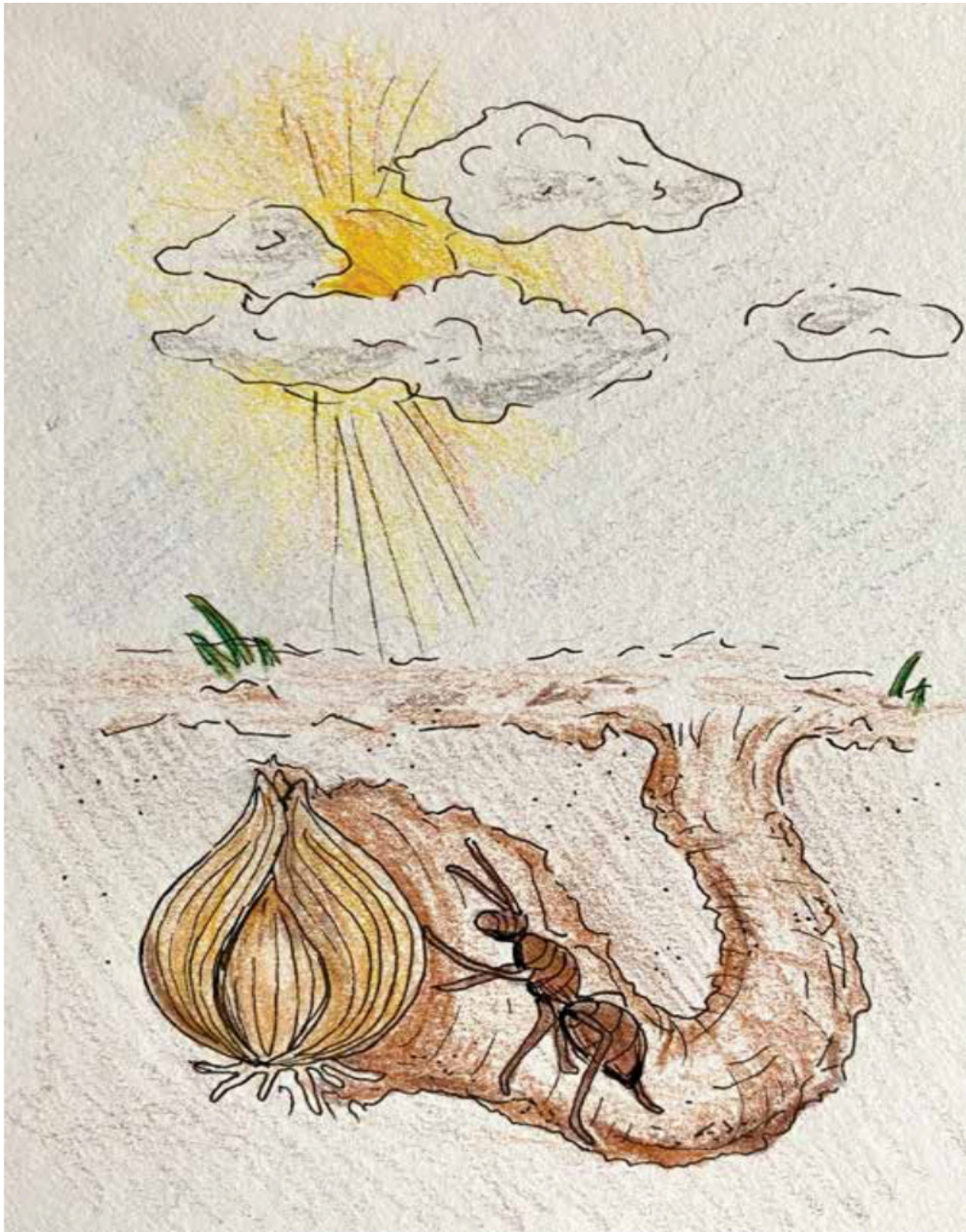
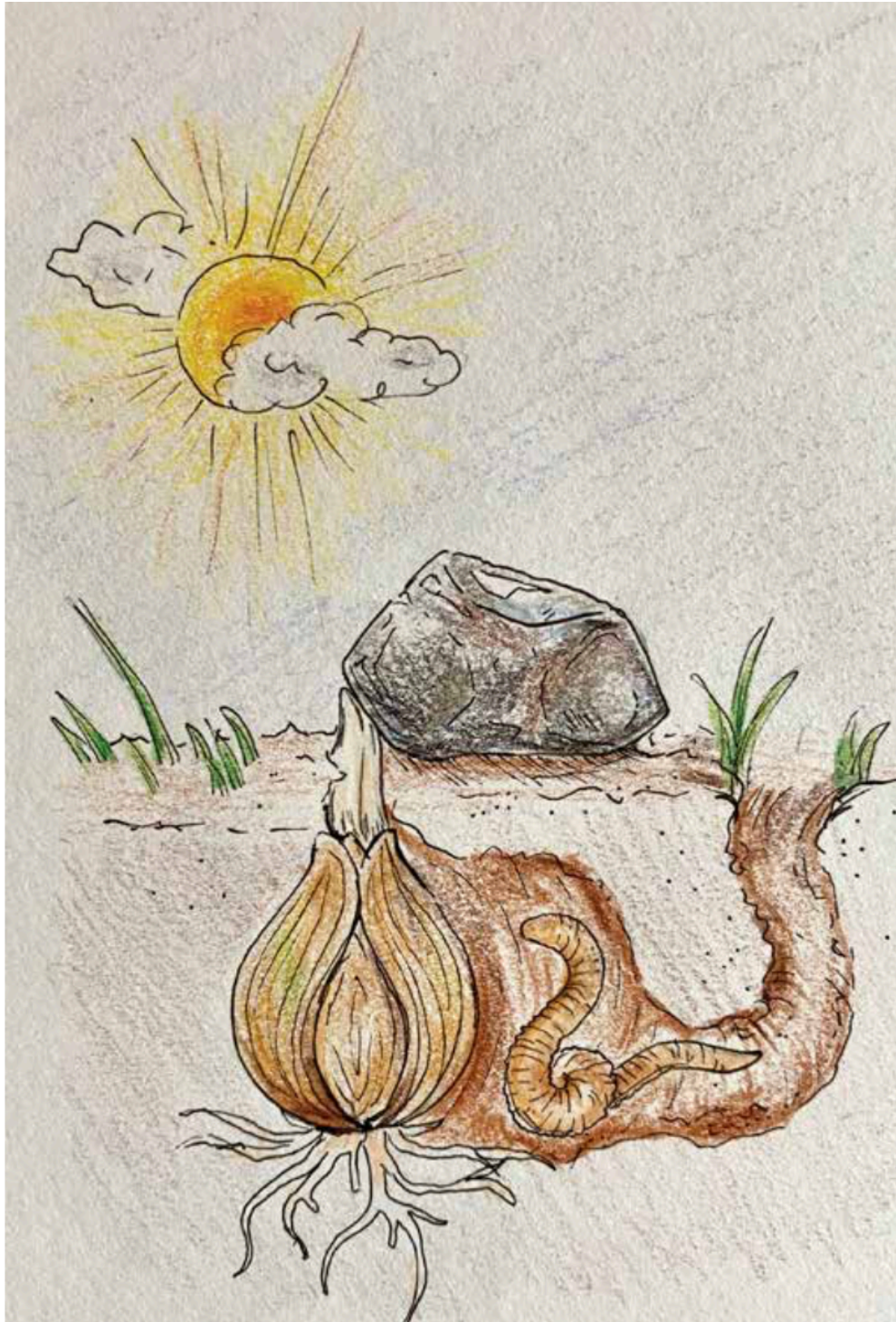


The Daffodil

A little bulb was lying in the earth. She had been asleep in the ground for many cold winter days. One day an ant came burrowing through the soil and tickled the little bulb awake. He chattered as he worked, and chattered so quickly that the little bulb had to ask him what he had been saying. The little ant said “Spring is coming, spring is coming” and he scurried away. He had found some fresh green grass and wanted to finish building his house.

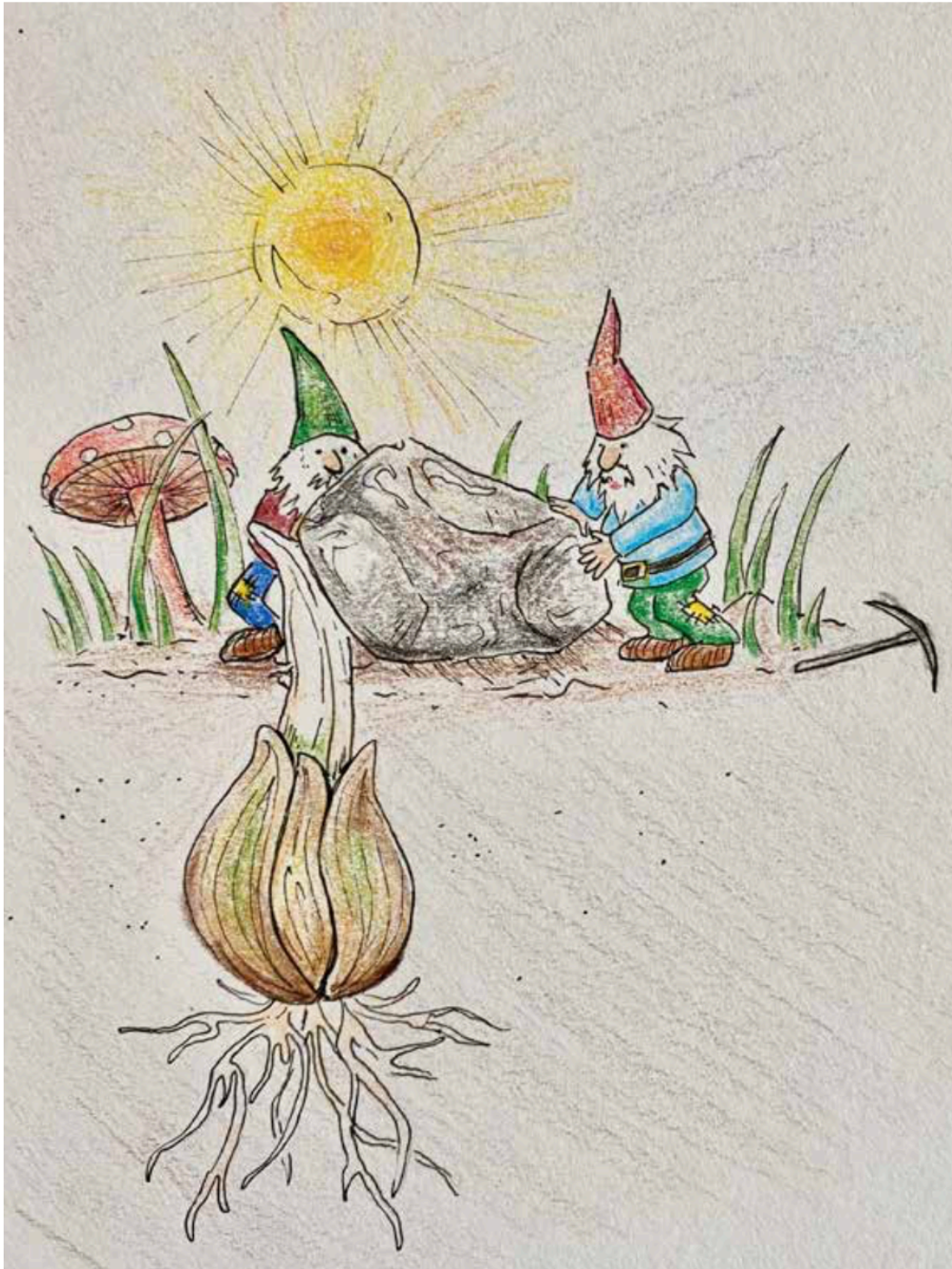


“Spring,” thought the little bulb “Can spring really be coming?” Just then her old friend the worm came slowly by, carefully pushing aside the earth as he traveled along. “Oh you lovely worm,” said the little bulb “Is it true what the little ant told me? Is it true that spring is coming?” The worm answered, “Yesterday upon my journey I am sure the soil felt warm, warmer than it felt for days now. It is time for you to grow up. See if you can stretch your head and come out of the soil.”

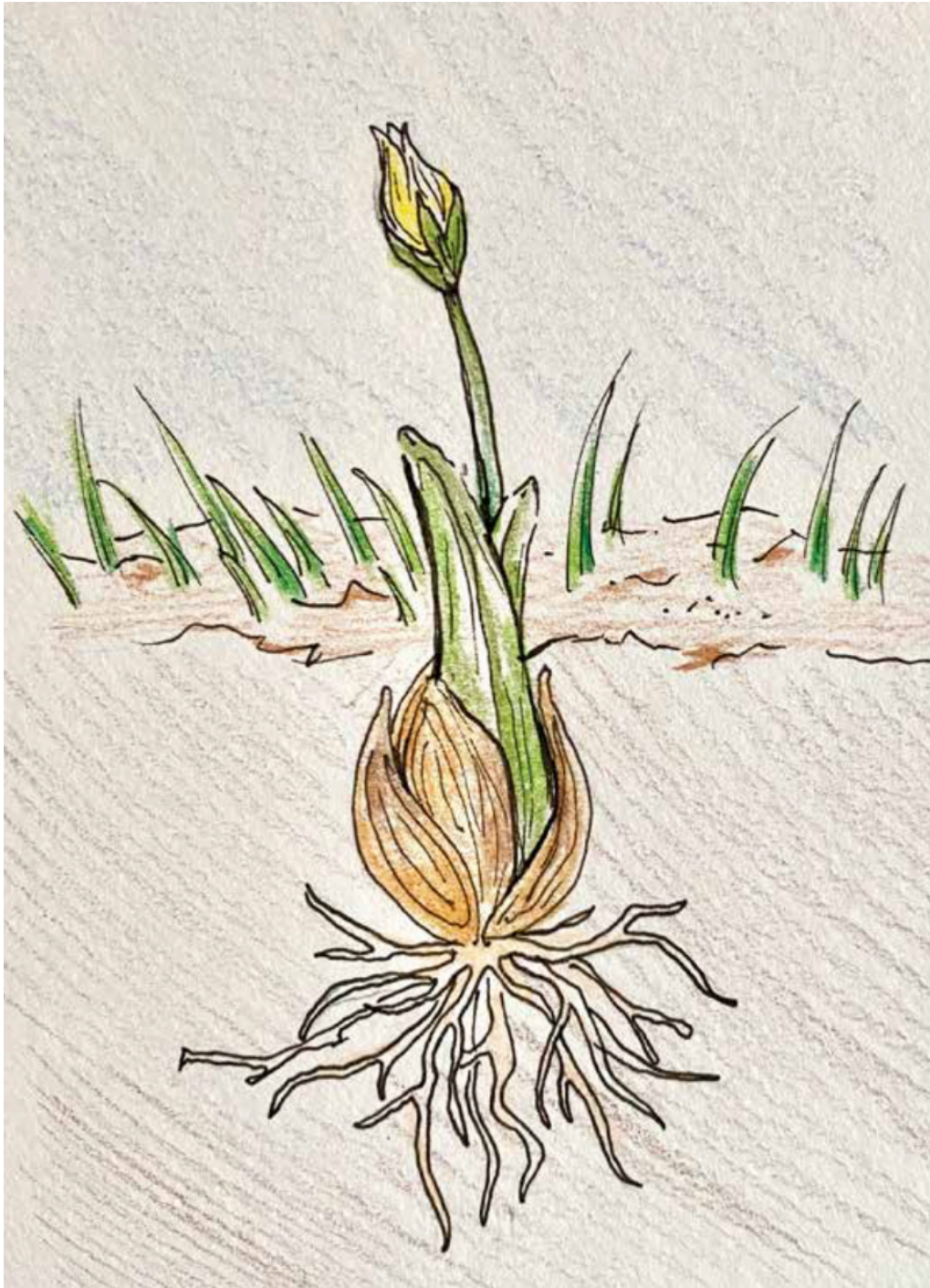


The little bulb was very excited to hear the worm's words. She began to push a little white root down into the earth and at the same time she pushed upwards a delicate white shoot. But when the shoot was just coming out of the earth, it hit a rock. The daffodil cried, "Oh dear! A rock is in my way. I doubt if I shall see the day! How can I lift my head out of the soil now?"

Fortunately, two little gnomes, who were taking a walk through the springtime garden, heard the daffodil crying. They came at once and pushed and pushed on the rock with all their might until the rock rolled away.



Now the daffodil was able to push her head through the soil. She was so happy to feel the warm sunshine on her face. Slowly, slowly, she unfolded her leaves and opened her blossom. A warm spring breeze was blowing and the daffodil was swaying and dancing to the wind's song.



Soon a child and his mother came into the garden and saw the daffodil. His mother said, “Spring time must be here now that the first daffodil has awakened.”

