

Rabah Kheddouci

**MY BEAUTIFUL
STORIES**

(for kids)

Translated by:

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Publications of EL-hadhara

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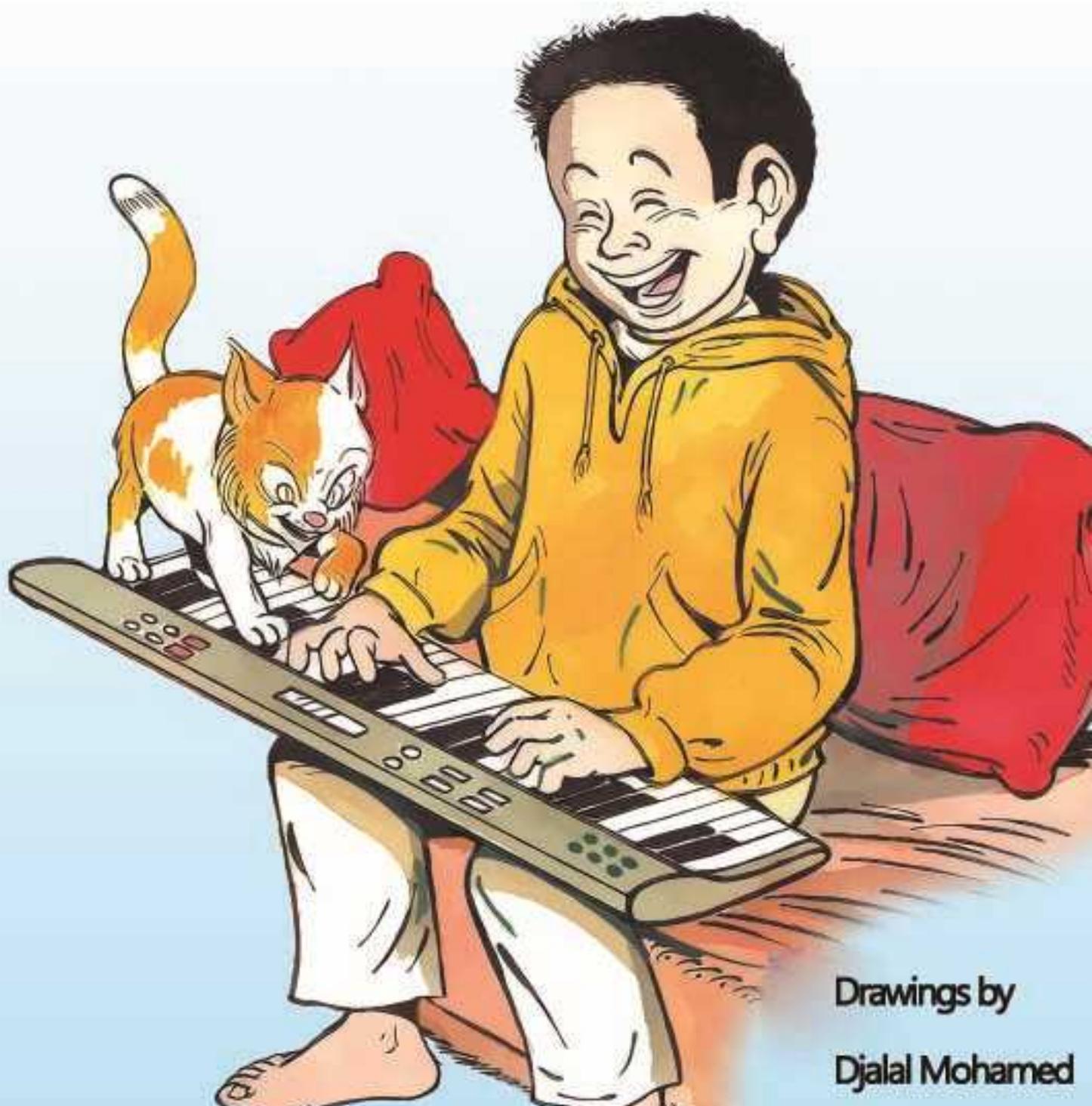
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MY FRIEND ...

MIMI

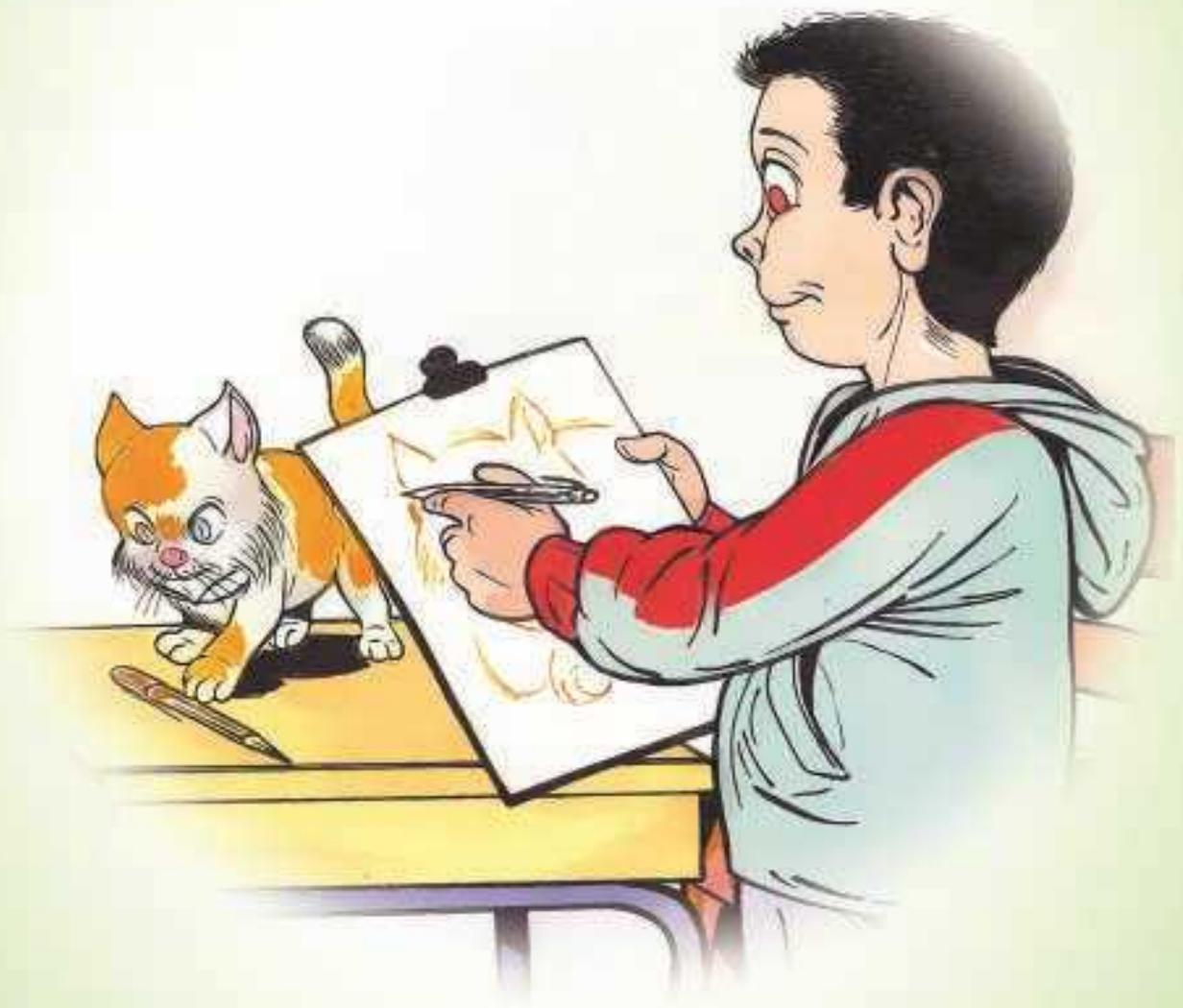


Drawings by

Djalal Mohamed

MY FRIEND MIMI

How did Hamou gather his friend to help him search for his missed friend? What did he tell them? Where was Mimi all that time? This is an exciting and educative story meant to develop the imagination of the child and bond him to his ecological environment by discovering various species of animals. Through beautiful and meaningful drawings, it aims at teaching children the values of loyalty and solidarity, as it assists them in the constitution of their scientific thinking and modern personality.



He loved her too much!
More than food and drinks!
More than fun and games!
More than pens and books!

Her name was *Mimi*, white-furred with orange spots and green eyes.

His name was Hammoud, nicknamed Hammou. Hammou was not eating until he poured her milk into a plastic bowl and filled her with fish. He was not sleeping until he made her hear his new song, like:

Mimi, Mimi... The closest loyal friend to me

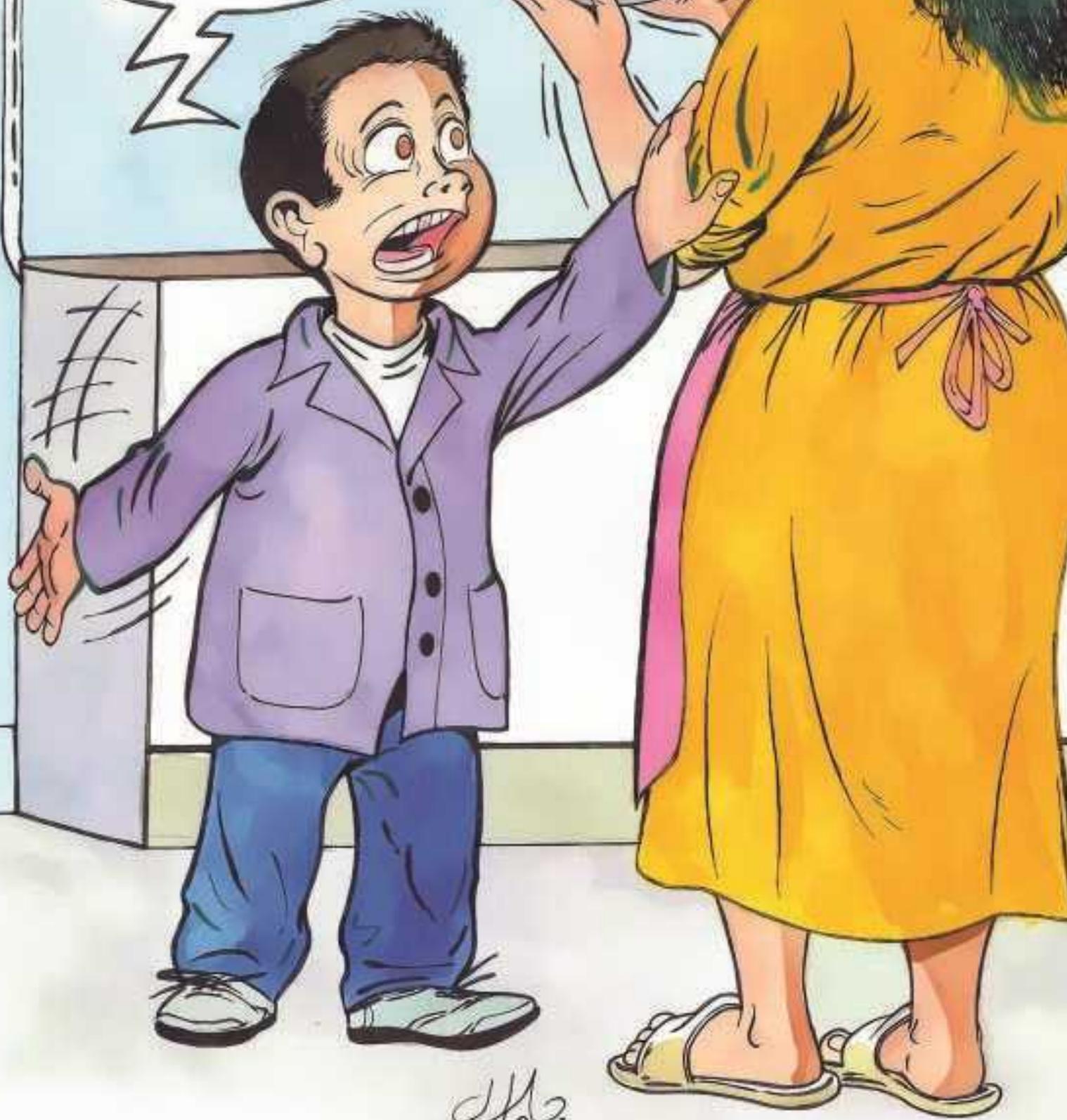
Mimi, Mimi... The kindest company to me

Every afternoon, Mimi would wait for Hammou come back from school, and then she would jump into his hands and on his shoulder, before she slept in his lap.

Mi-mi! Mi-mi!
My most faithful close friend!



Mom... mom.
WHERE IS MI-MI?



Yesterday, Hammou returned from school and he did not find her to greet him as usual.

He shouted:

- Mimi! Mimi!

Then, he asked his mother:

- Where is Mimi, mom? Mimi?

She told him:

- She has gone out since the morning. Not back yet.

He waited her comeback at sunset into the darkness, but she did not show up. He thought over her absence, saying to himself:

- Maybe Mimi ran to the neighbors or she is just hidden in a cave!

He finally slept anxious, looking forward to the rise of the day. Yet, the day dawned, the noon and the afternoon and sunset had passed by, and the night had fallen, without the return of Mimi. Hammou felt very sad. She missed Mimi, and was afraid she got hurt.

By the end of the week, Hammou had sought for the cat Mimi, helped by his sister Hana and his friends Ameer the poet, Thamer the artist, and Samer the singer.

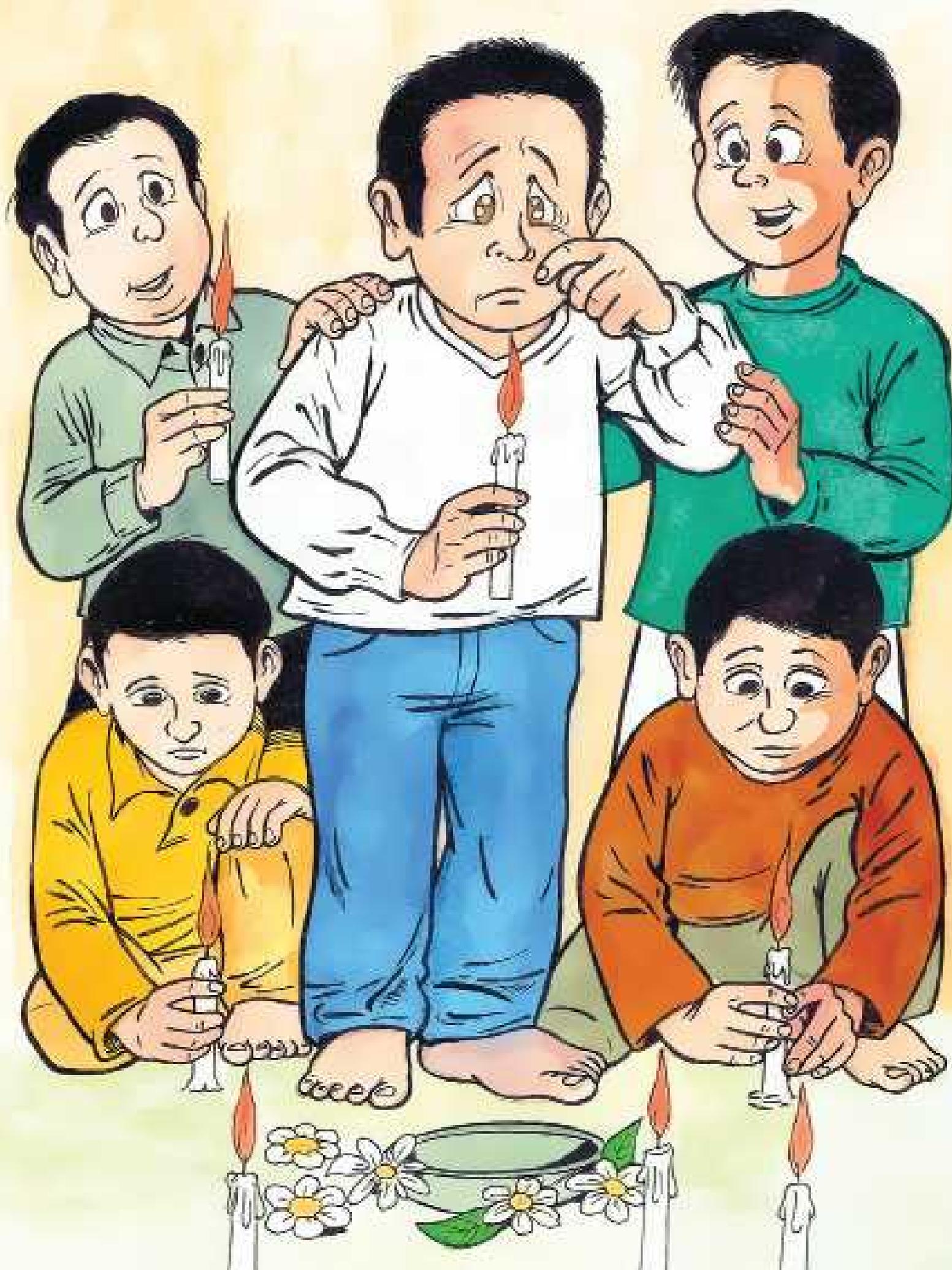
The neighbors looked for her in the streets of the neighborhood and in the roads of the city, but they failed to find the lost cat.

WHERE ARE YOU HIDING,

MI-MI?



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After many months of the absence of the Mimi, Hammou despaired to see her back home again. He gathered his friends and told them:

- We must look for Mimi everywhere! In the cities and villages, even abroad!

His friends were astonished. They said:

- Abroad? How come?

Hammou replied:

- Yes, abroad ! Thamer will search for Mimi in Europe, Ameer in America, Samer in Asia, Hana in Africa, and me in Australia! And this is her picture, a copy for each of you.

They all said:

- This is an impossible mission! Shall we travel by land, or sea, or air?

Hammou gave them an answer:

- You travel as you like. This is my only demand and you should execute it. Are you just my friends by talks!

Hammou paused for a short while, and then he continued:

- You all know the traits of my cat: her color is white with orange spots and her eyes are green.



They all fell silent, embarrassed. Everyone was thinking over the way of travelling, or perhaps each of them should just look for Mimi by means of radio, newspapers or Internet.

All of a sudden, Mimi peered through the door, before she came in, followed by six kittens.

They all cried:

- Mimi is back! Mimi is back!

Hammou rushed to hug the cat, incredibly joyful of her comeback. He did not believe his eyes, though. He then caressed the kittens, one by one. These little cats became his new friends. He said:

- This one is for me. That one, too...



Handwritten signature or mark in the bottom right corner.

His mother said:

- Mimi went away because she wanted to deliver her litter of kittens and take care of them.

The sadness of Hammou turned to joy and fun. He asked his cat:

- Where have you been all this time, my dear Mimi?

She gazed at him, her eyes bearing a thousand answers.

- Starting today, I am going to hang a small phone around your neck.

Once you are absent again, I will call you:

- Hello, my friend Mimi. And I will then know your exact position.

His sister Hana warned the boys:

- Be careful! Do not touch the cat and her kittens until the veterinarian will have examined them. You know, many animals do carry contagious diseases...



THE BUTTERFLY, MY TEACHER



Drawings by Djalal Mohamed

THE BUTTERFLY, MY TEACHER

What happened to the mayor when he had heard the dialogue between the butterfly and the bee? This is again an educative story, embellished with amazing and expressive drawings. The child will learn the importance of the preservation of the environment. It aims at building the conscious and civic of the child, and his acquiring of a fully equilibrated personality.



The City of Happiness had once been so beautiful, with verdant gardens, shining blue sky, ever flowing water and clean air. As the days passed by, the negligence transformed the gorgeous city into an ugly one. The pollution of the air caused chest, visceral and mental diseases.” This was what the new mayor had said with regret in one of the fields, as he looked for a suitable place to build a hospital.



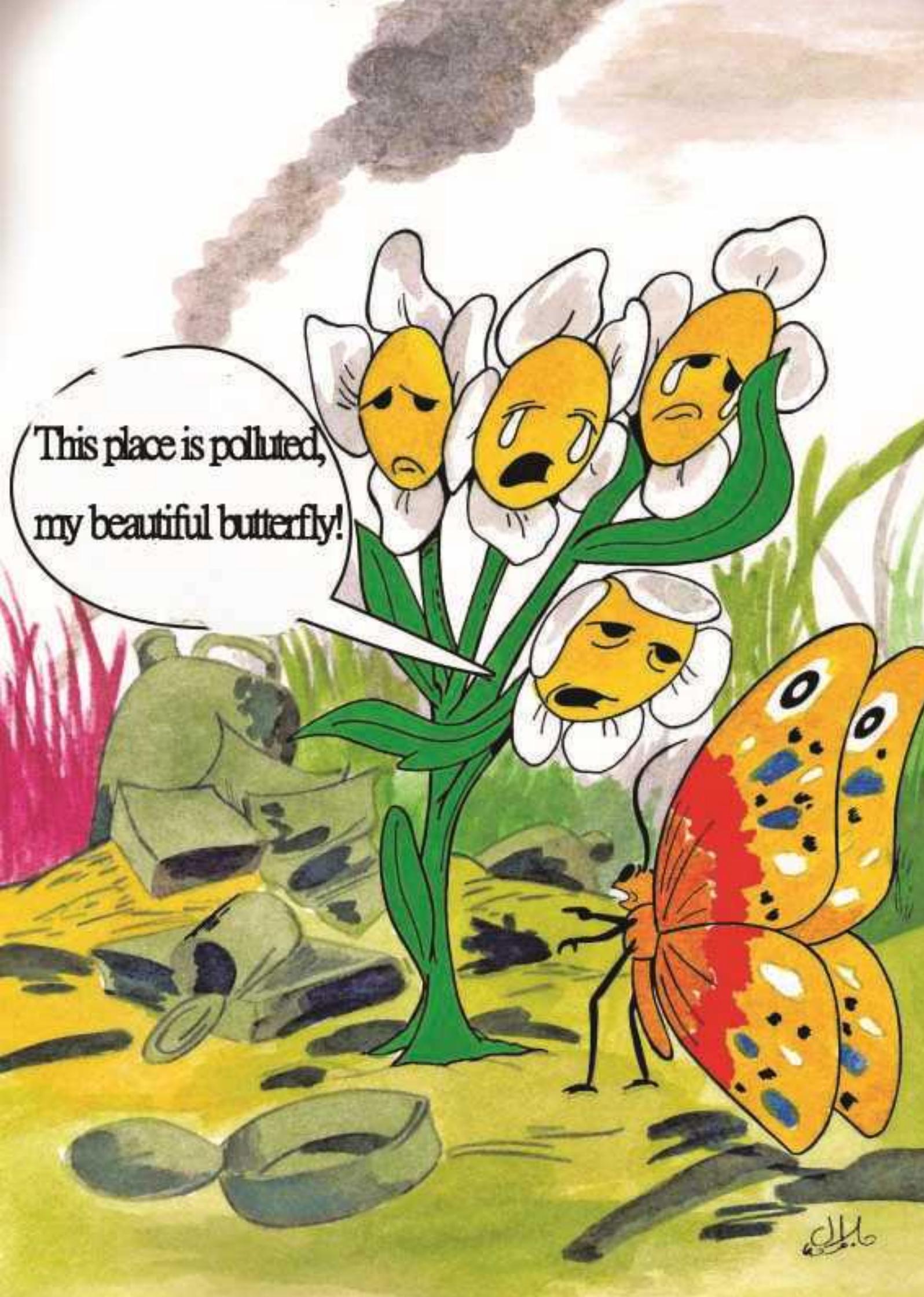
He wondered:

- What happened to our city? What has made my body fall sick?

A bee and a butterfly flew over the flowers of the meadow. They came closer, as though whispering to each other.

The bee:

- Every day I see you here, beauty! What is your name? And what are you doing here?



This place is polluted,
my beautiful butterfly!

The butterfly:

- I am the queen of magnificence. I teach people how to live in joy.

The bee:

- How so?

The butterfly:

- I wear colorful dresses. I drink pure water. I breathe clean air. I dance on the flowers. I have fun between the grasses with pleasure.



2010

The bee:

- It is a good work!

The butterfly:

- By the way, what is your name? Where do you come from?

The bee:

- I am a businesswoman! I live near the City of Oranges. Every day, I work with my colleagues in making honey, as a food and drug for humans.

After a short moment of silence, the butterfly asked:

- But why do children chase us, despite the fact we love and serve them?



The bee:

- Even the grown-ups run after us! Have you seen how they have built their houses and factories and gardens and farms?

The butterfly:

- Ah, they will meet the fate of the City of Happiness. They will regret what they did.

The bee:

- Shush... Shush! Someone would hear us.

Where are going you
like that?

**TO WHEREIN THE GROUND IS CLEANER,
THE AIR PURER,
AND THE WATER CLEARER.**

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The mayor looked surprised to the talk between the bee and the butterfly. He scudded away, saying:

- I knew the cause... I knew the cause, my teacher the butterfly!

He took out his cell phone and immediately called his aides, and the first decision was:

- Stop the building in the fields. Then, plant flowers and trees, instead. A few months later, there was increase in the numbers of butterflies and bees and birds in the City. The pollution and stress disappeared, and people got back their health and peace and gaiety. The hospitals were empty from patients. The mayor recovered from his disease. The City regained her former name: The City of Happiness...



Since then, the pupils would go out to the fields, to learn from the school of nature the culture of life of both animals and birds...

They even named the butterfly the teacher of grace and beauty, and saw the bee the teacher of activity and perfection, and considered the ant the teacher of labor and housing.

Likewise, they called the cicadas and birds the teachers of singing. The dog represented fidelity, and the donkey was a symbol of patience...

The children then chanted in chorus:

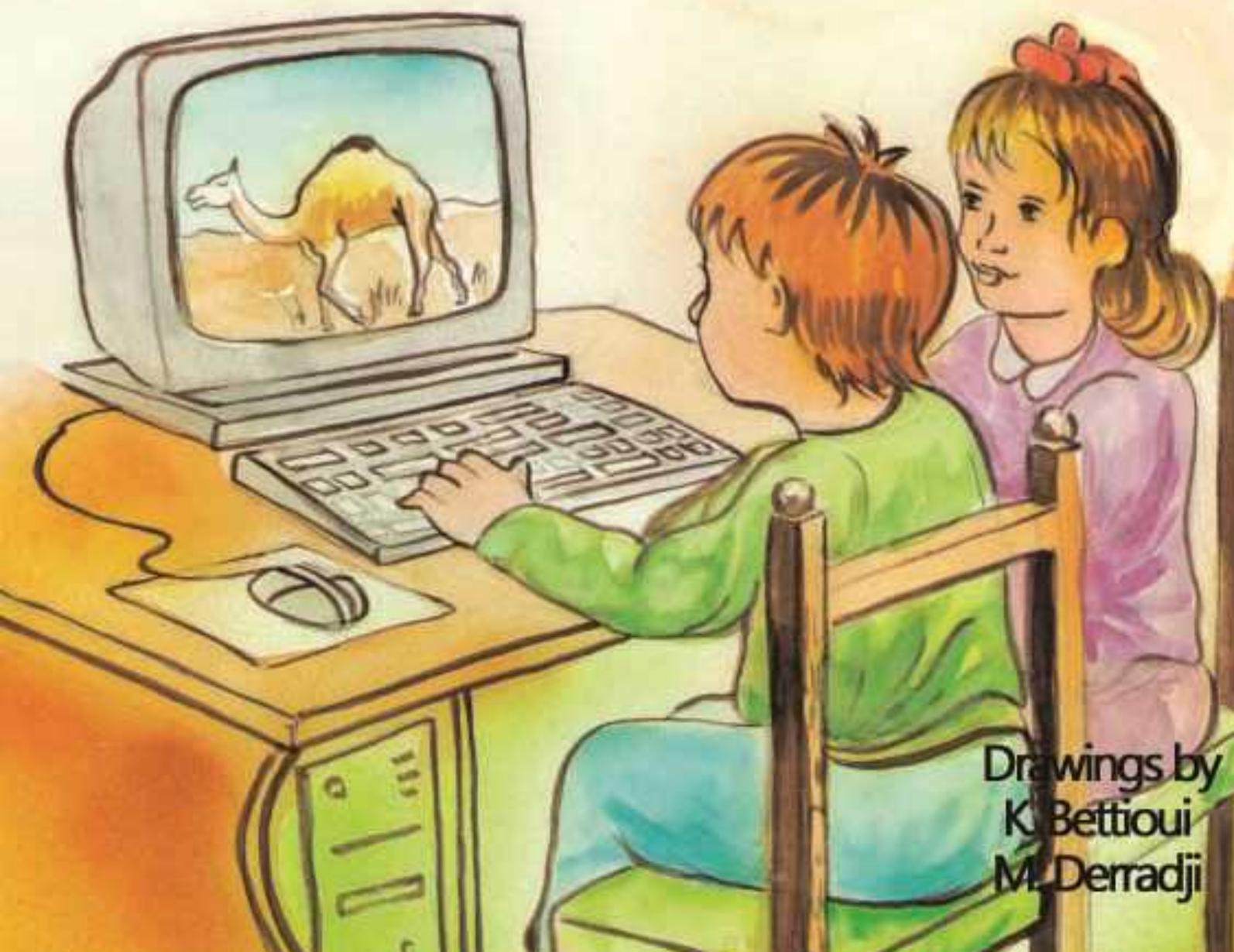
- Long live the school of nature and its teachers!





THE FANTASTIC GIFT

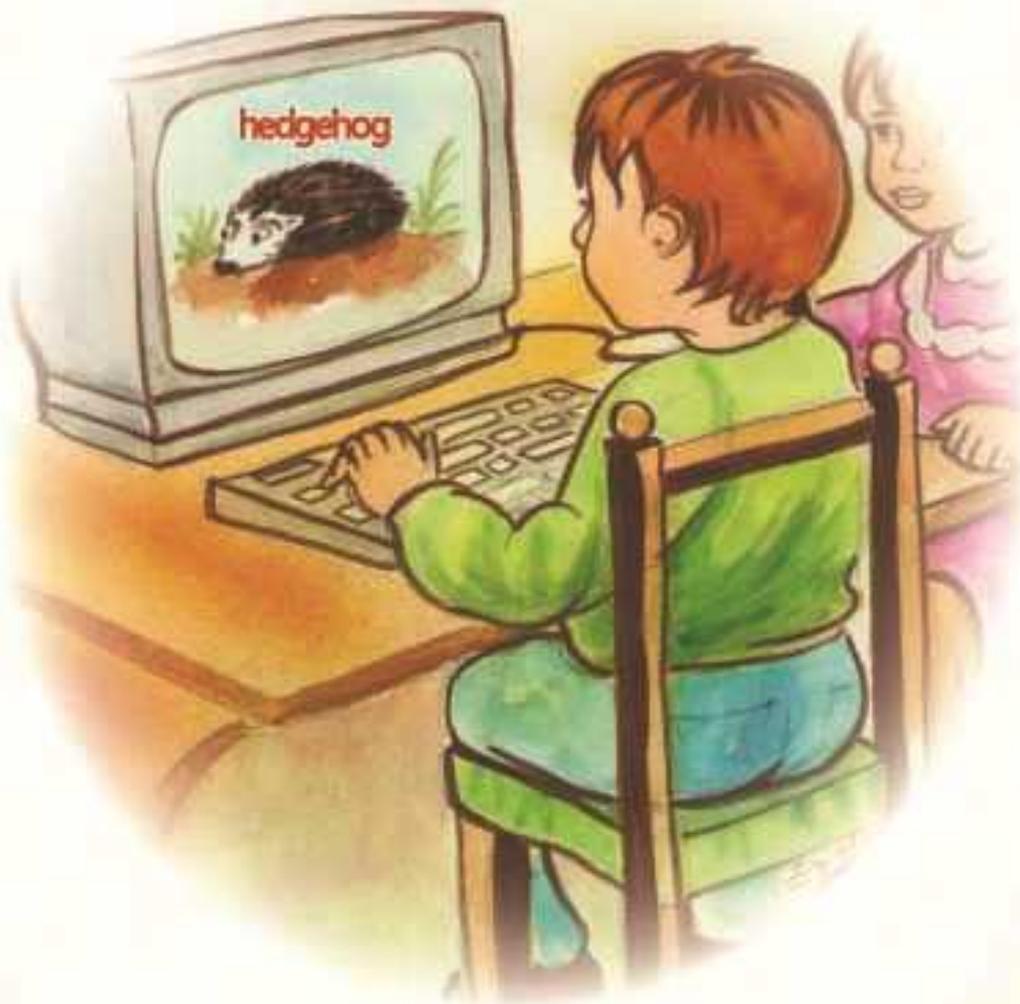
Ministry of Culture
Award Winner



Drawings by
K. Bettioui
M. Derradji

THE FANTASTIC GIFT

What kind of gift did the father offer to his son Zohir following his success at school? And what did he find inside it? This an exciting story adorned with beautiful and meaningful illustrations, animating at developing the imagination of the child and enhancing his creative thinking. It builds then the child's conscious mind and mature personality.



Zohir put the wonderful gift on his desk. He then started beholding its parts with marvel. He said to himself:

- What a happy day! It is like a holiday, because I have earned this gift from my family as a reward to my success in school... A computer! Zohir was aged ten, in his prime years, highly mobile, very active, as if he were a fish in the sea of life. He loved his parents, his friends and his teacher. He was eager to know more about the secrets of his wonderful computer, like games and funny stories.

In his spare time, Zohir turned on his computer. The small screen displayed the names of the games and the activities, and the themes of illustrated stories for children. Actually, there were plenty of them.

Zohir clicked on one illustrated story. It bore the title *The Forest School*. He scrolled down the sequences of the story of the fantastic school. He saw a rabbit in sports suit singing:

The forest is my school

Wherein I meet my friends

Nature is my school

With its splendid sceneries

The Arrival



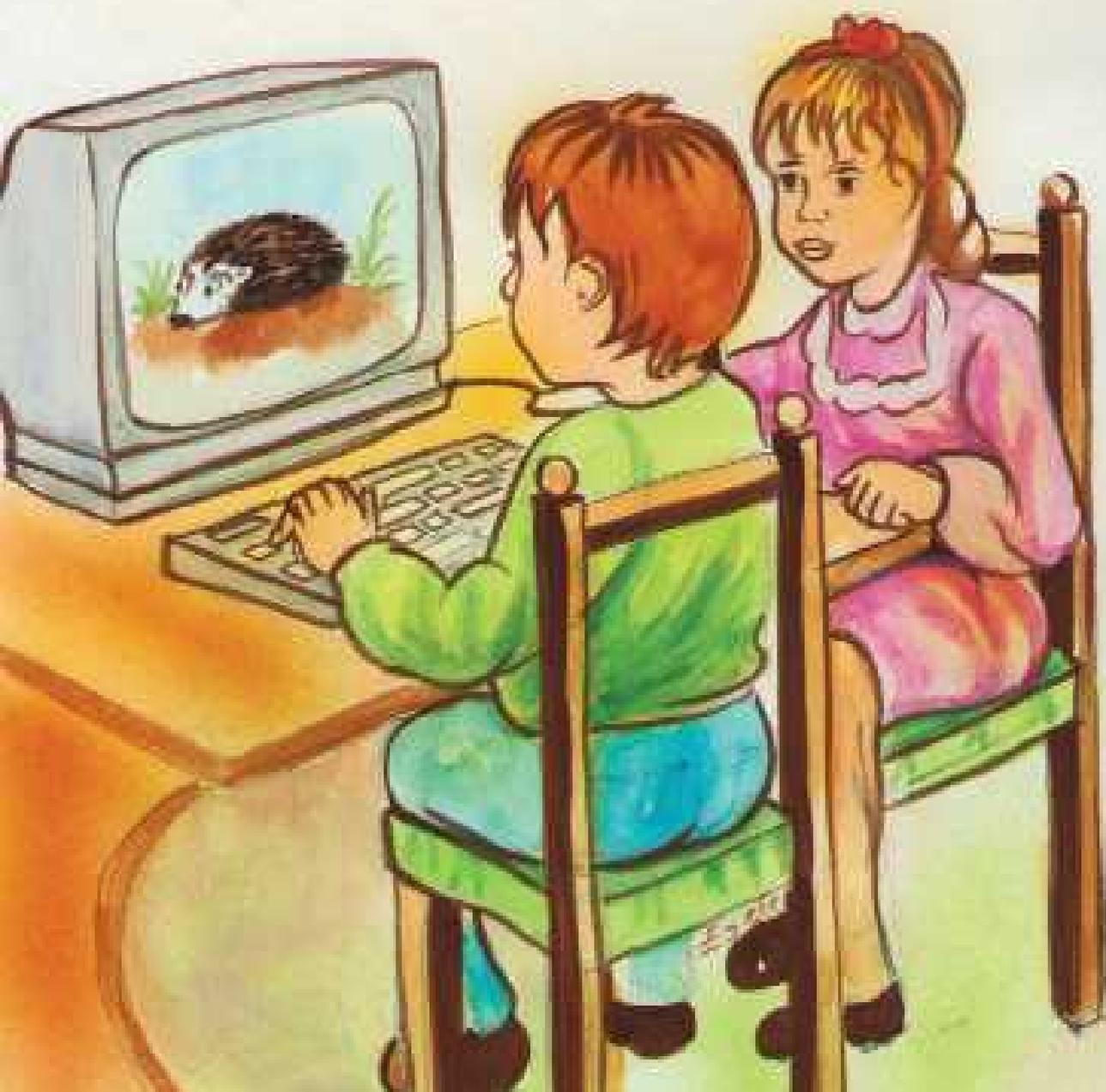
Afterwards, Zohir greeted everybody and shook the hand of the hedgehog.

After a short while, he asked the hedgehog:

- Who is teaching us this week? What is the name of the headmaster?

The obstinate hedgehog responded:

- Our headmaster is the gazelle, and then comes the camel. The names of the teaching board members are written in the school's newspaper, inscribed on the leaves of the willow tree...



Zohir followed that story with great interest. He learned a lot about the species of animals, as to how they would attend the lessons during the days of the week through an astonishing system. He enjoyed the quotes of the teachers through the cleverest animals in the world.

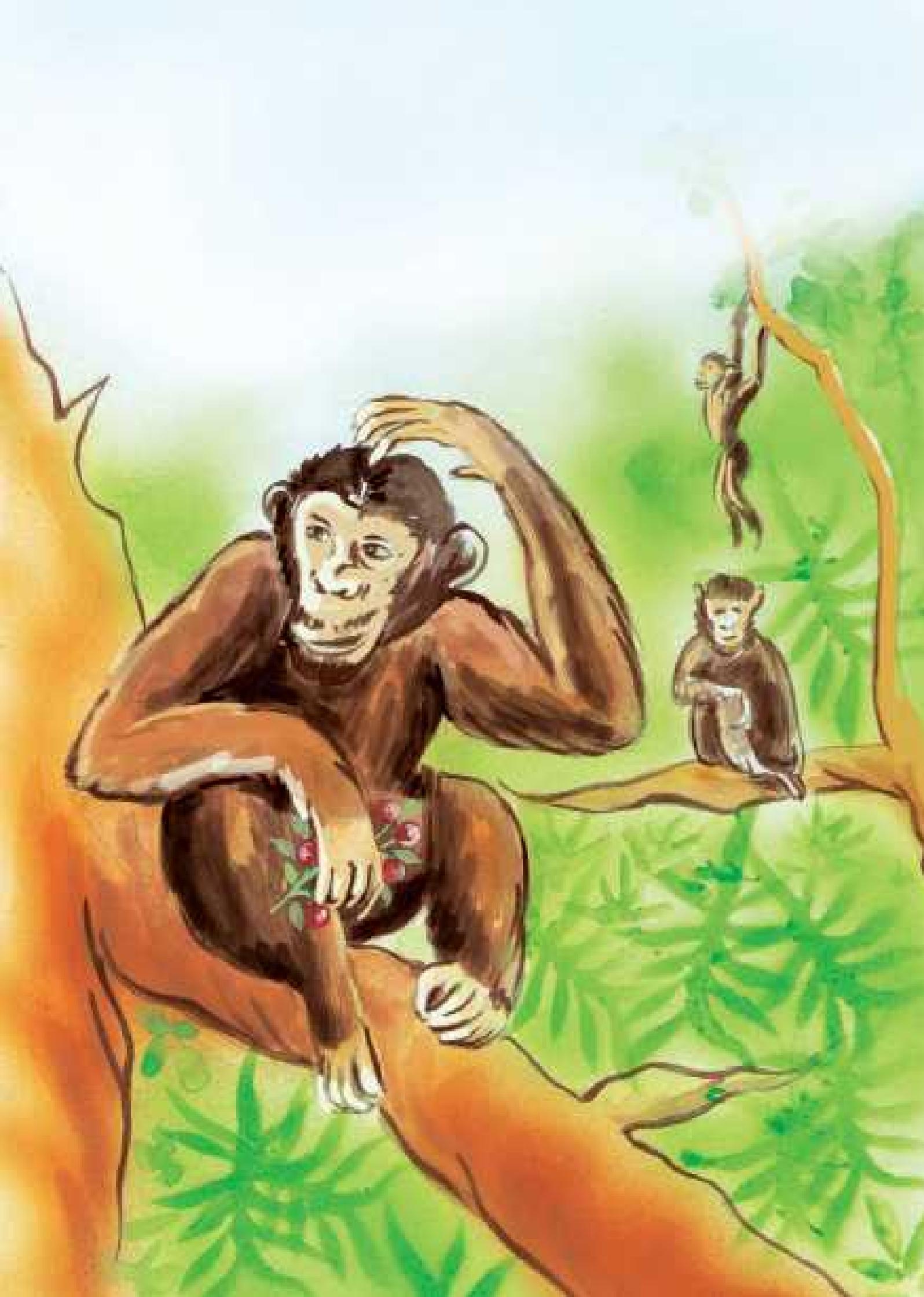
An idea came into his mind. He talked to his sister, Sana:

- I am going to ask the animals to answer the following question:
“What did life teach to you?”

After a moment, he executed his idea, thanks to the encouragements of his sister.

He wrote the question using the keyboard. The words appeared on the screen, and then he said:

- What animal will be the first to be asked?



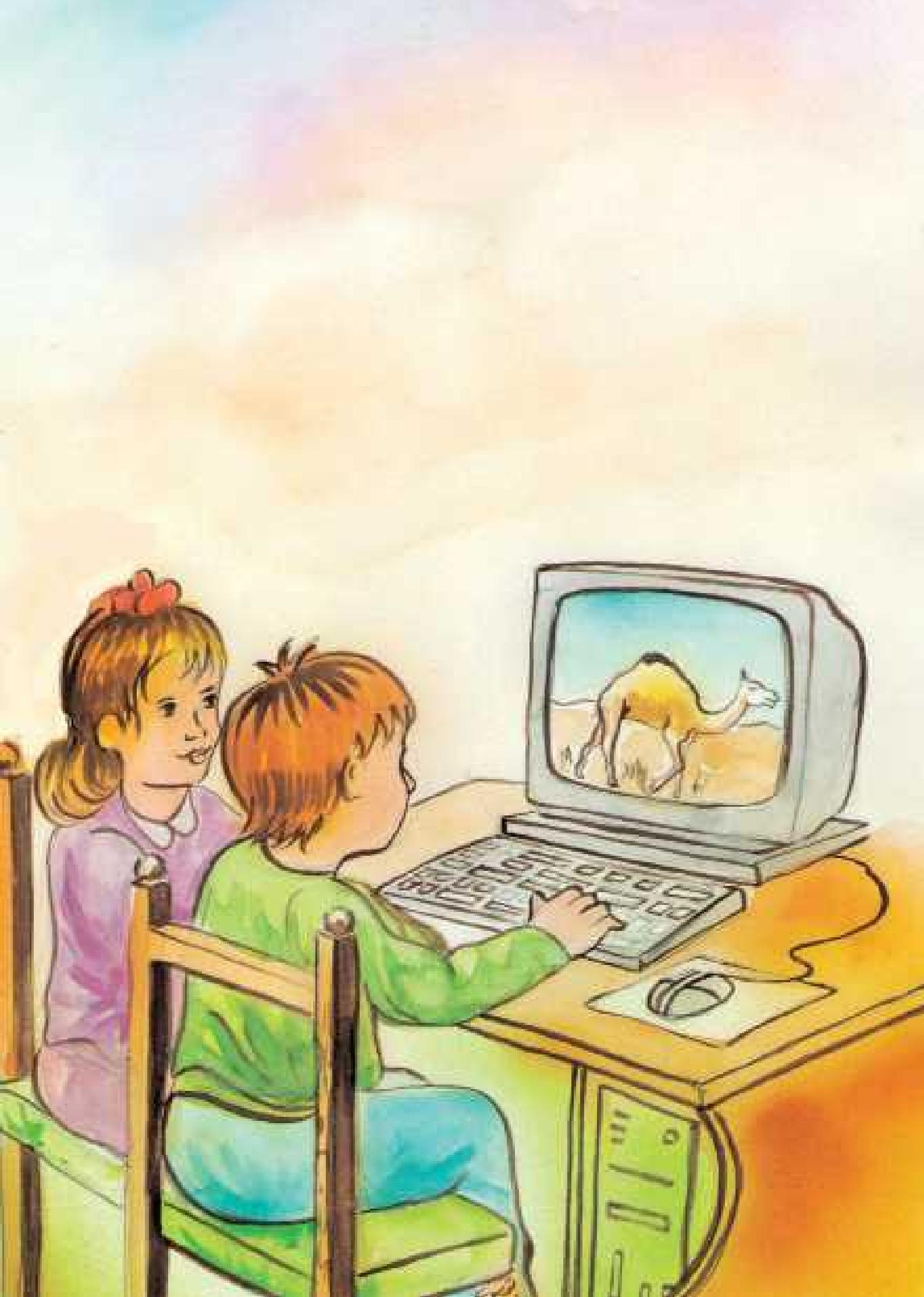
He thought for a while. He said:

- I found it! The monkey! The monkey!

He entered his name on the screen and waited for the answer...

Suddenly, the monkey showed up and jumped, staring at everyone, saying:

- Do you know who I am? I am the monkey, the bright spark! I am the one who had danced in the space. I am agile, light, kind, a friend of millions of boys and girls! I am skilled in computer. I like music, I do sports, and I love nature, my everlasting and cleanest and highest residence. Life taught me a golden wisdom: *“Take from life only what you need and from time only what is pure.”*



Zohir had been impressed by the answers of the monkey. He then said:

- Let me now ask the camel.

He typed it. It was soon displayed on the screen a sea of sand with its undulating dunes. The camel turned up with the two eyes bore oases of hope and the four hooves were covered by grains of sand. The camel talked on and on:

- The harsh life and the dry desert taught me that patience was the key of easing and a cure for all the throes of time. Hunger and thirst taught me the meaning of deprivation, and I therefore love the poor. My hump taught me the significance of the disability, and I took it as a secure storage in case of dire moments, to get from it a new strength. Despite of difficulties, I like the desert, because it taught me the meaning of life. What is more, it is my homeland. As the saying goes: *“Everything grows up before it decays. Yet, only the homeland remains small, in need of care.”*

Zohir was bemused. He then asked the same question to the ant. A few seconds later, the ant appeared on the screen, quiet and demure, walking shyly. She stood and said:

- You all know the story; that of me and the cicada. You have certainly learned from it the lesson and the moral. Truly it has been said: “*Who is industrious, will surely succeed, and who sows, will surely reap.*” But the dormant and lazy person will always feel regrets. I have another story with King Solomon!



The life of ants swings between ups and downs, coming and going, working and saving... Tribes learn from us, like the Japanese people. The ants are remarkable. They live in peace, worship work, always active and tireless. Life taught me that survival is for the most skilled individuals, and there is no welfare without work. Through pleasure we get our earnings. As a human poet said:

*Who fears climbing the mountains
Will always live inside the holes*

Zohir asked the very question to the horse. His query was displayed in the screen, but the white horse was late, busy in galloping in the green meadows. When the horses came closer, Zohir told him:
- Despite your long legs, you are one minute late. One minute equals centuries of our short lifespan! For this reason, I deny to you speaking today.

So, Zohir questioned another animal.

It was the elephant, who hurried up from quite a far-away land, carrying the flavors of India and Pakistan, and the breezes of Lake Victoria in the heights of the Nile and Ethiopia. The elephant stopped, whined, grazed, and then said:

- Listen to me carefully, my dear friends. There are two blessings in this life: good health and peace of mind. Thus, ivory and crown have no value! I hate oppression because it is sour, and the more it lasts, the more it swells. Life taught me that goodness is in contentment and safety is in tolerance. Making people feel good is both honorable and hard. Yet, pleasing to God brings total blissfulness.



Once the wise elephant vanished from the screen, Zohir commented:

- This computer is really wonderful.

He then asked for another animal:

- Let's see what the dog will say about life, which honored him a little and humiliated him a lot...

The dog appeared on the screen panting, his tongue dangling out because of the heat.

- *Haw! Haw!* I tell you a single word, a sentence, a maxim, a question, and then I end with an inquiry, before I leave, as the less said, the better:

“Loyalty is the character of the nobility. People set me an example of loyalty! Who is the most faithful animal to humans? To conclude, I dare say: who did travel first to space, fellow living beings?”



Zohir went on querying more animals, like the wolf, the lion, the ostrich, the hedgehog, the bear, the fox, and so on.

Zohir then moved to another activity. He started designing weird shapes and strange drawing. After a while, he switched off the computer to reflect seriously on this device. The computer had been his companion all the time, save during school and sleep and food. He even called it by “*my magic friend.*”

After one day of reflection and hesitation, Zohir decided upon doing something...

Do you wonder what Zohir had decided to carry out?

He said:

- I am going to open this device to discover its content and to see that wonderful world inside it. For example, the location of the animals, like the wolf and the monkey and the kind rabbit. I want to know more about the secrets of *Google* and *Facebook*. What a fantastic adventure!

Zohir cut off the electric supply from the computer. He then took a screwdriver and began to dismantle the device, piece by piece. The keyboard... The base... The case... The memory... The hard drive. He was astonished to find very complex and minute parts, unlike what he had expected to see!

Once he was finished beholding the parts, whenever he tried to restore the device back to its first functioning state, he failed. He almost regretted what he had done.

After a short rest, he tried again to mount the device, but he could not. As the confusion overwhelmed him, he went out to the balcony and stared at the horizon as if looking for an answer or a solution to his problem in the screen of space.

A period of silence and reflection seemed to him an eternity.

At last, the hope for Zohir was revived. The smile shone on his face.

He said to his mother:

- Only Uncle Rachid the repairman can solve my problem.

Zohir raced to his shop and found him very busy. He greeted him and told him the story of the device.

Uncle Rachid accompanied Zohir to his house. There, he reinstalled the computer in front of Zohir, who followed the operation with great intention till the end in order to learn all its secrets.

Zohir thanked Uncle Rachid for his much appreciated help. He said:

- Life taught me that knowledge comes after interrogations.
“*Necessity is the mother of invention.*”

Since then, Zohir could mount and dismount the device by himself.

In his higher studies, Zohir chose informatics. He was brilliant in that field and graduated as an engineer. He then established a small workshop for the installation of electronic devices. He recruited a few skilled workers to help me. It has been a resounding success in a short period of time.

Zohir has lived a delightful professional life ever since.



THE MOUNTAIN OF MONKEYS



Drawings by
Omar Zerman

THE MOUNTAIN OF MONKEYS

How did it end? A child captured a monkey of the mountain. Do you believe in it?

The Mountain of Monkeys is an exciting educative story about man and the world of monkeys.

Through beautiful and meaningful drawings, it aims at developing the imagination of the child and linking him to his ecological environment, as he will discover the different animals and the nature of self-sacrifice among these creatures. Also, this story builds the awareness and the complete personality of the child.



The morning beamed at the day, as the world woke up shortly before the sun rose. And with the first golden streaks of its rays, every hamlet sung its hymn of life.

My father came in my room, called us:

- Omar... Sofiane... Hurry up, the prize is waiting for you!

We got up at the same time, wondering:

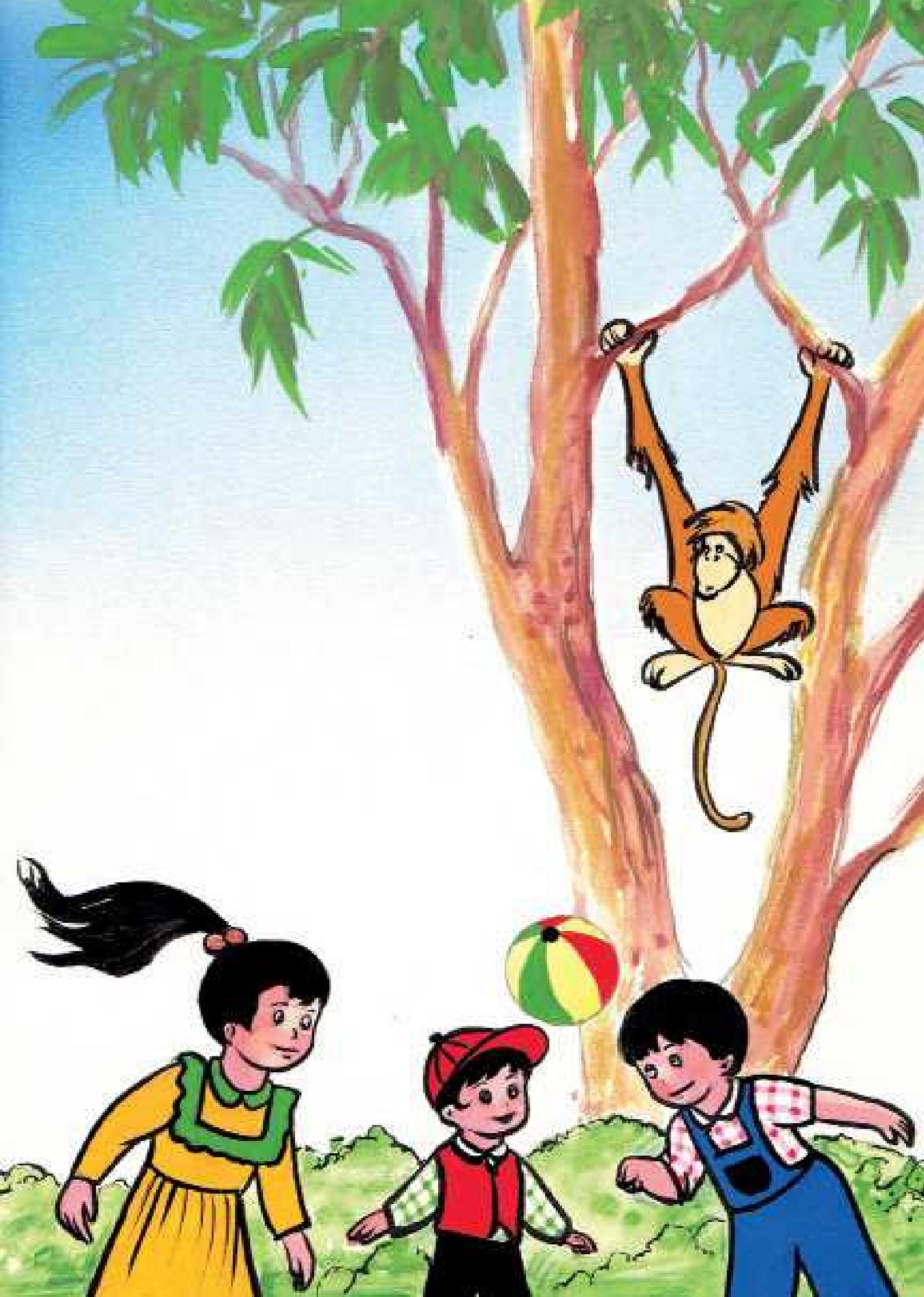
-What would that be?

Then, my Sofiane guessed:

- Without any doubt, it is a motorcycle.

My sister Amina said:

- I wish it a radio cassette recorder to store the songs of birds.



As to me, I kept thinking about the nature of the prize. I said:

- We all succeeded in school this year. Therefore, the prize should be shared by all of us. Or would you prefer each a special prize?

During breakfast, my sister Amina asked:

- For whom the prize, mom?

My mother answered with a smile:

- To all of you! A trip to the Mount of Monkeys near Chrea Mountains adjacent to the majestic mountains of Beni Misra...

I told all of them:

- I will not come back home without a little monkey!

They all smiled, saying to me:

- This is an impossible dream!

Yet, I bent upon seeing my dream come true at any cost.

The car started its drive from the city of Birtouta (*The Well of Mulberry*), not far from Algiers, toward the heights of Chiffa.

The father drove the car slowly before it picked up speed, racing with the rays of sun toward the valley.

The mountains of Chrea wore a white crown of snow, looking on Mount Beni Salah like a queen in her throne of The Mitidjia Plains, draped with a lush green carpet amidst the festive spring.

Mount Beni Salah sent cold kisses, yet mixed with the warmth of first sunshine, to the opposite Mount Tamezguida. This latter looked over the city of Mouzaya, known for its springs gushing with mineral water. The rear side hung over the jewel in the crown of all the cities, Medea, the twin of Algiers and Miliana in terms of beauty and old history.

The nature was glowing like the face of my mother, the landscapes were magnificent like the words of my father, and the waterfalls were cascading like the hair of my sister. I told myself:

- My country is a real paradise on Earth. What a wonder! It looks like my mother, her face being an Eden and under her feet spreads the Paradise!

I said:

- Look! Look over there! They are so like us!

My mother said:

- My God! How their stares are so strange!

Holding a piece of bread, my brother moved closer to the monkeys, while my scared sister got back to the car.

Some of the monkeys stepped back, hiding behind the boulder.

My father said:

- What a fantastic tale! Fear and cowardice are the signs of any weak living being.

Afterwards, we took a narrow path, and walked on, coping with its tortuousness. We reached a hill that overlooked the big river. The place bathed in various songs: the birds chirped atop the trees, the water gurgled between the rocks, and the frogs waited the evening to croak.

We children played in the woods.



After a while, my mother said once she had seen a little monkey:

- It is a kind animal if it had not a wretched face!

I told myself:

- It is the right time to capture this monkey!

Then, I made my desire known to my family, and everybody was ready to help me, except my mother...

We surrounded the monkey from each side. As we moved closer, he felt frightened. He tried to run away but my father seized him by the neck. The monkey began to twitch and cry, scaring my weeping sister.

I advanced toward the captured monkey with caution. The monkey failed to escape from the hands of my father.





I put a rope around his neck, and my father attached it tightly to the trunk of a tree. My brother brought a piece of bread. The monkey refused to eat the bread, as he continued to cry, pulling desperately the fastened rope.

I was very happy of this precious catch. This new friend will live with me. I will lodge him in the balcony. I will show off my monkey in front of the kids do not stop bragging their bikes and dogs. When the other monkeys heard his alarming cry, they screamed too, jumping to the trees, announcing a state of extreme emergency in their rows.

A big female monkey tried to break into our camp, as if she wanted to kidnap one of us.

My mother said:

- I think she is the mother of this little monkey... She is weeping without tears!

My father said, joking:

- She wants to kidnap Omar to avenge her baby monkey!

My younger sister was scared and she hid behind my mother, all quivering. My brother Sofiane hurried toward the little monkey to free him, but I stopped him.

More monkeys gathered not far from us. They declared war to liberate the hostage.

I denied the request of my brother for the second time, as I said to him:

- I am going to take with me this little monkey at any price!

Before my father settled the issue, we saw the little monkey sprinting away in the direction of his tribe, the rope still around his neck. My father laughed, saying:

- What a clever monkey! He cut the grass weed-made rope with his teeth and saved his skin!

Fed by anger, I ran after the little monkey to catch him again.

The little monkey was turning back as he ran away, and then stared at me baffled, as though he asked me:

- What do you want from me, human? Eating my flesh? Taking my freedom to see birds playing with me in the cages?



I continued to follow him between the trees, but he jumped on the back of the big female monkey. In fact, she was his mother who was certainly waiting for him to come back.

She walked away, her son on her back. An amazing sight. The eyes of the little monkey shone with joy of escape. He was even waving at me with his leg: *Bye-bye...* And then he let his tongue out as if warning me:

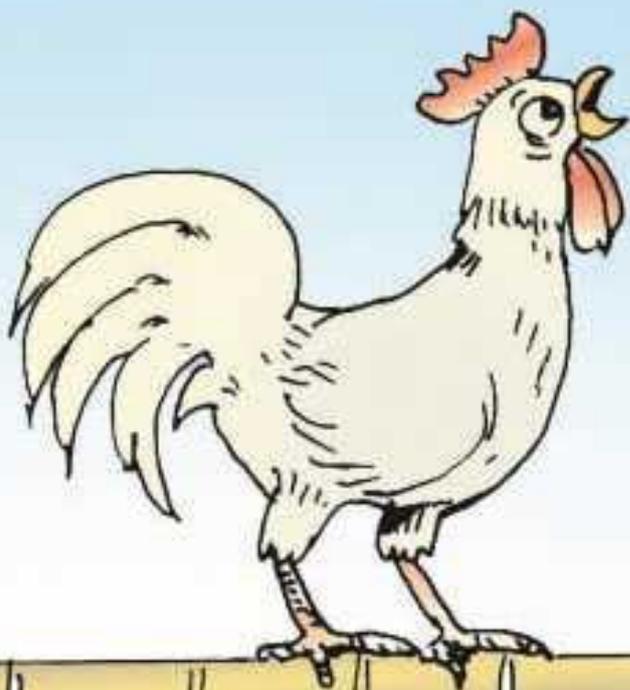
- Go back to your mother, too!

Indeed, I walked back to my mother, who was receiving roses and congratulations from my father and siblings.

Shortly after, I learned that the day coincided with the Mother's Day.

Finally, that remarkable trip was a gift from my father to us and my mother in her *birthday*.

THE ROOSTER AND THE SUN



Drawings by Djalal Moham

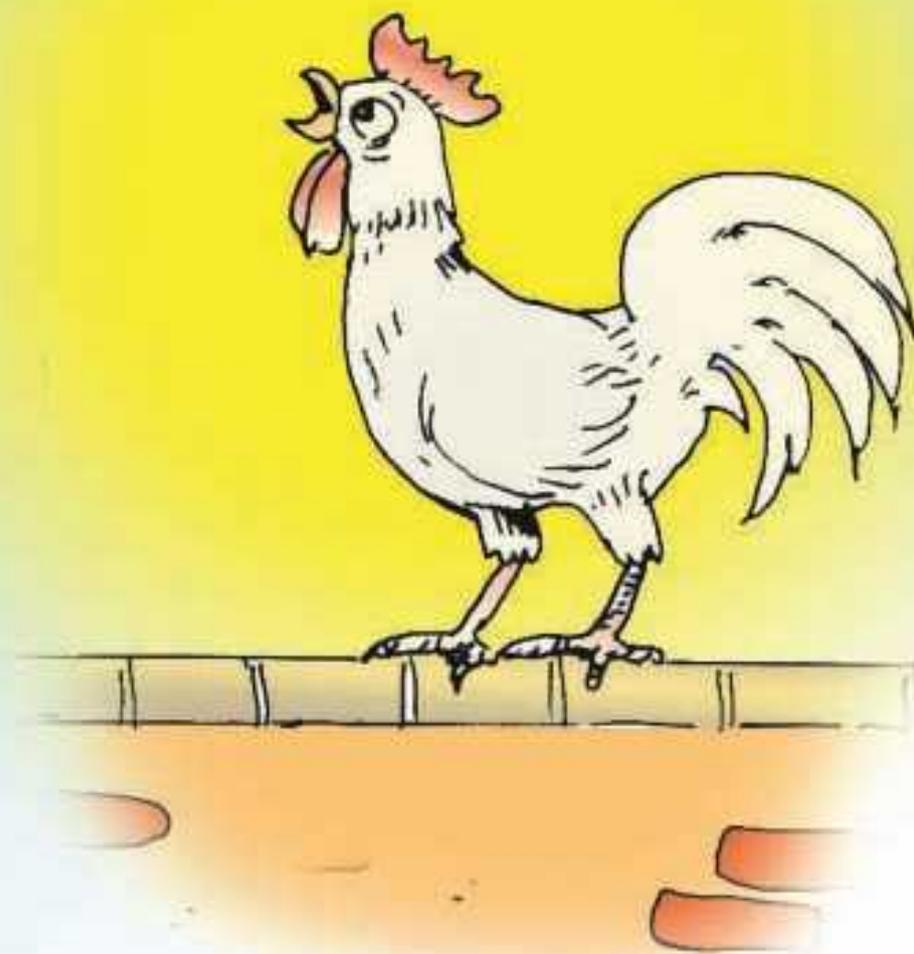
THE ROOSTER AND THE SUN

Is it true that the child Wassim is responsible for the sunrise?

What did he really invent? This is a sensational story with well-elaborated and expressive drawings.

It aims at developing the imagination of the child and broadening his creative thinking.

It then builds the child's conscious cognizance and mature personality.



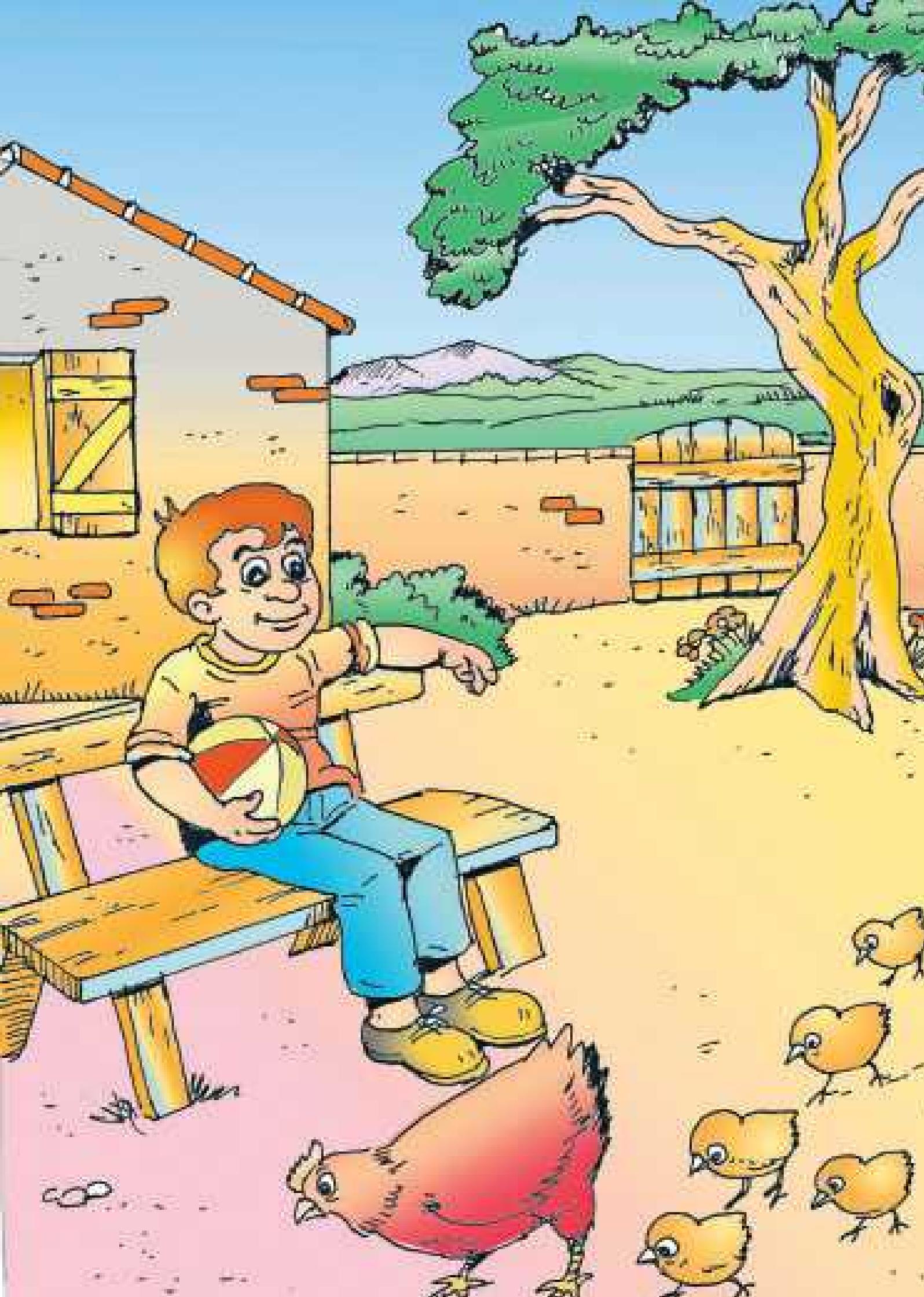
Every day, a red hen would come to our garden, searching for food to her chicks. They would walk behind their mother. Every time the hen found a maggot, she would cackle:

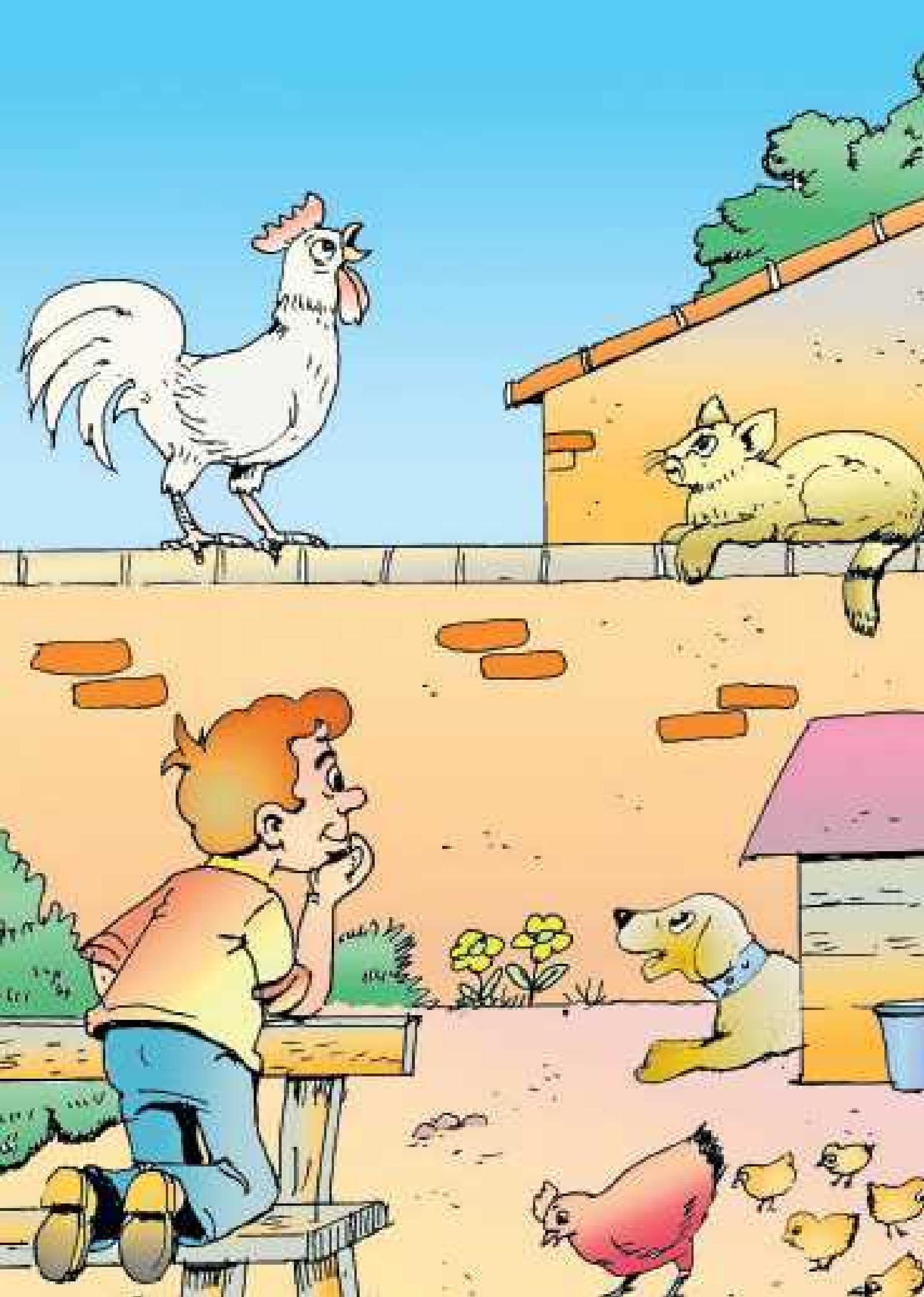
- *Cluck... cluck... cluck...*

Her babies would hurry toward her:

- *Wis... wis... wis...*

The hen loved and fed them as much as my mother loves and feeds me. She was the hen of Aunt Meriem.





On the top of the fence of the house, a white rooster of Auntie Doudja stood, guarding the place. From time to time, he would crow:

- *Ko-ko-ri-ko...ko-ko-ri-ko...ko-ko-ri-ko...*

And he would fall silent when he heard the meow of our cat Nounous:

- *Miaw... miaw... miaw...*

And as the dog of our neighbor Uncle Tahar would bark:

- *Haw... haw... haw...*

The rooster would come down from the wall to run closer to the hen and its babies.

So was the boy Wassim saying when he found himself in the garden, watching the hen and its chicks and the white rooster.

He would then mime their sounds:

Cluck... cluck... cluck...

Wis... Wis... Wis...

Ko-ko-ri-ko... ko-ko-ri-ko...ko-ko-ri-ko...

Miaw... miaw... miaw...

Haw... haw... haw...

Wassim began to think about the language of the chicken. He told himself:

- What would happen to the chicks if the hen went missing?

Who will tell them?

- *Cluck... cluck...* to get together them?

And if the chicks went missing, who would hear their calls:

- *Wis... wis... wis...*

And if the rooster went away the coop, who would crow:

- *Ko-ko-ri-ko...ko-ko-ri-ko...ko-ko-ri-ko...*

What a wonderful language! *Wis-wis, cluck-cluck, ko-ko-ri-ko, haw-haw, miaw-miaw!*

Wassim asked his grandmother:

- What does the rooster say when he crows every morning?

The grandmother answered him:

- The rooster says: Wake up, the sun! The rooster says: without my cries, the sun could not rise! No daytime!





Days after, Wassim went out to the garden as usual. He saw the hen and its chicks quiet as though they were sad. He did not hear the crow of the rooster, either. He looked for the rooster, not to be found. Later, he learned that his aunt Doudja had traveled, taking the rooster with her.

In the morning, Wassim looked up at the sky and did not see the sunshine, like the other days. He thought that the sun fell asleep because the absent rooster had not woken it as always!

On the second and the third days, Wassim checked again the sky, but he did not spot the sun.

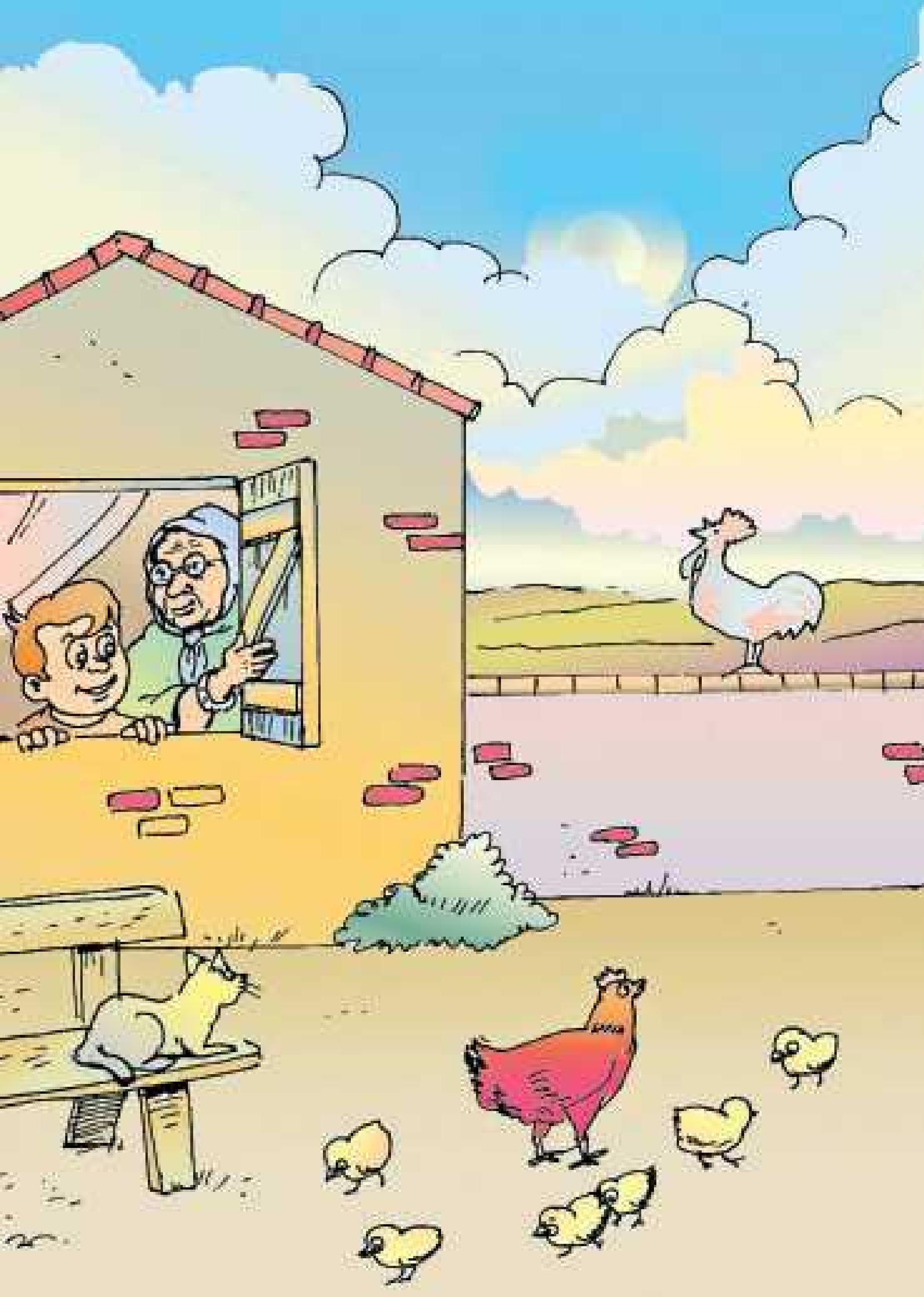
He pondered for a while, and then headed to the factory of phones. He bought a small-sized cell phone provided with the sound of the rooster, *ko-ko-ri-ko!*

He hurried back home, and made a model from fabric and plaster, looking like the rooster of Aunt Doudja. He put the cell phone inside the artificial rooster, as he set the alarm clock on the morning time. He then placed the hand-crafted rooster atop the garden's wall.

On the fourth morning, the automatic alarm clock of the hand-made rooster started to scream:

- Ko-ko-ri-ko! Ko-ko-ri-ko! Ko-ko-ri-ko!





The grand-mother got up and said to Wassim:

- There the rooster of your aunt Doudja comes back again!

Wassim laughed, saying:

- It is just a new rooster!

Shortly afterwards, the sun rose, as the clouds cleared away, following many days of absence of the sun.

The hen and the chick were delighted to hear again the crow of the rooster. The hen began singing:

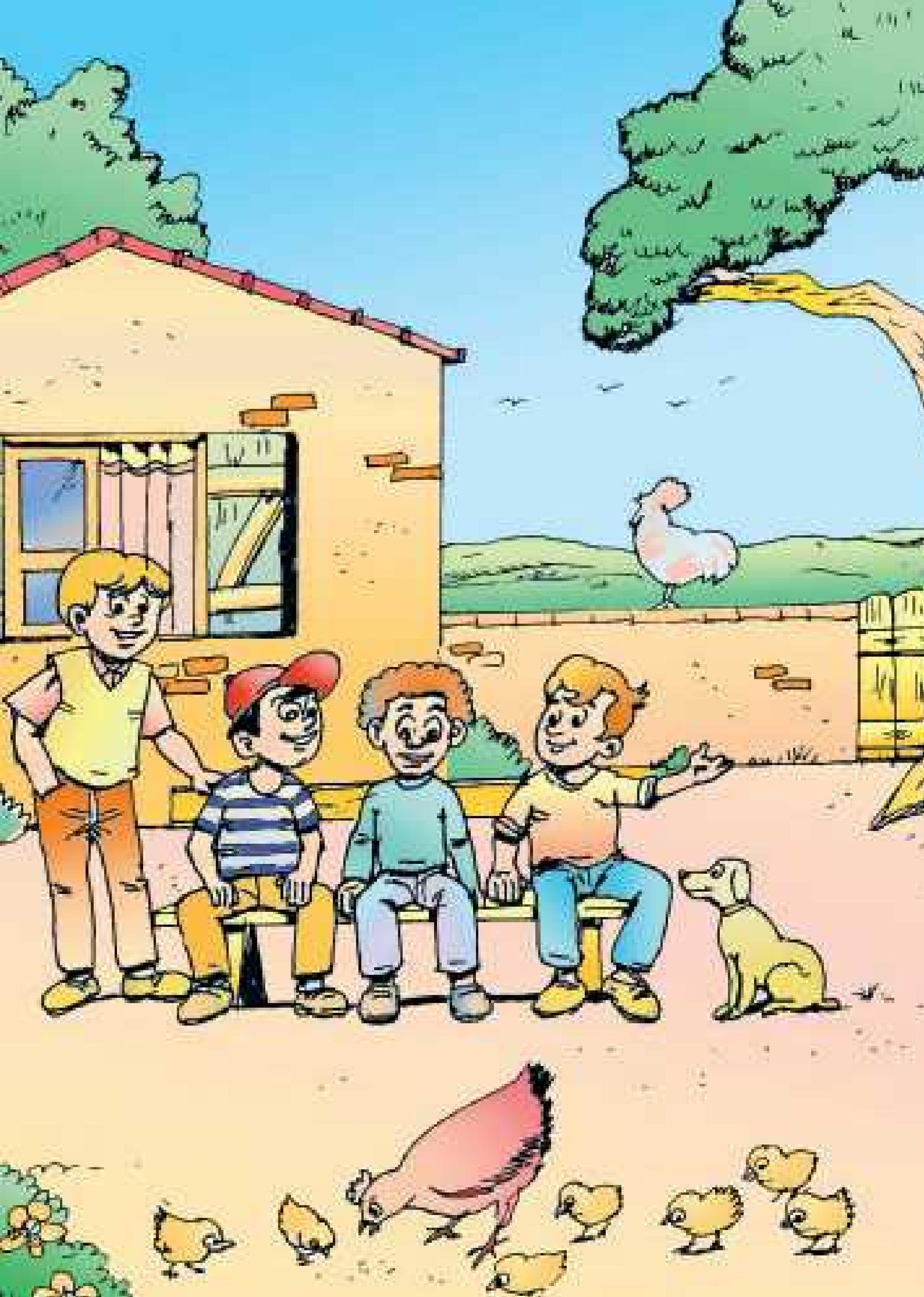
- *Cluck... cluck... cluck...*

The chicks sang on, too:

- *Wis... wis... wis...*

Thus, the life in the garden went back to normal, and Wassim felt glad of it. He even became proud of the success of his idea in front of his brothers and friends. He would say:

- If it was not my idea, the sun would never rise, and people would have stood in darkness forever!



THE GIRL AND THE MOUSE



Drawings by Djalal Mohamed

THE GIRL AND THE MOUSE

Believe it or not, there is a mouse in our house!

What happened to the girl Naima whom the mouse kissed?

This is a moving story, with beautiful and meaningful drawings. It depicts the importance of cleanness to keep a good health and shape. It matters also in building a conscious thought and a fully healthy personality of the child.



There is a mouse in our house! Do you believe that?

This mouse is polite, elegant, clean, agile, but he is does not suit us as a neighbor.

I do not know when the mouse arrived in our house fir first time. He occupied a hole in the garden. What I know is, that this mouse did not exist when the cat *Nounous* lived amongst us, before he moved out to the new house of my married big sister...

This way, the mouse could every night walk freely in the garden and the rooms of the house, as if he were the king of the house in the dark.

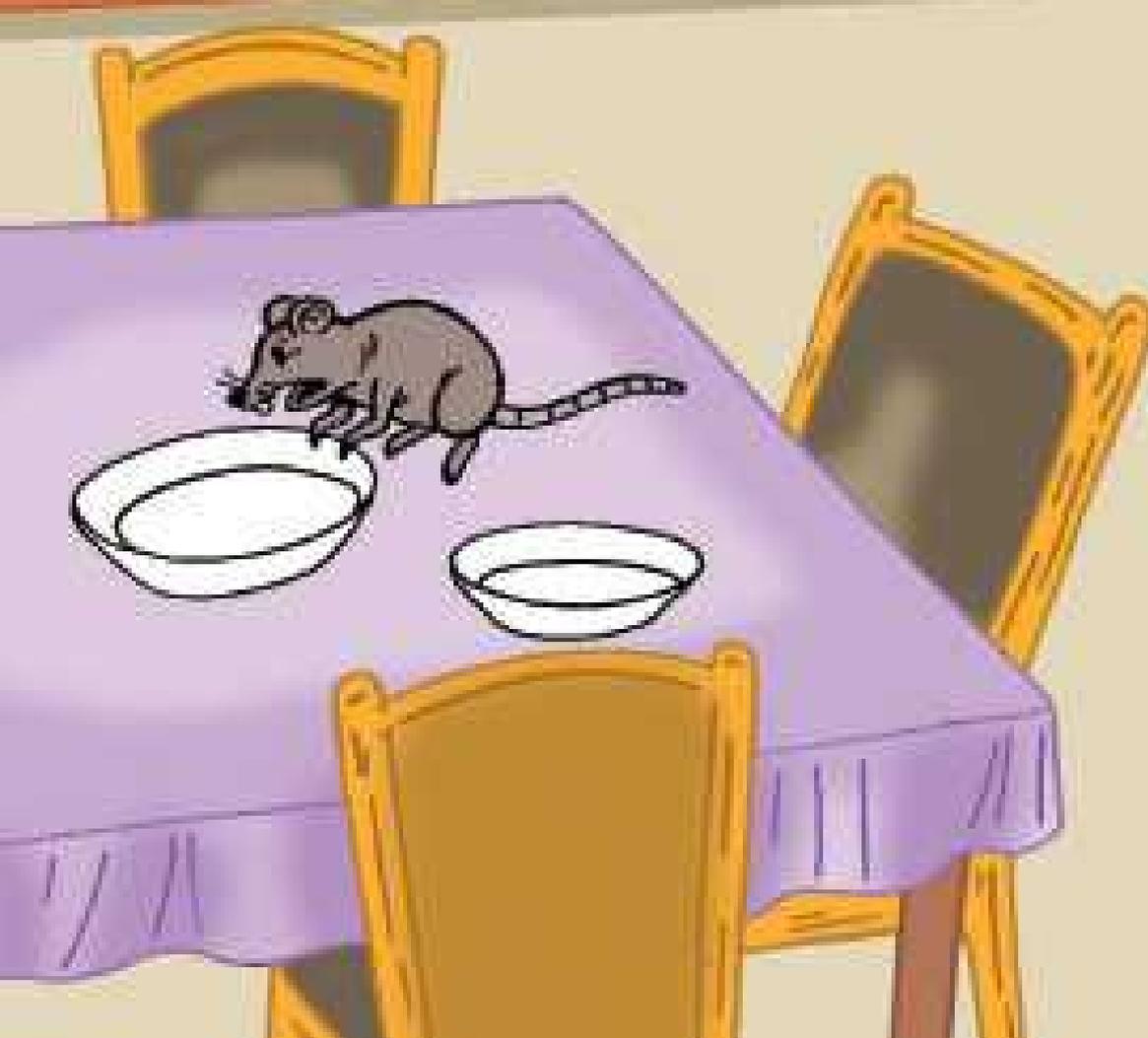
Once, my sister Naima was asleep in her bed. Like a queen, she was dreaming of the spring and its flowers, of the summer and its fruit.

Her room was spacious and clean, her bed neat and comfortable. The silence was total, at the exception of the tick of the alarm clock. *Tick... Tock... Tick... Tock...*



The mouse was hungry, but he showed some patience. At last, he went out of his hole looking for food. He felt hunger pinching his stomach. He slipped into the kitchen, searching the cupboard and under the table. Anything of help, be it cheese, bread, or soup. He could not choose at that moment as hunger got the better of him.

Unluckily, he did not find any food to eat. He thus headed to another room, running after food.



with his strong sense of smell, the mouse smelt food on a bed. Actually, they were just leftovers stuck between the teeth and on the lips of the sleeping girl. Should he advance to eat or come back to his hole disappointed?

The mouse turned around the bed many times, and before he ran of patience, he decided to venture. He climbed on the bed, and began to lick the remains of soup on her lips. He savored it and forgot himself when he bit her two juicy lips with his teeth...



Naima woke up terrified, as her lips were bleeding. The blood trickled down onto the bed. Out of fright, Naima fell onto the ground unconscious:

- Ouch! Mom... Dad...

Her mother came up, scared:

- My God! What happened? My dear daughter... Blood... My sweet girl... Achour... Achour... hurry up! Naima is in danger...

The father got panicky, too:

- What happened? Who is the criminal who did this?





The father called the hospital:

- Make haste, please... my daughter is in real danger.... Our address is: 15, Garden Street.

It was midnight. The streets were empty. People were in their beds. The ambulance arrived quickly like thunder. They took away the wounded girl to hospital.



The doctor examined her and made the necessary treatment. He advised her:

- If you want the mouse not coming back again, you have to brush your teeth after meals!

Naima thought over it and told herself after thanking the doctor:

- I will never forget this lesson!

That day, her father and mother visited her in the hospital. The girl recovered from the bite of the mouse, and she smiled, too.

Her father said to her:

- I will buy a mousetrap and I will set it in the house to capture the mouse.

Her mother said:

- In my opinion, we must rear a cat in our house, instead!

The girl kept silent, musing over the suitable method to get rid of the mouse: the trap, or the cat, or the doctor's advice.



The first thing Naima did when she quit the hospital, was brushing her teeth with toothpaste. After that, she wrote a dictum on a sheet of paper and hung it above her bed:

CLEANLINESS IS NEXT TO GODLINESS

Naima said:

- From today on, there is no place for mice in my room!

She got into her bed and slept like a log. She was relieved that the mouse would never come closer to her as she was clean.

Before the sun rose in the morning, she dreamed herself in the school, and her schoolmates held in her honor a nice party, where she was awarded a prize for the cleanest teeth.

In the midst of her enjoyment, she felt a hand stroking her shoulder. She was her mother, saying to her daughter:



- Naima... Naima... Get up, it is time to go to school!

Naima woke up, saying:

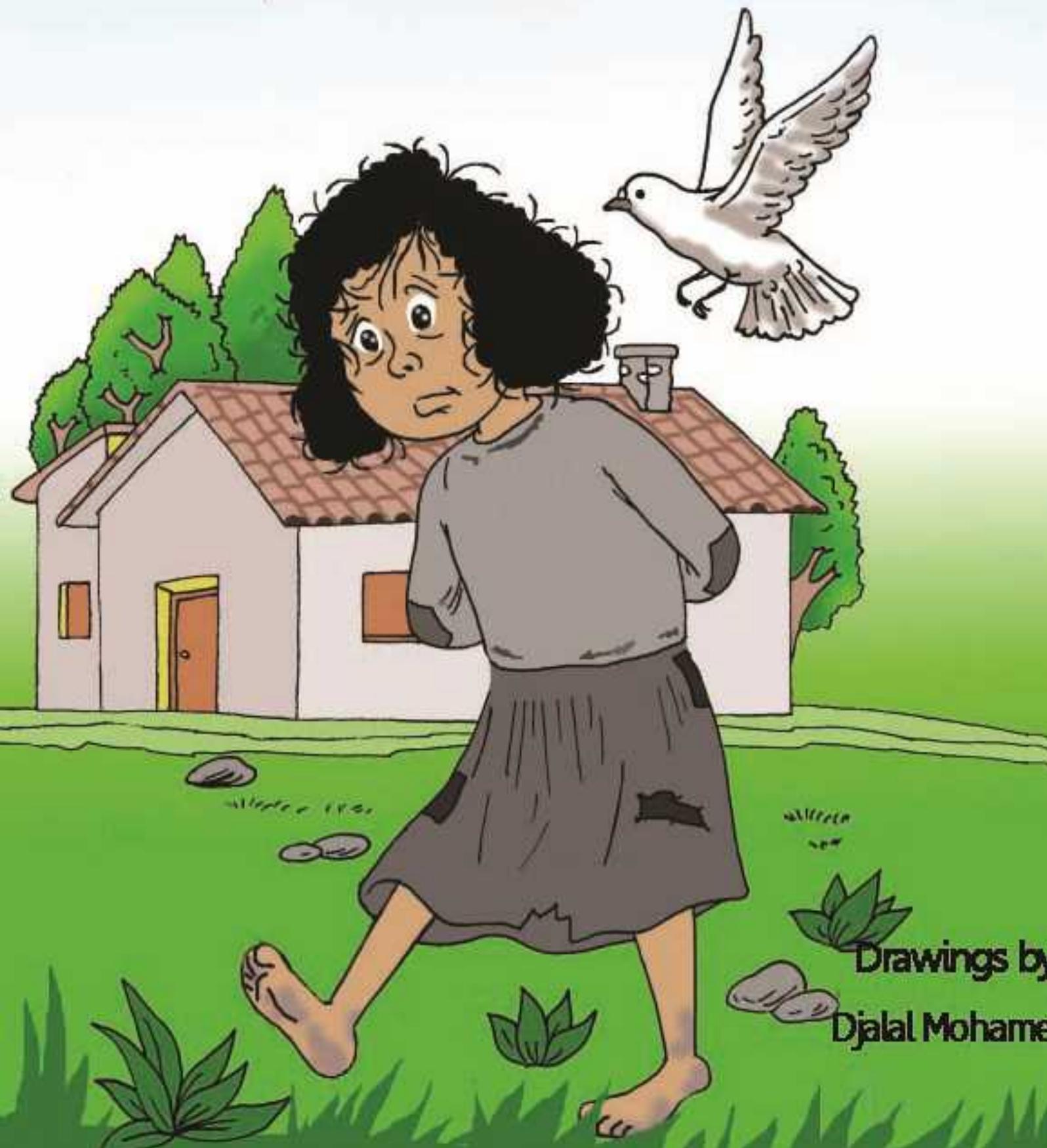
- Where am I? Where are the pupils and the prizes? Was I dreaming?

The mother beamed at Naima:

- You have a lot of dreams, my daughter! It is seven o'clock. Get out of bed now!



THE ORPHAN GIRL



Drawings by
Djalal Mohamed

THE ORPHAN GIRL

All the people did not like her. This was what Samira thought of. Was she right?

This is an educative and very moving story, told by way of beautiful and significant drawings.

It is intended to teaching the spirit of solidarity and kindness towards the poor and

the orphans and the have-nots. It is about bringing back hope and smile after the hardships.

Furthermore, this story sets the goals of developing both the notion of conscious associations and

the openly tolerant personality of the child.



Samira was a schoolgirl studying in the *Basil River School*. She was industrious and polite. Fatherless, she lived with her mother in the *Neighborhood of Olives*.

Samira was too quiet, less joyous, preferred solitude, away from her schoolmates.

When the spring comes with its wonderful lovely weather, it found the face of Samira sad as if it wore a black cloud.

As the flowers and leaves of trees fell off on Samira, kissing her forehead and cheeks, she did not care about what was happening around her.

Even the birds, which settled on the trees of the school, sang in daze as though they asked after Samira, inviting her to share with them joy and merriment.

The teacher encouraged Samira:

- Your answers in the exams were exact. Go on!



Samira told herself:

- This is the last day of studies in school. I will never come back to see these pupils despise my threadbare clothes.

Samira had remained in the house for a week. Her mother failed to convince her to go back to school.

Samira got busy befriending a little dove. She offered that bird water and love...

And then one day, as Samira was playing with the dove outside the home, one of the children stole the bird and scurried to his house. Samira ran after him in tears, and urged him to give her back her dove:

- Chabane... Chabane... My dove... My dove!

And on the way, the teacher saw Samira walking barefoot with worn clothes, and there she knew the true reason that made Samira miss the school. It was the extreme poverty.



Samira went back home alone and despaired. That mischievous child had deprived her of her little dove, and thus she decided to withdraw into herself, avoiding any contact with people.

Samira spoke to herself:

- Because they hate me... I boycott them forever.

So, Samira stood away from children and all the people, even from the domestic animals. She fell into loneliness and despair.



Samira's health began to wither and her body lost weight as if it were an autumn's yellowish tree leaf.

Her mother felt sad and tried to treat her daughter in the hospital, but the treatment of doctors did not make her feel better.

In the classroom, the teacher remembered her pupil, Samira. She had in mind the poem of the poet Maarouf al-Rassafi, talking about the widow and her orphan daughter. The teacher wrote some verses of it on the blackboard. Afterwards, she began to explain it to her pupils with great emotion and passion, making them shed tears. She also asked her pupils to copy the following verses:

I had met her yet I wish I had not met her
She walked burdened
with impoverishment
Her clothes were torn without shoes on
The eyes
streaming tears down her cheeks
She wept for her poverty, reddening
her tears
And her face turned yellowish out of hunger
The man who'd
protect and make her happy had died
She thus inherited bad times
which made her suffer.

One noon, a dove landed on the window of the weeping Samira. As she looked the bird, Samira felt great joy. She said:

- Oh, my God! You are my dear dove. You are back into my arms! How I am happy today!

After a while, noticed something:

- You bring a letter in your leg. What's a wonder!

She kissed the dove, pulled the letter and opened it with enthusiasm. She started to read the lines.

My dear Samira: my warmest greetings to you... Your friend, Djamila.

Reda wrote her:

Your place is still empty... Come back to us, we are waiting for you.

And Chabane apologized to her:

Forgive me, Samira. My perfumed greetings to you.

Aicha and Lamia wrote together:

We miss you too much, queen of the class.

And Samira went on reading the other expressions from Omar, Sana, Suad, Scheherazade, Nur, and so on. The tears flowed down her cheeks, as she wept out of joy till the letter got soaked in her hands.

She hugged the dove and told herself:

- They really love me.



By the end of the week, she heard knocks on the door. She hurried to open it, as she wondered who was coming that day.

She opened the door, surprised:

- Oh, Latifa, my aunt's daughter... Welcome!

Latifa came in, embraced Samira and her mother, and then she said with joy:

- Congratulations, Samira! You ranked first in the exams!

- Is it true? How do you know that?

- I read your name and saw your picture amongst the first ranks in the website which published the results of final exams. You got a 19/20 mark.

Samira did not believe what she heard. She gazed at her mother who was astonished and wordless.

In the afternoon, there had been more knocks on the door.

The mother opened the door, to see a boy holding some letters and packages, as though he were a mailman. She asked him, bemused:

- What is this, sonny?

The little mailman replied:

- My name is Chabane. And these are letters from my schoolmates sent to Samira, following teacher's lessons about respect of the people and help those in need.



The blow of the surprise nearly stopped the heartbeats of Samira, as she was listening to Chabane?

Samira left her bed and rushed like a little girl to the letters and the packages. She opened the letters to read them...

While her mother tore the packages to find inside toys and books and clothes. She told her daughter:

- Thanks God! The World is still going well!

Samira tried on her new clothes, one by one, lively and enthusiastic, as if she had made the illness go away.

After a while, she heard another hits on the door. She was the teacher with her pupils. They all said:

- Congratulations, *Soso!*

Stunned, Samira hugged her teacher and kissed all the schoolgirls. Samira's mother came to greet and thank them.

The pupils handed Samira and her mother an invitation to take part in the party they would be holding in honor of her success.

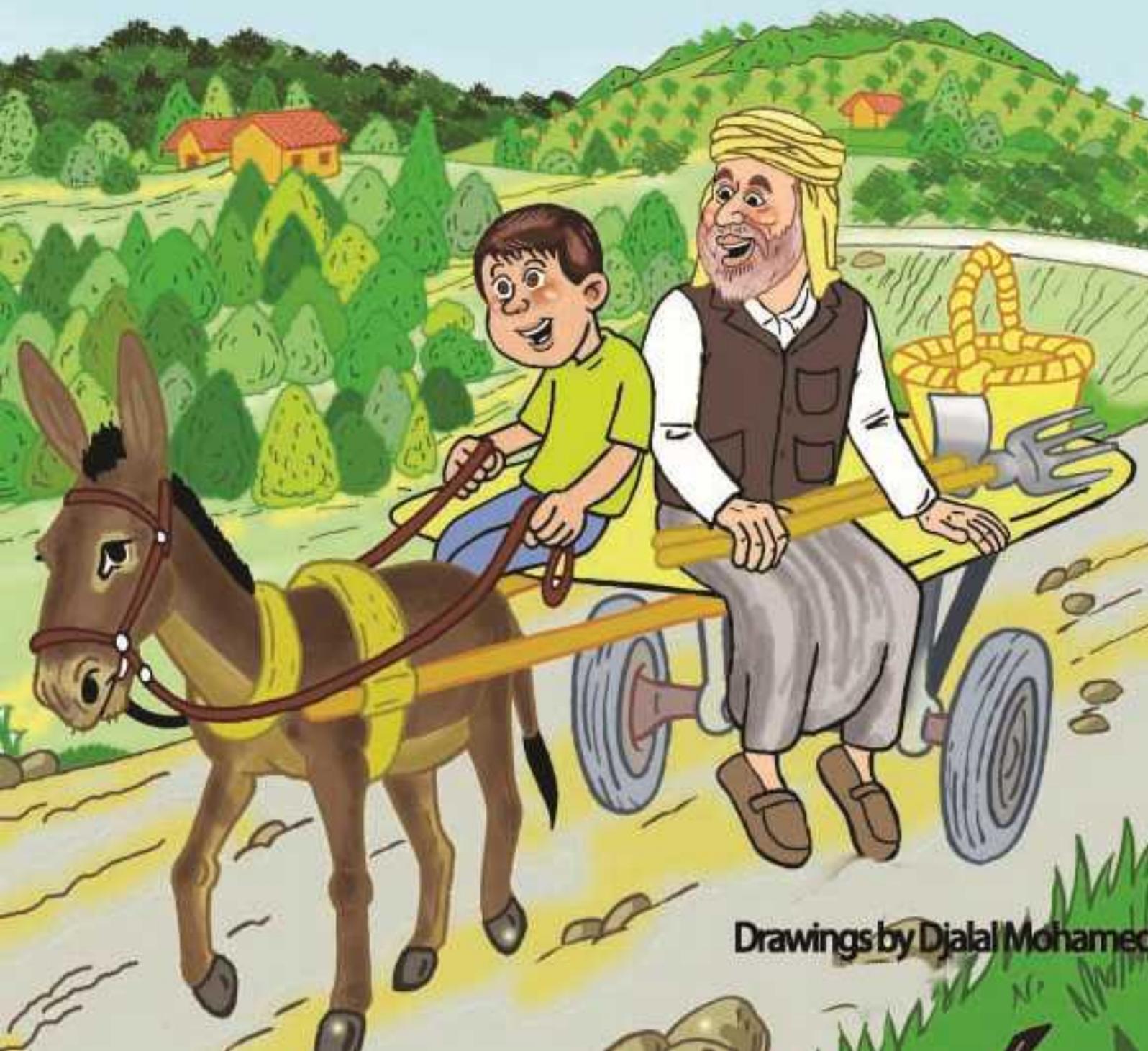


Days later on, a merry party was held. Samira was awarded a precious gift: a computer and a theater entry pass ticket...

Samira was thrilled. The following year, she returned to the school to further her studies. Since then, she would gather one success after the other.



THE WONDERFUL OLD MAN



Drawings by Djalal Mohamed

THE WONDERFUL OLD MAN

A man who is not like the others. What is the cause of his happiness?

The wonderful old man is an educative exciting and story, with beautiful and meaningful drawings.

It depicts the life in the countryside. This story aims at developing the imagination of the child,

making him feel the importance of nature as a necessary factor for the joy of humankind.

Thus, it builds the awareness and the complete personality of the child.



Last summer holidays, Salem paid a visit to his uncle in the countryside. He had spent with him pleasurable days. He then wrote about him:

Uncle Salah is a happy man, his whole life has been labor and activity, and his days were joys and celebrations.

Uncle Salah lived in the village of his birth. The residents loved a lot him because he was kind, sociable, sweet-talking and smiling. He lived a wonderful, strange life, but enjoyable and quiet.





If you ever asked him:

- What is your clock?

Uncle Salah would reply cheerfully:

- A rooster crowing at dawn and at noon. A shadow I see moving with me every time a sun rises or a moon appears in the sky...

Uncle Salah liked to listen to good songs of birds by daytime, and croaks of frogs in the night.

He followed the news of the world through the waves of nature and on the screens of earth. He thus admired the miracles of the universe as he beheld the kingdom of bees and the marches of armies of ants.

Did Uncle Salah need a radio or a television?

Uncle Salah was an active farmer, a sportive running like bolt. He breathed clean air, had a voice like thunder, and was strong like a lion. He never went to see a doctor, since he was healthy, physically and mentally. When he fell ill, he just took flowers' pollen, seeds of herbs and bee honey.





He was indeed the doctor of himself!

Every evening, his red hen would lay a delicious egg inside the hay. His green garden would provide him of vegetables and fruit. And his wife Zahra would cook him appetizing country bread.

Once, I asked him:

- What is the address of your house, Uncle Salah?

He stared at me, smiled, and then said:

- I dwell in the garden of love, Freedom Street, Neighborhood of Happiness, Municipality of Birds, Province of Laboriousness, and Republic of Peace.

And I requested his house's number. He replied:

- My house's number changes every evening, according to the number of drops of sweat tricking down my forehead during my farming works all the day.





I laughed at my uncle Salah's words, as he hugged and kissed me. In the last day of my visit to the beautiful, quiet countryside, Uncle Salah offered me bunch of flowers and a basket of fruit picked from his orchard. He asked me to come back the following summer holidays.

We took our seats in the donkey-drawn cart and moved toward the train station in Boufarik, wherein my father was waiting for me. The trip was delightful by beholding the meadows and the verdant fields. They were happy days I would never forget. Uncle Salah was a wonderful man, and so was his donkey! I had never seen beings like these two, either in the town's different quarters or on the Internet with its numerous websites. I am thinking about living like Uncle Salah. Hopefully, I will do.

The following summer holidays, Salem returned to the village to visit his uncle, Salah. He found him silent and sad. He did not see all those green meadows, and orange and apple orchards. Hens, bees and chirping birds, all had disappeared. Even his friend, the donkey was missing. Instead he found towering buildings making up the newly erected town, Bouinane. He was so sorry that he wept hours-long....



THE KING

ANTAR...NET



Drawings by
Abbas Kebir Ben Youcef

THE KING ANTAR...NET

How did the computer and the Internet heal him?

This is a marvelous story with well-done and expressive drawings. It aims at boosting the imagination of the child and growing his creative thinking.

It then builds the child's scientific thinking about technology and makes up his full-grown, mindful personality.



He had been a king different from the other kings. His name was Antar. His demands were strange and his orders weird. For that reason, nobody wished to be his minister.

When his wife died, the king had declared mourning for one year. He told his minister:

- I do not like seeing something of joy and fun. Even the colors: red, green, blue, yellow, I do not like seeing them in front of me.





The minister was confused as to that odd demand. He said:

- How can I change the colors of the sky, of the earth, of the trees, of the cars, and of the clothes?

As the minister failed to carry out the difficult wishes of the king, he was jailed. The king appointed a new minister and gave him the order of erasing the colors of things. He was given two weeks to do those works, otherwise he would be thrown to jail like his predecessor.

The new minister went to see the scholars and the sages, in a bid to find a solution to his tough mission. He did not get the suitable answers. He then returned to imploring God to help him save his head. He was thus waiting for his fate.

In the last night of the second week, a surprise did happen. The king came to the minister full of happiness:

- Congratulations, minister. You have changed all the colors! There is no red, no blue, no yellow...

The minister was astounded by the amazing words of the king. He spoke to himself:

- *What happened? I did nothing!*

Shortly afterwards, the minister became aware that the tyrannical king fell ill with blindness of colors, and he could just see the white and the black colors! The king thought that the minister had changed all the colors into white and black!



The gladness of the minister had not lasted for a long time. After one year, the king ended mourning, and asked his minister to bring back the colors to all the things.





The minister felt puzzled again. How could he make the king see colors anew?

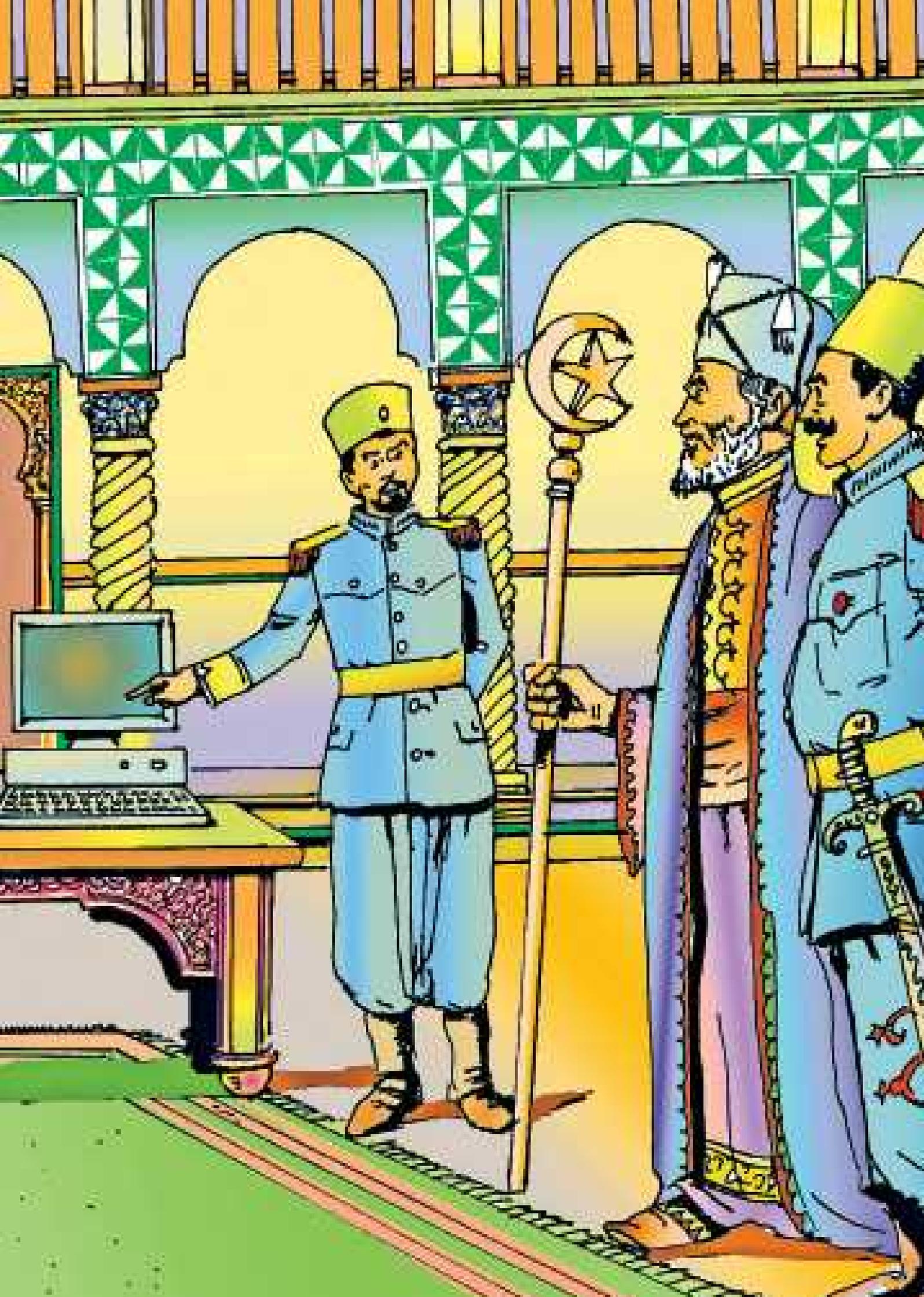
The minister headed again to talk to doctors and scholars and sages. One of them told the minister to make a treatment for the eyes of the king through rays, in such a way that the king would see again the natural colors.

The minister was glad of that proposal. He bought the abovementioned drug, but he asked himself, bewildered:

- *Who could dare put the drug on the eyes of the king?*

The young minister pondered over the matter, before he got an idea.

He dashed to the computer engineer and told him the story.
The engineer prepared the computer, screen of which sent rays of treatment meant to cure the king of the blindness of the colors.
The minister brought in the computer to the king. He said to him:
- You Majesty, this apparatus is a gift to you coming from the scientists of the country. You will find in it wonders and funs.





The king started the computer with the help of his minister. He began to surf through Internet. He visited the websites of friendly kings, and those of his enemies, as well. The radiation gradually seeped into his eyes, without he felt any sore.

After quite a while, the eyes of the king could see the yellow, the blue, the green, and the red.

The king's knowledge and culture increased tremendously. He no longer gave strange orders and funny demands. All his people were then saved from his punishment.

The people nicknamed their king:

Antar-net... Inter-net.

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