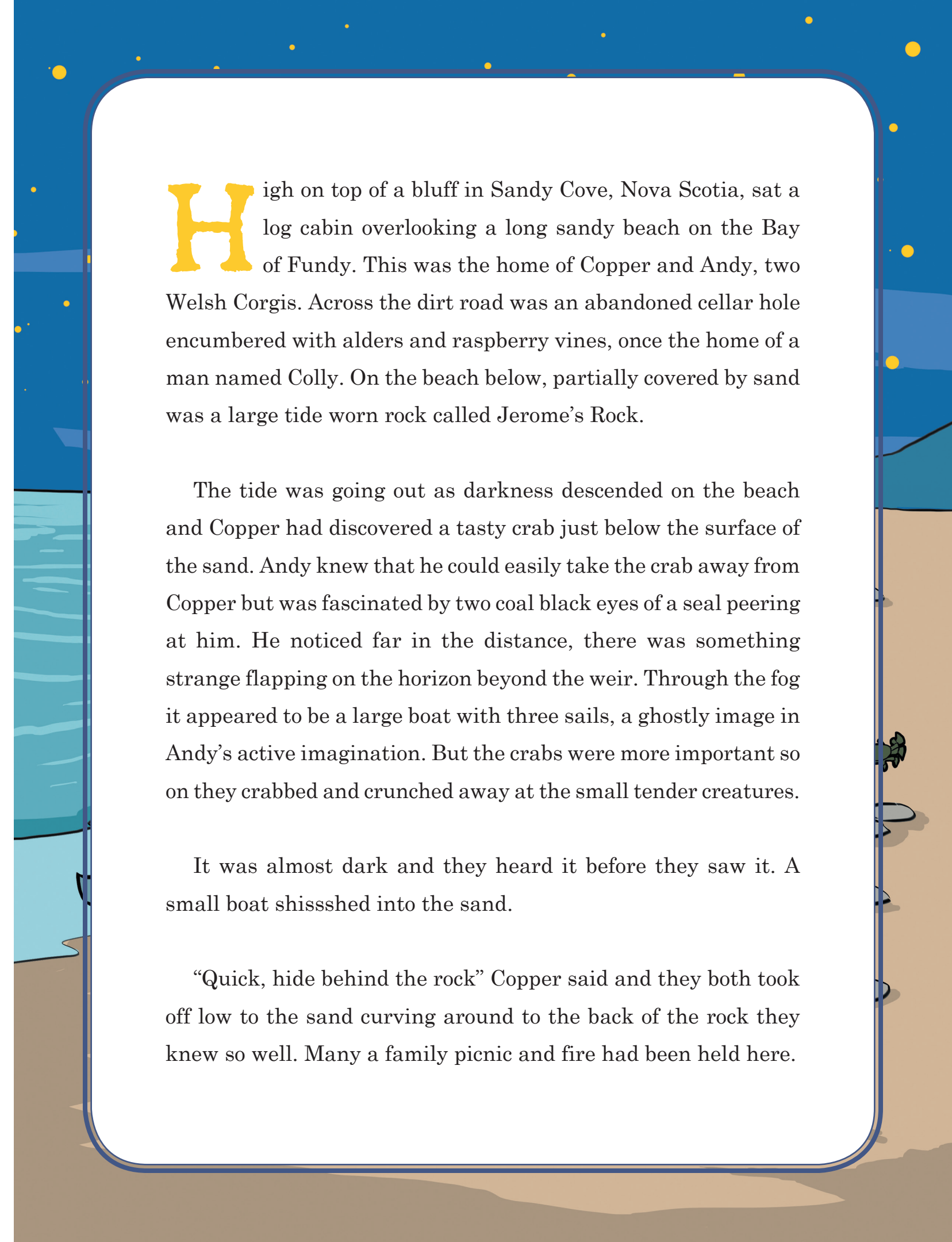


Peter Leibert

Jerome





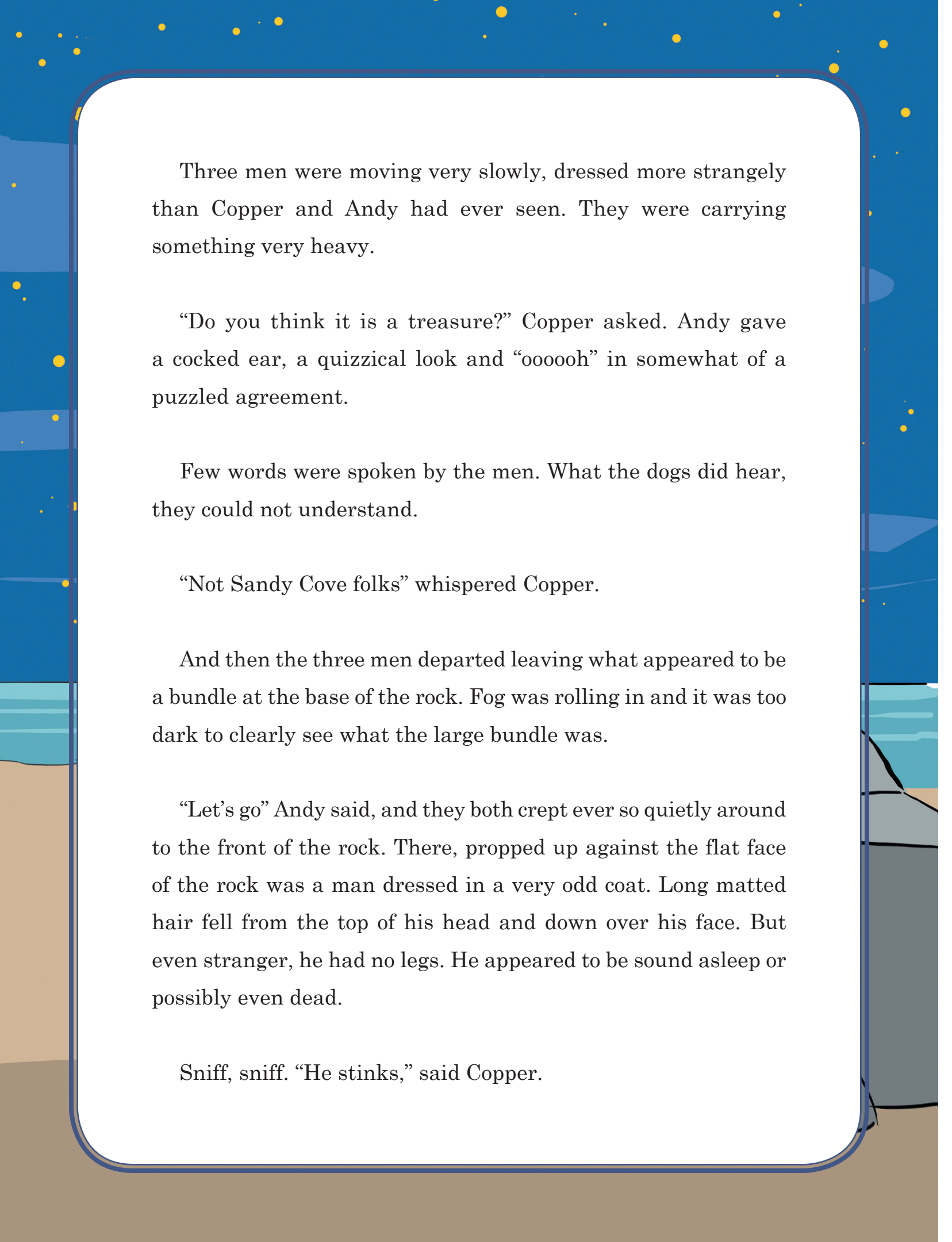


High on top of a bluff in Sandy Cove, Nova Scotia, sat a log cabin overlooking a long sandy beach on the Bay of Fundy. This was the home of Copper and Andy, two Welsh Corgis. Across the dirt road was an abandoned cellar hole encumbered with alders and raspberry vines, once the home of a man named Colly. On the beach below, partially covered by sand was a large tide worn rock called Jerome's Rock.

The tide was going out as darkness descended on the beach and Copper had discovered a tasty crab just below the surface of the sand. Andy knew that he could easily take the crab away from Copper but was fascinated by two coal black eyes of a seal peering at him. He noticed far in the distance, there was something strange flapping on the horizon beyond the weir. Through the fog it appeared to be a large boat with three sails, a ghostly image in Andy's active imagination. But the crabs were more important so on they crabbed and crunched away at the small tender creatures.

It was almost dark and they heard it before they saw it. A small boat shissshed into the sand.

"Quick, hide behind the rock" Copper said and they both took off low to the sand curving around to the back of the rock they knew so well. Many a family picnic and fire had been held here.



Three men were moving very slowly, dressed more strangely than Copper and Andy had ever seen. They were carrying something very heavy.

“Do you think it is a treasure?” Copper asked. Andy gave a cocked ear, a quizzical look and “oooooh” in somewhat of a puzzled agreement.

Few words were spoken by the men. What the dogs did hear, they could not understand.

“Not Sandy Cove folks” whispered Copper.

And then the three men departed leaving what appeared to be a bundle at the base of the rock. Fog was rolling in and it was too dark to clearly see what the large bundle was.

“Let’s go” Andy said, and they both crept ever so quietly around to the front of the rock. There, propped up against the flat face of the rock was a man dressed in a very odd coat. Long matted hair fell from the top of his head and down over his face. But even stranger, he had no legs. He appeared to be sound asleep or possibly even dead.

Sniff, sniff. “He stinks,” said Copper.

