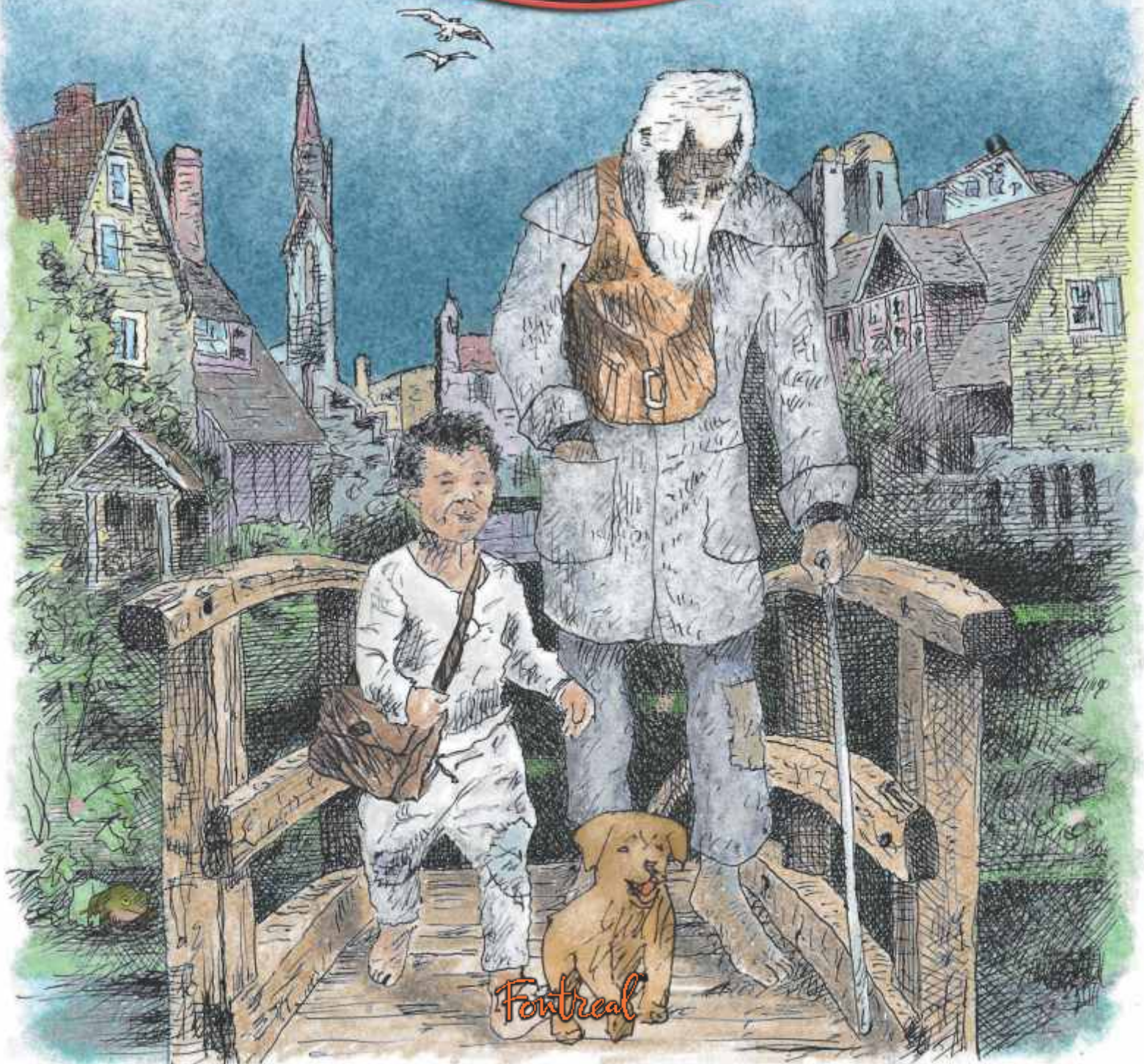


THE COBBLER'S BRIDGE

BY MARIN



THE COBBLER'S BRIDGE

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A Christmas story about two towns,
two shoemakers, and a magic cross



*This is my Tomitude:
In memory of Harriet Beecher Stowe,
one of the most emancipated women
of the 19th century.*

M.D.

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A

wide and shallow
river ran between Wolftown and Lambville.

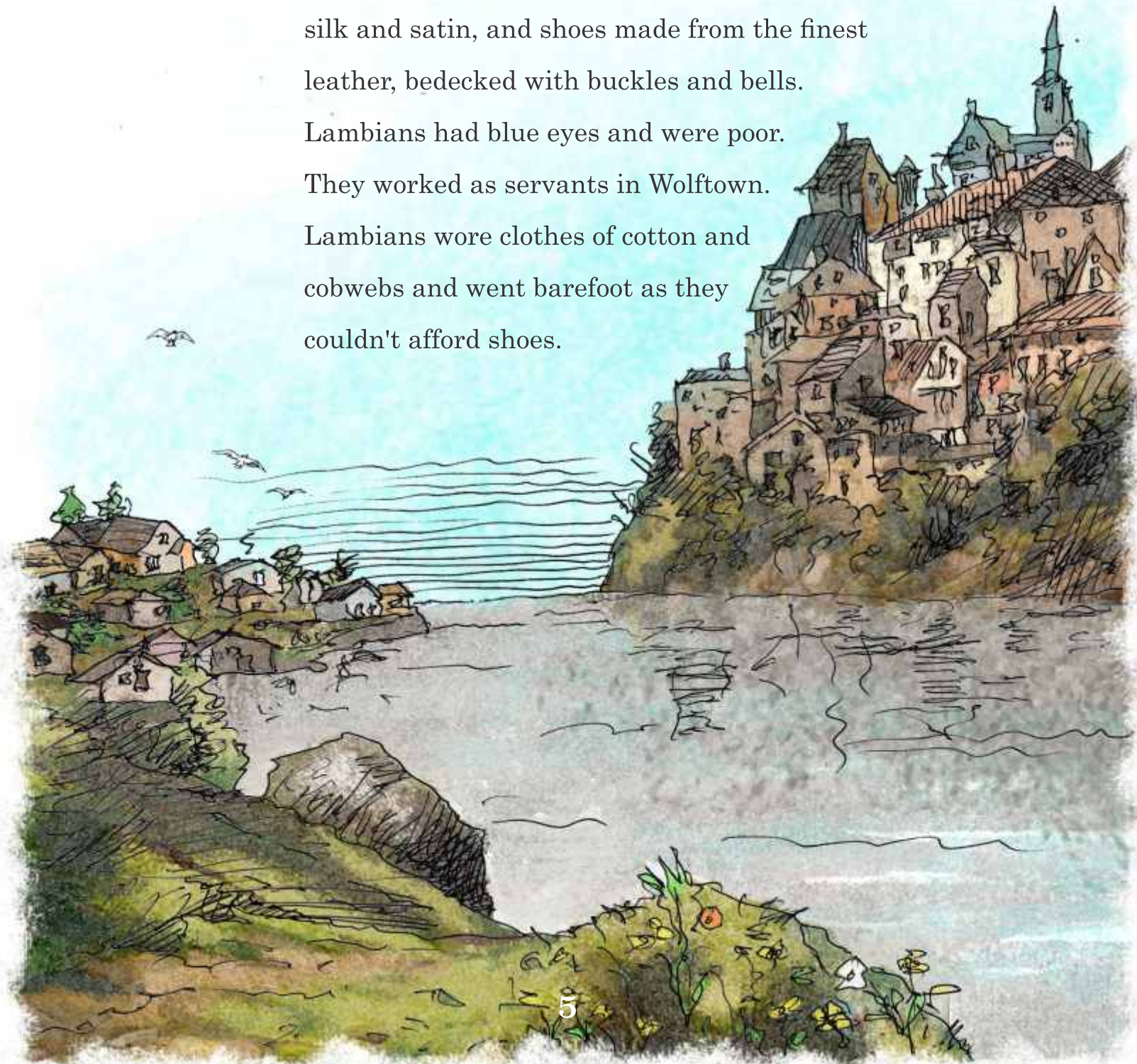
Wolfarians had brown eyes and were rich.

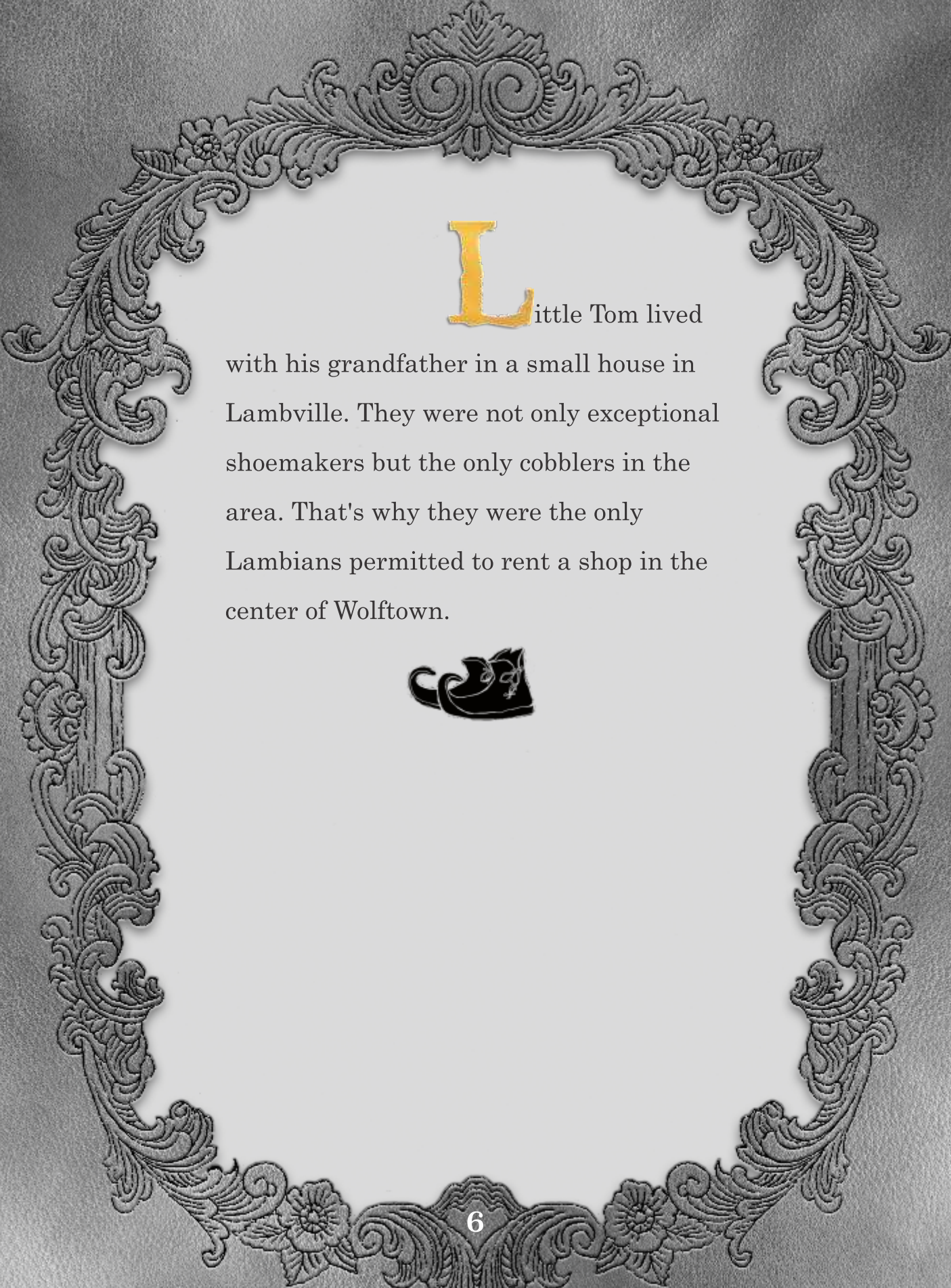
They owned all buildings, houses, and land on
both sides of the river. They wore clothes of
silk and satin, and shoes made from the finest
leather, bedecked with buckles and bells.

Lambians had blue eyes and were poor.

They worked as servants in Wolftown.

Lambians wore clothes of cotton and
cobwebs and went barefoot as they
couldn't afford shoes.

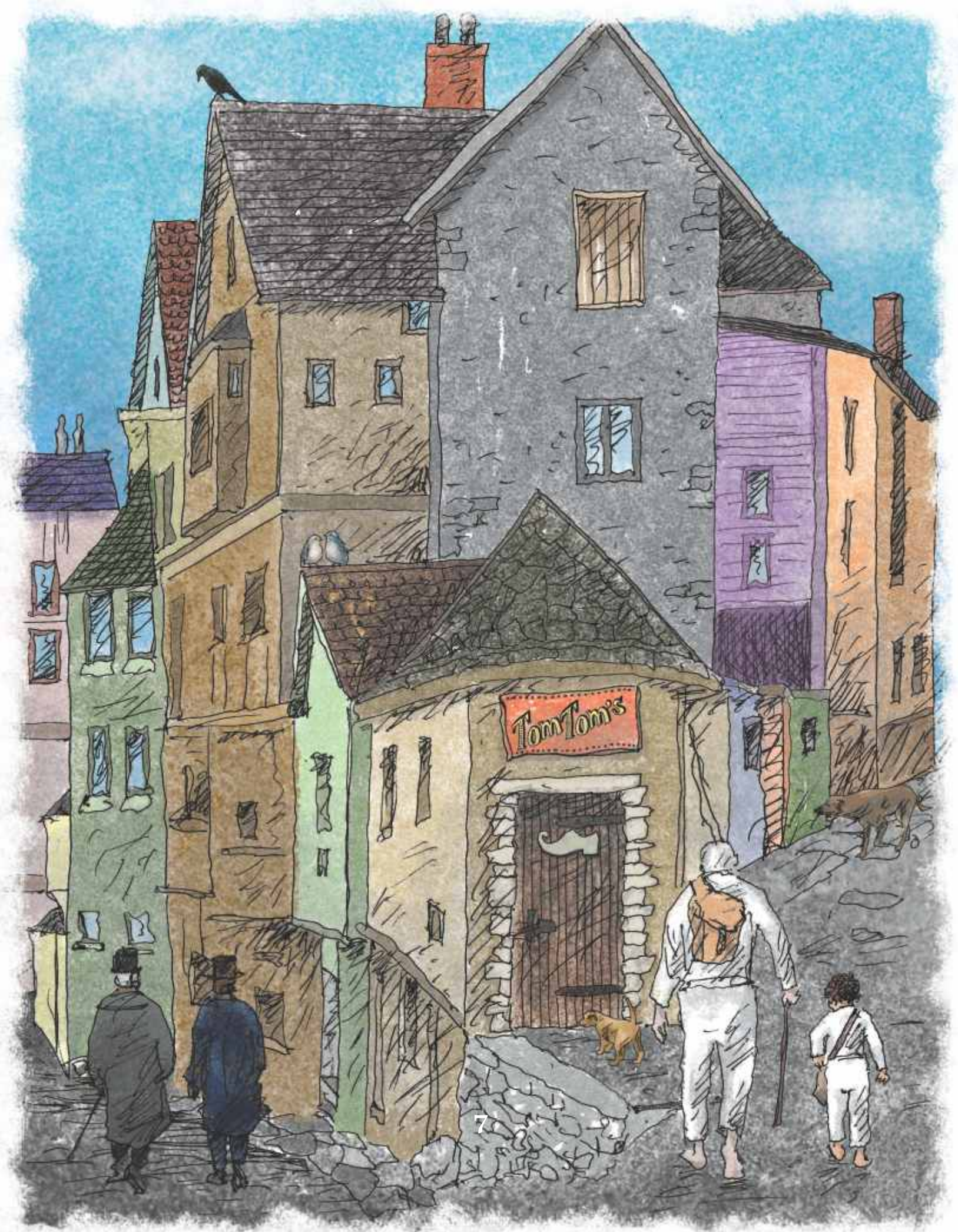


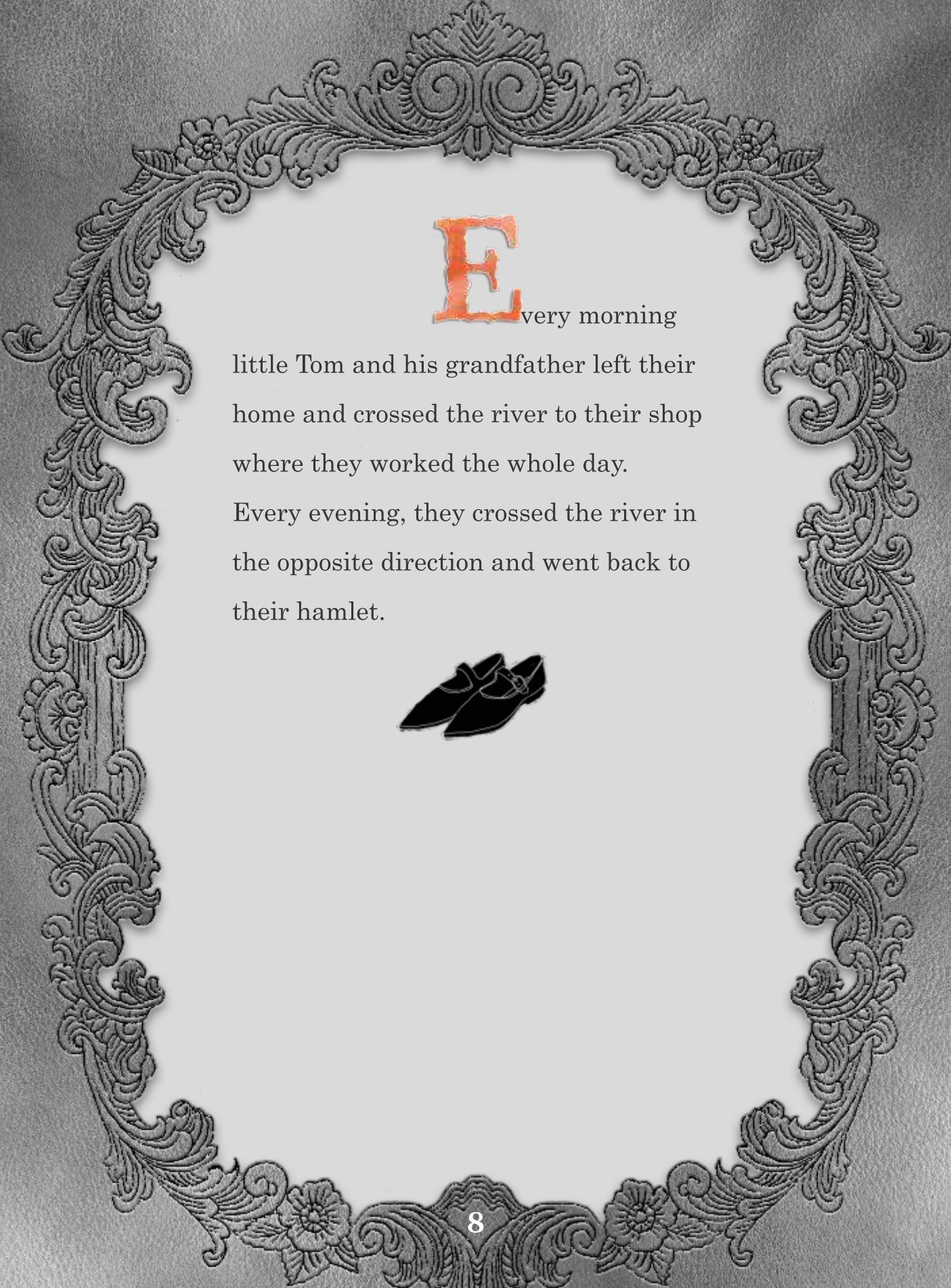


L

ittle Tom lived
with his grandfather in a small house in
Lambville. They were not only exceptional
shoemakers but the only cobblers in the
area. That's why they were the only
Lambians permitted to rent a shop in the
center of Wolftown.







E

very morning

little Tom and his grandfather left their home and crossed the river to their shop where they worked the whole day.

Every evening, they crossed the river in the opposite direction and went back to their hamlet.





T

he little boy

helped the old man every day. He pierced
leather strips, cut wooden pegs, attached
buckles, and polished the finished leather.
He also delivered baskets of loafers and
boots and buskins all over Wolftown.

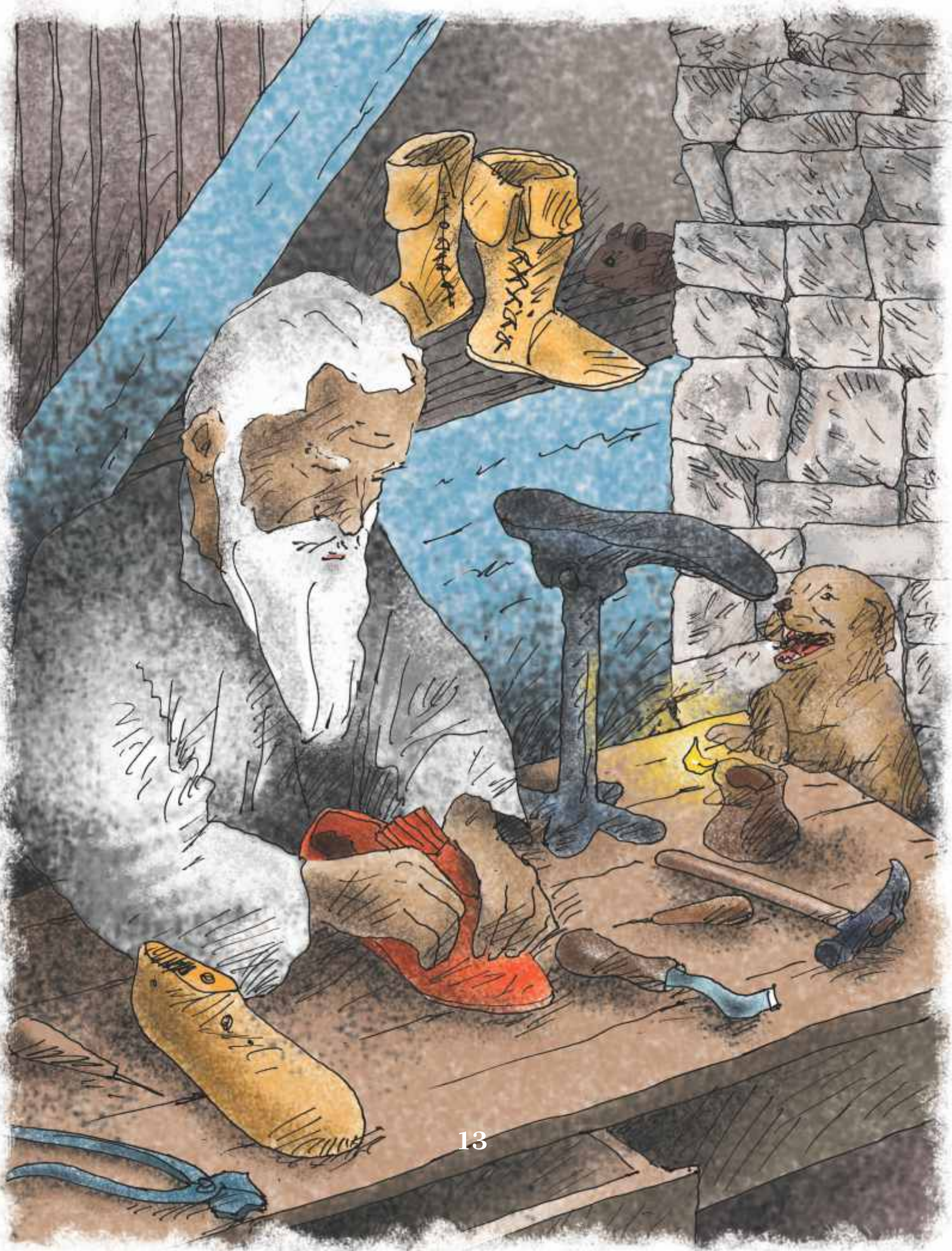




T

om and his
grandfather sweated from dawn to dusk
and never took any days off. They were
always hard at work, immersed in making
footgear for the citizens of Wolftown,
especially in the months before Christmas.

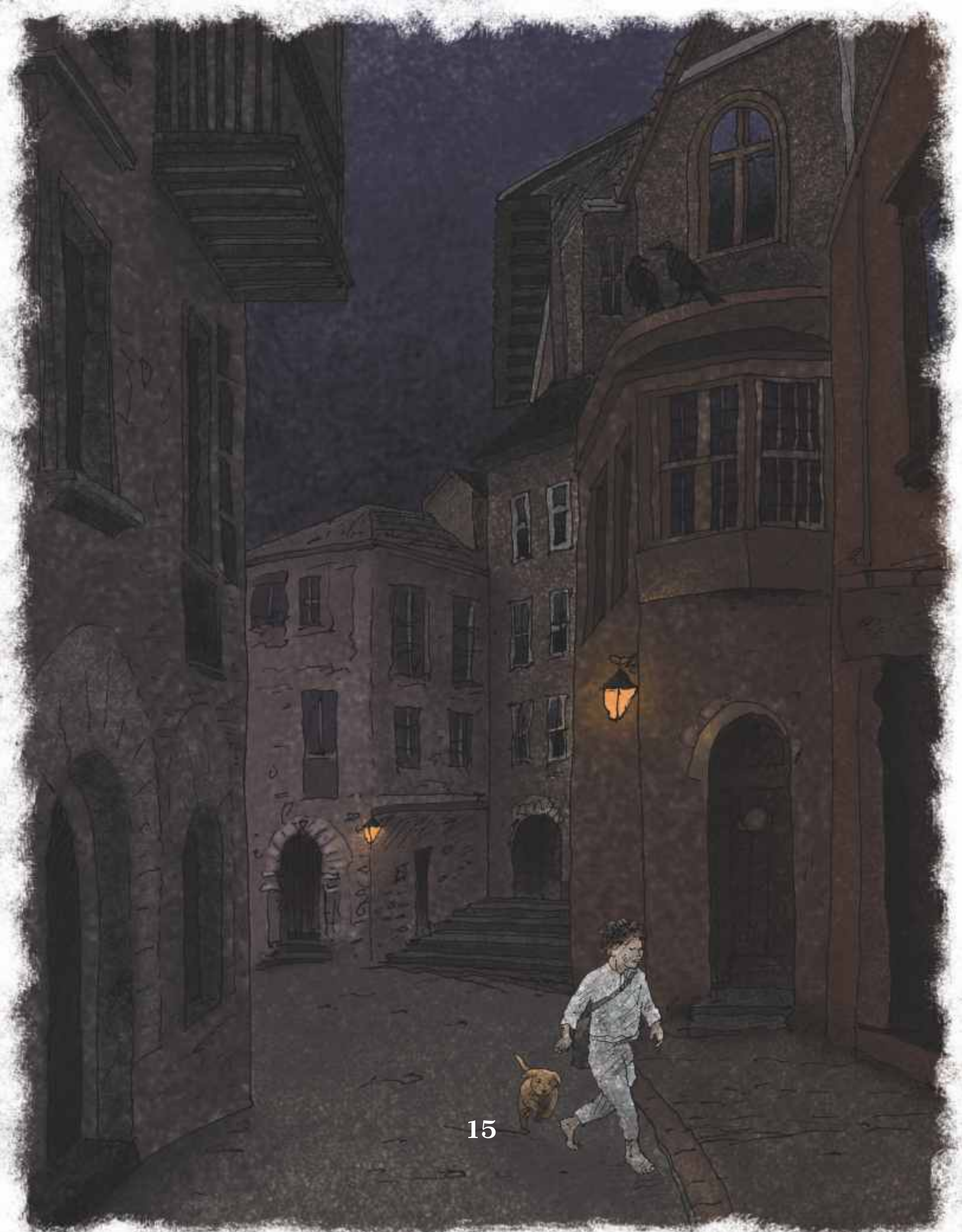


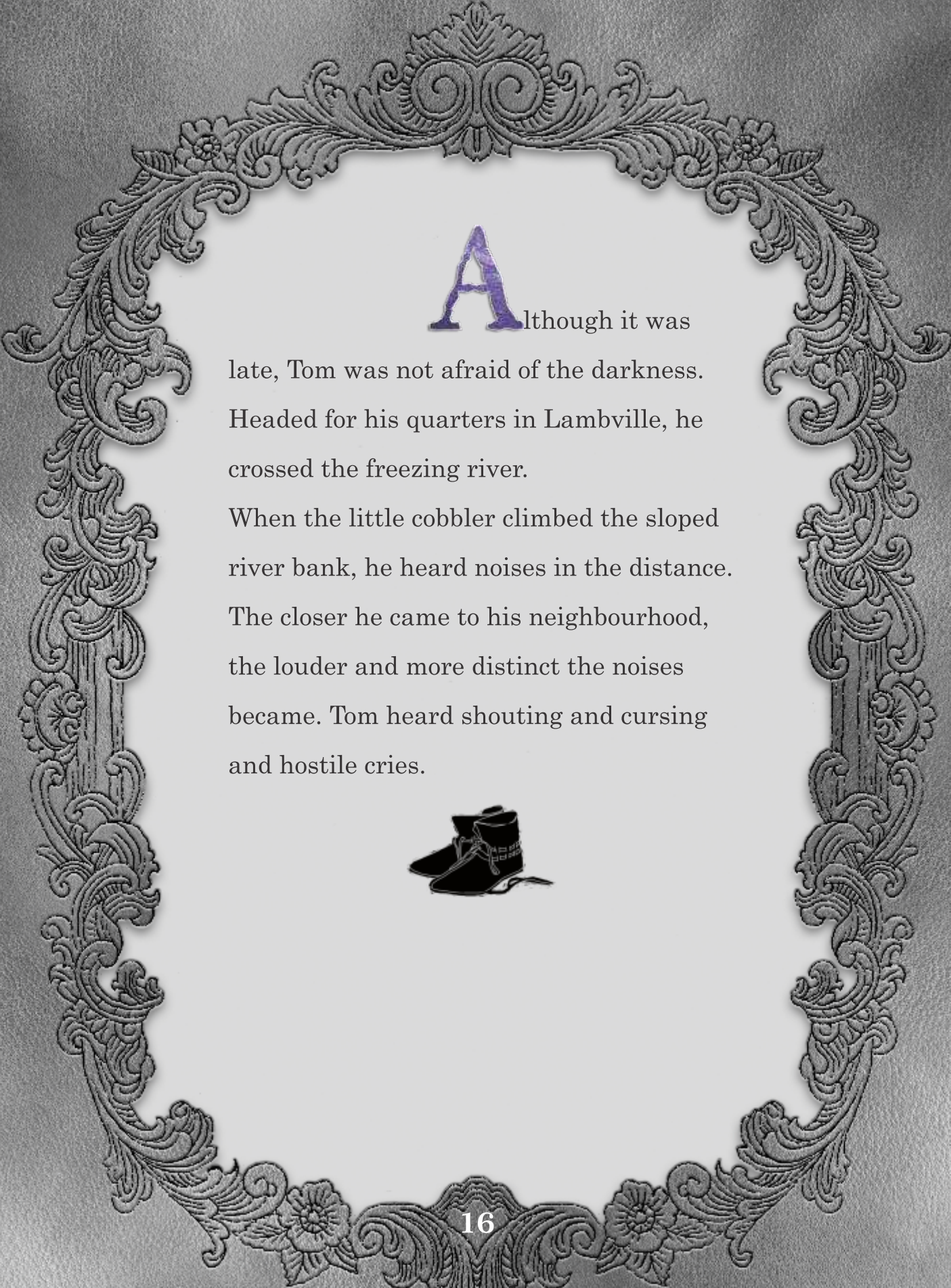




ne evening, the old man decided to stay up all night. He had enough leather scraps to make a Christmas present for his grandchild—the first-ever pair of shoes for a Lambian citizen. So, he sent the little boy home to sleep.







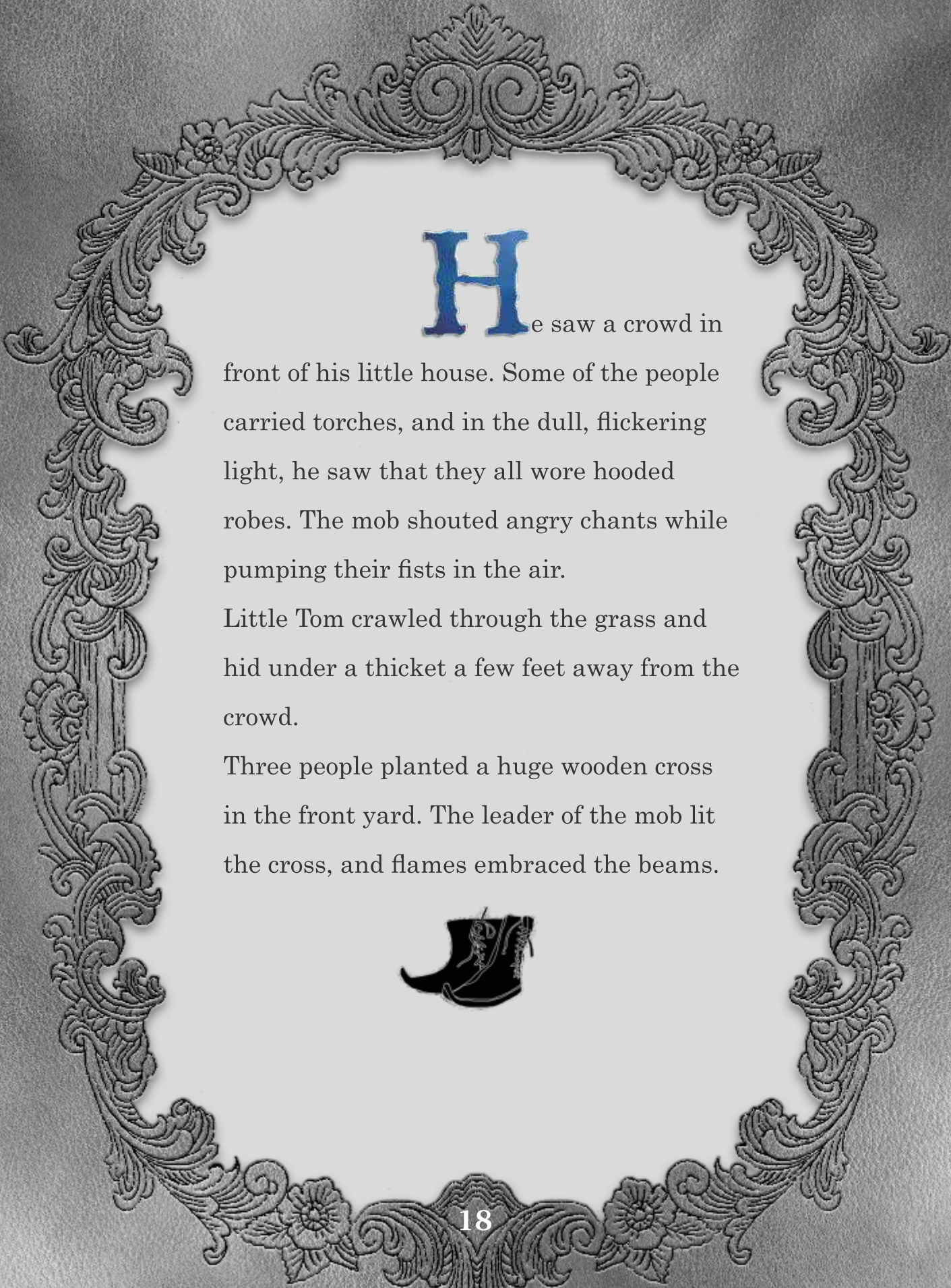
A

lthough it was late, Tom was not afraid of the darkness. Headed for his quarters in Lambville, he crossed the freezing river.

When the little cobbler climbed the sloped river bank, he heard noises in the distance. The closer he came to his neighbourhood, the louder and more distinct the noises became. Tom heard shouting and cursing and hostile cries.







H

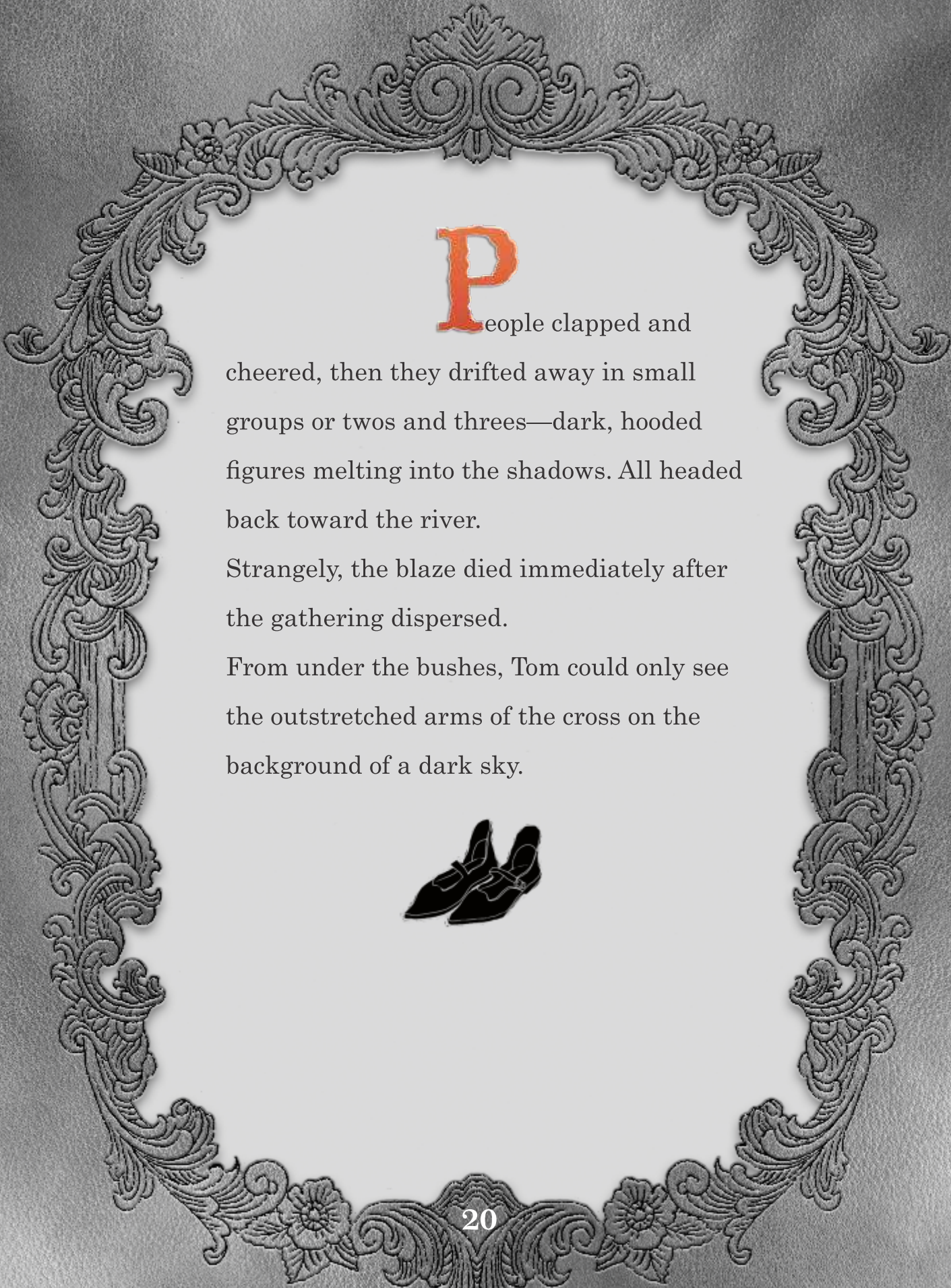
e saw a crowd in front of his little house. Some of the people carried torches, and in the dull, flickering light, he saw that they all wore hooded robes. The mob shouted angry chants while pumping their fists in the air.

Little Tom crawled through the grass and hid under a thicket a few feet away from the crowd.

Three people planted a huge wooden cross in the front yard. The leader of the mob lit the cross, and flames embraced the beams.







P

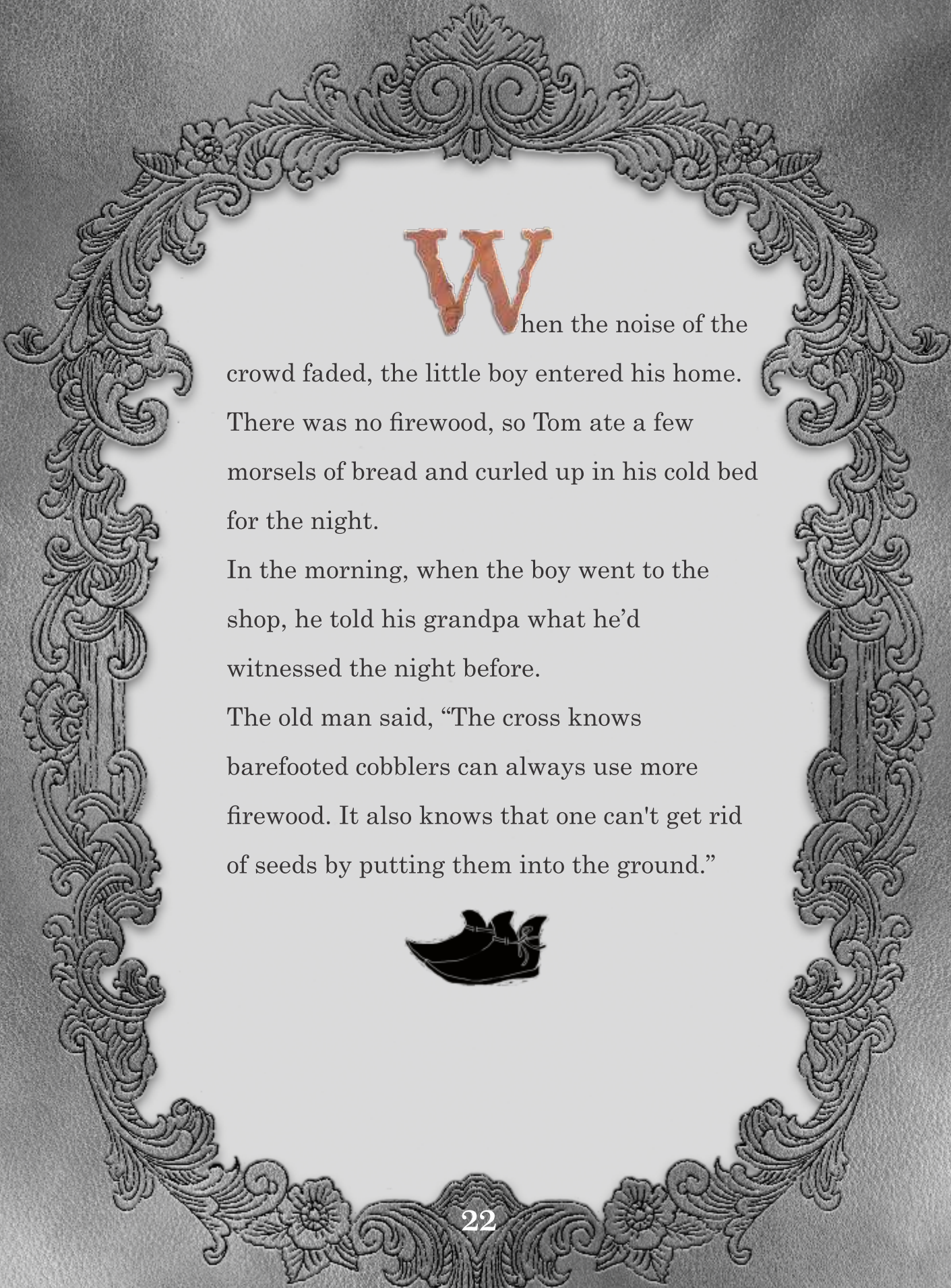
People clapped and cheered, then they drifted away in small groups or twos and threes—dark, hooded figures melting into the shadows. All headed back toward the river.

Strangely, the blaze died immediately after the gathering dispersed.

From under the bushes, Tom could only see the outstretched arms of the cross on the background of a dark sky.







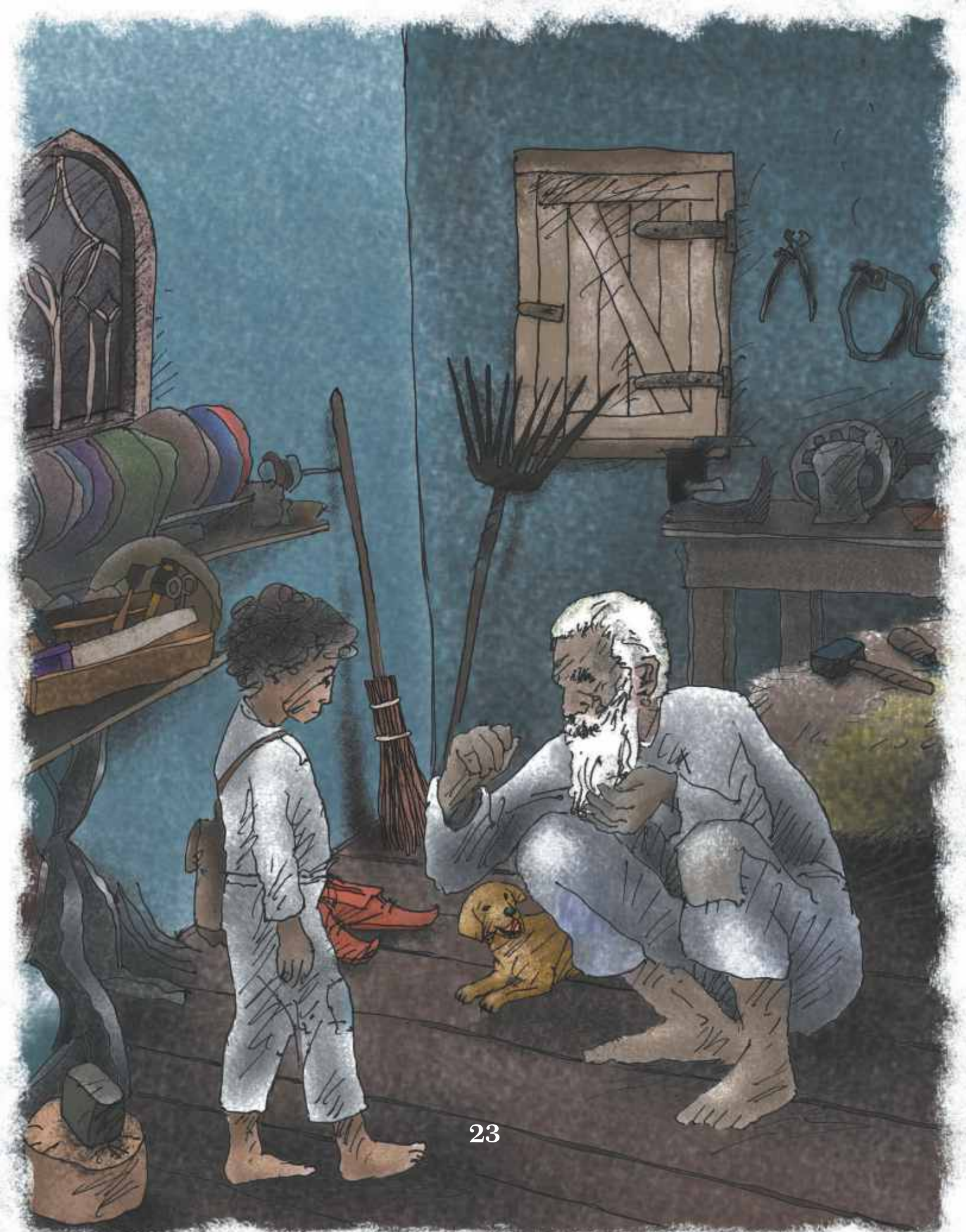
W

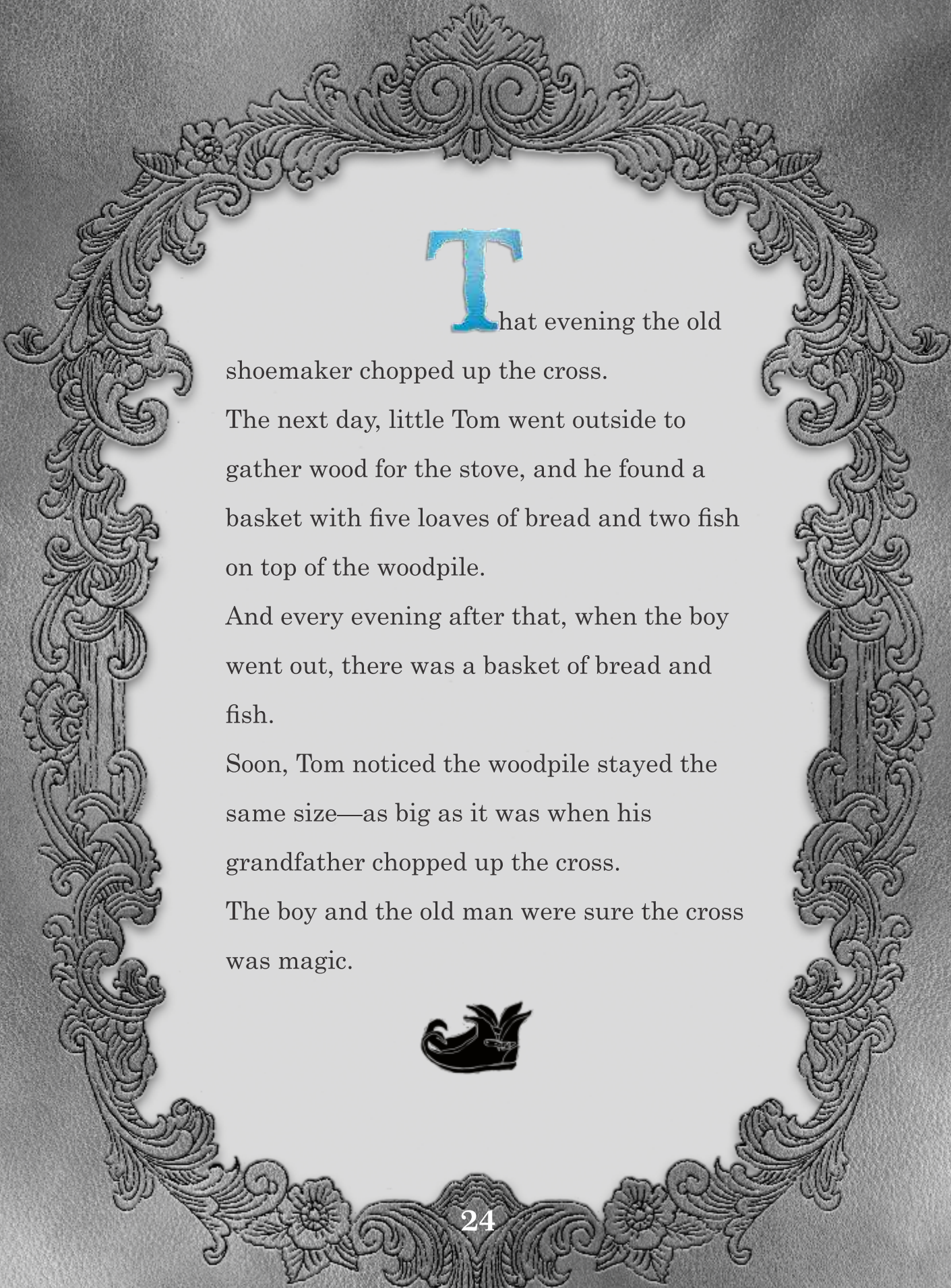
hen the noise of the crowd faded, the little boy entered his home. There was no firewood, so Tom ate a few morsels of bread and curled up in his cold bed for the night.

In the morning, when the boy went to the shop, he told his grandpa what he'd witnessed the night before.

The old man said, "The cross knows barefooted cobblers can always use more firewood. It also knows that one can't get rid of seeds by putting them into the ground."







T

hat evening the old shoemaker chopped up the cross.

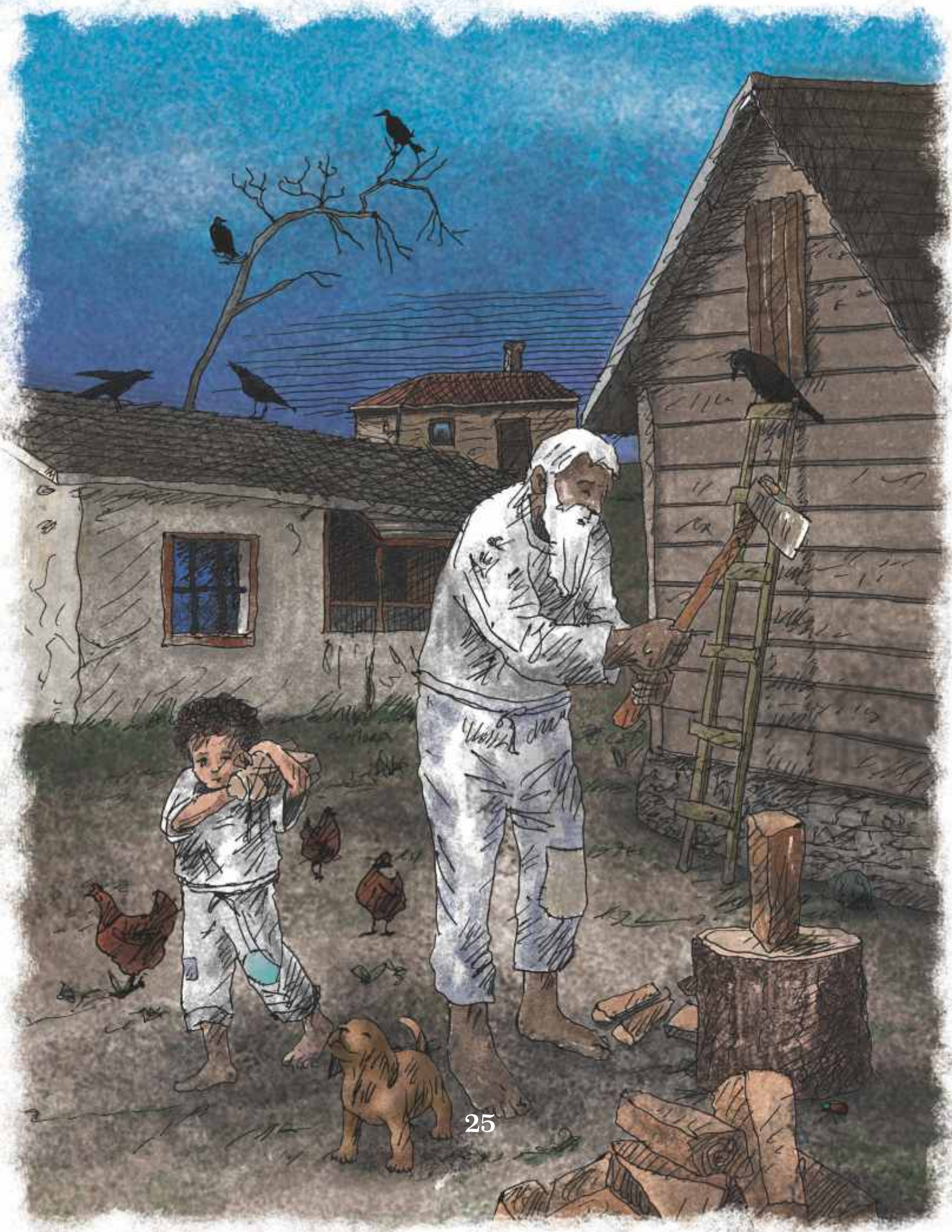
The next day, little Tom went outside to gather wood for the stove, and he found a basket with five loaves of bread and two fish on top of the woodpile.

And every evening after that, when the boy went out, there was a basket of bread and fish.

Soon, Tom noticed the woodpile stayed the same size—as big as it was when his grandfather chopped up the cross.

The boy and the old man were sure the cross was magic.







n Christmas

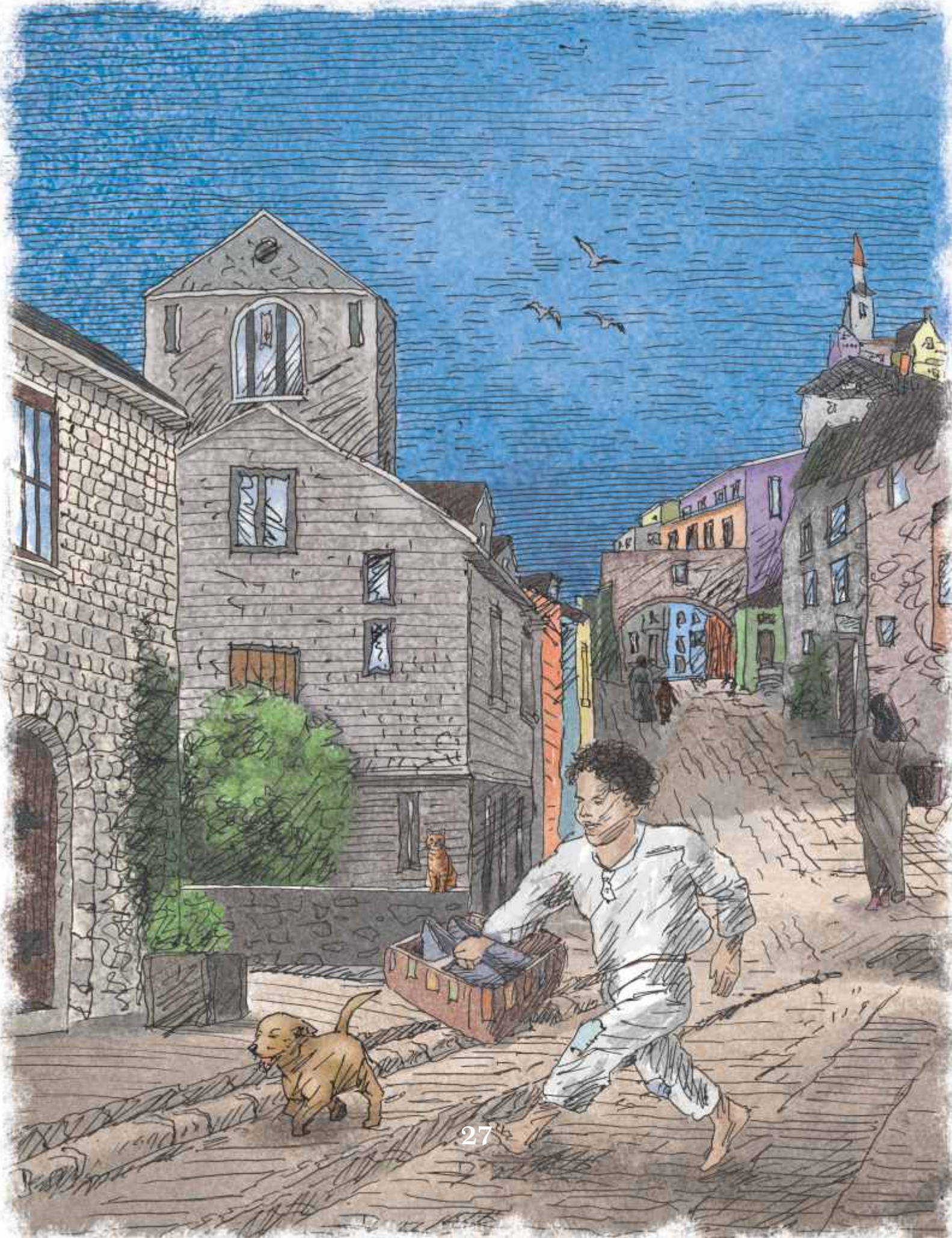
morning, Tom received the prettiest shoes in the world. The very first shoes for anyone in Lambville!

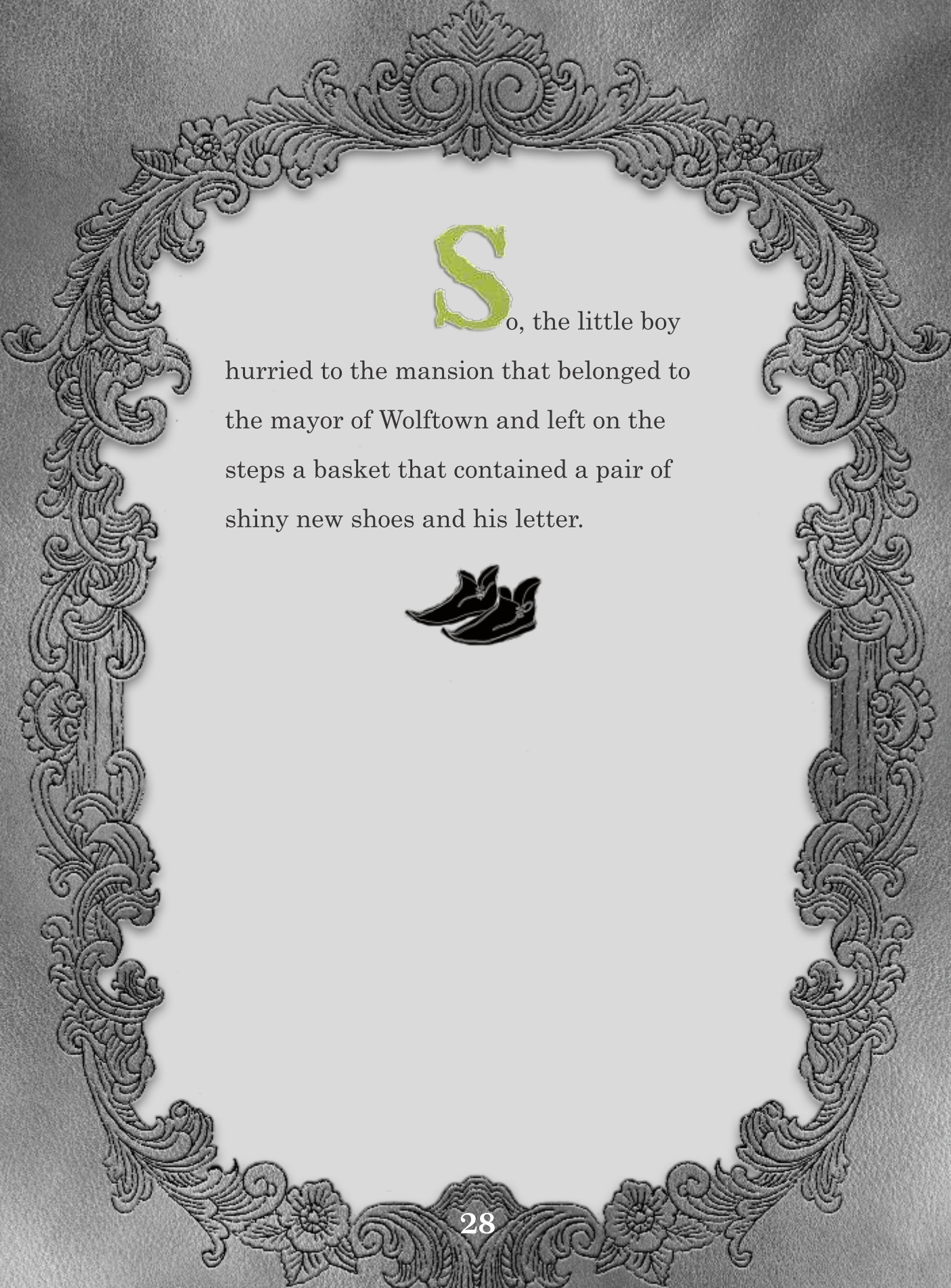
And a plan came into his head.

He wrote a letter and shared the idea and the note with his grandfather.

The old cobbler approved.







S

o, the little boy
hurried to the mansion that belonged to
the mayor of Wolftown and left on the
steps a basket that contained a pair of
shiny new shoes and his letter.





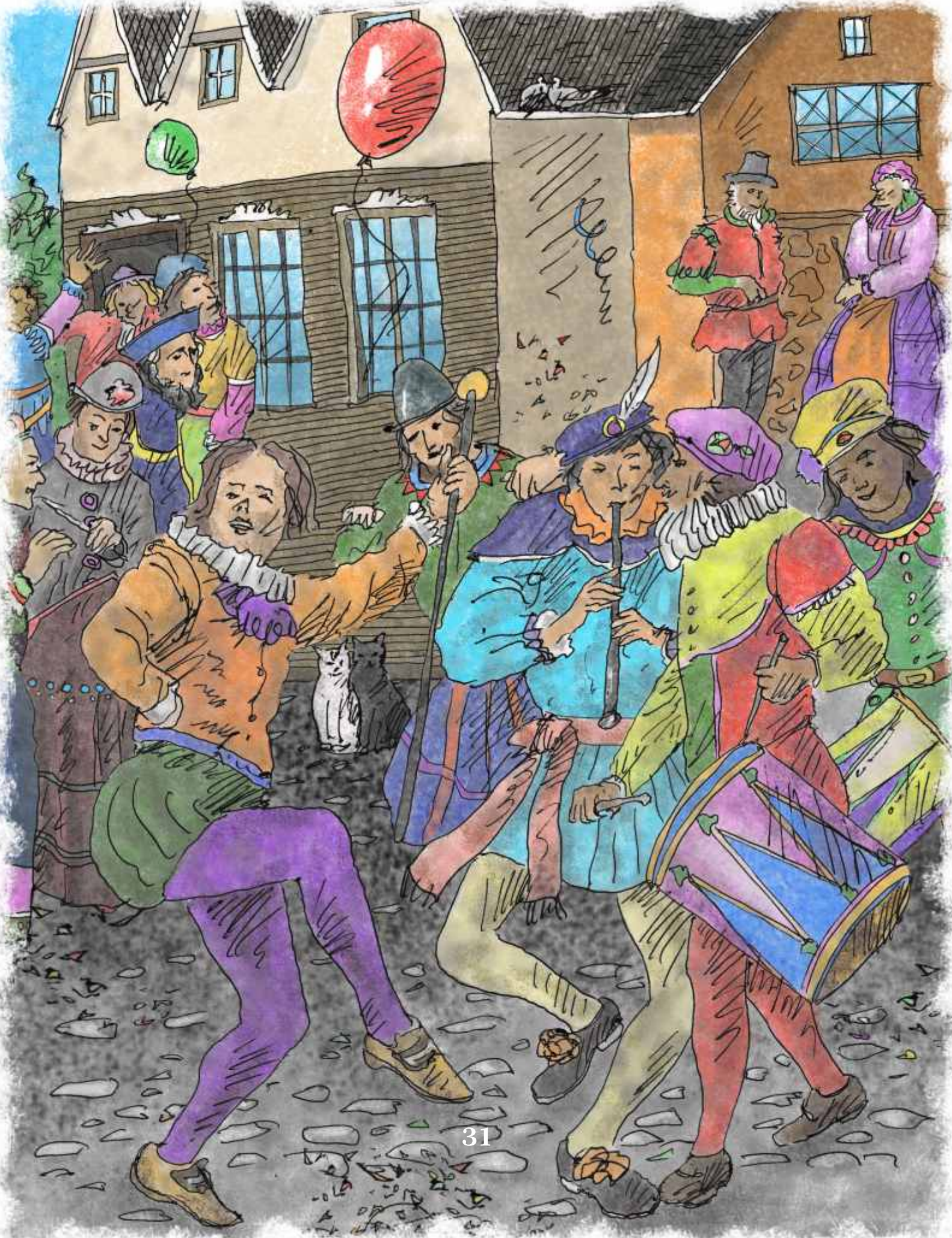
Dear Mr. Mayor,
a couple of weeks ago, I saw you at our house.
I did not see your face, but I recognized your boots.
I would like to thank you.
We have so much wood, fish, and bread now
that we are able to share with others.
For Christmas my grandpa made me my first pair of
shoes, and I want you to give them to your child,
as we are thankful for the magic cross.

Merry Christmas,
Tom, the cobbler's grandson

T

hat year the people on both sides of the river had the best Christmas ever. And shortly in the new year, the mayor of Wolftown used his own money to build a new bridge.

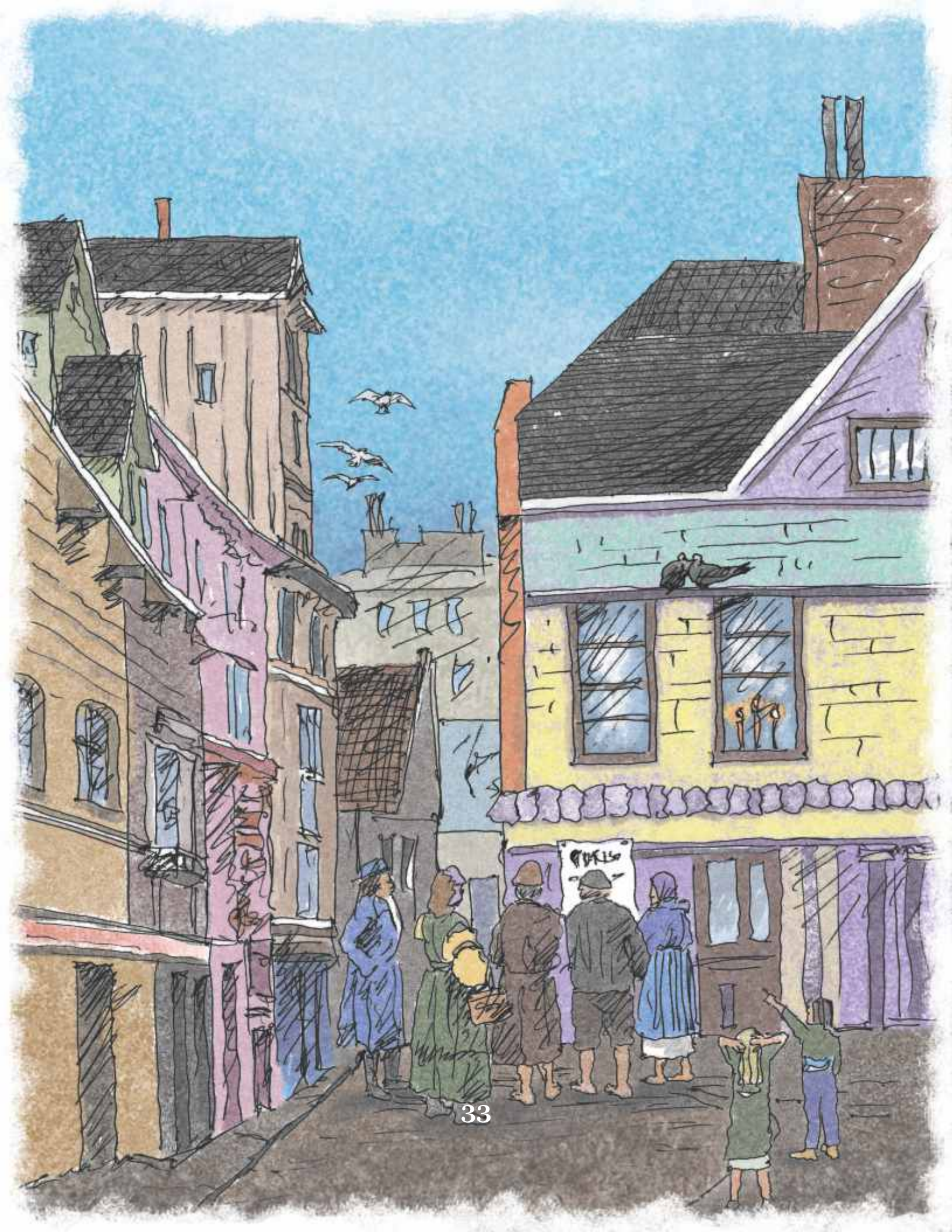




T

he dwellers of the
two towns were thrilled with the new viaduct
crossing the wide and shallow river that ran
between Wolftown and Lambville.





They also loved the mayor's announcement regarding the name of the practical new bridge.

It was to be called





A river divides two towns:
One with wealthy inhabitants and one with poor folks.
With a selfless Christmas gesture,
a little shoemaker makes a step
to connect the people from both sides of the river.
Bridges are nothing but links -
the story about a magic cross reminds us gently
that all humans are interconnected.
Is there a place for goodness in our world?
Yes, you may find it in children's hearts.
They are the fertile grounds for miracles. And hope.

Dear Mighty Reader,
I would be very thankful if you post a review
about my book on Amazon, your blog, Goodreads
or any other platform of your choice.
Thank you in advance,
Marin