



Friends Through the Storm





In a land not too far away
little animals escape the day.

They close their eyes and snuggle in bed.
“Sweet dreams, little animal, rest your head.”

Off to sleep into their dreams,
to the land where ZoonicornS are Seen.

Together the animals and ZoonicornS play
with adventures and learning along the way.



It started out as a grand day with the Zoonicornns laughing and playing tag among the grass, trees, and the sky.



"It's not fair. I don't want to be it again," pouted Ene.

"Well, it's not my fault you are the slowest runner here. Maybe you should have picked a different game," responded Valeo.

"Don't worry, Ene, one of these days your legs will grow and grow, then you'll be able to beat Valeo in any race," said Promi with a wink.

"Oh, yes, I'll practice every day and get really fast!" declared Ene.

The four set out to play another round of tag when they heard crying coming from a small bush. Under it was a small red panda.

"There, there, don't cry," comforted Promithea.

"We are the ZoonicornS. What is your name?"

The red panda looked up at them.

"J-J-Jomi," she said with a snuffle.

"Why are you crying?" asked Aliel.



"Because I'm afraid, the weather bird told me a storm was coming,
and I don't like storms."

"Storms are caused by cue-nu-no-nimbus clouds," said Ene proudly.

"It's cumulonimbus clouds, Ene," corrected Valeo.

"That's what I said, cue-numb-no-nimbus clouds!"

"Hmm, we'll practice saying that later," replied Promi.





The ZoonicornS didn't really know how to help Jomi with her fear of storms, but they wanted to do something.

Aliel suggested they visit Madam Bigsby. She was sure to know what to do, so off they went with Jomi to seek her advice.

Madam Bigsby was the wisest in all the land. She lived under a large oak tree in the middle of the forest.



When they knocked on the door,
it opened to reveal a long winding
staircase.

The ZoonicornS and Jomi made their way
down the twisting and turning stairs;
hopeful they would find an answer there.



"Come in, come in, young ones. Don't be shy, tell Madam Bigsby why you stopped by."

"I'm afraid of thunderstorms and one is coming tonight. They are loud and scary and I don't know what to do. Can you make it go away?" asked Jomi.

"I cannot stop a thunderstorm from coming this way. However, I can help keep your fear at bay."

Madam Bigsby's cap lit up and she started writing on a piece of paper.

She told them it was a riddle and by solving it, they would help Jomi get over her fear of thunderstorms.

Jomi gave Madam Bigsby a big hug and they all left the big oak tree.



Once outside Jomi opened the paper
and began to read the riddle out loud.

"A place to stay safe and dry,
A soft comfort to keep you warm,
Something bright against the dark,
A sound so sweet to hush the storm."

A place to stay safe and dry,
A soft comfort to keep you warm,
Something bright against the dark,
A sound so sweet to hush the storm.



"Let's just take it one line at a time. I think the first one is pretty easy Jomi, where do you live? Is it safe and dry?" asked Valeo.

"We nest in the trees."

"Hmm, it's always best to stay away from trees during thunderstorms. I have an idea; you can stay with us tonight. Our home is safe and dry."

"That's a great idea!" said Promi. "I'll go back and set up a room for Jomi. Valeo, you work on the next riddle. Aliel, Ene, take Jomi and work out the last two. Then we'll all meet back at the den."





They all went their separate ways. Jomi, Aliel and Ene sat down and began to think. The last two parts of the riddle stumped them. It didn't help that there was a noisy crow cawing in the background.

"Why couldn't it be a songbird singing us a sweet song instead?" remarked Jomi with her hands over her ears.

"That's it!" said Aliel "A sound so sweet to hush the storm. We need to find some song birds. Surely they can drown out the noise of thunder."

They rushed to the opera where the birds often gathered to practice their morning Song.

As they entered, they saw three yellow birds perched on a window sill singing.



"Your Song is lovely," said Ene.

"Thank you that is our rain Song," replied the first bird.

"My name is Can. This is my sister Ary and my brother Finch."

Aliel, Jomi, and Ene told the birds all about the coming thunderstorm and asked them if they would help. Since Ary and Finch didn't like storms either, the three birds quickly agreed.



The birds flew out the window to sing their rain song warning the other animals of the upcoming storm.

They promised to meet back at the Zoonicorn's den before the storm arrived.

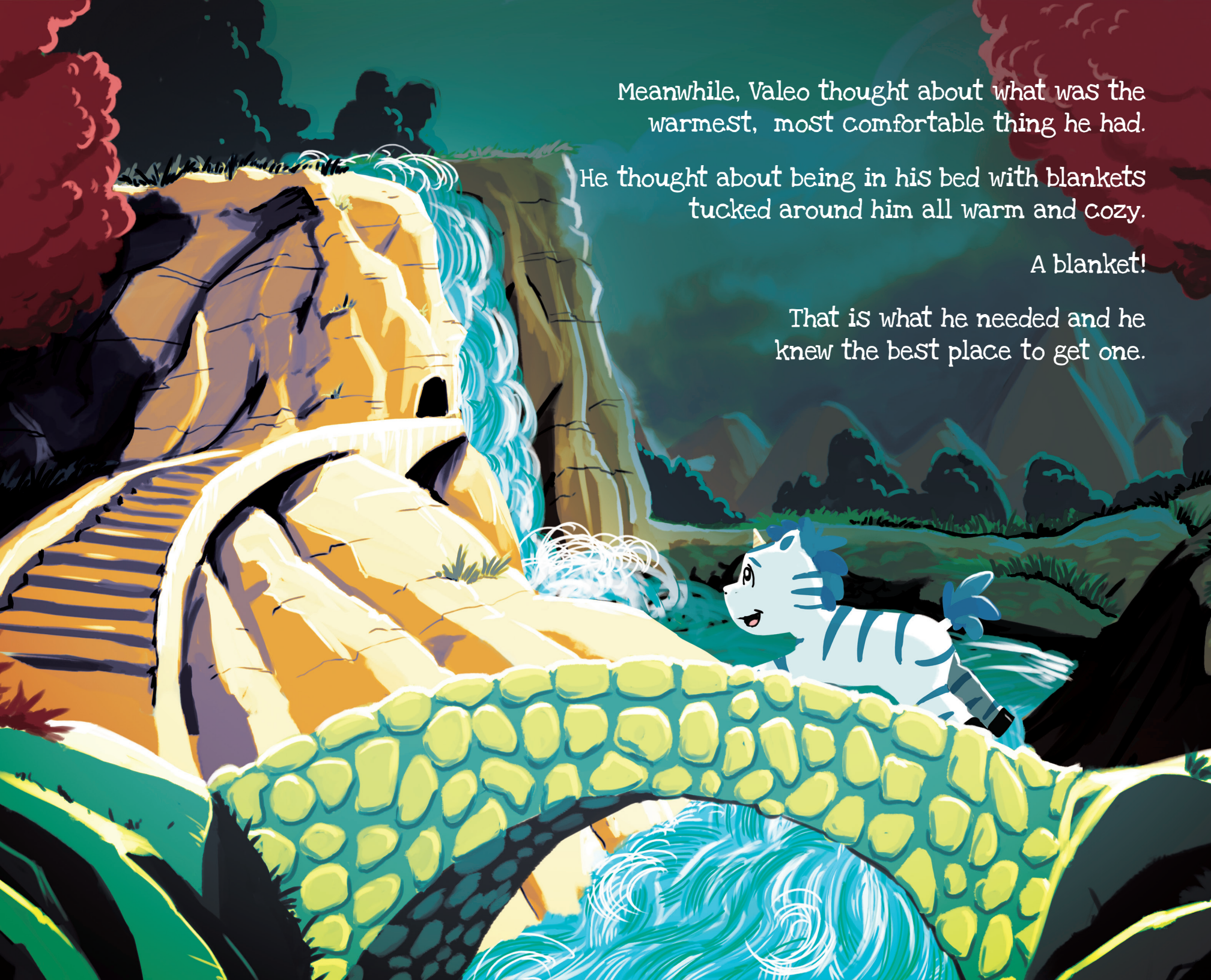


Meanwhile, Valeo thought about what was the warmest, most comfortable thing he had.

He thought about being in his bed with blankets tucked around him all warm and cozy.

A blanket!

That is what he needed and he knew the best place to get one.





He climbed up the large hill to the hall of The Great Sheep King above the woolly waterfall. The Sheep King listened to Valeo's story.

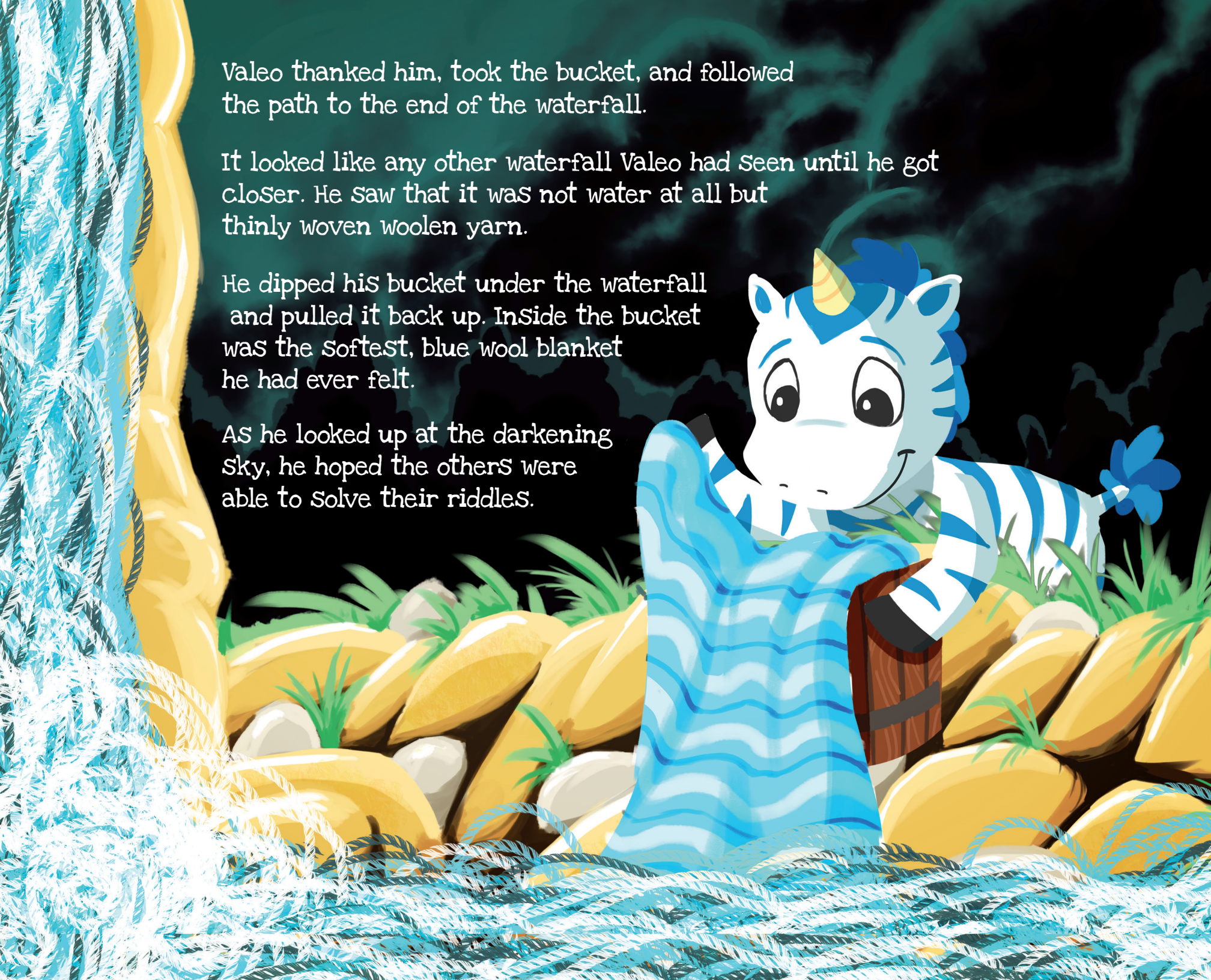
"Go to where the waterfall ends and fill this bucket. You will find what you need there," ordered the Sheep King.

Valeo thanked him, took the bucket, and followed the path to the end of the waterfall.

It looked like any other waterfall Valeo had seen until he got closer. He saw that it was not water at all but thinly woven woolen yarn.

He dipped his bucket under the waterfall and pulled it back up. Inside the bucket was the softest, blue wool blanket he had ever felt.

As he looked up at the darkening sky, he hoped the others were able to solve their riddles.



The others had not been able to solve the last riddle.
The sun, moon, and stars wouldn't work; they would be covered in clouds.

Jomi thought about asking the bees for some wax to make a candle
but Aliel didn't think that would be a good idea.

Ene thought he had a flashlight at home
but didn't know if it still worked.



They ran down to the meadow where the lighting bugs were. Gathering as many lightning bug friends as they could, Jomi told them about the storm. They quickly agreed to help, especially after Ene said there would be snacks.






AS they hurried back home, it became darker and more lighting began to flash.
Jomi started to tremble.

The lightning bugs offered her comfort by surrounding her and lighting the path home.



Everyone enjoyed themselves by playing games and singing songs. When the storm arrived, the lightning flashed, the thunder rumbled, but Jomi didn't notice. She felt safe, dry, and warm.



After such a long day, Jomi and the others began to feel sleepy. They all fell asleep to a sweet lullaby, under a soft blanket, surrounded by twinkling lights.



In a land not too far away
little animals wake for the day.

They open their eyes and turn their head.
“Good morning, little animal, sit up in bed.”

Off they go, there's a day to be seen
until it's time, again, to dream.