

The Spaghetti Did It!

A Spaghetti Western

Written and Illustrated
by Caroline Stellings



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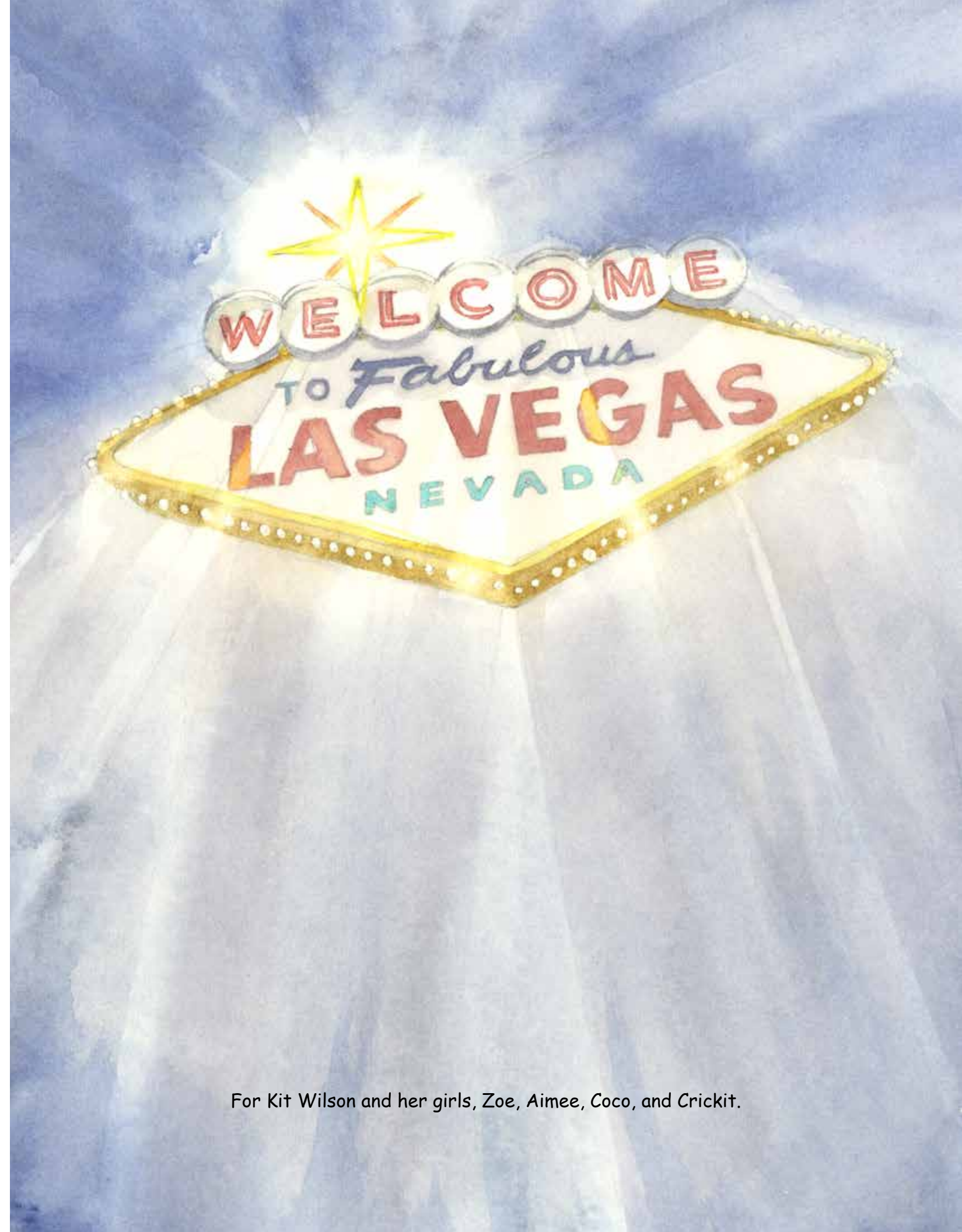
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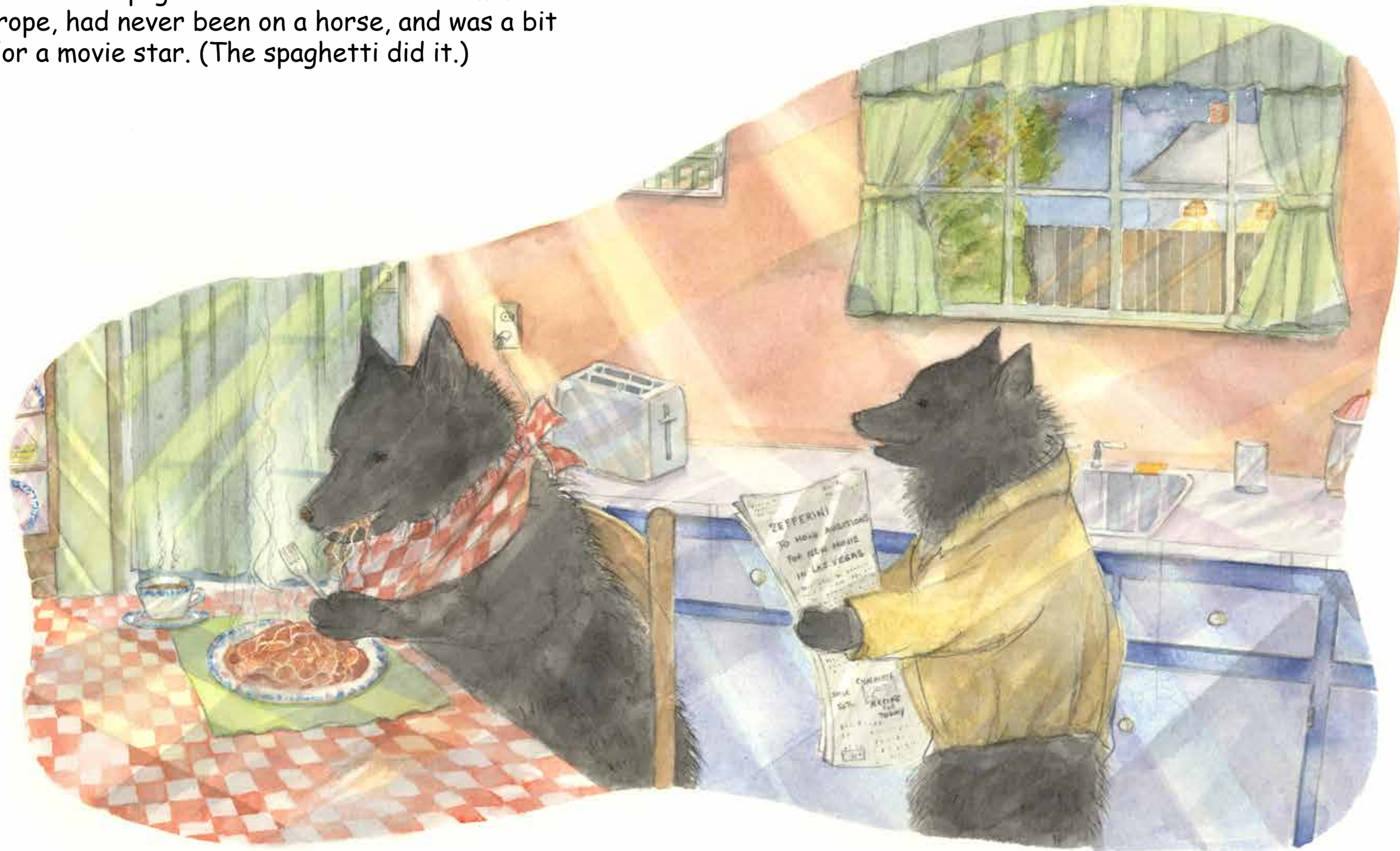


For Kit Wilson and her girls, Zoe, Aimee, Coco, and Crickit.

Steve was good at everything. Among his many talents were roping, riding, and doing the quick draw. He'd always wanted to be in a spaghetti western, so when he read that the Italian film director, Federico Zeffirelli, was holding auditions in Las Vegas, he ran to tell his brother Eddie.

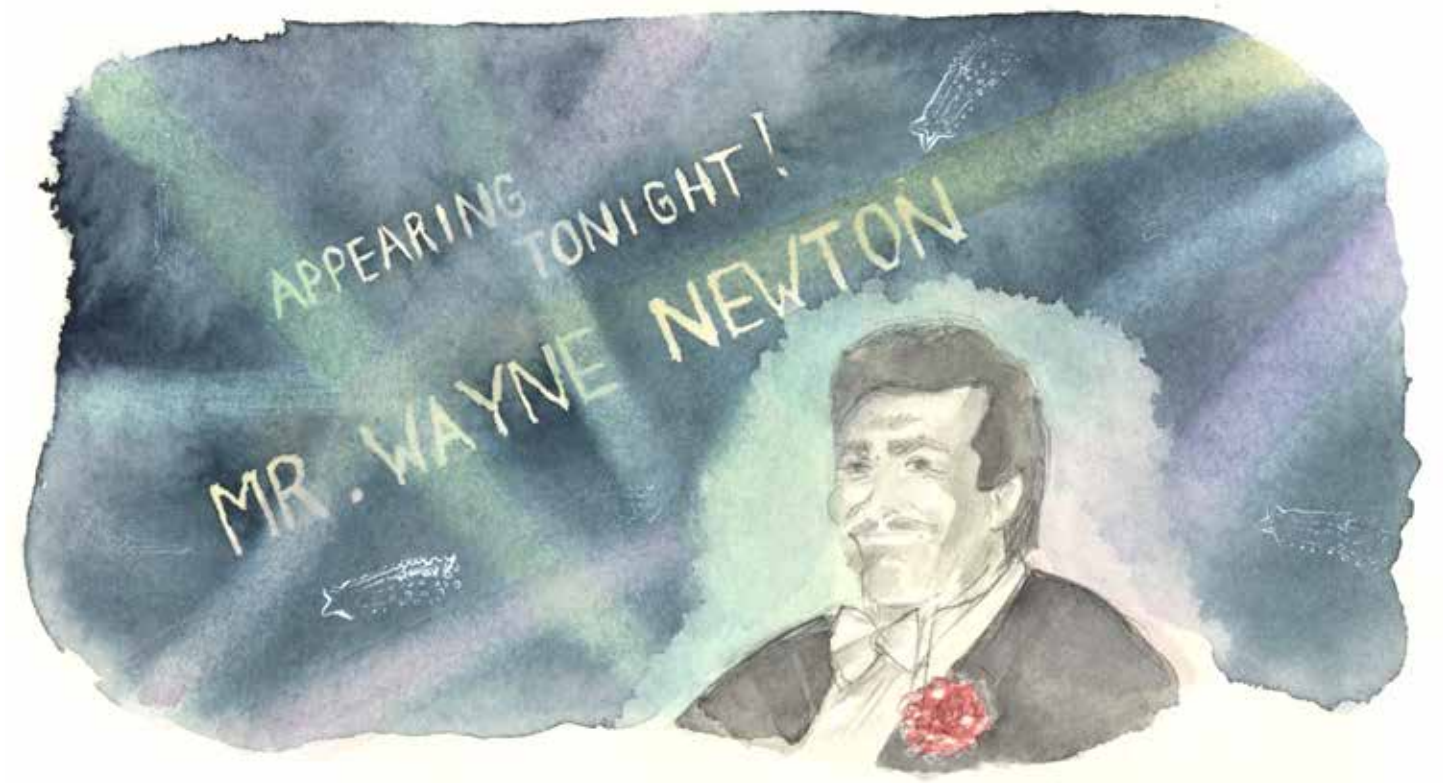


Eddie's only qualification for being in a spaghetti western was that he loved spaghetti and ate it all the time. He couldn't rope, had never been on a horse, and was a bit chubby for a movie star. (The spaghetti did it.)



But Eddie jumped at the chance to go to Las Vegas and see the famous celebrity Wayne Newton perform in real life. It would be worth the long ride in a sidecar to hear Mr. Newton sing "Danke Schoen," his first and most popular hit — and the song that Eddie loved best.

Now for those of you who have never heard of Wayne Newton and his old-fashioned music, it may be worth noting that he was a star in this glitzy city for so many years that he became known as Mr. Las Vegas. Something else you might not know is that the German phrase *danke schoen* means "thank you very much" in English.

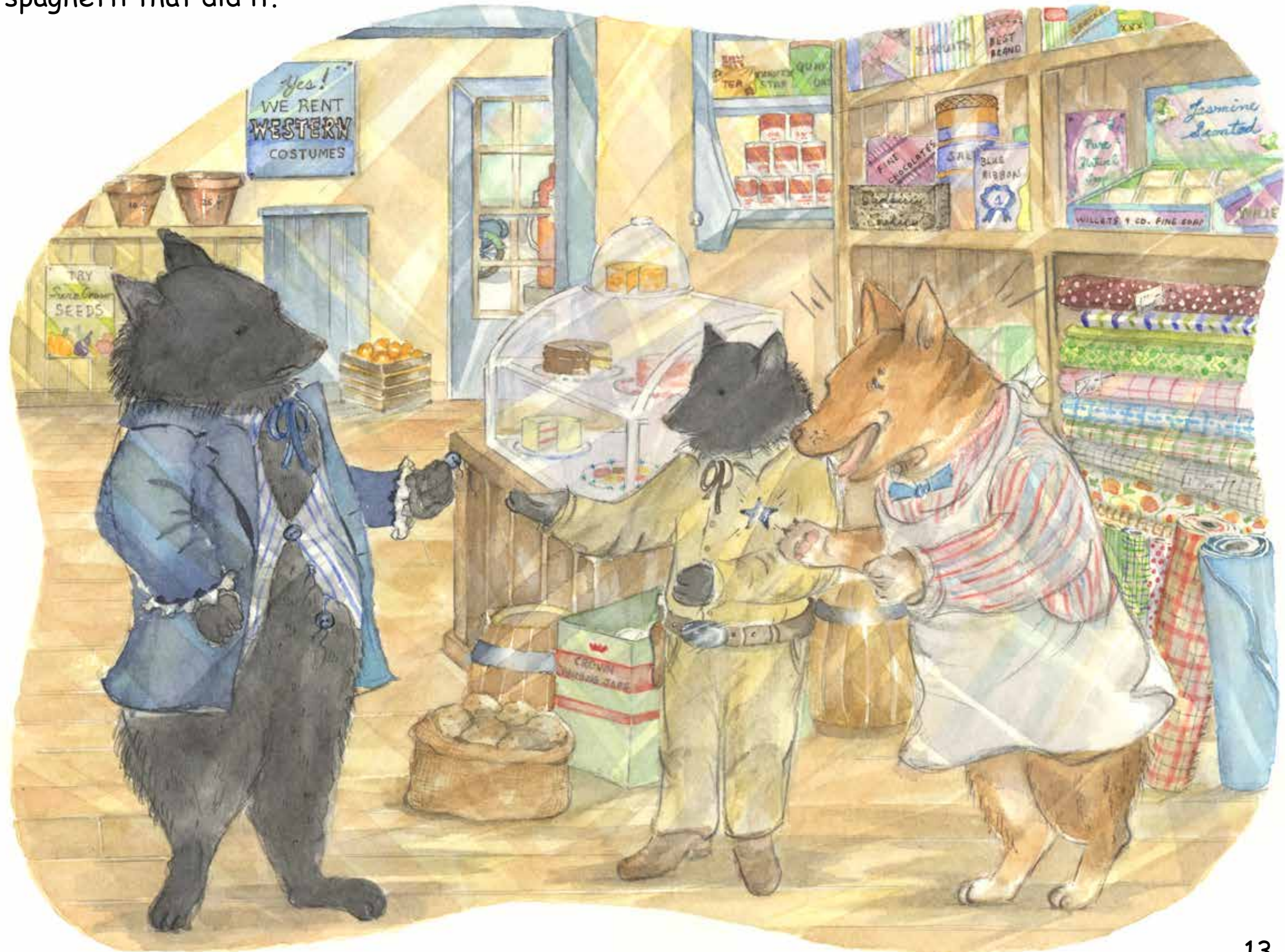


Steve and Eddie drove for days and days. Every evening at dusk, they set up their tent and cooked dinner. Eddie heated canned spaghetti over a campfire. It wasn't as good as homemade, but they enjoyed eating under the stars.

Once Steve pulled onto Highway I-15, it was a straight run to Vegas. Just outside the city limits, they stopped at a roadside store for gas and to rent western costumes for the audition.



Steve found a spiffy sheriff's outfit, but the storekeeper had nothing in Eddie's size. They tried to squeeze him into a gambler's suit, but he burst the buttons. Steve apologized, explaining Eddie's craving for Italian food. The storekeeper didn't blame Eddie. He knew it was the spaghetti that did it.



Then he thought of a costume! He rifled through the racks and pulled out a Zorro cape and mask. "This is perfect!" he declared jubilantly. "It's one-size-fits-all!" But his mood changed when he went behind the counter and saw the poster on the wall. He rang up their bill and told them the whole story.



"Those squirrels have wreaked havoc. It began with a jar of peanut butter and a can of mixed nuts from this very store. Next it was bandanas to hide their faces. Now this! They've been seen all over the city, but they're fast. No one can catch them." The storekeeper shook his head from side to side. "Wayne Newton will not perform without his rhinestone-buckled shoes."

