



There was a little cloud of bog,
and What? popped up,
and dust swapped with fog,
right here:



What? was sitting on the x,
shaking his head
as the fog curled around him.
What? barked, "What?"
and Poodle laughed to see his friend.

"I'm so happy to see you!" Poodle said
with a big smile.

Smile? That was not easy
because beaks don't smile.

For a proper smile,
you have to tweak the beak,
bend the beak, *EEK!*,
sneak the beak
into a leak. Not easy.
Poodle did it, though.

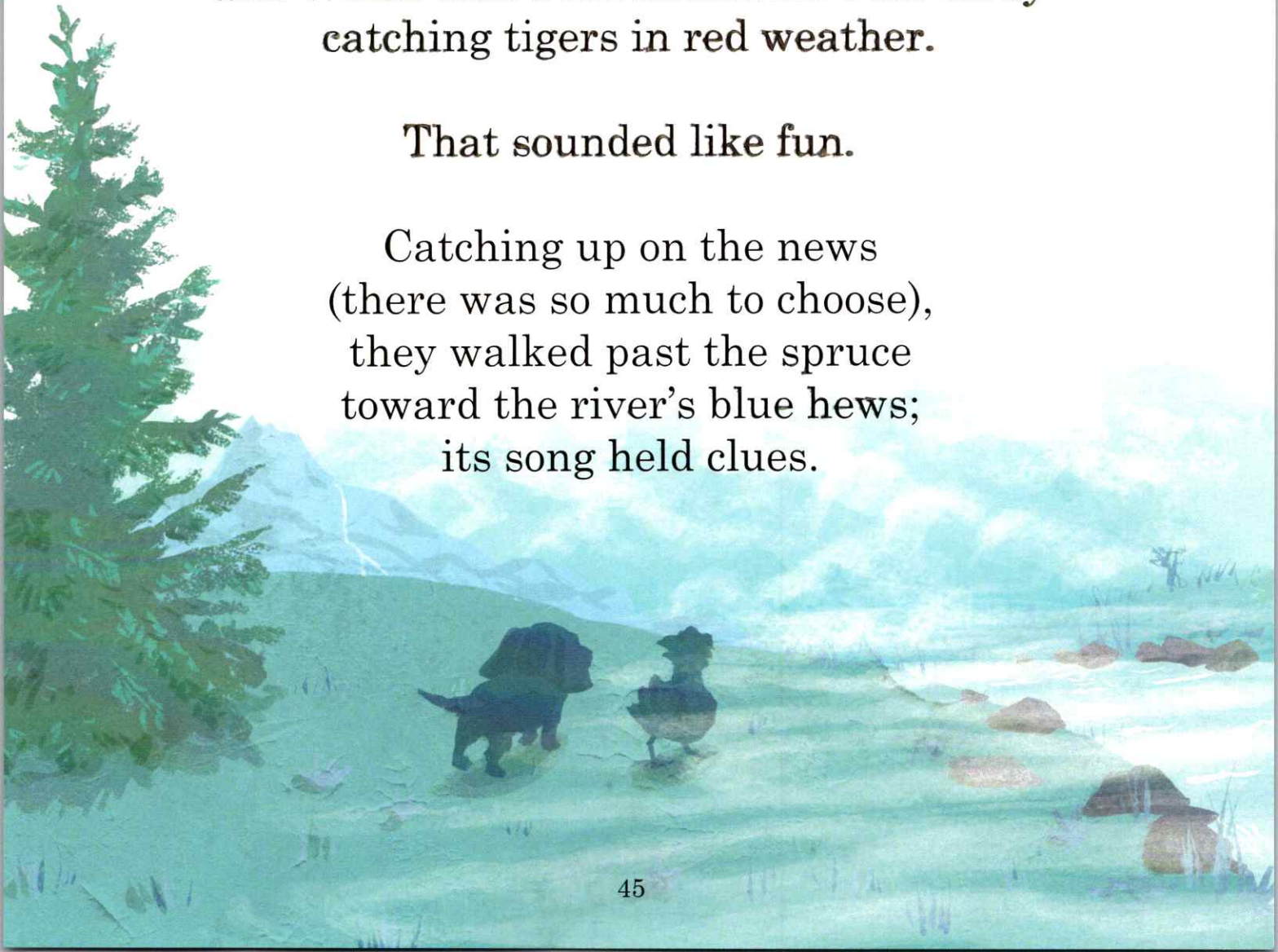
“What-what-what!” said What?
in his barkiest bark.

It was a great moment.
The two friends shared their tales
of where they’d been
since they had sat on the summit
of Blue Mountain.

They explained:
Poodle had been arguing with the author
(something about chicken toes),
and What? had been somewhere far away
catching tigers in red weather.

That sounded like fun.

Catching up on the news
(there was so much to choose),
they walked past the spruce
toward the river’s blue hews;
its song held clues.





They stepped through the fog,
the chicken and dog,
like Sancho and Don,
having their talk,
around that rock,
past that stalk,
through those ferns,
'round those turns,
past that fox they didn't see
(but he had watched them the whole day-ee),
and under the pine bough now,
and the green tree frog
explained *grog, grog, grog*,
and the voice of the river
grew louder like a quiver.

Of course, the river, Worsh,
saw them coming.
You know those rivers,
and this one was no different.
It knew more than they knew.
It was a river, right? It had seen *everything*
from the beginning of time,
like a sublime rhyme.
It was waiting for them.