



Written by:

Madeleine
Rouse

Illustrated by:

Teresa Thomas



AUTHOR'S NOTE



A very special thank you to
Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez;
You are a fearless leader for
generations of young women to come.

Additional thanks to Anna Bernstein, Savannah
Maestrello, and Caroline Smith. This book would
be nothing without your research and contribution.

Maria was sleepy after a long day of playing in the sunshine. She waited for her Grandma Alexandria to tuck her in bed. She looked out the window to a clear, starry night.

Maria said “Grandma, were the stars always this bright?”

Grandma Alexandria was quiet. “No Maria. When I was your age, I couldn’t see the stars some nights.”

Maria looked out her window and then back at her grandmother.

“What do you mean? There were no stars?”



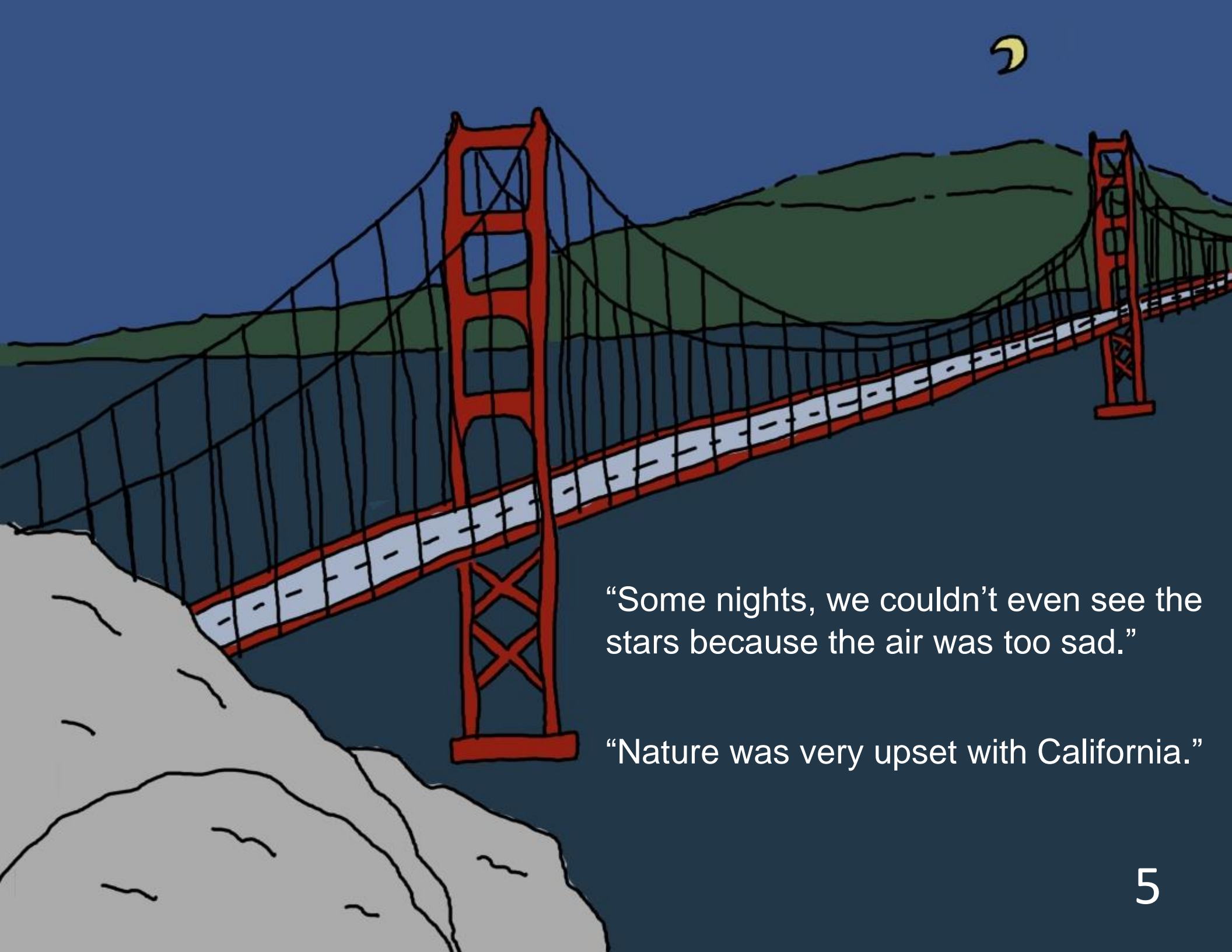


“Why?” asked Maria.

Grandma Alexandria said,
“Well, let me tell you a bedtime
story with a happy ending.”

“Before America used power
from nature, the sun, the water,
and the earth were upset.”





“Some nights, we couldn’t even see the stars because the air was too sad.”

“Nature was very upset with California.”

“California did not always look like this.

People got sick breathing dirty air and drinking dirty water.

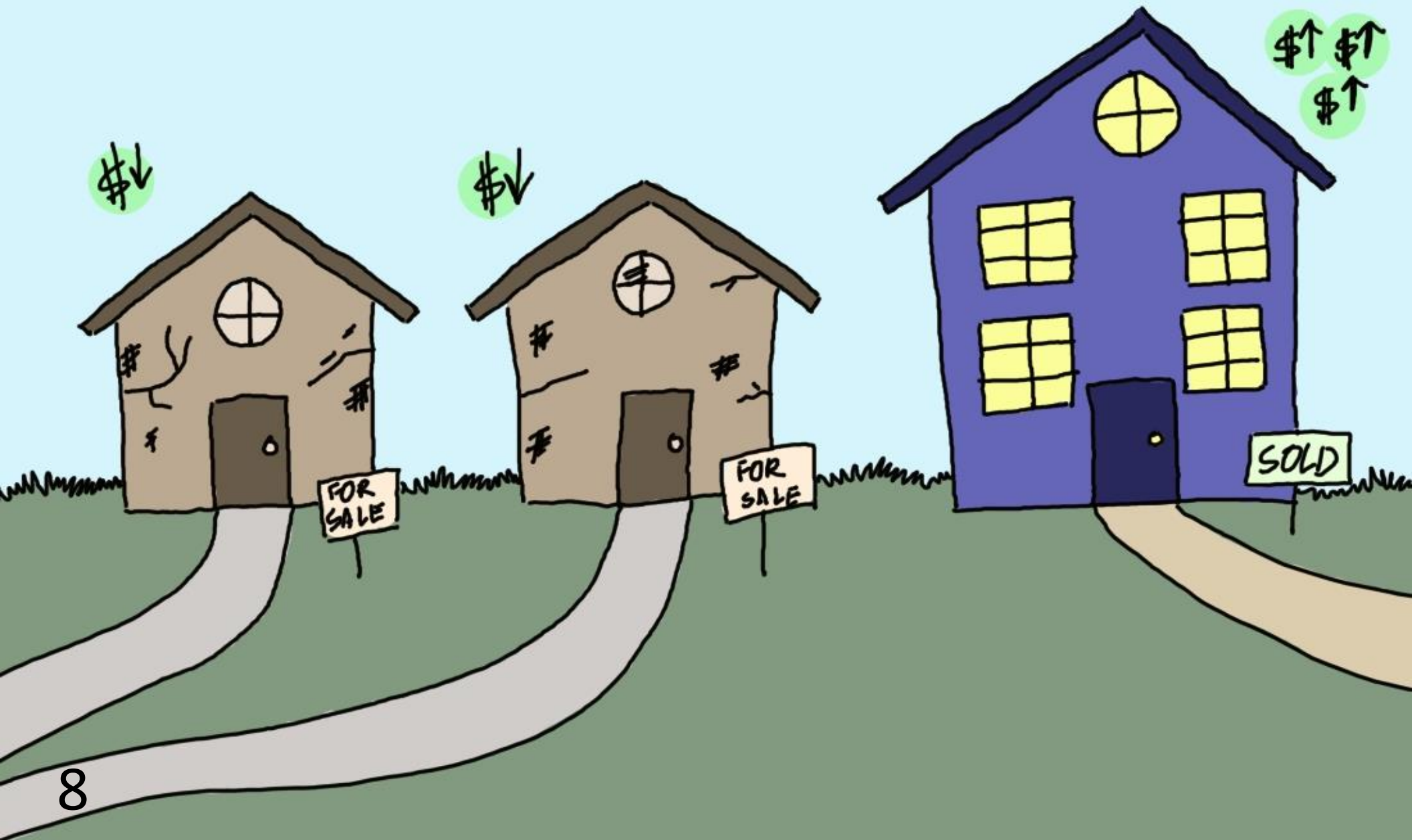
In the North, the forests became so hot they caught on fire.

In the South, mountains and cities flooded.

I’ll start the story from the very beginning.

I was born in Oakland, California. My neighbors, like me, were mostly Hispanic.”



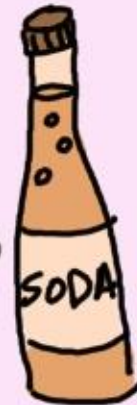


8



“When I was just a girl, I had to leave my small neighborhood.

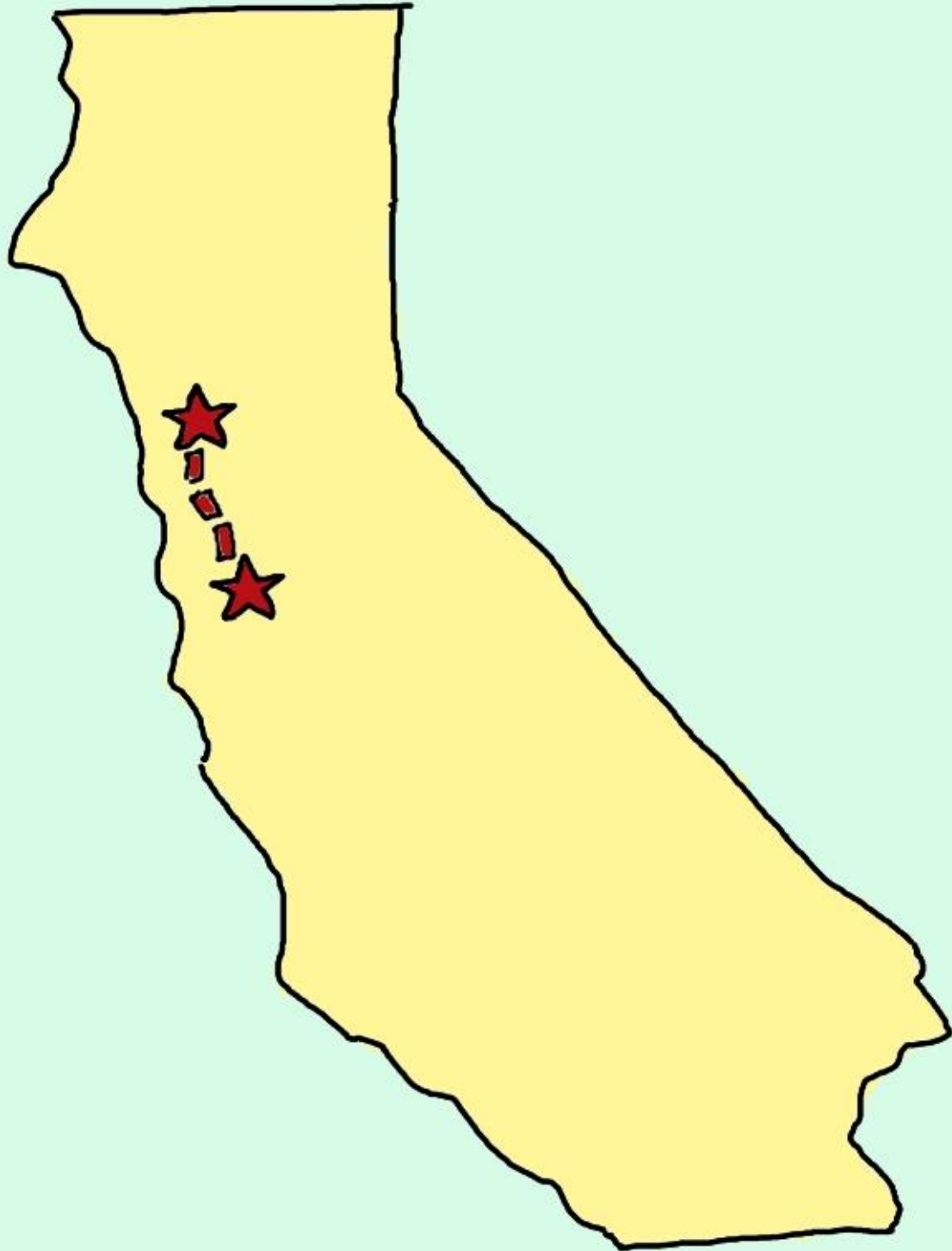
My house wasn't very safe to live in. New buildings were built all around us. The houses next to us cost too much.

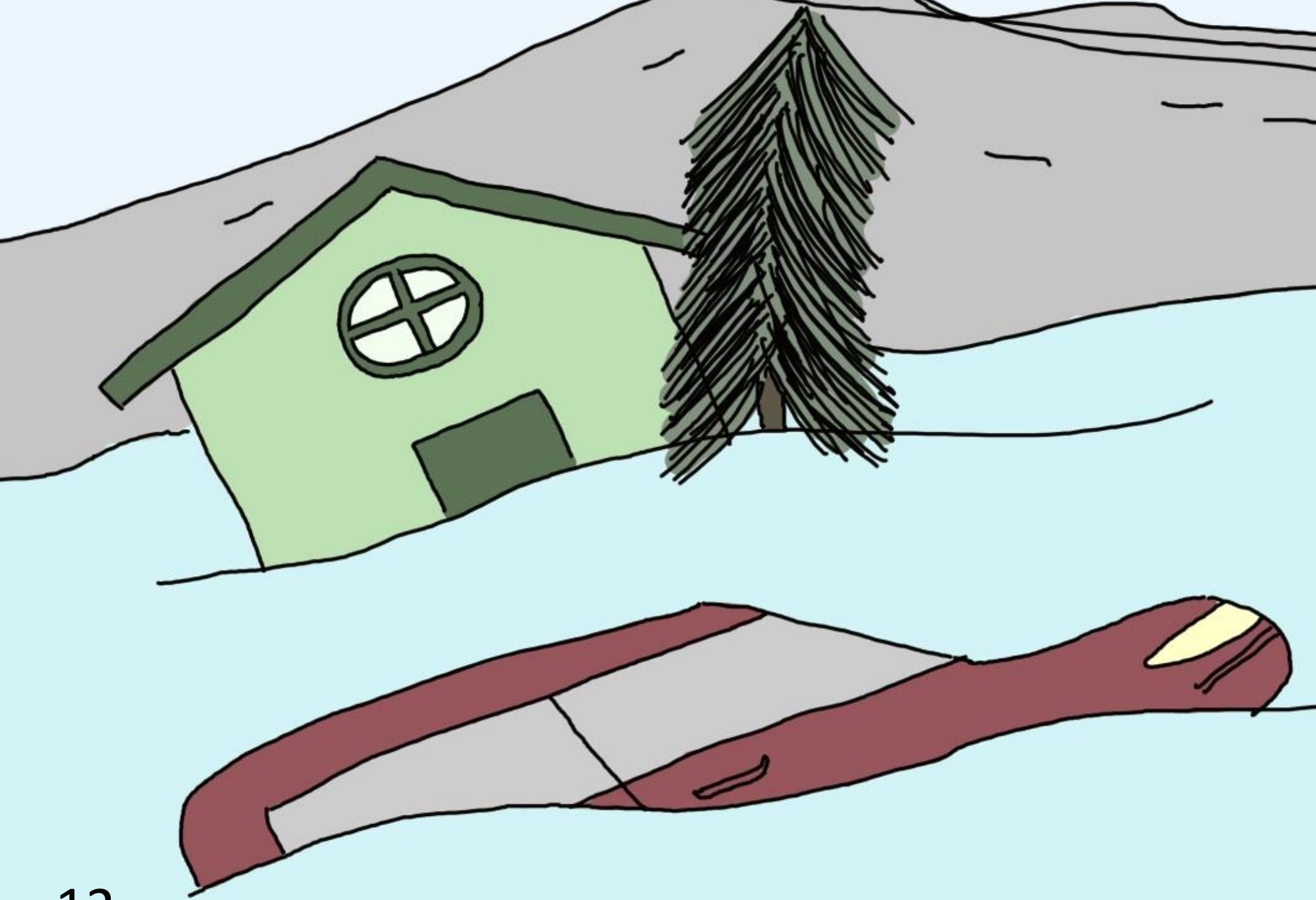


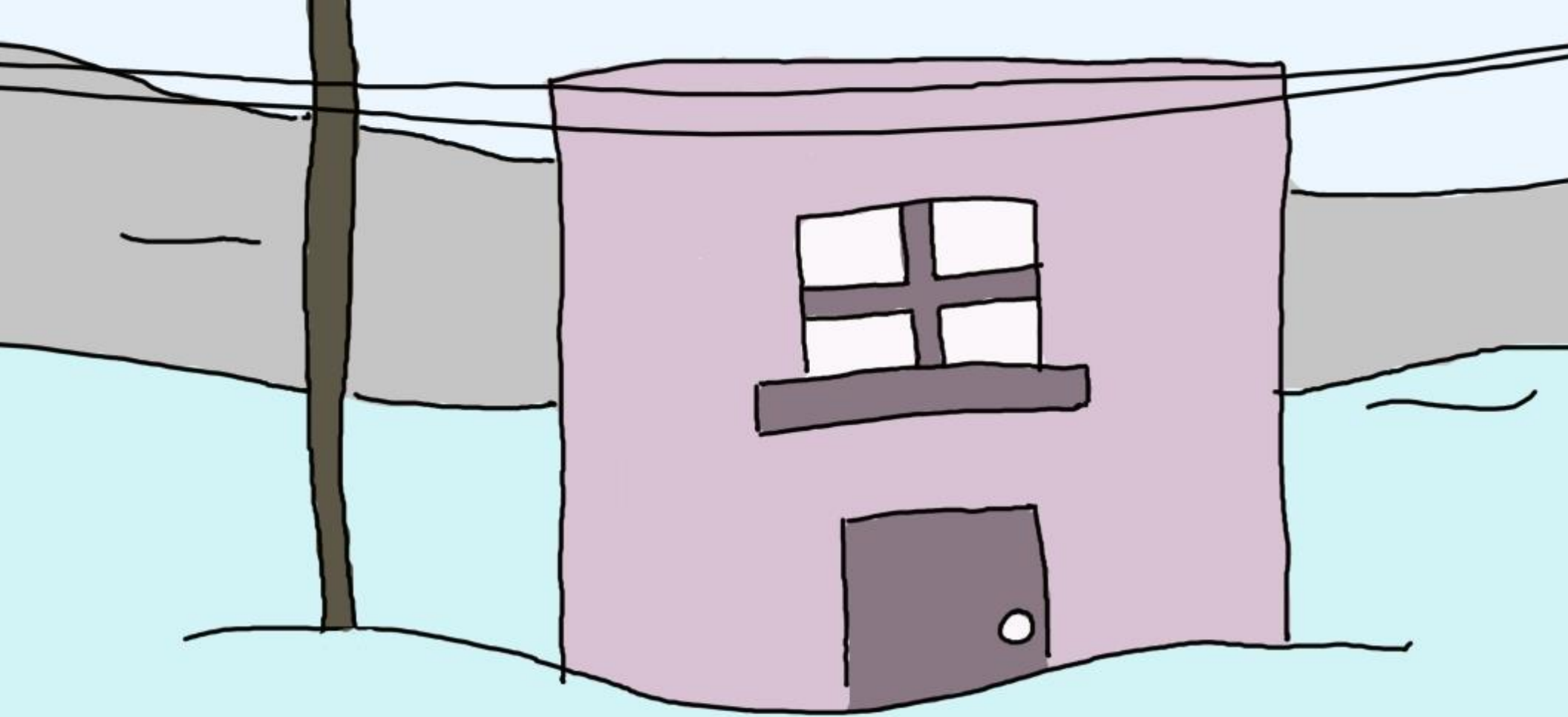
My family didn't have enough money to pay for healthy food anymore.

Junk food was easier to buy than fresh fruits and veggies.”

“So I left to find a better place to live. I went all the way to Mount Tamalpais.”







“Summer storms brought lots and lots of rain to Mount Tamalpais.

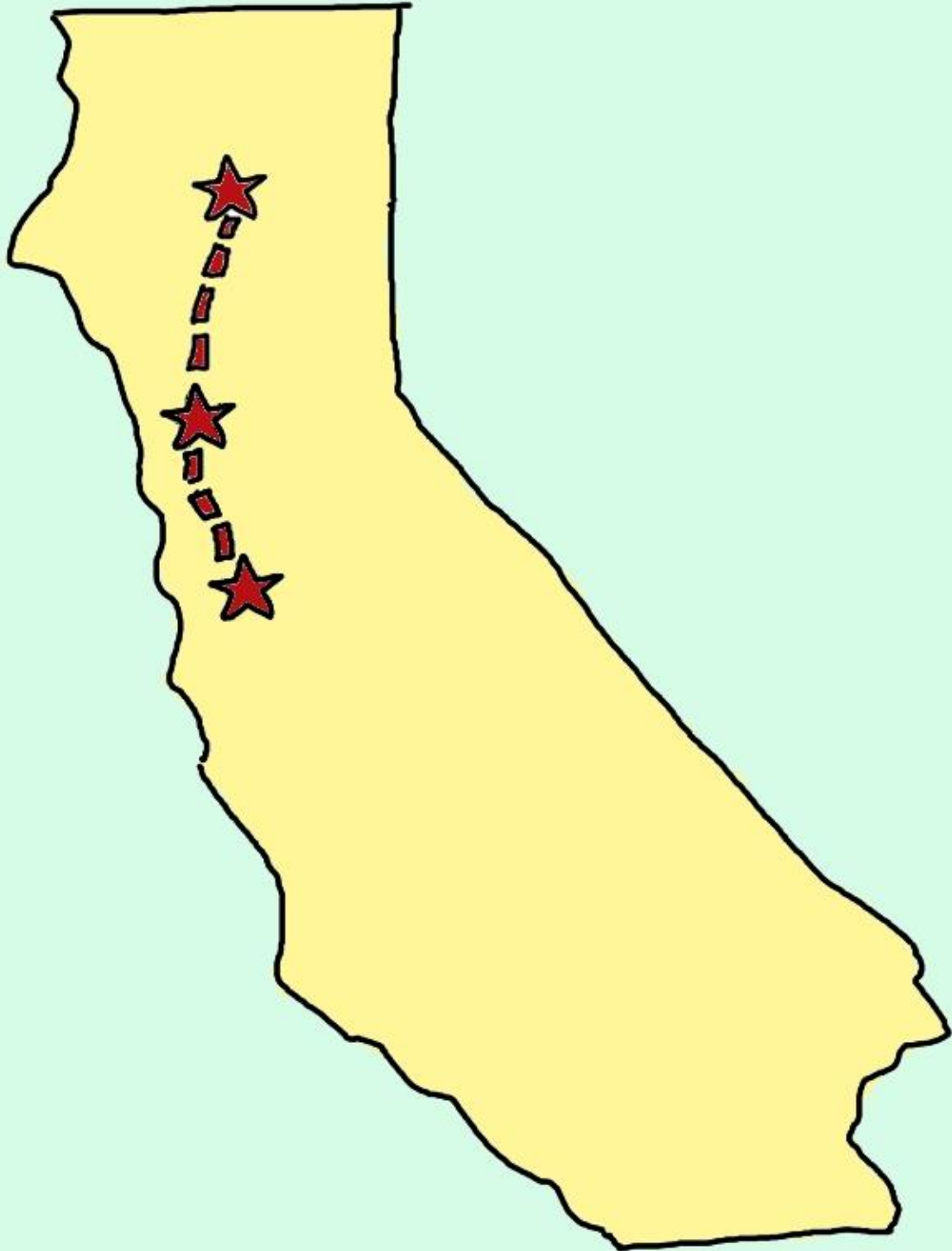
They also brought flash floods.”

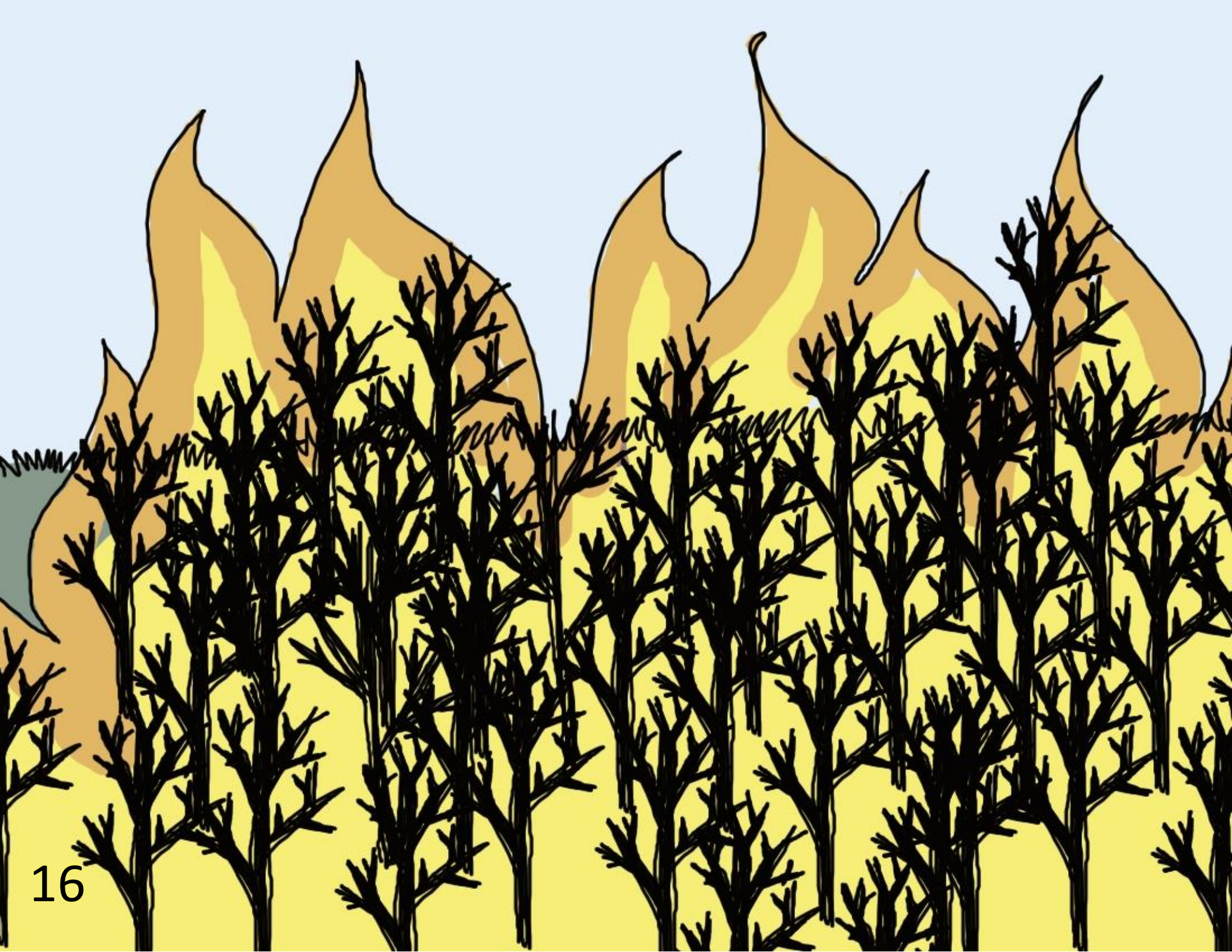
“Flash floods happen when there is too much rain and nowhere for the water to go.

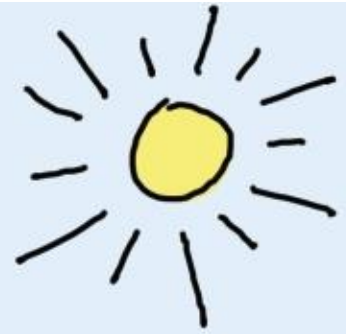
Too much water can make rocks slip and fall down mountains. This is called a mudslide.

Too much water can ruin houses in cities.

So I left to find a dryer place for my family. I went from the mountains to the forests of Paradise, California.”







“The forest was not green like it is now. The trees were dry and it was hot.

I watched firefighters try to stop the fires for days. The air smelled like smoke.

Schools and stores nearby closed because the air was too dirty to breathe.”

“So I left to find a place my family could breathe fresh air. I went from the forest to the city of Los Angeles.”






“I couldn’t breathe very well here.

There was smoke coming out of big factories.

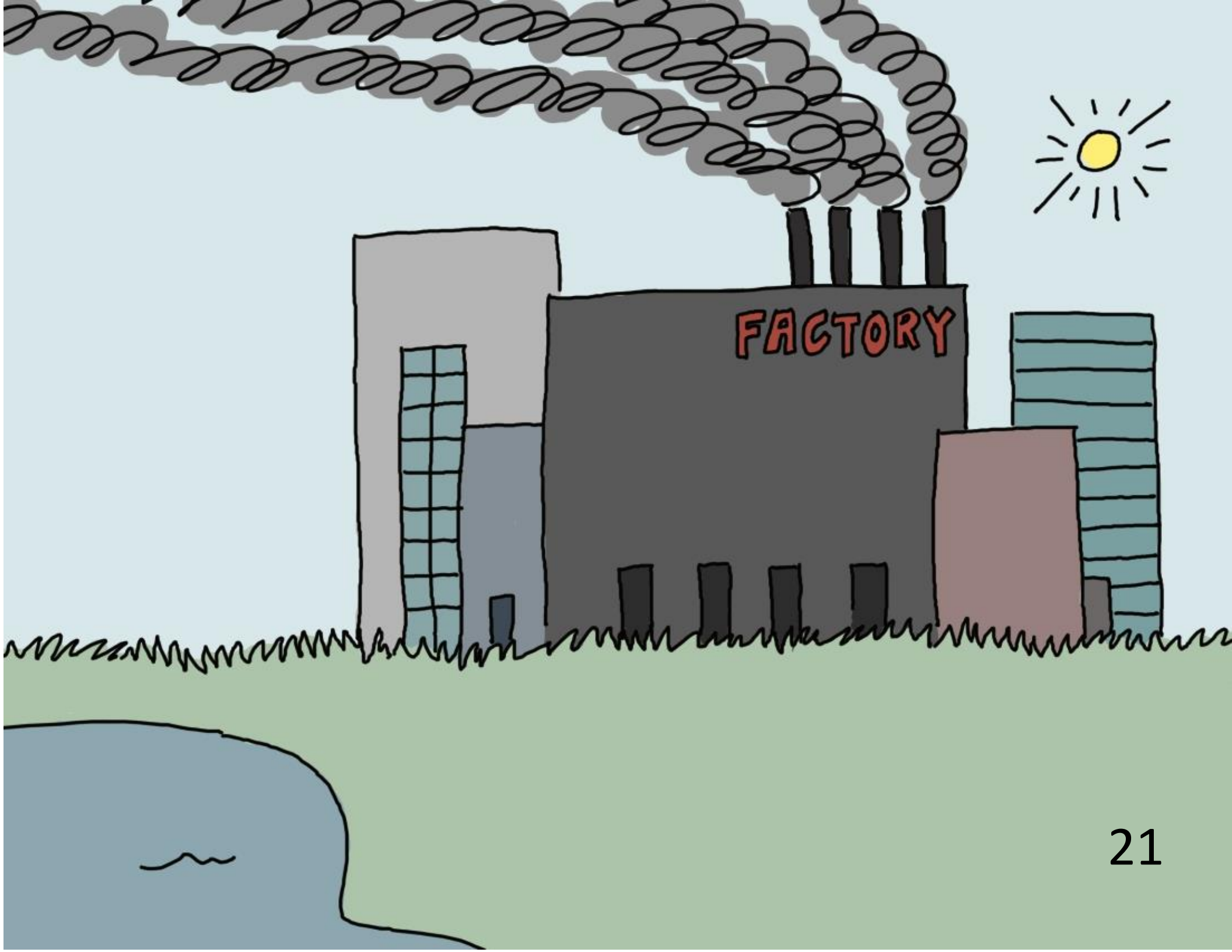
There was smoke coming out of small buildings.

There was smoke coming out of cars.

There was smoke coming out of everywhere.



The only places with no smoke, was where the very rich lived.”



“So, again, I left to find a safer place for my family. I traveled the whole state of California.

I saw the weather getting warmer.

I saw the sea levels rise.

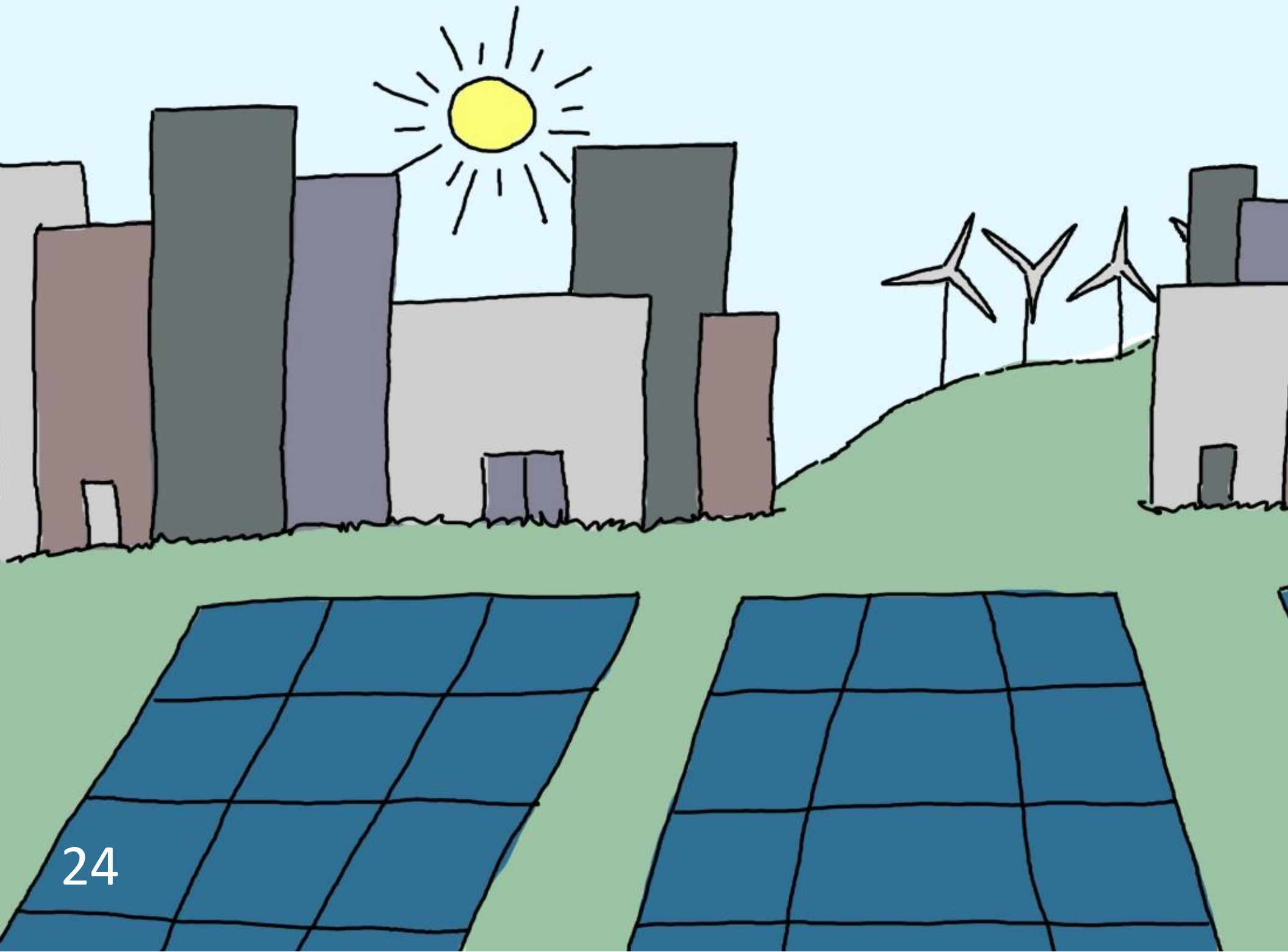
I saw more fires. More places where people could not afford to eat.

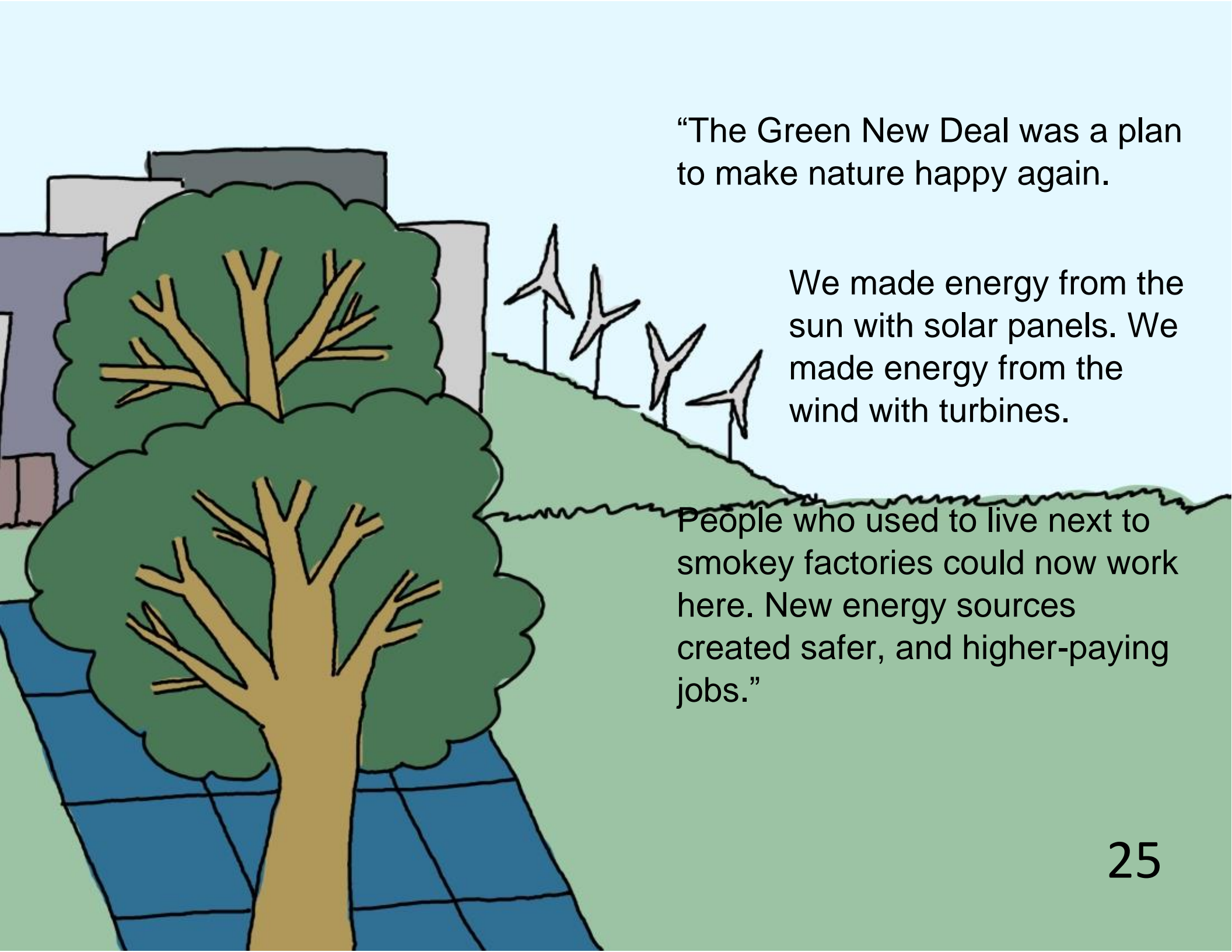
I saw neighborhoods in need of fixing.

I walked until I could see the Green New Deal.

I saw the people smile. I saw the planet smile too.”







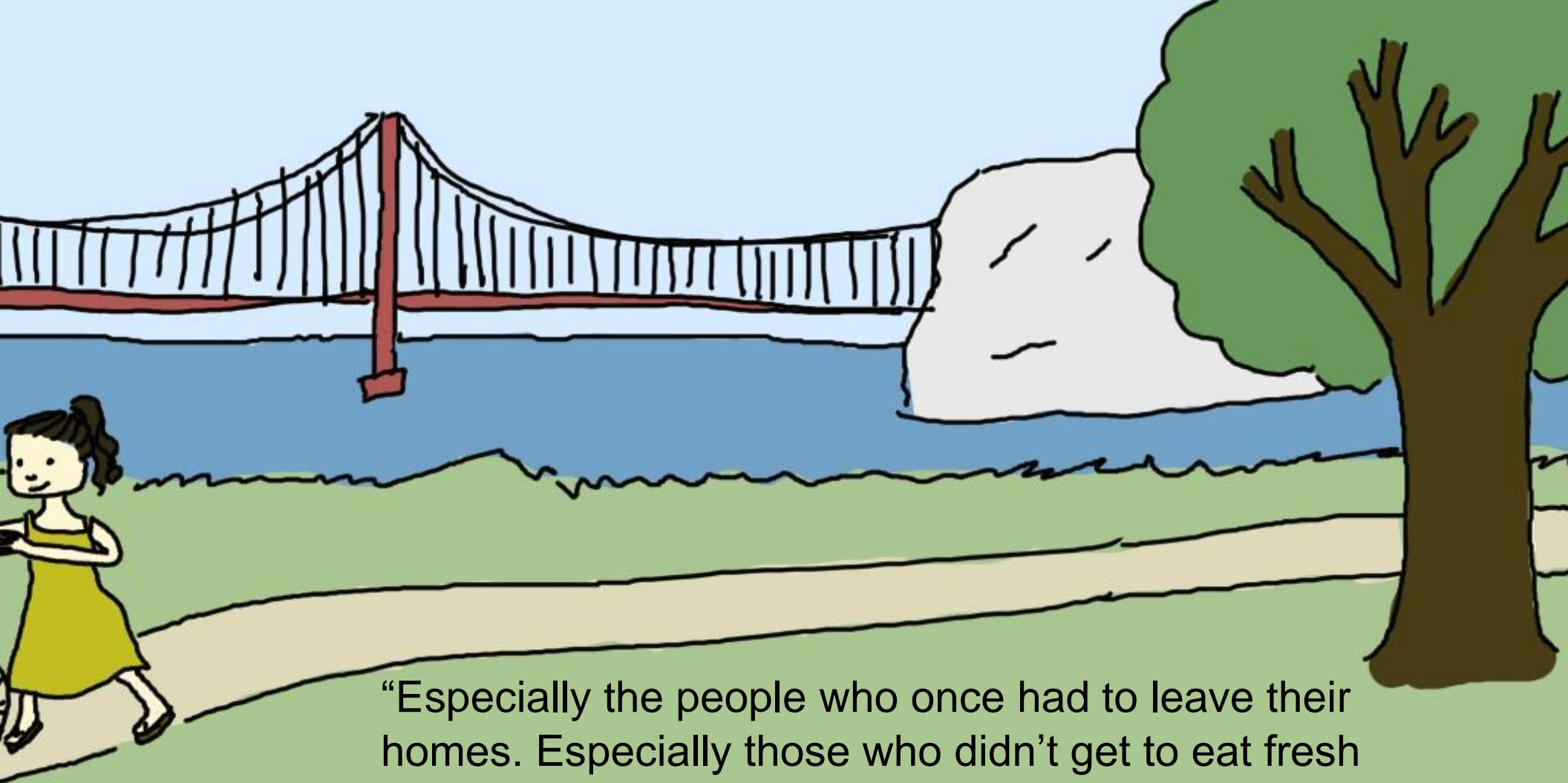
“The Green New Deal was a plan to make nature happy again.

We made energy from the sun with solar panels. We made energy from the wind with turbines.

People who used to live next to smokey factories could now work here. New energy sources created safer, and higher-paying jobs.”



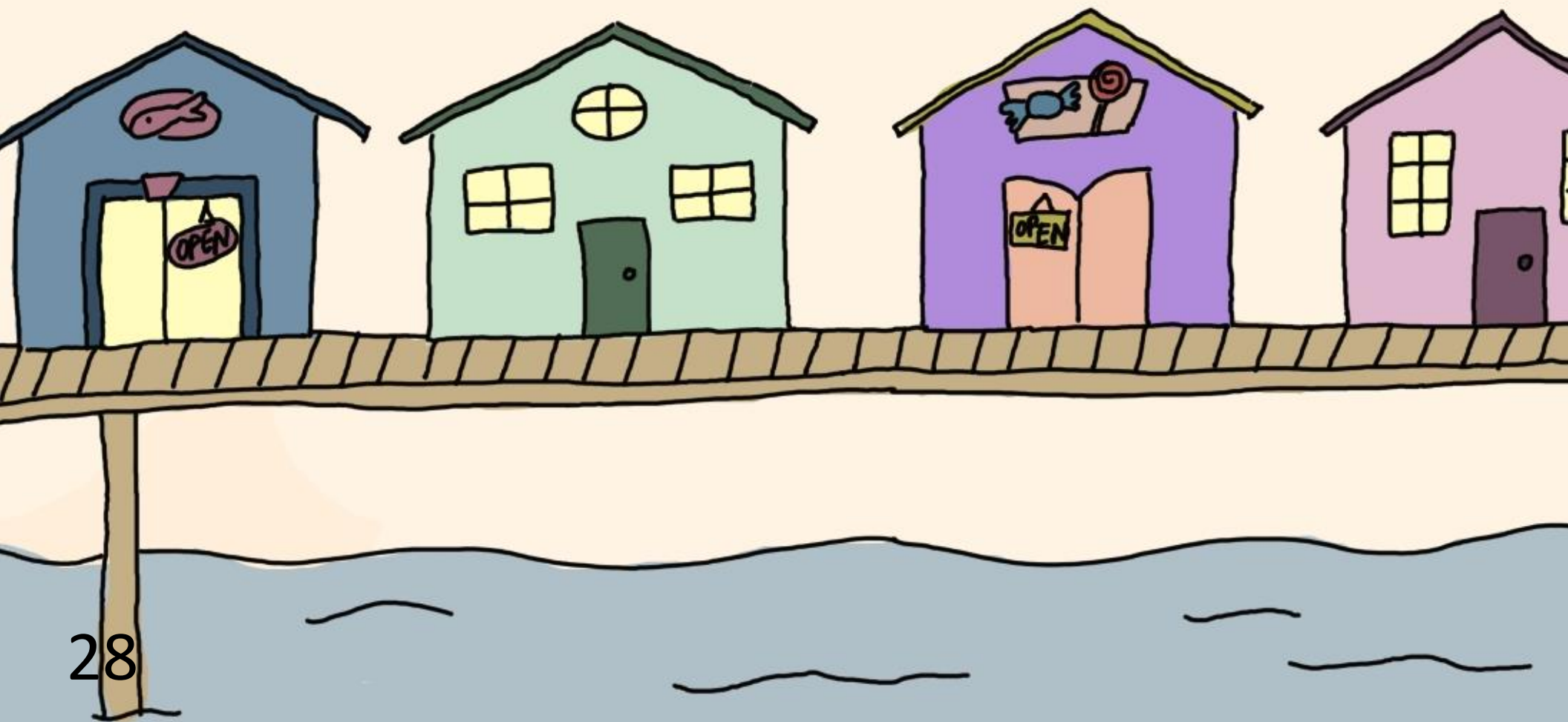
“The Green New Deal was a plan to make people happy again.”



“Especially the people who once had to leave their homes. Especially those who didn’t get to eat fresh fruit and veggies.

We planted more trees, made public gardens, and spent more time outside. Anyone could visit gardens and parks. Each person had access to everything, no matter if they were rich or poor. Or had skin any color of the rainbow.”





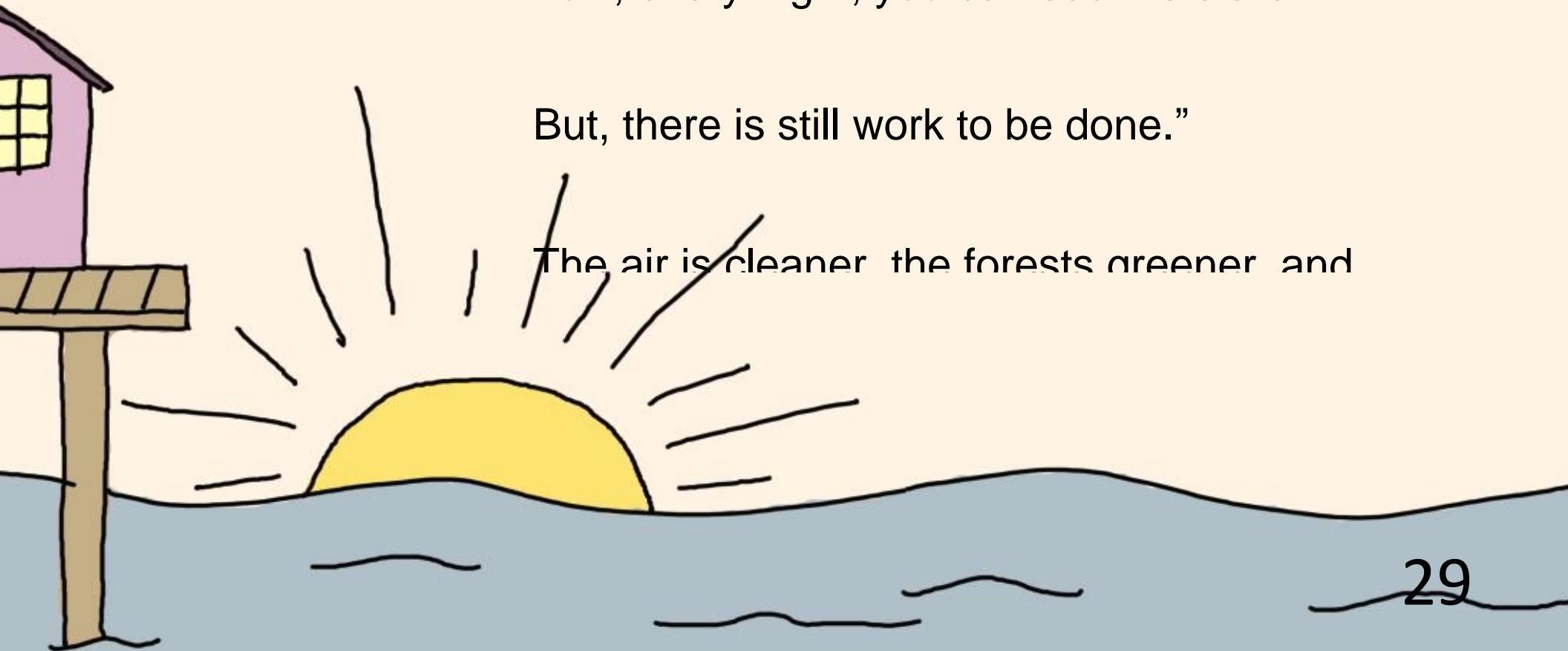
“Houses were built to stand tall during strong weather and rising seas.

Now, nature is not as sad.

The air is cleaner, the forests greener, and now, every night, you can see the stars.

But, there is still work to be done.”

The air is cleaner the forests greener and

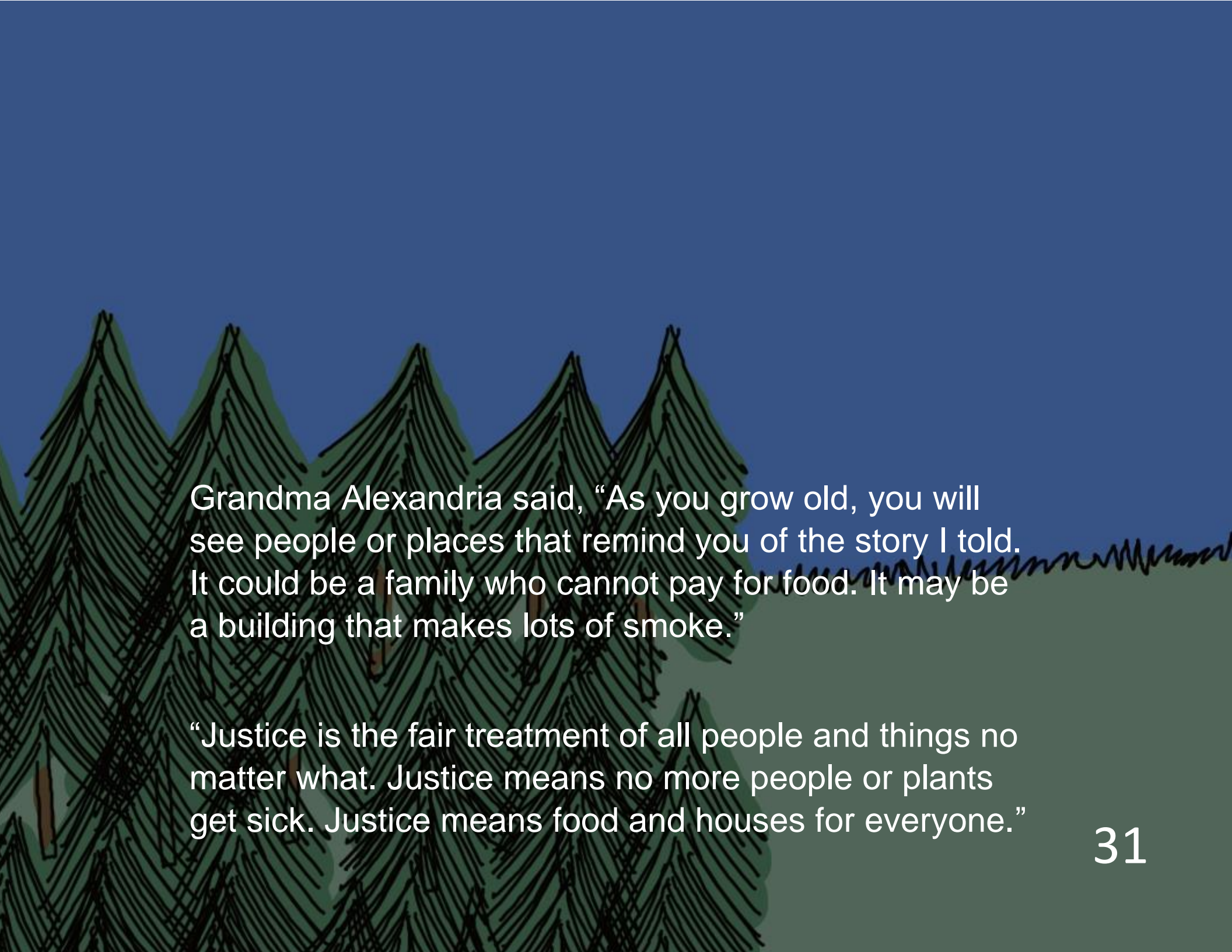




Grandma Alexandria said to Maria, "You will always need to protect the planet and our people."

Maria asked, "How? I am just a little girl."

Grandma Alexandria was quiet.



Grandma Alexandria said, “As you grow old, you will see people or places that remind you of the story I told. It could be a family who cannot pay for food. It may be a building that makes lots of smoke.”

“Justice is the fair treatment of all people and things no matter what. Justice means no more people or plants get sick. Justice means food and houses for everyone.”





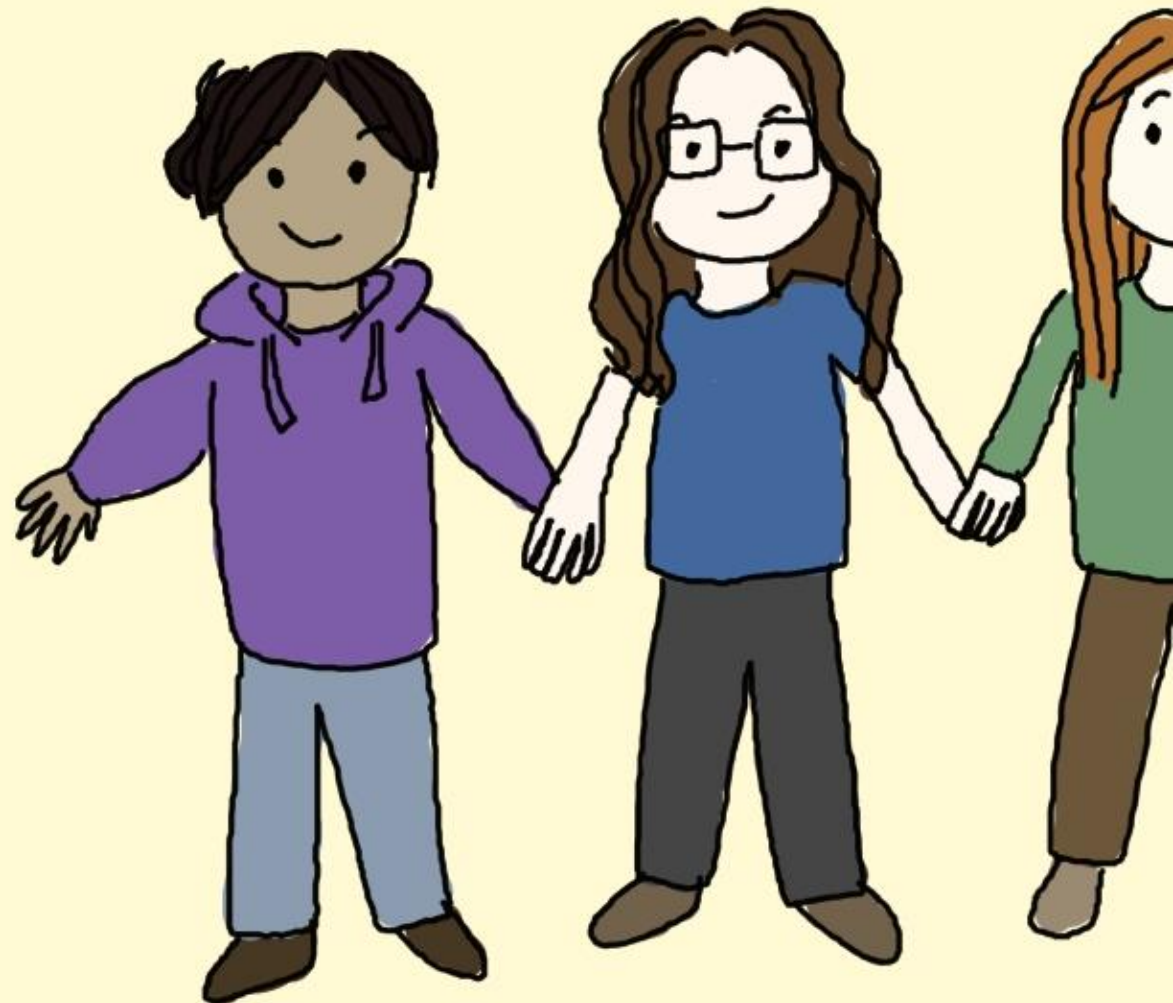
Grandma Alexandria whispered to Maria,
“You have never been just a little girl. You will
always fight for the earth and for its people to
have justice.”

“Just like me, and my mother, and my
grandmother. Sweet dreams Maria.”

Maria fell asleep. She dreamed of justice and
the Green New Deal.

The End.

thank you



for reading!

