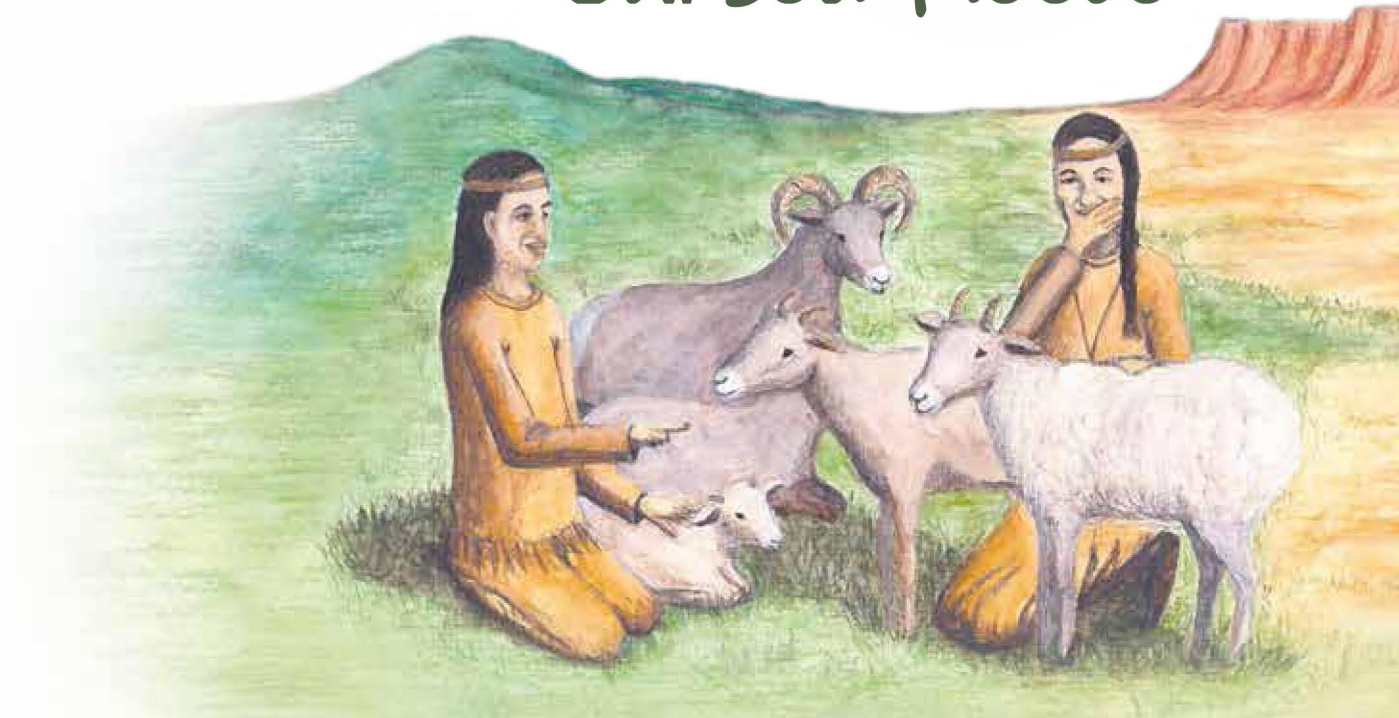


The Mystery of the Cursed Fleece

Reading sample



An exciting hunt for clues to discover
the 5 Biological Laws of Nature

Translated from German into English
by Elisabeth V. Strassert

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Discover
what has always
been there...

The night watch

Excerpt: Chapter 4

All the way back to camp, Adjun and Yumi are talking about the different views of why people and animals get sick. And they marvel at how, by Half Moon's frizzy fleece, they have gotten into this big question that has also been bothering the elders since time immemorial. Should they keep Half Moon under observation for a day and a night to test Hama's perception? Or should they take the herbs to Healing Earth? Or expel Half Moon from the camp today, as Black Hawk has demanded? Yumi looks at her older brother with uncertainty, "But which is the truth? Which of our elders is being right?"

Adjun is at a loss, "I don't know either. I can't figure out why any of them would have such a different way of viewing things." They look at each other insecurely, Adjun shrugging his shoulders.

The siblings are aware of their choice's implications: in fact, nothing less than Half Moon's future and life depend on it!

Around noon, the camp comes into sight on their trek home, and Adjun suggests, "Let's do it this way: I'll go to Half Moon now and watch him for the rest of the afternoon. You take the herbs to Healing Earth so she can make the medicine in any case. Then we'll have a contingency plan in case we don't



discover a reason for Half Moon's fleece growth by tomorrow. Tonight you come, relieve me and take over the first night watch. Then I'll take over for the second half of the night."

Yumi nods, feeling the rising insecurity at the thought of being out alone with the sheep for half the night, "Alright. I'll talk to our parents later. Hopefully they won't mind us being out all night."

Their mother, however, is less than thrilled when Yumi approaches her about their plans. "Why, by all good spirits, do you want to keep vigil? Even though your brother is already twelve years old, you're both still too young to needlessly spend half the night outside in the cold instead of in a warm tent!"

But their father says, appeasingly, "Let's let them have a go, it will certainly be an exciting experience. I'll let Silent Tree know. He is going to keep vigil for our camp tonight. At the same time, he can keep an eye on our children and the surroundings of the barn from time to time."

Everyone agrees with this suggestion – even Yumi now feels a little better at the thought of keeping watch at the sheep shel-

ter all alone in the dark. Silent Tree can be relied upon; under his watchful eye, no uninvited guest will be able to slip into the camp.

Several hours later, Yumi sits in the dusk close to her sheep and is watching Adjun disappearing toward their teepee to go to sleep. So far they have not been able to observe anything unusual. Half Moon is still out in the pasture with about half of the flock, while the other sheep have already retreated into the barn. Shortly before the sun's last rays disappear under the horizon, the remaining sheep are also wandering into the shelter.

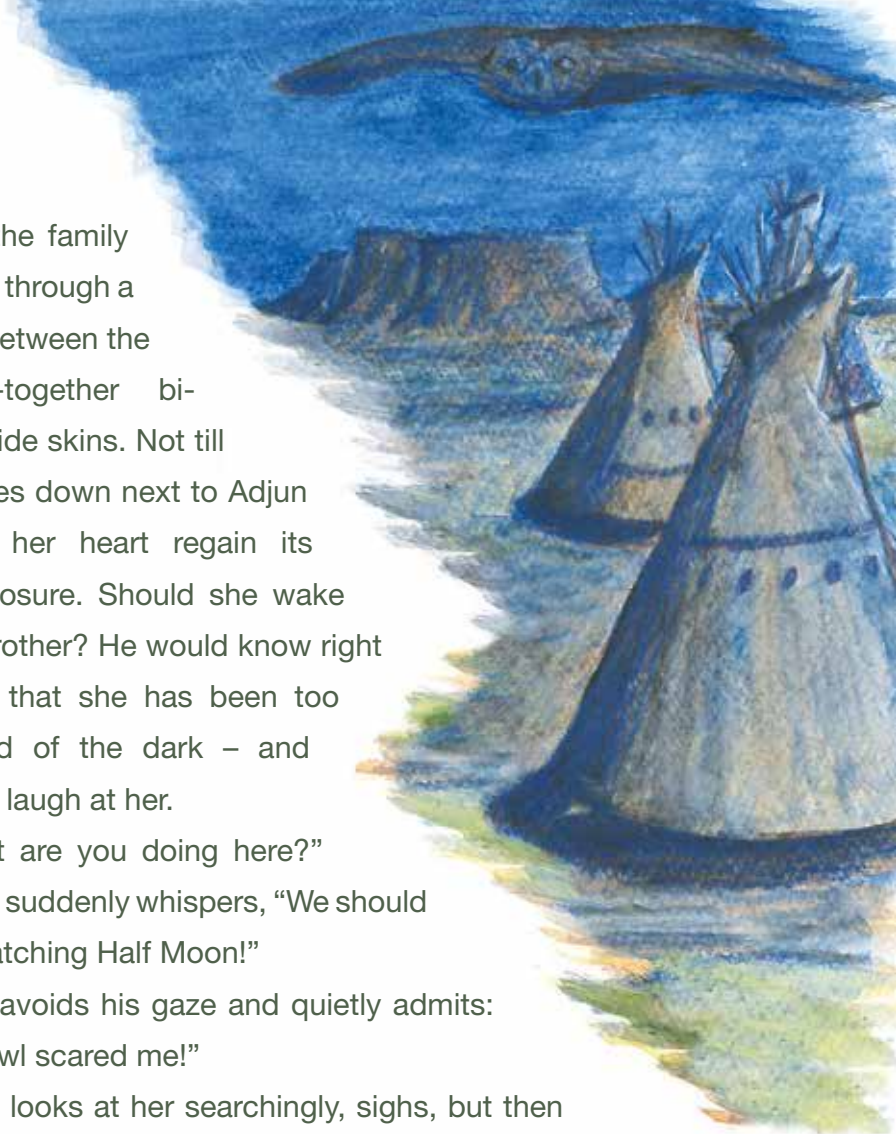
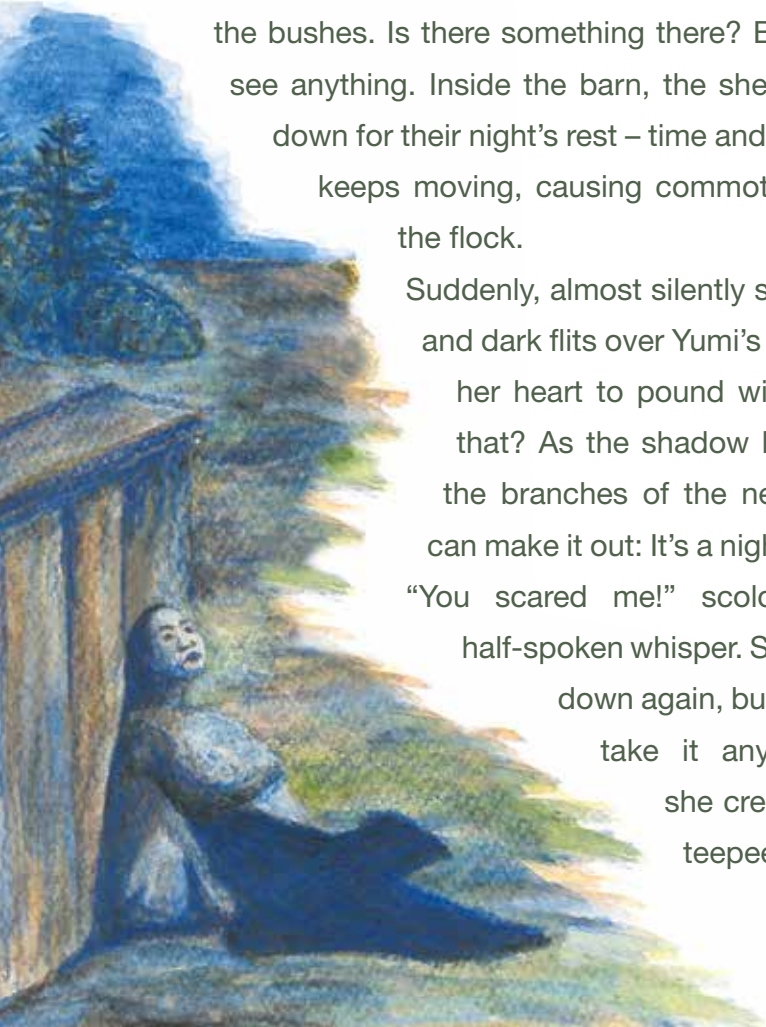
Shivering, Yumi covers herself with a warm woolen blanket because it has become unpleasantly cold. She is able to watch Half Moon closely through a gap in the wooden planks as he squeezes in between the other sheep. "It's gotten cramped in there," Yumi is worrying. When they had built the barn, the sheep had been much smaller and slimmer and still had had plenty of room. Yumi is listening to the soft, soothing animal sounds, hears the crunching of the straw, the soft sounds of her sheep chewing their cud, and now and then a soft "Baa!"

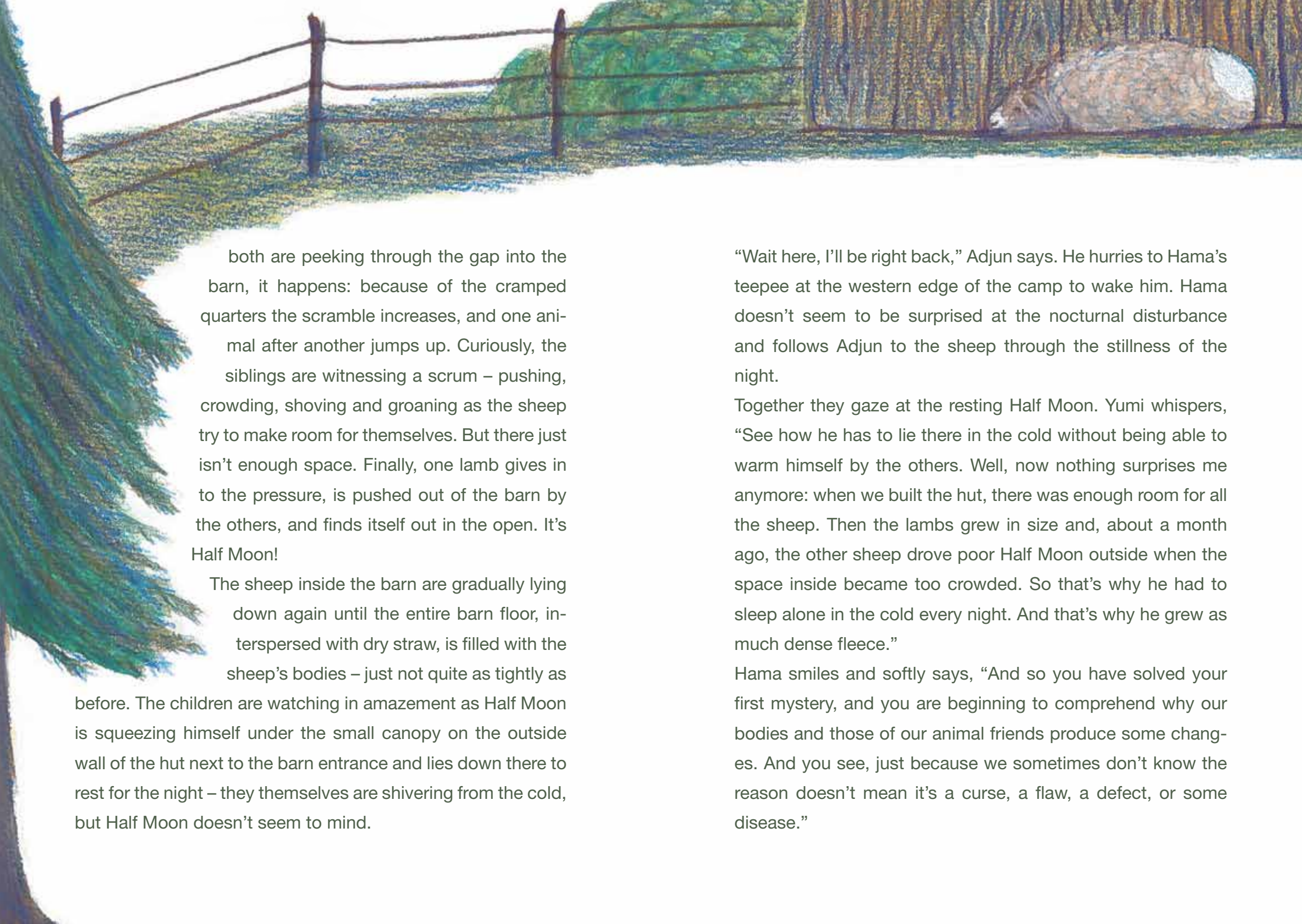
Meanwhile, the birds are ending the day with their many-voiced evening twittering. Then the birds' voices also fall silent and it becomes still – very still and very dark. Yumi whispers to herself: “Just because it’s dark doesn’t mean I should be afraid! Silent Tree keeps vigil and will keep coyotes and other predators away from our camp.”

All of a sudden she is startled, hearing a cracking sound in the bushes. Is there something there? But she doesn’t see anything. Inside the barn, the sheep begin to lie down for their night’s rest – time and time again one keeps moving, causing commotion throughout the flock.

Suddenly, almost silently something large and dark flits over Yumi’s head – causing her heart to pound wildly. What was that? As the shadow lands in one of the branches of the nearby tree, she can make it out: It’s a night bird – an owl! “You scared me!” scolds Yumi in a half-spoken whisper. She tries to calm down again, but then she can’t take it anymore. Quietly, she creeps toward the teepee and slips in-

side the family home through a gap between the sewn-together bison hide skins. Not till she lies down next to Adjun does her heart regain its composure. Should she wake her brother? He would know right away that she has been too scared of the dark – and might laugh at her. “What are you doing here?” Adjun suddenly whispers, “We should be watching Half Moon!” Yumi avoids his gaze and quietly admits: “An owl scared me!” Adjun looks at her searchingly, sighs, but then whispers, “You know what, we’ll just both go outside.” Yumi nods in relief and follows him out of the tent. Together with Adjun, she’s feeling more than twice as strong – and dares to continue keeping vigil now. “Look how crammed our sheep have it in the barn,” Yumi says quietly to Adjun as they sit in their watcher’s post. Just as they





both are peeking through the gap into the barn, it happens: because of the cramped quarters the scramble increases, and one animal after another jumps up. Curiously, the siblings are witnessing a scrum – pushing, crowding, shoving and groaning as the sheep try to make room for themselves. But there just isn't enough space. Finally, one lamb gives in to the pressure, is pushed out of the barn by the others, and finds itself out in the open. It's Half Moon!

The sheep inside the barn are gradually lying down again until the entire barn floor, interspersed with dry straw, is filled with the sheep's bodies – just not quite as tightly as before. The children are watching in amazement as Half Moon is squeezing himself under the small canopy on the outside wall of the hut next to the barn entrance and lies down there to rest for the night – they themselves are shivering from the cold, but Half Moon doesn't seem to mind.

“Wait here, I'll be right back,” Adjun says. He hurries to Hama's teepee at the western edge of the camp to wake him. Hama doesn't seem to be surprised at the nocturnal disturbance and follows Adjun to the sheep through the stillness of the night.

Together they gaze at the resting Half Moon. Yumi whispers, “See how he has to lie there in the cold without being able to warm himself by the others. Well, now nothing surprises me anymore: when we built the hut, there was enough room for all the sheep. Then the lambs grew in size and, about a month ago, the other sheep drove poor Half Moon outside when the space inside became too crowded. So that's why he had to sleep alone in the cold every night. And that's why he grew as much dense fleece.”

Hama smiles and softly says, “And so you have solved your first mystery, and you are beginning to comprehend why our bodies and those of our animal friends produce some changes. And you see, just because we sometimes don't know the reason doesn't mean it's a curse, a flaw, a defect, or some disease.”

Yumi remains skeptical: “But that still has nothing to do with the fact that sometimes our skin, teeth, knees, necks or ears hurt? Or that we have to cough or lie on the sickbed with a fever?”

Hama calmly replies, “Who knows... I think it may very well have something to do with it. And I’m sure you’ll get the chance to find out for yourselves in more detail! Just because you don’t yet understand the reason and the significance of something doesn’t mean it doesn’t exist.”

Later in the tent, Yumi already fast asleep beside him, Adjun is wide awake. He runs his hand up and down his left leg and is pondering: will he be able to discover a logical explanation for his twisted ankle and his walking problems? Should he ask Hama about it? He’d rather not, for now, he wants to keep this to himself – no one should know about his leg issues yet. After today’s events, a glimmer of hope flickers inside him that maybe he soon will comprehend what is wrong with his leg – and that he will find a solution through understanding! Slowly falling asleep, one last thought raises a smile: at least he will be able to help Half Moon.

Part 2 Black Hawk

The curse is contagious

“Ah- Ah- ACHOO! How dusty the old boards are!” Adjun exclaims after a sneezing fit. Yumi and Adjun, along with their friend Lyra, have spent all day helping their father expand the barn with seasoned, dry boards so that all the sheep will have enough room. They kicked up a lot of dust while carrying the beams for the shed, which is why everyone keeps sneezing in turn. Lyra laughingly remarks, “Yumi, you’ve got gray hair!” and adds pensively, “Why does getting dust up our noses actually make us sneeze?”

End of reading sample

All information about the book:
www.disease-is-different.com/book