



# THE FAIRY POOL

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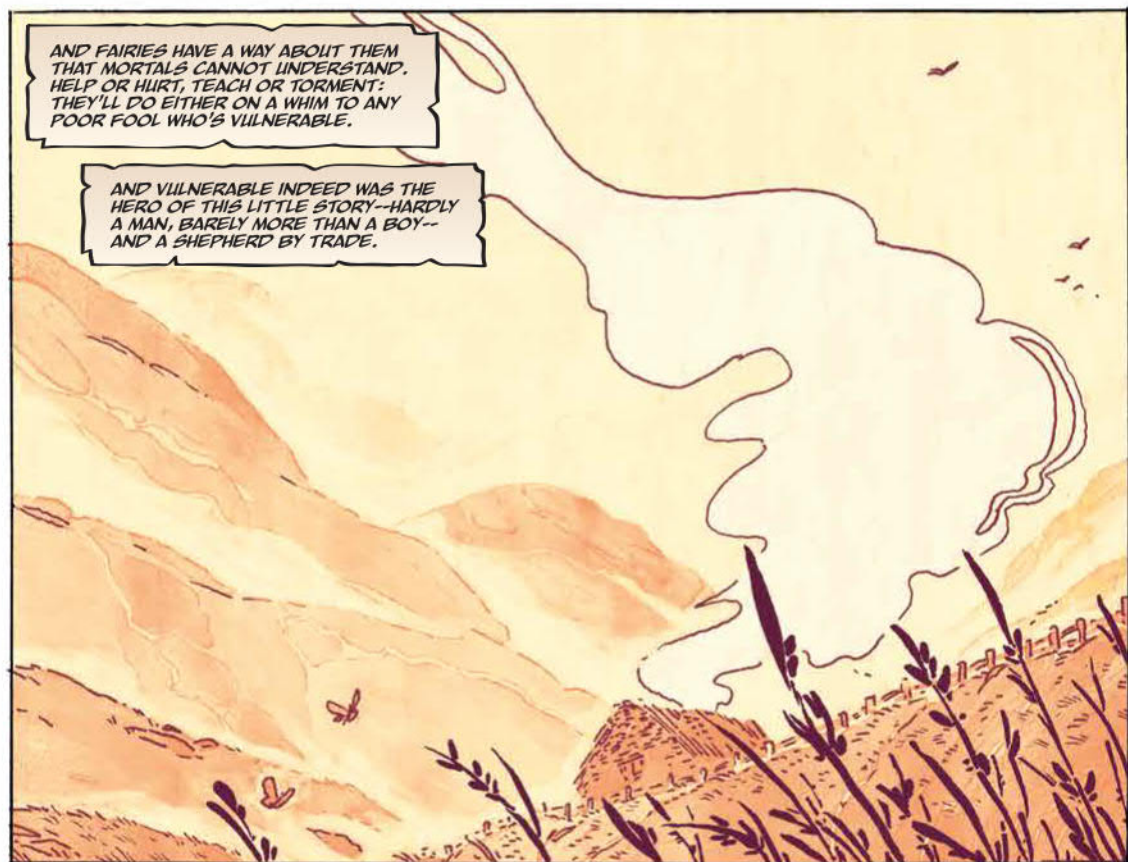
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FAIRIES, MY FRIEND!



AND FAIRIES HAVE A WAY ABOUT THEM THAT MORTALS CANNOT UNDERSTAND. HELP OR HURT, TEACH OR TORMENT: THEY'LL DO EITHER ON A WHIM TO ANY POOR FOOL WHO'S VULNERABLE.

AND VULNERABLE INDEED WAS THE HERO OF THIS LITTLE STORY--HARDLY A MAN, BARELY MORE THAN A BOY--AND A SHEPHERD BY TRADE.



IT WAS ON A WARM SUMMER'S MORNING THAT OUR SHEPHERD-LAD'S ENCOUNTER WITH THE FAIRIES BEGAN.



AND ON THIS MORNING, AFTER A LATE AND RIBALD NIGHT WITH FRIENDS, HE TIPTOED PAST HIS MOTHER'S BED AND PREPARED TO TAKE THE FLOCK OUT--AS HE DID EVERY DULL DAY.



HIS MOTHER THOUGHT LITTLE OF HIS FECKLESS NIGHTTIME FRIENDS; THEY FILLED HIS HEAD CONSTANTLY WITH DREAMS OF MERCANTILE GLORY, DISTANT EMPIRES, AND RICHES.



BUT HE DIDN'T THINK MUCH OF WATCHING SHEEP ALL DAY, AND SO CONSIDERED THEM EVEN.



BUT SHE DID NOT  
AGREE WITH THIS  
OPINION.

DEAR ME, WAS SHE UNHAPPY  
WITH HIM. HE WAS NOT THE  
MASTER OF STEALTH HE'D  
THOUGHT. HIS MOTHER HAD  
HEARD HIS RETURN HOME,  
IN THE WITCHING HOUR'S  
HEIGHT, THE NIGHT  
BEFORE.

HE'D BEEN  
DULY CAUGHT.

