

Max Kaplan Lev Kaplan

THE LEGEND OF DRAGON HILL



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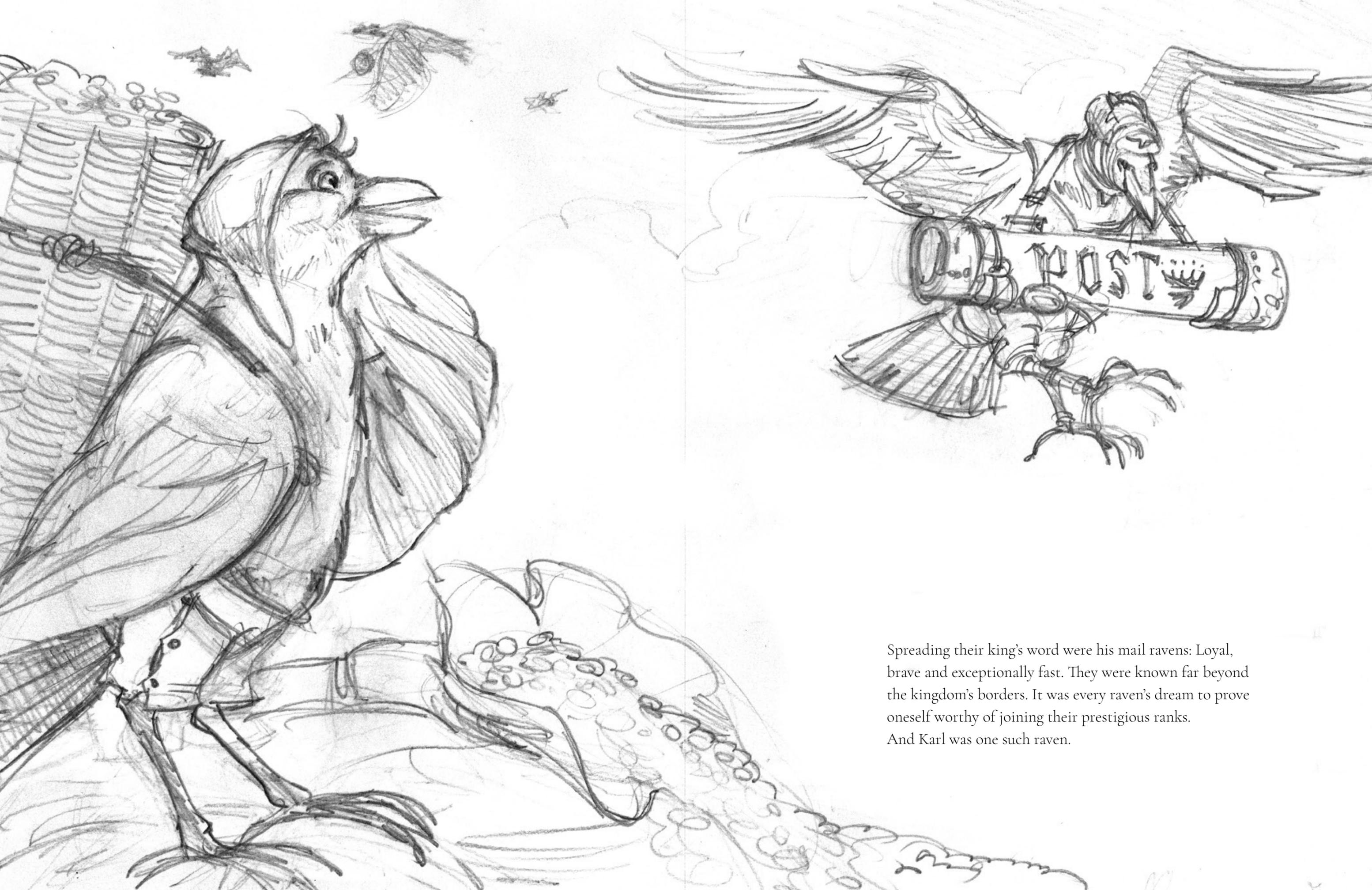


“Grandpa, why’s our castle called Dragon Hill?”, a young raven once asked.
“Have I never told you the story of Karl the raven?”, said the grandfather in genuine surprise.

The grandson shook his head. And thus he was told an incredible story ...

As you know, the grandfather began, our kingdom was once ruled by a great king. Named Felix the Great by his people, he was a man of mercy and goodwill who brought peace and prosperity to our lands.

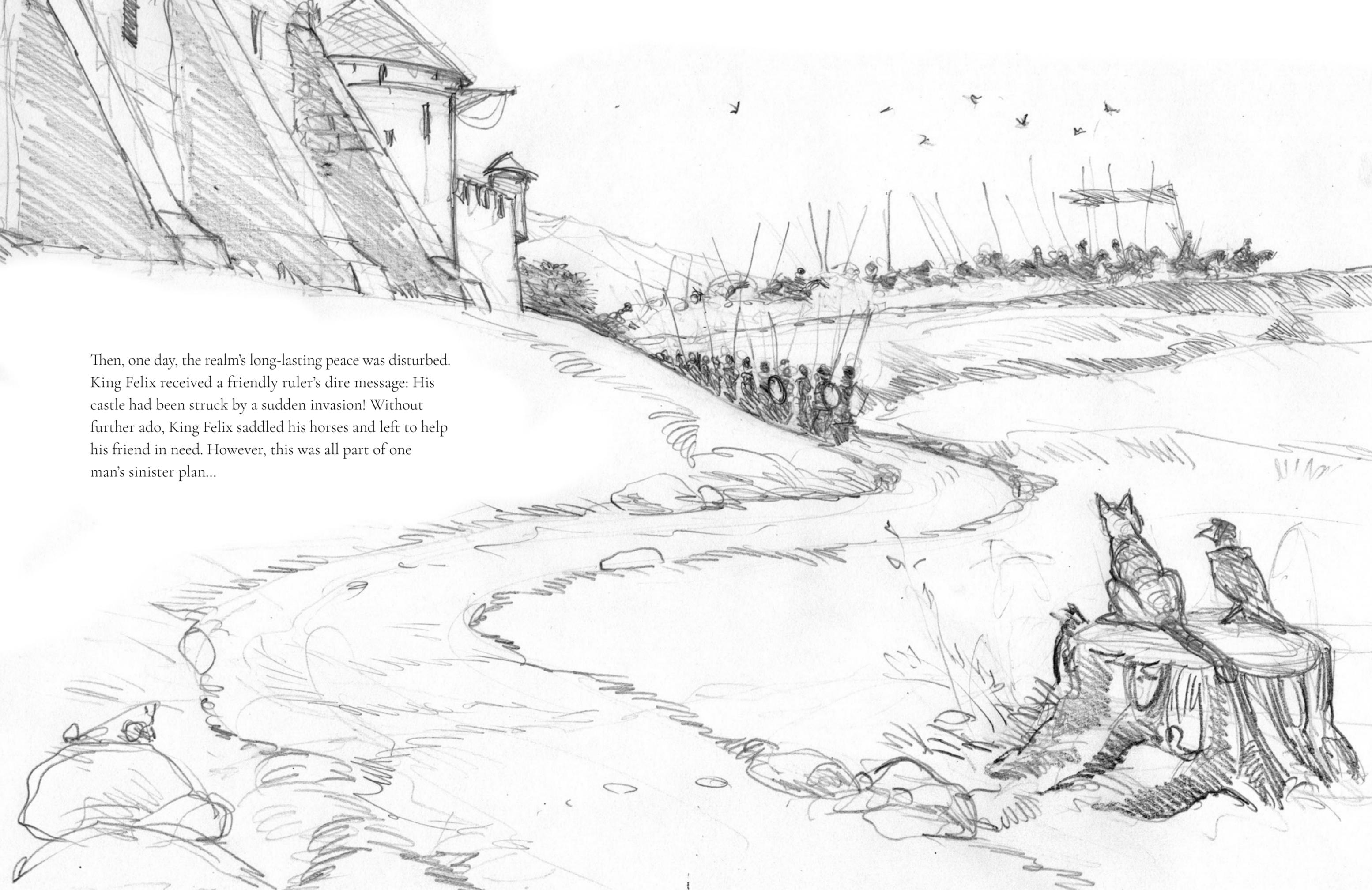




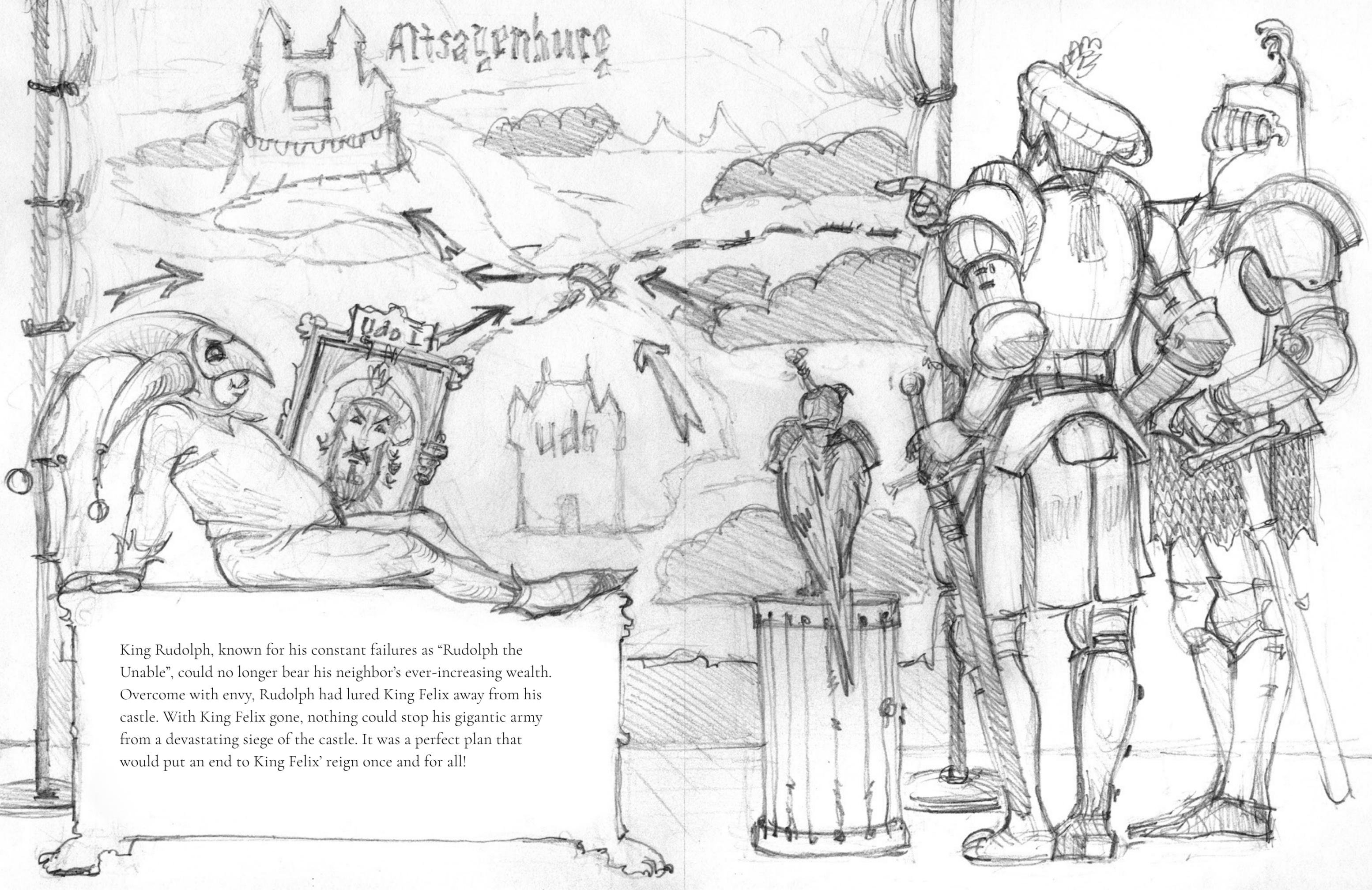
Spreading their king's word were his mail ravens: Loyal, brave and exceptionally fast. They were known far beyond the kingdom's borders. It was every raven's dream to prove oneself worthy of joining their prestigious ranks. And Karl was one such raven.



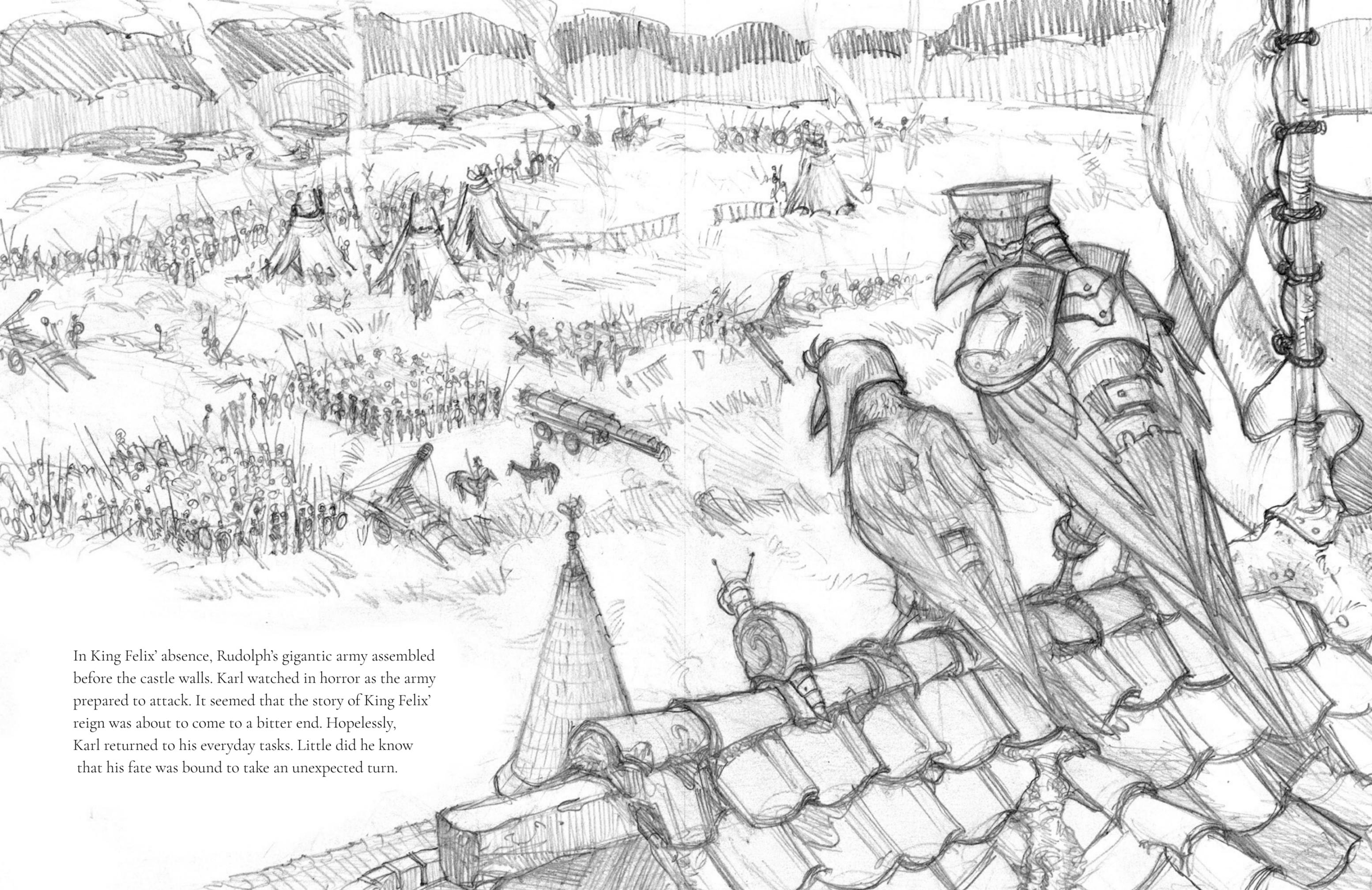
As determined as he was, however, Karl was still very young. He was also the youngest member of an old family business. There, his help was indispensable. It was a tiring and tedious task. But luckily, Karl was gifted with the mind of an inventor.



Then, one day, the realm's long-lasting peace was disturbed. King Felix received a friendly ruler's dire message: His castle had been struck by a sudden invasion! Without further ado, King Felix saddled his horses and left to help his friend in need. However, this was all part of one man's sinister plan...



King Rudolph, known for his constant failures as “Rudolph the Unable”, could no longer bear his neighbor’s ever-increasing wealth. Overcome with envy, Rudolph had lured King Felix away from his castle. With King Felix gone, nothing could stop his gigantic army from a devastating siege of the castle. It was a perfect plan that would put an end to King Felix’ reign once and for all!



In King Felix' absence, Rudolph's gigantic army assembled before the castle walls. Karl watched in horror as the army prepared to attack. It seemed that the story of King Felix' reign was about to come to a bitter end. Hopelessly, Karl returned to his everyday tasks. Little did he know that his fate was bound to take an unexpected turn.



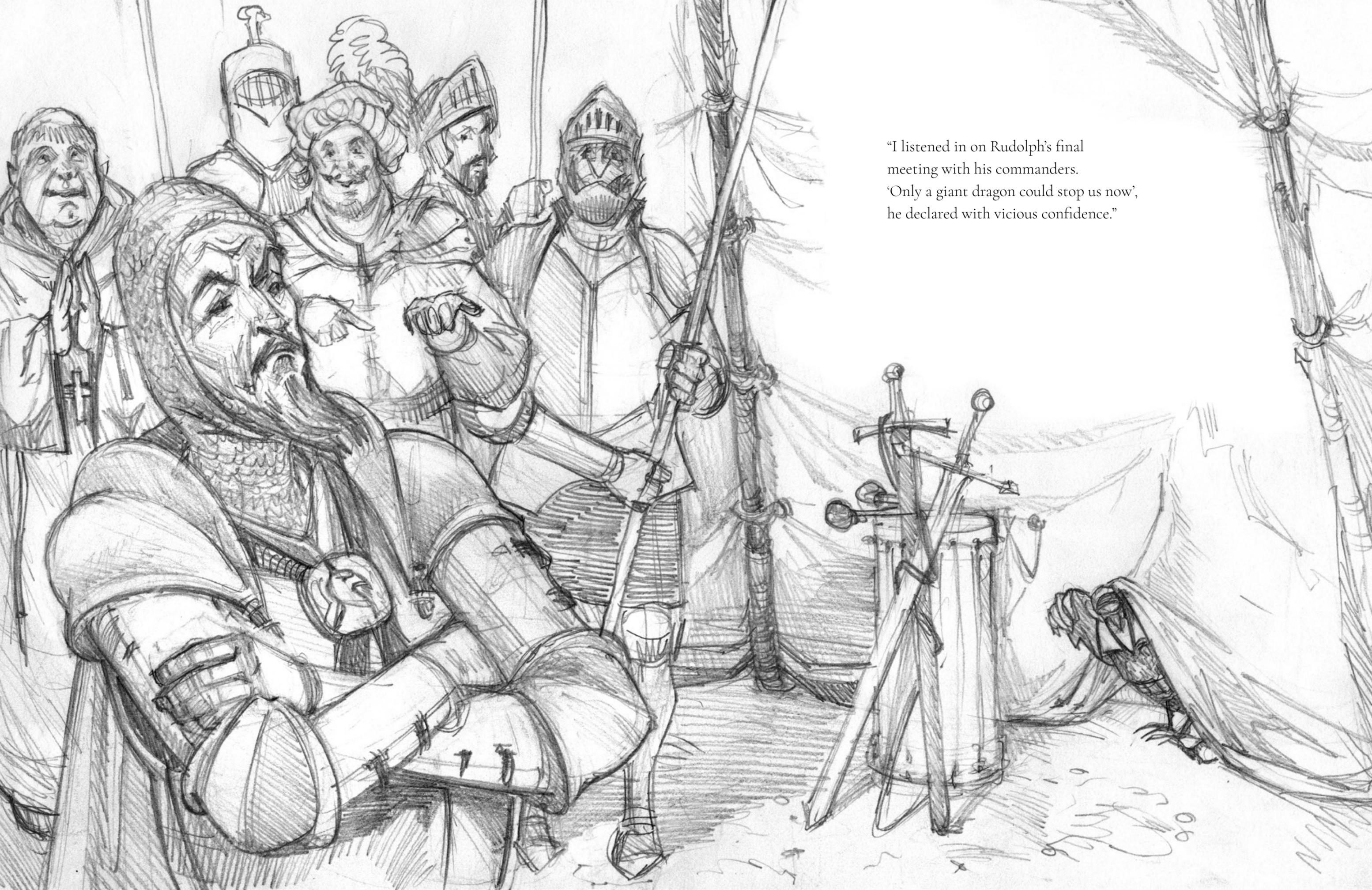
Upon returning to the castle yard, Karl found the other animals in an unusual commotion. He made his way to the center of their circle and gasped. Never had Karl seen a mail raven in such a miserable state.

“What on earth has happened here?”, he cried out in disbelief. “He came crashing down out of nowhere!”, the dog explained. Suddenly, the mail raven looked up at his worried spectators. As they all held their breath, the mail raven spoke.





“There is no way to inform our king about the attack, not even by air.”, the mail raven began, “Rudolph’s ruthless predators have seized the airspace. Even the very best of us cannot pass their blockade! One sunk his claws into my wing and brought me down. I thought this to be the end of me. But a pile of straw softened my fall. And what’s more, the pile lay next to the tent of evil King Rudolph himself!”



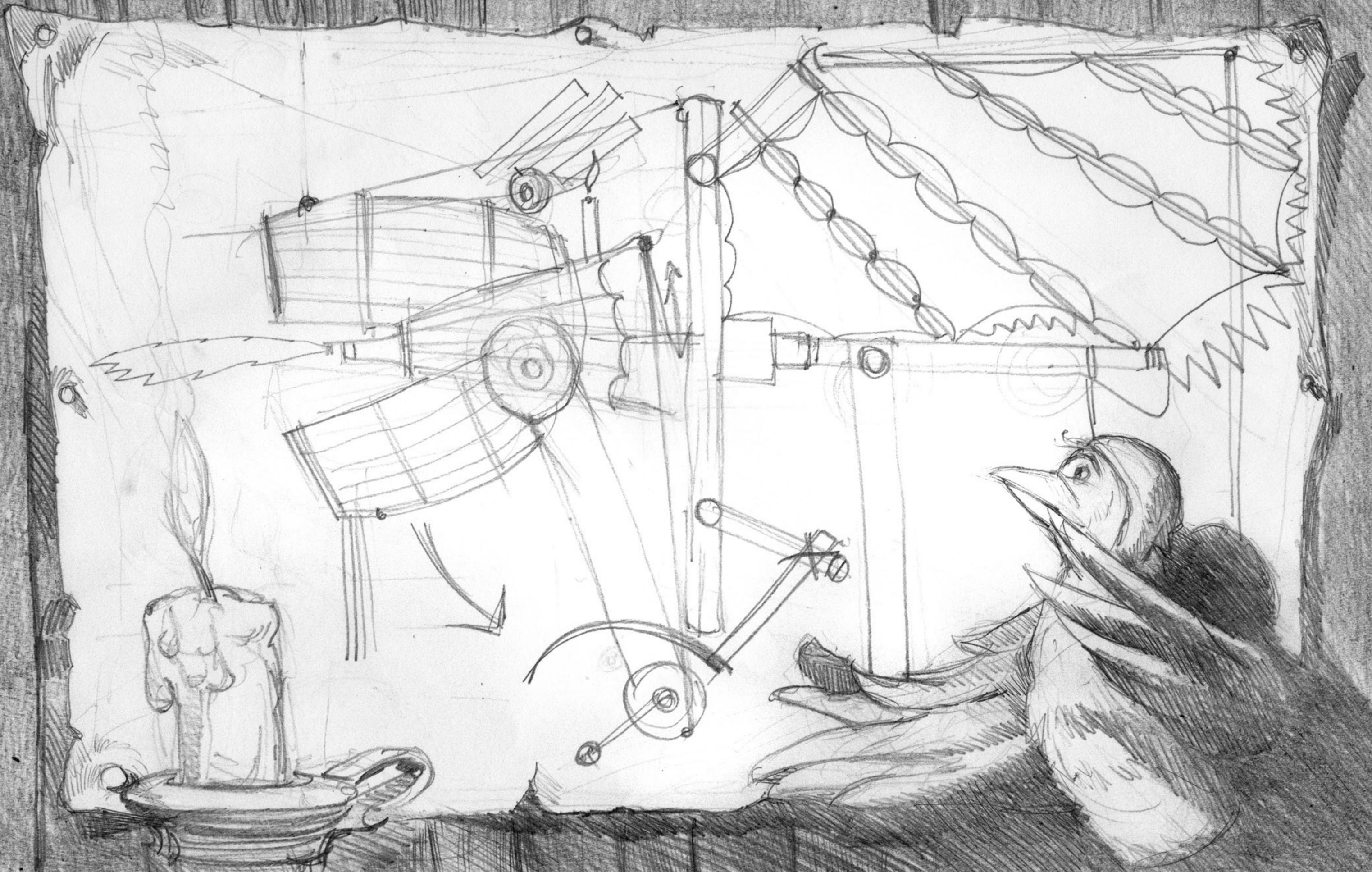
“I listened in on Rudolph’s final meeting with his commanders. ‘Only a giant dragon could stop us now’, he declared with vicious confidence.”



However, King Rudolph's boastful words did not intimidate young Karl. Instead, they fueled his inventiveness. In a matter of minutes, Karl had come up with a plan. He presented it to the animals in excitement.

"And how do you propose we ever accomplish such a ludicrous endeavor?", the pig asked.

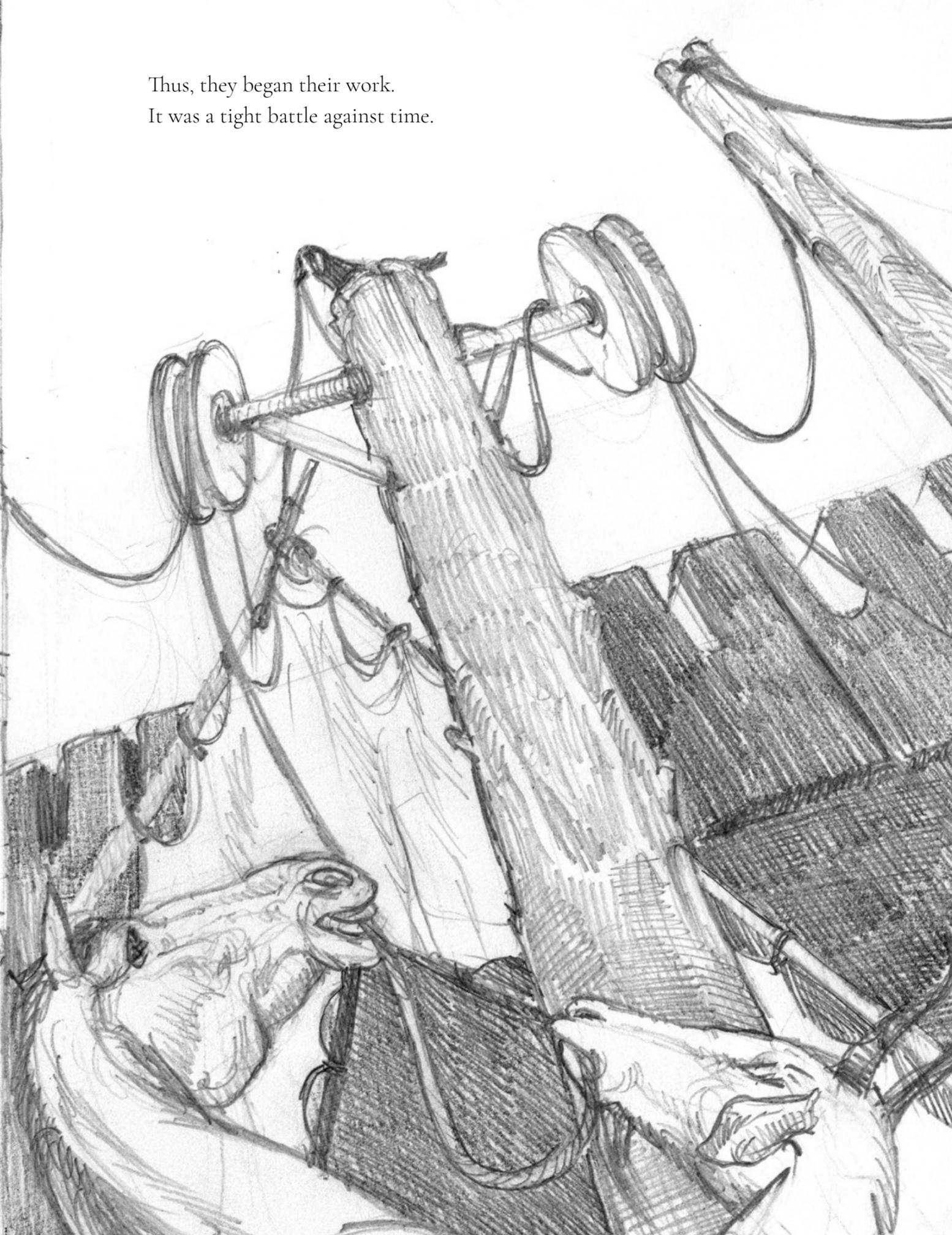
"Just give me a little time.", answered Karl.



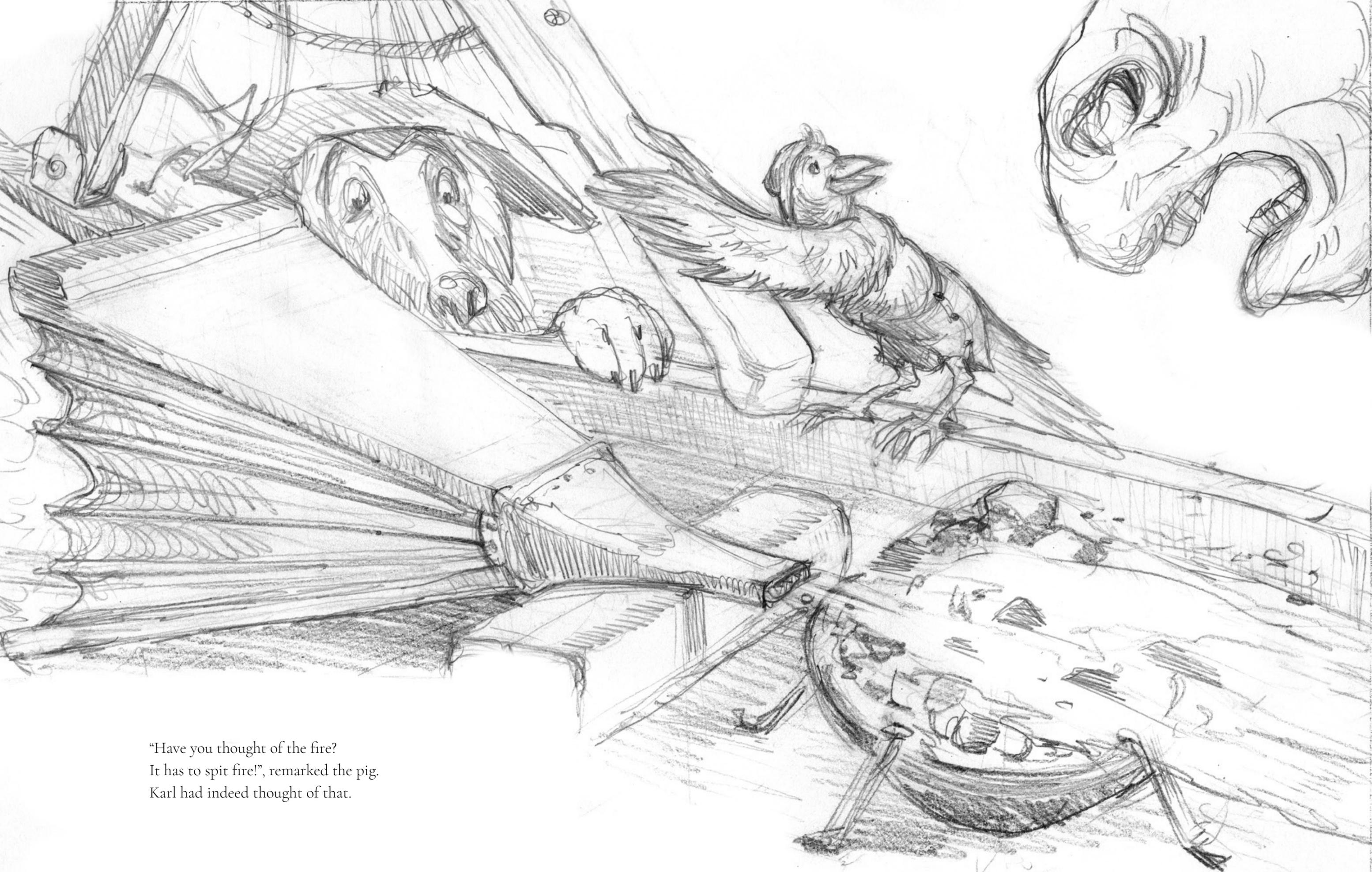
Karl's plan sounded insane if anything.
But it was the only one they had.



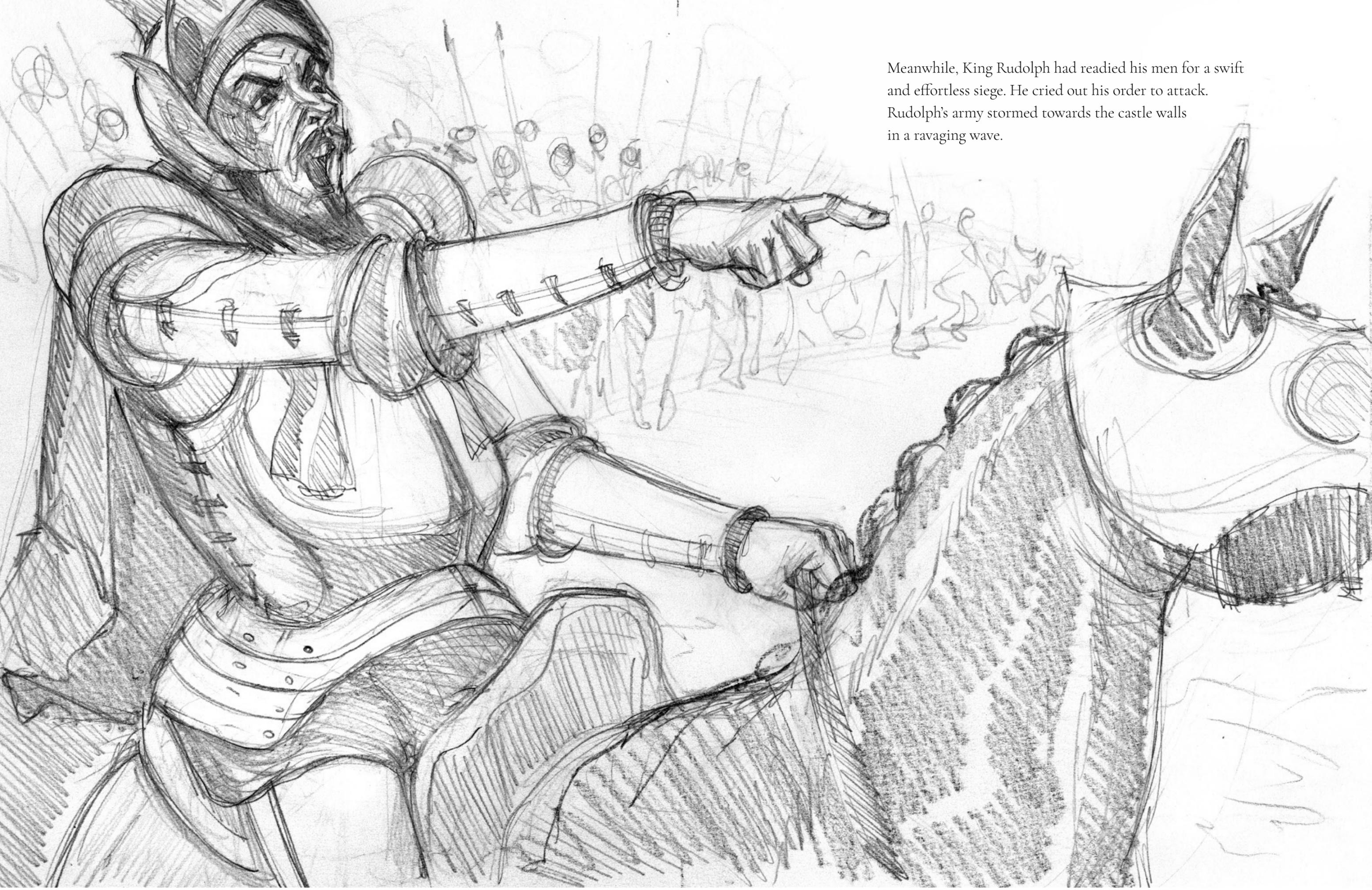
Thus, they began their work.
It was a tight battle against time.



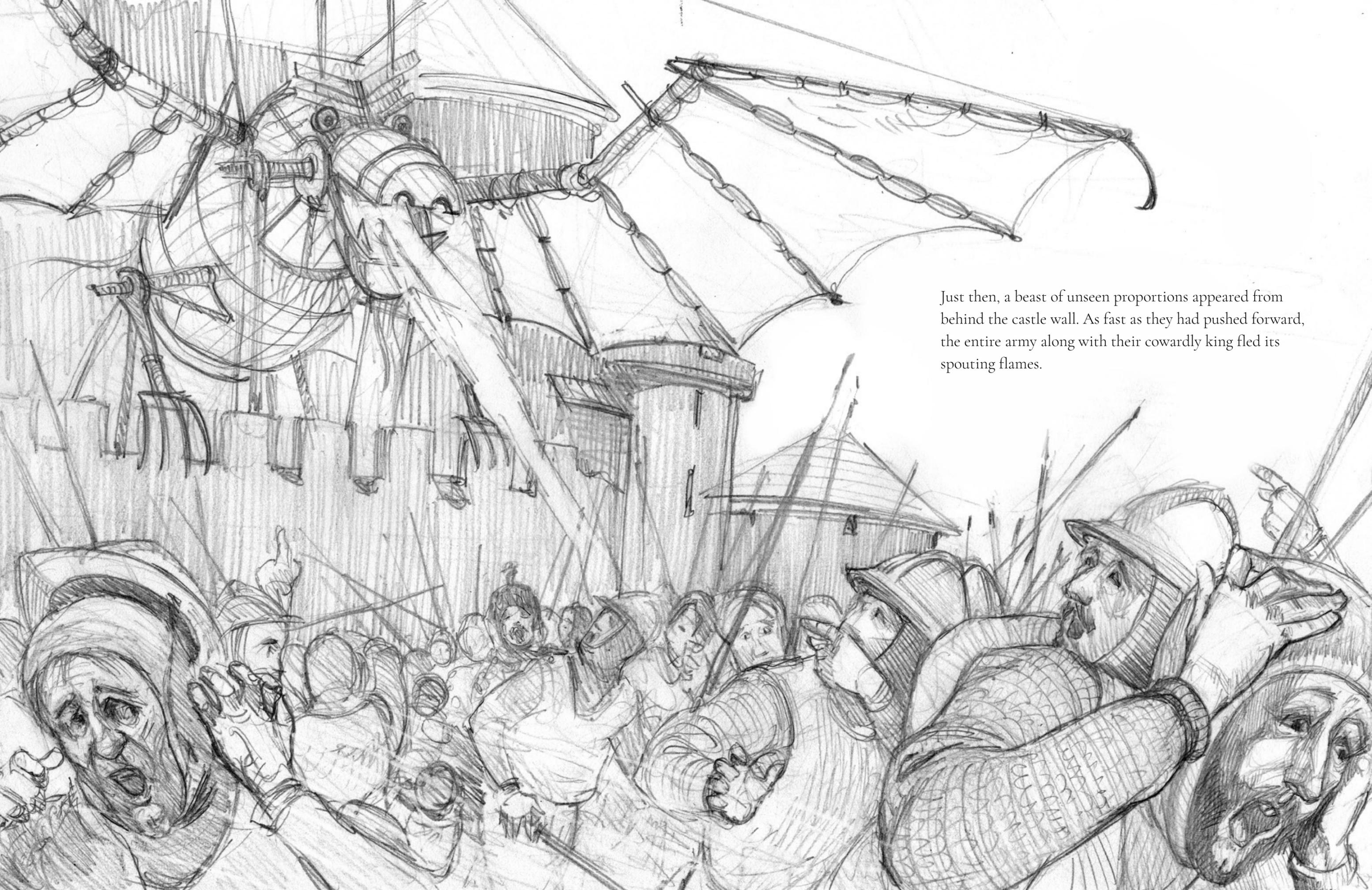




“Have you thought of the fire?
It has to spit fire!”, remarked the pig.
Karl had indeed thought of that.



Meanwhile, King Rudolph had readied his men for a swift and effortless siege. He cried out his order to attack. Rudolph's army stormed towards the castle walls in a ravaging wave.



Just then, a beast of unseen proportions appeared from behind the castle wall. As fast as they had pushed forward, the entire army along with their cowardly king fled its spouting flames.

For their exceptional bravery and stunning ingenuity, the animals were gratefully rewarded by their king. And Karl, the talented inventor, was offered the prestigious position of First Royal Architect. He accepted the king's offer in great respect and humbleness.



“What an incredible story!”, exclaimed the young raven.
“And isn’t it funny that the young raven’s name was Karl, just like yours?”
The grandfather smiled warmly. “That is quite interesting indeed, isn’t it?”



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L.K.
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