



TREATY WORDS

FOR AS LONG AS
THE RIVERS FLOW

AIMÉE CRAFT

ILLUSTRATIONS BY
LUKE SWINSON

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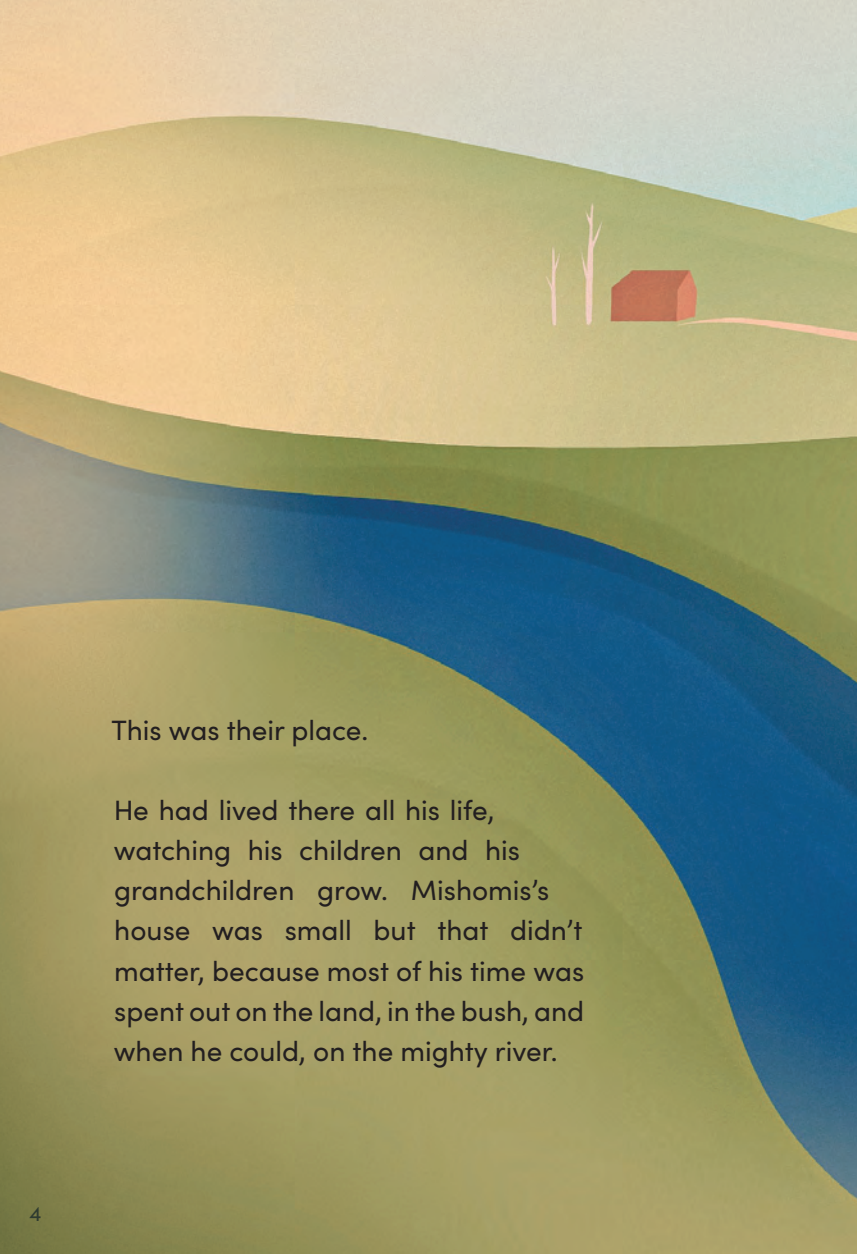
THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED TO
THOSE WHO WILL COME NEXT . . .
THE TEACHERS AND THE LEARNERS.
—A.C.

FOR MY WONDERFUL NIECE, INGRID.
—L.S.

She sat there, on the bank of the
kitchi sipi with her Mishomis, watching
the wide river pass them by.

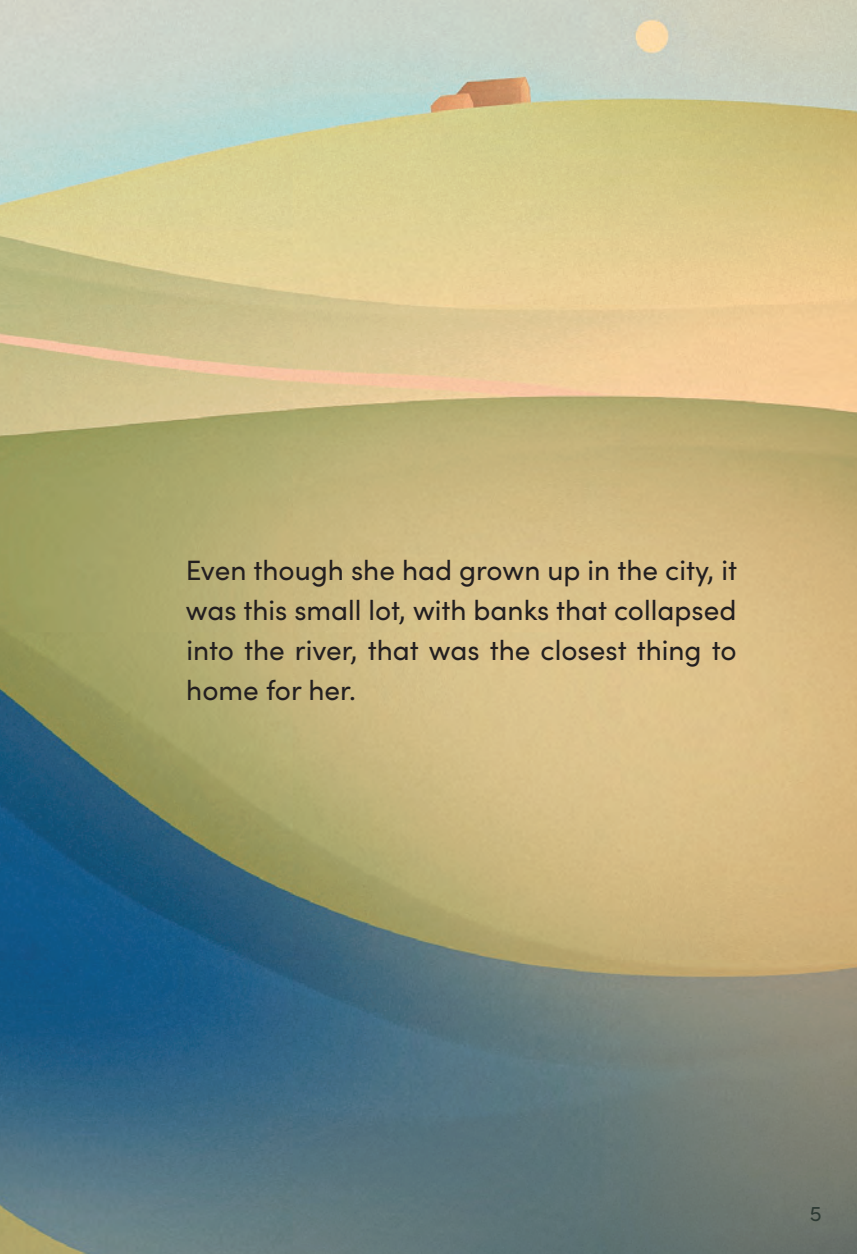




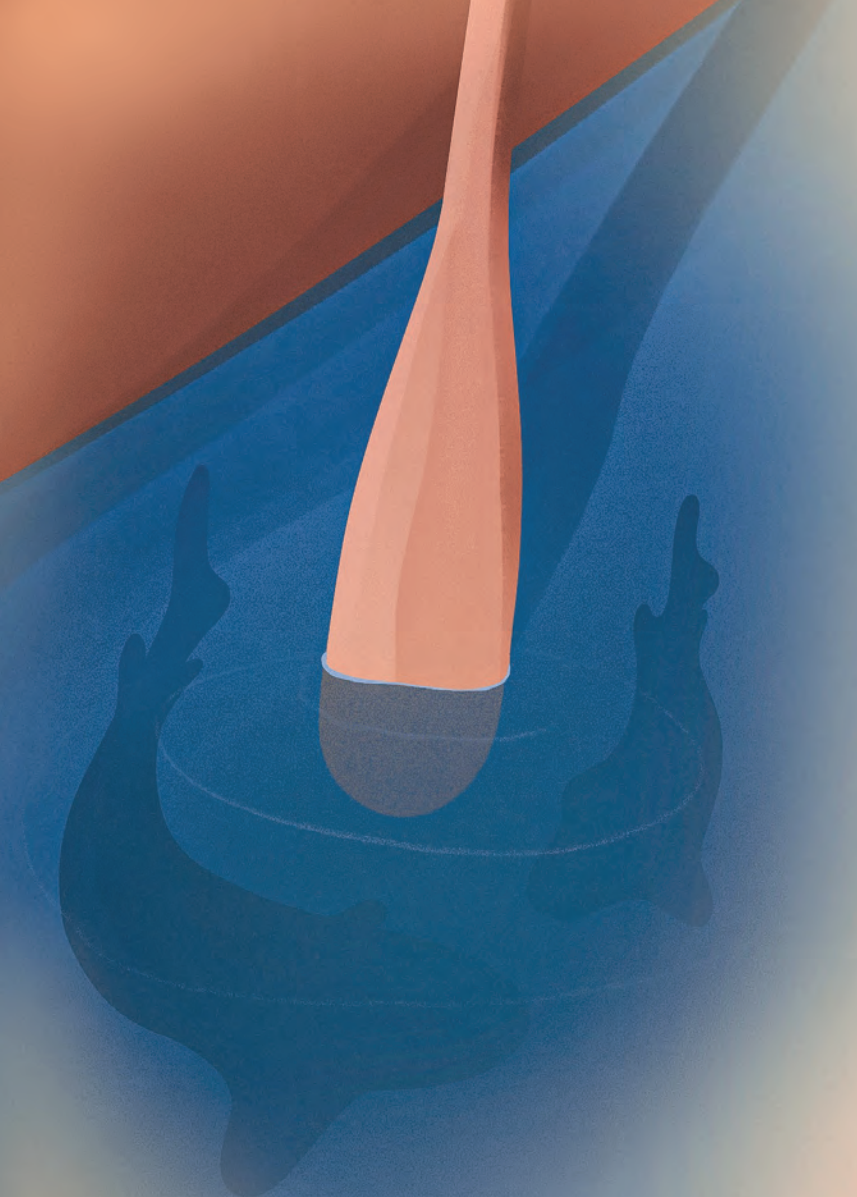


This was their place.

He had lived there all his life, watching his children and his grandchildren grow. Mishomis's house was small but that didn't matter, because most of his time was spent out on the land, in the bush, and when he could, on the mighty river.




Even though she had grown up in the city, it was this small lot, with banks that collapsed into the river, that was the closest thing to home for her.



In his lifetime Mishomis had traveled that river many times, up and down, until the dams were built. Then the river changed. Even so, after the dams blocked his canoe, he continued to spend time on and with the river. It was his place. His relative.

Throughout his life he had helped research the nameo—the sturgeon—in the river and restock the population. In his later years he had led territorial mapping projects of original place names in Anishinaabemowin, recalling each place by its original name and significance.



Every spring, while there was still snow on the ground, he would cash in his pension check, buy supplies, and head into the bush. He'd take only a backpack, some flour, sugar, lard, and tea and would come back out four to six weeks later, hitchhiking his way home.



She would get a short call from him saying that he was back, and she'd make her way up to visit him.