Boats and Island

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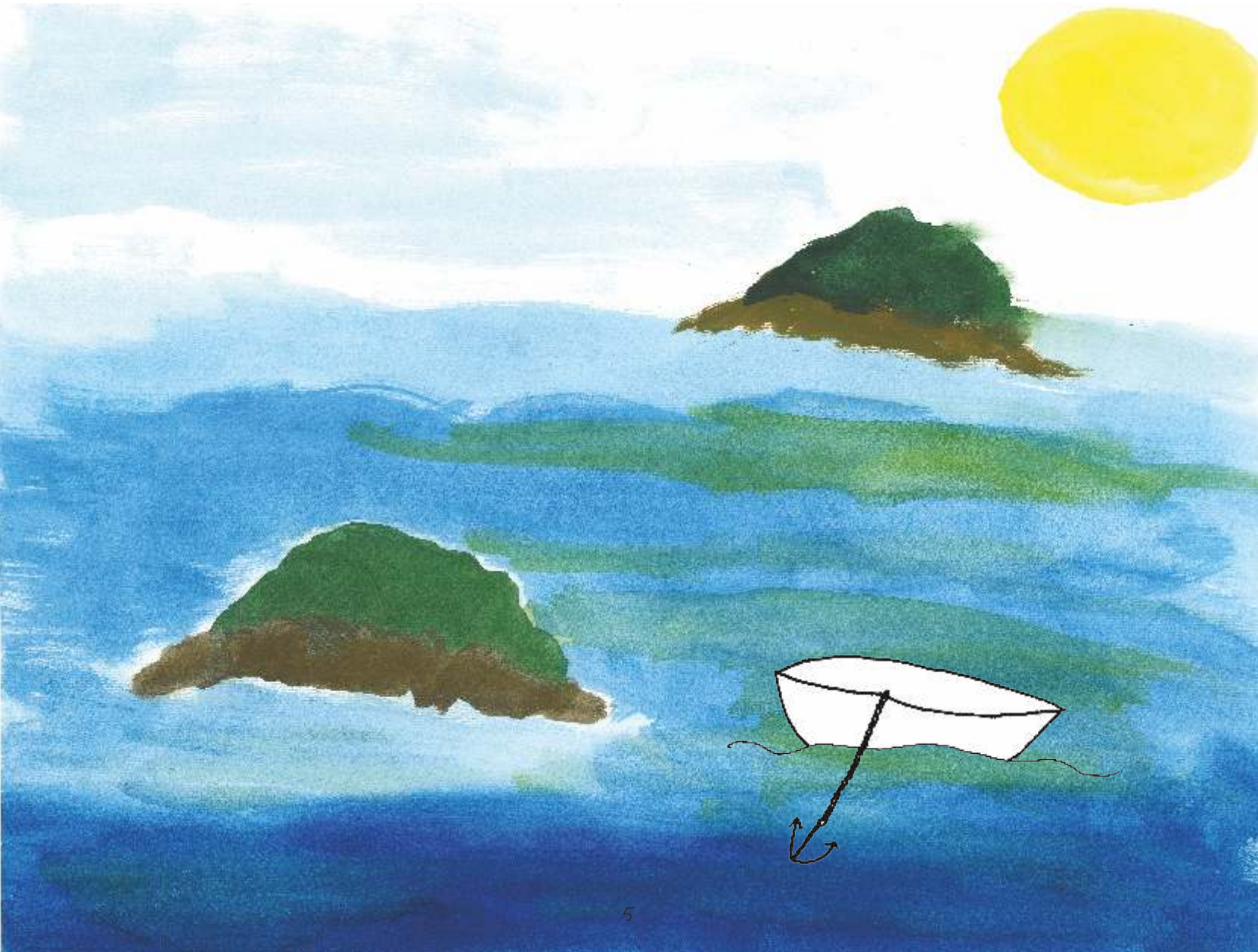
What does a boat mean for an island?
Boats mean everything for an island. But
only when the island loves the people.
And when the people love the island.

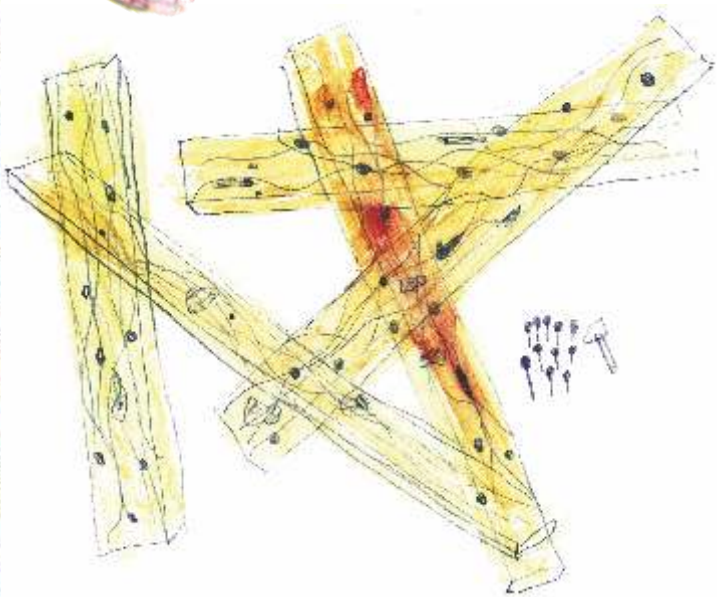
People can use a boat to reach the island from the mainland. Perhaps they could swim over, but what if the island is too far away? In any case, how could they bring all they need to the island? This is why people build boats. Various boats. Big and small, made of wood or some other materials. In this way people can travel the seas. They can sail or they can row.

They can travel far, far away, all the way to the most distant of islands.

But what about the island? It is a piece of land, small or large, surrounded by the sea. There are many, many islands in the world. They differ from each other. Some may be rocky, others are covered with forests, and there may be some which are sandy. Sometimes they are even mysterious. The sea keeps them apart from everything, but, again, it also connects them to the rest of the world. Therefore people build boats to allow the sea to connect them with the islands.

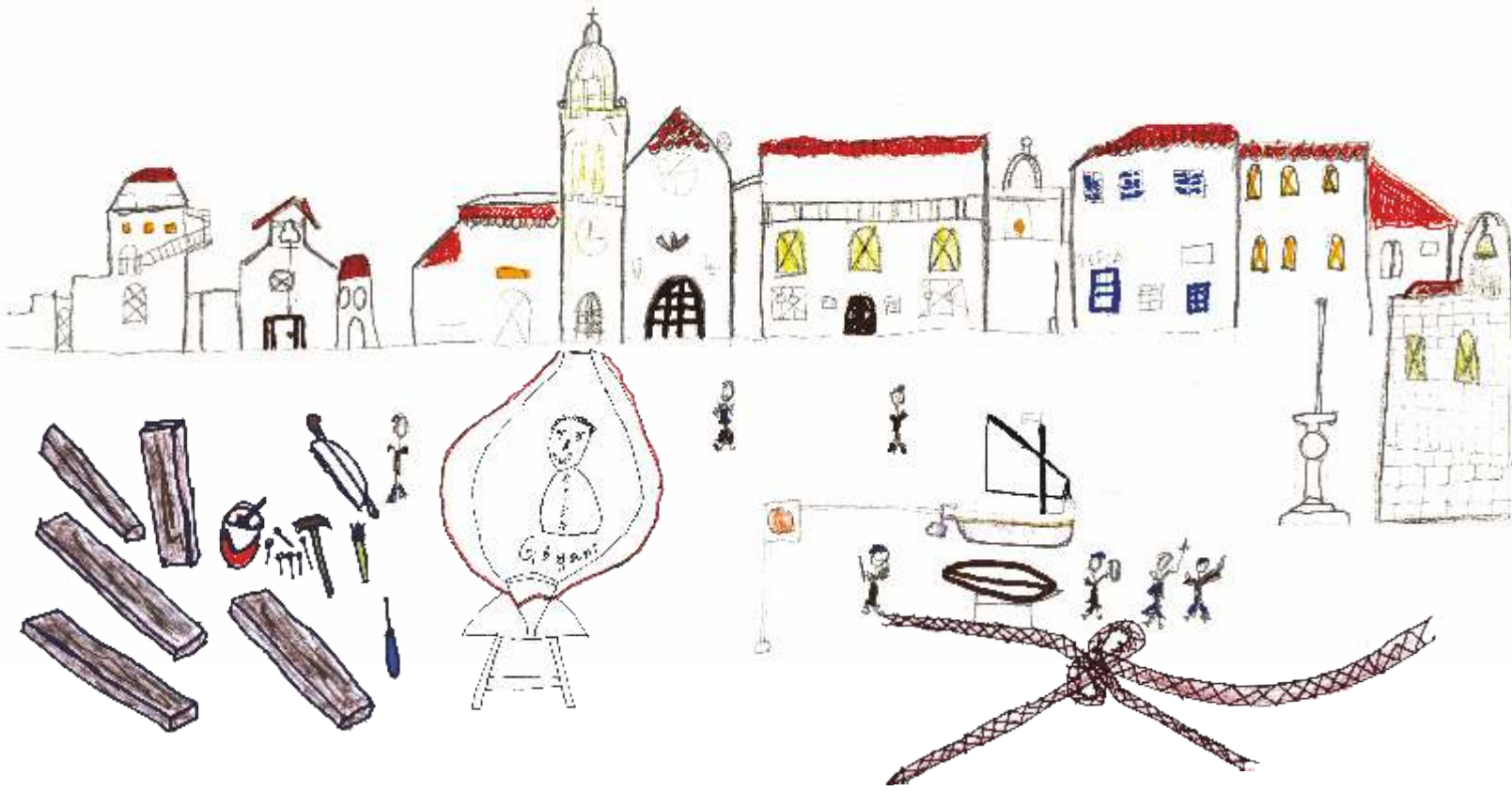


In the beginning, people built boats out of wood. There were many difficulties to be overcome and a lot of experience and knowledge had to be acquired. The sea is not always calm and easy to sail on. Sometimes the sea is stormy. We need sturdy and reliable boats which can take us safely to our destinations in all kinds of weather.

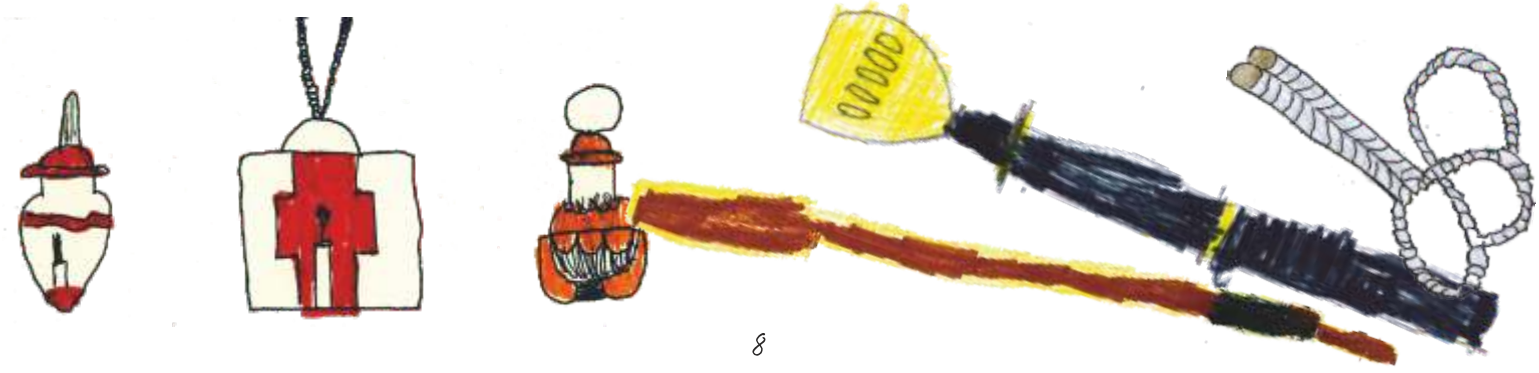


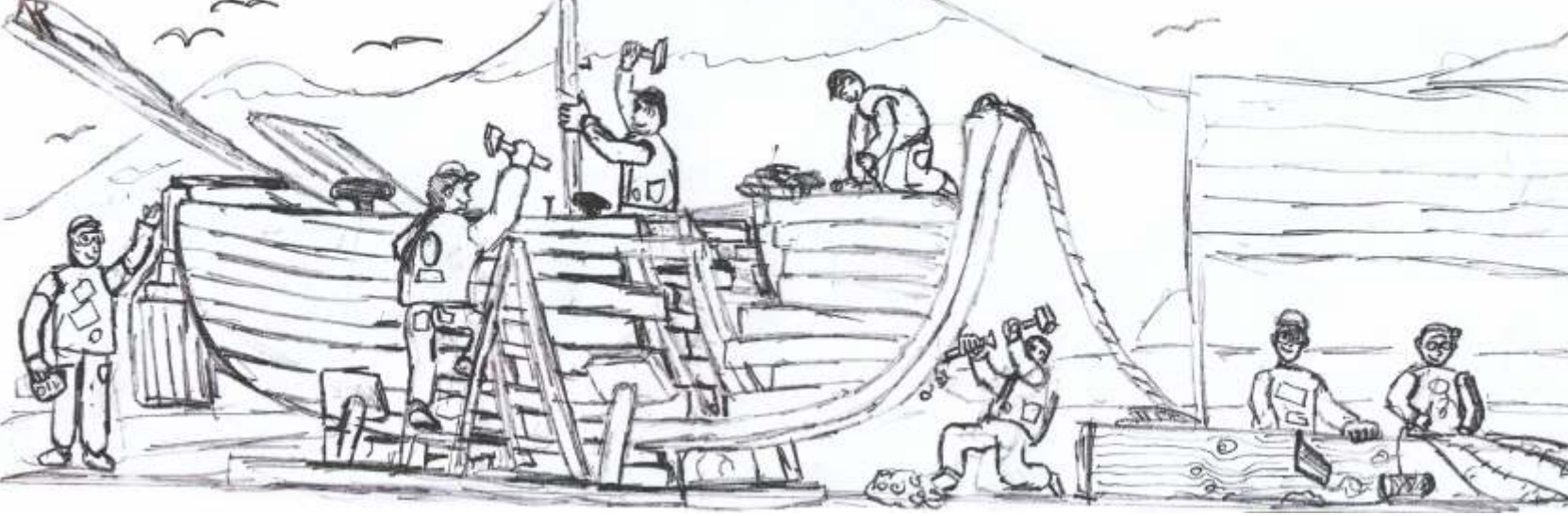
To build a boat is a true enterprise. Let's start with finding good timber. Then we need good tools. There are also nails, tar, various kinds of rope, sail cloth, oars, anchors … and a few other things … and a lot of knowledge. The timber has to be chosen very carefully and then harmoniously

shaped from the bow at the front, to the stern at the back. Shipbuilders are masters of their trade. They have learned how to build all sorts of ships using hand tools. So that they can sail all the seas and oceans. Transport people, carry all sorts of goods. Catch fish, either to feed the family or to supply shops. Sail far away. Cross oceans. Discover new shores and new islands.

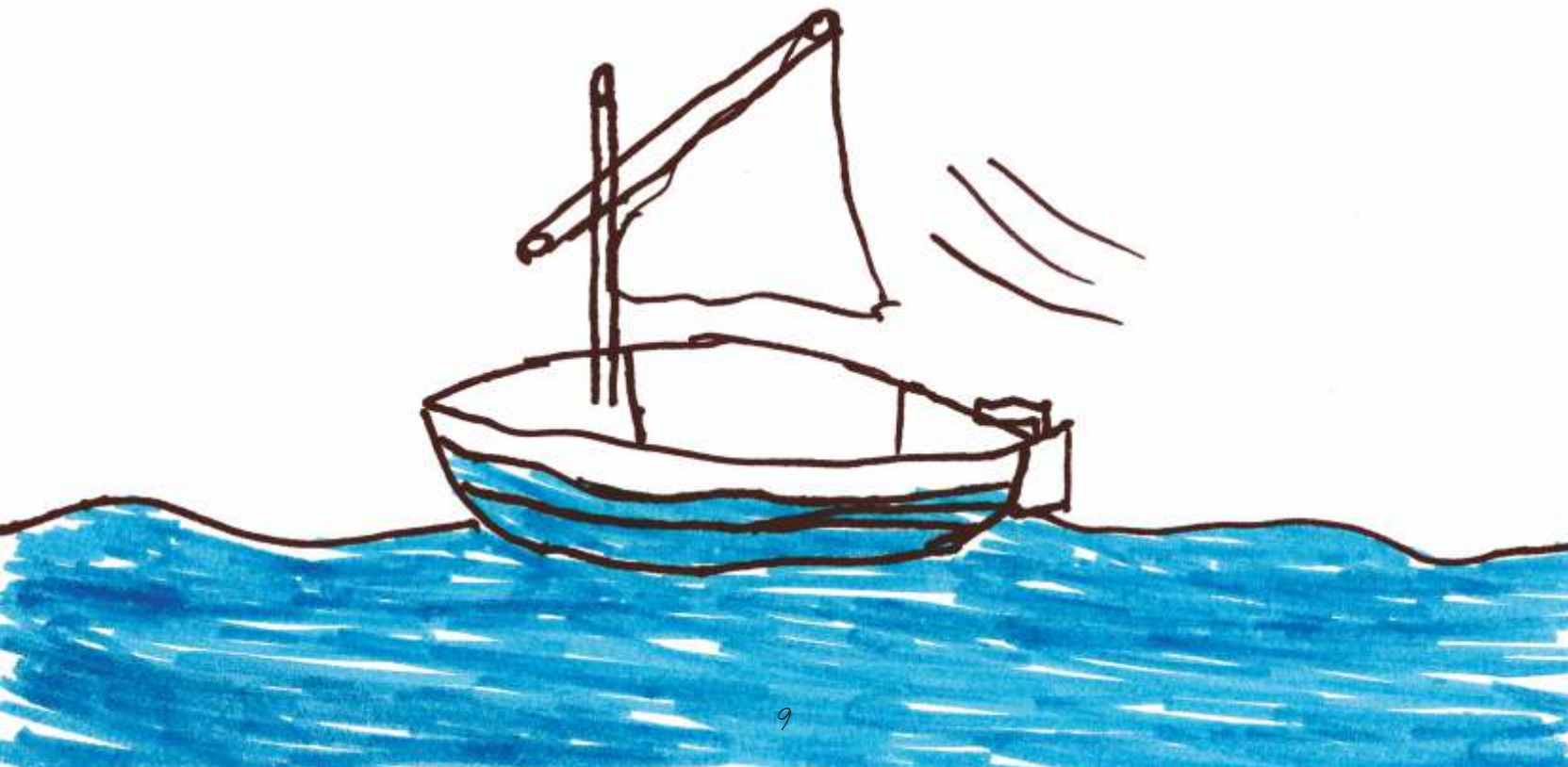


Shipyards are often built on coasts covered with forests, especially in bays protected from strong, rough winds and stormy seas. Such bays can be found both on islands and on the mainland. Shipyards attract many people, such as naval architects and their assistants, blacksmiths, rope makers, oar builders and sail makers, along with their families. Sometimes a whole town can develop from a shipyard.





Living on an island, means that we are completely surrounded by the sea. All that reaches us from the mainland can only come to us by sea. This means that living on an island without a boat would be very difficult.



On an island it is easier to see if the people who live there like the place they live on. If we are not careful enough, all the natural resources, like forests, water, the fertile soil, are soon depleted. That's because there are usually fewer of these resources on an island. Yet there is no need to make big changes on the island. We do need to learn to live with the island and do whatever is best to preserve the good things.

Then there are the animals living and plants growing on some islands which differ from those on the mainland. That's because these islands are far away from the mainland and as such they have created their own fragile little worlds. They clearly need particular care for their survival.

At night, the view of the moon and the stars from an island is beautiful. They are reflected on the sea and they sparkle on the waves. Sometimes, at night people go fishing. They hang a lamp on the boat and thus lure shoals of fish into view. Together, the illuminated boats and shoals of fish sparkle on the water like the stars in the sky.

The island people love boats. Because the boats mean everything for an island. That's why people build boats. To let the sea connect them with other coasts and other islands. And that's why the island means everything for the boat.

People like islands, boats and voyages.