

MY BOOK of DELIGHTS

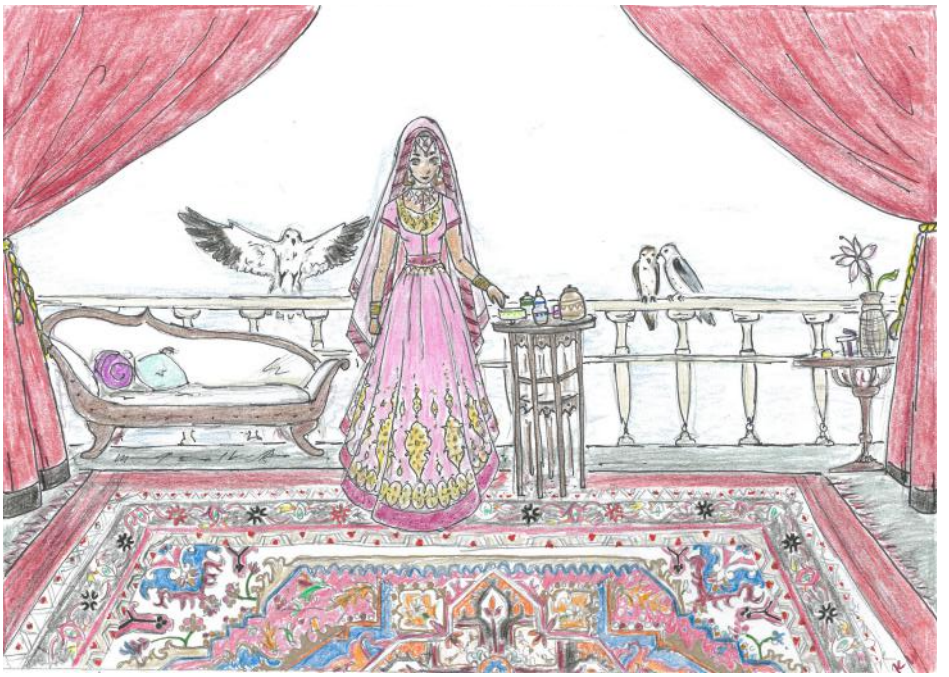
Book Seven

Compiled by Marlene Peterson

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Libraries of Hope

My Book of Delights
Book Seven

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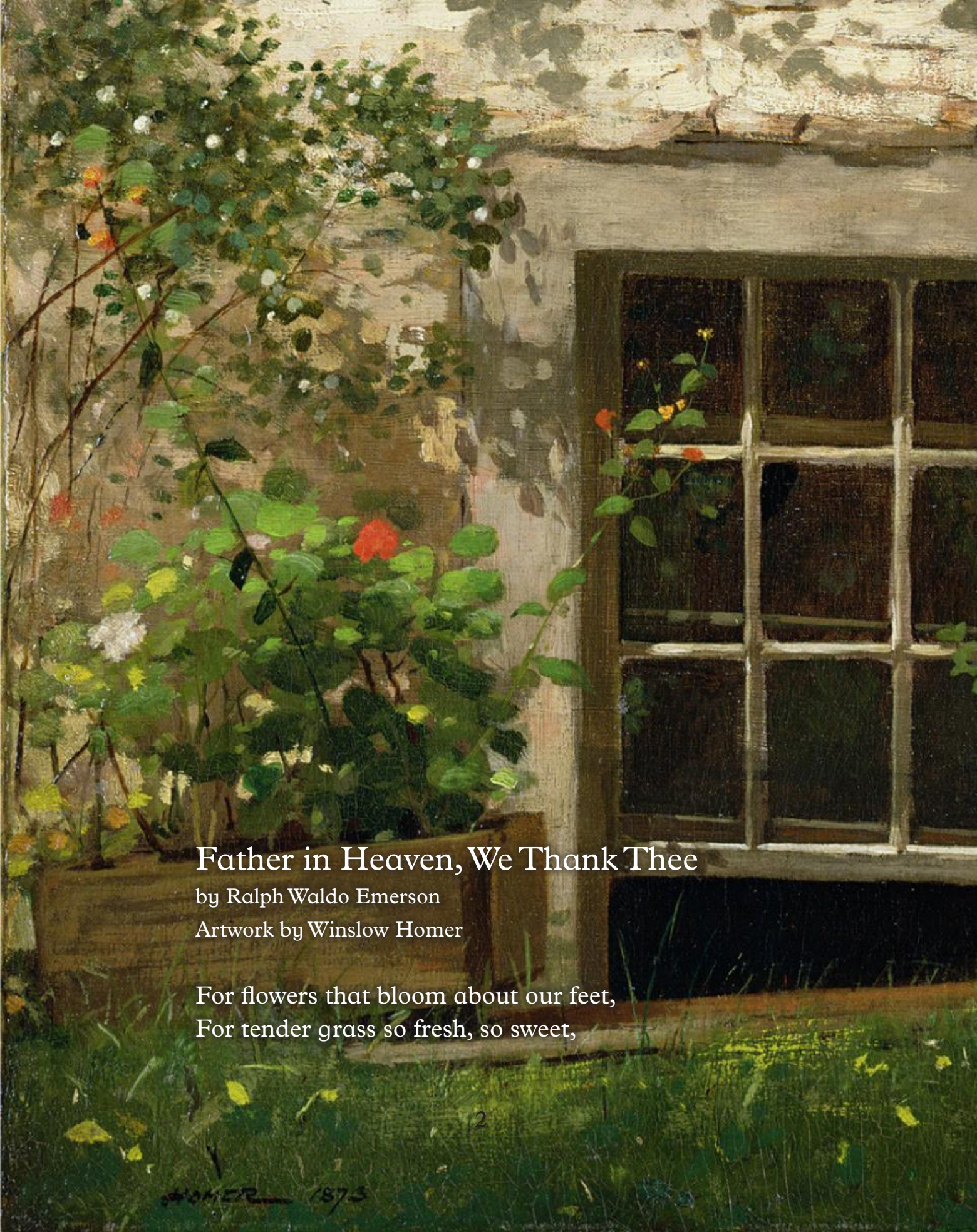
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Father in Heaven, We Thank Thee

by Ralph Waldo Emerson

Artwork by Winslow Homer

For flowers that bloom about our feet,
For tender grass so fresh, so sweet,





For song of bird and hum of bee,
For all things fair we hear or see,



For blue of stream and blue of sky,
For pleasant shade of branches high,



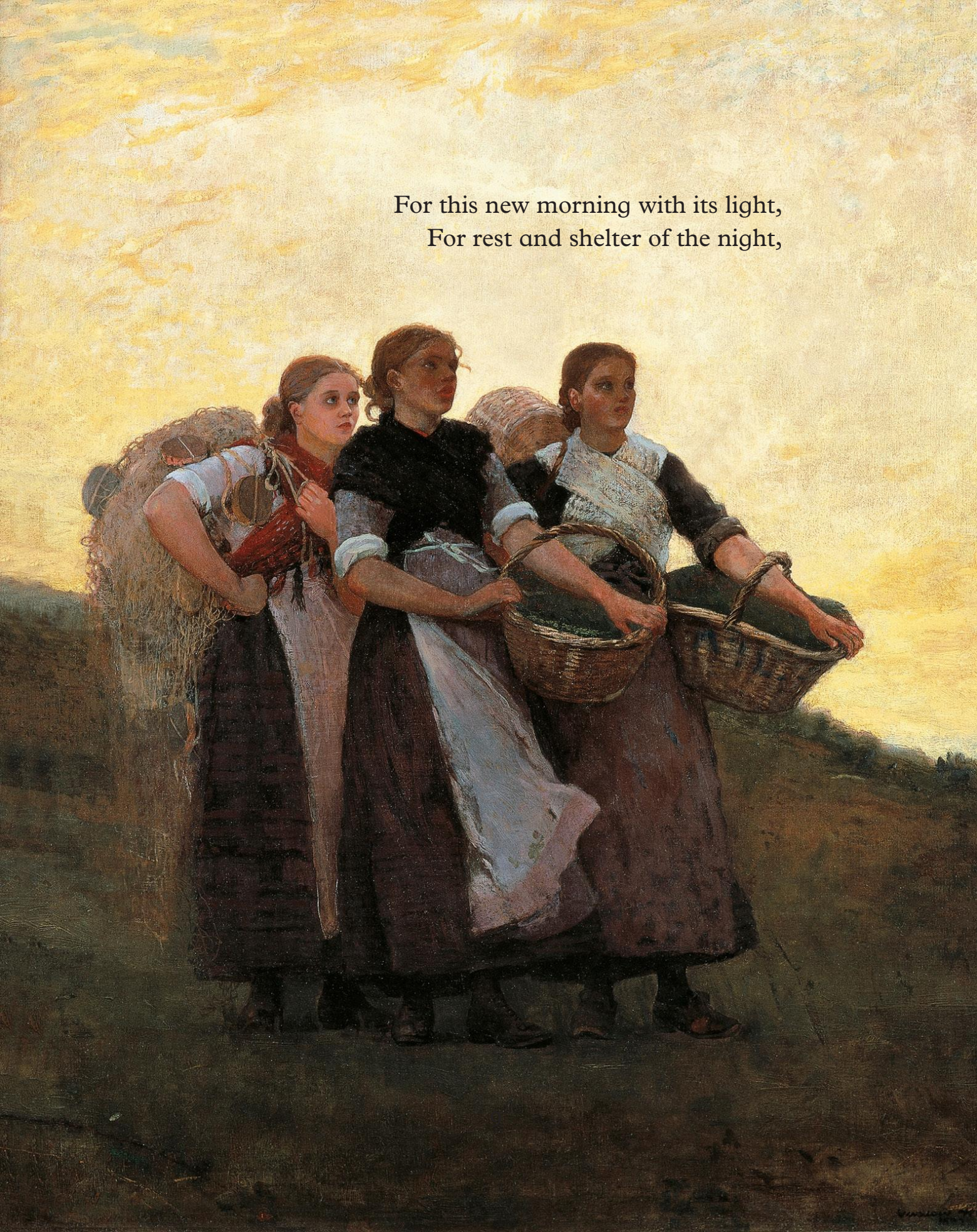
For fragrant air and cooling breeze,
For beauty of the blooming trees.


For mother-love and father-care,
For brothers strong and sisters fair,



For love at home and here each day,
For guidance lest we go astray,

For this new morning with its light,
For rest and shelter of the night,






For health and food, for love and friends,
For ev'rything His Goodness sends,
Father in Heaven, we thank thee.



John Greenleaf Whittier

John Greenleaf Whittier loved to run and play with his brother and his two sisters. He had few playthings, but he did not need even those. He ran barefooted through woods and meadows and waded and fished in the clear water of the little

brook near his home. He often listened to the sounds about him and thought that the wind, the brook, and the birds talked to him of the things he loved.

At times he played that he was a king with the doorstep for his throne. The beautiful sunset clouds were its splendid curtain and when darkness fell, the fireflies came with their glowing wings to light his palace. All the world was his kingdom, so what cared he for playthings?

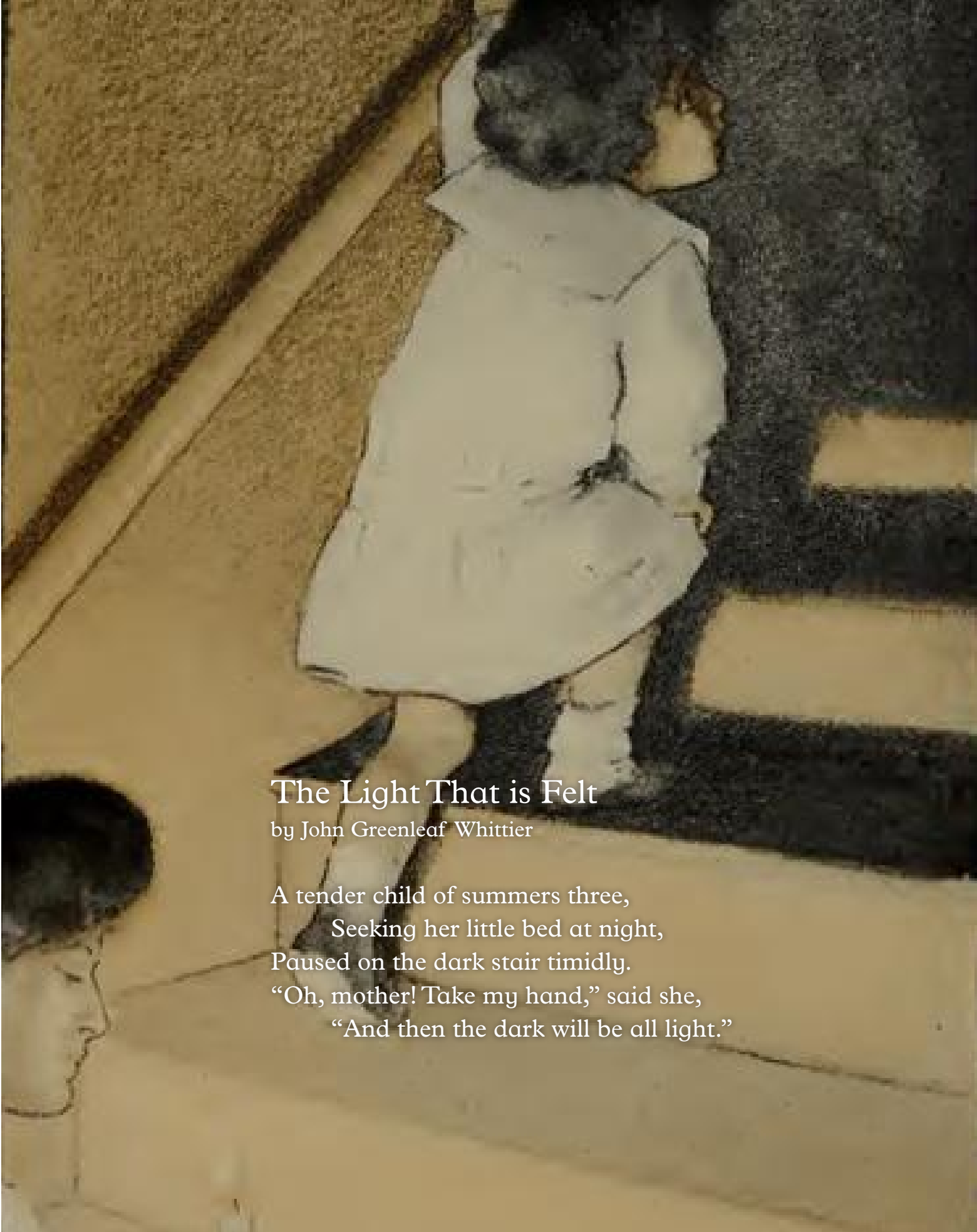




The Barefoot Boy

By John Greenleaf Whittier

Blessings on thee, little man,
Barefoot boy, with cheek of tan!
With thy turned-up pantaloons,
And thy merry whistled tunes;
Outward sunshine, inward joy:
Blessings on thee, barefoot boy!



The Light That is Felt

by John Greenleaf Whittier

A tender child of summers three,
Seeking her little bed at night,
Paused on the dark stair timidly.
"Oh, mother! Take my hand," said she,
"And then the dark will be all light."





Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow was a wonderful poet. He had five little children. They lived in a lovely old house with soft green lawns all around it. Here and there were shady elm trees and purple and white lilac bushes. A beautiful river flowed nearby.

The children loved their father. Sometimes when he was in his study, the little girls crept softly down the long stairway and peeped through the open door. Then they rushed into his arms and covered him with kisses.

He once wrote a poem about them. He called the poem "The Children's Hour." He said,

"From my study I see in the lamplight,
Descending the broad hall stair,
Grave Alice, and laughing Allegra,
And Edith with golden hair."

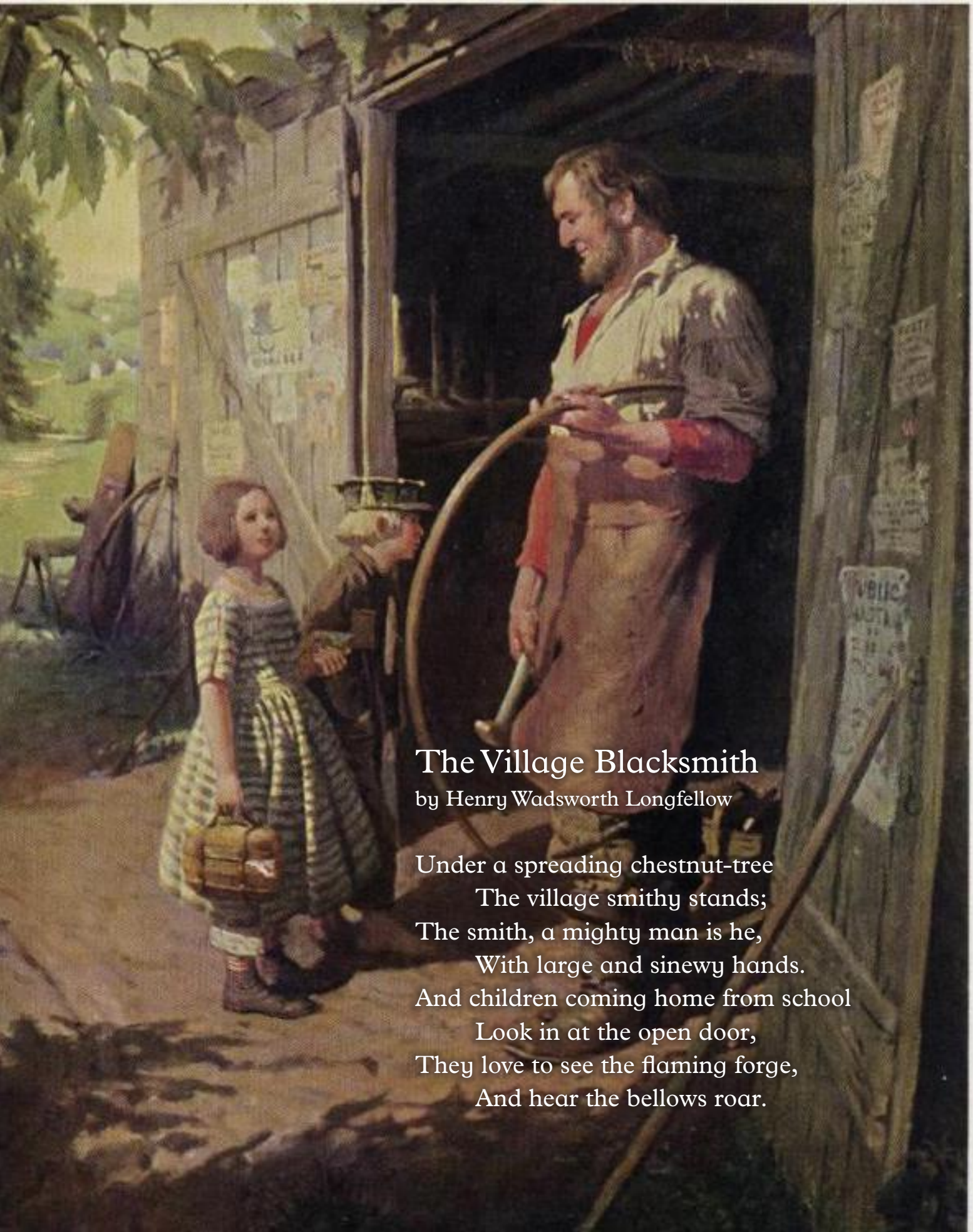
Near Mr. Longfellow's home there was a blacksmith's shop. In front of the shop grew a large chestnut tree. The branches of the tree were low and thick. They made a shady place for the children to rest and play on their way home from school.

Mr. Longfellow often rested under the great tree, too, and talked with the boys and girls. He loved the old tree and was sorry when it was cut down.

The children had a beautiful arm chair made from the wood of the tree. They gave the chair to the poet on his seventy-second birthday.

He will always be remembered as "The Children's Poet."





The Village Blacksmith

by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Under a spreading chestnut-tree
The village smithy stands;
The smith, a mighty man is he,
With large and sinewy hands.
And children coming home from school
Look in at the open door,
They love to see the flaming forge,
And hear the bellows roar.

The Castle Builder

by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

A gentle boy, with soft and silken locks,
  A dreamy boy, with brown and tender eyes,
A castle-builder, with his wooden blocks,
  And towers that touch imaginary skies.

A fearless rider on his father's knee,
  An eager listener unto stories told
At the Round Table of the nursery,
  Of heroes and adventures manifold.

There will be other towers for thee to build;
  There will be other steeds for thee to ride;
There will be other legends, and all filled
  With greater marvels and more glorified.

Build on, and make thy castles high and fair,
  Rising and reaching upward to the skies;
Listen to voices in the upper air,
  Nor lose thy simple faith in mysteries.





Eugene Field and the Children

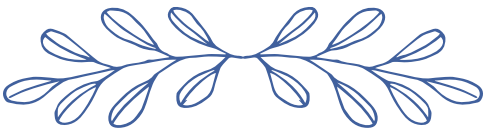
Eugene Field was a great poet. He had five children: Mary, Eugene Junior, Frederick, Roswell, and Baby Ruth. Mary was called, "Trotty," Eugene Junior was "Pinny," Frederick was "Daisy," Roswell was "Posy" and Baby Ruth was little "Sister Girl."

Though his own family was a large one there was always room in Eugene Field's home and garden for all the children in the neighborhood. No child was too ragged, no face and hands too soiled to find the way into his heart, where there was room for all.

It is no wonder that the children loved Mr. Field. He could tell the best stories they had ever heard, and he could make up the best games they ever played. He played marbles with the little boys, joined in their games of ball, or even played with dolls when little girls came to see him.

But Mr. Field did more than amuse little children. He wrote beautiful poems about them and for them. He knew the things that children liked and did, and he wrote poems about these things.





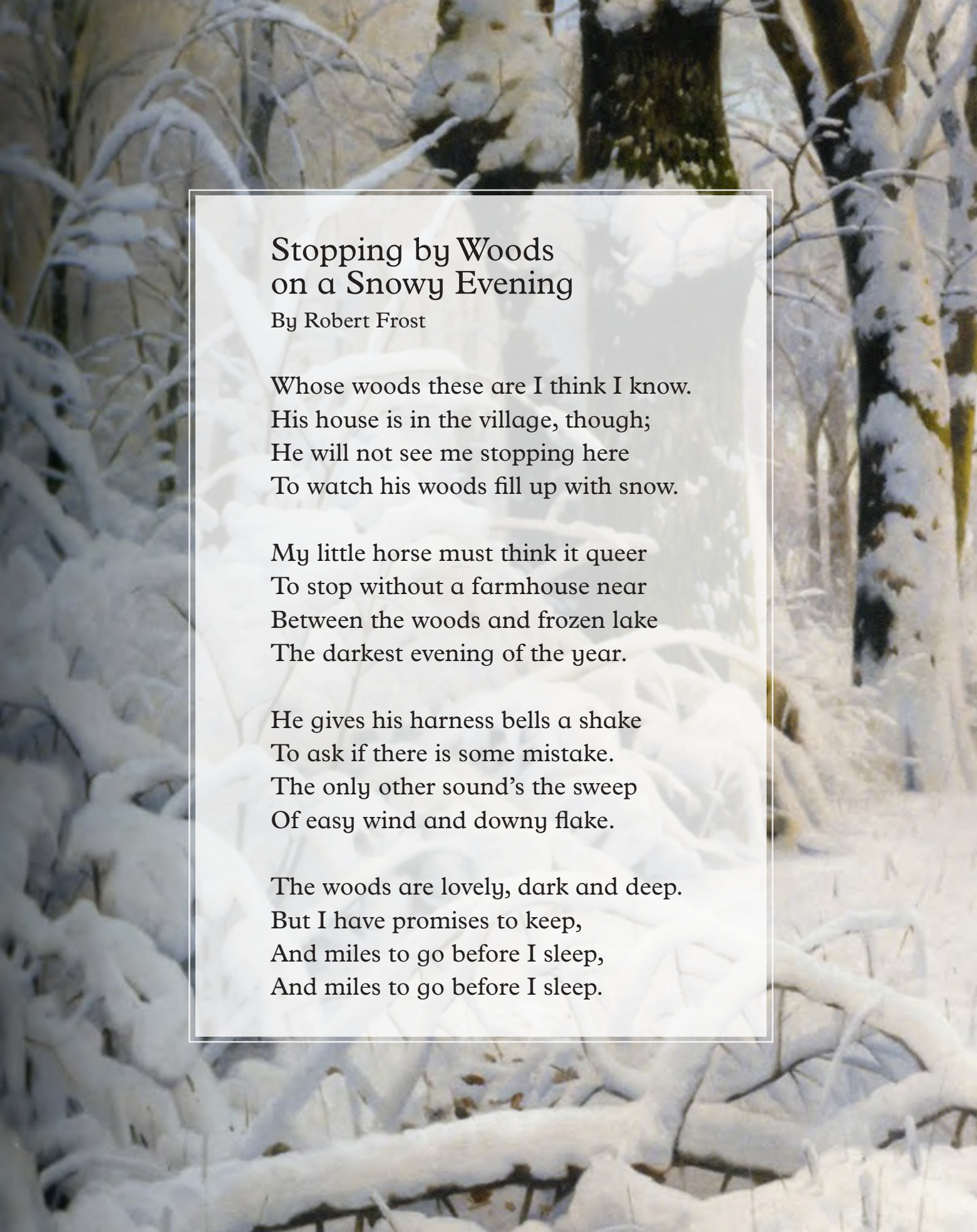
The Sugar-Plum Tree

by Eugene Field

Have you ever heard of the Sugar-Plum Tree?
'Tis a marvel of great renown!
It blooms on the shore of the Lollypop Sea
In the garden of Shut-Eye Town;
The fruit that it bears is so wondrously sweet
(As those who have tasted it say)
That good little children have only to eat
Of that fruit to be happy next day.







Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening

By Robert Frost

Whose woods these are I think I know.
His house is in the village, though;
He will not see me stopping here
To watch his woods fill up with snow.

My little horse must think it queer
To stop without a farmhouse near
Between the woods and frozen lake
The darkest evening of the year.

He gives his harness bells a shake
To ask if there is some mistake.
The only other sound's the sweep
Of easy wind and downy flake.

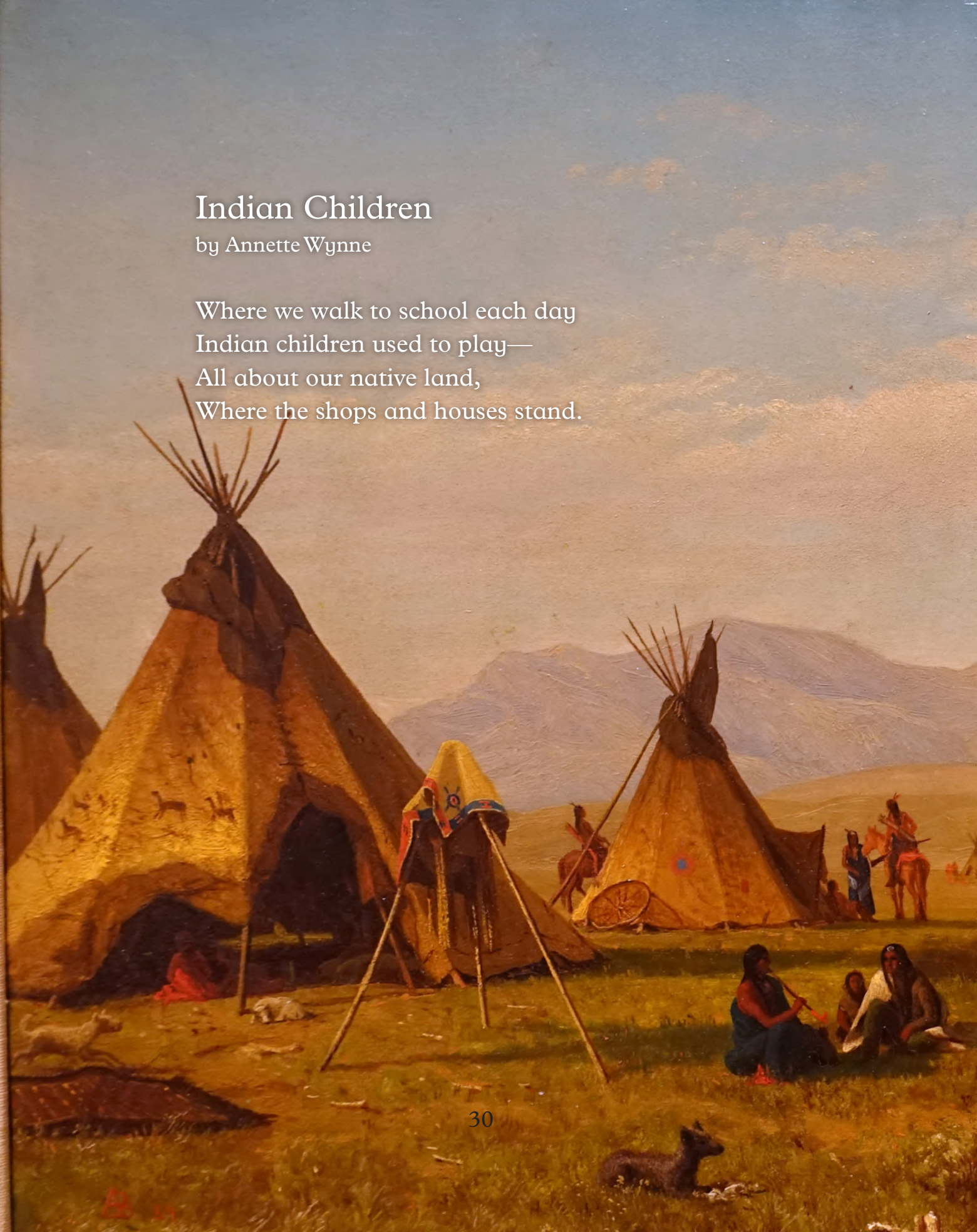
The woods are lovely, dark and deep.
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep.





Native Americans





Indian Children

by Annette Wynne

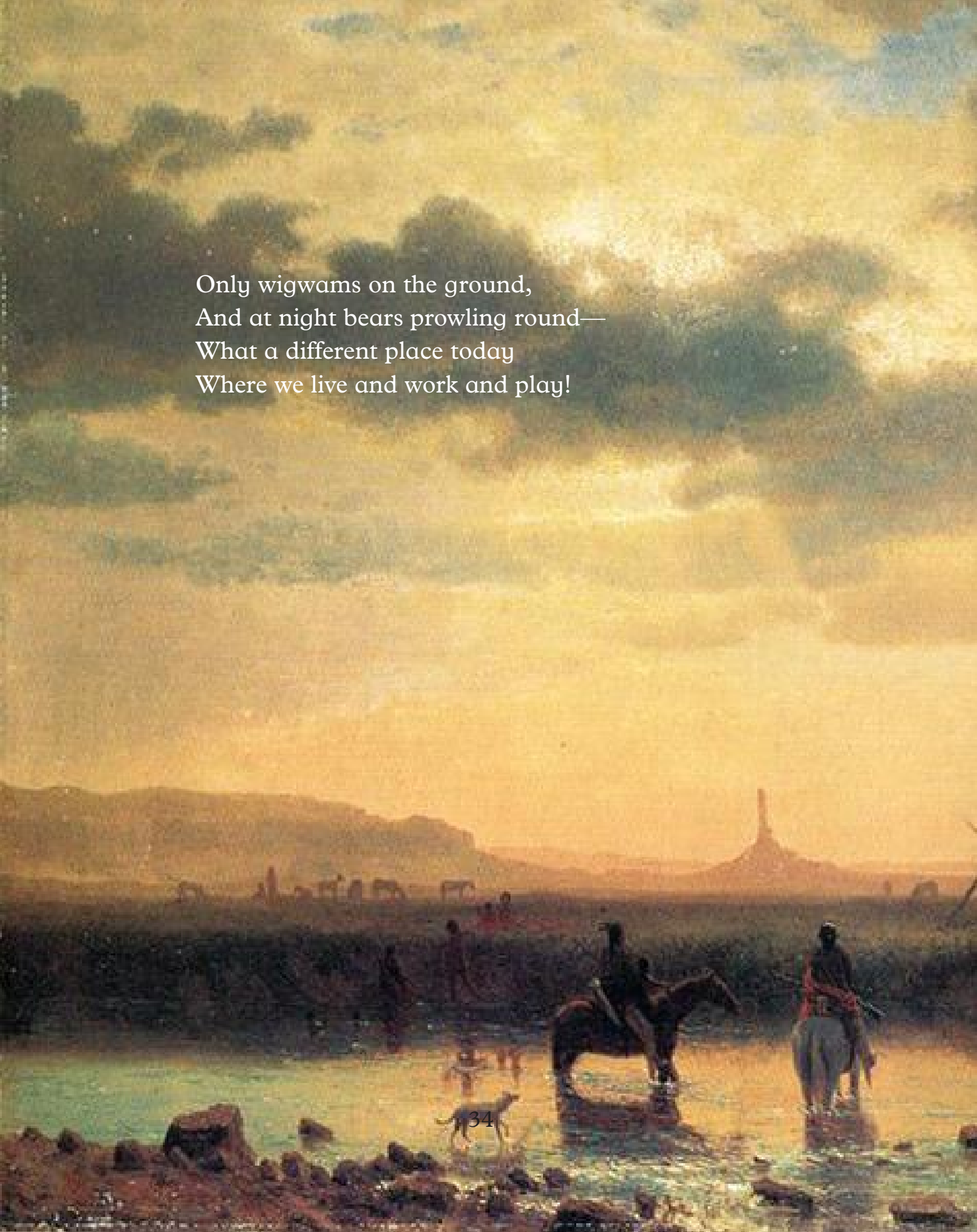
Where we walk to school each day
Indian children used to play—
All about our native land,
Where the shops and houses stand.





And the trees were very tall,
And there were no streets at all,
Not a church and not a steeple—
Only woods and Indian people.





Only wigwams on the ground,
And at night bears prowling round—
What a different place today
Where we live and work and play!





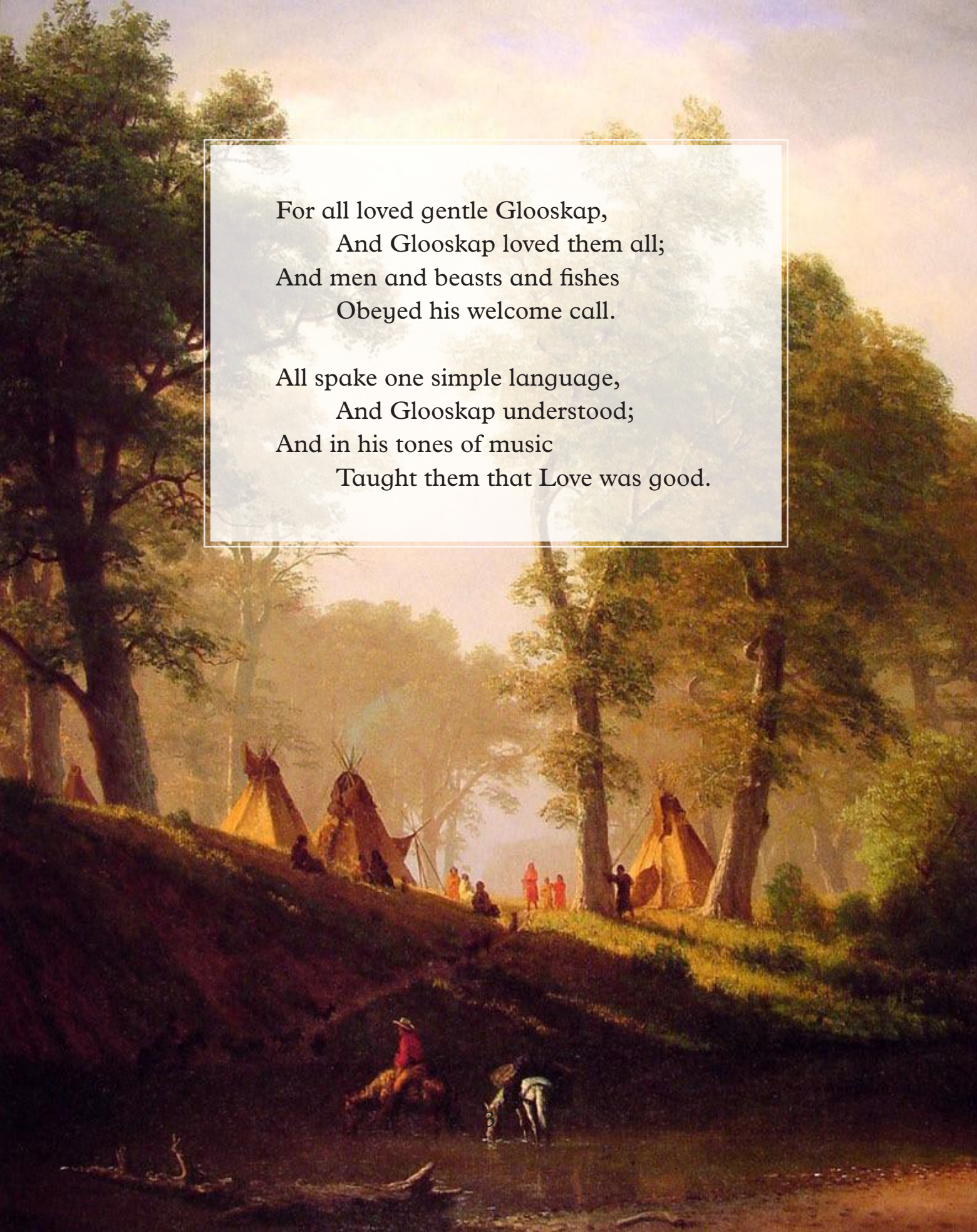
The Story of Glooskap

Long, long ago there was a tribe of Indians known as the Micmacs. The god of the Micmacs was Glooskap, and he taught them many wise things. He was kind to all the animals of the forest, to the birds of the air, and to the fish of the sea, and they all trusted him and would come at his call. He taught the Indians to be kind to animals, too, so that they lived together without hurting each other.

Here is a little poem about those times:

In the primeval forest,
    In the old happy days,
The men and beasts lived peacefully
    Among the woodland ways;—

The forest knew no spoiler,
    No timid beast or bird
Knew fang or spear or arrow;
    No cry of pain was heard;—



For all loved gentle Glooskap,
And Glooskap loved them all;
And men and beasts and fishes
Obeyed his welcome call.

All spake one simple language,
And Glooskap understood;
And in his tones of music
Taught them that Love was good.

Under his wise teaching they all lived very happily, and both man and animal had plenty to eat. Wherever Glooskap walked, flowers sprang up at his feet.

Glooskap was sad when, by and by, some of the tribe starting hurting each other and began to hunt and slay the animals. At last he left them.

But some day, when men live at peace with each other, Glooskap said he would return again to dwell among them forever.





The Friendly Indians

When Mary Stone was a little girl, she lived in a log cabin in Wisconsin. The forest was all around the cabin, and in the forest were many Indians. Mary's mother told her never to go to the forest alone, because the Indians were there.

One day, Mary and her little brother were playing together under the trees. Suddenly they saw six tall Indians coming toward them. Mary and her brother hid behind trees and watched the Indians go past.

"They are surely going to our house," she whispered softly to her brother.

"We must run down the shorter path, and tell mother they are coming."

The children ran through the forest and reached the cabin before the Indians.

"Mother, the Indians are coming!" they cried.

If the mother was badly frightened, she did not show it.

"Just be quiet, and all will be well," she said. Then she hurried to prepare dinner.





When the Indians came, they had a fine dinner. They stayed all day. When night came they went home with their hands full of presents.

For a time the Indians did not come again. Then, one day, Mary saw them coming across the snow.

"What can we do?" cried the mother. "We are so poor that I can give them nothing. They will be very angry."

Just then the tallest Indian knocked on the door. Mrs. Stone lifted the latch and the Indians walked in.

They said nothing, but walked over to the fire to warm their cold hands. Then they went away again.

After they were gone, the children found a big bundle outside the door.

They brought it in and opened it. Inside were moccasins and snow shoes, warm furs, and best of all, dry corn and deer's meat for the hungry family.





Hiawatha

by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow wrote a poem about a little Indian boy. His name was Hiawatha. He lived in the forest with his old grandmother, Nokomis.

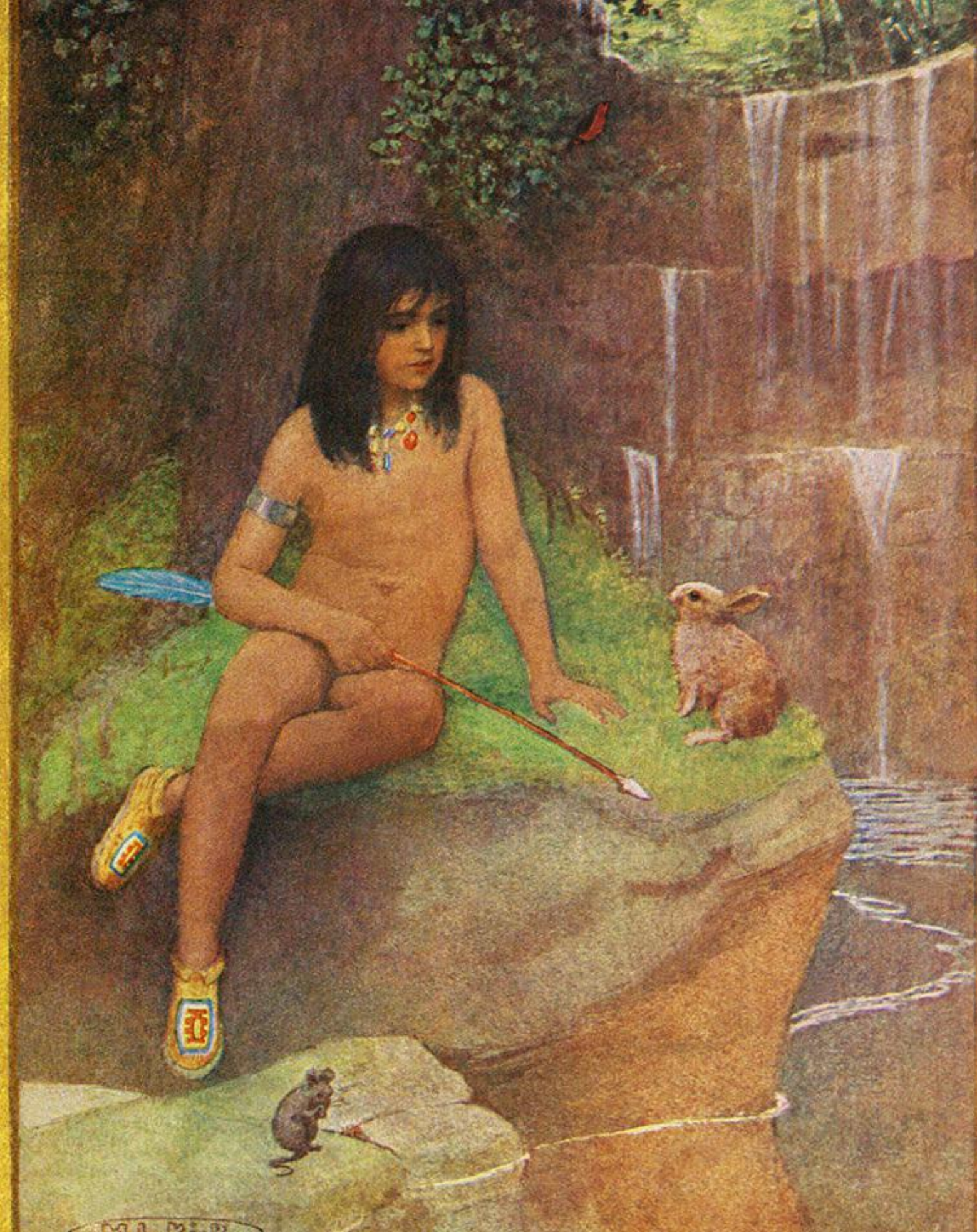
He lived out of doors all day long. In the summer evenings the old grandmother and the little boy sat in the doorway of their wigwam.

Then Nokomis told Hiawatha stories about the meadow flowers. She told him about the winds and the stars. She taught him to chase the fire-flies and sing:

"Little, flitting, white-fire insect,
Little, dancing, white-fire creature,
Light me with your little candle,
Ere upon my bed I lay me,
Ere in sleep I close my eyelids!"

Then the little boy fell asleep and Nokomis
"Rocked him in his linden cradle,
Bedded soft in moss and rushes."







"Then the little Hiawatha
Learned of every bird its language,
Learned their names and all their secrets,
How they built their nests in summer,
Where they hid themselves in winter,
Talked with them whene'er he met them,
Called them 'Hiawatha's Chickens.'

"Of all beasts he learned the language,
Learned their names and all their secrets,
How the beavers built their lodges,
Where the squirrels hid their acorns,
How the reindeer ran so swiftly,
Why the rabbit was so timid,
Talked with them whene'er he met them,
Called them 'Hiawatha's Brothers.'"





Hiawatha grew to be a fine young man. He learned to do everything that other Indian men could do.

He made a canoe from the bark of birch trees. He sailed alone over streams and lakes. He saw the fish swimming in the clear water below him.

He was strong and brave and Indian people loved him. He taught them to clear the forests. He showed them how to plant corn and rice.

Best of all, Hiawatha taught the Indian people to forget the war song and to live in peace with each other.









One day he told his people he must leave them.

"I am going, O my people,
On a long and distant journey;
Many moons and many winters
Will have come and will have vanished,
Ere I come again to see you.
But my guests I leave behind me;
Listen to their words of wisdom.
Listen to the truth they tell you.
For the Master of Life has sent them
From the land of light and morning!"

Thus departed Hiawatha,
Hiawatha the Beloved,
In the glory of the sunset,
In the purple mists of evening…





Arabia



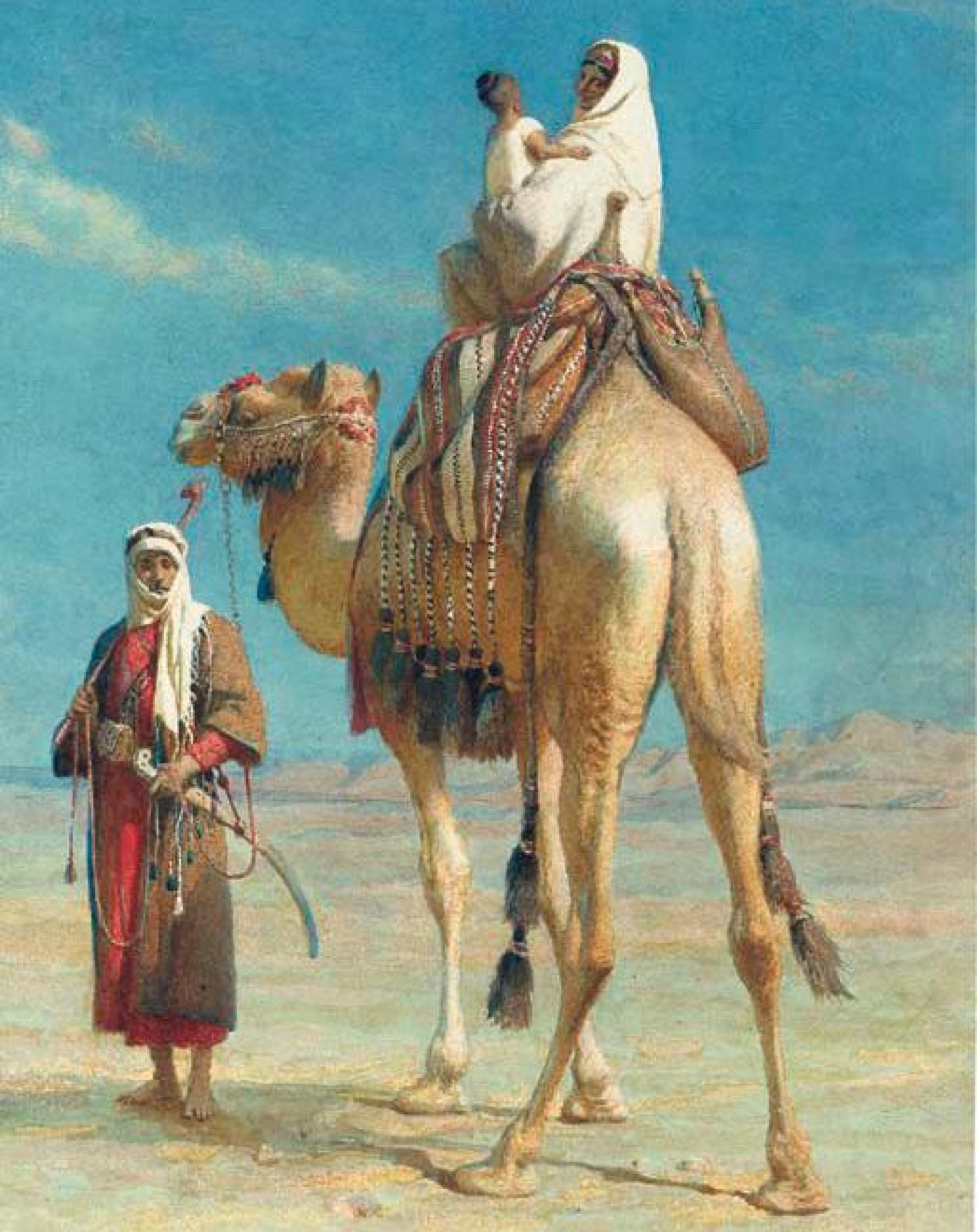


A Little Arab of Long Ago

I am an Arab boy. My home is in a warm country. I live in a tent. The tent is made of skins. At night I can hear the lions roar. I am not afraid because they are far away. They are afraid of the fire.

I can ride on horseback. All the little Arab boys can ride. My father has many fine horses. We have a great many goats. They give us milk. I like to drink it very much.

Did you ever see a camel? I often ride one.



Arabian Nights

There was once a king who did a very wicked thing. Every day he married a new wife. And the very next day, he took away the life of his new wife before she could do anything to hurt him or make him sad or mad.

One day a beautiful woman named Scheherazade came to be with the king. Her father was afraid and did not want her to go. But she had a plan. She had read many books. She had learned many poems by heart. She knew a thousand stories!

That first night, the king lay awake while he listened with awe to her first story. But she stopped in the middle before the story was finished. The king asked her to finish, but she said it was almost day and there was no time. So he spared her life for one more day so she could finish the story the next night.

The next night, she finished the story, but then began an even more exciting tale. And again, she stopped before the story was finished. And again, the king spared her life for one more day so that she could finish the story the next night.

At the end of 1,001 nights, and 1,000 stories, Scheherazade told the king she had no more stories to tell him. By now the king had fallen in love with her and made her his queen.

One of the stories she told is the story of Aladdin. Do you remember the story?





Aladdin was a little boy. He had no father. His mother was good to him. Aladdin played all day.

One day a strange man came up to him.

"How do you do, Aladdin," said he.

"Who are you?" asked Aladdin.

"I am your uncle," said the man.

The man gave Aladdin some gold. Then he said, "I shall come to eat supper with you tonight."

Aladdin ran home. He gave the gold to his mother.

She said, "Aladdin, you have no uncle."

The strange man was not Aladdin's uncle. He was a bad magician. The magician came to supper that night.

In the morning Aladdin went for a walk with the magician. They walked and they walked. At last they sat down. The magician made a fire and said something to the fire.

There was a black cave under him. The magician made Aladdin go into the cave. Aladdin was to get a strange lamp. Aladdin did not like to go.

When Aladdin came back the magician asked for the lamp.

"You may have the lamp," said Aladdin, "when I get out of the cave."

The magician said something and the cave closed up! Where was Aladdin?

It was as black as night in the cave. Aladdin rubbed the lamp a little. There stood a man!

"Who are you?" cried Aladdin.

"I am the slave of the lamp. Ask what you will."

"Then take me home," said Aladdin.

Aladdin was home as quick as that! He had the strange lamp with him, too!

Aladdin had many adventures with this strange lamp that you can read about in a book called Arabian Nights.



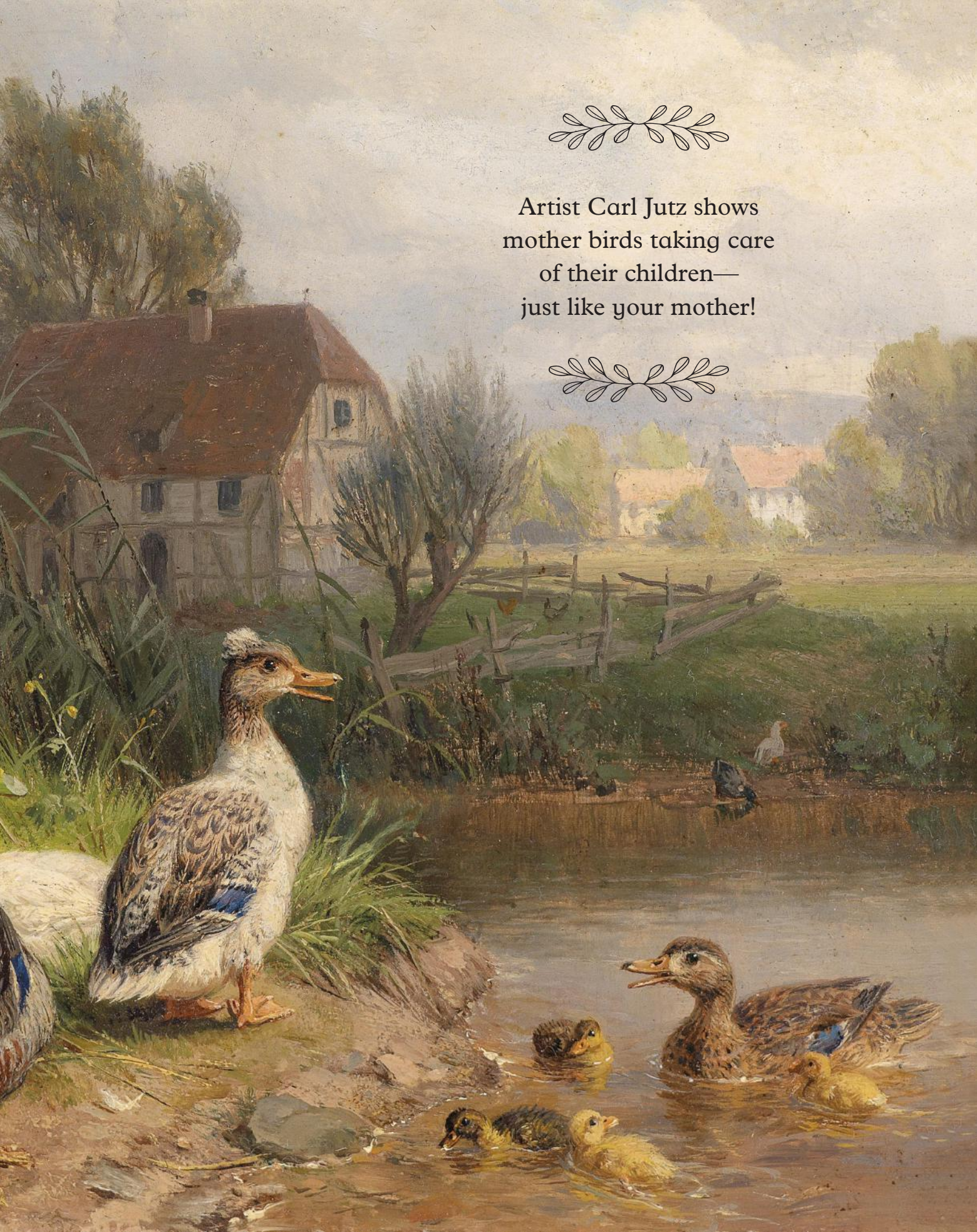


Birds



Cock crows in the morn
To tell us to rise,
And he who lies late
Will never be wise.
For early to bed,
And early to rise,
Is the way to be healthy
And wealthy and wise.





Artist Carl Jutz shows
mother birds taking care
of their children—
just like your mother!














Jules Breton

A Song

by James Whitcomb Riley

There is ever a song somewhere, my dear;
There is ever a something sings alway:
There's the song of the lark when the skies are clear,
And the song of the thrush when the skies are gray.
The sunshine showers across the grain,
And the bluebird trills in the orchard tree;
And in and out when the eaves drip rain,
The swallows are twittering ceaselessly.

There is ever a song somewhere, my dear,
Be the skies above or dark or fair,
There is ever a song that our hearts may hear—
There is ever a song somewhere, my dear—
There is ever a song somewhere.



Little Birdie

by Alfred Tennyson

What does little birdie say,
In her nest at peep of day,
"Let me fly," says little birdie;
"Mother, let me fly away."
"Birdie, rest a little longer,
Till the little wings are stronger."
So she rests a little longer,
Then she flies away.

What does little baby say,
In her bed at peep of day?
Baby says, like little birdie,
"Let me rise and fly away."
"Baby, sleep a little longer,
Till the little limbs are stronger."
If she sleeps a little longer,
Baby, too, shall fly away.









What Robin Told

How do robins build their nests?
Robin Redbreast told me.
First a wisp of amber hay
In a pretty round they lay;
Then some shreds of downy floss,
Feathers, too, and bits of moss,
Woven with a sweet, sweet song,
This way, that way, and across,
That's what robin told me.

Where do the robins hide their nests?
Robin Redbreast told me.
Up among the leaves so deep,
Where the sunbeams rarely creep;
Long before the winds are cold,
Long before the leaves are gold,
Bright-eyed stars will peep and see
Baby robins, one, two, three;
That's what robin told me.



The North Wind Doth Blow

The north wind doth blow,
And we shall have snow,
And what will the robin do then?
Poor thing!

He will sit in the barn,
And keep himself warm,
And hide his head under his wing.
Poor thing!





The Emperor's Bird's Nest

All the boys and girls of Spain knew about Emperor Charles and the brave little bird that built a nest on the Emperor's tent. They may have told the story to Longfellow when he was traveling in Spain. He told the story in a poem. This is the story.

Emperor Charles lived in Spain many years ago. One cold, rainy spring he marched with a large army against the French people. The Emperor's soldiers set up their tents in an old town in Flanders.

One day when the soldiers were guarding the Emperor's tent, what do you suppose they saw?

Why, on the top of the tent was a little bird's nest. A tiny swallow had made her home there.

Day after day she had gathered bits of straw and horse hair. From these odd bits she had made a snug little nest on the top of the Emperor's tent.

Around her was the sound of guns and the tramps of soldiers, but the swallow was not afraid.

When the Emperor heard what the shy little bird had done, he was very much pleased. "The swallow is my guest," he said. "Let no hand hurt her."

So the little swallow stayed on day after day.

In her nest were several tiny eggs. The Emperor knew they were there and that was why he said, "Let no hand hurt the swallow."

At last the time came for the army to go away. The soldiers took down their tents and made ready to march.

Everything was ready except the Emperor's tent. Emperor Charles thought of the little bird's home on the top of his tent, and of the tiny swallows that were too small to take care of themselves.

He said to his officers, "Leave my tent standing."

So the Spanish army went away and left the Emperor's tent standing alone on the great battlefield.

There were holes in the sides of the tent where the bullets had torn it. Sometimes the wind nearly blew it down.

But the mother bird lived there until her little family had grown up, when they all flew way to make homes of their own.




Come to me, O ye children!
And whisper in my ear
What the birds and the winds are singing
In your sunny atmosphere.
Henry Wadsworth Longfellow



Chorus of Birds

Every flutter of the wing,
Every note of song we sing,
Every murmur, every tone
Is of love, and love alone.



Answer to a Child's Question

by Samuel Taylor Coleridge

Do you ask what the birds say? The sparrow, the dove,
The linnet and thrush say, "I love and I love!"
In the winter they're silent—the wind is so strong;
What it says, I don't know; but it sings a loud song.
But green leaves, and blossoms, and sunny warm weather,
And singing, and loving—all come back together.
But the lark is so brimful of gladness and love,
The green fields below him, the blue sky above,
That he sings, and he sings; and forever sings he—
"I love my Love, and my Love loves me!"







The Bird's Song

A little bird with feathers brown,
Sat singing on a tree;
His song was very soft and low,
But sweet as it could be.



And all the people passing by,
Looked up to see the bird
Whose singing was the sweetest
That ever they had heard.

But all the bright eyes looked in vain,
For birdie was so small;
And with a modest dark brown coat,
He made no show at all.

"Papa, dear," little Gracie said,
"Where can this birdie be?
If I could only sing like that
I'd sit where folks could see."

"I hope my little girl will learn
A lesson from that bird,
And try to do what good she can–
Not to be seen or heard.

"This birdie is content to sit
Unnoticed by the way;
And sweetly sing his Maker's praise,
From dawn to close of day."





The Cheerful Robins

The clouds had been heavy
And dark all day;
I had looked for the sun in vain;
But sweet and clear
In the maple near
The robins sang in the rain.

Ah, boys and girls
Who sit and sigh
And of dreary days complain!
In cloud and sun,
Work bravely on—
The robins sing in the rain.







Beautiful hands are they that do
Things that are noble, good and true.



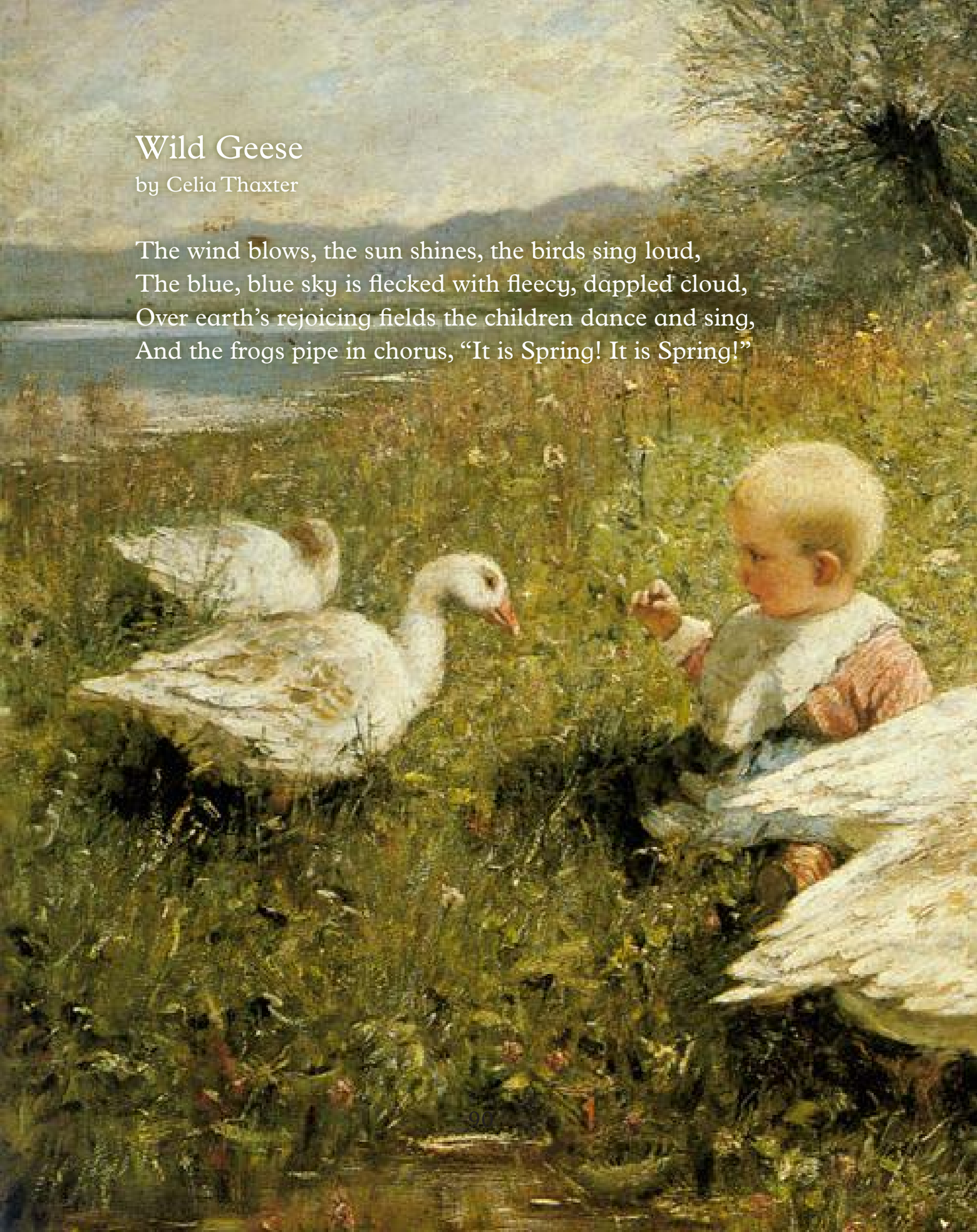
Celia Thaxter

When Celia Thaxter was five years old, her father brought his family to live on some islands where he worked as a lighthouse keeper. When summer came, Celia and her two brothers had long hours of play out of doors. They loved to watch the clouds and the ocean.

But most of all, Celia loved the birds. She knew how to make friends with them. She talked with them as if they were children. She never forgot these little friends and when she grew to be a woman she wrote many poems about them.







Wild Geese

by Celia Thaxter

The wind blows, the sun shines, the birds sing loud,
The blue, blue sky is flecked with fleecy, dappled cloud,
Over earth's rejoicing fields the children dance and sing,
And the frogs pipe in chorus, "It is Spring! It is Spring!"










A KOESTER



The End of the Day

The birdie has gone to its nest,
And baby must go to her bed,
For the sun has sunk down in the west,
In curtains of purple and red.

Yes, this is the end of the day,
The lambs are asleep in the dew;
So baby must leave off her play,
And go to her little bed, too.



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