

Frieda B.TM

and the ZillaBeast

by Renata Bowers
pictures by Michael Chesworth



*To Mary Kay,
for your insight and wisdom
in leading me into this journey.*

*And to Paula,
for joining me in the quest to help children everywhere
believe they, too, are free to be.*

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To visit Frieda and/or order additional
books from the Frieda B. series, go to
www.FriedaB.com.



A whole Saturday morning
with nowhere to go;
Frieda B. was incredibly glad it was so.
Having been to the library the day before,
she had dozens of books scattered over her floor.



All those stories! The worlds and adventures they held,
full of heroes and villains and enemies felled.
Of great mountains to climb, of great dreams getting wings...
Of a thousand times thousand great wonderful things.

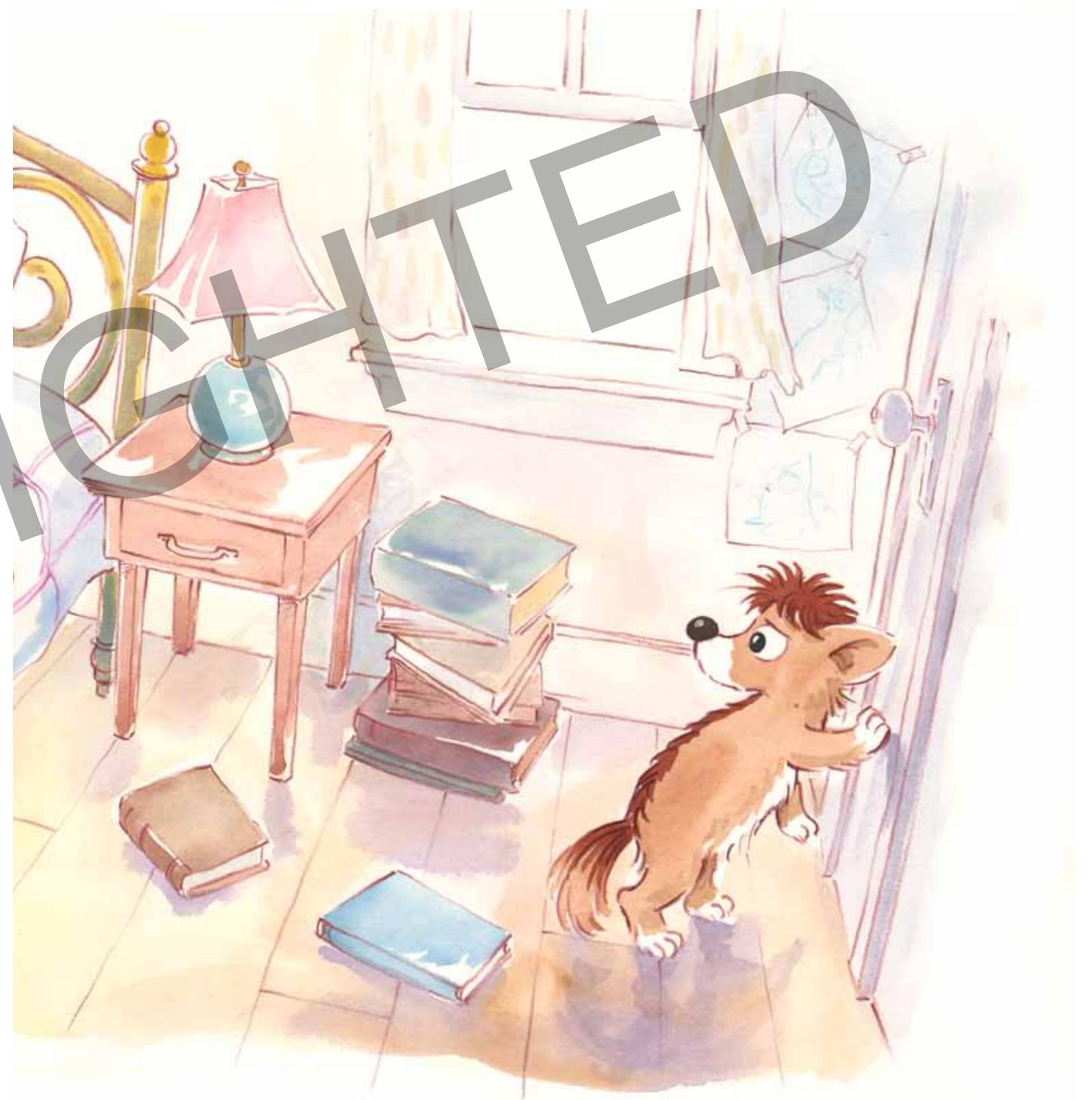
It was terribly, wonderfully hard to decide
just which one of the books she'd first venture inside.
As she pondered her choices, her mom's voice below
called up, "Frieda, it's time now for breakfast, let's go!"



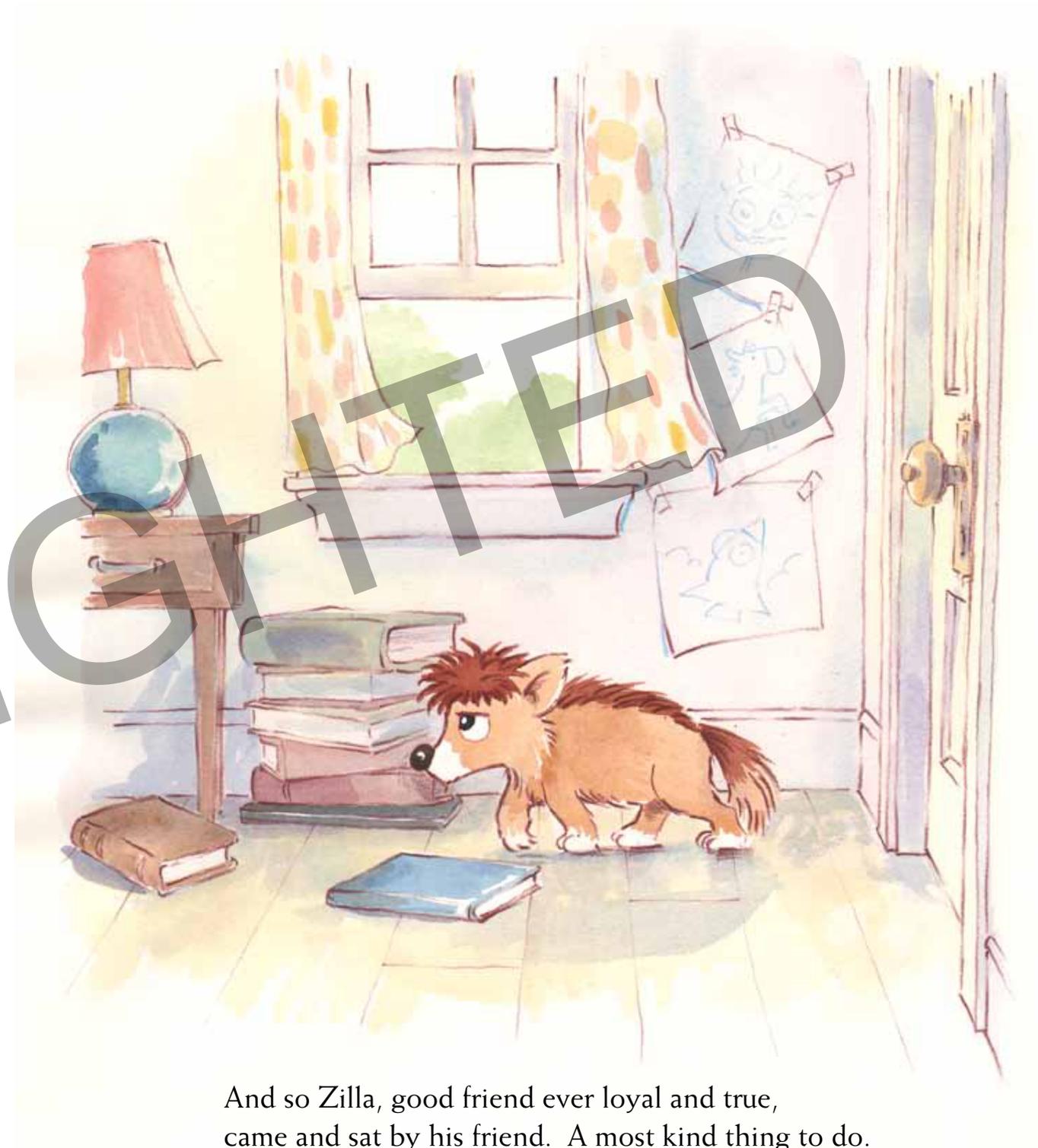
"Oh, okay – just a minute," she called with a start.
But a minute is not what she meant in her heart.
For she'd chosen her book, and the characters called.
She cracked open the cover...
Her breakfast was stalled.



Now poor Zilla had heard the clear call from the stairs,
and he scratched at the door; there was bacon down there.
Oh, but Frieda was wholly consumed by her book.
At the door, at the scratch, she did not even look.



No, instead, she cried, "Zilla! Come over here, quick!
Come and look at this book that I happened to pick.
It is stuffed full of stories too good to ignore.
We just have to jump in! We just have to explore!"

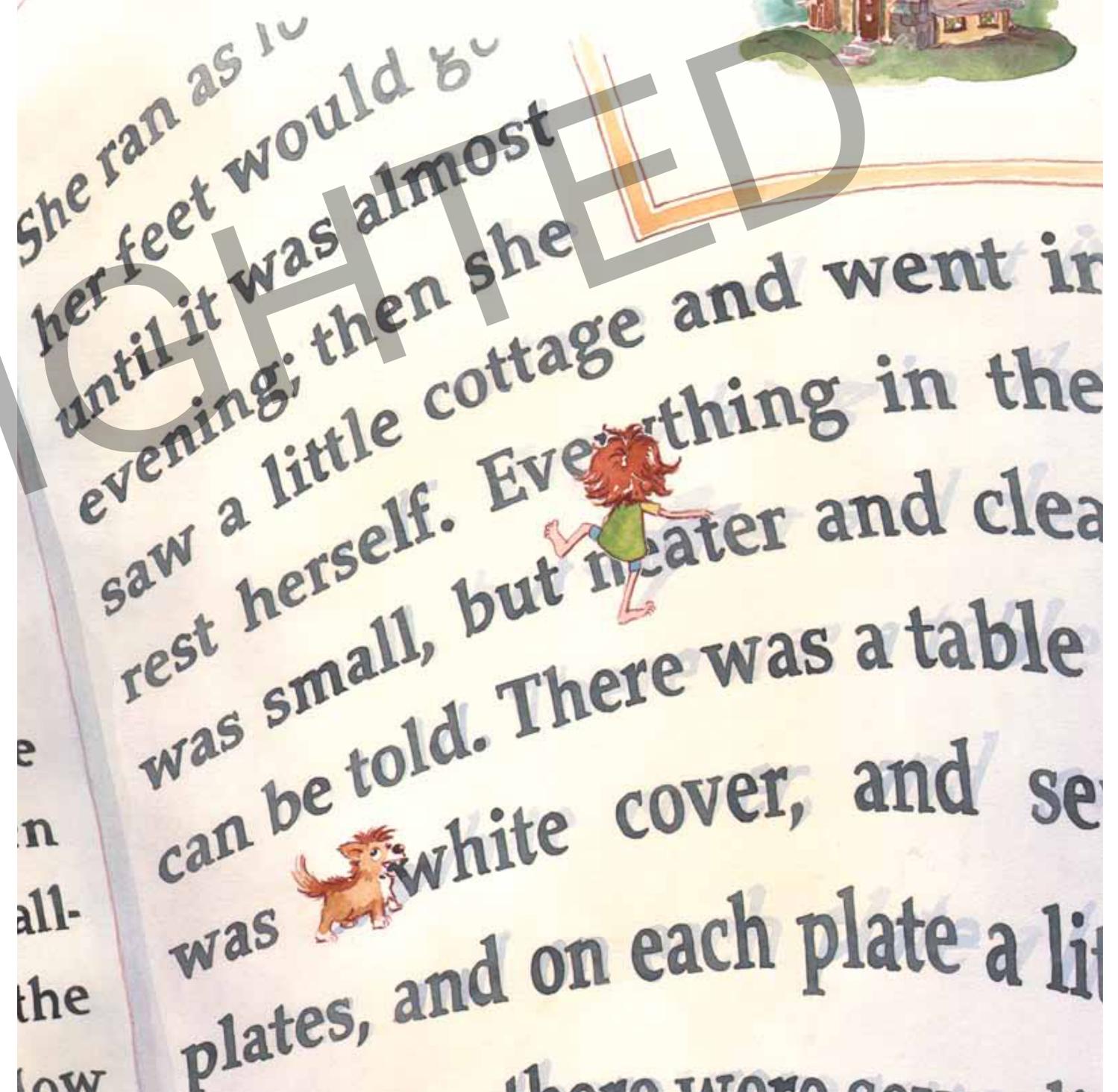


And so Zilla, good friend ever loyal and true,
came and sat by his friend. A most kind thing to do.

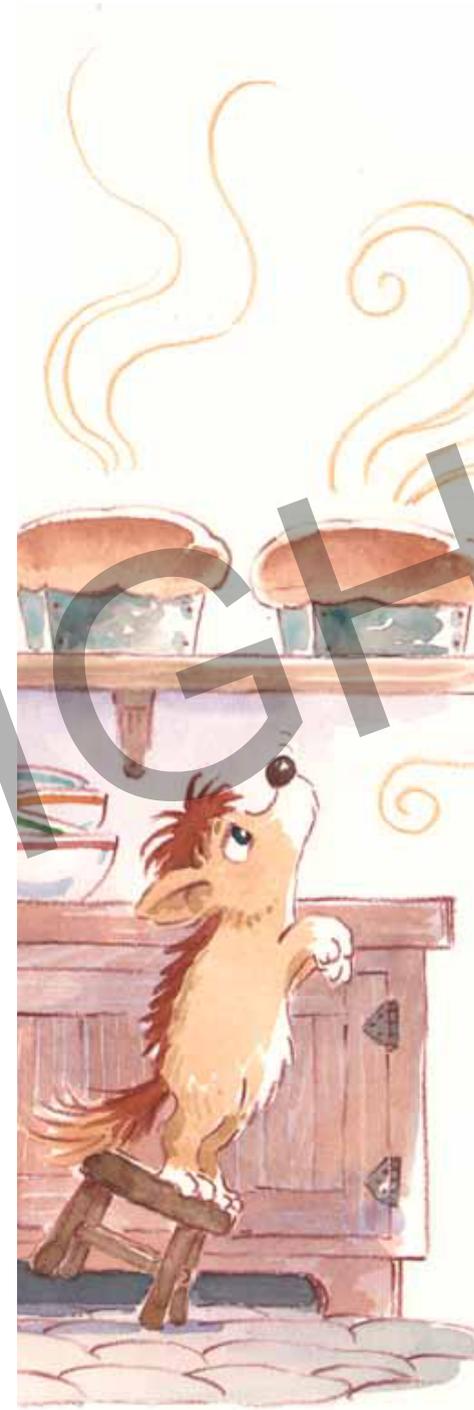
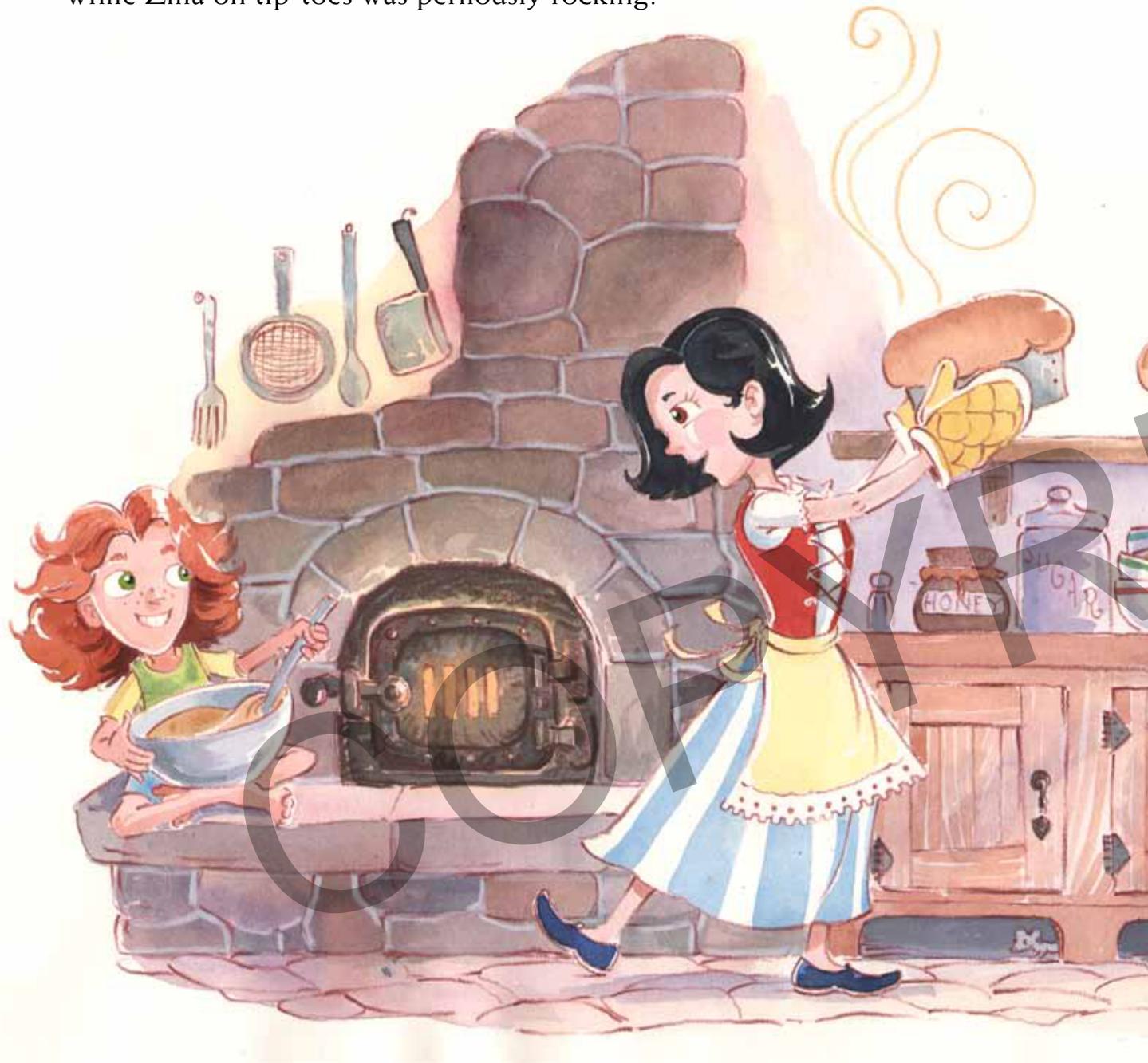
On the very first page, a great tale did unfold
of a not-so-nice Queen who could not be consoled,
for her beauty was second to that of Snow White.
In her anger, the Queen cast her out in the night.



Frieda B. became lost in the tale so complete,
she soon found the words sprouting right under her feet.
So with Zilla, she climbed to the top of the page
where they entered a cottage, all weathered with age.



And right there, by the fire, stood Snow White, herself,
who was placing some freshly baked bread on a shelf.
Within minutes, the two girls were happily talking,
while Zilla on tip-toes was perilously rocking.



And then with a thund-er-ous "Hi-Ho, Hi-Ho!"
seven dwarfs marched on in, one-by-one, in a row.

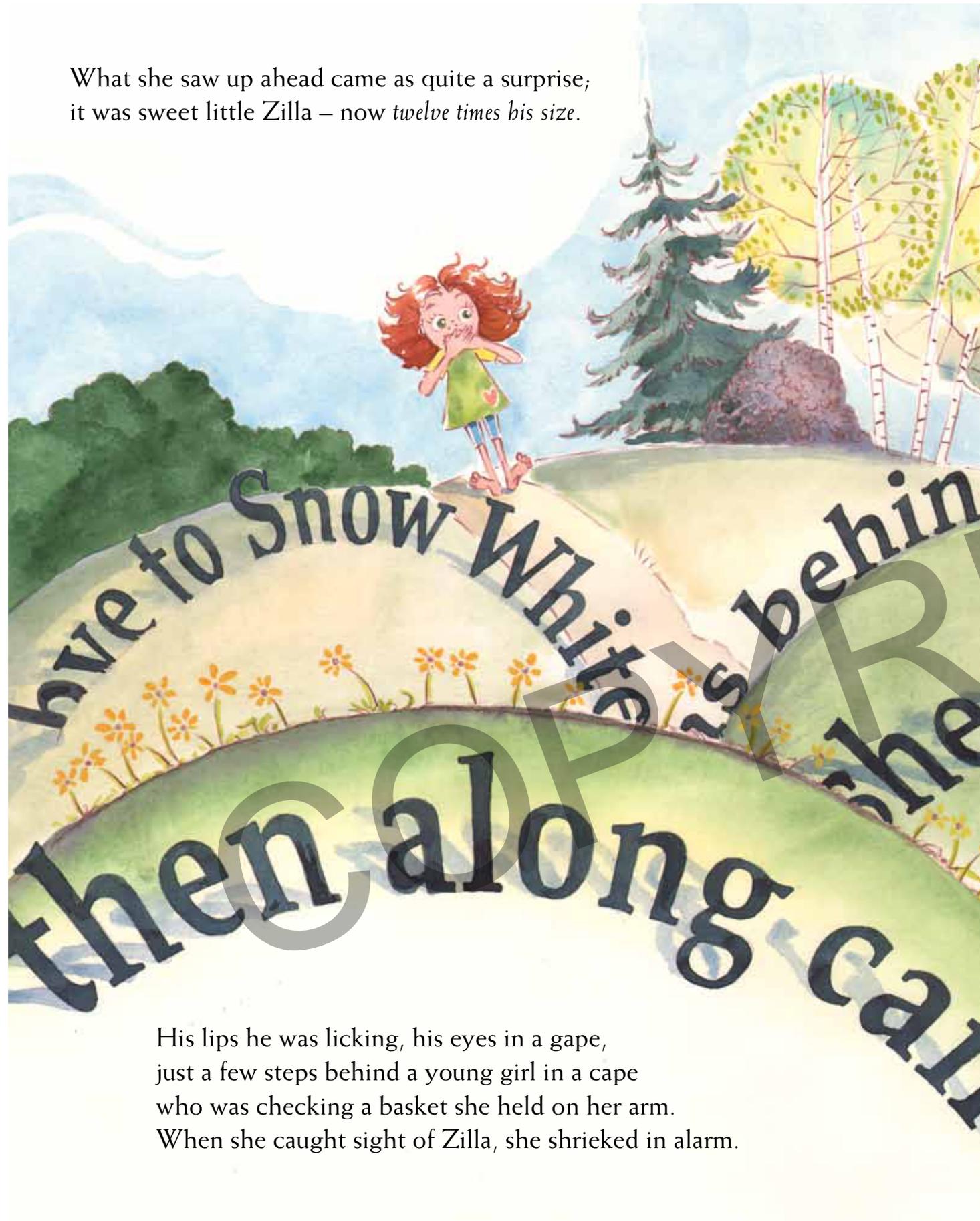
They took one look at Zilla and said, "He looks owly."
They made him a dwarf and they nicknamed him Growly.
And growly he was (although no one knew why),
with his fur all on end, and a glare in his eye.



He stormed out of the door with a growl and a snort.
Frieda said, "Goodness me, he's a bit out of sorts.
I do wish we could stay, but we'll come back again."
Then she hugged all good-bye to catch-up with her friend.



What she saw up ahead came as quite a surprise;
it was sweet little Zilla – now *twelve times his size*.



His lips he was licking, his eyes in a gape,
just a few steps behind a young girl in a cape
who was checking a basket she held on her arm.
When she caught sight of Zilla, she shrieked in alarm.



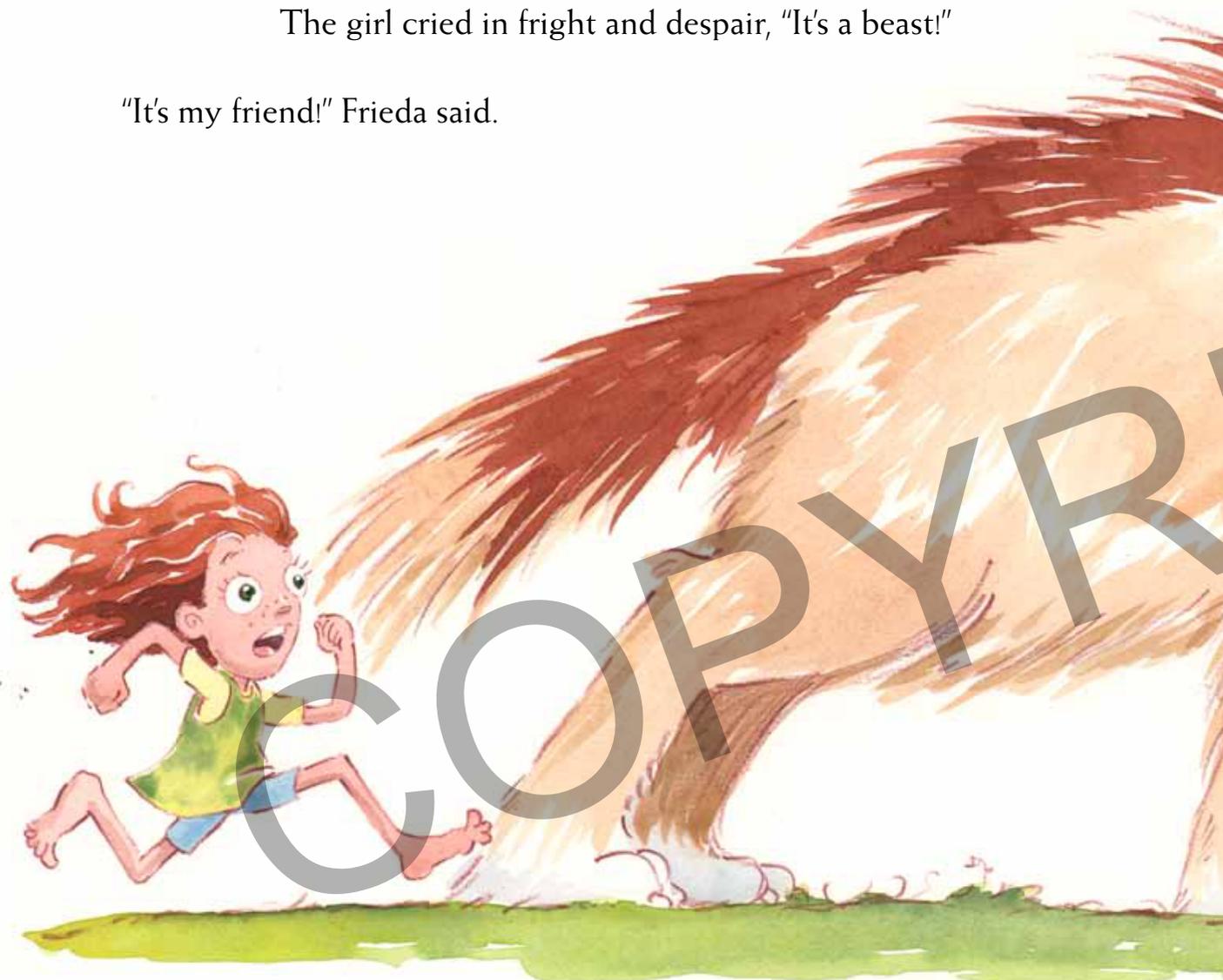
And then everything – everything – got sort of jumbled.

Frieda came running.

The basket it tumbled.

The girl cried in fright and despair, "It's a beast!"

"It's my friend!" Frieda said.



Zilla stared at the feast.



Yes, he stared at that basket, all full of good things – homemade treats that a girl to her grandmother brings. Zilla stared and he stared... but a move did not make. For the feast was not his. Not one crumb did he take.



It was then – in that moment – that Frieda B. knew.
It all made perfect sense why her poor Zilla grew
into something so growly and twelve times his size.
He was hungry. 'Twas simple as that. No surprise.



In her hurry that morning to read, to pretend,
Frieda B. had forgotten to feed her good friend.

With a heart full of sorry, she ran to his side
and she hugged him back down to his regular size.

A small growl in his stomach was all that remained
of a Zillabeast who – with some food – could be tamed.



"Let's go home," Frieda said. "Let's start over again."

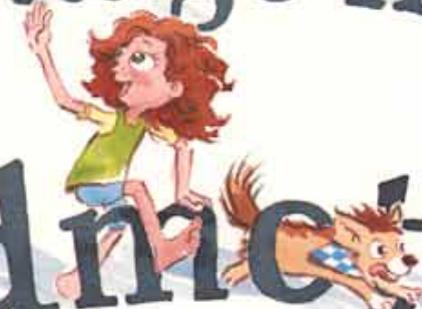
Then they said their good-byes to their red-hooded friend who requested, "Please come back and visit me soon. With some notice I'll bake chocolate chip macarons."



They both gave her their promise, then started their climb down a mountain of words made of rhythm and rhyme. And as pancakes and bacon their appetites beckoned, they found their way back to her room in a second.



and made her way along the path
back to the cottage in the
er grandmother
happily ever





They raced through the door and they bounded downstairs,
where a full stack of pancakes – and mom – waited there.

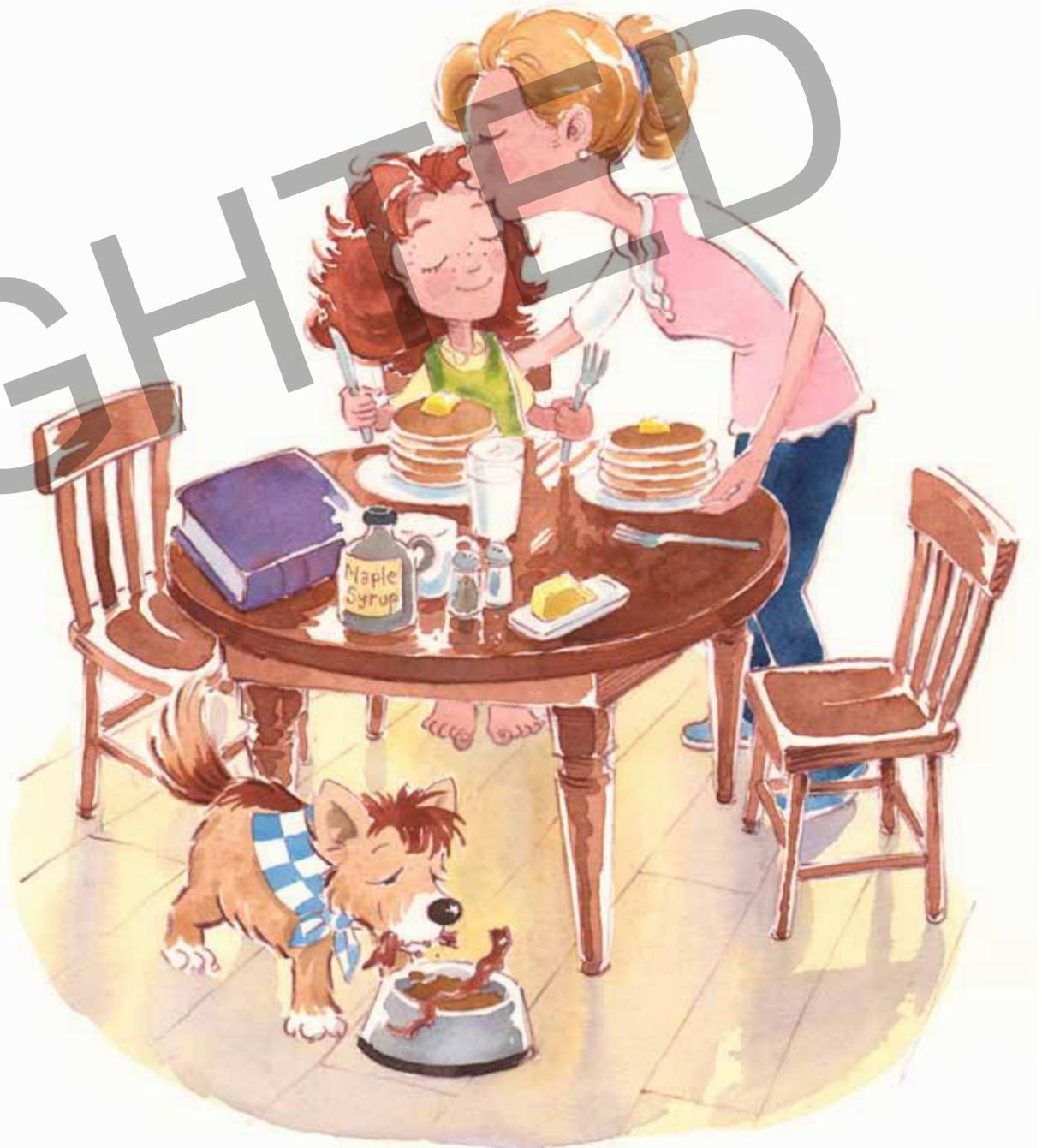




Frieda took care of Zilla with kibbles and water then turned to her mom with the love of a daughter.

"I'm sorry," she said, "for not listening to you.
I will wash all the dishes – and dry them all, too."
A sweet kiss on her head made her little heart swell,
she had pancakes, her dog.

She had love.



All was well.

