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Opening extract from

The Flute

Written by

Rachna Gilmore

Published by

Tradewind Books

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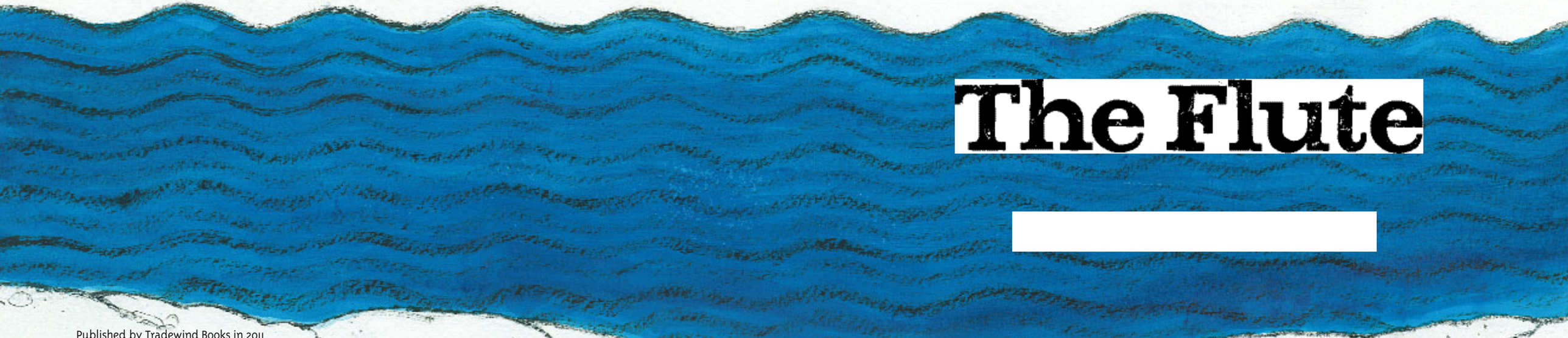
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For Swami Tejomayananda—RG
To my grandchildren Myna & Vihaan—PB

Rachna Gilmore

The Flute



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BOOK DESIGN BY ELISA GUTIERREZ The text of this book is set in Triplex and Zapatista

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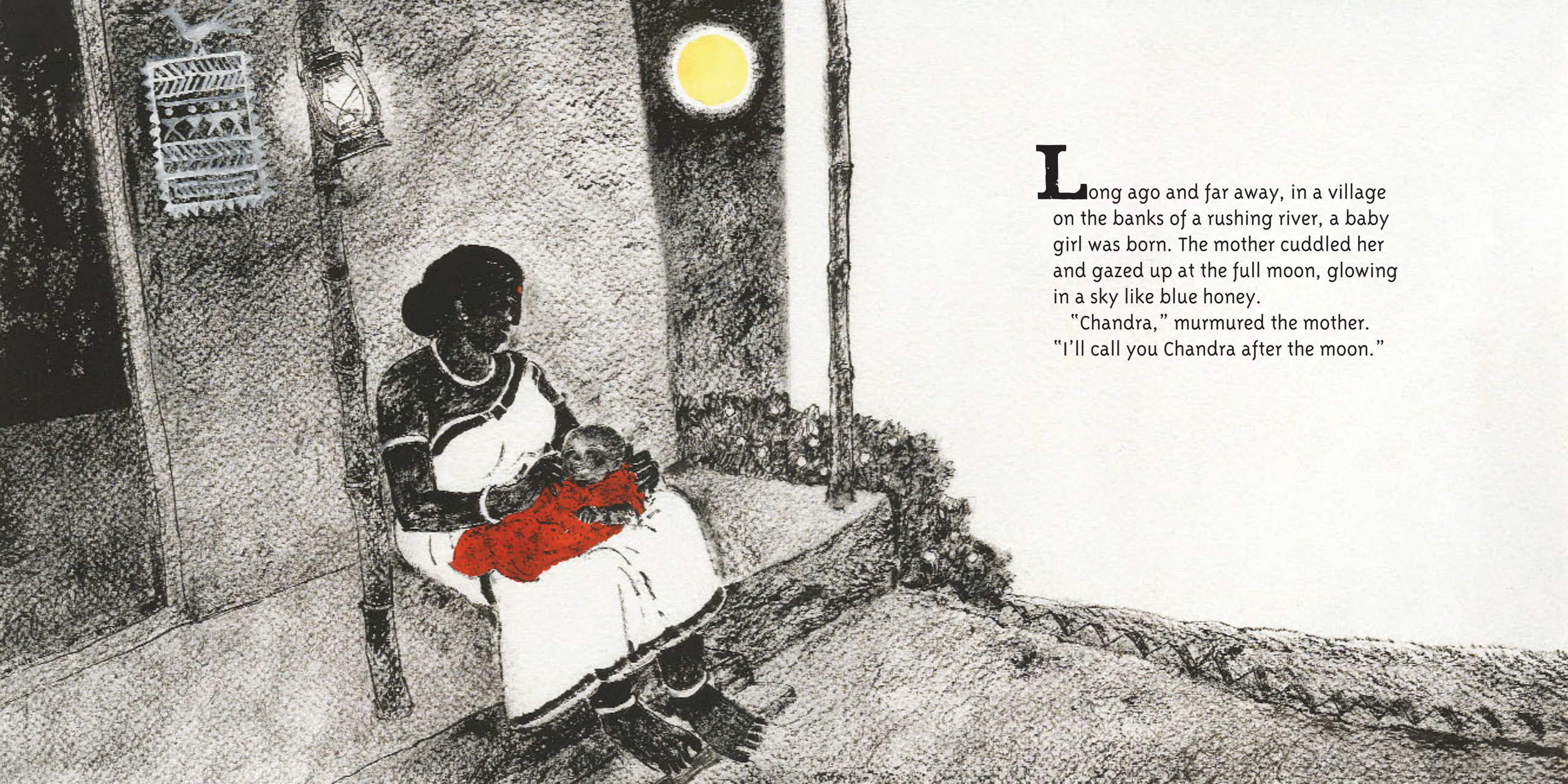
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Long ago and far away, in a village on the banks of a rushing river, a baby girl was born. The mother cuddled her and gazed up at the full moon, glowing in a sky like blue honey.

"Chandra," murmured the mother. "I'll call you Chandra after the moon."

As Chandra grew, she followed her mother like a shadow. Each day she helped her parents in the fields. Each evening she went with them to the banks of the great river. There her mother played her old wooden flute. She played of shimmering hot days and the richness of the earth. She played of the cool evening sky and the growing promise of the moon.



Then one year, disaster struck the village. The monsoon rains came hard and heavy. The river flooded its banks, sweeping away cows, carts and huts.

Chandra's mother pushed her up the tallest tree. "Be strong and hold tight," she cried, then handed Chandra the flute.

Chandra clung to the branch and wept as her mother and father vanished in the flood.

