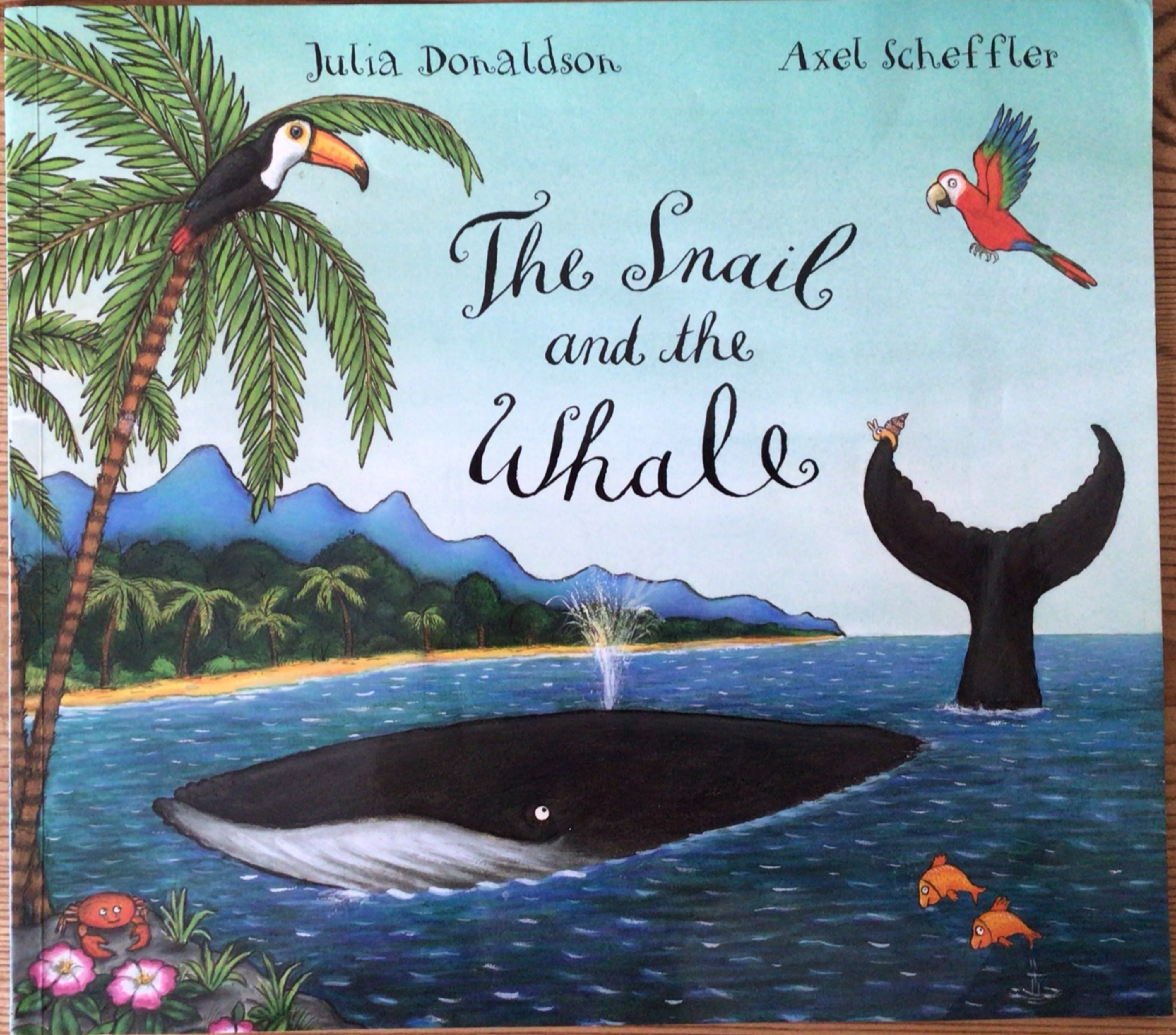


Julia Donaldson

Axel Scheffler

The Snail
and the
Whale



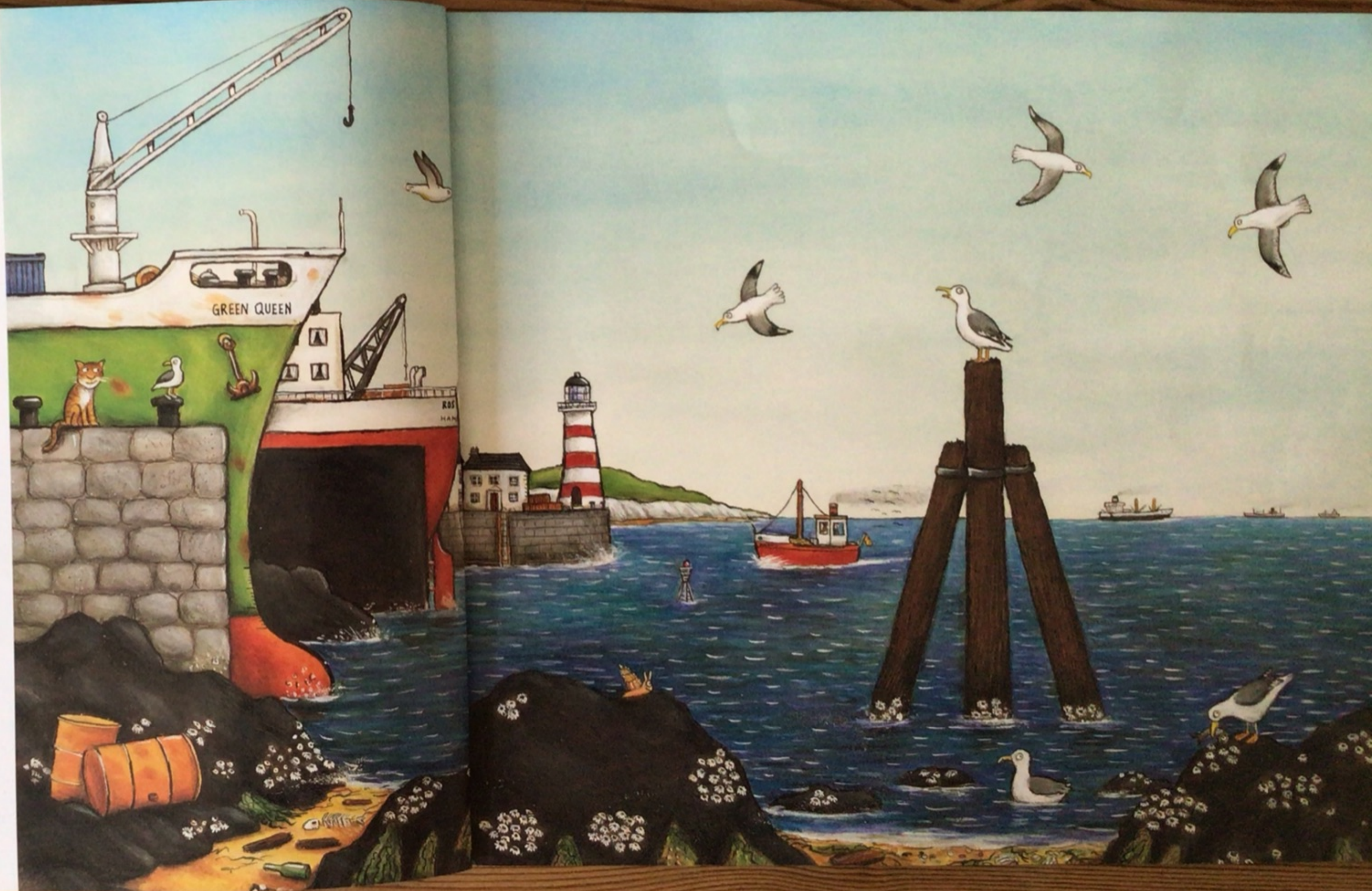
This is a tale of a tiny snail
And a great big, grey-blue humpback whale.



This is a rock as black as soot,
And this is a snail with an itchy foot.



The sea snail slithered all over the rock
And gazed at the sea and the ships in the dock.
And as she gazed she sniffed and sighed.
"The sea is deep and the world is wide!
How I long to sail!"
Said the tiny snail.

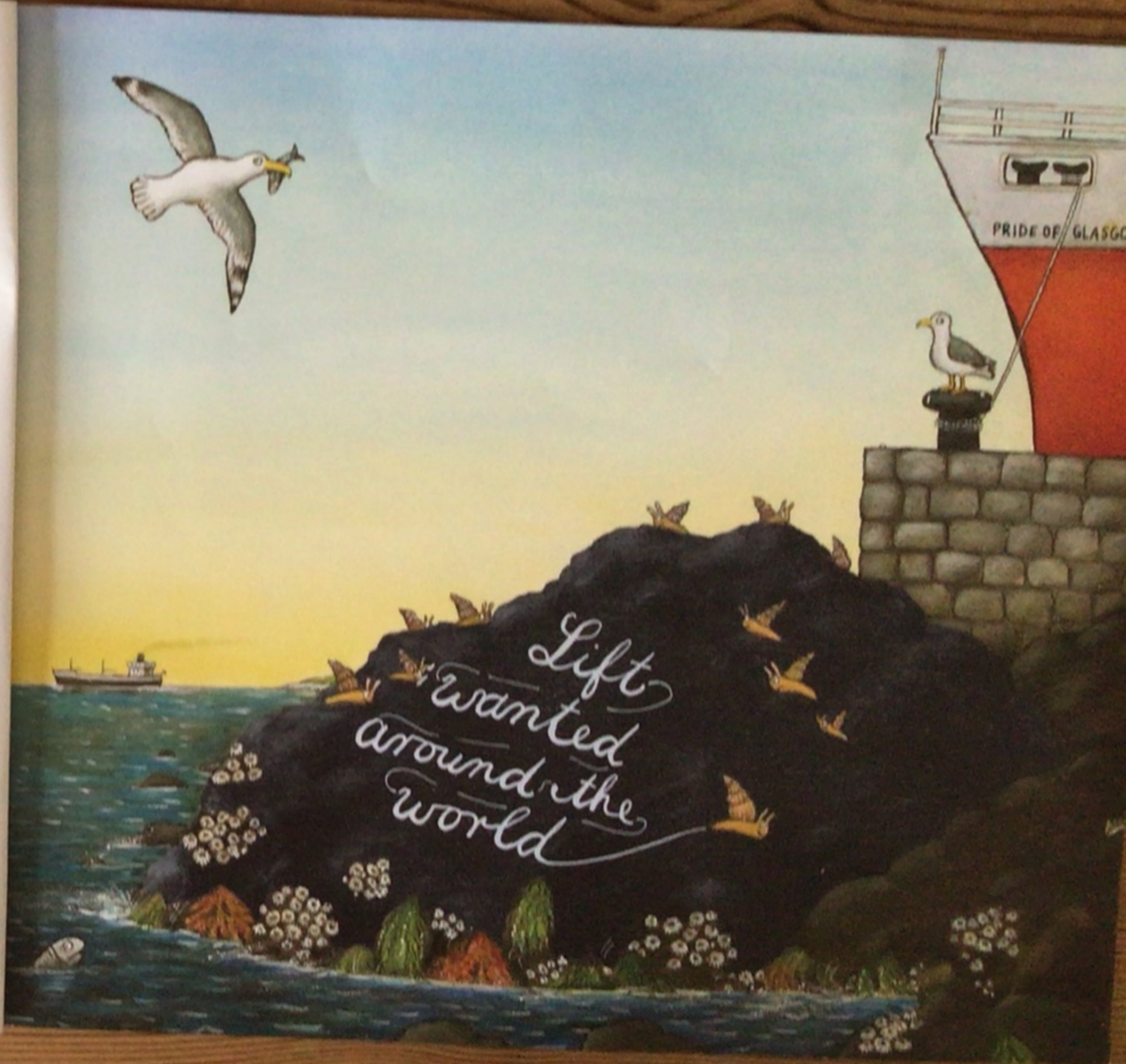


These are the other snails in the flock,
Who all stuck tight to the smooth black rock
And said to the snail with the itchy foot,
"Be quiet! Don't wriggle! Sit still! Stay put!"
But the tiny sea snail sighed and sniffed,
Then cried, "I've got it! I'll hitch a lift!"



This is the trail
Of the tiny snail,
A silvery trail that looped and curled

And said . . .



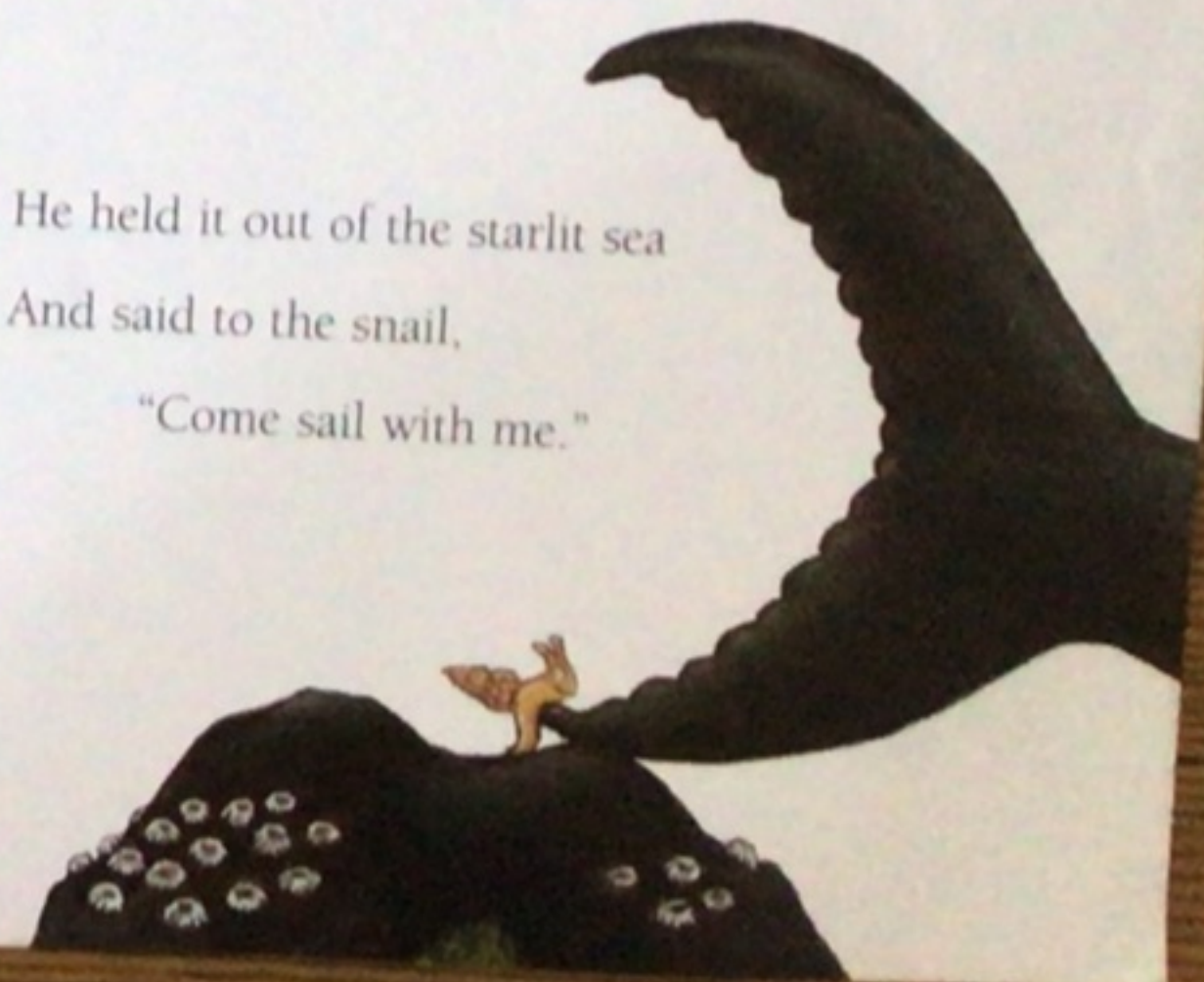


This is the whale who came one night
When the tide was high and the stars were bright,
A humpback whale, immensely long,
Who sang to the snail a wonderful song
Of shimmering ice and coral caves
And shooting stars and enormous waves.

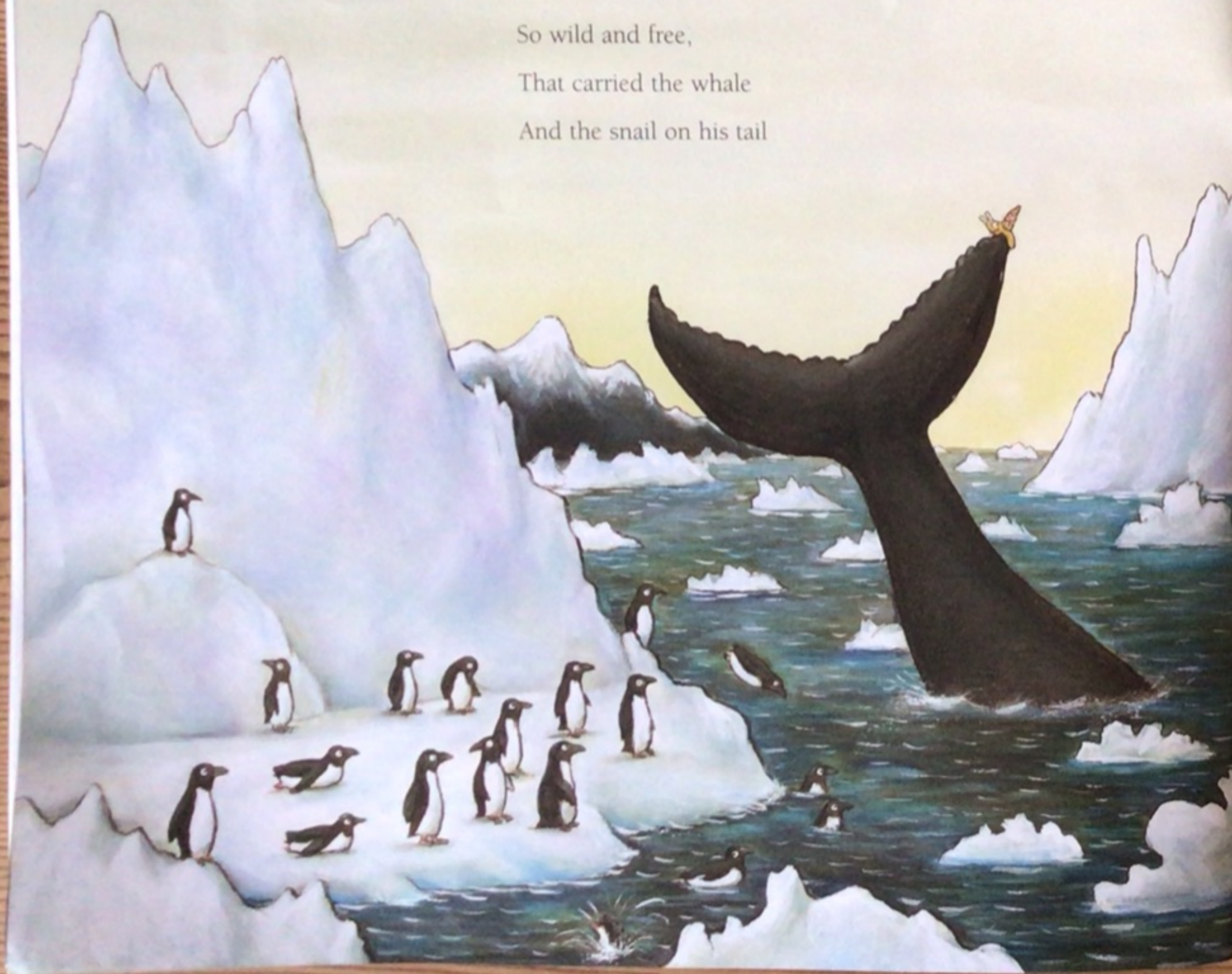
And this is the tail
Of the humpback whale.

He held it out of the starlit sea
And said to the snail,

"Come sail with me."



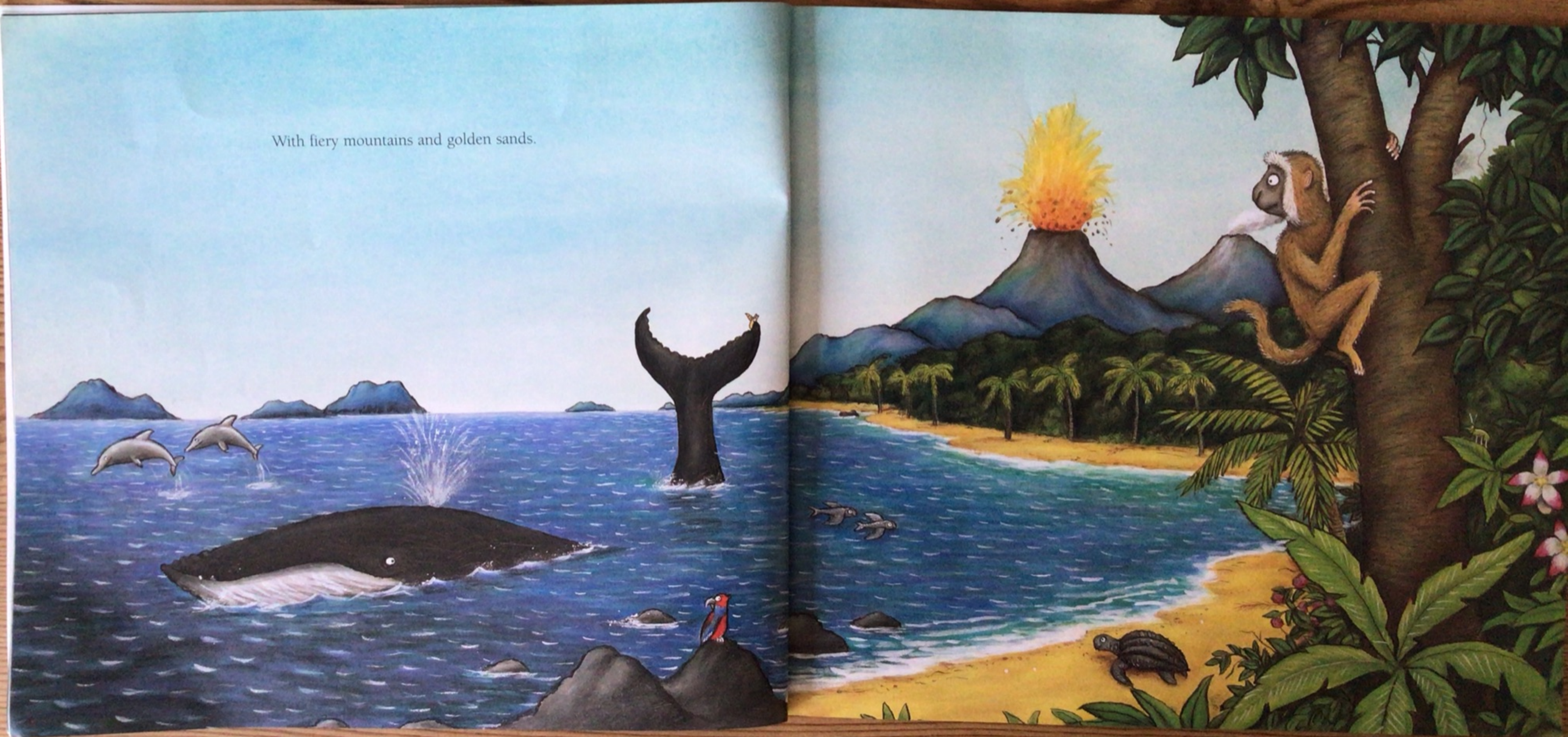
This is the sea,
So wild and free,
That carried the whale
And the snail on his tail



To towering icebergs and far-off lands,

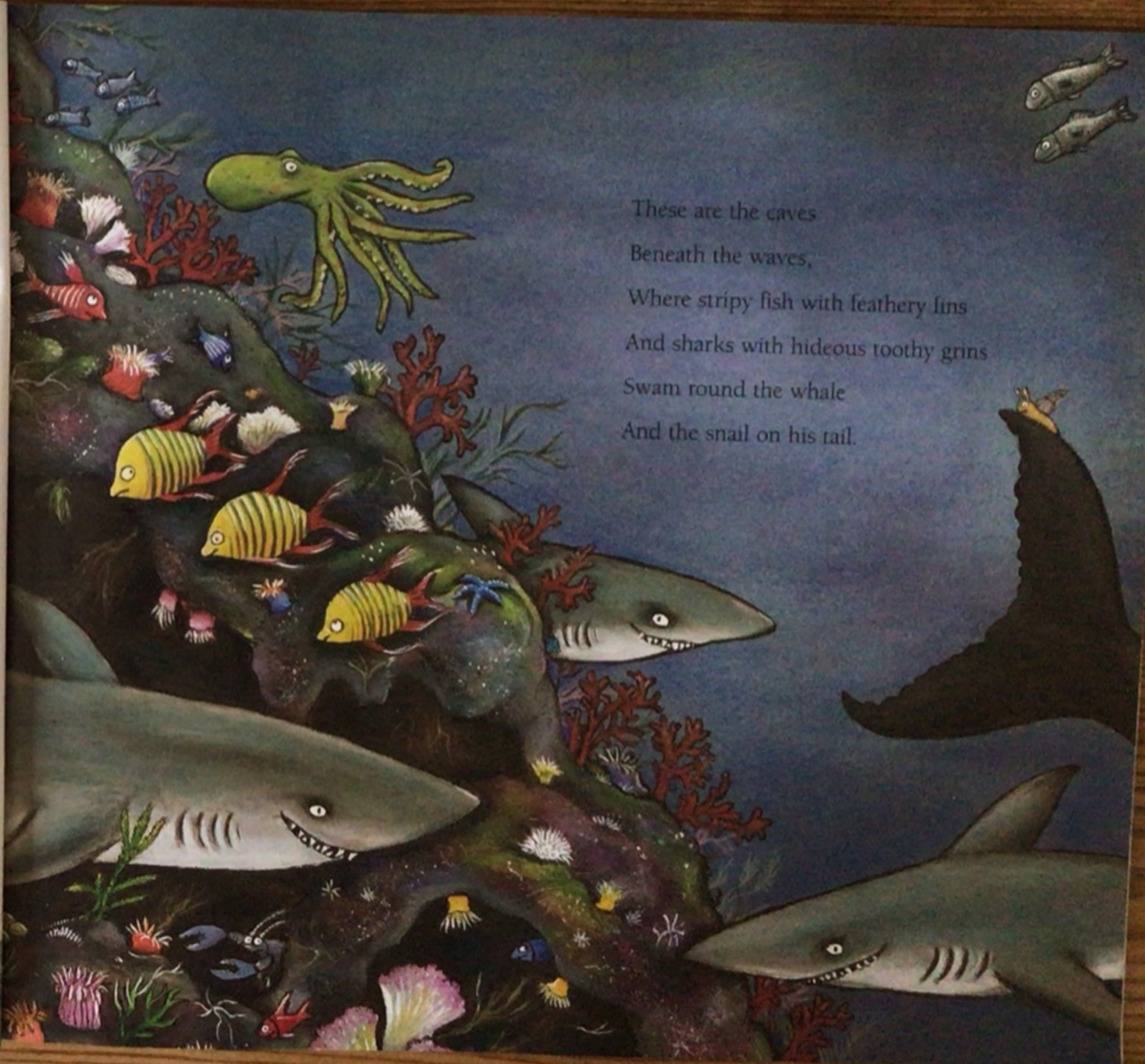


With fiery mountains and golden sands.





These are the waves that arched and crashed,
That foamed and frolicked and sprayed
and splashed
The tiny snail
On the tail of the whale.



These are the caves
Beneath the waves,
Where stripy fish with feathery fins
And sharks with hideous toothy grins
Swam round the whale
And the snail on his tail.



This is the sky
So vast and high,
Sometimes sunny and blue and warm,
Sometimes filled with a thunderstorm,
With zigzag lightning
Flashing and frightening
The tiny snail
On the tail of the whale.



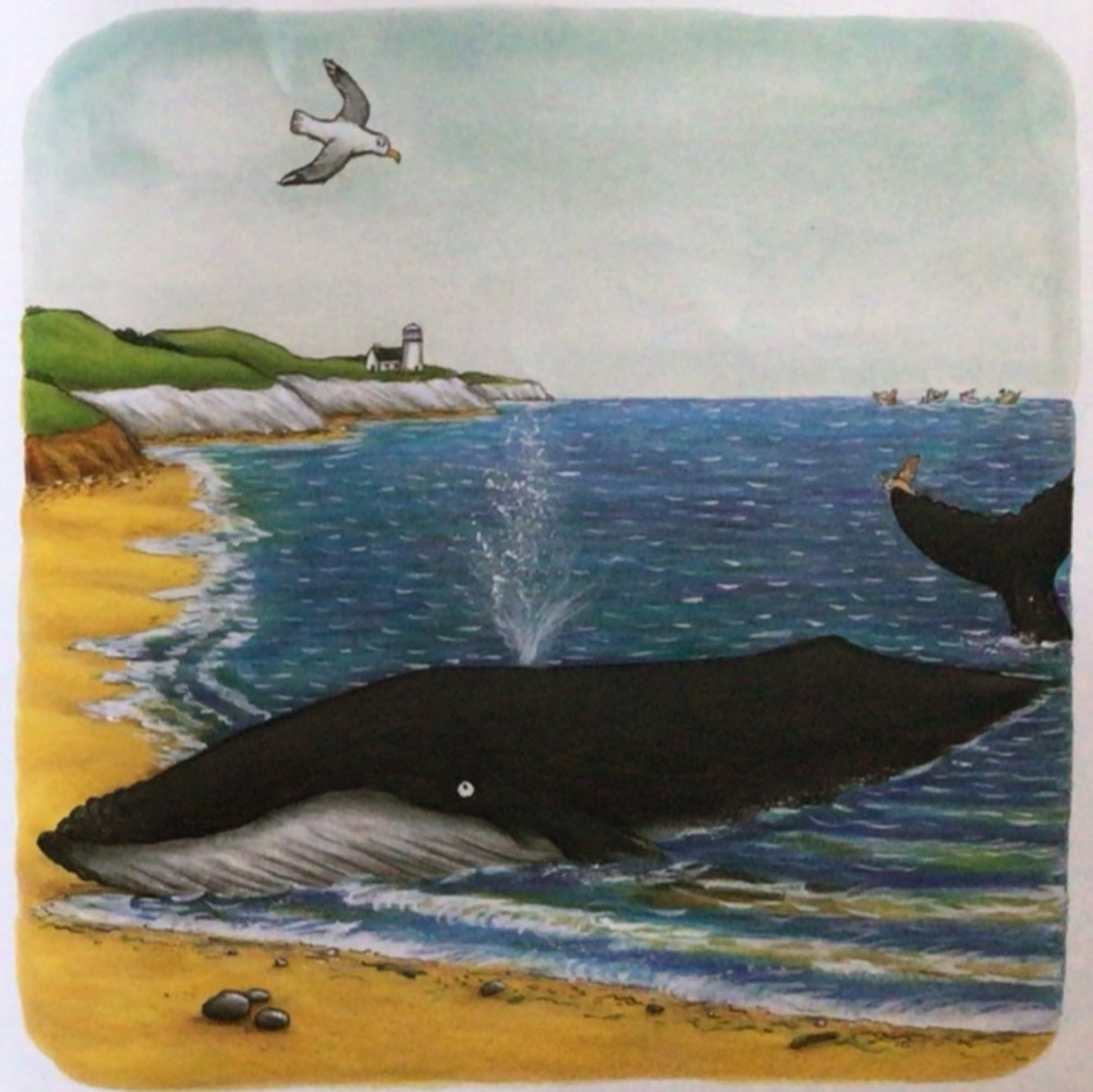


And she gazed at the sky, the sea, the land,
The waves and the caves and the golden sand,
She gazed and gazed, amazed by it all,
And she said to the whale, "I feel so small."



But then came the day
The whale lost his way . . .

These are the speedboats, running a race,
Zigging and zooming all over the place,
Upsetting the whale with their earsplitting roar,
Making him swim too close to the shore.



This is the tide, slipping away . . .



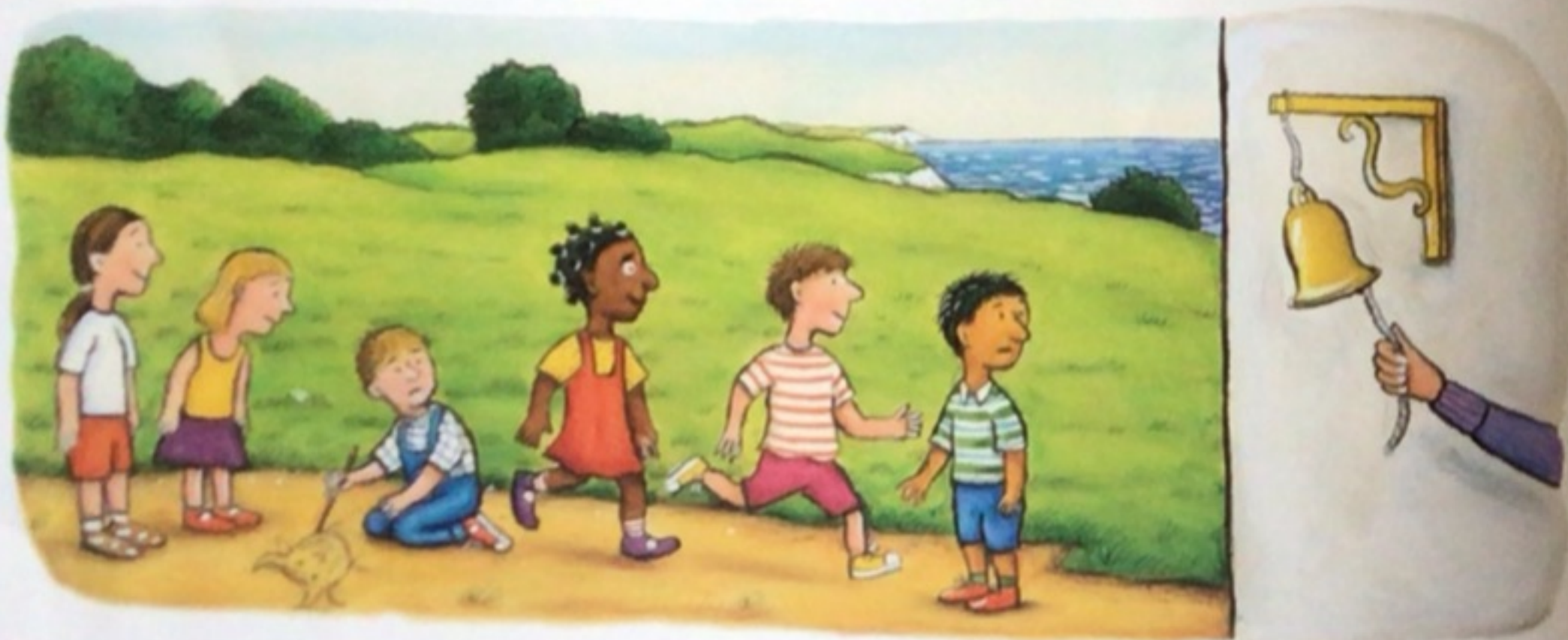
And this is the whale lying beached
in a bay.

"Quick! Off the sand! Back to sea!"
cried the snail.
"I can't move on land! I'm too **big!**"
moaned the whale.

The snail felt helpless and terribly small.
Then, "I've got it!" she cried,
and started to crawl.

"I must not fail,"
Said the tiny snail.





This is the bell on the school in the bay,
Ringing the children in from their play.



This is the teacher, holding her chalk,
Telling the class, "Sit straight! Don't talk!"
This is the board, as black as soot . . .



And this is the snail with the itchy foot!

"A snail! A snail!"

The teacher turns pale.

"Look!" say the children.

"It's leaving a trail."

This is the trail
Of the tiny snail,

A silvery trail saying . . .

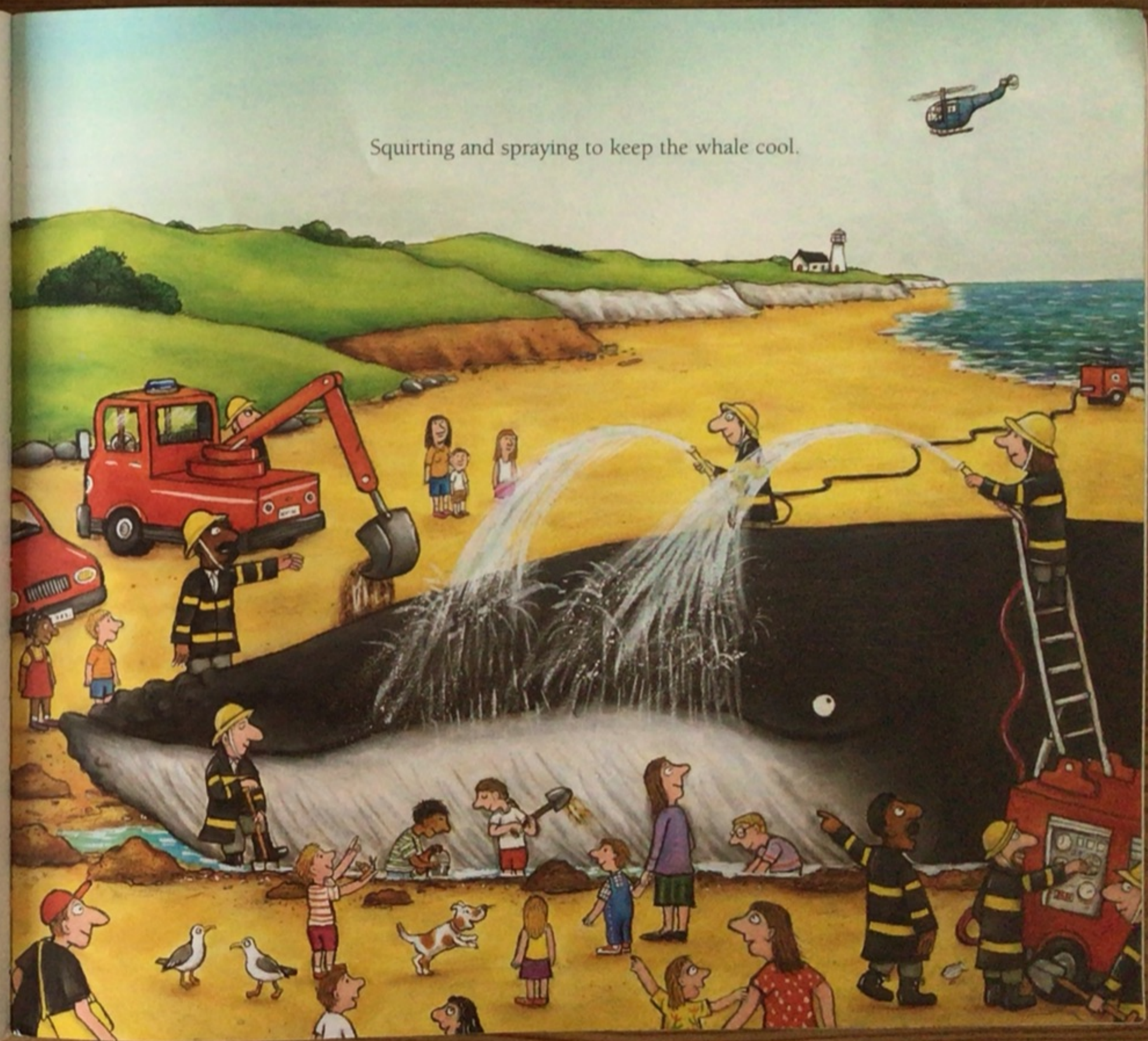




These are the children, running from school,



Fetching the firemen, digging a pool,



Squirting and spraying to keep the whale cool.

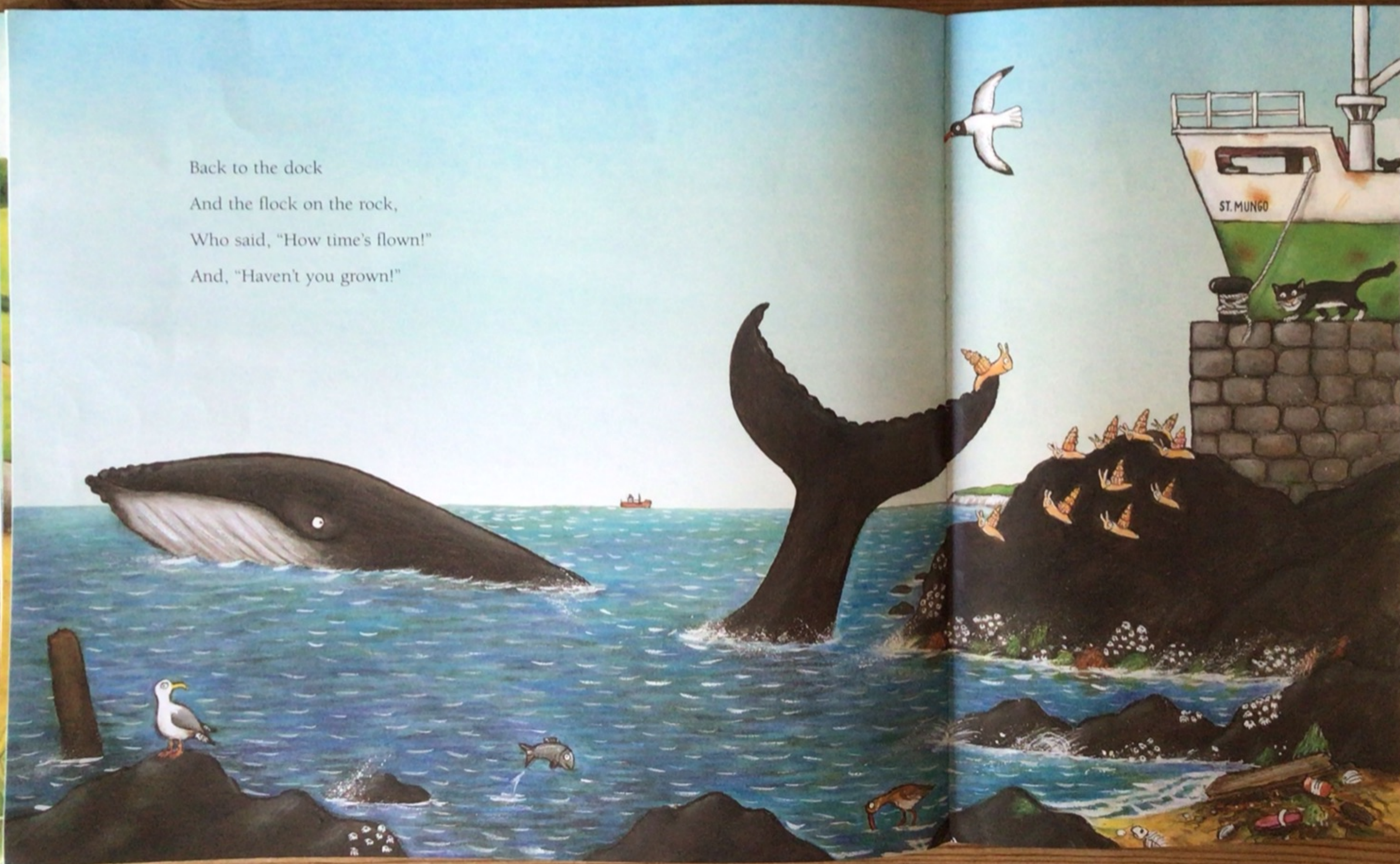
This is the tide coming into the bay,



And these are the villagers shouting, "Hooray!"
As the whale and the snail travel safely away . . .



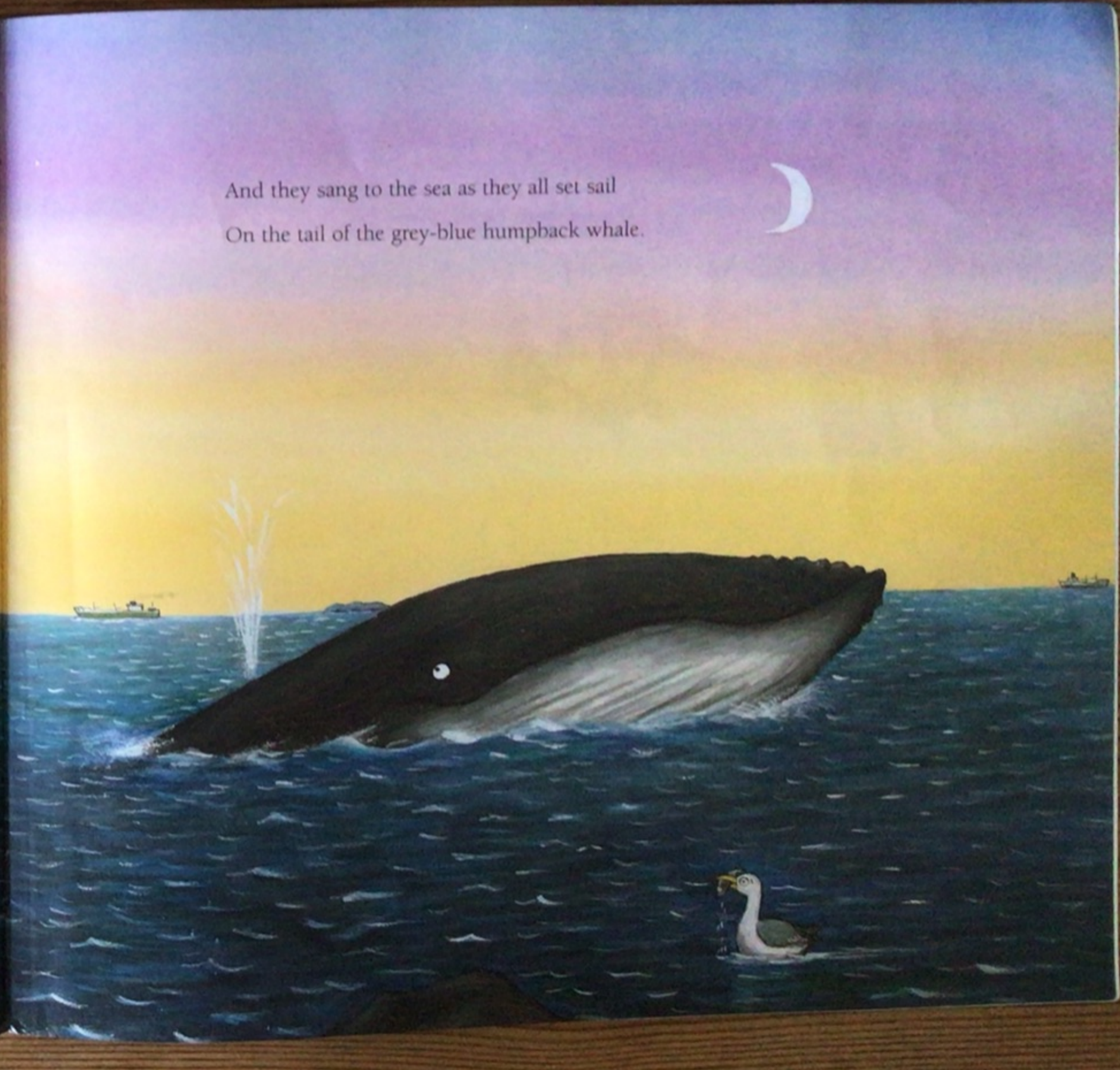
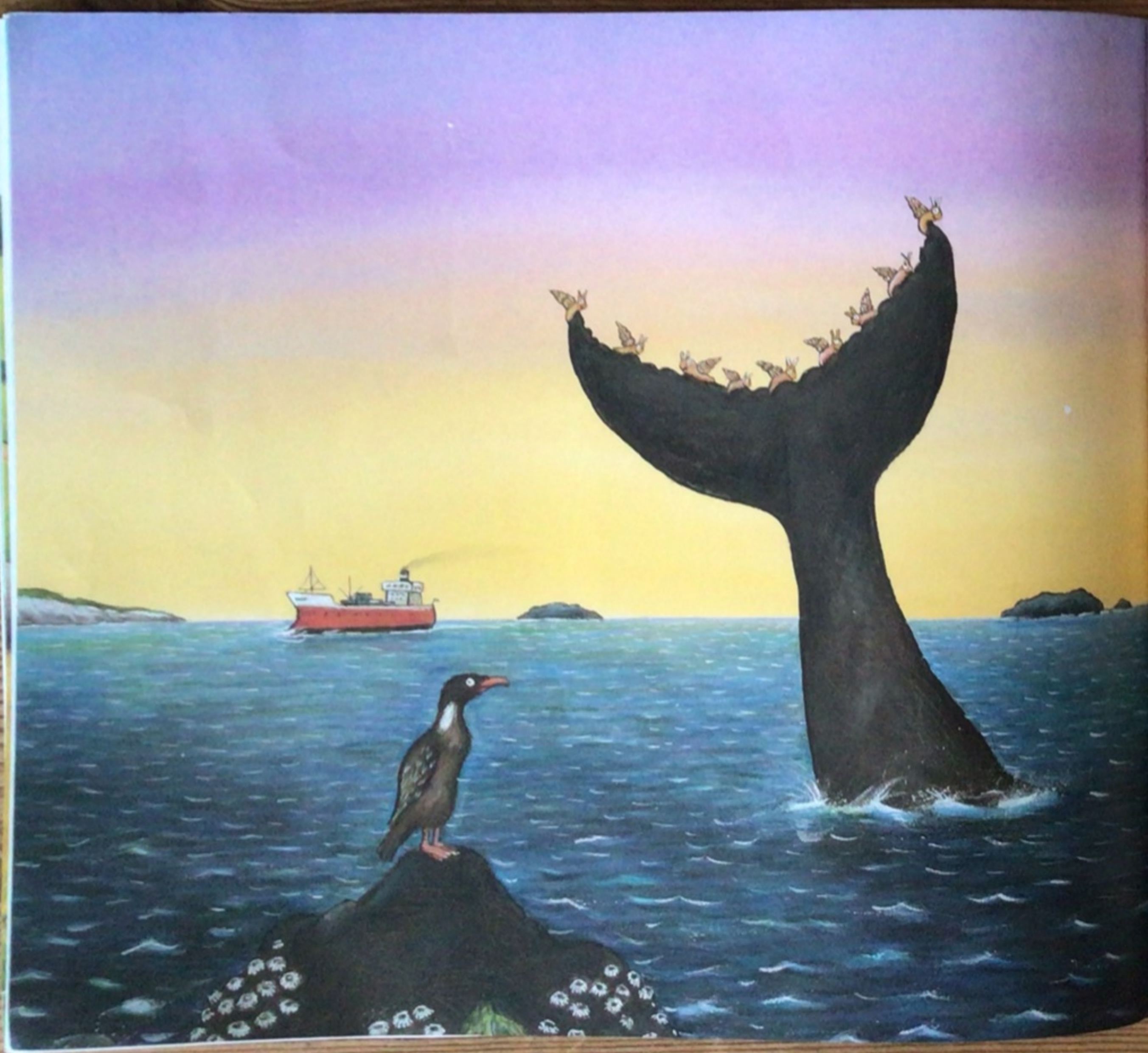
Back to the dock
And the flock on the rock,
Who said, "How time's flown!"
And, "Haven't you grown!"



And the whale and the snail
Told their wonderful tale
Of shimmering ice and coral caves,
And shooting stars and enormous waves,
And of how the snail, so small and frail,
With her looping, curling, silvery trail,
Saved the life of the humpback whale.

Then the humpback whale
Held out his tail
And on crawled snail after snail after snail.





And they sang to the sea as they all set sail
On the tail of the grey-blue humpback whale.

The sea snail slithered all over the rock
And gazed at the sea and the ships in the dock.
And as she gazed she sniffed and sighed.
"The sea is deep and the world is wide!
How I long to sail!"
Said the tiny snail.



'Bold and brilliant, wise and wacky'
The Times

'A joy to read aloud'
Guardian

'Gorgeously illustrated and with a first-rate story'
Sunday Express

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