



Wangari loved being outside. In her family's food garden she broke up the soil with her machete to get it ready to plant the seeds.



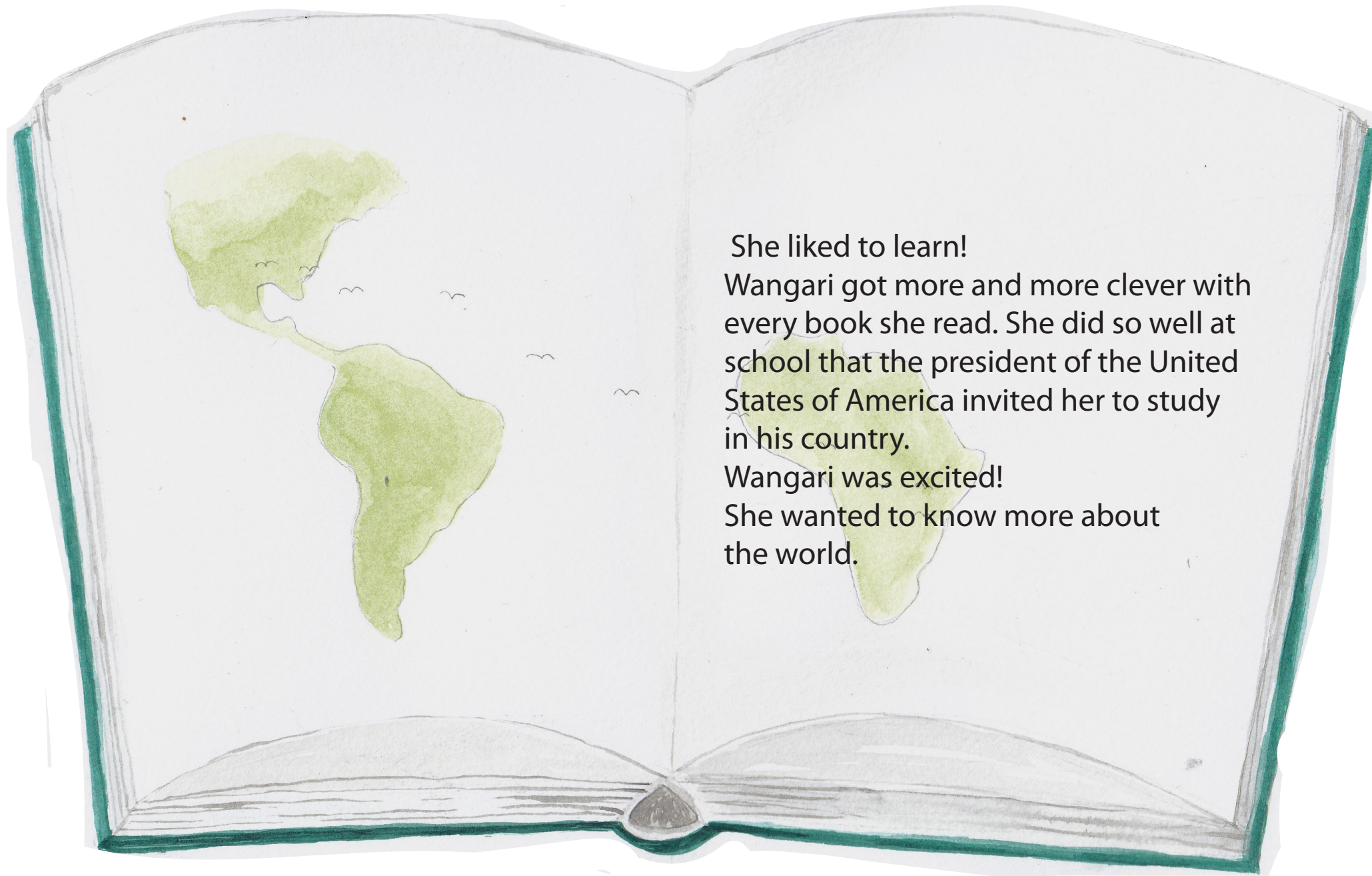


Her favourite time of day was just after sunset.
When it got too dark to see the plants, she knew
it was time to go home.
She followed the narrow paths across the fields,
crossing rivers as she went.



Wangari was very bright and couldn't wait to go to school. But her mother and father wanted her to help them at home. When she was seven years old, her big brother persuaded her parents to let her go to school.



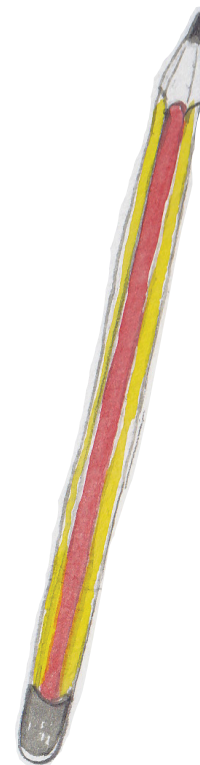


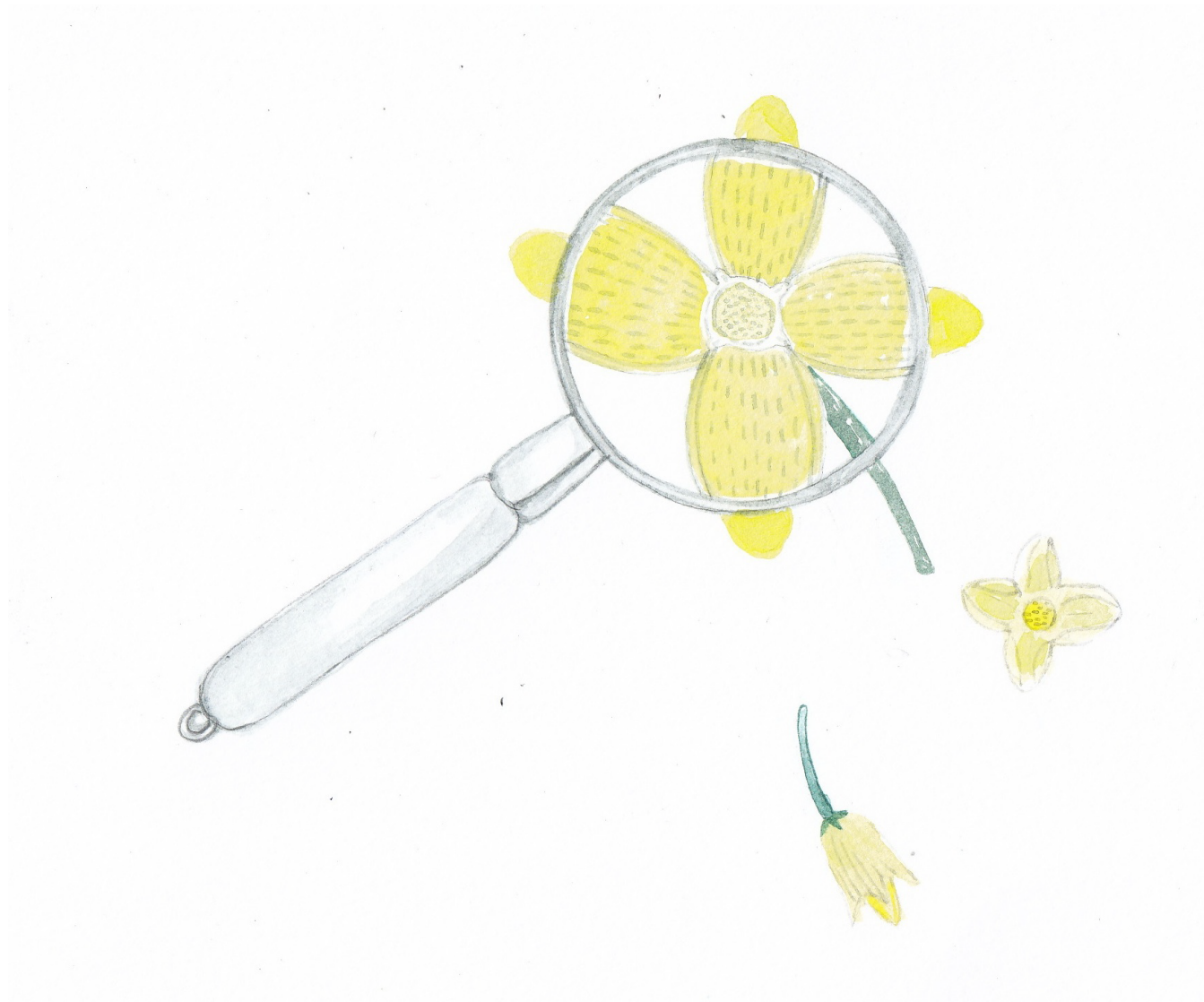
She liked to learn!

Wangari got more and more clever with every book she read. She did so well at school that the president of the United States of America invited her to study in his country.

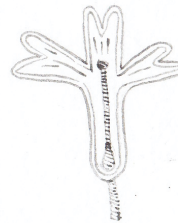
Wangari was excited!

She wanted to know more about the world.





Wangari studied plants and how they grow.
And she remembered how she grew: playing
games with her brothers in the shade of the
trees in the beautiful Kenyan forests.



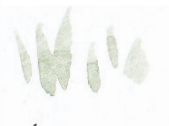


At the American university she learnt many new things.
As she learnt, she realised that she loved the people of Kenya.
She wanted them to be happy and free.
And the more she learnt, the more she remembered
her African home.



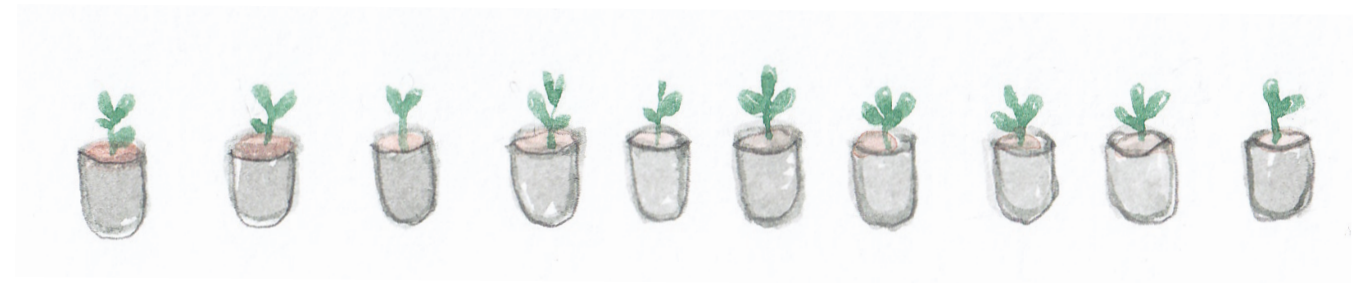


But when she came back home, Kenya had changed. The forests were gone. Huge farms stretched across the land. Now the women had no wood to make cooking fires. The people were poor and the children were hungry.





Wangari knew what to do. She taught the women how to plant trees from seeds. The women were very happy! Now they had jobs and they could look after their families. Wangari had helped the women to feel powerful.





The new trees grew into forests, and the rivers started flowing again. Wangari's message spread across Africa. Thirty-five million trees have been planted from Wangari's seeds.



Wangari died in 2011, but we can think
of her every time we see a beautiful tree.





Wangari had worked hard.
People all over the world took notice,
and gave her a famous prize.
It is called the Nobel Peace Prize,
and she was the first African woman ever
to receive it.





In a village on the slopes of Mount Kenya in East Africa, a little girl worked in the fields with her mother. Her name was Wangari.

