


## CHAPTER 1

**M**arvin ducked and weaved along the overgrown track, dodging the giant palm leaves.

'Come on, Grandad!' Marvin called, as he hurried deeper into the botanical gardens.

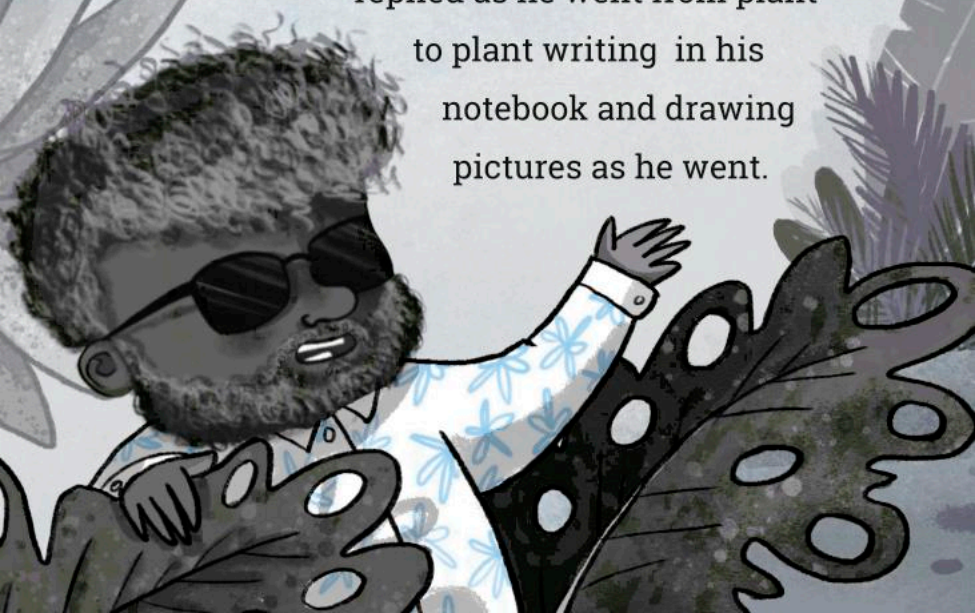




'Give me a second,' Grandad said, moving a huge leaf out of his way so that he could see Marvin. 'Are you sure you know where we're going?'

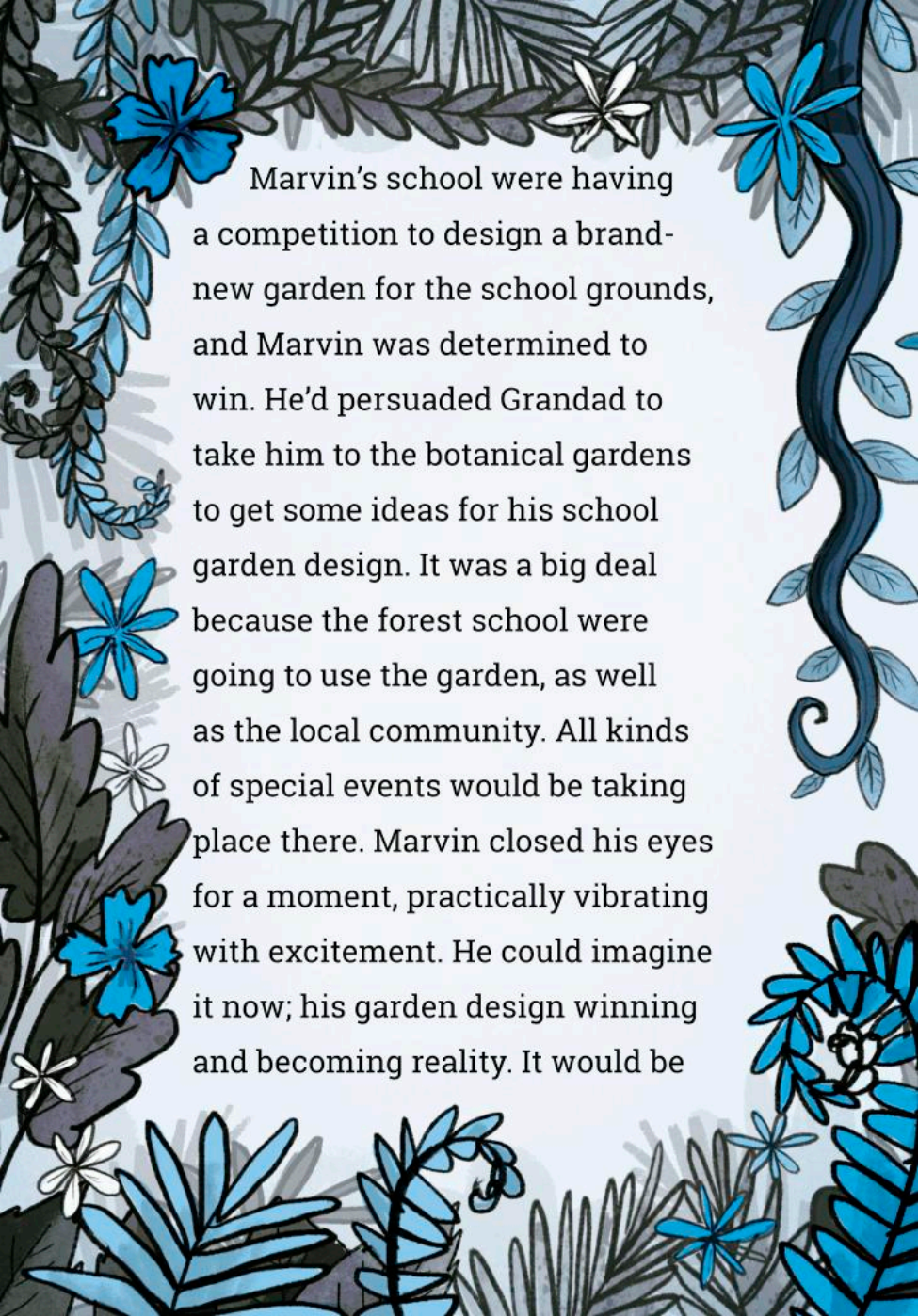
The botanical gardens were heaving with stunning plants and flowers. The giant green palm leaves towered over Marvin and Grandad and made it hard to see exactly where they were heading.

'Yep, it's right up ahead, I think.' Marvin replied as he went from plant to plant writing in his notebook and drawing pictures as he went.



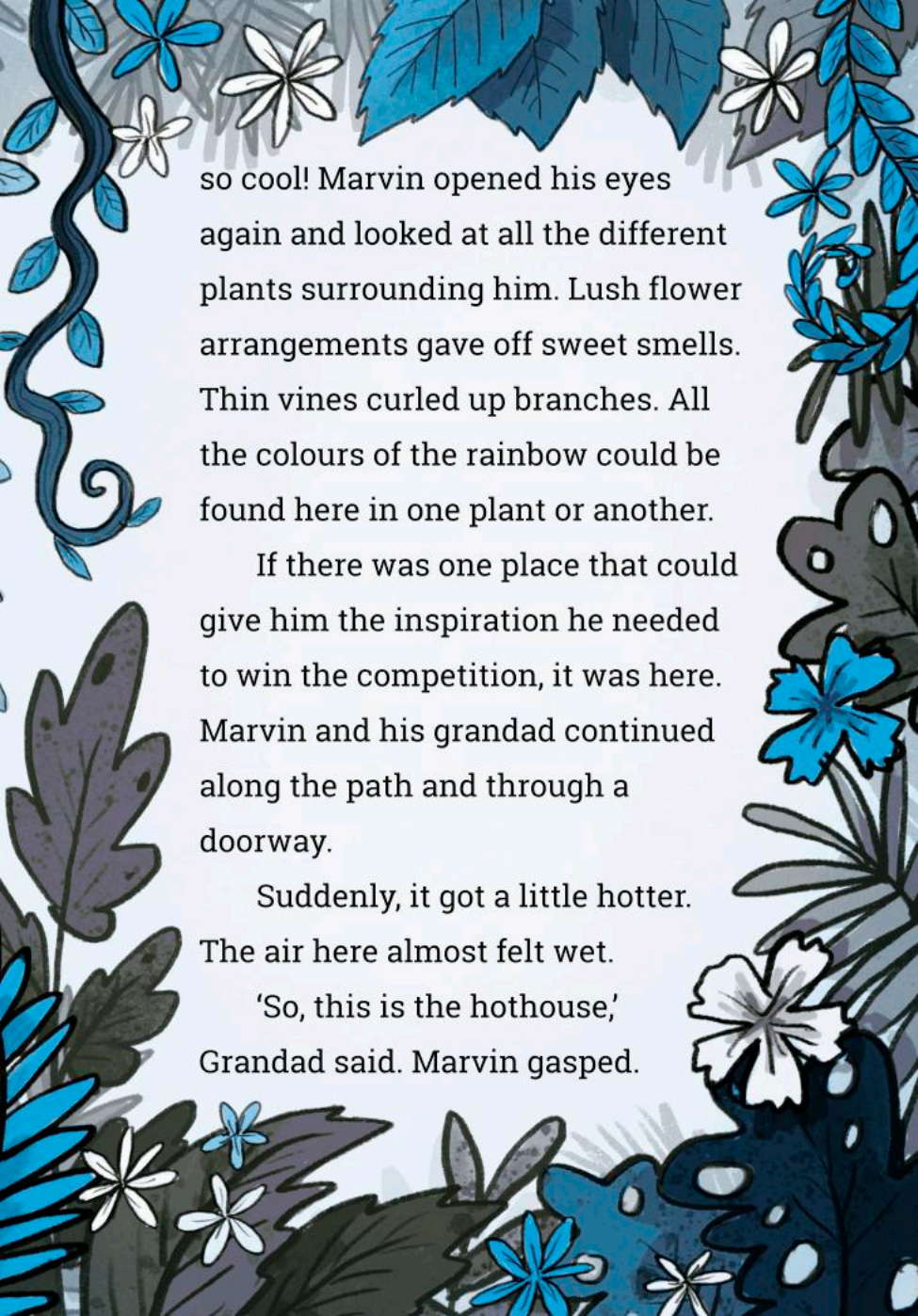






Marvin's school were having a competition to design a brand-new garden for the school grounds, and Marvin was determined to win. He'd persuaded Grandad to take him to the botanical gardens to get some ideas for his school garden design. It was a big deal because the forest school were going to use the garden, as well as the local community. All kinds of special events would be taking place there. Marvin closed his eyes for a moment, practically vibrating with excitement. He could imagine it now; his garden design winning and becoming reality. It would be





so cool! Marvin opened his eyes again and looked at all the different plants surrounding him. Lush flower arrangements gave off sweet smells. Thin vines curled up branches. All the colours of the rainbow could be found here in one plant or another.

If there was one place that could give him the inspiration he needed to win the competition, it was here. Marvin and his grandad continued along the path and through a doorway.

Suddenly, it got a little hotter. The air here almost felt wet.

'So, this is the hothouse,' Grandad said. Marvin gasped.

Marvin had read about the different areas within the botanical gardens, and he was looking forward to visiting the hothouse most of all. It was full of tropical plants that ordinarily only grew in hot places around the world.





Big Venus flytraps with large yawning mouths stood frighteningly still, as though waiting to pounce on their next meal. Huge ferns with long flapping leaves swayed gently from side to side. Thick green vines had woven themselves across the floor reaching every corner of the hothouse.

