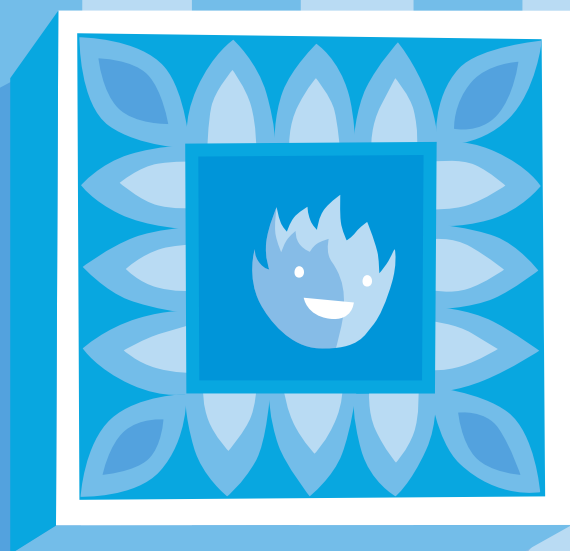
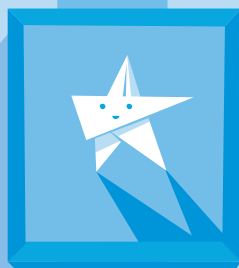


Ara & the Fox of Friend- ship

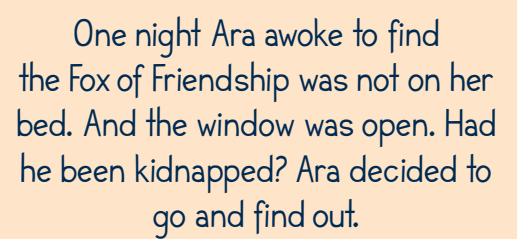




Ara & the Fox of Friend- ship

jfml








She put on her cloak
and gently tapped her
lamp to wake up the fire
elemental inside. She
fed it some coals.





On her way she
passed the statue of
the sleeping Buffalo
God, dreaming of
the monsoon rains.


The god protects
anyone who rests
at her feet – no
one would dare
shoo them away.



Did the
Fox of Friendship
come this
way?

Yes, I let him
cross a while ago.
He went into
the city.






Sparrowguard!
Catguard! Have
you seen the Fox
of Friendship?


Yes, he was
heading to
the Labyrinth
of Books!

The Shadow Queen,
the guardian and librarian
of the countless books in
the labyrinth, walked with
Ara to show her which
way the fox had gone.






The Shadow Queen
brought Ara to
Three Sisters Gate,
where Jahnja was
keeping watch.

An illustration of a woman with dark skin and long dark hair, wearing a purple top and purple pants, sitting on the ground at night. A lion is perched on her shoulder. She is looking towards a small child with dark skin, wearing a blue and white striped shirt and pink pants, who is sitting on the ground and looking up at her. A small lantern with a flame is on the ground between them. In the background, there is a small building with a balcony and a ladder, and a large, dark, rocky structure. The sky is dark blue with white clouds and stars.

Not many people
go through this
gate because you
have to answer a
riddle to pass:

If you feed it,
it lives. But if you
give it something
to drink, it dies.
What is it?

...
It's fire!

A stylized illustration of a forest at night. Tall, thin trees with green trunks and bare branches are scattered throughout. The ground is a mix of light brown and green. In the background, a red wall with a circular opening is visible. A child with dark skin, wearing a blue shirt and pink pants, is running towards the right. A white hare with blue ears and paws is in the foreground, looking down. The sky is dark blue with small white stars.

Behind the gate was the
grove of the White Hare
where it was always
winter. Suddenly Ara
heard a great crash!



O dearest
fox! Are you
hurt? And what
are you doing
here?

Hello Ara!
I'm fine, but my
tail got trapped
when the tree
fell.


You know
I'm the Fox of
Friendship! I must
roam city and country
at night to look for
people who
are lost.



But what
are we going to
do? I don't think
I can lift this
tree.

You
poor thing!
Let me help
you!





The woman looked a bit scary but she had just helped to save the fox, so they went back to her camp and she told them her story.

My name is Nin.
I'm a geologist - I go all over the world to find interesting rocks. But when the Fire Rooster came and sat on my roof, my house burnt down. I tried to rescue my most favourite stones. That's where I got my scars.

Thank you for helping my friend, I'm Ara.

So you don't have a home? There is a treehouse in our garden. You could sleep there tonight.





(The Owl
Thieves Guild
has a permanent
seat in the Owl
Parliament.)

Nin had not slept
under a roof for a long
time so she was glad
to come. On the way
home they tip-toed
past the Parliament
of Owls.

They took the ferry
back into the city,
not knowing that a
surprise was waiting
for them at home.



Ara's parents were awake and they had a midnight feast! They decided that their house could be Nin's base to return to from her geology expeditions.

So Nin would not have to sleep in the treehouse after all but could slumber in a cozy bed.

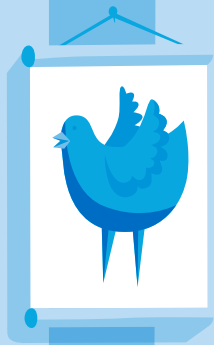




After they finally all went
to bed, the fox fell asleep last.
He could hear Nin snoring
quietly in the room next door.
It had been a successful
night for the Fox of Friendship!









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