

The Stars Recall Our Passage

by Sharang Biswas

Players: 2

Time: 30-60 minutes

Supplies Needed:

- A single Flashlight
- Single-sided printouts of each Constellation
- Adhesive to stick Constellations onto walls
- A printout of the Celestial Interpretations
- A printout of the Timeline

You are *ihas*, scholars who study the history of your people. The two of you have very different approaches as to how you unlock the secrets of the past.

The University has sent both of you on a major interdepartmental research trip to study The Great Passage, a semi-mythical journey that brought your people to this place in a time before recorded history. All that is known is that something caused the people to leave the Homeland and wander until they found a new place to settle.

You will interpret the patterns of the stars through your scholarly literature and (re)construct the history of your people.

SETUP

1. One player takes three of the Constellations, while the other takes four.
2. Silently, each player individually attaches their Constellations to the walls and ceilings of the room. Players do not need to know where the other's Constellations are.
3. One player is the *tarihas*, studying how patterns and movements of the stars can illuminate major historical events. They take the Celestial Interpretations.
4. One player is the *prithvihas*, studying material remains of your ancestors to construct history. They take the Timeline.
5. Players darken the room, switch on their flashlight, and lie down next to each other.

CONTENT ADVISORY

- Topics of Violence, Genocide, Racial Trauma, and Natural Disasters may arise.
- This game involves lying down close to another person in relative darkness.

Space Requirements:

- Walls and ceilings on which paper can be affixed.
- Relative Darkness
- Space for both players to lie down next to each other on their backs

PLAY

The *ihas* are in a significant location, an auspicious hillside or field, perhaps.

1. One player takes the flashlight and shines it slowly around the room until they reveal a Constellation. (They should stop at the first Constellation they spy)
2. Both players consult their scholarly references one by one, by the light of the flashlight:

The Timelines tells players which event the Constellation references. Players begin with Event 1 “The Settling”. In later rounds, they will work their way backwards in time, ending with Event 7 “The Homeland”. Each Timeline entry includes modern evidence that the *prithvihas* has studied, and some research questions they want answered.

The Celestial Interpretation tells the players how the constellation symbolizes major themes that dominated during the event. The *tarihas* can choose one interpretation (the one that *feels* right, based on the *tarihas*’ vast experience in their subject matter)

3. Using these details, the players together narrate what transpired during that moment in history. They can linger on one event as long as they wish.
4. The flashlight is passed to the next player and they proceed from step one. Note that in Step 2, the next, older event in the Timeline is now referenced.
5. When *ihas* are done interpreting all seven events, their research trip is at an end, and the game is over.

PRESENT

TIMELINE

1.The Settling: Oldest remains of permanent dwellings.

-How did our People adapt to this environment?

-What tradition arose at this time?

2.The Obstacle: Signs of mass cremation

-What threatened the migrants in the in their new home?

-How did the people collectively come together against the Obstacle?

3.The Finding: Many myths refer to “The Finding of the New Home”

-What told the migrants that they had arrived?

-How was disagreement quelled?

4.The False Paradise: Children’s stories warn of a “Land that Betrayed Us”

-What hope did the migrants see in the False Paradise?

-What insidious danger emerged?

5.The Fugue: Neighbouring countries all have stories about “a people, lost & confused”

-What social problem did the Migrants encounter?

6.The Great Trial: The oldest bones show signs of great suffering

-What happened in the homeland that prompted the Passage?

-What happened to those who stayed?

7.The Homeland: Fragments of tools and art hinting at a distant past

-What few facts do we know for sure about life in the Homeland?

-What custom is attributed to life in the Homeland?

PAST

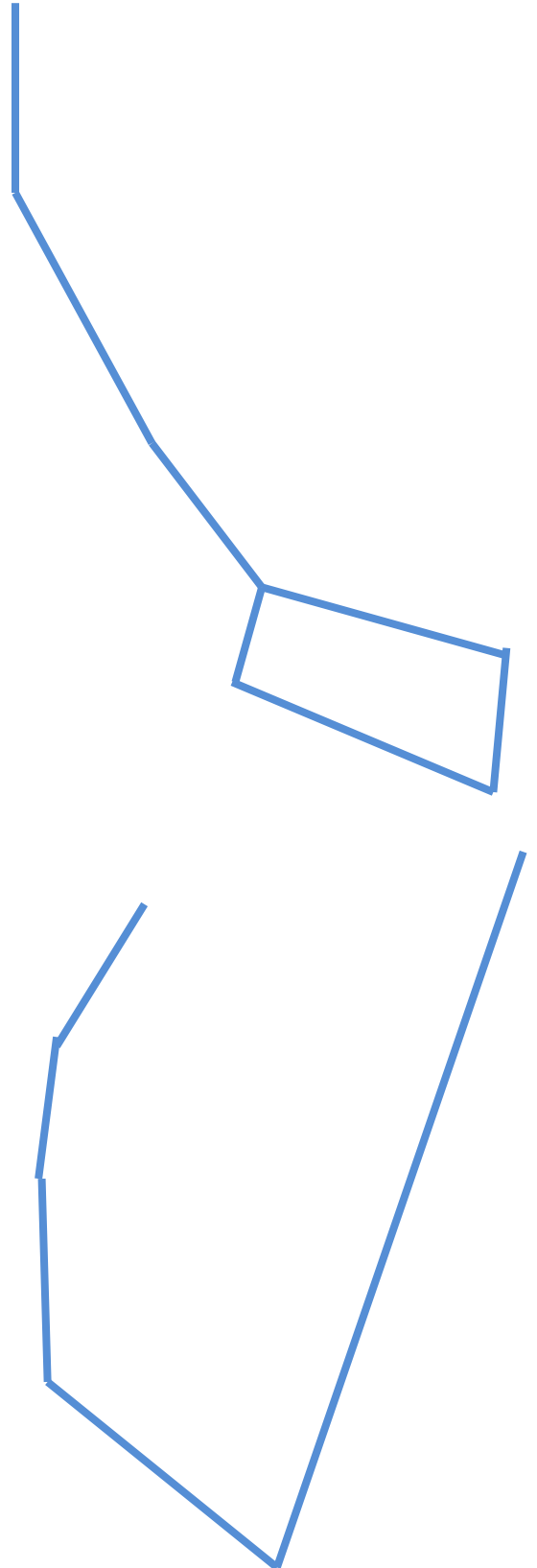
CELESTIAL INTERPRETATION I

The Axe

- The death of someone significant.
- The end of an important practice.
- An important tool or relic

The Goblet

- The birth of a significant individual.
- The birth of a social caste
- The finding of something lost



CELESTIAL INTERPRETATION II



The Horse Alighting

- A strange beast
- Rapid change
- A shift in a significant resource



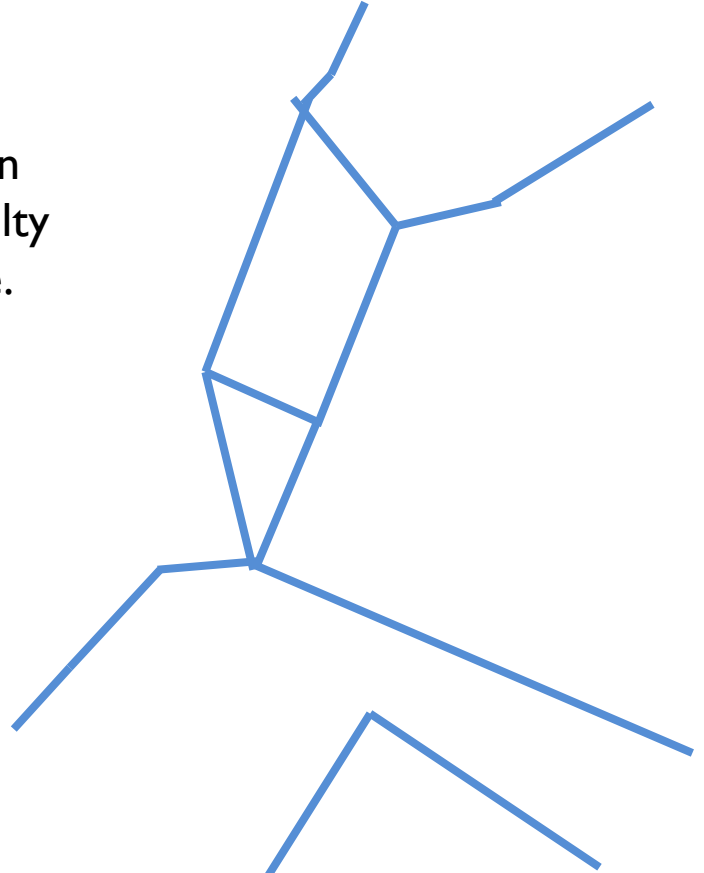
The Acrobats

- Unpredictable chaos
- Working with strangers
- A precarious balance

CELESTIAL INTERPRETATION III

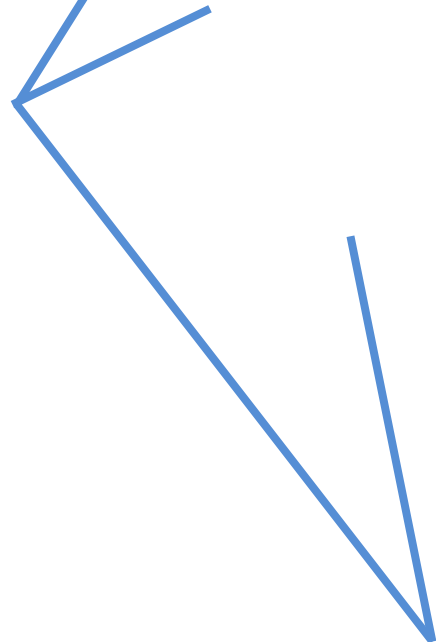
The Climber

- A sudden answer to an insurmountable difficulty
- The wonder of nature.
- Self-sacrifice

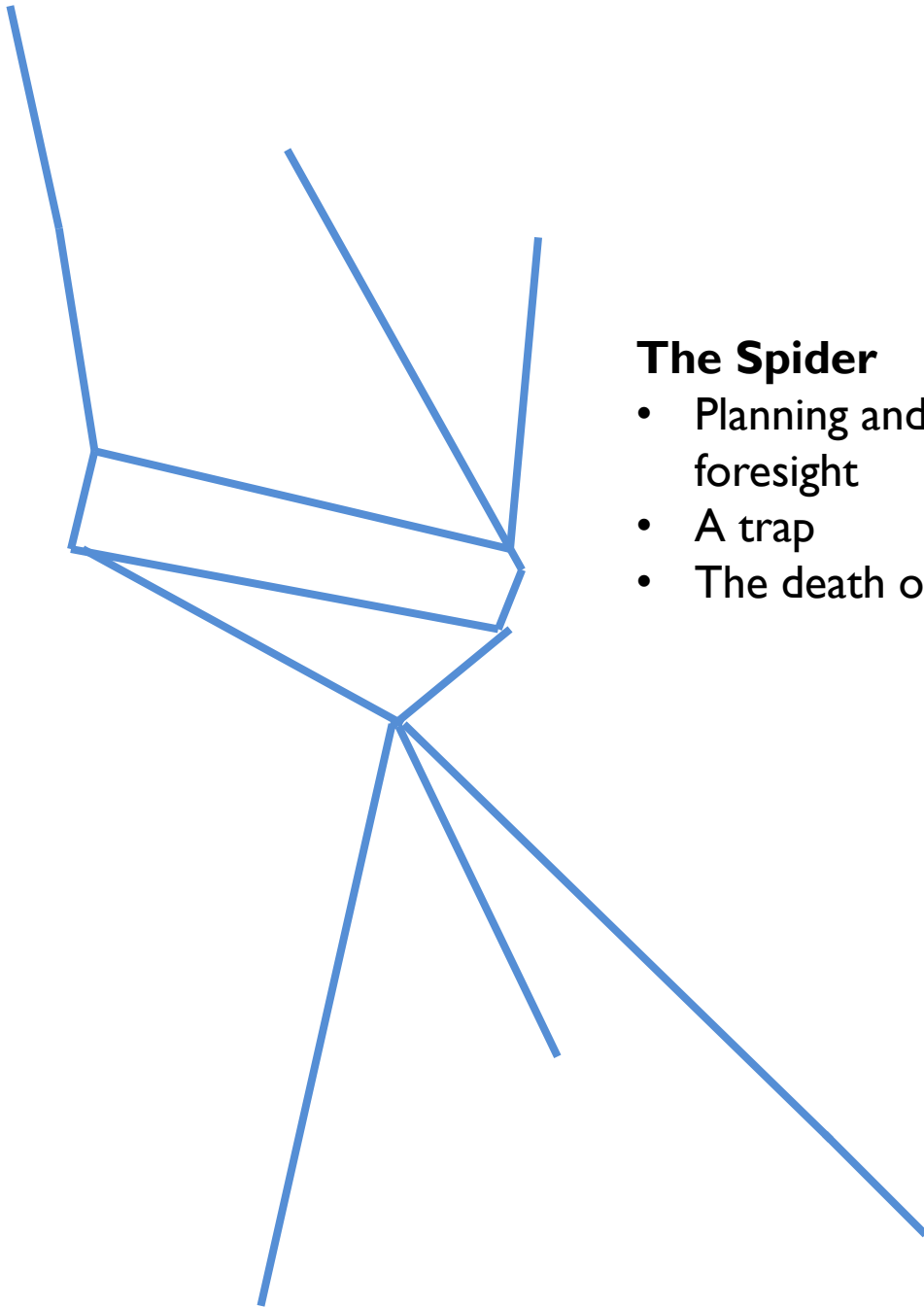


The Claw

- Greed or jealousy
- Opposing ideologies
- A strong, defensive position

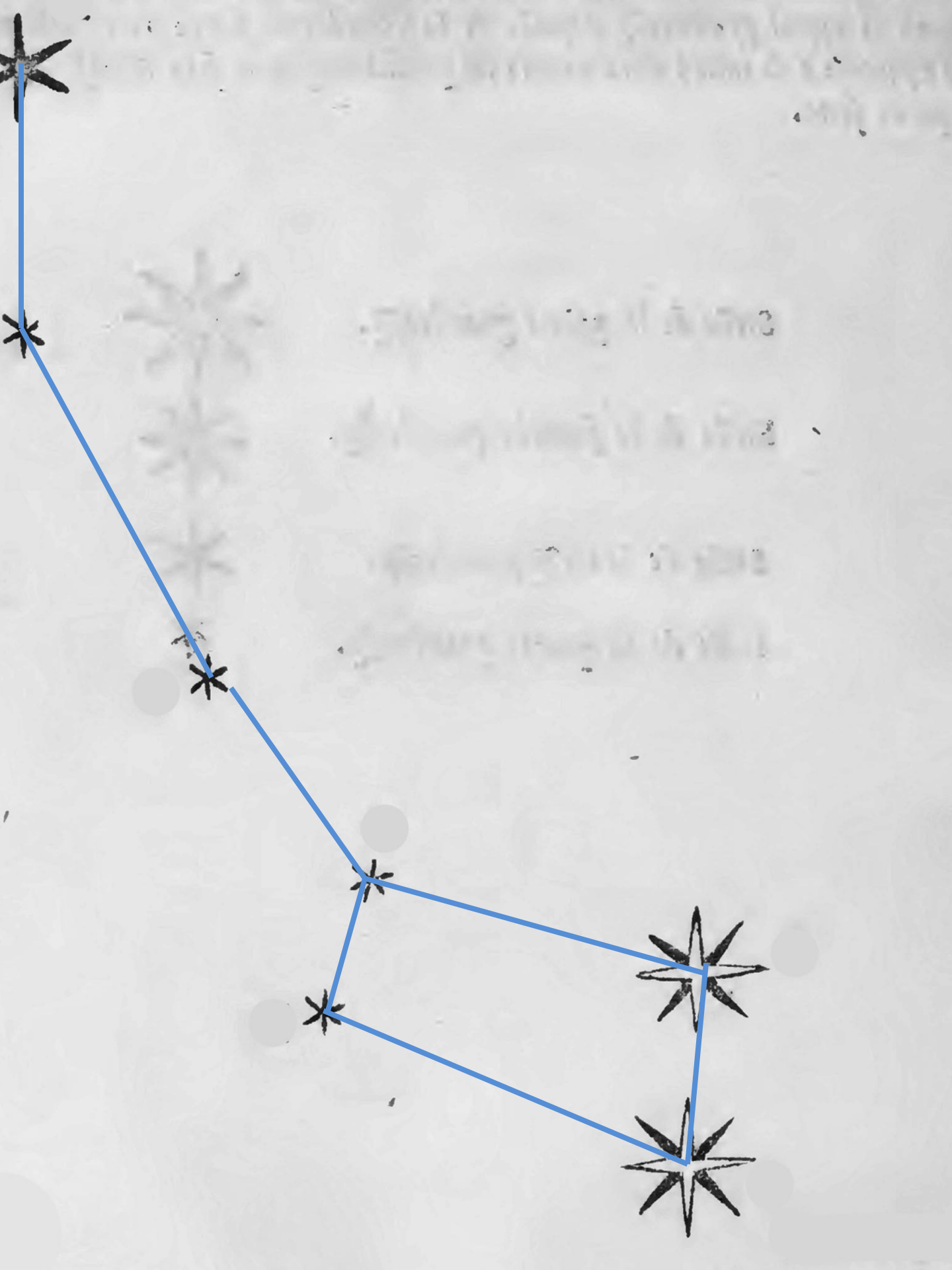


CELESTIAL INTERPRETATION IV

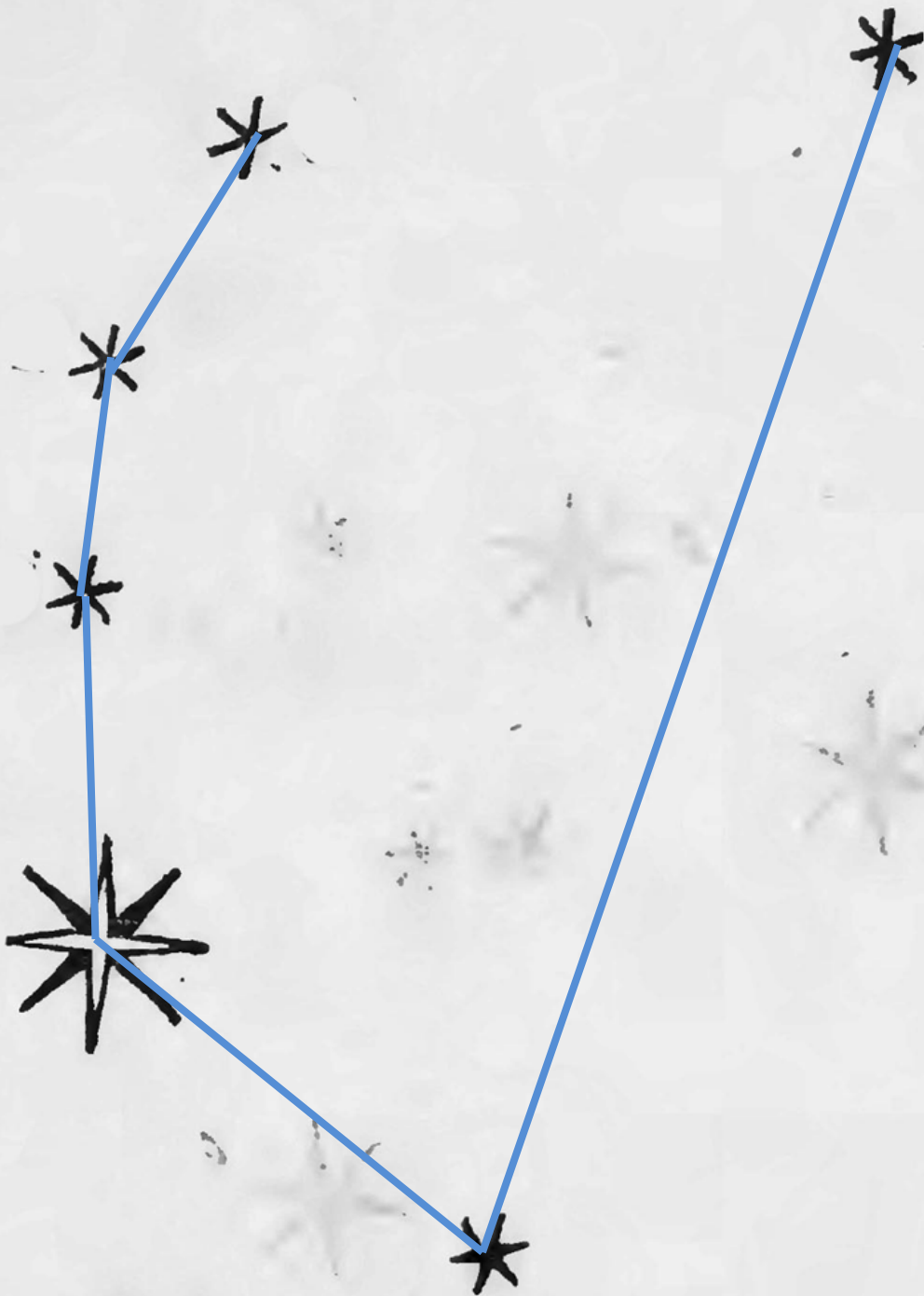


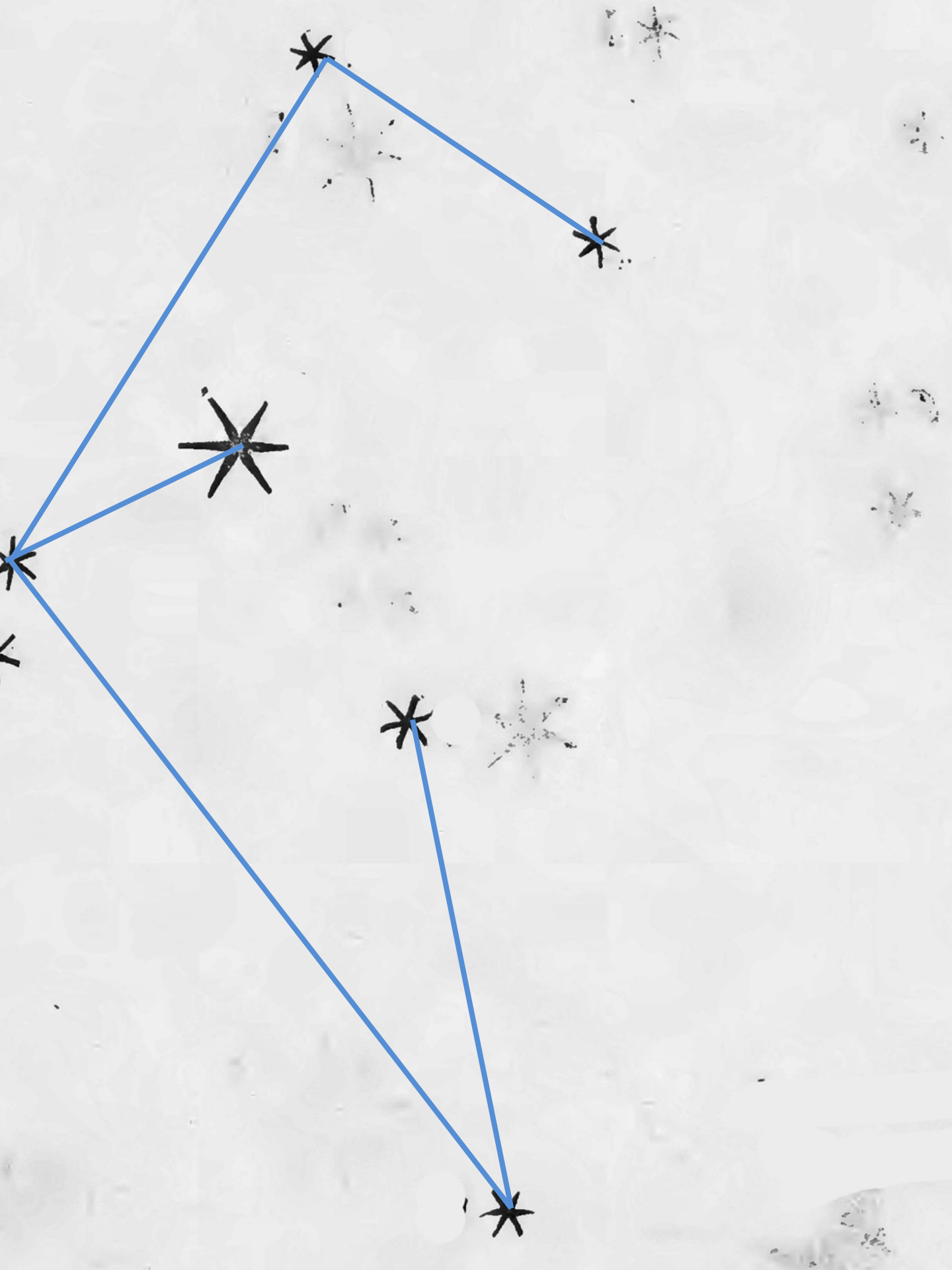
The Spider

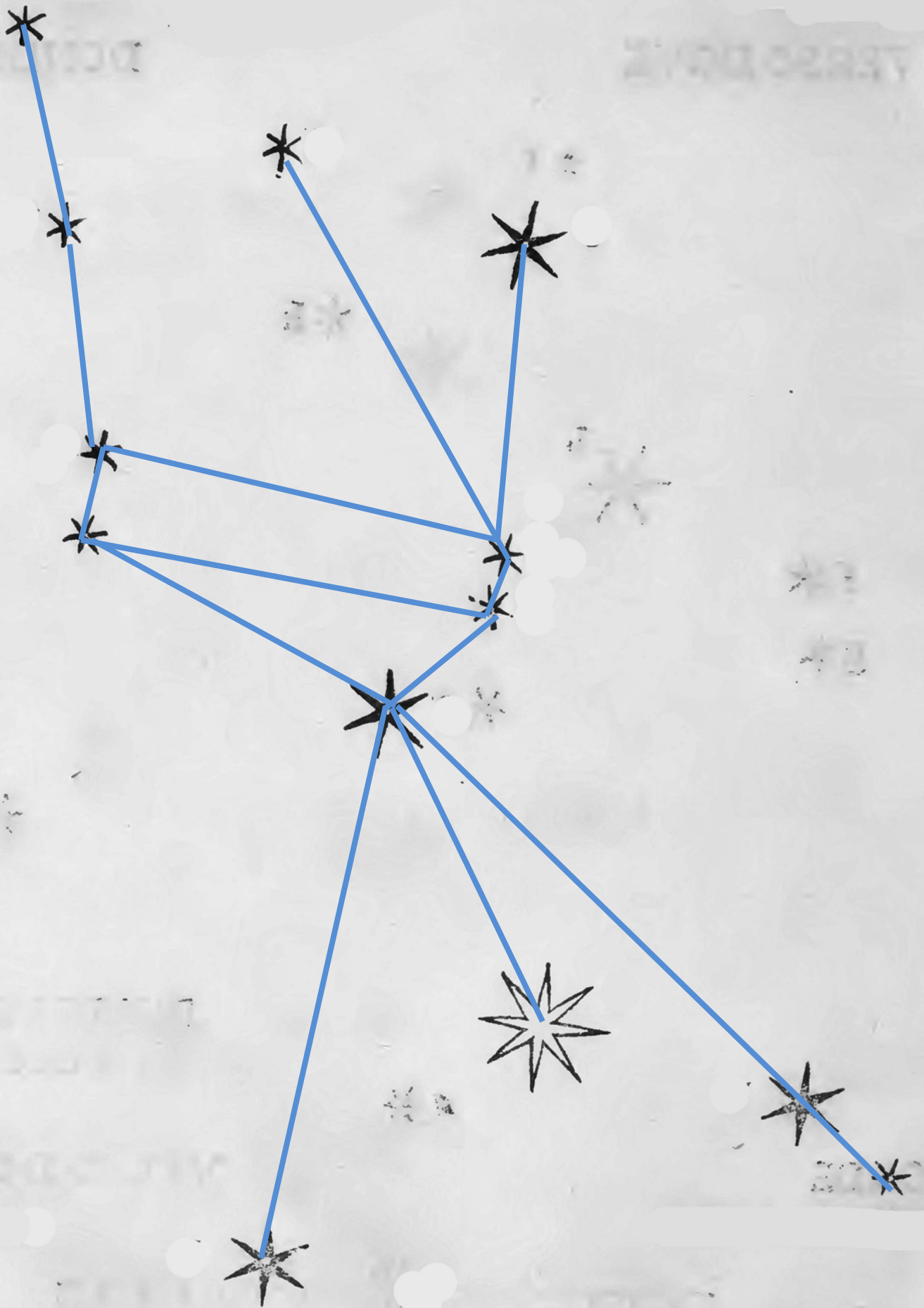
- Planning and foresight
- A trap
- The death of vermin.

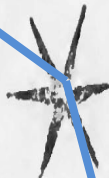
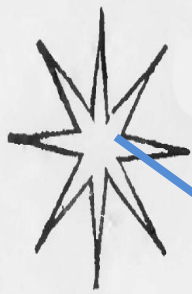


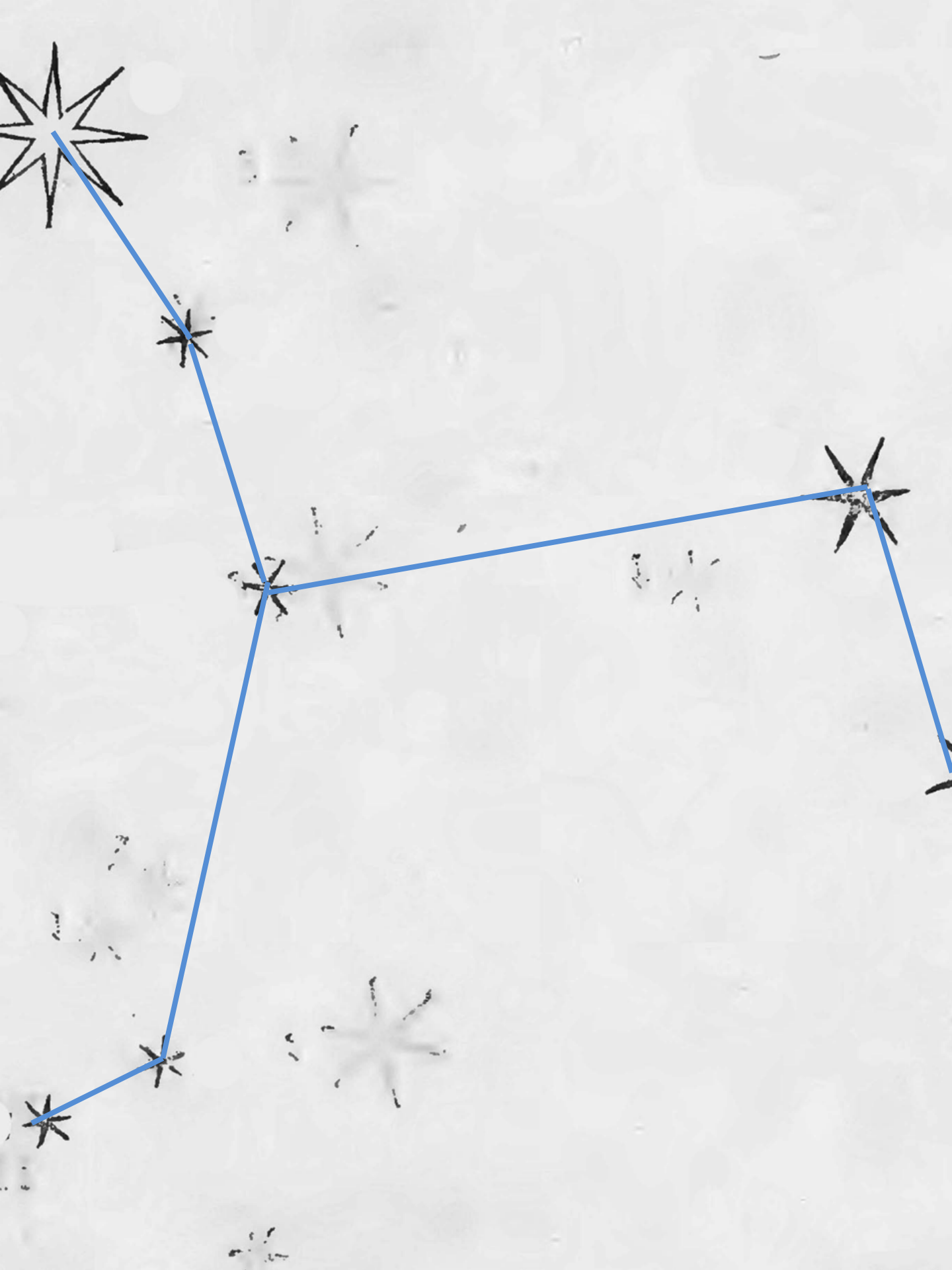












CREDITS

Game by Sharang Biswas

<https://sharangbiswas.myportfolio.com/>

<https://astrolingus.itch.io/>

Twitter: [@SharangBiswas](https://twitter.com/SharangBiswas)

Constellations from: *On the Fixed Stars*, by Alessandro Piccolomini (1540), retrieved from the Internet Archive.

<https://archive.org/details/delasferadelmond00picc/page/n229>

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