

WHEN THE RAIN STOPPED



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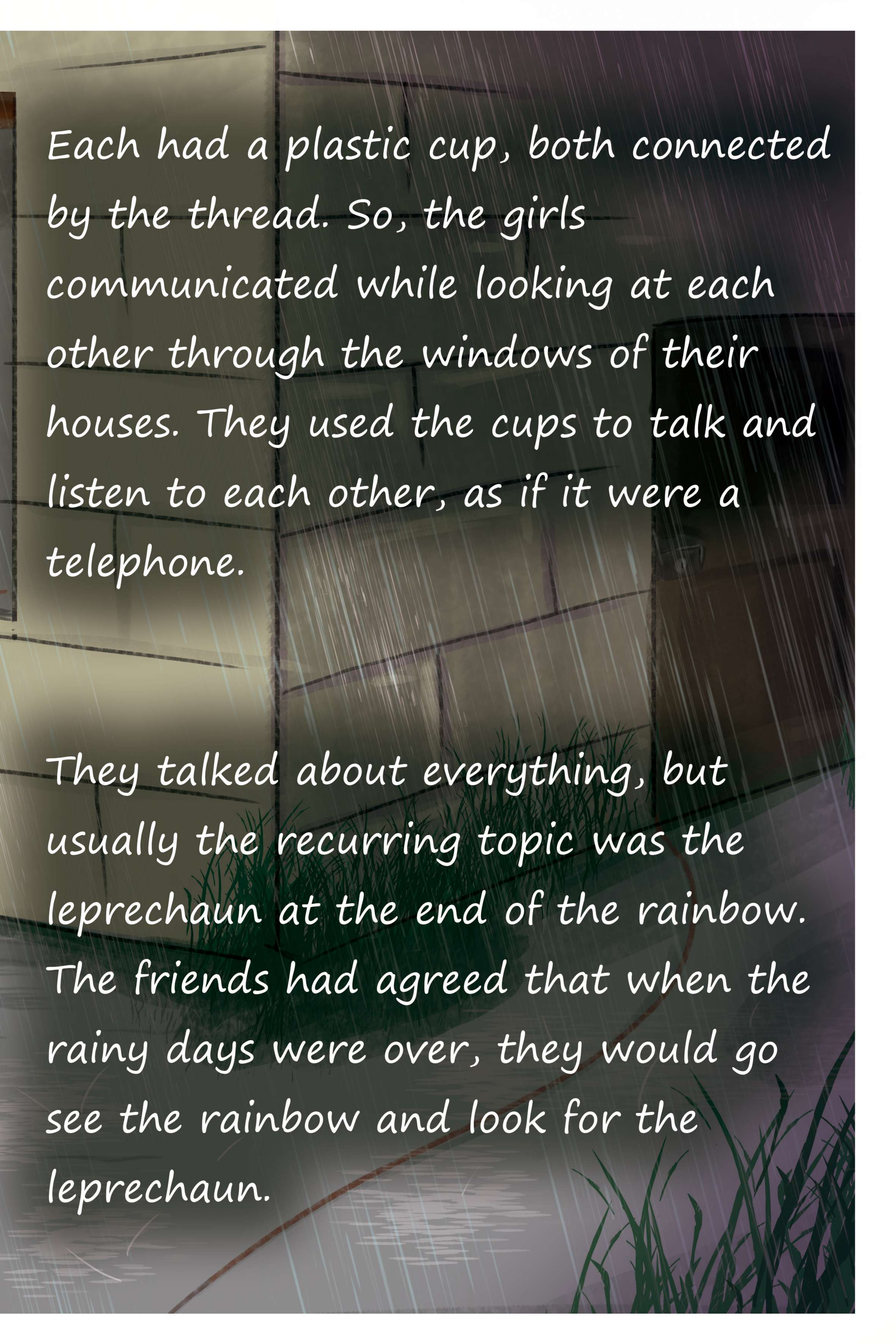
MAYRA SORIA.

In Lucia's town, Curía, it had been raining a lot lately. The children were used to spending their days at home, helping their parents. The constant rains prevented from going fishing, so the parents got together and did other activities to keep the business afloat.



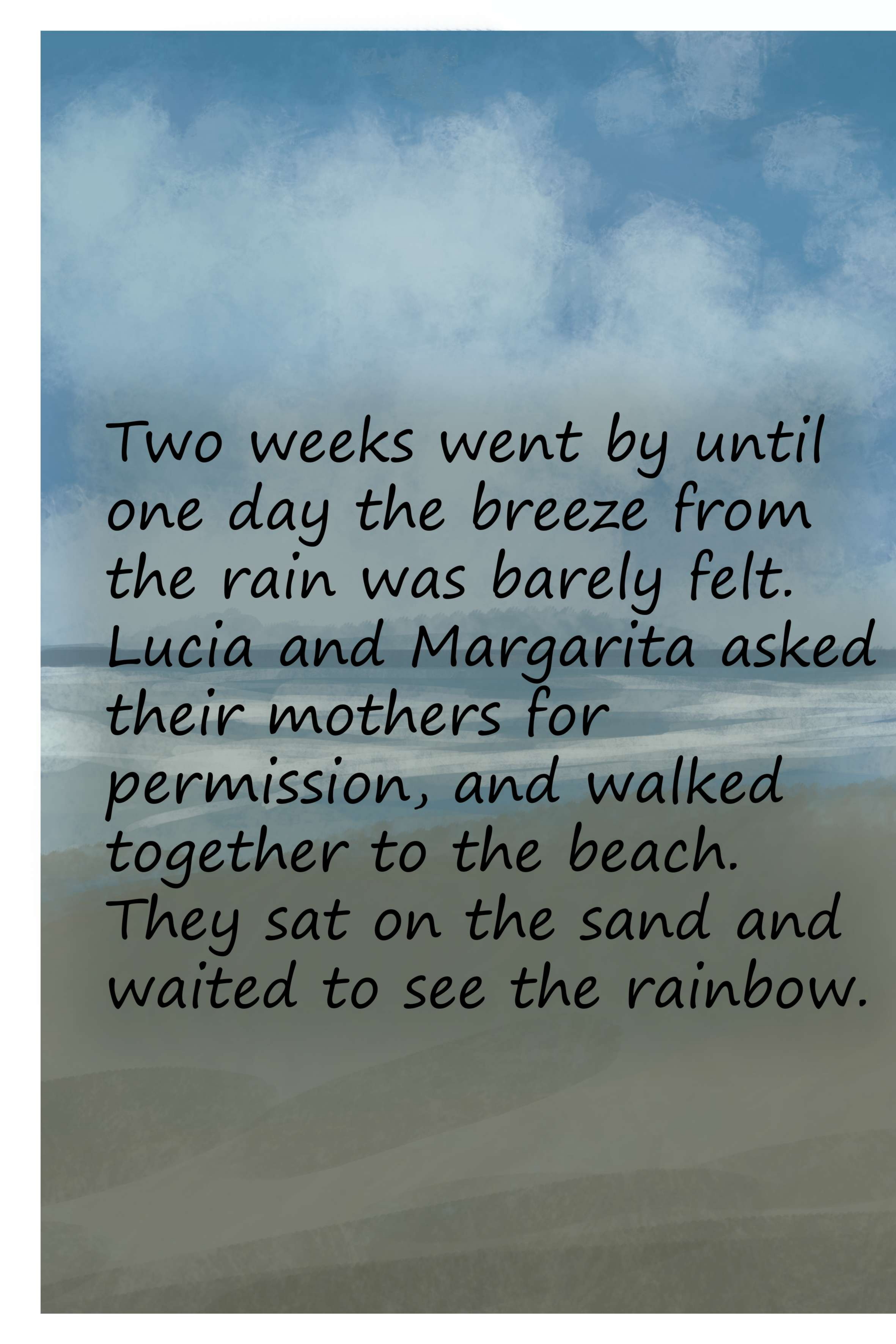


To get pass the boredom, Lucia and Margarita, lifelong friends and neighbors, had created a communication system according to their imaginations: from Lucía's house, a red thread stretched across her patio to Margarita's house.



Each had a plastic cup, both connected by the thread. So, the girls communicated while looking at each other through the windows of their houses. They used the cups to talk and listen to each other, as if it were a telephone.

They talked about everything, but usually the recurring topic was the leprechaun at the end of the rainbow. The friends had agreed that when the rainy days were over, they would go see the rainbow and look for the leprechaun.

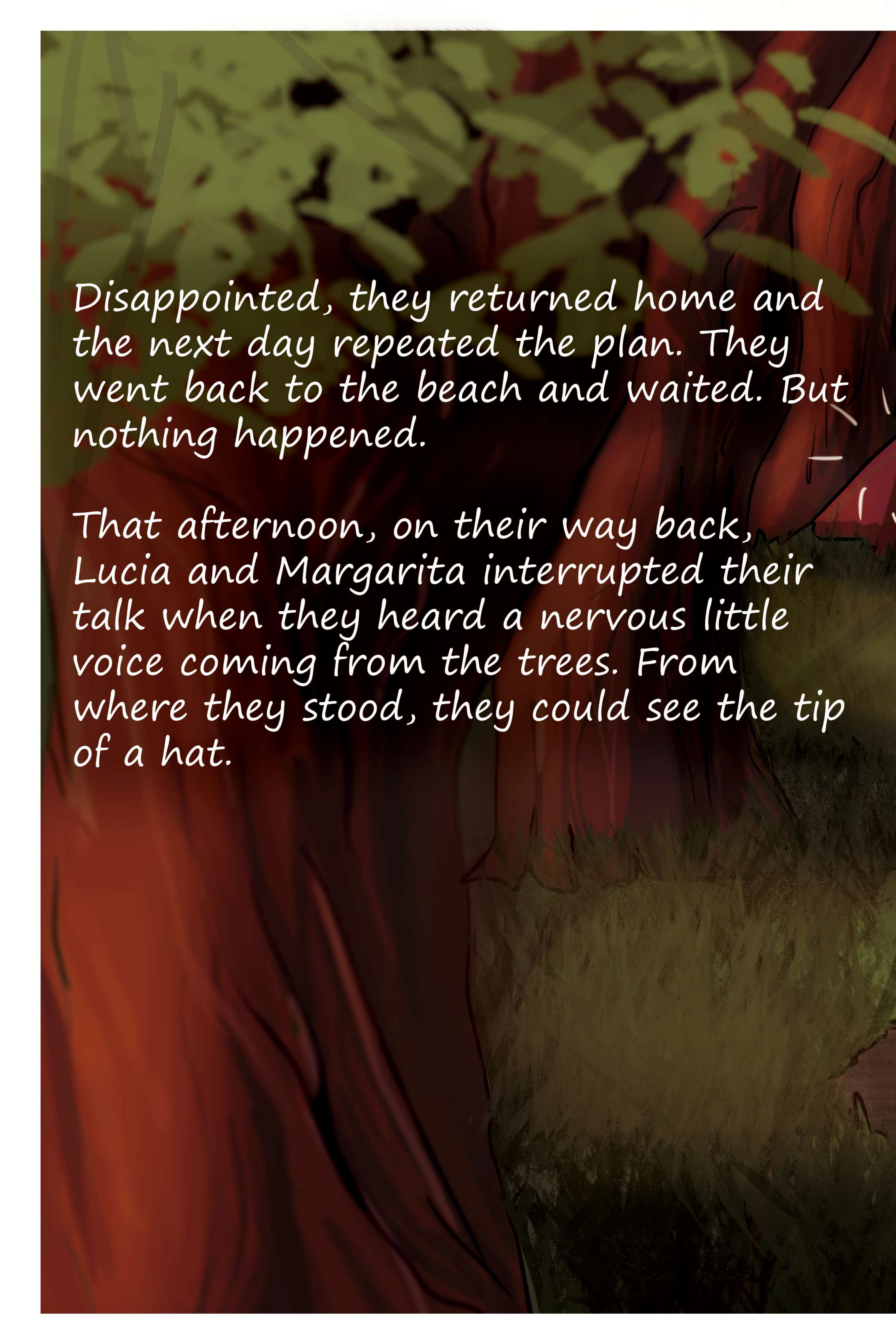


Two weeks went by until one day the breeze from the rain was barely felt. Lucia and Margarita asked their mothers for permission, and walked together to the beach. They sat on the sand and waited to see the rainbow.

They waited, and
waited, and waited.

But the rainbow never
came out.





Disappointed, they returned home and the next day repeated the plan. They went back to the beach and waited. But nothing happened.

That afternoon, on their way back, Lucia and Margarita interrupted their talk when they heard a nervous little voice coming from the trees. From where they stood, they could see the tip of a hat.



"Looks like no one is here, I'll go out now!" One... two... —the girls listened without fully seeing who was speaking.

"Who's there?", one of them interrupted.

"Whoops, someone saw me,

The girls looked at each other intrigued, and Margarita, who has always been more determined, approached the trees. She gave a cry of surprise when she encountered a shy little leprechaun. Margarita realized that she had scared the little man, so she decided to apologize.

"I'm sorry," she moved a little closer, "I didn't mean to scare you." My name is Margarita and this is my friend Lucia.



Lucia, just as fearful as the little leprechaun, approached him suspiciously and greeted him.



"Sir, shouldn't you be at the end of the rainbow?", she said, clinging to her friend's arm.

"What rainbow? Nobody has brought out the colors, the colors, the colors!", the leprechaun took off and put on his hat. "Excuse me, young ladies. No one is supposed to see me, I'm in a lot of trouble and I must get the colors out".

"Is there anything we can do?", asked the girls.

"The colors, the colors!", the leprechaun screamed in anguish. "We have to get the colors out. I have spent two days hiding. While it was raining, I fell asleep and appeared here. It's my job to bring out the colors of the rainbow when it stops raining".

"That explains everything", the girls said, understanding the days of useless waiting.





In the last two weeks of rain, the little man, tired of not being able to do his job, decided to take a long nap. He fell asleep and, without noticing it, the fall took him to earth, to Lucía's town.

"I was afraid that someone had noticed that, after so many days of rain, the rainbow was not coming out".

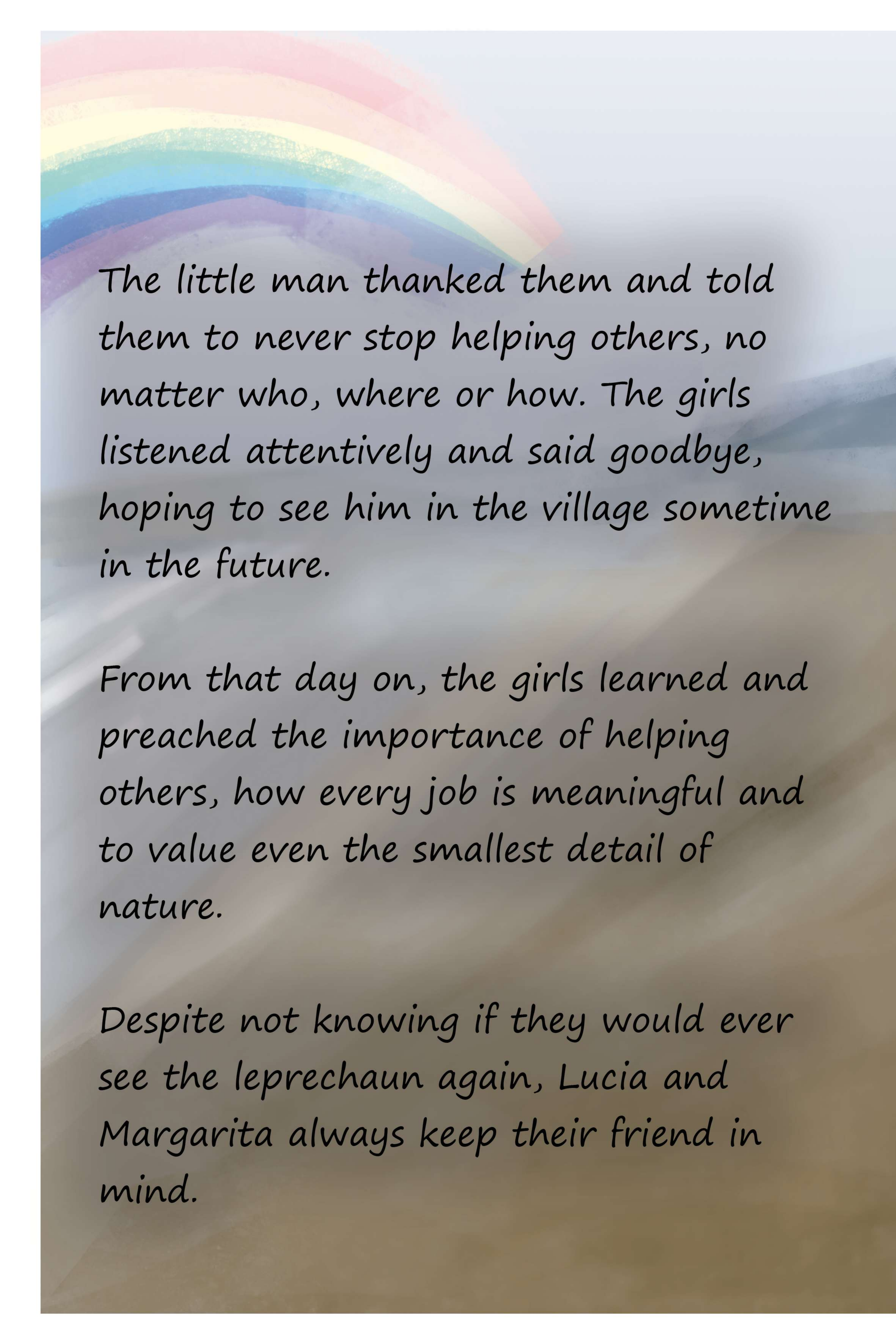
So Lucía and Margarita decided to help him.

They took colors from nature: they squeezed some strawberries and blackberries, crushed some leaves, scratched orange peels, poured some lemon drops and added a little sea water. After collecting them, they put them in seven different containers for their new friend to form the rainbow.



All across town, the rest of the villagers came out to see the colorful path that led to the leprechaun. Before saying goodbye to their new friend, the three sat looking up at the colorful sky, with the sound of the sea in the background as they played with the sand.





The little man thanked them and told them to never stop helping others, no matter who, where or how. The girls listened attentively and said goodbye, hoping to see him in the village sometime in the future.

From that day on, the girls learned and preached the importance of helping others, how every job is meaningful and to value even the smallest detail of nature.

Despite not knowing if they would ever see the leprechaun again, Lucia and Margarita always keep their friend in mind.

