

Welcome to my portfolio

Sue Gent

www.illustrationx.com/de/SueGent



ILLUSTRATION X
Sue Gent

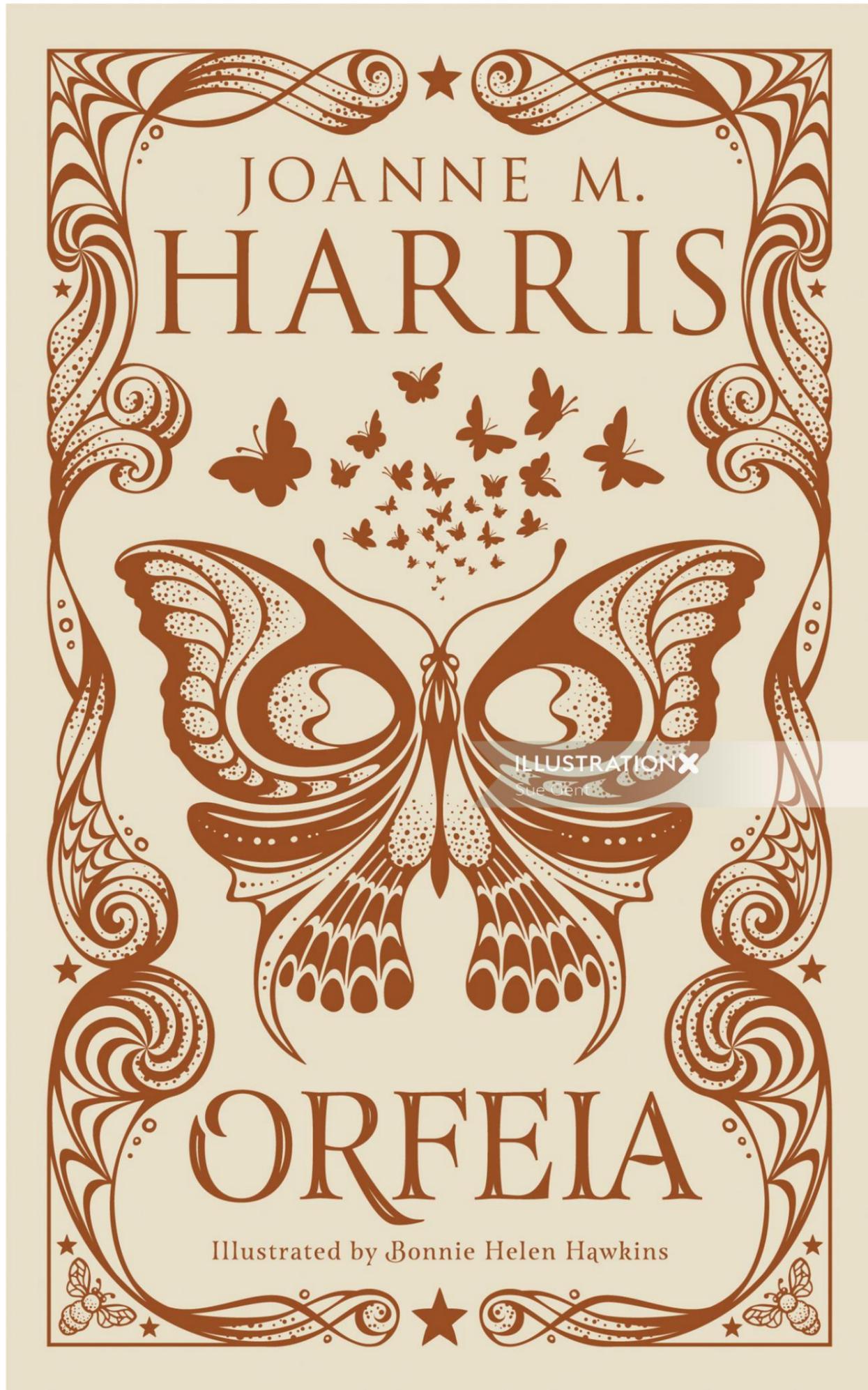
Sue Gent

www.illustrationx.com/de/SueGent



Sue Gent

www.illustrationx.com/de/SueGent



Sue Gent

www.illustrationx.com/de/SueGent



ILLUSTRATIONX
Sue Gent

Sue Gent

www.illustrationx.com/de/SueGent



Sue Gent

www.illustrationx.com/de/SueGent



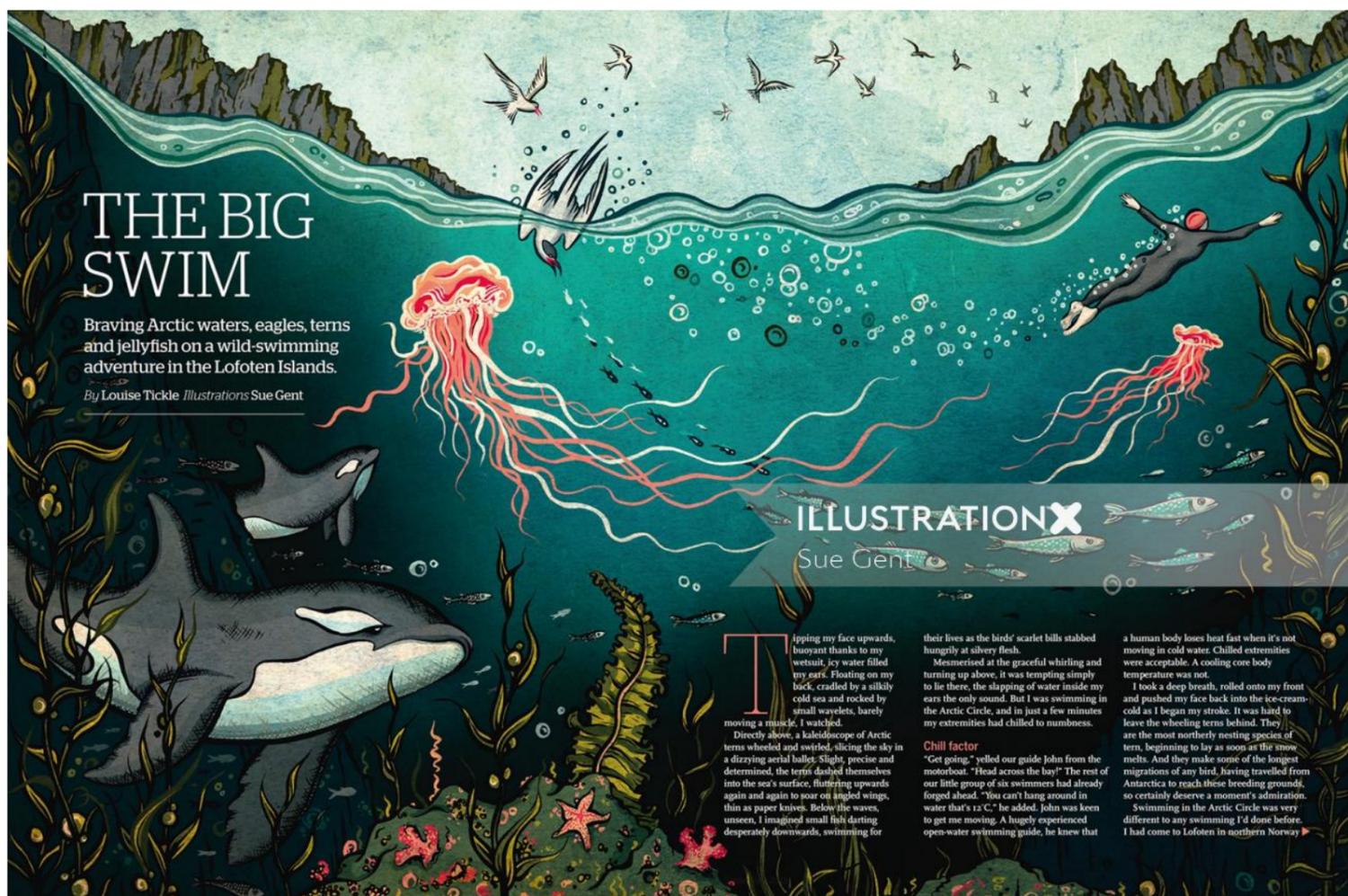
Sue Gent

www.illustrationx.com/de/SueGent



Sue Gent

www.illustrationx.com/de/SueGent



THE BIG SWIM

Braving Arctic waters, eagles, terns and jellyfish on a wild-swimming adventure in the Lofoten Islands.

By Louise Tickle Illustrations Sue Gent

ILLUSTRATIONX
Sue Gent

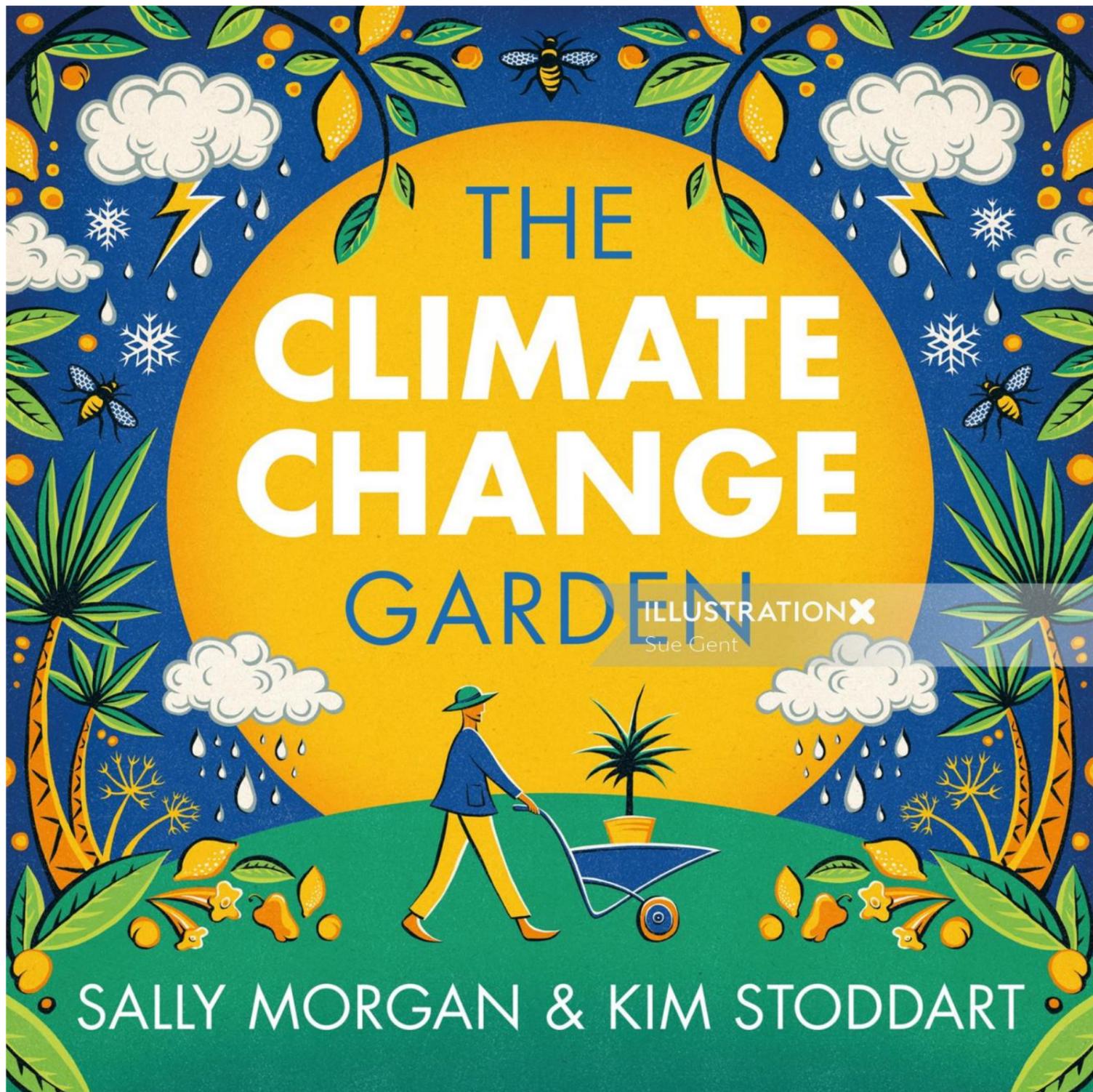
Tipping my face upwards, buoyant thanks to my wetsuit, icy water filled my ears. Floating on my back, cradled by a silky cold sea and rocked by small wavelets, barely moving a muscle, I watched. Directly above, a kaleidoscope of Arctic terns wheeled and swirled, slicing the sky in a dizzying aerial ballet. Slight, precise and determined, the terns dashed themselves into the sea's surface, fluttering upwards again and again to soar on angled wings, thin as paper knives. Below the waves, unseen, I imagined small fish darting desperately downwards, swimming for

their lives as the birds' scarlet bills stabbed hungrily at silvery flesh. Mesmerised at the graceful whirling and turning up above, it was tempting simply to lie there, the slapping of water inside my ears the only sound. But I was swimming in the Arctic Circle, and in just a few minutes my extremities had chilled to numbness. **Chill factor** "Get going," yelled our guide John from the motorboat. "Head across the bay!" The rest of our little group of six swimmers had already forged ahead. "You can't hang around in water that's 12°C," he added. John was keen to get me moving. A hugely experienced open-water swimming guide, he knew that

a human body loses heat fast when it's not moving in cold water. Chilled extremities were acceptable. A cooling core body temperature was not. I took a deep breath, rolled onto my front and pushed my face back into the ice-cream-cold as I began my stroke. It was hard to leave the wheeling terns behind. They are the most northerly nesting species of tern, beginning to lay as soon as the snow melts. And they make some of the longest migrations of any bird, having travelled from Antarctica to reach these breeding grounds, so certainly deserve a moment's admiration. Swimming in the Arctic Circle was very different to any swimming I'd done before. I had come to Lofoten in northern Norway

Sue Gent

www.illustrationx.com/de/SueGent



Sue Gent

www.illustrationx.com/de/SueGent



Sue Gent

www.illustrationx.com/de/SueGent



Sue Gent

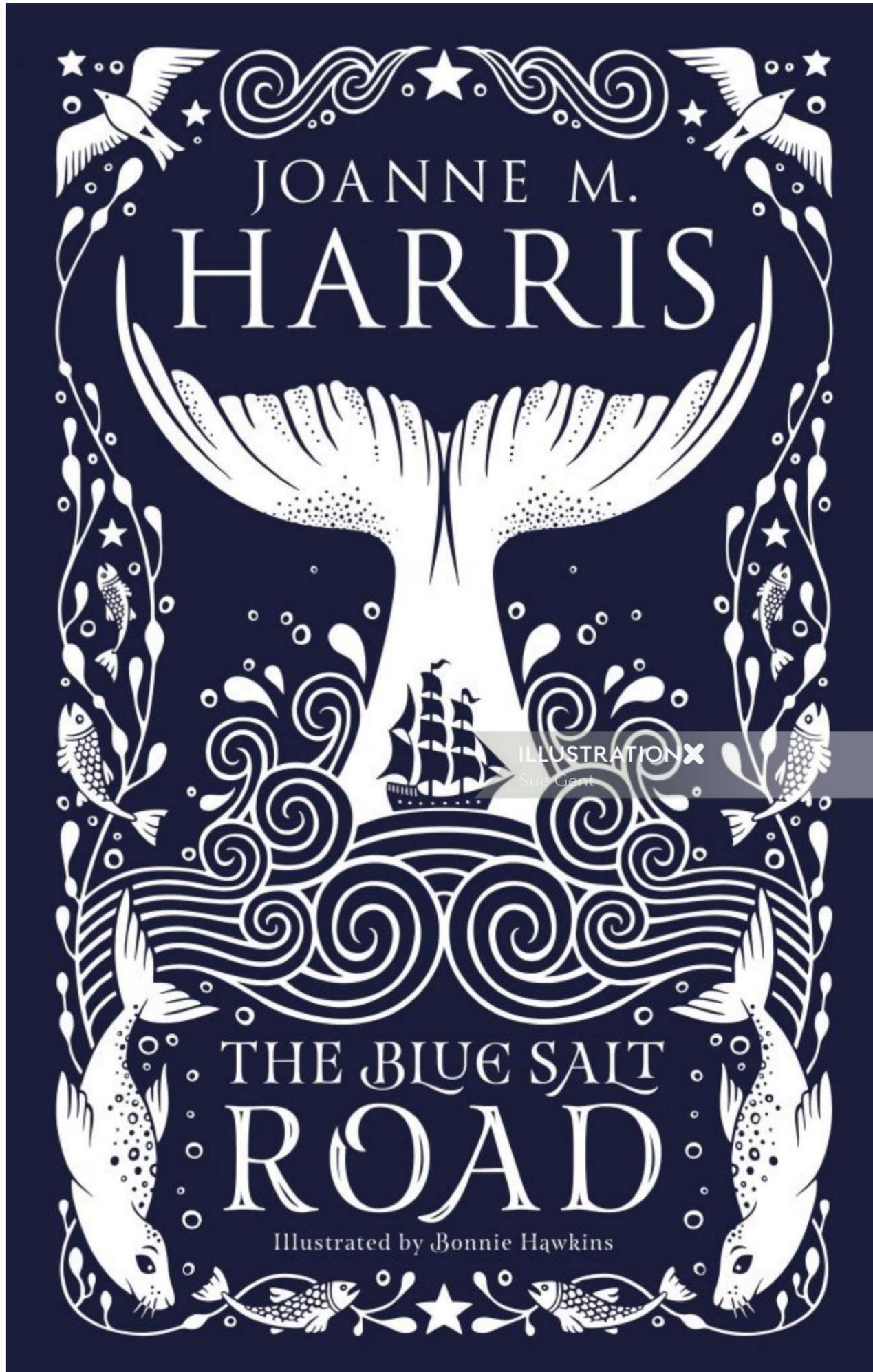
www.illustrationx.com/de/SueGent



ILLUSTRATIONX
Sue Gent

Sue Gent

www.illustrationx.com/de/SueGent



Sue Gent

www.illustrationx.com/de/SueGent



ILLUSTRATIONX
Sue Gent

Sue Gent

www.illustrationx.com/de/SueGent



Sue Gent

www.illustrationx.com/de/SueGent



ILLUSTRATIONX
Sue Gent

Sue Gent

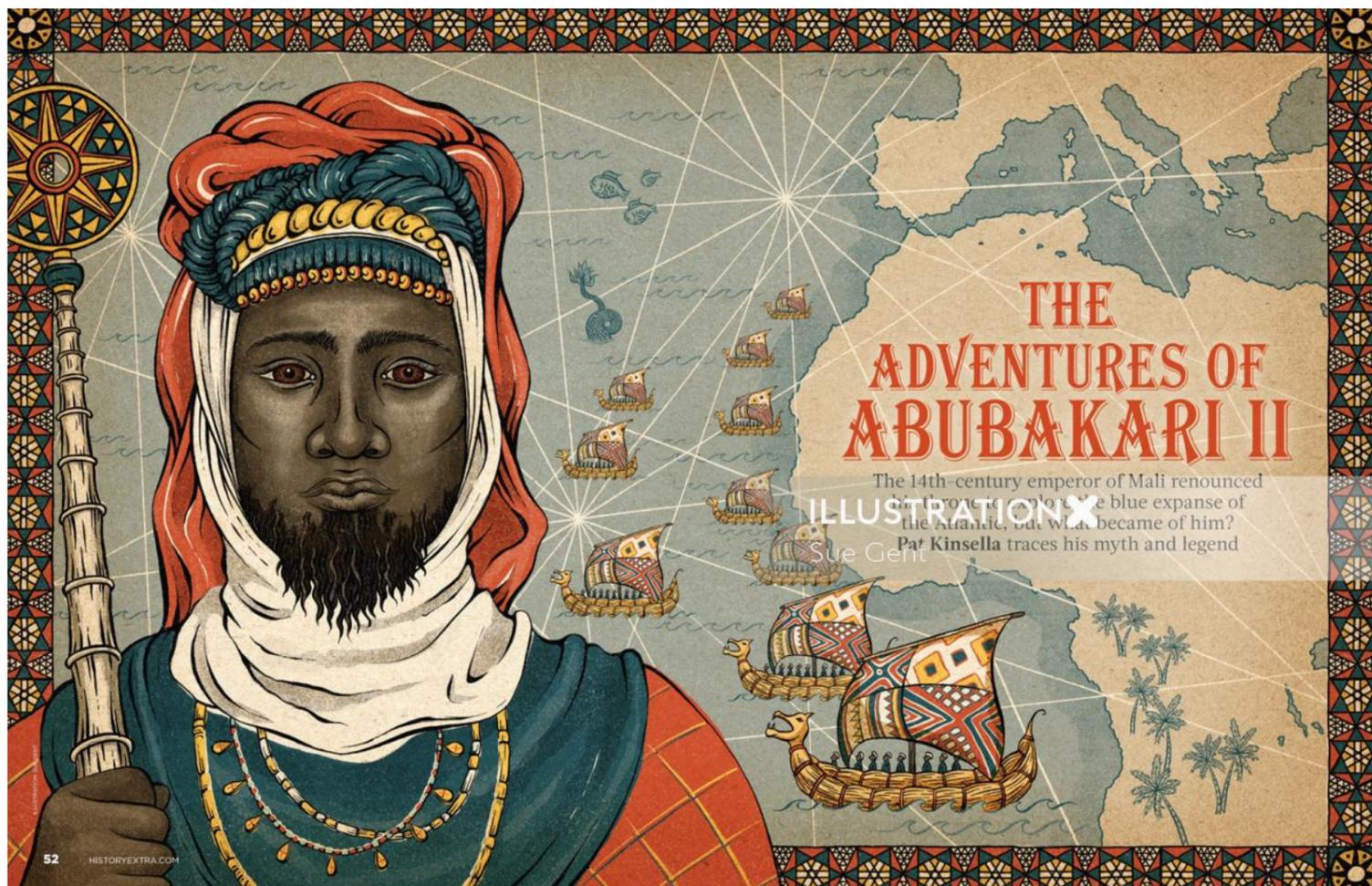
www.illustrationx.com/de/SueGent



ILLUSTRATIONX
Sue Gent

Sue Gent

www.illustrationx.com/de/SueGent



Sue Gent

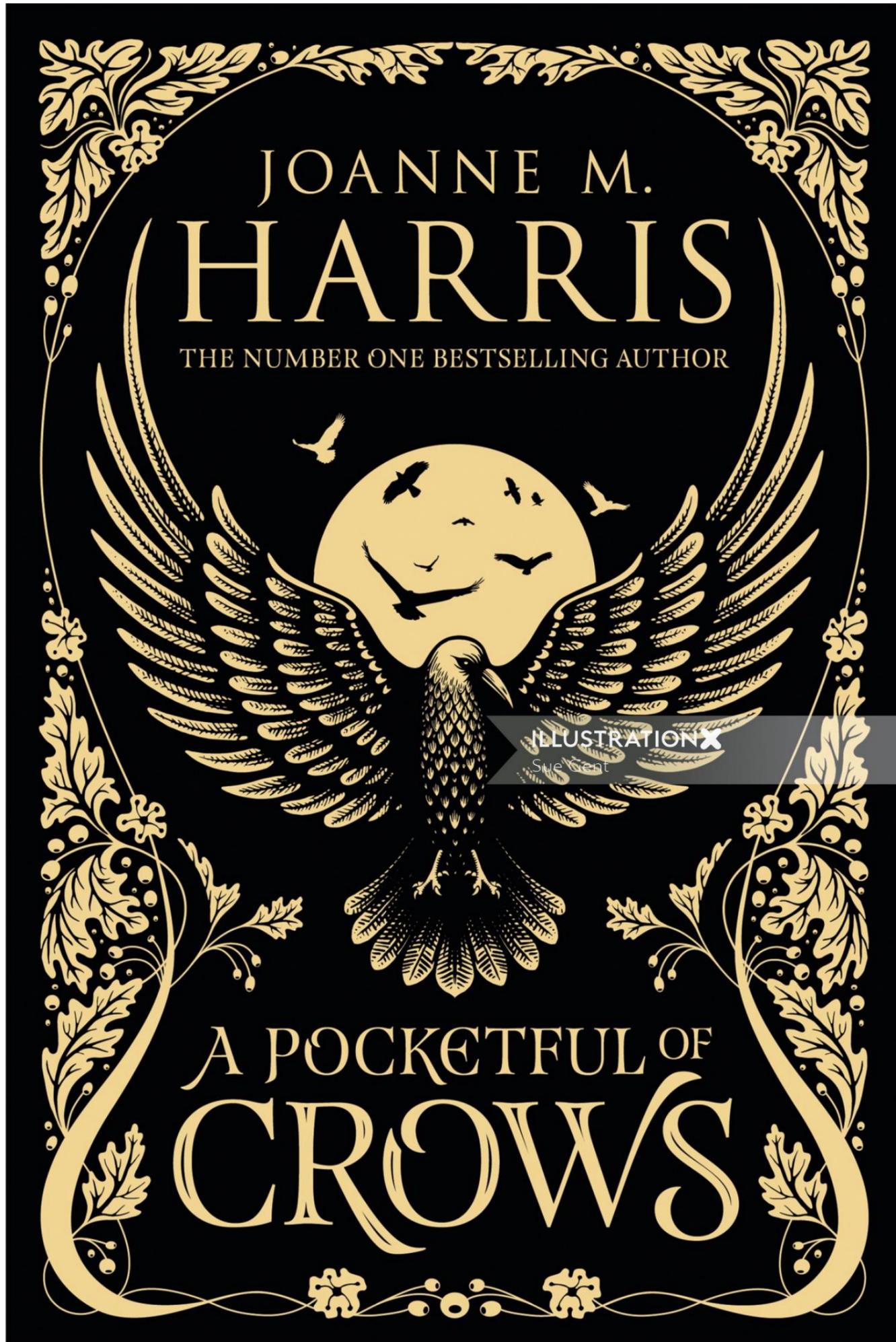
www.illustrationx.com/de/SueGent



ILLUSTRATIONX
Sue Gent

Sue Gent

www.illustrationx.com/de/SueGent



Sue Gent

www.illustrationx.com/de/SueGent



ILLUSTRATIONX
Sue Gent

Sue Gent

www.illustrationx.com/de/SueGent



Sue Gent

www.illustrationx.com/de/SueGent



ILLUSTRATION X
Sue Gent

Sue Gent

www.illustrationx.com/de/SueGent



Sue Gent

www.illustrationx.com/de/SueGent



ILLUSTRATION X
Sue Gent

Sue Gent

www.illustrationx.com/de/SueGent



Sue Gent

www.illustrationx.com/de/SueGent



Sue Gent

www.illustrationx.com/de/SueGent



PIRATES

cozering his friends and neighbours... by receiving of stolen goods, by consorting with pirates."

Similar problems existed in Wales in the Middle Ages where the Marcher Lords - nobles entrusted to guard the border between Wales and England - provided safe havens for "ship thieves". In the 1590s, Sir John Perrot, the Vice Admiral of Pembrokehire, actively encouraged pirates to sell their stolen goods in Cardiff.

ENEMIES ON ALL SIDES

Such pirates normally attacked foreign shipping, but in the Middle Ages enemies could be found very close to home with the Welsh, Irish and Scots at various times all at war with the English, as were the French, Spanish, Dutch and Hanseatic League, among others. But maritime violence and theft was not restricted to wartime. Indeed, the opposite was often the case; in times of peace the coasts became flooded with sailors, trained in war but now with no job, no pay and no prospects. Using their skills to take what they could (and give nothing back) was all too appealing.

In such circumstances, ships became prey - whatever the colour of the ship's flag or the language of her sailors. In 1314, during the reign of Edward II, a ship in the king's service was robbed by a fleet led by a man who, until recently, had been an English admiral. It could not if you will, as the king's admiral, until recently, had been an English admiral. It could not if you will, as the king's admiral, until recently, had been an English admiral.

"In times of peace, the coasts became flooded with sailors with no job, no pay and no prospects"

wherry laid [her] aboard... with swords drawn and robbed the boy". No one was safe, not even a king. In 1406, James I of Scotland was captured by English pirates and held captive by Henry IV for 18 years.

For centuries, therefore, the sea around the British Isles was livid with domestic pirates operating from bases on private land and sailing with the blessing of the wealthy and politically connected landowners. Lubworth Cove and Studland Bay in Dorset were particularly notorious, as was Baltimore and Crookhaven in south-west Ireland, and the Western Isles of Scotland, where the English warship the *Mary Wuloughby* was sent in 1533 to punish the piracies of the "wild Scots" - but was captured by those same wild Scots. In 1578, one of Queen Elizabeth's own ships was plundered by pirates at Newport in Wales. Lundy Island in the Bristol Channel briefly became a pirate "kingdom" in 1630, having been seized by West Country pirate Thomas

FAMOUS PIRATES



Blackbeard: Edward Teach (c.1680-1718) Perhaps the most famous pirate from the Golden Age of piracy, Teach was possibly born in Bristol before joining the Royal Navy. He went on to cause mayhem in the Caribbean until the Royal Navy finally caught up with him and his crew off South Carolina.



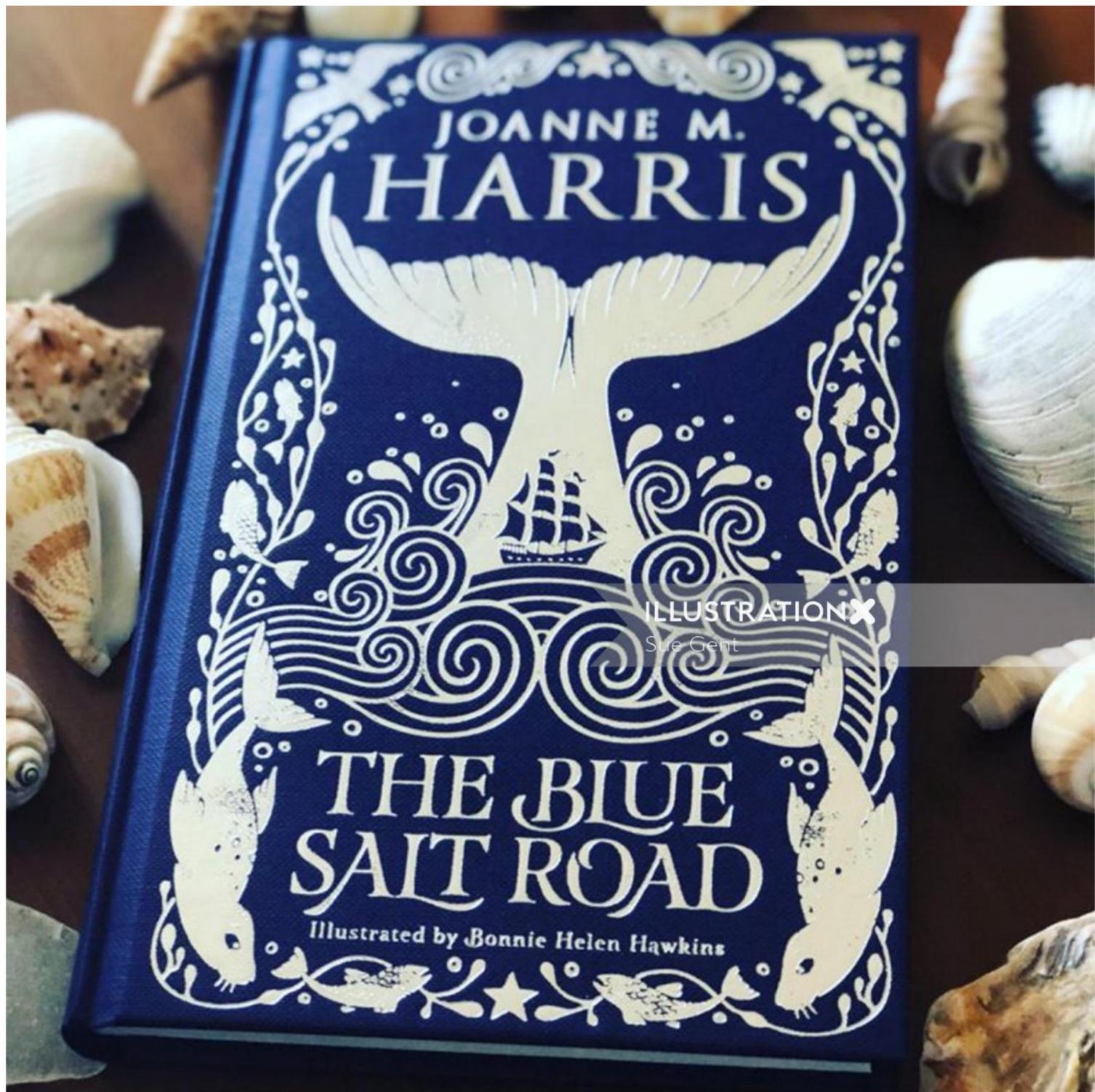
Anne Bonny (c.1680-c.1722) The most famous female pirate is perhaps fisherman Anne Bonny, who became notorious for her piracy in the Caribbean. When she was captured in 1720, her execution was stayed because she was pregnant. It is possible she survived until 1722 but her fate is unknown.



William Kidd (1654-1701) A Scottish sailor, particularly notorious for "turning pirate", he was actually sent into the Indian Ocean with a license to capture pirates but ended up sinking ships and treasure for himself. He was hanged before at Execution Dock, London, because the rope broke on the first attempt.

Sue Gent

www.illustrationx.com/de/SueGent



ILLUSTRATIONX
Sue Gent

Sue Gent

www.illustrationx.com/de/SueGent

Terror rules the waves

For centuries, pirate raids made Britain's coast a place to be feared and avoided. **Sam Willis** examines the era when danger stalked the seas and barbarous kidnappers seized locals from the shores

Illustration: Sue Gent

"And though we have not always war upon the sea yet it shall be necessary that the King have always some fleet upon the sea, for repressing of rovers, saving our merchandise, our fishers, and the dwellers upon the coasts..."
Sir John Fortescue (c.1395 - c.1477)

Here's a fun task to transport you to a happy place: which words do you think best describe the British seaside? Mine are: pasties, surfing and lazy sunbathing. It's a personal response and my list is almost entirely defined by the fact that I live in the West Country. But I bet that - wherever you are imagining yourself - the imagery and words that come to mind are generally positive.

Now what about these: fear, slavery, greed, torture. These are words that used to be linked with the coast. And the unsavoury list goes on and on: predators, corruption, cruelty, deceit, betrayal, murder. Do not be deceived when you sit in your deckchair safely watching the gulls circle overhead, for the British coast used to be a place of acute danger.

The fear associated with the coast was born from being an island nation. We have looked to the sea for millennia for sustenance and

wealth, and as long as there has been trade at sea, there has been robbery at sea. The famous golden age of piracy is associated with Caribbean waters and names such as William Kidd and Blackbeard, but those men came from a much less well-known but crucially important world that was shaped by an ancient tradition of violent robbery at sea. In the medieval period, piracy was widely practiced around our coasts. There was very little legal structure to define or condemn pirates and very few ships to police the coasts. The sea was a strange place where no man could claim any rights, no court had any jurisdiction, and no sovereign could impose peace. Piracy was not even recognised as a crime in English law until 1536.

VILLAINS OF THE HIGHEST ORDER Pirates were protected, encouraged and supplied by some of the highest ranking individuals in the land. During the reign of the Tudor queen Elizabeth I, a Hamburg merchant was robbed by the ship *Henry Seckford*, "whereof is owner one Henry Seckford esquire, one of the gentlemen of your Majesty's Privy Chamber". In the same period, personal ships belonging to Charles Howard, the Lord High Admiral, actively engaged in piracy while they were supposed to be suppressing it.

Perhaps the most notorious English pirates were the Cornish Killigrew family. Sir John Killigrew was both captain of Pendennis Castle in Falmouth and head of a commission set up by the Elizabethan government to investigate and police piracy in the West Country, but he himself was one of the county's most notorious pirates. And it ran in the family: his father was a pirate, his mother was famed for leading a boarding party in person, and in 1595 his son was accused of making his living by "oppressing his tenants... by robbery... by

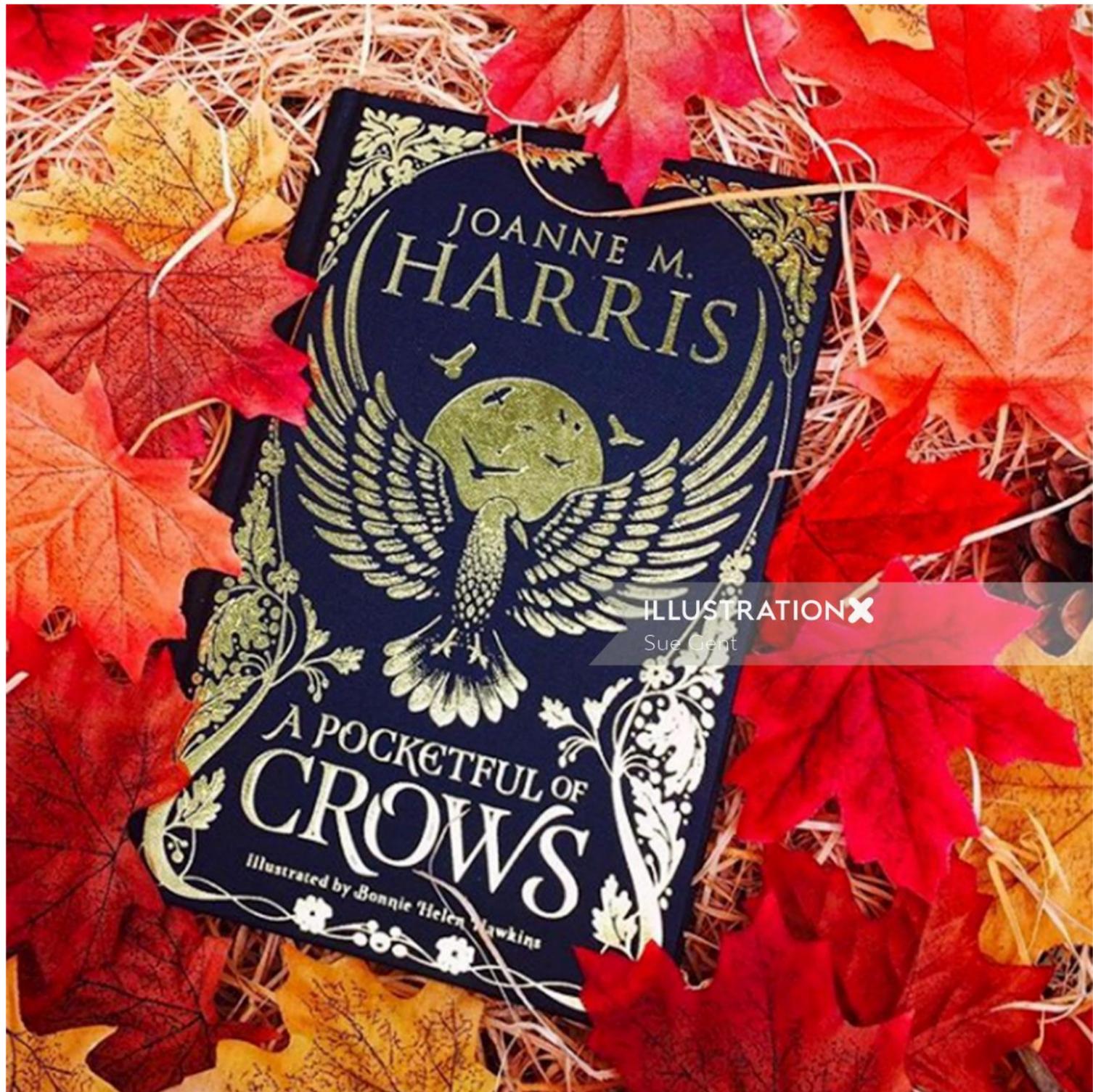
"The sea was a place where no court had any jurisdiction and no sovereign could impose peace"



ILLUSTRATION X
Sue Gent

Sue Gent

www.illustrationx.com/de/SueGent



ILLUSTRATIONX
Sue Gent

Sue Gent

www.illustrationx.com/de/SueGent



Sue Gent

www.illustrationx.com/de/SueGent



Sue Gent

www.illustrationx.com/de/SueGent



Sue Gent

www.illustrationx.com/de/SueGent



ILLUSTRATION X
Sue Gent

Sue Gent

www.illustrationx.com/de/SueGent



ILLUSTRATIONX
Sue Gent

Sue Gent

www.illustrationx.com/de/SueGent





WILDLIFE ESSAY

LIFE *after* DEATH

A hint of DayGlo green one minute; a dash of sky blue the next. Their abdomens made patterns like disco lights across the floor. As they flew in and around the object of their affection they looked almost playful. This was their world. Their playground. It was their sea. This is the story of a death, with an innocent bluebottle-spitter to a death-obsessive and back again. I began by visiting Peter Cross, a forensic entomologist who runs a unique project set up by the University of Central Lancashire. On a secret site in the north-west of England, he showed me his experimental research facility – a field of carefully arranged dead pigs intended to help forensic teams monitor the rates at which mammalian bodies decay.

“Have you got used to the smell?” I asked him. “It doesn’t really bother me,” Peter replied. “I register when it’s strong, but...” He shrugged. “Every job I’ve ever had was in some way related to death. I’ve smelt it all of my life.” Peter was introducing me to a side of nature that I had never experienced. He, and scientists like him, see life everywhere, even in death. Especially in death.

During the day that I spent with Peter we watched and became entranced by the ecosystems that suddenly appear around animals that have recently died, like a travelling circus coming to town. Carrion beetles, cheese flies, sexton beetles. Rotund clown beetles. Chequered beetles. Black scavenger flies. Rove beetles running amok

Should we think differently about death in nature? Without this fascinating process we wouldn’t even be here – even this, from the chain to evolve by natural selection relies on it, says Jules Howard.

within the rain-washed pig skeletons, carrying maggots into the dark depths like leopards pulling gazelles into the boughs of enormous trees.

There was so much to see that it was enthralling. There were many other creatures upon and within those dead pigs: dung beetles, parasitic wasps (targeting the maggots), clothes moths, skin beetles and occasional marauding interlopers such as predatory harvestmen and centipedes, which weaved paths through the collapsing bones. Those dead pigs had become such

a wonderful place for life. A food-chain had been resurrected. Transformed. Such activity. Such occupancy.

As a naturalist, why hadn’t I thought to study such a thing as a dead animal before? Why had I overlooked such a ripe place for seeing and studying invertebrates? Questions like these formed in my head in the months that followed my visit with Peter. Was it disgust that had kept me from looking at death? Was it my concern that such an interest might be thought ghoulish or perverse? The truth of the matter is that I had never considered death as a scientific subject. That was a mistake.

In the weeks that followed this first close encounter with a carcass, I talked about my experiences – my epiphany, really – with my friends and family. I told them about my blossoming interest in death. They gave me a look that said: “Rather you than me.” Was I mad, or were they the mad ones?

DARWIN, DISGUST AND DEATH
Darwin himself was among the first to notice the universal human reaction of disgust about certain things to do with death. In *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals* (1872) he wrote: “With respect to the face, moderate disgust is exhibited in various ways; by the mouth being widely opened, as if to let an offensive morsel drop out; by spitting; by blowing out of the protruded lips; or by a sound as of clearing the throat.”

The apparent universality of the ‘disgust face’ throughout human populations and cultures suggests that it might have a genetic ancestry. Disgust at death may turn out to be hard-wired: an evolved behaviour that serves to limit human contact with the perils associated with decaying corpses, such as

WE WATCHED THE ECOSYSTEMS THAT APPEAR AROUND ANIMALS THAT HAVE DIED, LIKE A CIRCUS COMING TO TOWN.

Sue Gent

www.illustrationx.com/de/SueGent



Sue Gent

www.illustrationx.com/de/SueGent



Need advice?

We're ready to help



kontakt@illustrationx.com

+49 (0)40 250 40 50

ILLUSTRATION 

Connecting You to a World of Illustration
Hamburg, DE

www.illustrationx.com/de