

The Hex Hunt



Michelle Lowe

The Hex Hunt

Part One

by

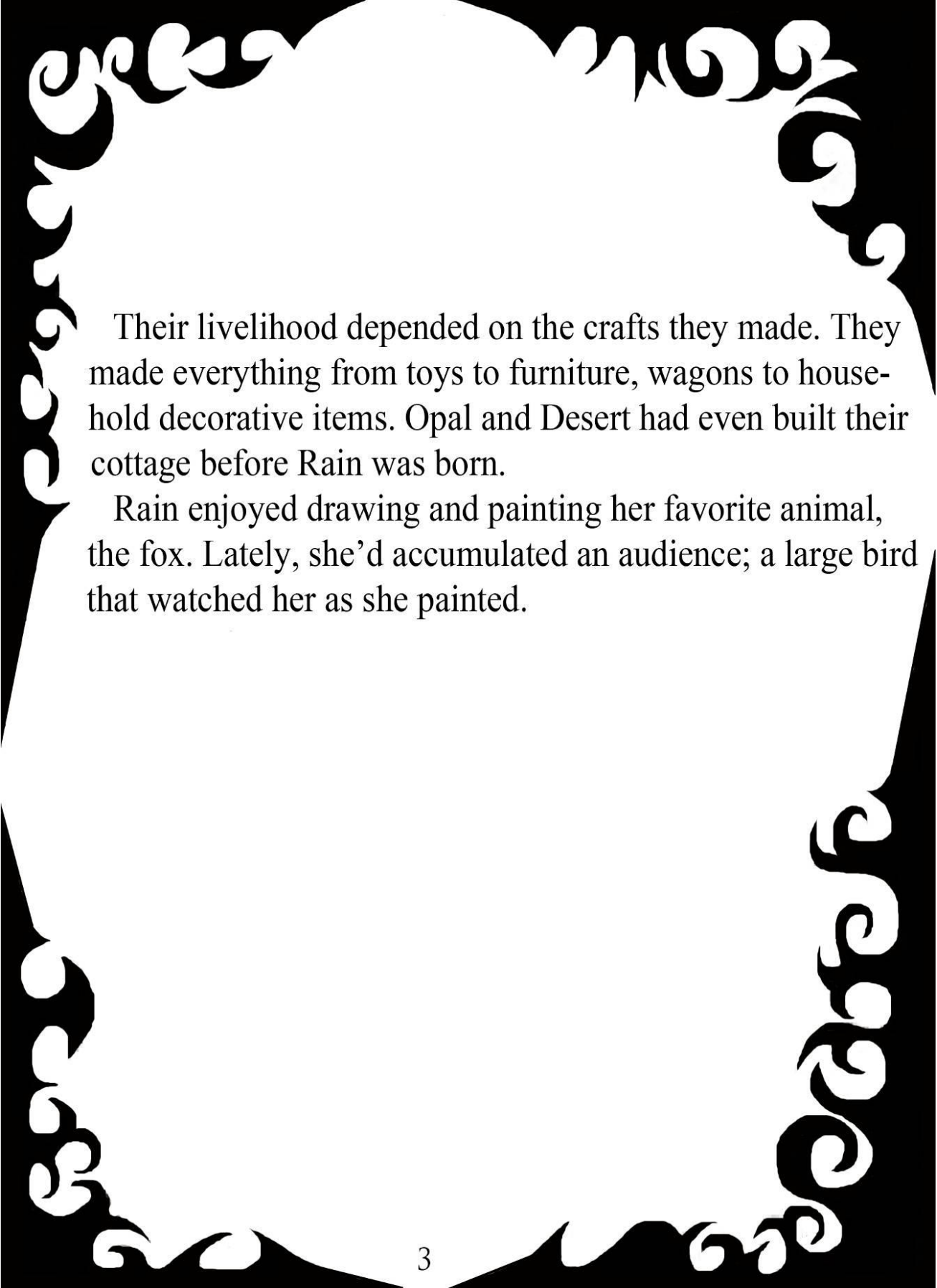
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CHAPTER 1 THE FOX

There are many lands, each different and unique. Some lands are hilly, and some are flat. Some areas have forests while others have buildings.

And in the West Lands, there lives a brave and special young girl named Rain. She and her mother, Opal, and her father Desert, lived in a small cottage out in the countryside.

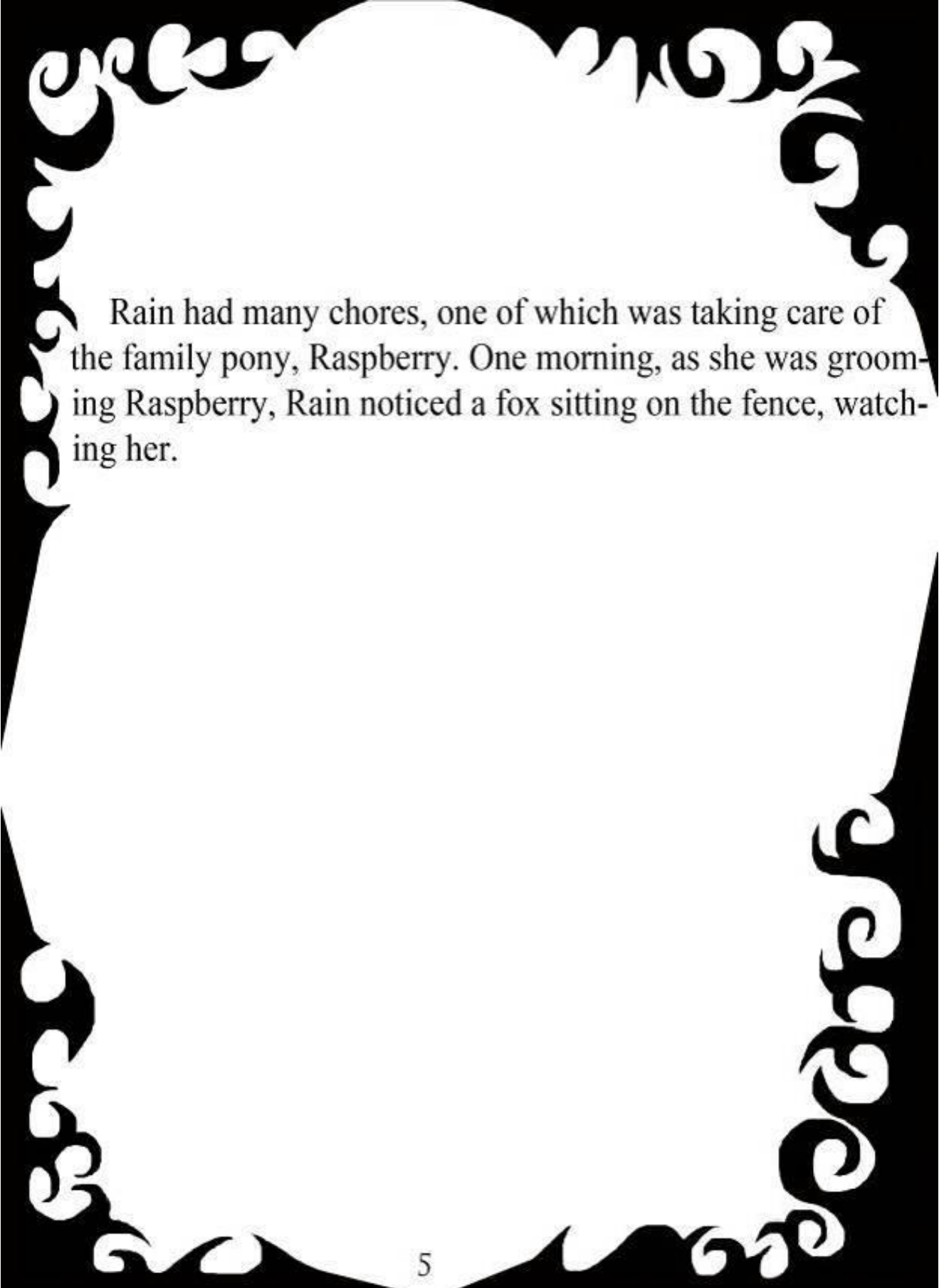




Their livelihood depended on the crafts they made. They made everything from toys to furniture, wagons to household decorative items. Opal and Desert had even built their cottage before Rain was born.

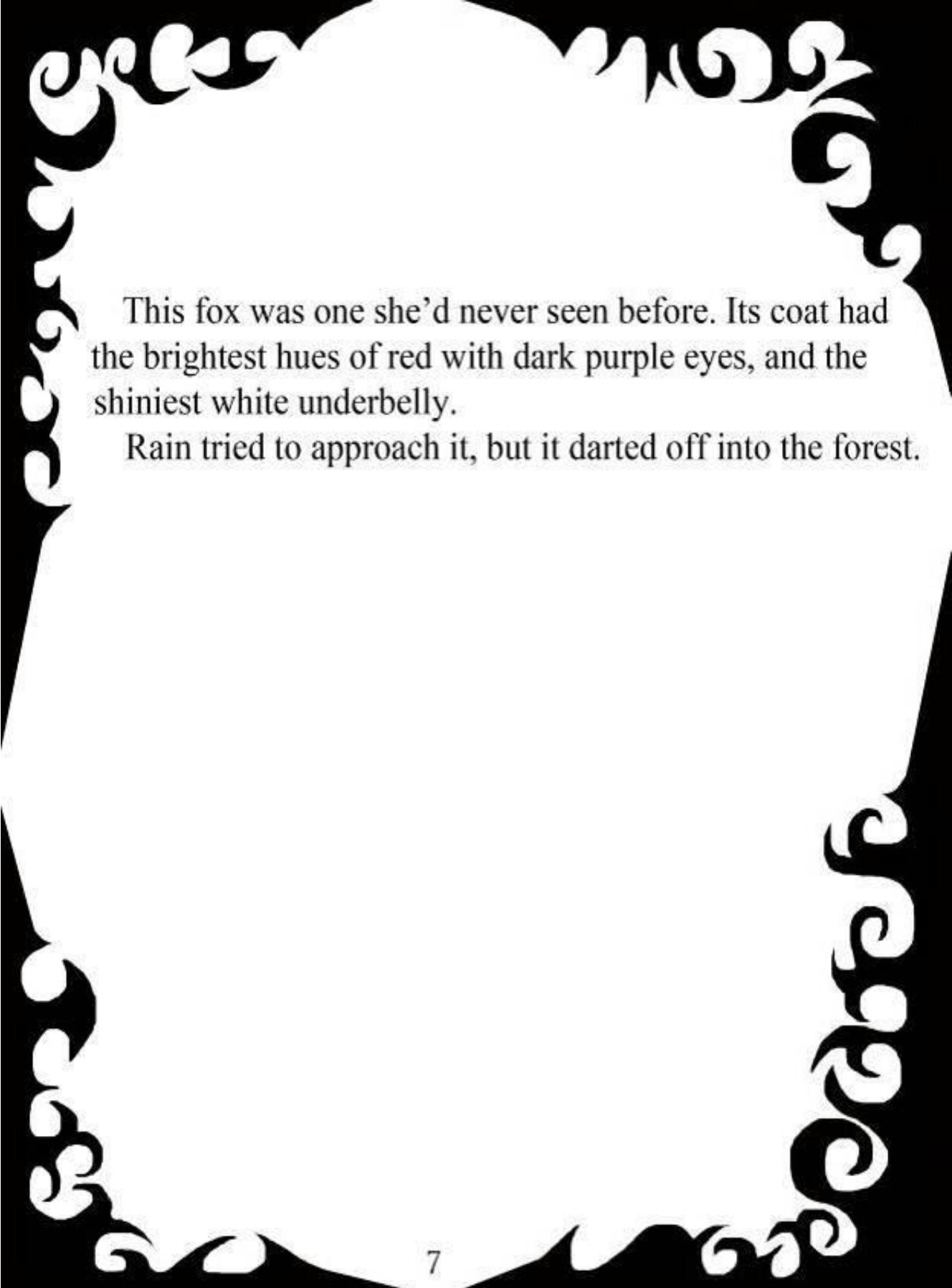
Rain enjoyed drawing and painting her favorite animal, the fox. Lately, she'd accumulated an audience; a large bird that watched her as she painted.





Rain had many chores, one of which was taking care of the family pony, Raspberry. One morning, as she was grooming Raspberry, Rain noticed a fox sitting on the fence, watching her.






This fox was one she'd never seen before. Its coat had the brightest hues of red with dark purple eyes, and the shiniest white underbelly.

Rain tried to approach it, but it darted off into the forest.

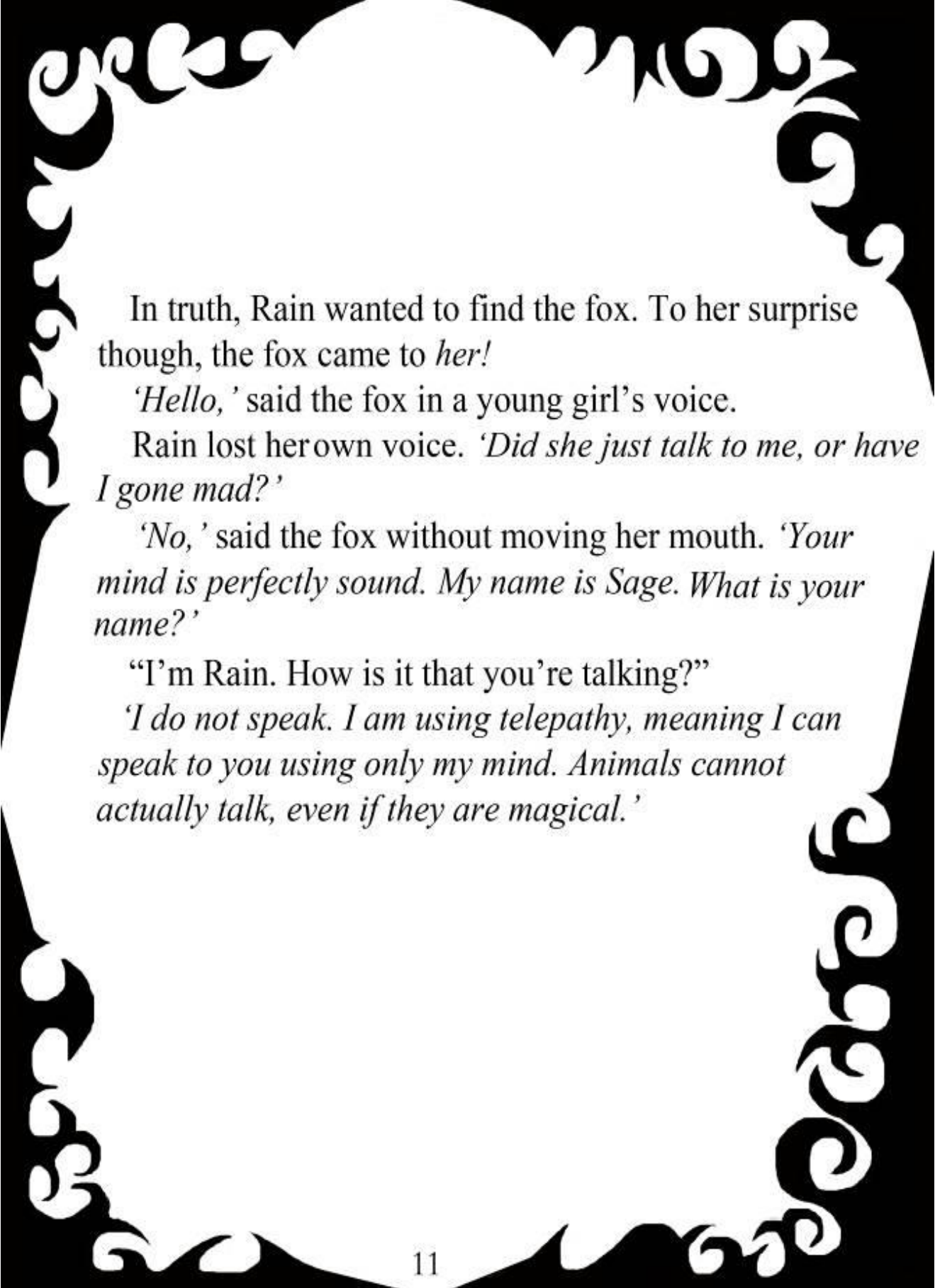




The following day, Opal and Desert packed up their wagon, ready to sell their crafts at the town's annual Starshine Arts & Crafts fair. Usually Rain went with them, but this time she asked to stay behind and in exchange she'd keep the cottage neat and the fruit garden well tended.

After some consideration, Opal and Desert decided that their daughter was old enough to stay by herself. They kissed her goodbye and headed on without her.





In truth, Rain wanted to find the fox. To her surprise though, the fox came to *her*!

'Hello,' said the fox in a young girl's voice.

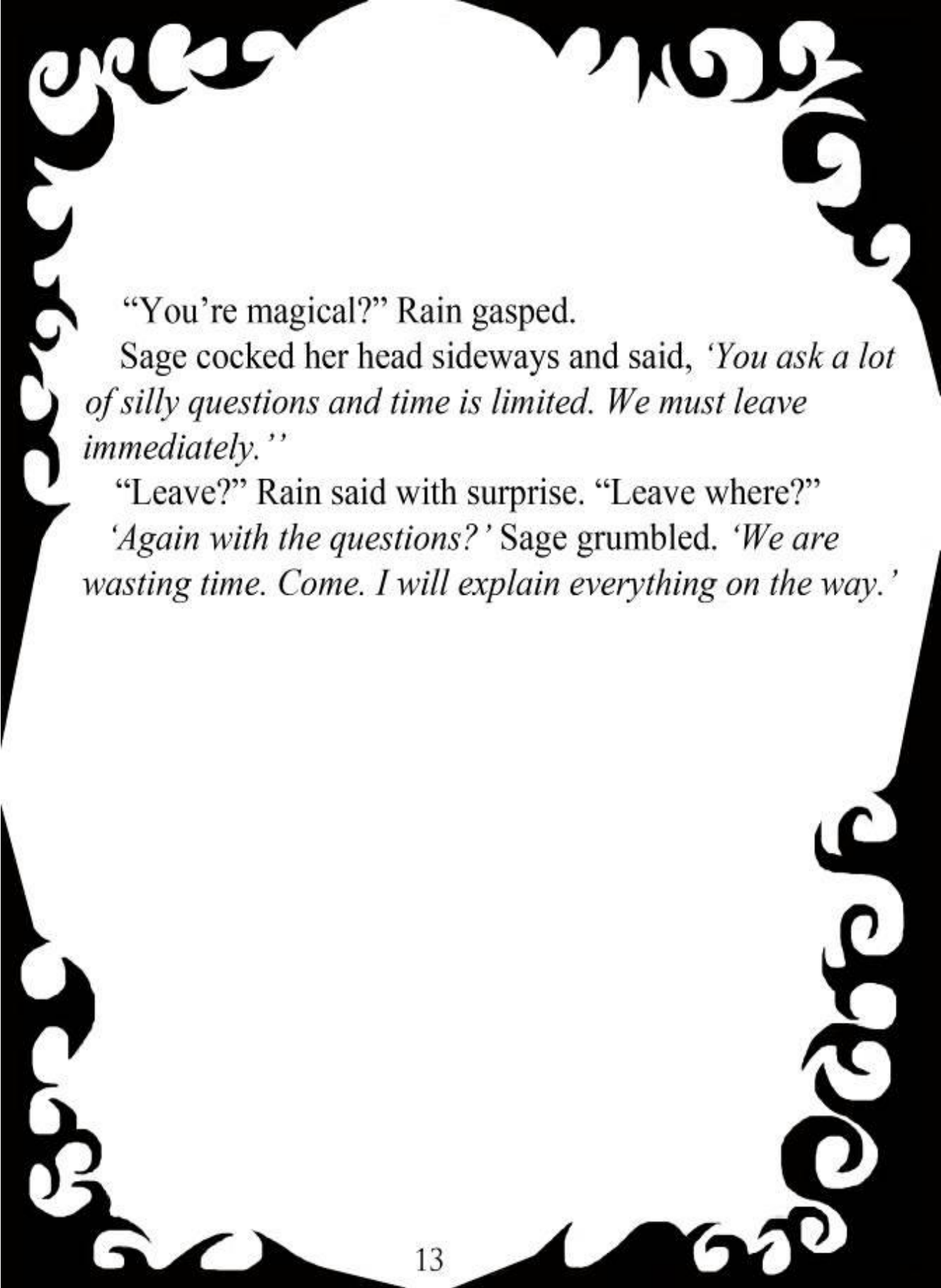
Rain lost her own voice. *'Did she just talk to me, or have I gone mad?'*

'No,' said the fox without moving her mouth. *'Your mind is perfectly sound. My name is Sage. What is your name?'*

"I'm Rain. How is it that you're talking?"

'I do not speak. I am using telepathy, meaning I can speak to you using only my mind. Animals cannot actually talk, even if they are magical.'



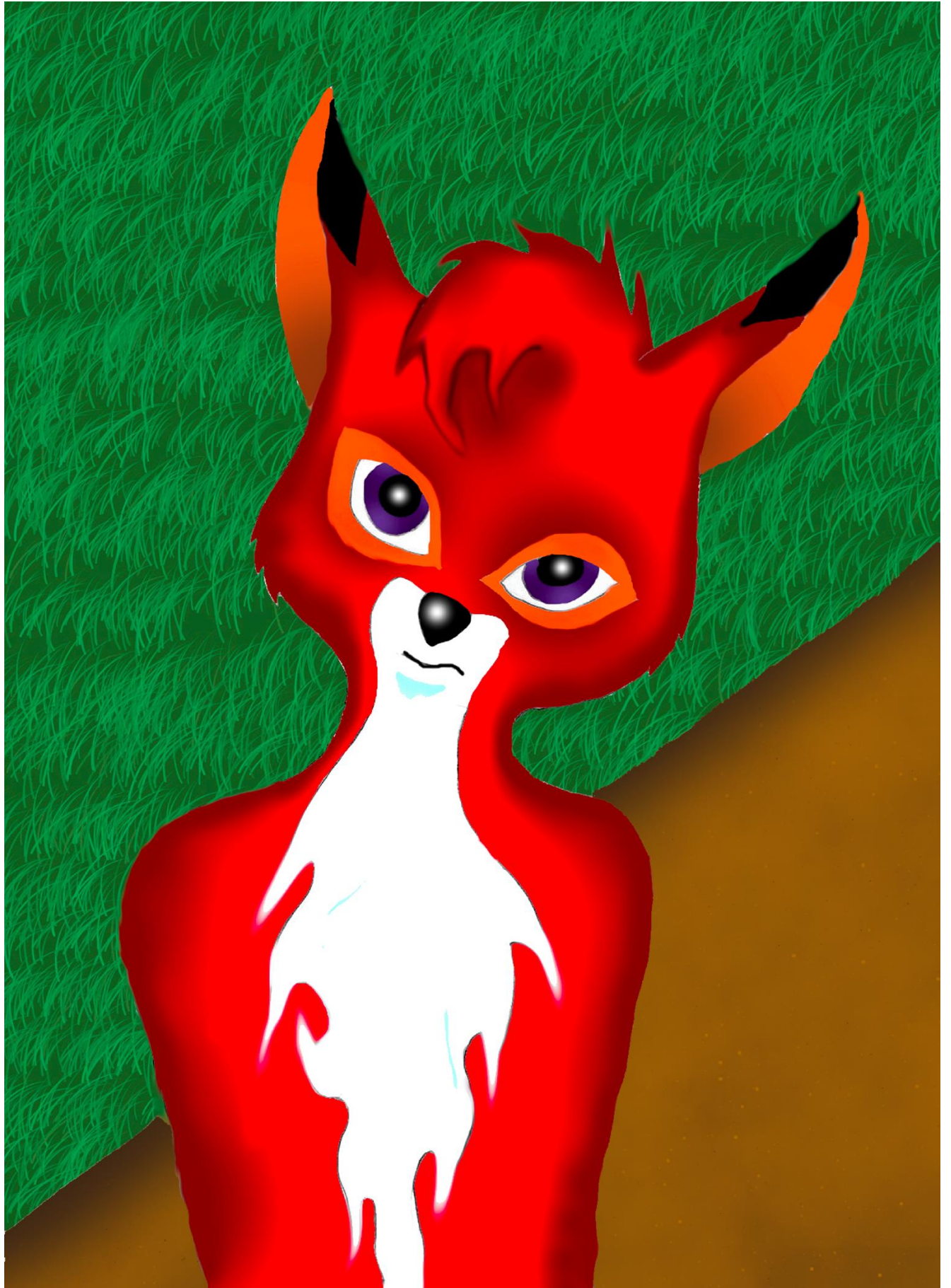


“You’re magical?” Rain gasped.

Sage cocked her head sideways and said, *‘You ask a lot of silly questions and time is limited. We must leave immediately.’*

“Leave?” Rain said with surprise. “Leave where?”

‘Again with the questions?’ Sage grumbled. *‘We are wasting time. Come. I will explain everything on the way.’*



“On the way where?” Rain asked again.
‘I do not know yet, but I am sure our destination is miles away.’ Sage turned to leave. *‘Follow me.’*

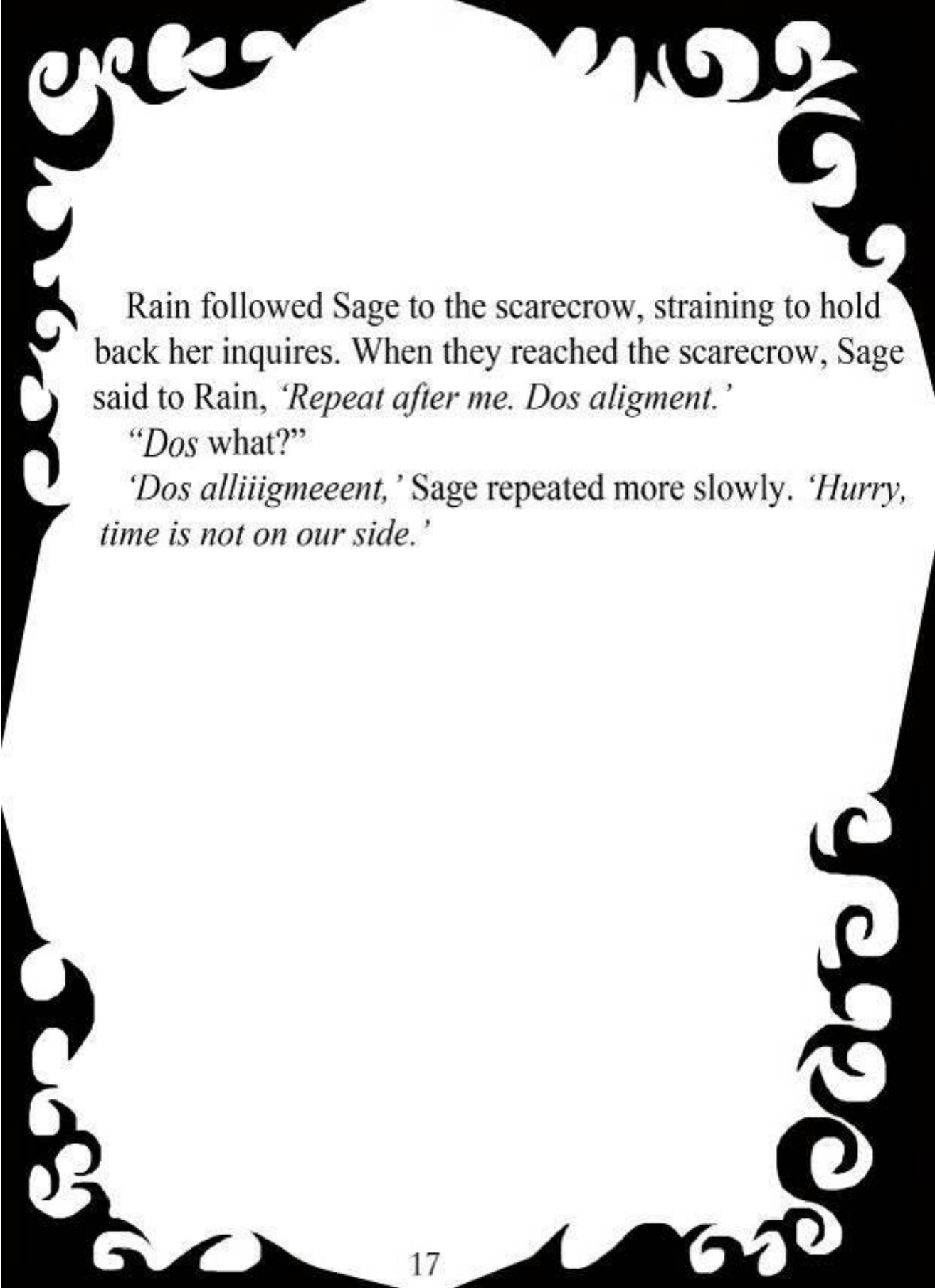
“Wait. I made a promise to my parents that I’d keep the house neat and the fruit garden well tended. The cottage will be coated with dust. Weeds and animals will consume our food.”

With a huff, Sage said, *‘I noticed yesterday that you have a scarecrow in the garden.’*

Rain became bewildered. “Yes. Why?”

‘You will see,’ said Sage, heading toward the back of the cottage.



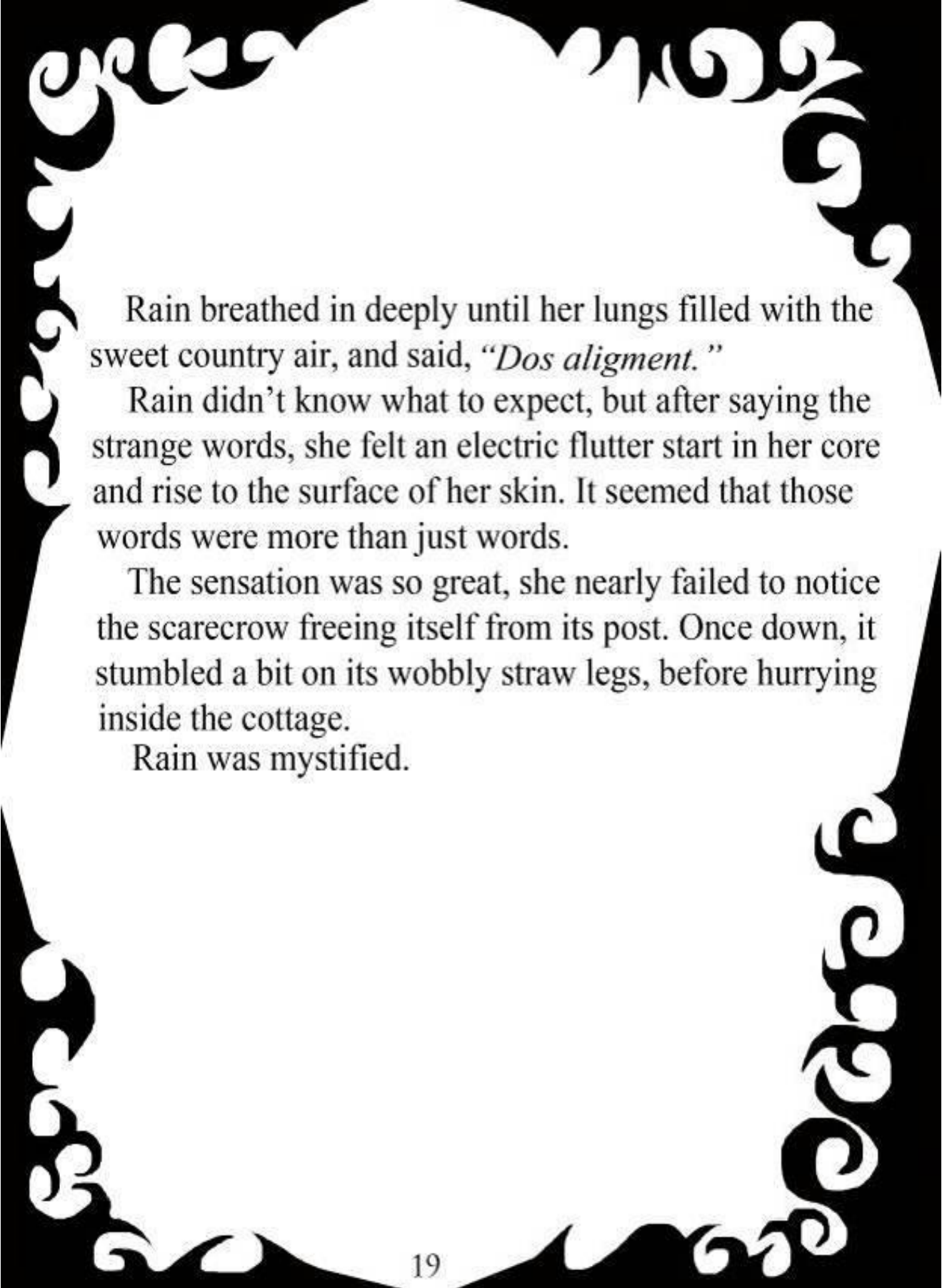


Rain followed Sage to the scarecrow, straining to hold back her inquiries. When they reached the scarecrow, Sage said to Rain, *'Repeat after me. Dos alignment.'*

"Dos what?"

'Dos alliiigmeent,' Sage repeated more slowly. *'Hurry, time is not on our side.'*



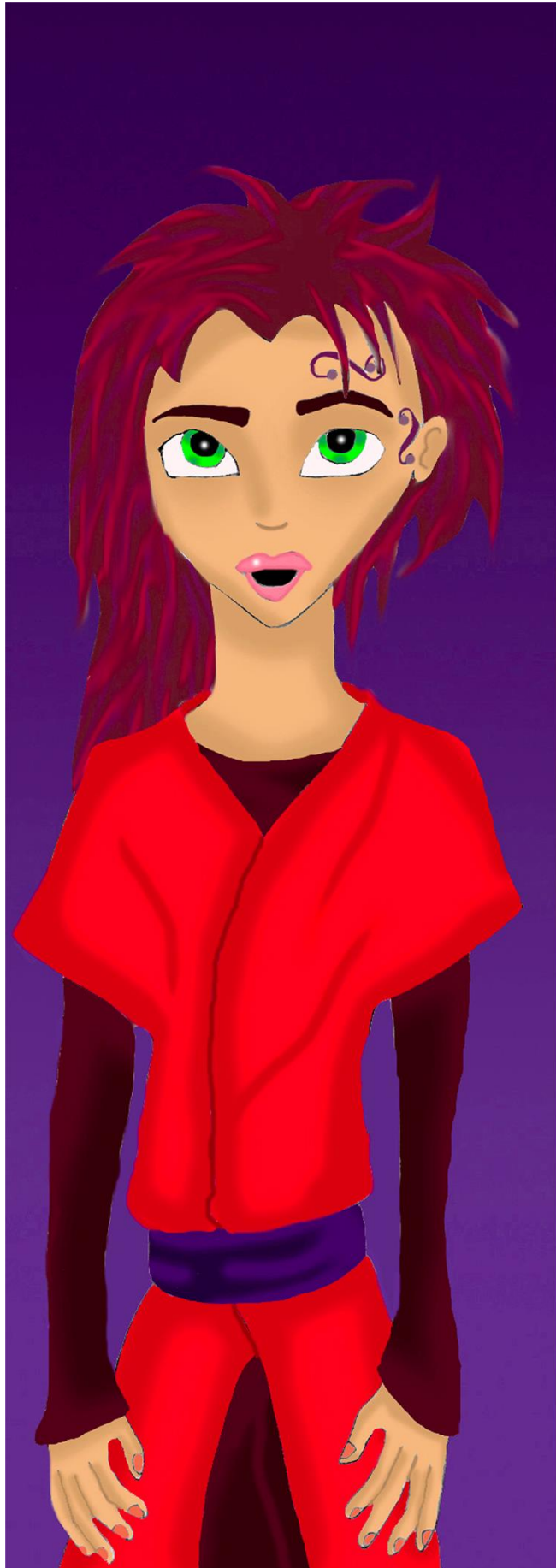


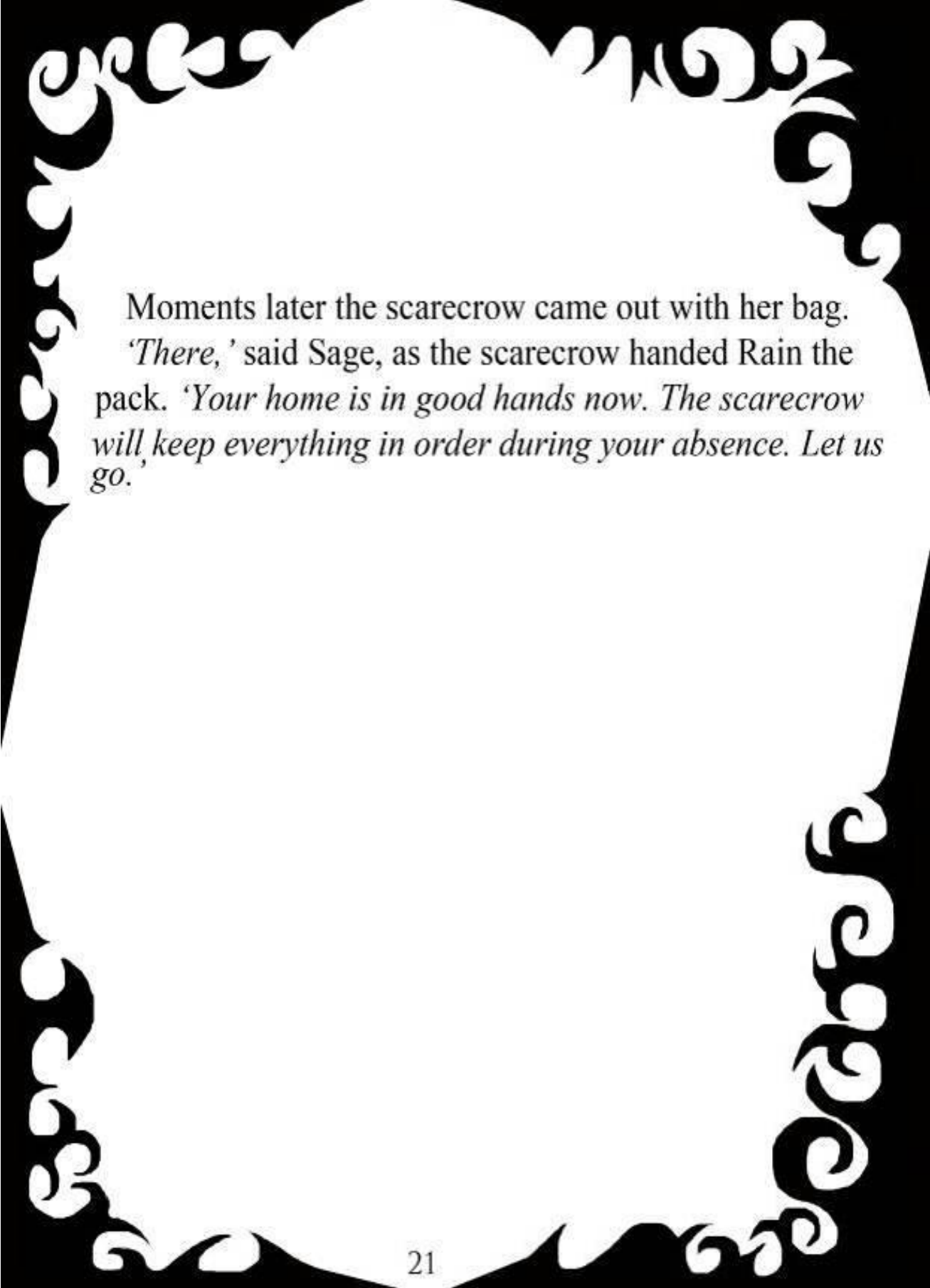
Rain breathed in deeply until her lungs filled with the sweet country air, and said, "*Dos aligment.*"

Rain didn't know what to expect, but after saying the strange words, she felt an electric flutter start in her core and rise to the surface of her skin. It seemed that those words were more than just words.

The sensation was so great, she nearly failed to notice the scarecrow freeing itself from its post. Once down, it stumbled a bit on its wobbly straw legs, before hurrying inside the cottage.

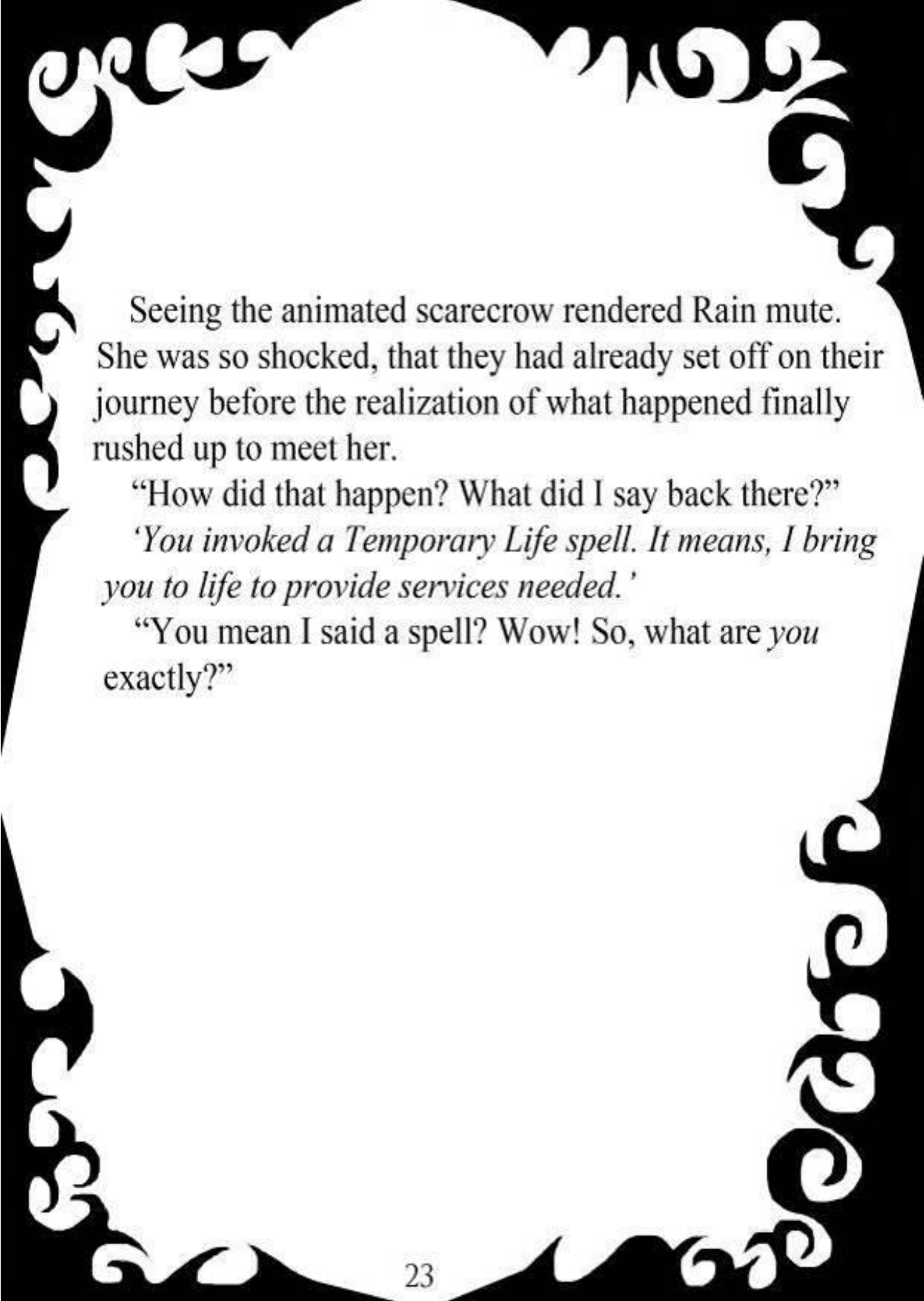
Rain was mystified.





Moments later the scarecrow came out with her bag.
'*There,*' said Sage, as the scarecrow handed Rain the pack. '*Your home is in good hands now. The scarecrow will keep everything in order during your absence. Let us go.*'





Seeing the animated scarecrow rendered Rain mute. She was so shocked, that they had already set off on their journey before the realization of what happened finally rushed up to meet her.

“How did that happen? What did I say back there?”

‘You invoked a Temporary Life spell. It means, I bring you to life to provide services needed.’

“You mean I said a spell? Wow! So, what are *you* exactly?”



'I am a servant of a great and powerful sorceress. She has sent me on a quest to find a spell that has escaped her and drive it back to her island of the Sleeping Volcano. But I cannot do it alone. Since my arrival in this land, I have been searching for someone brave and stouthearted. That someone is you, Rain.'

"Me? But I'm just a kid."

'I have observed you since I came across your cottage yesterday. I sensed the strength and courage within you.'

"What does the servant of a powerful sorceress need from me? What is this spell we are chasing?"

'My master was working on a protective spell, one meant to keep her safe in the face of adversity. But the spell turned against her instead, creating mischief on her home island. It had gone from being a protective spell to a curse, or hex, if you will.'

"So, why do you need my help?"



'Before the hex escaped, my master developed a spell code written in the Language of Magic. This spell code keeps the hex anchored in one place of its choosing. Otherwise, the hex would continue to drift from one place to another, causing chaos for many. The spell code was also designed to pull the hex back toward the island of the Sleeping Volcano every time it was read aloud.'

"Aloud? Is that what you need from me? To read off this spell code?"

'Yes. As I said, animals, even magical ones, cannot physically speak. I need your voice to actually say the spell code aloud or it will not work.'

"If you can't speak, how can you use umm...tel...tel..."

'Use telepathy,' Sage cut in. 'Because my master created me this way.'

"Created?" Rain pounced on the word. "You mean you're not real?"

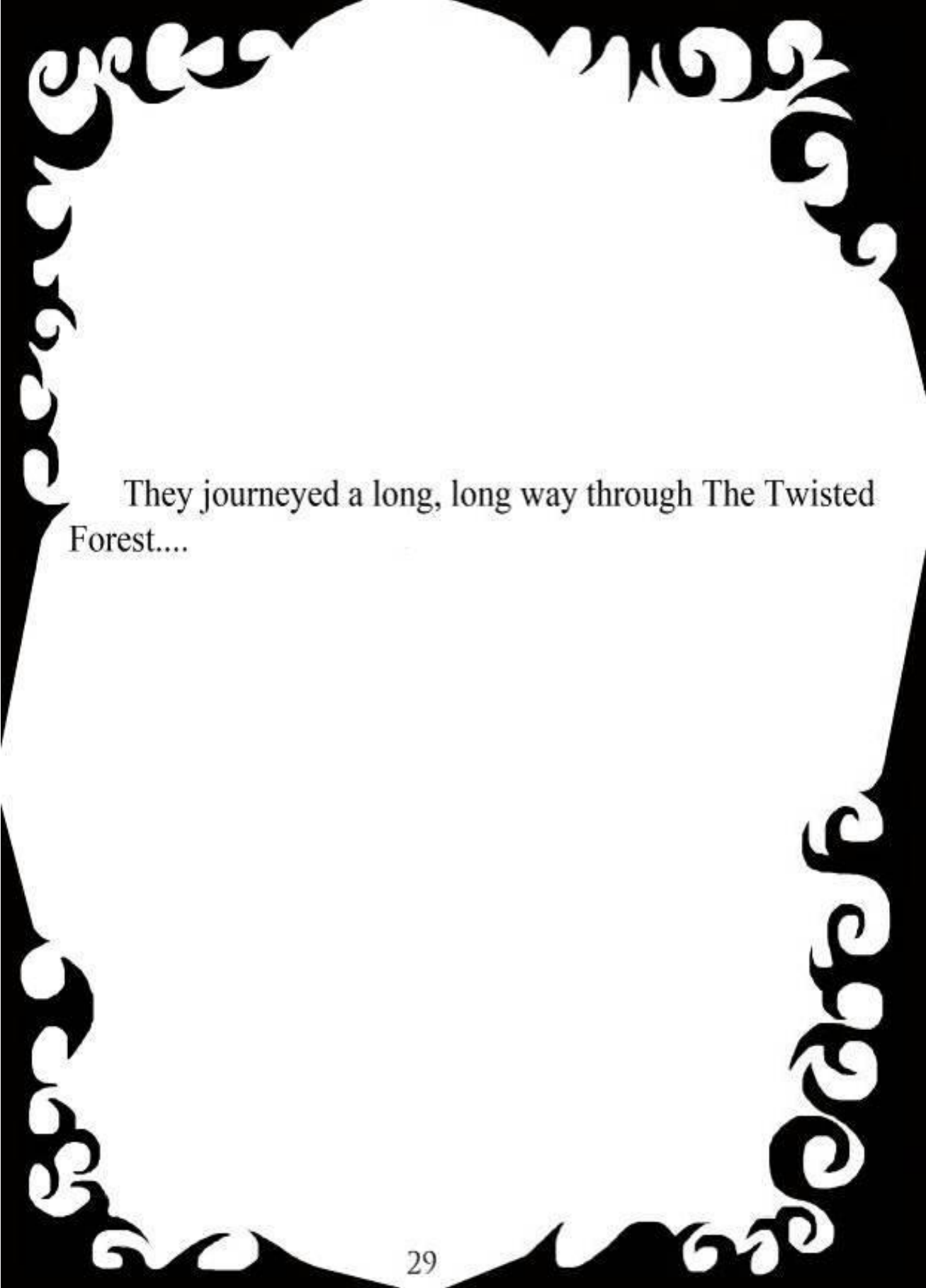
'I am real!' Sage retorted. 'I just was not brought into the world the same way as most living things.'

"I...I didn't mean anything by that," Rain tried to explain. "I..."

'We are wasting time,' Sage snapped, moving on.

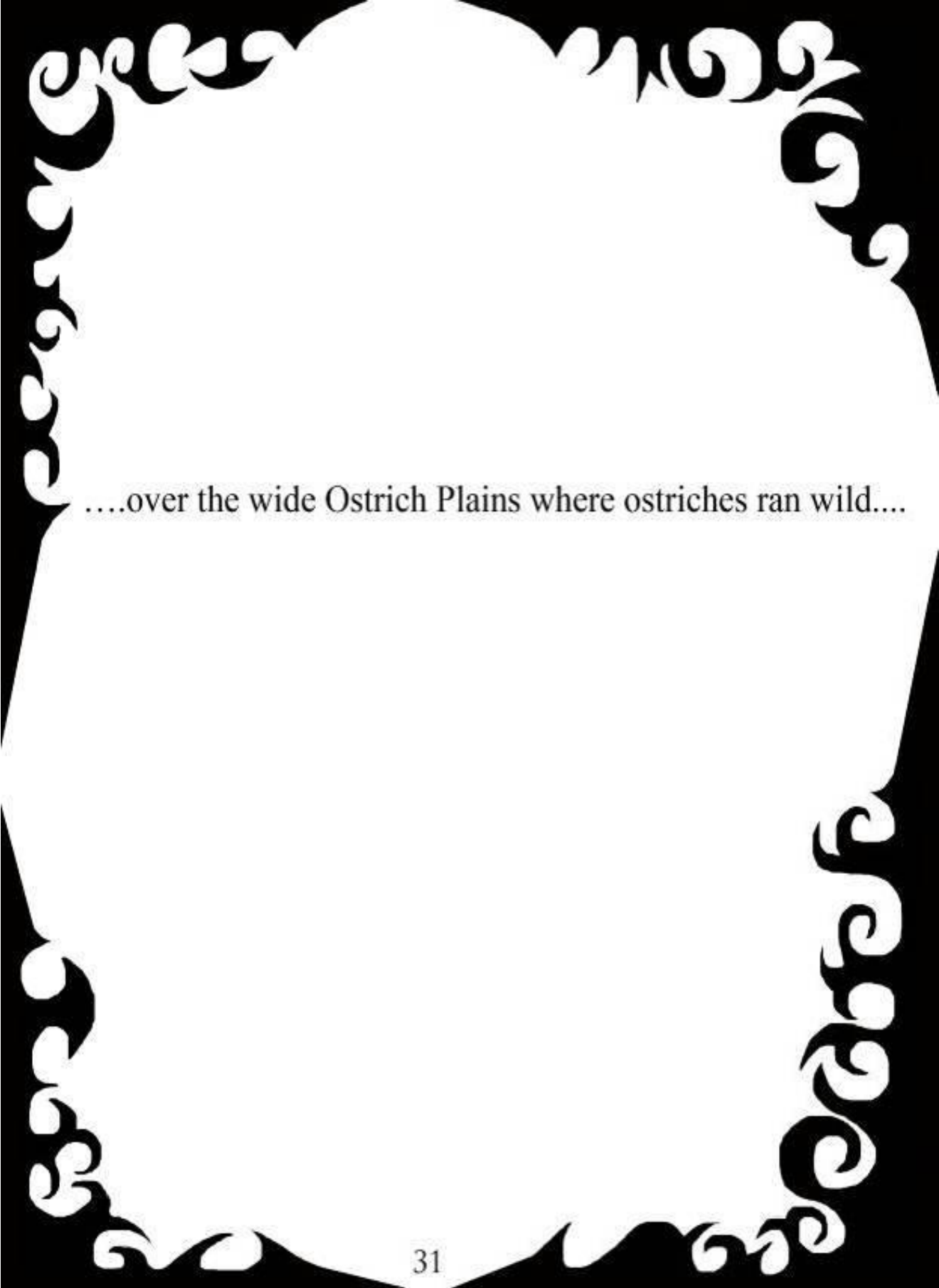
Rain felt bad for what she said, and as they continued on, the two remained silent.



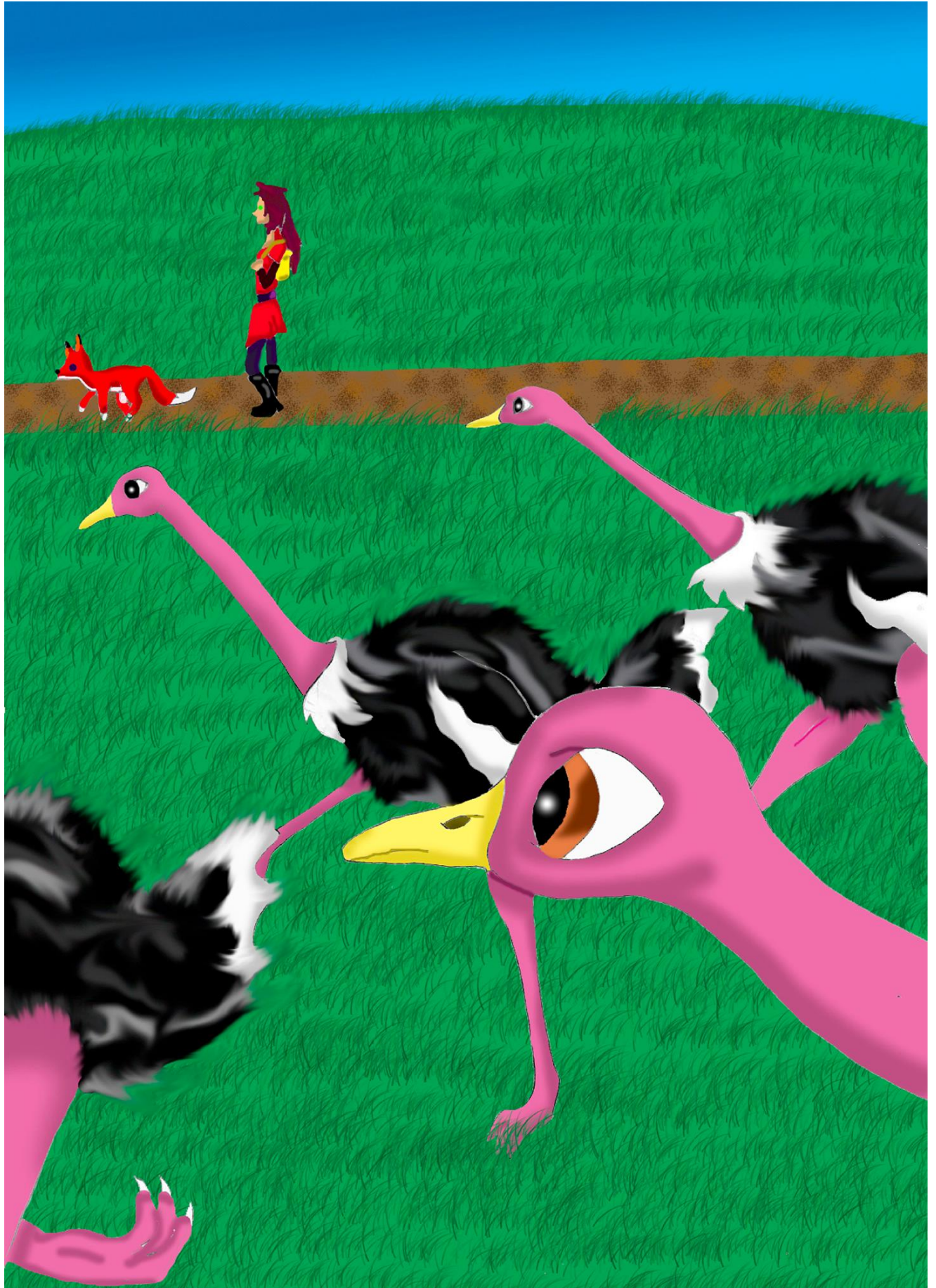


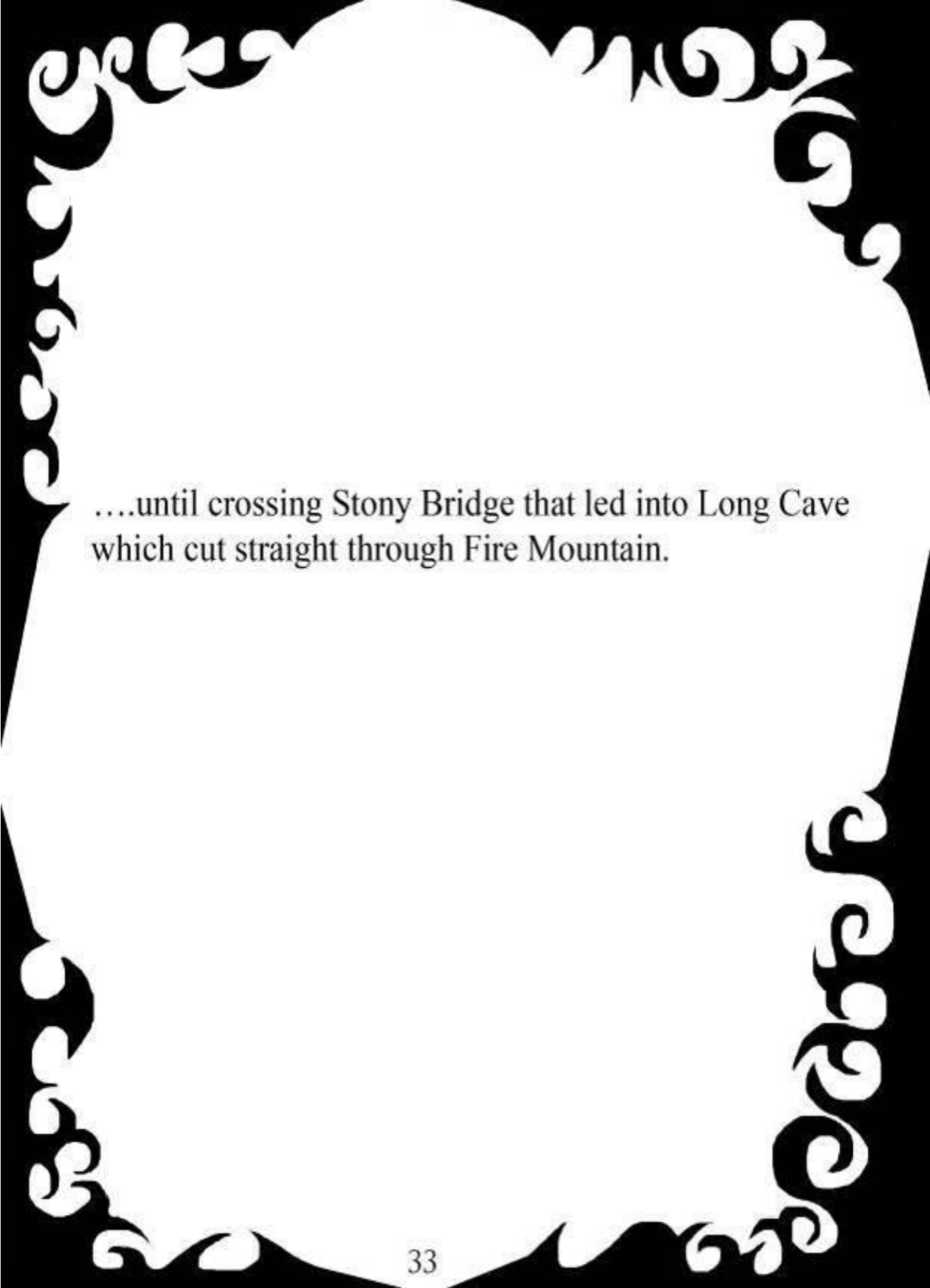
They journeyed a long, long way through The Twisted
Forest....





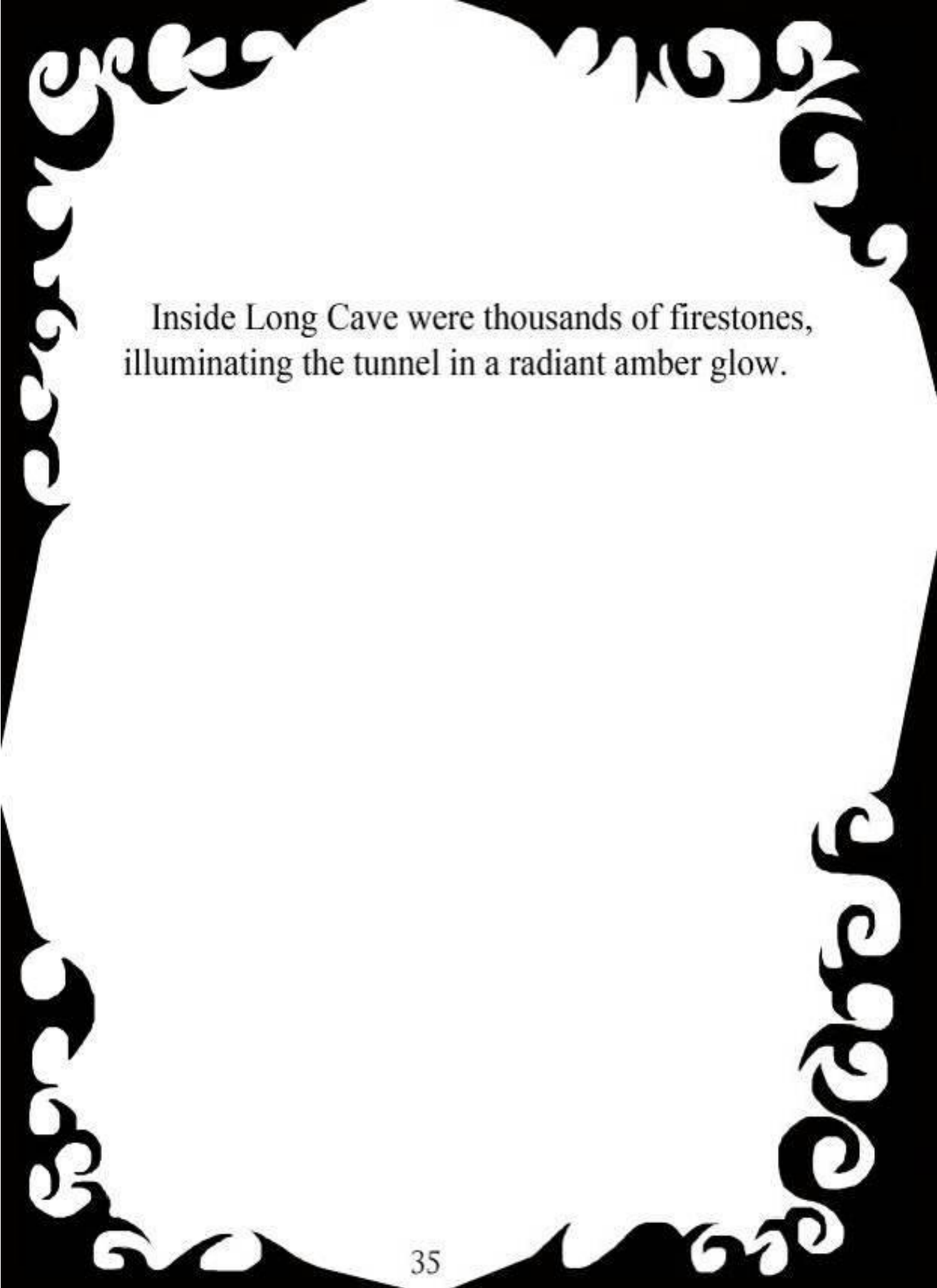
....over the wide Ostrich Plains where ostriches ran wild....





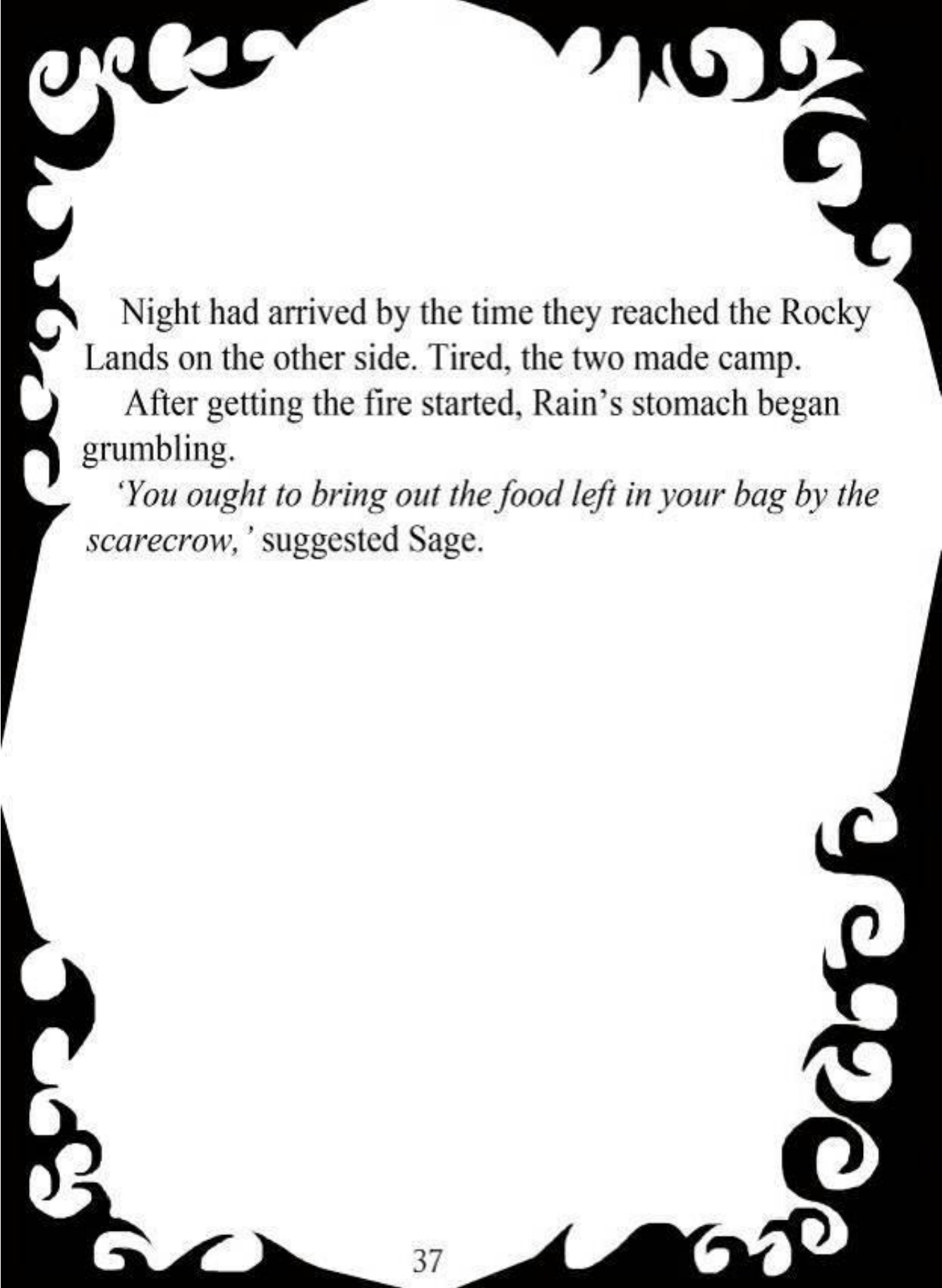
....until crossing Stony Bridge that led into Long Cave
which cut straight through Fire Mountain.





Inside Long Cave were thousands of firestones,
illuminating the tunnel in a radiant amber glow.

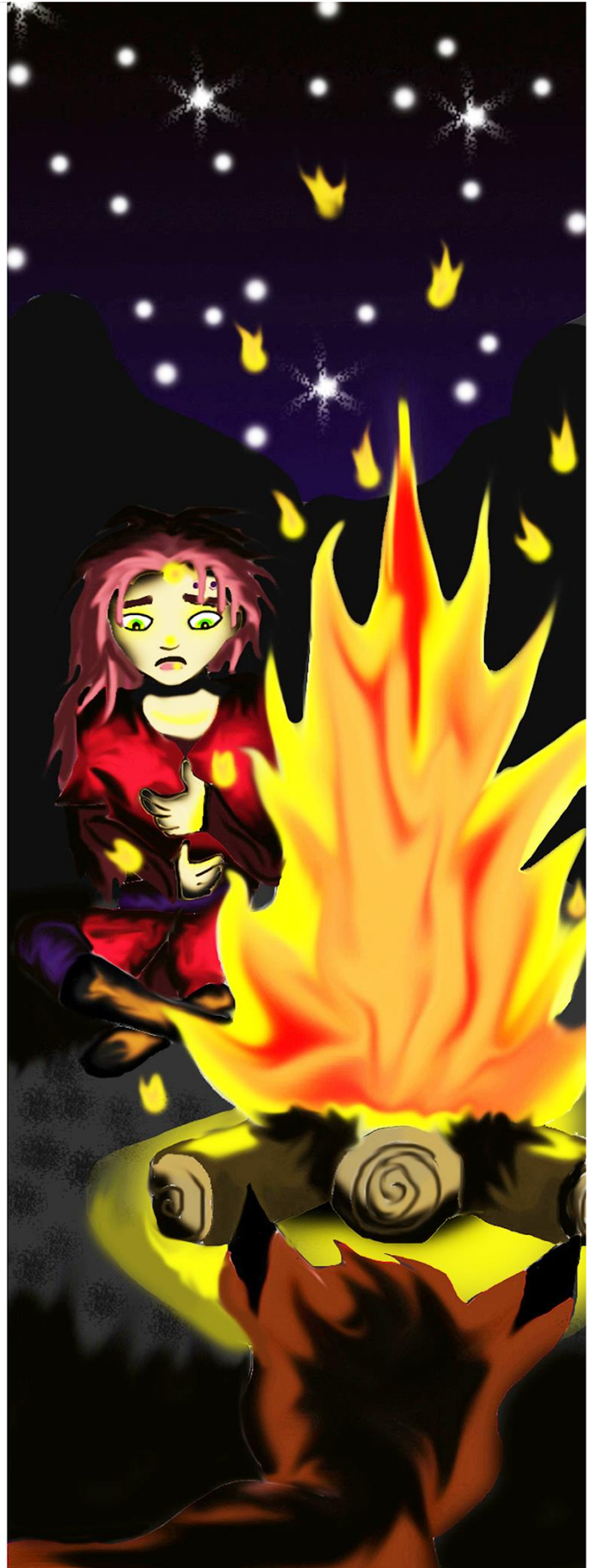
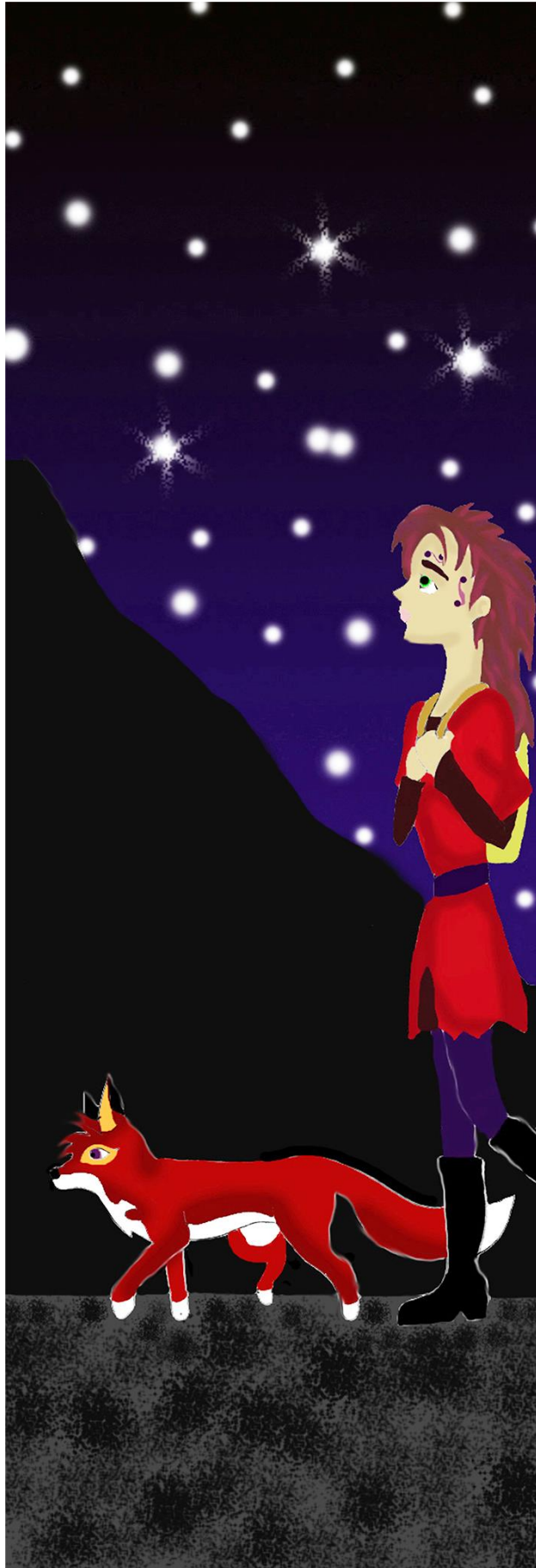


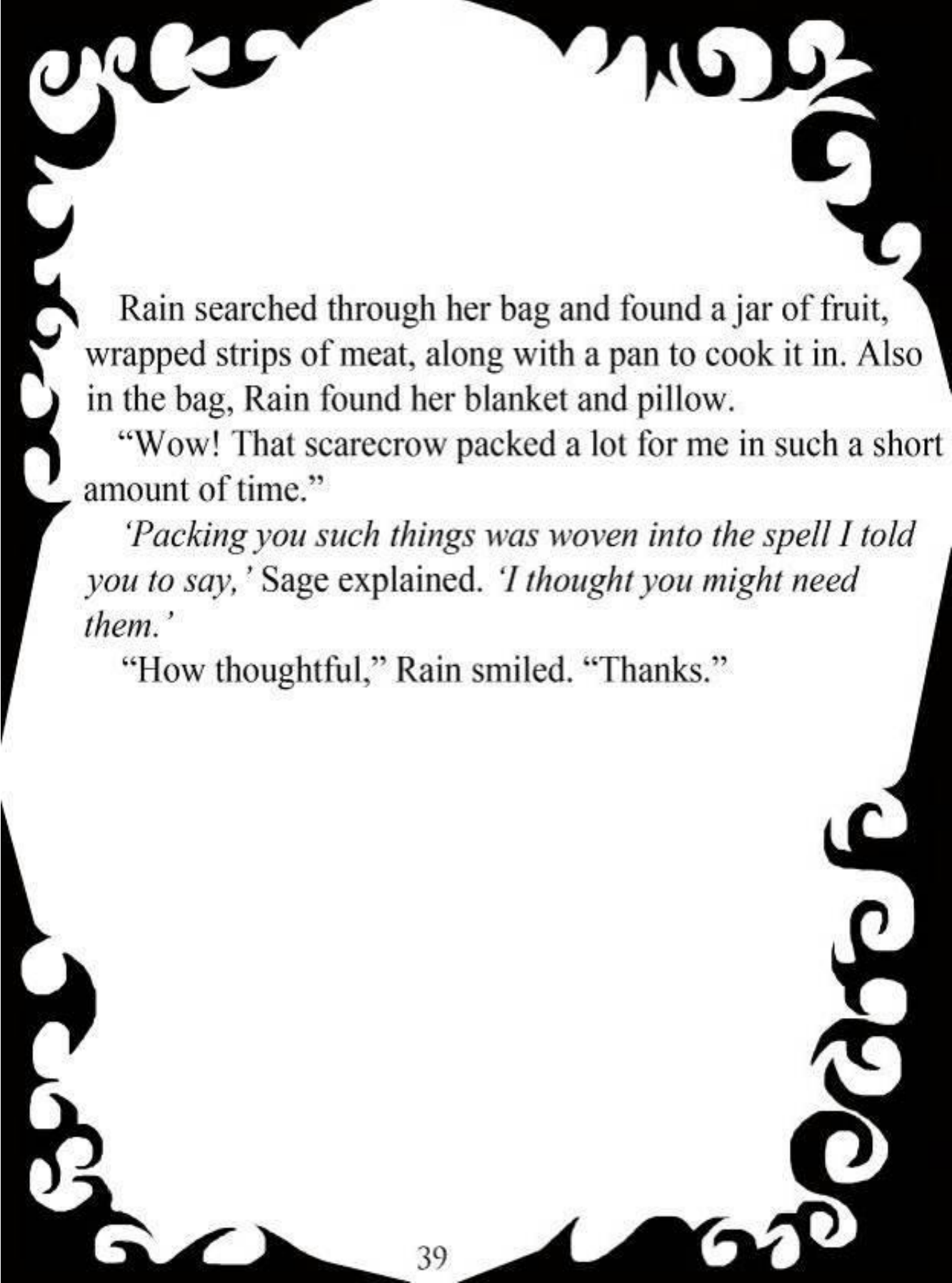


Night had arrived by the time they reached the Rocky Lands on the other side. Tired, the two made camp.

After getting the fire started, Rain's stomach began grumbling.

'You ought to bring out the food left in your bag by the scarecrow,' suggested Sage.





Rain searched through her bag and found a jar of fruit, wrapped strips of meat, along with a pan to cook it in. Also in the bag, Rain found her blanket and pillow.

“Wow! That scarecrow packed a lot for me in such a short amount of time.”

‘Packing you such things was woven into the spell I told you to say,’ Sage explained. ‘I thought you might need them.’

“How thoughtful,” Rain smiled. “Thanks.”



Rain began cooking the strips of meat over the fire. The delicious smell, however, wasn't on her mind. Throughout the long journey, she had questions, but dared not ask and risk upsetting Sage again.

Finally, Sage sighed and said, *'I am sorry for snapping at you. Things have been topsy-turvy since the hex escaped.'*

"It's alright. Are we getting close to it?"

'Yes. I have been following its trail. The only advantage of the hex being so powerful is that it lets off a great amount of energy for a magical creature like me to sense.'

"But why has this sorceress sent a servant instead of dealing with the hex herself?"

'Magic Keepers have certain rules they must follow,' Sage said.

"Magic Keepers?" Rain asked.

'Yes. Sorcerers and sorceresses. They keep magic within themselves and therefore are Magic Keepers.'



“Oh,” said Rain. “Well, what kind of rules does a Magic Keeper have?”

‘When a Magic Keeper enters this world, their very first magic assignment is to create their own replacement. After a Magic Keeper dies and returns to the cosmos from whence they came, their replacement awakens.’

“You mean, every Magic Keeper came from the spell of another Magic Keeper?” Rain asked.

‘Yes. A Magic Keeper’s power comes from the outer universe. When a new Magic Keeper is being created, their power source is pulled down to this world and placed into the form of their creator’s choosing. Then the Replacement Spell is placed into a special magic bottle to be preserved until their creator passes away.

When the new Magic Keeper awakens, everything the deceased Magic Keeper had once owned, their spell books, their land, and their home, is automatically inherited to the replacement. The Keeper is bound for life.’



“You mean, a Magic Keeper can never leave their homeland? How lonely!”

‘Yes,’ Sage said, lowering her head sorrowfully. *‘It is very lonely.’*

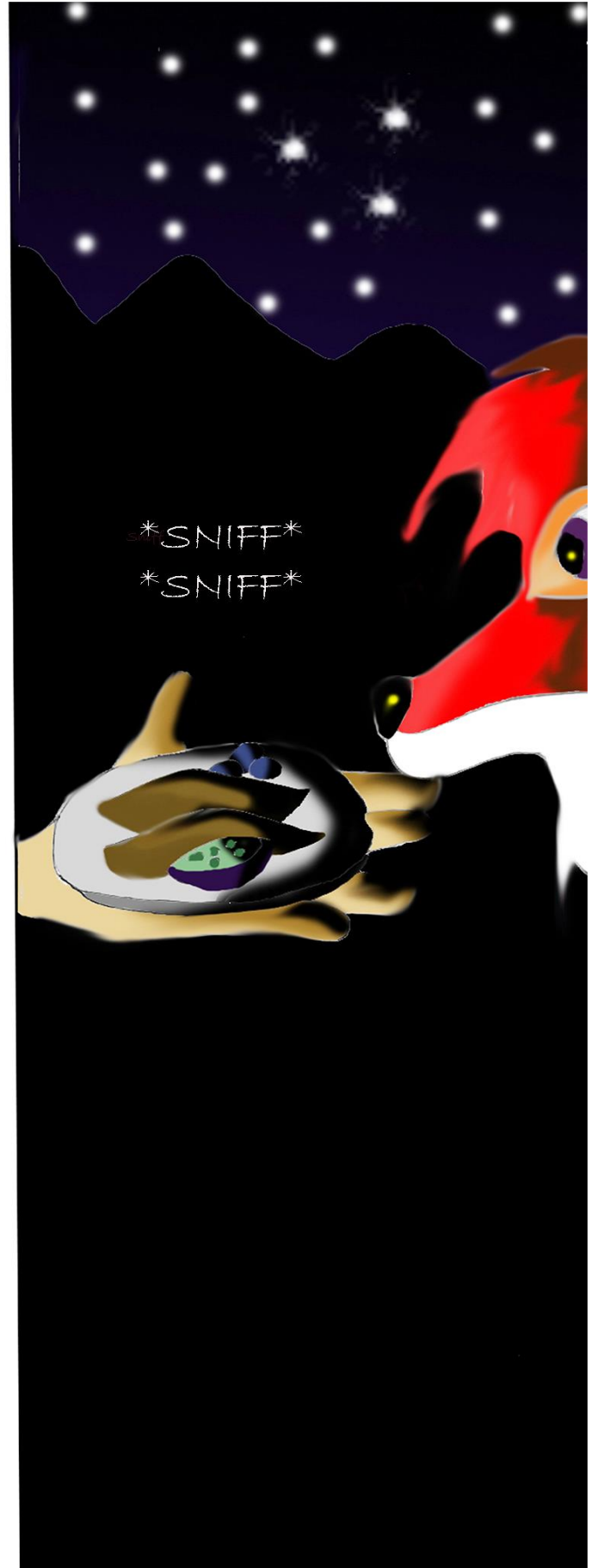
Rain couldn’t help but notice the longing in her purple eyes. She didn’t understand why, since Sage was only a creation and not a lonely Magic Keeper. To try and brighten her sprits, she changed the subject, “Would you like some food?”


‘I have never eaten before,’ Sage admitted.

“Really?” Rain said with surprise. “Then try some of this. You’ll like it.”

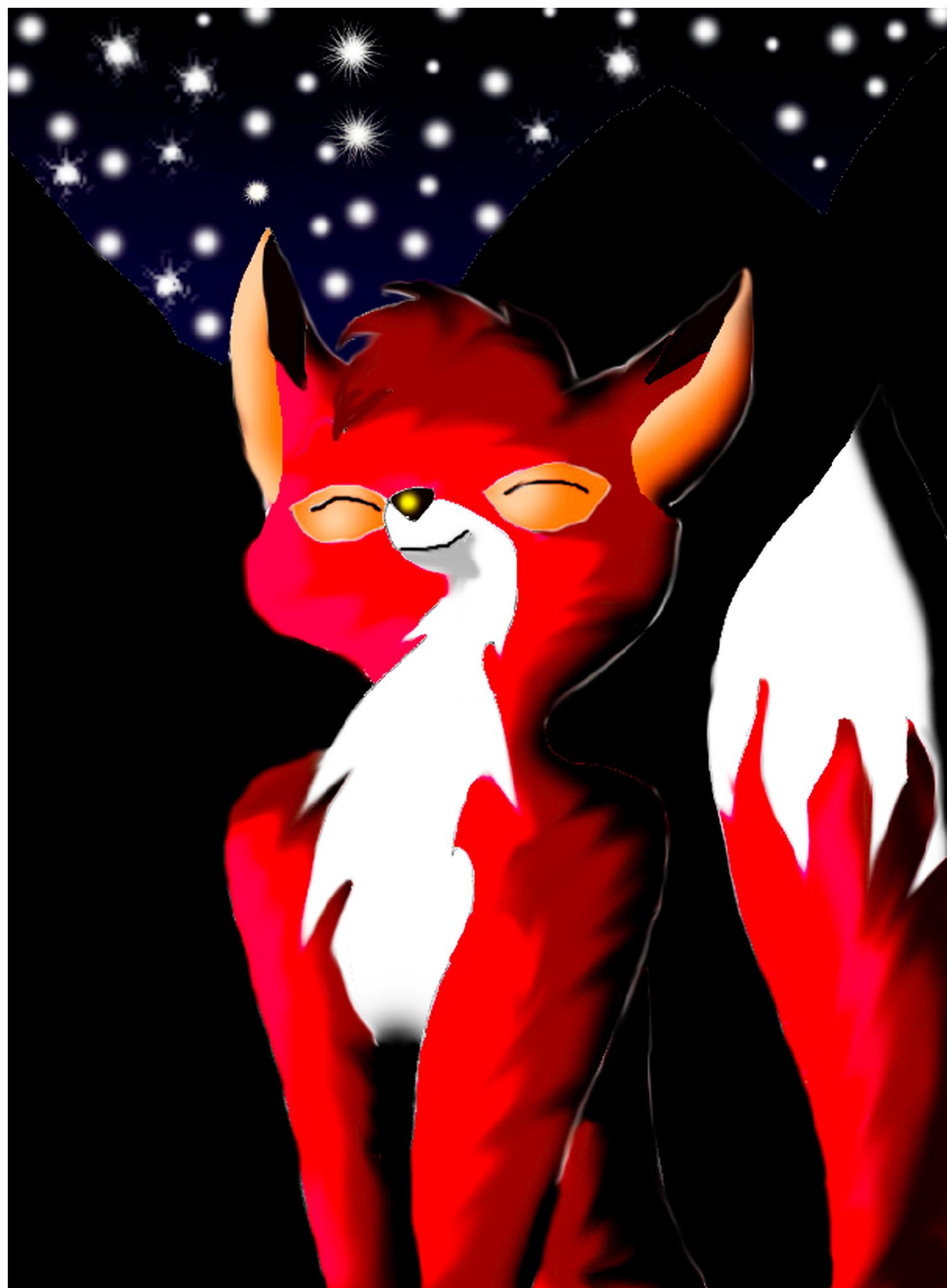
Rain made her a small plate and placed it in front of her. Sage sniffed and tried one of everything.

“How it is?” asked Rain.



A decorative border with a repeating scroll pattern, rendered in white on a black background, framing the central text.

Sage flashed a big smile. *'Yum!'*



The Hex Hunt (Vol.1) available on [Amazon](#).

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