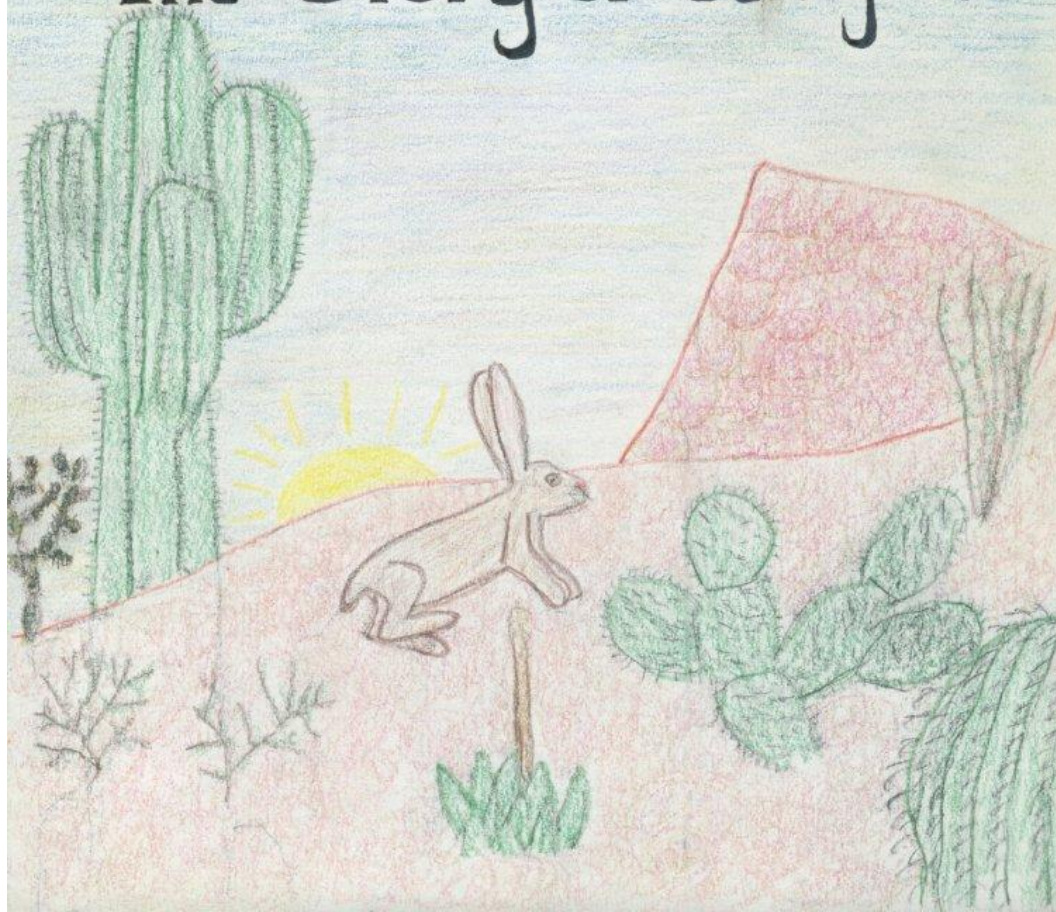


Little Rabbit's Journey The Story of Conejito



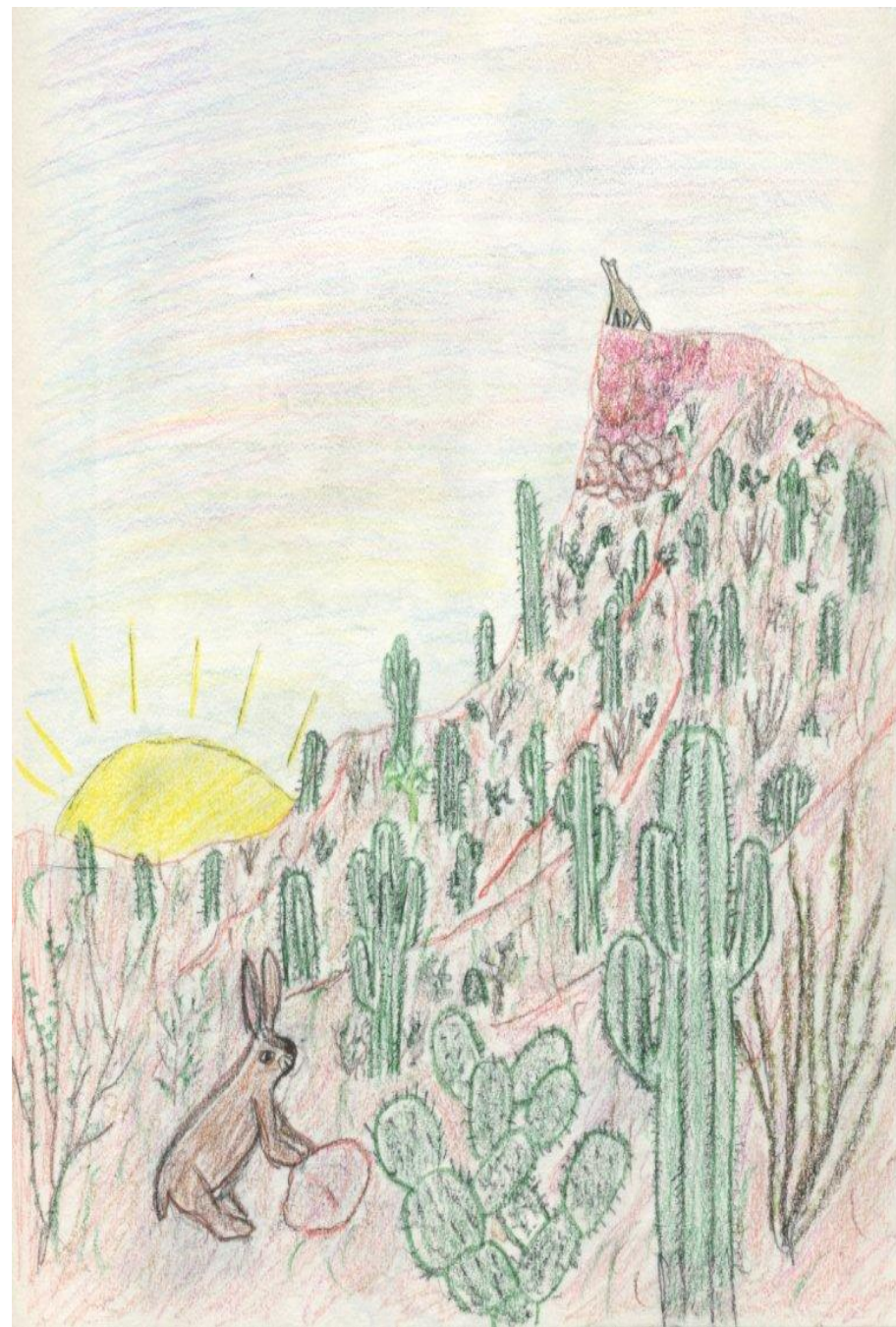
Little Rabbit's
Journey
The Story of Conejito

Written and illustrated

By Sean Gregersen

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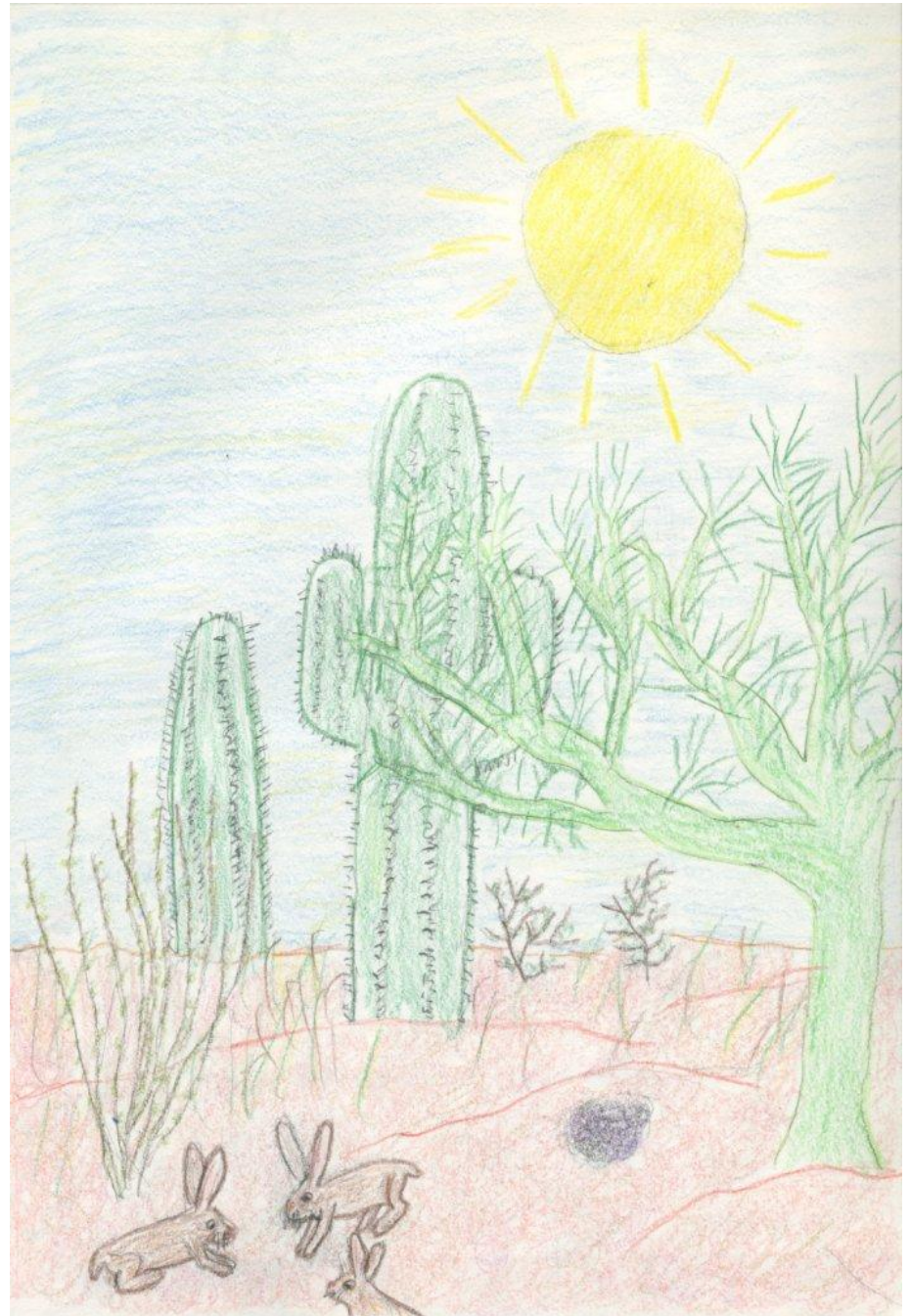
Everyday when the sun fell from the sky, Conejito (co-nay-hee-toe) wondered where the sun would go. He asked his parents and other small desert creatures. They did not know and would say, "I do not know where the sun goes, as long as I see it keep rising in the morning, it does not matter." Conejito was unhappy with this answer and wanted to find out. One day at sunset Conejito decided to find his own answer tomorrow. He looked up the mountain to Lookout Point. The cliff was so high, surely you could see where the sun went from there.



The next day by the palo verde tree (pal-o ver-day) Conejito asked his brother and sister if they would like to journey to the top of Lookout Point with him.

His sister exclaimed, "the journey is far to dangerous, you could run into many creatures that will eat you along the way. Please do not go to Lookout Point!"

"It is far too long of journey for me, and your sister right. It is too dangerous, don't go!", his brother demanded.



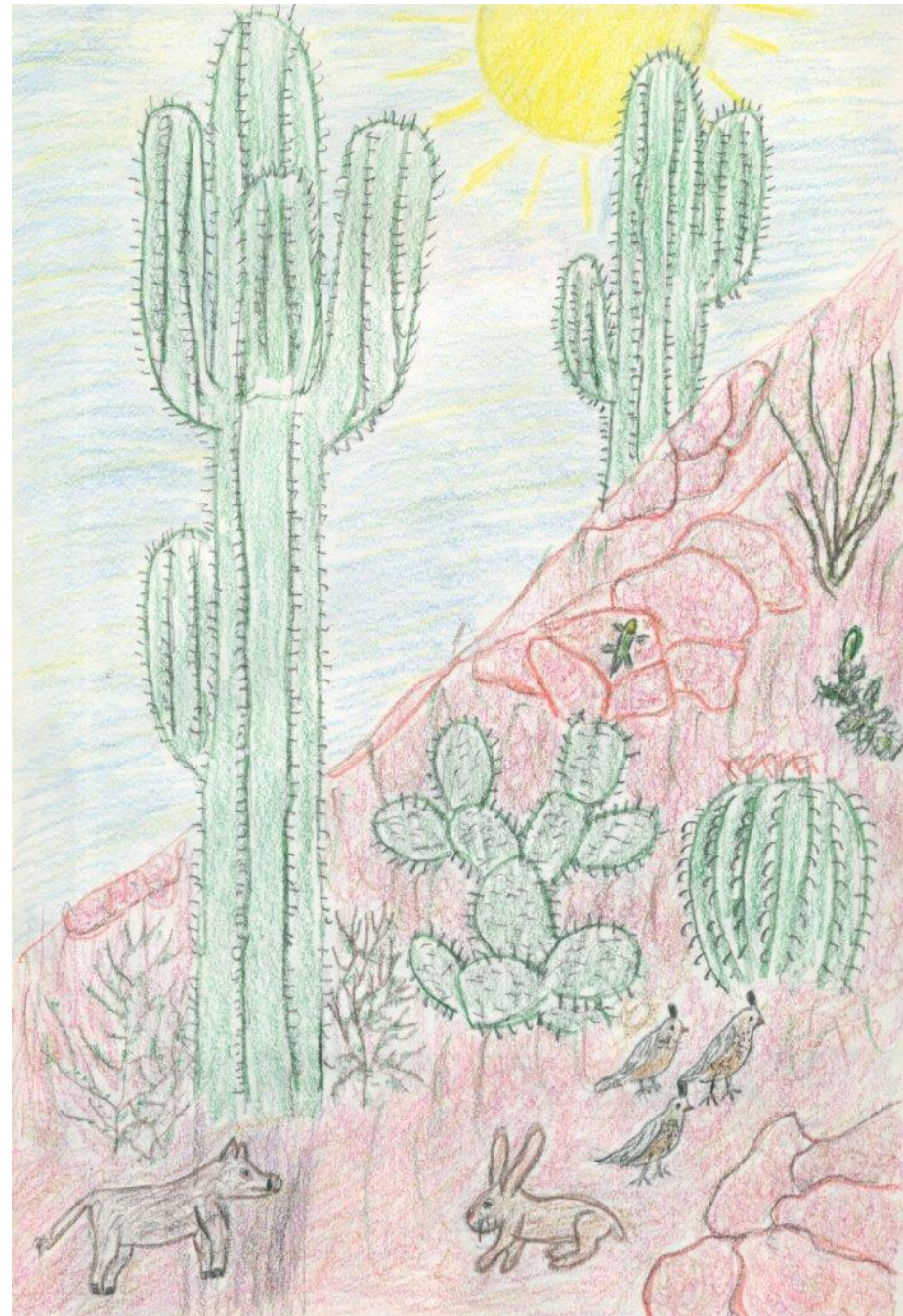
But, Conejito did not listen. He started hopping up to Lookout Point. On his way he saw many friends. First he came upon Javelina (hav-a-lee-na), who was resting in the shade of a giant saguaro (sa-wa-ro).

Conejito asked, "I am going to the top of Lookout Point and discover where the sun goes when it falls from the sky. Do you want to come with me?"

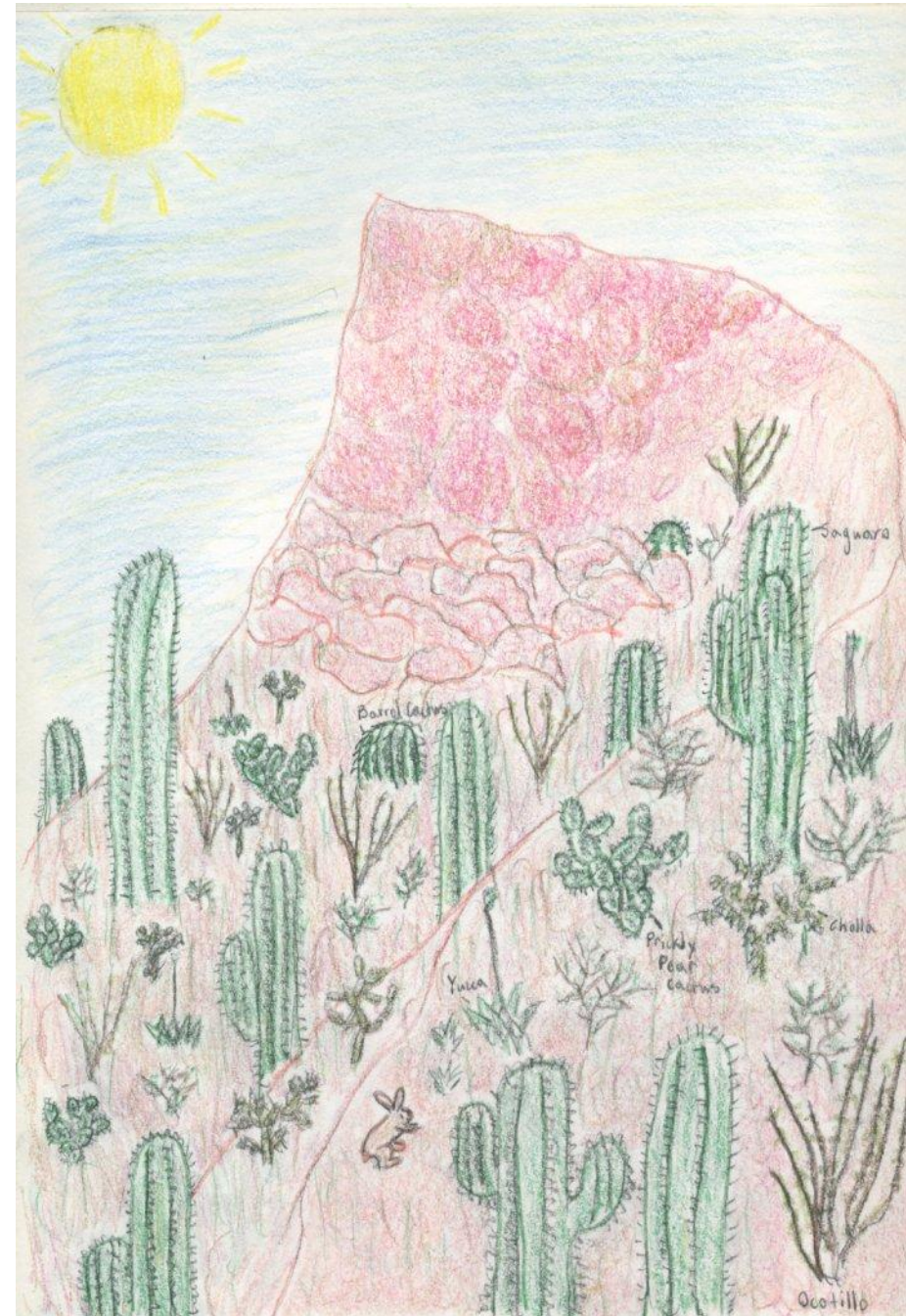
Javelina snorted, "It is too hot to travel during the middle of the day and I am enjoying my nice shady spot."

Next, he asked his friends, the Quail family. They peeped, "there is not place to hide and we must stay together where it is safe."

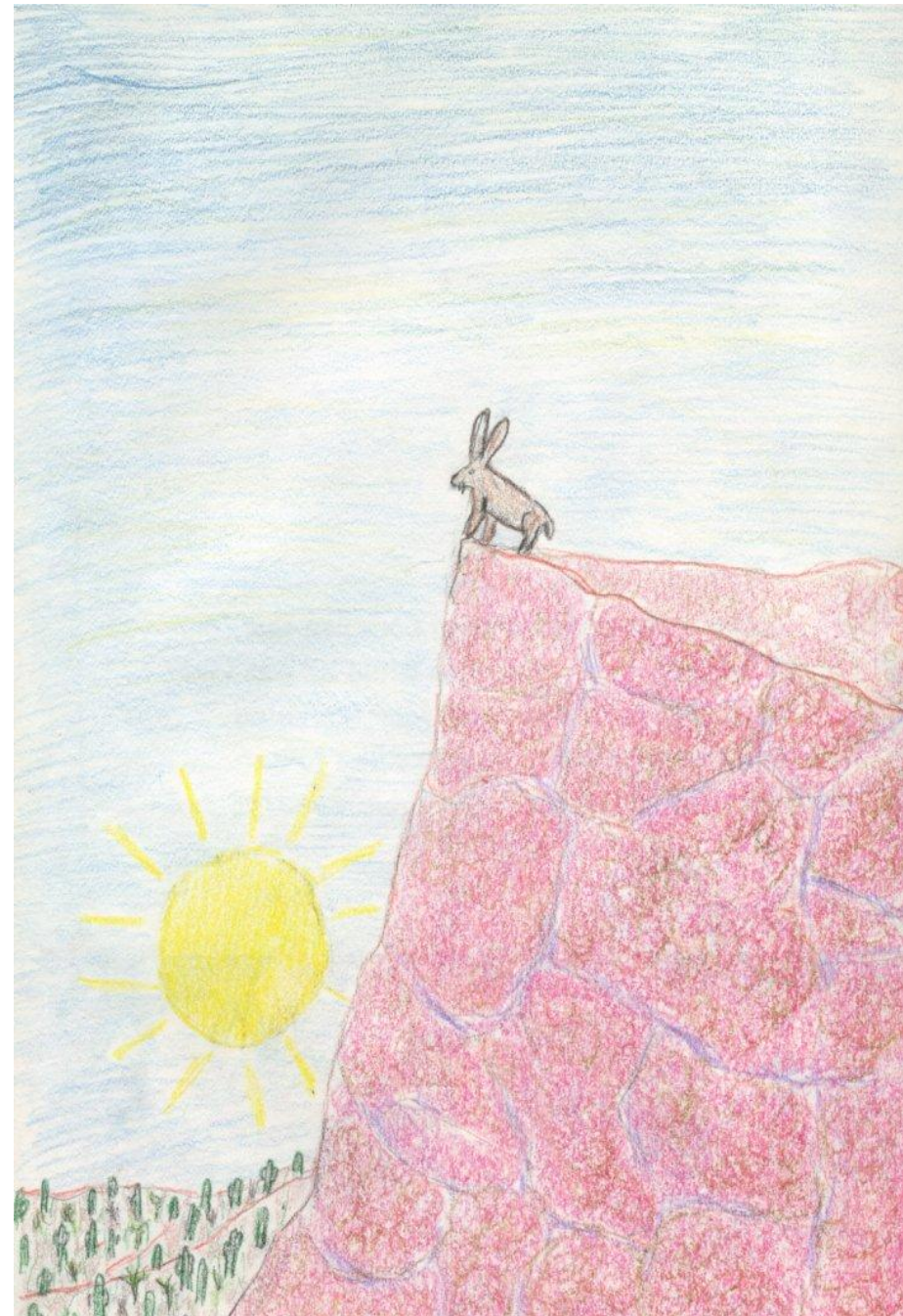
Finally, Conejito hopped to the bright green collared lizard that was sun bathing on a rock. After being asked, the lizard twitched, "It is far too long for my short legs to travel and too many creatures like to eat lizards."



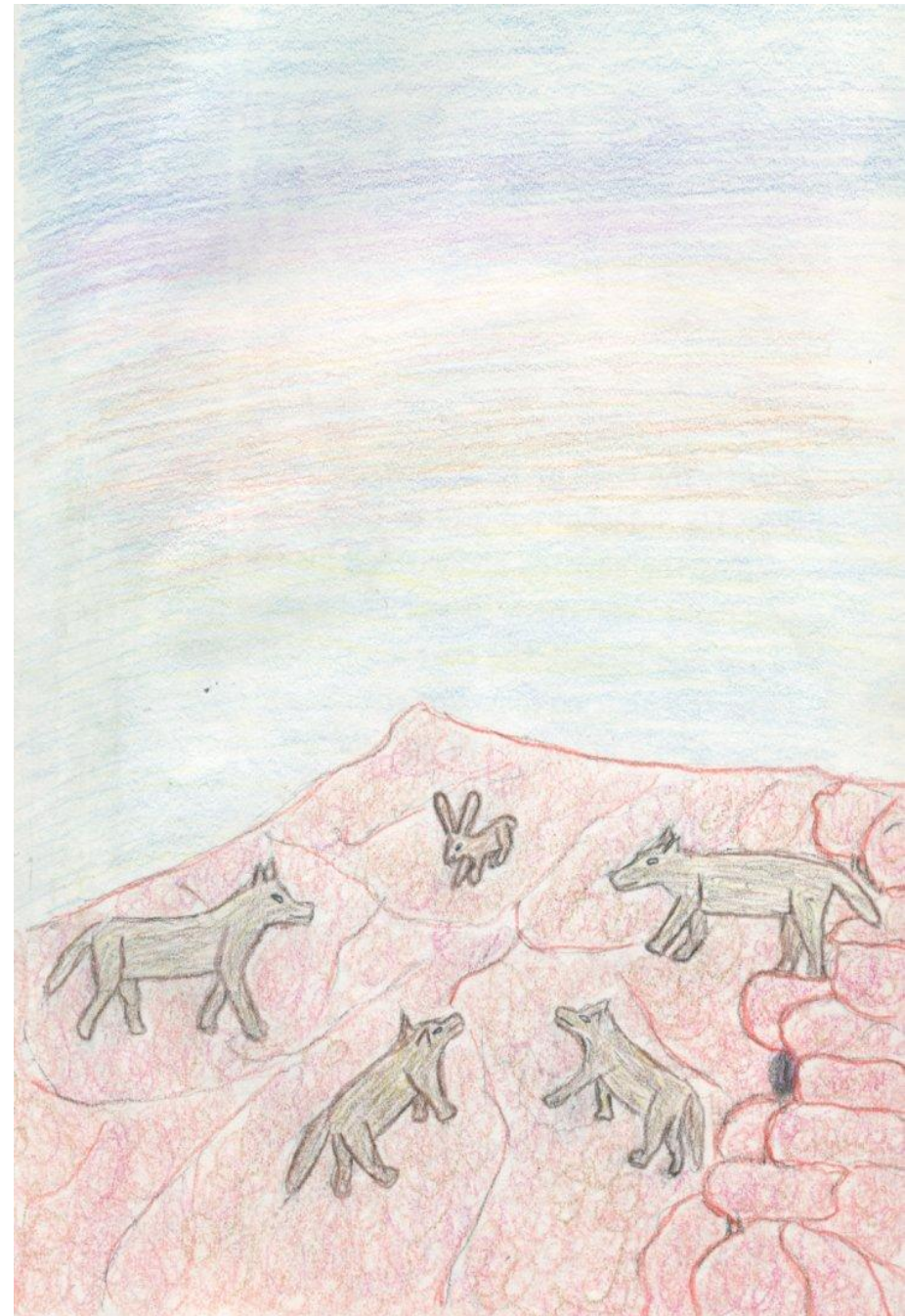
Determined to find his answer, Conejito hopped up the mountain alone. Along the way he passed many desert plants. Like giants, the enormous arms of the saguaros reached high into the sky. The prickly pear cactus spread out in all directions with its prickly oval paddles. The many tentacles of the ocotillo (o-co-tee-yo) swayed in the light breeze. Nasty spines of the cholla cactus (ch-oy-a) shouted to intruders to stay away. The long wooden sprout of the yucca reached toward the sun.



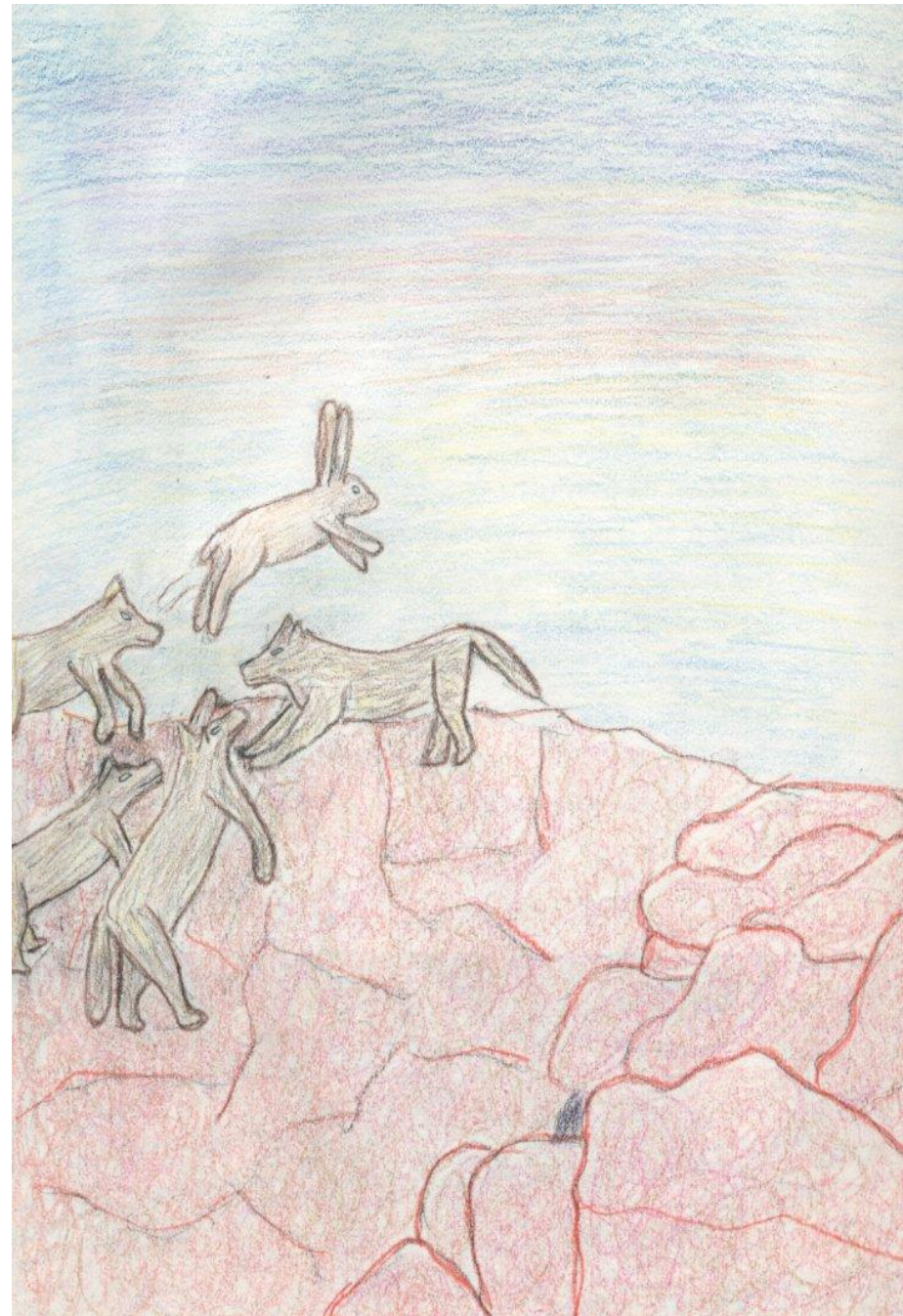
By the time Conejito reached the top, his legs ached and it was late in the day. Conejito hobbled up to the edge of Lookout Point and peaked over. Lands he had never seen before stretched in all directions. Conejito looked across the distant lands in awe. The sun quickly started falling below the horizon. Conejito could see further, but still he could not see where the sun disappeared to. Tired and getting cold, Conejito decided to return back home.



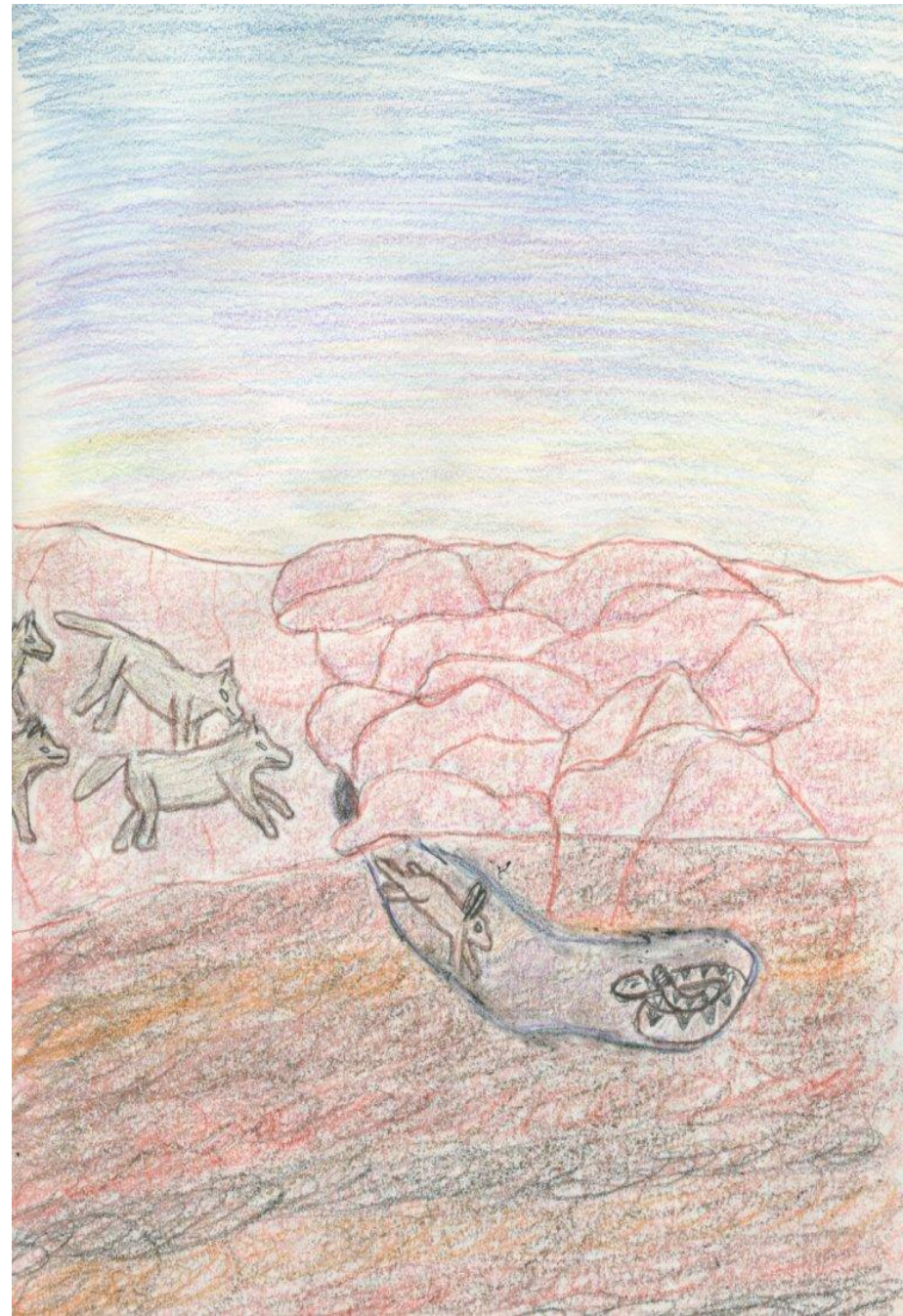
When he turned around Conejito saw four coyotes had snuck up on him while he was lost in his curiosity about the sun. Shivers of fear trembled down Conejito's back. The coyotes started yipping with excitement at the thought of a tasty rabbit dinner. Conejito was trapped between the coyotes and the cliff. His heart was pounding so hard that it felt like it was going to leap out of his chest.



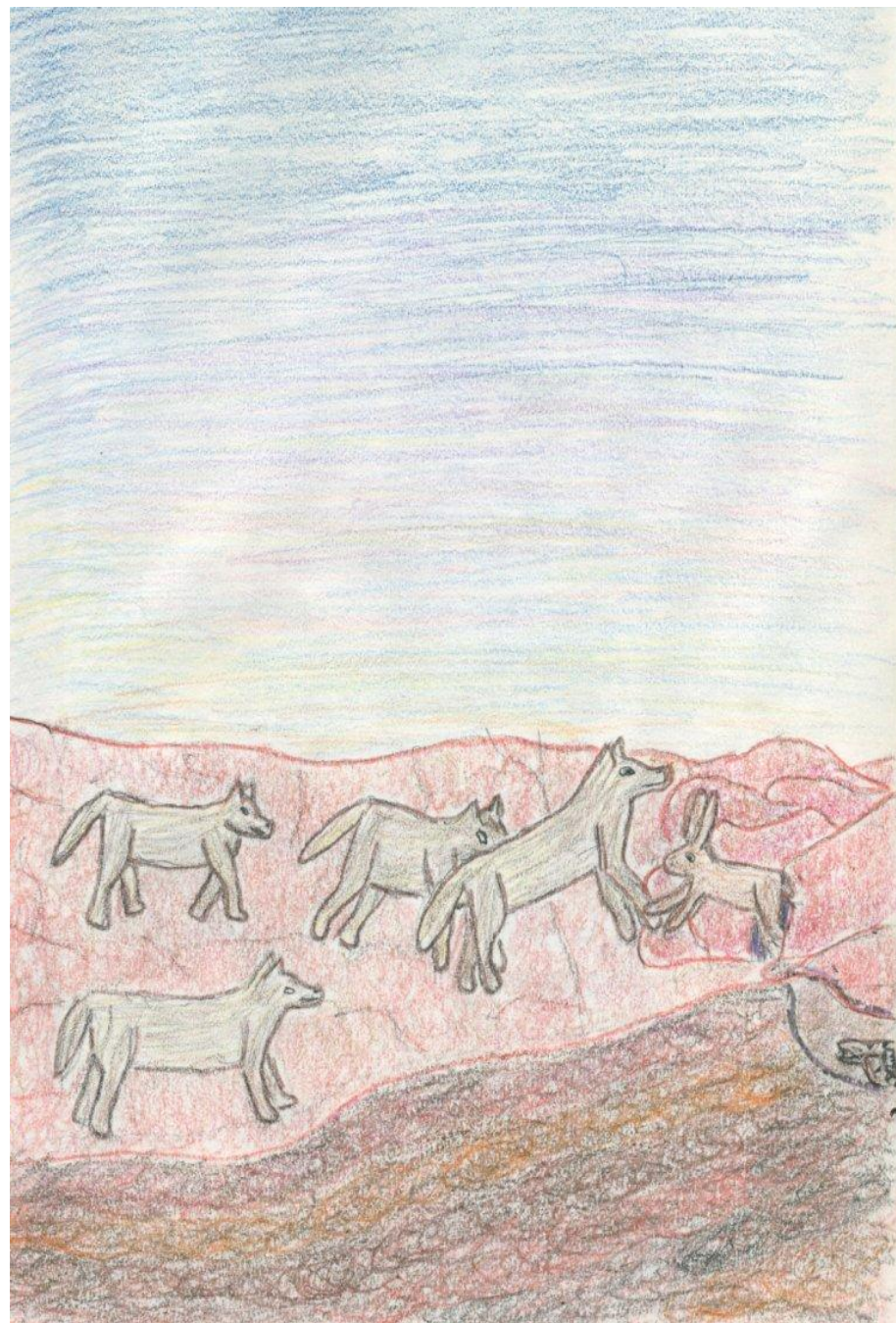
With a rush of fear, Conejito gained new energy. He did what rabbits do best. He hopped with all his might and leaped right over the coyotes. Surprised at how high he leaped, the coyotes turned around and chased him. Conejito quickly spotted a crack under a rock and darted towards it.



As soon as Conejito started under the crack, the air vibrated and rattled. This was the home of Rattlesnake and Rattlesnake did not like visitors. Rattlesnake's poisonous bite would surely be the end of Conejito if he did not leave. Yet, outside the hole yipped the four hungry coyotes. For the second time, Conejito did not know what to do.



Rattlesnake lunged toward Conejito with his long poisonous fangs. Conejito had turned around just in time. The rattlesnake's bite caught a piece of fur on the end of Conejito's tail. At full speed Conejito leaped out of the hole directly at one of the coyotes. Surprised at the speed of the rabbit heading toward him, the coyote jumped back making way for Conejito to escape.



Conejito swerved and jumped to get past the coyotes. Like the Quail family said, there was no other place to hide. The coyotes chased Conejito down the mountain, several times nearly trapping and catching him. Hopping as fast as he could, Conejito tried to find a place to escape the coyotes' chase. Finally, he found a tortoise hole by a barrel cactus that he could escape into. Conejito quickly leaped in, this time the hole was empty. Everyone of Conejito's heart beat painfully pounded like a drum in his head. The coyotes yipped and howled in frustration outside the hole.

For several hours, the coyotes yipped, howled, scratched, and dug at the entrance of the hole. Cold chills snuck up and down Conejito's body and he collapsed into a deep sleep. Conejito dreamt about yipping coyotes, snuggling next to his family, and watching a new sunrise.



The next day when the sun rose, Conejito woke up. All his muscles ached from last night's chase. Carefully, Conejito crawled out of the hole looking to see if the coyotes were playing a trick. The coyotes were nowhere to be found. The careful journey back lasted most of the day. When he arrived home, his worried family greeted Conejito, happy he was back.

His brother and sister asked, "Conejito, where does the sun go when it falls from the sky?"

Tired and sore, Conejito muttered, "I traveled to Coyote Point, I mean Lookout Point and looked far beyond, and still don't know. So, I do not know where the sun goes, as long as I see it keep rising in the morning with the family I love, it does not matter."

That evening's sunset while the coyotes howled at Lookout Point, Conejito cuddled and snuggled with his family ready for a good night's sleep.

