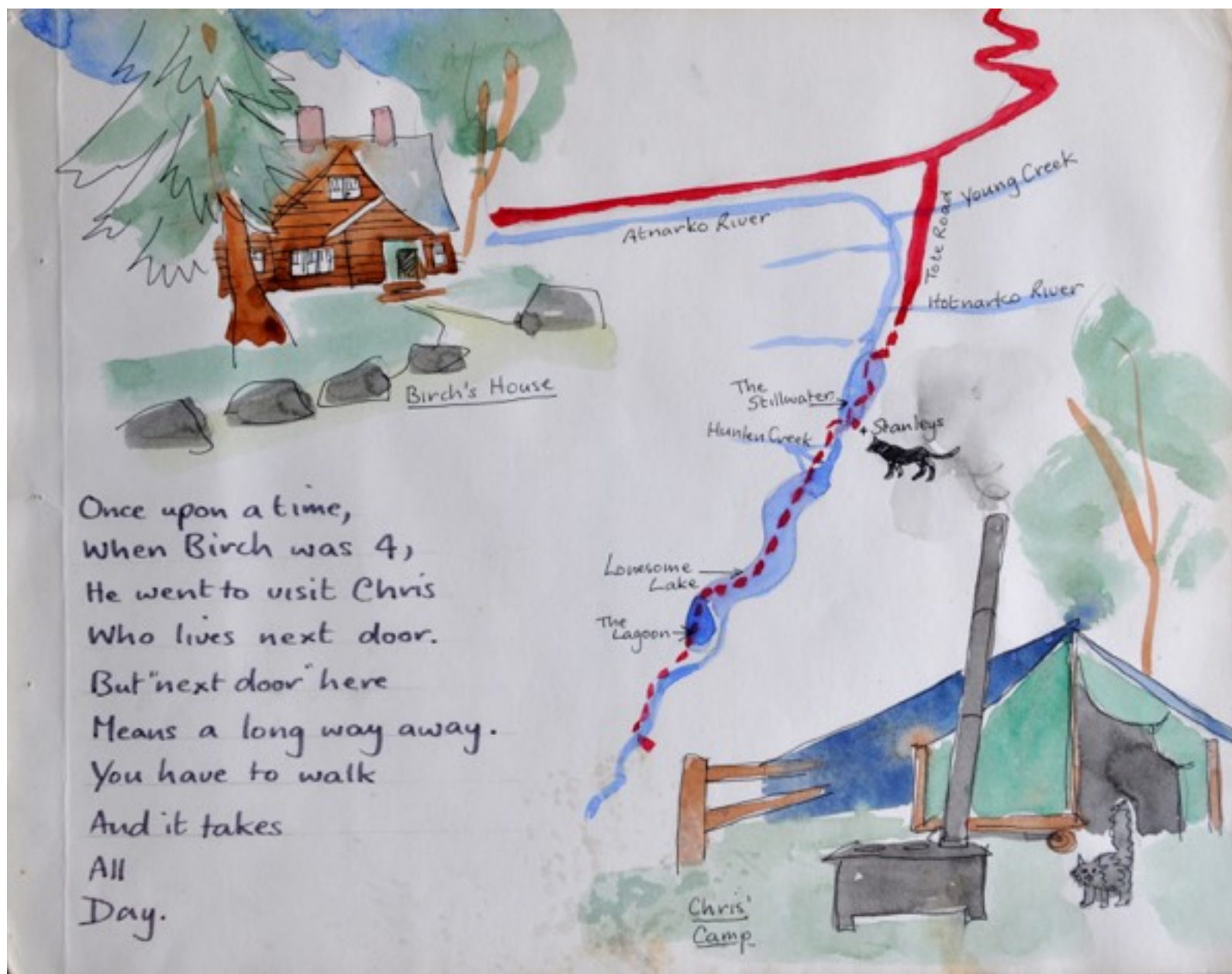


# Birch Goes HIKING

by  
Chris Czajkowski



Once upon a time,  
When Birch was 4,  
He went to visit Chris  
Who lives next door.  
But "next door" here  
Means a long way away.  
You have to walk  
And it takes  
All  
Day.





Birch was dressed  
For the mountain trail  
From the top of his head  
To the end of his tail.  
He wore strong boots  
To walk on rocks  
And a nice soft pair of  
Thick wool socks.  
He wore long pants  
So the bush wouldn't rip,  
And he wore long sleeves  
So the bugs wouldn't nip.  
And right on top of his  
Long blond head  
He kept off the sun with a  
Cap bright red.



But best of all,  
Upon his back was his  
Brand new,  
Bright red  
Hiking  
Pack.



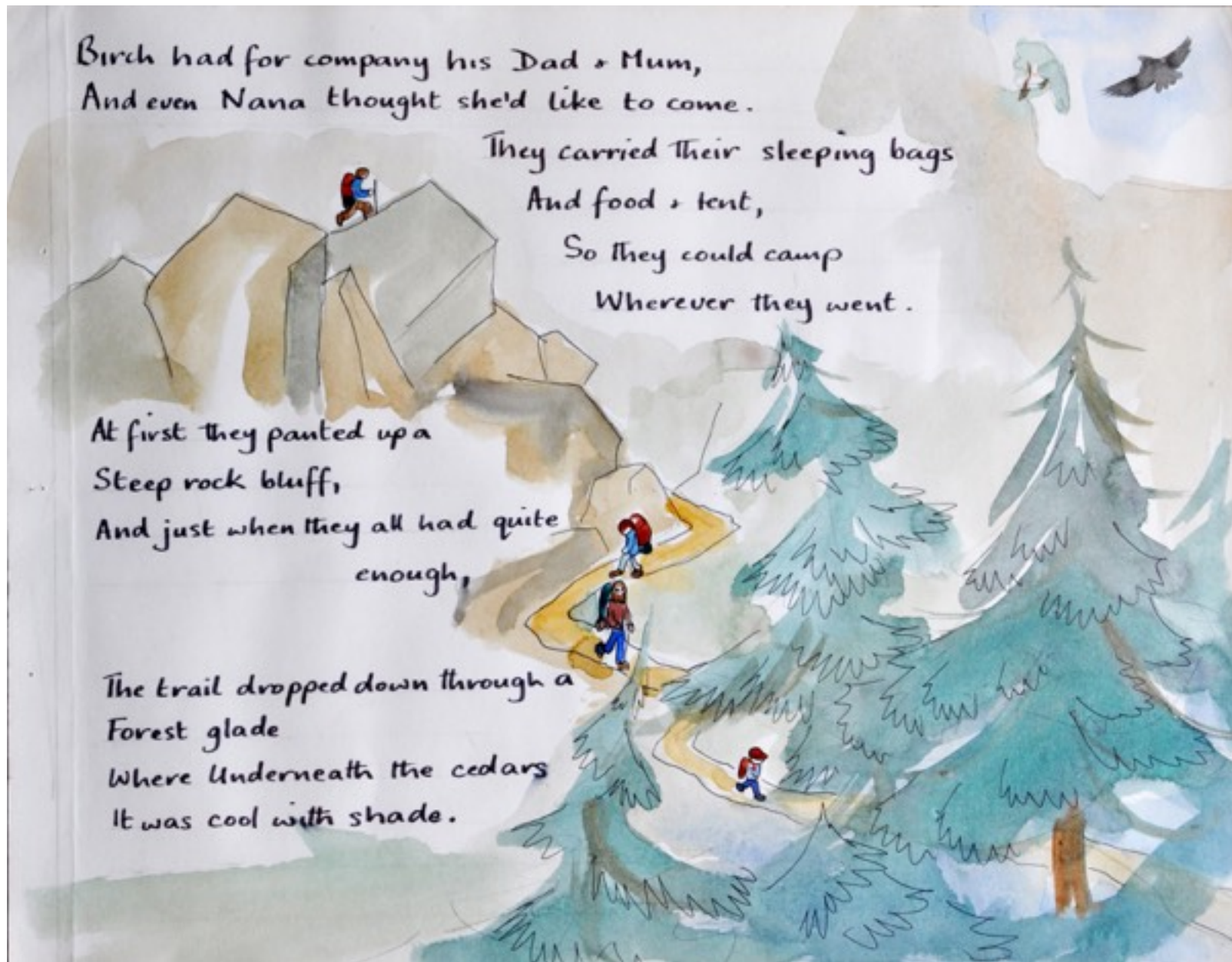
And in the pack  
Was everything handy  
From Macaroni Cheese to  
Peppermint Candy.

Birch had for company his Dad & Mum,  
And even Nana thought she'd like to come.

They carried their sleeping bags  
And food & tent,  
So they could camp  
Wherever they went.

At first they panted up a  
Steep rock bluff,  
And just when they all had quite  
enough,

The trail dropped down through a  
Forest glade  
Where underneath the cedars  
It was cool with shade.





They came to a lake that was so blue  
It seemed that the sky had fallen through.  
Stanley's boat was playing with the spray  
Waiting to carry them across that day.



They pattered along  
Up the breeze blown lake  
And stopped at Stanley's  
For a lunchtime break.





But still there was a very long way to go  
So they set off once again, walking in a row.

And braving mosquitos &  
Devil's club,  
Was the Fearless, Surefoot,  
Little Birch cub.





All of a sudden, the trail disappeared  
Beneath wild waters where the white waves reared.  
The water swirled in patterns + riddles  
And they had to wade right up to their middles.



At last they arrived  
At Lonesome Lake  
Where Chris' canoe was  
Waiting to take  
Them all the way up  
To Lost Lagoon.



A short hike more;  
They would be there soon.



But it was almost time  
To light the lamp  
By the time they came to  
Chris' camp.



On a smokey stove  
They brewed a cuppa  
Then ate macaroni  
Cheese for supper.

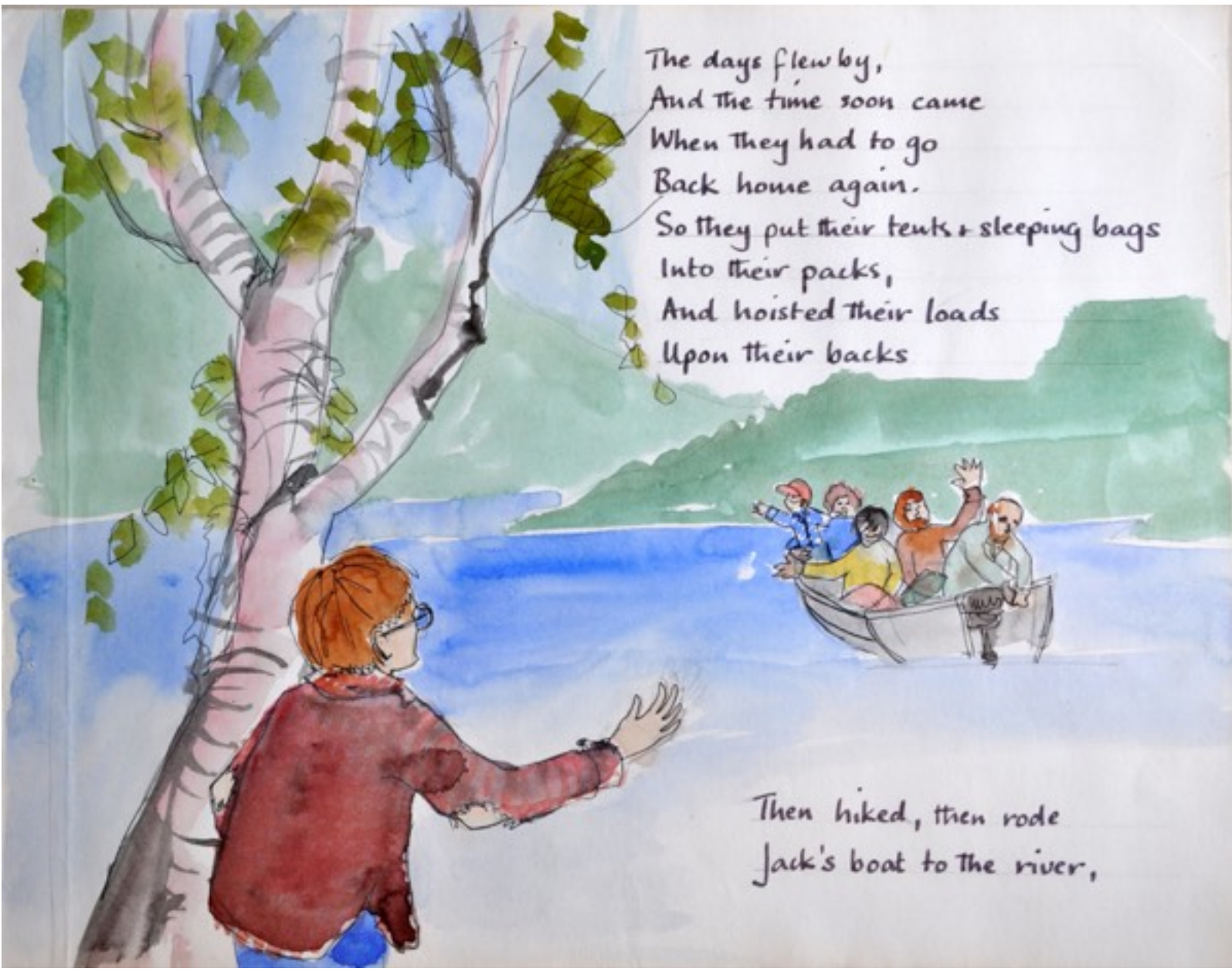
The weather was hot, & the very next day,  
They went down to the river to play  
In the water, & lie on a sandy bar,  
And swim in a pool where salmon are.





He visited Susan, who lived quite near,  
And she gave him a ride on Gwinevere.





The days flew by,  
And the time soon came  
When they had to go  
Back home again.  
So they put their tents + sleeping bags  
Into their packs,  
And hoisted their loads  
Upon their backs

Then hiked, then rode  
Jack's boat to the river,

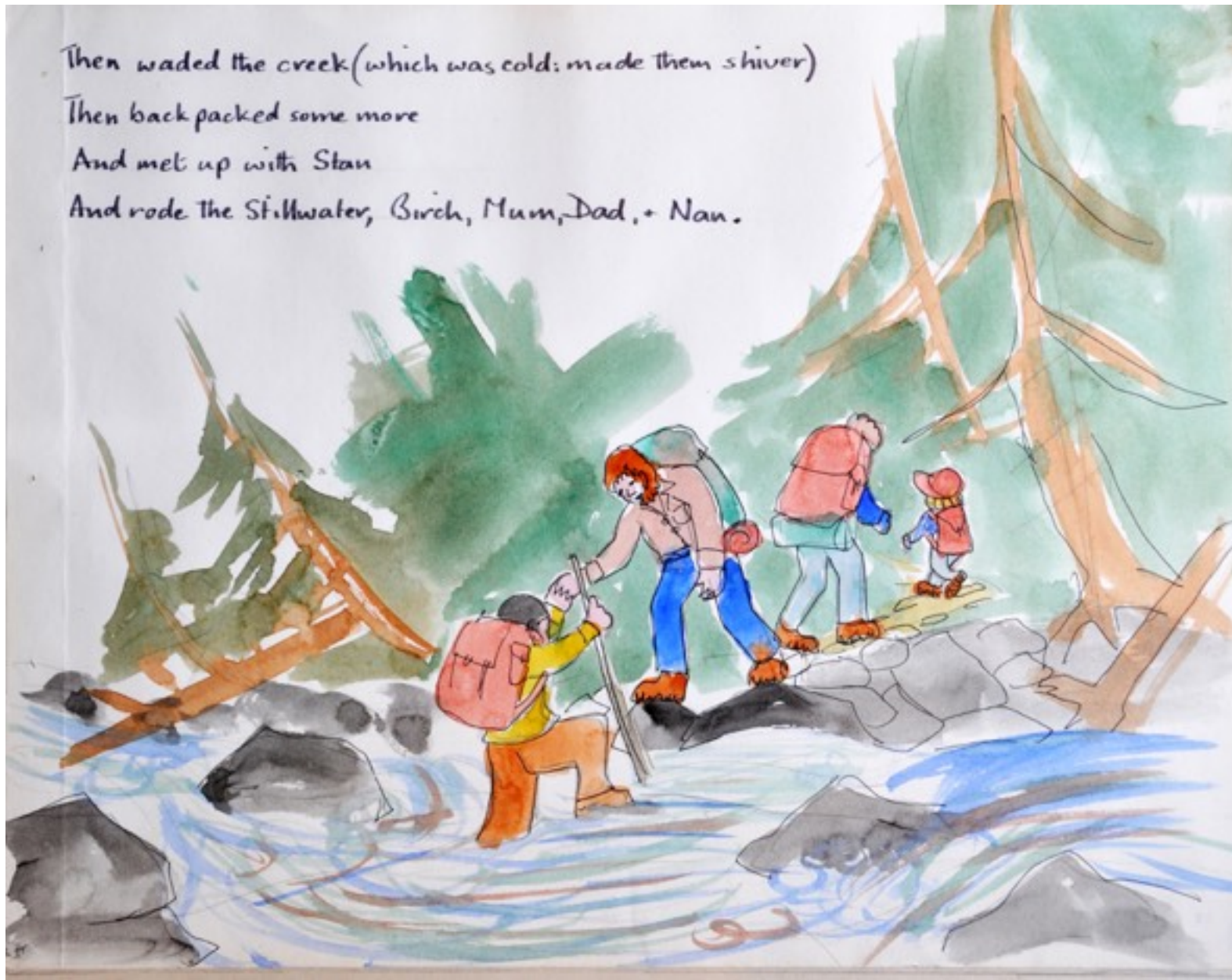


Then waded the creek (which was cold; made them shiver)

Then backpacked some more

And met up with Stan

And rode the Stillwater, Birch, Mum, Dad, + Nan.





They hiked the last stretch  
(Nana nearly got stuck  
On the Ding Blasted Bluff)  
Then They climbed in the truck  
And they rode back home  
By the light of the moon,

And everybody hopes They will go again soon.