

Sunshine and Shadow

As adults we often like to think of childhood as a predominantly carefree time. Although it is often a very happy period, it is never completely carefree. The picture book provides a safe space for children to learn about the world and explore their feelings. These books are created by authors and illustrators who understand the way in which children attempt to make sense of the realities of their lives.

Remarkable writers and artists working in the field of picture books are continually enlarging the scope and variety of themes and motifs and are producing books of great artistic distinction. The aesthetic quality and psychological subtlety of these storybooks call for attention, because they give genuine expression to the child's conscious and unconscious thoughts and emotions. The illustrator and, particularly, the author-illustrator present with great symbolic force unconscious processes only hinted at in the text. True, this approach is not so new, since literature and the arts have for a long time proffered topics, metaphors, and symbols for the growing child's experiences. The innovation lies in the maturation of the picture book as a serious medium of communication, one that has taken on humanistic responsibilities.

(Schwarz and Schwarz, 1991, p. 22)

The Red Tree

Shaun Tan



sometimes the day begins
with nothing to look forward to



and things go from bad to worse

darkness

overcomes you





nobody understands

the world is a
deaf machine







sometimes you wait



and wait



and wait



and wait



and wait



and wait



and wait



but nothing ever happens

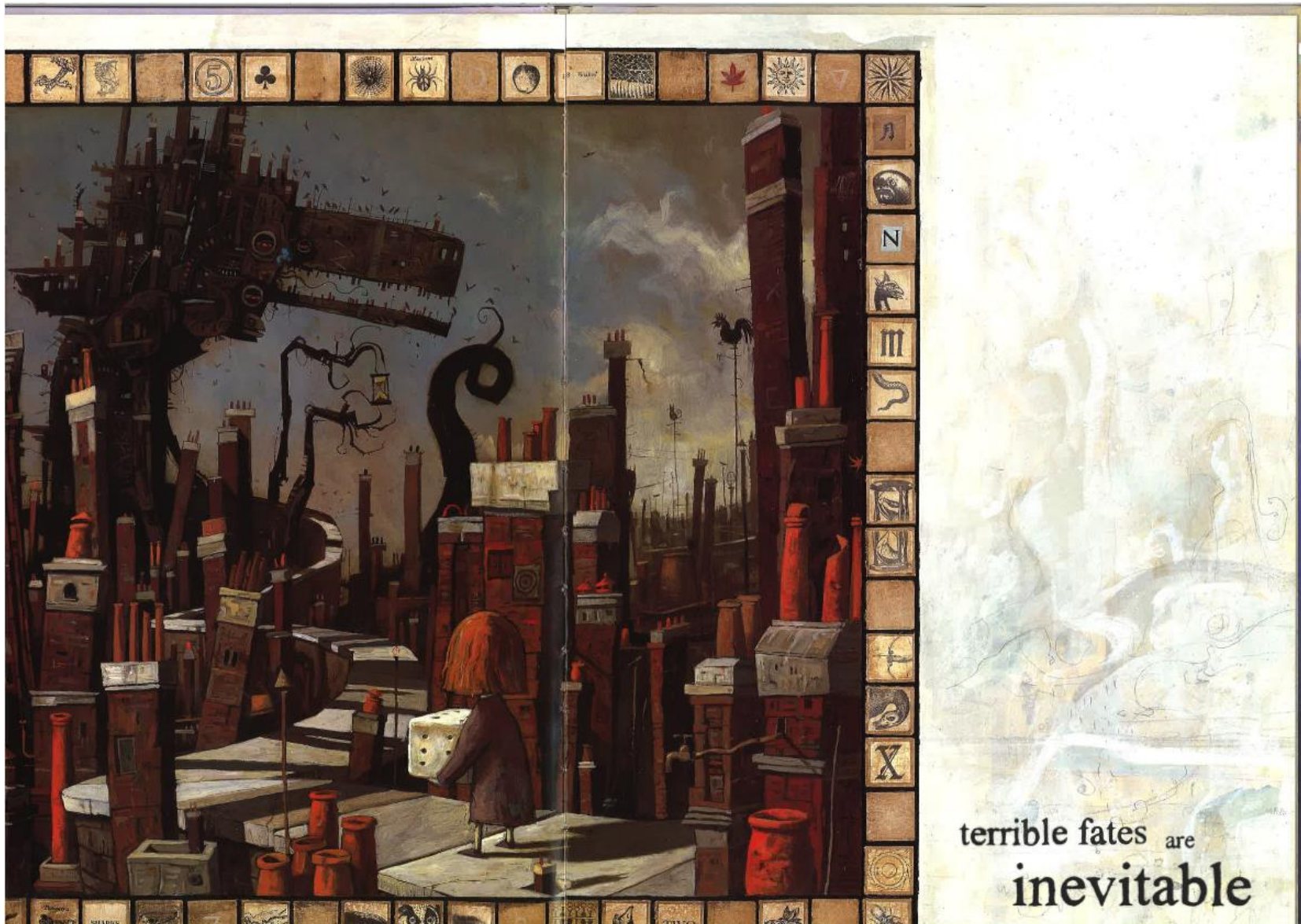


wonderful things
are
passing

you

by





terrible fates are
inevitable

sometimes
you just don't know
what you are
supposed to
do



or

who

you

are

meant

to

be



or
where
you are



and the day seems to end
the way it began



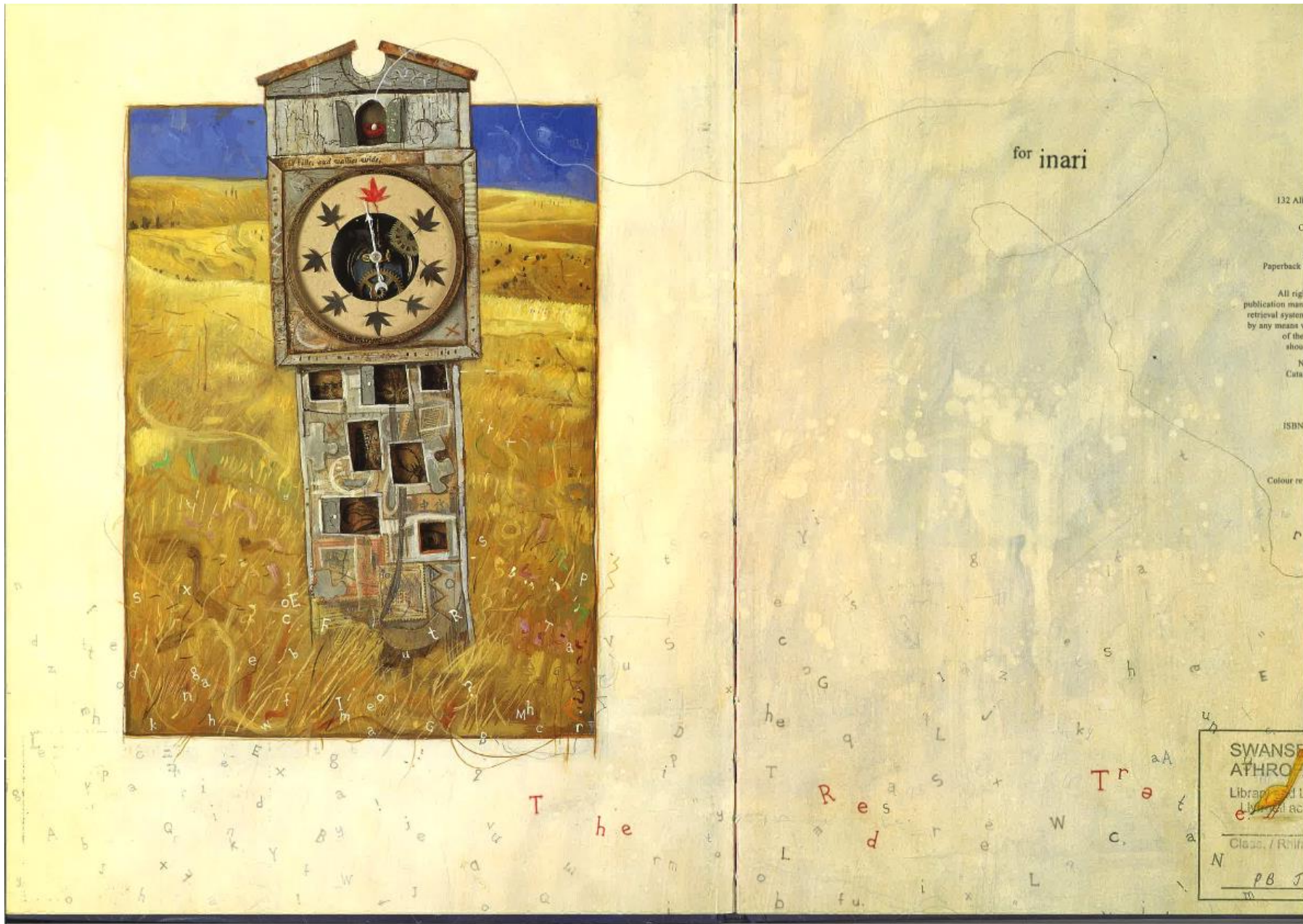
but suddenly there it is
right in front of you
bright and vivid
quietly waiting



just as you imagined it would be

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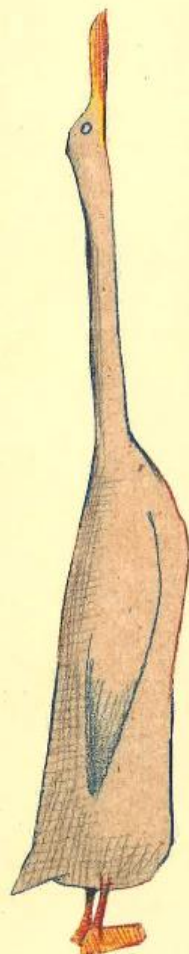
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Death, Duck and the Tulip

Wolf Erlbruch

WOLF ERLBRUCH

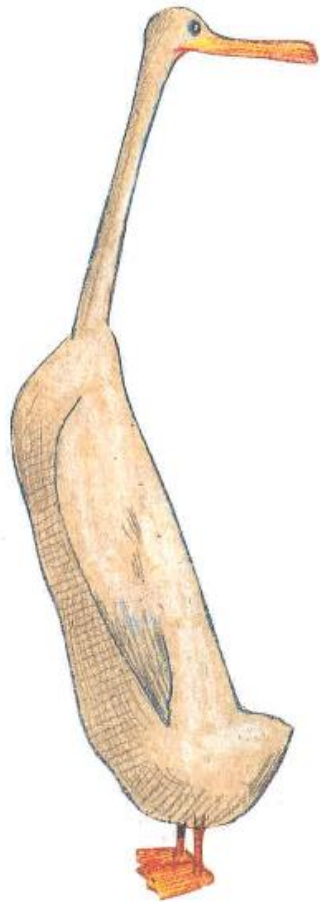
Duck, Death and the Tulip



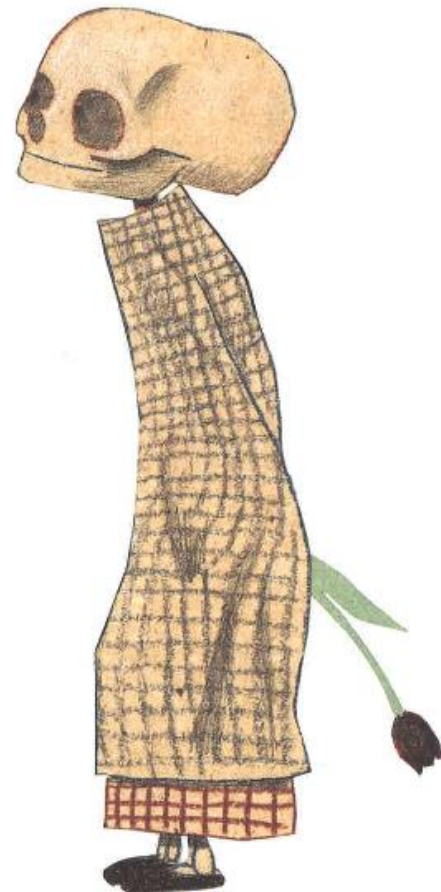
GECKO PRESS

For a while now, Duck had had a feeling.

'Who are you? What are you up to, creeping along behind me?'



'Good,' said Death, 'you finally noticed me. I am Death.'



Duck was scared stiff, and who could blame her?
'You've come to fetch me?'



'Oh, I've been close by all your life – just in case.'
'In case of what?' asked Duck.



'In case something happens to you. A nasty cold; an accident — you never know.'

'Are you going to make something happen?'



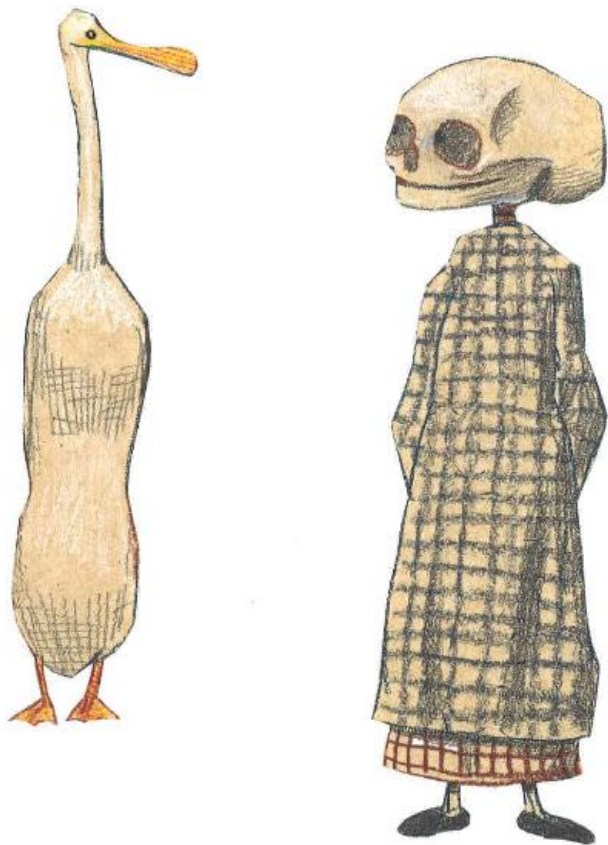
'Life takes care of that: the coughs and colds and all the other things that happen to you ducks. *Fox*, for example.'

Duck tried not to think about that. It gave her goosebumps.

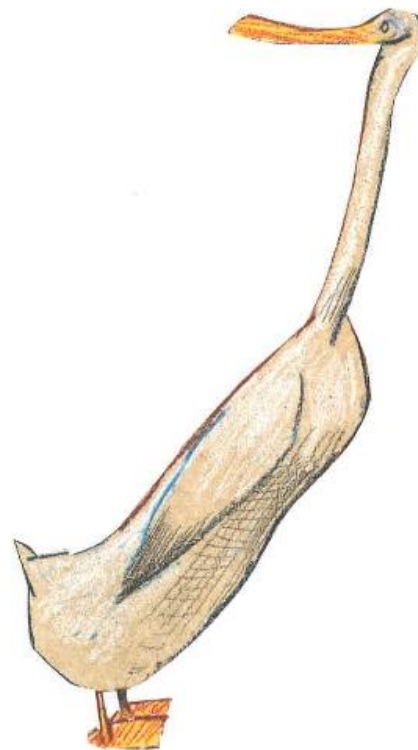


Death gave her a friendly smile.

Actually he was nice, if you forgot for a moment *who* he was — really quite nice.



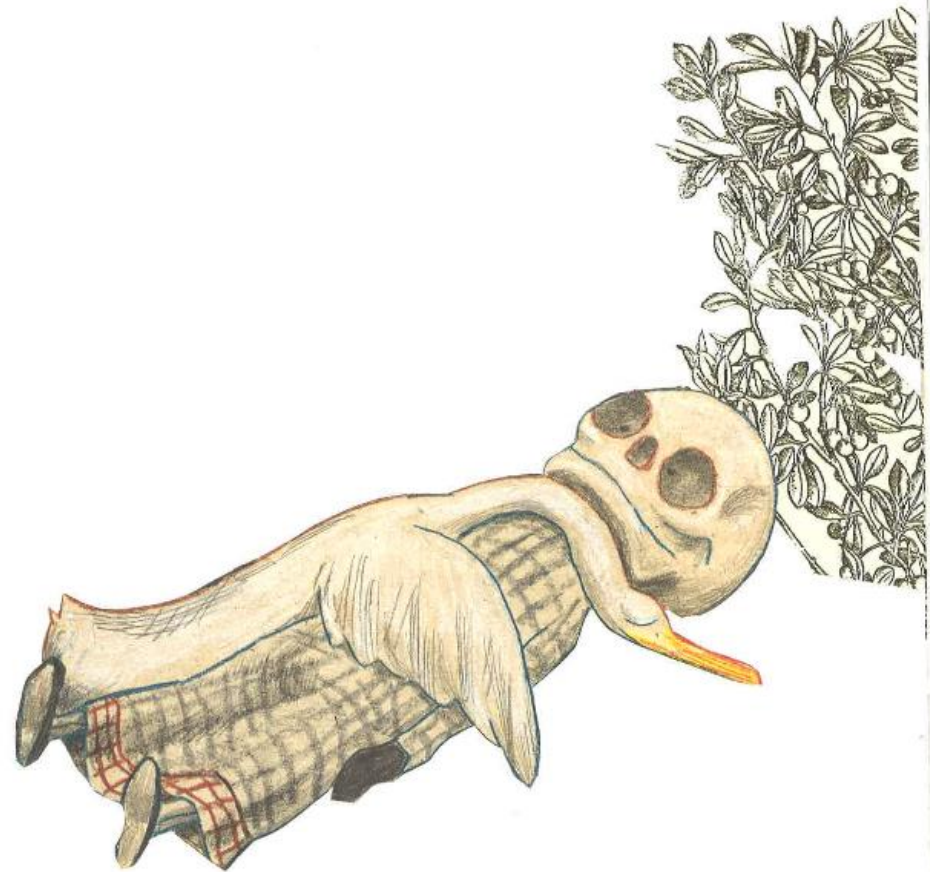
'Shall we go down to the pond?' she asked.
Death had been dreading that.



Before long, Death decided that he had his limits.
'Forgive me,' he said. 'I really must get away from this damp.'



'Are you cold?' Duck asked. 'Shall I warm you a little?'
Nobody had ever offered to do that for Death.



Duck woke first, very early in the morning.
I'm not dead, she thought to herself.



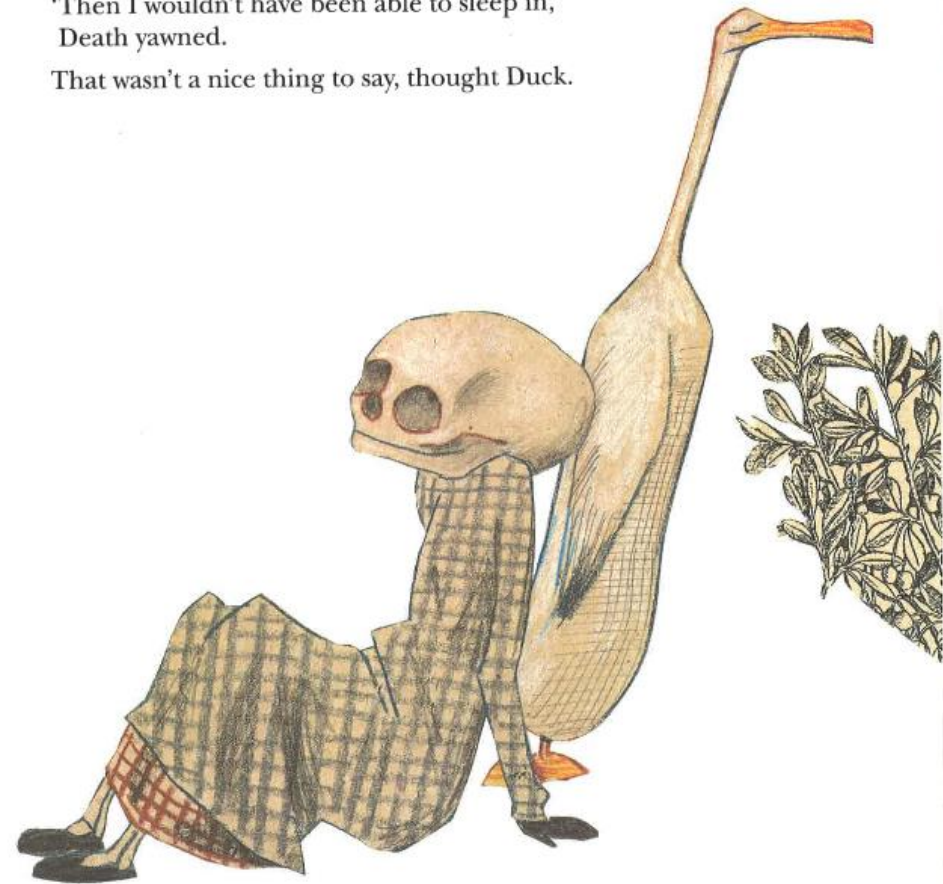
She poked Death in the ribs. 'I'm not dead!' she quacked, utterly delighted.

'I'm pleased for you,' Death said, stretching.

'And if I'd died?'

'Then I wouldn't have been able to sleep in,'
Death yawned.

That wasn't a nice thing to say, thought Duck.



For a while she refused to speak, but soon she was chattering again.
'Some ducks say you become an angel and sit on a cloud,
looking over the earth.'
'Quite possibly.' Death rose to his feet. 'You have the wings already.'

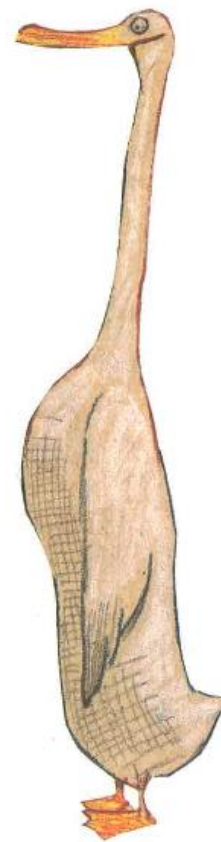


'Some ducks say that deep in the earth there's a place where
you'll be roasted if you haven't been good.'
'You ducks come up with some amazing stories, but who knows?'
'So you don't know, either,' Duck snapped.
Death just looked at her.

'What shall we do today?' Death asked.

'Well, let's not go back to the pond. Let's do something really exciting.'

Death was relieved. 'Shall we climb a tree?' he teased.



They could see the pond far below.
There it lay, so still – and so lonely.
That's what it will be like when I'm dead, Duck thought.
The pond alone, without me.



Death could sometimes read minds. 'When you're dead, the pond will be gone, too — at least for you.'

'Are you sure?' Duck was astonished.

'As sure as sure can be,' Death said.

'That's a comfort. I won't have to mourn over it when ...'

'... when you're dead.' Death finished the sentence. He wasn't coy about the subject.

'Let's climb down,' Duck pleaded after a bit. 'You can start having strange thoughts in trees.'



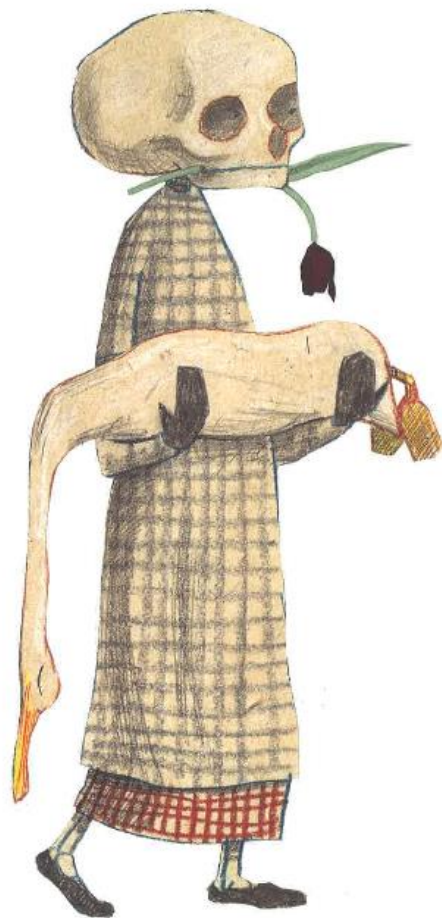
Summer was ending and they went less and less often to the pond. They sat together in the grass, saying little. When a cool wind ruffled her feathers, Duck felt its chill for the first time. 'I'm cold,' she said one evening. 'Will you warm me a little?'



Snowflakes drifted down.
Something had happened. Death looked at the duck.
She'd stopped breathing. She lay quite still.



Death stroked a few rumpled feathers back into place,
then he carried her to the great river.



He laid her gently on the water and nudged her on her way.



For a long time he watched her.
When she was lost to sight, he was almost a little moved.
But that's life, thought Death.





Michael Rosen's Sad Book



This is me being sad.
Maybe you think I'm being happy in this picture.
Really I'm being sad but pretending I'm being happy.
I'm doing that because I think people won't
like me if I look sad.



Sometimes sad is very big.
It's everywhere. All over me.

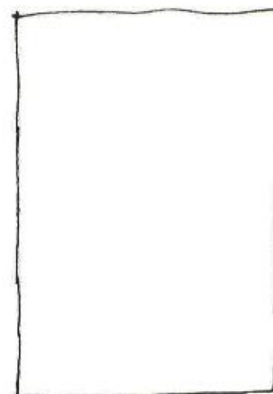
Then I look like this.
And there's nothing I can do about it.



What makes me most sad is when I think
about my son Eddie. He died. I loved him
very, very much but he died anyway.

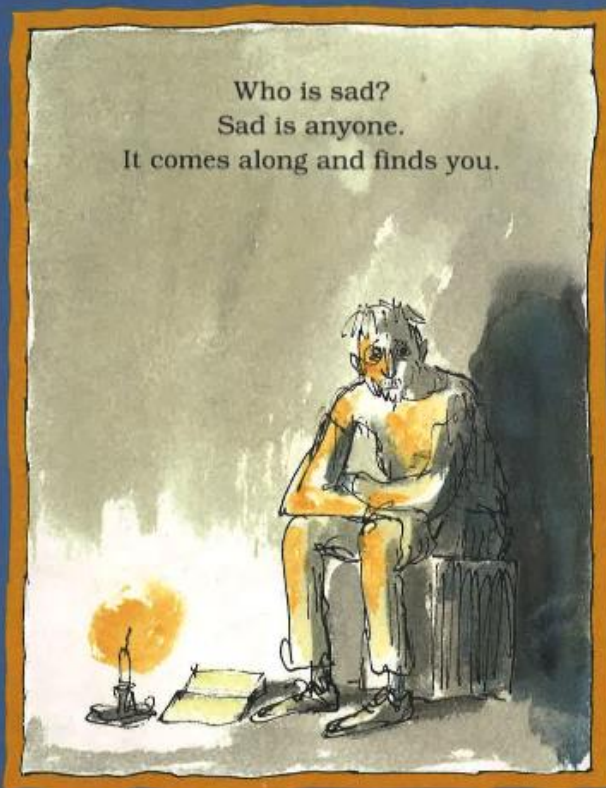


Sometimes this makes me really angry.
I say to myself, "How dare he go and die like that?
How dare he make me sad."



He doesn't say anything,
because he's not there any more.

Who is sad?
Sad is anyone.
It comes along and finds you.



We all have sad stuff – maybe you have some right now, as you read this.

What makes Michael Rosen most sad is thinking about his son Eddie, who died. In this book he writes about his sadness, how it affects him and some of the things he does to try to cope with it. This is a very personal story that speaks to everyone; whether or not you have known what it's like to feel really, deeply sad, its truth will surely touch you.

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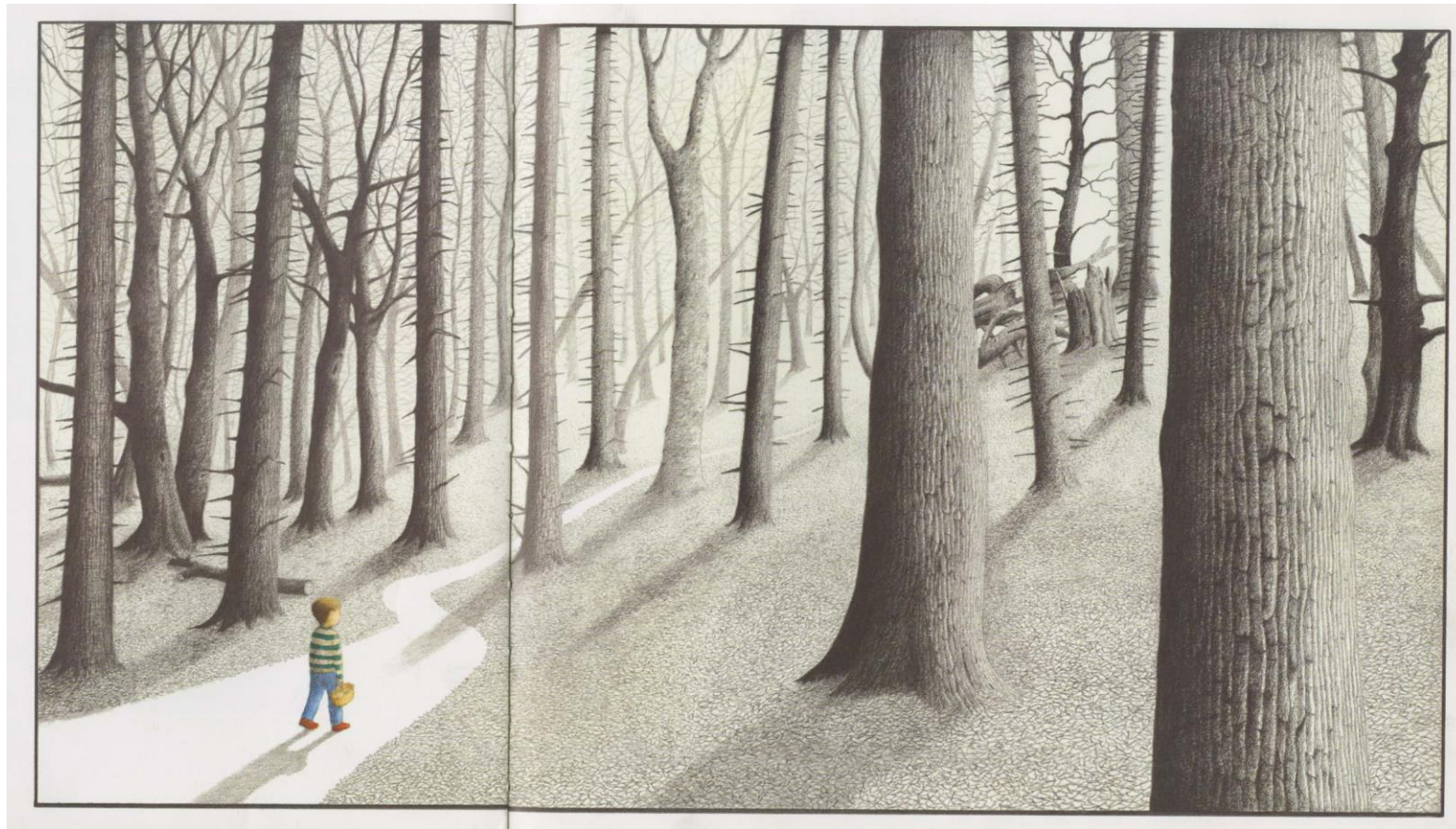
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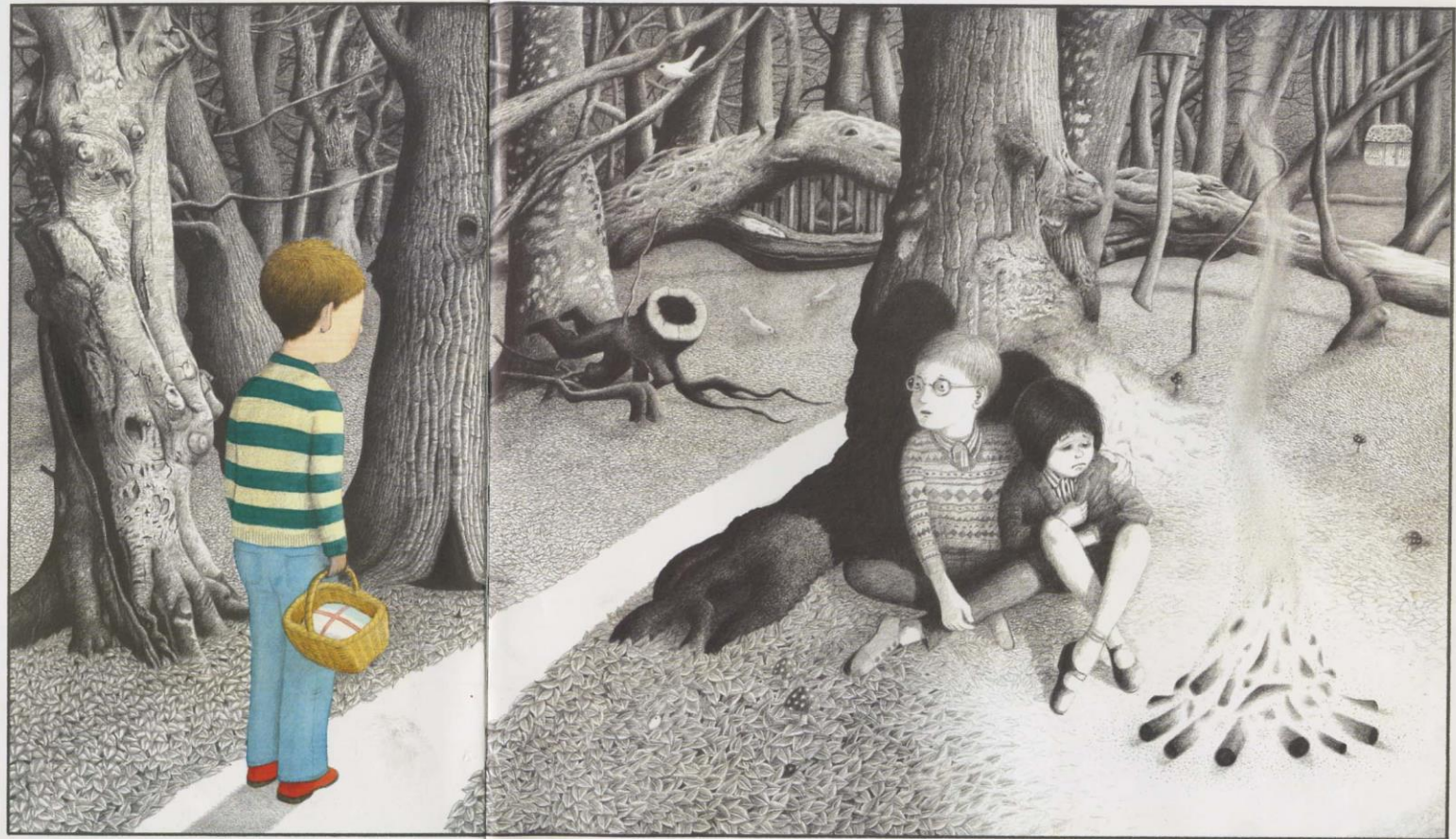
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Into the Forest

Anthony Browne







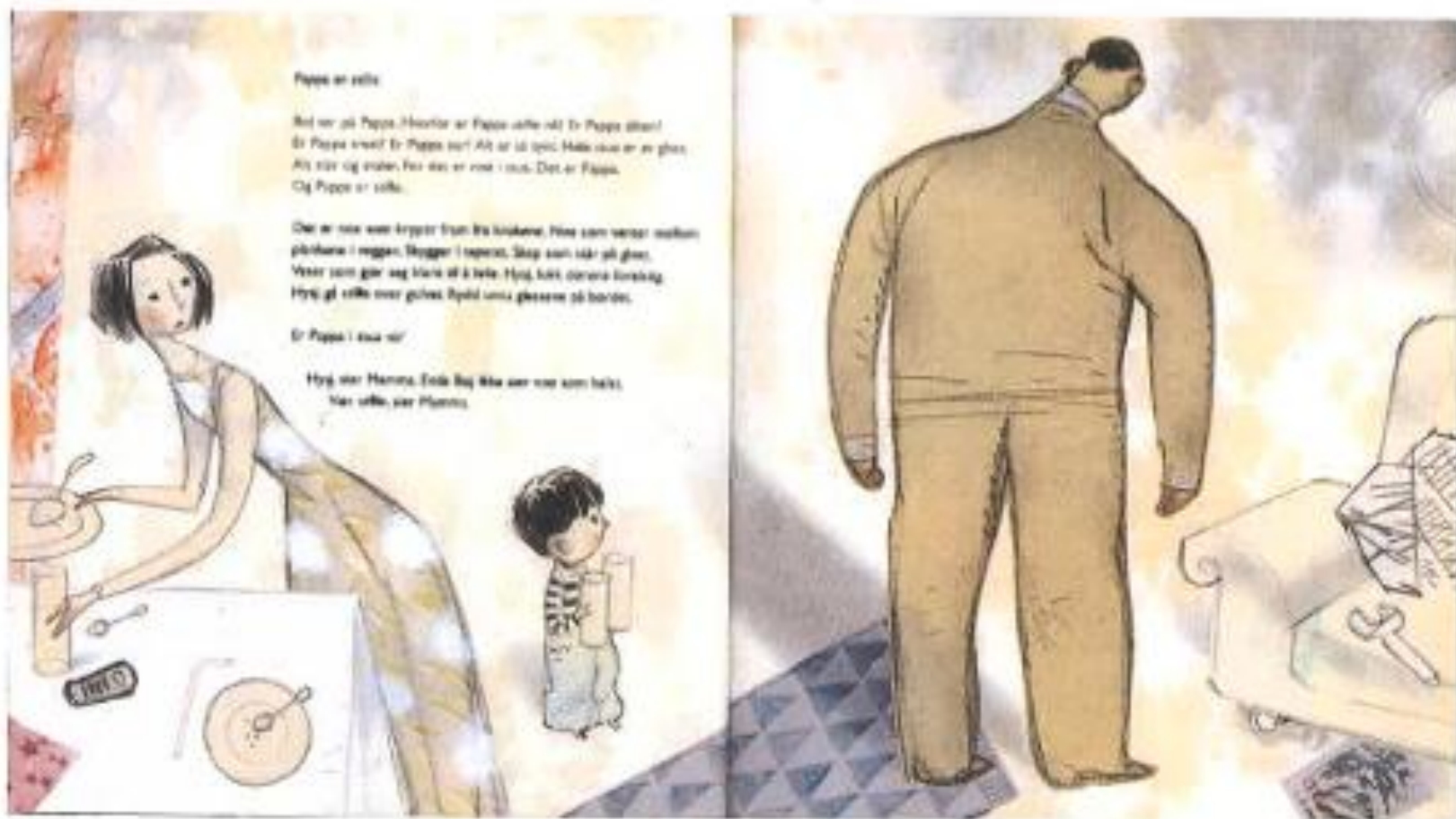


Sinna Mann
Angry Man

Gro Dahle and Svein Nyhus

Boj is listening. There's something in the living room. It's Daddy.
Is Daddy quiet? Is Daddy happy? Is Daddy calm?
Yes, Daddy's calm now. Now Daddy's happy!
See how happy Daddy is! He's as cheerful as apples on the table and
raisins in a yellow bowl. Cheerful as a bag of lemon drops and a three-layer
birthday cake with candles on top. Cheerful! Cheerful as some presents tied
up with ribbons and a glass of soda with a straw. Cheerful as apple pie.
Mama's laughing in her finest dress.
"My daddy," Boj says, looking at Daddy. Big, big, cheerful Daddy. Daddy's
hands are so big. Daddy's hands have red knuckles.
My daddy, Boj thinks, looking at Daddy.
I might be as big as Daddy someday, Boj thinks.





Pappa er sølle

Det var på Pappa. Hvorfor er Pappa sølle når Er Pappa stundt
Er Pappa sølle Er Pappa sølle Alt er så tynt. Måske er der en ghos
Alt er så tynt, for der er en i os. Det er Pappa.
Og Pappa er sølle.

Det er nok som kryper frem fra kuglerne. Hvis som vender mellem
plukker i reggen. Slapper i reggen. Slap som står på gnen.
Vær som gør sig klar til å lege. Høj, højt, der er forskel.
Høj, gl sølle over gulvet. Høj, sølle over gulvet på bordet.

Er Pappa i sølle

Høj, sølle Pappa. Ende. Beg. Når sølle sølle sølle.
Når sølle, sølle Pappa.

Det er bare Pappa. Men i kjelleren bak stemmen til Pappa er det noen som reiser seg. Og opp trappa inne i Pappa er det noen som kommer. Boj hører det i pusten. Boj hører det i skrittene og i dora som slår. Det er Sinna Mann som kommer opp ryggen til Pappa. Sinna Mann som krummer seg i nakken til Pappa. Sinna Mann som klatrer opp stiger av ribbein. Det er Sinna Mann som vil ut.

Å kjære Pappa, ikke slipp ut Sinna Mann. Ikke la Sinna Mann komme. Jeg skal bli så snill. Skal ikke si et ord. Skal ikke puste. Men Boj hører at Sinna Mann kommer. Alle hører at Sinna Mann kommer. Sinna Mann er i pusten til Pappa, i ansiktet til Pappa. I halen. I nakken. I hendene og beina. Sinna Mann er overalt på Pappa. Alle ser det. Alle merker det. Alle. Utenom Pappa.

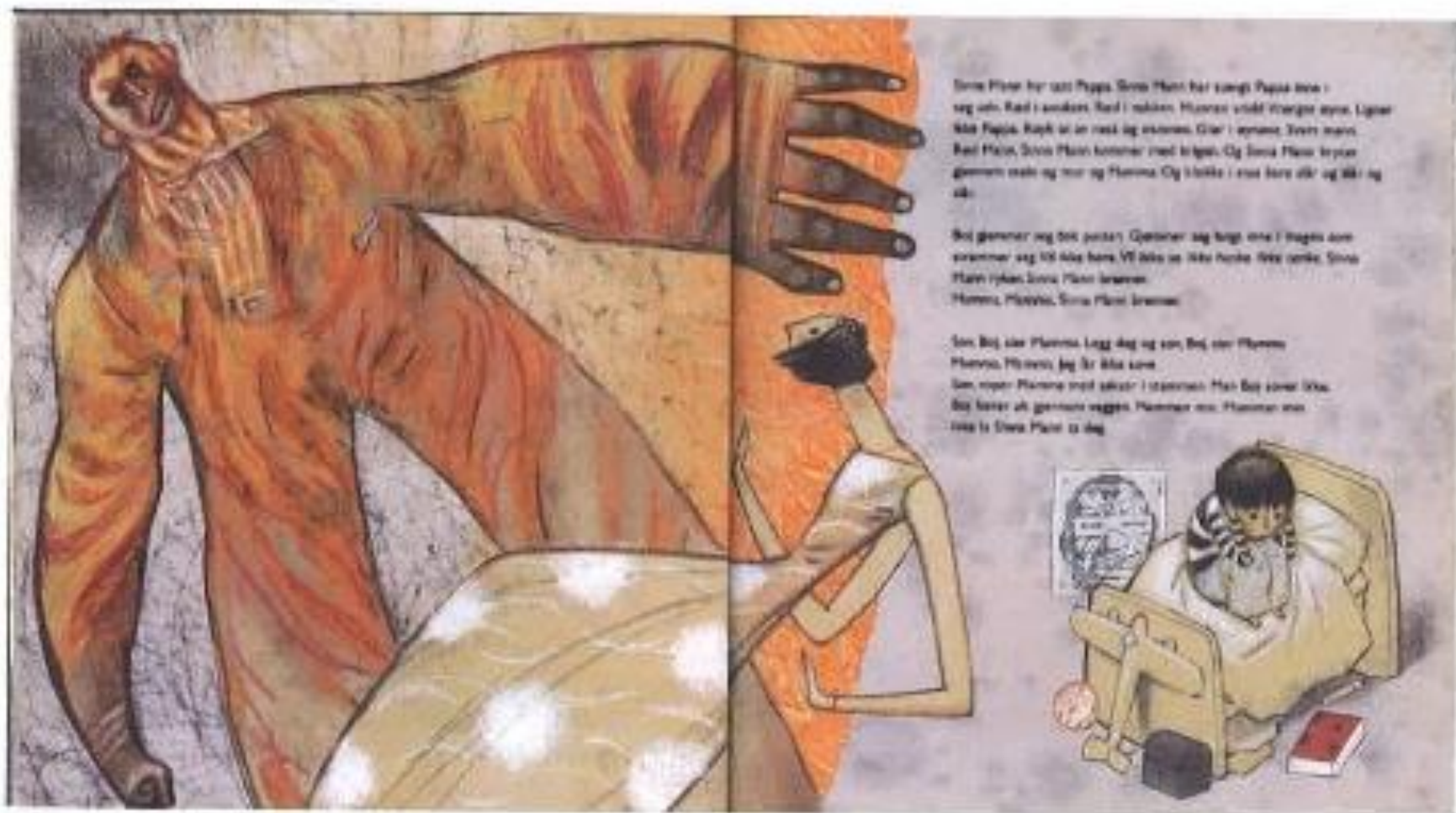


Pappa må hvile litt, sier Mamma og glatter duken på bordet. Pappa må jobbe, sier Mamma og glatter teppene på gulvet. Ikke forstyr Pappa nå, sier Mamma og lukker dora til Pappa.

For det er noe i stua. Det er ikke Pappa. Det er Sinna Mann.

Rommet strammer seg helt inntil veggene. Til og med taket holder pusten. Så så så så så, sier Mamma. Så så så så så så, sier Mamma.





Sine Plise har sagt Pappa, Sine Plise har sagt Pappa sine i
sag sin, Red i andens Red i andens, Plisen vider strænge øjne, Ligner
Sine Plise, Rødt at en rodt og skinnende, Gler i øjnene, Sine Plise
Red Plise, Sine Plise kommer med brødt, Og Sine Plise kryder
gennem rodt og rødt og Plise, Og Sine Plise i end bare ødt og Sine og
Sine.

Det gemmer sig det jorden, Glemmer sig Sine Plise i Plise som
sikker sig Sine Plise, Vi Sine og Sine Plise, Sine Plise, Sine Plise
Plise Plise, Sine Plise Plise Plise.

Sine Plise, Sine Plise, Legg dig og sin Plise, Sine Plise
Plise, Plise, Sine Plise Sine
Sine Plise Plise med Sine i Plise Plise Sine Plise
Sine Plise og Sine Plise, Plise Plise, Plise Plise
Sine Plise Sine Plise



[illegible]

Bog her er Thalesen græs i hestevens. Bog her er
Havets fuge i vinden. Det smukke i Stenen.
Alt det gode og smukke. Det smukke i Altsammen.
Da jeg er borte og går på vej. Så kommer det tilbage og
går.

[illegible]

Dada Pappa
 Papa Pappa
 Pappa Pappa
 Mamma Pappa
 Mamma Mamma
 Mamma Mamma





The sins of the fathers

Young children dragged kicking and screaming to visit their abusive fathers and mothers threatened with prison if they don't comply... It's a world away from the image of wronged dads that the campaign group Fathers4Justice implanted in the public mind. Yet, as **Decca Aitkenhead** discovers, it's the harrowing reality for many families riven by violence or sexual abuse. Illustrations by **Laura Carlin**