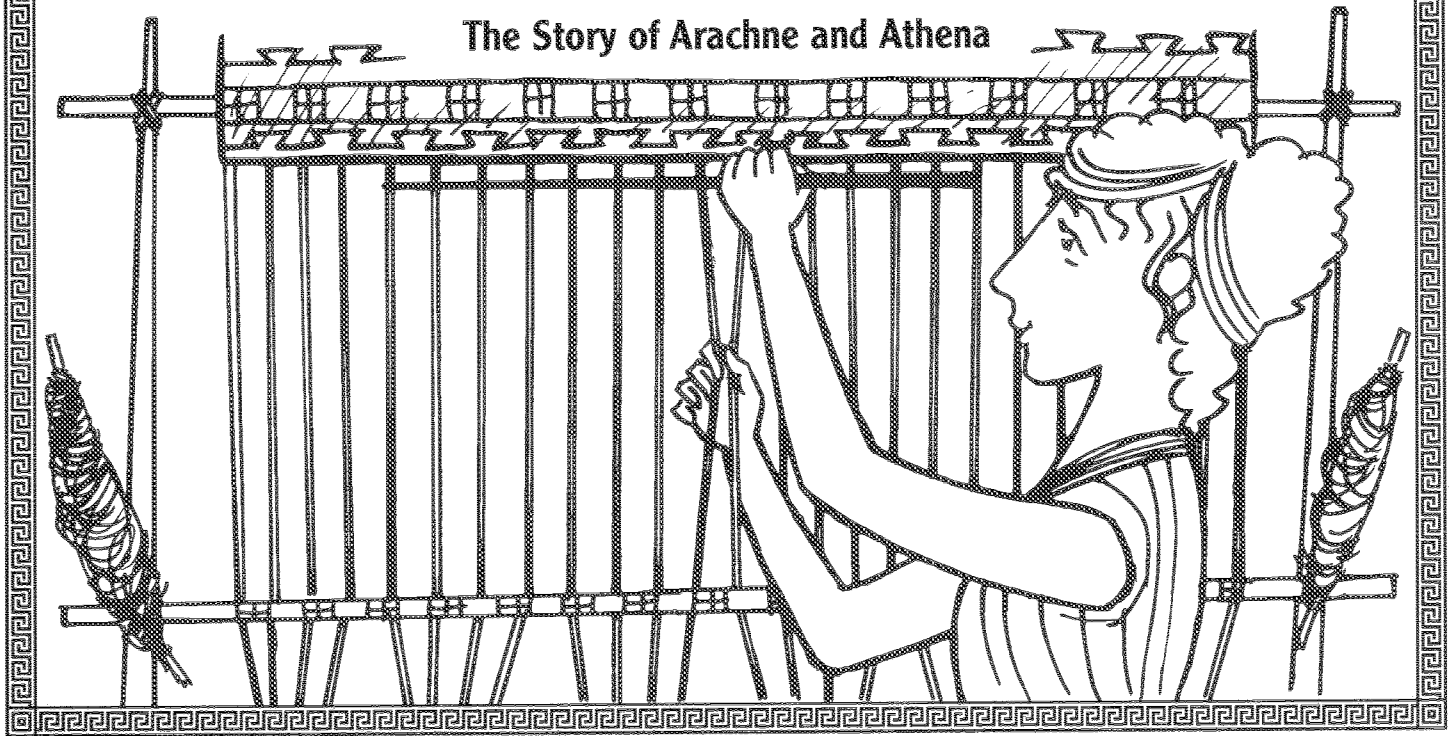


A TALE OF TWO SPINNERS

The Story of Arachne and Athena



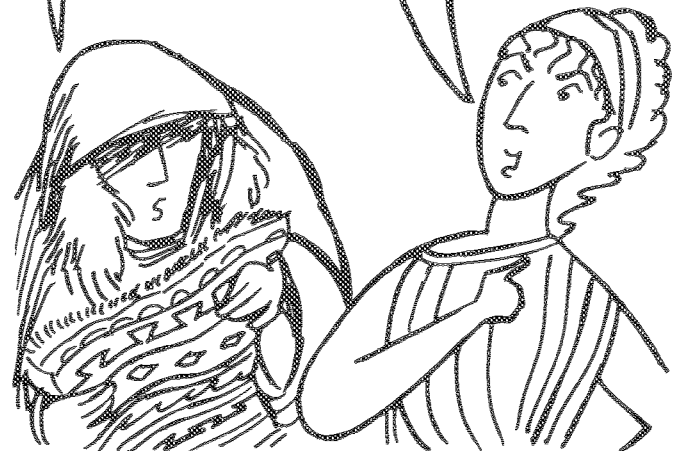
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Athena, the goddess of wisdom, thought she heard someone say her name. She swooped down from Mount Olympus to listen. When she heard the boastful girl daring to compare herself to a goddess, Athena disguised herself as an old woman and knocked on Arachne's door.

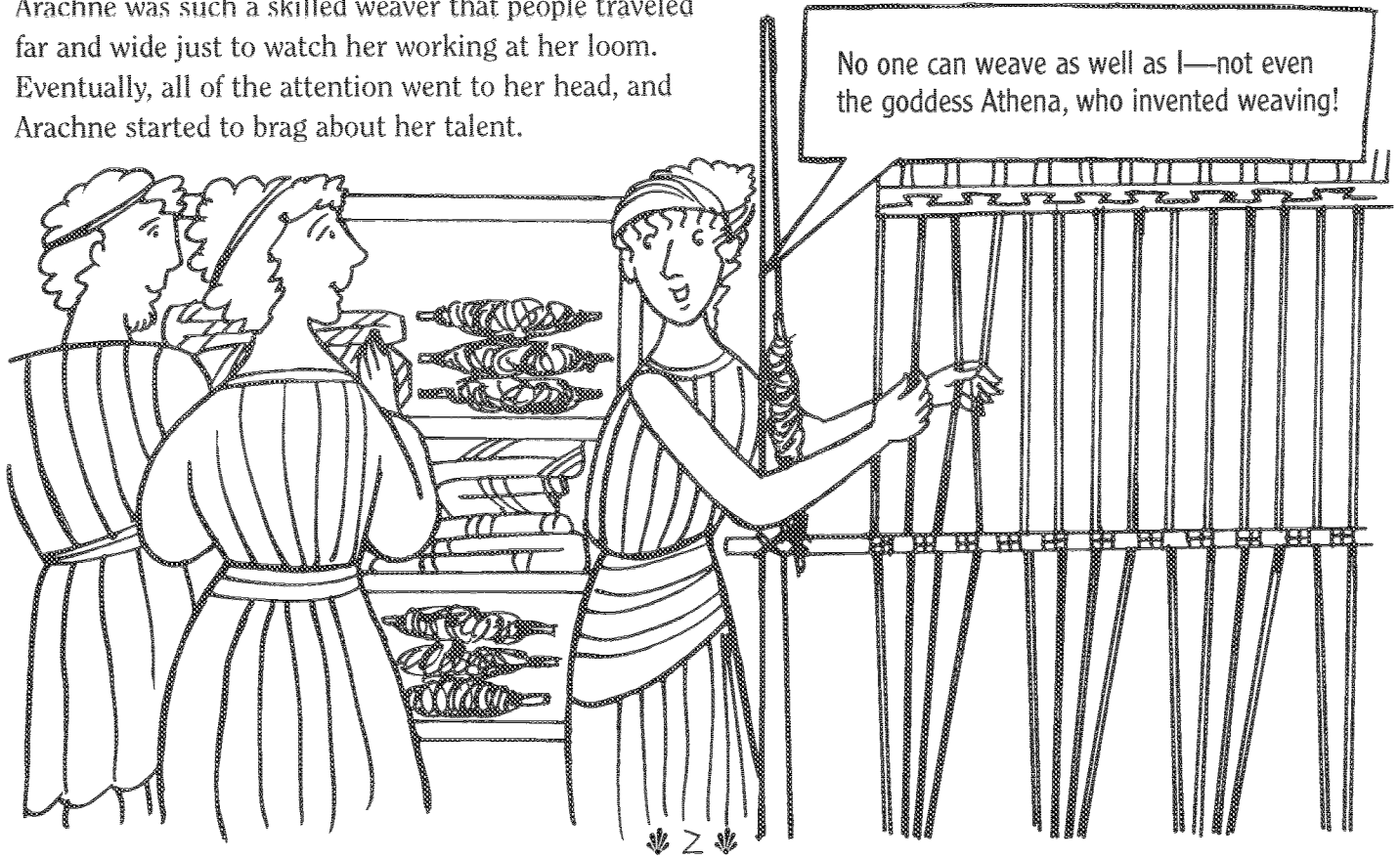


I hear that Athena has blessed you with great skill.

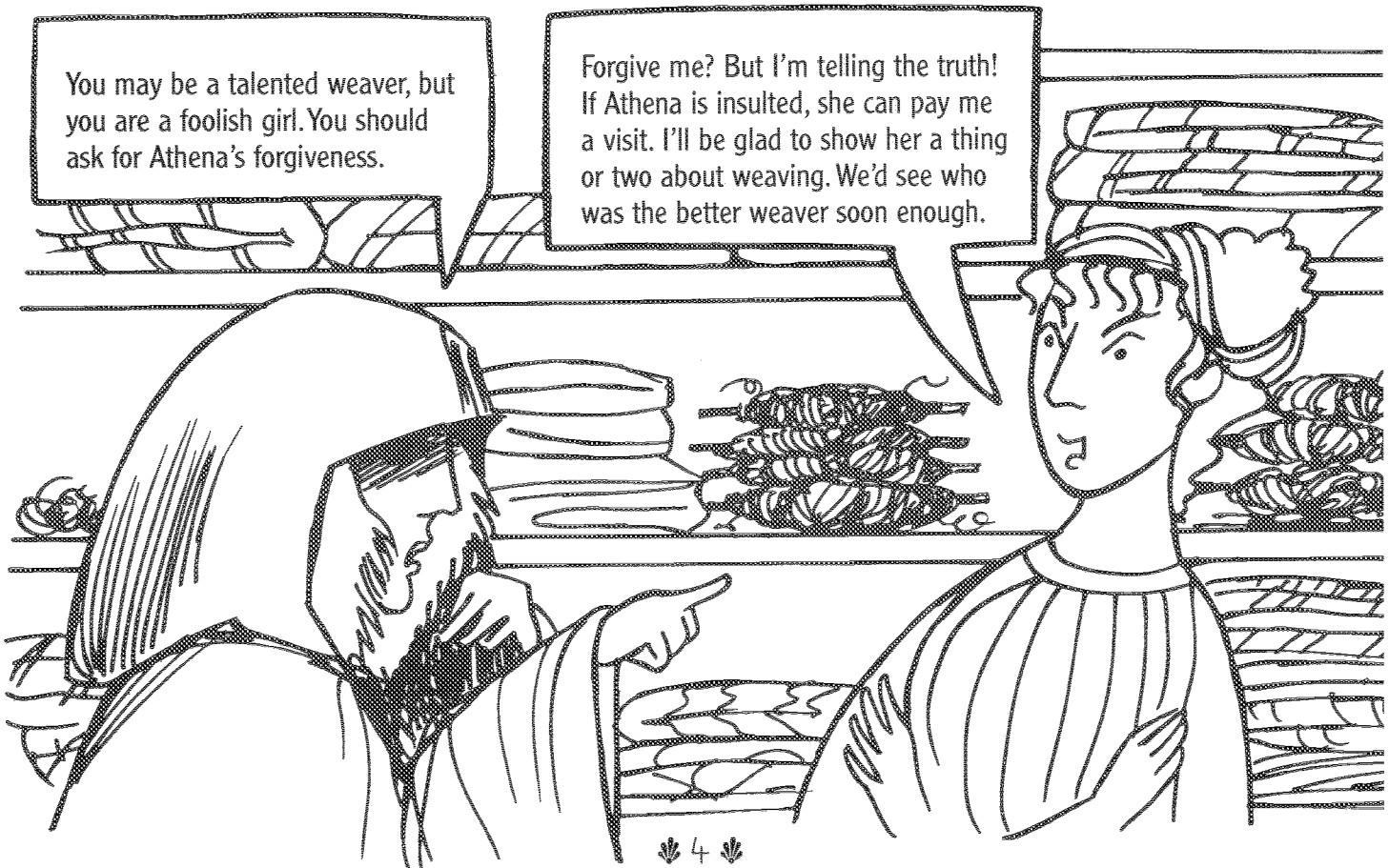
My talents are my own. Athena has nothing to do with it. She may be a goddess, but her skill is no match for mine.



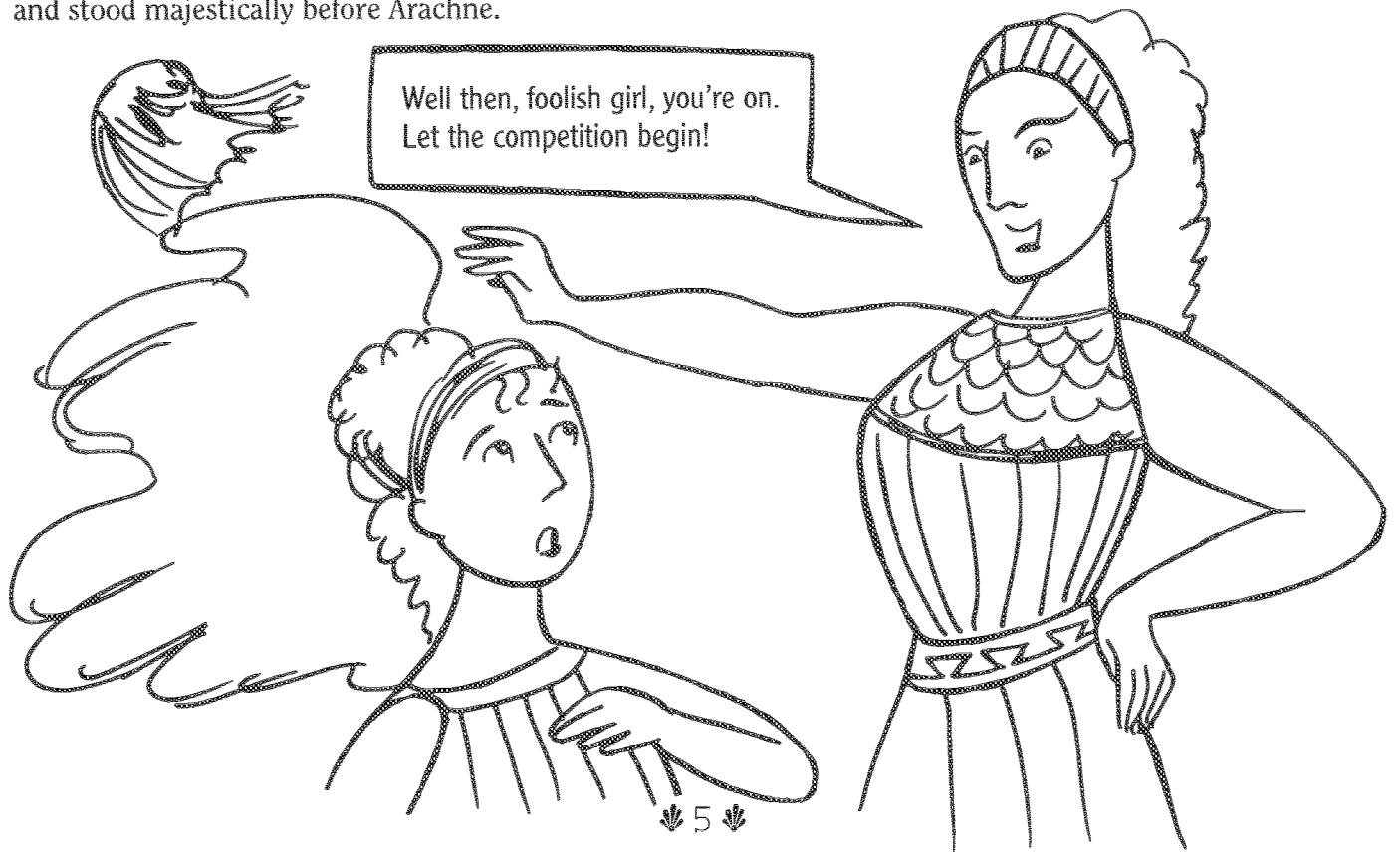
Arachne was such a skilled weaver that people traveled far and wide just to watch her working at her loom. Eventually, all of the attention went to her head, and Arachne started to brag about her talent.



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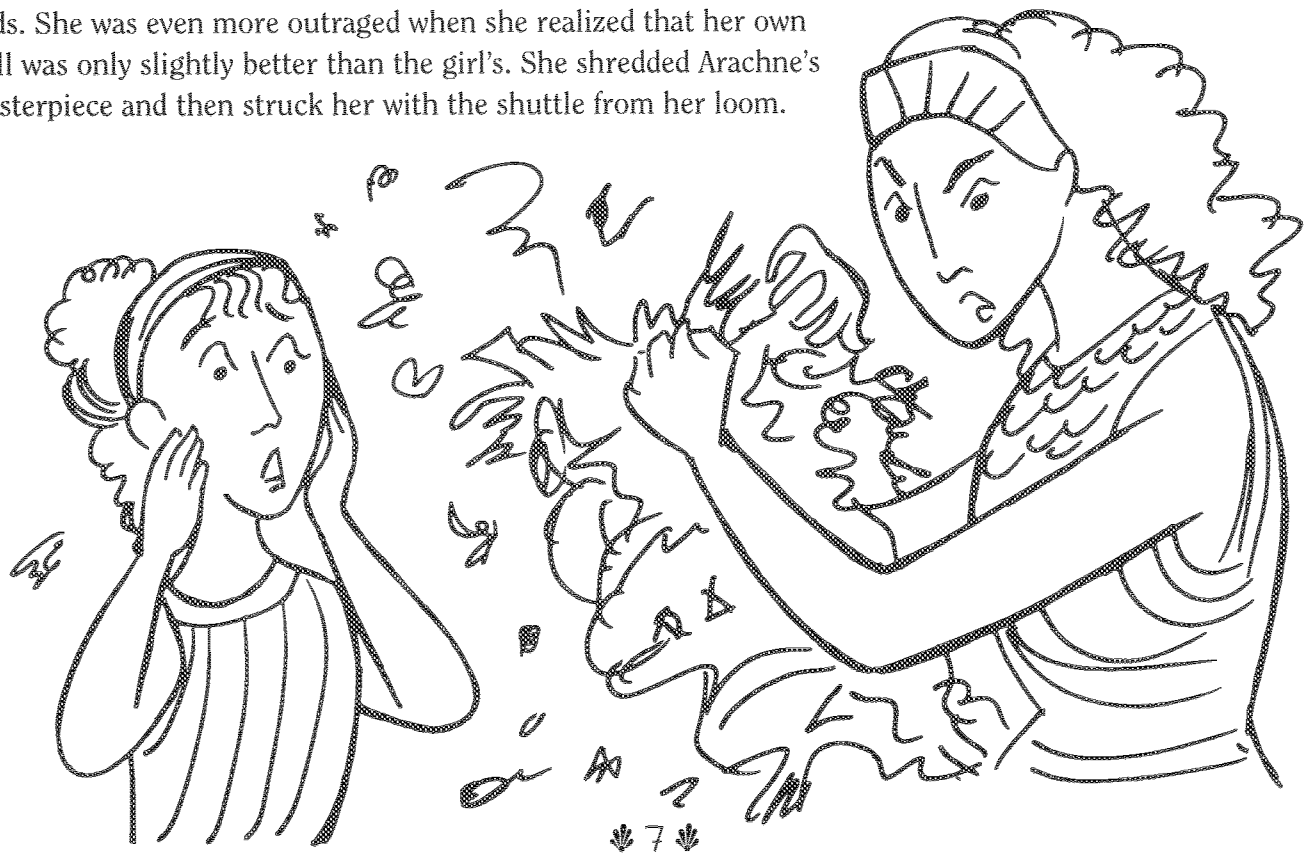


With that, Athena threw off her cloak and wig and stood majestically before Arachne.

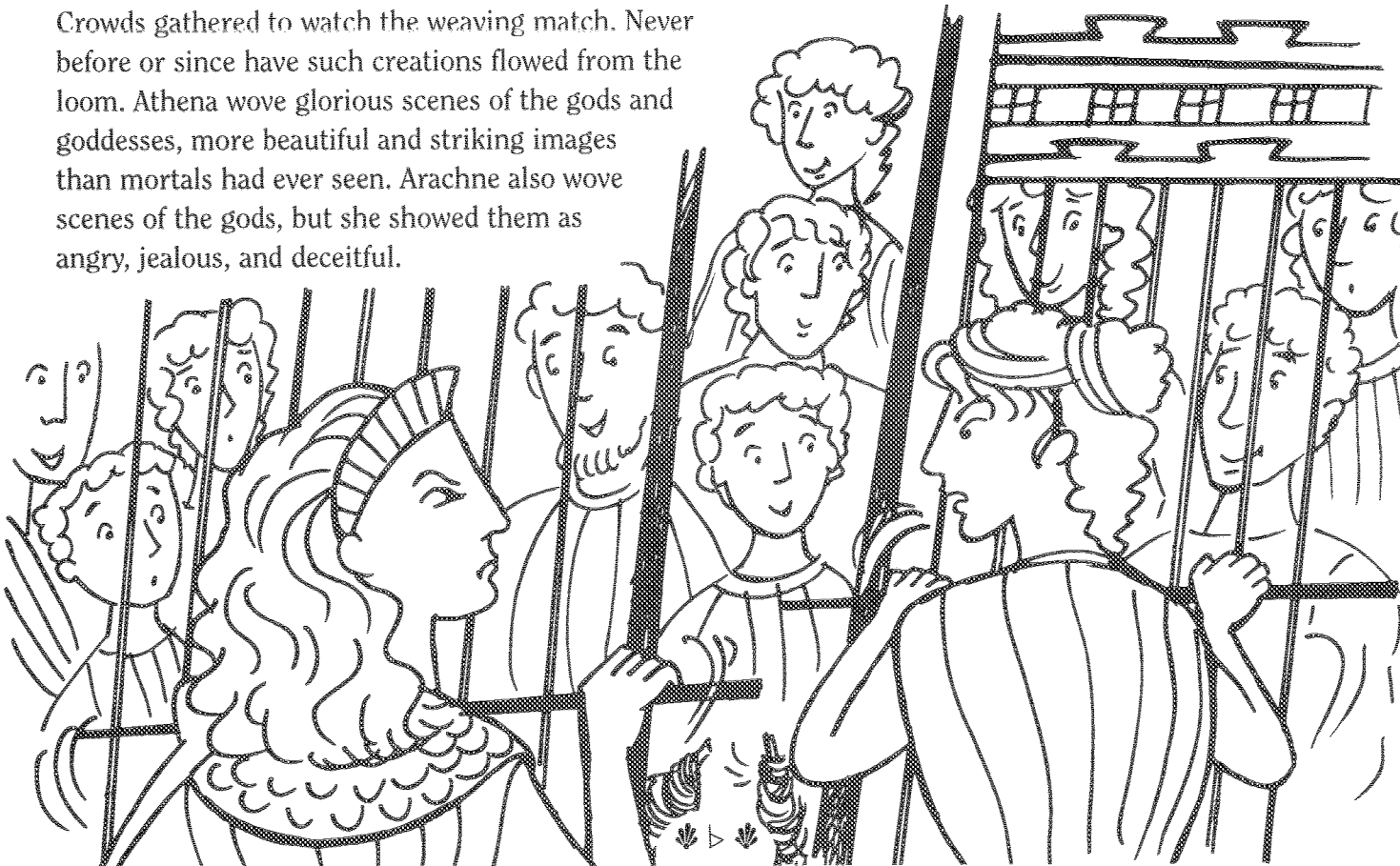


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Athena was furious when she saw how Arachne had portrayed the gods. She was even more outraged when she realized that her own skill was only slightly better than the girl's. She shredded Arachne's masterpiece and then struck her with the shuttle from her loom.



Crowds gathered to watch the weaving match. Never before or since have such creations flowed from the loom. Athena wove glorious scenes of the gods and goddesses, more beautiful and striking images than mortals had ever seen. Arachne also wove scenes of the gods, but she showed them as angry, jealous, and deceitful.



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In that moment, Arachne began to shrink until her whole body was smaller than a little toe. She started to sprout legs until she had eight in all, and black hair grew all over her body. The tiny creature scurried to the highest spot it could find, and there it began weaving a delicate web—a home for the world's first spider.

