

Onion

A picture book written and illustrated by me :)

A boy onion, was born in a drought-ridden far away kingdom. It was a peaceful place except on Odin Day. That was when Odin, the not-very-bright-but-very hungry ogre, came to the village demanding one child for his birthday meal.

Every year Odin was fooled into eating a make-believe child made out of vegetables. But this year, there had not been enough rain. When Odin came, there would be no vegetable child to trick him.

Will Onion and his sweet friend Alan save their village from Odin? Of course they will, but it's fun to watch how the misfit friends manage to fool the ogre and be seen for their bravery, not just their flaws.

Back cover



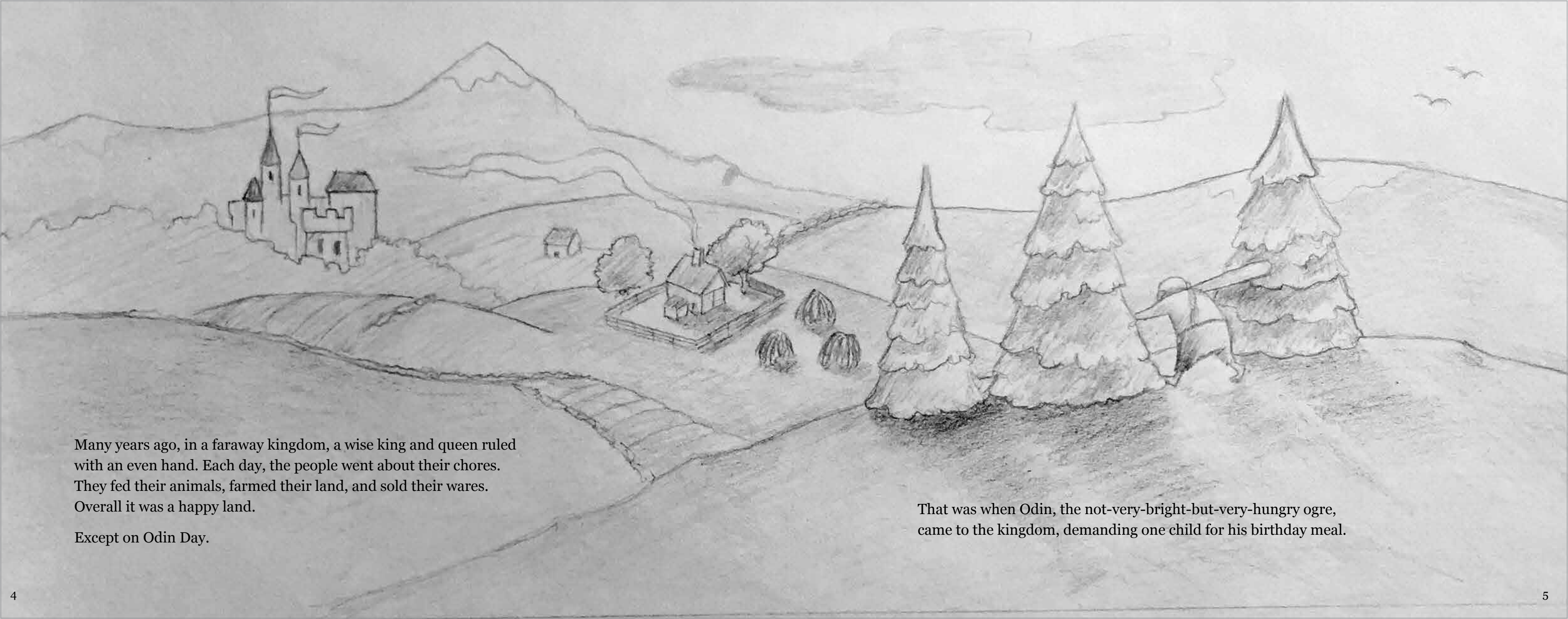
onion

Written and illustrated by
Carl DiRocco

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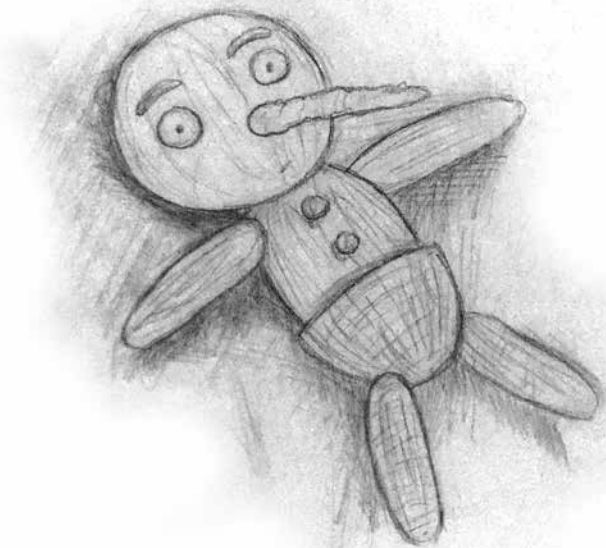
Onion



Many years ago, in a faraway kingdom, a wise king and queen ruled with an even hand. Each day, the people went about their chores. They fed their animals, farmed their land, and sold their wares. Overall it was a happy land.

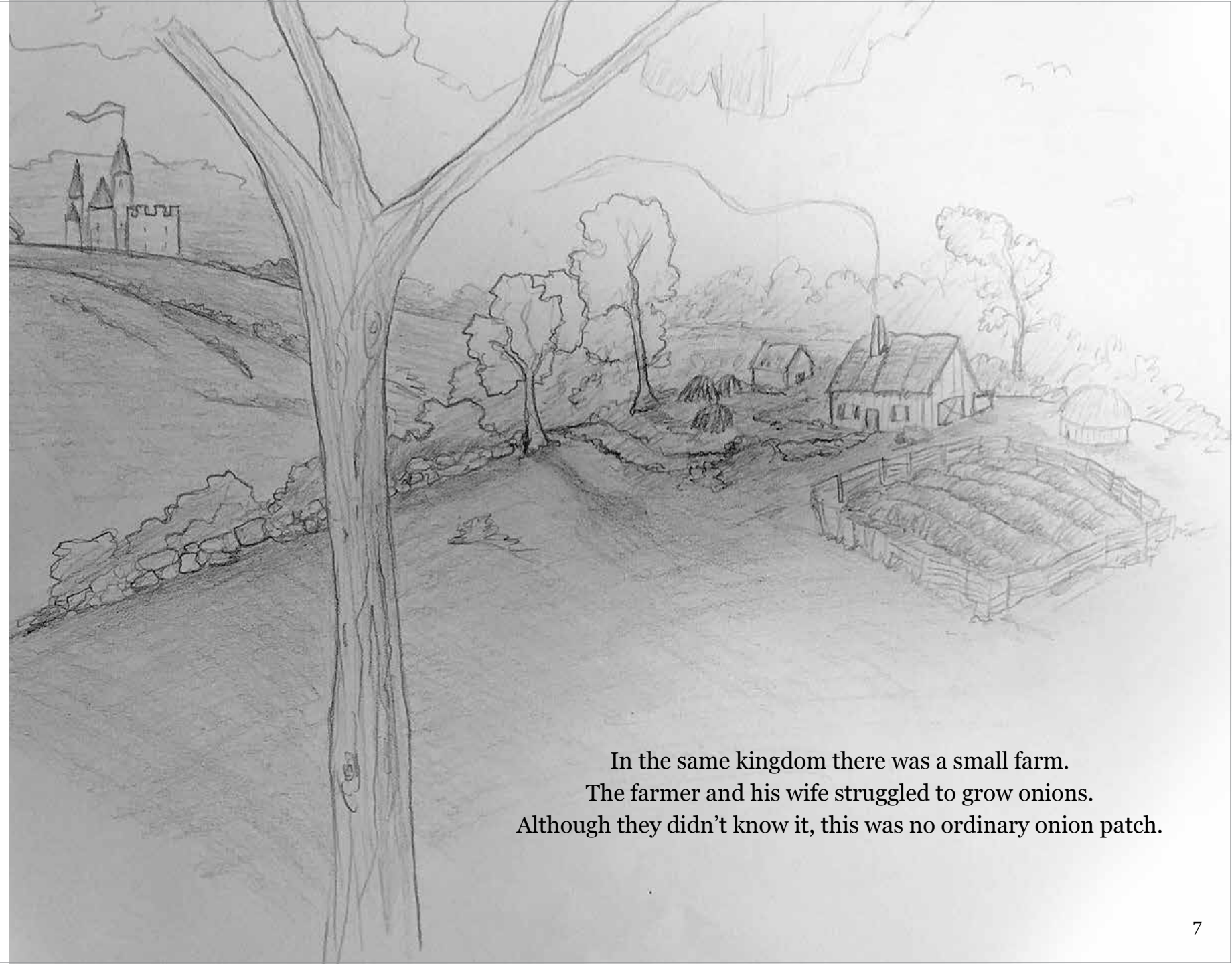
Except on Odin Day.

That was when Odin, the not-very-bright-but-very-hungry ogre, came to the kingdom, demanding one child for his birthday meal.



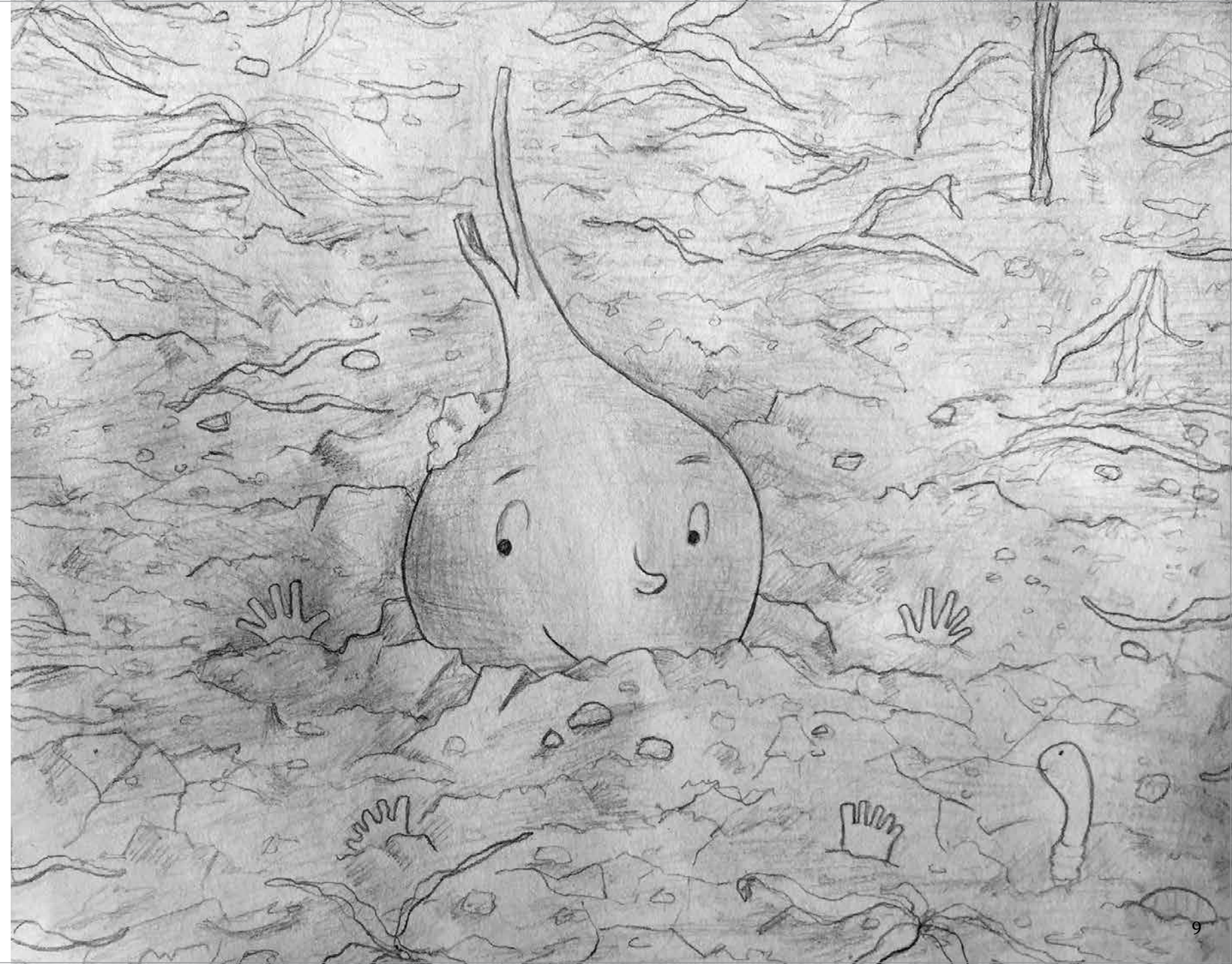
It was a terribly frightening time but the villagers knew their beloved king and queen would protect them. The wise rulers gathered crops from the farmers and had the tradespeople create a child out of carrots, tomatoes, green beans, and cucumbers. Every year Odin was fooled into eating the make-believe vegetable child instead of a real one.

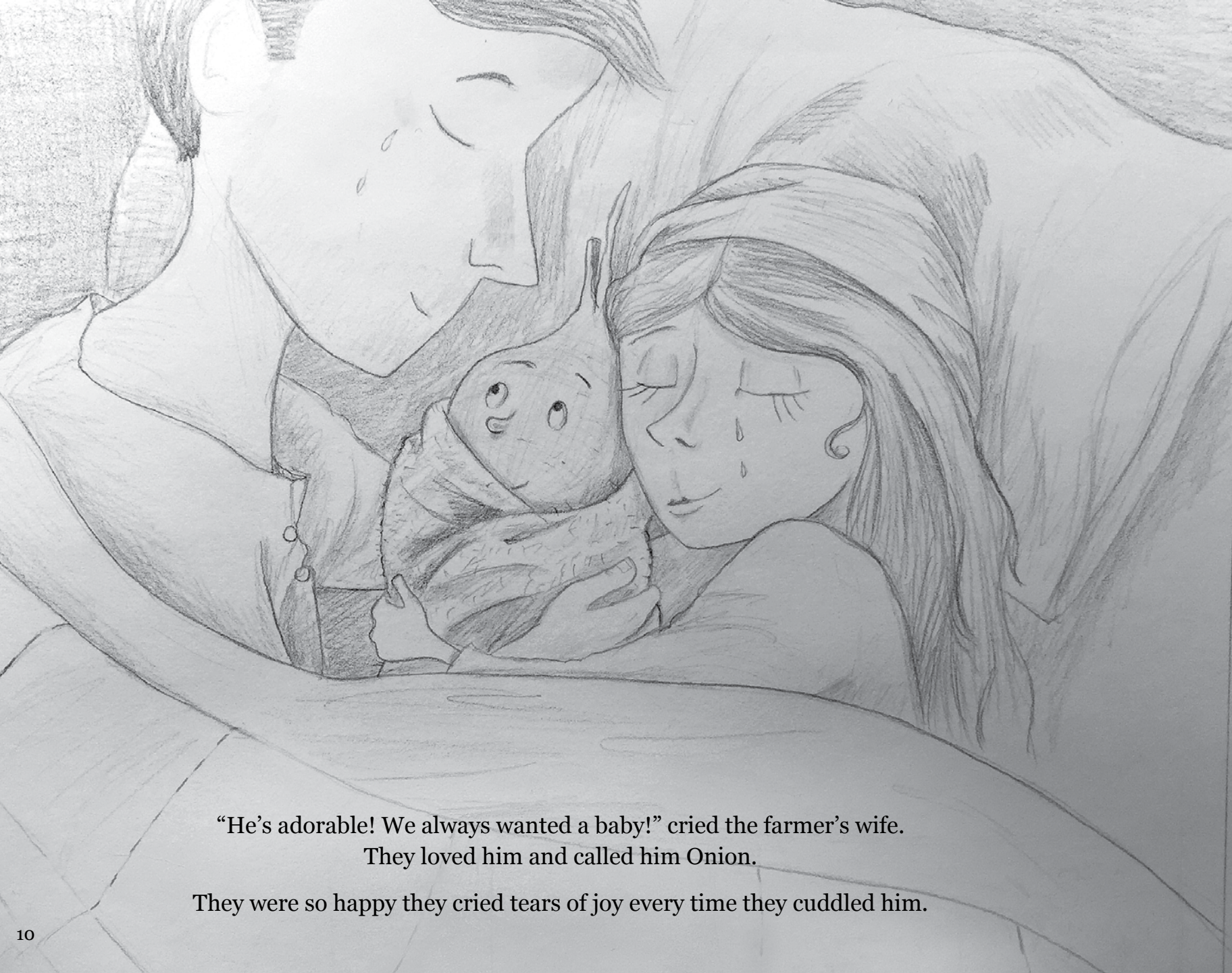
But this year, there had not been enough rain. When Odin came, there would be no vegetables to trick him.



In the same kingdom there was a small farm.
The farmer and his wife struggled to grow onions.
Although they didn't know it, this was no ordinary onion patch.

The farmer noticed tiny fingers and toes among the withered crops. He plucked the onion from the dirt and brought it home to his wife.

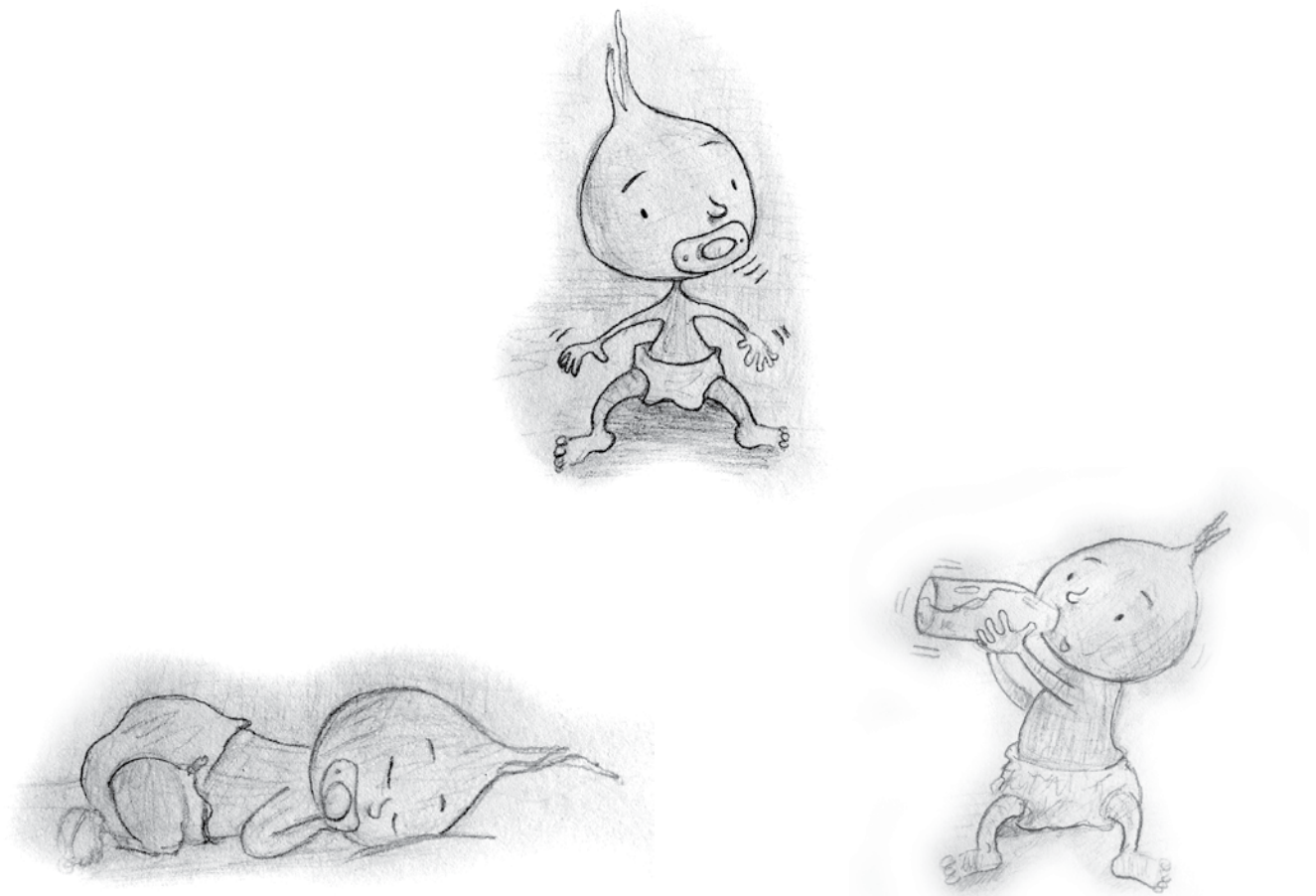




“He’s adorable! We always wanted a baby!” cried the farmer’s wife.

They loved him and called him Onion.

They were so happy they cried tears of joy every time they cuddled him.



Aside from being an onion, Onion was just like other babies.
He enjoyed his binky, taking naps, and drinking warm milk from his bottle.

And just like other babies, Onion grew up fast.

One of Onion's favorite activities was climbing the boulder atop the wooded knoll. Onion would climb all day if he could.

One afternoon, Onion saw a small boy who looked like he wanted to join him. "Hi, my name is Onion," called Onion. "What's yours?"

"I'm Alan. Why do you look different?" asked Alan.

"I was grown in an onion patch and raised on a farm," said Onion. "Come on up."

"Sounds neat," said Alan.

"Being so small, I look different, too."

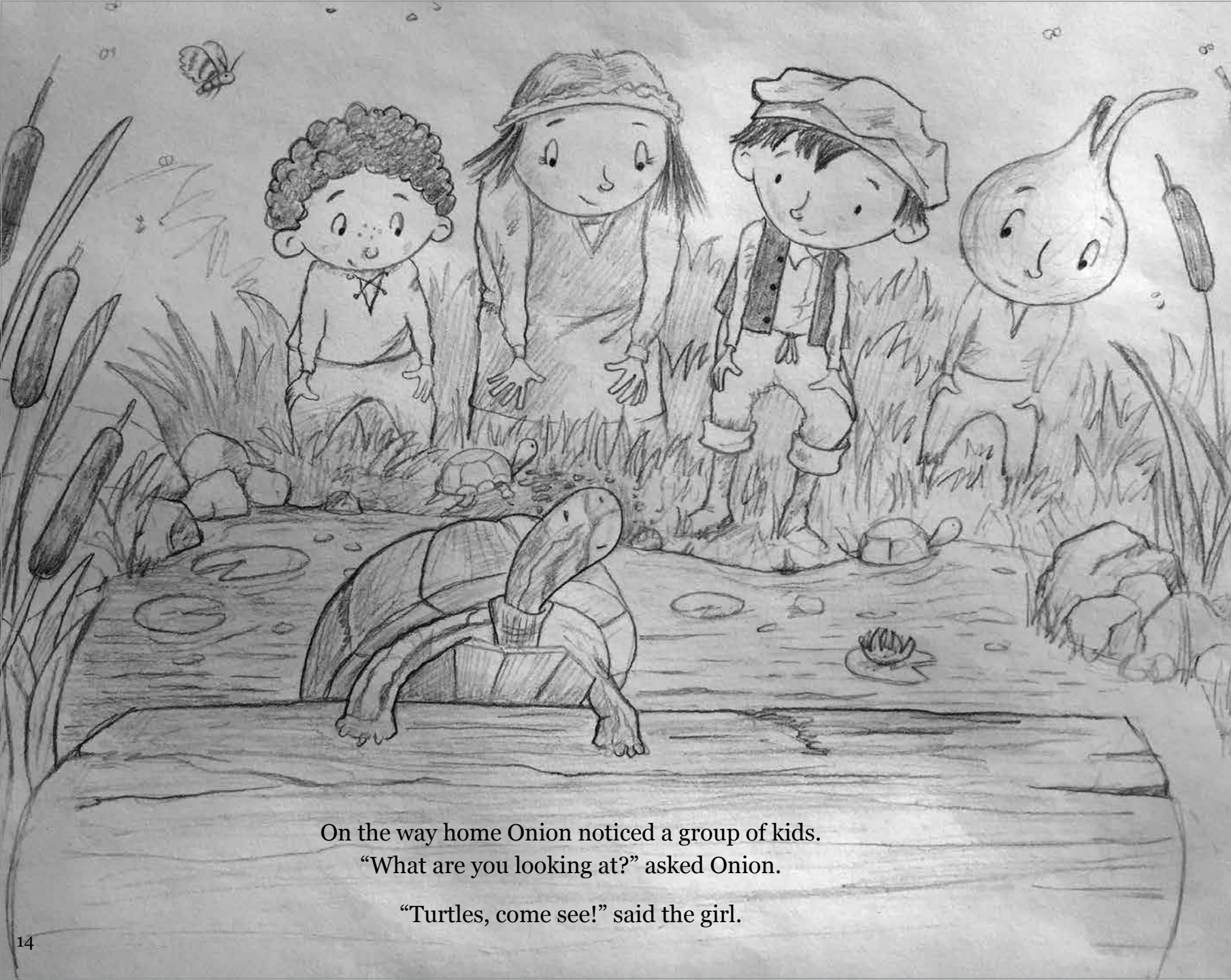


Alan started to cry.

"What's the matter?" asked Onion.

"I don't know," said Alan. "I don't feel sad, but I can't stop crying." He quickly climbed down and ran away.

Onion felt awful. He jumped down and darted home to his small farm.



On the way home Onion noticed a group of kids.

“What are you looking at?” asked Onion.

“Turtles, come see!” said the girl.

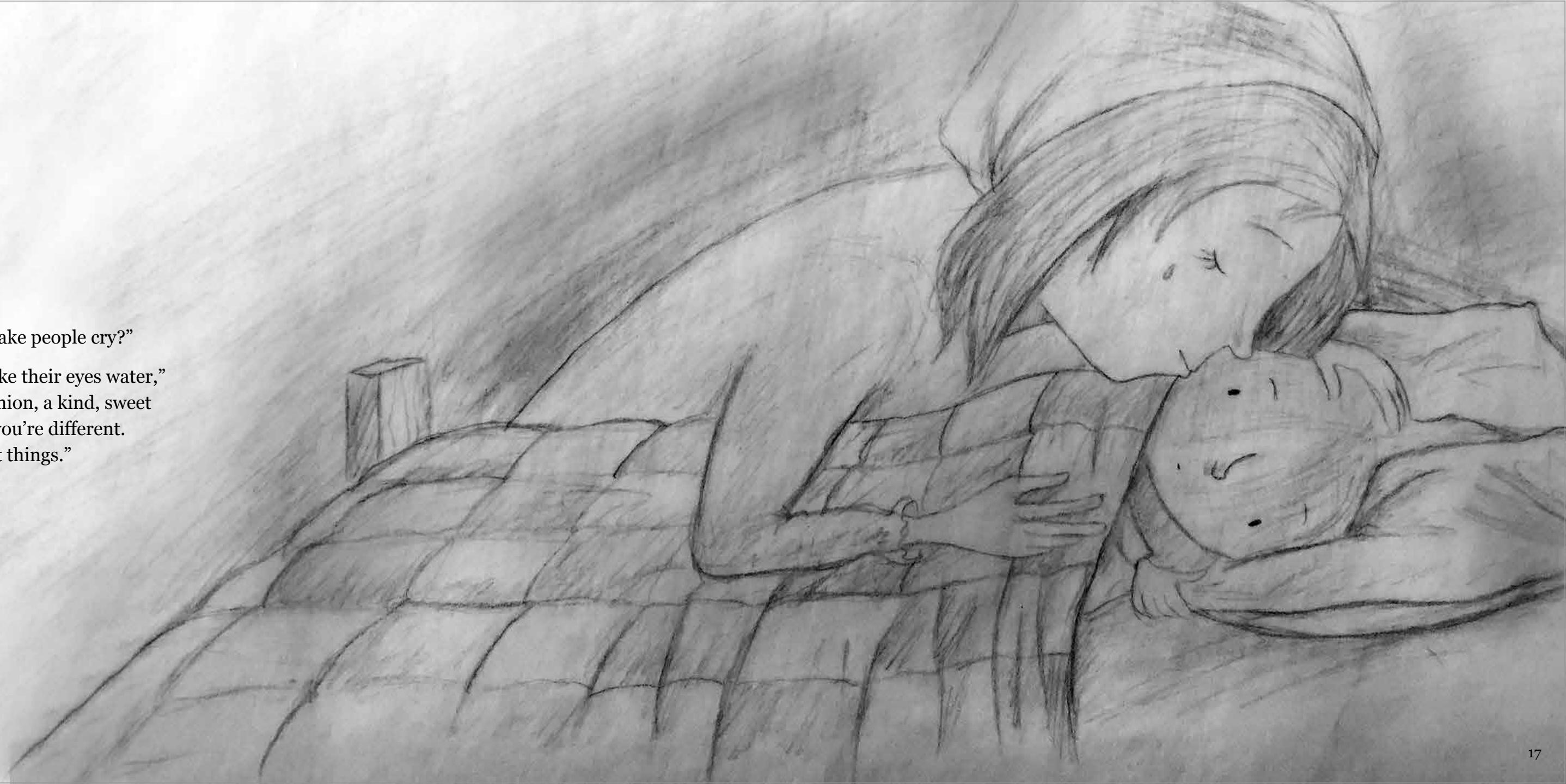
All at once, the group broke out in tears.
The tears fell right on top of a turtle!

“Why are we crying?” asked a confused girl.
“I don’t know!” answered a puzzled boy.

“Oh no, not again!” cried Onion as he raced
back home to the farm.



Onion lay awake. “Mom, why do I make people cry?”
“You don’t make people cry, you just make their eyes water,”
said Mom. “That’s because you’re an onion, a kind, sweet
onion. And just like everyone else, you’re different.
I love you, and you’ll do great things.”



The next morning, Onion had an idea.

“Hi Onion! What are you working on?”
asked Alan peeking through the barn door.

“Oh, hi Alan! I’m making a boy out of straw.
This way, when I play with a friend,
he won’t cry. I’ll bring him to the
village on Odin Day,” explained Onion.



“Can I help?” asked Alan. “You bet!” said Onion.

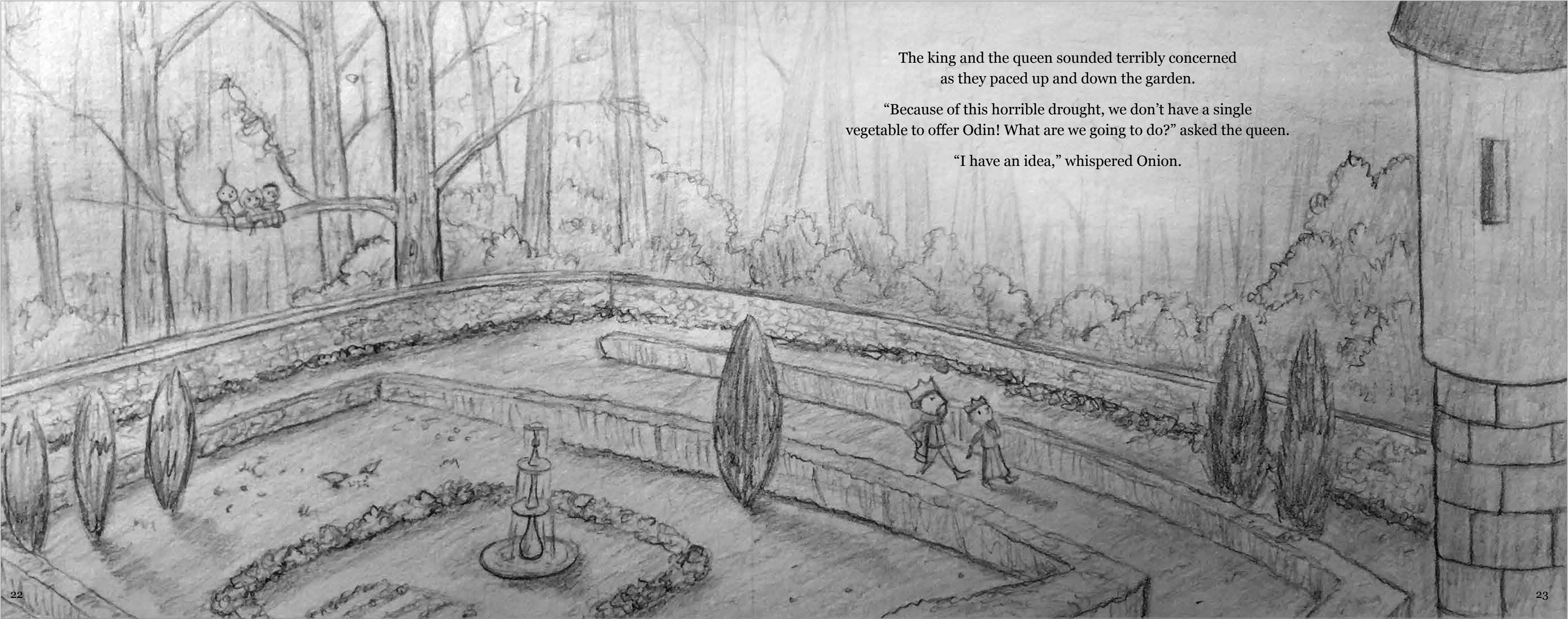
“Sorry I ran off crying yesterday,”
said Alan, wiping a tear from his eye.
“That’s ok. It happens a lot,” said Onion.

“Let’s do something fun,
want to go for a swim?” asked Alan.



Along the way home, the friends rested up in a tree
high above the kingdom walls.

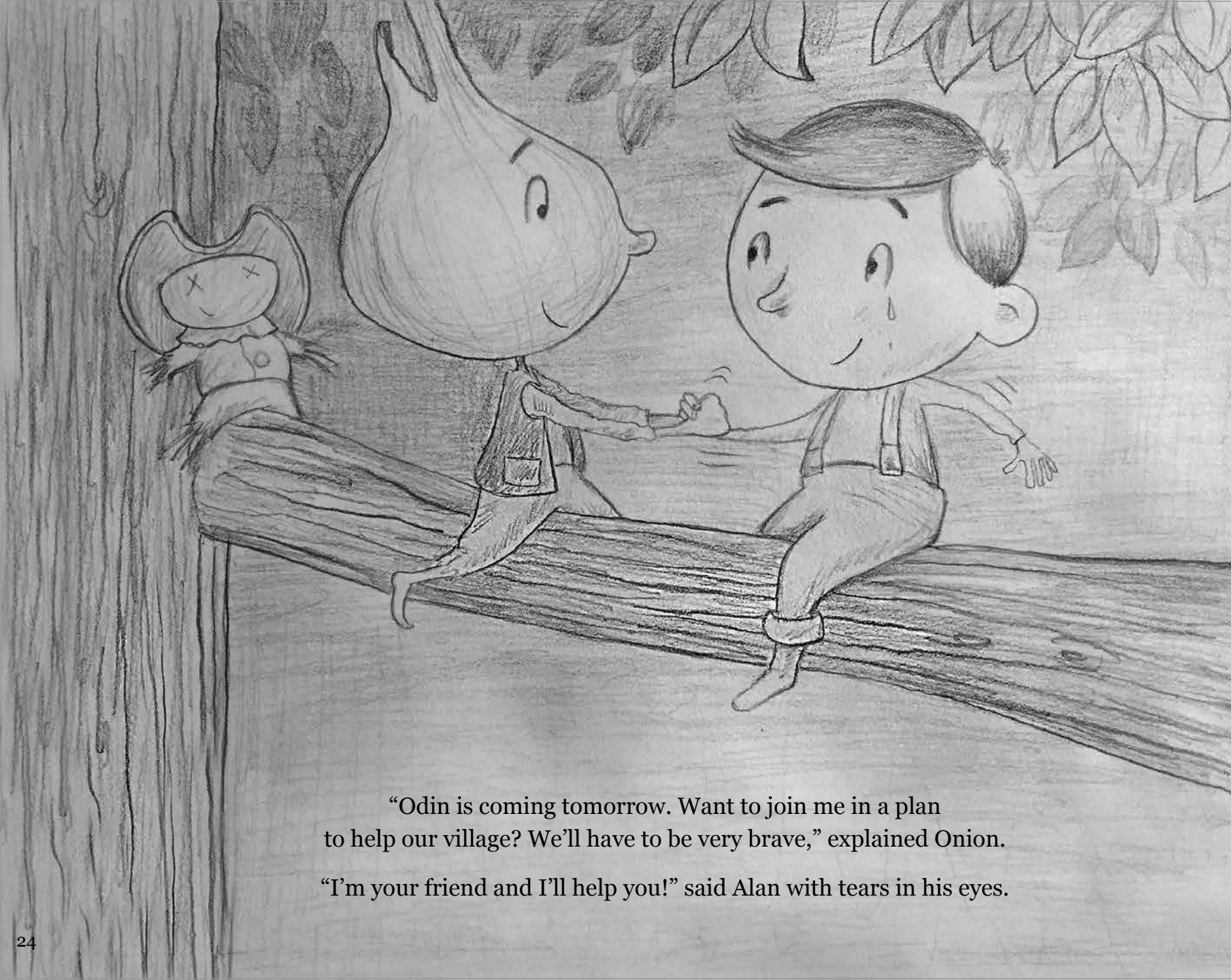
“Shhh, I hear the king and queen” said Onion.



The king and the queen sounded terribly concerned
as they paced up and down the garden.

“Because of this horrible drought, we don’t have a single
vegetable to offer Odin! What are we going to do?” asked the queen.

“I have an idea,” whispered Onion.

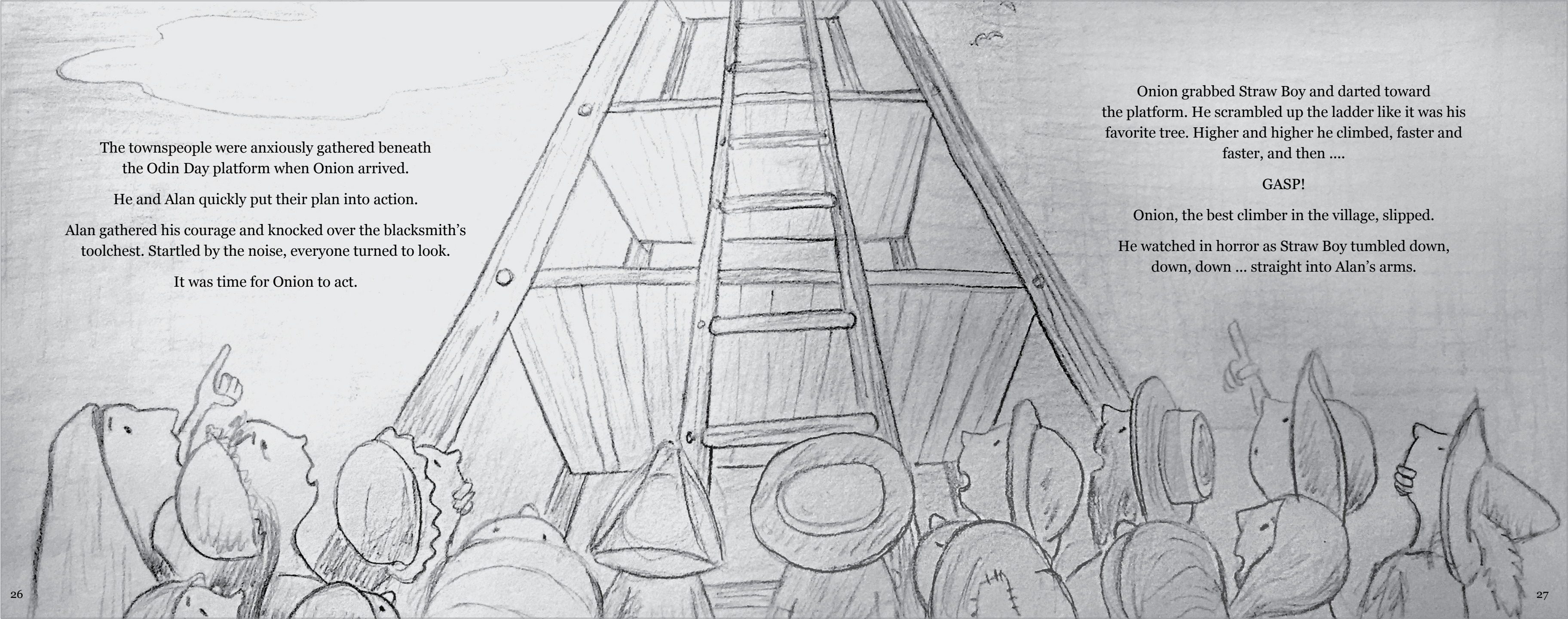


“Odin is coming tomorrow. Want to join me in a plan to help our village? We’ll have to be very brave,” explained Onion.

“I’m your friend and I’ll help you!” said Alan with tears in his eyes.



On Odin Day morning, Onion jumped out of bed and quickly dressed. Too excited to eat his breakfast, he ran straight to the village.



The townspeople were anxiously gathered beneath the Odin Day platform when Onion arrived.

He and Alan quickly put their plan into action.

Alan gathered his courage and knocked over the blacksmith's toolchest. Startled by the noise, everyone turned to look.

It was time for Onion to act.

Onion grabbed Straw Boy and darted toward the platform. He scrambled up the ladder like it was his favorite tree. Higher and higher he climbed, faster and faster, and then

GASP!

Onion, the best climber in the village, slipped.

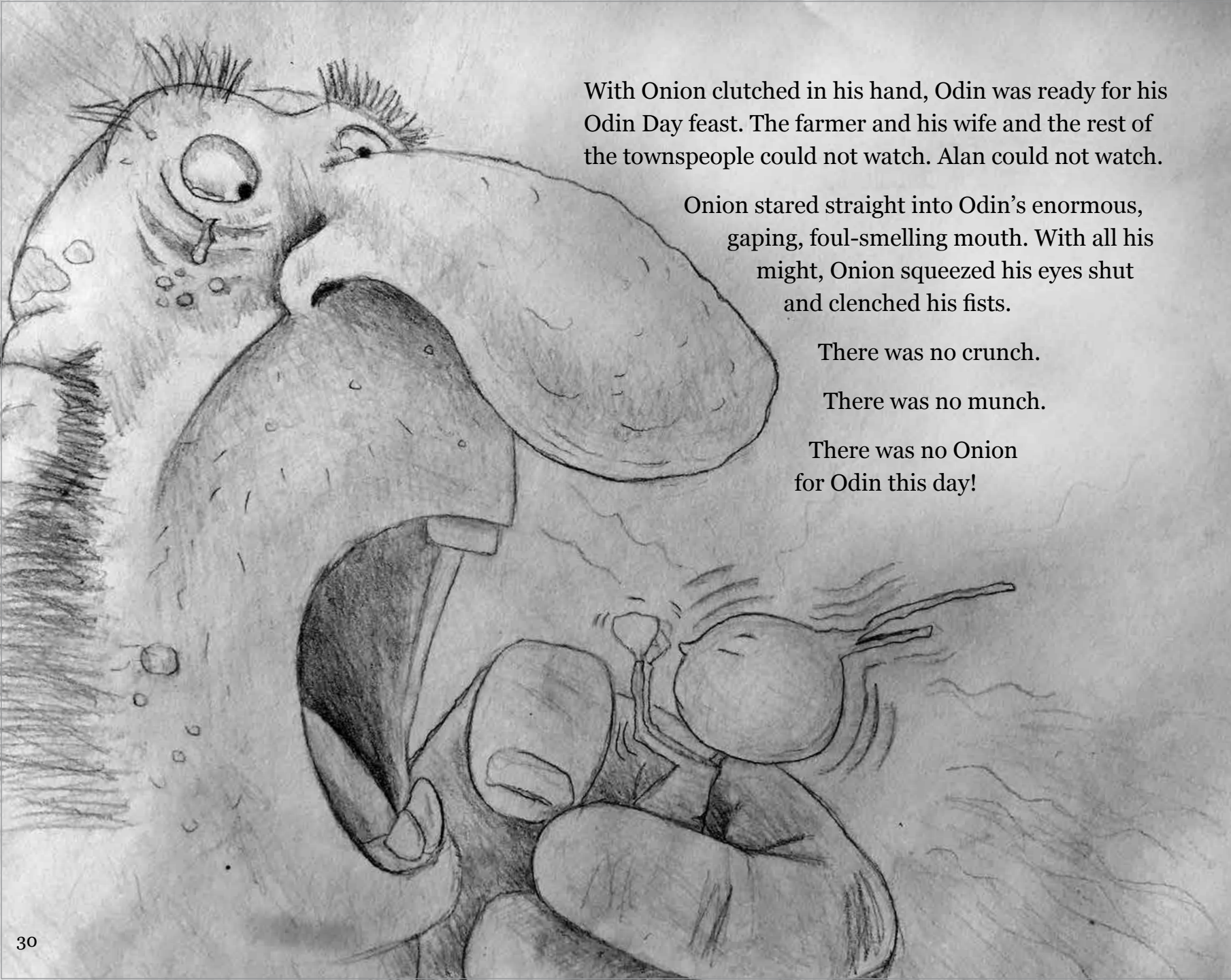
He watched in horror as Straw Boy tumbled down, down, down ... straight into Alan's arms.

Hearing the commotion, Odin charged out of the woods, crushing fences, carts, and barrels along the way. He was slow but strong.

“Oh no!” yelled Alan. “Oh yes!” yelled Onion, “you caught him with your tiny arms. Bring him up!”

Onion and Alan raced to the top together. They dropped straw boy onto the platform and turned to run away when OUCH!

Onion was being squeezed and scrunched. Odin had snatched Onion instead!



With Onion clutched in his hand, Odin was ready for his Odin Day feast. The farmer and his wife and the rest of the townspeople could not watch. Alan could not watch.

Onion stared straight into Odin's enormous, gaping, foul-smelling mouth. With all his might, Onion squeezed his eyes shut and clenched his fists.

There was no crunch.

There was no munch.

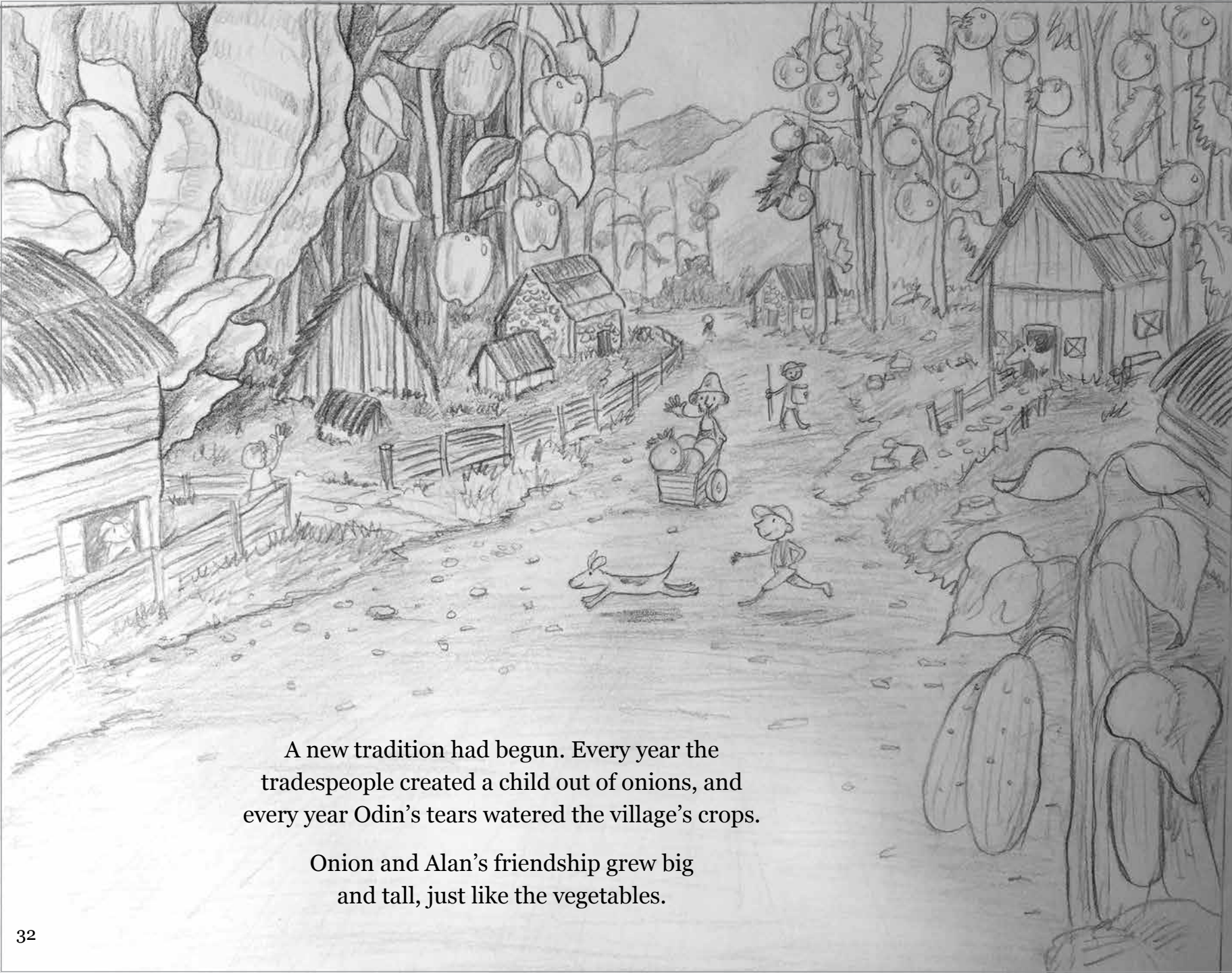
There was no Onion for Odin this day!



A very relieved Onion heard a sobbing, blubbing sound as great tears flowed like rivers from Odin's watery eyes.

The tears flowed through the village and cascaded between the crops. The village erupted in cheers as the confused, crying ogre dropped Onion and stormed back into the wood.

Onion gave Alan a big hug, and the two friends turned to the applauding villagers below. Onion smiled when he noticed his proud parents in the front row, tears of joy in their eyes.



A new tradition had begun. Every year the tradespeople created a child out of onions, and every year Odin's tears watered the village's crops.

Onion and Alan's friendship grew big and tall, just like the vegetables.