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DOGRIB LEGENDS

BOOK 5

WOMAN & THE PUPS

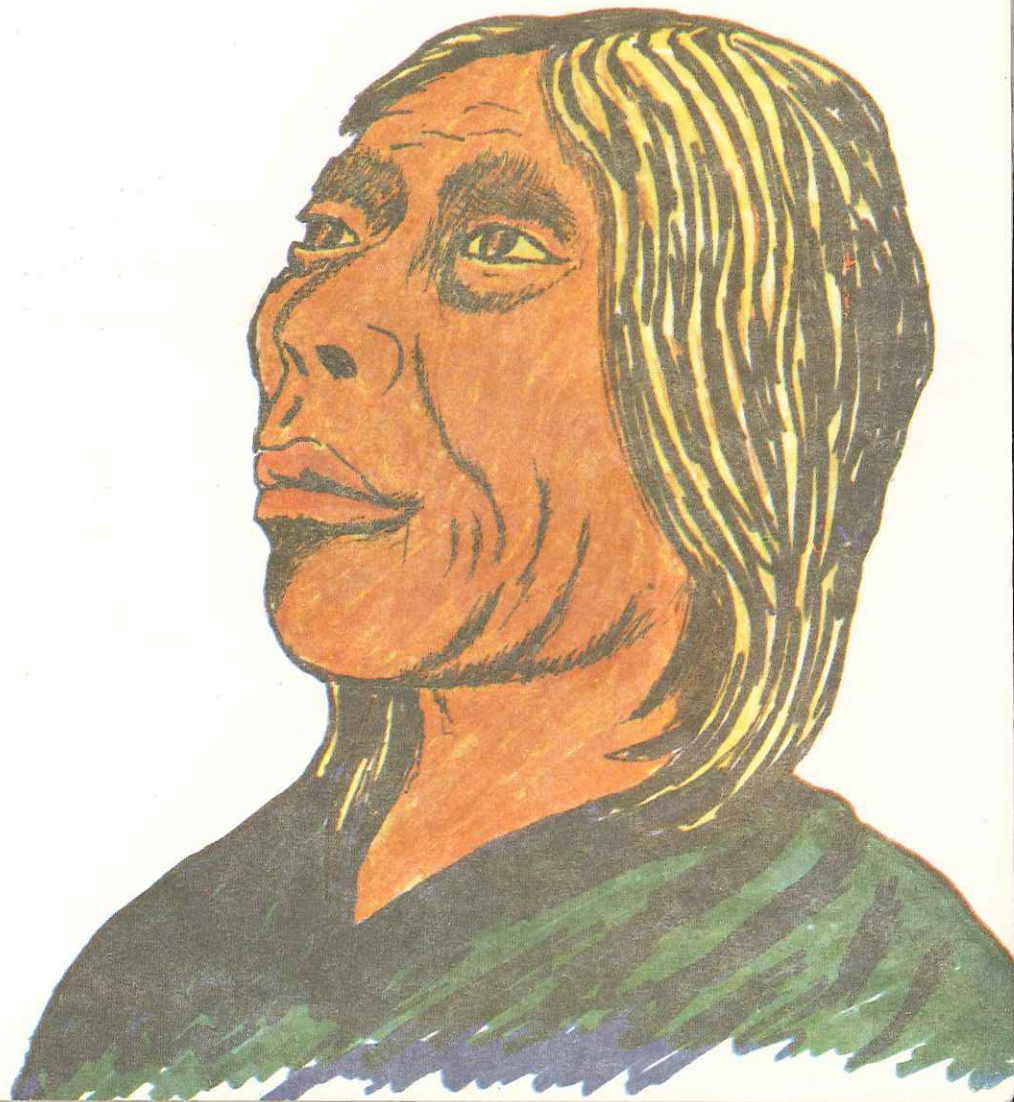
Collected and translated: Virginia Football

Illustrations: B. Abraham

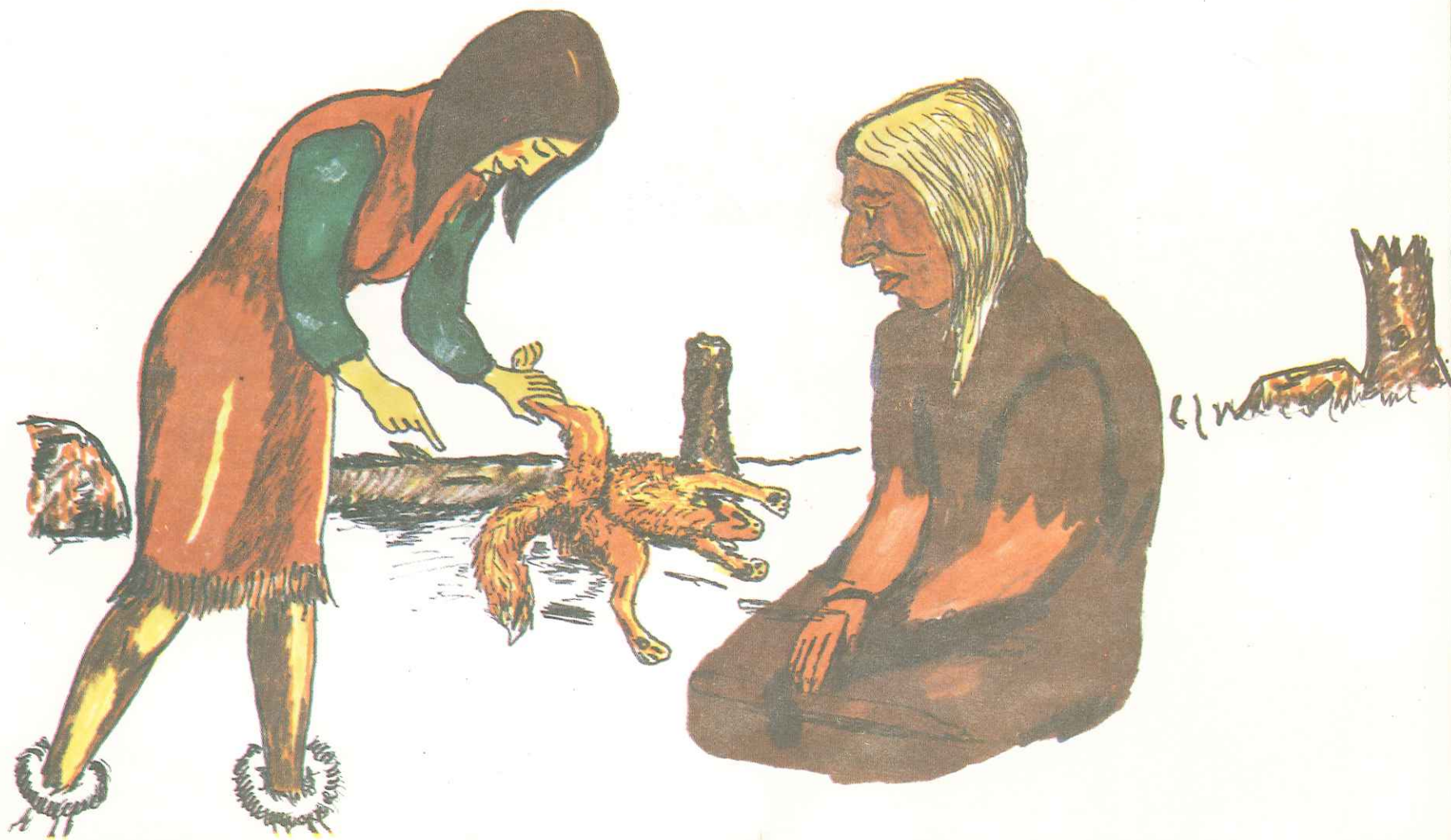
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There once lived an old woman and her young daughter. They had lived for so long in the same place, that they decided to move away to another location.



So, one day they broke camp and prepared to leave. While they were packing, their dog died of old age. The woman and her daughter were very upset over the dog's death.



However, since they were in a hurry, they left the dog in the camp and set off through the woods.



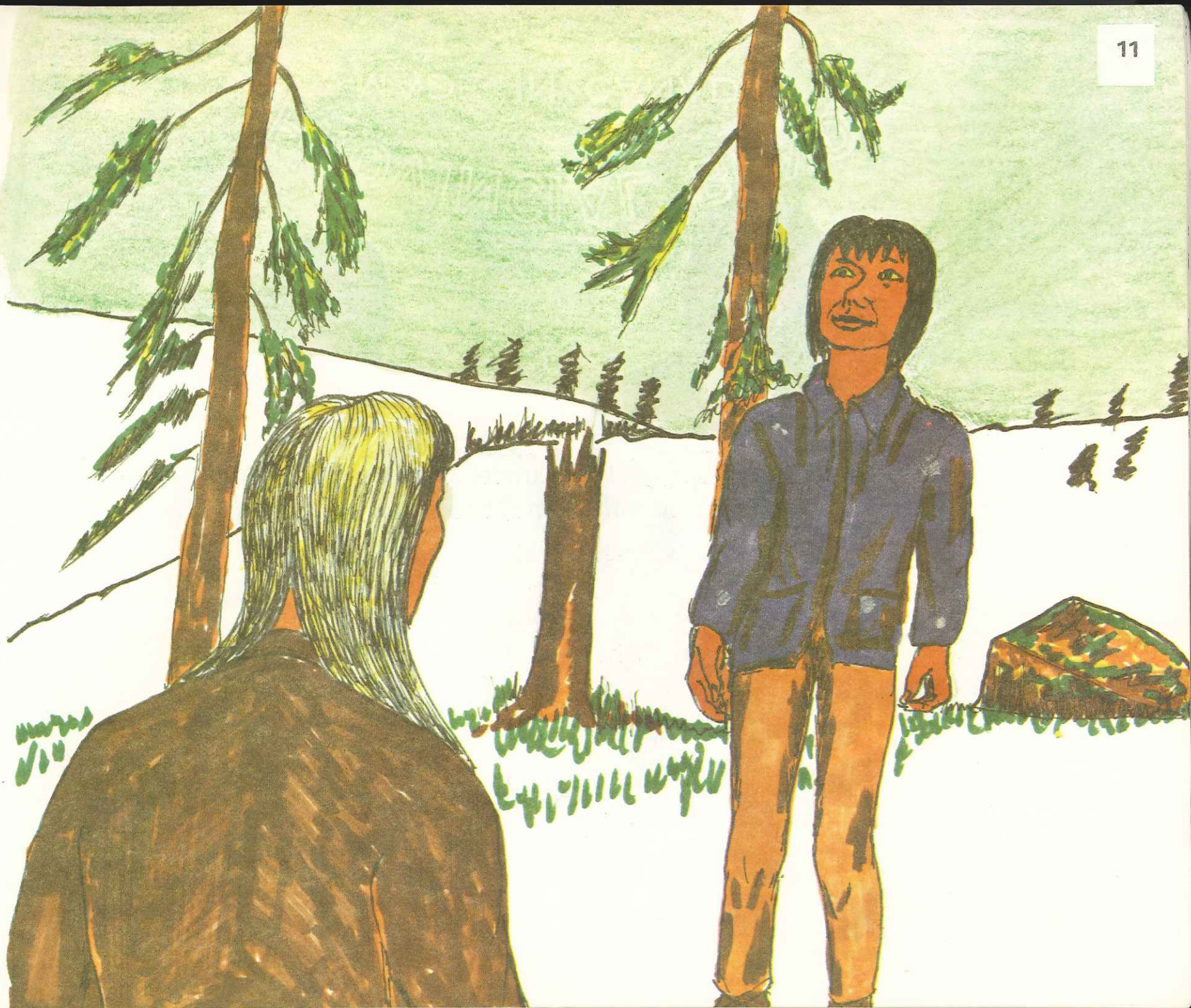
When they had gone a fair distance, the daughter suddenly remembered that she had forgotten their moose-hide scraping log in the camp. The old woman thought about the log, and finally decided they might need it again. So, the young girl ran to fetch the forgotten article.



When she was close to the old camp, she noticed a man standing on the trail ahead. At first she couldn't see him properly, but as she came closer, she saw that he was a very handsome person. As she approached, he said, "Where are you going?"

"I am going back to our camp to fetch my scraping board which I left behind."

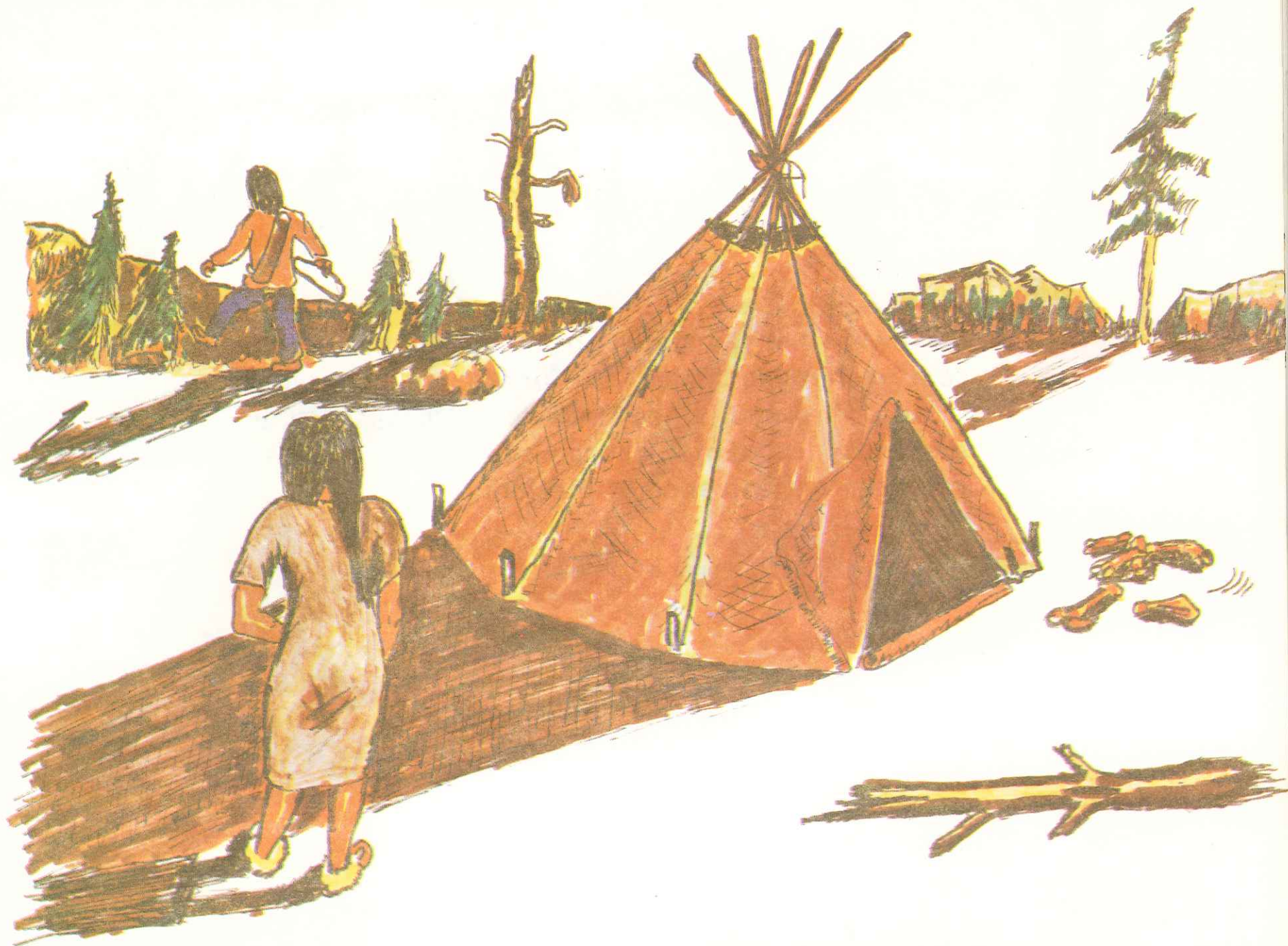
The man thought for awhile and then suggested that she go with him to his camp.



At first the young girl was uncertain. But since the young man was so handsome, she finally agreed to go.



When they arrived at the camp, they made themselves at home. Since they needed food, the man went hunting for wild game.



Meanwhile the young girl busied herself around the camp collecting bones. She broke the bones into small pieces and boiled them to get grease. When she had collected many bones, she left them all in a pile near the entrance of the tent.



That night, the young girl thought she heard footsteps outside. She lay quietly listening very carefully. Then she heard what sounded like a dog climbing on the bones and gnawing on them.



Quietly the young girl picked up her beaver board
and tossed it at the dog.

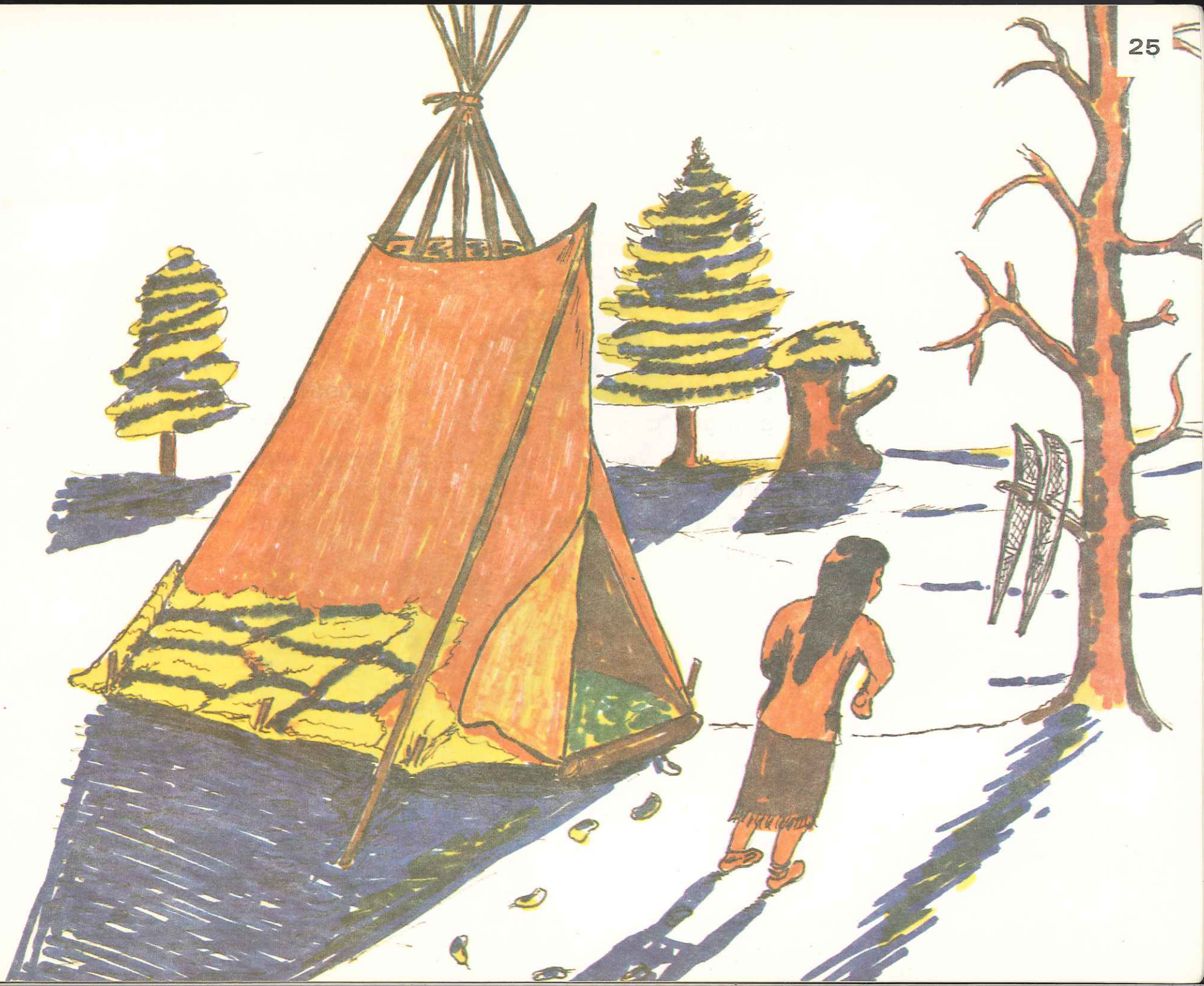
After that there was no more noise, so the young girl
went to sleep.



The next morning, she found a dead dog on the pile of bones.



At the same time, she noticed that her husband was gone. She looked everywhere but she couldn't find a trace of him. There were no footprints and his snowshoes were still hanging on the pole.



While she was sitting in the tent thinking about her husband, a thought suddenly came to her. She suspected that the young man, her husband, was really her old dog who had come back to life in a different form. Then she remembered that she was to be a mother.

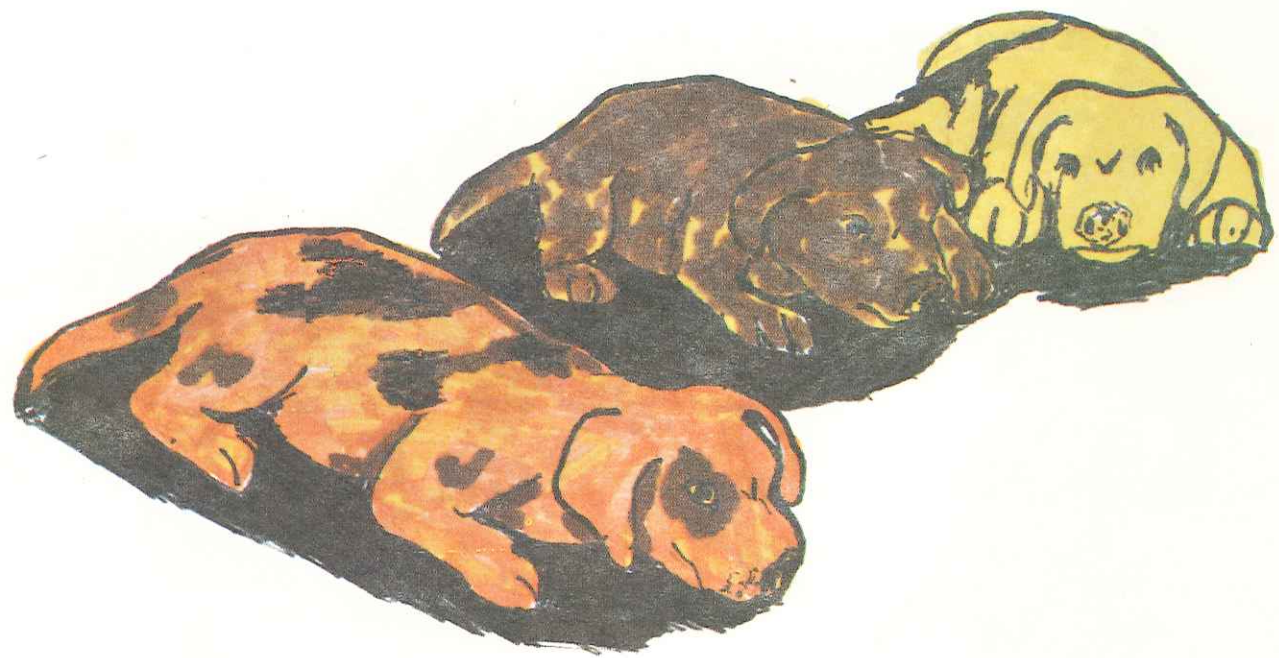


She tried to return to her mother's camp, but no one



Finally, her children were born. However, instead of being children, she bore a litter of puppies; two males and a female. Even though they were dogs, she loved them, and she worked very hard to keep them alive.

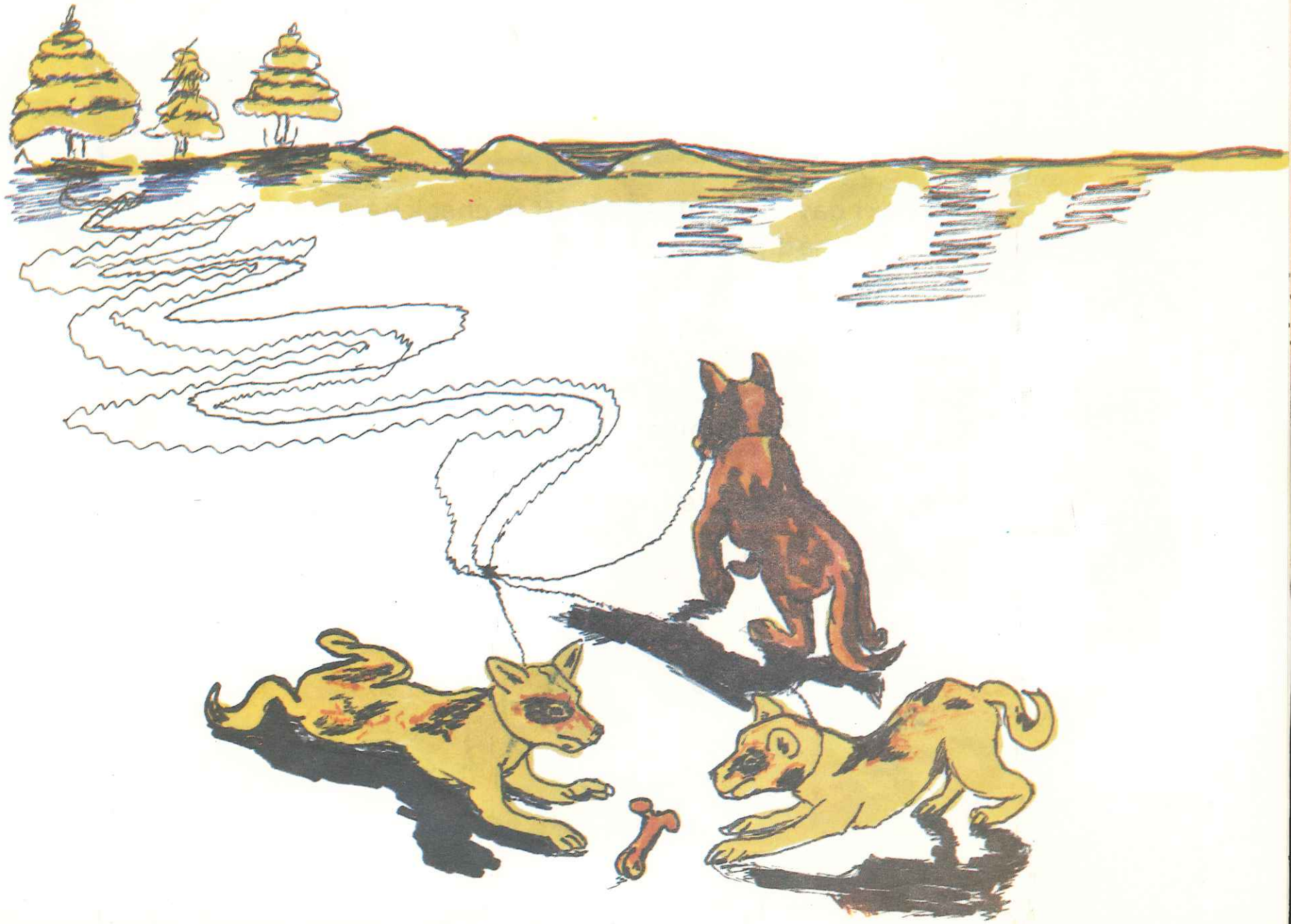
Although it was difficult, she managed to feed her puppies and raise them properly.



Each day she would leash her puppies to the tent poles and head off into the forest to check her rabbit snares.



One day when she returned to camp, she found footprints of children in the ashes by the fireside. That night she thought very hard about the footprints and her puppies. Quietly she tied a string to each of her puppies and let the strings outside to the trail in the woods.



The next day the mother set off to check her snares. When she had gone, one of the puppies said, "Now that our mother is out of sight, let's continue our games."

Then the three puppies took off their hides and immediately changed into three small children. Meanwhile the mother was watching from the forest.

As the children played, she pulled the strings toward her.



She managed to get two of the hides, which she threw into the fire. Only the little girl was quick enough to jump back into the skin. So, she remained a dog, while the other two remained little boys.



The two youngsters grew up to be good hunters. While the mother did the housework, they hunted and fished for food. They all lived happily for years and years. Meanwhile the young girl's mother heard that her daughter was living happily. So, she and some neighbours decided to visit the girl's camp. The daughter, remembering how they had treated her when she arrived in their camp said, "When I needed help, no one would help me. When I needed love, no one would love me, and when I was sad, no one tried to make me feel better. Now my family can take care of itself."



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WOMAN and the PUPS

