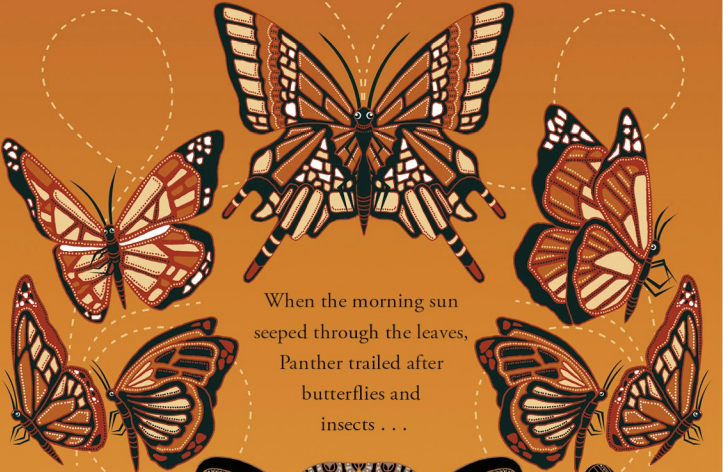





THE
MIDNIGHT
PANTHER

Poonam Mistry



When the morning sun
seeped through the leaves,
Panther trailed after
butterflies and
insects . . .

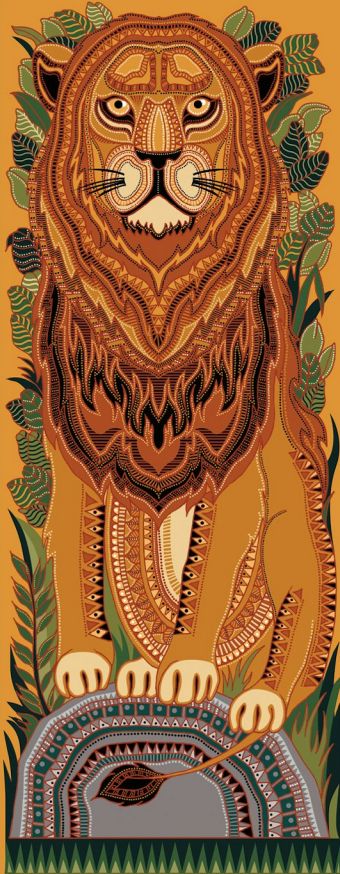


. . . and frolicked in the clear waters
of the stream.

He was different to the other cats,
and they did not like it.



"My stripes are bold
and fearless," said Tiger.



"My golden mane blazes
as bright as the sun," said Lion.



"My spots dazzle all
that see them," said Leopard.



Each day they taunted
him and over time
Panther grew a little less
brave, until one day
he could take no more.
And so he set off,
hoping to change
his fortune.





Panther crept over and under the tangled vines and weeds.
Soon he reached a dense cluster of trees.

Up in their branches was a rainbow as far as the eye could see.



From behind the clouds,
Sun shone down, flooding the
forest with her warmth.

She beamed down
brightly onto Panther.
“That’s better,” Sun smiled
as the dry leaves fell.



Shadow engulfed
the forest.
Panther sank into
the soft earth.
“I don’t belong anywhere,”
he said.