

Last week, our class took a field trip to the art museum. A guide showed us lots of cool statues and paintings and explained the history of each one. At the end of the tour, she asked us to take out our notebooks and sketch our favorite artwork. Shannon chose an Italian marble sculpture of a man and a wolf that looked so real I expected the two figures to come alive at any minute. Theo started sketching a painting

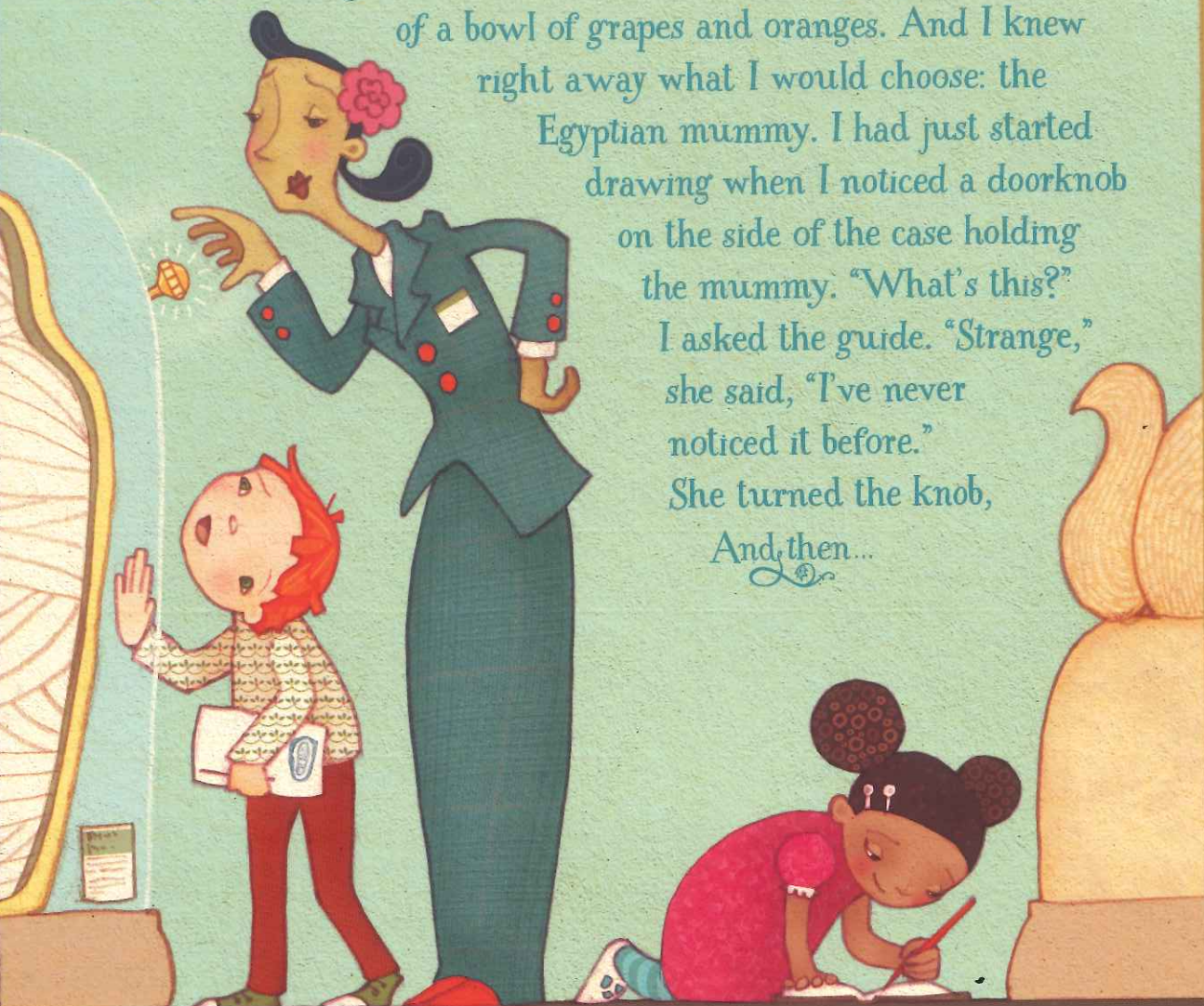
of a bowl of grapes and oranges. And I knew right away what I would choose: the

Egyptian mummy. I had just started drawing when I noticed a doorknob on the side of the case holding the mummy. "What's this?"

I asked the guide. "Strange," she said, "I've never noticed it before."

She turned the knob,

And then...

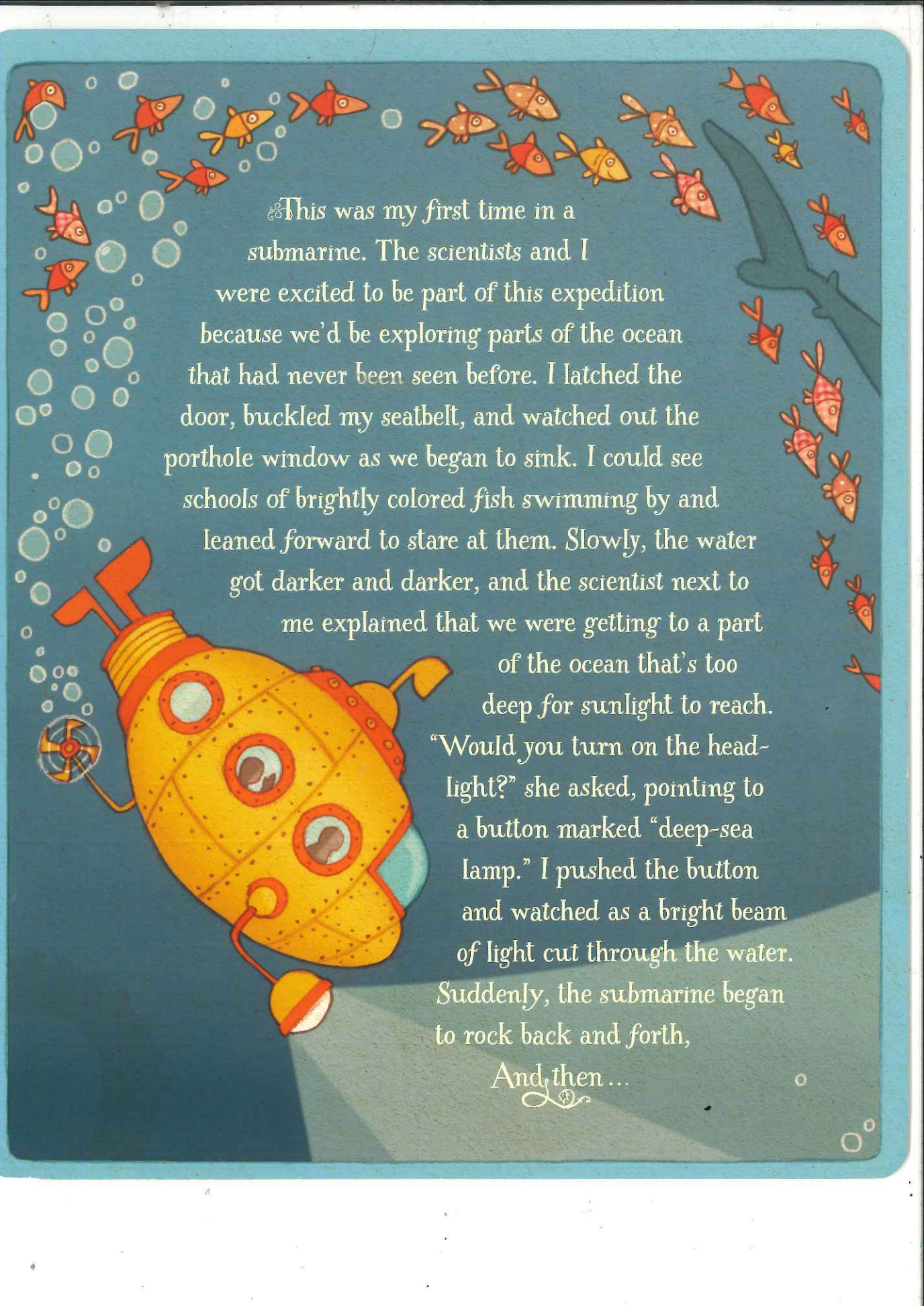


Every day, Alex and I take the same shortcut through the woods. We walk around the woodshed, jump over the stream, and follow the path straight until we reach the old pine tree. From there, Alex takes a left to go home, and I take a right. We must have done it a hundred times. But yesterday, we walked around the woodshed, jumped over the stream, and discovered something new by the old pine tree. It was a door—a very old door, with smooth, worn wood and a polished gold knob. It stood up all on its own, as though a house that had once supported it had simply disappeared.

Alex walked right up to it, grabbed the lion's head door knocker, and rapped three times.

And then...





This was my first time in a submarine. The scientists and I were excited to be part of this expedition because we'd be exploring parts of the ocean that had never been seen before. I latched the door, buckled my seatbelt, and watched out the porthole window as we began to sink. I could see schools of brightly colored fish swimming by and leaned forward to stare at them. Slowly, the water got darker and darker, and the scientist next to me explained that we were getting to a part of the ocean that's too deep for sunlight to reach. "Would you turn on the headlight?" she asked, pointing to a button marked "deep-sea lamp." I pushed the button and watched as a bright beam of light cut through the water. Suddenly, the submarine began to rock back and forth,

And then...

We pitched our tent before sunset, unrolled our sleeping bags, and lit a fire to cook dinner. For dessert, we made s'mores, toasting marshmallows until they were gooey and licking our fingers. The flames burned to embers, and we warmed our hands over them, counting shooting stars. A soft blanket of darkness had settled all around. "You know," Casey whispered, "I heard that if you're in the woods and you hear an owl hoot, you'll turn into an owl yourself." We giggled, but Casey insisted it was true. Later, the four of us were zipped snugly into our sleeping bags, and everyone seemed to be asleep. I was awake, though, listening to the crickets, when I heard a sound through the trees. I perked my ears up. After a moment, it came again.

"Who, whoo, whoo..."
the owl called.

And then...

