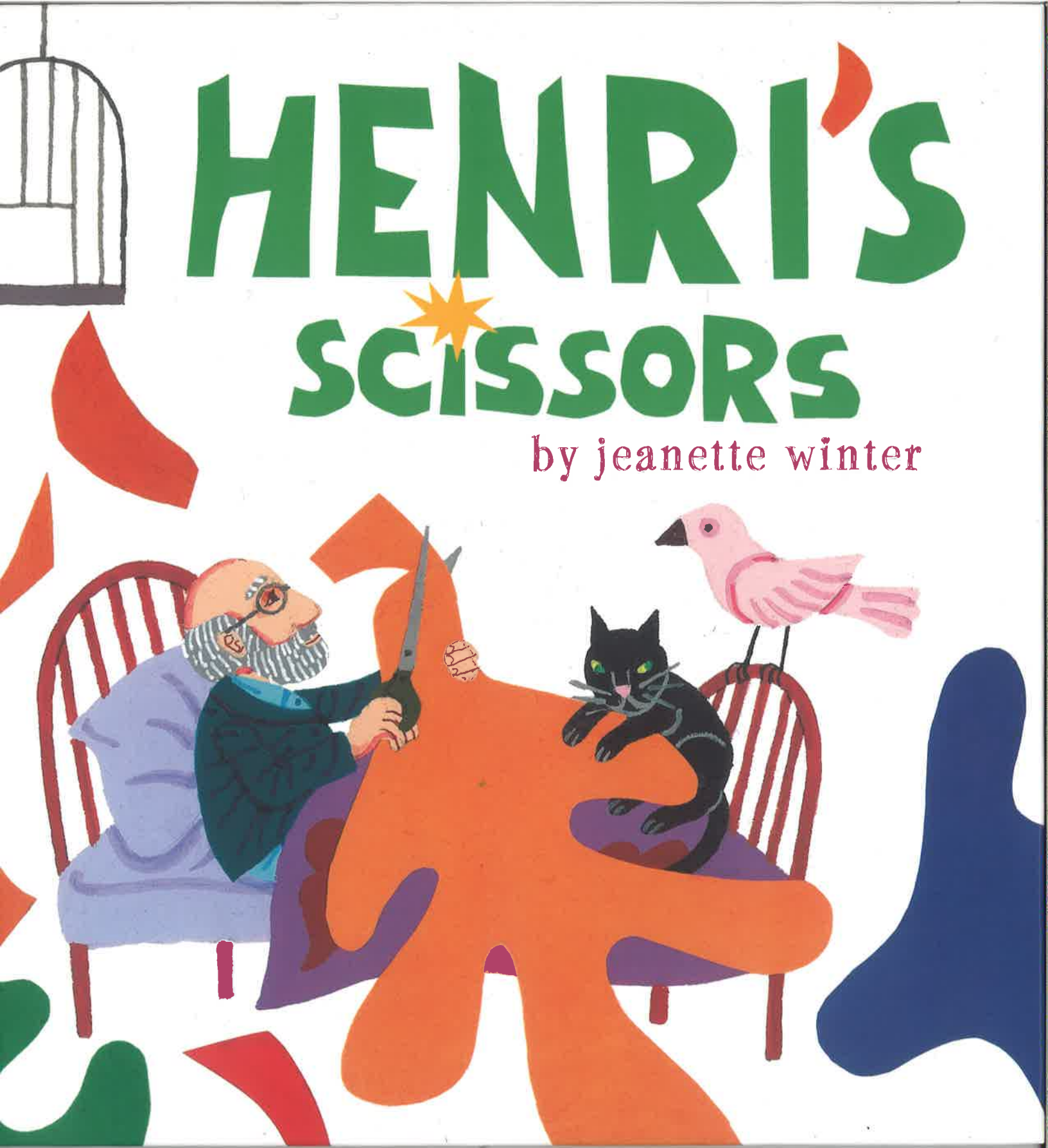



# HENRI'S SCISSORS

by jeanette winter



An illustration in the top right corner shows a hand holding a pair of scissors, cutting a yellow star. The background is a light yellow color with several other yellow stars scattered throughout.

“Matisse got as  
close as one can get  
to heaven with a  
pair of scissors.”

—Romare Bearden

For Maria



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# HENRI'S SCISSORS

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In a small weaving town in France,  
a young boy named Henri-Émile-Benoît Matisse  
watched his mother paint china.  
He wanted to paint too.



He drew pictures in the sand,



and he drew pictures in his schoolbooks.



young man, he drew pictures



on contracts, deeds, and wills.

Henri was sick in bed with appendicitis one winter.



His mother gave him a box of paints,  
and he painted until he was well.

ing, forgot about law, and



own to be an artist in Paris.

Henri painted pictures day after day



and year after year.





His paintings made people happy.

But when Matisse was an old man, he fell ill—  
so ill he couldn't paint,  
so ill he couldn't sit up,  
so ill he could only lie in bed and sleep.



His paintings floated by in his dreams.



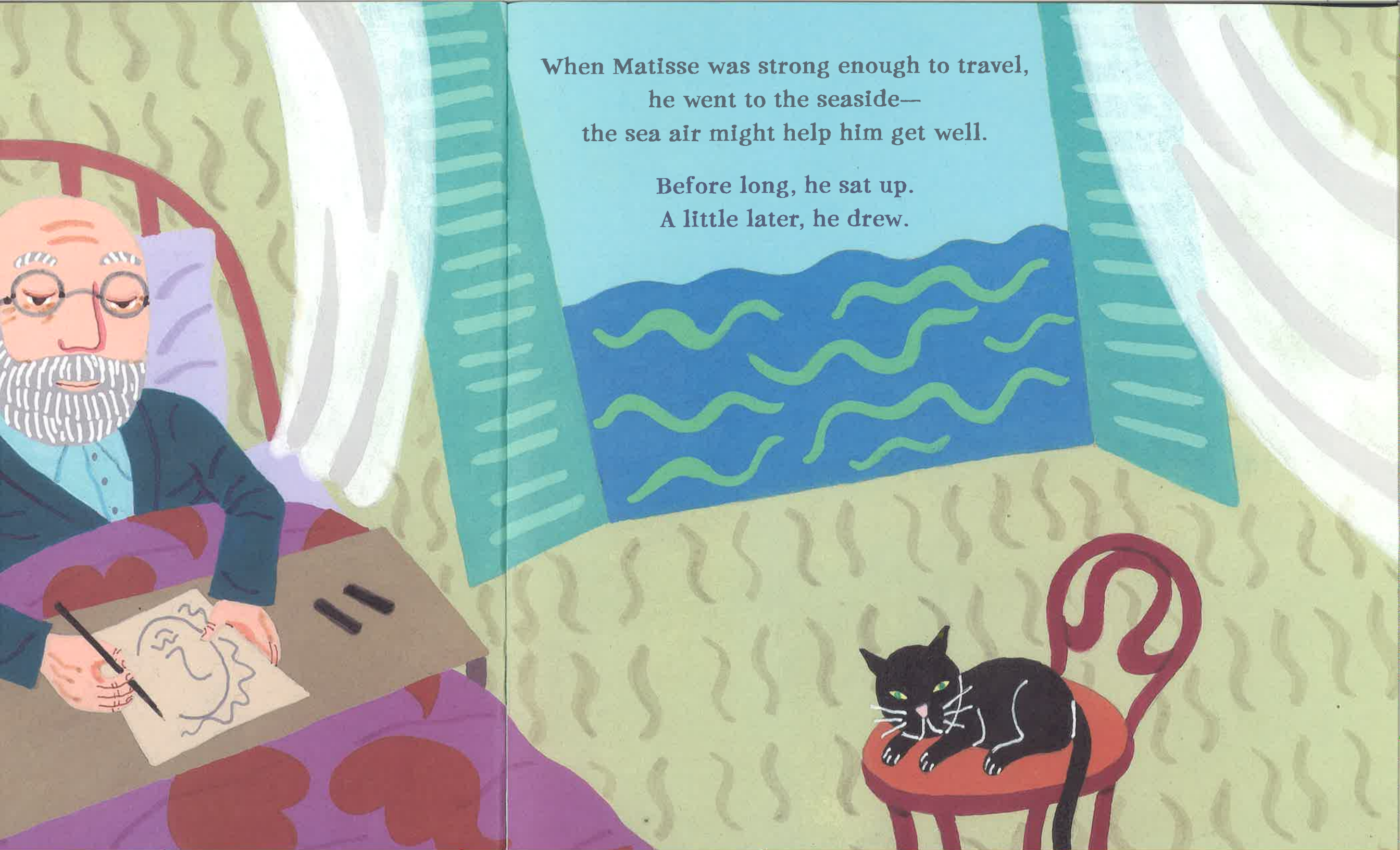
inally opened his eyes,  
ere filled with sadness.  
must remain in bed  
se a wheelchair.

ever have the energy  
paint again?

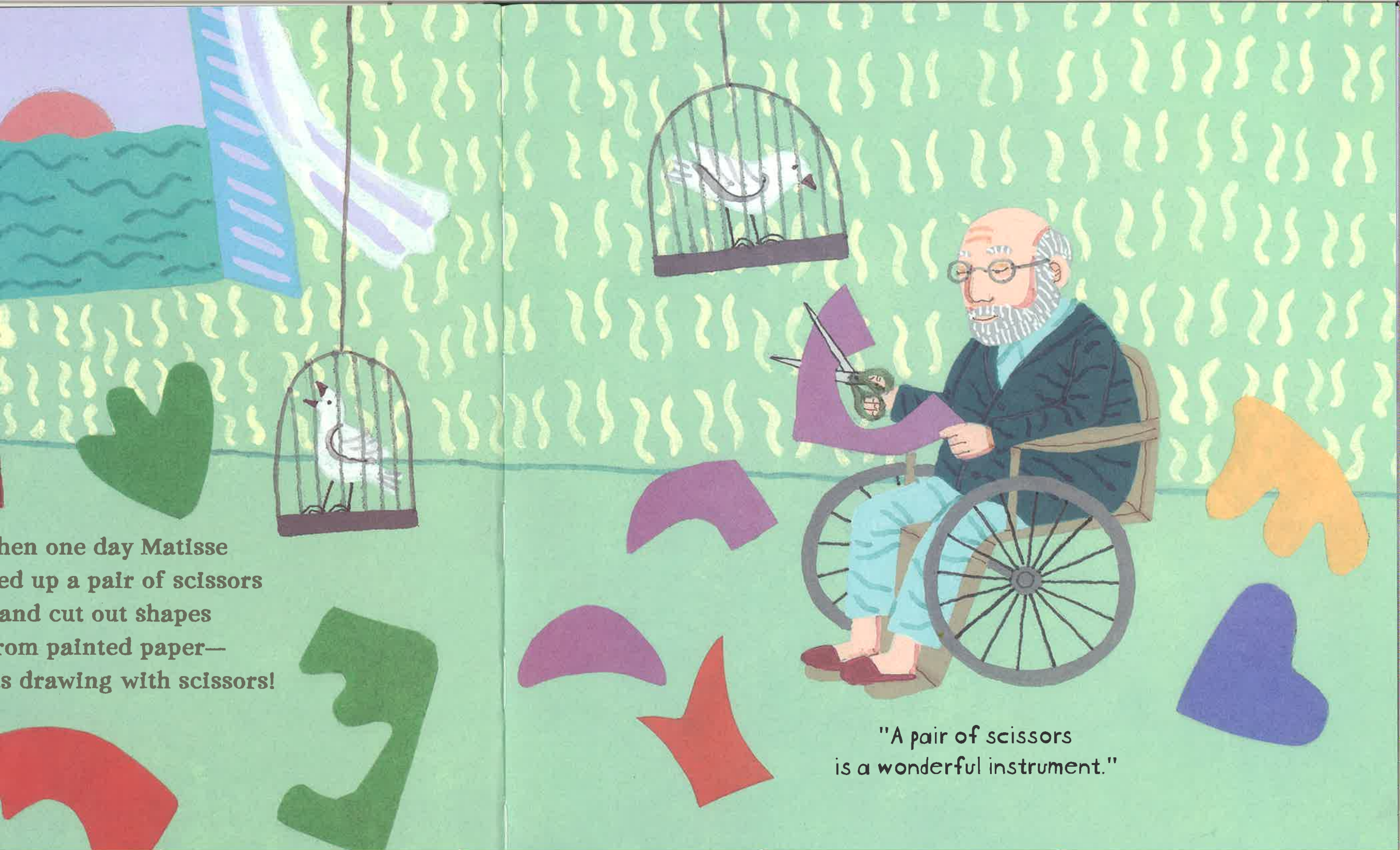


When Matisse was strong enough to travel,  
he went to the seaside—  
the sea air might help him get well.

Before long, he sat up.  
A little later, he drew.







When one day Matisse  
picked up a pair of scissors  
and cut out shapes  
from painted paper—  
his drawing with scissors!

"A pair of scissors  
is a wonderful instrument."



Matisse cut paper all day.

“My pleasure  
in cutting things out  
grows even greater.  
Why didn't I think of  
it earlier?”



His assistants painted paper for him all day.

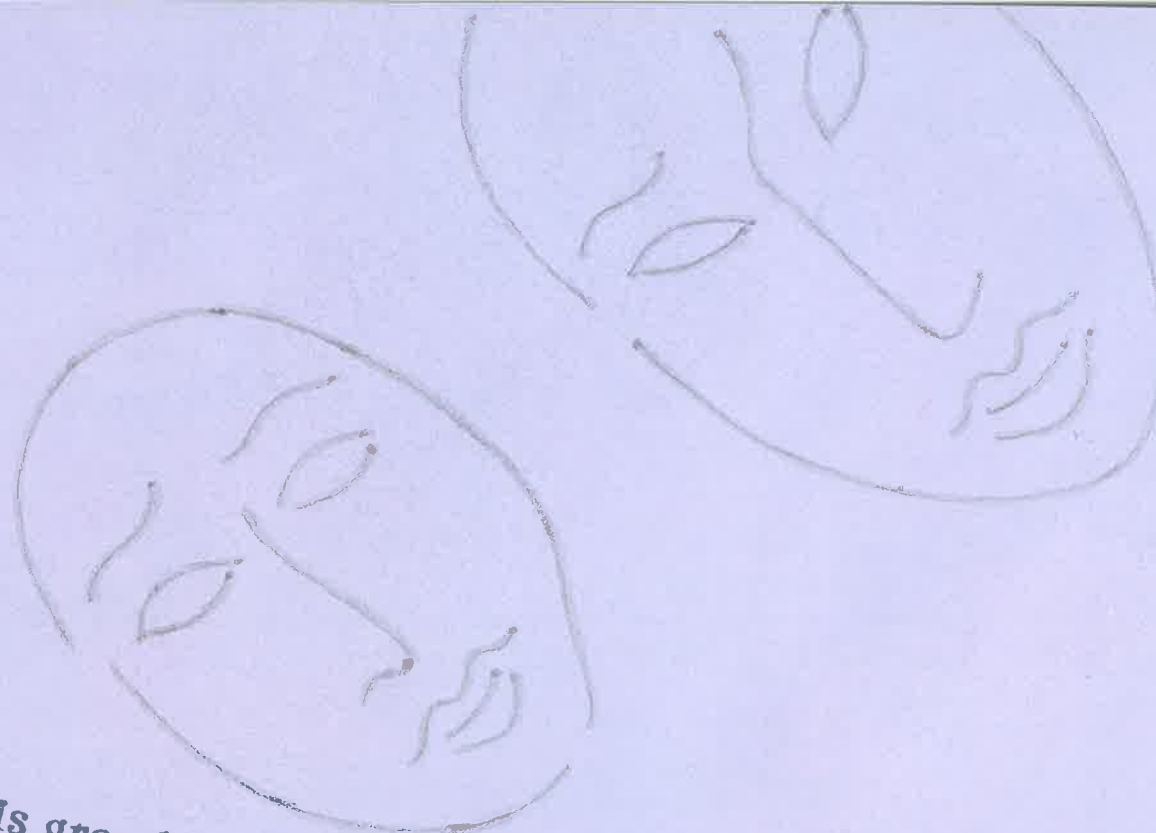






Paper cut-outs covered his walls.





As he fell  
asleep,  
they looked down  
on him and saw  
his dreams.

Atatisse  
lay in bed and drew the faces of

his grandchildren on the ceiling with a piece of chalk tied to a long pole.



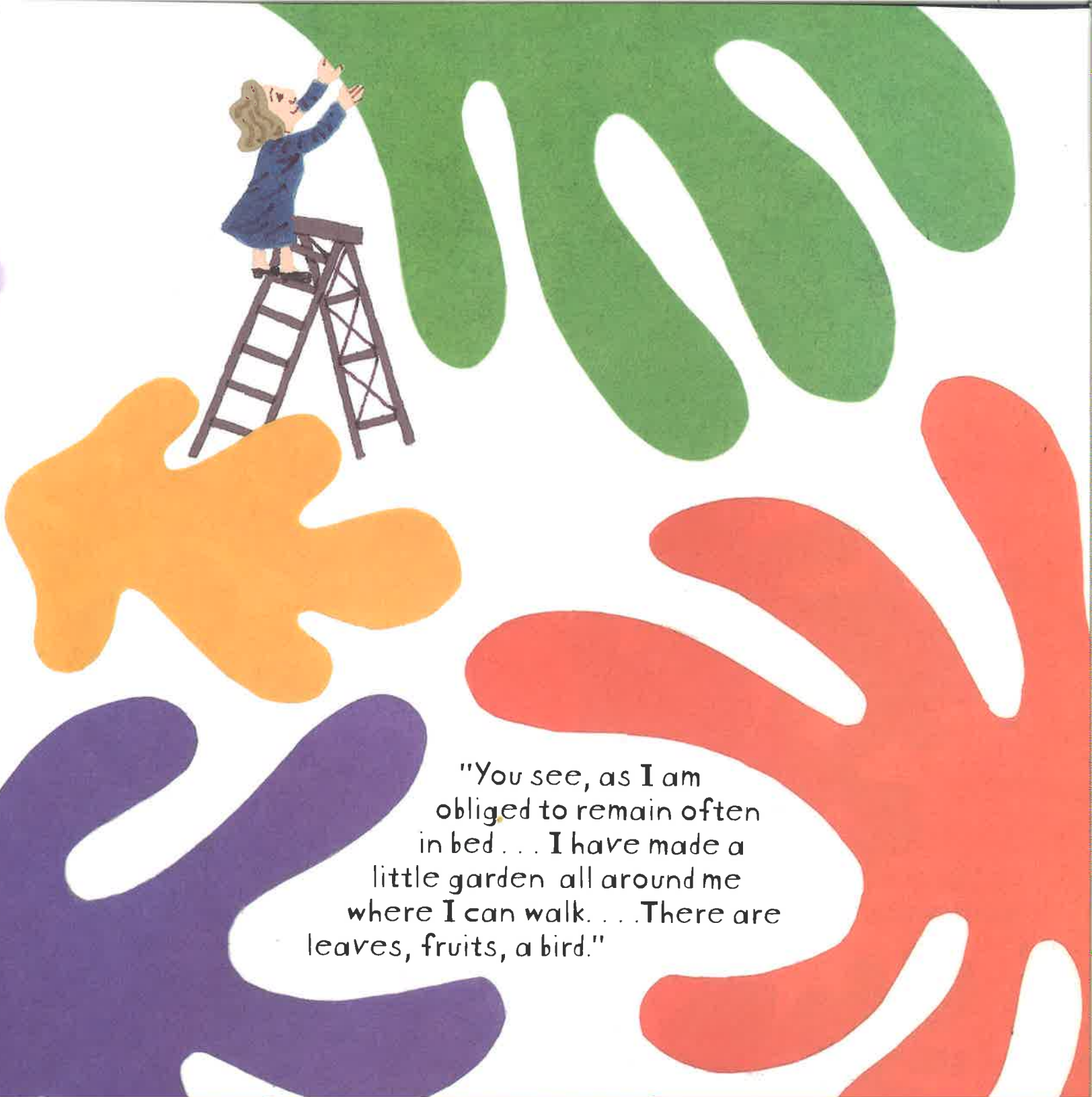


SHAPES that surrounded him in sleep.





, Matisse cut bigger and bigger shapes.  
led his seaside room with color.



"You see, as I am  
obliged to remain often  
in bed . . . I have made a  
little garden all around me  
where I can walk . . . There are  
leaves, fruits, a bird."









nt, Matisse walked out into his paper garden, and the

rainbow of shapes cradled the old artist and carried him into the heavens.

Some of the stars  
we see at night  
are coming to us from  
Peter's scissors?

Perhaps.





## or's note

n Le Cateau-Cambrésis, France,  
f his life in Paris, where he  
ant-garde painting. At age  
me seriously ill and survived  
ody was frail, but not his spirit.  
colored paper and a pair of  
n 1954.

uctions of Matisse's large cut-  
ional Gallery in Washington,  
the enormous wall-size images  
Matisse's garden, surrounded by  
at experience was the impetus for

worked were Matisse's own  
rom his correspondence with his  
ouveyre, which can be found in  
Hazen, 2005).

—J. W.



“Though produced  
by a very old man  
who was mortally ill,  
[the cut-outs]  
seem to come from  
the springtime  
of the world.”

—John Russell,  
*New York Times*, November 25, 1984





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