

#1 of 3



CAT'S-PAW
COMICS

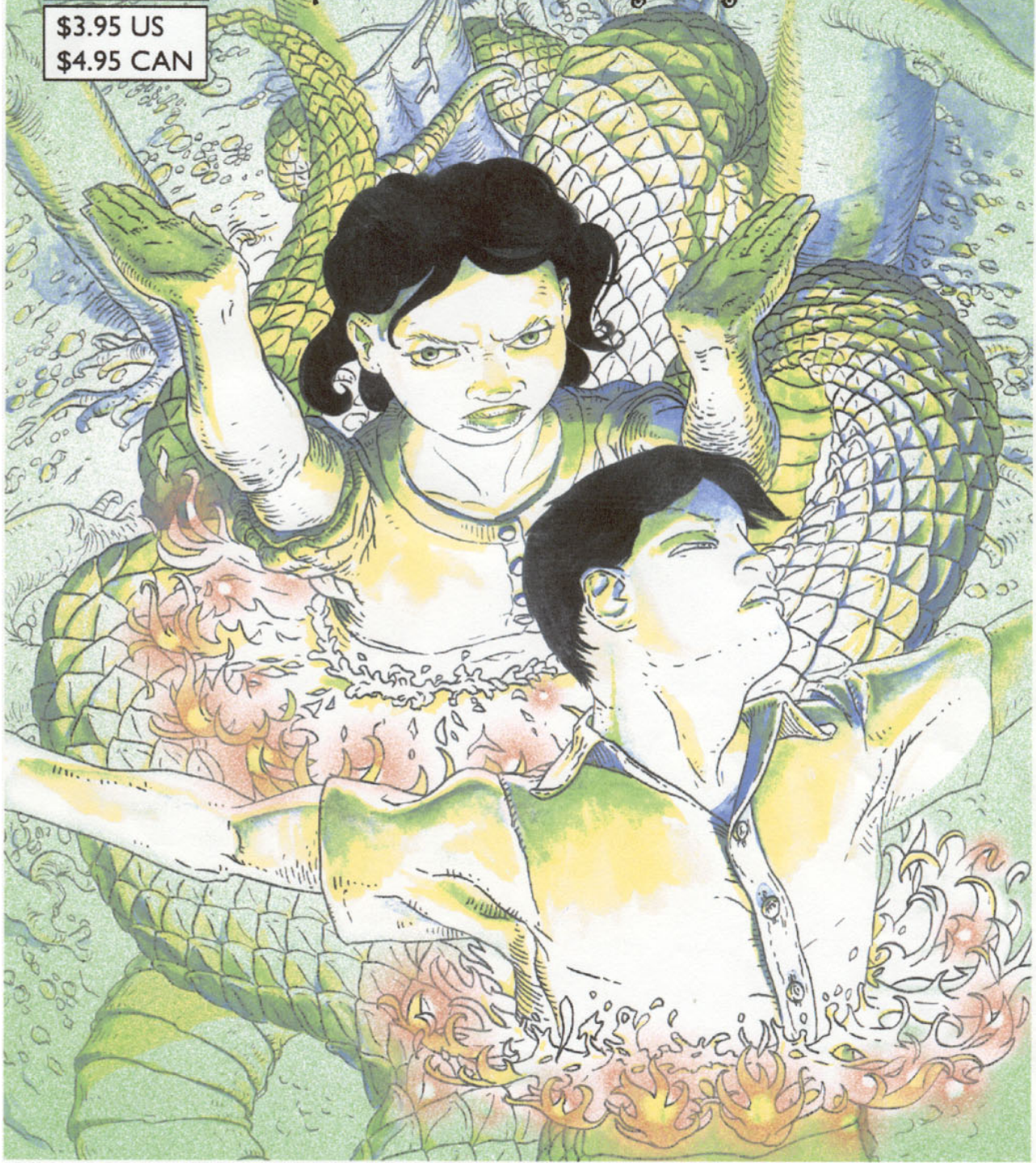
\$3.95 US
\$4.95 CAN

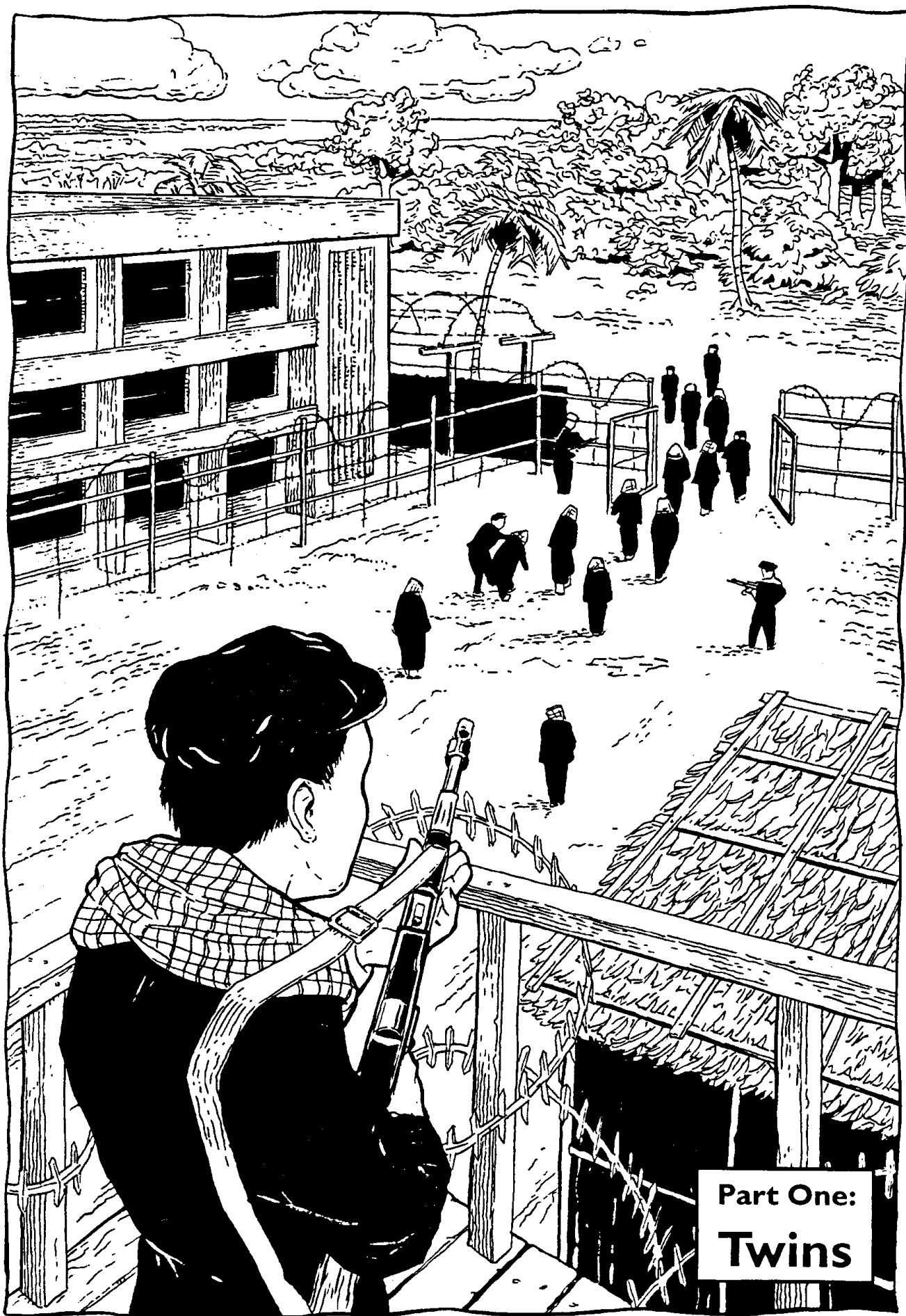
Sun & Moon

A Khmer Journey

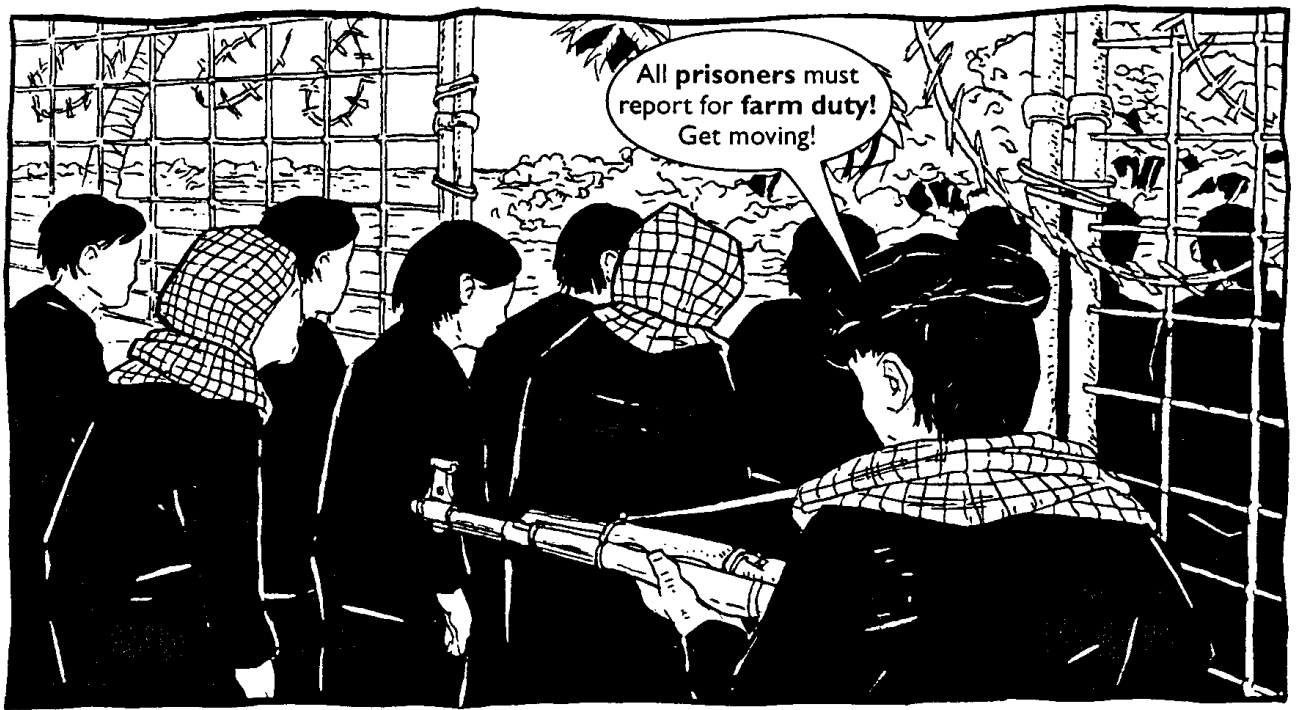
by Svang Tor and Dr. Richard Mollica

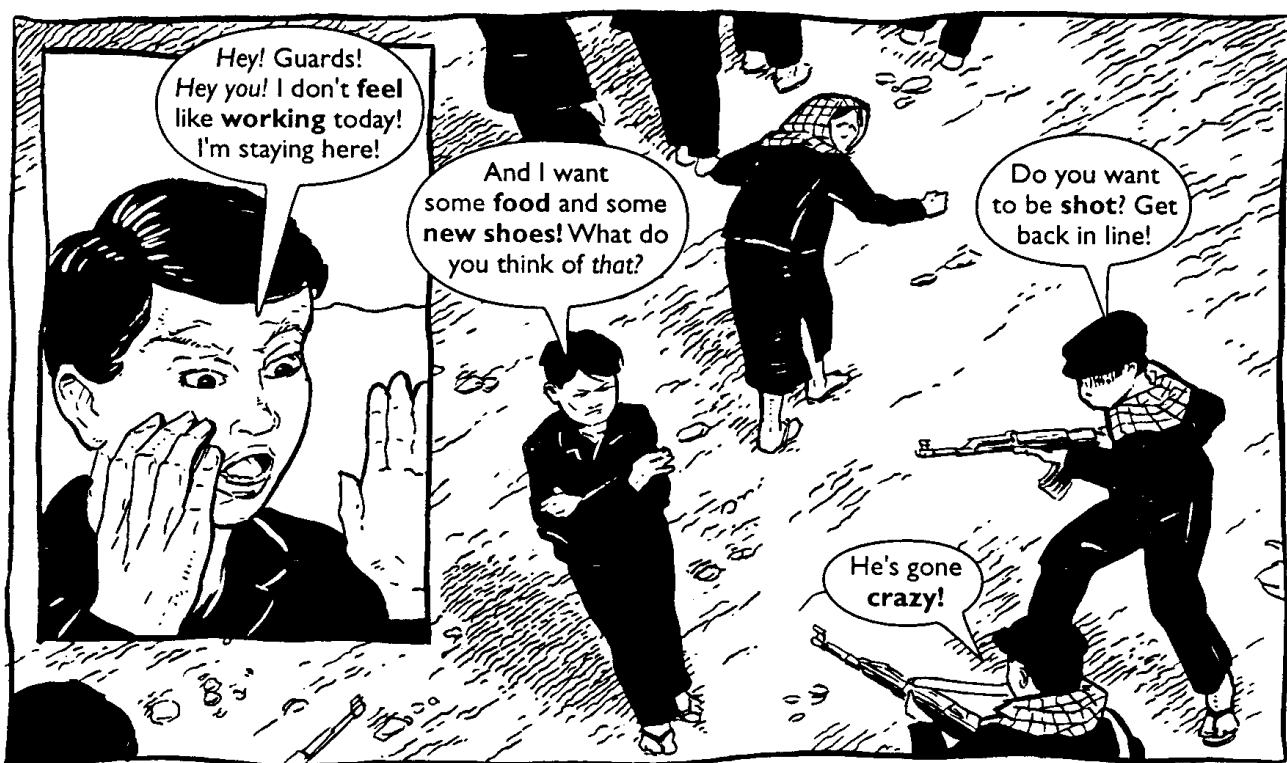
Adapted and Illustrated by Doug Anderson

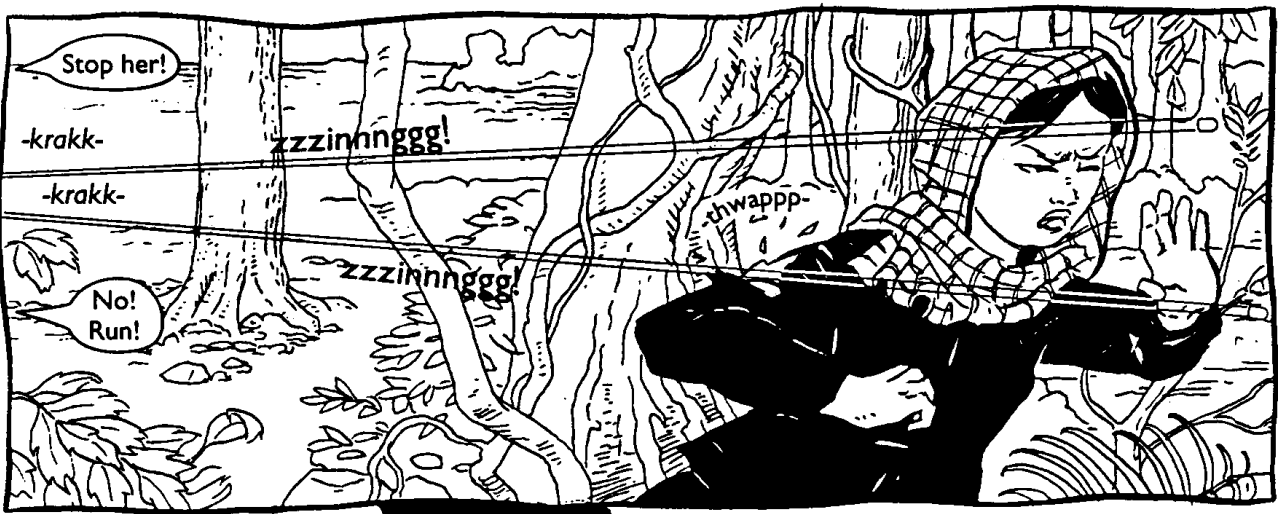




Part One:
Twins







Stop her!

-krakk-

zuzzinnnggg!

-krakk-

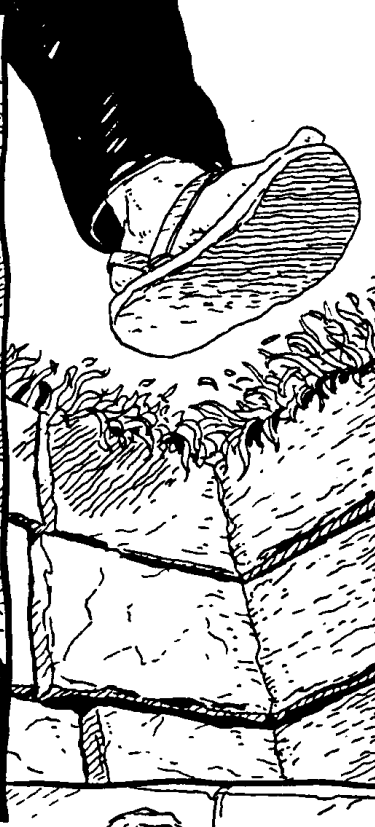
thwapp-

No!
Run!

zuzzinnnggg!



Ouch!
My arm!



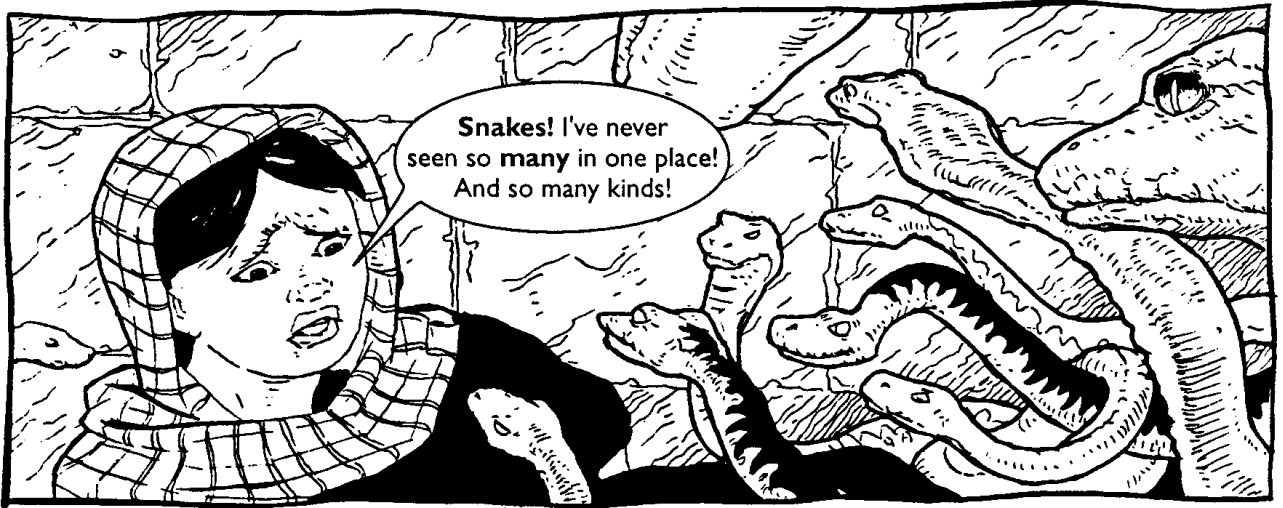
Help!



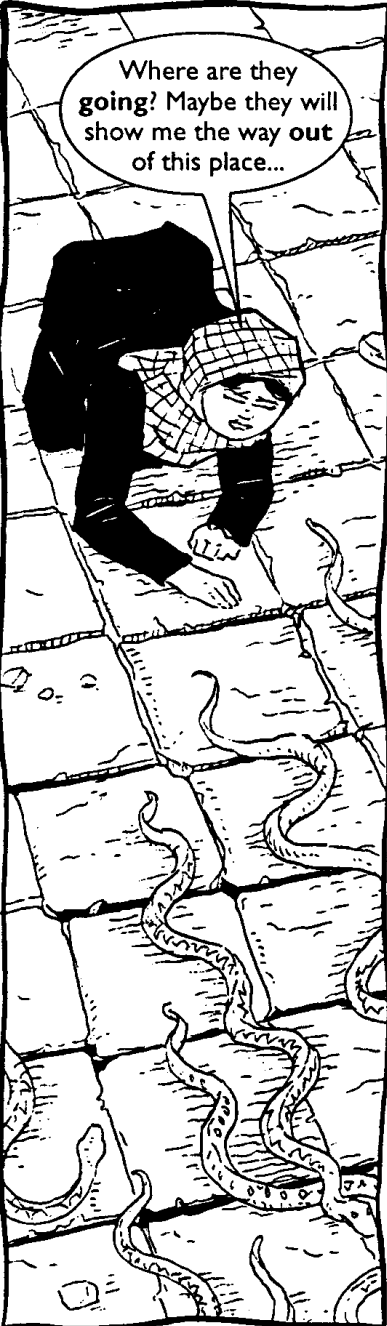
Ooof!

THWAKKKKK





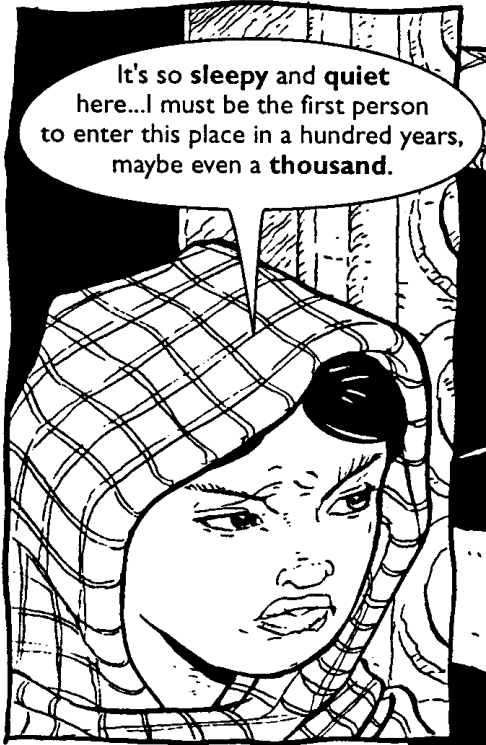
Snakes! I've never seen so many in one place! And so many kinds!



Where are they going? Maybe they will show me the way out of this place...



This must be an old temple...



It's so **sleepy** and **quiet** here...I must be the first person to enter this place in a hundred years, maybe even a **thousand**.



Ohhhh...the **baby** is starting to come. it's almost time...



I wish I were not in this place, with only **snakes** for company.

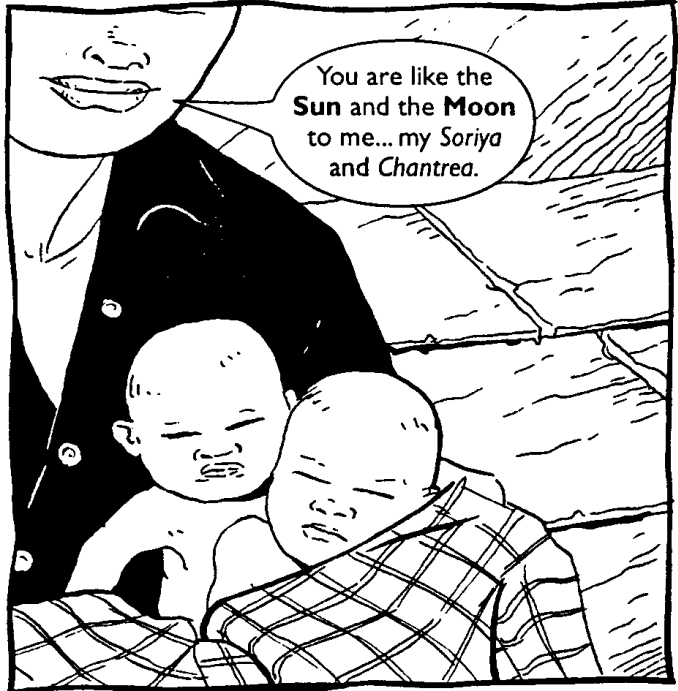
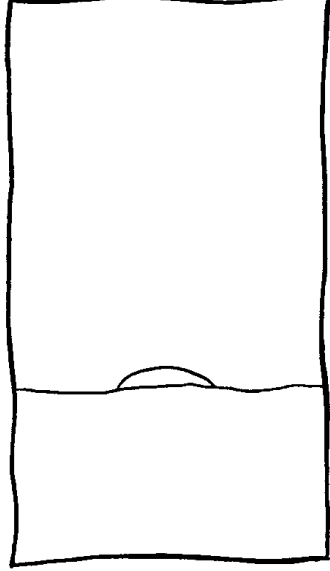
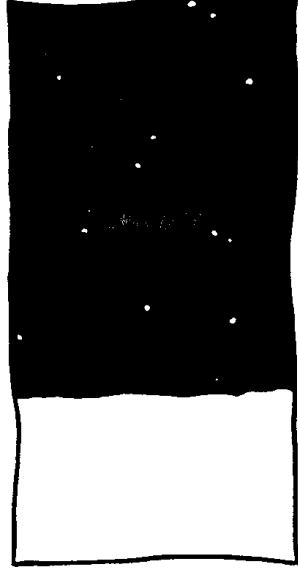
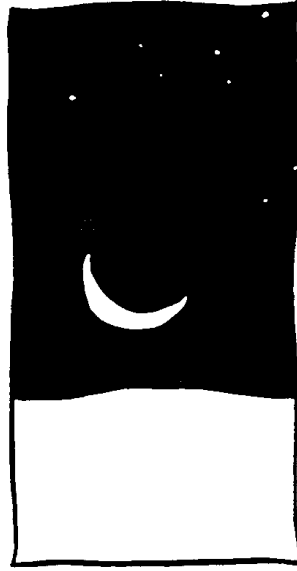
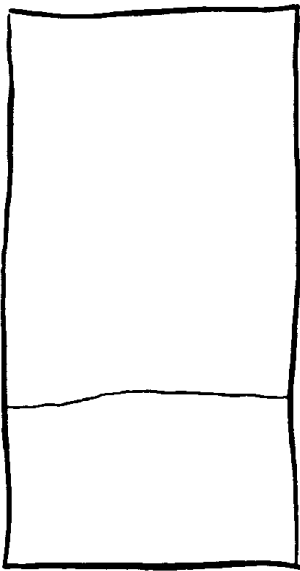


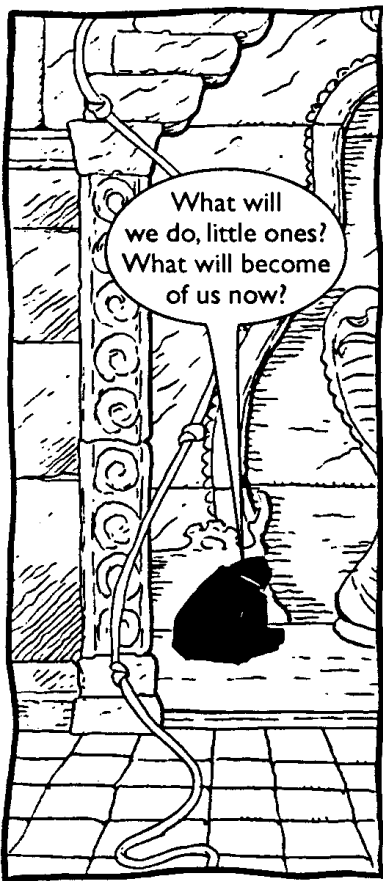
But what **choice** do I have?

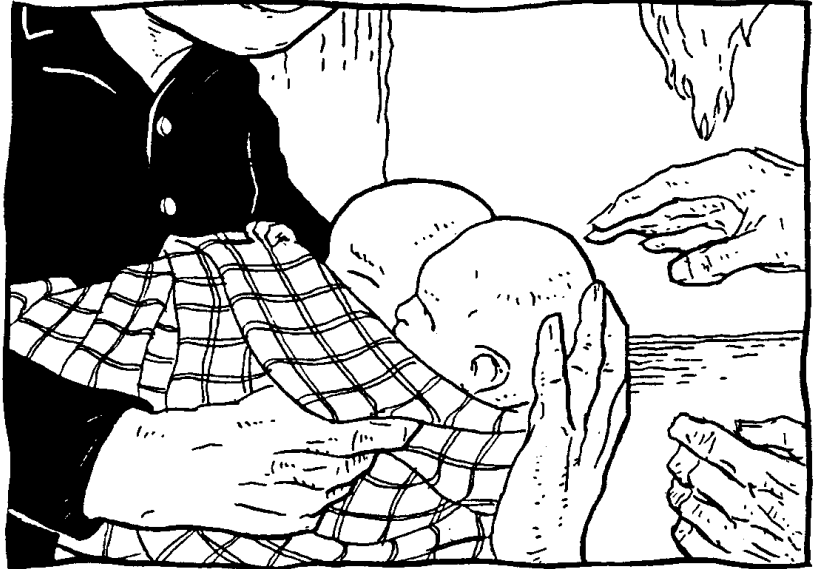
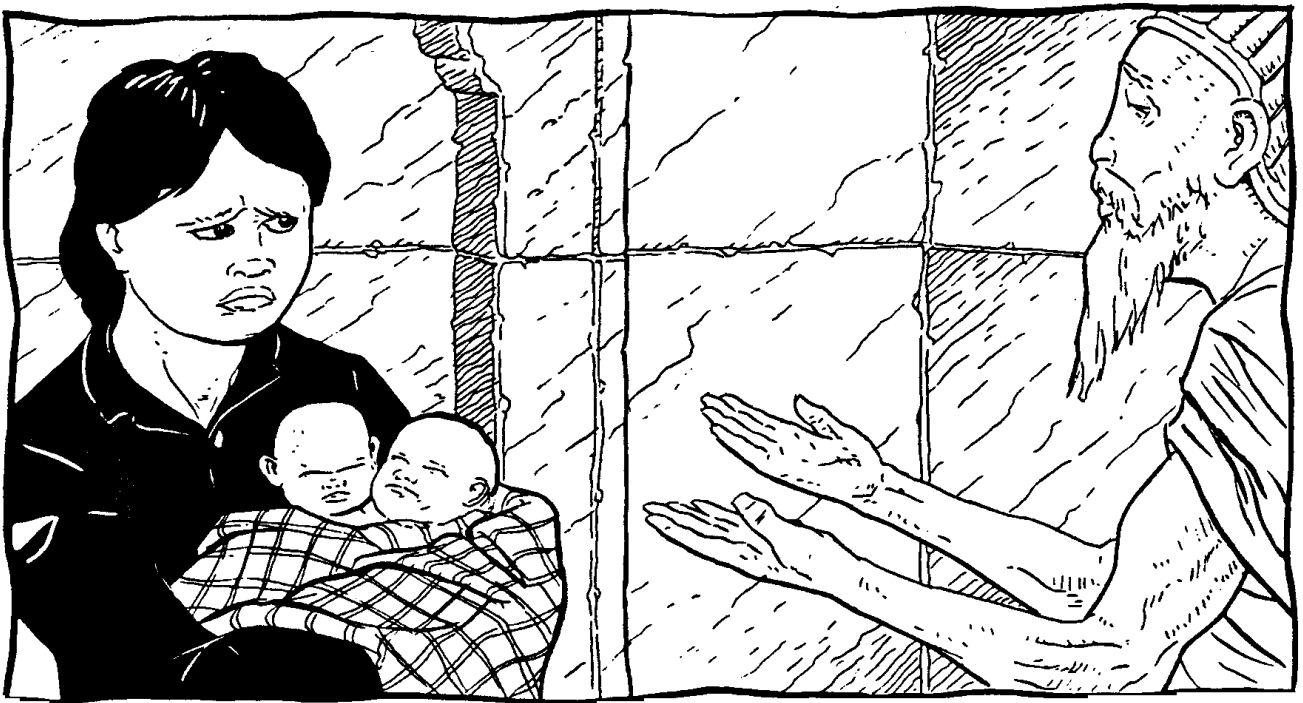
Even if I could find a way out, the **guards** would catch me, I'm sure of it.

At least here, I can have my **child** in **safety** tonight.

And beyond tonight? I will worry about that **tomorrow**...

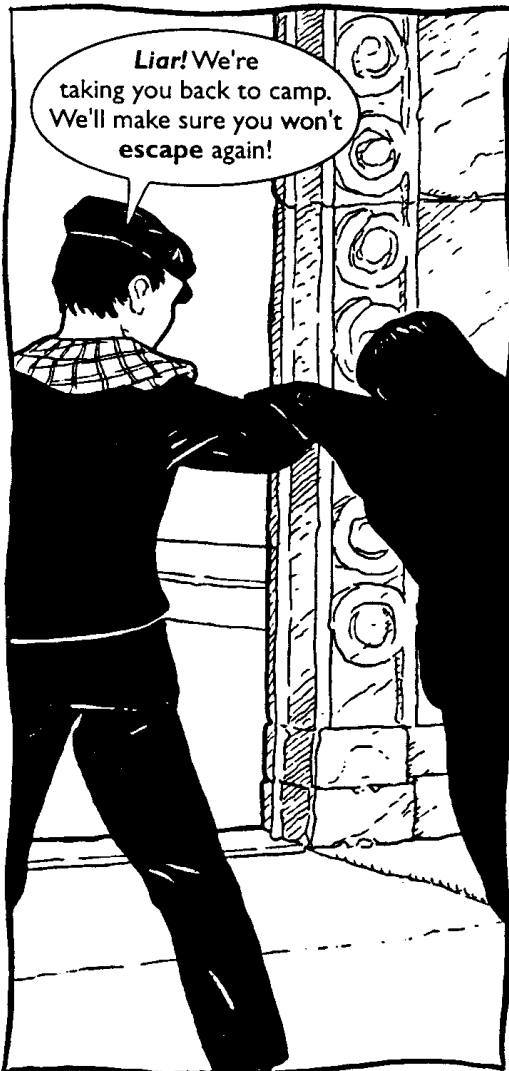








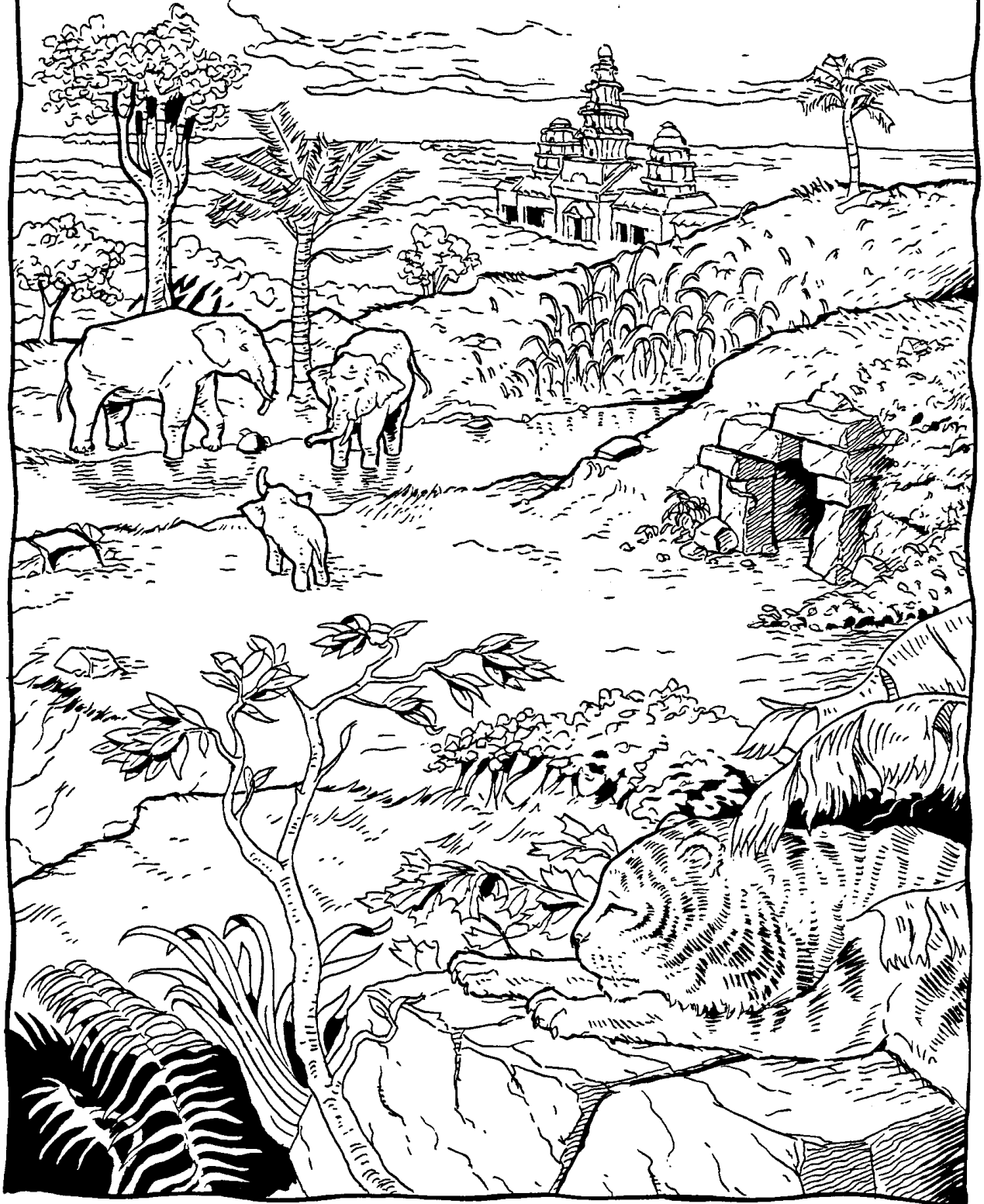
There is no baby. That was me you heard crying.



You are safe now, little Soriya
and Chantrea...

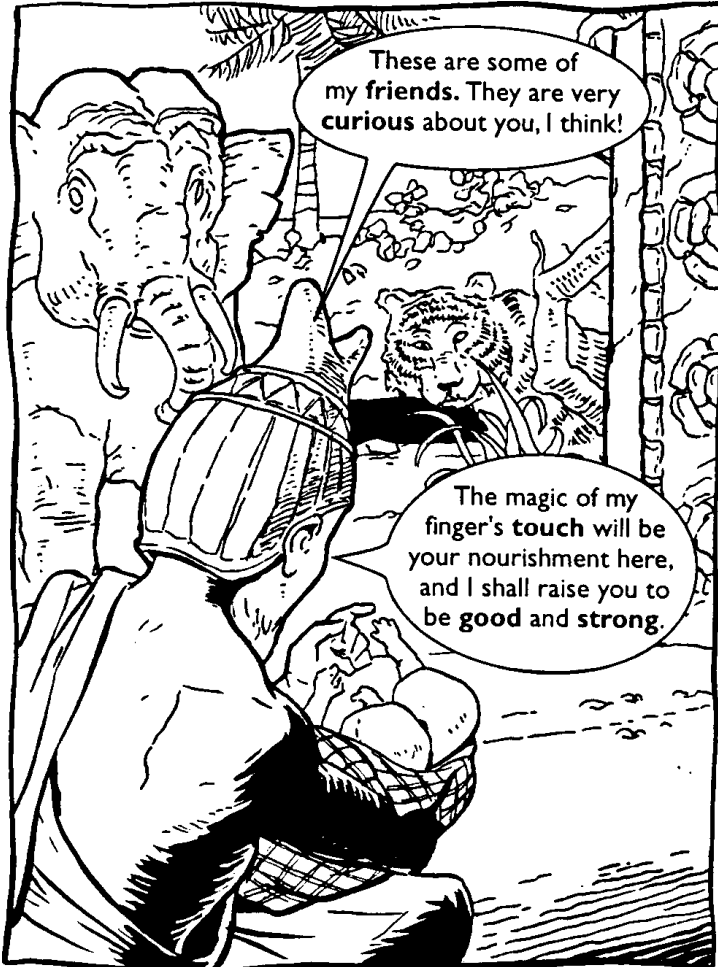


...wherever you are,
it must be a better place than this.





Here we are, babies,
in my nice, dark hermit's cave!
You will love it here!



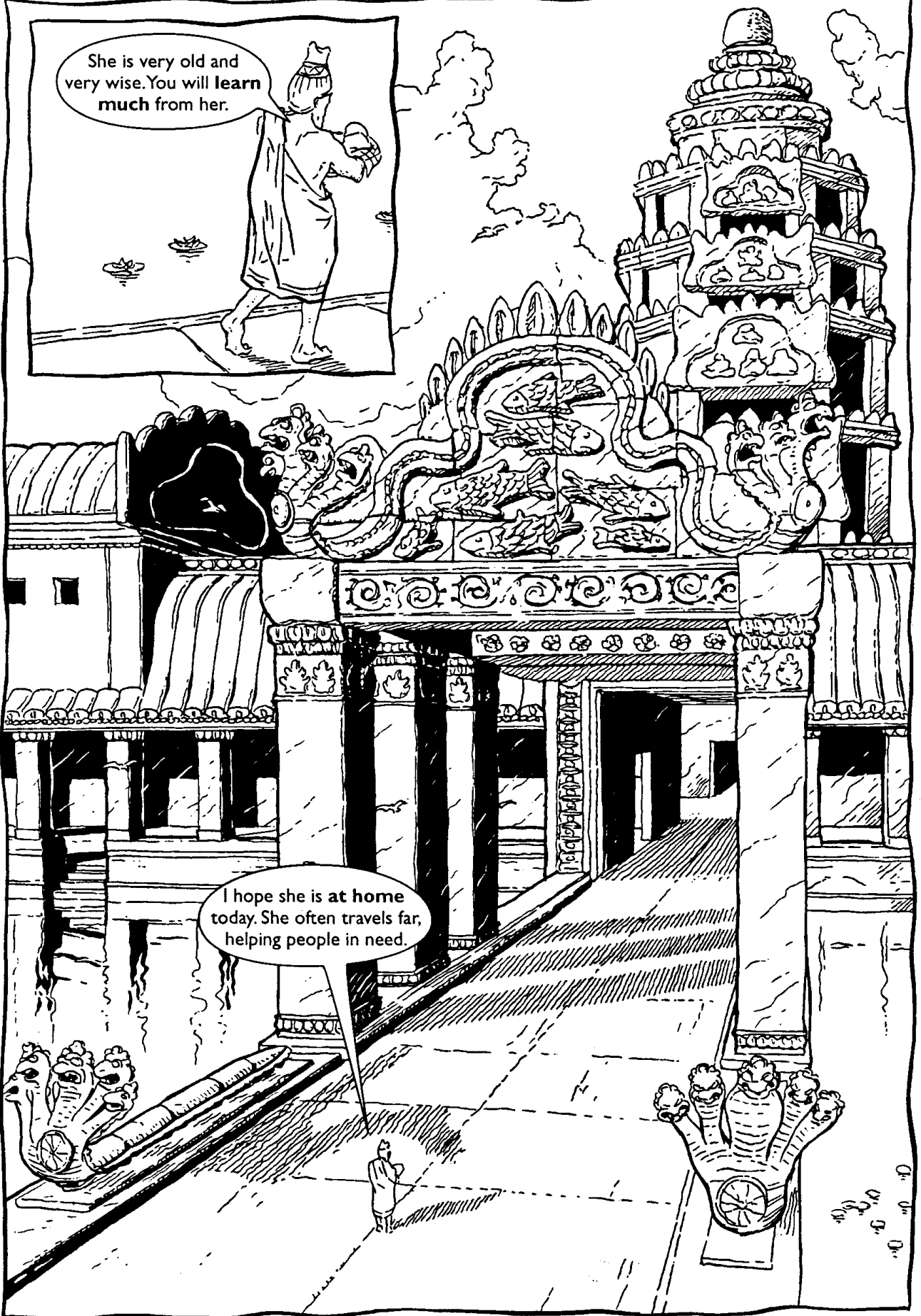
These are some of
my friends. They are very
curious about you, I think!

The magic of my
finger's touch will be
your nourishment here,
and I shall raise you to
be good and strong.

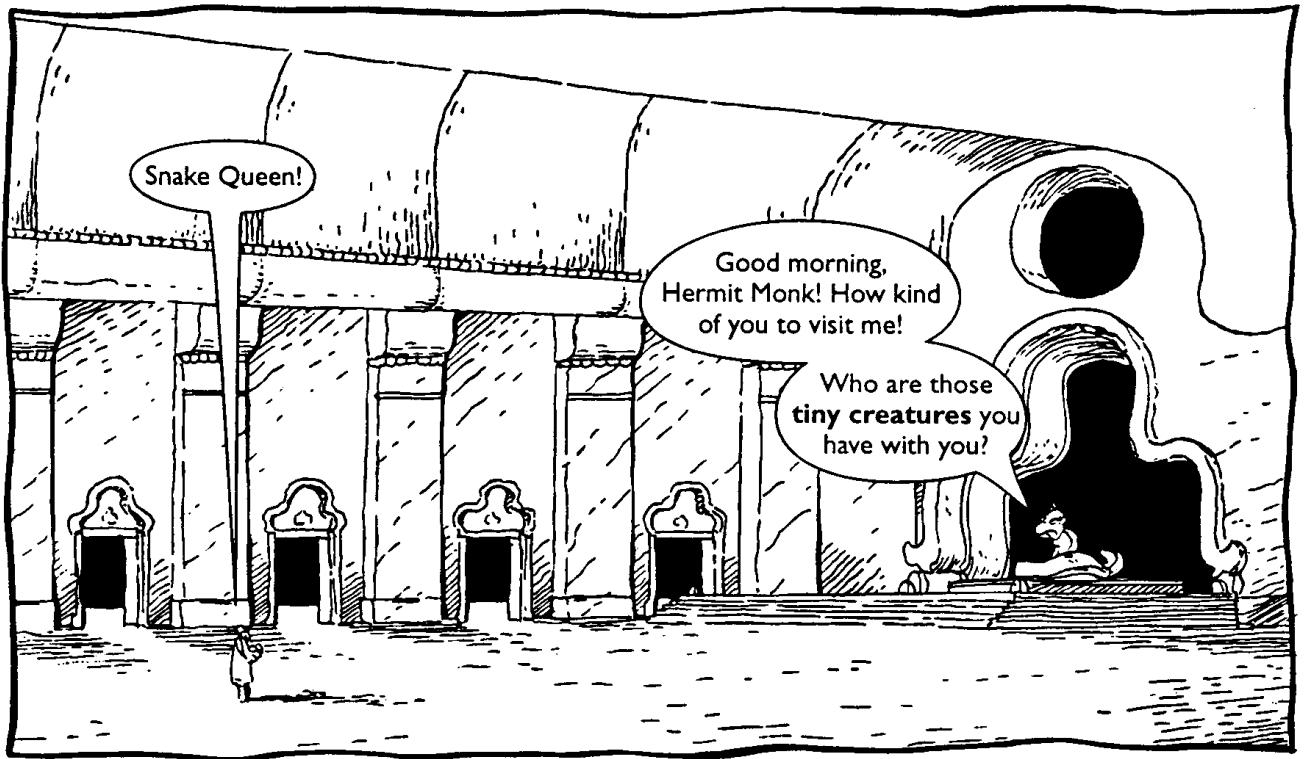


Tomorrow, we shall
visit a friend of mine,
who will also help in
your upbringing...

She is very old and very wise. You will learn much from her.



I hope she is at home today. She often travels far, helping people in need.



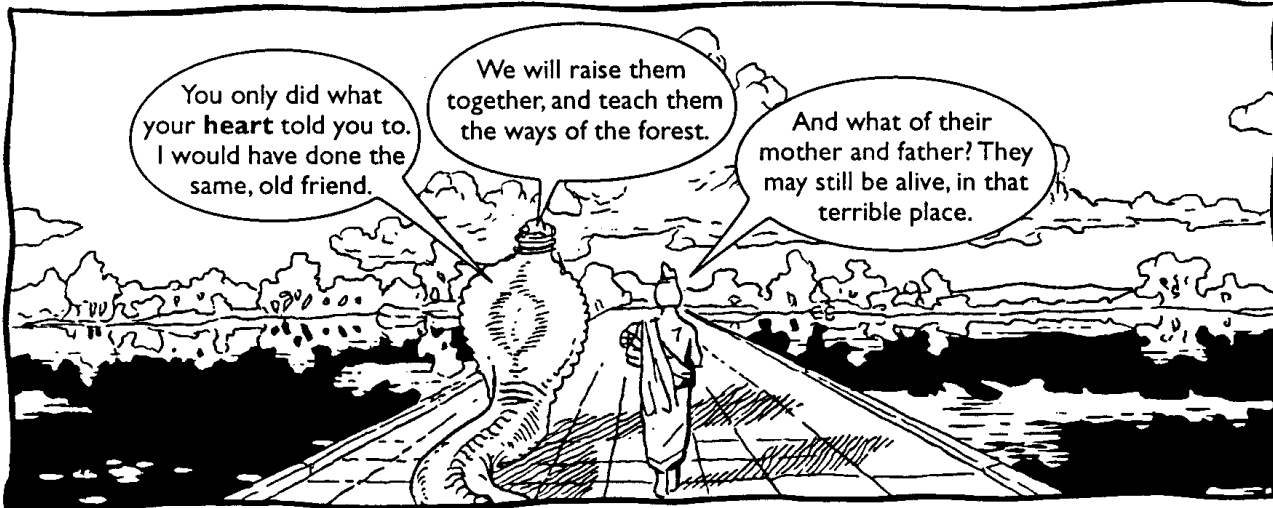
They are **babies** -- human children. I have pledged to care for them, and I came to ask you to **share** in their upbringing.

Babies, you say? Bring them closer, so I might see and smell them!

What beautiful children! I will be happy to help them!

But how did you come by them? Where are their parents?

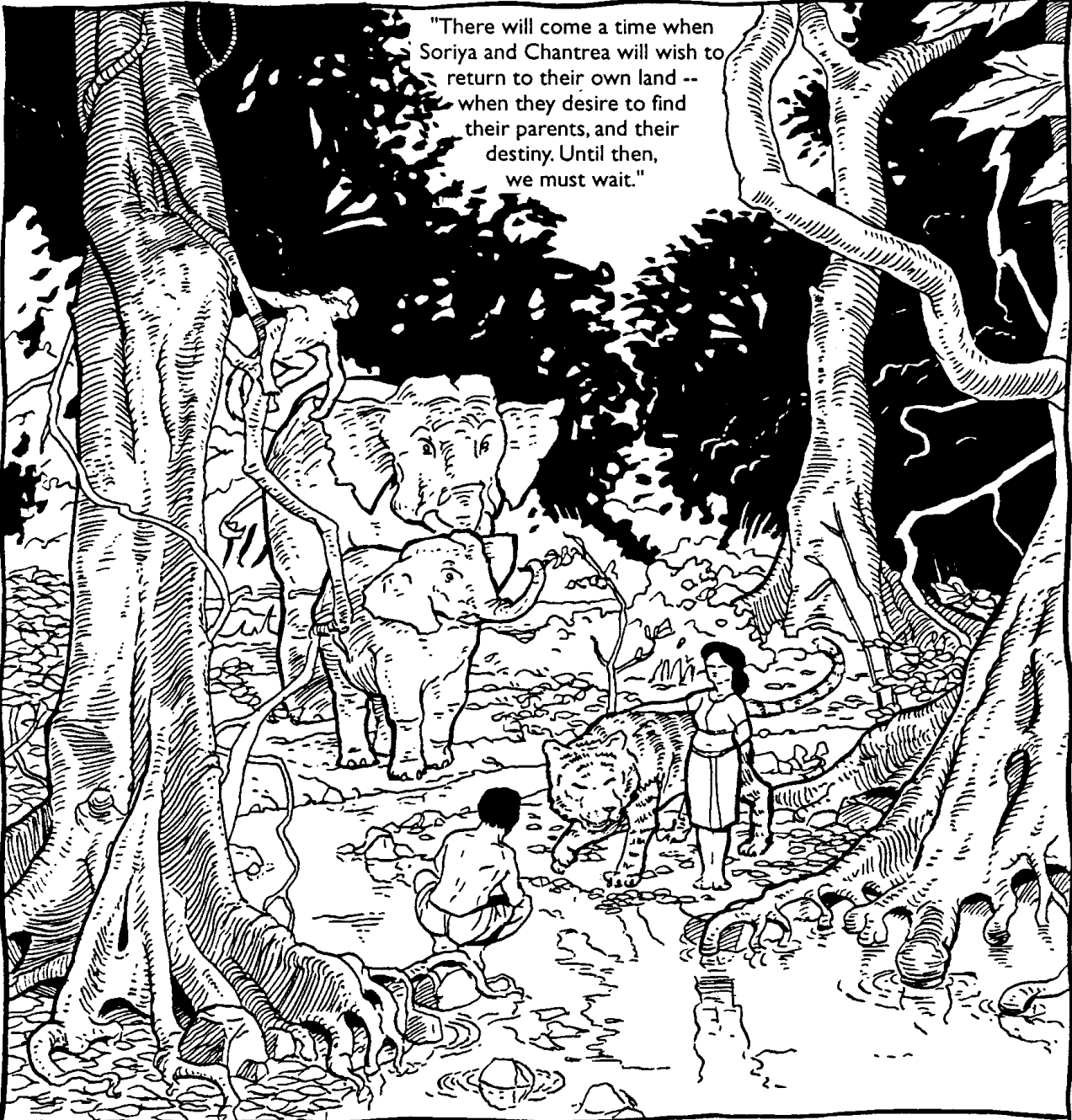
Their land is not safe right now -- they were in danger. So I rescued them. What else could I do?



You only did what your heart told you to. I would have done the same, old friend.

We will raise them together, and teach them the ways of the forest.

And what of their mother and father? They may still be alive, in that terrible place.



"There will come a time when Soriya and Chantrea will wish to return to their own land -- when they desire to find their parents, and their destiny. Until then, we must wait."



Mother! Father!
We must speak
with you!

We have both had
the strangest dream...

"In it, we saw two people,
very sad, reaching out towards
us, as if they were searching
for us. What does it mean?"

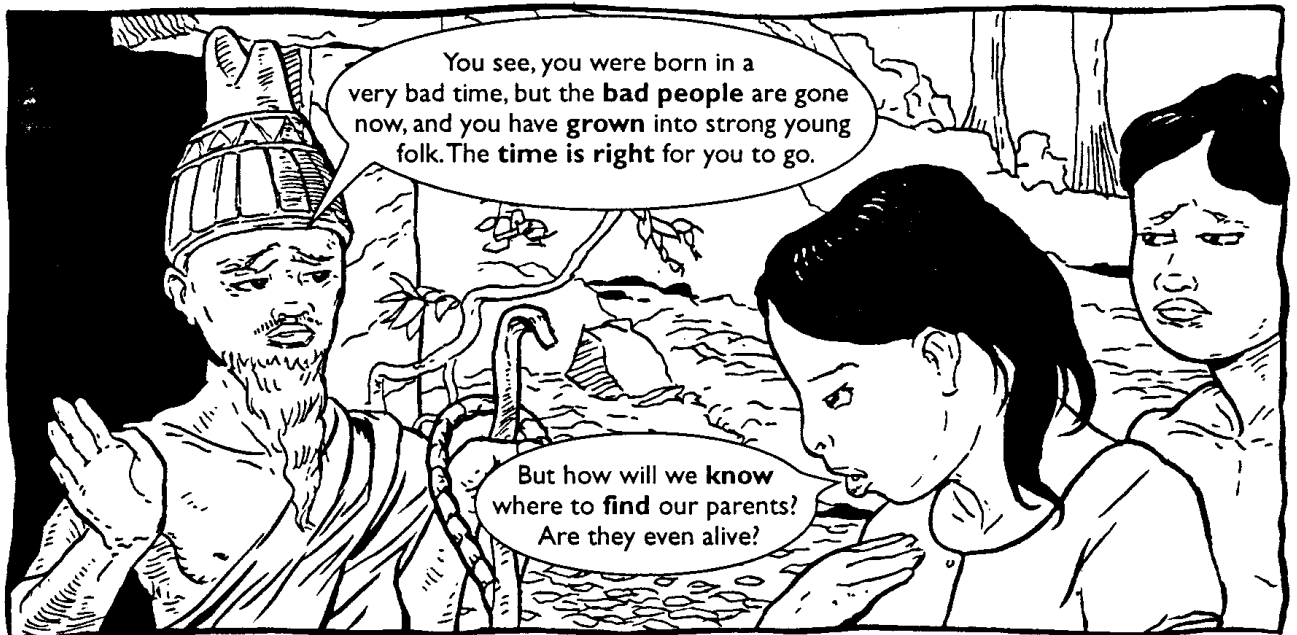


We too have had
that dream. I believe it
was your mother and
father you saw.



Our mother
and father?

Yes. That dream was a
sign that it is time to **return**
to the place of your birth, and
seek for the **parents** who gave
you life, fourteen years ago.



You see, you were born in a very bad time, but the **bad people** are gone now, and you have **grown** into strong young folk. The **time** is right for you to go.

But how will we know where to find our parents? Are they even alive?



That remains for you to **discover**, my children. Not even a **Snake Queen** can predict your destiny!




Here is some gold, children, and amulets to wear for good luck.


Thank you, Father!




Wait! We also have gifts for you that cannot be carried in the hand...



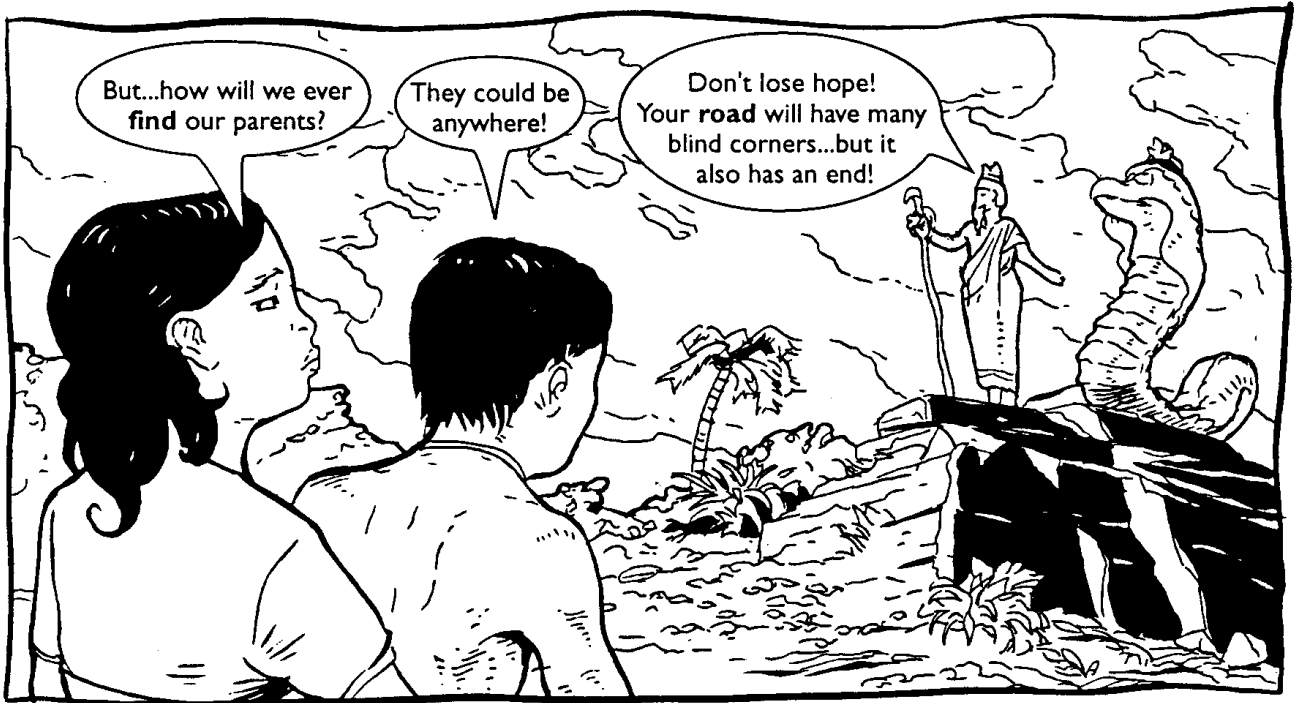
From me, you will gain the power to take the form of **great serpents**, merely by wishing it!



And as my wards, you shall have **Foresight**: the power to **glimpse** what tomorrow may hold for you. Keep in mind, though, that you may not always like what you see!



That way lies the place of your birth. As you journey, remember that **truth** is often disguised. **Be careful** not to assume that all you see is all there is!



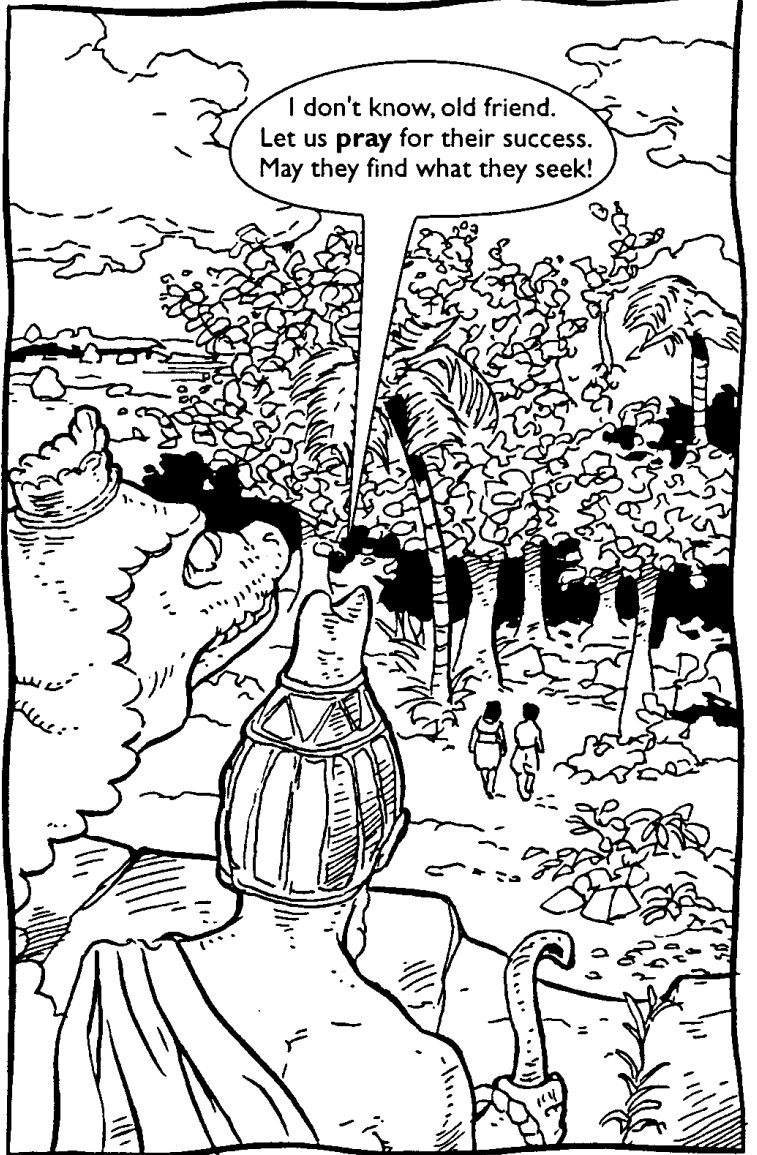
But...how will we ever find our parents?

They could be anywhere!

Don't lose hope! Your road will have many blind corners...but it also has an end!



Will we see them again, I wonder?



I don't know, old friend. Let us pray for their success. May they find what they seek!





Is this where we were born? There must be some mistake. Where are all the people?

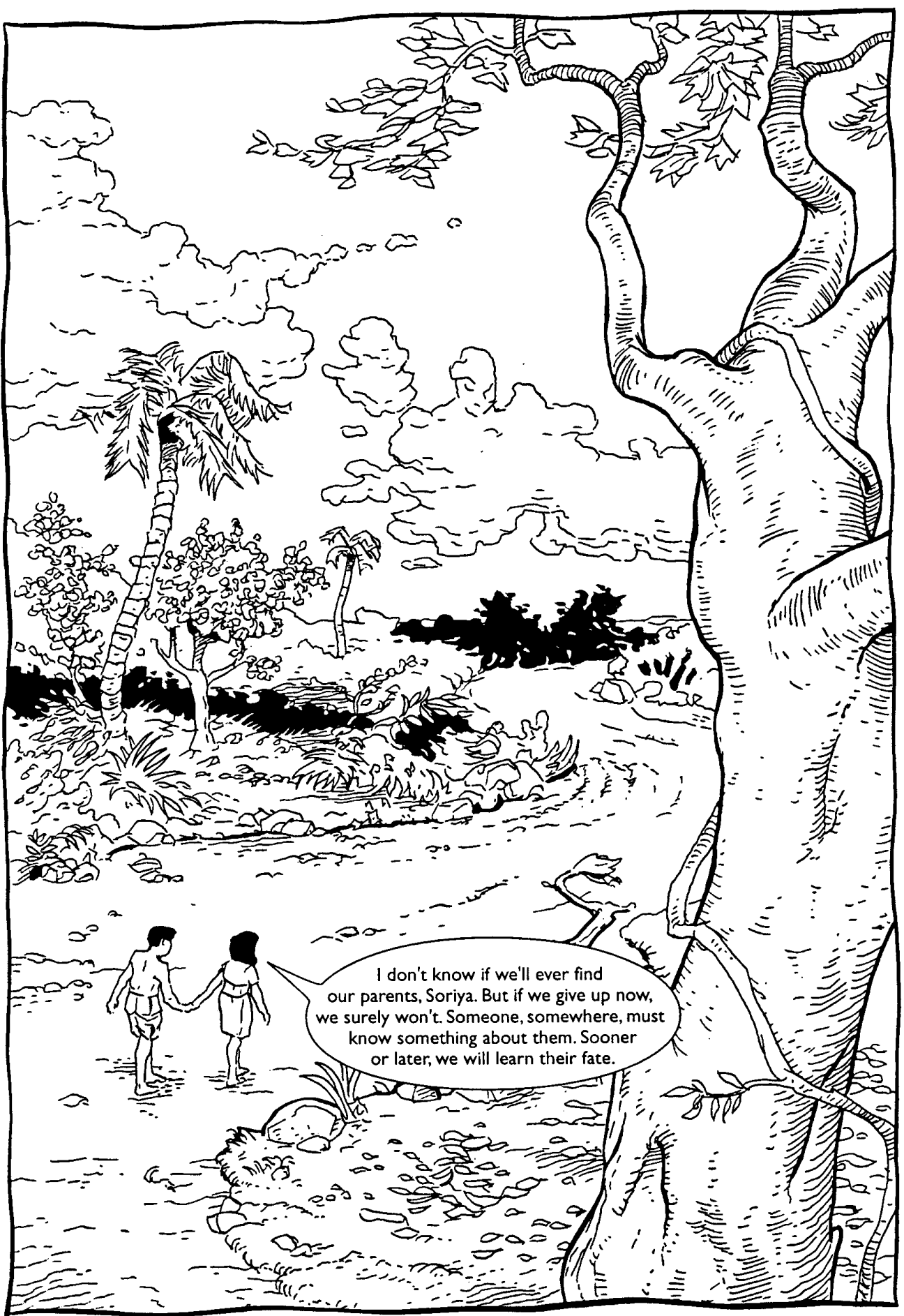
There must have been hundreds here once, but now...



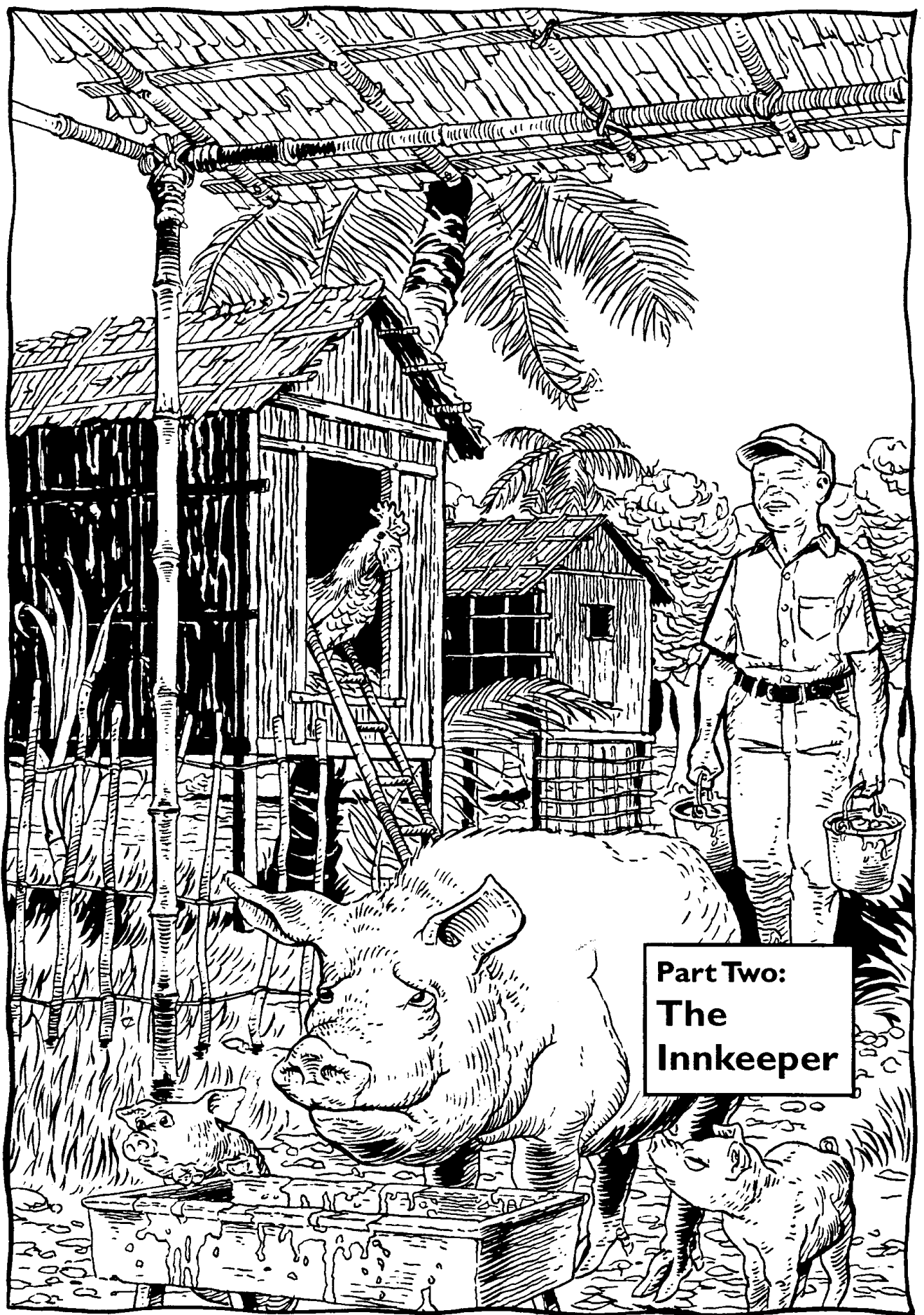
Well, if our parents were ever really here, they're long gone now. I was hoping at least to find someone who knew them.

Chantrea -- let's go back to the forest. Perhaps the dream was not a true dream after all.

No! Remember what the Hermit Monk said: don't lose hope. It is too soon to give up looking. This way!



I don't know if we'll ever find our parents, Soriya. But if we give up now, we surely won't. Someone, somewhere, must know something about them. Sooner or later, we will learn their fate.

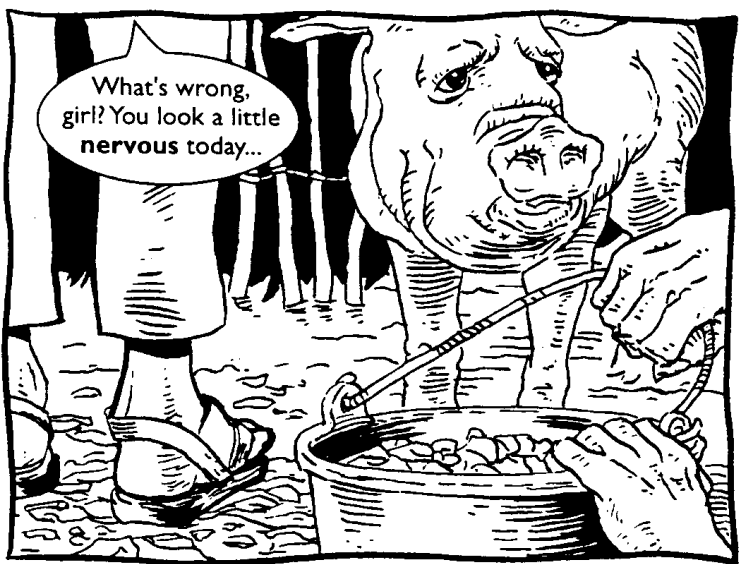


**Part Two:
The
Innkeeper**



Here you go! Last night's leftovers! Eat up! There's a whole 'nother bucketfull-- the inn was busy last night, you know...

Oinkkkkk!



What's wrong, girl? You look a little nervous today...



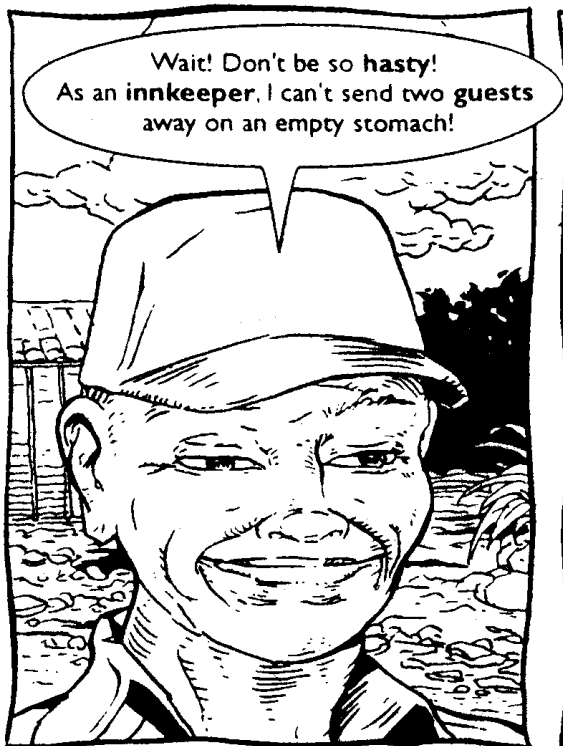
Huh? Who are you? Where'd you come from?



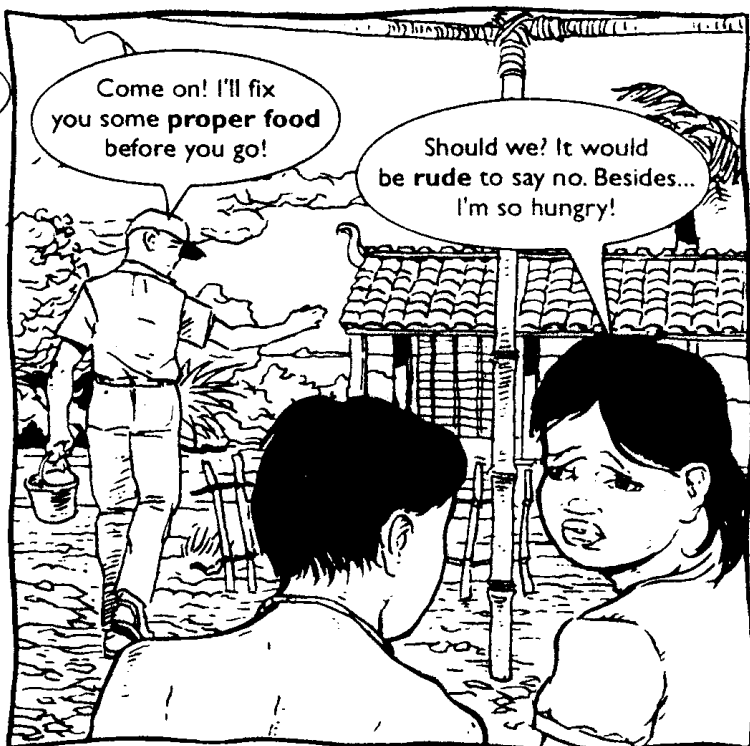
And don't you know that's garbage in there? You must be pretty hungry, huh?

I bet you slept out here last night, didn't you?

We're sorry, but we didn't think anyone would mind. We'll be going now anyway. Our apologies...



Wait! Don't be so hasty!
As an innkeeper, I can't send two guests
away on an empty stomach!



Come on! I'll fix
you some **proper food**
before you go!

Should we? It would
be **rude** to say no. Besides...
I'm so **hungry!**



Been travelling
long, have you?

A few days. How
did you know?

In my business, you
learn to look for **clues**
about your guests, like the
dust in your hair, and the
blisters on your feet.

No shoes, either. You
are not well-prepared for
a **long journey**.



It's our mother and father. we're on a quest to find them. We can't stay long...

Orphans, are you? I thought so. There are so many of you on the road these days.



It hurts me to think of it. I have two kids myself.. They're all grown up now-- they live in the city..

So it's just you and your wife now?



No. She died a few years ago. It's just me here.

Is this her picture? How pretty she was!



Yes, I miss her dearly. It's a little like having her around again, talking to you...

It's a shame you have to be going again so soon.

Please wait-- I have something for you two.

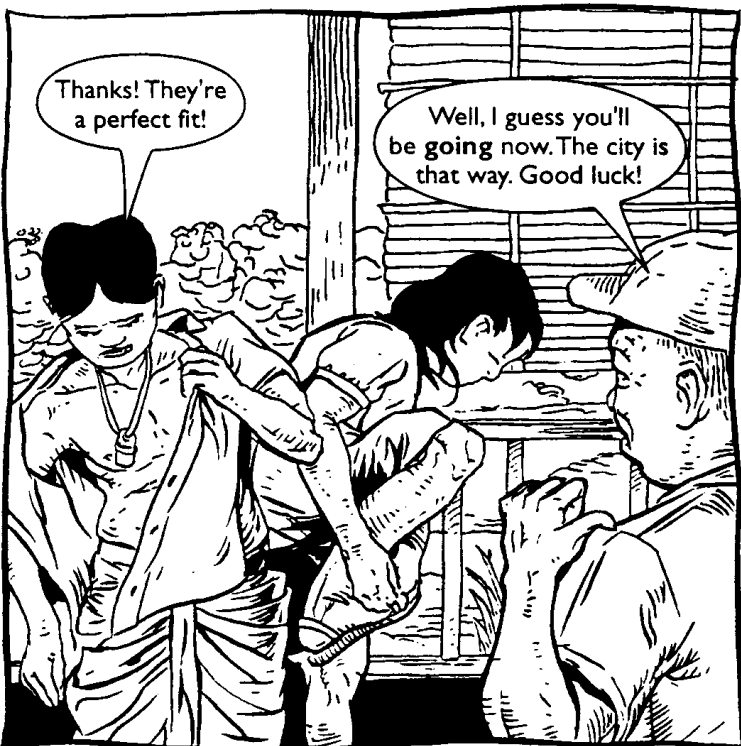


Let's go, Chantrea. I left some money for what we ate.

But he's so sad. I wish there was some way we could help.



Look! I found some old clothes for you-- they were my kids' things. Please, take them for your journey!



Thanks! They're a perfect fit!

Well, I guess you'll be going now. The city is that way. Good luck!

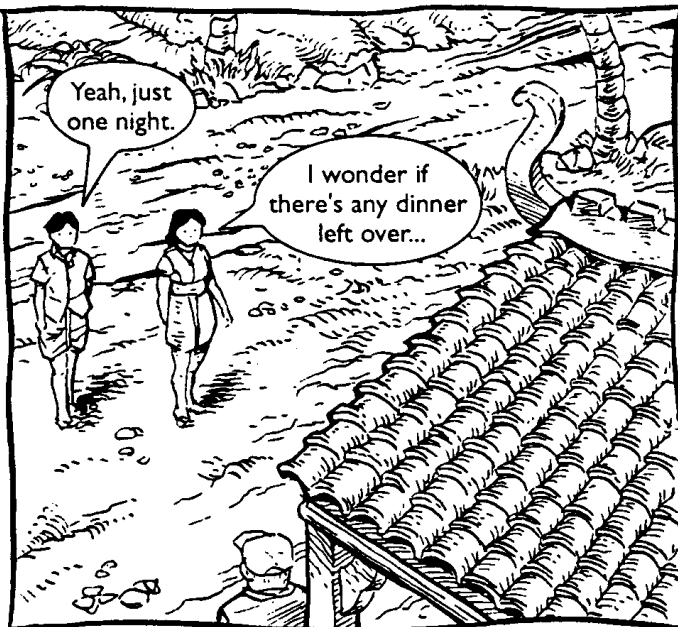


Goodbye, children!

Poor guy... maybe we could stay overnight. We could use some rest, and he seems so lonely...

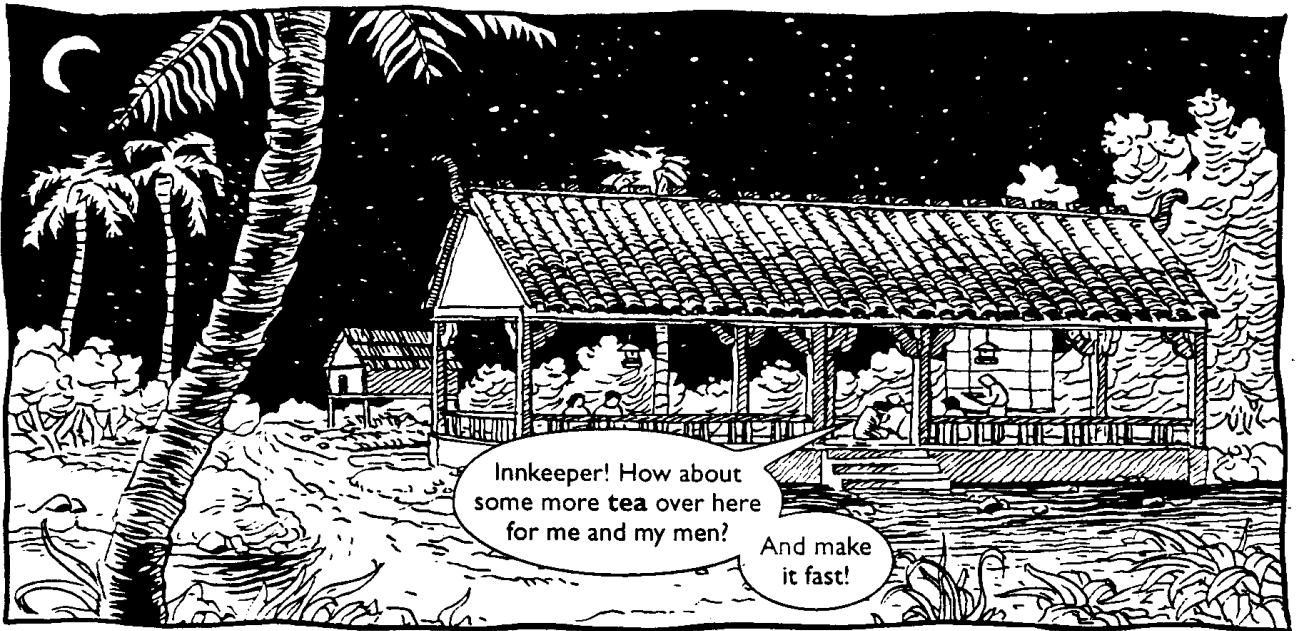


Okay-- just one night, and then we'll move on, right?



Yeah, just one night.

I wonder if there's any dinner left over...



Innkeeper! How about some more tea over here for me and my men?

And make it fast!



Here we are! Will that be all for you tonight?

Trying to get rid of us, eh?

It's not as if you have any other guests tonight, except for those two kids!

I guess we scared everyone else away!



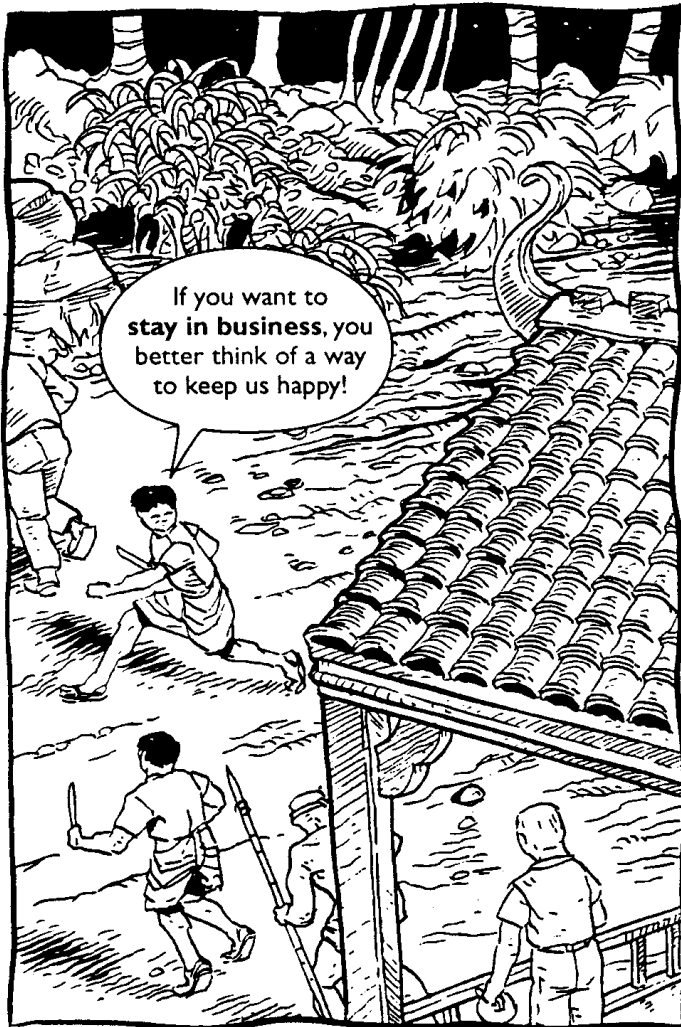
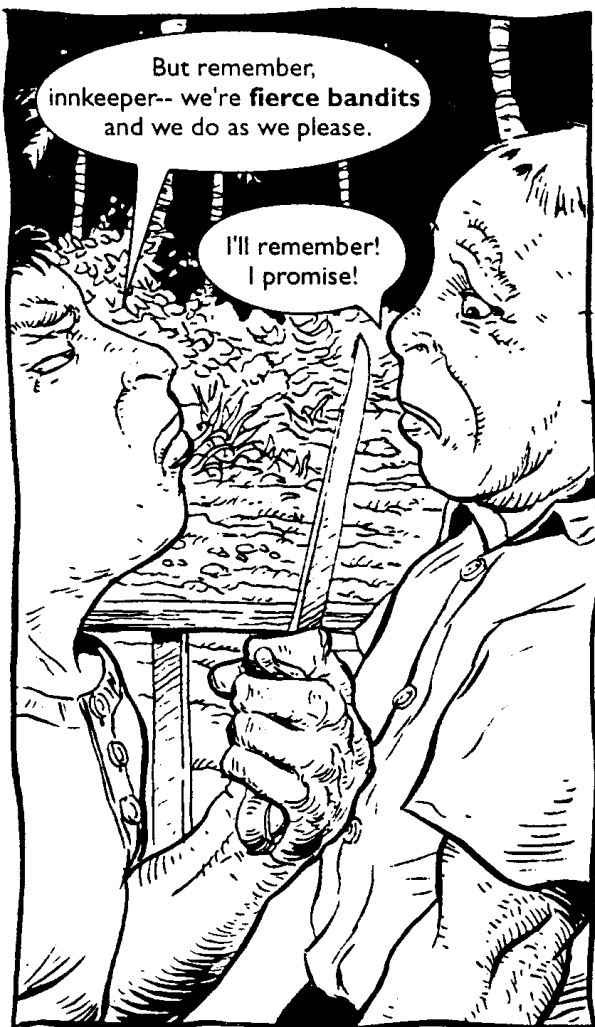
Who are they, your relatives?

No, they are orphans in search of their parents. They have been here a week now, taking a break from the road.



The boy is strong. We could use a kid like him to gather firewood and do our chores.

And the girl is quite a beauty, don't you think...?





Innkeeper? Are you okay? Who are those men?

Go to sleep, children...

Tomorrow, Chantrea and I will go to market, and it's a long walk to town. You must rest...



Chantrea, wake up! I must talk to you, alone!

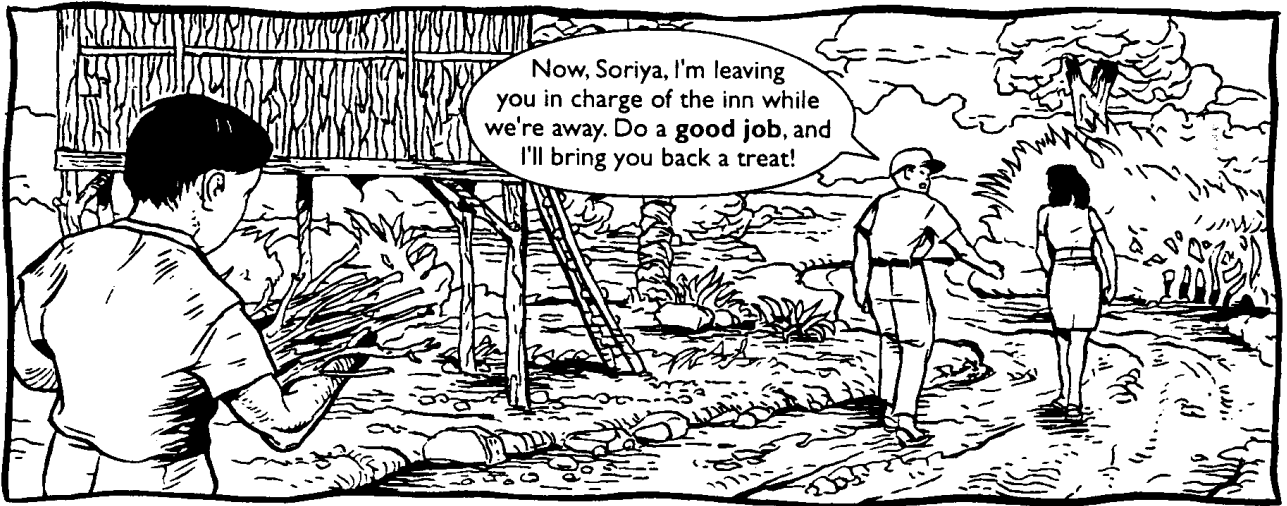
Hmmm? Soriya?

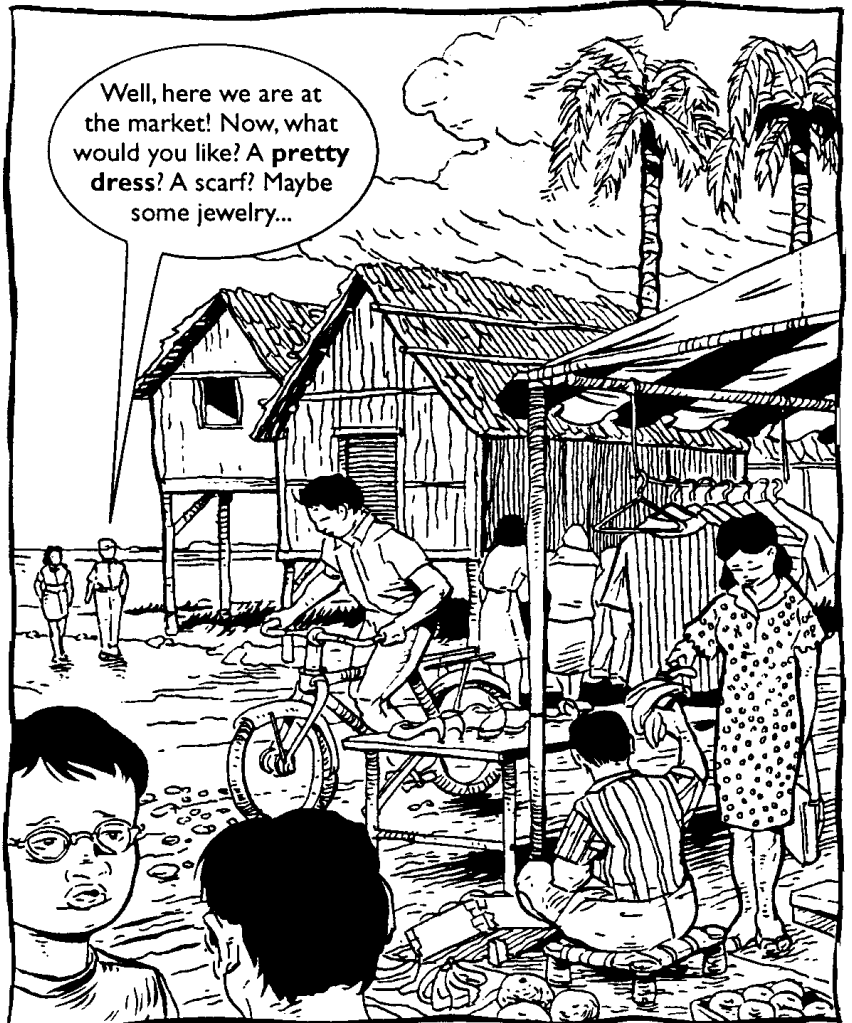


We've been here for a whole week now. We really should be going!

I know. But the innkeeper has been so kind to us. And I'm afraid it will break his heart when we leave again.

I'll tell him tomorrow, on the way to market. I promise, Soriya.







Brother!
We're back!



Look at the
dress I bought! And
a stuffed animal...and
there's some candy
for you, too!



Chantrea, perhaps you
should put your dress away
before it gets dirty-- you
look so **pretty** in it!

Okay,
"Dad"!



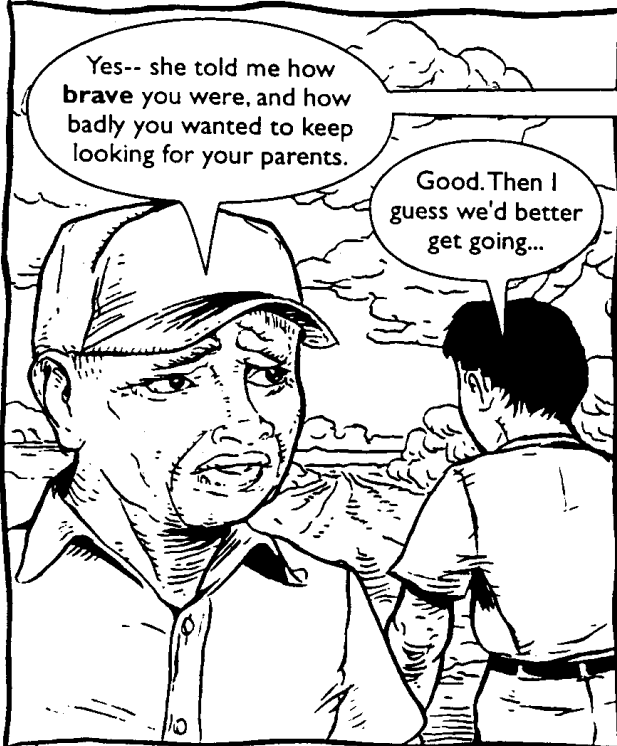
Soriya, let me help
you finish your chores. You
are a good worker!

Why did she
call you "Dad"?



Just a kindness to an
old man! Don't worry
about it! Have you ever seen your
sister so happy?

No... Innkeeper, did
she mention anything
to you about leaving?



Yes-- she told me how **brave** you were, and how badly you wanted to keep looking for your parents.

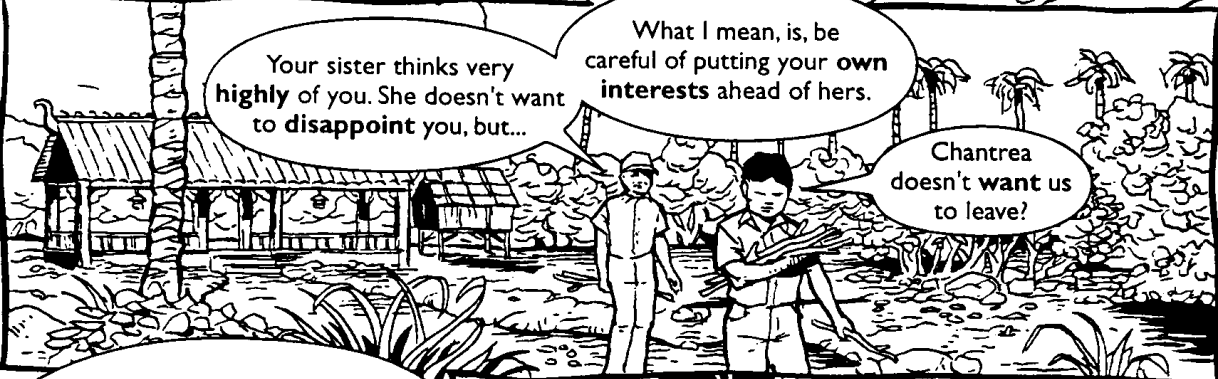
Good. Then I guess we'd better get going...



Wait-- I'd like to give you a little advice from someone with a bit more **experience** in life...

Advice?

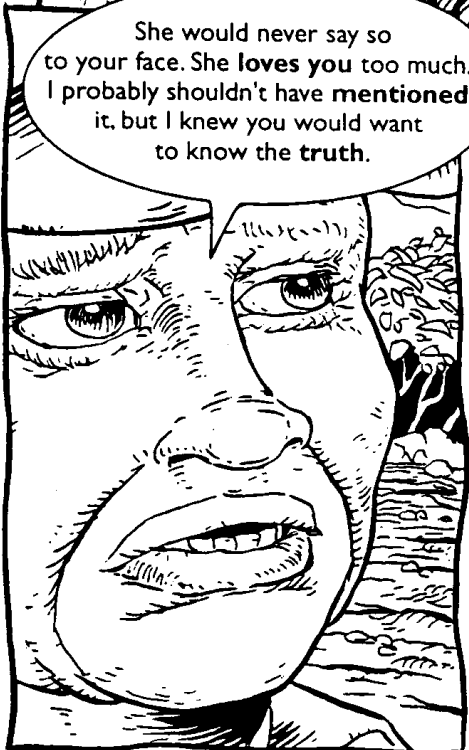
Yes. Let's talk in **private**, while we gather the wood.



Your sister thinks very **highly** of you. She doesn't want to **disappoint** you, but...

What I mean, is, be careful of putting your **own interests** ahead of hers.

Chantrea doesn't want us to leave!



She would never say so to your face. She **loves** you too much. I probably shouldn't have **mentioned** it, but I knew you would want to know the **truth**.



What should I do, then?

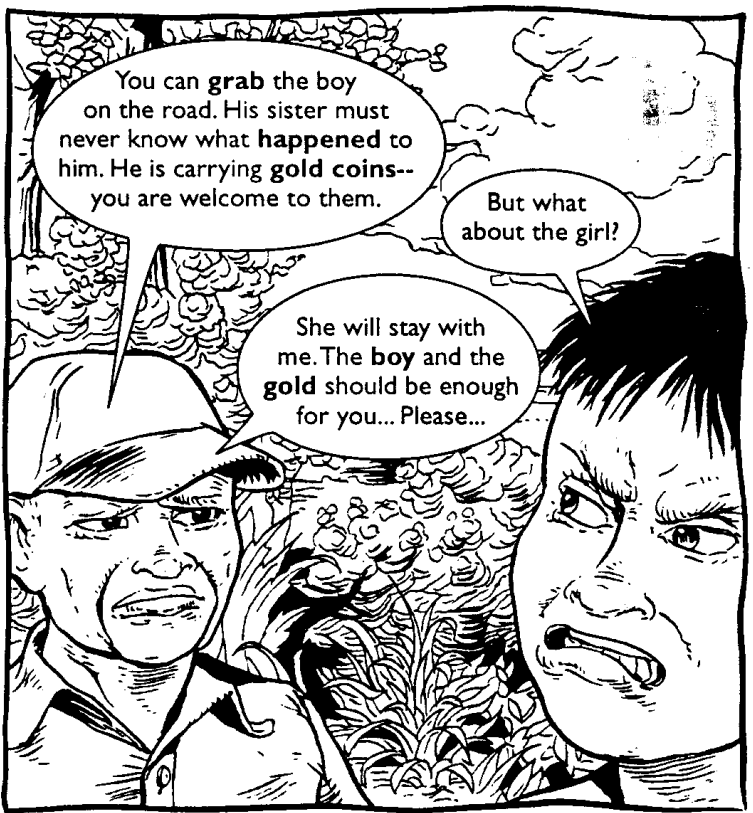
You must do what you think best. As for me, I can't imagine anything more important than Chantrea's **happiness and safety**...

Go back to the inn, Soriya. I must rest a moment.



You did well with the boy, Innkeeper. He will go, and leave his sister behind.

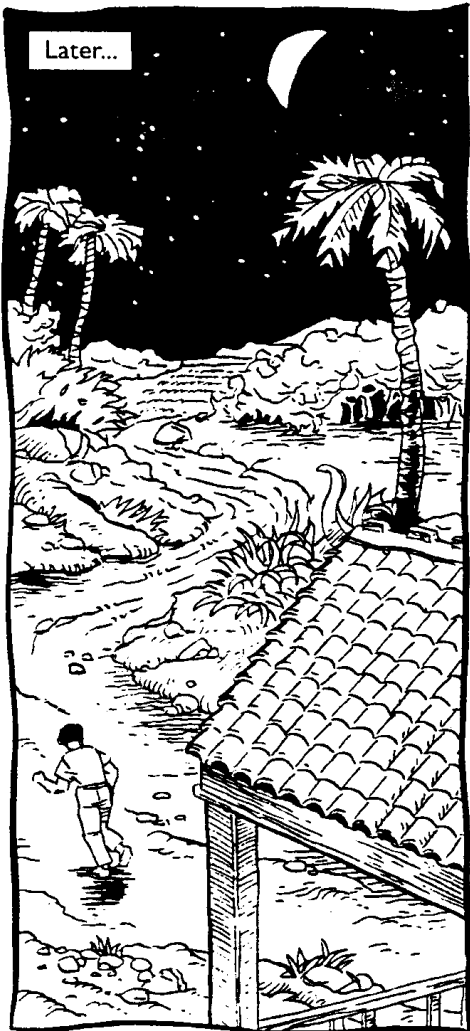
His love for her is strong...



You can grab the boy on the road. His sister must never know what happened to him. He is carrying gold coins-- you are welcome to them.

But what about the girl?

She will stay with me. The boy and the gold should be enough for you... Please...



Later...



Goodbye, Chantrea. I wish I could be sure I was doing the right thing by leaving you...



Wait! That's it! I can use the Foresight that my dear Lok Ta gave me to see how Chantrea will feel about being left behind!

But how does it work?
Maybe if I sit still and
meditate...



Hmmm...
try to clear my mind...



Ohhh! It's working!



Chantrea... She's crying...
She's packing her things...
Is she coming after me?

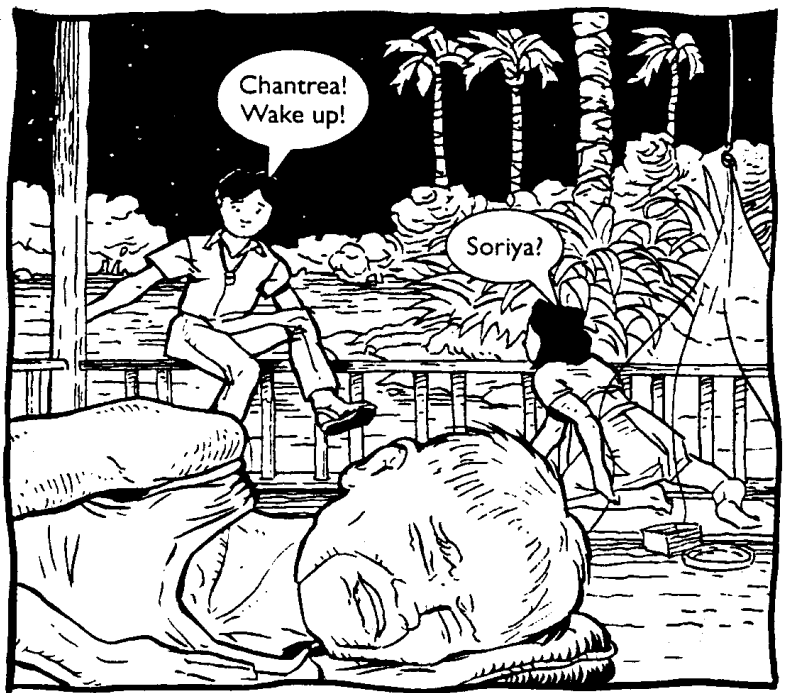


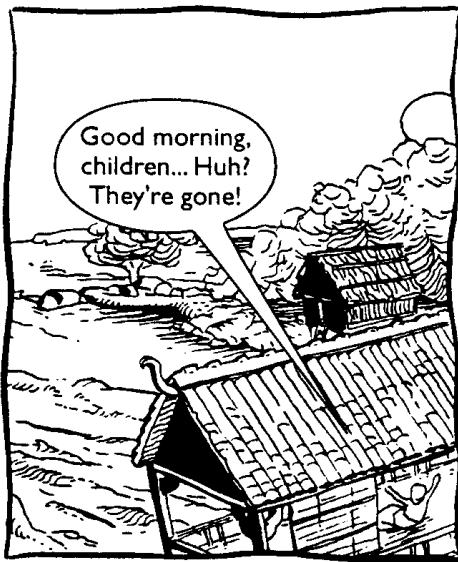
The Innkeeper doesn't
want her to go... He's
telling her to forget about
me! He's a bad man! A liar!



Look out! He's trying to
grab her! She's shouting
but no one can hear her!
No! I can't watch any more!

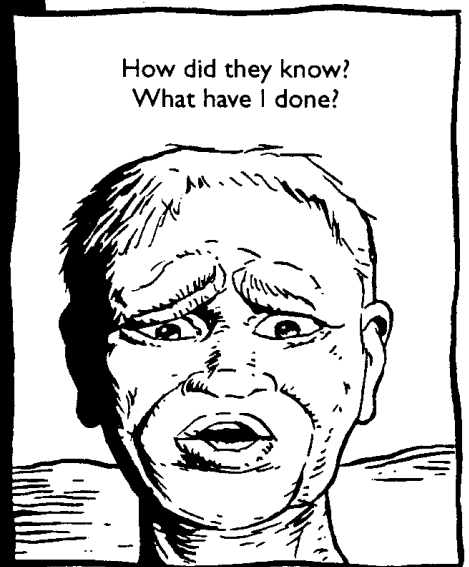






"Dear Innkeeper,
Thank you for your generosity, but we have decided not to stay any longer. We also thought it was best that we go before you had a chance to do something you might regret."

--Chantrea and Soriya



How did they know?
What have I done?





We've been running for **hours**-- I don't think we have to worry about being **followed** anymore...



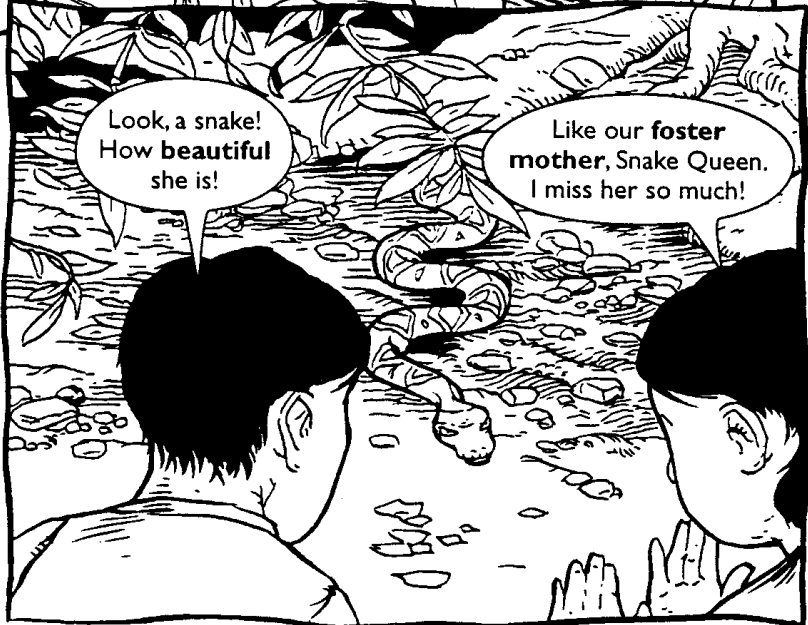
Agreed! I'm tired of **running**, anyway...



Oh, Chantrea, I'm sorry I tried to leave you. How could I have ever doubted your **courage** to go on?

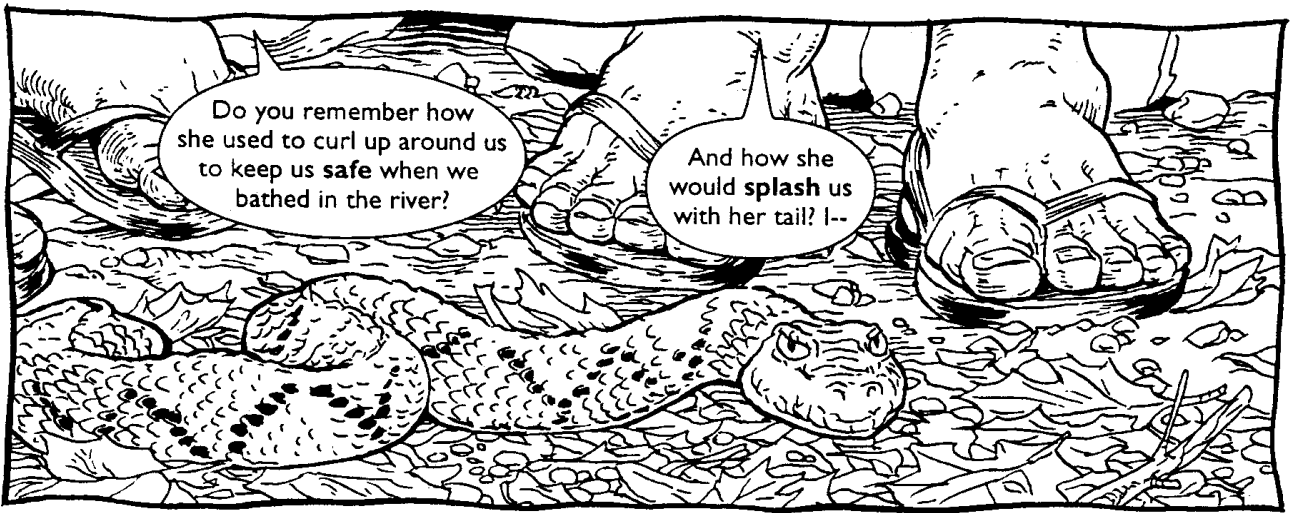


And did you really believe I could ever leave you behind? That **innkeeper** had us both fooled, I think...



Look, a snake! How beautiful she is!

Like our **foster mother**, Snake Queen. I miss her so much!









Monsters!
Let's get out
of here!

Cowards! Are
you afraid of a few
snakes? Attack!

Hellllp!



Soriya! It's not
working! Try to restrain
them in your coils to
tire them out!



Stop! We don't
mean to harm you!
Owww! He's hurting
me! Chantrea!

Die,
demon!



Soriya!
No!

It's gone
mad! Aarrgh!
Help me!!



I've been
poisoned! Run!
Save yourselves...

Aaaaagh!

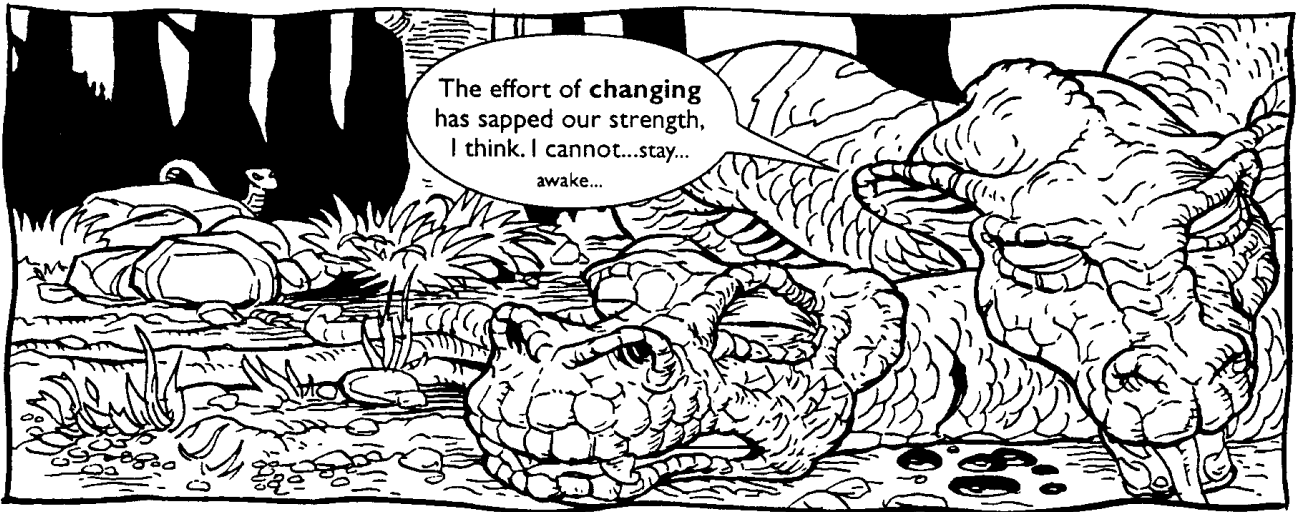


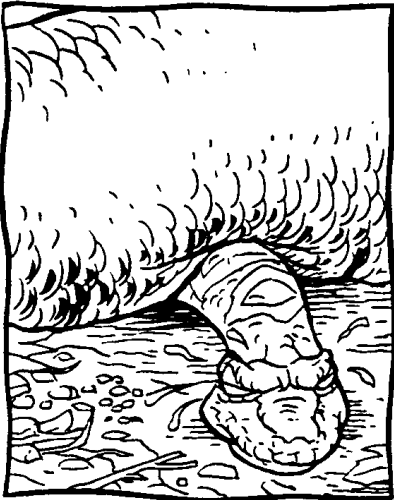
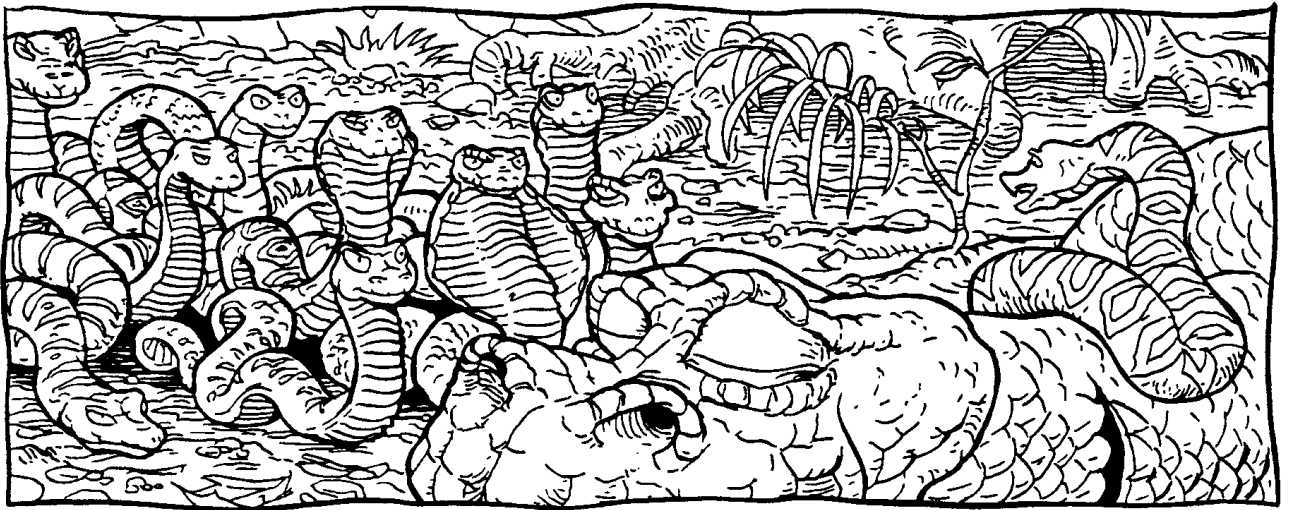
You've...
killed them,
brother!



Sister, what
have I done? The snake
part of me seemed to
take control...

I'm so tired...







The Sun and Moon story, like many others before it, celebrates the spirit of two heroes who overcome a difficult past and persevere. The twins are able to use their cultural history in powerful ways to create good in spite of the horrors of their past.

If you or your parents or teachers are interested in other works dealing with these issues, there are many texts and even several comic books that have addressed these difficult topics.

- In the popular tradition of Japanese *manga*, Keiji Nakazawa wrote an autobiographical comic called *Barefoot Gen: A Cartoon Story of Hiroshima*, which was translated into English in 1976. In it he deals with the trauma of a city and a people on whom the atomic bomb was dropped during World War II.
- More recently, Art Spiegelman won a Pulitzer prize in 1992 for his treatment of the Jewish Holocaust in *Maus: A Survivor's Tale*, and then its sequel *Maus II: And Here My Troubles Began*. Using cats to represent Nazis and mice to represent Jews, Spiegelman tells the story of his father Vladek, a survivor of the concentration camps.
- Even now, at the dawn of the twenty-first century, major conflicts continue in Rwanda and in the former Yugoslavia. Joe Sacco's *Safe Area Gorazde* presents a vivid portrayal of the genocide, sometimes termed "ethnic cleansing," in Eastern Bosnia. As a reporter, he befriended Muslims whose lives were transformed as their home turned into a war zone.

Although these books are all in comic form, their content is very serious. Comic books in the United States have long been used to entertain, but around the world they often convey very adult messages.

The authors of this comic book work at the Harvard Program for Refugee Trauma with victims of human rights abuses. Despite the violence they have encountered, the vast majority of survivors continue their life journeys full of hope for the future. Soriya and Chantrea are examples of such survivors, who come to terms with their past in order to create and enjoy a brighter tomorrow.

Susan Frick
Harvard Graduate School of Education