

A ROYAL COMMONWEALTH SOCIETY ESSAY COMPETITION WINNER

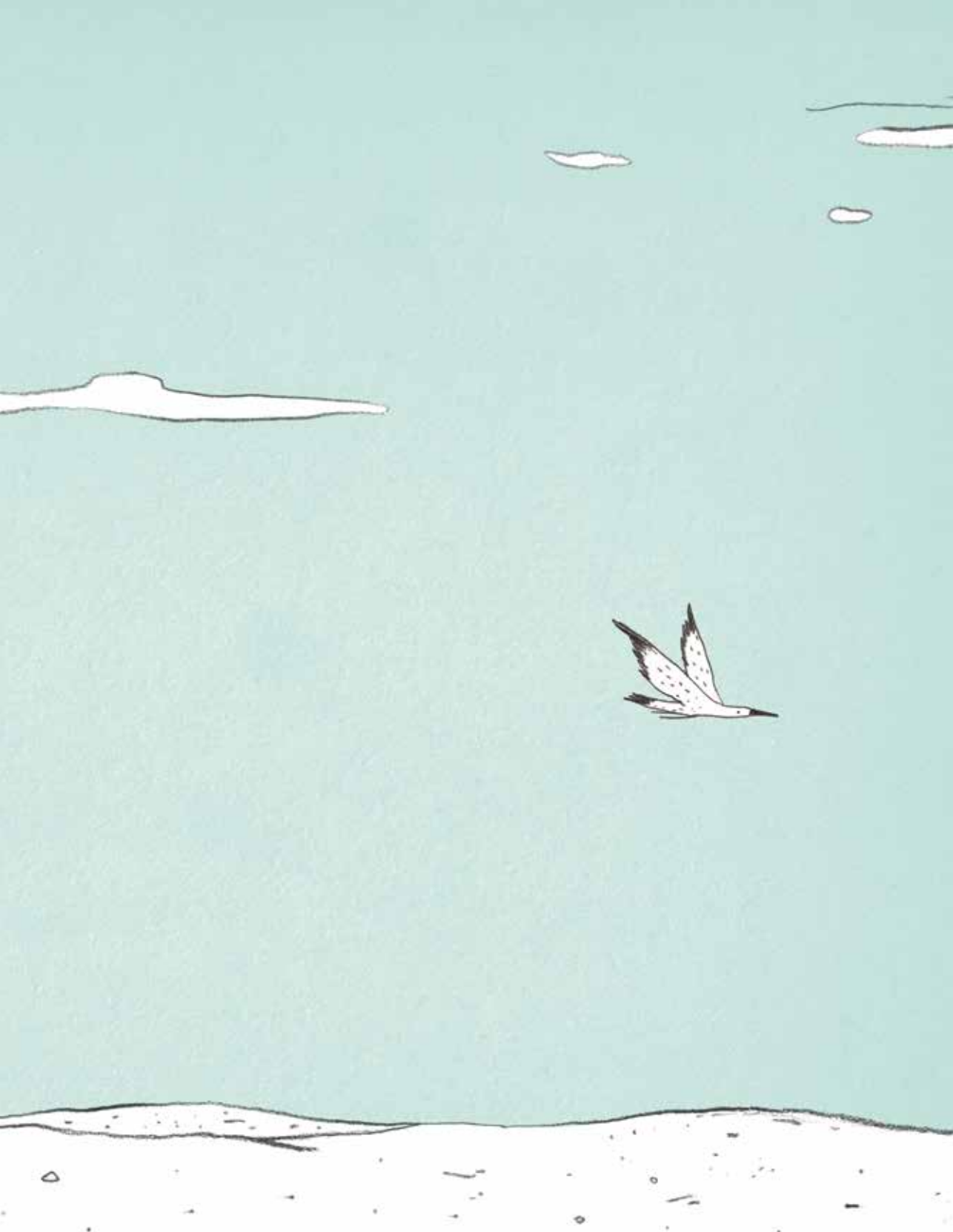


# THE ROCK AND THE BIRD

Chew Chia Shao Wei



Illustrated by Angee Neo



Originally titled “Unlikely Friends”, this story won first prize in the Royal Commonwealth Society’s essay competition in 2009.

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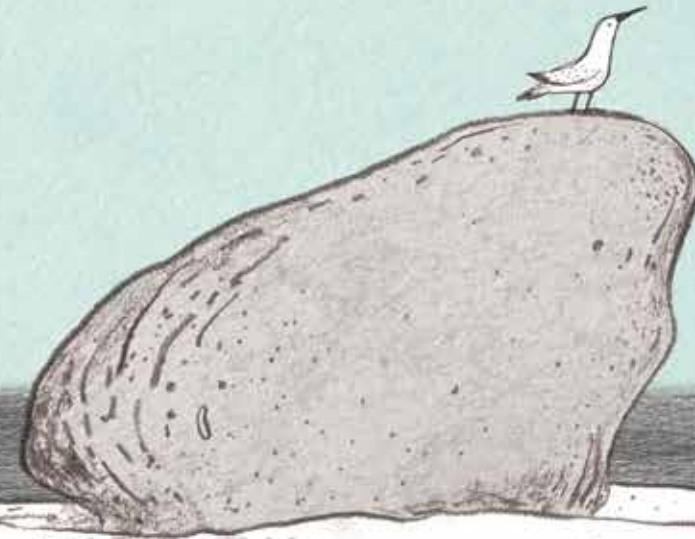


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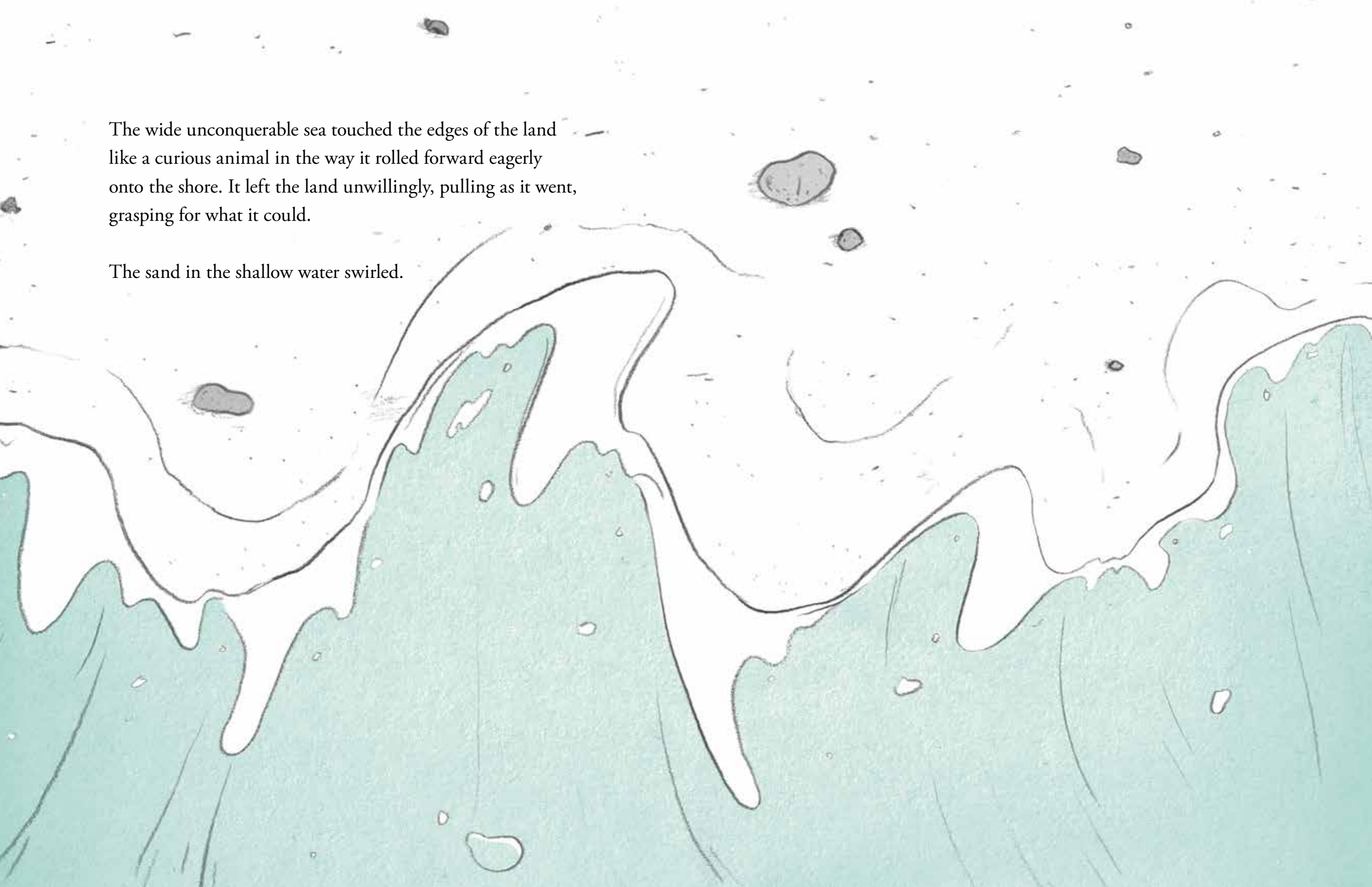


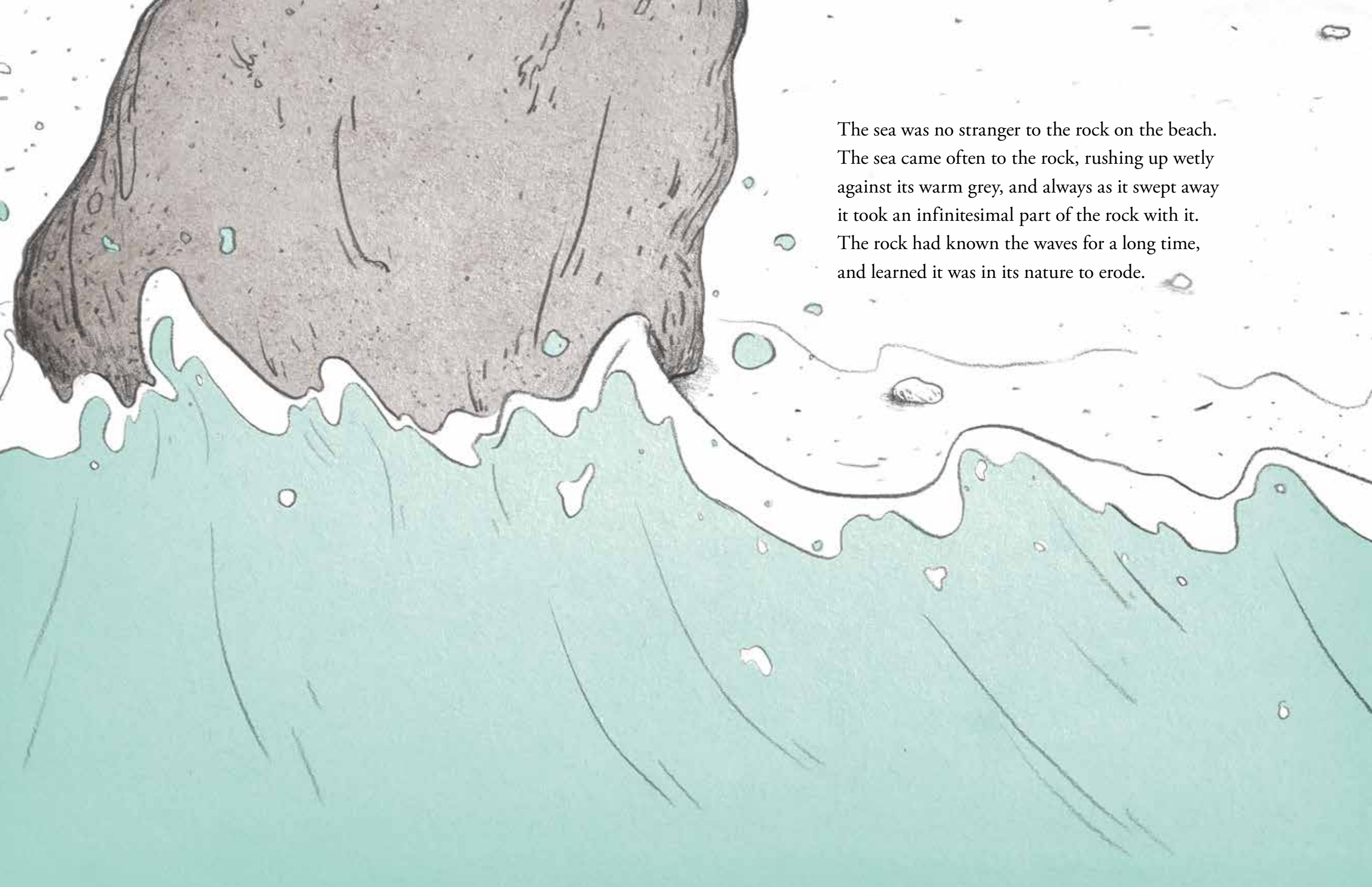


There was something vaguely sad about the rock.  
It was as old as it looked, standing weathered and lonely  
amidst the stretch of sand, and its thoughts were quiet  
as it listened to the waves.

The wide unconquerable sea touched the edges of the land like a curious animal in the way it rolled forward eagerly onto the shore. It left the land unwillingly, pulling as it went, grasping for what it could.

The sand in the shallow water swirled.





The sea was no stranger to the rock on the beach.  
The sea came often to the rock, rushing up wetly  
against its warm grey, and always as it swept away  
it took an infinitesimal part of the rock with it.  
The rock had known the waves for a long time,  
and learned it was in its nature to erode.



One day, the sunlight on the rock was interrupted  
by a brief darkness in the blurred shape of a bird.



“An astonishing and stunning story; a timeless fable which would appeal to readers of all ages.”

— The Royal Commonwealth Society

There once was a rock which stood old and alone amidst a stretch of sand. For a long time it knew nothing, except the lapping waves of the sea. Then one day a noisy bird came to rest on the rock — and the lives of both became inextricably entwined and changed forever. *The Rock and the Bird* is an everlasting and unforgettable story about friendship, loss and mortality.

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