



THE
SUNSHINE
GRABBER

Charles Horman

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SYNOPSIS

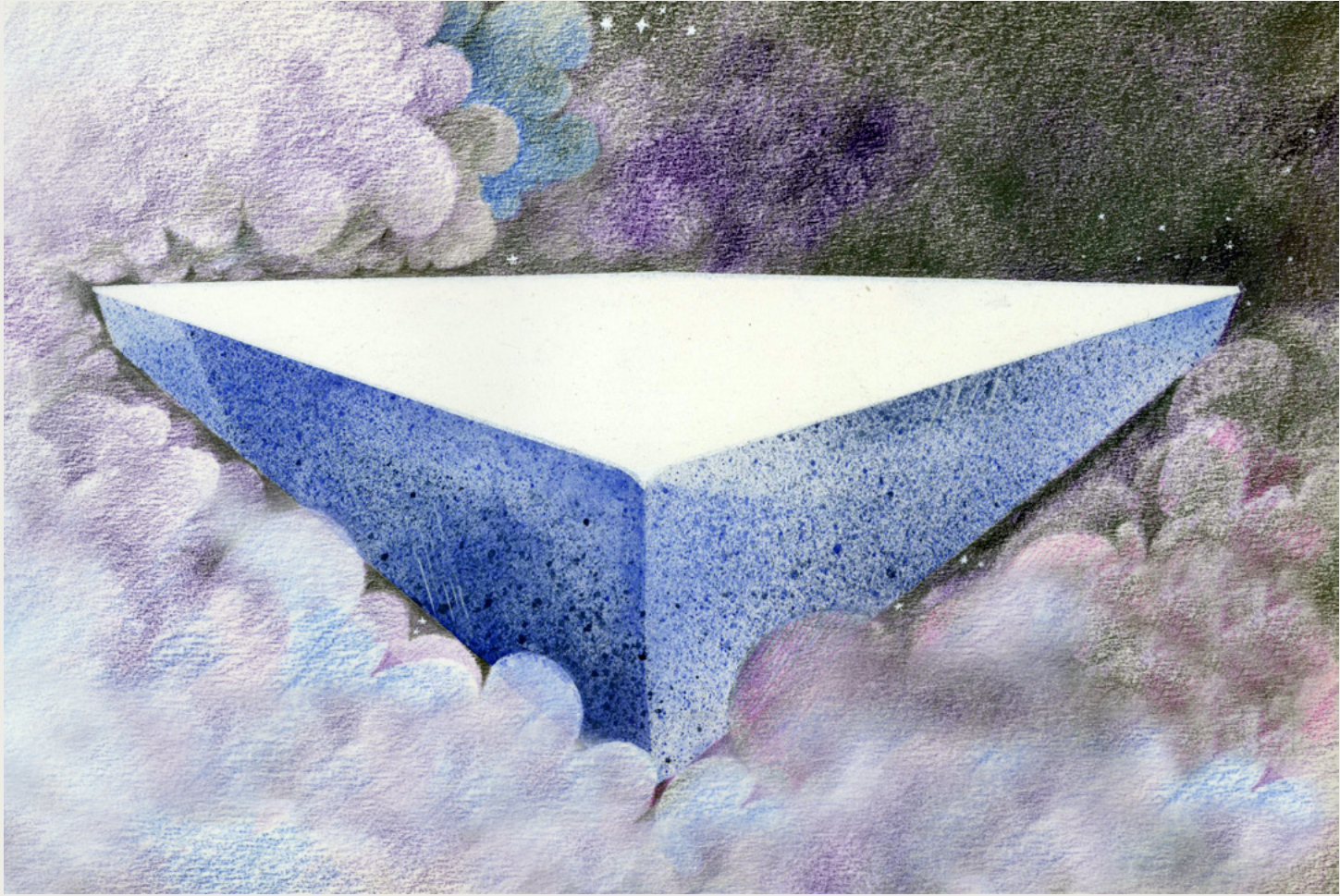
THE SUNSHINE GRABBER

Once upon a time, there was a country
so far north
It was further north than the north pole.
It was further north than the south pole.
It was even further north than the big dipper
and the milky way.

(and that's pretty far north)

Nobody knew the name of the country
(except the folks that lived there)
because the ink in the explorer's pens froze
before they could write it down





This is a picture of the country.

If you peer hard you might see a sign

with the country's name

NORTH OF NORTH

You might also see 5 rabbits or 15,000 yaks. But you will

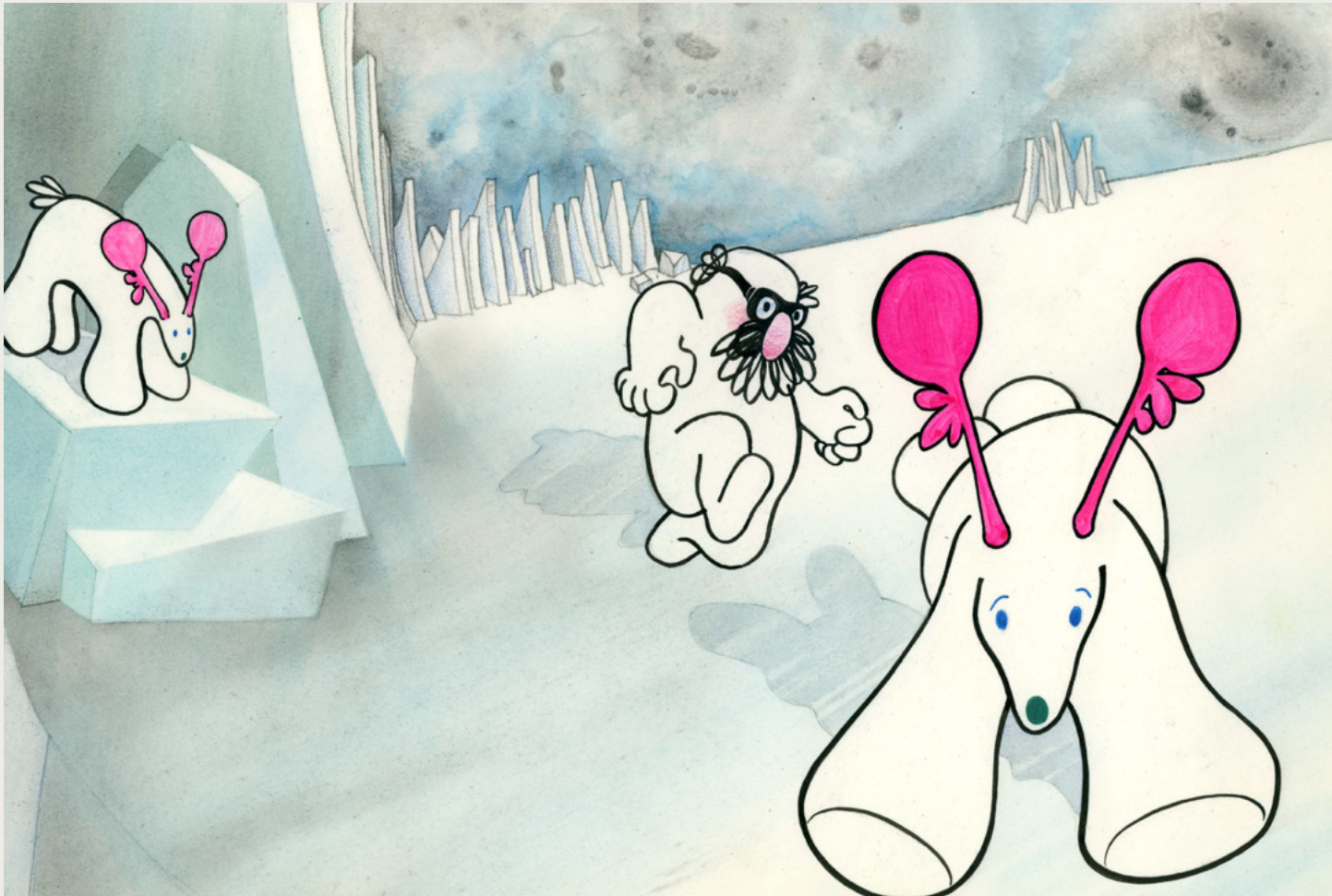
have to look Very hard because they're all covered with snow.





Also....very, very far under The Snow
In an igloo lived a family named SHARN

The father was named Erg
The mother was named Zerg
And the little boy
and the little girl
were named Zibbon
and Gluck.



Everyday Erg and Zerg tunnelled up through the
Snow to catch Yaks.

They were the best Yak catchers in all the land.

But the Yaks were sneaky

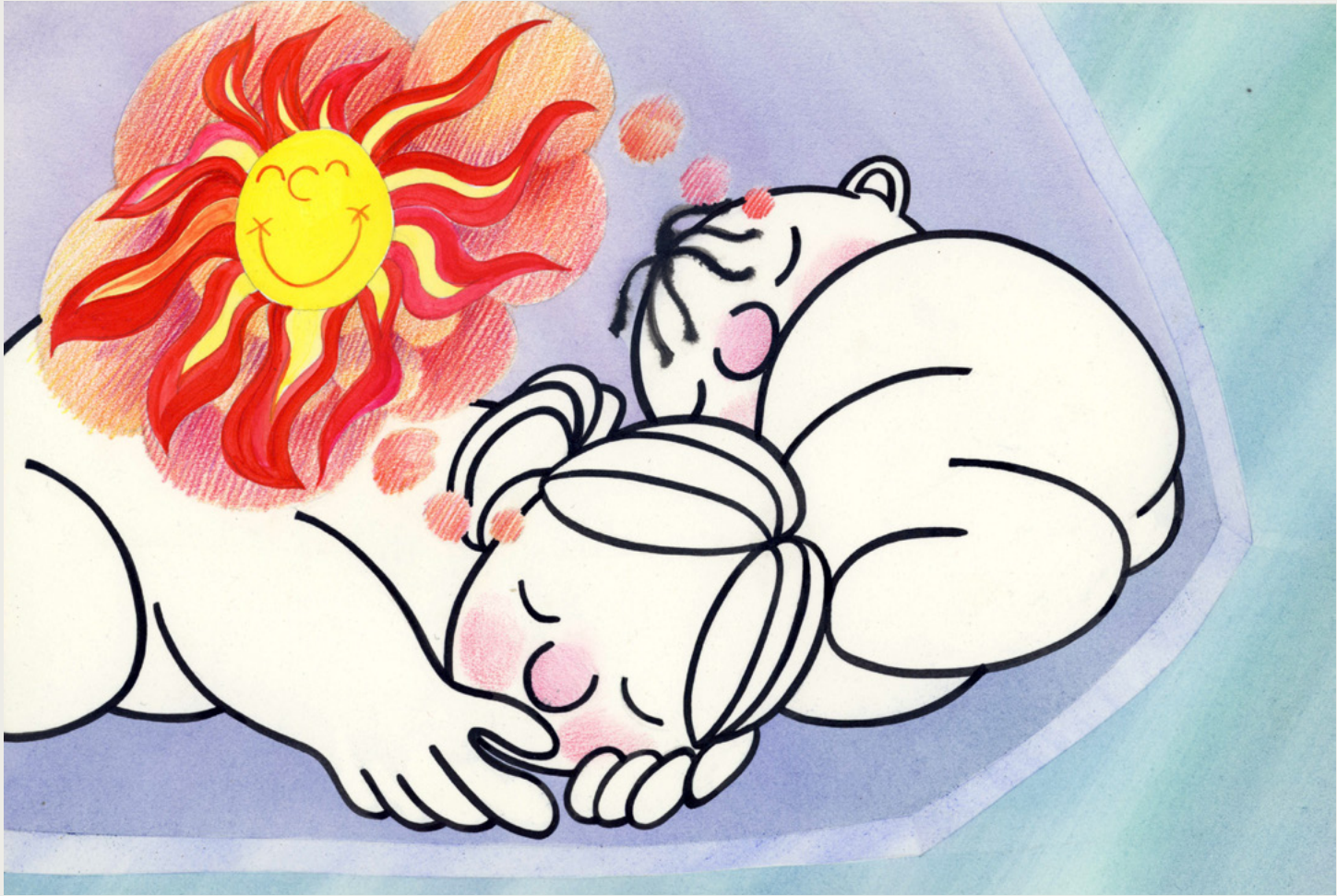
Sometimes they hid behind one snowdrift.

Sometimes they hid behind the other....

And sometimes they just stood against a lamppost
disguised as John Lennon.

The Yaks were getting wise to it all.

The Yaks knew the ropes....and Erg and Zerg
got madder and madder.



Erg jumped up and down.

He broke waffles and poured syrup over them.

He threw his galoshes across the room

and cast other strong spells,

but nothing helped.

The Yaks knew all the tricks.

On weekends Zibbon and Gluck took

Erg and Zerg out to get their minds
off the Yaks.

They all played in the snow.

None of them liked snow, but it was all there was to
play with.



One day, late at night, when Zibbon and Gluck were tucked in the igloo, ready to go to sleep, Zibbon said....

"Daddy, why can't we go where it's warm?"

SSSSSSSHHHHHHHHHHH," said Daddy Erg.

Zibbon dived under the covers to escape her Daddy's Shhh. which was coming at her at 110 miles per hour. Then she poked out one eye and said

"why" Shhhhhhhh(wilting over her why)

BECAUSE" "In the place where it's warm there's a
MONSTER" His name is the Sunshine Grabber.



What does he look like, "stammered little Gluck who was clutched the covers with trembling hands.

"Nobody has ever seen him that I know," "but it's said that he has fangs as long as Yak horns and yellow eyes. And if he hears anyone, anywhere in the world, talking about WARM PLACES, his ears wiggle and his nose twitches and he comes slinking and slinking around and GRABS them and so much for that person.

"oh" said Zibbon and Gluck.

The next day Zibbon and Gluck were sitting around the kitchen after breakfast when Zibbon said "Why did Daddy tell us that silly story about the Sunshine Grabber

"Because Daddy is a Yak catcher," said Zerg, They don't have Yaks in Warm Places. They just have Yaks in cold places. Like here."

"I haven't seen any Yaks," said Gluck.

"There are two Yaks right over there," said Zerg.

"Where?" asked Zibbon.

"They're gone now," said Zerg. "You weren't fast enough.





Meanwhile

in the warm place, the Sunshine Grabber's nose was wiggling.

His ears were twitching....

He knew that somewhere in a cold place, some one was talking
about the Warm Place.





But who? was the question.





He followed his nose through jungles, quarries, banks, supermarkets, corrals, tv studios, circus tents, stock exchanges, kindergardens, tennis matches, political conventions, insurance offices, rock concerts, poker games, and the 3rd international frisbee championship...

until he found THE COLDEST PLACE IN THE WORLD.



Wow! said the Sunshine Grabber. "This is cold all right, all right!

His knees were shaking, and his teeth were rattling, his gums were turning blue and his toes had icicles between them.

"In my time," said the Sunshine Grabber, "I've seen some cold places, but this takes the cupcake for cold."

But the Sunshine Grabber, pulled himself together and dug down into the deepest drift in the coldest place in the world.

He dug and dug and dug and dug and dug and dug and dug and dug...

...until he got to the igloo where Erg and Zerg and Zibbon and Gluck lived. Zerg and Erg were reading the Yak Monthly Review.

"Maybe they're the ones...."thought the Sunshine Grabber, but then he heard the quiet b-r-e-a-t-h-i-n-g of Zibbon and Gluck in the next room.

He crept through the igloo and looked....

around the door into the room where Zibbon and Gluck were sleeping. "There they are," he thought, and added to himself: "Heh, Heh, Heh." He crept into the room and sat down in the middle of the Yak skin rug. Then woke them up with a blaze of light.





Who are you?" asked Zibbon.

"It's so warm," said Gluck. And he was completely correct.

The icicles had melted off the alarm clock and a small pool of water had formed in the corners of the room.

"I'm the Sunshine Grabber," said the Sunshine Grabber.

"YOU'RE not the Sunshine Grabber," said Zibbon. "You couldn't be!"

"The Sunshine Grabber has fangs as long as a yak's horns and yellow eyes," said Gluck, wagging his fingers like fangs.

"You're pretty," said Zibbon. "The Sunshine Grabber's not pretty!" "Thank you," said the Sunshine Grabber, "But I still am the Sunshine Grabber. I look different ways to different people.. I look nice to you because you're not scared of me. People who are scared of me see me differently."

"How," said Zibbon.

"Show us," said Gluck.

"Oh," said the Sunshine Grabber. "You don't want to see THAT. It's just too horrible."

"Yes," they shouted, "Show us!"

The first thing the Sunshine Grabber showed Zibbon and Gluck WAS so horrible it can't be drawn the pencil melts. The next most horrible looked like this....

and this....

but even worse.

"Argggggg! said Gluck. "That's HORRIBLE!"

"Nothing's that horrible," said Zibbon.

"I am," said the Sunshine Grabber.

But what do you really look like? asked Zibbon.

"A thousand different things," said the Sunshine Grabber.

"No, I mean REALLY really. What do you really really really look like?"





"Very few people have seen what I really really really look like," said the Sunshine Grabber.

"Show us!" Show us! Show us! Show us! said Zibbon and Gluck.

"You're really sure you really want to see how I REALLY look?" asked the Sunshine Grabber.

YES! shouted Zibbon and Gluck.

All right," said the Sunshine Grabber. "Hang onto your hats - I look like this."

"Wow!" said Zibbon and Gluck. "You look great!"

"Thank You," said the Sunshine Grabber, switching back to the shape they'd seen him in first. "And now, if you like, I'll take you off to the warm place."

"Yes," shouted Zibbon and Gluck. "Let's go."



So the Sunshine Grabber took them on the back of his coat and carried them off to the warmplace. But first he took them to where the fish live and the stars, and the dark place where diamonds grow.

He showed them the house where the butterflies live and he pointed out their home from a thousand miles up.

They met a monkey and an alligator, and conversed at length with a large fruit.

Finally the Sunshine Grabber took them to the Warm Place where it was never cold and the mangoes grow all over.

Gluck had never seen mangoes before and thought they were orange icicles until he ate one.

The warm place had lots of flowers and big red bugs.

The Sunshine Grabber introduced Zibbon and Gluck to his friends Escutcheon and Plumb who taught them the warm place song....

(warm place song)

"What a dum song," said Gluck.

"That's because it's not really a song," said Escutcheon and Plumb, "It's a dance." So they danced the song.

And the warm place danced with them and Zibbon and Gluck couldn't help joining in.





Zibbon and Gluck were very happy in the warm place. They found they didn't miss the snow at all - but they did miss their mother and father, Erg and Zerg.

"Why don't we go and get them," said Zibbon. "I know they'd like it here."

"Yay," said Gluck.

"Will you give us a ride, Mr. Sunshine Grabber?" asked Zibbon.

"Of course, I will," said the Sunshine Grabber, "but don't be disappointed if they don't want to come."

"Don't want to come!" shouted Zibbon and Gluck. "Don't want to COME! Why wouldn't they want to come to the WARM PLACE?"

"Well," said the Sunshine Grabber. "Just don't say I didn't warn you."

The Sunshine Grabber grabbed Zibbon and Gluck up on his coat and soon they were racing North.

North past the North pole.

North past the South pole.

North past the big dipper and the milky way. And then way, way below, Zibbon and Gluck could see their father tracking a yak.

They landed nearby, just as Erg missed and fell in a snow drift.

"Daddy, daddy, daddy," shouted Gluck. "Here we are....We're back from the WARM PLACE and you've got to come back with us cause..." but then he stopped.

Zerg was speechless with terror.

To him, Zibbon and Gluck looked like t-h-i-s.....

Because he was scared of the warm place, he was scared of them too.





"Daddy, it's us," said Zibbon, but to Zerg she sounded like

A R G G A R Z B G L Z

"What can we do!" said Zibbon, She was so disgusted, she kicked yak which had been sniffing at her, because she smelled warm.

"Why don't you try the song?" whispered the Sunshine Grabber.

"What good will THAT do?" asked Gluck.

"What harm will it do," said the Sunshine Grabber.

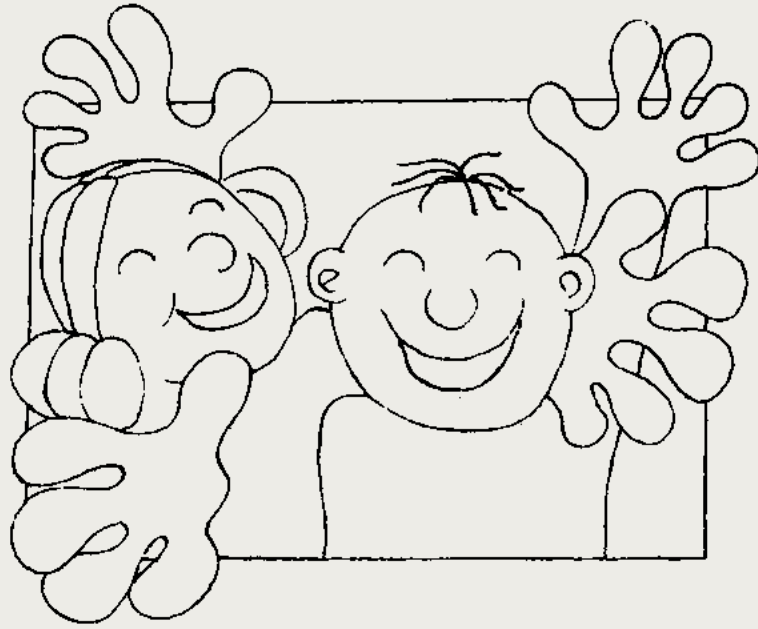




So they tried the song. And as they sang the Warm Place Song,
the strangest things began to happen.
The snow began to melt.
Then the sun came out.
Flowers grew.
The trees sprouted mangoes,

and the Yaks caught Zerg and Erg.





Zerg and Erg joined in the song, because they could recognize
Zibbon and Gluck as their children
And there was no reason to leave the country North of North and
go to the Warm Place, because the Warm Place had come to them.

SYNOPSIS

PURPOSE: Educating for human values.

HISTORY: Story written by Charles Horman in Panama in 1972.
Inspired by a letter from friends in Montreal whose children wanted to go to California - children who weren't happy with their lives and thought somewhere else would be better.



SYNOPSIS: THE SUNSHINE GRABBER is a fable for children of all ages. It is about a family that lives in a Cold Place. The Cold Place is emotionally and psychologically rigid and inflexible as depicted by its physical attributes. The family includes a father, a mother, a little girl and a little boy.

The father catches yaks, is ambitious, worries about his work, and has ulcers. He is fearful of anything different from his way of life. The mother depends on him for her livelihood and therefore acquiesces to his definition of what's important.

The children would like to participate and share in their parents' world but find that they only get in the way and cause troubles. They, like the rest of the family, really hate snow and cold. They dream of another place, a different place, a warm place. And one day, they ask their father straight out why they can't go someplace warm.

Their father, terrified of change of any sort, invents a creature out of his nightmares. An evil lurker who lives in warm places and who when he hears anyone, anywhere in the world talking about a warm place, comes slithering and slinking up to that person and grabs him. The creature is named the Sunshine Grabber. The father wants to frighten his children; he does, but not as much as he'd like. They'd still like to go someplace different.



The children go on thinking of a warm place and it turns out that there is in fact a real Warm Place; represented in our story by sunshine, color and fluidity of line. The children's thought reaches the Warm Place and is picked up by the people who live there. The Warm Place sends a representative to look everywhere for the source of the message. This representative is called the Sunshine Grabber. He finds the children in the Cold Place. He is a creature of continual flux. Both his physical and mental shape are changing constantly. He appears, like all changing things, in different ways depending on what you think of changes. People who are afraid of change think he is the ugliest thing they've ever seen. People who welcome change see him as extraordinarily beautiful.

The children see him as extraordinarily beautiful. After a lengthy discussion of worldly matters, the Sunshine Grabber offers to take the children to the Warm Place and the children respond enthusiastically. The three travel through space and other dimensions and arrive in a place warm beyond their imagination, where the children learn a fluidity and capacity for growth which seemed inconceivable in the home where they grew up. The children are very happy except that they miss their parents.

They tell the Sunshine Grabber that they want to bring their parents to this place too. So the Sunshine Grabber takes them



back to the Cold Place. As they are landing, they see their parents chasing yaks. At first, their parents are terrified, - they don't recognize their children. They have changed and grown - and their father sees them as ugly beyond recognition. But the change in the children's thinking is so powerful in its warmth and understanding that the Cold Place where they have always lived is transformed into a place full of joy, flowers, music and sunshine so expansive that it embraces their parents and there is no need to move.

The SUNSHINE GRABBER is an allegory, but it also has an implicit social message stated in color, music and dance. The message is primarily for people who experience rigidity, authoritarianism and boredom in their working lives. In essence, it says that change is possible and ideas shouldn't automatically be labeled as monstrous because they might disrupt established routine. Creative thinking must be encouraged if we are to cope with today's world problems.

As we approach our problems through, warmth, understanding, flexibility, the solutions take over and make our lives joyful, and bring a new beauty to ourselves and everyone around us.



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