

Noi lived with his dad and six cats by the sea.
It was autumn and Grandma had come to visit.





Storms were coming. Noi thought of the whale he had once saved from a storm; how he and his dad had helped it back to its family in the sea.

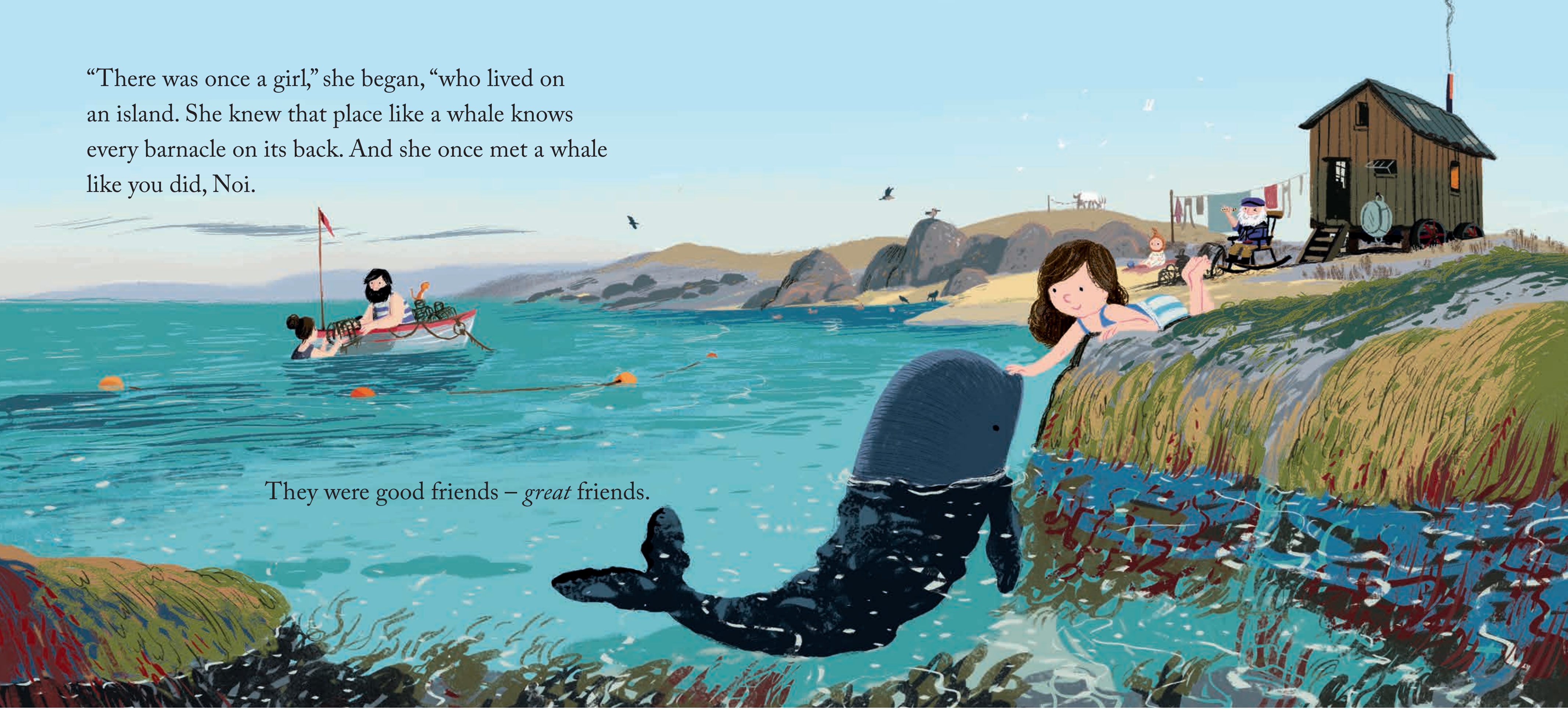
That night the wind howled and Noi could not sleep.



“Let me tell you a story . . .” said Grandma.

“There was once a girl,” she began, “who lived on an island. She knew that place like a whale knows every barnacle on its back. And she once met a whale like you did, Noi.

They were good friends – *great* friends.



Her grandpa had made her a wooden flute which she would play to the whale, and the whale would sing back.



The whale came every summer.



But then, one year . . . it didn't."

"What did the girl do, Grandma?" Noi asked.

