

CHAPTER VIII – THE CURSE OF PROBOPOLO

Fritz, Laio and Maxim released the true king Gandra and Arlequina from the old shed and Gandra started to tell them the terrible mistake he had made, having listened to Mad-ellia and disobeyed the teachings of the Book of Life.

Fritz started to tell his father the things that Mad-ellia had done in his name, bringing great sorrow and suffering to the people of Doggerland.

- 'Oh, my... What have I done!! I am so terribly sorry!' – exclaimed king Gandra. – 'I did not put my trust in the God of Life and listened to Mad-ellia. She said the Book of Life was just an old book, an old-fashioned book, and that all that was written in it should be regarded as only ancient legends written by danes, not by the God of Life... she said I needed to renew my mind... I ended up letting me be influenced by her... Please, forgive me!'

Laio listened to the words of the king, then he said:

- 'We need to reverse this situation, we have to release our people from this evil influence of Mad-ellia. But how are we going to do that? It seems that she has evil powers!'

Arlequina started to tell them all about Mad-ellia and the world that she came from.

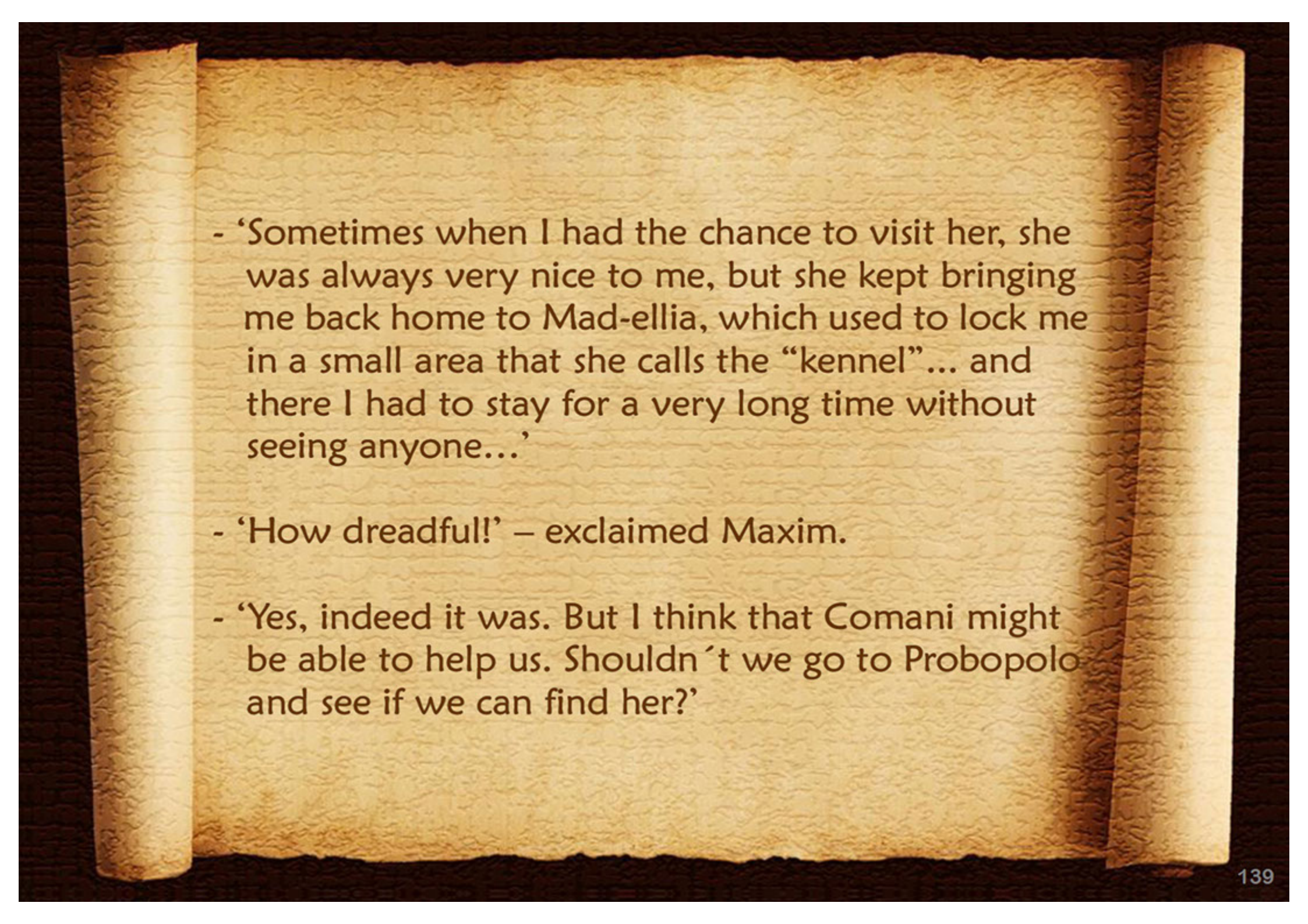
- 'Mad-ellia belongs to a world that is cursed.' – said Arlequina. She went on telling them everything she knew about Probopolo, because that was where she was born. She went on and said:
- 'Probopolo is a world that is now in the process of self destruction. There are wars and hunger, many diseases and a lot of misery. The ozone layer is being destroyed, forests are being burned, many species of animals are endangered, the air, rivers and sea are being polluted and the whole environment is suffering, and the atmosphere is undergoing global warming!'

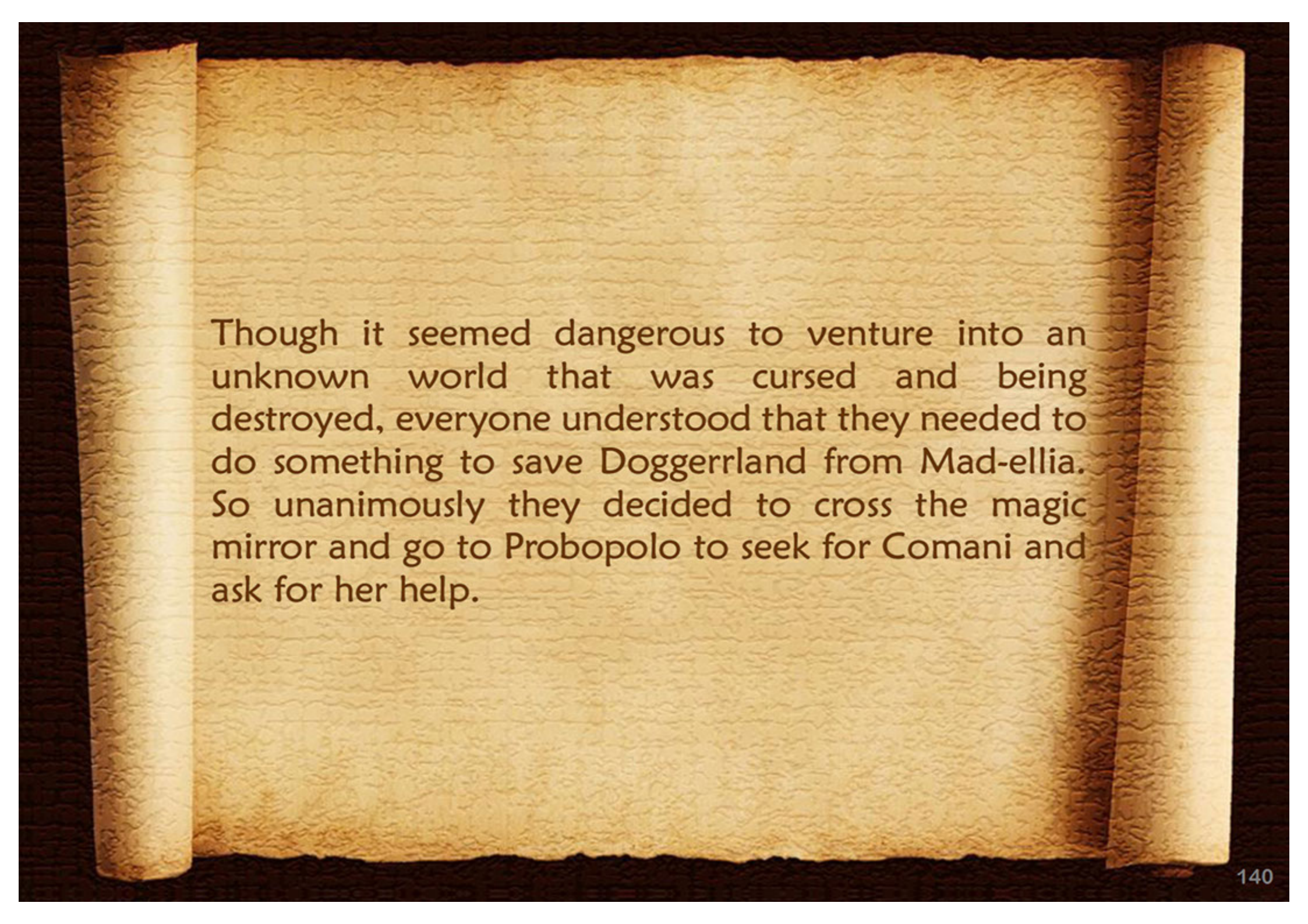
Everyone was devastated by the narrative of Arlequina about Probopolo. Maxim then asked Arlequina:

- 'But what happened? Why is this world being destroyed? Why is it cursed?'
- 'I don't know exactly, but it seems it has something to do with free will...' - answered Arlequina.
- 'Free...what?' – replied Fritz.

- 'Well, I don't know exactly how to explain. But there is a young lady who lives in Probopolo, just next door to Mad-ellia's house. Her name is Comani ... she is a human, like Mad-ellia, but she is very different from her. She has many of us, great danes, living with her, but she is gentle and affectionate with everyone ...she is a lovely friend to the ones that are under her care, the ones living with her in her home.'

Arlequina sighed and continued:

- 
- 'Sometimes when I had the chance to visit her, she was always very nice to me, but she kept bringing me back home to Mad-ellia, which used to lock me in a small area that she calls the "kennel"... and there I had to stay for a very long time without seeing anyone...'
 - 'How dreadful!' – exclaimed Maxim.
 - 'Yes, indeed it was. But I think that Comani might be able to help us. Shouldn't we go to Probopolo and see if we can find her?'



Though it seemed dangerous to venture into an unknown world that was cursed and being destroyed, everyone understood that they needed to do something to save Doggerland from Mad-ellia. So unanimously they decided to cross the magic mirror and go to Probopolo to seek for Comani and ask for her help.