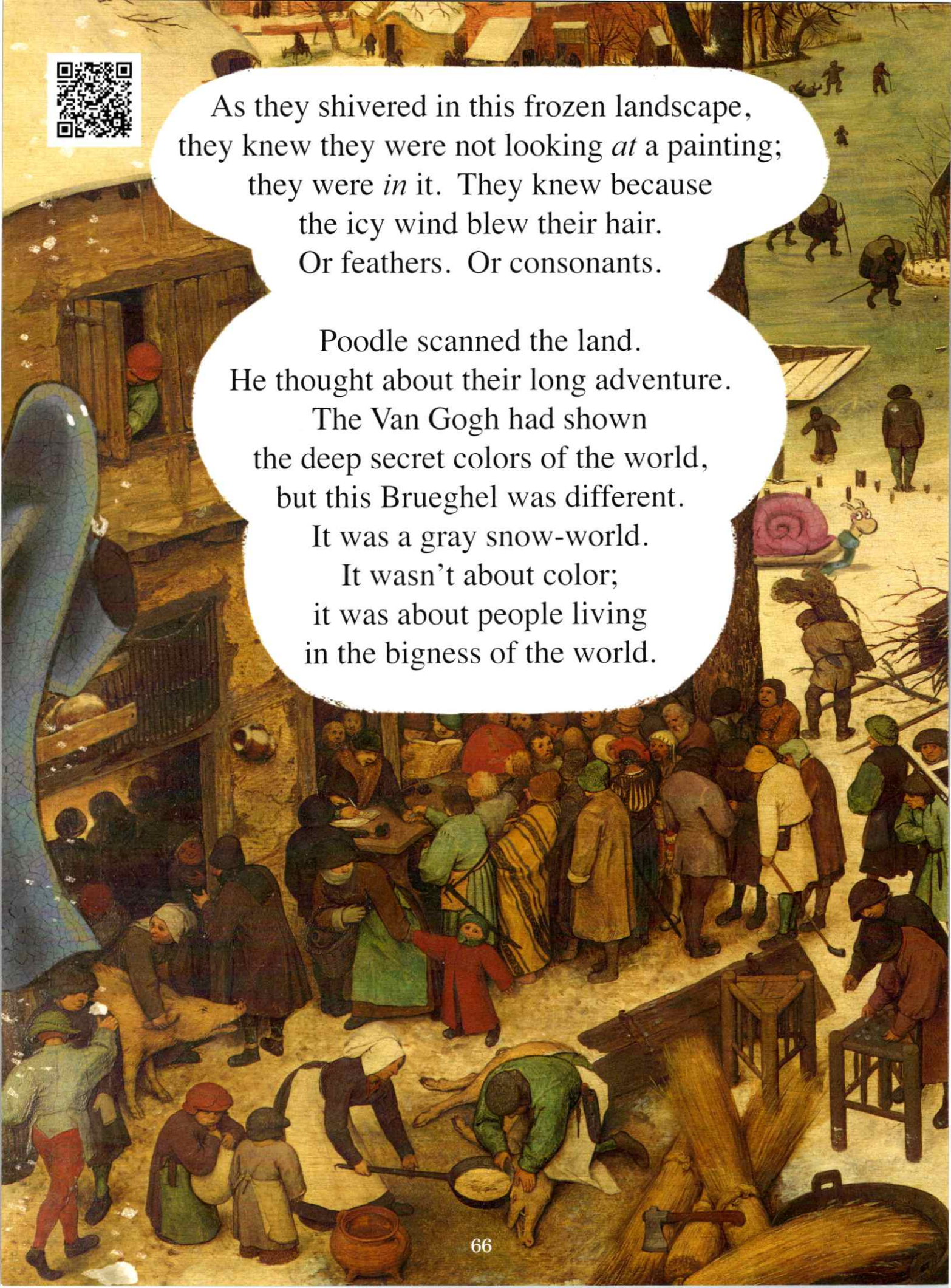
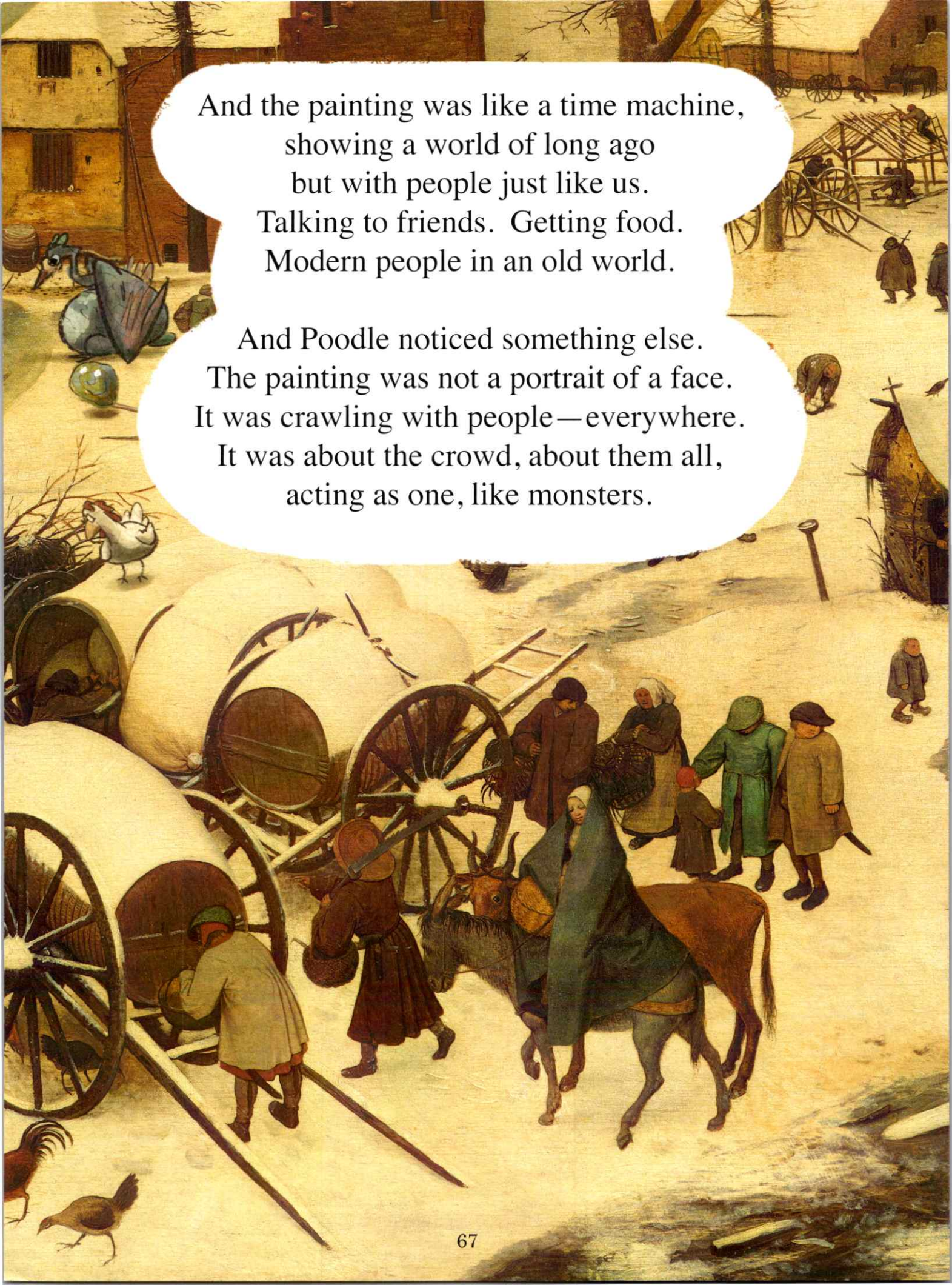




As they shivered in this frozen landscape,
they knew they were not looking *at* a painting;
they were *in* it. They knew because
the icy wind blew their hair.
Or feathers. Or consonants.

Poodle scanned the land.
He thought about their long adventure.
The Van Gogh had shown
the deep secret colors of the world,
but this Brueghel was different.
It was a gray snow-world.
It wasn't about color;
it was about people living
in the bigness of the world.

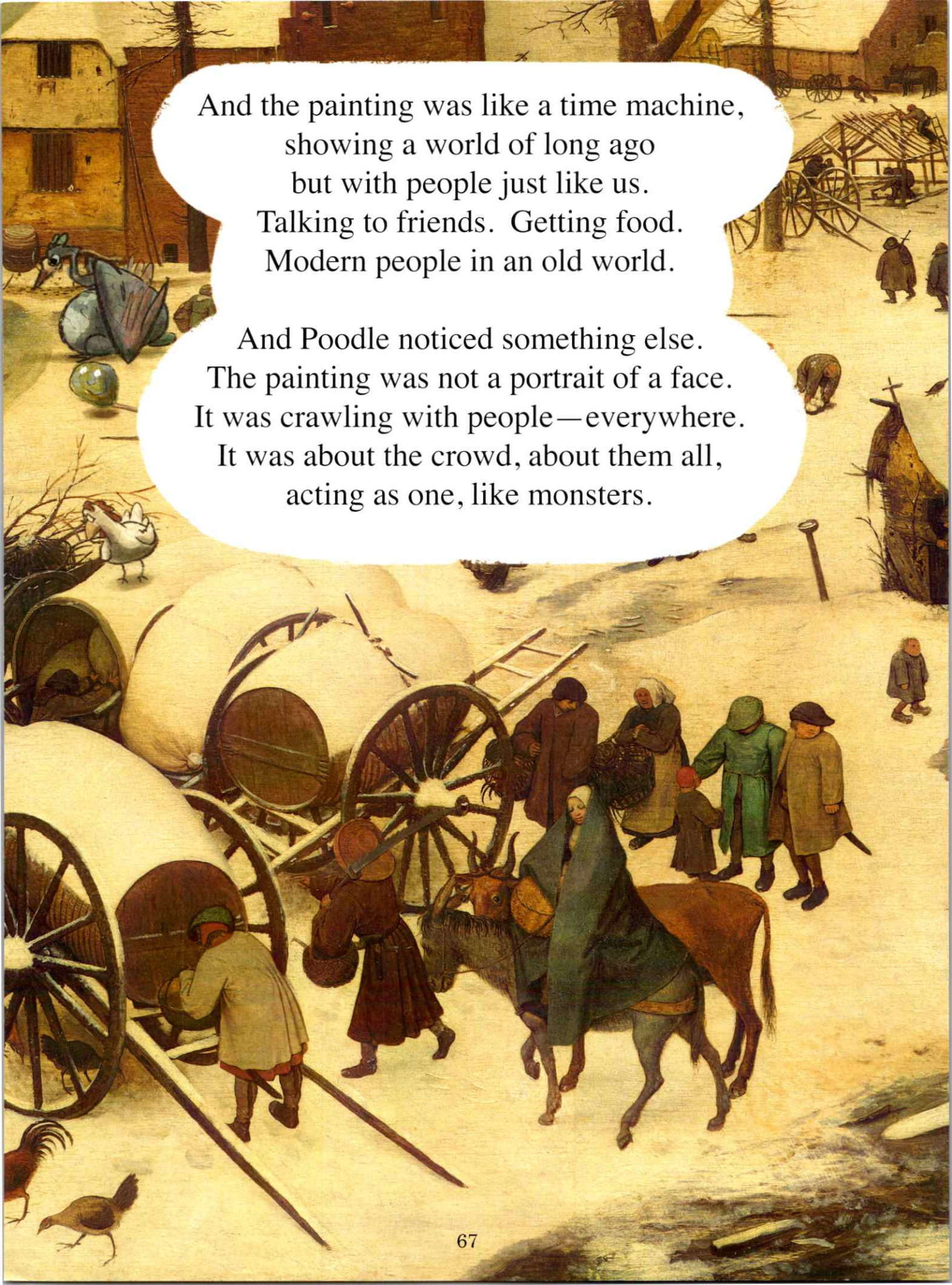




And the painting was like a time machine,
showing a world of long ago
but with people just like us.
Talking to friends. Getting food.
Modern people in an old world.

And Poodle noticed something else.
The painting was not a portrait of a face.
It was crawling with people—everywhere.
It was about the crowd, about them all,
acting as one, like monsters.

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It was reassuring, somehow, to know
that there were so many things to do,
so much fun to have.
The painting hummed with a love of life.

Poodle liked it.
He liked these busy people.
He liked this frosty Brueghel.
It was a different way to think.
It is nice, Poodle thought,
to have different ways to think.
He knew that he did not want
to be trapped forever
in his same old thoughts.

