

The Most Amazing Bird



written by
Michael Arvaarluk Kusugak

illustrations by
Andrew Qappik, CM

The Most Amazing Bird

For my irngutaq (granddaughter), Hazel,
who lives where this story takes place.
—M.A.K.

The Most Amazing Bird



written by Michael Arvaarluk Kusugak

illustrated by Andrew Qappik, CM



annick press
toronto • berkeley

Aggataa's feet went, "Crunch, crunch, crunch"
on the hard snow.

"Crunch, crunch, crunch" went her grandmother's feet.

"Anaanattiak, what is that bird?" asked Aggataa.







“It is a tulugarjuaq,” her grandmother replied, “a raven.”

“It’s ugly. It looks like it slept in its coat,” Aggataa said.

“And its coat is too big. Why is it still here? It’s the middle of winter.”

“Tulugarjuat are winter birds,” her grandmother said.

“They stay here all winter. This one likes me.

It follows me everywhere.”

“I don’t like it. Go away, ugly bird!” Aggataa yelled.

“C R A H !” answered the bird.



The next morning, Aggataa saw two ravens.

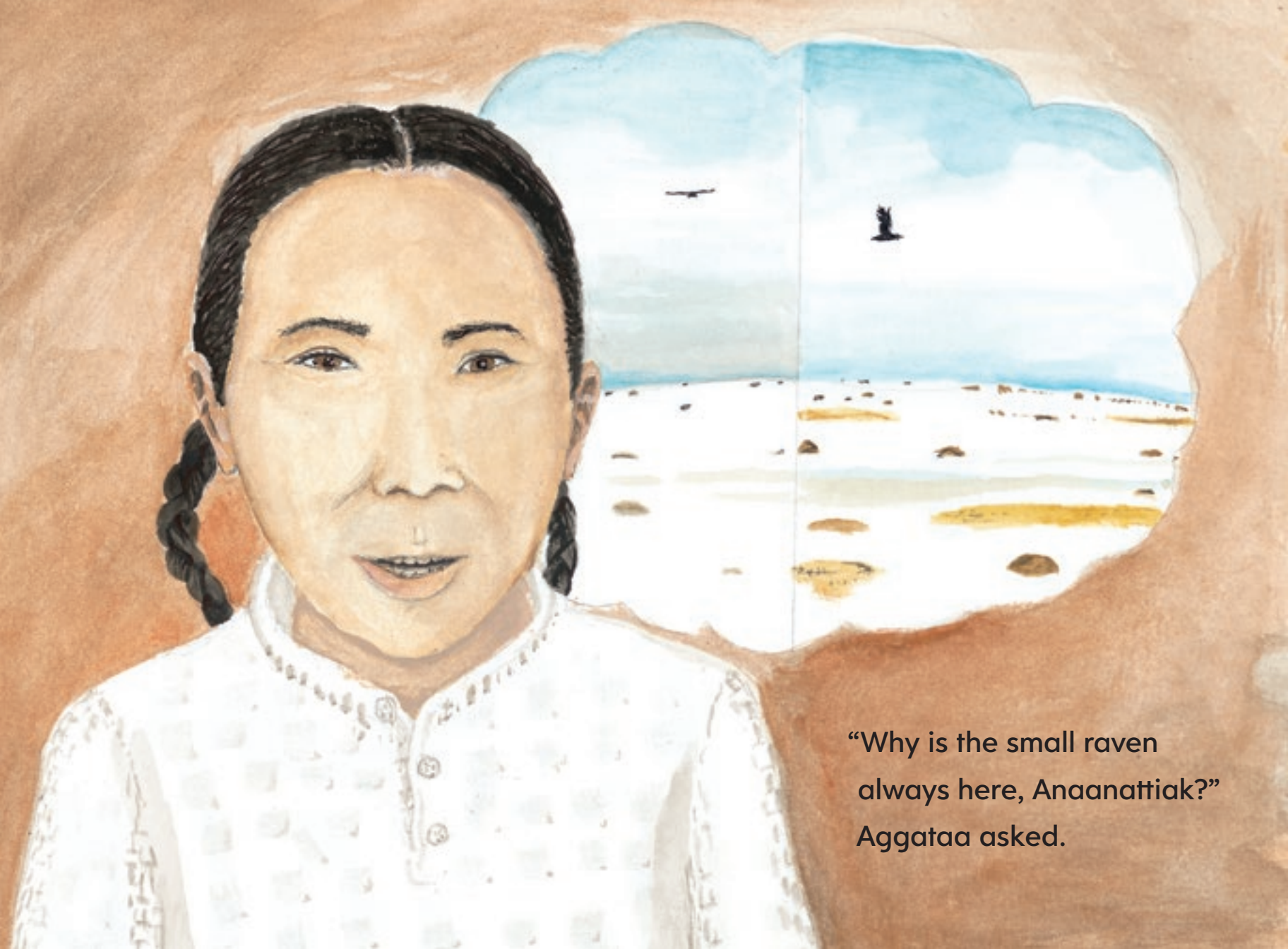
While one raven—a huge, ugly bird—teased the sled dogs, the smaller raven stole some of the dogs’ food. Then off they flew, looping and somersaulting through the air.

After a few minutes, the birds started to fight. The big raven grabbed the stolen food and flew away.

“Mean bird!” Aggataa yelled at the huge bird.

“**Crah!**” the bird replied.

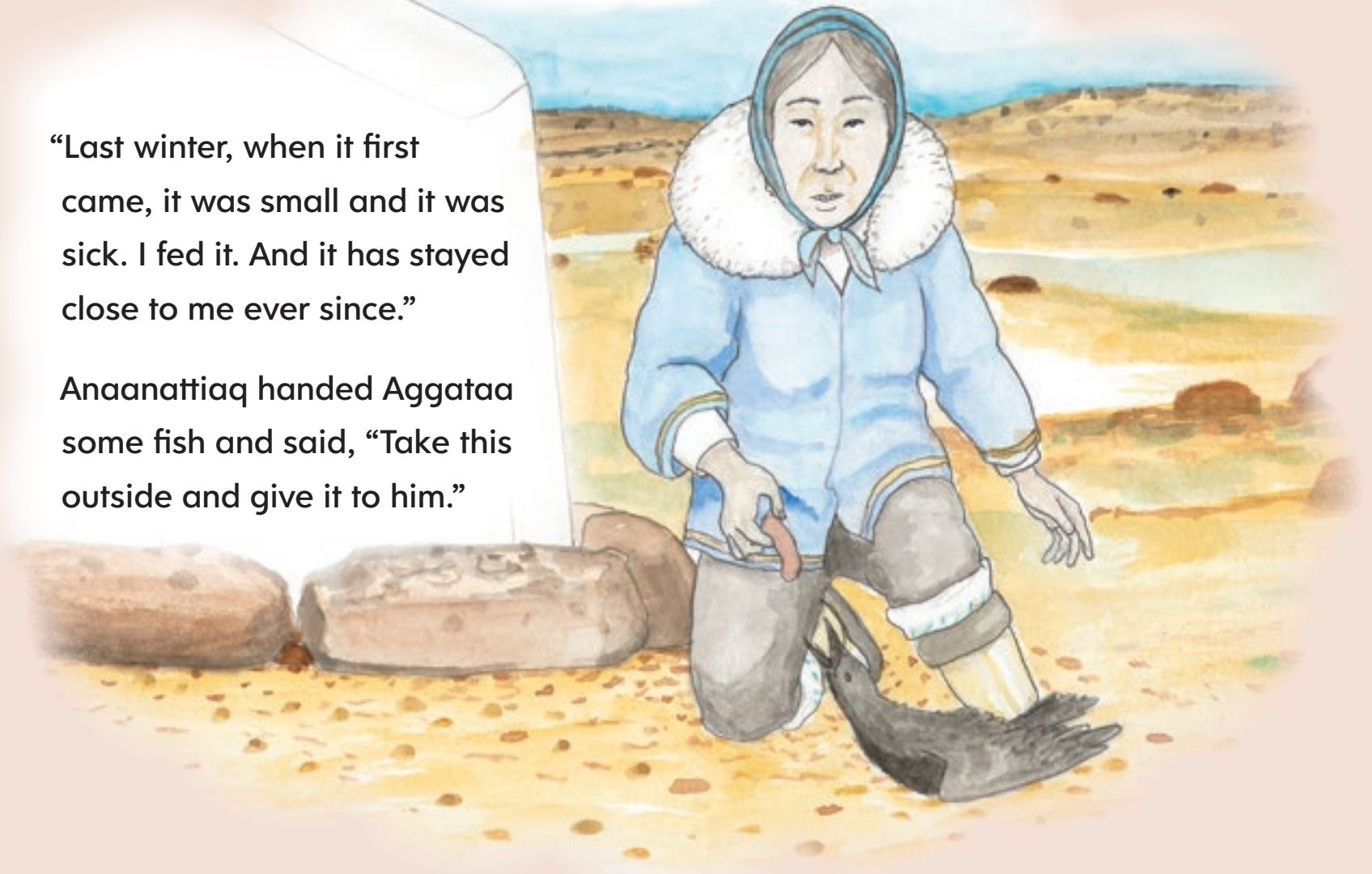




“Why is the small raven
always here, Anaanattiak?”
Aggataa asked.

“Last winter, when it first came, it was small and it was sick. I fed it. And it has stayed close to me ever since.”

Anaanattiaq handed Aggataa some fish and said, “Take this outside and give it to him.”



“Here, Ugly Bird!” Aggataa yelled.

The bird hopped over, took the fish and hopped away with it. It began to eat but did not fly away. The big black bird watched from a distance.

“Naa, naa, na, nanny; you’re not getting any,” Aggataa teased the big raven.

“**Crah!**” the bird replied.

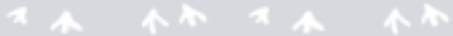




From then on, when Aggataa walked to her grandmother's hut, the small bird would meet her along the way.

“Hi, Ugly Bird,” she would say.

And the bird would hop along behind her.



Soon the spring sun stayed up in the sky day and night and the snow softened.

The ravens still played, flying around doing loops and somersaults. Now, the frost was gone from their beaks. They were so black they looked almost blue. Their feathers glistened in the sun. And their coats were no longer too big. They fit.

Now, they were beautiful.



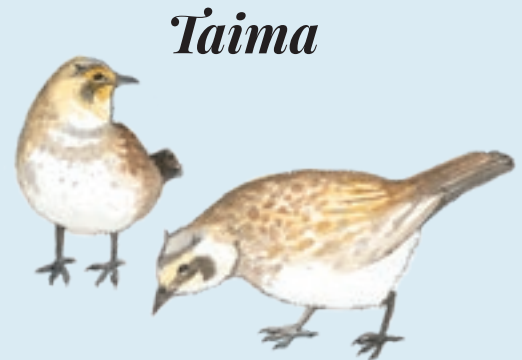


“Hi, Ugly Bird!’ Aggataa yelled.

“**Crah!**” the bird replied.

It would not be a lonely winter after all.

The most amazing bird was back.



© 2020 Michael Arvaarluk Kusugak (text)
© 2020 Andrew Qappik (illustrations)

Edited by Mary Beth Leatherdale

Cover art by Andrew Qappik, designed by Robin Mitchell Cranfield
Interior design by Robin Mitchell Cranfield

Annick Press Ltd.

All rights reserved. No part of this work covered by the copyrights hereon may be reproduced or used in any form or by any means—graphic, electronic, or mechanical—without the prior written permission of the publisher.

We acknowledge the support of the Canada Council for the Arts and the Ontario Arts Council, and the participation of the Government of Canada/la participation du gouvernement du Canada for our publishing activities.



Library and Archives Canada Cataloguing in Publication

Title: The most amazing bird / written by Michael Arvaarluk Kusugak ; illustrated by Andrew Qappik, CM.

Names: Kusugak, Michael, author. | Qappik, Andrew, 1964- illustrator.

Identifiers: Canadiana (print) 20200189069 | Canadiana (ebook) 20200189093 | ISBN 9781773214184 (hardcover) | ISBN 9781773214214 (PDF) | ISBN 9781773214191 (HTML) | ISBN 9781773214207 (Kindle)

Classification: LCC PS8571.U83 M67 2020 | DDC jC813/.54—dc23

Published in the U.S.A. by Annick Press (U.S.) Ltd.
Distributed in Canada by University of Toronto Press.
Distributed in the U.S.A. by Publishers Group West.

Printed in China

annickpress.com
michaelkusugak.com

Also available as an e-book.
Please visit annickpress.com/ebooks for more details.