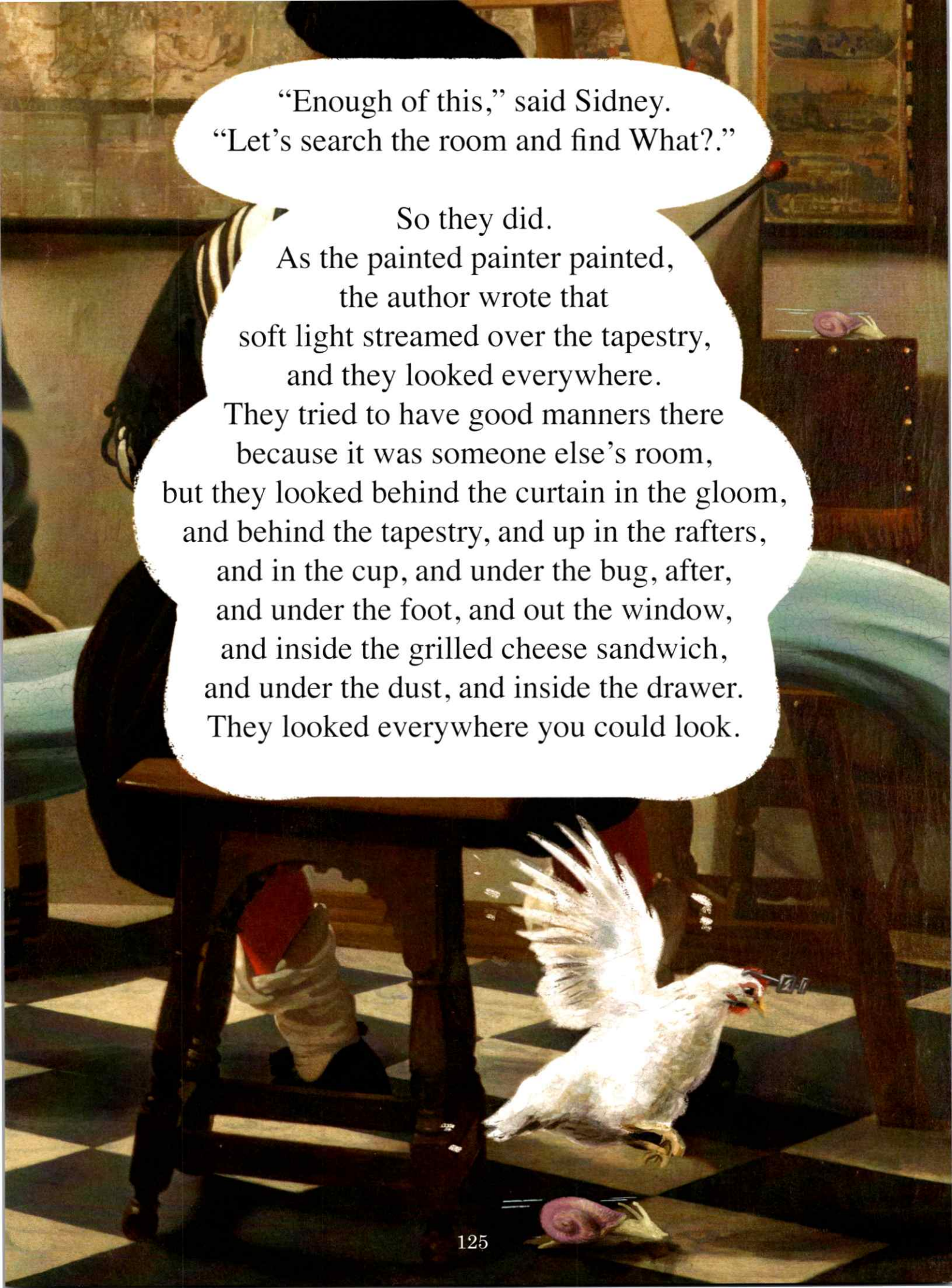


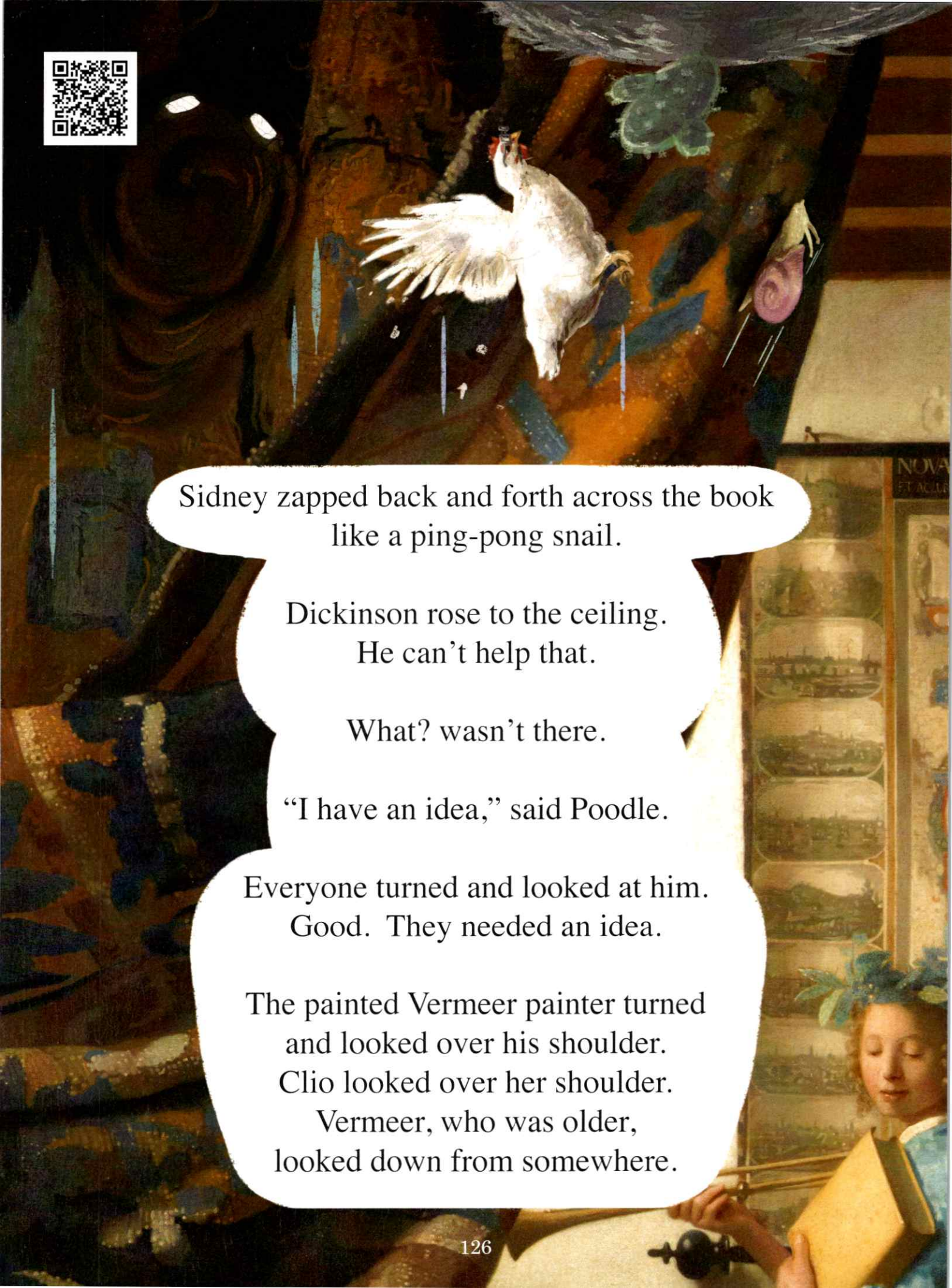
A surrealist painting of a room. In the foreground, a white chicken with its wings spread is on a black and white checkered floor. A purple snail is also on the floor. In the background, a person wearing a black and white striped shirt is visible. The room has a tapestry on the wall and a wooden chair. The text is overlaid on a white, cloud-like shape in the upper part of the image.

“Enough of this,” said Sidney.
“Let’s search the room and find What?.”

So they did.

As the painted painter painted,
the author wrote that
soft light streamed over the tapestry,
and they looked everywhere.

They tried to have good manners there
because it was someone else’s room,
but they looked behind the curtain in the gloom,
and behind the tapestry, and up in the rafters,
and in the cup, and under the bug, after,
and under the foot, and out the window,
and inside the grilled cheese sandwich,
and under the dust, and inside the drawer.
They looked everywhere you could look.

A white chicken is depicted in mid-flight, wings spread, against a dark, swirling, abstract background. The chicken is positioned in the upper center of the page. To its right, there is a small, green, four-lobed shape and a purple, spiral-shaped object. Below the chicken, there are several vertical, blue, needle-like shapes. In the bottom right corner, a portion of a painting is visible, showing a young girl with a blue headband and a book.

Sidney zapped back and forth across the book
like a ping-pong snail.

Dickinson rose to the ceiling.
He can't help that.

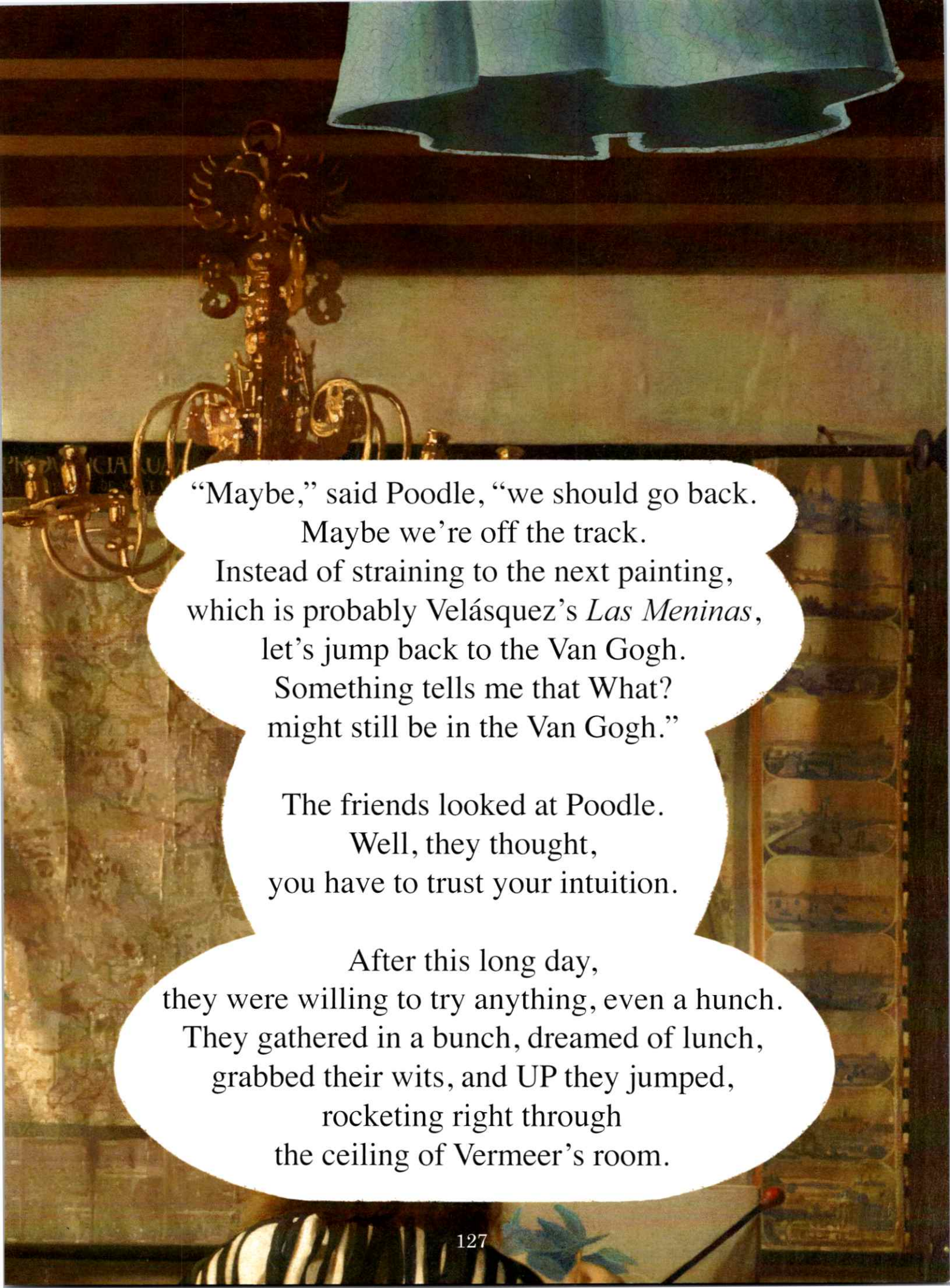
What? wasn't there.

"I have an idea," said Poodle.

Everyone turned and looked at him.
Good. They needed an idea.

The painted Vermeer painter turned
and looked over his shoulder.
Clio looked over her shoulder.

Vermeer, who was older,
looked down from somewhere.

The background is a painting of a room interior. At the top, a blue lampshade hangs from a cord. Below it, a large, ornate brass chandelier with multiple arms and decorative finials is visible. The walls are a warm, yellowish-brown color. On the right side, there is a wooden cabinet or display case with several glass-fronted drawers, each containing a small, dark, rectangular object. The overall style is that of a classical painting, with soft lighting and detailed textures.

“Maybe,” said Poodle, “we should go back.
Maybe we’re off the track.

Instead of straining to the next painting,
which is probably Velásquez’s *Las Meninas*,
let’s jump back to the Van Gogh.
Something tells me that What?
might still be in the Van Gogh.”

The friends looked at Poodle.
Well, they thought,
you have to trust your intuition.

After this long day,
they were willing to try anything, even a hunch.
They gathered in a bunch, dreamed of lunch,
grabbed their wits, and UP they jumped,
rocketing right through
the ceiling of Vermeer’s room.