

All the stories in this book introduce words that contain an **r-controlled vowel**.

When the letter *r* appears with a vowel, the pronunciation of the vowel is very different from its short or long sound. Consider the difference between the pronunciation of the vowel in *băn* (**short vowel**) and *barn* (*r*-controlled vowel).

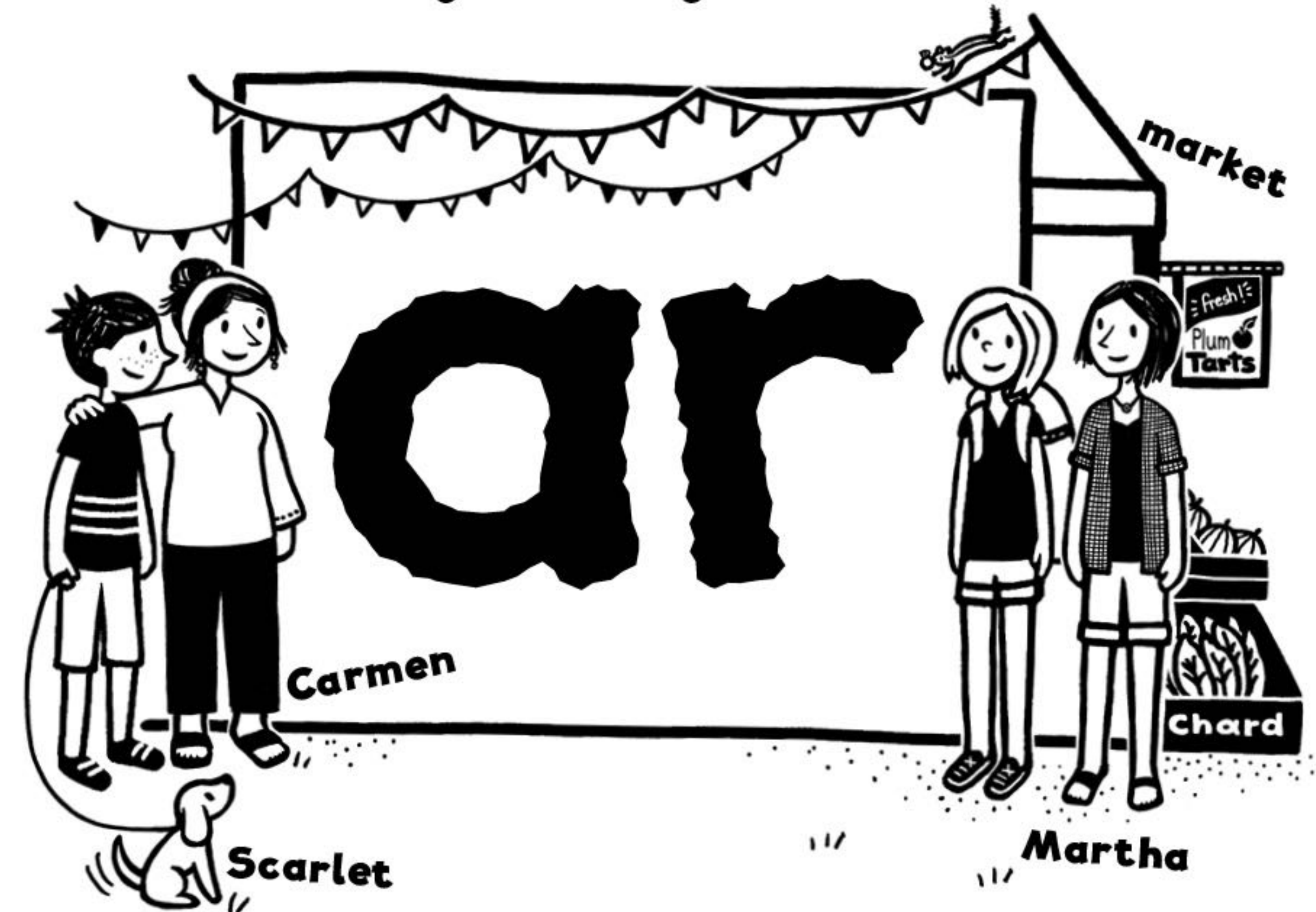
This story focuses on words containing the sound /**ar**/ as in *sharp* and *star*. This sound is only spelled with the **ar phonogram**, which can appear anywhere in a syllable: at the beginning, as in *art*; in the middle, as in *farm*; or at the end, as in *mar-ket*. (We do not include the suffix *-ar*, as in *lunar*, which is pronounced differently.)

The story also includes the thirteen phonograms and spellings introduced in *Meg and Greg Book 1* (*ck, sh, ch, th*), *Book 2* (*nk, ng, tch, dge*) and *Book 3* (*a-e, e-e, i-e, o-e, u-e*).

For a list of words with the sound /**ar**/, including all the ones used in this story, go to orcatworead.com.

Scarlet and the Ring

A story featuring the sound





Stardust Market

Meg stood at the railing of the ferryboat as it approached **Stardust** Island.

"We're almost there, Greg. Stop reading your book!"

Greg didn't look up. "Let me finish this chapter. Detective **Smart** is solving the case!"

Meg grinned. "Did your cousin **Martha** get a dog?"

Greg looked up. "What? Oh yes, a new puppy named **Scarlet**."

"I see them. But not your aunt **Carmen**," Meg said.

"My aunt is probably at the **farmers' market**. She has a jewelry stall," Greg said.

Meg smiled. "I love **farmers' markets**!"

Greg rubbed his tummy. "Me too! I love all the yummy treats for sale."





Martha led the way along a path, following the signs to **Stardust Farm Market**.

Greg held **Scarlet's** leash. He looked up at his cousin. "**Are** you finished college for the summer?"

Martha nodded. "Yup, I had my last exam on Tuesday. It's nice to be home for a few months. I'm excited to hang out with you two."

"I've told Meg about all the amazing stuff we can do here," Greg said.

Meg nodded. "Greg said you have a friend with horses."

"Yes, I do! My friend Flora has two horses," **Martha** replied.





At the **market**, vendors were setting up stalls. The three kids walked through, looking at all the things for sale.

Greg saw a sign that read *Grub Garden*. "Does 'grub' mean food? I'm **starving!**"

Martha laughed. "Yes, it does."

Meg groaned. "You **are** always hungry."

"Let's find my mom. We can drop off your bags at her jewelry stall," **Martha** said.

"Then we can get some lunch."



Hi Mom!

Hi Carmen!

Hi kids.

You OK, Mom?

Well, no. I am missing a ring. The **garnet** ring.

What? The ring with the big red stone?

Yes. The red stone is a **garnet**. It costs a lot.



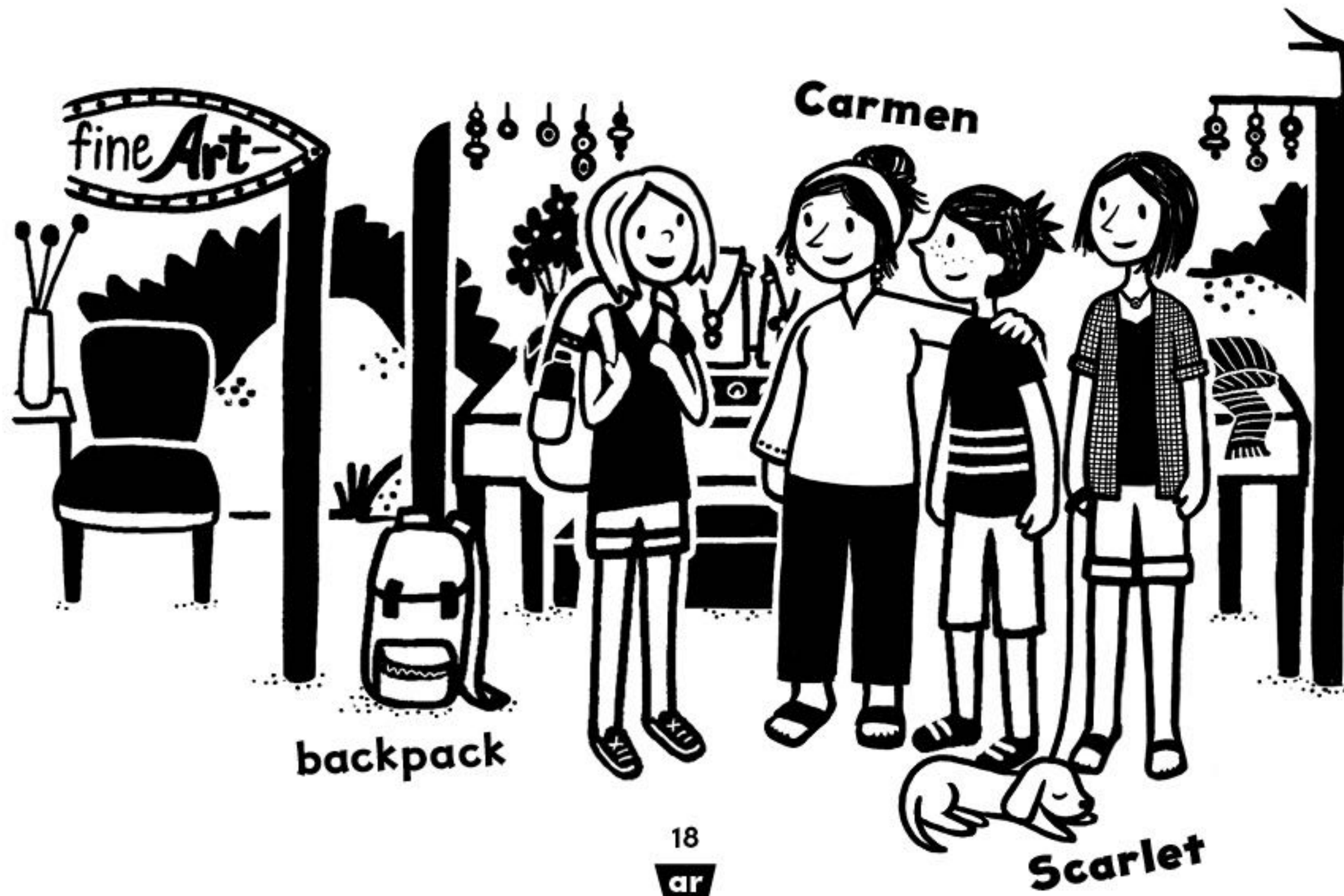
The Lost Garnet Ring

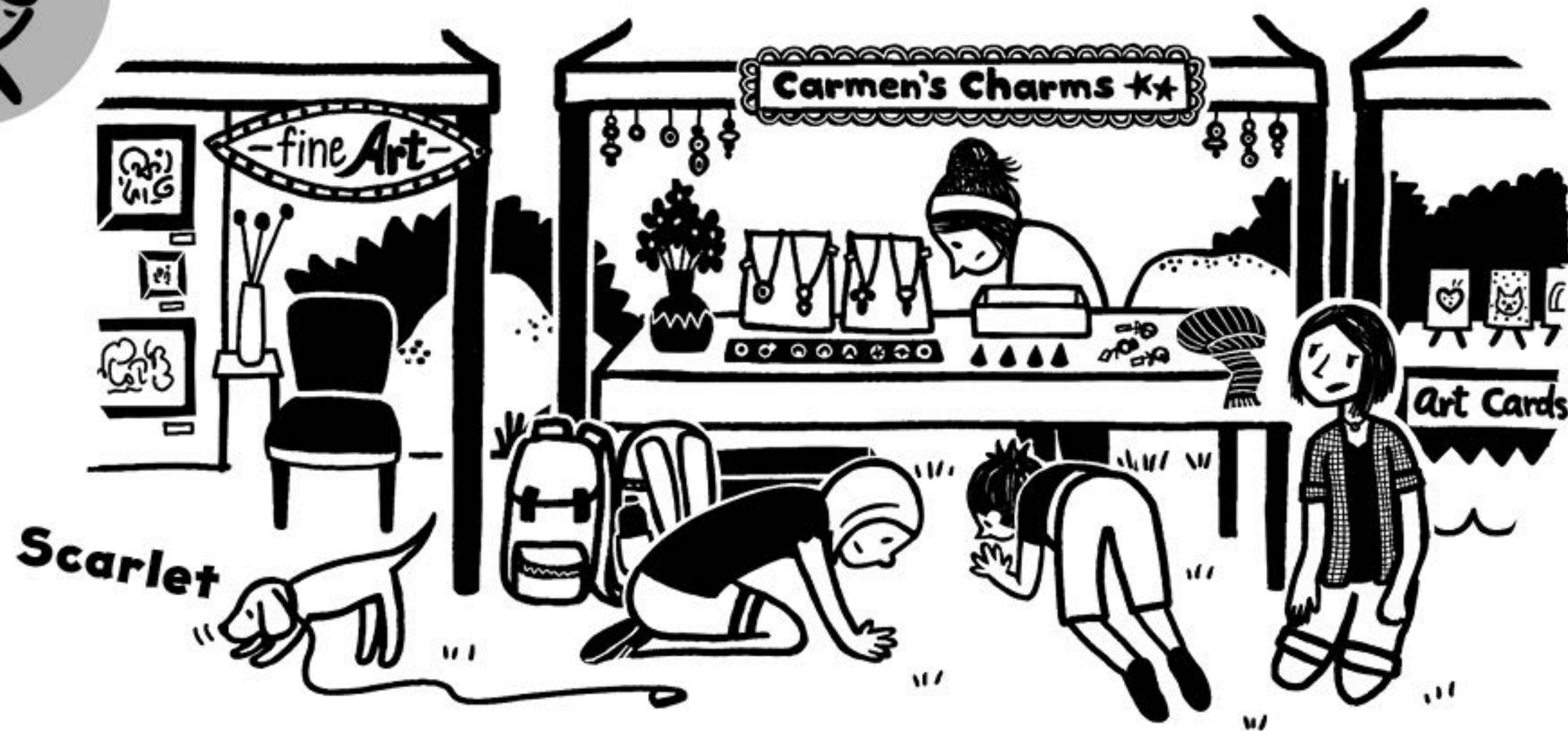
Aunt **Carmen** went back to hunting through a box on her table.

"When did you last see the ring?" Meg asked.

Carmen looked up. "Goodness! How rude of me. You must be Meg. I'm so pleased to meet you." She came out from behind her stall. "Please forgive me. I'm just so worried about the missing **garnet** ring."

Meg smiled. "It's OK. We can help you find it."





"What if somebody stole it?" **Martha** asked.
Carmen frowned. "I hope not. The **market** has only just opened for the day."

"Did you see anyone looking at your jewelry?"
 Meg asked.

"No, nobody," **Carmen** said. "It's just been me and a few birds, until you three got here."

"Birds? What kind of birds?" Greg asked.

"A few different ones. Robins, chickadees, **starlings**..." **Carmen** said.

Greg frowned. "I've read that **starlings** sometimes take bits of string and wool to make their nests. But not jewelry."



Well, the ring *did* have a bit of pink **yarn** on it.

I bet a **starling** got the **yarn** to make its nest!

And the **garnet ring** went with it!

Darn!

