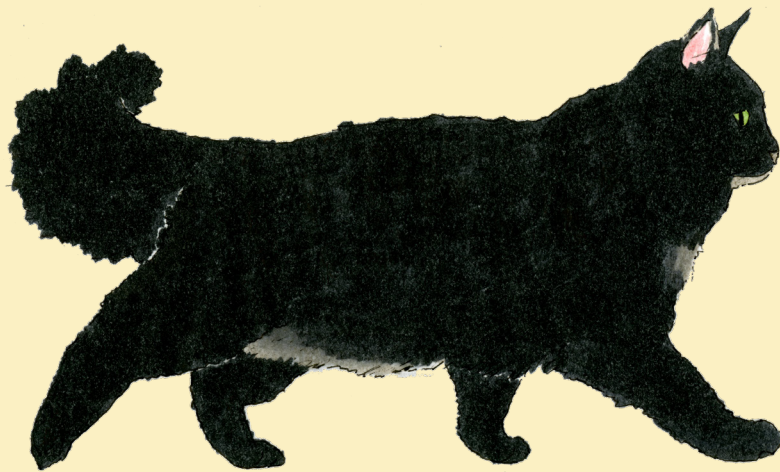




# CHESTER THE CAT

## EXPLORES CENTRAL PARK



BY AUSTEN HORD



CHESTER THE CAT  
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Chester was a very fluffy, very pampered cat who lived right across from Central Park in New York City. One of Chester's favorite things to do was take a walk into the park, but he was only ever allowed to go as far as the Naumburg Bandshell on his own, with good reason too, as Chester had a horrible sense of direction.

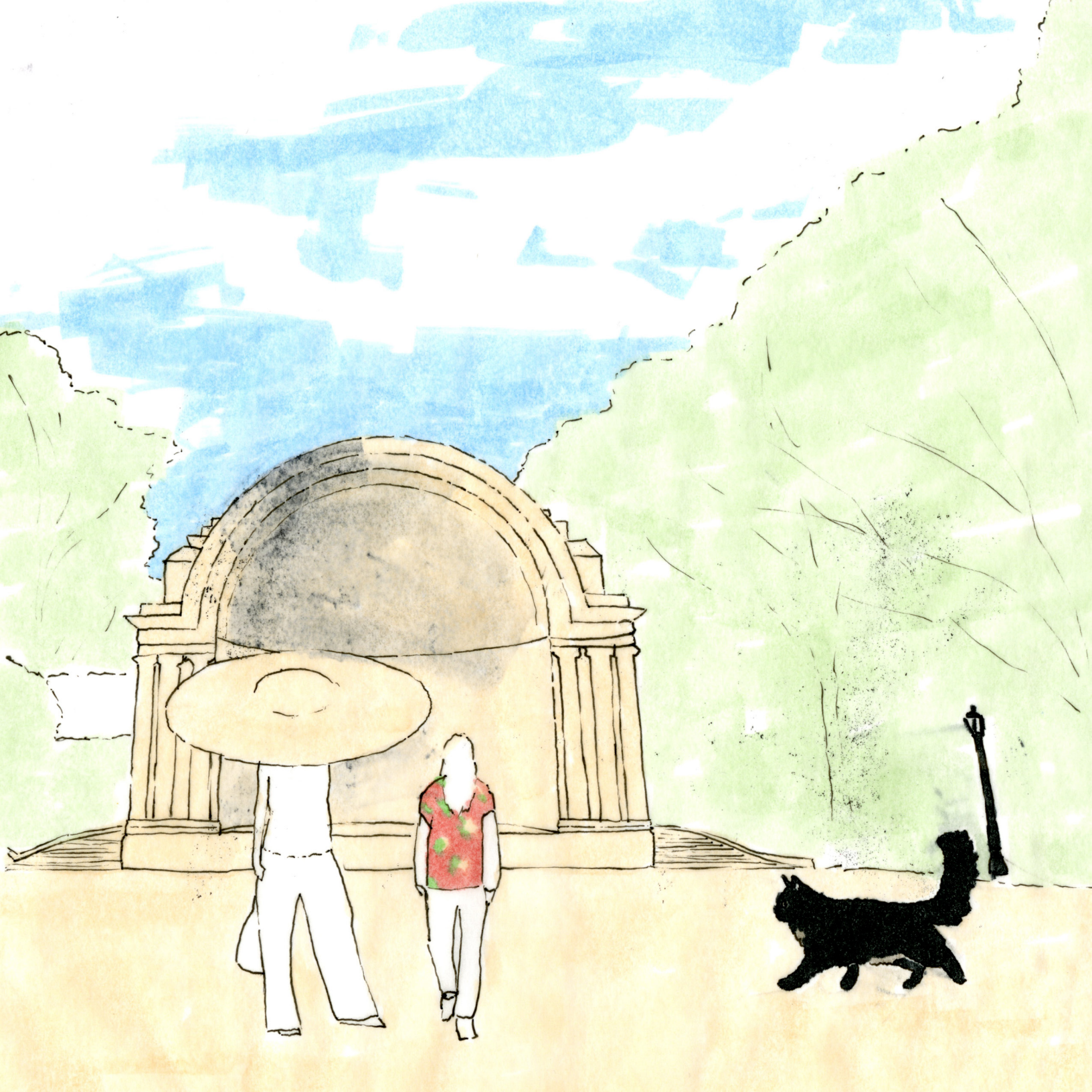
"It's a beautiful day today," Chester said as he began his walk to the bandshell.

Chester knew Naumburg Bandshell was not as old as the rest of the park, but it had been there a very long time. He loved to sit on The Mall and listen to the different musicians performing at the bandshell. But today, Chester overheard something that made him curious.

“Let’s go see the Conservatory Garden, I hear its always beautiful this time of year,” a tourist in a large hat said.

“That sounds like a great idea,” her friend in a colorful shirt replied.

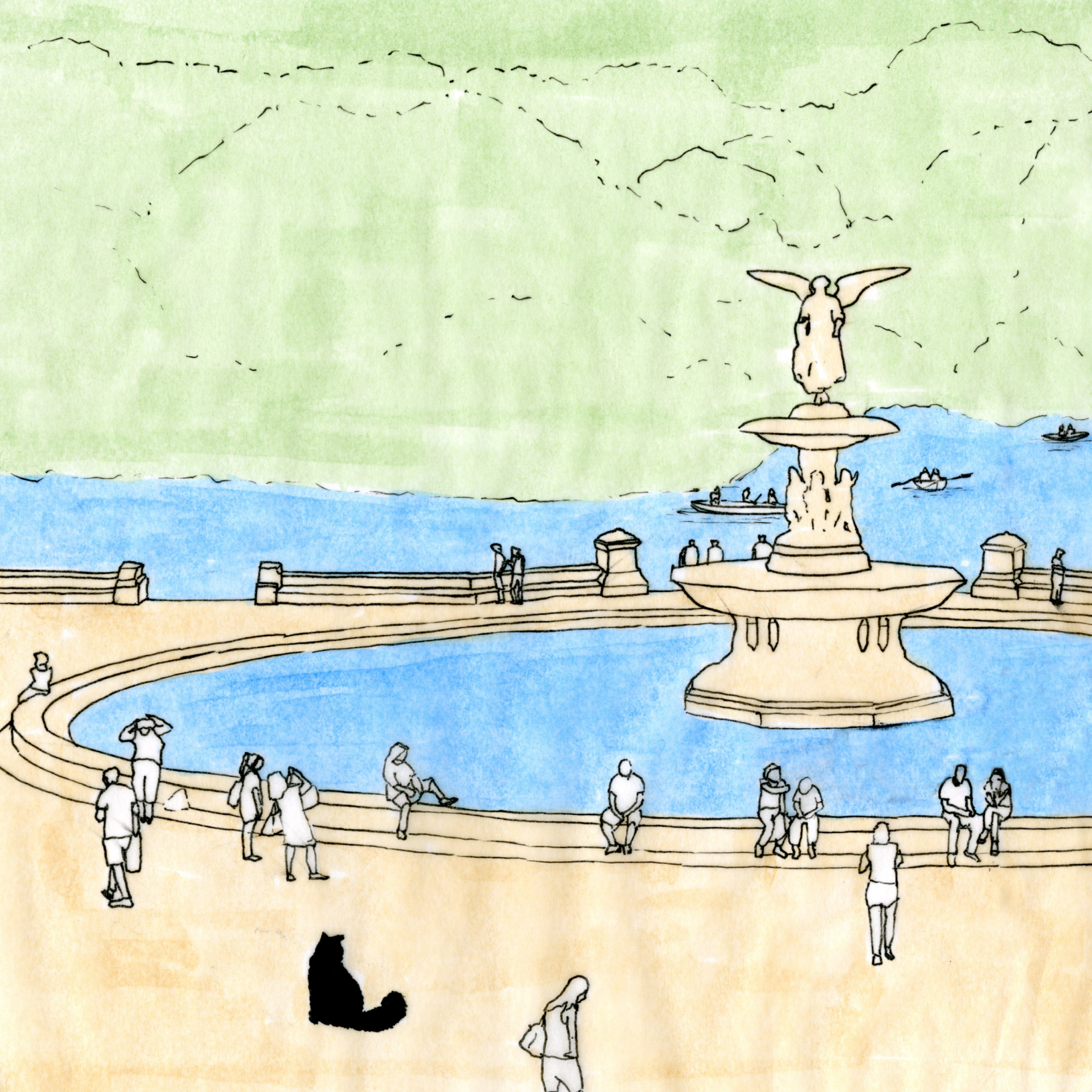
Chester had never heard of this garden before, and now, he wanted to see it too.



Soon, Chester was following in the footsteps of the large hatted tourist and her friend. Chester was so sure he could follow them to the garden, but he very quickly lost track of them, and suddenly he was all alone in a new place. This new place was a plaza full of people taking pictures of the large fountain in the center, overlooking a lake. Chester was sure this was not the garden he had heard about.

“And this is Bethesda Terrace,” a cheery tour guide said, “it was designed by Calvert Vaux to be the artistic heart of Central Park.”

“It is very fancy here,” Chester thought “but I don’t think this is what I’m looking for”, so he turned and kept moving deeper into the park.



Chester crossed a bridge and followed the path. Suddenly, it was cooler and darker. Dense trees and large rocks rising around him. It was much quieter here than at Bethesda Terrace or Naumburg Bandshell. Chester felt very alone. Once again, Chester was sure this was not the Conservatory Garden he was looking for. He spotted a greying squirrel on the path that looked like she had lived in the park her whole life.

“Excuse me ma’am,” Chester started, “would you be able to tell me where the Conservatory Garden is?”

“Well young man, you’re still a long ways off,” she replied, “This here is The Ramble, you wanna keep goin’ up north past The Reservoir.”

“Which... which way is north?” Chester asked, very embarrassed. The kind squirrel sighed and pointed deeper into the woods of The Ramble. “Thank you!” Chester meowed as he continued on his journey.



After a while in the dense woods and rocks of The Ramble, the path opened up, and Chester began to see more people. Eventually the path opened up into a large lawn with people everywhere.

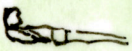
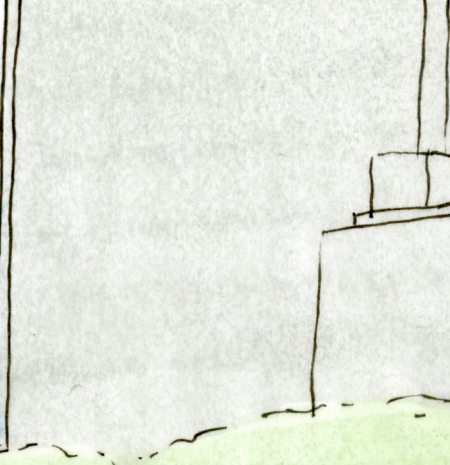
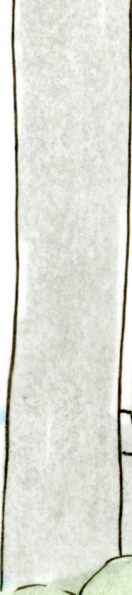
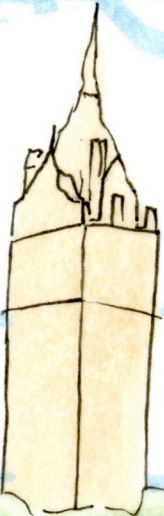
Chester paused “I don’t remember the squirrel saying anything about this, just a reservoir.” Suddenly, he spotted someone familiar - the tourist with the large hat! Chester ran towards her and her friend in the colorful shirt.

The large hatted tourist turned towards her friend, “The Great Lawn, isn’t it wonderful? You know, when the park was first built this used to be a reservoir?”

“Really!?” her friend in the colorful shirt replied, “like filled with water?”

“Maybe this is the reservoir the squirrel was talking about” Chester thought.

“Now the only reservoir in the park is the main reservoir” the large hatted tourist said, pointing down The Great Lawn.



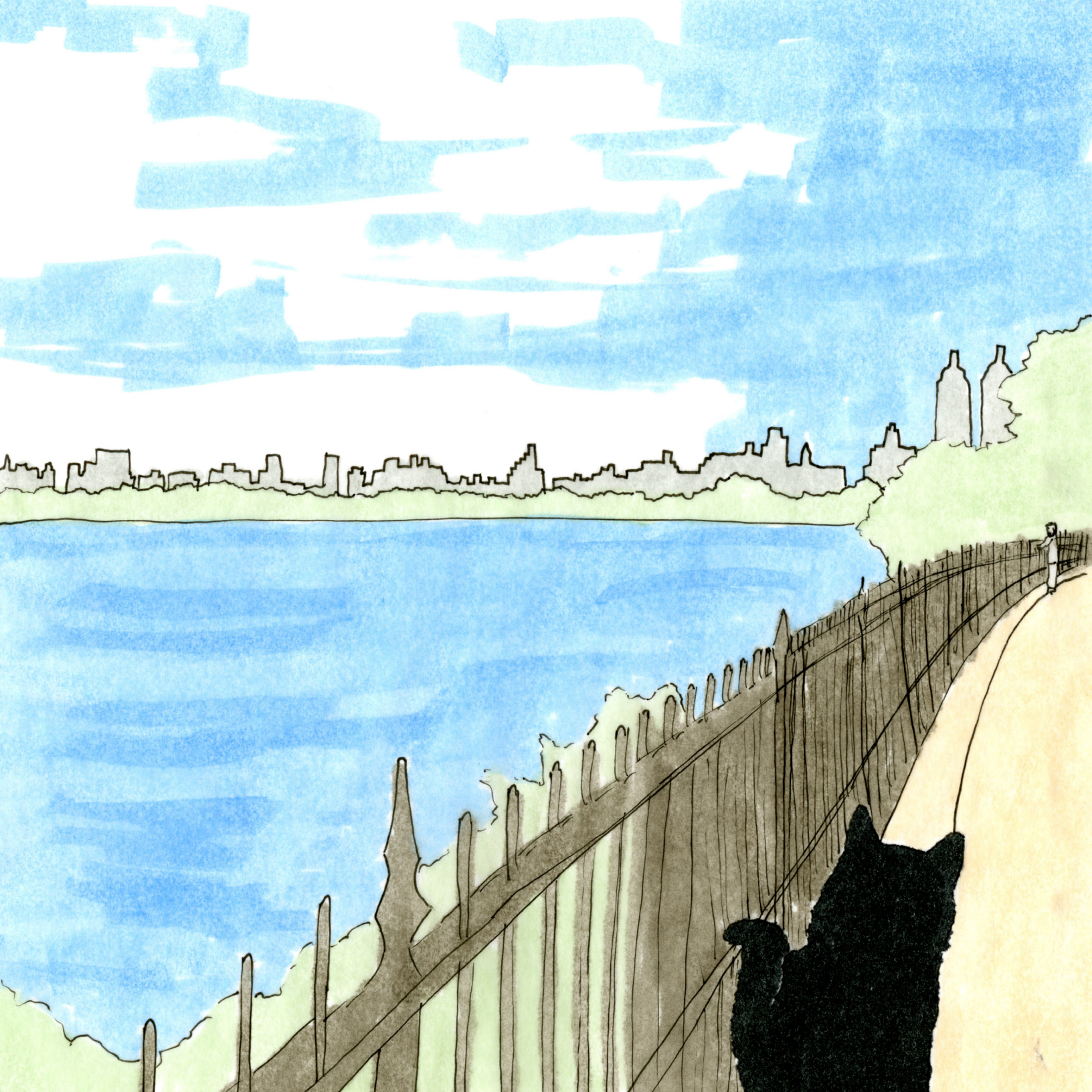
“That must be the reservoir the squirrel mentioned”

Chester said.

He turned back to see that the large hatted tourist and her friend had disappeared, leaving Chester to find his way on his own again. He turned back to where she had pointed and began walking. Chester passed through some trees, and he saw a massive lake.

“Wow...” Chester said, stunned into silence. He had never seen so much water in his life. “This HAS to be the reservoir, but it’s so big, it’ll take forever to find the Conservatory Garden.”

The size of the reservoir was overwhelming, but Chester had come so far already, so he turned to the path to his left, and began his journey again.

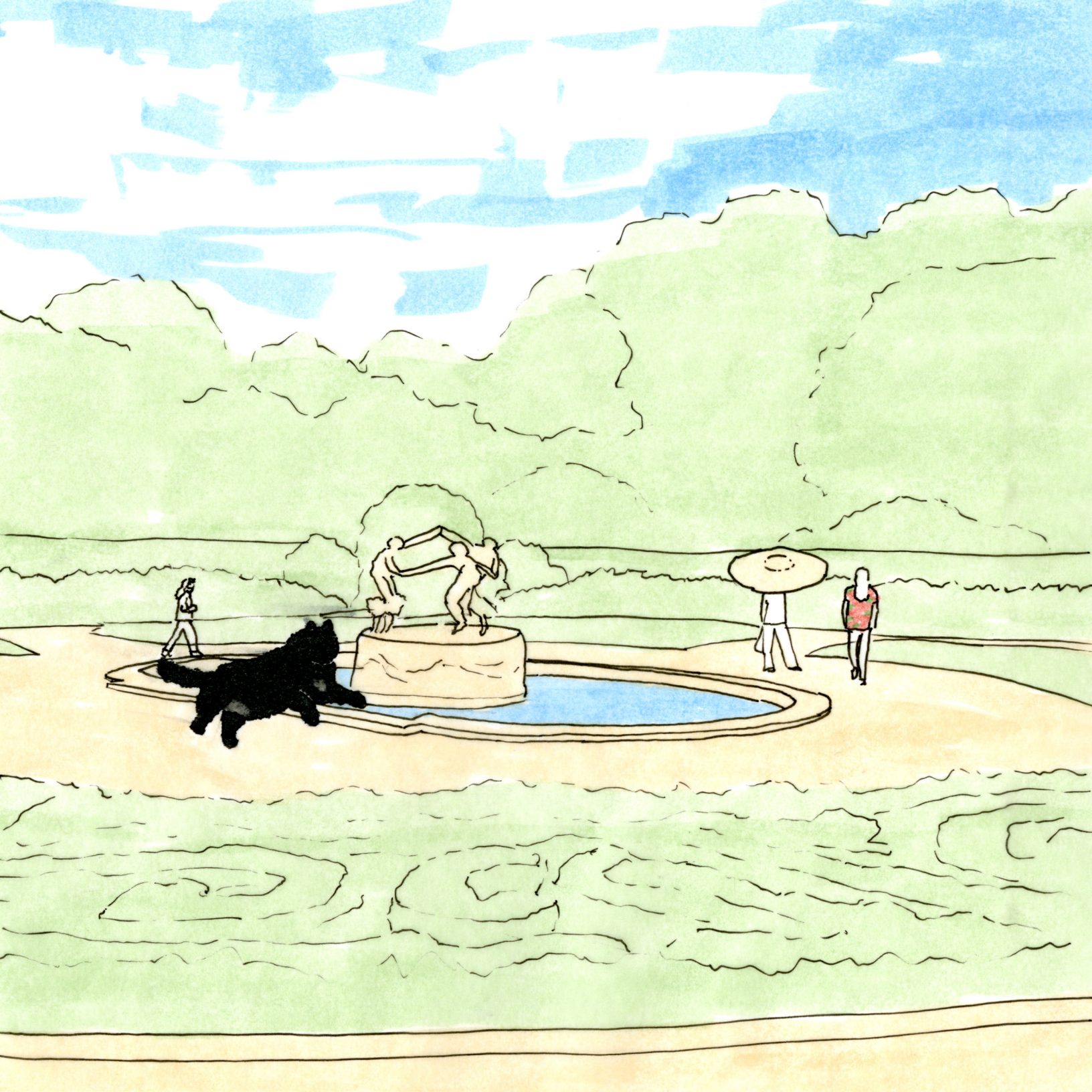


Chester felt like he had been walking forever with the massive reservoir to his right.

“I’ve got to be close to the garden by now,” Chester said, absolutely exhausted from his journey. As he began to slow down, he saw something that brought his energy back: The large hatted tourist and her friend in the colorful shirt.

“The garden is just up this way!” the large hatted tourist exclaimed.

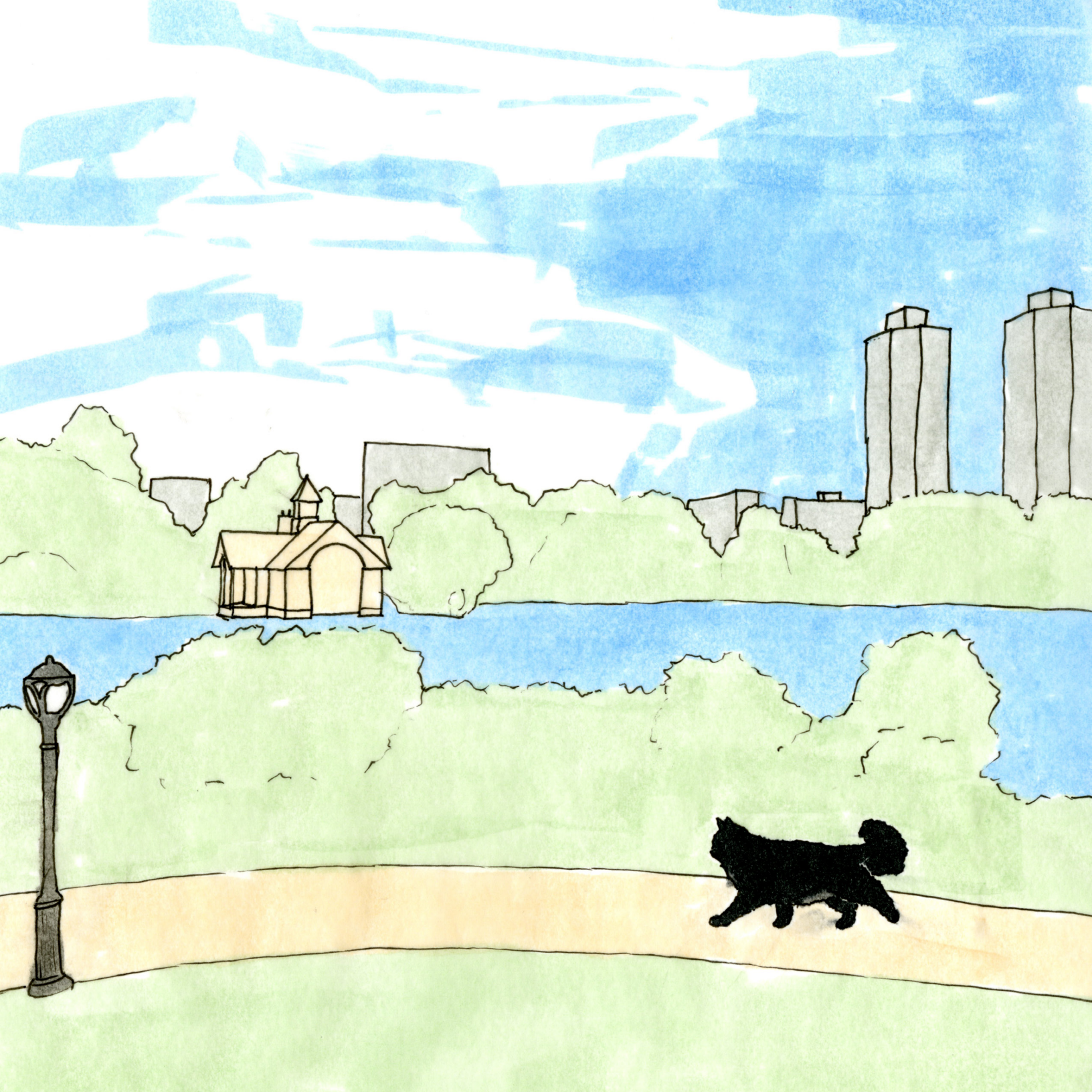
Chester was so close now, and he was not going to lose sight of the large hatted tourist and her friend this time. He ran to keep up with them, following them away from the reservoir through a meadow, and finally he saw it, a garden full of shrubs and flowers: The Conservatory Garden! Chester was so excited he sprinted ahead of the large hatted tourist and her friend, he wanted to see every inch of the garden. There were so many different plants, and three different fountains to see.



Chester explored the garden, making sure to smell each flower he came across. After the garden was thoroughly explored, Chester decided it was time to head back home, he knew the trip would be long, and he wanted to be home before dark. He left the garden and was very rapidly greeted by a lake that looked familiar, the one outside Bethesda Terrace.

“Maybe I took the long way around...” Chester wondered. He tried to find the terrace, making his way around the lake, but nothing looked familiar to Chester. As Chester followed the shore of the lake, he began to see buildings close by.

“This can’t be right,” Chester said, “I don’t remember seeing any buildings at Bethesda Terrace. I must’ve gone the wrong way!”



Chester turned around, and began to retrace his steps, but the sun had started to drop in the sky. Everything started to look different. He managed to find the Conservatory Garden again, but even that didn't look the same as the shadows began to grow. Chester walked and walked and walked, hoping that by walking out the opposite side of the garden he would run into something more familiar.

“The Reservoir!” Chester shouted, as the massive body of water appeared in front of him, “Finally, something I recognize!”

Chester continued on his path, this one much straighter than his original trip around the reservoir.

“I must have walked along the other side,” Chester said, remembering the curving paths from his journey to the garden.



As the Reservoir faded behind him, and a large building grew in front of him, Chester began to worry he had been walking in the wrong direction again. The sun had continued to set, and fewer people wandered the park now. Chester spotted a lone pigeon, pecking at crumbs on the path.

Trying his very best to not scare the pigeon, Chester said “excuse me sir...” in a soft voice. The lone pigeon turned his head, and began to panic, fluttering his wings to fly away.

“Wait!” Chester cried, “I’m just a little lost! I need to know if I’m going in the right direction, I won’t hurt you!” The pigeon slowed his wings, landed on the ground, and stared at Chester for a moment.

“Well?” the pigeon said, still cautious of Chester.

“I’m looking for Bethesda Terrace and Naumburg Bandshell, I thought I was going the right way, but I’m not so sure now...” Chester said.

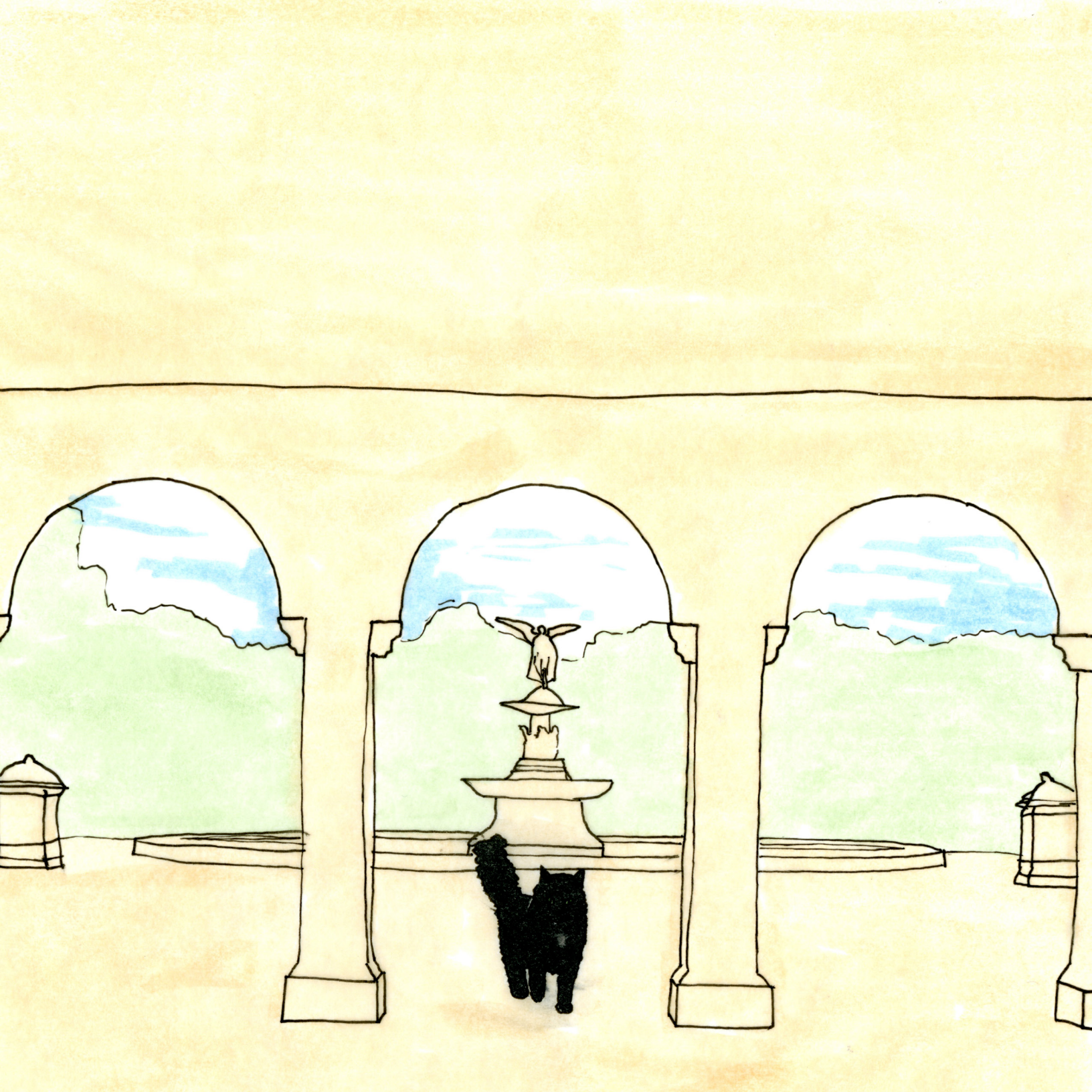
“Hmmmmmmmmm,” the lone pigeon started, “Well, if you’re heading down this way, you’re going in the right direction, stay on this path and it’ll take you right to Bethesda Terrace kid, now don’t go scaring a lonely pigeon like that again.”

Chester had been going in the right direction! “Thank you so much,” he exclaimed, “Thank you!”

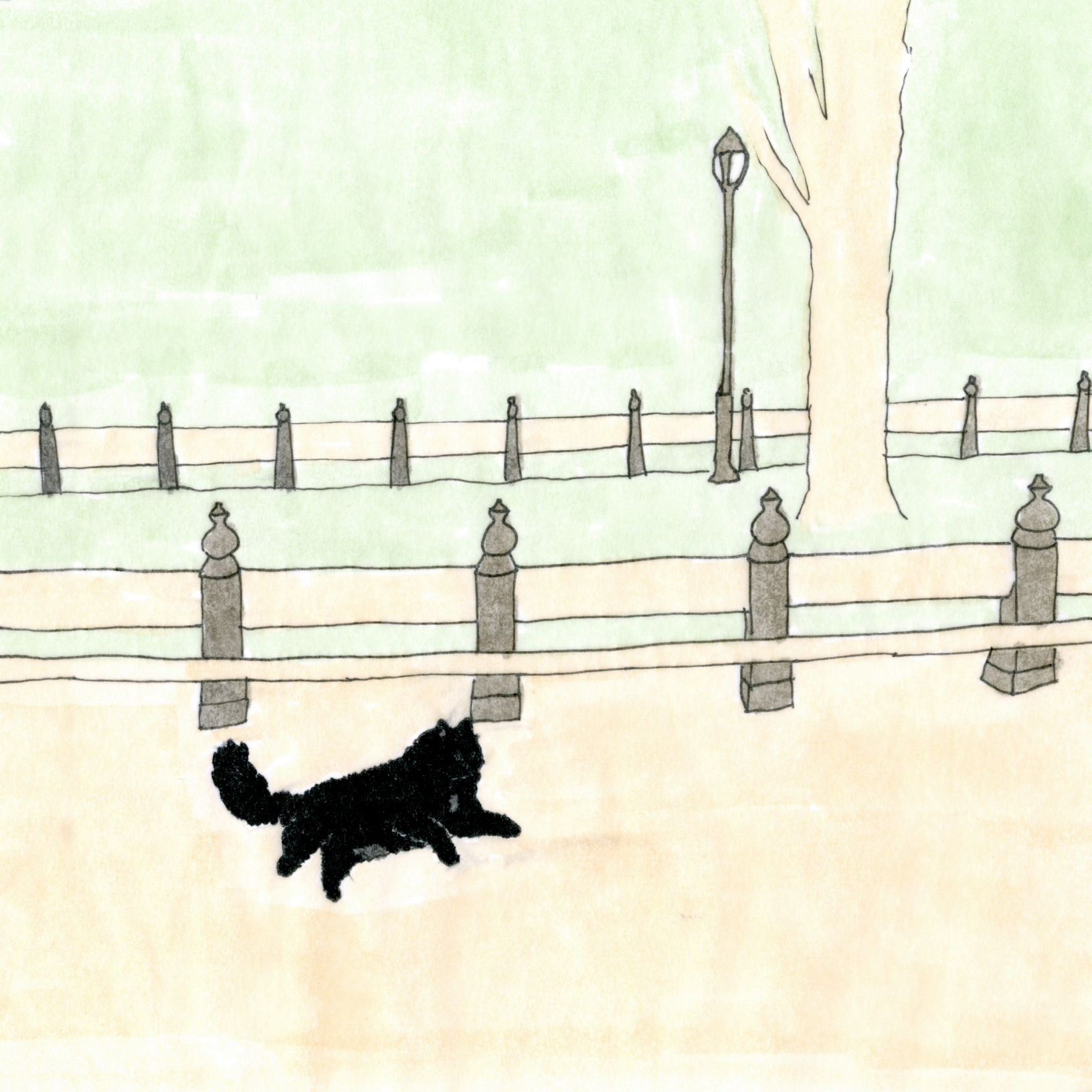


Chester hurried along, staying on the path like the lone pigeon had told him to. As he ran along the path, the trees opened up, and Chester recognized a very artful fountain across a small lake.

“Bethesda Terrace! I’m almost home!” Chester ran even faster, eventually making his way back to the terrace. He looked around. Chester knew Bethesda Terrace was not far from Naumburg Bandshell, and Chester could easily make his way home from there. He looked off to one side, recognizing the wide path lined with benches and trees: Central Park’s Mall.



The benches and trees of The Mall were a blur as Chester ran by. Soon he saw the familiar form of Naumburg Bandshell, and just in time too! The sun was nearly set now. Chester walked past the bandshell and began his short journey home from there. “Maybe tomorrow” Chester started “I’ll go find this Central Park Zoo I always hear about.”



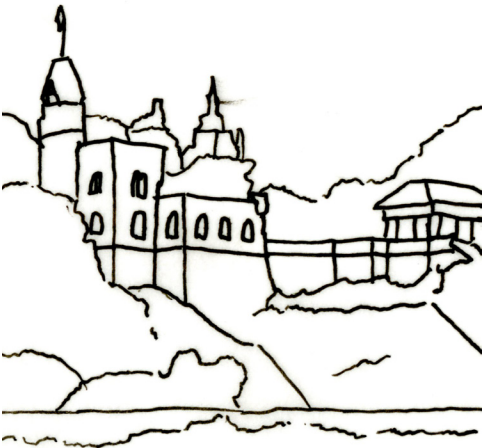
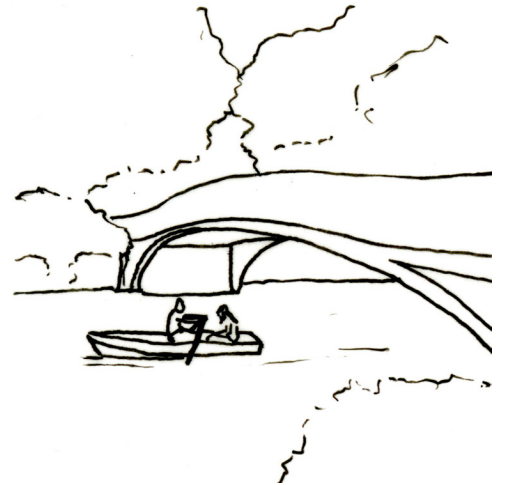




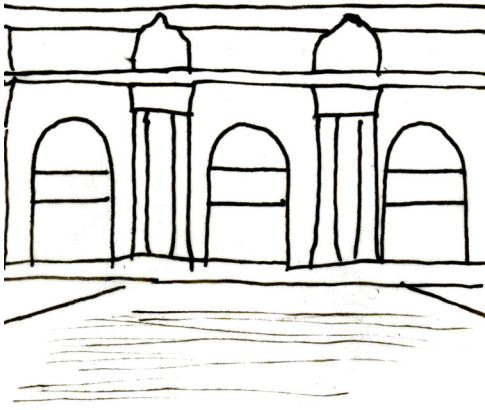


Frederick Law Olmsted, the father of landscape architecture, is the designer behind Central Park. He worked alongside architect Calvert Vaux on the design of the park.

The Bow Bridge is located northwest Bethesda Terrace. It is a favorite destination of park visitors. Rowboats are often seen traveling under the bridge.



Belvedere Castle sits overlooking the Turtle Pond and Great Lawn, at the highest point within the Ramble. It houses Central Parks weather monitoring equipment.

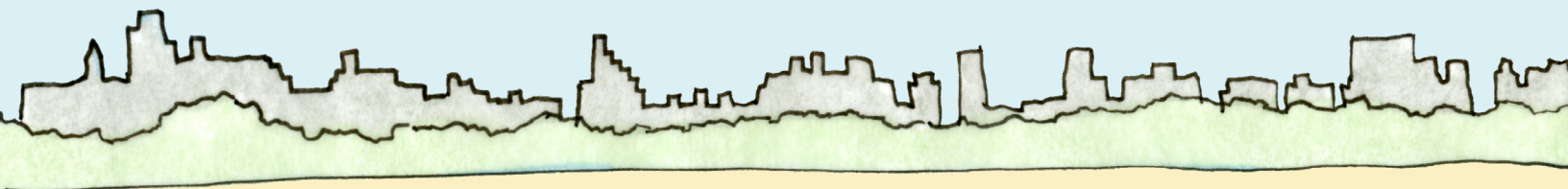


The Metropolitan Museum of Art, also known as The MET, is located along the eastern edge of the park. It is the 4th largest art museum in the entire world, and the largest in both North and South America.

Before Central Park, Seneca Village, a village of free African Americans, was located west what is now the Great Lawn. The residences were displaced as construction of the park began in 1857.



A 15 acre field in the park, southwest of Bethesda Terrace, used to feature grazing sheep. While there are no sheep living in the park today, the field is still called the Sheep Meadow.



Come with Chester the cat, as he explores Central Park in a new light. Discover iconic landmarks of the park along a journey that expands Chester's world, and teaches him to see Central park in a whole new way.



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