

KAMOME SHIRAHAMA



Witch Hat Atelier

1

GRIMOIRE EDITION

AN INTRODUCTION TO CASTING SEALS

A HANDY REFERENCE ON THE BASIC DESIGNS OF AND RULES FOR CONSTRUCTING MAGIC SEALS.

THE THREE ELEMENTS OF A SEAL

SIGIL

OCCUPIES THE CENTER OF THE SEAL AND DETERMINES THE TYPE OF SPELL CAST.

EXAMPLES



SIGIL OF WIND



SIGIL OF WIND UNDERFOOT



SIGIL OF WATER

SIGNS

ARRANGED AROUND THE SIGIL TO INFLUENCE THE FORM, SIZE, AND DIRECTION OF THE SPELL.

EXAMPLES



SIGN OF LEVITATION



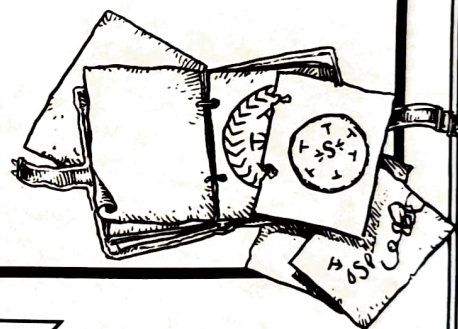
SIGN OF COLUMNS



SIGN OF CONVERGENCE

RING

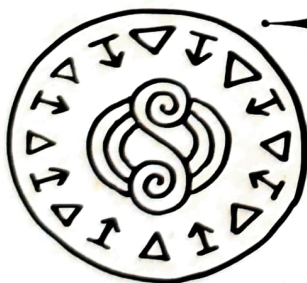
ENCOMPASSES THE SIGIL AND SIGNS. COMPLETING THE RING ACTIVATES THE SPELL.



EXAMPLES OF CASTING SEALS

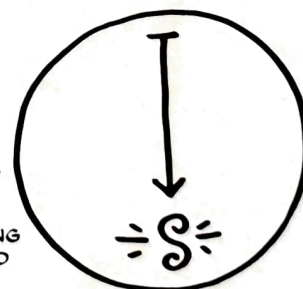
SEAL USED ON SYLPH SHOES

BRINGING BOTH HALVES OF THIS SEAL TOGETHER GRANTS STABLE FLIGHT, ENABLING THE USER TO SOAR THROUGH THE SKY.



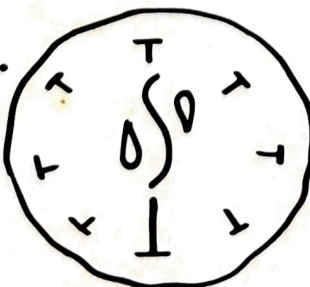
COCO'S SEAL AT THE DADAH RANGE

THE SIGIL IN THIS SEAL IS OFF-CENTER, INFLUENCED BY A SINGLE, EXTREMELY LONG SIGN. IT PRODUCED A VERY POWERFUL AND SHORT-LIVED GUST OF WIND.



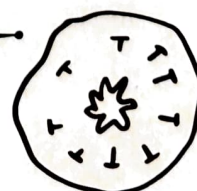
COCO'S SEAL IN THE ATELIER

A SINGLE SIGN DRAWN LONGER THAN THE OTHERS CAUSED THE SPELL TO DRENCH AGOTT IN WATER. INCIDENTALLY, MASTER QIFREY IS PARTICULARLY SKILLED WITH WATER MAGIC, ENABLING HIM TO CAST MARVELS SUCH AS THE FLOWER MADE OF WATER.



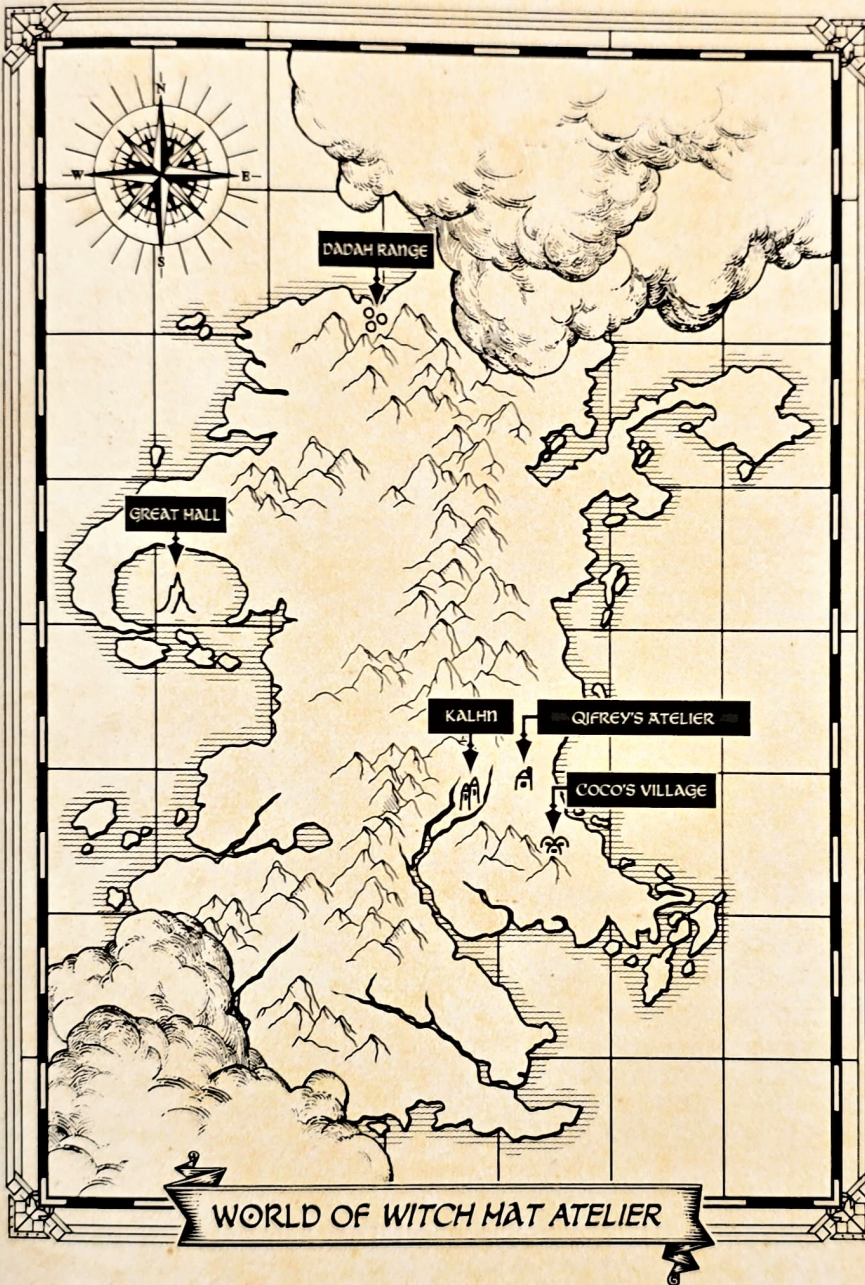
COCO'S VERY FIRST SEAL

THIS SEAL RESULTED IN A SMALL, FLICKERING LIGHT. AS IT WAS COPIED FROM THE BOOK OF FORBIDDEN SPELLS, ITS INTENDED EFFECT IS UNKNOWN.



THE WORLD OF WITCH HAT ATELIER

A BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO THE WORLD INHABITED BY COCO AND HER FRIENDS



COCO'S VILLAGE

A SMALL, RURAL VILLAGE NESTLED IN THE FOOTHILLS. CONTRAPTIONS ARE NOT UNHEARD OF HERE, BUT NEITHER ARE THEY FOUND IN GREAT NUMBER. COCO'S HOME IS ALSO A TAILORING SHOP, WHERE SHE HAS HELPED OUT SINCE SHE WAS VERY YOUNG.



QIFREY'S ATELIER

A SINGLE, LONELY BUILDING FOUND A SHORT WAY FROM COCO'S VILLAGE. MANY WITCHES CHOOSE TO TAKE UP RESIDENCE IN THE GREAT HALL, BUT QIFREY PREFERS TO LIVE IN THE COUNTRYSIDE FOR REASONS UNKNOWN.



GREAT HALL

A MASSIVE STRUCTURE POPULATED BY POWERFUL WITCHES, THE GREAT HALL LIES AT THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA AND CAN ONLY BE ACCESSSED BY DESCENDING A DEEP STAIRWELL WHOSE ENTRANCE IS LOCATED ABOVE THE WAVES.



DADAH RANGE

THE LOCATION OF THE TEST ONE MUST PASS TO BECOME AN APPRENTICE. AN ANCIENT SPELL CAST THERE KEEPS THE MOUNTAINS SUSPENDED IN THE AIR. THE EXCLUSIVE HABITAT OF THE DIADEM HERB, NEEDED AS PROOF OF COMPLETING THE TEST.



KALHN

A TOWN OF WITCHES, EASILY ACCESSIBLE FROM QIFREY'S ATELIER. PART OF THE TOWN IS BUILT ATOP AN ISLAND, HOME EXCLUSIVELY TO ARTISANS OF MAGIC TOOLS AND OTHERS ENGAGED IN THE USE OF MAGIC.



Witch Hat Atelier

The conversation below, between *Witch Hat Atelier* creator Kamome Shirahama and editor Koji Terayama, was conducted in 2017, as *Witch Hat Atelier* Vol. 2 was being released in Japan. The two discuss laying the foundation for the series and launching it on a trajectory that would later lead to it becoming a global, award-winning hit manga. The interview begins in the left column.

“The process of bringing a drawing to life is like magic.”

Terayama: Congratulations on finishing Vol. 2. There is a booklet of illustrations included with [the Japanese special edition of] this volume. [These illustrations are included in this book after the interview. -Ed.] This was extra work compared to Vol. 1, and I can imagine it wasn't easy.

Shirahama: Not at all! The design of this volume is very cute, and I am very happy how it turned out.

Terayama: Now we're just waiting for August 23, [2017,] the release day. After the first volume was released, we heard from a lot of readers and booksellers, saying they thought your drawings were truly amazing. I think you really lived up to their expectations. Now, the illustration gallery in the booklet included with Vol. 2 includes drawings that you showed me during our first meetings... It's making me nostalgic!

Shirahama: Indeed. There are some elements that differ from the final versions, and I hope readers will enjoy discovering them.

Terayama: But the core of the story, where young Coco admires witches and aspires to become one herself, hasn't changed. Neither has the idea that she was always told that non-witches couldn't practice magic, even though that secretly wasn't the case. Coco's fellow apprentices and foils—the energetic Tetia, calm Richeh, and studious Agott—haven't changed much, either. What changed most was where Coco learned magic—moving from a school to an atelier—and her teacher, Qifrey, right?

Shirahama: Yes, Qifrey changed quite a bit.

Terayama: The readers will see how you

originally imagined him, but now his character has a bit of a darker side. Let's talk about the starting point of the series. This goes back to when I first met you two years ago to discuss your next project. When did you start working on it?

Shirahama: I'd say six or seven years prior. I was chatting with an illustrator friend, and we realized that the process of bringing a drawing to life is like magic. From there, I thought to myself, “What if I drew a story about someone whose job was to draw pentacles?” That was when I started thinking about pentacles, among other things.

Terayama: So you had the idea for this manga even before your previous series, *Eniale & Dewiela*?

Shirahama: Absolutely. I always wanted to draw fantasy.

Terayama: Yes, it's a fantasy, but the fact that magic is seen as “work” [in *Witch Hat Atelier*] is an aspect that intrigued me from the start. You seem to be drawing the story with this in mind.

Shirahama: I've been interested for a while now in creative professions, like illustrator or *mangaka*, that are perceived in our society to be exclusive to “talented” people. If you want to do something, I don't think you should tell yourself, “I can't do it,” but rather, “How can I get there?”

Terayama: Is it the same for magic, then? You shouldn't tell yourself, “I can't do it,” but rather, “How can I get there?”

Shirahama: Absolutely. Primary school and junior high kids have heads full of dreams, and I wanted to draw a manga that would help them pursue those dreams.

Terayama: When did you realize you wanted

Start here! ♥

to become a mangaka? Was this before you enrolled at the Tokyo University of the Arts?

Shirahama: More so after I enrolled. I met a mangaka when I was studying. Before that, I thought the work would be too difficult, but after that, I thought I could become one, as well.

Terayama: So you grew out of this idea that you couldn't do it.

Shirahama: Yes. I may never have become a mangaka if I hadn't met this person.

"I want to draw so many things!"

Terayama: On top of your manga, you also draw covers for American comics. I think I remember you saying you went to the U.S. to showcase your work?

Shirahama: Yes, I had a booth at New York Comic-Con to show my illustrations. This led to professional work being offered to me, and even today, I still draw a few cover illustrations every month.

Terayama: Your energy impresses me!

Shirahama: I've always liked manga, of course, but also American comics and French *bandes dessinées*, so I'd hoped to work in those areas, too.

Terayama: And you achieved it by asking yourself, "How can I get there," right? Your experience translates to *Witch Hat Atelier*, in this case.

Shirahama: Very possible.

Terayama: Speaking of *Witch Hat Atelier*, where do you think the story is going?

Shirahama: I have an idea for the end. But it might completely change...

Terayama: Every time I meet with you, I feel like the number of things you want to draw grows.

Shirahama: Yes, I want to draw so many things!

Terayama: What an enthusiastic answer! (Laughs.) I know everyone's excited to dive deeper into the world of *Witch Hat Atelier*.

**"Support from readers
was tremendous."**

Terayama: By the way, as this is a chat between a mangaka and her editor, I'd like to ask you... What is the editor's role, in your view?

Shirahama: Hmm, I'd say it's to provide an objective perspective on my manga. When I'm drawing, I often wonder if something is actually good. I sometimes get a bit lost, so I'm grateful for the editor's advice. One author and one editor make up the minimum team size for creative work. An editor needs to make quick judgments and be able to explain their opinion concisely. We work together toward the same goal, and that's a big help.

Terayama: Sorry, it feels like I twisted your arm to say this...

Shirahama: Not at all! (Laughs.) When the first chapter of *Witch Hat Atelier* was serialized in the magazine, and later, when the first volume was released, I saw lots of people spreading the news on Twitter [known as X since 2023] and booksellers displaying it in their windows, and the support from readers was tremendous. I'm counting on them in the future, too.

Terayama: They must give you the power to draw even more.

Shirahama: They do!

Terayama: If you don't have the first volume, you can follow the serialized chapters in *Morning Two* magazine [in Japanese or on the K MANGA app in English]!

Shirahama: There are a cover illustration and color pages included in the Aug. 22[, 2017] issue. Don't miss it!

Terayama: And don't miss Vol. 2, which will include two variant covers [in Japan]!

Kamome Shirahama: A graduate of the design department of Tokyo University of the Arts, Shirahama works as a freelance illustrator and manga artist. She has illustrated comics covers for Marvel and the *Star Wars* franchise. She also created the manga *Eniale & Dewiela*.

Koji Terayama: Born in Tokyo in 1983, Terayama graduated from Waseda University with a degree in bioscience engineering. He joined Kodansha in 2009. After working as an editor for *Weekly Gendai* magazine, he joined *Morning Two*. In June 2016, he became its editor-in-chief. He began working with Shirahama-sensei as her editor in 2015.

HOW TO DESIGN YOUR OWN POINTED CAP

THE DESIGN OF A POINTED CAP DIFFERS DEPENDING
ON THE ATELIER ITS WITCH BELONGS TO!
TRY DRAWING YOUR VERY OWN POINTED CAP IN THE SPACE BELOW!

my own, ORIGINAL POINTED CAP!

RULES FOR POINTED CAP DESIGN:

1. THE CAP MUST NOT HAVE A BRIM ABLE TO CONCEAL THE FACE.
2. THE IDEAL POINTED CAP USES A CONICAL DESIGN THAT FULLY COVERS THE TOP OF THE HEAD.

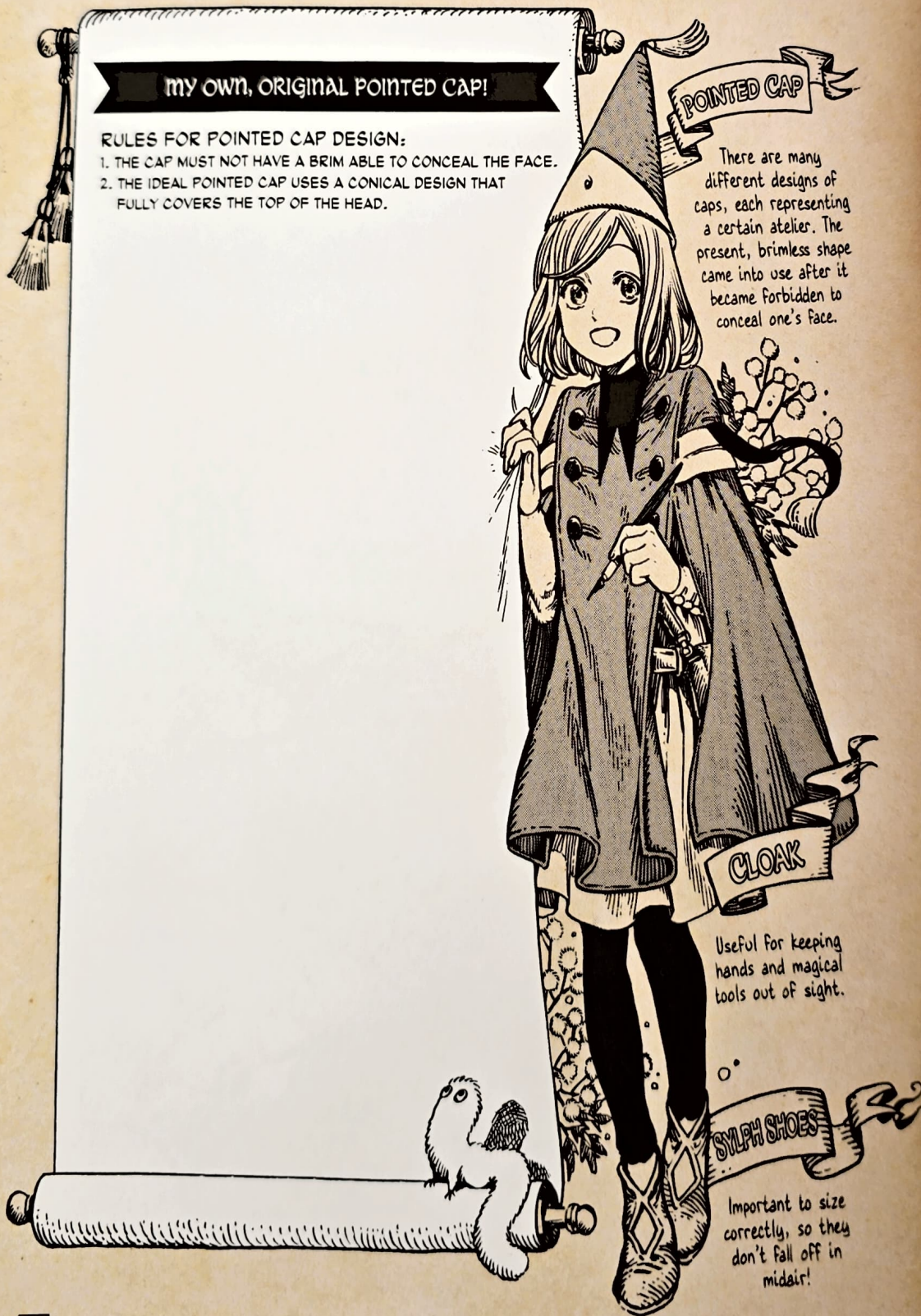
There are many different designs of caps, each representing a certain atelier. The present, brimless shape came into use after it became forbidden to conceal one's face.

CLOAK

Useful for keeping hands and magical tools out of sight.

SNIP SHOES

Important to size correctly, so they don't fall off in midair!

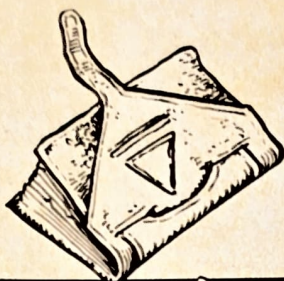




A TRIAL SET BY
FOUR LIBRARIANS...

A SECRET CONCEALED
BY THREE SAGES...

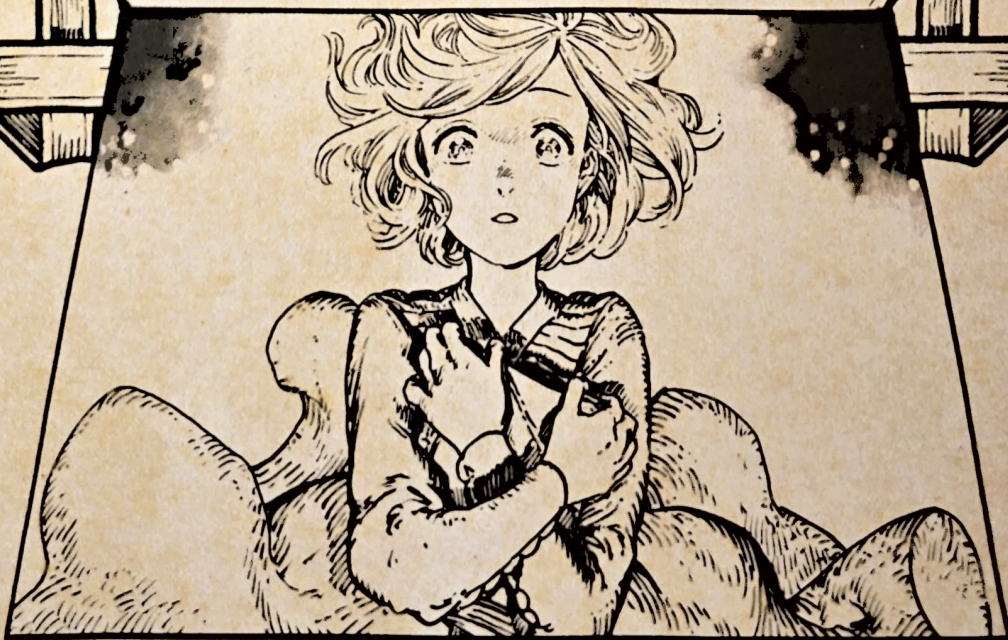
A CRIME CARRIED OUT
BY TWO WIZARDS...



THIS IS THE STORY...



...OF A LITTLE GIRL
IN AN UNKNOWN WORLD.

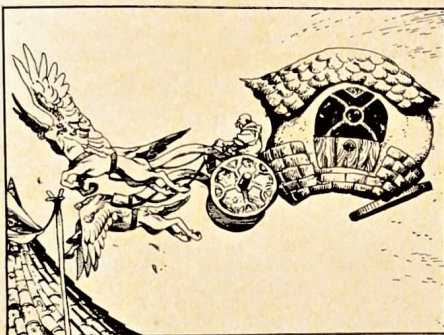


ANIMALS OF WITCH MAT ATELIER

PEGASUS

FIRST APPEARS IN CHAPTER 1

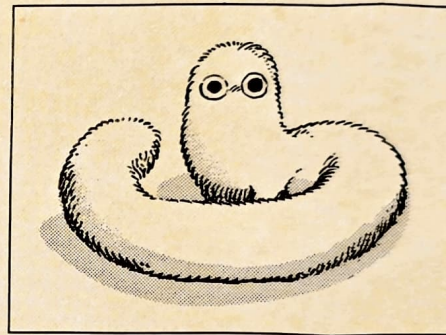
WINGED STEEDS USED TO DRAW FLYING CARRIAGES. EVEN WITHIN THE CITIES, PASSAGE ON SUCH A CARRIAGE IMPLIES A CERTAIN DEGREE OF WEALTH. THE ANIMALS HAVE TWO PAIRS OF WINGS—ONE PAIR EACH SPROUTING FROM WHERE ONE WOULD EXPECT TO FIND THE EARS AND TAIL OF A NORMAL HORSE. THESE EXTRA APPENDAGES ARE CAUSE FOR SOME SCIENTIFIC DEBATE ABOUT WHETHER THE ANIMAL SHOULD BE CLASSIFIED AS HAVING FOUR OR EIGHT LIMBS. SO AS TO AVOID LEG INJURIES, TAKEOFF FROM AND LANDING ON STONE IS GENERALLY PROHIBITED. SLIGHTLY SLOWER THAN A NORMAL HORSE WHEN RUNNING ON THE GROUND.



BRUSHBUDDY

FIRST APPEARS IN CHAPTER 4

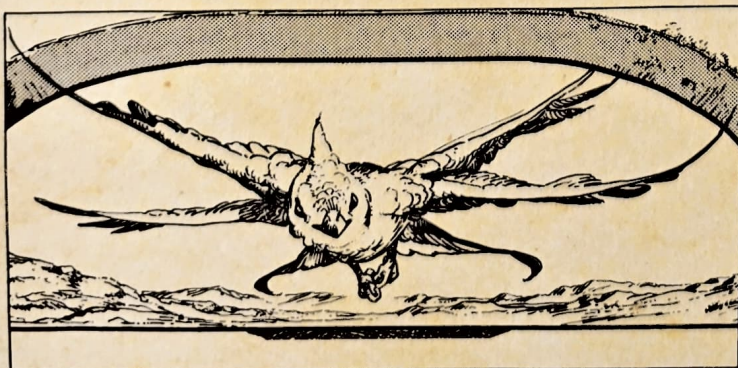
SMALL CREATURES COVERED IN FUR LIKE THE SOFT BRISTLES OF A WRITING BRUSH. FOND OF THE SCENT OF CONJURING INK. WHEN GIVEN THE CHANCE, KNOWN TO COVER THEIR OWN BODIES IN INK AND FROLIC AROUND; AN INK POT LEFT UNCOVERED AND UNATTENDED MAY RESULT IN QUITE A MESSY ROOM IF ANY BRUSHBUDDIES ARE AROUND. IN ADDITION TO THE WHITE-FURRED VARIETY, NUMEROUS OTHER COLORINGS EXIST—EVEN ONES WITH PATTERNED APPEARANCES. PREFERRED DIET INCLUDES NUTS AND FRUITS. EXHIBITS A MUCH SHORTER, ALMOST ROUND APPEARANCE AT BIRTH.



DRAGON

FIRST APPEARS IN CHAPTER 5

RARELY IF EVER SEEN NEAR CENTERS OF HUMAN POPULATION. DIET IS VARIED AND INCLUDES BOTH MEAT AND VEGETATION. EXTREMELY TERRITORIAL; KNOWN TO STRIKE AT INTRUDERS WITH ITS LONG, WHIPLIKE TAIL. CAPABLE OF GLIDING THROUGH THE AIR AND LARGELY UNAFFECTED BY FLAMES. THESE CREATURES' SCALES AND EGGSHELLS ARE SOURCES OF HIGHLY PRIZED CONJURING INK DYES.



QUADRYPHON

FIRST APPEARS IN CHAPTER 8

RESEMBLES A DRAGONFLY WHEN IN FLIGHT, WITH EACH OF ITS FOUR WINGS BEATING INDEPENDENT OF THE OTHERS. ITS METHOD OF FLIGHT IS THEREFORE QUITE UNLIKE THAT OF OTHER BIRDS, AND IT ENABLES THE CREATURE TO QUICKLY CHANGE DIRECTIONS IN MIDAIR. BODY LENGTH TYPICALLY MEASURES 60 CM AND WINGSPAN, 150 CM. A RELATED SPECIES IS THE "GRYPHON," WHICH EXHIBITS TWO ADDITIONAL LEGS INSTEAD OF THE EXTRA PAIR OF WINGS.

PRELIMINARY SKETCHES FOR WITCH HAT ATELIER



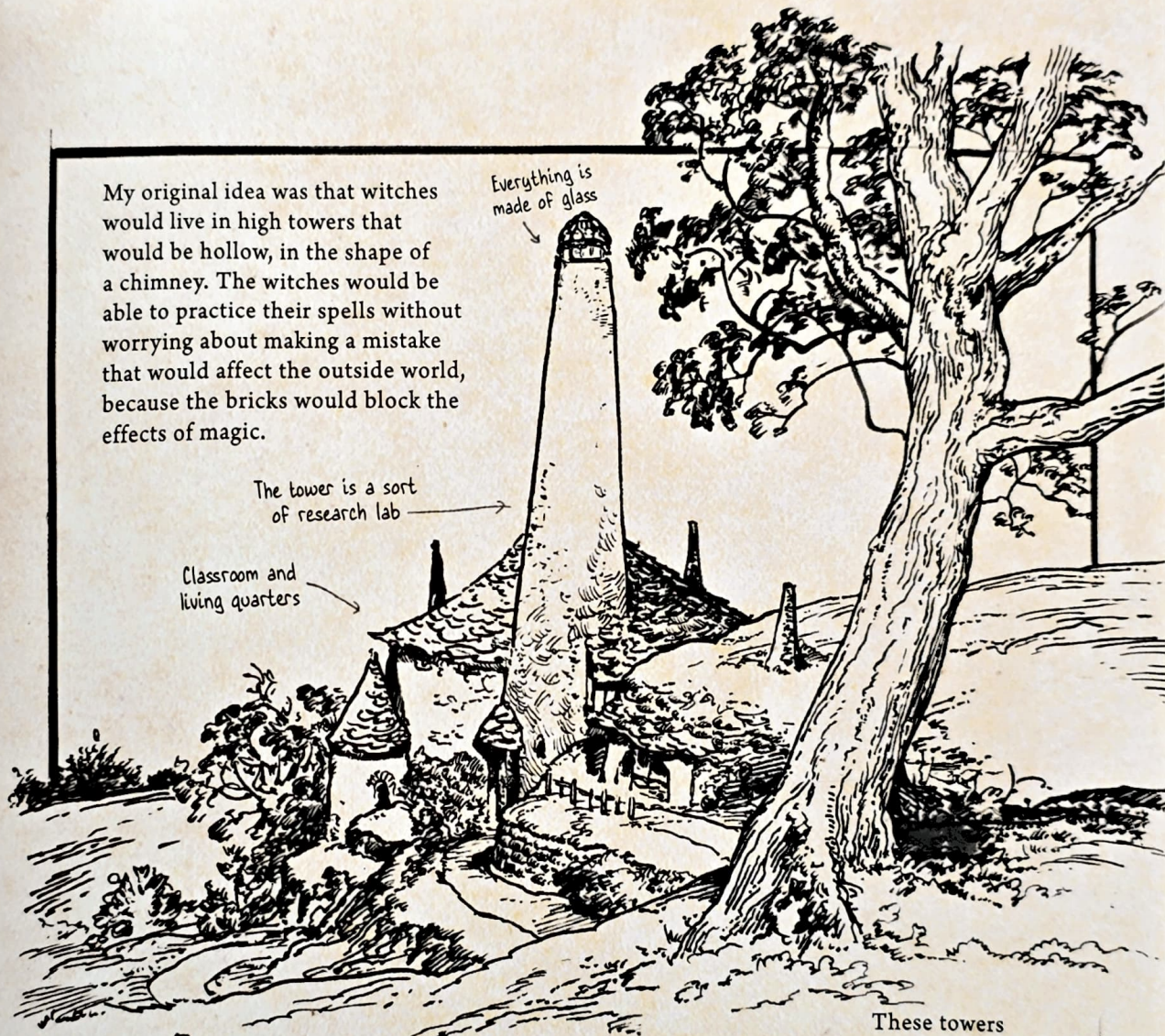
At the start, I only had a vague idea in my mind. I wanted to create a fantasy world where magic would obey specific rules. For example, the quality of a spell could depend on how precisely a magic circle was drawn... Magic would be present in many aspects of daily life, like making fire and lighting up the street lamps. For this universe to be believable, I needed to imagine all these techniques precisely. I knew it would be a smooth but steep path. I had plenty of time, but I also knew that it'd have to run out in the end. I would have to fight off loneliness, despite having friends around me. In short, my fictional torments had real-life impacts. And despite it all, I kept drawing. At the start, I wanted to set it in a school for witches, but because the series was supposed to go on for a while, I decided to narrow the scope to a modest atelier. Little girls faced with various problems, mysteries in a world ruled by witchcraft... Even though some details have changed since I created *Coco*, the basis for my story has remained the same.

My original idea was that witches would live in high towers that would be hollow, in the shape of a chimney. The witches would be able to practice their spells without worrying about making a mistake that would affect the outside world, because the bricks would block the effects of magic.

Everything is made of glass

The tower is a sort of research lab

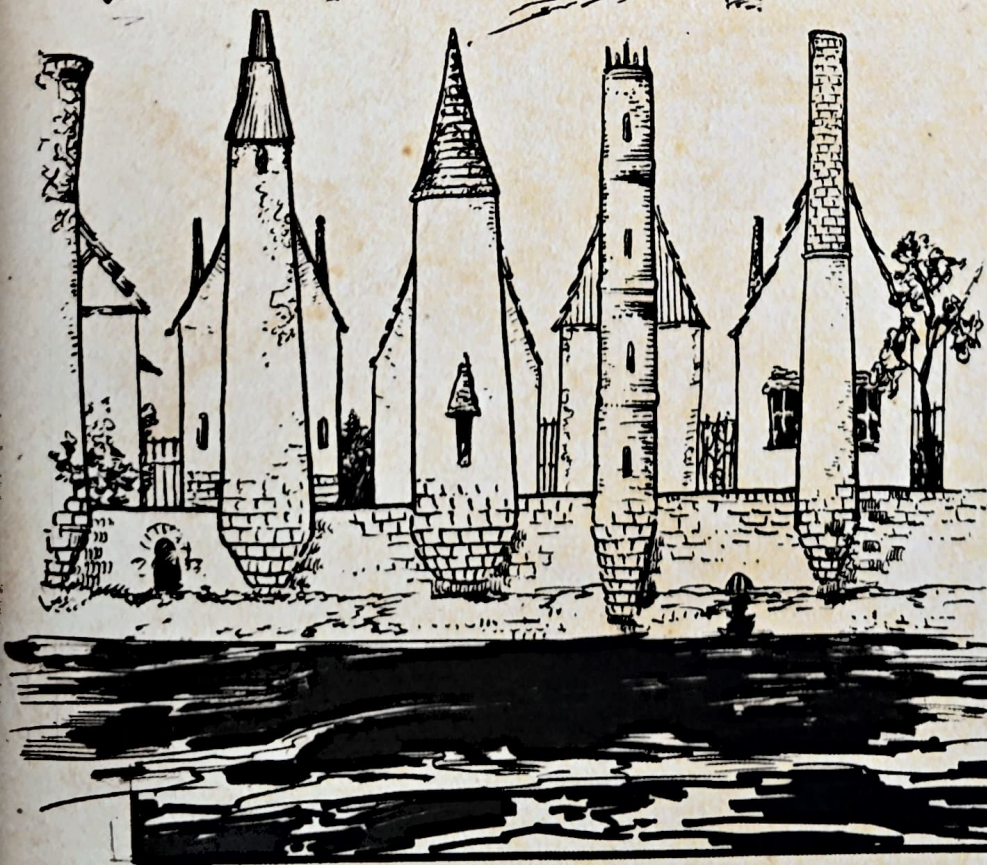
Classroom and living quarters



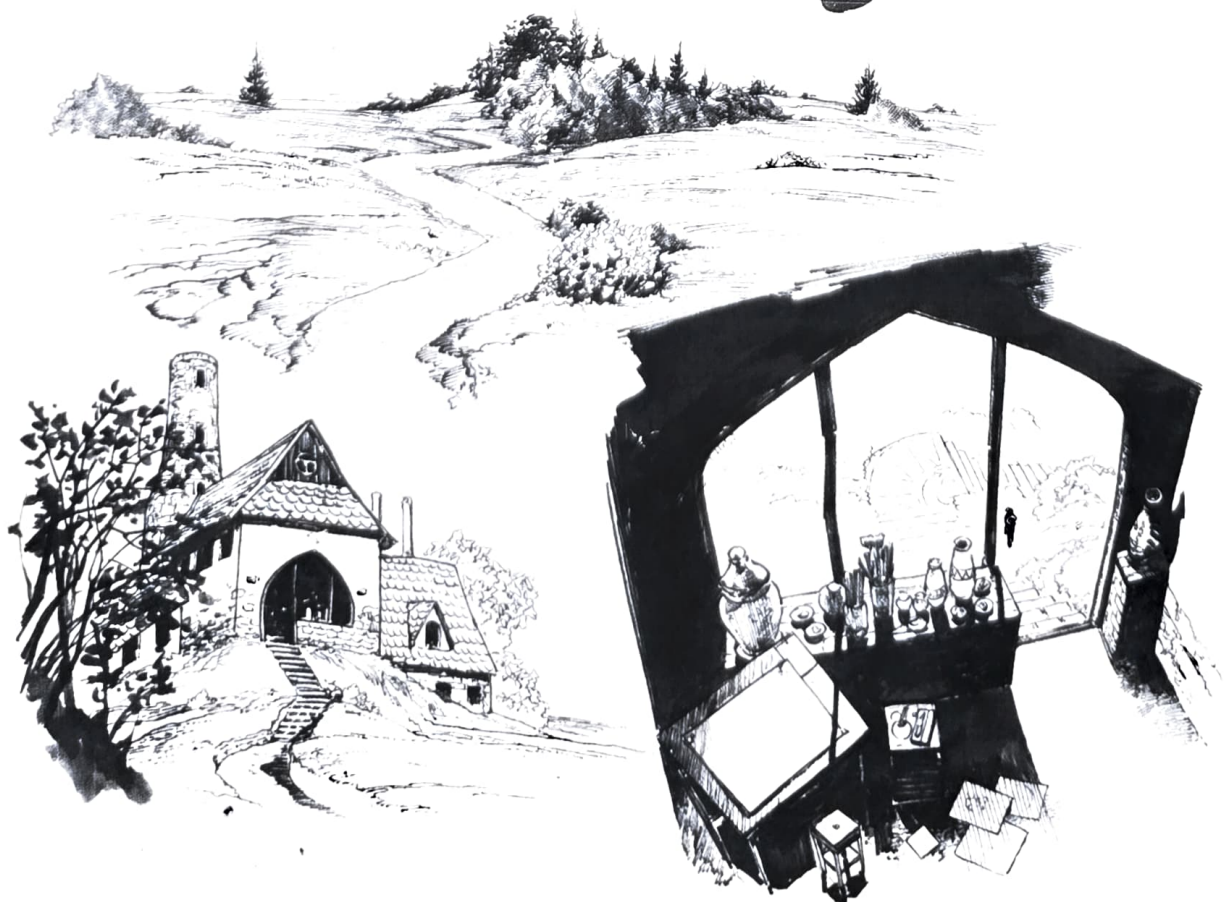
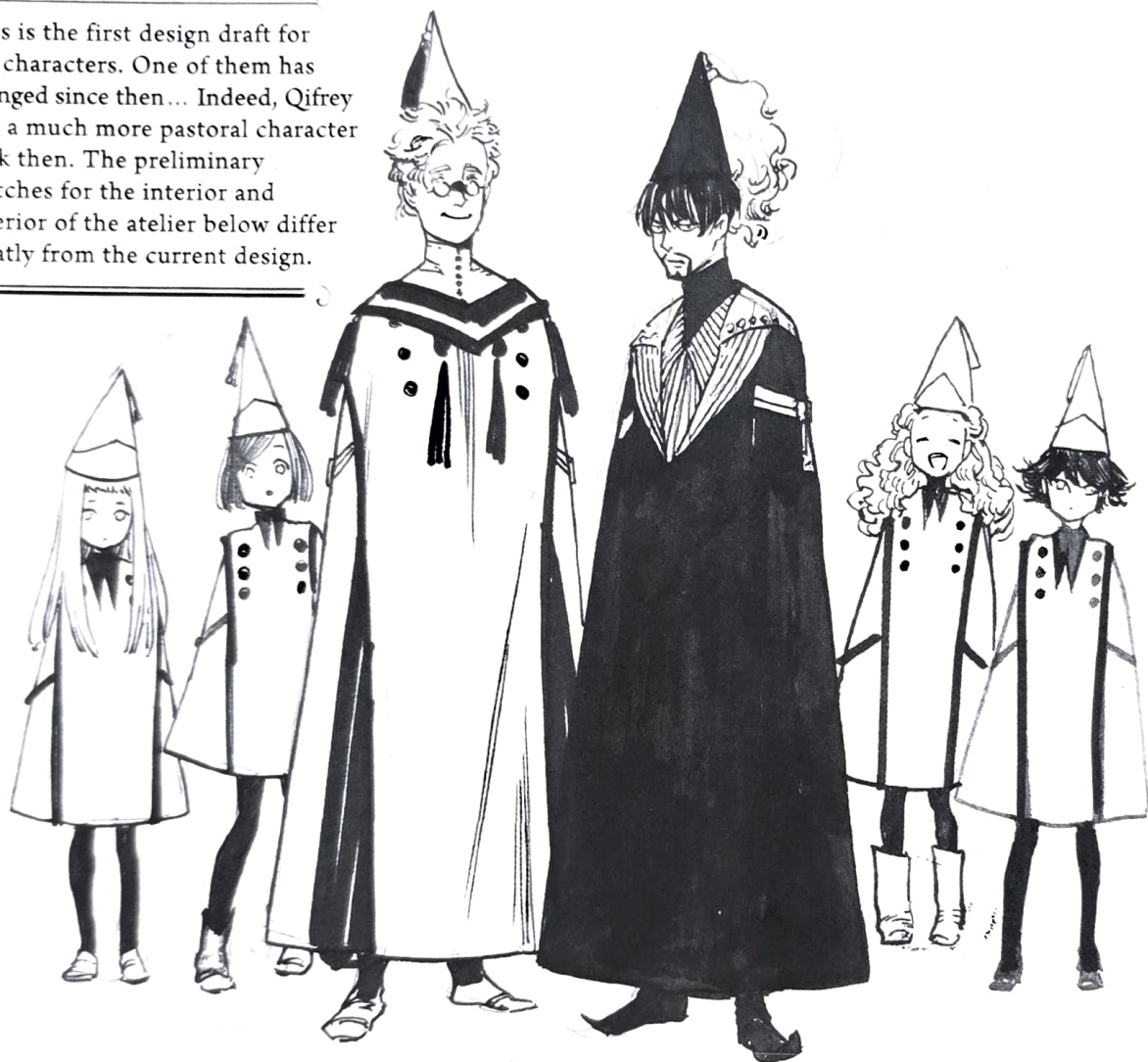
These towers would be sprinkled throughout the landscape of the countryside, but in the cities, where the ateliers were more numerous, there would have been dozens of towers rising next to each other.

In the manga, I still use this tower idea for locations like the academy or Kalhn, where many witches assemble in one place.

Many ateliers



This is the first design draft for the characters. One of them has changed since then... Indeed, Qifrey was a much more pastoral character back then. The preliminary sketches for the interior and exterior of the atelier below differ greatly from the current design.





On the right, a preliminary sketch of Qifrey. On the left is Qifrey's friend Alaira, who was originally supposed to sell magical items.





Olruggio hasn't changed much since these initial sketches. I meant for the witches' outfits to be unisex.

Opening scene



Coco's night gown



Both ends are tied

Base of the collar



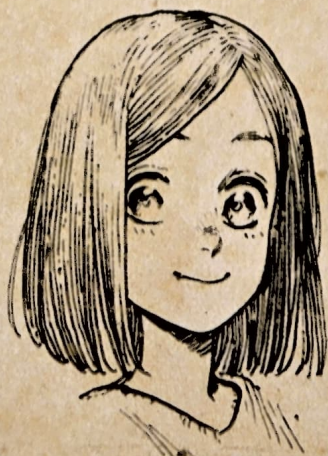
Pearls

Balloon sleeves (these are optional)

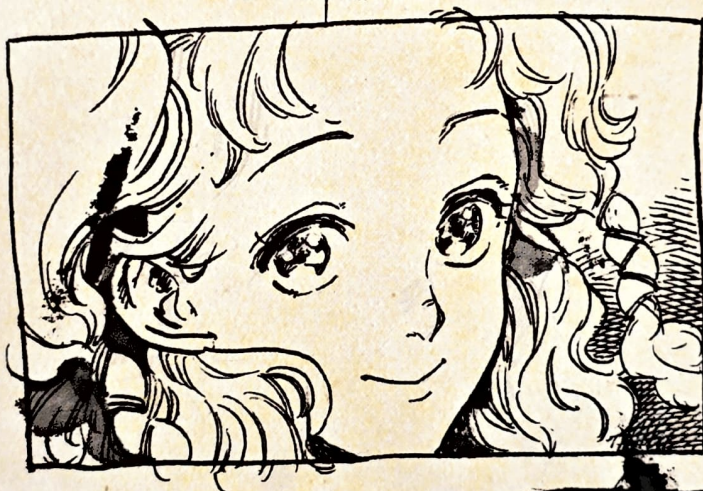
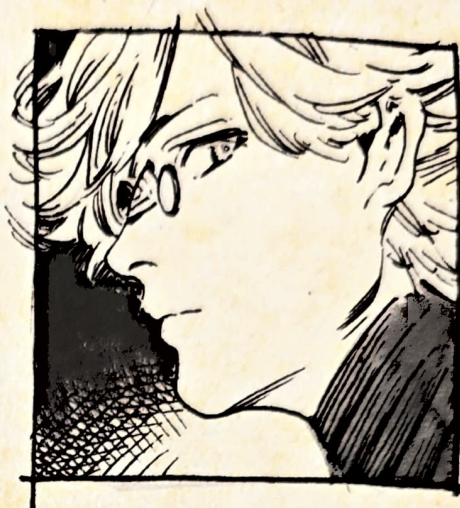
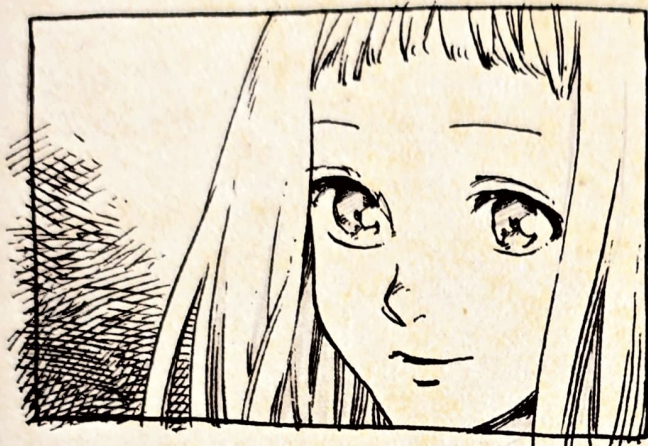


Long sleeves that cover the hands

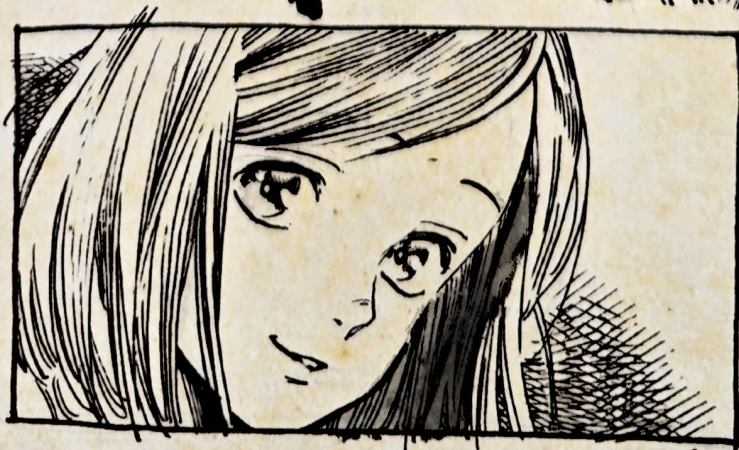
Or a simpler outfit that would make her country girl vibe come out



Here are the drafts for Coco's outfit when she is still living in her small village. I ended up choosing simpler clothes. The hooded witch on the right is the first iteration of the character who sells the illustrated book to Coco.

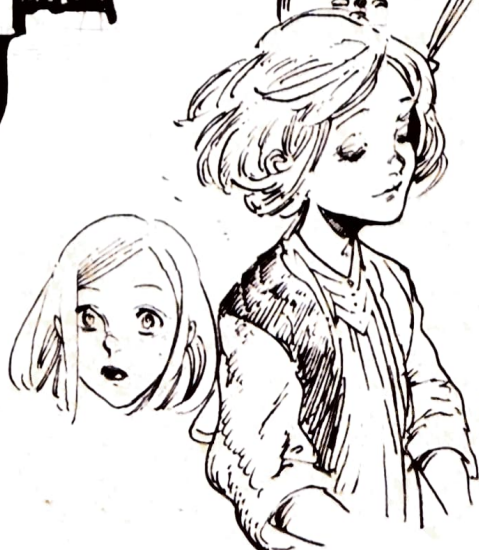
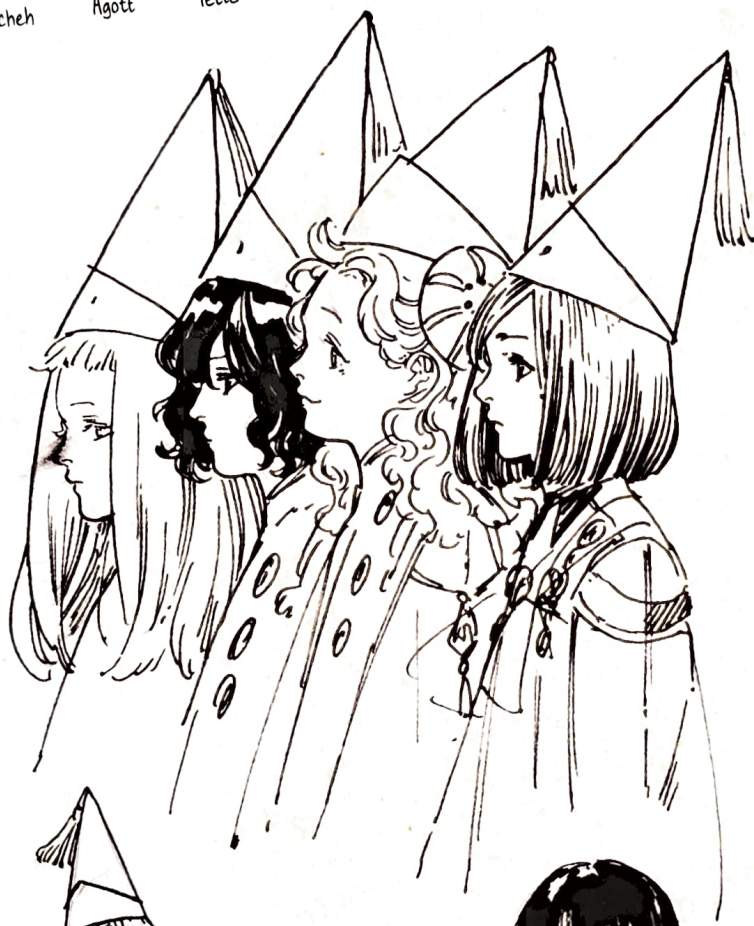


Here are a few character sketches I drew for practice. I was trying to refine their expressions, but I forgot the details. There are some ink stains here and there...



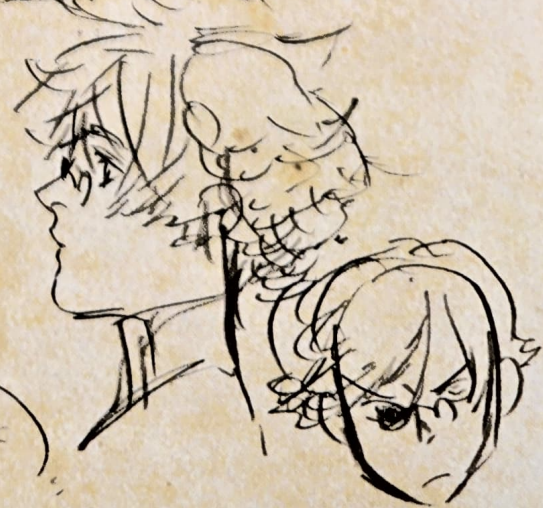


First design
of the
uniform



I have many unfinished sketches that I can't show you, as well as a lot of preliminary drafts that predate the manga's release. I was allowed to keep out those that I was too embarrassed to publish!

Series of expression sketches for Coco and Qifrey. The sketches on the left page were meant to help me finalize the character design before the series' launch.





This doughnut is so yummy!
I love it!

This is not an outfit to go rock climbing!

Pff!

Go change!

It's so pretty!

A river!

I also love chocolate!

You eat too much!

A trout...

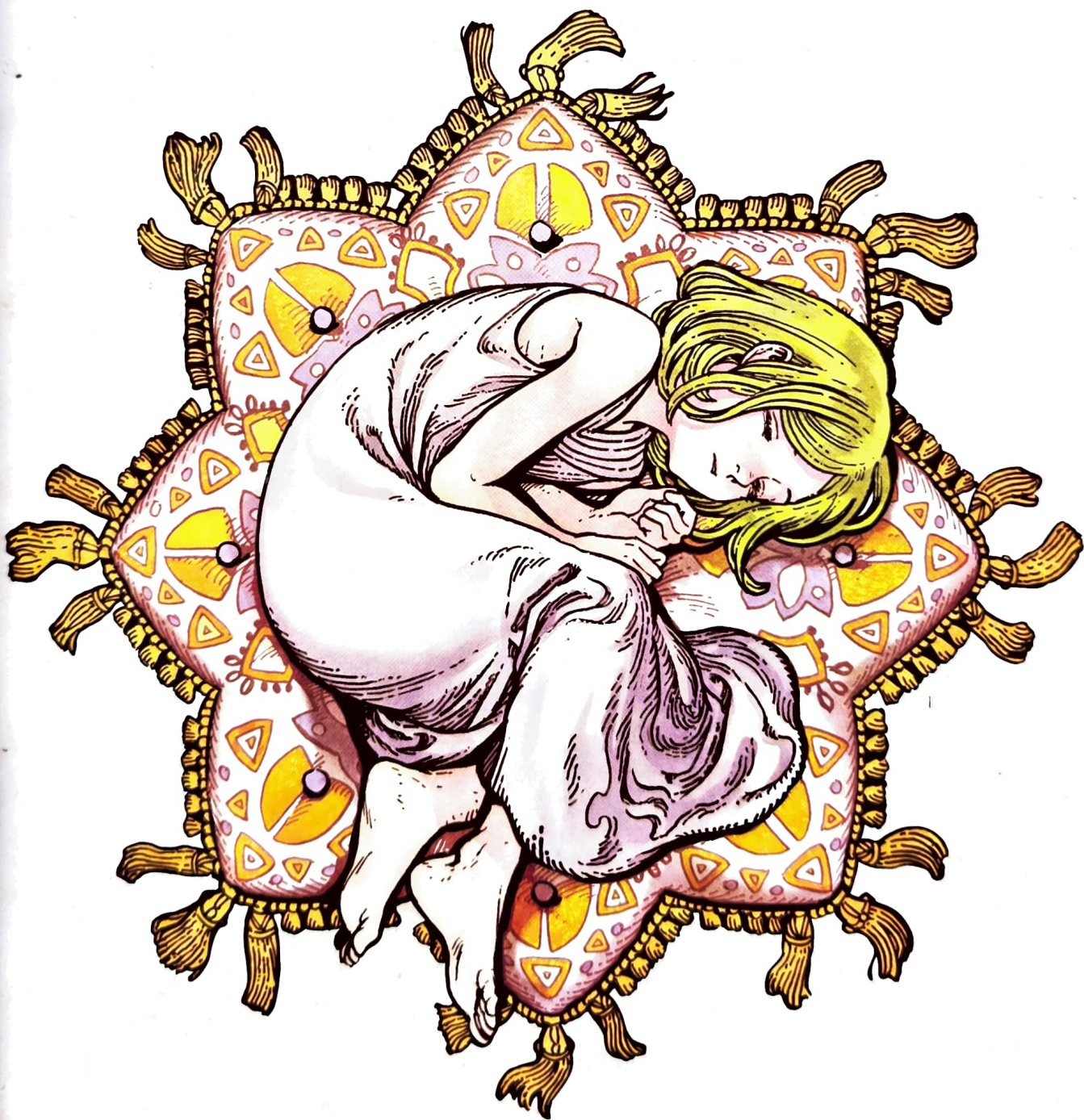
It's making me hungry...

My feet are cold...

My shoes are dirty...

This is nice...

Hmm, a ray of sunshine...





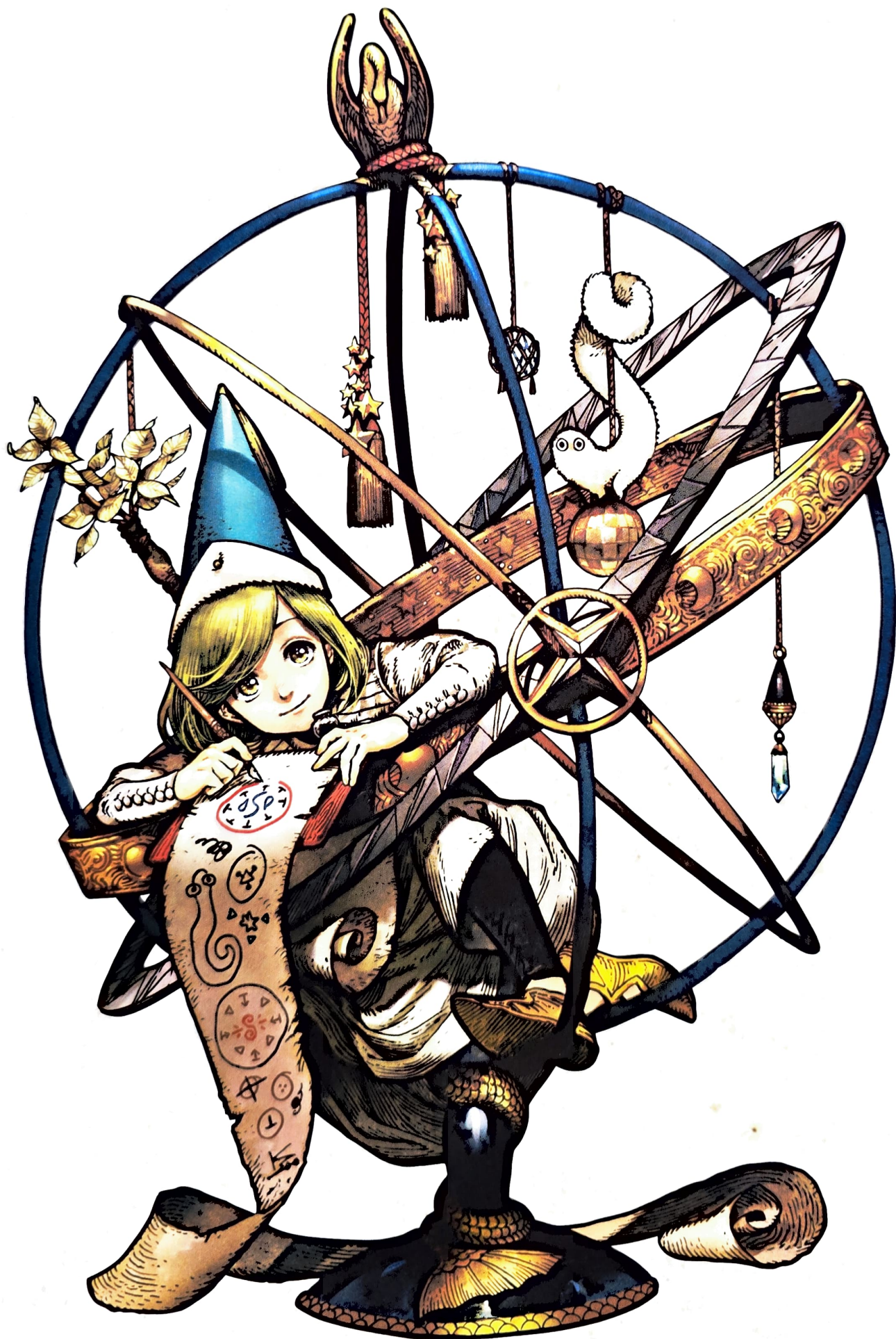




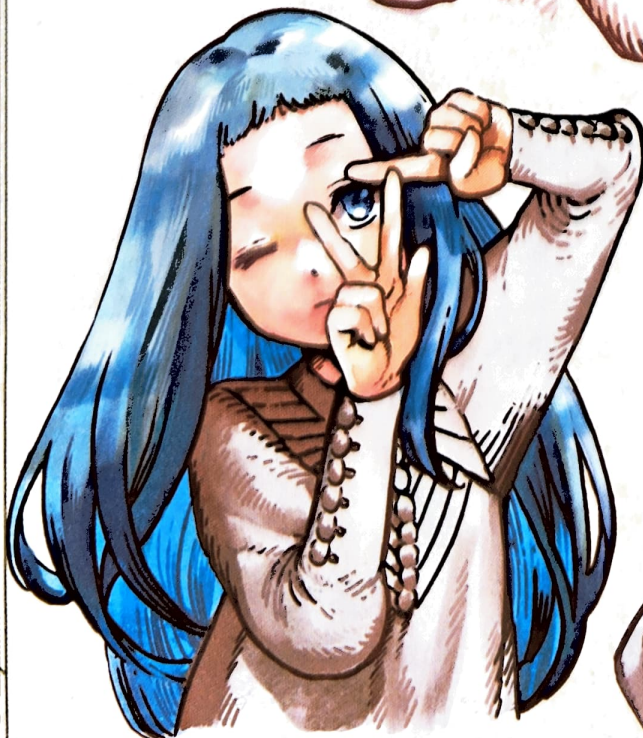
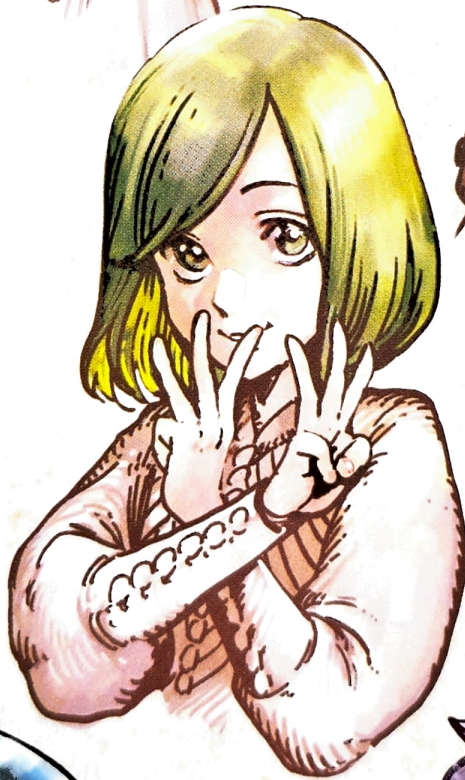
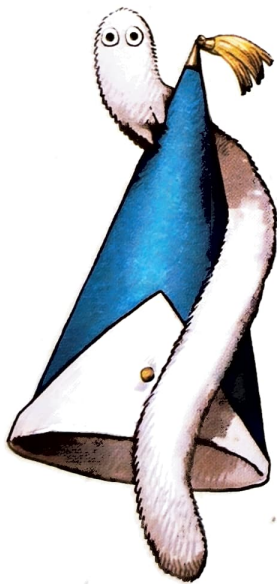


REJECTED LAYOUT FOR THE
TITLE PAGE OF VOLUME 1







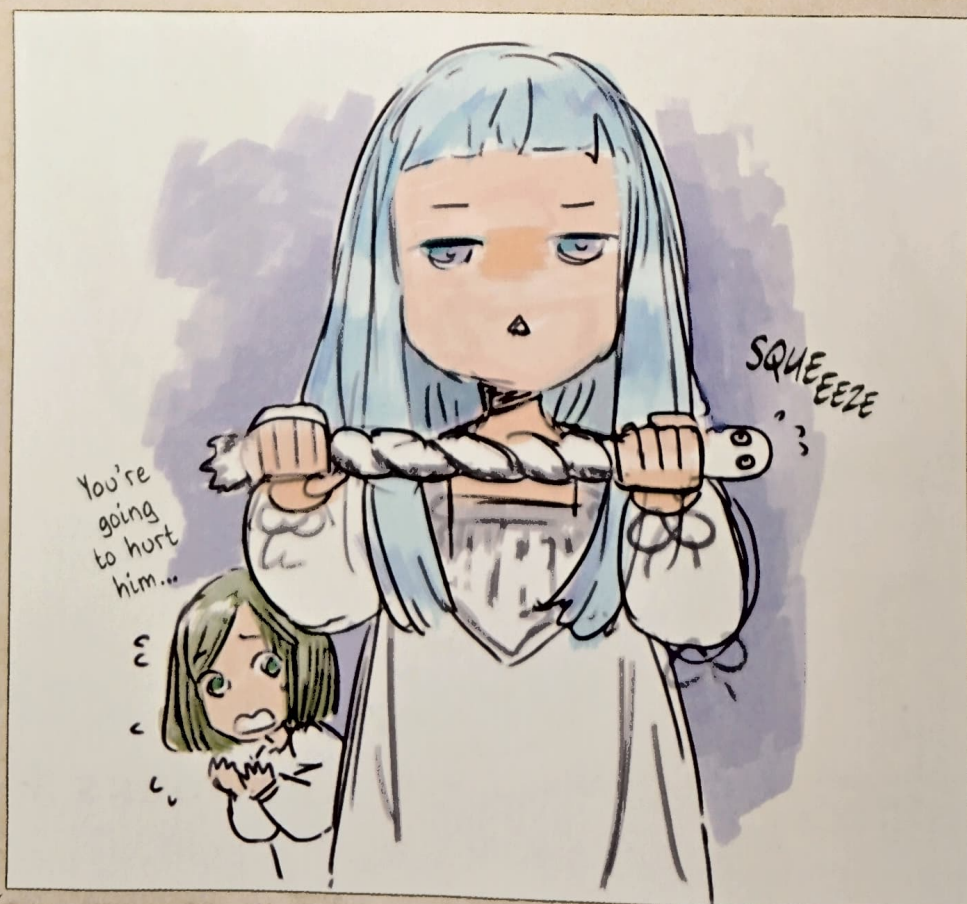














✿ ARTWORKS ✿







**"WOULDN'T YOU
LIKE TO BUY A PICTURE
BOOK ABOUT MAGIC?"**

In a magical world where everyone takes spells and dragons for granted, Coco has a simple dream: to be a witch. But everybody knows magicians are born, not made, and Coco doesn't possess the necessary talent. Resigned to her mundane life, Coco is about to give up on her dream...until the day a mysterious, traveling magician comes to her door. After secretly seeing him perform magic in a way she's never seen before, Coco learns that what everybody *knows* might not be the *truth*, and her dream might not be so far away.

**Includes Vol. 1-3 of *Witch Hat Atelier*,
plus author interviews, bonus art,
concept sketches, and more.**



KODANSHA

RATED:
TEEN 10+

USA
\$49.99

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ISBN 979-8-88877-779-4

