



The Tale of the Sands

LIST OF IDRIES SHAH CHILDREN'S BOOKS

- The Onion
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- The Rich Man and the Monkey
- The Boy With No Voice and the Men Who Couldn't Hear
- The Tale of Melon City

The Tale of the Sands
BY IDRIES SHAH

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THE IDRIES SHAH FOUNDATION



Dedicated to the sense of imagination which lives within us all.



A stream, from its source in far-off mountains ...

... passing through every kind
and description of countryside ...



... at last reached the sands of the desert.

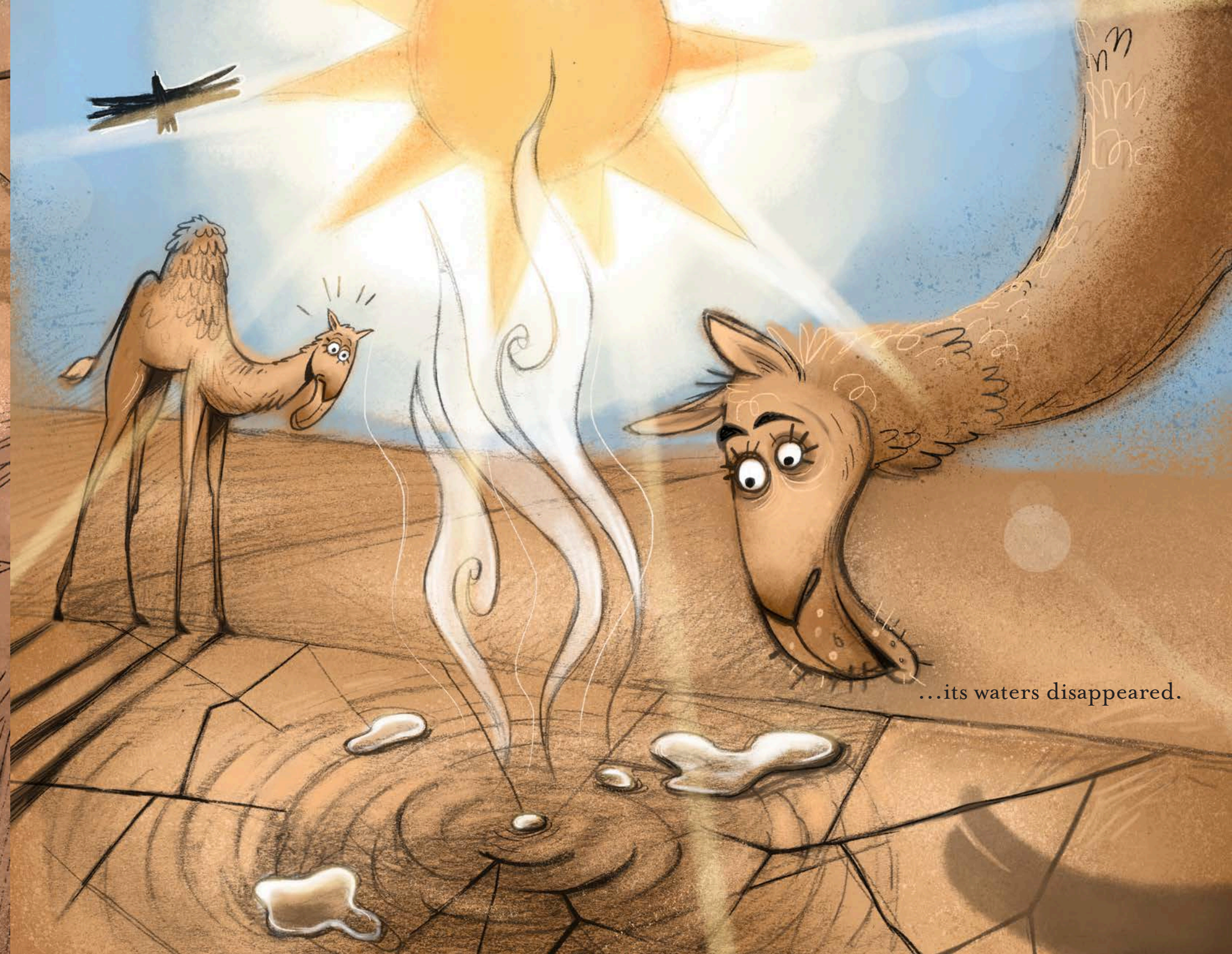





Just as it had crossed every other barrier,
The stream tried to cross this one.



But it found that as fast as it ran into the sand ...

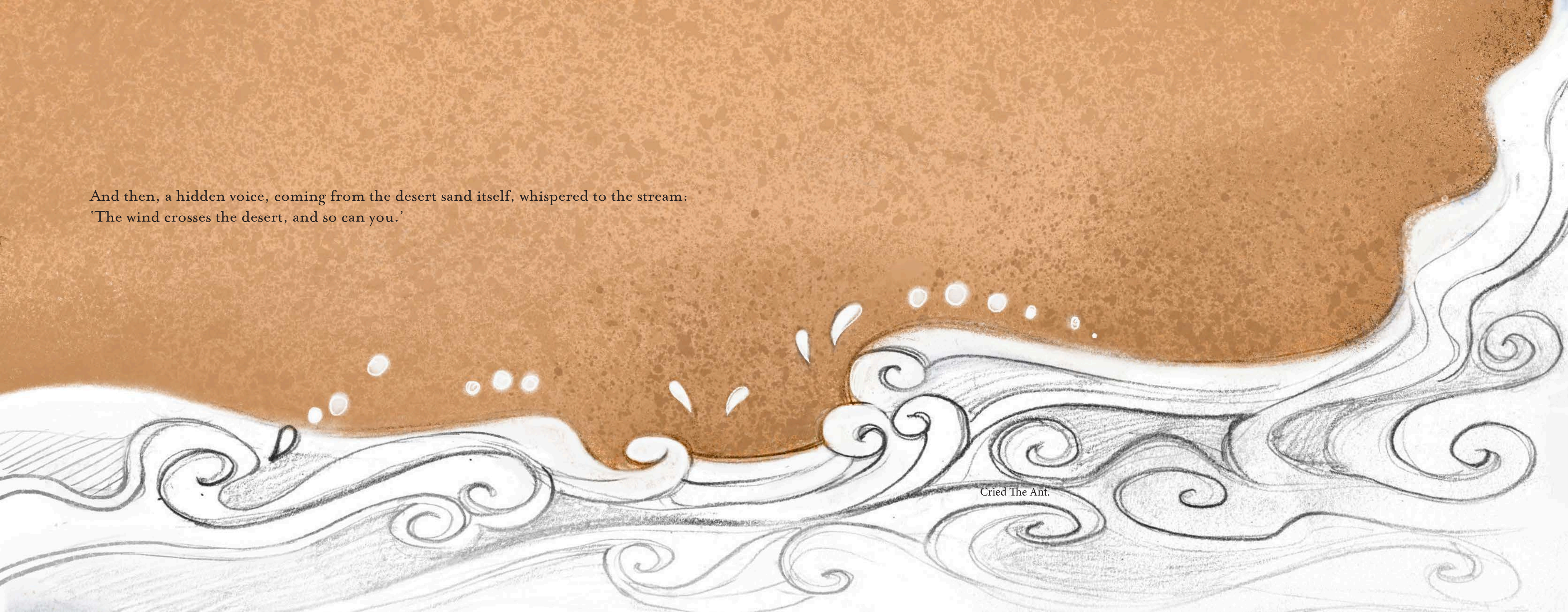


...its waters disappeared.



The stream was certain that its destiny was to cross this desert.

And yet *there was* no way to get across.



And then, a hidden voice, coming from the desert sand itself, whispered to the stream:
'The wind crosses the desert, and so can you.'

Cried The Ant.

The stream grumbled that it was racing towards the sand with all its might, but that it was only getting absorbed.

It pointed out that the wind could fly, and this was why it could cross a desert.






'By hurtling at things in your usual energetic way you will not get across,' cooed the voice of the sands.

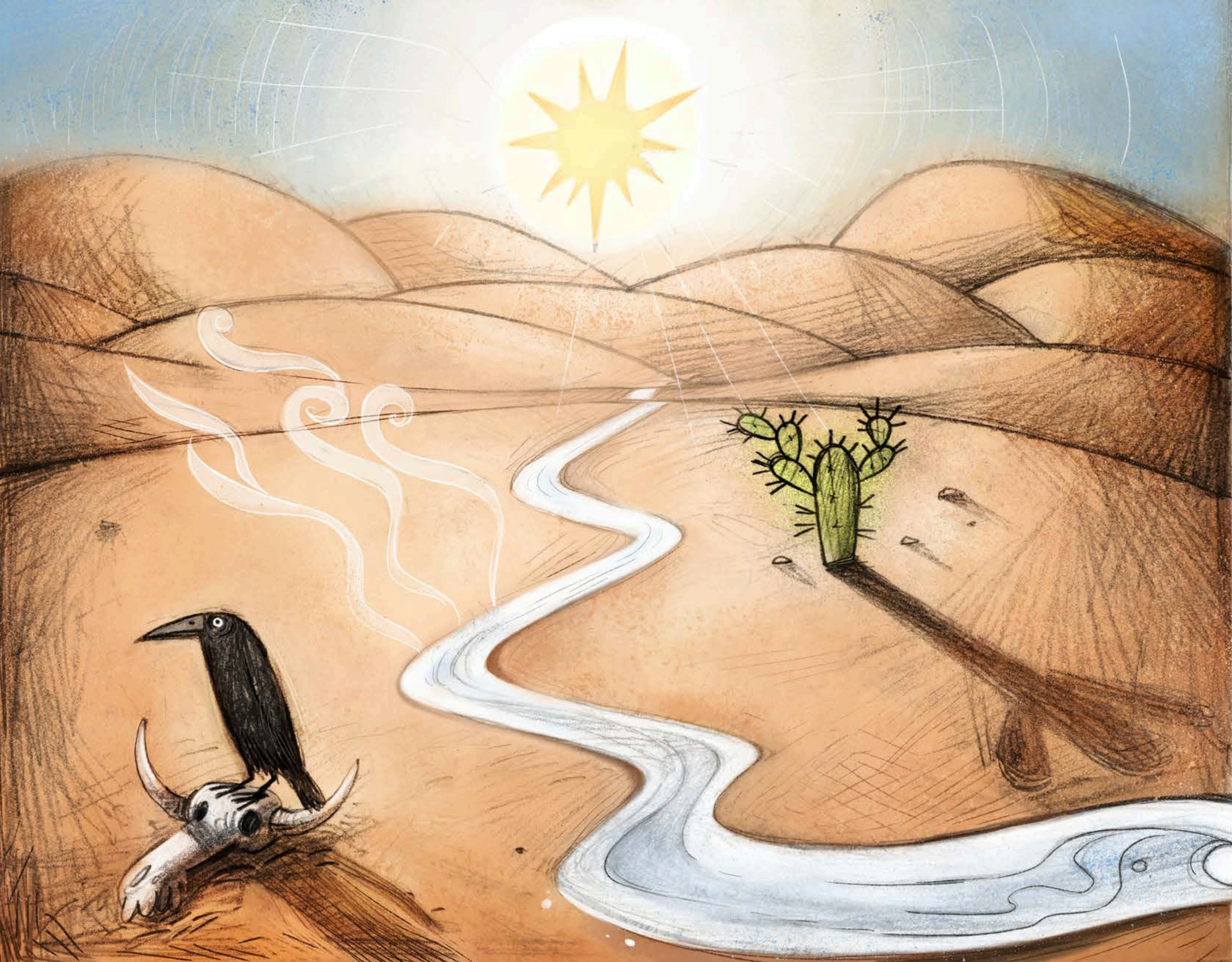
'You will either disappear.

Or become a marsh.



You must allow the wind to carry you over to your destination.'

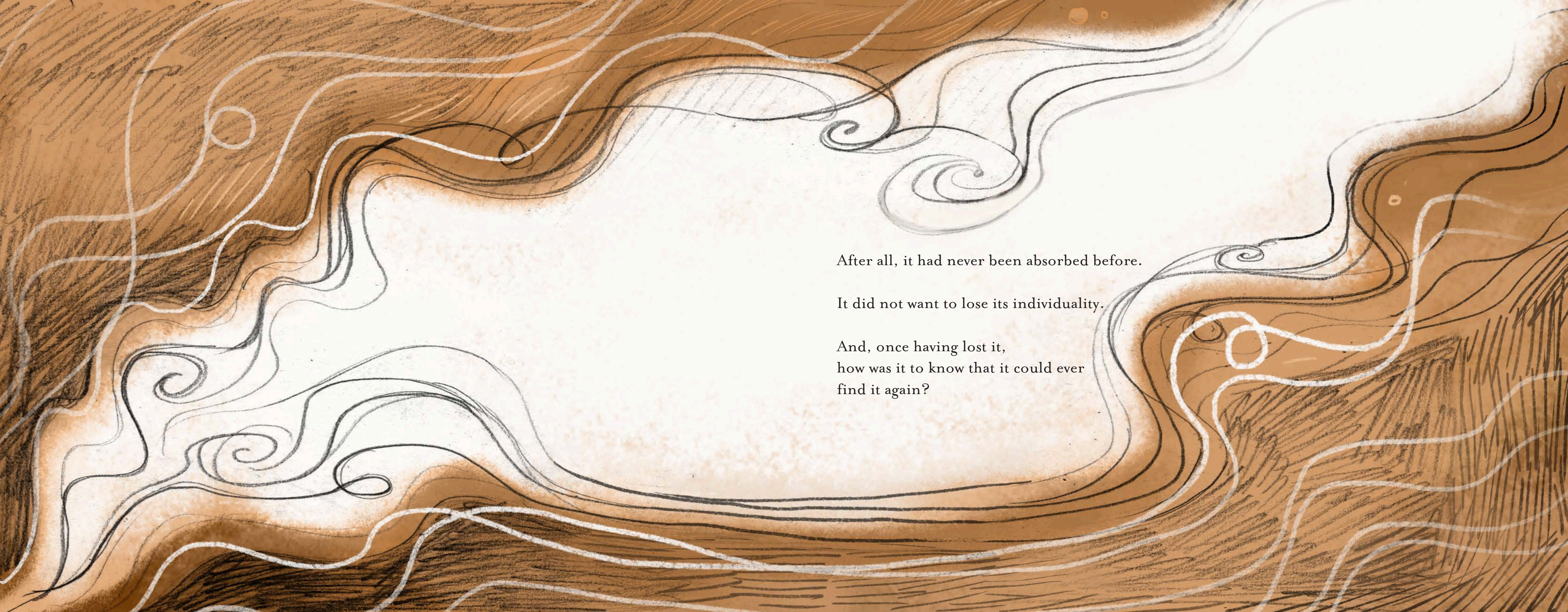
'But how can the wind carry me?' sobbed the frustrated stream.



'You can be carried but only by allowing yourself to be absorbed into the wind.'
The sands whispered.

The stream did not like the idea of being swallowed up by the wind at all.



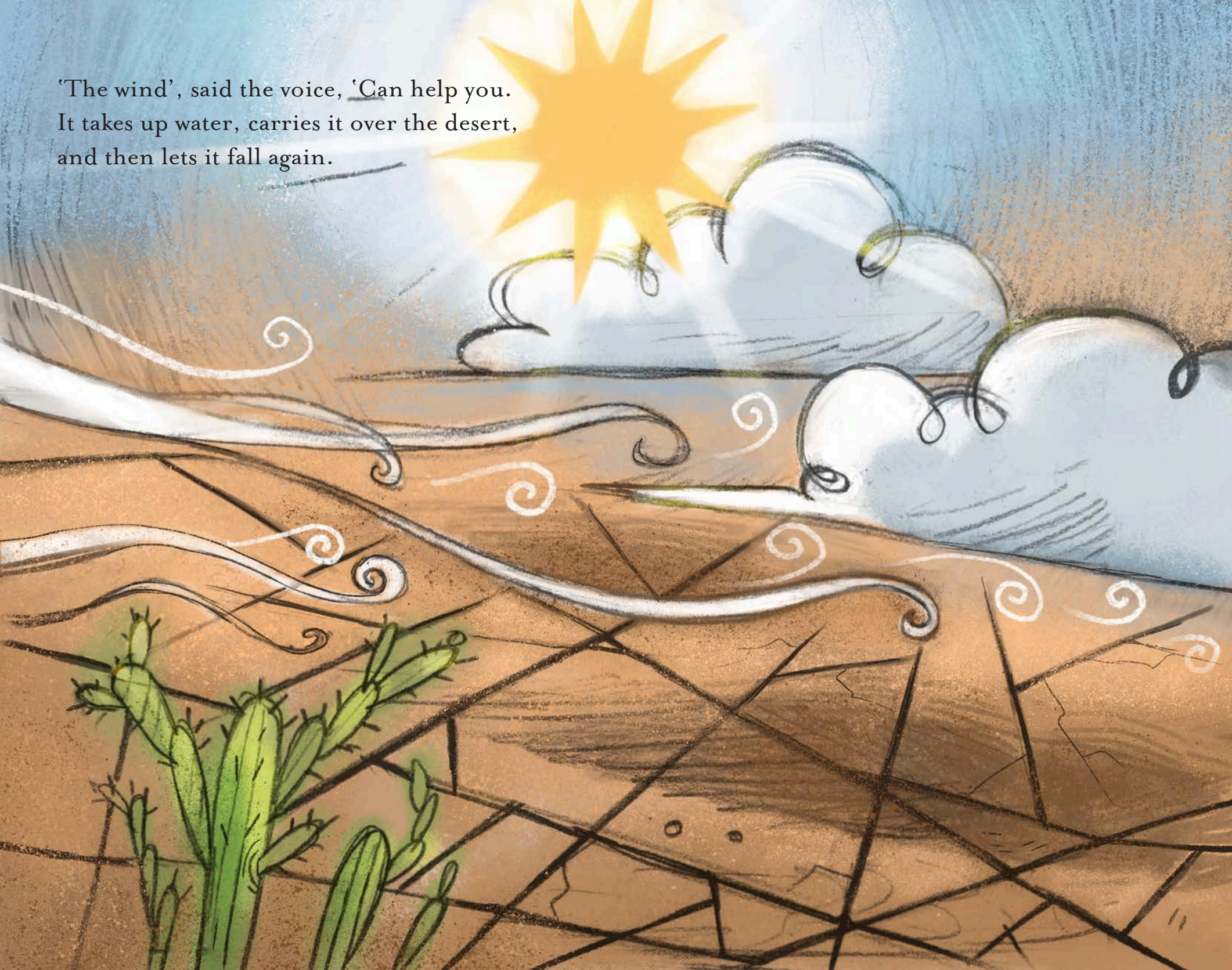
The background of the page is a complex, abstract illustration. It features a central, irregularly shaped white space that resembles a cloud or a void. This central area is surrounded by thick, swirling lines in various shades of brown, from light tan to dark chocolate and near-black tones. The lines are fluid and organic, creating a sense of movement and depth. Some areas are filled with dense, parallel hatching, while others are more open, showing the underlying paper texture. The overall effect is one of a dreamlike or ethereal landscape.

After all, it had never been absorbed before.

It did not want to lose its individuality.

And, once having lost it,
how was it to know that it could ever
find it again?

'The wind', said the voice, 'Can help you.
It takes up water, carries it over the desert,
and then lets it fall again.'



Falling as rain, the water again becomes a river.'





'But how can I know
that this is true?'
moaned the stream.



'It is true,' said the voice.



'And anyway, if you don't listen to me,
the best you can hope to become is a quagmire ...

and even that could take you many, many years ...


And being a quagmire isn't nearly as good as being a stream.'



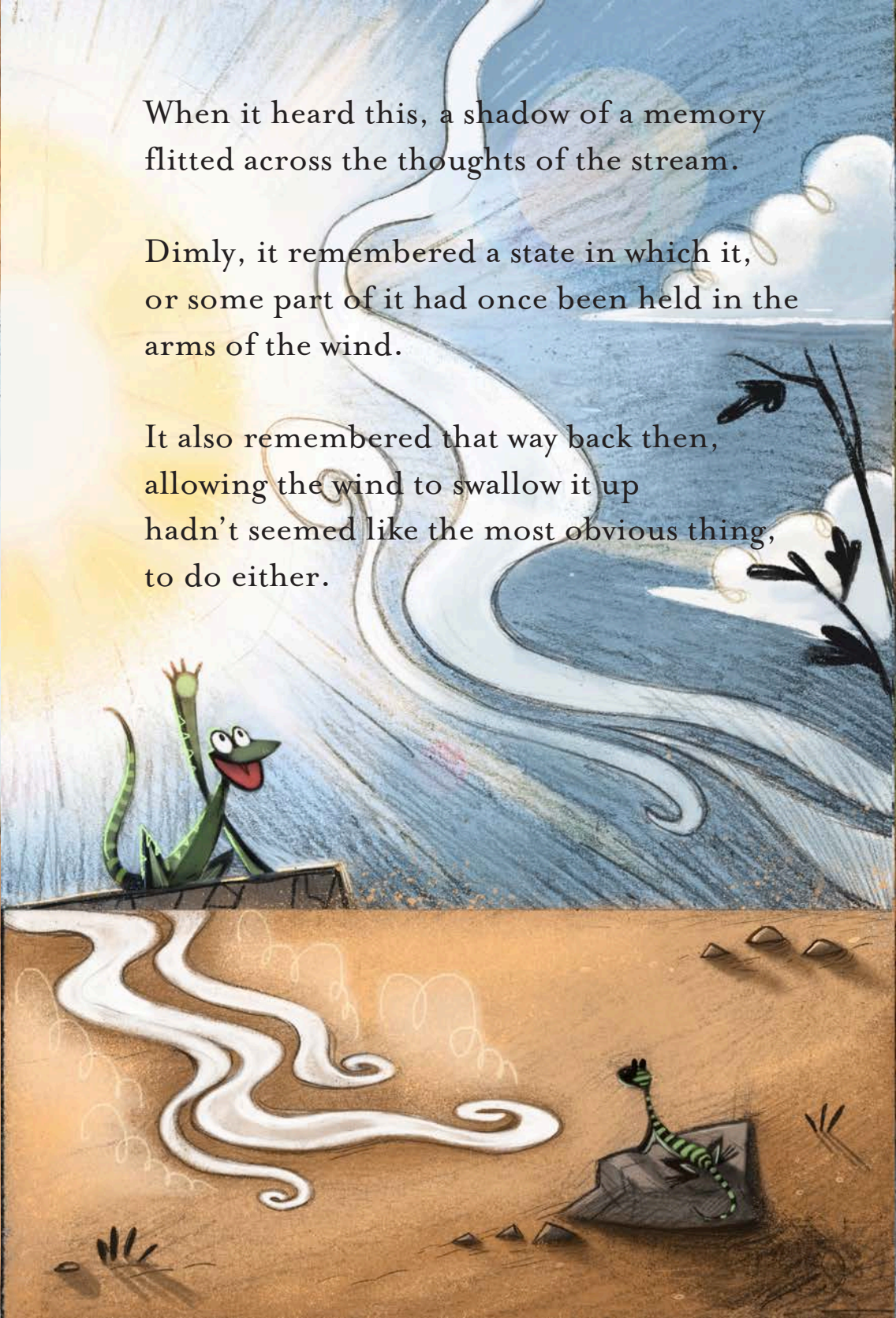


'But I just want to stay the same as I am!' wailed the stream.

'Whatever happens, you can't stay *exactly* the same as you are now,' the voice said.



'But if you act now, the wind
will carry your most important
part away, so that it can re-form you
into a wonderful *new* stream.'



When it heard this, a shadow of a memory
flitted across the thoughts of the stream.

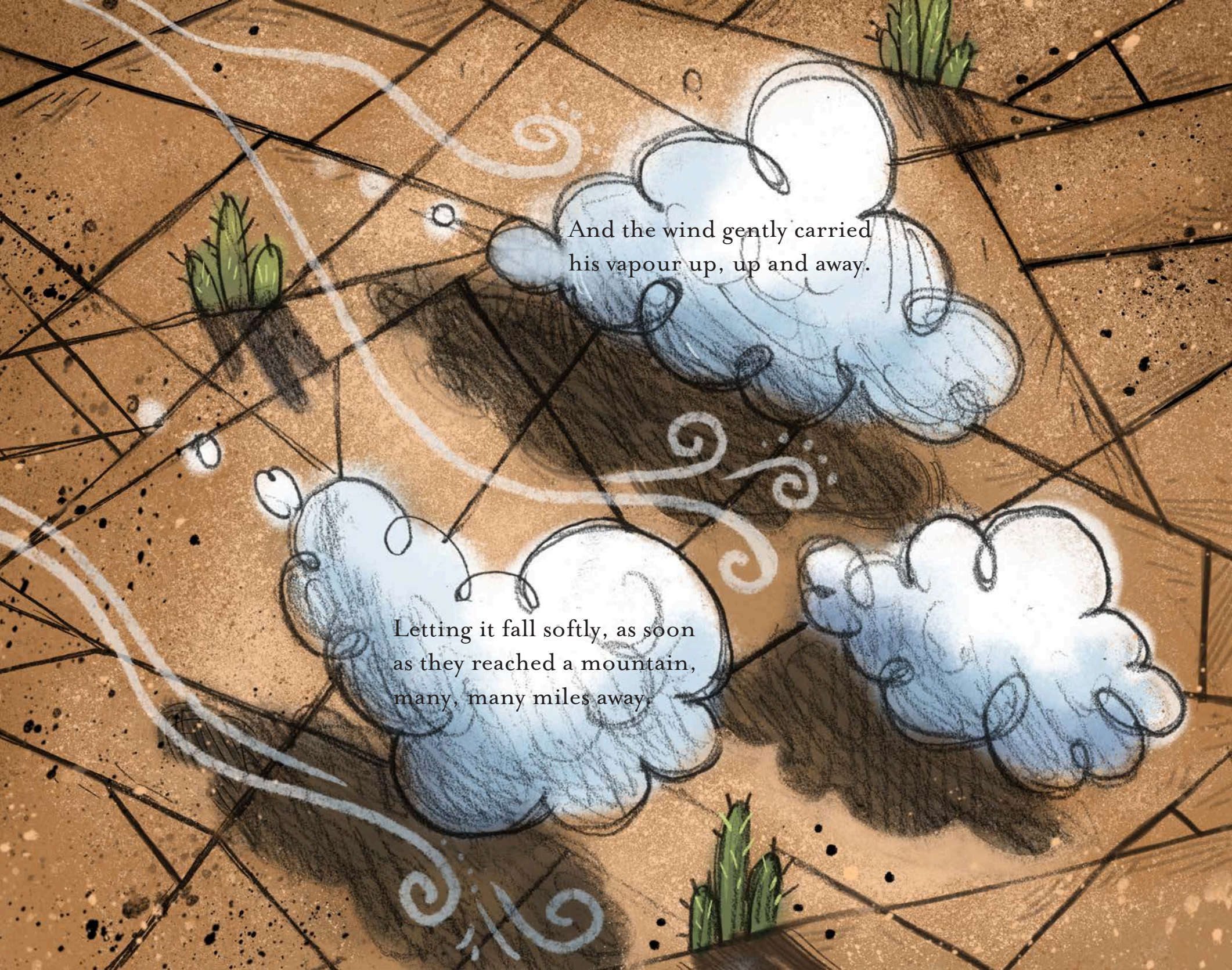
Dimly, it remembered a state in which it,
or some part of it had once been held in the
arms of the wind.

It also remembered that way back then,
allowing the wind to swallow it up
hadn't seemed like the most obvious thing,
to do either.





So with a whimper of fear, the stream raised his vapour into the welcoming arms of the wind.



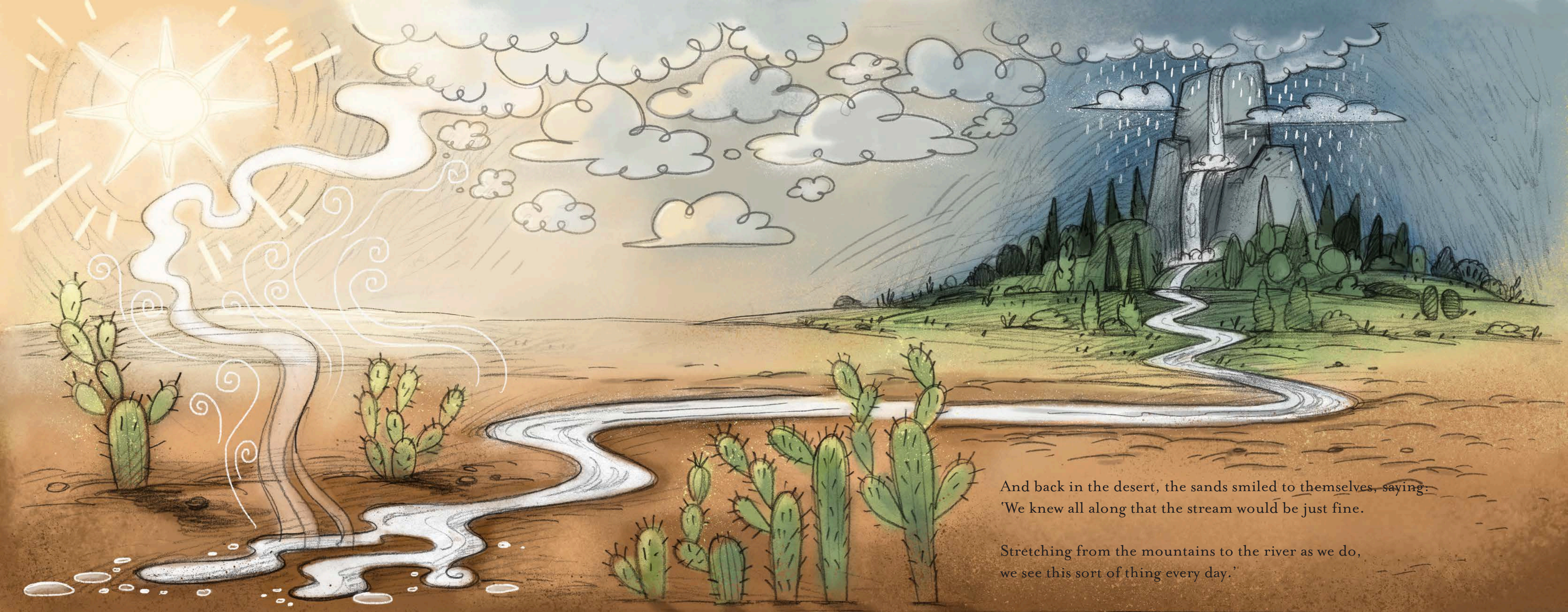
And the wind gently carried
his vapour up, up and away.

Letting it fall softly, as soon
as they reached a mountain,
many, many miles away.



And because it had been so worried
about what would happen,
the stream was able to really appreciate
its new home.

And with a sigh of relief it realised
that it now knew what it really meant
to be a stream.



And back in the desert, the sands smiled to themselves, saying:
'We knew all along that the stream would be just fine.'

Stretching from the mountains to the river as we do,
we see this sort of thing every day.'

And that is why it is said that the 'Stream of Life' is written in the sands.

