



Why Fairy Tales?

MINDY DWYER 



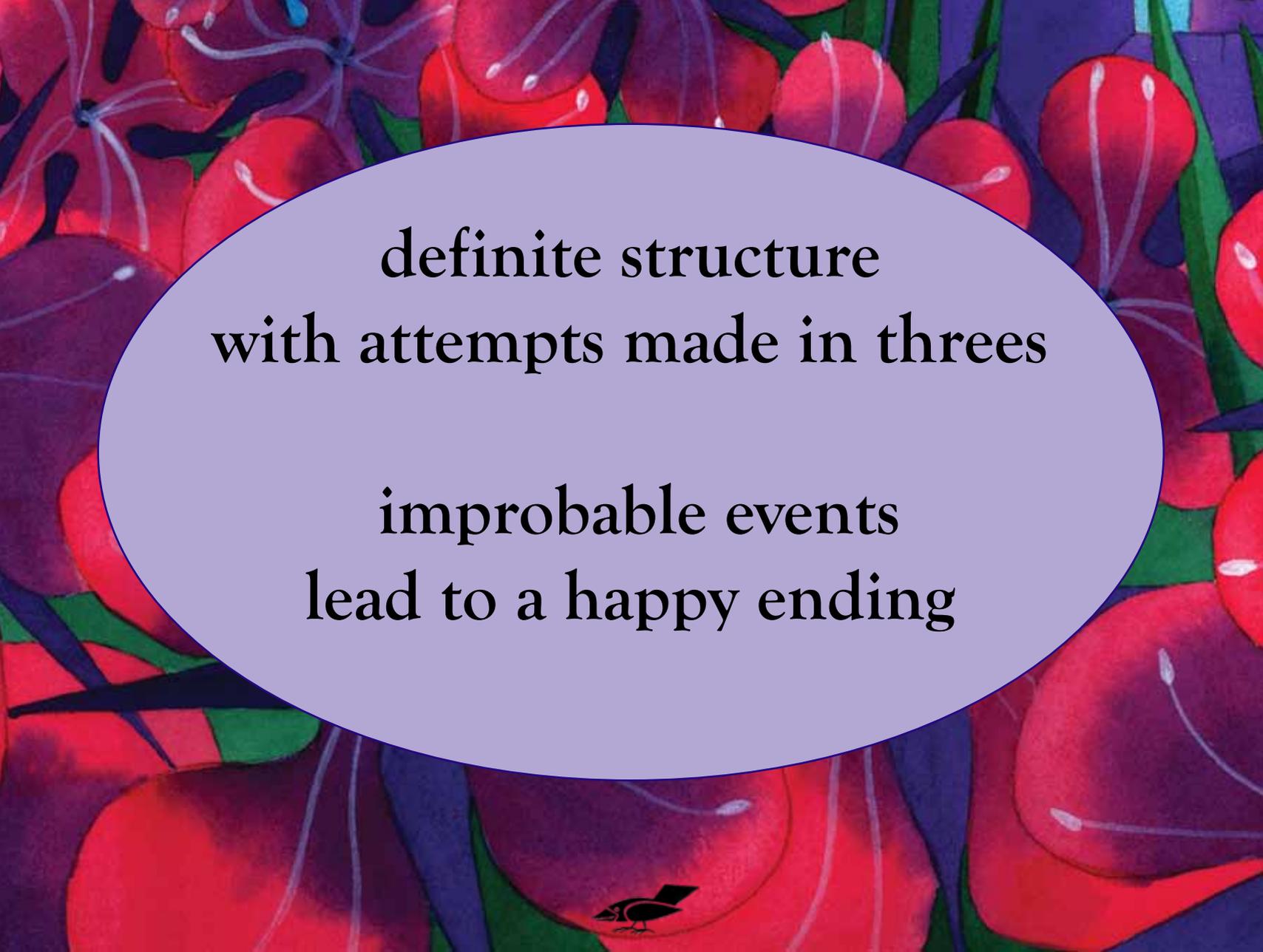
What is a fairy tale?
short story featuring
fantastical characters:
fairies, goblins, elves, trolls,
dwarves, giants, witches,
or mermaids





magic or enchantments
taking place once upon a time
rather than in actual times

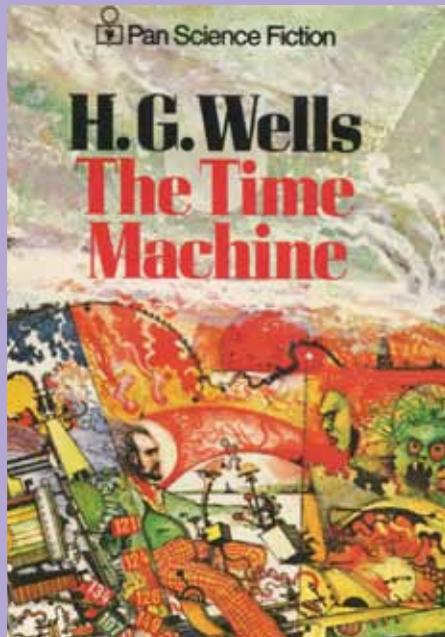




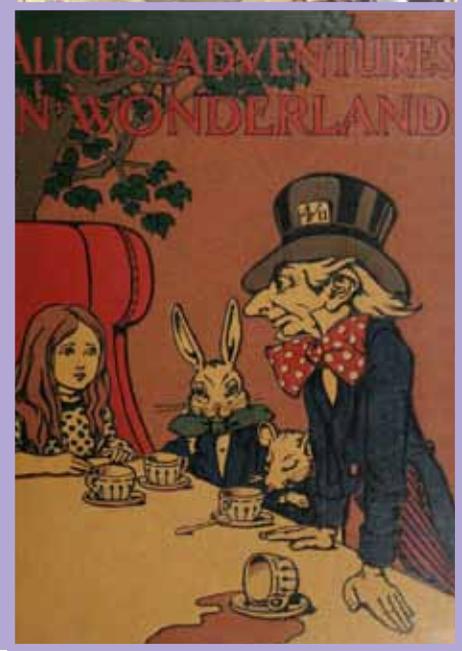
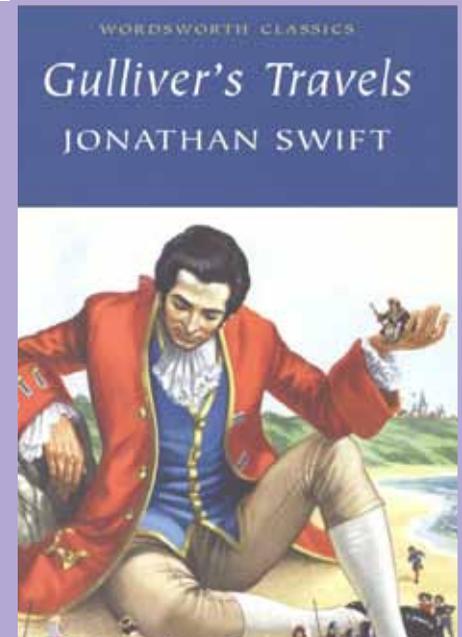
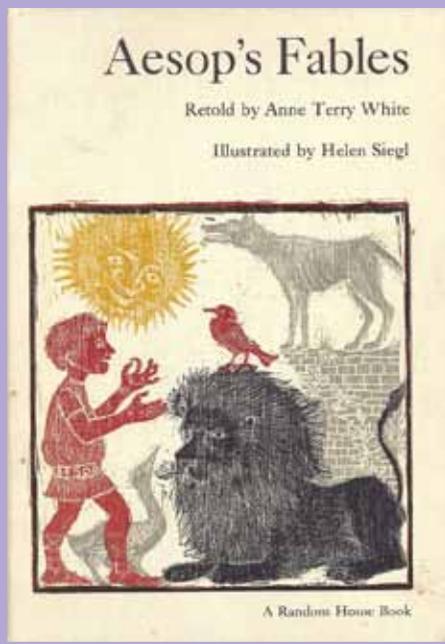
definite structure
with attempts made in threes

improbable events
lead to a happy ending



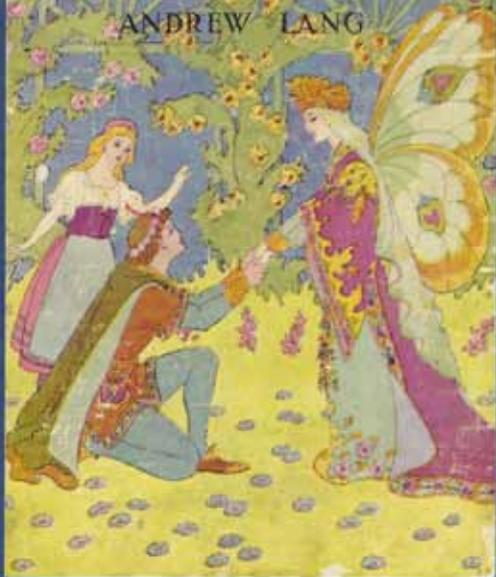


not
traveler's tales
science fiction
beast tales
or dream stories



The BLUE FAIRY BOOK

ANDREW LANG



GRIMM'S COMPLETE FAIRY TALES



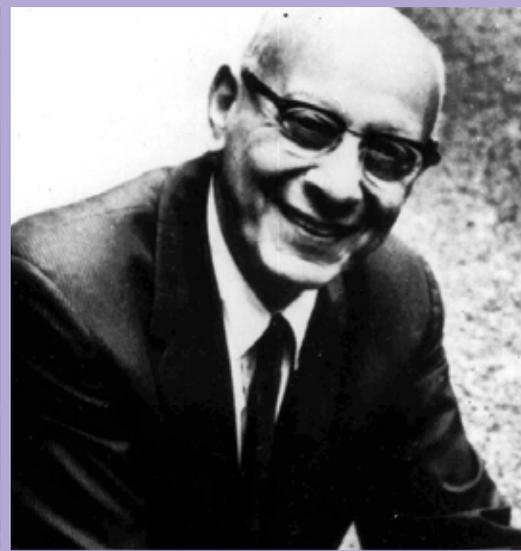
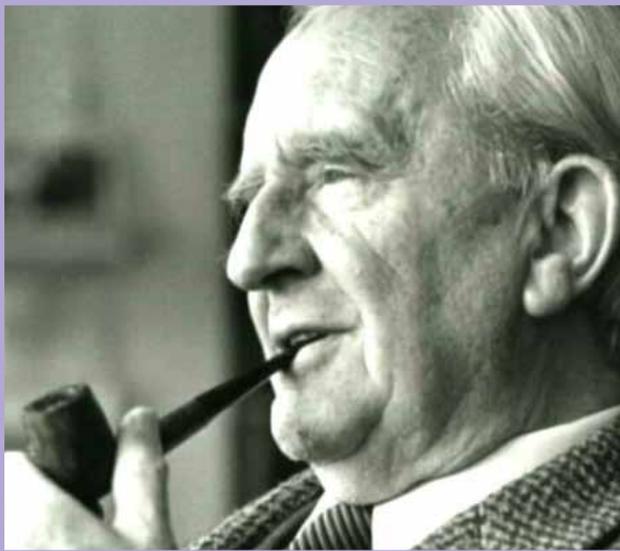
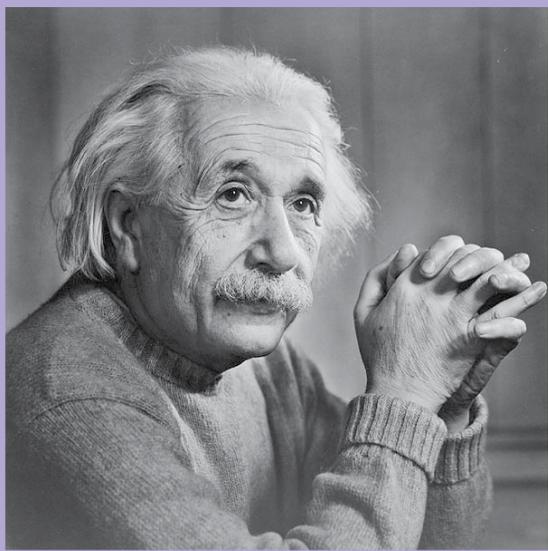
THE MERMAID AND OTHER TALES HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN

COLOURED ILLUSTRATIONS
BY
MAXWELL ARMFIELD



J. M. DENT & SONS, LTD., LONDON





Einstein
Tolkien
Bettleheim

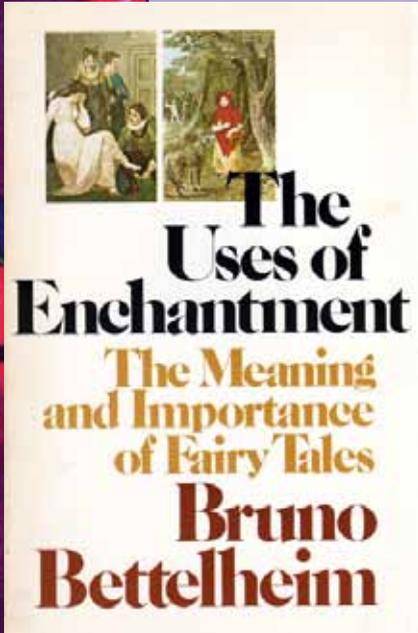


Bruno Bettelheim

Vienna 1903 (America 1939) -1990

scholar and educator
of psychology and psychiatry
published sixteen books
& many scholarly papers

1977 National Book Award
National Book Critics Circle Award
The Uses of Enchantment





decisions are up to us
if we choose to make any

respond to hidden meanings
make application to our own life

or simply enjoy the fantastic events



Bruno Bettelheim



fairy tale hero performs miraculous feats
child with imagined or real inadequacies
can identify with the hero's transfiguration
in the end is returned to reality



Bruno Bettelheim



deepest meaning will be different
for each person

at various moments in his life

entertains and enlightens child
about himself fosters personality



Bruno Bettelheim



fairy tales
offer meaning on so many different levels
to enrich child's existence

“Children's play should be regarded as their most
serious actions.”



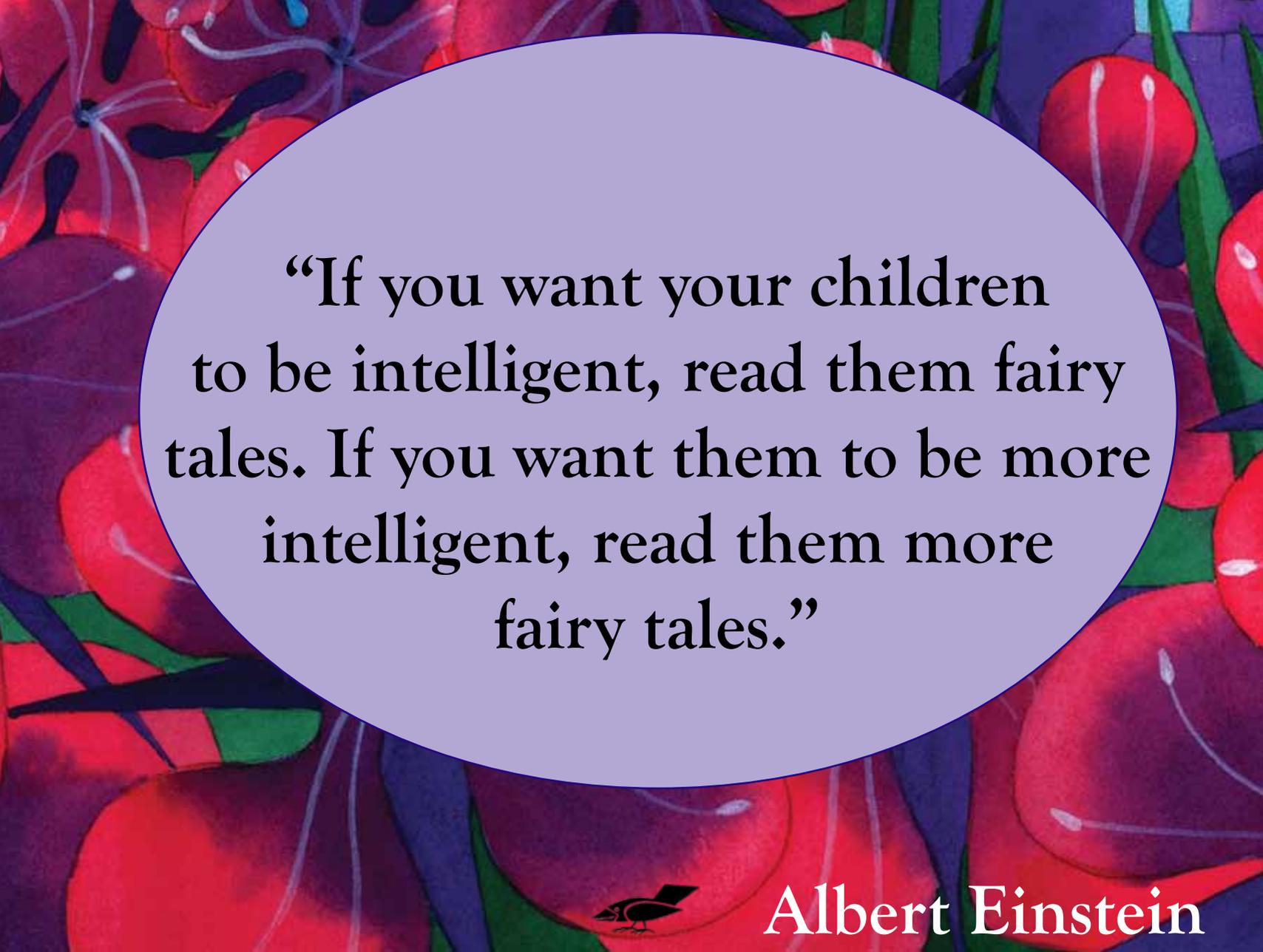
Bruno Bettelheim



“Each fairy tale is a magic mirror which reflects some aspects of our inner world, and of the steps required by our evolution from immaturity to maturity. For those who immerse themselves in what the fairy tale has to communicate, it becomes a deep, quiet pool which at first seems to reflect our own image; but behind it we soon discover the inner turmoils of our soul – its depth, and ways to gain peace within ourselves and with the world, which is the reward of our struggles.”

—Bruno Bettelheim

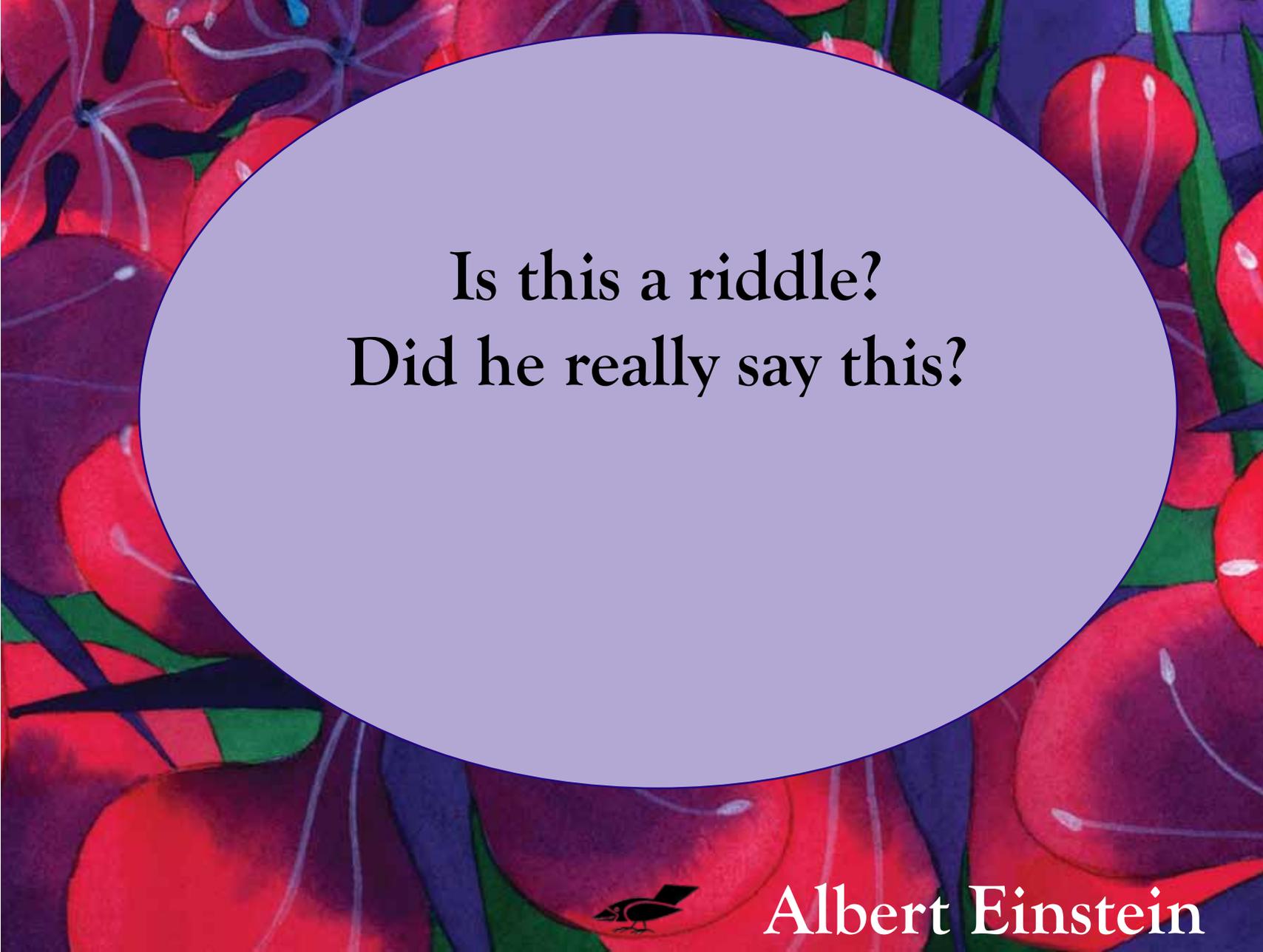




“If you want your children to be intelligent, read them fairy tales. If you want them to be more intelligent, read them more fairy tales.”



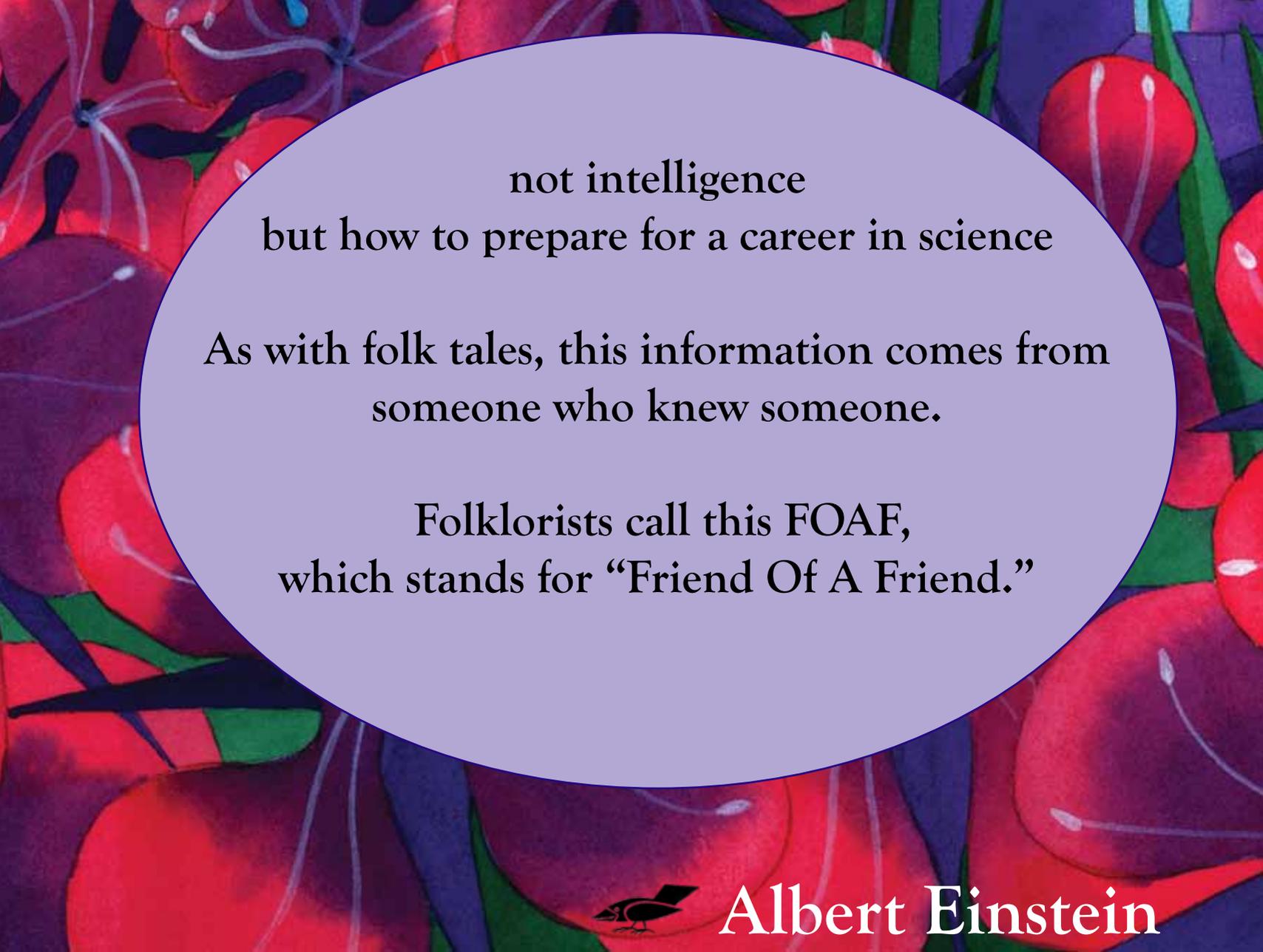
Albert Einstein



Is this a riddle?
Did he really say this?



Albert Einstein



not intelligence
but how to prepare for a career in science

As with folk tales, this information comes from
someone who knew someone.

Folklorists call this FOAF,
which stands for “Friend Of A Friend.”



Albert Einstein

folktales = foaftales

The story goes...

there was a woman who was a friend of Dr. Albert Einstein who hoped her son might become a scientist who asked Dr. Einstein's advice about the kind of reading that would prepare her child for a career in science...



Albert Einstein



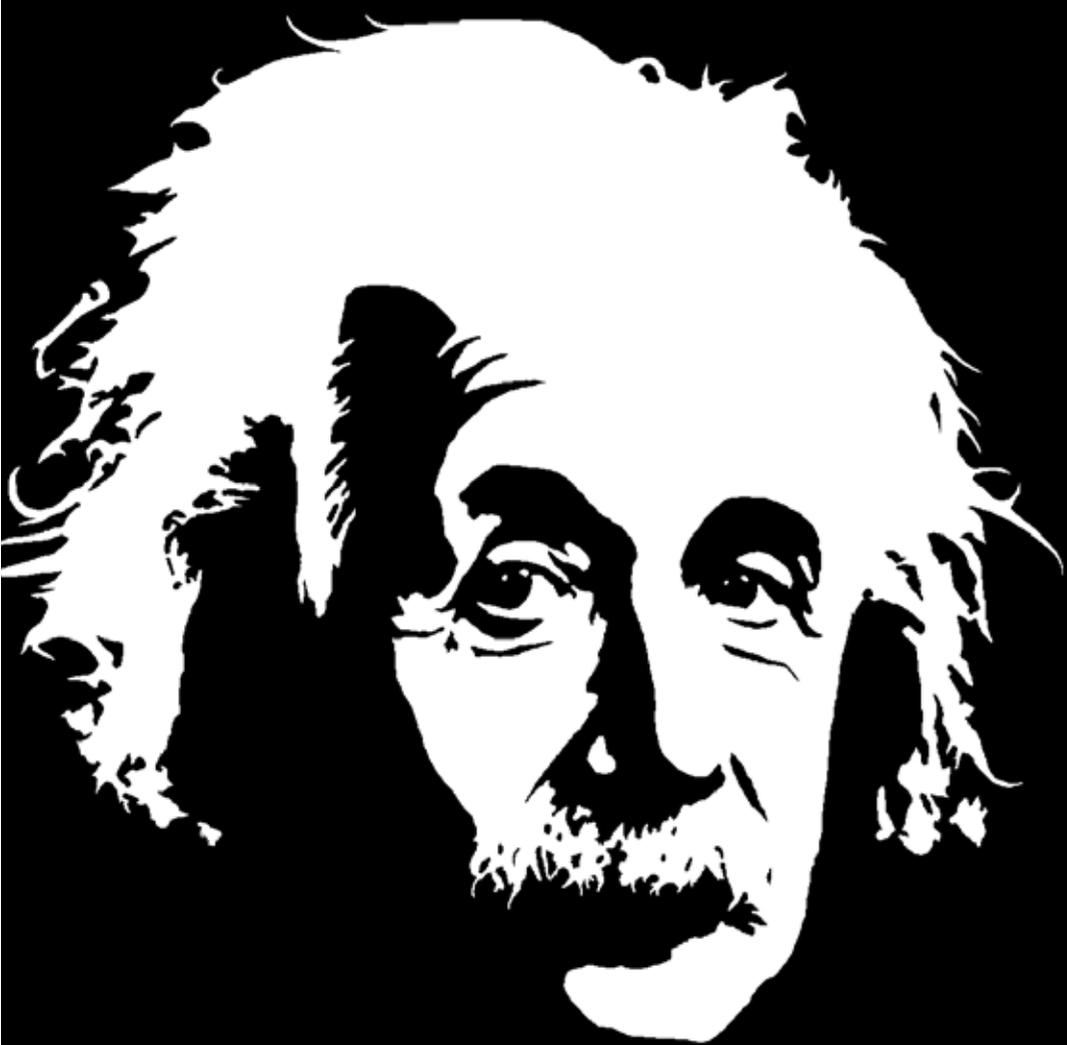
**“Fairy tales and
more fairy tales!”**

**Creative imagination is the essential element
in the intellectual equipment of the true scientist**

**fairy tales are the childhood
stimulus to this quality**



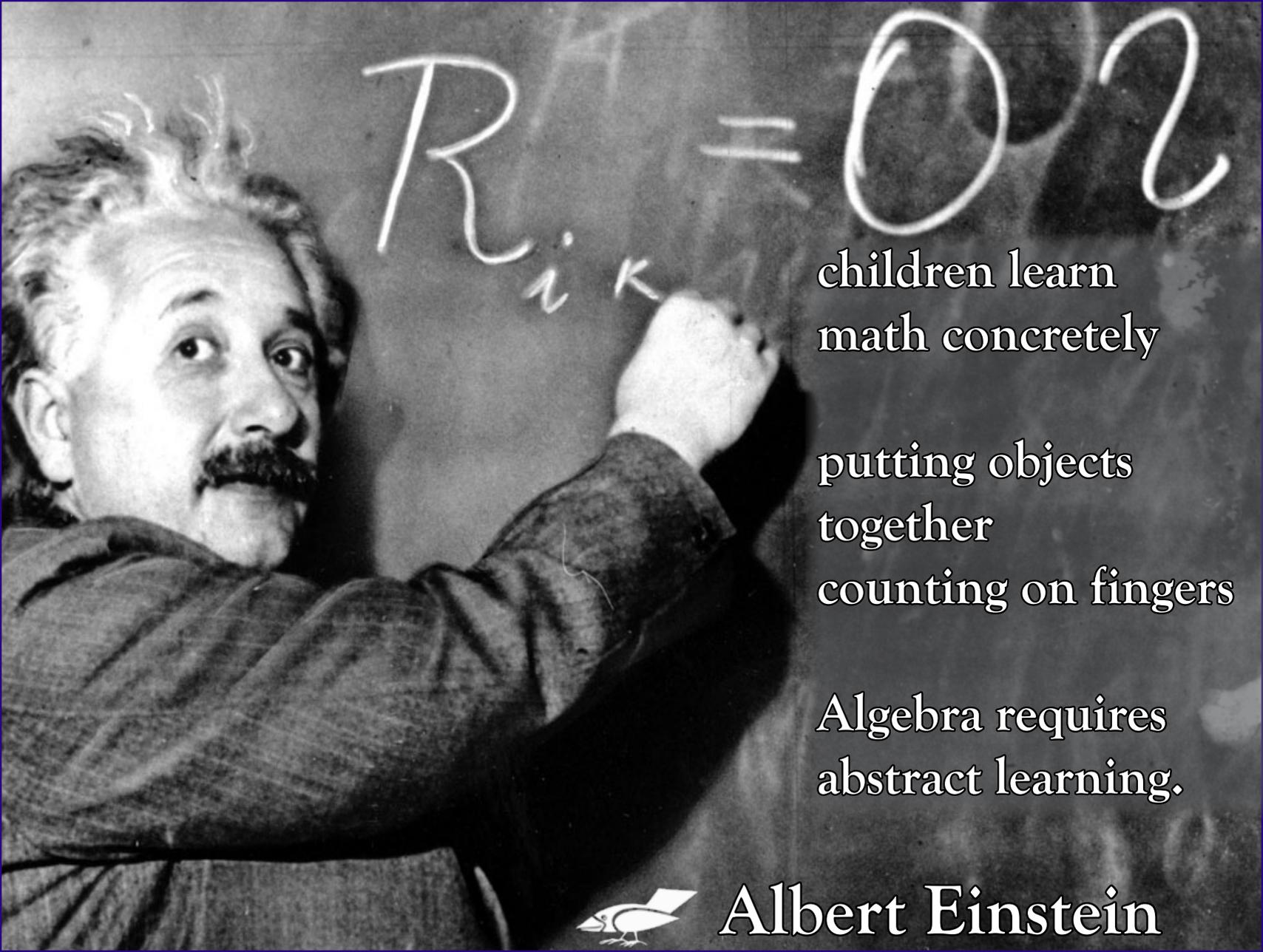
Albert Einstein



“When I examine myself and my methods of thought, I come to the conclusion that the gift of fantasy has meant more to me than any talent for abstract, positive thinking.”



Albert Einstein



$$R_{ik} = 0$$

children learn
math concretely

putting objects
together
counting on fingers

Algebra requires
abstract learning.



Albert Einstein



When children hear a story that begins in “once upon a time” they are entertaining ideas in their heads. They know it didn’t actually happen and they are thinking abstractly in a basic, graspable form.

“ Play is the highest form of research.”



Albert Einstein



presence of magic

transformation is the key feature of the genre

takes the child on a trip into a wondrous world, at the end returns the child in a reassuring manner



JRR Tolkien



presence of magic

transformation is the key feature of the genre

takes the child on a trip into a wondrous world, at the end returns the child in a reassuring manner

a truly good fairy story is marked by joy



JRR Tolkien

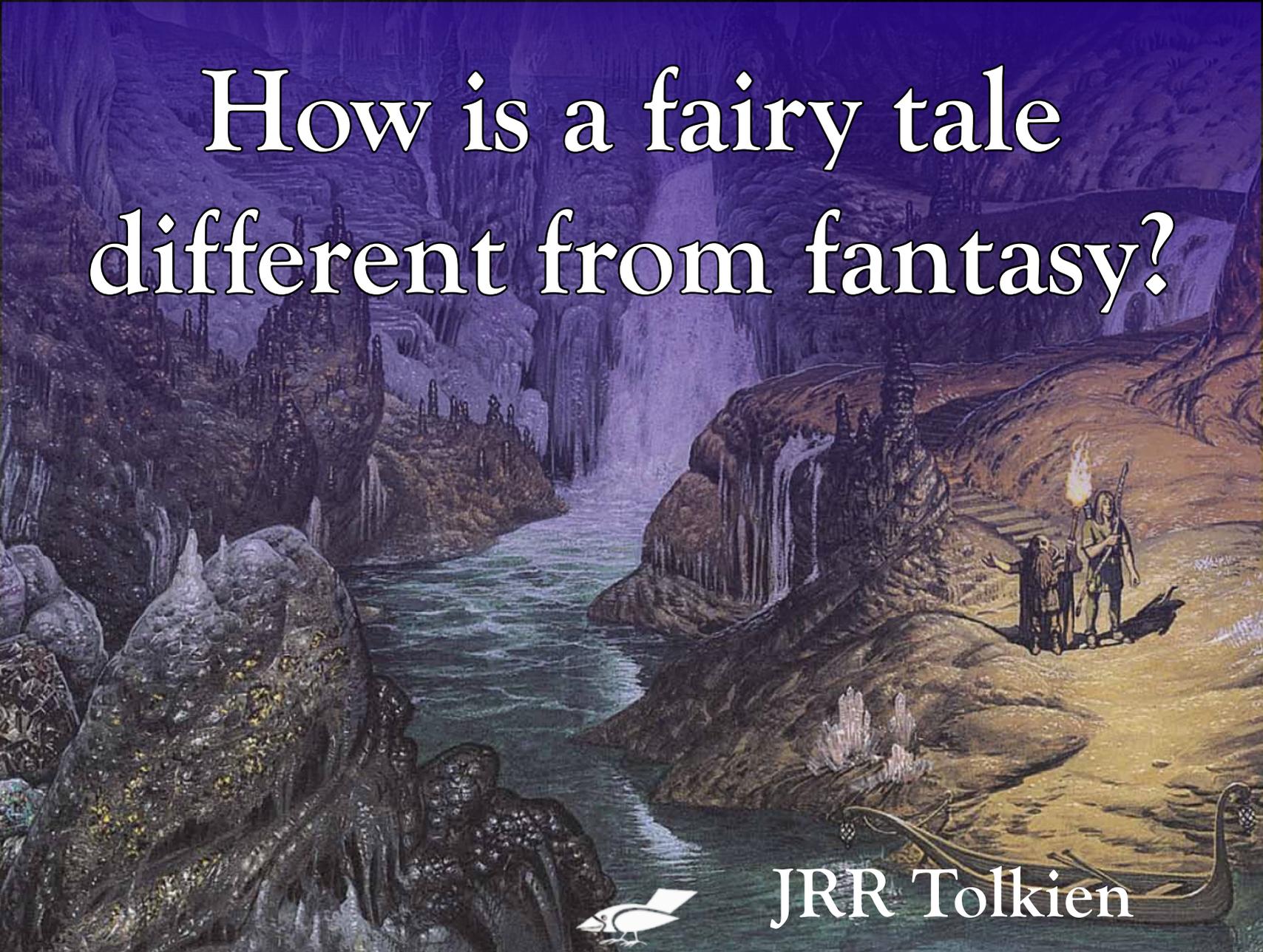


“Far more powerful and poignant is the effect of joy, when the sudden turn comes, we get a piercing glimpse of joy, and heart’s desire, that for a moment passes outside the frame, rends indeed the very web of story, and lets a gleam come through.”

JRR Tolkien



How is a fairy tale different from fantasy?



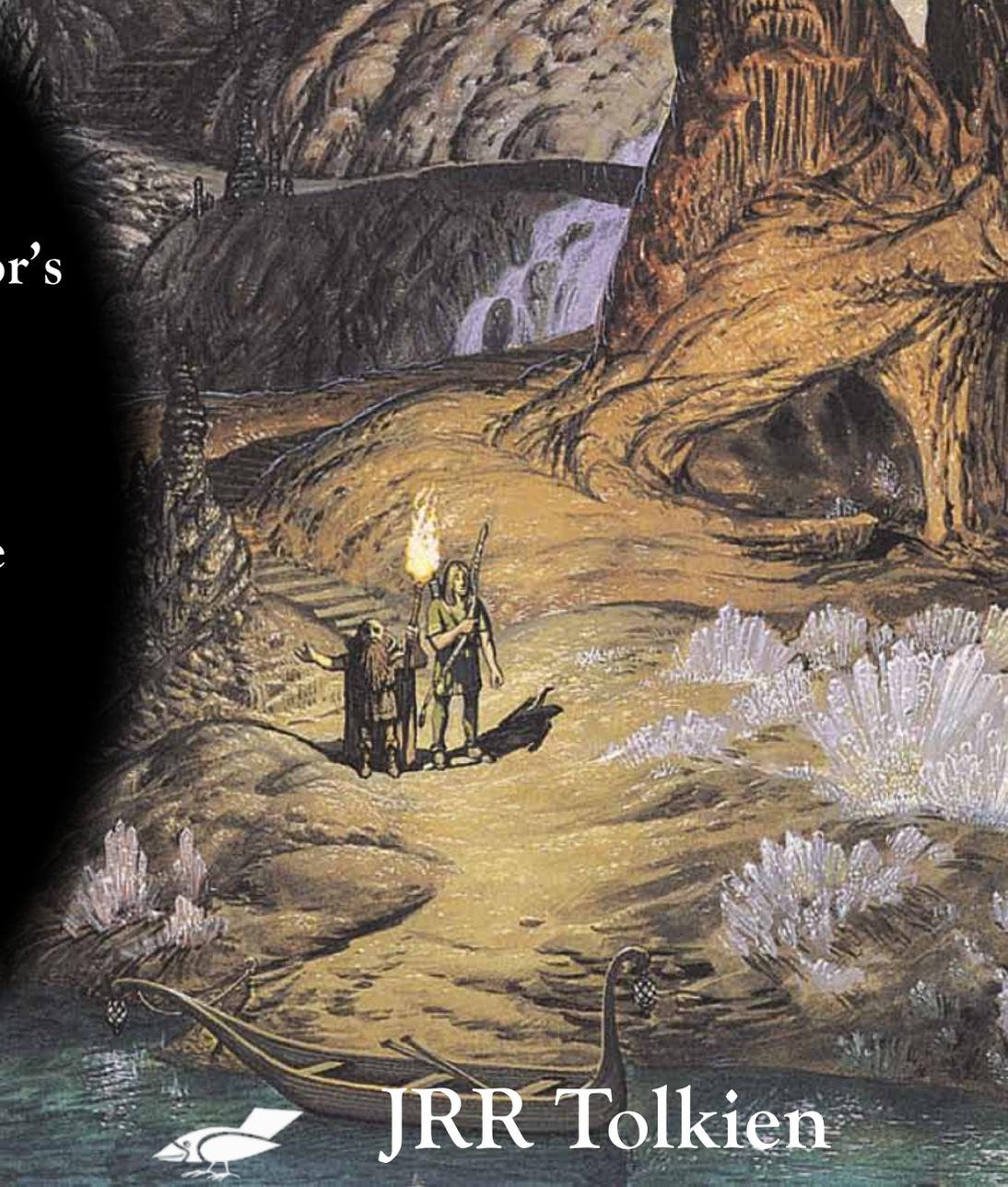
JRR Tolkien

fantasy writing

alternative world
recognizably the author's
as the setting for
speculative fiction

Secondary Belief is made
possible by art
when done right
it is story-making
in its most
potent mode

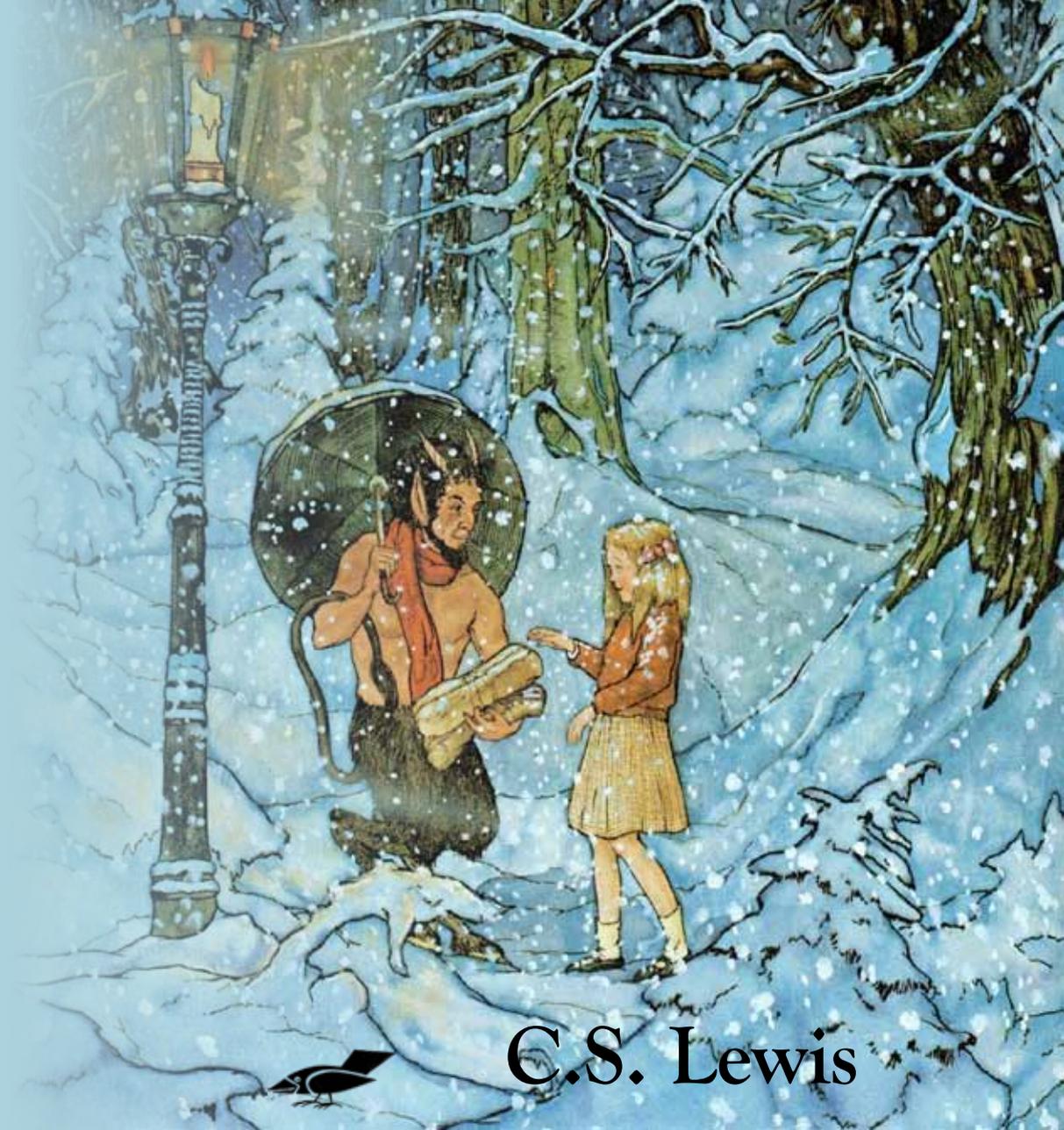
Tolkien and
C. S. Lewis
were the first



JRR Tolkien

a consistent
and rational
world

rules outside
the normal
world



C.S. Lewis



Real vs True

story as credible

no figment or illusion

magic must be taken seriously

not laughed at or explained away



JRR Tolkien

Real vs True

“Fairy tales are more than true, not because they tell us that dragons exist, but because they tell us that dragons can be beaten.”



G.K. Chesterton

Real vs True

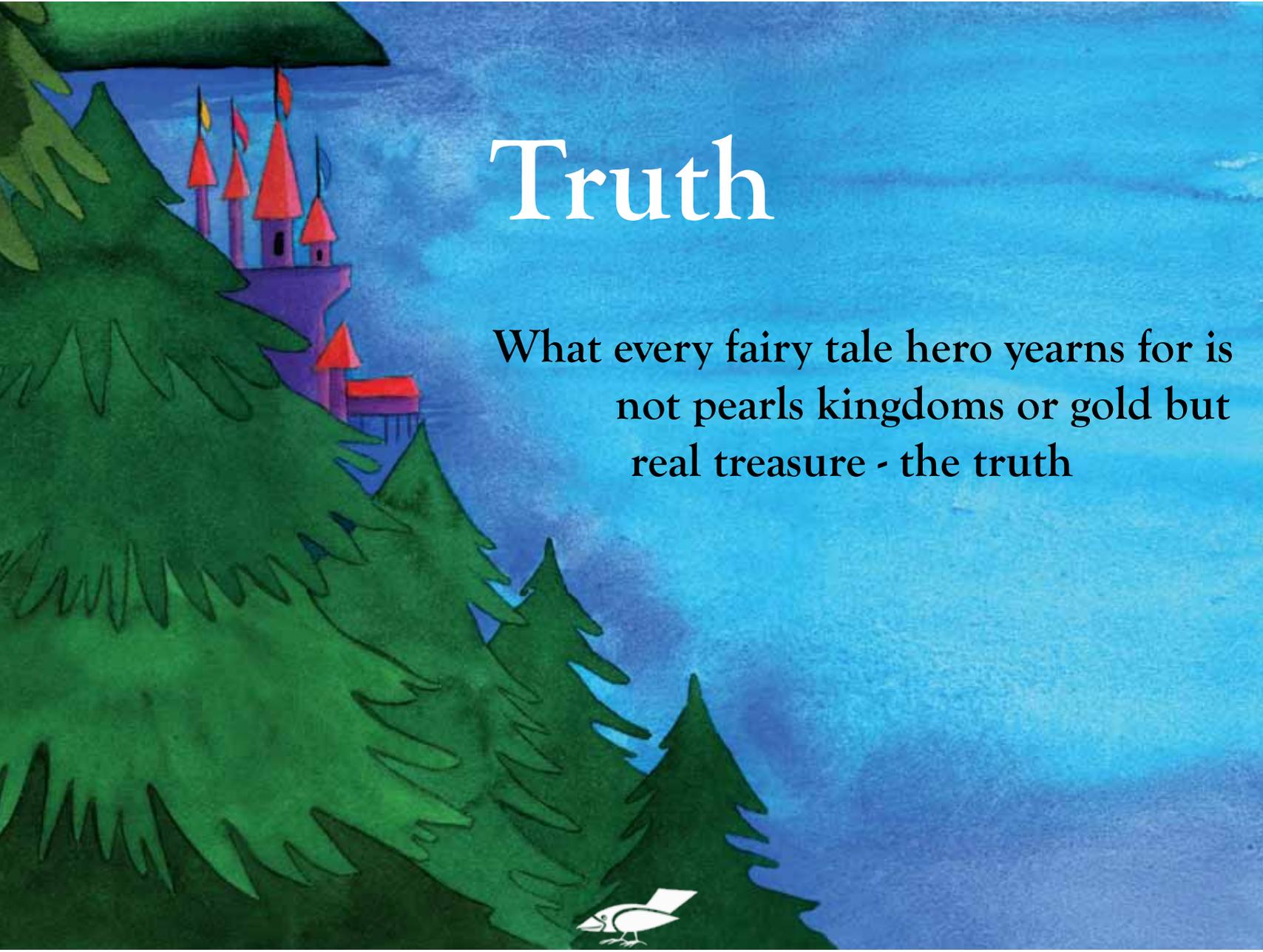
Children's feelings are more complex than their language can support.

Fictional children are given a language that honors their intuitions, or inner life returning a child's helplessness to dignity.

-from *What Maisie Knew*, 1897

Henry James

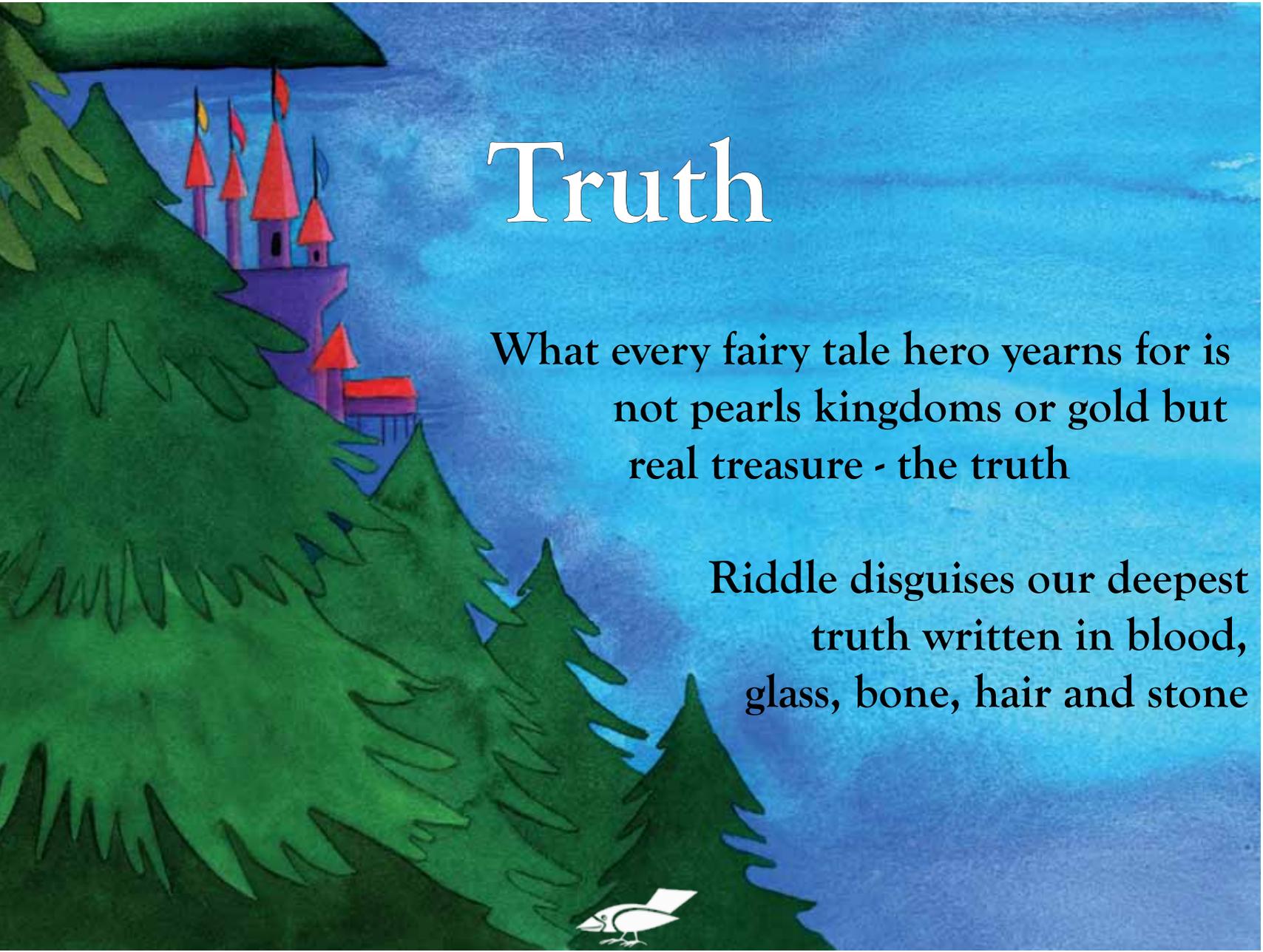




Truth

What every fairy tale hero yearns for is not pearls kingdoms or gold but real treasure - the truth



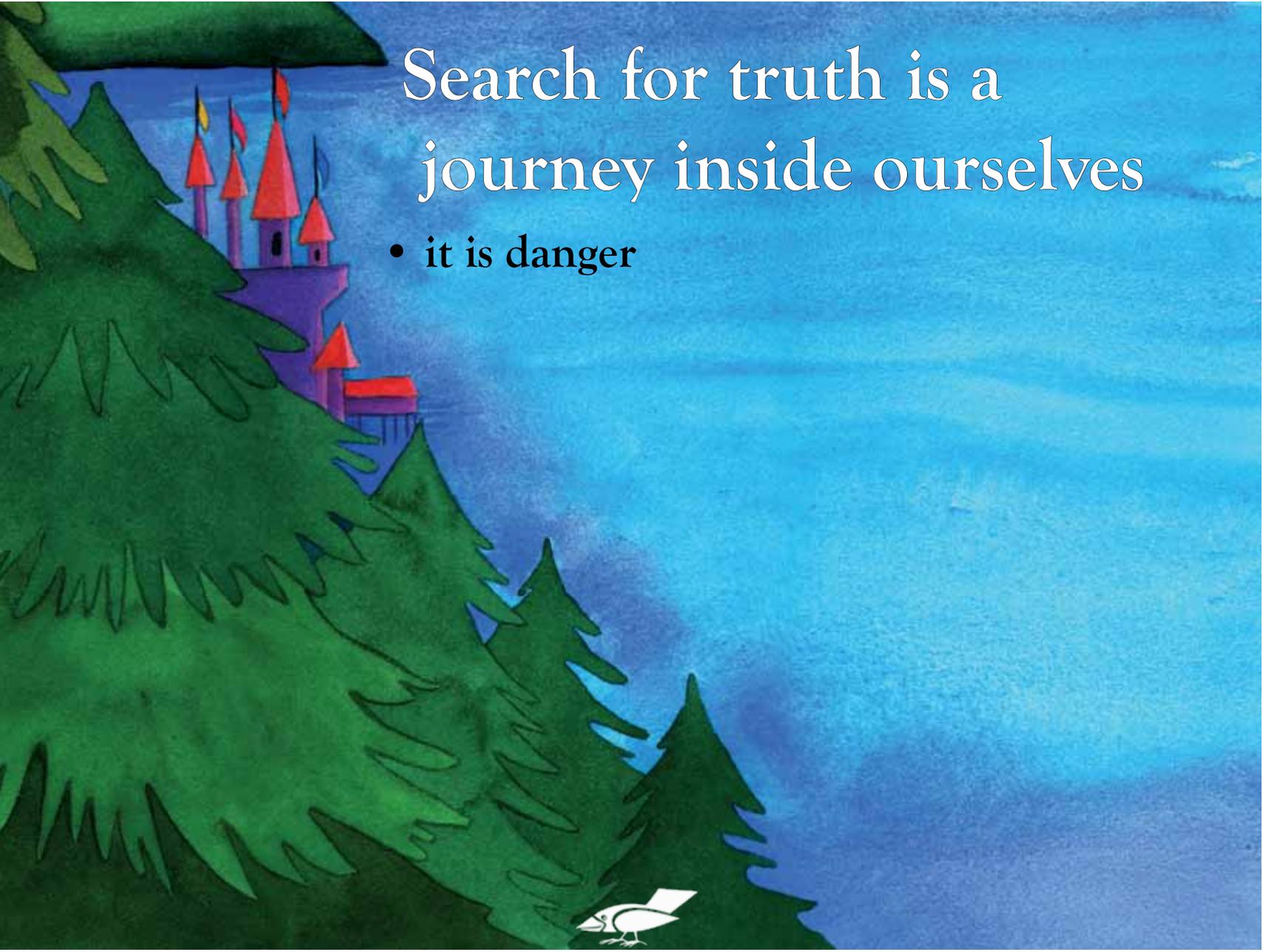


Truth

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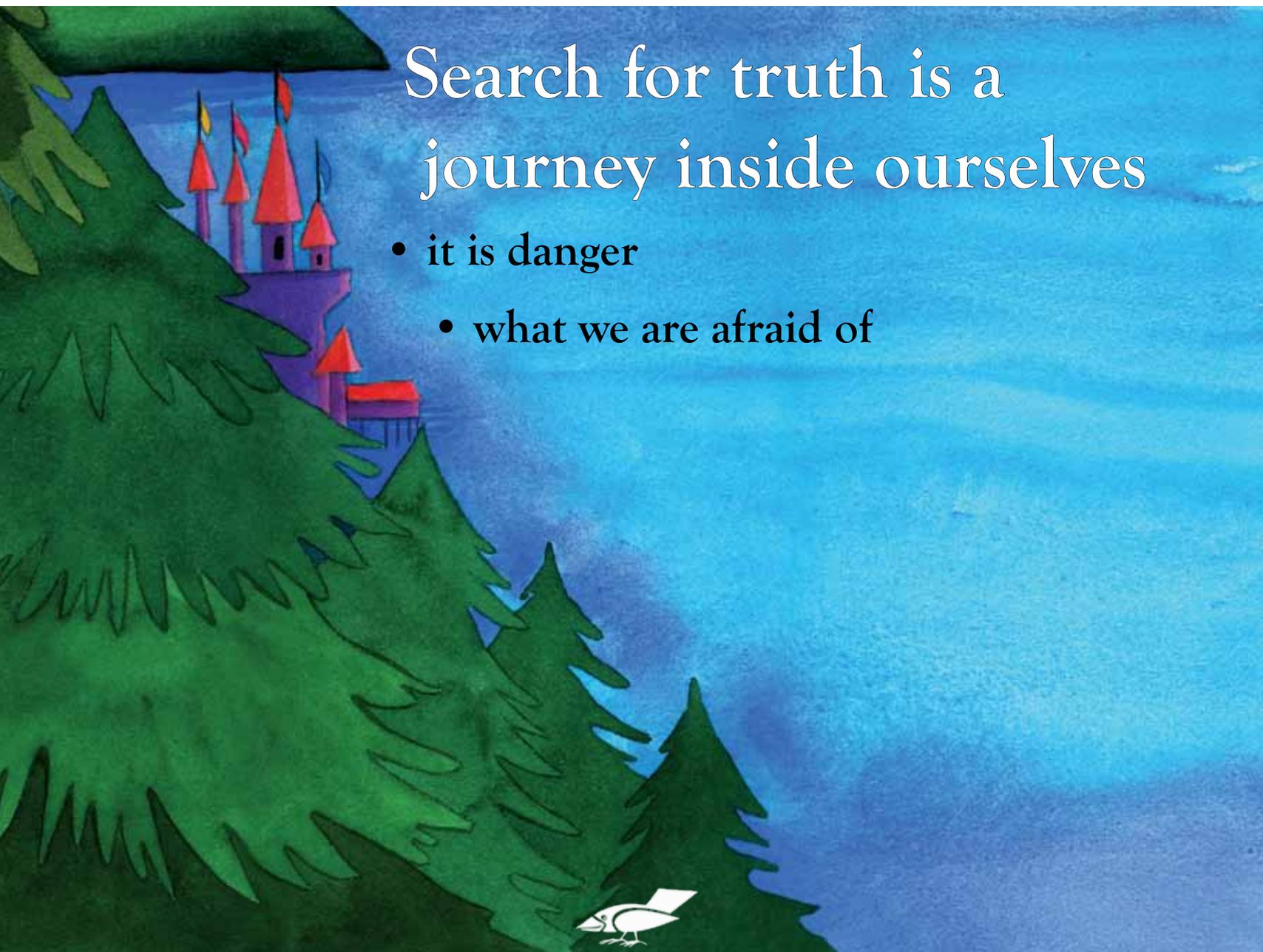
Riddle disguises our deepest truth written in blood, glass, bone, hair and stone





Search for truth is a journey inside ourselves

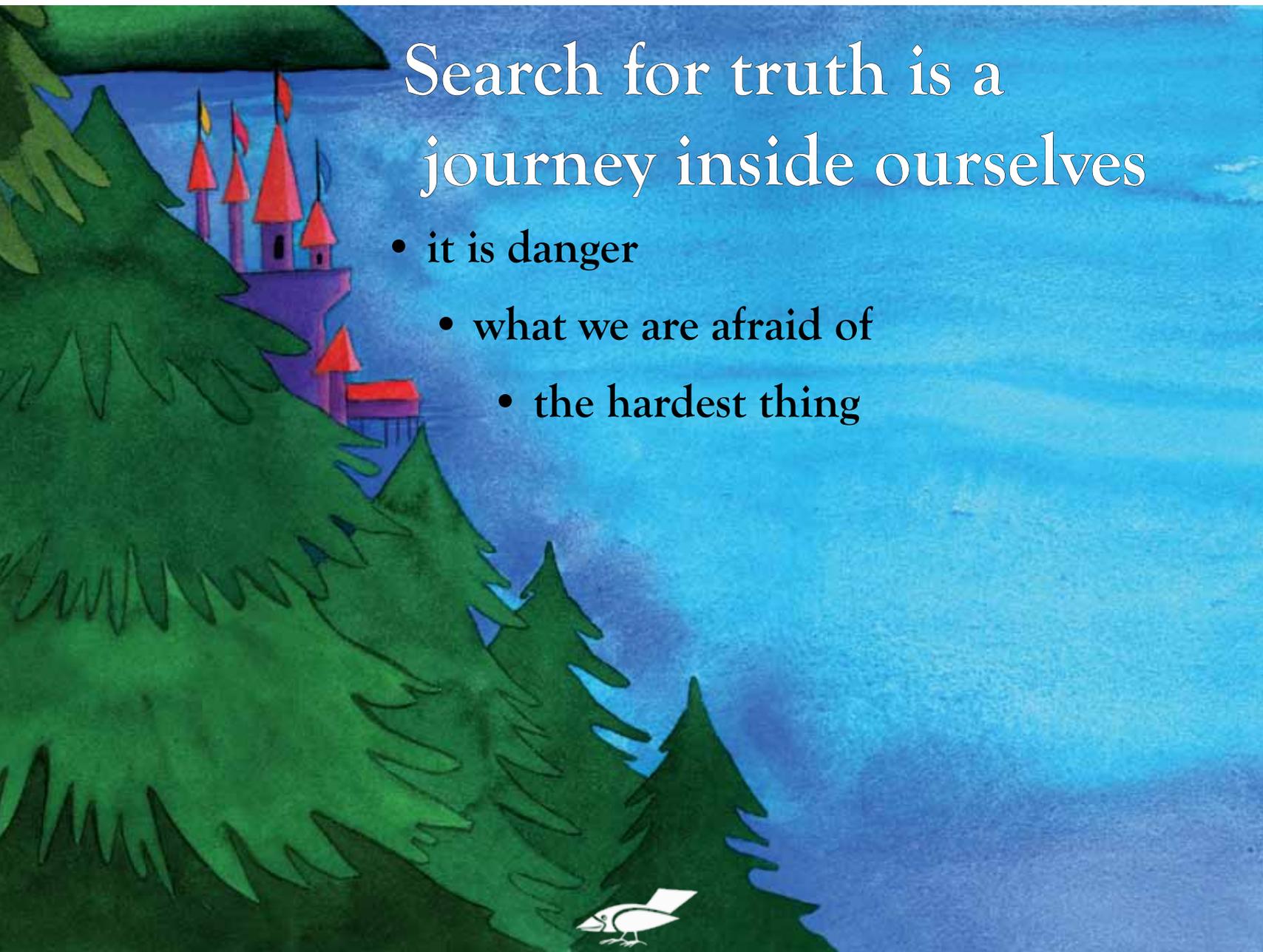
- it is danger



Search for truth is a journey inside ourselves

- it is danger
 - what we are afraid of

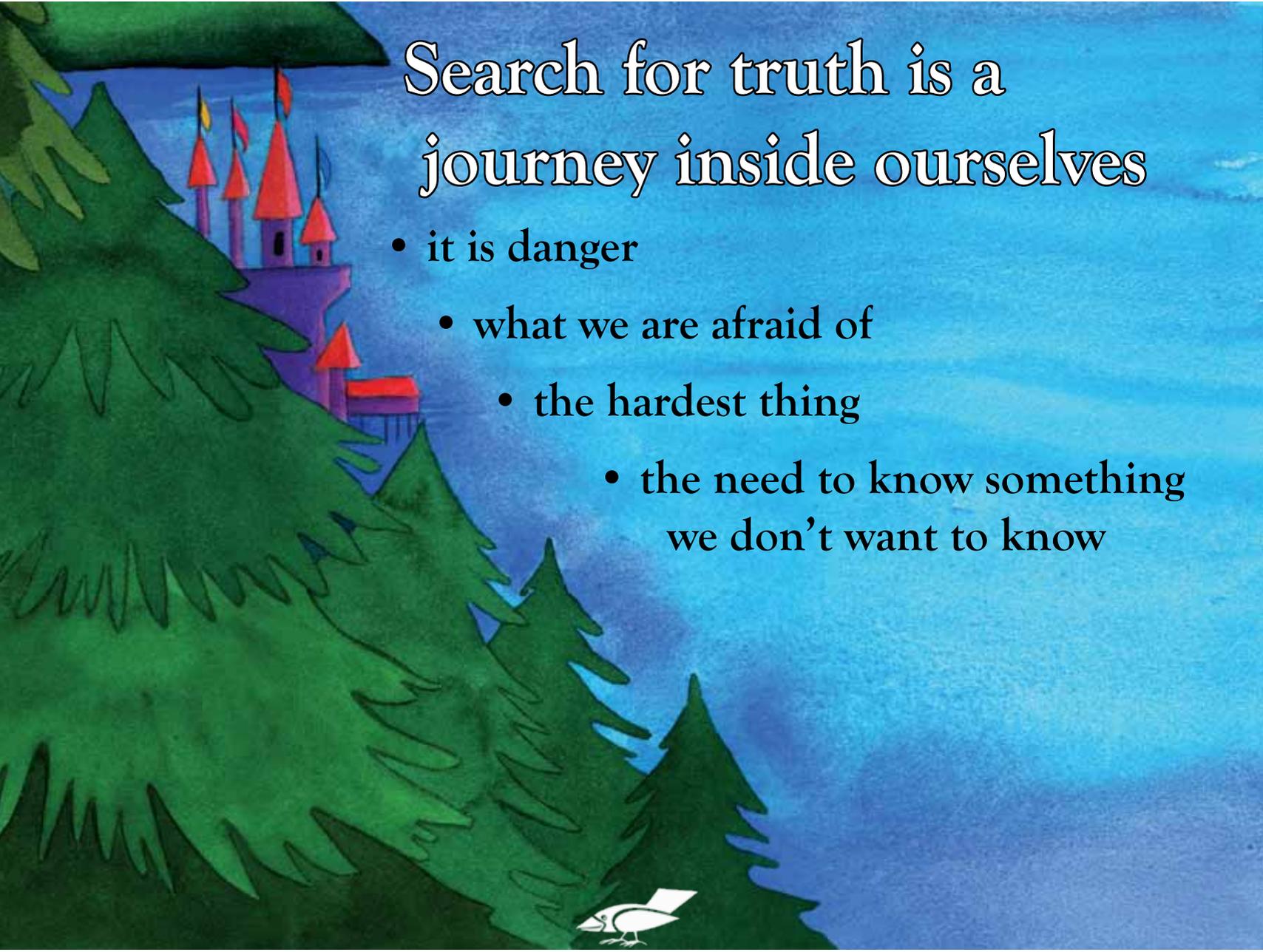




Search for truth is a journey inside ourselves

- it is danger
 - what we are afraid of
 - the hardest thing

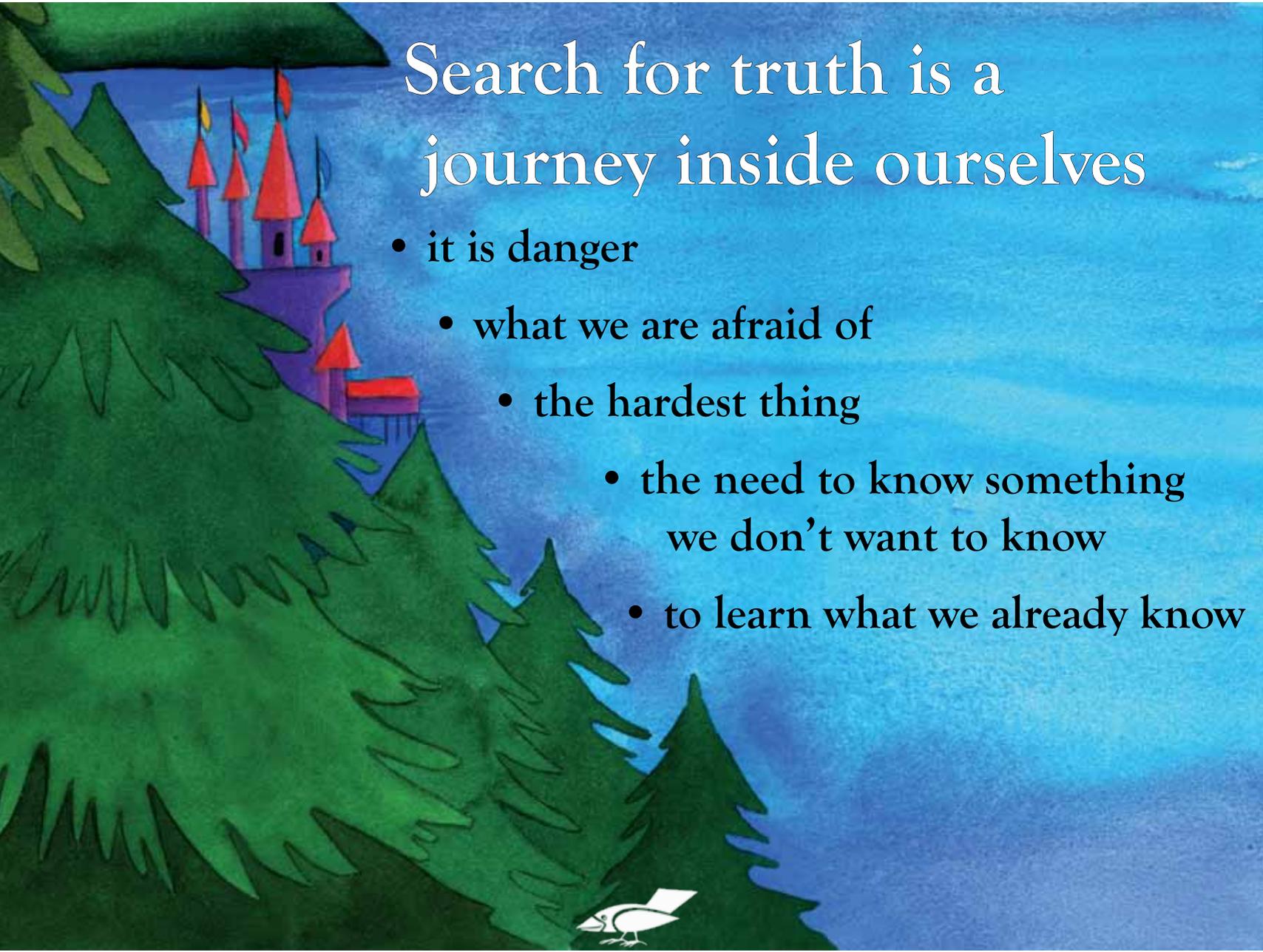




Search for truth is a journey inside ourselves

- it is danger
 - what we are afraid of
 - the hardest thing
 - the need to know something we don't want to know

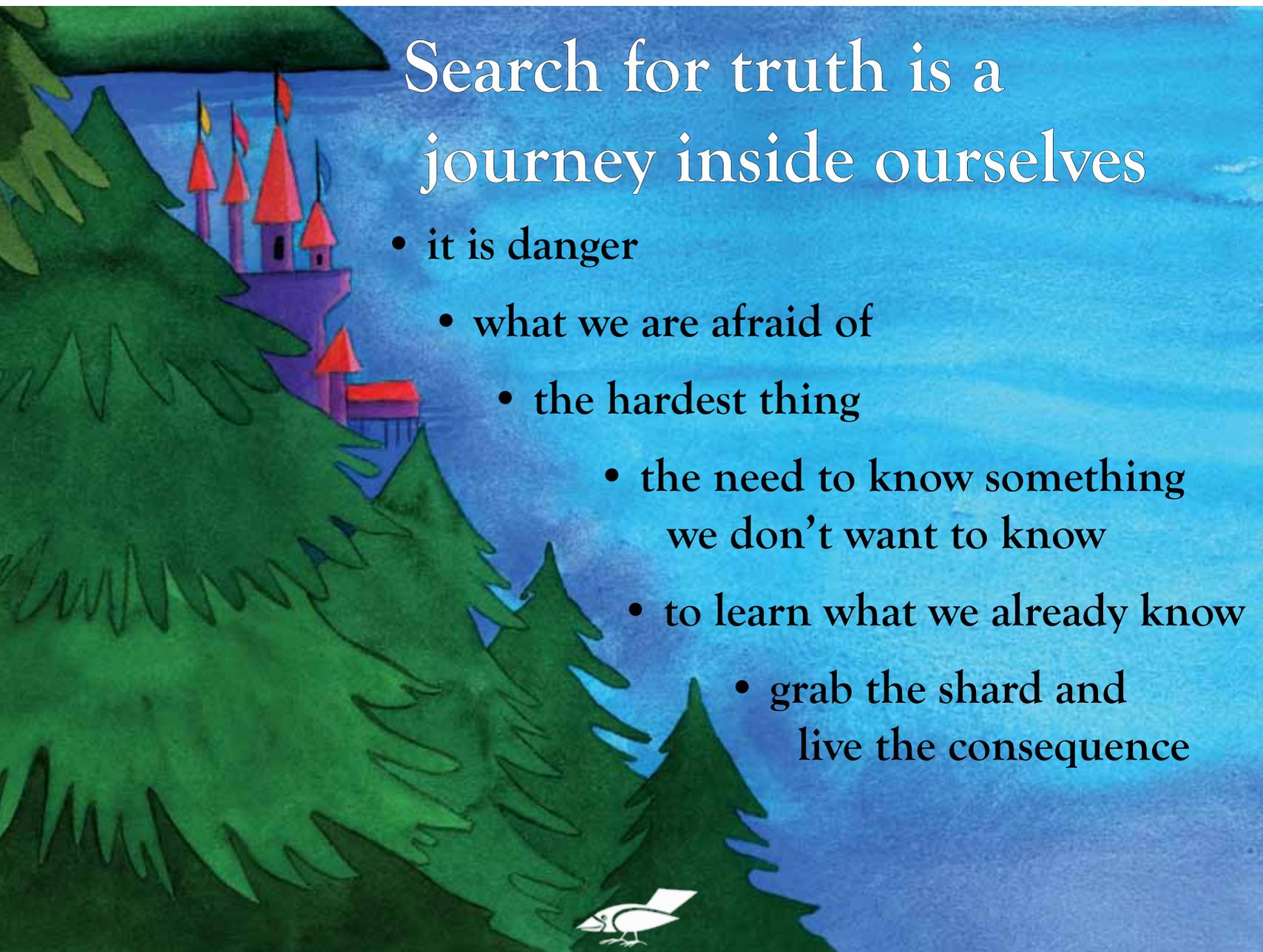




Search for truth is a journey inside ourselves

- it is danger
 - what we are afraid of
 - the hardest thing
 - the need to know something we don't want to know
 - to learn what we already know





Search for truth is a journey inside ourselves

- it is danger
 - what we are afraid of
 - the hardest thing
 - the need to know something we don't want to know
 - to learn what we already know
 - grab the shard and live the consequence



story is the search

light disguises truth

truth

is the treasure
in the dark
unknown



story is the search

light disguises truth

truth

is the treasure
in the dark
unknown

riddle
clues are
written in
stone, blood,
tears, bone,
snow

logic is fluid
hero must
learn



story is the search

light disguises truth

truth

is the treasure
in the dark
unknown

riddle

clues are
written in
stone, blood,
tears, bone,
snow

logic is fluid
hero must
learn

threshold

a door to open

the "aha!"
moment



story is the search

light disguises truth

truth

is the treasure
in the dark
unknown

riddle

clues are
written in
stone, blood,
tears, bone,
snow

logic is fluid
hero must
learn

journey

right way is always
the hardest
try three times

threshold

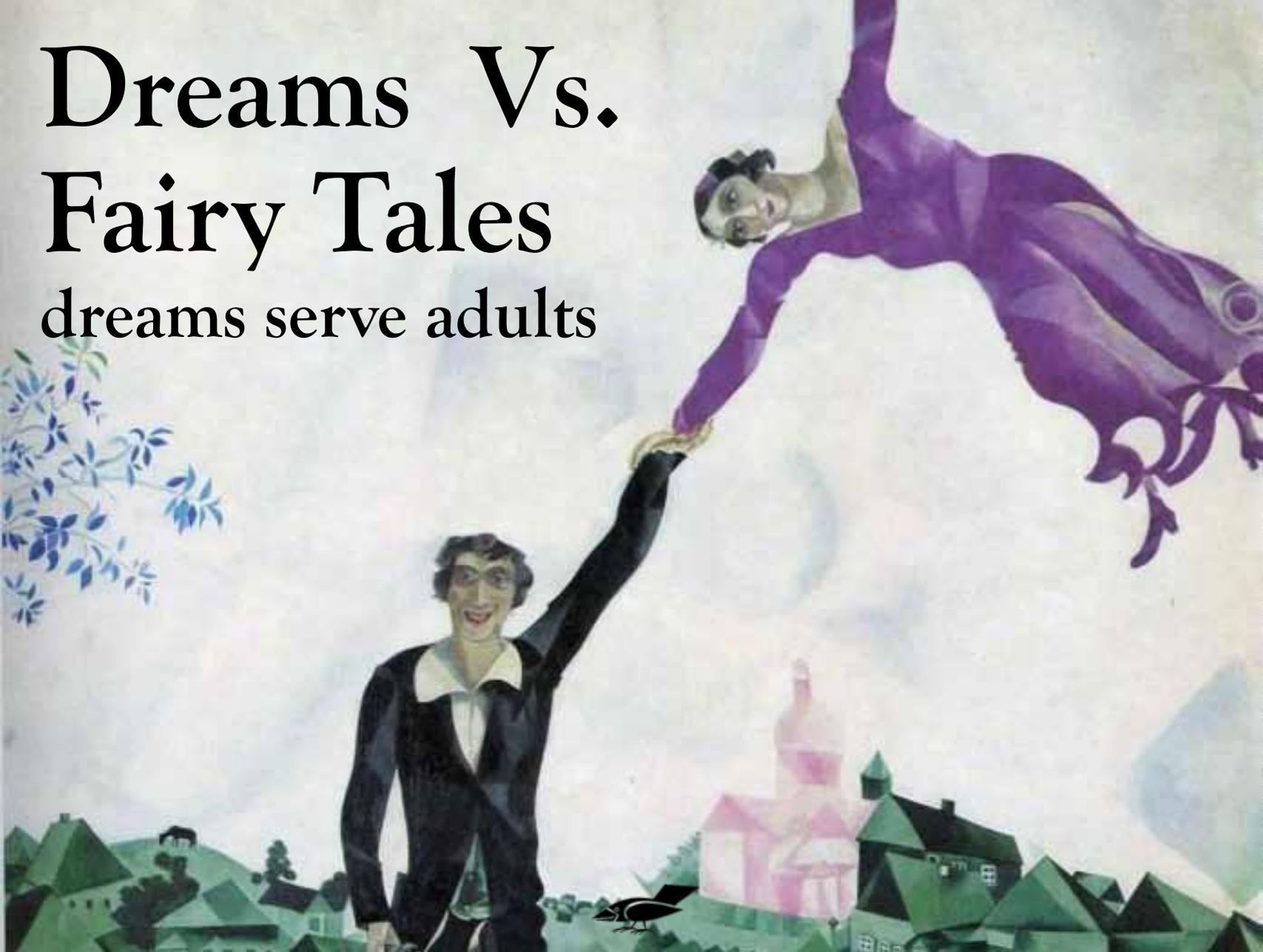
a door to open

the "aha!"
moment



Dreams Vs. Fairy Tales

dreams serve adults



Dreams Vs. Fairy Tales

- complex elaborate content
- awake better able to meet the tasks of reality



Dreams Vs. Fairy Tales



Dreams Vs. Fairy Tales

fairy tales have
dreamlike features

consistent structure

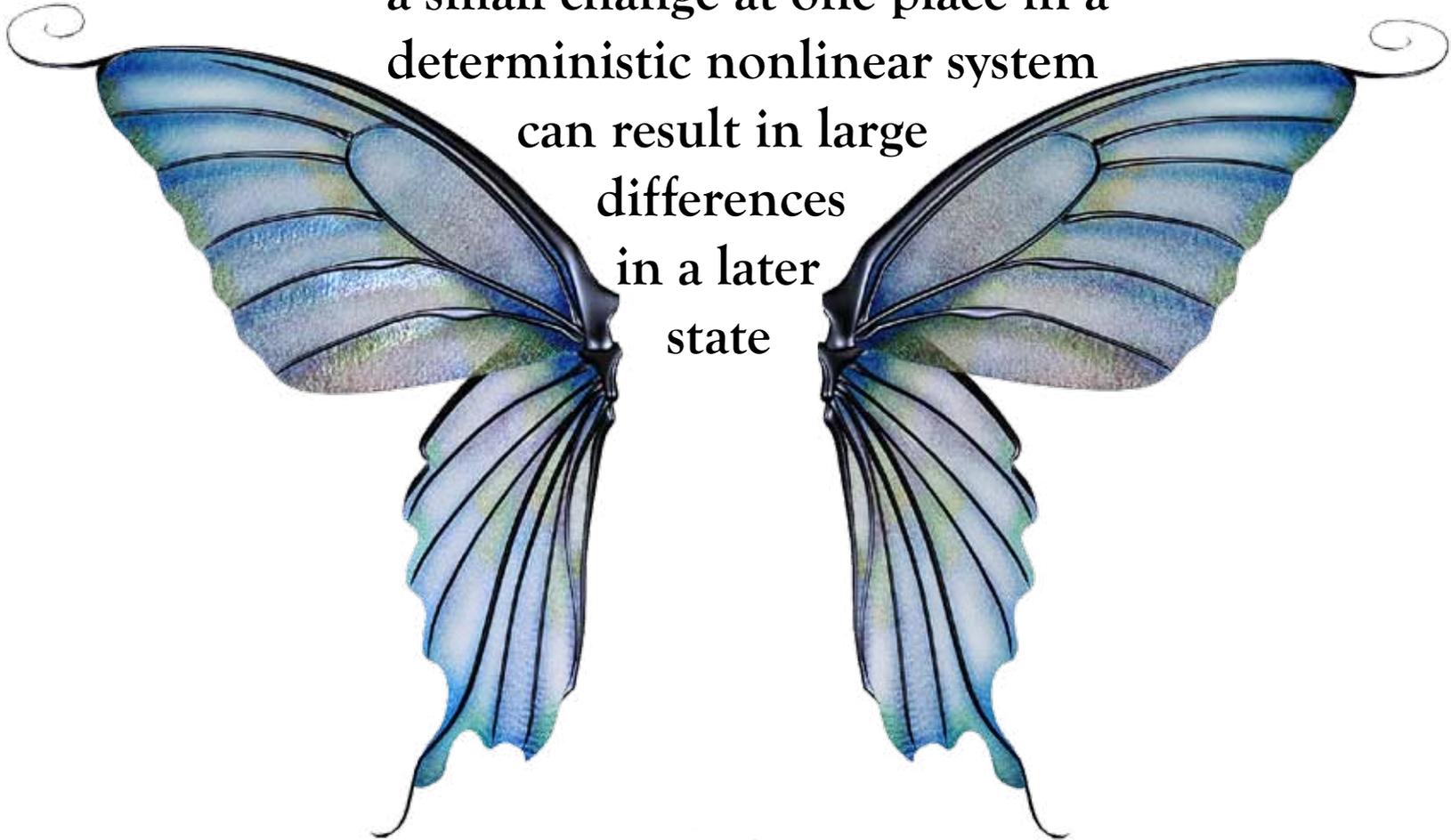
definite beginning

plot that moves toward
a satisfying
solution at the end



Chaos Theory:

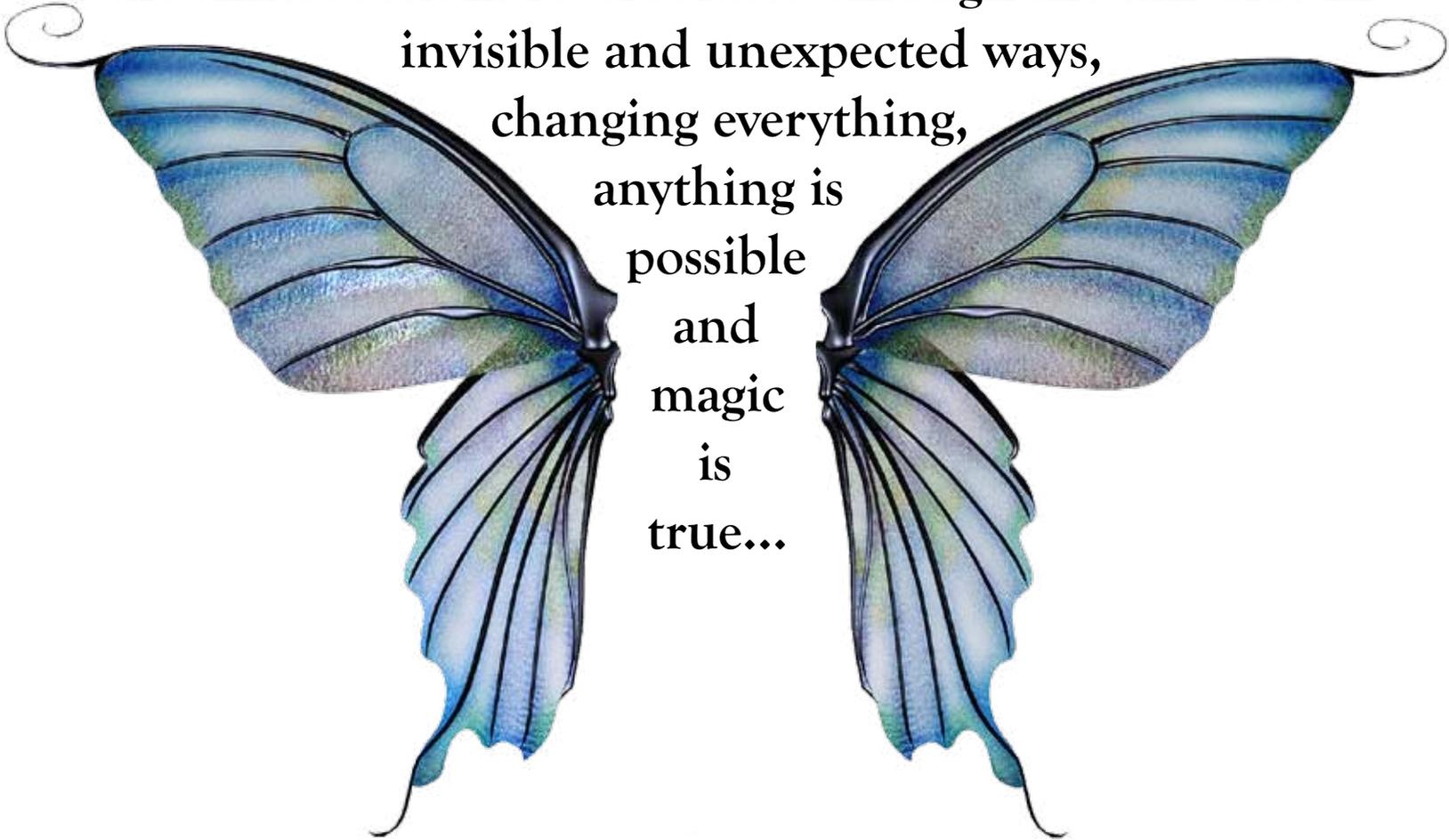
a small change at one place in a
deterministic nonlinear system
can result in large
differences
in a later
state



Butterfly Effect

Fairy Tales

If the tiniest actions reverberated through the universe in
invisible and unexpected ways,
changing everything,
anything is
possible
and
magic
is
true...





girl who sleeps 100 years does so
because of one choice to thread a needle...



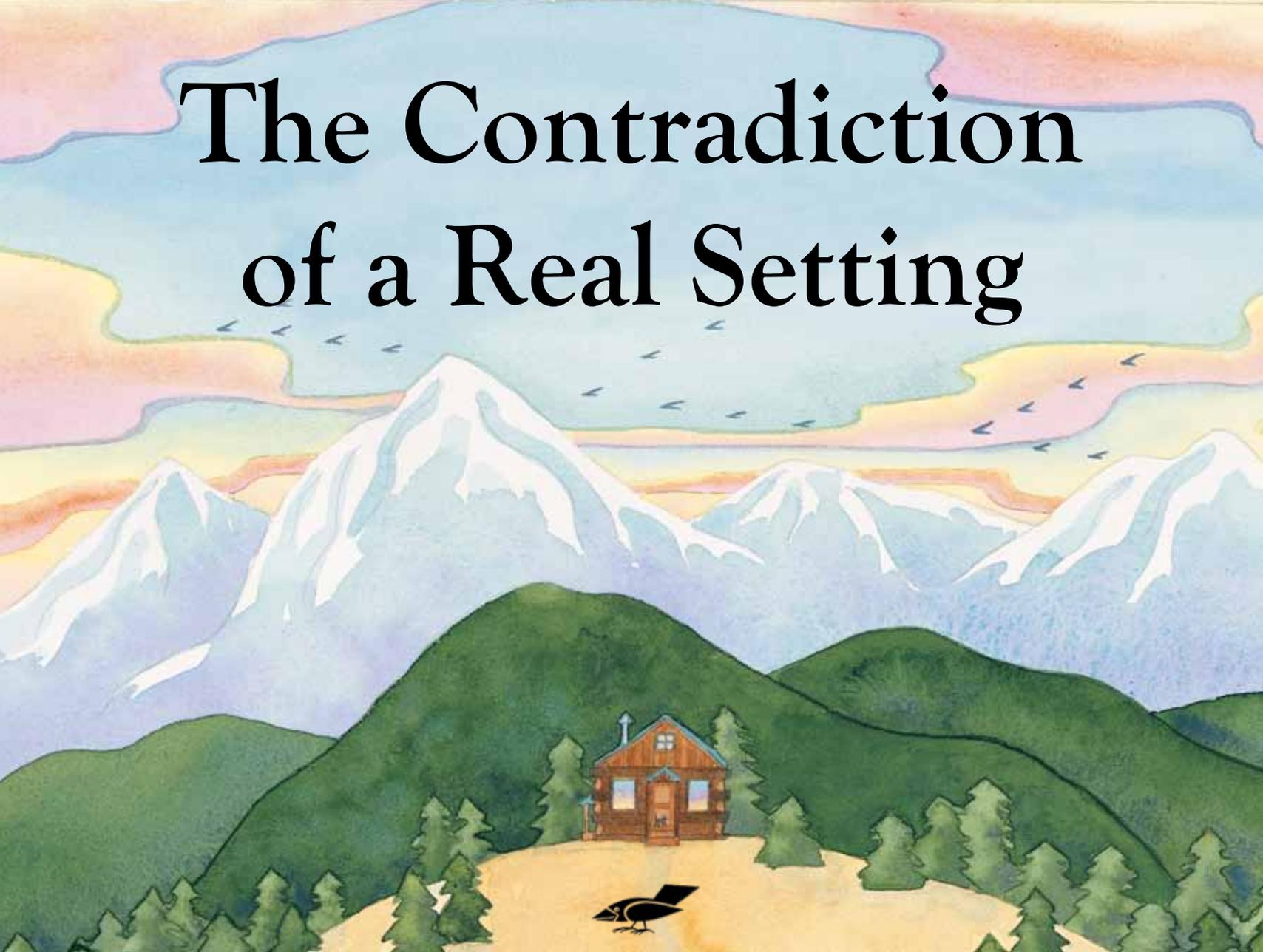
golden ball
falls down a well
changing
everything...



“The world is full of magic things waiting for
our senses to grow sharper.” WB Keats

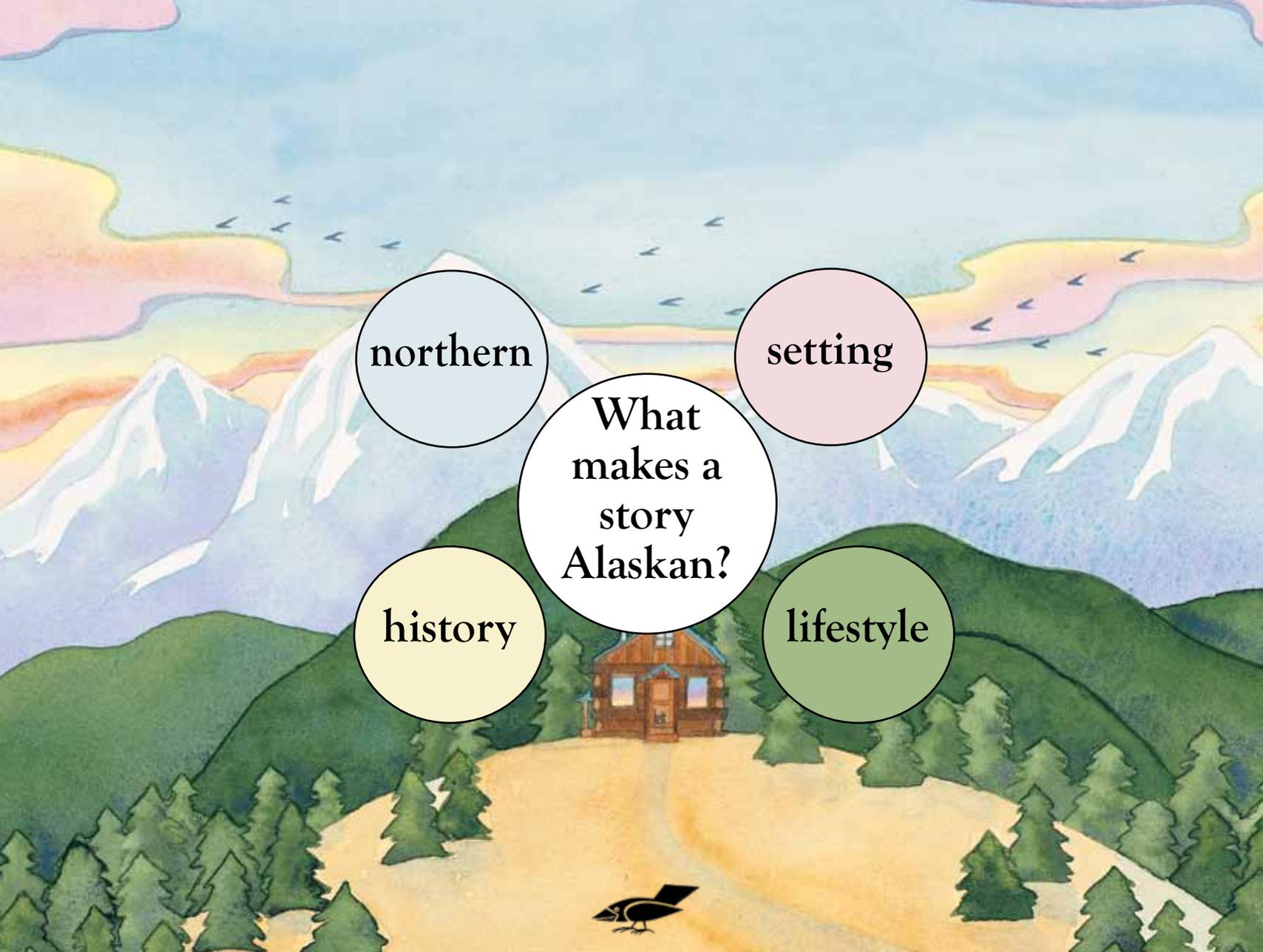


The Contradiction of a Real Setting



A watercolor illustration of a mountain landscape. In the foreground, a dirt path leads to a wooden cabin with a chimney, surrounded by green evergreen trees. The middle ground features rolling green hills. In the background, large, snow-capped mountains rise against a sky with soft, colorful clouds in shades of blue, yellow, and pink. Several birds are flying in the sky, and a raven is perched on the path in the foreground.

What
makes a
story
Alaskan?

A watercolor illustration of a mountain landscape. In the foreground, a dirt road leads to a wooden cabin with a chimney, surrounded by green evergreen trees. The middle ground shows rolling green hills. In the background, there are large, snow-capped mountains under a blue sky with several birds flying. The overall style is soft and artistic.

northern

setting

What
makes a
story
Alaskan?

history

lifestyle



**What
makes a
story
Alaskan?**

northern

weather

extremes

setting

animals

history

lifestyle



What makes a story Alaskan?

natural world

lifestyle

weather

extremes

wilderness

northern

setting

animals

cultures

history

lifestyle

legends

rugged individuals

icons

tradition

fierce independence



What makes a story Alaskan?

northern

setting

history

lifestyle

natural world

extremes

wilderness

animals

history

bears
moose

legends

tradition

native cultures

outdoors

rugged individuals

fierce independence

home-
steaders

icons

fishing

weather

cold
& hot

light &
dark

avalanche

nature

northern
lights

snow
glaciers

termination
dust

fata
morgana

gold
rush

animals
speak





What makes a story Alaskan?

northern

setting

history

lifestyle

magic

magic

magic

magic

natural world

extremes

wilderness

animals

history

icons

legends

tradition

rugged individuals

termination dust

weather

fata morgana

avalanche

cold & hot

light & dark

nature

bears moose

gold rush

fishing

animals speak

fierce independence

native cultures

outdoors

home-steaders

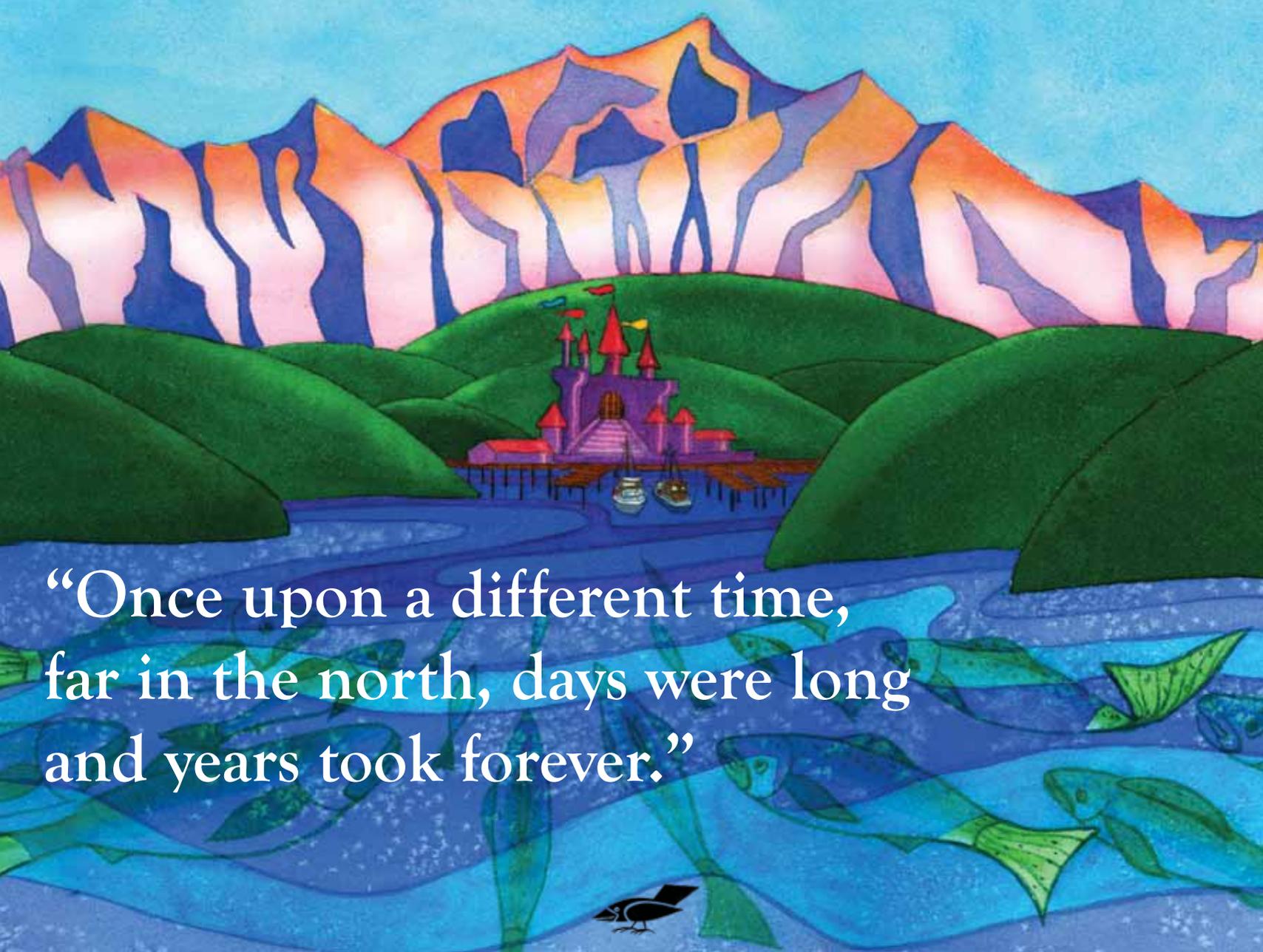


a story place
a state of mind



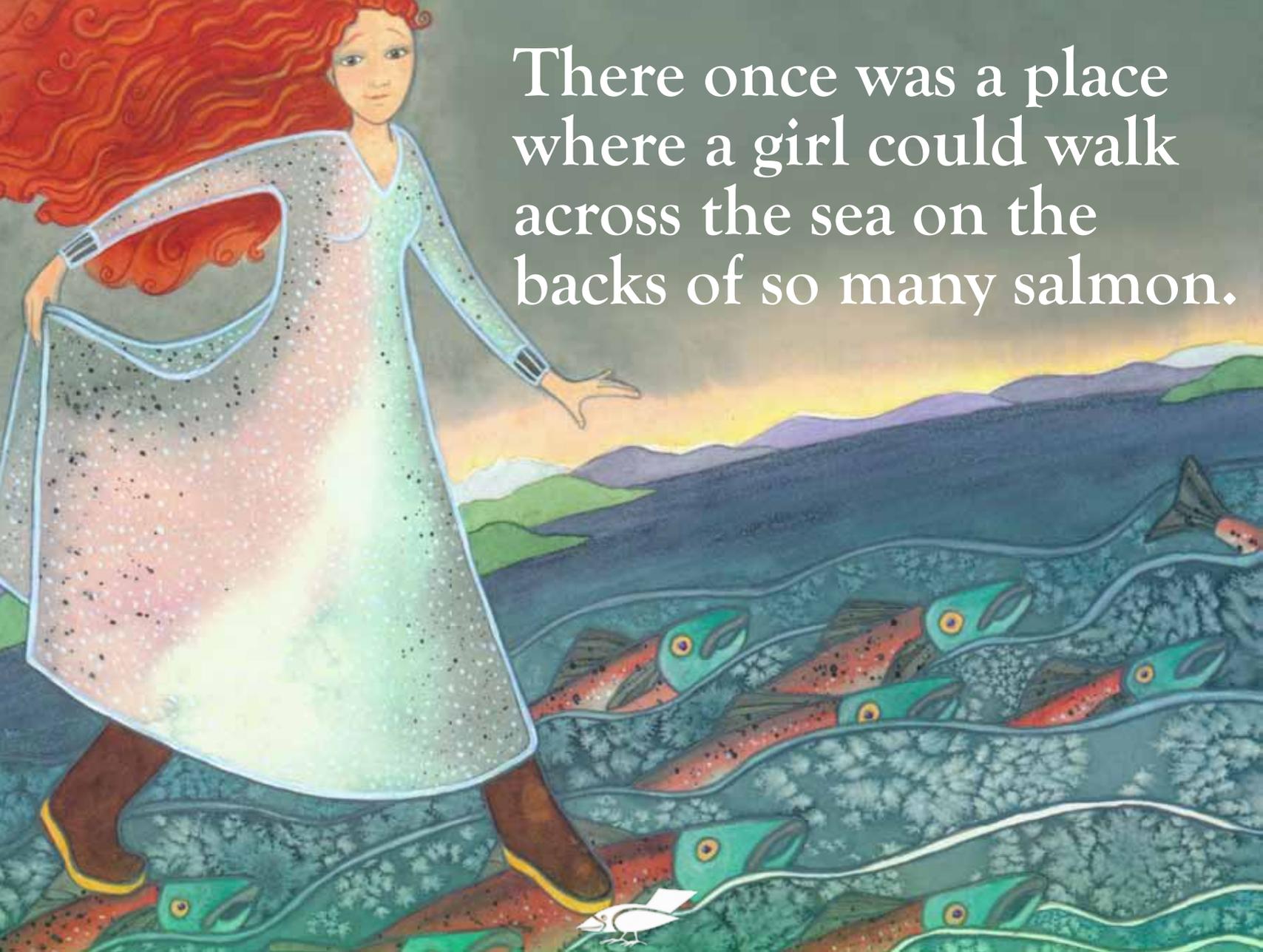
signals a time
outside of now

outside of ordinary reality



“Once upon a different time,
far in the north, days were long
and years took forever.”

There once was a place
where a girl could walk
across the sea on the
backs of so many salmon.



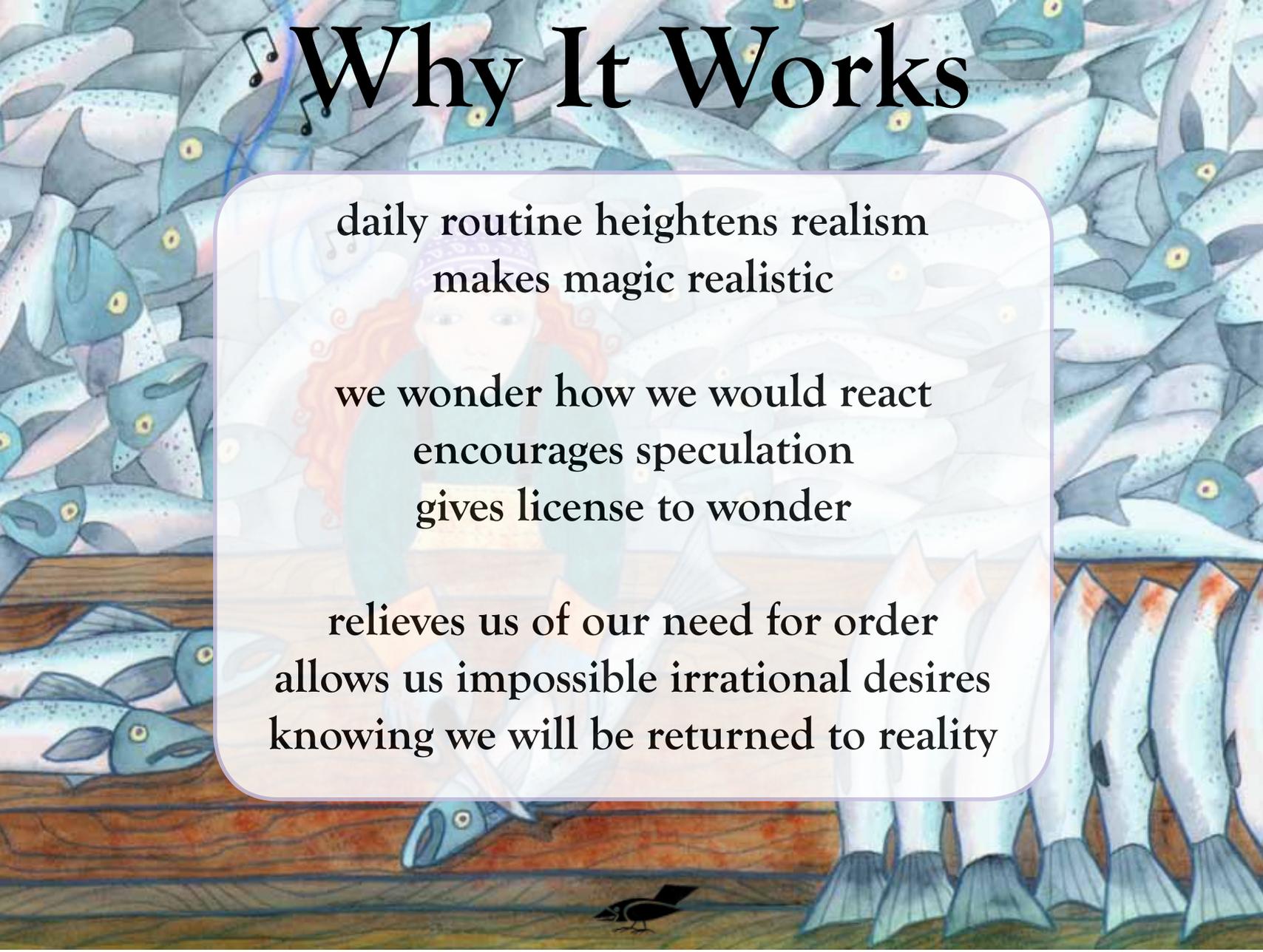


Daily reminders of the shifting natural forces of powers greater than ourselves, this is Alaska where magic dancing in shadows from an ancient world, still exists.



Why It Works





Why It Works

daily routine heightens realism
makes magic realistic

we wonder how we would react
encourages speculation
gives license to wonder

relieves us of our need for order
allows us impossible irrational desires
knowing we will be returned to reality



magic object changes
the hero's life

fairy tale gives dignity to the smallest achievements
wonderful consequences come of it



encourages
the child to trust
that his small real
achievements
are important
even though these events
happened once long ago in
a far and distant land

it offers hope not simply
realistic accounts of
what the world is like
here and now



But why?

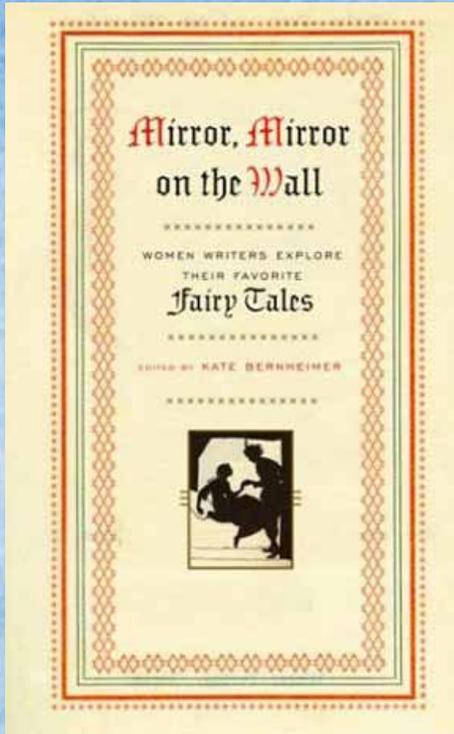
Do we still need
fairy tales?

Any relevance in
today's world?



What about Feminism?
Business?
Parenting?



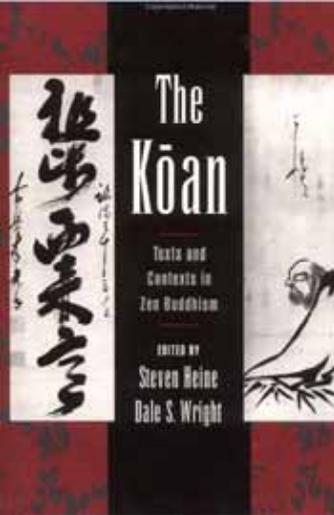


28 leading women
contemporary writers
write penetrating
commentaries

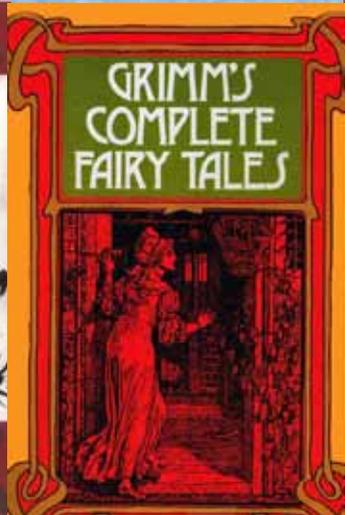
how fairy tales
helped shape their
imagination, their craft,
and our culture

Alice Adams, Julia Alvarez, Margaret Atwood, Ann Beattie, Rosellen Brown, A. S. Byatt, Kathryn Davis, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, Deborah Eisenberg, Maria Flook, Patricia Foster, Vivian Gornick, Lucy Grealy, bell hooks, Fanny Howe, Fern Kupfer, Ursula K. Le Guin, Carole Maso, Jane Miller, Lydia Millet, Joyce Carol Oates, Connie Porter, Francine Prose, Linda Gray Sexton, Midori Snyder, Fay Weldon, Joy Williams, Terri Windling

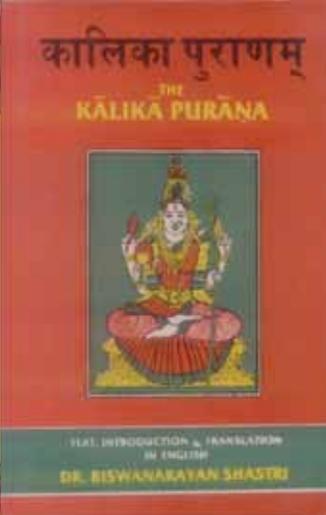




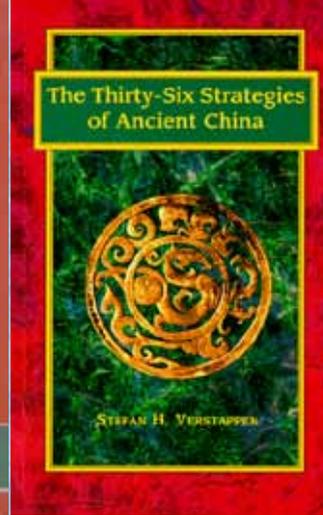
Japan



Europe



India



China



America

“Narratives are culturally embedded, as children we are told tales that are meant to guide us in our lives.”

-Kaihan Krippendorff

Business



takes “story” to a new level
paths for success in business

36 Chinese Stratagems:

old military tactics (synonymous with ruse)

not the same thing as a strategy (being a long-term plan or outline)

like proverbs or folklore

part of the “collective unconscious” of most Chinese people

www.kaihan.net

interactive stratagem tool
answer questions
solve a problem

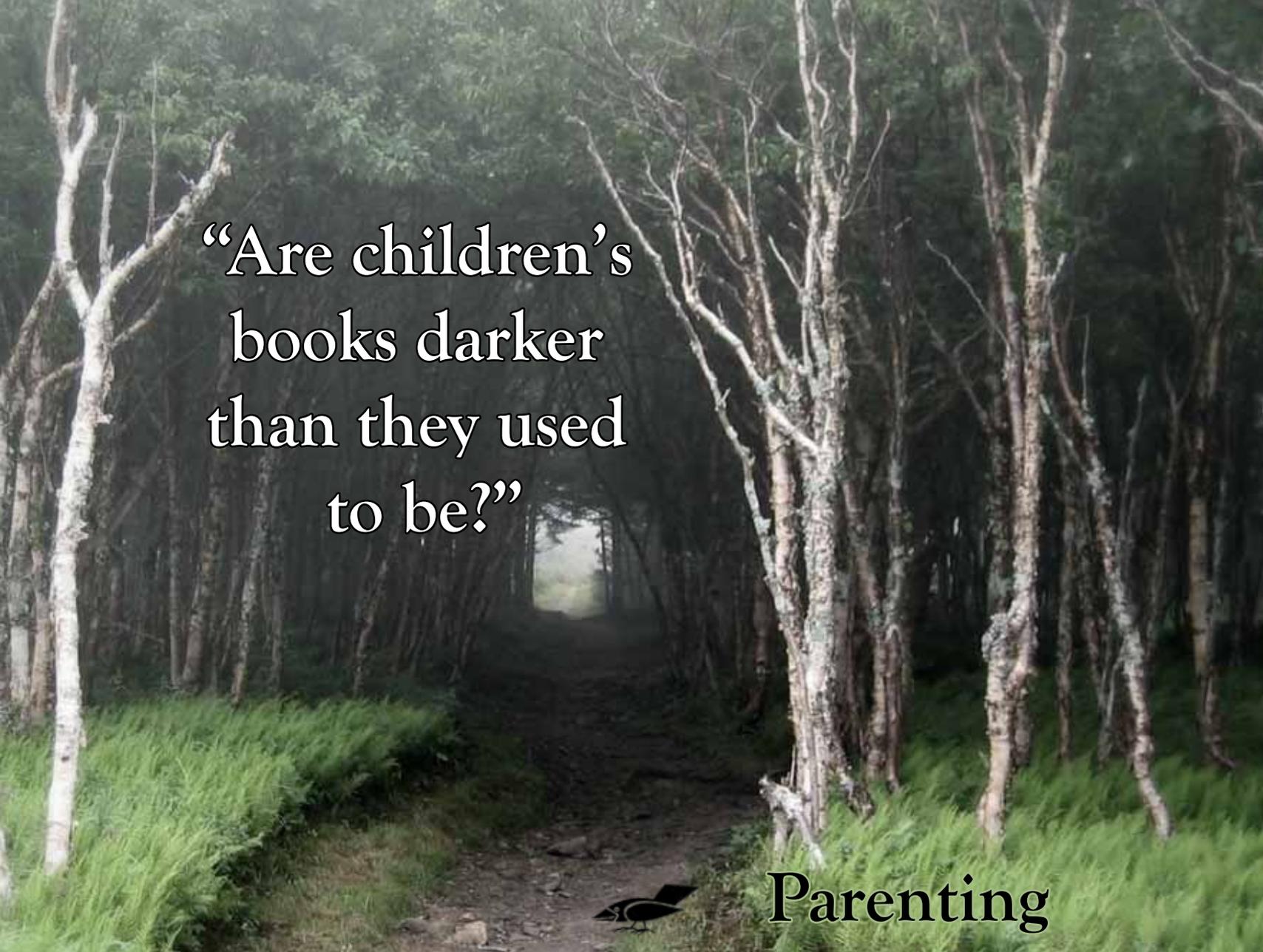
“Create Something Out Of Nothing”

“Coordinate The Uncoordinated”

“Take Away A Goat In Passing”



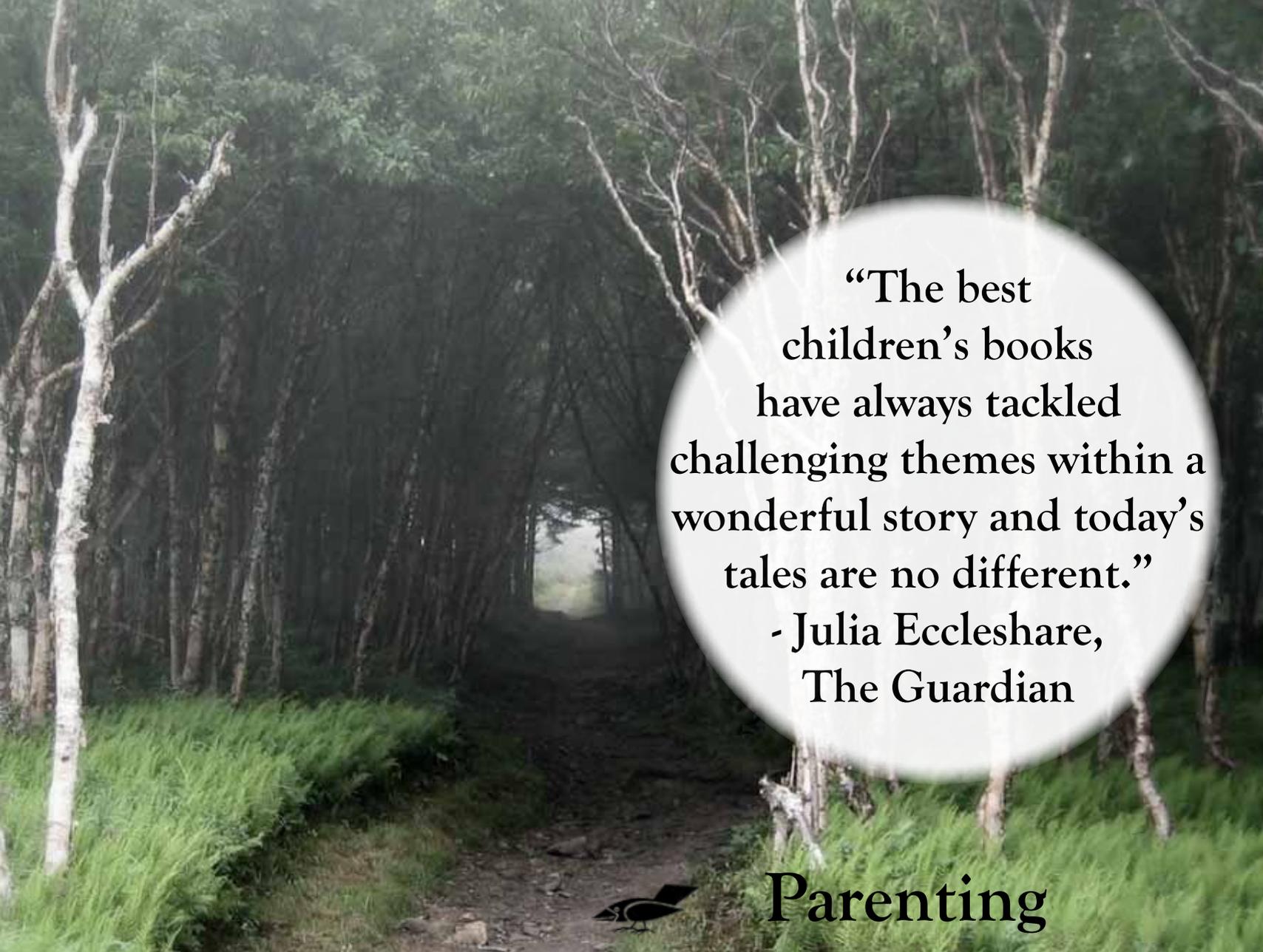
Business

A photograph of a forest path. The path is narrow and made of dirt and rocks, leading into a dense forest. The trees are tall and thin, with light-colored bark, possibly birches. The ground is covered with green ferns and grass. The lighting is dim, creating a somewhat somber and mysterious atmosphere. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

“Are children’s
books darker
than they used
to be?”



Parenting

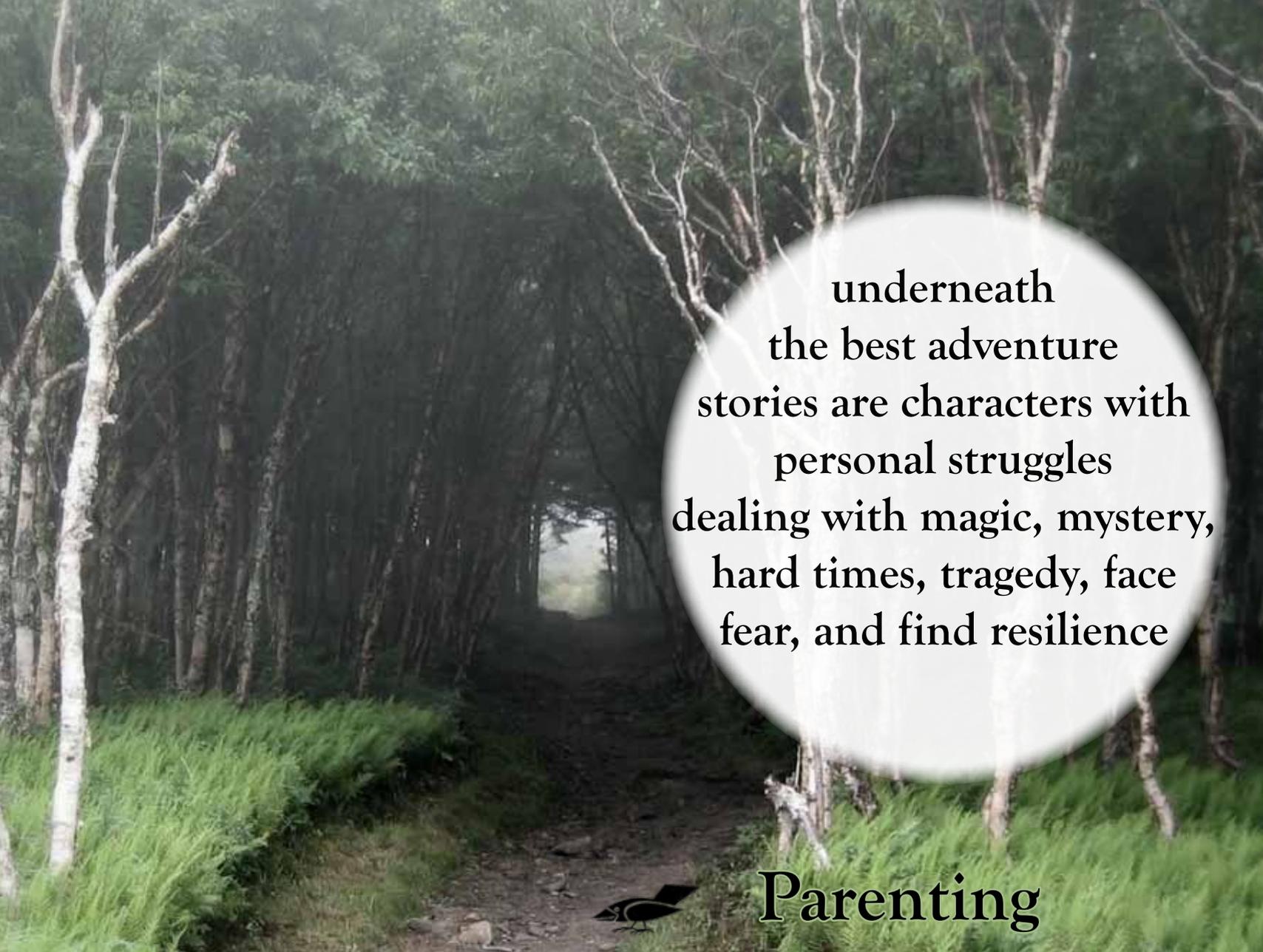
A photograph of a forest path with tall, thin trees and green grass. A large white circle is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing text.

“The best
children’s books
have always tackled
challenging themes within a
wonderful story and today’s
tales are no different.”

- Julia Eccleshare,
The Guardian



Parenting

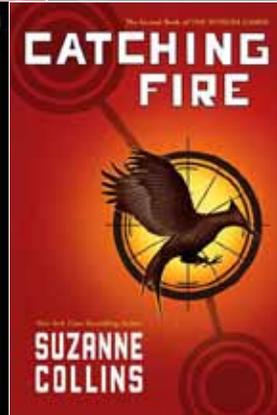
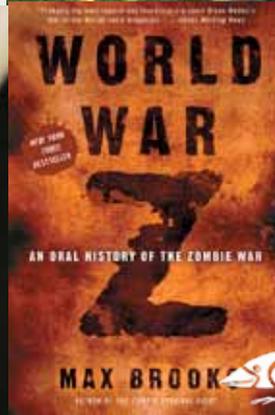
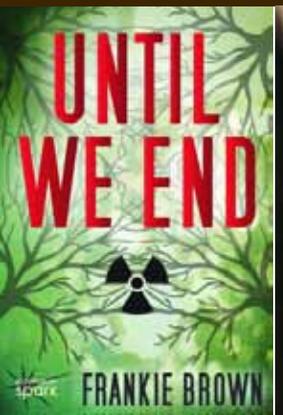
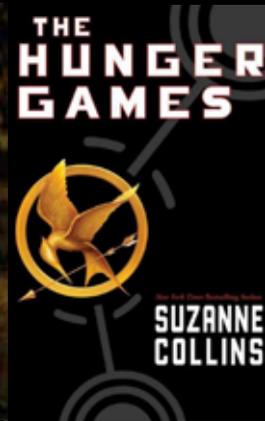
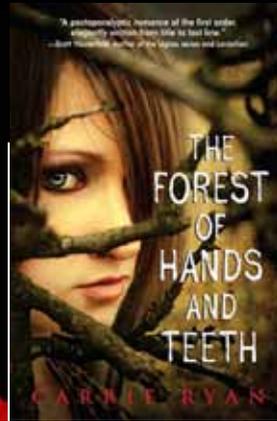
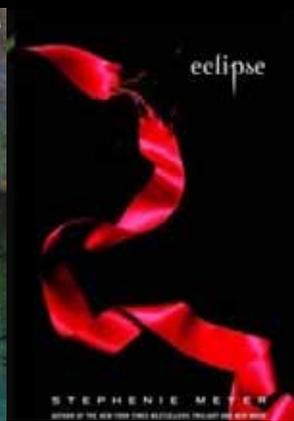
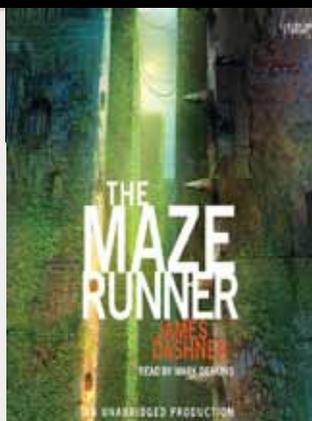
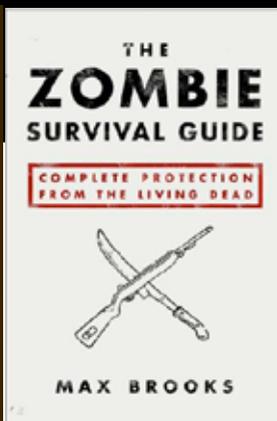
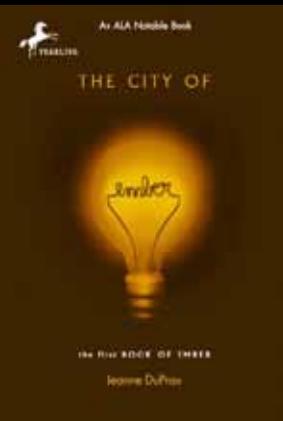
A photograph of a dirt path winding through a forest of tall, thin trees. The path is flanked by green grass and ferns. A large white circle is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing text.

underneath
the best adventure
stories are characters with
personal struggles
dealing with magic, mystery,
hard times, tragedy, face
fear, and find resilience



Parenting

- contemporary stories are set in imaginary dystopian futures where children face current worldly problems
- not the familiar historic settings of our childhood stories
- necessary worlds where children must learn to fend for themselves, take risks and take charge of their lives, or die



Is that as grim or grimmer than the poisoned apple,
evil step-mother, eye-poking,
child-eating creatures of fairy tales?

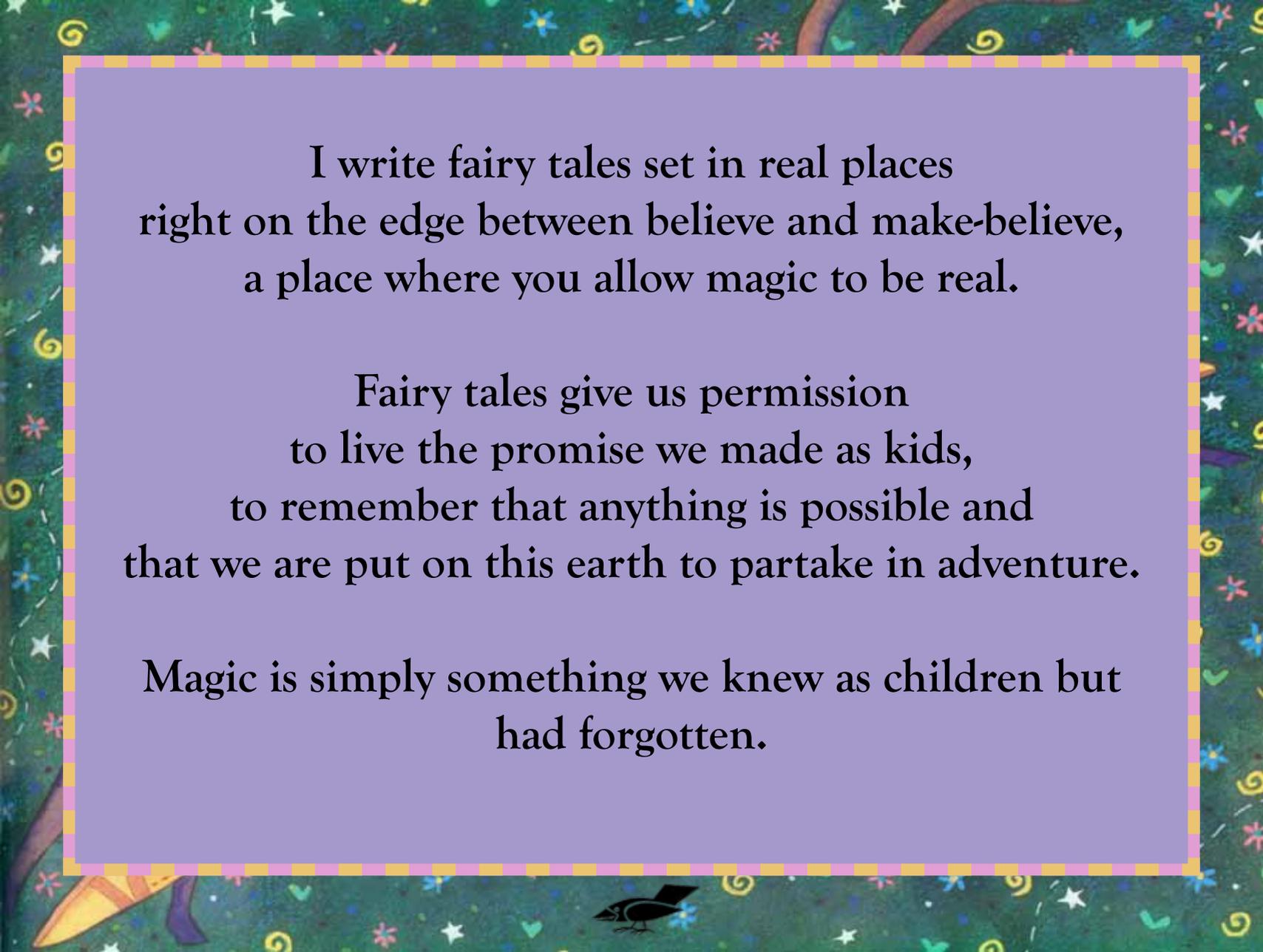


This is a dark scary fairy tale forest where Hansel and Gretel could get lost. These truths stay with us through our lives.

I can still hear my mom say, “don’t run with scissors or you will poke your eye out!” Just like a fairy tale, it didn’t seem real, but what a scary thought.







I write fairy tales set in real places
right on the edge between believe and make-believe,
a place where you allow magic to be real.

Fairy tales give us permission
to live the promise we made as kids,
to remember that anything is possible and
that we are put on this earth to partake in adventure.

Magic is simply something we knew as children but
had forgotten.

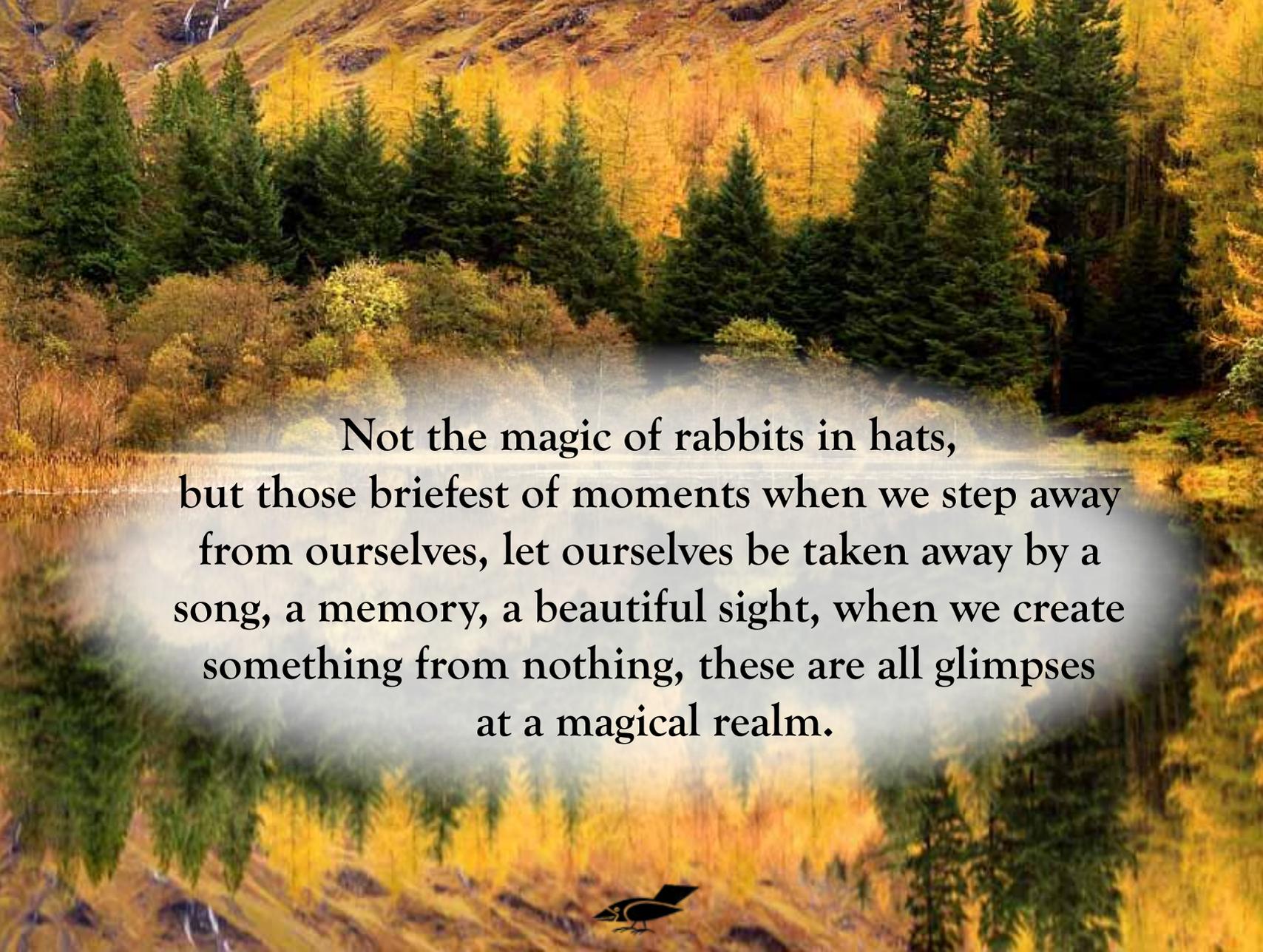


Each year
we move
farther and
farther away
from it

and when we are lucky
it appears in brief
flashes.

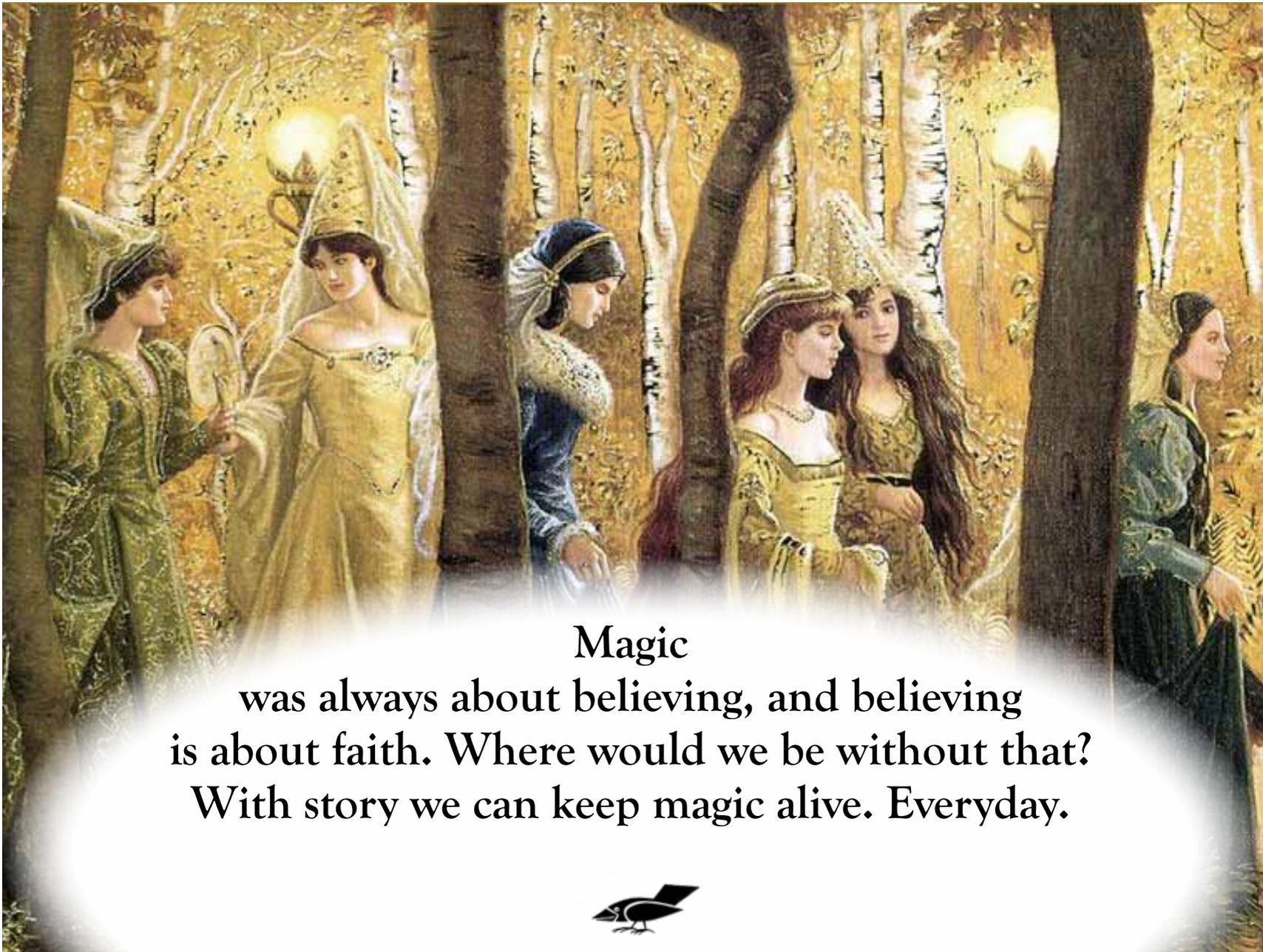




A scenic landscape featuring a river in the foreground, a dense forest of evergreen and deciduous trees in the middle ground, and a mountain range in the background. The scene is bathed in warm, golden light, suggesting a sunrise or sunset. The text is centered over the river and forest area.

Not the magic of rabbits in hats,
but those briefest of moments when we step away
from ourselves, let ourselves be taken away by a
song, a memory, a beautiful sight, when we create
something from nothing, these are all glimpses
at a magical realm.





Magic
was always about believing, and believing
is about faith. Where would we be without that?
With story we can keep magic alive. Everyday.



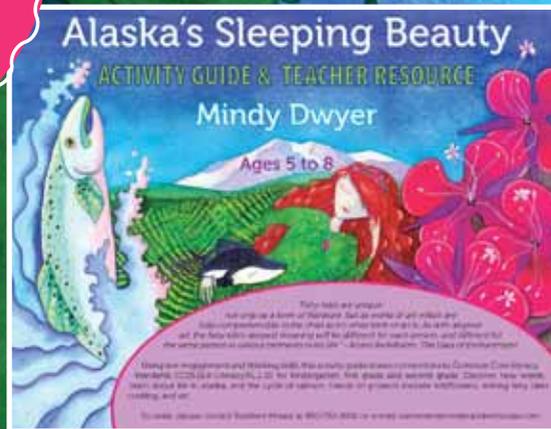


nce upon a time
has always been
and is still.



"Fairy tales are unique, not only as a form of literature, but as works of art which are fully comprehensible to the child as no other form of art is. As with all great art, the fairy tale's deepest meaning will be different for each person, and different for the same person at various moments in his life."

Common Core
literacy standards
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.
RL.1-10 for
kindergarten, 1st
and 2nd grade



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life in Alaska, the cycle of salmon,
wildflowers, writing fairy tales,
cooking, art and more.