

CLASSICS

STORYUISION

John Bunyan's

Pilgrim's

Progress

Part Four

For teens and adults

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Produced by Genesis Research Corporation

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Christian, who had started up the steep hill at a run, soon slowed to walking, then, as the hill got steeper, to crawling on hands and knees. It was tough going. About the middle of the hill Christian spotted a little hut built by the Lord of the hill as a rest house for weary travellers.





There, Christian sat down to rest his tired body. Pulling out his letter, he read the comforting words. Weary but happy, Christian inspected the garment given him by the Shining One at the cross. Ya-aw-nnn! His mouth opened wide. Soon he was fast asleep. His arm dropped

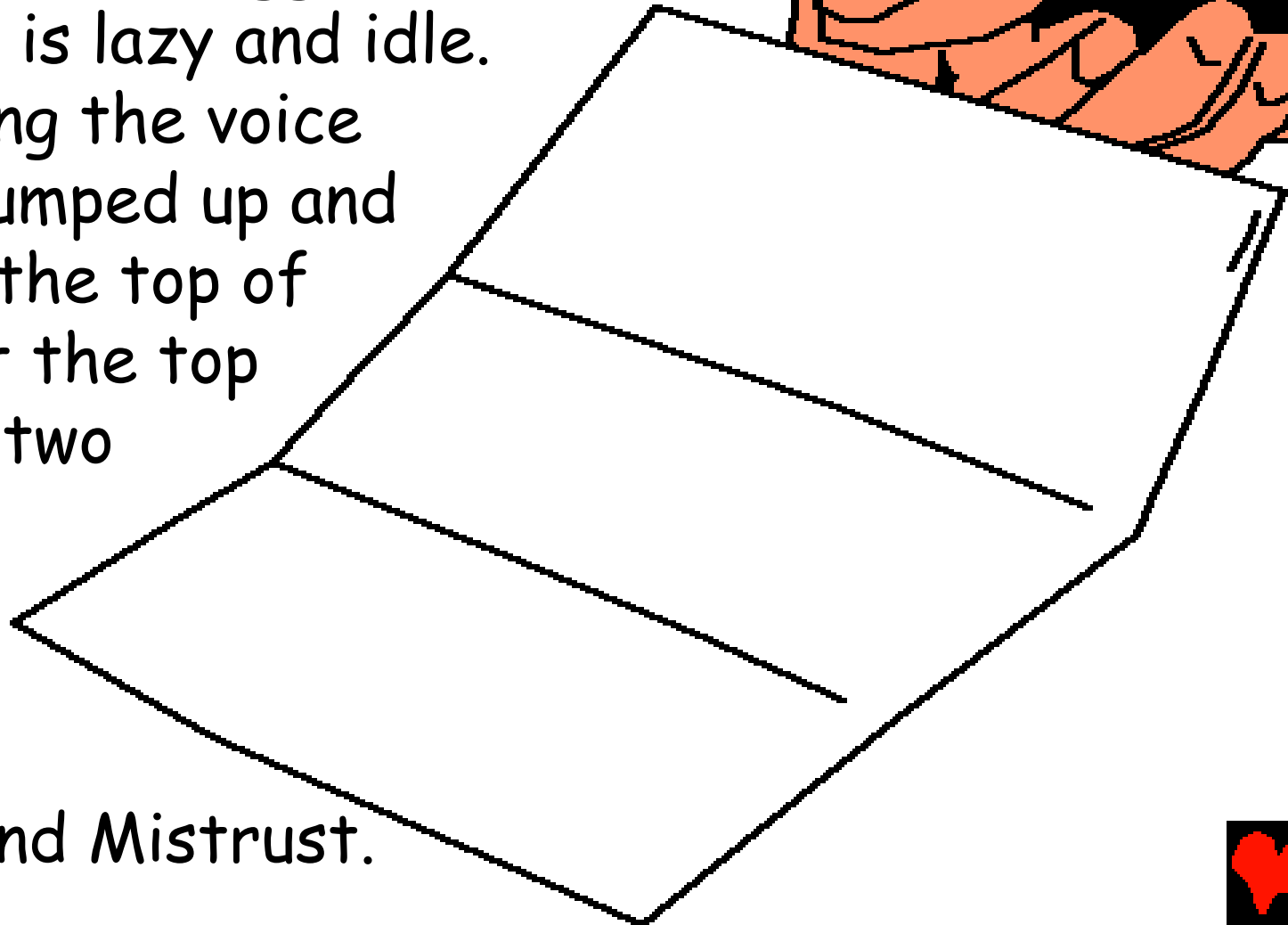
limply to his side. His precious letter slipped from his fingers.



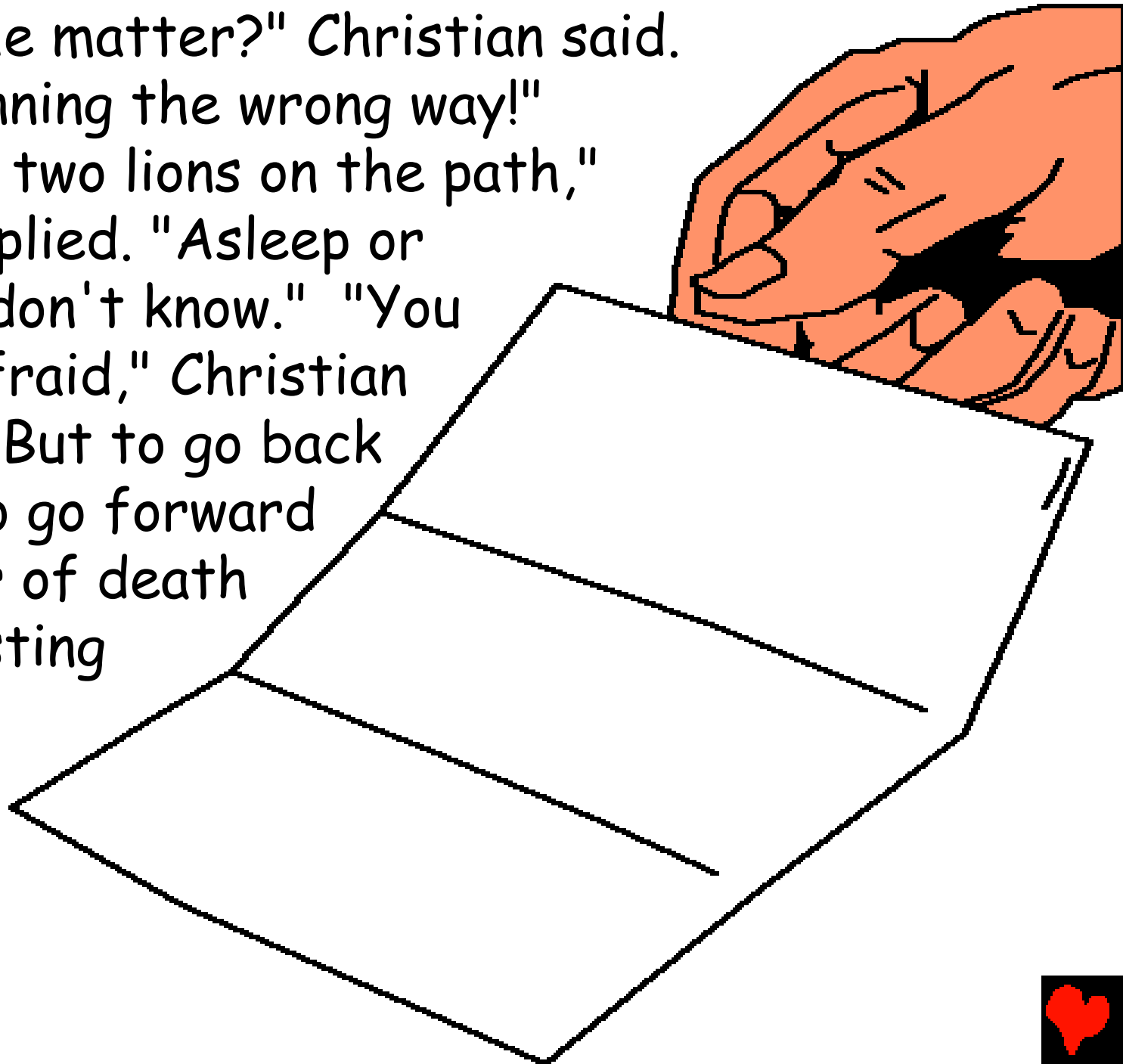
While he slept, someone came to Christian and said, "Go to the ant, you sluggard; consider her ways and be wise." A sluggard is a person who is lazy and idle.

Upon hearing the voice Christian jumped up and hurried to the top of the hill. At the top of the hill, two men ran towards Christian.

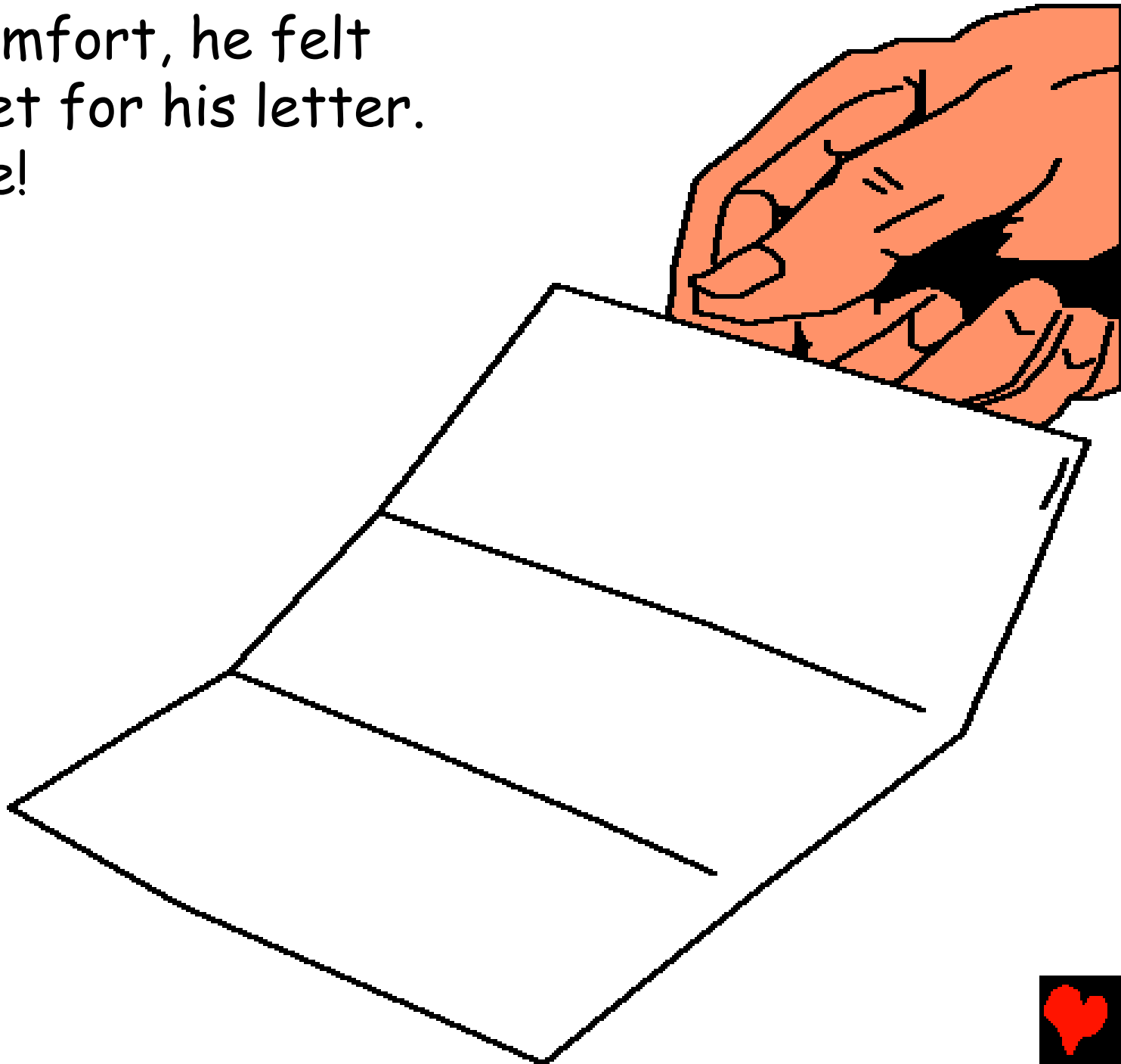
They were Timorous and Mistrust.

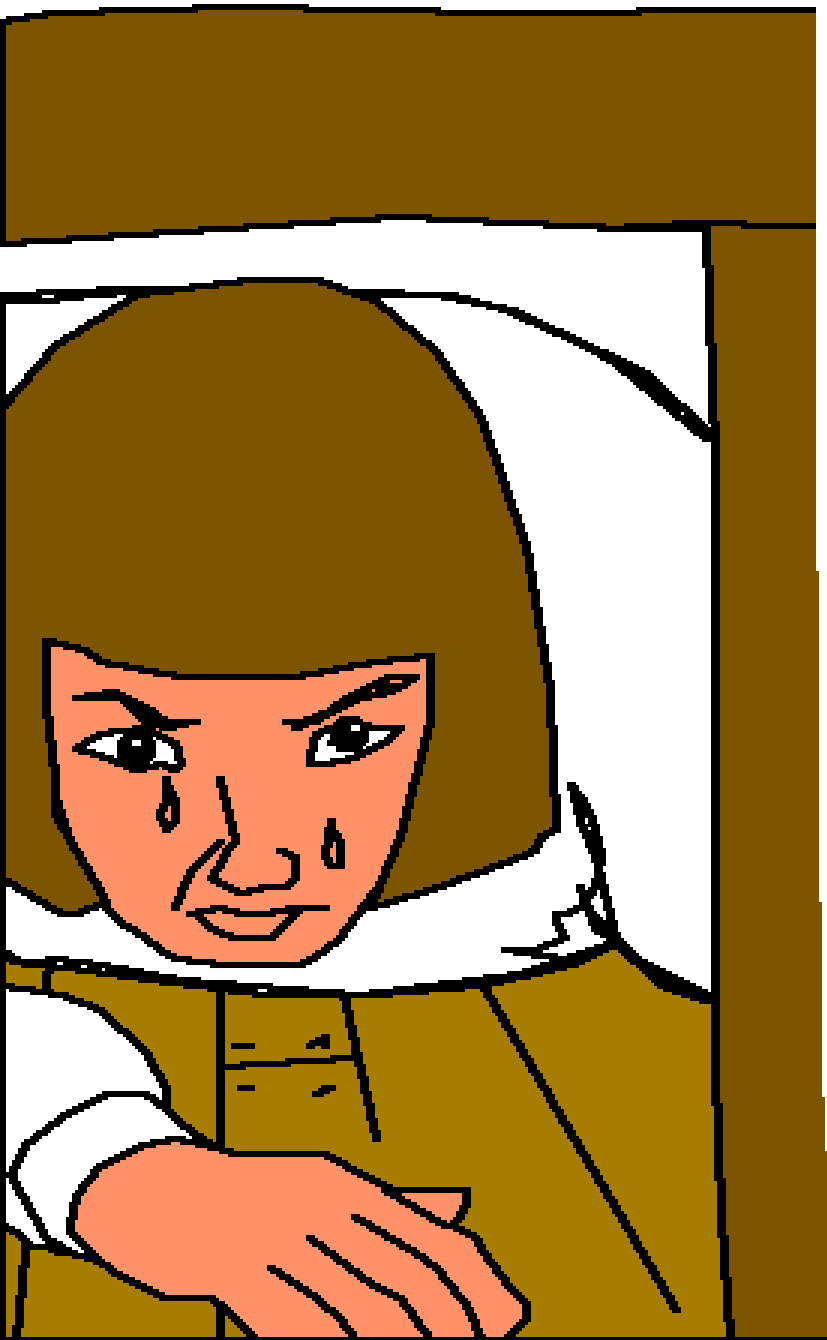


"What's the matter?" Christian said.
"You're running the wrong way!"
"There are two lions on the path,"
the men replied. "Asleep or
awake, we don't know." "You
make me afraid," Christian
admitted. "But to go back
is death; to go forward
is only fear of death
and everlasting
life beyond
death.
I will
go on."



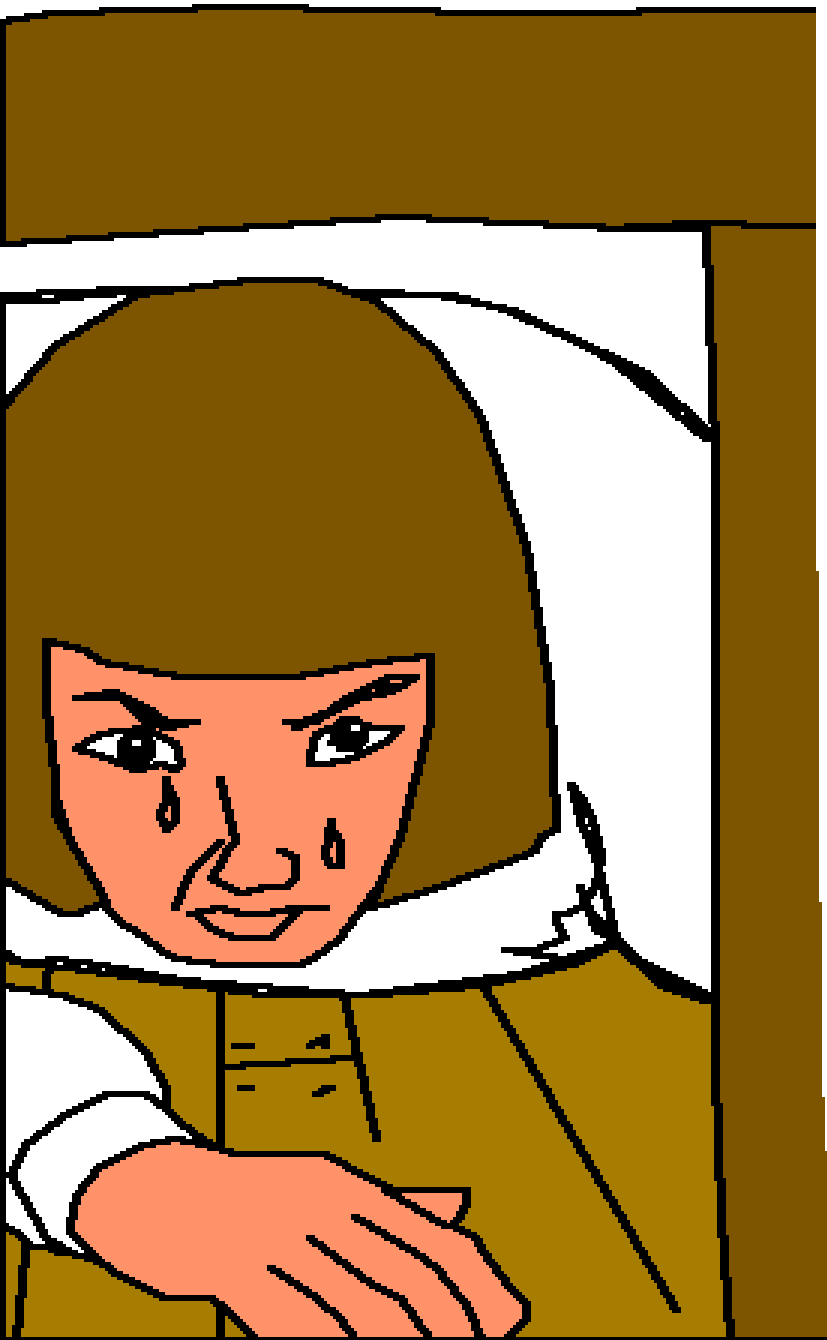
Needing comfort, he felt
in his pocket for his letter.
It was gone!





Christian was very upset. "My letter," he thought. "Where could I have put it?" He knew he could not enter Celestial City without it. When did he read it last? He remembered! At the rest hut on the hill. He must have lost it there. Falling to his knees, Christian confessed his foolishness to God. If only he hadn't allowed himself to fall asleep there.



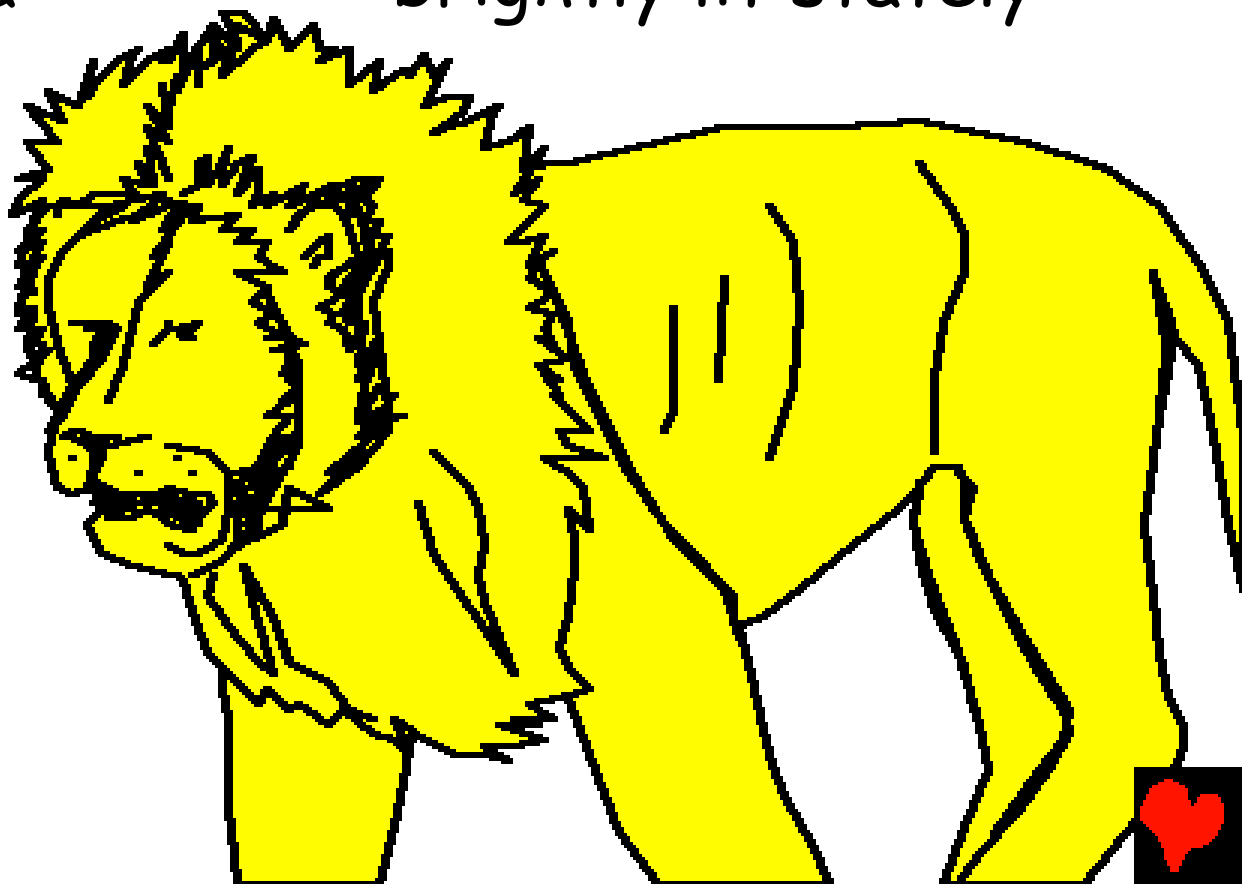


When he finished praying, the sad pilgrim hurried back to the hut, looking right and left as he ran. At the hut he sat down and cried.

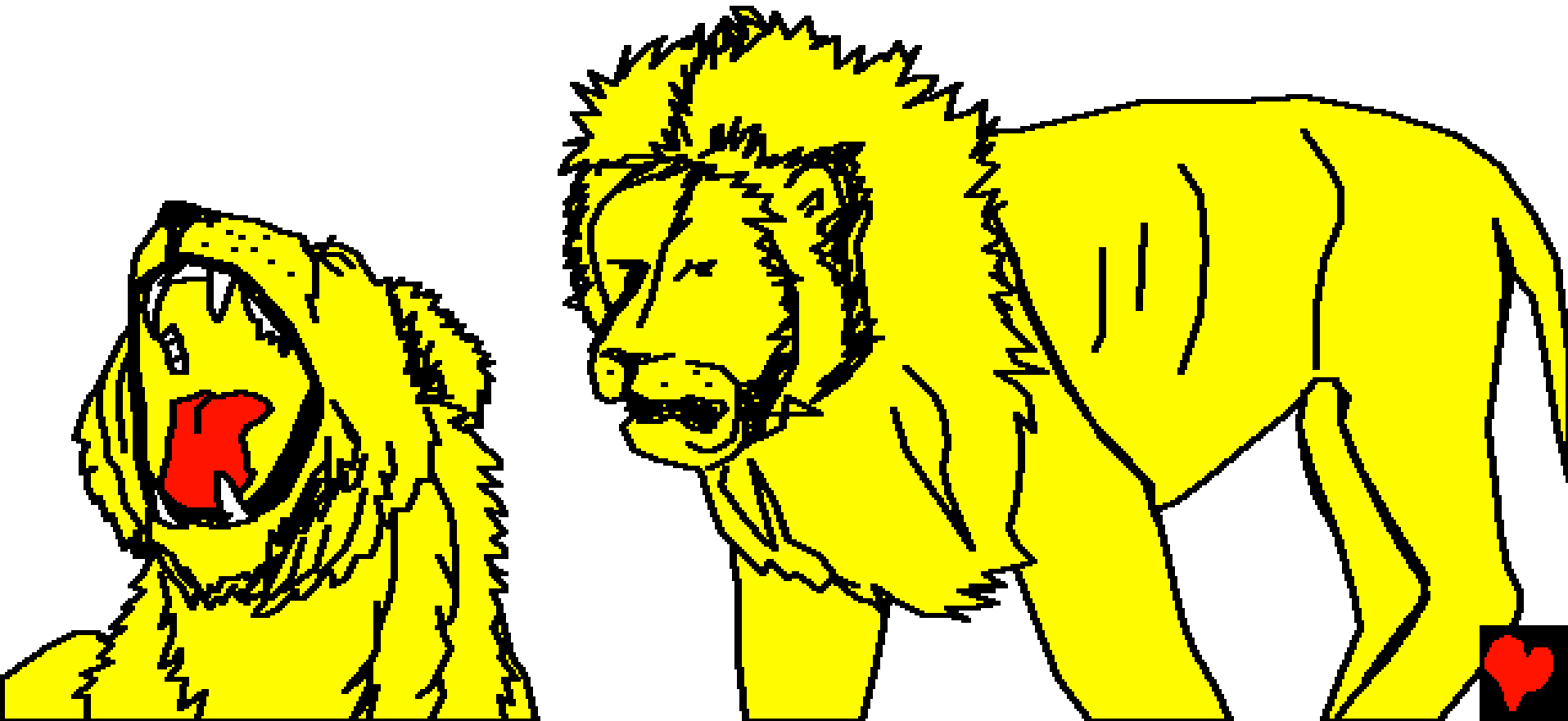
At last, searching around, Christian found his letter underneath the bench on which he'd fallen asleep. Oh, how happy he was. He thanked God again and again for its return, tucked it carefully in his pocket, and sped up the hill.



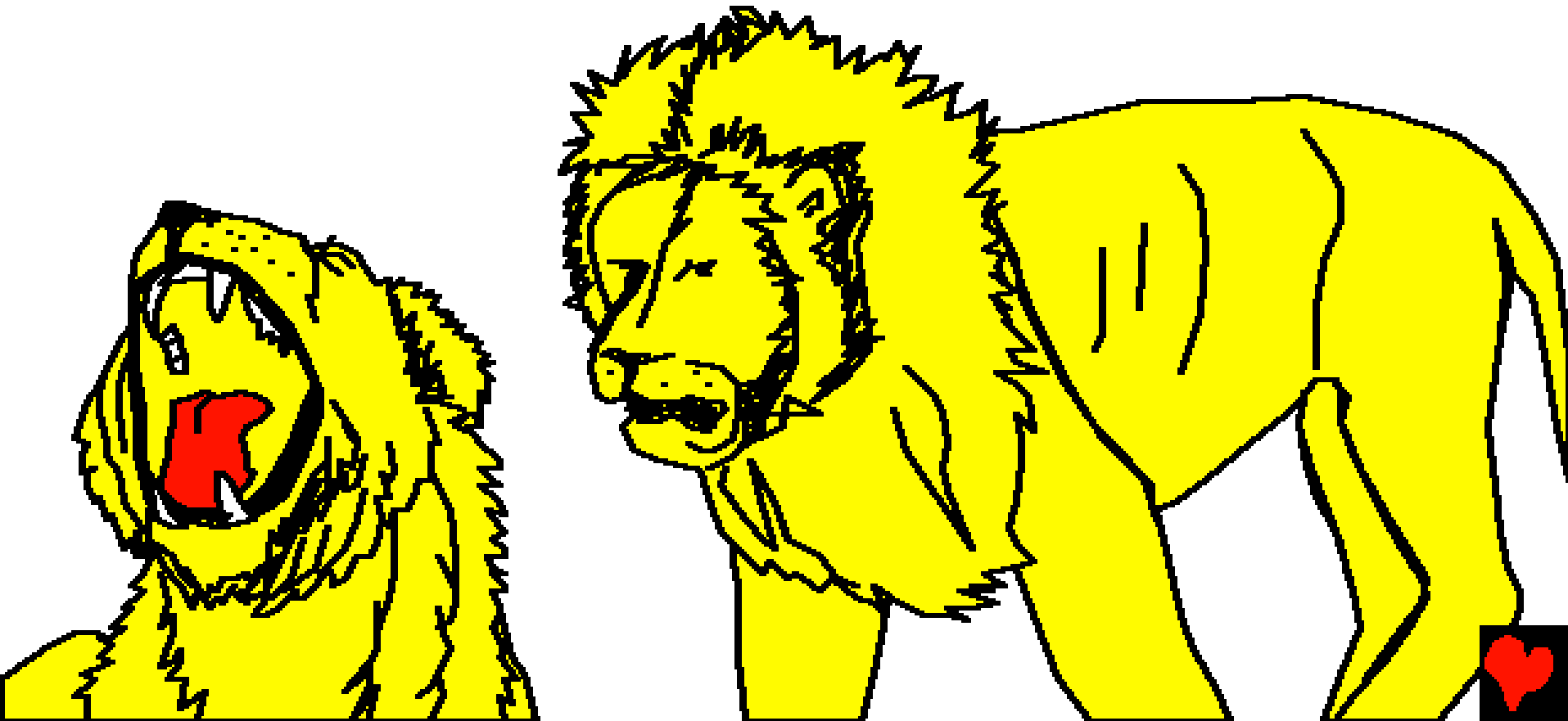
Darkness fell before Christian reached hilltop. He remembered the story Timorous and Mistrust told him about the lions waiting ahead. "These beasts hunt in the darkness," Christian muttered. "How can I escape them?" While he thought these unhappy thoughts, he saw a brightly lit stately palace further along the road.



The palace was called Beautiful. "I may get lodging there tonight," Christian thought. He hurried forward to the palace pathway - then stopped short! "I see them," Christian groaned to himself. "Two lions between me and the porter's gate."



The palace porter, whose name was Watchful, saw Christian. "The lions are tied," he cried. "Keep in the middle of the path and you'll be safe."



Though he trembled with fear, Christian carried on along the path. The lions' roars shook the ground he walked on. But the lions couldn't reach him. Realizing he was safe, Christian clapped his hands. Soon, he stood before the porter. "Sir, whose house is this?" Christian asked the porter. "The Lord's house, built to give relief and security to pilgrims," the porter replied.



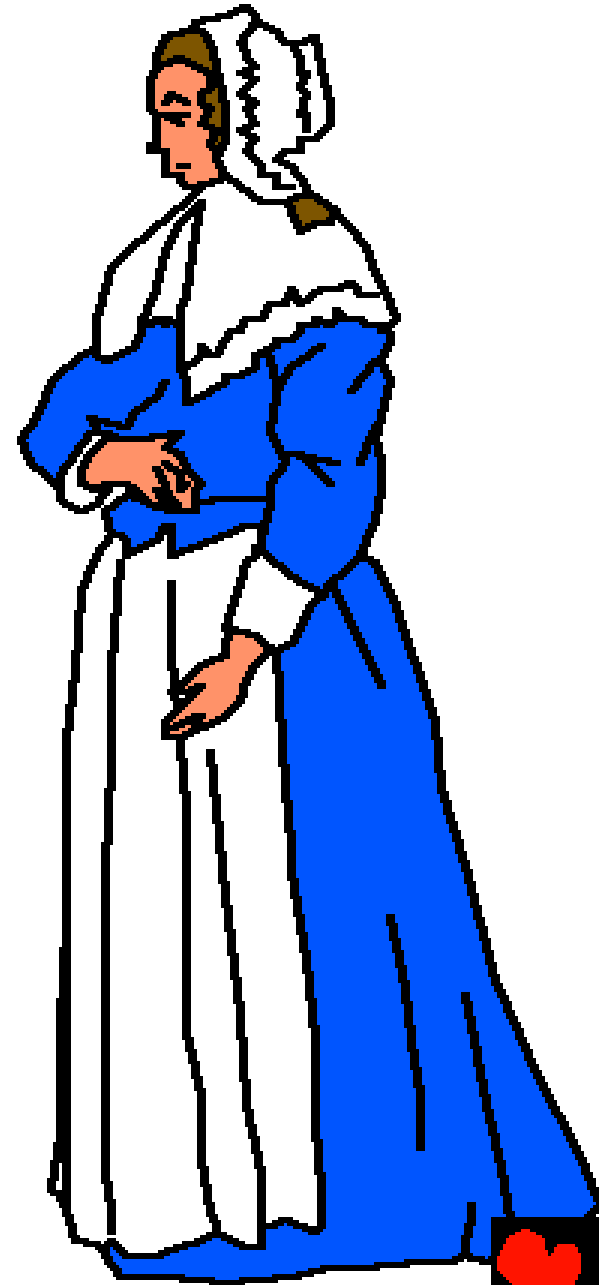
Then he asked Christian where he was from and where he was going. "I come from the city of Destruction and am going to mount Zion," Christian said. "It's late. I would like to lodge here tonight, if I may." The porter asked him his name. "Christian, but it used to be Graceless," the pilgrim said.



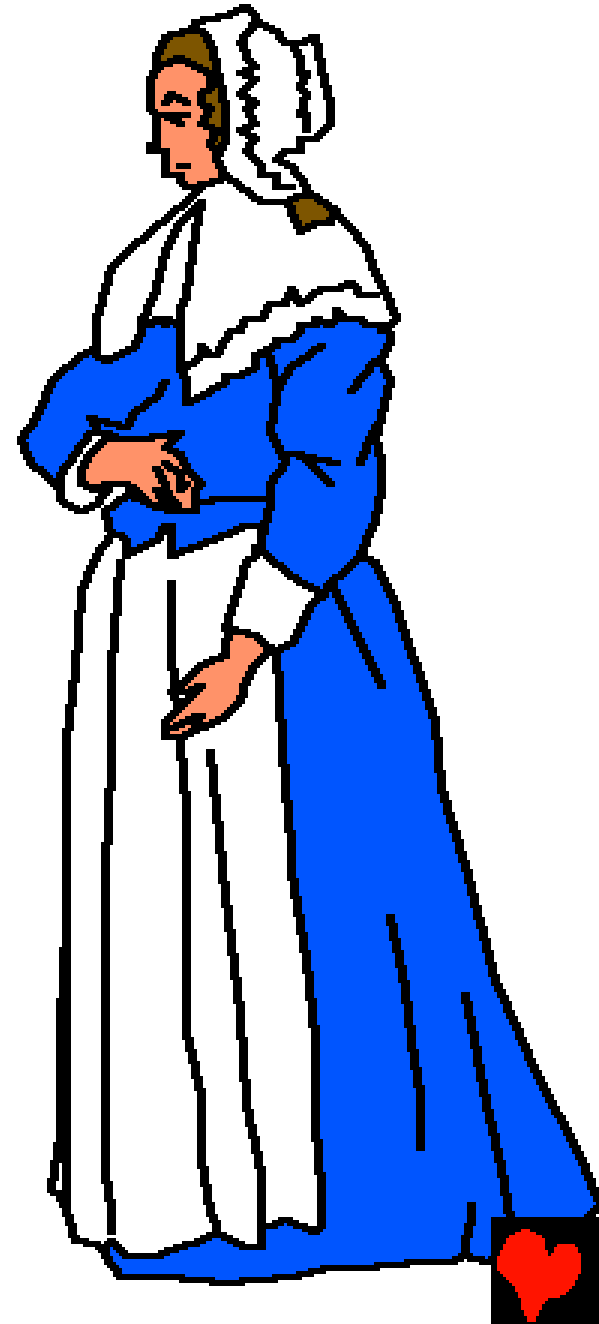
"How come you're on the road so late?" the porter enquired. Christian looked ashamed.

"Wretched man that I am, I slept in the rest hut on the hill." He sighed. "There, I lost my sealed letter and had to return to find it again."

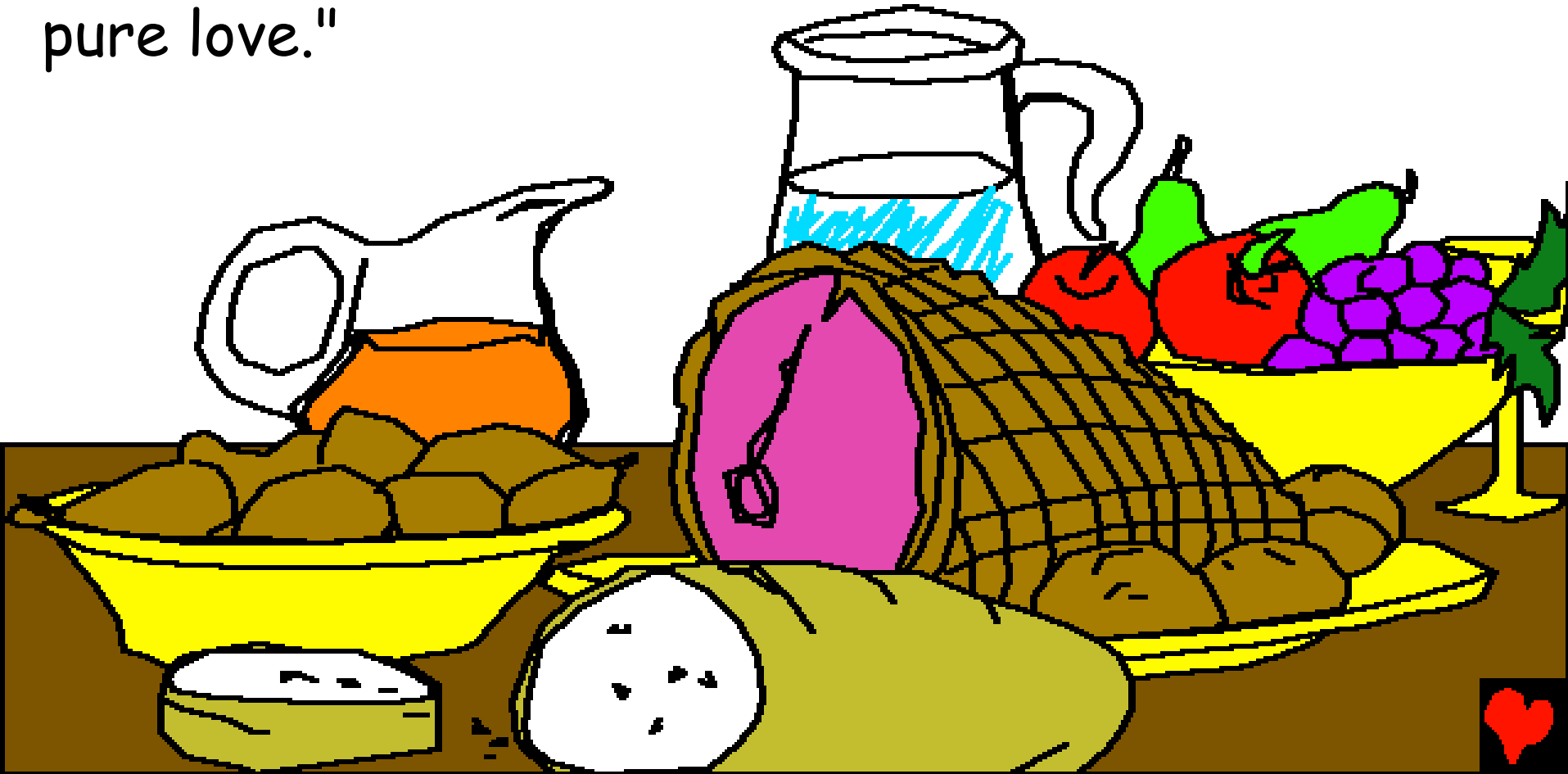
Ringling a bell, the porter nodded. "I'll call one of the women of the palace. If she likes your talk, she will bring you into the rest of the family according to the rules of the house," he said.



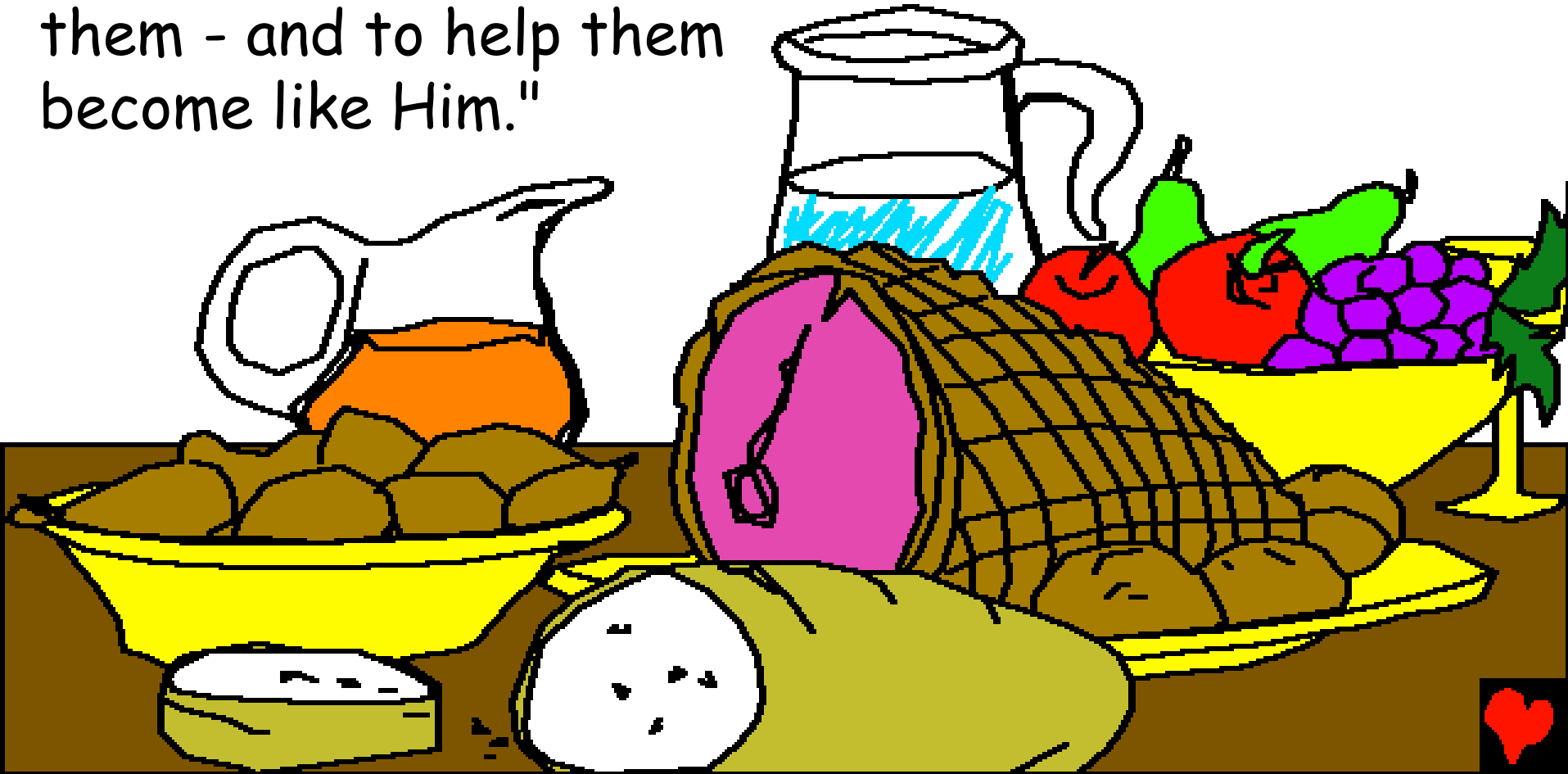
A lady named Discretion appeared. She asked Christian many questions. He told her all that had happened along the way. Some things brought tears to her eyes. Pleased to welcome him, she called three other women to talk with Christian until supper was ready.



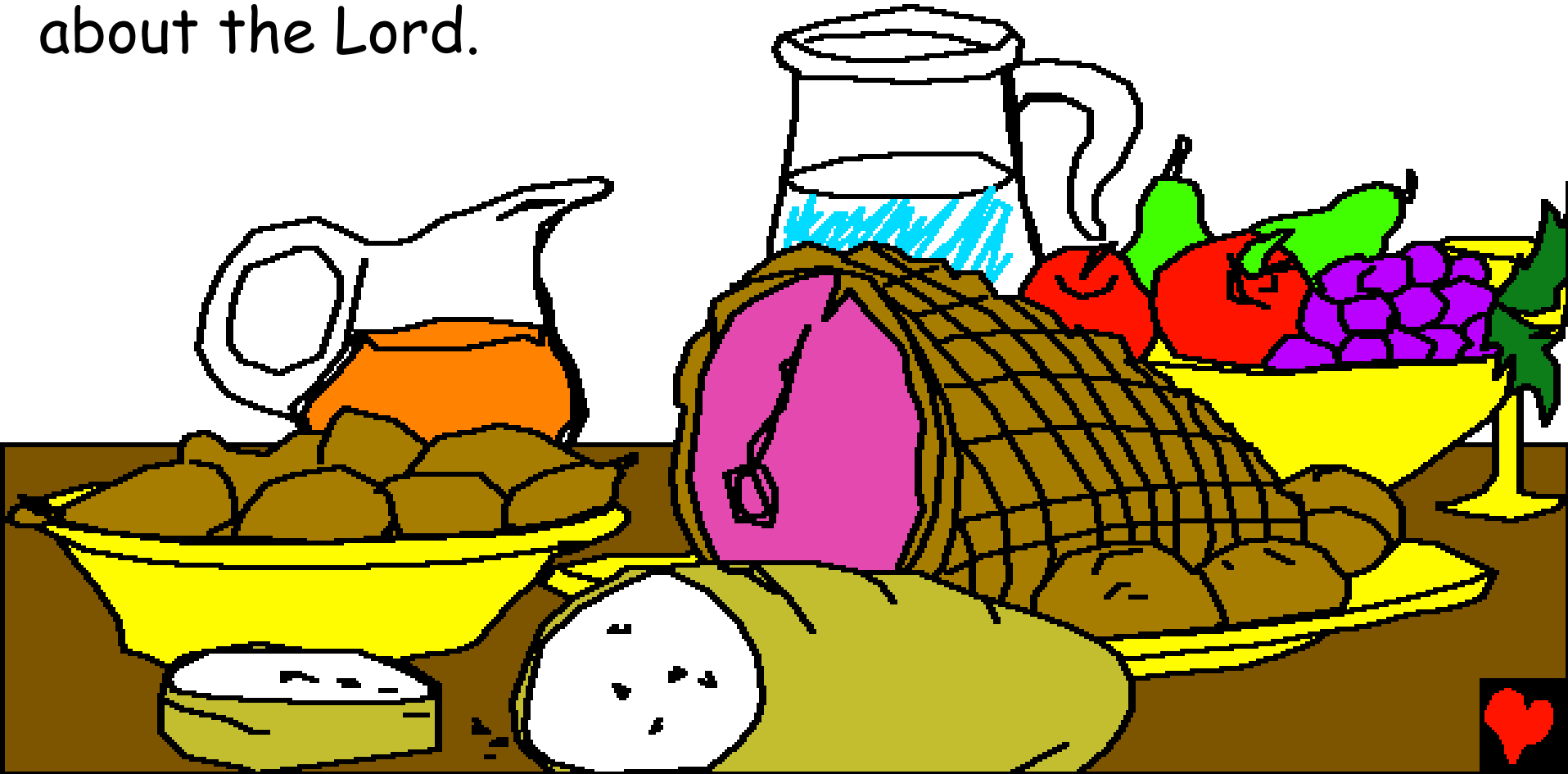
All the talk at the supper table was about the Lord of the hill; what He had done, why He did what He did, and why He had built the palace. "He did it with the loss of much blood," Christian agreed. "But He did it out of pure love."



Some in the palace said that they had seen and spoken to the Lord after He died on the cross. "He wants everybody to know He loves poor pilgrims," they said. "He stripped Himself of Glory to become like them - and to help them become like Him."



Others affirmed that the Lord does not wish to live in Zion alone. So He made poor pilgrims become princes even though they were beggars by birth and nature. In the company of the Lord's people, Christian learned much about the Lord.



The Lord's people talked together late into the night. Christian, tired from his travels, slept in a large upper room called Peace. The room's window opened toward the East. In the morning, Christian woke refreshed. He began to sing.



"Where am I now? Is
this the love and care

Of Jesus, for His
pilgrims who travel
far?

This He provides, that
I should be forgiven

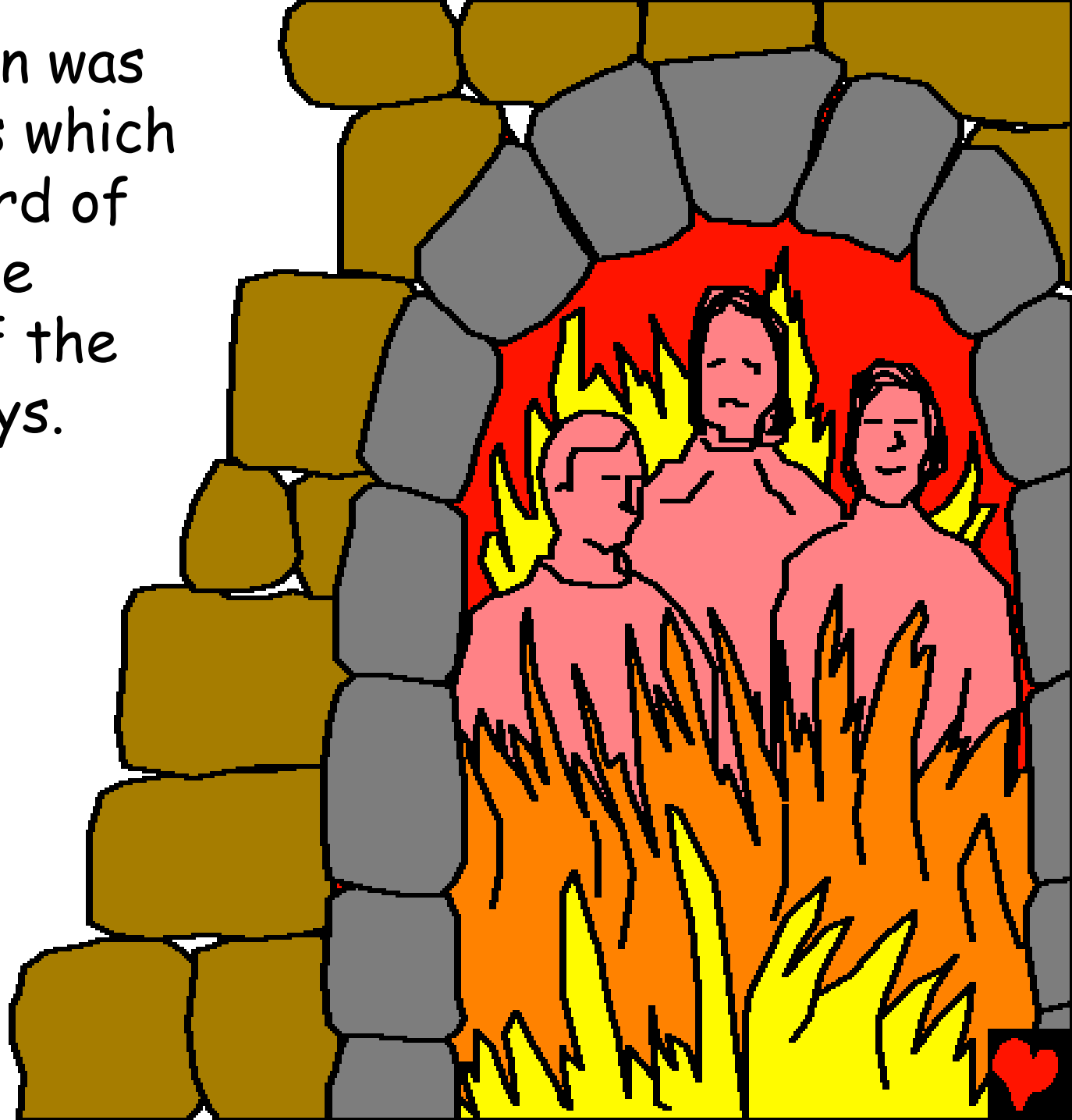
AND, already, dwell
next door to Heaven."



His new friends would not allow Christian to depart until they had shown him some of the wonderful things kept as witnesses of their Lord's wonders. He'd never seen such things.



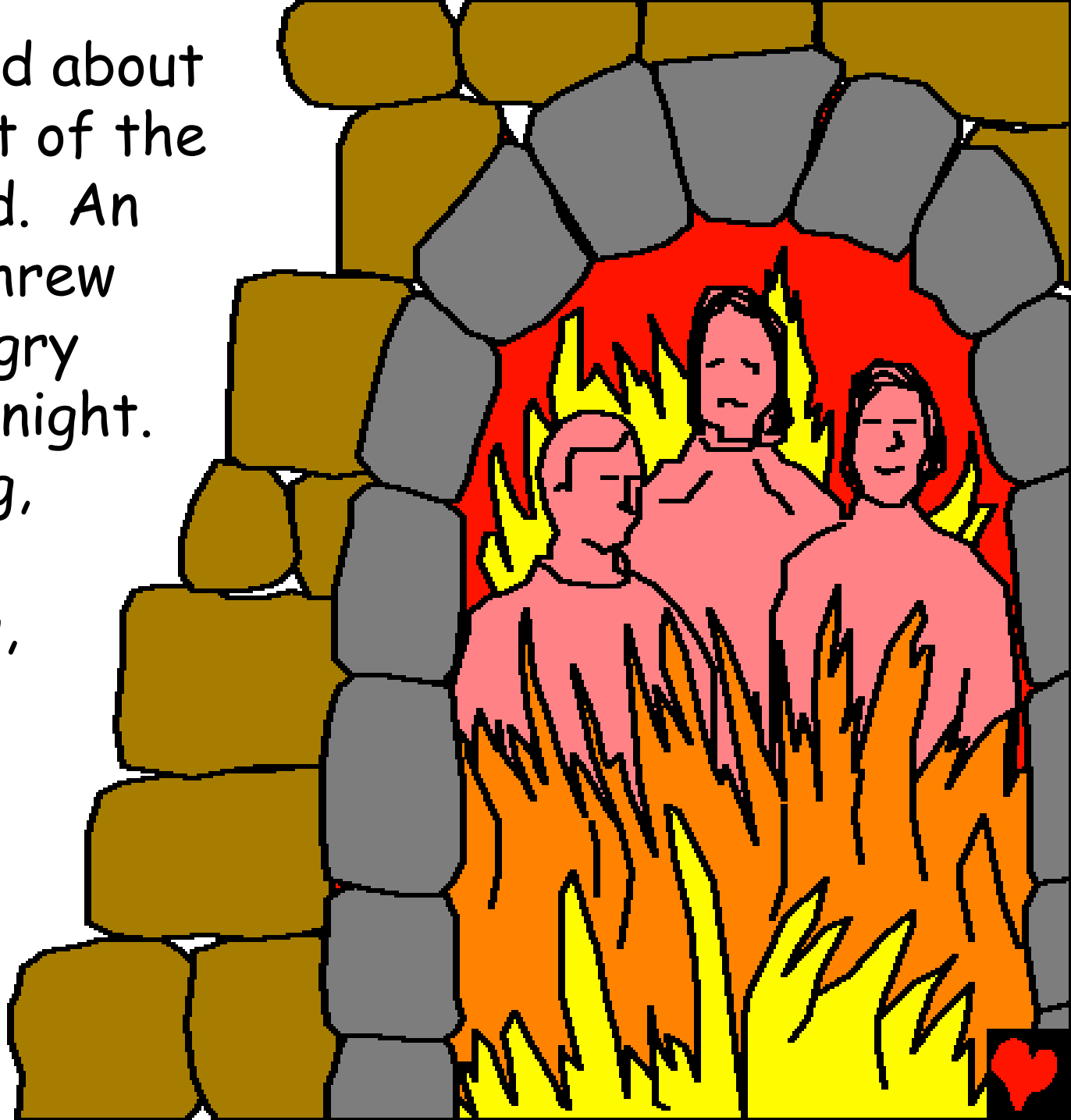
First, Christian was shown records which proved the Lord of the hill was the eternal Son of the Ancient of Days. Also, his new friends read to him the adventures of God's people in the past.

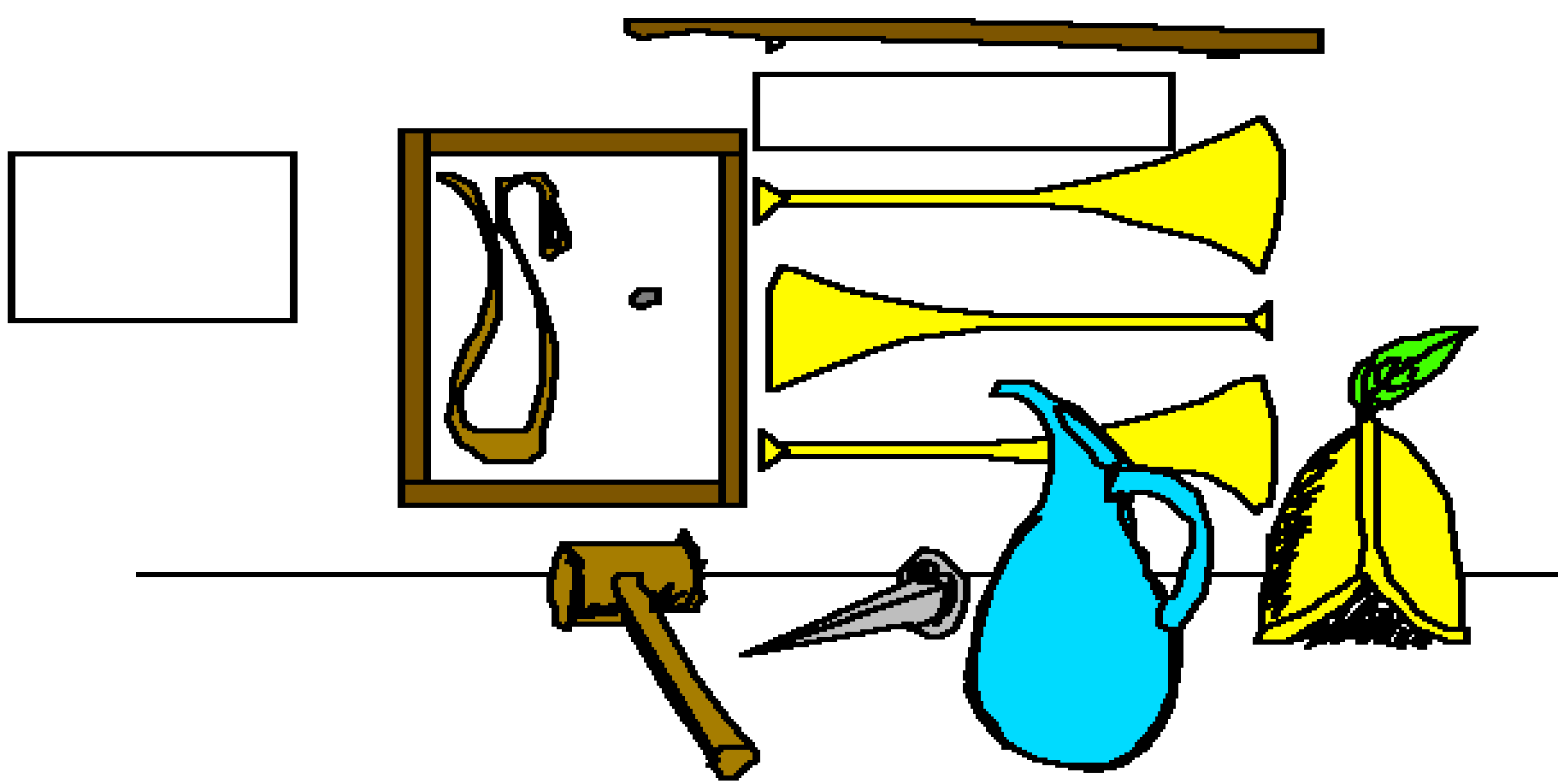


One adventure told
of three men being
thrown into a fiery
furnace because
they loved the Lord.
The fire could not
destroy them
because their
Lord was right
there, too.



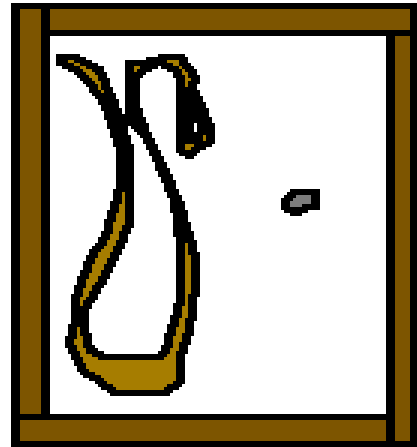
Christian heard about Daniel, servant of the Most High God. An earthly king threw him into a hungry lion's den one night. In the morning, Daniel said, "Good morning, King! I'm still here because my God shut the lion's mouth."



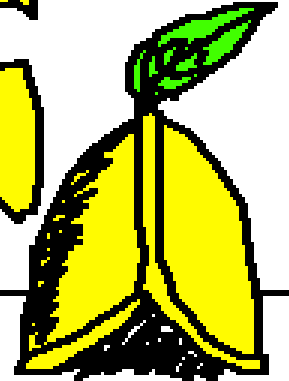
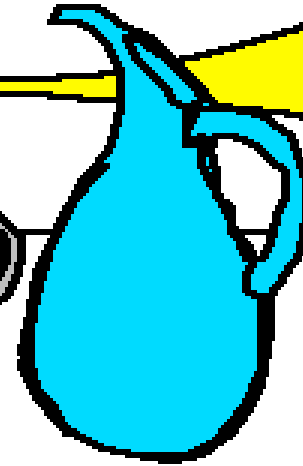
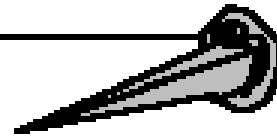
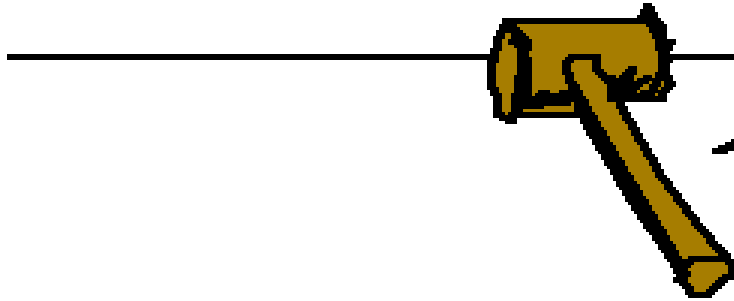
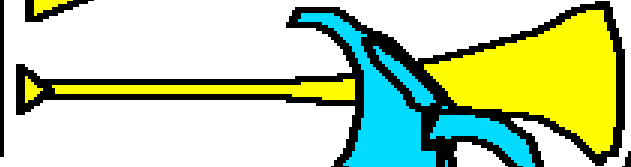
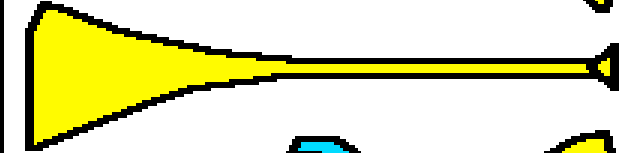
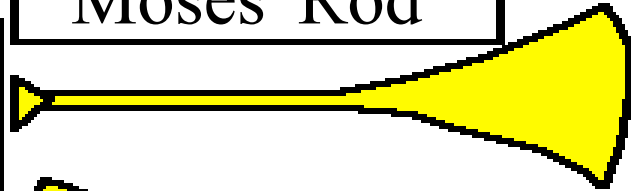


After being told of former enemies of the Lord who became His trusted son, Christian's friends showed him a kind of museum which held all manner of exhibits. Christian saw suits of armour for God's people to wear.





Moses' Rod

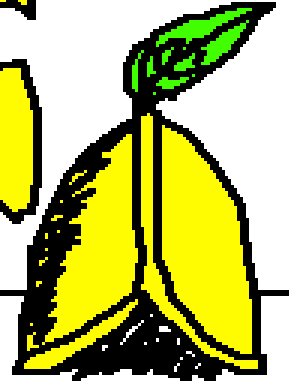
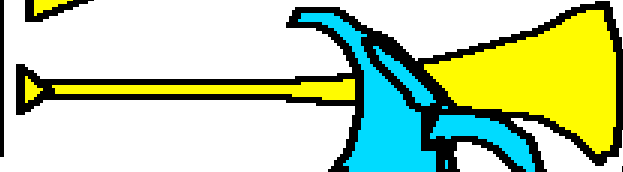
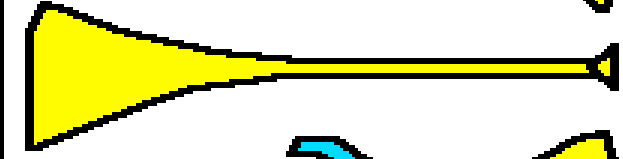
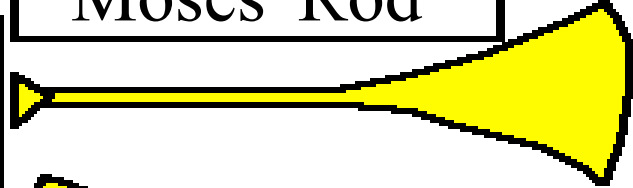


Moses' rod was there, the very rod which Moses held over the Sea to form a dry path of escape from Egypt for the Israelites. There was a hammer and nail by which a lady called Jael used to kill Sisera, one of God's enemies.

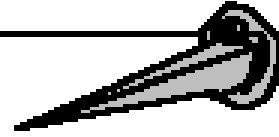
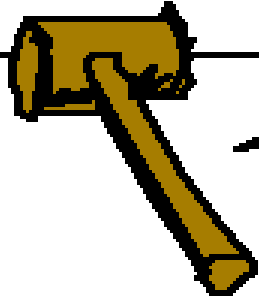
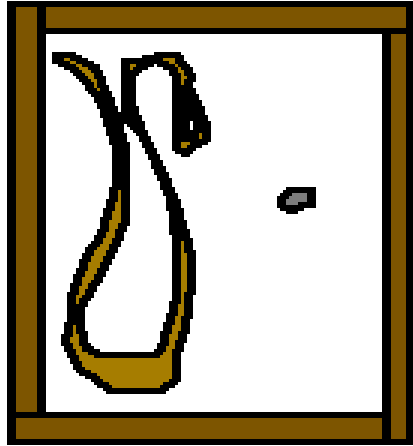




Moses' Rod

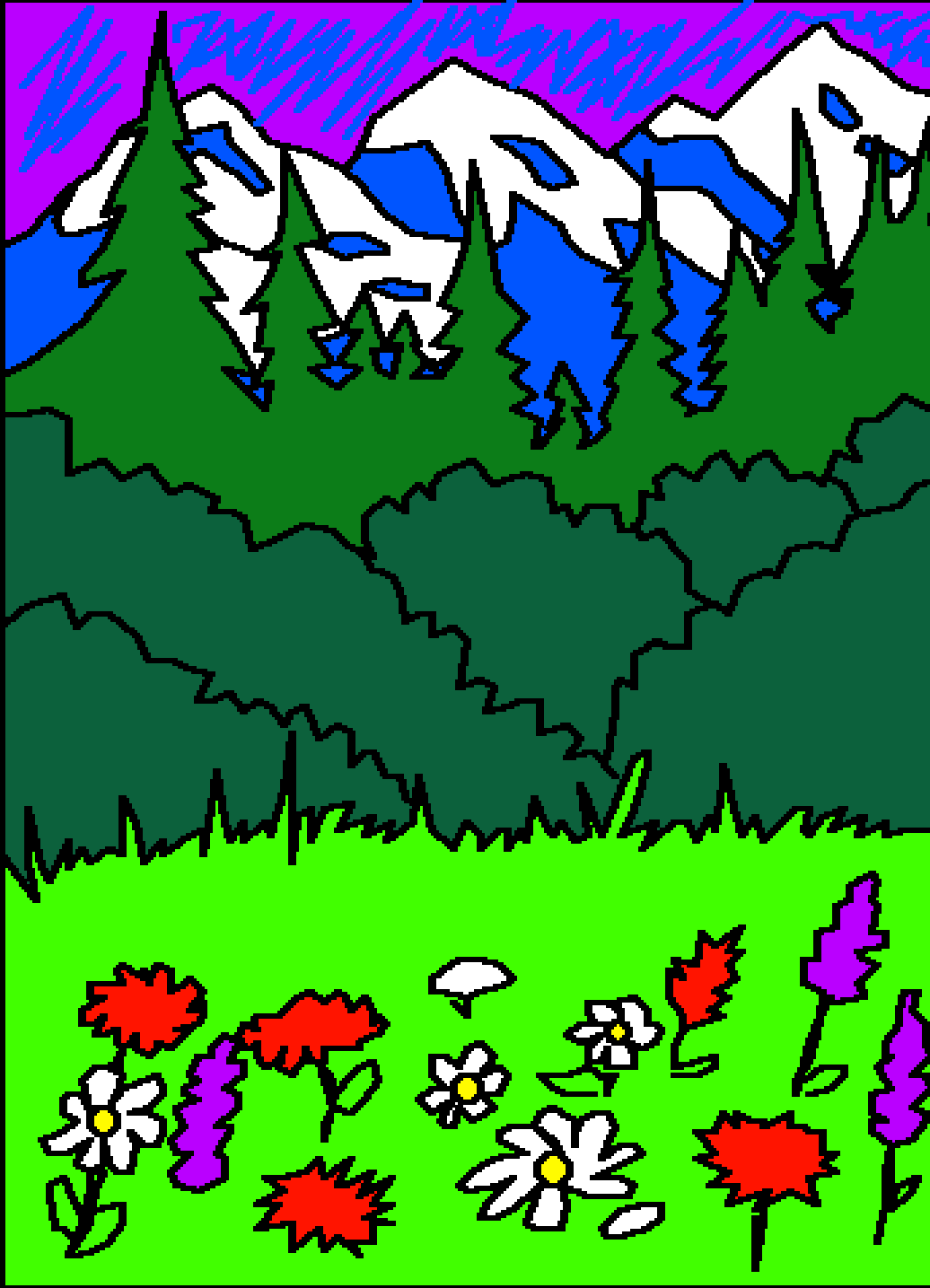


David's Sling



His friends showed Christian the donkey's jawbone which Samson used to fight and kill a thousand Philistines. Near it lay David's sling and stone which conquered Goliath. These things reminded Christian that God gives His people victory.





Next day, Christian prepared to leave. His friends took him to the roof of the palace and showed him the Delectable Mountains through which he would have to travel. It was a beautiful sight. "What is the name of that fair country?" Christian asked.





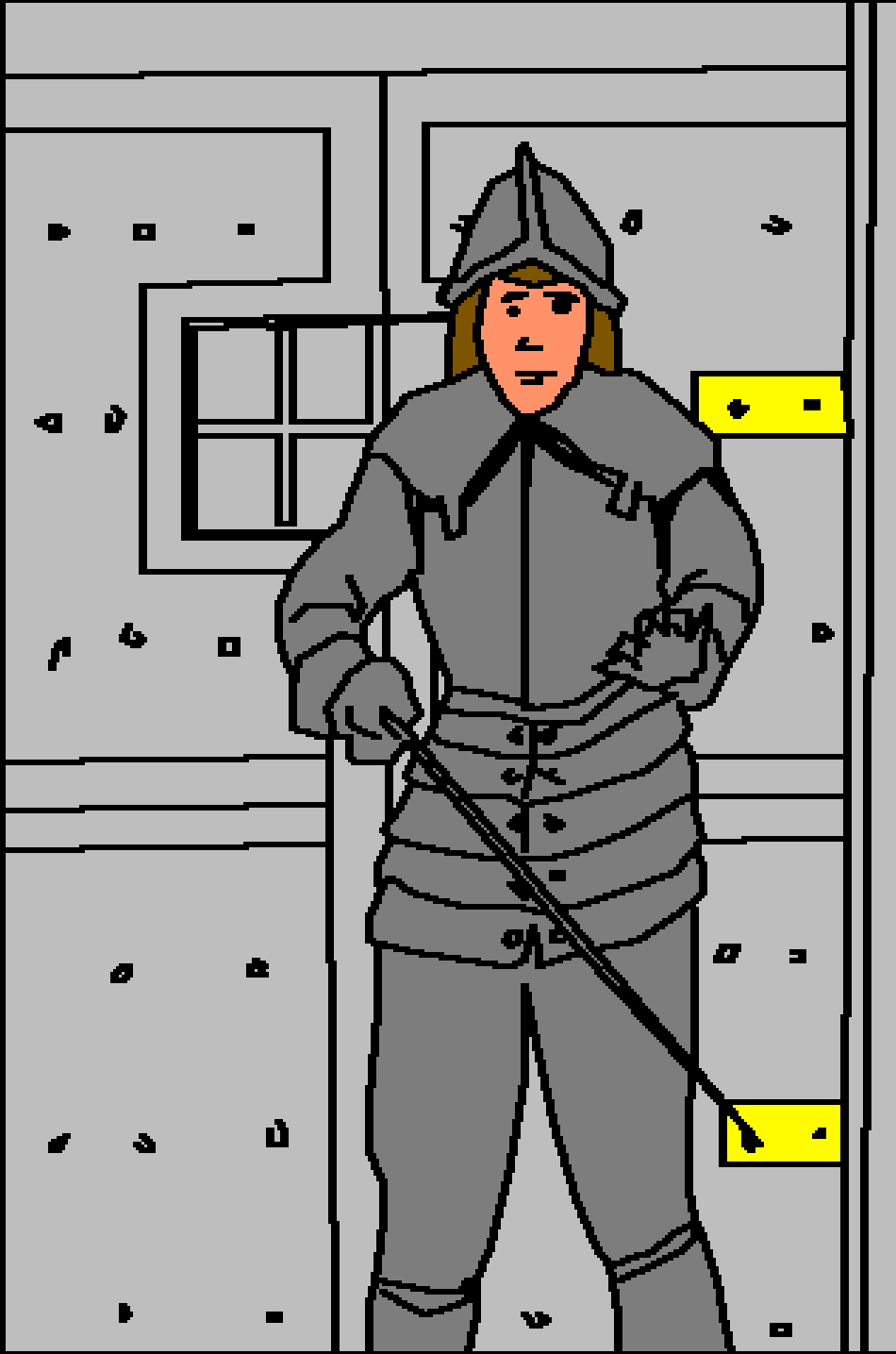
He could hardly wait to enter. "That is Immanuel's Land," his friends replied. "From there, you will see the gate of the city Celestial." Christian wanted to leave right away. But his friends first took him back to the museum and fitted him with armour from head to foot.





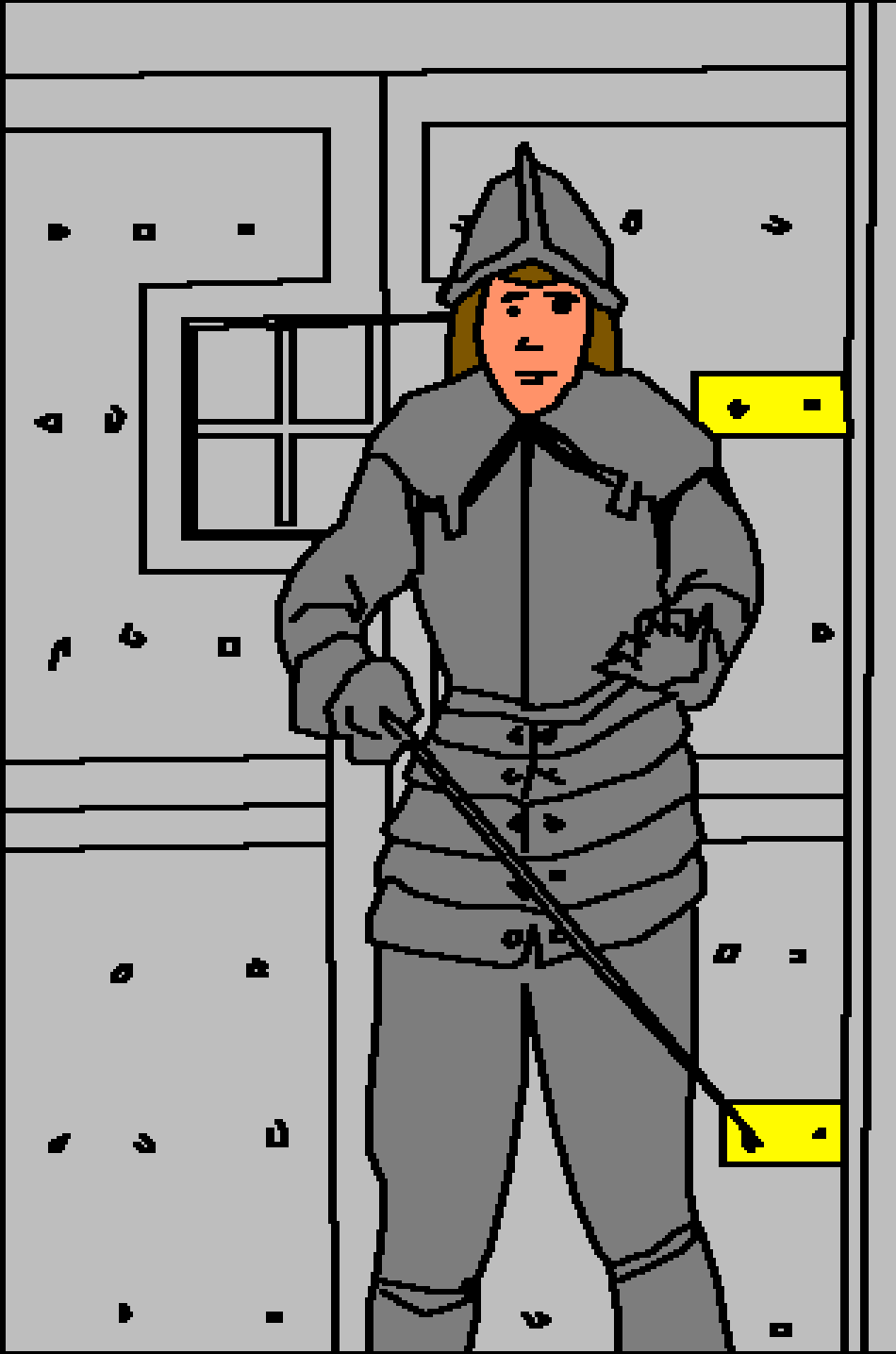
They warned he could meet with trouble along the way. Bidding them goodbye, Christian set off eagerly.





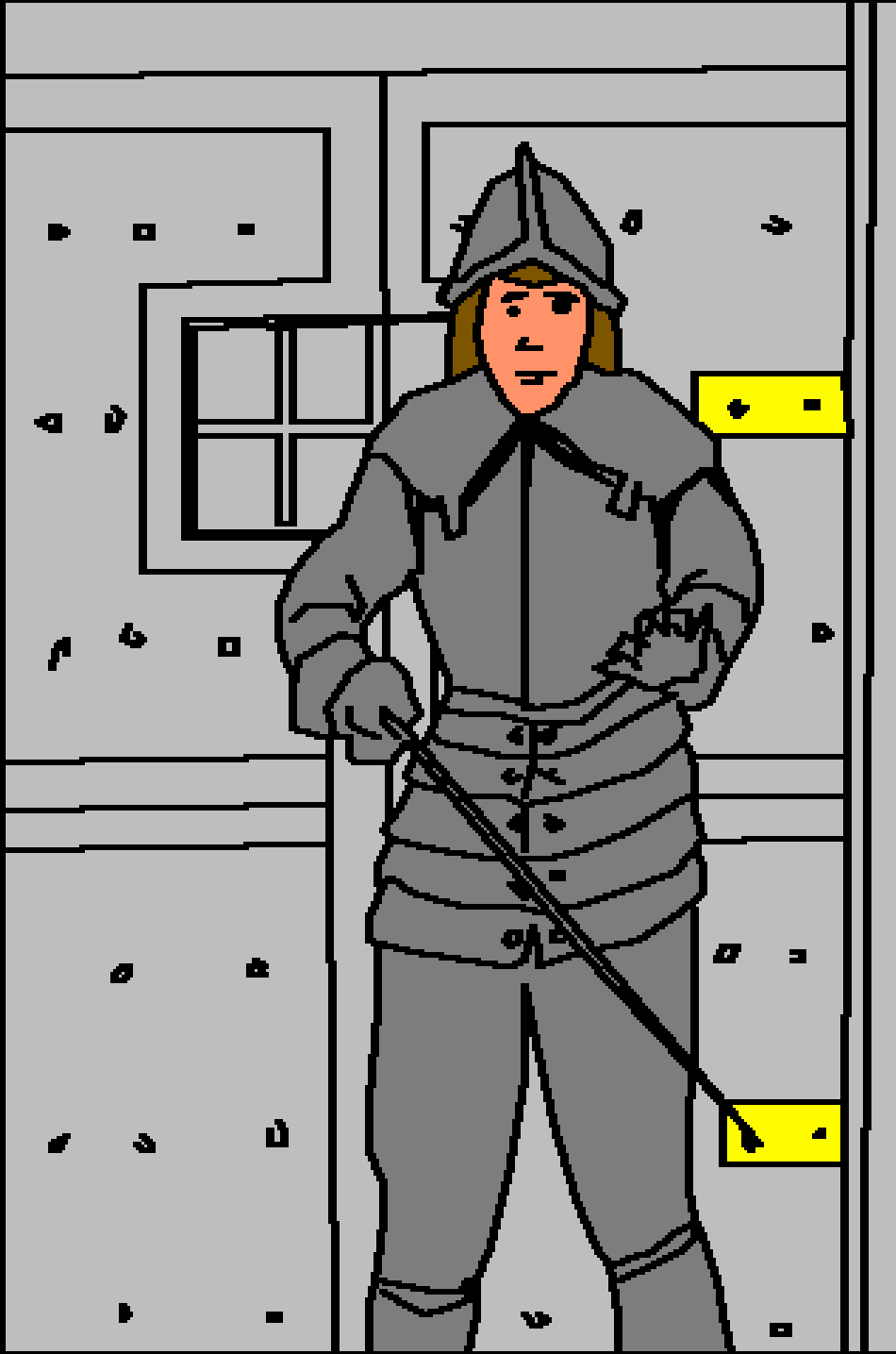
"Did you see any other pilgrims on the road?" Christian asked the porter. "Yes, a man called Faithful passed by." "I know him," Christian exclaimed. "He's my townsman, a near neighbour. How far ahead down the road do you think he is?"





"Below the hill by this time," Porter answered. Thanking the porter for all his kindnesses, Christian set out. Discretion and three other women walked with him all the way to the foot of the hill. They talked about the pilgrim journey.



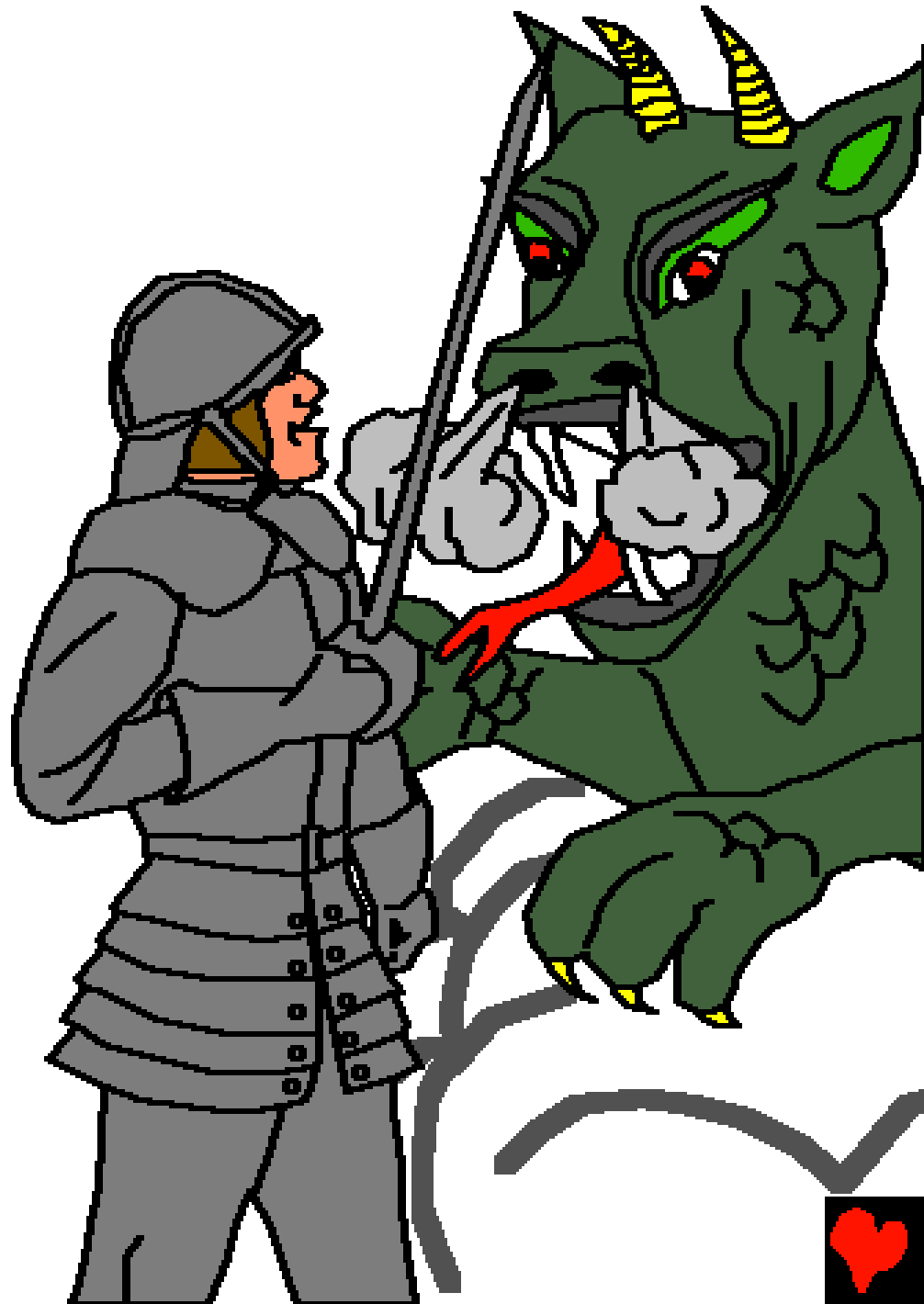


"It is as dangerous going down as it was difficult going up," Christian noted.

"Yes," replied one of the women whose name was Prudence. "It's hard for a person to go down to the Valley of Humiliation without slipping on the way."



At the bottom of the hill, the friends parted and Christian made his way along the Valley of Humiliation. Poor Christian! He had hardly gone any distance when there, coming towards him, was the foulest fiend he had ever seen. He was hideous to look on.



He had scales like a fish; wings like a dragon; feet like a bear and fire and smoke belched out of his lion-like mouth. His name was Appolyon. "Should I run?" Christian wondered. "No, my armour only covers the front of me. I'll stand my ground." The monster approached, hate gleaming from his eyes. "Who are you and where are you going?" he snarled.



"I'm from the city of Destruction, the place of all evil. I'm going to the city of Zion," said Christian with a boldness he didn't feel.

"Destruction city's in my kingdom," the monster replied.

"You're one of my subjects."

"I was," Christian agreed.

"But your service was hard, and I couldn't live on your wages, for the wages of sin is death! I gave myself to the King of kings."



"Turn back to me," the monster suggested. "Others have!" "Not I," Christian vowed. "You've already been unfaithful to Him," Appolyon scoffed. "At the Slough of Despond. And sleeping on the hill. You just about turned back at the sight of the chained lions. You think He'll accept you?" "By His mercy, yes!" Christian said.



Appolyon became enraged. "I am an enemy to this Prince," he screamed. "I hate His Person, His laws, and His people. I came here to stop you!"

"Beware what you do," Christian warned.

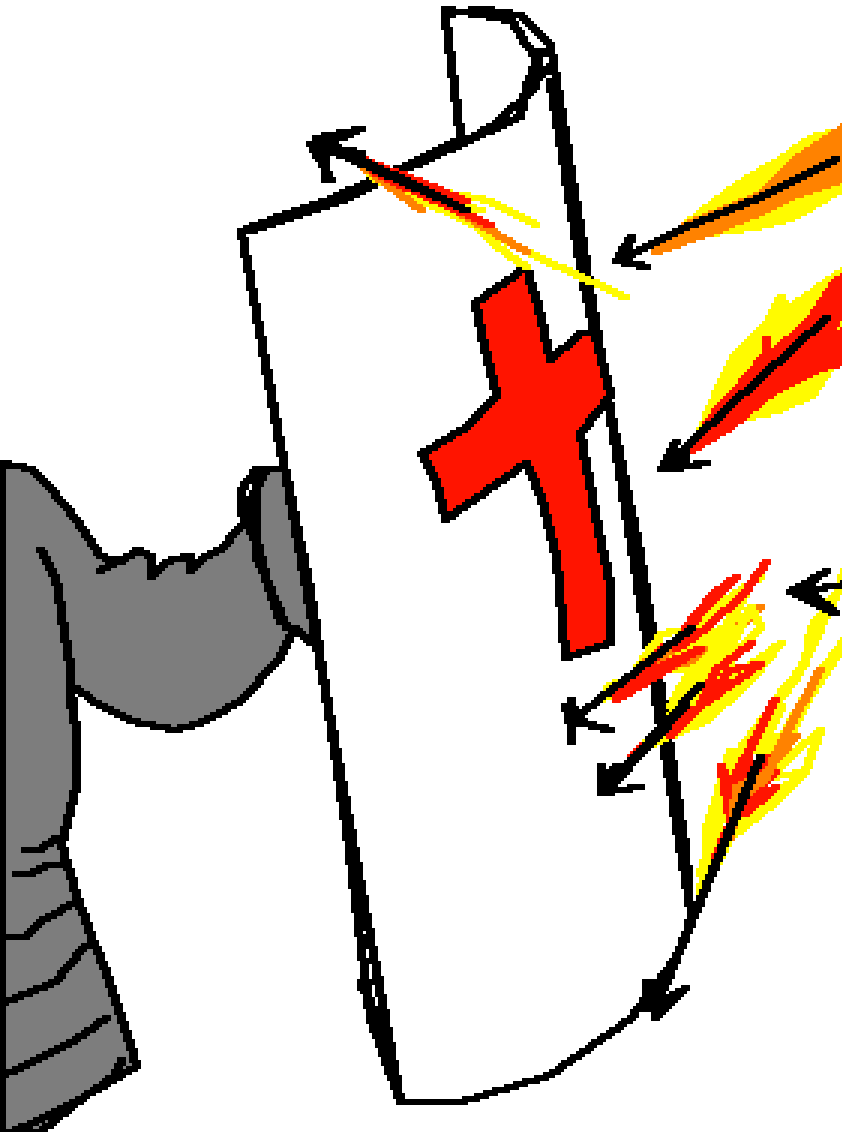
"I'm on the King's highway, the way of holiness." Appolyon

spread himself over the width of the

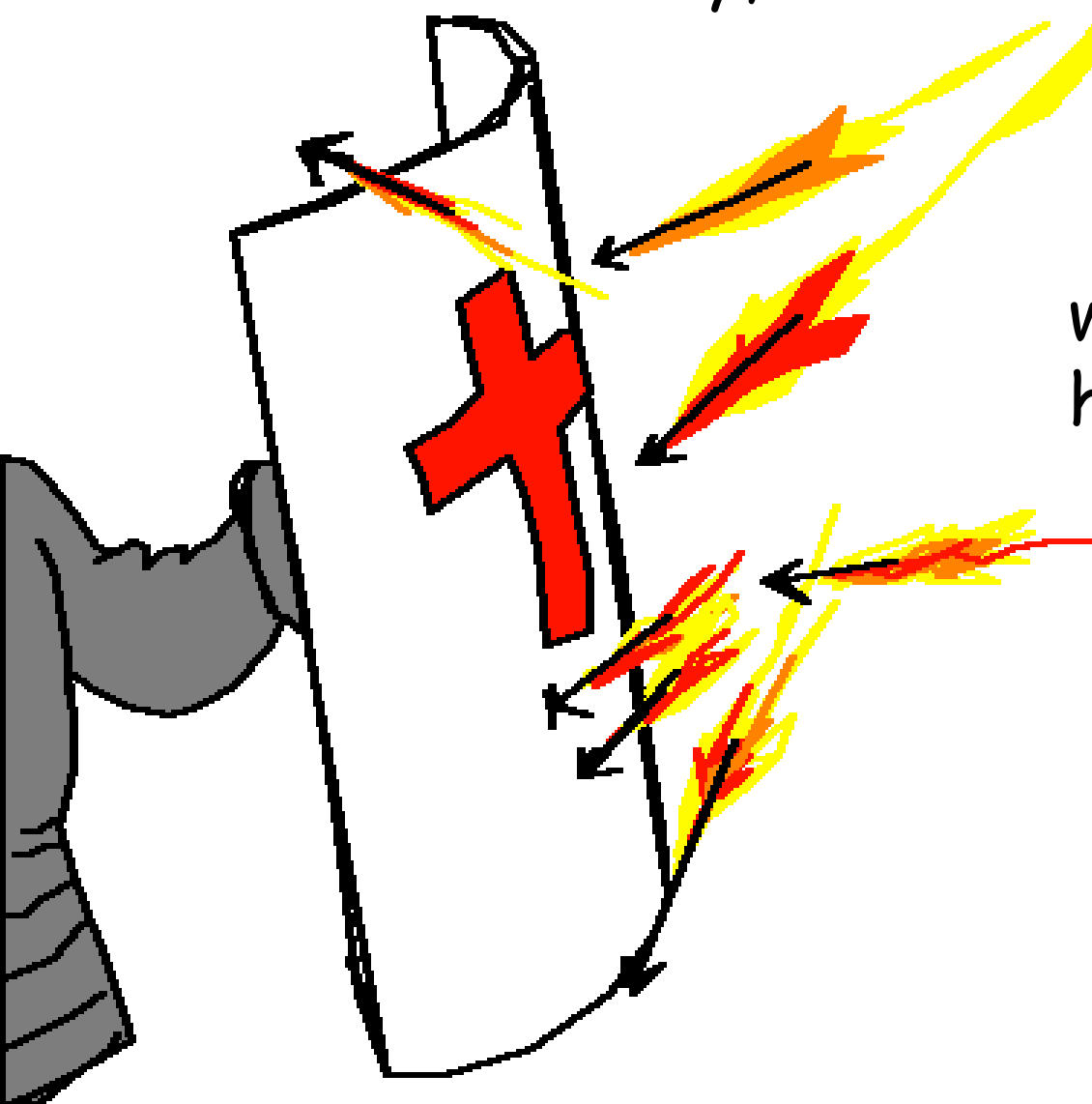
road in front of Christian.

"I have no fear," he growled.

"Prepare to die. I swear by my infernal den, you shall go no further."



With that, he threw a flaming dart at Christian's breast. Throwing up his shield to divert the dart away, Christian drew his sword.



The darts came thick and fast, like a driving hailstorm, wounding Christian's head and hand and foot. He became weaker and weaker. Then he fell, dropping his sword.



"Now I've got you," Appolyon yelled in triumph. And Christian despaired of life. The monster reached forward to deliver the last deadly blow that would make him the victor. What could help Christian now? As the monster's foot moved, Christian reached for his fallen sword. Feeling its solid handle renewed his strength.



"Don't rejoice against me, my enemy," he cried out. "When I fall, I shall arise." It was one of his Lord's promises. Claiming the promise, he gave Appolyon a deadly thrust which forced him back. Christian then called out another promise.

"We are more than conquerors through Him that loved us." When Appolyon heard that, he spread his wings and flew away.



No one who hadn't seen it could even imagine what hideous yelling and roaring Appolyon made throughout the fight. Nor how deep and sorrowful the sighs and cries of Christian. At the finish, he was covered with wounds.



First Christian gave thanks to the Lord for delivering him from Appolyon. He smiled as he examined his two-edged sword which had wounded his enemy so deeply. It had been a dreadful battle - but now it was over.



A Hand appeared, holding leaves from the tree of life. As Christian rubbed the leaves on his wounds, they healed at once. Refreshed, he rose to go on, his sword in his hand. But Appolyon left him alone through the length of the valley.



Leaving the Valley of Humiliation Christian came immediately to another - the Valley of the Shadow of Death. He had to go through it because that was the only way to the Celestial city. It was a very lonely and dismal place. Suddenly, two men came running away from the Valley.



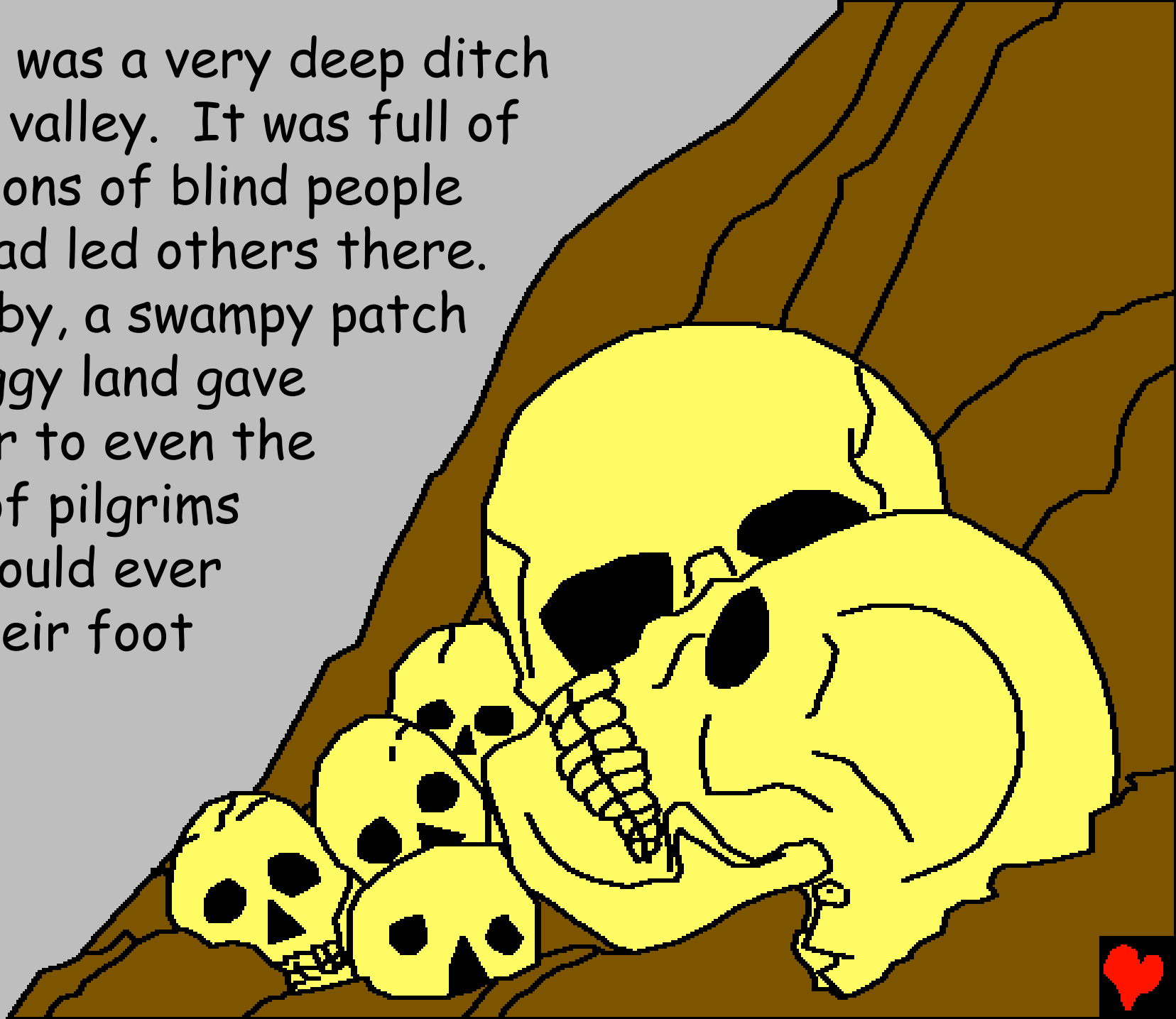
"Back, back!" they shouted. "There's danger ahead."
"What danger?" Christian asked.
"The valley is as black as pitch. There are hobgoblins, satyrs, dragons of the pit. It's dreadful!"
"But it is my way to the desired haven," Christian pointed out.



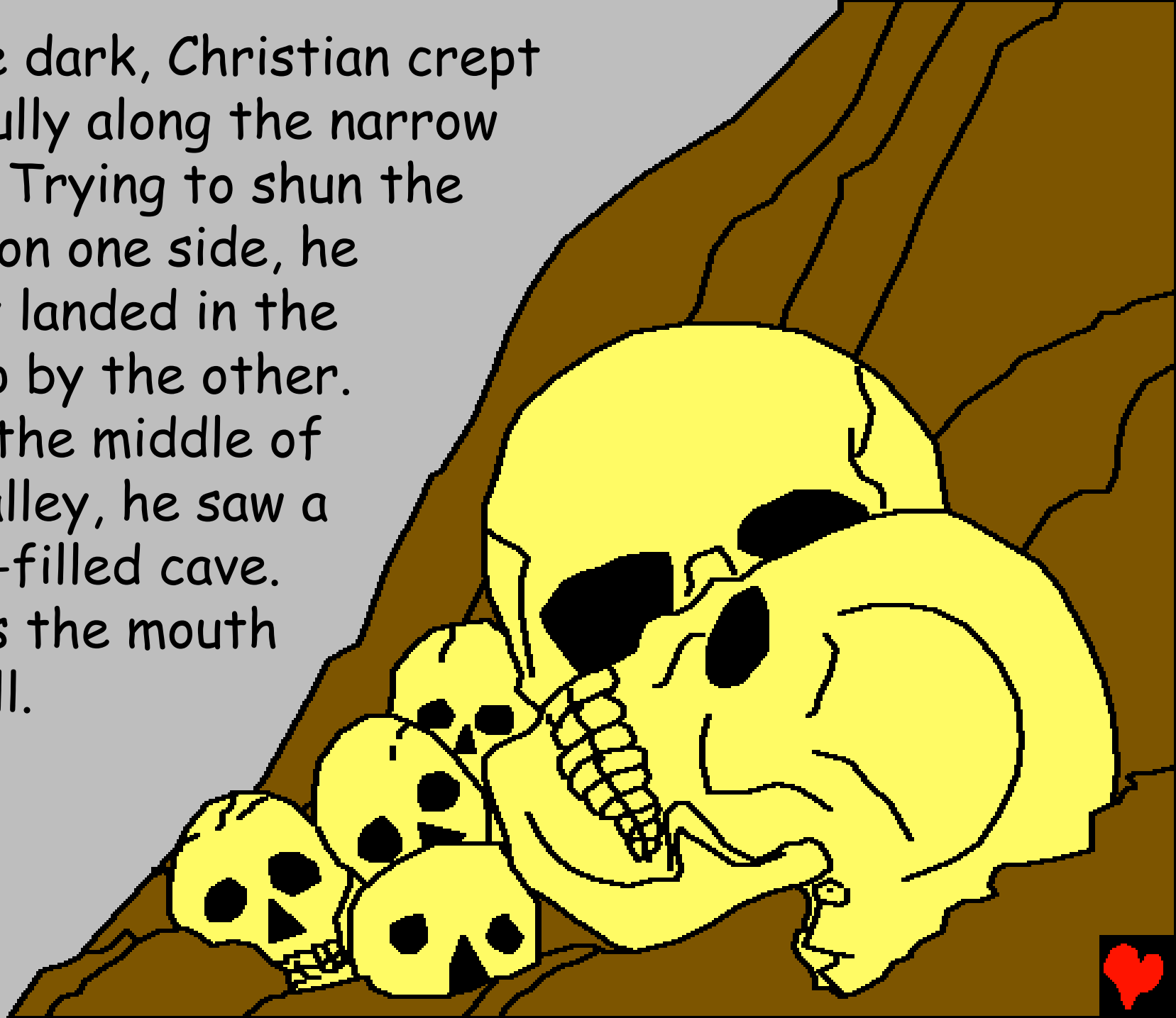
"Let it be your way,
we will not choose it
for ours," the men
replied. So they
parted, and Christian
went on into the
Valley of Death - still
with his sword drawn
and ready.



There was a very deep ditch in the valley. It was full of skeletons of blind people who had led others there. Close by, a swampy patch of boggy land gave danger to even the best of pilgrims who would ever set their foot there.



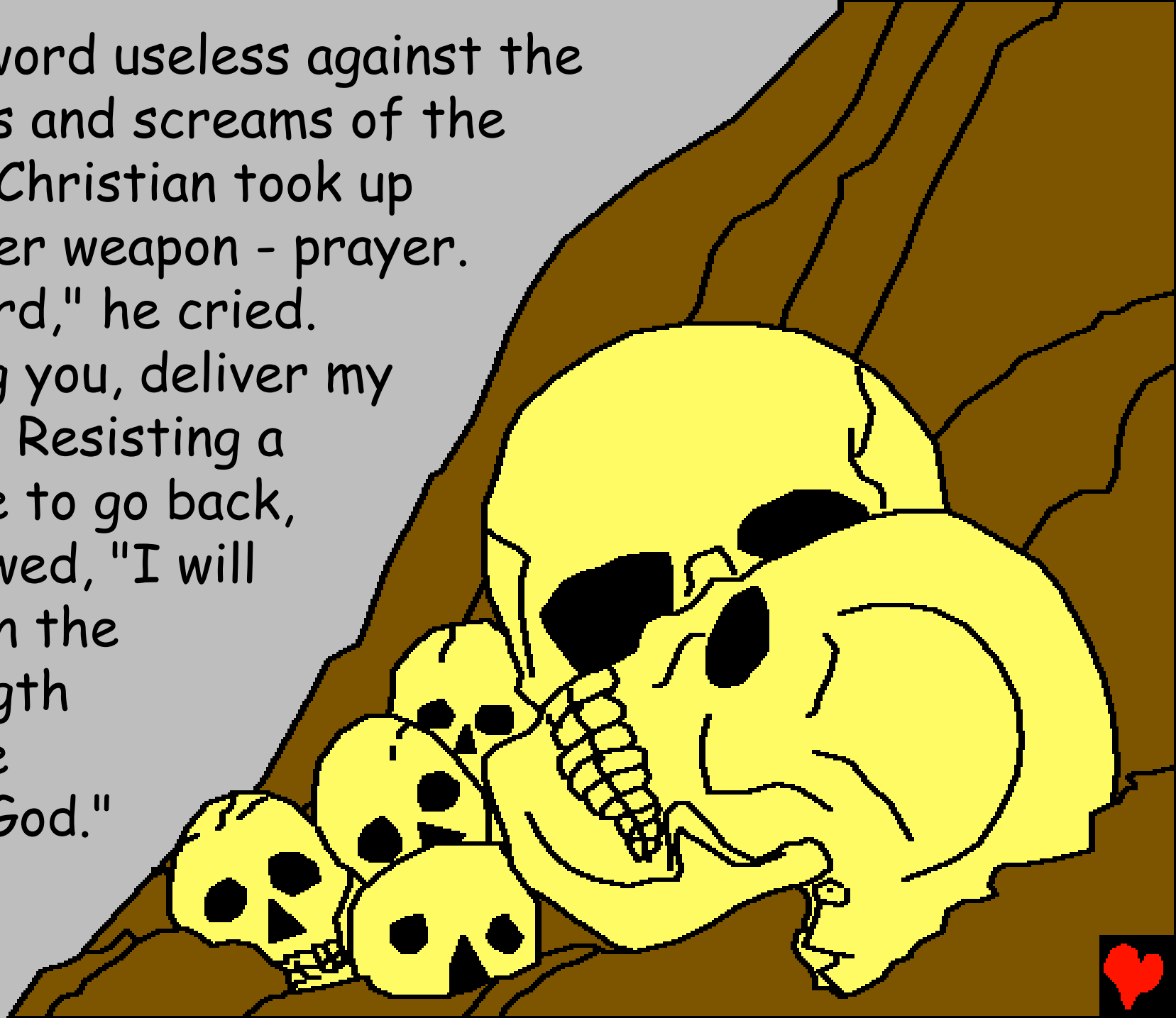
In the dark, Christian crept carefully along the narrow path. Trying to shun the ditch on one side, he nearly landed in the swamp by the other. Near the middle of the valley, he saw a flame-filled cave. It was the mouth of Hell.



His sword useless against the sparks and screams of the cave, Christian took up another weapon - prayer.

"O Lord," he cried.

"I beg you, deliver my soul." Resisting a desire to go back, he vowed, "I will walk in the strength of the Lord God."

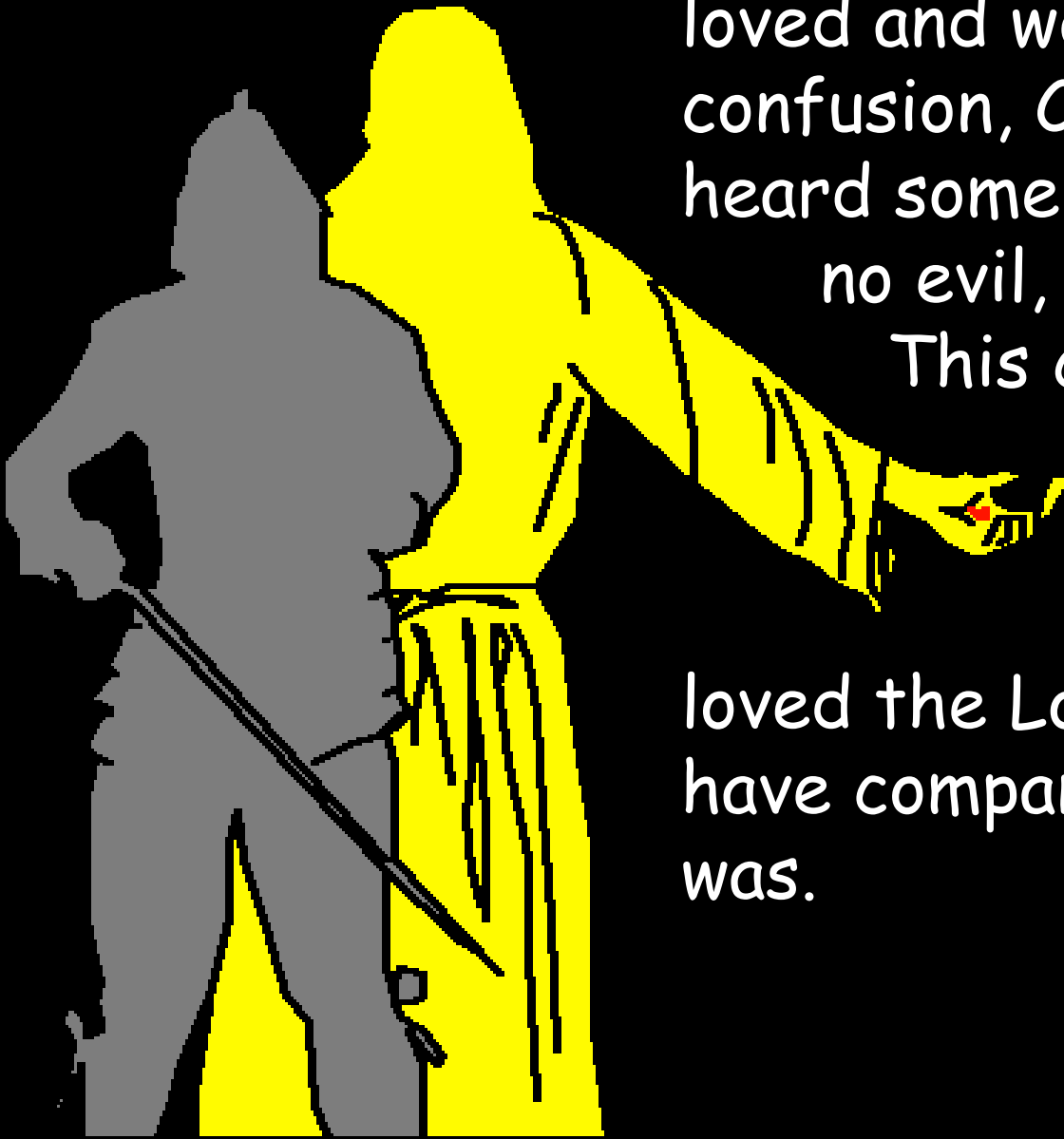




A strange thing happened in the Valley of the Shadow of Death. The mists and blackness so confused Christian that he did not know his own voice. The spirits of darkness took advantage of this when he came near the mouth of the burning pit.

Slipping behind him, one of the wicked ones whispered terrible blasphemies in his ear. Christian was horrified. He thought these things were in his own mind.





How could he think such thoughts of the One he loved and worshipped? Still in confusion, Christian thought he heard somebody say, "I will fear no evil, for You are with me." This cheered him. He realized God was still with him; someone close by loved the Lord, too; and he would have company if he found who it was.



To be
continued...