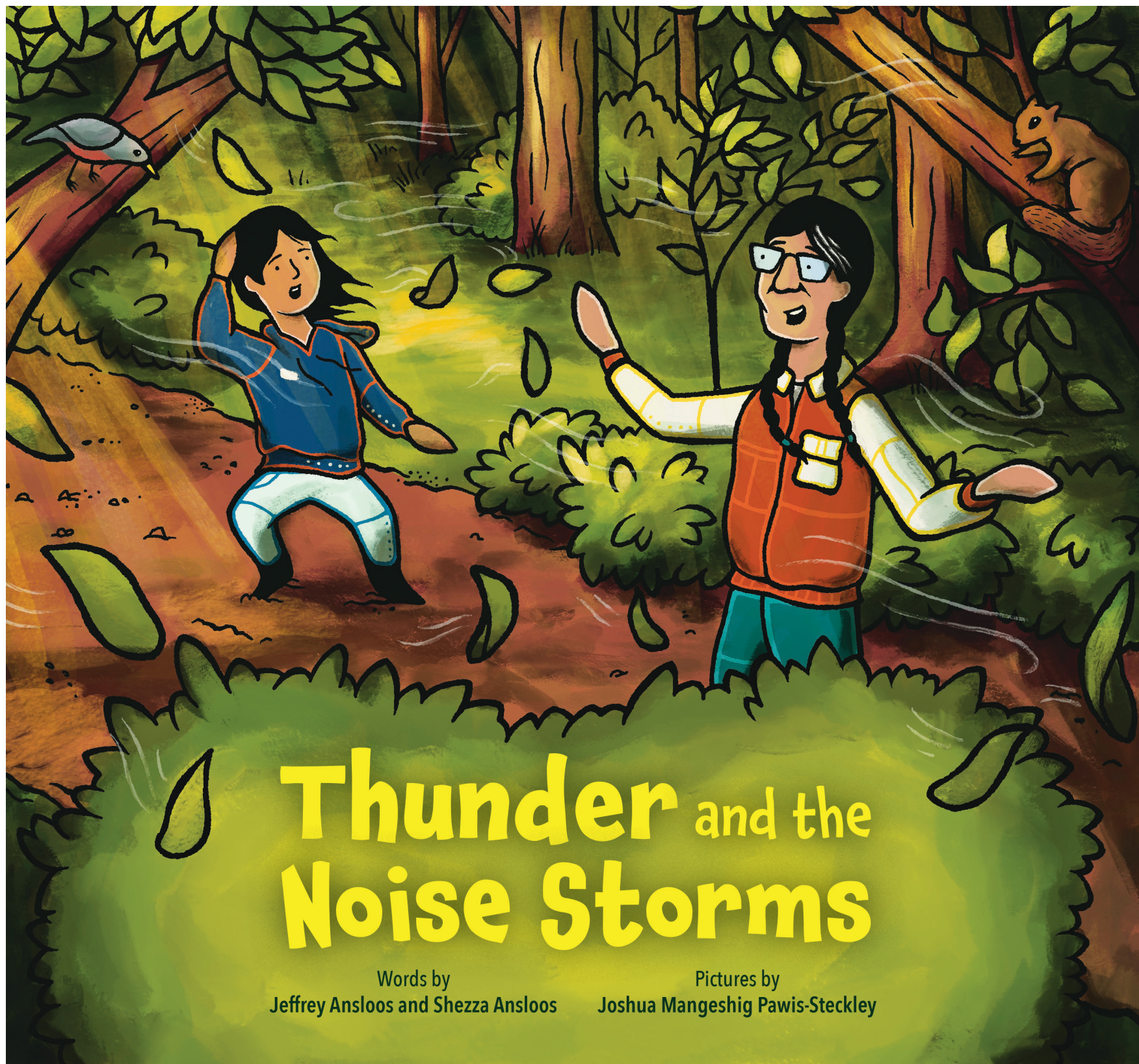




Thunder and the Noise Storms

Words by
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Pictures by
Joshua Mangeshig Pawis-Steckley

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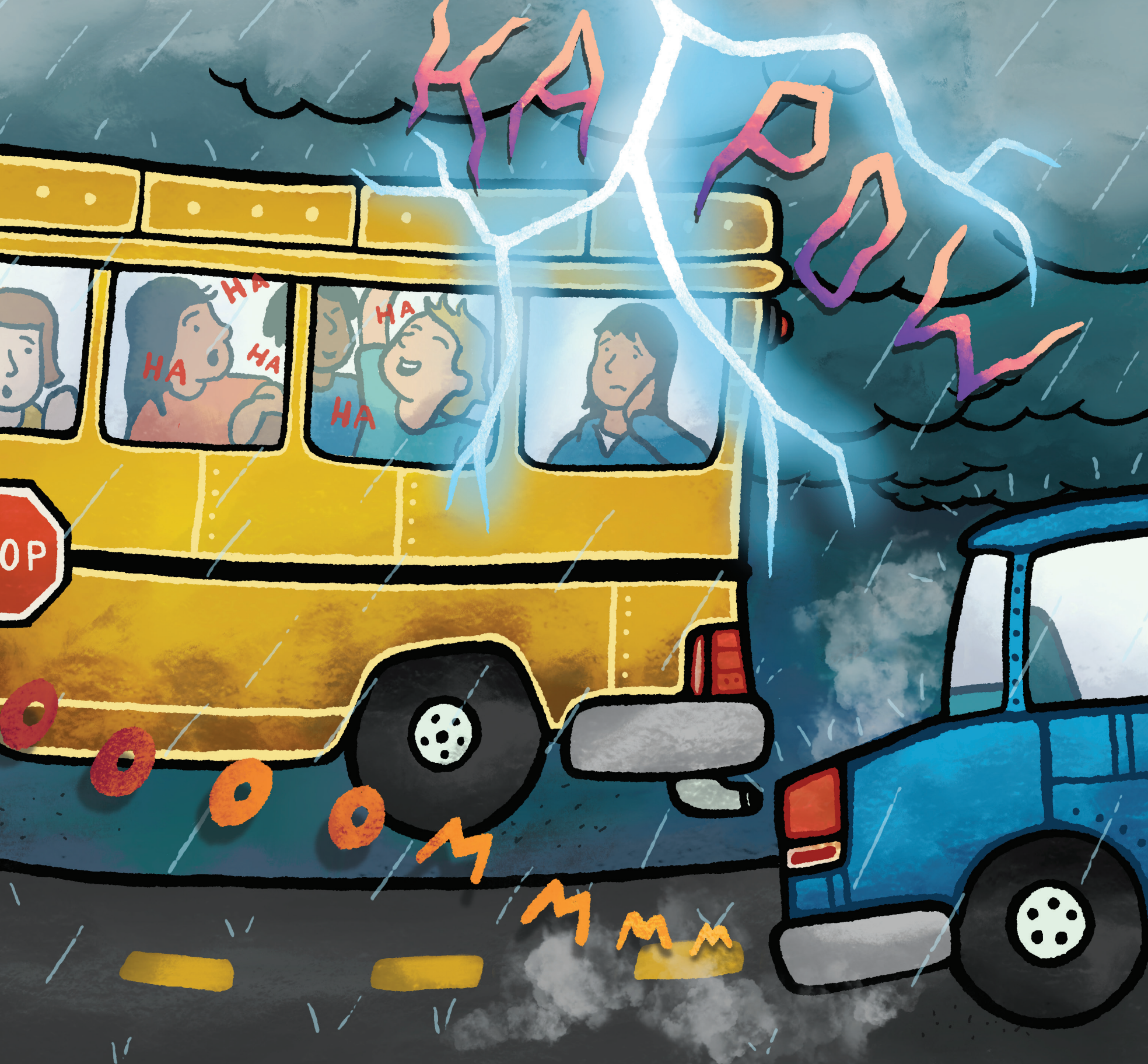
Noise storms at school are the worst.

On Monday there was a big storm. It started on the bus, with all the kids laughing and waving at the cars driving past, trying to get them to honk their horns.

Honk, honk, honk!

I got that funny feeling in my body and my brain felt woozy.







RIIING
((O))
RIIING

At school, everyone was talking, and all the jackets, shoes, and backpacks scraped and swished as the other kids put them in their cubbies.

All that racket made me grumpy.



AHHH
HA HA
HA
HA
HA



In music class on Tuesday, my friends were singing at the top of their lungs. When the teacher said we could use the instruments, my head felt like it would explode.

I pulled up my hoodie so I could be by myself.





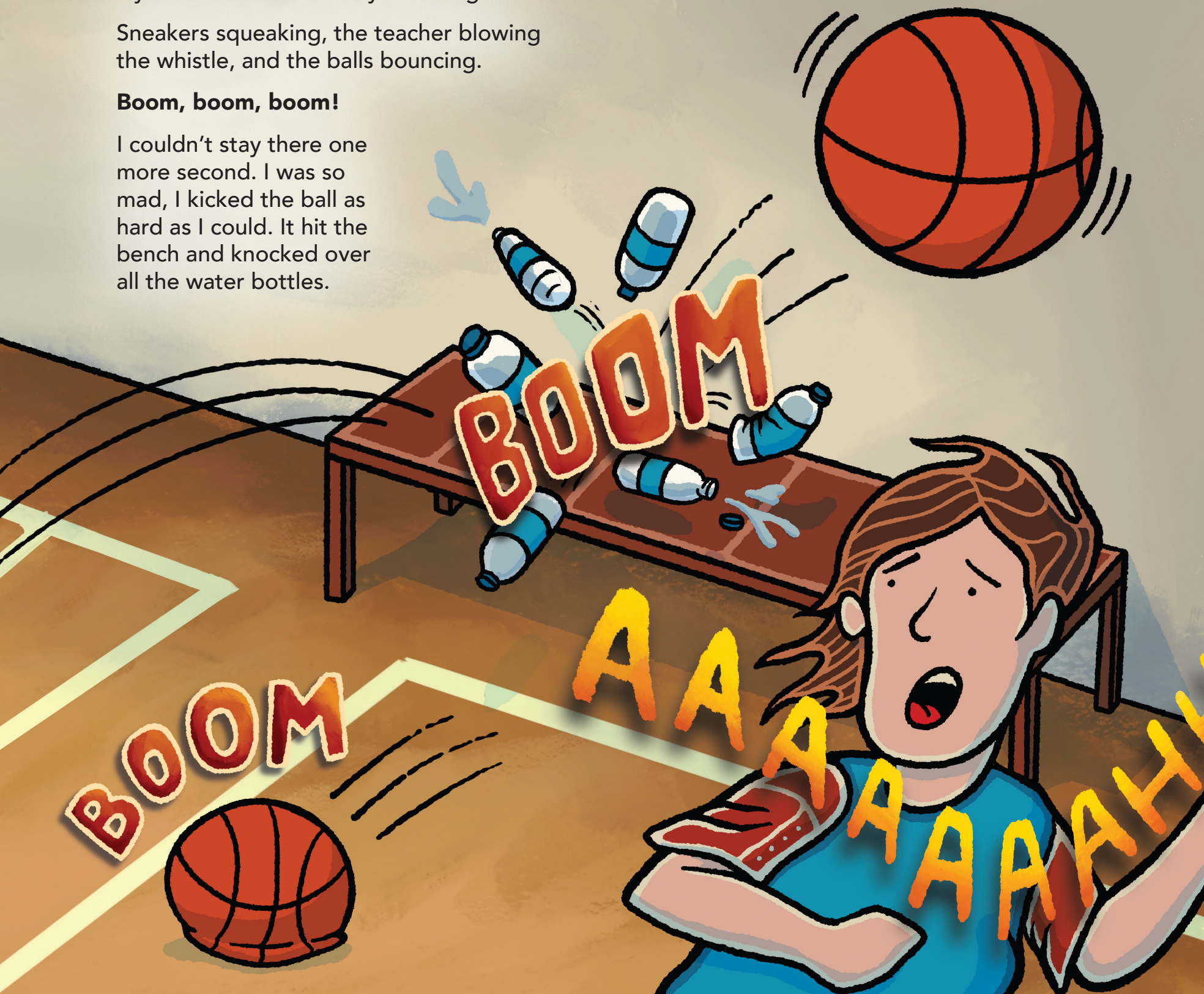


Gym class on Wednesday was rough.

Sneakers squeaking, the teacher blowing the whistle, and the balls bouncing.

Boom, boom, boom!

I couldn't stay there one more second. I was so mad, I kicked the ball as hard as I could. It hit the bench and knocked over all the water bottles.



Recess was even tougher.

When the bell rang and the kids ran
to line up, someone bumped me.
I yelled at everyone to leave me alone.
The kids backed away and stared.





I felt so alone.
I hid in the
play structure,
covering my ears.



The principal called my mosom to come help. By the time Mosom got there, I was crying and embarrassed.

Mosom said, "When you're ready, Thunder, you can come down. I'll just wait here."

It got quiet when everyone went back into the school. I climbed down, and at the bottom of the slide, Mosom was waiting.



He smiled and said,
"Let's go for a walk."
I love walks with Mosom.

After a while he asked, "Thunder, why were you hiding?"

I told him that sometimes things get too noisy. It's just so loud and I can't stand it.

Mosom nodded. "It's like that for me too, sometimes."

He explained that when he was a little boy, his father taught him a special word to help him with noise storms.

The word is mamaskasitawew.
It means to listen with wonder.





Mosom said, "Sometimes life is noisy, and sometimes life is wonderful . . . especially when you listen to the quiet things. There is wonder all around us."

I tried to listen to the quiet things Mosom spoke about, but I didn't hear anything.

I still felt stormy. My face was hot, and my skin felt scratchy. All I heard was the swing set, screeching in the breeze.





Mosom closed his eyes, then he said,
"Thunder, Thunder, listen with wonder. Can you hear our
relative the wind? The wind is singing a soothing song."

I stopped to listen again. It was hard at first.
I only heard annoying songs. The flag whipping,
a door banging, and the gravel grinding under my feet.





I started to get that funny feeling again.

I took some deep breaths and listened for the quiet sounds. I remembered what Mosom said.

"Thunder, Thunder, listen with wonder."

Even with all the noise around me,
I could still listen to my heart.





For Matthew, Kîsik, and all the quiet things.

–J.A. and S.A.

In loving memory of Taran Kootenhayoo. Neghanighita.

–J.M.P.S.

Mosom is the Cree word for “grandpa.”

Tanisi is the Cree word for “hello.”

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