

# TERRA'S WALK

BY BILL MORGAN ILLUSTRATED BY ERNESTO PAUL









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There once was a girl named Terra, whose name means The Earth. One day, she decided to visit her friends, the animals who lived in nearby Shady Woods. It was a calm and peaceful day. She could see tall trees off in the distance. A light wind was blowing, and the treetops moved slowly in the breeze. As she got closer to the Woods she could hear the Clearwater River as it rushed along below. A ways farther down the hill was the ocean and Sandy Beach, where the Ferris Wheel turned over and over like a big clock in the sky. Even farther away, across the river and beyond the beach, she could see Mighty Mountain, tall and bright in the sun.







Soon, however, as she walked along, the weather changed. The calm day got darker. Heavy clouds filled the sky and it started to rain. Terra ran to get into the forest. It was a long run, and when she got there, she turned her ankle and fell down hard, hitting her head. It hurt and she felt dizzy. She tried to stand up, but in a few minutes, her aching head and the sound of the raindrops made her pass out.







# TERRAS'S NIGHTMARE. THE WOODS TO BE

She woke up in the middle of the forest. She never knew how long she lay there, because when she woke up her head still hurt, but everything around her was different. For one thing, the rain had stopped.

She stood up and looked around. For another thing, the air was so smoky she couldn't see very well. Tears came to her eyes and rolled down her face.

And Shady Woods was gone! Most of the tall, beautiful trees had been cut down and there were fires burning all around her. There were smoking branches and bushes everywhere. She coughed and choked, barely able to breathe.

“What happened?” she said to no one in particular,  
“Where is Shady Woods?”

Then, she heard a deep, loud Voice:

“There is no more Shady Woods!” It said.

Terra looked all around, but there was no one there.

“Who said that?”

“There is no more Shady Woods!” the Voice repeated,  
“This is the Forest to Be! This is what Shady Woods will become unless you help!”

“But where are the animals that used to live here? And the beautiful trees?”

“The animals and the trees are gone!” The Voice answered.

“Where did they go?” Terra wondered.

“The animals all ran away or died out because people cut down the forest to make room for the city. Plus, the air is so hot and dry from fossil fuels that the fires burn hotter and spread faster.”

The smoke was getting worse and Terra couldn't stop coughing. “I'm sorry,” she told the Voice, “but I can't even breathe. I have to get out of here! I'm going down to the river to cool off!”





E. Paul  
2024



# WHICH CLEARWATER RIVER DO YOU MEAN?

She took the path down to the river. Anything to get away from that burning forest! Anyway, she had always loved the Clearwater River, with its cold, clean current and little pools and waterfalls. It was a great place to swim and picnic. But just now as she looked down the hill and saw what was there, she stopped and rubbed her eyes. Her river was gone!

“But where is my river?”

The Voice said, “Behold the River To Be! This is what the Clearwater River will become unless you help!”

“But the water is not even moving!” Terra cried.

It was true. There were piles of plastic wrappers and cups and plates and bottles, big broken pieces of random things and all kinds of junk. Dead fish floated around. The whole thing smelled terrible!

“This - this is my river? But why is the water all brown?”

“Oh, that!” The Voice answered. “See that sign there?”

Terra looked. The sign said

ACME PAPER COMPANY.

KEEP OUT!

THIS MEANS YOU!

“But where did all the garbage come from?”

Terra asked.

“Where do you think?” the Voice answered, “Look!”

From a huge pipe on the shore, stinking brown liquids poured into the river.

“People!” The Voice exclaimed, “people throwing their junk into it, dumping poison chemicals into it for years and years and years! This is what the river will become unless you help!”







Looking at all the garbage and smelling it made Terra feel sick. She asked the Voice,

“Why is this happening to our Earth? The forest is burning down, and the river is polluted.”

For once, the Voice didn't say anything.

The heat from the fires and the smell from the garbage made her hot and thirsty but when she reached down to get some water to drink and splash on her face, she saw a sign next to the water with the words,

THIS RIVER IS POLLUTED!!

DO NOT DRINK!!

Terra walked on.

”At least the beach will still be there, she thought, “Nothing could change that! But when she came to the beach, the beach wasn't there, only ocean waves! And her favorite ride, the Ferris Wheel, was nowhere to be seen! Terra looked everywhere, but she couldn't find it. Finally, she saw a sign that said,





POLLUTED  
RIVER...  
DON'T DRINK  
THE WATER.



# BEACH THAT WAS

Beach that Was? Had she made a mistake? Had she lost a whole beach?

“No,” she told herself, “this is where the beach was, all right, but where is it now?”

“You are right, the Voice said, “The beach used to be here, and it was called Sandy Beach. But the hot air from gas cars and other air pollution is melting big blocks of ice at the North and South Poles and putting more and more water in the ocean. Your beach is there all right, but now it’s underwater, so it’s called The Beach That Was.”





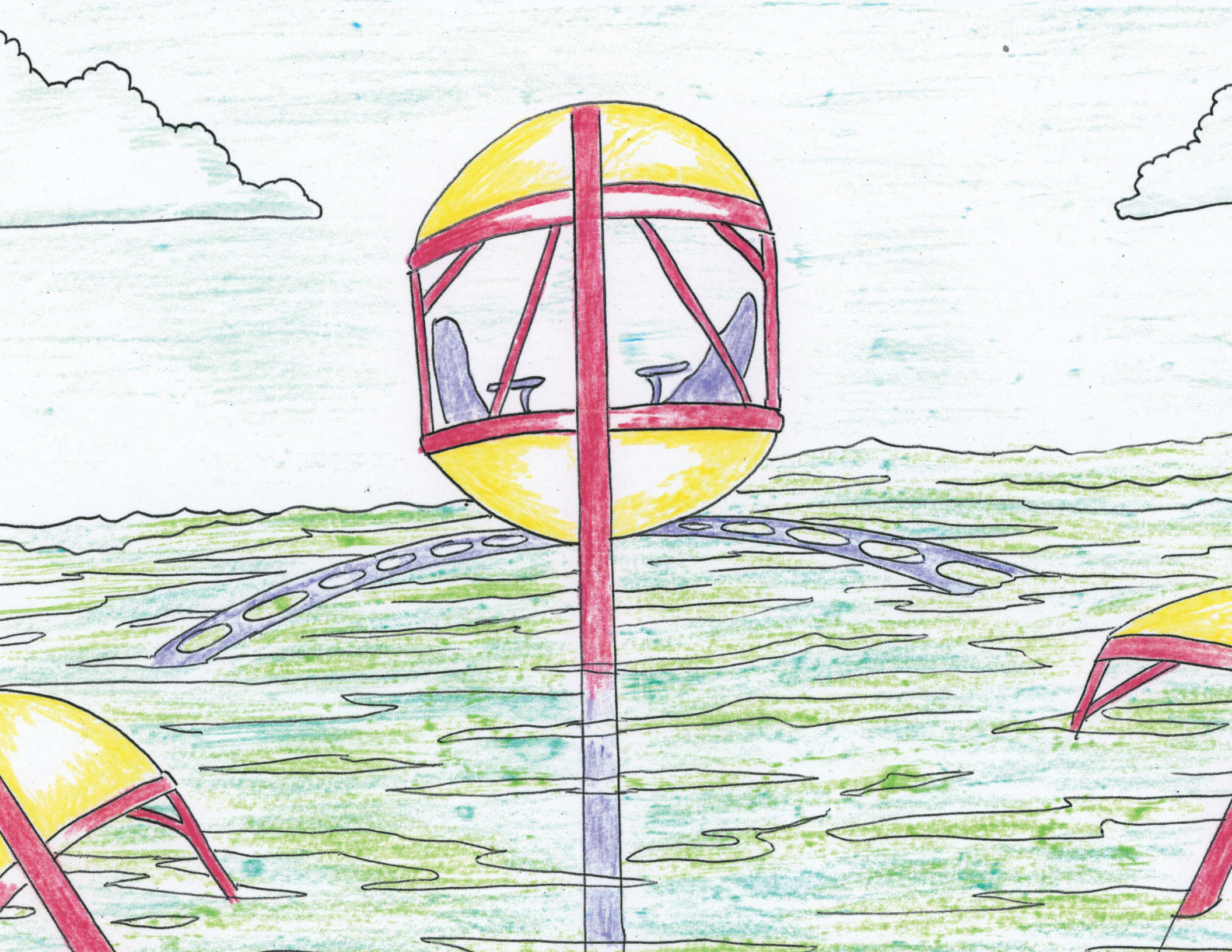
BEACH  
THAT WAS,  
HELP!!



“But what about the Ferris Wheel?” Terra asked.

“It’s underwater, too. Wasn’t it over there somewhere?” the Voice asked. And sure enough, Terra could see one of the Ferris Wheel seats barely sticking up out of the water.







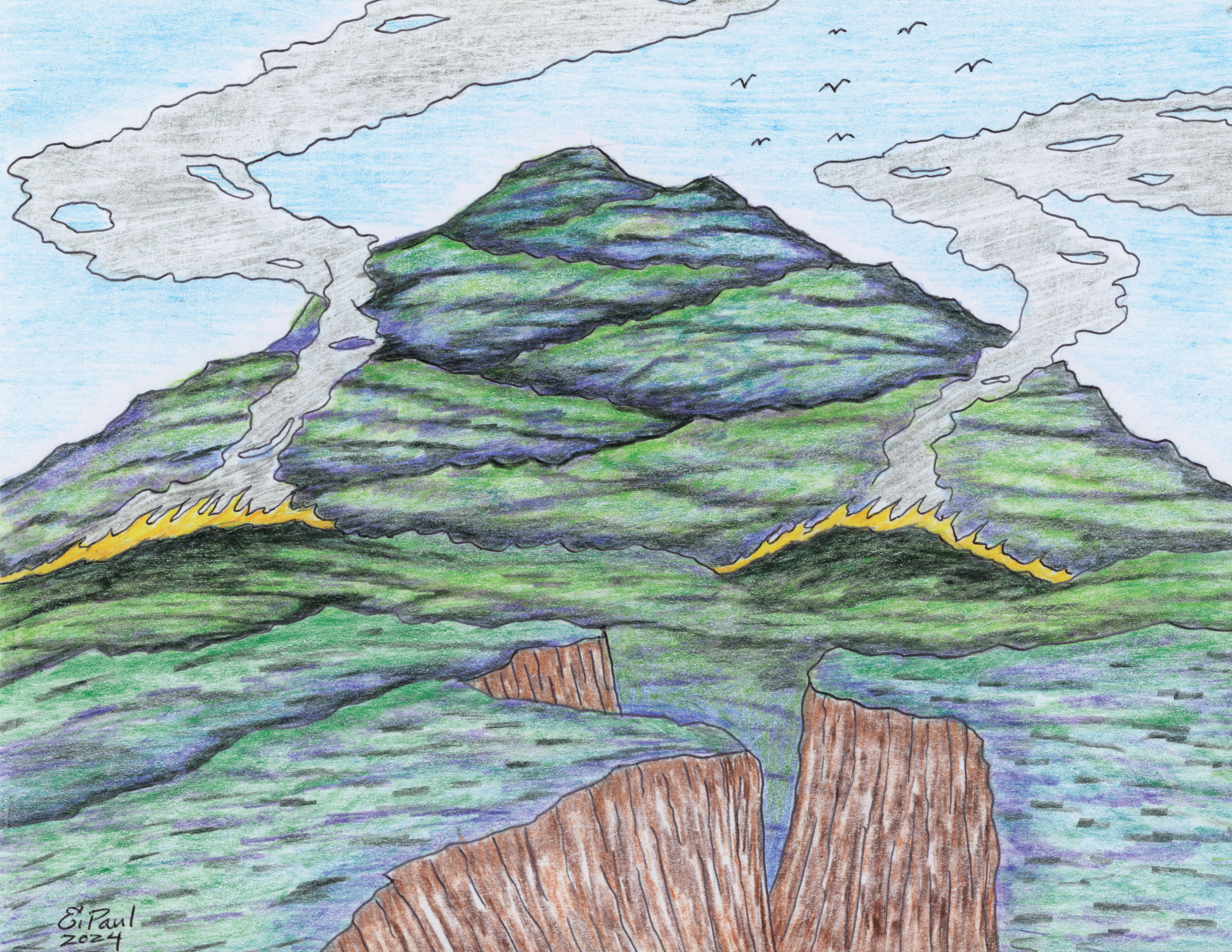
She looked all around her. First, Shady Woods. Then, the Clearwater River, and now, even Sandy Beach! What had the Voice called it - The Beach That Was? And they all needed help! But how could she help? She was only one person!

And that was when she looked up at Mighty Mountain. It had always been there, as long as she could remember, in good weather and bad. She had hiked up there many times. But even Mighty Mountain had changed. Now there were huge dark holes dug into its sides, and most of the mountain was covered up with foul-smelling smoke.

“What happened to Mighty Mountain?”

“Oh that.” said the Voice, “It’s not called that anymore. Now it is just Pit X123. That’s where the coal mines are. They make so much pollution up there that some days you can’t even see the mountain anymore.”





St Paul  
2024



Woods to Be? River to Be? Beach That Was? Pit 123? It was all too much for Terra. She began to cry, right there, at the edge of the Beach That Was.

“Terra?”

She looked up because the Voice was calling her.

“Terra, are you all right?”

“No, no I’m not,” Terra sobbed.

“ Why are you crying?”

“I’m crying because the Shady Woods and the Clearwater River and Sandy Beach are gone! And now Mighty Mountain is a coal mine and I can barely even see it!”

The Voice said. “Well, what are you going to do about it?”

“Who, me? But-”

“Yes, you! If you people get organized and work together, the Earth can be healthy again. Only you can do it! It’s up to you now. Good-bye, Terra! It’s getting late!”

“Wait!” Terra cried. “Stop! Who are you?”

“My name is Hope.”

“But what can I do alone?”

“Alone? That’s where you are wrong!” Hope’s Voice was fading away.

“Wait! Please wait! What do you mean?”

Hope’s Voice was just a whisper on the wind. “You are not alone! All over the world there are people who care about the Earth, just like you do! Look in the telescope!”

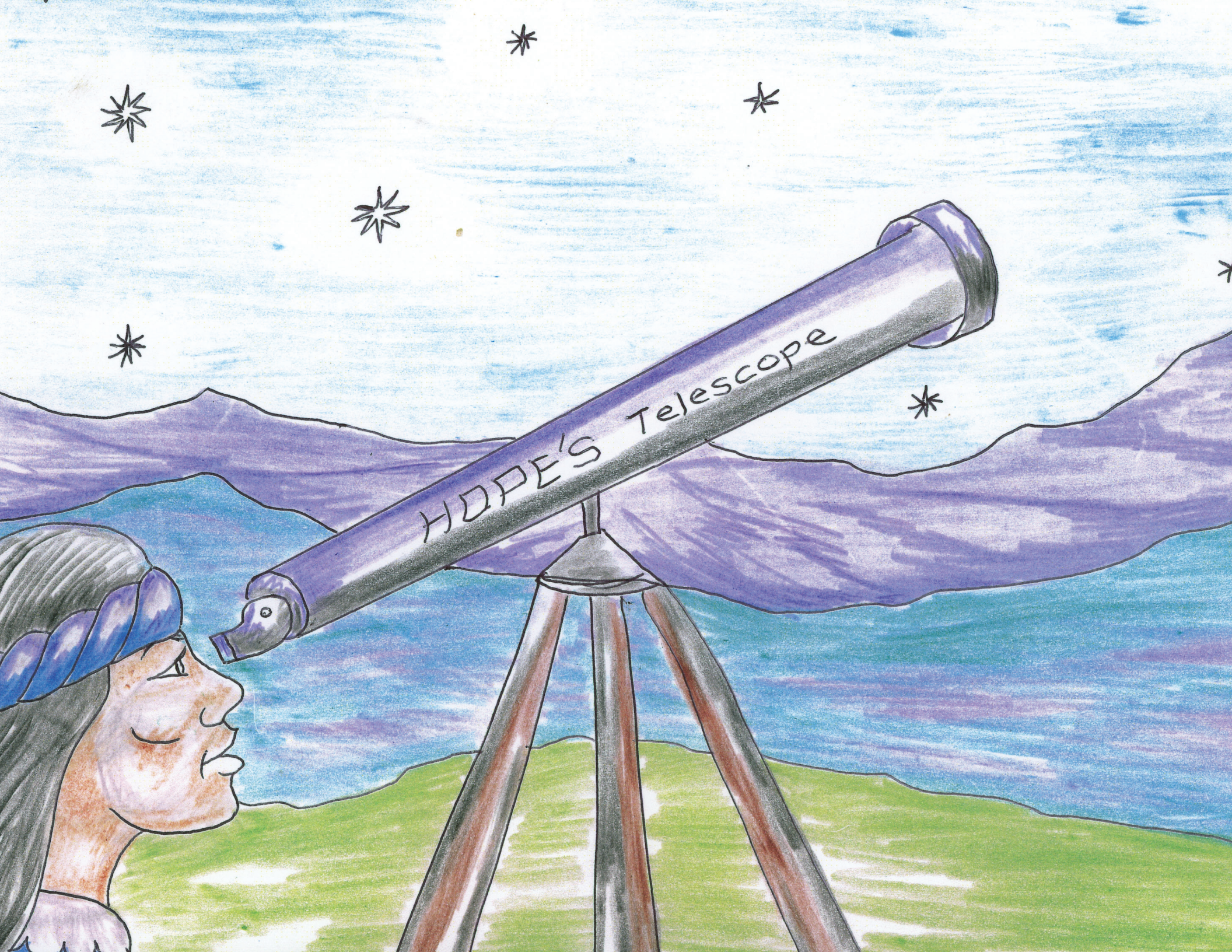
“Telescope? What telescope?”

But the Voice was gone. Terra called and called, but it was no use. Hope didn’t answer. Terra sat down on a big rock. And there on the rock next to her, Terra found a telescope. Why hadn’t she seen it before? It had the words

HOPE’S TELESCOPE printed on it.

“Maybe with this, I can see Mighty Mountain better.”



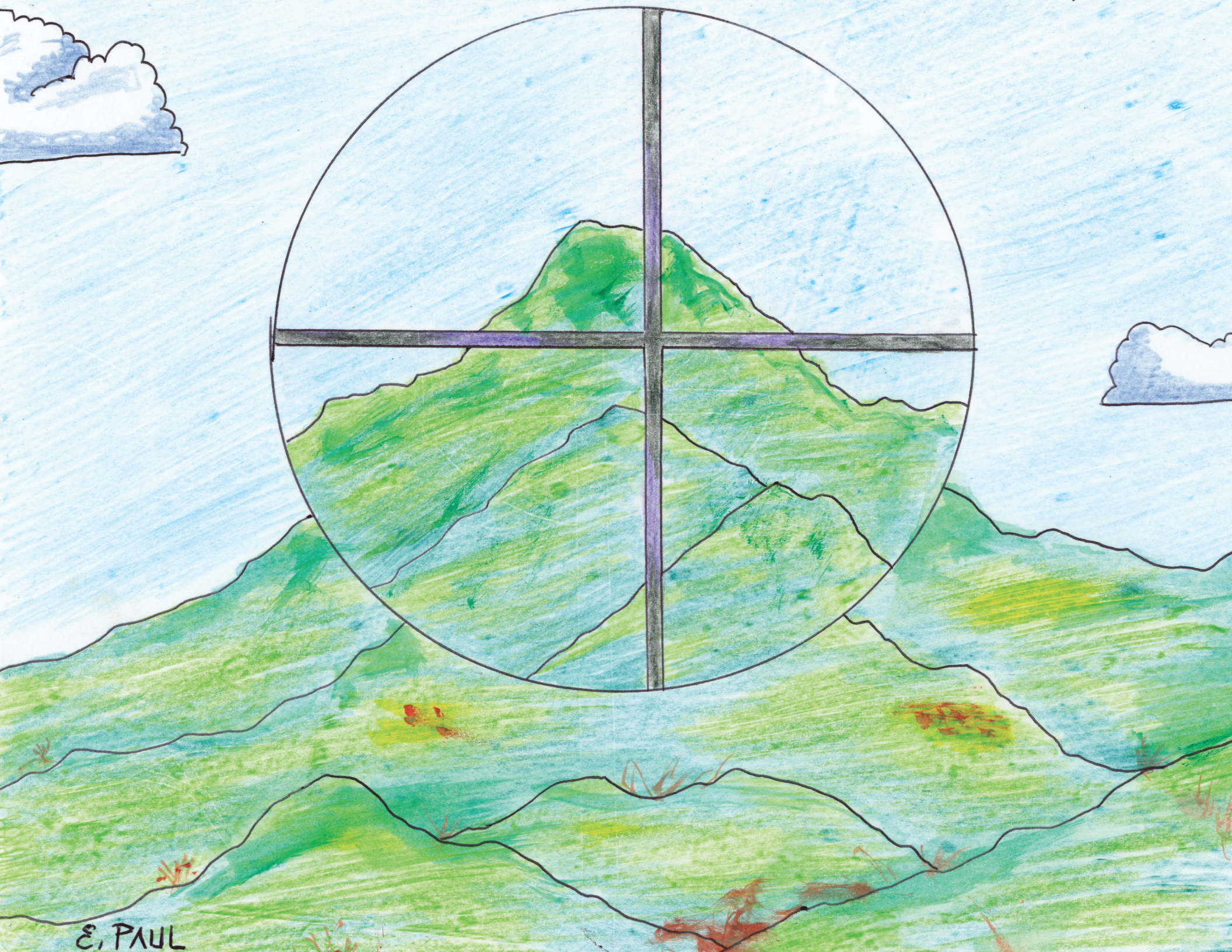




# HOPE'S TELESCOPE. TERRAS EVERYWHERE

She put the telescope up to her eye. And there was Mighty Mountain, her Mighty Mountain, just like she remembered it, green and bright in the sun.





E, PAUL



And then she saw the people, hundreds of people like her, more and more and more of them! Young people with their parents and friends, older people joined together were marching up the hill to PitX 123. People walking, riding their bicycles, holding signs and chanting:

“No more coal! Clean Energy! Wind Energy, Solar Energy! Save Mighty Mountain!”

She was amazed. And what about Sandy Beach? She turned the telescope toward Sandy Beach and there were crowds of people there too. “Stop fossil fuel emissions! Save the Planet!” they chanted. Crews of people were putting up giant windmills to catch the wind. Others were putting solar panels on their roofs to catch energy from the sun.



SAVE ~  
CLEARWATER  
RIVER NOW!

SAVE  
SANDY  
BEACH!





It was the same when she pointed the telescope at the river and looked. People were there, too, cleaning the Clearwater River, hauling away the garbage so the river could flow free and clean and clear once again. They were chanting, "Save Clearwater! No more chemical dumping! Bring back the river!" And in the forest there were people everywhere putting out the fires and planting new trees.

She saw other people making speeches and making signs that said, "Recycle your garbage!" "Save the Forest!!" "Save our Earth!" Many, many people, She realized that she wasn't alone after all. Would people, working together, be able to save themselves?

And a smile spread over Terra's face.





E. PAUL



This is the end of the story of Terra's Walk, but it is not the end of the story of The Earth. Yes, forests are being cleared to make room for cities and farms, rivers are being poisoned. Beaches are being ruined by rising ocean waters. Mining for coal and other fossil fuels has ruined beautiful mountains and polluted the air. All this is true.

What are you going to do about it?

The Earth is our home. What will it be like in the future?

Will Shady Woods be green and alive again or will it become The Forest to Be?

Can the Clearwater River flow clean and clear again? Or will it become a garbage dump?

Can rising ocean waters be stopped and beaches be saved?

And how about Mighty Mountain? Will such mountains be destroyed to find more coal?

It's up to you...What do you say?

By the way...why is Terra smiling?

## THINGS PEOPLE CAN DO:

- ☐ Use clean energy from wind and sunshine.
- ☐ Clean up oceans and rivers.
- ☐ Replant forests and let them live.
- ☐ Replace coal and gas with clean energy.
- ☐ Recycle garbage. Stop dumping poison waste into our rivers
- ☐ Eat less meat and more fruits and vegetables. In fact, grow your own!
- ☐ Think about other ways to help. Work together.
- ☐ Take a walk yourself, by a river, to the beach or
- ☐ Take a hike in the mountains or forest. How does being in those places make you feel?
- ☐ Write to people in government or in companies who are supposed to help.
- ☐ Ask questions. Tell them your ideas and your suggestions.
- ☐ Write letters. Make phone calls to find out more.
- ☐ The Earth is everyone's business!



**Bill Morgan**, teacher and author: I taught elementary school in San Francisco for many years, worked on several books for children about working people and their lives with the help of the California Federation of Teachers Labor in the Schools/Climate Justice Committee. What kind of world are we handing to our children?

**Ernesto Paul**, painter and muralist: I started painting murals when I was 13 in the city of San Ysidro, just across the border from Tijuana, Mexico. I have traveled all around the country, painting small murals at Indian reservations. Now I'm back in the Bay Area restoring murals, giving painting classes in high schools, painting signs in the Mission District. There is so much to be done, not enough time to do it all.

Terra's Walk is a production of the CFT Labor and Climate Justice Education Committee. The LCJC devises strategies that CFT locals and union members can use to make the study of the labor movement and climate justice a part of the curricula of California schools and colleges. The members of the committee are classroom teachers as well as faculty from community college and university labor education programs.

To learn more about the Committee and its work, go to Labor and Climate Justice Education Committee. The Committee has created and disseminated a wide array of materials for classroom teachers from K to College. They are available at <https://www.cft.org/post/labor-and-climate-justice-education-committee> by clicking the "Learn More" button.



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This book is dedicated to all the Terras and their allies all over the world.

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“Terra just wants to take a walk to all her favorite places: Shady Woods, The Clearwater River, Sandy Beach, and Mighty Mountain. But wait! What’s going on? Everything has changed! The woods, the river, the beach, her favorite mountain—who’s going to save them?”