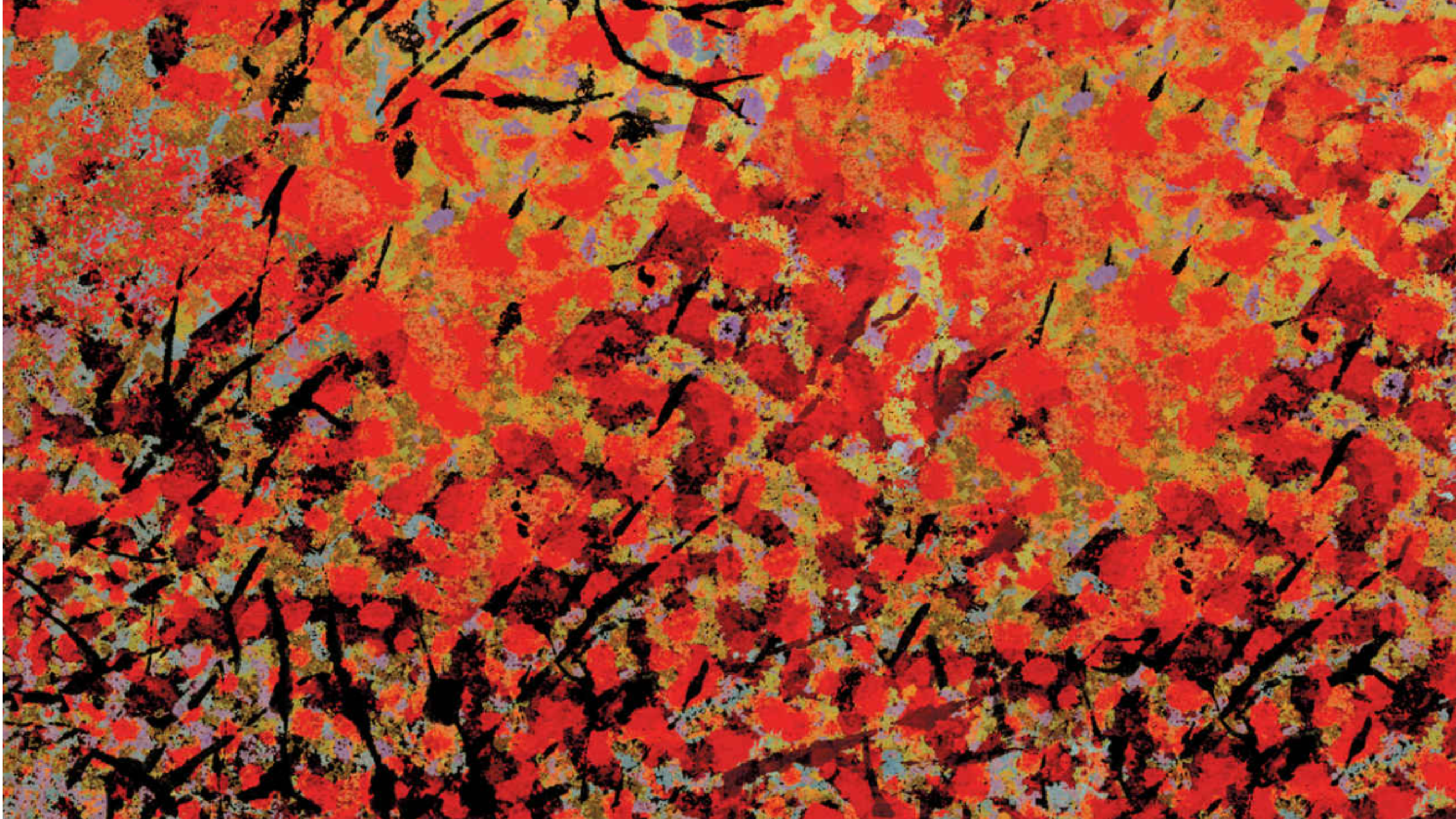




# a house that once was

Julie Fogliano *Illustrated by* Lane Smith







a house  
that  
once  
was



*Written by Julie Fogliano Illustrated by Lane Smith*

 ROARING BROOK PRESS • NEW YORK



Deep in the woods  
is a house  
just a house  
that once was  
but now isn't  
a home.







At the top of a hill  
sits the house  
that is leaning.  
A house that once wasn't  
but now it is peeling.  
A house that was once  
painted blue.



Tiptoe creep  
up the path  
up the path that is hiding.  
A path that once welcomed.  
A path that is winding.  
A path that's now covered in weeds.








At the front of the house  
the house that is waiting  
there's a door that is not really open  
but barely.  
A door that is closed  
but not quite.  
A door that is stuck between coming and going.  
A door that was once painted white.



Off to the side there's a window  
that's watching.  
A window that once opened wide.  
A window that now has no window at all.  
A window that says climb inside.







Inside the house  
it is silent but creaking.  
We're whispering mostly  
but not really speaking.  
We whisper though no one would mind if we didn't.  
The someone who once was  
is someone who isn't.  
The someone who once was  
is gone.





Who was this someone  
who ate beans for dinner  
who sat by this re  
who looked in this mirror?  
Who was this someone  
whose books have been waiting  
whose bed is still made  
whose pictures are fading?







Who was this someone  
who walked down this hallway  
who cooked in this kitchen  
who napped in this chair?  
Who was this someone  
who left without packing  
someone who's gone  
but is still everywhere?







Was it a man with a big beard and glasses

who would look out the window and dream of the sea?





Or a woman who painted all day in the garden

portraits of squirrels while sipping iced tea?

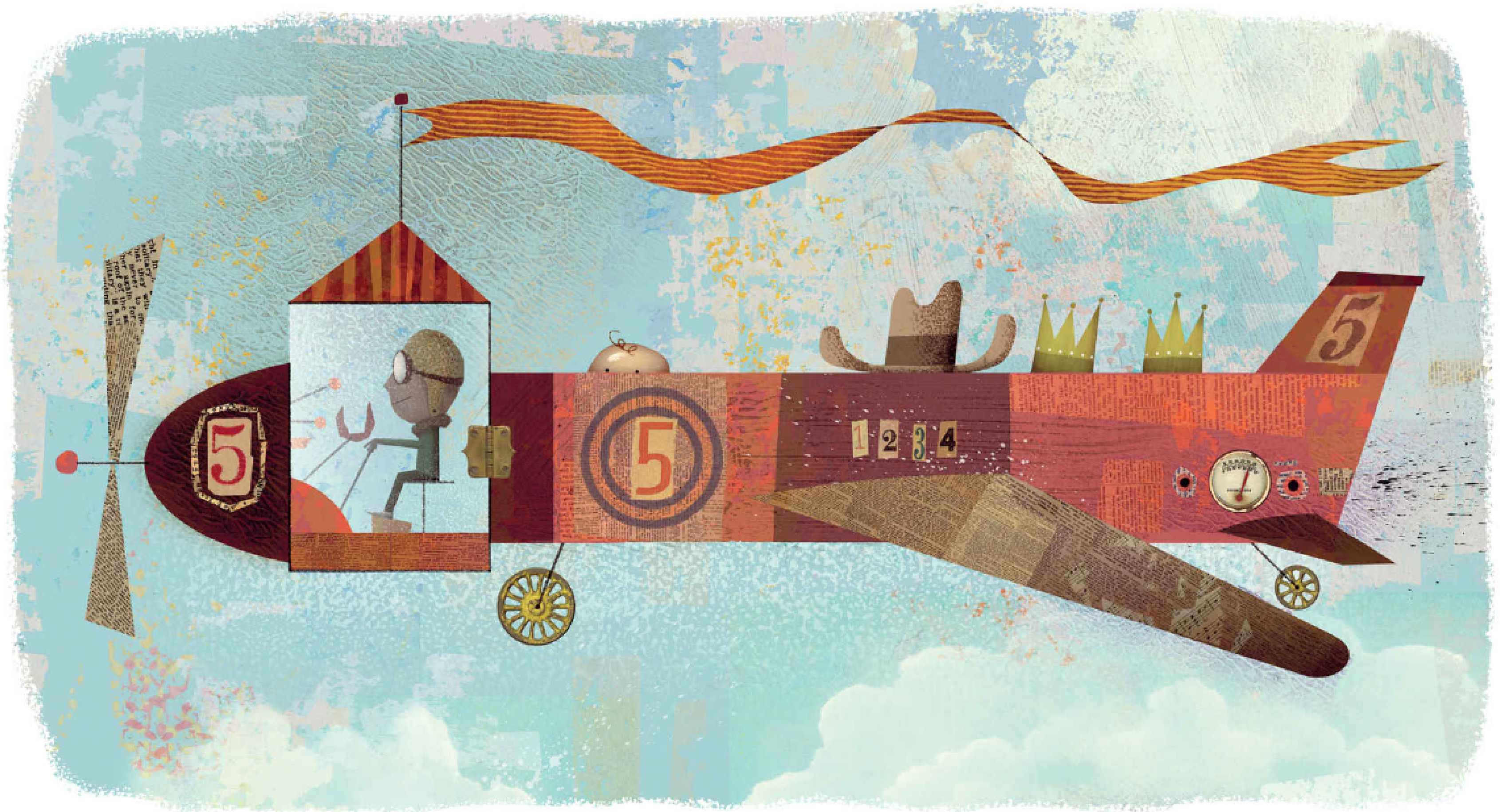




Was there a cat who would sleep by the re

or a girl who would twirl to her records and sing?





A boy who built planes and dreamt nightly of flying?  
A baby? A cowboy? A queen or a king?

Why did they leave here and where were they going?  
Did they run off and not say goodbye?





**Were they shipwrecked and now  
live on an island  
wearing coconut clothes with a pineapple tie?**

**Or maybe they took off and headed to Paris  
where they paint by the river and eat lots of cheese.**





*Or what if they're lost and they're wandering lonely?*

*Maybe they can't find their set of house keys?*





And maybe the house is still waiting there for them.  
Waiting to hear their key turn in the door.



Waiting for voices to bounce down the hallway.  
Waiting for someone to come sweep the floor.



Or maybe it loves to just sit and remember  
stories of someone who we'll never know.  
And maybe it likes it out there in the forest  
with the trees coming in where the roof used to go.







So back through the window  
we climb as we wonder.  
Back down the path that is tangled with thorns.



Back to a house where our dinner is waiting.  
Back to a home that is cozy and warm.







Deep in the woods  
is a house  
just a house  
that once was  
but now isn't  
a home.



for the boys  
who found a house  
and wondered

and for lane  
who knew just what to do  
with wondering

—j.f.



For John and Malain  
—L.S.



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Library of Congress Control Number: 2017955705

eISBN 978-1-250-01560-1

The illustrations in this book were done in two different techniques. The "present day" illustrations were made with India ink, drawn on vellum with a crow quill pen, then peened while wet onto watercolor paper creating a bleeded line effect. The colors were painted in oil over gesso then scanned and added digitally under the ink-line. The "imagined" scenes were painted in oil paints on hot press board and scanned along with paper collage elements that were combined digitally.

First edition, 2018  
Book design by Molly Leach