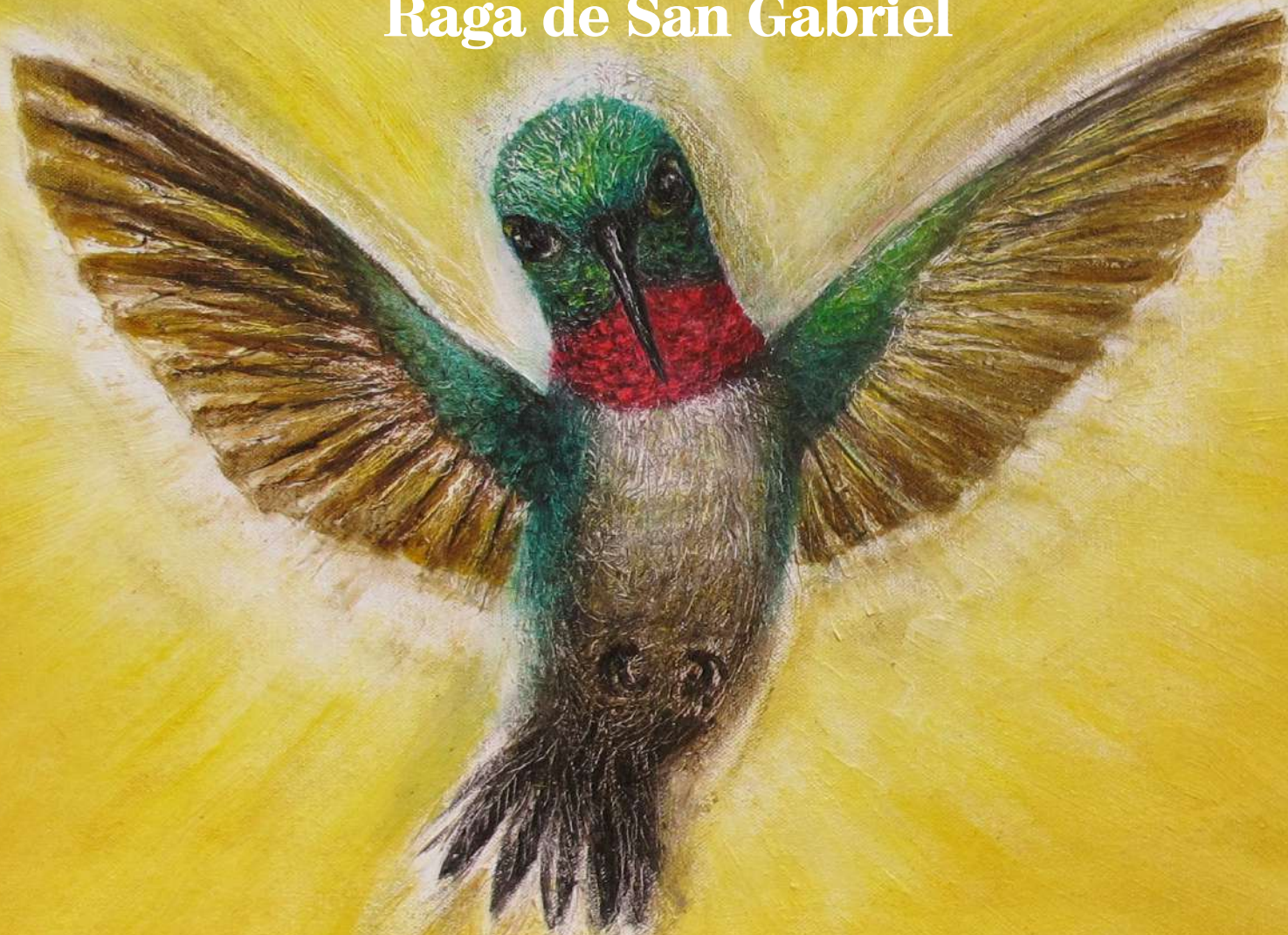


Rayo de Aire

Raga de San Gabriel



AVISPERO

Rayo de Aire

TEXT AND ILLUSTRATIONS

Raga de San Gabriel



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Made in Mexico



Thousands of years ago, a hummingbird arrived in America. He came during the last Ice Age, along with the first Indians that crossed the Bering Strait, before the continents of America and Asia were separated. He enjoyed the jungle so much, its flowers and the warmth of the tropical weather, and found plenty of little bugs that were a delicacy for his palate. He returned at once to tell his brothers about this paradise, where they could live far away from cold temperatures in peace without having to protect themselves from their enemies, which were many, since they are the tiniest birds on the planet. He convinced the others so successfully that all of them went to live in America, and ever since, they have transformed in a number of ways and shapes, with big tails, beautiful colors and special beaks for each flower, allowing them to pollinate the plants.



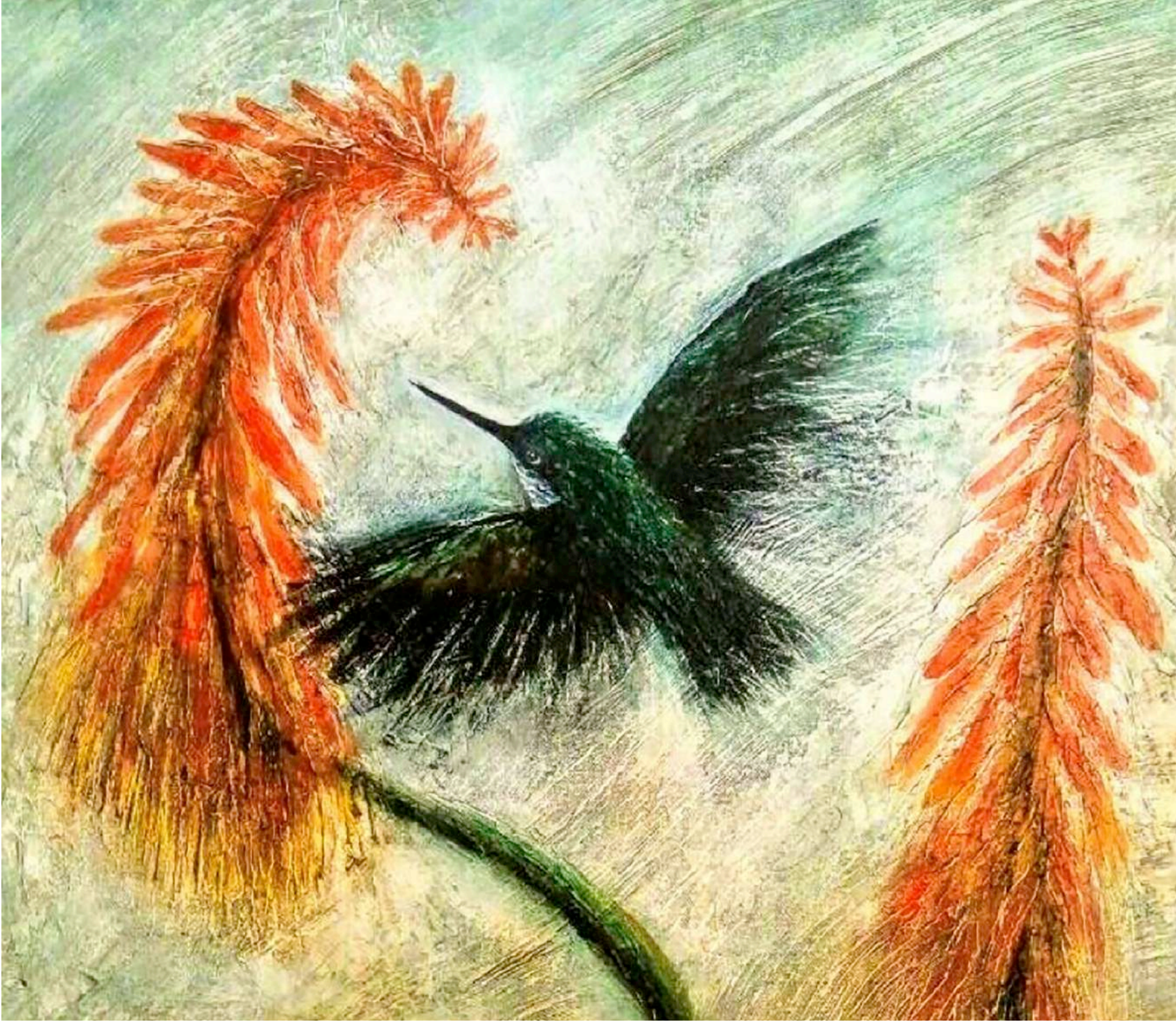




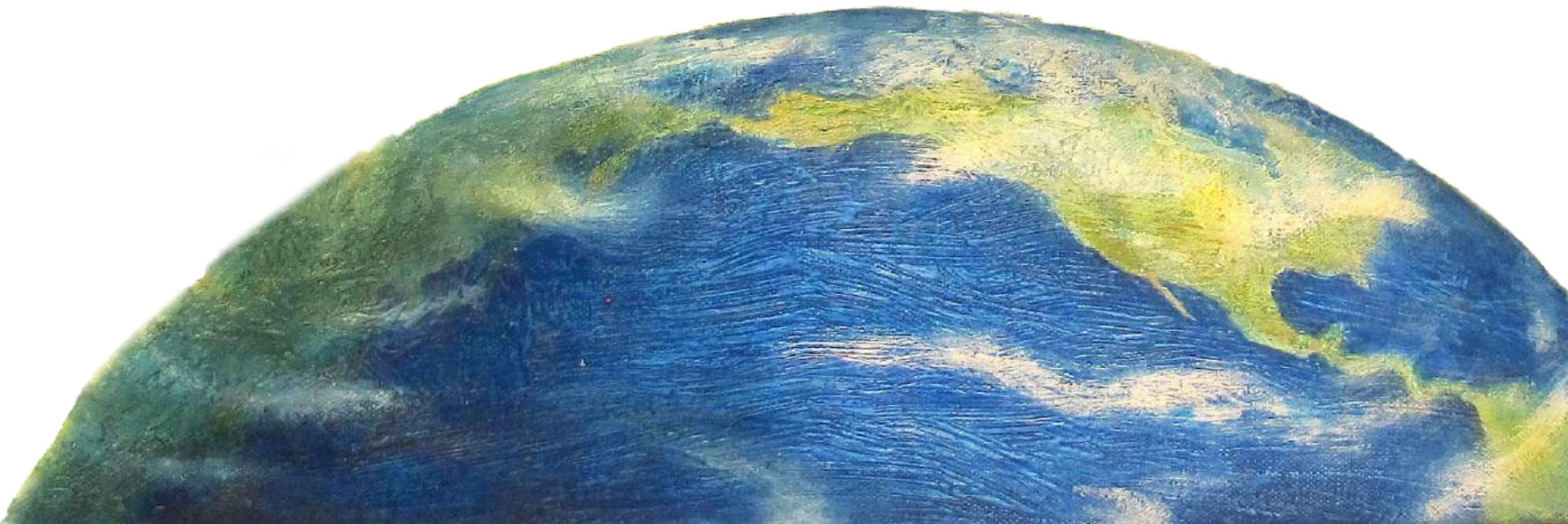


According to ancient Mayan tales, the hummingbird was made from a tiny jade arrow that was blown by a divine breeze and began to fly like a bird of delicate feathers, reflecting all the colors of the rainbow. It was assigned two missions: to carry mankind's loving thoughts and to guide their souls to Paradise. And so it goes, retrieving souls and flying from flower to flower to take them to Heaven, where they continue their journey because death is not the end of life. The bodies remain on Earth, but the souls live on; they fly and hide in a flower, waiting for this magical being to pick them up and guide them lovingly to Paradise.






Few hummingbirds risk migrating and building their nests in other places, far from home. But there is one in particular that seems to live without boundaries. Despite its tiny size, it dares to face the mighty sea and cross the Gulf of Mexico, from the Yucatan Peninsula to the coast of Florida, in a non-stop flight of over a thousand miles.



This is the story of this great little traveler: a ruby-throated hummingbird (*Archilochus colubris*, according to scientists) named *Rayo de Aire*. When the sunshine touches their feathers, hummingbirds look like colorful heartbeats, grazing the tattered sky. Following the shore, they fly northward over the Earth to avoid getting lost along the way. For over sixty days, their wings spread, full of hope. They migrate to build their nests and form a family.

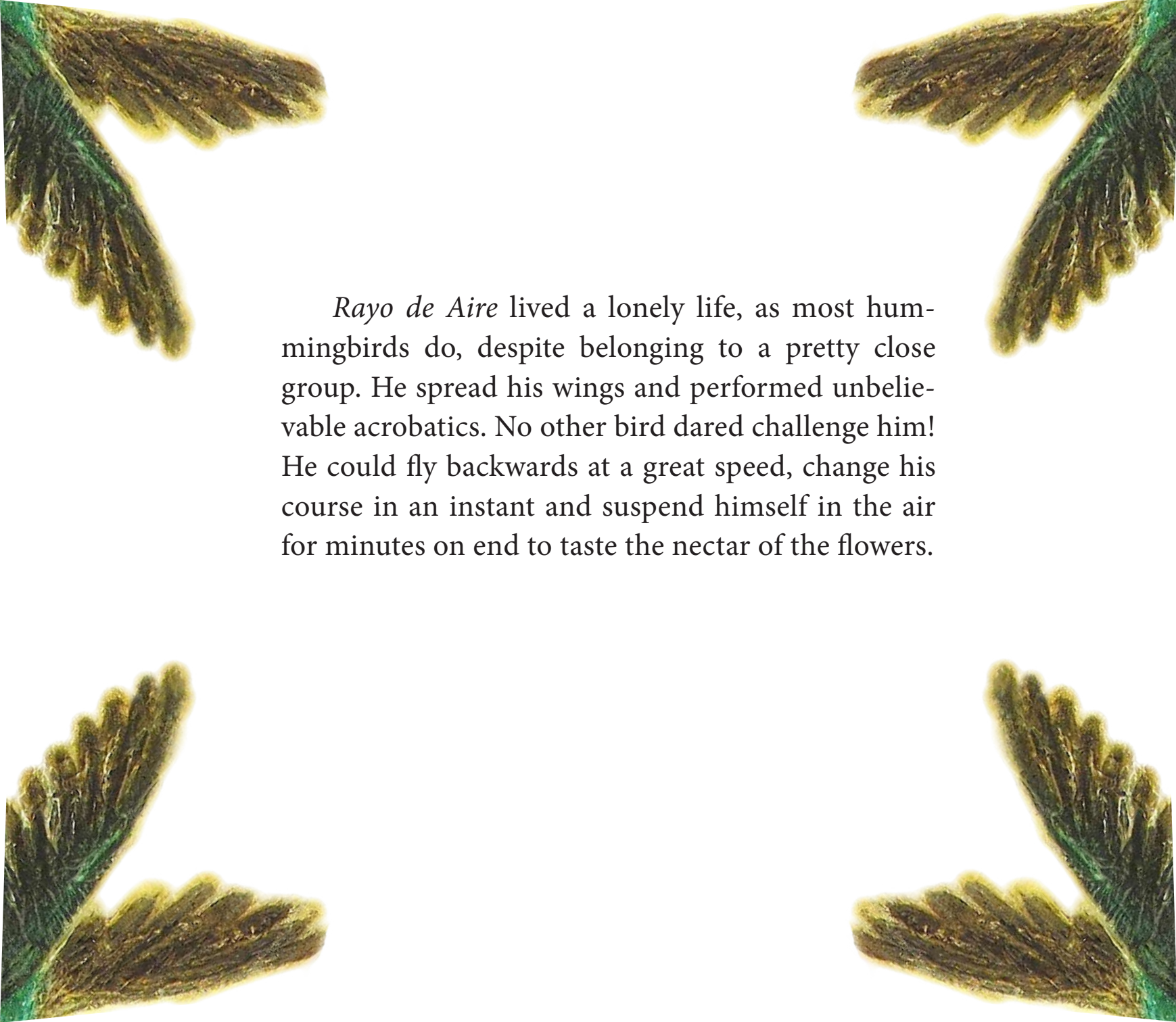




Rayo de Aire grew up listening to the legends of the great hummingbirds, those who gave their hearts and souls to their kind. He knows there is a straight path that will take a day and a night: crossing the frightening and vast ocean! In his heart and mind, the idea lingers of opening that route again. But it is a risky endeavour. There are many dangers ahead, the tradition has been lost for a long time, and nobody has dared to do it. Why did they stop taking the shorter journey across the sea? Will he be able to fly so far without any rest?



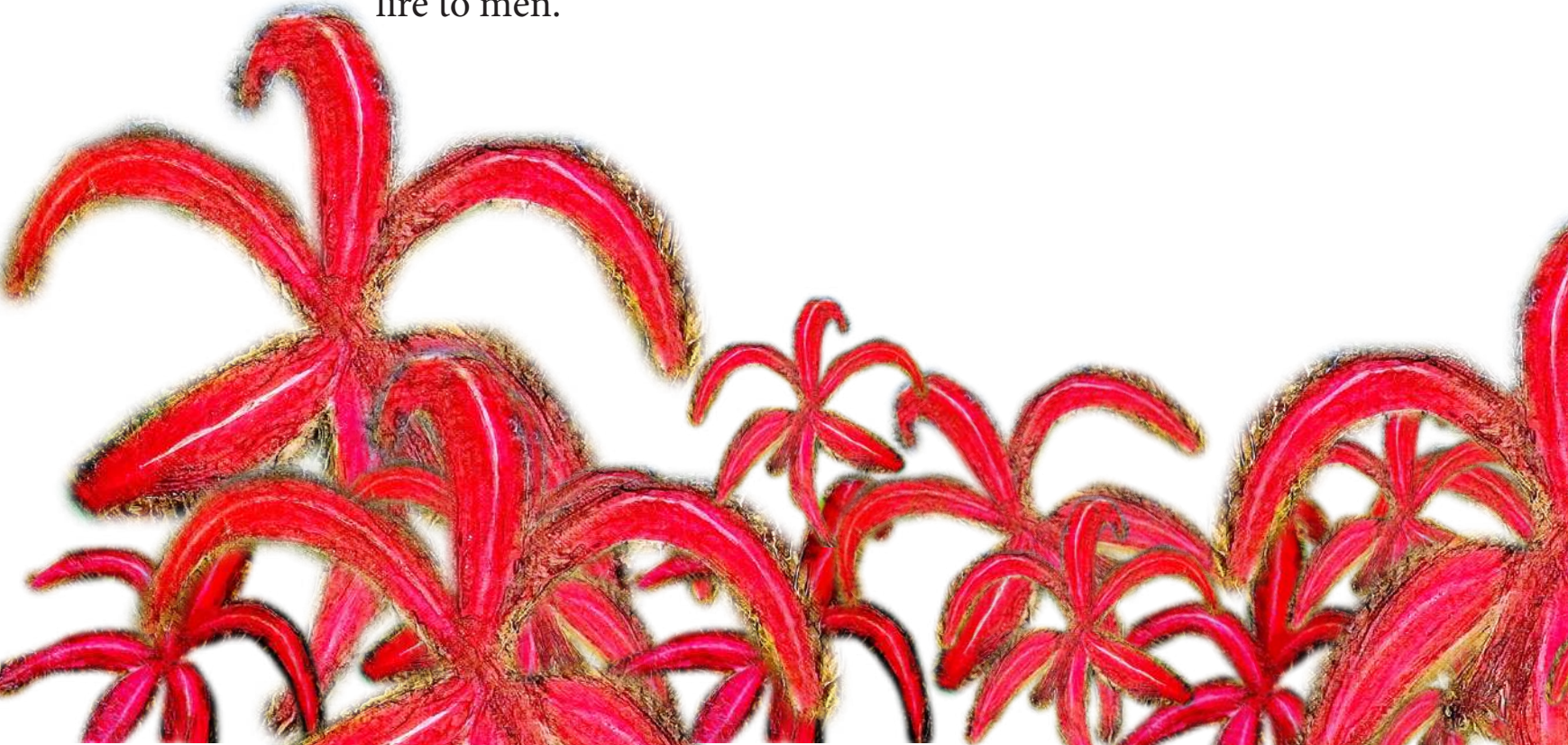




Rayo de Aire lived a lonely life, as most hummingbirds do, despite belonging to a pretty close group. He spread his wings and performed unbelievable acrobatics. No other bird dared challenge him! He could fly backwards at a great speed, change his course in an instant and suspend himself in the air for minutes on end to taste the nectar of the flowers.

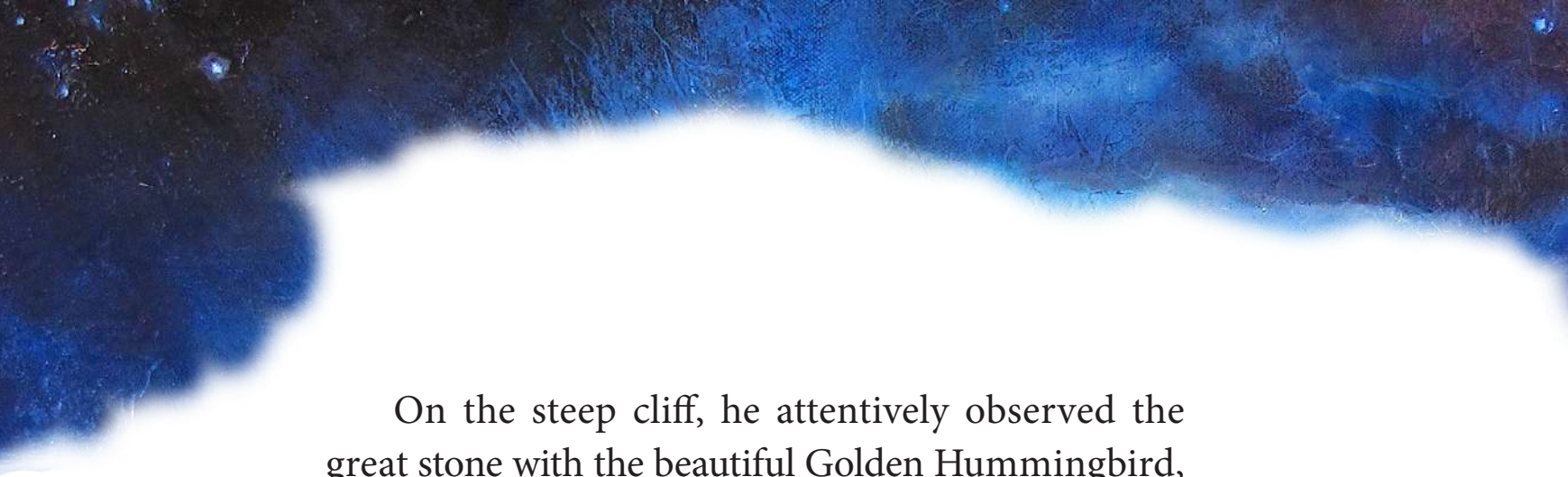


Although tiny, these creatures show uncommon courage when defending their territory and confronting bigger birds. Their eyes are starry impulses that perceive all the colors of the universe, even the subtlest ones. In their throats, burning ruby stones bring the words of fire to men.



Spring finally arrived, a feast of colors and scents! The ideal time to cross the Gulf. *Rayo de Aire* had to choose the best moment to start his journey. He spent several days watching both ocean and clouds carefully.





On the steep cliff, he attentively observed the great stone with the beautiful Golden Hummingbird, surrounded by blue constellations engraved by the Mayans. As the forefathers had said, on that stone a Mayan elder indicated the straight path across the ocean.

His knowledge of nature was essential. All the elements had to be in complete harmony: wind, earth, water, and fire. His inner voice kept whispering, “You can do it; I know you can make it!”





Rayo de Aire prepared himself by eating plenty of insects and sipping lots of flowers in order to double his size. He knew he needed all the energy possible to achieve his goal. The elements began to harmonize, except one: water. He loved to bathe under the glow of the yellow star, but in his chest, he felt a swarm of black wasps every time he stopped to think about that blueness, almost infinite, dragging him into the darkness. However, the fire inside drove him to attempt the adventure.



He was so absorbed in his own thoughts that he did not notice that night had fallen. He liked to watch those twinkling stars while everyone else slept. All of a sudden, it seemed to him that these constellations were harmonizing, like cosmic music, to place him in tune with the universe and achieve the great feat of crossing the entire Gulf in a single flight.

“I will do it without collapsing!”, exclaimed *Rayo de Aire*.





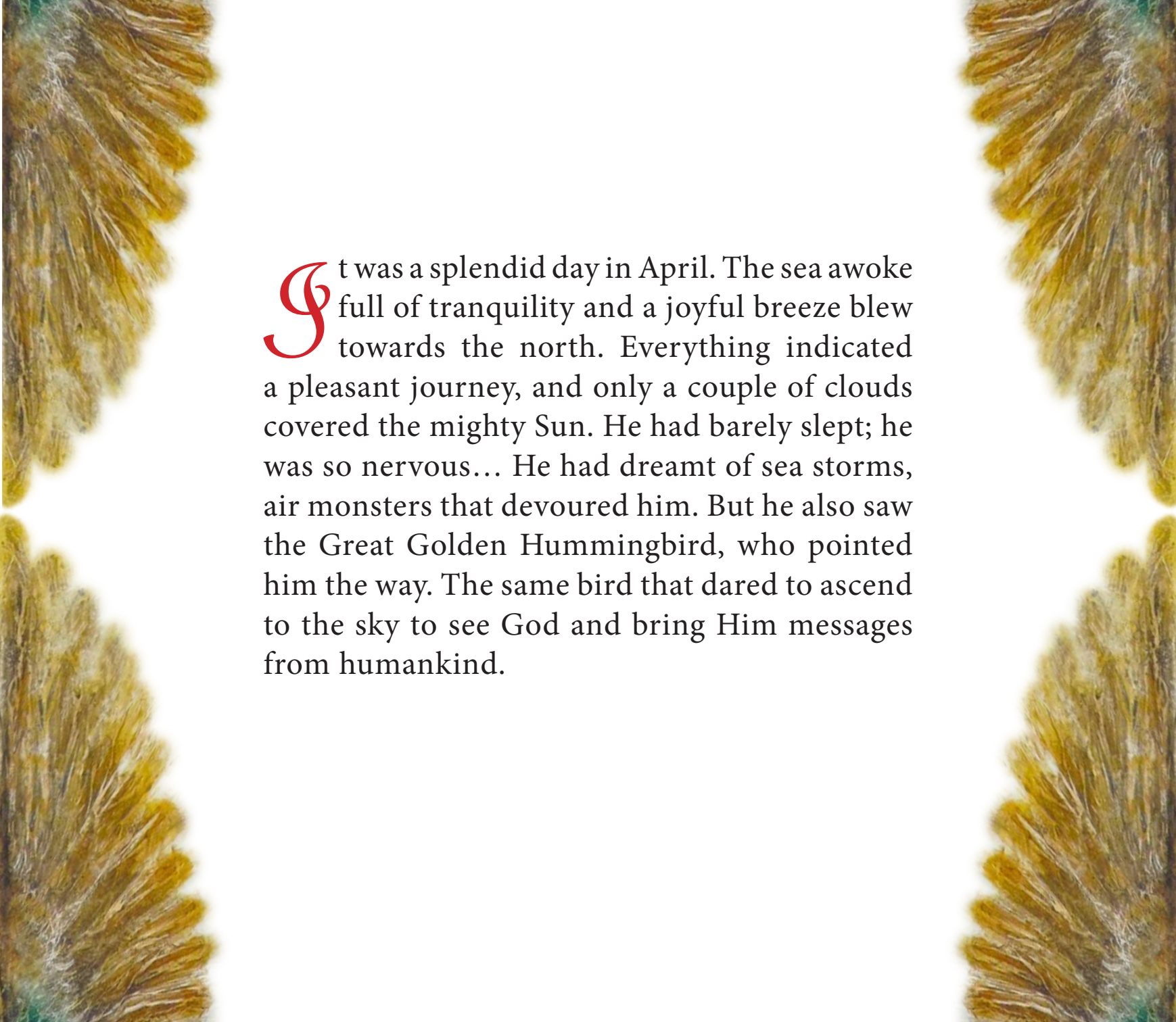


At sunrise, he visited his family and friends,
as well as the places he loved so much. He said
farewell to his favorite hills and flowers. He
wasn't sure if he would return to tell his story.



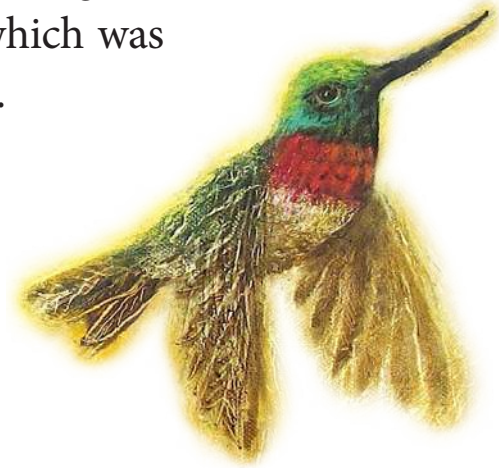




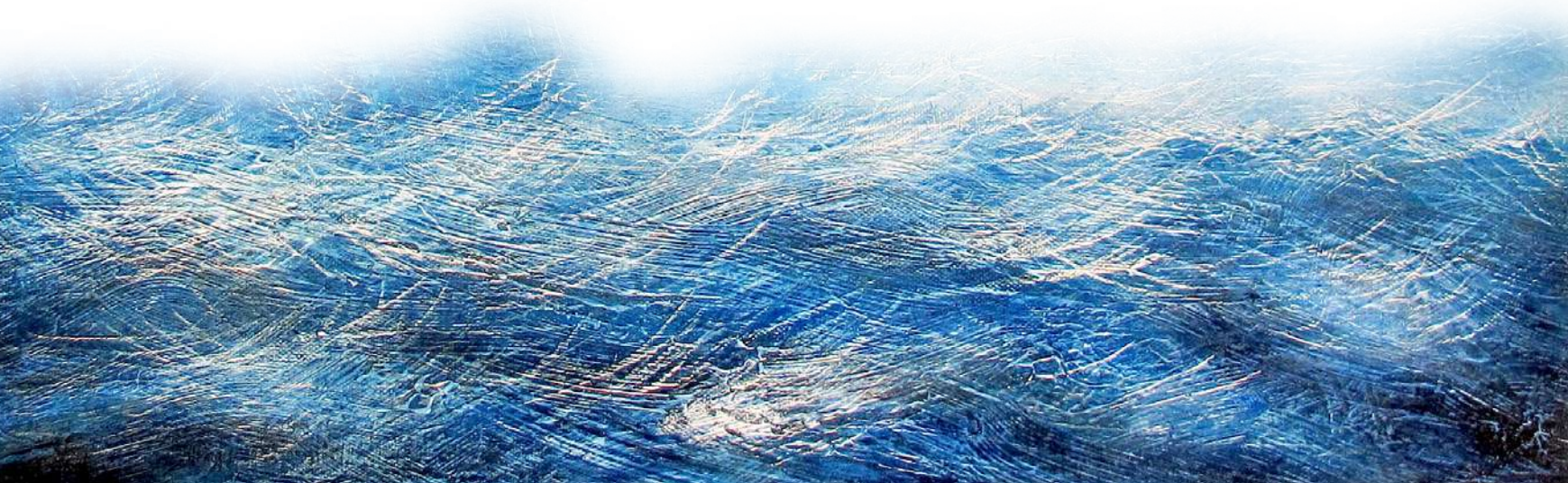
The page features four decorative borders in the corners, each resembling a golden feather or a fan of fine, radiating lines in shades of yellow and gold. These borders frame the central text area.

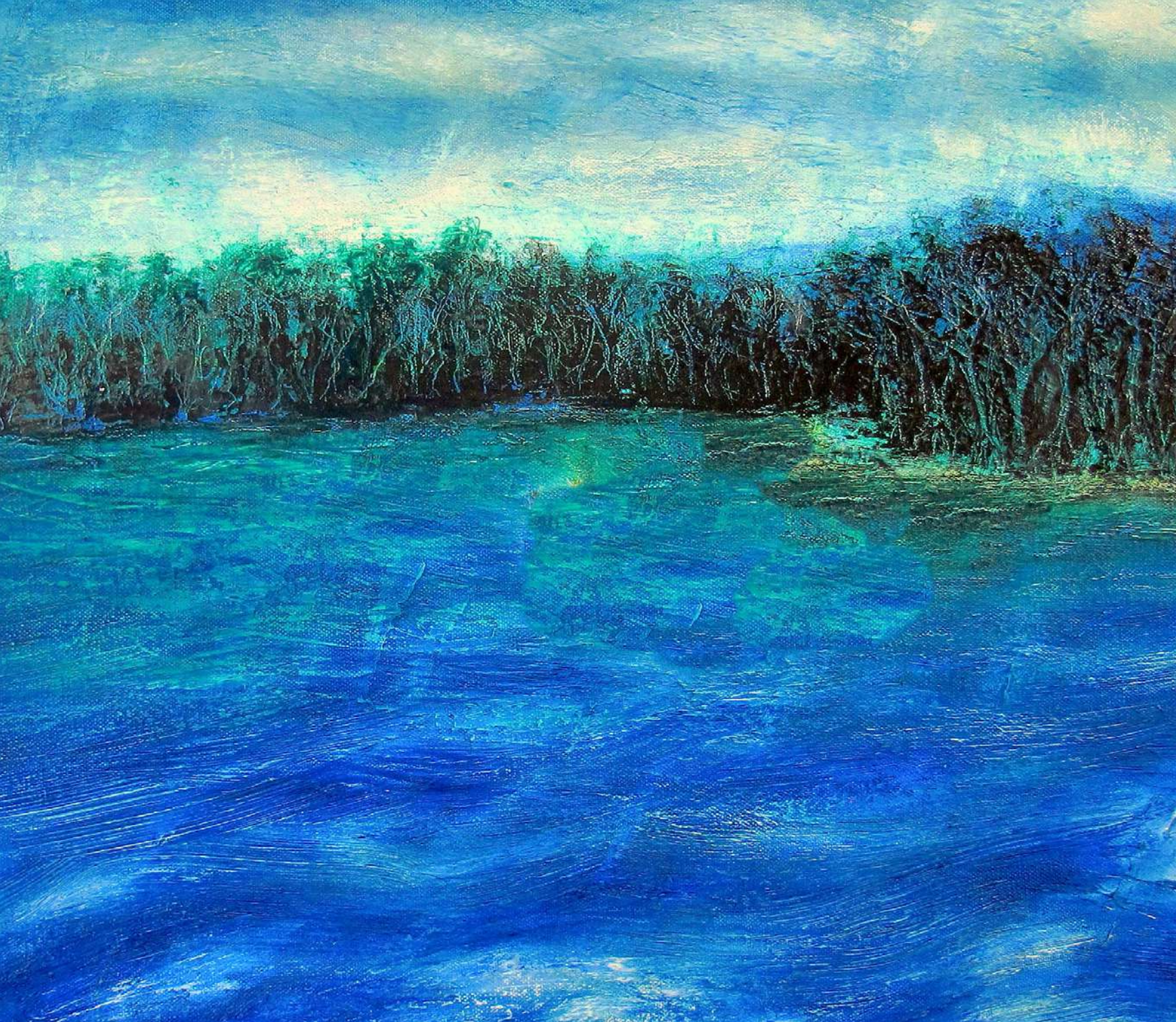
It was a splendid day in April. The sea awoke full of tranquility and a joyful breeze blew towards the north. Everything indicated a pleasant journey, and only a couple of clouds covered the mighty Sun. He had barely slept; he was so nervous... He had dreamt of sea storms, air monsters that devoured him. But he also saw the Great Golden Hummingbird, who pointed him the way. The same bird that dared to ascend to the sky to see God and bring Him messages from humankind.

He asked the Golden Hummingbird for protection and threw himself from the cliff. He started to elevate with all the thrust his tiny wings allowed, higher and higher, out over the ocean, moving away from land, which was slowly fading away until it was completely gone.



The ocean was all he could see, so immense, in front of him, behind and below him. *Rayo de Aire* became nervous and tense. It was not too late to go back.

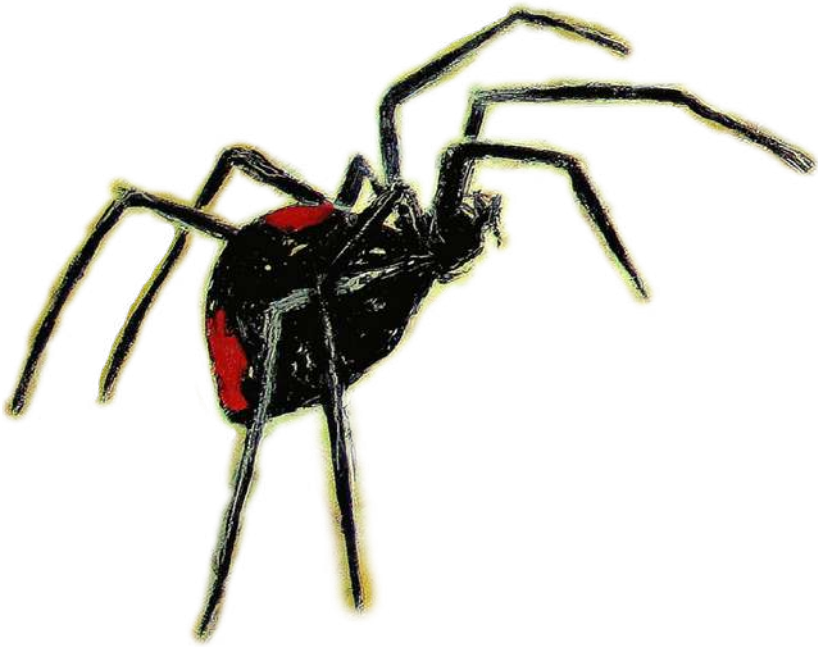






He felt a shiver, a harsh and rusty fear. Silence. Just when he was about to turn back, the day suddenly appeared in his mind when he was caught in a spider web and on the verge of death. The memory petrified him. He had strayed too close to eat an insect. His wings stopped moving when they got tangled in the web's threads, fine and sticky but strong as steel. Desperate, he started to screech when he saw a black widow approaching with its seal of fire on her belly. Just before she attacked him with her mortal bite, a pair of hands set him free. An old man dressed in white smiled at him and said:



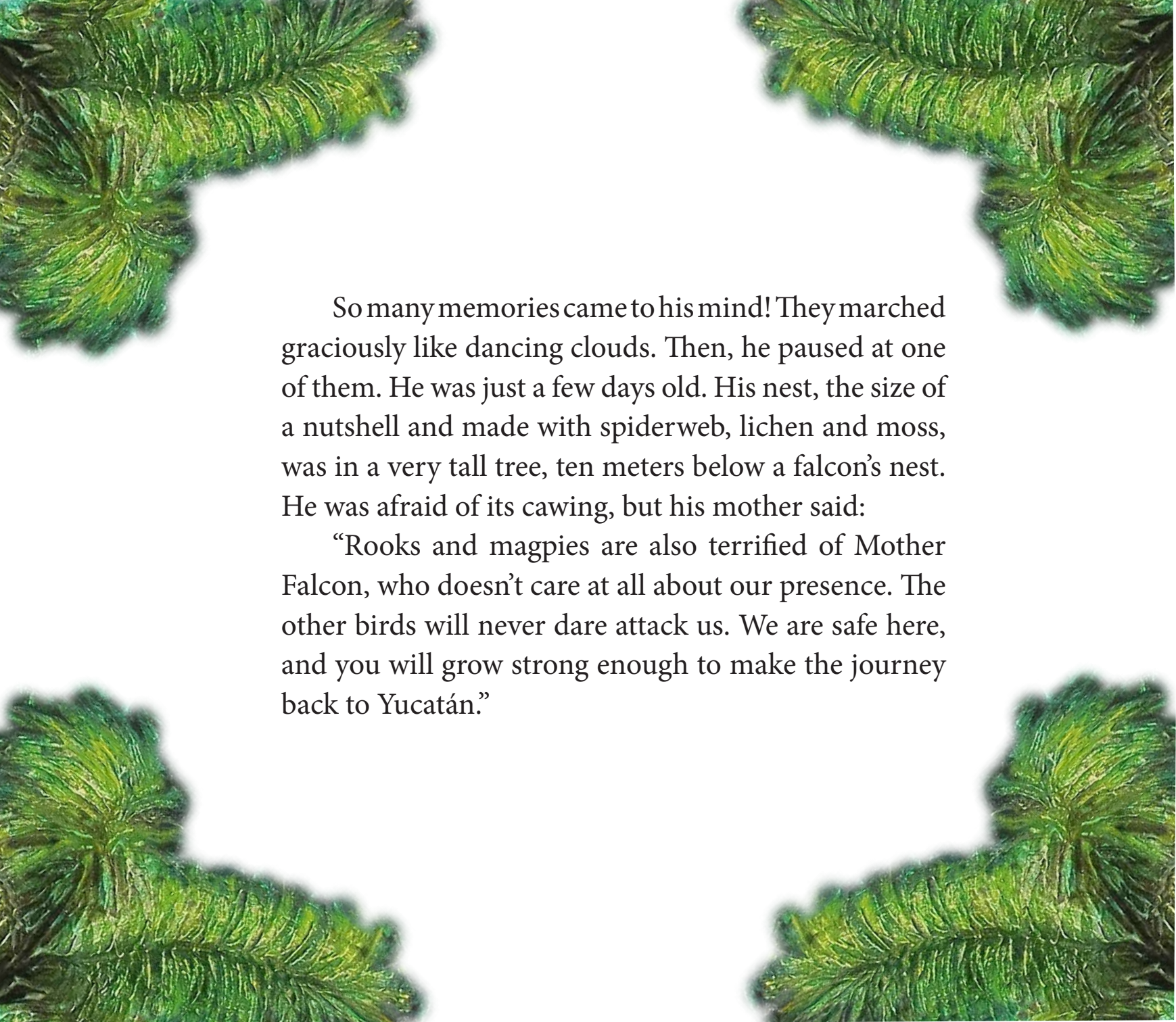


“Follow the voice of your heart. From now on, you will live up to your name, *Rayo de Aire*, and open the lost path for the sake of your community. Your mission will be to cross the sea.”

The old man’s words shattered his fear and he continued to flap his wings forcefully. The wind became his ally, and drove him swiftly northward, to the promised land. He kept advancing, catching a glimpse of the patterns the beams of sunlight form when they enter the earth’s atmosphere.





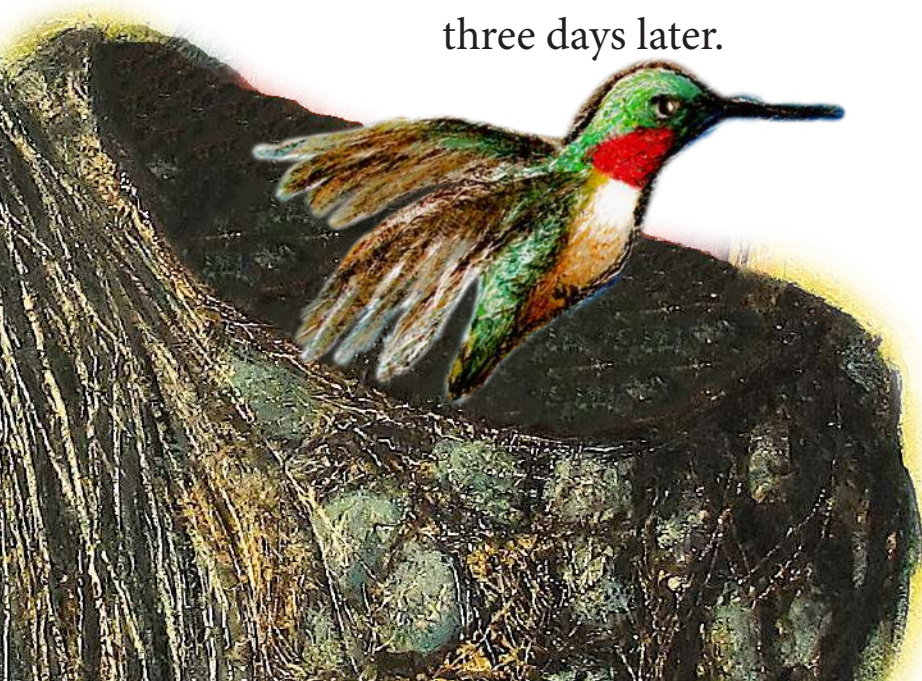
Four pine tree branches, likely from a spruce or fir, are positioned in the corners of the page. They are rendered in a detailed, painterly style with vibrant green needles and visible brown bark. The branches are arranged symmetrically, with one in each corner, framing the central text area.

So many memories came to his mind! They marched gracefully like dancing clouds. Then, he paused at one of them. He was just a few days old. His nest, the size of a nutshell and made with spiderweb, lichen and moss, was in a very tall tree, ten meters below a falcon's nest. He was afraid of its cawing, but his mother said:

“Rooks and magpies are also terrified of Mother Falcon, who doesn't care at all about our presence. The other birds will never dare attack us. We are safe here, and you will grow strong enough to make the journey back to Yucatán.”



He remembered the surprising elasticity of his nest, where he lived with his sister. They were growing every day, so fast that they barely fit inside. The wind blew hard and shook their branch, which moved him to fly. He couldn't walk, because his legs were too short. He flapped his wings forcefully and buzzed out of the nest. How happy he was... his first flight!! From that moment, he realized he was born to fly. It was such a joy to fly rapidly from one place to another. His sister, on the other hand, did not decide to leave the nest until three days later.



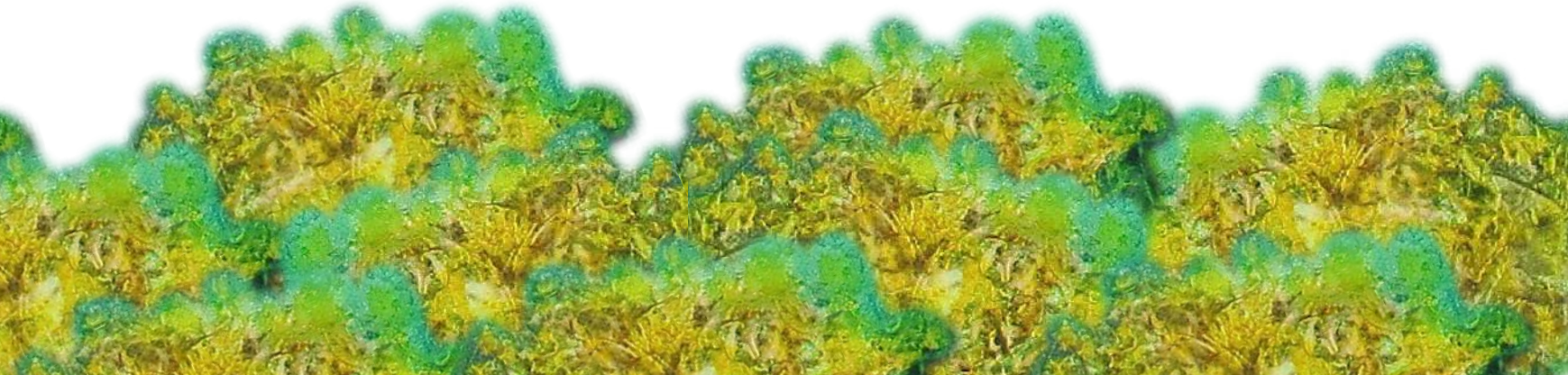




His mother taught them to sip the most delicious flowers and to hunt for insects in the air. After several weeks, she encouraged them to search for their own flowers and insects, telling them:

“My dear sweethearts, we will soon have to return to Yucatán, so you have to learn to take care of yourselves and survive on your own.”

She said this because she knew half of all hummingbird die in their first year, and the journey is mostly a lonely one.





In the evening, the wind stopped blowing and he had to flap his wings even harder. They were as heavy as lead and drooped dangerously towards the sea. His strength had abandoned him. He was going to drown, like in the worst of his nightmares! Suddenly, just before touching the water, he saw a turtle that was emerging from the blue depths and asked her to let him rest for a while on her back to recover his energy. The turtle smiled and said:

“Of course, go ahead, rest on my shell. I will swim on the surface.”






Then she looked at him and saw that her new friend was distraught and anxious.

“Why are you so afraid of the ocean?”, asked the turtle, with a soft and tender voice.

“I don’t know how to swim. My element is air”, *Rayo de Aire* answered worriedly.

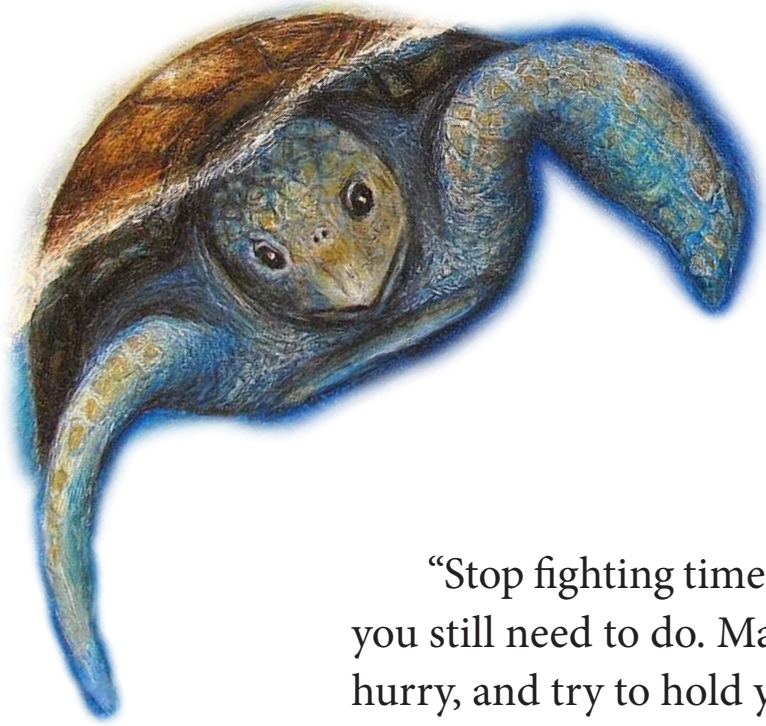
“Fear paralyzes us. It prevents us from transcending our limits, what is known. You must get over it if you want to keep going. But, tell me, where are you going in such a hurry?”

“I have to speed up, I have to get to the flowery land, and I’m afraid there is still a long way ahead”, answered *Rayo de Aire*.



“If you are going to the flowery land, there’s still a long way to fly. Remember, it doesn’t matter where we are going, there will always be plenty of time to reach it. Look at me, I am over fifty years old and I live slowly, with no rush whatsoever”, the turtle said with a smile.

“That’s amazing!” said *Rayo de Aire*, astonished. “We live short lives. I am three years old and I don’t know if I will ever get to five. Though they say that some hummingbirds live up to eleven. I must fly quickly to reach my goal.”



“Stop fighting time. Don’t despair about everything you still need to do. Make your best effort, without any hurry, and try to hold your life in your hands.”

“I’m afraid I won’t reach my destination soon”

“Don’t worry, you will be where you are meant to be.”

“My community depends on my success in this task. I must get to...”

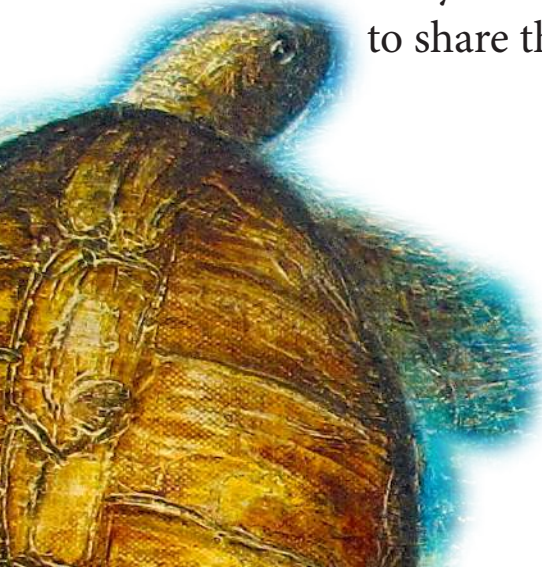


The turtle interrupted him. *Rayo de Aire* listened attentively:

“The path is endless. Those who push themselves to finish too quickly, I assure you, end up lost or defeated. What you need to do is be calm. I repeat: stop fighting time and don’t despair about everything you still need to do.”

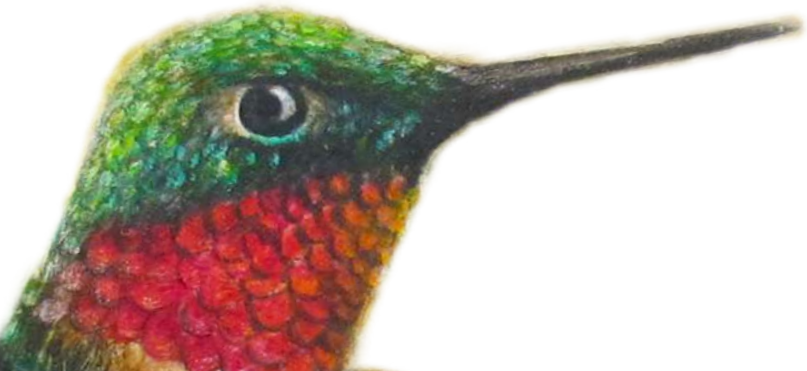
“You speak just like the old man in white that rescued me,” replied *Rayo de Aire*.

“You must be willing to take the falls. The key is to stay in the moment and not allow fear to defeat you. Only then will we reach our limit and enable ourselves to share the world of the gods.”





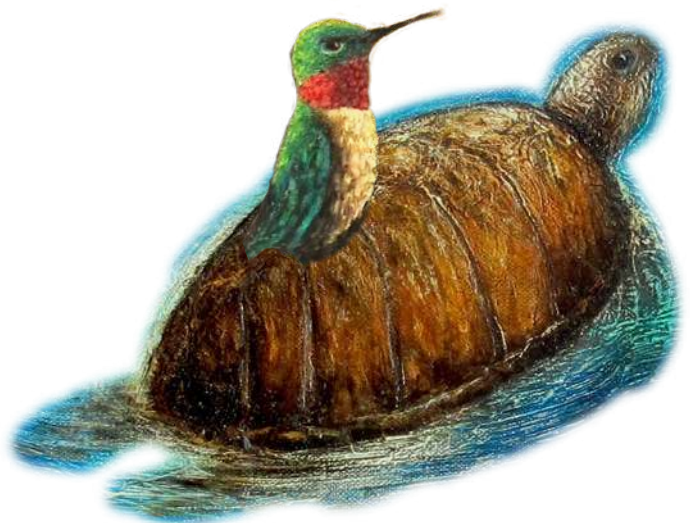
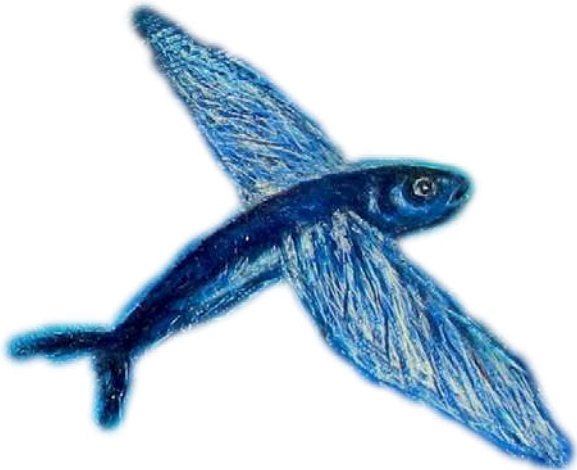
As soon as the turtle stopped talking, *Rayo de Aire* watched in amazement as some flying fish jumped out of the sea. Were these his sea-cousins? They had wings, too! Suddenly, a group of threatening golden fish emerged from the water and devoured them. *Rayo de Aire* started to shiver in terror. The turtle said:

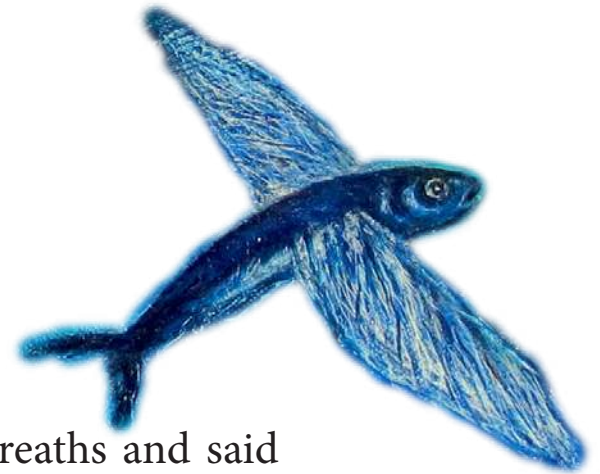
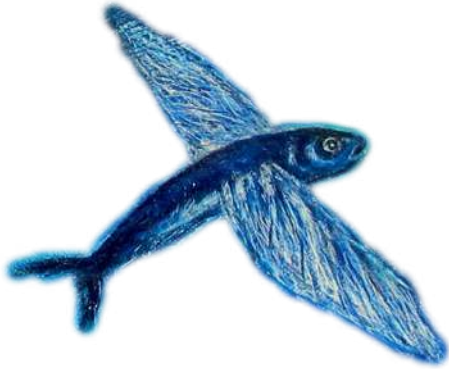






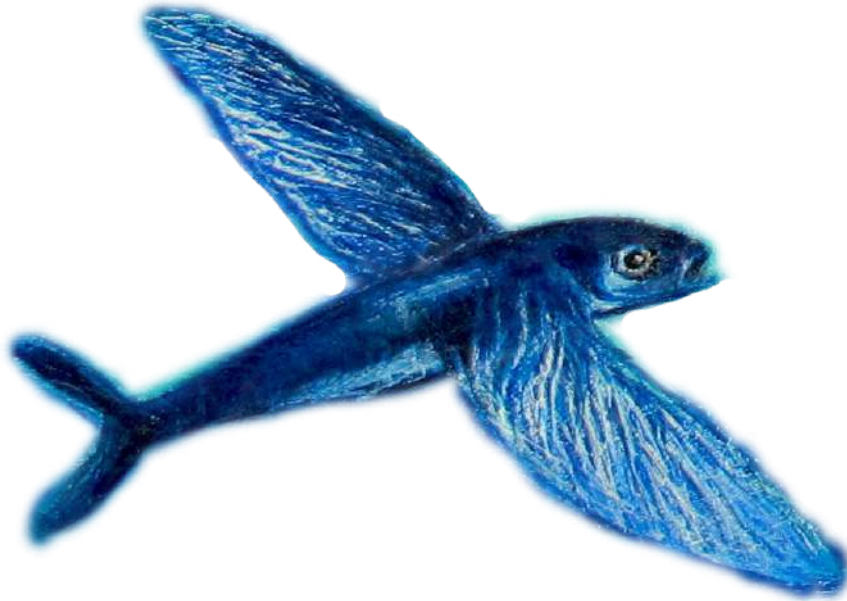
“Calm down! You are no food for those golden fish. Regain your strength, because soon I will have to submerge again. Remember that the sea is the cradle of life, the origin of the greatest adventures, the limitless passion for knowledge. There is no reason to be scared of it.”





Rayo de Aire took several deep breaths and said goodbye to his new friend before taking flight once again:

“Farewell and thank you. I will never forget you. I will carry the message to humans that your kind must be respected so that you and your descendants live for a long time and no one will eat the eggs you lay on the beach with so much effort and love year after year.”



Full of renewed energy, *Rayo de Aire* kept flying until the Sun merged with the ocean, painting the sunset with his favorite colors, which reminded him of honey and the hues of his favorite flowers. It was beautiful!

The last sunlight disappeared behind the horizon. Everything went dark and, with a sense of helplessness, an intense terror almost paralyzed him.

“You have to trust yourself. Don’t get carried away by anxiety or doubt. Everything is going well”, *Rayo de Aire* said to himself.

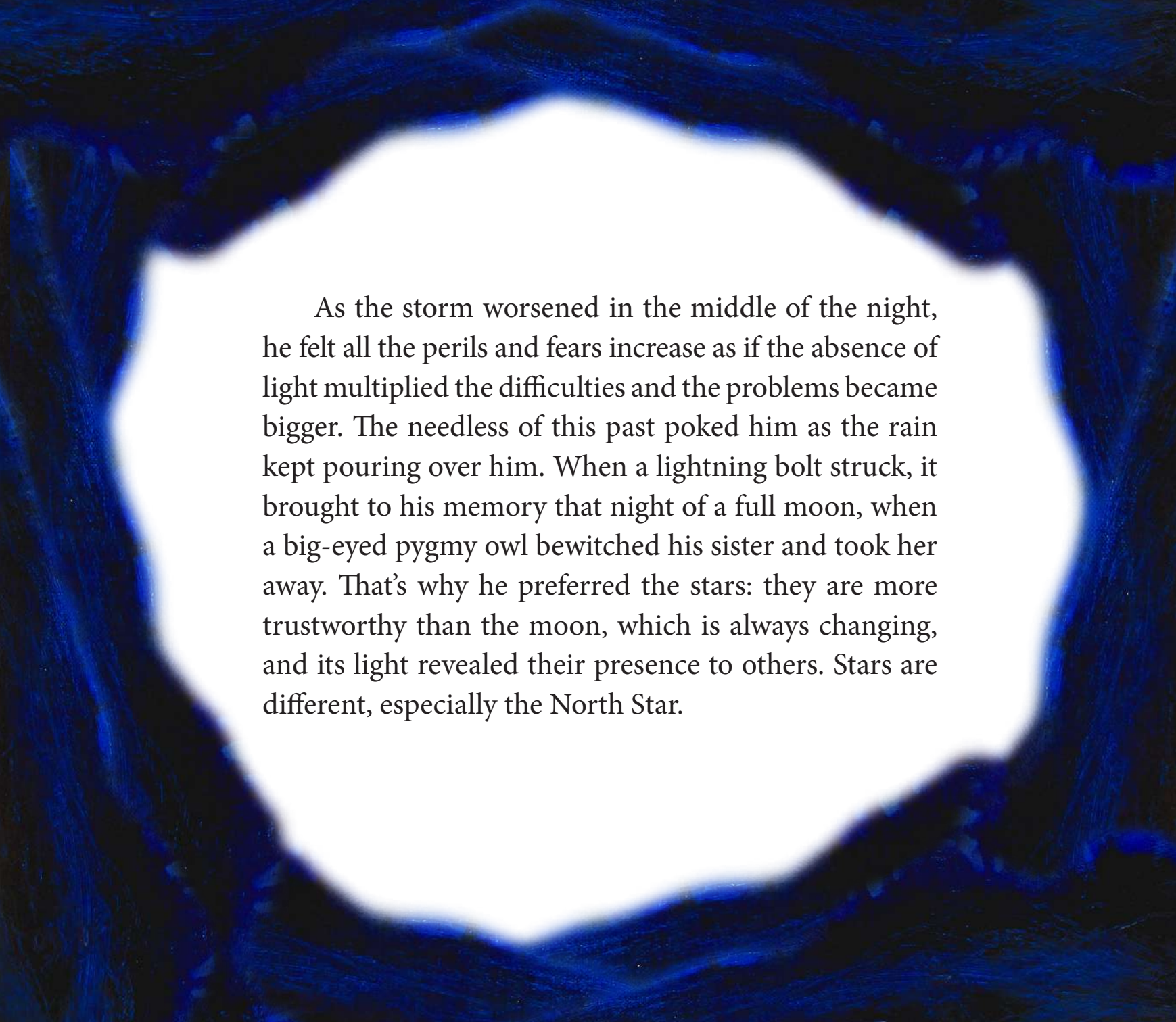






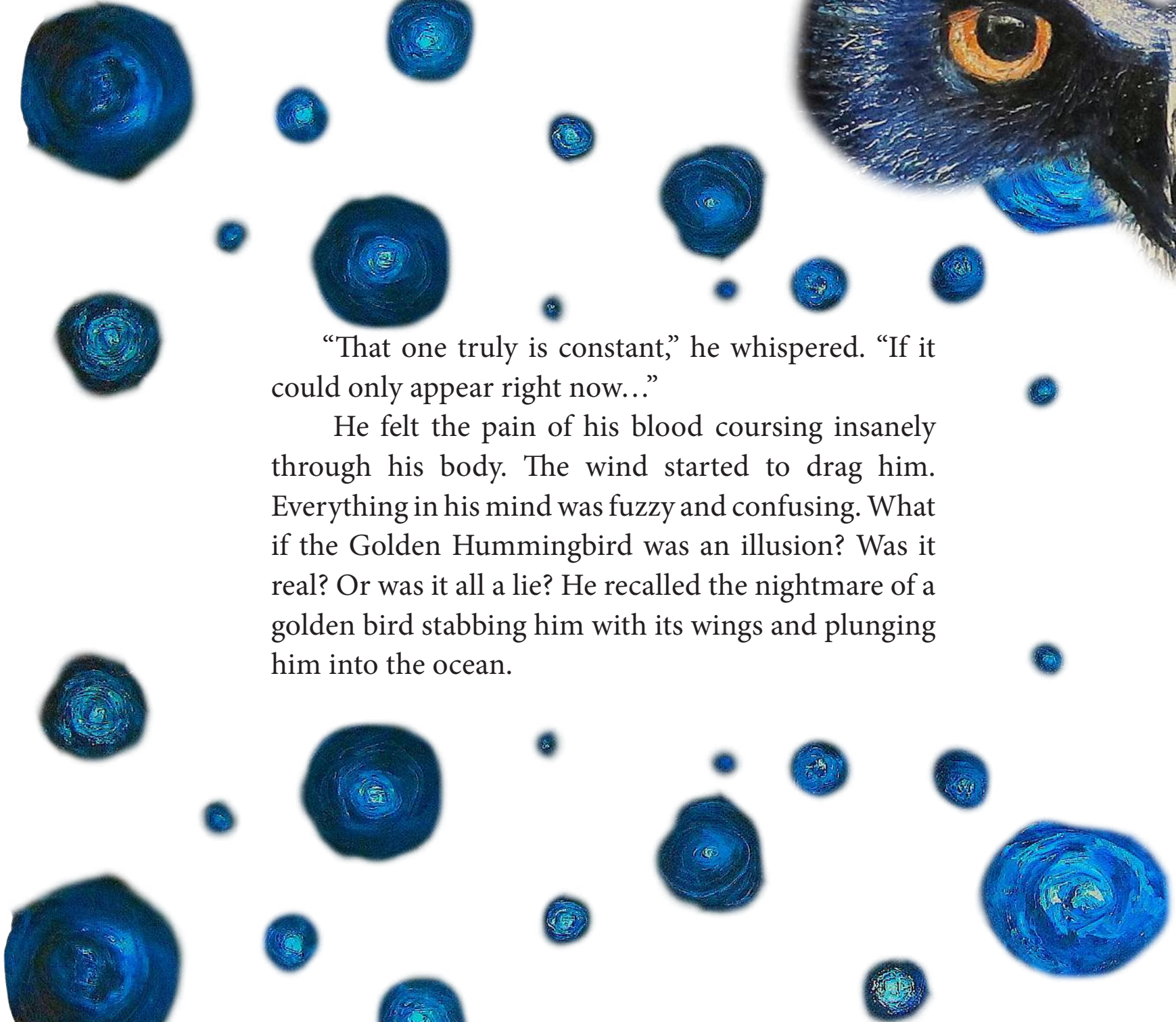
He kept flapping his wings vigorously. Before that immensity of worlds, suns and stars shining in the cosmos, he felt like a speck of dust in the midst of an eternal night. Suddenly, a group of clouds resembling black wings filled up the sky. The one thing he dreaded the most was approaching rapidly: a storm! He shook when he felt the first drops on his body, and the memory of that huge crow that almost ended his life when he was three months old came to his mind. It happened during his first trip back to Yucatán. That's why he decided to make the crossing at night, to avoid daytime predators, but he was advancing very slowly.





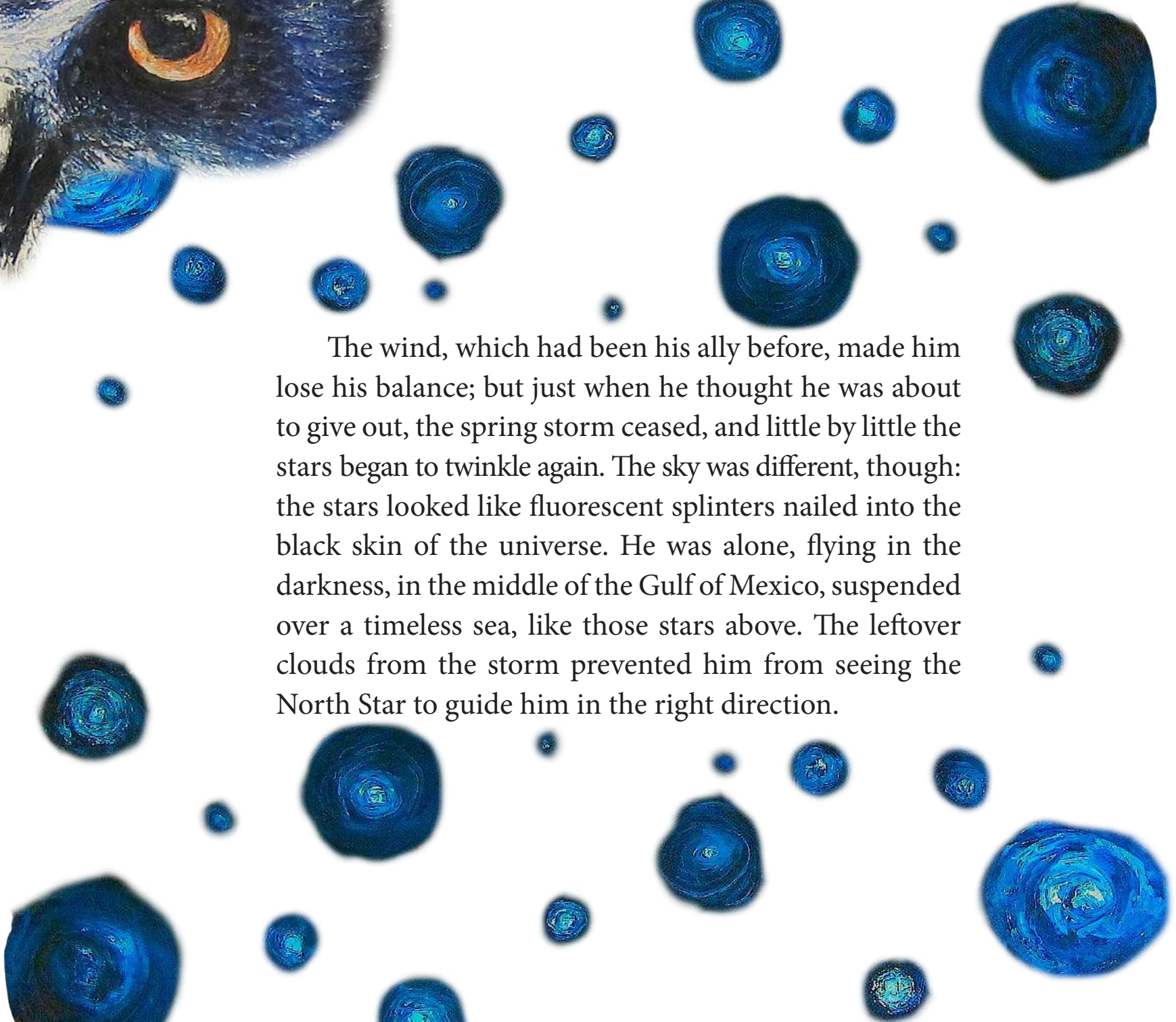
As the storm worsened in the middle of the night, he felt all the perils and fears increase as if the absence of light multiplied the difficulties and the problems became bigger. The needlessness of this past poked him as the rain kept pouring over him. When a lightning bolt struck, it brought to his memory that night of a full moon, when a big-eyed pygmy owl bewitched his sister and took her away. That's why he preferred the stars: they are more trustworthy than the moon, which is always changing, and its light revealed their presence to others. Stars are different, especially the North Star.



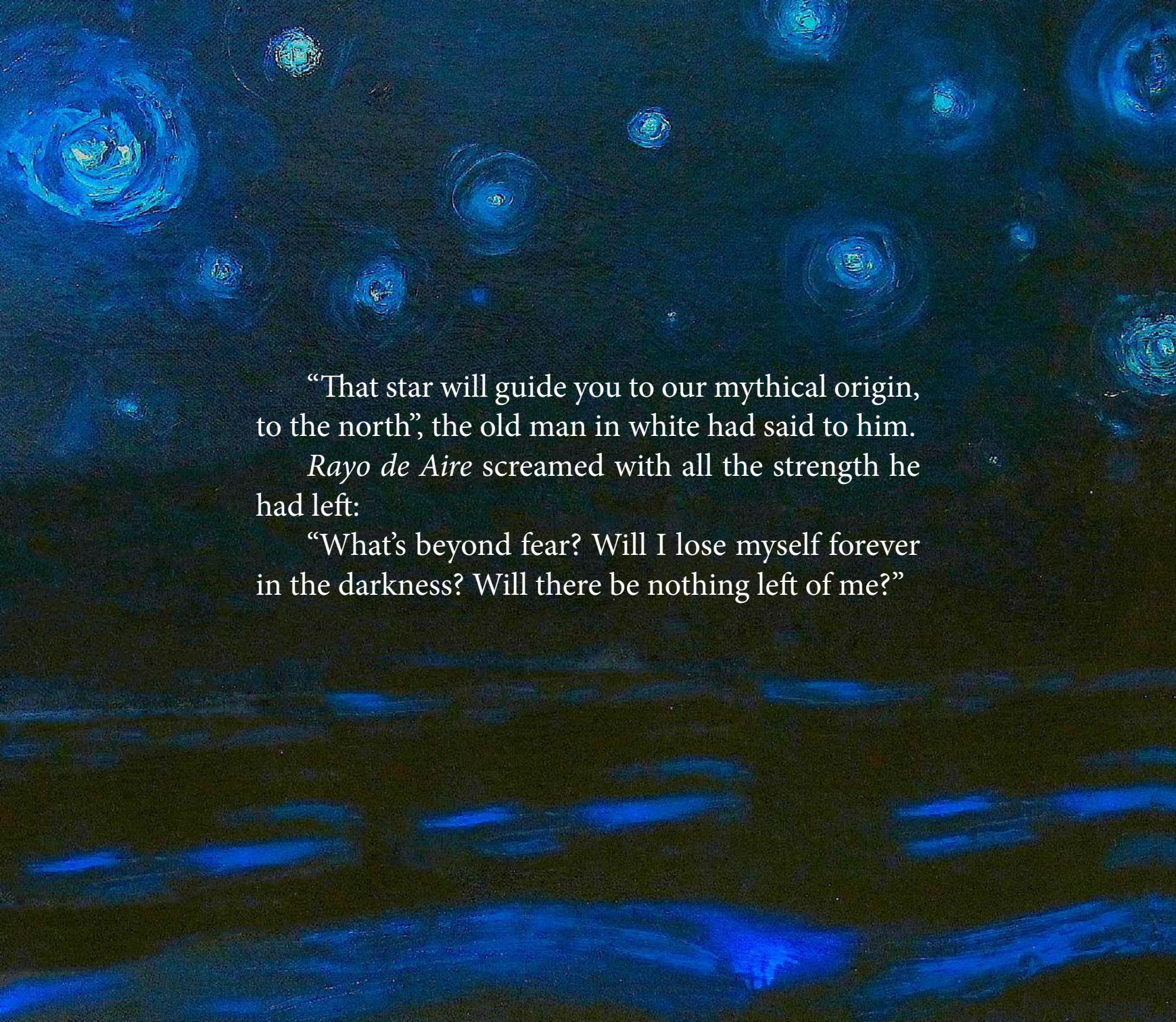


“That one truly is constant,” he whispered. “If it could only appear right now...”

He felt the pain of his blood coursing insanely through his body. The wind started to drag him. Everything in his mind was fuzzy and confusing. What if the Golden Hummingbird was an illusion? Was it real? Or was it all a lie? He recalled the nightmare of a golden bird stabbing him with its wings and plunging him into the ocean.



The wind, which had been his ally before, made him lose his balance; but just when he thought he was about to give out, the spring storm ceased, and little by little the stars began to twinkle again. The sky was different, though: the stars looked like fluorescent splinters nailed into the black skin of the universe. He was alone, flying in the darkness, in the middle of the Gulf of Mexico, suspended over a timeless sea, like those stars above. The leftover clouds from the storm prevented him from seeing the North Star to guide him in the right direction.

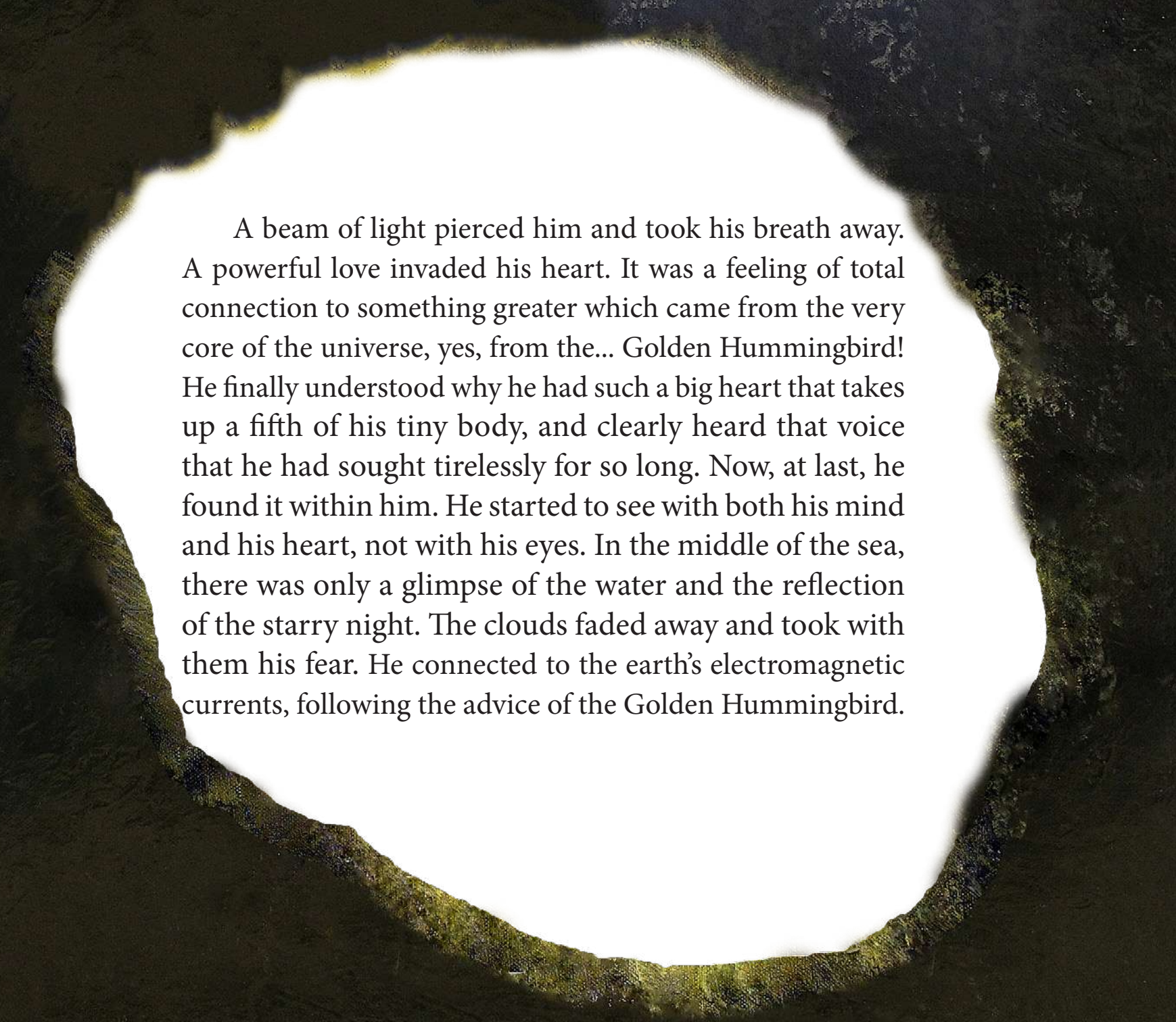


“That star will guide you to our mythical origin,
to the north”, the old man in white had said to him.

Rayo de Aire screamed with all the strength he
had left:

“What’s beyond fear? Will I lose myself forever
in the darkness? Will there be nothing left of me?”



The image features a large, irregularly shaped circular opening in a dark, textured surface. The surface appears to be made of a rough, possibly stone or wood material, with a mottled greenish-brown hue. The opening itself is bright white, creating a strong contrast with the dark surroundings. Centered within this white circle is a paragraph of text in a black serif font.

A beam of light pierced him and took his breath away. A powerful love invaded his heart. It was a feeling of total connection to something greater which came from the very core of the universe, yes, from the... Golden Hummingbird! He finally understood why he had such a big heart that takes up a fifth of his tiny body, and clearly heard that voice that he had sought tirelessly for so long. Now, at last, he found it within him. He started to see with both his mind and his heart, not with his eyes. In the middle of the sea, there was only a glimpse of the water and the reflection of the starry night. The clouds faded away and took with them his fear. He connected to the earth's electromagnetic currents, following the advice of the Golden Hummingbird.





The Hummingbird spoke to him in his head, and *Rayo de Aire* felt him in his heart. He had to let himself flow with his mind, not his body. He breathed just as his friend the turtle told him, deeply and slowly. He had finally realized that it didn't matter if he died trying. If he didn't make it, someone else would do it. He didn't feel lonely anymore. The Golden Hummingbird was always there, inside him, waiting. But before this, he had to conquer his doubts and fears to immerse himself in his inner silence and connect to that light. He kept going the rest of the night, memorizing the heavenly map he would use to go back year after year as long as he lived. He saw the North Star showing him the way with great clarity.







The sky began to clear up. Finally, the sunrise! In the horizon, the clouds were tinged with color. From the sky, small luminescent petals began to come down to light up his feathers, like prisms reflecting the rainbow. His ruby throat burned with the first rays of the Sun.

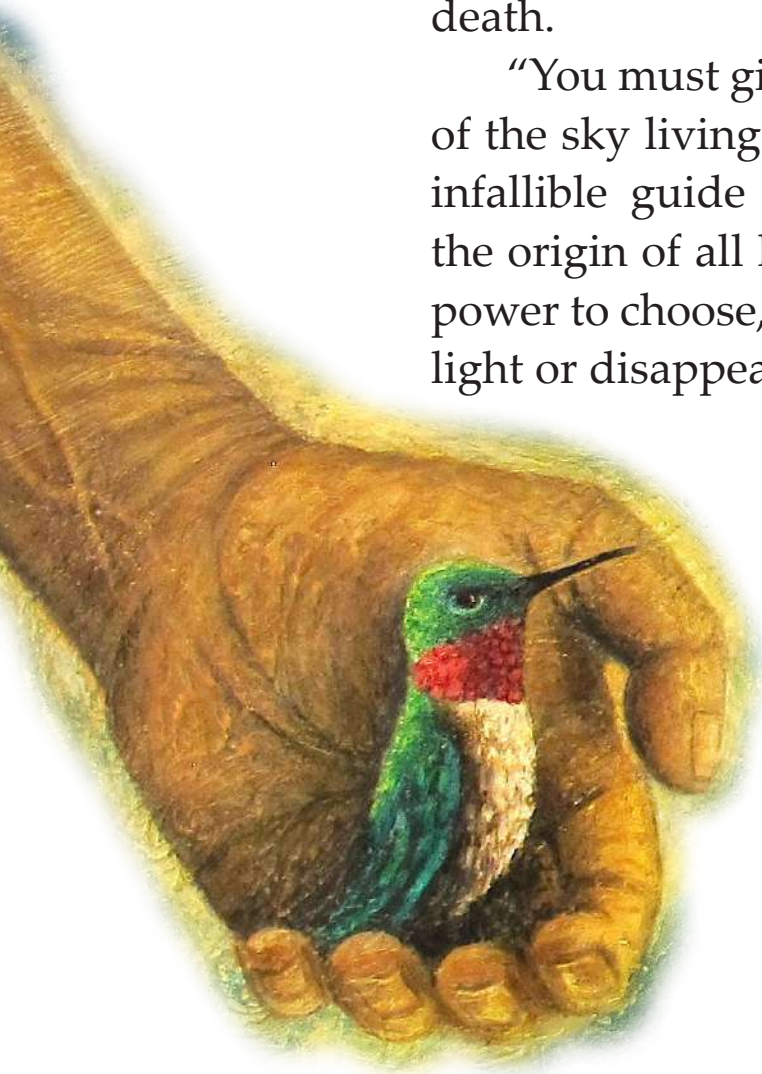
At last, he came to the flowery land, the place where he was born! He thought about his community and its welfare. Now, they could be the first to choose the best locations to build their nests, as well as the most delicious flowers. The following year, he would go to the distant grove of the north to fulfill his promise to the Mayan elder: to go to the place where the Sun is born, the mythical place of origin his ancestors had come from thousands of years ago.





The voice of the Golden Hummingbird spoke to him strongly and clearly, and gave him the most important message of his life, now that he had conquered all his doubts, fears, and even death.

“You must give this message to men: the light of the sky living in all human beings is the most infallible guide to the Center of the Universe, the origin of all life. Tell them that they have the power to choose, whether to fuse with this divine light or disappear forever into the darkness.”







There are few human beings who are seeking to extend their established limits intellectually and physically, as well as spiritually. Those are the ones who advance our civilization, facing new challenges, growing constantly, and risking their lives in the process. The same happens with these tiny birds, which, despite their minuscule size, accomplish great feats such as crossing the Gulf of Mexico: over a thousand miles, in a single, twenty-four-hour flight without dying in the attempt.

When you see a hummingbird, remember: “Connect to your inner divine light to avoid getting lost and reach the center of the Universe.”



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