



**SEEING THROUGH  
THE SNOW**



# SEEING THROUGH THE SNOW

Story by Vanessa Raimondo

Illustrated by Emily Farrugia



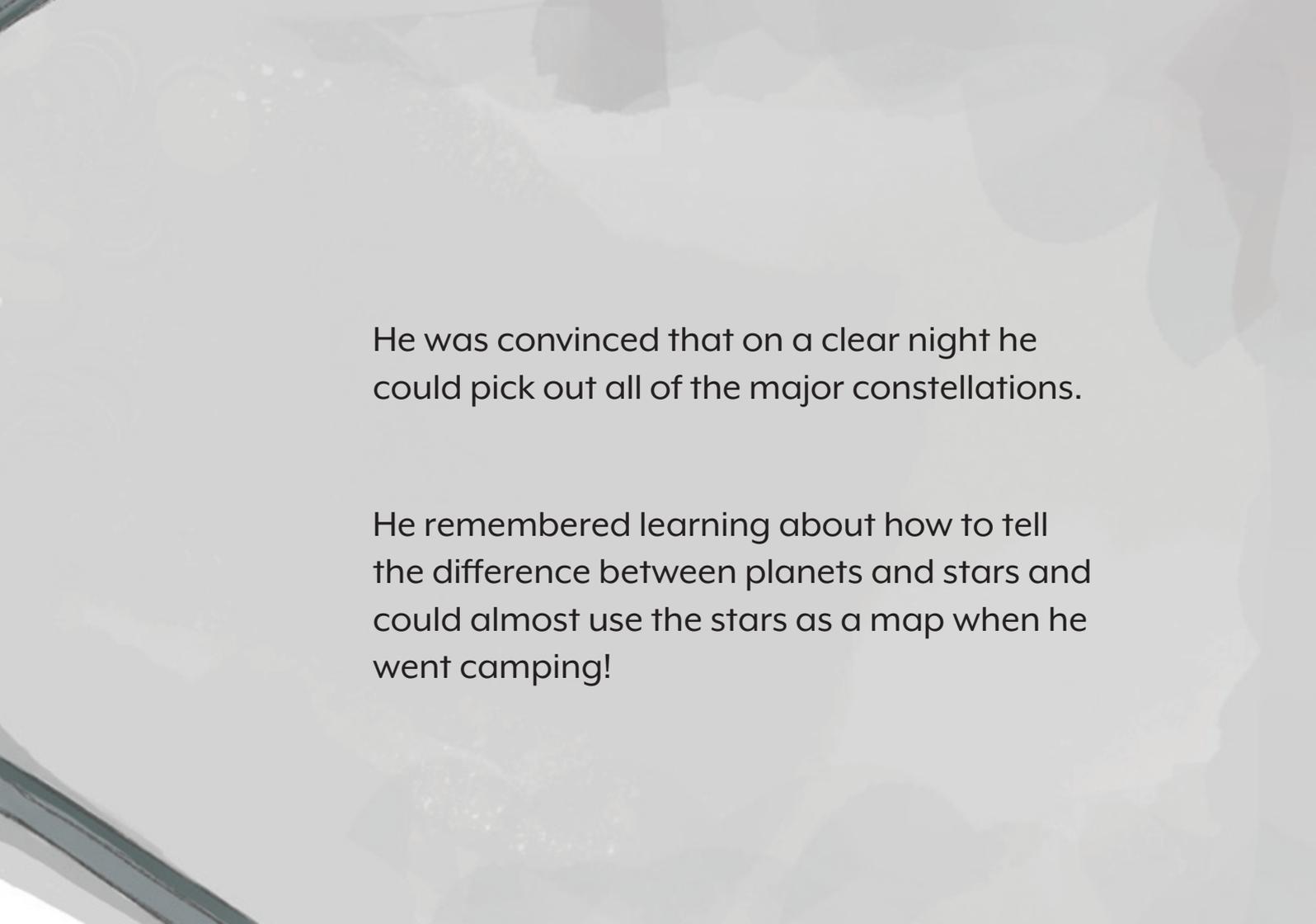
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David was putting off  
doing his homework.

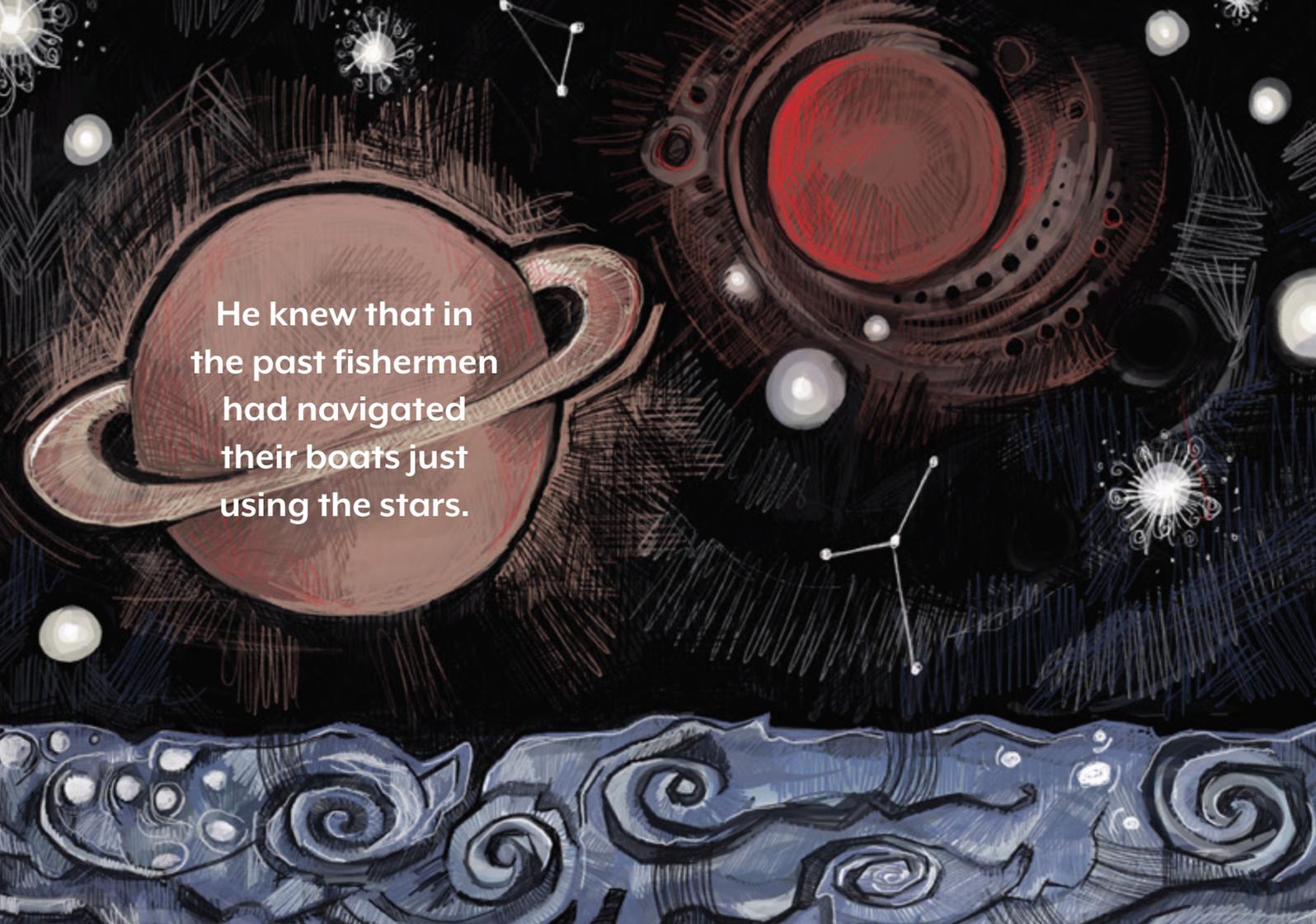
Instead, he was  
staring out of the  
window watching  
the stars at night.



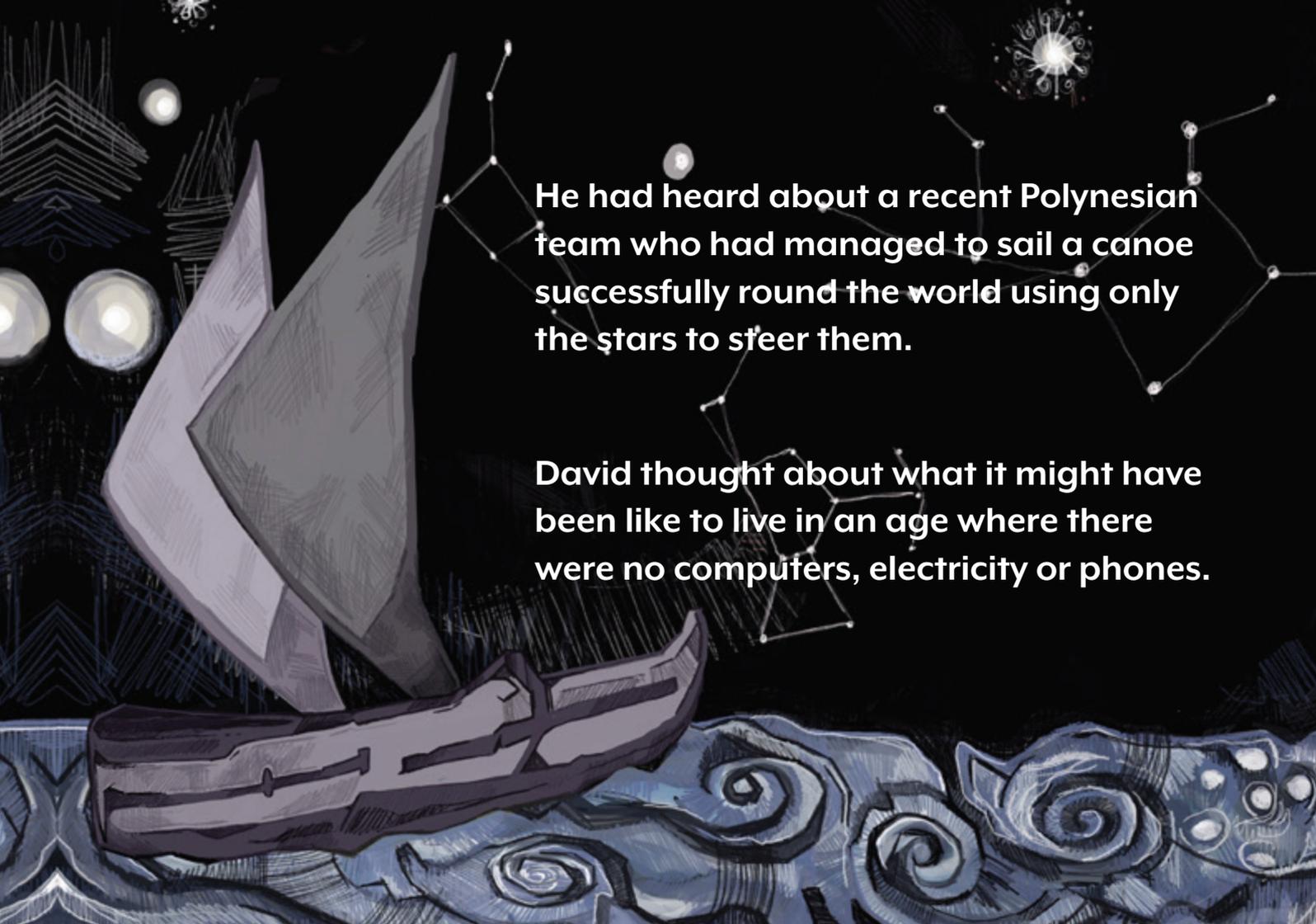


He was convinced that on a clear night he could pick out all of the major constellations.

He remembered learning about how to tell the difference between planets and stars and could almost use the stars as a map when he went camping!



He knew that in  
the past fishermen  
had navigated  
their boats just  
using the stars.



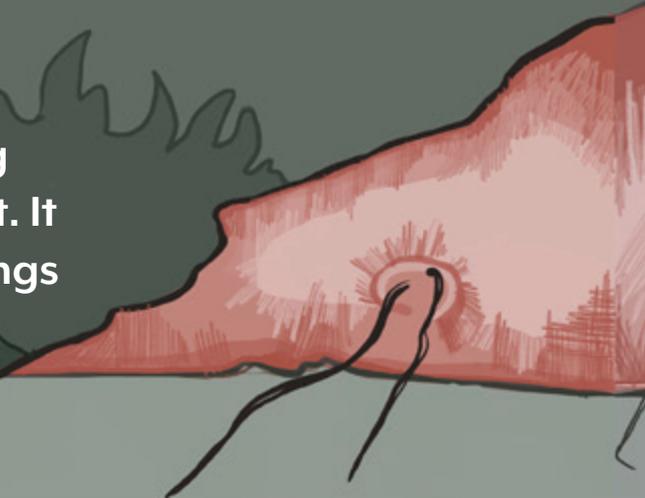
He had heard about a recent Polynesian team who had managed to sail a canoe successfully round the world using only the stars to steer them.

David thought about what it might have been like to live in an age where there were no computers, electricity or phones.

He had once been camping and run out of phone battery! It wasn't so bad, except for when he needed a pee and had to try and get out of the tent in the pitch black without his phone to act as a torch.

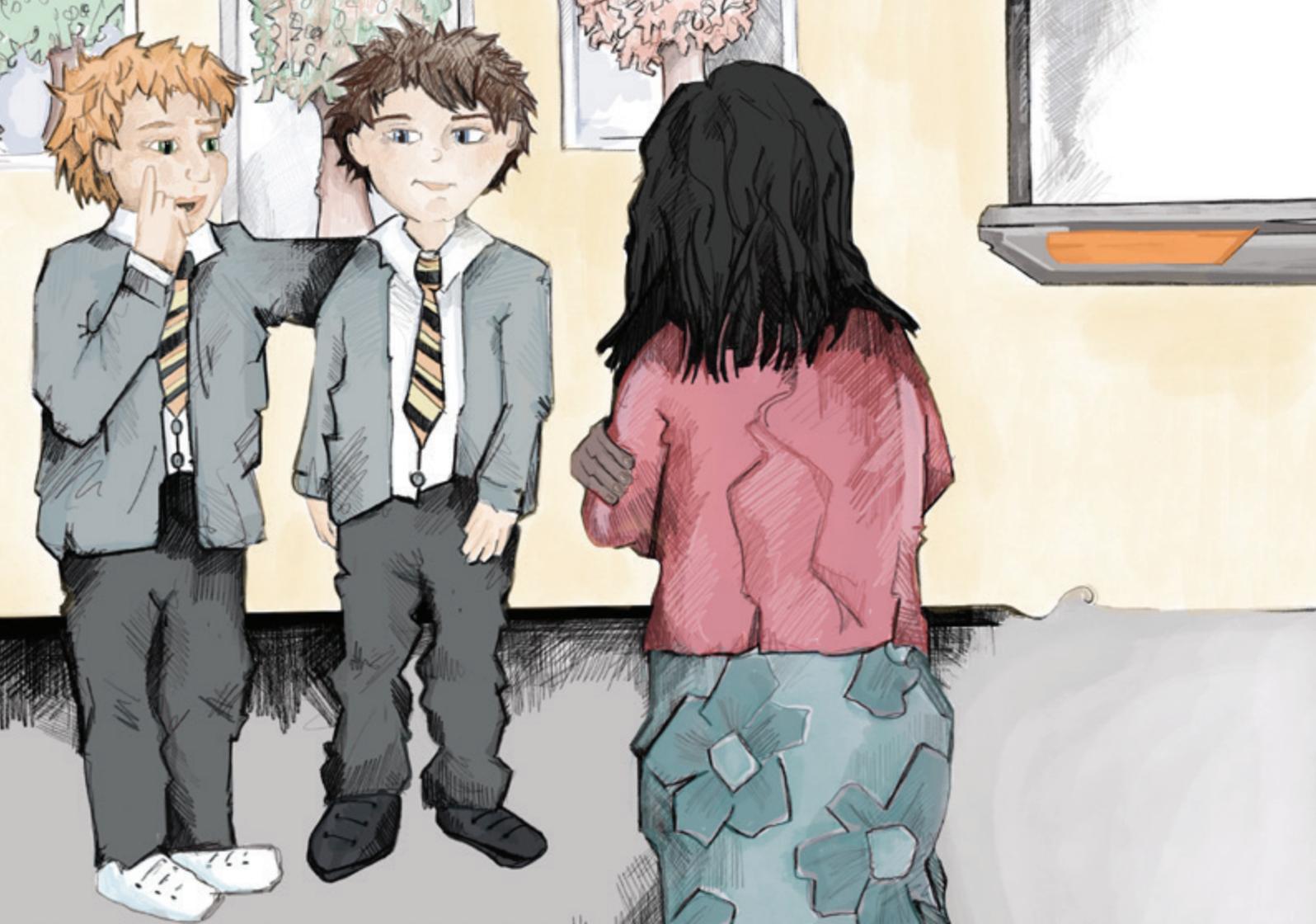
He had done really well until he tripped on one of the tent pegs and brought the whole tent down on his sleeping friends. It was funny now to think about it but at the time it was absolutely chucking it down and everyone got soaked.

His friends still joked that if David was going for a pee everyone else was going to get wet. It was hard to move about without hitting things when you couldn't see properly!





DAVID III





That made David think about his eyes:  
he had uveitis.

All his friends knew that he had uveitis. His best mate Mark was even jealous of him having it because he got to miss school to go to his appointments.



Mark had tried to tell his form teacher that he had caught uveitis from David and would need to go with him to see the eye doctor. He had almost convinced the teacher, because David didn't look like he had anything wrong with his eye.

To see David's uveitis you had to have a special microscope with a bright light called a slit lamp. This allowed the Doctor to see the uveitis which is a fancy name for inflammation within the eye.

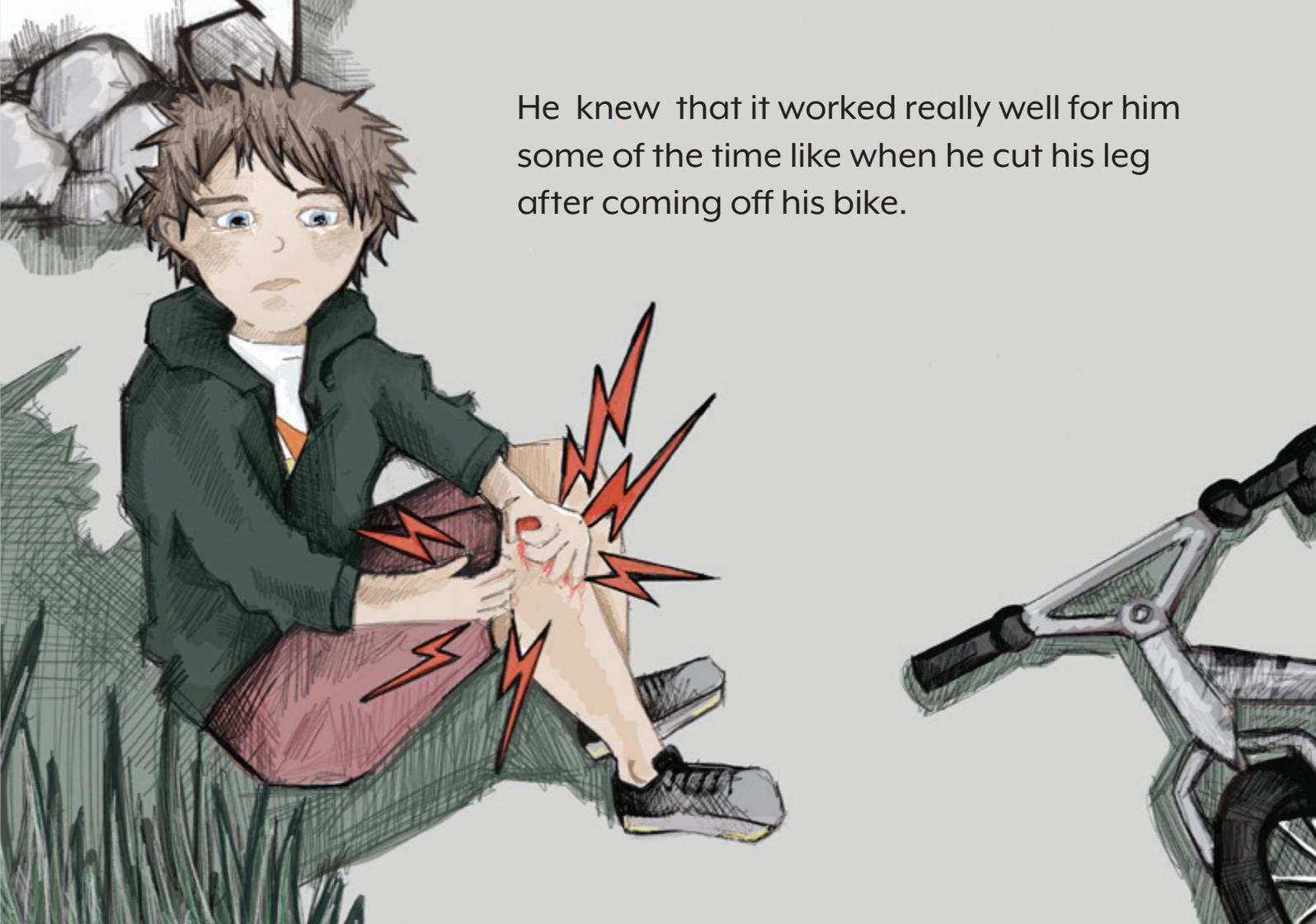
David knew what inflammation was - it was part of the body's attempt at a self defence system.







He knew that it worked really well for him  
some of the time like when he cut his leg  
after coming off his bike.

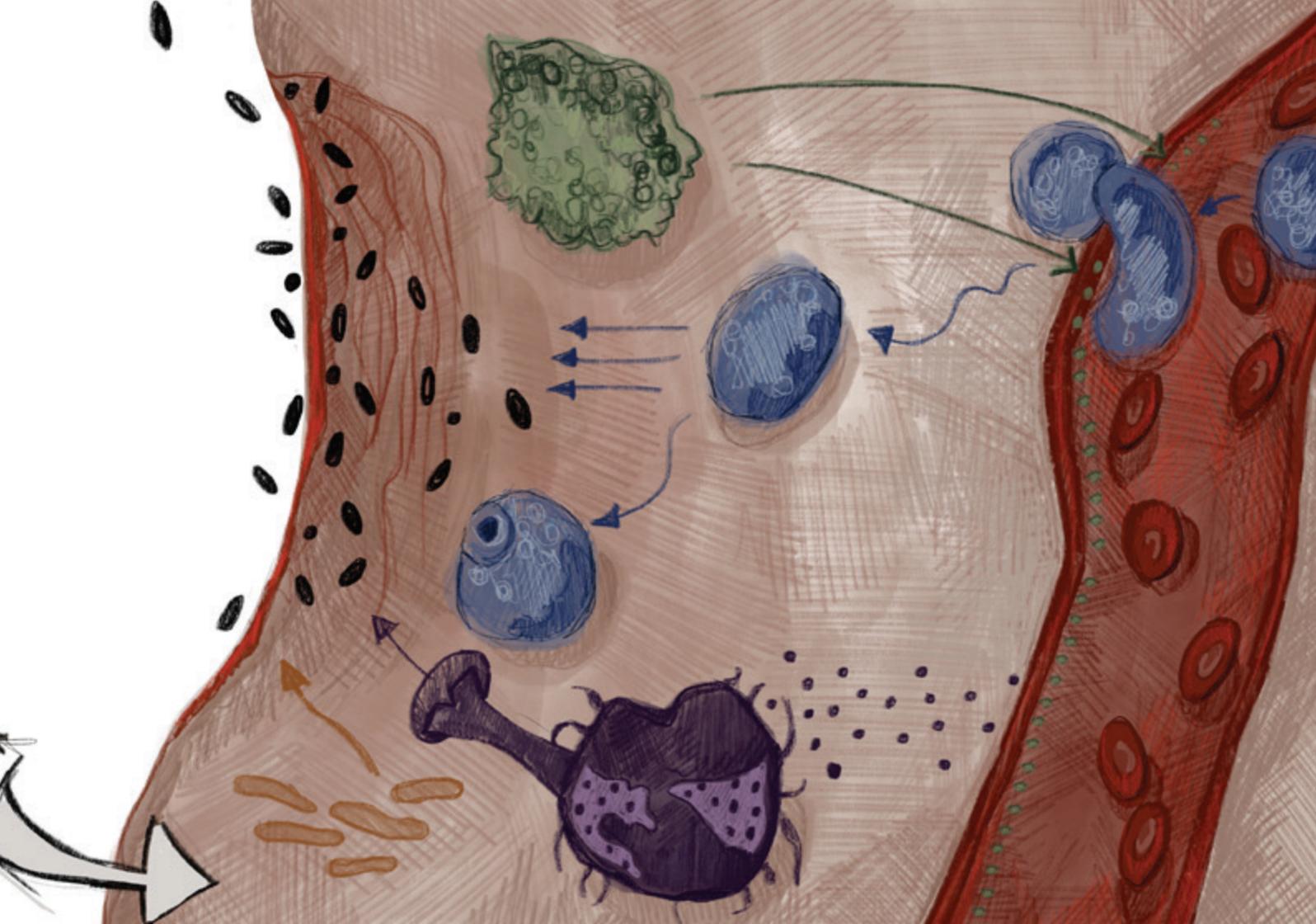


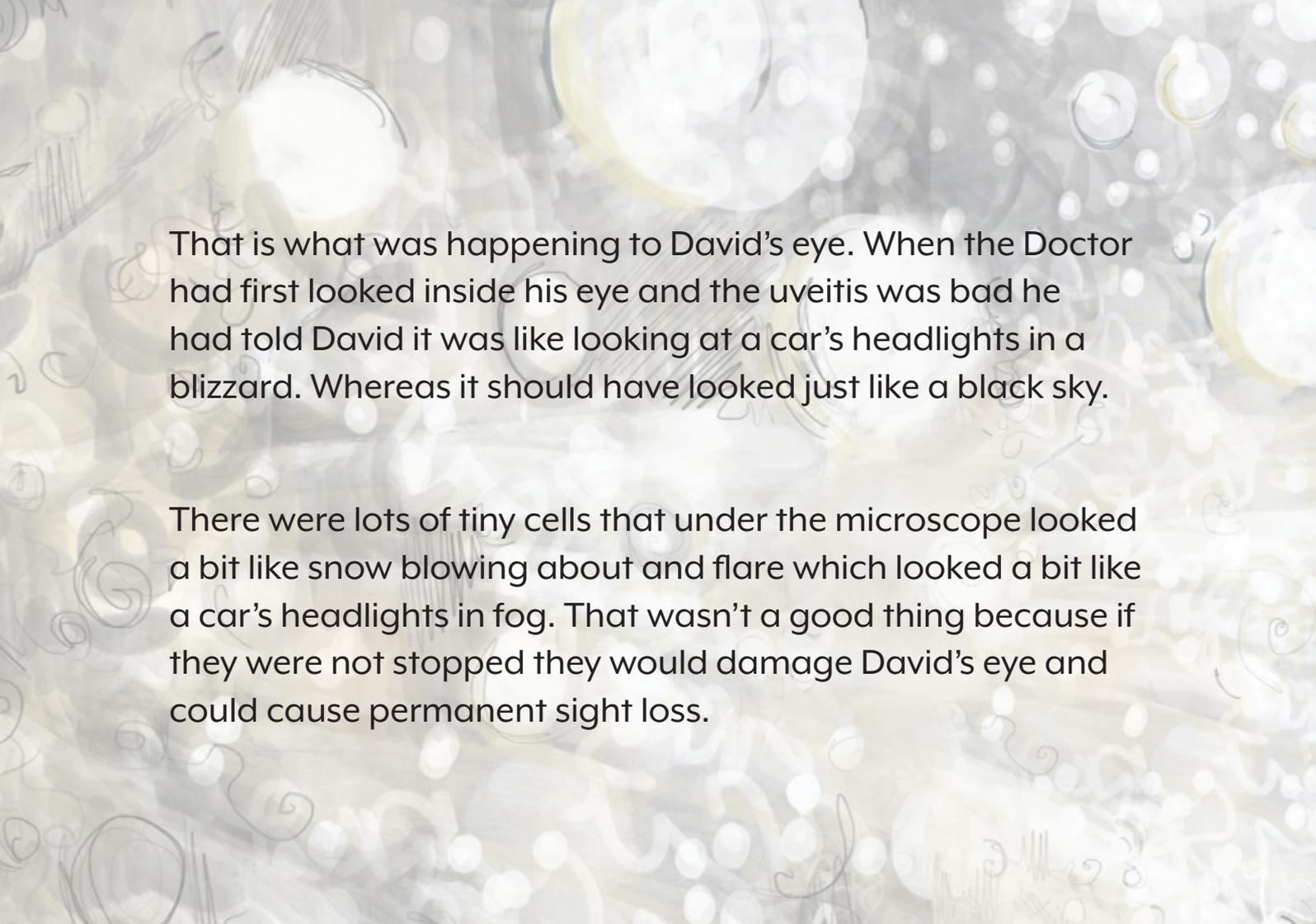
After initially getting red, hot and swollen with a little bit of pus, his leg healed up nicely.

However the inflammation inside his eye wasn't to help heal up anything – it was his defence system going haywire.

David had learnt that the cells of the immune system are excellent destroyers of bacteria and other cells which shouldn't be in the body but when they go into overdrive they can cause havoc.





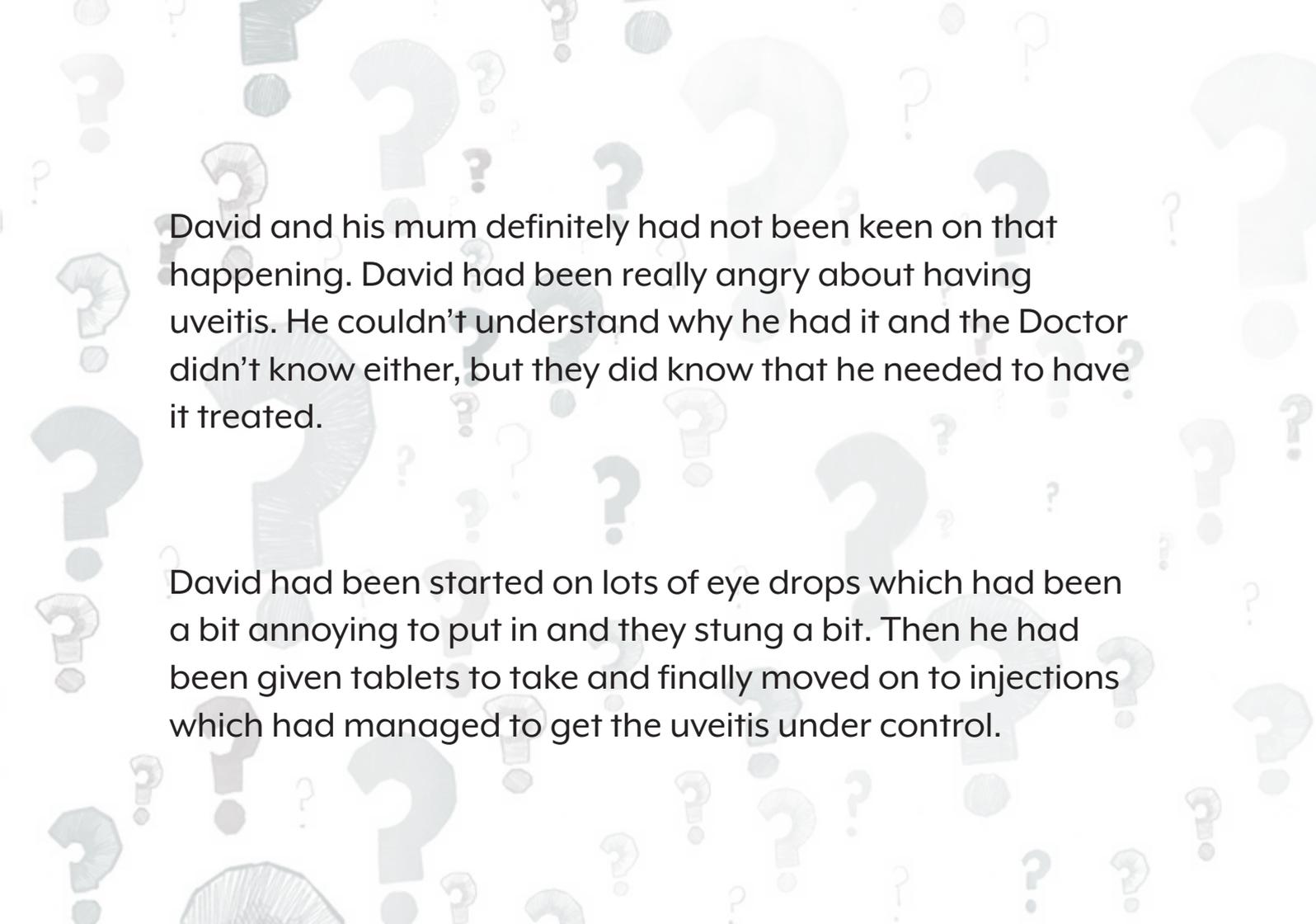


That is what was happening to David's eye. When the Doctor had first looked inside his eye and the uveitis was bad he had told David it was like looking at a car's headlights in a blizzard. Whereas it should have looked just like a black sky.

There were lots of tiny cells that under the microscope looked a bit like snow blowing about and flare which looked a bit like a car's headlights in fog. That wasn't a good thing because if they were not stopped they would damage David's eye and could cause permanent sight loss.





The background of the slide is white and filled with numerous question marks of various sizes and shades of gray, creating a pattern of inquiry.

David and his mum definitely had not been keen on that happening. David had been really angry about having uveitis. He couldn't understand why he had it and the Doctor didn't know either, but they did know that he needed to have it treated.

David had been started on lots of eye drops which had been a bit annoying to put in and they stung a bit. Then he had been given tablets to take and finally moved on to injections which had managed to get the uveitis under control.

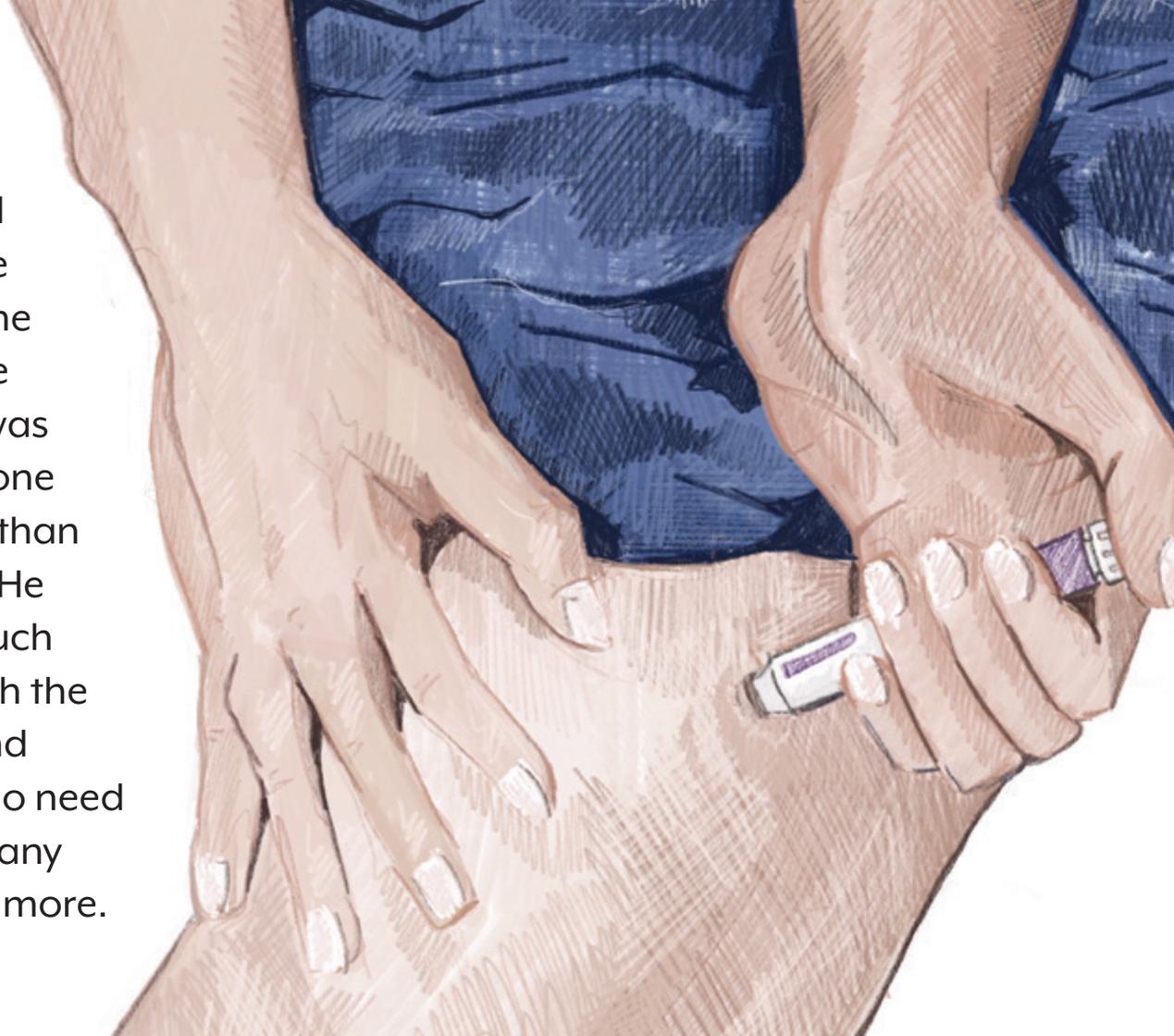
David had to have blood tests to monitor the effects of the medication he was on and he had to visit the hospital for reviews. Recently the appointments were getting less frequent and his uveitis was under control.

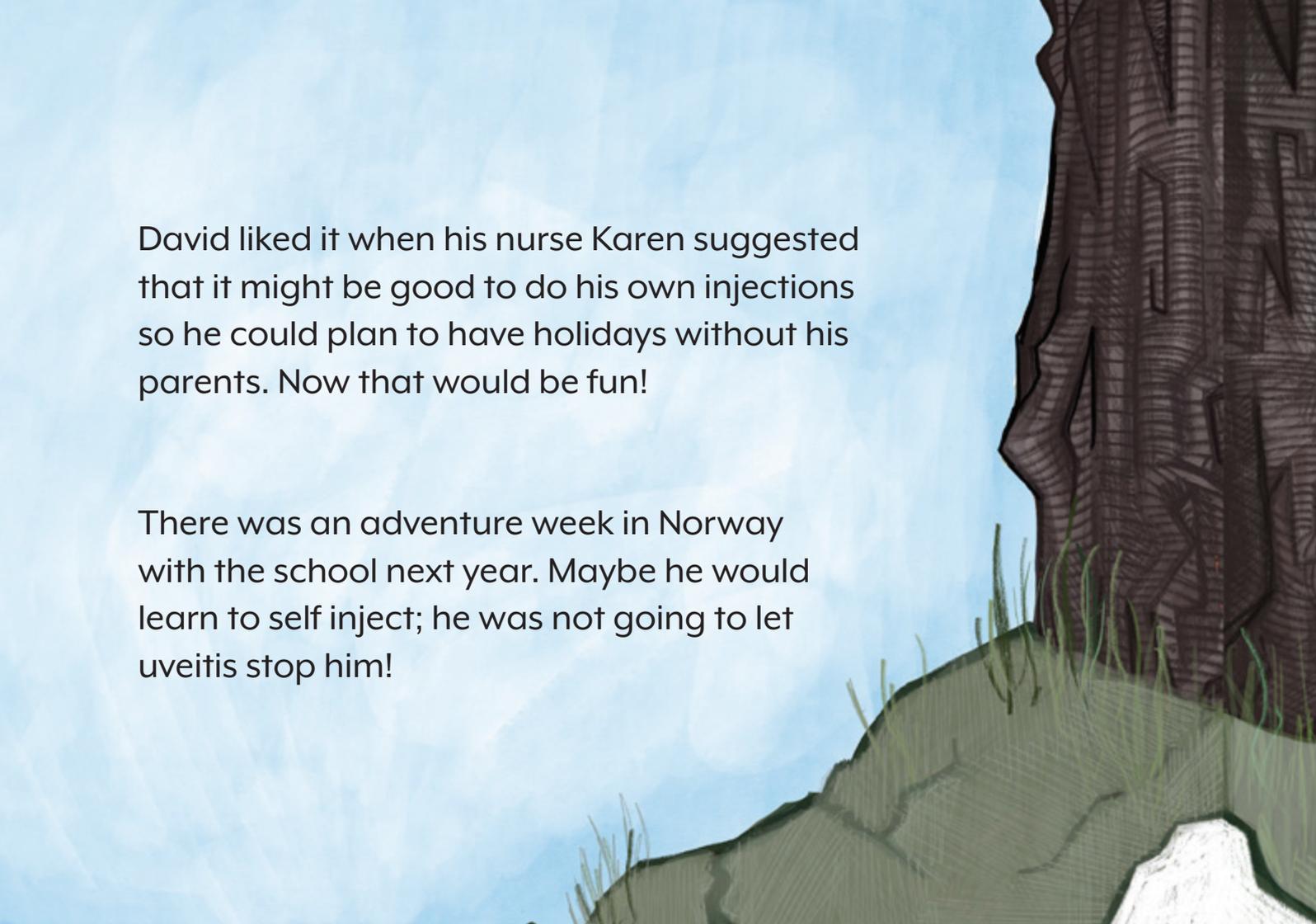


The eye doctor had told him just the other day that he had great vision.

So David thought that having the treatment was worth it. He had an injection every week and was thinking about learning to give it himself.

Once David had got use to having the injection he realised it was over and done with in less than 5 minutes! He became much happier with the injection and there was no need to swallow any tablets any more.





David liked it when his nurse Karen suggested that it might be good to do his own injections so he could plan to have holidays without his parents. Now that would be fun!

There was an adventure week in Norway with the school next year. Maybe he would learn to self inject; he was not going to let uveitis stop him!



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