

The Cricket Who Could Not Sing



Farideh Khalatbaree

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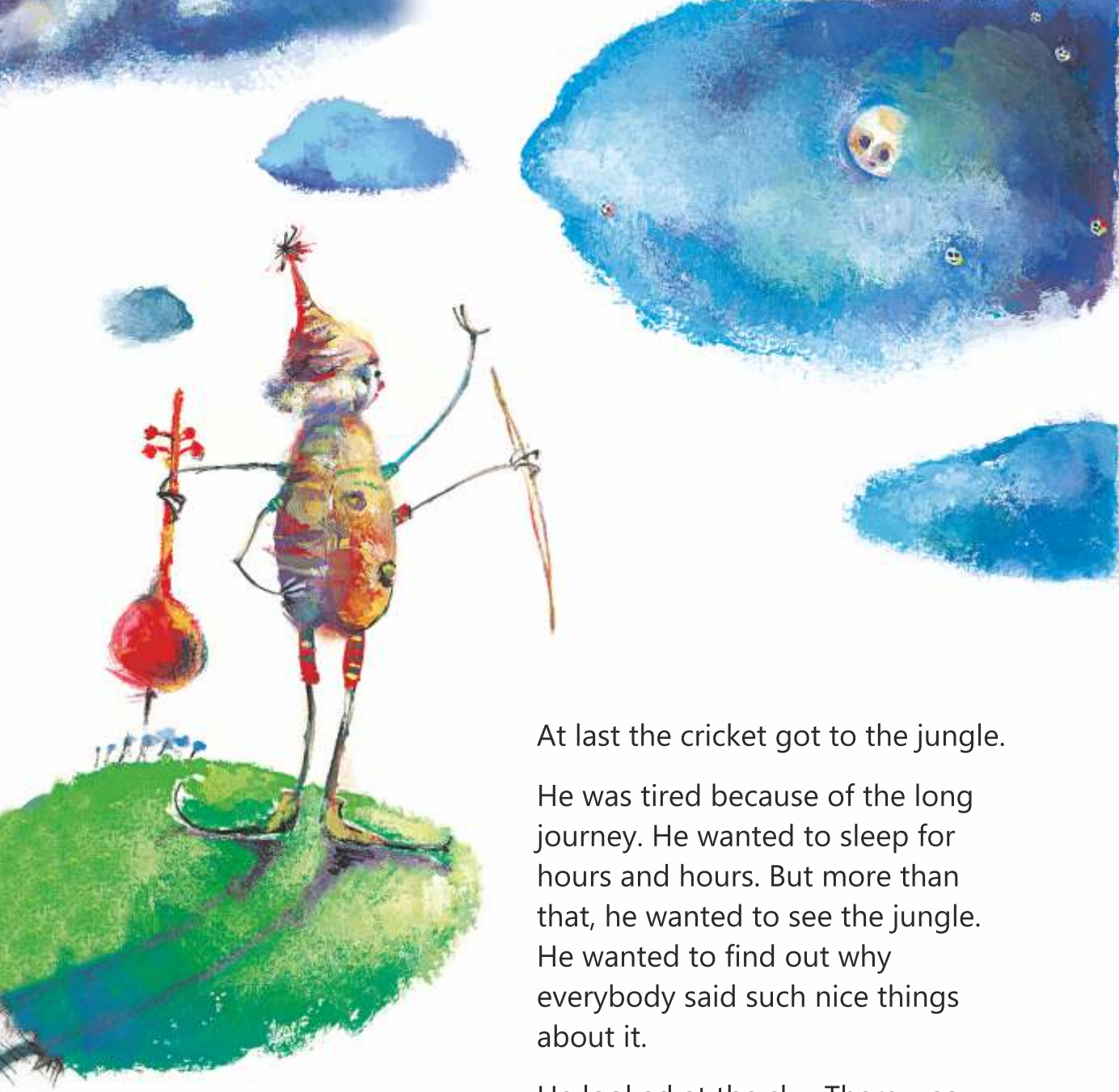
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At last the cricket got to the jungle.

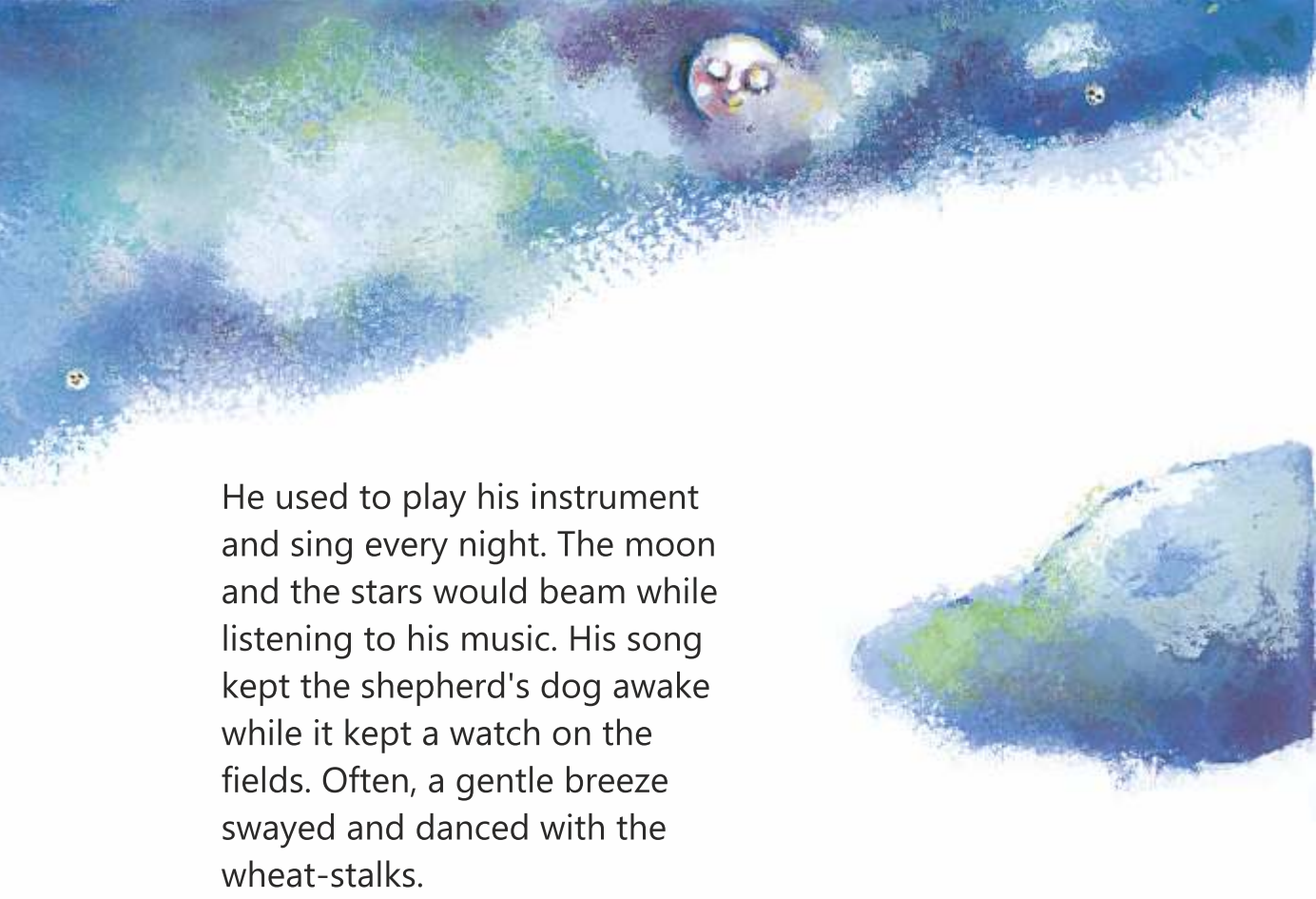
He was tired because of the long journey. He wanted to sleep for hours and hours. But more than that, he wanted to see the jungle. He wanted to find out why everybody said such nice things about it.

He looked at the sky. There was still some time for the sun to set.

So, he tucked his instrument under him like a pillow and went to sleep.

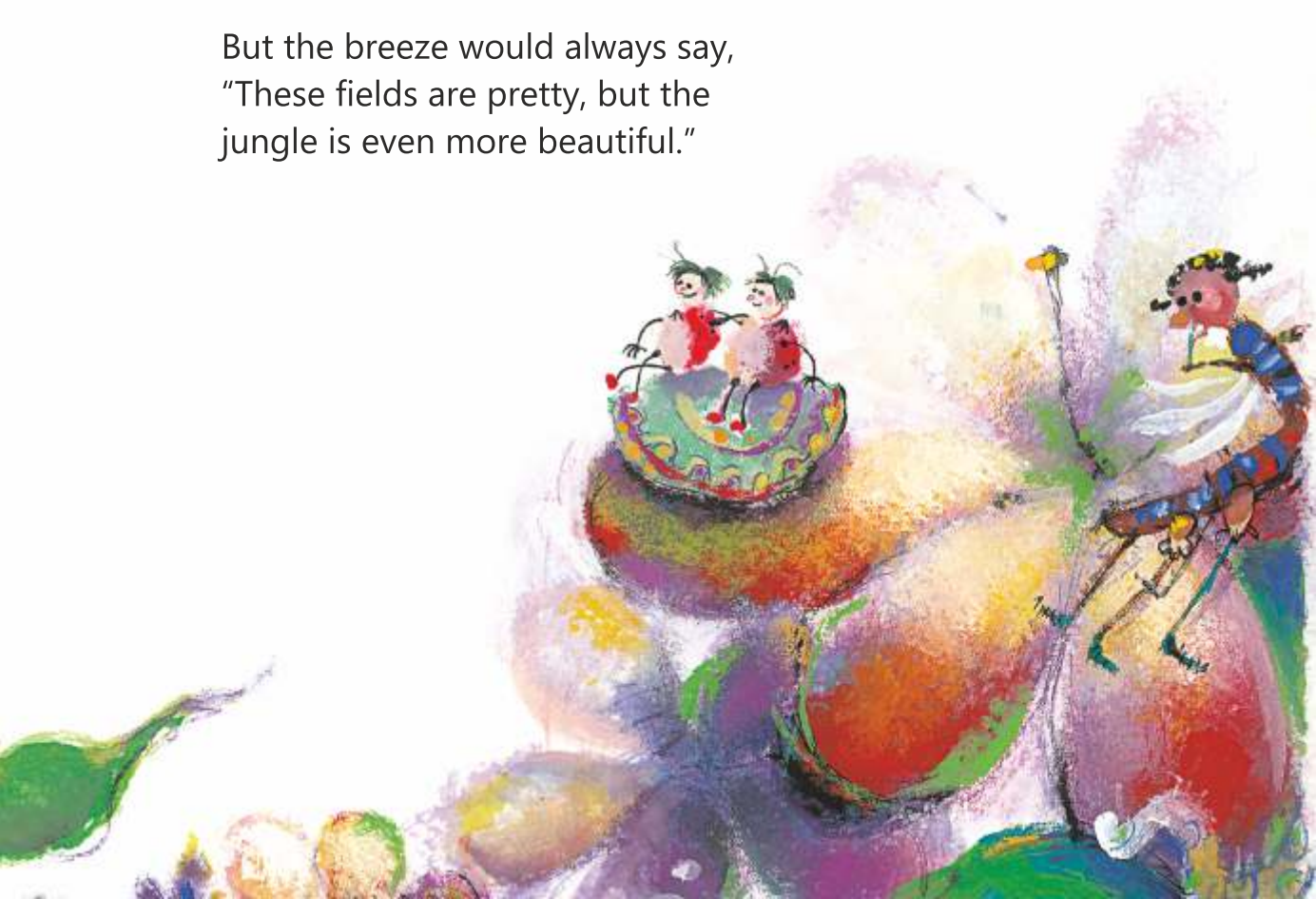







He used to play his instrument and sing every night. The moon and the stars would beam while listening to his music. His song kept the shepherd's dog awake while it kept a watch on the fields. Often, a gentle breeze swayed and danced with the wheat-stalks.

But the breeze would always say, "These fields are pretty, but the jungle is even more beautiful."







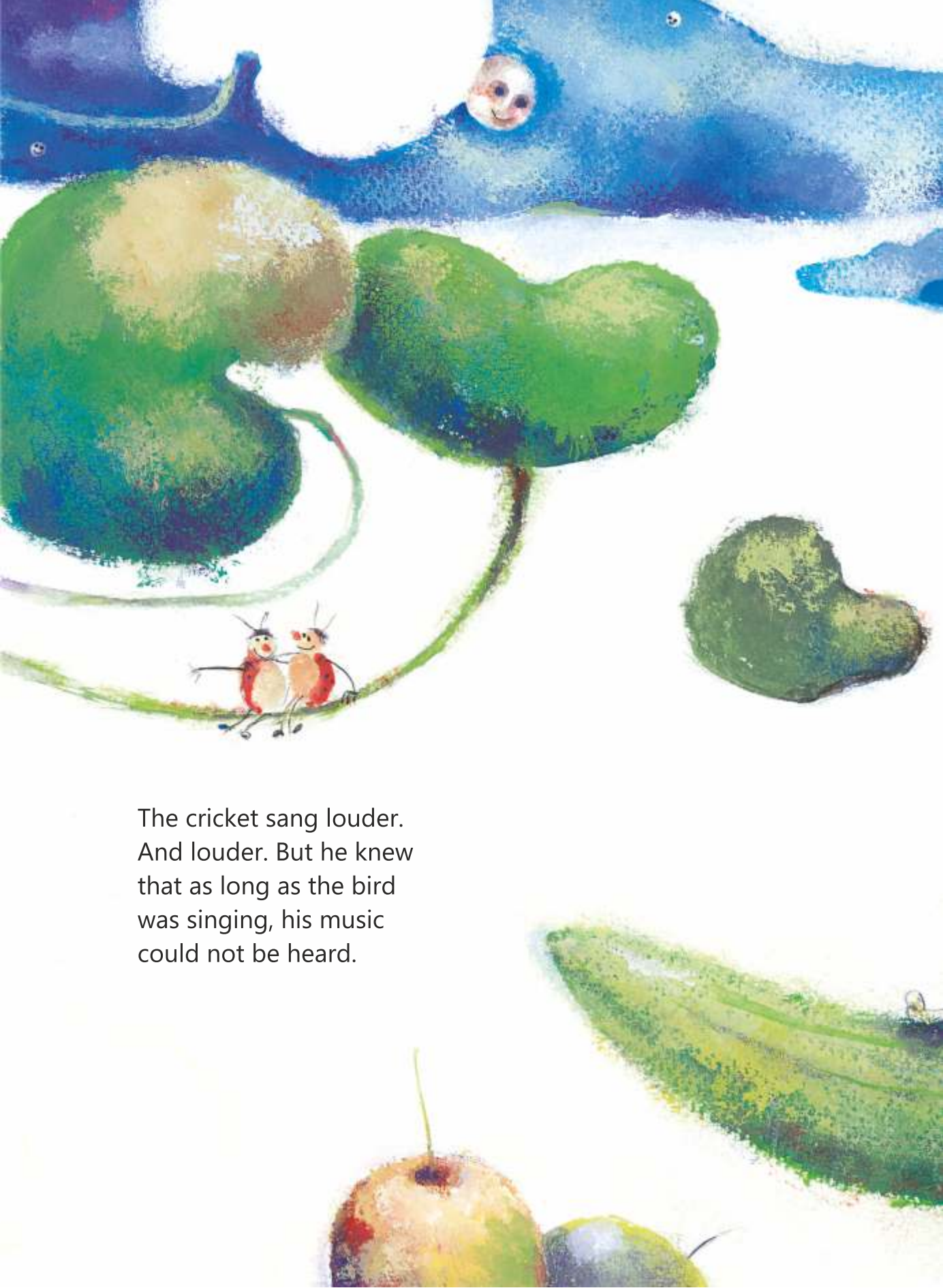
And now the breeze was saying, "Wake up cricket, wake up. You haven't come so far only to sleep."

The cricket opened his eyes. It was getting dark. "Oh, it is getting late," he thought. "Everyone must be waiting for my music. Thank you breeze, for waking me up."

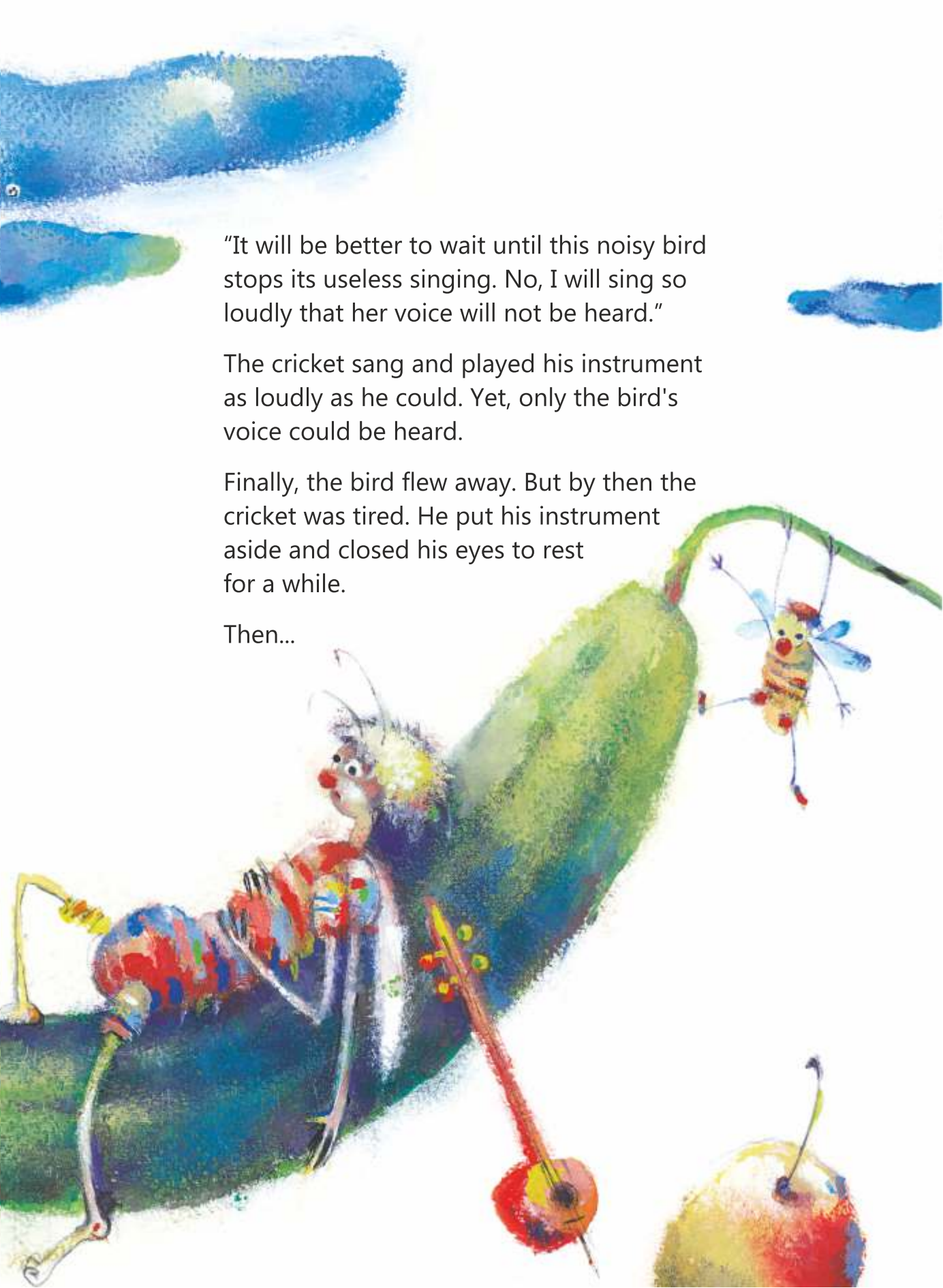
The cricket picked up his instrument and started a song. But just then a bird began to sing loudly. No one could hear the cricket's song.







The cricket sang louder.
And louder. But he knew
that as long as the bird
was singing, his music
could not be heard.



"It will be better to wait until this noisy bird stops its useless singing. No, I will sing so loudly that her voice will not be heard."

The cricket sang and played his instrument as loudly as he could. Yet, only the bird's voice could be heard.

Finally, the bird flew away. But by then the cricket was tired. He put his instrument aside and closed his eyes to rest for a while.

Then...



A growl was heard. The cricket got so scared that he hid under the leaves. He even let go of his instrument in a hurry.

He shouted out loud so that his voice could reach the moon and the stars, but the growl was louder than him.







“What is the use of my singing if nobody can hear it?” He sighed and crawled in deeper under the leaves. “Now I have to wait for this awful noise to stop.”

But when the growling noise stopped, a roar began.

The cricket was struck dumb with fear. He was so scared that he thought he would never be able to sing again.

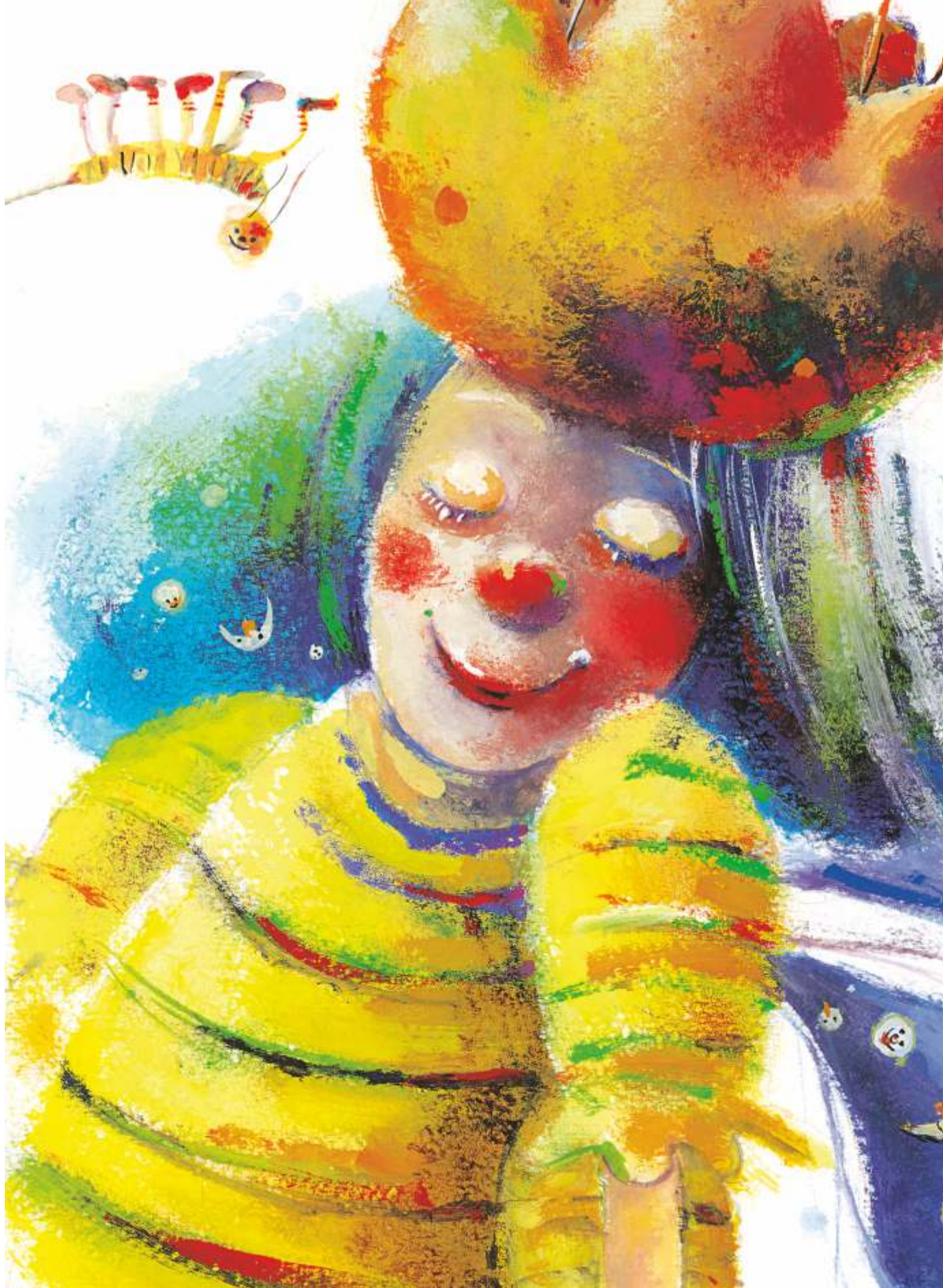
"I am not staying here, I will run away. This jungle is not the right place. I will never be able to sing for the moon and the stars. Nobody here can hear my voice."


"How do you know? You are neither singing, nor playing," said the breeze laughing. It was whistling through the leaves.

Upset, the cricket shouted, "I am angry with you. If you had not told me nice things about the jungle, I would never have come here."

But the breeze had already gone.



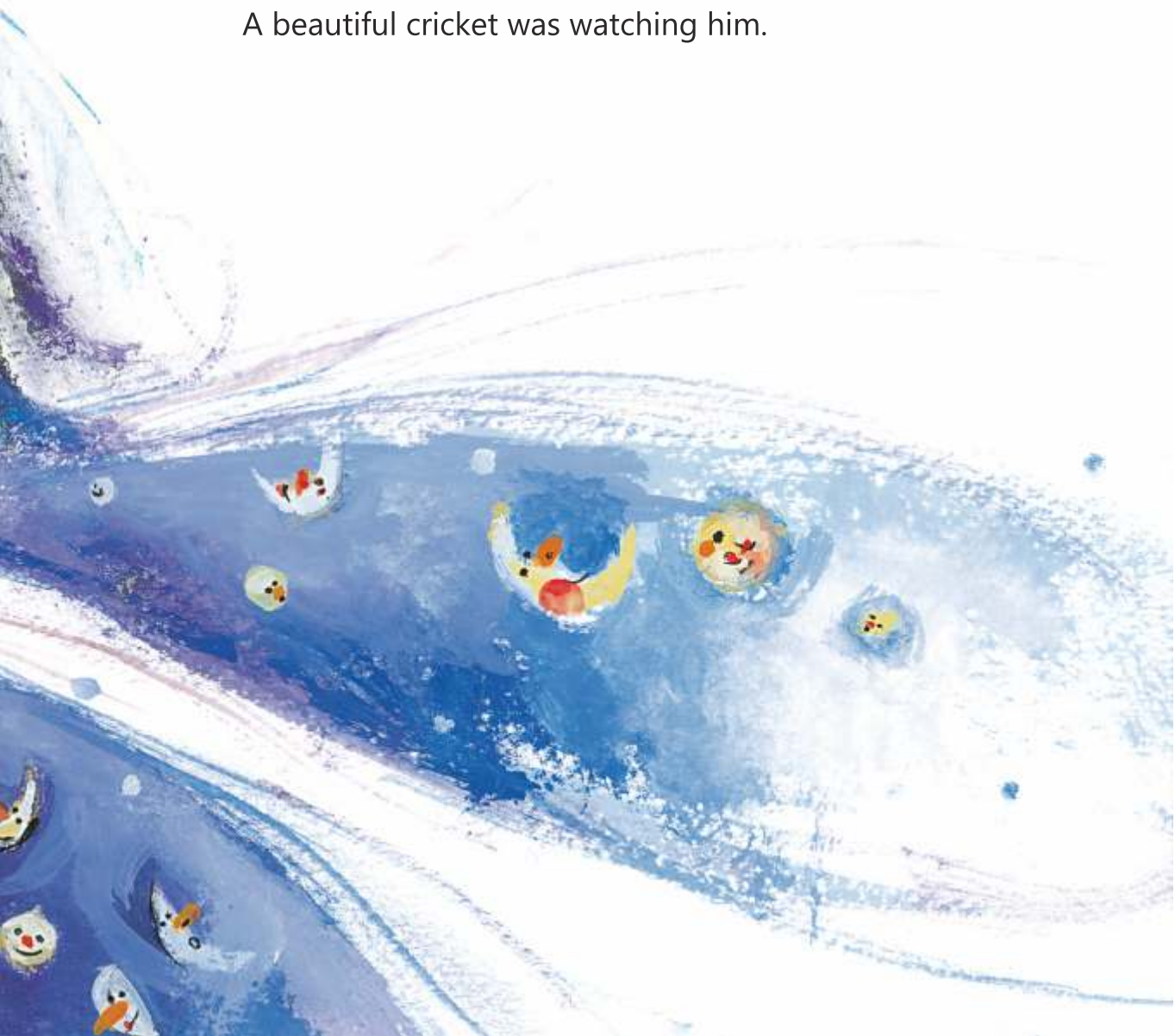




The cricket crawled out from underneath the leaves. He found his instrument. The roaring noise was still there. Unknowingly his fingers touched the strings of his instrument and some sweet notes came from it.

“What sweet notes! Why don't you sing?”

The cricket looked where the voice came from. A beautiful cricket was watching him.





He replied sadly, "What is the use of my singing if nobody can hear my voice?"

"But I am listening."

"You? Can you hear my song?"

"Well, all crickets can hear the voice of other crickets, even if other animals make noise around them."



Saying so, the beautiful cricket blushed.





The cricket came closer. He played his most beautiful melody and sung his sweetest song. Then both of them walked together humming and singing.



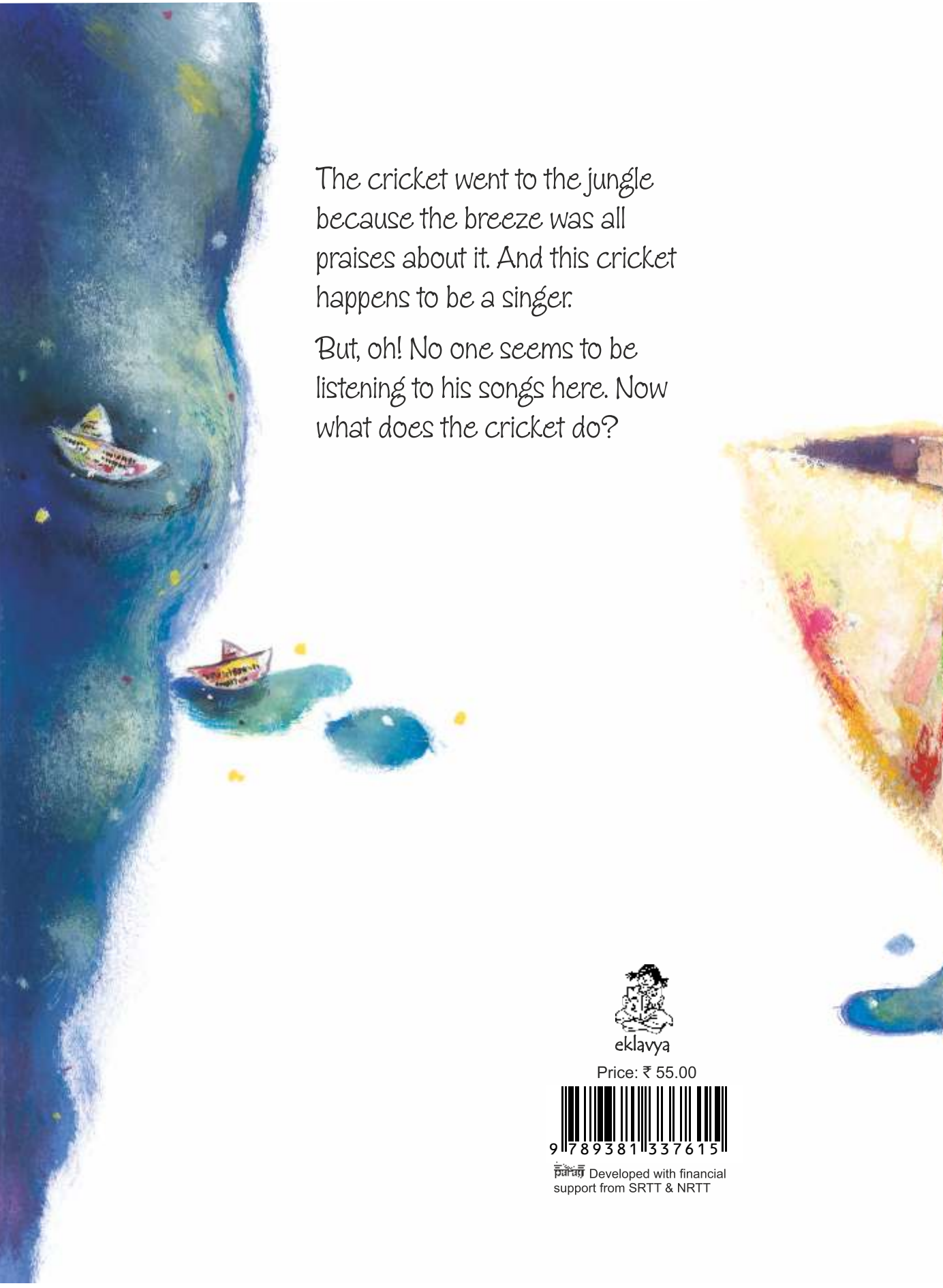




Even now they sing and play music together. They are not bothered at all by the birds calling or the growling and roaring of other animals of the jungle.

Their small house is full of baby crickets' sounds. They too are trying to sing and play music like their parents.





The cricket went to the jungle
because the breeze was all
praises about it. And this cricket
happens to be a singer.

But, oh! No one seems to be
listening to his songs here. Now
what does the cricket do?



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