

# An anthology of UNWITTING WISDOM Aesop's ANIMAL fables



RETOLD & ILLUSTRATED BY  
HELEN WARD



UNWITTING WISDOM

江苏工业学院图书馆  
藏书章



To Aesop  
AND all tellers of moral tales who,  
despite a monumentally ineffective history,  
still gently try to point the human race  
in a better direction - h.w.

❧ A TEMPLAR BOOK ❧

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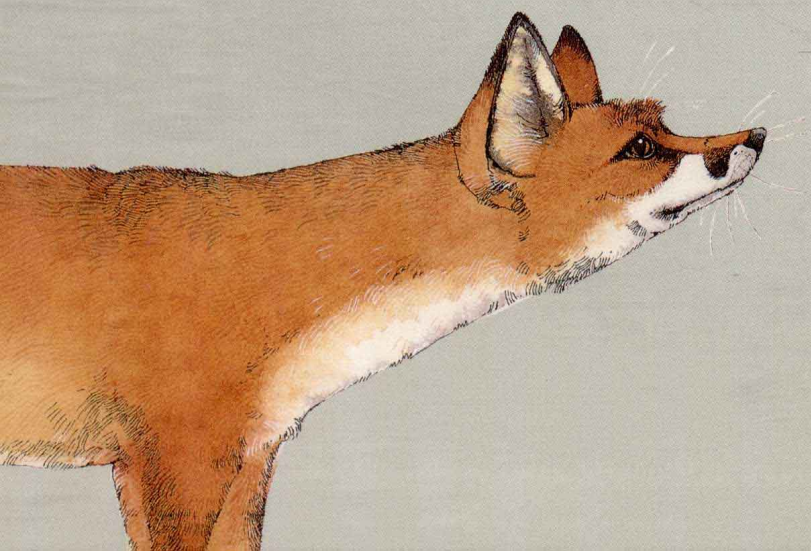
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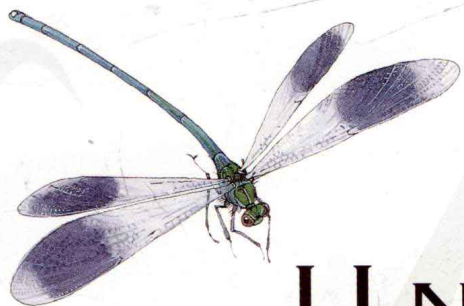
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The illustrations in this book are rendered in ink line and watercolour  
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The text is set in Leonardo & MB Tempus

Printed in Hong Kong







# UNWITTING WISDOM

*An anthology of Aesop's animal fables*

RETOLD & ILLUSTRATED BY

HELEN WARD



templar publishing







# Aesop's fables

ONE

sour grapes

TWO

the trappings of power

THREE

all dressed up

FOUR

pot luck

FIVE

a time to dance

SIX

a dinner invitation

SEVEN

steady and slow

EIGHT

upon reflection

NINE

size isn't everything

TEN

not flying, but falling

ELEVEN

fool's gold

TWELVE

hard cheese

helen ward



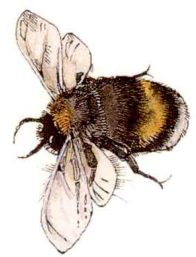
Aesop's fable





# AESOP'S FABLES REMAIN AMONG THE MOST ENDURING OF STORIES.

The seeming simplicity of such tales as "The Lion and the Mouse" and "The Hare and the Tortoise" belie the strength of their underlying message, and the final moral once heard is seldom forgotten. But Aesop himself remains something of a mystery. Some say that he was a Greek slave who lived in the late 5th century B.C. and made up the original tales to amuse his master, others that Aesop is a collective name under which the best and earliest fables have been gathered and passed down through generations. Whatever their true origin, variations of these stories appear the world over, particularly in Ancient Greece, Egypt and India.



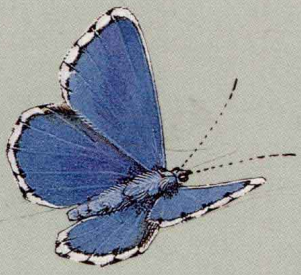


IN THIS EDITION award-winning illustrator Helen Ward has collected together a dozen of her favourites, including fables both familiar and lesser-known. All use animals as the central characters in place of people, thereby avoiding the distractions of race or class, age or gender. As such, the experiences described apply to us all and the lessons learned are both timeless and universal. Each creature comes to symbolize in its own way some particular aspect of the human condition — the sly, sidling fox; the silly crow; the majestic lion; all acting out their parts, uncomprehending, in the great game of life. As the author G.K. Chesterton once wrote, “In Aesop’s Fables... the animals’ reactions are always predictable. They have no choice; they cannot be anything but themselves. They are never more or less, and that is the great lesson and the essence of the fable.”

Here then is a panoply of human feeling expressed through Ward’s animals. Fear, greed, arrogance, stupidity, all these and more put in an appearance, leaping straight to the heart of our understanding from each page of this magnificent edition.









ONE

# sour grapes

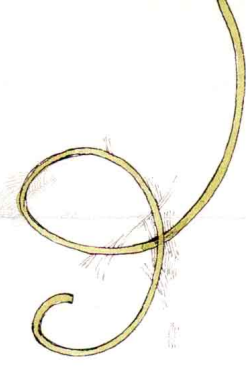
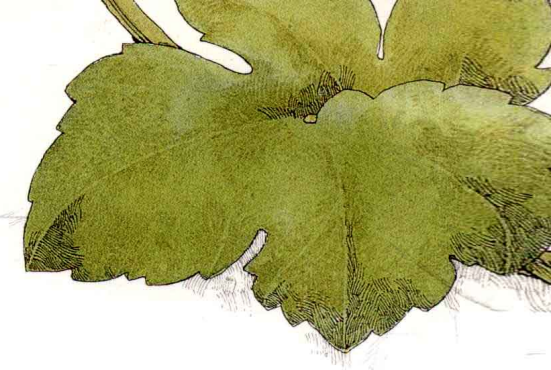
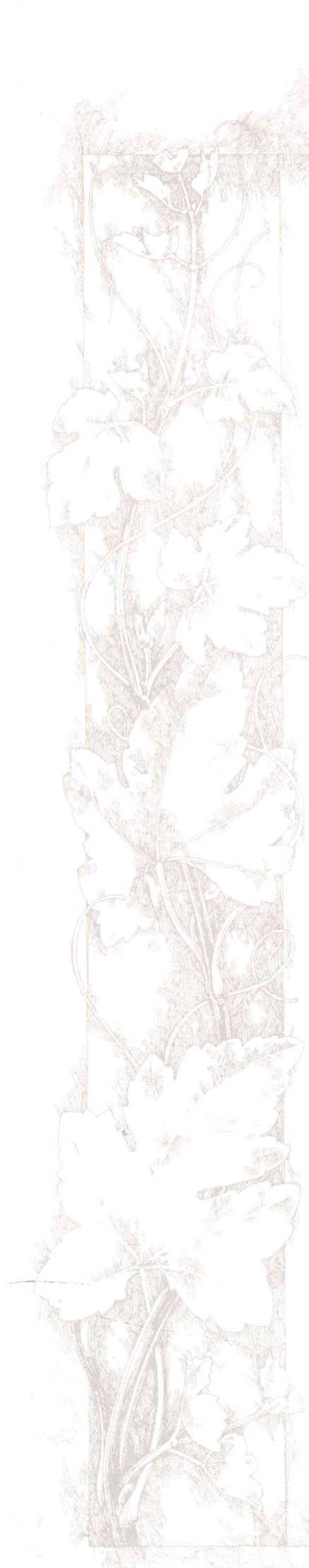






IN  
WHICH  
A  
FOX  
TRIES  
TO  
HIDE  
HIS  
DISAPPOINTMENT  
WITH  
INSULTS





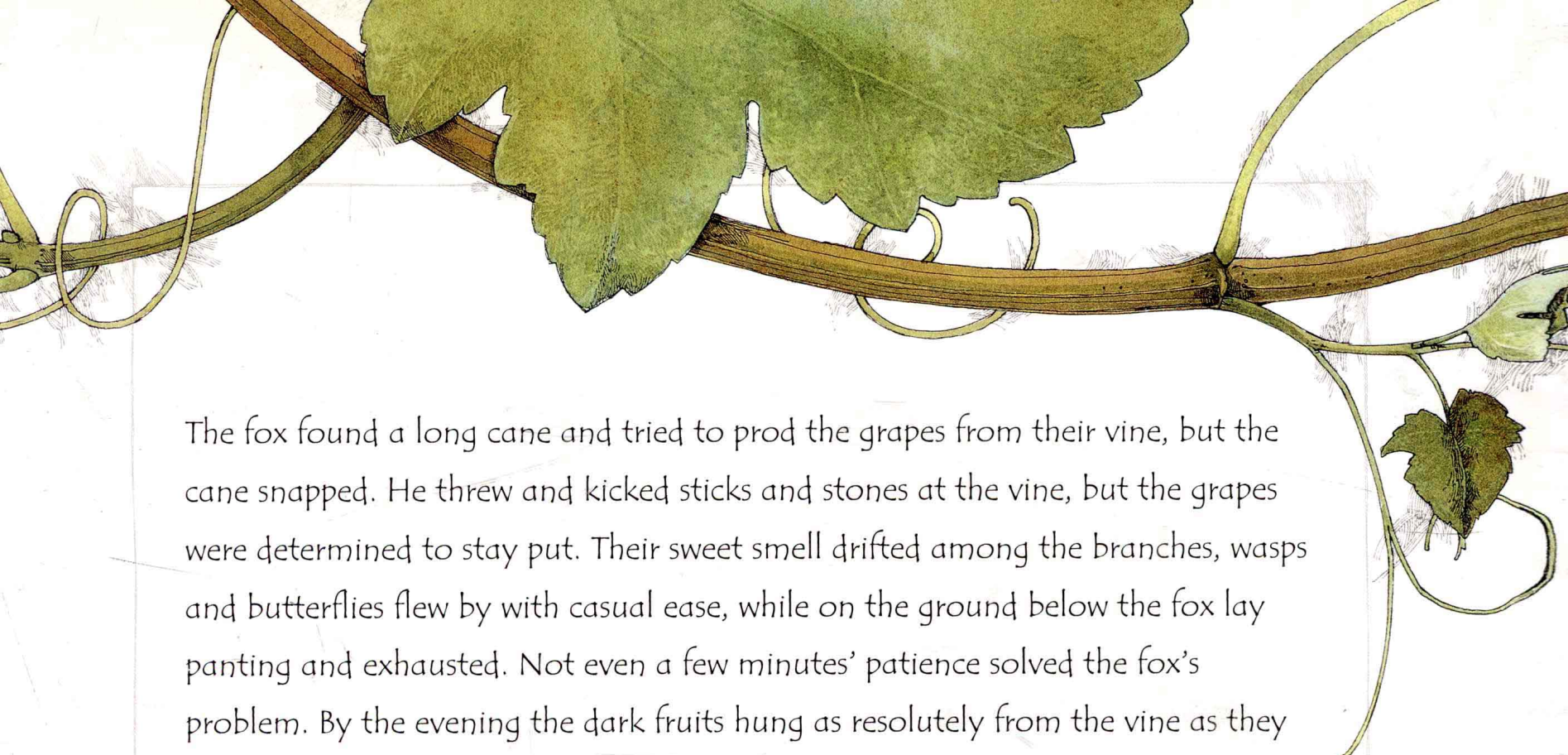
# THERE WAS ONCE A BUNCH OF PARTICULARLY FINE GRAPES

hanging temptingly from a vine that had wound its way up a tree. And as is usual with such unguarded temptations THERE WAS SOON ALSO A **FOX**.

The tantalising fruits hung just a little higher than the fox could reach but he would not be thwarted.

He leapt as high as he could, twisting in the morning light, his jaws clapping shut on air and flies and dust until his teeth hurt. He tried to climb the tree but the trunk was too straight, the bark too smooth, the first branch too high. Everything about the tree was unhelpful. It refused to so much as twitch a twig when he tried to shake it.





The fox found a long cane and tried to prod the grapes from their vine, but the cane snapped. He threw and kicked sticks and stones at the vine, but the grapes were determined to stay put. Their sweet smell drifted among the branches, wasps and butterflies flew by with casual ease, while on the ground below the fox lay panting and exhausted. Not even a few minutes' patience solved the fox's problem. By the evening the dark fruits hung as resolutely from the vine as they had that morning.

The shadows had lengthened by the time the fox finally turned his back on the grapes, muttering to himself that they were undoubtedly

THE NASTIEST,

MOST HORRID,  
DISGUSTING,  
REVOLTING,  
INEDIBLE,  
INDIGESTIBLE  
SOUREST

and very probably the  
grapes he had ever had the pleasure  
of NOT eating!



∞ IT IS EASY TO DESPISE WHAT YOU CANNOT OBTAIN ∞

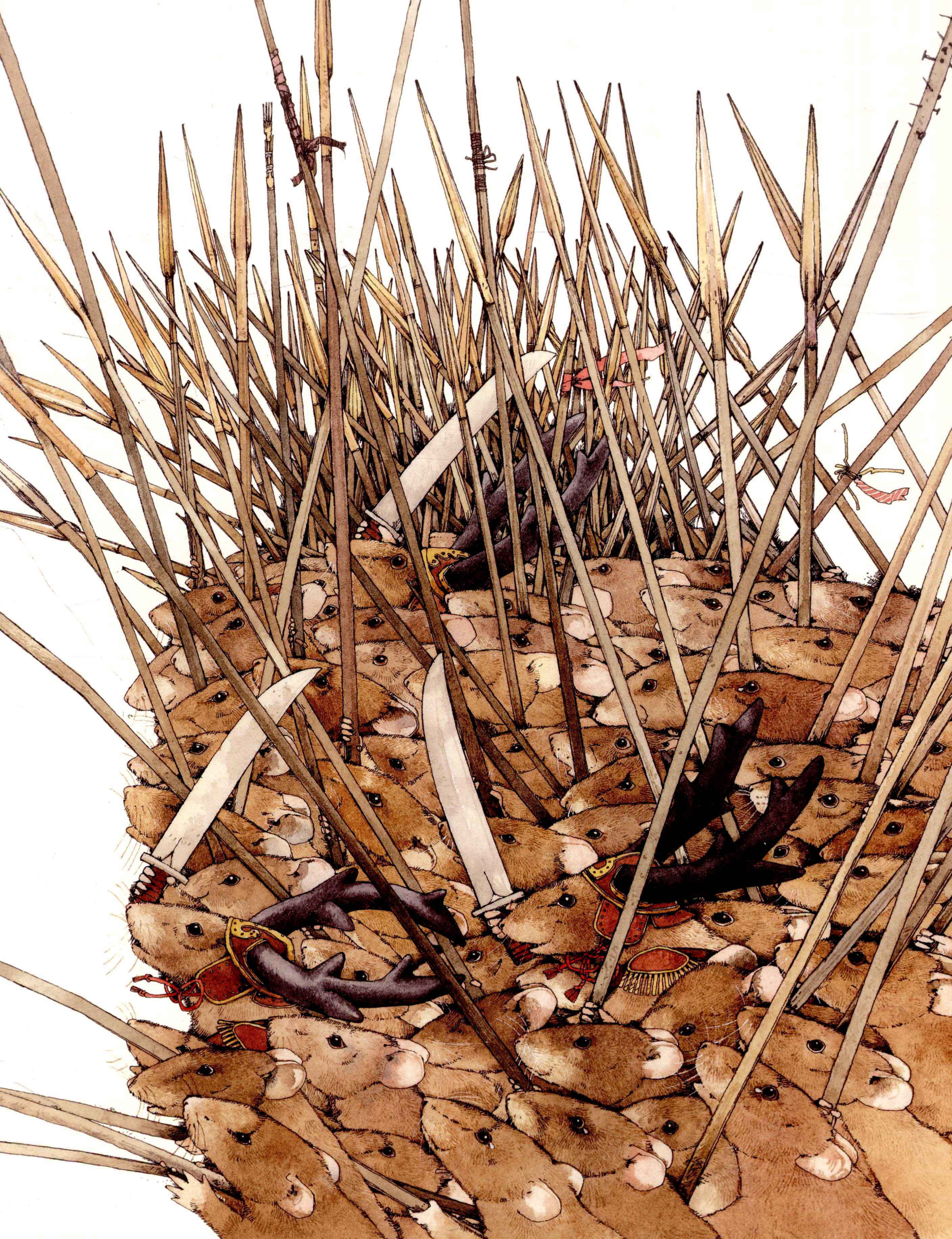


Two  
the trappings of power

IN WHICH  
THE POWERFUL  
PERISH THROUGH  
THEIR PRIDE











# THERE ONCE WAS A CITY OF MICE,

fortified  
against marauders with high, thick walls, perforated only by a  
hundred little exits or entrances just big enough for a mouse  
and just small enough to keep out anything larger and more  
dangerous... IN PARTICULAR, WEASELS.

The mice and the weasels had been at war for longer than  
anyone could remember. So long that neither the mice nor the  
weasels knew why. All they knew was that they hated each  
other, and that was enough to fight battle after battle. But this  
long war had cost the mice dear, for in all the time they had  
been fighting they had lost every battle and many a mouse to  
their ferocious enemy.

At long last the mice decided to have a conference. They  
concluded that their problem was a lack of discipline on the  
battlefield. No attack had ever been co-ordinated, no retreat  
anything other than every-mouse-for-himself. They decided  
that what they needed was organisation and leadership.