

N!haì Dshàú

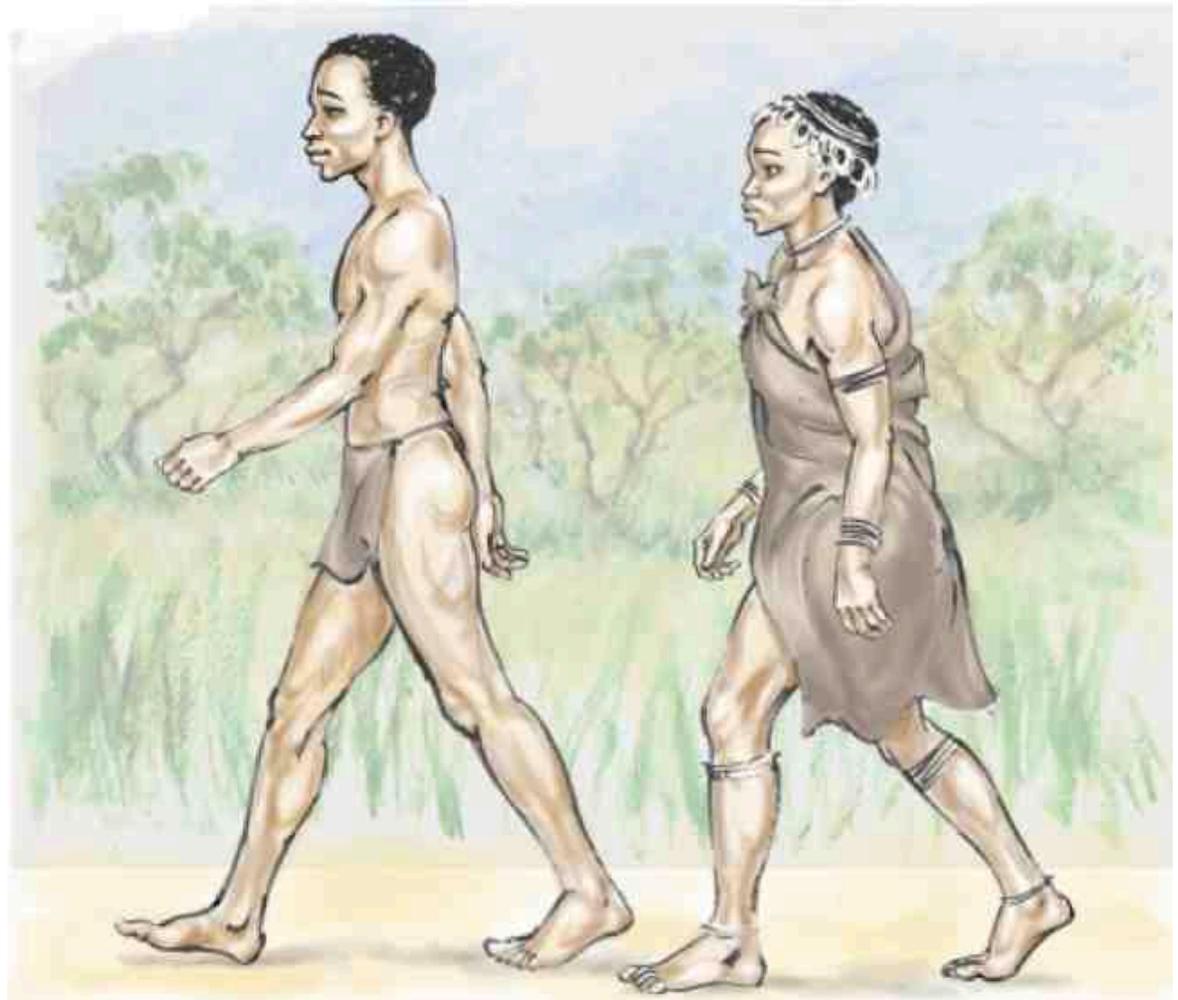
The Lion Woman

A Ju/'hoan story told by Kxao /O/oo, transliterated and translated by Megan Biesele and illustrated by Morgan Johnson

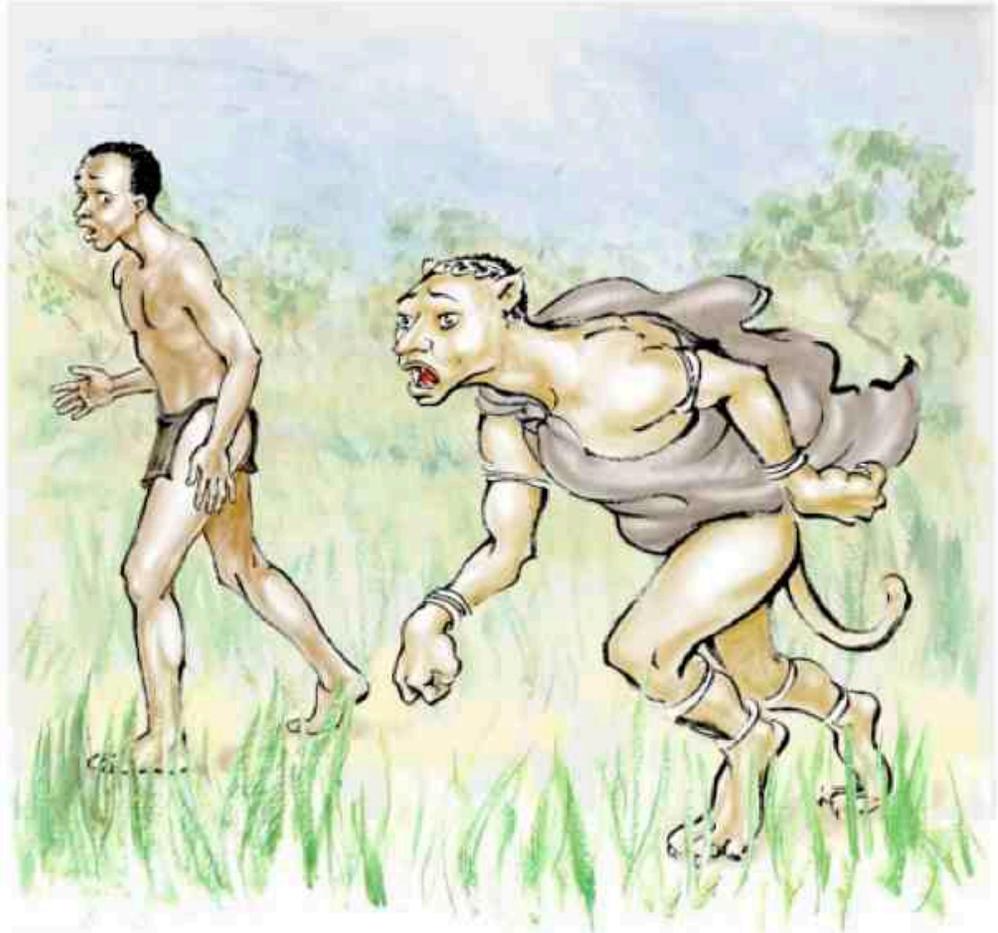
Mi n=oahn a ko tcisa n//aahn, ju !ae!ae n=oahn mi

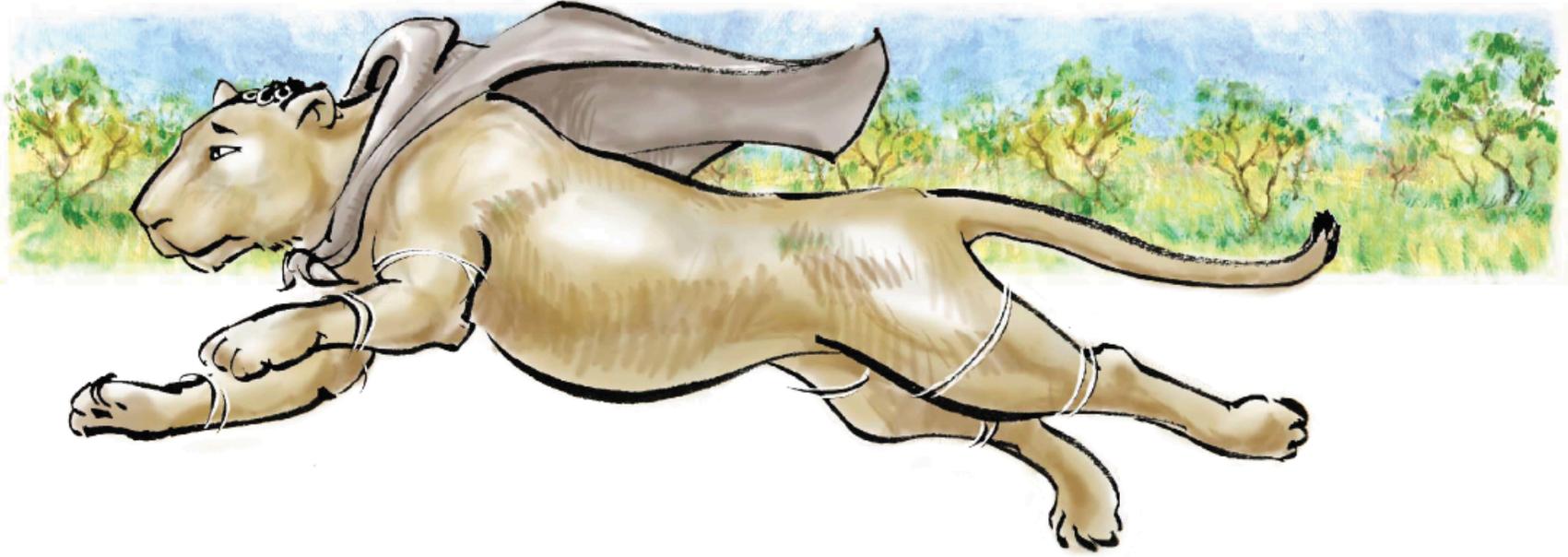
2. Si ko, n//aahn kxaice te ka ko o !'hoan ke ti ha dshau

I will tell you about the things of long ago that the old people told me
2. They said that long ago there was a man and his wife
3. And he had gone and married his wife from a place that was really far away
4. Then he took his wife and settled her in his own place
5. And one day that wife said, “Uh-uh! Today I want to go, to go see my people”
6. And her husband agreed and they took food and set out on the road
7. They just walked—there were none of these things like trucks
8. And there were no donkeys: Ju/'hoansi just walked
9. And as they walked and walked and walked, the food they were carrying, they ate up
10. And when they finished it, they were still only halfway along the road
11. And when they were halfway along the road, that meant...
12. The distance they had walked was like the distance they still were going
13. And they walked and walked, and the things (animals) they saw
14. They just saw these animals of the bush, carnivores (lions),
15. They walked along and they were dying of hunger

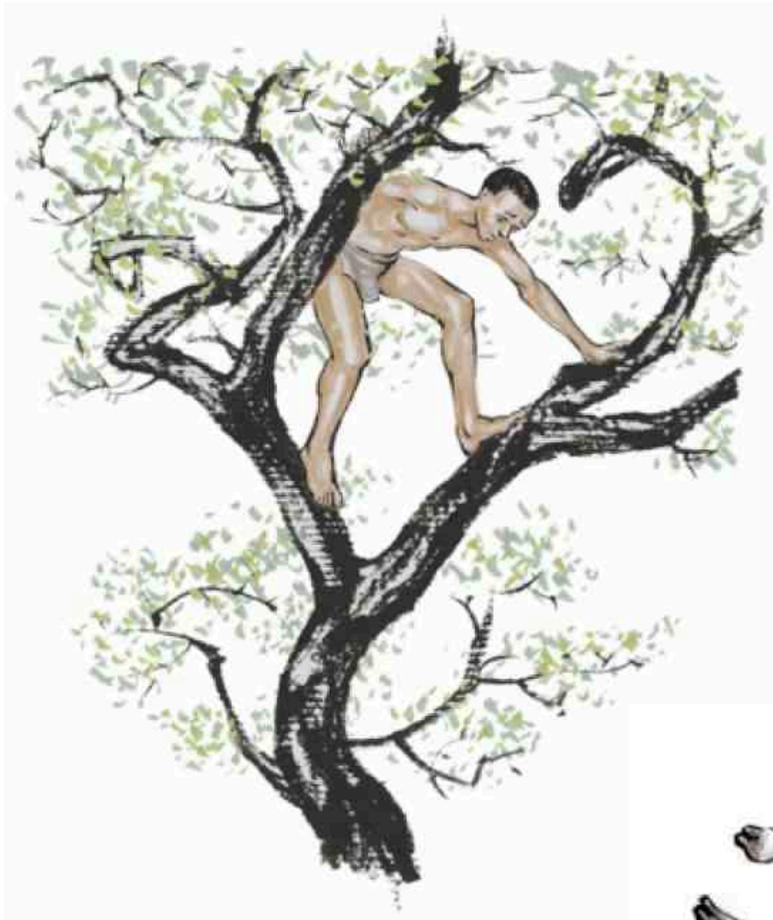


16. And as they walked and walked and walked,
the man almost...
17. Other people in fact had told him that the
wife he married,
18. Could turn herself into a lion,
19. A little carnivore, a lion
20. And as they just walked and walked and
walked
21. Nights, days, nights
22. And the man said, "Uh-uh! My wife! I long
ago heard someone say
23. That you could turn yourself into a lion.
24. Why don't you change yourself and go kill
some meat for us to eat?
25. And the woman said "Yes, my husband,
26. If I change myself, you will later fear me."
27. "You'll see that if I am a a lion,
you'll fear me and run away."
28. But her husband said "Uh-uh, I'm really hungry"
29. "Won't you just try it and we'll both see what
I'll do?"
30. "I am a man!"
31. So his wife and her fingernails also began to
change and change.
32. And she changed and he watched how her gait
changed.
33. Her husband, as it looked to him, she was
changing, changing.





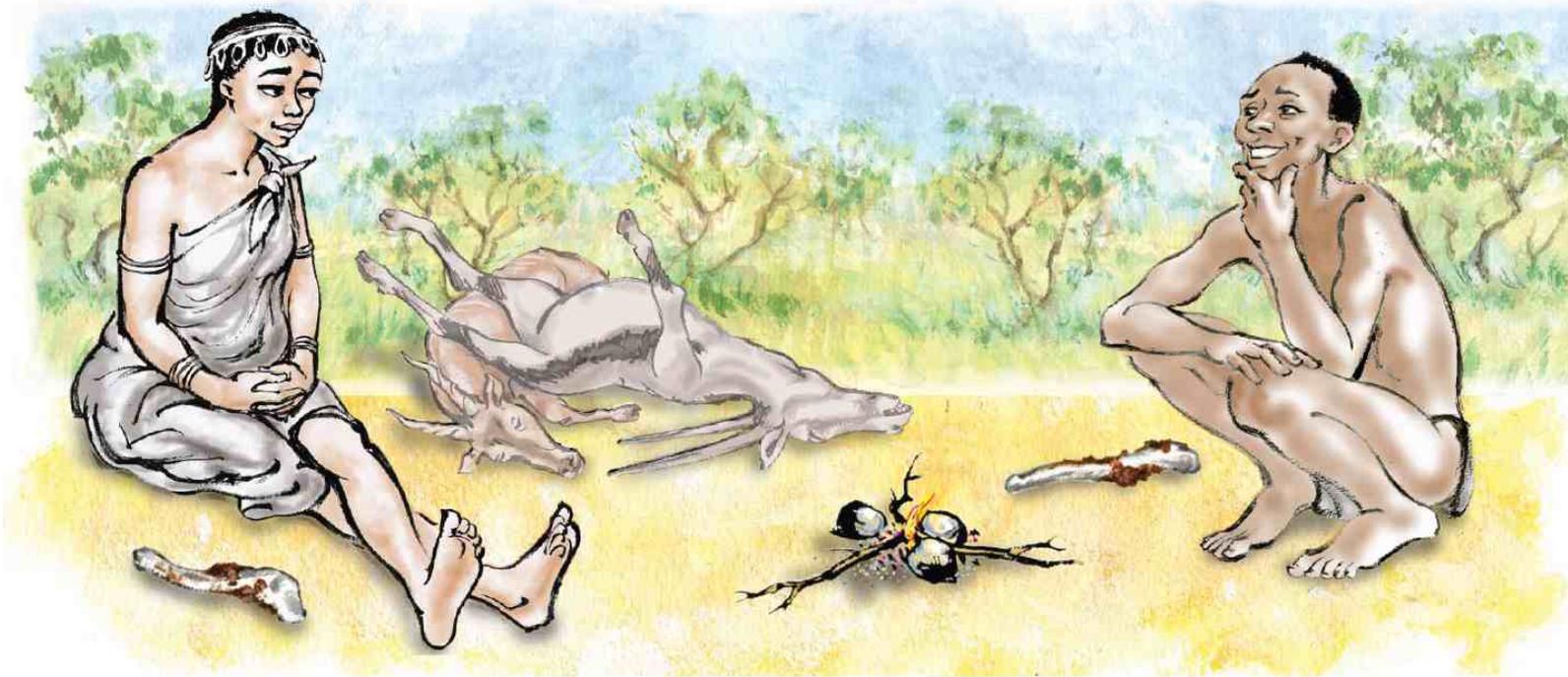
34. Then the husband called, he called that his wife had just changed,
35. That she was a real carnivore, a lion.



36. And she went and killed an eland, killed a gemsbok.
37. She killed-- she stalked them, she stalked like a carnivore,
38. Jumped and killed, and then called,
39. Called her husband who had gone up a tree and said,
40. My husband, come down, let's eat meat"
41. But her husband said, "Uh-uh, I won't come down."
42. "Why should I come down, because you're still a carnivore,"
43. "And if I come down and go (to where the meat is), you will eat me."
44. She said, "Come down and let's go eat meat."

45. "So you're going to come down."
46. He refused. He said, "If you want me to come down, then change and be a woman."





47. His wife changed and was that woman who looked like his wife.
48. So he came down and they went and ate meat and roasted it and ate it,
49. And roasted it, and cut some of it into strips.
50. And he said, "Hey! Have I in fact married a good wife?"
51. I would have died: as I'm standing here, hunger would have killed us along the road
52. If I had married another wife who was lazy that would not have been good,
53. And we would never have gotten home,
54. Hunger nearly killed us along the road.
55. So they carried the meat home and his old people ate it.
56. And people praised him. Saying "Yes, my son, you have married a real wife, you have married a good wife."
67. That story is finished there.

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Richard Katz, Megan Biesele, Verna St. Denis, *Healing Makes our Hearts Happy*,
Inner Traditions International, 1997

Megan Biesele, Kxao Royal /O/oo, *San*,
The Rosen Publishing Group, 1996

Display of selected books from my personal library related to Kamhuka kasina Guse

Tim Matthews, author and Colleen Cousins, illustrator,
Tales of the Secret Valley (English)
Ngano dze Mhute yevaTonga (Shona)
Twaana twaMusena Usitikide (Tonga)
[There is also a Ndebele version]
Baobab books, 1988.

Mordikai A. Hamutyinei, Albert B. Plangger, *Tsumo - Shumo*,
Mambo Press, 1974.

Jessie Hertslet and Joyce Wallis, illustrator, *Bantu Folk Tales*,
The African Bookman, 1946