

## Prologue

A heritage long forgotten by us in the mad pursuit of material progress.

A madness fuelled by greed and selfishness.

A heritage we must learn about, prioritise, and practice.

A heritage we must swear and live by, for our happiness and well-being, and for the sake of the generations who will populate our dear Earth in the future.

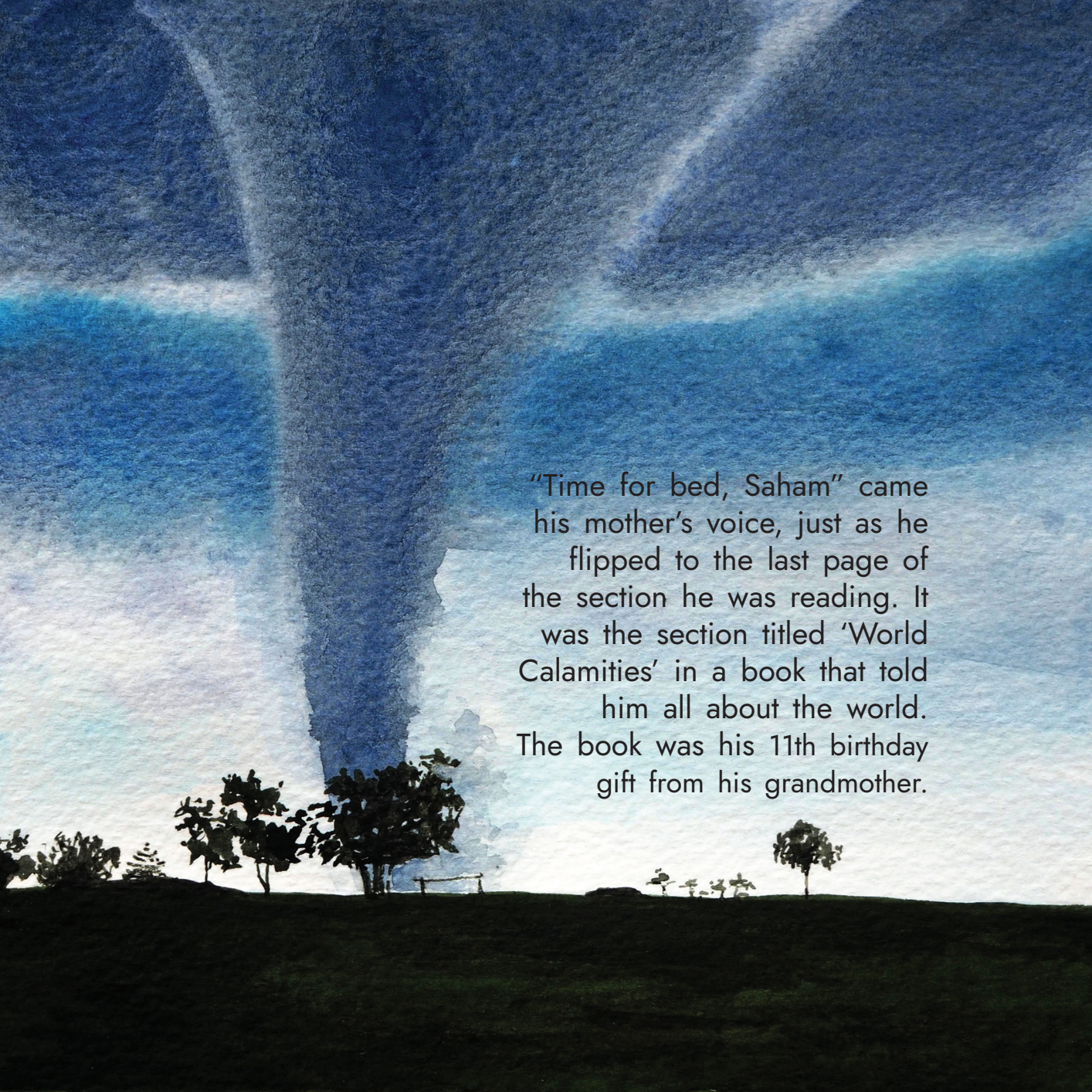
This is the true legacy we can pass onto future generations.

# Contents

1. CHAPTER 1 . . . Silent night . . . . .	2
2. CHAPTER 2 . . . Outside the window . . . . .	8
3. CHAPTER 3 . . . In the Garden . . . . .	14
4. CHAPTER 4 . . . The Adventure Begins . . . . .	20
5. CHAPTER 5 . . . A World Beyond . . . . .	26
6. CHAPTER 6 . . . A Fresh Start . . . . .	32
7. CHAPTER 7 . . . Way of Life . . . . .	40
8. CHAPTER 8 . . . A Guest, A Friend . . . . .	52
9. CHAPTER 9 . . . Real Power . . . . .	56
10. CHAPTER 10 . . . Making a Difference . . . . .	60
Epilogue . . . . .	66

Silent night





“Time for bed, Saham” came his mother’s voice, just as he flipped to the last page of the section he was reading. It was the section titled ‘World Calamities’ in a book that told him all about the world. The book was his 11th birthday gift from his grandmother.

“Yes mamma” he called, his mind still on what he had been reading. Ever since the pandemic had started a few months ago, Saham was determined to find out if the world had ever seen anything as disastrous before, but hadn’t found anything like it so far.

He chewed on his toothbrush, lost in thought, when his grandmother hobbled into his room. “Come Saham, I’ll tuck you into bed” she said with a smile in her voice. Saham grinned from ear to ear. He spat out the last of his toothpaste, rinsed his mouth, and skipped into the room. He loved his nani more than anyone else in the world. He was grateful to the pandemic for at least one thing — his nani coming to live with Saham and his parents. In the last few months, bedtime became his favourite time of the day, when nani would come tuck him in and occasionally read him a story.

Today, he snuggled in close to her, breathing in her comforting scent. “Nani...” he said thoughtfully. “Yes Saham baba, what is it?” He looked up at her smiley, wrinkly face. Her face

had wrinkles like the branches of a tree and her hair was as soft as the clouds that he so loved to cycle under.

“Have you ever seen a pandemic before?” he asked. His nani thought for a moment, and said, “well, I haven’t seen a pandemic like this, but I have seen other scary disasters”. She paused before saying “I’m ancient, you know” she winked. “Naniiii” Saham looked at her with his big, serious eyes. She patted his head, understanding that he was actually worried. “See Saham baba. Everything is going to be okay. The world has survived other disasters and it will survive this one too. Besides, have you noticed how much happier the Earth looks? Mother nature has sent us all indoors and she’s taking time to recover.”

This realisation surprised Saham. He hadn’t thought about it before, but it was true. The air in his garden was fresher, and the trees lining his street also seemed lush and green in a way that he hadn’t seen before. The other day, he even heard a little bird in the morning when he woke up — and when he ran to look at it, it was unlike any other he’d seen.

It was as though all of mother nature's hidden secrets were revealing themselves, now that human beings were not interfering with her growth!

"Why are only humans sent indoors nani?" "I'm no scientist, but I believe, every once in a while, Mother Earth tries to teach us something. Maybe this time, she's telling us to slow down and not exploit nature as we have become so used to doing." Saham nodded in response. He didn't really know what to say. Perhaps his nani was right, and despite all the bad things happening, there was some good too.

"Goodnight nani" he said softly.

"Goodnight Saham baba" she smiled. He closed his eyes, and drifted off, dreaming about clear blue skies and chirping birds.

