

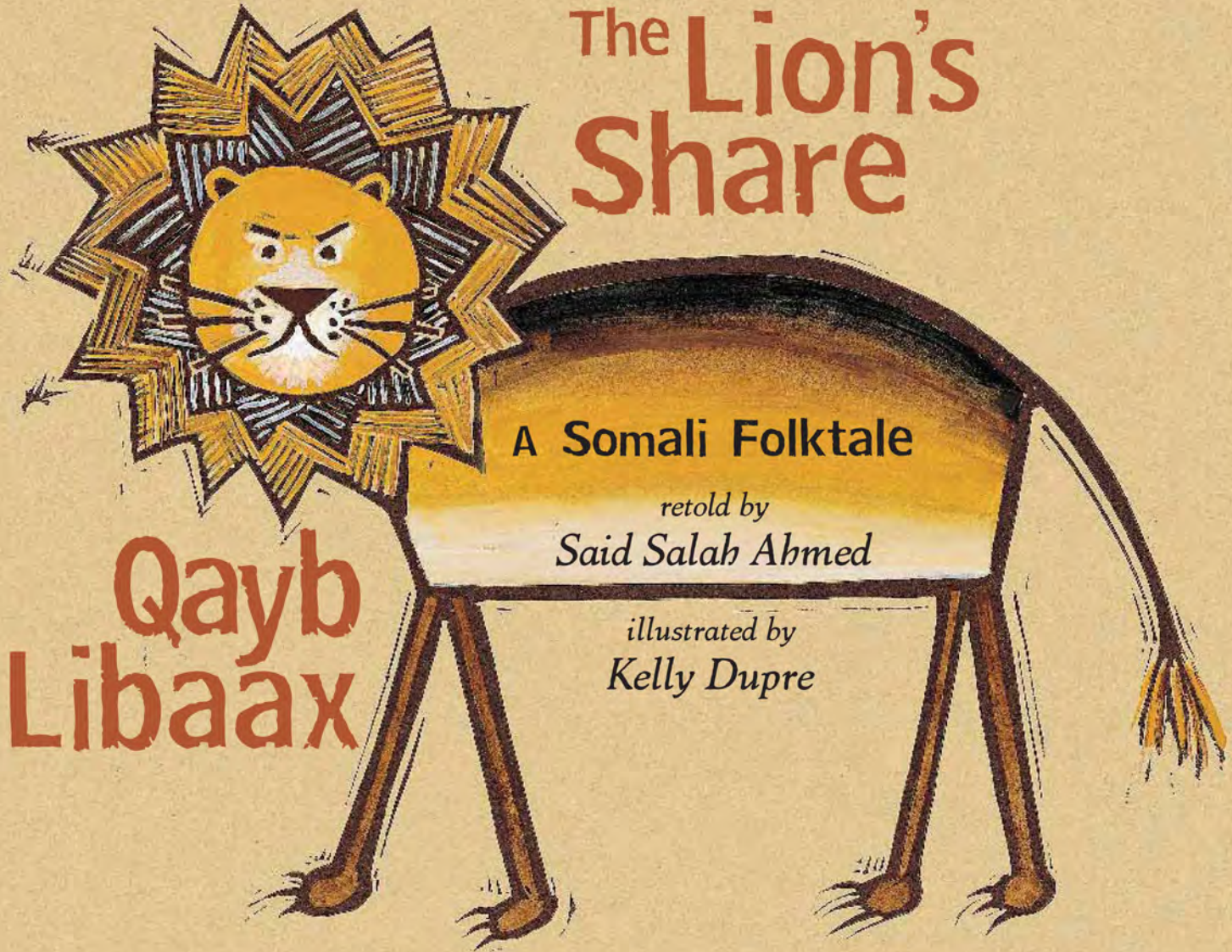
# The Lion's Share

A Somali Folktale

*retold by  
Said Salah Ahmed*

*illustrated by  
Kelly Dupre*

Qayb  
Libaax



The Somali Bilingual Book Project is dedicated to all refugee children and their families.  
Many thanks to those who shared their stories to make this project possible.

*Mashruuca Buuggaga af-Soomaaliga ee labada-af ah, waxa loo hibayey dhamaan carruurta qaxootiga ah oo dhan iyo qoysaskooda. Way ku mahadsan yihiin dadkii sheekooyinkooda noo soo bandhigay ee suurta galiyey birgelinta mashruucan.*

The Lion's Share / *Qayb Libaax*

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*Buugaan waxa ku qoran qaybna dib looma daabaci karo marnaba iyada oo aan ogoaasbo qoraal ah laga helin soo saaraba.*

Minnesota Humanities Commission / Somali Bilingual Book Project

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[www.minnesotahumanities.org](http://www.minnesotahumanities.org)

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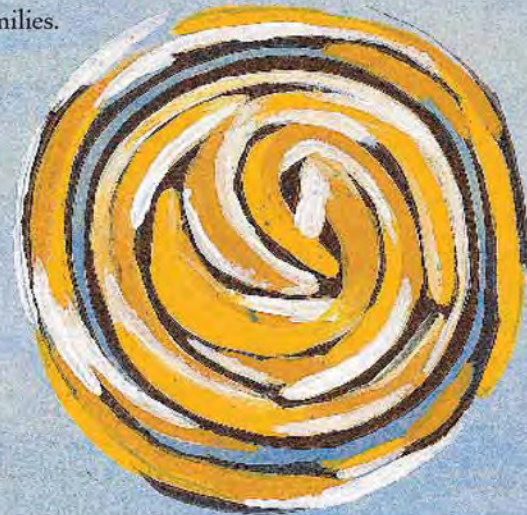
Somali Bilingual Book Project Director: Kathleen Moriarty, Minnesota Humanities Commission

The text is set in Marco Polo and Hoosker Don't.

The illustrations are linoleum block prints painted with acrylic gouache.

The Somali Bilingual Book Project is a component of the Minnesota Humanities Commission's Bilingual and Heritage Language Programs. These programs develop families' English literacy skills while recognizing and supporting the role of families' home language in early literacy development. Reaching out to K-6 teachers, parent educators, early childhood educators, librarians, social service providers, and other literacy professionals, Bilingual and Heritage Language Programs develop materials and training to fill existing gaps in culturally and linguistically appropriate resources. The Somali Bilingual Book Project initially includes publication of four traditional Somali folktales—*The Lion's Share*, *The Travels of Igal Shidad*, *Wii! Waal*, and *Dhegtheer*—in hardcover and paperback editions and a dual-language audio recording of all four stories.

Visit [www.minnesotahumanities.org](http://www.minnesotahumanities.org) to download free online resources for use in educational settings.



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## AUTHOR'S NOTE

The Lion's Share is one of the most widely known animal fables throughout Somalia. It is told for entertainment but also for its wisdom about the misuse of power. At different times in history the folktale was retold in poems, songs, and other prose.

The phrase "the lion's share" can be used positively in everyday Somali language to mean that someone has done more than expected. It can also be used negatively to mean that someone has taken more than a fair share. Different versions of this story and this phrase can be found in many folklore traditions around the world.

## EREYGA QORAAGA

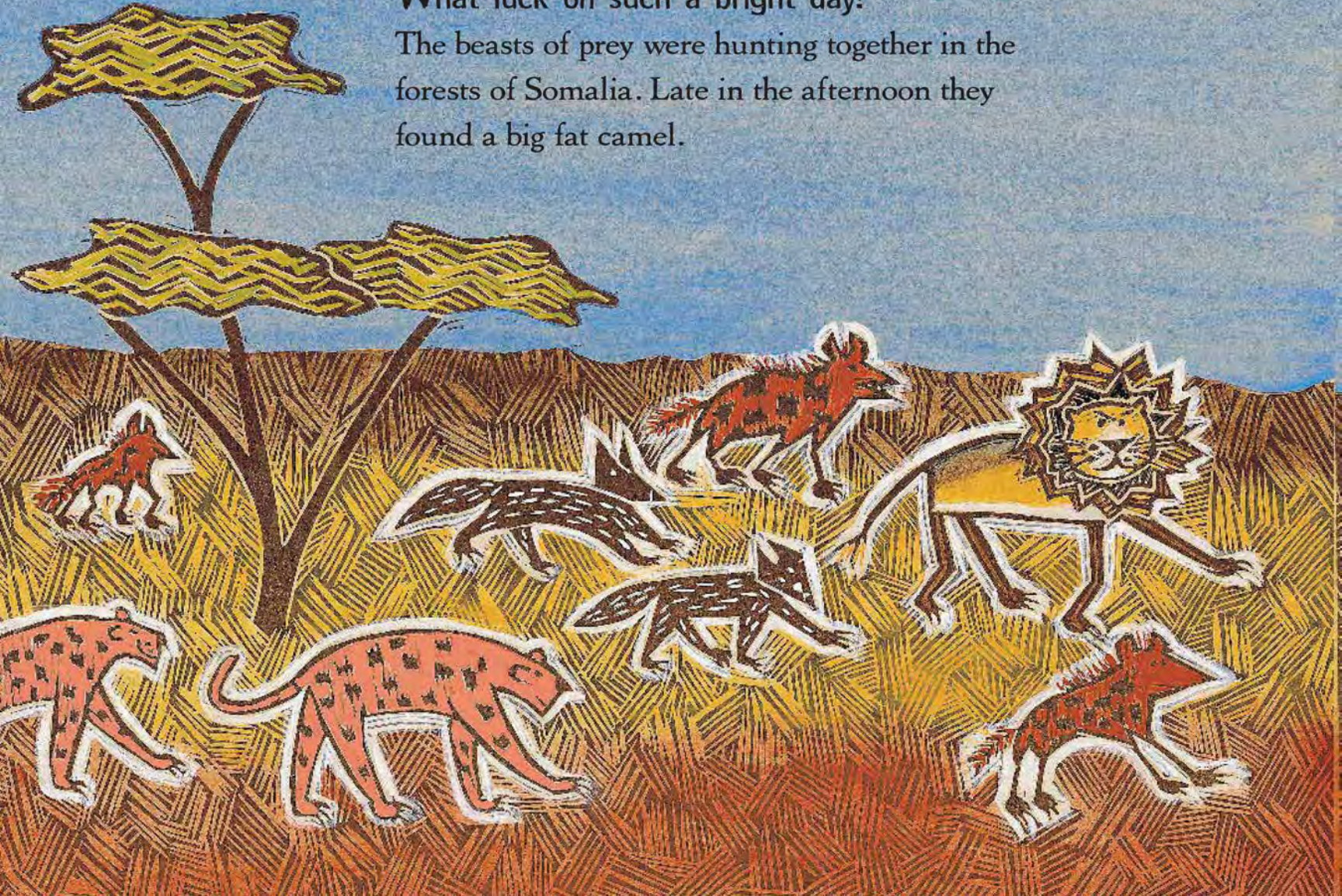
Qayb Libaax waa sheeka xariiro ka mid ah kuwa ugu caansan ee lagaga sheekeysto dhulalka Soomaalidu degto. Sheekadan waxaa looga sheekeeyaa maaweelo iyo weliba murti ahaanba marka la tilmaamayo amar ku taaglayn iyo ku gefka awood xukun. Waqtiyo kala duwan ayaa taariikhda, sheeka xariirada lagu tebiyey gabayo, heeso iyo murti tiraab ah.

Oraahda "qayb libaax" waxaa loo adeegsan karaa si togan ama toosan luqada maalin kasta lagu hadlo ee af-Soomaaliga, iyada oo macna ahaan looga jeedo in qof hawl ka qaatay kaalin weyn ama mid aan laga filayn. Waxa kale oo loo adeegsadaa si taban oo gurac ah, marka loo jeedo in qof iska qaatay qayb uusun xaq u lahayn. Siyaabo kala duwan ayaa sheekada iyo oraahda "qayb libaax" looga helaa sheeka xariirooyinka hidde meelo badan ee goonyaha adduunka.



What luck on such a bright day!

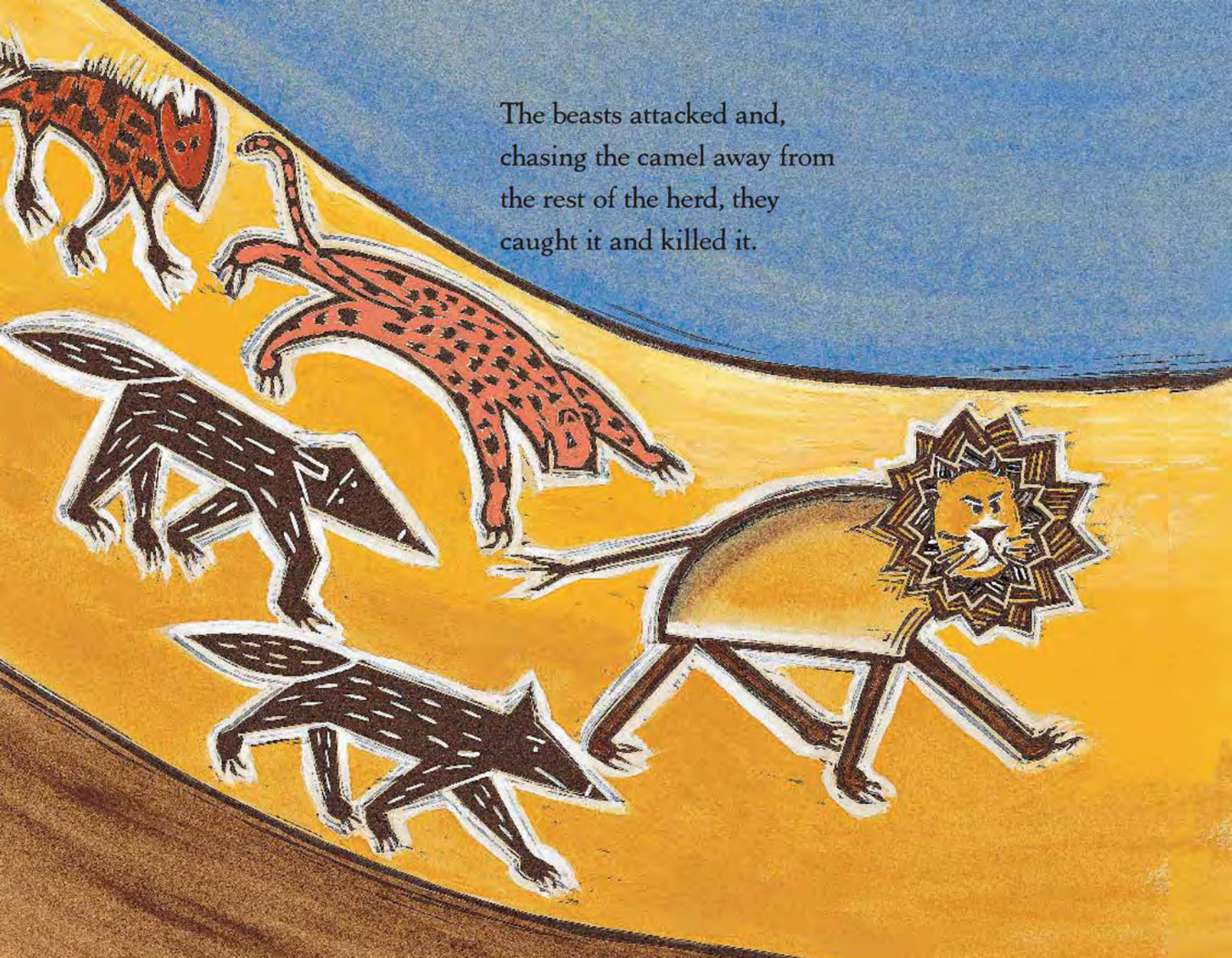
The beasts of prey were hunting together in the forests of Somalia. Late in the afternoon they found a big fat camel.

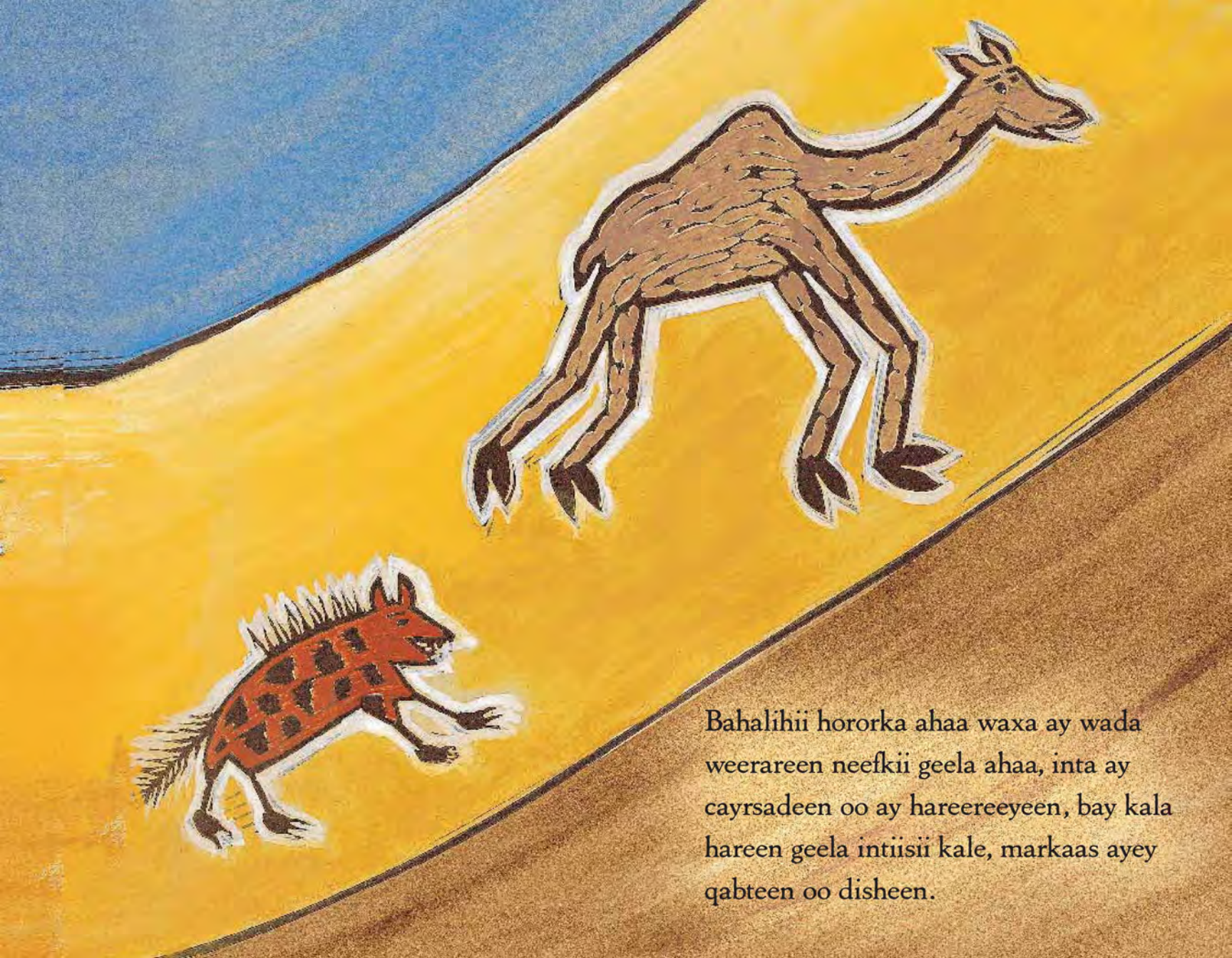




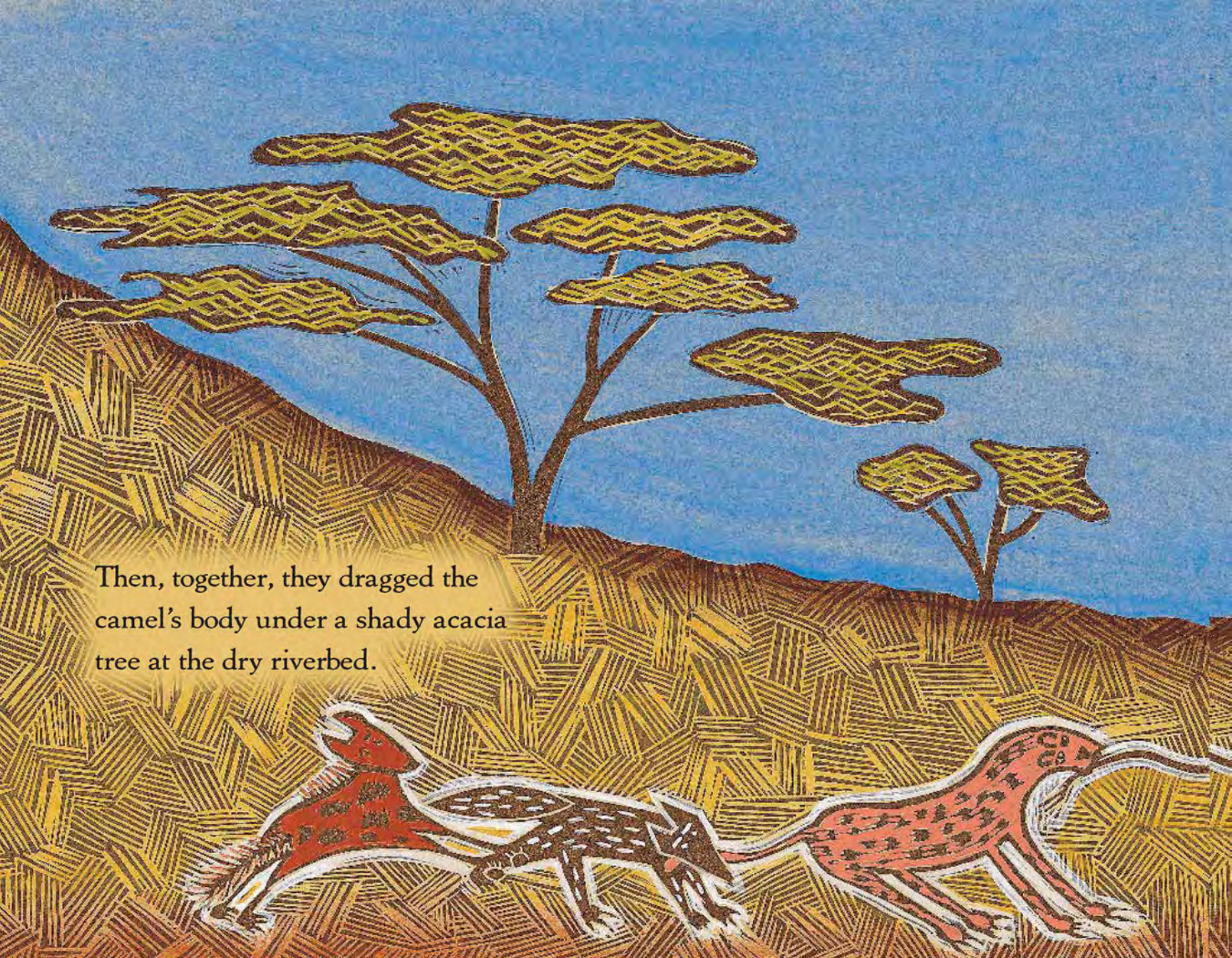
**Maalin cad oo cawo iyo ayaan leh!**  
Waxa ay u ahayd, bahalaha hilib cunka ah oo wadajir uga ugaarsanayey ayda jiqda ah ama duurduurka hawdka Somaaliyeed. Goor galab ah ayey heleen tulud geel ah oo gool ah.

The beasts attacked and,  
chasing the camel away from  
the rest of the herd, they  
caught it and killed it.





Bahalihii hororka ahaa waxa ay wada weerareen neefkii geela ahaa, inta ay cayrsadeen oo ay hareereeyeen, bay kala hareen geela intiisii kale, markaas ayey qabteen oo disheen.



Then, together, they dragged the camel's body under a shady acacia tree at the dry riverbed.





Ka dib, raqdii neefka ayey u  
jiiteen geed qudhac ama  
aqab damal ah oo togga ku  
dhex yaal harkiisii.

Gathering around their kill, each of them waited patiently for a bite. In spite of their hunger, none dared to touch the meat without the lion's permission.

The lion roared, raising his bushy mane to warn the animals not to eat before he gave his approval. All were silent.



Raqdii bay isku soo wareejiyeen oo wada dul  
joogsadeen iyada oo mid kasta oo ka mid  
ahi, si sabir badan ku sugayey in uu  
cantuugo ama rudhmo uga helo  
hiblibka. In kasta oo gaajo haysey,  
bahalna kuma dhiiran in uu  
hiblibka far saaro ama taabto,  
inta libaaxa ogolaansho laga  
helayo. Aarkii baa reemay oo  
bulbusha ama giirka kiciyey  
si uu ugu digo oo u cabsi  
geliyo bahalaha intooda kale.  
Dhamaan waa ay wada  
hogteen iyaga oo aamusan oo  
wada shib ah.



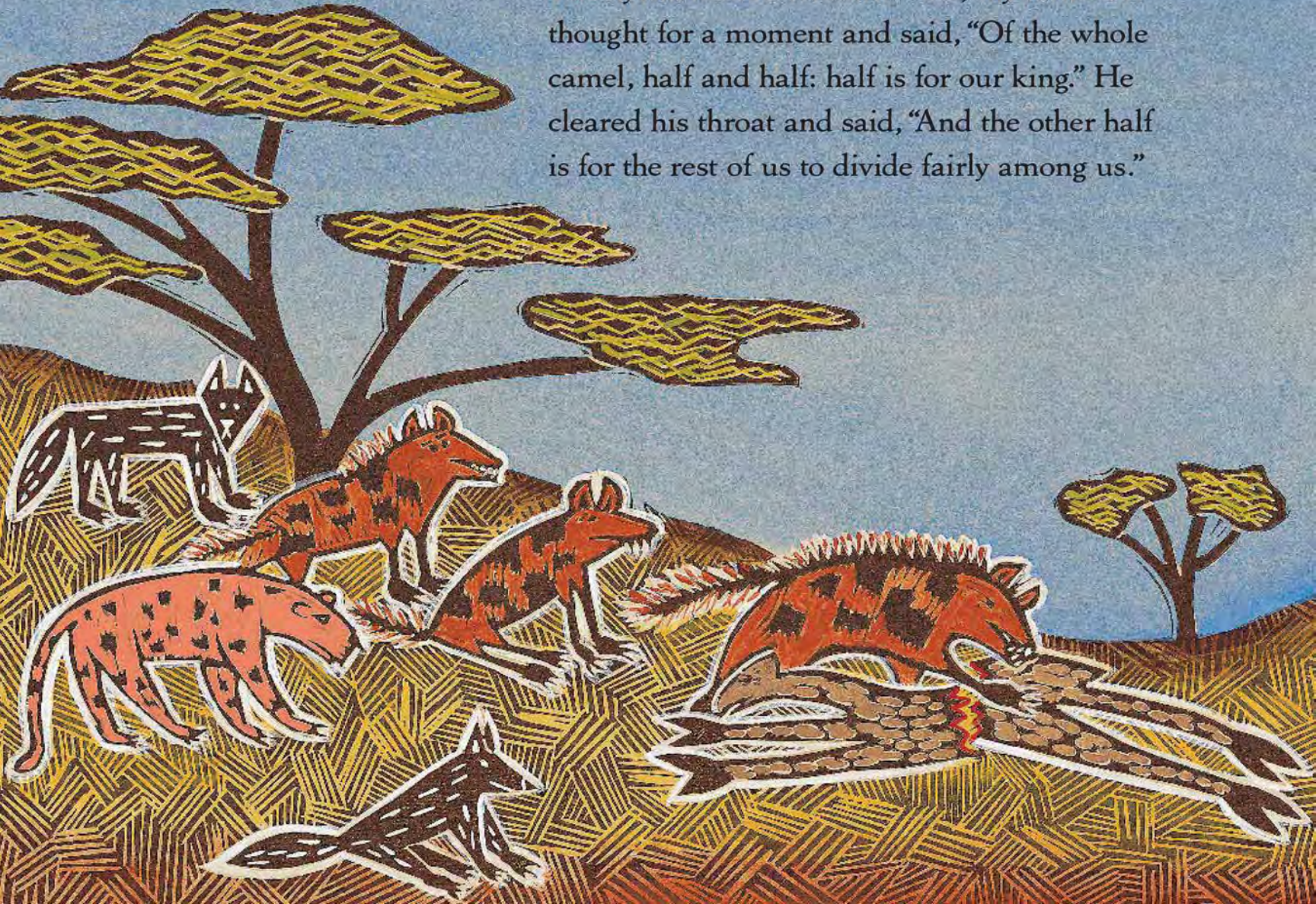
Picking the eldest of the hyenas, the lion ordered,  
“You! Ali with the short leg, you suggest the best  
way of dividing the meat among the clan.”





Libaaxii waxuu u yeeray dhurwaagii waraabayaasha ugu da' weynaa oo ku amray, "Adigu! Cali lug yare ka tali sida ugu wanaagsan oo aad hilibka ugu qaybin lahayd bahda habar dugaag."

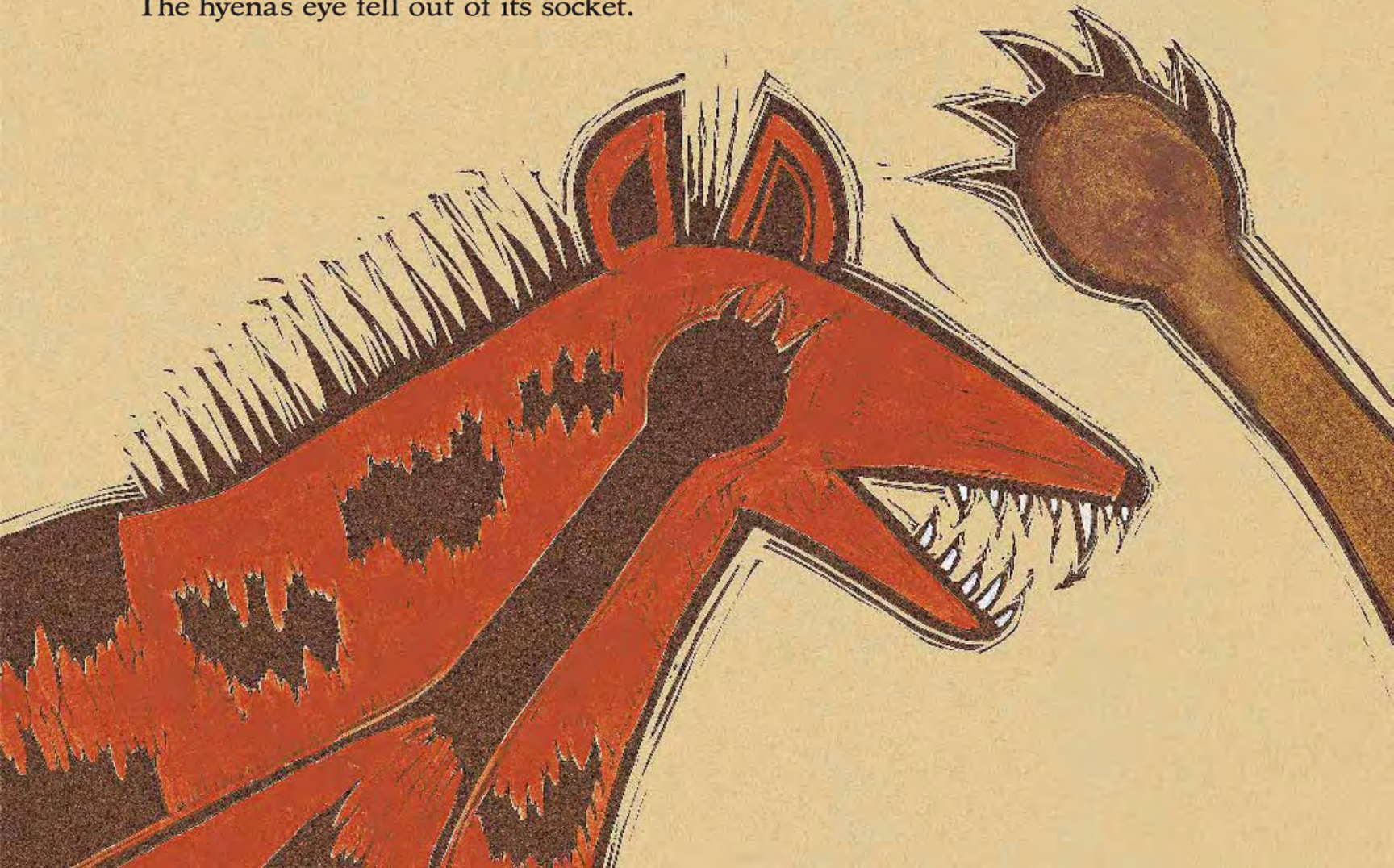
The hyena moved forward. "Yes, my lord." He thought for a moment and said, "Of the whole camel, half and half: half is for our king." He cleared his throat and said, "And the other half is for the rest of us to divide fairly among us."





Dhurwaagii baa hore u soo dhaqaaqay, intuu wax yar fekerey ayuu yiri, “Haahey... boqorkaygiiyow ukuliyow.” Maarkaas ayuu hakaday oo haddana hadalkii sii watay, “Hasha ma bar mise bar: bar boqorkaa leh.” Waa xabeeb tirtay oo yiri, “Barna aan inteena kale si xaq ah u qaybsano.”

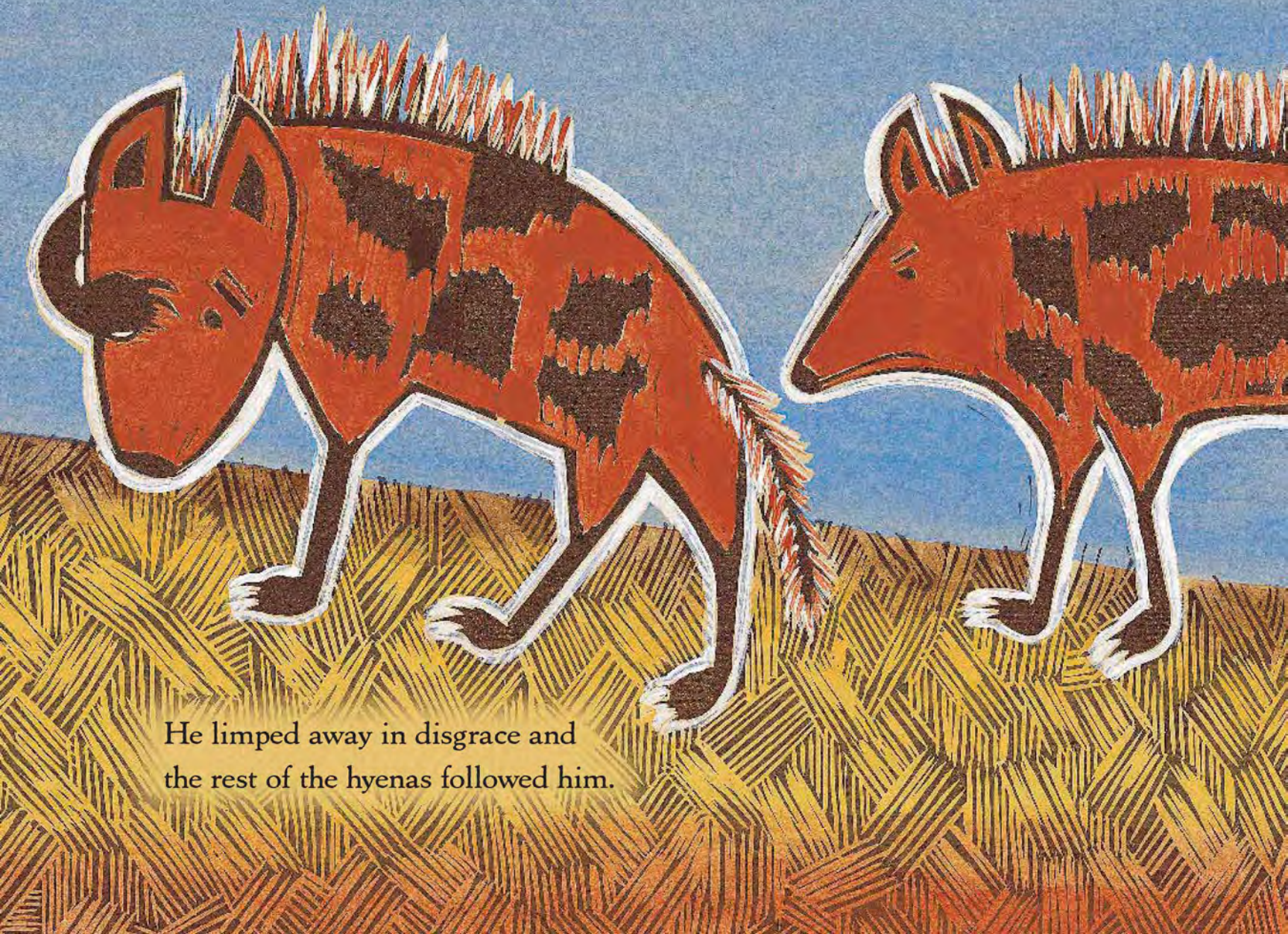
The mighty lion suddenly jumped at  
the old hyena and slapped his face.  
The hyena's eye fell out of its socket.



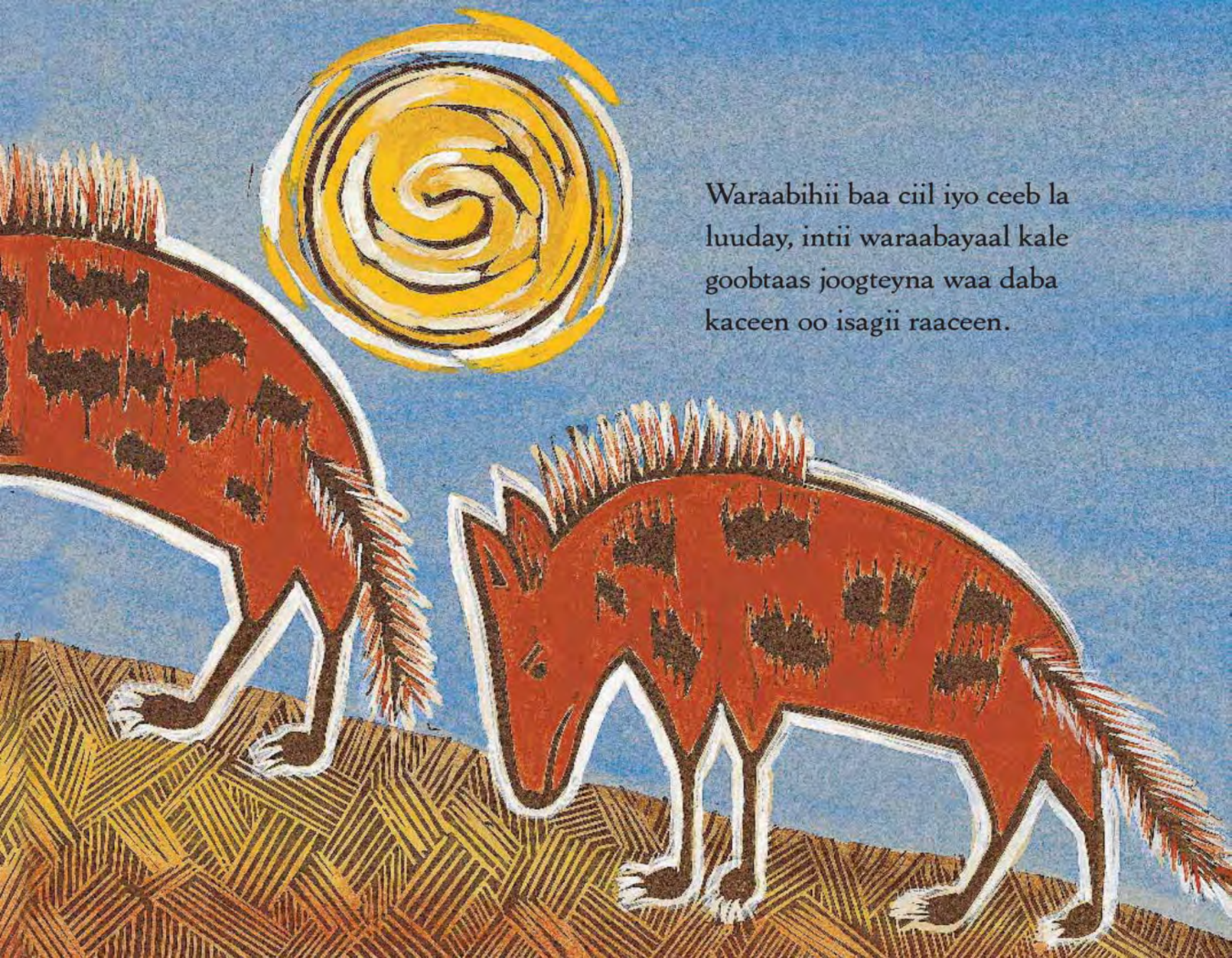




Aarkii laxaadka lahaa ayaa intuu ku abraaray  
dhurwaagii waayeelka ahaa, dhabanaano wejiga kaga  
jiidey. Markaas ayaa ishii goonka ka soo boodey.

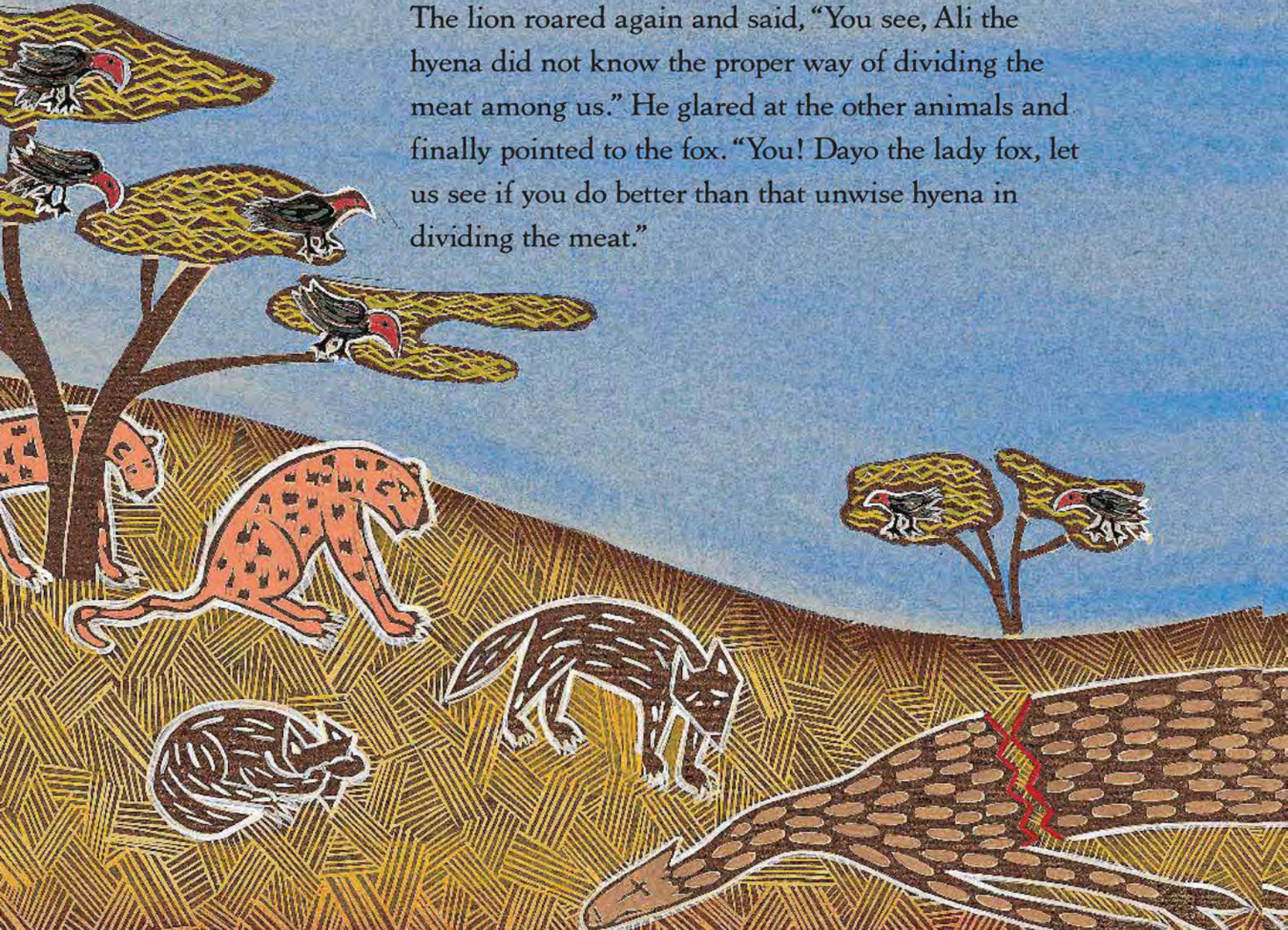


He limped away in disgrace and  
the rest of the hyenas followed him.



Waraabihii baa ciil iyo ceeb la  
luuday, intii waraabayaal kale  
goobtaas joogteyna waa daba  
kaceen oo isagii raaceen.

The lion roared again and said, "You see, Ali the hyena did not know the proper way of dividing the meat among us." He glared at the other animals and finally pointed to the fox. "You! Dayo the lady fox, let us see if you do better than that unwise hyena in dividing the meat."





Libaaxii baa inta uu mar kale reemay ayuu yiri, “Waa u jeedaan waraabihii Cali lug yare in uu kasi waayey sidii ugu wanaagsaneyd oo uu hilibka inoogu qaybin lahaa.” Inta uu indha caddeyey oo galka ka soo saaray ayuu bahalihii isha wada mariyey markaas ayuu ugu danbayntii dawacadii u gacan haadiyey, “Adiga! Dayo marwo dawoco, bal aan ku eegno in aad waraabaha doqonka ah ku dhaantid qaybinta hilibka.”

The fox crawled forward with fear and looked at the rest of the frightened beasts. She bowed before the king and whispered, "Very well, half and half: half of the camel meat will go to our great king. And the other half . . ." she paused as the lion interrupted her with a fierce look. But the fox quickly continued, "Of the other half, quarter and quarter: one quarter is also for our noble king. Of the other quarter, one-eighth and one-eighth: one-eighth is for the beloved king. Of the other eighth, one-sixteenth . . ."



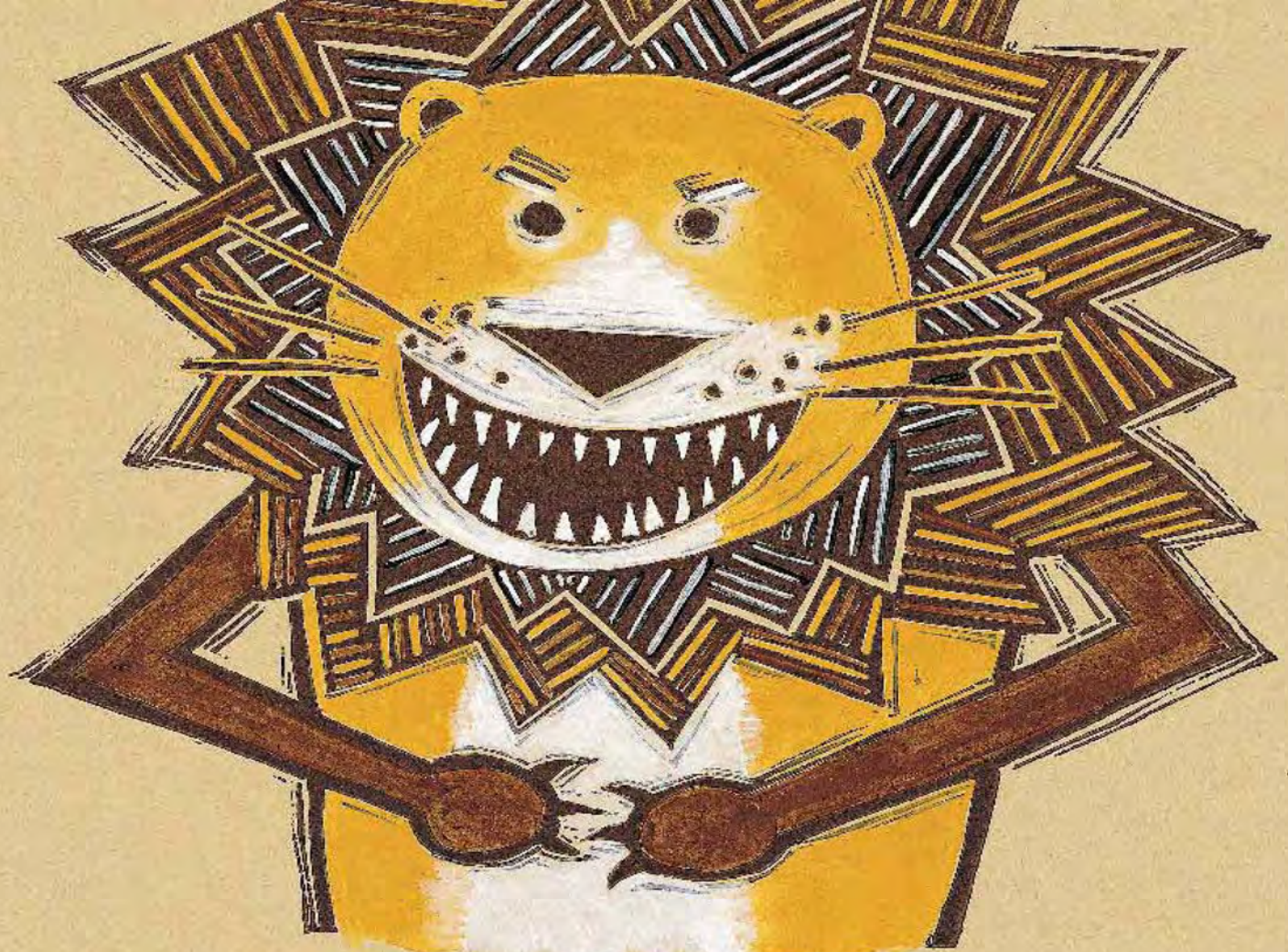


Dawacadii baa iyada oo cabsanaysa soo gurguuratey, oo fiirisay bahalihii oo baqdin la wada gariiraya. Waxay u rukuucday boqorkii oo hoos u tiri, “Waa hagaag, hasha ma bar mise bar: bar libaaxaa leh boqor keena buruudka weyn. Barka kale...” Libaaxii baa si xun u fiiriyey oo hadalkii ka hakiyey. Lakiin dawacadii degdeg bay hadalkii u sii wadatay, “Barka kale, ma waax mise waax: waax boqorkeen mudan baa leh. Waaxda kalena ma rimic, mise rimic: rimic boqorka aynu wada jecel nahay baa iska leh. Sideed daloolka kale, lix iyo toban meelood...”

Before the fox finished her statement, the lion broke out in laughter and all the other animals pretended to join the laughter to please him. "... one-sixteenth is for me too," he declared.







Dawacadii oo an oraahdii dhamayn, ayaa libaaxii  
qosol ka wadhay, markaas baa bahalihii dhamaantood  
qosolkii ku wada dareen iyaga oo isaga ku raali  
gelinaya, "... jab lix iyo tobnaadna anigaa iska leh..."

Then the lion continued, “Wonderful! Lady fox, who taught you this proper way of dividing the meat?” The fox smiled, bowed before the king, and replied, “Your majesty, I have learned my lesson from the eye that is hanging from the hyena’s cheek.”

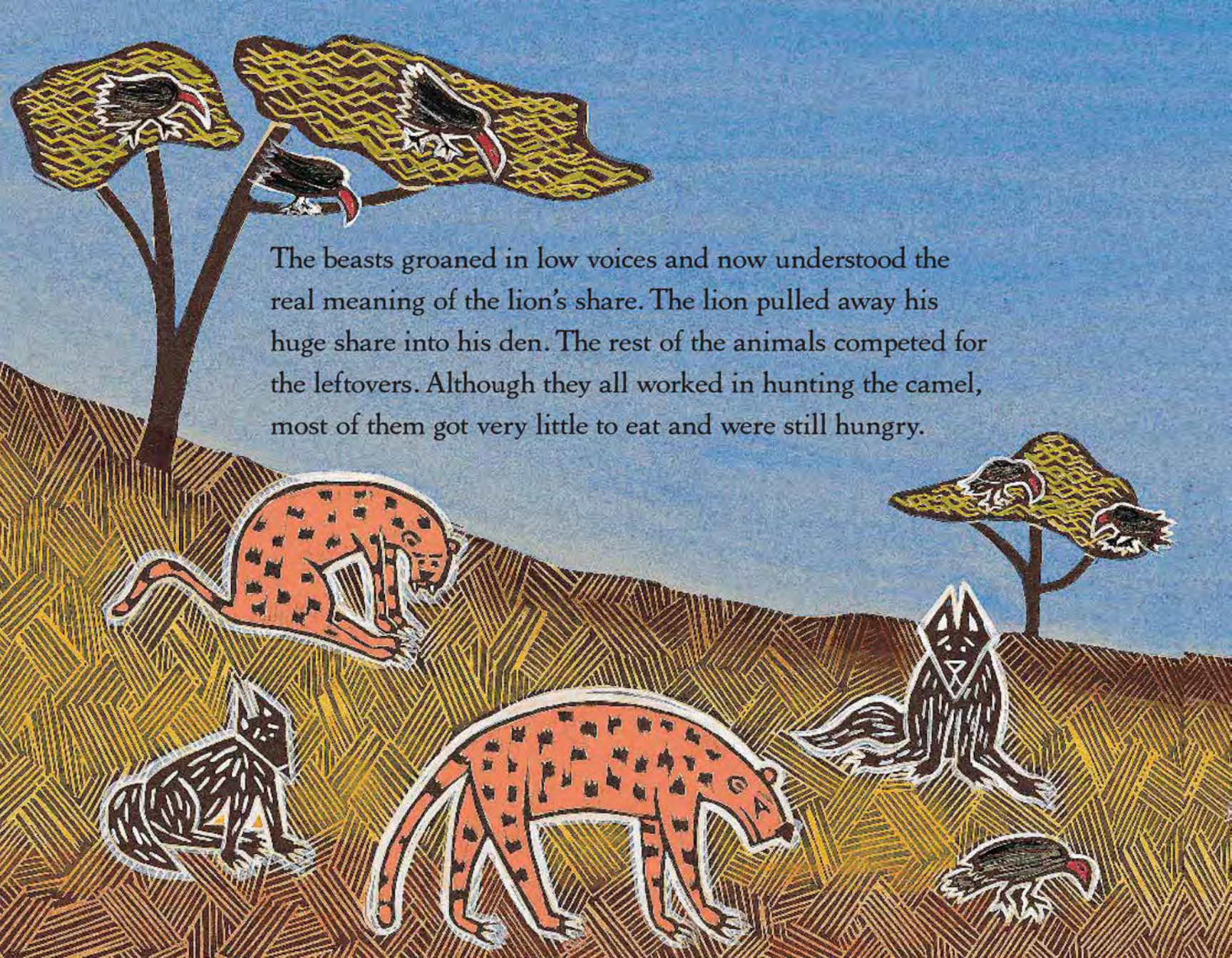




Libaaxii oo hadalkii

sii wata ayaa yiri, “Waa  
amakaag iyo layaab eh! Yaa  
dayooy adiga qaybinta hilibka  
sidaa haboon kuu baray?”

Dawacadii inta ay ilka cadaysay,  
ayey boqorkii u rukuucday oo ku  
jawaabtey, “Boqorow, waxaan ku  
waana qaatay oo casharkaa ka bartay  
isha dhafoorka Cali ka laalaada.”



The beasts groaned in low voices and now understood the real meaning of the lion's share. The lion pulled away his huge share into his den. The rest of the animals competed for the leftovers. Although they all worked in hunting the camel, most of them got very little to eat and were still hungry.



Dhamaan habar dugaag iyaga oo wada guuxay oo hoos u wada gurmamay waxay garteen waxa dhab ahaan qayb libaax macnaheedu yahay. Libaaxii baa godkiisa u jitey tuludii geela qaybtii weynayd ee uu ka qaatay. Inkasta oo ay bahaladaasu ka wada hawl galeen ugaarsigii neefka geela ahaa, haddana bahalaha intoodii kale waa ka qadeen oo waxa ay kala boobeen feentii lafaha iyo hambadii libaaxa ka haray.

They left with grief and spread out in the forest, chanting:  
“The lion’s share is not fair, the lion’s share is not fair.”





Bahalihii waxa ay la luudeen ciil iyo urugo oo ku kala baaheen aydii, iyaga oo ku heesaya: “Qayb libaax garanoo, gar iyo daw ma aha, qayb libaax garanoo, gar iyo daw ma aha.”

## THE SOMALI BILINGUAL BOOK PROJECT

reflects the Minnesota Humanities Commission's commitment to promote and preserve heritage languages and increase English literacy skills of refugee and immigrant families. This collaborative project initially includes publication of four bilingual children's books for shared reading and a dual-language audio recording. A portion of proceeds from sales of the books will support ongoing projects of the Minnesota Humanities Commission's Bilingual and Heritage Language Programs.

**SAID SALAH AHMED** was born in Somalia. He is an established poet, storyteller, playwright, filmmaker, and writer. A lifetime educator, he is currently a bilingual teacher and resides with his family in Minneapolis, Minnesota. This is his first children's book written in English.

**KELLY DUPRE** is an artist and writer. The natural environment and the art of indigenous cultures are her greatest influences. A former special education teacher, she lives in Grand Marais, Minnesota, with her husband. She is the author/illustrator of *The Raven's Gift, A True Story from Greenland*.

