

# WELCOME TO THE CYPHER



WORDS BY  
**KHODI DILL**

PICTURES BY  
**AWURADWOA AFFUL**

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**Psst.  
Yo, li'l one!**

**Follow my finger snaps.  
Follow the beatbox and  
follow the claps.**

**Come on inside  
the cypher.**



I wanna show you how to rap.  
**Imagine that.**

Imagine all the words.  
Imagine how they curve  
over the **boom-bap!**  
Can you vibe with that?

**Are you ready to begin?**  
Can you dive into the groove  
while the record player spins?



You wanna ride with the rappers  
who are gathered in the round?

Together  
we can lift each other  
right off the ground!

You'll see, li'l one.



So tell me,  
are you down?



**Say word. Come on, yo!**

**Lemme show you how we flow  
over rapids on the river of music.**

**Imagine, though!**



**Imagine all the ways  
to ride a sound wave.  
See how a word plays?**



**You can turn a simple phrase  
into imagery that soars  
and emotions that **roar!**  
Into a fire that warms us  
**right down to the core.****



And you can let your fire out  
in a whisper or a **shout!**

All feelings are welcome in the cypher,  
**no doubt.**

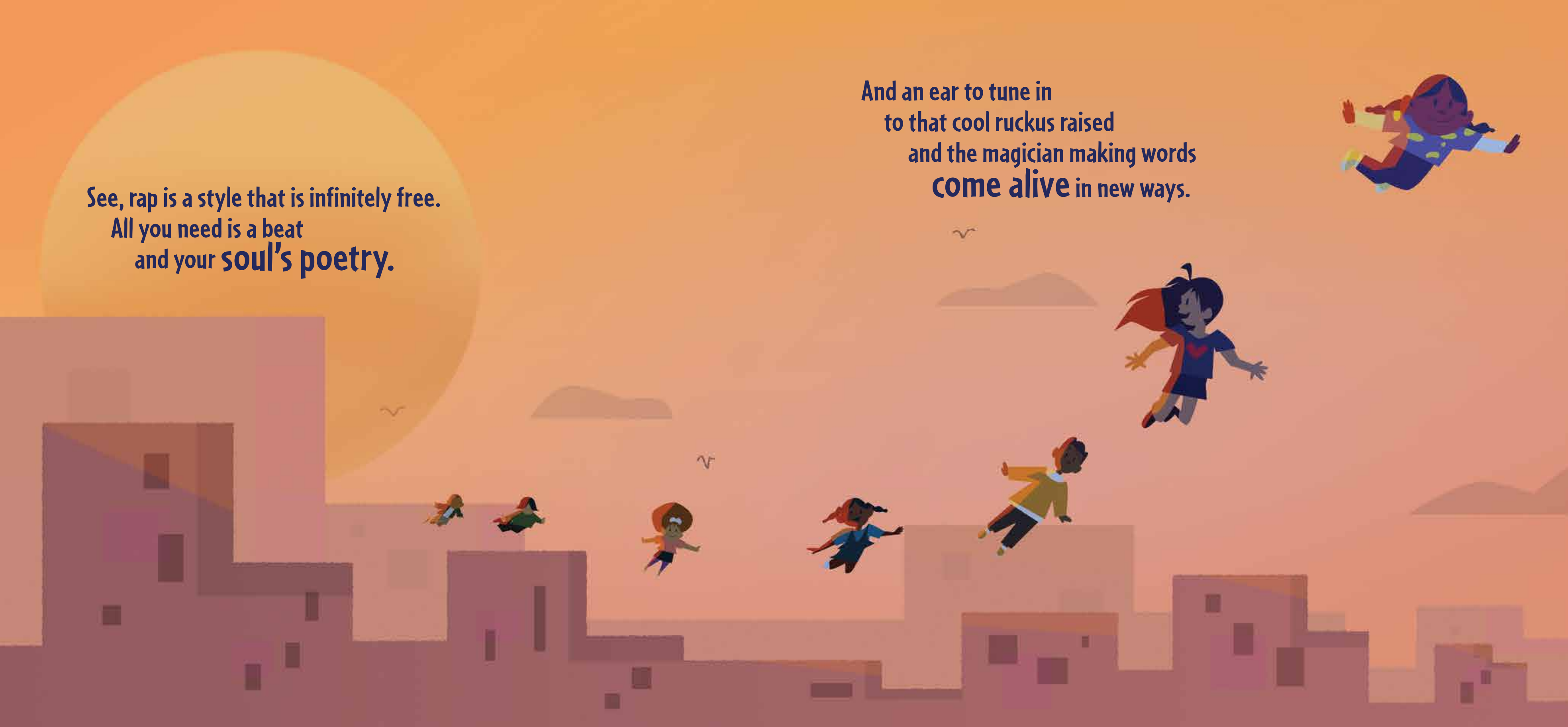
So if you yearn to ignite,  
then let your words **burn bright!**

Watch them twist  
and see them turn.  
Watch them teach.  
**You will learn!**



See, rap is a style that is infinitely free.  
All you need is a beat  
and your **soul's poetry.**

And an ear to tune in  
to that cool ruckus raised  
and the magician making words  
**come alive** in new ways.





For Carly, Hazel, and Ezraah.  
Go in.

–K.D.

For Mom and Adwoa.

–A.A.



**KHODI DILL** is a Bahamian-Canadian writer of everything from rap songs to children’s literature. He is a practicing anti-racist educator with a passion for social justice and the arts. Khodi is a proud father and partner who lives and writes in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.

**AWURADWOA AFFUL** is a Ghanaian-Canadian designer, illustrator, and animator. She was born and raised in Toronto, Ontario.

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