

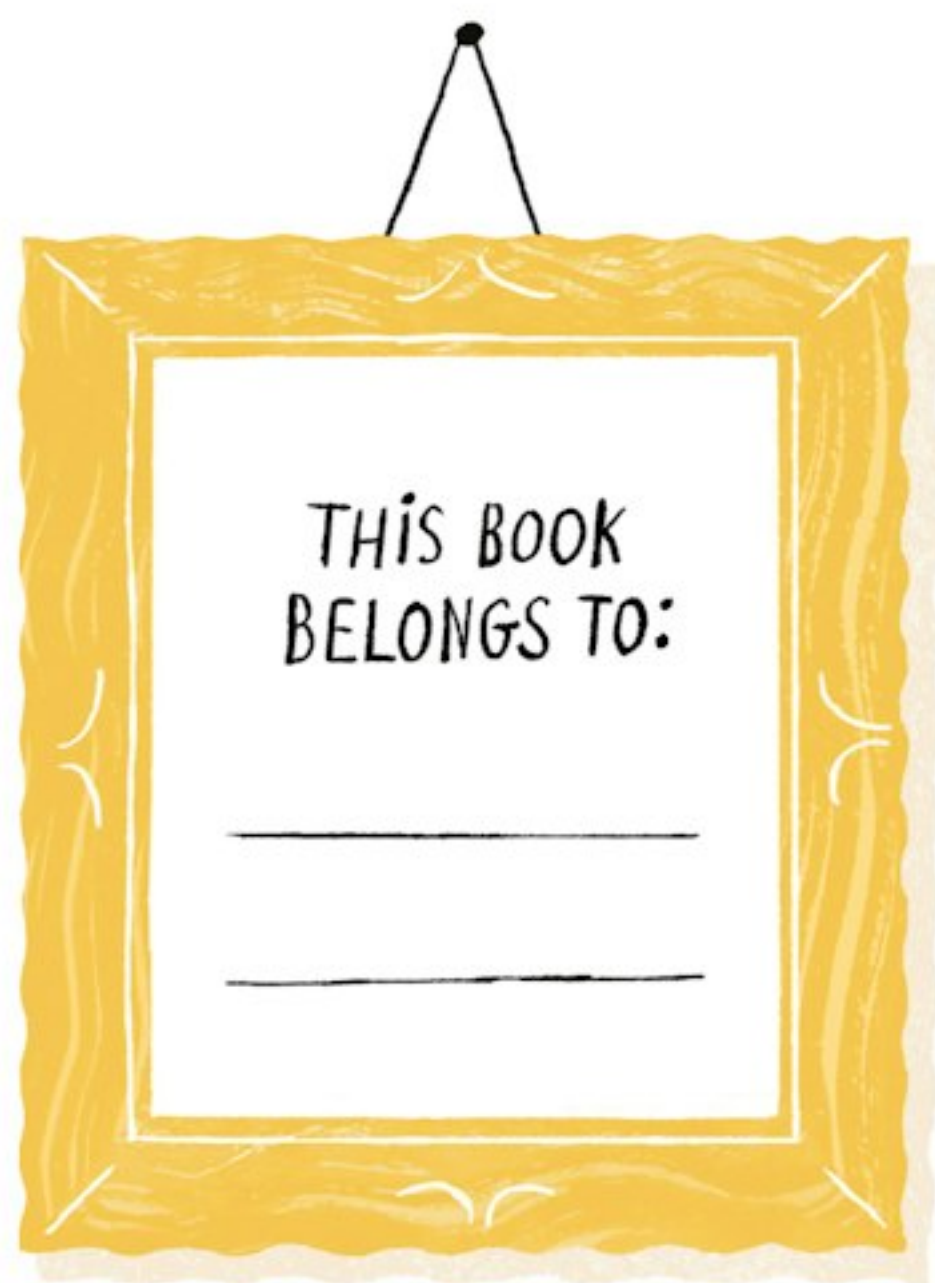


# HENRI AND THE MACHINE

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MARINOV

OLGA  
SHTONDA









A TEMPLAR BOOK

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Everyone seemed happy.  
Except for Henri.

He didn't want to go to an art gallery.  
He wanted to go to the beach instead.  
To collect seashells and to swim  
in the ocean.



Henri looked around.  
There were lots of paintings on the gallery walls.



A painting of a woman whose eyes were in the wrong place.  
Henri knew one thing for sure: the eyes had to be above the nose.



A painting of melting watches. Watches didn't melt.  
They broke. They got lost. They stopped. But they did not melt.

A painting of thirty-two soup cans.  
Who knew there were that many different kinds of soup?



"Chicken Noodle, Oyster  
Stew, Pepper Pot, Cream  
of Celery...."

"No soup in the world deserves  
a painting!" Henri declared.  
"But spaghetti with meatballs  
would. And maybe fish fingers."





But then Henri saw a painting that he liked.

It was all blue; the bluest of blue.

Blue was Henri's favourite colour.

It reminded him of  
the ocean,

of blueberries and  
summer skies,

blue jays  
and butterflies.





The next room was totally empty.

Except for a chair. And a very complicated looking machine.

IS THIS A CHAIR?

¿ES ESTA UNA SILLA?

CZY TO KRZESŁO?

APAKAH INI KURSI?

それは椅子ですか？

IST DAS EIN STUHL?

क्या यह कुर्सी है?

*Est-ce une chaise?*

هل هذا كرسي؟

ЦЕСТИАЕМ?

IS DIT EEN STOEL?

ONKO SE TUOLI?

QUESTA È UNA SEDIA?

ISTO É UNA CADEIRA?

Ass deat e Stuhl?



What a strange question, Henri thought. "Of course, it is a chair," he said. "What else could it be?"



"I don't know. In art, things are never what they seem. I would not sit on it," Clara said.





But Henri was tired. And  
a tiny bit curious, too.



So he sat down.



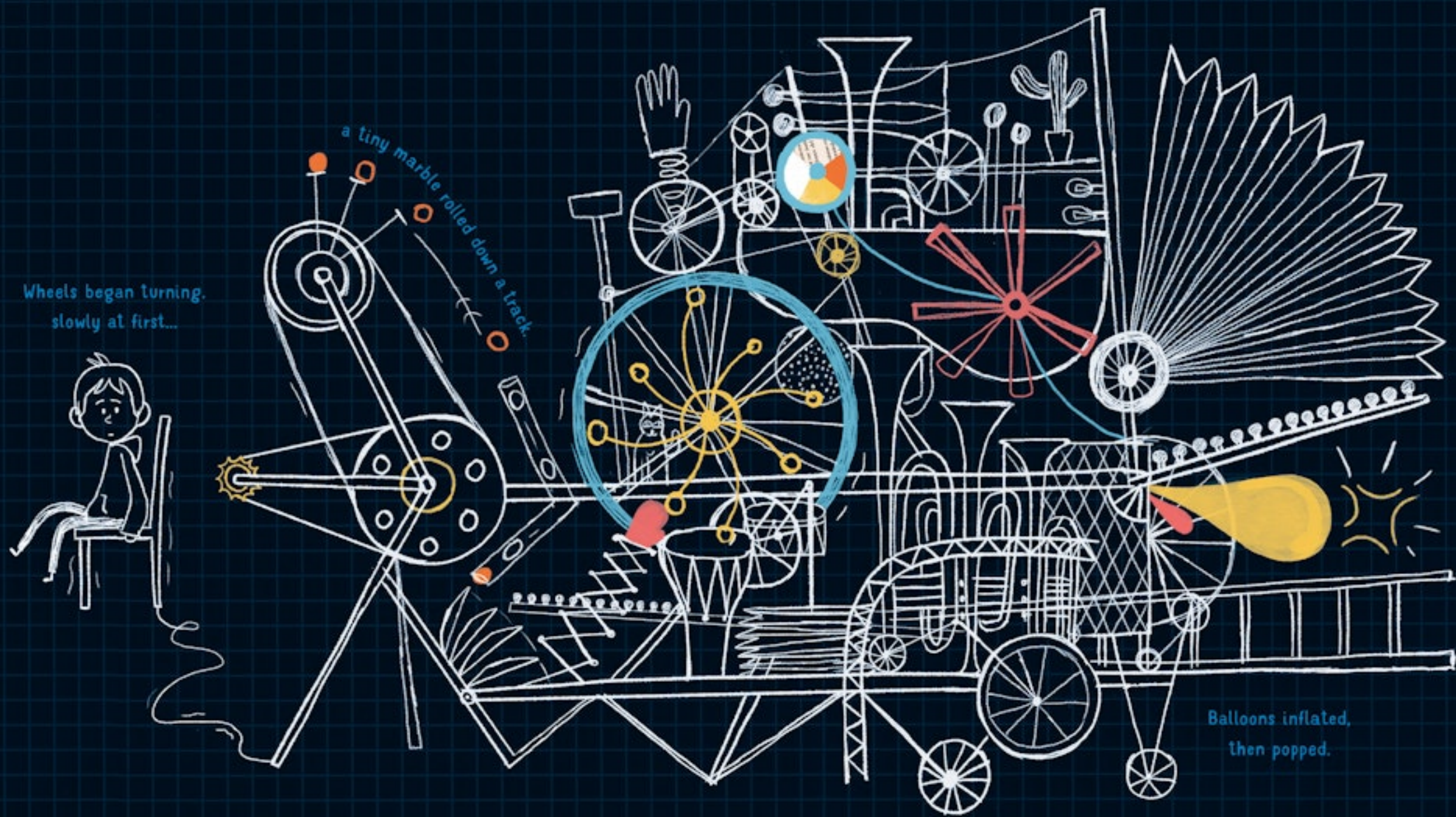
**BANG!**



At that very moment, Henri  
knew that he had set something  
in motion. Something he could  
no longer control...



Wheels began turning.  
slowly at first...



a tiny marble rolled down a track.

Balloons inflated,  
then popped.



Drums played and horns honked.



Plates fell to the floor and smashed.



Confetti rained from a trumpet.



Rainbow coloured smoke oozed out of the machine and covered everything in a technicolour cloud.







And then, the machine fell apart.

The wheels and the marbles.

the drums and the horns...

everything crashed to the ground.

A long, lamenting sound signalled  
the end of it all...



The museum guide came running in.  
Then he stopped. And looked.



Henri's heart thumped in his chest.  
He closed his eyes and wished he could  
disappear forever into the blue painting.





"Congratulations,"

the museum guide cheered.

"Finally, someone sat on that chair! The artist has been waiting for this moment for more than thirty years."

Now Henri was even more confused.  
"I thought that art was something serious?" he asked.





"Art can be many things,"  
the museum guide said.



"It can be playful."

serious.

sad or happy.

It can be something to look at,  
something to touch or  
something to sit on.

The only thing that matters is  
how art makes you feel."

But all of this doesn't matter.

So THAT was the point of art, Henri thought.



"How does The Machine make you feel?"  
the museum guide asked.

"It makes me want to giggle,"  
Henri said.

PARRP!









