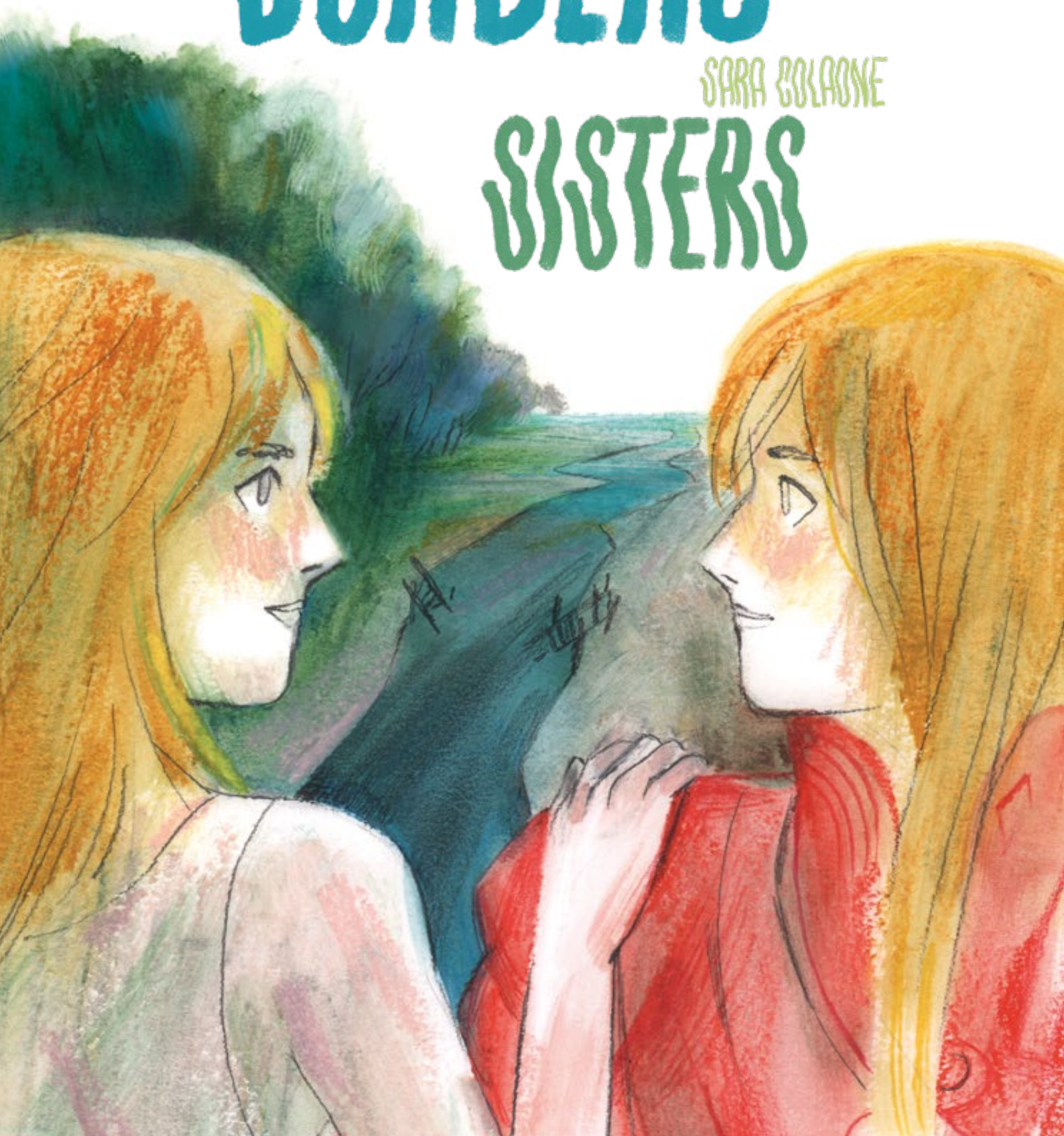


BORDERS

SARA COLABONE

SISTERS



BORDERS CONFINI MEJE

Sara Colaone

Published for



On the occasion of

GOI 2025
NOVA GORIZIA
GORIZIA

Uradni program
Programma ufficiale
Official programme

by



Borders. Sisters

A comic book by Sara Colaone

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This is the volume
of the Borders/Confini/Meje project
dedicated to adolescence.

Borders/Confini/Meje

Three stories, three ages, one single
question: what are “borders”?

In a region where borders have always been part of everyday life and culture, a special project has been created, made up of three volumes – each designed for a different age group: childhood, adolescence, and adulthood – entrusted to three leading figures of the Comic Art: Altan, Sara Colaone, and Vanna Vinci. A narrative and visual journey that embraces the spirit of Nova Gorica and Gorizia, European Capital of Culture 2025, to portray borders not as limits but as spaces for encounter, discovery, and reflection.

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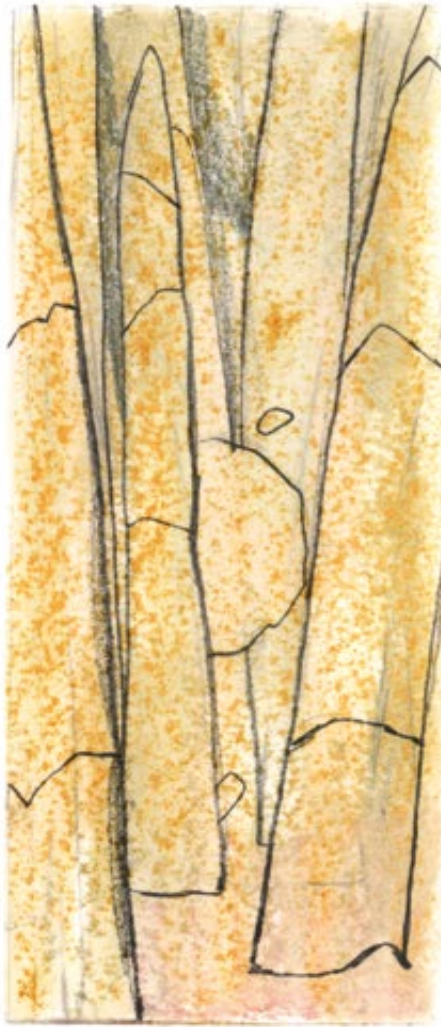
The illustrated book you're holding was created as part of the GO! 2025 project, which features Friuli Venezia Giulia as its protagonist and the cities of Nova Gorica and Gorizia as the joint European Capital of Culture. It is an initiative that brings together diverse and innovative forms of expression to tell our story and, above all, to engage younger generations.

The choice of the comic, with the evocative power of its images and its fresh approach to storytelling, is no coincidence: it speaks to everyone, young and old, with immediacy and lightness, yet carries with it profound themes such as encounter, dialogue, and the new meaning that we wish to give to the concept of borders together.

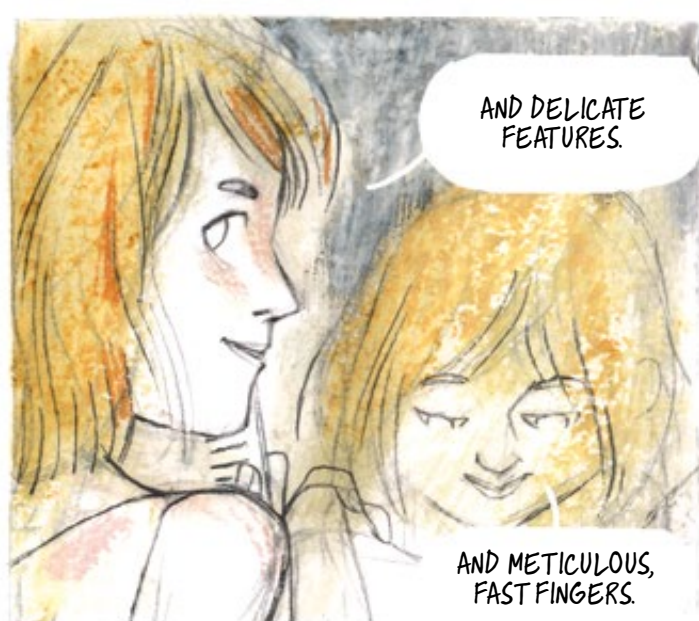
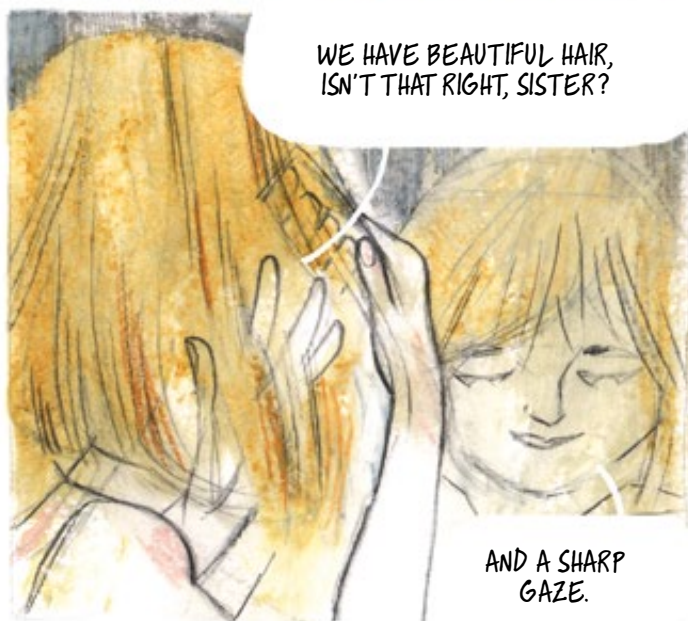
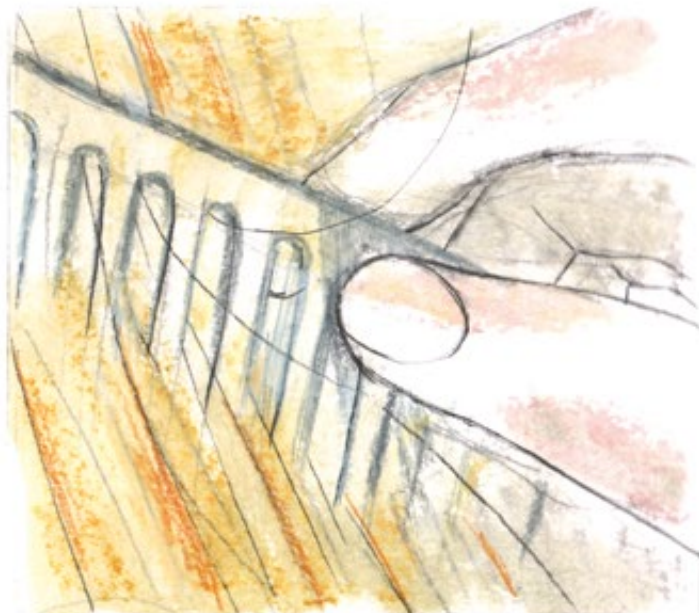
For us, GO! 2025 is an opportunity for growth, exchange, and openness. Through initiatives such as this, we want to remind everyone that culture is not a privilege for the few, but a shared, living, and accessible space, capable of bringing people and communities together. In this spirit, I invite you to turn these pages, to let yourselves be guided by the stories, and to be surprised by the creative energy that Friuli Venezia Giulia brings to the fore in looking to the future with courage and curiosity.

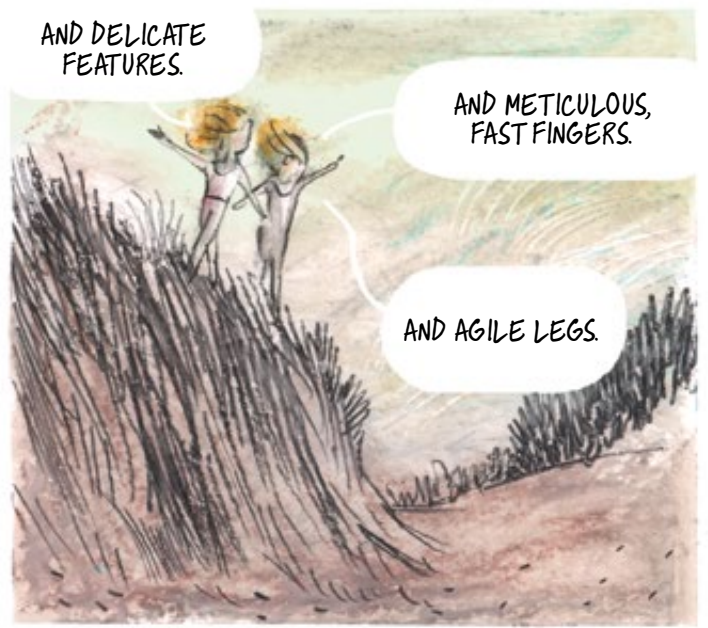
Happy reading!

Vice-President and Regional
Councillor for Culture and Sport
Mario Anzil



us...





MY NAME IS MILA,
I LIVE IN A SMALL TIN HOUSE
ON THE GREAT PLAIN, WITH GIULIA
GIULIA AND I WERE BORN TOGETHER,
WE COOK, WE WALK AND TALK – WE TALK.
OUR THOUGHTS BECOME IMAGES
AND TOGETHER WE SEW OUR FABRIC OF FANTASIES.
SOMETIMES THOUGH, MY THOUGHTS WON'T STAY
STILL, I CAN'T PIN THEM ALL TOGETHER
THE WAY I CAN WITH A NEEDLE AND THREAD.
IT HAPPENS MOSTLY WHEN I'M LOOKING TOWARDS
THE FOREST THAT'S ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE MOAT.
I'D LIKE TO GO.
GIULIA DOESN'T KNOW ABOUT THIS.
GIULIA IS MY SISTER.



SOLOPURNIO RADICANS.



I'M TIRED, GIULIA,
CAN WE STOP?

DO YOU EVER WONDER
WHAT'S ON THE OTHER SIDE
OF THE MOAT?

DON'T GET DISTRACTED,
WE'VE ALMOST FINISHED WITH
THIS TACKING.

WHY SHOULD WE CARE?
OUR LIFE IS BETWEEN THESE
BEAUTIFUL FABRICS.

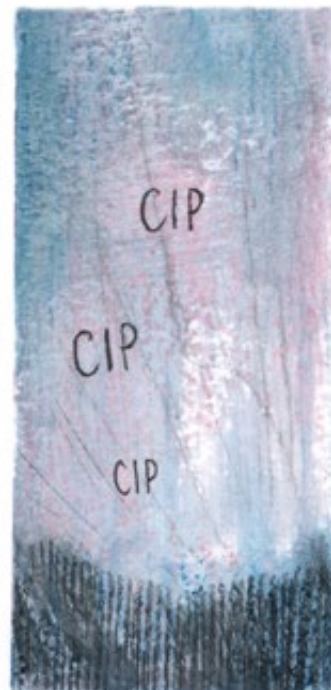
IT'S JUST THAT TODAY,
I WAS LONGING FOR THOSE
SOLOPURNIS BERRIES.

FORGET ABOUT IT, NOW WE
JUST NEED TO FOCUS ON
FINISHING THE COSTUMES. THE
BIG PARADE IS ALMOST HERE.

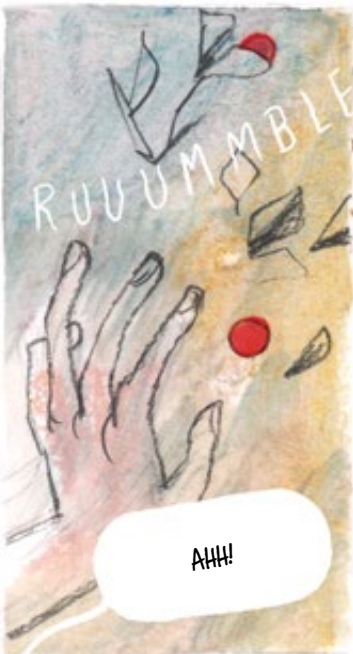
WHEN THE TIME COMES,
MAYBE WE WON'T EVEN LIKE THE
TASTE OF SOLOPURNIS ANYMORE.

WHAT'S WRONG, MILA?
I DON'T UNDERSTAND.

YOU REALLY DON'T UNDERSTAND?







I'M GIULIA AND FOR MY WHOLE LIFE
I'VE BEEN WITH MILA, MY TWIN.
WE COME FROM A FAMILY OF TAILORS,
WHOSE DUTY, SINCE ANCIENT TIMES, HAS BEEN
TO SEW THE GARMENTS FOR SPECIAL OCCASIONS.
THIS YEAR THERE WILL BE A REALLY IMPORTANT ONE A PARADE
FOR THE VISIT OF THE EMPEROR OF THE NORTH-EAST LANDS.
WE MUST CREATE A GARMENT SO BEAUTIFUL IT COULD MAKE
EVEN THE LOWLIEST BEGGAR LOOK LIKE A KING.
IF THE EMPEROR LIKES IT, HE'LL WEAR IT.
IT'S A DIFFICULT TASK, BUT BETWEEN THE TWO OF US,
WE CAN FINISH IT IN TIME. IT'S A GREAT HONOUR,
AND WE HAVE TO DO IT ON OUR OWN.
IT'S A TRADITION. WE'RE ENOUGH FOR EACH OTHER.
WE JUST HAVE TO TRUST ONE ANOTHER.
MILA AND I HAVE NO SECRETS.





EVER SINCE MILA DISAPPEARED, BEYOND THE RIVER...



...THE DAYS FEEL LIKE DUST.



MY HANDS ARE SAD...



...AND THEY CAN'T DO ANYTHING GOOD.



MY EYES BURN.





WAIT...



IS THAT MILA?





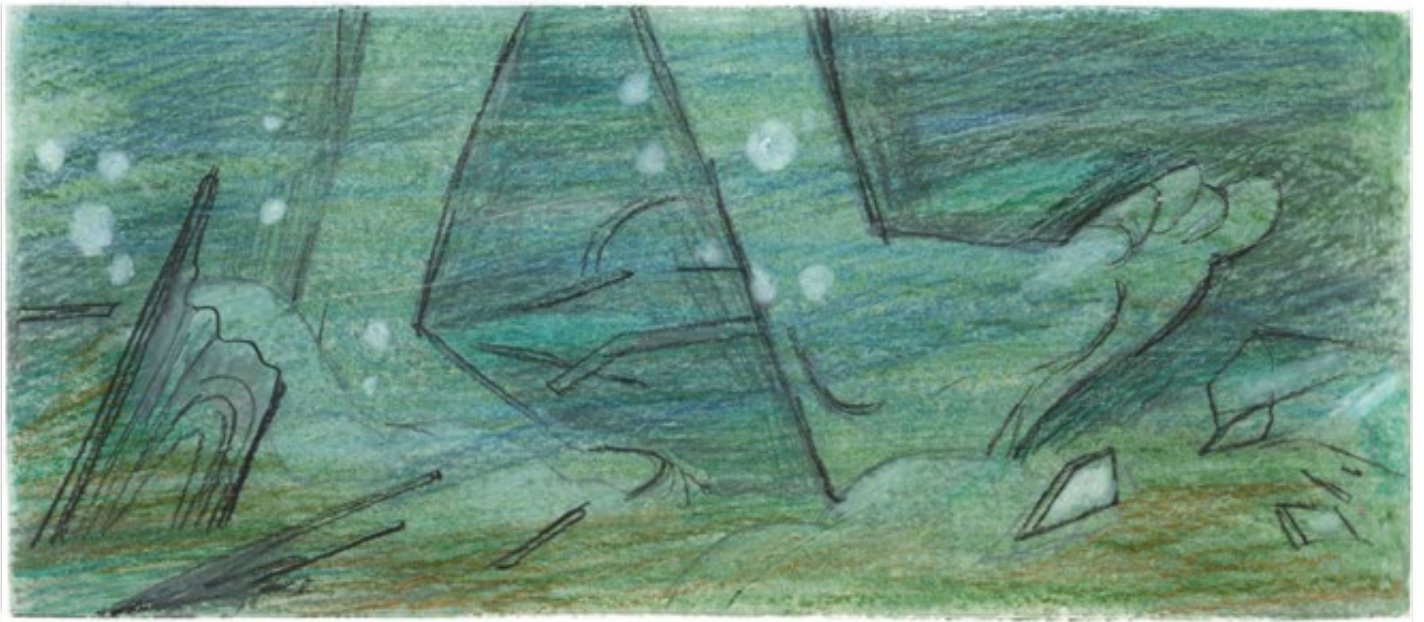
I'M CERTAIN.



IT WAS HER.



SHE WAS THERE,
BY THE BRIDGE.
ON THE OTHER SIDE
OF THE MOAT.









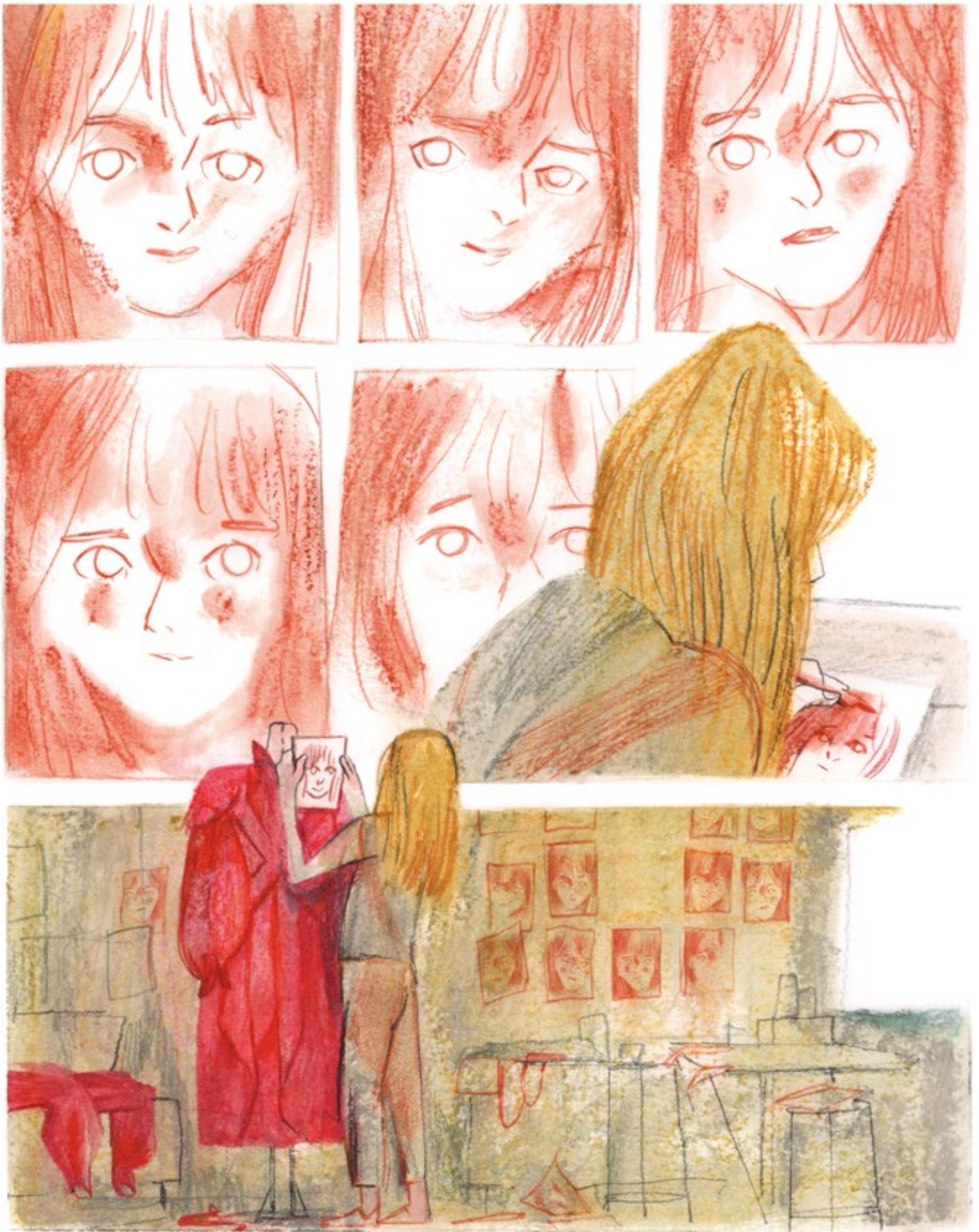









MILA, EVER SINCE THAT DAY I'VE BEEN DRAWING OUR FACE. WHO AM I? WHO ARE YOU?
THE MEMORIES SLOWLY FADE. I HAVE TO CAPTURE THEM ON PAPER, SEW THEM TOGETHER.



IN THE COUNTLESS HOURS SPENT
AT THE WINDOW TRYING TO SEE YOU
AGAIN—NOT A GLIMMER, NOT A SINGLE
SHAPE THAT RESEMBLED YOU.





THE MOMENT OF THE BIG PARADE HAS COME,
MANY PEOPLE AND SOLDIERS HAVE ARRIVED.
BUT THE LONG-AWAITED EMPEROR HAS
BEEN CALLED TO OTHER PLACES AND OTHER
BATTLEFIELDS.

IN OTHER GARMENTS,
HE SHINES IN DISTANT REALMS.

BUT HE NEVER
DID COME HERE.

NO ONE EVER REBUILT THE BRIDGE. NO ONE EVER HELPED ME GET TO THE OTHER SIDE.



THE RIVER IS STILL THERE, SEPARATING US. A LONG BORDER BETWEEN YOU AND ME.



IF ONLY I COULD CROSS IT, THEN I WOULD KNOW IF THAT DAY IT WAS REALLY YOU.



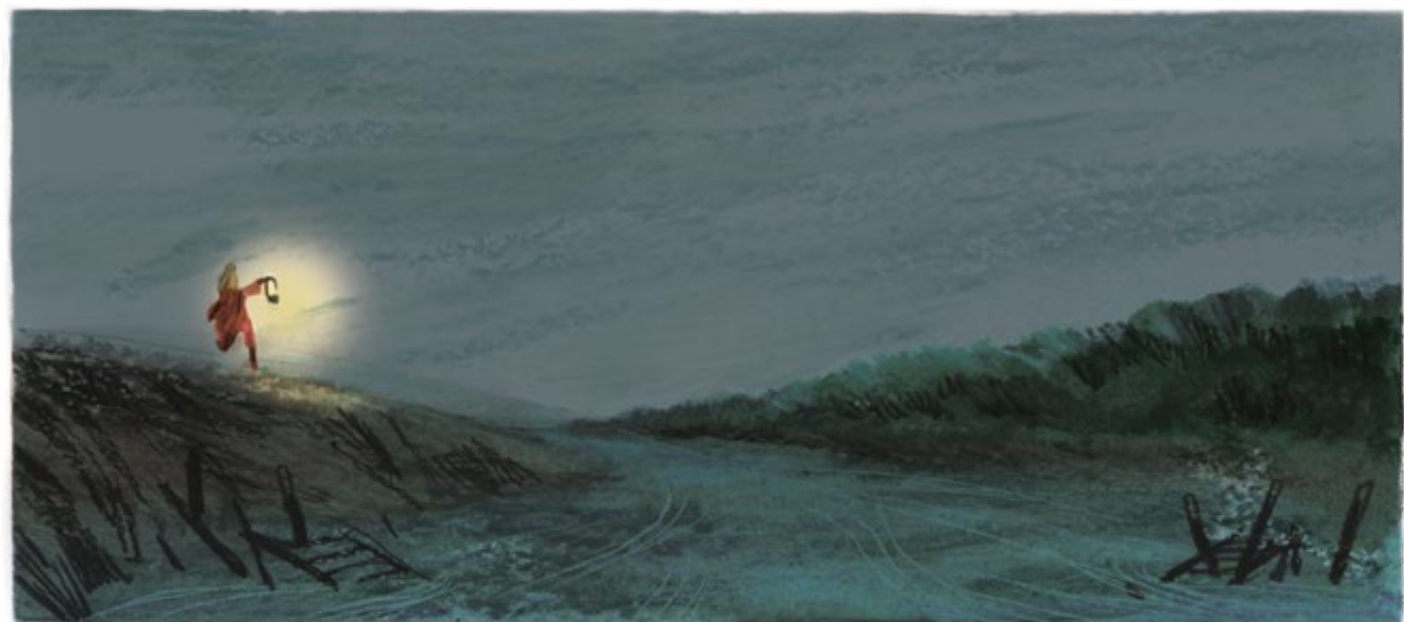
AND I'M READY TOO.

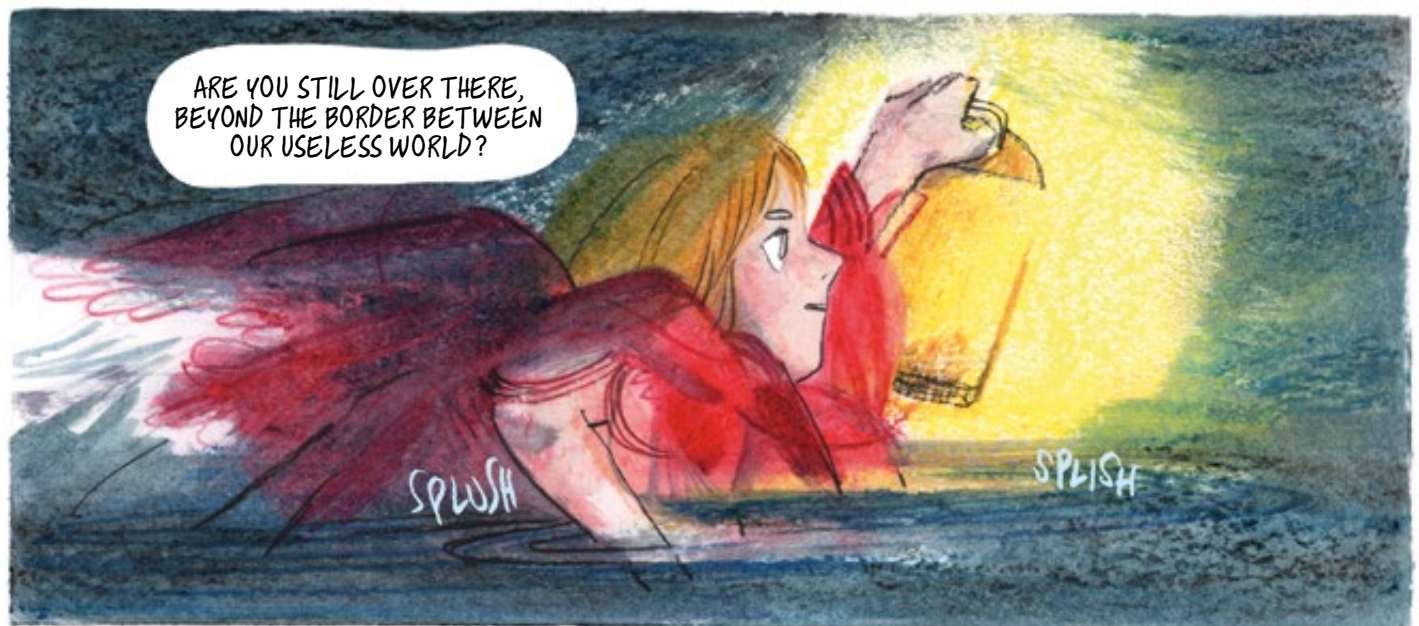
THIS COSTUME WAS FOR THE
EMPEROR, BUT HE WON'T WEAR IT.

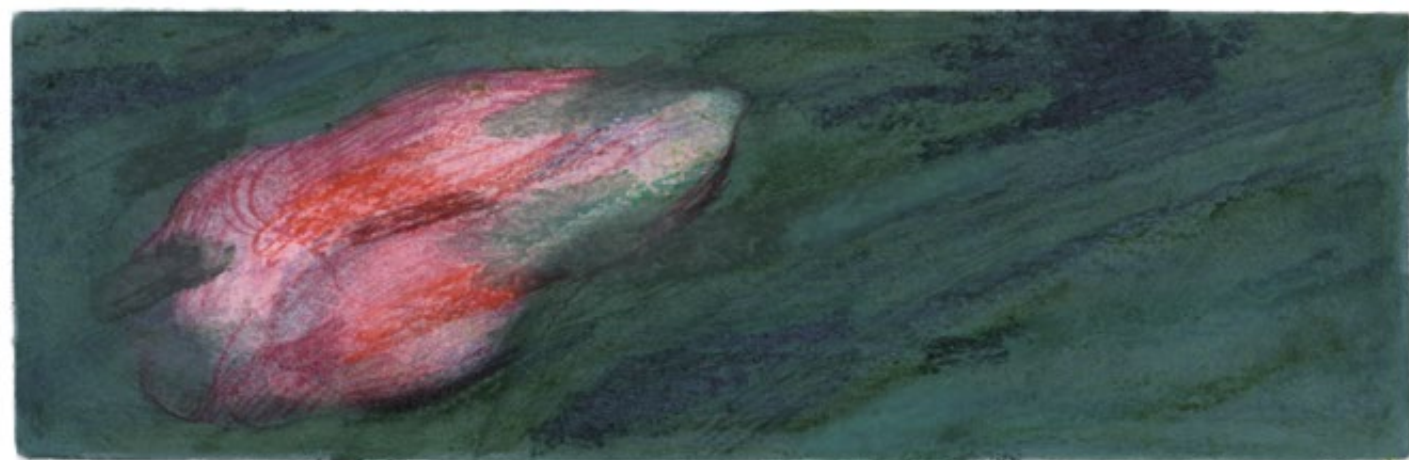
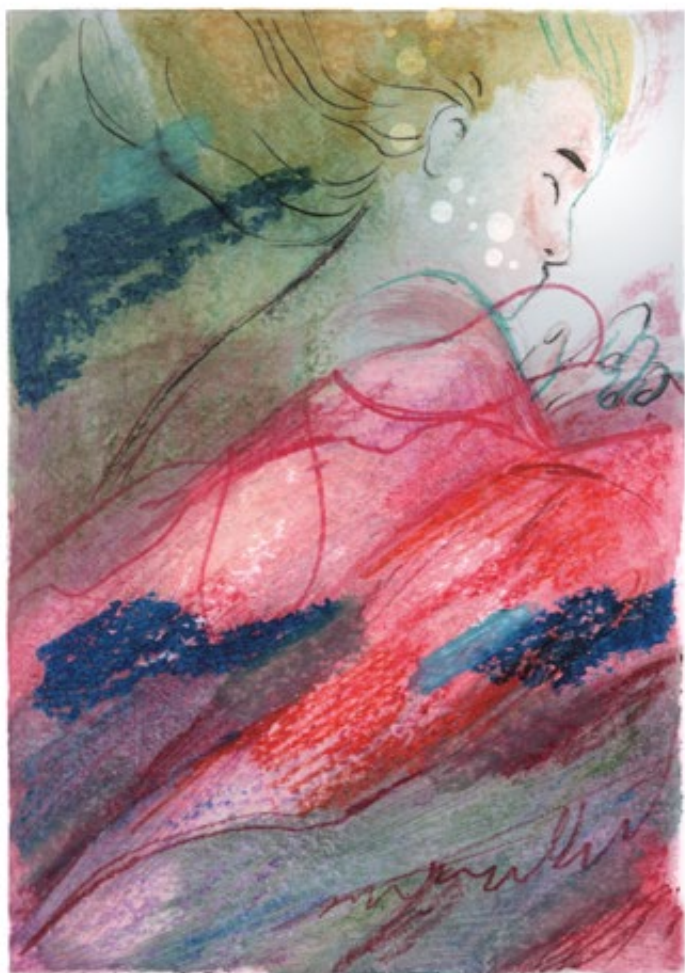
I MADE IT RICH WITH EMBROIDERY, LIKE
A TREASURE. I FINISHED IT ON MY OWN.

NO COSTUME IN THE
WORLD IS MORE BEAUTIFUL.

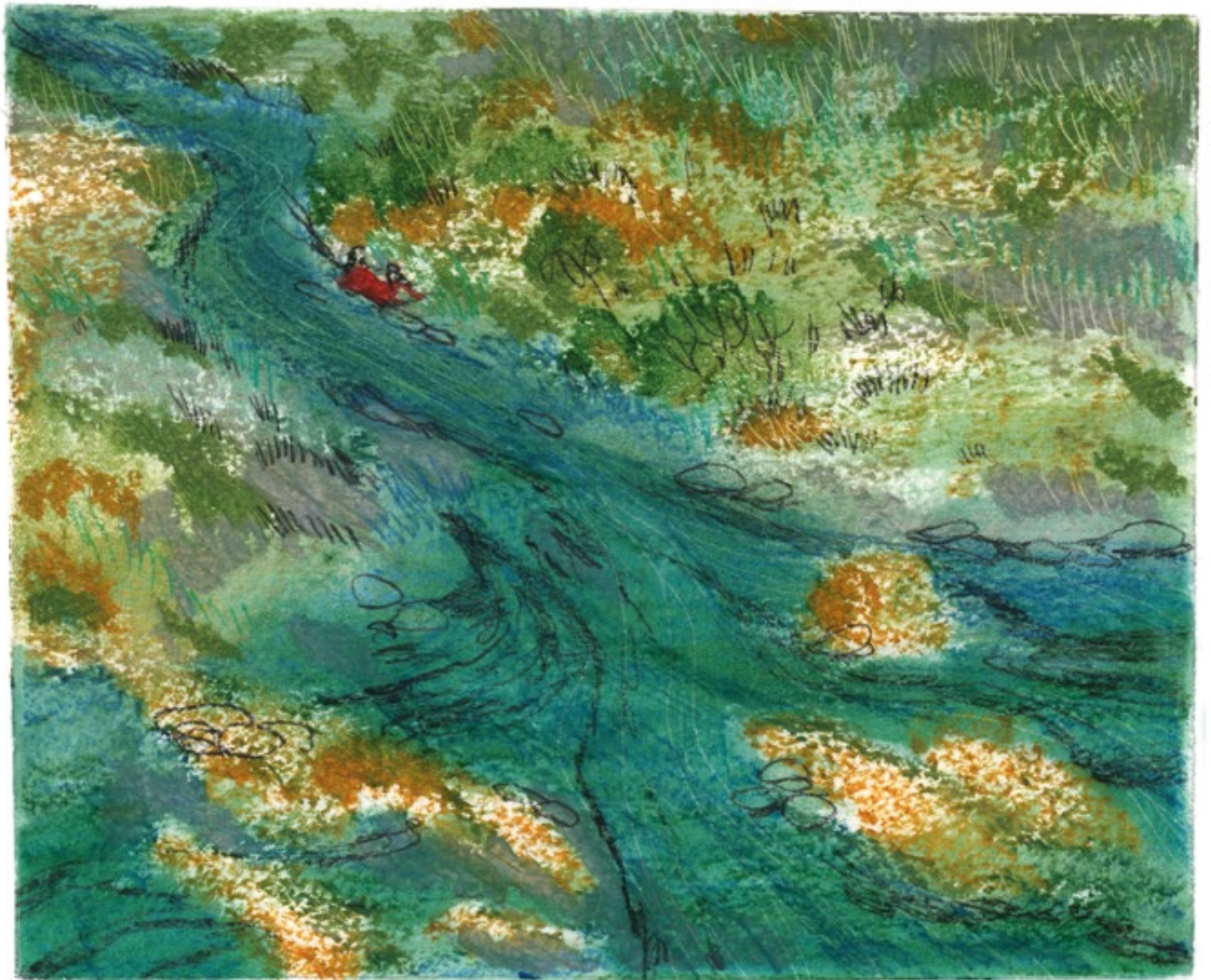












Afterword

This story originates from a simple idea: what makes a border?

Borders can be rivers, mountains, deserts, walls and human-made creations, fabric curtains, lines traced in the ground, moments of light and shadow. Borders can be lined with flowers or desolate places. They are objects or bodies that can be touched, understandable and easily visualised images, that can protect us and that we can hate.

But the most complex borders are those within us: distrust, fear of the unknown, doubt in our own abilities, that end up drawing an impassable line, within which we risk remaining prisoners.

The border that marks the lives of Mila and Giulia is a river that wasn't always there, it grew during a sudden storm. A simple river, if it cannot be crossed, could separate the twins forever, reducing them to little more than a faint memory of one another. Yet, when they were together, they lived almost as if they were one body, with a single purpose: to carry on the family tradition, sewing lavish garments for the emperor of distant lands.

Mila (from the Slavic root meaning *loving*) and Giulia (of the *gens Julia*, in Latin) seem like two perfect halves of one being, bound together by a destiny spanning generations. Nevertheless, on the day of the storm, it is the sweet Mila who braves the rain in search of something new and unknown in their quiet life: the taste of Solopurnio, a berry as delicious as it is mysterious, enjoyed only by adults. Mila is growing up and invites the more fearful Giulia to cross that border and join her. But it is far from an easy task, as she must struggle against the forces of nature and the law enforced by the armed men – the emperor's red-coated soldiers –, who turn Giulia's urgency into a distressing political trap, symbolised by the flags that threaten to envelop and strangle her.

The most difficult obstacle – the highest barrier of that fragile border between childhood and adulthood – will be the fear of fully becoming themselves.

Sara Colaone
July 2025

Sara Colaone (1970) is one of the most interesting artists on the contemporary comics and illustration scene. Author of the illustration for the poster of the 36th Salone Internazionale del Libro di Torino, she teaches Comics and Illustration at the Academy of Fine Arts in Bologna and serves as curator of the Comics section of the literary magazine *Nuovi Argomenti*. Her books, published in Italy and abroad, include *Georgia O'Keeffe* (2021), *Ariston* (2018), *Leda* (Gran Guinigi Award 2017), and *In Italia sono tutti maschi* (Micheluzzi Award 2009). In 2025, Palazzo Blu in Pisa dedicated a major solo exhibition to her work.



BORDERS/CONFINI/MEJE

Altan
Colaone
Vinci

