

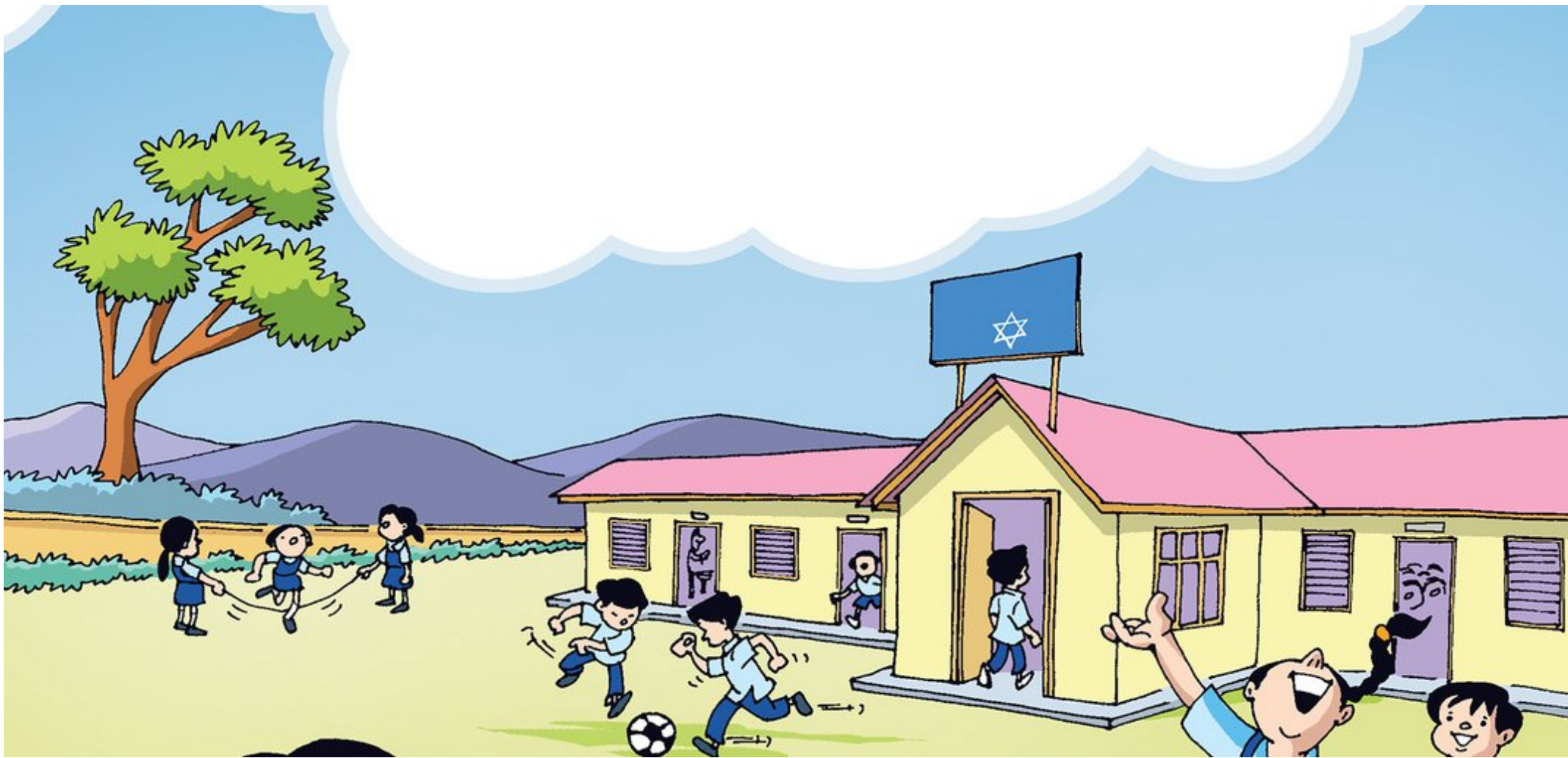


The Antics of Sammie and Chintu

Author: Gauri Sirur

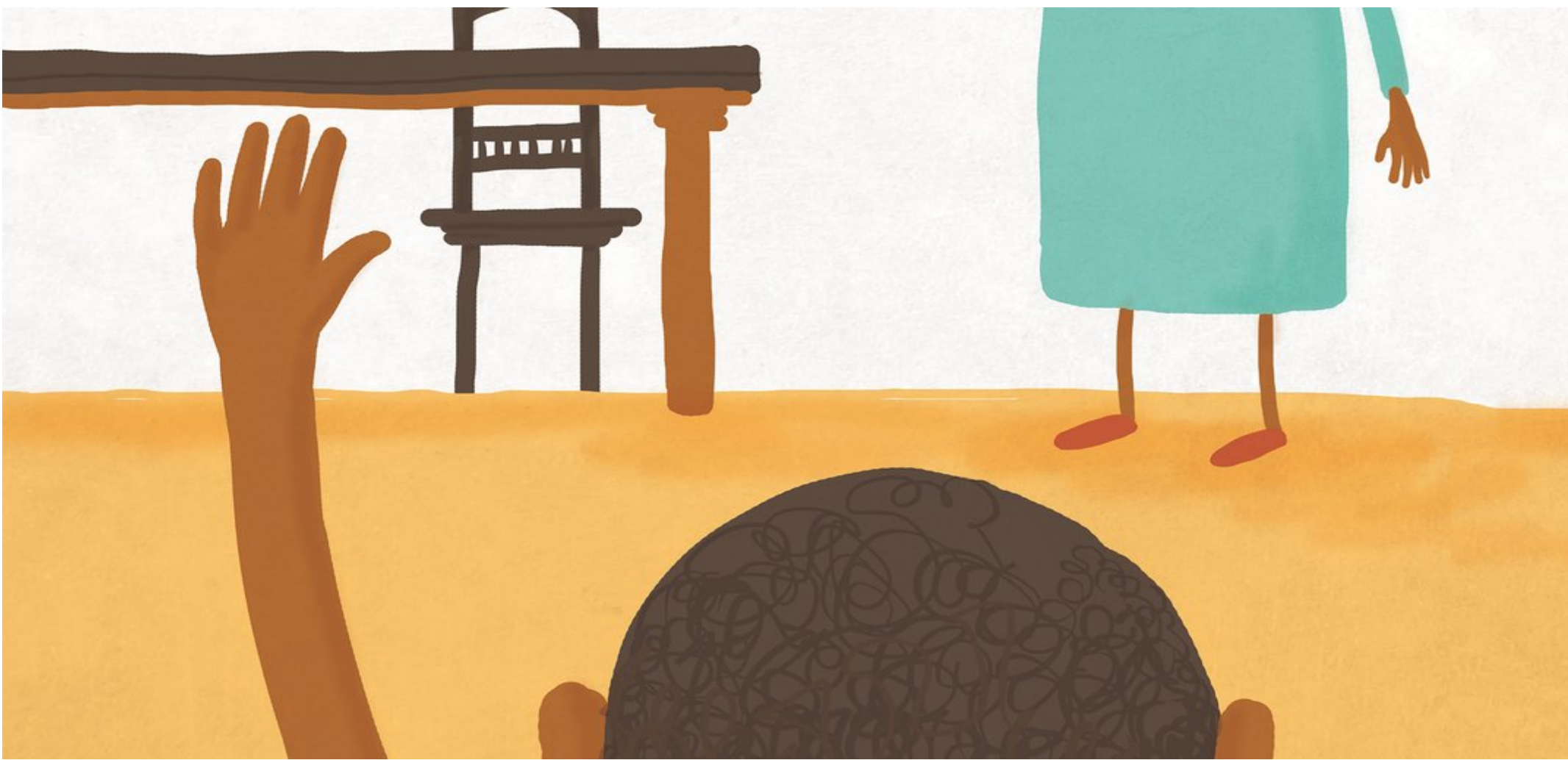
Illustrators: Abin Shrestha, Adrie Le Roux, Amy Slatem , Ashok Sharma, Debasmita Dasgupta, Diya Ullas, Gauri Sirur, Greystroke, Ouk Ratha, Pallak Goswamy..

Level 3



Bal Vihar School is holding a drama competition. Classes 1 to 7 will be putting up plays. Std. 3 is doing a play called, "Homework Hassles."

Miss Lily is their class teacher. "Our play is about two students," she tells the class. "One of them always does their homework, and the other one never does."



"I'm going to pick two children to act in the play," says Miss Lily.

Chintu and Sammie put up their hands right away. "Pick me, pick me," they both say.

But Miss Lily chooses Rohit and Faiza to act in the play.



Chintu and Sammie are not ready to give up. When class ends, they run after Miss Lily. "Miss, Miss... we want to be in the play too. Please, please..."

"Okay," says Miss Lily. "You can be two of the other students in the play."

"Yay!" Chintu and Sammie shout as they high-five each other.



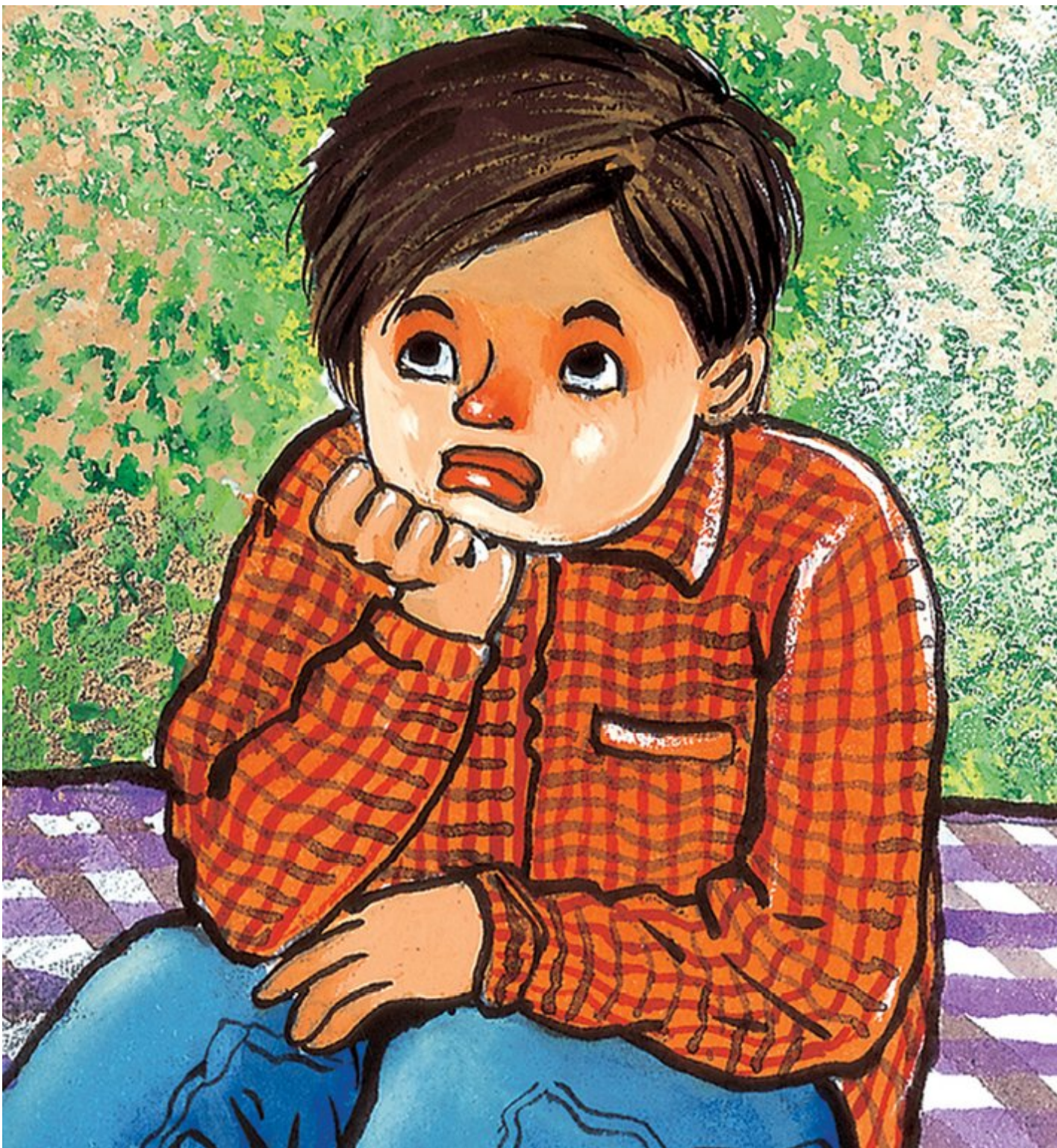
"Miss Lily, what do Sammie and I have to say on stage?" Chintu asks.

"You don't have to say anything," says Miss Lily. "You have to sit on a bench on the stage with your schoolbags. And you have to be very, very quiet."



"But why do we have to be very, very quiet?" asks Chatterbox Chintu.

"Because if you keep talking, then Rohit and Faiza will forget their lines," says Miss Lily.



"I'm going to be on stage for the first time ever," Sammie says to Chintu during recess. He turns a cartwheel. "I'm so excited!"

Chintu frowns. "But Miss Lily said we have to be very, very quiet during the play," he says. "That sounds boring."

"Maybe being very quiet on *stage* will be exciting," Sammie tells him.



It's the day of the play. It's time for Chintu and Sammie to go on stage.

Chintu and Sammie take their schoolbags and sit down on the bench.

"Remember, no talking," Miss Lily tells them.

The curtain opens. The play begins.

"Did you do your homework?" asks Faiza.

"No, I did not," says Rohit.



Rohit and Faiza talk and talk
and talk about homework.

The audience yawns.

Chintu looks for his parents
in the audience. He sees
them sitting with Sammie's
parents. He raises his hand
to wave to them.

Suddenly, he feels himself
being pushed off the bench.
He falls onto the stage with a
whump.



The audience laughs.

"Are they laughing at me?"
Chintu wonders. His face
grows warm.

He stands up quickly. He
wants to know how he got
pushed off the bench. And
then he sees the reason why.



Sammie has put his big, overstuffed schoolbag on the bench. There is no space left on the bench for Chintu to sit.

Chintu pushes the bag towards Sammie. But there still isn't enough space.

"Put your silly bag down..." Chintu is about to tell Sammie.

Then he remembers Miss Lily telling them that they cannot speak.



But words are not the only way in which Chintu can tell Sammie what he wants him to do.



So, Chintu nudges Sammie's arm. Then he points to the bag, and then to the floor. *'Put your bag down on the floor.'*

Sammie points to the dusty floor of the stage. He makes a face. *'The floor is dirty.'*

Chintu frowns, then signs: *'Put your bag on your lap.'*

Sammie crosses his arms and shakes his head. *'I'm not putting my bag on my lap.'*



Chintu glares at Sammie and pushes his hands forward. *'I'm going to push your bag off the bench.'*

Sammie stands up. He plants his hands on his hips and glares at Chintu. *'Just try it -'*



Chintu and Sammie have forgotten about the play and the audience.

They are scowling at each other now. Their hands are bunched into fists. Their faces are the color of beetroots.

Luckily, just before they can get into a wrestling match, the play ends. The curtain comes down.



The audience claps loudly and for a long time.

Chintu is surprised. "They liked our boring play!"

Chintu and Sammie come off the stage. They are best friends once more. They have already forgotten their quarrel.



Miss Lily is waiting in the wings. She does not look happy.

"I told you two to be quiet," she says.



"I don't know why Miss Lily scolded us," Chintu says to Sammie. "We were very, very quiet," Sammie agrees. "We didn't say a single word. We didn't even whisper."

Finally, it's time for the judge to announce the prizes.

"The prize for the best play," says the judge, "goes to to Std. 3 for their play: 'Homework Hassles.'"

The judge presents Miss Lily with the trophy.

"What a terribly clever idea, Miss Lily" he says. "You had your actors acting without actually speaking. Very original."

Miss Lily thanks the judge, but she looks confused.

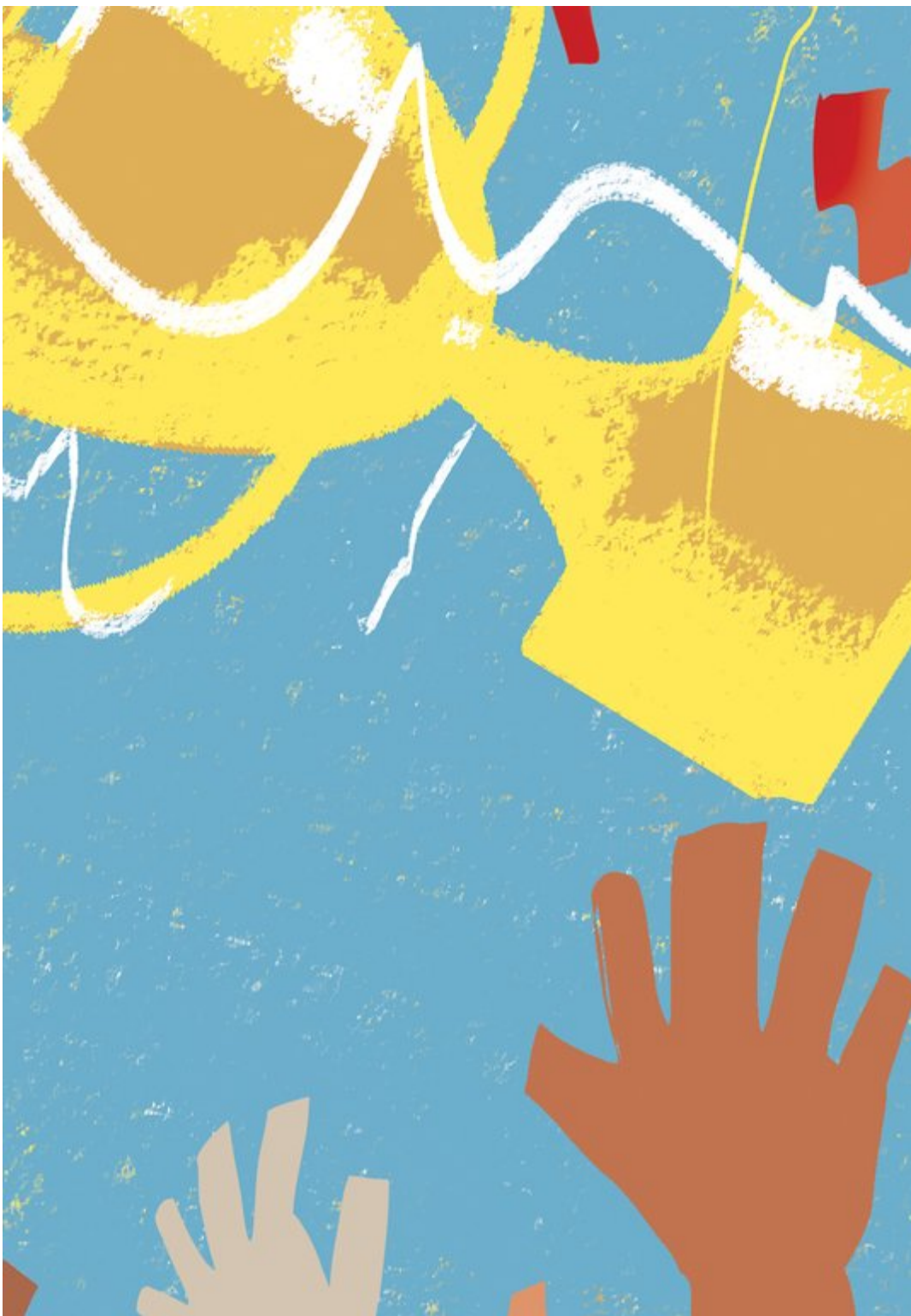




"And a special prize," the judge adds, "to our two outstanding young actors: Chintu Ghosh and Sammie Varghese. They got up to the funniest antics without saying a single word."

Chintu can't believe his ears. "Am I dreaming?" he asks.

"Maybe we're dreaming this together," Sammie replies.



Chintu and Sammie go onto the stage. They shake hands with the chief guest. He smiles and says, "Congratulations!"

He gives each of them a gold-colored trophy, which has these words inscribed on it: "Best Actor in the Bal Vihar Drama Competition."

Chintu and Sammie give the cheering audience their biggest, brightest smile. They see their parents standing and clapping for them. And they raise their trophy cups high, high, high.

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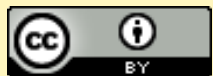


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The Antics of Sammie and Chintu

(English)

Sammie and Chintu are part of a play that their class is putting on for the school's drama competition. Can Sammie and Chintu help their class win the competition? Let's find out...

This is a Level 3 book for children who are ready to read on their own.



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