

Edited by Wendy Cooling
Illustrated by Piet Grobler

All the Wild Wonders

For you my sweet babe
I wish fish in the sea
Birds in the trees
Tigers in jungles
And all the wild wonders
All the wild wonders
For you my sweet babe

For you my sweet babe
I wish carpets of wildflowers
Beetles and butterflies
Bright birds of paradise
And all the wild beauty
All the wild beauty
For you my sweet babe

For you my sweet babe
I wish wind for the albatross
Clear flowing rivers
Forests of giants
And all the wild wonders
All the wild wonders
For you my sweet babe

For this wish to come true
We have much work to do
All the wild wonders
All the wild wonders
For you my sweet babe

Elizabeth Honey

Australia



When the Sun Rises

When the sun rises, I go to work,
When the sun goes down, I take my rest,
I dig the well from which I drink,
I farm the soil that yields my food,
I share creation, kings can do no more.

Anonymous

China (2500 BC)

The Sun

Our
Earth would fit a
million times inside the
Giant sun; a ball of burning
Gases giving light to everyone.
The sun's a star that pulls the
Planets round and round and
Round by gravity, the force that
Holds us firmly to the ground.
Without the sun, there'd be no
Life, no creatures, grass or
Trees. We need the
Sun – without its heat
Everything would
Freeze.

Penny Kent

England

Night

Silently sleeps the river.
The dark pines hold their peace.
The nightingale does not sing,
Or the corncrake screech.

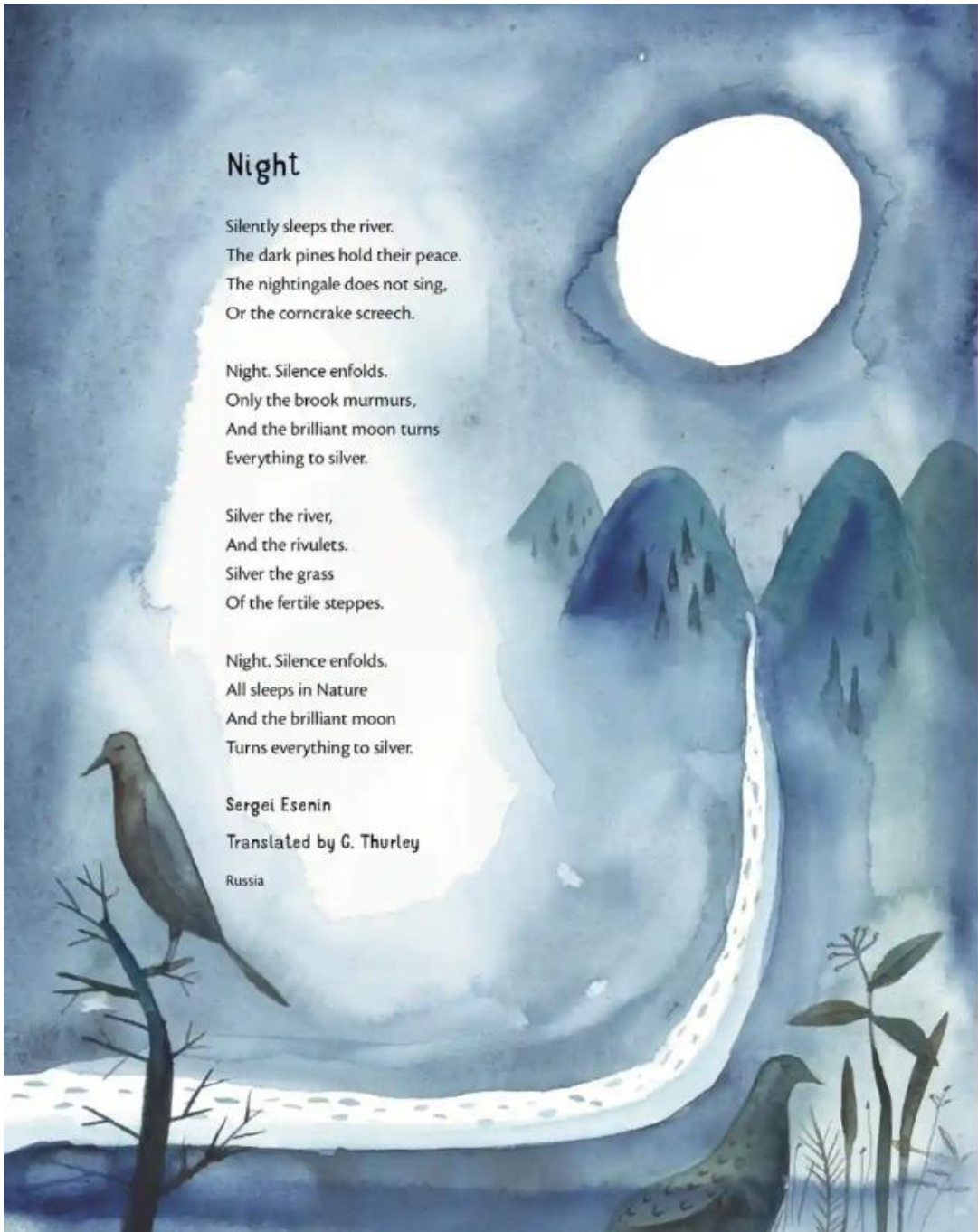
Night. Silence enfolds.
Only the brook murmurs,
And the brilliant moon turns
Everything to silver.

Silver the river,
And the rivulets.
Silver the grass
Of the fertile steppes.

Night. Silence enfolds.
All sleeps in Nature
And the brilliant moon
Turns everything to silver.

Sergei Esenin
Translated by G. Thurley

Russia



Dreamer

I dreamt I was an ocean
and no one polluted me.

I dreamt I was a whale
and no hunters chased after me.

I dreamt I was the air
and nothing blackened me.

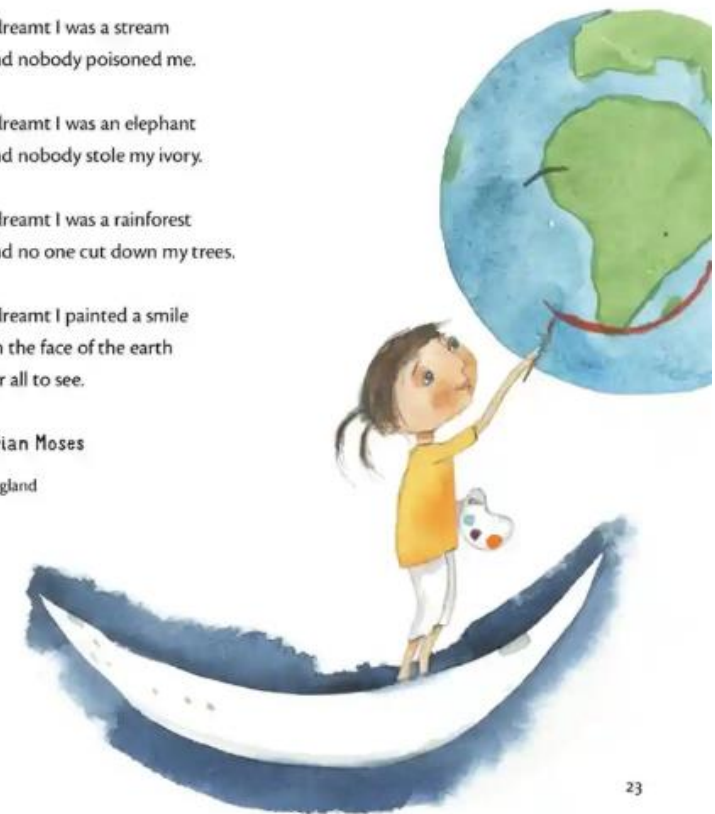
I dreamt I was a stream
and nobody poisoned me.

I dreamt I was an elephant
and nobody stole my ivory.

I dreamt I was a rainforest
and no one cut down my trees.

I dreamt I painted a smile
on the face of the earth
for all to see.

Brian Moses
England



Question

As asphalt and concrete
Replace bushes and trees,
As highways and buildings
Replace marshes and woods,
What will replace
The song of the birds?

Tony Chen

USA

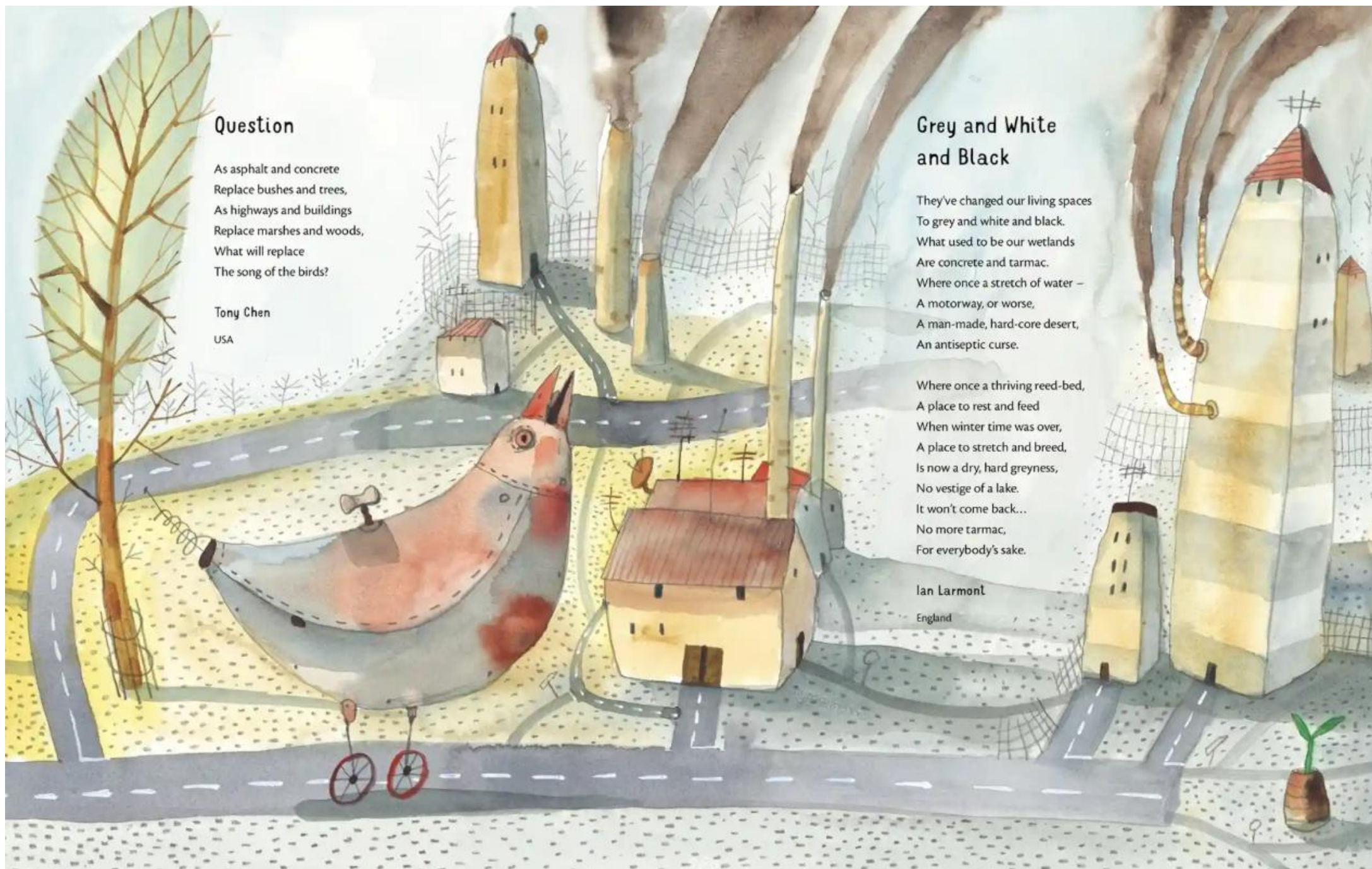
Grey and White and Black

They've changed our living spaces
To grey and white and black.
What used to be our wetlands
Are concrete and tarmac.
Where once a stretch of water –
A motorway, or worse,
A man-made, hard-core desert,
An antiseptic curse.

Where once a thriving reed-bed,
A place to rest and feed
When winter time was over,
A place to stretch and breed,
Is now a dry, hard greyness,
No vestige of a lake.
It won't come back...
No more tarmac,
For everybody's sake.

Ian Larmont

England



Man, the Mad Magician

Said the money-man "We must have oil!
And that's my final word!"
How magical and tragical his final act
As the seagull became a blackbird.

Andrew Fusek Peters

England



A Robin Red breast in a Cage

A Robin Red breast in a Cage
Puts all Heaven in a Rage.

William Blake

England

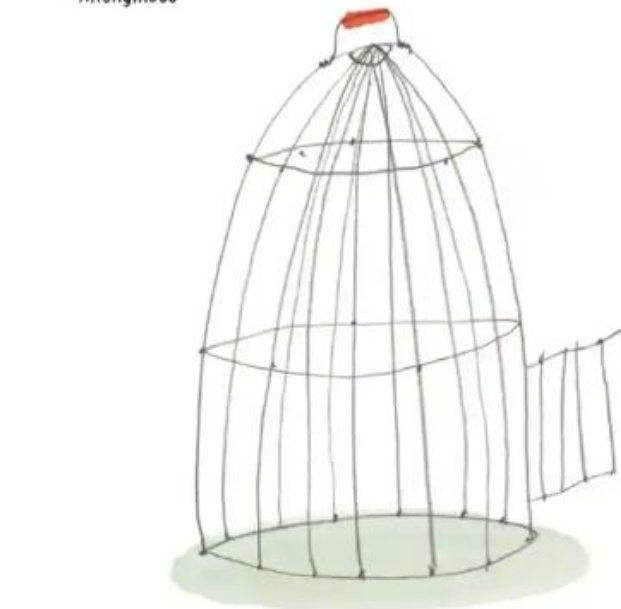


If I Was a Bird...

If I was a bird
I would like to fly in the sky
so that everyone could see me.
I could fly in and out of the clouds and caves.
There'd be just one pest in my life –
that's a man with a gun to shoot me,
Him I wouldn't like.

If I was a man and not a bird,
I'd never shoot at birds
Because a bird is lovely to see
when it's flying.
If I was a man I'd just watch,
not shoot.

Anonymous

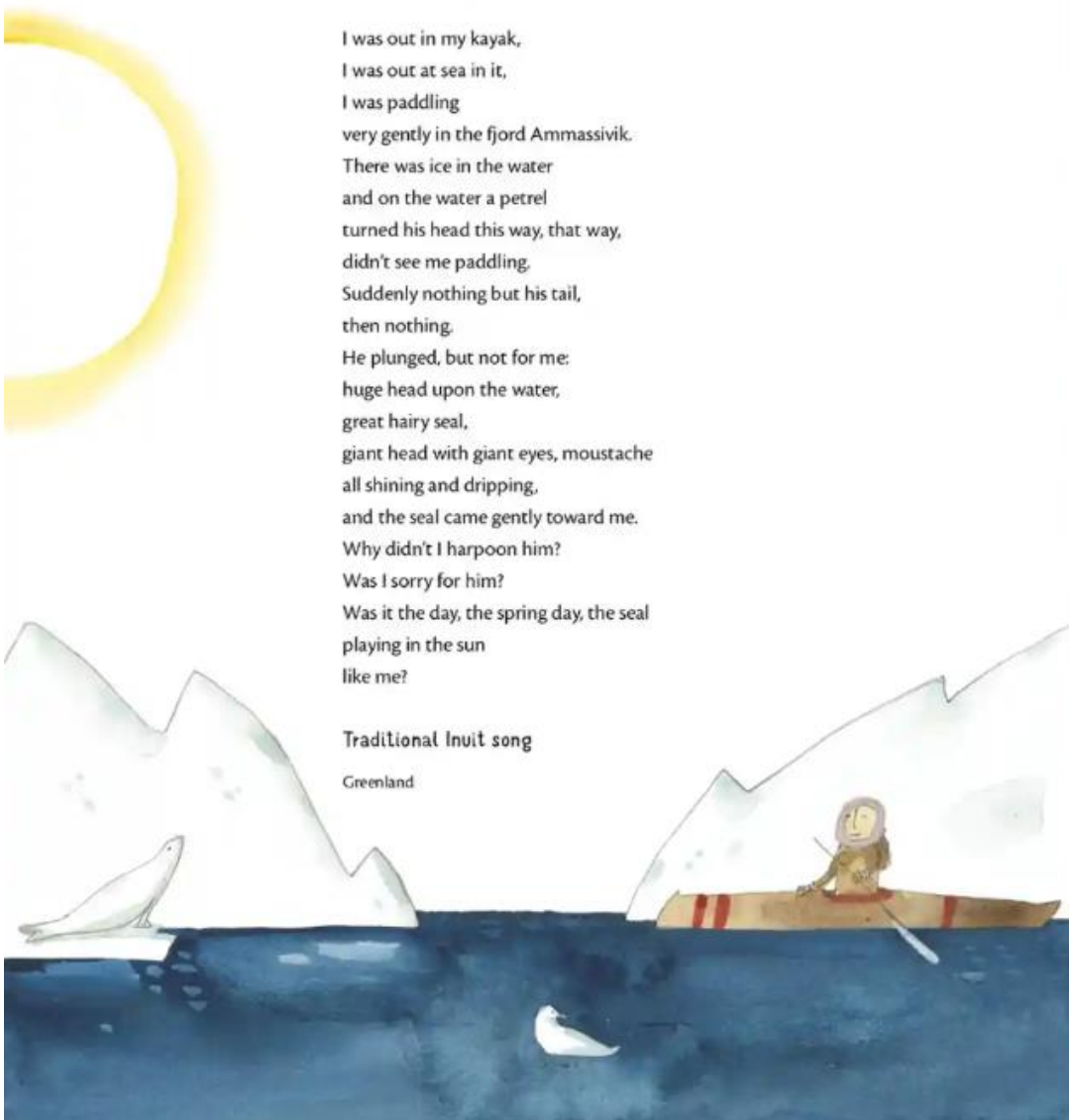


Spring Fjord

I was out in my kayak,
I was out at sea in it,
I was paddling
very gently in the fjord Ammassivik.
There was ice in the water
and on the water a petrel
turned his head this way, that way,
didn't see me paddling.
Suddenly nothing but his tail,
then nothing.
He plunged, but not for me:
huge head upon the water,
great hairy seal,
giant head with giant eyes, moustache
all shining and dripping,
and the seal came gently toward me.
Why didn't I harpoon him?
Was I sorry for him?
Was it the day, the spring day, the seal
playing in the sun
like me?

Traditional Inuit song

Greenland



No Answer

Once the seals had skins
shiny wet as a new anorak.

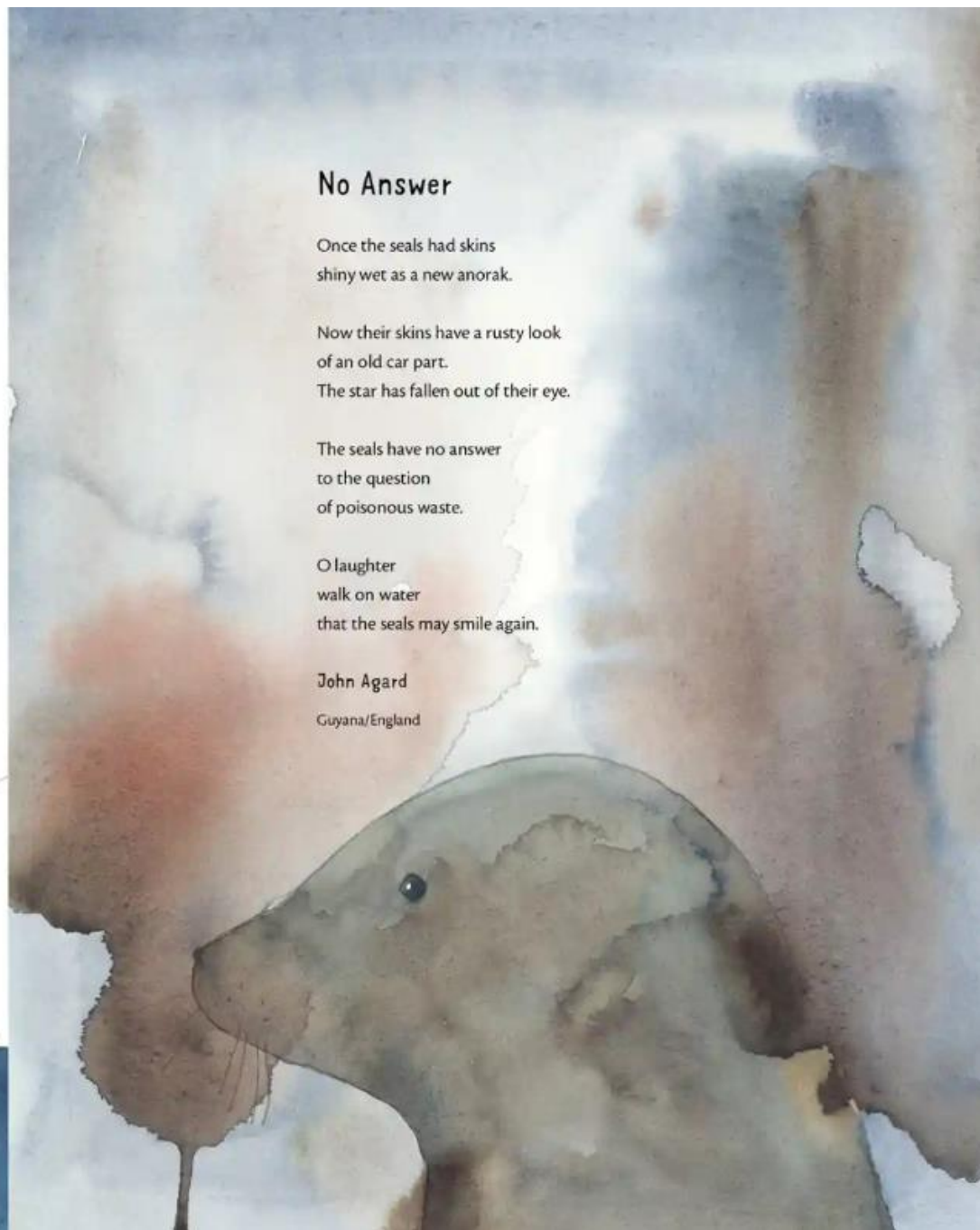
Now their skins have a rusty look
of an old car part.
The star has fallen out of their eye.

The seals have no answer
to the question
of poisonous waste.

O laughter
walk on water
that the seals may smile again.

John Agard

Guyana/England





Leave the Whales Alone, Please!

Leave the whales alone, please,
They don't do any wrong;
They swim in every ocean,
And fill them with their song.

Leave the whales alone, please,
Like us, they've got a brain;
But if we don't start using ours,
We won't see them again.

Leave the whales alone, please,
We need them in the seas;
We need their life and beauty,
And all they need is peace.

Leave the whales alone, please,
Let them live their lives,
Let them leap, and swim, and sing –
Let the whales survive!

Tony Bradman
England

From *Paradise Lost*

There Leviathan,
Hugest of all living creatures,
In the deep
Stretched like a promontory,
sleeps or swims,
And seems a moving land;
and at his gills
Draws in, and at his breath
spouts out a Sea.

John Milton
England

If You Ever

If you ever ever ever ever ever
If you ever ever ever meet a whale
You must never never never never never
 You must never never never touch its tail:
For if you ever ever ever ever ever
 If you ever ever ever touch its tail,
You will never never never never never
 You will never never meet another whale.

Anonymous

Who am I?

The trees ask me,
And the sky,
And the sea asks me
Who am I?

The grass asks me,
And the sand,
And the rock asks me
Who I am.

The wind tells me
At nightfall,
And the ram tells me
Someone small.

Someone small
Someone small
*But a piece
of
it
all.*

Felice Holman
USA

Natural Anthem

God save our gracious green
Long live our glorious scene
God save our green.

Dis ting is serious
Do it for all of us
Save our asparagus,
God save
Our
Green

Benjamin Zephaniah
England

