

The spirit  
asked for  
a place  
to stay.

But I  
have

nothing  
to offer.

Everything  
that is  
needed  
to start

is  
already  
here.



Start  
what  
...?

I didn't  
understand.

but  
as soon as  
I allowed  
it to stay.

patches  
of green  
began  
to grow.

glow



and  
every step  
it took

felt warm  
on my  
skin.



It used  
my soil


to build  
a system  
within.

It tamed  
new life  
around  
us

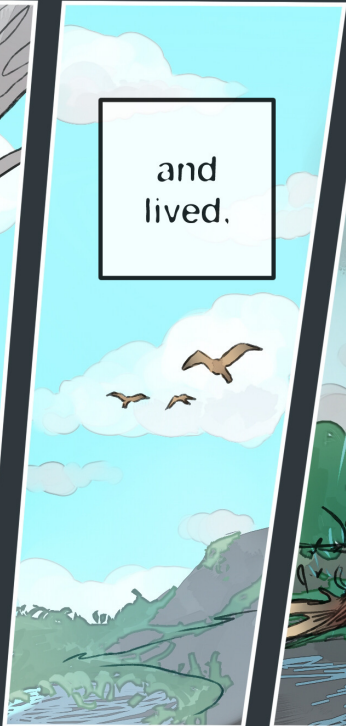
and  
gave it  
something  
to hold  
onto.

something I  
never could  
have done  
alone.

and  
it didn't  
take long  
until




the first  
animals  
settled.



and  
lived.



and  
died.



while  
flowers  
bloomed

and  
withered.



I saw that  
every being  
would leave  
after  
a while.

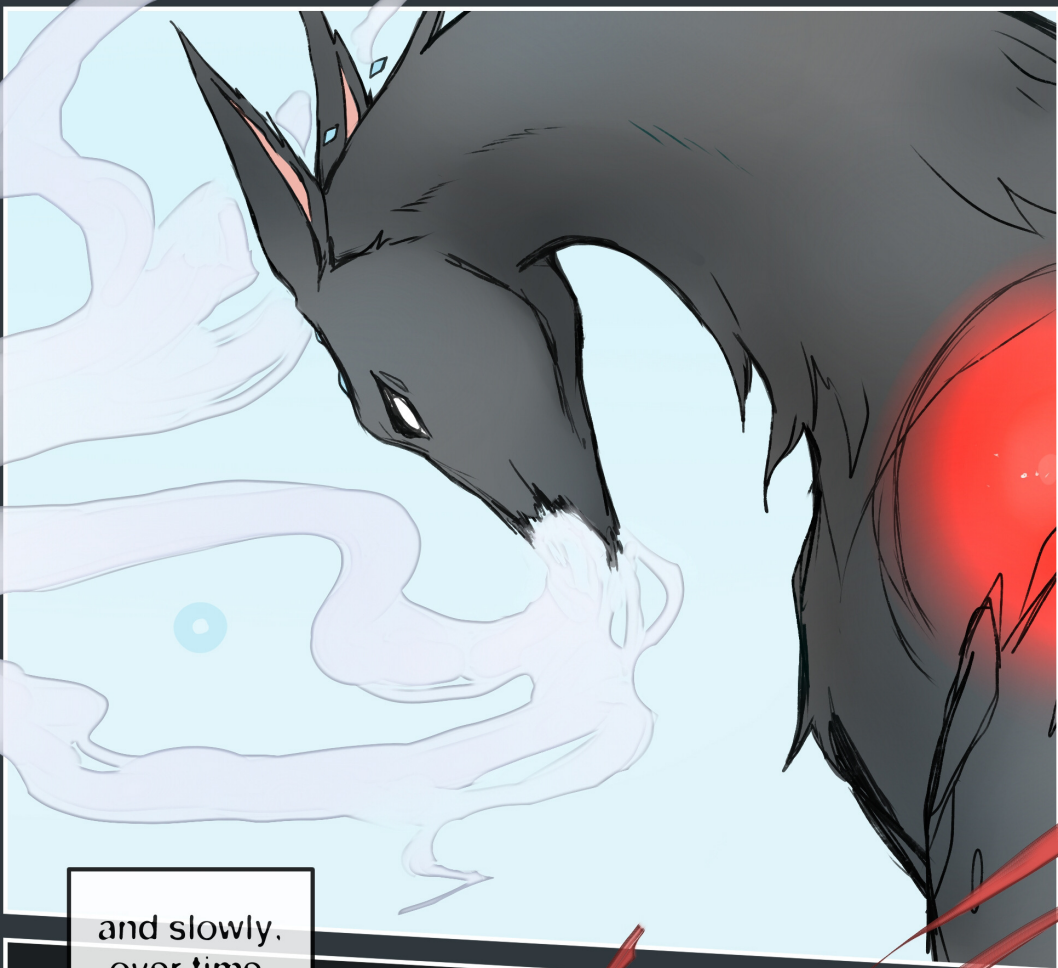
I figured  
they needed  
to return  
into the great  
whole.

to  
start over,  
again.

But  
whenever  
that  
happened,

the bodies  
they left  
behind  
would  
transfer  
into me.

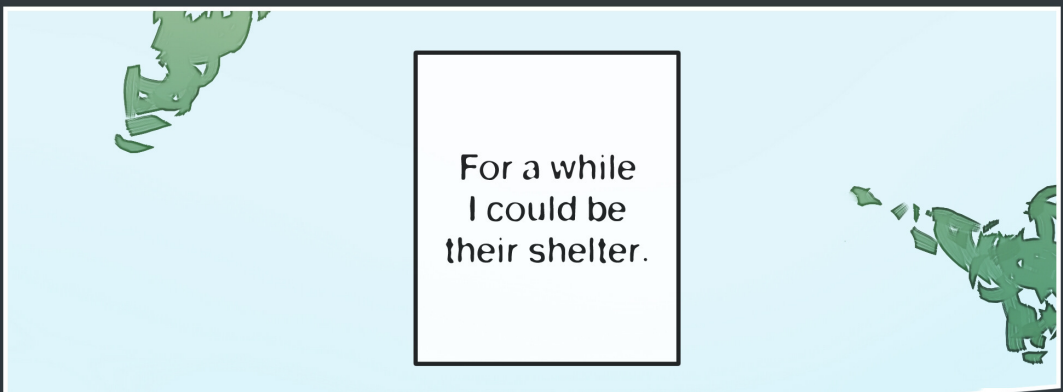
like  
a steady  
exchange  
of energy.




and slowly,  
over time.  
I could feel  
how  
this place.

no...  
*myself.*

grew.



For a while  
I could be  
their shelter.



The spirit  
seemed  
happy.

I made  
sure  
it was  
safe.



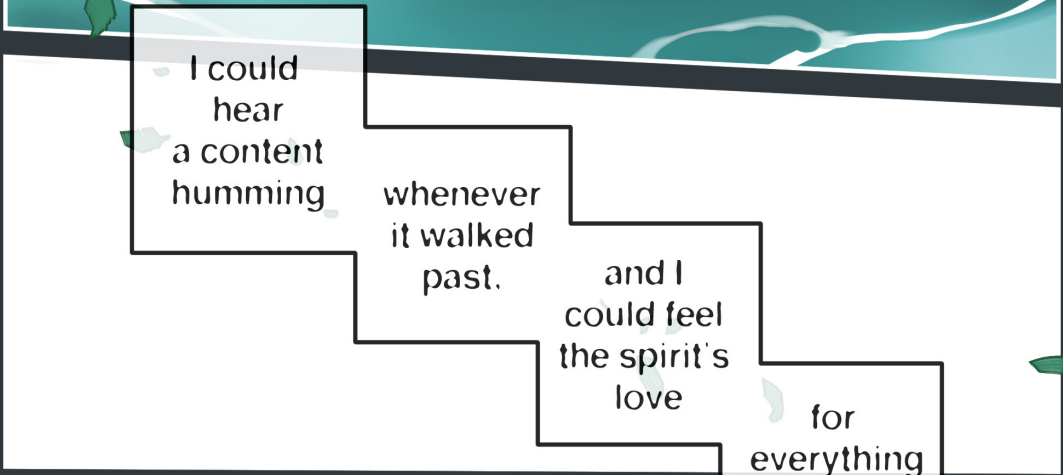
I watched  
over it

during  
harsh  
winter  
nights.



and in  
summer

our  
rivers  
ran  
calm.



I could  
hear  
a content  
humming

whenever  
it walked  
past.

and I  
could feel  
the spirit's  
love

for  
everything  
that lived  
here

radiating  
through  
the air.

Back then  
I wondered  
if things would  
be like this  
from now on.





However,  
even though  
we were  
deeply  
connected.

the spirit  
kept its  
distance  
from me.

Like an  
unspoken  
rule.

a line  
that  
shouldn't  
be crossed.

and I  
wouldn't dare  
to approach  
either.

Something  
told me  
that getting  
too close

would end  
painful.

The spirit  
must have  
felt the  
same way.

because  
it only  
looked  
at me  
from afar.



If it  
looked  
at me

at all.



And soon,  
I should  
learn  
why.

