

CHILDREN'S FICTION

A grandmother explores her special garden with her granddaughters.

A joyful and poetic example of the best kind of teaching and learning, done in the same inquisitive spirit as the critically acclaimed *All Around Us*.

Where does wonder grow? Grandmother knows it grows everywhere but she especially

loves to show it off in what she calls her story garden. She invites her granddaughters to join her there in a sweet meditation on the treasures she's brought to that magical place—the rocks, the shells, the crystals, the meteorites: how they came to be, how they were formed, how they each have a story to tell. *Where Wonder Grows* encourages curiosity and thoughtfulness.

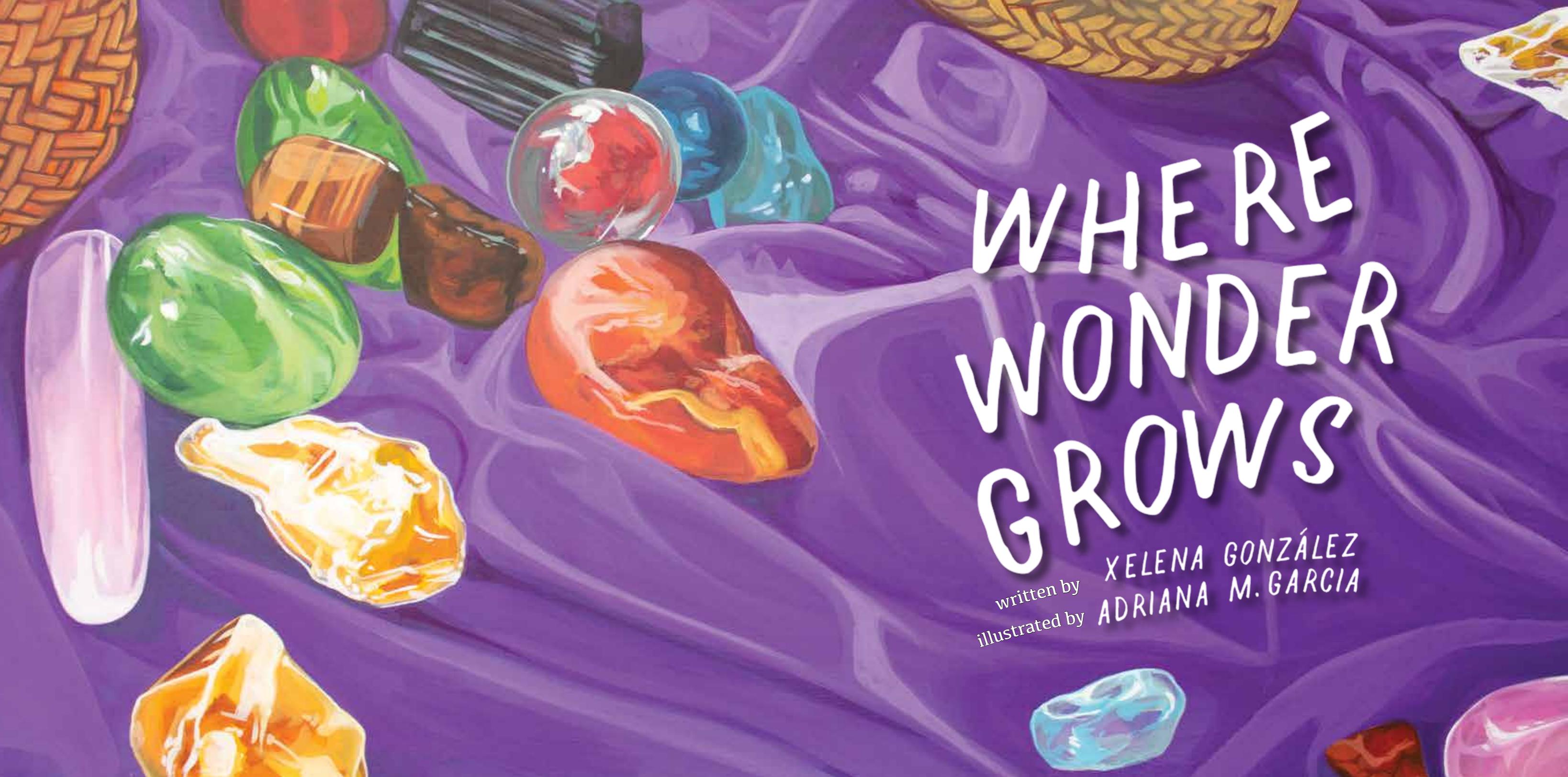
**-Not For Sale-
UNCORRECTED PROOF**

Hardcover 978-1-947627-46-8, \$17.95

eBook 978-1-947627-47-5, \$17.95

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WHERE WONDER GROWS

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illustrated by ADRIANA M. GARCIA

**When Grandma walks to her special garden,
we know to follow.**



**This is the place
where wonder grows
and stories blossom.**

**Where we gather our magic rocks
and relics from nature.**



In school we learn
that rocks are things.
But Grandma has taught us
they are *beings*.

They are alive with wisdom,
so we call them grandfathers
and grandmothers.



She asks us to wonder why
this one has so many holes,
like secret rooms.

We look inside to see
molten heat bubbling
from the earth's belly,
burning new rocks
into being!



**“They were here
long before us
and know more
about our world
than we ever will.”**

**Grandma says that in the sweat lodge,
they help send songs and prayers
through the air, to our ancestors.**



**“They have survived fire,
and so they give us strength.”**

**When we’re old enough to enter
the sweat lodge, we’ll know
exactly what she means.**



**“Tell us about the ones
with super powers,”
we ask.**

**“You mean the ones
with a healing touch?”**



We're transfixed by the colors of crystals
and the glow of Grandma's stories...



**...about curanderas who can cure the body
with white halite, sky blue celestine,
and quartz of all kinds.**



**“From its core to its surface,
our earth gives us everything
we need to survive.”**



**After conjuring fire
and digging deep within earth,
it's time to dive into water.**

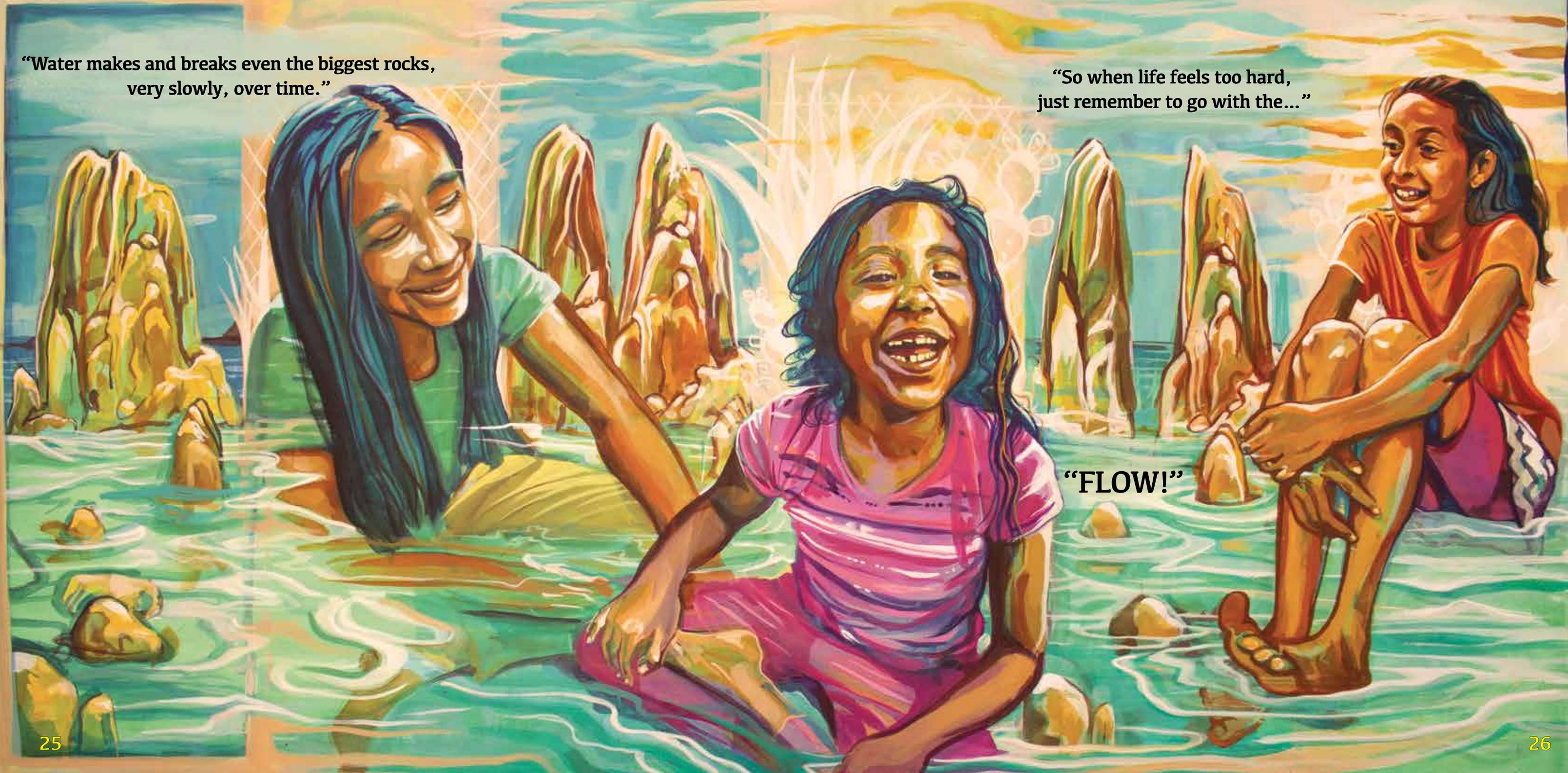
**We wonder what wisdom
these tiny white forests and
houses of shell hold,
down in the sea,
where there is still
so much mystery.**



**“Water makes and breaks even the biggest rocks,
very slowly, over time.”**

**“So when life feels too hard,
just remember to go with the...”**

“FLOW!”

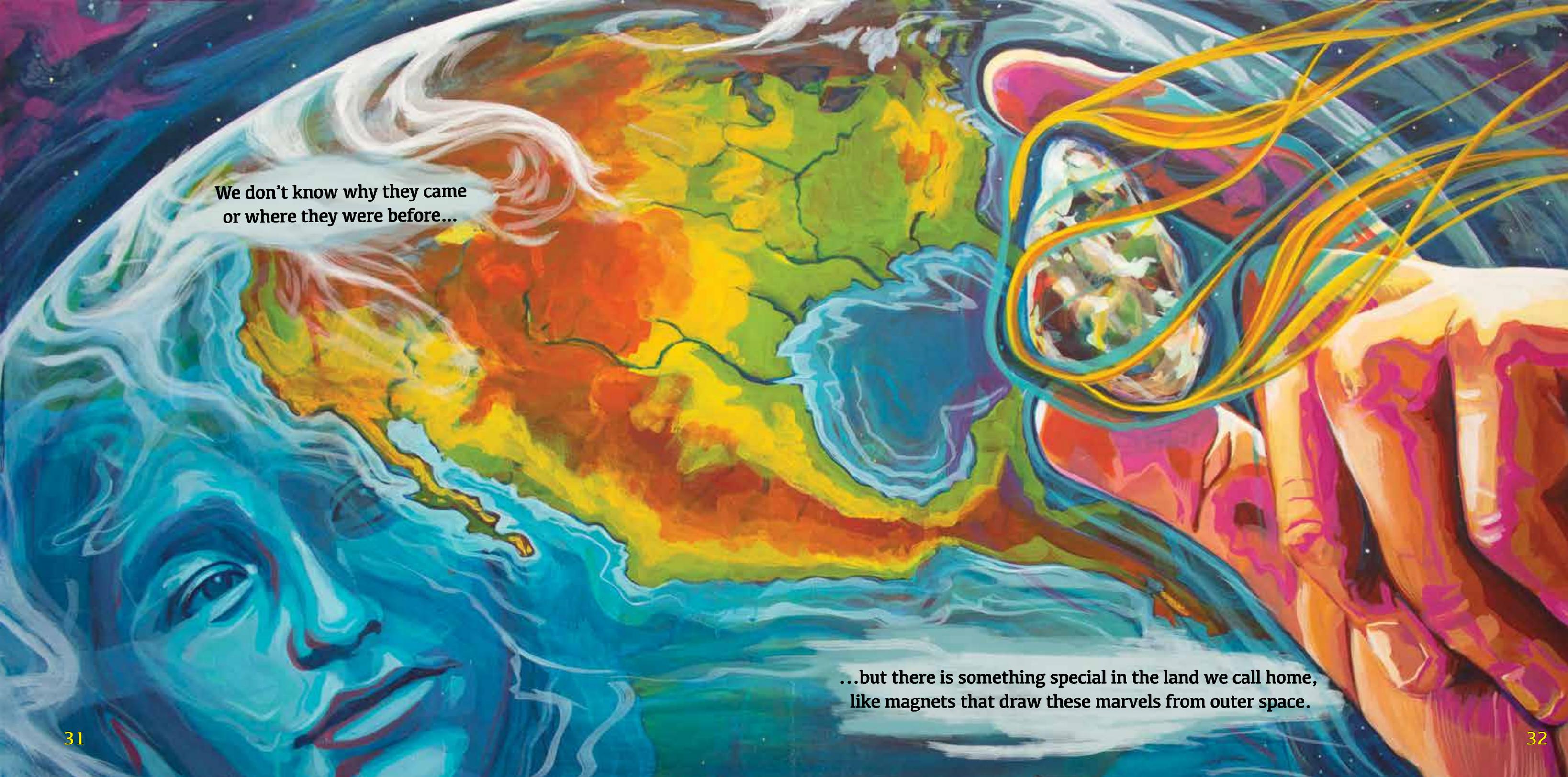


As the sun quiets, we remember the rocks we love most...





Silver beauties who flew
from night's sky
like freed light
dancing on air.



**We don't know why they came
or where they were before...**

**...but there is something special in the land we call home,
like magnets that draw these marvels from outer space.**



They remind us
how small we are
in this big world...
and how very powerful.

When the stars awaken,
we rest in our garden,
holding these treasures close.

And with every breath,
we continue to wonder.

Dear Reader,

The idea for this picture book came from you – our readers. Adriana and I have traveled to many schools and libraries around the country, and along the way, you have introduced us to your rock finds and friends. You invited us to rock parties, stone painting sessions, and gem hunts. Your belief in the magic of rocks inspired us!

Adriana and I enjoy making art in unusual ways. She had a strong vision for what this book could be, and I shaped words that would match her splendid paintings. These illustrations are extra special for me because they feature my family (my nieces, my mother, and my daughter – who also appeared alongside my dad in *All Around Us*.)

We hope that our books remind you of the very special connection you have to your grandparents, your ancestors, and to nature. Because of this, you are powerful and enduring. Just like a rock.

Love and light,
Xelena

FACTS THAT ROCK



The elements of fire, earth, water, and air are celebrated in various indigenous ceremonies and art forms. Our book features four relics from nature that represent these four elements: volcanic rocks symbolize fire; crystals represent earth; shells illustrate water; and meteorites express air.

What do you gather in your nature collections? What is their story?



A sweat lodge is a ceremonial place where some go to cleanse their body and spirit, by sitting in a natural steam bath, praying and singing alongside people from their Native American community. Various tribes and circles have different ways of practicing this custom, but people usually do not participate until adulthood.

In the Nahuatl language of Mexico, a sweat lodge is called a temazcal. It's fun to say! Can you try it? Do you have any special places where you go to sing or pray with others?



Some people keep their most powerful nature finds in a special place, like Grandma does in her garden. Others carry their treasures with them in a medicine bag. They call it “medicine” because many can cure and find healing from the stones and plants provided by nature.

Does your family practice any remedios or natural remedies? Where do you carry or keep your special tokens from nature?



Not all rocks are ready to be collected. Some parks prohibit taking rocks and plants from their natural environment. Before collecting a new find, be sure to check the rules and even check with the being itself

Do you name any of your rock friends? How about shells, trees, or house plants?

