

HISTORY OF BAŚKA

MURMAŃSKA



Based on Eugeniusz Małaczewski's
History of Baśka Murmańska
The Story of Polar She-Bear



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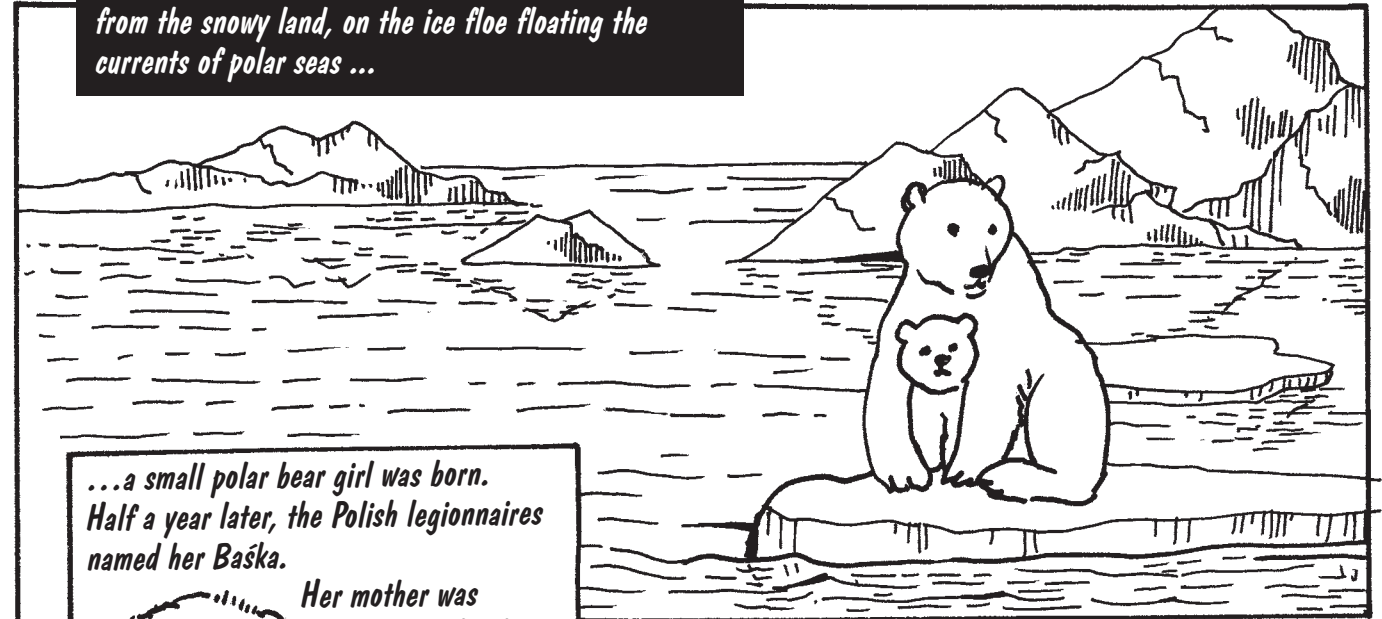
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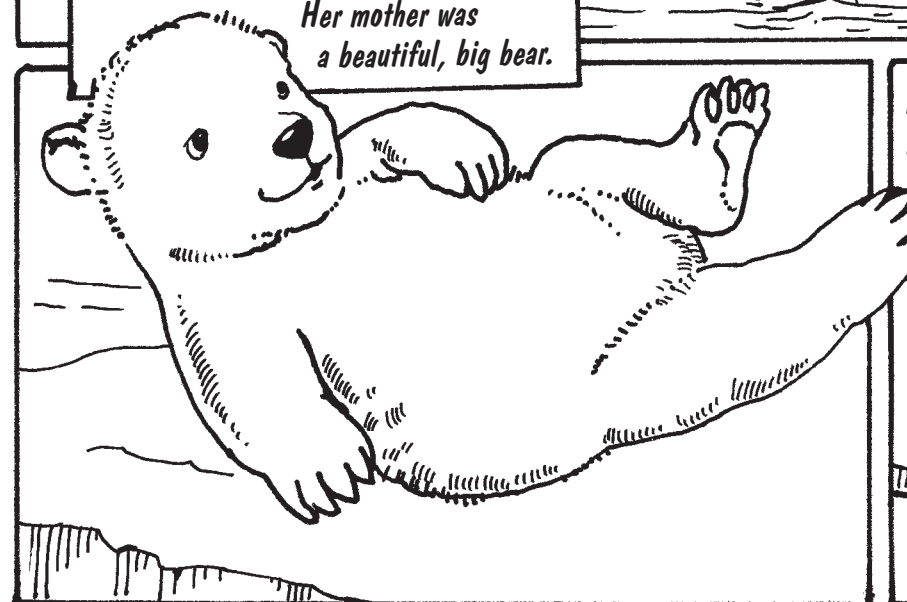


Somewhere in the Arctic Ocean, 250 nautical miles from the snowy land, on the ice floe floating the currents of polar seas ...

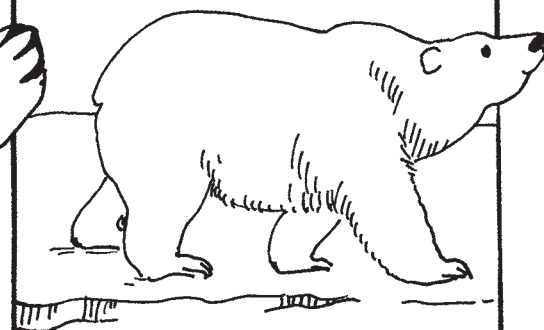


...a small polar bear girl was born. Half a year later, the Polish legionnaires named her Baška.

Her mother was a beautiful, big bear.

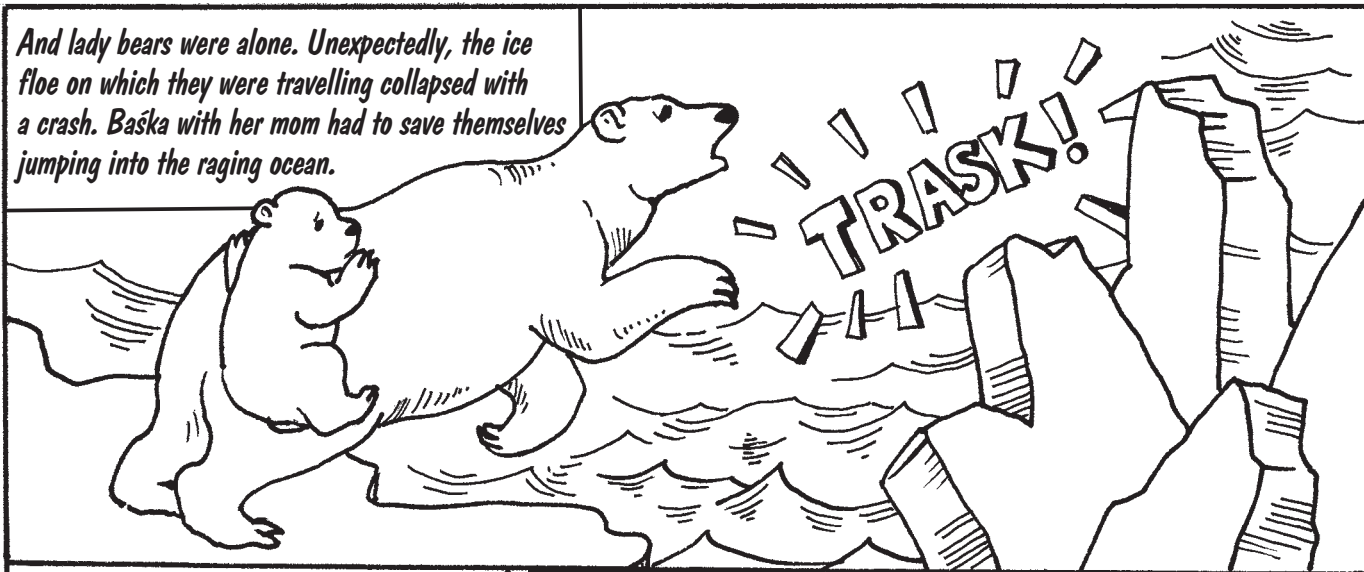


However Baška's dad was a soulful romantic, always pursuing his ideals.

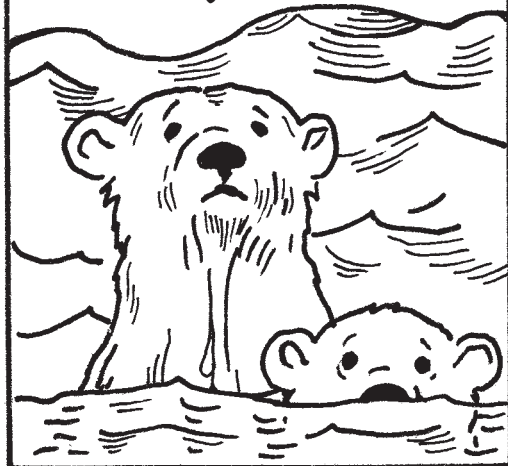


He soon sailed to the North Pole.

And lady bears were alone. Unexpectedly, the ice floe on which they were travelling collapsed with a crash. Baška with her mom had to save themselves jumping into the raging ocean.

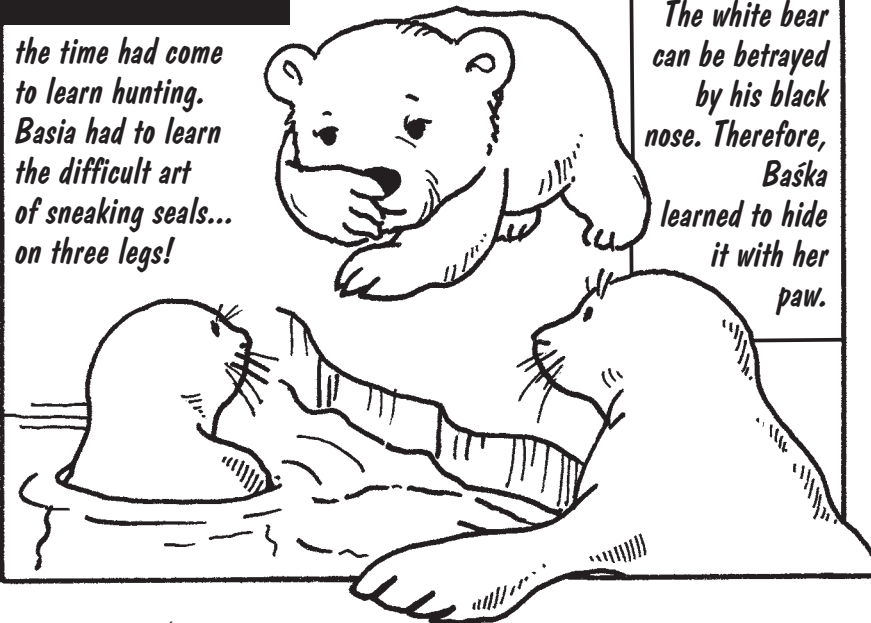


The whole two days they were swimming in the storm to reach the mainland. Little Baška learnt on the threshold of life what the great fear is.



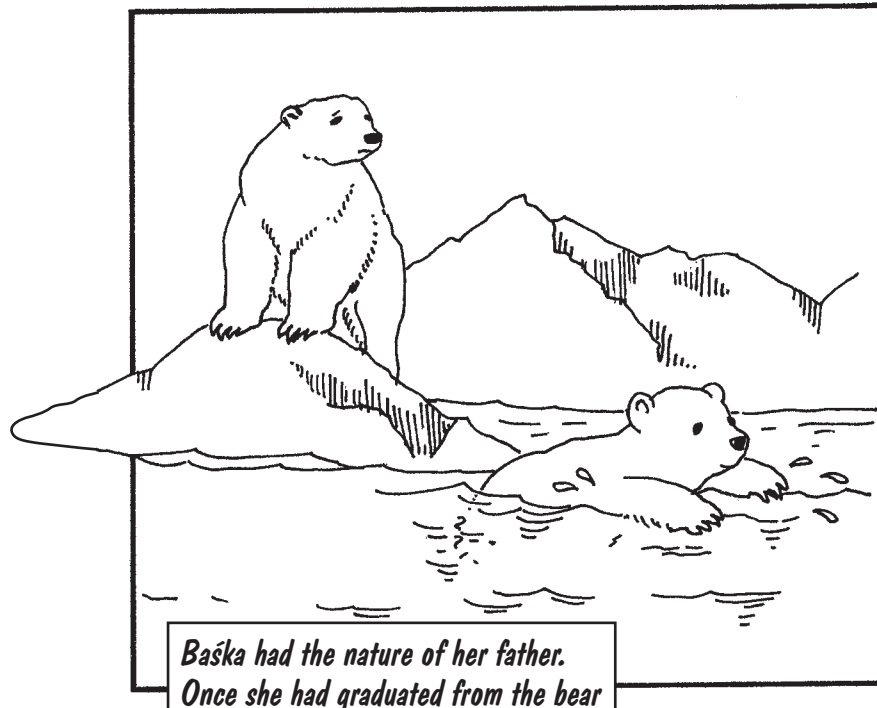
But after a week ...

the time had come to learn hunting. Basia had to learn the difficult art of sneaking seals... on three legs!



The white bear can be betrayed by his black nose. Therefore, Baška learned to hide it with her paw.

1919, Arkhangelsk over the White Sea



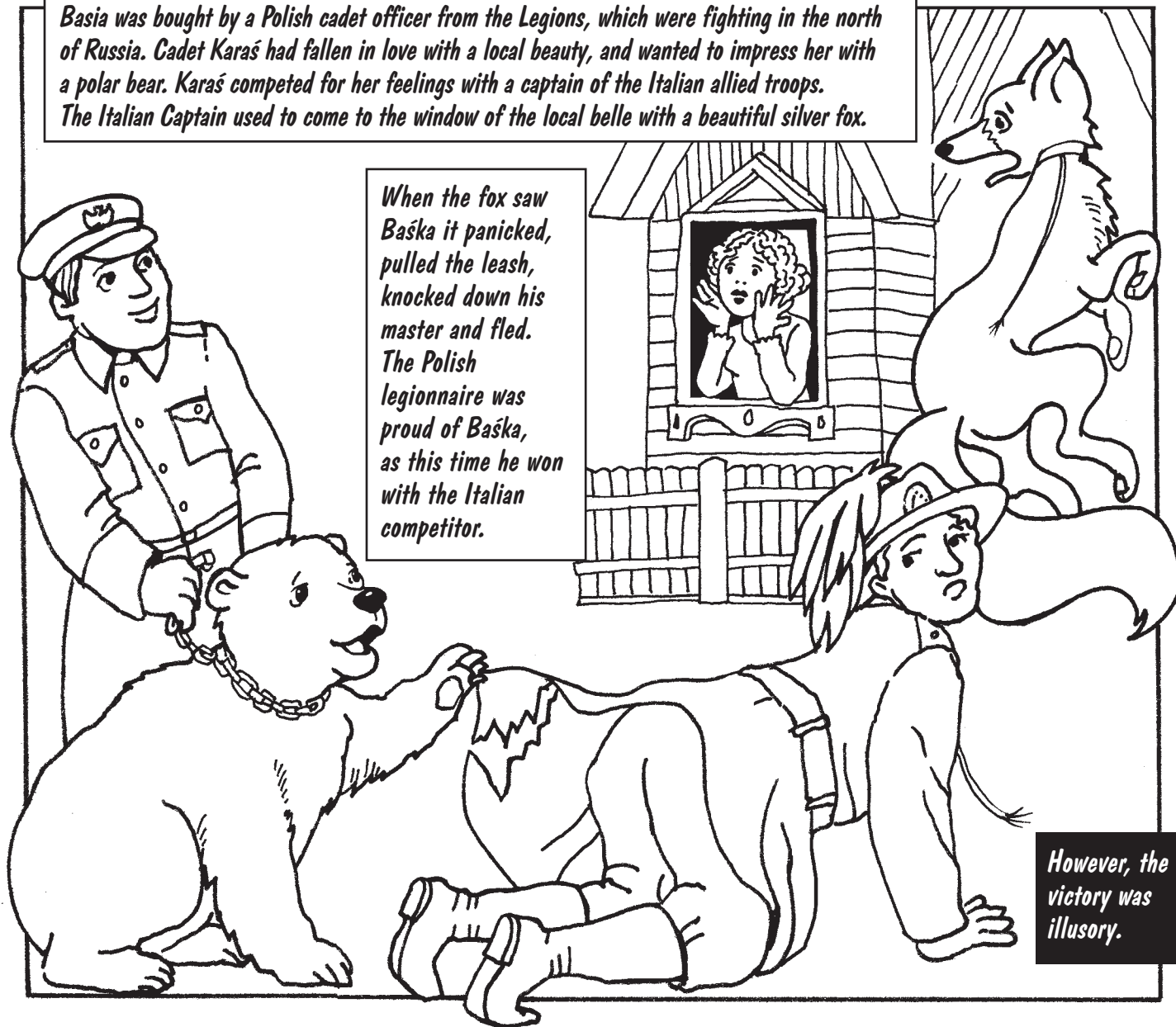
Baška had the nature of her father. Once she had graduated from the bear survival school, she decided to leave the safe haven alongside her mom. She made a leap into the ocean and swam away in an unknown direction.

Unfortunately, Baška ran out of luck. She was caught by a native, buckled on the rope and offered for sale at a market in Arkhangelsk.



Basia was bought by a Polish cadet officer from the Legions, which were fighting in the north of Russia. Cadet Karaś had fallen in love with a local beauty, and wanted to impress her with a polar bear. Karaś competed for her feelings with a captain of the Italian allied troops. The Italian Captain used to come to the window of the local belle with a beautiful silver fox.

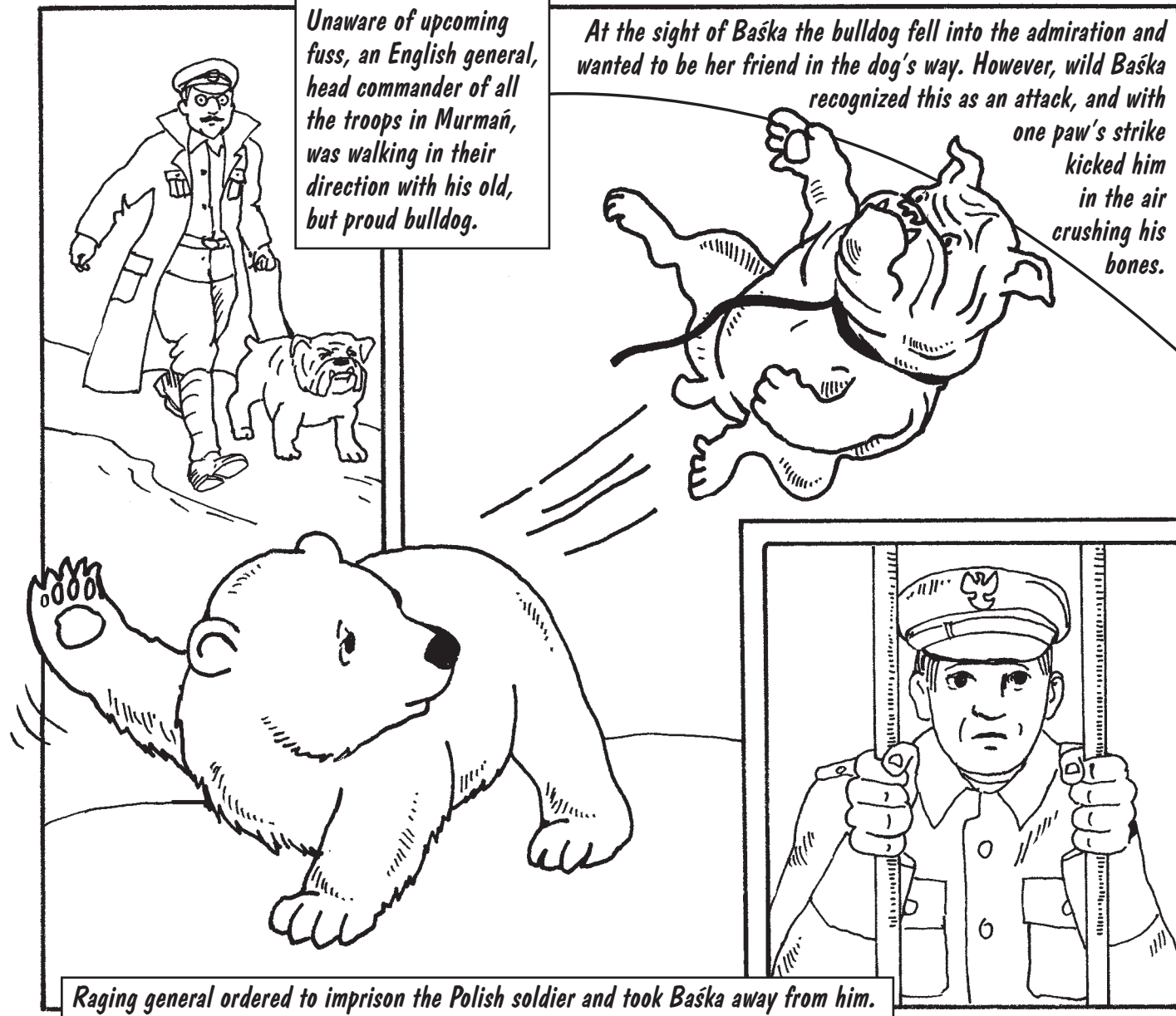
When the fox saw Baška it panicked, pulled the leash, knocked down his master and fled. The Polish legionnaire was proud of Baška, as this time he won with the Italian competitor.



However, the victory was illusory.

Unaware of upcoming fuss, an English general, head commander of all the troops in Murmań, was walking in their direction with his old, but proud bulldog.

At the sight of Baška the bulldog fell into the admiration and wanted to be her friend in the dog's way. However, wild Baška recognized this as an attack, and with one paw's strike kicked him in the air crushing his bones.



Raging general ordered to imprison the Polish soldier and took Baška away from him.

By a military command Baška got assigned to a battalion of the Polish Army in Murmań. Her new keeper was the Corporal Smorgoński. The commander ordered the corporal to teach Baška how to behave in two weeks. The Corporal gladly began the training. He didn't avoid education of Baška by a stout stick, but at the same time heartily loved the bear and it was him who named her Baška.

Corporal Smorgoński drilled Baška, and taught her, among other things to march on two paws in shooting step ...



... and at night they shared a common bed, warming each other in the cold, polar nights.



Baška grew up among loving her bothers in arms. Together they went through the trail of fire in the far north. Polish soldiers were fighting bravely and were full of devotion. The English command admired them and gave them the nickname - „Lions of the North”. Finally, after a year and a half of fighting, there came the order to come to back to Poland.

On the board of the ship sailing to Poland

Happy to be back home soldiers were singing their favourite song „Arctic Laments”. Baška echoed them with her fierce roar.



Polish soldiers were fighting bravely in the Northern Russia

England

Gdańsk Seaport



On the way to Poland the ship docked at a port in England. Polish soldiers were welcomed as heroes, and Baśka aroused admiration and sensation.

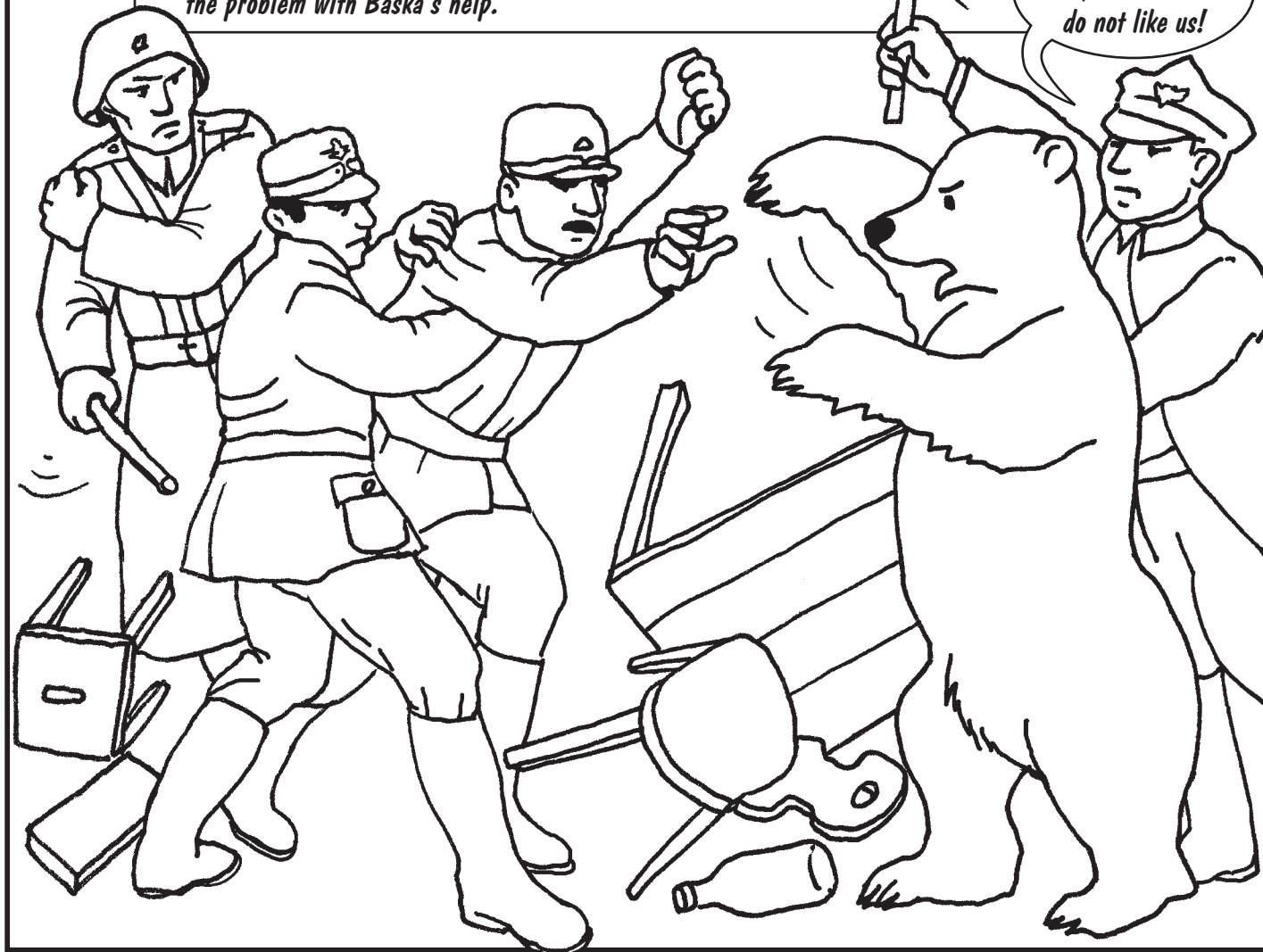
Look, Baśka!
What did I tell you?!
We are coming back to Poland.
It's our homeland, Baśka!
A very beautiful country!



Gdańsk

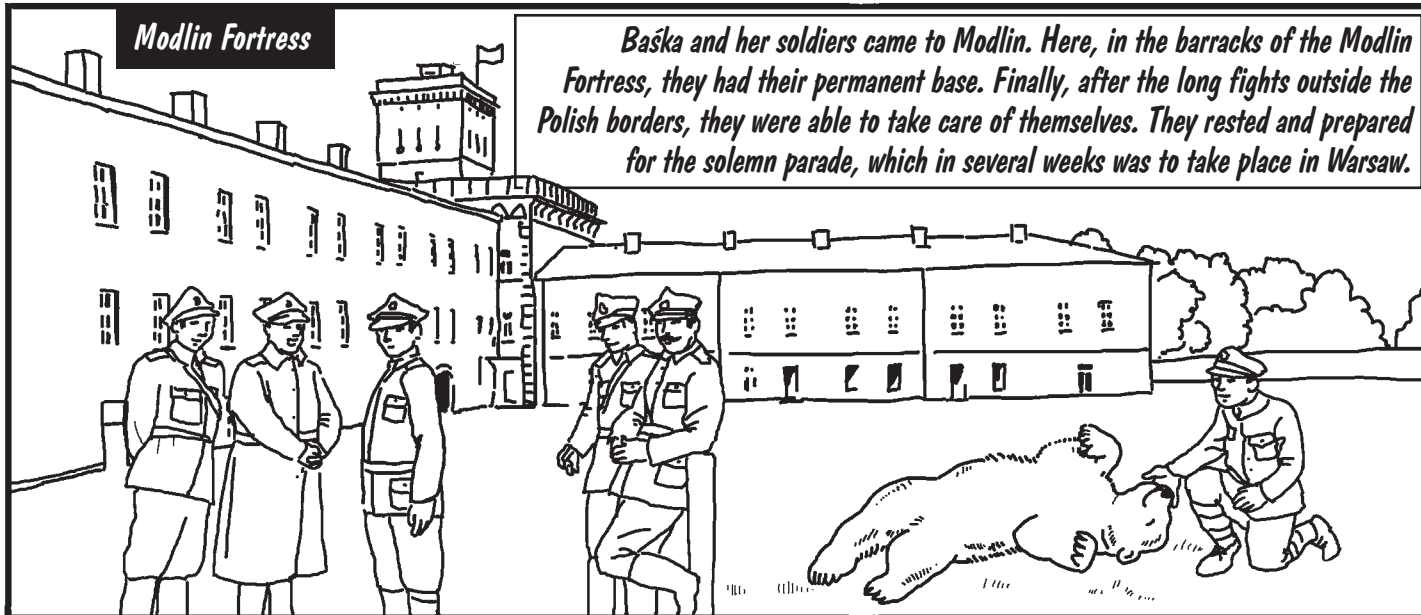
In Gdańsk the Murman folks spent one night, but not without an incident. In the evening in the port pub it came to fight with the soldiers of the German „Grenzschutz” who had provoked Polish soldiers. Veterans from Murmań coped with the problem with Baśka's help.

Leave them,
Baśka, those Germans
do not like us!

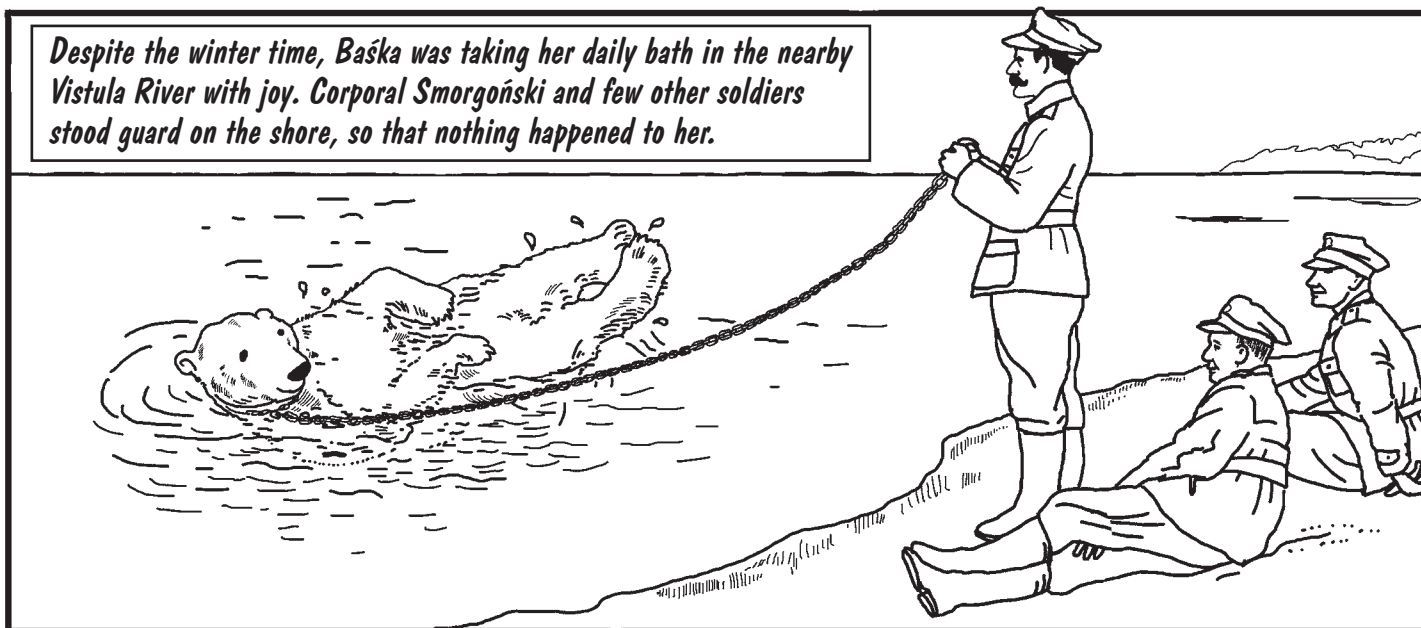


Modlin Fortress

Baška and her soldiers came to Modlin. Here, in the barracks of the Modlin Fortress, they had their permanent base. Finally, after the long fights outside the Polish borders, they were able to take care of themselves. They rested and prepared for the solemn parade, which in several weeks was to take place in Warsaw.



Despite the winter time, Baška was taking her daily bath in the nearby Vistula River with joy. Corporal Smorgoński and few other soldiers stood guard on the shore, so that nothing happened to her.



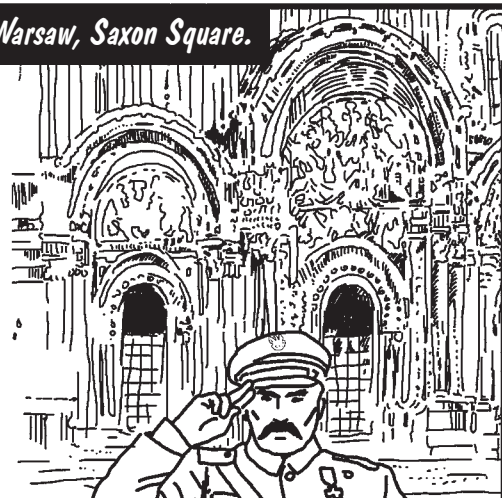
Warsaw



Soldiers of the Murmań Battalion came to the capital to take part in the ceremonial parade. They marched to the music from the Vienna Station to the Saxon Square. They were greeted by Warsaw inhabitants. The biggest sensation was Baška. The crowds of curious people followed her everywhere. Baška's name was passing through the crowd like an electric wave.

Just before the parade Baška was presented to Chief of State - Józef Piłsudski. When the Chief held out her hand, she gave him gracefully her paw and curtsied like a lady.

Warsaw, Saxon Square.



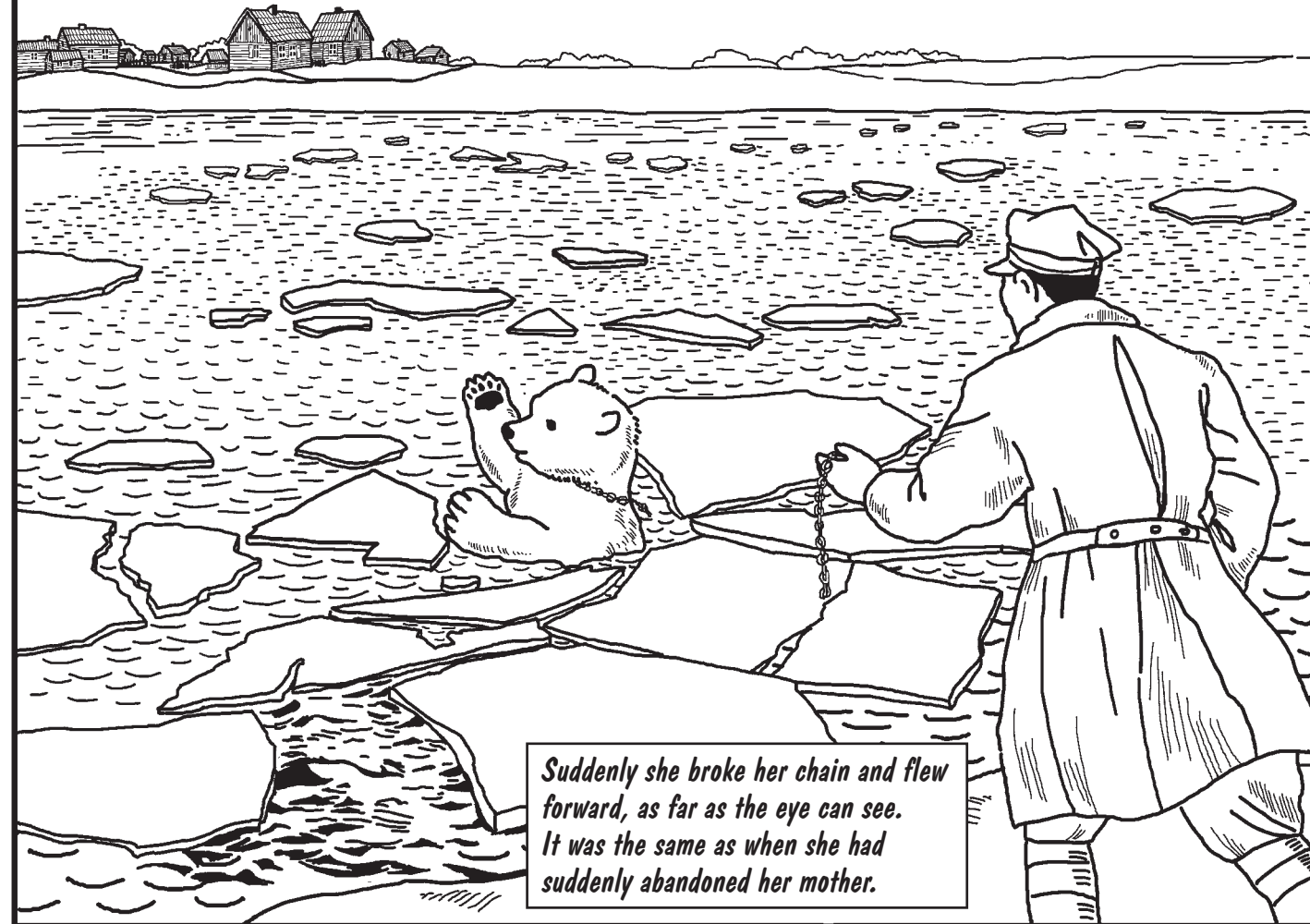
During the parade crowds admired Baška. It was a beautiful view of her walking on her hind paws, in step with the division, and saluting the Chief of State as private on the march.



Baška became famous. Unfortunately, her popularity and trust to the people lost her ...

*Two months later.
Modlin on the Vistula*

Smorgoński, as every day, lead Baška to the Vistula, so she can enjoy the water. Basia did not mind that the Vistula was cold and covered by ice floes. After all, she was a polar bear. But that day Baška felt a special call. Winter scenery and floe on the river woke up in her old memories and longing for the Arctic Ocean.



Suddenly she broke her chain and flew forward, as far as the eye can see. It was the same as when she had suddenly abandoned her mother.

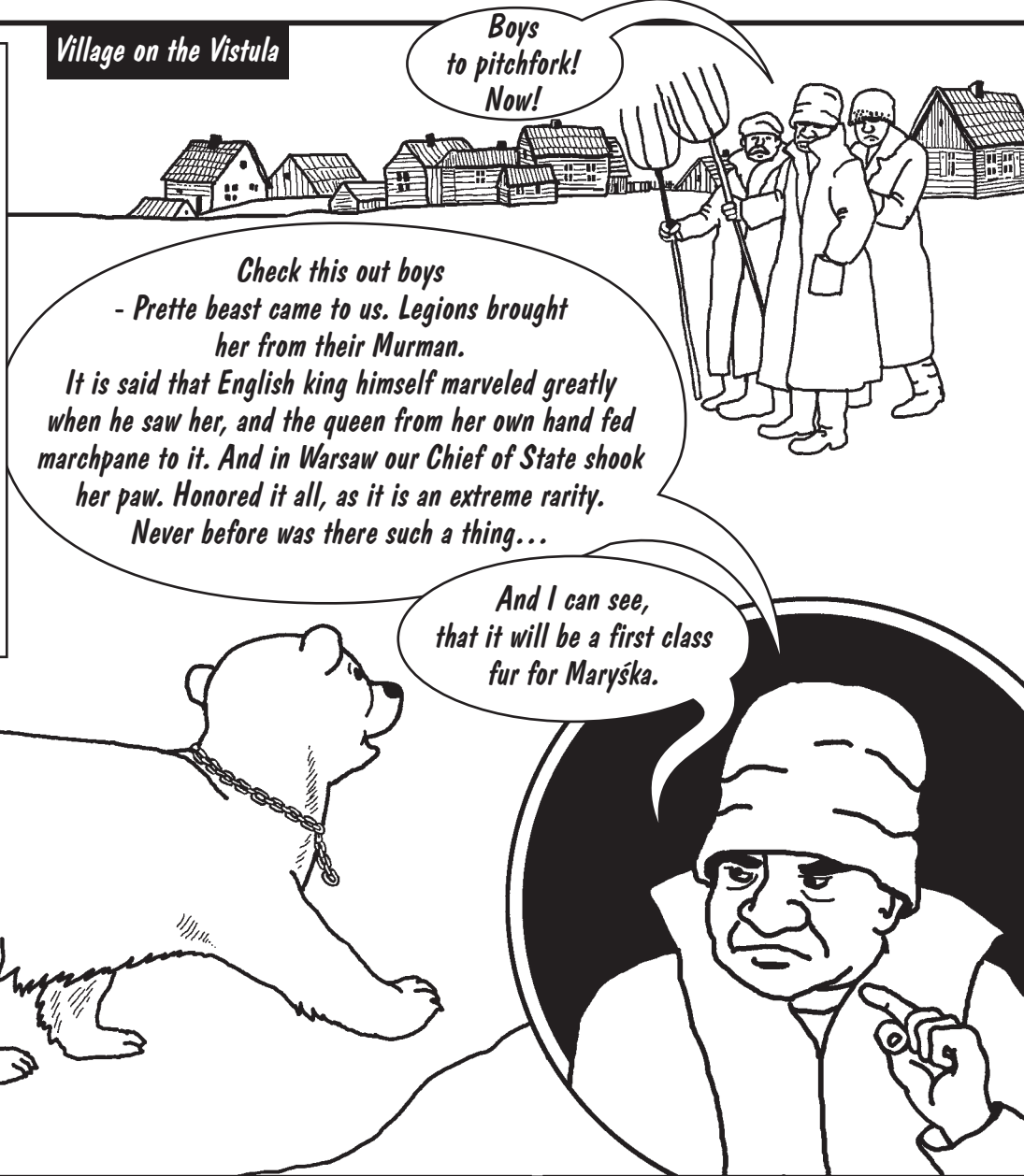
Village on the Vistula

When Baška swam to the opposite riverbank, she wanted to run to the forest — to the imaginary ocean. But from a distance, she saw people and again wanted their company. She trusted people because no one had ever done her any harm, everybody admired and loved her. She did not expected that something wrong could happen.

Boys to pitchfork! Now!

Check this out boys
- Prette beast came to us. Legions brought her from their Murman.
It is said that English king himself marveled greatly when he saw her, and the queen from her own hand fed marchpane to it. And in Warsaw our Chief of State shook her paw. Honored it all, as it is an extreme rarity. Never before was there such a thing...

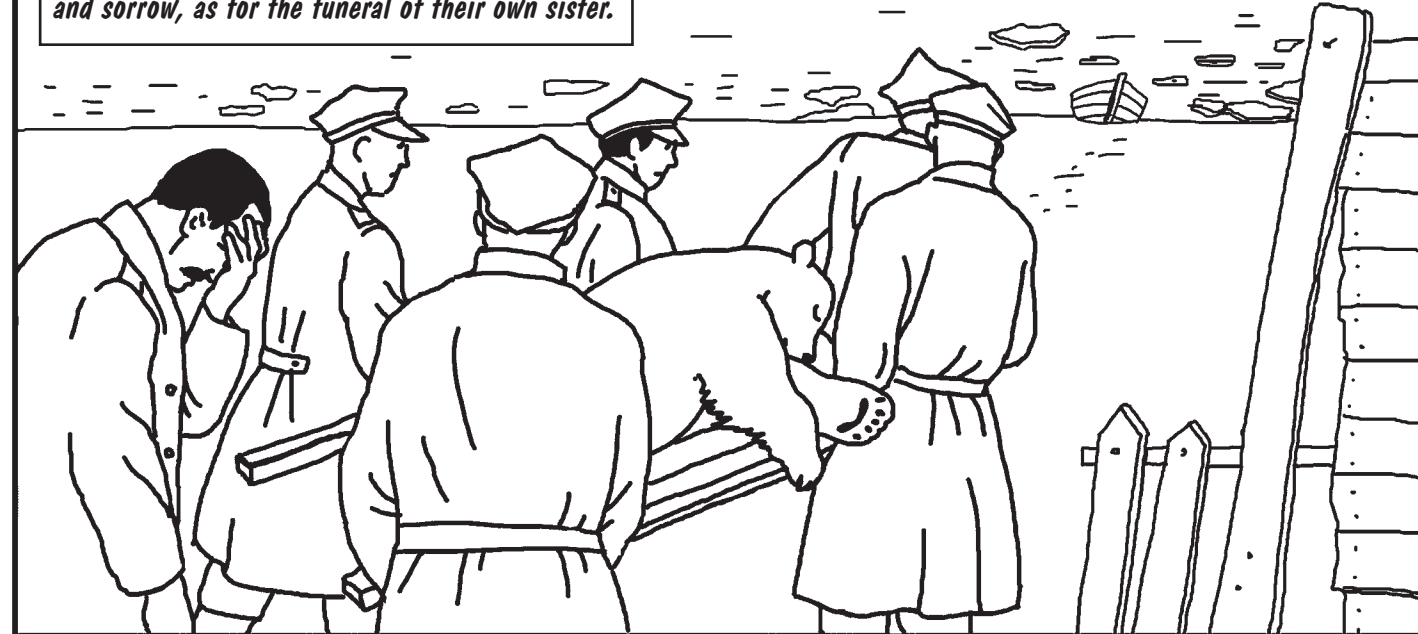
And I can see, that it will be a first class fur for Maryśka.



Before the soldiers came to the village, Baška had already died. They could not save her. Despair, tears and terrible regret for a moment overpowered the soldiers. In a moment later they rushed in fury to the peasants, beat them and picked up Baška's body.

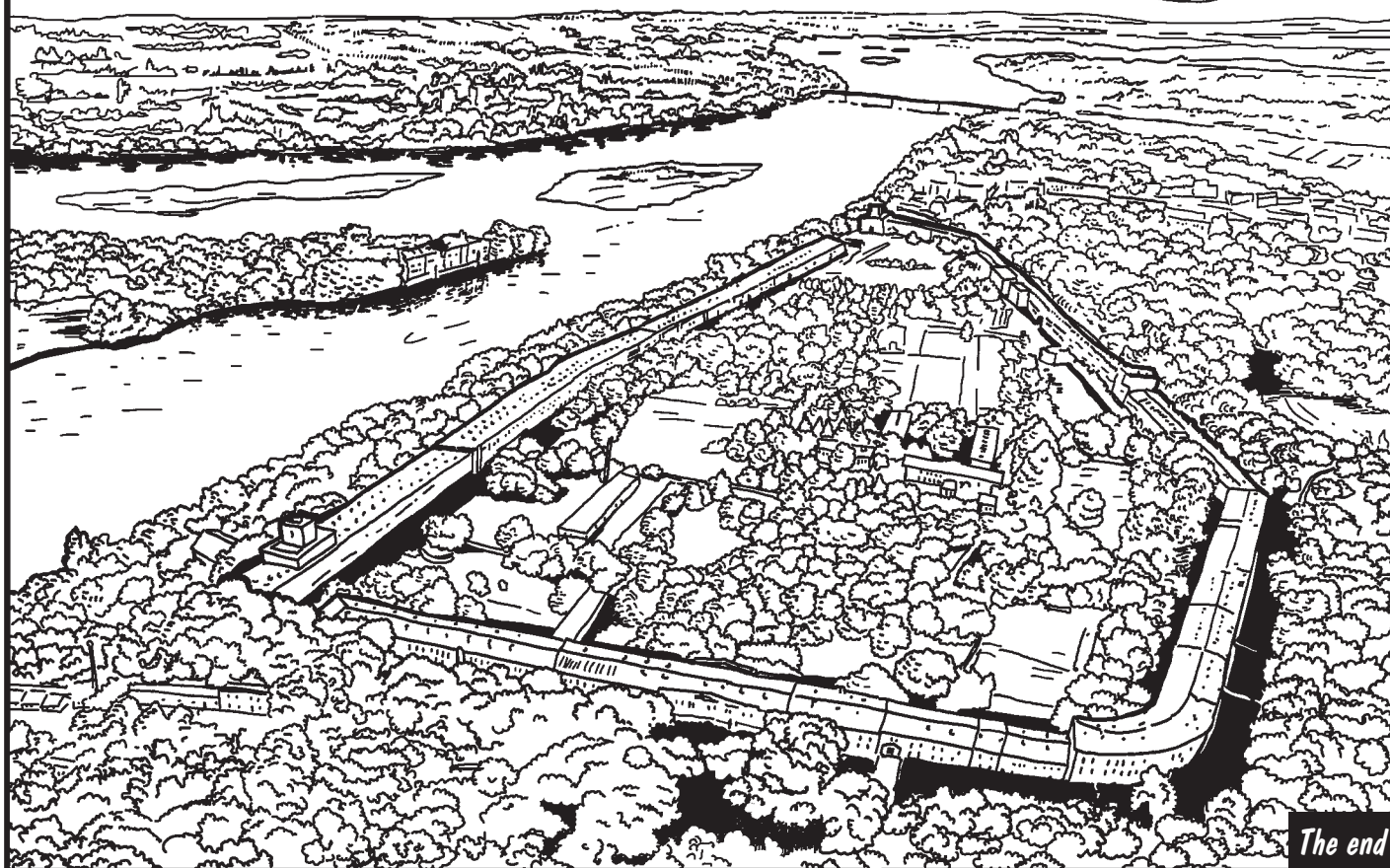


Then they carried her to the boat, with grief and sorrow, as for the funeral of their own sister.



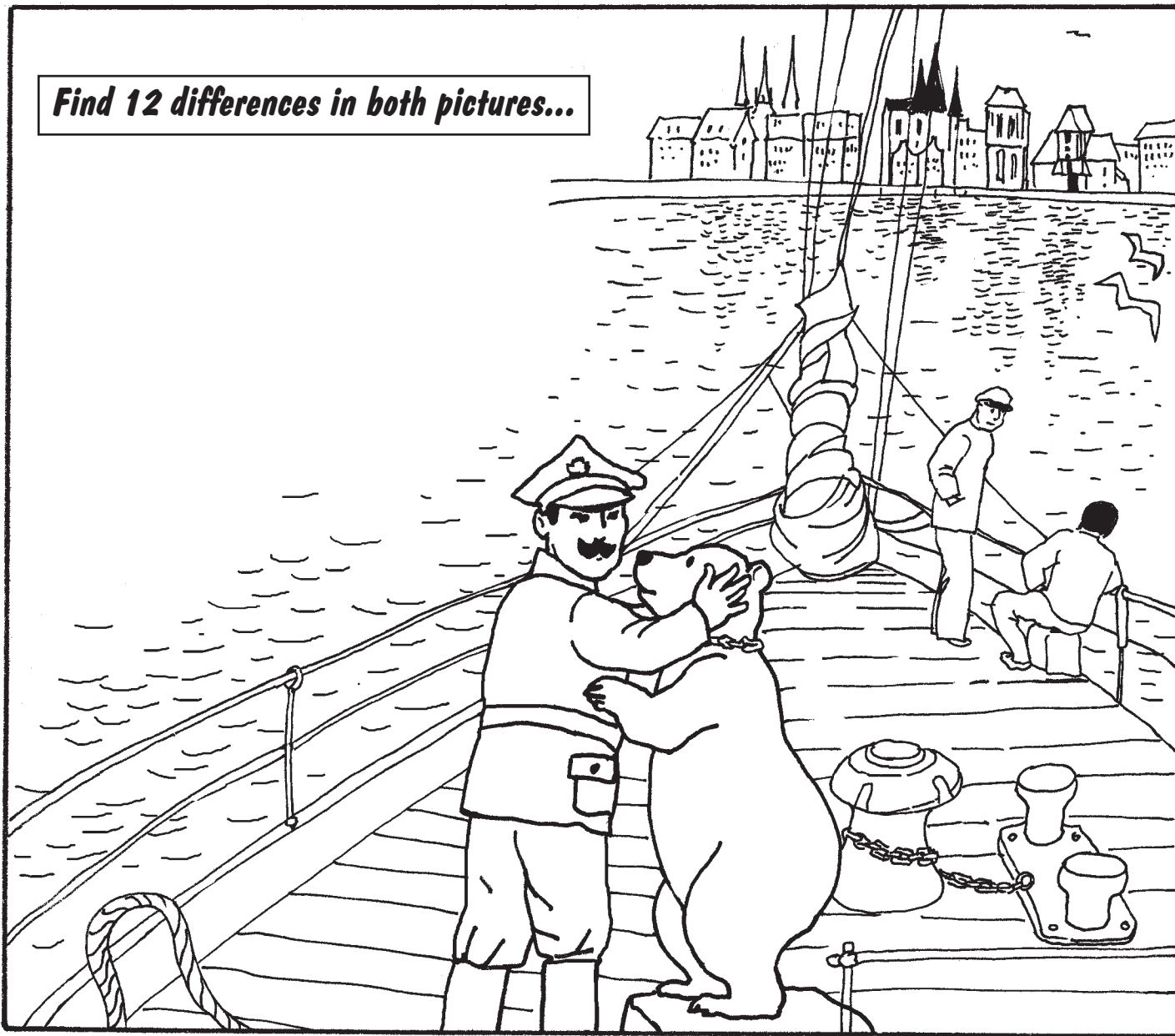
Modlin Fortress

Grateful memory of the Polar Bear from Murmansk lives and will never be lost, because she was a really beautiful and beloved animal.

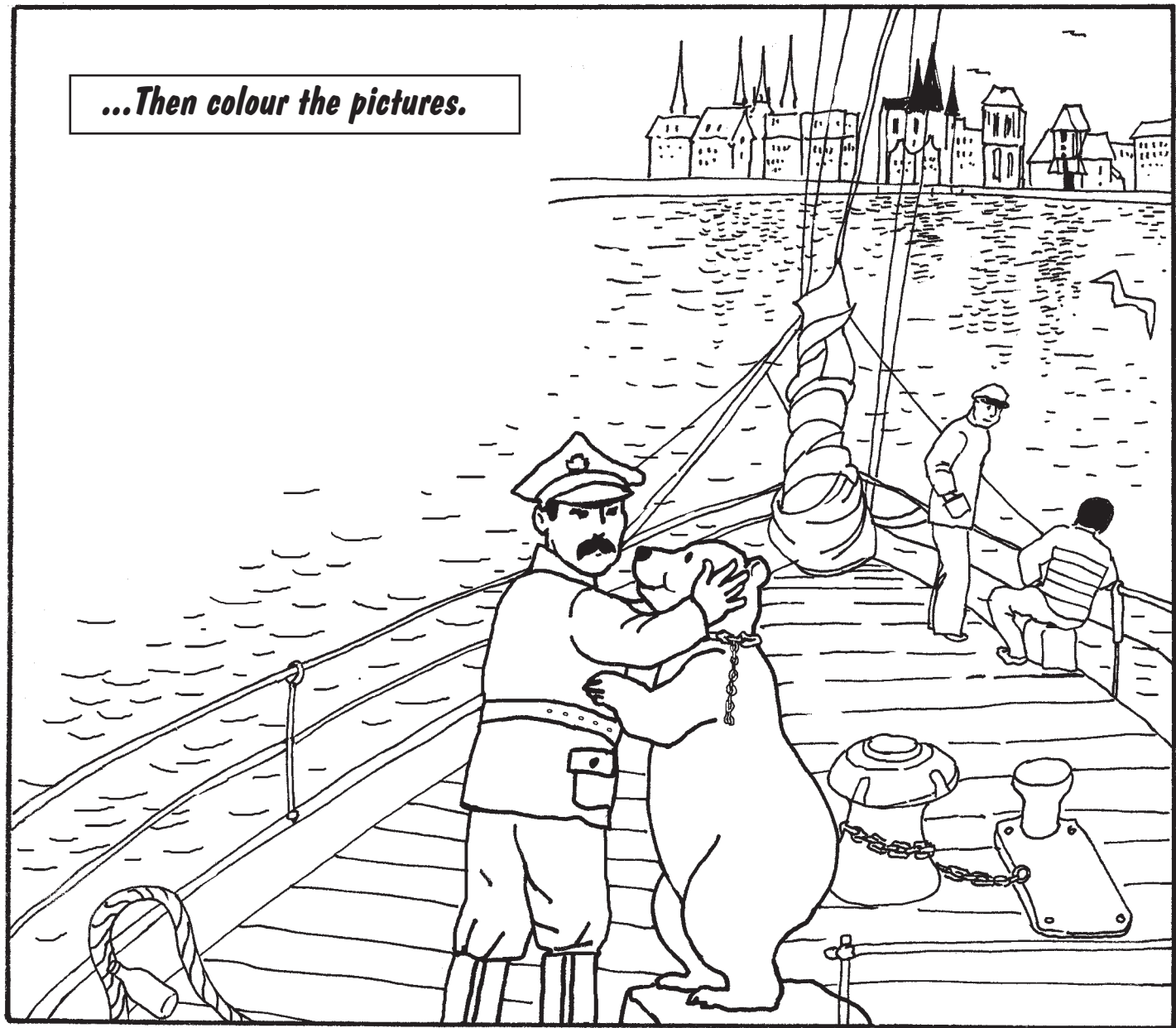


The end

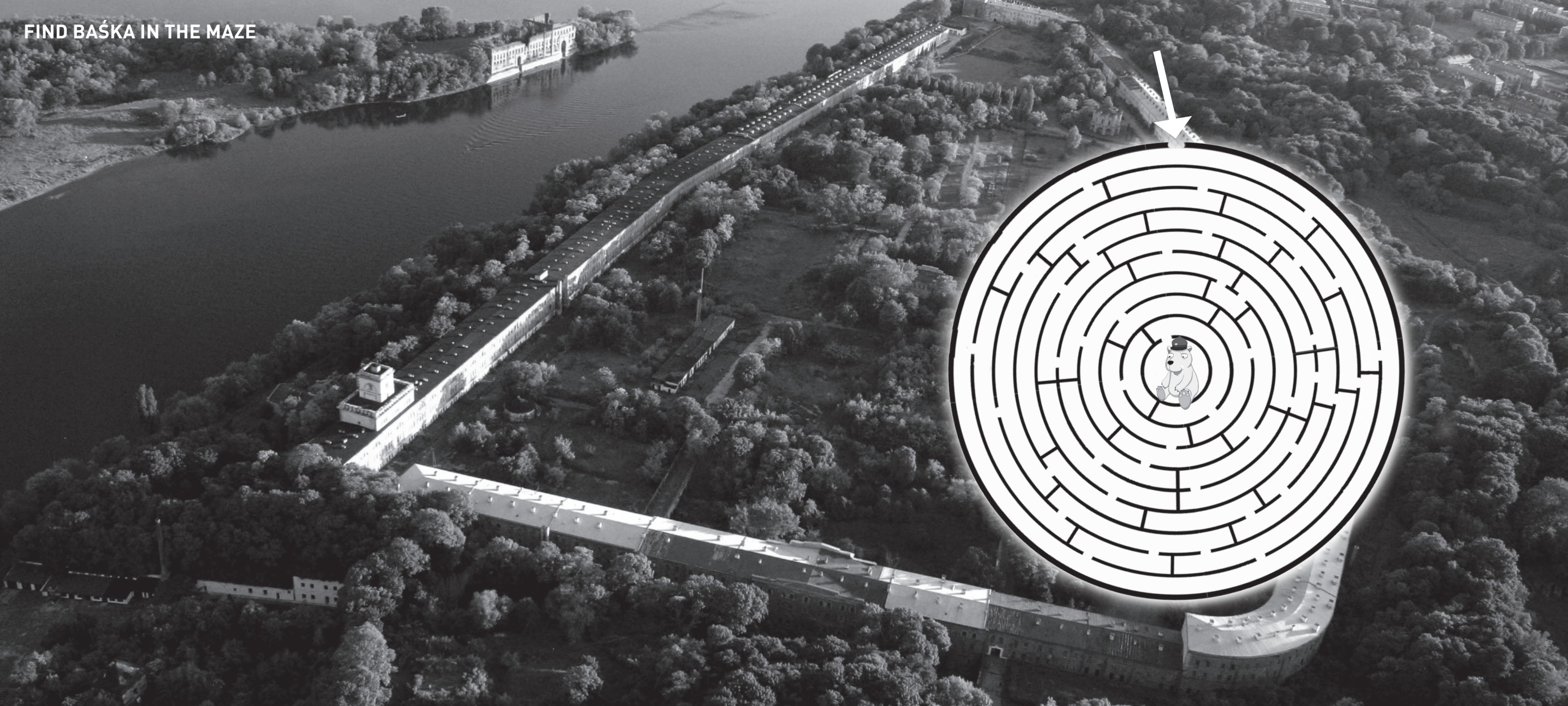
Find 12 differences in both pictures...



...Then colour the pictures.



FIND BAŠKA IN THE MAZE



SEE YOU IN THE MODLIN FORTRESS!



Dear Reader,

Pages of Modlin Fortress history are written down many colourful stories. A lot of them are well known for us, some despite of are equally interested, still waiting for their time. Undoubtfully one of such stories is history of Baśka Murmanska, white she-bear, which came with an army from far Russian extremities to Modlin Fortress. At one time she got a chance to be personally introduced to Marshal Pilsudski, and even according to legend, saluted in front of him.

From where white she-bear in the fortress? She was bought by Polish soldier on Russian market in 1919. He wanted so to impress a woman, her favours he competed with Italian captain However he didn't foresee how far-reaching consequences could have this happening. Baska run foul of major commander's Triple Entente army dog on Murman. As a result she was assigned to Polish battalion, (called also Murman battalion), as a "regiment's daughter". There she was broken in by one of the corporals, and with time she became one of the soldiers, behaving similarly to them. She arrived with them by steamship to Gdańsk, and from there she came to Modlin Fortress. There she took up residence with servicemen, and bathed in water of local rivers. Unfortunately she ended up her life full of adventures sadly. But about it inside the comic book.

The history of Baśka wrote up Eugeniusz Małaszewski in the book "The history of Baśka Murmańska. The history of white she bear". It was published in 1925, printing by Goebethner and Wolf publishing house, in seven towns: Warsaw, Cracow, Lublin, Lodz, Poznan, Wilno, Zakopane. We decided to publish the comic book about this unusual history to save it from the oblivion especially among the youngest, at own cost of Nowy Dwór Mazowiecki, and a Local Tourist Organisation of Three Rivers.

Have a nice reading!



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