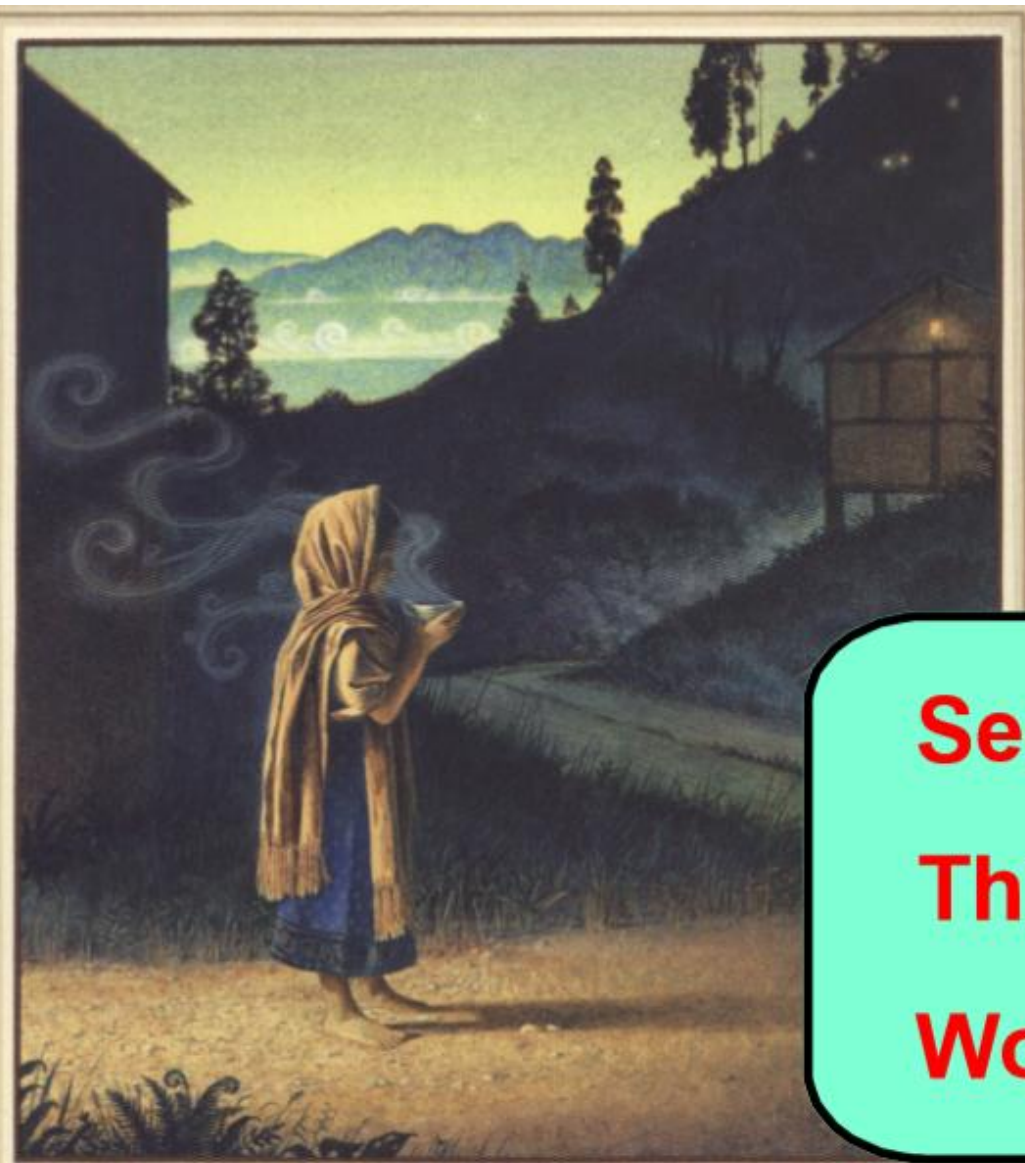




MAL PEET & ELSPETH GRAHAM

# CLOUD TEA MONKEYS

ILLUSTRATED BY  
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**See**



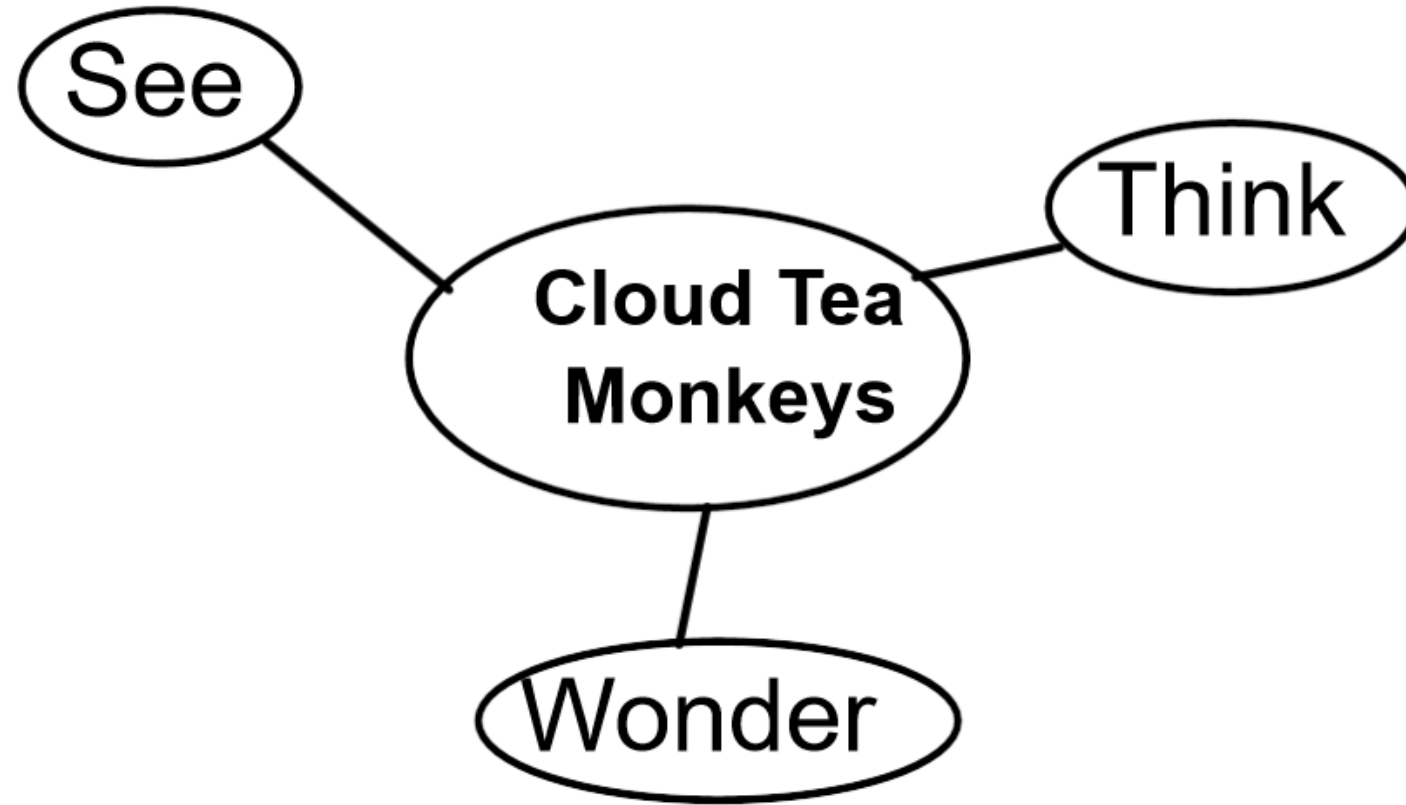
**Think**



**Wonder**

?

Task 1:

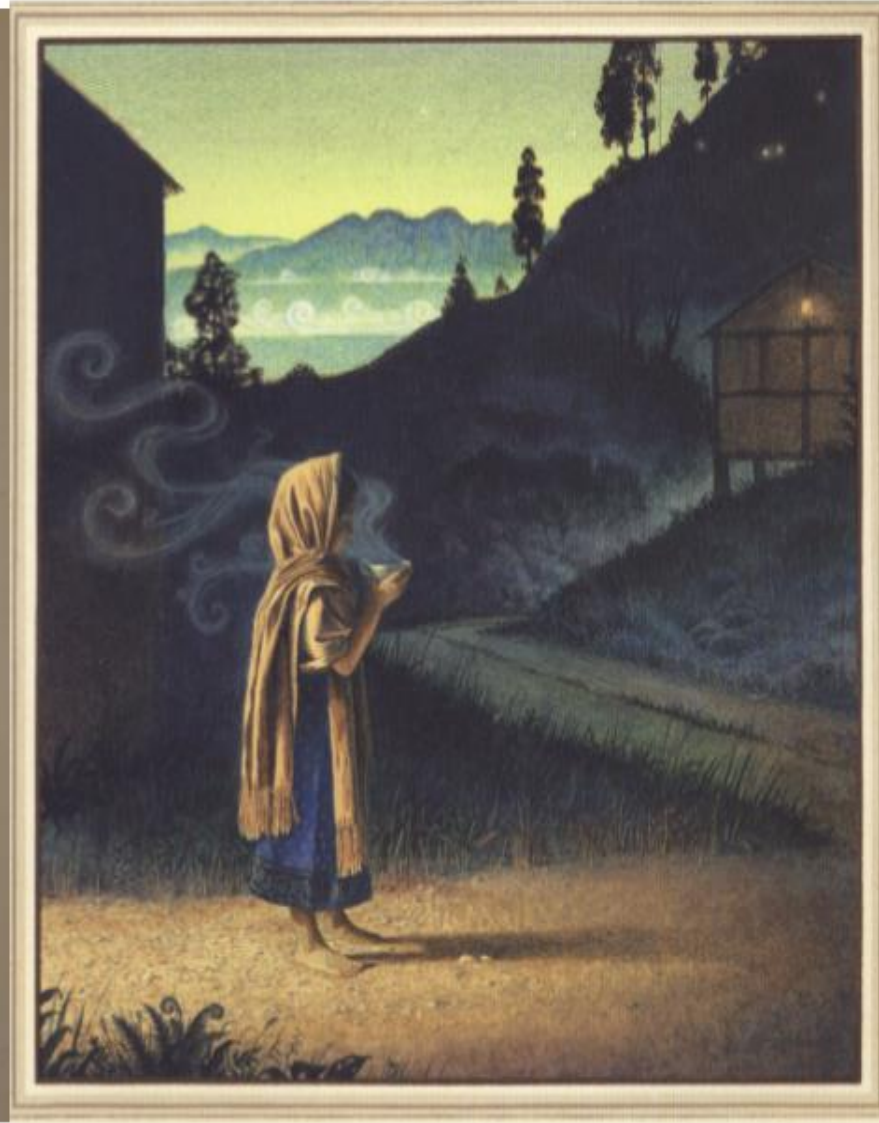




## Page 1:

ONE BY ONE, the familiar sounds of morning drew Tashi from her sleep. Her mother breathing life into the fire; the hiss and crackle of the twigs as the flames caught; the whispering of the soot-blackened kettle as the water came to the boil.

Tashi took her bowl of sweet tea outside and stood beside the rough road in the blue morning. The sun had not yet found a way through the mountains, but it was coming; a light the colour of lemons was soaking into the sky and painting out the stars. The air was very cold. Tashi shivered and pulled her shawl more tightly around herself. As the stars went out, small squares of light appeared on the dark hillside above her: lamps were being lit in the village. A cockerel crowed and another answered. Inside the house her mother coughed, twice.



Task 2: What words and phrases contribute to the feeling of calm and tranquility? Write them down.



It was not long before they heard voices and laughter from where the road curved down from the hill. Then the women came, their white headscarves glowing in the half-dark, their clothes bright patches of scarlet, green, indigo. Each woman carried a great wicker basket, bigger than Tashi. They called her name, their voices wobbly in the cold air. Her mother came out of the house, her back bent under the burden of her tea-basket.

The walk to the tea plantation was long, but for Tashi this was a happy part of the day. The women gossiped and made jokes about their husbands. The sun was kind too, laying warm patches in the road that were good to walk into out of the cold shadows. Later the sun would turn cruel, burning down from a hazy sky.



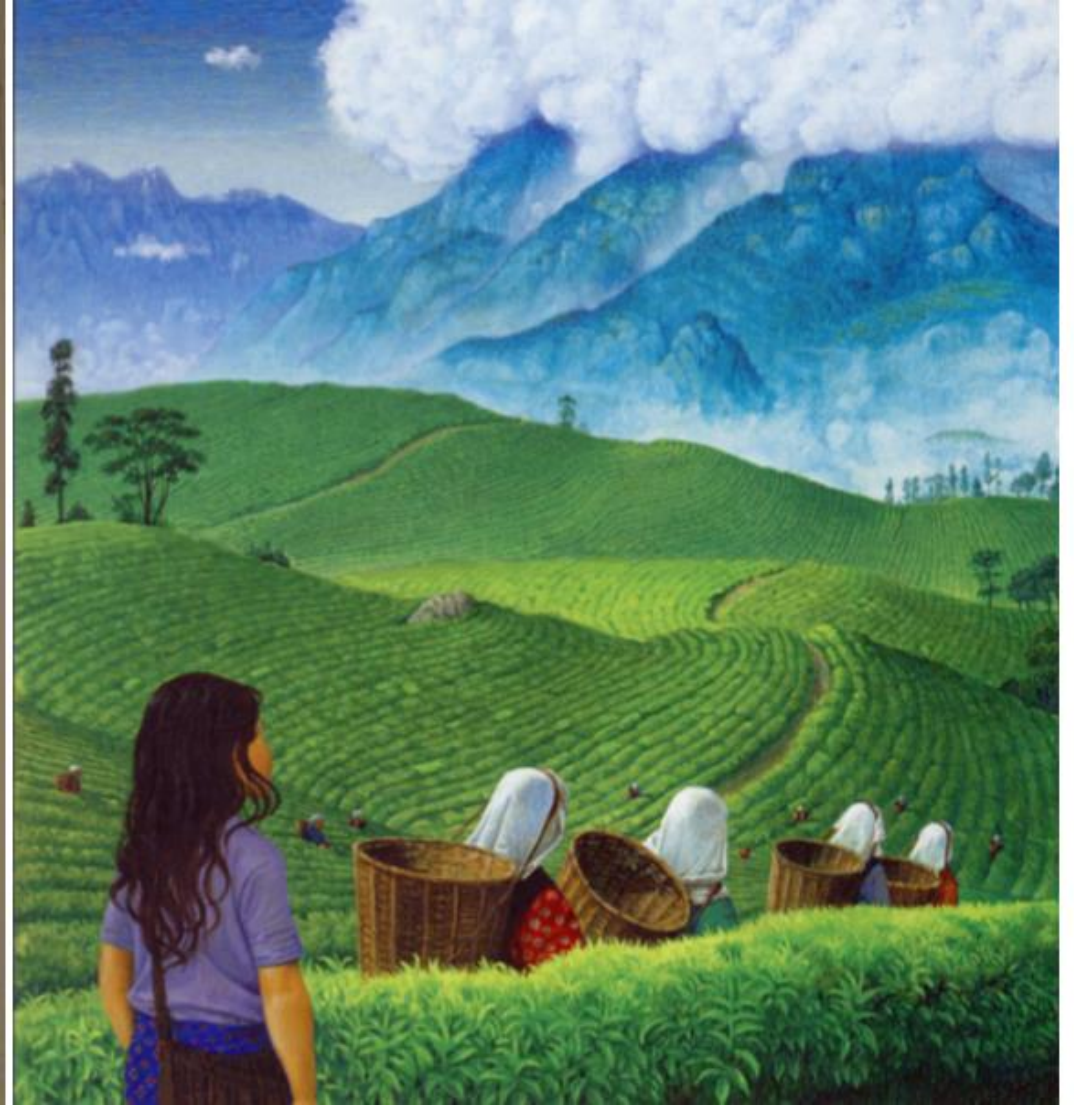
# Page 3

When Tashi and her mother and the women arrived at the tea plantation the Overseer came out of his hut, yawning and scratching his belly. He was a bad-tempered man with a beaky nose and eyes like sharp little stones.

The women stood silently while he told them what they already knew, what they had always known: to pick only the young leaves and the buds from the tops of each bush. Then they found their places and began, plucking the tender leaves and buds and tossing them over their shoulders into their great wicker baskets.

The rows of glossy green tea bushes curved into the distance like waves. Tashi had never seen the end of the plantation. Perhaps it had no end. Perhaps it went right around the world.

Within an hour the sun had sucked the mist up out of the valleys and hung it like a great grey curtain over the tops of the mountains. Up there, on those wild mountain-tops above the cloud, were things Tashi was afraid of: big cats with jade-green eyes and snakes like yellow whips.



- **Task 3: What do we know about the characters so far?**
- For each character, write down at least 2 words to describe their personality and explain with evidence from the text.
- Also, write down what each character might be thinking in the scene on the last page - think about showing their character in what they say...
- *E.g. The Overseer is disrespectful; he gives orders to the women and treats them like they are stupid as they already know what to do.*
- *He might be thinking 'Stupid women, every day I have to tell them what to do and every day they just stand there.'*