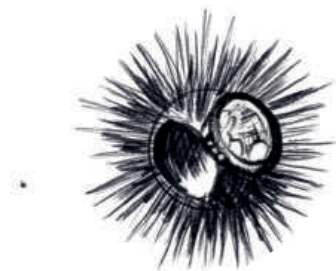


THE SKY IS GREEN
twirly tales of tiny travellers

Tiziana Potocco
Armando Miron Polacco

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written by Tiziana Potocco
illustrated by Armando Miron Polacco



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1.

THE BREEZY STORY OF SIFFI AND SOFFI



Spring has arrived in the meadow next to the beech forest.

Dandelions have bloomed among the blades of grass, covering the soft green carpet with yellow dots.

In this peaceful and welcoming place, time slips by unnoticed – from bright sunshine to a gentle sprinkle of rain.

Down there, next to the first large tree, a small DANDELION has grown – far from the others. It does not fully enjoy the warmth of summer. It prefers the comfy green shade.

Every now and then insects come to visit – especially bees, which feed on the nectar of its golden flower, tickling it slightly. It is nice to have some company.

With the arrival of autumn, even the last little dandelion of the season has completely transformed. They become unrecognisable: the multiple sun-coloured petals have become delicate, transparent embroidery threads, swaying in the north wind.

The dandelion starts to feel a little lonely now the fluttering creatures have left with the last summer days. It is also feeling a little light-headed and drowsy.

Meanwhile, in the grass and at the edge of the woods, the temperature has already started to change. It is getting colder and colder, every day. At the foot of the flower, more of the dry, crackling leaves of the large beech tree are falling.

It's a sign: the dandelion's long winter rest will soon arrive.





One windy morning, its embroidery thread petals begin to fall off the flowerhead and fly towards the sky, swaddled by the cool breeze. They fly further and further away, until they disappear out of sight, and the little flower can finally rest.

“What a lovely cool breeze, where will it take us?” asks *SIFFI*.

“Hard to say, I think south. Give me your hand, we could travel together, it’s boring to fly alone!” replies *SOFFI*, who feels uncomfortable after spending long days stuck next to all the other seeds.

“That could be an excellent idea!”

SIFFI reaches out, firmly grasping his brother’s hand.

“We sure look very much alike,” says *SOFFI*, observing his companion, as a gust of cold wind spins them around in a playful, whirling dance.

“Wow! That’s amazing! Hold on tight!” shrieks the other.

The wind softens, and *Siffi* says: “Look at me more closely. Dear brother, your features are sharper, and you are slimmer.”

“Oh, have you seen our parachutes? They are identical and work perfectly.”

They rise higher and higher. What they see below is incredible: the trees look like small curly specks, and the fields look like a tiny green handkerchiefs. On one side, they can clearly see the gigantic mountains, on the other, meadows and more meadows. They are heading in that direction.

“Look, a cloud is chasing us!”

“It is the wind that carries us along with her. There are swallows too!”

“They are heading for Africa, where it is warm and they can find food.”

“Siffi, you know so many wonderful things — it’s truly amazing!”



As they chat, the wind dies down until it disappears completely. The two begin to glide down slowly, until their parachutes gently stop on a cold, jagged meadow.

“Brr, I’m shivering, it’s freezing here!” stammers *Siffi*.

“You’re right!” agrees *Soffi*.

Just then, large snowflakes begin to fall from the sky, settling softly on the ground where they weave a soft blanket.

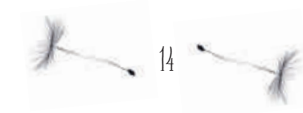
“If this continues, we’ll soon be completely covered!” says *Siffi*, his teeth chattering — a little because of the cold but also a little because of the fear.

“Don’t worry; see, it’s not cold down here anymore. Get under the soil, it’s damp and soft here. Try to rest.”

The snow covers everything, and beneath this white blanket, despite the cold, the two seeds fall asleep, feeling cosy and warm.

Winter has arrived: time to rest. All is quiet.

Even in places far from the meadow, stretching out beside the beech wood, time flies past. All the sleeping creatures dream, huddled together in the ground, in burrows, in rock crevices, in hollow branches — waiting for something to change.



One day, the snow begins to melt under the first rays of a warmer, and more comforting sun. Soon the grass turns a pastel spring green.

Meanwhile, in the soil, *SIFFI AND SOFFI* slowly wake up.

“Stop yawning!”

“Don’t stretch out like that – you’re like a little snake!” adds the other.

“It’s nice here, isn’t it?”

“Oh, hello earthworm, how are you doing? Um, sorry, Siffi, I am making friends with the creatures who live underground.”

“You always chat with everyone... Wait a minute! We’ve got roots now, can’t you see?”

“It’s fantastic!” screams his brother, “I’m really enjoying myself here!”

Spring has arrived once again, and everything has come back to life.

The two seeds have grown into two beautiful dandelions. They are tall and green.

Their golden crowns gently sway in the wind. They are happy in their new meadow, which is no longer rough and bumpy. It is covered with soft green grass and lots of water and food.

Day after day, they grow taller than the other plants, standing proudly side by side.

“Look, Siffi! Today the butterflies have come to keep us company. They flew past the river to come and see us!”

“Can you see the other dandelions?”

“Yes, but I can also see ladybirds, bees, beetles, mosquitoes, wasps, flies, midges, stinkbugs and spiders. We are definitely not alone here!”

“Yes, you’re right! It’s a wonderful feeling. We have become two beautiful flowers!

Now we can finally enjoy the warmth of the sun and the gentle breeze blowing from the south together!”





TICHĚ AND TUCHĚ'S TWIRLY TALE

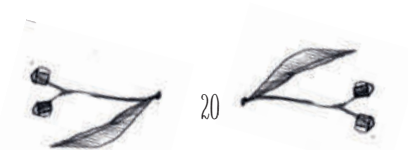
 Although we could simply talk about *TICHĚ AND TUCHĚ*, it is not possible without first explaining who they are and what their role is in this booklet.

TICHĚ E TUCHĚ are two **LIME TREE** seeds. They are still hanging from their branch, swaying back and forth, and playing with the leaves.

High up in the tree, they watch the hustle and bustle below: all the little animals are excited. The cold will be arriving soon, and they must get everything ready before it does.

Squirrels and mice run frantically up and down along the tree trunk, the woodpecker persistently pecks at the hard bark in search of hidden caterpillars, and the swallows are getting ready to leave.

The two watch in awe as children swing on the swings, jump, or ride their bikes along the paths in the park.



Although the two little seeds enjoy observing the chaos, at the same time they feel uneasy about the transformations which are starting to take place.

They are particularly worried about the leaves that have changed colour, most of which have gone, falling from the branches to the ground.

They are not sorry for their new colours – beautiful brown and orange tints – but because they can no longer hide among them.

The wind has changed direction and has now turned into a strong gale.

“Tichè, don’t you think you’re swaying more than usual?”

“Yes, you’re right! The weather is getting worse. We’d better check our hang glider; it might be ready to take off.”

They look at each other for a moment, then look upwards. Their means of transport seems ready: the leaf is a lovely dark tone, well spread out and very strong.

The tie rods will definitely work; one glance is enough to understand this.

“Well, what do you think, Tichè? Are you up for a long journey around the world?”

“Don’t get distracted, the hang glider is about to take off! Farewell little leaves, farewell lime tree, I don’t know if we’ll ever meet again, but it was fun living on your branches!”

“Goodbye everyone!”

Many little voices come from the lime tree. All of the little seeds’ brothers and sisters are saying goodbye: “Bye-bye, and safe travels!”

They are the first to leave, but soon many others will follow.



There is a loud bang, suddenly the leaf comes off the branch and *TICHÈ AND TUCHÈ* are free to fly into the sky.

“Make sure you steer the hang glider towards the current! I don’t want to risk ruining the leaf!” says *TICHÈ*.

“Don’t worry, I’ll see to that!” replies the other.

They start moving away from their tree and fly higher and higher.

“Wait a minute, can’t you hear someone shouting?”

“Yes! I can hear a distant voice, and it sounds like someone is asking for help.”

“Tuchè, look over there, there’s a little animal that can’t fly. Shall we help them?”

“Come on, let’s try!”

The two seeds head towards the creature and slowly settle on a half-dead plant.

There, right at the top, a little bee is clinging on with its little legs:

“Help, help, I can’t fly, and if I don’t hurry I’ll find the door to my hive closed!”

“Hop onto our leaf, we’ll help you!”

They get as close as possible, she immediately jumps onto the hang glider, then the three of them head towards the little creature’s house.



“It’s so nice to be up here, it’s not tiring, I really needed a rest, thank you so much!”

“Don’t worry, just tell us where your beehive is.”

“Mmmmh, you need to change direction. Can you see that meadow over there? And that enormous lime tree, can you see it? Well, I live with my sisters in a hollow in the trunk.”

Then *TICHÈ* says: “Hurry up, Tuchè, before the wind changes!”

Suddenly, a gust of wind carries them far away, followed by another which brings them back.

“My head is spinning with all this whirling around!” shouts *TICHÈ*.

Finally, they manage to stop near the trunk of the tree.

“Quick! Jump!” they tell the little bee.

The bee moves her aching wings and enters her home. They hear her sisters greeting her, and the sound of their little legs stamping in the hive.

“That’s done!” says *TUCHÈ*.

And they get ready to leave again.



They are about to head off when they hear another cry for help.
The little voice is coming from an oak leaf: “With this strong wind I can’t fly! Please help me!”
The little animal crying for help is a ladybird. She is shivering, sitting on a leaf in her red suit with black spots.
“You can hop on to on our hang glider, but you’ll have to take a big leap!” says *TICHÈ*.
“No problem at all, I’m athletic!”
She had barely finished speaking when a sudden gust of wind blew the vehicle next to the little animal, who jumps on immediately.
“My belly was full and I was looking for shelter to spend the winter, but I just couldn’t move.”
“Maybe an empty stomach might have made it easier! Perhaps it would have been better for you not to fill yourself up with so much food, don’t you think?”
“Easy to say, but try fasting before winter arrives!”
They soon arrive at an imposing tree.
“What a beautiful beech tree. Maybe I should stop here — what do you think?”
“At your service, ladybird!”
In the blink of an eye, the insect is safe.
“Thanks! I won’t forget you!” she shouts as she starts to prepare her shelter for the long winter rest.



Finally, the two seeds can now fly freely in the sky and head towards a wood full of golden plants.
They are about to glide down when they hear a moan coming from a bramble bush.
“Someone help us, please!”
The voice is faint, worried. Approaching the bush, they find two little ants climbing on a leaf. They look like they are about to fall.
“Jump onto the hang glider when we pass underneath you!” shouts *TICHÈ*.
They immediately direct the vehicle under the leaf and save the two little ants.
“Thank you, we didn’t have the strength to stay up there any longer!”
Where is your nest?
“Oh, it’s nearby. If you drop us off, we’ll walk there.”
“Right, girls, let’s take a big breath.”
In a second, the two little ants are on the ground and, waving goodbye, they head home.

At this point in the story, it is clear that the two seeds have not had an easy day. Perhaps it is time for them to rest... let’s see what they do next.
“The sun is about to set. Tichè, what shall we do?”
“Let’s look around, I don’t like flying in the dark.”
TICHÈ catches sight of a tree that is not very tall, with a hole in its trunk. They head for that spot, climb inside, and fall asleep straight away, exhausted after the trip.





The following morning, they are woken up by the sparrows' songs.

"Do not move, Tichè! Stay still and quiet, it's dangerous!"

They hide, frozen still and silent, but *TICHÈ*, with one eye, manages to see a large beak searching for food. Fortunately, the bird rummages around a bit and then flies away, flapping its wings loudly.

"Is your heart beating fast too?"

"Of course! I am terrified!"

"Tichè, look! That sparrow ruined our hang glider! What a mess!"

"Yes, what are we going to do now?"

They remain still for a moment, then, once everything is calm, they decide to try to fly anyway.

The wind is blowing in the right direction. It's reasonably strong. The journey will certainly be adventurous, and they are not sure if they will arrive, but they must set out – it's a matter of life or death.

The sky is a breathtaking vibrant blue, and it is wonderful to drift off in the wind, seeing the world from above as it becomes smaller and smaller.

It is certainly not easy to fly with a hole in your hang glider. It is either as fast as an arrow just released from a bow, nearly making them crash into tree trunks; or it plummets downwards, and then suddenly rises up again. Their hectic journey continues throughout the day.

The poor little things are exhausted, but luckily towards the evening they spot a suitable place to land: a large, soft meadow. They decide to try, but their first attempt is not successful.

They try again and again, but each time, just as they are about to touch the grass, a gust of wind blows them back up again.

Finally, they succeed: the grass is soft and warm, there is no one around, and there are no dangers on the horizon. This is the perfect place to spend the winter. They are just about to fall into a deep sleep...

“How are you, Tichè? It’s been tough, hasn’t it?”

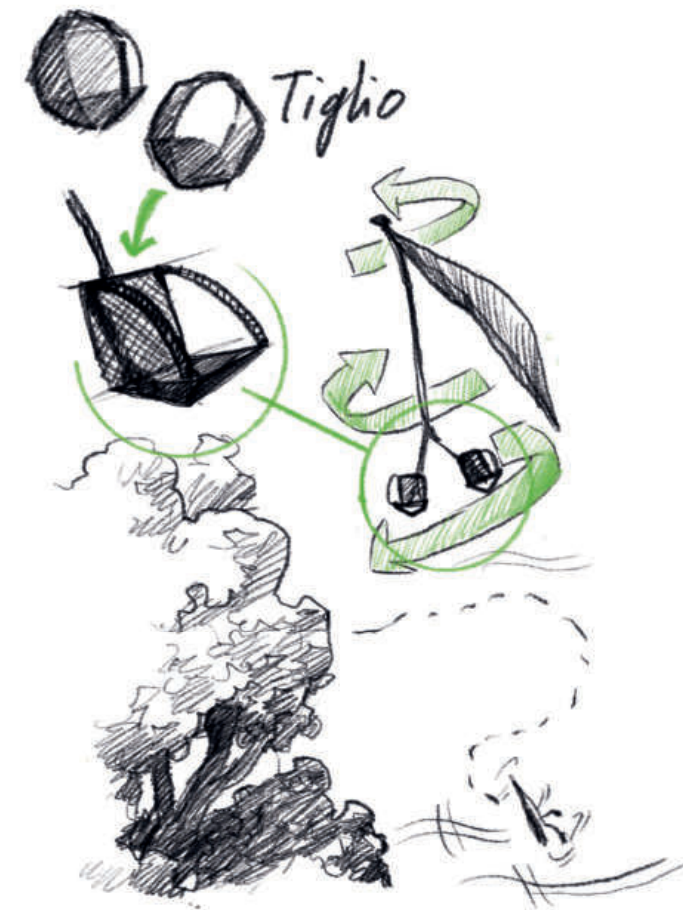
“Definitely, I can’t even talk about it. We only just made it!”

“Let’s not worry about it now, we’re safe here. We should try to get some sleep.

Goodnight, Tichè!”

“Goodnight, Tichè, we will see each other in the spring!”

Goodnight little seeds, and may a sweet awakening bring you lovely new things!





3.

THE PIROUETTING PLOT OF TU-TUM AND TU-TAM

 Before I tell you the tale of *TU-TUM AND TU-TAM*, I must first let you know that we start our story in Canada, to be precise in a **MAPLE** forest.

Winter is approaching, and here, the cold is no joke: when it arrives, you have to be prepared. So that's what everyone does.

There are many trees, but in the middle of the forest there is one full of seeds that are nearly ready to fall off the branches.

They are still there, motionless, looking up at those enormous hand-shaped leaves, which have turned a beautiful rich red, like sunset.

It is, undoubtedly, a beautiful sight.

During the day, various small creatures pass by. They are all animals which live in the forest: wolves, eagles, a bear, a hawk, two caribou, a herd of bison, a fox and a moose.



During the night, a gust of wind hits the branch. One of the many protective casings containing the seeds breaks off, and flies away.

TU-TUM AND TU-TAM, who were asleep, suddenly wake up. They find themselves spinning round in circles, stunned by a deafening noise.

“Tu-tum, what’s going on?”

“Our helicopter’s engine has started. Can you hear how noisy it is?”

It goes tu-tu-tu-tu-tu-tu, then ta-ta-ta-ta ta-ta!”

“Where are we going?”

Tu-tu-tu-ta-ta-ta.

“I have no idea. The storm is heading east and we’re going with it, but as we are going round in circles, it’s hard to tell — I could be wrong! Let’s try to stay calm. We have to wait for the sun to come out. There’s nothing we can do right now.”

Tu-tu-tu-ta-ta-ta.

They spend the entire night in their noisy helicopter, which drags them up first, and then downwards, often crashing into branches and tree trunks.

Tu-tu-tu-ta-ta-ta.

“Hey! Tu-tum, are you okay?”

“Yes, but my head is spinning and I feel a bit dizzy!”

Tu-tu-ta.

“Be careful, listen, the wind isn’t whistling anymore, and we’ve stopped moving!

Maybe the carousel has stopped turning!” *TU-TUM* shouts happily.

The helicopter comes to a halt. They don’t know where they have landed, but neither of them cares after all that circling. Exhausted, they lie down to rest, waking up only when a ray of light blinds them.

“Tu-tum, where are we?”

“I don’t understand, I feel like I’m still in the sky. I don’t know where we are, although we seem to be moving, and there’s still a little breeze. Let’s try to move closer to that edge!”

They do, and what they see really frightens them.

“Tu-tum, have you ever seen so much water? Where on earth have we ended up?”

“You’re in the middle of the ocean, on a huge ship, at the foot of a funnel!” replies a seagull that stopped there to rest.

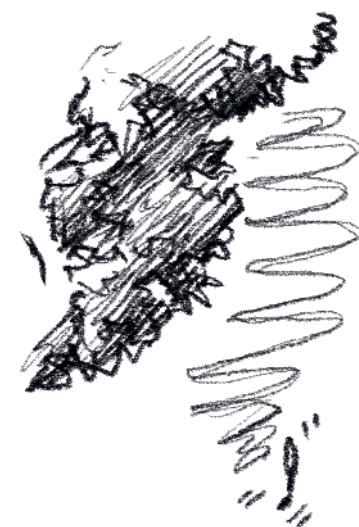
The seagull is very big. He has a large beak and long orange legs. To tell the truth, he could look quite intimidating, but he starts chuckling friendly. He looks at the two seeds, staring at them with two sweet marble eyes.

“I’m going to Italy, to Lignano to be precise, where all my friends are. Ah, we have so much fun together! Come with me, don’t stay in Canada, think of how cold it will be!”

They trust the seagull.

“That sounds like a great idea, what do you think, Tu-tam?”

“All right then, let’s get a lift to Lignano!”





At that moment, the funnel begins to puff and a pleasant warmth engulfs them. Straight after, the ship sets sail. Towards the evening, gently rocked by the waves of the ocean, they settle down to rest.

They sleep all night, and feel much better the following day.

“I hear someone shouting. What’s happening?”

“I’m going to check!” says the seagull, second to none when it comes to curiosity.

He starts flying in circles, moving his large white wings. He disappears from view, then reappears saying: “The ship is full of people walking on the deck or sunbathing. I think it’s a cruise ship! You can hear people shouting because we have just arrived at a port and, if I’m not mistaken, we’re in Genoa. Let me carry you in my beak so you can visit the city.”

In an instant, they are up in the air, and what lies below is extraordinary: the sea on one side, the mountains on the other.

“Do you see that tower over there? It is the lighthouse, *Lanterna*, and down there you can see the Aquarium, the largest in Europe. Inside you can find fish from all over the world. Unfortunately, it is difficult to catch them. Here, the people from Genoa erected a statue of Christopher Columbus, the discoverer of the Americas.”

“We like Genoa, but now we’re tired of circling in the sky, we’re cold, let’s go back to the ship!” say the two frozen seeds.

Scooping them up in its beak, the seagull carries them back.

The journey continues, and the days pass by, but the three are happy. It is nice and warm up there near the funnel, and they can enjoy a special view.

Early one morning, the large ship stops at a port and the seagull, enchanted, admires a strange cone-shaped mountain in the distance. He begins to shout: “We have arrived in Naples, now you can see the most famous volcano in the world!”

He picks up the two seeds and takes them up again, high in the sky. The two are truly delighted with the spectacle they are witnessing.

On one side, the sea: the waves crash into the coast, foaming. On the other side, Vesuvius, the volcano, with a cap of smoke on its head.

Soon after, they find themselves above the colourful alleys of the city, packed with cheerful, boisterous people. They even visit the fish market, where the seagull tries to get some breakfast.

Once the tour is over, they return to the ship. A siren warns them that they are about to set sail again. The journey is long, and the three spend a lot of time together, becoming best friends.

One day, the ship pulls up alongside a quay and the seagull begins to flutter happily, squawking: “We have just arrived in Trieste, now we have to take the ferry to Lignano – we are nearly there. Stay here! I’ll only be gone for a moment!”

He spreads his wings and flies away. After a few minutes, he returns chirping: “I’ve found it, come on!”

He picks up *TU-TUM AND TU-TAM* and carries them to the top of the ferry, which is already starting to move.

“Look at the Trieste Karst, it’s full of rocks and caves!”

They look on in amazement, then rest, tired because of the enduring journey.



At a certain point, the seagull catches sight of the low, sandy coast of Lignano and the small, bustling harbour.

With hardly enough time to realise it, a flock of seagulls flies towards them joyfully: “You’re here! Hello! Welcome!”

They are all so happy to see each other again that they fly off over the sea and forget about the two seeds who are left on the ferry. Still unsure about what to do, they wait for their friend for a little. After a while, sure that the seagull will not return, they decide to fly away in the nice cool breeze.

“We can’t stay here, we have to find somewhere warm to spend the winter,” says *TU-TUM*.

Tu-tu-tu-ta-ta-ta goes the engine that had been silent for so long.
Tu-tu-tu-ta-ta-ta.

They fly over the plains painted with fields, rivers, woods, towns and villages.
Tu-tu-tu-ta-ta-ta.

They fly over green hills, coated in trees and vineyards.
Tu-tu-tu-ta-ta-ta.

Then they fly over some mountains that are not too high, and *TU-TUM* says, “It seems like the temperature here is just right for us, what do you think?”

“I agree!” says the other.

They decide to glide down to the forest of maple trees.

Tu-tu-ta-ta.

Tu-ta.



They finally land.

The forest is big enough. There is room for both of them. They find a relatively large clearing and try to make their way through the warm ground as quickly as possible to take shelter from the snow that is beginning to fall.

“Welcome, little seeds, where are you from?” asks a slightly curious maple tree.

“From Canada.”

“Where is that?”

“It is very far away, on the other side of the ocean.”

“The ocean?”

“So much saltwater separates the lands.”

“Oh, I had no idea there was so much water. Well, you’ve travelled a long way, but now you must rest. We need new trees. The men keep cutting us down. Have a good winter’s rest Canadian seeds, we’ll see you in the spring and we can chat together then!”

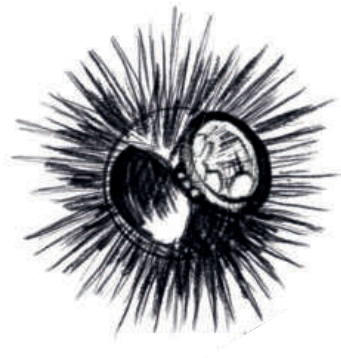
“Have a good rest too. We’ll get to know each other better in the summer, when we’ve grown into little maple trees!”

We have got to the end of *TU-TUM AND TU-TAM*’s long journey, and now they have grown into two beautiful trees, living in the forest alongside all the others, happy to be there and to have seen the world before spreading their roots.





THE STICKY STORY OF RICCI AND RUCCI



Have you ever cycled or walked along the country roads of Friuli?

How many times have you glanced at the ditches running alongside them? If you are like me, you would have many times. I usually observe them in spring, when primroses and violets bloom among the tender grass. Throughout the year many interesting plants can be found there. In March, for example, the ditches are filled with green grass, which is highly toxic but undoubtedly beautiful to look at with its flowers clustered like bubbles in a fizzy drink. In July, the blue viper's bugloss blooms, with its long stem and bell-shaped flowers arranged on either side, all the way to the top. Bees often keep these flowers company. Also in July, wild thistles grow and bloom, with flowers that resemble artichokes. They are tall, long and thorny. They look like watchmen guarding the ditch. Bindweed winds its way everywhere. Recognisable for the large white or small pink bell-shaped flowers that give off a delicate scent.

The silene plant is extraordinary, with a balloon under the white flower. If you clap your hands around it, it bursts. Children used to play with it all the time.

I often see flowering broom plants. It forms large orange patches. Its flowers are also called cockerels because of their crested shape.

The star of Bethlehem creates many white tufts among the grass, like stars in the sky, and the clover proudly displays its violet-coloured spike.

Throughout spring and summer, meadow sage appears, with its long stem laden with dark purple flowers, attracting many insects that flutter around it.

And do you know what *vecia sativa* is? It is a plant that resembles a bean plant but has different leaves: they are small and vary in shape and size. Although these plants appear tender and delicate, they are actually quite resistant, like all plants that grow in ditches.

Throughout the year, you can find dandelions in bloom, their flowers shining in the green like yellow stars.

In certain places, you can find a lot of horsetail growing. This is a plant that is rightly described as ancient. There is also stinging nettle — best not to touch this one!

Finally, I will describe **BURDOCK**, a rather mischievous plant that often goes unseen. It is quite unique, and I will explain why.

During the summer, it grows tall with many branches and silvery leaves, then it blooms and the flowers, shaped like hedgehogs, are thorny and sticky, while at the top the petals are pinkish.

During autumn, the plant goes dormant, but not the burrs, which have turned brown and are pricklier than ever.

This story is about them, and it's time to begin.

RICCI AND RUCCI are two burdock seeds. Their plant grew in a ditch in the middle of the fields. They remained in their burr all summer long, but now they sense the weather is changing and that their plant is going to sleep.

“Listen, Ricci, don't you think it's getting colder?” says *RUCCI*.

“And what's more, lots of curly-haired people have left, lucky them!” says *RICCI*.

They continue chatting.

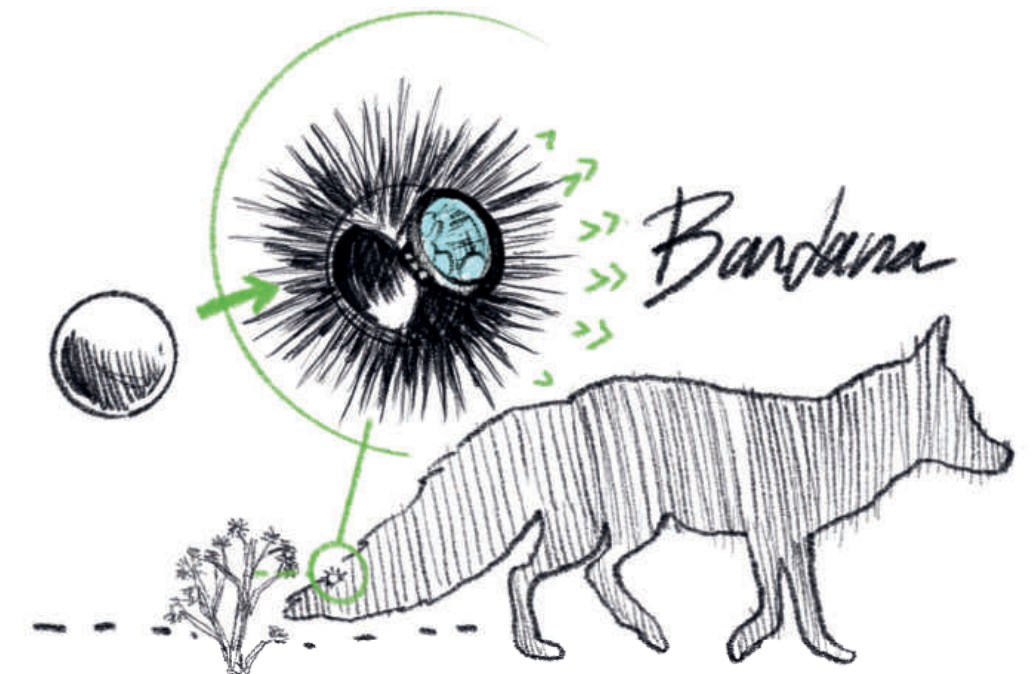
“Ah, did I tell you that yesterday everyone who lived on our branch left? I'm scared everyone will go and that we will be left all by ourselves soon!”

“I agree, but what should we do? We're too high up and no one ever comes up here!”

“Let's hope someone passes by soon. We need to find a spot to rest underground!”

Night falls, but the two prickly things are still quite comfortable. It is warm.

They settle down and close their eyes.



Outside, in the darkness, the moon shines and the little animals have retreated into their burrows. Not all of them though; some are waking up and moving among the blades of grass, searching for food.

The mice scurry here and there to gather fruit, roots and seeds, moving cautiously so they aren't caught by predators.

High above, an owl glides silently, a real danger to the little mice. It has large, strong wings and eyes that can see well in the dark. It can land on you when you least expect it, so they must be careful.

At the same time, in a small wood next to the ditch, a fox is waking up in its den. He opens his mouth wide, pricks up his ears, stretches his legs, licks his soft, tawny fur and starts to think about finding some food. The fox prefers the night because during the day there are humans everywhere. Setting off, he comes out of his hole and begins to look around with his large eyes. They look like two dark pearls.

All is quiet among the trees. He listens carefully but hears nothing.
Only the leaves rustling in the wind – nothing else.
Then, with small steps, he heads towards the ditch.

In the sky, the moon is brighter than usual and its rays, filtering through the branches, form many long disturbing shadows. These could frighten anyone but not, however, the fox, who is used to roaming in the world of shadows.



Slowly, he crosses the woods, getting closer to the ditch.
 “Let’s hope that at least something happens over there...” he thinks.
 The moon is brighter now, and the grass moves in the ditch.
 “Hmm, I think my breakfast is ready,” thinks the fox, approaching steadily.
 When he feels close enough, he hides among the blades of grass and waits.
 The little mouse is right under the burdock plant, gathering lots of seeds, when he seems to sense something strange in the air. He straightens his little head, turns it to the right and left, and before he has time to understand what is happening, the fox pounces.
 The little mouse instinctively moves away and the hunter ends up bumping into the burdock plant. He tries to chase him, but the mouse has already run into his nest.
 The mouse’s eyes are wide open and its heart is beating wildly.
 “Survival is not easy,” the two both think, although they mean something different: the mouse thinks of the danger it faced in gathering those seeds, the fox of the food that he was not able to catch.
 However, we can say that the fox’s leap was not without consequences.
 “Ricci, what’s going on? I was sleeping so well!”
 “I don’t know, there’s a mad rush!”
 “We’re moving – it’s like being on a merry-go-round! Rucci, hold on tight! Look! Through this little hole I can see that we’ve moved, we’re no longer on our little map! Our prickly shells have clung onto something furry! Oh, there, I can see a snout! Now I understand: a fox, we’re on the back of a fox!”
 “Well done! Rucci, we’re finally on our way, even if it might be a little adventurous!”
 The two seeds cling tightly to the walls of their prickly shell and wait for the events to unfold, as the hooks on their little house are so strong that they won’t fall off easily.



The fox is rather disappointed. The night is long and his tummy is rumbling.
 He moves around in search of food until he gets close to a chicken coop: it is surrounded by a sturdy fence and the hens sleep peacefully inside the shed. In the middle of the courtyard there is a tree that stretches out in a sinister shadow.
 The moon is high in the sky, a bright light for the fox.
 He circles it but cannot find any gaps in the fence.
 Suddenly, an angry bark makes him jump back: it’s a dog! Like a lion, with its mouth wide open, it shows its sharp, pointed teeth. Better run away!
 Four jumps and he is already far away, hidden behind a house, breathing heavily from fear and exhaustion.
 He is about to return to his den, empty-bellied, when he notices a small window left ajar. It’s at ground level. He approaches and smells something delicious. Slowly and quietly, he slips through the crack and... what does he see? Salami, ham, pancetta, cotechino, and sausages. He has never seen anything like it!
 He looks around, sees no one, takes a big leap and grabs a cotechino sausage, then runs away as fast as he can.
 He passes the chicken coop, jumps over the ditch, and stops in the woods to calmly eat his prey.
 From far away, you can still hear barking, but the damage has been done, and the fox can now relax with a full belly.
 Above, the sky is clearing, signalling that dawn is about to break and it is time for our thief to retreat. He gets up and, only then, does he notice something bothering him.
 He moves his snout: his back is covered in sharp burrs.
 To get rid of them, he rubs himself against a bush and a tree trunk until they all fall off, then continues on his way.
RICCI AND RUCCI’s hedgehog shell is left lying on the ground.





“I’m dizzy!” *Ricci* complains.

“Me too! My head is spinning!” *Ricci* comments. “But tell me, what do you think happened to that fox?”

“He did us a great favour by leaving us on the ground.”

“What shall we do now?”

“I think we should look around; after all, it’s daytime and with the light we can get a better idea of where we can find shelter.”

Indeed, sunlight was already shining down on everything, even the small patch of land where the two seeds were lying. Around them it was full of majestic trees, twigs and bushes, colourful leaves that had fallen from the branches, and here and there they could see a few mushrooms, with red caps covered in white dots.

One of the mushrooms is standing right next to the two seeds.

“Hello little mushroom, tell me, have we come to the right place?” *Ricci* says to him.

“I don’t know, I haven’t lived here long, but so far no one has bothered me, although that is partly because I’m so poisonous that they don’t dare to!” he replies.

“Did you hear that, Ricci? We’re in luck!”

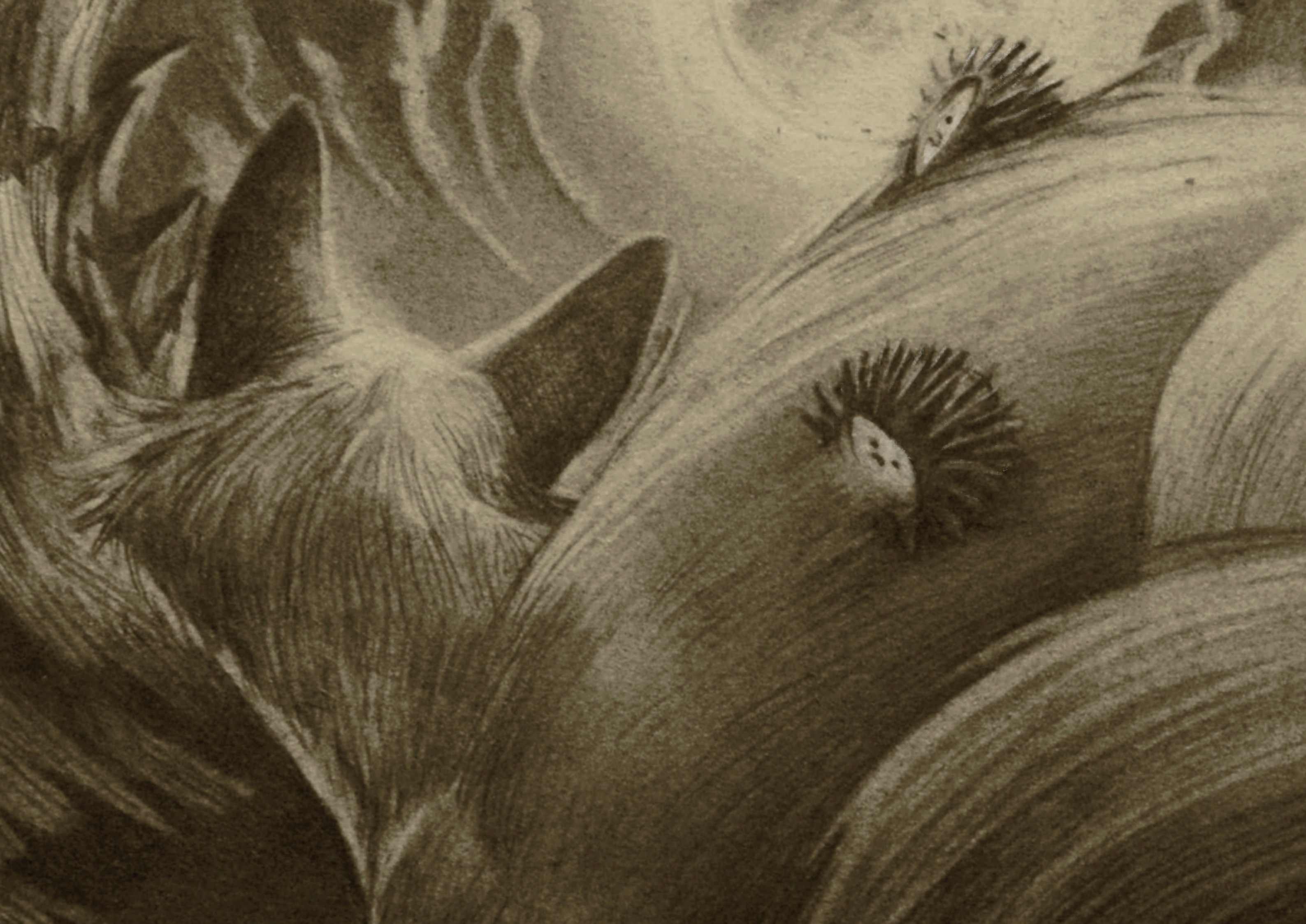
“Come on, hurry up, it’s getting cold. Let’s go inside and get some sleep. I’m so tired I can hardly keep my eyes open!”

“All right, have a good winter break, Ricci!”

“Have a good rest too, Ricci, see you when it’s warmer!”

In the meanwhile, leaves continue to fall from the trees, creating a carpet to protect the two little seeds.

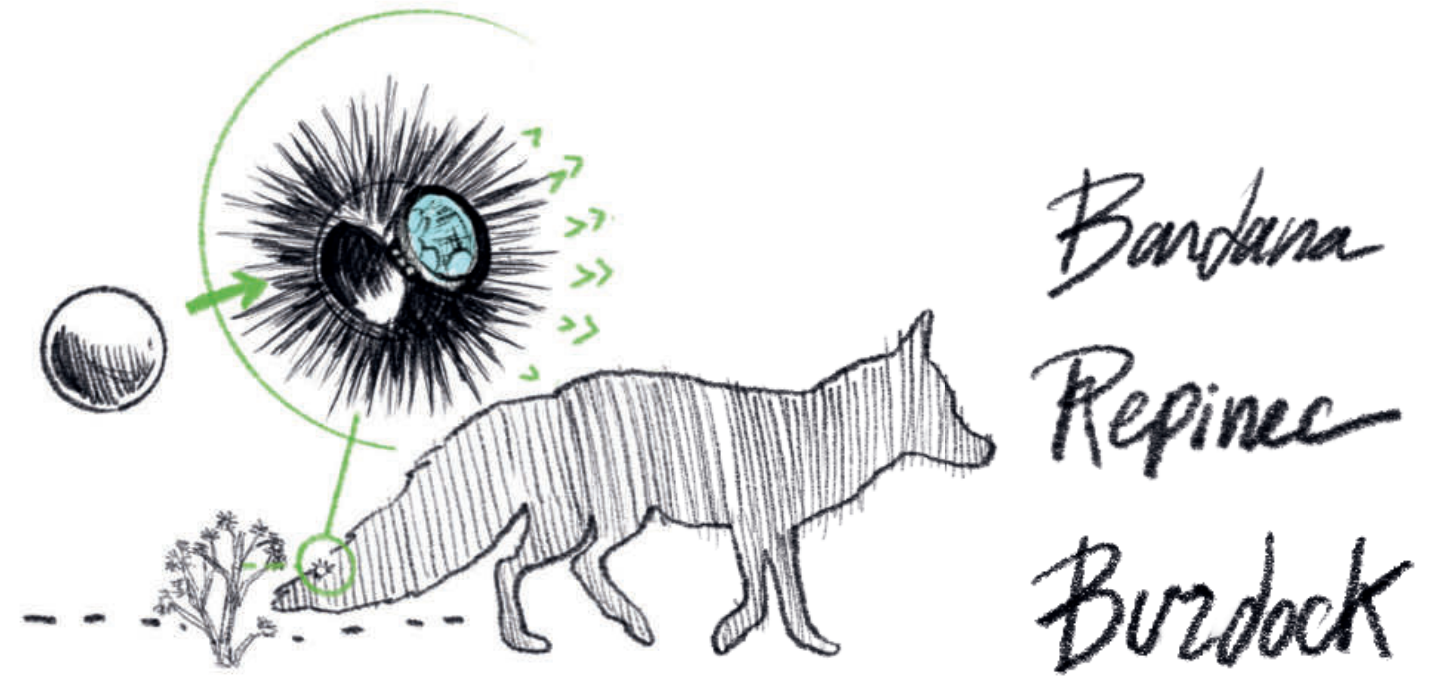
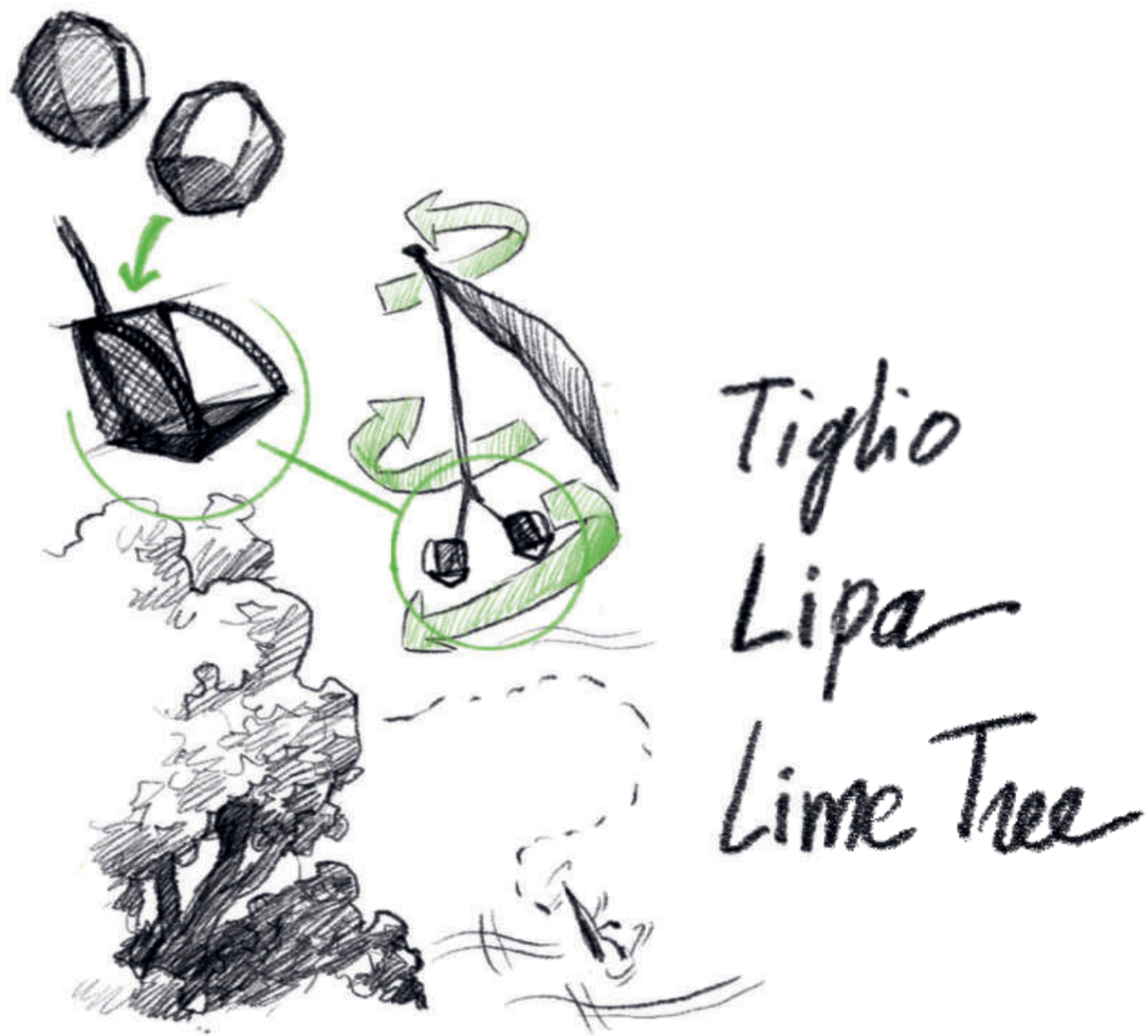
What beautiful burdock plants they will become in the warmth of spring!



my seed collection

How many different seeds can you find?
Stick them here!





Walking through the meadows and woods of Friuli-Venezia Giulia is an experience that connects you with the Earth, and that is where those who go walking turn their gaze. There are so many things to observe: plants, flowers, shrubs, mushrooms, small animals or traces of animals that you cannot see. A world to explore.

To read these stories, however, we must look upwards.

The sky is criss-crossed by strange, tiny invisible travellers, searching for a place to put down roots. They come from the trees of the Friuli woods or from distant forests overseas - as in the case of the Canadian maple seeds.

The wind will guide them and, as they take flight, they will experience new adventures, meet new friends and discover new places.

They are a small group of microscopic vagabonds, curious and courageous, who will colour the Friuli region with the green coat which is essential for the survival of all living beings.

Four short, delicate and dreamy stories with a strong focus on nature, for young children and toddlers.

Four different stories, but linked by a common thread that is clearly expressed in the title: The sky is green.

In Friuli, summer is now over and the woods, meadows, vegetable patches and gardens are preparing for their long winter rest.

It is in this setting that the journey of the protagonists begins. The small seeds are carried by the wind, and their journey embodies the hope for future rebirth.

These stories transport children into nature and help them discover its constructive and regenerative power. The aim is to help them learn to respect the ecosystem and environment we live in, and, by doing so, learn to respect ourselves - as we are tied to all the living beings that inhabit our planet.

The narrative is fictional, but the plot and the dialogues of the characters that animate it are an attempt to convey the values that should underpin civilised society and give meaning to community life: values such as cooperation, respect, mutual assistance, acceptance of others, and care for the environment.

The stories also want to contribute, even if only in a small way, to opening our children's minds to the outside world, to hospitality and cultural sharing. They nurture the hope and presumption of being able to aspire to this, through the adventures of the tiny protagonists who pursue these values with bold determination.

Tiziana Potocco, Author

This is a special book, where fairy tales drift as lightly as seeds are carried by the wind, and every story is cradled by music that listens, embraces, and protects.

Some seeds take off on a leaf-shaped glider, others cling to one another so they won't get lost in the wind, and others still travel through forests, seas, and seasons in search of a place to lay their roots. They are stories, but also symbols: just like children, seeds experience change, waiting, fear, and transformation.

Sometimes, in the hearts of little ones, anxiety hides like a tiny knot, delicate and hard to explain.

For this reason, alongside words, we chose to weave specific sounds into this book — tones selected to support relaxation and calm children.

It isn't a therapeutic program, but rather a gentle companion: music designed to reassure, support, and encourage a sense of peace during listening or shared reading.

We begin with frequencies from 320–432 Hz, wrapping like a soft blanket and inviting the body to slow down.

Then comes 528 Hz, descending like a deep breath before rising again, carrying light, presence, and trust.

Between 432 and 440 Hz lies balance: the heartbeat steadies, the mind becomes clearer and calmer.

Finally, the bridge between 432 and 528 Hz guides every young reader through a delicate passage—from tension to release, from racing thoughts to rest.

These frequencies were chosen with care, inspired by music therapy for children and by studies that highlight their potential benefits: they help reduce stress, increase a sense of safety, and encourage deep relaxation.

In every story there is a hint of wind, a pause of silence, and a hidden melody.

Read them slowly, listen to them with your heart.

Because in this book, fairy tales aren't just read — breathe them too.

And, as the characters find the soil where they can bloom, also children — while listening — can find their own space to rest.

Alessio Travan, Music Therapist

Associazione Examina

Examina is an association based in Gorizia made up of young people passionate about music, art, cinema and intelligent tourism. For over ten years, it has been active in producing events, festivals, exhibitions and events that explore and promote the tangible and intangible heritage of the region.

As part of the project “Ermes. Multimedia Readings for Dreamers of All Ages,” created with the support of the Friuli Venezia Giulia Region, the Association oversaw the design and production of this volume.

For additional information, visit: www.associazionexamina.it

Written by

Tiziana Potocco

Illustrations by

Armando Miron Polacco

Read by

Robyn Cavalli

Ana Černic

Angelica Stasi

Translations

Robyn Cavalli

Ana Černic

Zoë Rivas Zanello

Project

Flavio Cecere

Martino Gismano

Angelica Stasi

Music therapy and sound project

Flavio Cecere

Marco Di Lena

Alessio Travan

Design project

Zoë Rivas Zanello

Project developed by

examina

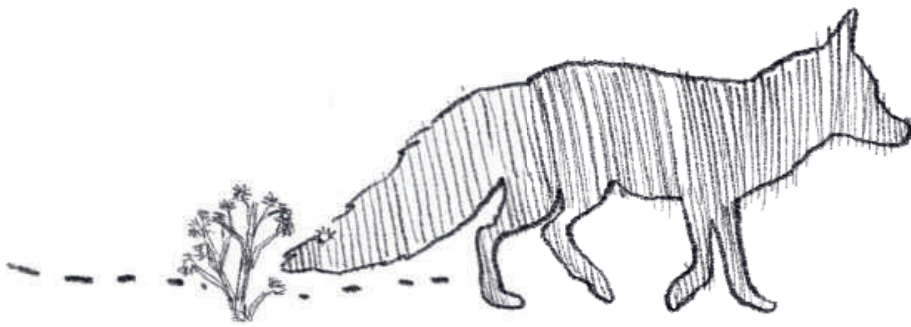
Thanks to the financial support of



IO SONO
FRIULI
VENEZIA
GIULIA

In collaboration with

il laboratorio





this is a special book
that you can read, look at or listen to...

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For more information, please visit our website:
www.associazionexamina.it.

examina