

Long ago, in  
a land called  
Norendy . . .



LOST  
EVANGELINE



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For Karla, who gave me the lamp,  
and for Sophie, who lit it

KD



For my father, who made me into  
a traveler like him,  
and for Kate, who wrote me a map

SB







## CHAPTER ONE

THERE WAS ONCE a boy who longed to go to sea.

“Tsk,” said his father. “Do not be one of those who spend their lives spinning pointless fantasies. I will not have it.”

And so the child put aside his dreams, grew up, and became, like his father before him, a shoemaker.

He tried to forget the sea.

One evening, as the shoemaker sat in front of the fire with his wife, he said, “Do you know that when I was young, I dreamed of being a sailor?”

“Well,” said the woman, “that would have

been a foolish and dangerous life. Better that you are here, safe and warm with me.”

The shoemaker nodded. “I suppose,” he said. “But imagine—I would have seen the world!”

“The world?” said the shoemaker’s wife. “Isn’t the world the world no matter where you go?”

“Ah, yes, but to sail on the blue seas under skies bright with stars . . .” said the shoemaker.

“The stars are over your head right now, husband, are they not?”

“Yes,” said the shoemaker. “Yes, yes, they are.”

“Be content with what you have,” said his wife. “There is no point in thinking things would be different somewhere else.”

The two of them did not ever speak of the sea again.

The shoemaker and his wife had no children, and they had long given up hoping

for them. And so it seemed an entirely miraculous thing when one day, the cobbler sat down to work on repairing an old boot and found, hidden in its squared-off toe, an extremely small child.

The shoemaker held the baby in his cupped palm and stared down at her in wonder.

“Wife,” he said, “come here. You must see what has been given to us.”



The shoemaker's wife came and stood at her husband's shoulder and looked down at the baby in his hand. "No, no," she said. She shook her head. "That is not a child. It is some magic trick."

"Of course it is a child," said the shoemaker. "A perfect little child."

"It can't be," said the woman. "Such a thing is impossible."

The baby started to cry. The shoemaker rocked her back and forth gently in his hand, smiling down at her.

"I don't understand," said the shoemaker's wife. "A child so small seems wrong to me. I'm sure a mistake has been made. Someone will return to claim the boots and want what they have left behind. And what will happen then? You will be nothing but brokenhearted."

The shoemaker was not listening. He was looking down at the baby and thinking of a sloop he had seen when he was a boy. The

small ship had seemed full of joy, pulling and tugging against its anchor, dancing and bobbing in the waters as if to say, *Let's go! Let's go!*

A sailor standing on the dock had pointed to the boat and said, “Do you see this little lady? She has gone around the world—twice, if you please!”

Painted on the side of the sloop in red, flowing script was the boat's name: *Evangeline*.

This was the name the shoemaker chose for the child.

Evangeline.

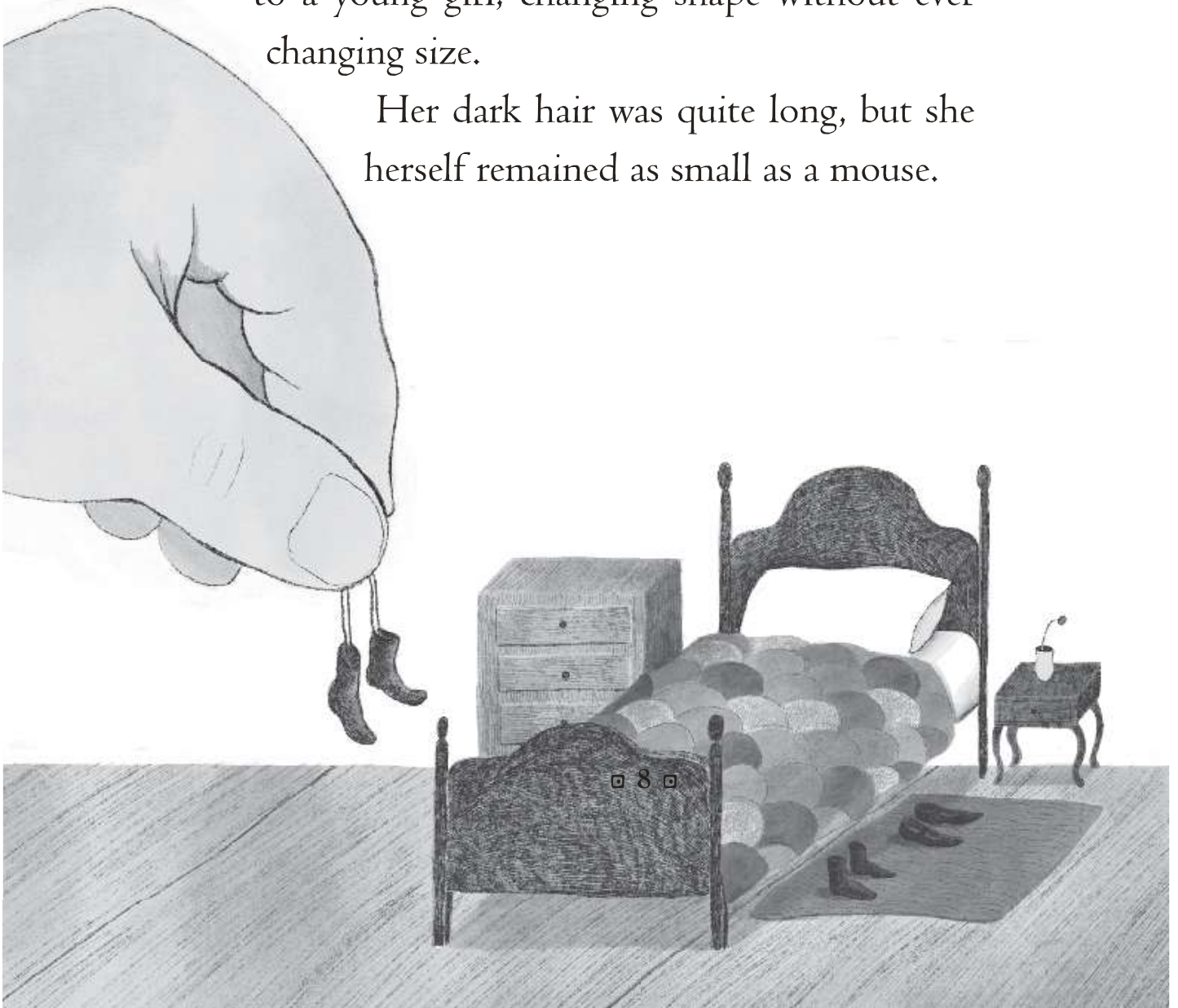
It was, to him, a name full of joy and curiosity, daring and courage—a name that spoke of possibilities.

## CHAPTER TWO

NO ONE EVER RETURNED to claim the boots, or the child.

Evangeline grew from a baby to a toddler to a young girl, changing shape without ever changing size.

Her dark hair was quite long, but she herself remained as small as a mouse.

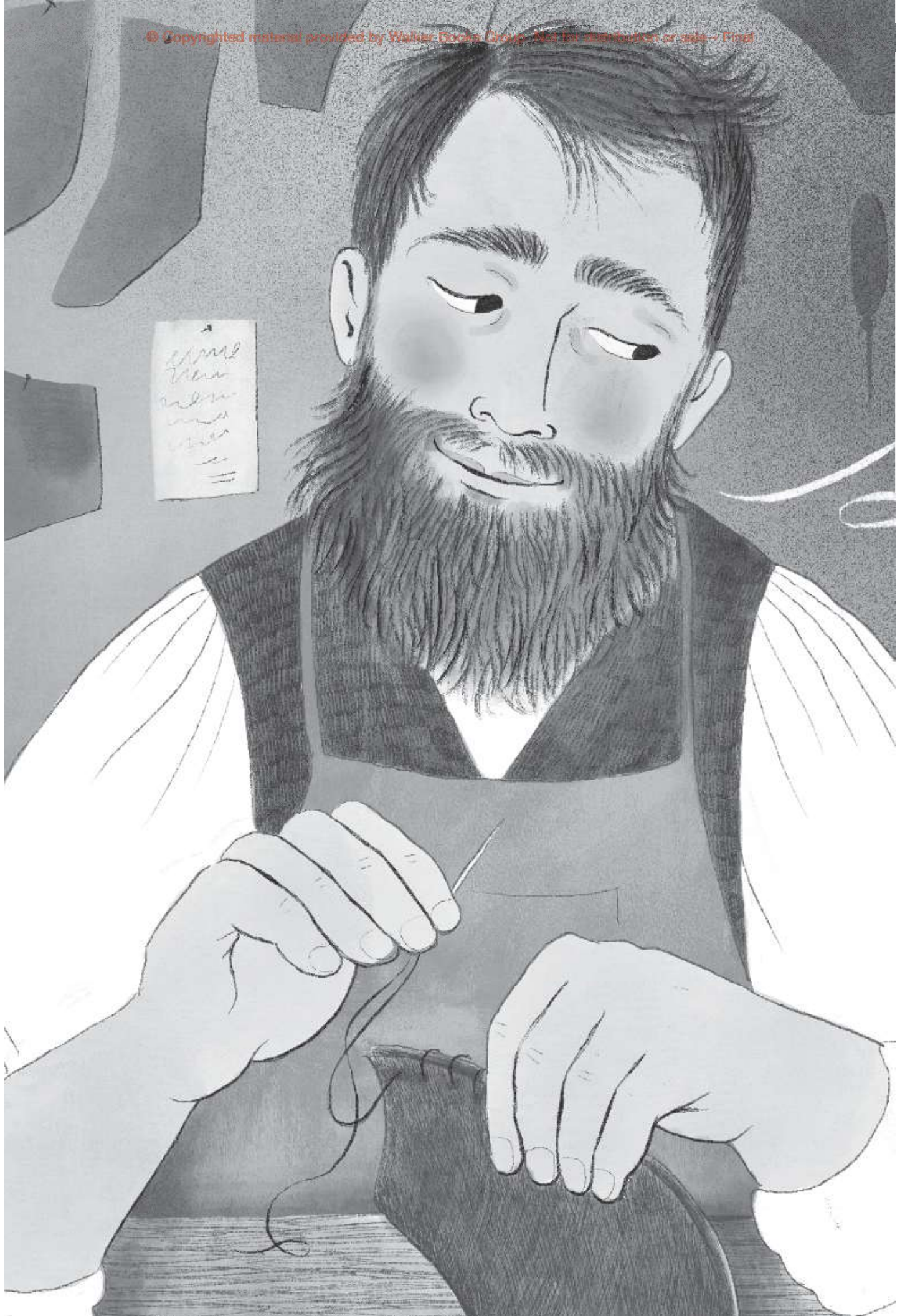


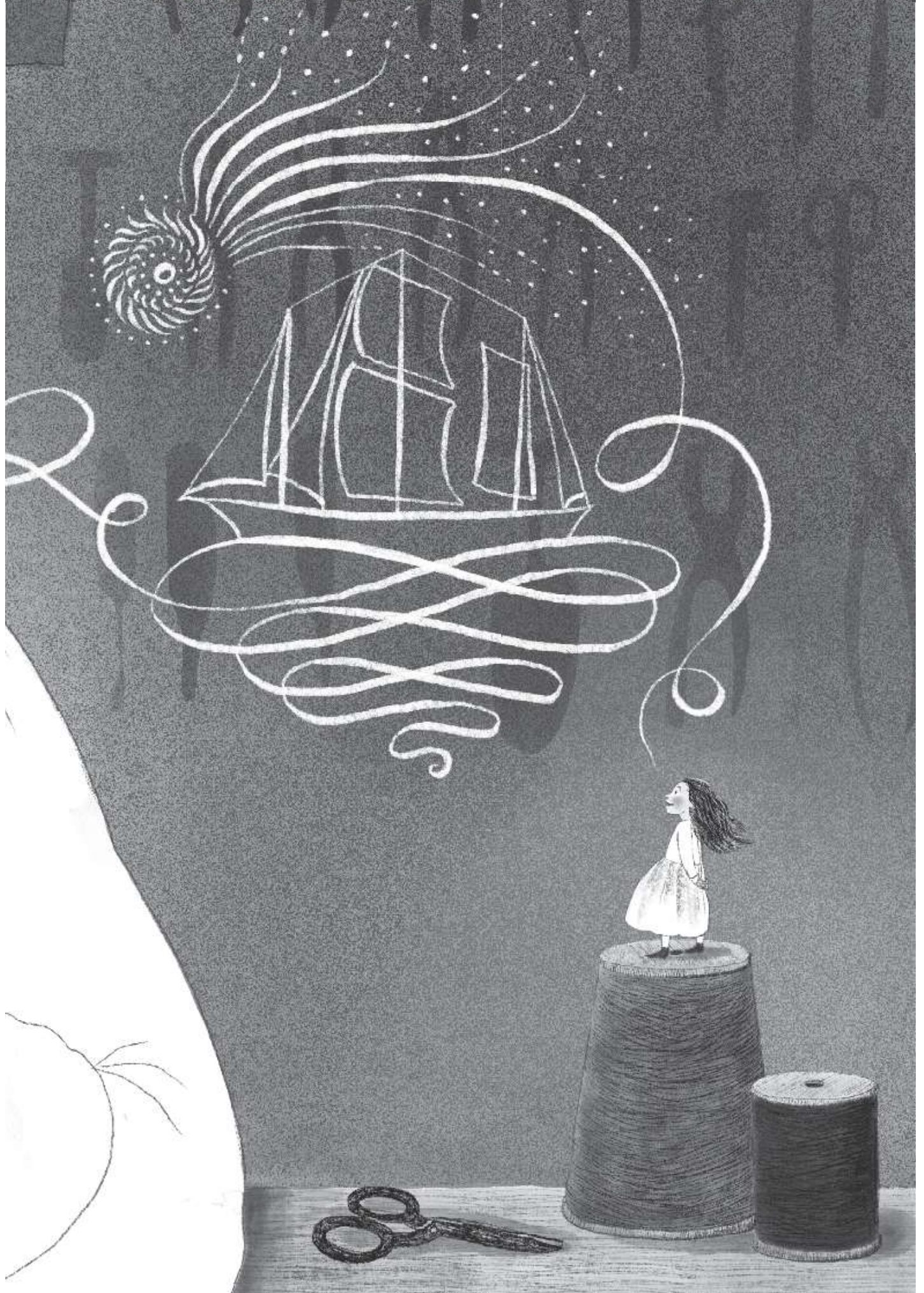
The shoemaker, who was very skilled at making things with his hands, fashioned a small bed for Evangeline. He made her a dresser and a bedside table with a drawer where she could keep her small brush and comb. He sewed her dresses and knitted her socks and made her a good sturdy coat for the cold weather. And, of course, he crafted her several pairs of tiny, handsome shoes.

Evangeline spent her days with her father in the shop. She sat on the workbench as the shoemaker labored at the making and repairing of shoes. He sang sea shanties as he worked, and Evangeline learned the songs and sang them with him. Her voice was high and sweet.

“When will we go to sea, Papa?” she said to him.

“Someday, my dear,” said the cobbler. “We do not want to waste our chance, do we? Surely someday we will go.”



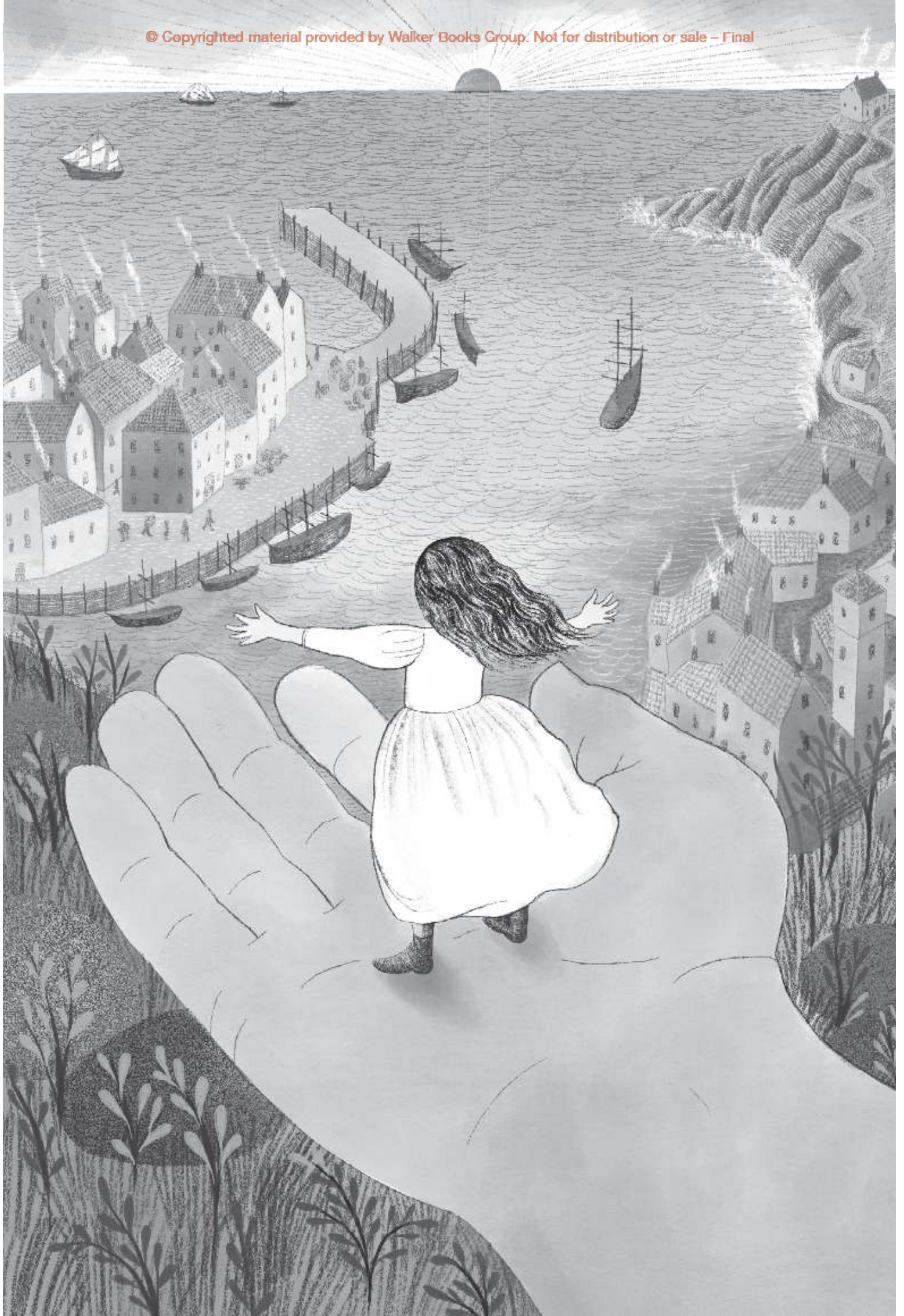


The two of them often went down to the harbor to look at the ships anchored there. They listened to the sailors speak of where they had been and what they had seen. Together, the father and the daughter breathed in the smell of the sea and filled their hearts and minds with the dreams and stories of other places.

The shoemaker put Evangeline in the pocket of his leather apron for these trips. He told her to keep herself hidden, for he was always worried that someone would come to reclaim her and that she would be lost to him.

Above the town harbor was a cliff. The shoemaker, after he had strolled along the wharf, would climb to the top of the rocks, to a spot that he called the crow's nest. When he was up as high as he could go, and no one else was around, he would lift Evangeline from his pocket and hold her in his hand.

And Evangeline, standing, balanced herself on his outstretched palm and looked down at



the boats crowded together, at the crates and boxes being loaded and unloaded on and off the ships, at the cats who twined their way among the nets filled with silver-scaled fishes, and at the sailors sitting on the docks, smoking their pipes and shouting and singing. Farther out to sea, white gulls floated above the water that shone green and then blue, and sometimes became black with menace, and then would suddenly become blue again.

Evangeline, safe in her father's hand, looked down at it all, and her heart filled with wonder. Joy billowed inside her like a sail.

“When, Papa?” she said without turning around. “Oh, when shall we go?”

## CHAPTER THREE

ALWAYS, THE SHOEMAKER was worried that he would lose Evangeline, that someone would come and take her away. And so it was good that the hinges on the door to the cobbler's shop were rusty, and that they made a small, complaining sound whenever the door was opened.

The shoemaker taught Evangeline to listen for this sound; it became a game that, at the first creak of the hinges, Evangeline must make herself disappear.

In the shoemaker's shop, there were many places for someone as small and clever as Evangeline to hide. She could crouch behind



an awl, a spool of leather cord, or a box of nails and disappear entirely. There was only one rule to the game, which was that Evangeline must never hide herself in a shoe; other than that, she had the run

of the shop. And when she finally settled on her hiding place, she would hold herself very still and wait as her father and the customer talked.

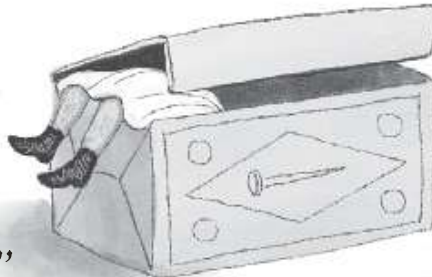
She listened to the rise and fall of conversation, to her father's gentle, patient voice, while the old clock on the shelf ticked the time away. It

seemed to Evangeline that the clock was forever singing the same mournful song: *Ah, well, time passes, time passes on and on.*

When the customer and her



father bid each other goodbye and the creak of the hinges sounded again, the shoemaker would clear his throat and say, “I wonder what became of Evangeline. Oh, lost Evangeline, where can you be?”



He would then stand up from his stool and start to search for her.

The shoemaker would sing, “*Oh, dear, Evangeline is lost. Where has she gone? Evangeline of the sea and stars, where have you gone, and will you return?*”



Over time, Evangeline became better at hiding herself, and it became harder and harder for the shoemaker to find her.

When, after a long time searching, her father still had not found her, when he stood in the center of the shop looking truly bereft, Evangeline would take pity

on him, and she would sing out, “*Oh, dear, Evangeline is lost . . .*”

She would keep singing the song until her father found his way to her.

