

MY BOOK of DELIGHTS

Book Four

Compiled by Marlene Peterson

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Libraries of Hope

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Libraries of Hope, Inc. Appomattox, Virginia 24522

Website: www.librariesofhope.com
Email: librariesofhope@gmail.com

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Ancient Greece





Aesop

A long, long time ago–over two thousand years ago!–there lived a wonderful story teller by the name of Aesop. He was a poor, homely boy and his father and mother were slaves. Aesop studied and thought until he became very wise and very famous for his learning. People loved listening to his stories, and he wished to teach a lesson with each story.

He was such a clever storyteller, his master gave him his freedom, and he traveled through many countries talking with wise men and learning all that he could.

He didn't write his stories down, but they were told so often that people remembered them. Finally, they were written down and studied by the boys and girls of Greece. One of the first books made after the invention of the printing press was a collection of Aesop's fables, printed in 1475 in Italy.

They have traveled a long time to reach you, haven't they?

The Mouse and the Lion

Aesop

One warm day a great lion lay asleep near his den.

A little mouse played near by.

At last he ran over the lion's paws, and the lion caught him.

"Do not harm me, Mr. Lion," the mouse said. "Let me go now and sometime I may be of help to you."

The old lion laughed. "How can such a little thing ever be of any help to me?" he said.

But he set the little mouse free.

Not long after this, some men caught the lion.

They tied him with strong ropes and then went away for awhile.

When the lion found that he was tied fast, he roared and roared.

The little mouse heard him and ran for him.

When he saw how the lion was caught, he began to gnaw the ropes.

At last he set the lion free.

"Once you laughed at me," he said. "Now you see a little mouse may help a great lion, after all."





The City Mouse and the Country Mouse

Aesop

Once there was a little mouse that lived in the city. And once there was a little mouse that lived in the country.

One day the city mouse went to visit the country mouse. The two mice ran and played til they were hungry.

Then they went into the garden to find something

to eat. They found all the seeds and corn they wanted to eat. And they found all the fresh water they wanted to drink. The country mouse thought this was enough and he was very happy.

But the city mouse said, "Do you ever have anything but seeds and corn to eat? Come to the city and visit me. I live in a big house. I will show you what good things I have to eat."

So the two mice started for the city.

They ran straight to the fine big house where the city mouse lived. They found bread to eat. They found cake to eat. They found all kinds of good things.

"How fine this is!" thought the country mouse. "I wish I lived in the city."

But just then a man came into the room. The little mice were very frightened. They hid behind a big chair. Soon the man went away, and the mice began eating again.

They had taken only one bite when a cat and her kittens ran into the room. How frightened the poor little country mouse was!

"Good-by, my friend," said the country mouse. "I must be going home now. I am afraid to stay here. You have good things to eat. And you have a fine house to live in. But I am happy to have only corn and seeds, for I never have anything to frighten me."

The Tortoise and the Hare

Aesop

One day a Hare was making fun of a Tortoise. "How slow you go," said the Hare. "I do not see how you can ever get anywhere! Now, I can run as fast as the wind. You ought to see me run."

"Will you run a race with me?" asked the Tortoise. "I think I can beat you."

"Ha! Ha! That is a good joke," said the Hare. "I could dance around you all the way."

"Do not boast until you have beaten," answered the Tortoise. "Shall we race?"

"Yes, indeed!" said the Hare. "And we will ask the Fox to mark the course and to give the prize."

The fox was very wise and fair. He showed them where to start and how far to run.

The Hare started off like the wind, but he wanted to show the Tortoise that he did not need to hurry, so he lay down under a bush and went to sleep.

The Tortoise crept slowly on and on until he came to the end of the course. Just then the Hare awoke, but he found that he was too late to win the race.

"Slow and steady does it, you see," said the Fox.





The Boy and the Wolf

Aesop

A little boy was once sent to a field to look after some sheep.

His father said, "If a wolf comes into the field, you must cry, 'Wolf! Wolf!' The men who are at work in the next field will come and drive him away."

For many days no wolf came.
One day the little boy thought he would have some fun. He cried out, "O, help! a wolf! a wolf!"

The men ran to him at once. "Where, where is the wolf?" they cried.

The boy laughed. "O, I called you for fun," he said. "There is no wolf."

The men did not see any fun in this, and they went back to their work.

Two or three times the boy called to the men when there was no wolf.

At last a wolf did get into the field.

O, how the boy did cry then! "A wolf! O, help, help! A wolf is here!"

The men heard the boy; but they said, "O, he is making fun again!" So they did not run to help him.

The wolf killed some of the sheep and carried them off to his den.

The boy wished he had not called the men in fun.

King Midas and the Golden Touch

There once lived a king who was very fond of gold. He loved gold more than anything else in the world.

One day he was counting all his gold when a fairy stood in his doorway.

"You must be very happy, King Midas. You have all the gold you need."

"Oh!" said King Midas. "I don't have enough. I wish everything I touched turned to gold."

"You may have your wish," the fairy said.

The next morning, when the king woke up, he touched his bed, and it turned to gold.

He touched his clothes, and they turned to gold. He touched his glasses, and they turned to gold.

He ran out to his garden. He touched the roses. They turned to gold.

Soon his little girl, Marygold, came running to him. "Father, what has happened to my roses? They are yellow and stiff and ugly."

"Why, they are golden roses, child. Do you not think they are more beautiful now?"

"No," she sobbed, "they do not smell sweet. They won't grow anymore."

She threw a golden rose on the table and sat down to eat breakfast with her father.





But every time he tried to take a bite of his breakfast, it turned into a lump of gold as soon as it touched his lips.

"Father, what is happening?" cried little Marygold. She threw her arms about him, and he kissed her. Instead of his loving little girl, she was changed to a little golden statue.

Now the king sobbed.

Just then the fairy came back. "Are you happy, King Midas? You have all the gold you want."

"Happy? I am the most miserable man in the world. Take my gold, take all my gold, and give me back my little daughter. I've lost all that was worth having."

"You are wiser than you were, King Midas," said the fairy. "Go to the stream and fill a pitcher with water. Whatever you sprinkle with water will turn again to what it was before it changed to gold."

King Midas rushed through the garden to the stream. He hurried back to the house and sprinkled his dear Marygold with water.

Then he took her by the hand, and they went out into the garden, where he sprinkled the roses with water, and they became sweet and fair.

Never again did King Midas care for any gold except for the gold of the sunshine, and the gold of little Marygold's hair.



The Story of Demosthenes

Demosthenes is known as one of the greatest orators of all time. An orator is someone who speaks well.

When Demosthenes was a young boy, he could not talk very plainly and his friends made fun of him. Sometimes he would stutter and he couldn't say his r's right. But instead of crying or getting mad, he decided to do something about it. He made up his mind to learn how to speak so well that they could no longer laugh at him.

So he learned many poems, which he recited every day. He used to go down to a lonely spot on the seashore, where he would put some pebbles in his mouth, then try to recite so loud that his voice could be heard above the noise of the waves.

To make his lungs strong, he used to walk and run up hill, reciting as he went.

To help him learn how to say things well, he copied all the works of the great Greek historian, Thucydides, nine times!

He studied hard while his friends played. Later, whenever he stood to speak in public places in Athens, crowds listened open-mouthed to all he said. No one laughed at him ever again.

The Story of Diogenes

At Corinth, in Greece, there lived a very wise man whose name was Diogenes. Men came from all parts of the land to see him and hear him talk.

But wise as he was, he had some very strange ways. He said that no man needed much. And so he did not live in a house, but slept in a barrel, which he rolled about from place to place. He spent his days sitting in the sun, and saying wise things to those who were around him.

At noon one day, Diogenes was seen walking through the streets with a lighted lantern, and looking all around as if in search of something.

"Why do you carry a lantern when the sun is shining?" someone asked.

"I am looking for an honest man," answered Diogenes.

Do you think he found one?


J.L. GEROME - MDCCCLX



Ancient Rome & Italy





Cornelia and Her Jewels

One morning in a beautiful Roman garden, two brothers were playing among the flowers and trees. Cornelia, their mother, called the boys into the house, saying, "A friend is coming to lunch today. She will show us her jewels."

After the simple meal was over, a servant brought in a treasure chest of jewels, which the rich lady showed.

The boys gazed at those sparkling jewels– pearls, rubies, sapphires, and diamonds!

The younger boy whispered to his brother, "I wish our mother had beautiful jewels, too!"

Later, when the boys had gone out into the garden to play, the friend said, "Is it true, Cornelia, that you are so poor that you have no jewels?"

"Oh, no," answered Cornelia, "I have jewels that are far more precious than yours."

"Oh, let me see them," said the lady; "where are they?"

"If you care to see them I will bring them to you," said Cornelia.

Then, calling her boys to her side, she said, "These are my jewels! Are they not far more precious than your gems?"

When Cornelia's sons became the greatest and best men of Rome, they never forgot that day when they knew that they were their mother's pride and joy and love, dearer far to her than the jewels of the rich.

The Story of Cincinnatus

There was a man named Cincinnatus who lived on a little farm not far from the city of Rome. He had once been rich, and had held the highest office in the land, but now he was poor. He was so poor that he had to do all the work on his farm with his own hands.

Cincinnatus was so wise that everyone trusted him. When any one was in trouble, and did not know what to do, his friends would say,

"Go and tell Cincinnatus. He will help you."

Now, there came a time when a tribe of wild men said they would tear down the walls of Rome, burn the houses, and make slaves of the women and children. As they came closer, the people of Rome were afraid.

"What shall we do? Who is wise enough to lead us and save Rome?"

The answer came: "Send for Cincinnatus. He will help us."

When Cincinnatus heard, he left his plow standing where it was and hurried to the city. The people were told that they were to obey whatever he told them to do.

A few days later there was great joy in Rome. Cincinnatus had saved Rome.

He knew he could have made himself the king of Rome.

But, before the people could thank him for what he had done, he went back to his little farm and his plow.

He had been ruler of Rome for sixteen days.







The Story of Coriolanus

Coriolanus was a mighty Roman general. He did much to help Rome.

But one day, some things happened that made him very angry. He not only left Rome, he raised up an army to go back and do great harm to the people there. The people of Rome were afraid of him and didn't know what to do.

A group of senators was sent to beg him to not hurt them.

Coriolanus would not listen to them.

They tried a second time.

Coriolanus still would not listen to them.

Then they sent their priests.

Coriolanus would not listen to them.

Then they sent his mother, his wife and his children.

Coriolanus dearly loved his mother. Bursting into tears, he cried, "Mother, thou hast saved Rome."

The Bell of Atri

Long ago, in Atri, there was a tower close beside the city gate.

A great bell with a very long rope hung in this tower.

"This bell is for those in trouble," said the duke. "Even a child may ring it. When it rings, all Atri will come."

For many years the bell hung there, and very often it was rung.

At last the rope was so badly worn that it broke. In all Atri there was no rope long enough for this bell.

"What shall we do?" cried the men. "Some one may need to ring this bell."

Then one looked at the grapevines that climbed over the tower.

"Here is our new rope," he cried.

He took the vines and twisted them until he made a long, strong rope.

Then he fastened the rope to the bell.

That same day the bell was rung, and the people came running.

They found no one there, but a horse was



eating leaves from the new rope.

"Who rings the bell?" asked the duke.

"It is only a poor old white horse," said the people.

"Perhaps he needs help," said the duke. "Tell me about him."

"He belongs to the miser," said one.

When the horse was young, he carried his master on his back.

"Now that he is too old to do any work his master gives him no food at all. He is eating leaves from the rope."

"Ah," said the duke, "he did very well to ring the Bell of Atri. Bring the miser to me."

The old miser was badly frightened when he was told to come to the duke, but he could not say no.

"Is this your horse?" asked the duke.

"He was once, but I really do not care for him now," said the miser.

The duke frowned and shook his head.

"Give me your bag of gold," he said. "With this I shall build a warm stable. There your horse shall live in comfort for the rest of his life."

The miser looked around the place, but there

was no one to help him.

Very slowly he walked up to the duke and gave him the bag.

Then he turned and went to his home. He knew that the duke was right.

The old horse had rung the bell, and all Atri had come to help him.





The Story of Saint Valentine

Long ago there lived a priest by the name of Valentine. This good man was known in all the country round about for his kindness. He nursed the sick, cheered the sorrowing, and was always ready to help any one in trouble.

Father Valentine dearly loved the children, and those who went to him for food and clothes were never turned away.

After he became too old to go about among his people, he was very sad, because he thought he could no longer be of use.

Then he remembered that he could write them loving messages; and soon his friends began to watch for the kind words that were sure to come whenever they were in trouble.

Even little children would say when they were ill, "I think Father Valentine will send me a letter today."

But after a time no more letters came, and it was known that the good old priest was dead. Then every one said that such a good man should be called a saint; and from that day to this he has been known as Saint Valentine.

It was not long before people began sending loving messages to their friends; and the letters containing these messages were called valentines.

Good Saint Valentine died many years ago, but he is still remembered, for every year we remember the day he died on the fourteenth of February: Valentine's Day.



Be you to others kind and true,
As you'd have others be to you;
And neither do nor say to men
Whate'er you would not take again.







A Boy Who Spent Three Years in a Palace

When Michael Angelo was a little boy he thought more about drawing than of any other thing in all the world. His father sent him to school, but Michael Angelo did not like books and

would not study hard. He drew pictures on his books, instead. "I want to learn to draw," he would say to his father.

His father was angry at this. "I do not want you to be an artist, my son," he said. "Artists cannot earn much money, and I don't want you to become one."

Poor little Michael Angelo did not want much money. He only wanted to learn to draw well, and he could not get the idea out of his head.

"I would rather do this than any other thing," he told his father.

One day a great artist said he would teach him. At that time there lived a prince who loved beautiful statues. He said to the drawing teachers of the city, "Choose your two best pupils. Send them to study my fine statues. I will get a teacher to help them."

Michael Angelo was chosen! He was always glad to see beautiful things and to learn about them. One day he saw a young man modeling in clay. Michael Angelo thought he could like this work even better than drawing, and it was not long before he was working in clay, too.

One day he was making a faun's head. The

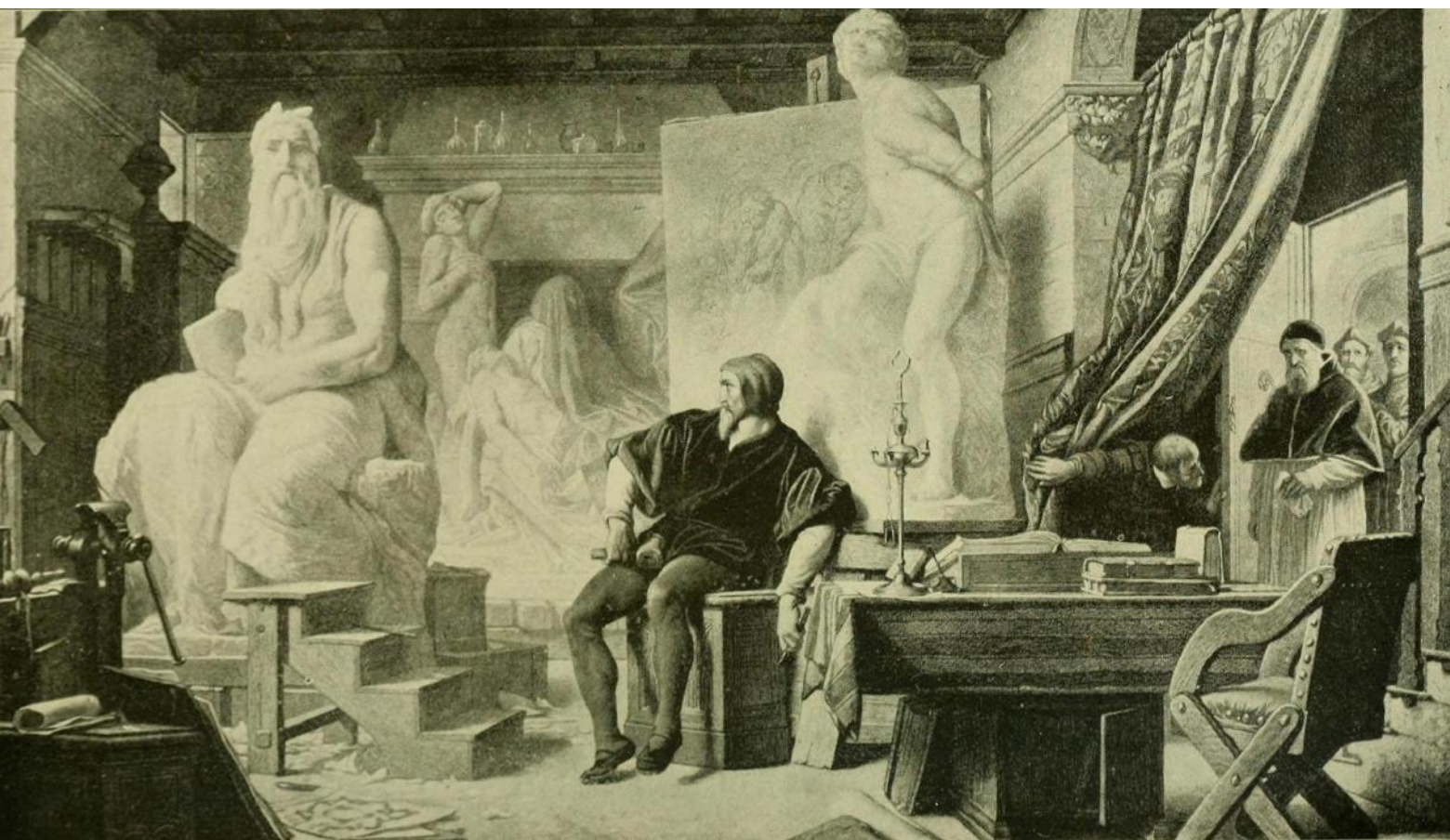
prince came along and saw him at work. “That is a fine head,” the prince said, “but you have made one mistake. The faun should have one tooth missing.”

When the prince came around a second time, the faun had one tooth less than it had had before.

The prince was much pleased. “My boy, I see that you are willing to learn. You may come and live with me in my palace. I will get you a teacher and you shall study with my three sons.”

For three years he worked in the palace, with princes for friends.

Michael Angelo became one of the greatest sculptors that has ever lived.





Leonardo da Vinci

When Leonardo da Vinci was seven years old, his father sent him away to school. He had tried to teach him lessons, but Leonardo wouldn't listen. He didn't like to listen at school, either. So it would happen that many a time, instead of going to school, he would slip away and escape up into

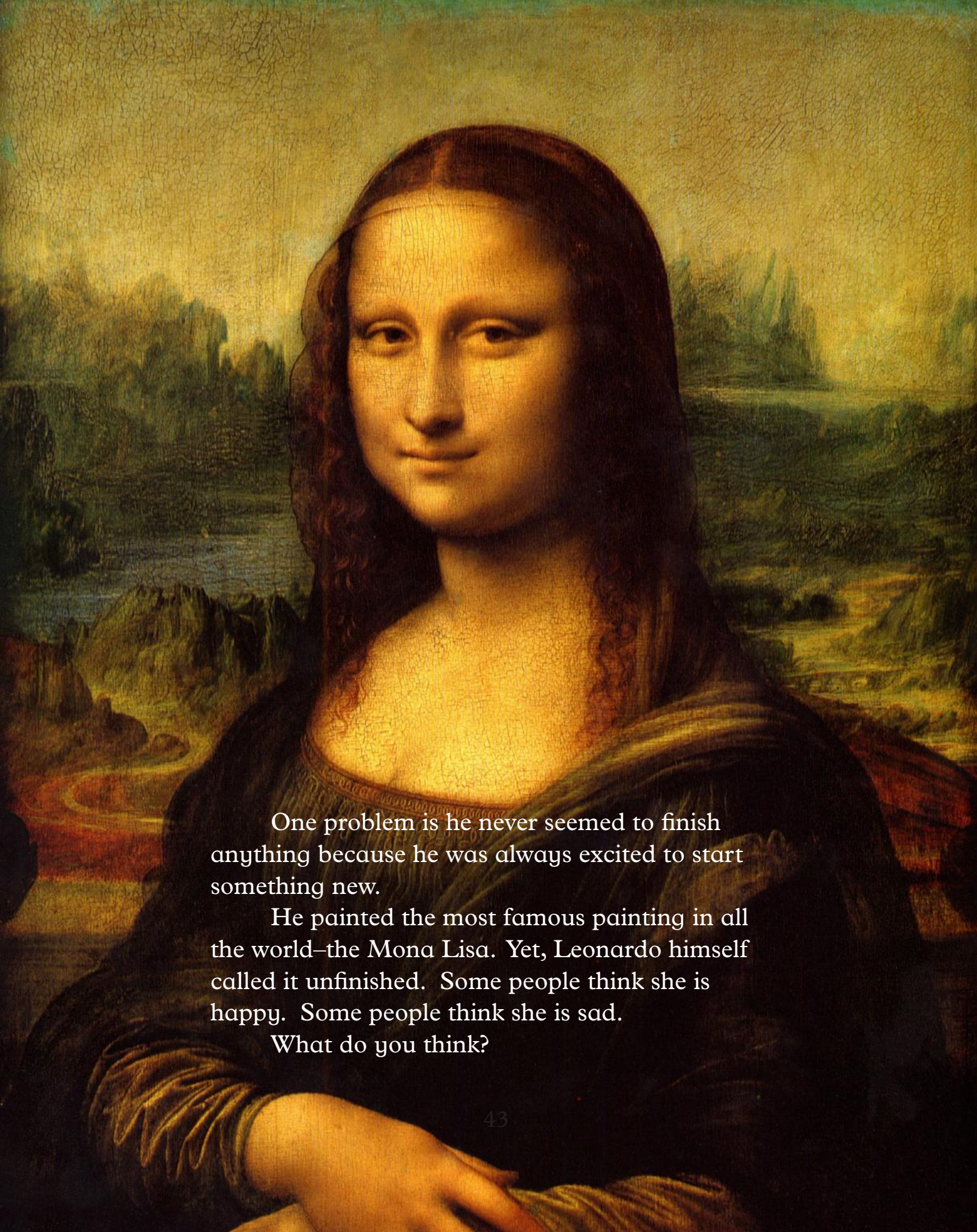
the hills, as happy as a little goat. Here was all the sweet, fresh air of heaven, instead of the stuffy schoolroom. Here were no cruel boys, but all the wild creatures that he loved.

Here he could learn the real things his heart was hungry to know, not merely words which meant nothing to him and seemed to lead nowhere.

For hours he would lie perfectly still with his heels in the air and his chin resting in his hands, as he watched a spider weaving its web. He loved to watch the butterflies, the fat buzzing bees, the green lizards. But above everything he loved the birds. Oh, if only he, too, could fly like the birds. What was the secret power in their wings? Surely by watching he might learn it. Sometimes it seemed as if his heart would burst with the longing to learn that secret. It was always the hidden reason of things he wanted to know.

When the sun began to sink he would turn sadly towards home, very hungry, with torn clothes and tired feet, but with a store of sunshine in his heart.

Leonardo never lost his desire to learn about everything! He was interested in invention, drawing, painting, sculpture, architecture, science, music, mathematics, engineering, literature, the human body, rocks, the stars, plants and map making.



One problem is he never seemed to finish anything because he was always excited to start something new.

He painted the most famous painting in all the world–the Mona Lisa. Yet, Leonardo himself called it unfinished. Some people think she is happy. Some people think she is sad.

What do you think?



The Story of Raphael

Raphael is one of the greatest painters in the world.

Raphael's father was his first drawing teacher. He taught him how to mix colors. He taught him how to care for his brushes.

By and by Raphael went to study with a great artist. Soon he did better work than his teacher.

Soon he was known far and wide. Everybody loved Raphael. He was always kind and pleasant. He did all he could to help other artists.

The king and queen were his friends. They asked him many times to come to the palace.

Whenever Raphael went to the palace to see the king and queen, many of his friends went with him. There were so many friends! They made a great parade! When the people saw this great parade, they knew that Raphael's friends loved him.

Raphael painted the walls of the king's palaces. He painted the walls of the great churches.

He painted many beautiful pictures of the Christ-Child and his Mother.

The most beautiful of all is "The Sistine Madonna."







The Sistine Madonna

A beautiful Mother! A beautiful Child!

This is the Christ-Child and his Mother. See the wonderful face of the Christ-Child! See the beautiful face of the Mother!

They are coming down from heaven to earth. See how the breeze fills out the Mother's scarf.

This picture was painted long ago.

Long ago people could not read the stories of the Christ-Child and his Mother. They had no books as we have today.

But one day the artists began to paint. They began to paint the stories of the Christ-Child and his Mother.

Sometimes they painted the story of his birthday.

Sometimes they painted the story of the gifts the Wise Men brought.

Sometimes they painted only the Child and his Mother.

These pictures were placed in the churches for all the people to see.

The people read the picture instead of a book. The picture taught them many things about the Child. It taught them many things about the



Mother, too.

In our picture the green curtains are drawn back. Now we may see the Mother and Child coming down to earth.

See the Child!

His eyes are wonderful. They are so large! They see so far! I think he sees all the children in the whole wide world!

His baby forehead rests against his mother's cheek. The two faces are almost side by side.

The mother is beautiful. Her eyes are large. She seems to see away, way off. Perhaps she, too, sees all the children in the whole wide world!

She wears a red dress. About her sleeve is a band of gold. She wears a white veil about her shoulders. Her long scarf is carried out like a sail.

Do you see the golden background? Do you see the angel faces about the Mother's head? Oh, yes! All the golden background is filled with angel faces!

They are singing songs of joy. They know this is the Christ-Child and His Mother!

The Christ-Child hears the singing. He listens to their song. The Mother seems to hear, too.

The angels must be singing about the wonderful Child and his Mother!



Sandro Botticelli

Sandro Botticelli also painted pictures of the Christ Child and His Mother.







Eugenio Zampighi liked to paint the happy family life of Italy. You will see mother, sister, brother, grandmother and grandfather. But someone is missing in his paintings. Where do you think he is?

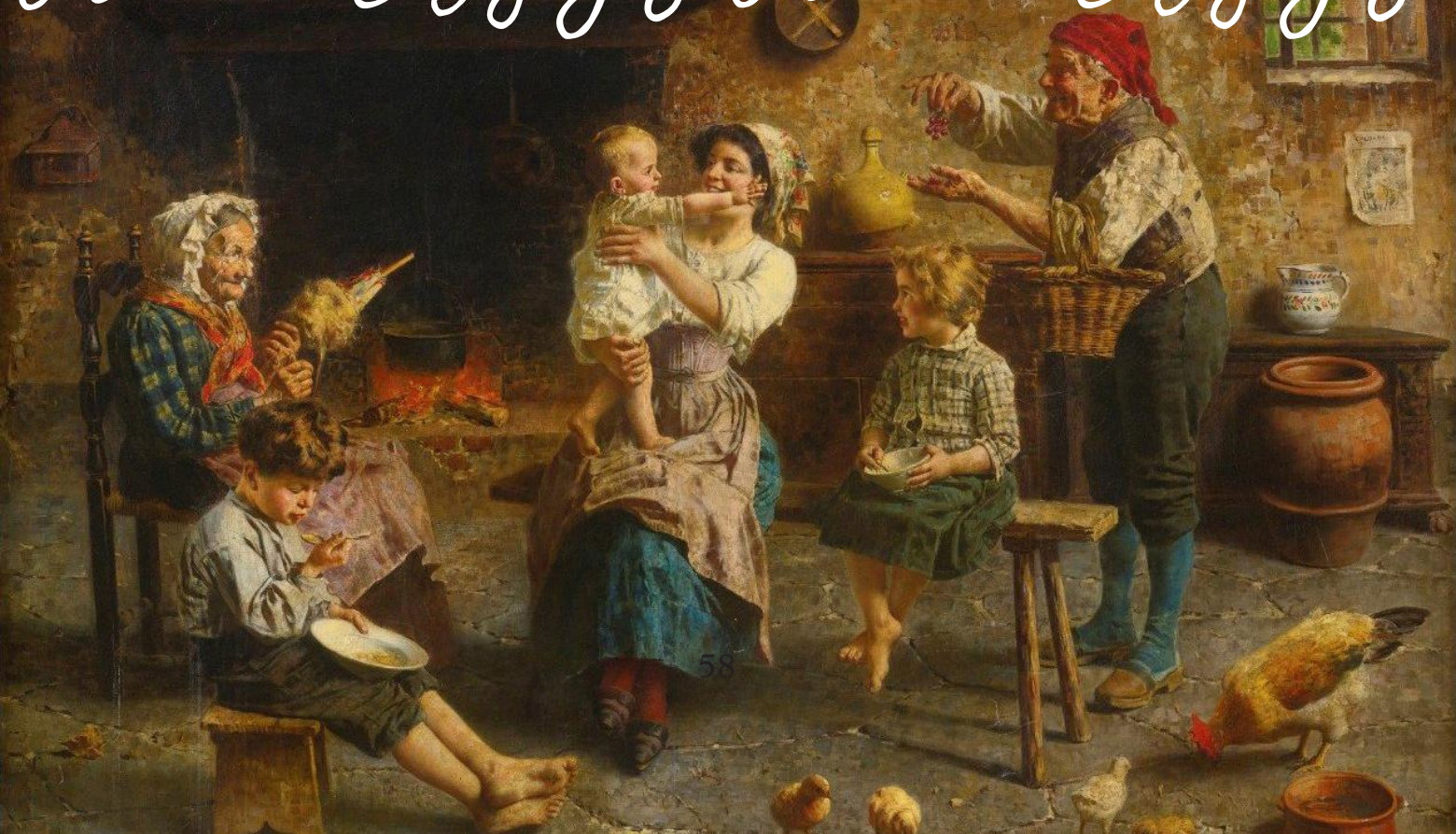







E. Zampighi










E. Zampighi



Be not overcome with evil,
But overcome evil with good.

Trees



The Egg in the Nest

There was a tree stood in the ground,
The prettiest tree you ever did see;
The tree in the wood and the wood in the ground,
And the green grass growing all around.

And on this tree there was a limb,
The prettiest limb you ever did see;
The limb on the tree, and the tree in the wood,
The tree in the wood, and the wood in the ground,
And the green grass growing all around.

And on this limb there was a bough,
the prettiest bough you ever did see;
The bough on the limb, and the limb on the tree,
The limb on the tree, and the tree in the wood,
The tree in the wood, and the wood in the ground,
And the green grass growing all around.

Now on this bough there was a nest,
And in the nest there were some eggs,
The prettiest eggs you ever did see;
Eggs in the nest, and the nest on the bough,
The bough on the limb, and the limb on the tree,
The limb on the tree, and the tree in the wood,
The tree in the wood, and the wood in the ground,
And the green grass growing all around,
And the green grass growing all around.




I think that I shall never see
A poem as lovely as a tree.



Who Loves the Trees Best?

Alice May Douglas

Who loves the trees best?
"I," said the Spring;
"Their leaves so lovely
To them I bring."





Children's May Song

Spring is coming, spring is coming,
Birdies, build your nest;
Weave together straw and feather,
Doing each your best.

Spring is coming, spring is coming,
Flowers are coming too;
Pansies, lilies, daffodillies,
Now are coming through.

Spring is coming, spring is coming,
All around is fair;
Shimmer and quiver on the river,
Joy is everywhere.


Who loves the trees best?
"I," Summer said;
"I give them blossoms,
White, yellow, red."

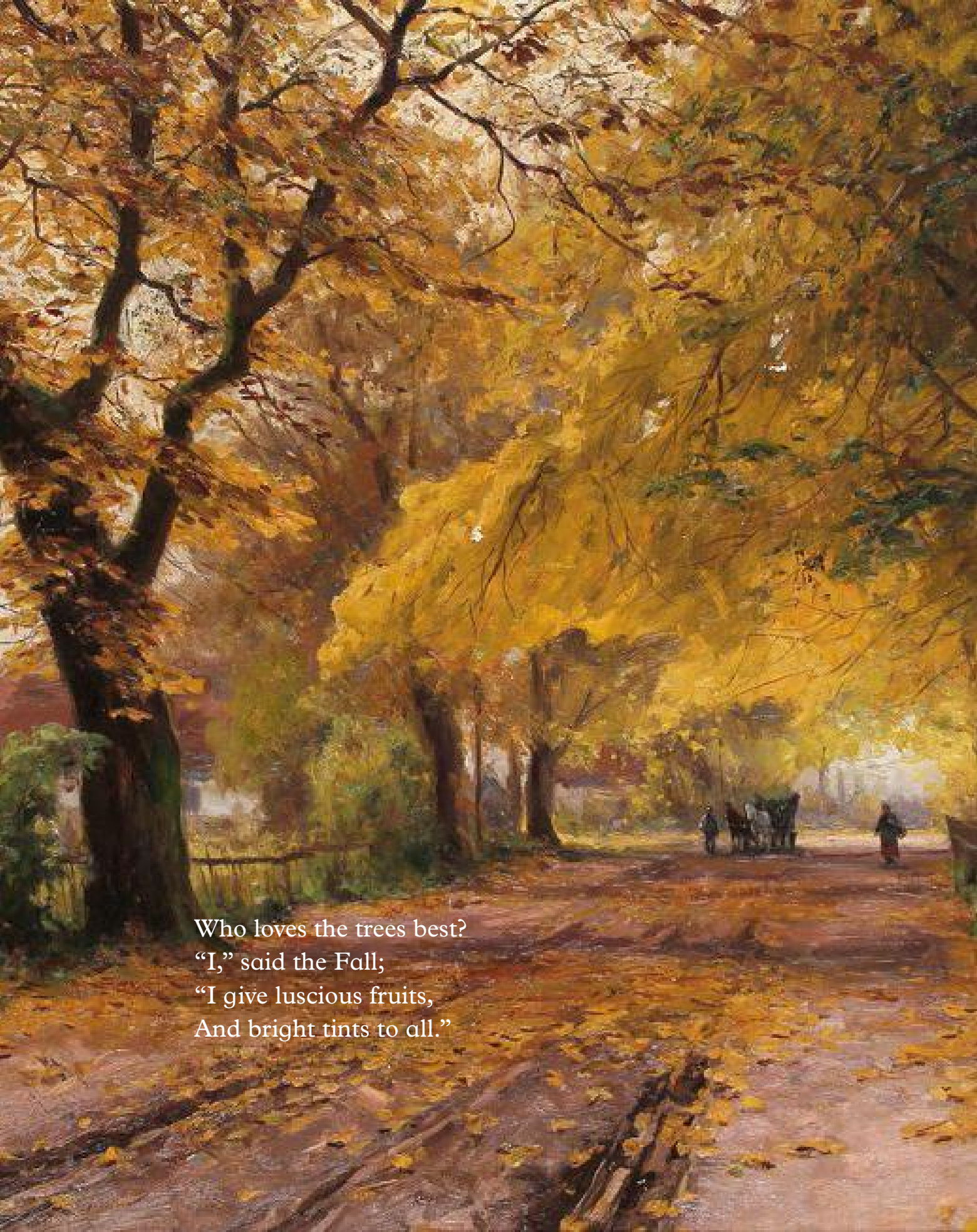


I love to see the summer beaming forth.
And white wool sack clouds sailing to the north.

John Clare







Who loves the trees best?
"I," said the Fall;
"I give luscious fruits,
And bright tints to all."







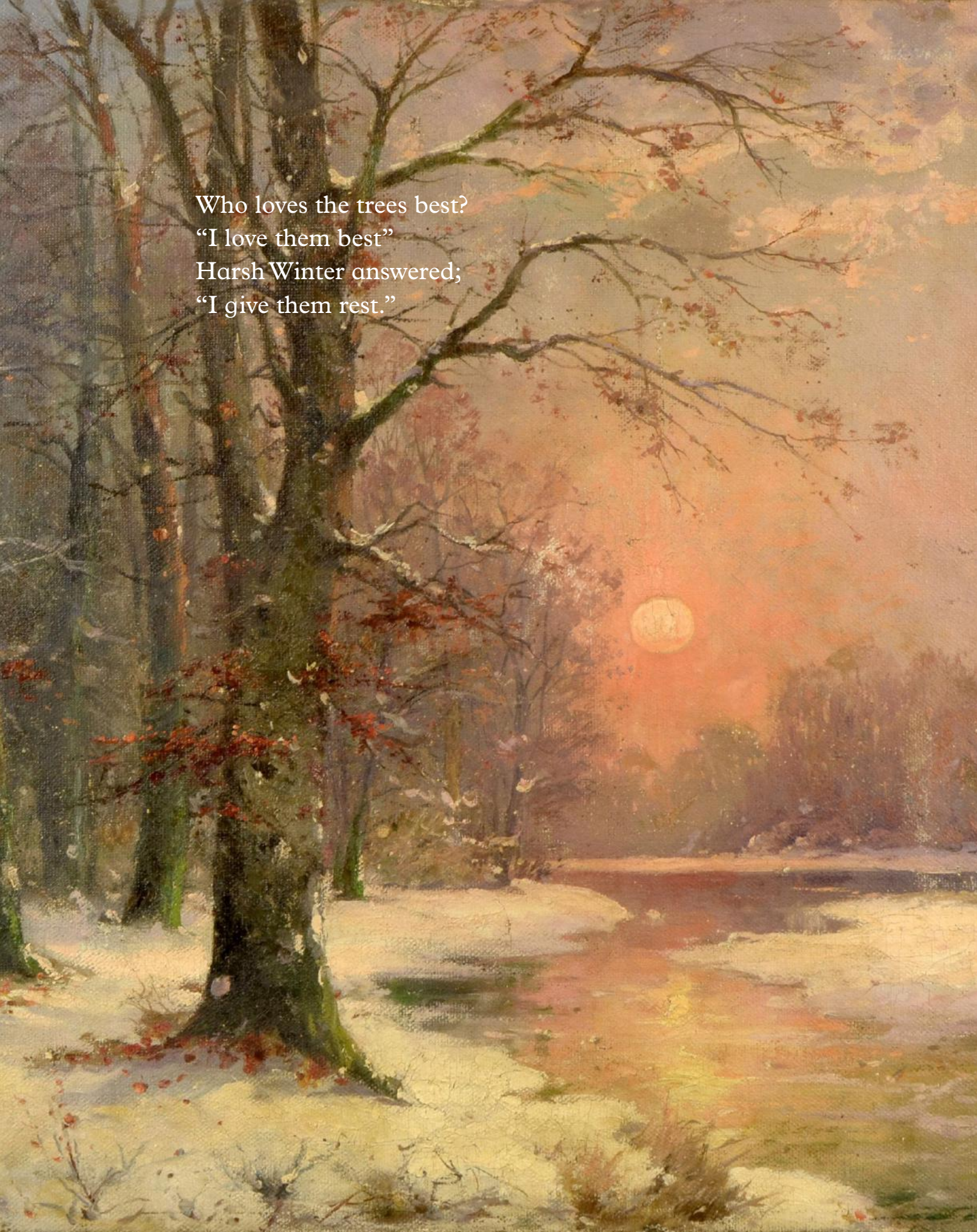
The Wind and the Leaves

by George Cooper

"Come, little leaves," said the wind one day,
"Come o'er the meadows with me and play;
Put on your dresses of red and gold,
Summer is gone and the days grow cold."

Dancing and flying the little leaves went;
Winter had called them, and they were content,
Soon fast asleep in their earthy beds,
The snow laid a coverlet over their heads.




Who loves the trees best?
"I love them best"
Harsh Winter answered;
"I give them rest."



Snowflakes

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Over the woodlands brown and bare,
Over the harvest-fields forsaken,
Silent, and soft, and slow
Descends the snow.

The Friendly Oak

It was almost time for winter to come. The little birds had all gone far away, for they were afraid of the cold.

There was no green grass in the fields, and there were no pretty flowers in the gardens. Many of the trees had dropped all their leaves. Cold winter, with its snow and ice, was coming.

At the foot of an old oak tree some sweet little violets were still in blossom. "Dear old oak," said they, "winter is coming; we are afraid that we shall die of the cold."

"Do not be afraid, little ones," said the oak;





“Close your yellow eyes in sleep, and trust to me. You have made me glad many a time with your sweetness. Now I will take care that the winter shall do you no harm.”

So the violets closed their eyes and went to sleep; they knew that they could trust the oak. And the great tree softly dropped red leaf after red leaf upon them, until they were all covered over.

The cold winter came, with its snow and ice, but it could not harm the little violets. Safe under the friendly leaves of the old oak, they slept and dreamed happy dreams until the warm rains of spring came and waked them again.



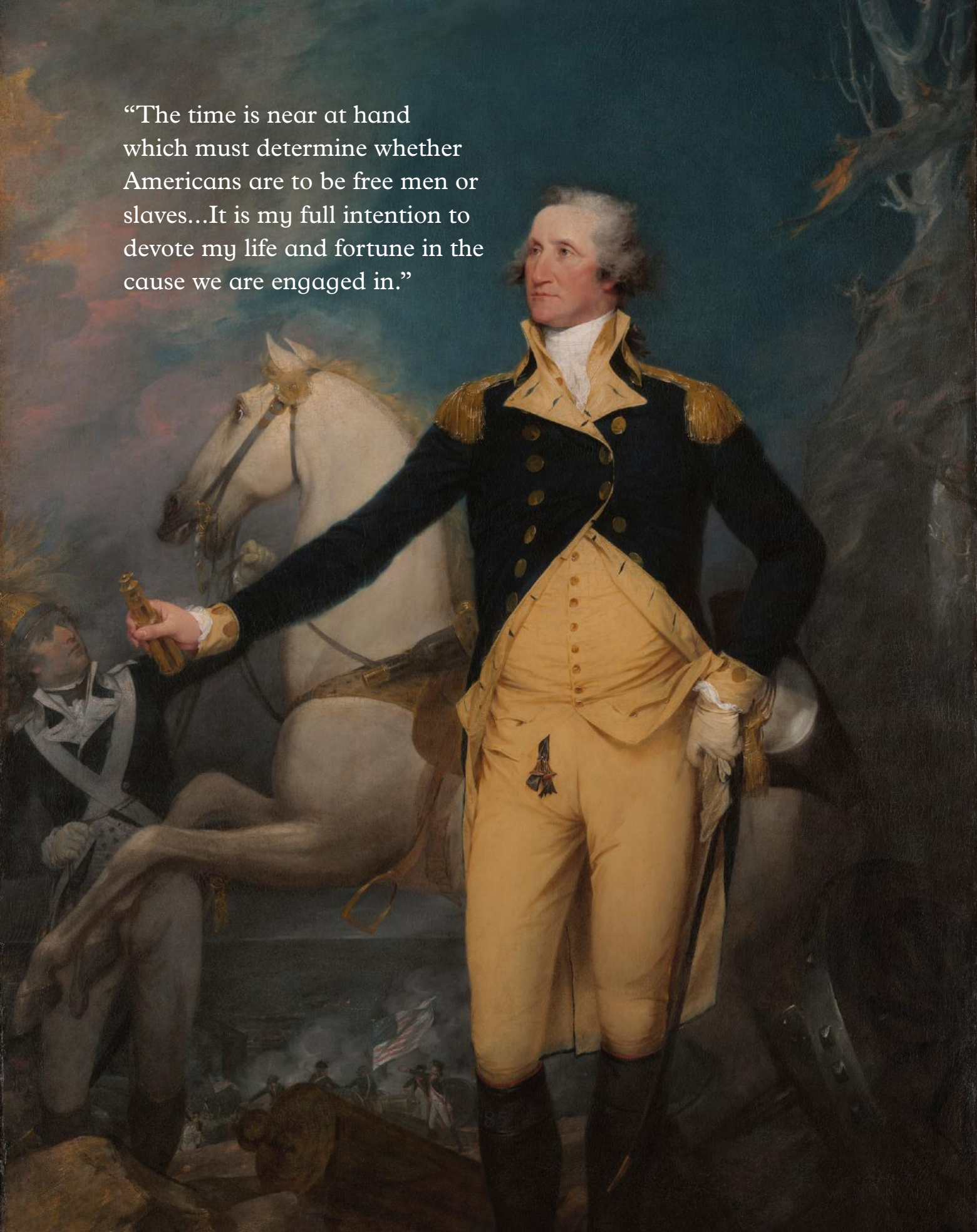
George Washington

February 22, 1732 – December 14, 1799





"I have always considered marriage the most interesting event of one's life."


"The time is near at hand
which must determine whether
Americans are to be free men or
slaves...It is my full intention to
devote my life and fortune in the
cause we are engaged in."

Resolved: The flag of the United States be 13 stripes, alternate red and white and the Union be 13 stars, white in a blue field, representing a new constellation.







"These are the times that try men's souls.





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"We have … reason to thank Providence…It has at times been my only dependence, for all other resources seemed to have failed us."

(Can you see Washington's mother sitting on the chair in a black dress?)





King George of England asked the American painter, Benjamin West, what Washington would do after winning independence. West replied, “They say he will return to his farm.”

The king said, “If he does that, he will be the greatest man in the world.”

“I am become a private citizen on the banks of the Potomac…under the shadow of my own vine and my own fig tree.”





"Grandpapa is very well and much pleased with being once more 'Farmer Washington'."

(Can you see why some people thought he was like Cincinnatus?)

"It appears to me…little short of a miracle that the delegates from so many states…should unite in forming a system of national government."

"The Constitution is the guide which I shall never abandon."

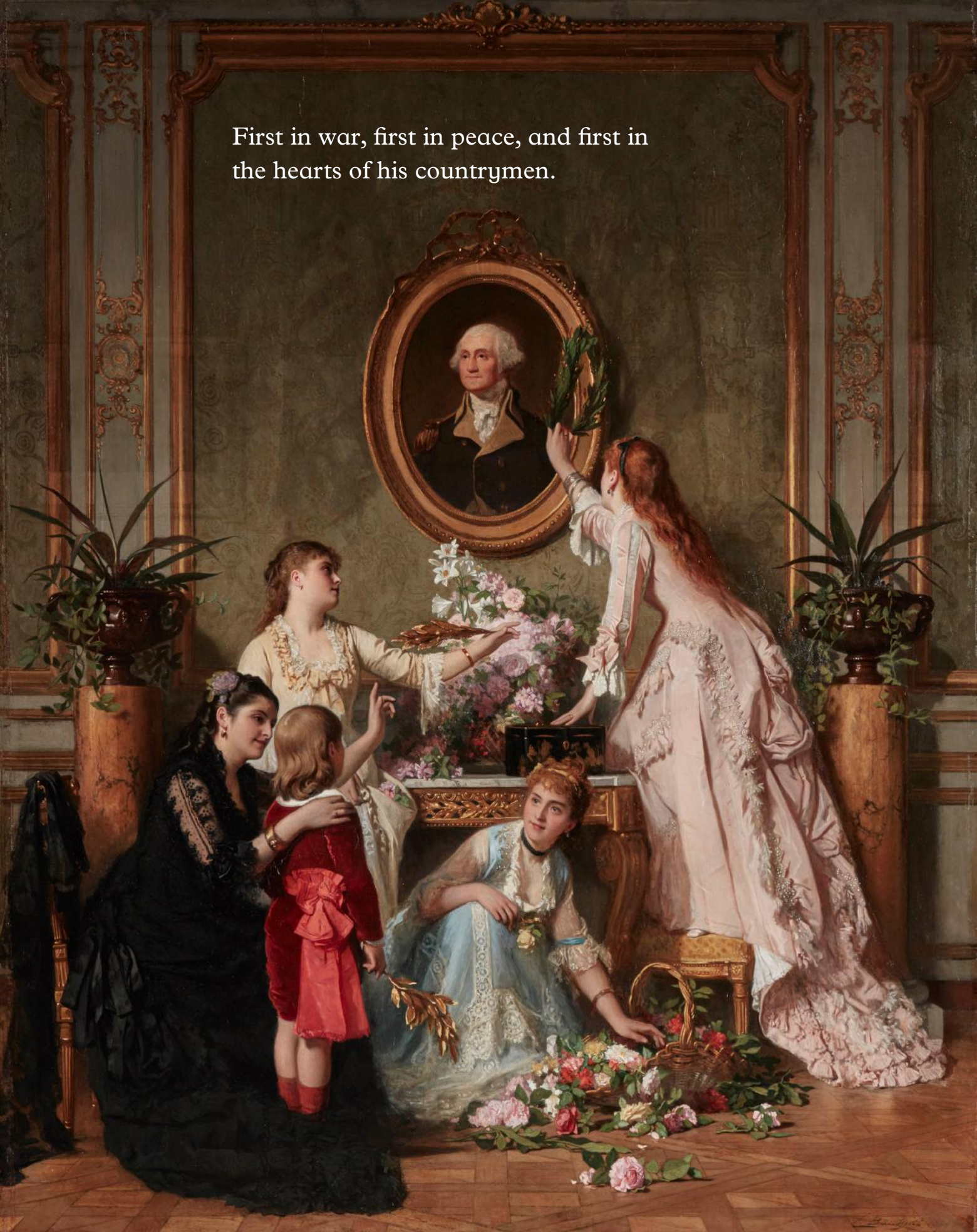


"I do solemnly swear that I will faithfully execute the office of President. So help me, God."





"I am not afraid to go."


First in war, first in peace, and first in
the hearts of his countrymen.



Only a few years must pass before all who are now occupying the position of trust and honor will be no more, and you are to fill their places.

Are you going to be ready?

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