

Up Toward the Light

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR

GRANGER SMITH

ILLUSTRATED BY
LAURA WATKINS



**Tommy
NELSON**

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Up Toward the Light

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For River. You taught me
how to reach for the light.



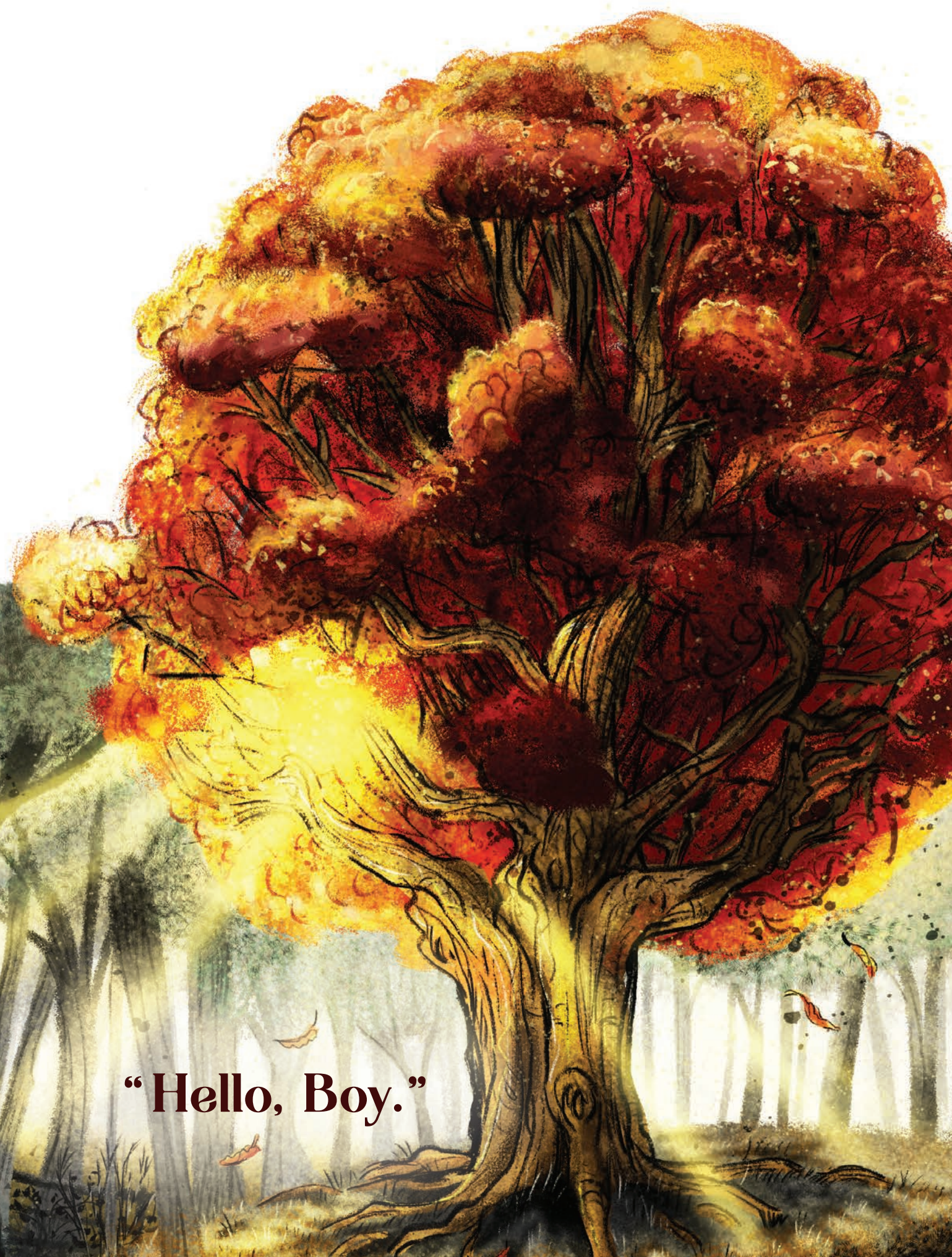
Once there was a boy.

The boy and his dog searched all the forest for one tree. A special tree.

They walked behind the barn, hiked across the hayfield, folded over the fence, scraped through the cedar thicket, plodded up the bank . . . and there it was.



“Hi, Tree.”



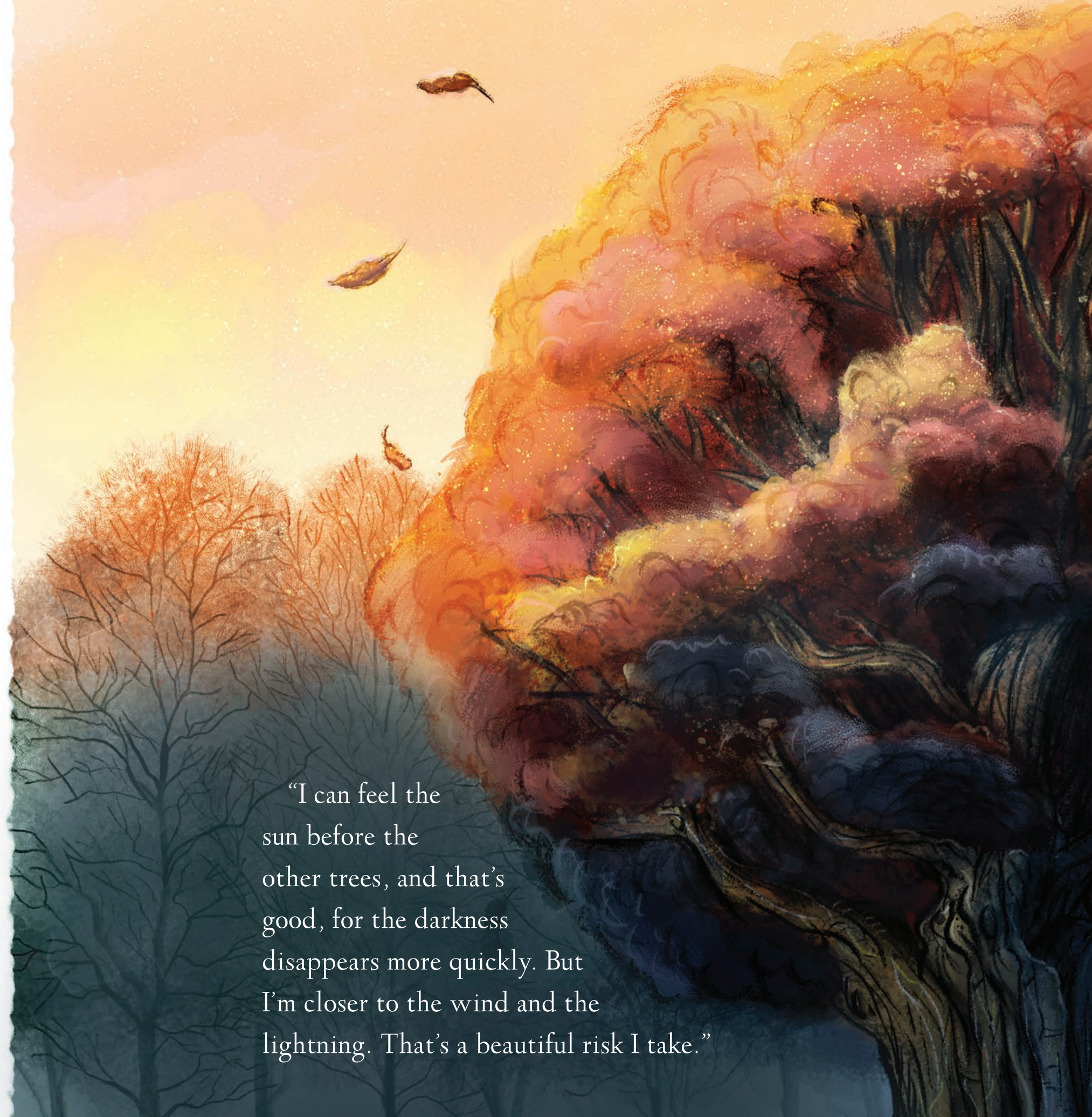
“Hello, Boy.”

“Grandpa said you’re a special tree.
Is that true?” the boy asked.

“I don’t feel more
special than other trees.”



The boy tilted his head back.
“You’re taller than the others in the forest.
What’s it like way up there?”



“I can feel the sun before the other trees, and that’s good, for the darkness disappears more quickly. But I’m closer to the wind and the lightning. That’s a beautiful risk I take.”



“I’ve seen trees much larger than you in other forests,” the boy said.

“I’ve only seen this forest. Larger trees in other forests don’t matter to me at all,” replied the tree.