



The Sky Between Us

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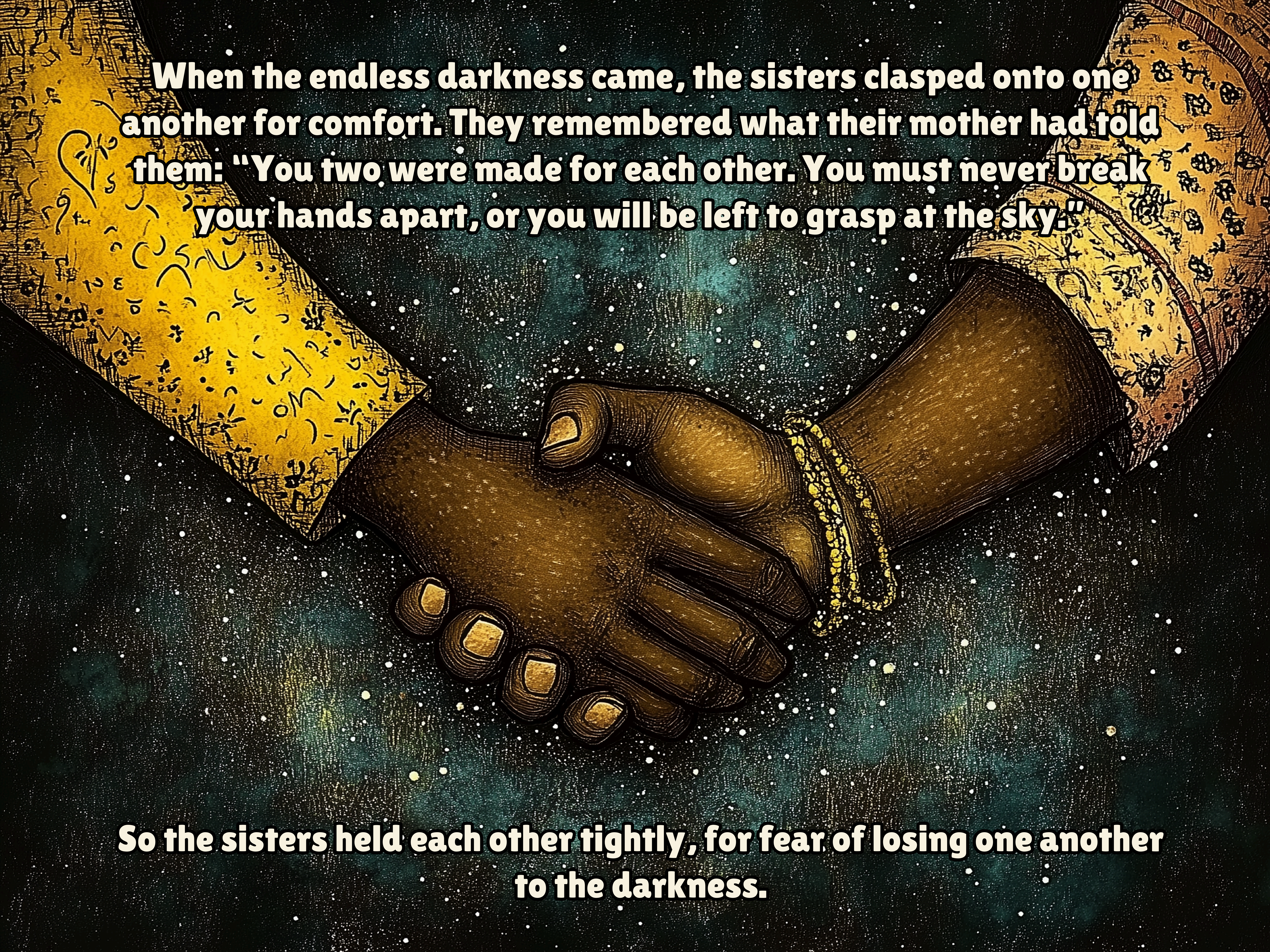
Dedications

To my sister, Abbie, and to my mom, Sunny.
I love you both to the moon and back.

**Before the darkness, Mother spoke the sisters into existence.
One had the sun in her eyes, and the other had the moon.**



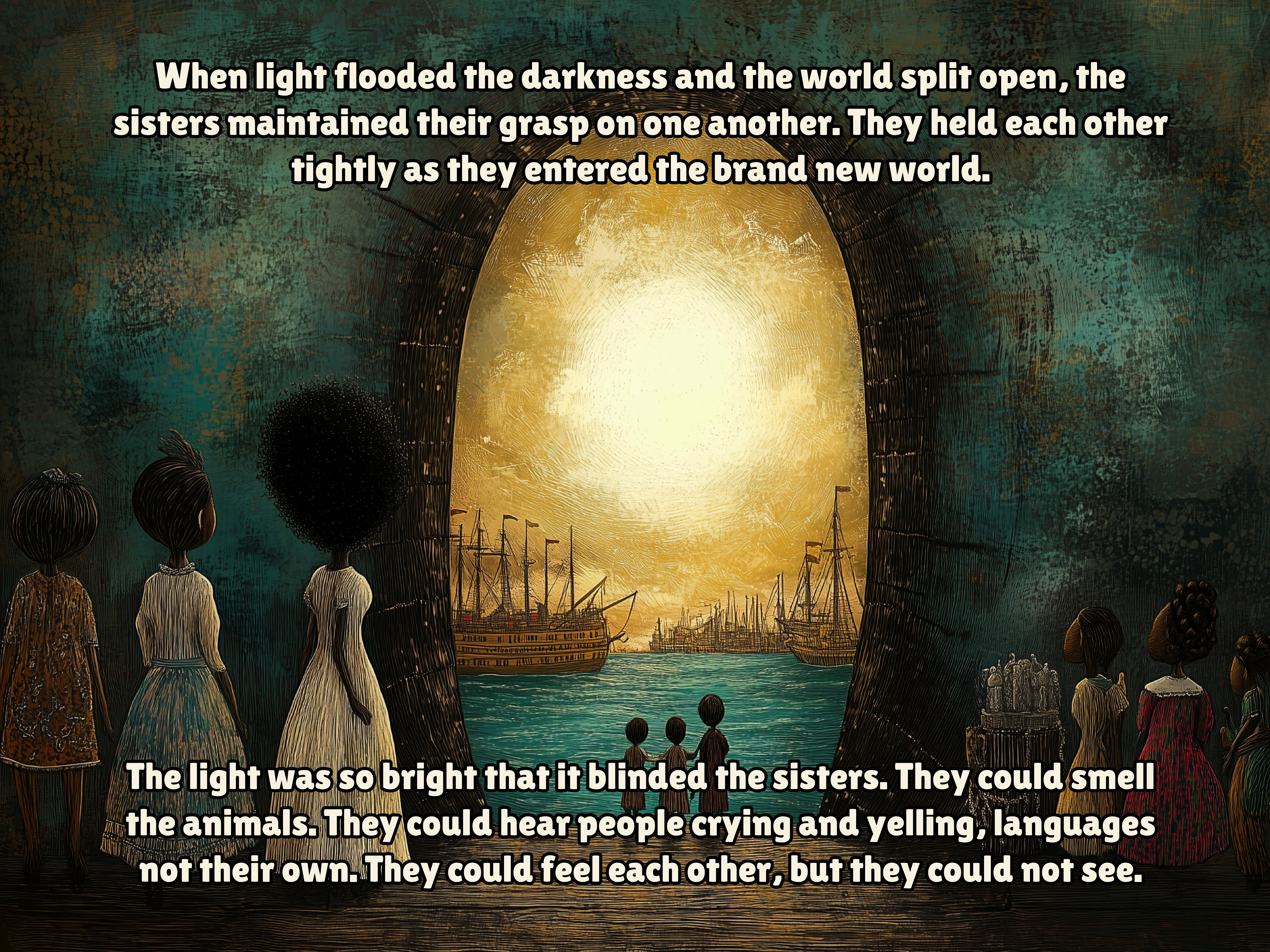
**Mother said: "I shall name one of you Moi, after the sun that shines,
and I shall name the other Sanza, after the moon that glows."
The two joined hands and lived in a land that was bright and warm.**



When the endless darkness came, the sisters clasped onto one another for comfort. They remembered what their mother had told them: "You two were made for each other. You must never break your hands apart, or you will be left to grasp at the sky."

So the sisters held each other tightly, for fear of losing one another to the darkness.

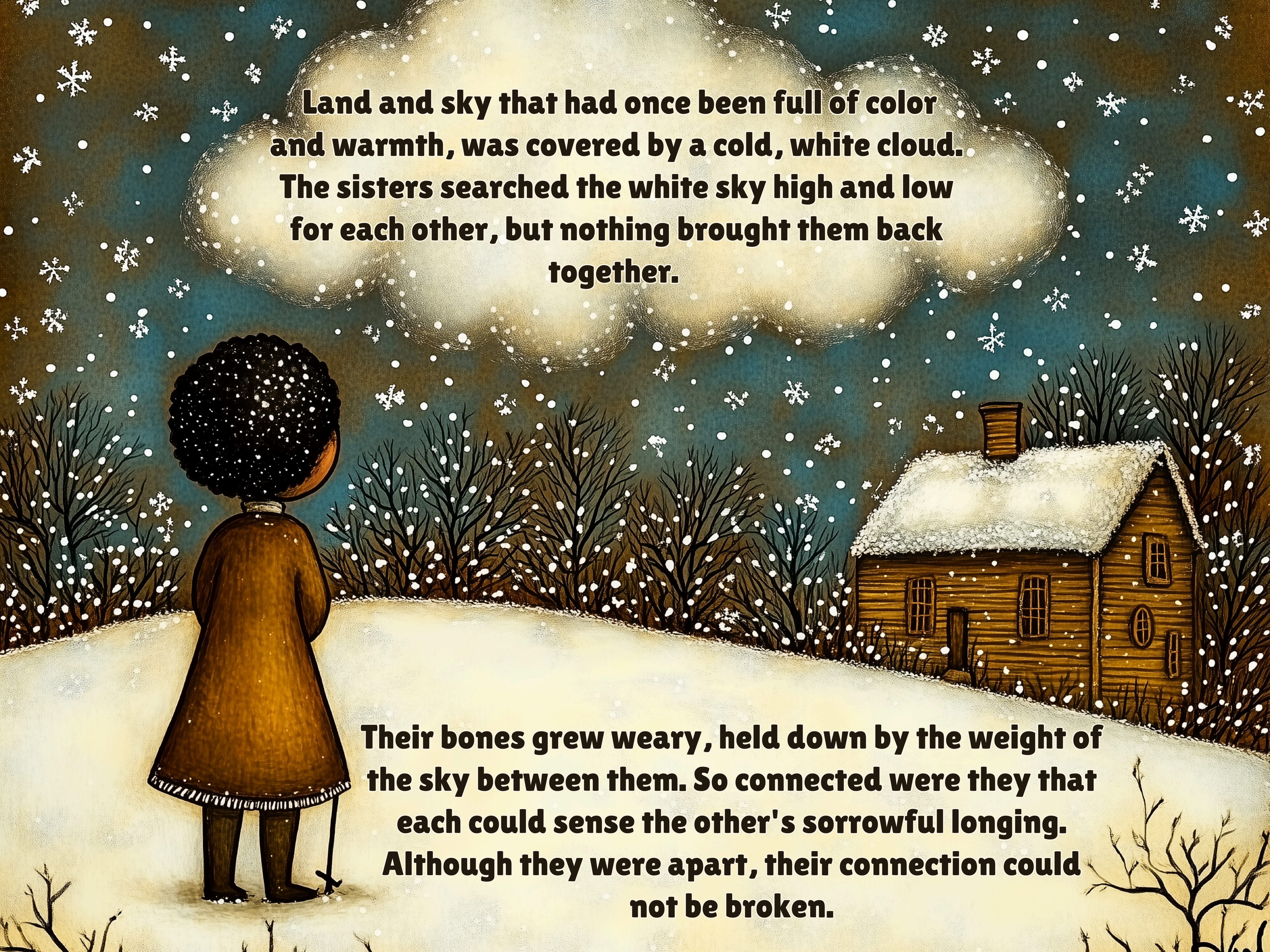
When light flooded the darkness and the world split open, the sisters maintained their grasp on one another. They held each other tightly as they entered the brand new world.



The light was so bright that it blinded the sisters. They could smell the animals. They could hear people crying and yelling, languages not their own. They could feel each other, but they could not see.

A pair of hands as white as the blinding light around them grabbed each of their wrists and pulled them apart with the force of mighty elephants. Confusion and panic overwhelmed them. The two sisters were left grasping the sky.






**Land and sky that had once been full of color
and warmth, was covered by a cold, white cloud.
The sisters searched the white sky high and low
for each other, but nothing brought them back
together.**

**Their bones grew weary, held down by the weight of
the sky between them. So connected were they that
each could sense the other's sorrowful longing.
Although they were apart, their connection could
not be broken.**

One day, Moi, whose eyes once shone with the brightness of the sun, swore that she had spotted her sister at the market. The sky was dull that day – grey, flat, and full of mist. Yet through the mist, her sister's eyes glowed like a beacon, drawing her near.



**"Do my eyes deceive me?" thought Moi.
"Does my mind play a cruel trick?" thought Sanza .
After all this time, could it really be, that the sisters would
join hands again?**

An illustration of two young girls with large, dark, curly hair, looking at each other in a snowy city street. They are wearing patterned dresses with white collars. The background shows a city with many buildings and a crowd of people in the distance, all under a heavy snowfall.

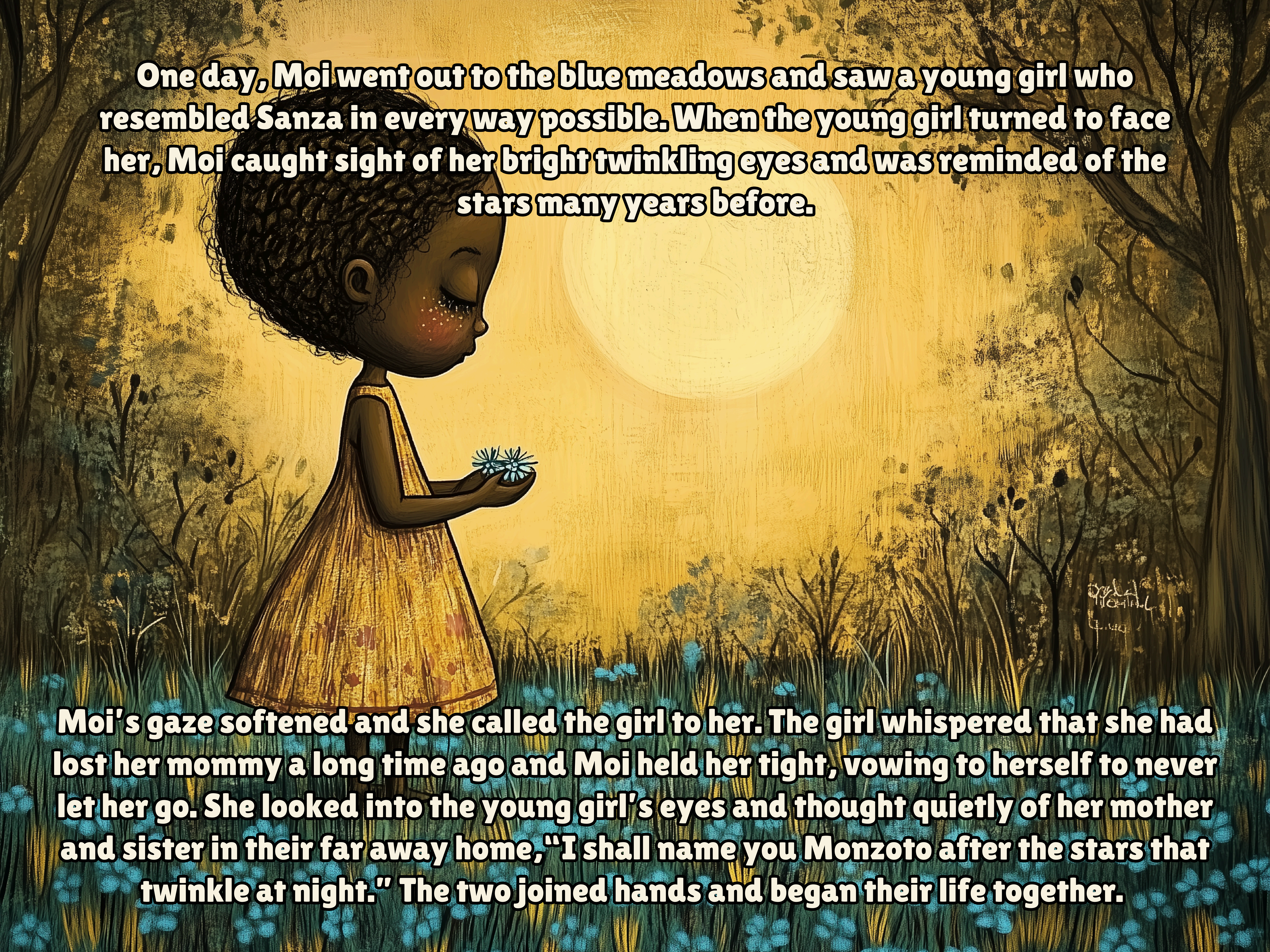
Moi and Sanza did not hear the dogs barking or the horses' hoofs. They did not hear the woman fighting with the sailor, or the boy yelling as he tried to sell his newspaper. Their hands reached out for each other to embrace as their mother had taught them. But not a second had passed before they were yanked apart by those cruel white hands and banished back to the cold and unforgiving white sky.



The sisters continued their endless search for each other in the land of cold and white. Until one day, the sky returned to its dark and clear state. Moi, the sister with the sun in her eyes stared up at the night sky searching for Sanza's soul, but the sky was empty of the moon. Stars began to twinkle in the sky of darkness as bright as her own eyes, but the moon remained hidden in the shadows.



Every night for years and years, Moi shed a single tear at the absence of Sanza in the sky. The tears took root in the ground, sprouting flowers as blue as the moon in their place.



One day, Moi went out to the blue meadows and saw a young girl who resembled Sanza in every way possible. When the young girl turned to face her, Moi caught sight of her bright twinkling eyes and was reminded of the stars many years before.

Moi's gaze softened and she called the girl to her. The girl whispered that she had lost her mommy a long time ago and Moi held her tight, vowing to herself to never let her go. She looked into the young girl's eyes and thought quietly of her mother and sister in their far away home, "I shall name you Monzoto after the stars that twinkle at night." The two joined hands and began their life together.

Acknowledgments

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