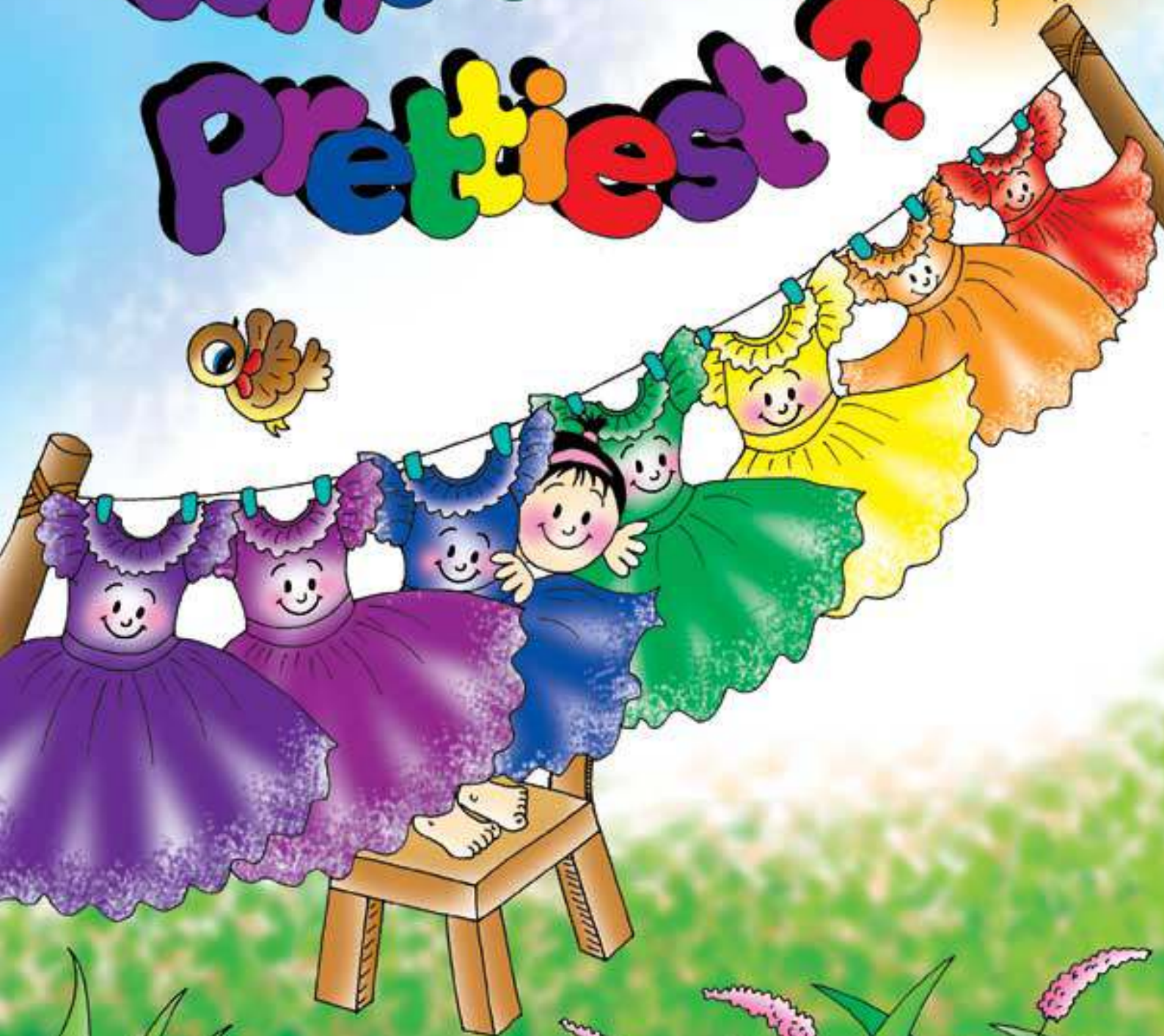


Who's the Prettiest?



Janaki Sooriyarachchi

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Who's the Prettiest?

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This book is dedicated to
my beloved niece, Sethni



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Who is the prettiest?

Sethni was a little girl.
She had seven beautiful dresses
in the seven beautiful colors of the rainbow.
She wore them on the seven days of the week.





She wore the violet dress on Sunday.
She wore the indigo dress on Monday.
She wore the blue dress on Tuesday.
She wore the green dress on Wednesday.
She wore the yellow dress on Thursday.
She wore the orange dress on Friday.
She wore the red dress on Saturday.



The dresses were very jealous of each other.

“I’m the prettiest,” said the red dress.

“No, I’m the prettiest,” said the green dress.

“No, I am,” said the yellow dress.

“No, I--- !”

“No !”

The dresses quarreled all day long.

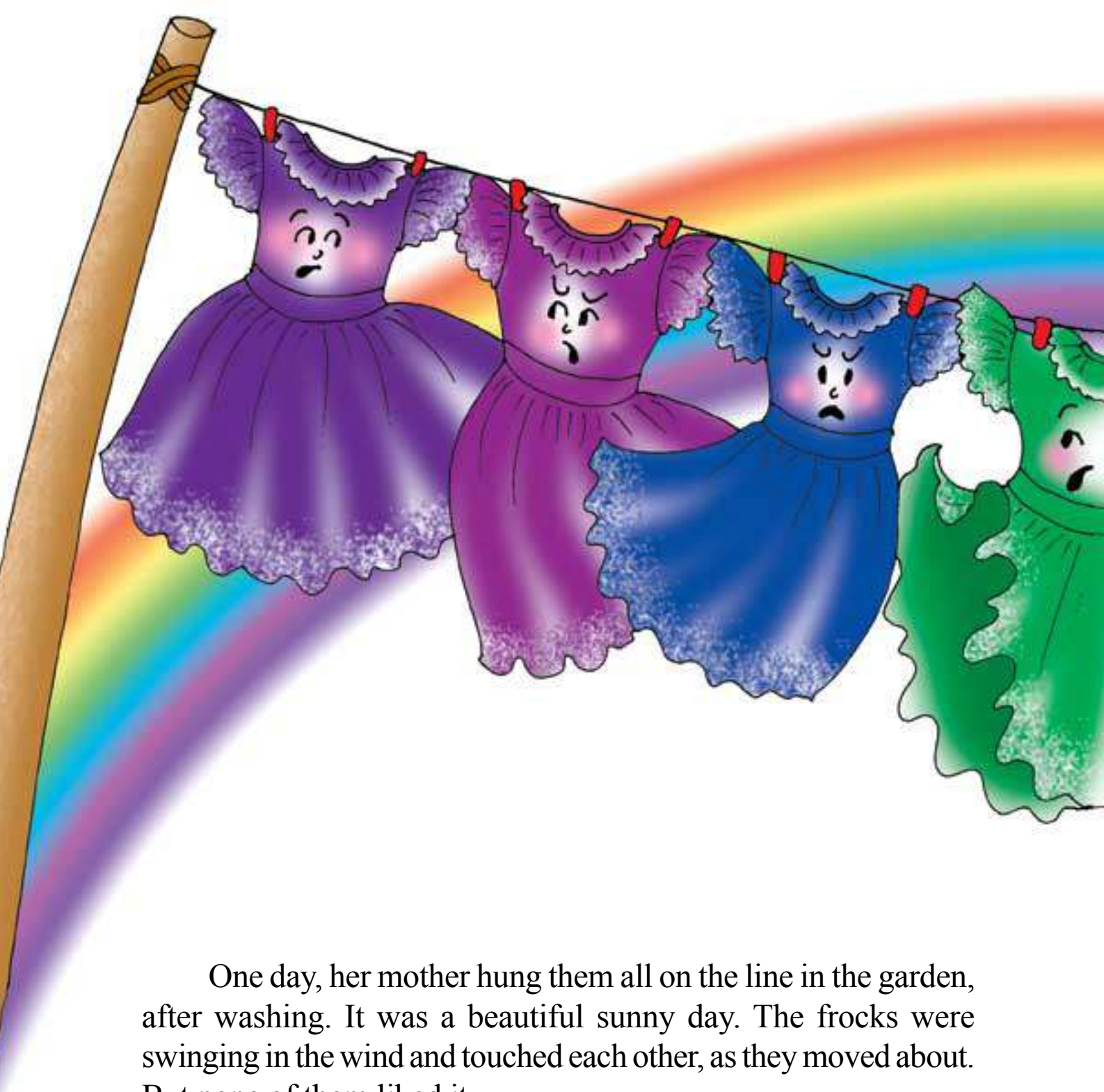
The dresses were hung together in
Sethni's wardrobe.
But they didn't like being next to each other.

“Stay away from me!” said the orange dress.
“You stay away---!”
The violet dress pushed her away.
“Don't touch me!”
The blue dress nudged the green dress.
“Don't ---!”
“No !”
They quarreled all the time.

Whenever Sethni came to the wardrobe
to select her dress,
they fought to be picked first.
Each one of them wanted Sethni to wear it every day.
So, when Sethni selected one dress for the day,
the others got very envious.
They couldn't wait until their turn came.







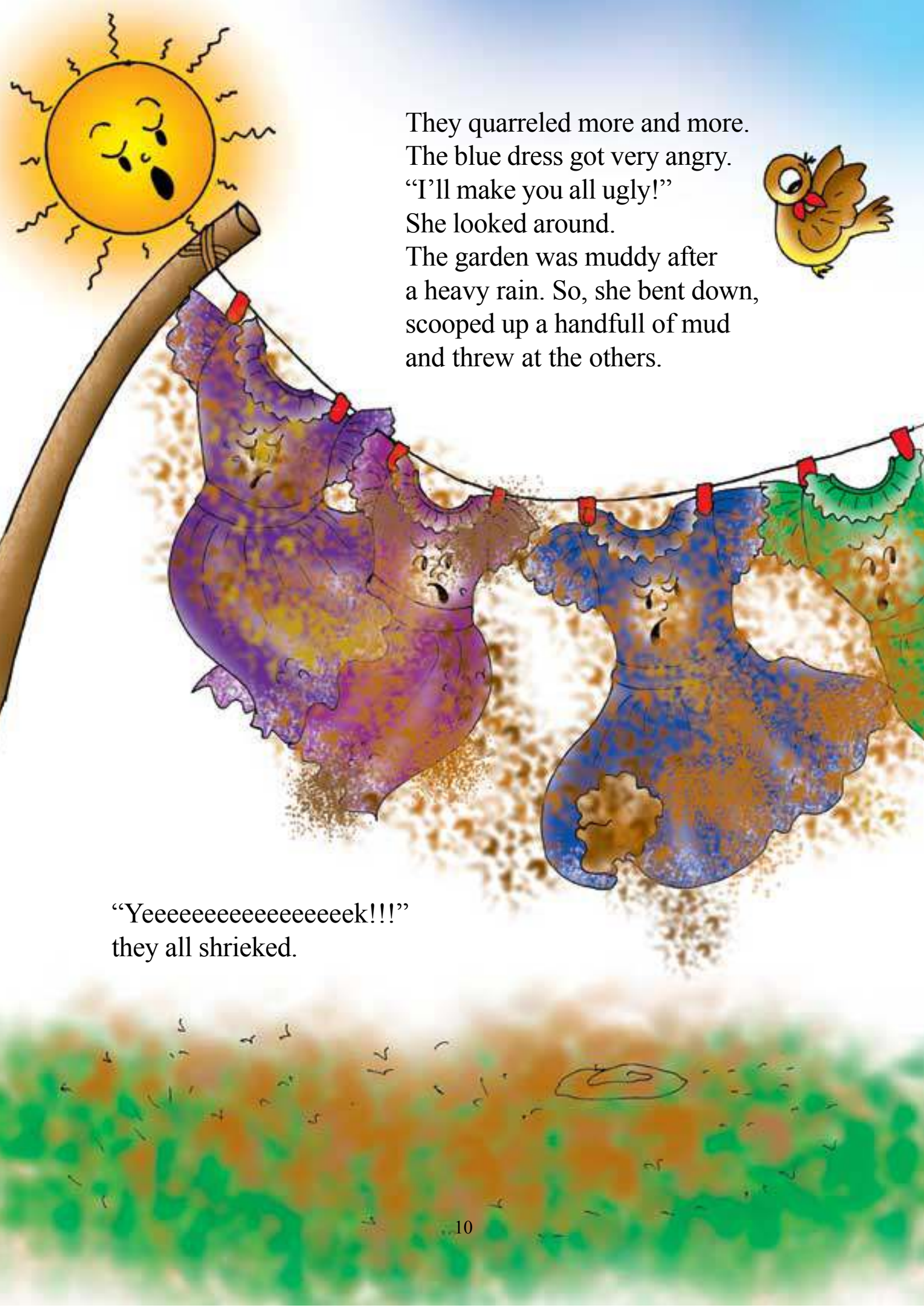
One day, her mother hung them all on the line in the garden, after washing. It was a beautiful sunny day. The frocks were swinging in the wind and touched each other, as they moved about. But none of them liked it.

The violet dress glared.
The indigo dress frowned.
The blue dress huffed.
The green dress squawked.
The yellow dress pushed.
The orange dress nudged.
The red dress pinched.



“I’m the prettiest. So don’t come close to me.”
The violet dress pushed the indigo dress away.
“No, it’s me, who’s the prettiest.”
The blue dress pushed all the others away.

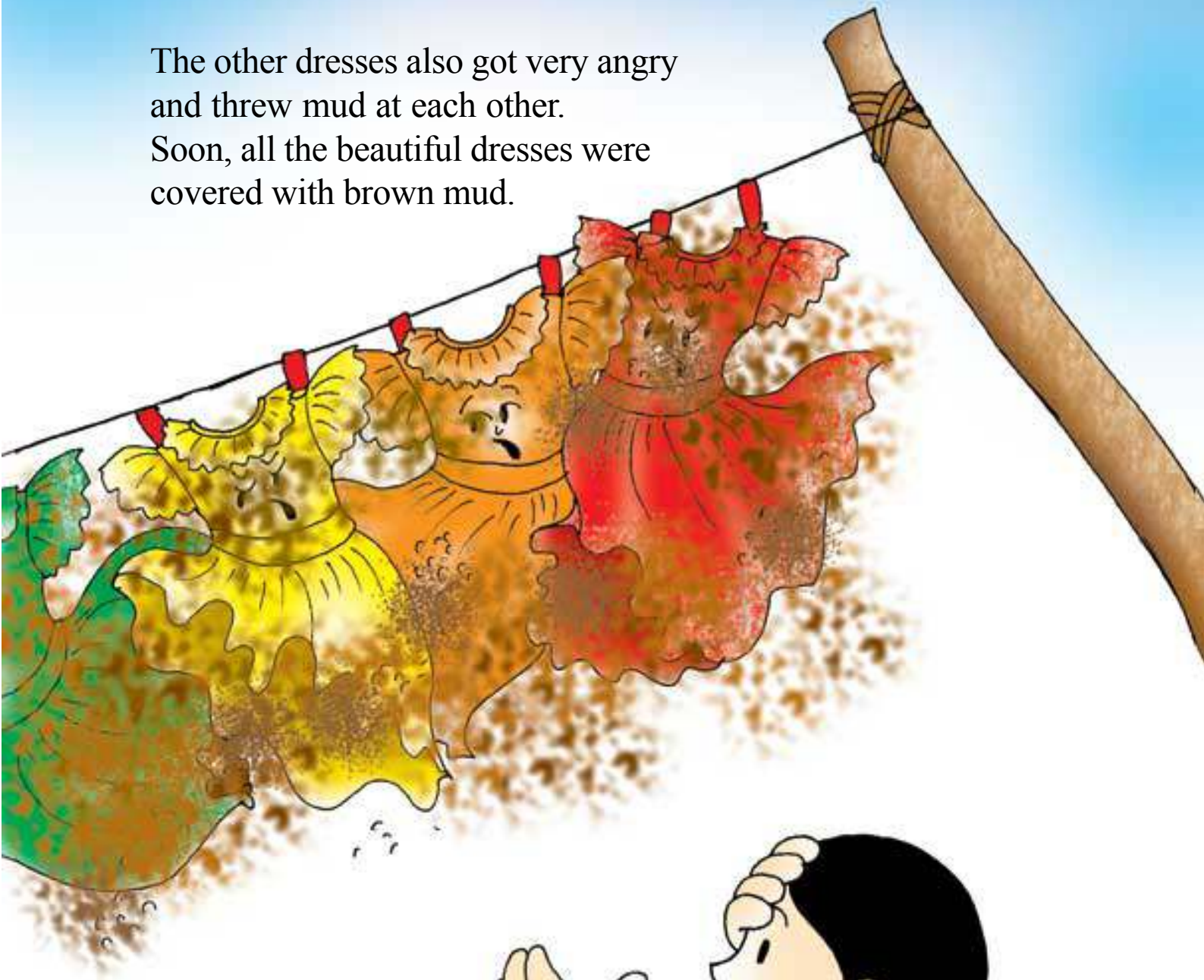
The quarrel started again, in the garden.
They pushed, kicked, nudged and pinched each other.
Everyone wanted to be the prettiest.



They quarreled more and more.
The blue dress got very angry.
“I’ll make you all ugly!”
She looked around.
The garden was muddy after
a heavy rain. So, she bent down,
scooped up a handful of mud
and threw at the others.

“Yeeeeeeeeeeeeeeek!!!”
they all shrieked.

The other dresses also got very angry and threw mud at each other. Soon, all the beautiful dresses were covered with brown mud.



Then, Sethni's mother came out, shouting in despair.

“Oh, nooooo!”





She put all the dresses into a washbasin and scrubbed them hard.
But the muddy brown stains didn't rinse out.

The dresses had all become very ugly and blotchy.



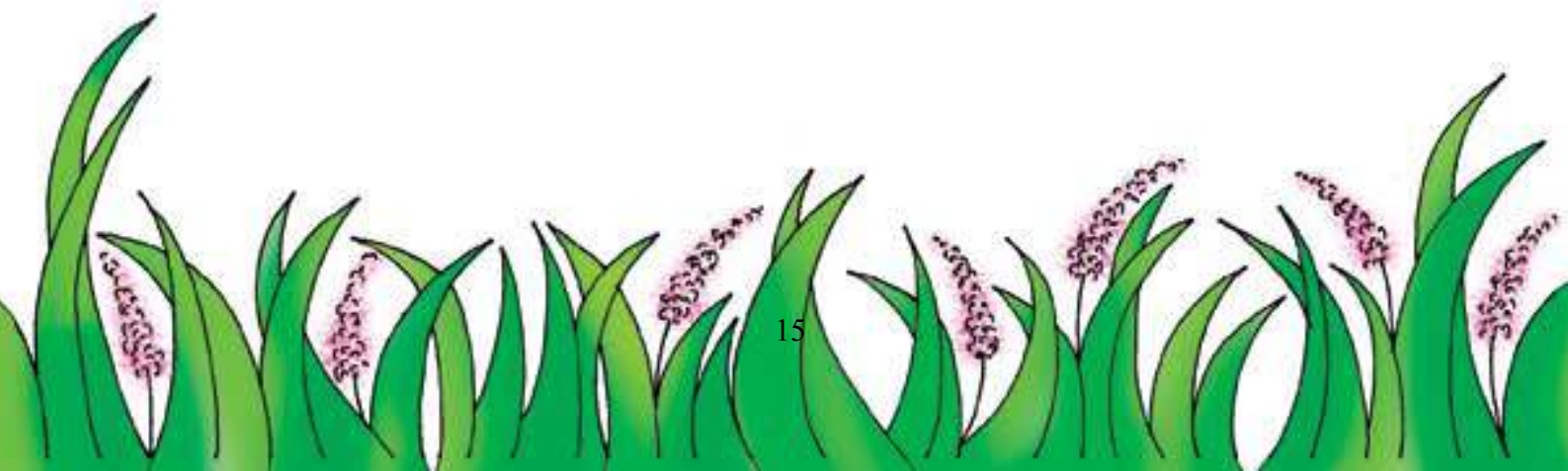


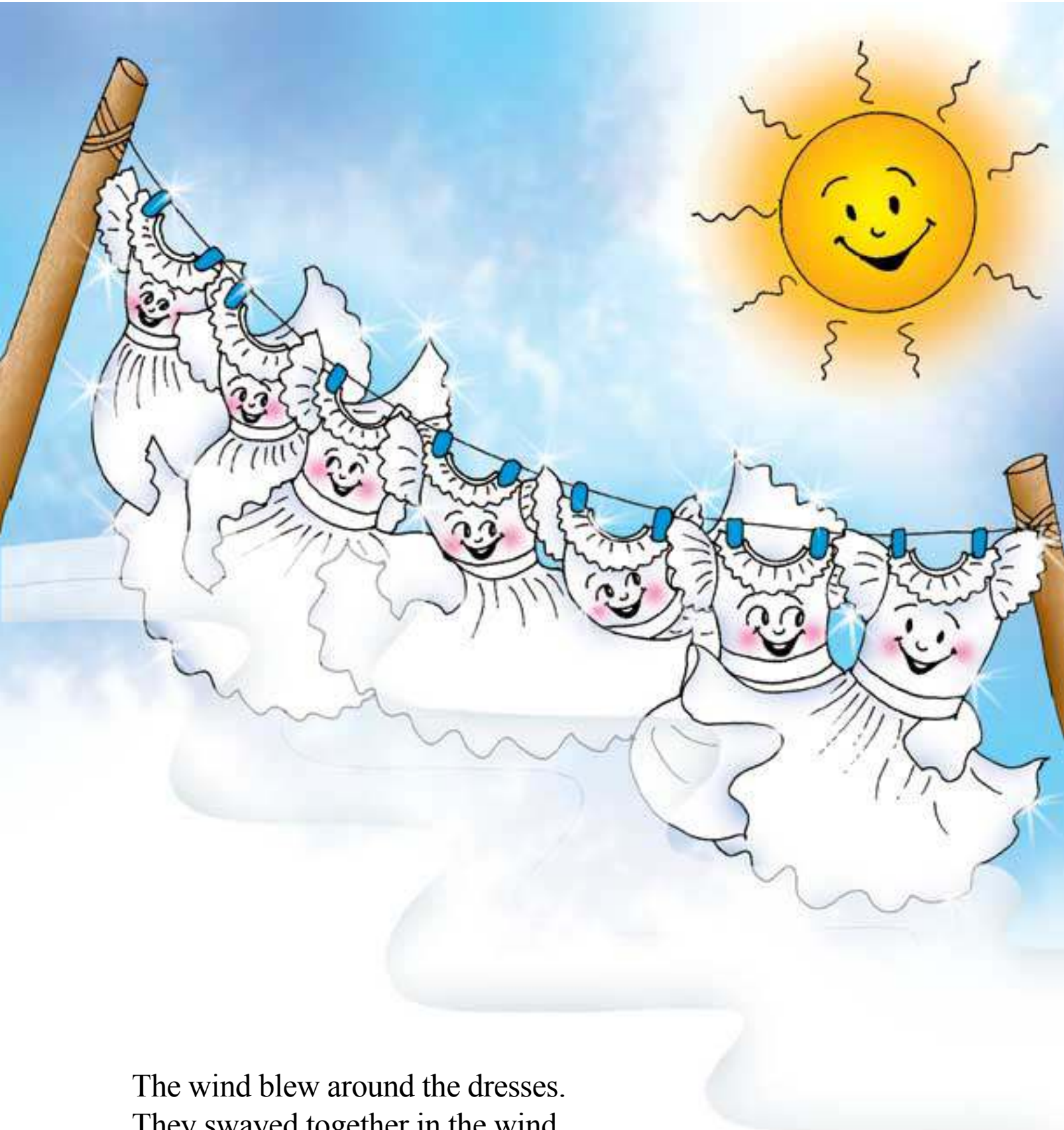
Sethni's mother put them back on the line, in the garden.
All of them were fretting.

Who is the prettiest now, they wondered.



But all were the same plain white. They had lost all their beautiful colors because of their jealousy and anger. So, they were ashamed of themselves. They looked shyly at each other.





The wind blew around the dresses.
They swayed together in the wind.
And there were no more quarrels to be the prettiest.
They smiled at each other and soon became friends.
The sun was very glad to see them happily together.
So it turned all the dresses whiter and whiter until
they glowed brighter and brighter.
And they all became so beautiful.