THE PIRATES AND THEIR YO HO HO

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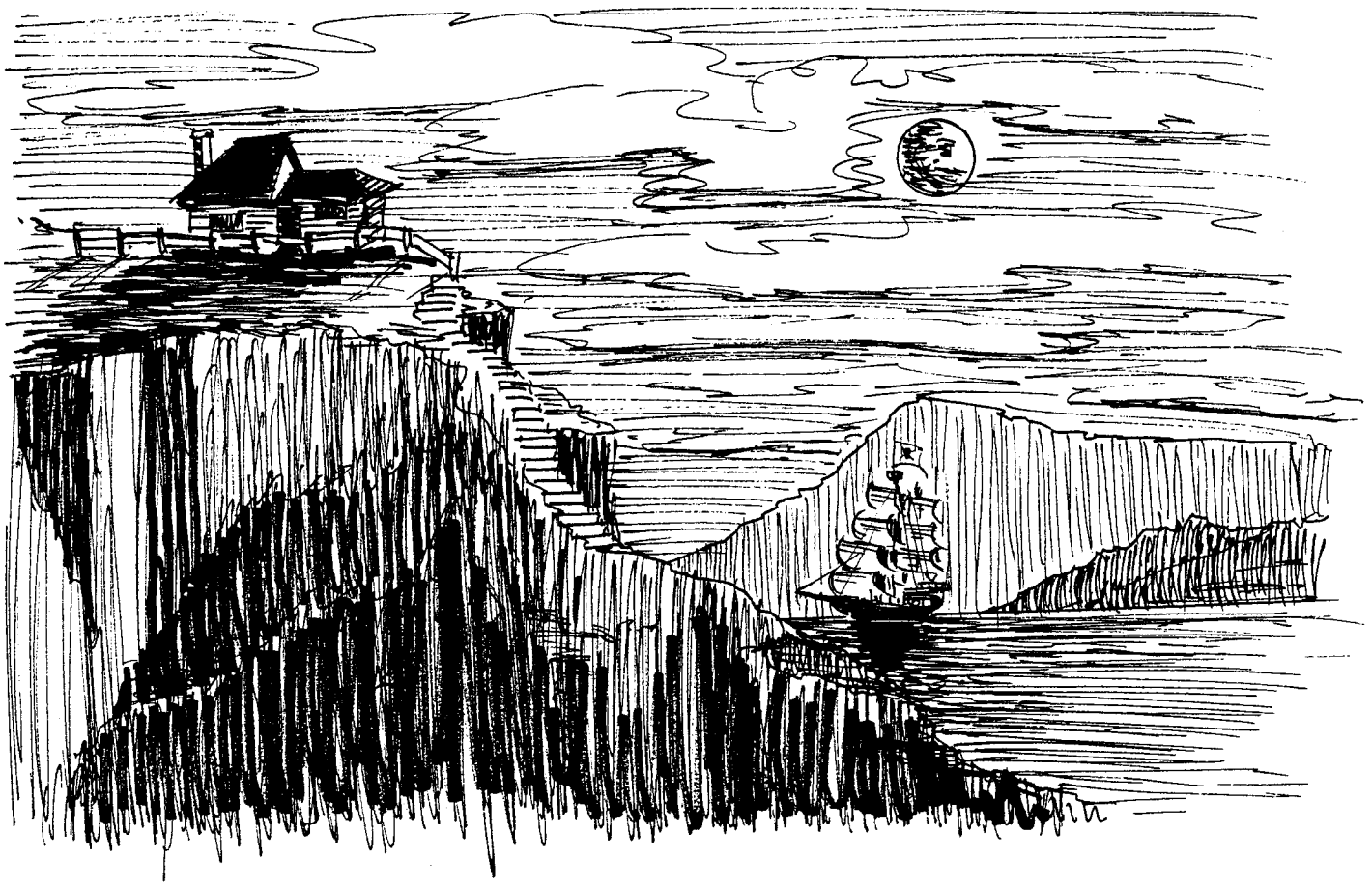
FOR AUDREY
(1961–1996)



Once upon a time there was a family living on a cliff by the sea. The family had a mother, a father, a young girl, a younger boy, a big dog, and a little dog.

In the middle of one night when everyone was asleep — even the dogs — a pirate ship sailed over to the side of the cliff. The pirates got off the boat, climbed up the cliff, went into the house, and took the little boy. They sailed out to sea.

Soon the little boy woke up. When he saw that he was on a pirate ship, he cried and cried for his mother. The pirates, who were the nicest pirates you would ever want to meet — not that you would want to meet any pirates — soon got the boy to stop crying.

They said that they would bring him home as soon as he helped them recover their treasure. They had buried their treasure in a cave, but now the cave entrance was too small for them to get into, so they needed a small child to go in and remove the treasure.

The boy agreed to try and he asked what the treasure was. The pirates said that they had hidden a chest of gold and jewels, a bottle of rum, and their yo ho ho.

They soon arrived at the small island. Quickly, they sent the boy into the cave to find their treasure.

"Don't forget the yo ho ho!" the pirates yelled after him.

The boy crawled into the cave where he saw a lot of different paths. Soon he got lost and, once again, started crying. Then he sat down and cried himself to sleep.

The pirates waited and waited for the boy to come out. But pirates aren't known for their patience, so they soon gave up on the boy.

They sailed back to the house on the cliff. It was still night and everyone was still asleep — even the dogs. This time, they took the young girl.

They sailed back to the island and told the girl to go in the cave and get their treasure. So the little girl crawled into the cave looking for the chest, the bottle of rum, and the yo ho ho. But most importantly to the little girl, she was looking for her little brother.

The pirates called after her, "Don't forget the yo ho ho!"

But the little girl also got lost in the cave. She sat down to rest and, like her brother, soon fell asleep.

The pirates waited and waited, but again gave up on the girl. They got back into their ship and sailed back to the house on the cliff. They tried to take the big dog, but it started to growl, so they took the little dog instead.

They sailed back to the island and told the little dog to go into the cave and get their chest of treasure, their bottle of rum and, of course, their yo ho ho. The dog ran into the cave so fast, that the pirates didn't get a chance to yell, "Don't forget the yo ho ho!"

The pirates waited and waited and then saw the dog crawling back out of the cave dragging something. They cheered, "The dog has found our treasure!" But instead of the treasure, it was ... the little boy.

So they sent the dog back into the cave to get the chest and the rest of their treasure. Again, they waited and waited and then saw the dog crawling back out of the cave dragging something. But this time, instead of the treasure, it was ... the young girl.

The pirates sent the dog back into the cave for the third time. They waited and waited and once again saw the dog dragging something out of the cave. This time it was ... the chest of treasure!

The pirates, the little boy and the young girl cheered. Then the pirates sent the dog back into the cave looking for the bottle of rum and their yo ho ho. Again, they waited and waited and finally the dog came out carrying ... the bottle of rum!

"Yay!" everyone cheered. The girl and boy also cheered. Even though they knew they could not have any of the rum, they were excited for the pirates. The pirates seemed so happy that it was impossible not to be happy with them.

"Now all we need is our yo ho ho!" said the pirates as they sent the dog back into the cave.

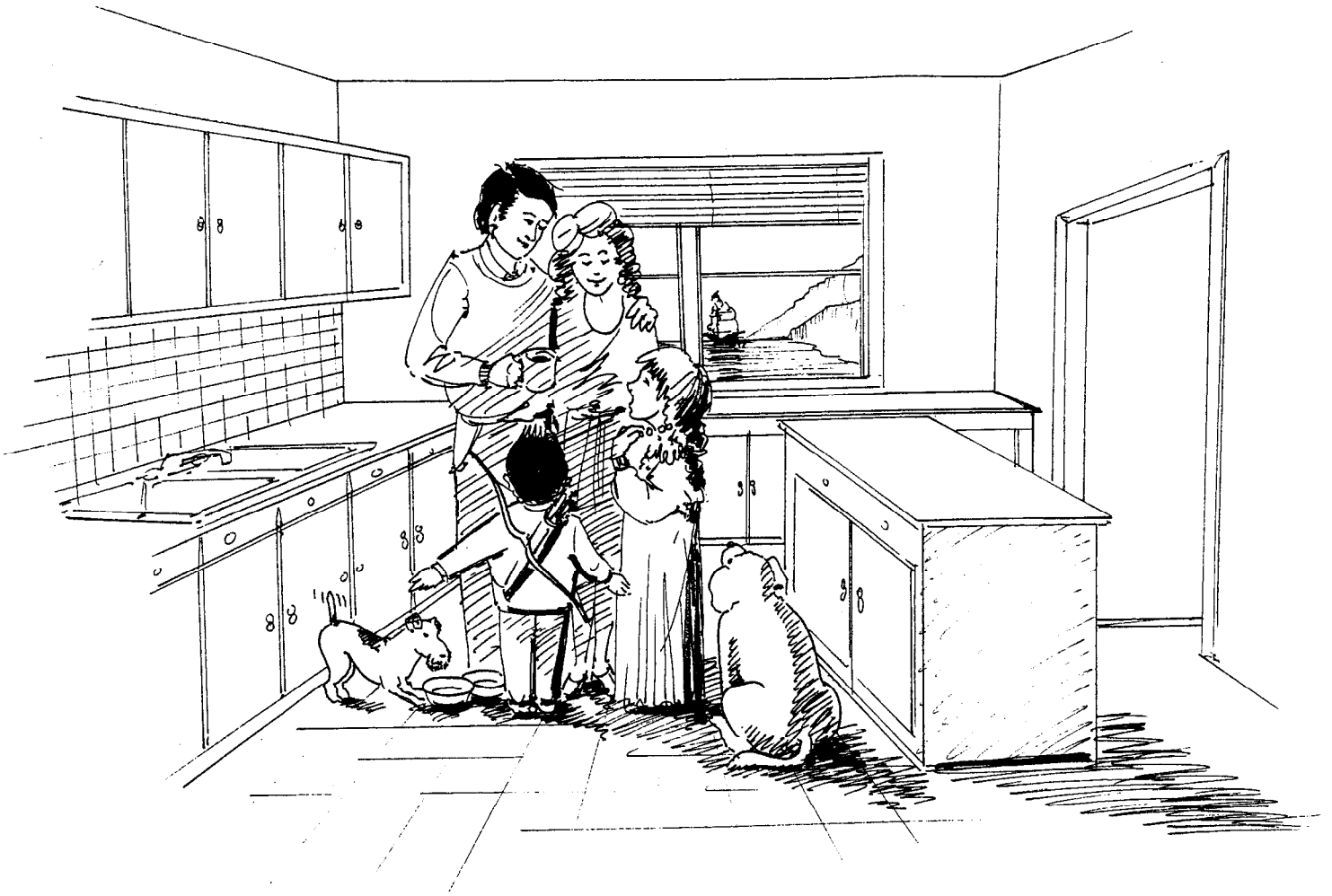
They waited and waited and waited some more until, finally, the dog came back out of the cave carrying ... nothing. The dog shook his little head. No yo ho ho.

The pirates were sad that the dog did not find the yo ho ho, but they were so happy about their treasure and the bottle of rum that they decided to have a party right there on the small island.

The pirates danced their pirate jigs and sang their pirate songs and opened the bottle of rum. And you know what? It turns out that the yo ho ho was... *inside* the bottle of rum!

And all of them, including the little boy and girl, chanted "Yo ho ho *in* a bottle of rum!" until their mouths were tired. Even the little dog barked along.

NOT The End.



MOLLY & HAL'S
Ending:

The pirates were so happy when they found their yo ho ho, that they opened the treasure chest and let the boy, the girl and, yes, even the little dog, take whatever they wanted.

The little girl took a beautiful necklace full of sparkly gems. The little boy took a golden bow and some golden arrows. And the little dog took a pair of golden bowls, one for food and one for water.

Then the pirates sailed back to the house on the cliff and put the girl, the boy, and even the dog back to bed.

In the morning, the father and mother were very glad to see their children — and the dogs — but they didn't believe the children's story about the pirates, the treasure, the bottle of rum, or the yo ho ho.

REALLY The End.

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