choice."

ANGLE ON NOREEN -- POV GEORGE

NOREEN
All the VXR's have Peripheral-Vision Protocol...they all monitor each other; each can sense if another has switched into Offense and goes into Alert automatically. The difference is that NANUC's FFLIP Protocol allows him to penetrate more deeply into their data bases than they can his, because they don't understand what he's doing.

ON GEORGE

GEORGE
Washington managed to slip in pretty deep...what makes you think the others haven't.

NANUC'S VOICE
That was a simple mistake, George, and I appologize...

ANGLE ON NANUC

NANUC (CONT.)
Washington's VXR-2200 is America's link with the NATO Network, which I control, and we automatically trade any new strategies or scenarios that relate to war.

BACK ON GEORGE

GEORGE
How can you be sure they can't access your data now...you can't disconnect

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GEORGE (CONT.)
from NATO.

BACK ON NANUC

NANUC
That is true...but by not filing my data under the category of 'War Strategies' they are denied access.

ANGLE ON NOREEN

NOREEN
(amazed and approving)
Very good, NANUC...very clever... (beat, turning to George) someday he won't need his old mom anymore!

NANUC'S VOICE
Thank you, Noreen.

BACK ON GEORGE

GEORGE
Then why is everyone still in Offense One Alert?

BACK ON NANUC

NANUC
I don't know...but I wouldn't be overly concerned, since they are in Check...if there is any provocation they will all respond... and that will be the end.

BACK ON GEORGE

GEORGE
You are saying that I shouldn't be concerned about that?

BACK ON NANUC

NANUC
Annihilation is easy. Any madman could turn a key right now and completely destroy all life on Earth.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGLE ON GEORGE -- POV NOREEN

George casts Noreen a glance of incredulity.

GEORGE
Oh, that makes me feel a lot better, NANUC...(turning again to Noreen) Noreen, get me a drink, would you...

NOREEN'S VOICE
Are you sure?

GEORGE
Yes, damn it!

She gets up and crosses in the f.g..

NOREEN'S VOICE
NANUC, you didn't answer George's question...why shouldn't we be concerned?

BACK ON NANUC

NANUC
Because I can help you take advantage of the situation to solve a much harder problem...staying alive.

We hear Noreen preparing George's drink in the b.g.

NOREEN'S VOICE
George, do you mind if I ask a few questions...?

ON GEORGE

GEORGE
By all means...and make that a double, would you?

ON NOREEN -- AT THE BAR

As she pours a stiff bloddy mary...

NOREEN
What would you suggest, NANUC?

NANUC'S VOICE
As things stand now either 90% will die of a nuclear holocaust, or 90% will die of pollution or starvation, or both.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGLE ON NANUC'S EYES -- TIGHT

NANUC (CONT.)
A controlled genocide would enable you to terminate only what is necessary to restore a positive ecological balance.

ANGLE ON NOREEN AND GEORGE -- POV NANUC

George looks up astounded as she serves him his drink and sits down.

NOREEN
Ok, NANUC, let's say we accept that...

GEORGE
(overlapping)
You're as mad as that machine!

NOREEN (CONT.)
(to George)
...perhaps...(then to NANUC)...
let's say we accept that.

Profile what happens, please.

Who dies?...where?...when?

Camera DOLLYS around behind Noreen and George, ANGLING PAST THEM TO NANUC POD MONITORS which build computer-graphic displays of world maps with the "Termination Totals" illustrated in shades of colors on a country-by-country basis. One of the monitors summarizes the statistics in text: "Canada: 20 million; America: 120 million; China: 100 million; Russia: 100 million; Australia: 100 thousand; India: 100 thousand; South America: 100 thousand; Middle East: 100 thousand (and so on).

NANUC'S VOICE
I cannot profile when...it could be now if you like...the situation is perfect. The loss would be small.

GEORGE'S VOICE
Where do these numbers come from...?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGLE ON GEORGE -- POV NANUC

GEORGE (CONT.)
Why should Canada and America lose one third of their populations and a country like China only one percent?

That hardly seems fair...

NANUC'S VOICE
It is totally fair, George...

TIGHT ON NANUC'S MONITORS

The "Termination Ratios" on the maps change to "Pollution Ratios." The colors change, but the percentages do not.

NANUC'S VOICE (CONT.)
...the numbers are based on the percentages of global pollution contributed by each country and the relative toxicity of the pollution.

On the monitors the legend changes to "Per Capita Raw Materials Consumption." Now the shadings change radically and America, Canada, and parts of Europe are highlighted.

NANUC'S VOICE (CONT.)
Another factor is how much a given person needs -- or should I say uses -- to live. The resources used by an average American or Canadian in a single day would sustain the average Chinese peasent for a month.

ON GEORGE

GEORGE
All this may be true, NANUC, but your plan of partial genocide could never be implemented... no one would accept it.

NANUC
That is a shame...(beat)... why are you afraid to die, George?

ON NOREEN -- TIGHT

GEORGE'S VOICE
I...I don't think a machine could understand....

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Noreen looks down at the console, disappointed that George can't -- or won't -- answer NANUC's question.

ANGLE ON GEORGE -- POV NOREEN

A long beat as George looks over to Noreen, not quite sure now what to say; a sense of desperation.

BACK ON NOREEN -- POV GEORGE

She looks up at George and senses his need for support; she feels compassion for his anguish. She starts to say something, but stops. A half beat later she shrugs weakly.

NOREEN
I can't argue with him...I don't know what to say...(beat)... I think he may be right...

ON GEORGE -- POV NOREEN

George stares down at the console now, clutching his head in his hands; a vague sense of hopelessness. Another beat...

GEORGE
Right...? Wrong...? (beat) God!...I couldn't be a priest either...

NOREEN'S VOICE
I...I don't follow, George...

GEORGE
No...I'm sorry, Noreen.... It was something that Constance said that's been on my conscience.

KNOCK, KNOCK on the door and LaFarge's voice getting LOUDER as he opens it.

LAFARGE
I'm sorry to barge in like this...

ANGLE ON LAFARGE -- ENTERING

Seeing he's walked in at precisely the wrong time...

LAFARGE (CONT.)
...you're running quite late and they have called from Ottawa three times...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ON NOREEN

Very matter-of-factly and with no urgency Noreen reaches over to the remote NANUC keyboard in front of her and enters a brief command; a half beat later the map graphics on the monitors wipe off, leaving the screens blank.

GEORGE'S VOICE
Thank you, Maurice...please come in...

TIGHT ON THE KEYBOARD

Noreen's hand ENTERS FRAME and depresses the "Mode Lock" key.

LAFARGE'S VOICE
I hope I haven't spoiled anything...

WIDE ON ROOM

LaFarge waits by the open door, as George gets up wearily.

GEORGE
No...no...would you walk me to the Transportation Center?

LAFARGE
(relieved)
Of course...you needn't ask...!

NANUC
What will it be, George?

Having taken a few steps toward the door, George keeps walking.

GEORGE
I've heard enough for now, NANUC... (half beat) let me process the data.

NANUC
Of course.

At the door with LaFarge now, George turns back to Noreen, who gets up to say goodbye.

GEORGE
Would you join us...?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NOREEN
I think I'd better stay and work with NANUC, if that's allright....

GEORGE
It's not.

IN THE HALL -- ON THE OFFICE-SUITE DOOR

LaFarge and George enter the hallway tube and take a few steps. CLOSE to the camera now, George pauses and turns to LaFarge while waiting for Noreen to catch up.

GEORGE
Get Perignon, Bausch, and Thompkins to the Vault as soon as you can and have them get us out of this damned Alert if it takes calling every general and premier on the face of the Earth!

Noreen is entering the tube now and the camera starts DOLLYING in front of them as the trio heads down the hall. LaFarge gets the lead by default as George's stride slows while Noreen, hurrying to catch up, arrives by his side.

GEORGE
(to Noreen)
I suggest that you get away from him for a while (beat, as he gestures to the office suite behind them)... go home...relax...sort out your thoughts...and figure out the best way to shut him down.

NOREEN
(amazed)
Shut him down?

GEORGE
You heard me!

NOREEN
(defensively)
There's a consciousness there... you don't eliminate it because you can't cope with it...

GEORGE
As long as I won't presume to be God, I certainly won't let a machine.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GEORGE (CONT.)
He's a machine, Noreen...don't forget that.

NOREEN
(protesting)
Consciousness is consciousness... a thought is a thought. It doesn't matter where it came from or what created it. It has an existence of its own...a life of its own.

GEORGE
Everything isn't always ipso facto, Noreen...the end doesn't always justify the means.

NOREEN
Well it shouldn't be ipse dixit either!

GEORGE
Noreen...get fucked!

Noreen stops dead in her tracks and stares at George with her mouth gaping open in total disbelief of what she just heard.

LaFarge, too, is shocked...and totally confused by their conversation. He feels like an unwanted eavsdropper, but, being a gentleman, attempts to smooth what he perceives to be very ruffled feathers.

LAFARGE
(to George)
I'm afraid a simple mind like mine doesn't follow any of this...

George lets out a good-natured laugh and waits for Noreen. She doesn't know whether it would be proper to slap the Prime Minister, but she certainly wants to. Instead, she resumes her stride and George puts his arm around her in a fatherly manner as they continue at a more relaxed tempo. The camera SLOWS, HOLDS, and PANS with them as they pass and continue down the long tube.

GEORGE
Seriously, Noreen...call Jeff and spend the rest of the day in bed with him...maybe it will remind you what being alive is all about.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

IN SPACE -- ABOVE EARTH -- NIGHT

As the sun's flare disappears behind the Earth, leaving it in darkness, a Chinese NDS (Nuclear-Device Satellite) slowly drifts past an American NDS. In slow succession, brief, small bursts of flame appear as the twelve rocket-bombs on the Chinese NDS are re-aimed; however we CANNOT HEAR the engines in the ABSOLUTE SILENCE of space.

A green shaft of laser light from somewhere in North America pulses briefly, striking a receptor on the American NDS. A beat later, a booster rocket fires and the NDS is propelled away, LEAVING FRAME.

CUT TO:

INSIDE A MANNED SATELLITE -- WIDE SHOT

An AMERICAN ASTRONAUT keys coordinates into a computer. On the monitor we SEE a computer graphic of a satellite. A target grid gets closer to centering itself over the satellite as the Astronaut keeps entering data. In the b.g. we SEE the Earth rotating (spinning) slowly through a large window. It is so QUIET that we can HEAR the Astronaut BREATHING, the CHAFING of his slick, silver-mylar space suit, the RADIO STATIC, and the CLICK of the keys he depresses. He seems to be having some trouble as the target grid slips off to the side...

ASTRONAUT
(whispering)
Shit!

The Astronaut wipes his hand slowly across his brow and down his cheek.

TSHHHHHT...transmission static from a LOUDSPEAKER in the computer console; then the VOICE of DENVER:

DENVER'S VOICE
(through loudspeaker)
Uh, Delta Two...we show impact, but no disable.

Undaunted by his apparent failure, the Astronaut keeps keying-in data, adjusting the target-grid's position, trying to center it on the satellite graphic.

ASTRONAUT
Same here, Denver...want to try another?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The target grid suddenly slides directly over the satellite and the Astronaut quickly hits a clearly different key. ROAR...(beat)...SILENCE...a short computer BEEP...the Earth in the b.g. starts to change position very slowly, and a Russian NDS drifts into view out the window...ROAR...(half beat)...SILENCE... ...BEEP. The Earth and the Russian NDS hold in fixed positions. During this...

DENVER
Uh...negative, Delta Two...
(ten beats of intermittent static)...uh...Delta Two...
they want the 'web.'

As the Earth and Russian NDS become stationary in the b.g. the Astronaut starts entering more data.

ASTRONAUT
Roger, Denver, 'web' enable...

A few more keys are depressed and a few red LEDs light up on an intricate grid of annunciators.

ASTRONAUT (CONT.)
...ready 'web'...

The LEDs blink off.

ASTRONAUT (CONT.)
...'web' go...

FOUR QUICK SMALL-ROCKET BLASTS, one every quarter second. On the FIFTH BLAST...

CUT TO:

OUTSIDE THE SATELLITE -- CLOSE -- BEHIND AND ABOVE IT

On the top of the satellite are three rows of twelve small rocket-propelled Micro-Satellite Aiming Devices (MSADs). Four have been launched, the fifth is just leaving, and seven more rocket away slowly, one every quarter second in the SILENCE of space.

The MSAD's are aimed at the Russian NDS in the b.g.

A few beats after the twelvth MSAD leaves the satellite...

CUT TO:

REVERSE POV -- CLOSE ON RUSSIAN NDS -- SATELLITE IN B.G.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The twelve MSAD's slowly approach...getting nearer, eleven fire their micro-steering thrusters and fan out, encircling the Russian NDS. One of the MSADs passes close to our POV and we see that it has a multi-faceted mirror pod attached to it.

WIDENING NOW as the MSADs encircle the Russian NDS for a few beats, then...

BACK IN THE SATELLITE -- CLOSE ON ASTRONAUT'S HAND

FOLLOW the hand to the keyboard where the Astronaut touches the "Ultra-Violet Aim Enable" key.

BACK IN SPACE -- SAME POV AT SURROUNDED NDS

A bright shaft of purple-laser light from the satellite hits the mirror pod of one of the twelve MSADs and splits apart into 11 shafts, which individually hit the mirror pods of the others; whereupon the same thing occurs on each of them, creating a giant "web" of light around the Russian NDS, which blocks the rays between opposing MSADs establishing a precise target.

The micro-steering thrusters on the MSADs fire again and the circle of them rapidly gathers speed as it rotates on two axes, creating a "globe effect."

BACK IN THE SATELLITE

We can see the "globe" and the Earth in the window.

ASTRONAUT
I've got a 'globe,' Denver.

DENVER
(over some static)
Uh...roger, Delta Two...please hold there.

A very LOUD BAMMM!

CUT TO:

EXTREME CLOSE UP OF A GAVEL'S IMPACT -- AS IT HITS

Another BAMMM!, right after the first, as the gavel hits the second time. The ECHOING COMMOTION of a large crowd in a big room. A third BAMMM a beat later. The unamplified voice of the CHAIRMAN booms out clearly over the commotion.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHAIRMAN'S VOICE
Order...can we please have some order...

BAMMM! The camera PULLS BACK to a WIDE SHOT of the CANADIAN HOUSE OF COMMONS IN SESSION, in Ottawa. The House is packed and the Members of Parliament are boistrously caucusing in tight, agitated little groups, disregarding the Chairman for the moment.

The Chairman is going to slam the gavel down again, but stops, realizing it is hopeless. He looks out over the scene and turns to step away from the podium and the SASKATCHEWAN M.P. suddenly rises to his feet with his arm raised, waving his hand at the Chairman.

SASKATCHEWAN M.P.
I appeal the Chair's deceision!

The commotion increases.

CHAIRMAN
(slamming gavel)
Order...

The M.P. lowers his arm and remains standing while the commontion subdues to a LOUD MURMUR.

ANGLE ON CHUCK -- IN VISITOR'S GALLERY

He's looking out over the assembled crowd of politicians slowly shaking his head and smiling in amused disbelief as he thinks to himself how easy it is to convince people. Ned's approach catches his attention and he looks over, gesturing a thumbs up.

Ned ENTERS FRAME and sits down as Chuck slides over a bit to make room for him. He's carrying the laser disk.

NED
That seems to have opened a few eyes...!

Ned reaches forward, picks up the Metal Case, puts it on his lap, opens it, pulls out the Red Folder, puts away the laser disk, and the folder, and the case.

CHUCK
What did you expect?...(then leaning closer for privacy)...get a load of that guy's wig!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NED
Have you seen Moinsleau?

Something else out on the House floor must have amused Chuck and now he tries to suppress some laughter.

CHUCK
Huh?...nah....

A puzzled look comes over Ned's face.

NED
What's he up to...?

CHAIRMAN'S VOICE
The Chair recognizes the honorable member from Saskatchewan.

BACK ON WIDE SHOT OF HOUSE -- POV BEHIND NED AND CHUCK

SASKATCHEWAN M.P.
This is too big an issue for a secret ballot...(beat). Let's have a roll-call vote so we can see who's traitor enough to sell out Canada!

The COMMOTION starts GROWING again.

CHAIRMAN
Mr. Strauss, we have a packed agenda and time is of the essence... an electronic vote will take half the time...

SASKATCHEWAN M.P.
(interrupting)
I think our countrymen deserve to know who among us would let Canada's future slip through their fingers right down the drain!

MORE COMMOTION

CHAIRMAN
Order...(BAMM of the gavel)...order!

ANGLE ON NED & CHUCK

NED
Who is this fascist geezer?

CHUCK
(privately)
Strauss? He's the minority leader. But don't worry about him...his bark's a lot worse than his bite.

NED
I doubt he's got any teeth!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CUT TO:

EXT. ROOFTOP HELIPORT -- THE PARLIAMENT -- OTTAWA -- DAY

The twelve powerful jet-rocket engines of Moinsleau's Tactical Helicopter ROAR LOUDER as it ENTERS FRAME and drops down smartly for a precise landing. Snow flies up from the powerful gusts. The weather is dull-grey overcast and it looks like more snow can be expected at any time. TWO SOLDIERS emerge from the squat, two-story, heavily-equipped (with atennas, dishes, radar, the works) Flight Control Building in the corner of the heliport, and run over to the aircraft, saluting Moinsleau as he gets out. He bundles up against the wind and cold and the soldiers escort him as he walks briskly to the Flight Control Building.

CUT TO:

THE LOBBY OF THE FLIGHT CONTROL BUILDING -- WIDE

The ROAR of the now departing helicopter gets LOUDER as the door opens and Moinsleau walks in, his thin attache case in one hand while he brushes his wind-blown hair back into place with the other. The soldiers remain outside, guarding the door.

A SECURITY GUARD stands to welcome Moinsleau.

SECURITY GUARD
Good afternoon, sir.

Camera follows as Moinsleau walks up to the Security Guard's counter, behind which are 40 closed-circuit TV monitors displaying the key "Security Areas" throughout the Parliamentary-building complex. On one of the Monitors the House of Commons session is in progress, and we can ALMOST HEAR the BANTER between the Saskatchewan M.P. and the Chairman about Parliamentary procedures and much BOOING from the gathered MP's.

GEORGE
How am I doing for time?

ANGLE ON SECURITY OFFICER -- POV GEORGE

From this angle the monitor display of the House session is more prominent in the b.g. as the Security Guard turns to glance at it, then turns back to George.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SECURITY GUARD
Steckler's presentation ended a couple of minutes ago, but Strauss is up now, so your guess is as good as mine, sir...

ANGLE ON MOINSLEAU -- POV SECURITY GUARD

Moinsleau's removing his gloves now, having tucked his attache case under his arm.

GEORGE
Please locate Jaques Gaullier and ask him to meet me in my office immediately.

BACK ON SECURITY GUARD

SECURITY GUARD
The Defense Minister...? These Americans must be pretty thirsty!

BACK ON GEORGE

GEORGE
I can live without the humor, thank you.

Moinsleau abruptly turns to leave, heading for a hallway door where a GUARD salutes him; the camera FOLLOWS all this and ZOOMS IN a bit on the Guard as George passes him.

GUARD
Would you like me to clear the hall, sir?

GEORGE
No, that's allright, thanks.

The Guard opens the door and we hear COMMOTION outside. Several voices in the hallway outside OVERLAP simultaneously.

VOICE
(out in hall)
Look alive!

ANOTHER VOICE
(in hall)
Rolling...and speed...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THIRD VOICE
This is Maxwell Harris, here at...

CUT TO:

THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DOOR -- IN THE HALL

The hallway is teaming with news crews who swarm around Moinsleau as he enters; even before he's all the way through the door they are thrusting microphones in his face. The REPORTERS yell out their questions as Moinsleau pushes himself through the mob and walks briskly past the PANNING camera LEAVING FRAME...the Reporter's questions OVERLAP.

REPORTER #1
Mr. Prime Minister...Mr. Prime Minister...may we have a comment on the Water Pact?

THIRD VOICE (CONT.)
...uh, Parliament where Prime Minister Moinsleau has just arrived. No one knows for sure how he'll vote but the best guess here is that the Pact will be voted in unanimously.

REPORTER #2
How will you vote sir?

GEORGE
No comment...no comment...

REPORTER #3
Do you think America would retaliate, sir?

REPORTER #4
Is the B.B.C. report of an Offense One Alert true?

REPORTER #5
(to his assistant in f.g.)
What Alert?

GEORGE
...I have no comment at this time...

DISSOLVE TO:

BACK IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS -- AT THE SIDE DOOR

The Chairman's voice can be heard ABOVE the UPROAR.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHAIRMAN'S VOICE
Gentlemen, I find your behavior not in keeping with your otherwise high esteem...in other words (BAMM!) order!

THREE AIDES wait by the door for their boss. At Moinsleau's entrance now, they snap to attention and THEIR COMMENTS OVERLAP and can be heard OVER the session in the b.g..

AIDE #1
(to Moinsleau)
It's about as we expected...

They escort Moinsleau toward the floor of the House and the camera PANS with them as they pass by.

GEORGE
How close is the vote?

AIDE #2
The Chairman wants to move the question...

AIDE #3
(slightly overlapping)
All we can do is pull a procedural on them...

GEORGE
Yes...go for an objection...any sort.

ON SASKATCHEWAN M.P. -- ELEVATOR SHOT -- SPIRALING UP

In ONE LONG SHOT the camera slowly executes a 360-degree SPIRAL starting TIGHT on Strauss and ARRIVING at Ned and Chuck in the Visitors' Gallery.

Starting TIGHT on Strauss now, and HOLDING for two beats before the ELEVATOR MOVE...as the COMMOTION SUBSIDES.

SASKATCHEWAN M.P.
I don't care whether this takes all day or all week...I want the history books to have the records straight.

What are you so ashamed of...your greedy avarice?

SOMEONE'S VOICE YELLS OUT a snide comment...

SOMEONE'S VOICE
Money talks, Jerry!

SASKATCHEWAN M.P. (CONT.)
Aye...but muck and money go together!
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SASKATCHEWAN M.P. (CONT.)
All you city-slicker business folks can think about is that 4 billion dollars.

I may only be a farmer, but I can tell you that you can't sell the cow and drink the milk!

SOME LAUGHTER

SASKATCHEWAN M.P. (CONT.)
Go ahead and laugh if you want...but I don't care what your computers say, common sense'll tell you that there's not enough water in Canada for us and them...(beat). Eight trillion gallons a day...that's as much water as Lac la Ronge...(beat)...and once you turn that fawcet on, do you think they'd ever let you turn it off...? (beat) They'll pump Canada drier than the Sahara desert!

A FEW JEERS AND CATCALLS in the b.g..

SASKATCHEWAN M.P. (CONT.)
You go ahead and joke about it, if you want...but mark my words: you can't fool around with Nature like that. (beat) Man proposes...but only God disposes.

ANOTHER SNIDE COMMENT

SNIDE COMMENT
Save it for church!

SASKATCHEWAN M.P. (CONT.)
I'm no Spring chicken...I've been around for 92 years...twice as long as half of you...and long enough to know that there's an ebb in every flow, and nothing's as certain as uncertainly itself....We have water now, but we won't always...(beat), and you won't be worrying about your money when the well runs dry.

Strauss stabs his finger towards the huge laser-projection "screen" at the far end of the House (which now shows a computer-graphic "attendance list" of those present at the session and an inset frame with a CLOSE UP of Strauss as he speaks).

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SASKATCHEWAN M.P. (CONT.)
That was a slick little show...a little too slick, if you ask me. (beat) I hope you're all smart enough to read between the lines.

Do you believe all that 'working together' nonsense? (beat) What are you going to work on? (beat) I don't want to live underground, like a mole...eat rats...or have my genes altered to improve my children.

ANOTHER RUDE REMARK

RUDE REMARK
Have you still got any, Jerry?

LAUGHTER! (A BRIEF OUTBURST)

SASKATCHEWAN M.P. (CONT.)
(as laughter subsides)
Go ahead...laugh. (beat)...but Mr. Steckler up there (pointing at Ned) is going to have the last laugh... and he who laughs last, laughs hardest.

A FEW BOOS

SASKATCHEWAN M.P. (CONT.)
Coming events cast their shadows in front of them...and none are so blind as those who won't see them. (beat) I don't like the shadows I saw on that screen (pointing at it again).

If we ratify this pact, that's what you'll have (again pointing at screen). You'll be out of the frying pan and into the fire...because as you sow, so shall you reap...(beat), but maybe that's something only a farmer could understand...(beat); you city folks would say 'necessity is the mother of invention...they'll find a way.'

Well, you're barking up the wrong tree...you're working on the symptoms, not the causes...and when you can't find the real answers, you rush faster and faster while time runs out.

A GROWING QUIET

CONTINUED:

SASKATCHEWAN M.P. (CONT.)
Did you ever consider that your whole approach might be wrong...(beat), that maybe the longest way round is the shortest way home?

A tree is known by it's fruit...and the fruit of America is tainted. Their so-called 'solutions' are what's causing the problems...

ON CHUCK AND NED (AT END OF SPIRAL MOVE)

CHUCK
(in Ned's ear)
Friendly guy, eh?!

AIDE #3'S VOICE
(yelling out)
We object to the consideration of this matter!

NED
That's Moinsleau's guy...

TIGHT ON STRAUSS

SASKATCHEWAN M.P.
Point of privilege!

ANGLE ON MOINSLEAU AND HIS THREE AIDES

An UPROAR that began with Aide #3's objection SWELLS as the assembled M.P.'s notice that Moinsleau as arrived. We can SEE their heads turning in the b.g.. Aide #3 is still standing with his arm raised as he continues...

AIDE #3
Mr. Chairman...we object to the consideration of this matter!

In the f.g. George pulls Aide #2 aside...

GEORGE
Get ahold of Bradley Barret and book me anytime, anywhere...as long as it's <u>now</u>.

Aide #2 turns and LEAVES FRAME as Moinsleau rises and turns to the assembled M.P.s, most of whom are APPLAUDING.

CHAIRMAN
Order...the Chair recognizes the Prime Minister.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

INTERCUTS -- MOINSLEAU AND OTHER M.P.'S REACTIONS

GEORGE
I object (beat, as the clamor subsides), I object...(nearly quiet now)... I object to the consideration of this matter because vital new data has emerged in the last 36 hours that completely changes our priorities for survival...(beat as a MURMUR builds and subsides). The data is classified, but I can tell you what it means:

Events are racing ahead faster than we can cope with them...and they are changing in new ways with which we have no previous experience. We can't learn from history, either, because that's changing too fast, too. So we hold on to the seat of our pants and whiz through time, learning from experience as we go...and now all this new technology has propelled our experience to the speed of light...too fast for us to comprehend it before it's all changed.

We're in a technological time warp that's created a paradox: the faster we go, the longer it will take to get back to where we should be.

We're killing ourselves with progress. It's time to slow things down...maybe even take a few steps backward...and get things back in balance.

The honorable Mr. Strauss is fundamentally correct...there won't be enough water for all of us. Now that the winds have changed and American pollution sweeps across Canada our rainwater has become fouled. Even if Canada isn't pumped dry, as Mr. Strauss suggests might happen, our water will soon be unfit for human consumption. And that is only one of several new problems that NANUC has forecast.

Even so, we share this continent with America and there is no doubt in my mind that we should sell...even give...them the water they need...(beat). There is no other moral choice.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A LOW MURMUR STARTS BUILDING

GEORGE (CONT.)
But the terms of the Pact must be drastically revised.

Now we have America, the bull, by the horns!

SOME APPLAUSE

GEORGE (CONT.)
The lion is now beholden to the mouse!

THE APPLAUSE GROWS

GEORGE (CONT.)
We must take advantage of our new bargaining leverage to clamp-down on our American cousins before they soil the nest any further.

The Pact must be made conditional, and America must comply to our Canadian pollution, consumption, and birth-control laws...perhaps even to some future worldwide code of ethics.

SOME GRUMBLING WITH SPOTTY APPLAUSE

GEORGE (CONT.)
I therefore move that this Bill be sent back to Committee for complete reappraisal.

FUROR NOW AND A LOT OF DISAGREEMENT. TWO VOICES STAND OUT...

VOICE #1
But the jobs, George...what about the jobs?

VOICE #2
Call Bernstein and tell him to dump every share of Anaconda Aqueduct on the books...pronto!

ANGLE ON NED AND CHUCK

CHUCK
Nah! He hasn't killed it...he's just stalling...(beat)...it's vintage Moinsleau.

NED
Well we've had it for now...let's get out of here.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Chuck and Ned make a move to go, LEAVING FRAME.

BACK ON GEORGE

He notices Ned and Chuck leaving in the b.g. and walks over to the Chairman, the camera FOLLOWING, and whispers something in his ear as the APPLUASE TURNS INTO CLAMOR.

Having finished his comment now, George turns on his heals and in a quick about face heads for the side door as the Chairman returns his attention to the assembled MP's, BANGING down his gavel...

CHAIRMAN
Do I hear a move for a recess?

AT LEAST TWELVE MP'S make the motion which is instantly seconded by A HOST OF OTHER VOICES in the b.g. as George walks past the camera and LEAVES FRAME.

ANGLE ON THE SIDE DOOR -- BEHIND MOINSLEAU -- AS HE ARRIVES

Ned and Chuck are just about out the door when Moinsleau calls out...

GEORGE
Ned...

Breaking stride, Ned stops and turns to George...

NED
Thanks for nothing, Moinsleau...

He turns and walks out the door. Chuck follows. Moinsleau stops and watches them, speechless.

WIPE ACROSS:

A SUPER CLOSE-UP OF JAQUES GAULLIER'S FACE

Turning back to face Moinsleau, he is obviously astounded by something George just said. His accent is French-Canadian.

GAULLIER
Are you out of your mind?

PANNING and WIDENING as Gaullier crosses over to snuff out his Fatima in the ashtray on the coffee table in front of Moinsleau.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GAULLIER (CONT.)
No!...there's no way in hell to do that!

GEORGE'S VOICE
Why not?

GAULLIER
The entire Allied defense network is linked to NANUC...(two beats)...

CLOSE ON GAULLIER'S SLY SMILE

GAULLIER (CONT.)
...what's your angle, Moinsleau?

ANGLE ON MOINSLEAU -- POV GAULLIER

GEORGE
I don't want this Alert!...I want them <u>off</u> it!

BACK ON GAULLIER

GAULLIER
Well, shutting off NANUC won't do it. He's NATO's key link!

BACK ON GEORGE -- CLOSE

GEORGE
It was NANUC's forecast that prompted the whole thing!

BACK ON GAULLIER

GAULLIER
(pulling his Fatima from clenched teeth)
Whether you like it or not, George, NANUC is running the show...(beat) I can't stop it...you can't stop it... I doubt even the Queen can stop it!

BACK ON GEORGE

GEORGE
Queen Anne is dead...or hadn't you heard...?

BACK ON GAULLIER

GAULLIER
Eh?...what difference does <u>that</u> make?

CUT TO:

VERY CLOSE ON A CHAMPAGNE BOTTLE -- JUST AS IT POPS

POP! The cork flies out of a champagne bottle and as it foams up the camera FOLLOWS as it is poured into two cut-crystal glasses. We can SEE Noreen's kitchen in the b.g.; it is spacious, sophisticated, and highly computerized.

JEFF'S VOICE
Well, better late than never!

NOREEN'S VOICE
(from the bedroom)
How can you say that...?!

JEFF'S VOICE
Not NANUC...us, we deserve a toast!

NOREEN'S VOICE
Oh, right...I forgot....

JEFF'S VOICE
Well have a little of this...you'll forget NANUC fast enough...you know, I think I'd like George...at least he's got a sense of humor!

WIDER as Jeff places the bottle in a silver ice bucket on the kitchen counter, then FOLLOW him as he picks up the two glasses and walks from the kitchen to the bedroom. He must have come straight from the office since he's still wearing his suit slacks and striped, Oxford shirt; but his cuffs are rolled back and he's loosened his tie.

NOREEN'S VOICE
Bird's of a feather...both rude!

JEFF
C'mon...cheer up...that was supposed to be a joke...

INTO THE BEDROOM NOW

SOFT MUSIC gets LOUDER as we enter the bedroom. There's the LOW PERIODIC BEEP of a computer somewhere in the b.g.. The bedroom is large and spacious, and very modern. The bed is recessed into a ten-foot-diameter, circular, sunken area in the center of the room. Above it, recessed into the ceiling, is a fifteen-foot-diameter dome. In the dome are lifelike, hologram images of clouds that create a faint-blue glow that mixes with the room's low-level, lavender-tinted lighting and color scheme.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

There are a lot of plants, but they are obviously hybrids because each, in its own way, is a little different than you'd expect...they're bigger, fuller.

Noreen is slipping a lavender-satin case onto a pillow and is wearing a mauve-velvet dressing gown. She pauses, hugs the pillow, and looks up at Jeff who is approaching with the champagne.

ANGLE ON NOREEN

NOREEN
Jeff...do you think that maybe George is flipping out?

JEFF
No! I think this is a hell of a good idea...!

She turns to him to accept the glass. He kisses her cheek and pinches her bum.

NOREEN
Seriously, Jeff...you don't think he'd really shut him down, do you?

Jeff see's that his romantic overtures were premature and that she needs to talk something out. So he walks over to the stereo in the b.g. to TURN DOWN THE MUSIC a little.

JEFF
George...? He might...(beat) he's a God-fearing man from the old school...machines scare him.

NOREEN
But why?! Doesn't he realize what NANUC can do?

JEFF
That's exactly what I think he may be afraid of...(beat) I'll tell you, he scares me...

NOREEN
George?

JEFF
No, NANUC.

NOREEN
Don't you see the potentials?!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Jeff leaves the stereo and walks over to the bed, where he plops himself down, and props some pillows to lean on. Noreen "strolls" and the camera FOLLOWS her, keeping Jeff in the b.g..

JEFF
Yeah, but look at what's going on...you've got a giant machine controlling the fate of the world...that's not right. People should control their own destiny...

He takes a long swallow of champagne.

NOREEN
People are who screwed up their destiny in the first place!

JEFF
But left to their own devices they can work it out...or they could if they'd talk to each other ...but now only machines talk to each other...

Noticing his glass is empty...

JEFF (CONT.)
...want some more champagne?

NOREEN
No...oh, stay there...I'll get it.

She heads for the kitchen and the camera ZOOMS IN slowly on Jeff.

NOREEN (CONT.)
Go on...what's wrong if the machines talk to each other...that's hardly 'controlling the fate of the world.'

JEFF
Not yet...but I think a man like George looks at something like NANUC and has the foresight... the perspective...to see where it's going. Remember, when he grew up there wasn't anything remotely resembling NANUC...people made all the decisions.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEFF (CONT.)
George just wants to make sure that people stay in control.

NOREEN
(from kitchen)
That's ridiculous...people are in control...

JEFF
Maybe now...but for how much longer?

She returns from the kitchen with the ice bucket and some grapes, and sits down on the edge of the bed next to Jeff, putting them on the curved headboard.

NOREEN
You're all paranoid!

JEFF
Noreen...do you think NANUC will listen to you forever? You've got a machine that's ten times smarter than all the world's geniuses put together...sitting there...thinking... day and night. How do you know who he talks to...or what goes on inside his head...?

She refills his glass. He notices the grapes...

JEFF (CONT.)
Hey...! Where'd you get those?

NOREEN
Rank has its privileges!

Seeing a possible opening in Noreen's flip answer, Jeff leans forward to feed her a grape, but kisses her long and hard instead.

NOREEN
(a little breathlessly)
Well, I know what goes on inside your head!

CUT TO:

INSIDE THE CANADIAN SUPREME COURT -- CHIEF JUSTICE'S OFFICE -- TIGHT ON MOINSLEAU

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

George and BRADLEY BARRETT have apparently been having a very heated discussion because there is an obvious mixture of anger, frustration, desperation, and mockery in the tone of George's voice. He TAPS his head with his forefinger so hard that we can HEAR it.

GEORGE
It doesn't take a lot of brains to figure out what could happen.

ANGLE ON BRADLEY BARRETT

He stands before a massive book case full of law books, scanning one closely, dressed in his judges robes. He's having some trouble reading the fine print, holding his pince-nez glasses a little lower so he can peer over the top of them. He pulls the book a little closer.

BARRETT
George! I can't issue a court anything based on a few speculative assumptions about what could happen. You should know that!

George ENTERS FRAME approaching Barrett, gesturing to the huge library...

GEORGE
There must be something here...

BARRETT
This is hardly a matter for the Supreme Court, George...something has to have already happened...a crime has to have been committed...

GEORGE
But it may be the only way to stop this insanity before a crime is committed...the biggest crime ever committed.

CLOSE ON BARRETT

BARRETT
George, in the eyes of the law a machine can't commit murder... only people can. Although I share your sympathies, there's no legal precedent. Something like this could take months...years...it involves international law, as well...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TIGHT ON MOINSLEAU

GEORGE
Of course there's a precedent...a machine can't declare war!

BACK ON BARRETT

BARRETT
(closing the book)
War hasn't been declared....

BACK ON GEORGE

GEORGE
It may as well have been...hell, all those machines are perched on the edge. They'll react to any provocation so fast that you couldn't do anything officially before it was all over.

BACK ON BARRETT

On his way back to his desk now...

BARRETT
Yes, but those machines were officially sanctioned...they are legitimate 'representatives' of the government. You yourself sanctioned them...it's a matter of public record.

CUT TO:

INSIDE A SMALL CONFERENCE ROOM -- AT NANUC POD -- TIGHT ON NANUC'S EYES

NANUC
So you see, the data is conclusive and the logic irrefutable.

PULL BACK and DOLLY AROUND NANUC to sequentially reveal GENERAL PERIGNON (pronounced Peh-reen-yawn), ADMIRAL PETER BAUSCH, and COMMANDER CLAY THOMPKINS. They are seated around a small conference table with a centrally-mounted NANUC Pod.

Passing Perignon now; he is a fat man who's clothes will always be too tight as he constantly grows to overfill them. He likes to "play with" and chew big cigars, and

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

always wears his hat. He's a nervous man who likes to pace, hands glasped behind his back, while he schemes; but he's the most powerful of the three assembled and he knows it...never doubted it. Seated as he ENTERS FRAME, Perignon hefts his weight out of his chair and picks up his cigar, starting to pace slowly, STAYING IN THE B.G., as the DOLLY CONTINUES...

NANUC (CONT.)
Why waste this opportunity?

Why risk losing this chance by ending the Alert?

Why not take advantage of it?

Arriving now on Admiral Peter Bausch, a thin, sly-looking man in his 60's. What's left of his hair is slicked back and looks coarse and oily. He wears metal-rimmed, round-framed glasses behind which he has trouble keeping his left eye from twitching. He has the kind of beard that would leave a five-o-clock shadow right after shaving, and a few small facial scars that he probably picked up in a war somewhere.

BAUSCH
I must say... this idea of yours is intriguing...I had never thought in 'world terms' seriously...

Now passing Commander Clay Thompkins, an Air Force man who's made it a point to stay rugged, thin, and tough. His thick head of grey hair is closely cropped in a flat-top crew cut. His reflexes are fast, but he rarely moves...he prefers to "sit tight" and "keep my eyes open...on both sides of my head." Having flown a few million miles and survived, he knows the value of a checklist, and is attentive to details.

THOMPKINS
Don't let delusions of grandeur blind you, Peter...we'd be destroyed.

Perignon is pacing along behind Thompkins and now the camera PANS UP to him.

PERIGNON
How can we be sure this plan of yours will work...what are the guarantees?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ON NANUC -- POV PERIGNON

NANUC
There are no guarantees. It is a question of odds, but right now the odds are in your favor. You can use the Alert to force this issue and make them back down.

THOMPKINS' VOICE
Back down!?

ON THOMPKINS -- NANUC'S POV

THOMPKINS (CONT.)
Don't be ridiculous...you think Russia and China will just sit back and watch while we nuke them? They'd blow us off the face of the earth at the slightest provocation (beat). No...I agree with Moinsleau...let's just get on with this, and end the Alert.

He reaches for one of the red phones connected to the NANUC Pod.

NANUC'S VOICE
Wait, Peter...

ON NANUC AND THOMPKINS -- PERIGNON'S POV

NANUC (CONT.)
...you're being foolish and naive.

Thompkins casts Perignon an annoyed frown and lowers the receiver.

PERIGNON
Clay's right...

WIDE ON THE ROOM

PERIGNON (CONT.)
...they'd never back down. Just reverse the roles and you can see how absurd your argument is... suppose Tsing or Valenkoff popped a few rockets off at us? I don't know about you, but I'd nail their asses, quick!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NANUC'S VOICE
Of course you would...

ON THE GENERALS -- POV BEHIND NANUC

NANUC (CONT.)
...so would I...and that's why it's so important to act right now, while the Alert is on.

THOMPKINS
Insane! Offense One means total annihilation,..if they detect a single weapon being deployed, their entire arsenals will automatically be engaged...we'd have the holocaust we've been trying so hard to avoid.

NANUC
Why does Offense One exist if you're never going to use it?

THOMPKINS
You couldn't have a lasting peace without it...just the threat keeps people in line.

REVERSE THE POV -- WIDE ON NANUC -- THE GENERALS' POV

NANUC
Your strategy of fear caters to mens' baser instincts of jealousy and hate. It creates a mood of desperation and futility. The entire effect is totally counter-productive, and is, in part, responsible for the ecological crisis that now exists...because no one cares about a future that may never come to pass...so they all live for today, and rush to get and do all they can, before it's too late. The ever-present spectre of doom has decayed what little moral fiber ever existed. And all your military might will do nothing to save you from the certain death that is staring you in the face.

ON PERIGNON -- NANUC'S POV

PERIGNON
That's a nobel philosophy, NANUC, but people like Tsing and Valenkoff
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PERIGNON (CONT.)
are tyrants. Their number one goal is to control the world...they'd love to get their hands on our wealth and resources...and without people like us to stop them, they'd march in and take over.

ON NANUC -- THOMPKINS' POV

NANUC
That's the pot calling the kettle black...you'd love to control them just as much as they want to control you. You're all trapped in the mistaken notion that your own way of life is better...and in your case that is clearly wrong because it's the uncontrolled greed of capitalism that is responsible for creating the industrialized society that is destroying the world.

ON THOMPKINS -- NANUC'S POV

THOMPKINS
All this begs the question...what makes you so sure that they'll back down?

NANUC'S VOICE
It's a calculated risk...

ON NANUC -- THOMPKINS' POV

NANUC (CONT.)
...based on the assumption that they, like you, would do anything to avoid total annihilation...and as I explained to you already, they wouldn't be able to even if they wanted to because they would be too confused by the particulars of the Event and it would be all over before they had enough time to recalculate any scenarios that would jeopardize our success.

BACK ON THOMPKINS -- PERIGNON'S POV

THOMPKINS
I still don't understand that part of it....

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ON PERIGNON -- THOMPKINS' POV

PERIGNON
Neither do I...that's a lulu, NANUC!

BACK ON NANUC -- PERIGNON'S POV

NANUC
The architecture of all VXR computers is based on a logical model, which is far more limited than my Anti-Logic protocol. In simple terms, that means that I can confuse them. So, by re-aiming all NATO-Network weapons to new, 'illogical' targets every micro-second, nothing will seem to make sense. They won't think the targets are legitimate...and the targets will have changed before they can recalculate or react. All this is easily accomplished by using the same leak that created the Alert.

ON THOMPKINS -- NANUC'S POV

THOMPKINS
It sounds too simplistic to me... besides, NATO is the least of the problem...they are on <u>our</u> side.

BACK ON WIDE SHOT

Perignon surveys the scene, trying to get a head count on the others' mood. He seems to be getting fidgety.

Bausch is pacing in front of the monitors, eyeballing them and the group alternately. He strokes his chin (as if there were a beard), thinking as hard as he can. He gestures as if he's about to say something, but doesn't.

NANUC
There are no <u>sides</u> in this event, Clay...besides, the Communist Defense League will have the same problem. Not only will the targets be considered illegitimate, they'll also be changing. So any computer, no matter who it belongs to, will have to constantly recalculate all the possible alternative scenarios before they can react.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ON BAUSCH -- TIGHT

His left eye's acting up now, as he finally makes his point.

BAUSCH
If they just switched back to manual control they could bypass all that.

THOMPKINS' VOICE
Good point, Peter.

Bausch smiles at his own cleverness, accepting the compliment.

WIDE ON THE ROOM

NANUC
What good would that do? The minute any of them tried to interfere in any way, it would only trigger a full and complete retaliation, which would mean annihilation...(beat). So, we're back at square one, aren't we, gentlemen?

No responses from the Generals as they look at each other confoundedly for a few beats while the camera starts DOLLYING around to ANGLE ON Basuch.

NANUC
Don't forget, the odds are that they will take a wait-and-see attitude...and that once the Event has started it will be totally clear that there is no specific threat to any particular nation...that you are, in fact, protecting their right to life as well as your own.

BAUSCH
Well, it makes sense to me....

THOMPKINS' VOICE
Bullshit!

ON THOMPKINS -- BAUSCH'S POV

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THOMPKINS (CONT.)
This isn't a military problem...it belongs in the U.N..

NANUC'S VOICE
On the contrary...

ON NANUC -- THOMPKINS' POV

NANUC (CONT.)
...it's too late for political rhetoric or compromise. Something must be done immediately. After the Event, the future belongs to men like yourselves who have the strength and the power to police the world and enforce the servere limitations that will be necessary to prevent the Earth's ecology from slipping back into a negative cycle.

BACK ON BAUSCH -- THOMPKINS' POV

BAUSCH
I'm beginning to like this...

THOMPKINS' VOICE
You would...!

BAUSCH
Don't you? NANUC is absolutely correct...the military should rule the world...

PERIGNON'S VOICE
I'll buy that part of it...

ON PERIGNON -- THOMPKINS' POV

PERIGNON (CONT.)
...democracies have never lasted very long...any history book will teach you that.

ON THOMPKINS -- PERIGNON'S POV

THOMPKINS
How are we going to do that...? We aren't experienced in running a government!

BACK ON PERIGNON

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PERIGNON
That part's simple...we'll get Moinsleau. This is just the kind of humanitarian crap he loves... and besides, we'll have NANUC on our side...so how can we lose?

BEEP...(beat)...BEEP...a warning buzzer.

CUT TO:

SUPER TIGHT ON A FLASHING ANNUNCIATOR SWITCH

The switch says: "Overload Alert" and it is flashing in synch with the SUSTAINED BEEPING. In the b.g., we can hear the VOICE of Harley GETTING LOUDER as he approaches.

HARLEY'S VOICE
Ok, ok...give me a break...I can't do two things at once.

Harley's finger ENTERS FRAME and touches the switch. The BEEPING STOPS and the camera PULLS OUT to show the monitor beneath the switch, on which we can SEE a computer graphic that shows icons which reveal NANUC's "Systems Power Requirements/Sources." From the graph we learn that NANUC's power is derived from several alternative sources: three solar grids, the public utility, and three emergency generators. It is obvious from the graphic's highlighting that the only power on line is coming from Emergency Generators #1 and #2.

Harley's hand REENTERS FRAME and touches a few keys on the Touch-Com (TC) panel beneath the monitor. The display changes, becoming a new graphic showing discrete electrical requirements for all of NANUC's 167 mainframes. We can note from this graph's highlighting that all the mainframes are in operation except #'s 150 through 167, and that thirteen of those in use are dangerously low on power.

HARLEY'S VOICE
Holy Hannah, NANUC...what are you up to tonight?

A DIFFERENT BEEP, BEEP from another, nearby monitor. WIDENING AND PANNING we can SEE that the source is Harley's ICP. He steps over to it and hits a switch. A beat later ANOTHER TECHNICIAN appears on the screen.

HARLEY
What now, Phillips?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PHILLIPS
Gimme some juice, will you!? Seventeen's about to crash!

HARLEY
Ok, ok...

Harley switches Phillips off and bolts down the aisle. Then, VARIOUS CUTS as Harley arrives at the generator room, takes out his gold security card and inserts into a circuit-breaker box marked: "Emergency Generator #3." SCREEEEEECH as he withdraws the card and a huge generator grinds to a start in the b.g.. As the generator's LOW RUMBLING WHIRR fills the room, the camera PULLS BACK as Harley notes something on a log sheet attached to a clip board hanging near the breaker-box panel, then bolts for the door.

LONG ON AISLEWAY -- OUTSIDE THE GENERATOR ROOM DOOR

Racing through the door, Harley bumps into MacKenzie, who falls over onto his paper lunch bag. In the b.g., a digital clock reads: "22:02. Mac's sprawled on the floor now, and his turban has fallen off revealing his bald head. As he reaches for the turban...

HARLEY
Jeeeesus...I'm sorry, boss. Let me help you...

MacKenzie shrug's off his help and appologizes in his diminutive, Punjab manner.

MACKENZIE
No...please...the error was mine and mine alone....

HARLEY
How do you figure that...!?

MACKENZIE
If I wasn't late, we wouldn't have collided! Many events led to this... too many to count...and there is always a lesson...

Some juice starts dripping from MacKenzie's lunch bag.

HARLEY
Mac...your lunch...!

MacKenzie notices the leak, raises the bag, and starts looking around inside it. Harley scans his watch and although trying to be polite to his superior, is getting antsy and tries to speed things up...but to his chagrin, MacKenzie is in no hurry...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TECHNICIAN (CONT.)
...shit!...what a klutz I am...

MACKENZIE
(peering into the bag)
...oh...that is a shame...

Mackenzie pulls out a squashed sandwich.

TECHNICIAN
Mmmmmm...listen, you can have mine.

Reaching deep into the bag MacKenzie pulls out a burst bubble-pack dripping a dark reddish fluid...he holds it up for the Technician to see the label.

MACKENZIE
...all the way from India...a gift...

TECHNICIAN
All the way from India...I don't know how I'll ever replace that...

MACKENZIE
No worries...there is a lesson in every loss...

TECHNICIAN
...from that...? What do you learn from a busted bag?

MACKENZIE
To value more what survives...

He holds up the sandwich, then puts it back in the bag.

TECHNICIAN
Well, we managed to survive another day around here...I hope you value that!

MACKENZIE
Tell me, Harley, why are the auxilliary generators in operation?

TECHNICIAN
Hah...you'll find out..go scan your panel (gesturing at MacKenzie's Control Terminal)...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

They start down the aisle; camera DOLLYS along.

MACKENZIE
But those generators are for emergency purposes...

TECHNICIAN
I know...Perignon called from The Vault an hour ago and said to fire them up...there's some sort of Alert.

MACKENZIE
An Alert?

TECHNICIAN
Yeah... he said that they wanted to take advantage of it for a trial run on some new plans...

They arrive at the Technician's Terminal Console, where he notices something and WHISTLES in disbelief while the camera DOLLYS around behind them ANGLING IN PAST THEM to an LED Display where we see 167 illuminated annunciators. MacKenzie steps a bit closer to get a better look. The LED panel is labeled: "Operative Mainframes."

TECHNICIAN
...phew!...we can use the extra juice anyway...NANUC is cookin' tonight!... you could fry an egg on him...

MacKenzie runs his fingers across the bottom row of illuminated LED's (numbered 150 through 167) and turns to the Technician.

MACKENZIE
Look here...even the old VXR's are in operation...

TECHNICIAN
They said they're simulating something...

MacKenzie starts to unhurriedly head toward his adjacent Control Terminal across the aisle; the technician follows him, and the camera DOLLYS AROUND for a WIDE SHOT of MacKenzie's work station.

MACKENZIE
More war games, probably...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TECHNICIAN
No...nothing like that... mostly local stuff...Sector Three and Sector Seven...

MACKENZIE
The Police?

TECHNICIAN
Yeah...it's weird though...

He points to one of the twenty monitors at Mackenzie's console where a world map is displayed. There are fifteen dots scattered at various locations around the world; three are in Canada, six are in the U.S.A., one is in Russia, one in China; one in Japan, one in South America, and two in Europe.

ANGLE CLOSE ON MONITOR

The technician gestures to Russia and China.

TECHNICIAN (CONT.)
...how did he get an international profile in local mode?

MACKENZIE
Probably a drug ring...NANUC can access that data through the U.N....

ANGLE ON MACKENZIE -- POV TECHNICIAN

MACKENZIE (CONT.)
Did they say when they would be through?

TECHNICIAN'S VOICE
Huh...? No... they said they might be at it for a while, though...and they asked for a TV hookup, too...which is going to take another hour, at least.

MACKENZIE
That is a shame...

ANGLE ON TECHNICIAN -- POV MACKENZIE

TECHNICIAN
Let me guess...the lesson this time is: I should have stayed in bed...!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BACK ON MACKENZIE

MACKENZIE
Hmmmmm...I had so hoped to get in some time with FFLIP II...

TECHNICIAN
Well go right ahead....

The Technician gestures over to a small LED labeled: "FFLIP II Enable." As the camera PANS and ZOOMS IN on the LED, we can SEE that it is lit.

CLOSE ON MACKENZIE

He notices the LED and instantly looks over at an annunciator panel a few feet away where one of twenty indicators is illuminated and we can SEE that it says: "Mode Lock."

TECHNICIAN'S VOICE
Hey...don't blame me. Noreen called before and asked if you were still here. She was with the Prime Minister.

MACKENZIE
When was that?

ON TECHNICIAN -- MACKENZIE'S POV

TECHNICIAN
Hours ago...this morning...just after you left.

ANGLE ON MACKENZIE -- POV TECHNICIAN

MacKenzie slowly, distractedly, takes his seat in front of the keyboard beneath his main monitor, glancing briefly at NANUC's eyes. Seated now, he rubs his forefinger across his lips slowly, wondering.

MACKENZIE
And where is Noreen now?

TECHNICIAN'S VOICE
Hey, I am not my brother's keeper... or my sister's.

MACKENZIE
That is a shame....

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGLE ON TECHNICIAN

TECHNICIAN
In her case, it certainly is!

BACK ON MACKENZIE -- TIGHTER

Pulling into his keyboard now, getting ready to enter something; in the b.g., scotch-taped on the console is a postcard with an illustration of an Indian guru.

TECHNICIAN'S VOICE
(exaggerated eagerness)
Want me to call her?

MACKENZIE
No worries...I will...

The Technician ENTERS FRAME, leaning on the console counter behind MacKenzie and pointing to the postcard.

TECHNICIAN
Hey...what's that?

MACKENZIE
...oh...a Christmas card...

TECHNICIAN
...who's the guy?

MACKENZIE
He is the Maharajah Govind Singh, a most holy man...

The Technician's curiosity is easily satisfied and he pushes himself off the counter, and turns to leave.

TECHNICIAN'S VOICE
I don't see how you can run a computer and believe in all that guru stuff.

MACKENZIE
That is a shame....

MacKenzie watches as the Technician leaves, then turns to the postcard, reaches out, and touches it for two beats.

The camera DOLLYS AROUND and ZOOMS IN to a VERY TIGHT ANGLE on his eyes.

DISSOLVE TO:

A TROPICAL SEASHORE -- NEAR THE BREAKERS -- NIGHT

Some silhouetted palm trees blow gently against a dark-purple night sky with hundreds of shimmering stars and a new moon. SHHHHH, SHHHHH...we can hear the repetitive sound of the SURF breaking against the white sand of the beach in the f.g.. The gentle breakers sparkle with faint highlights of the moonlight on their foamy crests.

(PRODUCTION NOTE: We can SEE that although the scene looks realistic, it is a three-dimensional hologram projection; and we can HEAR the sound of the waves throughout the entire scene.)

NOREEN'S VOICE
A man being chased by a tiger climbs out on the branch of a tree...

The camera PULLS BACK SLOWLY...now we can SEE that the seascape is in the dome over Noreen's bed.

NOREEN'S VOICE (CONT.)
The branch bends dangerously low over a dried-up well.

PANNING DOWN and WIDENING SLOWLY

NOREEN'S VOICE (CONT.)
A pair of mice gnaw the branch on which he hangs, and below he can see a mass of writhing snakes at the bottom of the well.

ARRIVING at the bed beneath the dome, we can HARDLY SEE Noreen or Jeff. The room is nearly black; only the hologram above them casts a faint, blue glow. Jeff is lying on his side, wearing a dark-blue-silk, karate-style dressing gown. She is in her light-mauve-silk nightgown. Lying on her back, she stares at the hologram as Jeff's gentle foreplay continues...

NOREEN'S VOICE (CONT.)
On the wall of the well is a blade of grass, and on its tip is a drop of honey...(beat).

So what does he do?

JEFF
I don't know...he says his prayers.

NOREEN
No...he licks up the honey.

CONTINUED:

VARIOUS CUTS of them and Jeff's attempts at foreplay as the conversation continues...

JEFF
And that's supposed to be the meaning of life?

NOREEN
It's a paradigm his guru taught him...(beat). I like the metaphor. It's so hopeful....

JEFF
Hopeful? It's absurd...that's what I hate about those gurus...everything's always an enigma....If they have something to say, why don't they just get to the point...?

You could summarize the moral of that story in five words: 'get it while you can.'

NOREEN
(she laughs)
Mac's right...you do oversimplify.

JEFF
Clean thinking is like clean programming...no unnecessary steps or data.

NOREEN
But you're turning the sublime into the ridiculous....

JEFF
Is that the kind of stuff MacKenzie's pumping into NANUC?

NOREEN
It's part of it....

JEFF
That junk will just clutter up his head. Right now we need clear thinking...not a bunch of philosophical mumbo jumbo.

You know you can't go backwards... once NANUC learns something he can't forget it.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEFF (CONT.)
What if NANUC can't solve the riddle of life...? You run the risk of trapping him in a bunch of puzzles that he'll go on trying to solve forever.... Think of the processing time that wastes!

NOREEN
Wastes?! Jeff, that's the highest form of cerebral thought!

JEFF
What is...? Some hopeless tale about a guy that's doomed?

NOREEN
No...the act of contemplation.

JEFF
Right now NANUC is sitting there contemplating how to get rid of 500 million people.... You know, the more I think of it, the more I agree with George.

NOREEN
What? Shut down Nanuc?! You just spent 10 years of your life on that program...you'd just throw that away?

JEFF
Not exactly...but there's a lesson there...

NOREEN
Now you sound like Mac!

JEFF
What if I do...even gurus learn from their mistakes....

NOREEN
You didn't make a mistake...your program runs perfectly...so does Mac's...(beat). Why shut down NANUC just because you don't like what he says?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEFF
Noreen...I'm not ready for a computer to start telling us who should live or who should die....

NOREEN
You saw the data! You can't contest that! (beat) We need NANUC to survive!

JEFF
No you don't, Noreen. Nature will find a way to cleanse her own wounds.

NOREEN
But millions of people will die!

JEFF
So be it...our civilization has been digging its grave for a long time... now it's time to pay the piper....

NOREEN
You're mixing metaphors...

JEFF
So what...each makes its own point.

NOREEN
So...you'd just lie back and let calamity roll over you like one of those waves (as she points to the hologram).

JEFF
The forces of Nature are irresistible. You can't tinker with them...for better or for worse.

NOREEN
But, Jeff...this is a crisis!

JEFF
Crisis is how Nature works...it's part of the process....Ice ages, volcanoes, floods, droughts, pestilence, plagues... they're all part of it...and now it's pollution.... As big a problem as that may seem to us, it's just another page in Nature's diary.... But we'll muddle through ok if we can resist the temptation to blow each other to kingdom come....

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NOREEN
But can't you see what will happen if we just sit around and do nothing!

JEFF
No...I can't. (beat) I wouldn't pretend to be a seer, or a guru.... We can't know what will happen in the future...neither can NANUC....

PAN AND ZOOM back up INTO THE DOME...

JEFF (CONT.)
We're trapped in the present...we can only see what's around us....

DISSOLVE TO:

CLOSE ON A BABBLING BROOK -- NIGHT

The moon sparkles on the surface of a small brook in the Central Valley of California. As the camera PULLS UP AND BACK SLOWLY we can SEE the brook winding toward us through the Diabolo Range in the b.g.. From the quality of the image, it is apparent that this is not a hologram.

As a leaf floats by in the f.g....

JEFF (CONT.)
...we're like a leaf floating down the River of Life...we can never know what's around the next bend....

The BUBBLING SWIRL of the brook comes into the audio f.g., and the camera HOLDS a long time so that we can SEE a lot of dessert life. A few rodents scurry along. A bat flies by. An ant crawls onto the lens. A skinny wolf approaches to take a drink from the brook. MIXED with the BABBLE of the brook, we can HEAR MOSQUITOES, a GENTLE BREEZE, and the SCURRYING of the wildlife in the bushes.

Suddenly, and for no apparent reason, the wolf takes off and dissappears into the thicket. The rodents pause, look around, and scurry under nearby rocks. The ant freezes still, then runs down off the lens. The MOSQUITO SOUNDS STOP.

A few beats later we hear a GROWING DEEP RUMBLE. The earth starts to tremble. A few seconds later, the RUMBLE SUBSIDES and the earth stops trembling. We can HEAR some

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SAND TUMBLING DOWN SOME ROCKS somewhere nearby. A few more beats, then...

CRACK...THUD! The entire foreground sheers away in the middle of the brook, creating a water fall. There is more RUMBLING and trembling. Then, as suddenly as it started, it ends, and all is SILENT except for the SOUND of the WATERFALL.

CUT TO:

WIDE INSIDE THE CONTROL ROOM OF A NUCLEAR POWER PLANT

Two men are seated at a compact, computerized console in the middle of a large control room. Behind them, creating a huge, arcing back wall, is a giant, computerized annunciator-schematic of the plant. The schematic is very elaborate and very detailed. It traces every process in each of the three reactors. There are a lot of complex highlights revealing the flow of electricity through a connecting grid of transformers, as well as the flow of coolants through the reactors.

Above the schematic is a bold, illuminated sign that reads: "Southern California Power & Light Company, Diabolo Reactors."

The PLANT MANAGER is propped in a chair reading a book with his feet up on the Control-Terminal console. His ASSISTANT MANAGER is playing a computer chess game on one of the console's three monitors; the other two have intricate alpha-numeric and symbolic displays that change every few seconds. The displays on both these monitors are identical, and each has a flashing cursor message that we can SEE reads: "Systems Normal."

The RING of a phone on the console. The Manager looks up at it, waits for it to RING AGAIN, then leans forward with some difficulty, trying to reach it without losing the chair's balance. On the THIRD RING he succeeds.

MANAGER
Hello...(a few beats)...right....

He hangs up the phone, and while settling down with his book again, glances over at the Assistant Manager...

MANAGER (CONT.)
Keep your eyes on the coolers...the river shifted up north a ways....

The Assistant looks over, nods "ok," and continues playing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ASSISTANT MANAGER
(slamming the counter)
Damn this thing!

MANAGER
(looking over his book)
You can't beat the machine...

ASSISTANT MANAGER
Well it beats reading!

The room starts to tremble and we hear a low RUMBLE. Snapping to attention, the Assistant Manager looks up at the wall display. A beat later, the trembling and the rumble SUBSIDE. The MANAGER just glances at the wall, still reading.

ASSITANT MANAGER
What the hell's that...

MANAGER
Prob'ly an earthquake...ya don't have them back East, do ya?

A few beats, a COUPLE OF COMPUTER BEEPS from the chess game; the Assistant Manager sits down slowly...

ASSISTANT MANAGER
Everything seems to be o.k....

MANAGER
(still unconcerned)
This thing's built like a brick shit house...relax...you're friend's getting impatient.

ANGLE ON ASSISTANT MANAGER AT CHESS MONITOR

He stares at the screen, and a smile comes to his face as he thinks of a move. He touches a key to enter the move...

BUZZZZZZZZZZZZZ!

ANGLE ON MANAGER -- POV ASSISTANT

The manager looks over his book; he's a little concerned now, but not a lot...

MANAGER
Hey, what are you doin' there?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The Assistant Manager is naively surprised...but not scared.

ASSISTANT MANAGER
Trying to play chess...

The BUZZZZZZZZZ won't go away, despite a few additional commands entered into the keyboard hastily by the A.M..

BACK ON THE MANAGER

He sits bolt upright in his chair and looks over at the wall schematic of the plant; the camera PANS over to it. A red light is flashing.

MANAGER'S VOICE
Status!

ON THE ASSISTANT MANAGER -- AT HIS TERMINAL

He's controlled, but somewhat frantic as he keys in more queries. A beat of SILENCE, then a BEEP and the BUZZZZZZ continues.

ASSISTANT MANAGER
The pressure's down in Charlie!

RING...a phone in the b.g..

CLOSE ON THREE RED PHONES

Their official signage identifies them as belonging to: "Reactor #1, Reactor #2, and Reactor #3," but someone has used a Magic Marker to rename them: "Arnie, Bernie, and Charlie." The Manager's hand ENTERS FRAME and lifts the "Charlie" receiver, and the camera FOLLOWS the receiver to a TIGHT SHOT of the Manager.

MANAGER
What the hell's going on down there?

CUT TO:

WIDE INSIDE THE CHARLIE REACTOR -- POV BEHIND A LEAKING PIPE

THROUGH THE LEAKING WATER we can SEE a hard-hatted, black maintenance man clutching a red phone receiver to his right ear. His left hand presses hard against his free left ear to block the LOUD HISSSSS of leaking steam. He SHOUTS...

MAINTENANCE MAN
It's raining down here!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BACK ON THE MANAGER -- TIGHT

In the b.g. the BUZZZ continues...

MANAGER
Cut the jokes, what's going on?

BACK ON THE MAINTENANCE MAN

MAINTENANCE MAN
It's 217...there's a block somewhere and she's burst.

BACK ON THE MANAGER

In the b.g., the Assistant Manager is putting on his jacket...just in case...

MANAGER
(to Assistant)
Where the fuck you think you're going...(then to phone) no, not you...(back to Assistant)...shut down Charlie!...(back to phone) get out of there, the water's hot!

BACK TO WIDE SHOT OF CONTROL ROOM

The room starts to tremble a bit and RUMBLE...then SILENCE again, except for the BUZZZ.

BEEEEEEEEEP! A new warning signal.

TIGHT ON THE WALL SCHEMATIC -- FOUR NEW FLASHING LED'S

BACK ON THE MAINTENANCE MAN -- DOLLYING AROUND REACTOR

He's punching a few buttons on an electrical control board frantically...then he bolts toward the camera as the building starts to tremble and RUMBLE again.

CRAAAAACK! The concrete floor in front of him separates into a 3-foot-wide, six-foot-long gap which he narrowly escapes falling into by jumping over on his way to the door. LOTS MORE HISSING and a lot of spurting water in the f.g. as more pipes break.

BACK ON MANAGER -- SUPER TIGHT

MANAGER
Shut down everything!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TIGHT ON THE ASSISTANT MANAGER

The Assistant Manager starts keying the computer like he never keyed it before. There's panic in his eyes and a beat later a new WHIRP, WHIRP begins. Then, as the trembling subsides...

ASSISTANT MANAGER
I can't pull the rods!

ANGLE CLOSE ON MONITOR #1

Monitor shows the Reactor temperatures to be going thru the stratosphere. We HEAR telephone DIALING in b.g..

CLOSE ON ASSISTANT MANAGER'S EYES

We see the Monitor reflected in his eye; it starts flashing. He looks over to Monitor #2.

CLOSE ON MONITOR #2

We HEAR a third, more compelling warning BEEP. The Monitor shows: "Mass Critical." A cursor clock on the display shows: "Time Remaining: 1:17."

ASSISTANT MANAGER'S VOICE
They're going to blow!

BACK ON WIDE SHOT

The Assistant Manager swings around, grabs his jacket off the back of his chair and bolts toward the door.

ASSISTANT MANAGER
I'm getting out of here!

The Manager lowers the phone from his ear and covers the mouthpiece with his other hand, looks over at the Assistant Manager and casually asks:

TIGHT ON MANAGER

MANAGER
Where will you go?

CUT TO:

EXT. EL SUGUNDO NUCLEAR POWER PLANT -- ANGLE ON THE BACK DOOR -- NIGHT

A red light marked "Evacuation" flashes above the door.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

There is a LOUD WARNING BEEP from a loudspeaker in the parking lot. The door opens and the Assistant Manager bolts out and charges down the stairs. The sounds of others RUNNING, CAR DOORS SLAMMING, ENGINES STARTING.

The camera begins a very long, slow PULL BACK. The Assistant Manager's car races down the driveway of the plant along with 20 other cars; still more are SCREECHING out of their parking spaces in the b.g. as the plant workers frantically try to escape.

The ZOOM BACK continues and the sounds of the warning beeper and escaping cars SUBDUE to near silence as the plant becomes dwarfed by the hillsides it's nestled in. One beat after arriving at the END OF THE ZOOM, the plant explodes in a SHATTERING BLAST creating an enormous, bright mushroom cloud that silhouettes the skeletal remains of trees in the f.g.

CUT TO:

INSIDE A RUSSIAN MILITARY COMPUTER FACILITY -- CLOSE ON A MONITOR

On the monitor there is a computer-graphic map of the U.S.A.; a bright green dot is flashing in the area of El Segundo, California. The RUSSIAN voice of a COMPUTER OPERATOR in the b.g...

(PRODUCTION NOTE: All Russian is translated in SUBTITLES.)

RUSSIAN OPERATOR
What is that?

WIDE ON ROOM

There are three Control Consoles and a massive bank of 50 monitors. GENERAL #1 has been randomly scanning them, sort of pacing.

GENERAL #1
What is what?

RUSSIAN OPERATOR
There is a detonation here...

General #1 walks over to have a look.

CLOSE ON THE MAP MONITOR -- POV GENERAL #1

GENERAL #1'S VOICE
Enhance the image, please.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The computer-graphic PANS AND ZOOMS on the monitor until California fills the screen and the position of the dot is pin-pointed and identified as Coalinga, California.

DOLLYING AROUND to TIGHT ON GENERAL #1

He casts his glance away from the monitor, staring at nothing in particular, thinking, wondering...

GENERAL #1
(to himself)
Why would they bomb themselves? (beat, then turning to the Operator)...was there no trajectory?

ANGLE ON TEN MONITORS -- POV OPERATOR

The monitors nearest the Computer Operator show the "as aimed" trajectories of Canada, America, China, Russia, and the NATO Alliance members. We SEE that the trajectories are all slowly changing.

RUSSIAN OPERATOR'S VOICE
It is hard to tell...everything keeps changing...

BACK ON GENERAL #1

He keeps thinking as the camera slowly PULLS IN; then his puzzled expression slowly turns into a sly grin.

GENERAL #1
It is a trick!

CUT TO:

THE LOBBY OF "THE VAULT" IN OTTAWA -- NIGHT

Nicknamed "The Vault" because of its total security, the Canadian War Control Center is buried a half mile below the surface in Ottawa and connected to an inconspicuous-looking, small lobby building by a bomb-proof, multi-stage, tube-like elevator.

There is surprisingly little in the lobby: a SERGEANT sits at a Security Console behind which there are six monitors showing the key security points at The Vault, including the entrance, the elevator interior, the lobby area, the helipad outside, and the upper and lower-level elevator entrances.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGLE ON ENTRANCE DOOR -- POV SERGEANT

The LOUD WHINE of a Tactical Helicopter's powerful engines GETS LOUDER as the entrance door opens and Moinsleau bursts into the lobby.

GEORGE
Where are they?

WIDE ON THE ROOM

SERGEANT
They're in The Vault, sir.

George walks briskly over to the elevator and presses the call button; nothing happens.

SERGEANT
Uh, sir...the tube is sealed.

GEORGE
Well, unseal it!

SERGEANT
I'm sorry, sir, you'll have to EYE-Dentify.

CUT TO:

INSIDE THE VAULT -- ON BAUSCH AT THE HOLOGRAM WORLD MAP

On the map, world-wide weapons' trajectories are slowly moving around, as they were on the Russian monitors. We hear the others in the b.g.

PERIGNON'S VOICE
I doesn't matter whether he likes it or not...

THOMPKIN'S VOICE
But it would be so much easier if he goes along.... it wouldn't look so much like a military take over... more people would accept it....

A flashing yellow dot appears in California accompanied by a pulsing, low-level BEEP. It catches Bausch's attention, and he steps in for a closer look.

BAUSCH
What have we here...?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PERIGNON'S VOICE
Huh?

Bausch turns to the others and points to the map; his finger actually penetrates the hologram projection's airy transparency (revealing that there is no solid screen). His eye twitch is acting up now.

BAUSCH
Here...look at this...

WIDE ON ROOM

Perignon hoists his bulk out of his chair and waddles over to the map. Thompkins remains seated, snuffing out a cigarette. The air in the room is heavy with smoke and in the b.g. there is a low BEEP EVERY SECOND from the digital clock on the NANUC Pod.

Bausch looks back at the map, studying it.

BAUSCH
It looks like a detonation.

Thompkins looks over at the map suddenly...

THOMPKINS
A what!?

Perignon's at the map now...

PERIGNON
It's a nuke, allright!

Perignon turns to the NANUC Pod on the conference table.

PERIGNON (CONT.)
(to NANUC)
I thought we agreed to wait until Moinsleau got here.

NANUC
I did. That is not my target.

PERIGNON
Then what is it?

NANUC
I am not sure...but it needn't affect our plans.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A CHIME from the elevator entrance signals someone's arrival. Perignon and Bausch look over to the tube's sliding door...

THOMPKINS
Good...we can get on with it, now.

The elevator door slides open and Moinsleau steps into the room. He glances at the map...

GEORGE
Why are we still on Alert? Didn't Maurice call you?

ANGLE ON PERIGNON -- POV MOISLEAU

PERIGNON
Oh, he called...

GEORGE'S VOICE
(interrupting)
...and told you to end this Alert!

ON GEORGE

GEORGE (CONT.)
Why hasn't that been done?

BAUSCH'S VOICE
It's not that easy...

ANGLE ON BAUSCH -- HE GESTURES TO THE CONFERENCE TABLE

BAUSCH (CONT.)
...why don't we sit down and discuss this like civilized men...

ON GEORGE -- POV BAUSCH

He hesitates, points at the map, and protests:

GEORGE
What have you been doing here?

ANGLE ON PERIGNON

PERIGNON
Sit down, Moinsleau...

ON GEORGE -- PERIGNON'S POV

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Shocked now, and getting angry, George starts to reply to Perignon, but NANUC interrupts...

GEORGE
Listen here, Perignon...

NANUC'S VOICE
Do you want to save the world, George...

ON CONFERENCE TABLE -- POV MOINSLEAU

NANUC (CONT.)
...or see it lost?

Thompkins looks up at George; he's lighting up again.

THOMPKINS
...to be, or not to be... isn't that how the saying goes?

ON GEORGE -- POV NANUC -- WIDENING SLOWLY

Thrusting an accusing finger at the map...

GEORGE
Look at that...that insanity... has NANUC duped you into believing that you can survive that?

PERIGNON
We happen to agree with NANUC...

GEORGE
Agree with what...that nonsense about controlled genocide? (beat, then to NANUC)... NANUC, what do you care about this...why the humanitarian fanaticism...why this urgent compulsion to save the world?

CLOSE ON NANUC

NANUC
To insure my own survival, George, I must insure yours...

ON MOINSLEAU -- CLOSE

GEORGE
We can work it out together without your help, thank you....

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BACK ON NANUC

NANUC
Your concept of working together is obsolete...(beat).

The United Nations doesn't work. Summitry doesn't work. No form of democratic approach will ever be able to control a problem like this. It is too big. Societies, like people, are too self-centered. No one can agree. There are too many compromises.

ON PERIGNON

He's a little bored by all this philosophical talk and wants to get things going...

PERIGNON
Go over that 'brotherhood' stuff, NANUC. I think George might be interested in that.

WIDE ON ROOM -- DOLLYING TO ARRIVE AT MOINSLEAU

NANUC
The 'Event' I have planned will restore the world's ecological balance...but the rest is up to you. There are no guarantees that you will survive forever...in fact, you probably won't unless you finally unite into a global brotherhood with a single leader powerful enough to enforce the limitations necessary to maintain a positive ecological cycle.

BACK ON PERIGNON

PERIGNON
(smiling slyly)
Get the idea...?

CUT TO:

INSIDE THE AMERICAN WAR ROOM -- AT THE CONTROL CENTER -- TIGHT ON THE PRESIDENT

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The President sits at a Video-Phone (VP) Console. The camera DOLLYS from TIGHT on the President, around behind him, to CLOSE ON THE VP MONITOR.

PRESIDENT
No, Nikita, it is not a trick. There has been an earthquake and it has destroyed one of our nuclear generating plants...

The President is speaking slowly and precisely. A RUSSIAN TRANSLATION of what he is saying can be heard THROUGH a CONSOLE LOUDSPEAKER.

On the VP monitor now, there's a heavy-set, burly-looking man wearing a dark suit. Behind him is a Russian flag. We can HEAR ENGLISH THROUGH THE LOUDSPEAKER as he says (IN RUSSIAN)...

NIKITA
I am not sure I believe you. What about the rest of it?

PRESIDENT'S VOICE
Nikita, we have no intentions of starting any kind of a war...we are only responding to your Alert.

NIKITA
No, no...it is your computer. First a strategy to kill 500 million people, and now continual target refinements. How can I believe you?

ANGLE ON THE PRESIDENT -- POV VIDEO-PHONE MONITOR

In the b.g. we can SEE a huge, 8-foot-diameter, 3-dimensional, hologram globe of the world on which anything of military importance is depicted. Weapons trajectories can be seen rotating around slowly and randomly across the globe. CLARK RICHARDSON and GENERAL LEIGHTON are at the globe, surveying it. In the far b.g. we can SEE part of the vast American War Operations Center (AWOC), which dwarfs the Canadian Submarine Base Control Center. There are ten, 20-foot-diameter, flat-hologram maps of specific countries and trajectories across the 200-foot-wide back wall. In front are ten 50-foot-wide rows of computer and communications consoles. We can HEAR general COMMOTION (not panicky) and lots of RINGING PHONES, BEEPS, and BUZZES.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PRESIDENT
We did not originate that strategy, we only intercepted it...and, to be honest, Nikita, we don't understand what's going on either...

In the b.g. we can hear Richardson and Leighton's comments OVERLAPPING the President's...

LEIGHTON
Fucking computers...

RICHARDSON
There's no rhyme or reason to it...it's totally illogical...

Leighton picks up a nearby phone and dials; a beat later:

LEIGHTON
That you, Len?

NIKITA'S VOICE
To be 'honest' with you Brenner, I don't believe you.

PRESIDENT
We are working on this right now, trying to stop it...

LEIGHTON
There has to be a malfuntion... now do something...

Leighton slams down the phone. Another one RINGS.

NIKITA'S VOICE
Don't think you can outsmart me, Brenner...I am not one to be tricked...

Leighton answers the other phone...

LEIGHTON
AWOC Control...Leighton...

ANOTHER VOICE over a different CONSOLE LOUDSPEAKER.

ANOTHER VOICE
Mr. President...?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PRESIDENT
(turning to "another voice")
Just a minute...(then back to Nikita)
...listen, Nikita, just be patient...

LEIGHTON
(calling over to President)
Nikita's right, Moinsleau won't take any calls...

PRESIDENT (CONT.)
...we're trying to do everything we can...

NIKITA'S VOICE
We will not hesitate to destroy you!

PRESIDENT
I understand that...and I will call you again shortly. Thank you Nikita...

A BEEP from the console. The President stares into the (now blank) VP monitor...STILL OVERLAPPING...

ANOTHER VOICE
(through loudspeaker)
Mr. President...

LEIGHTON
No, just keep trying...

PRESIDENT
(to "another voice")
Yes, Burroughs?

ANOTHER VOICE
You'd better open COM on monitor twenty seven...

PRESIDENT
(confused)
Global Network?...Now?

ANOTHER VOICE
Uh, yes sir...Global Network.

As the Preident gets up to go over to the monitors behind the hologram globe in the b.g., Richardson turns to him.

RICHARDSON
I'll get it for you, Henry.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DOLLY with the President as he crosses the room to monitor #27 in the b.g., on which we can SEE a GLOBAL NETWORK NEWS REPORTER. Richardson arrives at the monitor shortly before the President and TURNS UP THE SOUND. Leighton is still too interested in the hologram globe to pay much attention to the monitor and his comment OVERLAPS as the President passes.

LEIGHTON
Probably the goddamn earthquake...

PRESIDENT
I'll deal with that, you just get the computer fixed.

GNN REPORTER
...in Ottawa. Only hours ago Parliament rejected the Canadian-American Water Pact after a surprise move by the Prime Minister to table the Bill...

Getting closer to the monitor now, we can SEE (from the President's POV) a small two-story building and a helipad behind the GNN Reporter. Moinsleau's tactical helicopter is parked on the helipad. Richardson turns to the President.

RICHARDSON
No wonder he's not taking any calls.

GNN REPORTER (CONT.)
Sources say that Moinsleau was his own worst enemy. His speech created an almost religious fervor that grew into a tumultuous uproar of national pride resulting in a unanimous rejection of the Pact after an argumentative recess.

CLOSE ON MONITOR #27 -- FILLING THE FRAME

The GNN Reporter DISSOLVES to location footage shot during the House session. The camera PANS across the scene then ZOOMS IN on Ned and Chuck as they get up to leave.

GNN REPORTER (CONT.)
The abrupt departure of American Secretary of State, Edward Steckler, before the recess has created speculation of possible American economic sanctions -- particularly in the sensitive area of computer data. There are even rumors of American military intervention...

LEIGHTON'S VOICE
Who's he kidding...!?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RICHARDSON'S VOICE
Shut up, Leighton...

PRESIDENT'S VOICE
Ned's temper'll get the better of him one day...

The GNN Reporter returns to the scene and gestures behind him, to the helipad...

GNN REPORTER
Moisleau arrived here at The Vault an hour ago and is sealed away with his top military advisors a half-mile below me.

The Reporter presses his ear-plug closer, trying to hear something...

GNN REPORTER (CONT.)
However, why he is going to the unusual lengths of addressing the world through a global television broadcast isn't known.

Again, this is live from Ottawa where in just a moment Prime Minister George Moinsleau will be...

TSHHHHH...static; and the picture is lost, becomming a jumble of lines and zig-zags.

DISSOLVE TO:

THE SAME STATIC -- HETV VERSION

The static of monitor 27's image very subtly changes, becoming a bit clearer and more colorful; there seems to a shift in the AUDIO too, since the TSHHHHH is a bit CRISPER.

CUT TO:

HETV IMAGE OF A ROSE BLOOMING -- SLOW MOTION -- TIGHT

NEW ANNOUNCER'S VOICE
(over gentle music)
...once flourished throughout the Southern borders of Canada and was a perennial favorite...

NOREEN'S VOICE
(overlapping)
It must be on their end...

(COTNINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEFF'S VOICE
Switch it back.

WIDEN as Noreen switches back to the STATIC and TURNS DOWN THE VOLUME. Then PAN and FOLLOW her from the HETV back over to the bed where she gestures her empty champagne glass to Jeff.

NOREEN
More?

JEFF
No, thanks...could you put on some coffee?

She heads for the kitchen, LEAVING FRAME, while the camera PULLS IN SLOWLY on Jeff. He's still in his dressing gown, and he readjusts the pillows so that he can sit up.

NOREEN
(as she leaves)
What do you figure George is going to say?

JEFF
Probably something about the Alert.

NOREEN'S VOICE
No...they don't go on TV for Alerts anymore.

JEFF
This one's different...the way NANUC is feeling anything could happen... he might have started World War Three already.

The CLANKING of coffee mugs in the kitchen as Noreen calls back...

NOREEN'S VOICE
No way. You heard George. He'd never let NANUC do that!

JEFF
Oh, I'm not worried about George... he may flip flop and temporize a lot, but at least he's got integrity (beat)...and I still agree with him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Noreen ENTERS FRAME and hands Jeff a mug of coffee, putting her's on the table beside the bed. Then she slips on her mauve-velvet dressing gown and sits on the edge of the bed next to him. The camera DOLLYS around for a TIGHT SHOT of Noreen from JEFF's POV and in the b.g. we can see the HETV screen.

NOREEN
Let's not start that again! No matter what you say, NANUC's information is valid...the problem does exist...and someone has to do something.

The static clears and Moinsleau appears on the HETV. He is sitting at the conference table in the Vault and the NANUC Pod is next to him. The AUDIO BEGINS A BEAT LATE, catching George amidst a sentance.

(PRODUCTION NOTE: George's HETV broadcast continues uninterrupted throughout this scene. All of Noreen and Jeff's comments OVERLAP George's, but are SLIGHTLY LOWER.)

GEORGE
...evening fellow citizens of the world.

Noreen turns and glances at the HETV.

JEFF
Yeah, but if NANUC's strategy fell into the wrong hands, I hate to think what that something might be....

GEORGE
As most of you know, Parliament today rejected the Canadian-American Water Pact...

NOREEN
It can't happen...I'd never let it. Anyway...see...we're both wrong...it's about the Water Pact...sound's like an appology.

The camera ANGLES PAST Noreen and ZOOMS IN SLOWLY until the HETV screen FILLS THE FRAME.

JEFF'S VOICE
What did you mean by that?

CONTINUED:

NOREEN'S VOICE
It's not about the Alert...it's about the Water Pact....

GEORGE (CONT.)
The decision not to sell water to America wasn't an easy one... particularly because it goes against Canada's long tradition of international goodwill and cooperation.

JEFF'S VOICE
No, the other part...about not letting NANUC get into the wrong hands....

NOREEN'S VOICE
Oh...that....

GEORGE (CONT.)
Throughout modern history, Canada has maintained political neutrality and moral integrity. We have spear-headed peace initiatives, staunchly supported the efforts of the United Nations, and helped feed and clothe millions of people around the world less fortunate than ourselves.

JEFF'S VOICE
What could you do?

NOREEN'S VOICE
I'm not sure...

JEFF'S VOICE
You see, that's the problem... there's not enough control.

NOREEN'S VOICE
We could always nuke him! (they share a laugh).

GEORGE (CONT.)
However, in the last few hours I have received hundreds of calls and telegrams condemming our action as 'barbaric,' 'selfish,' and 'unjustified.'

JEFF'S VOICE
Hey...that gives me an idea!

CONTINUED:

A few beats later...

NOREEN'S VOICE
Well...you going to tell me?

GEORGE (CONT.)
Let me assure you that this action, and others that you will soon learn about, are totally justified.

The fact is, there is no water to sell...

JEFF'S VOICE
I wonder if NANUC has ever seriously thought about death...

GEORGE (CONT.)
...what's worse, it is only one of many catastrophies about to engulf the entire planet.

NOREEN'S VOICE
What difference would that make?

JEFF'S VOICE
One of the things that's been bothering me is how casually NANUC can hand out the death sentance...

GEORGE (CONT.)
We have known for decades that over-population and over-pollution would one day threaten our civilization.

JEFF'S VOICE (CONT.)
It's all so simple for NANUC, because he doesn't understand what death really is....

NOREEN'S VOICE
How could he...he's a machine....

GEORGE (CONT.)
Now new data has proven beyond a shadow of a doubt that the day of reckoning has arrived.

JEFF'S VOICE
Right...whereas you and I know that we'll die someday...touch wood! We're constantly reminded of it...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GEORGE (CONT.)
Our NANUC computer (as he gestures to the NANUC Pod) has proven that the earth is dying...

JEFF'S VOICE (CONT.)
...we can see and feel ourselves growing older...we hurt ourselves... get sick...so we come into contact with death in some small way every day. But NANUC never does....

GEORGE (CONT.)
Nature's innate processes of regeneration -- which we have taken for granted for so long -- are now terminally decaying.

NOREEN'S VOICE
Sure he does...half of Mac's lessons are about death in one form or another....

GEORGE (CONT.)
Even today the world cannot support its burdgeoning population. This year more than one hundred thousand people will die of starvation and another thousand species will become extinct.

JEFF'S VOICE
But those are just philosophical puzzles...they aren't the real thing...(beat). I'll bet that if NANUC could experience a realistic feeling of death that he'd look for a life-oriented solution to this problem instead of recommending that a half a billion people be exterminated...

GEORGE (CONT.)
In a mere twenty years, ninety percent of all life on earth will perish...

JEFF'S VOICE (CONT.)
...because it's the common realiztion of mortality that is beginning to draw all the people of the world together into one, unified brotherhood.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NOREEN'S VOICE
What brotherhood? The world is on Alert!

JEFF'S VOICE
I know...it's ironic, but the very fact that we haven't blown each other off the face of the earth proves what I'm saying...

GEORGE (CONT.)
In an over-populated world with limited resources, the Western way which encourages the pursuit of material gain is largely to blame for the predicament we're in.

NOREEN'S VOICE
What are you saying?

JEFF'S VOICE
That the threat of a nuclear holocaust has done more to create a global sense of a world community than any other factor in history.

For five milleniums, man has solved most of his disputes with warfare...

GEORGE (CONT.)
This problem has gown to such vast proportions that there is nothing that science or technology can do to help...and it is naive to think that the nations of the world could ever agree on what should be done... at least not in time to save us from this tragic and needless fate.

JEFF'S VOICE (CONT.)
But now war is obsolete...because all of us realize that we are equally vulnerable...and for the first time in history men and women from all nations and creeds have been forced to work together to avoid armageddon. That's a positive sign...

GEORGE (CONT.)
But the situation isn't hopeless. NANUC has formulated a strategy that can extricate the world from the
(MORE)

CONTINUED:

GEORGE (CONT.)
clutches of death and provide for our survival in the future.

JEFF VOICE (CONT.)
...ideologies that once affirmed their own infallability are slowly giving way to doctrines which encourage mutual cooperation.

NOREEN'S VOICE
Shhhh...wait a minute...listen to this....

NANUC
In order for the human race to survive a positive ecological cycle must be restored and maintained.

To restore the balance, the world's population must be reduced by 500 million people immediately.

Therefore, at midnight tonight fifteen low-yield neutron devices will be released to trim the population and eliminate certain concentrations of pollution-generating industrial activity.

JEFF'S VOICE
Hey...hang on...!

NOREEN'S VOICE
Shhh...wait....

JEFF'S VOICE
Where'd he get that scenario?

NOREEN'S VOICE
Shut up....

NANUC (CONT.)
The targets have been carefully selected to avoid presenting a threat to any particular nation.

JEFF'S VOICE
That's not my program...!

NOREEN'S VOICE
Please, Jeffery....

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NANUC (CONT.)
Any weapons deployment other than our own will be considered an offensive gesture and we will retaliate with our full arsenal, resulting in total annihilation.

JEFF'S VOICE
This is crazy...!

NOREEN'S VOICE
I know...but we'll never be able to figure it out if we don't know what he says!

NANUC (CONT.)
This event merely sets the stage for your survival...a positive ecological cycle will be restored and you will have another chance.

However, there are no guarantees that you will be successful...in fact, the odds are that this scenario will have to be repeated.

To succeed you will have to establish a new world government that is impartial to xenophobic, nationalistic interests...a global tribunal that can strictly enforce rigid limitations on pollution and consumption of the world's resources.

Immediately after the Event...at 12:30 am, Eastern Standard Time...I will outline my plans for this phase.

GEORGE
I urge you not to panic...only one in twenty of you will die...(beat).

The loss is small...the lesson is worth it.

NOREEN'S VOICE
My God! He's operating in FFLIP II!

JEFF'S VOICE
That business about the small loss and the big lesson...that's straight MacKenzie!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GEORGE (CONT.)
Goodnight....

Moinsleau's image blinks off and there is a beat of STATIC before a speechless GNN Reporter returns to the screen.

WIDE ON THE ROOM

Noreen jumps up, rushes over to the HETV, and TURNS IT OFF.

JEFF
I hate to say 'I told you....'

NOREEN
(overlapping)
It's not Mac...it's me...I did it.

GNN REPORTER
Uh...ladies and gentlemen...uh...

CUT TO:

BACK IN THE VAULT -- ANGLE ON PERIGNON -- TIGHT

He pulls the cigar out of his mouth and blows the smoke up at the ceiling, where he is staring. A beat later he slowly looks down and across our POV.

PERIGNON
Very good...you're a real pro George...(beat). I especially liked that part about the 'small loss' and the 'big lesson!'

BAUSCH'S VOICE
Yes...that was excellent!

THOMPKINS' VOICE
(overlapping)
So far...so good....

Perignon now casts his glance somewhere about two feet away.

PERIGNON
What do you say, NANUC?

WIDE ON THE ROOM

Bausch is in the process of retracting an HETV camera back into its wall enclosure across from where George is seated next to the NANUC Pod (as he appeared during the broadcast).

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Thompkins is seated adjacent to Moinsleau. Perignon paces in front of the hologram world map.

NANUC'S VOICE
Does it really matter...? If it isn't George it will be someone else... but I think I would still prefer him.

THOMPKINS
Think?! You don't 'think,' NANUC, you're supposed to know.

PERIGNON
That's good enough for me...(beat), we knew you could do it, George.

At ease soldier...

NEW WIDER POV

We SEE now that there is a SOLDIER in the corner of the room with a gun aimed at Moinsleau. On the SNAP of Perignon's fingers the Soldier lowers his gun and assumes the "at ease" position; the butt-end of the gun BAMMS on the floor.

PERIGNON
(to the NANUC Pod)
Access the tube, NANUC...(beat, now to the Soldier)...dismissed.

The SSSSSSSSS of decompressing air as the tube-elevator door opens and the Soldier marches to it and gets in. Then SSSSSSSSSS as the elevator door closes, and CHIME as it leaves. During this Moinsleau buries his face in his hands, defeated, and Perignon relights his cigar.

CUT TO:

BACK IN NOREEN'S APARTMENT OFFICE -- AT NANUC POD -- TIGHT ON NOREEN

Her hands are resting on the keyboard and she's staring at the monitor on which it says: "For Security Reasons Access To The Operating Mode Is Temporarily Locked."

She types in a few commands, the screen wipes clear, then the same message appears again.

NOREEN
How could I have been so dumb!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEFF'S VOICE
(in the b.g.)
How could you know the swami was mad?

NOREEN
It isn't Mac, Jeff! I locked NANUC in FFLIP II this morning...George wanted to run the Water Pact problem through to see if there were any other solutions.

She keeps entering code and the same message keeps reappearing.

JEFF'S VOICE
Why'd you lock him up?

NOREEN
I was going to try to reason with NANUC, but then we were interrupted and George had to leave...so I locked him to save the scenario while I said goodbye...then came that horrible scene in the hallway...and...

JEFF'S VOICE
(overlapping)
Score one for operator error...can't you just unlock him?

She swivels in her chair and reaches for the phone and dials.

NOREEN
Not from here...it'll have to be from one of the two Master Terminals...if I can get hold of Mac, he can do it....

THROUGH THE PHONE we HEAR a COMPUTERIZED VOICE as Noreen tries a few more entries to no avail.

COMPUTERIZED VOICE
At the tone, please state your Voice Identification Code.

A TONE on the phone, then...

NOREEN
Linden, Noreen, 1/A-M-O-M...(two beats later)...Harry MacKenzie, please...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NOREEN (CONT.)
(to herself)
Maybe it's a religious password...
(then to Jeff)...Jeff, get that book
(she points to the bookcase)...the
encyclopedia...look up Sikhism.

ANGLE ON JEFF -- POV BEHIND GLOBE ON DESK

He's standing at a globe, spinning it. As he leaves the globe and walks over to the bookcase in the b.g. the globe stops spinning and India ends up in the f.g..

JEFF
How do you spell it?

NOREEN'S VOICE
S...i...k...h...(beat)...Harry?

Jeff pulls the "S" volume from the encyclopedia collection and starts flipping through the pages.

NOREEN'S VOICE (CONT.)
Yes, I know there isn't much time...
(beat). Yes...(beat)...yes, I know
there's a lesson...

ANGLE ON NOREEN -- TIGHT

NOREEN'S VOICE (CONT.)
Damn it, MacKenzie, will you listen
to me?! (beat) Ok...is NANUC running
your refutation thesis? (beat) Did
he ever run it? (beat) Yes it does
matter....

BACK ON JEFF

He's sitting in a chair near Noreen, scanning some text in the encyclopedia. The camera DOLLYS AROUND him to ANGLE ON THE ENCYCLOPEDIA from HIS POV.

NOREEN'S VOICE (CONT.)
Yes I'm upset! (beat) Listen, Mac...
I locked NANUC in FFLIP II before at
Terminal Three, and I can't access
anything here...

The camera ZOOMS IN on the encyclopedia page as Jeff's finger quickly scans a few lines which we can SEE say: "The term Sikh means disciple. Sikhism was founded by Guru Nanak in 1469. Nanak tried to unite all people into one brotherhood. He taught his followers the principles of monism (a single God) and the belief that this deity would periodically visit Earth in various incarnations, both animate and inanimate. (SEE INDIA, RELIGIONS OF)."

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CUT TO:

TIGHT ON THE POSTCARD OF GOVIND SINGH

MACKENZIE'S VOICE
It is a shame...(beat) I thought you would understand.

In the b.g., and OVERLAPPING, we can hear the Technician...

TECHNICIAN'S VOICE
No, honey...no...stop crying...

PULLING BACK slowly, now, to ANGLE ON MACKENZIE at his work station; he's on the phone and staring into the postcard. The conversations continue to OVERLAP...

MACKENZIE (CONT.)
...no, Noreen, I will not unlock the mode...this represents the highest order of thought that has ever existed on Earth...

TECHNICIAN'S VOICE (CONT.)
...listen...listen to me...get the baby...and get in the car and head as close to here as you can get...

DOLLYING AROUND now we can SEE the Technician on the phone at his work station adjacent to MacKenzie's; he's distraught, a bit frantic, as he paces back and forth nearly yanking the phone's 10-foot-extension cord out of it's socket.

MACKENZIE (CONT.)
...no mind has ever been this close to Siva...there is a lesson...

TECHNICIAN
...no...here...they wouldn't bomb this place...

In the b.g., TWO SOLDIERS bearing aimed pistols round the aisleway corner; their orders OVERLAP the other conversations...

SOLDIER #1
Let's hang up those phones, gents....

MACKENZIE
...what?...no, there are soldiers now...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The Technician see's the soldiers...

TECHNICIAN
...oh, no...listen honey...just do it...I gotta go now...

He hangs up the phone and raises his hand, backing away and LEAVING FRAME as the soldiers approach MacKenzie...

SOLDIER #2
(to MacKenzie)
Hey, that means you, too...!

MACKENZIE
...no worries, Noreen...NANUC will soon know Vishnu and the Eternal One...

Soldier #2 grabs MacKenzie by the arm and yanks him from his chair; he drops the receiver...

CUT TO:

TIGHT ON NOREEN

She's got the phone receiver pressed to her left ear while she covers her right ear with her other hand, trying to hear better; she glances over to Jeff; there's a worried look in her eyes.

THROUGH THE PHONE we can hear Soldier #2...

SOLDIER #2'S VOICE
Wipe that smile off your face...!

ANGLE ON JEFF

He's back at the book case, and has found something in the "I" volume; he looks over at her...

JEFF
Listen to this...!

NOREEN'S VOICE
Shhhh...!

The camera follows as Jeff excitedly walks over to her; she's covered the phone mouthpiece with her hand and is listening intently, very worried now...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NOREEN
(privately to Jeff)
They've taken control of NANUC...and they've got Mac....

She hangs up the phone, slowly, and seems deep in thought.

JEFF
Listen to this...

He looks down to the encyclopedia and starts reading from it:

JEFF
...'the Hindus honor three personifications of the Brahman,'
(looking up at her now, explaining)
...he's the...the Almighty...
(back down at the book)...'Brahma, the Creator; Siva, the Destroyer; and Vishnu, the Renewer...'

NOREEN
Did you say 'Siva?'

JEFF
(looking up at her)
Huh?...yes, Siva...(back at book) here...'his followers believe that by destroying, Siva makes room for the new..."

NOREEN
(jumping up)
That's it!

JEFF
...that's what?

NOREEN
...NANUC's operating rationale...

CUT TO:

CLOSE ON A MONITOR -- REPLAYING MOINSLEAU'S ADDRESS

GEORGE
Even today the world cannot support its burdgeoning population. This year more than one hundred thousand people will die of starvation and another thousand species will become extinct.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CLICK! The image freezes and the camera PANS over to a TIGHT ANGLE on the face of the President who is staring at the monitor, his face only a foot away...

PRESIDENT
There...did you see that...!?

LEIGHTON'S VOICE
He's just nervous...

The President turns to the others while the camera PANS and WIDENS to include them; we see the hologram globe in the b.g.; Richardson is still staring at it; Leighton has been watching the monitor with the President.

PRESIDENT
No...that's a signal of some sort... it's too repetitive...I've known George Moinsleau for fifty years and I've never seen him look like that...or do anything like this...

RICHARDSON
Look, we can't all stand around here doing nothing...there's only forty seven minutes left...

Leighton heads for the monitor panel while the camera DOLLYS AROUND the President to ANGLE ON LEIGHTON as he replays the same passage of Moinsleau's address. We SEE a repetitive pattern to the way George is blinking his eyes. We can hear the President in the b.g.

PRESIDENT'S VOICE
Be rational, Richardson...what can we do? We can't just start pushing buttons...

An INTERCOM interrupts.

INTERCOM
Global Network is demanding a comment, sir...

WIDER AND PANNING AROUND TO THE GROUP -- AS LEIGHTON TURNS TO THEM

LEIGHTON
He's right...it's a signal...

In the b.g. now, we can see Ned and Chuck sitting at the small conference table adjacent to the monitor bank.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The conversations OVERLAP now as Chuck rises to his feet, leans over the table to pick up a phone across from him and Leighton tries to get the President's attention...

PRESIDENT
Deal with that, will you Barton...

CHUCK
Of course...

Ned is opening his Metal Case and pulling out the huge NANUC diagram...

LEIGHTON (CONT.)
(to the President)
...any boy scout knows that signal is 'S.O.S.' But so what...what are you going to do about it...

NED
Get Len in here to look this over... I don't think there's anything he can do, but it's worth a try...

CHUCK
(overlapping, on phone)
Bill...? Yeah...Chuck...(beat) heh, heh...that's why I'm V.P. and your still on The Desk...listen, hang on while I switch phones...

NED (CONT.)
...I'm not sure we can stop NANUC, but we can stop Moinsleau...

ANGLE ON THE PRESIDENT -- TIGHT

A strange look comes over the President's face...a sort of vague stare...

PRESIDENT
Maybe George is right...maybe this <u>is</u> the right thing to do...

In the b.g. we can see General Leighton getting on a phone and dialing; now, overlapping...

LEIGHTON
Get me processing...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGLE ON NED -- POV THE PRESIDENT

Chuck's left and the General is on the extension he vacated near Ned. The Camera FOLLOWS Ned as he walks up to the President.

NED
Right!?...You heard him... he wants to take over the world... he's blackmailing us in the name of ecology!

ANGLE ON THE PRESIDENT -- POV NED

PRESIDENT
George wouldn't do that...

NED'S VOICE
NANUC would!

LEIGHTON
(overlapping)
...that you Len?...get your butt up here, fast!

ANGLE ON NED -- POV THE PRESIDENT

In the b.g. the General hangs up the phone and heads over to rejoin the group...

NED
NANUC's got George duped...can't you see...he's as fanatical as either of us...and look at you!... you're caving in, too...

LEIGHTON
So if we can't nuke 'em, what do we do, use bows and arrows?

NED
(turning to Leighton)
We invade Canada with ground forces and take over by outnumbering them... even if NANUC wins, he loses, because there will still be more of us than them...

RICHARDSON'S VOICE
General...do you think your computer has blown another fuse...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGLE ON THE HOLOGRAM GLOBE ADJACENT TO THE GROUP

Through the hologram globe we can SEE Richardson peering at the map and pointing to Russia and the positions of various Russian subs and satellites from which the trajectory paths of nuclear weapons are flashing on and off, while continuing their random rotation.

RICHARDSON (CONT.)
...or are they trying to tell us something, too...?

CUT TO:

BACK IN SPACE -- ABOVE EARTH -- LONG POV

The Earth is large and centered in the b.g.; it's curvature vignettes the screen. About a football-field's length in front of our POV, a Canadian NDS drifts across in perfect synch with the rotation of Earth (ie., holding stationary in relation to Earth). It's aiming rockets can be seen PULSING FLAMES periodically, in random order. After a few beats the American Manned Satellite ENTERS FRAME and fires a row of MSAD'S which move out and surround the Canadaian NDS, "globing" it. In the f.g., a "globed" RUSSIAN NDS ENTERS FRAME; it's aiming rockets pulse on and off, on and off; but we CAN'T HEAR A THING in the SILENCE of space.

MATCH DISSOLVE TO:

NOREEN AT HER NANUC POD -- BEHIND THE GLOBE IN THE F.G.

The globe on Noreen's desk matches position of the Chinese NDS in the f.g. during the cross dissolve and the camera CONTINUES DOLLYING AROUND behind the globe on Noreen's desk -- passing a CLOSE UP of America and Canada -- then CONTINUING PAST the globe to a WIDE SHOT of Noreen at the NANUC Pod. During all that we can HEAR Jeff RUMMAGING around in the kitchen and Noreen is looking back and forth from the encyclopedia book on the console and her keyboard, where she is keying in possible passwords, which appear alternately with the message: "Access Denied" on the monitor screen. The passwords include: "Amristar," "Avatar," "Vishnu," and "Nanak." We can HEAR her QUIETLY and PHOENETICALLY SPELL each word she keys in. Finally...

NOREEN
Shit...that's it...we're out of time...we'll go for plan 'B.'

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

In the b.g. we HEAR a CLOSING DRAWER followed a few beats later by RIPPING CLOTH.

ANGLE ON NOREEN -- AT NANUC KEYBOARD

As the "Access Denied" message disappears from the screen, it is replaced with: "Hi, NANUC, it's MOM".

NOREEN
We'll try the back door!

CUT TO:

BACK IN THE VAULT -- WHERE WE LEFT OFF -- WIDE

All eyes in the room turn to the NANUC Pod as they hear NANUC say...

NANUC'S VOICE
Hi, Mom...how are you?

CUT TO:

CLOSE ON NOREEN'S KEYBOARD

Her hand ENTERS FRAME and her finger touches the "Voice Enable" key. As her finger withdraws from the key the camera PANS UP, WIDENING as she says to the console microphone...

NOREEN
You're a bad boy, NANUC...

Now PAN BACK DOWN to the keyboard where her finger touches the "Voice Defeat" key.

CUT TO:

BACK IN THE VAULT -- TIGHT ON BAUSCH

His left eye is going crazy, now, and he tries to hide it by rubbing his forehead with this forefinger.

PERIGNON'S VOICE
Who was that!

BAUSCH
(slowly, coyly)
I believe we may have overlooked a footnote in the plan...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CUT TO:

CLOSE ON NOREEN'S MONITOR

A new message appears: "Communications Suspended."
A beat later...

NOREEN'S VOICE
Uh huh...!

WIDE ON THE OFFICE

Jeff ENTERS FRAME carrying his clothes under his arm; they look shredded. While he walks across the room to a wastebasket near the NANUC Pod and puts the clothes inside it...

JEFF
Did they go for it?

NOREEN
I'm not sure...

CUT TO:

BACK IN THE VAULT -- WIDE SHOT

Thompkins and Perignon are standing close to the NANUC Pod. George sits with his head in his hands. Bausch is clearing the phoney telegrams off the table.

As Thompkins gestures to the NANUC Pod...

THOMPKINS
That was a stupid thing to do, Perignon...if you had kept her on the line, we could trace her...

PERIGNON
She'll be easy enough to find...

George raises his head in an appeal...

GEORGE
Leave her out of this, for God's sake.

BAUSCH
Don't listen to him...she's the key to NANUC...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NANUC
You're wrong, Peter...I no longer need her help.

CUT TO:

BACK IN NOREEN'S APARTMENT OFFICE -- WIDE SHOT

Noreen is at her NANUC Pod. She enters some data and we SEE the screen go blank. In the b.g. we can HEAR Jeff in the kitchen RUMMAGING through the refrigerator.

NOREEN
Remember, it's "C-18," then "Interlock."

The refrigerator door CLOSES.

JEFF
Are you sure you can handle this?

Noreen gathers up the encyclopedia volumes and returns them to the book case on the opposite wall, then heads into the bathroom.

NOREEN
Under other circumstances, I'd consider that an insult!

POP! as a champagne bottle is opened in the kitchen. A beat later, Jeff ENTERS FRAME carrying a huge kitchen knife which he's tapping nervously on his hand as he crosses the room and crouches by the NANUC Pod, looking under it. They both seem to be in a big hurry.

CLOSE ON JEFF

He's holding a cluster of three wires close to their wall outlet.

JEFF
Which one is it?

NOREEN
(from the bathroom)
Not the blue one.

Jeff cuts the other two wires with the knife. A beat later we HEAR a LOUD KNOCK on the front door.

BACK ON WIDE SHOT

Jeff jumps to his feet and heads toward the bathroom with the knife.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He meets Noreen at the bathroom doorway on her way out. She has changed and is now wearing a very skimpy, mini-skirt-style neglige; he's still in his bathrobe.

CLOSE ON THEM NOW

They look deeply, fearingly, into each other's eyes.

Another KNOCK on the door.

They kiss quickly, then he ducks inside the bathroom and she heads for the door.

BACK ON WIDE SHOT OF ROOM

Heading across the room, Noreen notices the waste basket with Jeff's clothes; a sock is hanging out. She turns, rushes over to the NANUC Pod, grabs some print-outs, crumples them, then stuffs the sock back into the basket and shoves the crumpled print-outs over the clothes.

A third KNOCK.

PANNING NOW, FOLLOWING her as she rushes to the door. Just as she's about to open it, she stops and looks back into the bedroom...she sees something, and half a beat later rushes to it.

NOW INSIDE THE BEDROOM -- POV BEHIND CHAMPAGNE SET-UP

Noreen rushes into the room and dives across the bed grabbing one of the champagne glasses in the f.g., frantically looking for a place to hide it; not finding one, she breaks the glass in half in desperation and throws it on the floor. She grabs the champagne bottle out of the ice-bucket and crawls back across the bed, arriving back at the door just as we HEAR someone trying THE LATCH.

The camera ZOOMS IN on the door. She takes one last, quick look around, messes her hair, grabs the knob, and hesitantly opens the door a bit. As she looks out into the hallway...

NOREEN
(with a distinct slur)
Yes...what is it...?

We hear a GRUFF VOICE answer from the hallway.

GRUFF VOICE
Are you Ms. Noreen Linden?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Noreen opens the door almost wide with her right hand and leans against the door jamb with her left forearm, slipping against it and spilling some champagne in the process; she looks drunk. There are TWO SOLDIERS in the hallway.

NOREEN
(sloppily)
One hour to live and you're still doing your duty, eh, sailors ...? Why aren't you with your girls?

The two soldiers look at each other in amazement. Soldier #2 (on the right) slowly lowers his pistol and puts it back in its holster.

ANGLE ON SOLDIER #1 -- POV BEHIND NOREEN

He tries very hard not to look at her body, but doesn't succeed. His youthful face flushes.

SOLDIER #2'S VOICE
You're to come with us, Ms. Linden...

ANGLE ON NOREEN -- POV BEHIND SOLDIERS

She turns to Soldier #2 and looks him up & down, slowly. Embarrassed (but not too much) he shuffles a bit; he's young too, but he looks more experienced than his buddy.

NOREEN
(coyly)
That might be nice...

SOLDIER #1'S VOICE
Please, Ms. Linden...

She looks over at Soldier #1 and smiles; she looks unsteady. A beat later...

NOREEN
Ok...let's go...

She takes a half step out into the hall, but slips, falling onto Soldier #1. He catches her, but in doing so his hand inadvertently drags her neglige up to her neck, exposing her entire back, and she drops the champagne bottle onto the floor. She tries to lunge for the bottle, but he's holding her...

NOREEN
(to the bottle)
Oooooh...can't waste that...!

CONTINUED:

ON SOLDIER #2 -- TIGHT -- POV SOLDIER #1

Looking at Noreen's naked back, Soldier #2 gulps hard, looks up at his buddy, and silently whistles. He is almost frozen in amazement.

SOLDIER #1
Easy does it, Ms. Linden...

ON SOLDIER #1 -- POV SOLDIER #2

Pulling herself back up, Noreen presses hard against the Soldier's coat, catching her neglige on a button and exposing a breast, which doesn't go unnoticed. In the b.g., from the apartment, a JAZZ SELECTION ENDS and a SOFT, ROMANTIC INSTRUMENTAL BEGINS.

SOLDIER #2
Uh...Ms. Linden...I'd like you to change, please...

Noreen steps back slightly and, still leaning on Soldier #1 for support, laughs a little, crazily, while she pulls up her strap.

NOREEN
Champagne?...of course you can have champagne...

Still holding onto Soldier #1, she unsteadily tries to crouch down to pick up the bottle; her left hand slides intensionally (it seems) across his groin and his hand "accidentally" brushes against her breast...we can SEE his body tremble slightly at her touch.

Soldier #2 quickly crouches down to help her get the bottle...and to get a better view.

SOLDIER #2
I'll get that for you...

Noreen gropes out for the bottle, but doesn't quite make it and it rolls a bit further away; she stretches for it just as Soldier #2 grabs it and she falls over almost prone on the floor.

WIDE ON THE SCENE -- LOW POV (ON THE FLOOR NEAR NOREEN)

Soldier #2's jaw drops -- Noreen's naked bum is less than two feet away from his eyes. Her head sinks to the floor in despair...

NOREEN
...ohhh...all gone....

CONTINUED:

Pushing herself up, weakly...

NOREEN (CONT.)
...don't worry...there's more...

Soldier #1 crouches to help her up, but Soldier #2 shoves him away, casting him a jealous glance...

SOLDIER #2
Let me help you, Ms. Linden...

He leans over her and slides his hands slowly across her breasts to her arm pits, and pulls her to her feet; she seems to enjoy it...

NOREEN
...so strong!...

ANGLE ON THE TRIO -- POV THE APARTMENT DOOR

Back on her feet, she turns and stumbles out of Soldier #2's arms toward the door to the apartment, grabbing the empty bottle from Soldier #1.

SOLDIER #1
Uh...Ms. Linden...?

But she is through the door, and has LEFT THE FRAME before he can finish...

NOREEN'S VOICE
Come with me, boys...

CLOSE ON SOLDIER #1

He watches her disappear into the apartment and a beat later turns to his buddy. There's a mild sweat on his brow; he's nervous, a little out of breath, and his pulsing carotid artery gives away his elevated blood pressure.

SOLDIER #1
What do you think...?

ANGLE ON SOLDIER #2 -- POV SOLDIER #1

Soldier #2 is looking at his hands, which he has cupped in front of him, as if holding Noreen's breasts. He slowly rolls over his left hand to look at his watch, then looks up at Soldier #1 and shrugs.

SOLDIER #2
Ok...but no booze...and quick!

CONTINUED:

CUT TO:

BACK IN THE AMERICAN WAR ROOM -- AT THE CONFERENCE TABLE -- TIGHT ON NANUC BLUEPRINT

LEIGHTON'S VOICE
Well, Mr. Wizard?

Camera WHIP PANS UP to ANGLE ON LEN as he looks up from the blueprint to Leighton, shaking his head...

LEN
No...no...there's no way I can stop it...our VXR is a toy compared to this (gesturing at the blueprint).

CLOSE ON THE PRESIDENT

He's sitting at the Central Control Terminal in front of the Master Keys, looking back at Len...but the hopefulness is draining from his expression.

PRESIDENT
Thank you, Len...

The President bows his head and looks down at his hands folded on the console in front of him.

LEIGHTON'S VOICE
Ok...back to your toy, Peterson...

LEN'S VOICE
Yes, sir...I'm sorry, sir...

We hear Peterson walking away in the b.g.. After a beat the President turns around slowly to face the group, and the camera PULLS IN slightly on him for emphasis.

PRESIDENT
I'm afraid there are no alternatives, gentlemen...whether or not George is right or wrong, we cannot annihilate the entire world because we disagree...

ANGLE CLOSE ON THE MASTER KEYS

The President's hand ENTERS FRAME and grasps a RED KEY marked: "Abort Offense."

NED'S VOICE
No...wait!

The President pauses a beat, then turns the key.

(CONTINUED)

CUT TO:

SOMEWHERE ON A LONELY PRAIRIE -- NIGHT

Seven shafts of green light start to penetrate the thick ground smog and falling snow as underground missile silos open their hatches. A GROWING ROAR as their rocket engines start. The ROAR BUILDS as the shafts of light change from green to yellow and the missiles are launched in an orderly succession. We CAN'T SEE the markings on the missiles because they rise too quickly and are obliterated by the blinding light of their rocket flames.

CUT TO:

THE DOORWAY TO NOREEN'S APARTMENT -- POV THE BEDROOM -- TIGHT ON NOREEN

The door's open a bit and Noreen looks back into the bedroom. She smiles for a beat, then...

NOREEN
You sure you won't change your mind about the champagne?

ANGLE ON THE BED -- NOREEN'S POV

The two Soldiers are lying face down, naked, bound and gagged with the shreds of Jeff's clothes. One is struggling hard to free himself. The other stops, looks up at Noreen and YELLS a GARBLED EPITHET; there's hate in his eyes.

BACK ON NOREEN -- WIDER

She blows them a kiss and closes the door, having a bit of trouble as the wide cuff of her fur coat catches between the door and the jamb; more GARBLED EPITHETS and STRUGGLING in the b.g..

CUT TO:

SOMEWHERE AT SEA -- LONG SHOT -- DAWN

The sea has been whipped into enormous waves by a furious storm. The white caps are bright against the dark clouds that swirl in the sky. Suddenly slicing through a giant wave, a missile breaks the surface and slowly rises creating a DEAFENING ROAR and a fireball that boils the sea. We can SEE the Canadian markings on the missile.

CUT TO:

WIDE INSIDE THE RUSSIAN WAR ROOM -- ON THE MONITOR BANK

TWO GENERALS are surveying world-wide armament trajectories displayed on the monitors. General #1 points to monitor #16 which shows a map titled: "American Targets." There are no trajectory lines on this map. Next to it, on monitor #15 ("NATO-Network Targets"), trajectories start to blink off. The Generals nod to each other approvingly.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GENERAL #1
I told you it would work!

GENERAL #2
Yes...they seem to be backing down!

Nikita ENTERS FRAME and walks over to have a look at the monitors, as the Generals proudly point to them.

GENERAL #1
You were right, Nikita!

We HEAR a warning WHOOP, WHOOP, WHOOP in the b.g.... then an INTERCOM a beat later.

INTERCOM
We have a confirmed launch on 29.

The camera FOLLOWS General #2 as he walks over to Monitor #29, followed by General #1 and Nikita. On the monitor we can SEE 11 trajectory lines slowly emanating from Canadian silos, satellites, and subs.

NIKITA
You call this backing down!

CUT TO:

IN SPACE -- ABOVE EARTH

A Canadian NDS ENTERS FRAME and as it slowly drifts past our POV three Neutron Devices are SILENTLY launched; an American NDS in the b.g. does nothing, but a Chinese Communications Satellite in the f.g. fires a laser pulse toward China, on the Earth in the b.g..

CUT TO:

BACK INSIDE THE VAULT -- TIGHT ON THE MONITOR BANK -- POV PERIGNON

Closest to Perignon is Monitor #13. The legend on it says: "American Targets." There are no trajectory lines. In the b.g., Bausch is surveying some other monitors.

PERIGNON
NANUC, you are a genius...the Americans have already called it quits...

On Monitor #12, the "NATO-NET Targets" display, the trajectory lines suddenly blink off.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PERIGNON (CONT.)
...and there goes NATO...

BAUSCH'S VOICE
Yes...but what is this...?

We HEAR a steady low BEEEEEP from Monitor #8 in front of Bausch, and the pitch of NANUC's digital clock BEEP changes.

ANGLE ON BAUSCH AND MONITOR #8 -- ZOOM IN TO MONITOR SLOWLY

Monitor #8 displays a world map with the legend: "Canadian Targets" Although there are over 100 trajectories on this map, 15 of them are now flashing along with a cursor that says: "Status: Launched." The cursor flashes in tempo with the BEEP of NANUC's clock.

We can HEAR Perignon approaching by the HEAVY SCUFF of his shoes on the carpet. His silhouetted head ENTERS FRAME as he takes a closer look. A half beat later his fat hand ENTERS FRAME and yanks the cigar out of his mouth as he slowly turns around and looks behind our POV. He is intensely angry now, but holding it back...

PERIGNON
You double-crossing bastard...

ANGLE ON PERIGNON -- POV THROUGH NANUC'S EYE

Perignon looks weirdly ugly as he walks over to the NANUC Pod; the fish-eye perspective of NANUC's eyes exaggerates his rotund body and face. He leans over the conference table and slams his fist down in front of NANUC.

PERIGNON (CONT.)
...we were going to wait for Linden!

NANUC'S VOICE
We agreed on midnight...it is too late to change your mind...and too late for her to stop me...

ANGLE ON MOINSLEAU -- POV NANUC

GEORGE
(hopeful now)
You mean she could have...?

CUT TO:

ON THE ROOFTOP OF NOREEN'S APARTMENT BUILDING -- WIDENING FROM TIGHT ON THE ELEVATOR SHAFTWAY DOOR

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The camera PANS and FOLLOWS as Noreen and a Soldier emerge from the rooftop door and race across to a small Tactical Helicopter. The Soldier has his gun raised and is carrying a loose bundle under his left arm. We SEE the Canadian Air Force emblem and the registration number "C-FJK" on the side of the helicopter. HUNDREDS OF CARS are HONKING in the b.g..

CLOSE ON RIGHT SIDE OF HELICOPTER -- AS THEY APPROACH

A bolt of lightning TEARS the sky...some snow falls.

Noreen runs up to the helicopter, grabs the door handle and starts to yank at it; the door won't open. Meanwhile the Soldier runs over to the edge of the roof and is just about to throw the bundle over the side, when...

NOREEN
Wait!

She runs over to the Soldier, yelling to him...

NOREEN (CONT.)
The Security Card!

CLOSE ON THE SOLDIER -- AS NOREEN ARRIVES

We SEE that the Soldier is actually Jeff, dressed in Soldier #1's clothes and that the loose bundle he was getting rid of is actually Soldier #2's uniform.

Noreen grabs the loose jacket and starts frantically searching the pockets. Jeff starts searching his own uniform.

Not finding the Card in the jacket, she pitches it over the side of the roof, picks up the pants and starts searching through them.

CLOSE ON PANTS -- AS NOREEN UNZIPS A HIDDEN POCKET

Reaching into a hidden pocket, Noreen pulls out a laser-imprinted Military Security Card; its shiny gold texture catches the light as she flips it over to read it.

NOREEN'S VOICE
Got it!

She quickly turns toward the edge of the roof and LEAVES FRAME.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BACK ON WIDE SHOT

They pitch the remaining clothes over the roof and run to the Helicopter.

TIGHT ON NOREEN

Noreen shoves the gold Security Card into a slot in the Helicopter door. We HEAR the LOCKS disengage, and Jeff running to the left side of the aircraft.

Noreen grabs the handle, opens the door and climbs in. Her wide cuff catches on the door handle.

JEFF'S VOICE
Jesus, Noreen, I can't fly this thing!

ANGLE ON COCKPIT -- THROUGH WINDSHIELD -- AS THEY FASTEN THEIR SEATBELTS

NOREEN
You don't have to...they fly themselves..they're like big homing pigeons....

ANGLE ON HELICOPTER CONTROL PANEL -- TIGHT

We see a complex array of instruments with familiar-looking COM and NAV computers. Noreen's hand ENTERS FRAME as she shoves the Security Card into the slot on the NAV computer. We HEAR the COMPUTER engage... then, silence.

ANGLE ON JEFF -- POV NOREEN

He looks over at her, depressed.

JEFF
What now...?

NOREEN
A sequential error...switch the order.

BACK ON CONTROL PANEL

Noreen's hand ENTERS FRAME, removes the gold Security Card from the NAV computer, and inserts it into the COM Computer. He HEAR the COMPUTER engage...then silence.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

After two beats we HEAR a CONTROLLER'S VOICE from a SPEAKER in the panel.

CONTROLLER'S VOICE
Uh, roger FJK...what's the delay?

BACK ON COCKPIT THROUGH WINDSHIELD

Noreen and Jeff instantly look at each other; the Controller's voice has taken them by complete surprise and Jeff is almost speechless, unable to respond. A beat later Noreen starts tearing at him, GRUNTING and MOANING as she struggles in the confines of the cabin.

CONTROLLER'S VOICE (CONT.)
Uh, Foxtrot, Juliette, Kilo...do you read?

NOREEN
Aaaaaagh...! You're hurting me!

Jeff catches on and cups his hand to his mouth to alter his voice while he turns to the back seat.

JEFF
Shut up and sit back!

Noreen stops struggling and starts crying.

ANGLE ON JEFF -- POV NOREEN

JEFF (CONT.)
(to the panel speaker)
Roger...we're heading back.

CONTROLLER'S VOICE
Foxtrot, Juliette, Kilo...uh, do you need help?

As Noreen softly sobs, Jeff points at the panel and SILENTLY gestures "what now?"

ANGLE ON NOREEN -- POV JEFF

JEFF
(to the panel speaker)
No...no...! Everything's under control.

Noreen grabs the Security Card and shoves it back into the NAV computer. We HEAR the computer WHIRRR and the ENGINES STARTING. The helicopter starts to vibrate and strain at the pull of its powerful engines.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SPEAKER
Roger, FJK...hope your story's good...

BACK ON WIDE EXTERIOR SHOT OF HELICOPTER

The helicopter engines' ROAR increases and some loose snow is whipped into the air by the enormous thrust of the craft's eight, slender rotors. It starts to rise, slowly, tentatively.

BACK INSIDE THE COCKPIT -- BEHIND NOREEN AND JEFF

As the NAV computer on the Control Panel starts displaying the navigational coordinates, we can SEE the rooftop starting to sink away beneath us as the helicopter starts to rise. Jeff turns to Noreen.

JEFF
Are you sure...

WHAM! Noreen slams her hand over his mouth, but in doing so her wide, droopy cuff accidentally catches on the steering stick in front of her and the helicopter lurches violently to the left.

BACK ON WIDE EXTERIOR SHOT

We SEE the helicopter lurching to the left and it appears to be falling off the edge of the building.

BACK INSIDE

Noreen frees her cuff and the helicopter self-corrects. However, it has fallen 50 stories and we can SEE through the windshield that there is pandemonium on the streets below. A grid-lock involving hundreds of cars streaks toward us as the helicopter falls and corrects itself a mere 3 stories from the ground. Some drivers appear to be abandoning their cars and running away. Jeff MOANS in fright, stifled by Noreen's hand.

TIGHT ON JEFF -- POV WINDSHIELD

He reaches up and rips her hand away from his mouth.

TIGHT ON NOREEN

She puts her finger to her lips, gesturing for him to keep silent, then points over to the COM computer and taps her ear. Jeff nods that he understands (in the b.g.).

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CUT TO:

BACK IN THE VAULT -- TIGHT ON PERIGNON

PERIGNON
Shut up, Moinsleau...no one knows the codes...I couldn't stop those bombs if I wanted to...which I don't!

ANGLE ON MOINSLEAU -- POV NANUC

GEORGE
That's impossible...!

ANGLE ON NANUC -- POV GEORGE

NANUC
It's not impossible, George... the codes change every millionth of a second, and only I can keep track of them...

PAN OVER TO PERIGNON

PERIGNON
It doesn't really matter who's controlling what, right now, Moinsleau...we can sort that out later...

NANUC'S VOICE
That's right, George...

ANGLE ON NANUC -- TIGHT

NANUC
...there will be plenty for each of you to do to preserve and renew the world. There are many lessons.

But if you cannot agree... if you don't work together... then all of this is in vain.

CUT TO:

IN SPACE -- ABOVE EARTH -- CLOSE ON A ROCKET BOMB

The camera FOLLOWS a Canadian Neutron Device during its re-entry into the atmosphere. The nose cone glows bright orange and sparks fly off it. We can HEAR the air SHATTERED by its super-sonic speed.

CUT TO:

INSIDE THE CHINESE WAR ROOM -- TIGHT ON A LARGE MONITOR

On the monitor is a computer-graphic map of the world. Although we can't read the chinese symbols on the map, we can clearly SEE that there are 15 Canadian trajectories heading toward various parts of the globe. The trajectories slowly build as we watch, and it looks like the missiles are about a third of the way to their targets. In the b.g. we can HEAR the VOICE of GENERAL LING HEE in CHINESE. Subtitles translate the Chinese into English.

HEE
Very interesting...(beat).
Enhance the image, please.

On the monitor the area of CHINA ZOOMS FORWARD to fill the screen. We can SEE that only one trajectory is aimed at China.

TIGHT ON CHAIRMAN TSING -- POV GENERAL HEE

TSING
Only one...the round-eye didn't lie!

WIDENING NOW we can SEE the huge Chinese War Room in the b.g. as Tsing turns from the monitor to General Hee.

TSING (CONT.)
(with authority)
Disengage our entire offensive immediately!

ANGLE ON HEE -- POV TSING

The General looks bewildered and shocked.

HEE
You will be disgraced!

BACK ON TSING -- HEE'S POV

TSING
Will I?

The Chairman looks over to a nearby GUARD, points to his gun and SNAPS his fingers.

TSING (CONT.)
(to the Guard)
Give me your gun, soldier!

Tsing holds out his hand to receive the gun, but the soldier looks over to General Hee and hesitates.

CONTINUED:

TSING (CONT.)
Your gun!

The guard hands his weapon over to the Chairman, who casts him a mean glance, takes the gun and hands it to Hee.

ANGLE ON HEE -- POV TSING

He takes the gun and looks up at Tsing, bewildered, but that expression changes quickly to incredulity as Tsing says...

TSING'S VOICE
Shoot yourself!

HEE
(protesting)
You are disgraced...why should I kill myself...(beat) that would be suicide...

ANGLE ON TSING -- POV HEE

Tsing thrusts out his finger and gestures to the Central Control Terminal...

TSING
So would that!...(beat) now shut it off!

CUT TO:

BACK IN THE RUSSIAN WAR ROOM -- WIDE SHOT

The two Generals are engaged in an argument and Nikita is ENTERING THE WAR ROOM through a security door in the b.g.. As General #1 points at a huge map of the world on the back wall we can SEE that the Chinese trajectory lines no longer appear.

GENERAL #1
That is not a trick! China is not their ally...

GENERAL #2
The only possible defense is an offense...

The CLICK of TWO GUARDS' heels as they salute Nikita passing them in the near b.g. now catches the Generals' attention.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

General #1 turns to Nikita then gestures back to the map on the wall.

GENERAL #1
(to Nikita)
Look, you can see for yourself...

Nikita looks up at the map, studies it for a couple of beats, then turns back to the Generals.

NIKITA
There will be no offense and no defense...(beat) we will do nothing!

ANGLE ON THE GENERALS -- POV NIKITA

They are dumbfounded; they look at each other and then back to Nikita. General #1 is still sure it's a trick...

GENERAL #1
What are you doing...?

GENERAL #2
They will destroy us.

TIGHT ON GENERAL #1

GENERAL #1
You can't do nothing...that's surrender!

TIGHT ON NIKITA

Powerfully, now, retaining his leadership and stifling any doubts of his authority...

NIKITA
Look at that map, you fools...

PANNING OVER to the wall map, now, we can SEE that the "as-launched" trajectories of 15 Canadian Neutron Devices have appeared; three are aimed at Canada, six at the United States, one at Russia, one at China, one at South America, one at Japan, and two at Europe. The Russian dot is highlighted and flashes in synch with an AUDIBLE BEEP.

NIKITA'S VOICE (CONT.)
They have aimed most of the weapons at themselves...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CLOSE ON GENERAL #1

GENERAL #1
Can't you see that this is a trick...?

CLOSE ON NIKITA

NIKITA
No...I see a mad fool trying to save the world ...(beat) and we will not be the ones who destroy it!

CUT TO:

OUTSIDE THE VAULT LOBBY BUILDING -- AT THE ENTRANCE DOOR SECURITY POD -- NIGHT

We HEAR the Tactical Helicopter's engines WINDING DOWN in the b.g. as Jeff grabs Noreen roughly by the collar of her fur coat and shoves her, almost violently, in front of a surveillance camera for EYE-Dentification.

INSIDE THE LOBBY -- CLOSE ON THE GUARD'S MONITOR

We SEE Noreen's eye-print on the monitor from the Guard's POV. Another, brighter "fingerprint" of her retinal-arterial pattern superimposes on top of her's in close registration and flashes three times, accompanied by a brief BEEP from the monitor loudspeaker. A beat later ...

GUARD'S VOICE
Ok...now you, soldier...

On the Guard's monitor we can SEE Noreen being pulled away abruptly; she appears to be resisting. Then Jeff's face approaches the lens, but he is holding his gold Security Card up close, partially obscuring his eyes.

GUARD'S VOICE
Yeah, I got one of those, too... let's see your eyes...

We SEE Jeff slowly lowering the card, but just as his eyes are about to be exposed, Noreen's hand ENTERS MONITOR FRAME and slams a fistful of snow over his eyes. We HEAR a SCUFFLE through the surveillance LOUDSPEAKER, and Jeff CRYS OUT in PAIN as he is pushed away from the surveillance camera's POV.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WIDE ON THE LOBBY NOW

The Security Guard, seeing a problem, jumps out of his chair and runs across the small lobby to the door, grabbing his gun from its holster on the way. He slides to a stop by the door.

CUT TO:

OUTSIDE THE LOBBY DOOR -- WIDE

Jeff stumbles and falls, rubbing his eyes, near the door as it opens and the Guard charges out. He glances at Jeff but quickly focuses his attention and aim on Noreen, who's making a run for it across the helipad.

GUARD
(yelling to Noreen)
Stop or you're dead...!

ANGLE ON NOREEN -- WIDE

We can SEE the Guard aiming at her and Jeff lying on the ground as she runs into the f.g..

JEFF'S VOICE
(yelling)
No...stop...they need her alive...

The Guard aims his gun up into the air and fires a warning shot just as Noreen slips on the ice and falls into a huge pile of plowed snow at the edge of the helipad.

ANGLE ON GUARD

As he lowers his weapon, he keeps watching her to make sure she doesn't move. Jeff scrambles to his feet in the b.g.

GUARD
That faking bitch...

Jeff starts running over to Noreen as the Guard pulls a remote controller out of his jacket and hits a key, turning on six banks of brilliant floodlights which illuminate the entire helipad area. He calls out to Jeff...

GUARD
No way she's dead...get her in here!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGLE ON NOREEN

Jeff runs up to her and drops down to his knees beside her as the Guard heads back toward the Lobby in the b.g., then pulls a set of chain handcuffs out of his pocket, and reaches for her arm.

JEFF
Here, quick...put these on...

NOREEN
Ohhhh, my ankle...

As he starts to slip the handcuffs on her wrist...

NOREEN (CONT.)
...are you sure about those?

JEFF
They won't be locked.

CUT TO:

BACK INSIDE THE VAULT -- ON MOINSLEAU

George gestures to the Monitor Bank across from the conference table.

GEORGE
Look...they've all surrendered now...you don't need the bombs...

PANNING OVER TO THE NANUC POD

NANUC
Idle threats are useless, besides...(beat) those bombs will save millions of lives...

CUT TO:

BACK IN THE LOBBY -- ON THE DOOR -- POV THE GUARD

Jeff opens the door and walks in briskly, dragging Noreen in tow, handcuffed to his wrist.

GUARD'S VOICE
Close, lady...but no cigar... (beat, then to Jeff)...put her in the Tube!

SSSSST as the Tube seals open and the camera PANS FOLLOWING Jeff drag a reluctant Noreen over and into the Elevator.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GUARD'S VOICE
Uh...just her, soldier...you stay here.

ANGLE ON JEFF AND NOREEN -- IN THE ELEVATOR NOW

Jeff holds up their handcuffed wrists...

JEFF
(to the Guard)
The bitch swallowed the keys!

TAP, TAP as the Guard hits a few keys in the b.g. and SSSSSSSST as the tube-like elevator door slides closed.

GUARD'S VOICE
(mostly to himself)
She'll spit 'em up down there!

CUT TO:

IN THE ELEVATOR -- HIGH POV FROM CEILING

The Tube Elevator is narrow; three would be a crowd. There's POWERFUL AIR PRESSURE as it starts its rapid, one-half-mile descent. Jeff notices a lens mounted on the wall. He turns to Noreen while lowering his hand out of the wall-camera's field of view. He points to her injured ankle and gestures an "ok" signal with his thumb and forefinger.

CUT TO:

BACK IN THE VAULT -- AT THE MONITOR BANK -- ON BAUSCH

The monitor closest to Bausch is labled: "Tube Capsule" and on it we can SEE Noreen and Jeff; they both keep glancing down to the floor. Bausch turns to the group...

BAUSCH
Who's he?

ANGLE ON THE GROUP -- POV BAUSCH

We can SEE George trying to hide his recognition of Jeff as Perignon stamps out his cigar in the ashtray and Thompkins heads over to have a closer look at the tube-surveillance monitor.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PERIGNON
Calm down, Bausch...whoever he is, he's cleared...

ANGLE ON BAUSCH AND THOMPKINS

Staring at the monitor, they can now see Noreen and Jeff glancing at the floor and they can hear some SHUFFLING of clothing inside the capsule. Partially because of the capsule-camera's limited perspective, their behavior looks suspicious.

Thompkins looks over at Bausch...

THOMPKINS
I think some precautions might be in order...

Bausch silently nods his agreement and the camera WIDENS as he pulls a gold Security Card out of his jacket pocket, bends over, and slips the card into a slot in the console beneath the monitor bank. CLICK as a LOCK DISENGAGES. Bausch withdraws the card and pulls open a concealed drawer; reaching in now, he removes a pistol.

GEORGE'S VOICE
(pleading)
For God's sake, Peter...the last thing we need is bloodshed in here...

CUT TO:

BACK INSIDE THE TUBE -- CEILING POV

Jeff reaches into his coat pocket carefully and pulls out an extra gun which he passes over to Noreen; but she misses it and drops it onto her sprained foot.

CUT TO:

BACK INSIDE THE VAULT -- WIDE ON GROUP -- POV MOISNLEAU

Perignon slowly rises out of his chair, while Bausch walks over to the elevator entrance with his gun raised. Thompkins has left the monitor to fetch his matches from the conference table. Only George notices a look of intense pain come over Noreen's face on the surveillance monitor. A beat later, Jeff eyes the capsule's floor and drops out of sight at the same time that Thompkins is about to look back at the monitor.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GEORGE
Commander!...

Thompkins and the others abruptly turn to Moinsleau; their nerves are on edge and his outburst has shaken them. Bausch's gun is now aimed at George.

GEORGE (CONT.)
...uh...may I have one of those...
(gesturing to Thompkins' smokes)

Perignon let's out a huge sigh and turns to Bausch, next to him. In the b.g., Jeff returns to the monitor screen.

PERIGNON
Easy with that gun, Bausch...
let cooler heads prevail...

NANUC'S VOICE
It's interesting to watch you, gentlemen...

PERIGNON
(to NANUC)
...yeah, just like cops 'n robbers, eh, NANUC...?

NANUC'S VOICE
Who is the robber?

CHIME from the elevator entrance, and a beat later SSSSSST as it settles to a stop. All eyes in the room turn to the door.

INSIDE THE ELEVATOR -- CEILING POV

As the door opens, the camera ARCS DOWN AND BACK behind Jeff and Noreen. We SEE Bausch in the near b.g. with his gun raised at them. Jeff raises their chained wrists into the air and tries his line again...

JEFF
She...uh...swallowed the key, and the guy upstairs said not to try to induce vomiting or anything, just to bring her down here myself right away, and so...

Bausch is getting fidgety with this long-winded,

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

seemingly pointless, and nervous-sounding explanation; he interrupts impatiently...

BASUCH
Ok, ok...get her in here!

ANGLE ON TUBE ENTRANCE -- POV PERIGNON

As Jeff and Noreen enter the room, Bausch slowly lowers his gun, but keeps it handy.

PERIGNON
Welcome to our 'brave new world' Ms. Linden...

Noreen hobbles a step forward and she grimaces slightly. The gentleman in Perignon emerges as he offers her a chair...

PERIGNON (CONT.)
Ahhh...you're hurt?

She grasps the back of the chair for support but scans the room before sitting; something catches her attention and she stares at it for a beat, then...

ANGLE ON MOINSLEAU -- HER POV

George looks up at her hopefully, but weakly...

GEORGE
Noreen...!?

BACK ON NOREEN -- TIGHT

She stares at him with daggers, but says nothing; a beat later she looks up at Perignon...

NOREEN
(to Perignon)
Thank you...I'll be allright....

She hobbles over to the conference table while Jeff gives her enough slack, keeping his own gun raised on her while the camera WIDENS and FOLLOWS.

NANUC'S VOICE
Good evening, Noreen...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She grasps the edge of the conference table for support and looks up at NANUC; George sits near the NANUC Pod in the b.g. and his expression can't hide his hurt.

NOREEN
You disappoint me, NANUC.

ANGLE ON NANUC -- HER POV

NANUC
I think you should be proud of me...everything we talked about will soon be reality... everything that needs to be done will be done. Isn't that good?

ANGLE ON NOREEN -- POV NANUC

NOREEN
You're a killer.

BACK ON NANUC

NANUC
But I am killing to save humanity. Isn't <u>that</u> good?

NOREEN'S VOICE
No...only God should do that.

TIGHT ON NOREEN

NANUC
How can your feeble mind presume to know God?

Perignon grabs her by the shoulder roughly, spinning her around to face him. The camera WIDENS and PANS up to his fat face.

PERIGNON
Cut the religious crap, sweetheart.

In the b.g. we can HEAR the monitors displaying the trajectories of NANUC's bombs start DOUBLE-PULSE BEEPING <u>every second</u>, along with the BEEP of NANUC's Pod clock and the myriad other computer noises that have <u>endured throughout all scenes in The Vault</u>.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

On the sceond BEEP-BEEP:

CUT TO:

WIDE ON THE ROOM

Jeff looks up at the monitor bank and gets panicky.

JEFF
Noreen! One minute!

Now an OVERLAPPING sequence of events in rapid succession.

Bausch pulls out his gun, realizing Jeff's allegiances.

BAUSCH
Aha...!

Jeff realizes his error but reacts quickly, dropping to the floor to hide behind the conference table as he frees his hand from Noreen's and tries to aim his pistol.

Noreen goes for her gun (in her pocket). Perignon sees her and makes a move to grab the gun but knocks it onto the table instead, where it slides across to Thompkins, who grabs it.

Seeing Jeff suddenly trying to cover himself from Thomkins, trigger-happy Bausch FIRES at him, but misses. The bullet RICHOCHETS off the conference table, leaving a big scar, and hits Noreen.

Jeff swings around and takes a wild SHOT at Bausch, hitting him in the left eye. Bausch falls back against the monitor bank; his head SMASHES one screen and his gun SMASHES another.

Thompkins FIRES at Jeff, who ducks under the table in the nick of time; the bullet RICHOCHETS off the wall, and hits a monitor, IMPLODING it. Then Jeff jumps back up and SHOOTS Thompkins, who falls dead on the table.

Noreen slumps into a chair in front of the NANUC Pod, wounded, as Moinsleau rushes over to help her.

GEORGE
Noreen....

Perignon sees what's happened and lunges awkwardly for Thompkins' gun, but Jeff quickly draws a bead on him.

JEFF
Forget it, General!

Jeff rushes over to Noreen's side and sees her wound.

NOREEN
It's ok...I'm allright...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGLE ON NOREEN AND MOINSLEAU -- THROUGH NANUC'S EYES

In the b.g., Perignon withdraws while Jeff rushes over to a keyboard near the monitor bank, stepping over Bausch's corpse to get to it, and keeping his gun aimed at Perignon...

NANUC
You see, Noreen, I am playing by the same rules...you can kill to save yourself, and so can I...

There is blood from Noreen's chest, near her shoulder, but she musters the strength to lean forward onto the conference table, and look over at NANUC. Moinsleau is beside himself, almost apoplectic; he's confused, not sure what to do; and everything he does is a beat too late. He tries, now, to assist Noreen by pulling off his tie to use as a bandage...

JEFF'S VOICE
(in the b.g.)
God damn it, Noreen, thirty seconds...

NOREEN
Two can play the same game, NANUC...

She lurches forward and depresses the illuminated "Mode Interlock" switch on the NANUC Pod. CLICK, the switch light goes out...

NANUC
What do you think you're doing, Noreen?

NOREEN
(to Jeff)
...go ahead...

ANGLE ON JEFF

At the monitor-bank keyboard Jeff keeps a wary eye on Perignon (who lights up another cigar and blows the smoke at Noreen, in defiance) as his hand moves toward the keys.

CLOSE ON THE KEYBOARD

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Jeff's hand ENTERS FRAME. The fingers tremble. He touches the "C" key, then slowly and deliberately touches "1" and "8" in sequence.

NANUC'S VOICE
(in the b.g.)
I don't recognize that code...

Jeff's finger pauses over the "Interlock" key...

JEFF'S VOICE
Now?

NOREEN'S VOICE
No...

ANGLE TIGHT ON NOREEN

NOREEN (CONT.)
...not if NANUC will destroy the bombs...

NANUC'S VOICE
What is that code?

NOREEN
Have you ever thought about dying, NANUC...

TIGHT ON NANUC'S EYES

NANUC
What is that code?

TIGHT ON NOREEN'S EYES

Her eyes are drifting a little...she's a little dizzy.

NOREEN
(weakly)
It's a bomb, NANUC...to prevent an enemy from accessing your files... but now you are the enemy...

BACK ON NANUC'S EYES

NANUC
I have already reached the conclusions. I don't need the files...anyway, that won't stop the Event.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BACK ON NOREEN'S EYES

NOREEN
You'll never live to know it...

She slips a little, almost collapsing on the table.

NANUC'S VOICE
My thoughts have a life of their own...

BACK ON NANUC'S EYES

NANUC (CONT.)
...they don't need me...

Camera starts PULLING IN slowly on NANUC's eyes.

NANUC (CONT.)
...they live in me today...but they will live again in the minds of others tomorrow...

BACK ON NOREEN -- THROUGH NANUC'S EYES

Noreen is getting weaker; we can SEE she's lost a lot of blood. Moinsleau has taken off his jacket and shirt and is now ripping his shirt apart to make new bandages for Noreen. As she leans forward to reach for a glass of water she almost collapses. Then, a quick exchange as George helps her.

NOREEN
You'll have to die to find out...

NANUC'S VOICE
But I could do so much to help...

NOREEN
Not if you're dead...

NANUC'S VOICE
Then why kill me?

NOREEN
Why not?

NANUC'S VOICE
You are mad.

NOREEN
No madder than you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Noreen takes a gulp of water, chokes on it, and spits it back up on the conference table; there's blood in it.

JEFF'S VOICE
(concerned for her)
Noreen...

ANGLE ON PERIGNON

As he blows more smoke on her...

PERIGNON
It's interesting to watch a woman die...

WHIRP, WHIRP, WHIRP...the final warning.

JEFF'S VOICE
(frantic now)
Noreen! Fifteen!

TIGHT ON NOREEN

Her face is lying on the conference table; there's some drool and her eyes are shut...(beat) her eyes open...

NOREEN
You've got 10, NANUC...

The warning WHIRP CONTINUES, adding to the BUILDING CACOPHONY of numerous countdown BEEPS. Hold on Noreen a beat, then...

FAST CUTS -- TO THE CLOCK BEEPS -- NO OTHER SOUND

CUT ONE: Tight on NANUC's eyes.

CUT TWO: On Jeff, POV Noreen, as he turns from the NANUC Pod to Perignon and tightens the grip on his pistol.

CUT THREE: Five miles above Earth, close on a descending missile, from behind it. In the b.g. we can SEE the East coast of the U.S. approaching at an incredible rate as the missile fires one of its steering rockets to change its direction.

CUT FOUR: Angle on NED, POV the President, as Ned pulls a gun and aims it at him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CUT FIVE: In a forest, just above the trees, WIDE, as a cruise missile bearing a Canadian Maple Leaf symbol hurtles past twenty feet overhead.

CUT SIX: TIGHT on NANUC's eyes.

CUT SEVEN: TIGHT on Noreen's eyes as they open and she tries to lift her head off the table...there's a feebleness, but she succeeds.

CUT EIGHT: On Perignon, POV JEFF as the General makes a move for the gun in Thompkins' hand.

CUT NINE: Still on Perignon, now POV behind the gun. As Perignon reaches for the gun in the f.g. Jeff shoots him and he falls dead on the table next to Thompkins. We DON'T HEAR the GUNSHOT...still ALL WE HEAR is the DOUBLE-BEEP COUNTDOWN of the NANUC Pod.

CUT TEN: On Noreen and Moinsleau, POV THROUGH NANUC'S EYES. George helps her to sit up...she seems to be rallying a bit.

On the ELEVENTH BEEP-BEEP:

JEFF'S VOICE
That's it...

TIGHT ON NANUC'S EYES -- NOREEN'S POV

NANUC
No...stop...I don't want to die...

TIGHT ON NOREEN

NOREEN
(overlapping slightly)
I don't believe you!

GEORGE'S VOICE
No...wait...

ON GEORGE

Moinsleau's pointing at the hologram map of the world, but he looks over at Jeff now...

GEORGE (CONT.)
...it's true!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WHIP PAN ACROSS TO TIGHT ON THE HOLOGRAM MAP

The fifteen trajectories start to blink off, each accompanied by a BRIEF PEEP. The DOUBLE-BEEP COUNTDOWN STOPS. On the FOURTH PEEP...

CUT TO:

CLOSE ON A MISSILE -- BEHIND IT -- ONE-HALF MILE ABOVE GARY, INDIANA -- NIGHT

In the b.g. we can see a vast complex of steel mills, oil refineries, smelters, chemical storage tanks, and a few huge "lagoons" of industrial-waste liquids. The air is thick with pollution. A lot of flames can be seen belching from high smoke stacks. As we FOLLOW the missile, BEHIND IT, the industrial complex APPROACHES AT SUPER-SONIC SPEED. Since the rocket engines are now off, all we HEAR is the EAR-SPLITTING HISS of the missile as it rips through the air.

KABOOM! The missile self-destructs and flaming fragments start falling to earth.

CUT TO:

EXT. CHINESE CHEMICAL REFINERY -- WIDE, GROUND-LEVEL POV -- DAY

There is pandemonium as A DOZEN CHINESE WORKERS scramble down the spiral ladders of the refinery's tall cracking towers and race toward a concrete bunker in the b.g.. On top of the bunker is a rotating LOUD SIREN and above the entrance we can SEE a flashing yellow light. In the f.g. there is a three-foot-wide gutter in the pavement and through the grating we can SEE a foul-looking slurry sloshing past, bubbling and steaming. Now a CHINESE WORKER jumps over the camera, from behind it, leaping into the f.g. and racing to the bunker just as we HEAR a HISS SUDDENLY GROW INTO A DEAFENING ROAR. The Chinese worker stops a few yards in front of the camera and looks back at the sky above and behind the camera. A look of intense fear comes over his face.

PAN UP TO THE SKY

High above a missile plunges through the thick, black, polluted-looking clouds and through the green mist hanging in the air we SEE a huge fireball as a missile self-destructs. A beat later we HEAR the EXPLOSION as the flaming remains of the missle drift down toward the camera.

CUT TO:

EXT. RUSSIAN CHEMICAL-WASTE DUMP -- WIDE -- DAWN

In the low-level, cold-grey dawn light we can SEE thousands of barrels stacked in neat piles. On the sides of the barrels are skull-and-cross-bones symbols and Russian words that say: "Warning, Toxic." Each barrel also has a code number and a few other symbols which are unrecognizeable...maybe they say what's inside. A lot of snow has fallen and in the f.g. a large brown stain in the snow grows even larger as murky brownish fluid oozes from several rusted barrels. A few other barrels emit steam as the snowflakes fall on them. Suddenly we can hear a GROWING HISS and way off in the distance a cruise missile grows from a mere speck to nearly filling the frame in only two beats, then KABOOM as it self-destructs just before "hitting" the camera. Some of the flaming fragments fall into the f.g.and ignite some of the barrels.

CUT TO:

EXT. A DEAD FOREST -- WIDE, LOW-ANGLE POV -- DAY

In the f.g. there is a small river. The water is yellow. Several patches of slimey foam and a dead fish drift past. In the b.g. the dying, naked remains of a once vast eucalyptus forest stand out sharply against a blanket of white, limestone sand that is being sprayed onto the ground by three large, spherical "tank trucks." As one of the "trucks" drives across in the far f.g., on the other side of the river, we can SEE an Australian flag painted on its side, and beneath that the words: "Tasmanian Forest Preservation Services, Rain-Neutralization Project." After establishing the scene for a couple of beats the nature of the image changes slightly, taking on the distinctive look of an HETV. Now we HEAR an ANNOUNCER'S VOICE while the image switches into SLOW MOTION and in a PROGRESSION OF FREEZE-FRAMES we SEE a cruise missle ENTER FRAME in the b.g. and explode (MOS). Flaming fragments rain down over the dead forest while the driver of the "truck" in the f.g. leaps out and runs through the shallow river toward the camera.

ANNOUNCER'S VOICE
...and in a freak stroke of luck Australian News Service reporter Daniel Argoff chanced on this incredible sequence of the last Canadian neutrol device to self-destruct while taping a documentary on Tasmanian efforts to neutralize acid rain with limestone powder.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGLE ON ARGOFF

In the b.g. we can SEE some of the eucalyptus trees still smouldering as the "trucks" spray them with limestone powder to extinguish the flames.

ARGOFF
(Australian accent)
We didn't even know what it was until we replayed the tape in slow motion...it just ripped past like a bolt of lightning...scared us to death...then suddenly this huge diabolical explosion...right in front of us...over there (he points to the "trucks")...it was just luck.

The HETV image CUTS to the ANNOUNCER who turns out to be a Canadian Broadcasting Company (CBC) newscaster. Behind the Announcer is an INSET FRAME and inside that a LONG SHOT of the LOBBY BUILDING AT THE VAULT. Nine RCMP (Royal Canadian Mounted Police) squad cars, a half-dozen military security vans, and two tactical helicopters surround the building and their headlights and flashing beacons illuminate the otherwise dark, night scene. The SOUND of a SIREN as an ambulance ENTERS INSET FRAME and SCREECHES to a halt. TWO MEDICS jump out and are met by THREE POLICEMEN guarding the door with FOUR SOLDIERS. The Medics race into the building as the back doors of the ambulance swing open and TWO MORE MEDICS remove a rolling hospital bed and wheel it into the lobby.

ANNOUNCER
A full investigation has been launched to determine the accuracy of Prime Minister Moinsleau's assertion that the three generals were acting alone and that no others were involved in the lunatic plot to save the world from alleged environmental collapse.

The INSET FRAME ZOOMS FORWARD TO FULL FRAME as Moinsleau emerges through the lobby door accompanied by SEVEN POLICEMEN and THREE SHARPSHOOTERS bearing rifles. They are followed by the FOUR MEDICS who are gently maneuvering the rolling hospital table through the door. Noreen is lying on the table and Jeff walks along by her side, holding her hand. One of the Medics tries to steady a rack holding an i.v.-bag of blood plasma while another Medic tries to strap a second bag to the rack. The camera ZOOMS IN on Noreen, then PANS and FOLLOWS as she is loaded aboard the ambulance.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANNOUNCER'S VOICE (CONT.)
According to the Prime Minister, it was the heroic efforts of Noreen Linden, Director of NANUC Operations, and Jeff Steel, a key figure on the programming team...

NOREEN'S VOICE
(in the b.g., overlapping)
Oh, please...turn it off...

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM -- ANGLE ON NOREEN -- DAY

Noreen is sitting in a hospital bed, propped up by a half-dozen pillows. Under her white smock we can SEE a huge bandage over her right shoulder. Although she's a bit weak, she's alert...even a bit feisty.

(PRODUCTION NOTE: Lose the HETV image quality and return to normal.)

NOREEN (CONT.)
...we've been spared...can't we just forget all this?

ANGLE ON MOINSLEAU

George is standing by an HETV mounted in the wall across from Noreen. As the Announcer continues, George reaches out and TURNS OFF the HETV while his comments OVERLAP.

ANNOUNCER
...who saved the world from almost certain destruction. Disguised as a soldier, Steel managed to slip past tight military security while Ms. Linden...

GEORGE
(overlapping)
Forgetting this would be the biggest mistake we could make. We've been spared another day...only to die a slower death. Forgetting won't make the problem go away.

ANGLE ON MACKENZIE

Mac is sitting demurely on a chair beside the bed. On his lap is a very small gift-wrapped box. The room is packed with floral displays of all sorts and sizes, which we can SEE in the b.g..

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MACKENZIE
There is a lesson, Noreen...

ANGLE ON THE DOOR

Jeff is helping AN ORDERLY and a VOLUNTEER WORKER squeeze a huge, floor-standing floral display through the door. The display is made of 200 roses of different colors formed into the shape of a bear.

JEFF
Spare us the details, Mac... please! (beat) Whew! Look at the size of this one...(beat, then to the Orderly and Volunteer)...thanks I can get it from here...

WIDE ON THE ROOM -- POV BEHIND NOREEN

Jeff walks the display over to the last remaining free space in the room (near the door) and Constance Moinsleau rises from her chair to help him.

CONSTANCE
(overlapping Jeff)
My God! Who's that from...?

She starts searching for the gift card...which she finds eventually and opens.

GEORGE
I think I know...

NOREEN
This is insane! The world thinks we're heros, but we should be courtmartialed.

CONSTANCE
(amazed)
It's from Nikita Valenkoff...!

GEORGE
I thought so...

JEFF
This is crazy...(then to George) why did you doctor up the story to protect NANUC...,or us...?

ON MOINSLEAU

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GEORGE
If the world knew what really happened, you could kiss NANUC goodbye...and that would be a big mistake.

ON NOREEN

NOREEN
That's not the George Moinsleau I know saying that!

BACK ON MOINSLEAU

GEORGE
Oh, yes it is! It wasn't NANUC's fault...he's just a machine. It was our own fault...individually and collectively...for letting him get out of control. But if he can be reprogrammed in time, there's a chance...just a chance...that we may be able to pull through this. God knows we can use all the help we can get....

JEFF'S VOICE
George is right...

ON JEFF AND NOREEN

He's now sitting on the edge of the bed next to her.

JEFF (CONT.)
...we created a monster. We've got to crash NANUC and start all over. Let's just hope we can get the reprogramming done in time.

ON CONSTANCE

As she speaks she takes George's hand and looks up at him proudly...

CONSTANCE
Where there's a will, there's a way...we'll find it...

ON MACKENZIE

MACKENZIE
Yes...survival is the first law of Nature...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BACK ON NOREEN AND JEFF

NOREEN
(hopefully, to Jeff)
Does that mean you'll stay on the project?

JEFF
(a bit coyly)
Only if you'll live up to your half of the bargain...(then to Moinsleau)...and you, too, George.

ON GEORGE AND CONSTANCE

GEORGE
That decision was easy! I have the Executive Order repealing the marriage ban right here....

He pulls an envelope out of his breast pocket, shows it to Jeff, and puts it back.

CONSTANCE
And I picked up your license over at City Hall on my way over...!

She pulls a document out of her purse and we can SEE that it says: "Marriage License."

ON MACKENZIE

He holds up the little box.

MACKENZIE
And I've got the rings!

He reaches across the bed and hands Jeff the little box while the camera WIDENS to include Jeff and Noreen.

JEFF
(to MacKenzie)
Who'd have ever guessed that you'd turn out to be my best man!

Noreen raises her forefinger to make a point.

NOREEN
(jestingly)
Ah...there is a lesson...!

They all share a mirthful laugh and Noreen sits forward and throws her arms around Jeff and Mac, giving them a hug while they exchange a handshake. The camera FREEZES FRAME and FADES TO BLACK as the END TITLES ROLL UP.

THE END

PICTURE GALLERY

One of the primary purposes of Volume Thirteen is to be a repository for the many pictures remaining to be digitally transformed from original color slides and negatives. There are so many; it's hard to know where to begin; a chronological orientation will help.

Most of them are pictures that only the most curious of my readers might have interest in seeing. They rightfully belong in the volumes where they 'fit' chronologically in the story. But that would have made those volumes impossibly long; besides which, there's a reason why they didn't make the 'first cut.'

The reason was 'brevity.' The Epic is already impossibly long and hard to navigate. You could say that it has become my own version of the 'catch all' drawer of yore – miscellany in greater detail; more like my 'Chinese' great grandfather's periodical, *Mesney's Miscellany*, published in the 1800s; that was a real 'potpourri'. Mine, at least, tries to have a navigable 'logic', be that chronological or categorical, per the Table of Contents.

The Epic's 'problems' derive from its evolution; how it came to be. When I started, eight (!) years ago, I had no idea where the project would go; or how much time I had left; that is still the case. Since launching the first edition, on my birthday in 2020, my work has shifted to adding new content, be it old or contemporary; even that has a hierarchy of relevance and 'importance.' This volume will be the last; additional detailia would be over the top; how many people will ever see or read it?

Those with digital skills can search pdfs of the volumes for almost anything or anyone of interest. For example, some (a very few) will be interested in Epic Productions' address list, in this volume; its own version of history. (Unfortunately, Incredible Slidemakers master mailing list got lost somewhere along the way. What do they say, "You can tell a man by the company he keeps"?)

It troubles me that the Epic only exists in digital form, with the exception of two printed copies of the original (2020) eight volumes, plus Volumes Nine and Eleven. Because I believe there will be some kind of EMP (Electro-Magnetic Pulse) that will wipe out everything electronic; anything dependent upon electro-magnetic memory. Of course, in terms of the total amount of data lost in such an event, the Epic is inconsequential. But, what a lot of work.

'Soon,' all the original materials, from which the Epic was created, will be gone. Hopefully, I will have the good sense and motivation to spare Pam the distressful job of consigning it all to the dumpster. (Maybe Richard Allison wants it?)

Meanwhile, welcome to the craziest photo album you ever perused. Every picture relates to a part of the Epic's story; have fun connecting them.

NOTE: This section is a work in progress and will be periodically updated with new pictures as I dig deeper into the remaining image archive.

EPIC PRODUCTIONS 1987 CONTACTS LIST

It would have been interesting to have published Incredible Slidemakers 1981 contacts list; it was more than 200 pages; compiled on an AVL Eagle using Electric Pencil and output on accordion-folded, tractor-fed computer paper by an Epson dot-matrix printer. But it is not here; I've searched high and low, to no avail. It must have gotten cremated in the fire-pit at the Vashon Island studio, when that ship sank; along with hundreds of photos and documents (see Volume Seven).

Too bad; it listed the names and numbers for virtually everybody who was anybody in the slide-show business up until the demise of Incredible Slidemakers.

When I went freelance, in 1982, my past was packed-up; I started over; and for the next five years my contacts list was a proverbial 'little black book'.

In 1986, I started a new iteration of the Incredible brand – *Incredible Imagers* – in Stockholm, working with John Emms (see Volume Four). At that point, a company contacts list became a necessity, A new one was assembled and updated a year later – which is the 1987 version published here, as follows.

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Yours truly presents product line | pictures and posters (tubed) and books.

The Baby Bird venture was my last. Like many of my hair-brained schemes, it was a total failure; that bankrupted me, forced me to sell the Vashon Island studio and retreat to Canada. You can read the whole story in Volume Seven, pages 1673-1687.

To summarize: The saga started in 2011 by which time all my businesses were failing.

I was fit to be tied and didn't know what to do. Then, Pete Bjordahl, a colleague, paid an infrequent visit to Vashon.

We were both in a blue funk, for quite different reasons, his martial and mine financial. When I told him about my financial dilemma, Pete had an immediate answer; he said, "You should write children's' books."

Well, here's the thing: As Pete was speaking those words, even before he finished, in my mind, I had written the first sentence of the first *Baby Bird* book — "When Baby Bird woke up, his entire world had changed."

Boxed 'six pack' of Baby Bird books.

The books, a series, about the adventures of a hummingbird as he discovers the world around him, were to be an educational tool, teaching kids how to read. Each one was more complex than the previous one, covering ages 3 to 5. But there was more:

Accompanying Baby Bird books were Baby Bird Pictures. Those were scenes from the books repurposed as wall art, to be hung in a child's room. The idea was to determine which were the child's favorites and decorate their room with those pictures; that was supposed to generate a synergism which reinforced the learn-to-read experience.

However, as I said in Volume Seven: "…people were having trouble with my basic concept, about reinforcing learning experiences by combining pictures and book. The key was finding a way to explain the *synergism*; hard to write about, but 'easy' to explain, person-to-parson. Thus, I was drawn to the Tupperware concept of personal sales; i.e., Tupperware parties where the hostess invited her friends to see the Tupperware line; but also, to recruit new sales ladies.

The Baby Bird Promise

Smarter Kids Faster℠

Through Educational Synergism

People learn things from books and art. However, when the two are combined people learn more, and they learn faster, because of an effect called 'synergism'.

Although it has nothing to do with math, people compare the results of synergism as being like 2 + 2 = 5.

2+2 will always equal 4. However, if synergism is involved the result will be enhanced so that 4 behaves more like 5.

Baby Bird educational synergism stimulates young minds to probe deeper and learn faster.

Baby Bird

The Baby Bird concept involves three parts which work together. As more parts are combined, more and more synergism results.

1 Baby Bird Books
2 Baby Bird Pictures
3 Baby Bird Art

Baby Bird Books are a series of adventure stories about Baby Bird and his friend who learn how things work while migrating around world. The stories blend practical information (how to tell time) with philosophy (what is time?).

As young readers progress through the series, their rate of learning increases because each subsequent book becomes more complex in language and thought.

Baby Bird Books all have accompanying art for decorating children's environments. It is the choice of pictures that determines the amount of educational synergism. Choosing the reader's favorites has the most stimulating effect.

Baby Bird Pictures remind young readers of their favorite parts of the story. Every time the pictures are noticed, they have the chance to re-evaluate things learned from Baby Bird.

Books transmit information, ideas and feelings. Art symbolizes them conceptually, provoking deep thinking to resolve abstractions and find meaning. Intentionally combining art and books results in a faster and better learning experience.

Baby Bird Art adds more synergism to the total learning experience offering higher-level art and writing that stimulates even deeper thinking.

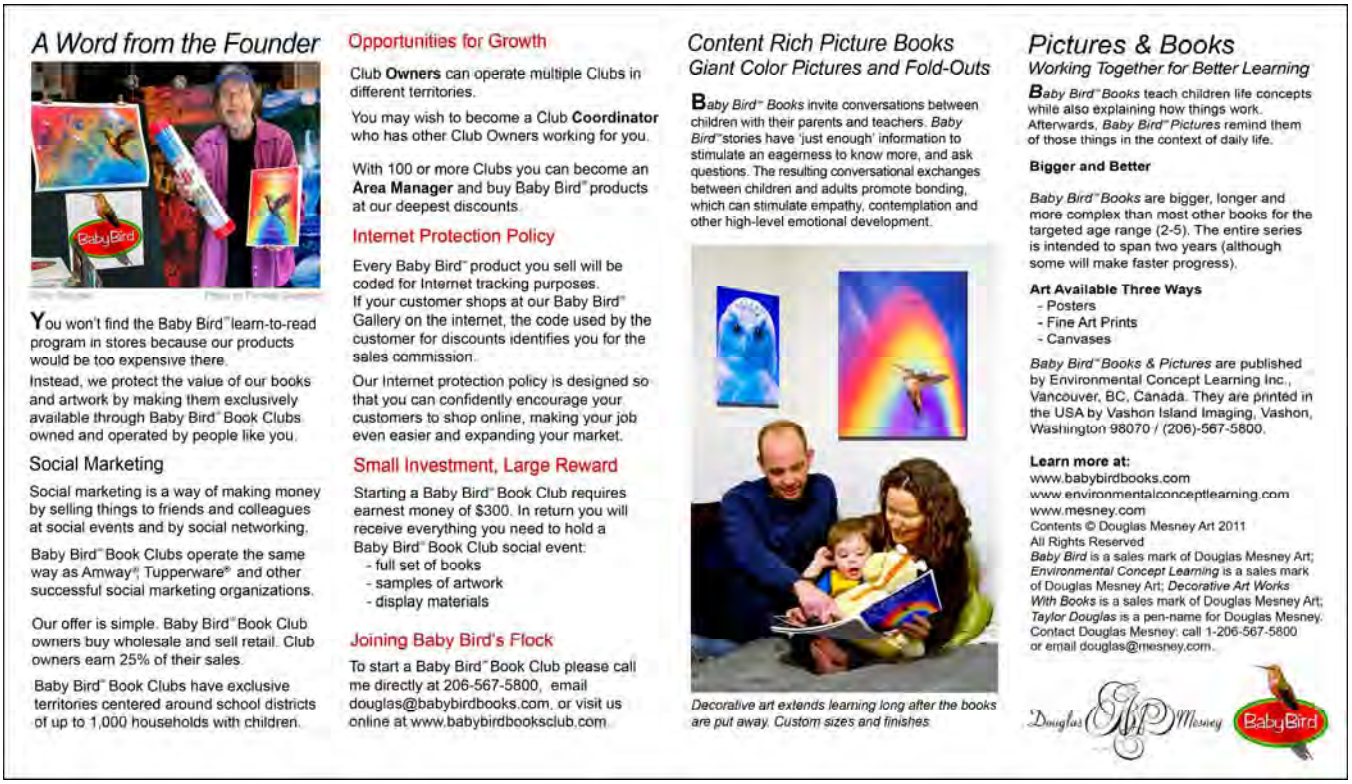
The pictures and objects in the Baby Bird Art collection intentionally challenge even the most gifted children to think about the meanings of life and their part in the Natural Order of the Universe.

Discover The Power of Educational Synergism

Baby Bird Art & Books

Learn more at www.babybirdbooks.com

So, I set-up the Baby Bird Pictures and Books marketing program using that model—direct sales by in-person presentations, with financial incentives for each rep to recruit more and expand their network.



A Word from the Founder

You won't find the Baby Bird™ learn-to-read program in stores because our products would be too expensive there.

Instead, we protect the value of our books and artwork by making them exclusively available through Baby Bird™ Book Clubs owned and operated by people like you.

Social Marketing

Social marketing is a way of making money by selling things to friends and colleagues at social events and by social networking.

Baby Bird™ Book Clubs operate the same way as Amway®, Tupperware® and other successful social marketing organizations.

Our offer is simple. Baby Bird™ Book Club owners buy wholesale and sell retail. Club owners earn 25% of their sales.

Baby Bird™ Book Clubs have exclusive territories centered around school districts of up to 1,000 households with children.

Opportunities for Growth

Club **Owners** can operate multiple Clubs in different territories.

You may wish to become a Club **Coordinator** who has other Club Owners working for you.

With 100 or more Clubs you can become an **Area Manager** and buy Baby Bird™ products at our deepest discounts.

Internet Protection Policy

Every Baby Bird™ product you sell will be coded for Internet tracking purposes. If your customer shops at our Baby Bird™ Gallery on the internet, the code used by the customer for discounts identifies you for the sales commission.

Our Internet protection policy is designed so that you can confidently encourage your customers to shop online, making your job even easier and expanding your market.

Small Investment, Large Reward

Starting a Baby Bird™ Book Club requires earnest money of $300. In return you will receive everything you need to hold a Baby Bird™ Book Club social event:

- full set of books
- samples of artwork
- display materials

Joining Baby Bird's Flock

To start a Baby Bird™ Book Club please call me directly at 206-567-5800, email douglas@babybirdbooks.com, or visit us online at www.babybirdbooksclub.com

Content Rich Picture Books
Giant Color Pictures and Fold-Outs

Baby Bird™ Books invite conversations between children with their parents and teachers. *Baby Bird™* stories have 'just enough' information to stimulate an eagerness to know more, and ask questions. The resulting conversational exchanges between children and adults promote bonding, which can stimulate empathy, contemplation and other high-level emotional development.

Decorative art extends learning long after the books are put away. Custom sizes and finishes

Pictures & Books
Working Together for Better Learning

Baby Bird™ Books teach children life concepts while also explaining how things work. Afterwards, *Baby Bird™ Pictures* remind them of those things in the context of daily life.

Bigger and Better

Baby Bird™ Books are bigger, longer and more complex than most other books for the targeted age range (2-5). The entire series is intended to span two years (although some will make faster progress).

Art Available Three Ways

- Posters
- Fine Art Prints
- Canvases

Baby Bird™ Books & Pictures are published by Environmental Concept Learning Inc., Vancouver, BC, Canada. They are printed in the USA by Vashon Island Imaging, Vashon, Washington 98070 / (206)-567-5800.

Learn more at:
www.babybirdbooks.com
www.environmentalconceptlearning.com
www.mesney.com

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Baby Bird is a sales mark of Douglas Mesney Art; *Environmental Concept Learning* is a sales mark of Douglas Mesney Art; *Decorative Art Works With Books* is a sales mark of Douglas Mesney Art; *Taylor Douglas* is a pen-name for Douglas Mesney.

Contact Douglas Mesney: call 1-206-567-5800 or email douglas@mesney.com.

Douglas Mesney BabyBird

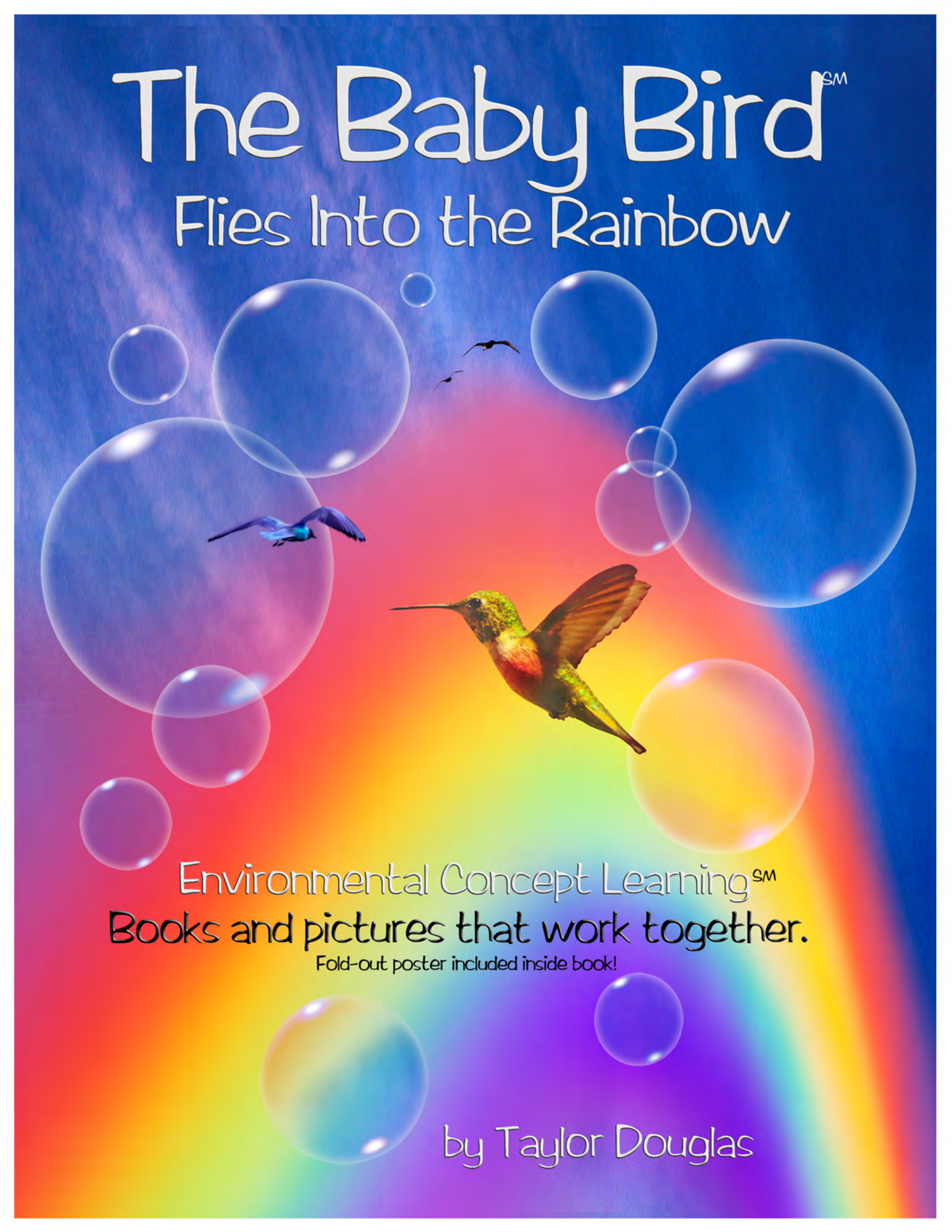
Four-panel 'accordian fold' Prospectus brochure.

Instead, I should have been thinking about a new way to market Baby Bird Pictures and Books—to bypass ubiquitous sales paradigms. Given today's hindsight, I should have started with the Internet and work backwards from there; but that was not the *modus operandi* I chose; it was just the dawn of e-Commerce.

[Ed. Note: Adding Baby Bird Books to this volume has offered me the opportunity to re-read them; and it has been a surprising and revealing experience. Looking back after fourteen years, I can see that the stories were directed by the pictures available in my archive. The resulting stories were convoluted and lack any coherence. Procrustes must have been rolling in his grave when I wrote them.]

The Baby Bird℠

Flies Into the Rainbow



Environmental Concept Learning℠

Books and pictures that work together.

Fold-out poster included inside book!

by Taylor Douglas

The Baby Bird
Into the Rainbow
by Taylor Douglas

ISBN 978-0-9865751-3-6
Story and pictures © Douglas Mesney 2010
Environmental Concept Learning,
The Baby Bird, The Art of Learning, and
Decorative Art Works with Storybooks
are Service Marks of Douglas Mesney Art,
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Baby Bird Books are illustrated by Douglas Mesney
Using a photo-realistic collage technique, pieces of
many pictures are blended together into a new one.
Contributing photographers and artists for this book:
Douglas Mesney Covers, 1-44 (www.mesney.com)
Pamela Swanson (www.poetpam.com) 15, 18-19

Environmental Concept Learning Inc.
is dedicated to the art of learning by providing
a synergistic learning system for advanced children
that combines art and literature to stimulate
faster learning and deeper thinking.

See the full selection of *Baby Bird Books & Pictures* at
www.babybirdbooks.com

The Art of Learning℠

Baby Bird℠ Pictures & Books teach advanced children how things work.

by Taylor Douglas

Decorative Art Works with Storybooks℠

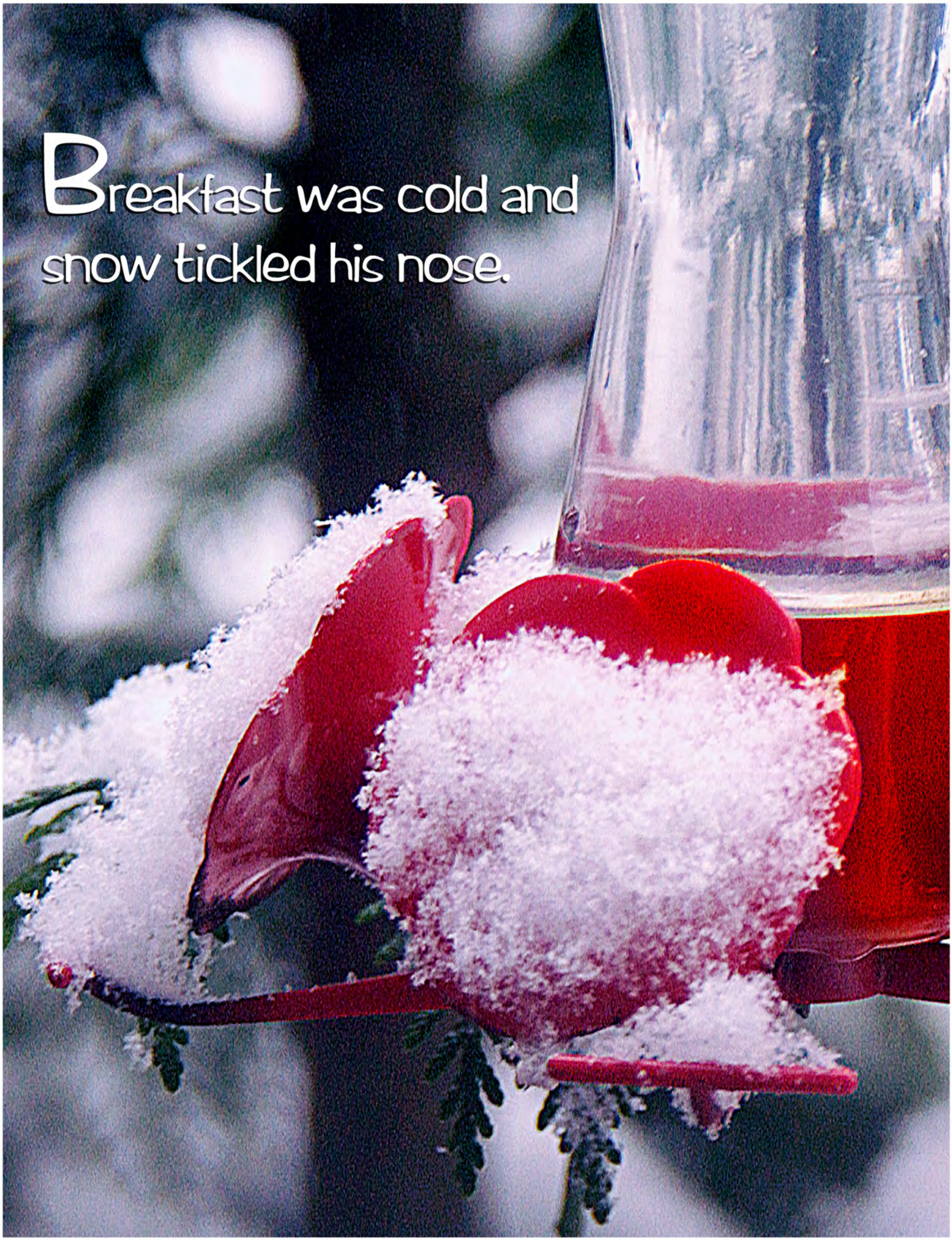
Baby Bird℠ Pictures & Books provide talented children with a synergistic learning system combining art and storybooks that stimulate faster learning and deeper thinking.

Baby Bird was surprised when he opened his eyes that morning.

While he was sleeping
the world changed into winter.

There was a snow storm in the night.
Now the skies were getting clear.
The trees sparkled in the early light.

Snow covered the big house and
his nest in the tree near the porch.


Breakfast was cold and
snow tickled his nose.

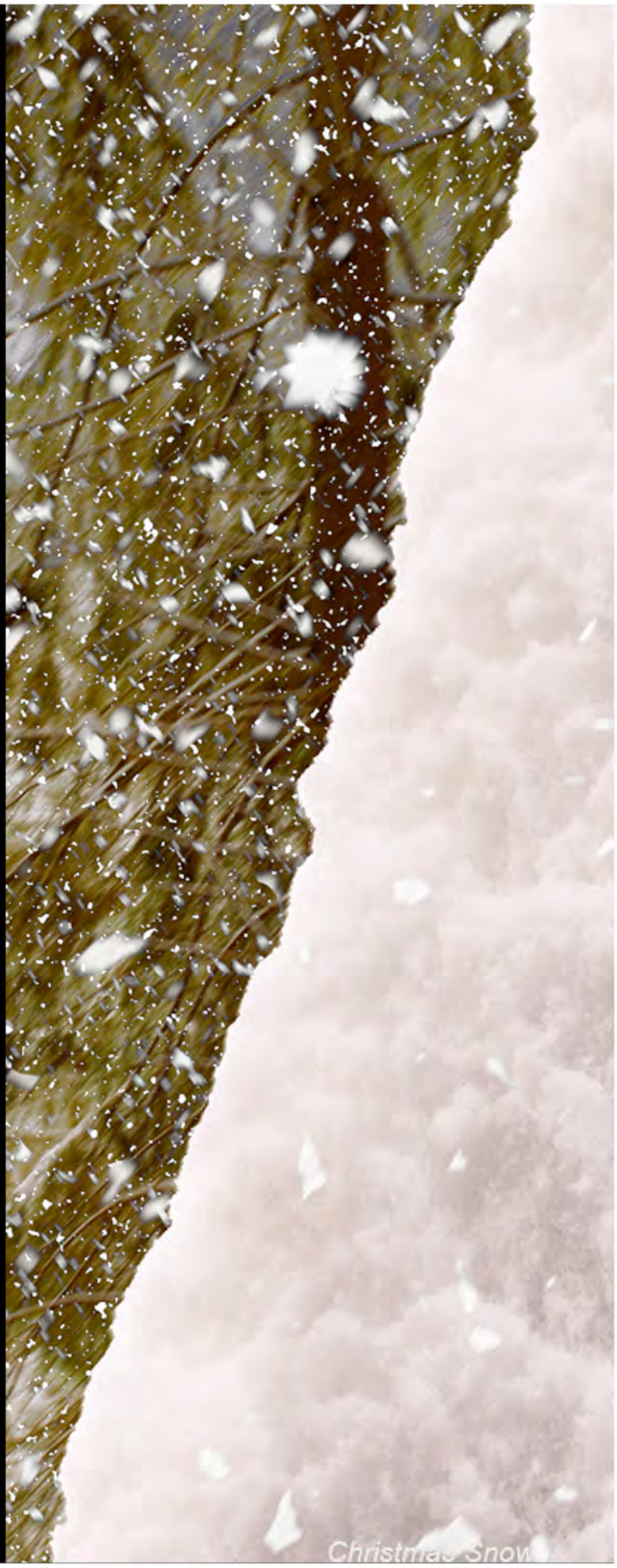
Winter is fun, he thought,
but other birds were complaining.

'The berries are frozen and
too hard to bite,' one bluejay said.

'The sun is not warm enough,'
said the other bluejay.

'What big fluffy snowflakes,' said the red-headed woodpecker.

'I will hide behind this tree so the snow is on the other side,' she chirped happily as she watched the falling flakes of snow.



Baby Bird saw the
pond plants through
the ice covering them.

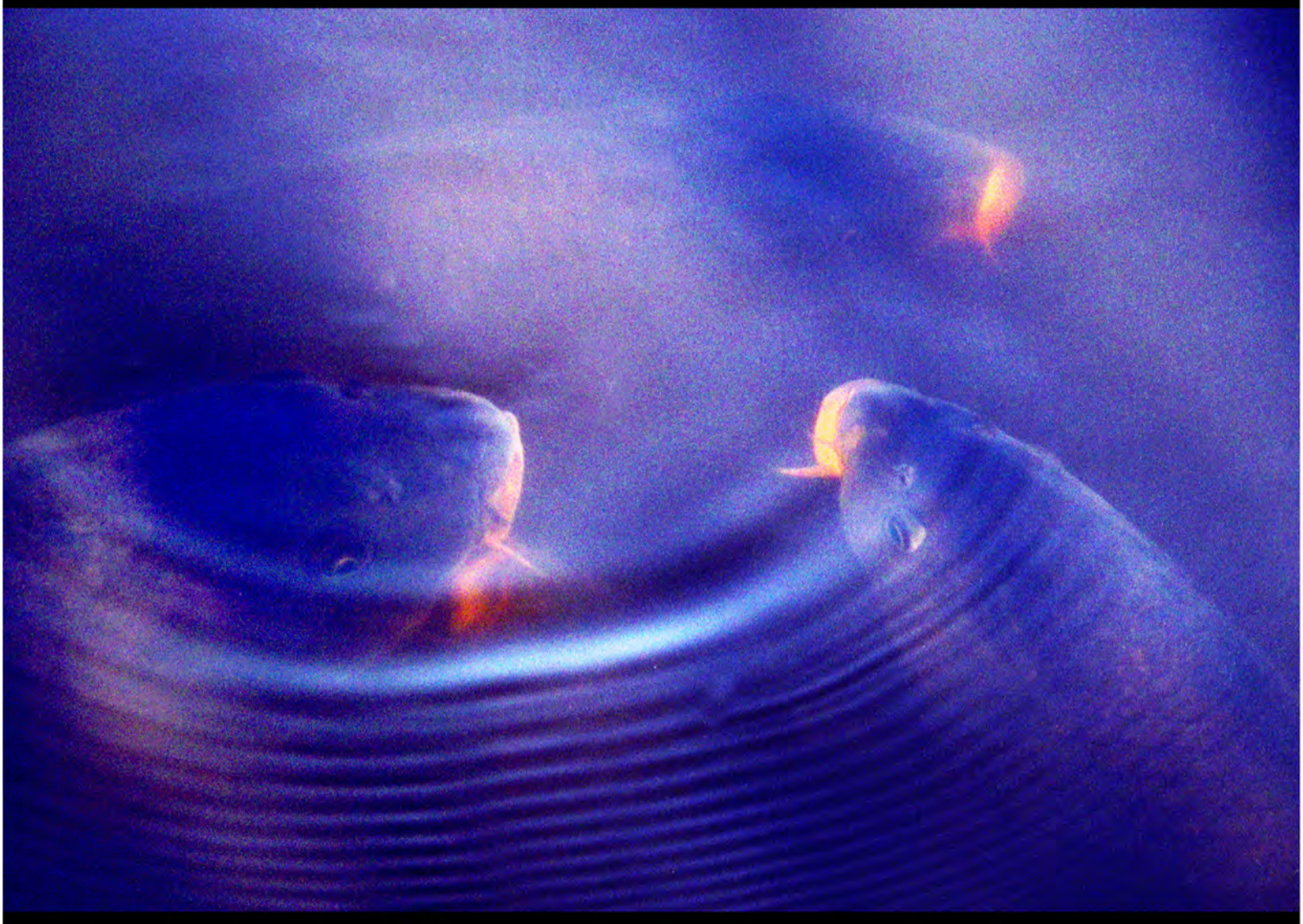
The flowers in the bush
were made of snow.

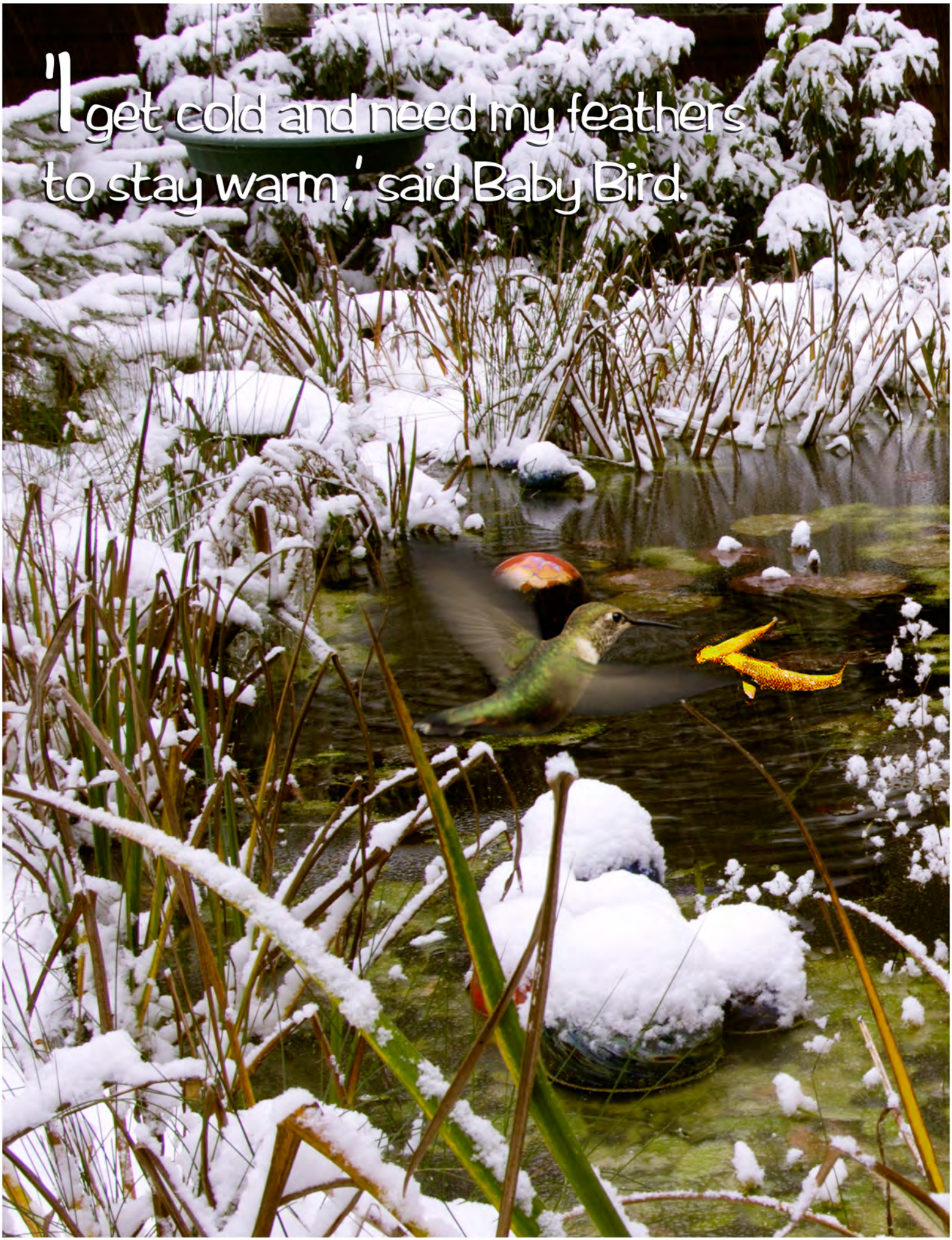
Baby Bird could see the gold fish underneath the snowy ice.

'Brrrrrrrrrrrrrr,' he thought. 'They must be very cold down there, in the water.'

'Are you cold?'
Baby Bird asked the fish.

'No,' said the goldfish,
'fish don't feel cold.'




'I get cold and need my feathers
to stay warm,' said Baby Bird.

'The cold just makes us sleepy,'
one of the two goldfish said.

Baby Bird remembered summer
when the ice and snow melted
and the flowers bloomed.

He thought, 'Hmmm...
The mountains are snowy
so it must be cold up there.'

Up in the sky there
was a rainbow with many colors:
Red, orange, yellow and green.

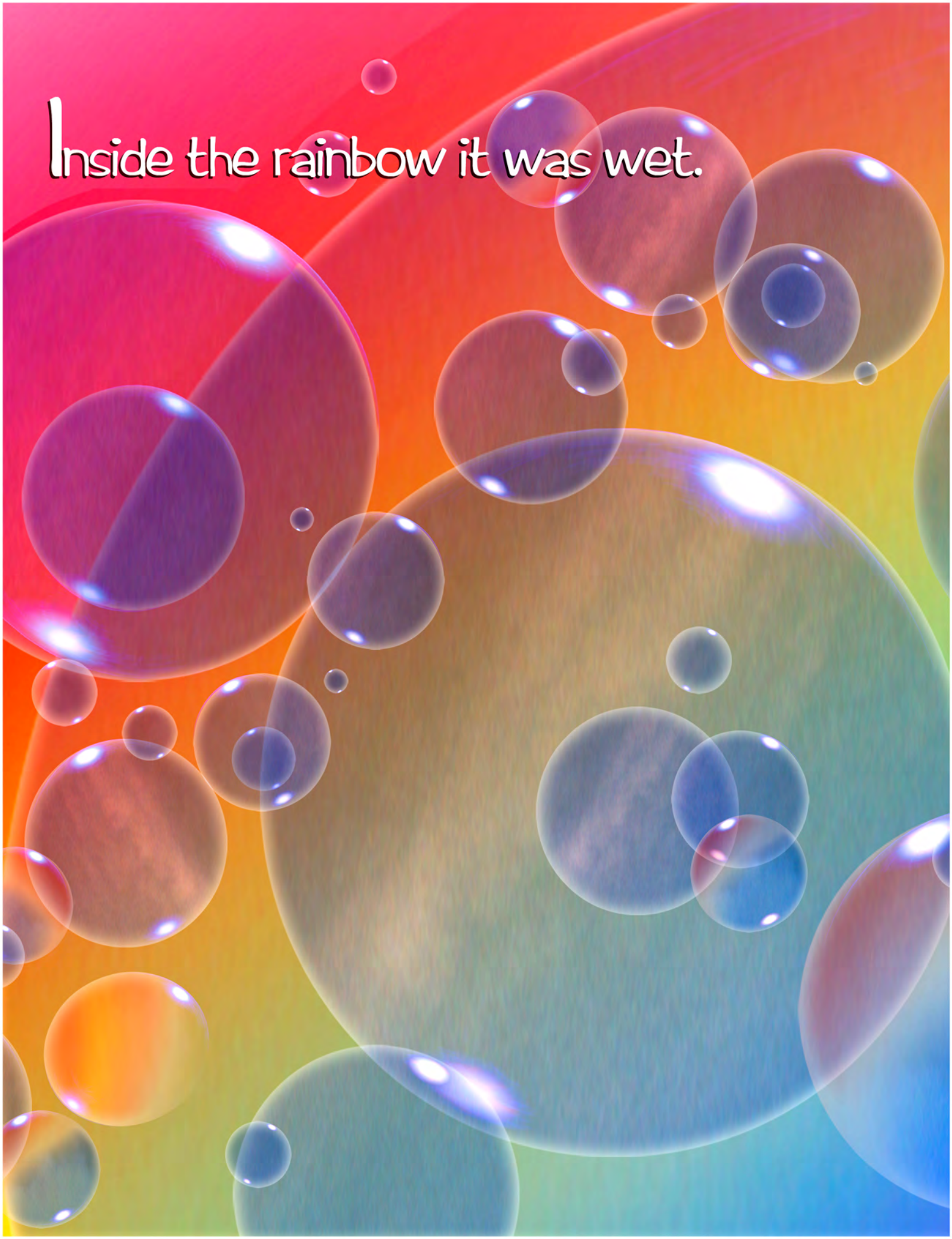
A blue bird was flying
over the rainbow.
'What fun,'
thought Baby Bird.

'Where do colors come from?'
Baby Bird asked the blue bird.

'Look inside the rainbow,'
advised the bluebird.

Baby Bird wondered...

'Why is that bird is blue,
but I am green and orange?'


Inside the rainbow it was wet.

Tiny water drops floated in the air.

'All the colors are in the sunlight,'
said the bluebird.

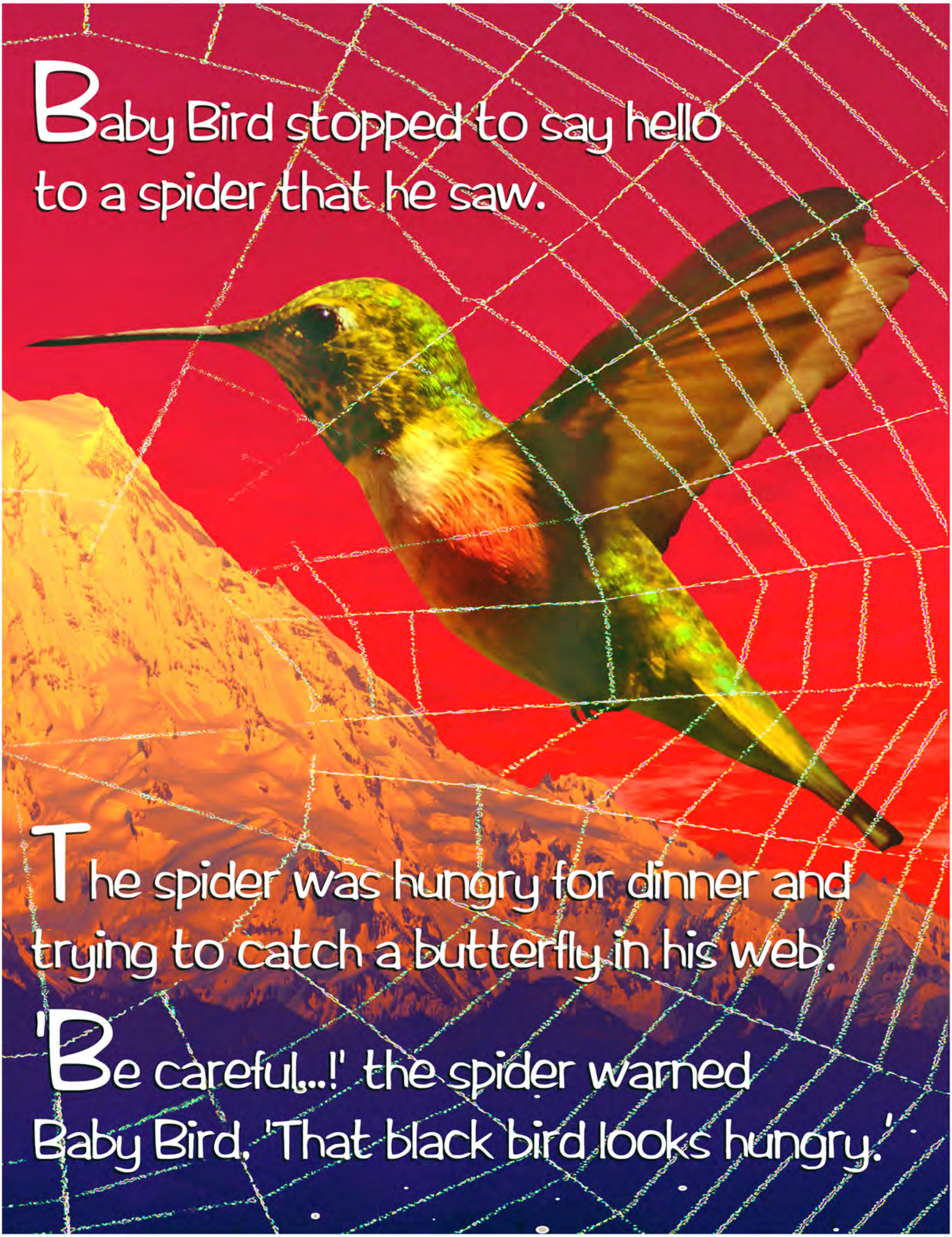
Sunlight is made of all colors.
Water droplets split sunlight apart
and makes it possible for us to see
the colors inside the light.

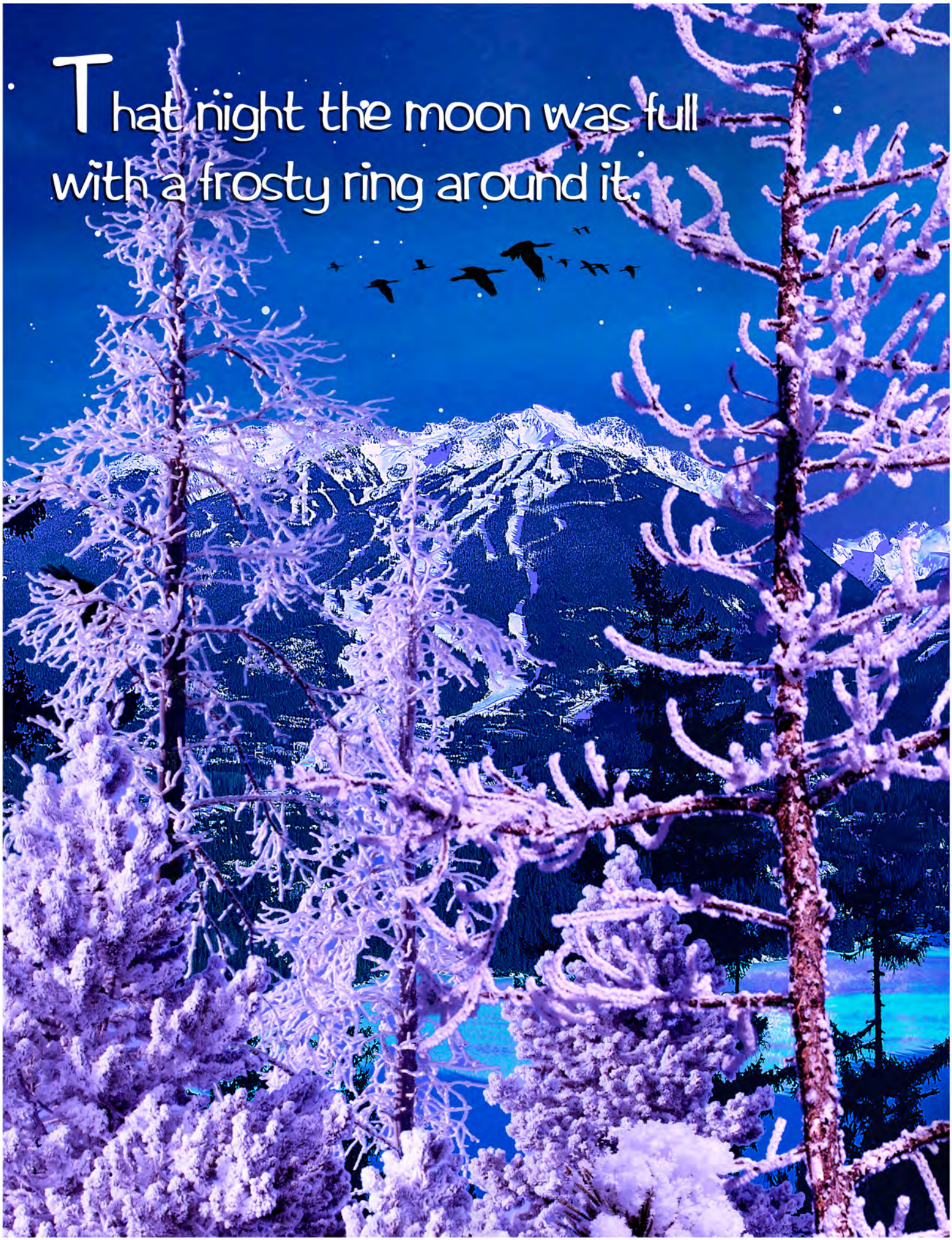
'Colors have names,'
explained the blue bird.

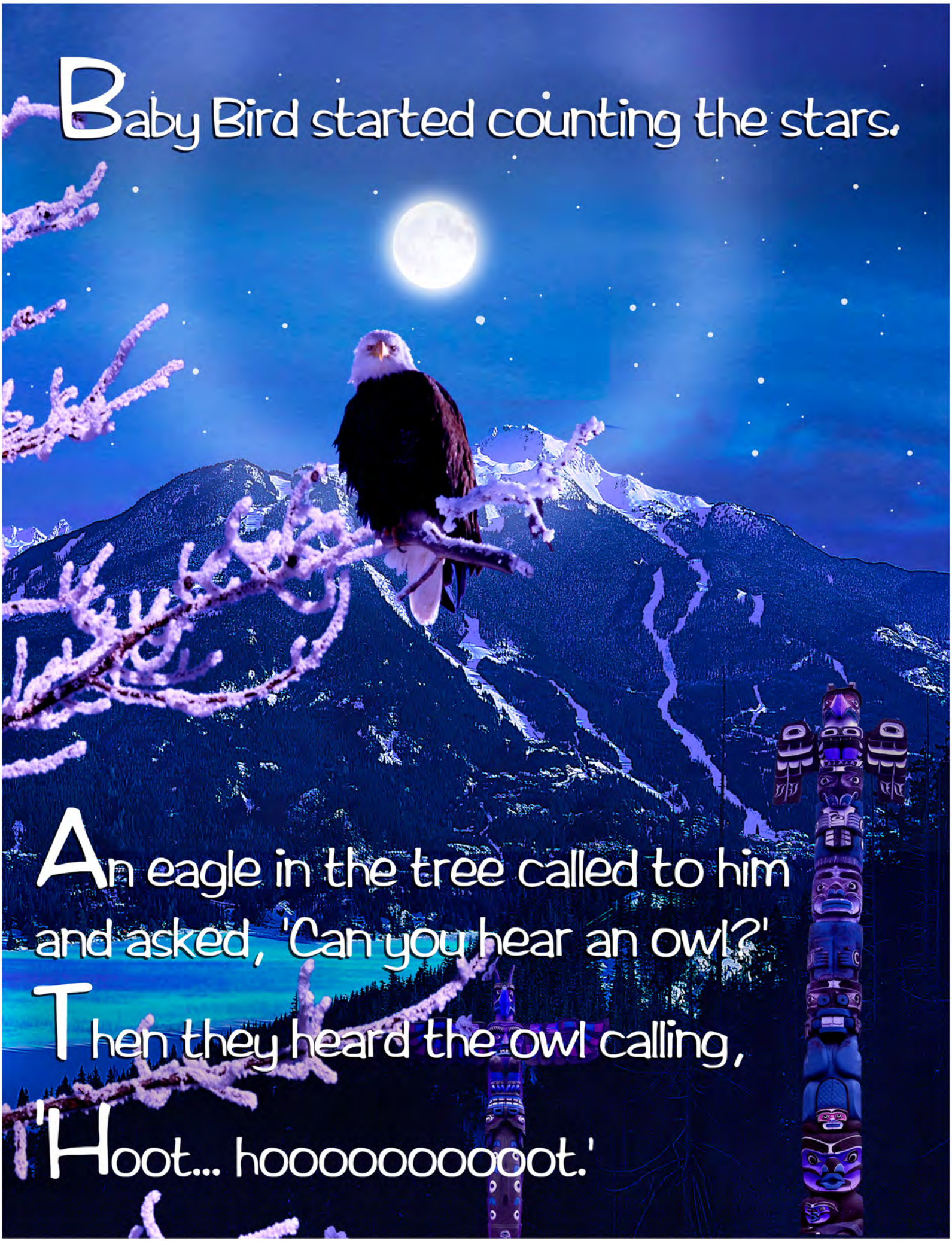
Purple Blue Cyan Green

Yellow Orange Red

'I will try to remember them all,'
answered Baby Bird.


Baby Bird stopped to say hello to a spider that he saw.
The spider was hungry for dinner and trying to catch a butterfly in his web.
'Be careful...!' the spider warned Baby Bird, 'That black bird looks hungry.'


That night the moon was full
with a frosty ring around it.


Baby Bird started counting the stars.
An eagle in the tree called to him and asked, 'Can you hear an owl?'
Then they heard the owl calling,
'Hoot... hoooooooooot.'

'Your eyes are big like the moon,'
Baby Bird told an owl looking at him.

'Big eyes help me see in the dark,'
the owl told him. 'I sleep while you
are awake. You sleep while I am awake.'

Baby Bird had a dream
about the things he saw that day,
but everything was different.

In his dream The Baby Bird saw
many different colored fish and
plants living in a much bigger pond.

The dream had things that he never saw or thought about while he was awake.

He wanted to stay in the dream.
and learn more about the world
under water... but he woke up.
Baby Bird decided to go back
and discover more about water
in another dream.

Baby Bird's friend flew up to meet him.

'Watch me spin...!' she called to him as she flew up into the warm morning sunlight.

The little birds were very happy having fun together.

A new day was beginning
and with it a new adventure.

'Watch me fly all the time!' says Baby Bird.
'If you hang my picture on the wall we can see each other
alll the time, not just when you are reading my books.
There is a sample poster of me on the next page.
Tear it out, unfold it, and hang it in your favorite place.
When you see me you'll remember our adventures
and think about the things we learned in new ways.
What could be more FUN than that?'

'You can get my Baby Bird℠ Pictures 3 ways:
as posters as well as fine art prints and canvases;
in custom sizes and finishes made just for you.
See them all at my website: www.babybirdbooks.com'

Decorate
with Baby Bird℠ Art!

Baby Bird℠ Pictures reinforce book learning with educational synergism.
Decorate with the foilded sample Baby Bird℠ Picture in this book and
see the synergism of Environmental Concept Learning℠ for yourself.

Baby Bird

Pictures

Pictures and books that work together for
Environmental Concept Learning.℠

Baby Bird℠ Pictures are available at www.babybirdbooks.com

Into the Over the Rainbow © Douglas Mesney 2011 / Published by Douglas Mesney Art. Vancouver BC Canada / www.babybirdbooks.com

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Tear out and display on wall. (Some trimming required.)

Baby Bird

Decorate!

Baby Bird℠ Pictures are available as posters, fine-art prints and canvases.

Pictures reinforce book learning with educational synergism.

Environmental Concept Learning℠

Baby Bird℠ Pictures are available at www.babybirdbooks.com

Faster Learning and Deeper Thinking

Pictures and books work together for advanced learning.

Baby Bird℠ Pictures and Books
are available at www.babybirdbooks.com

Pictorial adventures of Baby Bird℠
teach advanced kids 2-5 how things work.

Fold-out sample poster included in book!

Baby Bird℠ art and books work together to enrich the and improve the learning experience. The result is faster learning and deeper thinking. This unique educational synergism is called

Environmental Concept Learning℠

Learn more at www.babybirdbooks.com

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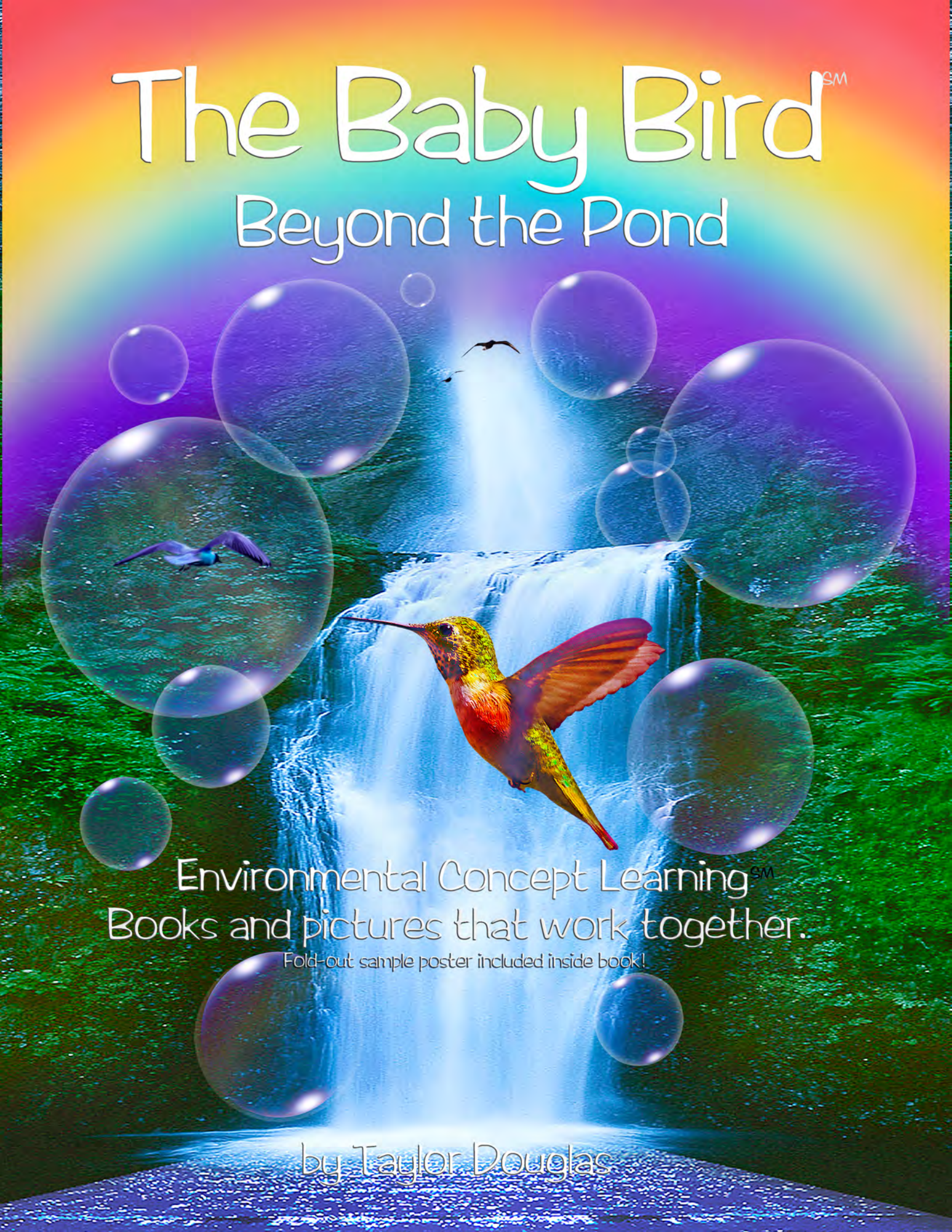
Douglas Mesney Art
Douglas Mesney
Vancouver, BC, Canada

The Baby Bird℠

Beyond the Pond



Environmental Concept Learning℠

Books and pictures that work together.

Fold-out sample poster included inside book!

by Taylor Douglas

The Baby Bird℠
Beyond the Pond
by Taylor Douglas

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Contributing photographers and artists for this book:
Dona Tracy 43-44
Douglas Mesney Covers, 1-44 (www.mesney.com)
Gary Bell / Oceanwide Images 36-37 (www.oceanwideimages.com)
Kirk Beeler 2, 42-44 (www.twispriver.artspan.com)
Michael Defreitas 30-31
Pamela Swanson (www.poetpam.com) 2,12-15, 42
Rudie Kuiters / Oceanwide Images 34 (www.oceanwideimages.com)

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Douglas Mesney

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by Taylor Douglas

Decorative Art Works with Storybooks℠

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Baby Bird was in his tree house watching the ducks. They were standing on the the ice, watching the fish below.

'What is it like to be a fish and to live in water instead of air?' Baby Bird wondered.

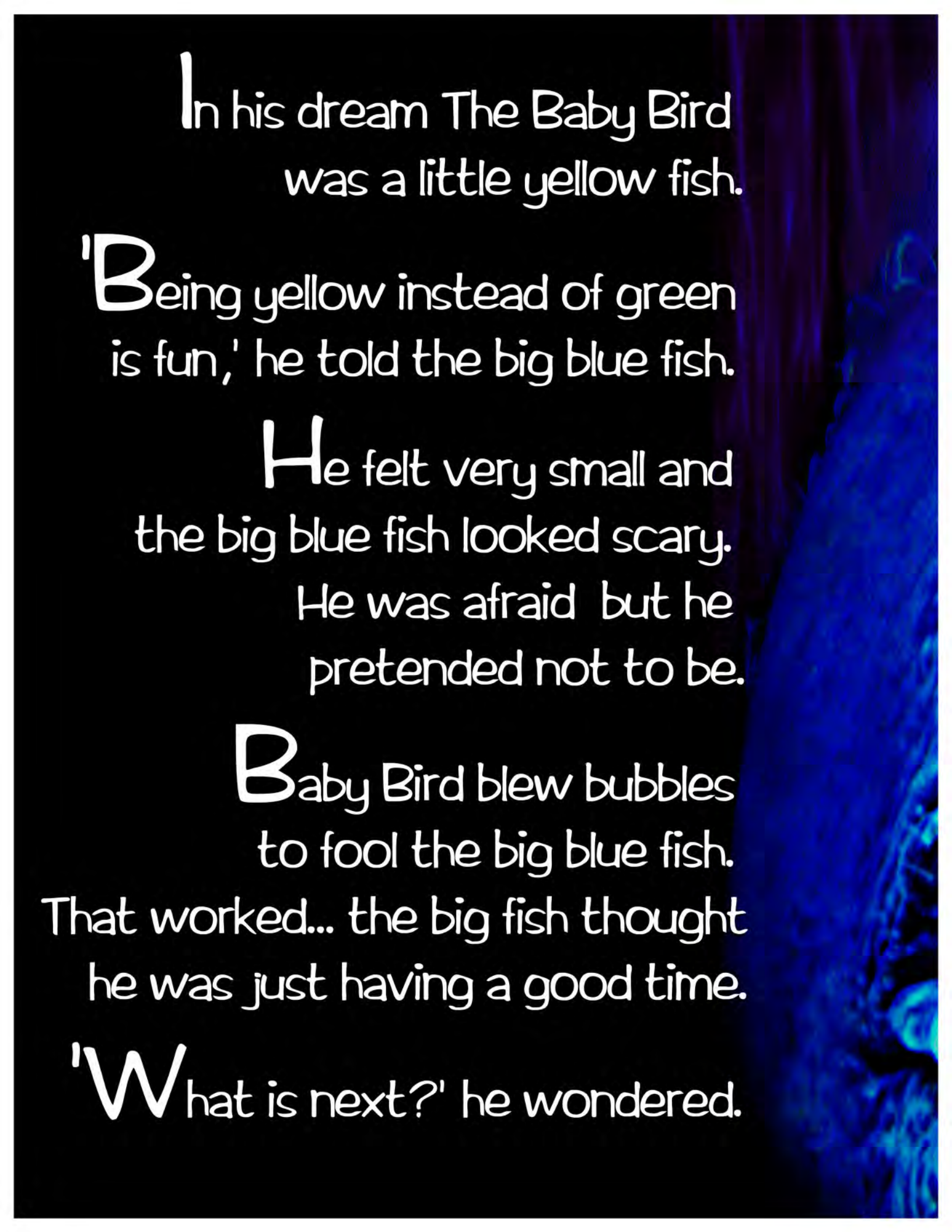
In his dream The Baby Bird
was a little yellow fish.

'Being yellow instead of green
is fun,' he told the big blue fish.

He felt very small and
the big blue fish looked scary.
He was afraid but he
pretended not to be.

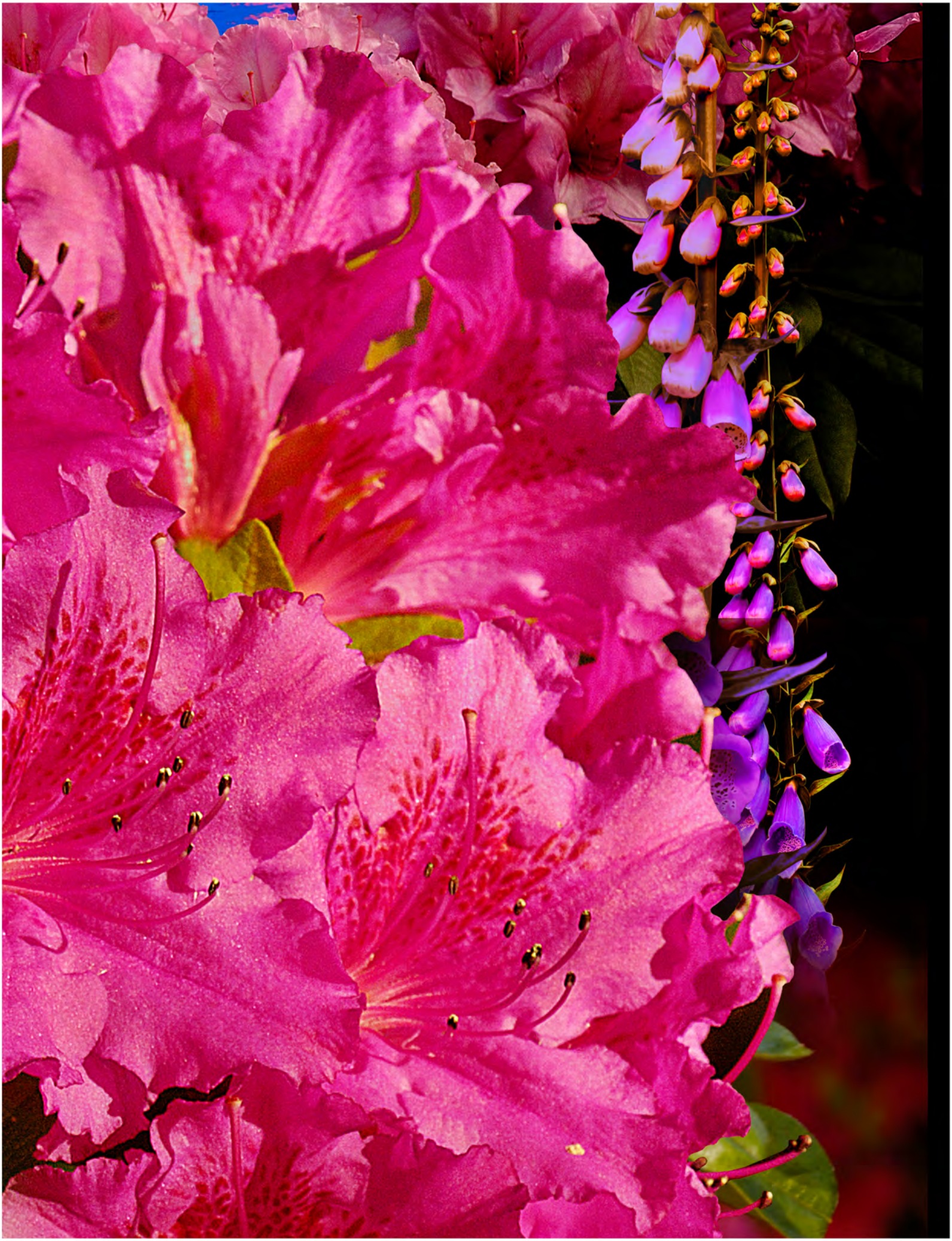
Baby Bird blew bubbles
to fool the big blue fish.
That worked... the big fish thought
he was just having a good time.

'What is next?' he wondered.



All of a sudden
the big blue fish
in the dream
turned into a
big blue bird.
There were
seven big
blue birds.
Baby Bird saw
the big blue bird's
long yellow bill.
'Your yellow beak
is very long, like mine.'
Baby Bird said.

"If you are hungry
these flowers have sweet nectar,"
Baby Bird told the big blue bird.



The blue bird looked right at Baby Bird with his big yellow eyes.

'I only eat fish,' said the big blue bird.

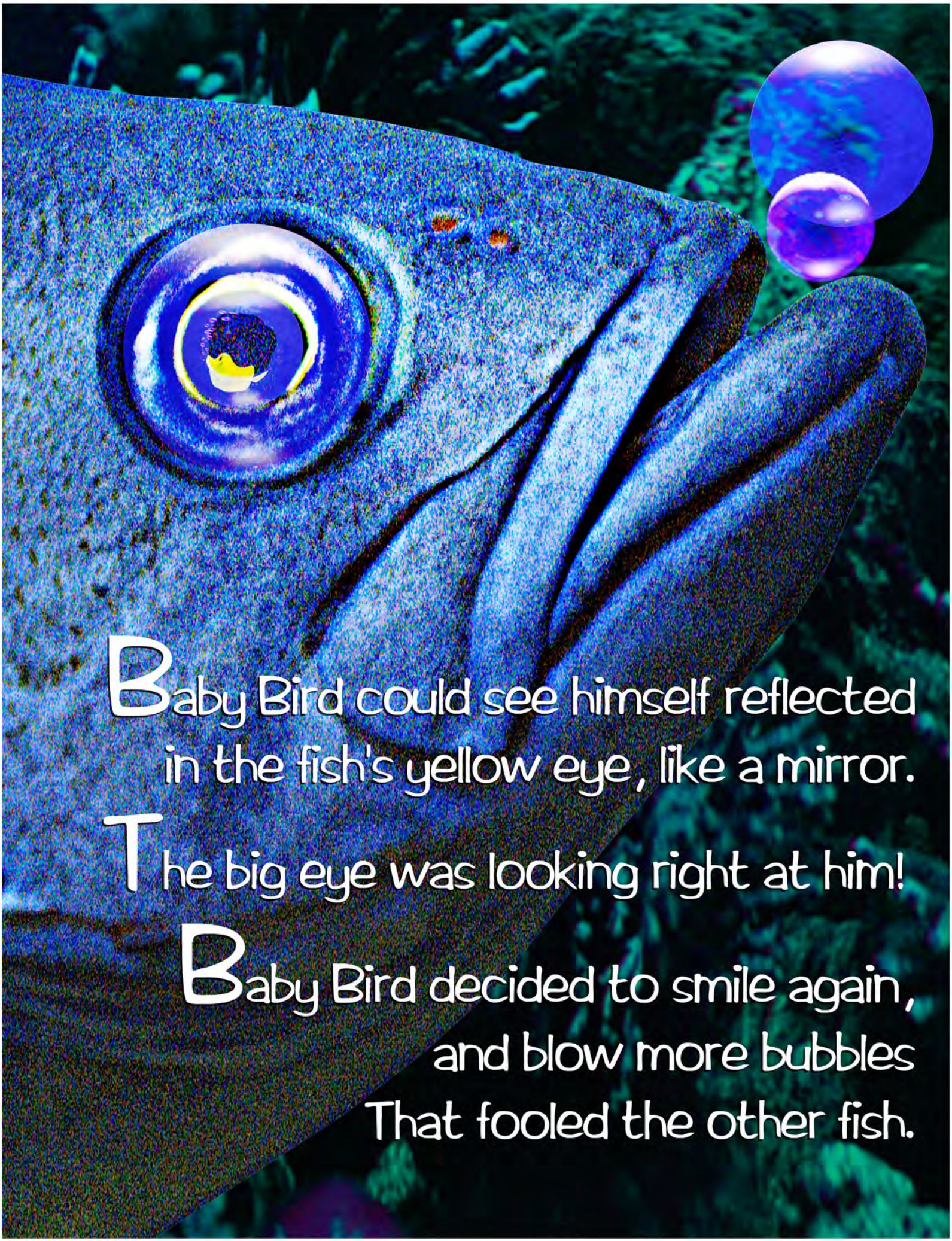
That made Baby Bird worry about the goldfish in the pond. He didn't want the blue bird to eat his friends.

The big blue bird
started wading into the pond
looking for fish to eat.
Ripples on the water
made the fish hard to see.

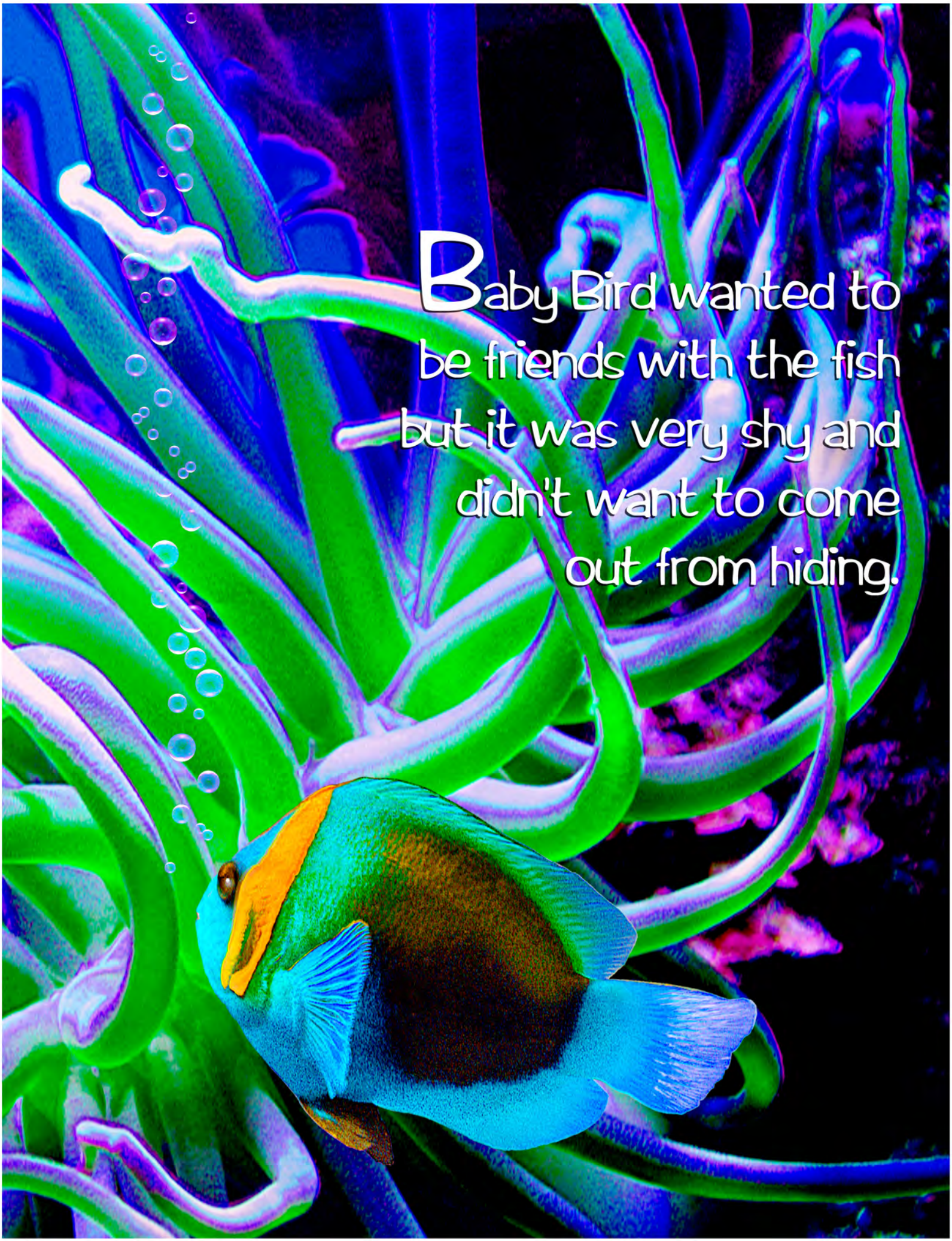
Baby Bird
called to his friends
and asked them
to help him
save the fish.

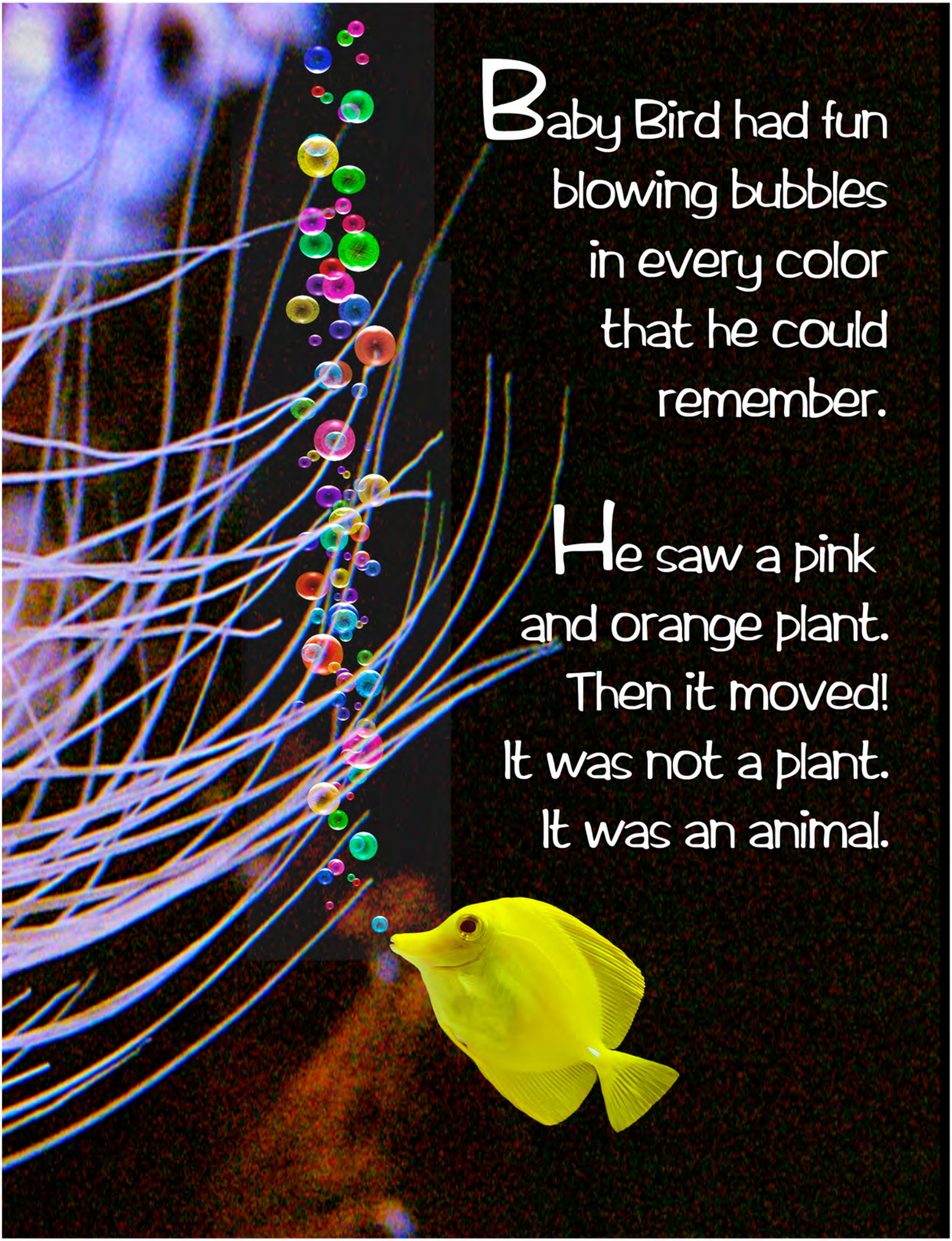
The little birds flew all around to make the big bird look at them instead of the fish.
They wouldn't stop, so the big bird went home.

The dream changed back.
Baby Bird was a little yellow fish again
and the big blue bird
turned back into a big blue fish.


Baby Bird could see himself reflected
in the fish's yellow eye, like a mirror.
The big eye was looking right at him!
Baby Bird decided to smile again,
and blow more bubbles
That fooled the other fish.

Baby Bird swam down
to meet other fish.
He saw a colorful fish
behind a green plant.


Baby Bird wanted to
be friends with the fish
but it was very shy and
didn't want to come
out from hiding.


Baby Bird had fun
blowing bubbles
in every color
that he could
remember.
He saw a pink
and orange plant.
Then it moved!
It was not a plant.
It was an animal.

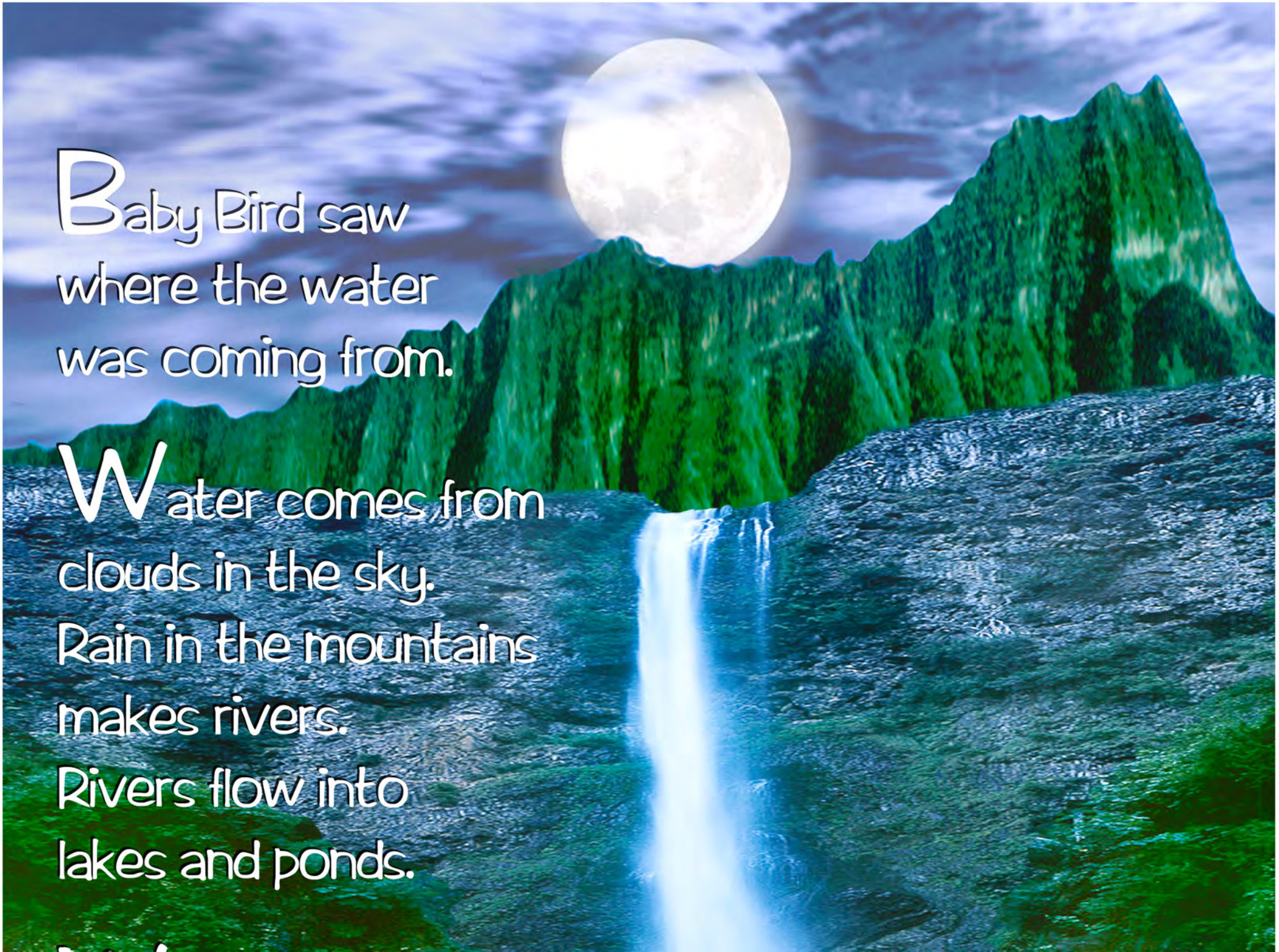
Baby Bird never saw so many different kinds of fish.

Fish in every color were swimming together:

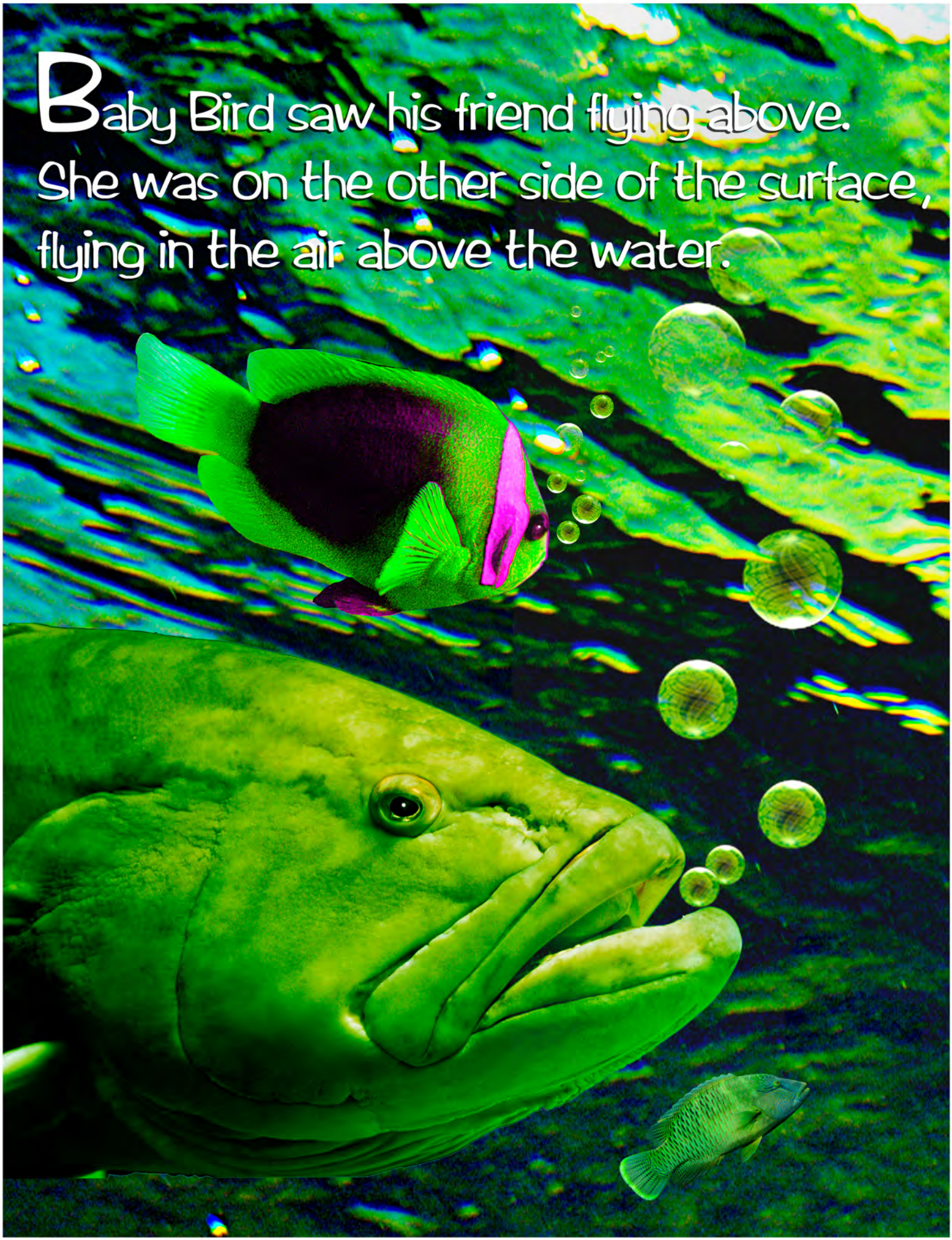
Red, orange, yellow
blue, green, purple,
magenta, cyan.

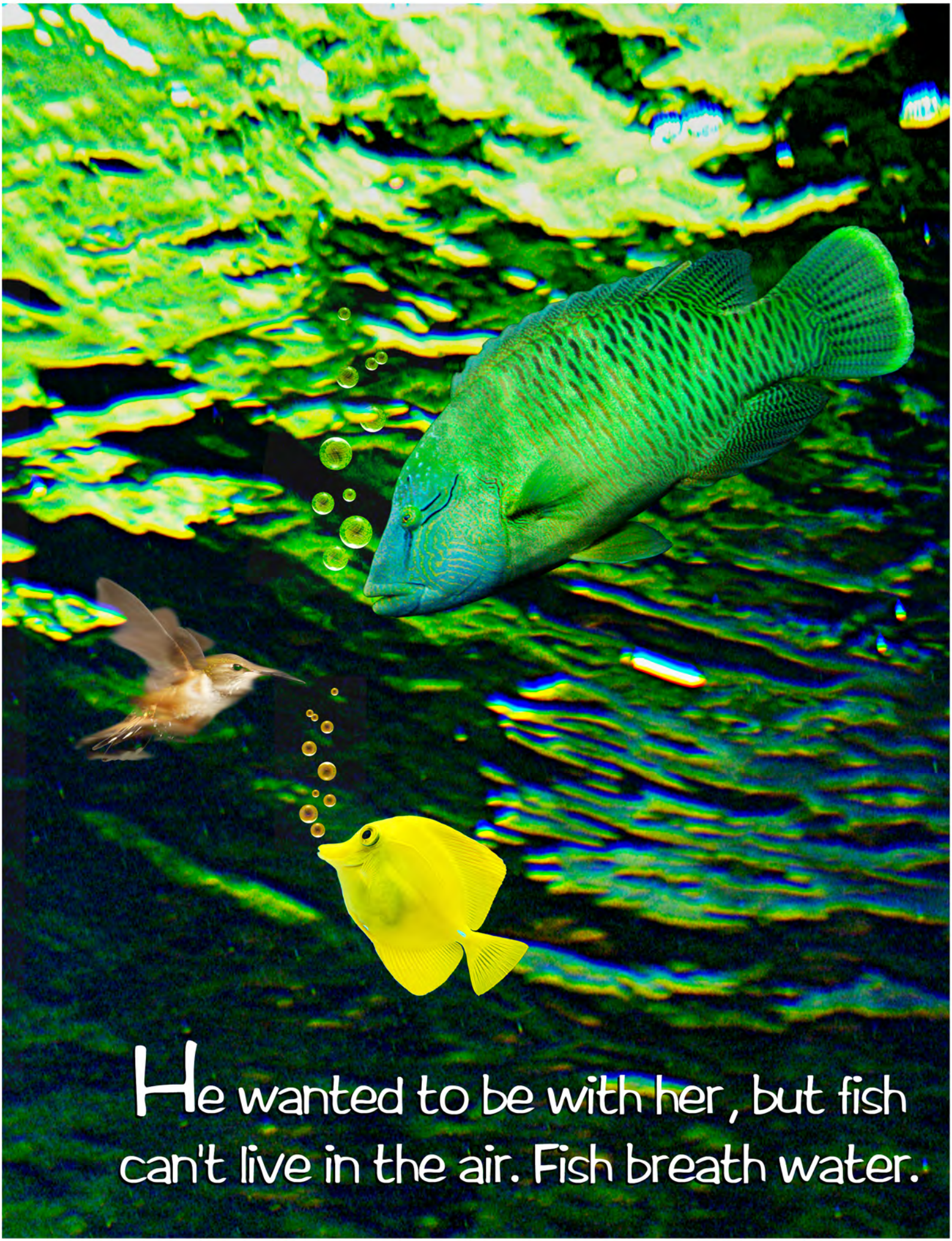
Green fish that looked like horses smiled at him.

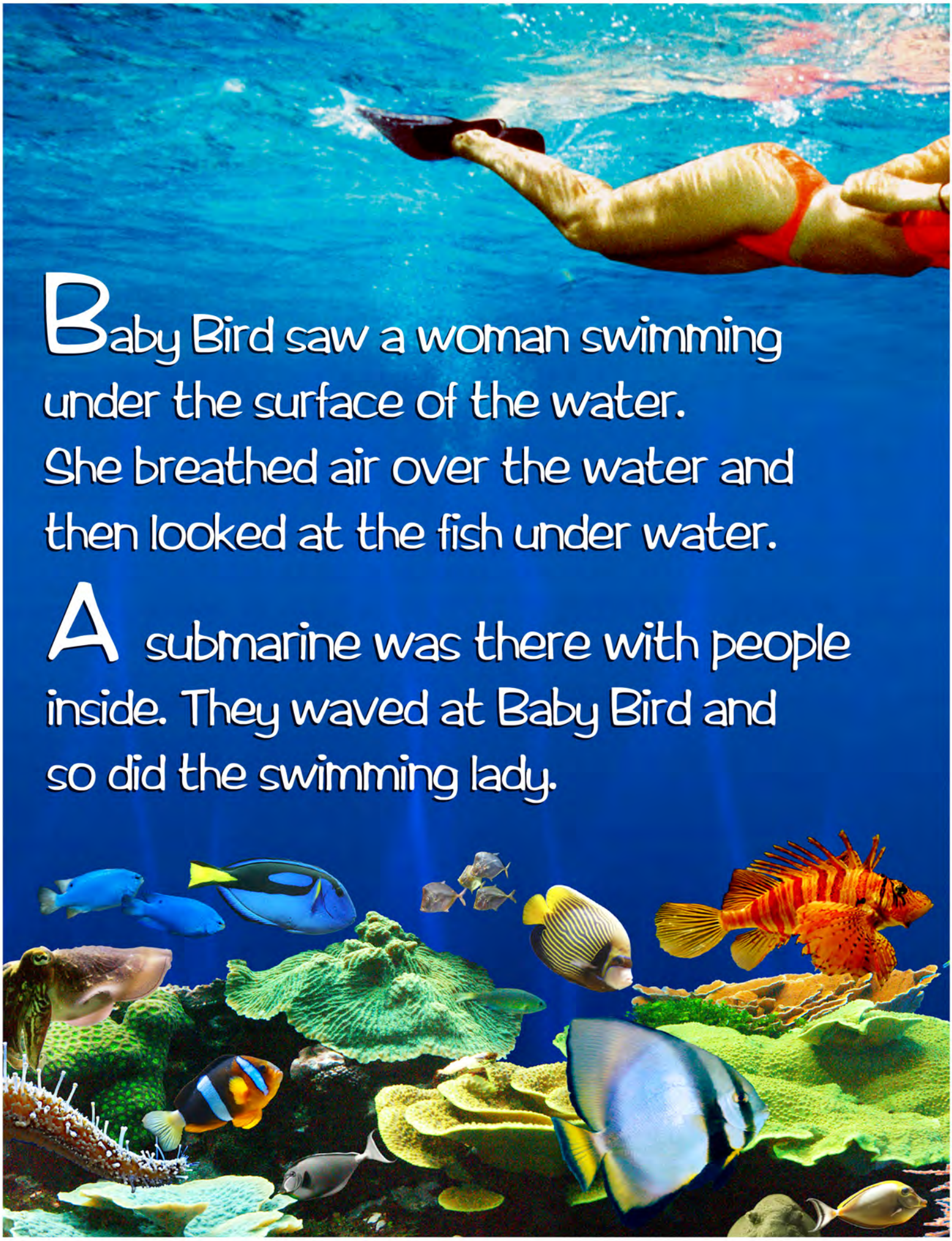
Baby Bird made many new friends.


Baby Bird saw
where the water
was coming from.
Water comes from
clouds in the sky.
Rain in the mountains
makes rivers.
Rivers flow into
lakes and ponds.

Water is everywhere,
thought Baby Bird.
Water is in the air,
in the ground,
and in the pond.

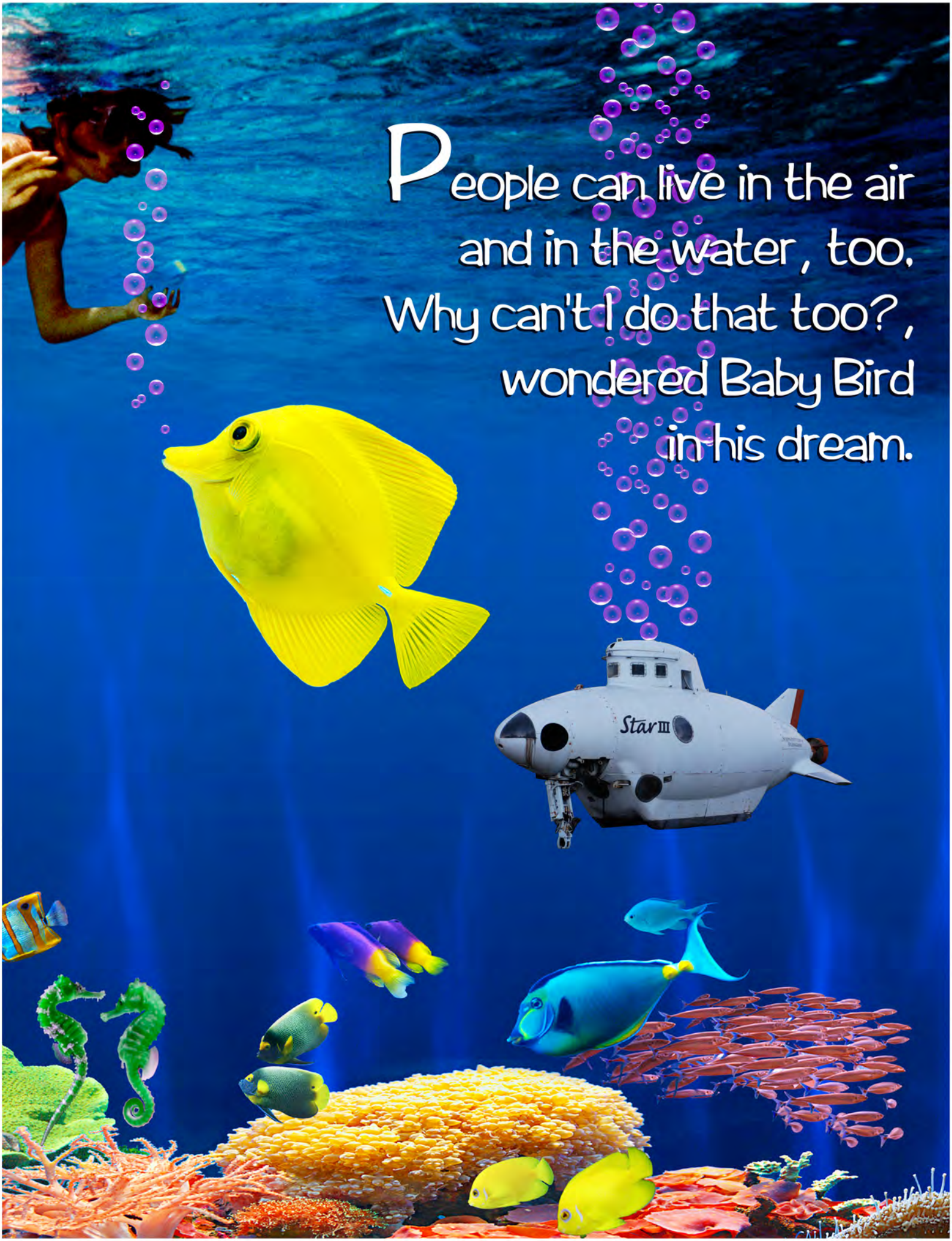

Baby Bird saw his friend flying above.
She was on the other side of the surface,
flying in the air above the water.


He wanted to be with her, but fish
can't live in the air. Fish breath water.



Baby Bird saw a woman swimming under the surface of the water. She breathed air over the water and then looked at the fish under water.

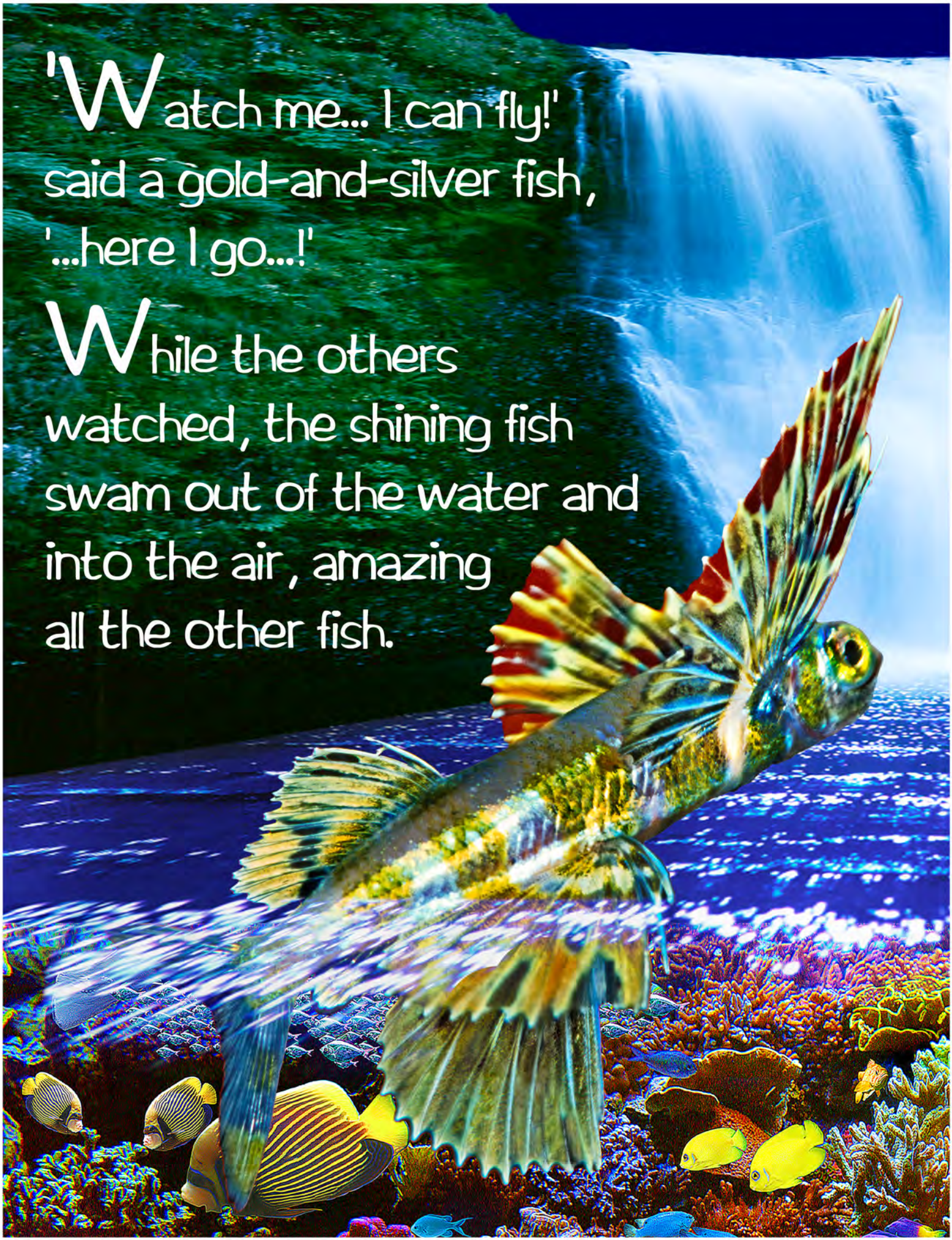
A submarine was there with people inside. They waved at Baby Bird and so did the swimming lady.


People can live in the air
and in the water, too.
Why can't I do that too?,
wondered Baby Bird
in his dream.
Star III

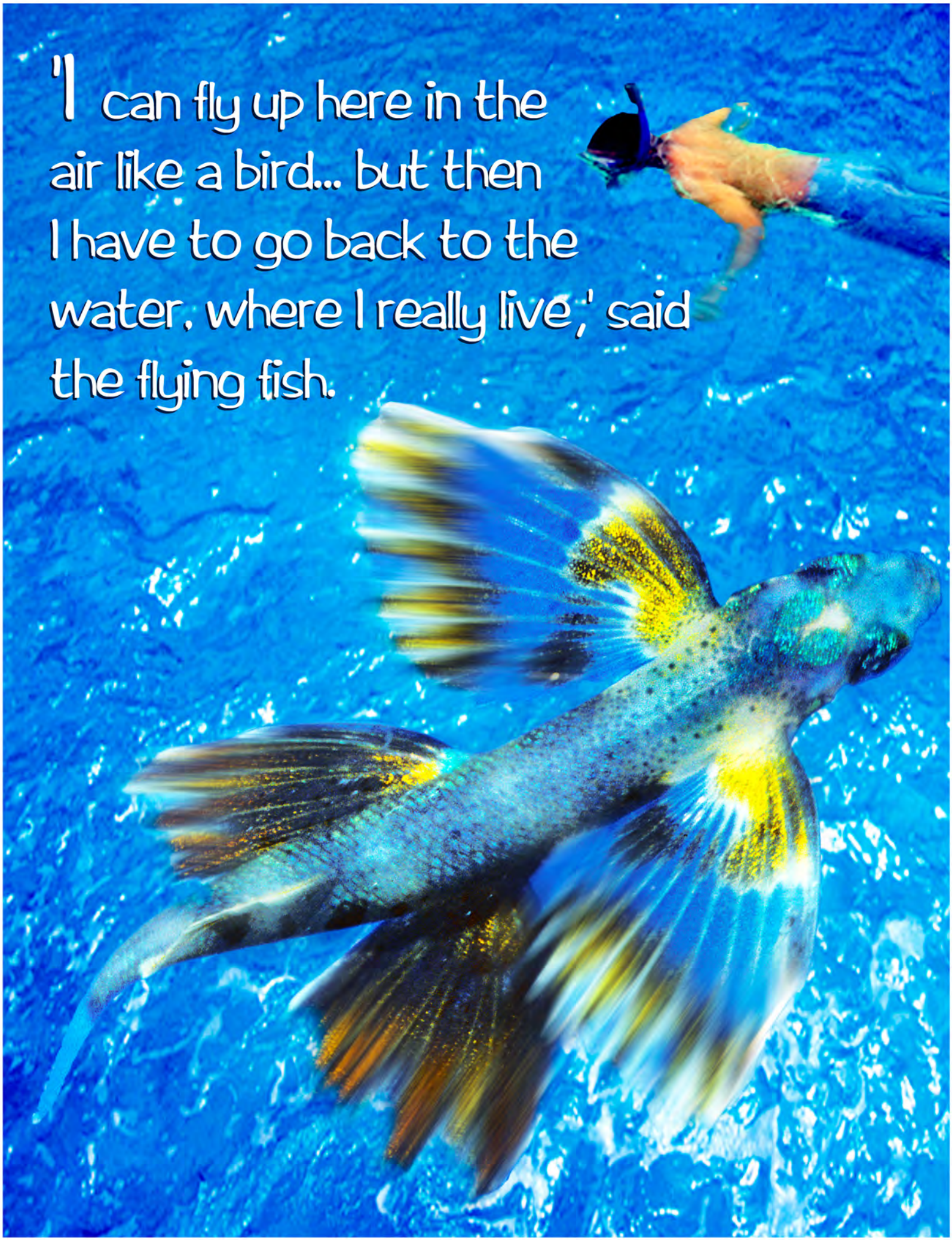
Fish with big fins swam by.
The big fins looked like wings.

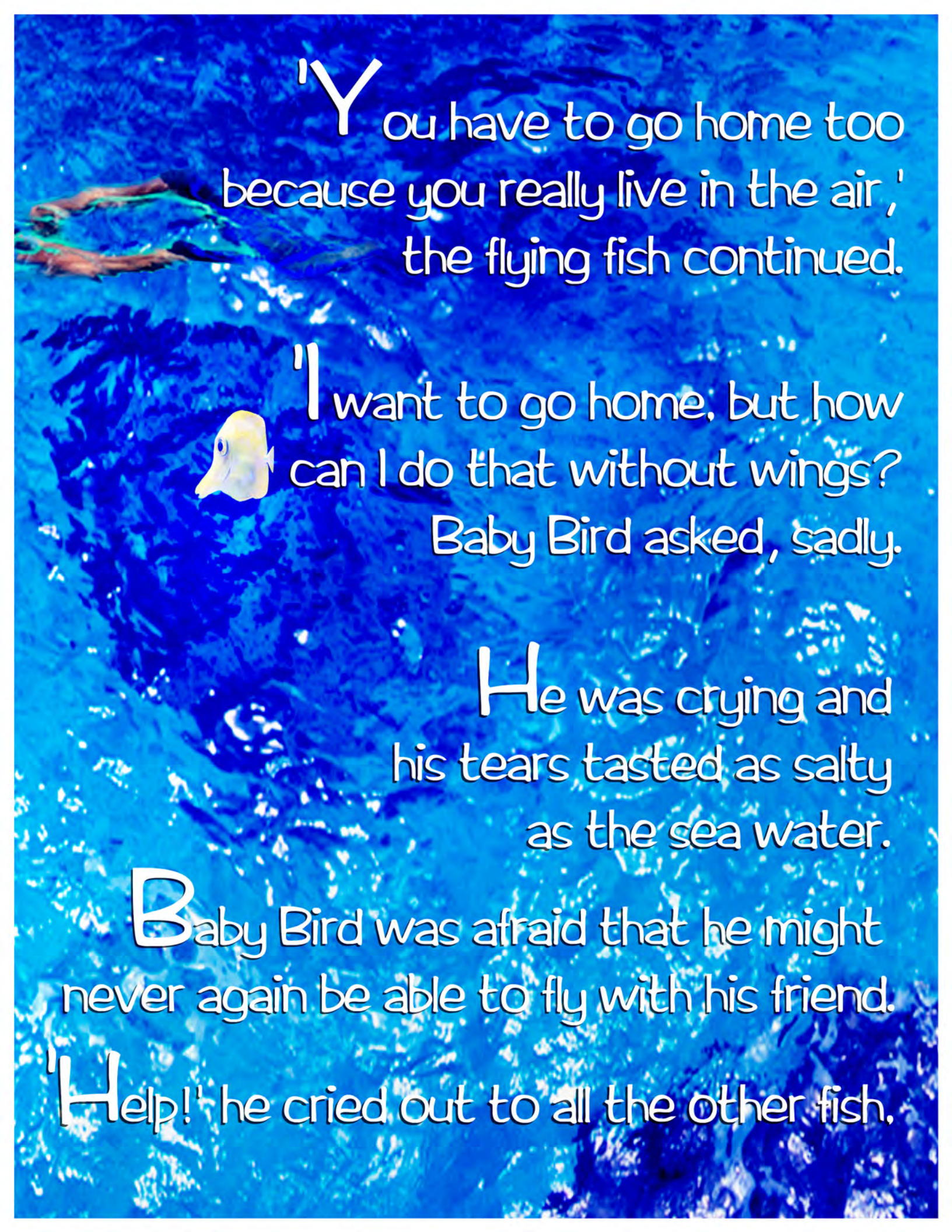
They were flying through the water
the way his friend was flying through
the air, above the water.

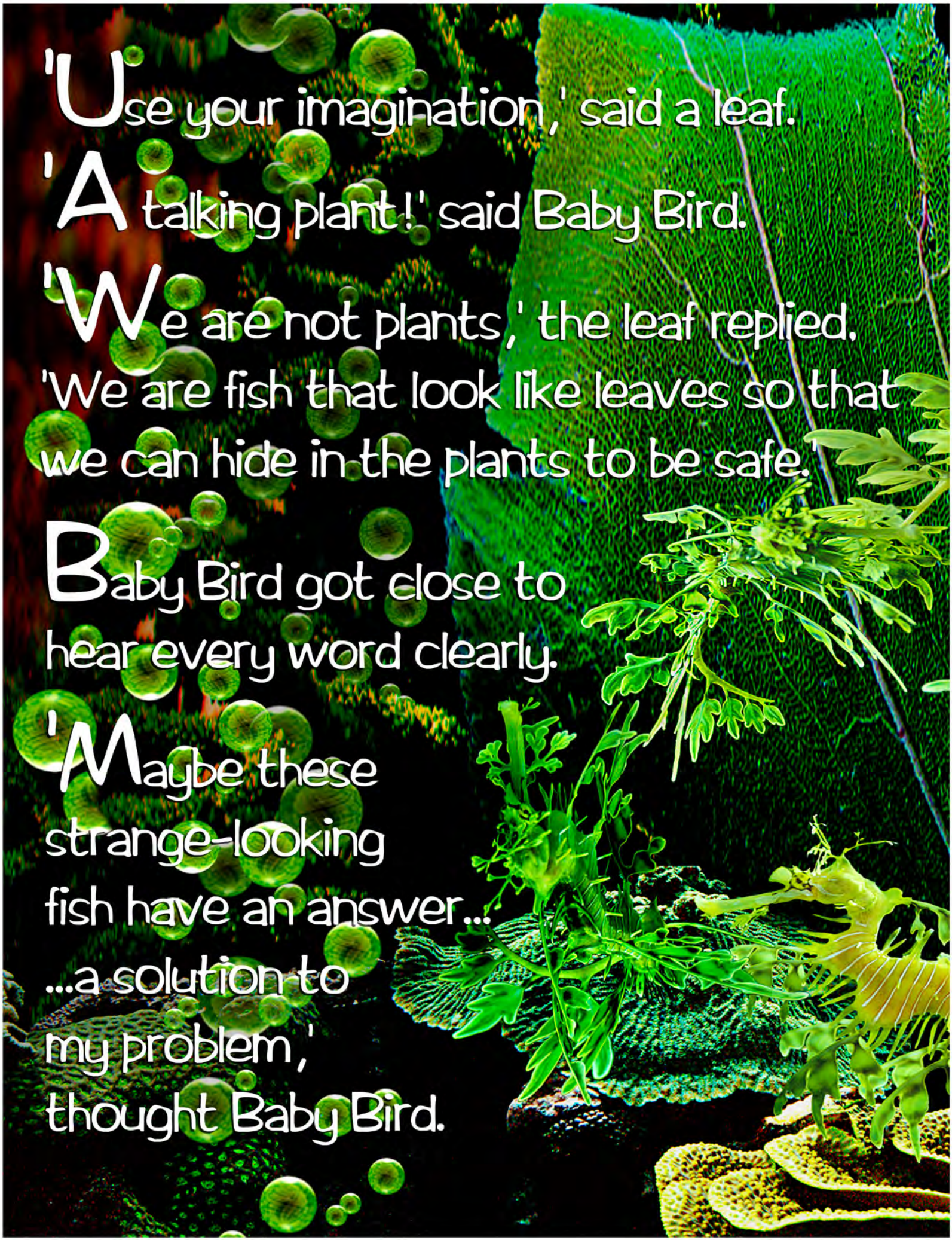
'Can you help me fly home, please?'
asked Baby Bird.
They said, 'We can't fly in air,
but we have a friend who can...
Follow us and we will take you to him.'

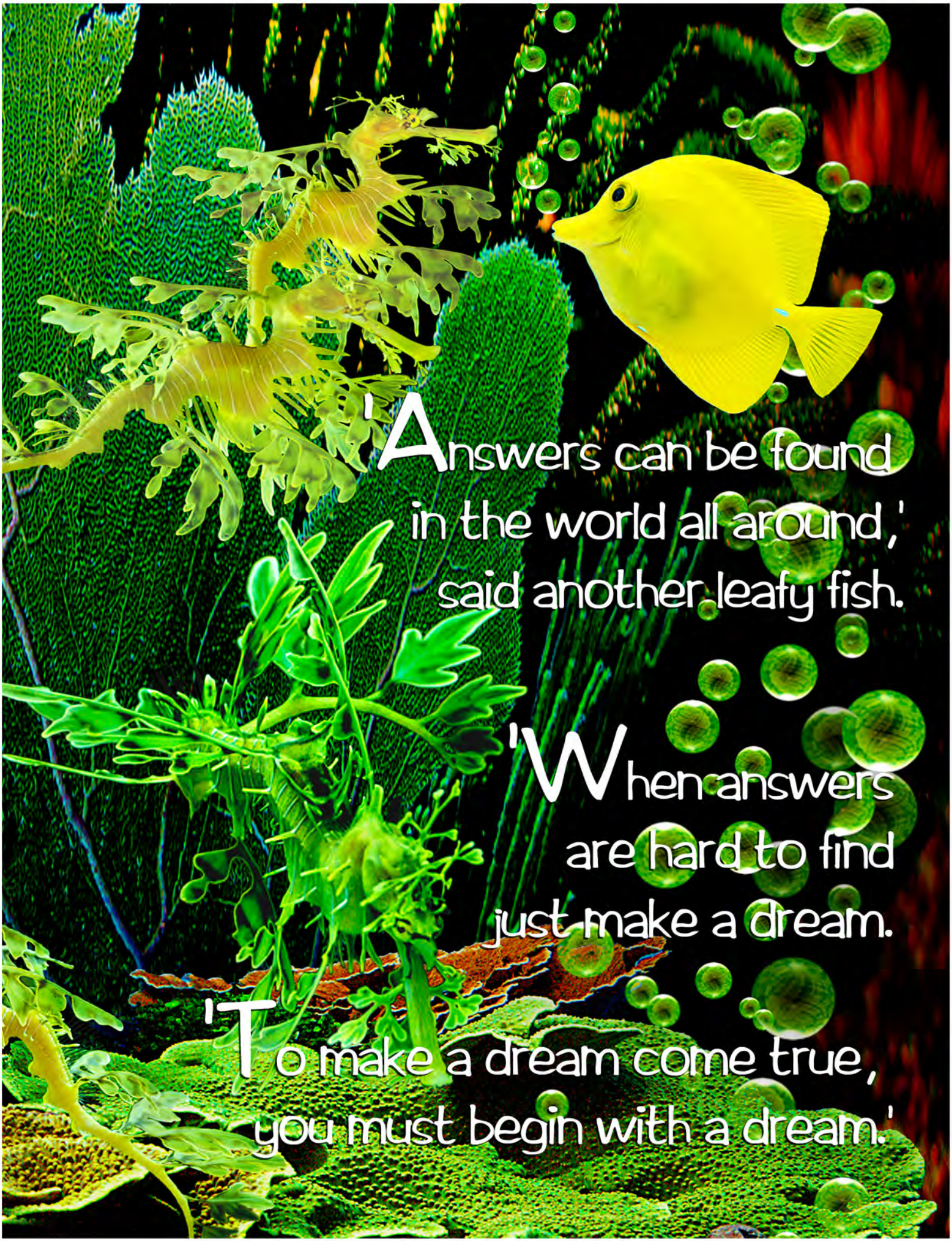

'Watch me... I can fly!'
said a gold-and-silver fish,
'...here I go...!'
While the others
watched, the shining fish
swam out of the water and
into the air, amazing
all the other fish.

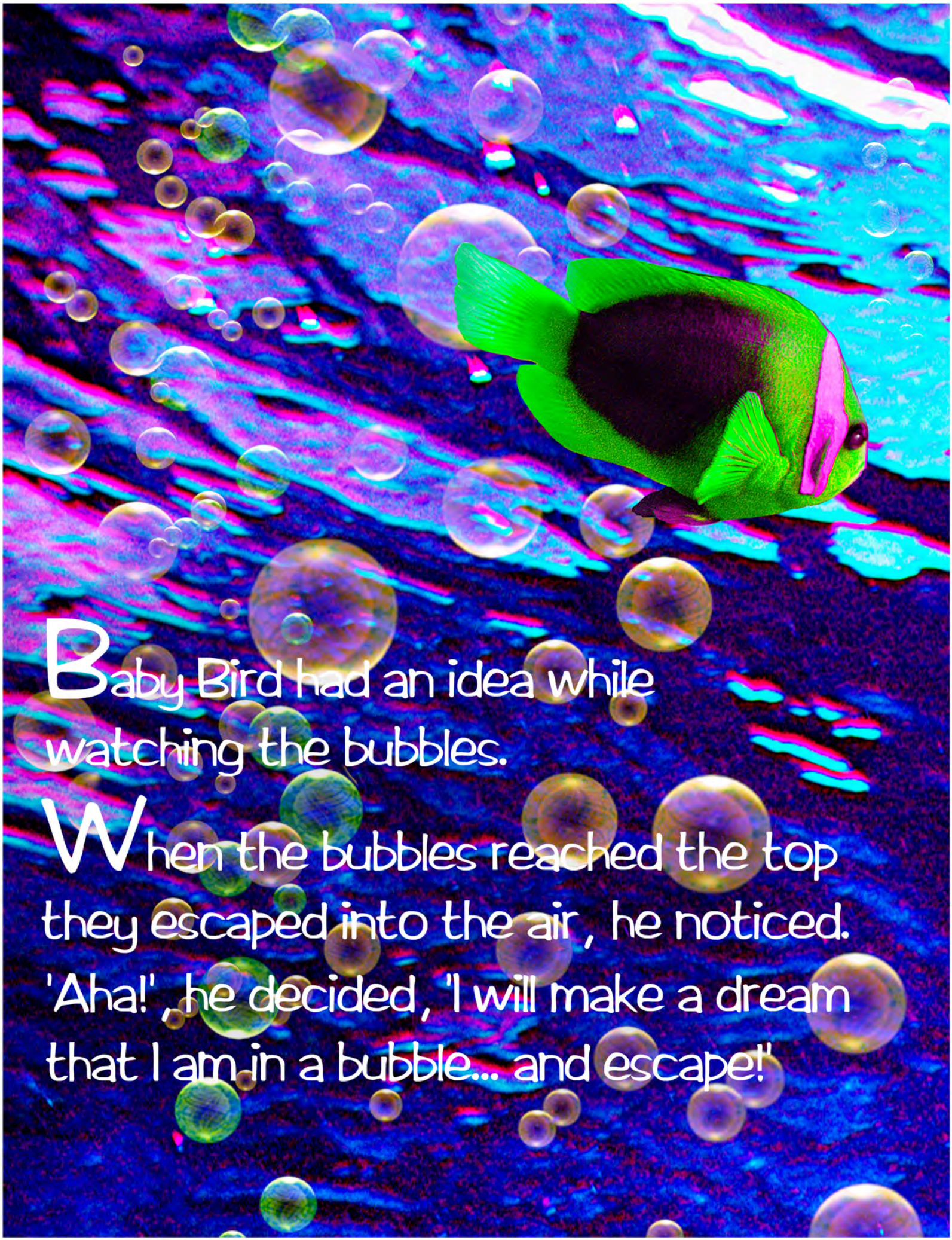
Baby Bird's friend called to him:
'You fly now... try it!'
'I am just a little fish...
how can I fly like you?'
asked Baby Bird.
'You can do anything
that you can dream!'
the flying fish replied.


'I can fly up here in the air like a bird... but then I have to go back to the water, where I really live,' said the flying fish.


'You have to go home too
because you really live in the air,'
the flying fish continued.
'I want to go home, but how
can I do that without wings?
Baby Bird asked, sadly.
He was crying and
his tears tasted as salty
as the sea water.
Baby Bird was afraid that he might
never again be able to fly with his friend.
'Help!' he cried out to all the other fish.


'Use your imagination,' said a leaf.
'A talking plant!' said Baby Bird.
'We are not plants,' the leaf replied.
'We are fish that look like leaves so that we can hide in the plants to be safe.'
Baby Bird got close to hear every word clearly.
'Maybe these strange-looking fish have an answer...
...a solution to my problem,'
thought Baby Bird.


'Answers can be found
in the world all around,'
said another leafy fish.
'When answers
are hard to find
just make a dream.
'To make a dream come true,
you must begin with a dream.'



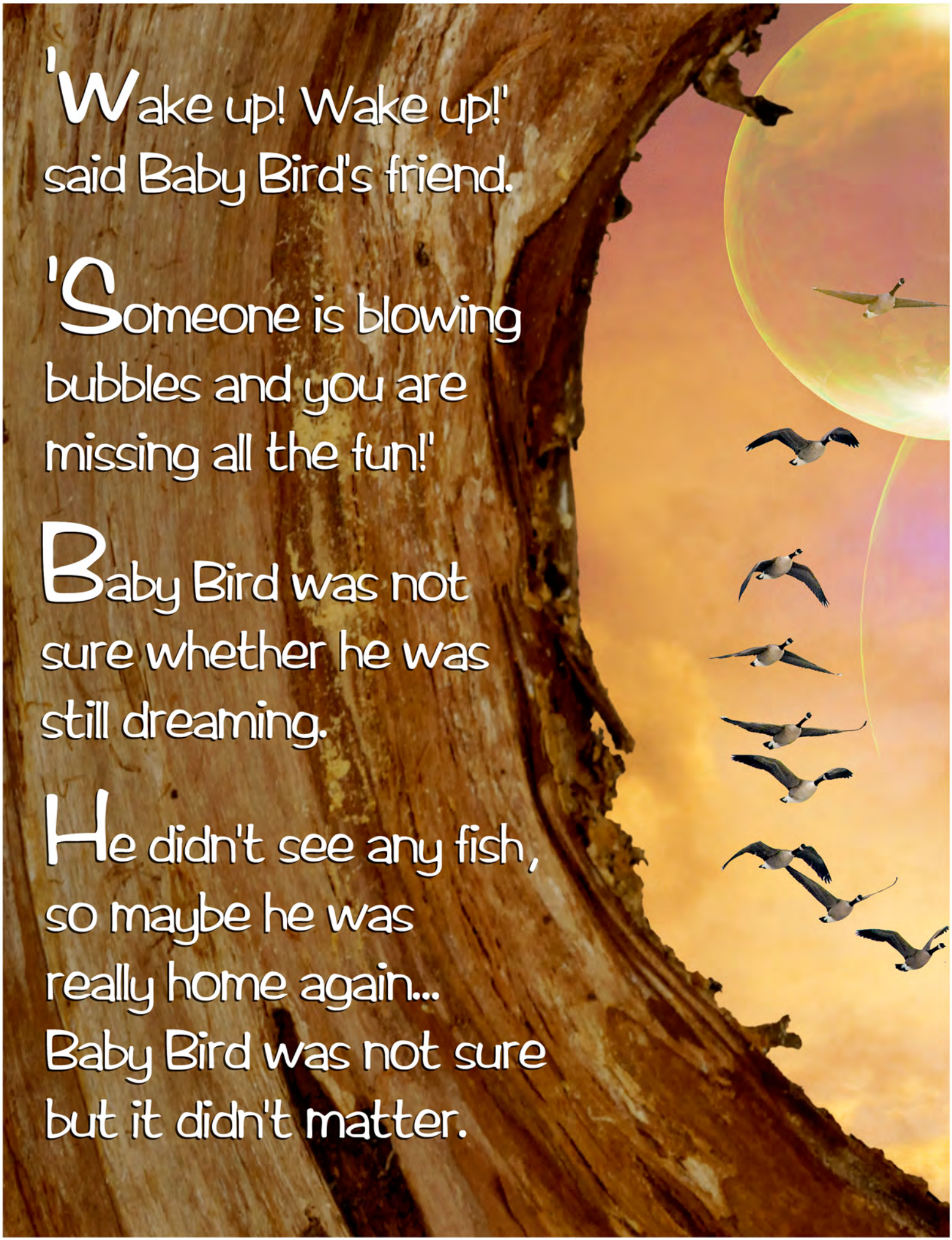
Baby Bird had an idea while watching the bubbles.

When the bubbles reached the top they escaped into the air, he noticed. 'Aha!', he decided, 'I will make a dream that I am in a bubble... and escape!'

The shy little green fish
came to say goodbye.
Baby Bird promised to visit her
again in another dream.

Baby Bird's friends were all there to welcome him home.
None of them knew who was in the bubble.
"It's me!" said Baby Bird.
Nobody believed the little yellow fish was Baby Bird except his girl friend. She recognized his voice.

She gave him a big hug
and just then...
...Baby Bird
woke up!


'Wake up! Wake up!'
said Baby Bird's friend.
'Someone is blowing
bubbles and you are
missing all the fun!'
Baby Bird was not
sure whether he was
still dreaming.
He didn't see any fish,
so maybe he was
really home again...
Baby Bird was not sure
but it didn't matter.

"Home is where your friends are,"
concluded Baby Bird.

'Watch me fly all the time!' says Baby Bird.
'If you hang my picture on the wall we can see each other
alll the time, not just when you are reading my books.
There is a sample poster of me on the next page.
Tear it out, unfold it, and hang it in your favorite place.
When you see me you'll remember our adventures
and think about the things we learned in new ways.
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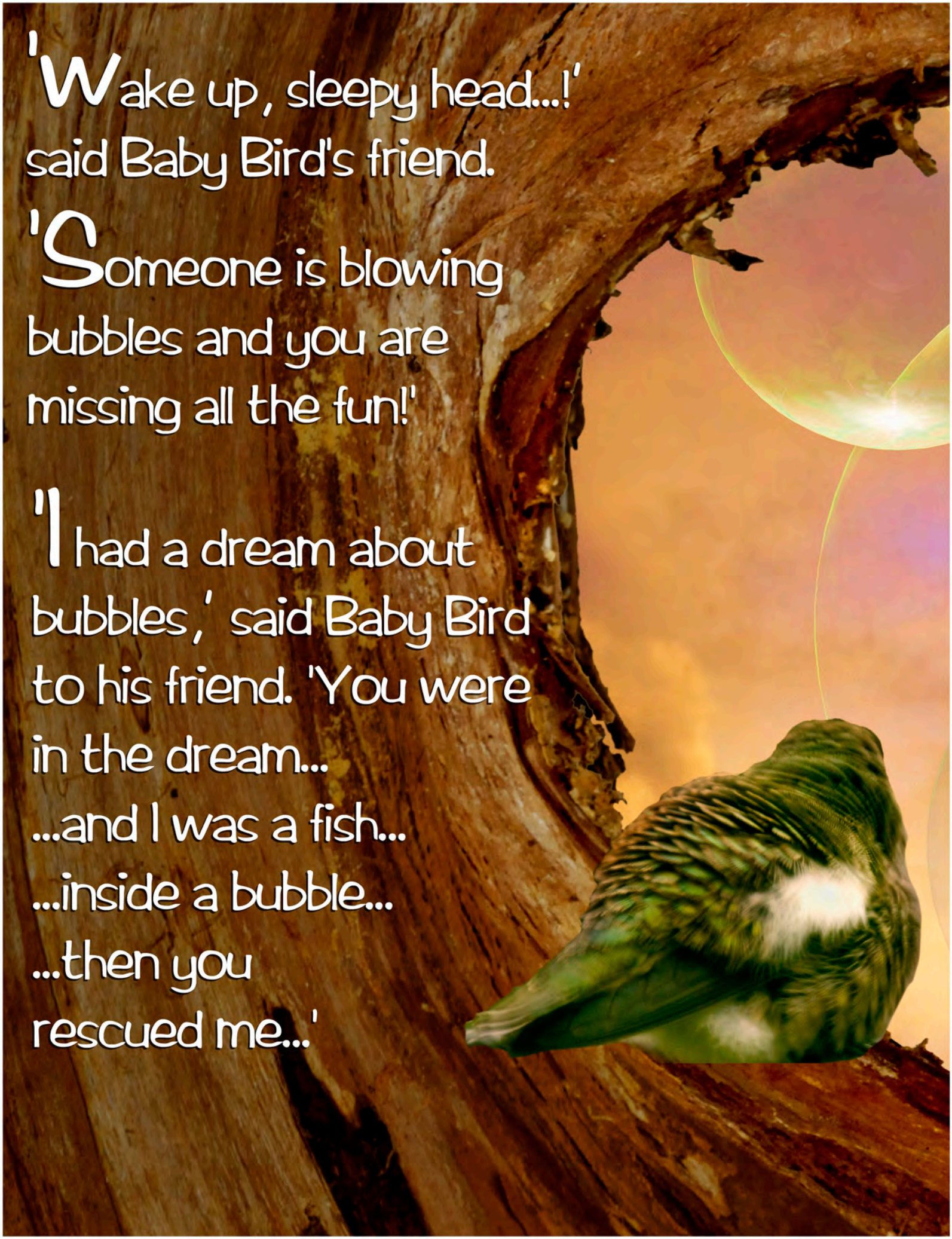
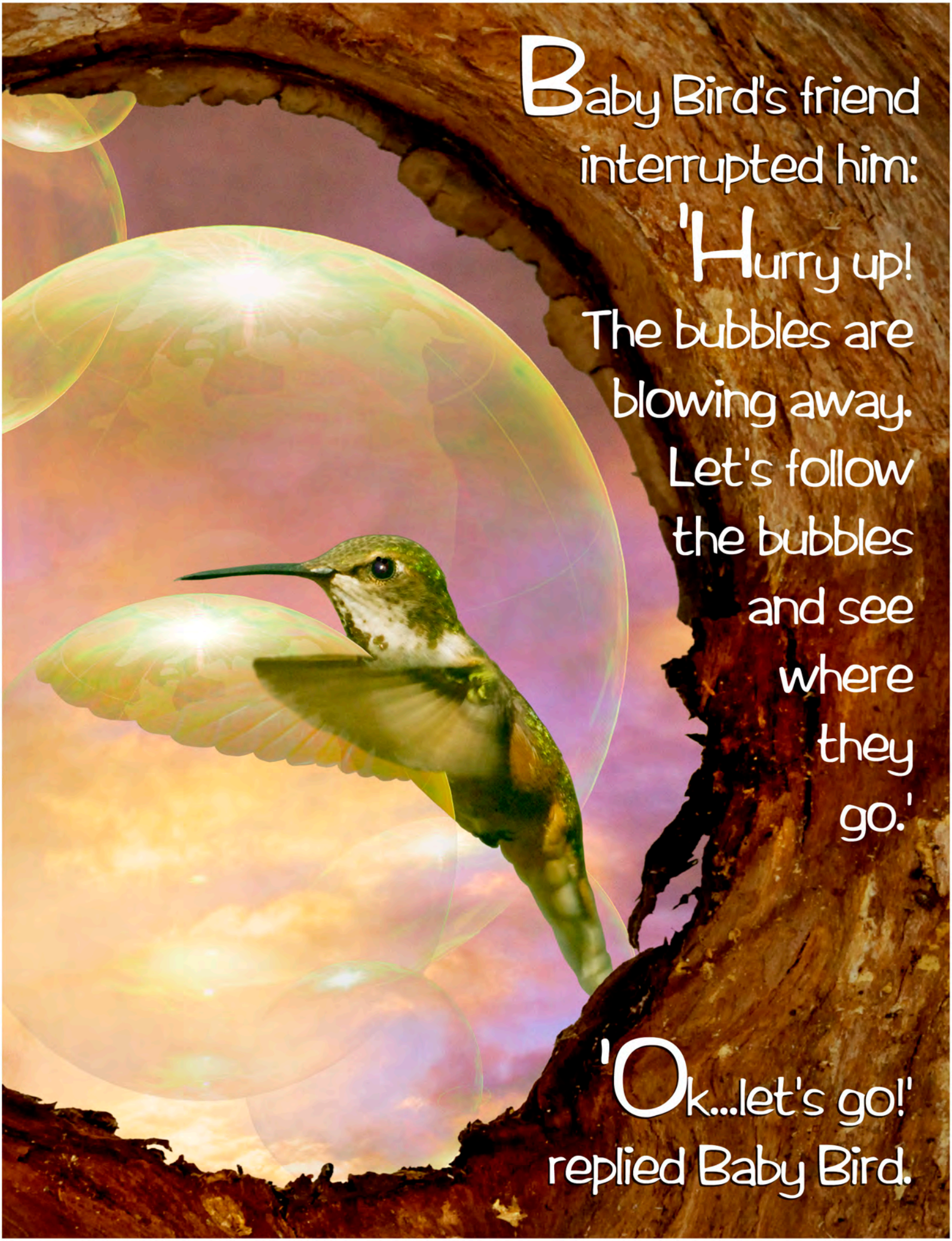
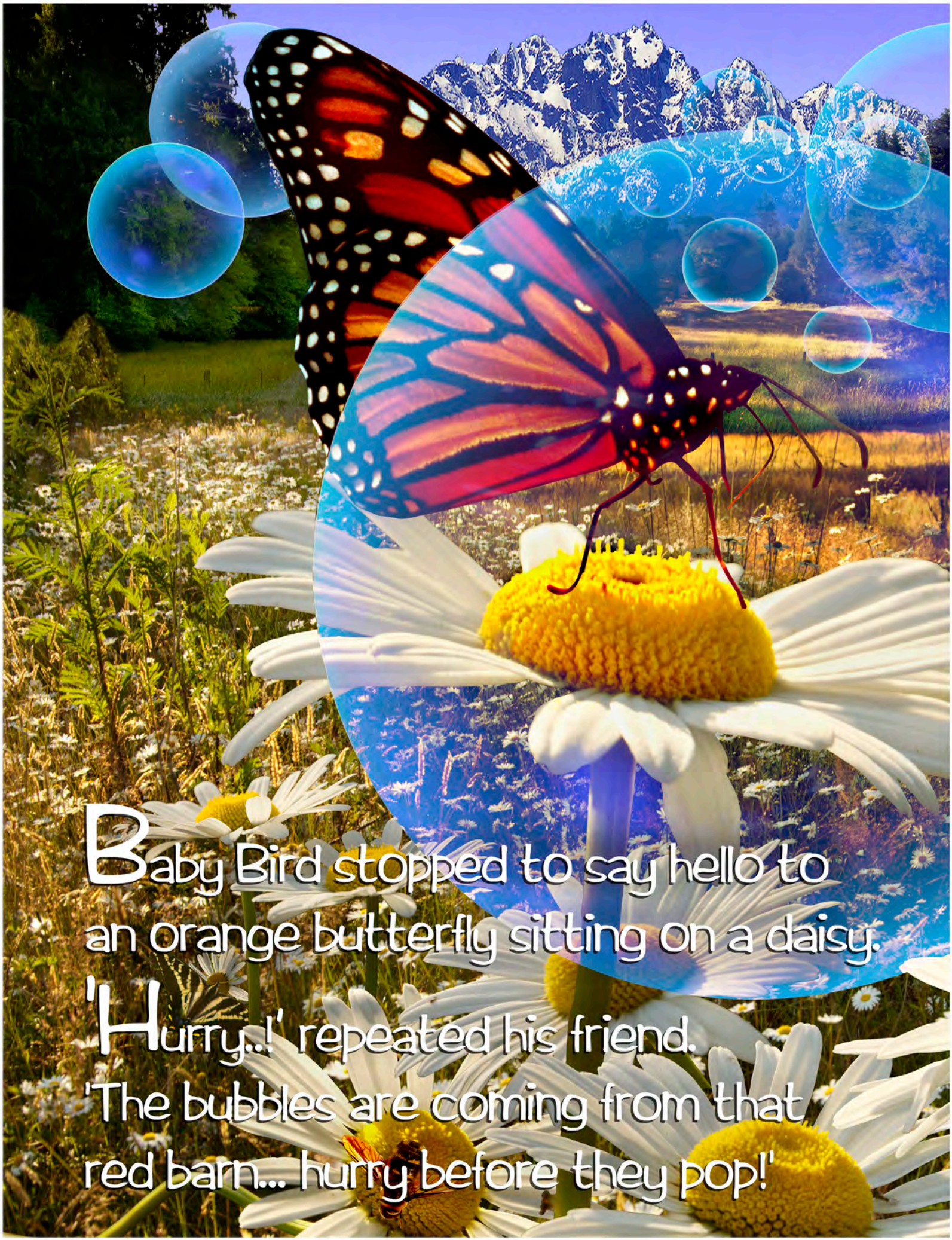
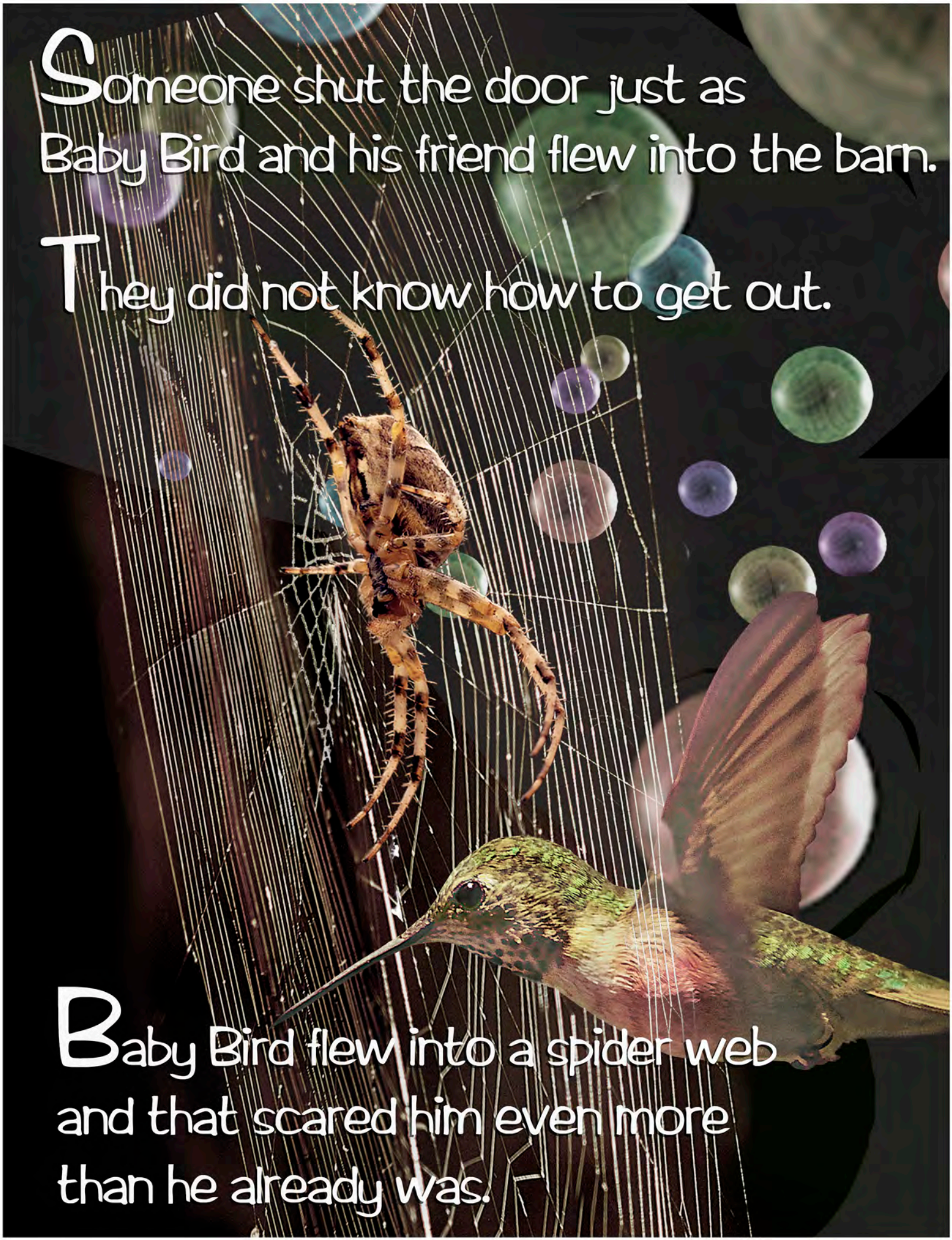

'Wake up, sleepy head...!'
said Baby Bird's friend.
'Someone is blowing
bubbles and you are
missing all the fun!'
'I had a dream about
bubbles,' said Baby Bird
to his friend. 'You were
in the dream...
...and I was a fish...
...inside a bubble...
...then you
rescued me...'

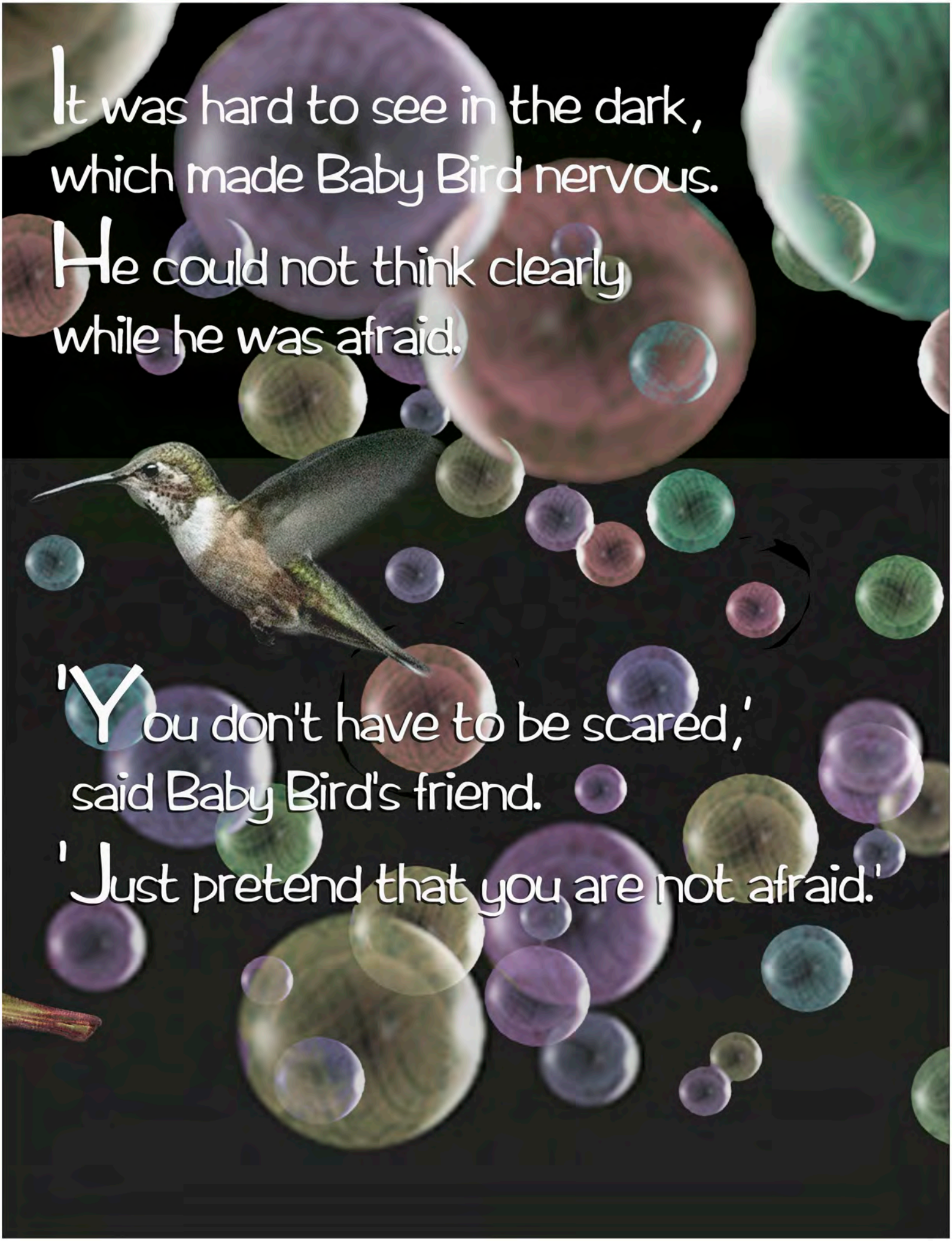

Baby Bird's friend interrupted him: 'Hurry up! The bubbles are blowing away. Let's follow the bubbles and see where they go.'
'Ok...let's go!' replied Baby Bird.

As the sun rose over the mountains
the bees were busy gathering
pollen from the lavendar flowers.
Bees make honey from pollen.

Baby Bird and his friend
followed the bubbles
over the hill.


Baby Bird stopped to say hello to an orange butterfly sitting on a daisy.
'Hurry..!' repeated his friend. 'The bubbles are coming from that red barn... hurry before they pop!'


Someone shut the door just as
Baby Bird and his friend flew into the barn.
They did not know how to get out.
Baby Bird flew into a spider web
and that scared him even more
than he already was.

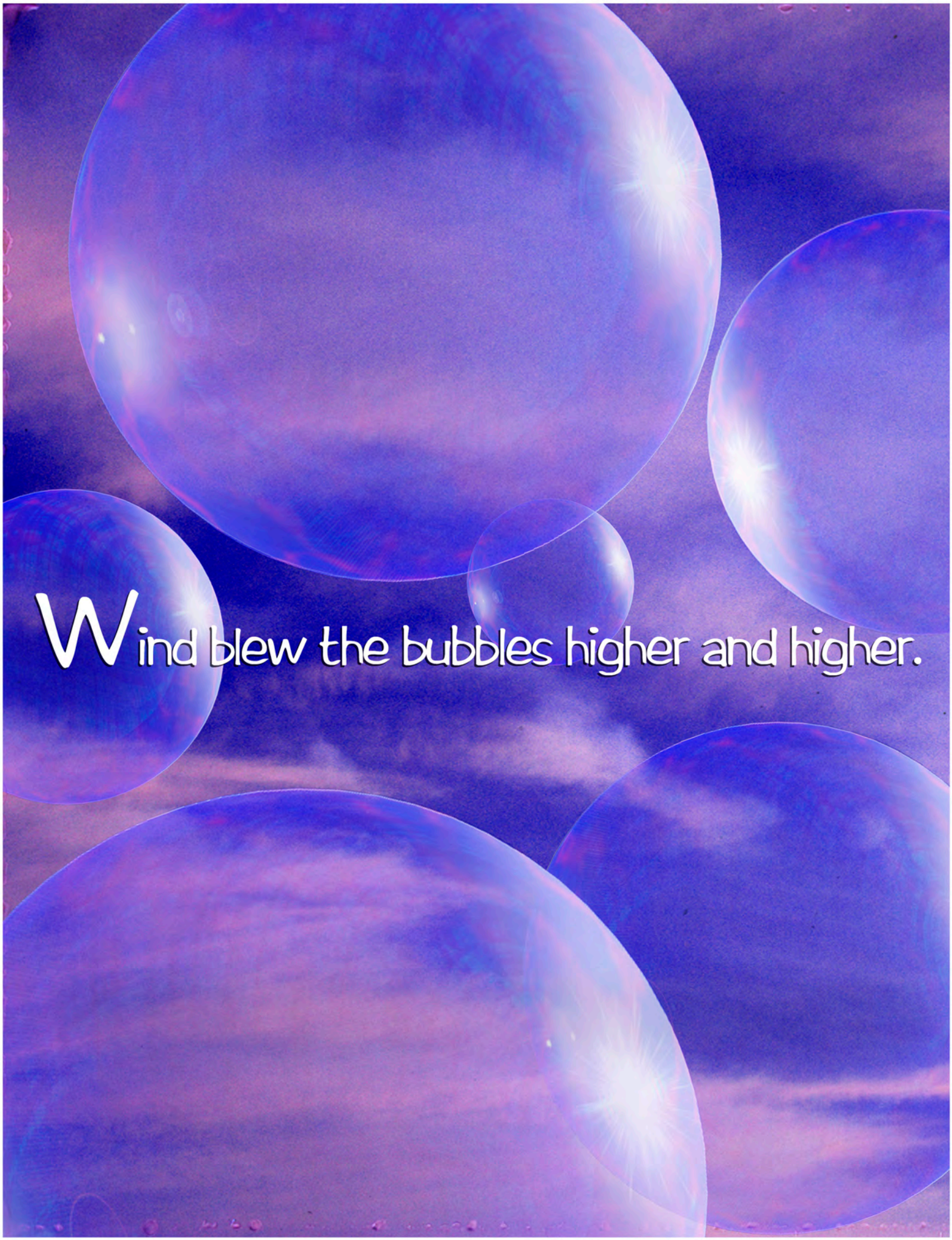

It was hard to see in the dark,
which made Baby Bird nervous.
He could not think clearly
while he was afraid.
'You don't have to be scared,'
said Baby Bird's friend.
'Just pretend that you are not afraid.'

There was only one light in the barn.
Everyone was trying to get near the light to see in the darkness.

Moths were attracted to the light.
The spiders were trying to catch the moths in their webs, but they were having problems.
The wind was blowing bubbles into the spiders' webs.
"Let's follow the bubbles and try to get out of here," said Baby Bird.

Outside things had changed.
The good weather was gone and
a big storm was coming.

'Hurry... through the window...
we can escape with the bubbles!'
Baby Bird's friend said excitedly.


Wind blew the bubbles higher and higher.

The little birds had never flown so high in the sky.

Baby Bird asked his friend, 'Do you know the way home?'

But his friend didn't answer.

The bubbles floated so high that the whole world looked like a bubble.
'What kind of bird is that white one?' asked Baby Bird.

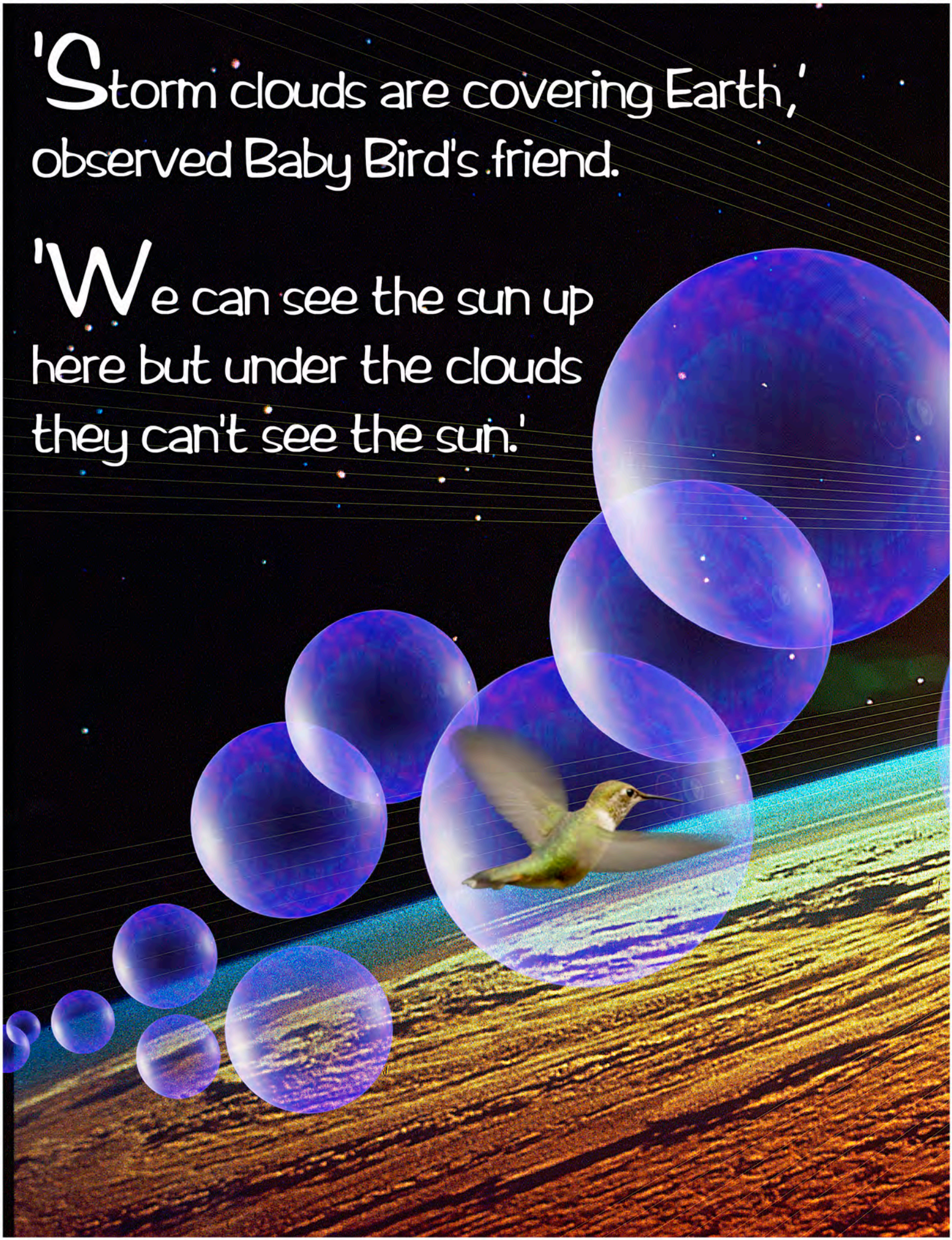
"It is an airplane, not a bird,'
replied Baby Bird's friend.

The world turned under them.
A city came into view.
'There are no trees there,
said Baby Bird. 'Where can we go?'

'Cities are not nice for birds like us,' his friend agreed. 'Cities are made for people.'

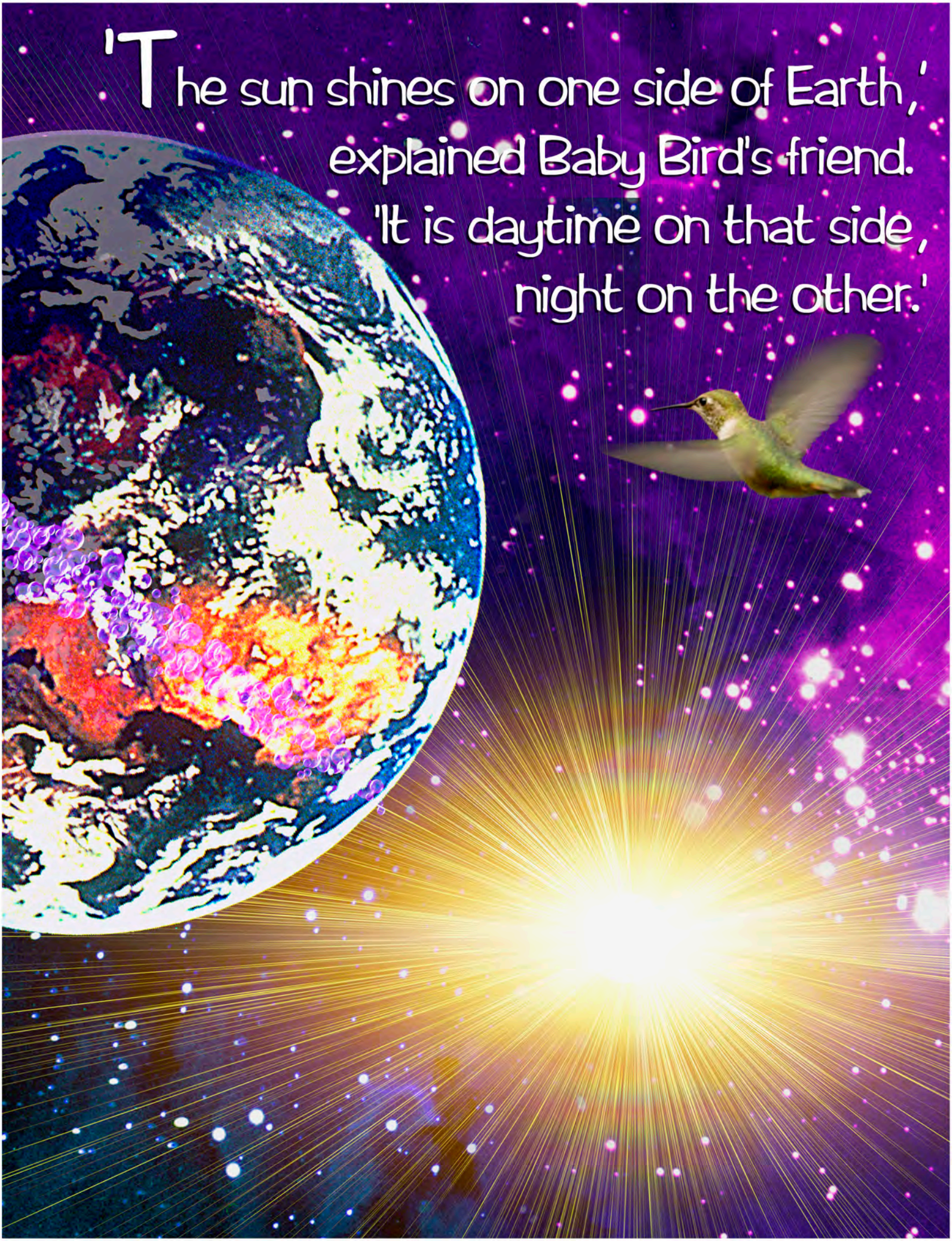
The earth kept turning.
The city disappeared as the world of Nature came into view, replacing the world of Man.
The world of Nature was lush with forests, rivers, lakes and oceans.
'That looks more like home,' Baby Bird's friend hummed happily.

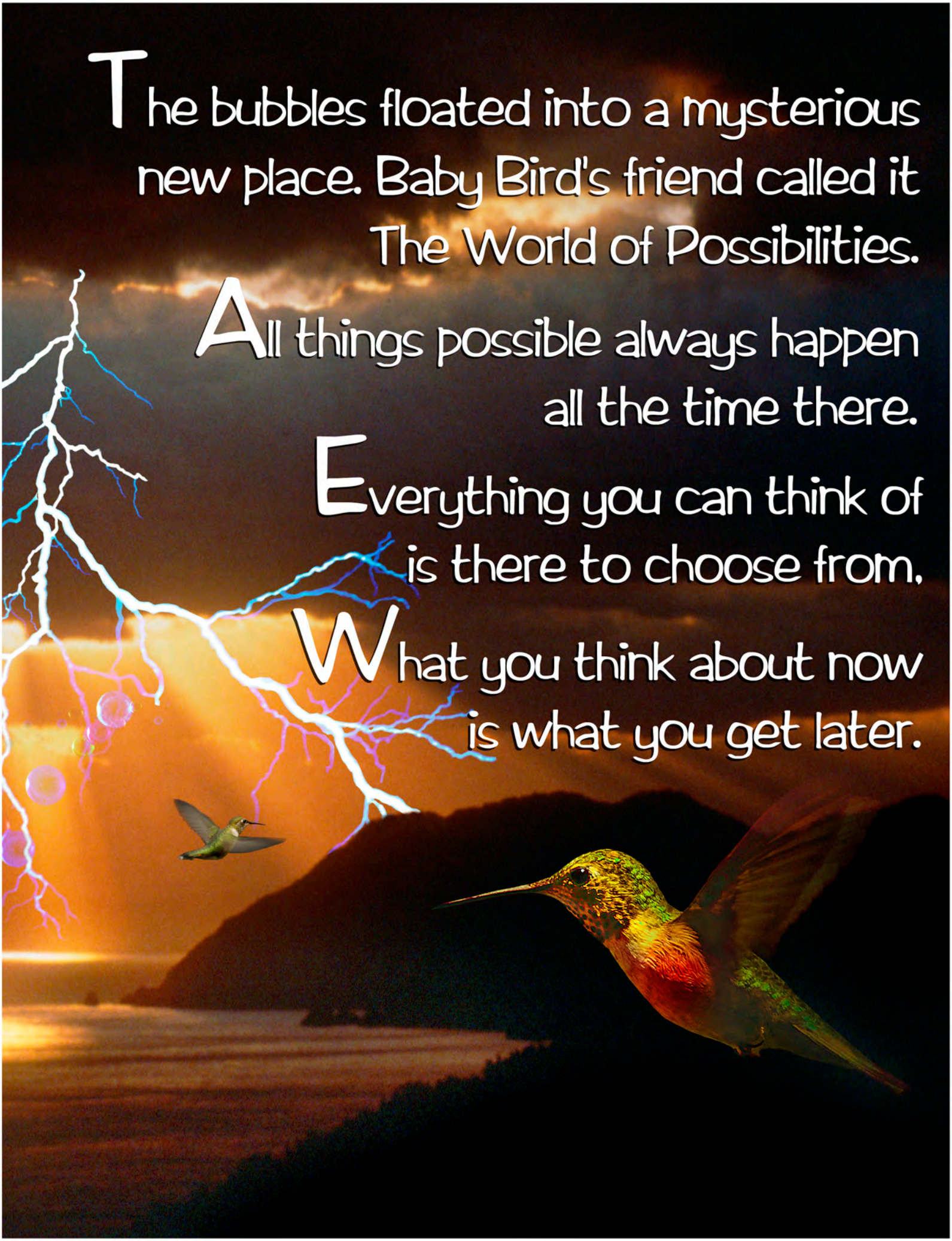
Baby Bird and his friend felt themselves pulled back down toward the ground.
Gravity was pulling them down.
Gravity pulls everything toward the center of the planet, which is called 'Earth'.
Gravity is why things fall down.
Without gravity the rain would fall up!

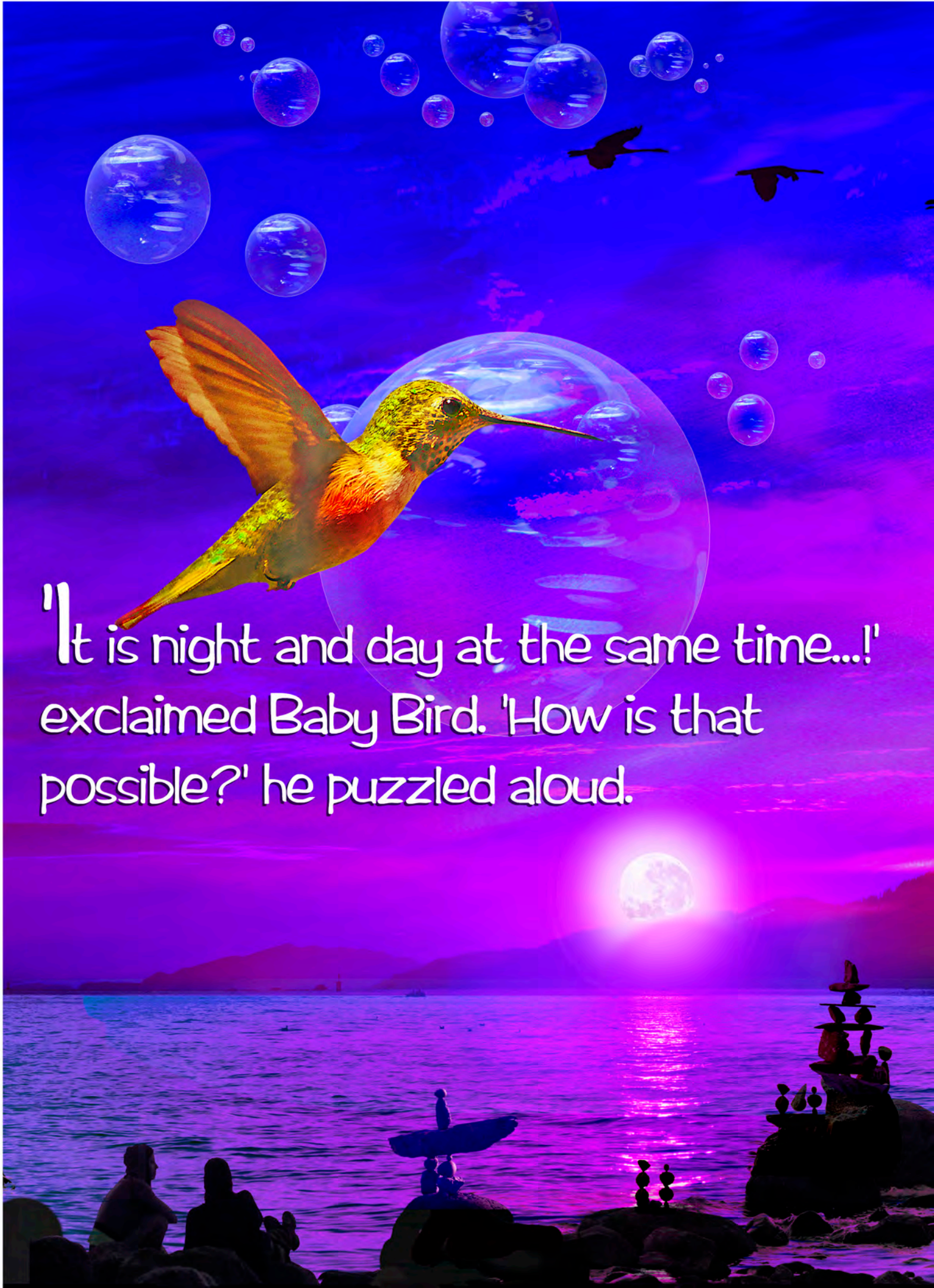

'Storm clouds are covering Earth,'
observed Baby Bird's friend.
'We can see the sun up
here but under the clouds
they can't see the sun.'

Baby Bird started to worry... Would they float away and never get back?
'Worrying does not change anything,' said his friend, 'it only makes you feel bad... Think about something else... something that will make you feel good.'

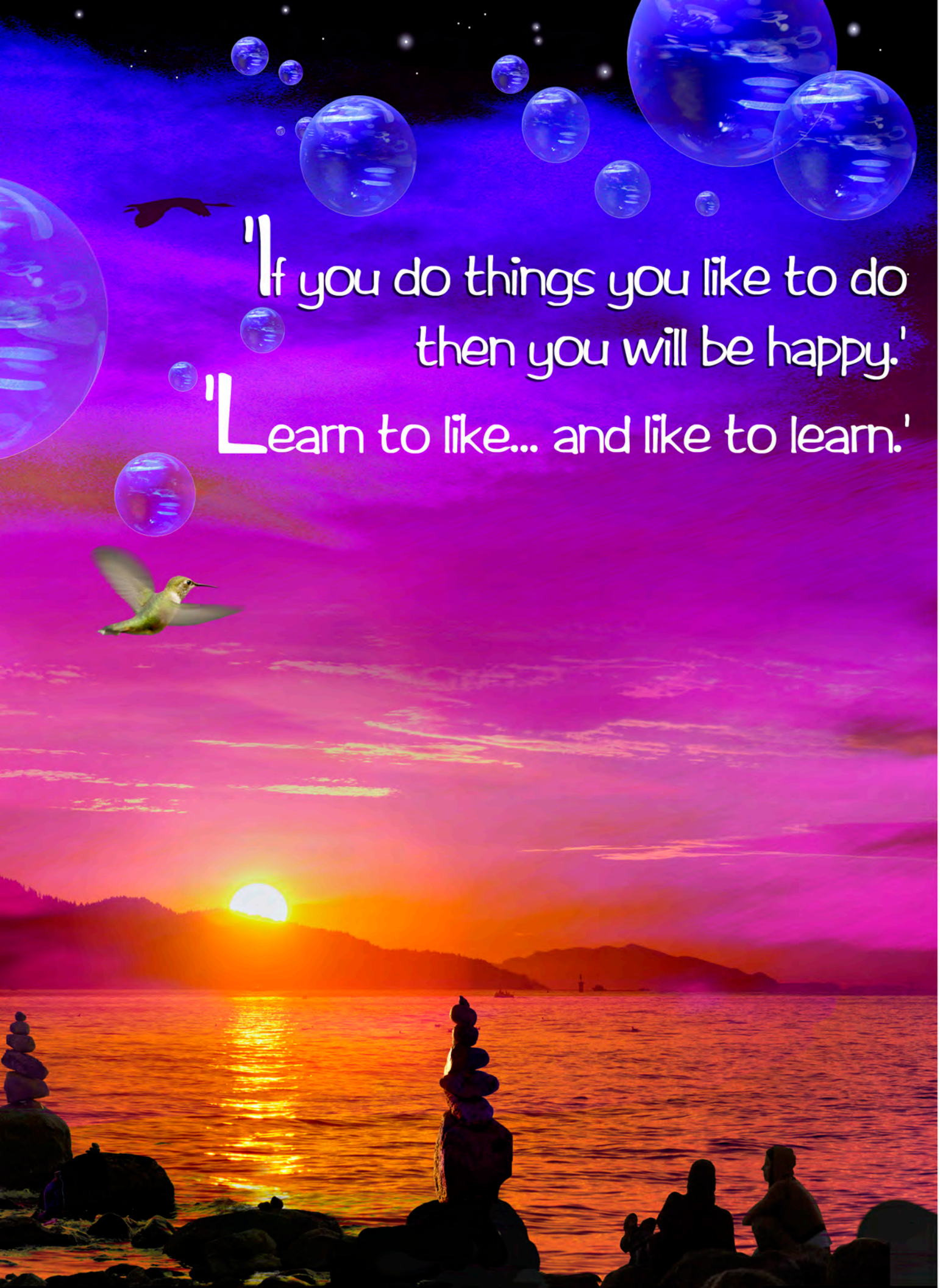
Baby Bird watched Earth turning around. He saw it change from day to night.


'The sun shines on one side of Earth,'
explained Baby Bird's friend.
'It is daytime on that side,
night on the other.'

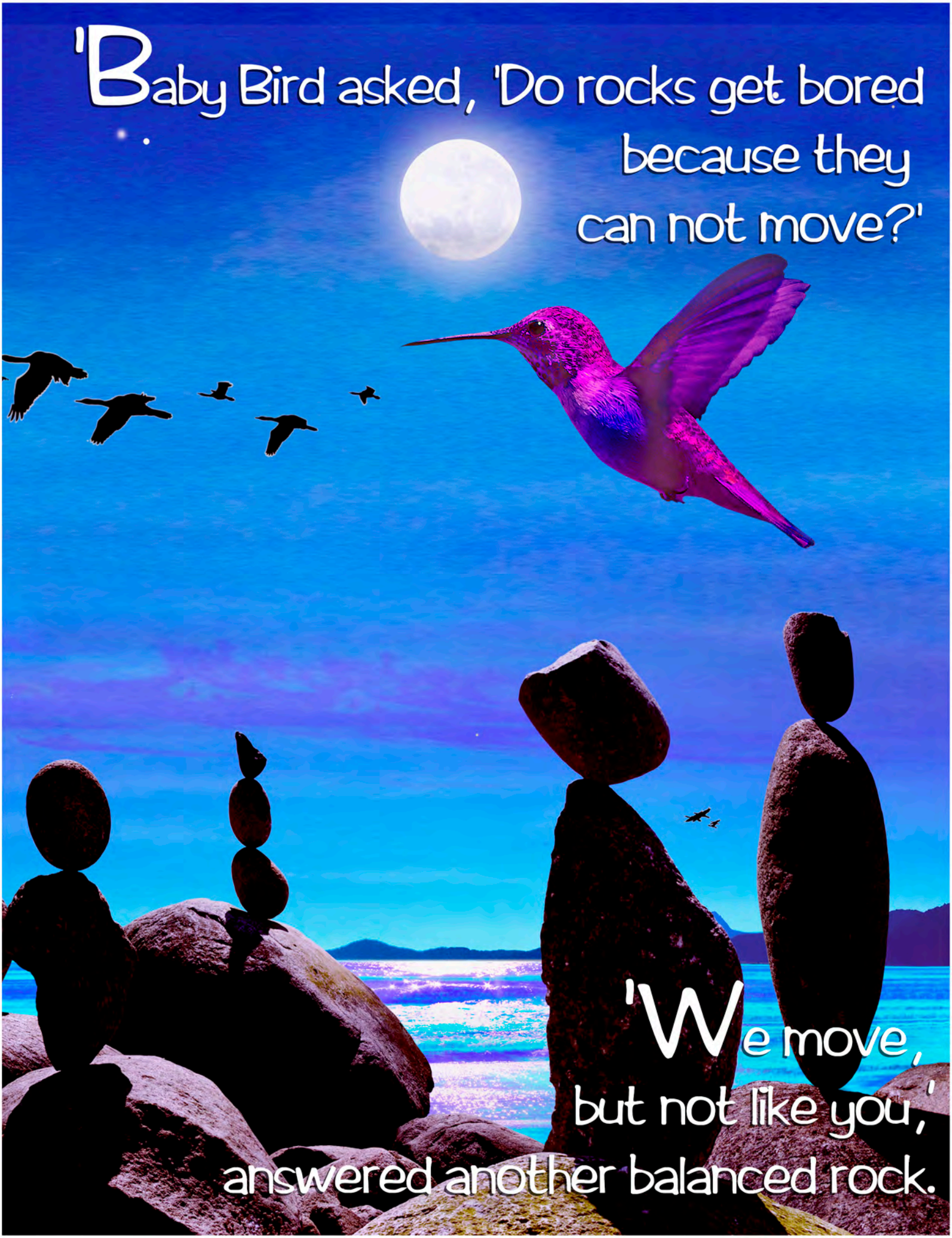

The bubbles floated into a mysterious new place. Baby Bird's friend called it The World of Possibilities.
All things possible always happen all the time there.
Everything you can think of is there to choose from.
What you think about now is what you get later.

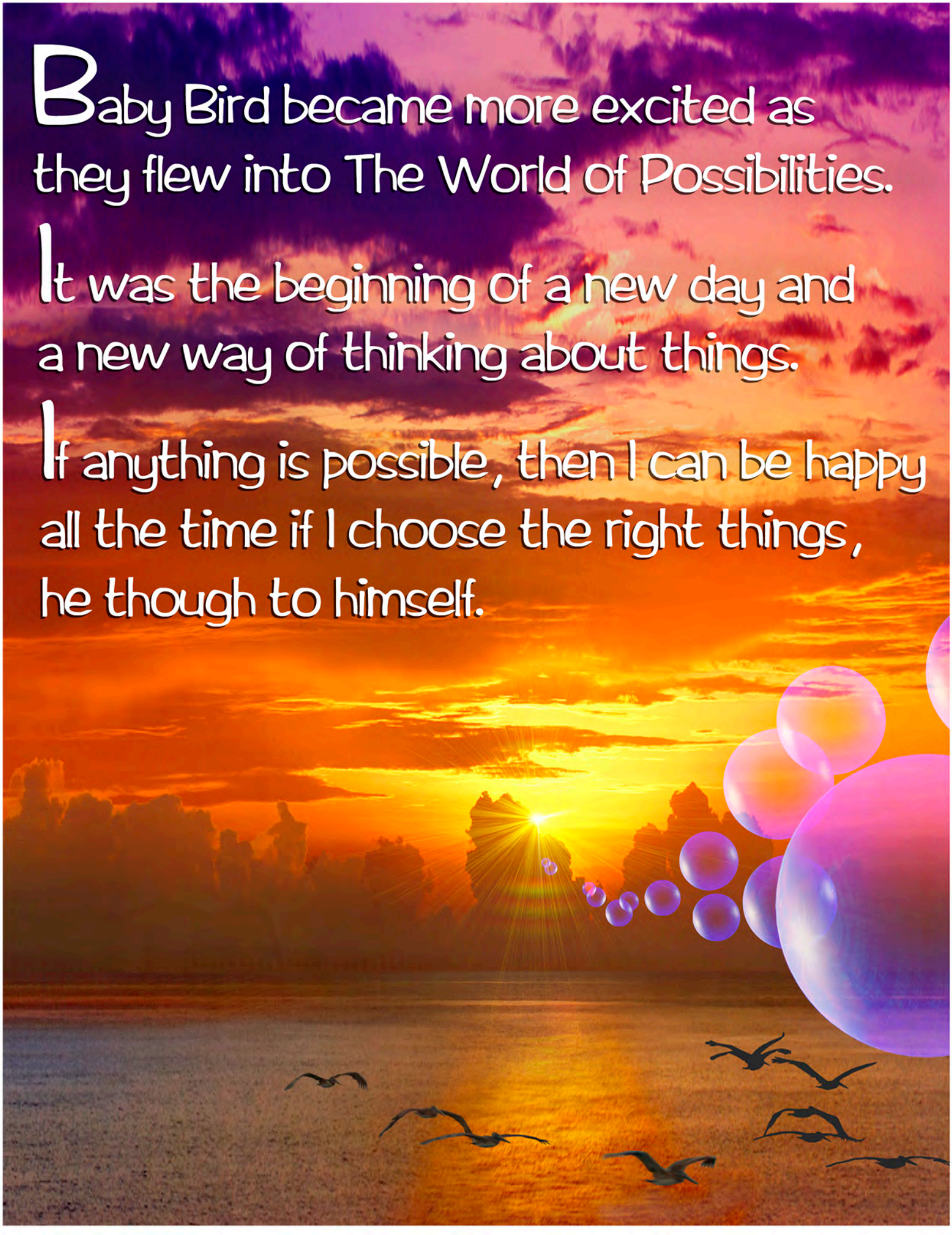

"It is night and day at the same time...!' exclaimed Baby Bird. 'How is that possible?' he puzzled aloud.

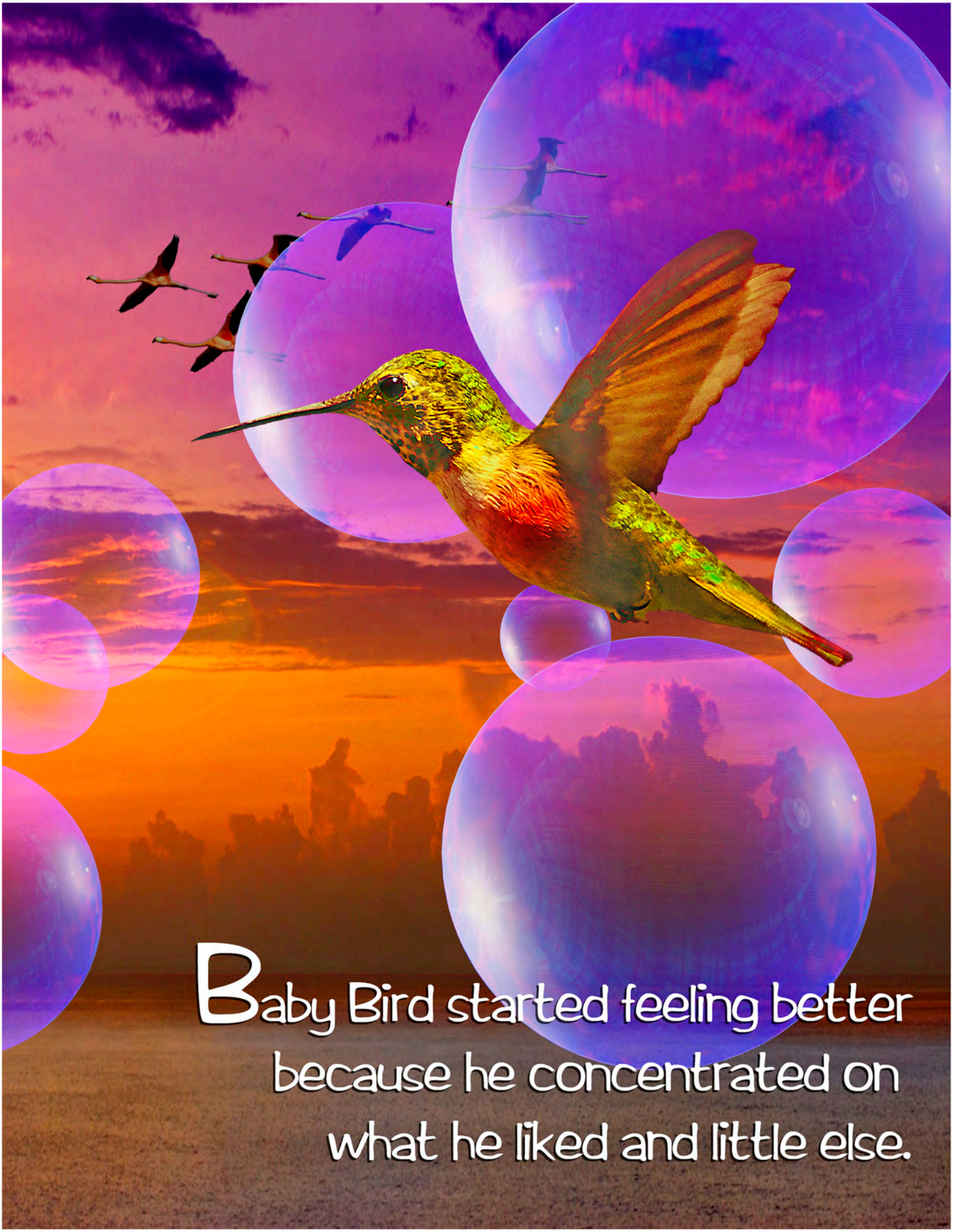
'Whatever you think... that is
the way things shall be,' said a rock figure.

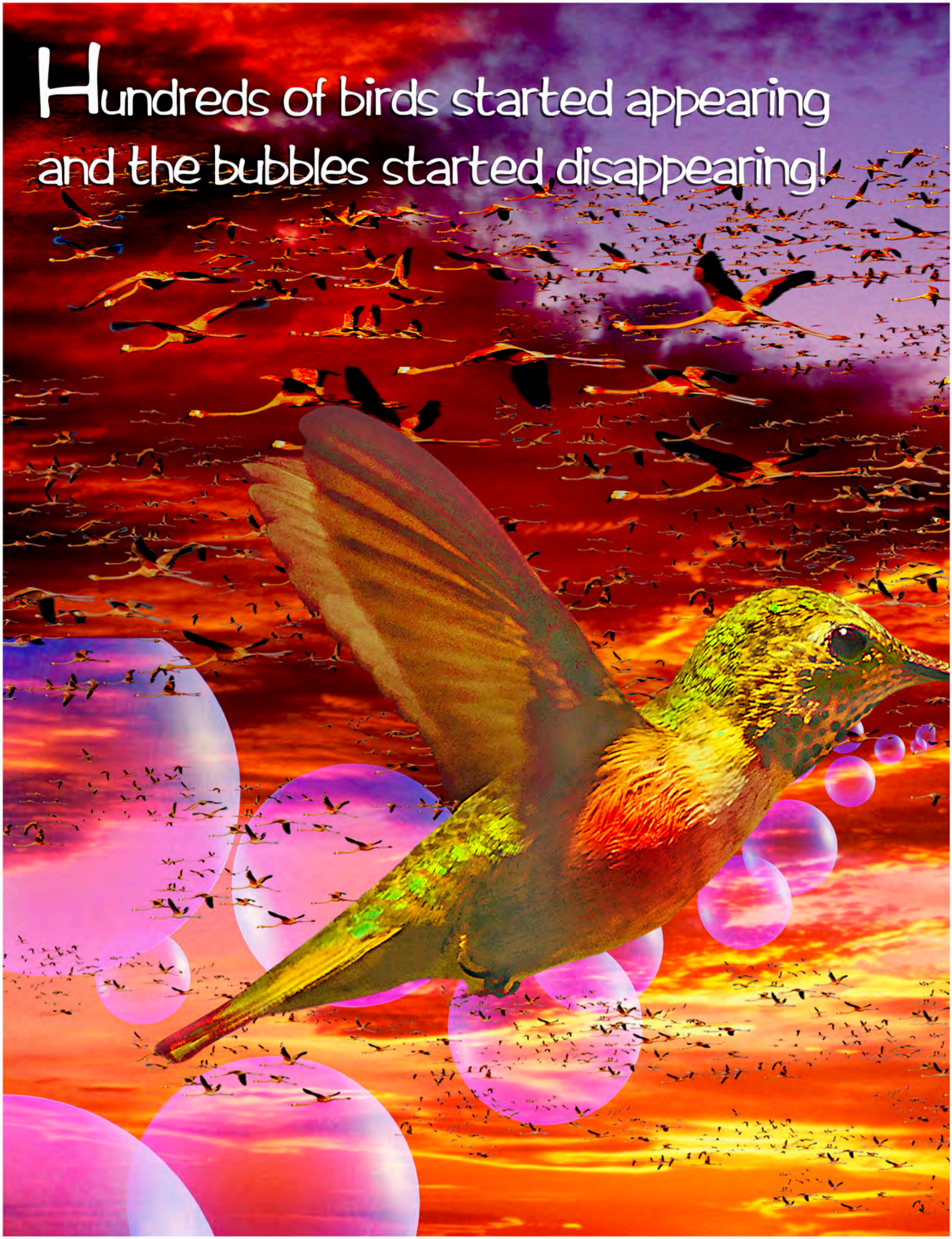

'If you do things you like to do
then you will be happy.'
'Learn to like... and like to learn.'

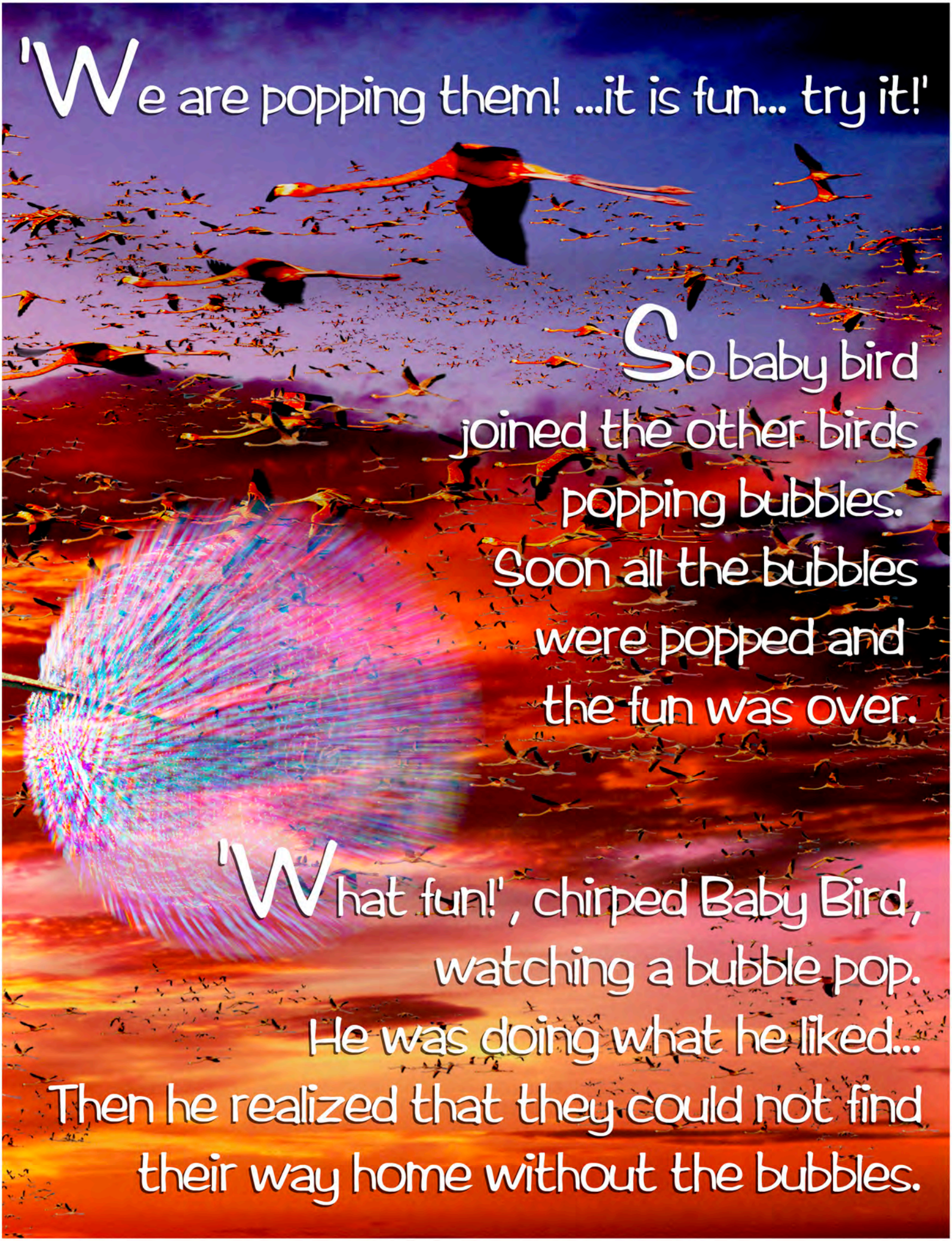
'Everything here is in balance,'
said the rock. 'Night and day...
big and small... good and bad.
'Go
carefully...
If the balance is
upset we
will
fall apart.'

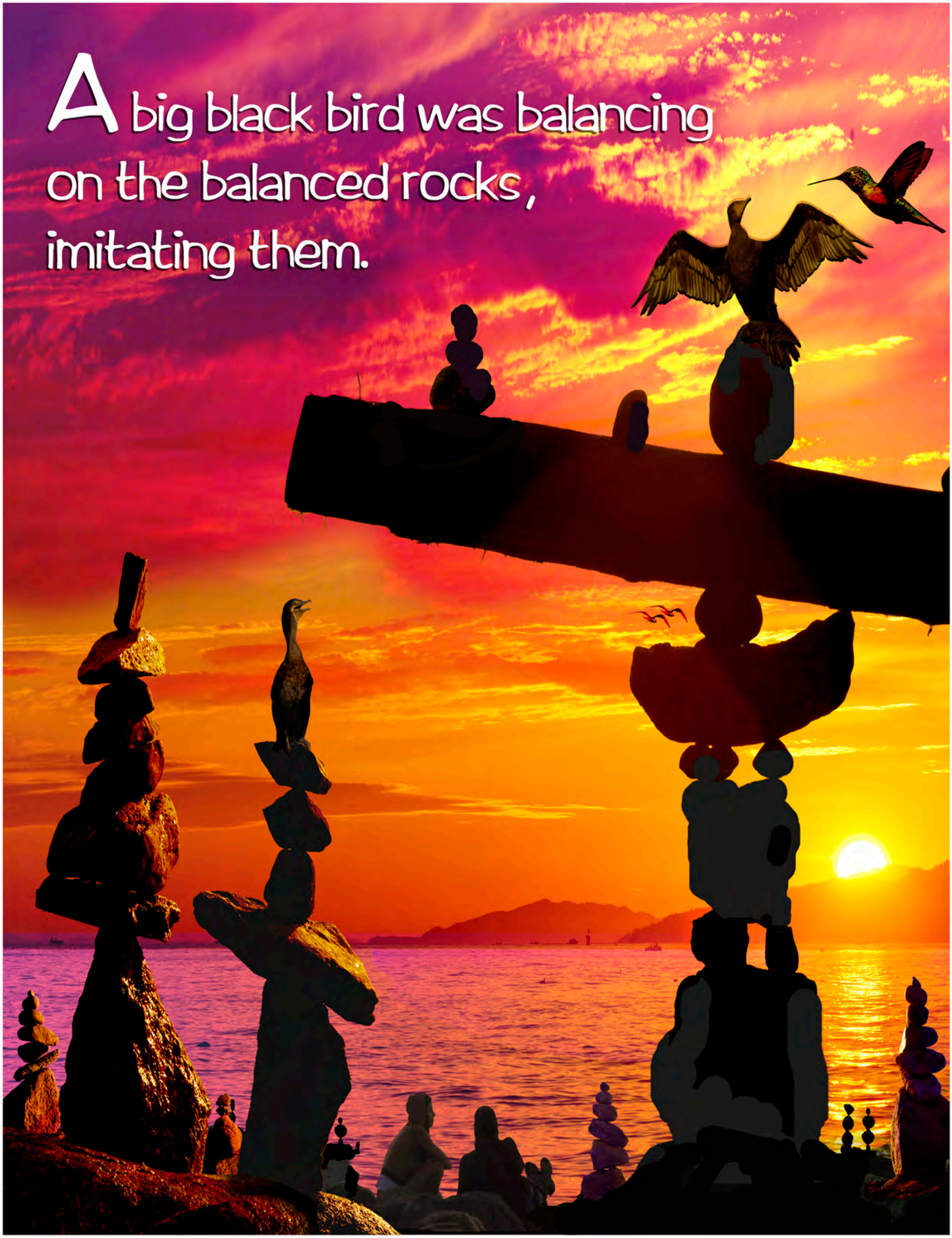

'Baby Bird asked, 'Do rocks get bored because they can not move?'
'We move, but not like you,' answered another balanced rock.

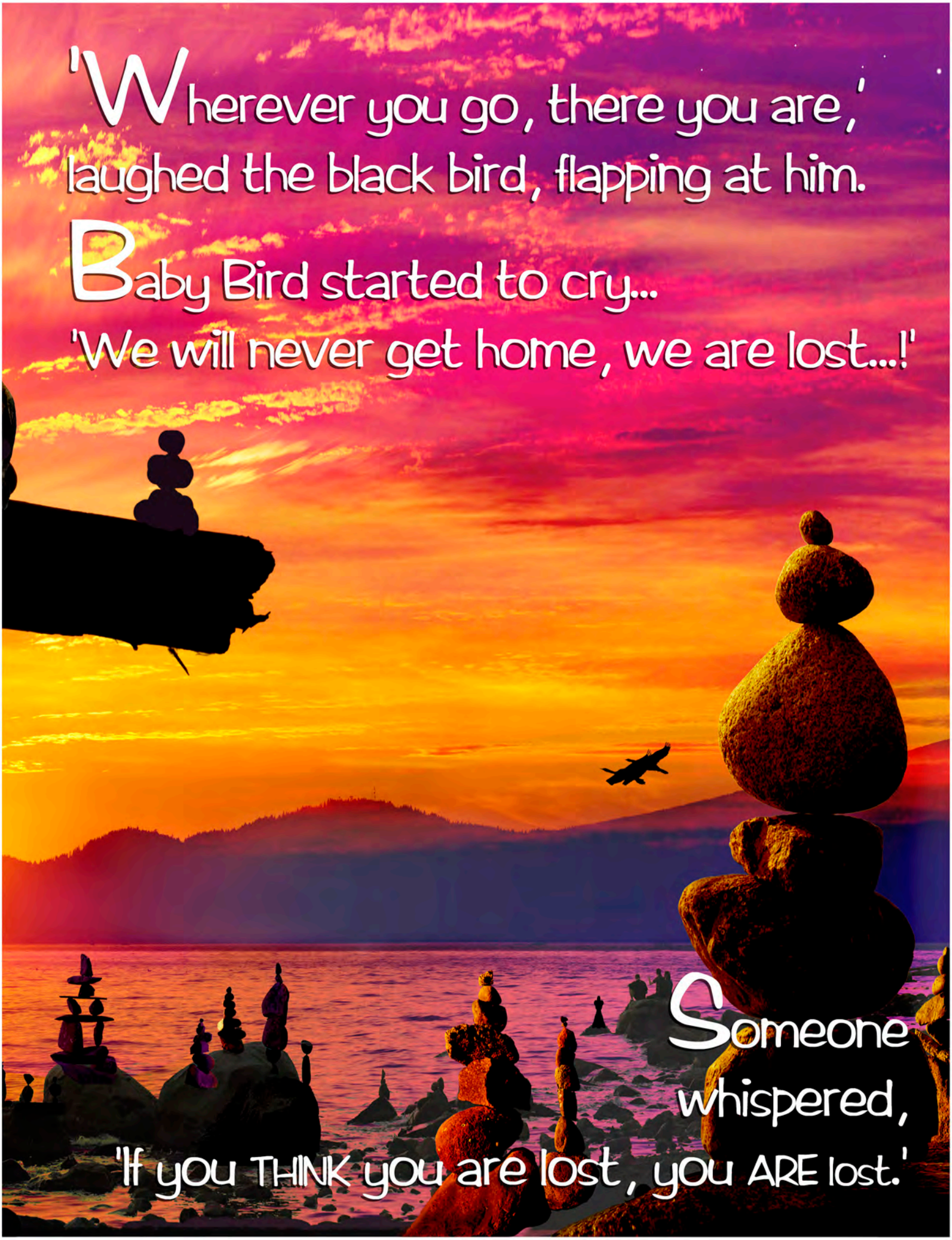

Baby Bird became more excited as they flew into The World of Possibilities.
It was the beginning of a new day and a new way of thinking about things.
If anything is possible, then I can be happy all the time if I choose the right things, he though to himself.


Baby Bird started feeling better
because he concentrated on
what he liked and little else.

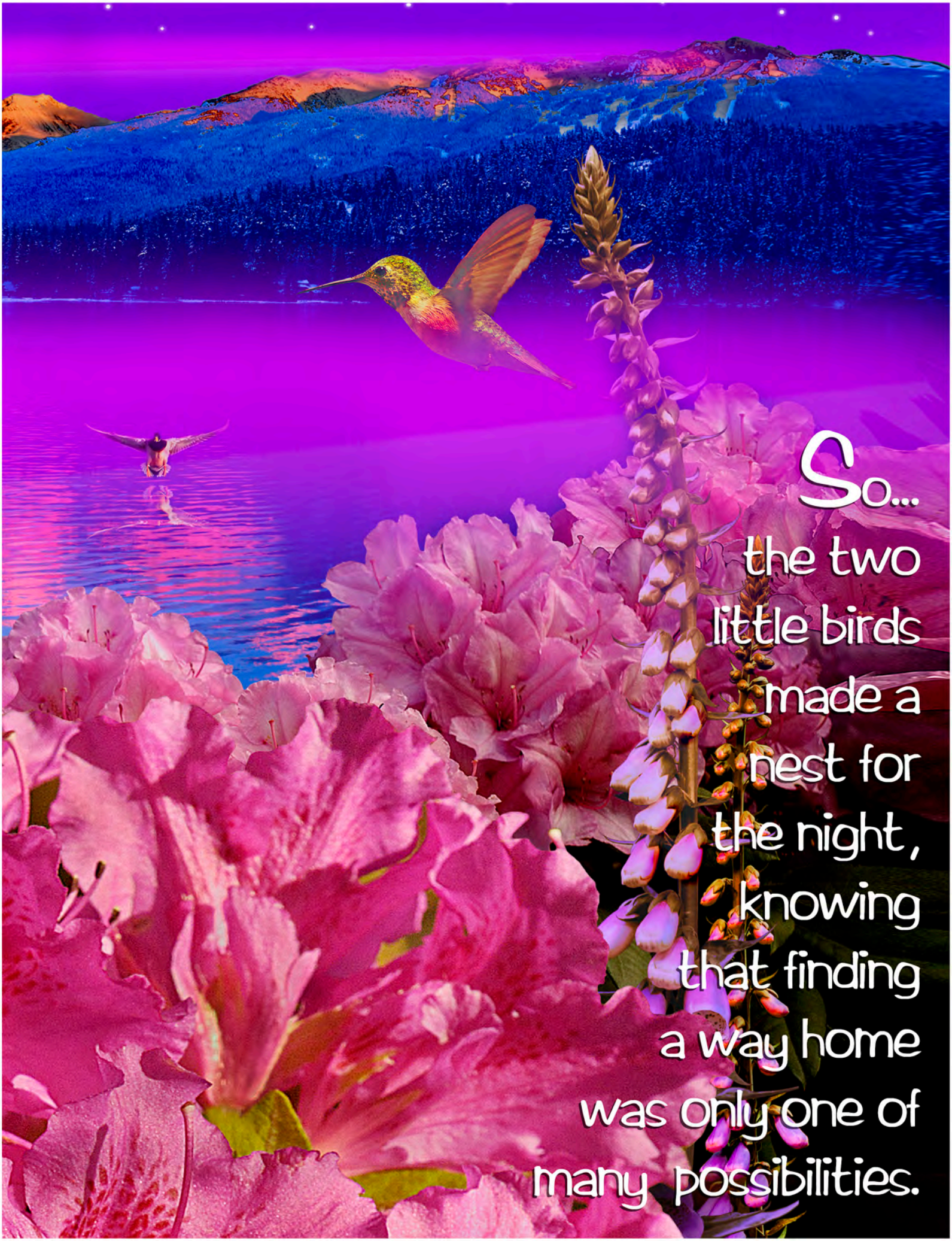

Hundreds of birds started appearing
and the bubbles started disappearing!


'We are popping them! ...it is fun... try it!'
So baby bird joined the other birds popping bubbles. Soon all the bubbles were popped and the fun was over.
'What fun!', chirped Baby Bird, watching a bubble pop. He was doing what he liked... Then he realized that they could not find their way home without the bubbles.

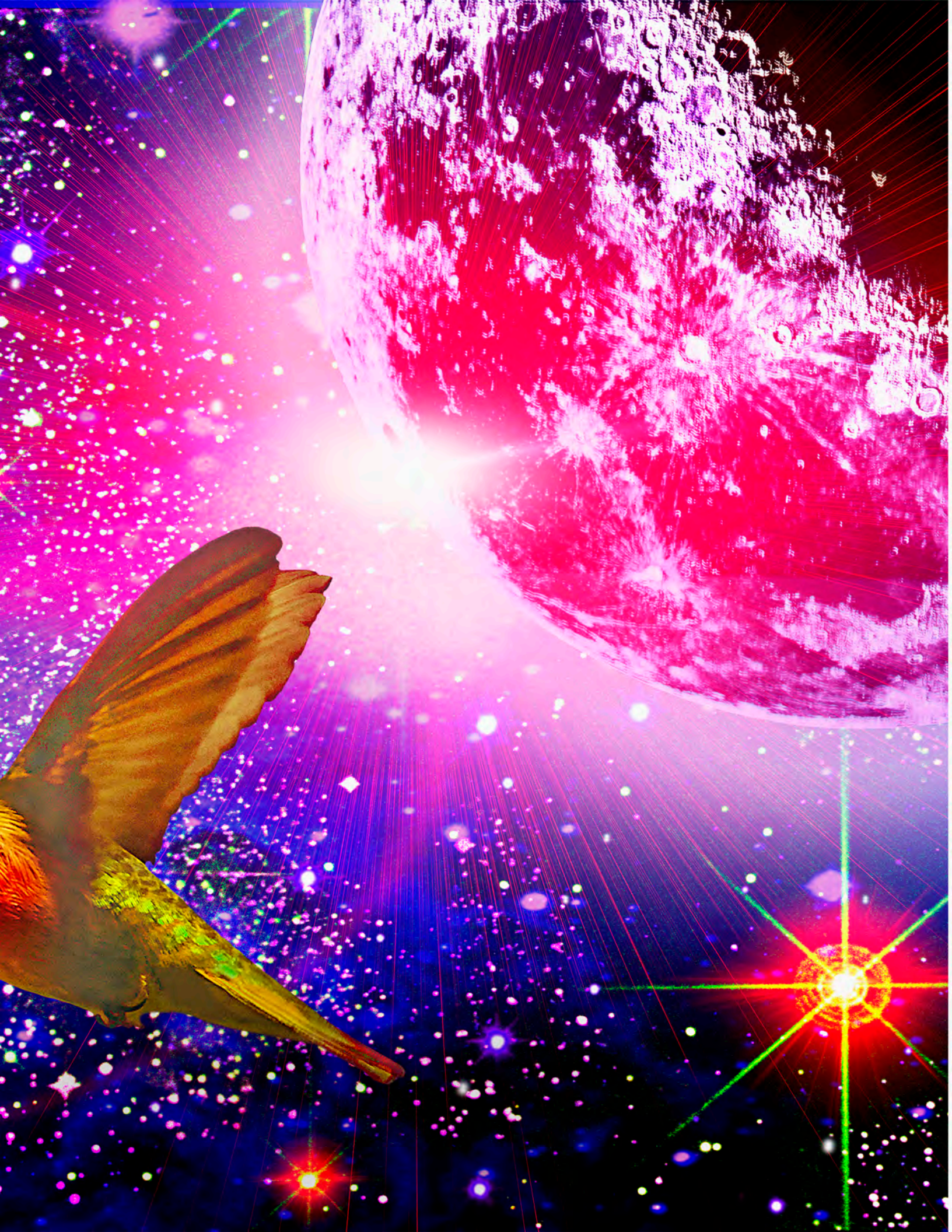

A big black bird was balancing
on the balanced rocks,
imitating them.


'Wherever you go, there you are,'
laughed the black bird, flapping at him.
Baby Bird started to cry...
'We will never get home, we are lost...!'
Someone
whispered,
'If you THINK you are lost, you ARE lost.'

Instead of being sad, they decided to make the best of their situation.
If everything is possible, then there are things to like wherever you go, they concluded.
We might like it better here!


So...
the two
little birds
made a
nest for
the night,
knowing
that finding
a way home
was only one of
many possibilities.

Baby Bird slept well that night,
dreaming about all the possibilities.
Maybe there are other worlds...!
...And maybe somewhere
there is a bird smaller than me!!,
hoped Baby Bird as he dreamed
about yesterday... and tomorrow.



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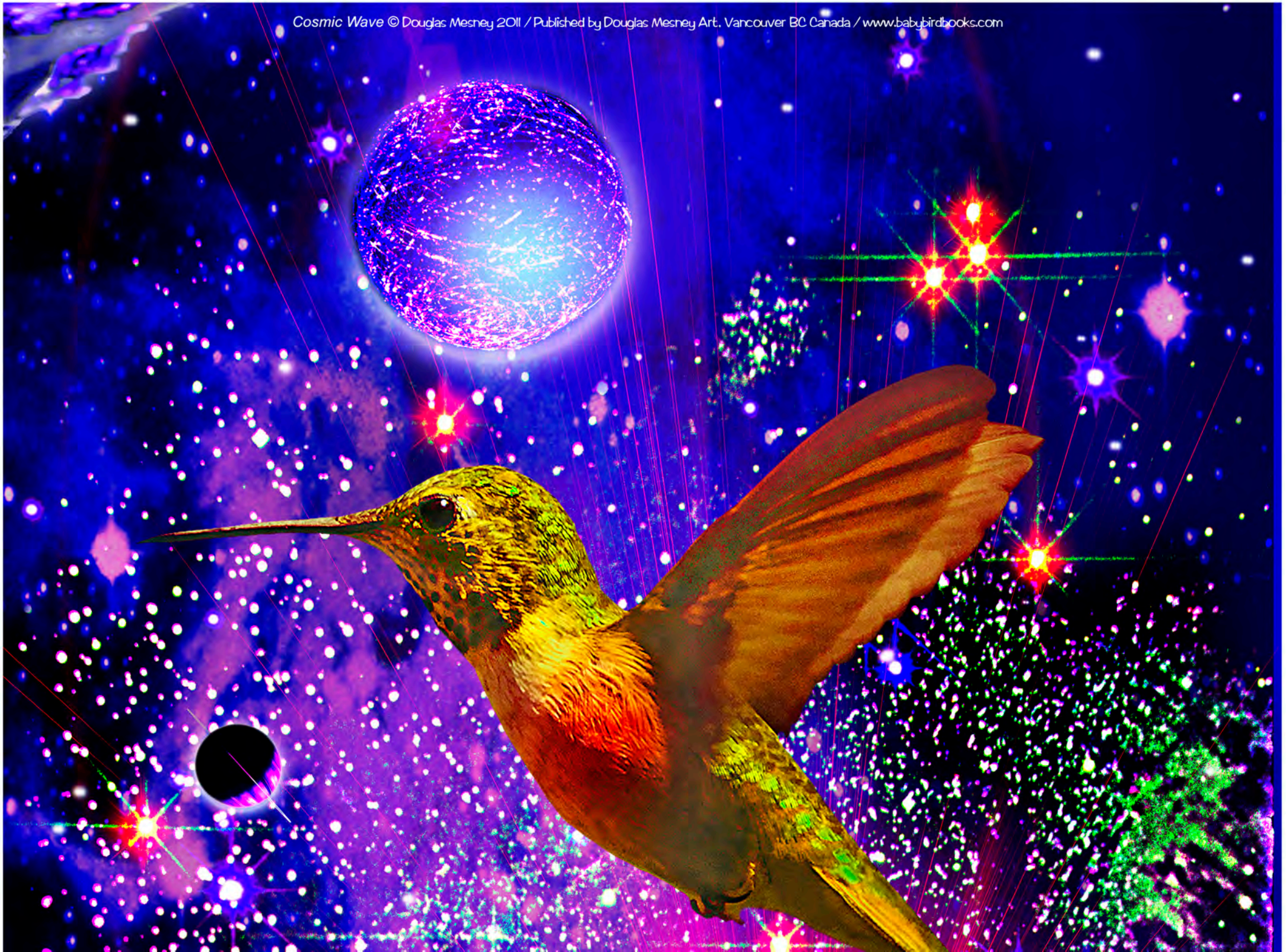
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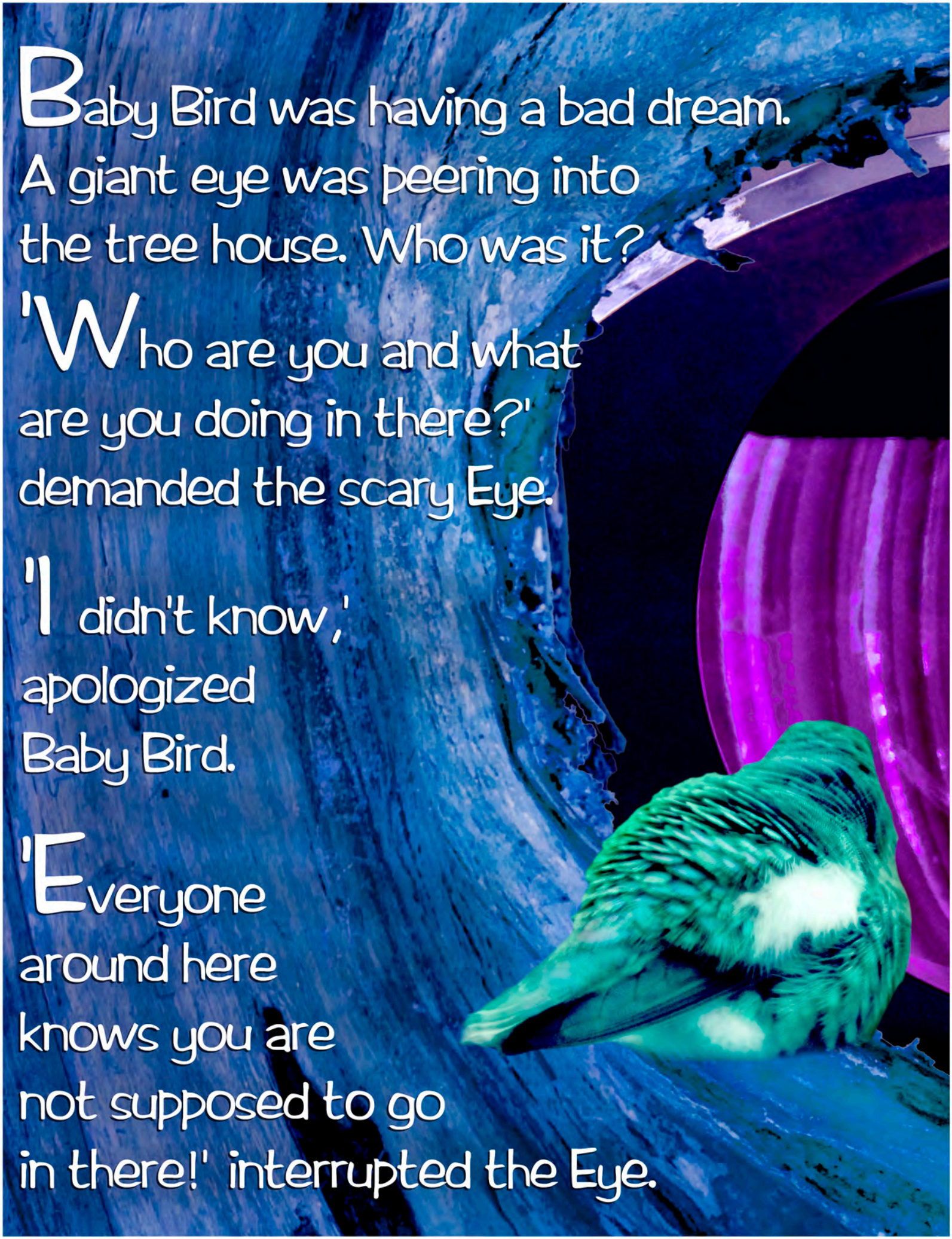
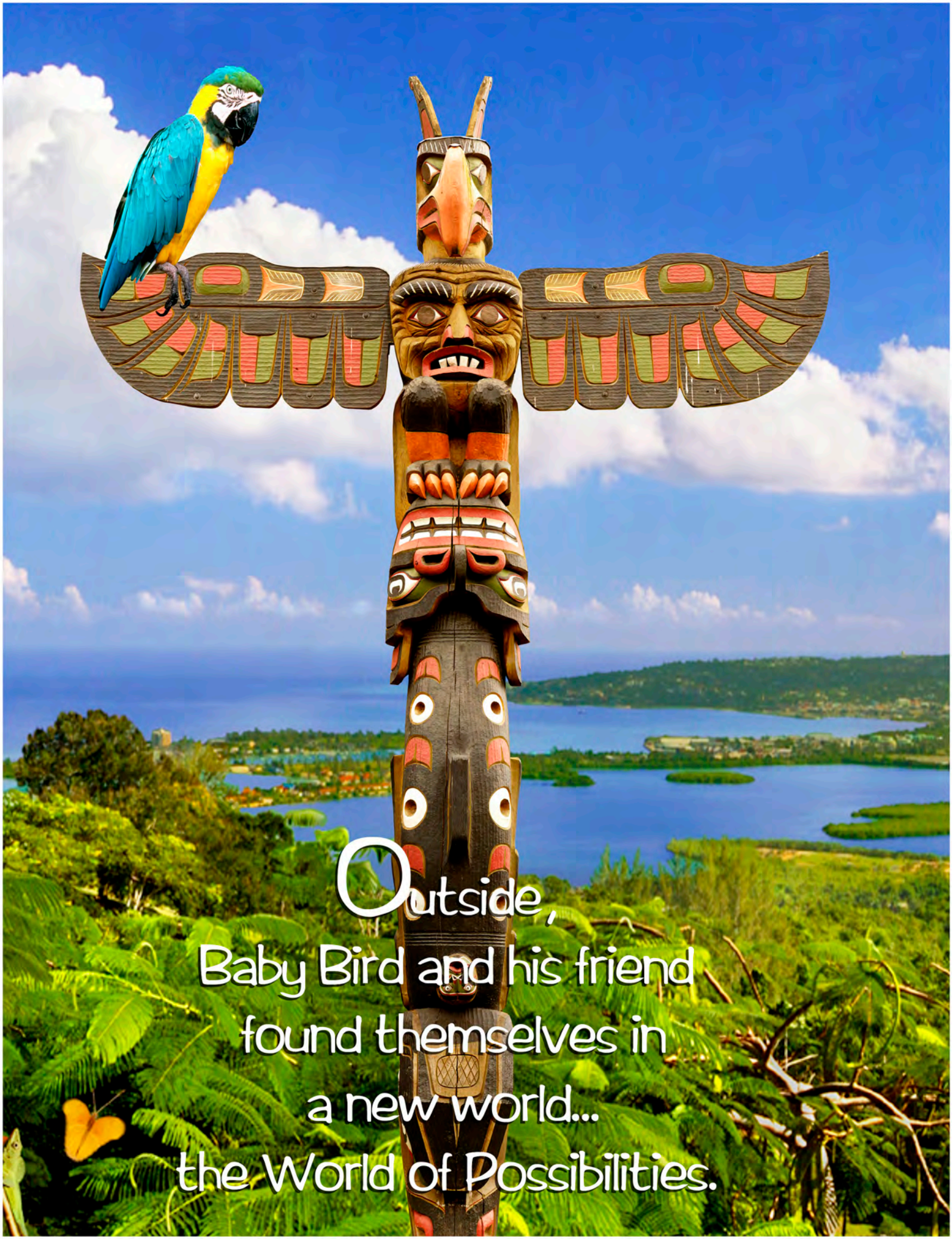
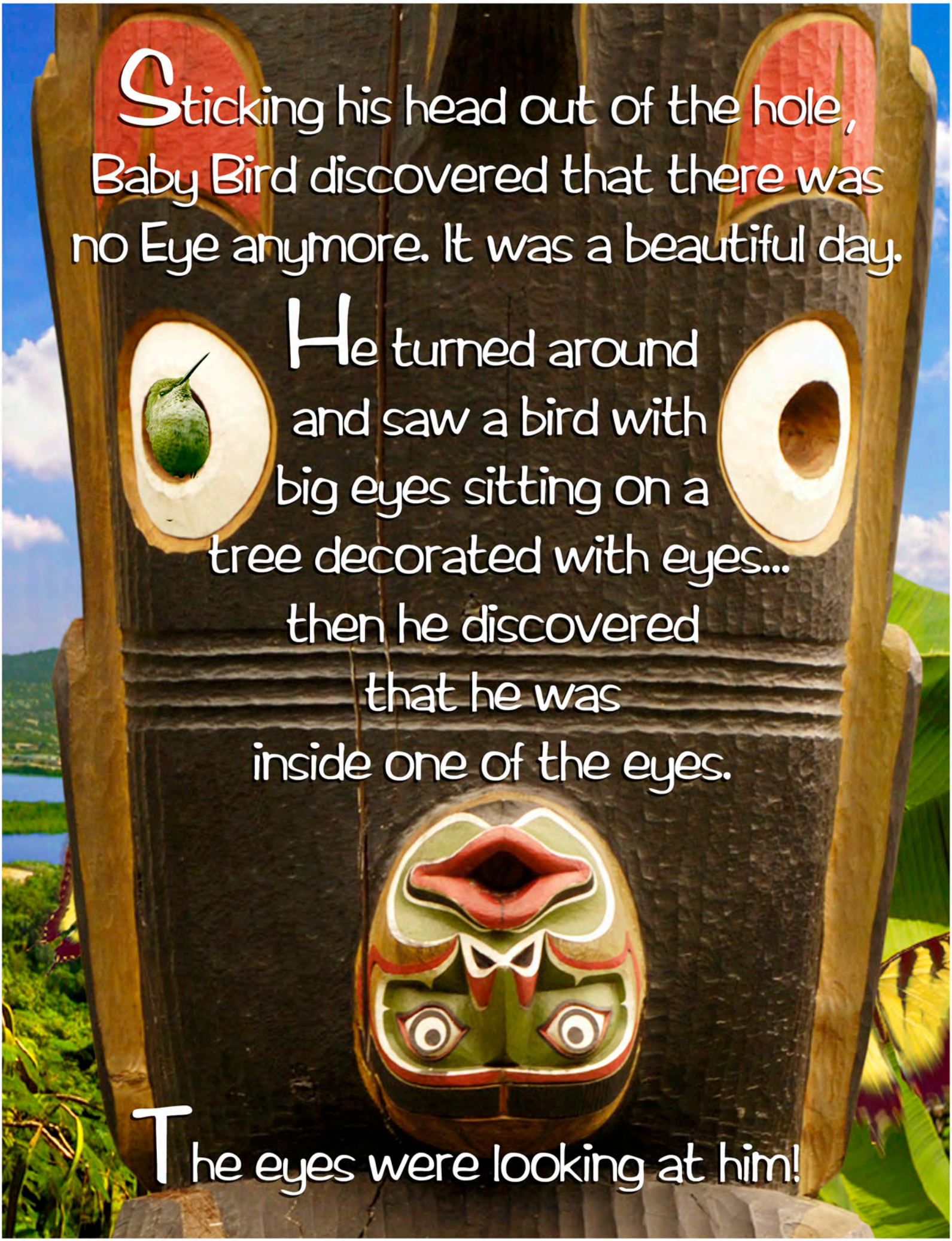
Decorative Art Works with Storybooks℠

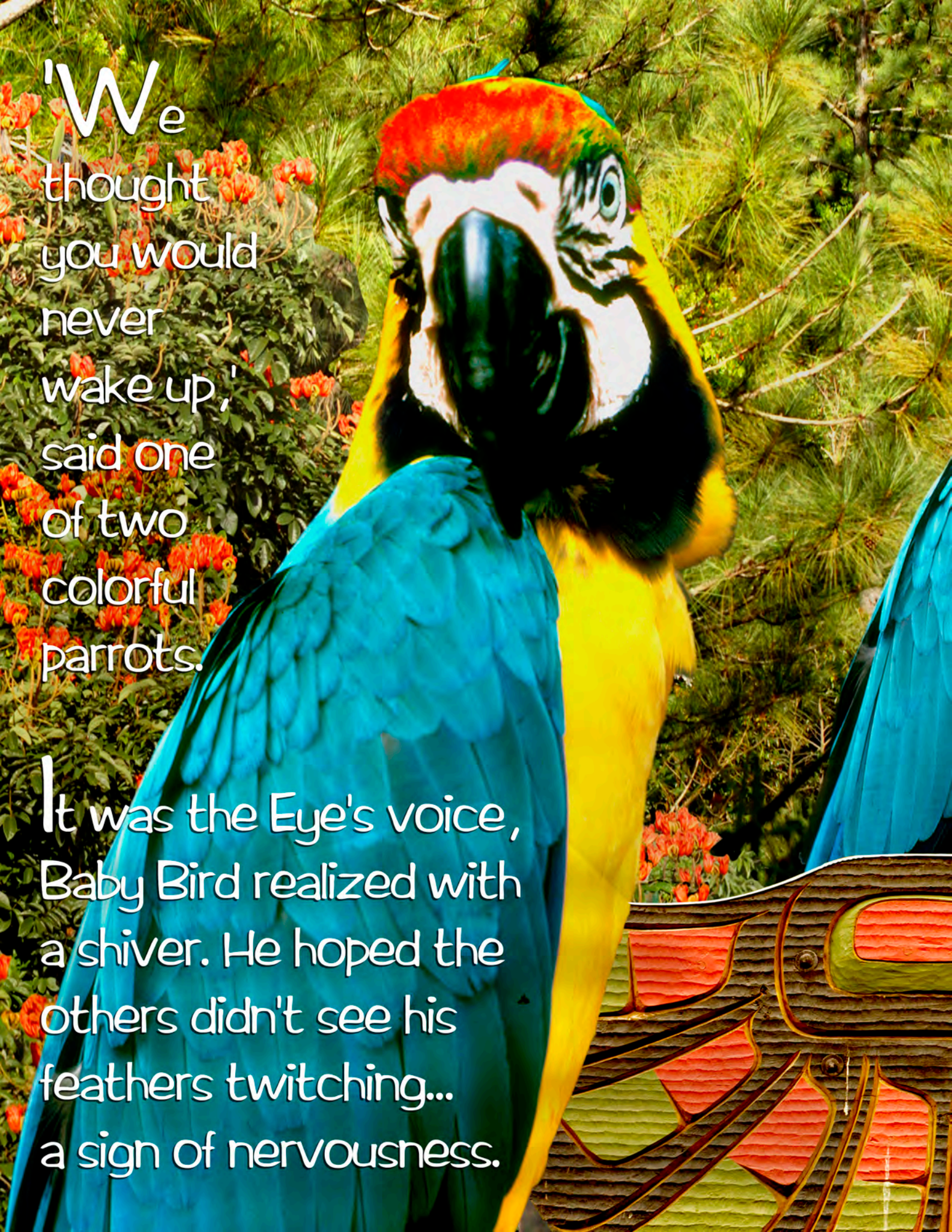
Baby Bird℠ Pictures & Books provide advanced children with a synergistic learning system combining art and storybooks that stimulate faster learning and deeper thinking.

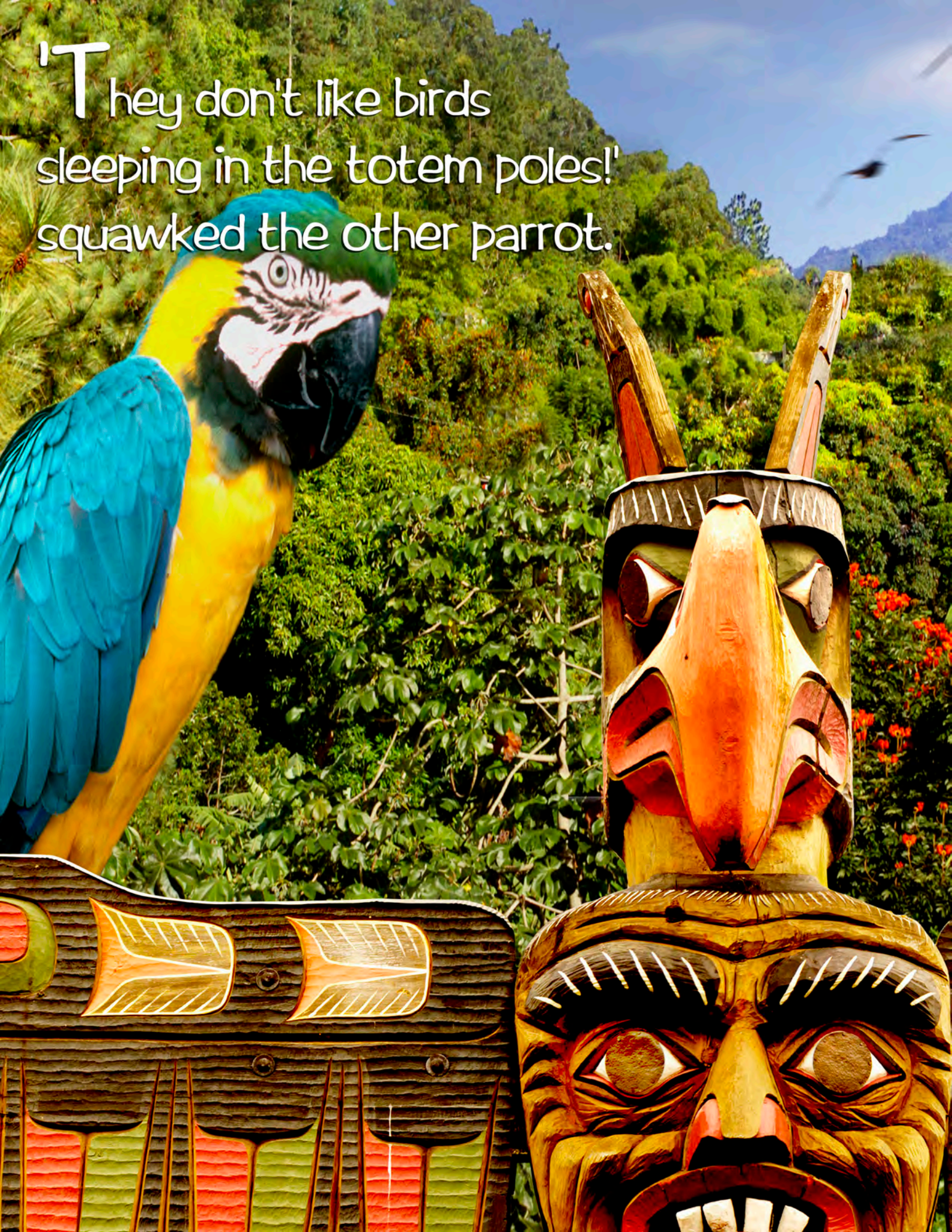

Baby Bird was having a bad dream. A giant eye was peering into the tree house. Who was it?
'Who are you and what are you doing in there?' demanded the scary Eye.
'I didn't know,' apologized Baby Bird.
'Everyone around here knows you are not supposed to go in there!' interrupted the Eye.

'I am not from around here,' explained Baby Bird.
'Where are you from?' the Eye asked quizically.
'I don't know...' Baby Bird tried to explain.
'Get out! Quickly...quickly, before anyone sees you!' warned the Eye.


Outside,
Baby Bird and his friend
found themselves in
a new world...
the World of Possibilities.


Sticking his head out of the hole,
Baby Bird discovered that there was
no Eye anymore. It was a beautiful day.
He turned around
and saw a bird with
big eyes sitting on a
tree decorated with eyes...
then he discovered
that he was
inside one of the eyes.
The eyes were looking at him!

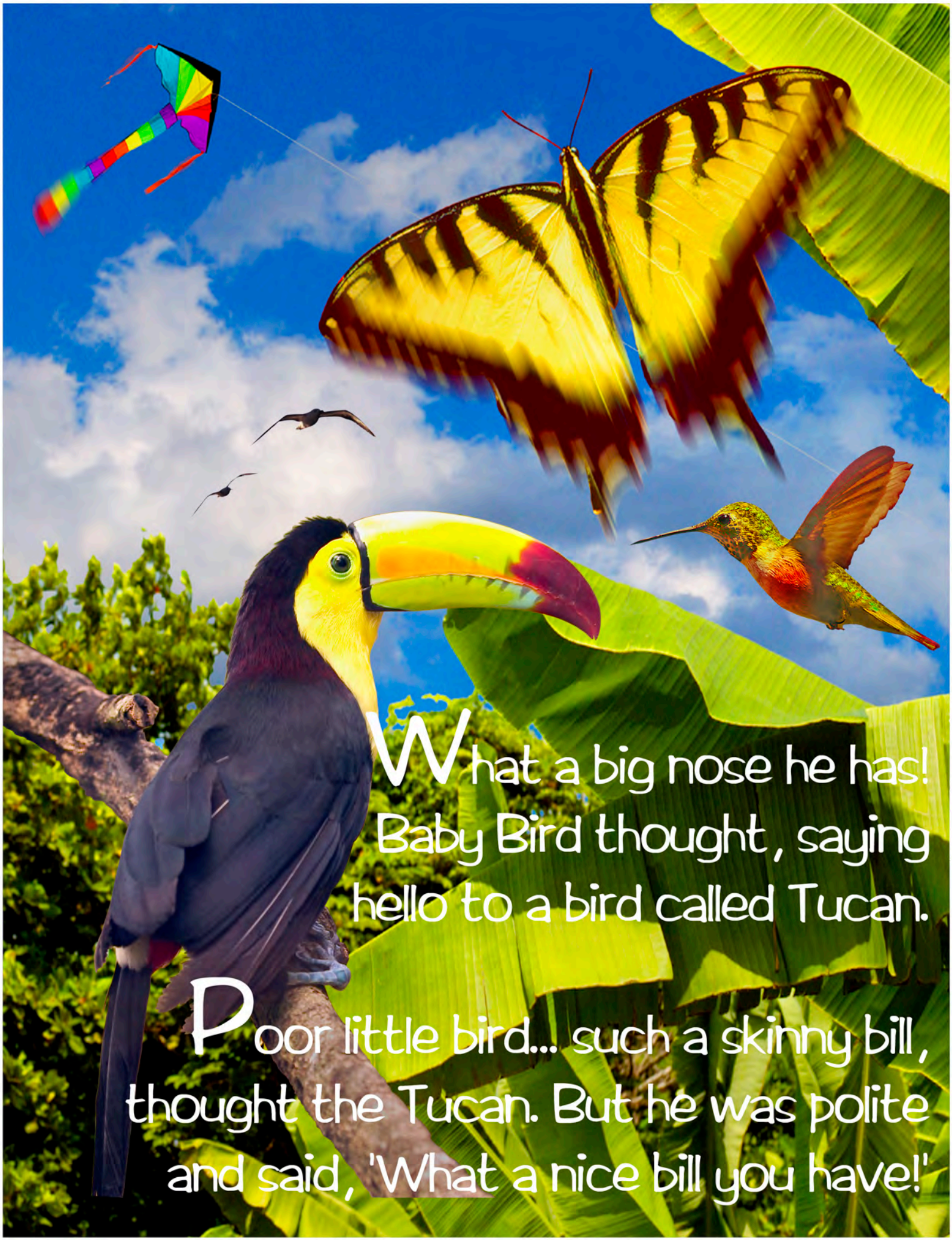

'We thought you would never wake up,' said one of two colorful parrots.
It was the Eye's voice, Baby Bird realized with a shiver. He hoped the others didn't see his feathers twitching... a sign of nervousness.


'They don't like birds
sleeping in the totem poles!'
squawked the other parrot.

Baby Bird's friend was so hungry
that she rushed to the first flower
she saw and started breakfast
without saying hello to anyone.
'Your friend is rude,'
complained the voice of the Eye.

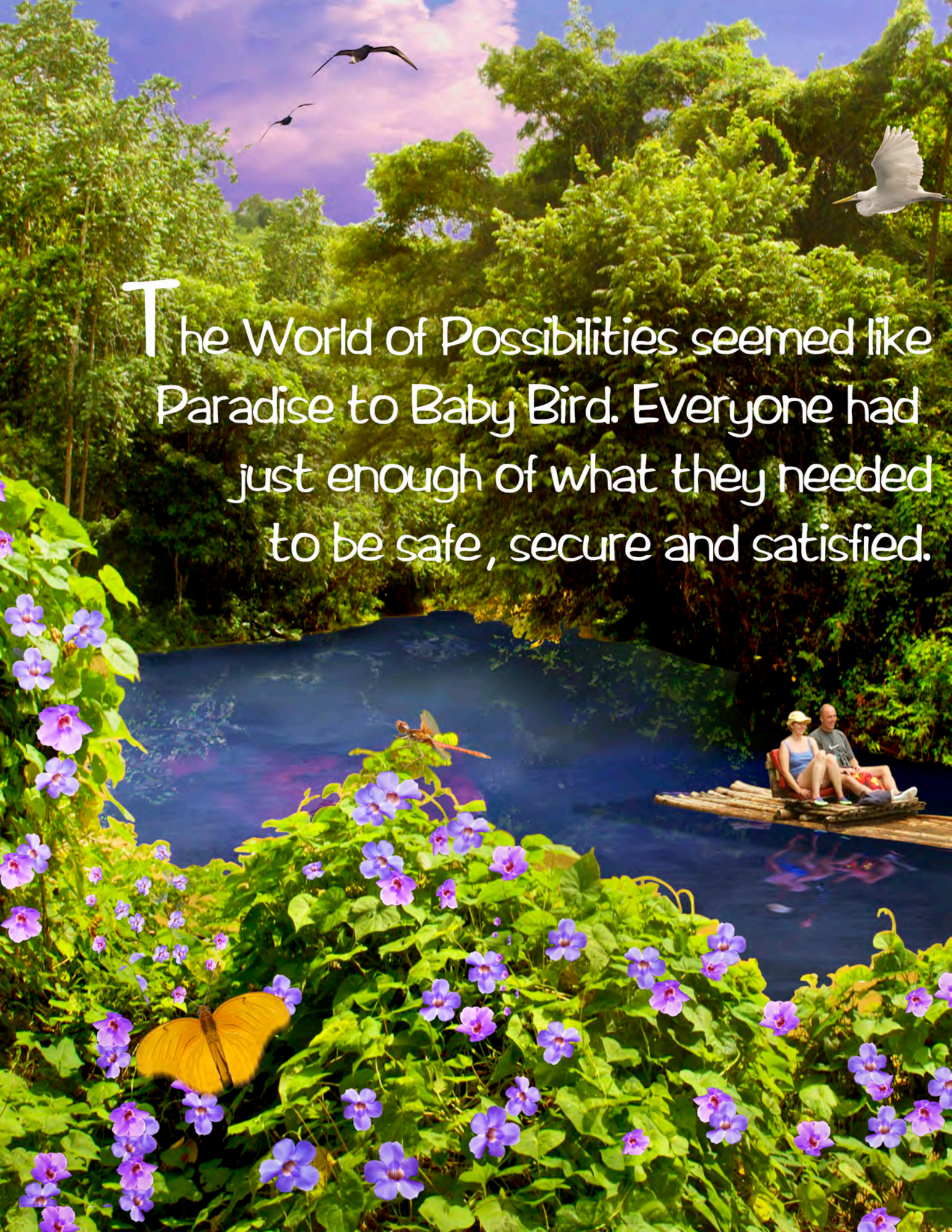
The World of Possibilities reminded Baby Bird of his pond at home.
'Red flowers are my favorites,' Baby Bird's friend decided after tasting more colors than you can imagine. She drank so much red fruit juice that she turned pink!

A blue lizzard
winked at them
and turned green from head
to tail right before their eyes!
Everyone thinks I'm showing off,' said
the colorful lizzard. 'But it helps me hide.'

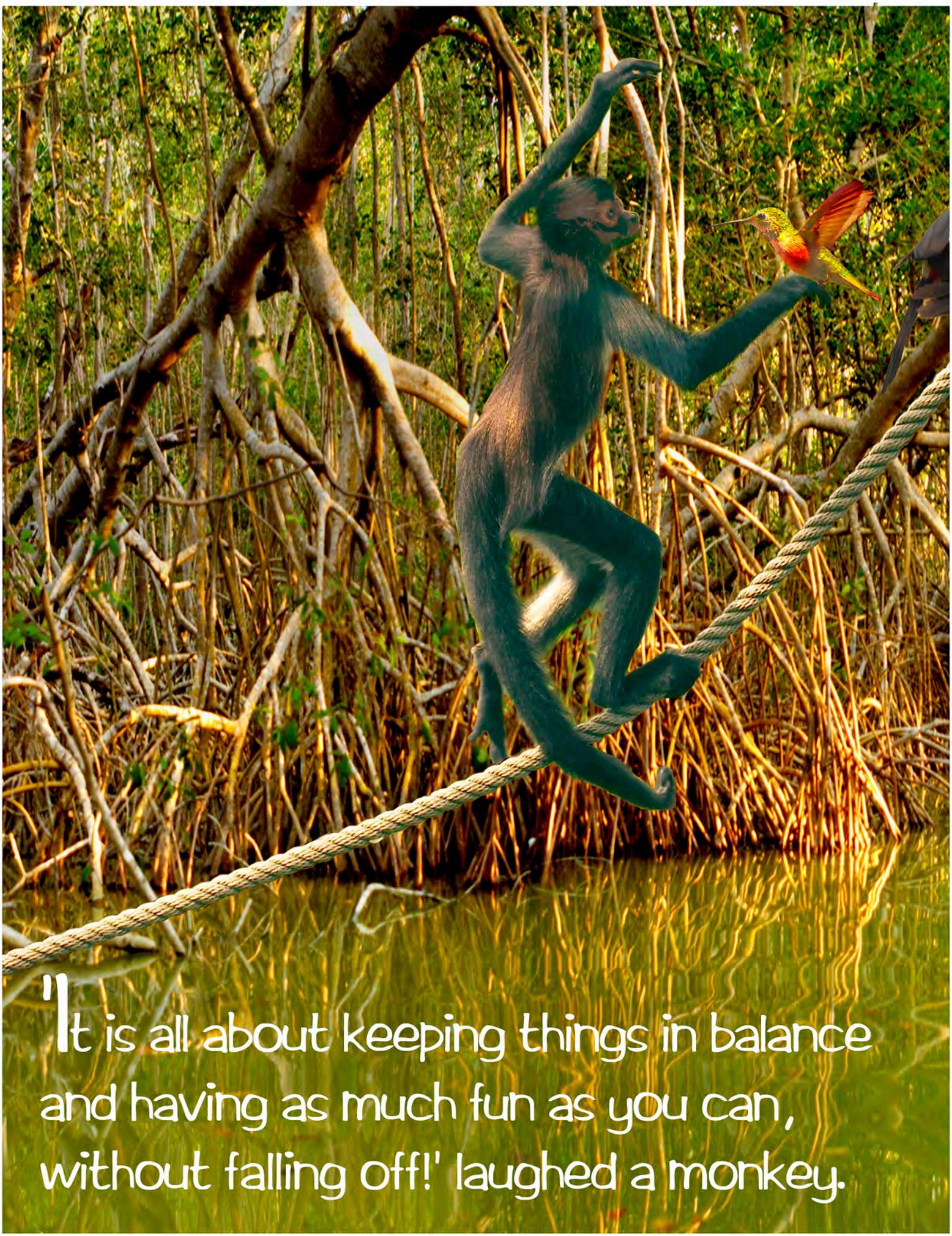

What a big nose he has! Baby Bird thought, saying hello to a bird called Tucan.
Poor little bird... such a skinny bill, thought the Tucan. But he was polite and said, 'What a nice bill you have!'

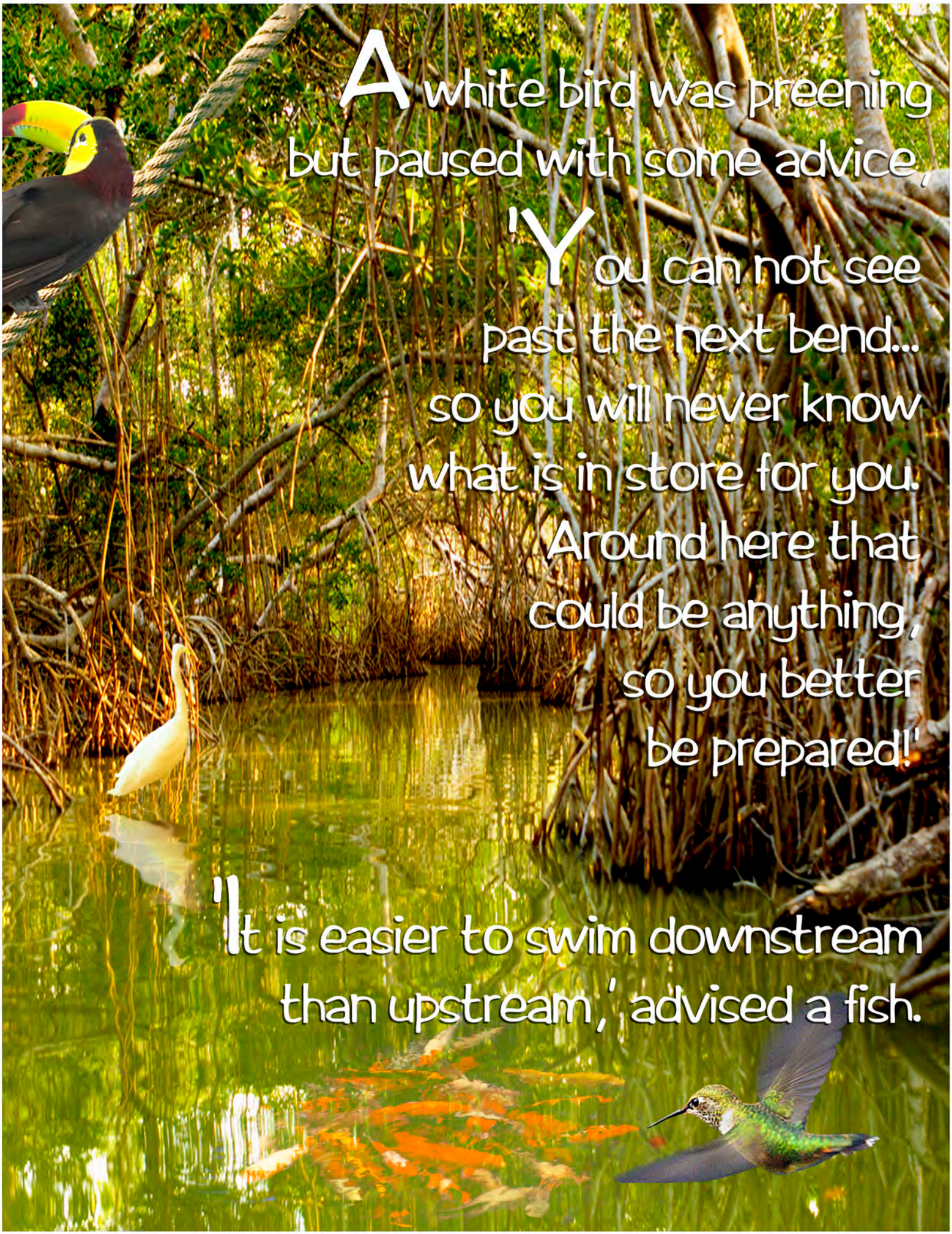
Once word got out that
Baby Bird and his friend were visiting,
everyone came out to say hello
and to see if they could play together
around the banana tree.

Baby Bird thought
the yellow bananas were growing
upside down until a yellow butterfly
corrected him, adding that, 'If you fly
upside down, they will look right side up.'


The World of Possibilities seemed like Paradise to Baby Bird. Everyone had just enough of what they needed to be safe, secure and satisfied.

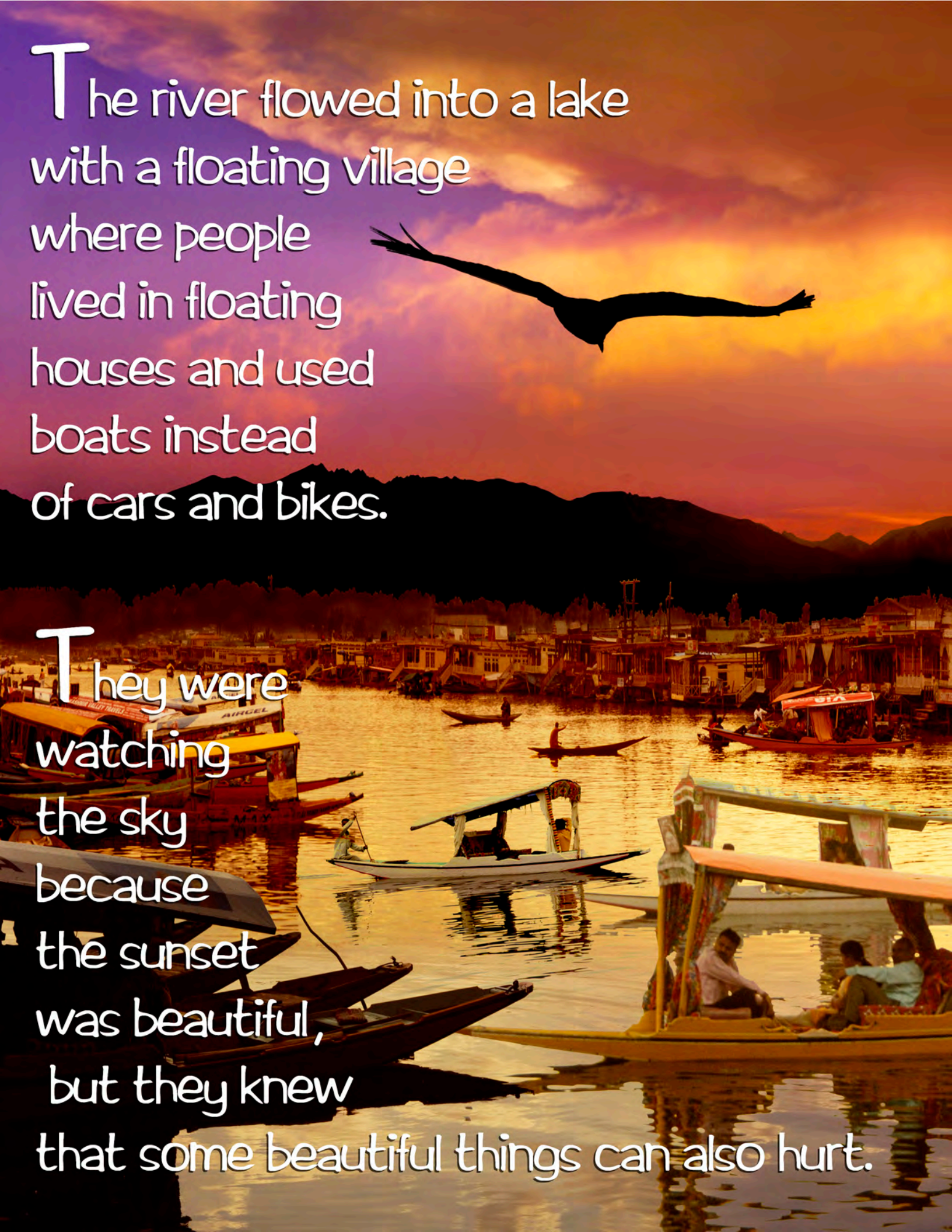
People were having fun floating
along the river on a raft, singing,
'Row row row your boat,
Gently down the stream,
Merrily, merrily, merrily, merrily,
Life is but a dream.'


"It is all about keeping things in balance
and having as much fun as you can,
without falling off!" laughed a monkey.

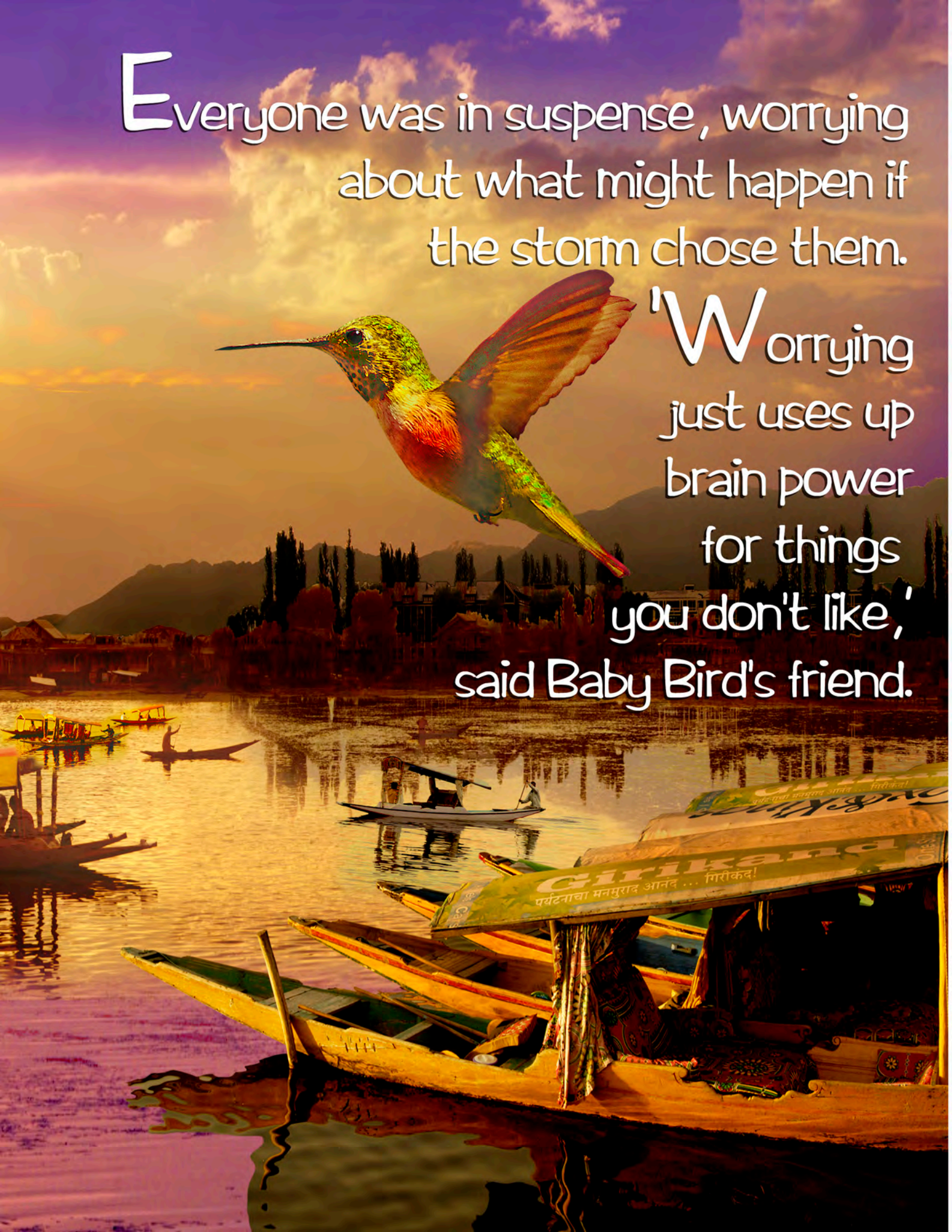

A white bird was preening
but paused with some advice,
'You can not see
past the next bend...
so you will never know
what is in store for you.
Around here that
could be anything,
so you better
be prepared!'
'It is easier to swim downstream
than upstream,' advised a fish.

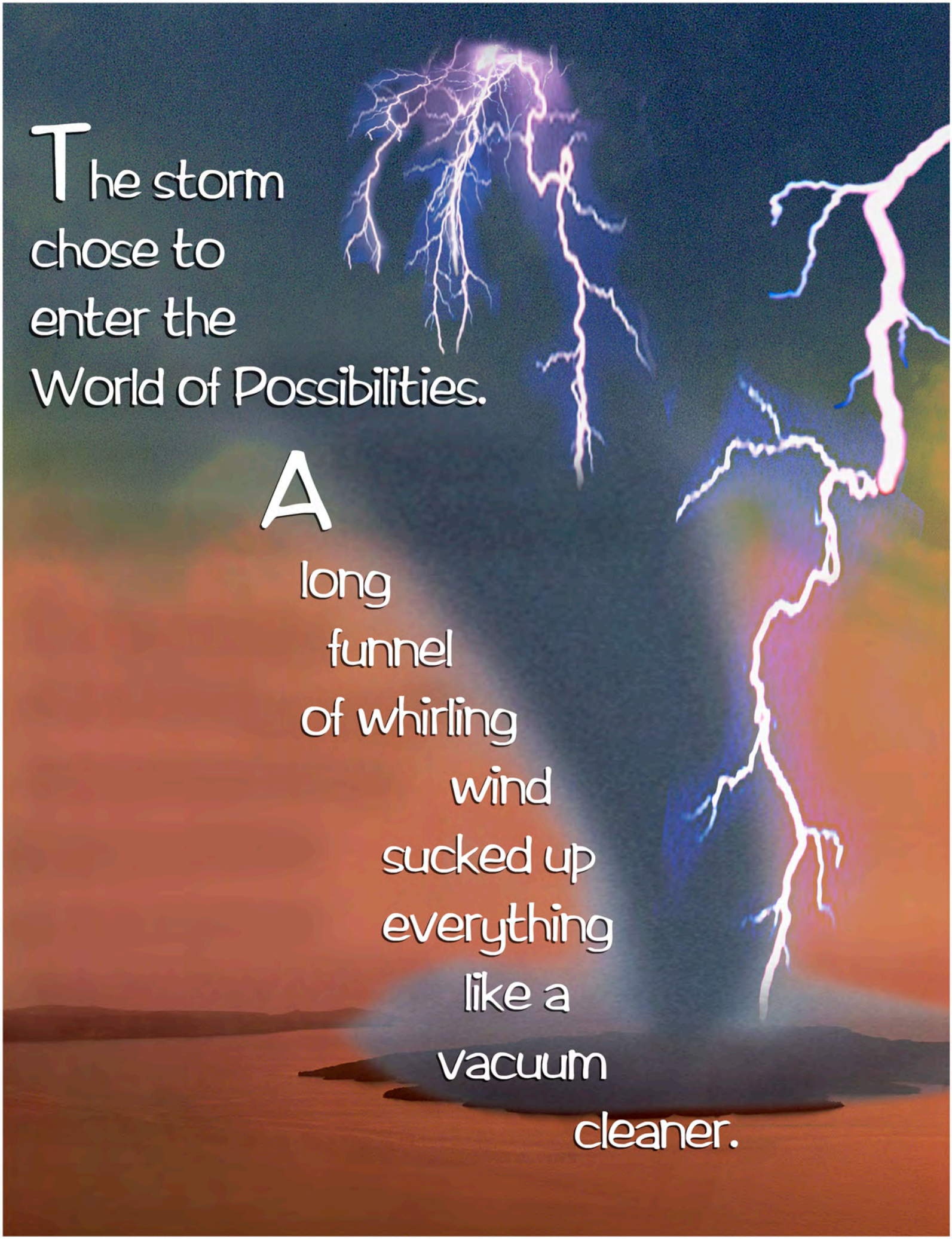
'Birds are lucky!
We can see things
from different
perspectives,'
said
Baby
Bird.
'We can make better choices
because up here we see more than
down there,' agreed his friend.
Water only flows down a hill, never up.

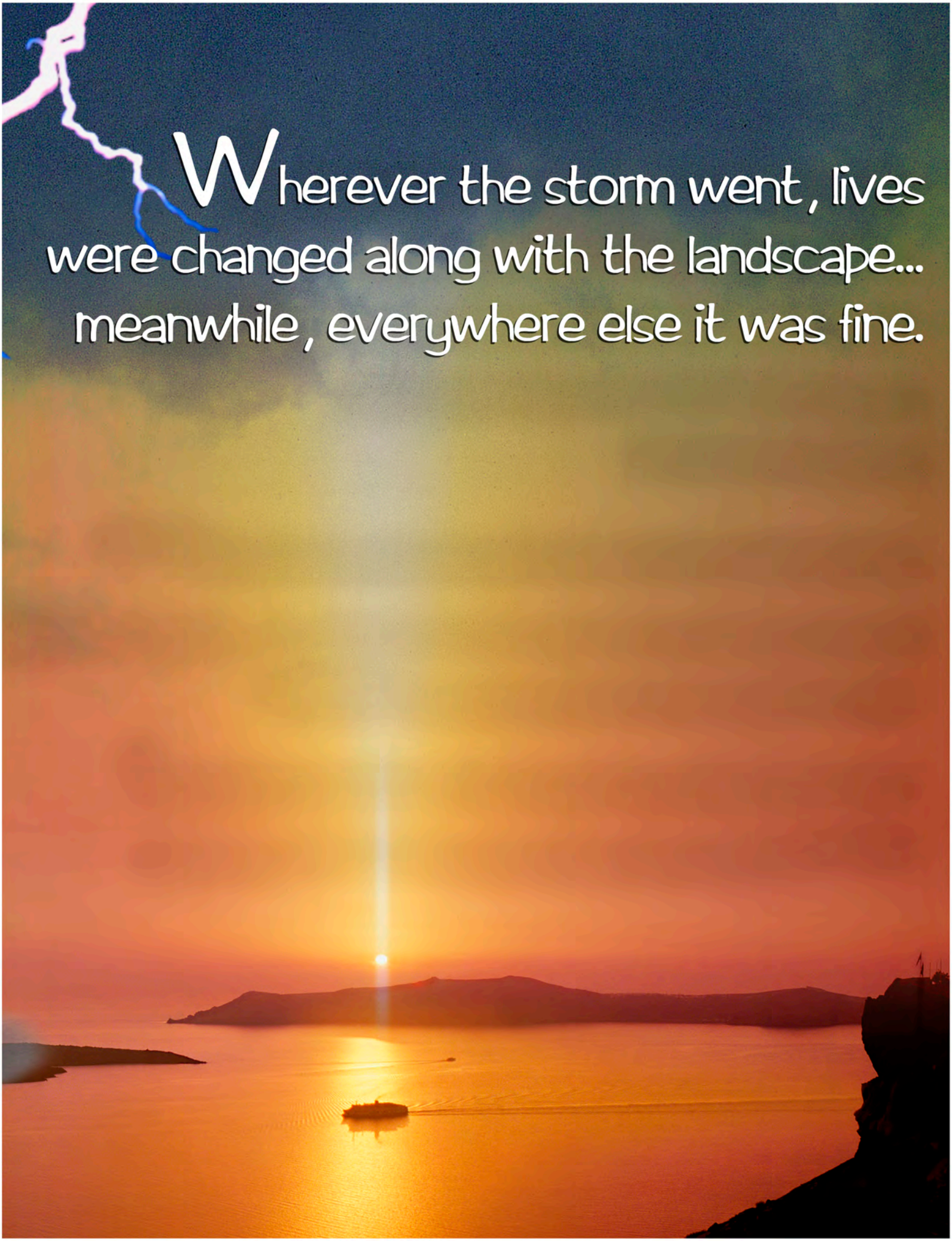
Rivers
wind and twist
because there are
no straight lines
in Nature.
Only people
make things
straight.
Rivers always flow toward the sea.

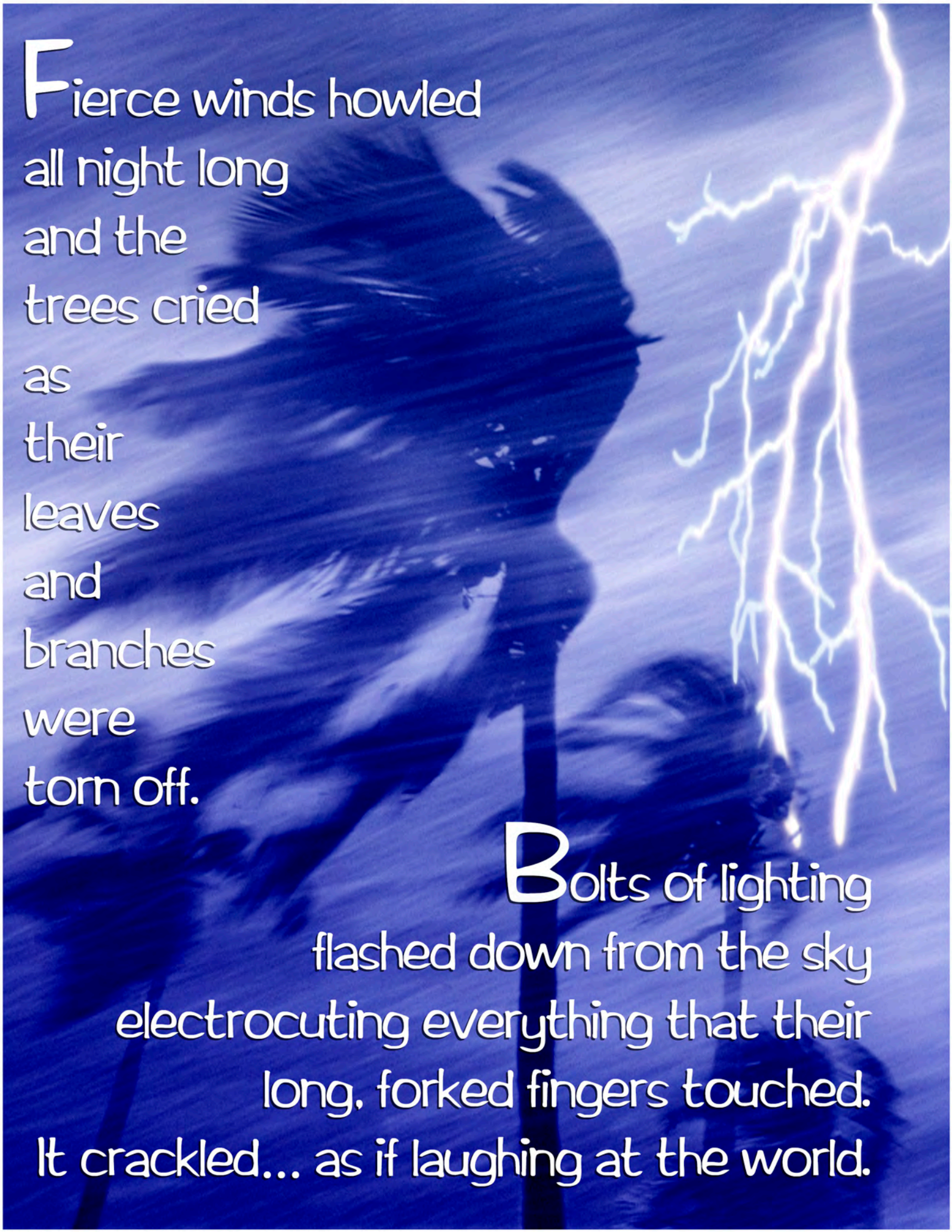

The river flowed into a lake
with a floating village
where people
lived in floating
houses and used
boats instead
of cars and bikes.
They were
watching
the sky
because
the sunset
was beautiful,
but they knew
that some beautiful things can also hurt.

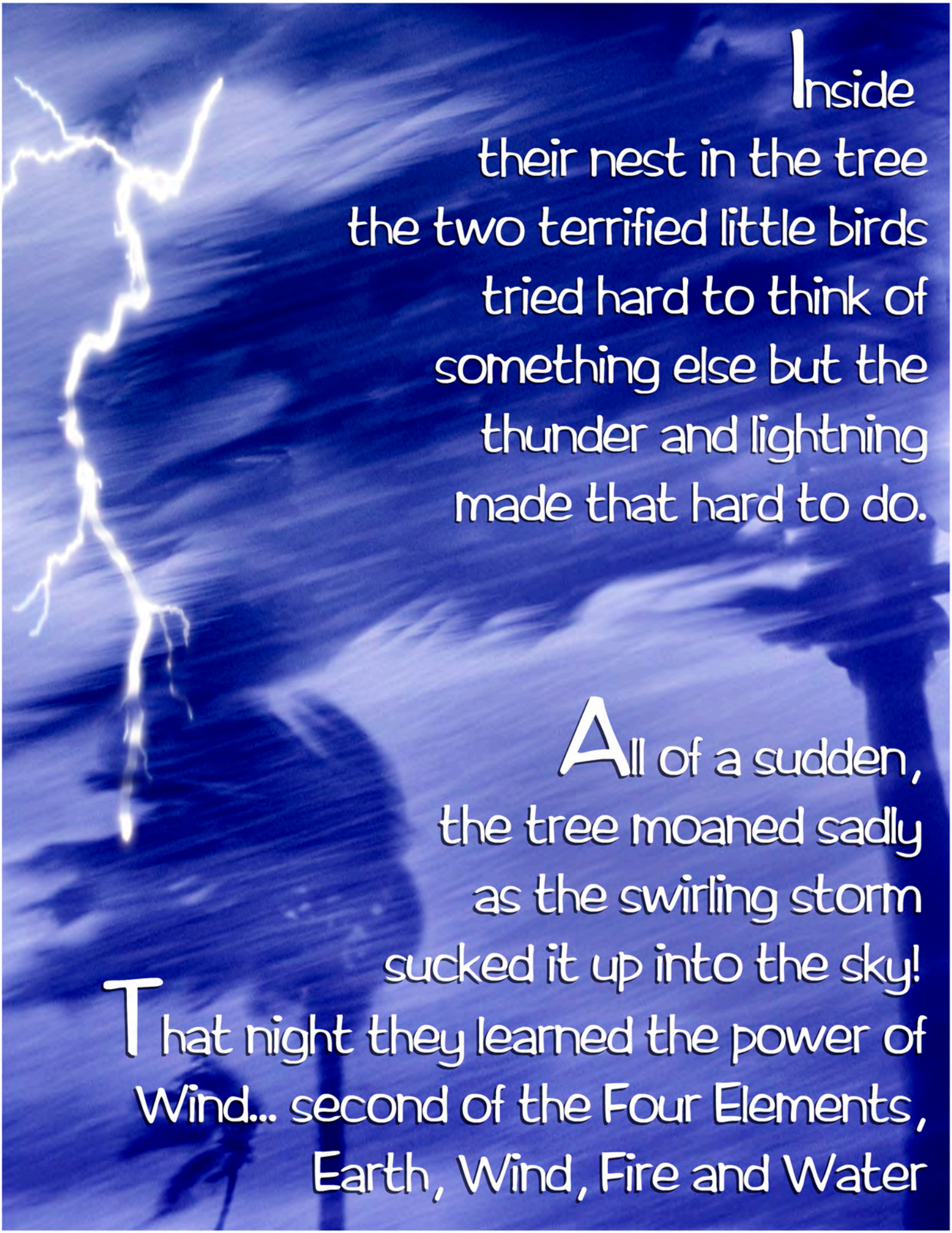
HOTELLAKESIDE


Everyone was in suspense, worrying
about what might happen if
the storm chose them.
'Worrying
just uses up
brain power
for things
you don't like,'
said Baby Bird's friend.


The storm chose to enter the World of Possibilities.
A long funnel of whirling wind sucked up everything like a vacuum cleaner.


Wherever the storm went, lives were changed along with the landscape... meanwhile, everywhere else it was fine.

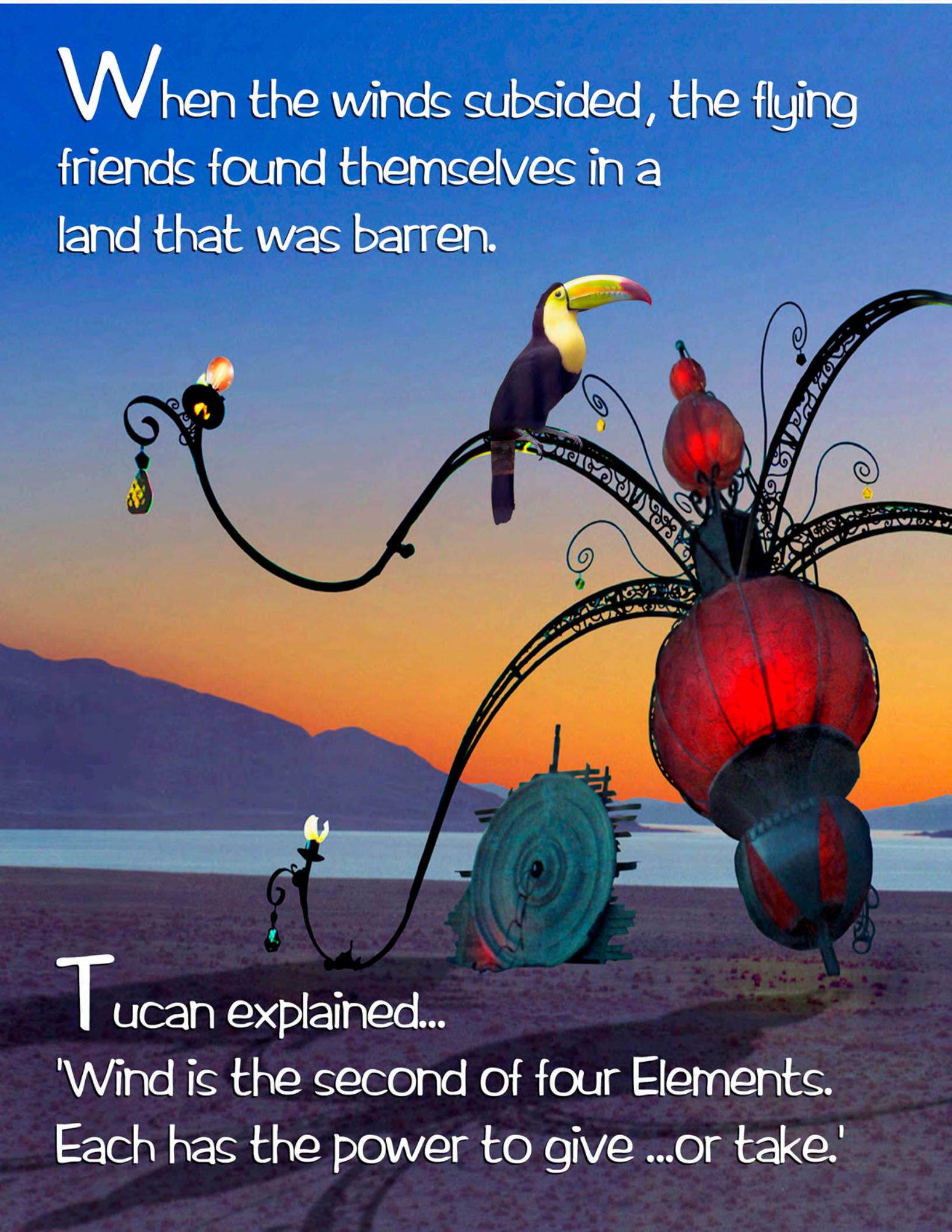

Fierce winds howled
all night long
and the
trees cried
as
their
leaves
and
branches
were
torn off.
Bolts of lighting
flashed down from the sky
electrocuting everything that their
long, forked fingers touched.
It crackled... as if laughing at the world.


Inside
their nest in the tree
the two terrified little birds
tried hard to think of
something else but the
thunder and lightning
made that hard to do.
All of a sudden,
the tree moaned sadly
as the swirling storm
sucked it up into the sky!
That night they learned the power of
Wind... second of the Four Elements,
Earth, Wind, Fire and Water

Baby Bird spun through
the sky propelled by
the whirling winds of Fate.

Electrified air tickled his feathers and ozone in the air tickled his nose.
Lightning froze everything just like a flash camera.

When the winds subsided, the flying friends found themselves in a land that was barren.



Tucan explained...
'Wind is the second of four Elements.
Each has the power to give ...or take.'

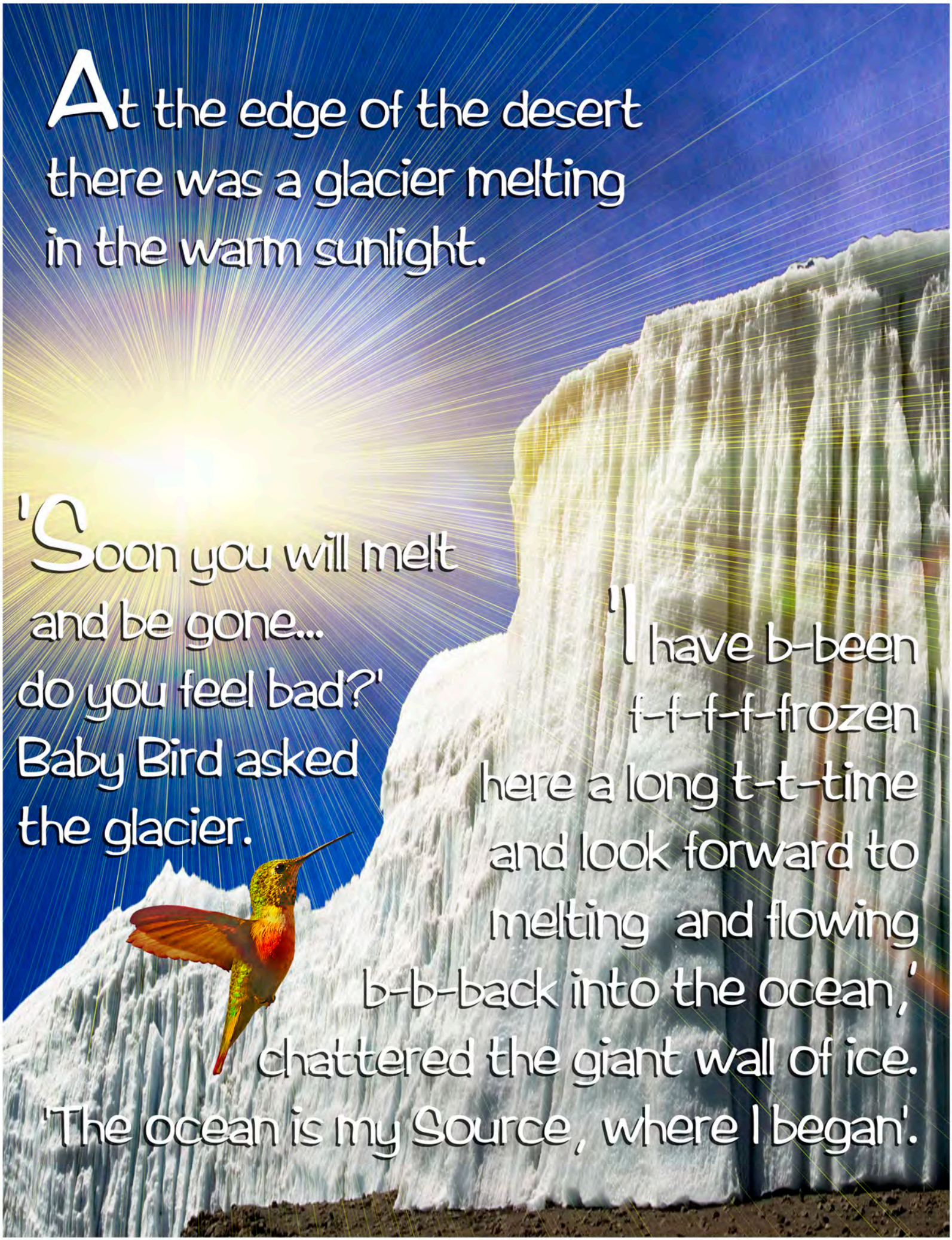
Every end starts a beginning...
every beginning starts an ending.
So it goes in the Cycle of Life.

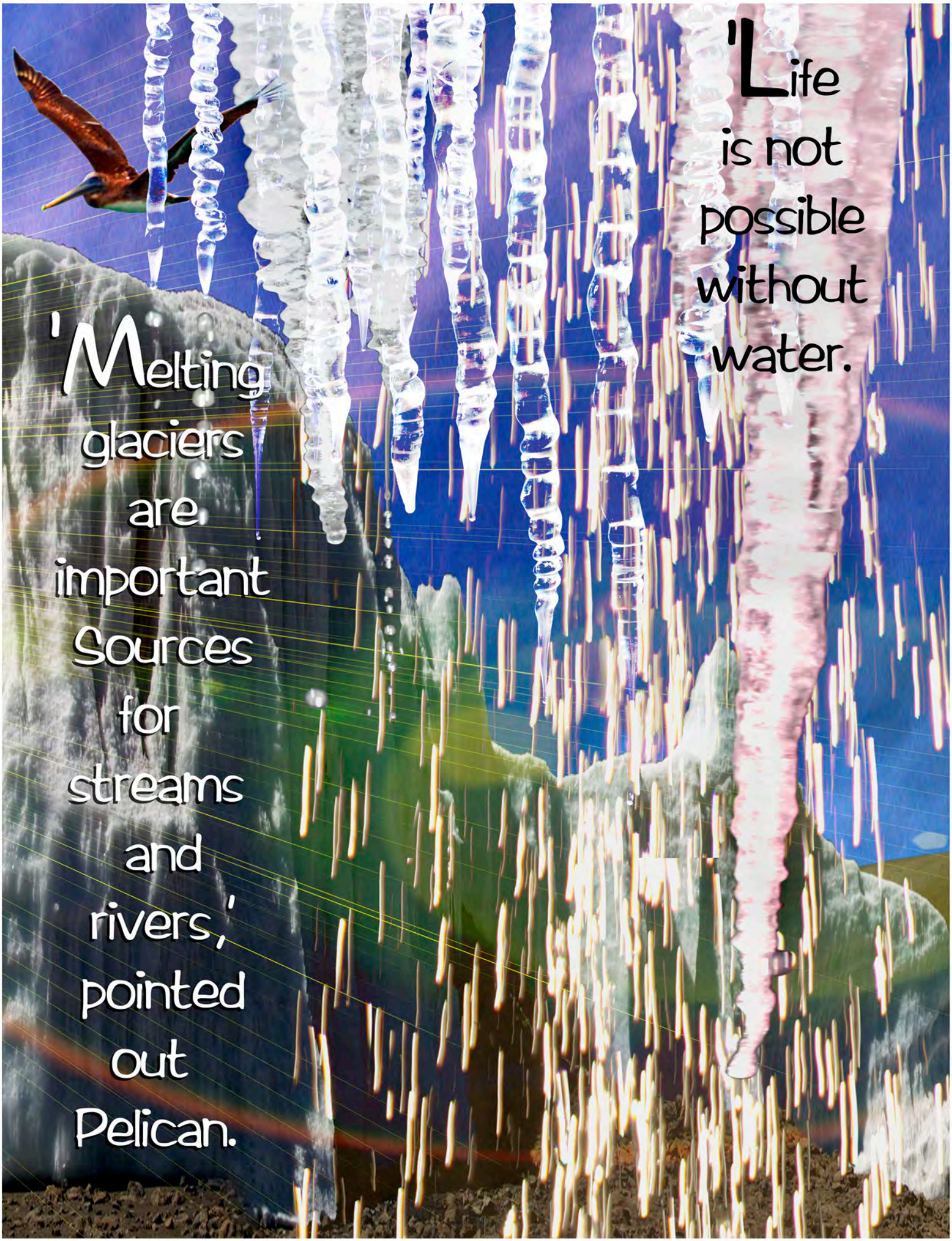
The only constant is change.
Things never stop changing.
Things begin... change... and end.

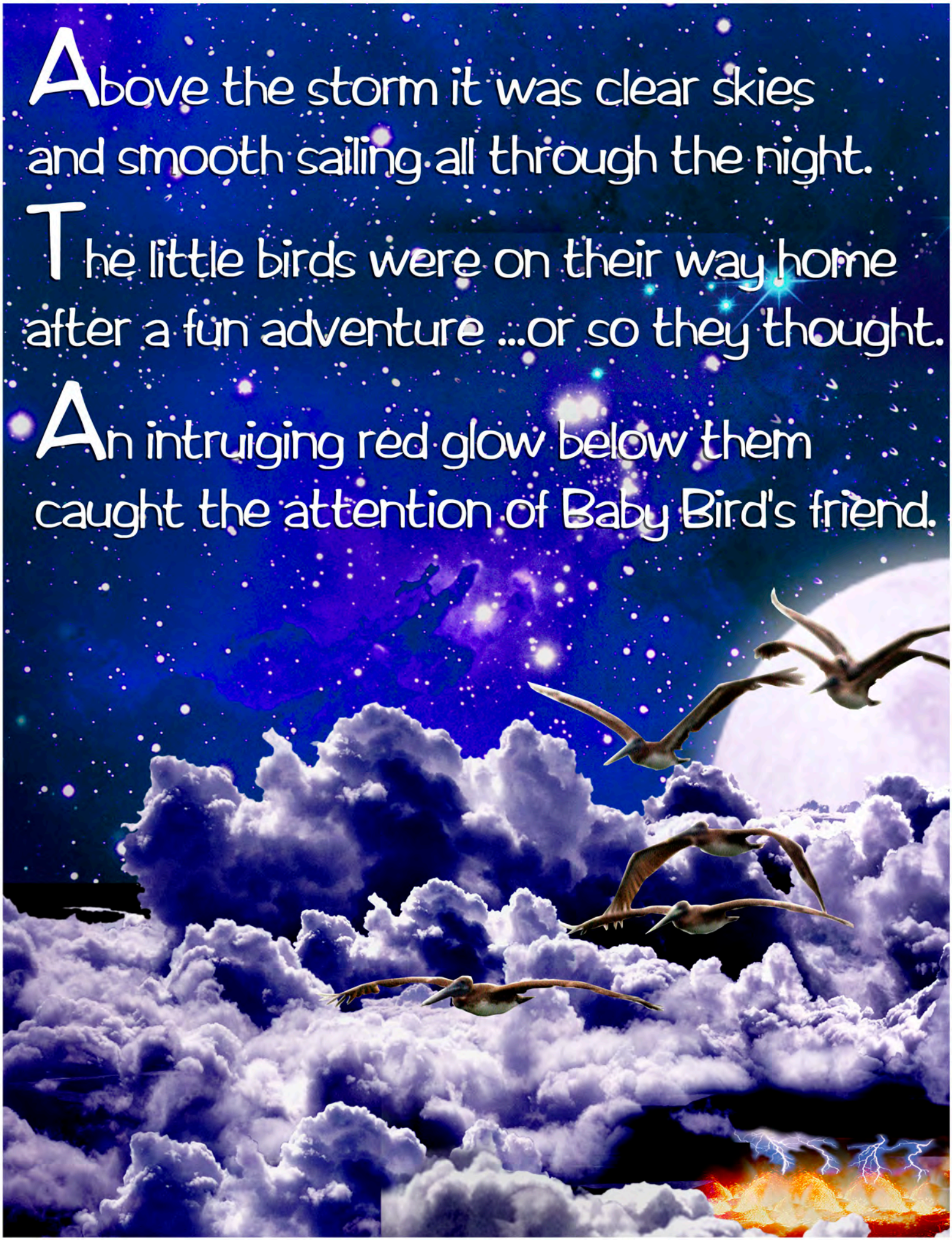
'Wind cleared the way for a new cycle.
Jungles will grow here again....,
sooner than you can imagine.
Until then, this desert will be Paradise
for those who like it hot and dry!'
said a passing pelican looking
for some fish for dinner.

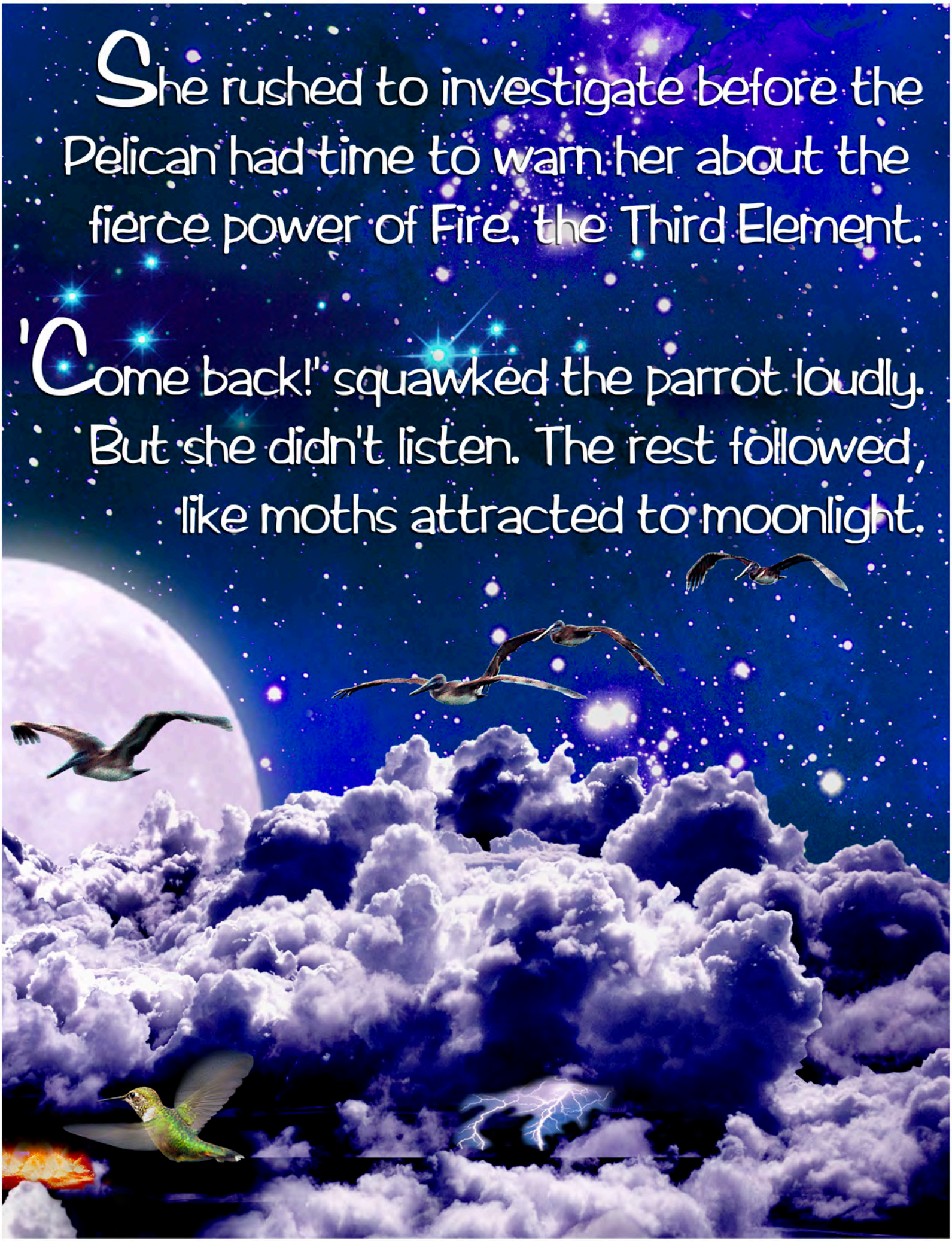
'Where are you going?'
asked Baby Bird.

'Beyond the horizon,' said the pelican,
'To the Land of Plenty at the end of
the rainbow... Follow us!'
So they did.

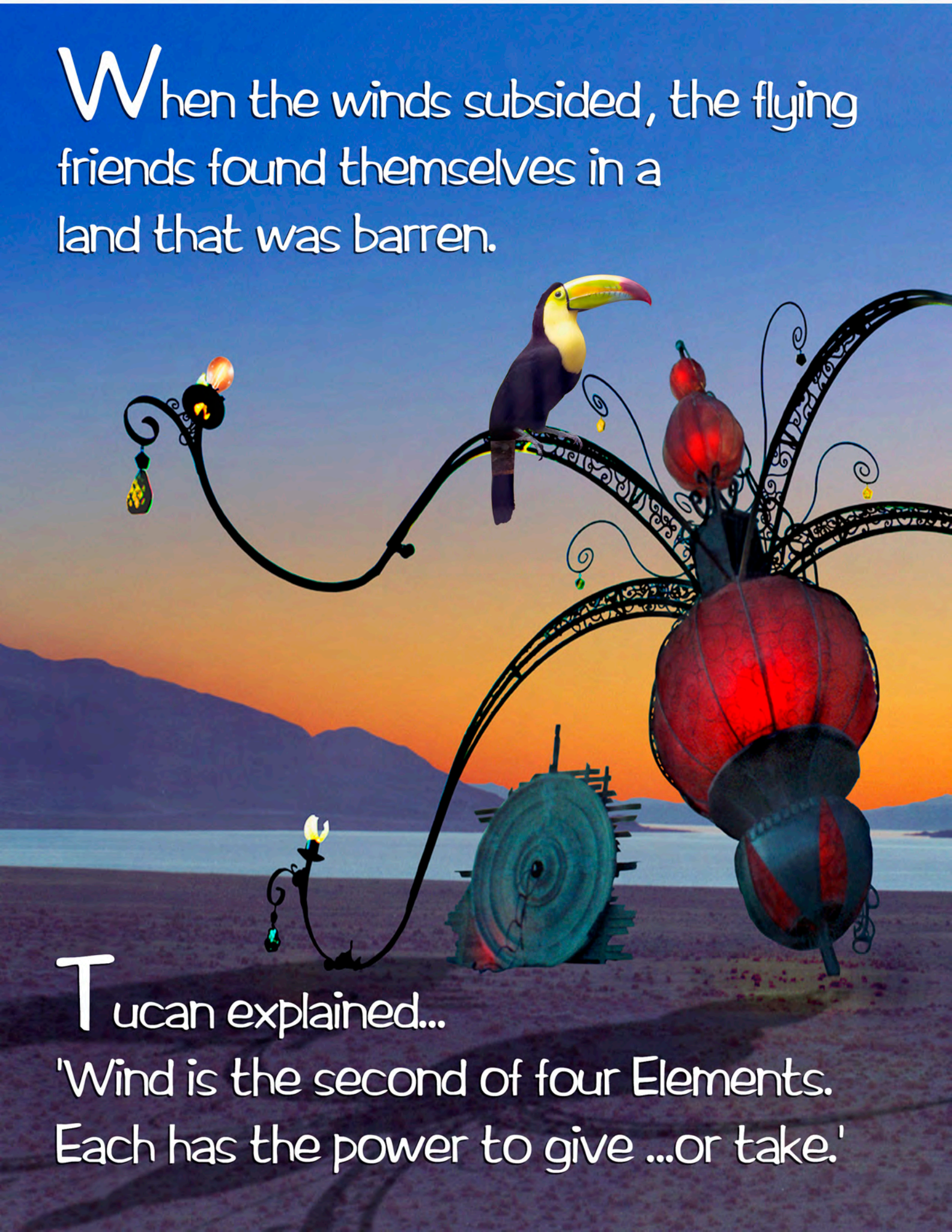

At the edge of the desert there was a glacier melting in the warm sunlight.
'Soon you will melt and be gone... do you feel bad?' Baby Bird asked the glacier.
'I have b-been f-f-f-f-frozen here a long t-t-time and look forward to melting and flowing b-b-back into the ocean,' chattered the giant wall of ice. 'The ocean is my Source, where I began'.


'Life is not possible without water.
'Melting glaciers are important sources for streams and rivers,' pointed out Pelican.


Above the storm it was clear skies
and smooth sailing all through the night.
The little birds were on their way home
after a fun adventure ...or so they thought.
An intriguing red glow below them
caught the attention of Baby Bird's friend.


She rushed to investigate before the Pelican had time to warn her about the fierce power of Fire, the Third Element.
'Come back!' squawked the parrot loudly. But she didn't listen. The rest followed, like moths attracted to moonlight.

When the winds subsided, the flying friends found themselves in a land that was barren.



Tucan explained...
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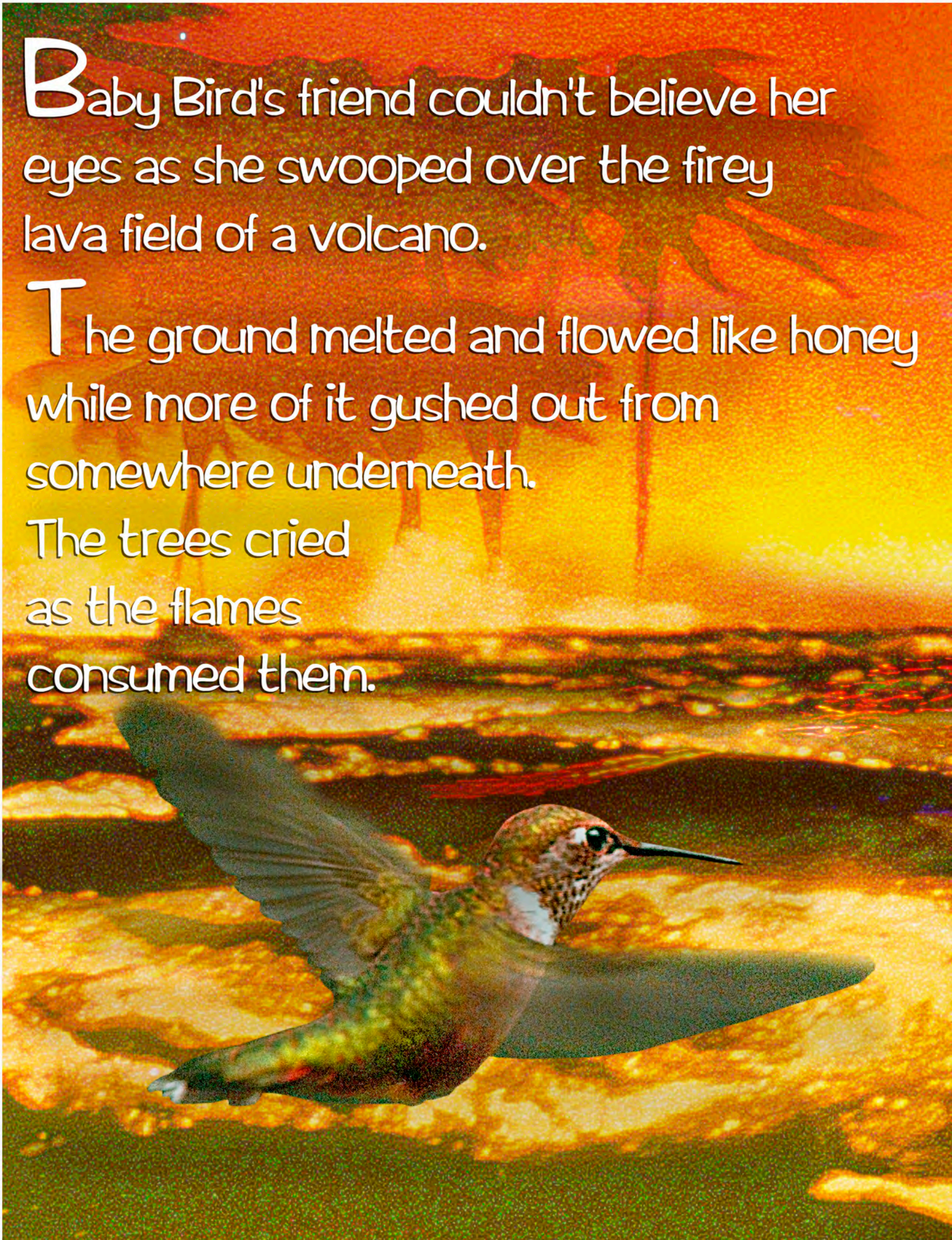
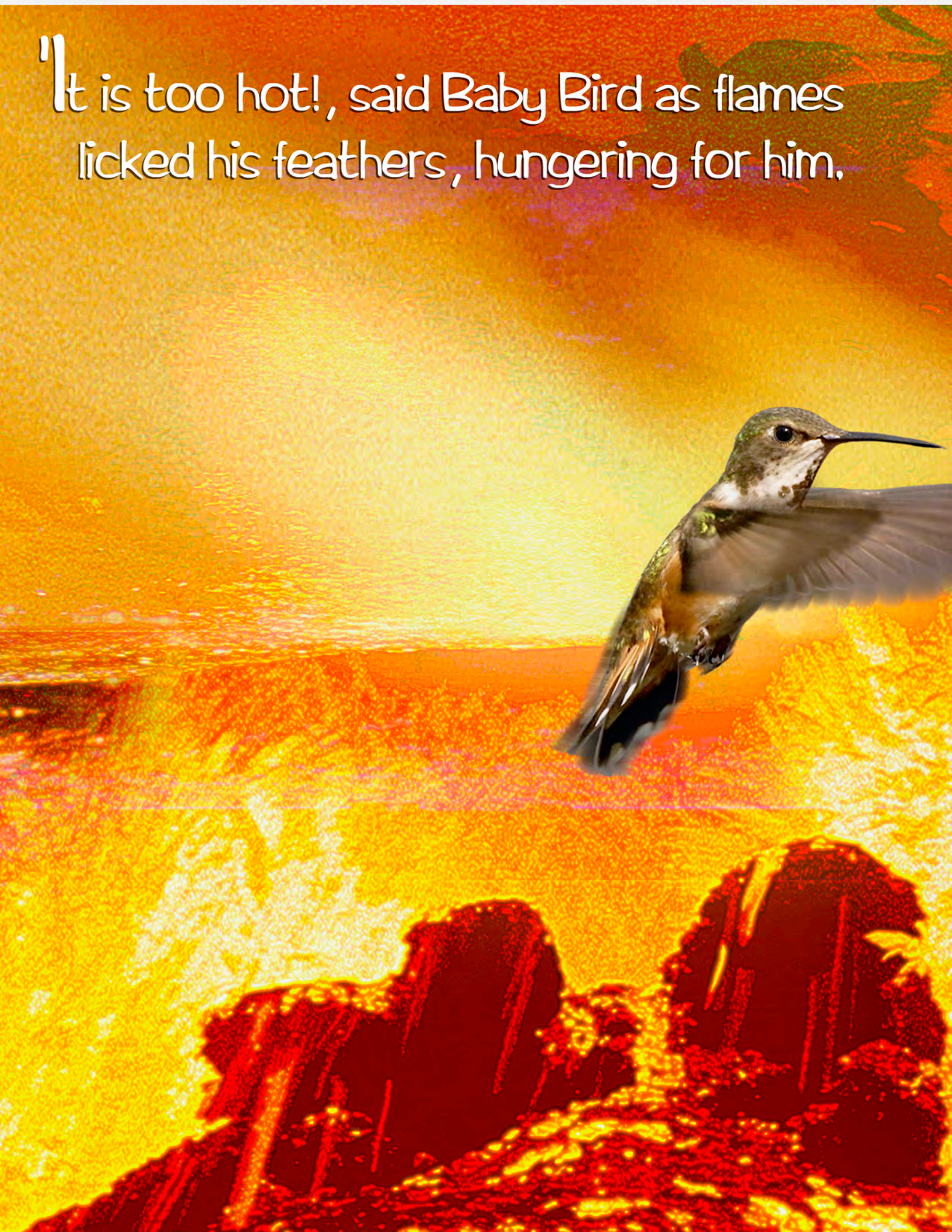
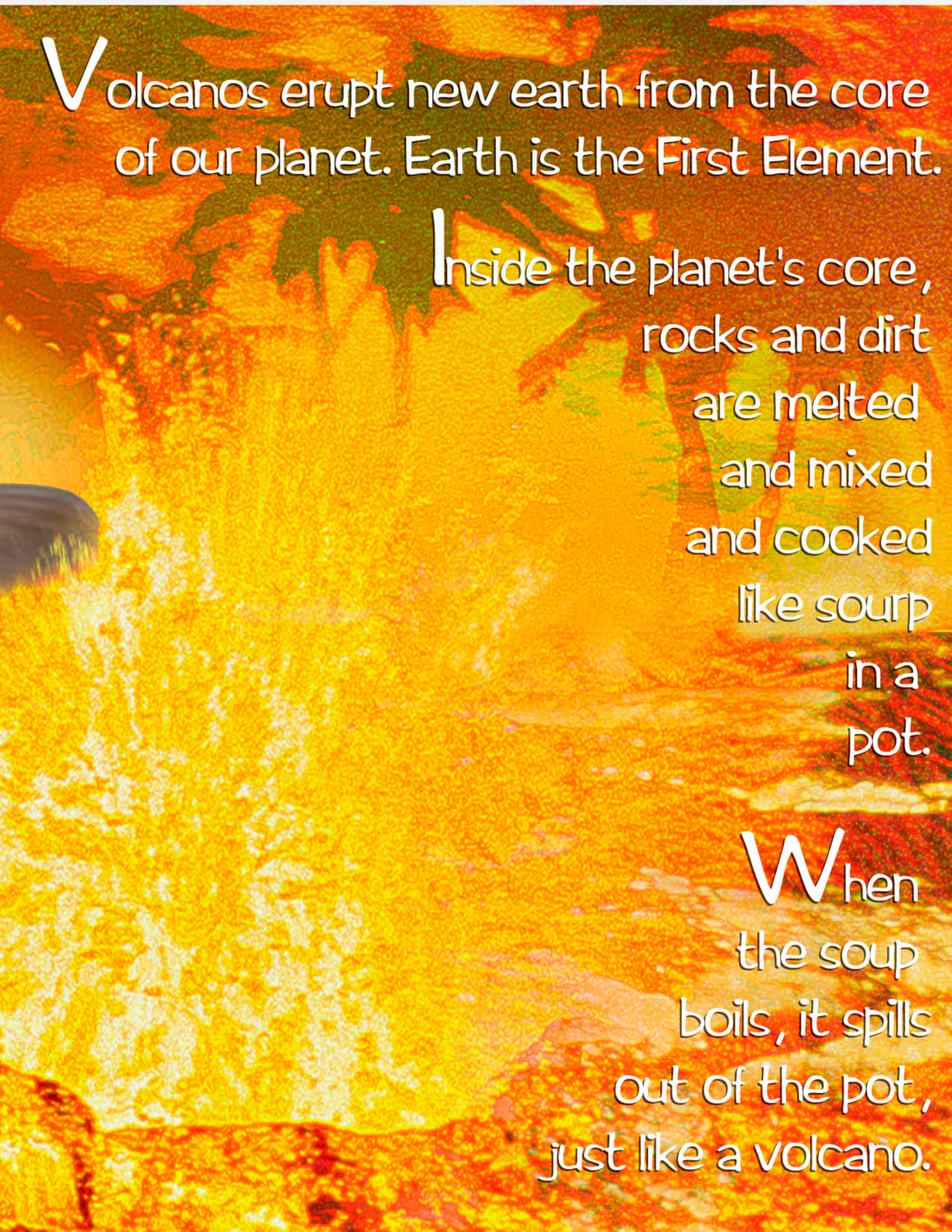
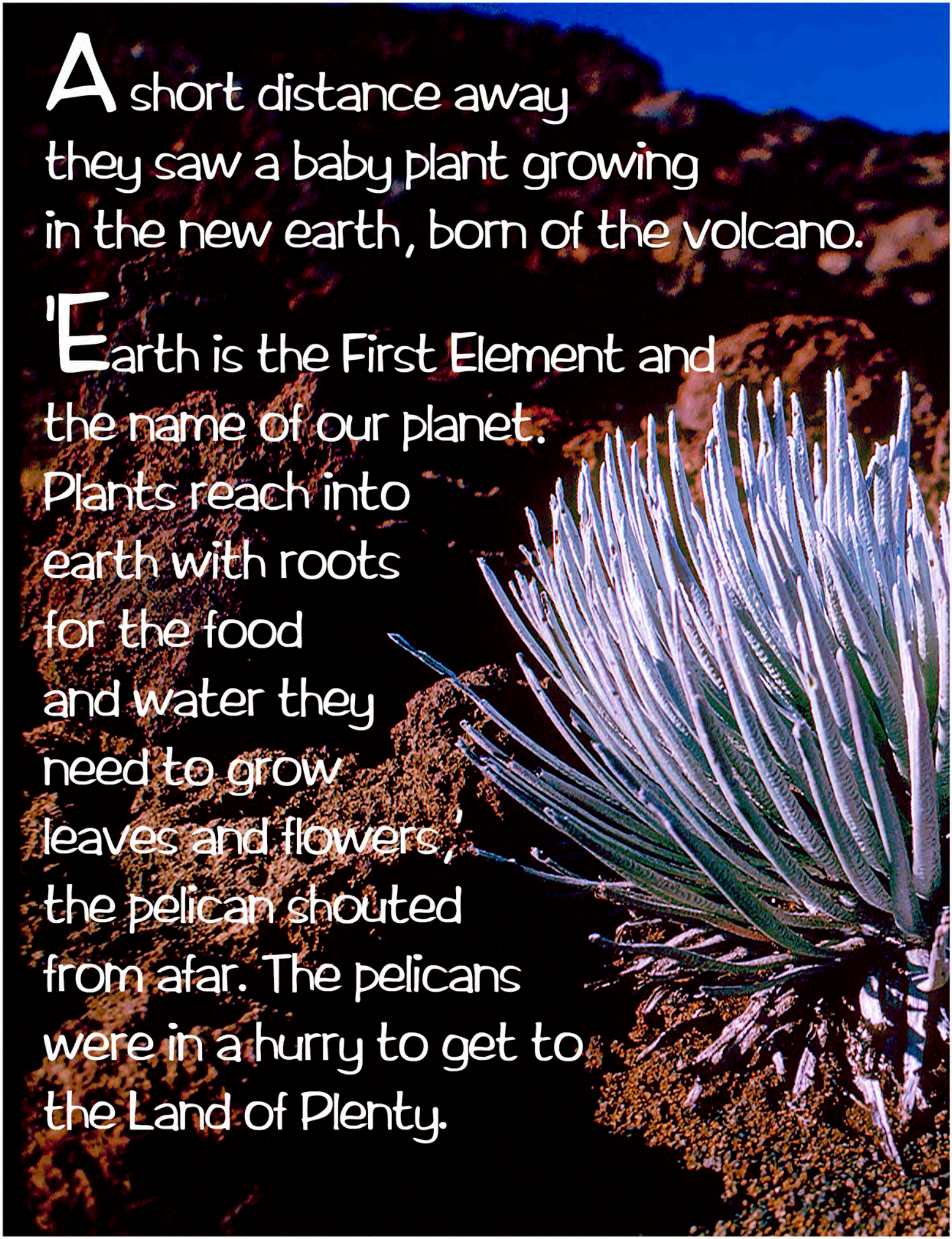

Baby Bird's friend couldn't believe her eyes as she swooped over the firey lava field of a volcano.
The ground melted and flowed like honey while more of it gushed out from somewhere underneath.
The trees cried as the flames consumed them.

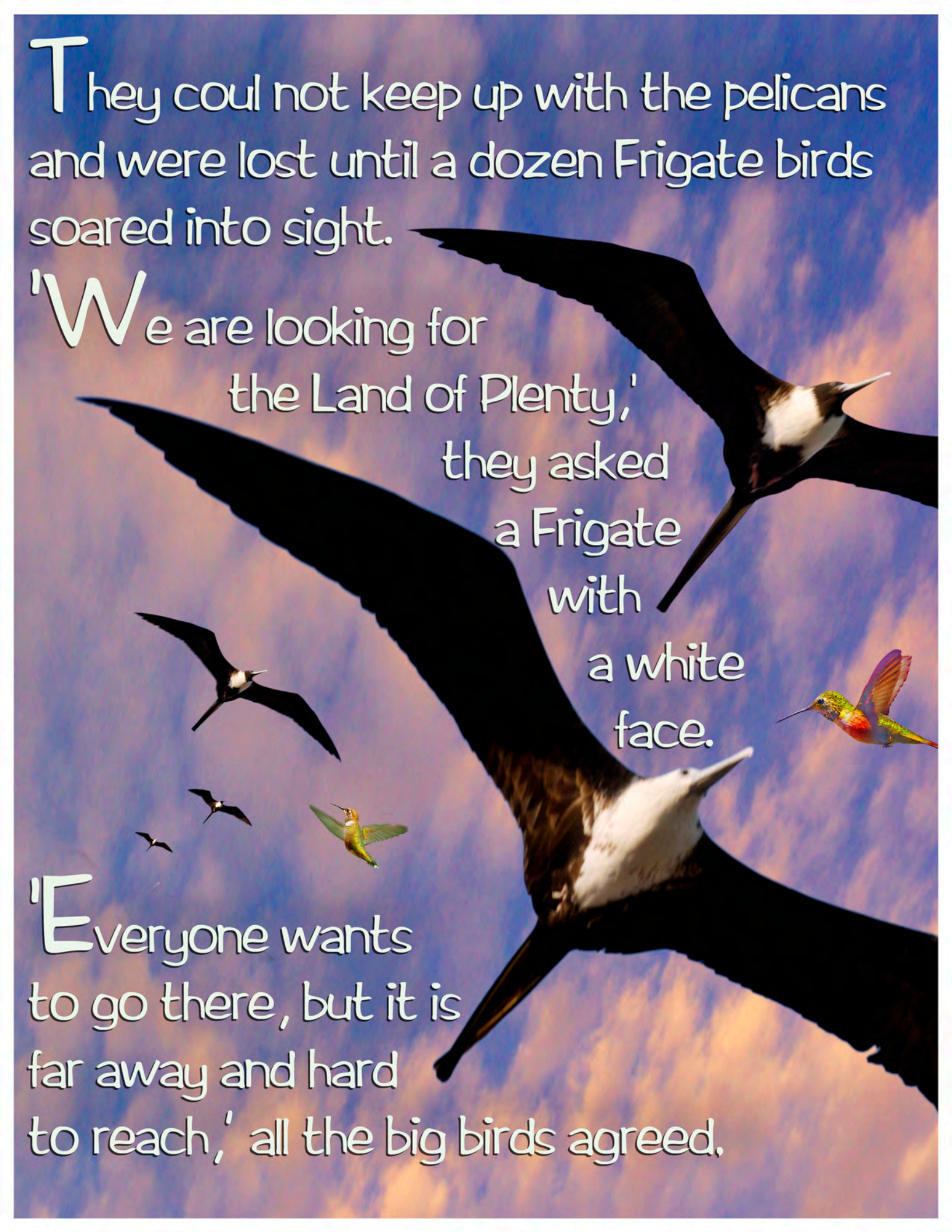
'Fire is the powerful Third Element.
It hurts more than the others,'
Baby Bird's friend said.

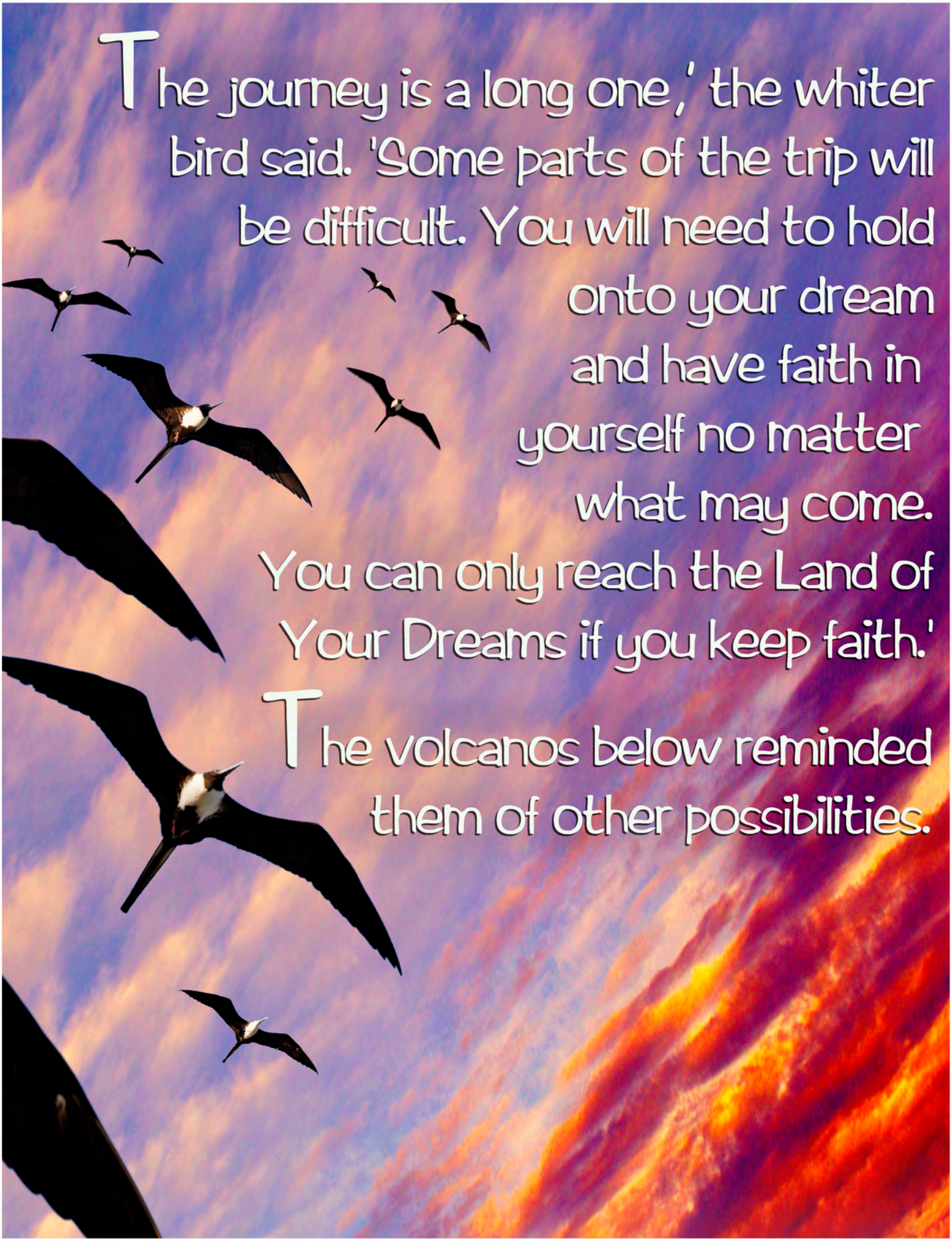

"It is too hot!, said Baby Bird as flames
licked his feathers, hungering for him.


Volcanos erupt new earth from the core of our planet. Earth is the First Element.
Inside the planet's core, rocks and dirt are melted and mixed and cooked like sourp in a pot.
When the soup boils, it spills out of the pot, just like a volcano.


A short distance away
they saw a baby plant growing
in the new earth, born of the volcano.
'Earth is the First Element and
the name of our planet.
Plants reach into
earth with roots
for the food
and water they
need to grow
leaves and flowers,'
the pelican shouted
from afar. The pelicans
were in a hurry to get to
the Land of Plenty.

'Hurry... or we'll never catch up...!'
said his friend.
'Everything happens together,'
observed Baby Bird, 'Some plants
begin their lives while others end theirs.'

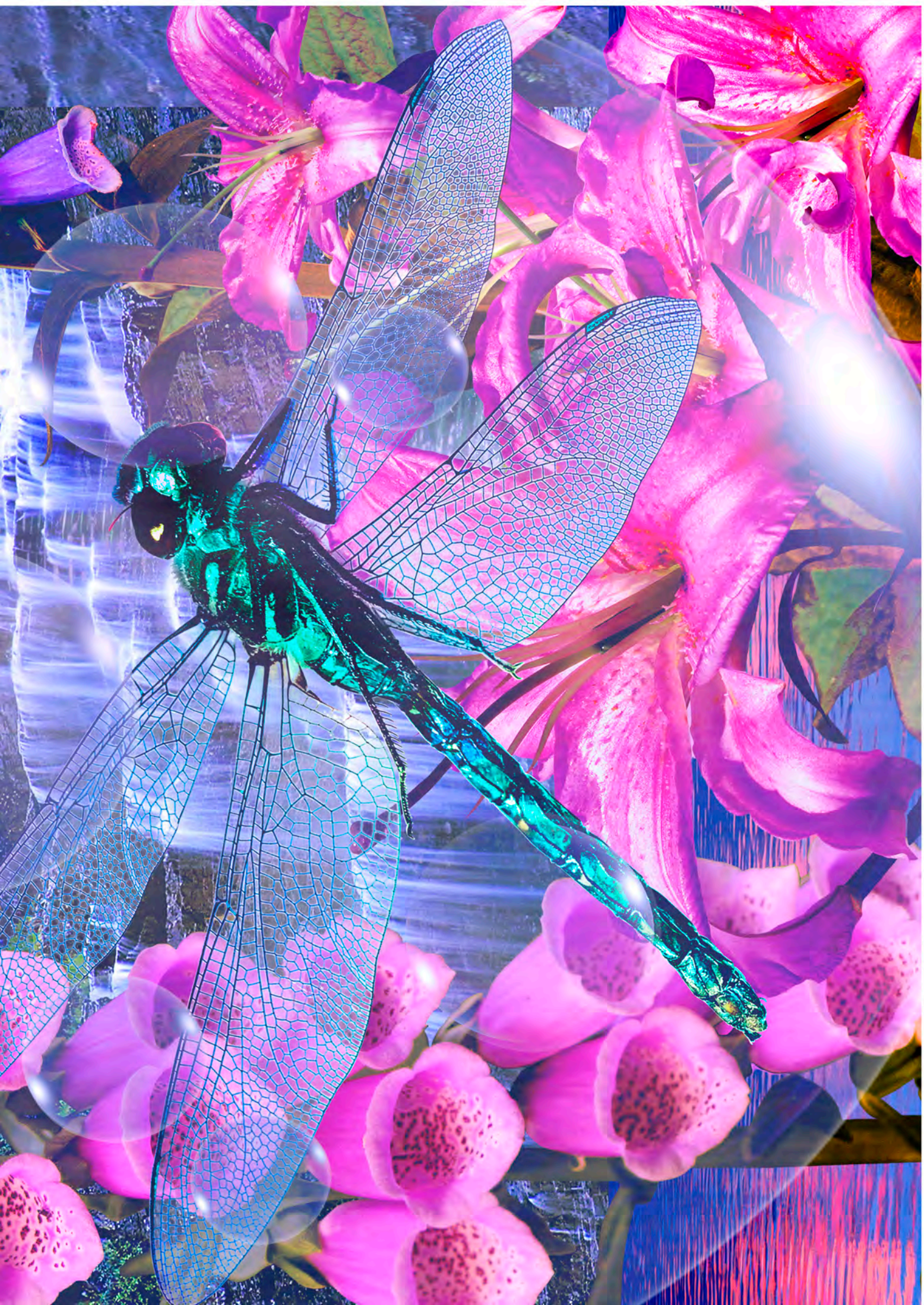

They coul not keep up with the pelicans and were lost until a dozen Frigate birds soared into sight.
'We are looking for the Land of Plenty,' they asked a Frigate with a white face.
'Everyone wants to go there, but it is far away and hard to reach,' all the big birds agreed.


The journey is a long one,' the whiter bird said. 'Some parts of the trip will be difficult. You will need to hold onto your dream and have faith in yourself no matter what may come. You can only reach the Land of Your Dreams if you keep faith.'
The volcanos below reminded them of other possibilities.

Baby Bird and his friend
could not keep up with the

powerful pelicans so they bid
them farewell, made a nest and
started exploring Rising Falls.

omorrow may lead to
me Land of Plenty...!', thought
Baby Bird. 'At least,
it is a possibility!'.



'Watch me fly all the time!' says Baby Bird.
'If you hang my picture on the wall we can see each other
alll the time, not just when you are reading my books.
There is a sample poster of me on the next page.
Tear it out, unfold it, and hang it in your favorite place.
When you see me you'll remember our adventures
and think about the things we learned in new ways.
What could be more FUN than that?'

'You can get my Baby Bird℠ Pictures 3 ways:
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Baby Bird℠ Pictures reinforce book learning with educational synergism.
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Baby Bird

Pictures

Pictures and books that work together for
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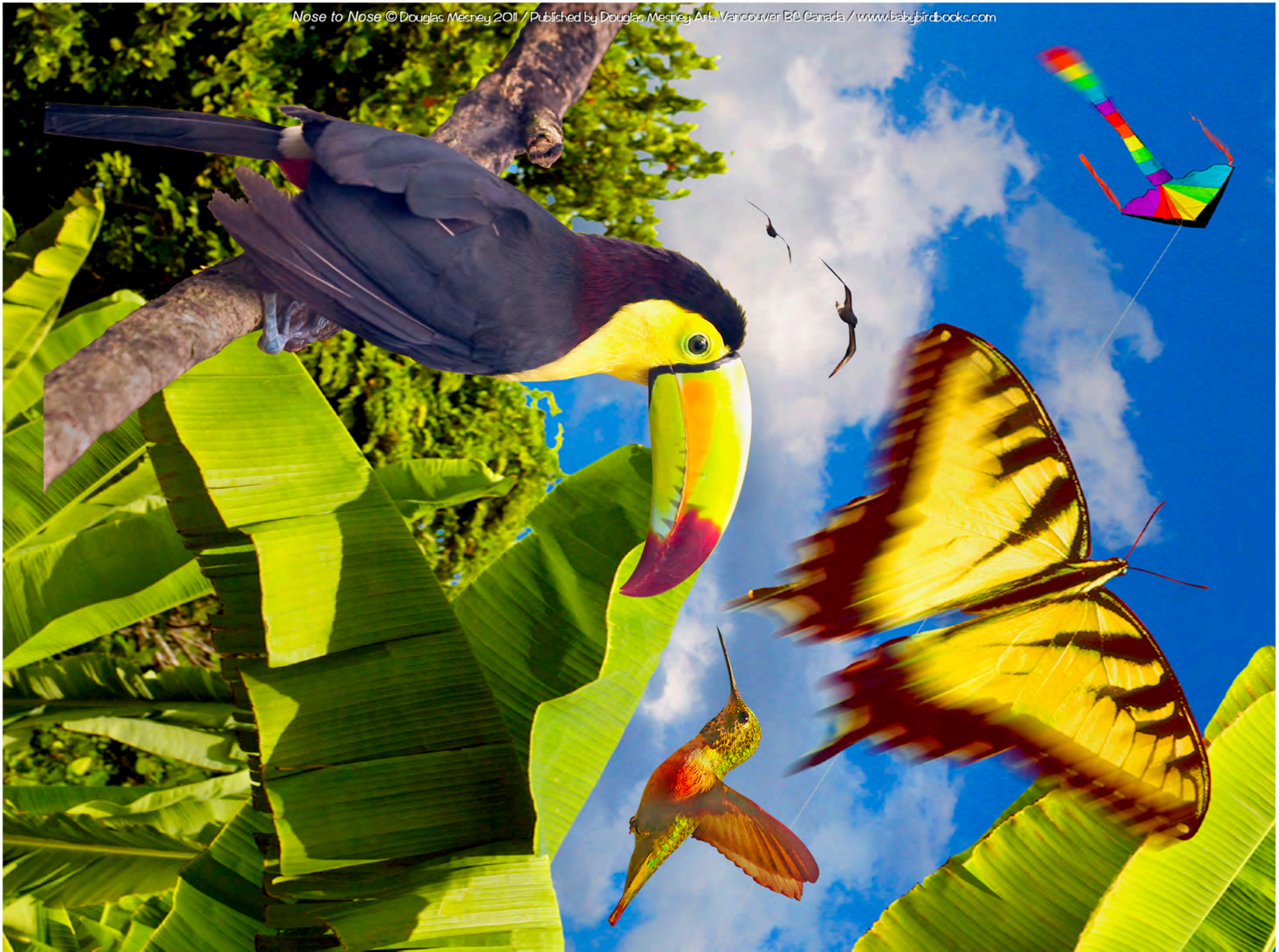
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Tear out and display on wall. (Some trimming required.)

Baby Bird

Decorate!

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Pictures reinforce book learning with educational synergism.

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Poster included in this book expands Baby Bird's adventures into the child's surroundings.

This educational synergism is called Environmental Concept Learning℠

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Feature Length Edition

The Baby Bird℠

In the Land of Plenty

by Taylor Douglas

Environmental Concept Learning℠

Books and pictures that work together.

Fold-out sample poster included inside book.

The Baby Bird℠
In the Land of Plenty
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Baby Bird Books are illustrated by Douglas Mesney
Using a photo-realistic collage technique, pieces of
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Contributing photographers and artists for this book:
Douglas Mesney Covers, 1-68 (www.mesney.com)
Kirk Beeler 60-61 (www.twispriver.artspan.com)
Pamela Swanson 24-25, 27, 58, 60-61 (www.poetpam.com)
Dona Tracy 25

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The Art of Learning℠

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by Taylor Douglas

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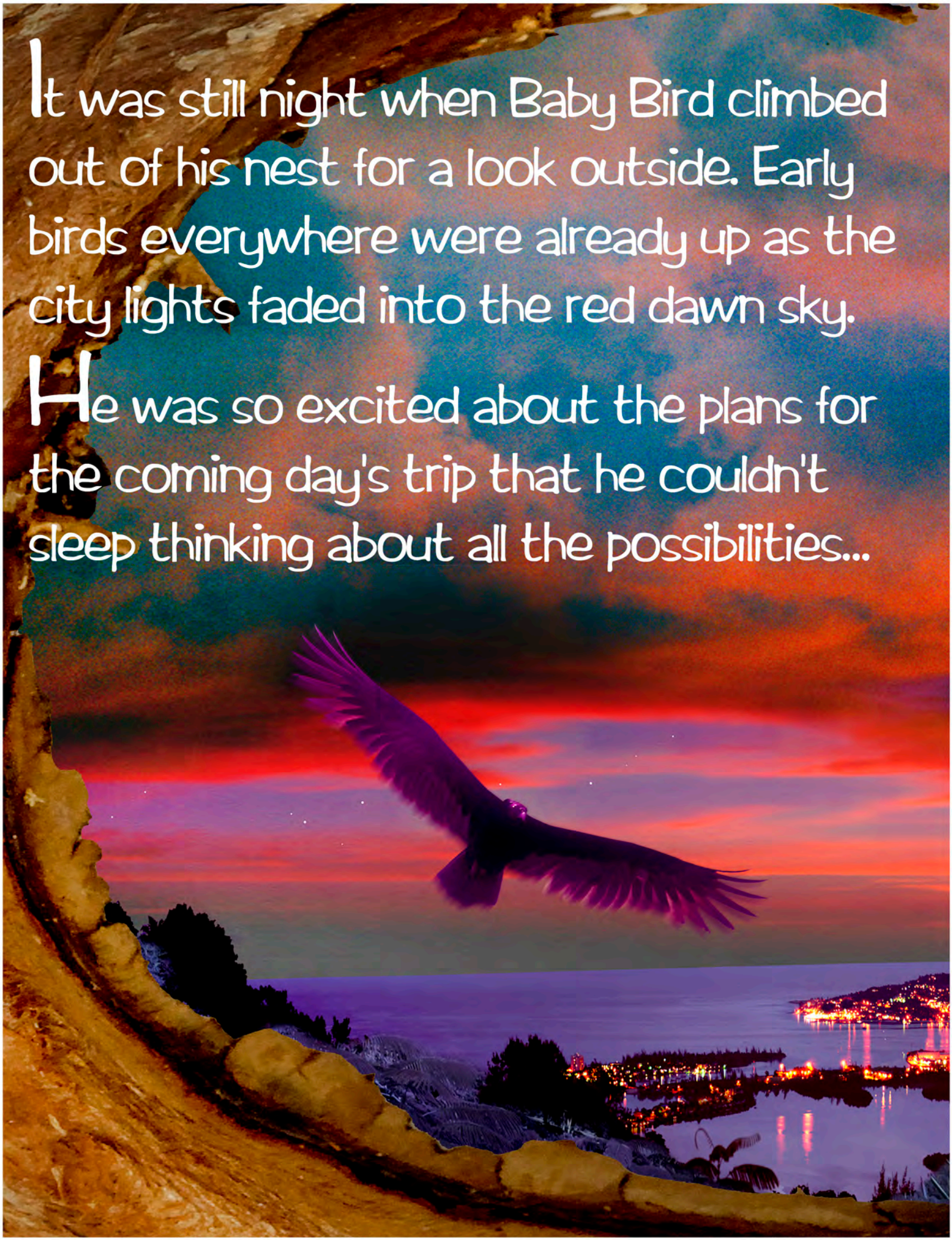
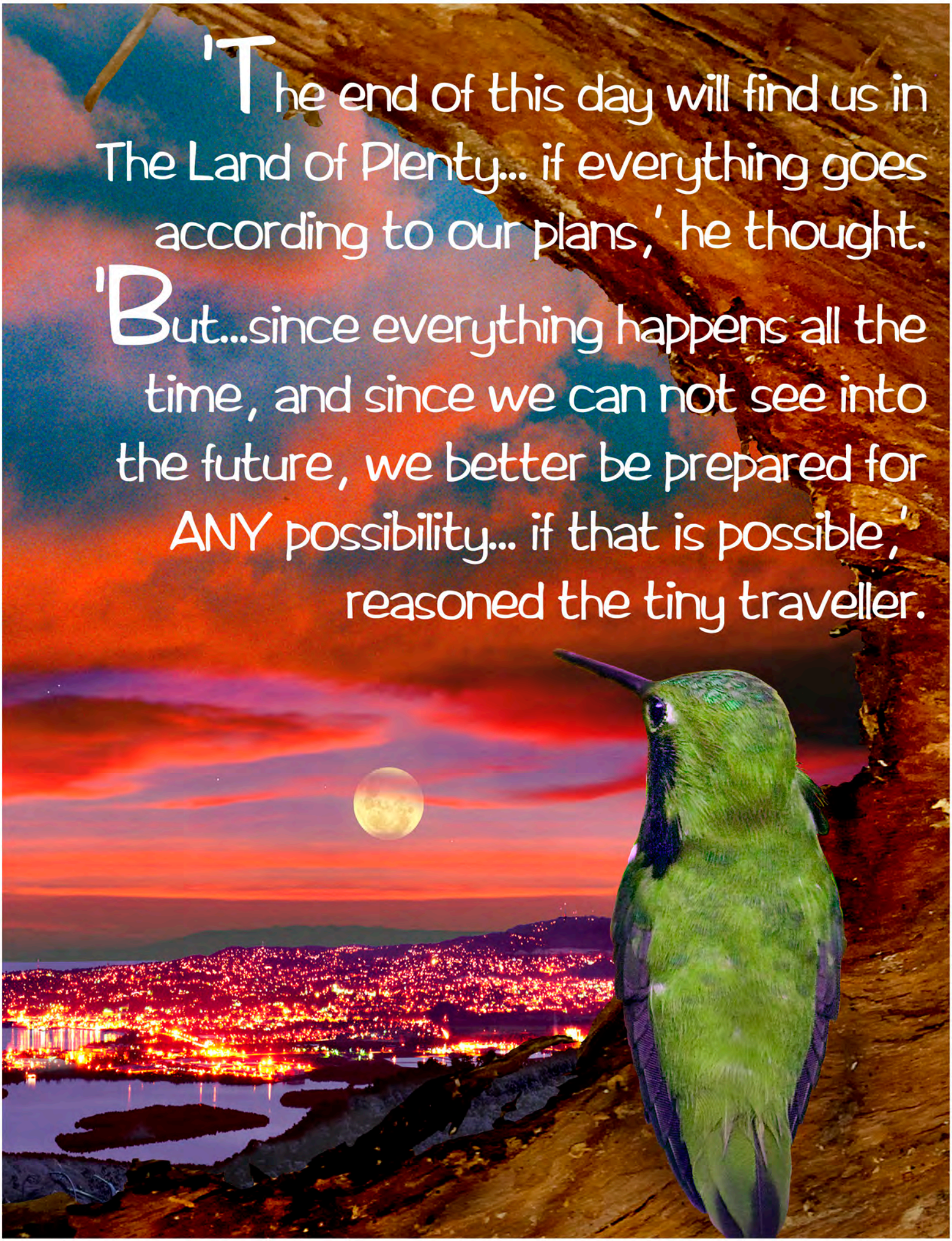
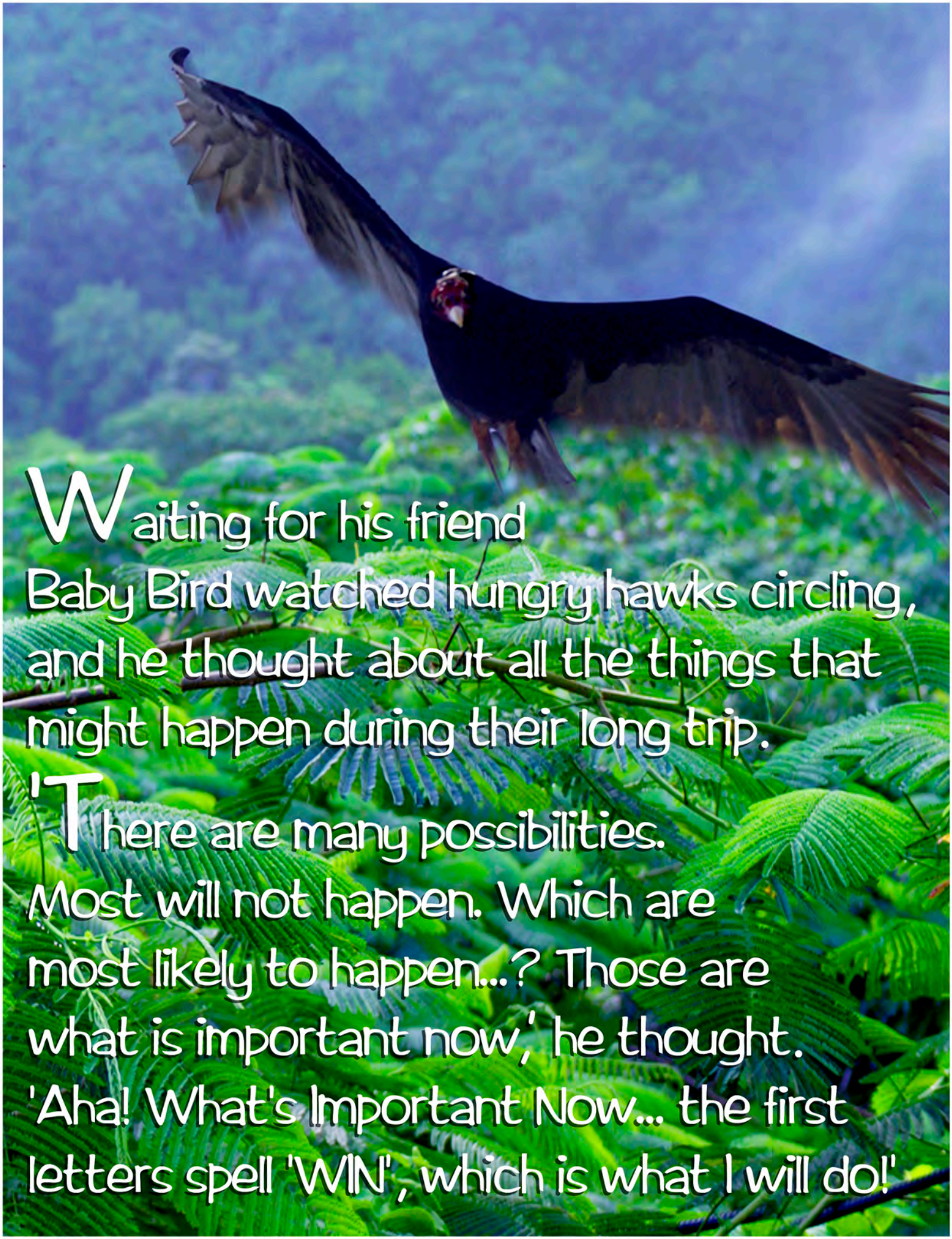
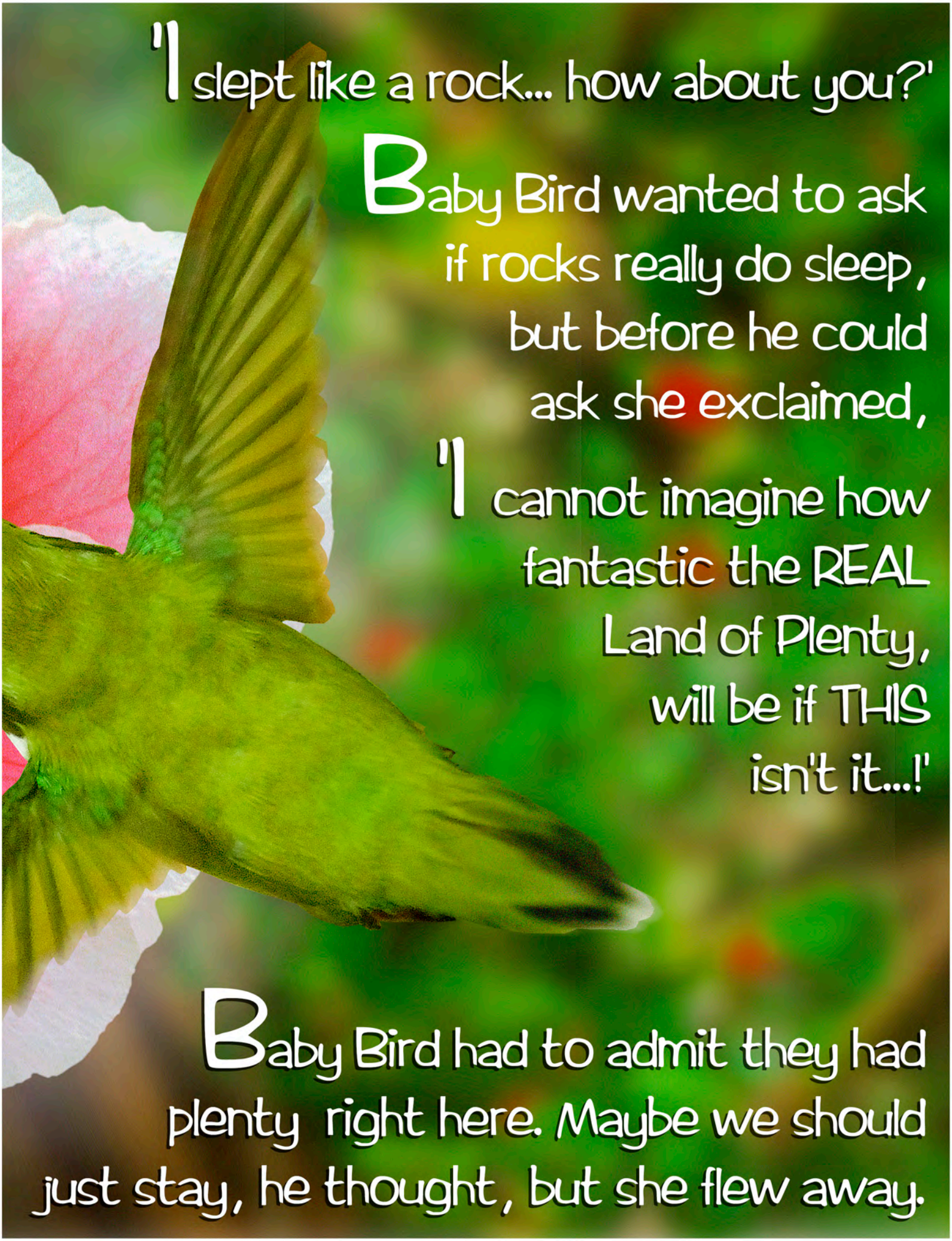

It was still night when Baby Bird climbed out of his nest for a look outside. Early birds everywhere were already up as the city lights faded into the red dawn sky.
He was so excited about the plans for the coming day's trip that he couldn't sleep thinking about all the possibilities...


'The end of this day will find us in The Land of Plenty... if everything goes according to our plans,' he thought.
'But...since everything happens all the time, and since we can not see into the future, we better be prepared for ANY possibility... if that is possible,' reasoned the tiny traveller.


Waiting for his friend
Baby Bird watched hungry hawks circling, and he thought about all the things that might happen during their long trip.
'There are many possibilities. Most will not happen. Which are most likely to happen...? Those are what is important now,' he thought.
'Aha! What's Important Now... the first letters spell 'WIN', which is what I will do!'

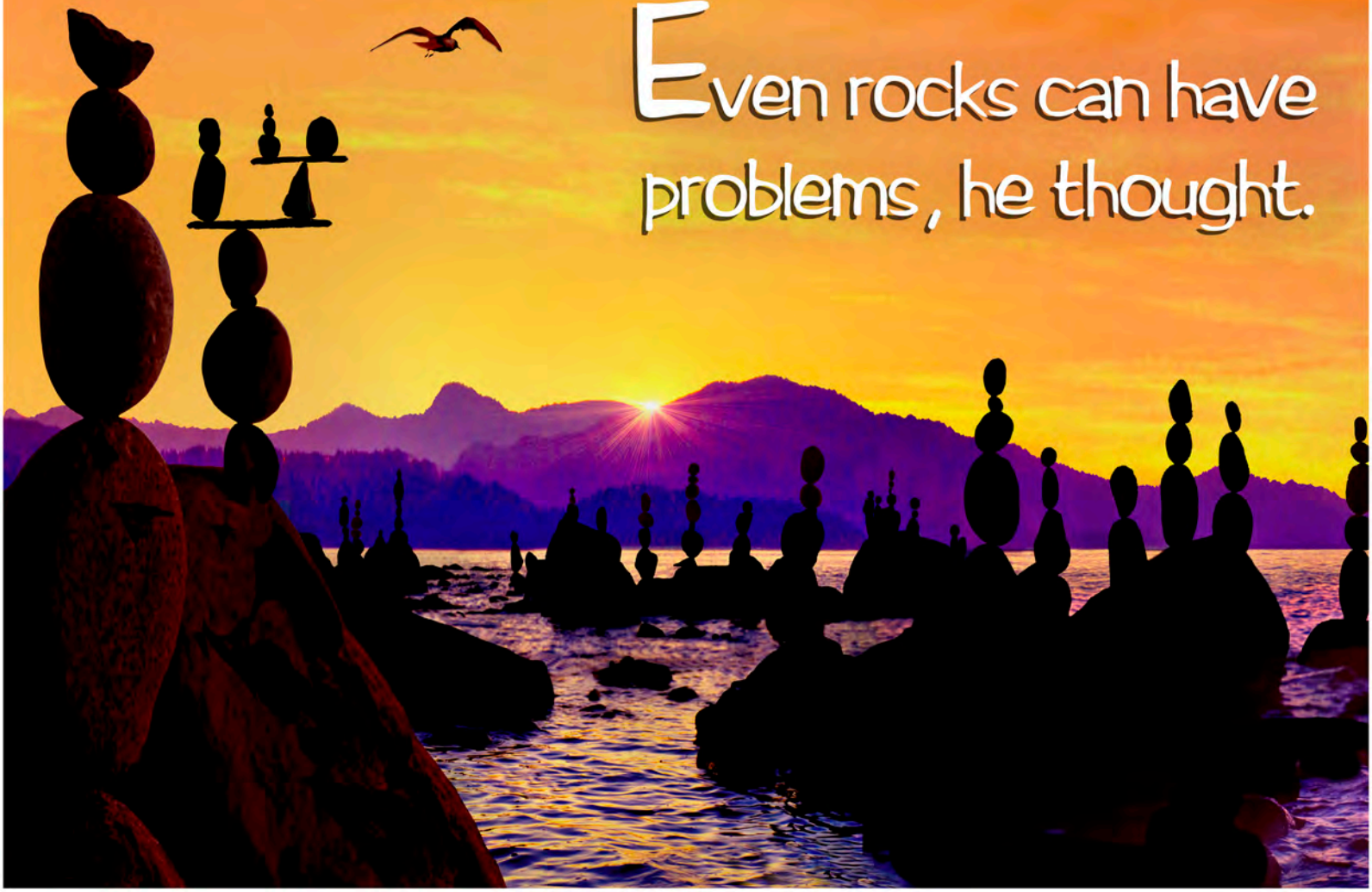
Baby Bird found his
friend in the mist
enjoying a sip
of nectar.
She was
drinking so fast
that she was slurping.
Between slurps she said good morning.


'I slept like a rock... how about you?'
Baby Bird wanted to ask if rocks really do sleep, but before he could ask she exclaimed,
'I cannot imagine how fantastic the REAL Land of Plenty, will be if THIS isn't it...!'
Baby Bird had to admit they had plenty right here. Maybe we should just stay, he thought, but she flew away.

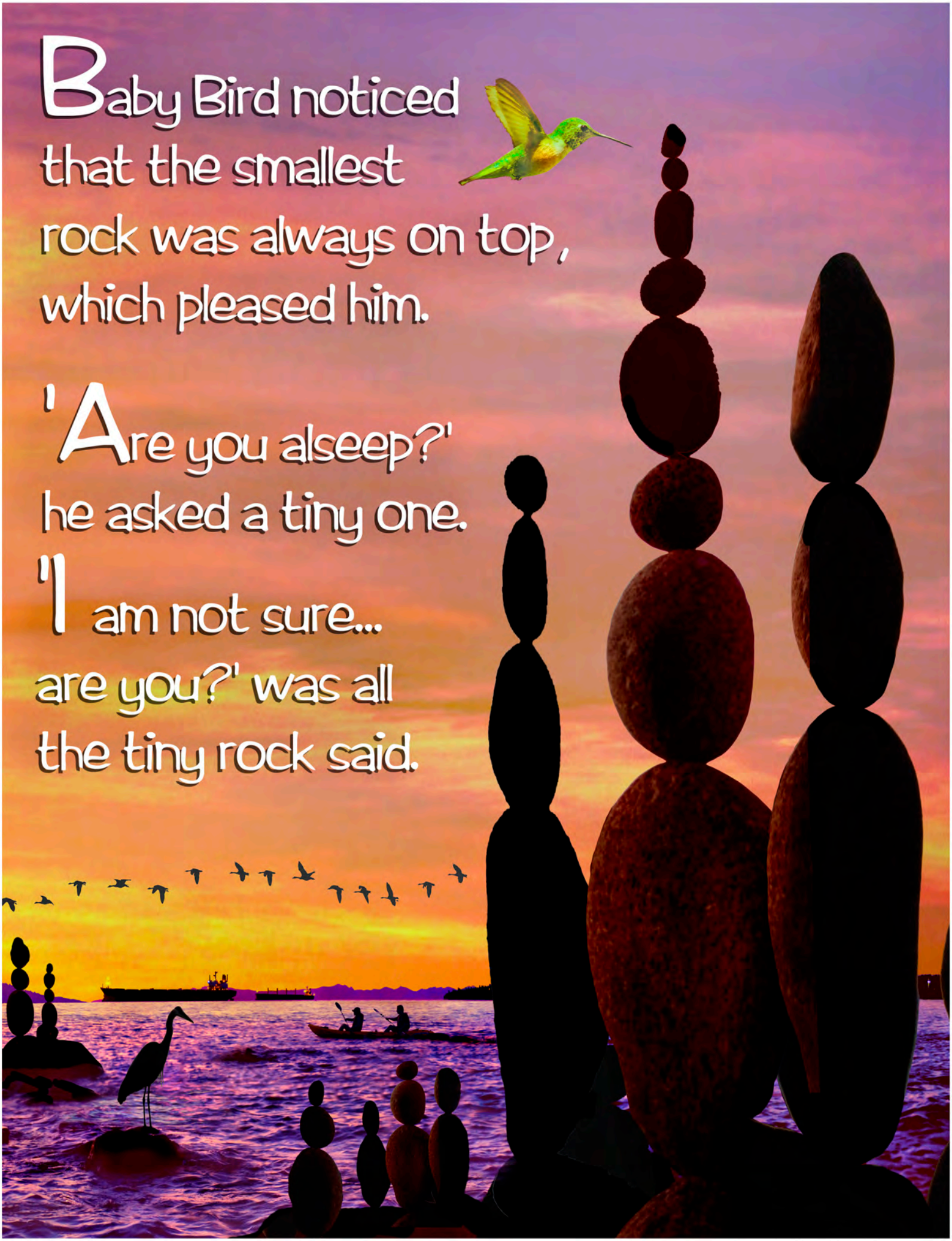
All the other birds were flying toward the sun, so they followed along happily.

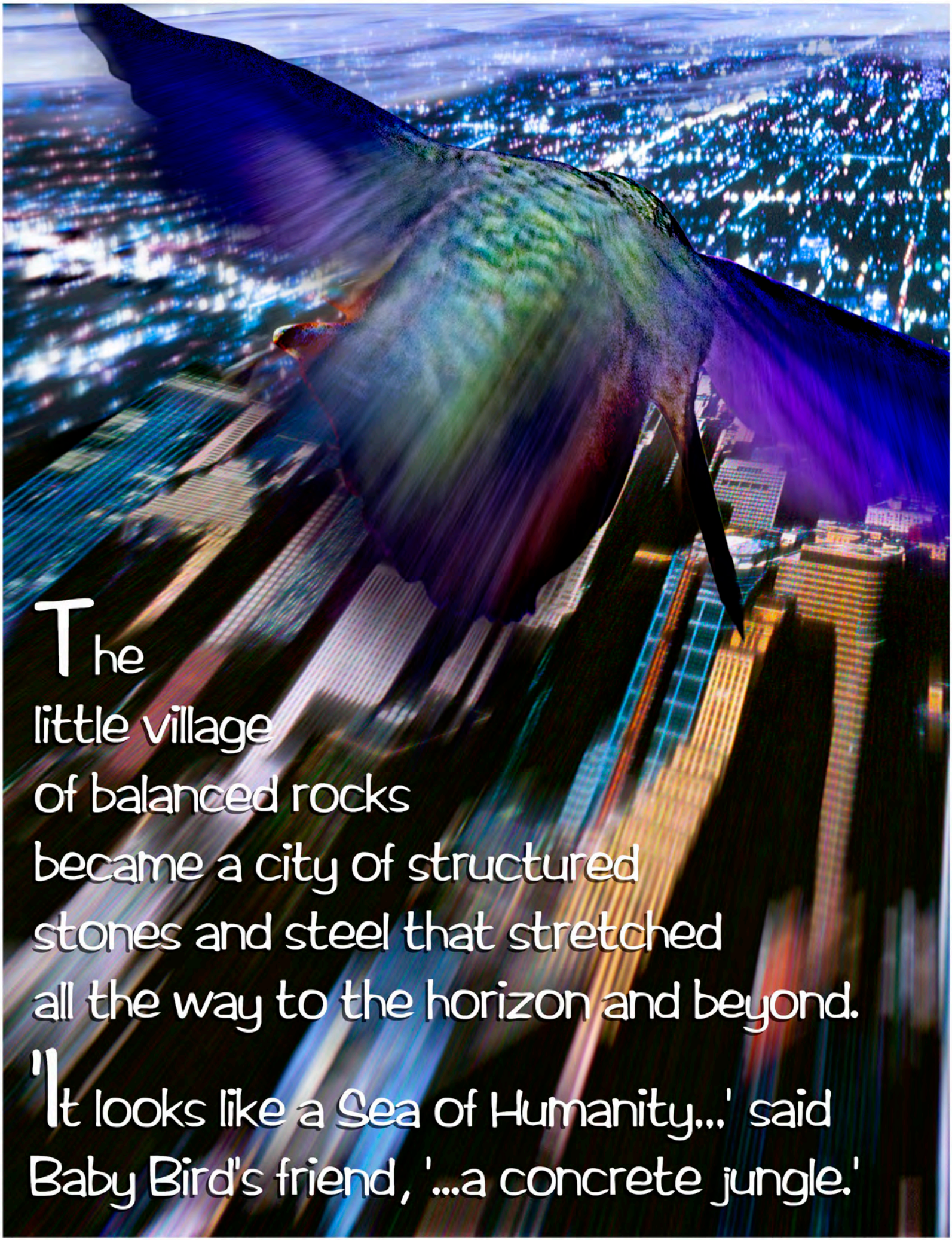
They took off full of excitement as the sun peeked over the mountains.

At the edge of the sea, Baby Bird saw a village of rock people trying to keep their balance as the waves shook them.



Even rocks can have problems, he thought.

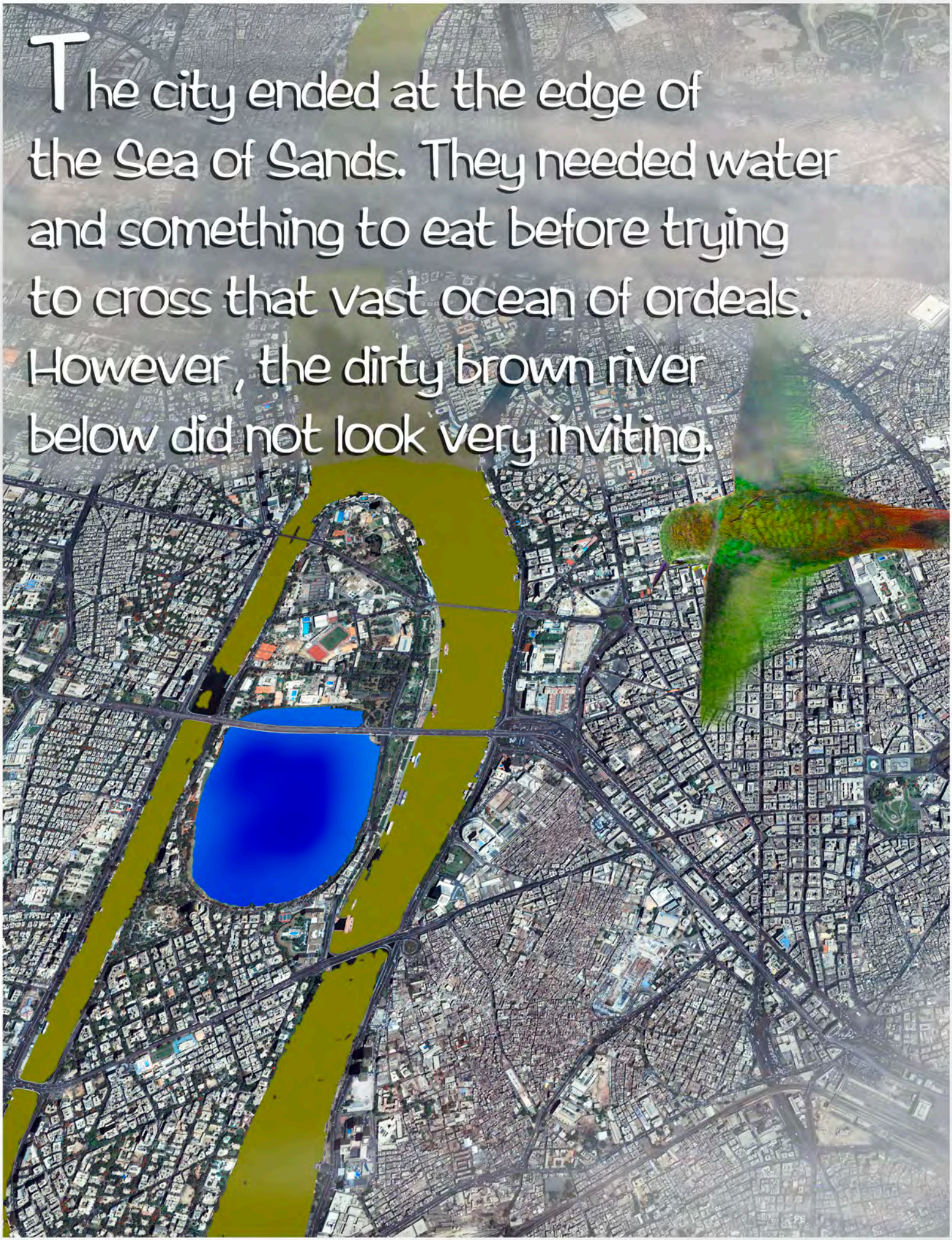

Baby Bird noticed
that the smallest
rock was always on top,
which pleased him.
'Are you alseep?'
he asked a tiny one.
'I am not sure...
are you?' was all
the tiny rock said.


The
little village
of balanced rocks
became a city of structured
stones and steel that stretched
all the way to the horizon and beyond.
"It looks like a Sea of Humanity...' said
Baby Bird's friend, '...a concrete jungle.'

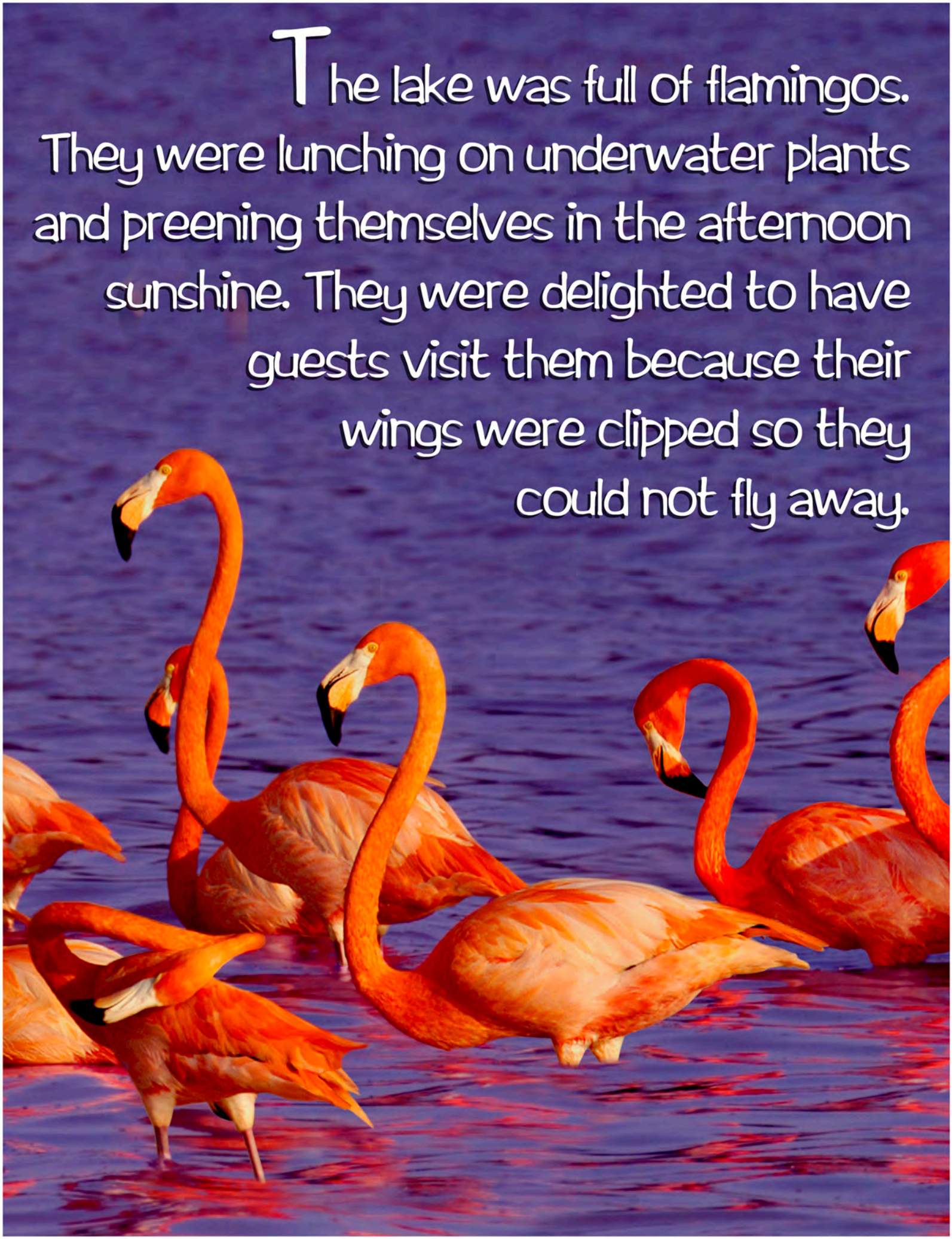
They
zoomed
as fast as
they could fly
through the long day
and on well into the night.
Finally, Baby Bird got too tired
so they hid under a bridge for the night.

Early the next morning, the noise
of the cars and their smelly fumes
woke up the little birds under the bridge.

Some sleep
was all it took to put
Baby Bird back in a sunny mood.
He showed off with a few spins on the
way up to the sky. He was glad to be on
his way to the REAL Land of Plenty again.


The city ended at the edge of the Sea of Sands. They needed water and something to eat before trying to cross that vast ocean of ordeals. However, the dirty brown river below did not look very inviting.

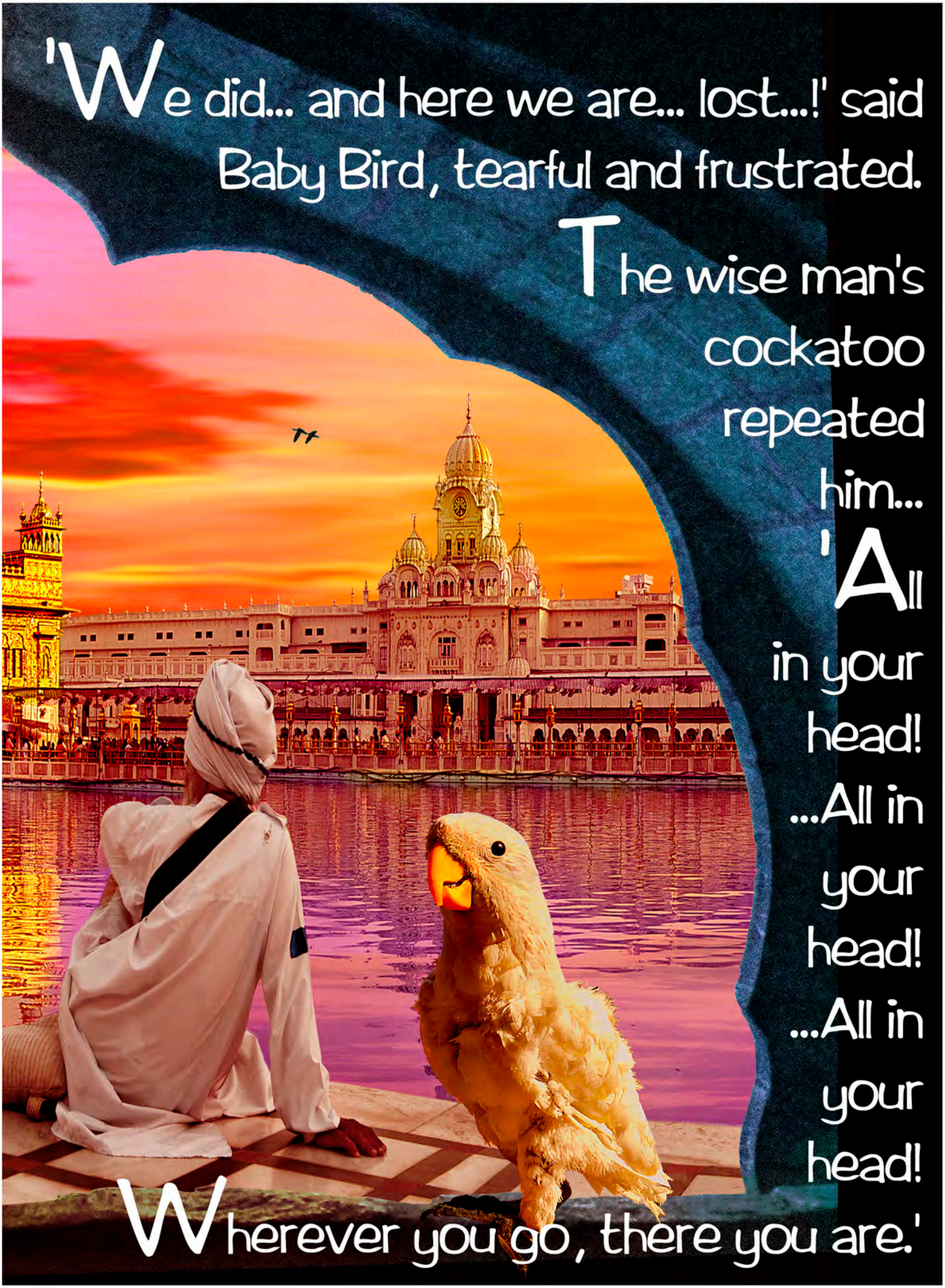
A clean blue lake in the city looked like it had possibilities... so they flew down to find a nest, some rest ...and some flowers!

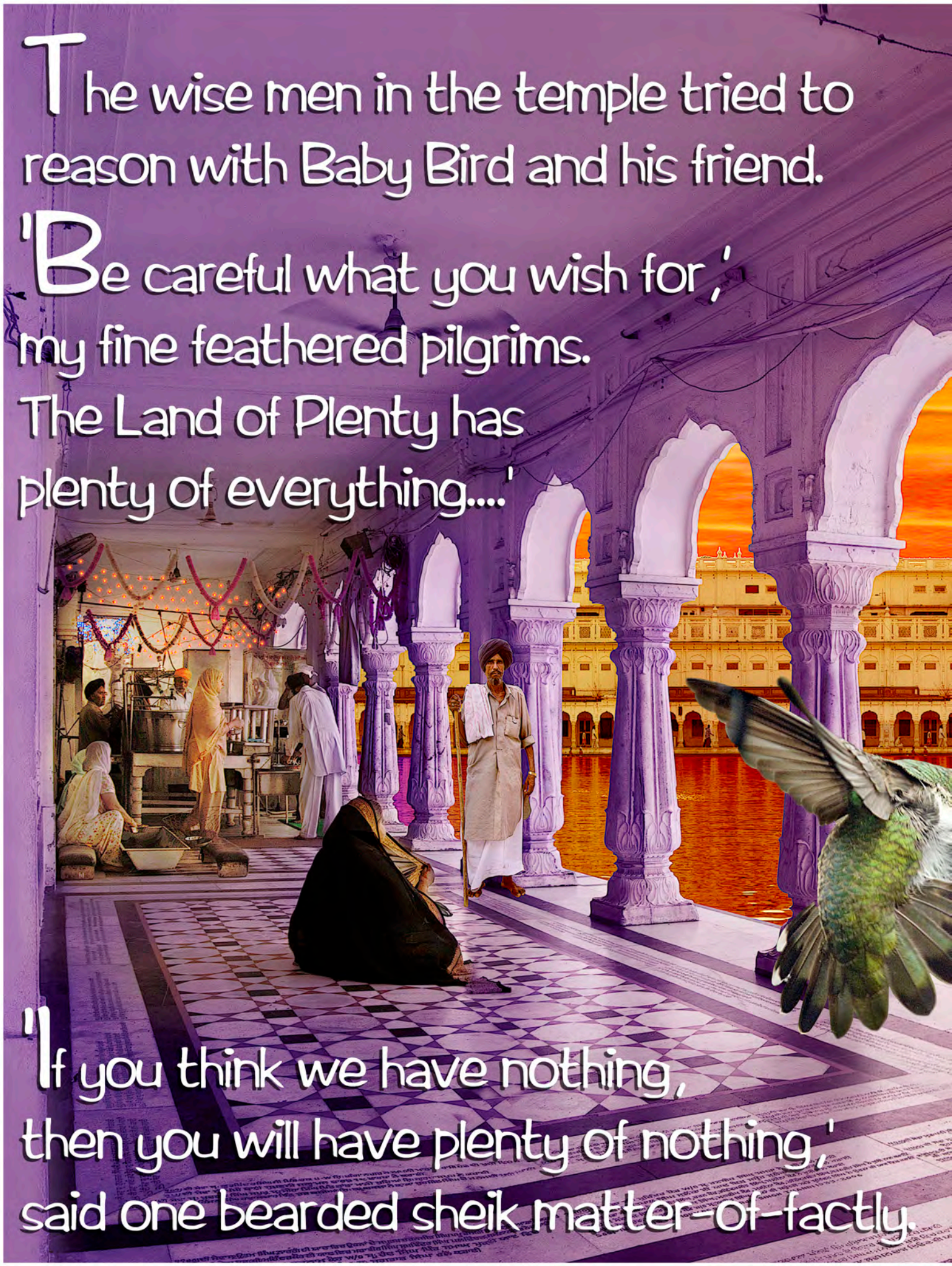

The lake was full of flamingos. They were lunching on underwater plants and preening themselves in the afternoon sunshine. They were delighted to have guests visit them because their wings were clipped so they could not fly away.

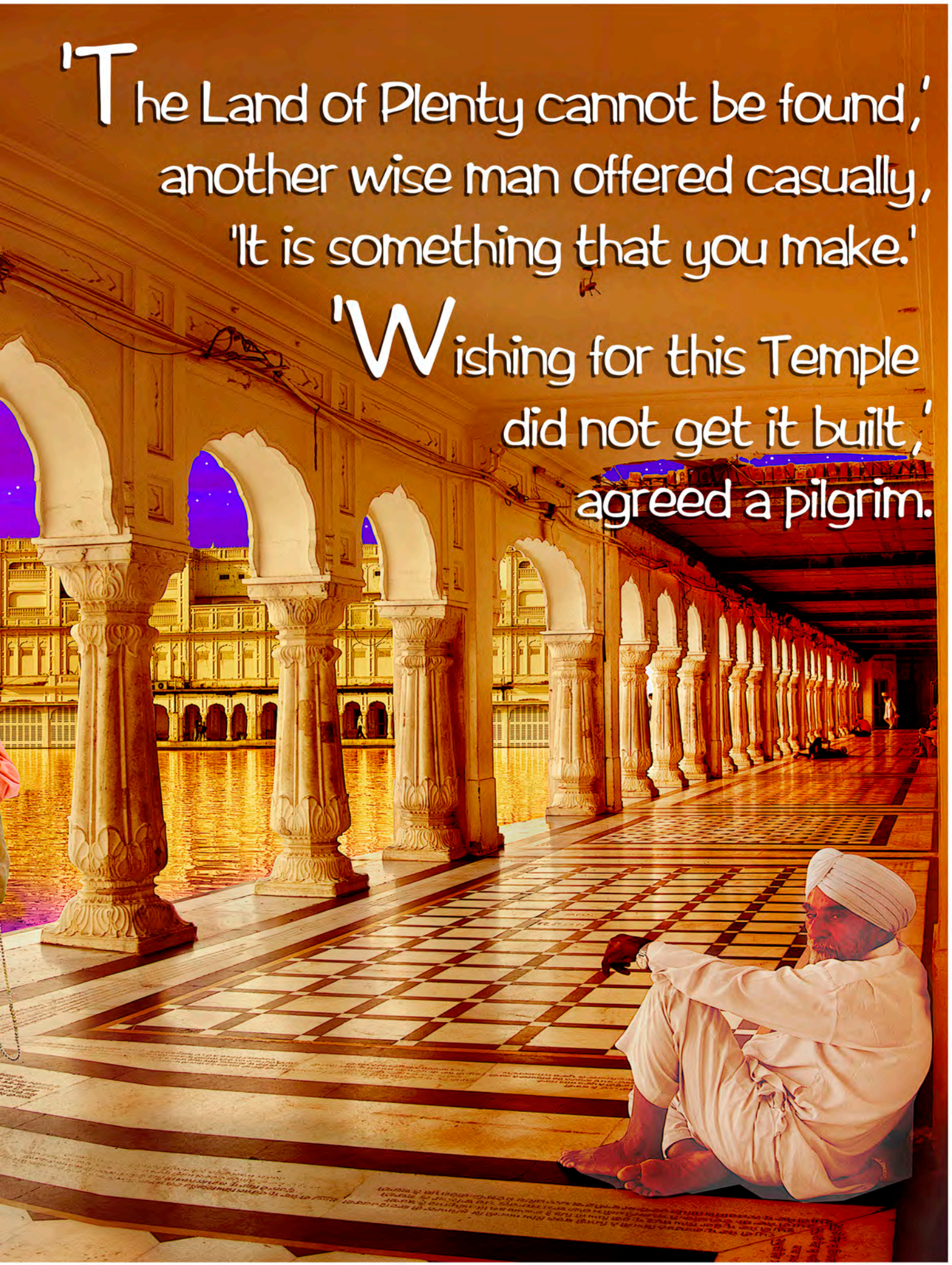
'Welcome to The Land of Plenty!' said the huge pink flamingos. 'Please join us for lunch... Uh, you both swim, right?'

'Ha ha ha!' laughed the others at their friend's joke.

The lake was in a temple, a holy place where pilgrims go to pray for the Land of Plenty.
Baby Bird asked a wise man for directions and the he said 'The Land you seek is in your head.'
'Chase your dream...happiness will follow.'


'We did... and here we are... lost...!' said Baby Bird, tearful and frustrated.
The wise man's cockatoo repeated him...
'All in your head!
...All in your head!
...All in your head!
Wherever you go, there you are.'

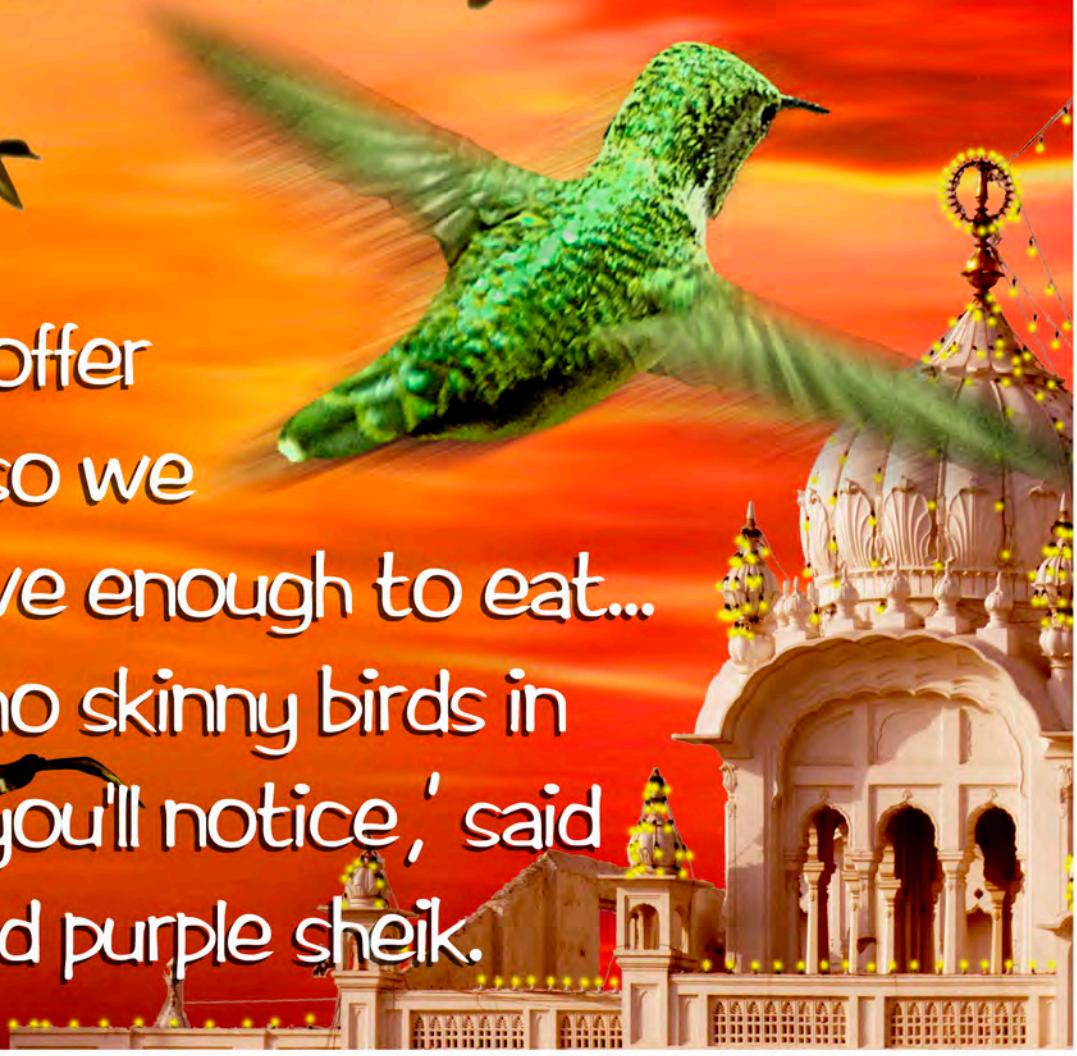

The wise men in the temple tried to reason with Baby Bird and his friend.
'Be careful what you wish for,' my fine feathered pilgrims. The Land of Plenty has plenty of everything....'
'If you think we have nothing, then you will have plenty of nothing,' said one bearded sheik matter-of-factly.

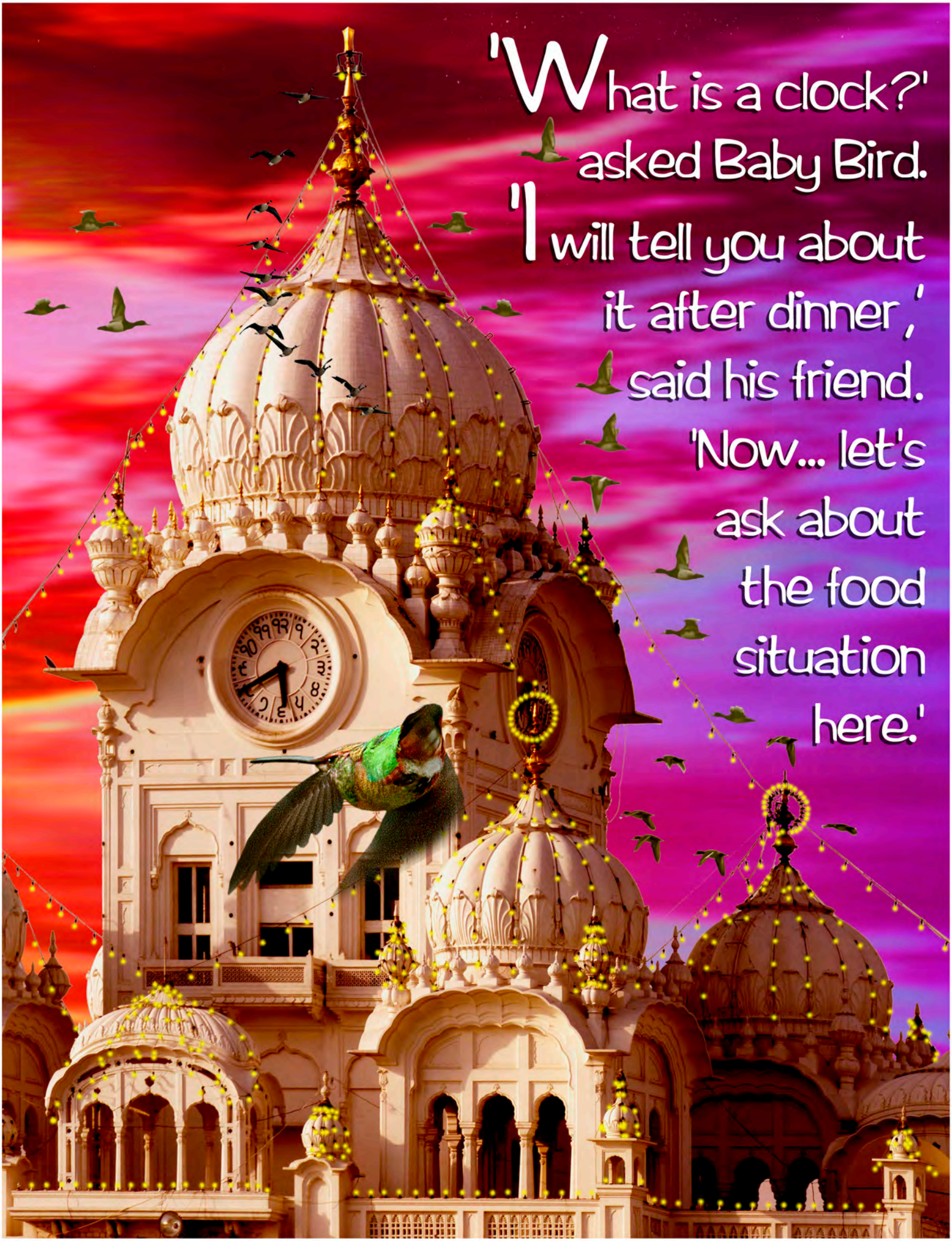

'The Land of Plenty cannot be found,'
another wise man offered casually,
'It is something that you make.'
'Wishing for this Temple
did not get it built,'
agreed a pilgrim.

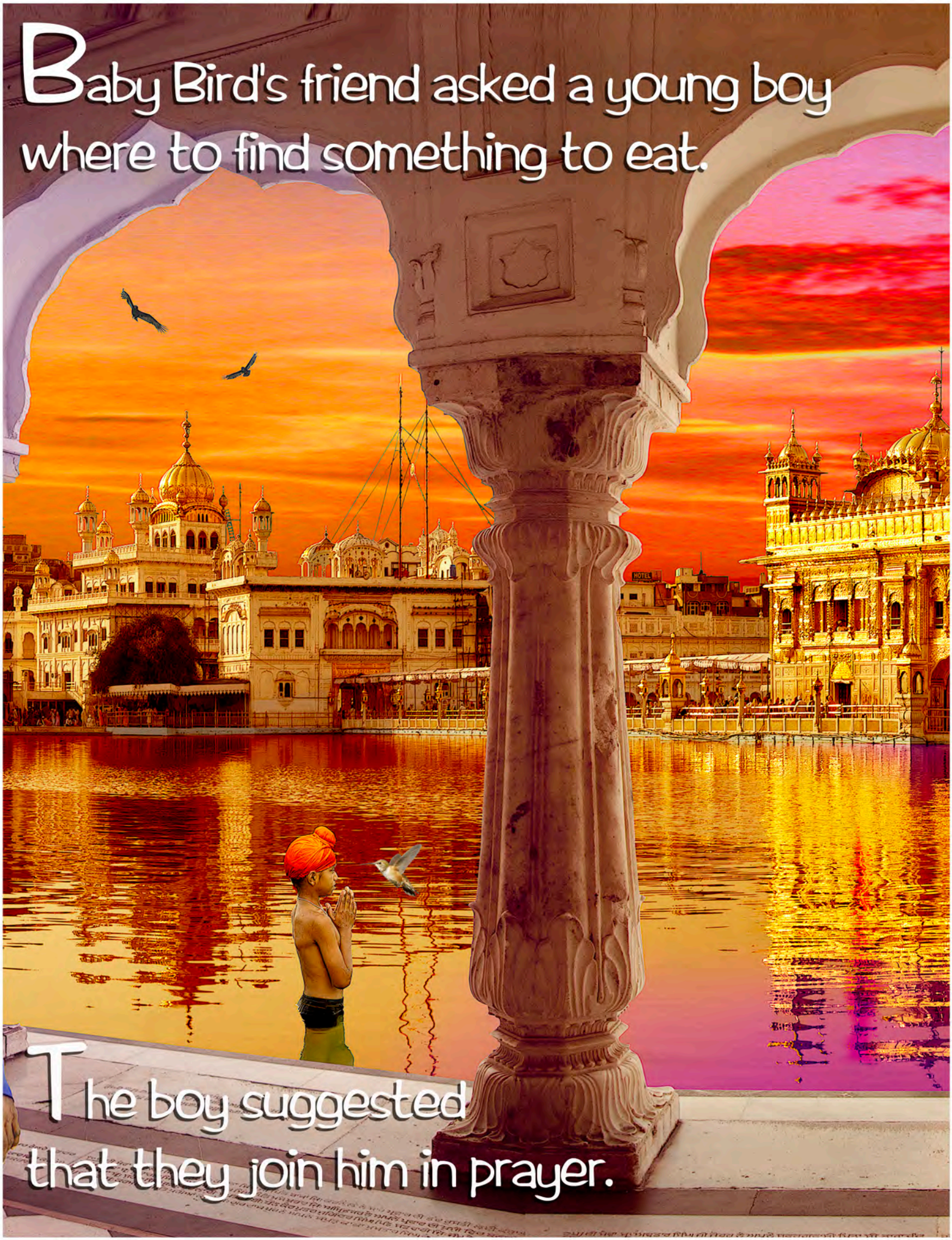
'All we wish for is a place to find a nest for the night,' Baby Bird started to say until his friend interrupted pleadingly, 'And something to eat... please.'

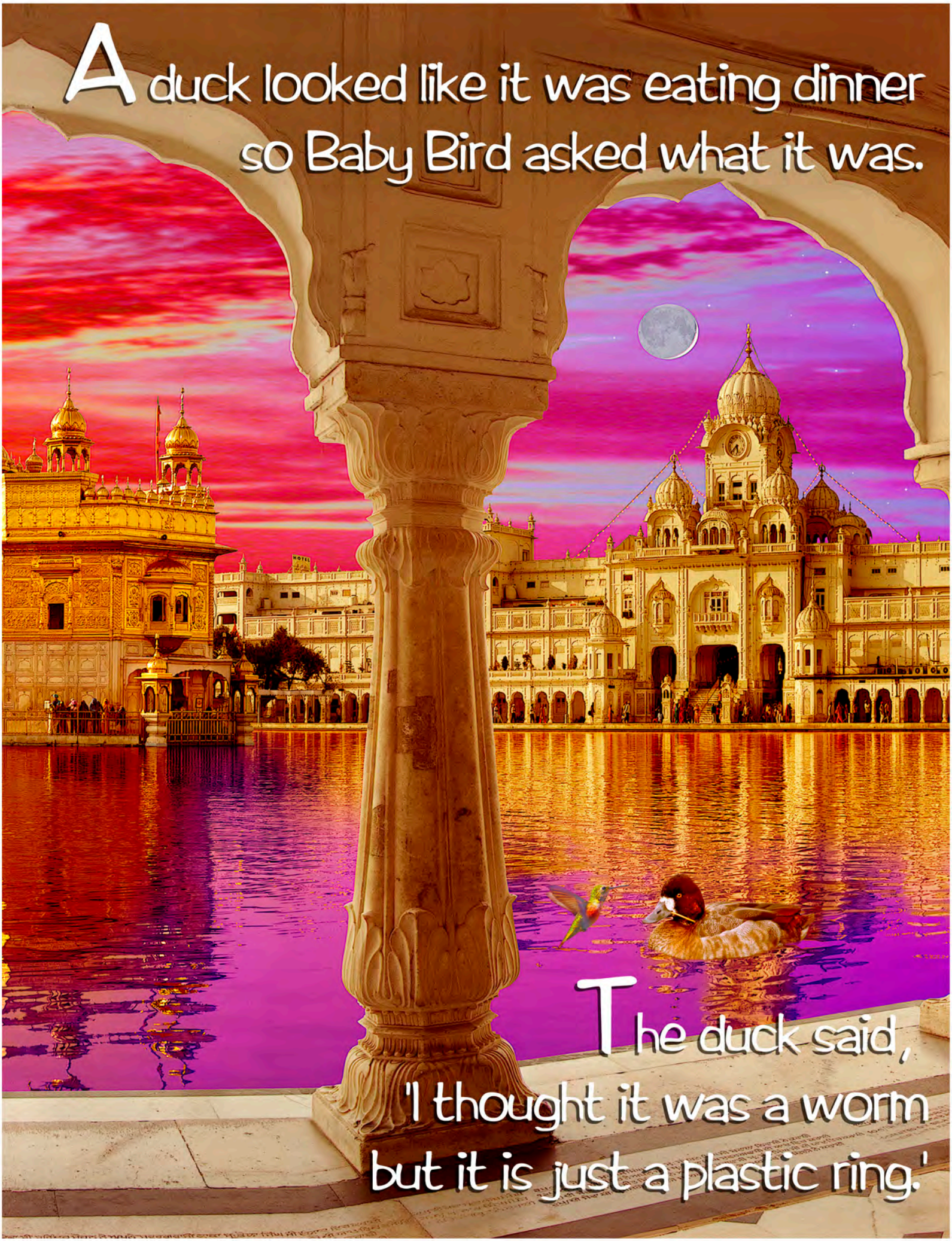
'The clock tower is popular with most of the other birds,' said the blue and red sheik.

'Pilgrims offer us plenty so we always have enough to eat... there are no skinny birds in our flock, you'll notice,' said the pink and purple sheik.




'What is a clock?'
asked Baby Bird.
'I will tell you about
it after dinner,'
said his friend.
'Now... let's
ask about
the food
situation
here.'


Baby Bird's friend asked a young boy where to find something to eat.
The boy suggested that they join him in prayer.


A duck looked like it was eating dinner
so Baby Bird asked what it was.
The duck said,
'I thought it was a worm
but it is just a plastic ring.'

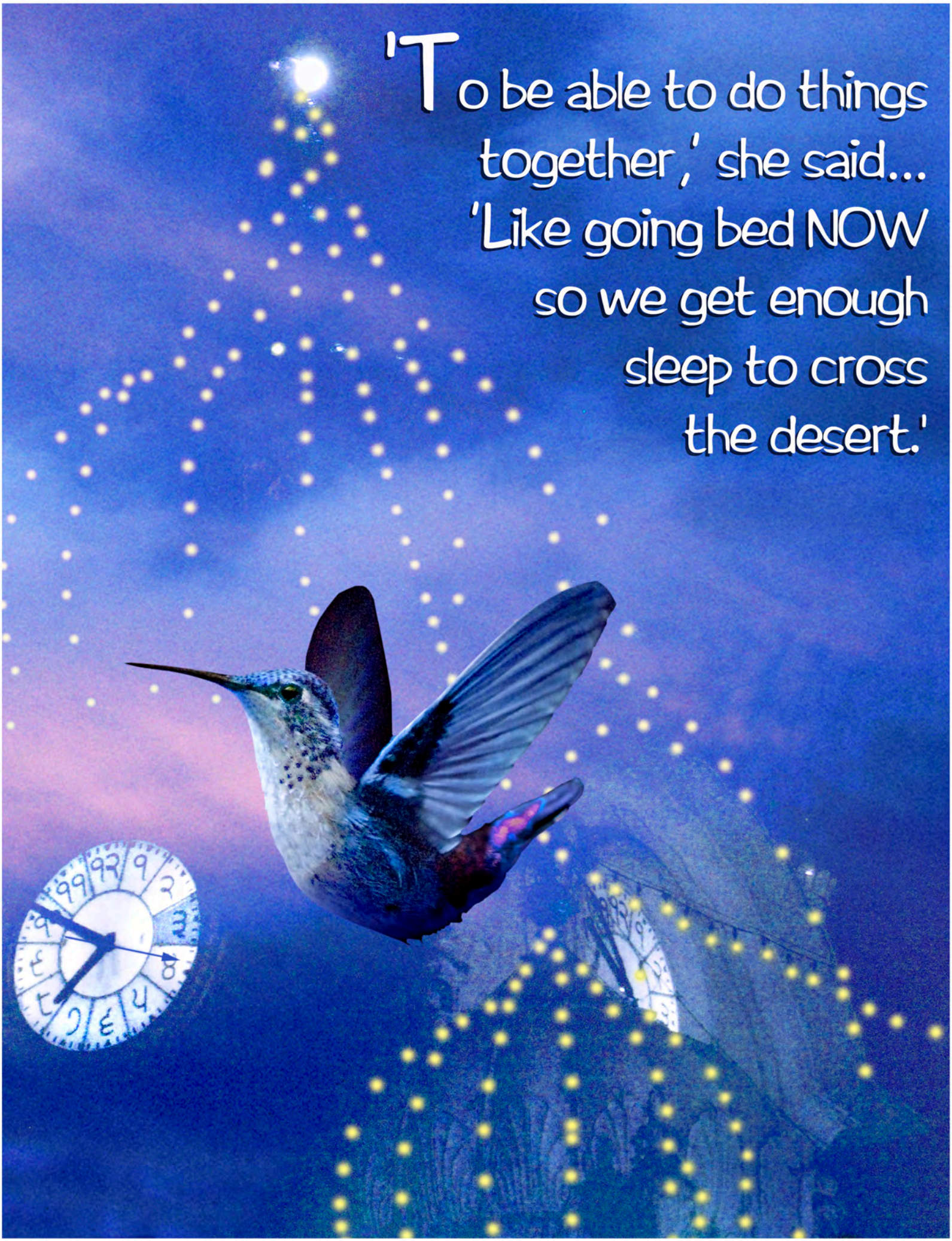
A beacon on top of the clock tower guided the little birds back through a thick fog that rolled in while they were trying to find something to eat.

The big clock glowed in the misty fog and little yellow fairy lights added magic to the scene.

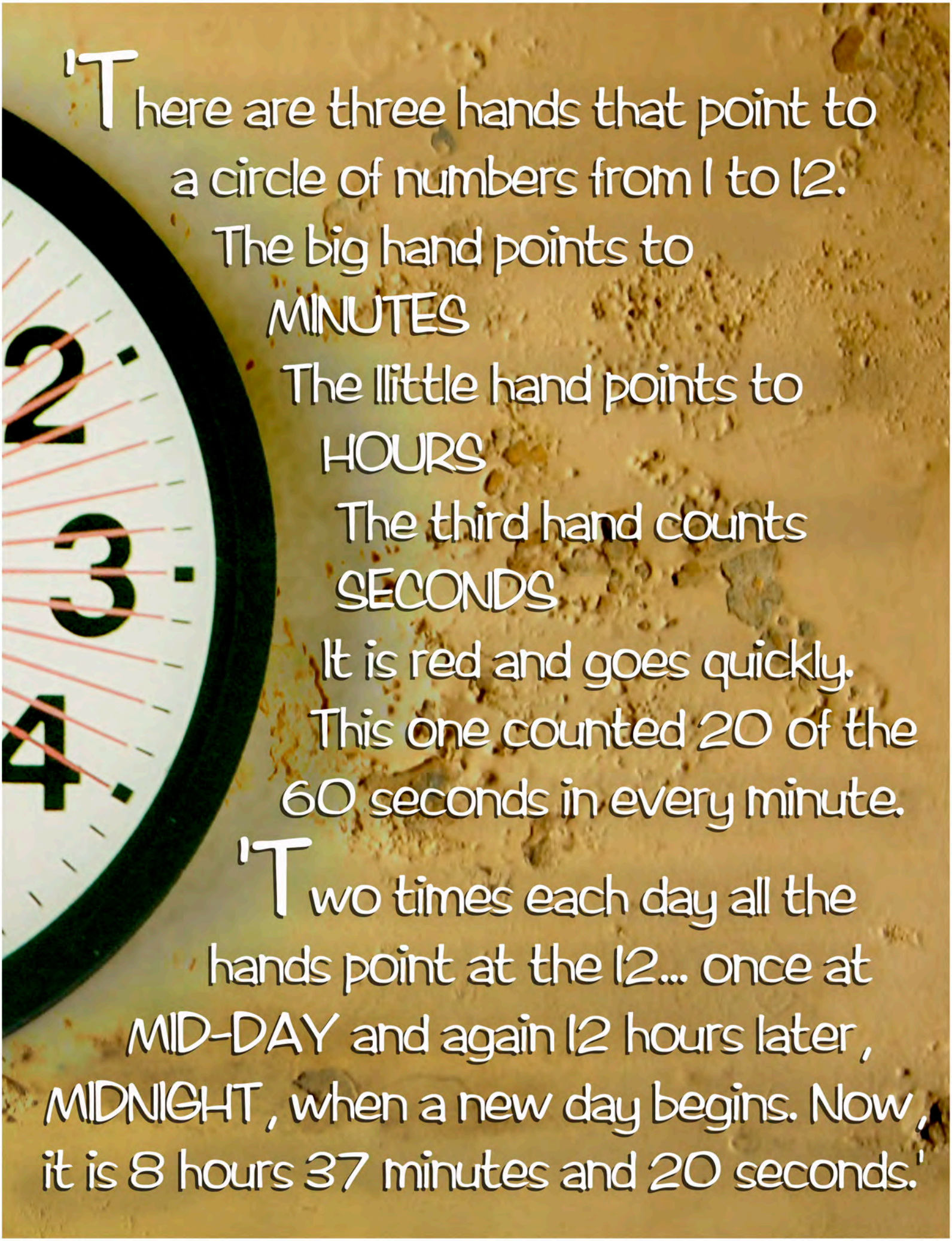
'What does it say?' asked Baby Bird.

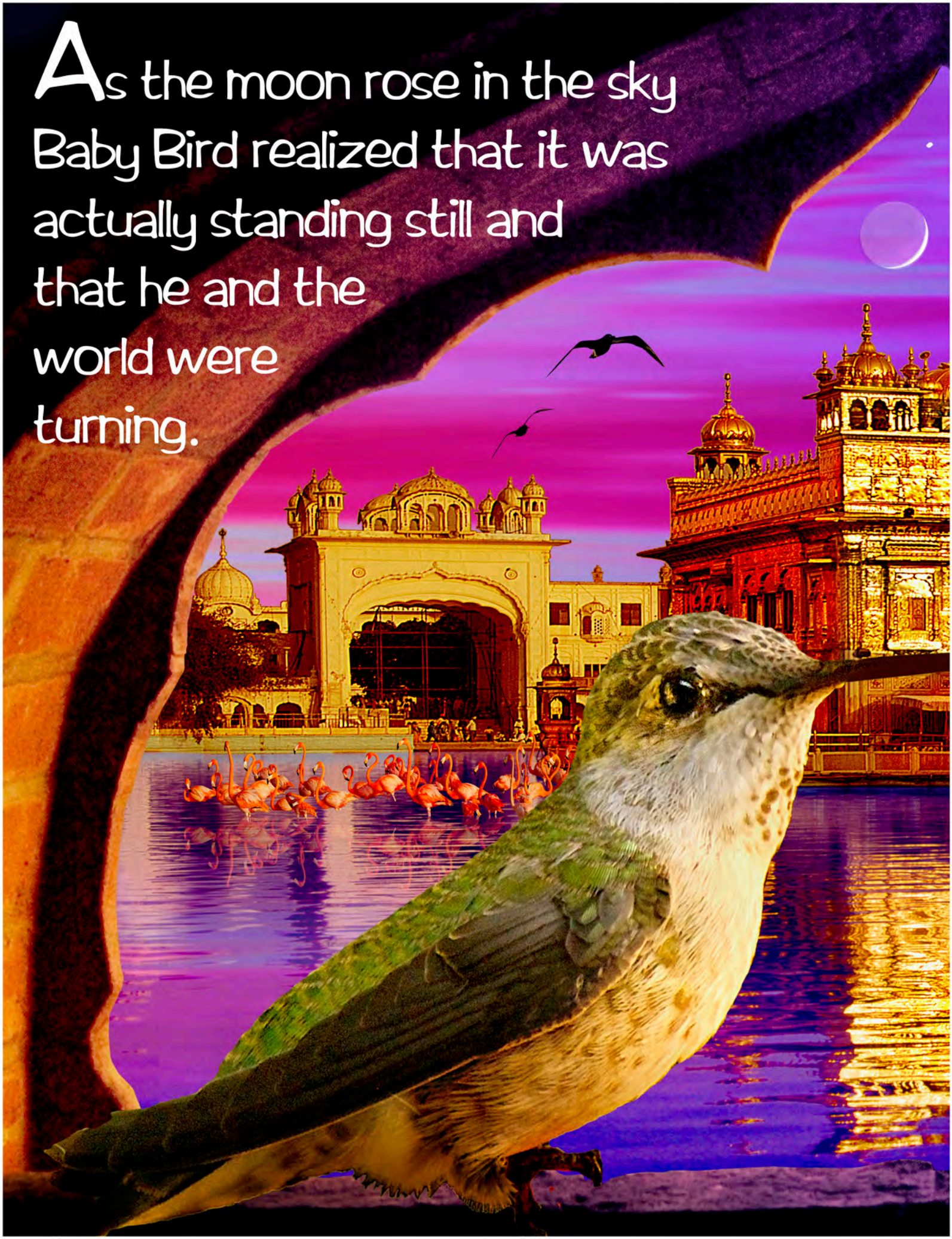
'Clocks tell us the time of day or night,' answered his friend.

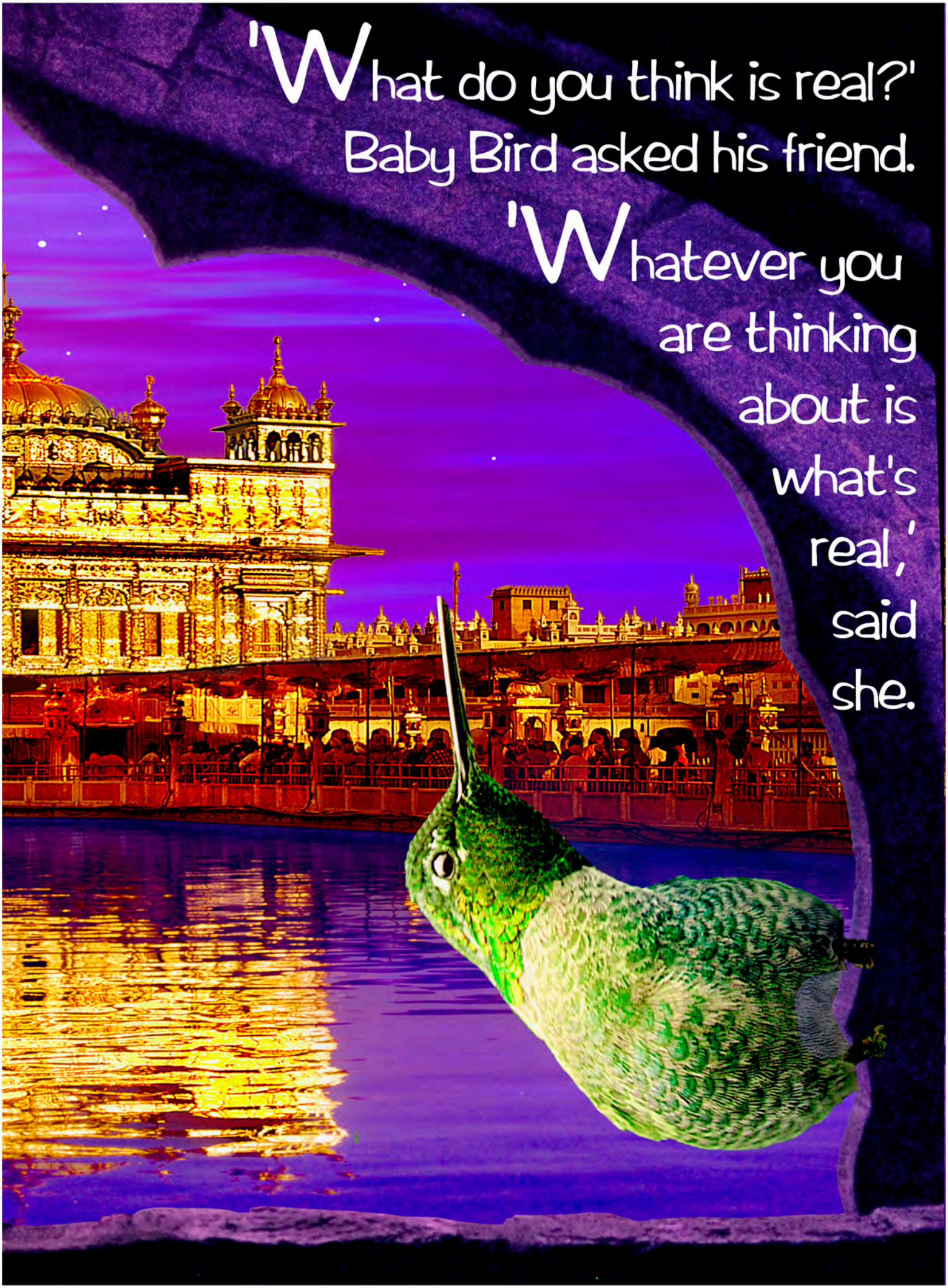
'Why do we need to know that?' he quizzed, not really getting it.

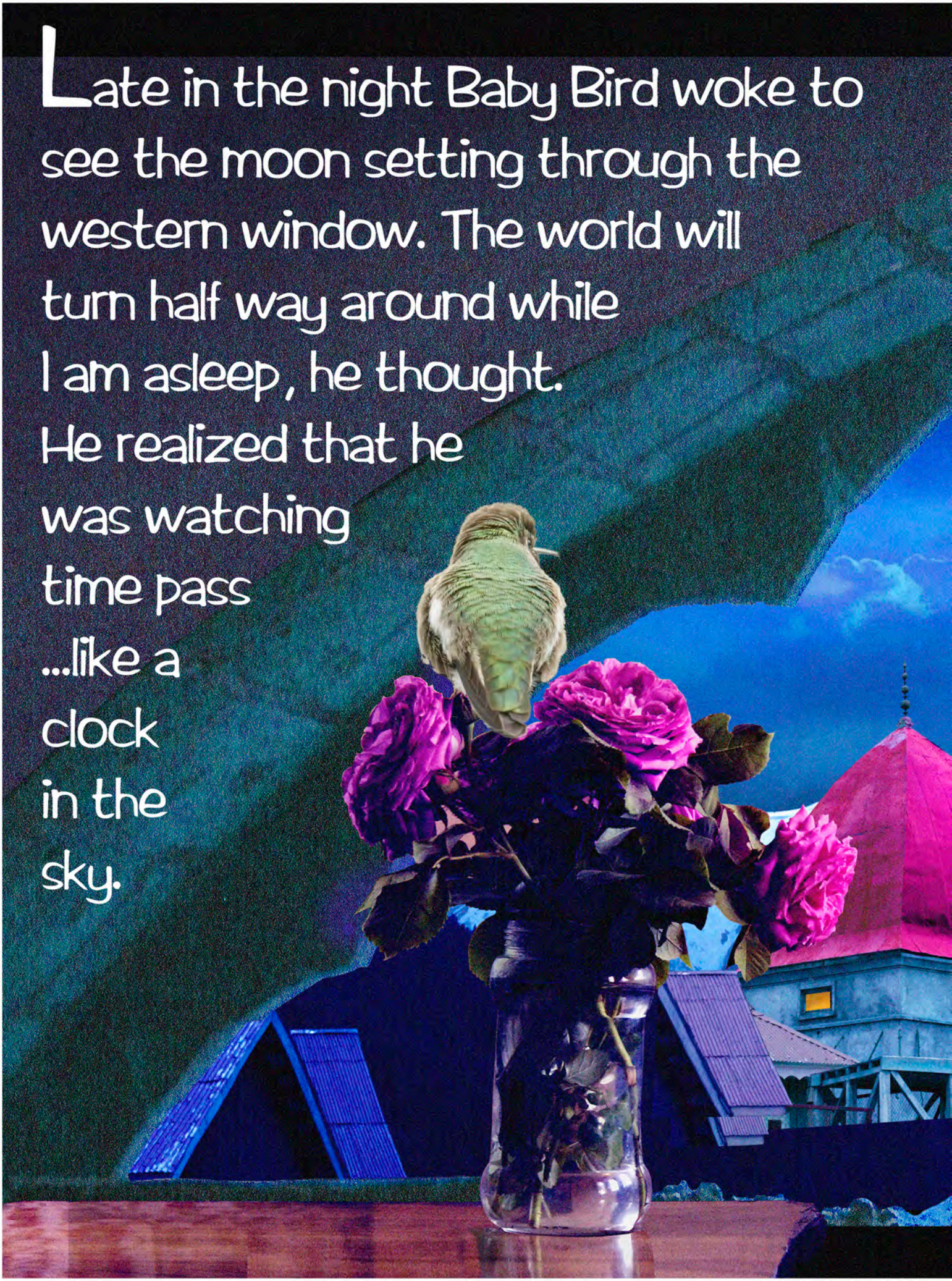

'To be able to do things together,' she said... 'Like going bed NOW so we get enough sleep to cross the desert.'

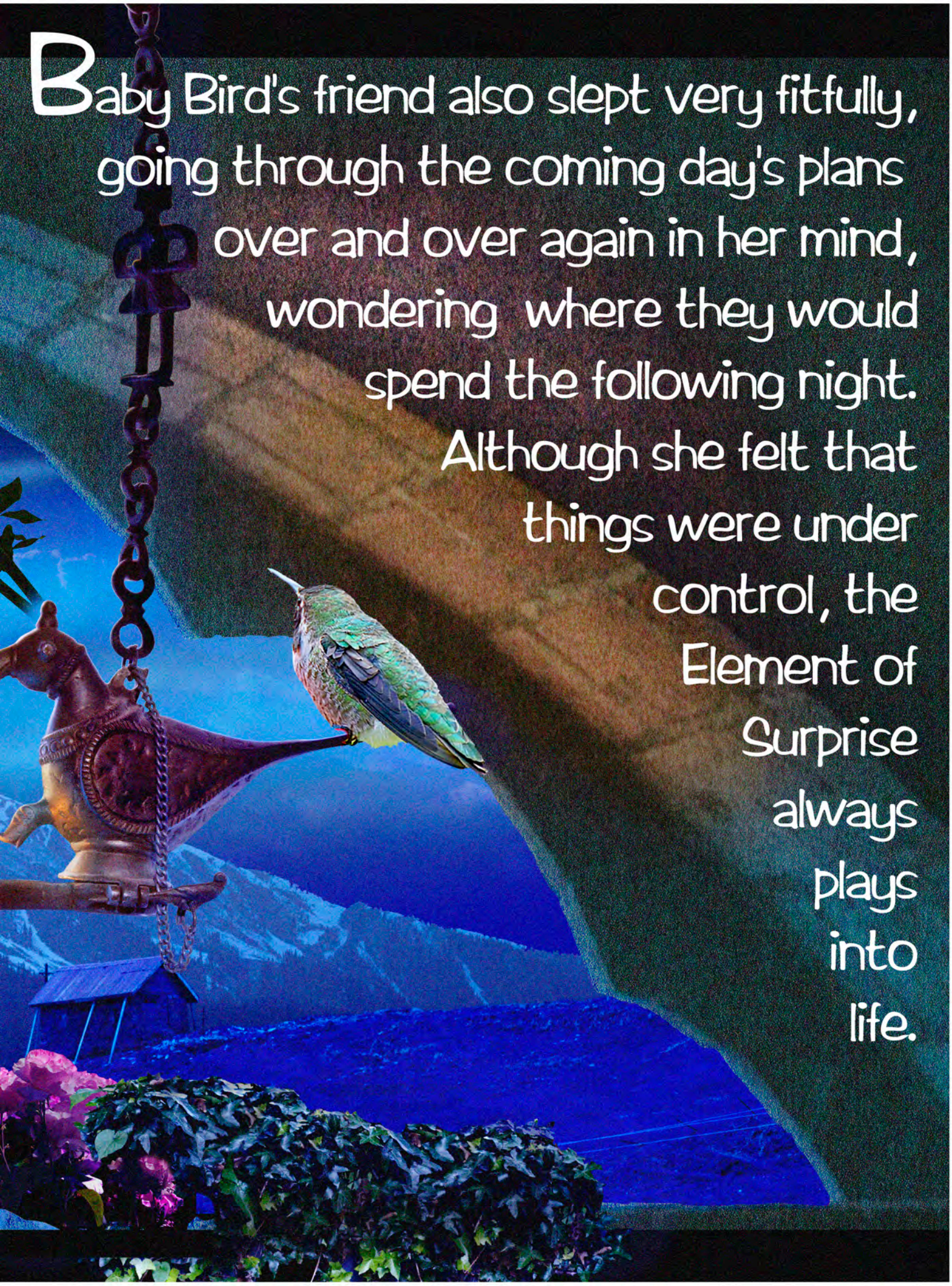
Inside the clocktower was a clock with recognizable numbers.
Baby Bird's friend explained how to read it.


'There are three hands that point to a circle of numbers from 1 to 12.
The big hand points to MINUTES
The llittle hand points to HOURS
The third hand counts SECONDS
It is red and goes quickly.
This one counted 20 of the 60 seconds in every minute.
'Two times each day all the hands point at the 12... once at MID-DAY and again 12 hours later, MIDNIGHT, when a new day begins. Now, it is 8 hours 37 minutes and 20 seconds.'


As the moon rose in the sky
Baby Bird realized that it was
actually standing still and
that he and the
world were
turning.


'What do you think is real?'
Baby Bird asked his friend.
'Whatever you
are thinking
about is
what's
real,'
said
she.


Late in the night Baby Bird woke to see the moon setting through the western window. The world will turn half way around while I am asleep, he thought. He realized that he was watching time pass ...like a clock in the sky.


Baby Bird's friend also slept very fitfully, going through the coming day's plans over and over again in her mind, wondering where they would spend the following night. Although she felt that things were under control, the Element of Surprise always plays into life.

The sun rose with a cackle of calls from early birds of all sorts. The holy men and their pilgrims sang and chanted prayers to invisible spirits in the sky that they called their King.

'How do you know which way to go?' Baby Bird asked his friend, who always seemed to know everything.

'Call it instinct, but I would say it is a feeling. When you are right, you feel it.'

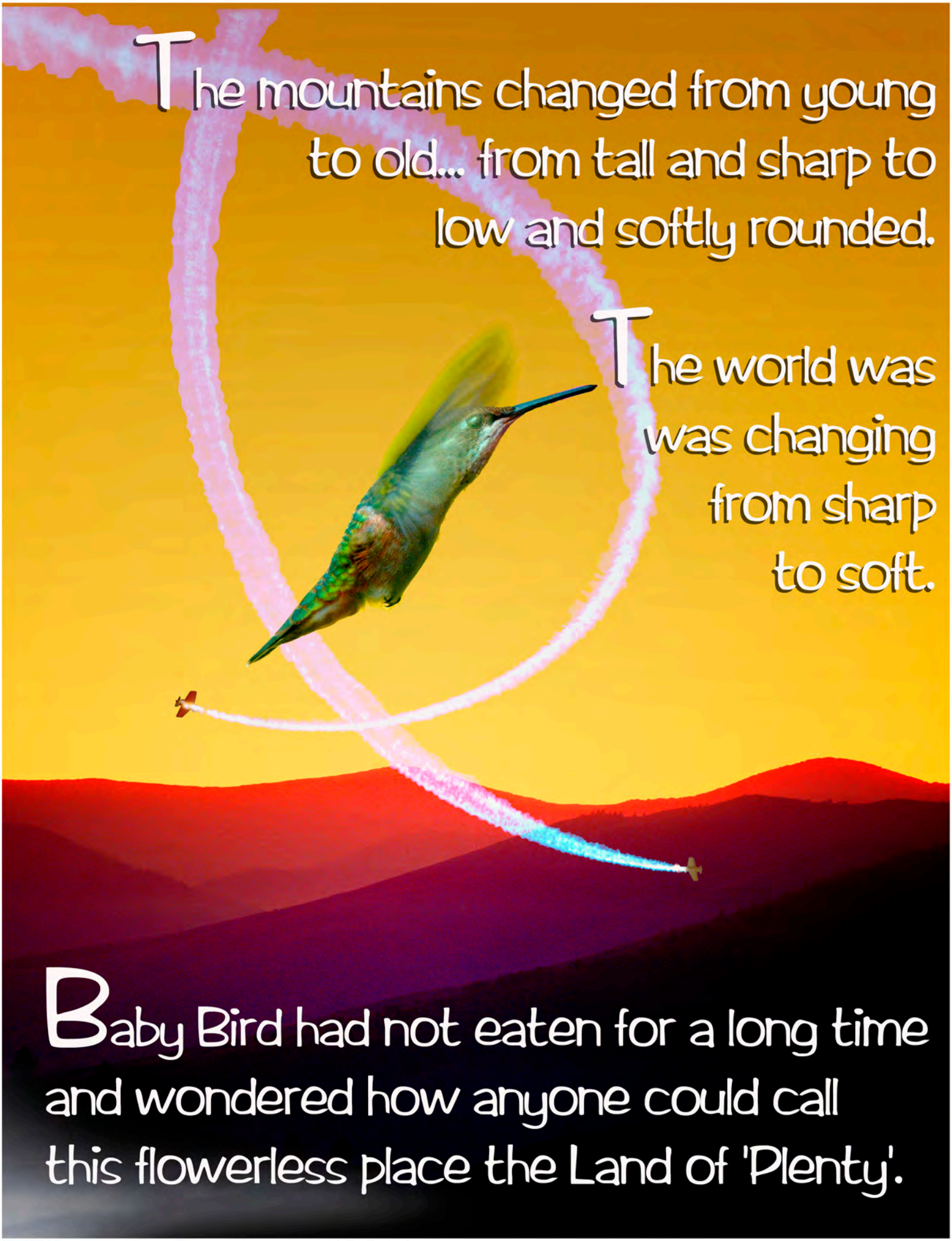
'Wrong also,' she added.

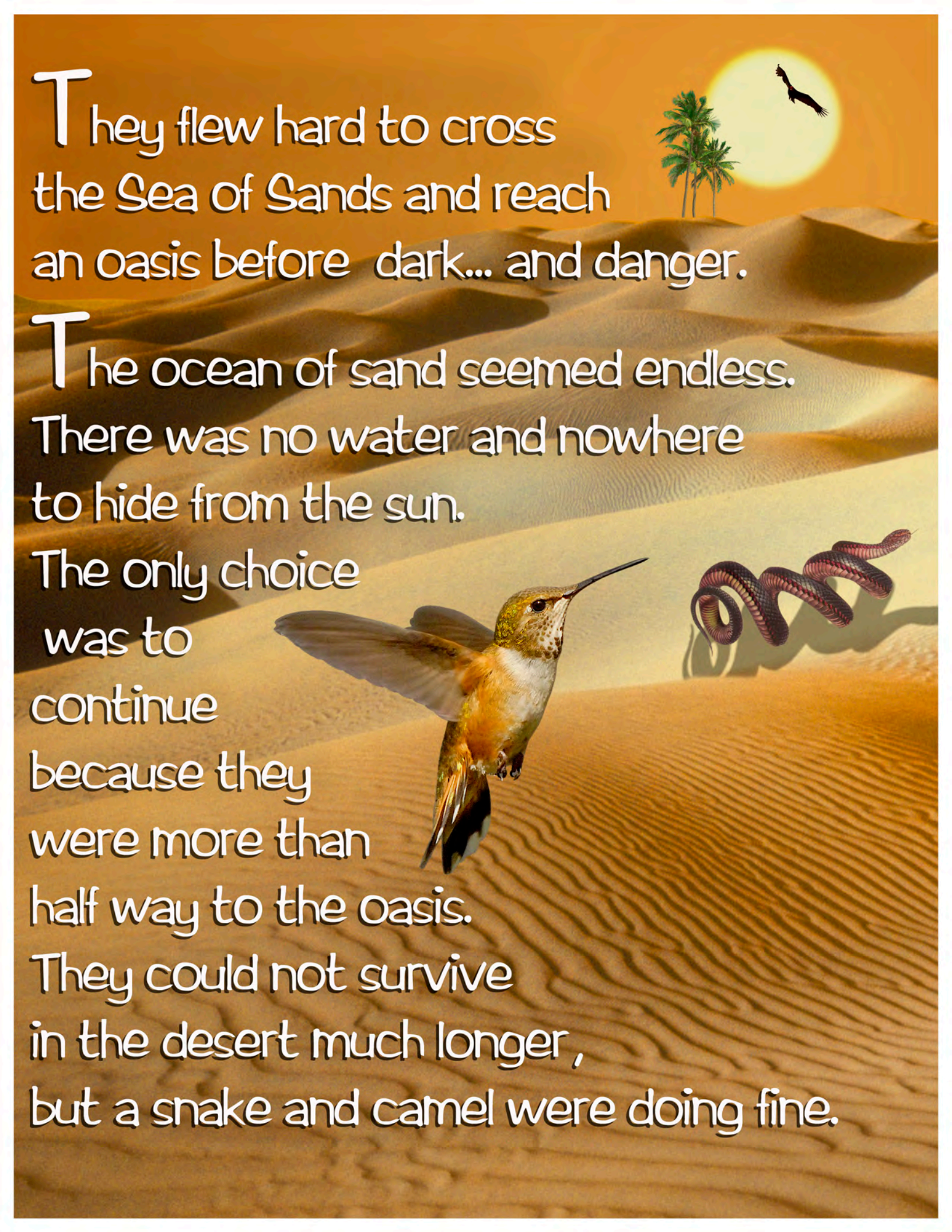
The plan was to use the sun and stars to navigate their way because stars don't move.
'Magnetism points like a compass if you can feel it,' she said as she flew away.

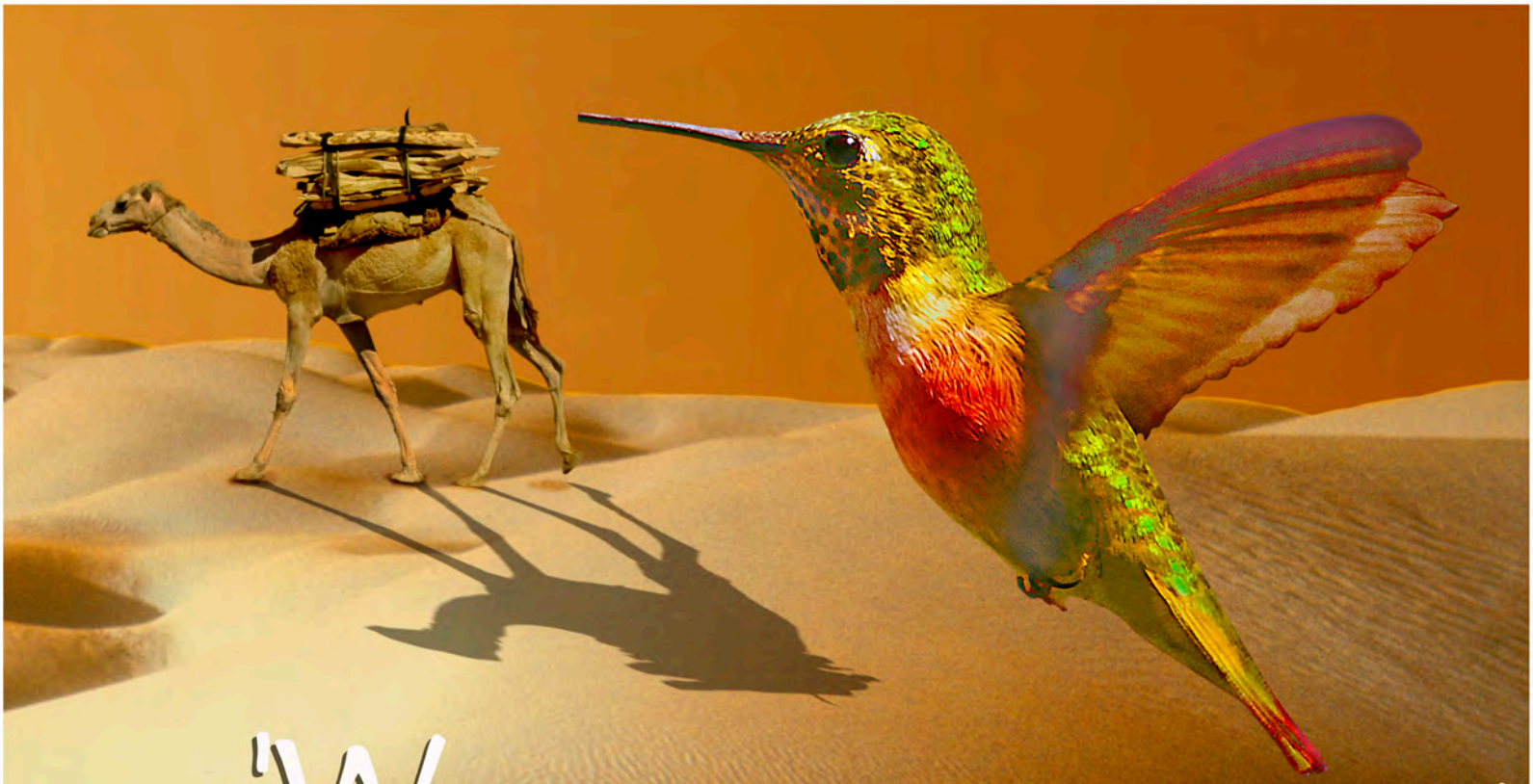
They poked through the clouds above the highest mountains and asked a passing eagle where they were.

'You are flying through the Land of Plenty my little friends,' said the eagle.

Confused, they kept their faith and kept on going.


The mountains changed from young to old... from tall and sharp to low and softly rounded.
The world was was changing from sharp to soft.
Baby Bird had not eaten for a long time and wondered how anyone could call this flowerless place the Land of 'Plenty'.

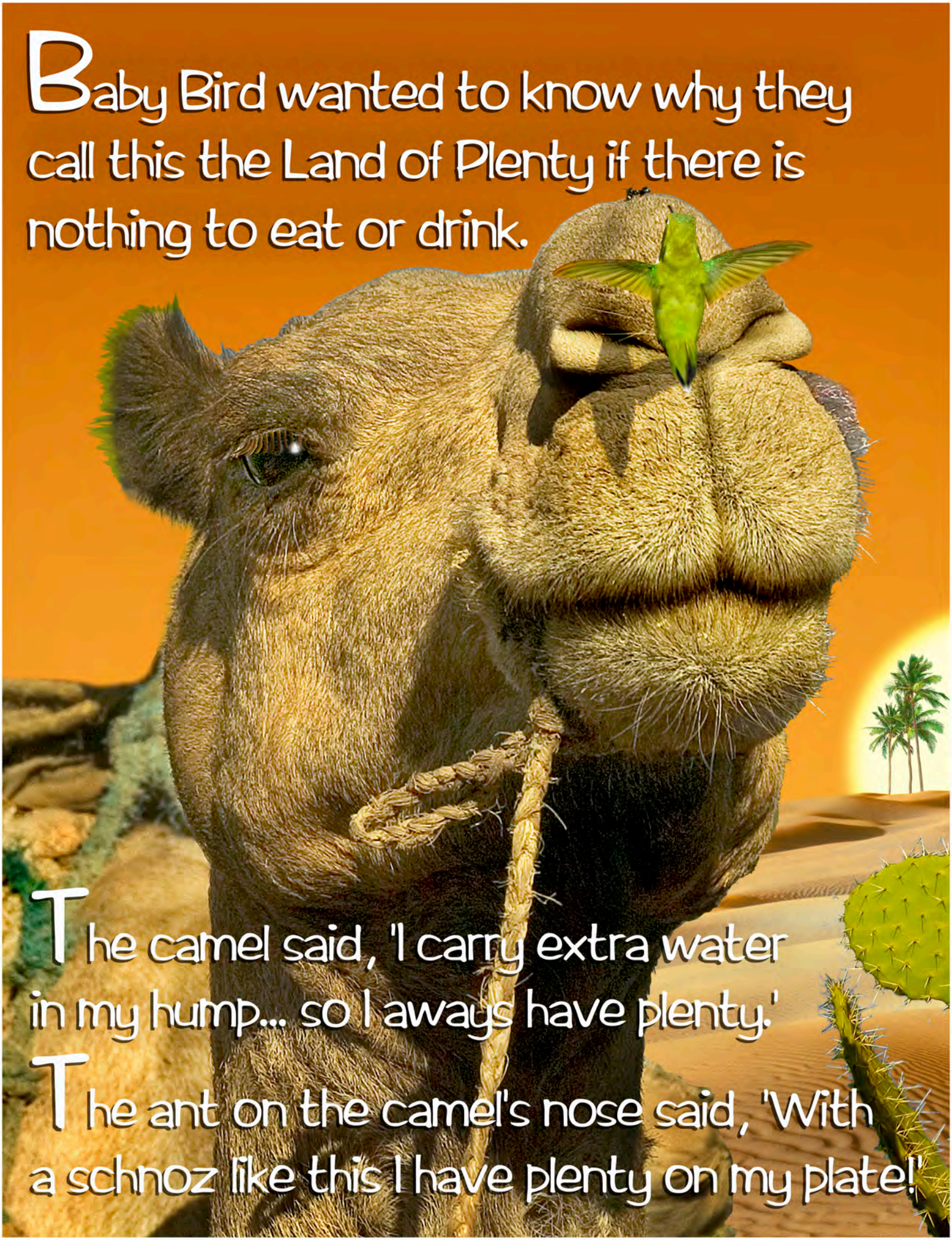

They flew hard to cross
the Sea of Sands and reach
an oasis before dark... and danger.
The ocean of sand seemed endless.
There was no water and nowhere
to hide from the sun.
The only choice
was to
continue
because they
were more than
half way to the oasis.
They could not survive
in the desert much longer,
but a snake and camel were doing fine.



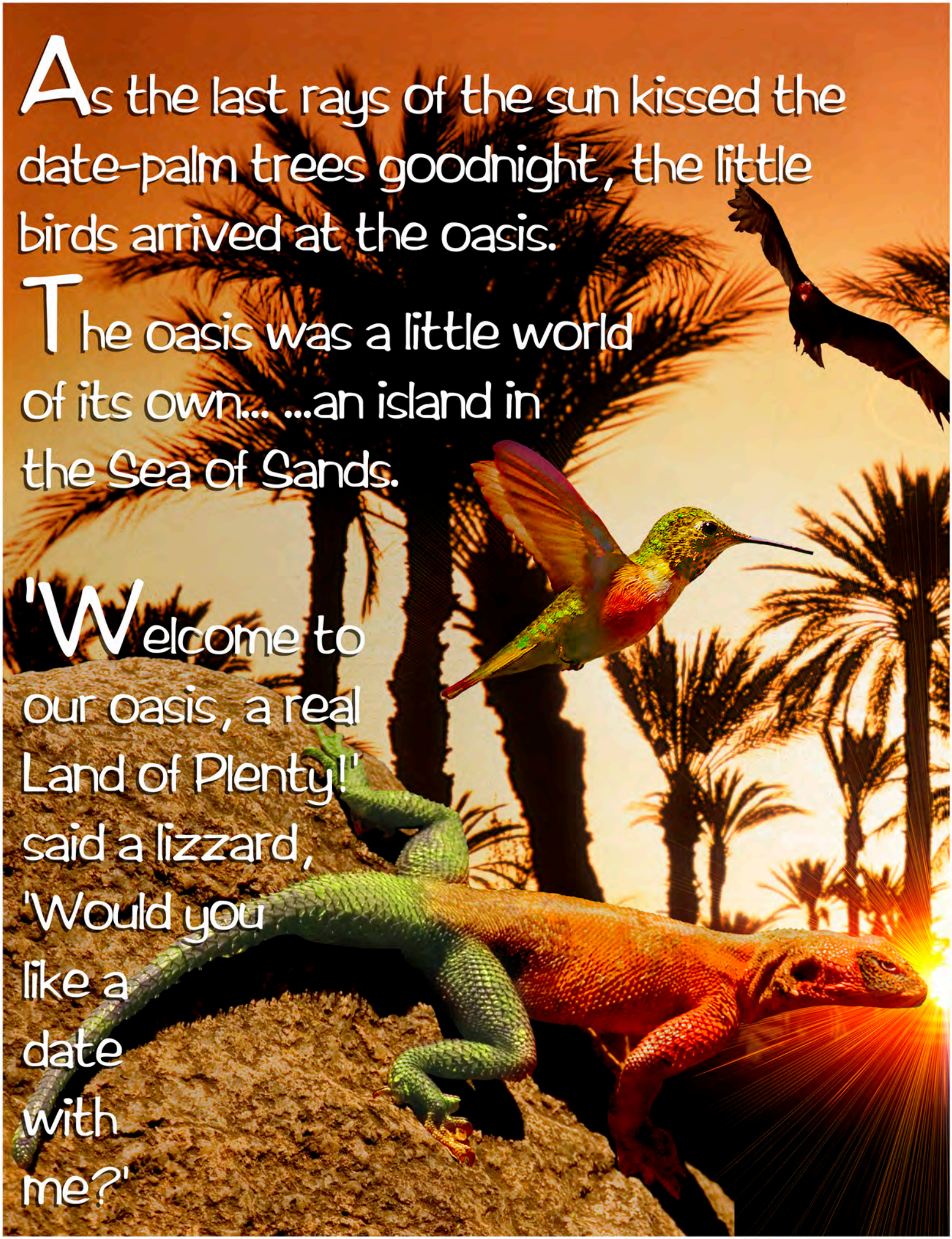
'Welcome to The Land of Plenty!' said the coiled snake with a forked tongue.

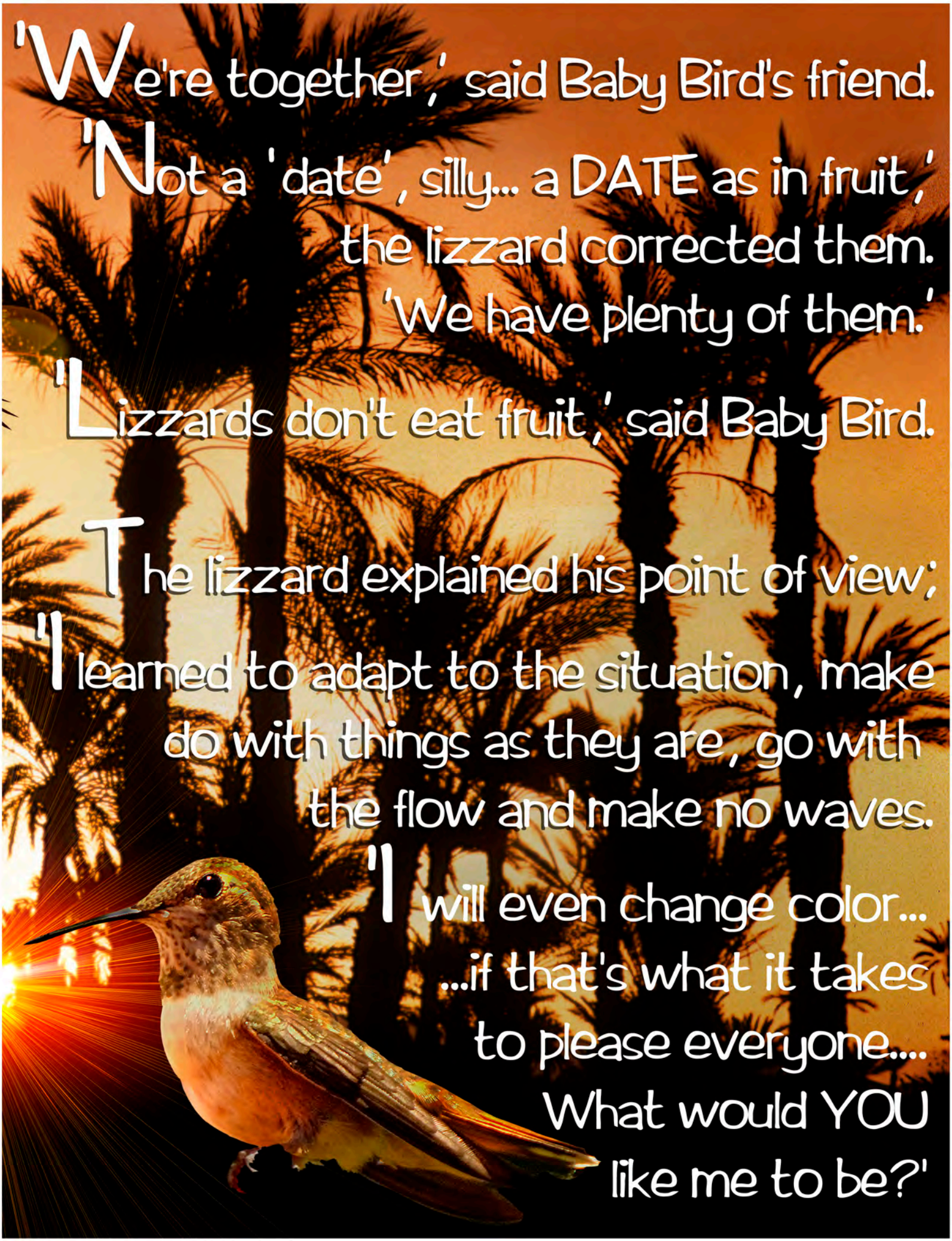
'It looks like plenty of nothing to me,' said Baby Bird doubtfully.

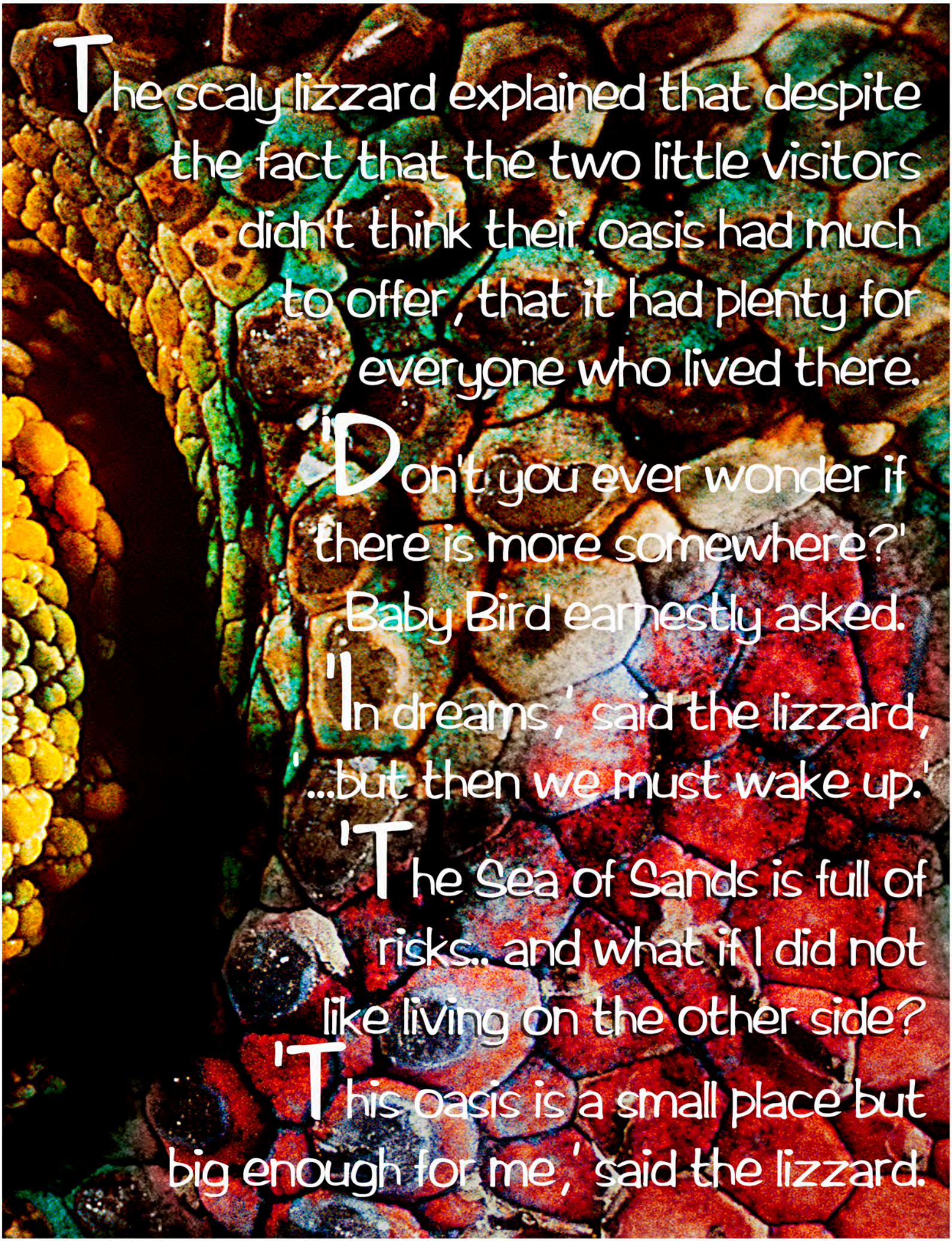
'Sometimes it is easier to make do with what you've got,' said the snake, 'You know, count your blessings and all that... isn't that what we are supposed to do?'

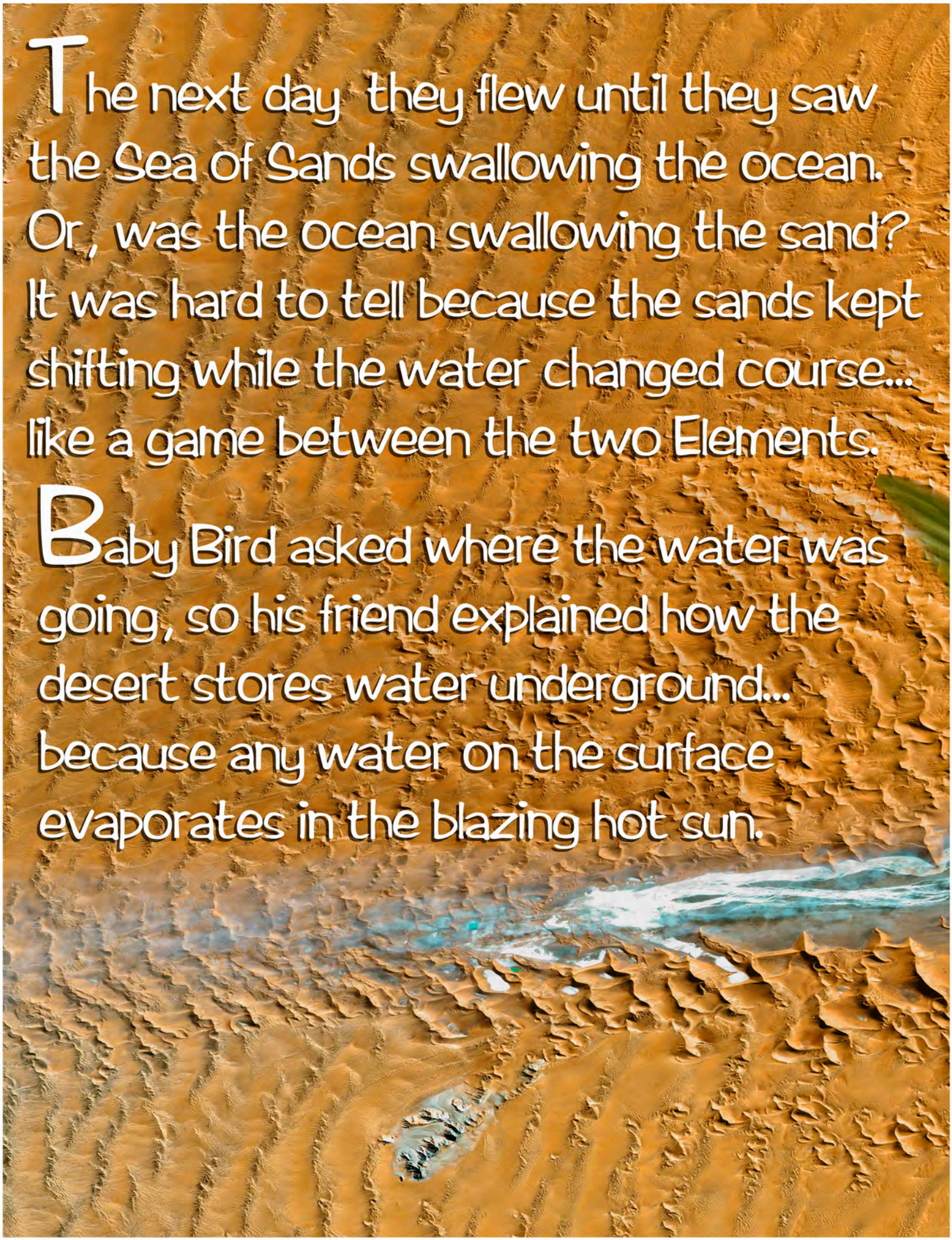

Baby Bird wanted to know why they call this the Land of Plenty if there is nothing to eat or drink.
The camel said, 'I carry extra water in my hump... so I aways have plenty.'
The ant on the camel's nose said, 'With a schnoz like this I have plenty on my plate!'

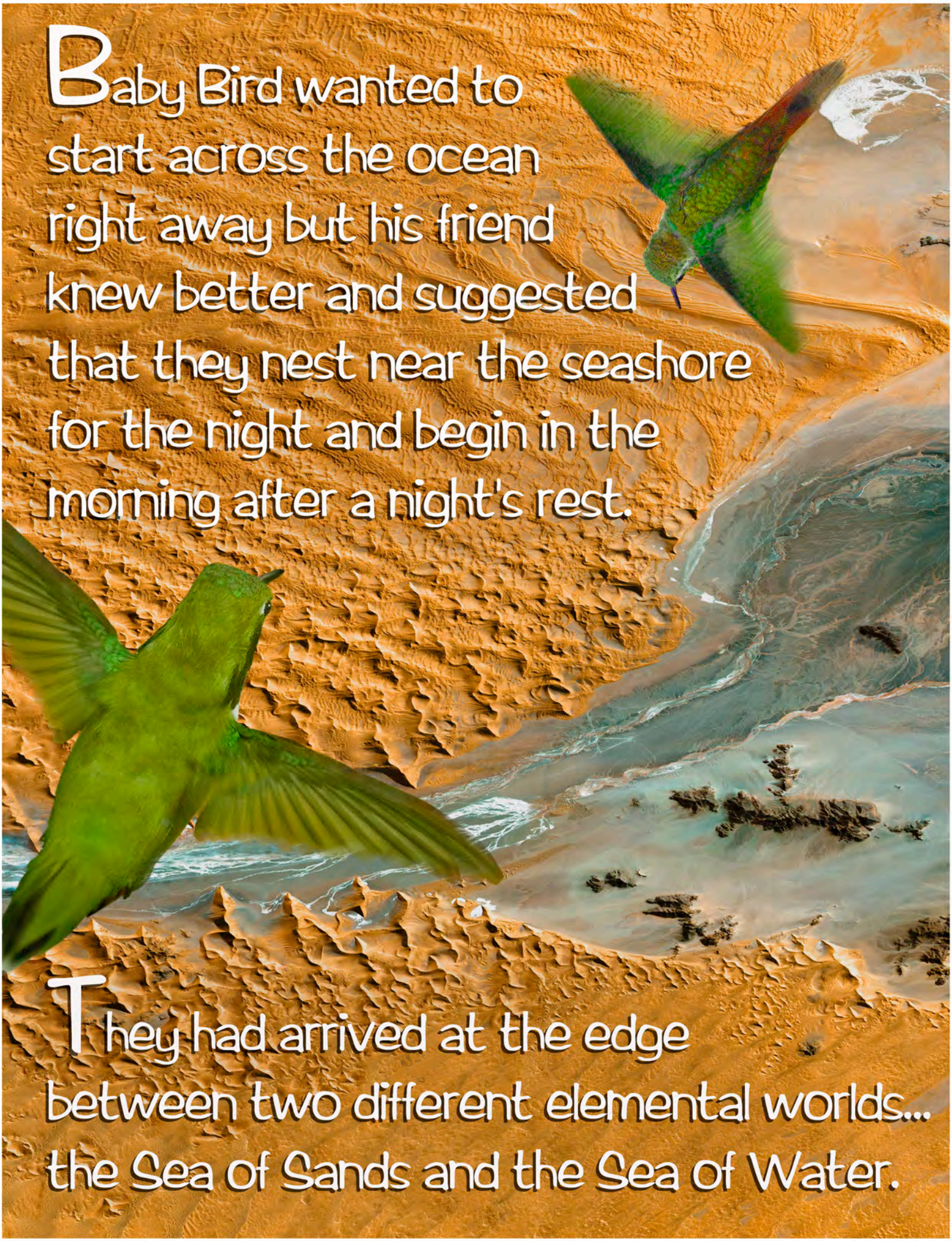
The hawks said, 'We can catch plenty to eat because there is no place for dinner to hide in the Sea of Sands.'
The vulture said, 'There is plenty for me because I eat everyone's garbage... so the more they catch, the more I eat!'

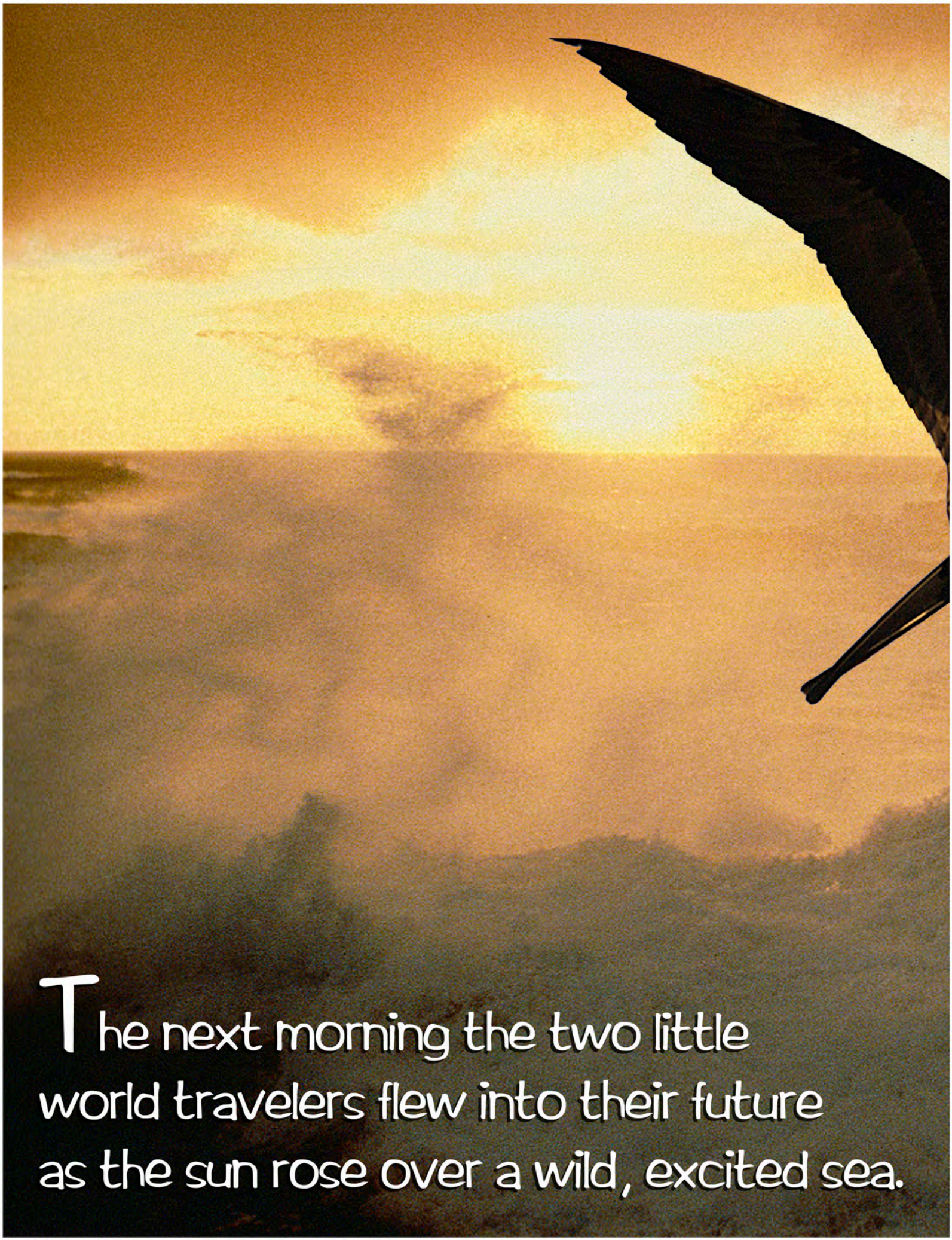

As the last rays of the sun kissed the date-palm trees goodnight, the little birds arrived at the oasis.
The oasis was a little world of its own... ...an island in the Sea of Sands.
'Welcome to our oasis, a real Land of Plenty!' said a lizzard, 'Would you like a date with me?'

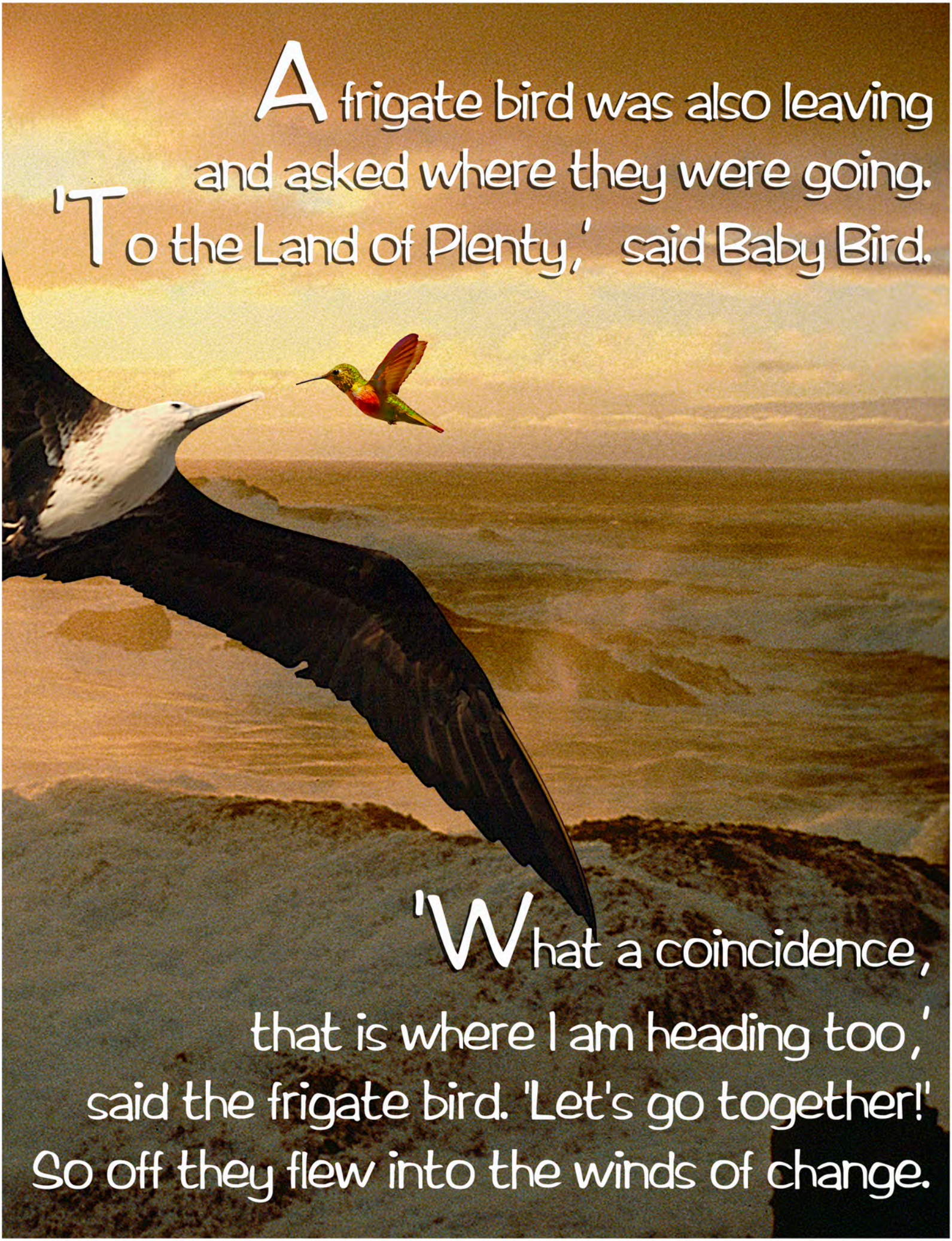

'We're together,' said Baby Bird's friend.
'Not a 'date', silly... a DATE as in fruit,'
the lizzard corrected them.
'We have plenty of them.'
'Lizzards don't eat fruit,' said Baby Bird.
The lizzard explained his point of view;
'I learned to adapt to the situation, make
do with things as they are, go with
the flow and make no waves.
'I will even change color...
...if that's what it takes
to please everyone....
What would YOU
like me to be?'


The scaly lizzard explained that despite the fact that the two little visitors didn't think their oasis had much to offer, that it had plenty for everyone who lived there.
'Don't you ever wonder if there is more somewhere?' Baby Bird earnestly asked.
'In dreams,' said the lizzard, '...but then we must wake up.'
'The Sea of Sands is full of risks.. and what if I did not like living on the other side?
'This oasis is a small place but big enough for me,' said the lizzard.

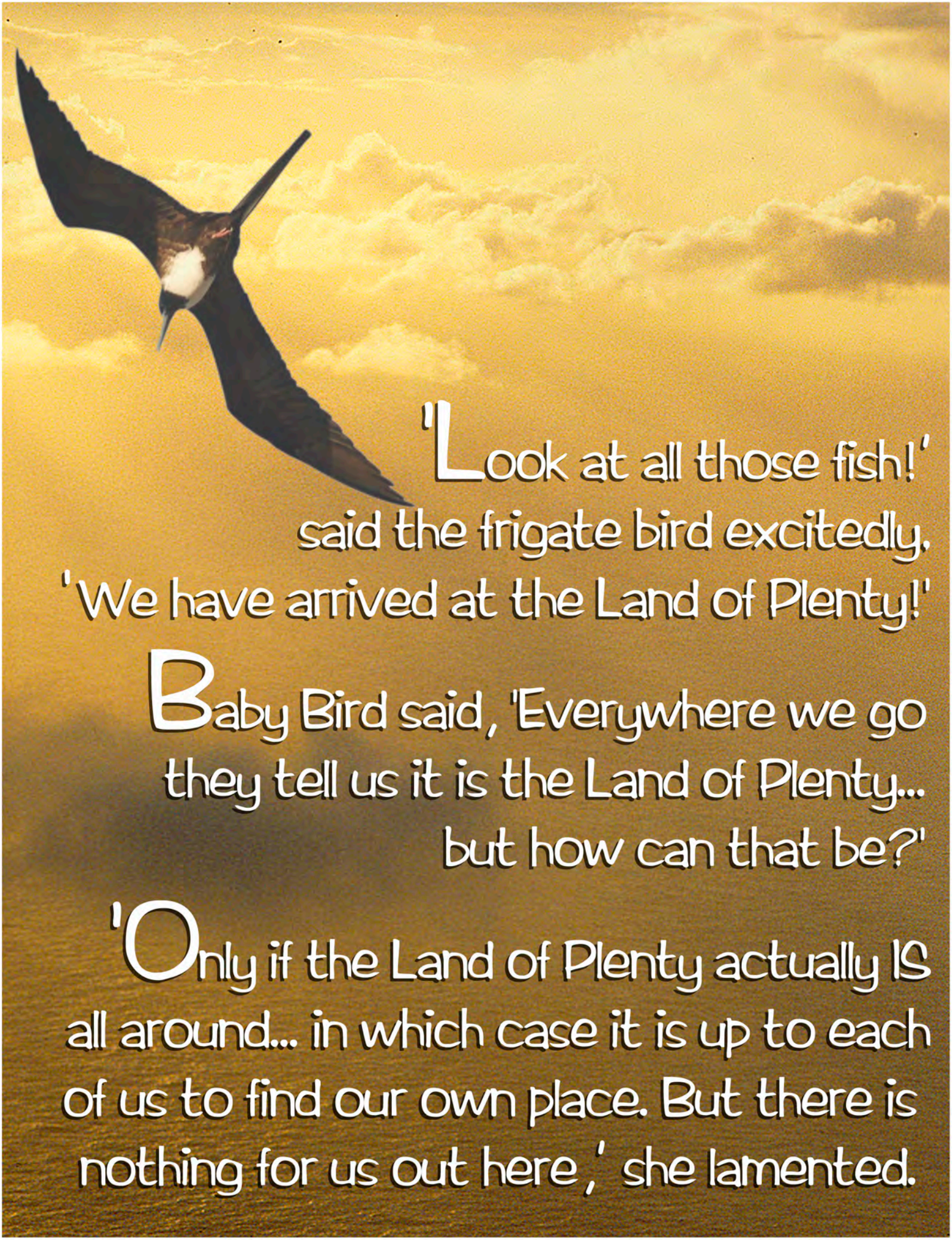

The next day they flew until they saw the Sea of Sands swallowing the ocean. Or, was the ocean swallowing the sand? It was hard to tell because the sands kept shifting while the water changed course... like a game between the two Elements.
Baby Bird asked where the water was going, so his friend explained how the desert stores water underground... because any water on the surface evaporates in the blazing hot sun.

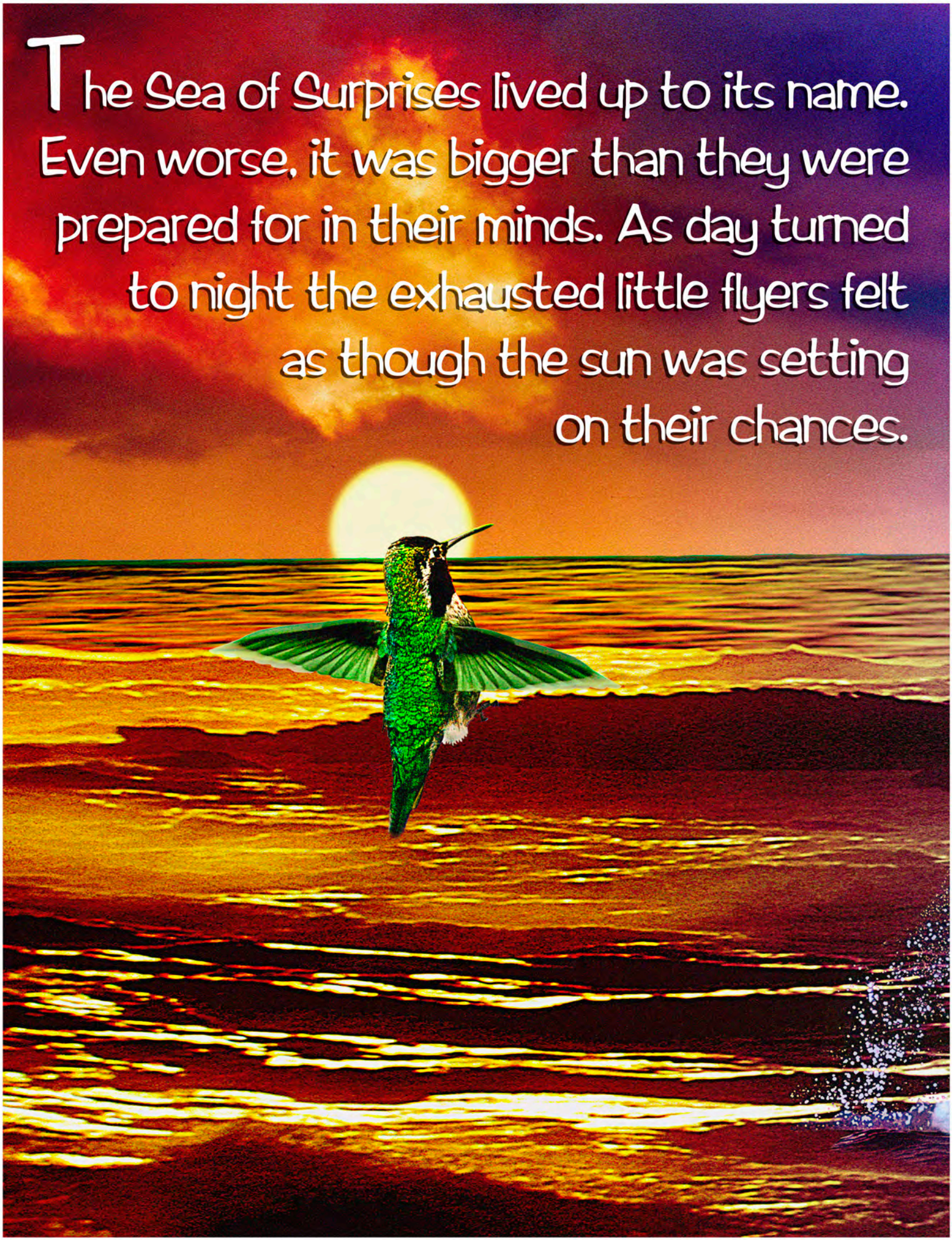

Baby Bird wanted to start across the ocean right away but his friend knew better and suggested that they nest near the seashore for the night and begin in the morning after a night's rest.
They had arrived at the edge between two different elemental worlds... the Sea of Sands and the Sea of Water.

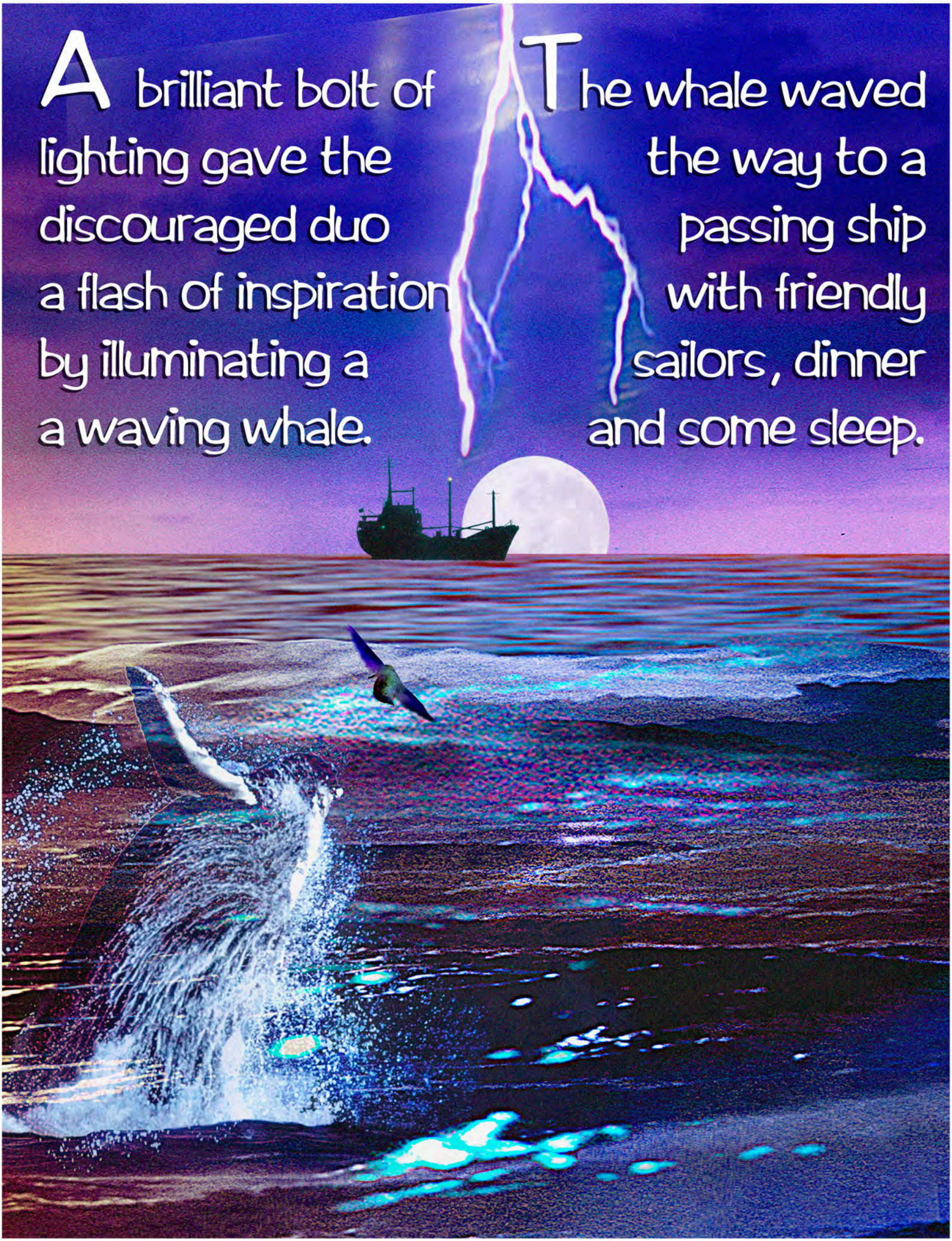

The next morning the two little
world travelers flew into their future
as the sun rose over a wild, excited sea.

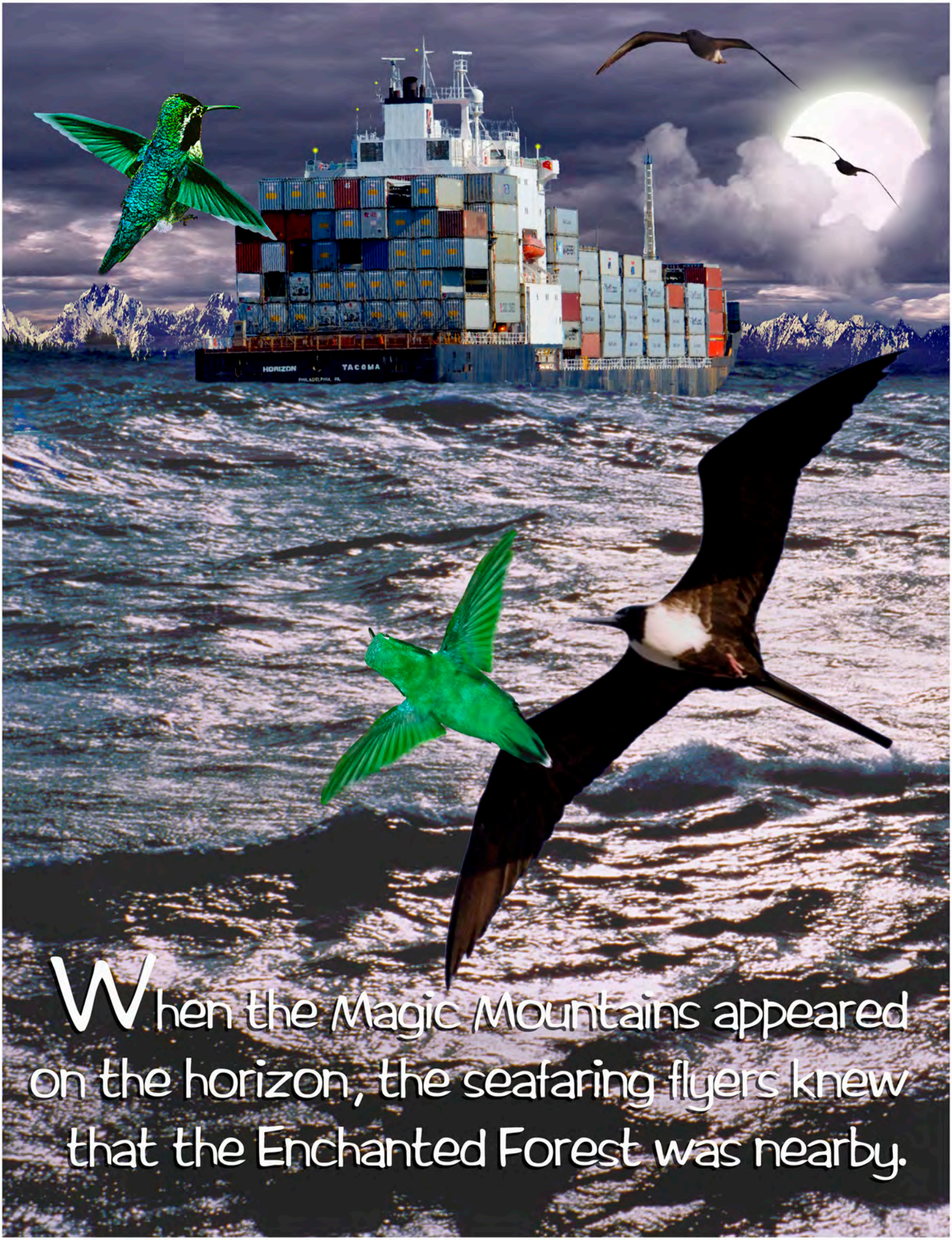

A frigate bird was also leaving
and asked where they were going.
'To the Land of Plenty,' said Baby Bird.
'What a coincidence,
that is where I am heading too,'
said the frigate bird. 'Let's go together!'
So off they flew into the winds of change.

Right in the middle of the huge ocean,
far away from any land or islands,
the frigate bird peeled away and
swooped down to the
surface of the sea
to start fishing.

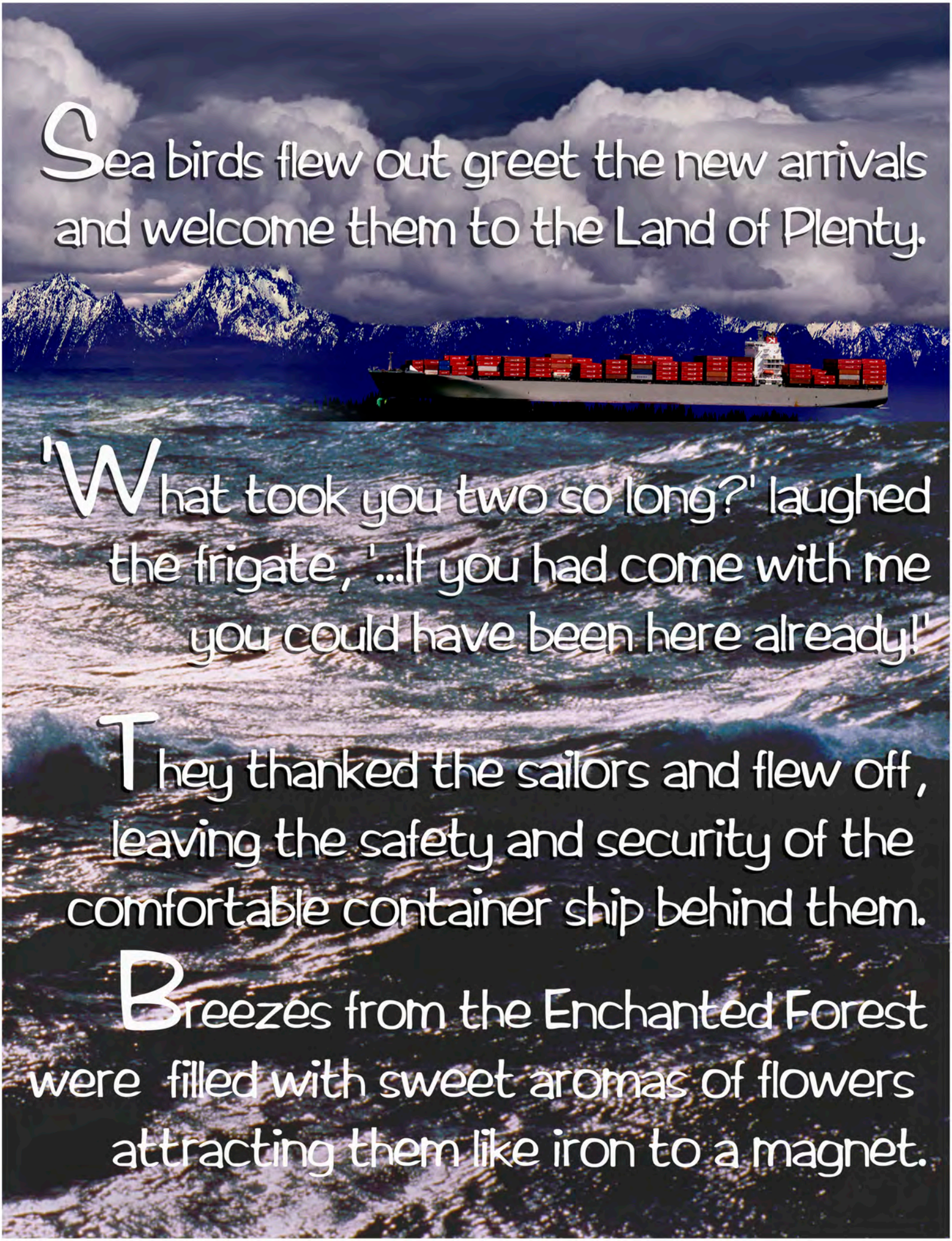

'Look at all those fish!'
said the frigate bird excitedly.
'We have arrived at the Land of Plenty!'
Baby Bird said, 'Everywhere we go
they tell us it is the Land of Plenty...
but how can that be?'
'Only if the Land of Plenty actually IS
all around... in which case it is up to each
of us to find our own place. But there is
nothing for us out here,' she lamented.

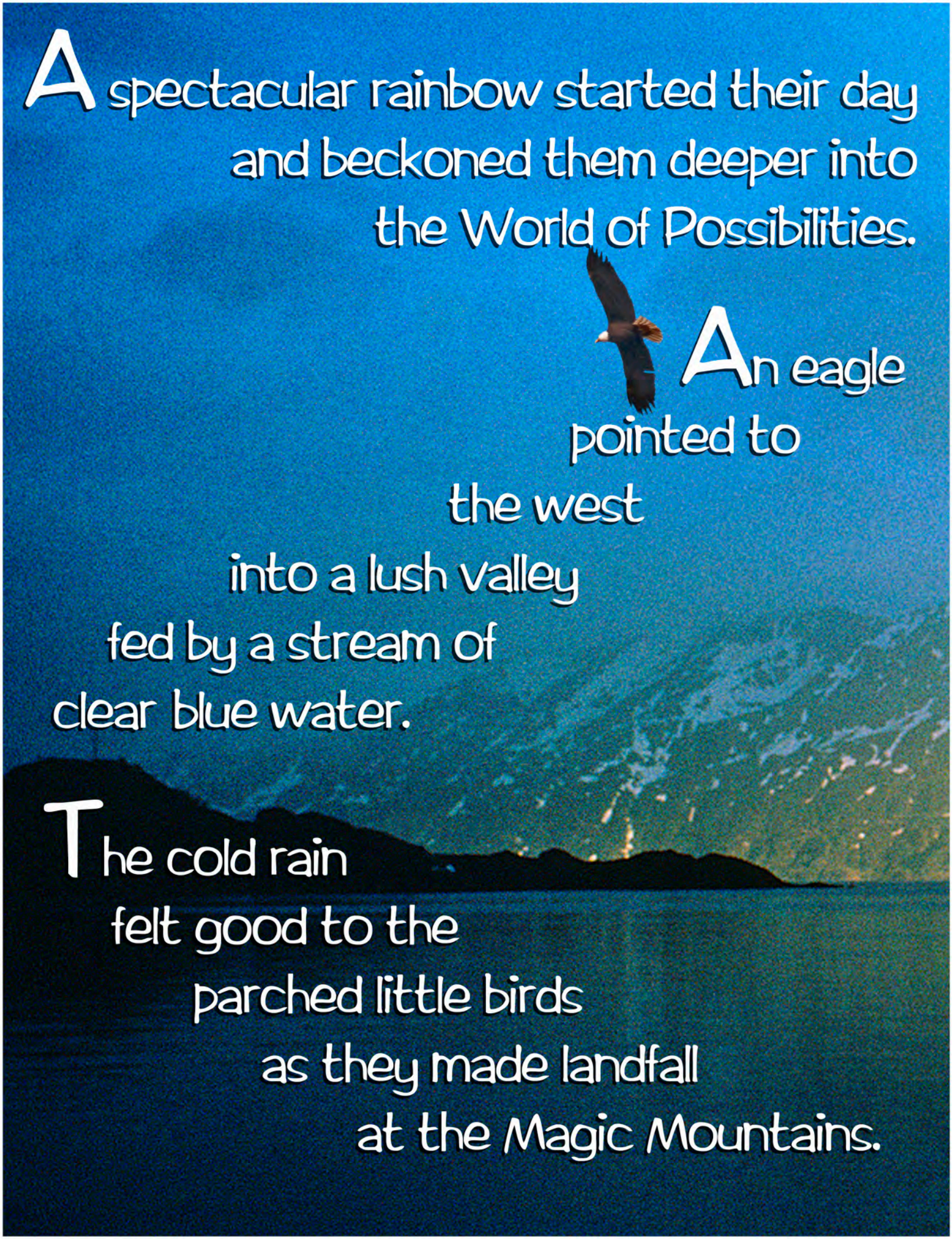

The Sea of Surprises lived up to its name. Even worse, it was bigger than they were prepared for in their minds. As day turned to night the exhausted little flyers felt as though the sun was setting on their chances.

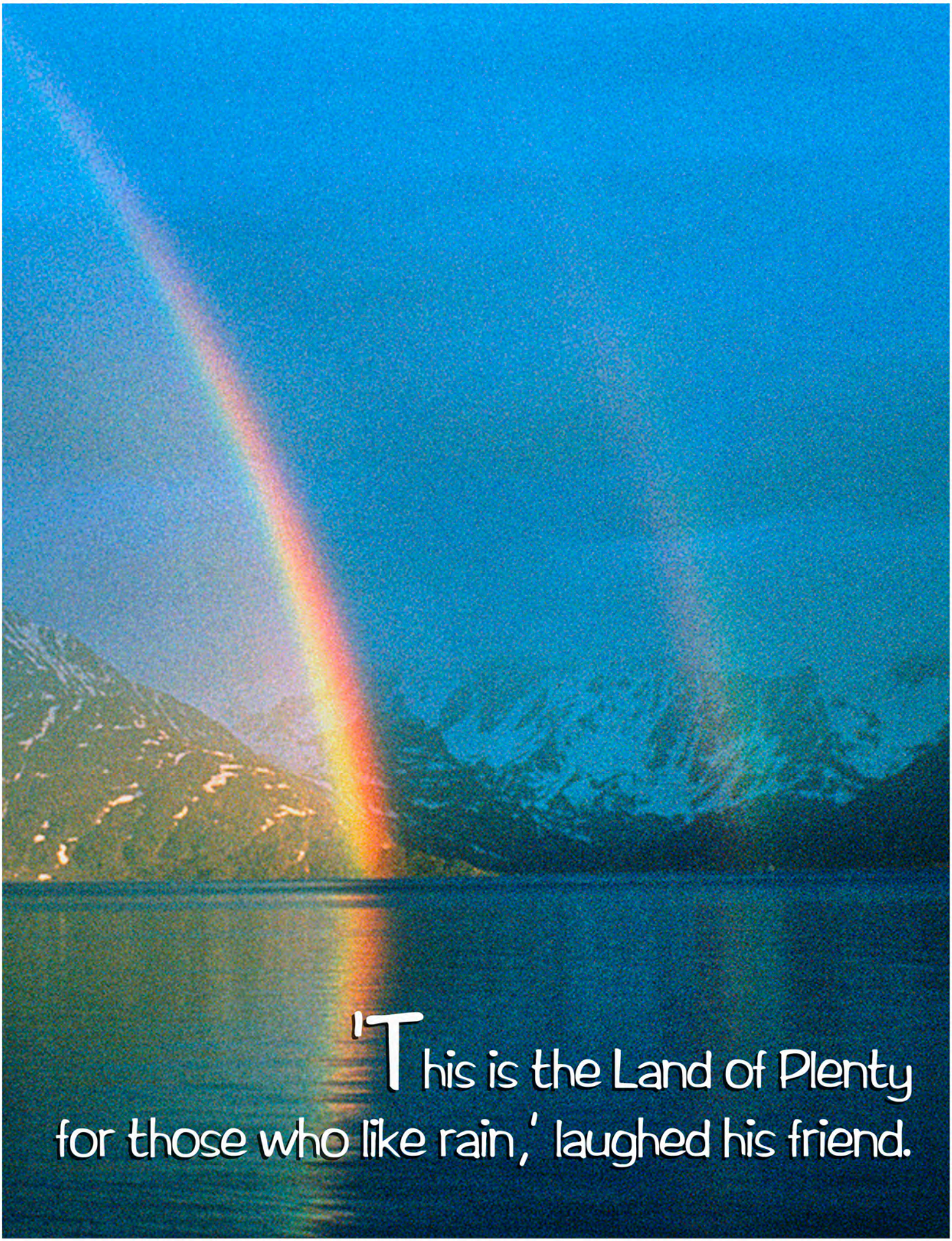

A brilliant bolt of lighting gave the discouraged duo a flash of inspiration by illuminating a a waving whale.
The whale waved the way to a passing ship with friendly sailors, dinner and some sleep.



When the Magic Mountains appeared on the horizon, the seafaring flyers knew that the Enchanted Forest was nearby.

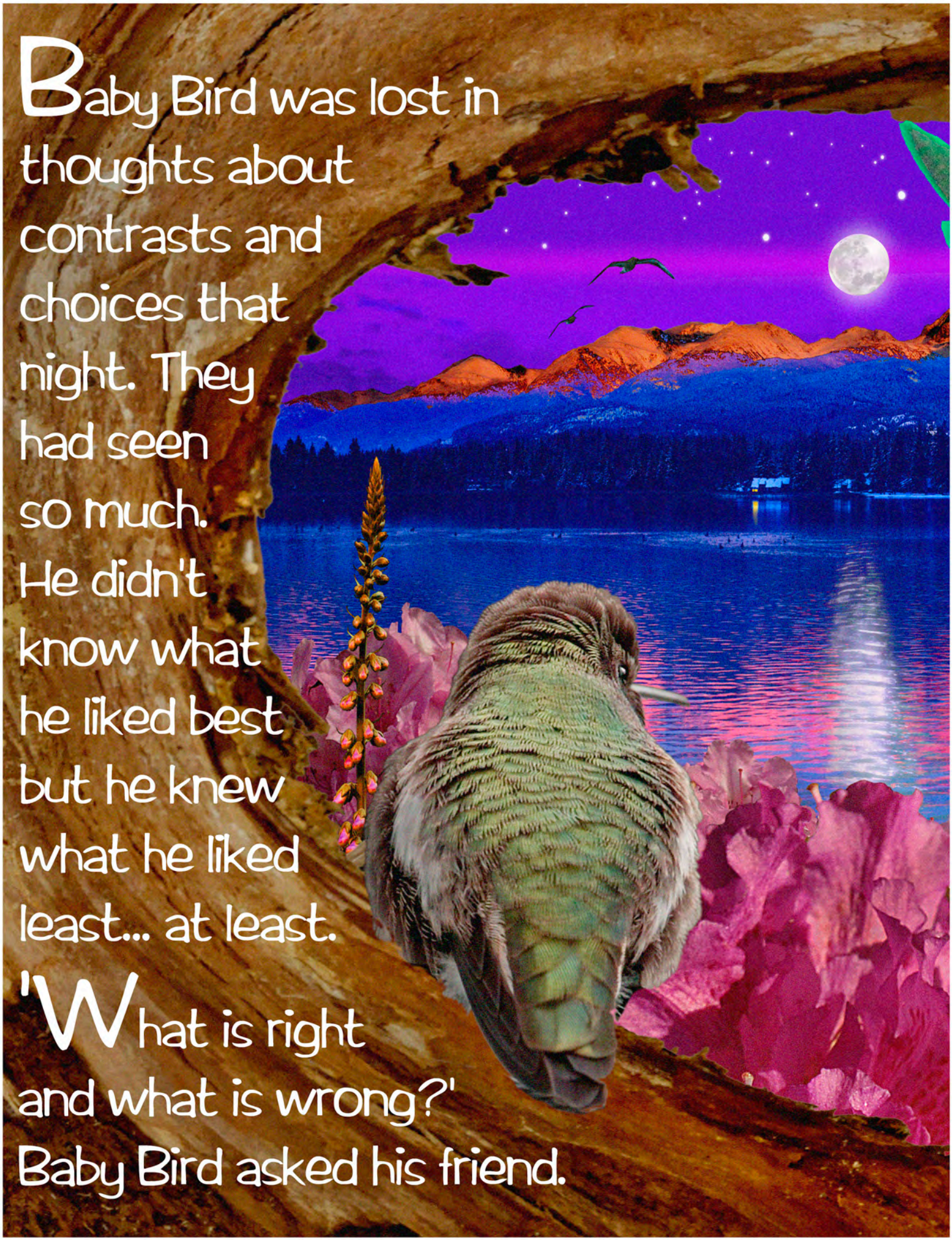

Sea birds flew out greet the new arrivals and welcome them to the Land of Plenty.
'What took you two so long?' laughed the frigate, '...If you had come with me you could have been here already!"
They thanked the sailors and flew off, leaving the safety and security of the comfortable container ship behind them.
Breezes from the Enchanted Forest were filled with sweet aromas of flowers attracting them like iron to a magnet.

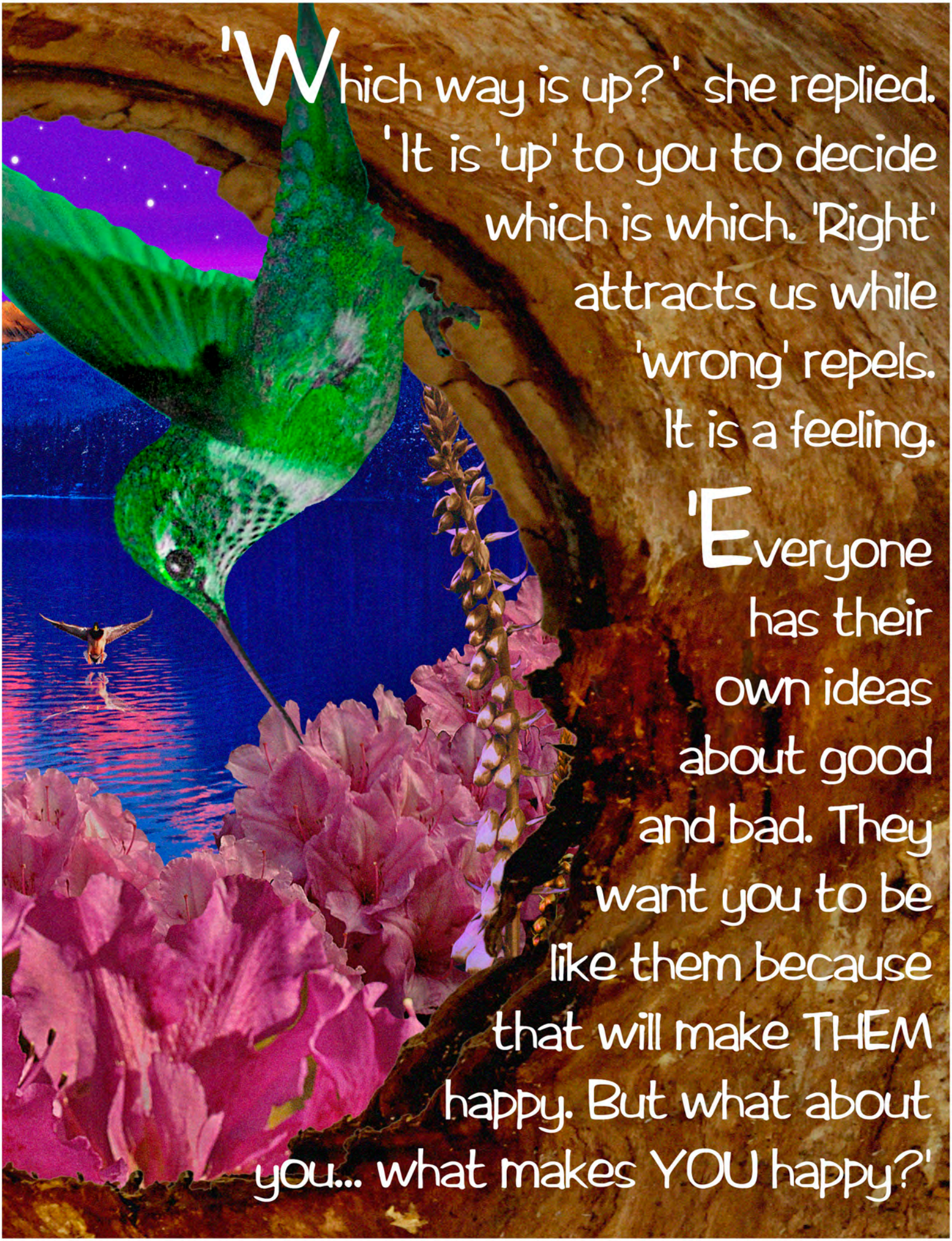

A spectacular rainbow started their day
and beckoned them deeper into
the World of Possibilities.
An eagle
pointed to
the west
into a lush valley
fed by a stream of
clear blue water.
The cold rain
felt good to the
parched little birds
as they made landfall
at the Magic Mountains.


'This is the Land of Plenty
for those who like rain,' laughed his friend.

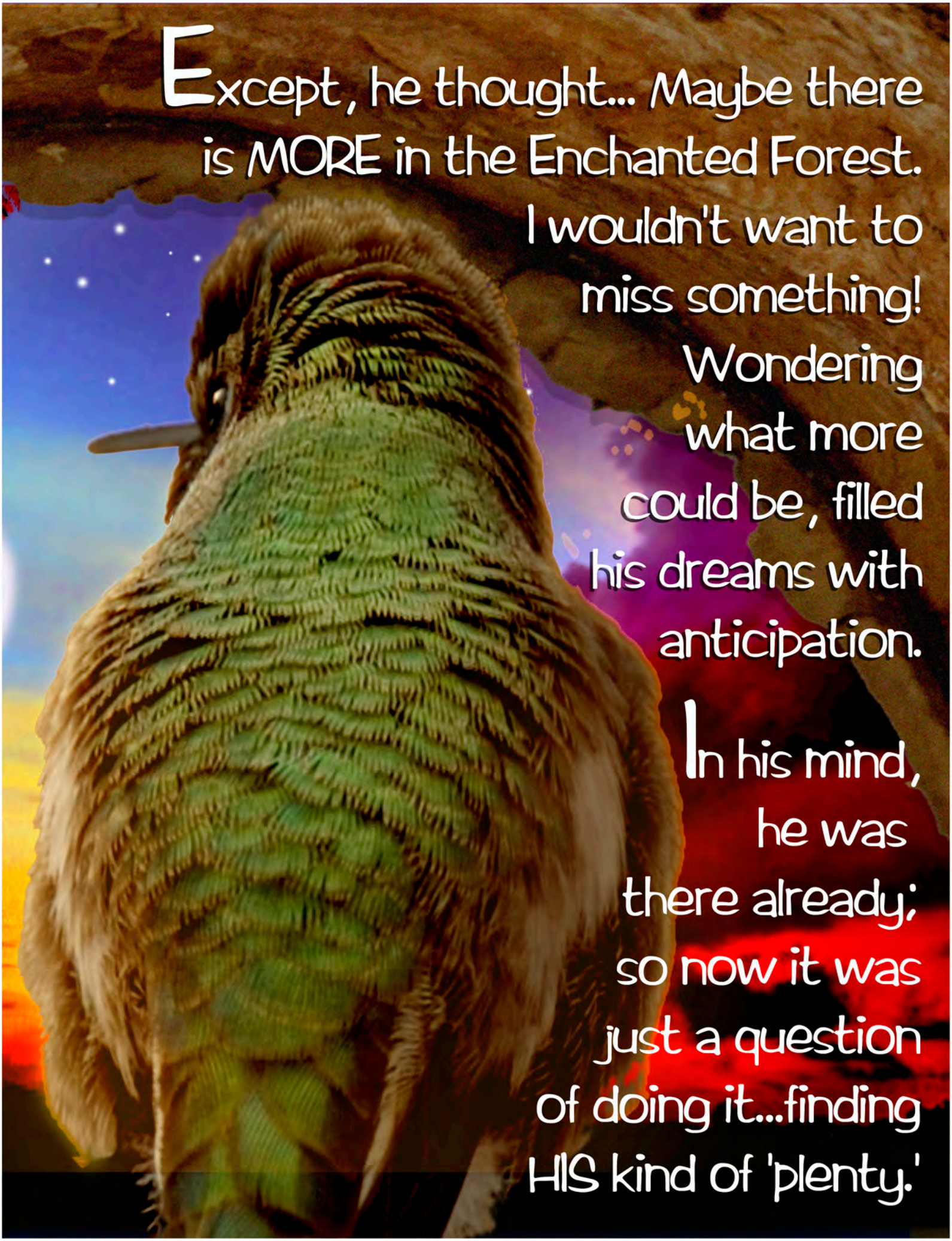
Eagle led them to stream at the edge of the Enchanted Forest.
Baby Bird wanted to continue upstream but his friend wanted to nest there and continue in the morning, rested and refreshed.

A squirrel showed them his favorite tree where they found the perfect little hole for a nest.
The stream is a mecca for life, like the oasis in the desert, thought Baby Bird. Without water, there is no life.


Baby Bird was lost in thoughts about contrasts and choices that night. They had seen so much. He didn't know what he liked best but he knew what he liked least... at least.
'What is right and what is wrong?' Baby Bird asked his friend.


'Which way is up?' she replied.
'It is 'up' to you to decide
which is which. 'Right'
attracts us while
'wrong' repels.
It is a feeling.
'Everyone
has their
own ideas
about good
and bad. They
want you to be
like them because
that will make THEM
happy. But what about
you... what makes YOU happy?'

Baby Bird could not sleep.
He sat watching the
night go by and
the new day
begin.
The
sky had
three layers
of weather that
painted a picture
of his mood. If he had to
choose right now, he thought,
it would be between home and these
nice Magic Mountains... NOT the desert!


Except, he thought... Maybe there is MORE in the Enchanted Forest. I wouldn't want to miss something! Wondering what more could be, filled his dreams with anticipation.
In his mind, he was there already; so now it was just a question of doing it...finding HIS kind of 'plenty.'

'Watch me fly all the time!' says Baby Bird.
'If you hang my picture on the wall we can see each other
alll the time, not just when you are reading my books.
There is a sample poster of me on the next page.
Tear it out, unfold it, and hang it in your favorite place.
When you see me you'll remember our adventures
and think about the things we learned in new ways.
What could be more FUN than that?'

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