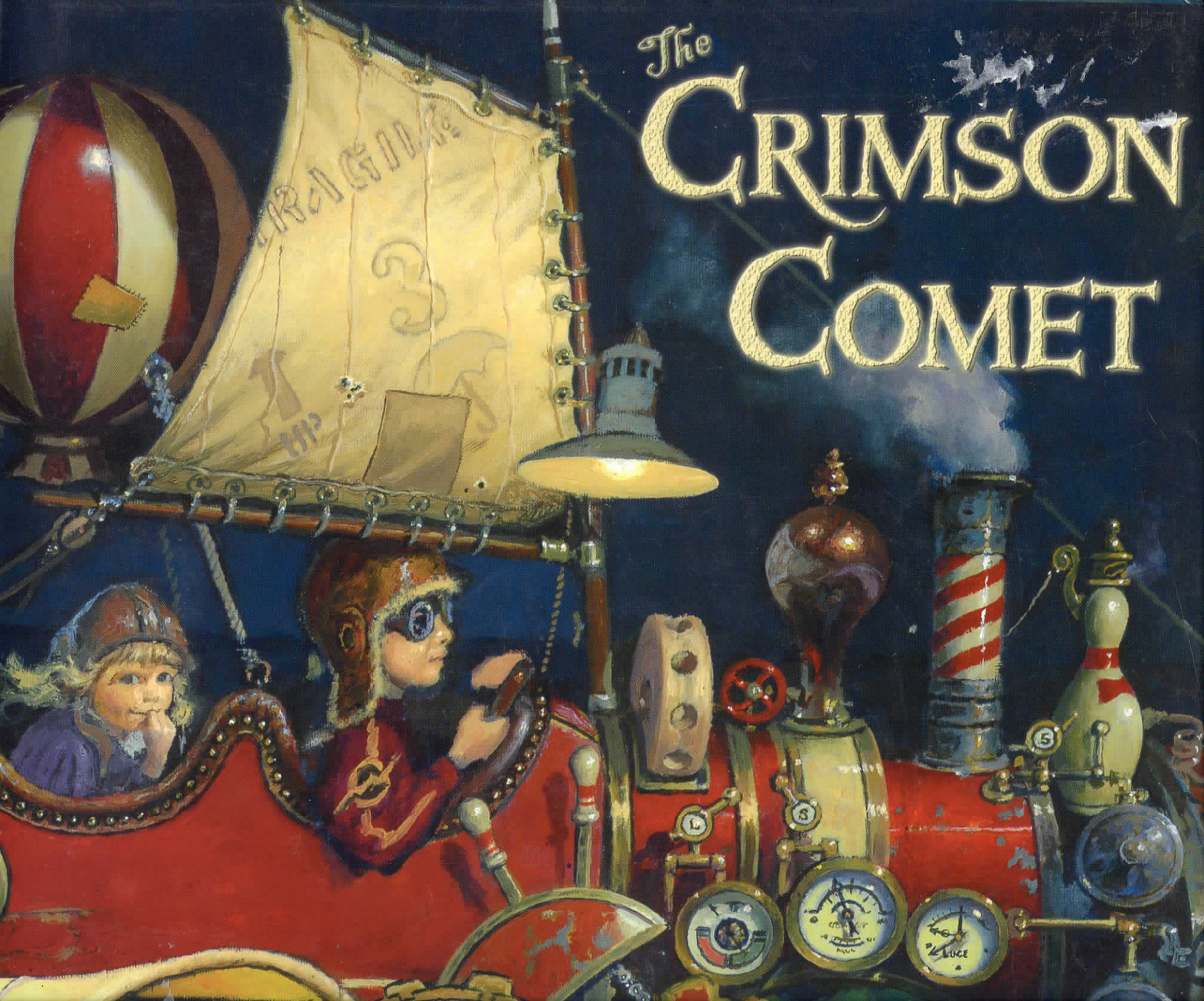
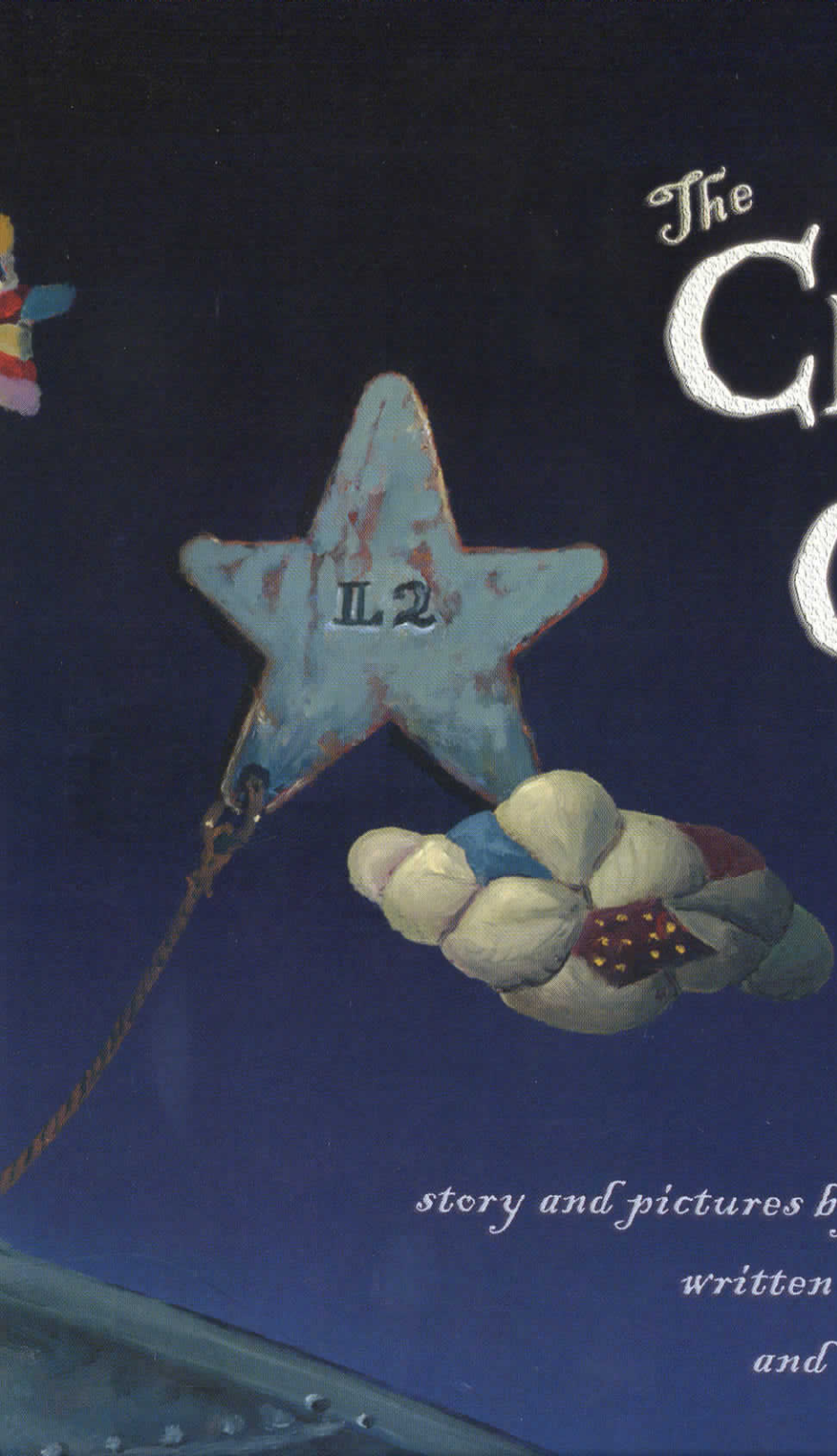


The
**CRIMSON
COMET**



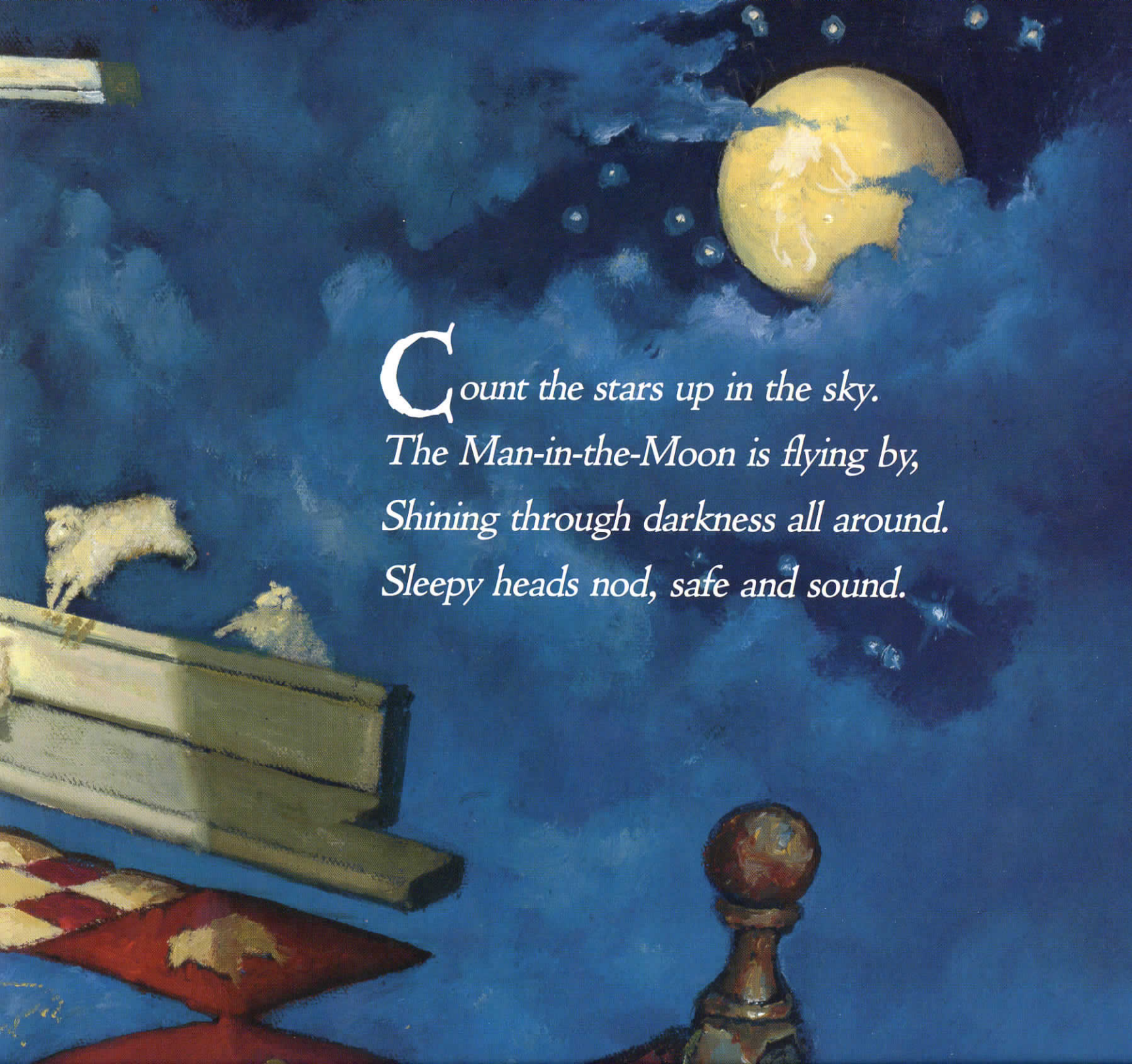


The
CRIMSON
COMET

story and pictures by DEAN MORRISSEY

written by DEAN MORRISSEY
and STEPHEN KRENSKY





*C*ount the stars up in the sky.
The Man-in-the-Moon is flying by,
Shining through darkness all around.
Sleepy heads nod, safe and sound.





*If only that were true, thought Nora.
But she was wide awake.
She looked up at the twinkling stars,
and the moon, once so bright,
suddenly blinked out.*



*If only that were true, thought Nora.
But she was wide awake.
She looked up at the twinkling stars,
and the moon, once so bright,
suddenly blinked out.*

A night sky with a dark blue background, scattered with yellow and dark blue stars and crescent moons. In the foreground, a window with a red frame is visible on the right side, with some stars and a crescent moon appearing to be on the window pane.

“J-a-a-a-c-k!” she cried, scurrying down the hall.

“The moon, the moon. It’s gone!”

“Okay, okay,” said her brother. “Calm down!”

He took a look for himself.

“You’re right. We’d better check this out.”

“But how?” Nora asked.

Jack pointed to his rocket.

“We’re going in *that!*” said Nora.

“*That,*” said Jack, “is the Crimson Comet.”



SECRET LAIR
OF THE
CRIMSON
COMET


KEEP
OUT

CC



Nora and Jack climbed into the cockpit.
“Hurry up!” said Nora. “This is an emergency.”
But Jack checked his instruments carefully.
He didn’t want to end up on Mars by mistake.





Very soon the rocket blasted out the
bedroom window and into the night.
Nora looked around her and plucked
a few stars from the sky.



RIMSON
Comet



Up and up and up they went until . . .

THUNK!

The rocket stopped cold.

“Uh-oh,” said Nora.

They got out for a better look.

“I think we hit the—” Jack began.



PARISSEY





“Moon,” said a figure behind them. “Dented it, too.”

Jack and Nora looked up.

“Then you must be the Man-in-the-Moon,” said Jack.

The gentleman nodded.

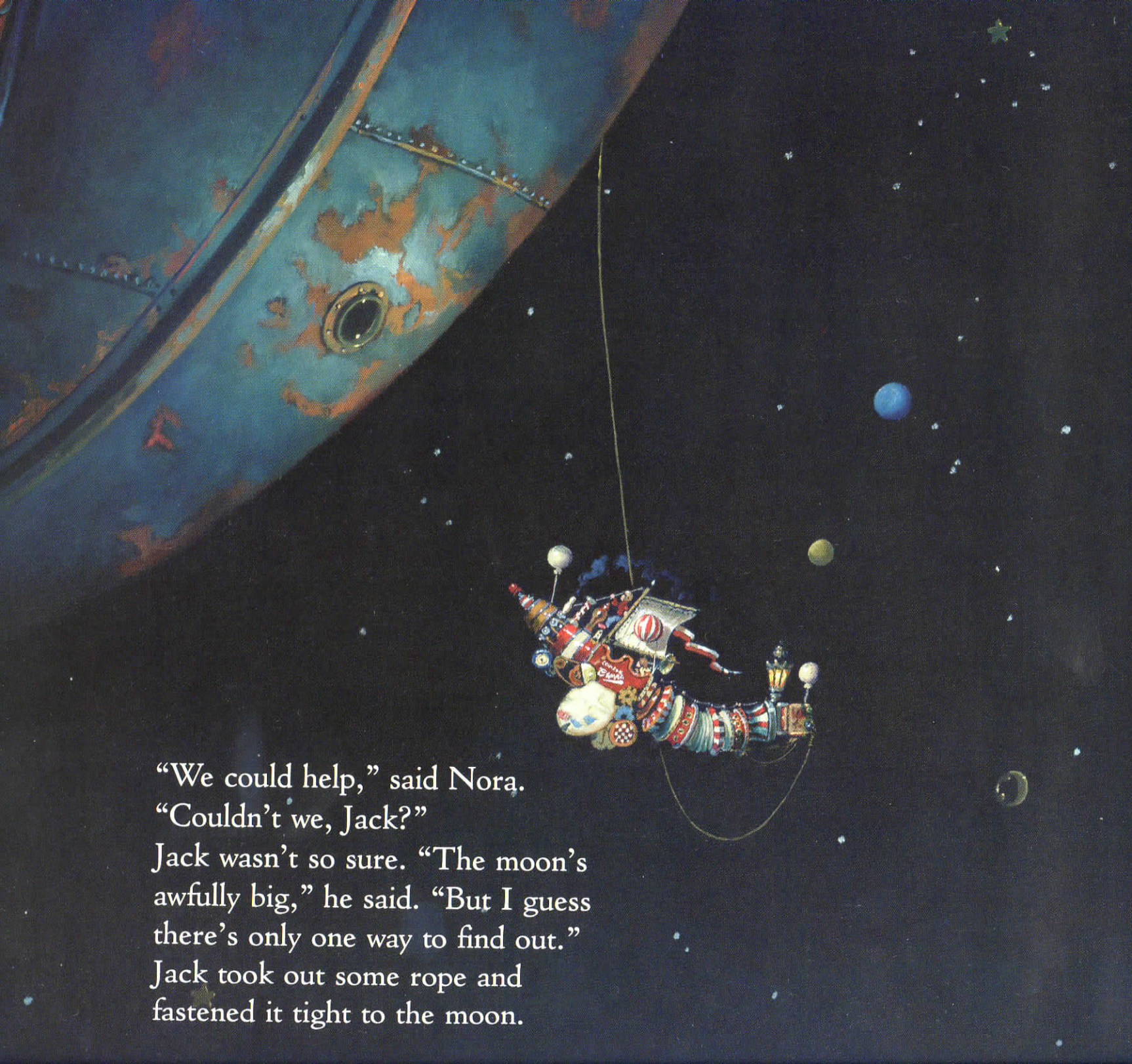
“Indeed I am.”

“Why is it so dark?” asked Nora.

“Ah, well, my engine’s failed,” the Man-in-the-Moon explained.

“And no power means no lights. What I really need is a jump start.”

He paused. “But who do you call to jump-start the moon?”

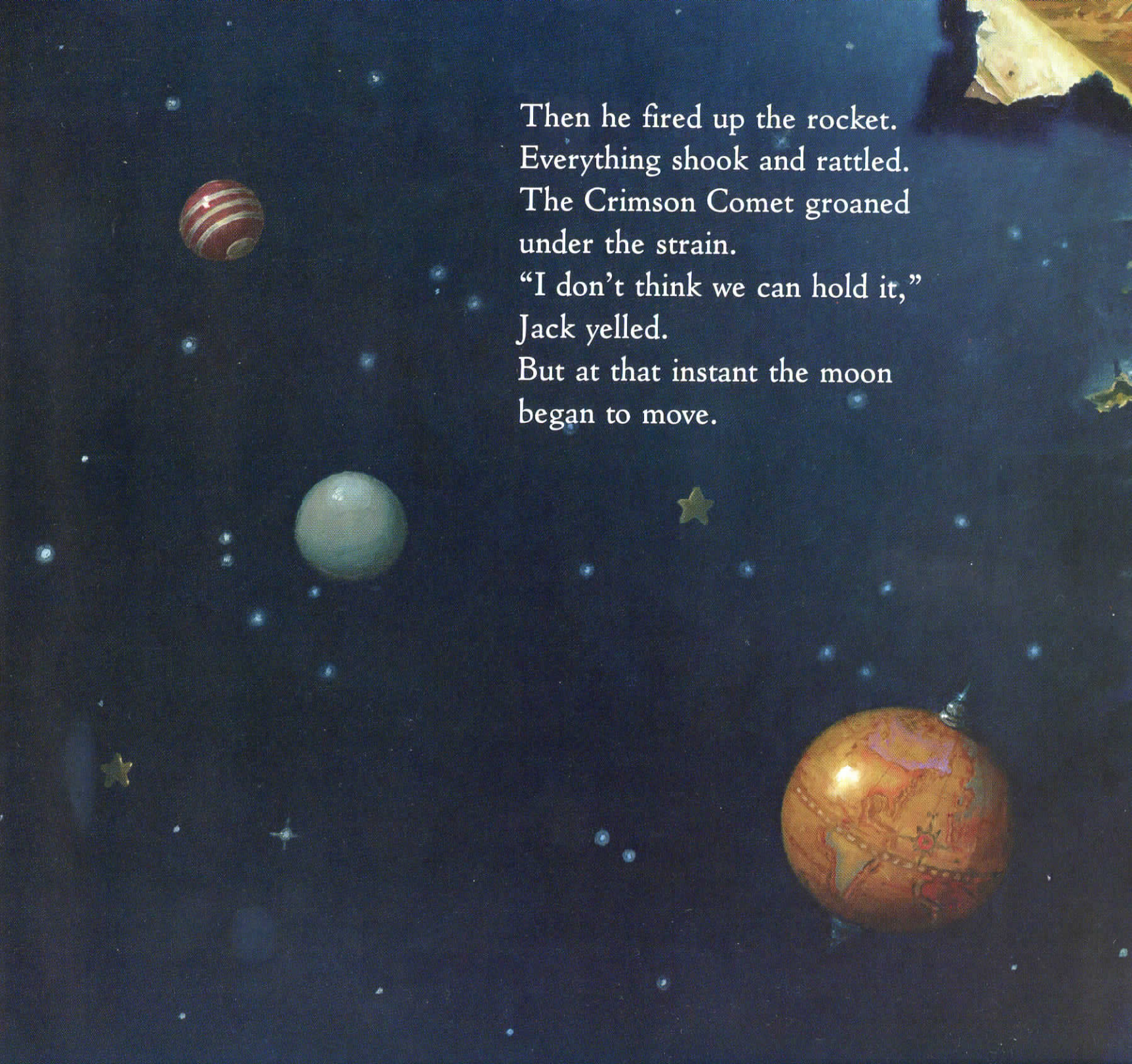


“We could help,” said Nora.

“Couldn’t we, Jack?”

Jack wasn’t so sure. “The moon’s awfully big,” he said. “But I guess there’s only one way to find out.”

Jack took out some rope and fastened it tight to the moon.



Then he fired up the rocket.
Everything shook and rattled.
The Crimson Comet groaned
under the strain.
“I don’t think we can hold it,”
Jack yelled.
But at that instant the moon
began to move.

PUTT-PHLUTTER-PLUTTT

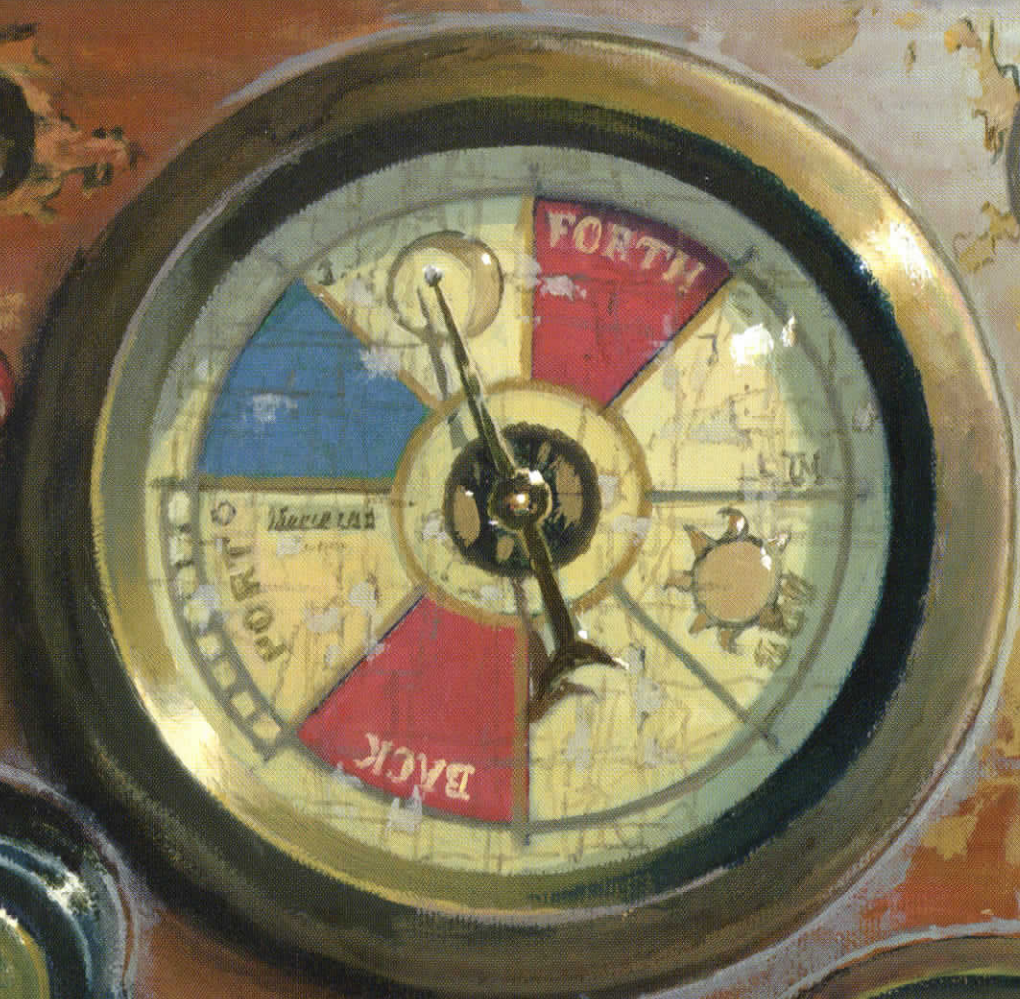


The moon's engine rumbled to life.
Its lanterns began to glow.
"Hooray!" cried Nora.
"The Crimson Comet saves the day,"
said Jack, retrieving his rope.
The Man-in-the-Moon waved in thanks
as the moon drifted away.



Jack checked his instruments again
and set a course for home.
But the fuel gauge read empty!







Down, down, down they went.

Faster and faster.

“We need something to burn!” Jack shouted.

Then Nora remembered the stars.

She threw them in the firebox, and the

engine flared to life, slowing the ship’s fall.



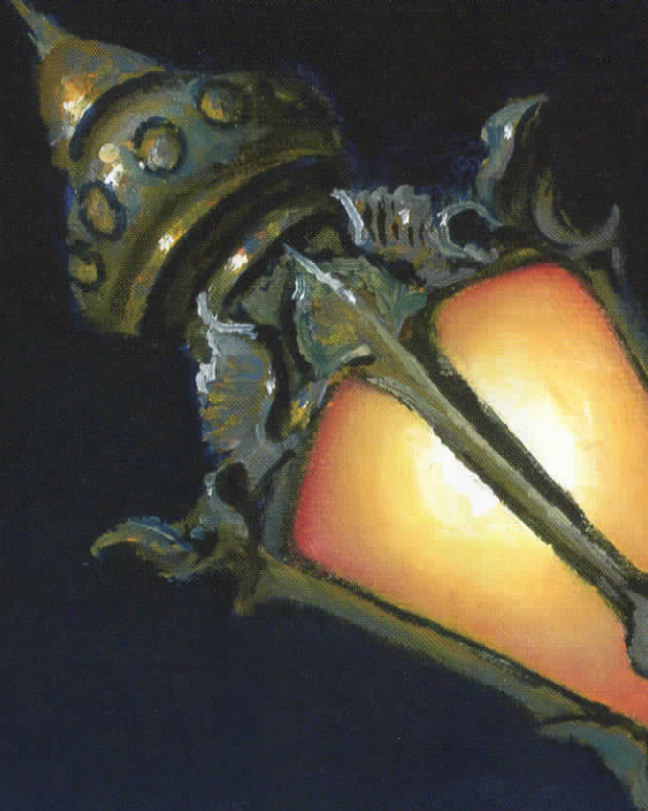
BAMMMMM!

The Crimson Comet bumped

and bashed

and crumpled

and . . . *CRASHED.*







Jack looked up from the broken rocket.
“We made it!” he said. “Are you all right?”
“I think so,” said Nora.
She climbed out of her seat.
“And there’s the moon. Right where it should be.”
They both smiled at it.





And
just
for
a
moment,
they
thought
the
moon
smiled
back.

