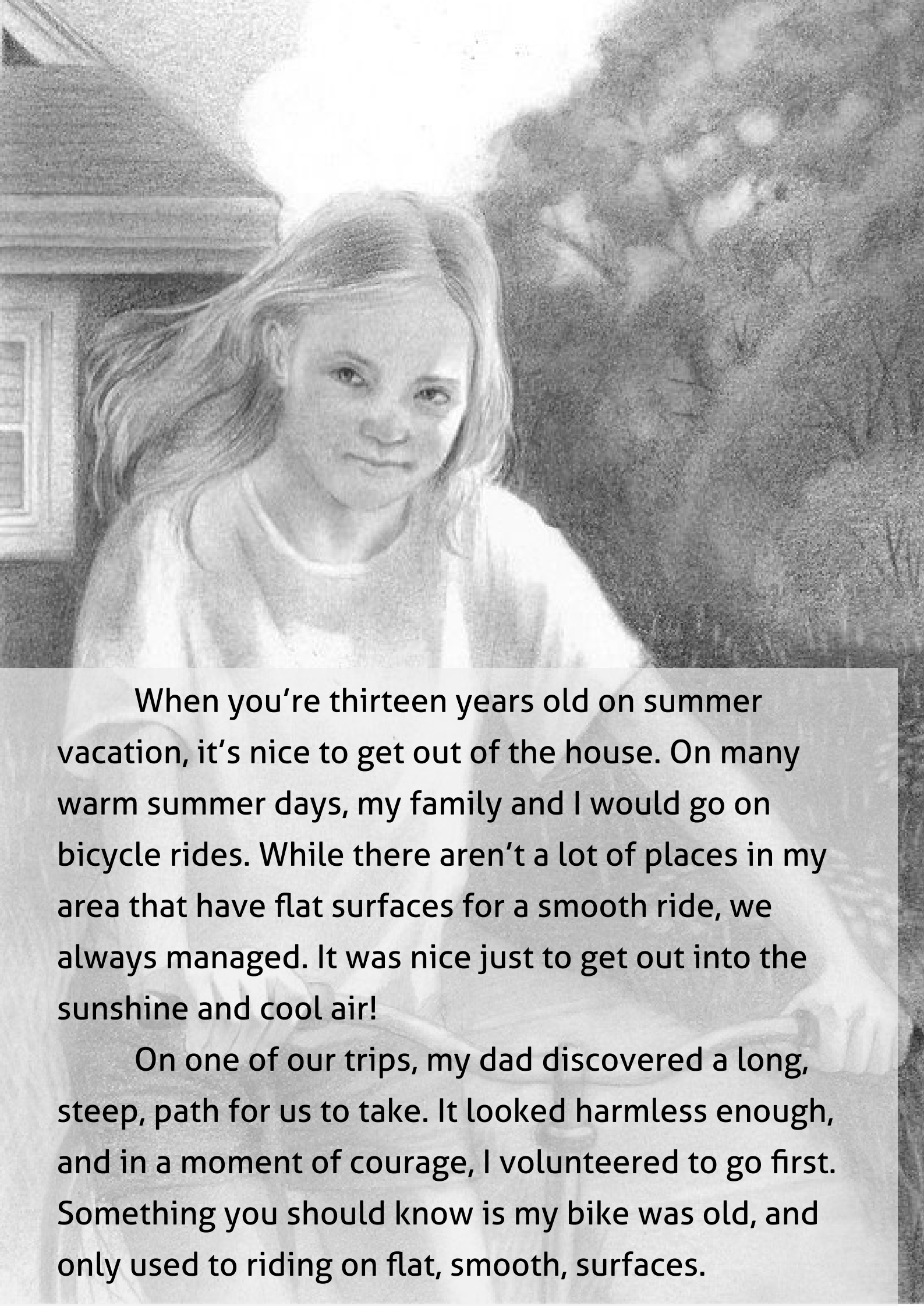


# THE BICYCLE DEBACLE

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When you're thirteen years old on summer vacation, it's nice to get out of the house. On many warm summer days, my family and I would go on bicycle rides. While there aren't a lot of places in my area that have flat surfaces for a smooth ride, we always managed. It was nice just to get out into the sunshine and cool air!

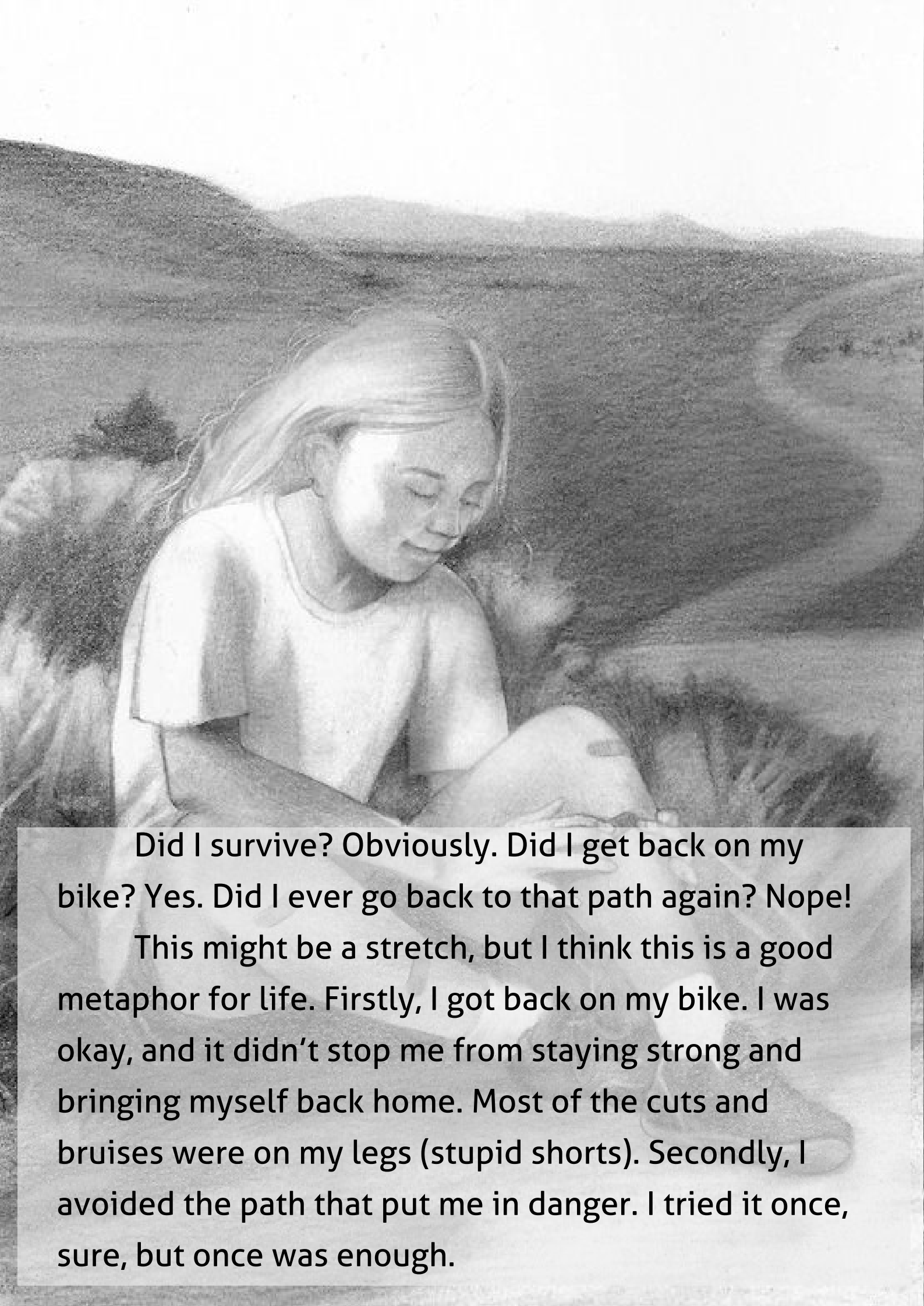
On one of our trips, my dad discovered a long, steep, path for us to take. It looked harmless enough, and in a moment of courage, I volunteered to go first. Something you should know is my bike was old, and only used to riding on flat, smooth, surfaces.

That's what I was comfortable with as well, so as I descended the gravel hill I quickly realized how unprepared I was. The bike started moving way too fast, wobbling uncontrollably.

That was the moment I discovered the right brake wasn't working properly. As I skidded along the gravel road and tipped on my side, my mind cleared. There was no panic, or fear, no thought.

There was just me, falling down a hill.





Did I survive? Obviously. Did I get back on my bike? Yes. Did I ever go back to that path again? Nope!

This might be a stretch, but I think this is a good metaphor for life. Firstly, I got back on my bike. I was okay, and it didn't stop me from staying strong and bringing myself back home. Most of the cuts and bruises were on my legs (stupid shorts). Secondly, I avoided the path that put me in danger. I tried it once, sure, but once was enough.

Many people avoid getting out of their comfort zone and living courageously. Taking a dangerous bike trail isn't that extreme, but for me at thirteen it was definitely a challenge. I play it safe and I like to have a calm, peaceful life.

But that doesn't mean everyone needs to. Adventures can come in many forms, mine just happen to come from reading fiction about travel and love.





When I got home after biking that day, my mother panicked, wondering why I was scraped up. That's what mothers do though. We told her everything was fine, because it was. My dad spent the rest of the afternoon fixing my bike. Brakes are important, without them we'd all be living in the fast lane.



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