



Refugee Week 2021
14 - 20 June

Monday 21st June 2021

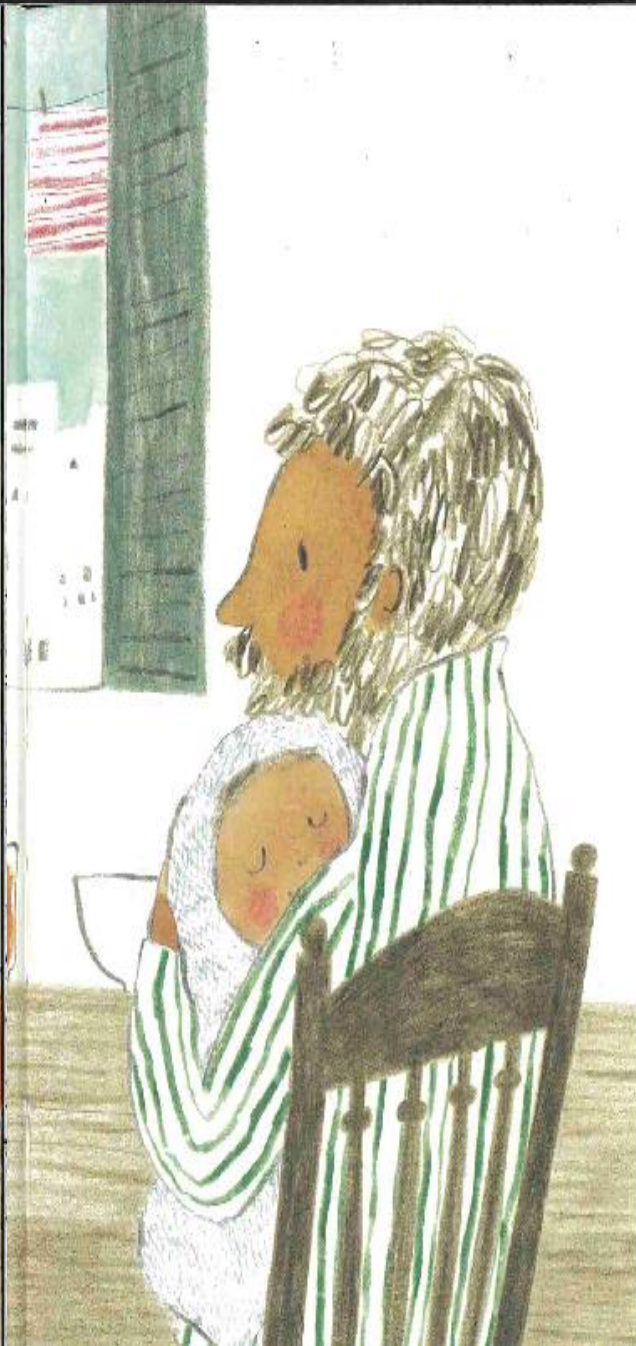
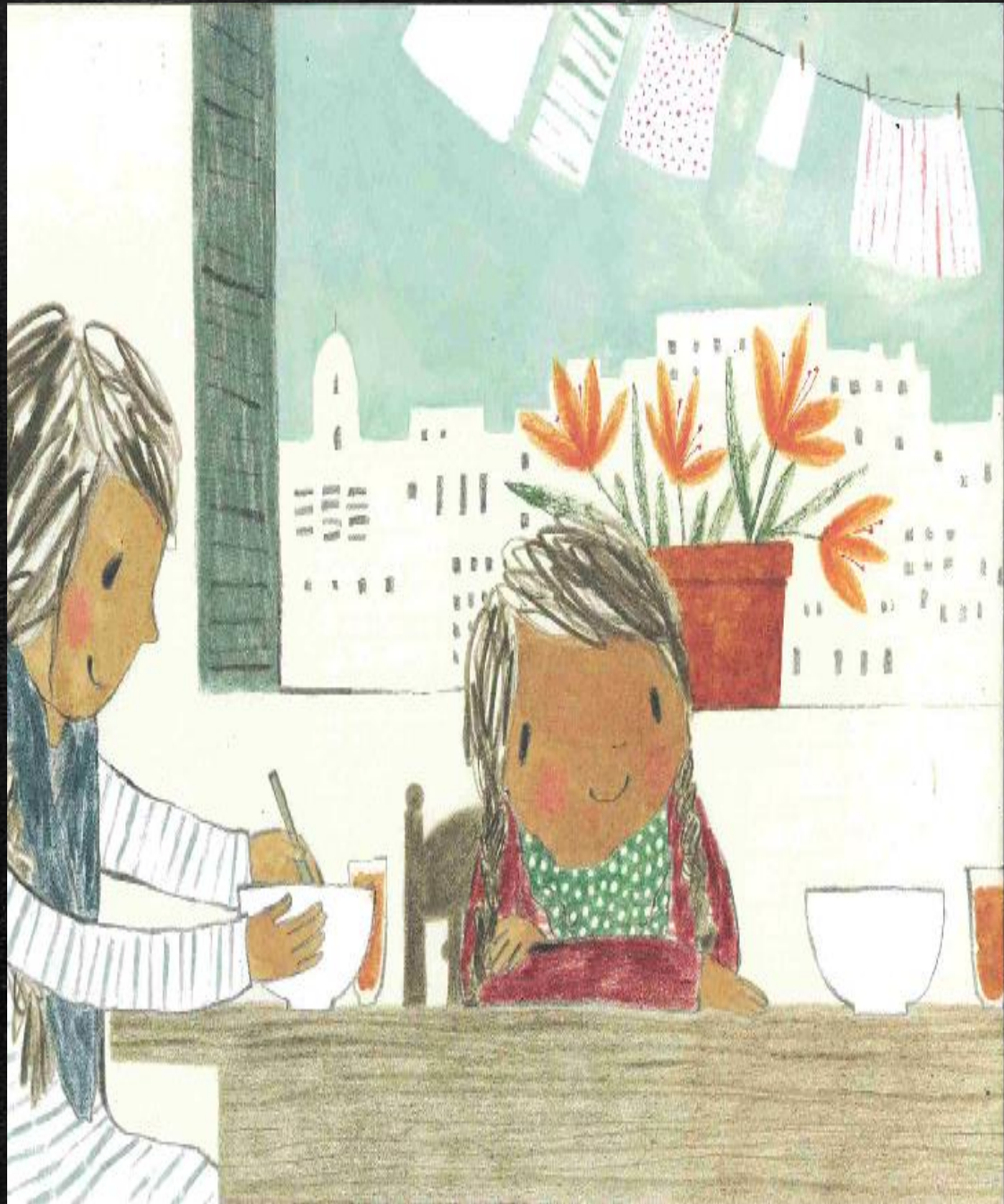
Imagine...

- ? Imagine having to flee (leave) your homeland because of war, terror, or persecution ?
- ? Imagine being that child...
- ? Imagine not having your parents with you because they were killed before you left or you were unable to leave together...
- ? Imagine arriving in a strange country, seeking asylum, completely alone...
- ? Imagine having absolutely nothing....



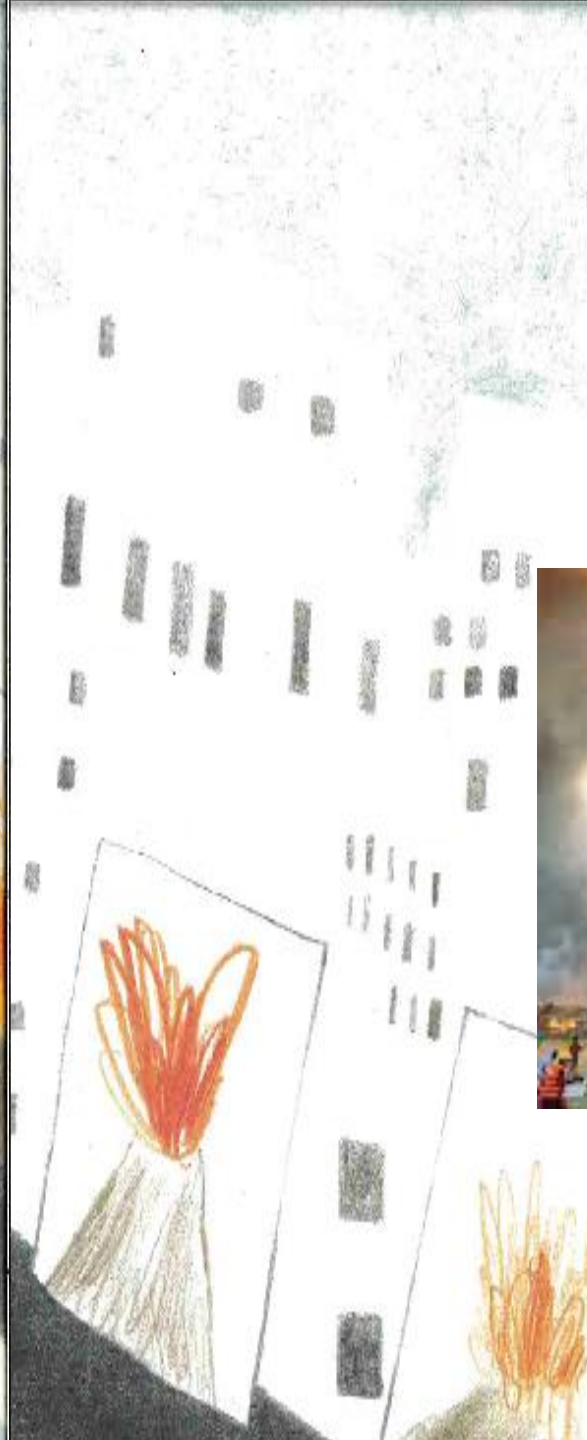
The Day
War
came





THE DAY WAR CAME there
were flowers on the window sill
and my father sang my baby brother
back to sleep.

My mother made my breakfast, kissed my
nose and walked with me to school.



That morning I learned about volcanoes.

I sang a song about how tadpoles
turn at last to frogs.

I drew a picture of a bird.

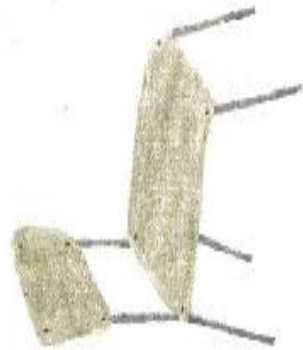
Then, just after lunch, war came.



At first, just like a spattering of hail,

a voice of thunder ...

then all smoke and fire and noise that I didn't understand.





It came across the playground.

It came into my teacher's face.

It brought the roof down

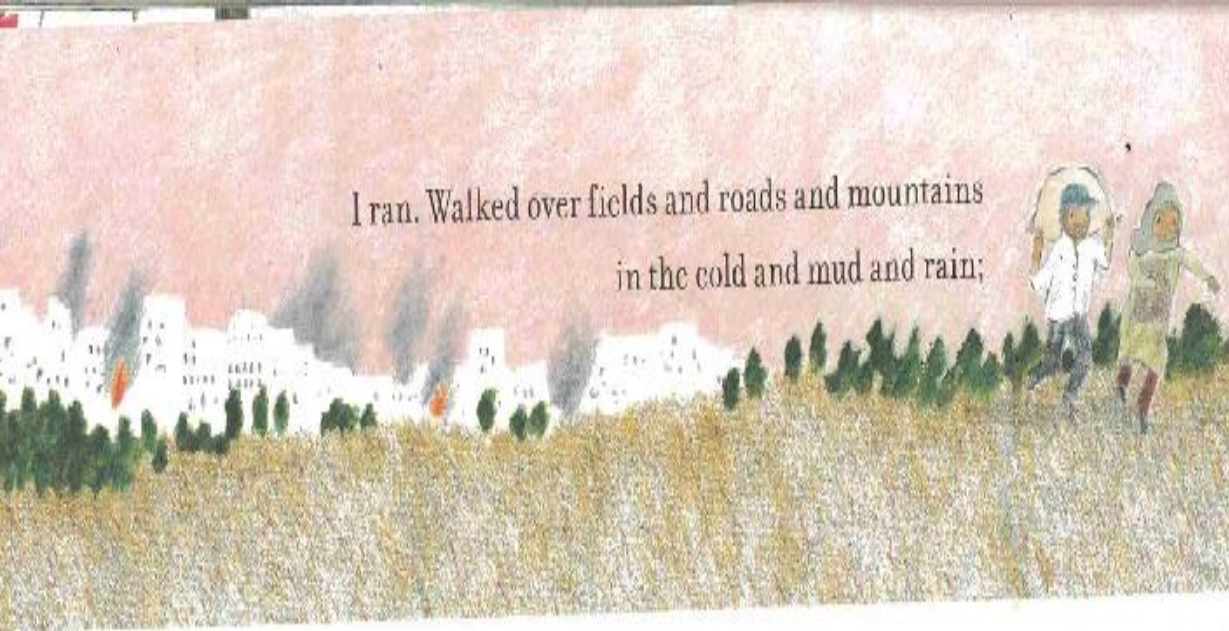
and turned my town to rubble.

I can't say the words that tell you
about the blackened hole
that had been my home.

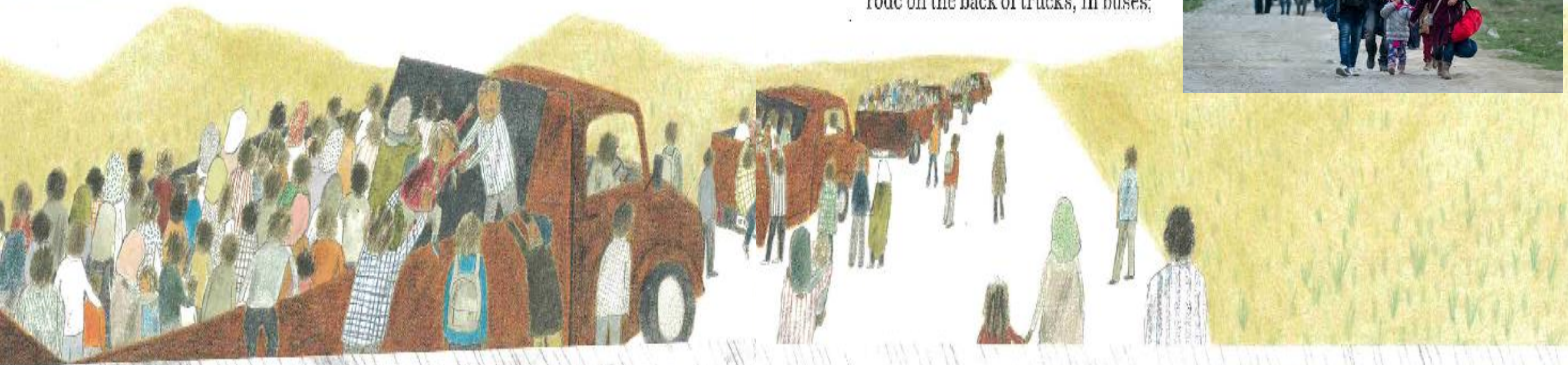
All I can say is this:
war took everything,
war took everyone.
I was ragged, bloody, all alone.



I ran. Walked over fields and roads and mountains
in the cold and mud and rain;



rode on the back of trucks, in buses;



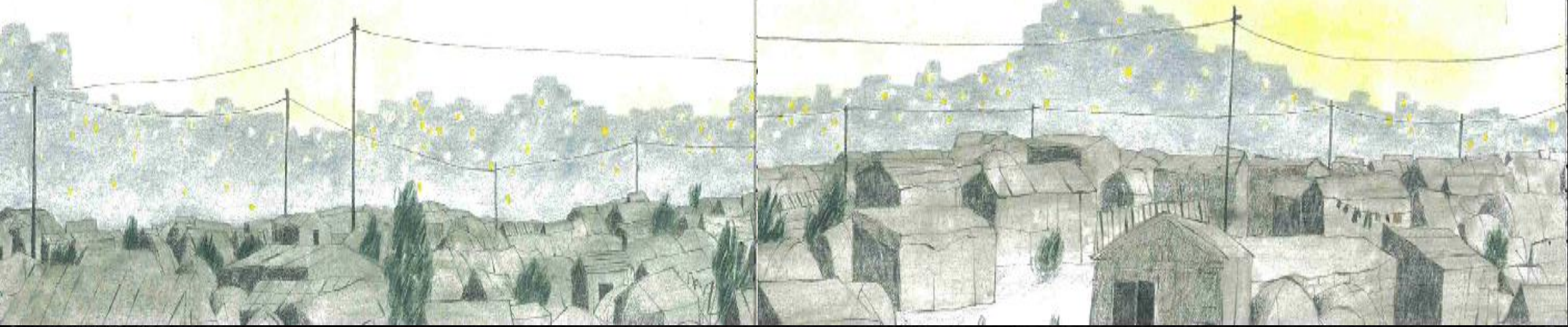
went on a boat that leaked and almost sank;
then up a beach where shoes lay empty in the sand.



I ran until I couldn't run,
until I reached a row of huts
and found a corner with a dirty blanket
and a door that rattled in the wind.

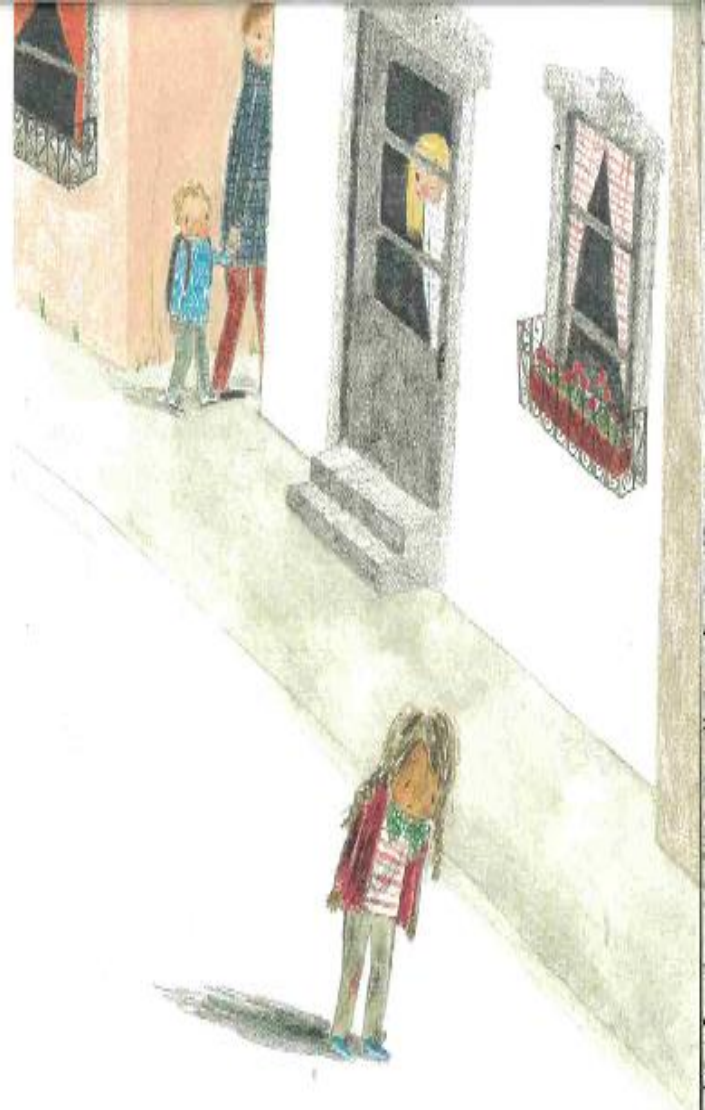
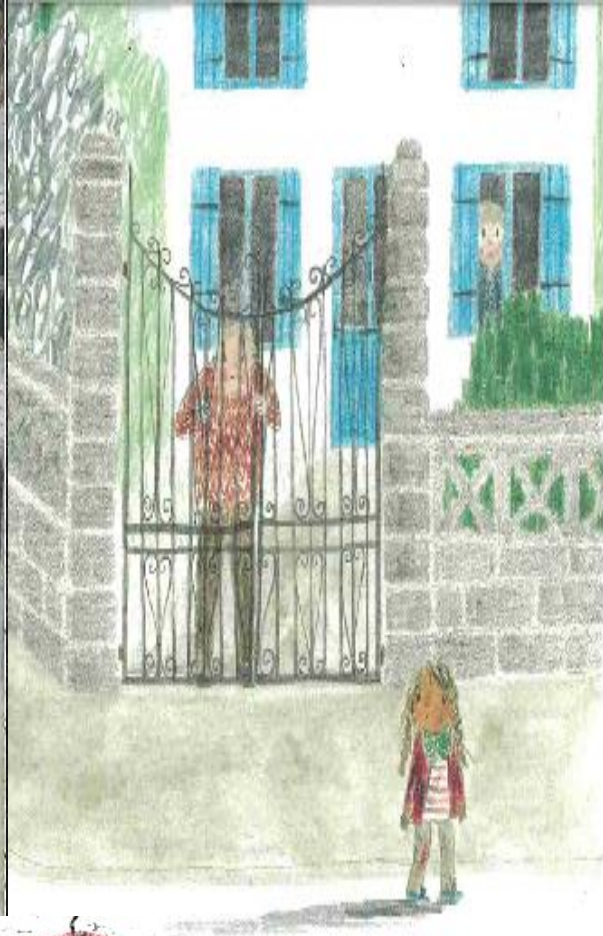
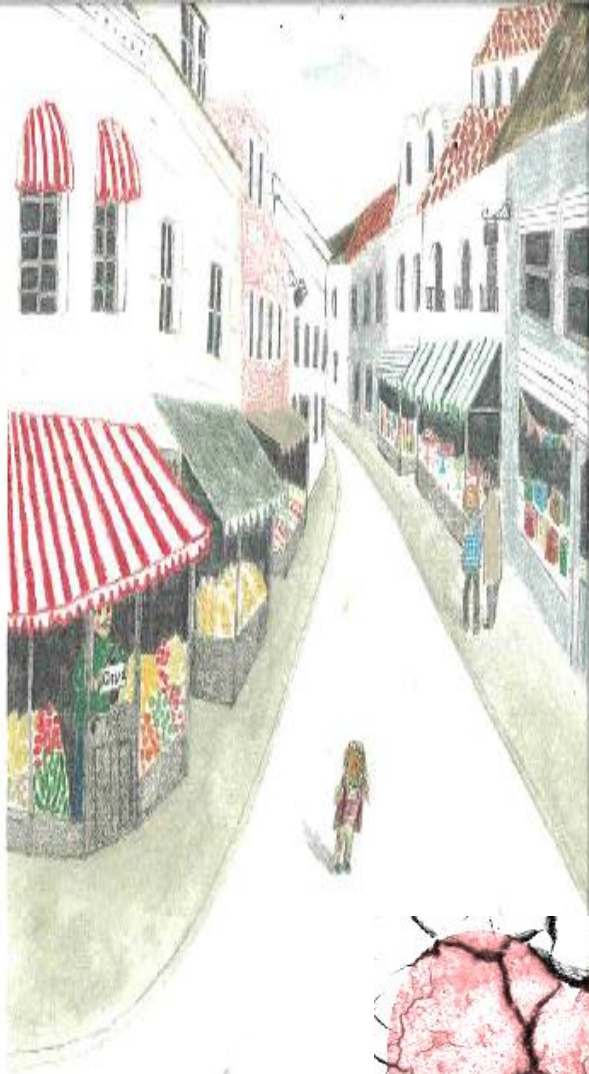


But war had followed me.
It was underneath my skin,
behind my eyes,
and in my dreams.
It had taken possession of my heart.

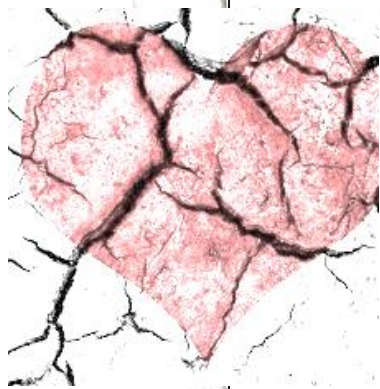




I walked and walked to try to drive war out of myself,
to try to find a place it hadn't reached.



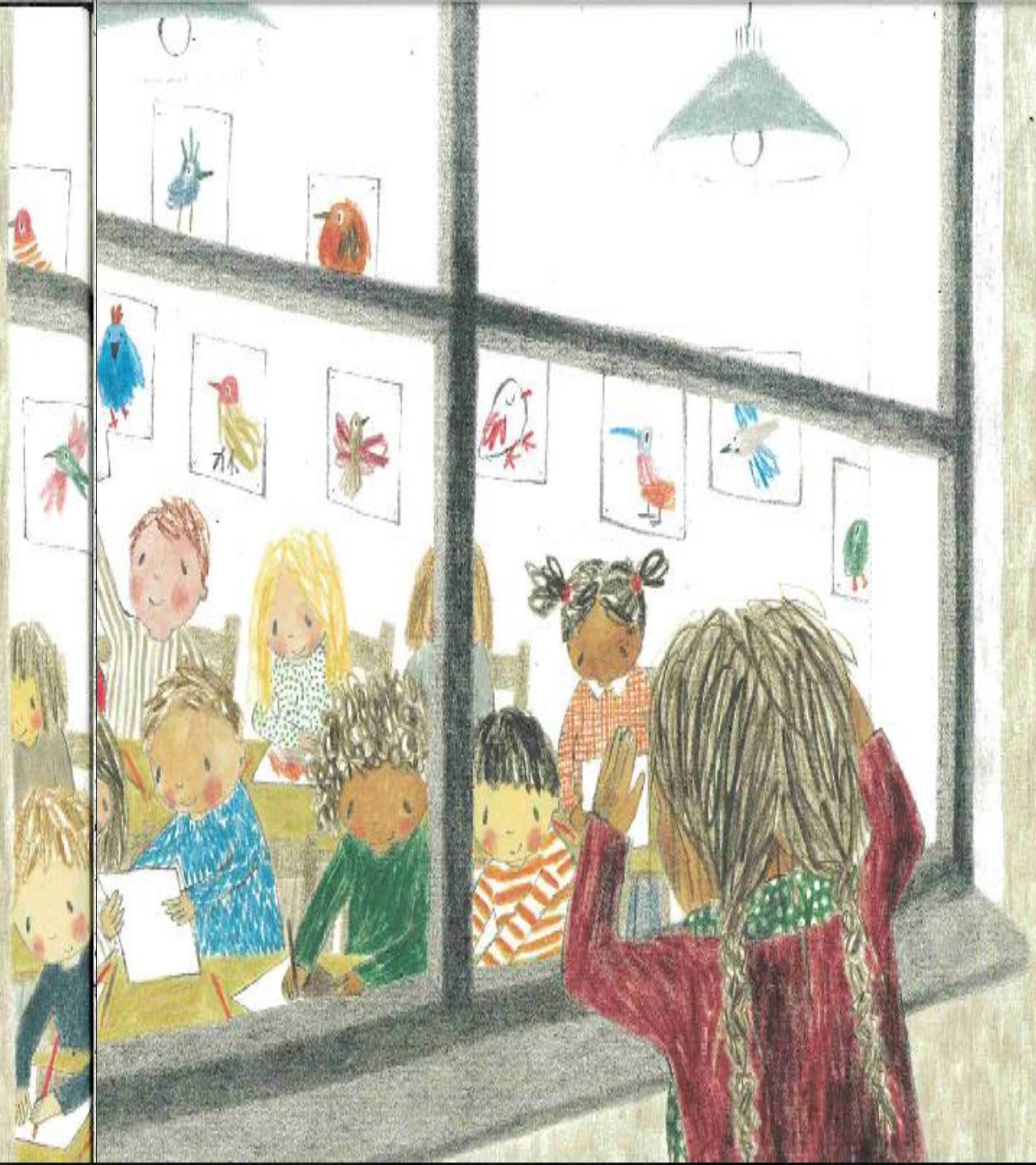
But war was in the way that doors shut when I came down the street.
It was in the way the people didn't smile, and turned away.



I came to a school.

I looked in through the window.

They were learning all about volcanoes,
singing and drawing birds.





I went inside.

My footsteps echoed in the hall.

I pushed the door and faces turned
towards me but the teacher didn't smile.

She said, "There is no room for you,
you see. There is no chair for you to sit on.
You have to go away."

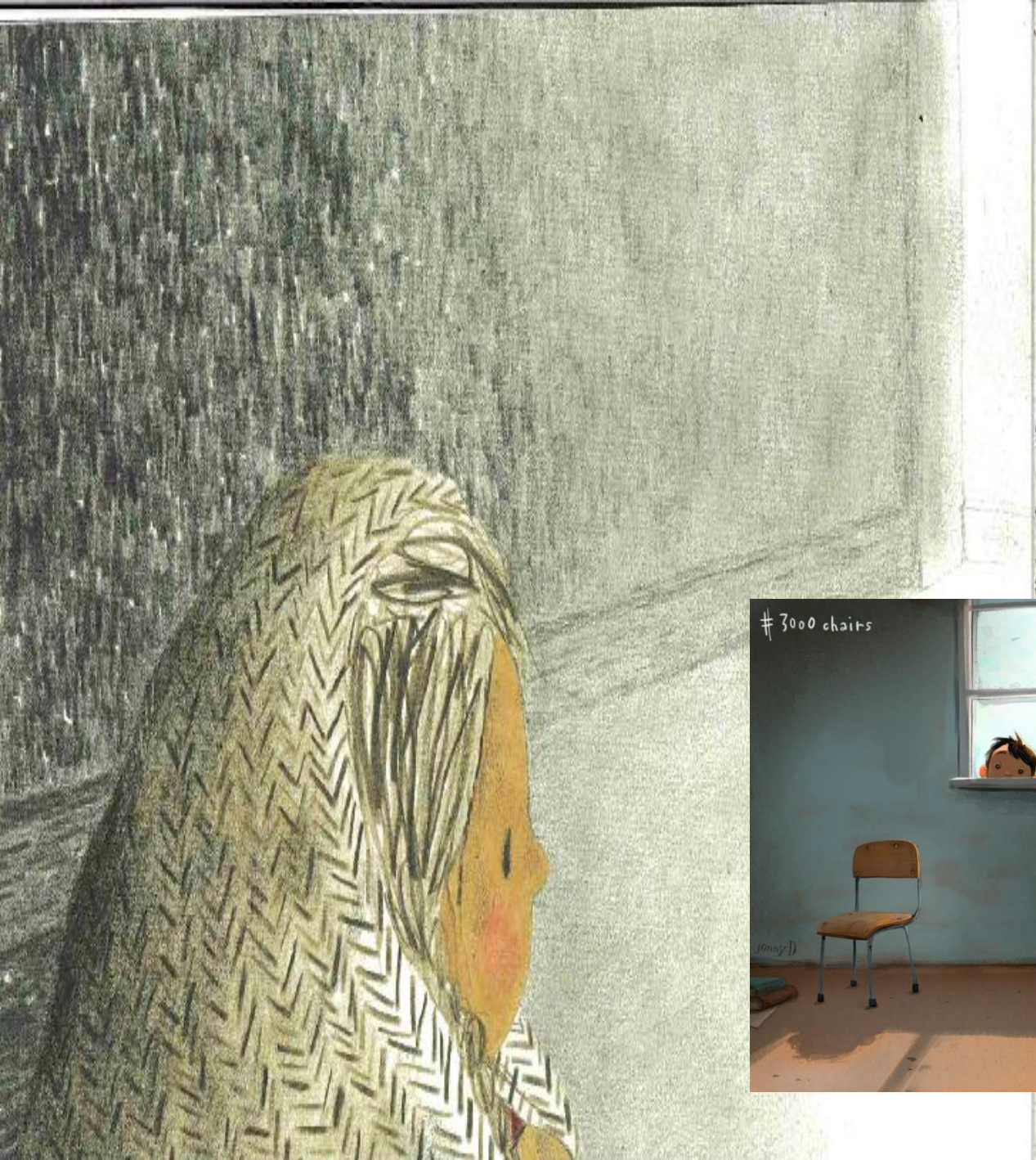
And then I understood that
war had got here too.



I turned around and went back to the hut, the corner
and the blanket, and crawled inside.

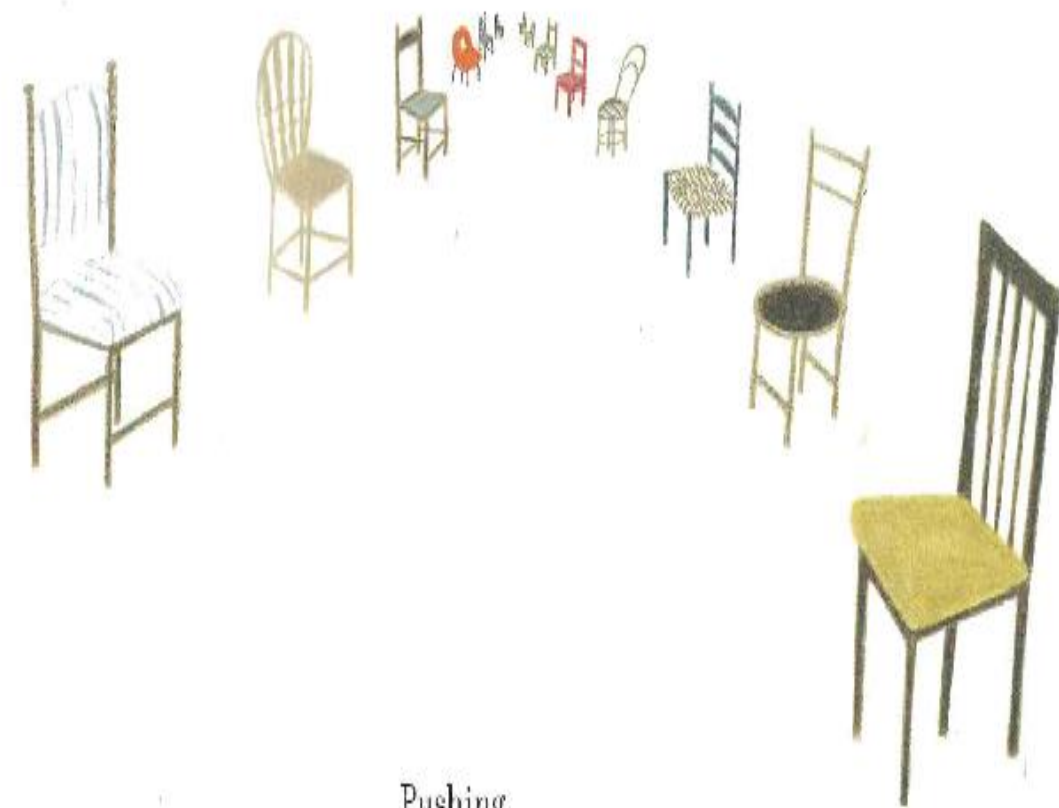
It seemed that war had taken all the world
and all the people in it.





The door banged. I thought it was the wind – but a child’s voice spoke.
“I brought you this,” he said, “so you can come to school.”
It was a chair.
A chair for me to sit on and learn about volcanoes, sing and draw birds.
And drive the war out of my heart.
He smiled and said, “My friends have brought theirs too,

Out of every hut a child came
and we walked together,
on a road all lined with chairs.



Pushing
back the war
with every step.



S.H.I.N.E Code



We all have
right to
strive.



We all have the right to
make independent
choices.



We all have the right to be
treated equally with care and
respect.



We all have the
right to be cared
for and nurtured.



We all have the
right to be
happy.

S.H.I.N.E Code

We have a responsibility to care and nurture others.

We have a responsibility to help others to be happy.



We have a responsibility to help others to make independent choices.



We have the responsibility to treat others equally with care and respect.



We have a responsibility to help others strive.



If we could look into each other's hearts and understand the unique challenges each of us faces, I think we would treat each other much more gently, with more love, patience, tolerance, and care.

Marvin J. Ashton