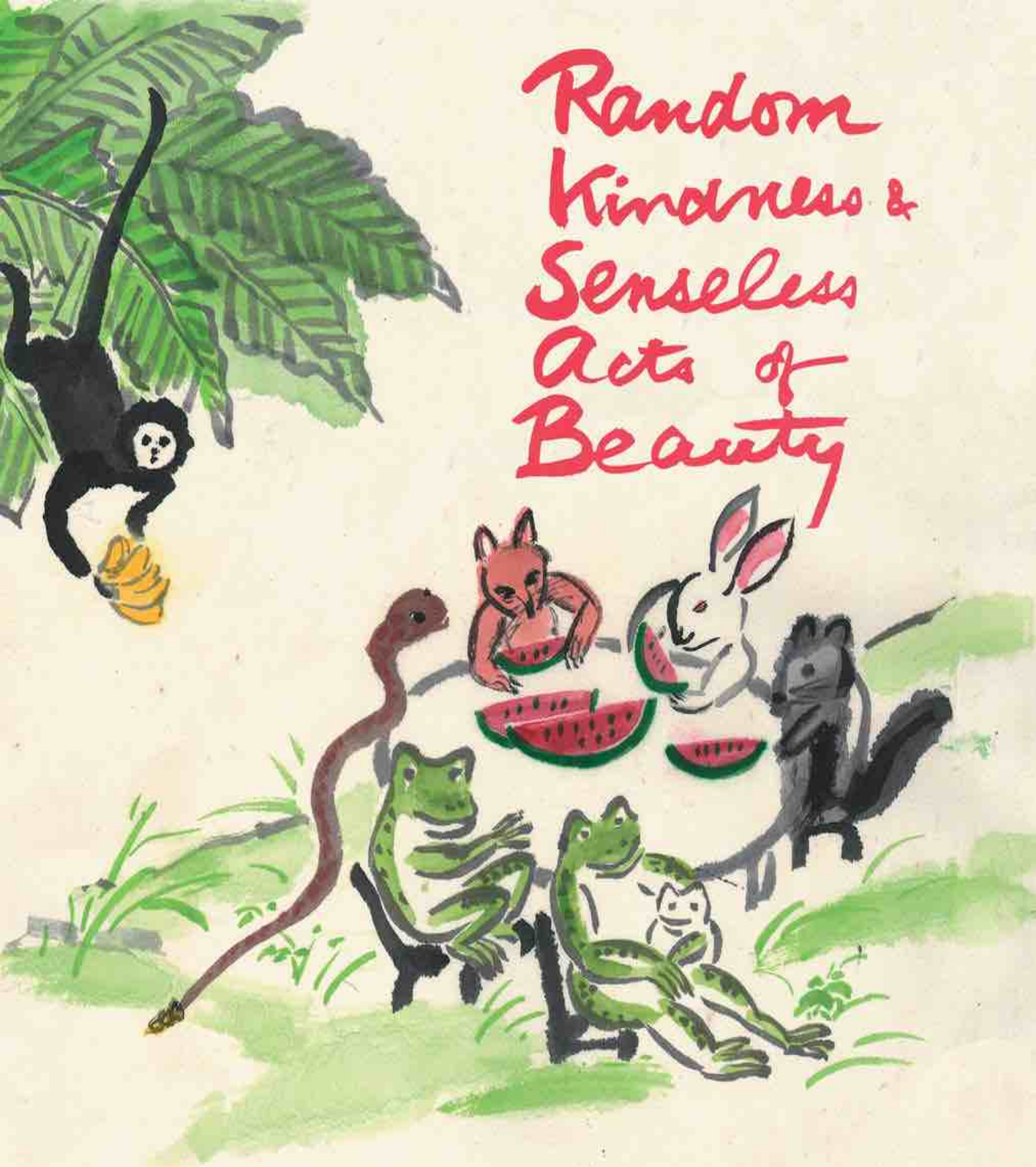
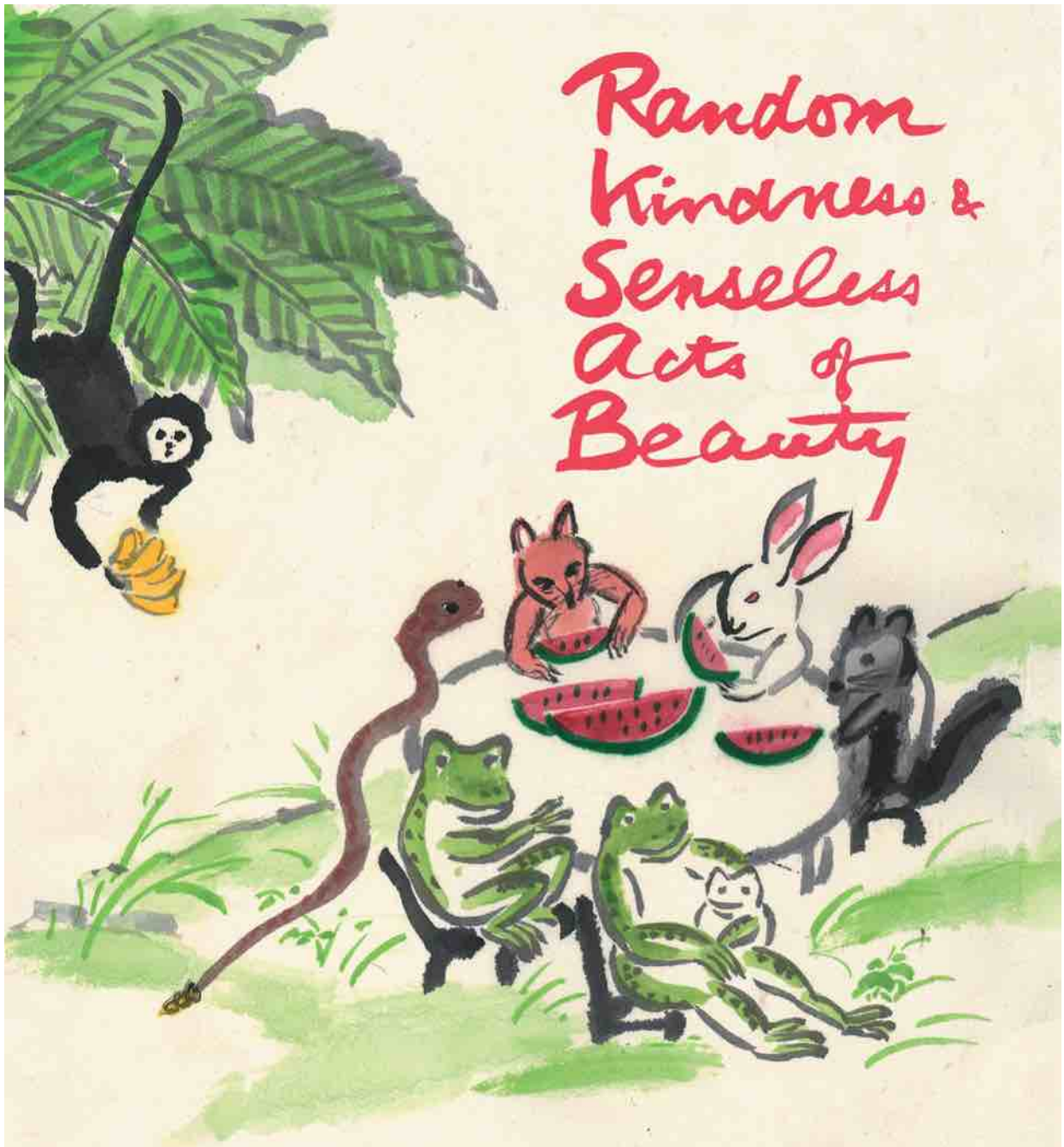


# Random Kindness & Senseless Acts of Beauty

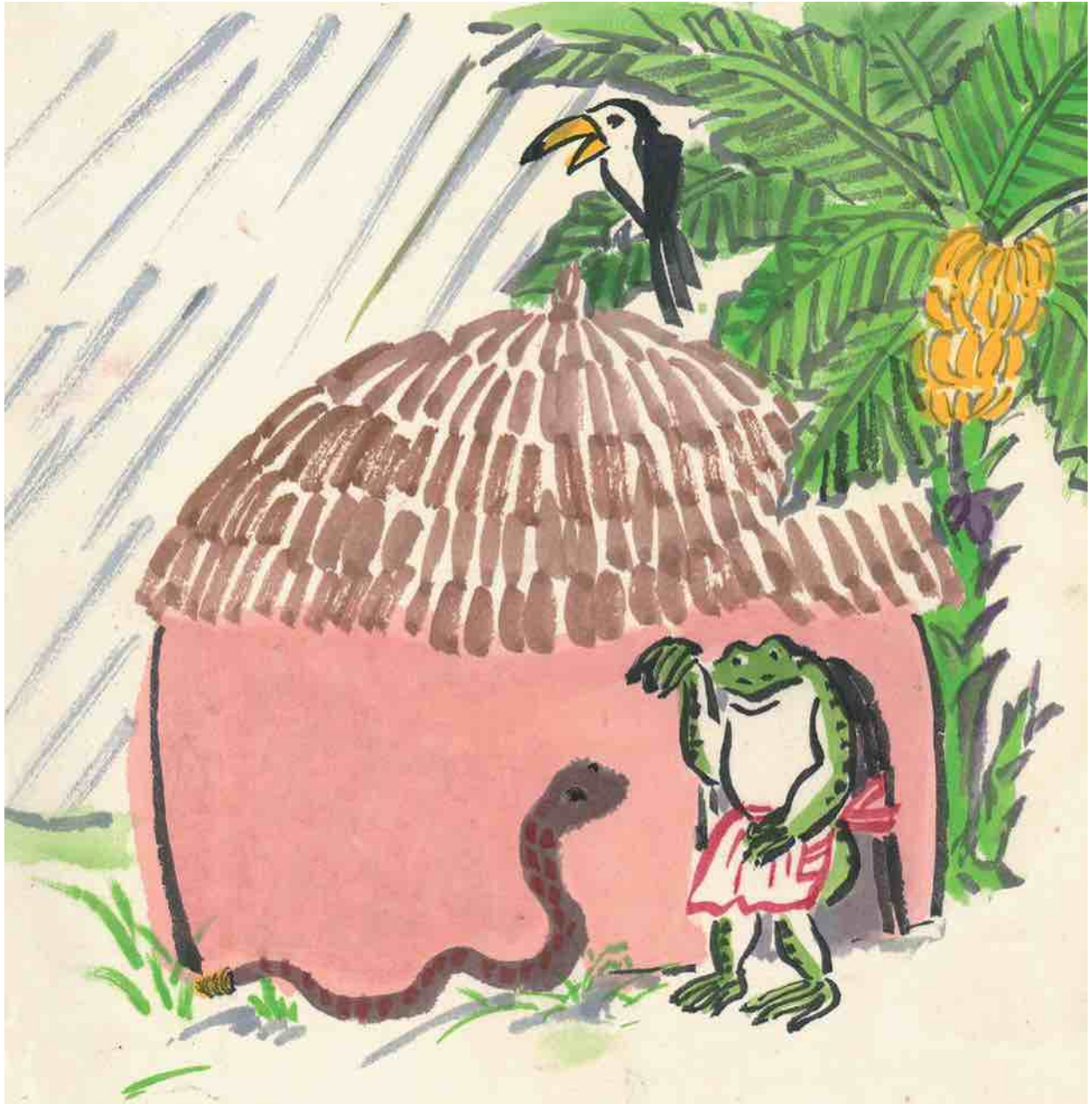


Written by Anne Herbert and Margaret Paloma Pavel    Illustrated by Mayumi Oda  
Foreword by Desmond Tutu

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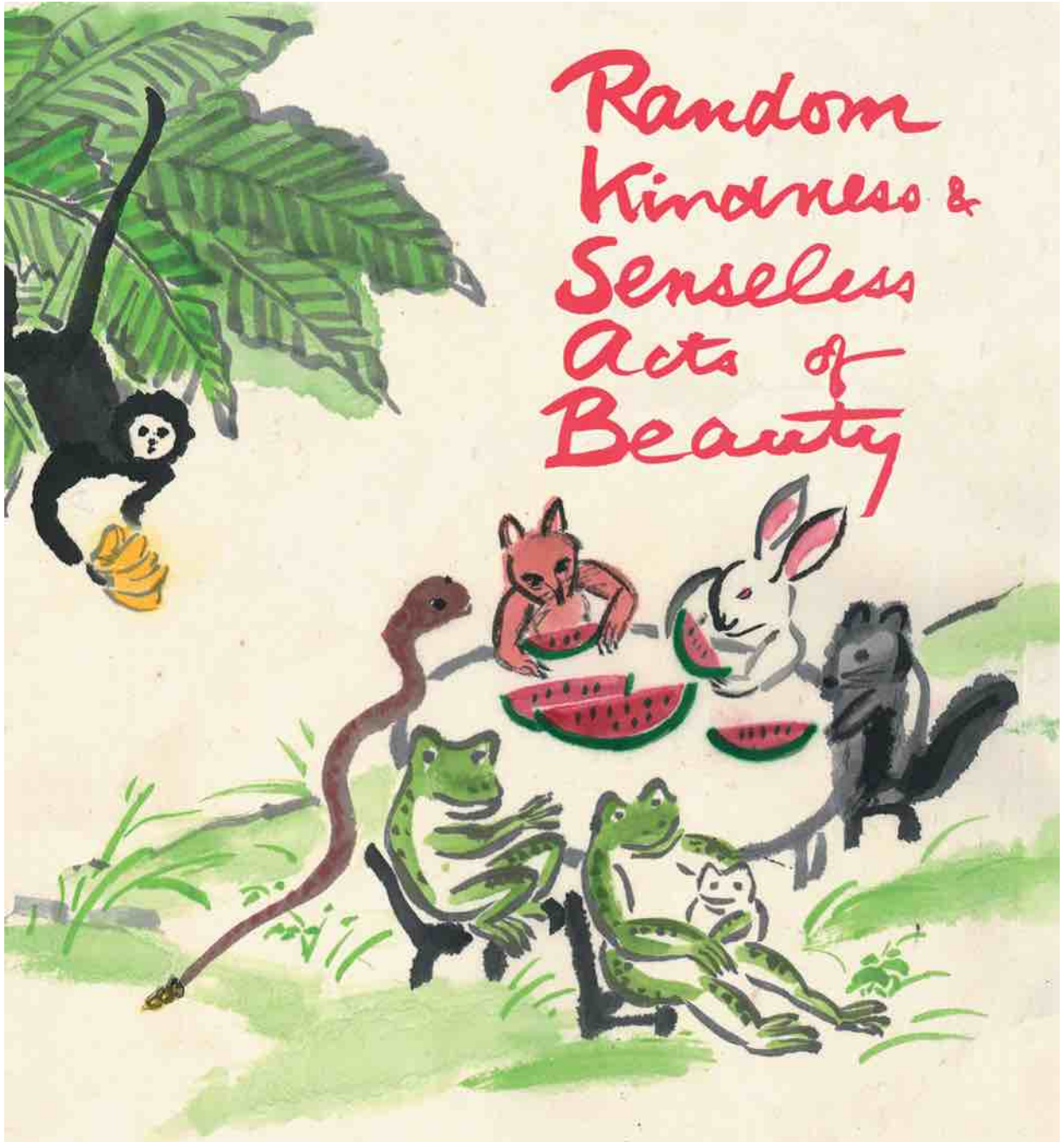
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Foreword by Desmond Tutu



“All we need to know right now in order to let our lives count  
in building a sustainable world.” — Joanna Macy

“This exquisite book offers guidance to us all.” — Alice Walker

# Random Kindness & Senseless Acts of Beauty



Written by Anne Herbert and Margaret Paloma Pavel    Illustrated by Mayumi Oda  
Foreword by Desmond Tutu

This edition of *Random Kindness* is dedicated to peace and recovery in the face of world unrest and climate crises.

All royalties from the sale of this book will be donated to antinuclear advocacy and community resiliency across boundaries.

# Random Kindness & Senseless Acts of Beauty

by Anne Herbert & Margaret Paloma Pavel

Illustrated by Mayumi Oda

Foreword by Desmond Tutu



New Village Press, New York

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We are living in an historic moment. We are each called to take part in a great transformation. Our survival as a species is threatened by global warming, economic meltdown, and an ever-increasing gap between rich and poor. Yet these threats offer an opportunity to awaken as an interconnected and beloved community.

Here in South Africa, interconnectedness is described by the concept *ubuntu*. Ubuntu is the philosophy and belief that our humanity is inextricably bound up in one another, and any tear in the fabric of connection must be repaired for us all to be made whole. This interconnectedness is the very root of who we are. Thus, compassion and service to others enhances the humanity of all, including oneself. As South Africa overcame the trauma of Apartheid, we discovered that ubuntu builds extraordinary resilience, enabling our people to survive and emerge still human despite all efforts to dehumanize our community.

Ubuntu tells us that we can create a more peaceful world by striving for goodness in each moment, wherever we are. Thus we are invited to become life artists, those who create lives of wholeness and beauty at every instant. Out of the cacophony of random suffering and chaos that can mark human life, the life artist sees or creates a symphony of meaning and order. A life of wholeness does not depend on what we experience, but on how we experience our lives.

My conviction that this is true is borne out not only by my experiences in South Africa, where we miraculously averted a bloodbath by cultivating forgiveness over cycles of retribution and violence, but also by many visits to other countries suffering oppression and conflict. We can indeed transform the world, and we are each called to take part in this sacred work.

*Random Kindness and Senseless Acts of Beauty* offers this simple and powerful message of wisdom and hope.

Wherever we are, we can create beauty. Moment by moment, we can create joy. Instant by instant, we can offer kindness.

—Desmond Mpilo Tutu, *Soweto*, 2014



Winner  
Independent Publisher 2016 IPPY  
Outstanding Book of the Year



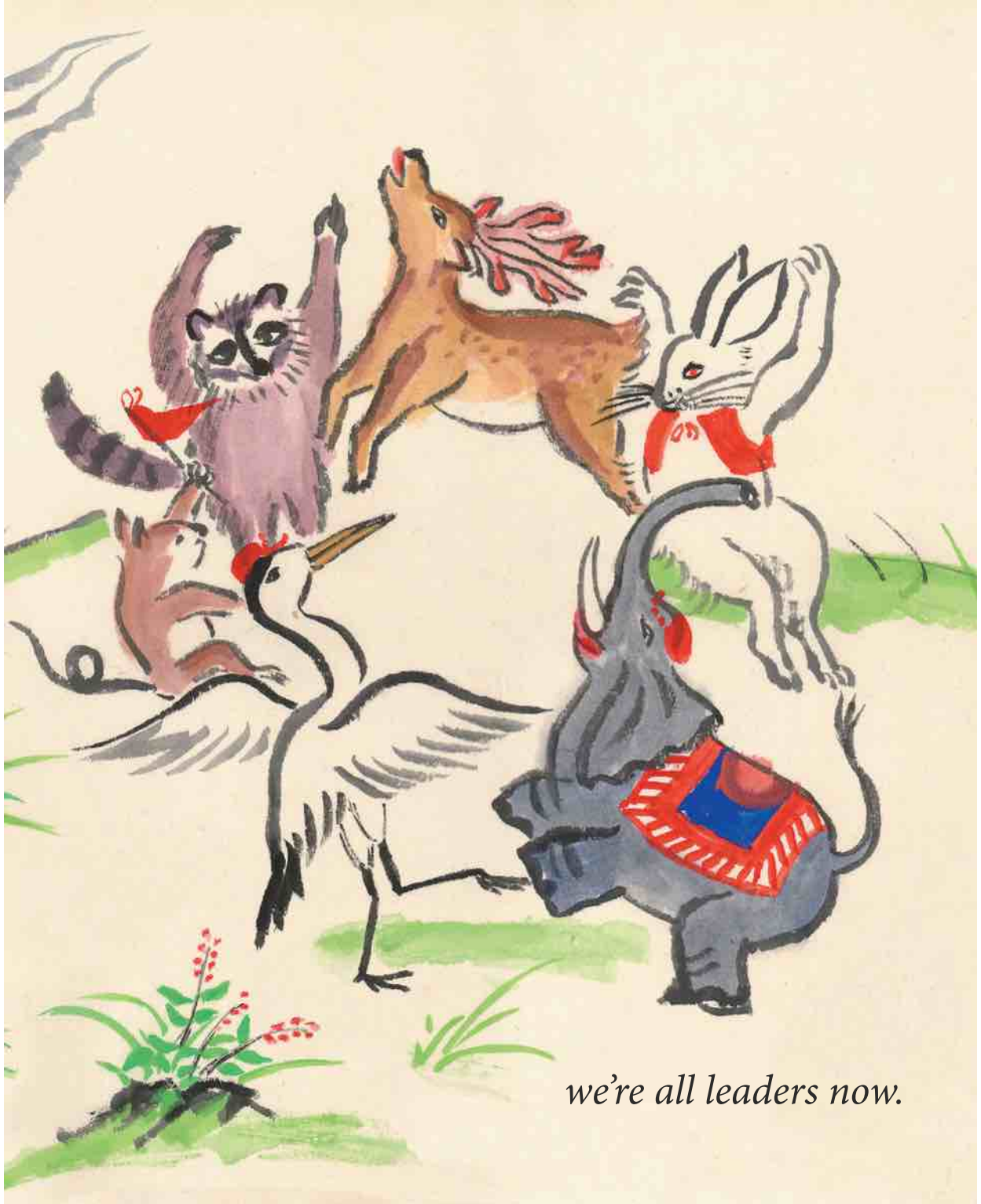
Gold Medal Book Award  
PEACEMAKER OF THE YEAR

Random  
Kindness &  
Senseless  
Acts of  
Beauty

*Our leaders got confused.*

*So . . .*

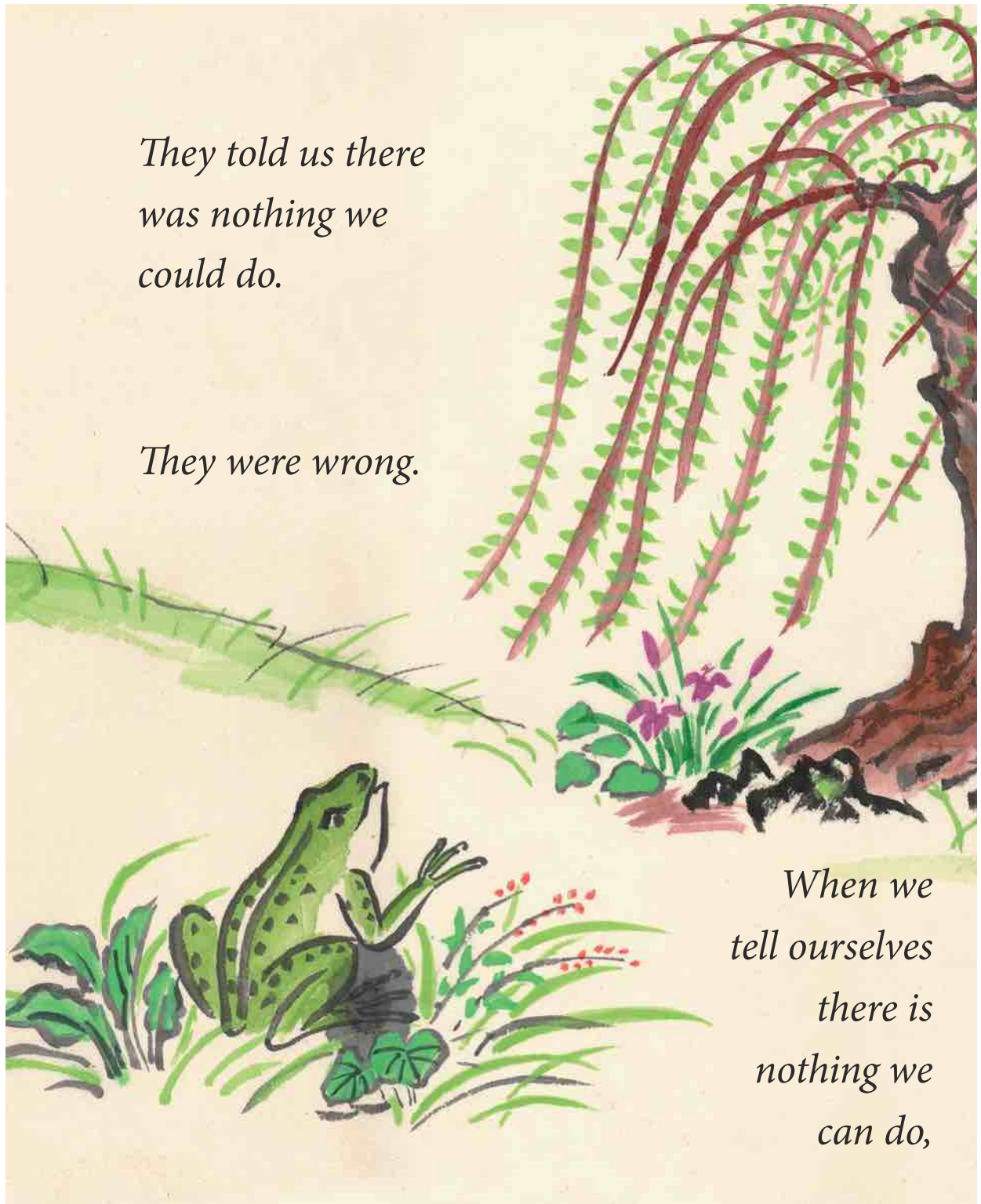




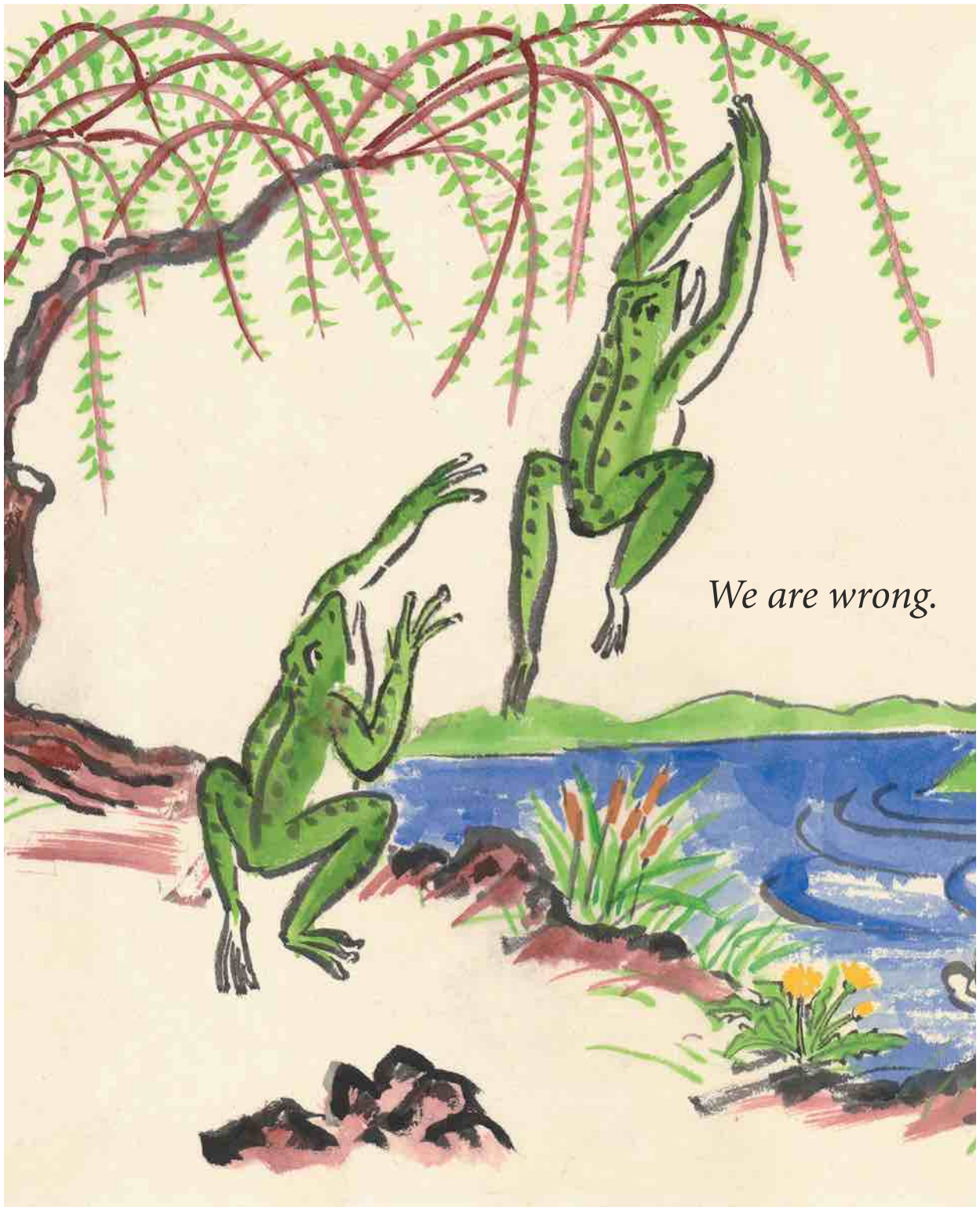
*we're all leaders now.*

*They told us there  
was nothing we  
could do.*

*They were wrong.*



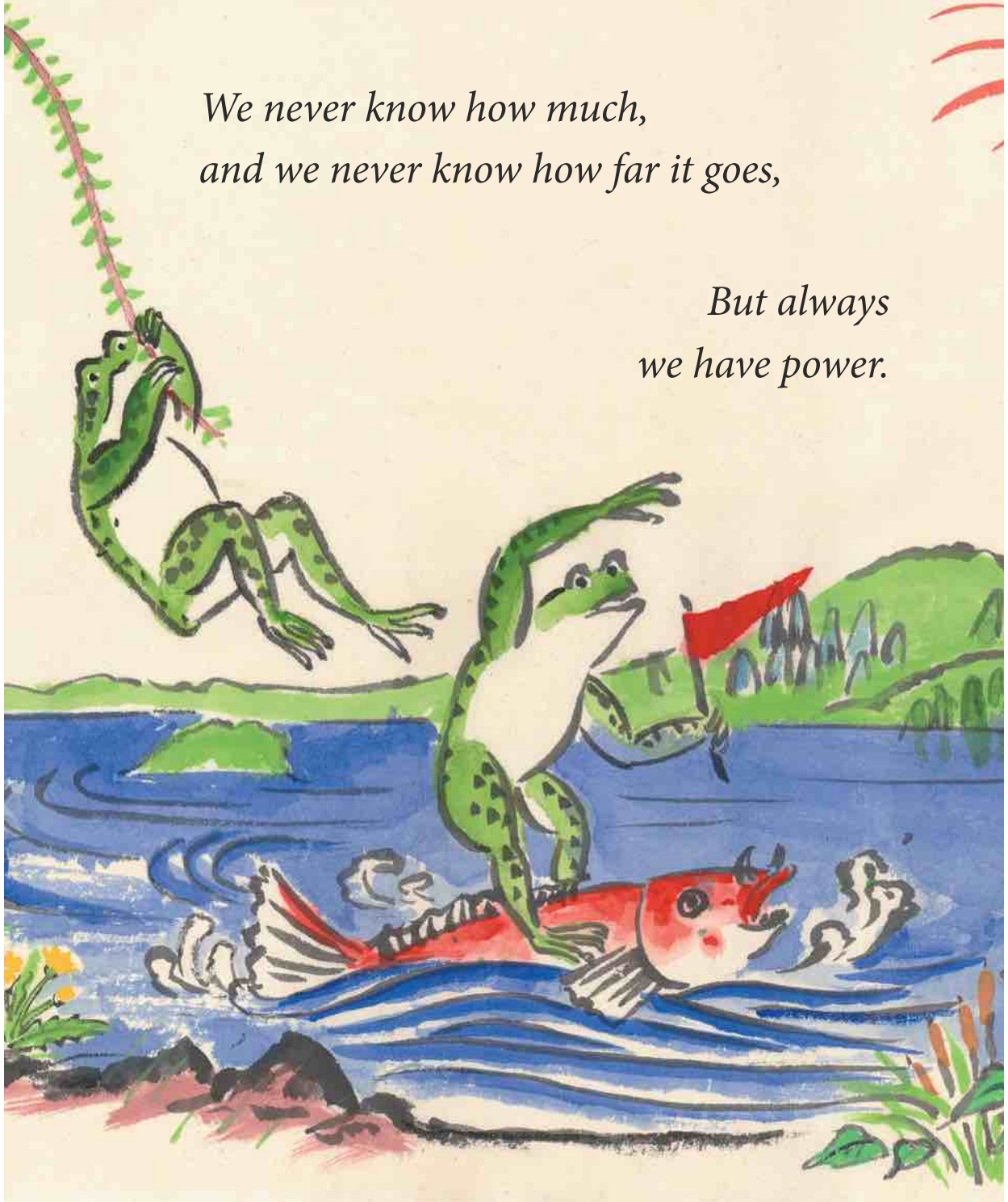
*When we  
tell ourselves  
there is  
nothing we  
can do,*



*We are wrong.*

*We never know how much,  
and we never know how far it goes,*

*But always  
we have power.*

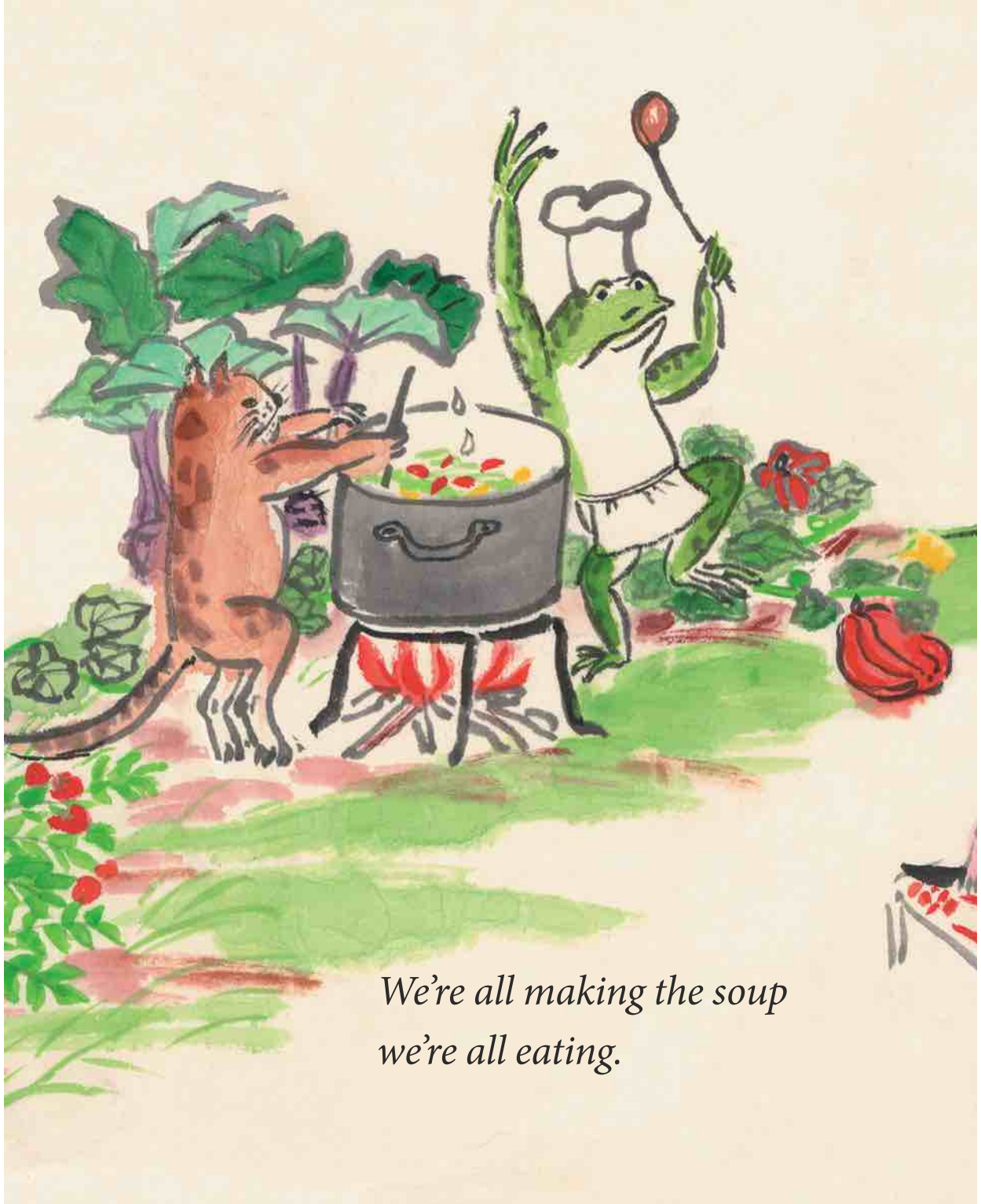




We have power



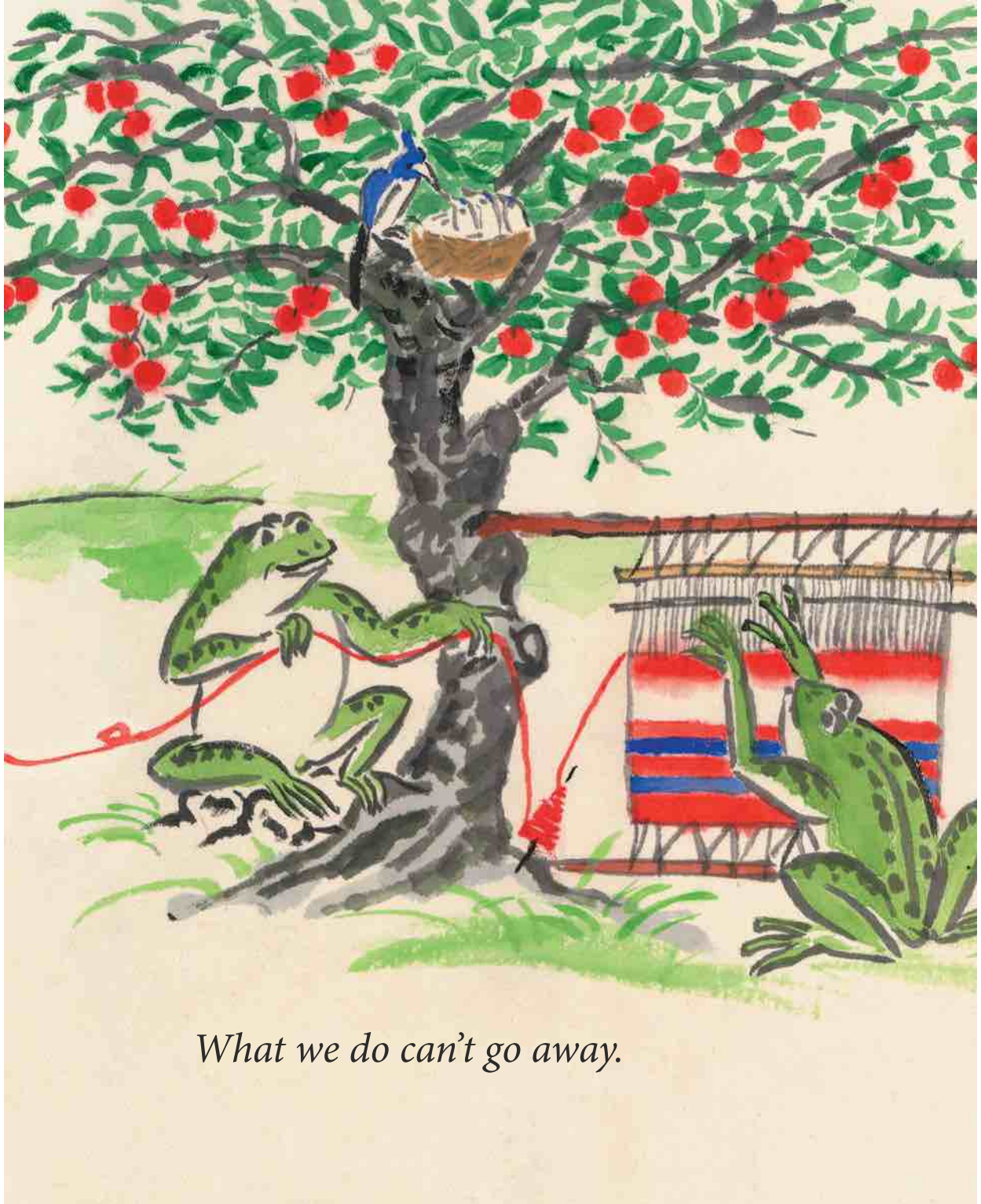




*We're all making the soup  
we're all eating.*

*We're all weaving the cloth  
we're all wearing.*





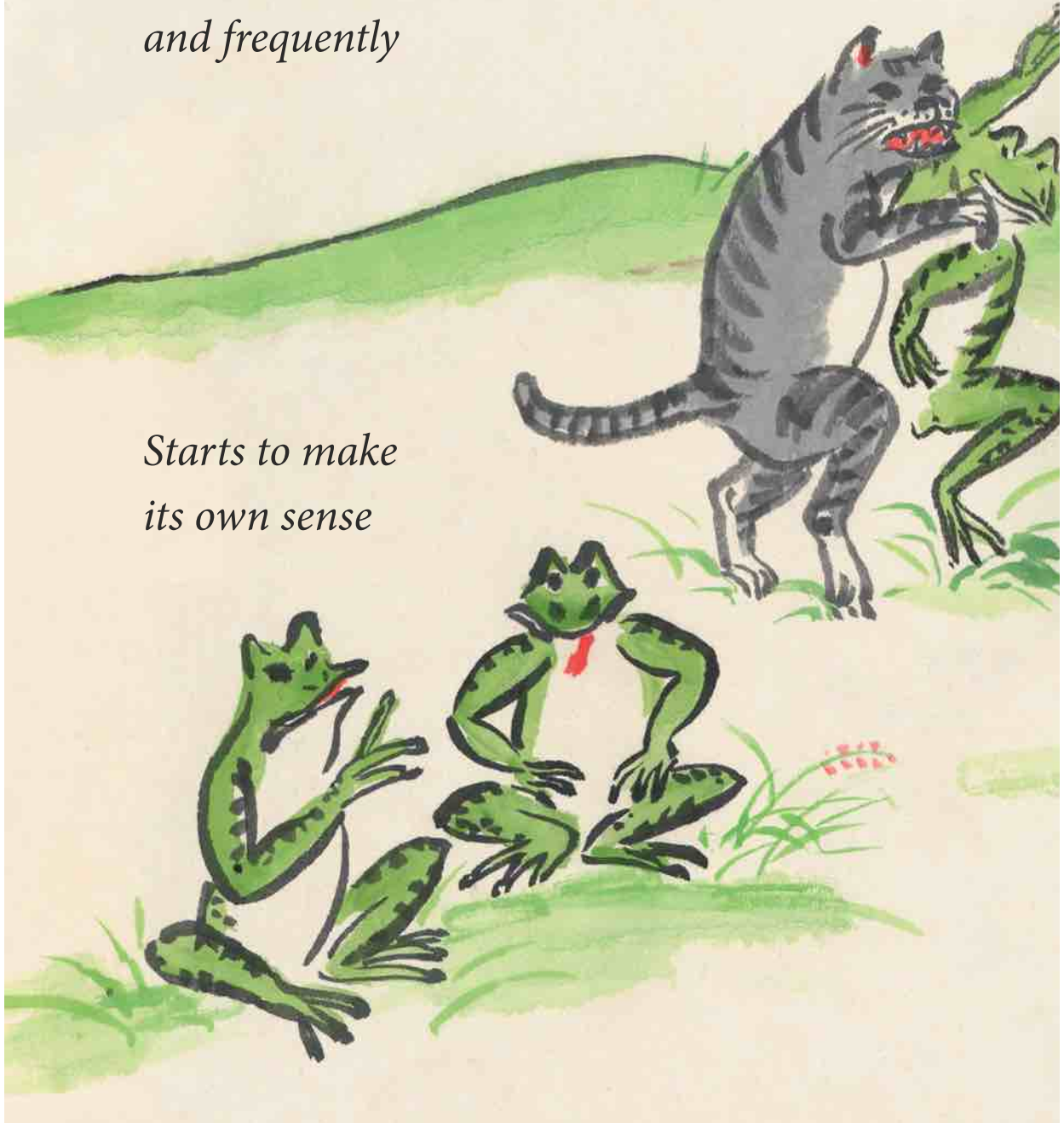
*What we do can't go away.*



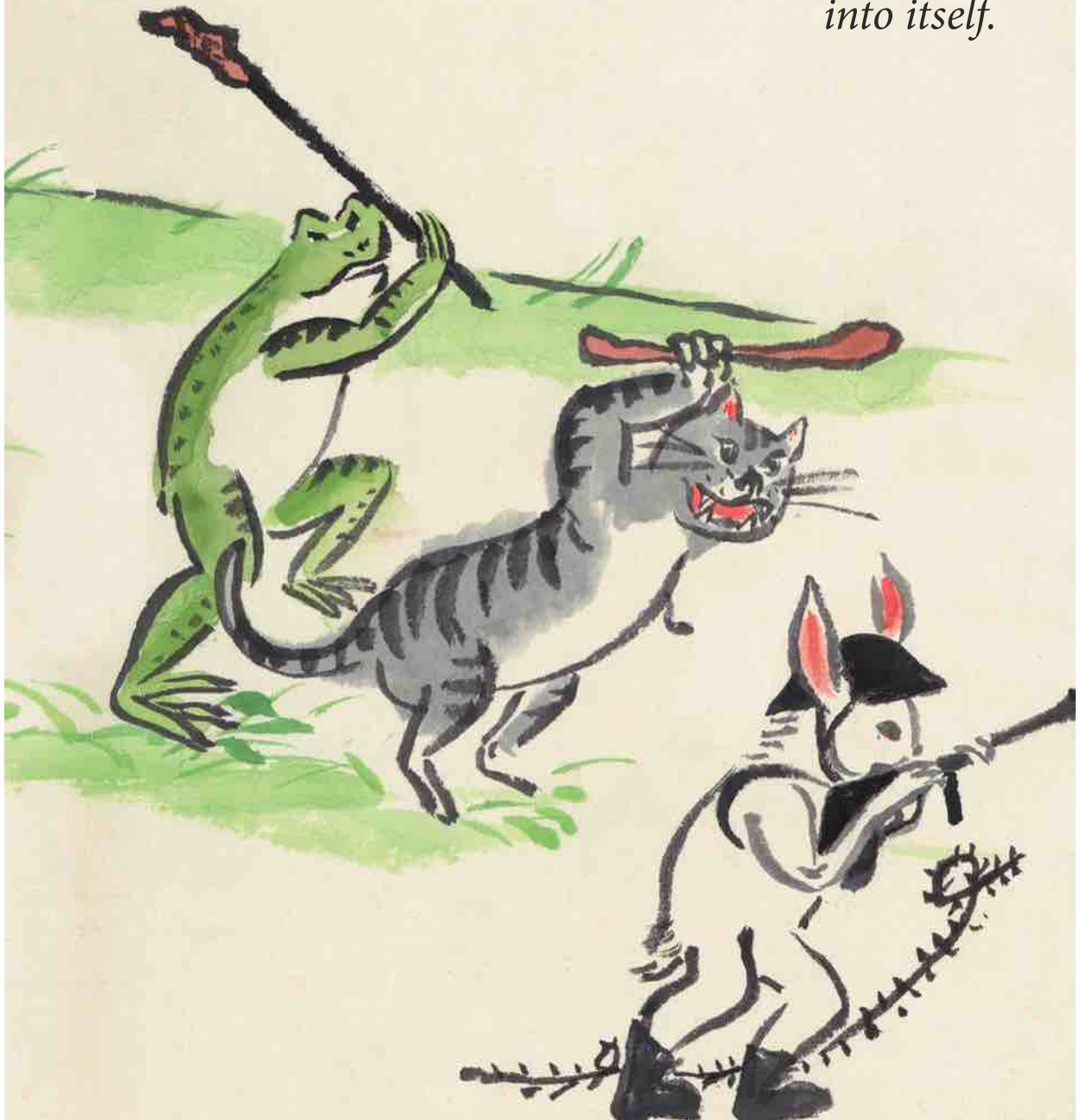
*We are all in the circle together.*

*Anything we do randomly  
and frequently*

*Starts to make  
its own sense*



*And changes the world  
into itself.*



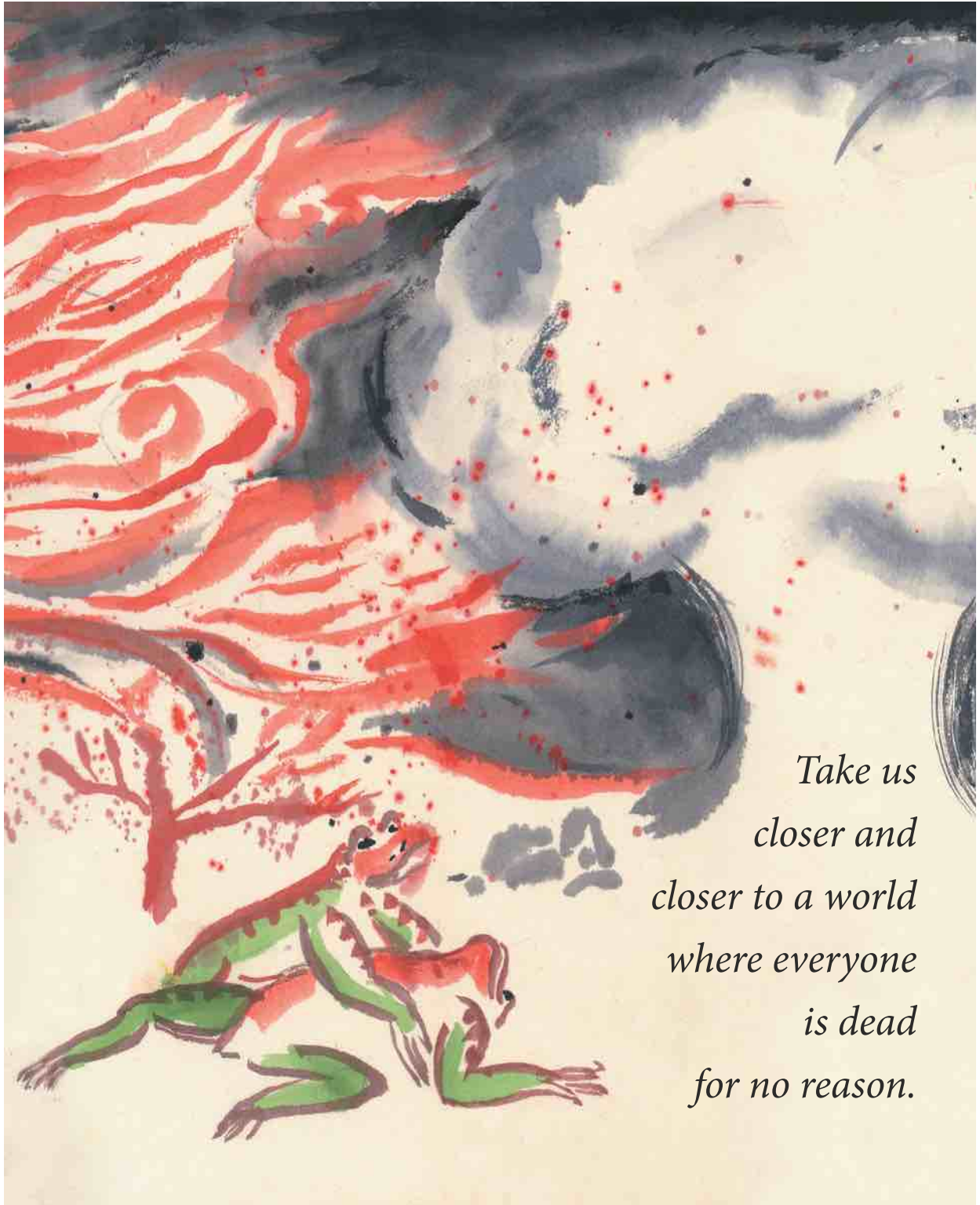
*Senseless violence makes  
more and more sense,*

*when vengeance and fear*

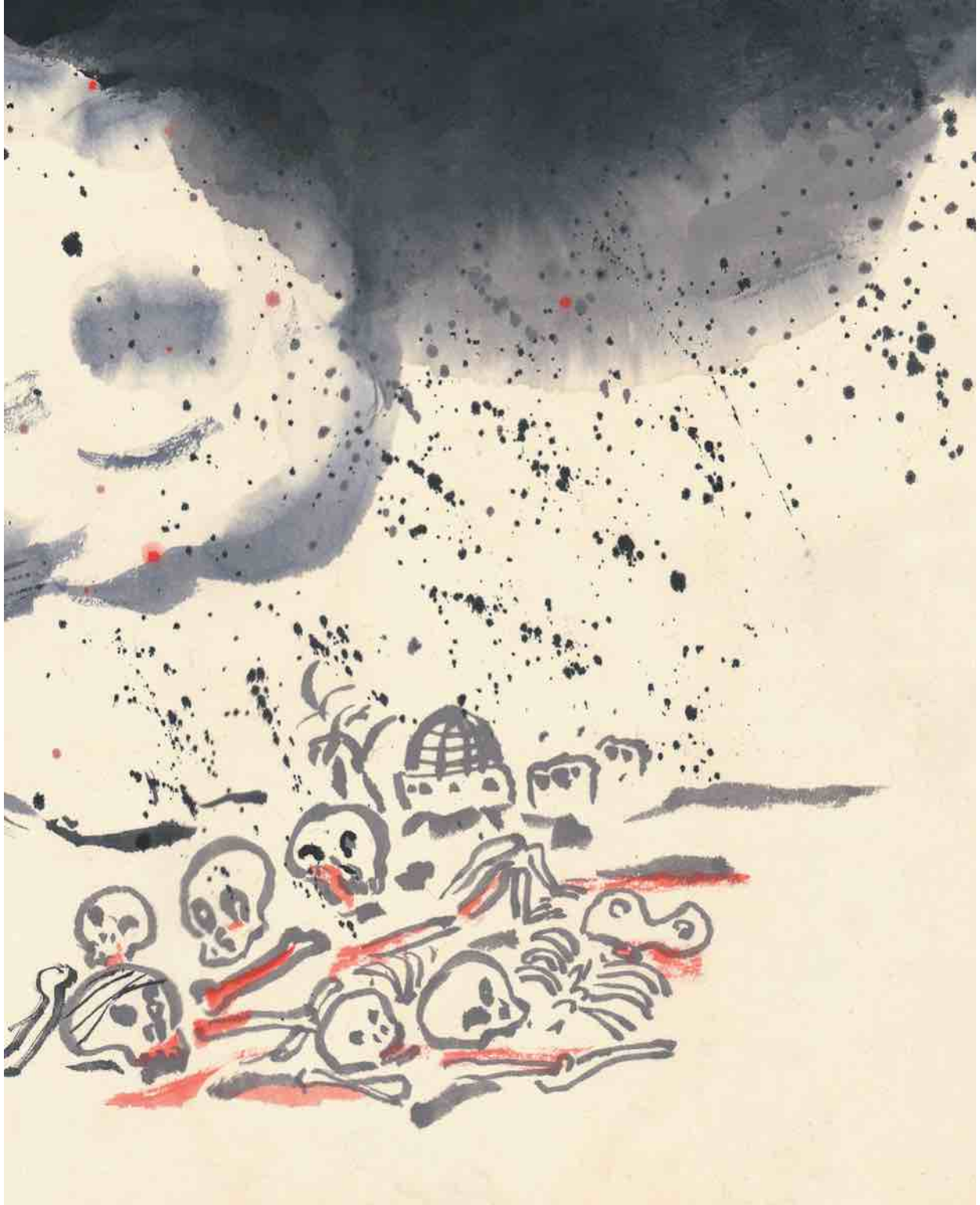








*Take us  
closer and  
closer to a world  
where everyone  
is dead  
for no reason.*





*But violence isn't the only thing  
that is senseless*

*until it makes its own sense.*



*Anything you want there to be more of,*

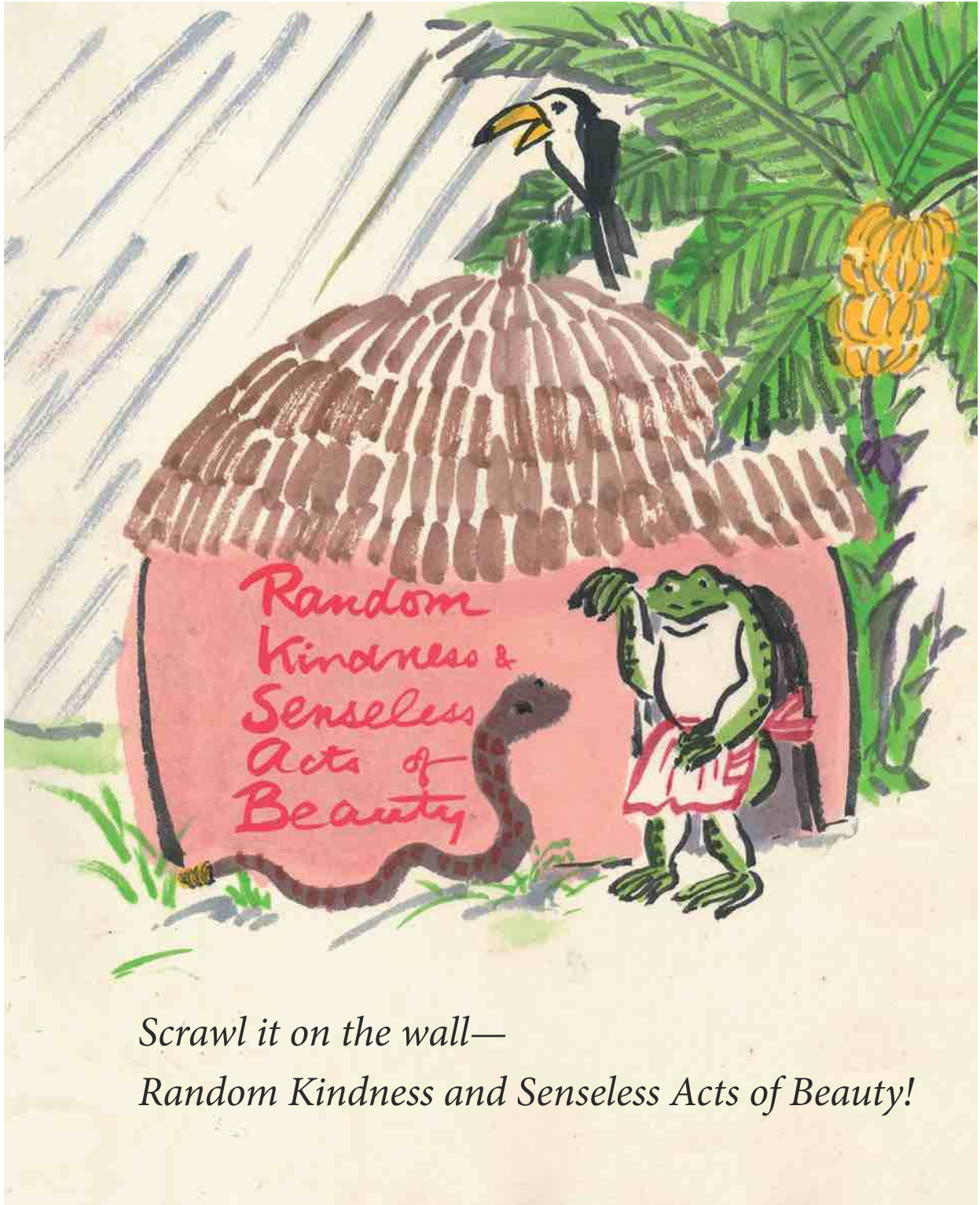
*Do it randomly.*



*Don't wait for reasons.*

*It will make itself  
be more  
senselessly.*

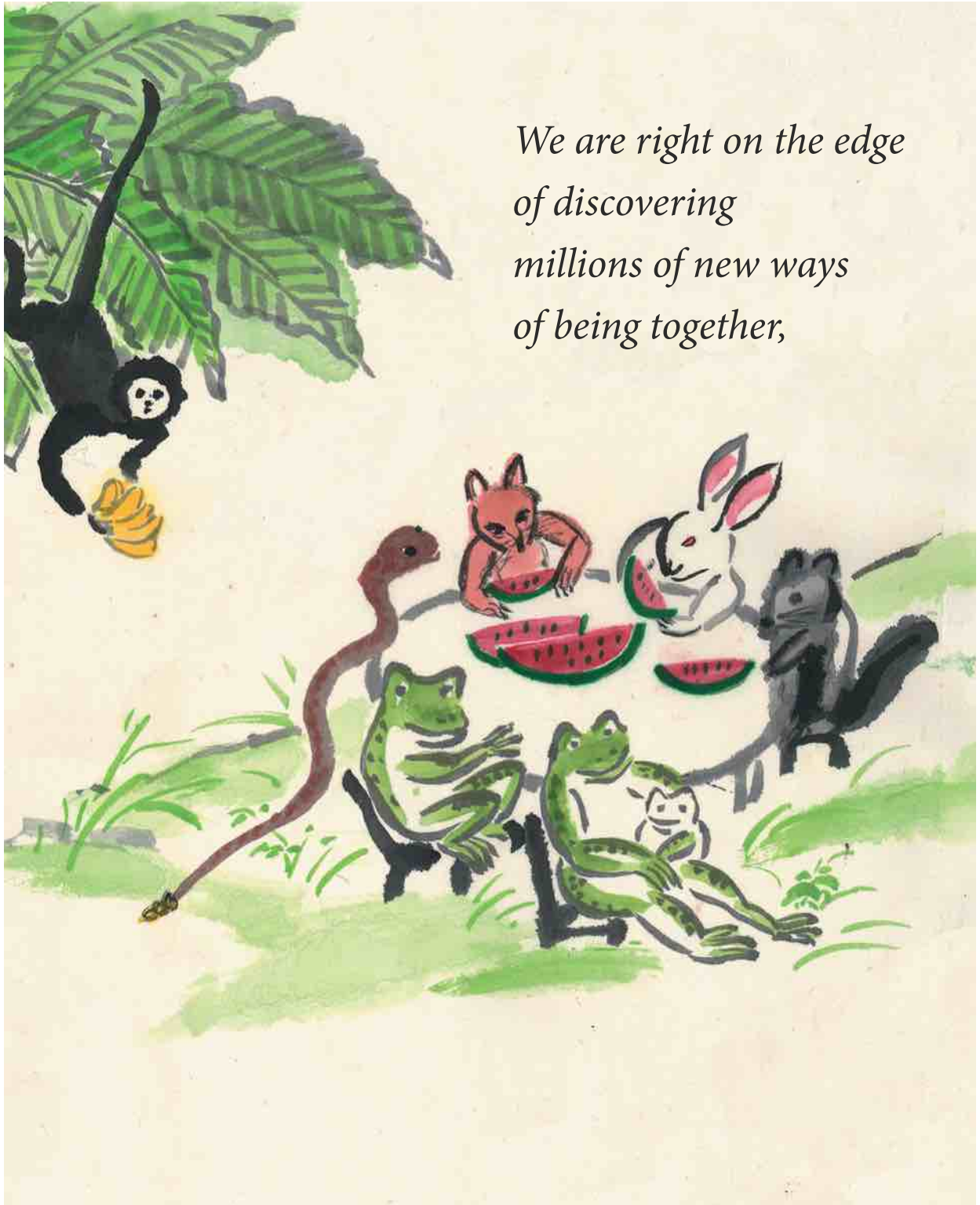




*Scrawl it on the wall—*

*Random Kindness and Senseless Acts of Beauty!*

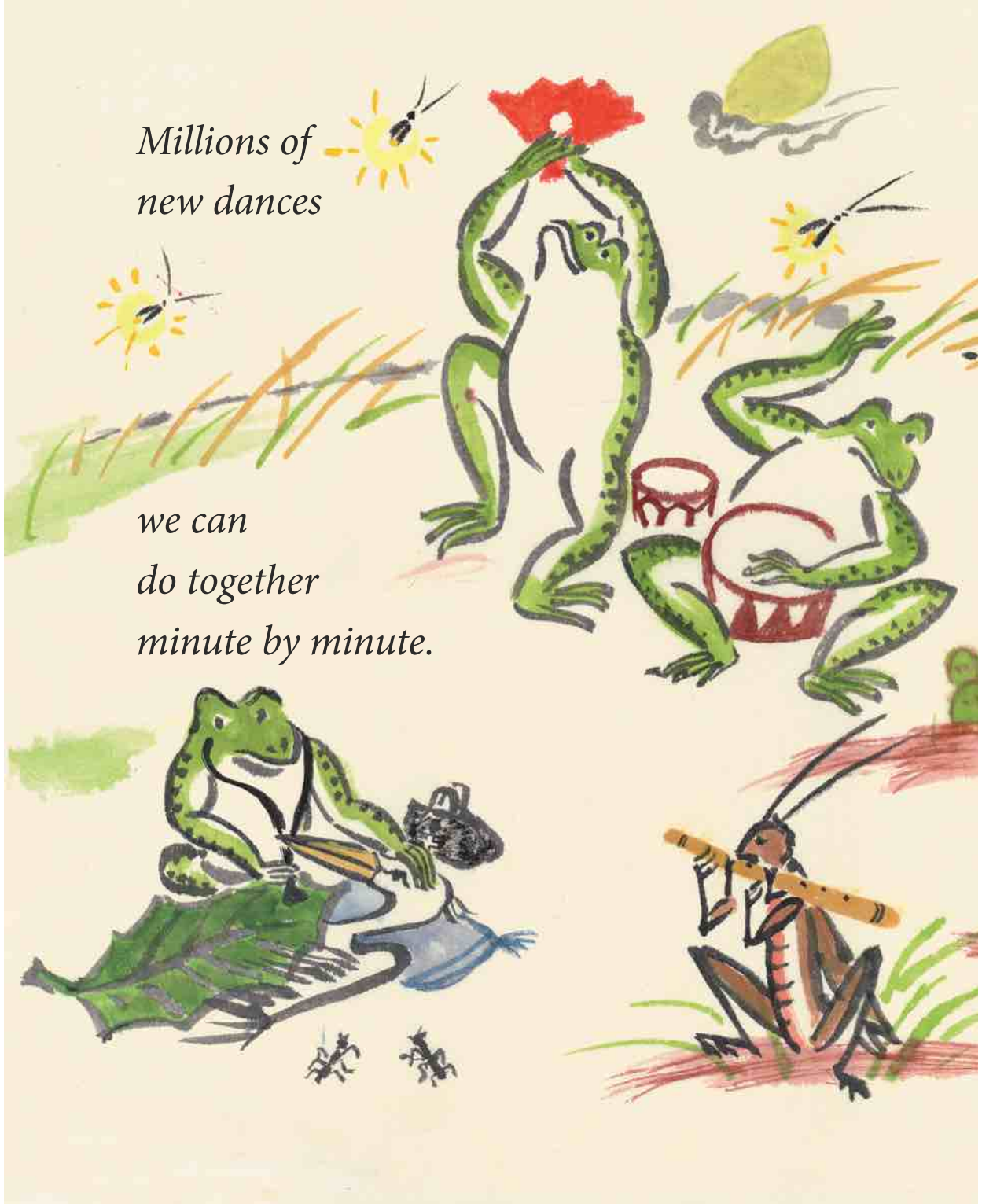
*We are right on the edge  
of discovering  
millions of new ways  
of being together,*





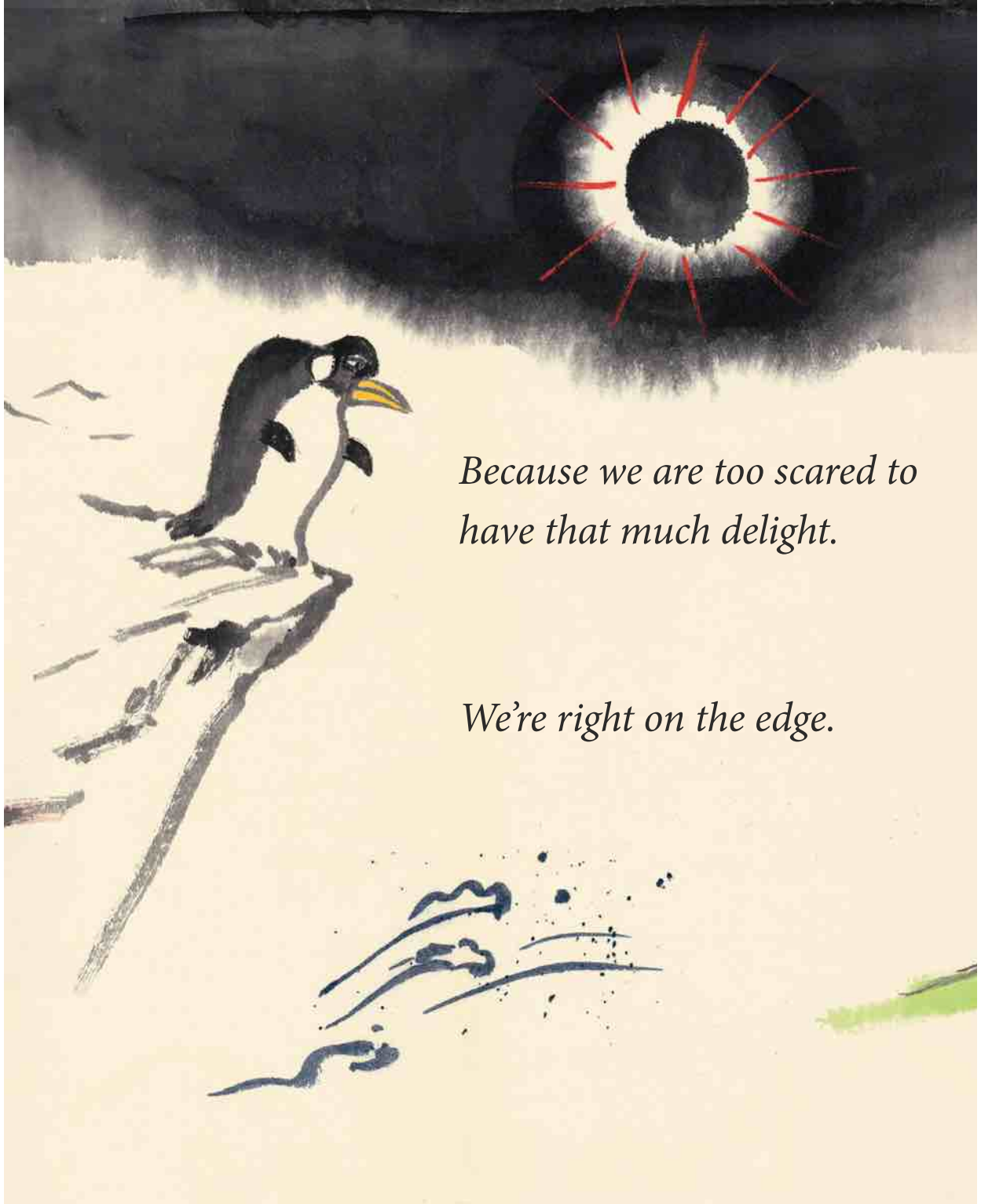
*Millions of  
new dances*

*we can  
do together  
minute by minute.*





*And we're right on the edge of  
destroying ourselves out of life,*



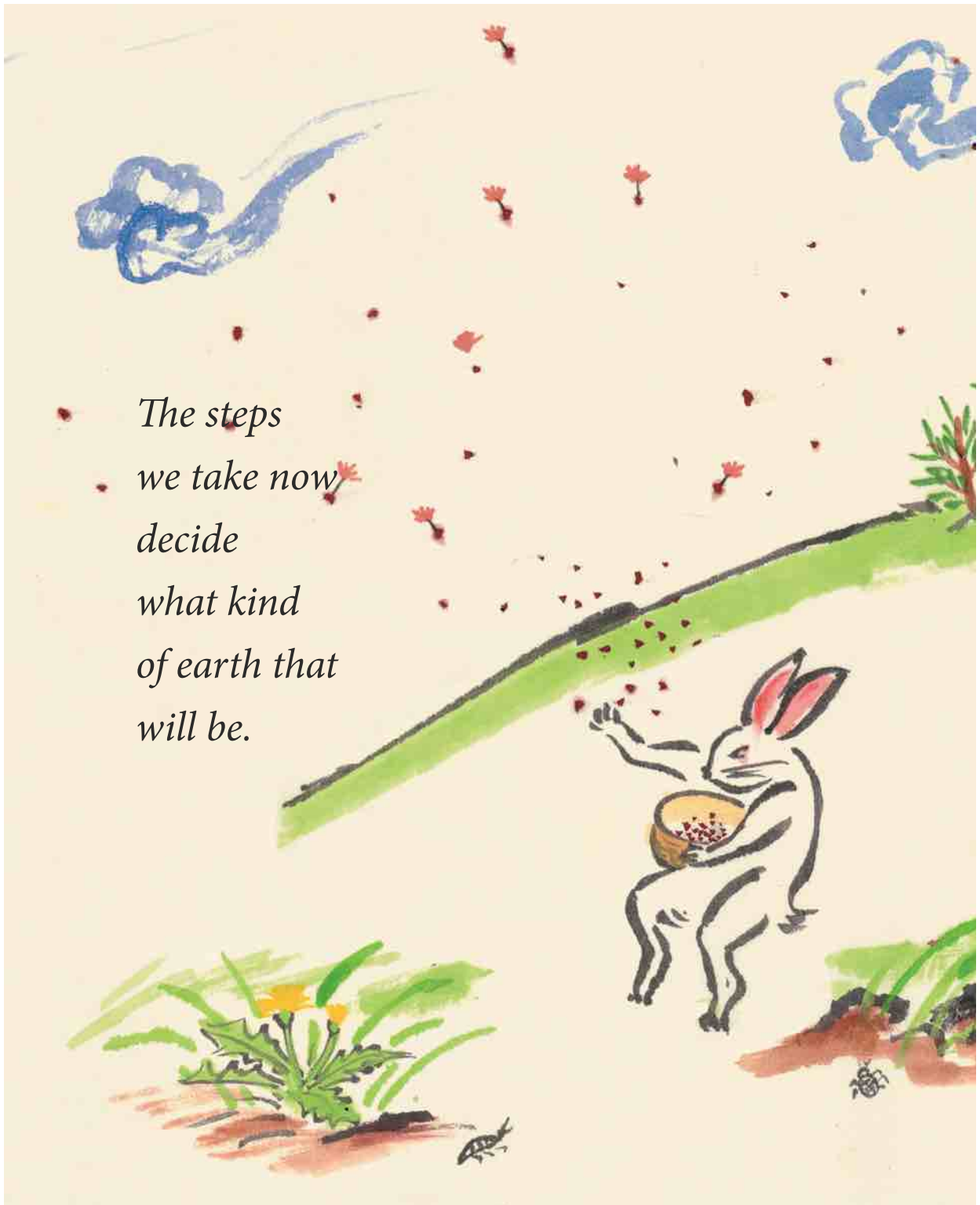
*Because we are too scared to  
have that much delight.*

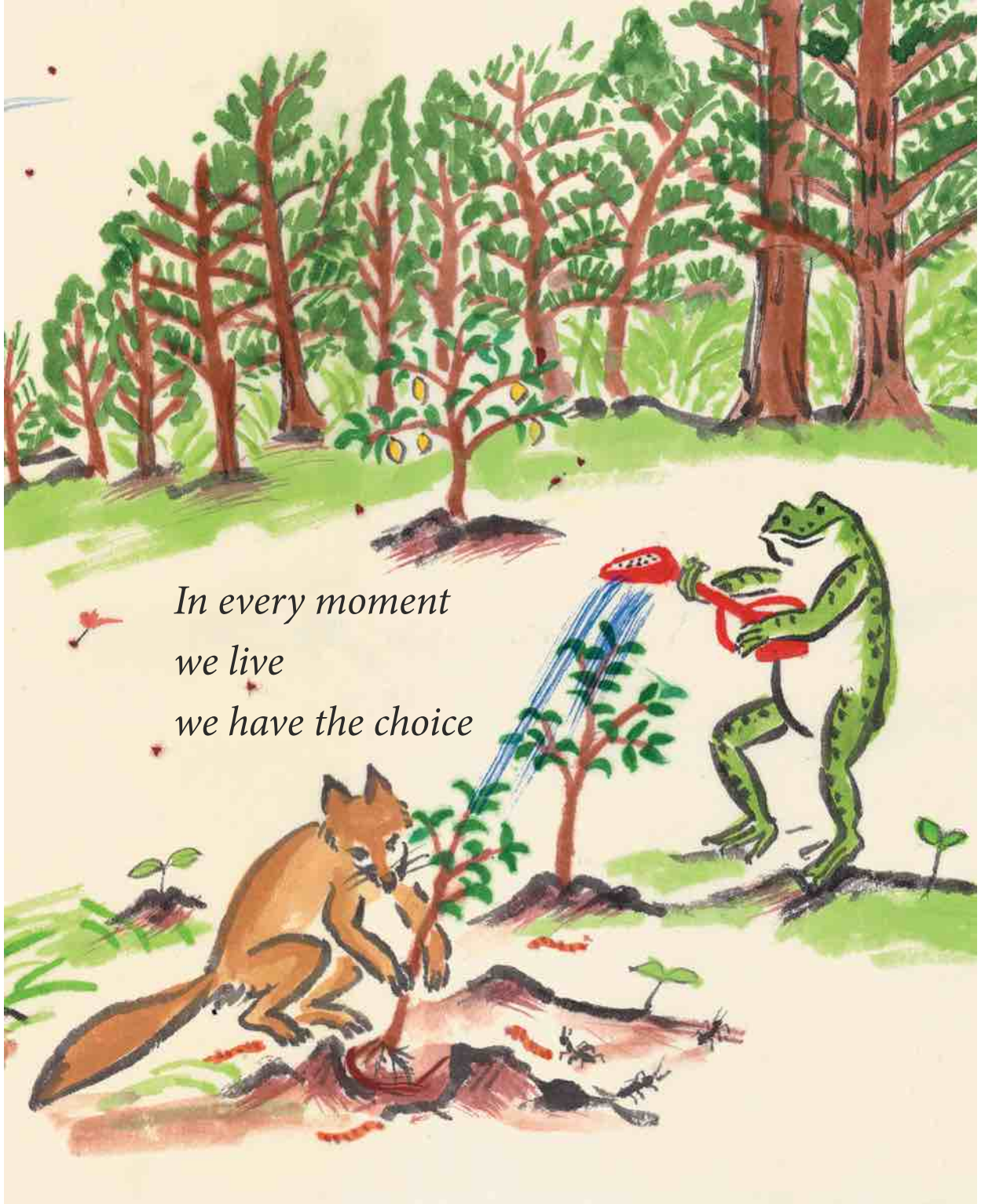
*We're right on the edge.*

*The steps we take now  
make new earth grow  
beneath our feet.*

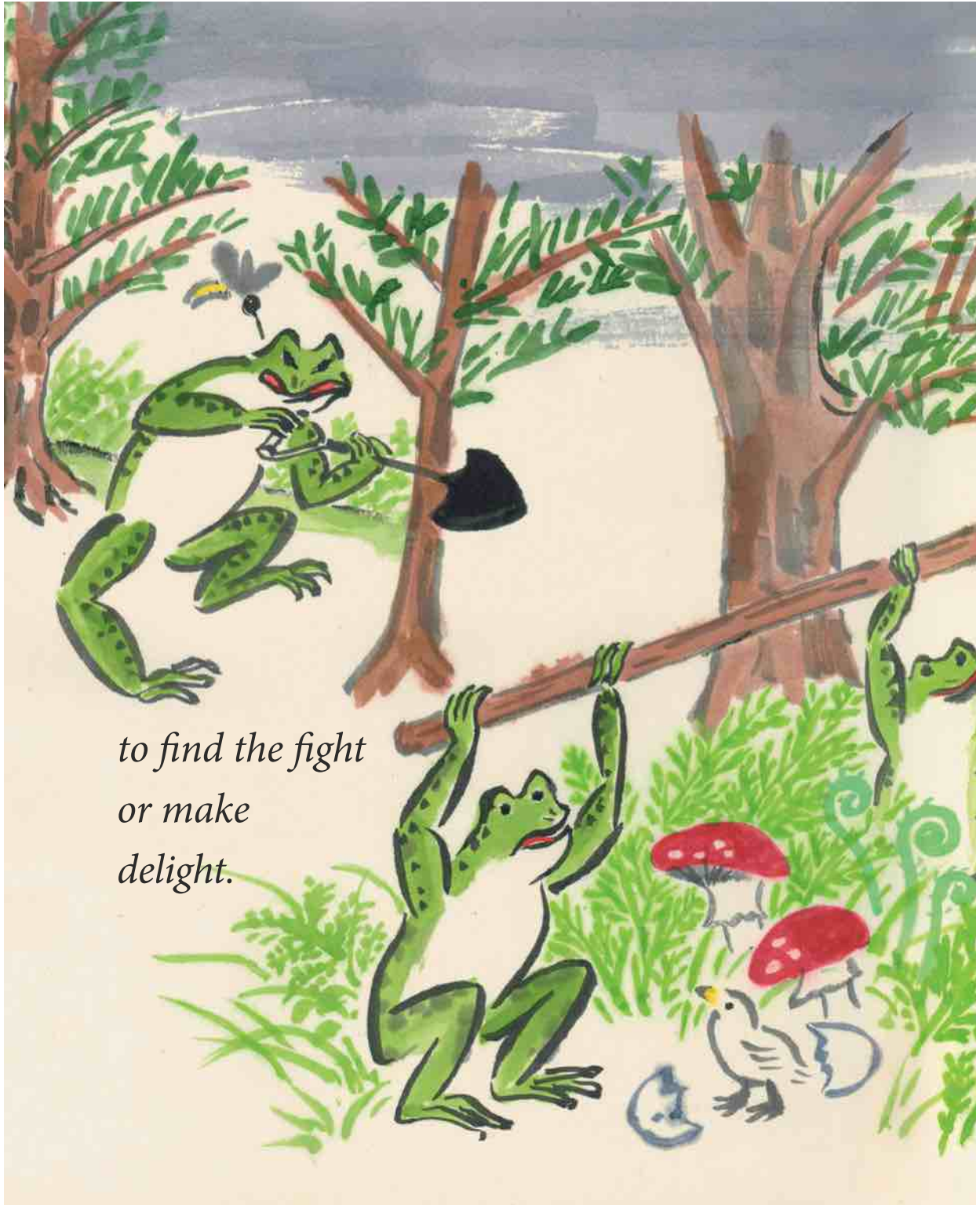


*The steps  
we take now  
decide  
what kind  
of earth that  
will be.*





*In every moment  
we live  
we have the choice*



*to find the fight  
or make  
delight.*

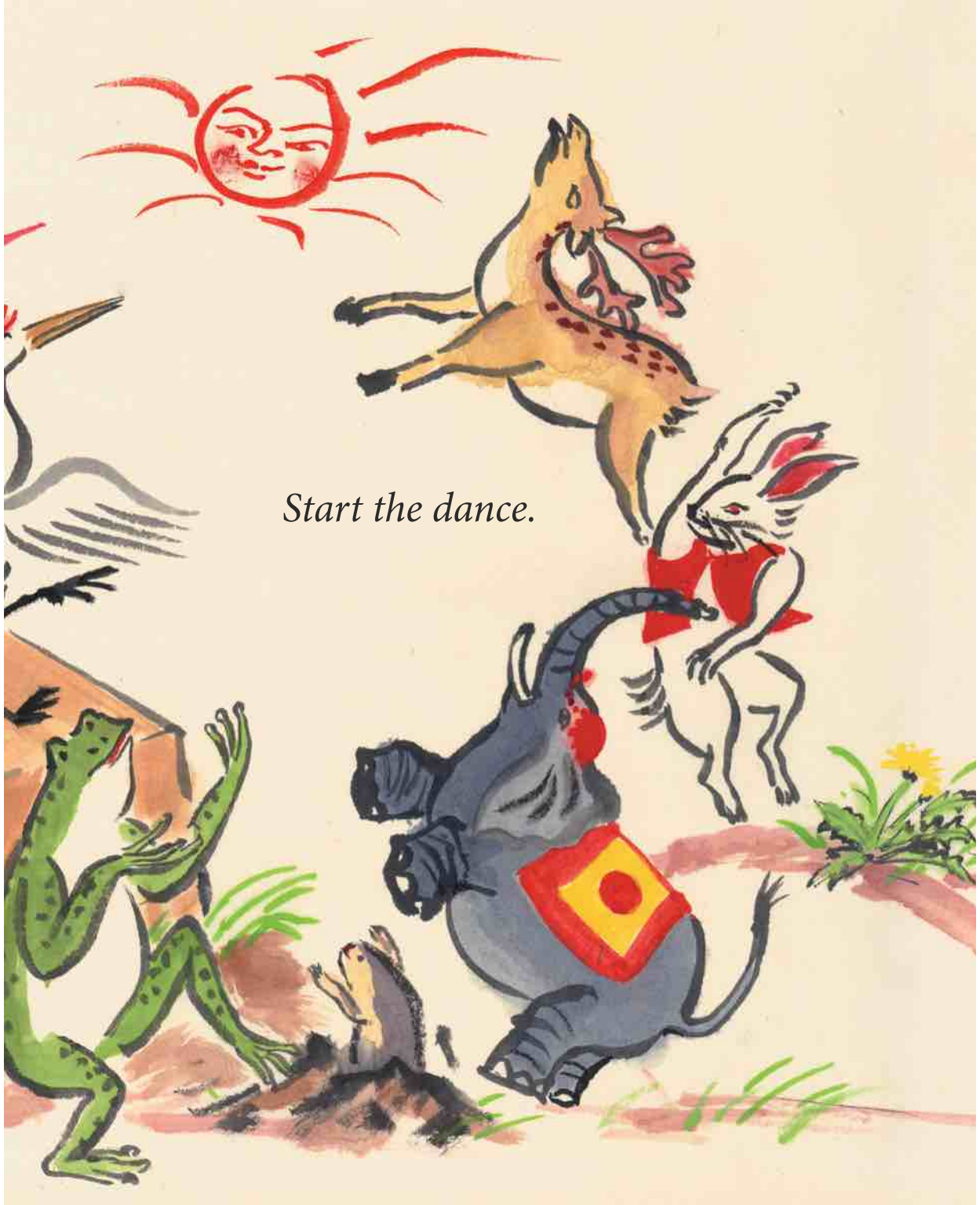
We have Power.





*It's a circle.*





*Start the dance.*

**Anne Herbert** (1959–2015) was an American writer known for authoring the popular expression, “Practice random kindness and senseless acts of beauty,” a delightful precept that has appeared on garden gates, bumper stickers, and posters, and has inspired books and celebrations worldwide.



**Margaret Paloma Pavel, PhD**, is an educator, psychologist, and international advocate of healthy, just, and resilient urban communities. She is founder and president of Earth House Center of Oakland, California, and editor of the book *Breakthrough Communities: Sustainability and Justice in the Next American Metropolis*. Dr. Pavel holds a Master of Divinity from Harvard University.

**Mayumi Oda** is a global antinuclear activist and revered artist known as the “Matisse of Japan.” She has illustrated her own books and the books of the esteemed Buddhist monk Thich Nhat Hanh. She has exhibited over fifty one-woman shows, and her art is in permanent collections of the Museum of Modern Art, New York, and the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Deeply caring about Mother Earth, she is the founder of Ginger Hill Farm in Hawai‘i.



**Desmond Mpilo Tutu** is Archbishop Emeritus of Cape Town South Africa and world renowned social rights activist. He is recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize, the Albert Schweitzer Prize for Humanitarianism, the Pacem in Terris Award, the Sydney Peace Prize, and the Gandhi Peace Prize.

It is my great joy to know this twentieth-anniversary edition of *Random Kindness and Senseless Acts of Beauty* will support community resilience throughout the world. The first edition of this book was published to break the spell of war, random violence and senseless acts of cruelty. Now, as our population has increased and our commonwealth of earth, air, and water are seriously threatened, and our “confused leaders” continue to militarize, the call to make a new earth grow and to lay down armaments is more urgent than ever.

I am grateful Anne Herbert’s phrase from 1982—Practice random kindness and senseless acts of beauty—has proliferated worldwide. It is a testament to her poetic wisdom. May you take to heart the message that every action makes a difference in an inextricably connected world.

— M. Paloma Pavel, Oakland, California

When Anne Herbert and Margaret Paloma Pavel approached me to illustrate this beautiful story, I had been working as an antinuclear activist in Japan and the United States. I felt strongly drawn to this message and poured my emotions onto the images, creating a pictorial complement that drew from my experiences with our world and my work as an activist. I based my design on the 12th Century Japanese scroll—*Birds and Animals Frolicking*.

My original art for the book was painted in black and red. In early 2011, I felt compelled to turn my illustrations into color, breathing new life into the story. I was deeply immersed in this venture when the tragic earthquake and tsunami struck on March 11, 2011. I was in Nara, Japan, at that time working with traditional scroll-maker Mr. Shosaku Yoshimura. It was there I knew this timely story had to be told, once again, to the new generations that will care for this planet.

I dedicate this scroll to every child of the Earth.

— Mayumi Oda, Kealahou, Hawaii