

The background of the entire page is a light cream color with a complex, abstract line drawing in blue ink. The drawing consists of various shapes, including what looks like a stylized face or mask in the upper right, a rectangular object with a handle in the center, and various geometric and organic forms scattered throughout. The lines are thin and expressive, creating a sense of movement and depth.

LOCAL COLORING

5 writers
67 artists

Axle Contemporary



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Axle Contemporary would like to thank all the talented writers and artists that contributed to the realization of this book.

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Front cover: detail, Rose Simpson

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In response to the Social Distancing recommendations in the world at this time, Axle Contemporary is offering our 2017 Local Coloring book for free online. If you have access to a printer, please download the book, read the stories, and color the pages with your pens, crayons, and imagination! We'll release one story and its accompanying drawing pages each week for five weeks.

Visit www.axleart.com to download.

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Axle Contemporary Press

The Family of Talls

Jamie Figueroa

Once there was a family of tall— a father who was tall, a son who was tall, and a daughter who was tall. They lived in a tall house, on top of a hill, at the end of a dirt road surrounded by trees.

In the mornings, without fail, the tall father swept the clouds from the sky. Then, he woke his children by singing, “It’s another beautiful day.” The children unfolded their long legs while the father helped them search for their smiles. Sometimes their smiles were hidden in the hamper, or still hanging from their toothbrushes, or sometimes even stuck to the bottoms of their shoes. When the tall son and the tall daughter had found their smiles and fixed them to their faces, and when their legs were sturdy beneath them, they trotted alongside the river all the way to school.

While the children were at school, the tall father tended to the trees on the land surrounding his house. When he found a tree that was wider than it was tall, he bent over it, hands gripping the trunk, pulling on the tree, making it taller. The trees were grateful for the help, as it meant being that much closer to the sun, to the heart of the sky.

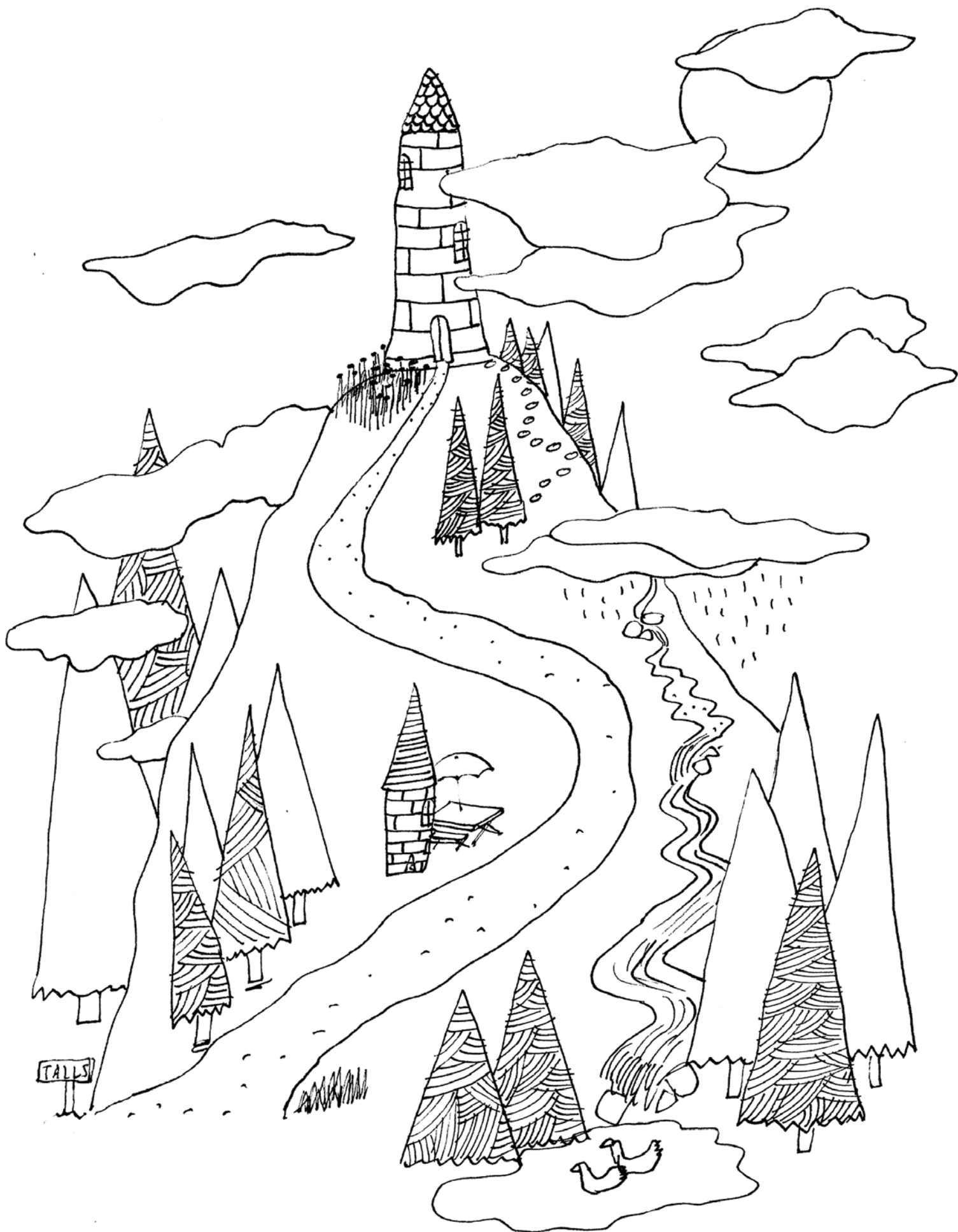
One day when the father was studying trees in need of being stretched, he came upon a shrub of a thing. He gripped the trunk, but when he pulled, it did not budge. Again, he tried but nothing. The tree was stubborn. No matter how many times he pulled, it did not grow. Soon, it was nearly dark. The father remembered his children. He had not been at home to greet them as he always did when they returned from school. Quickly, he strode down the hill, one very long leg, and then the other.

The tall son and the tall daughter jumped up and down at the sight of their tall father. He held them in his arms, but instead of his usual song and laughter, there were tears. “What’s the matter?” his children wanted to know. They had never seen their father without his smile.

“Today,” the father said, “was a sad day. I found a tree that did not want to be tall.” The father began to cry. For the first time in his life, he felt very small. “There was nothing I could do,” he told his children.

The tall son and the tall daughter were quite wise, and they surprised their tall father when they said, first the son and then the daughter, “Oh, Papa. Not everything wants to be tall. Not everything wants to be happy.” This was confusing for the father, and made him feel not like a man at all. And even though he couldn’t fully understand his children’s words, he sensed the truth in them.

At that, the tall son and the tall daughter each took one of his hands, and led him outside where the stars glittered in the dark sky. All three were quiet as they waited for what they did not know. As they waited, they felt how long their legs were. They felt their feet upon the ground, and while they did not exactly feel happy, they felt something else, they felt strong. As they looked into the darkness, and watched the glittering of stars, their strength began to feel like magic. It twinkled inside them. Who knew what the next day would bring?





Lisa Flynn



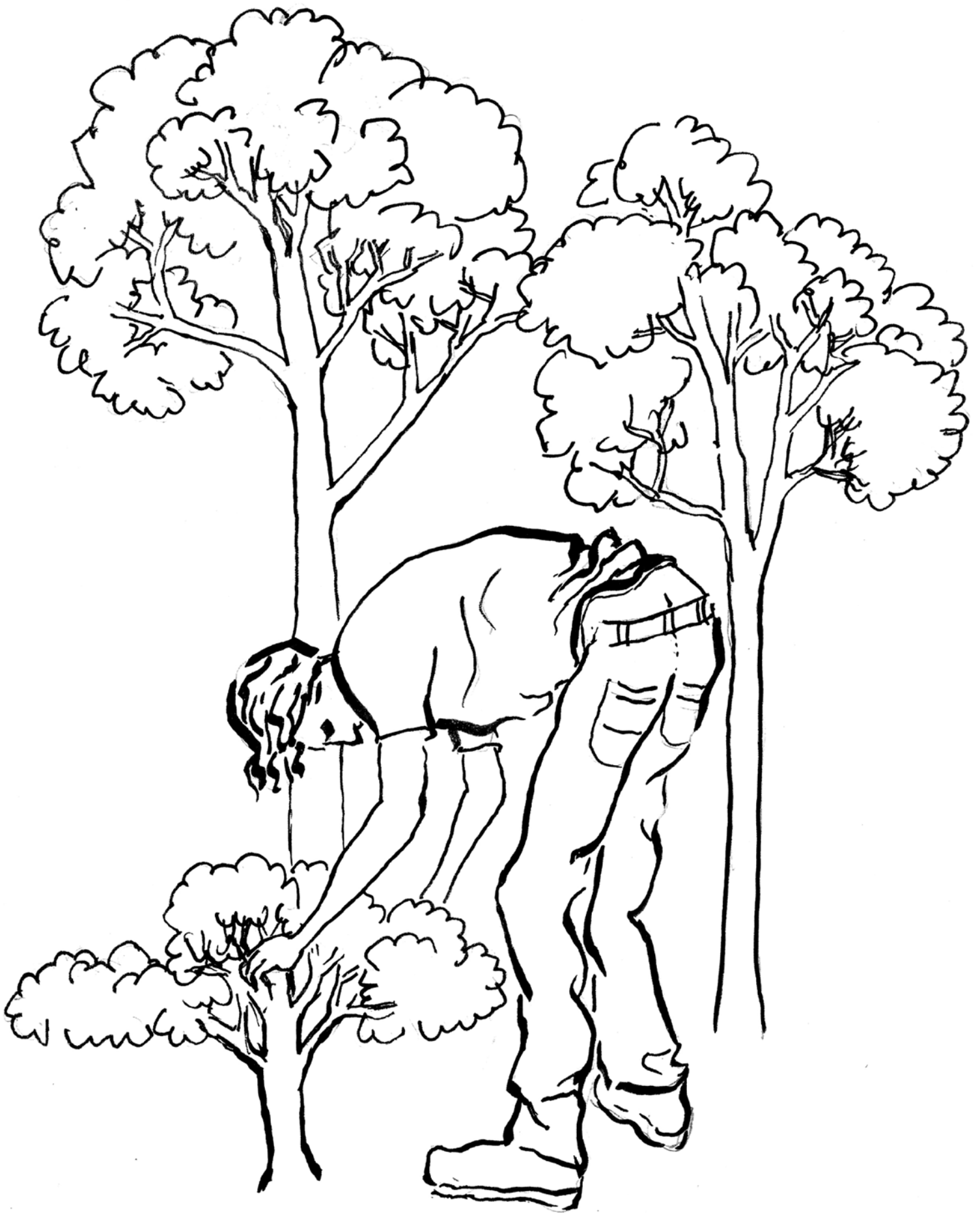
Eliza Naranjo Morse

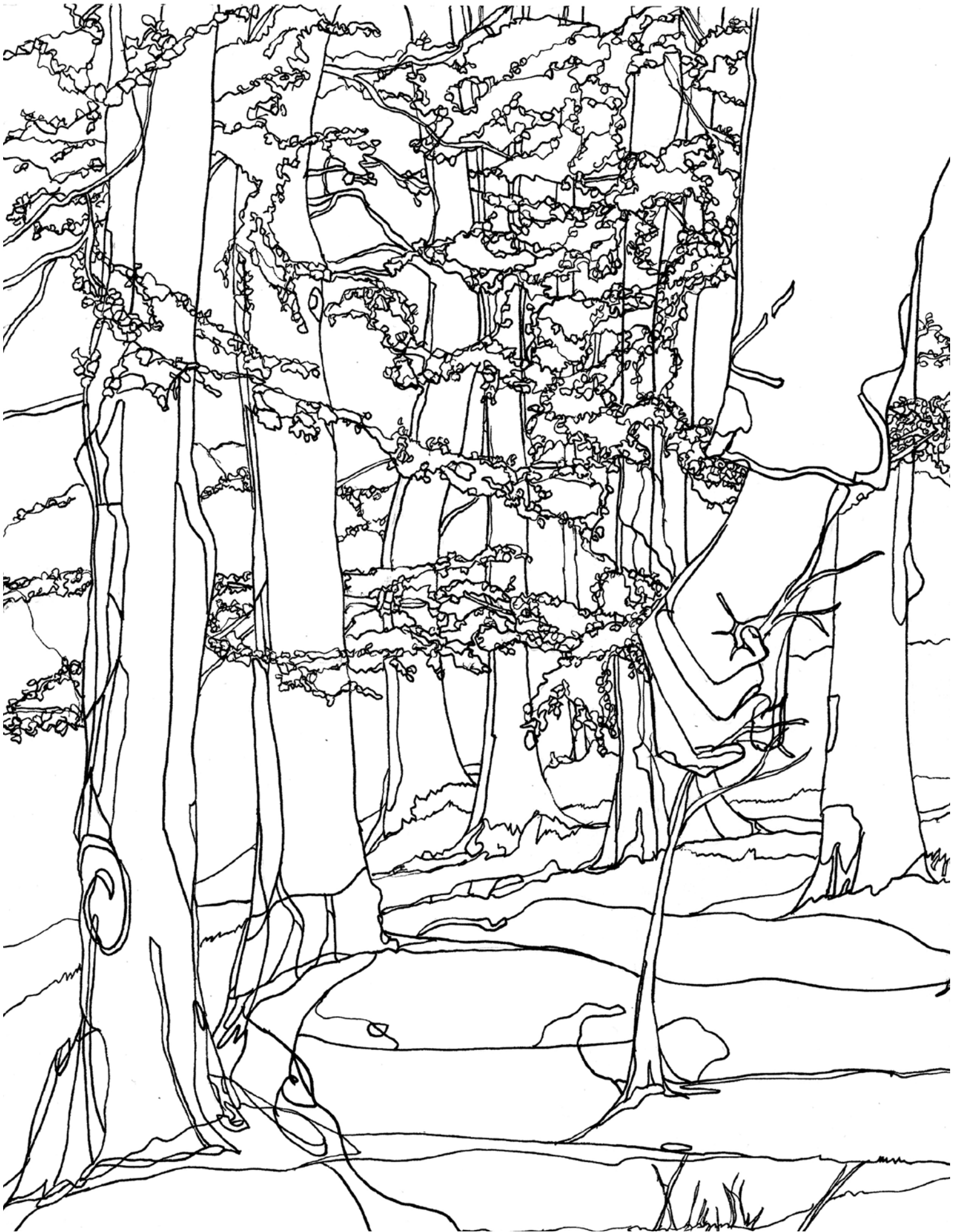


Arlene Ory



Israel Haros Lopez

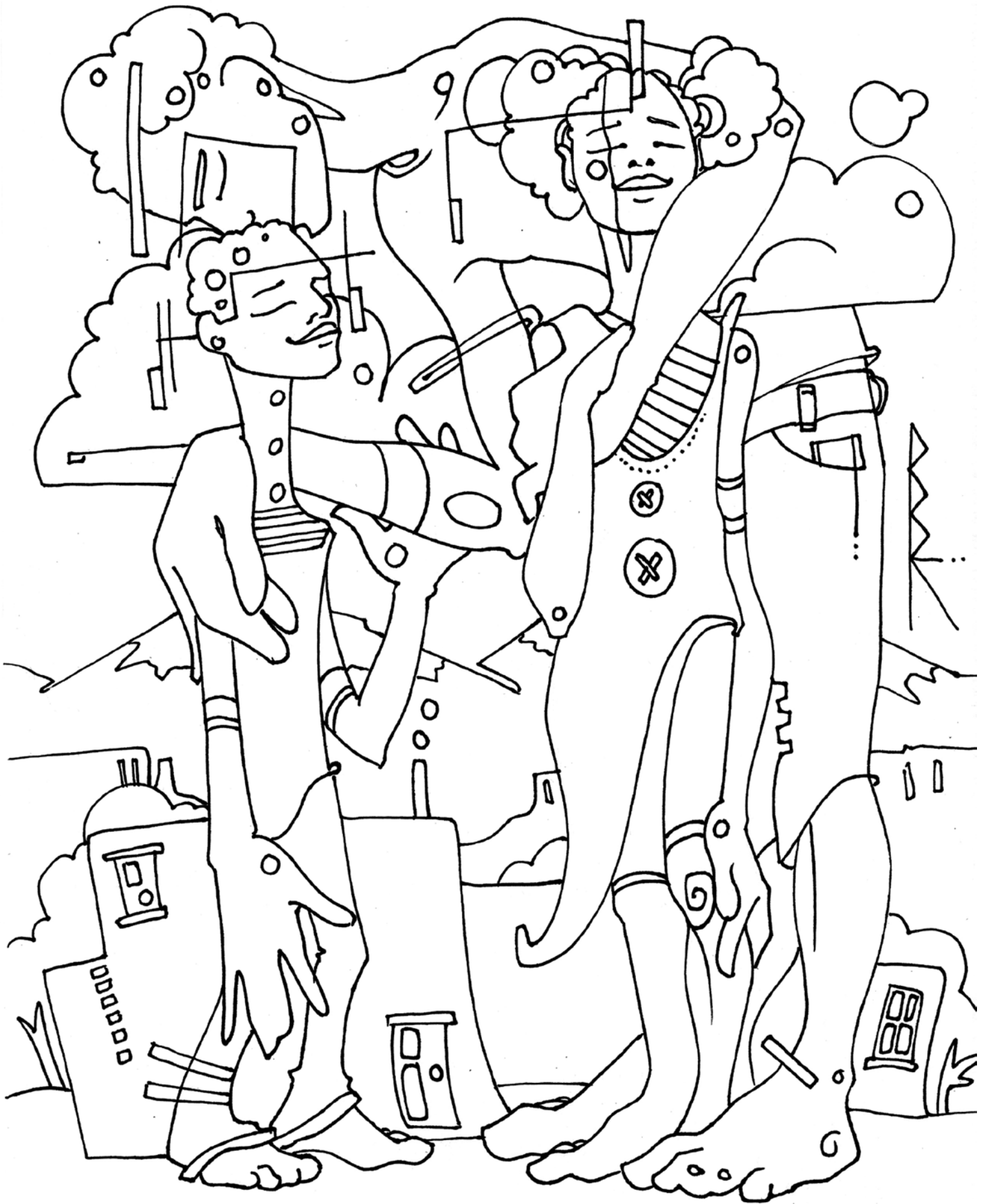


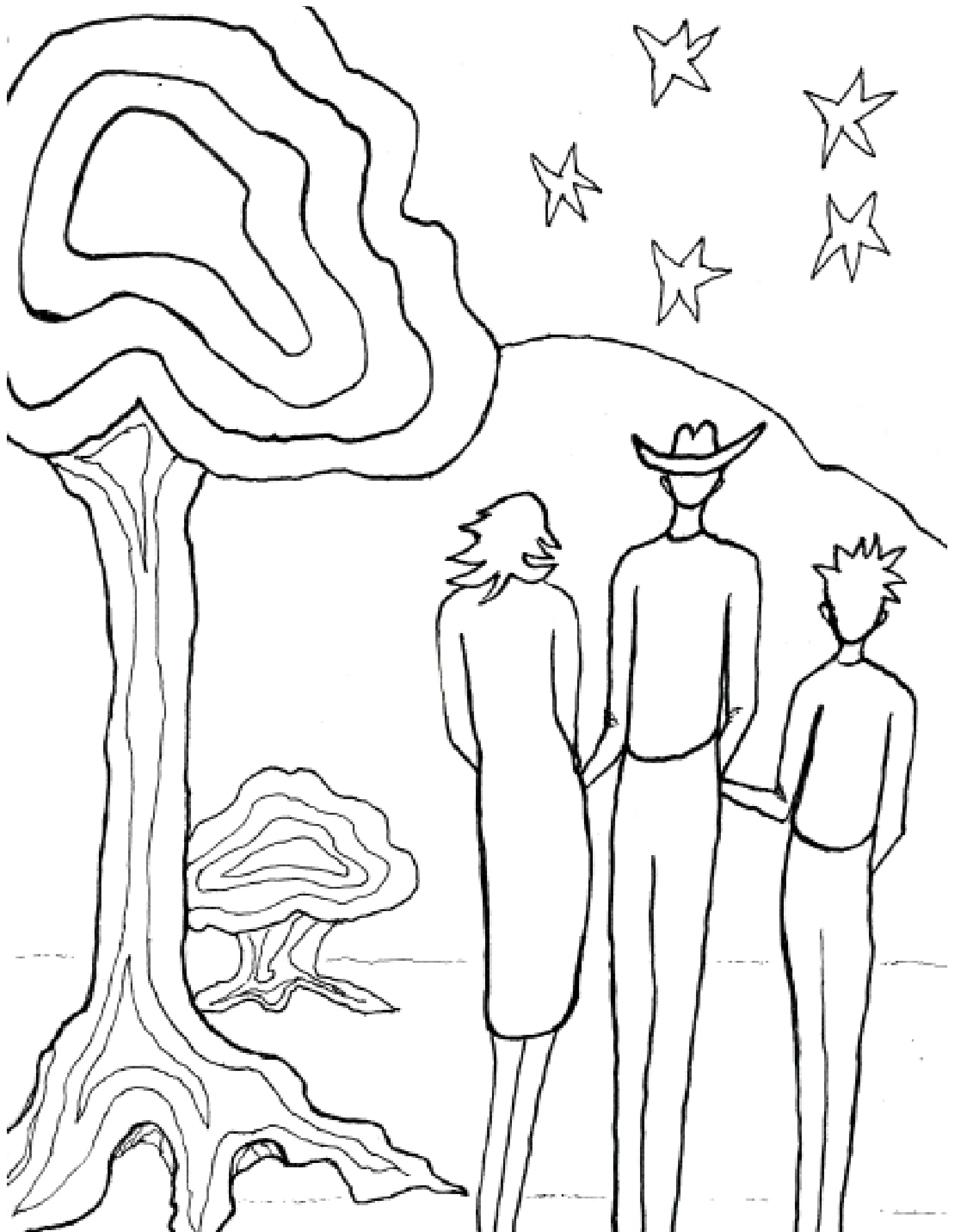


Holly Grimm



David Leigh





Tracy Cook Wein



