

fa.miliar (fə-mil-yər): noun.  
1. a demon supposedly attending  
and obeying a witch, often said  
to assume the form of an animal.

"H" is for House.

There is a house  
across from the  
cemetery.



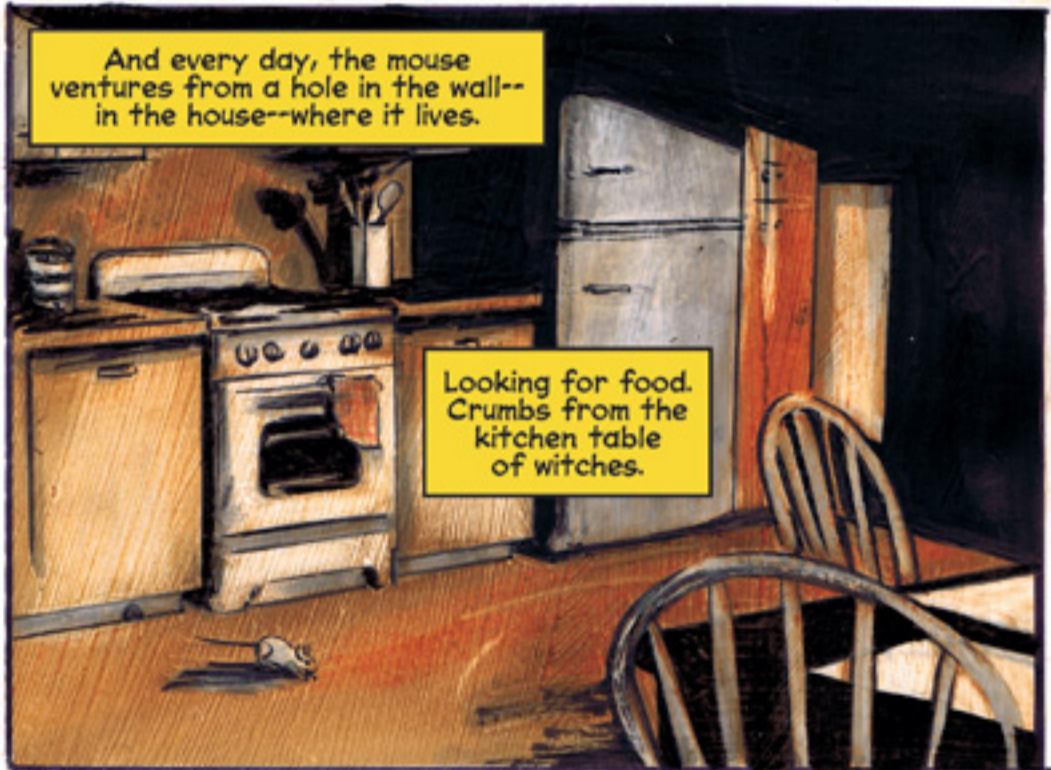
"M" is for Mouse.

There is a mouse  
in the house.



And every day, the mouse  
ventures from a hole in the wall--  
in the house--where it lives.

Looking for food.  
Crumbs from the  
kitchen table  
of witches.



"C" is for Cat.

There is a cat  
in the house.

That  
looks  
at the  
mouse.

That is  
looking for  
food.





This particular cat is no ordinary cat, though.



He was a boy, once upon a time...



...and remembered eating what boys like to eat.

...sighé  
...chicken...milk  
...bread...cheese  
...deer...

...beer  
...I miss beer...



"How lucky I am," thinks the mouse, "To live in a house with a cat that has no interest in eating me."

And that was true.

Unfortunately for the mouse, there were other things that lived in the house.



"C" is also for Cobra.



Little moussssssse...

Little moussssssse...

...you've made a terrible missssstake, coming out of your hole in the wall.



And then the cobras ate the mouse, who was only scrounging for crumbs, anyway.

"How unlucky I am," was the mouse's last thought, as its body was torn in two, "To have been born a mouse and not a man."



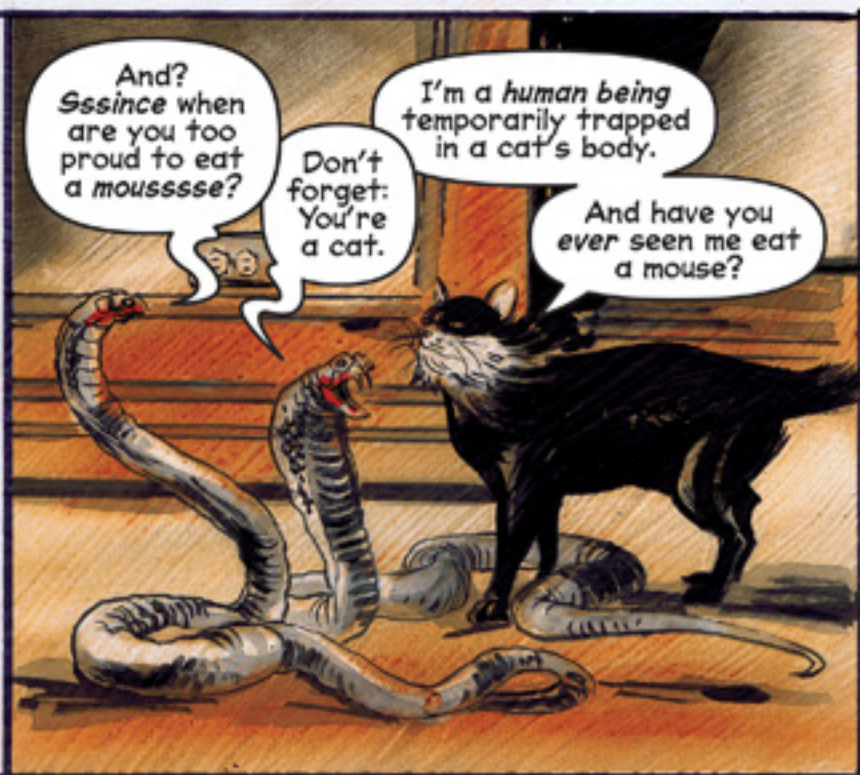
Afterwards:

You sssssaw the mousssse...

...and yet, you let it passsss...

I was enjoying my milk.

Also, no offense to mice, but they're vermin.



And? Sssince when are you too proud to eat a mousssse?

Don't forget: You're a cat.

I'm a human being temporarily trapped in a cat's body.

And have you ever seen me eat a mouse?



Temporarily?

If this were forever, I'd have killed myself nine times over.

I figure I've got another century, maybe two, and then I'll be back to walking upright again.



What a curiousssss familiar you are, Sssssalem...

...tell ussss, how did you come to be transformed into a cat?



Long story.

How did you two get snaked? Or were you born that way?

...

...

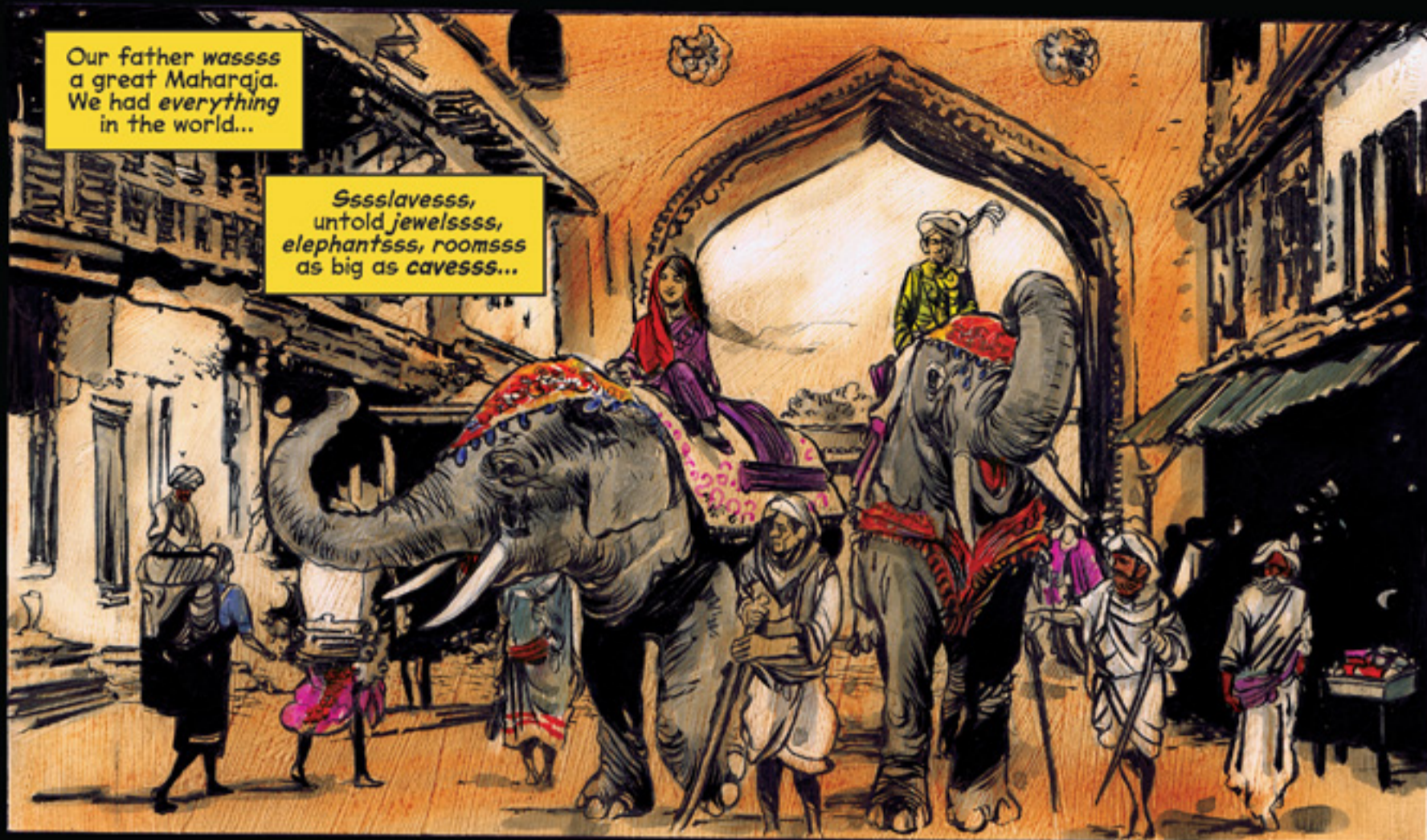


...we were royalty.

We were a prince and princesssss...

Our father wassss a great Maharaja. We had everything in the world...

Sssslavesss, untold jewelssss, elephantss, roomsss as big as cavesss...



And sssstill...

...we wanted more.



Our tutor, a wissse man named Sssorcar, who claimed to have myssstical powersss, wasss teaching ussss under a tree and sssaid...

Your father has great plans.

He wishes to build a magnificent palace.

It's to be a wedding present to his new bride...



Our mother had died, you ssssee...

...in childbirth, as motherssss do...





Our father'sss bride-to-be wasssn't much older than we were.

At dinner, ssshe often sssaid sssuch thingsss assss:

I am young and strong, Rajinder, I will give you so many sons...



...and I will live to see them grow old and expand your kingdom.



When we went to our teacher--and before we'd even opened our mouthsss to ssspeak-- he sssaid:

You are worried that her children will replace you in your father's heart...

As well you should be.

That is her plan, exactly.

She'll dote on her sons and turn His Majesty against you...



...why, I'd be surprised if you were even allowed to set foot in the new palace they're building.

We must stop that from happening, Sorcar.

Will you help us, Teacher? Father won't listen to us.



Of course, my children.

And don't worry...