

ECHOES OF MΥTHS

European folklore
in graphic art



Co-funded by
the European Union

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European follore in Graphic Art

Rahul Puri

One of the main aims at Whistling Woods International has been to ensure that our students receive a truly internationalised education, which we believe, means to open students up to new creative possibilities by looking at different forms of creativity around the world. It has led to some wonderful partnerships for the school and students and the Erasmus+ grant received by the School of Animation for a Jean Monet programme, has certainly been one such module for our students and faculty. By allowing funding for capacity building, the Erasmus+ grant has given the school the chance to explore European Folk Art and thereby opening students to another form of story-telling so crucial to their development as animator's and narrators.



Animation as a discipline relies on story-telling, cultural traditions and visual aesthetics. These emerge from folk traditions and are often rooted in where we are from. Thus the idea of juxtaposing Indian folk art with European traditions of the same allowed the next generation of animators and media creators the chance to evolve something innovative and novel as an art style and I was thrilled to see it come to pass. Walking through the gallery of the students work and talking to them about their choices, I saw the passion and interest they had found in researching the European art form they had picked, understanding the history of the tradition and then, using their own unique story-telling style and aesthetic, blending them together into something new and visual fascinating. I was really pleased with the outcome of the module and hope that the students will embrace this learning in the other projects that they do at WWI and in their professional careers.

In addition, the emphasis that both regions have on sustainability and ethics in folk-art, merges well with the Erasmus+ programme and allows students to become aware of a major challenge which needs to be dealt with in the coming years. The demonstration of shared outcomes and values will further enhance our students ability to work within the global media industry with aligned practices and a deeper understanding of cross cultural issues and art styles. Given the deep historical and artistic connections between India and Europe, the two regions are natural partners in fostering cultural and academic exchange. Strengthening these ties through initiatives like this module not only encourages creative education but also helps students engage with a broader, global storytelling tradition while staying rooted in their own cultural heritage.

I would like to congratulate the School of Animation and the faculty involved with this initiative. They have meticulously planned the proposal and have executed it expertly to benefit their school, Whistling Woods and of course, most importantly, the students involved with the project. My special thanks and congratulations to Vivek, Simran and of course Tejasvini, who helped so much in putting the proposal for the grant together. This has indeed been a wonderful initiative and I look forward to many more from the School of Animation and Whistling Woods International.

Vivek Nag

Folk culture has always been a subject close to my heart. As both an academic and an ethnography enthusiast, I find immense joy in teaching students about the rich and often underappreciated cultural traditions of India and other parts of the world.

European folk culture, in particular, is a vast and intricate tapestry of myths, practices, artistic expressions, and identities. Exploring its depth is not only an honor but also a privilege, and sharing this knowledge with students makes the experience even more fulfilling.

The Erasmus+ grant has provided a valuable opportunity to foster global interconnectedness, bridging cultural gaps through education and shared influences. I eagerly look forward to teaching more students about the rich folk traditions of Europe and exploring the connections and contrasts between European and Indian cultures.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vivek Nag".

Simran Tapadia

Indian folk art has always been a driving force in my journey as an artist, student, and now as a professor at Whistling Woods International. Studying and exploring our culture through art has been a profoundly rewarding experience, allowing us to connect with our roots, heritage, and history in a meaningful way.

Receiving the Erasmus+ grant provided me, as a faculty member, with the incredible opportunity to delve deeper into European folk arts and culture. Learning about diverse artistic traditions and exposing students to different cultural perspectives enriches our creative practice, broadens our understanding, and inspires new approaches in our work.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Simran".

This book is a culmination of that learning and exploration. I am incredibly grateful that our students had the opportunity to engage with various European folk art traditions and channel their newfound knowledge into these heartfelt comic books, inspired by the timeless tales of the Brothers Grimm.

MASTER MAID

Retold by Joseph Jacobs in his book Europa's Fairy Book

TEAM MEMBERS

Harsh Chougule

Ivan Perirh

Virendra Dasa

Aditya Kadam

Sibam Kundu

Shreyash Patil



A king once lost his way in a forest,
with no end in sight.
A giant came from the trees into light,
And offered help for a simple fee.

"Give me the first to holds you home,"
The king agreed, with plans of his own.
Thinking of his hound, Bevis, Brave and true,
Would be the one he'd bid for the Brute.

But fate had other plans, as the king felt dread
It was not the Bevis who ran ahead.
As he reached the gate with his grace,
His son, Prince Edgar rushed to his embrace.

The Giant knew and came for the price,
But the guilty king tried to spin him lies.

A herd boy first, then a shepherd dressed fine,
Yet the giant was fooled for only a time.
At last, the prince was given away,
To the giant's castle, far away.

In the giant's care, tasks were set,
To clean the stable an easy bet.
But a master maid fair by the well did wait,
With magic words to change his fate.

She told him how to clear the straw,
To wield the fork with the right law.
And when trees had to be fell by a glass axe,
Again, her magic saved the day.

The final task, hardest yet,
To climb a tree with eggs to get.
The master maid, with a sad farewell,
Had Edgar use her bones for a spell.

With her bones, he built a ladder tall,
He got the eggs without a fall,
And saved her life with a magic call.
But a finger was lost, her hand left bare,
Yet still, she stood, so wise and fair.

The giant knew she'd helped once more,
And planned a wedding to settle the score.
But they had whispers of their own,
A plan to run, and escape into the night.

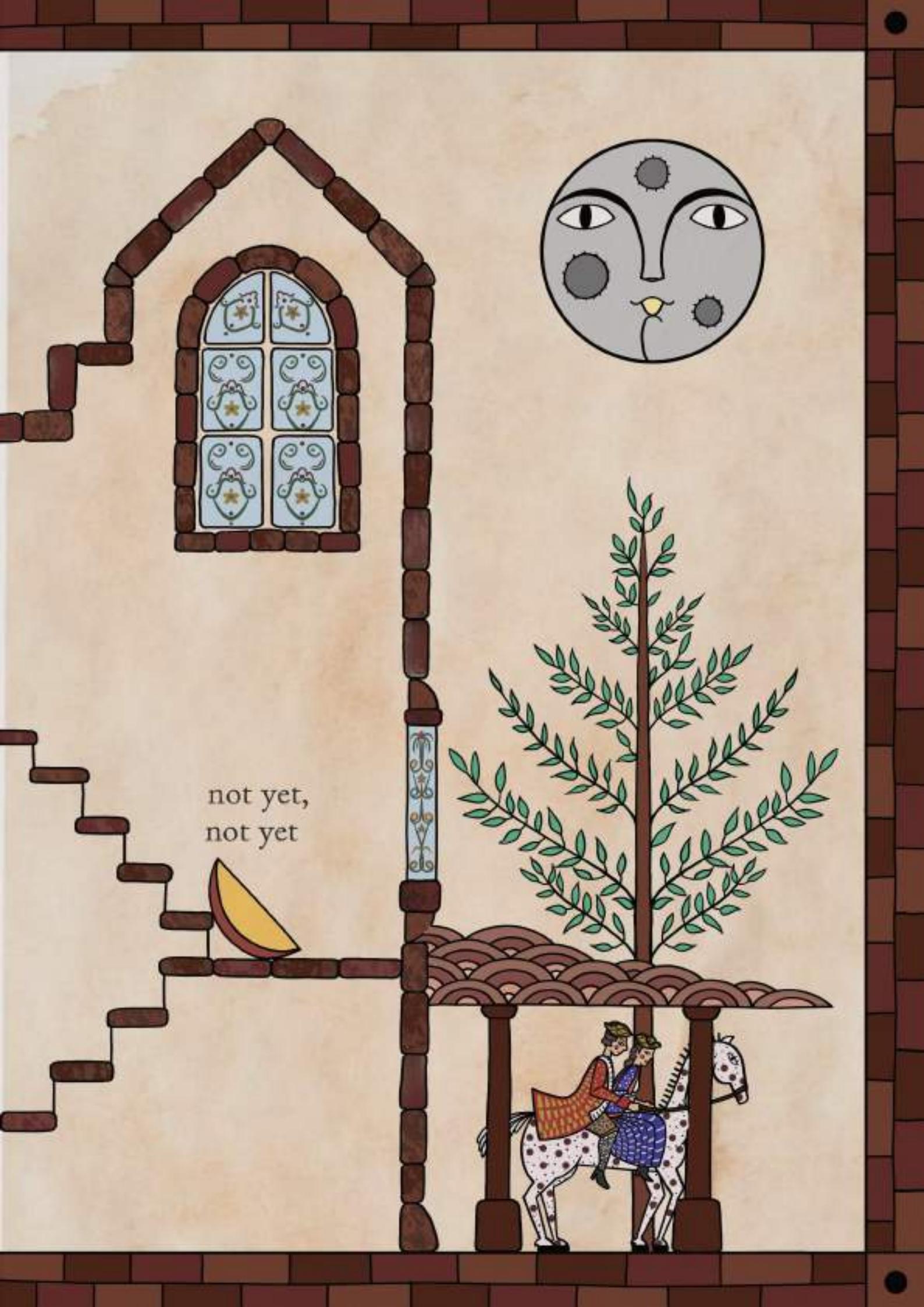




are you
asleep
yet?

not yet,
not yet





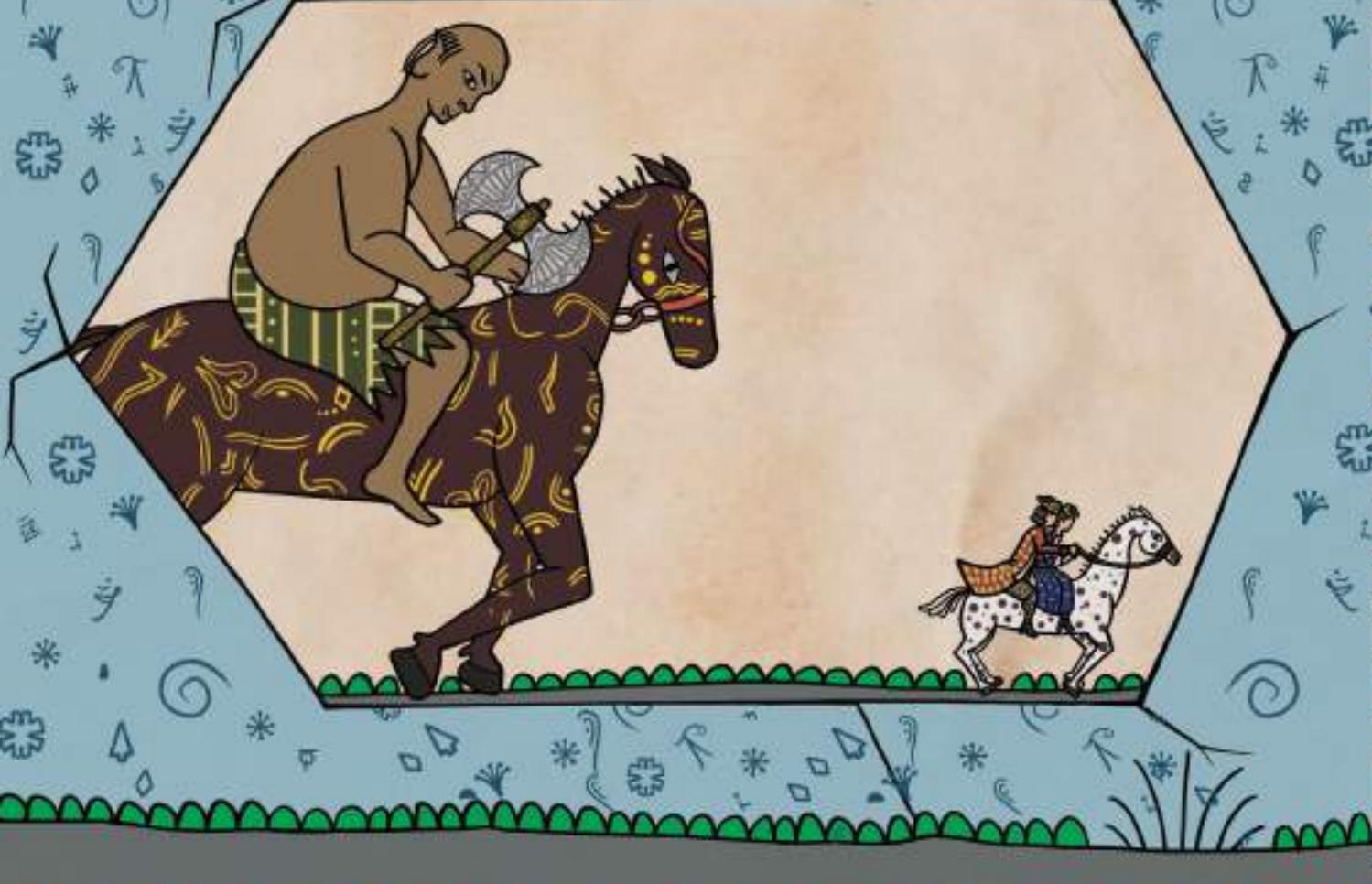
not yet,
not yet

how
dare you
flee!

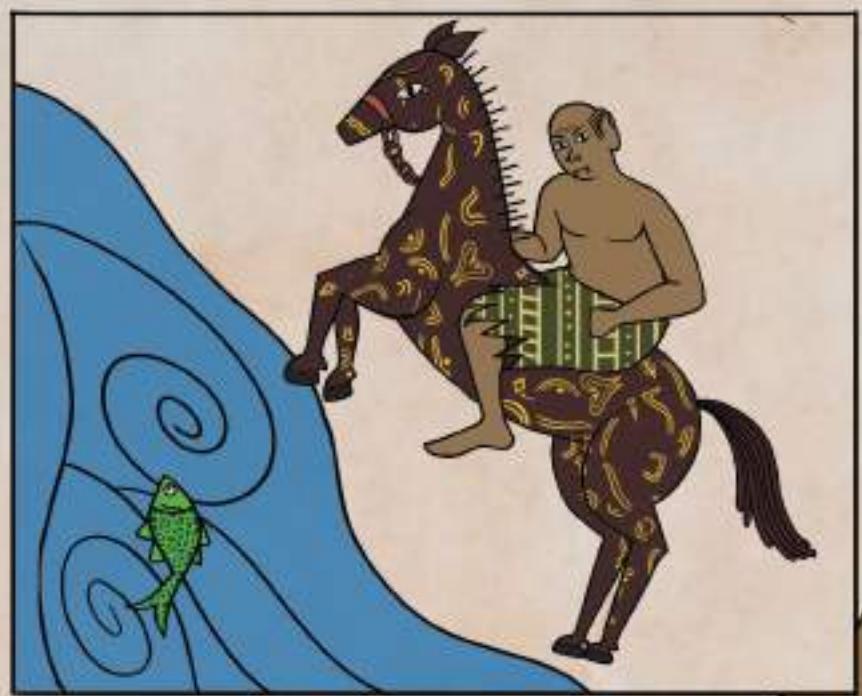








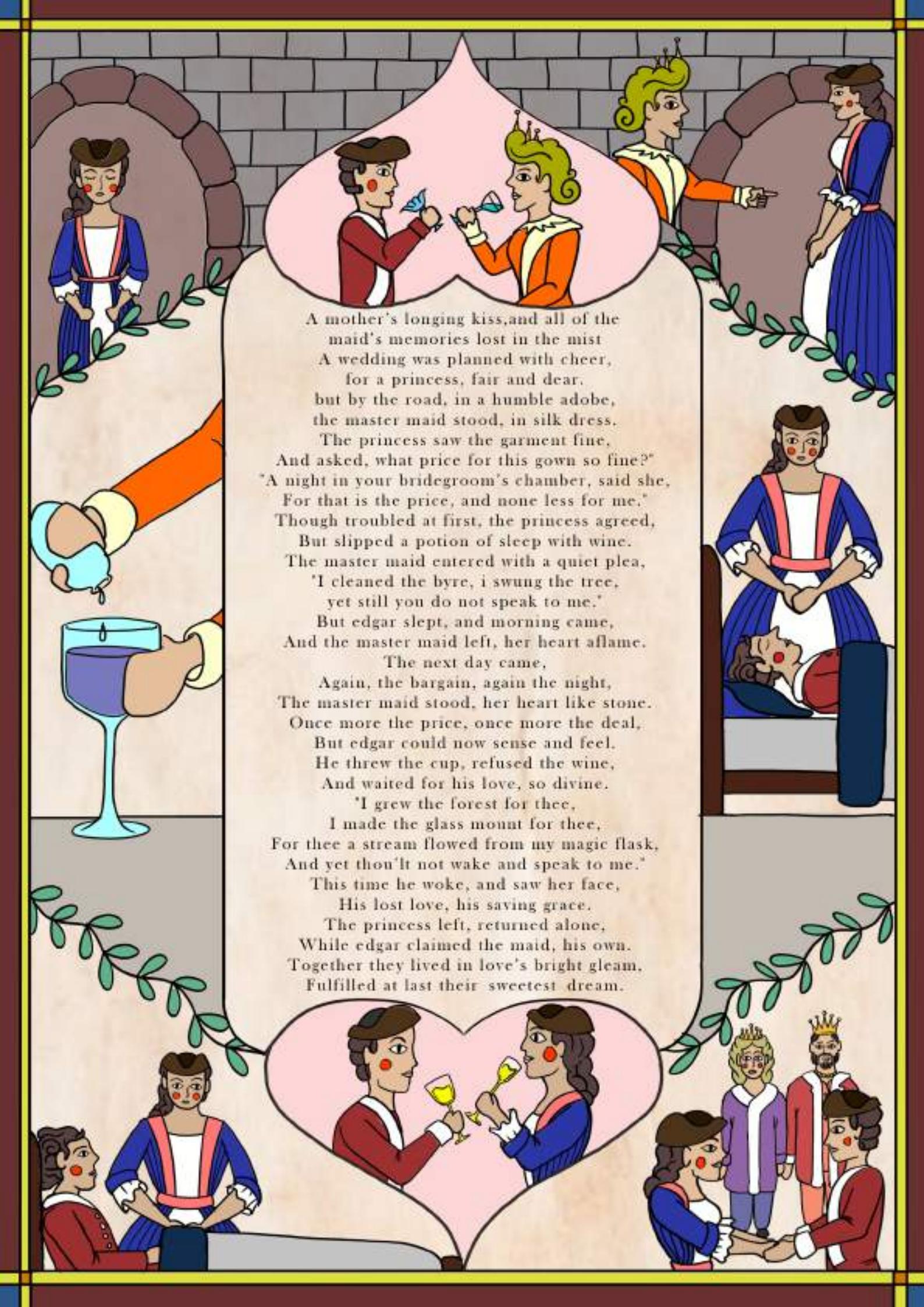






beware of kisses, my
love,
No lips but mine shall
touch your face,
Or my memory, time
will erase

or my memory,
time will
erase....



A mother's longing kiss, and all of the
maid's memories lost in the mist
A wedding was planned with cheer,
for a princess, fair and dear.

but by the road, in a humble adobe,
the master maid stood, in silk dress.

The princess saw the garment fine,
And asked, what price for this gown so fine?"
"A night in your bridegroom's chamber, said she,
For that is the price, and none less for me."
Though troubled at first, the princess agreed,
But slipped a potion of sleep with wine.
The master maid entered with a quiet plea,
"I cleaned the byre, I swung the tree,
yet still you do not speak to me."
But edgar slept, and morning came,
And the master maid left, her heart aflame.

The next day came,
Again, the bargain, again the night,
The master maid stood, her heart like stone.
Once more the price, once more the deal,

But edgar could now sense and feel.
He threw the cup, refused the wine,
And waited for his love, so divine.

"I grew the forest for thee,
I made the glass mount for thee,
For thee a stream flowed from my magic flask,
And yet thou'lt not wake and speak to me."

This time he woke, and saw her face,
His lost love, his saving grace.

The princess left, returned alone,
While edgar claimed the maid, his own.
Together they lived in love's bright gleam,
Fulfilled at last their sweetest dream.

UNSEEN BRIDEGROOM

Retold by Joseph Jacobs in his book Europa's Fairy Book

TEAM MEMBERS

Rajvardhansingh Pardesi

Sara Choudhary

Ishani Pawar

Parth Gawade

Preksha Mansinghka

Malhar Nhavkar

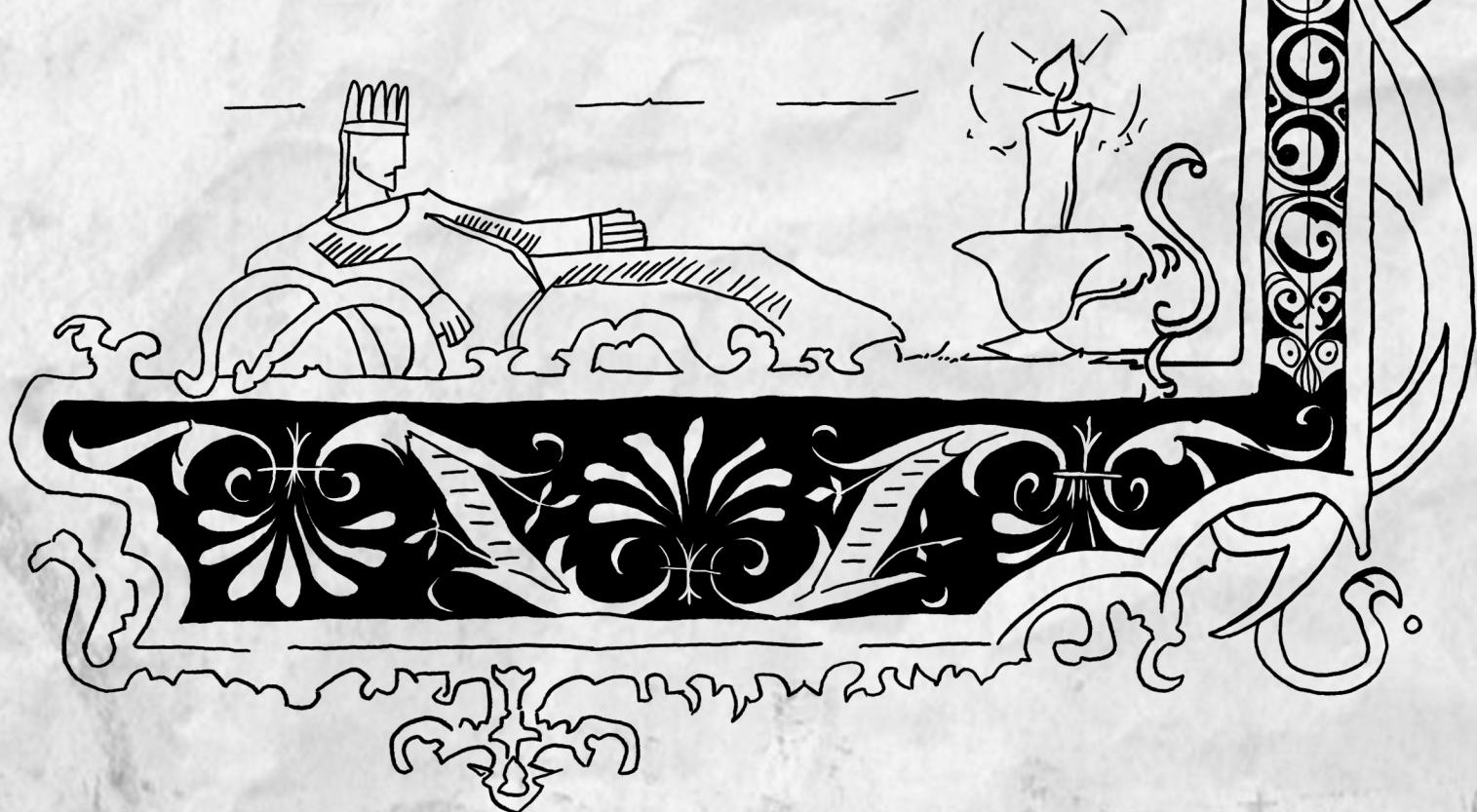
Aryan Jain

PROLOGUE

Once upon a time, in a kingdom where three princesses lived, the youngest was known for her unmatched beauty. She found a lone rose one peaceful afternoon while exploring the royal garden. She picked it, mesmerized by its grace, and a secret doorway appeared before her with a swift rush of wind. Enticed by curiosity, she entered.

There was a magical realm beyond with a magnificent castle that looked to be alive with magic. There were feasts and treasures everywhere throughout the palace. The prince living here was immediately captivated by her beauty and, in a fit of passion, proposed marriage. She accepted, but there were conditions: she must never leave the castle, never see her family again, and, most mysterious of all, she must never look upon his face.

She sneaked into his room one fatal night with a candle in hand. The light flickered across his face, revealing a being—so beautiful it took her breath away. But before she could take in more, a drop of wax fell on his skin, waking him up. In a voice heavy with sorrow, the prince cried out that she was not meant to see him, for his mother—an all-powerful enchantress—would never approve. As his words faded, the world around her plunged into darkness.





Thou hast married my nephew,
my sister's son. And I fear she'll
never forgive thee.

Go to her and demand thy Husband.
And she will have to give him up to thee.

Take this twig; If she
asks what I think she
will ask, strike it on the
ground thrice and help

Go to my other sister's
and she shall give thy a
raven's feather. Wave it
thrice and thou will

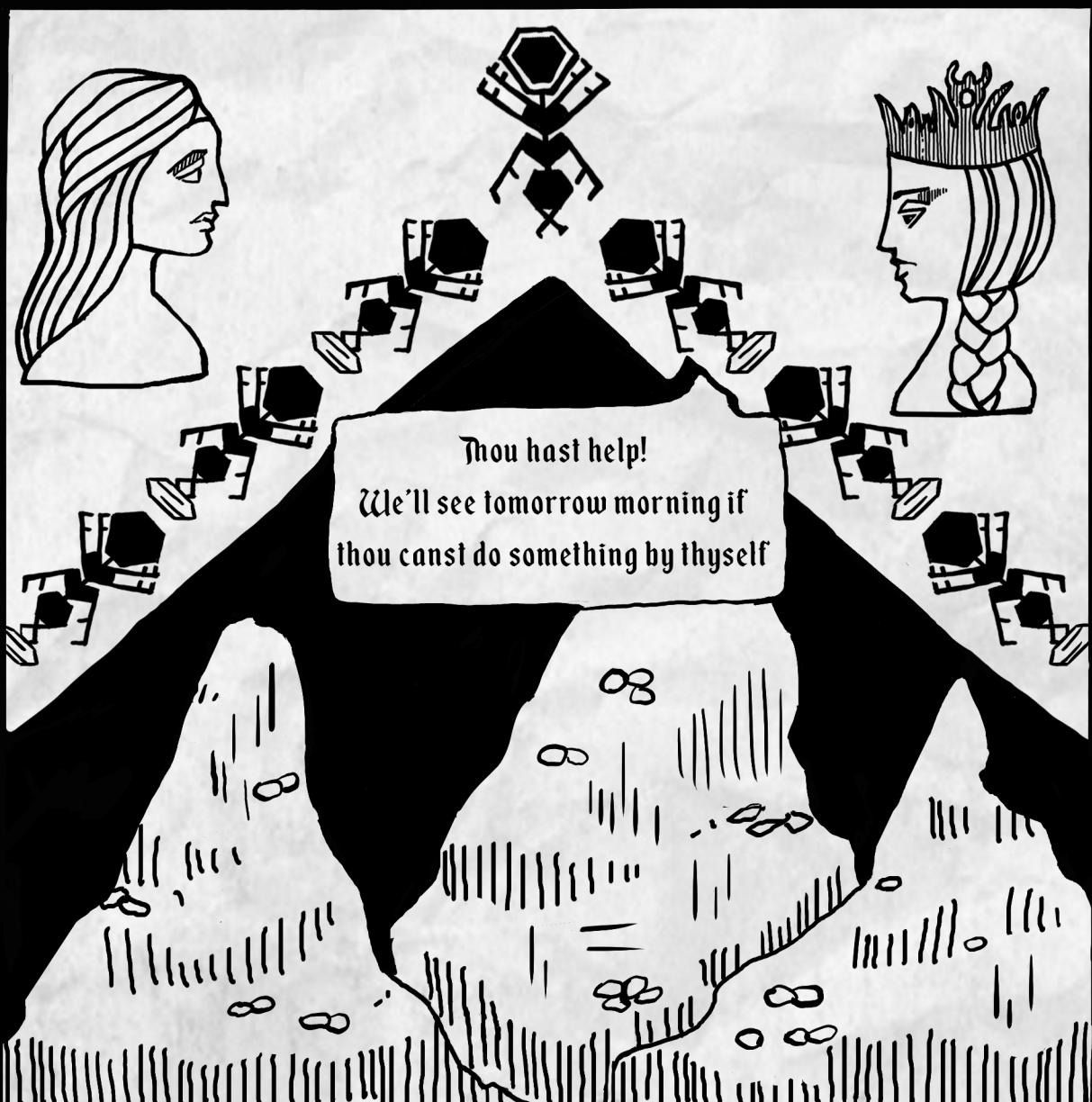
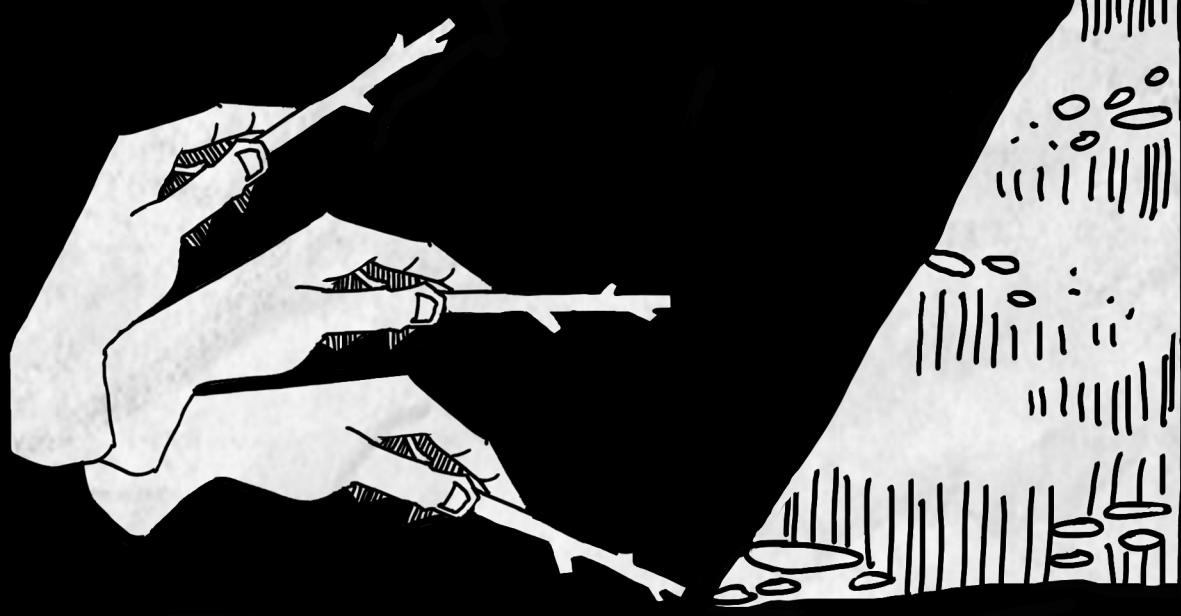
Then make your way to
the Queen

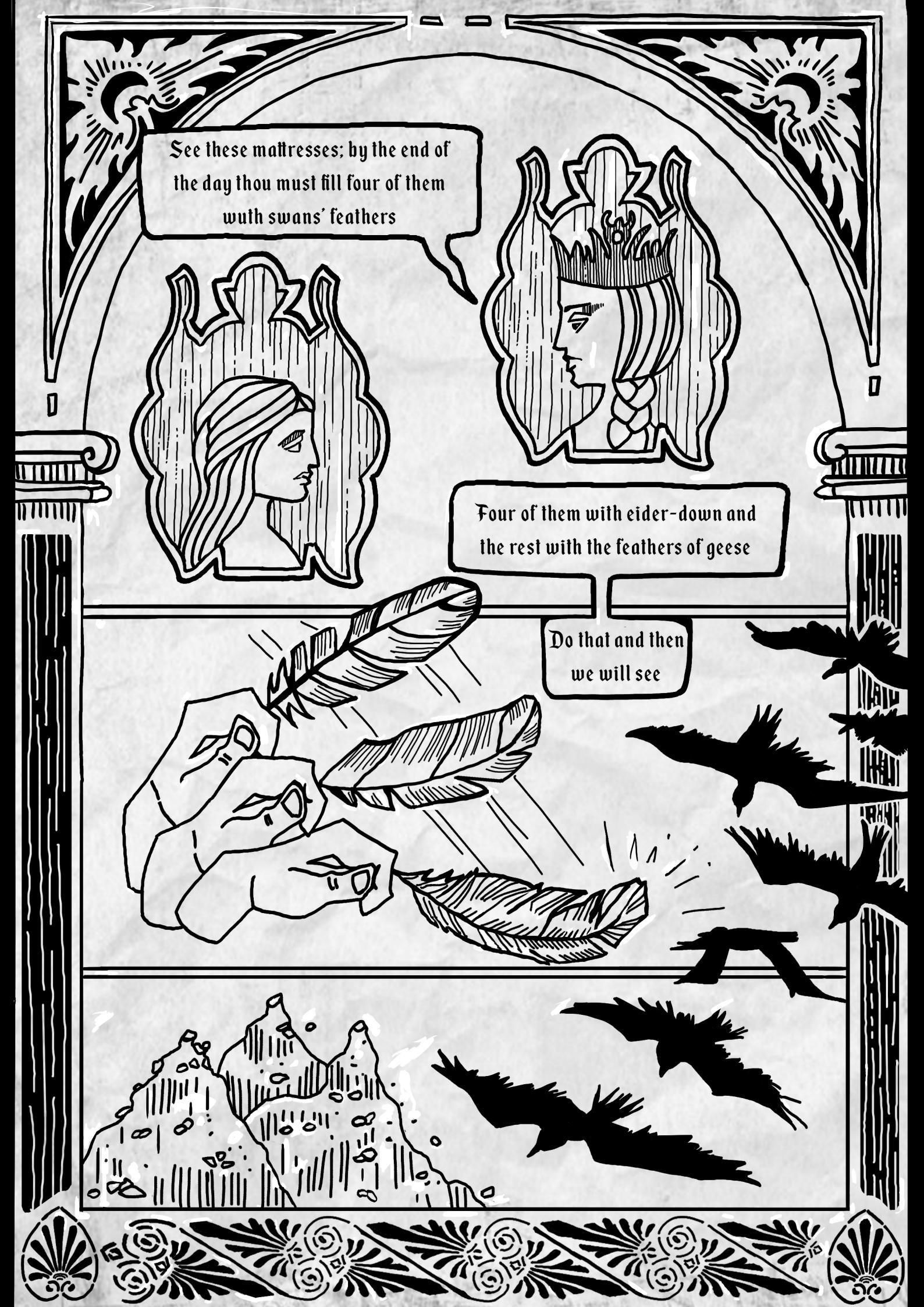
What, thou low born mortal!
How didst thou dare to wed my son

It was his choice and I am now his wife.
Surely you will let me see him once more

Well, If thou canst do what
I demand of thee thou shalt
see my son again.

And first go in that barn where my
stupid stewards have poured together
all the wheat and oats and rice into one
great heap. If by nightfall thou canst
seperate them into three heaps perhaps
I may grant thy wish

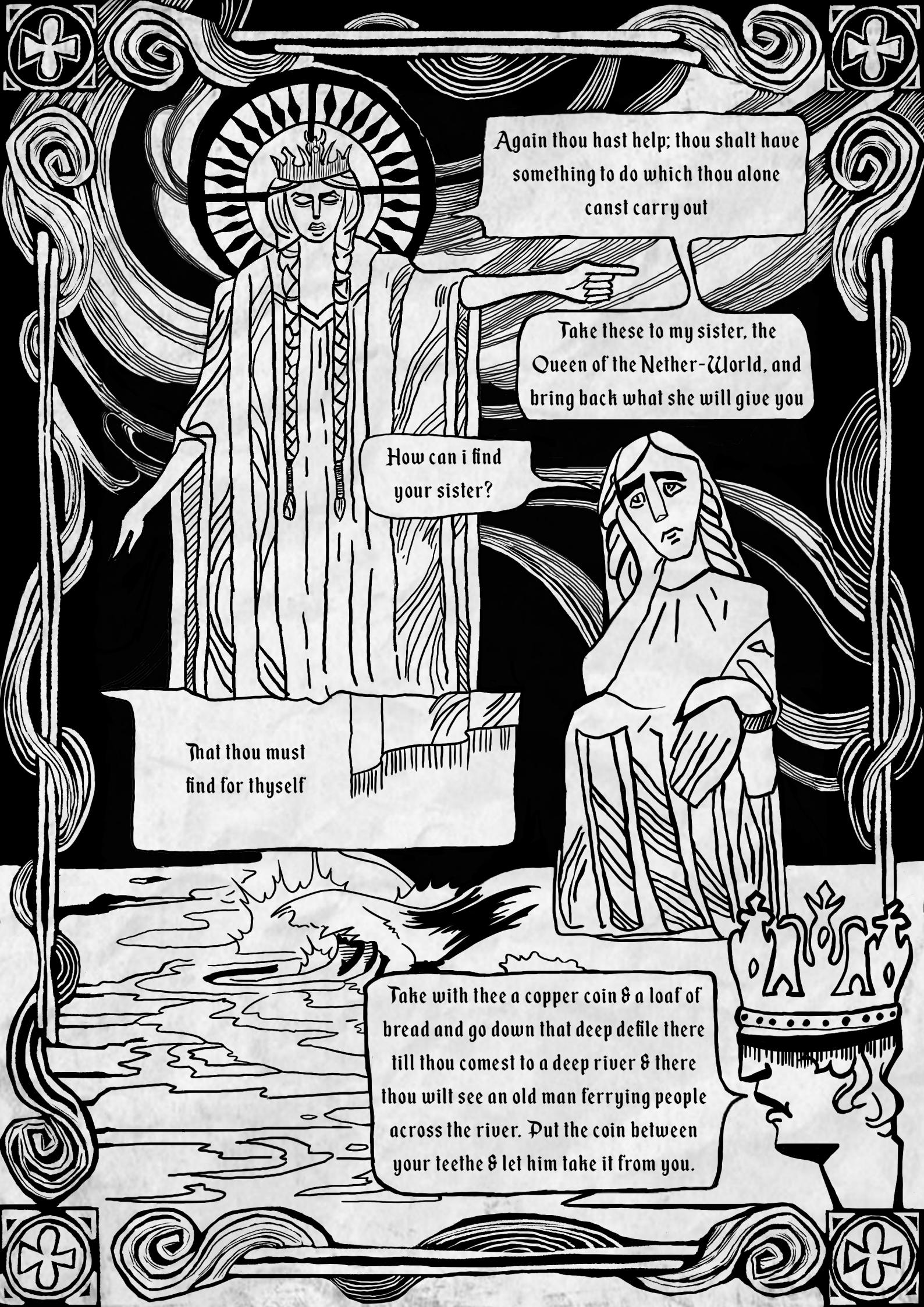




See these mattresses; by the end of
the day thou must fill four of them
wuth swans' feathers

Four of them with eider-down and
the rest with the feathers of geese

Do that and then
we will see



Again thou hast help; thou shalt have
something to do which thou alone
canst carry out

Take these to my sister, the
Queen of the Nether-World, and
bring back what she will give you

How can i find
your sister?

That thou must
find for thyself

Take with thee a copper coin & a loaf of
bread and go down that deep defile there
till thou comest to a deep river & there
thou wilt see an old man ferrying people
across the river. Put the coin between
your teeth & let him take it from you.

And he will
carry you across



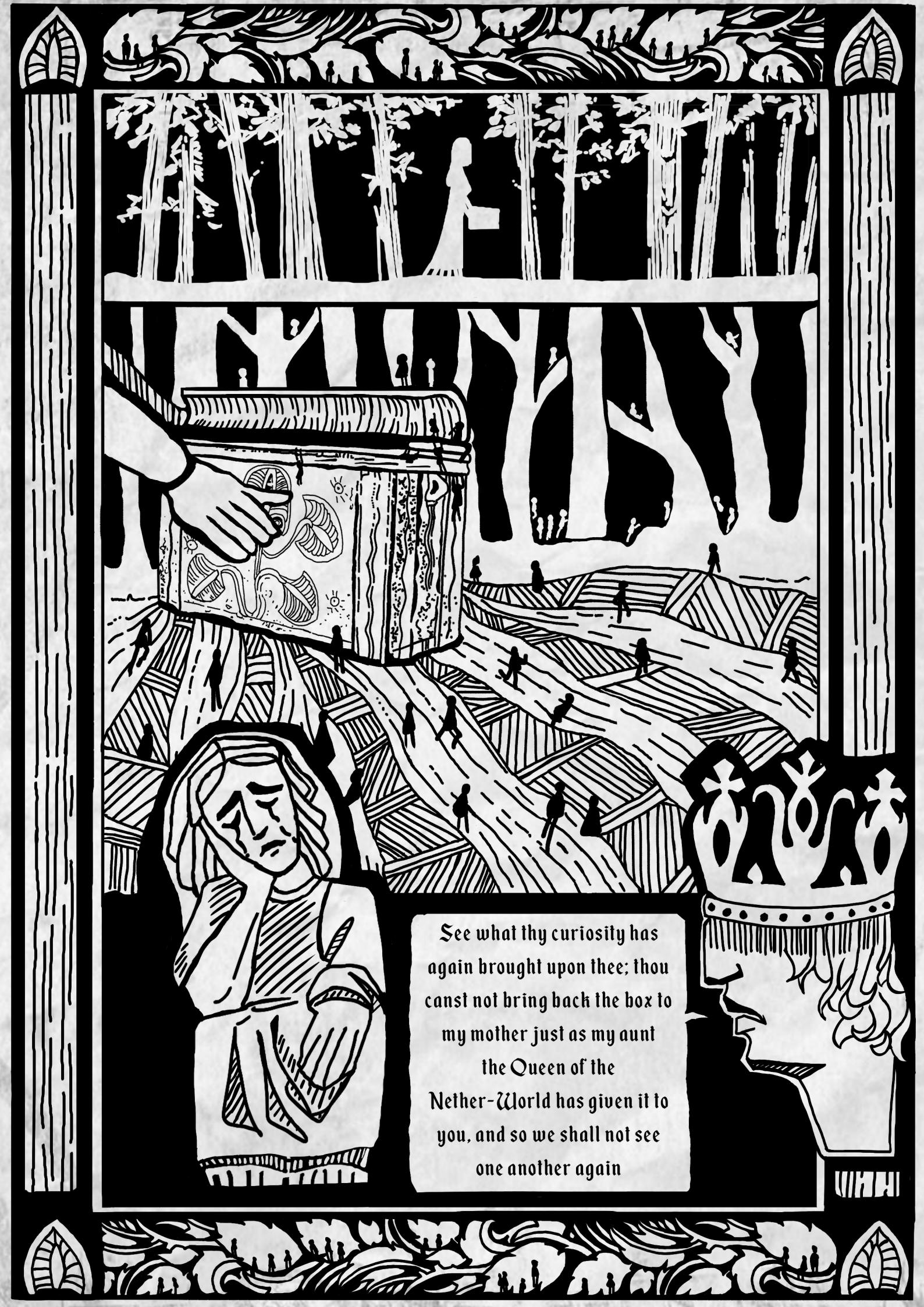
Thou wilt come to a dark
cave, & at the entrance is
a savage doge; give him
the loaf of bread & he will
let thee pass & thou wilt
soon come to the Queen
of the Nether-World



Take what she gives
thee, but beware lest
thou eat anything or
sit down

Take this, I praye thee, to
my sister; but beware lest
thou open it onw the way
or ill may befall you



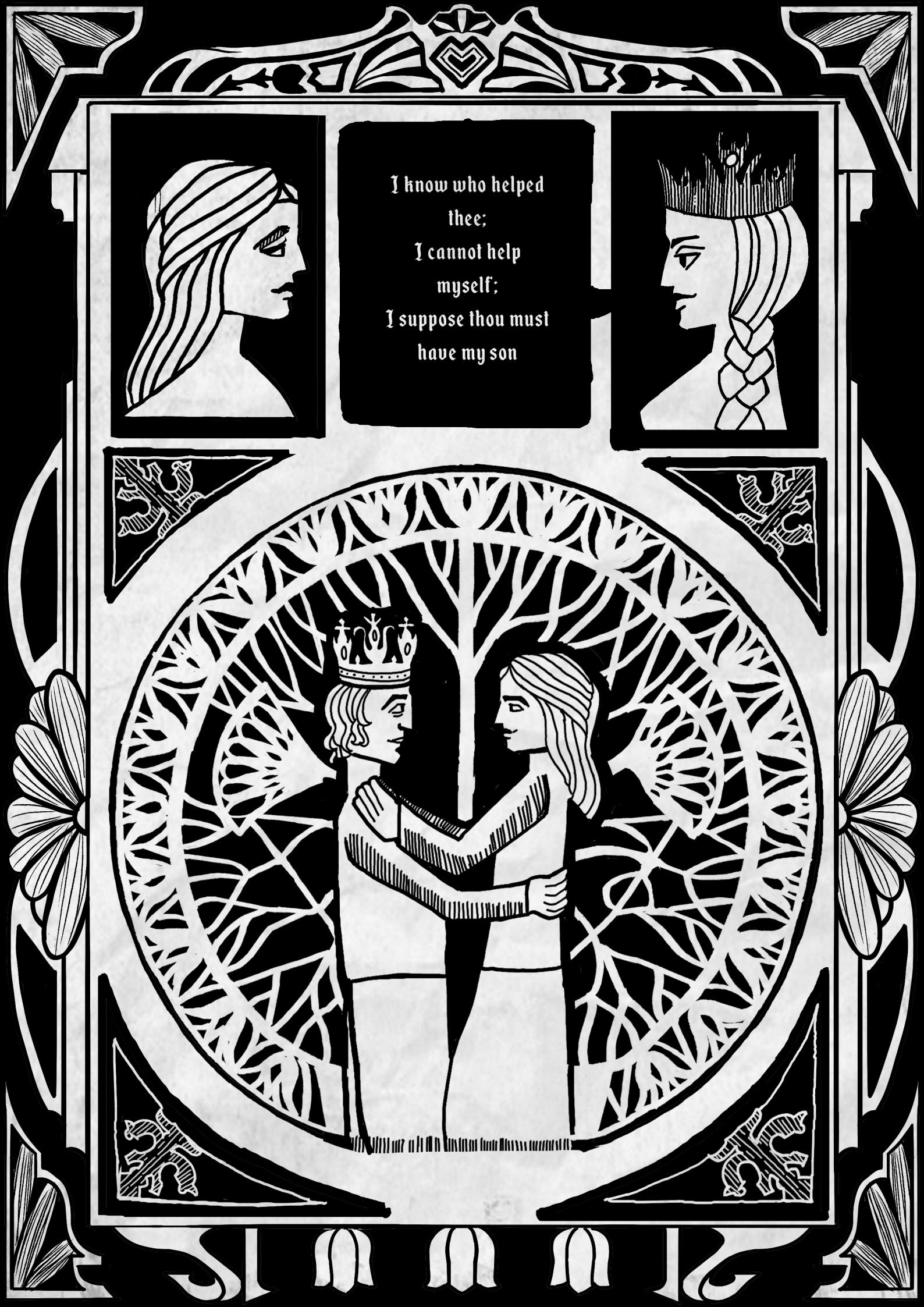


See what thy curiosity has
again brought upon thee; thou
canst not bring back the box to
my mother just as my aunt
the Queen of the
Nether-World has given it to
you, and so we shall not see
one another again



See that golden bough
on yonder tree; pluck it
and strike the ground
three times with it and
see what thou wilt see

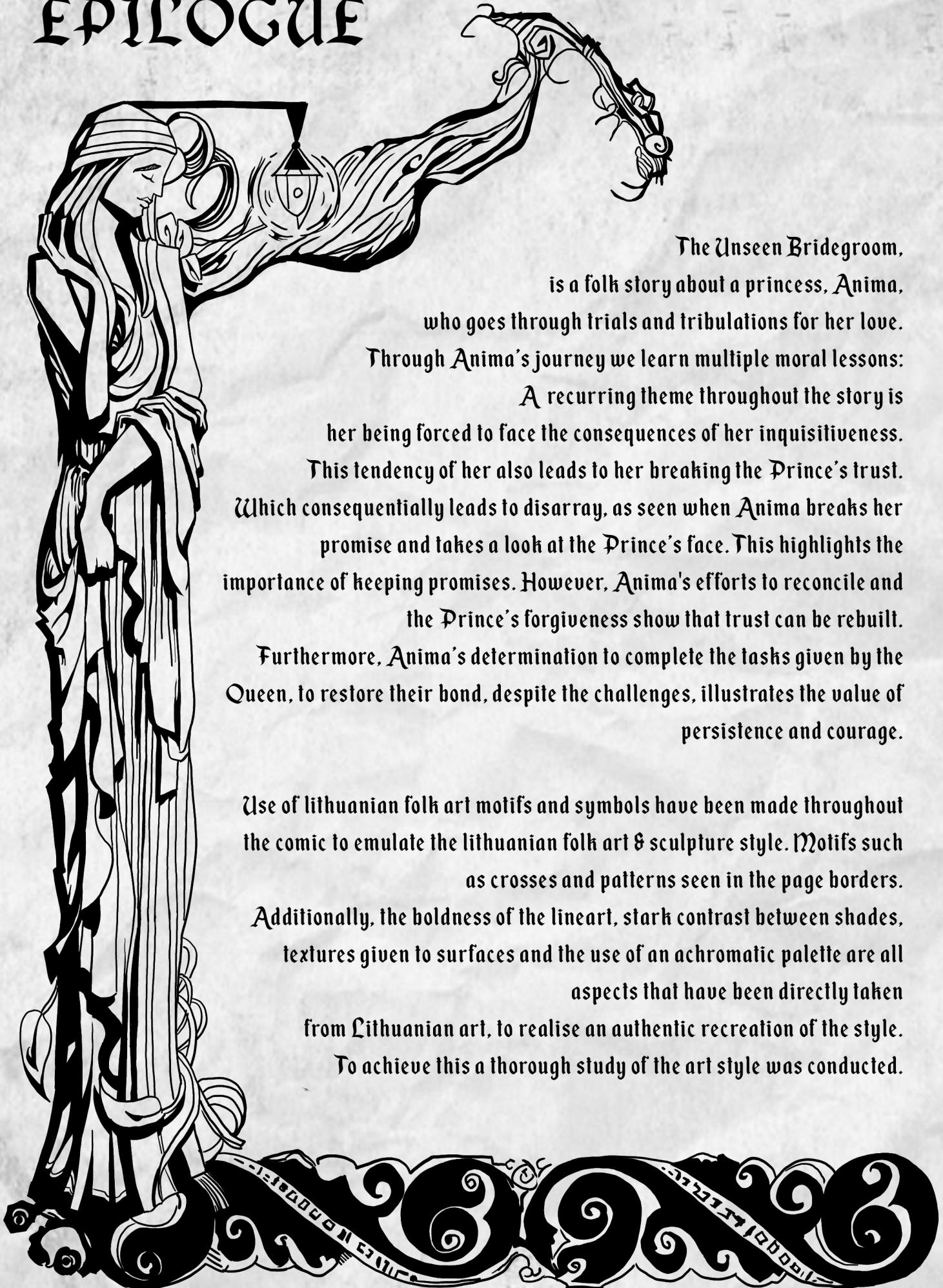




I know who helped
thee;
I cannot help
myself;
I suppose thou must
have my son



EPilogue



The Unseen Bridegroom, is a folk story about a princess, Anima, who goes through trials and tribulations for her love. Through Anima's journey we learn multiple moral lessons:

A recurring theme throughout the story is her being forced to face the consequences of her inquisitiveness. This tendency of her also leads to her breaking the Prince's trust. Which consequentially leads to disarray, as seen when Anima breaks her promise and takes a look at the Prince's face. This highlights the importance of keeping promises. However, Anima's efforts to reconcile and the Prince's forgiveness show that trust can be rebuilt. Furthermore, Anima's determination to complete the tasks given by the Queen, to restore their bond, despite the challenges, illustrates the value of persistence and courage.

Use of lithuanian folk art motifs and symbols have been made throughout the comic to emulate the lithuanian folk art & sculpture style. Motifs such as crosses and patterns seen in the page borders.

Additionally, the boldness of the lineart, stark contrast between shades, textures given to surfaces and the use of an achromatic palette are all aspects that have been directly taken from Lithuanian art, to realise an authentic recreation of the style.

To achieve this a thorough study of the art style was conducted.

SCISSORS

Retold by Joseph Jacobs in his book Europa's Fairy Book

TEAM MEMBERS

Akira Shah

Sarika Parghi

Kamalakant Kulkarni

Aditya Vaidya

Sian Barnes

Priyanka Sonawale



Once upon a time, though it was not in
yours, mine nor anybody else's time, there lived...



whatever tom did
Joan did the opposite
whatever tom thought Joan
thought contrary wise





CLATTER!



CRASH!





I cut these pots and
pans with my scissors



you STUPID WOMAN THAT IS IMPOSSIBLE



IM TELLING
YOU I CUT
THEM WITH
MY
SCISSORS



YOU
COULDN'T



I DID



YOU
COULDN'T
I DID



YOU
COULDN'T

I DID



I DID!



FOR THE LAST TIME...

TELL ME,
HOW DID
YOU BREAK
THOSE POTS AND
PANS?

WITH
MY

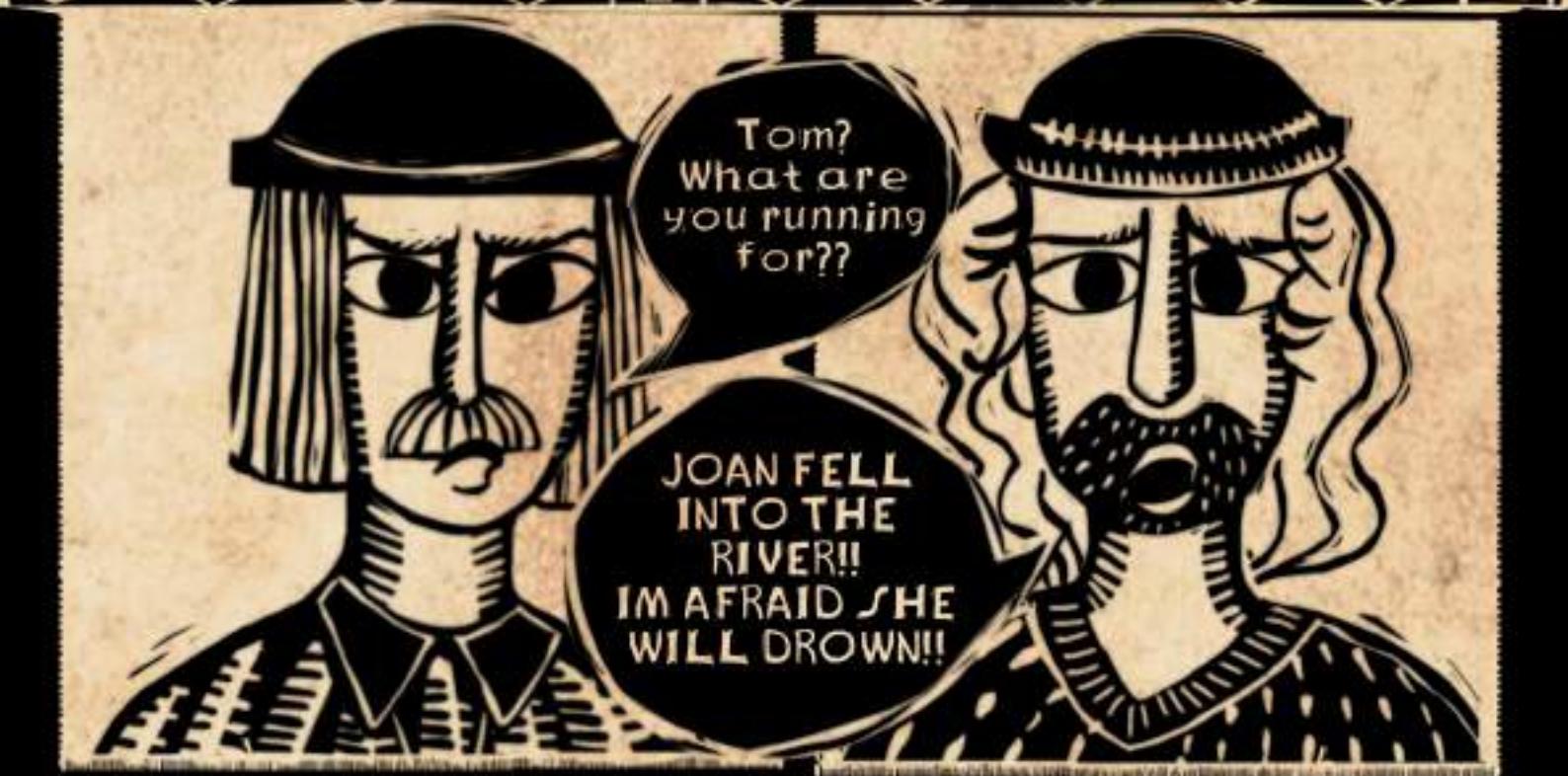
SCIS-
SORS

THUMP!

GLUB!

SPLASH!







but...
you are
running
upstream?

well...
Joan always
went contrary
wise...

no matter

what happened...



LANGUAGE OF ANIMALS!

Retold by Joseph Jacobs in his book Europa's Fairy Book

TEAM MEMBERS

Hashita Juvekar

Nitya Agrawal

Hyushi Maji

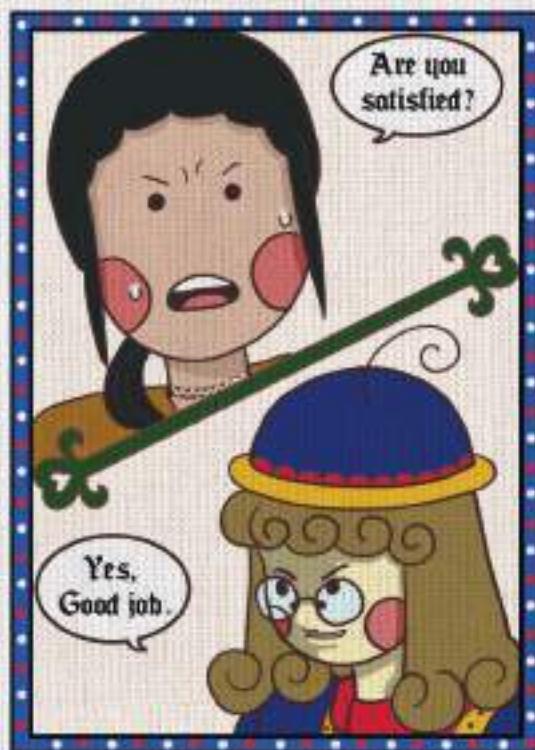
Surabhi Saxena

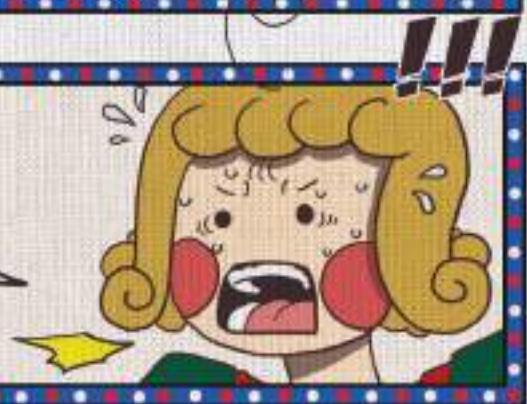
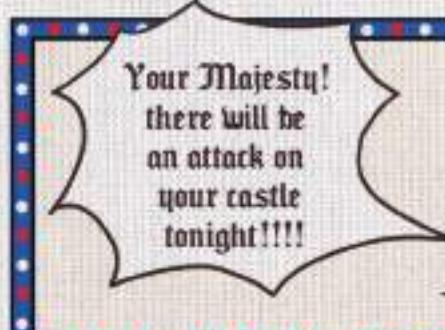
Zainab Ssuratwala

Sachi Joshi

Prologue

This story is about a boy named Jack whose father was rather backward in thought. He sent jack away to school for a year just to have him return having learnt nothing except what dogs meant when they barked, his father rather unimpressed sent him back to school only for him to return a second time having learnt what frogs meant when they croaked, his father still dissatisfied sent him to school a third time this time jack came back only having learned what birds meant when they twittered, chirped, cawed, cooed, gobbled and clucked. Jack's father was unimpressed with what jack had learnt over a span of three years and to test his knowledge he asked jack what the bird sitting on the tree above them was saying. Jack hesitated and his father told him to feel free to say what the bird had said, Jack replied saying that the bird had said that the day was not far away when jack's father would bend on his knees and offer him water to wash his hands and that his mother would offer him a towel to wipe them with. The father was so furious, his love for jack had turned into hatred.









I heard you warn the king back there. I was really impressed by how you could save the castle and all its people! Can I join you as a companion in your endeavours?



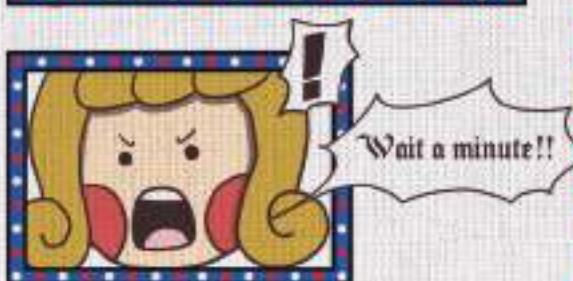
As time passed, Jack and his companion travelled many places together...



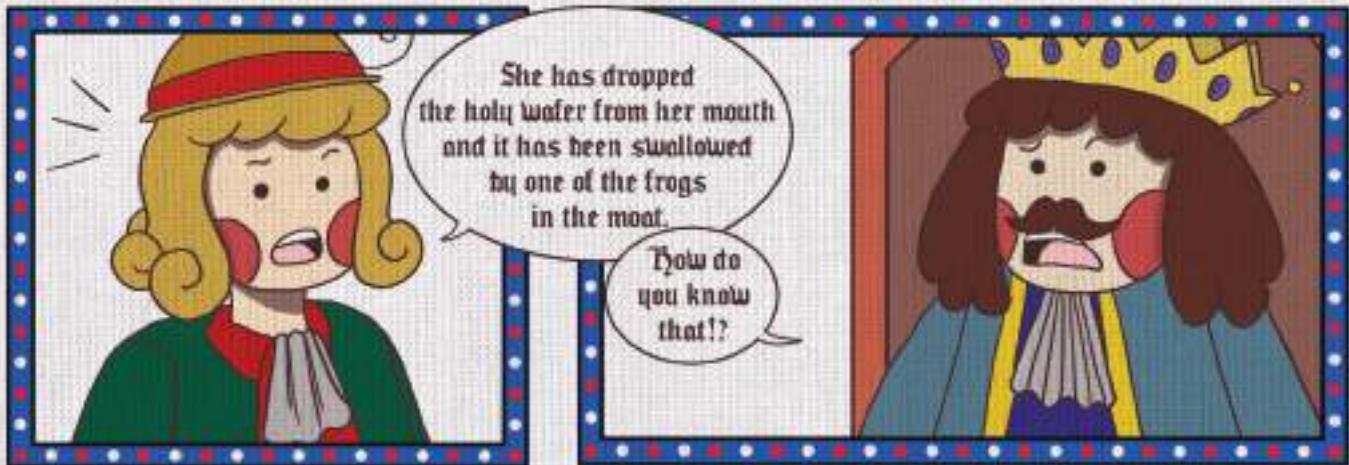
And then one day they reached a kingdom...



Unfortunately, the princess is severely ill. The Lord has declared that a great reward will be offered to the person who cures the princess



I have something to say!!
Its about your daughter!!







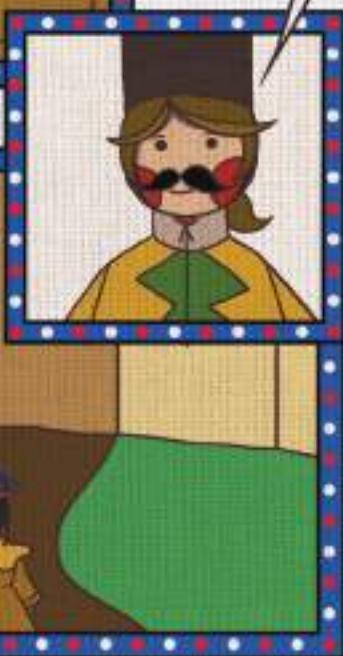
Jack was made Pope of all Christendom
and was named Pope Sylvester

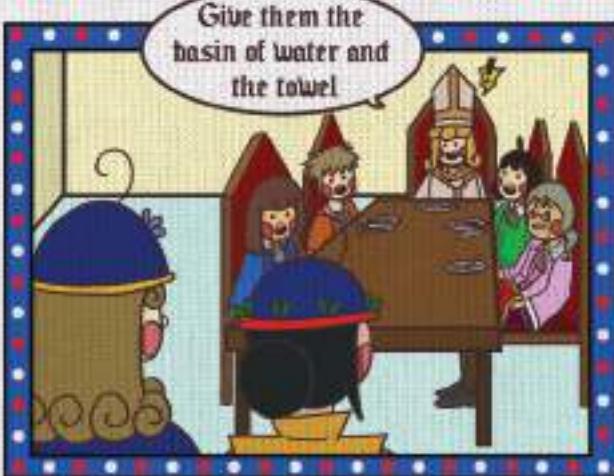


After a while the new Pope
went upon his travels



And went to the town
where his father dwelt.







Epilogue

There was a great banquet held in town to honour the new Pope. Jack's parents were also invited as per his request. When they arrived, the Pope ordered his servants to give his father a basin and his mother a towel, implying that they will wash his hands after the meal. In olden times, being able to wash the Pope's hands was considered to be the greatest honour. His court wondered why Jack's parents were given such an honourable task. After dinner they washed his hands and Jack asked if they remembered who he was. He then reminded his parents about what the bird had said. Jack then forgave his parents and took the both of them along to live with him happily ever after.

THUMBRIN

Retold by Joseph Jacobs in his book Europa's Fairy Book

TEAM MEMBERS

Anjali Patel

Dhanuj Kumar

Siya Dedhia

Ramaa Mani

Amrita Bera

Yash Agarwal

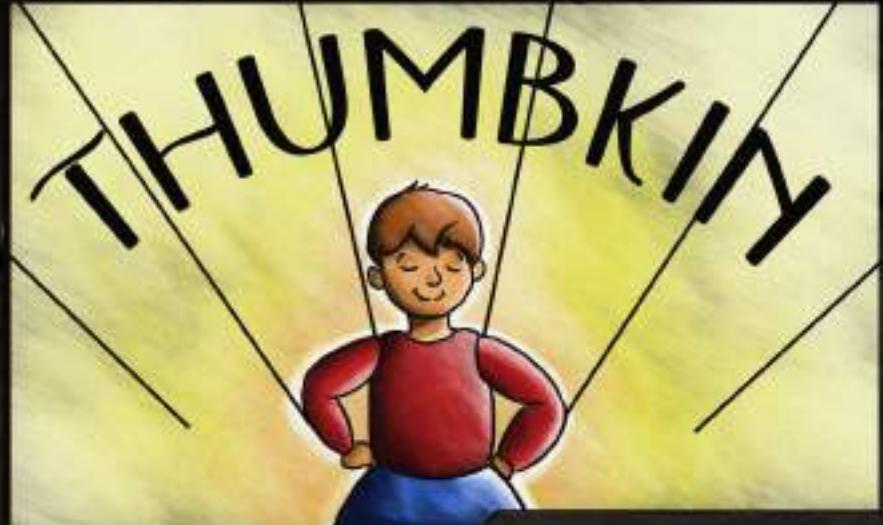
A woman was once stringing beans in her kitchen, and she thought to herself:



As she was speaking thus to herself and finishing off the beans, suddenly she thought they all turned into little baby boys, jumping and writhing about. She was so startled and afraid that she shook out her apron, in which they all lay.

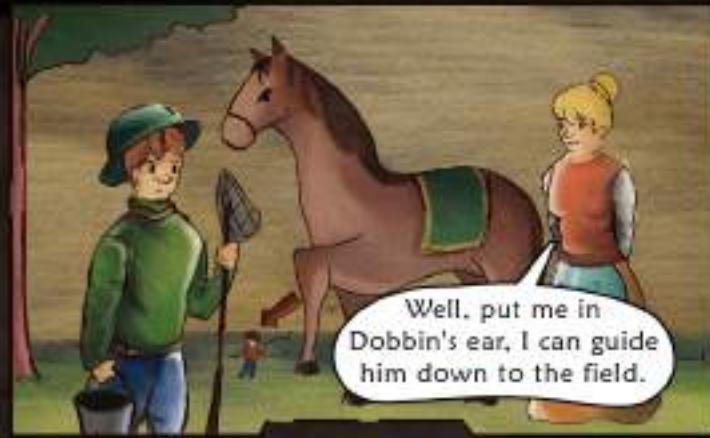


Into a big bowl of water with which she was going to wash the beans. And then she hid her head in her apron so as not to see what happened, and after a while she looked out from under her apron and looked at the bowl, and there were all the little boys.



She showed her husband when he came home. "We have always wanted a boy, and here we have one." So they dressed him up and he learned to talk, but he never grew any bigger their thumbs; and so they called him Thumbkin.

One day







Thumbkin saw someone coming



No, not for a fortune;
he's the light of our life



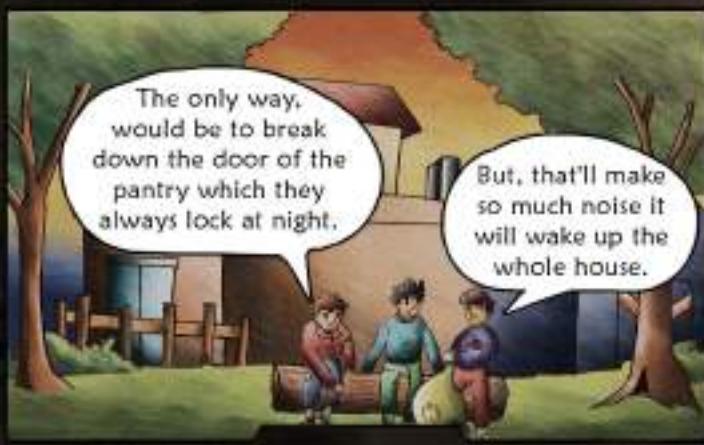
Sell me
and I'll soon
get back.

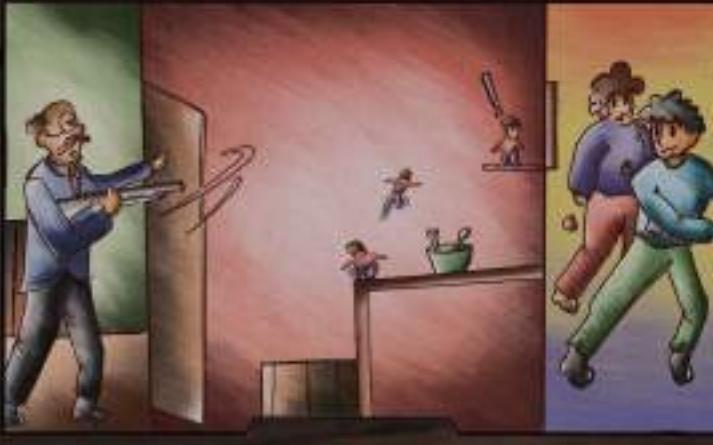
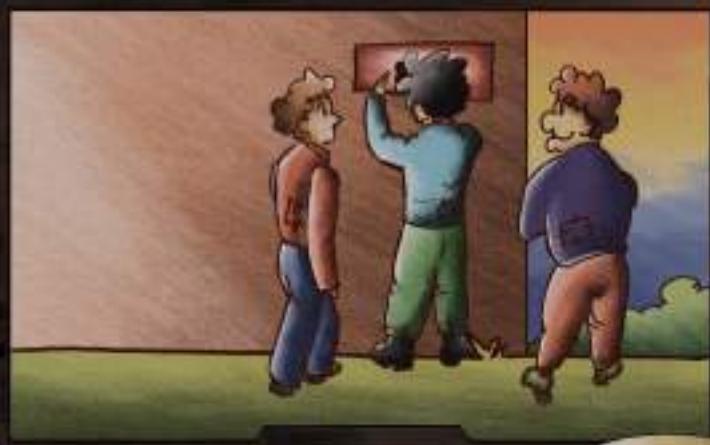






Three robbers enter the scene





Escapes the house and hides in a shed









But at last the paunch of the wolf was slit open, and Thumbkin jumped out and went to his mother. She cleansed and dressed him in new clothes. They sat down to supper as happy as could be.

Erasmus+ Jean Monnet Actions Program

The Erasmus+ Jean Monnet Actions program plays a crucial role in advancing knowledge and awareness of the European Union (EU) by integrating EU studies into higher education curricula worldwide. Through Modules, Chairs, and Centers of Excellence, this initiative provides numerous benefits to students, educators, and academic institutions.

One of the key benefits of Jean Monnet Modules is their flexibility and accessibility. These short teaching programs allow universities to introduce EU-related subjects in a way that aligns with their existing curricula. By offering multidisciplinary perspectives, the Modules ensure that students from diverse academic backgrounds—such as law, political science, economics, and international relations—gain valuable insights into EU policies, governance, and global influence.

Universities benefit from the Jean Monnet Actions by enhancing their academic reputation and international collaboration. The establishment of Centers of Excellence fosters research synergies, supports interdisciplinary studies, and strengthens institutional ties with universities worldwide. Additionally, by encouraging transnational activities, the program helps institutions build connections with policy-makers, think tanks, and international organizations, ensuring that research findings contribute to real-world decision-making.

Beyond academia, the program strengthens EU-global relations by promoting awareness and informed discussions on European integration, governance, and policies. By equipping students with specialized knowledge and analytical skills, Jean Monnet Actions contribute to career development in diplomacy, international organizations, and public administration.



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