

One afternoon we went to the river.

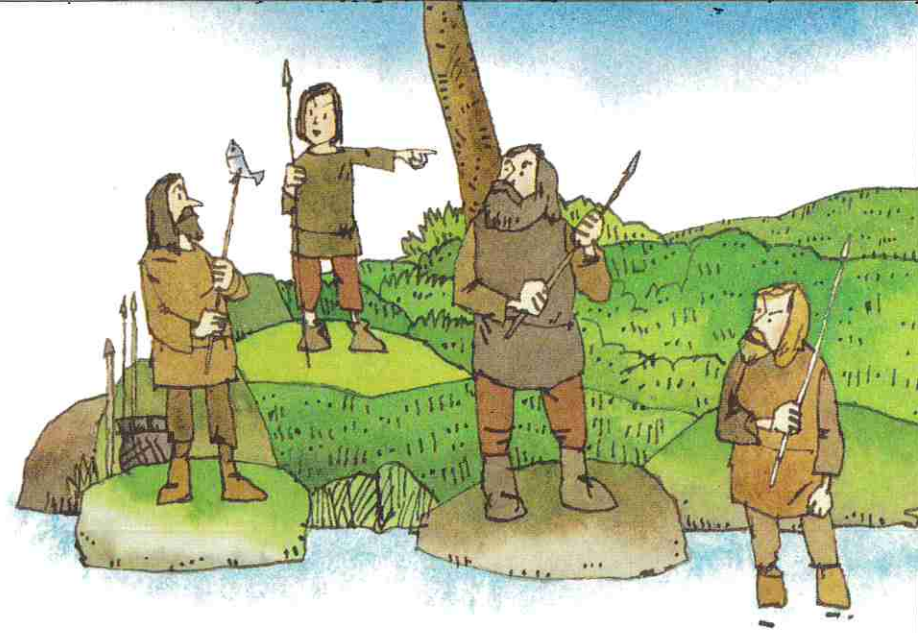
The little ones picked berries and nuts, but Om and I watched the men fishing.

They held their pointed spears high and stood as still as trees.

Then, suddenly, *swoosh!* their spears dropped down like lightning

and came up again spiking wriggling silver fish

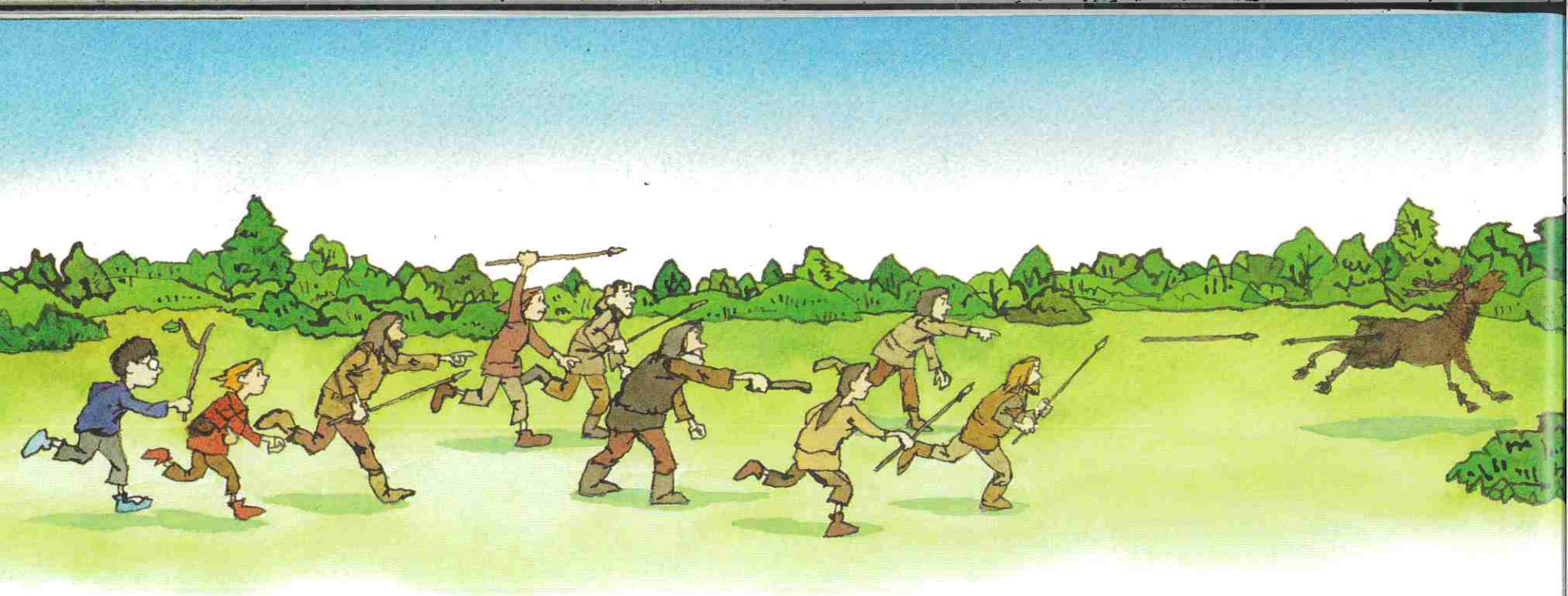
Suddenly a boy ran up, shouting and pointing to the hills. At once several people grabbed their spears and followed him. Om and I followed them.



Slowly, slowly, we crept forwards until we saw – a reindeer!

It was standing alone, munching the grass.





At a signal, the others ran towards it, yelling and throwing their spears.

Om and I didn't have spears, but we yelled anyway. It was so exciting!

A spear caught the reindeer in its side, and it fell to the ground.

That night we had a party to celebrate.

We cooked the reindeer over a great fire and there was music and dancing.

I joined in on air guitar.



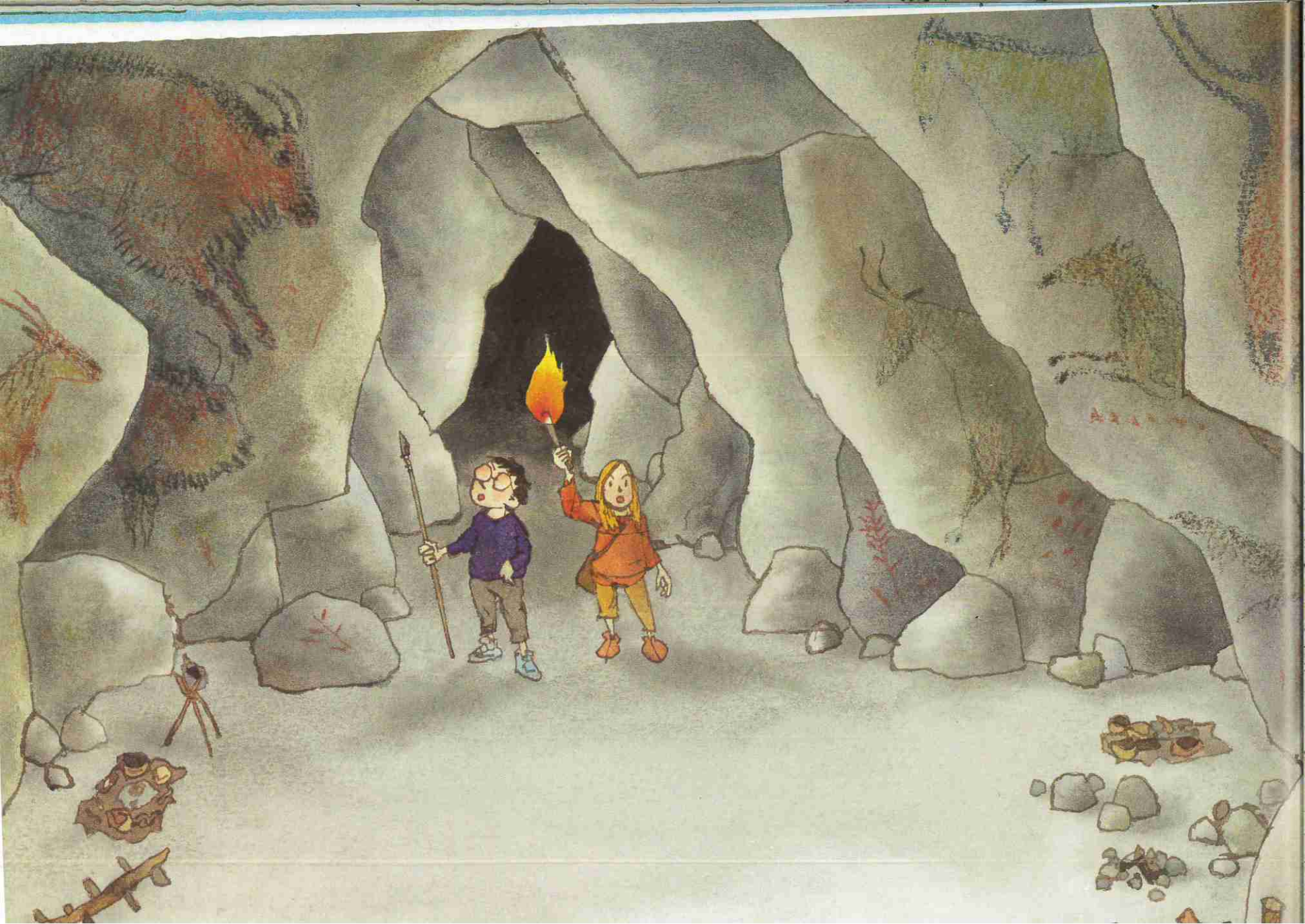


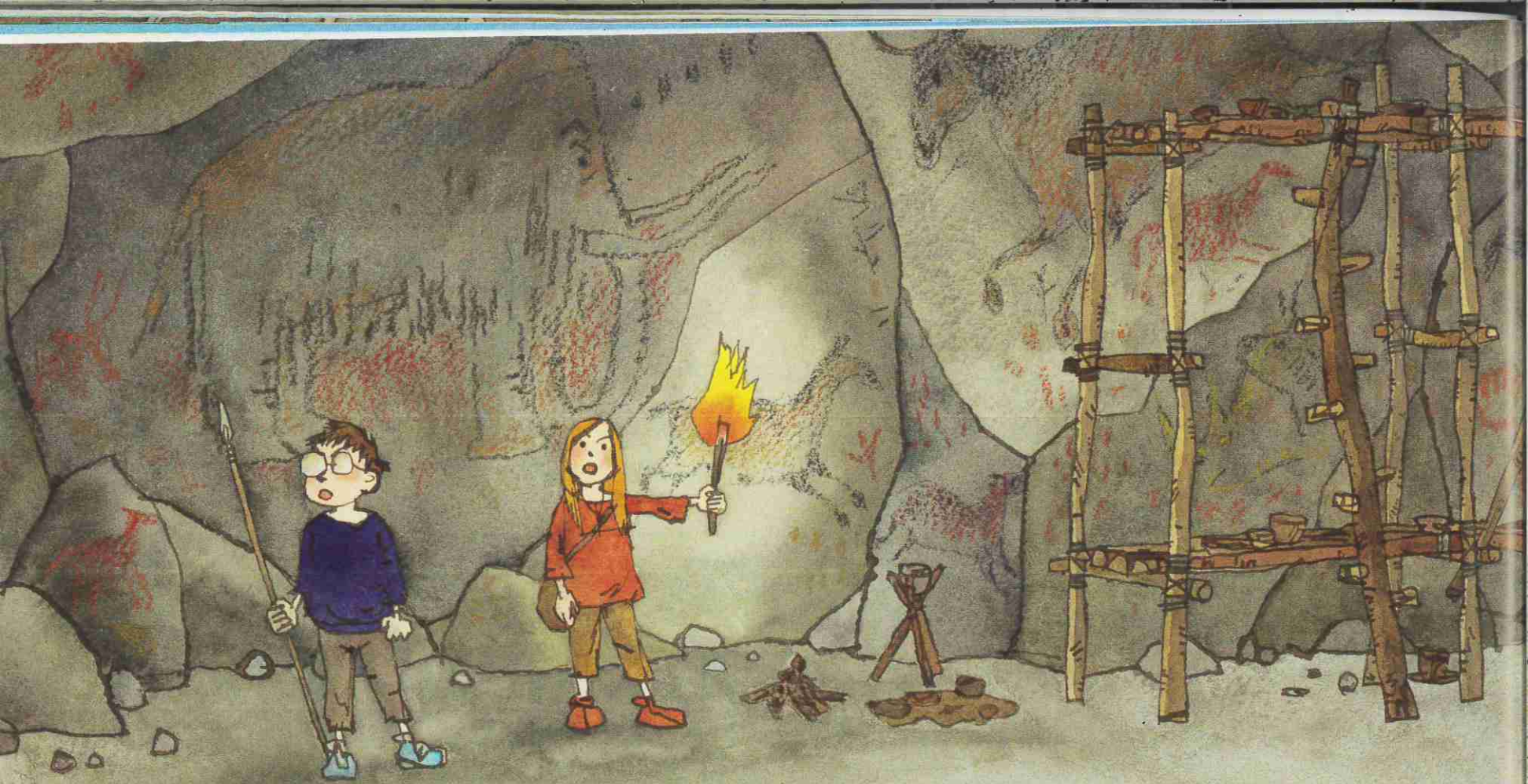
As the days became weeks, Om and her people taught me many things. I was very happy.

Then one day Om took me to a special place.

We walked a long way until we came to the mouth of a cave.

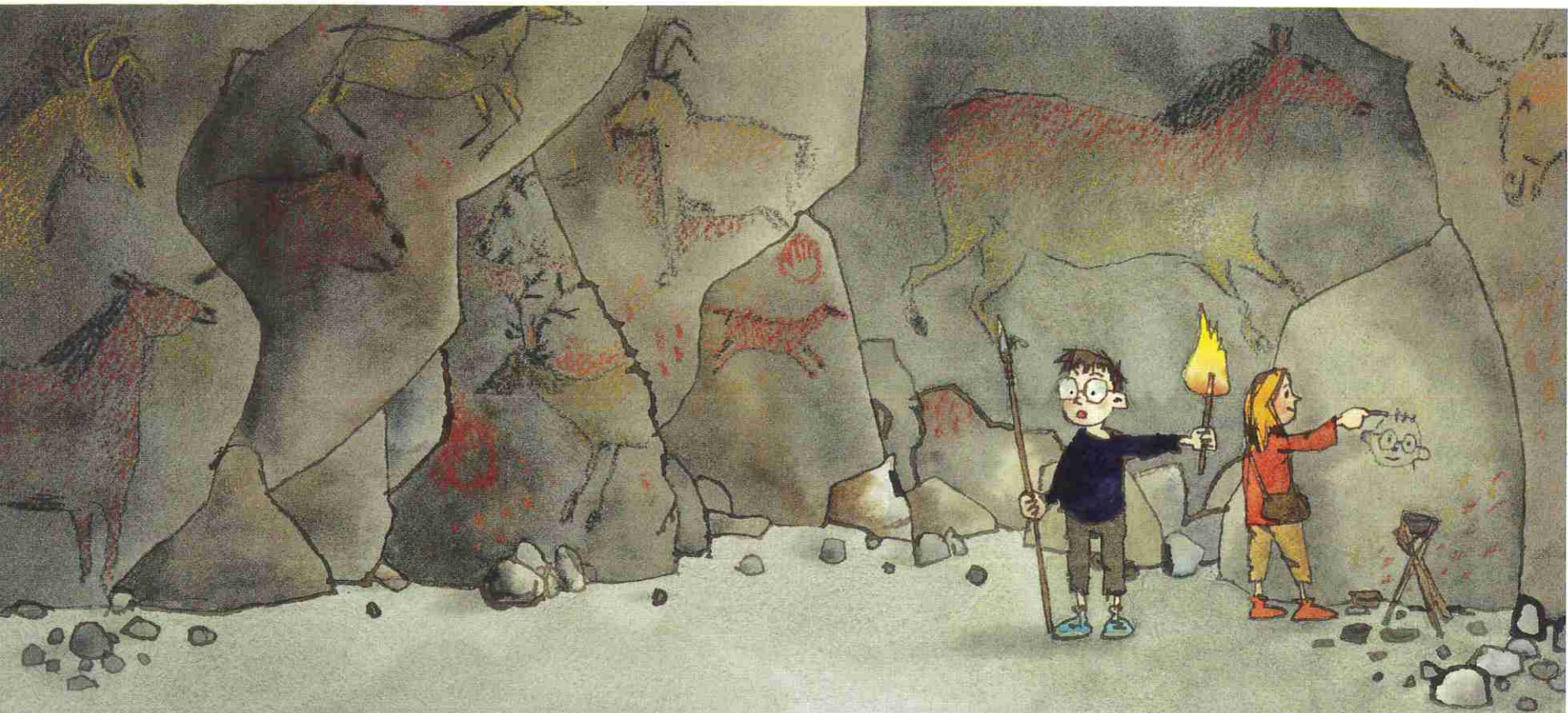
Om struck flint stones together to make fire. She lit a torch and we went in.





It took me a moment to realize the animals were only paintings.

Under the flickering light of the torch they looked real

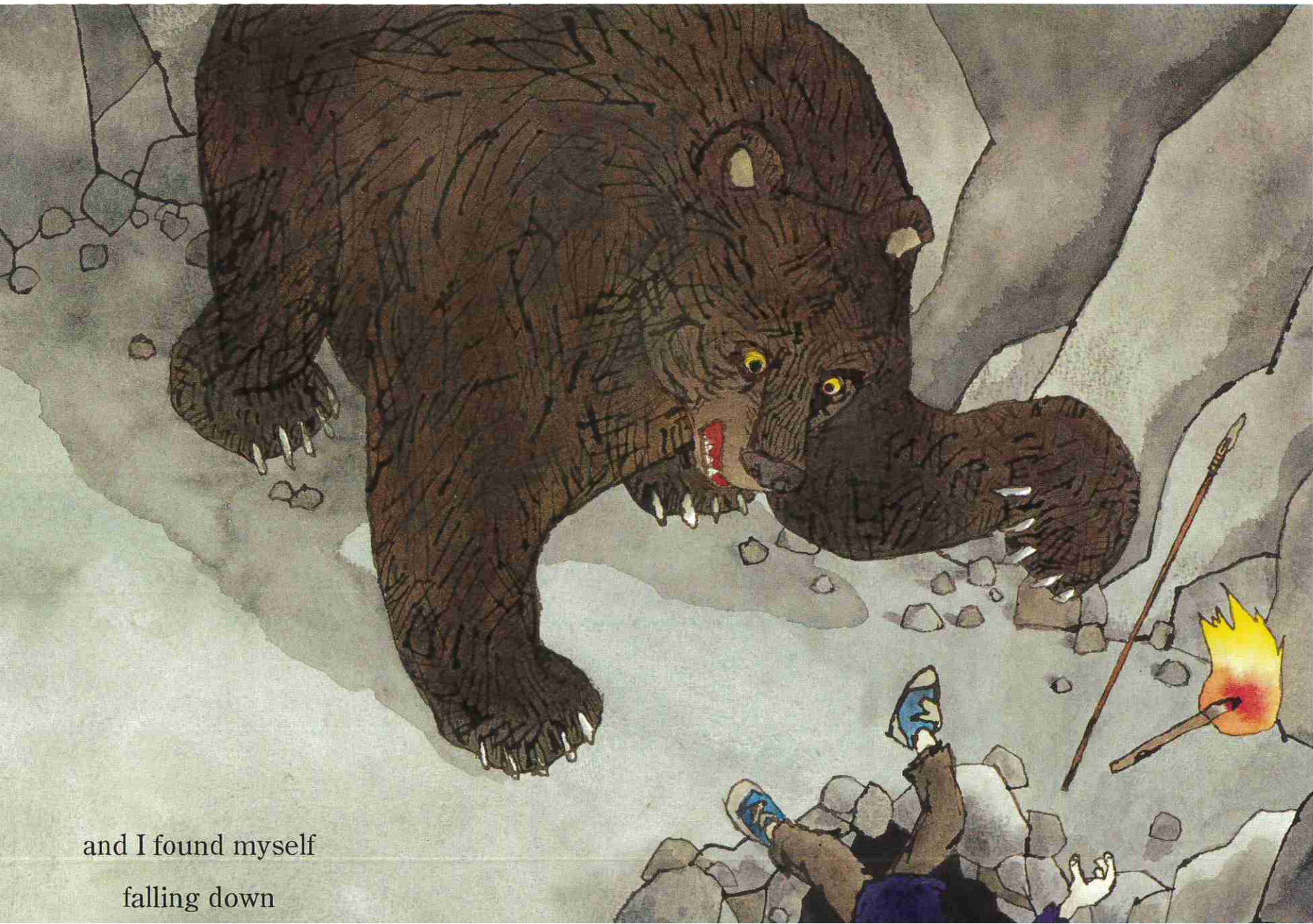


Om went over to the tools and paints the artists had left and began to draw.

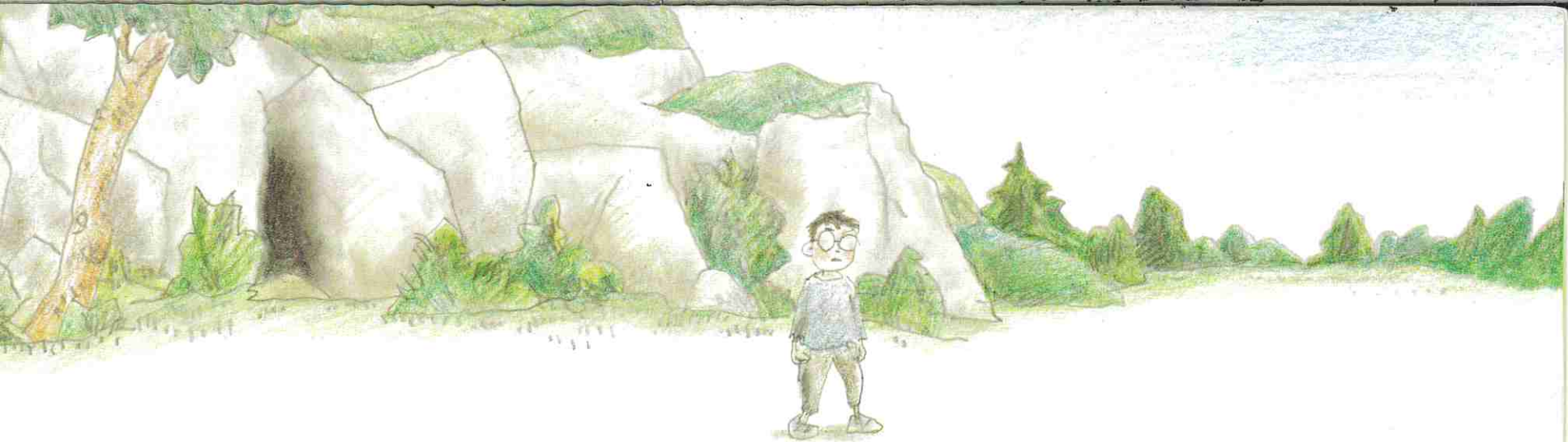
Suddenly, I saw something move in the darkness.



It was a bear, a big furious cave bear!  
I shouted at Om to run  
and turned to face the bear with my spear.  
I felt very small



and I found myself  
falling down



When I woke up the bear had gone.

So had Om.

I rushed outside.

The air felt ... different. Warmer.

I walked a long way, calling for Om. But I never found her.



Instead I found I was back home.

When I told my family what had happened, they didn't believe me.

They said I'd only been gone a few hours  
and I must have fallen asleep and dreamt it.

Years passed, but I never forgot my friend Om.  
I am an archaeologist now (that's me in the glasses).  
Everywhere I go, I look in the past for signs of Om.



Maybe not.