

A
SEED
NAMED
HOPE

JOE LATHAM



Do you like cats? HOLY CRAP I love cats too!
That's so cool, we have so much in common!


Every time I've lived in a place with no cats I've taken it upon myself to go on cat-walks around the neighbourhood to find where the best routes to go meet local cats. Yeah I'm that guy. Rach sometimes calls me the cat-whisperer because cats don't seem to mind me. I think it's got more to do with my slow moving persistence.

We shall be friends.

The following comic is a short story about dealing with a terrible sadness, trying to come to terms with the loss of hope. It comes from a very tough time that I had.

I didn't intend on ever printing this one,
but here we are, and it has made me very nervous.

Anyway, I hope someone somewhere finds this helpful.



THE SMALLEST CATS IN
THE BIGGEST WORLD...


THEY FEEL LIKE GIANTS
IN THEIR KINGDOM.

HEY RUSTY, HAVE
YOU SEEN WHERE I
PUT MY BLANKET?

HAVE YOU EVEN
LOOKED FOR IT?

OR HAVE YOU
JUST 'BOY-LOOKED'
FOR IT?


PROBLEMS SEEMED LIKE THINGS
THEY COULD OVERCOME.



COMFORTABLE IN THEIR FOREST-
FORTRESS, THEY BASKED.

I SAW J'M EARLIER,
HE WAS TALKING
ABOUT SOME TRIP.

OH?




WHEN YOU ARE SAFE, YOU
DREAM OF ADVENTURE.

THEY DARED TO DREAM.

...AND THE BEAST
KNEW I HAD
STOLEN IT'S GEM,

BUT I WAS ONLY
HALF WAY ACROSS
THE BRIDGE...



...SO I DIVED OFF,
OUT OF REACH OF
THE BIRD!

IT WAS AMAZING!

THEY WERE HOOKED ALREADY.



ONE DAY TUFTY WENT AWAY.

BYE SUGAR,
I LOVE YOU!

I'LL BE BACK SOON,
I LOVE YOU TOO!

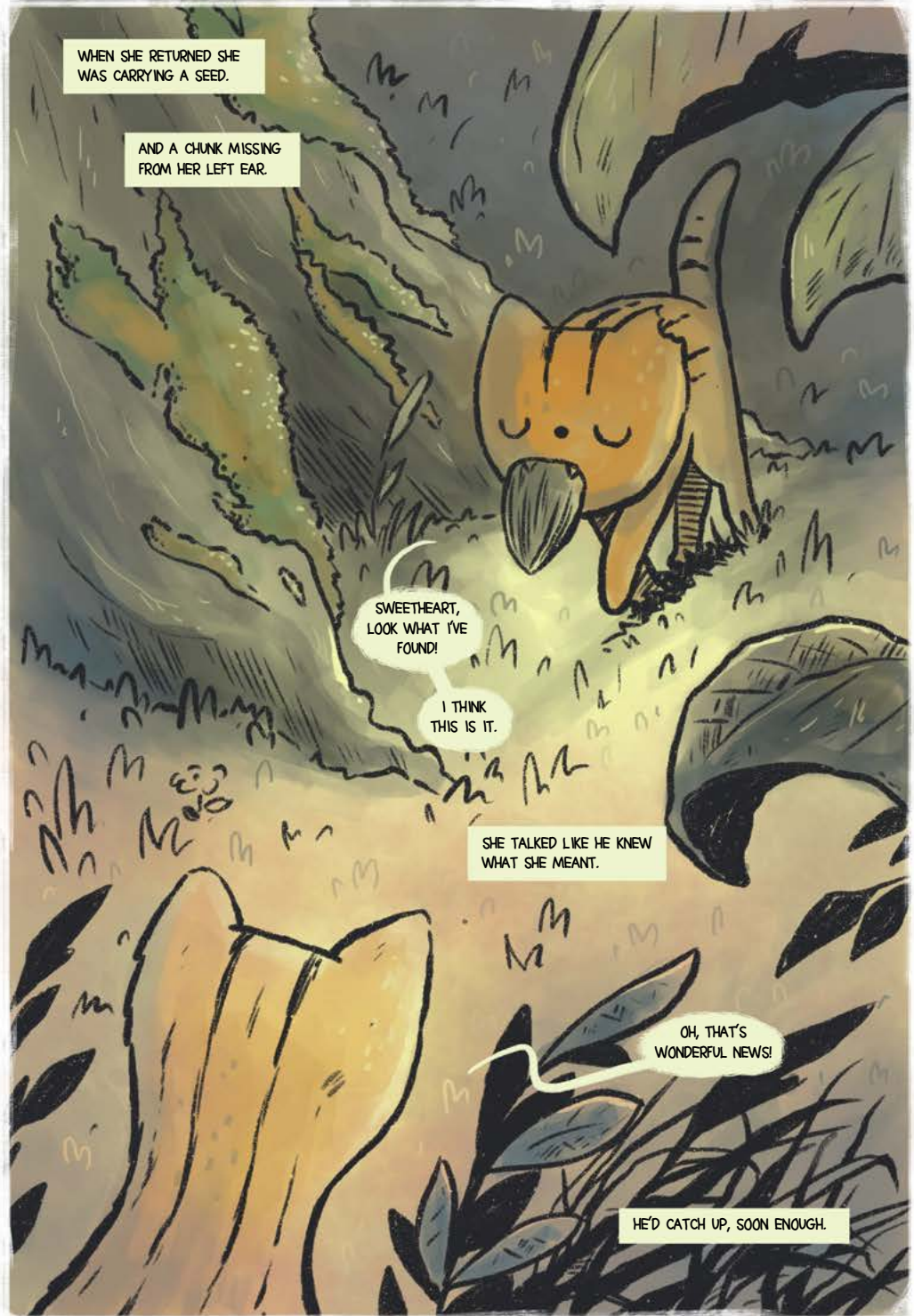


SHE WAS IN SEARCH OF ADVENTURE.



SOMETHING TO MAKE THEIR WORLD
EVEN BIGGER, AND MORE EXCITING.

TUFTY? IS
THAT YOU?



WHEN SHE RETURNED SHE
WAS CARRYING A SEED.

AND A CHUNK MISSING
FROM HER LEFT EAR.

SWEETHEART,
LOOK WHAT I'VE
FOUND!

I THINK
THIS IS IT.

SHE TALKED LIKE HE KNEW
WHAT SHE MEANT.

OH, THAT'S
WONDERFUL NEWS!

HE'D CATCH UP, SOON ENOUGH.



THERE WAS A CHANGE IN THE AIR.

SOMETHING HAD SHIFTED.

OK THEN PUDDING,
SHALL WE PLANT IT HERE?



THEY WERE BOTH SO NERVOUS.

OH I HOPE THIS
IS THE RIGHT
PLACE FOR IT.

I'M SURE IT
WILL BE FINE.



THEY SAT BACK AND WATCHED IT GROW.



AND GROW.



IT WAS HAPPENING!

RIGHT BEFORE THEIR EYES.



NERVES TURN TO EXCITEMENT SO QUICKLY.

OHMYGOSH! I WONDER
WHAT IT MAY BE.

IT COULD GROW UP
TO BE **ANYTHING**...



IT COULD BE A BIG JUICY
TOMATO PLANT...

OR...



A MAGIC
MONEY TREE!



OR MAYBE IT WILL
GROW SO TALL...

WE COULD LIVE
AMONGST THE CLOUDS...



OR...

PERHAPS IT WILL BEAR
MAGIC FRUITS THAT COULD
ALSO BE OUR FRIENDS!



THEIR DREAMS WERE SO COLOURFUL,

THEY COULDN'T WAIT TO FIND OUT.

THEN SOMETHING TERRIBLE HAPPENED...

WHAT APPEARED TO BE A ONCE HEALTHY PLANT,

SUDDENLY DID NOT LOOK SO HEALTHY.

TINY PLANT?
ARE YOU OK,
LITTLE ONE?

IN FACT, IT LOOKED AWFUL.

OH DEAR.





THE CATS PANICKED.

THEY TRIED SO HARD TO CARE OF IT.

THEY WATERED IT.



THEY THOUGHT THAT THEIR LOVE MIGHT HELP IT TO SURVIVE.



THEY SANG SONGS AND READ STORIES.

THE MOUSE'S NAME WAS KIERKEGAAD...

SOME PEOPLE CALLED HIM 'THE MOUSE WHO LIVED...'



THEY EVEN GAVE IT HUGS.

IT'S OK BUDDY, I'VE GOT YOU.



BUT THE PLANT CONTINUED TO WITHER.



IT SHRANK AND BECAME CROOKED AND PAINED.

IT LOOKED SO SAD.



THE NEXT DAY.

THE PLANT HAD DIED.

IT WAS GONE.

THERE WAS NOTHING THEY COULD DO.

THEY WERE TOLD "IT JUST WASN'T MEANT TO BE".

BUT THAT DIDN'T HELP.

IN FACT, IT MADE IT WORSE.



THE PAIR WERE GRIEF-STRICKEN.

THEY KNEW THEY HARDLY KNEW THE PLANT,

BUT WITH IT DIED THEIR DREAMS.

WHAT IT COULD'VE GROWN TO BE.

WHY???



I MISS YOU
ALREADY.

ALL OF THAT POTENTIAL.

GONE.



TIME IS AN ILLUSION WHEN YOU'RE HURTING.

ARE YOU OK?

NOT REALLY.



IT'S GOING
TO BE OK.

DAYS DISSOLVE AWAY.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS ONLY.

HOLD ON TO LOVE.

THEY WANTED TO THANK THE SEED.

FOR THE HOPE AND DREAMS THAT IT BROUGHT THEM.

SO THEY HELD A FUNERAL PYRE,

AND INVITED THEIR FRIENDS.

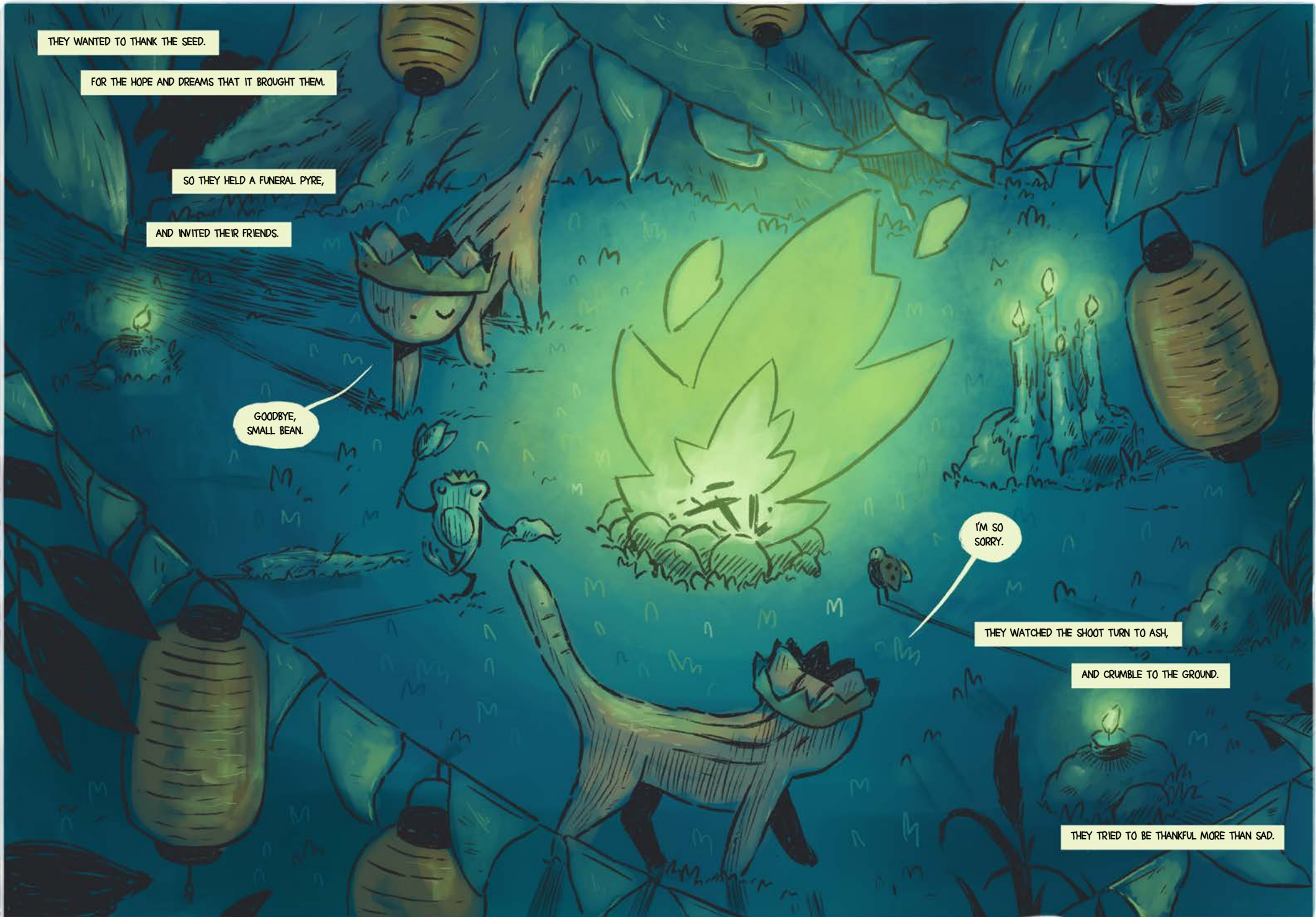
GOODBYE,
SMALL BEAN.

I'M SO
SORRY.

THEY WATCHED THE SHOOT TURN TO ASH,

AND CRUMBLE TO THE GROUND.

THEY TRIED TO BE THANKFUL MORE THAN SAD.





THEY MOURNED FOR DAYS.

IT WAS LIKE BEING ADRIFT WITHOUT AN OAR.

THROWN FROM CREST TO CREST.

BATTERED.



SOME DAYS THEY FELT FINE.

ALMOST NORMAL.

HEY, DO YOU THINK WE CAN GO ON HOLIDAY THIS YEAR?



OTHER DAYS, NOT SO MUCH.



THEY TRIED TO HELP EACH OTHER WEATHER THE STORM.

QUICKLY, GET UNDER THE TREE!

I'M FINE, I'M FINE!



THAT'S IT,

I'M NOT MOVING FROM THIS SPOT.

THE GRASS CAN HAVE ME.



GRADUALLY, THE STORM PASSED.

HEY I SAW
DR.LADYBUG TODAY.

OH YEAH? HOW
WERE THEY?



AND THEY FELT LIKE THEMSELVES
FOR THE FIRST TIME IN A WHILE.

DID YOU ASK THEM
ABOUT THAT TRIP?



SO THEY BEGAN TO MAKE PLANS AGAIN,
TO THINK ABOUT THEIR FUTURE.

YEAH, THEY SAID
IT'S STILL ON.

GREAT!



THEY STILL HAD DREAMS.

AND THERE WAS STILL COLOUR IN THEM.


DO YOU
REMEMBER
LISBON?

THAT FISH SHOP!
HOW COULD WE
FORGET?



AND THAT'S WHEN THEY NOTICED IT...

HEY LOOK
THERE...



THERE IN THE DIRT,

WHERE THE SEED ONCE STOOD.

SWEETHEART,
LOOK!

IT'S COME BACK!

WHAT?
WHAT DO YOU
MEAN?

IT TWITCHED AND SQUIRMED.



A BRIGHT FRESH SHOOT,

CURLING UP, CLIMBING OUT OF THE SOIL.

WHERE THE SHOOT HAD DIED, WAS LIFE.

OH MY
GOSH!



HOPE.

THERE IS ALWAYS HOPE.

WHEN YOU ARE LOST AT SEA,

OR CAUGHT IN A STORM.

HOLD ON TO HOPE.

BECAUSE IT IS YOURS.

AND IT IS PRECIOUS.

JOE LATHAM IS A HUMAN PERSON BASED IN THE UK.
HE PAINTS HIS NAILS AND LOVES CATS, LIKE, A LOT.

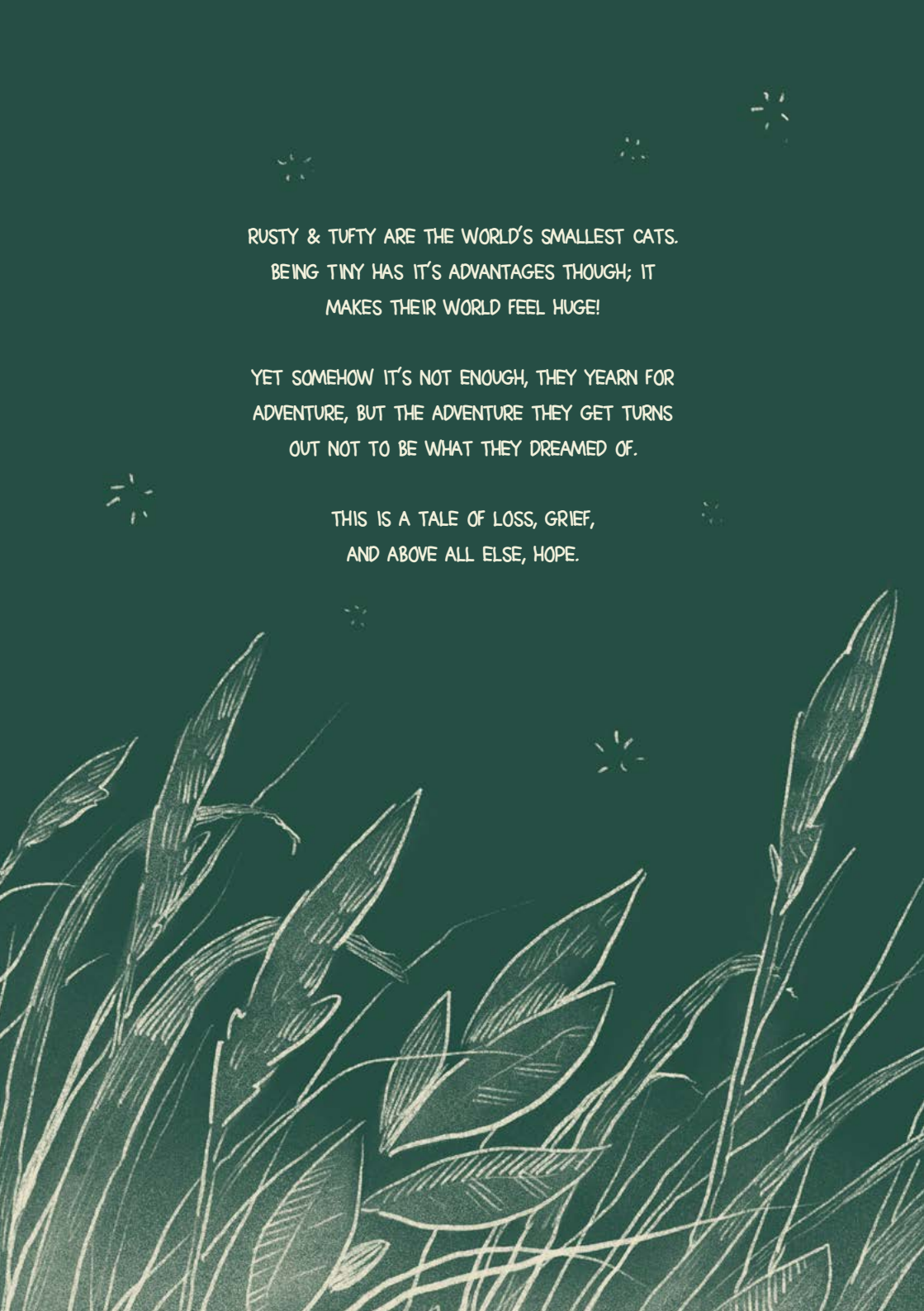
HE MAKES ILLUSTRATIONS AND WEBSITES FOR PEOPLE.
HIS WORK WEBSITE IS WWW.LOOKHAPPYDESIGN.COM

FIND HIM ON TWITTER, AND INSTAGRAM.

I GENUINELY NEVER INTENDED ON PRINTING THIS BOOK, BUT WHEN
MUM DIED A FEW WEEKS AGO IT CHANGED HOW EVERYTHING
FELT, SO I FIGURE, SCREW IT, I'LL PRINT IT FOR A BIT. MAYBE
OTHER PEOPLE WILL FIND IT HELPFUL.

THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR PICKING UP THIS BOOK.
THE FACT THAT YOU DID MAKES THIS ALL WORTH IT.





RUSTY & TUFTY ARE THE WORLD'S SMALLEST CATS.
BEING TINY HAS IT'S ADVANTAGES THOUGH; IT
MAKES THEIR WORLD FEEL HUGE!

YET SOMEHOW IT'S NOT ENOUGH, THEY YEARN FOR
ADVENTURE, BUT THE ADVENTURE THEY GET TURNS
OUT NOT TO BE WHAT THEY DREAMED OF.

THIS IS A TALE OF LOSS, GRIEF,
AND ABOVE ALL ELSE, HOPE.

