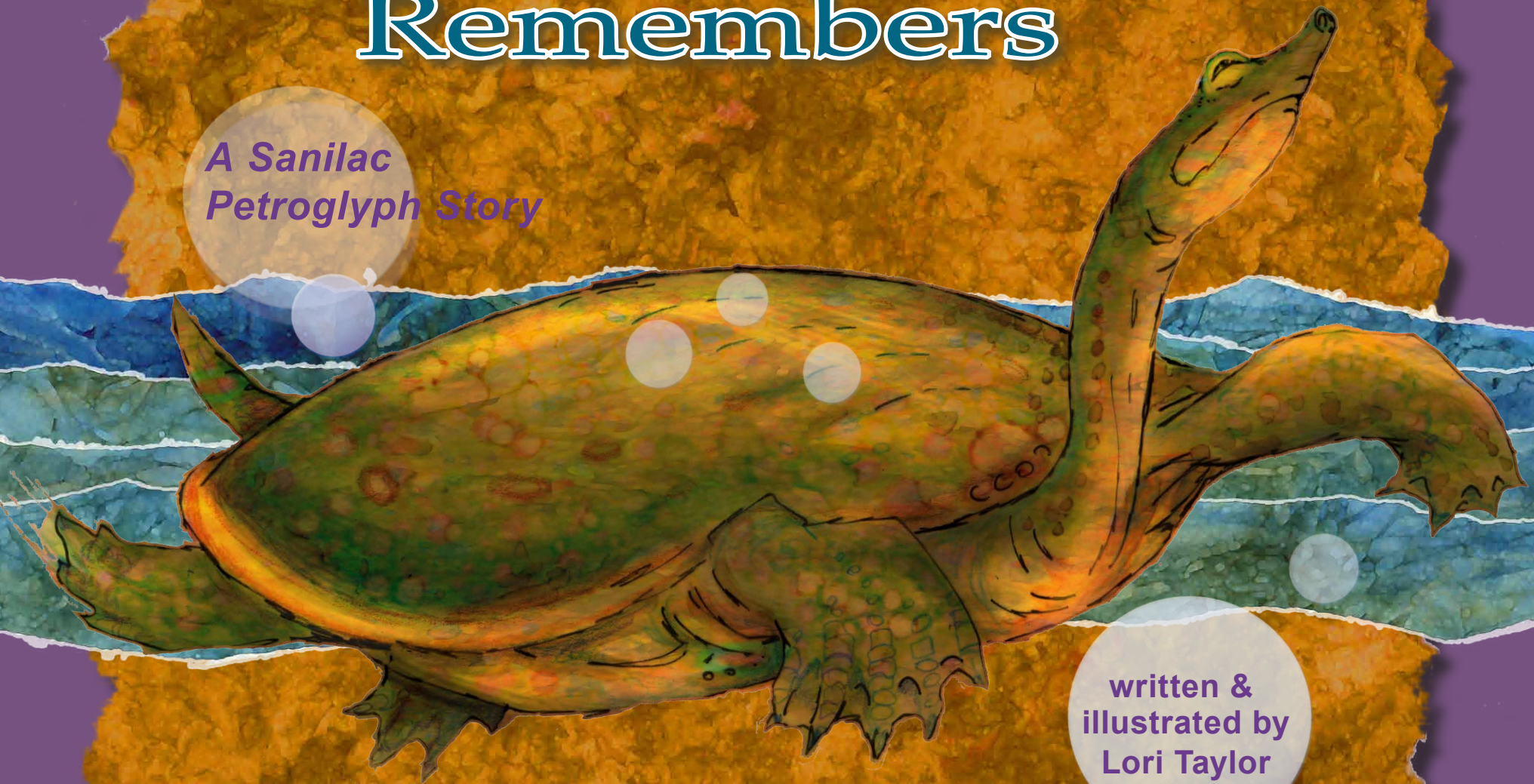
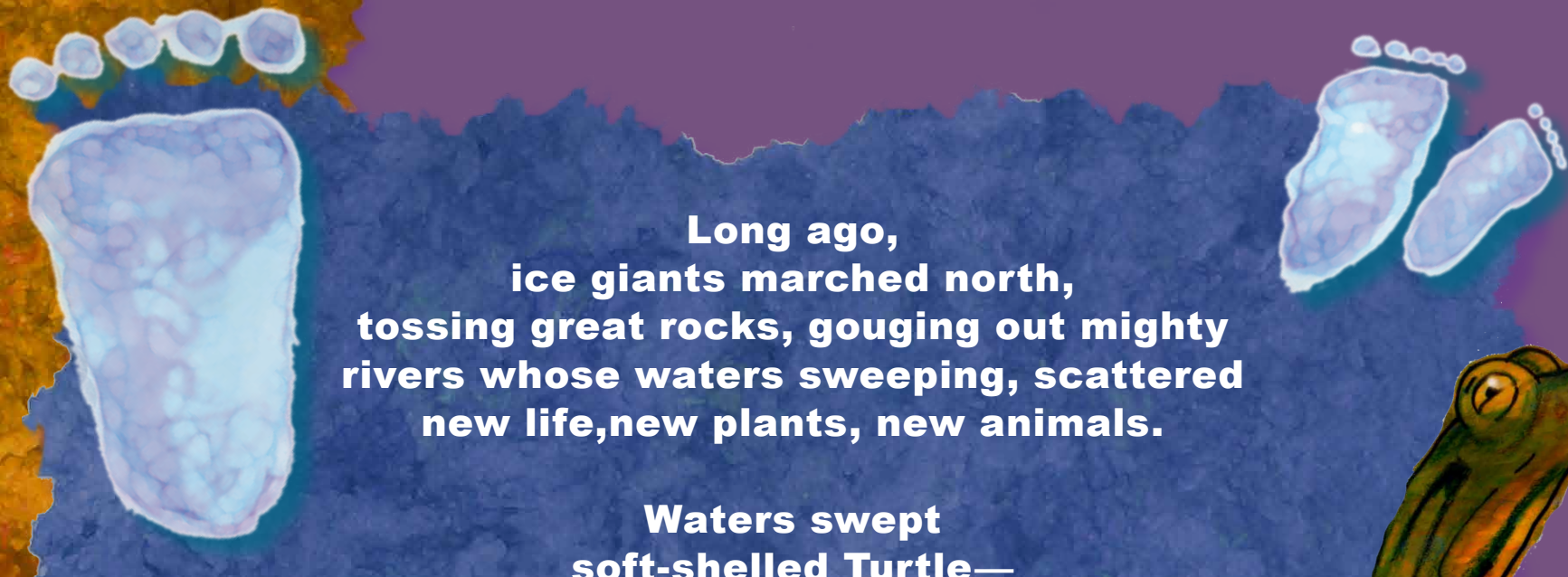


STONE TURTLE Remembers

*A Sanilac
Petroglyph Story*

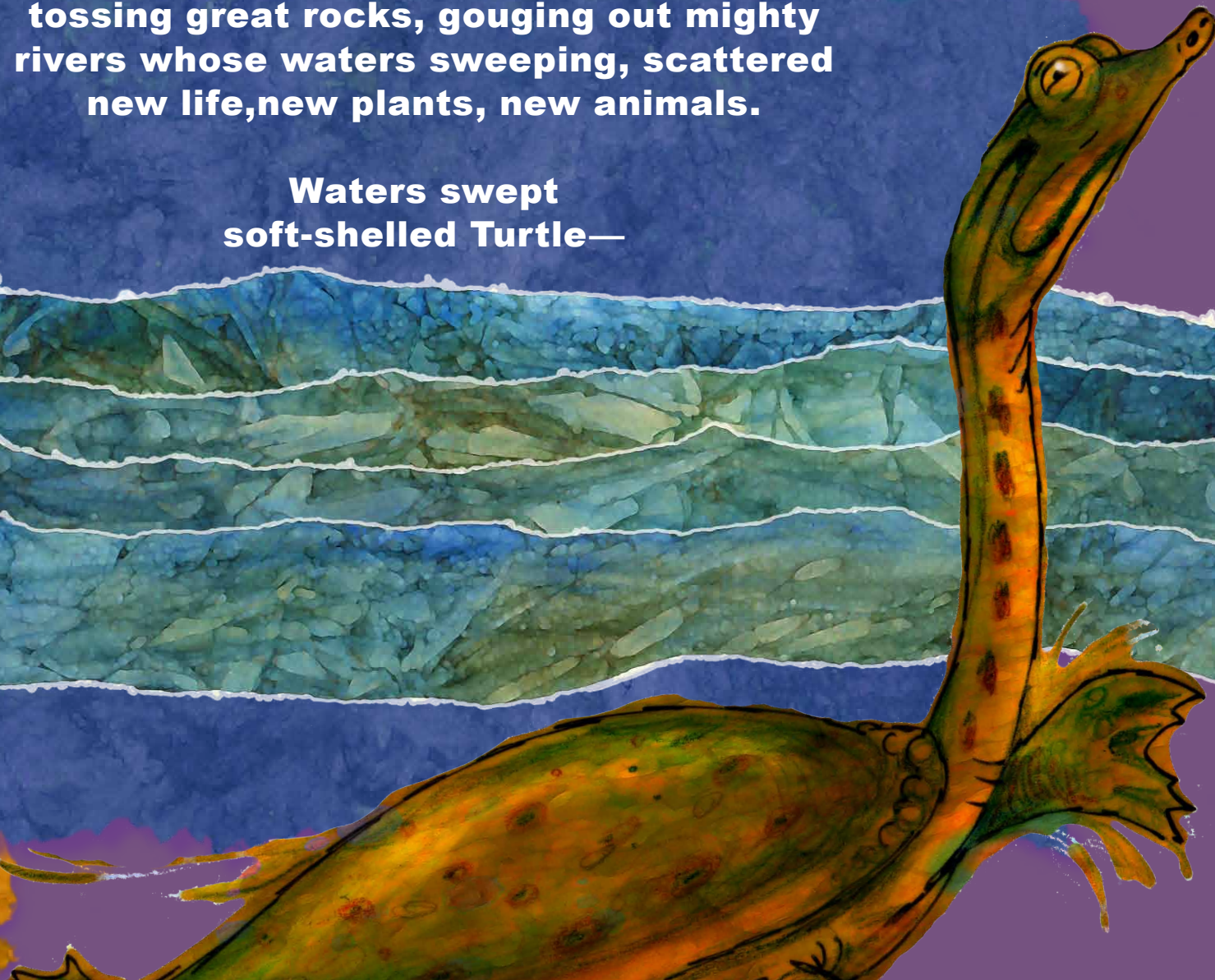


written &
illustrated by
Lori Taylor



**Long ago,
ice giants marched north,
tossing great rocks, gouging out mighty
rivers whose waters sweeping, scattered
new life, new plants, new animals.**

**Waters swept
soft-shelled Turtle—**



in its
icy jaws.

Turtle, her
eyes set atop,

her pointy
snout

poking out,
from long,

stretchy
neck

watched her
wondrous
world rush by.

On and on
struggling,
tired—

Turtle with



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one sharp
eye

spying
land—

one strong
toenail

grabbing
stone—

pulled

herself

up—

up—

to rest
in the

sun.

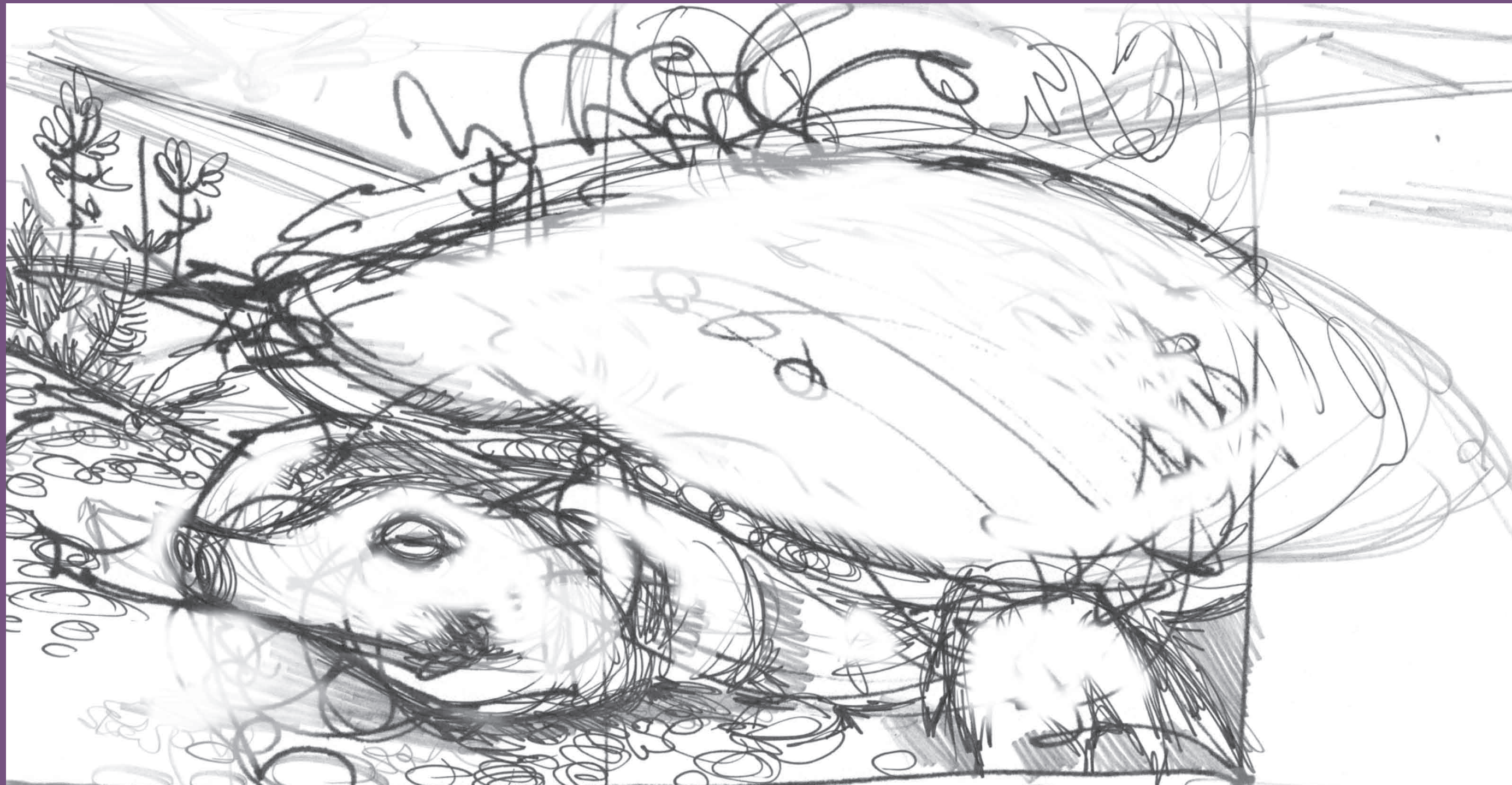
**Exhausted,
Turtle closed
her eyes.**

**for a
heartbeat—
a thousand
ages?**

**While
she slept—
water washed
over her
shell**

**covering her
in a**

**sandy
shawl.**



**While
she slept—
more sand
fell upon
her
back,**

**her shell
grew
larger.**

**While
she slept—
river waters
dropped.**

**Turtle woke
to River's
receding—**

**to a heavy
body,
heavy
shell**

**sand-crusted,
hard**

too large
to move,
to explore

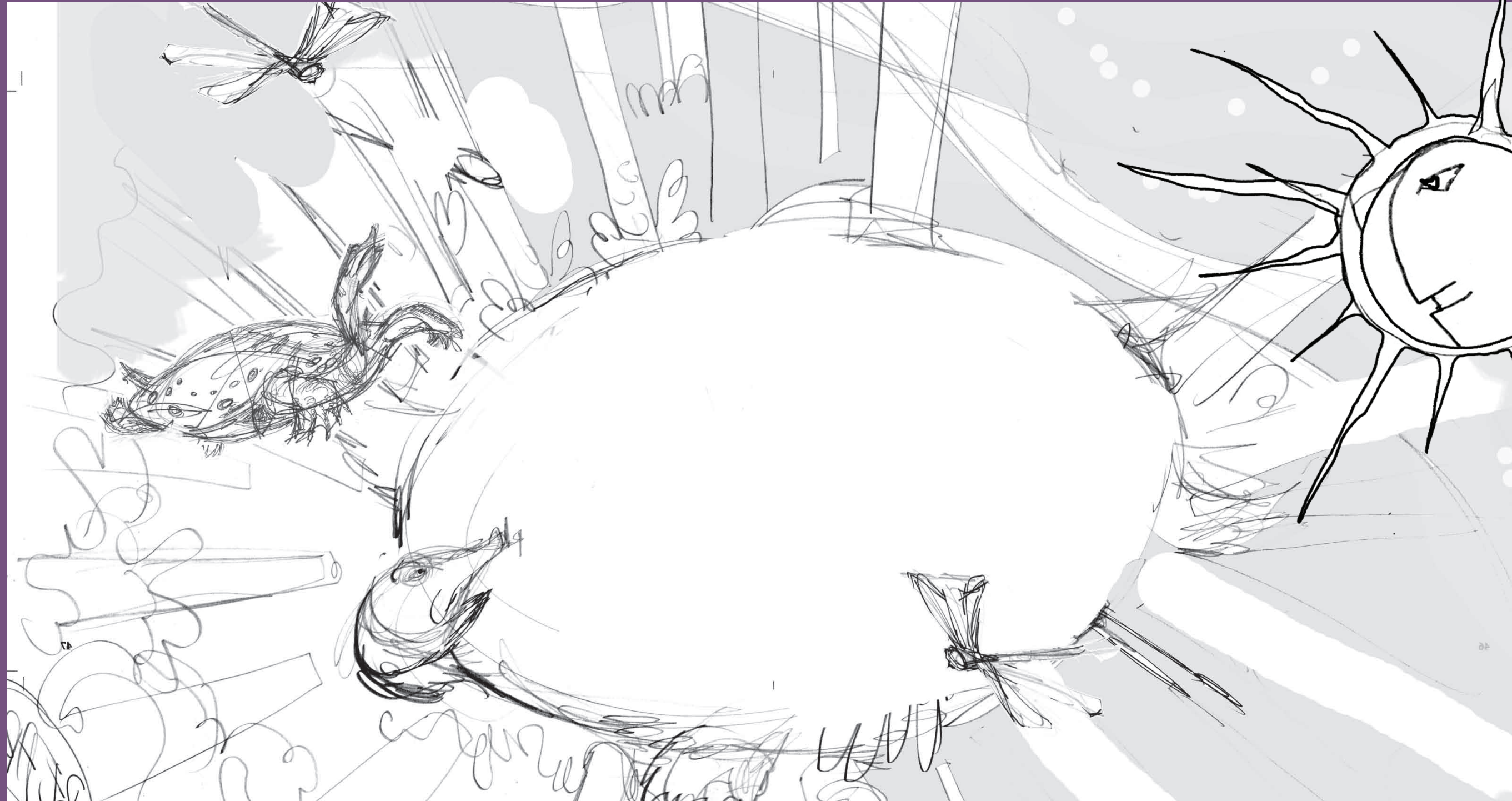
the wondrous
world,

Turtle was
destined to
sit upon
the banks

of the river,
for
many ages,

which is
forever—
which is
a very long
time.

Happy days
of swimming
came to her
mind—



she wept
sandy tears
she never
wanted to
forget
the wondrous
world.

Then—
insect hum,
bird chatter,
spicy pine
breezes
came to
Turtle.

She felt Sun's
warm smile on
her back.

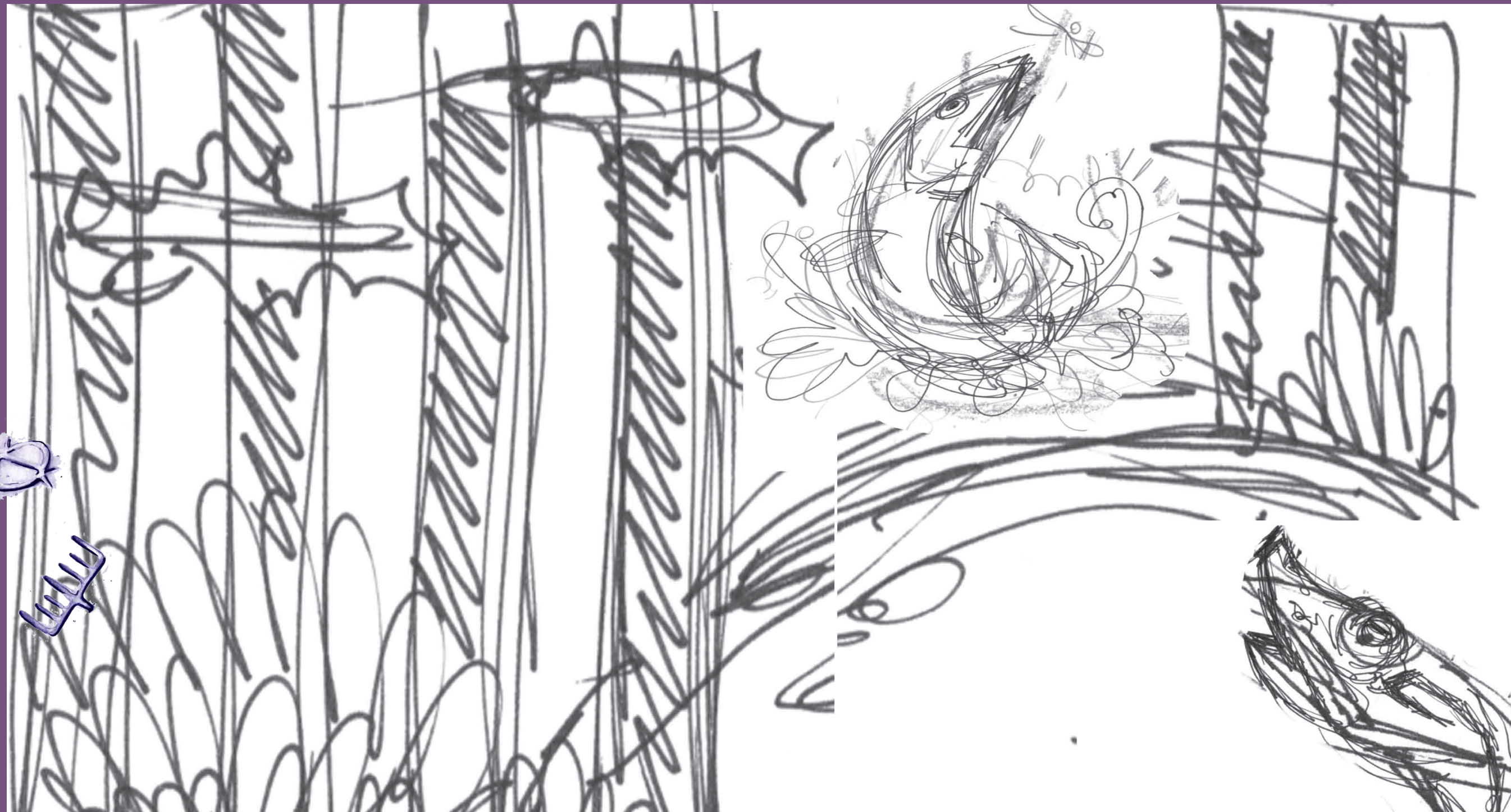
"Thank you,
Sun," she
sighed.

"Turtle,"
said Sun,

**“I will
always
shine on you
so others
will find
you.”**

**“Here they
will stop
to rest.
In this way,
the
wondrous
world will
come to you.”**

**Sun’s promise
made Turtle
happy.**



**She waited
patiently
for the world
to come**

Soon—

**Fifty days or
three years,**

**Turtle
heard
splashing.**

**Speckled fish
leapt
in the waters.**

**“Fish! Come
up here and
see me.”**

**“For a moment,”
said Fish.**

**“Tell me your
story, Fish.”**

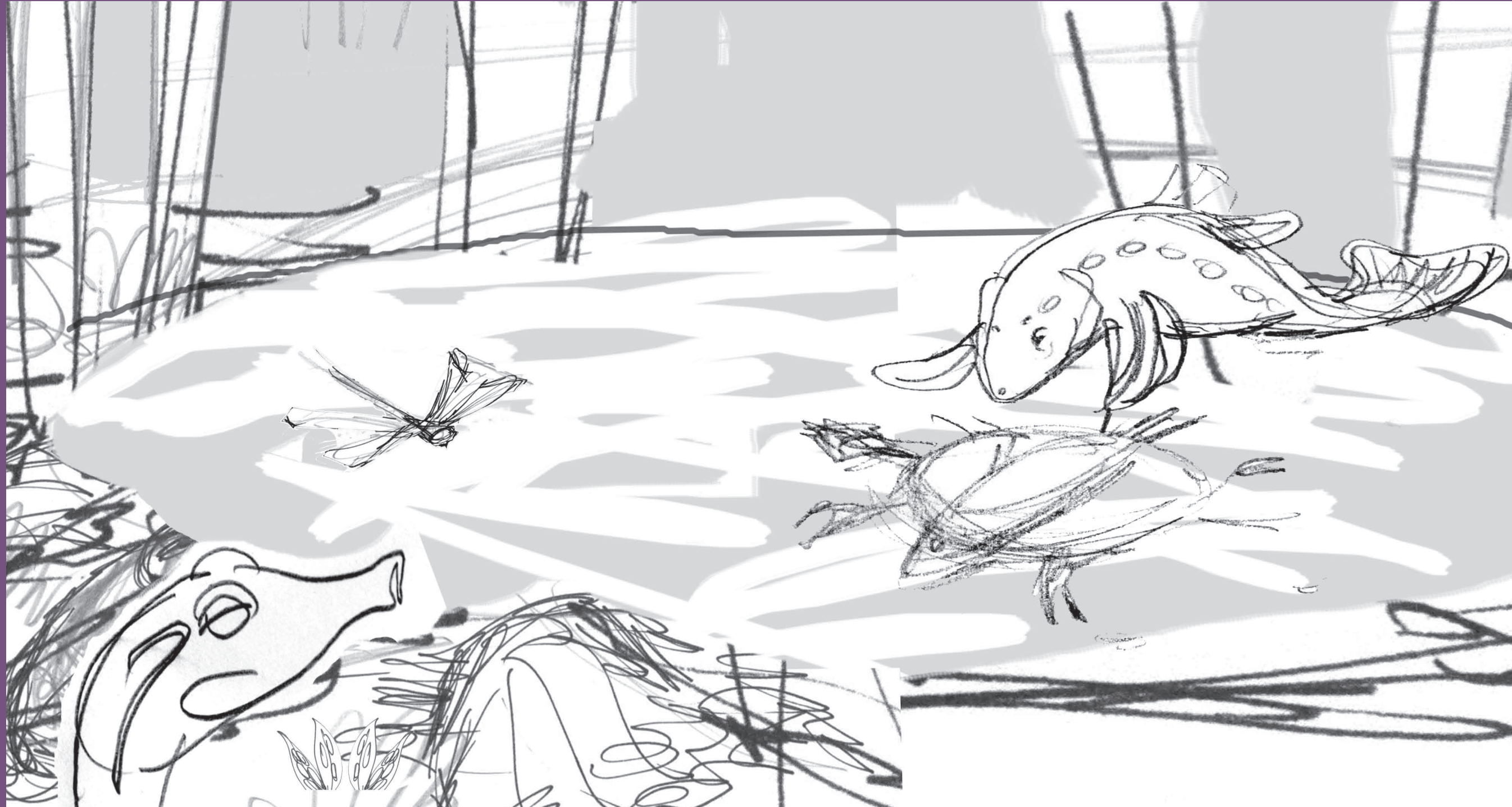
**“I swim all day.
Each dawn and
every evening
I jump for
insects.”**

**“Amazing!”
exclaimed
Turtle. Tell me
again!”**

**“I must go,”
said Fish.**

**“But perhaps if
I leave my**

**mark on your
back,
your shell—**



**you will
remember.”**

**“Oh yes!”
exclaimed
Turtle.**

**Fish, pulling a
sharp spine**

**from her fin,
drew a picture**

**of herself lying
across
Turtle’s back,
then returned**

to the river.

**“Thank you,”
called Turtle.**

**Soon—
an hour
or forty days,**

Turtle heard a yodeling wail bounce over the water,

and a trumpeting cry overhead.

“Loon, Crane, come sit with me!” called Turtle. Crane and Loon rested on her back.

“What are your stories?” asked Turtle.



“I dance on the water,” said Loon, “and sing Sun up in the morning,”

“I dance in the sky,” said Crane, “and carry Sun to the marsh each evening,”

“Amazing!” said Turtle.

Then remembering Fish she asked. “Before you go, could you both leave your mark upon me so I can remember?”

Loon
crawled
over,
her
sharp beak
scratched
her likeness
riding
the waters,
singing
on
Turtle's
back.



Crane
etched
herself with
bent neck
long.
“Thank you,”
called Turtle
to the
birds taking
their leave.
Soon after—
a month,
or fleeting
thought,
Turtle heard
a



great

CRASH

and smelled
a great

SMELL.

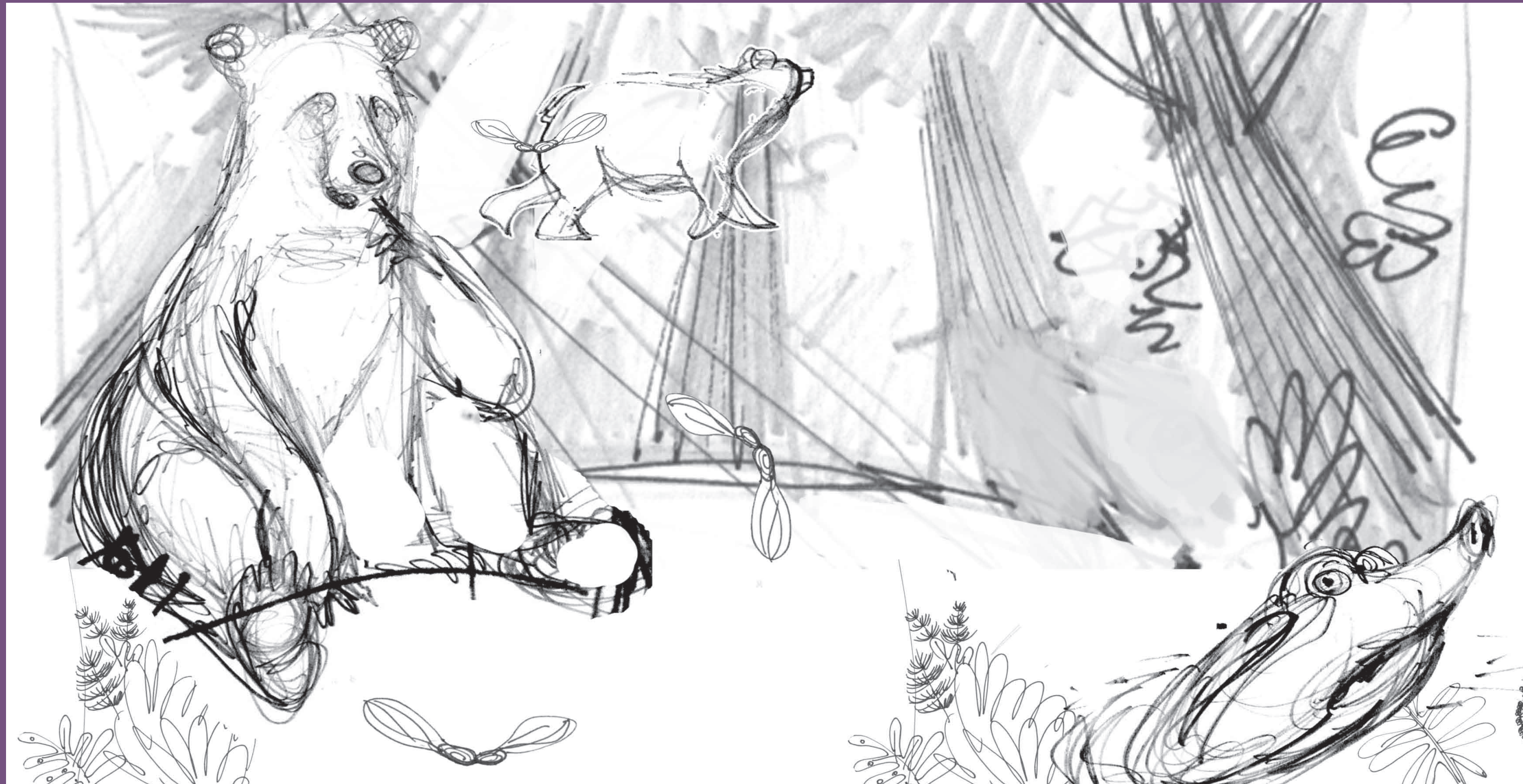
Snuffling
bear

popped

onto her
back.

“Bear, tell
me your
story,”
said Turtle,

holding her
breath.



“I just
woke up.

I am
hungry.”
Bear
yawned.

“I hunt for
food until
winter,

then sleep
until
spring,

when I look
for more
food.”

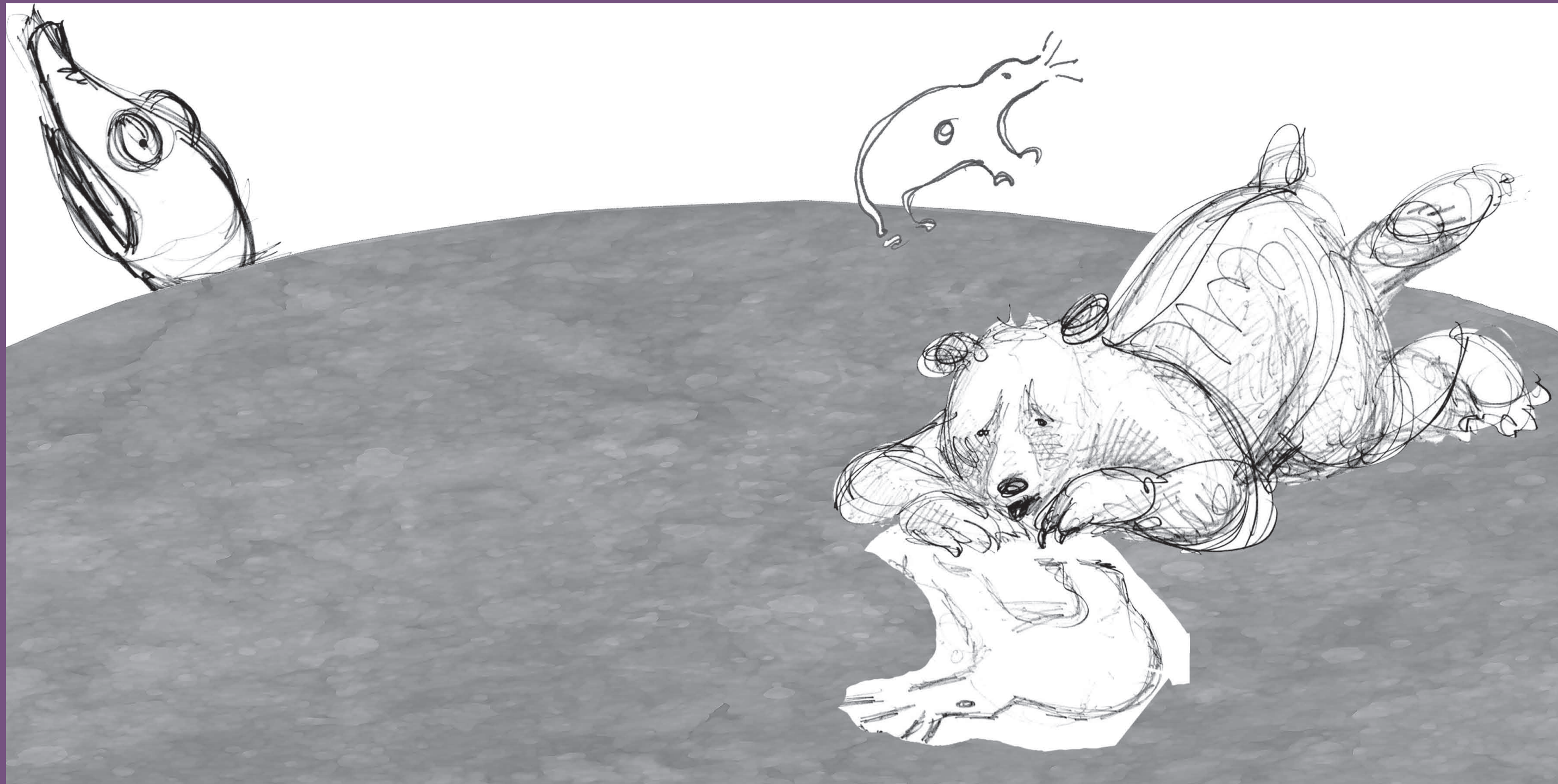
Interesting,”
said Turtle.

**“Could you
leave your
mark
on my back
so I will
remember?”**

**With
growling
belly,
Bear
scraped
his picture**

**in the
rock—**

**then
lumbered
off.**



**“Thank
you,” called
Turtle.**

**Suddenly—
ten seconds**

**or sixty
minutes**

later,

Deer burst through the ferns, breathing heavily.

“Deer, come rest,” offered Turtle.

“What has happened?”

“I run—from wolf—must cross river.”

“Exciting,” said Turtle.



“Before you go, would you leave your mark on me so I can remember your story?”

Deer hurriedly scratched

half of himself running,

the other half

his tracks.

Turtle called
thank you
as Deer
bounded off—

and up
trotted
Wolf.

Her nails
scraped
deep
tracks
with each
step.

Glad
she was

covered in
sand,
Turtle asked.



“Wolf, are
you hunting
Deer?”

“I was—but
now

I
run from
another
animal!”

Wolf
sniffed
then ran.

**Nervous,
Turtle
wondered—
Wolf only
feared
Fire.**

**She
waited for
Stalker-of-
Wolf
to appear.**



**Birds'
chatter
stopped,
frogs
leaped
into the water.**

**All
was quiet
when—
a smell,
stronger than
Bear,
tickled
Turtle's nose.**

From the
brush

stepped
the
strangest
animal

Turtle had
ever seen.

Walking tall

on two legs

like Crane,

skin smooth
as Fish,

yet fur
as thick as
Bear,

it wore
feathers like
Loon



and skin
of Wolf,
carrying
things

as sharp as
Deer's
antlers—

its eyes
shone

like a
hundred
Stars.

“Strange-
animal,
what
is

your story?”

“I am Man.

**I rise in the morning
to swim
and set
my boat
upon
the water.**

**I hunt and
walk with
the animals.**

**When the land
makes my heart
sing I laugh and
dance.**

**In the evening
I talk to the
stars and rest
in my lodge.”**



**“That is the
most amazing
story yet!”
exclaimed
Turtle.**

**“What is your
story, Turtle?”
asked Man.**

**Turtle told
Man of the
rushing river,
Sun’s promise,
and all the
animals.**

Man made Fire.

**The two
shared stories
of the
wondrous
world.**

**Turtle
laughed until
her side split.**

**“Before you
go Man,**

**leave your
stories on my
back.
Make your
marks so
I will
remember.”**

**When Stars
and Fire
faded,
Man, with
sharpened
bone point**

**etched Sun’s
promise on**

Turtle’s back.



**Drew heroes,
canoes,
water
monsters**

**with gaping
mouth.**

**Grain
by grain,**

**the sand
placed on
Turtle’s back
so long ago,
which was**

many decades

**or thousands
of years,**

**was scraped
from Turtle’s
back**

as story.

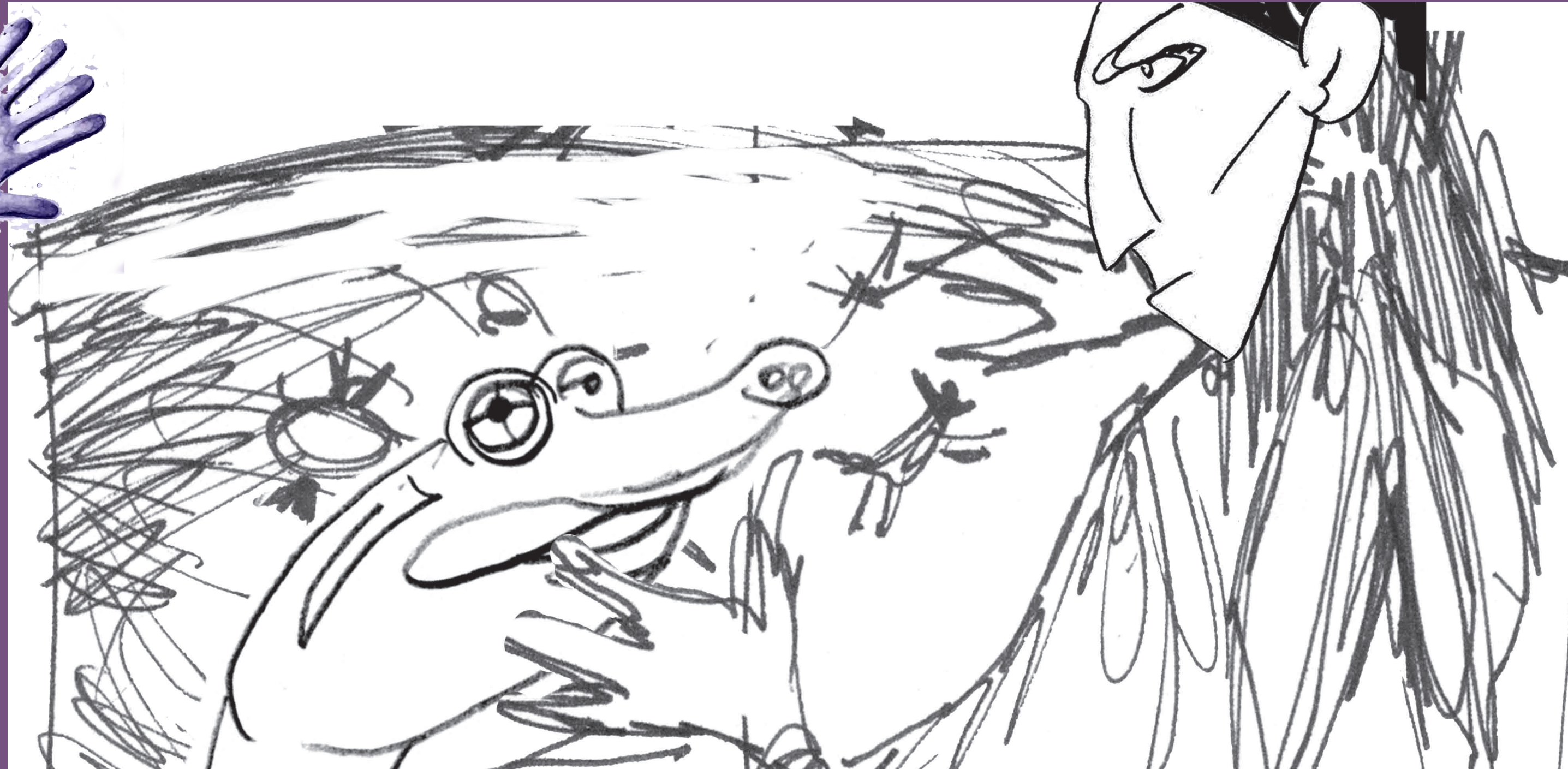
When he
finished,
Man made
his handprint
holding
the
bone point.



“I am glad
you found
me,” said
Turtle.

I have been
lonely and
did not
want to

forget the
wondrous
world.”



“I am glad I
found you,”
said Man.

“I have
been lonely
and wanting to
tell

stories so Man
never forgets
the
wondrous
world.”

Turtle cried
crumbly tears
of joy

But Man
looked
unhappy.

“Why are you sad?”

asked Turtle.

Man pointed.

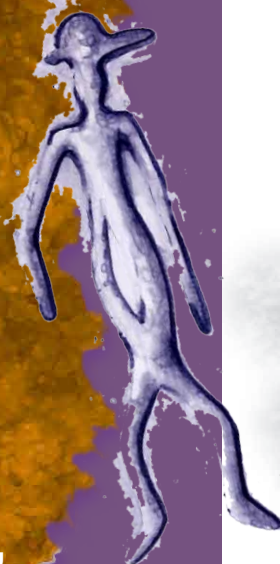
“There are those coming,

Those like me, but not like me.

Those who have forgotten to listen with their hearts,

forgotten how to talk to

plants, animals, the stars.”



“Maybe these stories placed here

will remind Man’s children

to know the wondrous world we know,” said Turtle.

“To laugh, dance, sing,” said Man,

“To live in a good way,” with all life, for their hearts to

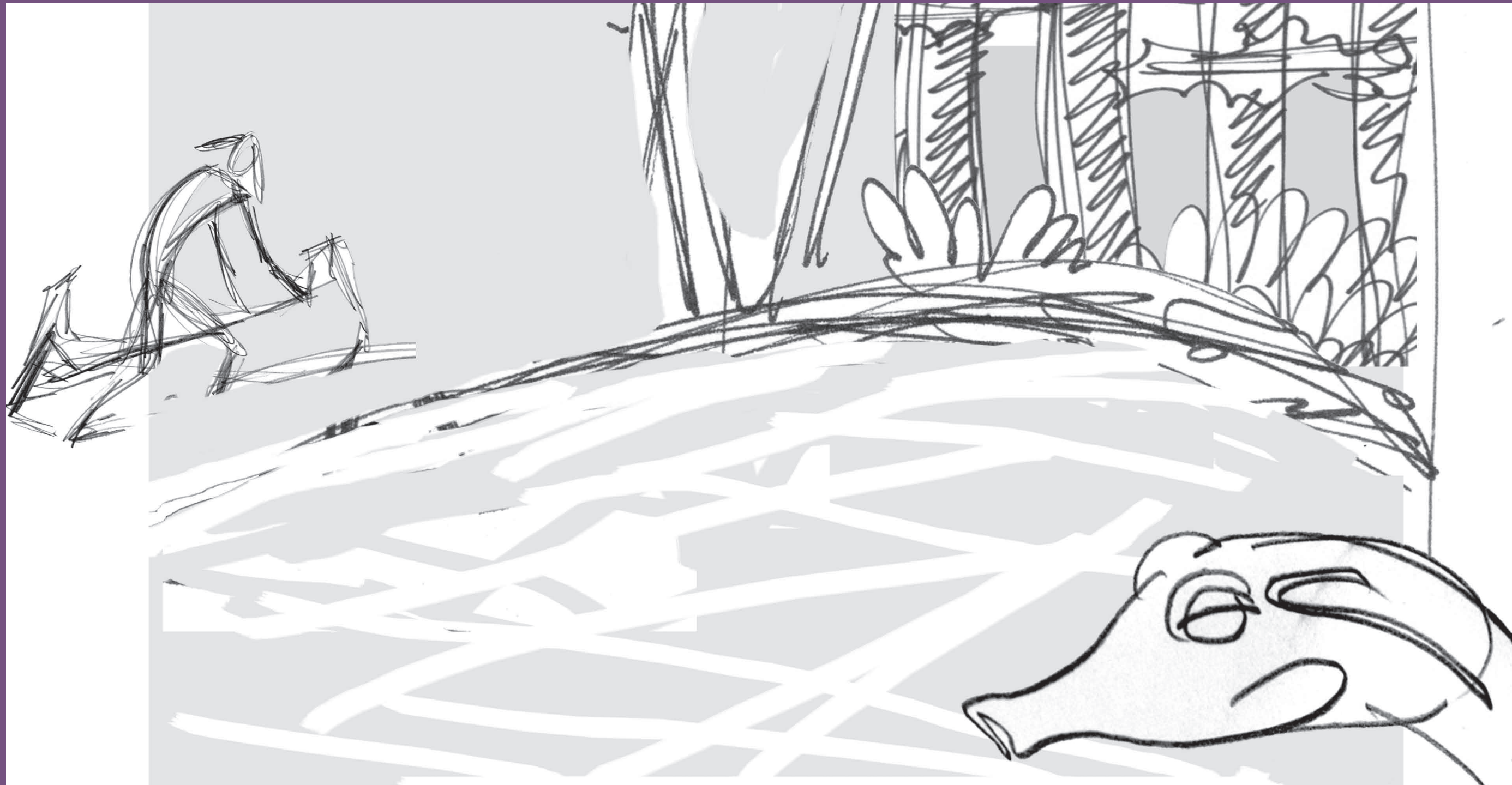
remember.”

**As Sun rose,
Man picked up
his things.**

**“Turtle, carry
these stories
for all time.”**

**Turtle was
honored
to carry the
weight of the
wondrous
world on her
back.**

**By doing this
for Man,
she was
doing it for all
Others.**



**She no longer
felt like she
was stuck here**

**on the banks
of the rushing
river.**

**She had
important
work,
keeping the
stories.**

**“I will keep
them for all
time,” she
called to Man,**

**Then
bird’s chatter,
leaf’s rustle
announced
another
new day.**



Sun's rays
danced
across Turtle's back
painting
the stories in golden light—

And Turtle never
forgot the
wondrous world.



Today, if you visit the Sanilac Petroglyph Historic State Park in Cass, MI in spring, you will find leaping trout and winged ones—trout lily flowers and maple seeds! They decorate the path to where Stone Turtle lies asleep among Heartberries on the Cass River, If you are lucky, you may find the golden moccasin flowers hiding along the trails.

In 1994 I was inspired by this special place back when I had the opportunity to study the site creating a map of the petroglyphs, early one summer solstice morning with retired elementary principal and archeology enthusiast, Harold Neitzke. Then on a beautiful, sunny morning, on Sept. 11, 2001 we visited the rock to record stories in the hopes of preserving and sharing them with all. Many times I tried to write the "turtle rock's" story. Many times I failed. finally, I felt by using the turtle rock's view point it was the best to convey the message of the patience in living a good life and one's own purpose.



STONE TURTLE Remembers

The Native American people in Michigan, known as the Anishinabeg, know of such a rock! Many tribes throughout North America kept "storytelling rocks". The elders took children to the site to teach them their stories to learn about living a good life.



This story was based on the Sanilac Petroglyphs Historic State Park. A state park in Michigan containing Michigan's only known rock carvings attributable to Native American Indians. The park consists of 240 acres in Greenleaf Township, Sanilac County, in Michigan's Lower Peninsula.

The carvings, known as petroglyphs, were discovered by residents after a fire swept through the area in 1881 and revealed rocks bearing the designs. Because they are made in relatively friable sandstone, geologists have been able to determine that the carvings were made 300 to 1,000 years ago, dating back to the Late Woodland Period. There is concern that without preservation, the carvings may be worn further away and lost.

