

Opening extract from

Varmints

Written by

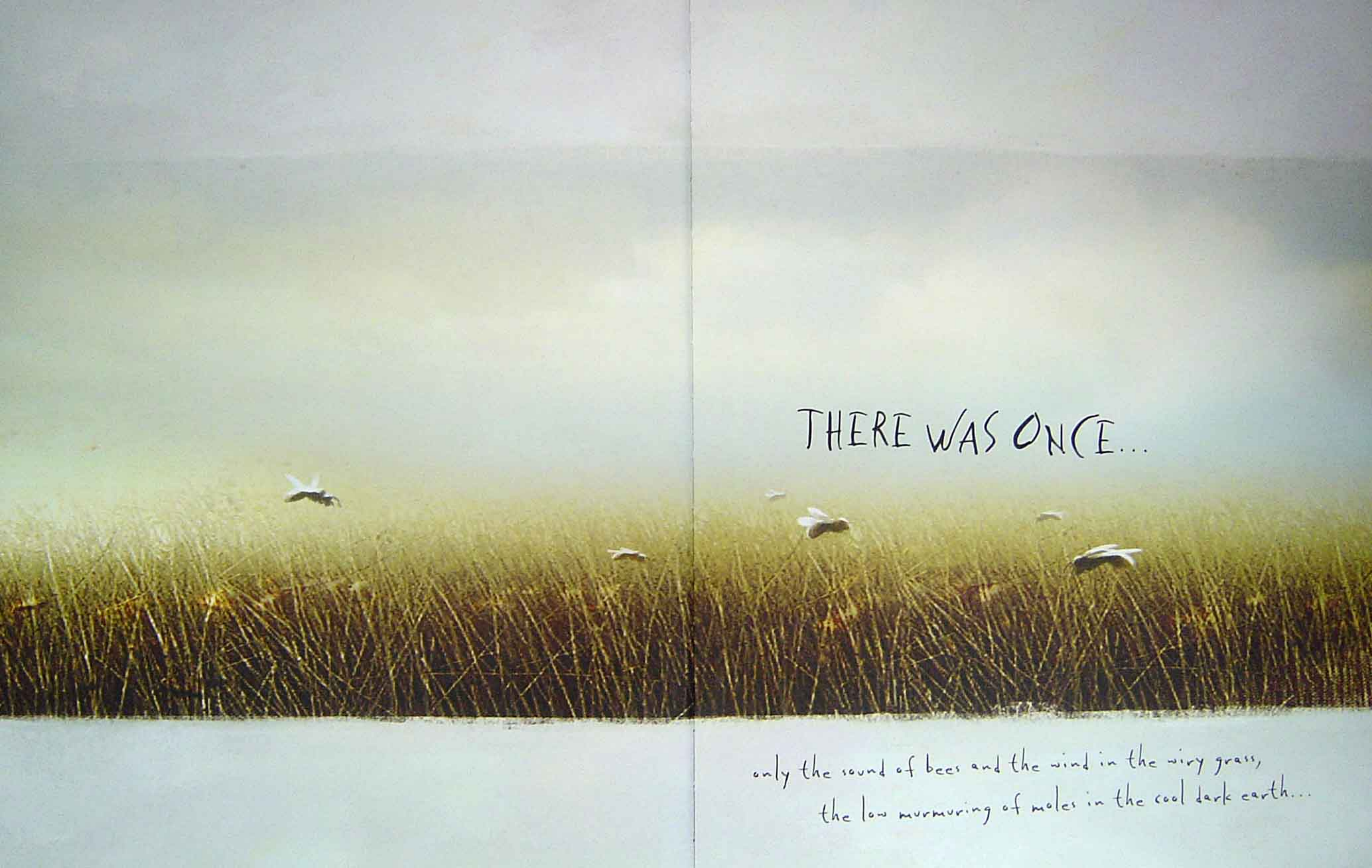
**Helen Ward & Marc
Craste**

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The image shows a two-page spread of a book. The background is a photograph of a misty or foggy landscape. In the foreground, there is a dense field of tall, golden-brown grass. Several white birds, possibly swans or geese, are captured in flight, their wings spread, moving across the middle ground. The sky above is a pale, hazy blue-grey, blending into the mist. The overall mood is serene and nostalgic.

THERE WAS ONCE...

only the sound of bees and the wind in the wiry grass,
the low murmuring of moles in the cool dark earth...

and the song of birds in the high blue sky.



It touched and warmed the hearts of those few
who paused and cared to listen...



Then one day OTHERS came,
and the sound of bees was lost.

