

Sophia Madouvalou



# Riko Kokoriko

**XENOPHOBIA**

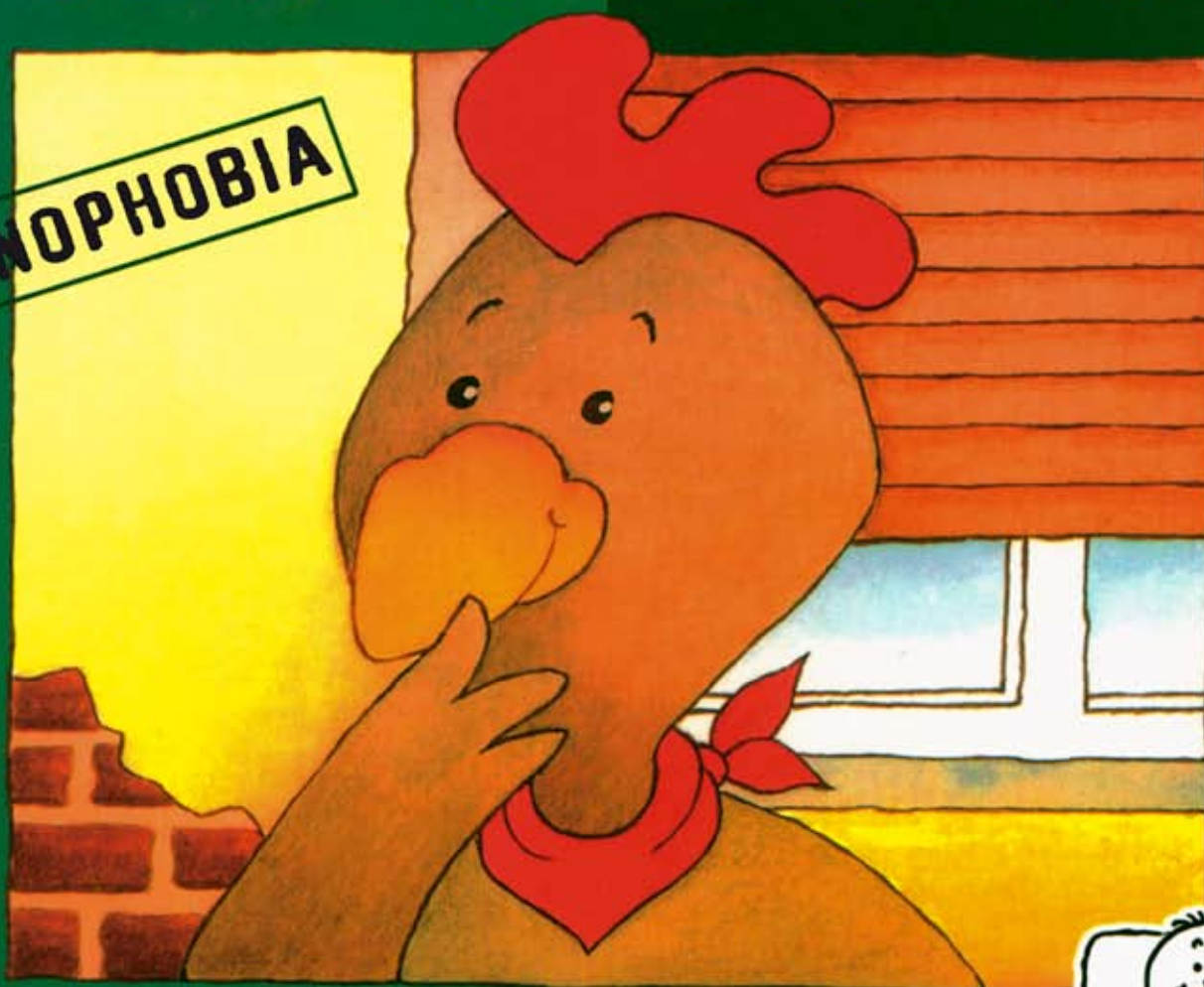
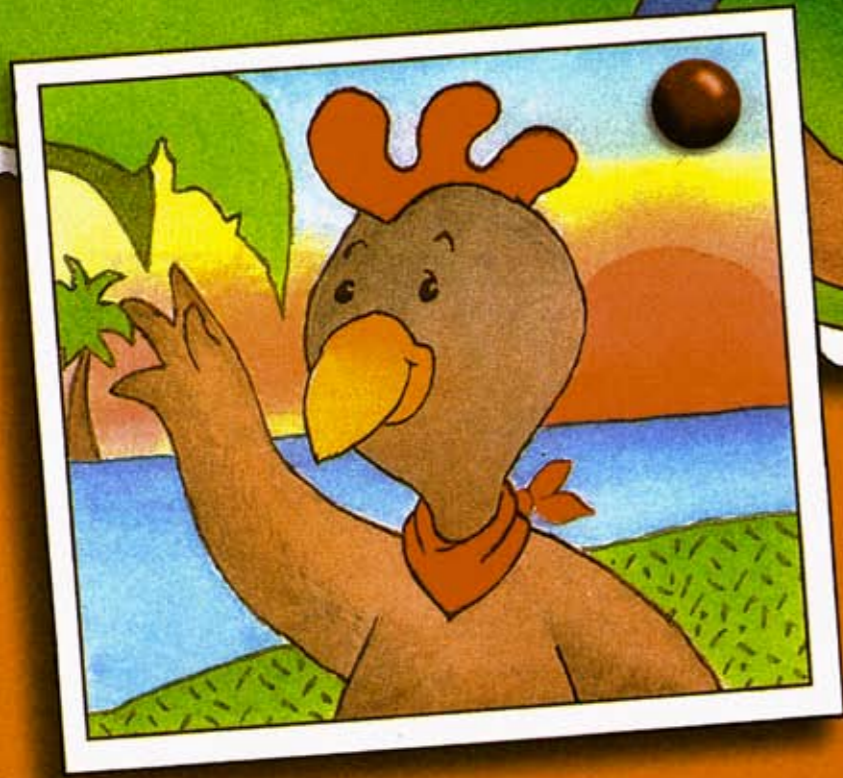


Illustration: **Teti Solou**





Στον παιδίατρο της Άρδρου  
Μαωία Αημεδ  
γορό του Ρίκο Κοκορίκο



ΣΕΙΡΑ: Τα μικρά και τα μεγάλα του κόσμου

Διεύθυνση: Καίτη Ι. Τοπάλη

Καλλιτεχνική Επιμέλεια: Τέτη Σώλου

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Εικονογράφηση: Τέτη Σώλου

Ηλεκτρονική σελιδοποίηση: Χρυσή Λειβαδίτη, Rush adv

Διαχωρισμοί-Φίλμ: TOP COLOR Ε.Π.Ε.

Μοντάζ: POLYGRAMA PCR S.A.

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ISBN 960-8340-11-X

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**Riko**  
**Kokoriko**

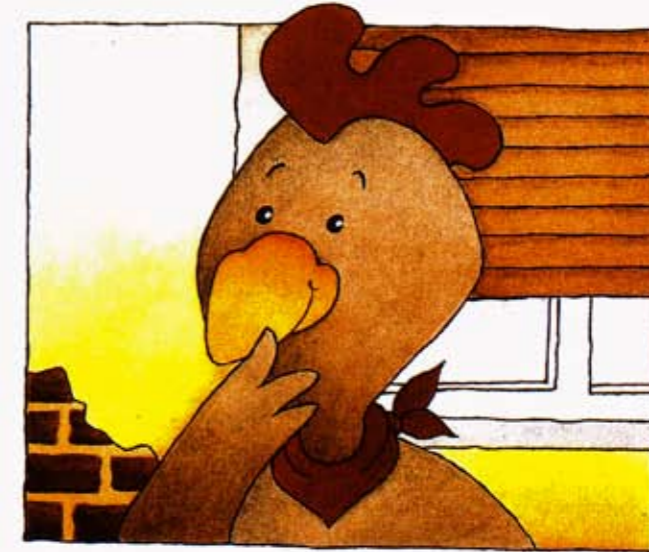


Illustration:  
**Teti Solou**





Though he'd been baptized Enrico  
The boys in his village called him Riko,  
Son of Fionto Kokoriko,  
Over the ocean in Puerto Rico.

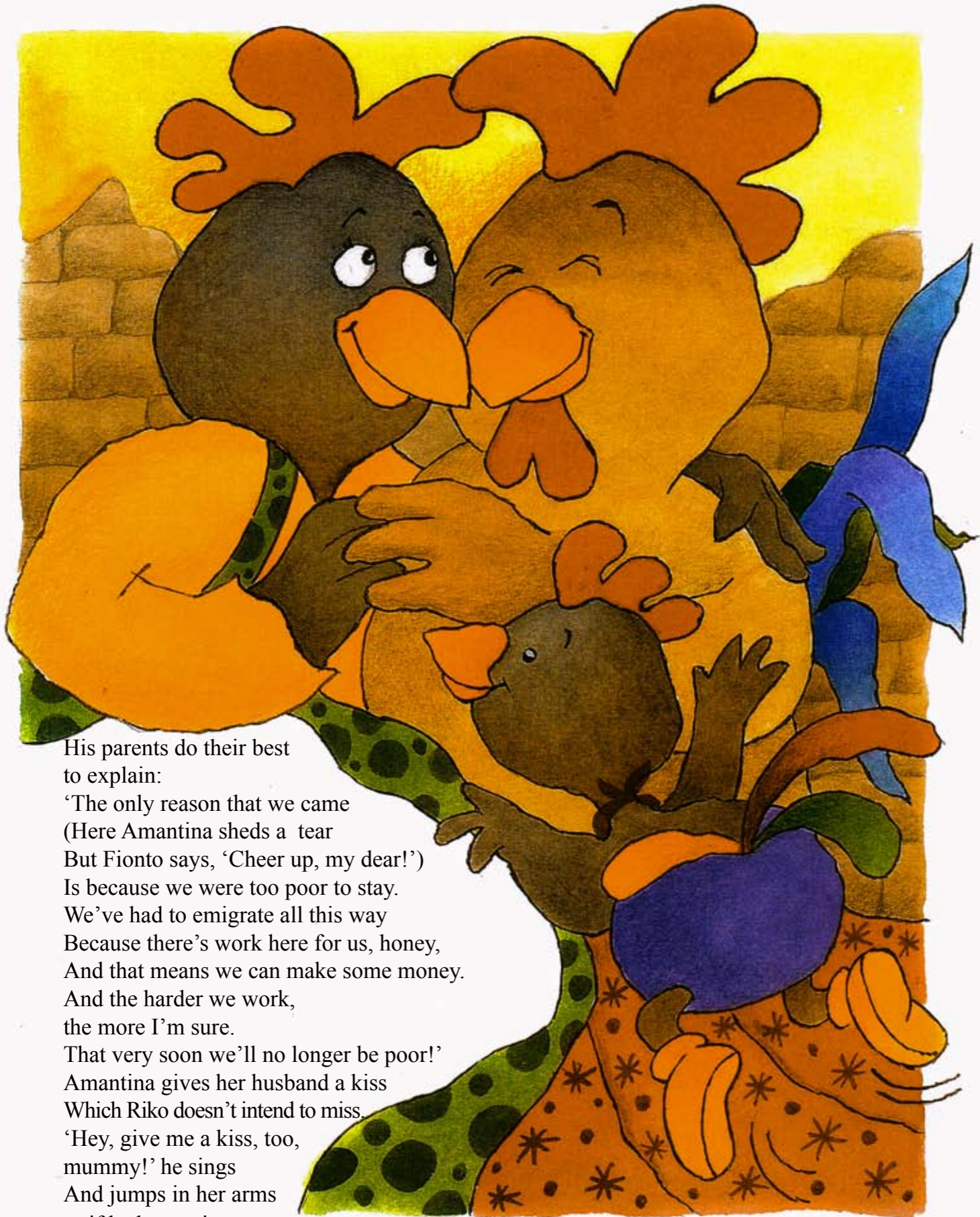


Urged by his mother, Amantina,  
The family boarded a ship for  
Athina,\*  
For though his father was not one  
to shirk,  
In Puerto Rico he couldn't find work.

\* Athens

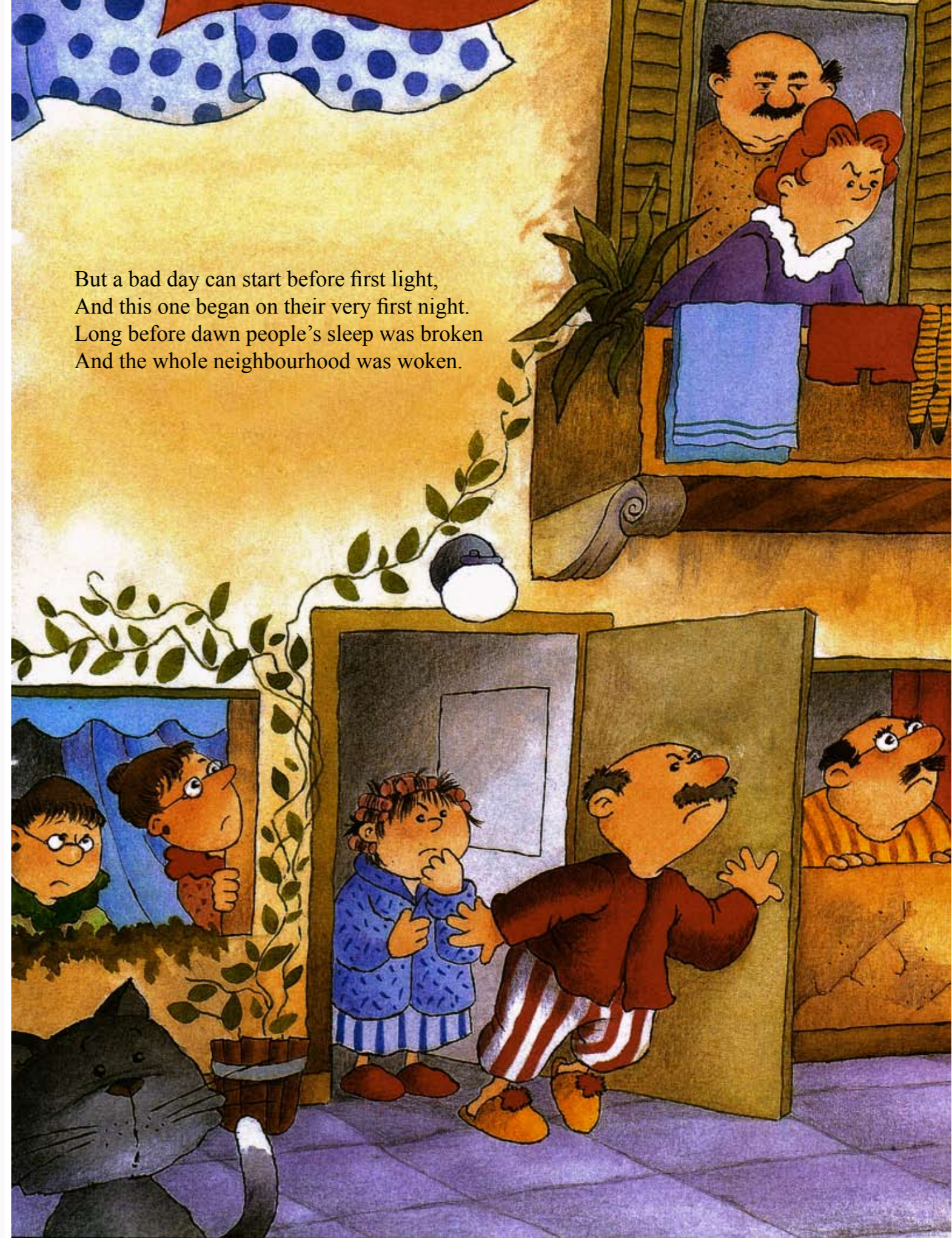


Seeing their 'new' Athenian home  
Riko begins to weep and moan.  
He misses his grandma and his mates  
And cities are places that he hates.

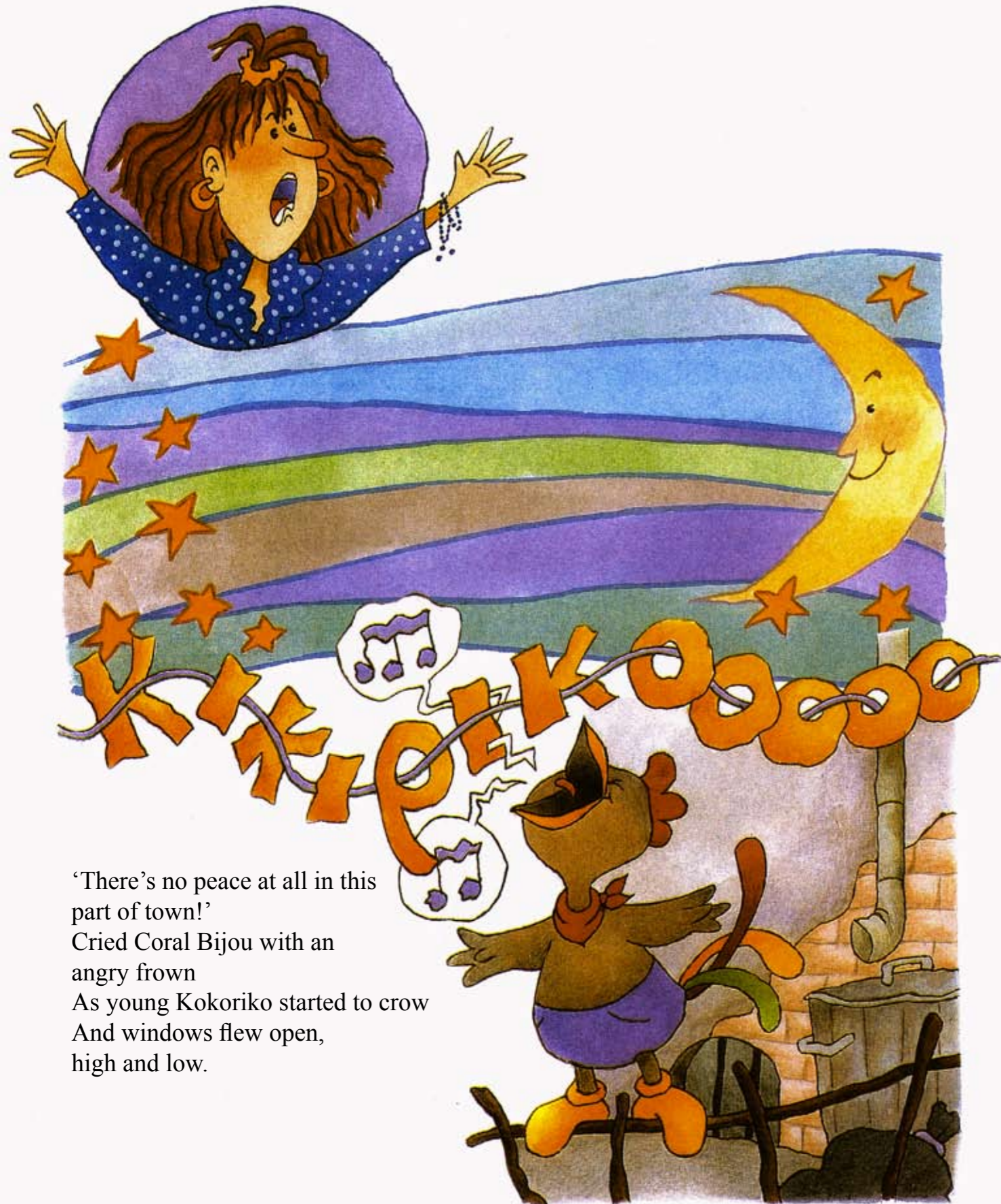


His parents do their best  
to explain:

'The only reason that we came  
(Here Amantina sheds a tear  
But Fionto says, 'Cheer up, my dear!')  
Is because we were too poor to stay.  
We've had to emigrate all this way  
Because there's work here for us, honey,  
And that means we can make some money.  
And the harder we work,  
the more I'm sure.  
That very soon we'll no longer be poor!  
Amantina gives her husband a kiss  
Which Riko doesn't intend to miss.  
'Hey, give me a kiss, too,  
mummy!' he sings  
And jumps in her arms  
as if he has springs.



But a bad day can start before first light,  
And this one began on their very first night.  
Long before dawn people's sleep was broken  
And the whole neighbourhood was woken.



‘There’s no peace at all in this part of town!’  
 Cried Coral Bijou with an angry frown  
 As young Kokoriko started to crow  
 And windows flew open,  
 high and low.

‘Someone must tell this new cockerel  
 That in Puerto Rico it’s all very well  
 To squawk like that in the depths of night,  
 But here in these parts it’s just not right!  
 Our cockerels wait till the break of day,  
 And like it or not, he must do things our way!’



*‘It’s nasty and different from what we do here!’*

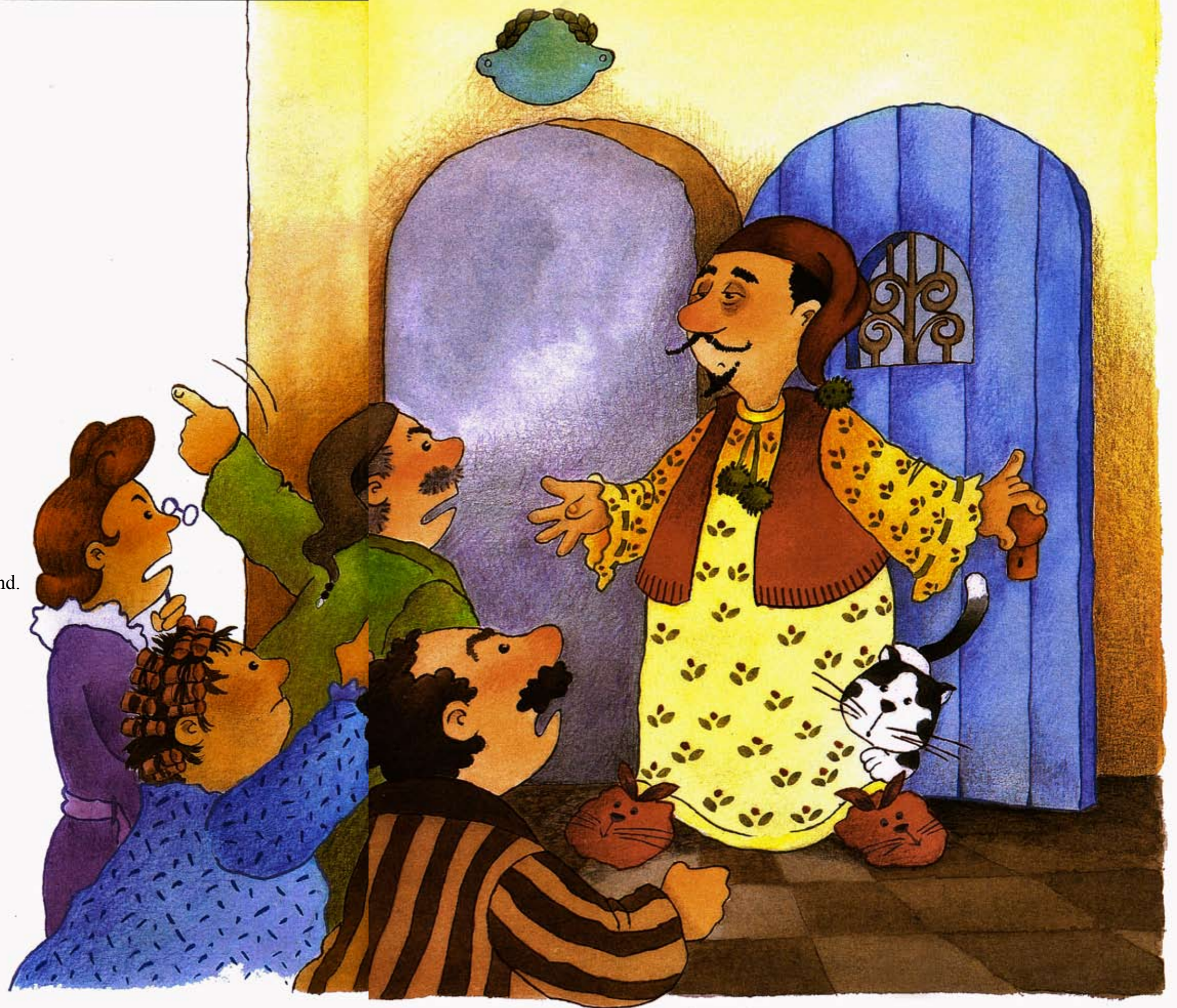
Shrieked Tsiriza in her poor husband’s ear.




'I'm sorry I gave you such a surprise,'  
Cried Kokoriko with fear in his eyes.  
'Back home, I know the right time to crow  
But the clock in my head is running slow  
And I still need some time to set it right,  
So I don't wake you up in the depths of night.  
For in Puerto Rico it's break of day,  
While here it is midnight, we're so far away.  
I know that old habits are hard to break  
But wait and see what an effort I'll make!'

Well, no one can say Kokoriko lied.  
You can't imagine how hard he tried!  
But one night he dreamed about Port of Spain  
And in his sleep he crowed once again.

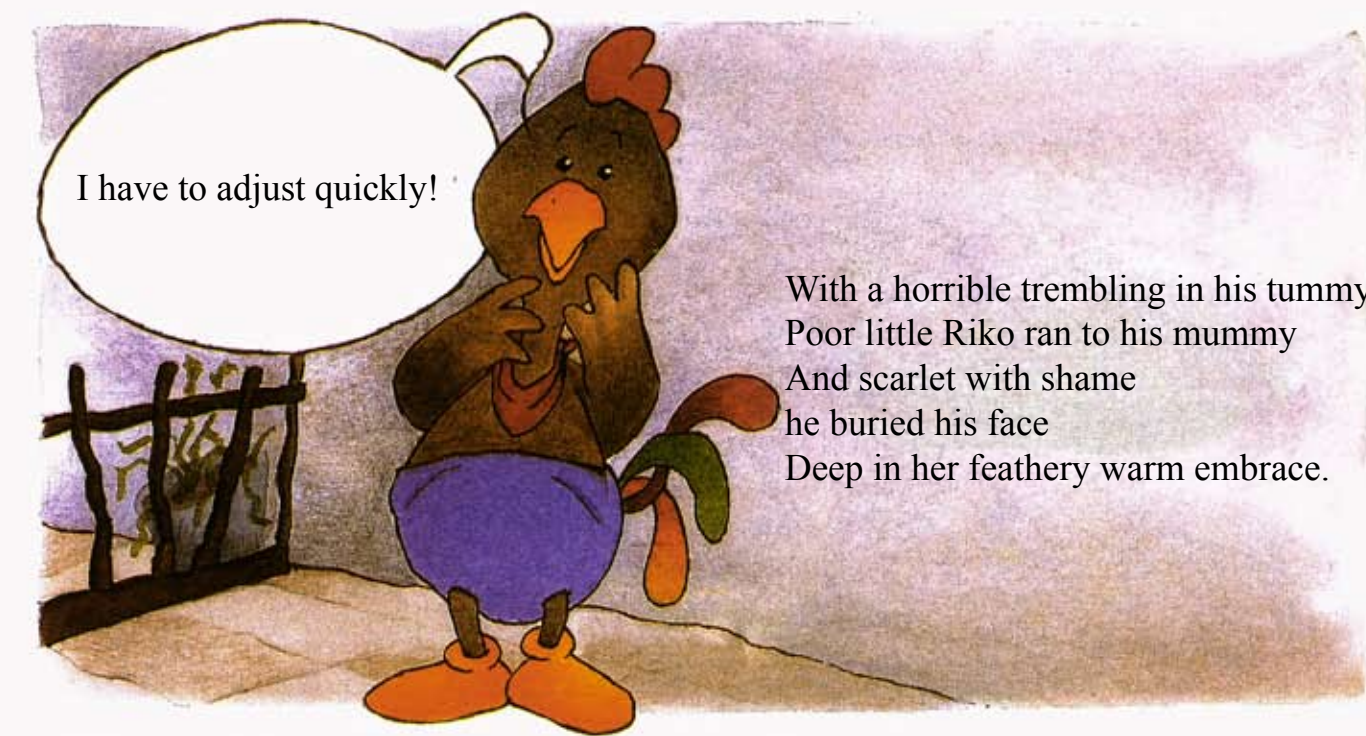
Now this was more than the neighbours could stand.  
In pyjamas and nightgowns they went in a band  
And hammered their fists on the mayor's door.  
'We won't put up with this any more!'  
They screamed as he stood there, bleary-eyed.  
'Unless you do something, woe betide  
You and your council – we'll throw you out!'  
They threatened him with an angry shout.





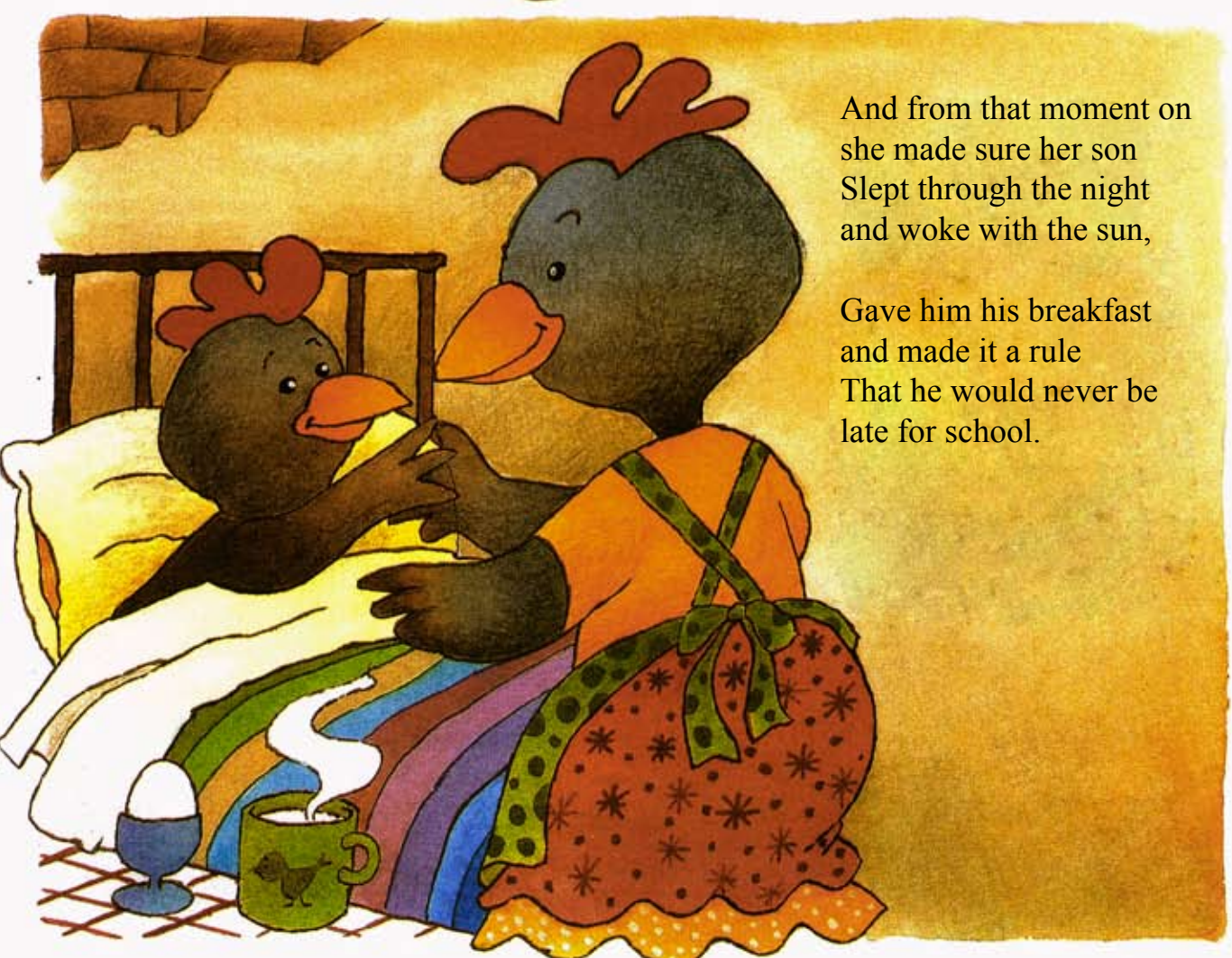
'If you let that new cockerel have his way  
He'll crow all night long  
and sleep through the day.  
We've had enough of his foreign ways!  
Letting in strangers never pays!  
Your job is to keep them away from here;  
If they're not gone soon,  
it'll cost you dear!'

Only the two old Misses Kalou  
Didn't join in this hullabaloo.  
Since they usually spent the night awake  
They rushed to speak up for Riko's sake.  
'The poor bird can't help it, Mr Mayor,  
He's doing his best and you must be fair.  
He's trying hard,  
and you can't say he's lazy  
But we do know his crowing  
is driving folks crazy.  
We'll sit down and talk with him,  
tell him he must  
Get used to our Athens and simply adjust!'



I have to adjust quickly!

With a horrible trembling in his tummy  
Poor little Riko ran to his mummy  
And scarlet with shame  
he buried his face  
Deep in her feathery warm embrace.

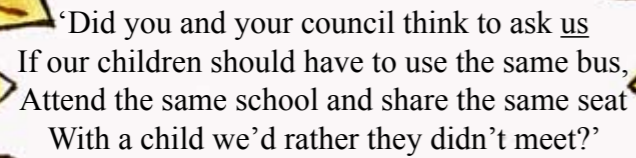


And from that moment on  
she made sure her son  
Slept through the night  
and woke with the sun,

Gave him his breakfast  
and made it a rule  
That he would never be  
late for school.



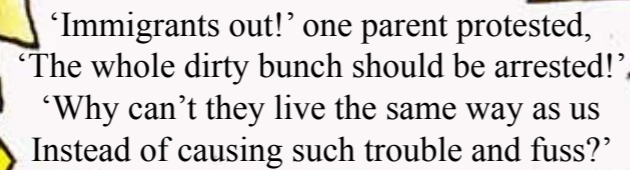
But alas for poor Amantina's labours -  
Even that didn't satisfy the neighbours!  
Mayor, what state of affairs is this?  
They all complained with an angry hiss.



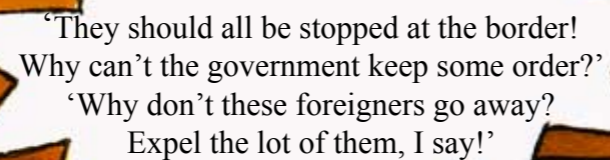
'Did you and your council think to ask us  
If our children should have to use the same bus,  
Attend the same school and share the same seat  
With a child we'd rather they didn't meet?'

'No business of mine,' said the mayor, looking bored,  
'Address your complaints to the governing board.'

The school board convened the very next day,  
Everyone bursting to have his say:




'Immigrants out!' one parent protested,  
'The whole dirty bunch should be arrested!'  
'Why can't they live the same way as us  
Instead of causing such trouble and fuss?'



'They should all be stopped at the border!  
Why can't the government keep some order?'  
'Why don't these foreigners go away?  
Expel the lot of them, I say!'

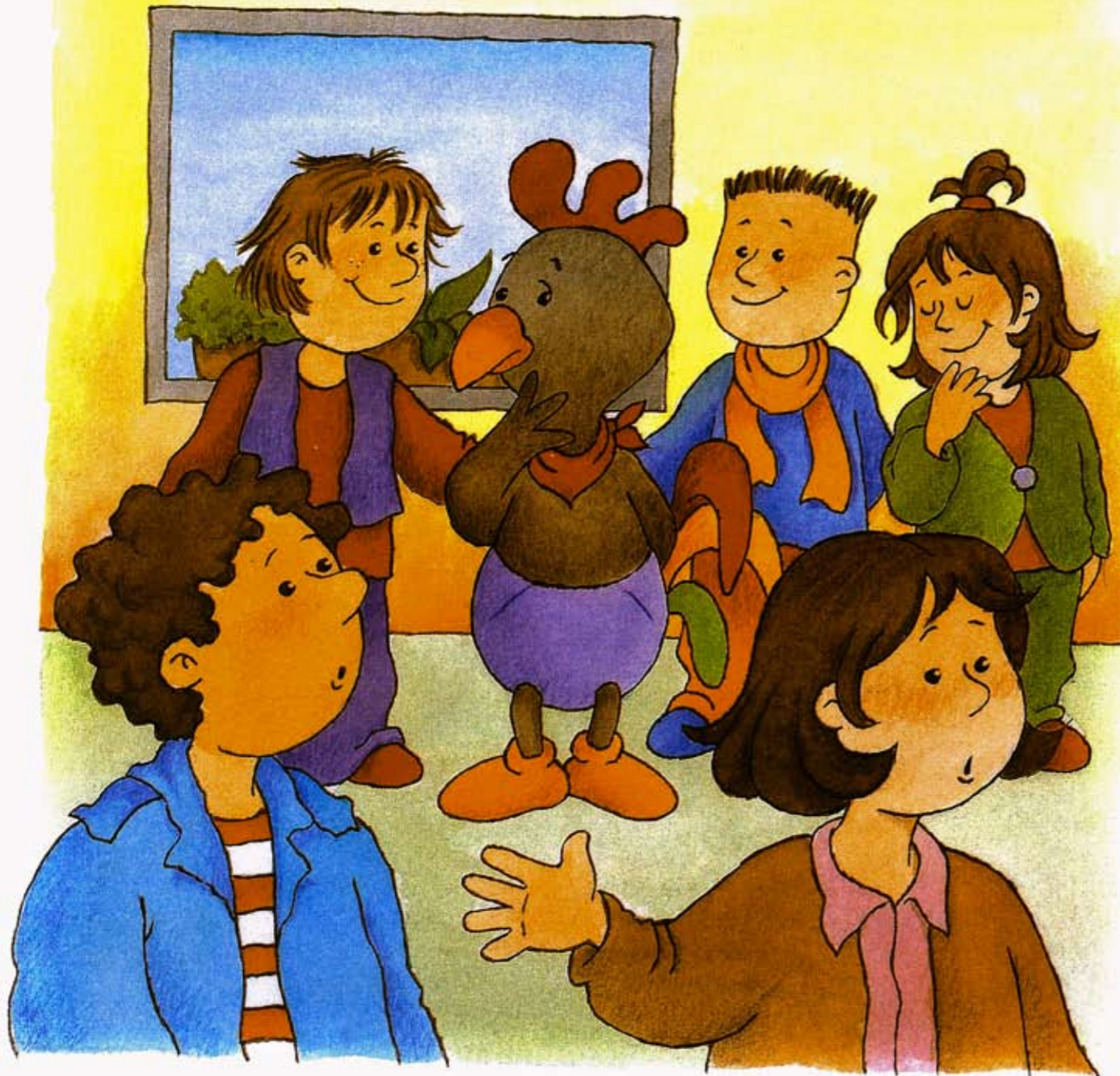
The chairwoman, shocked by all that she heard,  
Saw it was time she put in her word:



'Where does it get you, all this rage?  
Have you all come from some backward age?  
So your children and Riko are not the same.  
If he's darker than them,  
does that make him to blame?  
He only dreams of a better life.  
So why give him  
all this trouble and strife?'

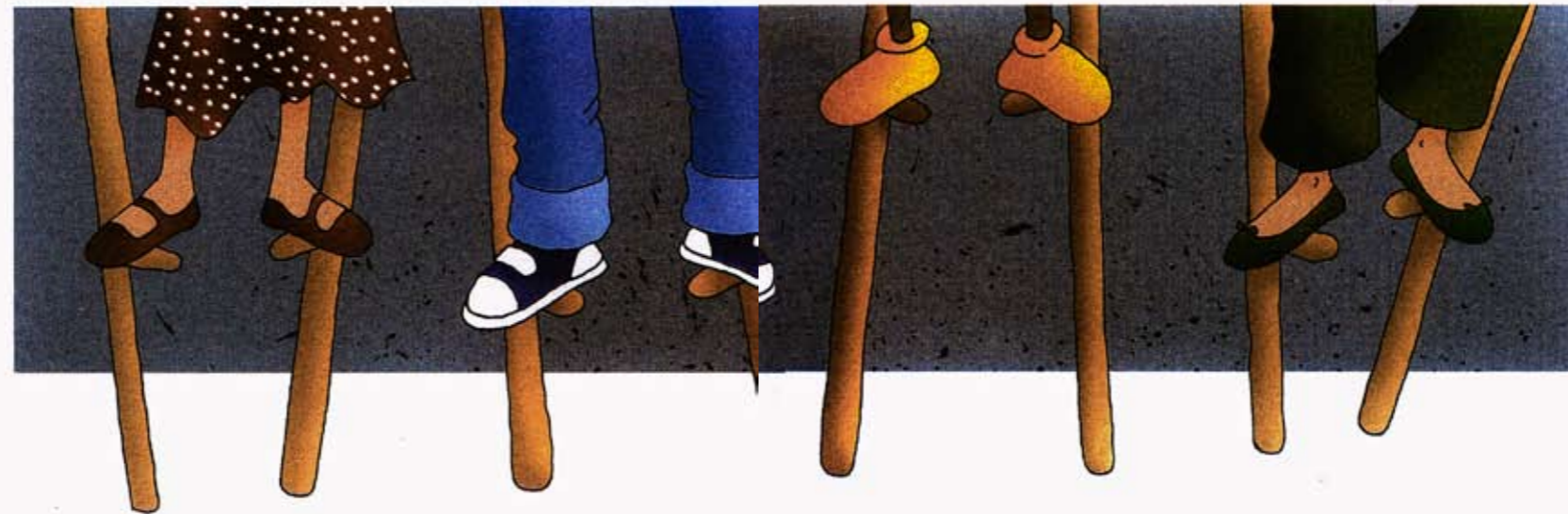
'We have dreams, too,' the parents replied,  
'Successful kids are a joy and pride.  
And how can ours do well at school  
When they're held back by that foreign fool?'  
We've had enough of young Kokoriko.  
Send the brat back to Puerto Rico!'

‘That’s not the story your children tell,’  
The chairwoman said. ‘They get on well.  
The way he speaks Greek is cute and disarming,  
While the girls all find him extremely charming.’



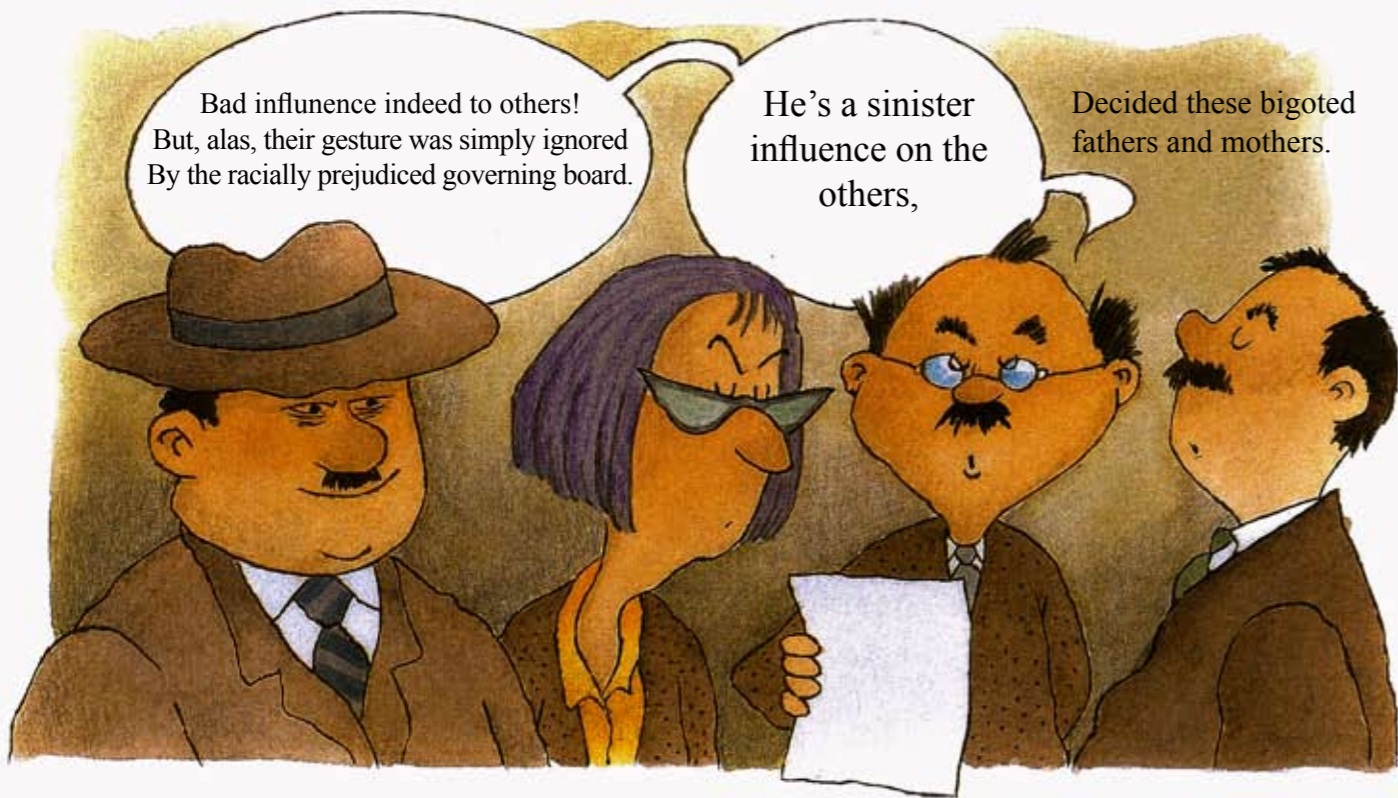


'That dinosaur's got his values confused!  
On wooden legs we'll walk to school  
To teach him a lesson, the racist fool!



Perhaps at last he will see the light  
When he sees that our heads are all the same height!





Bad influence indeed to others!  
But, alas, their gesture was simply ignored  
By the racially prejudiced governing board.

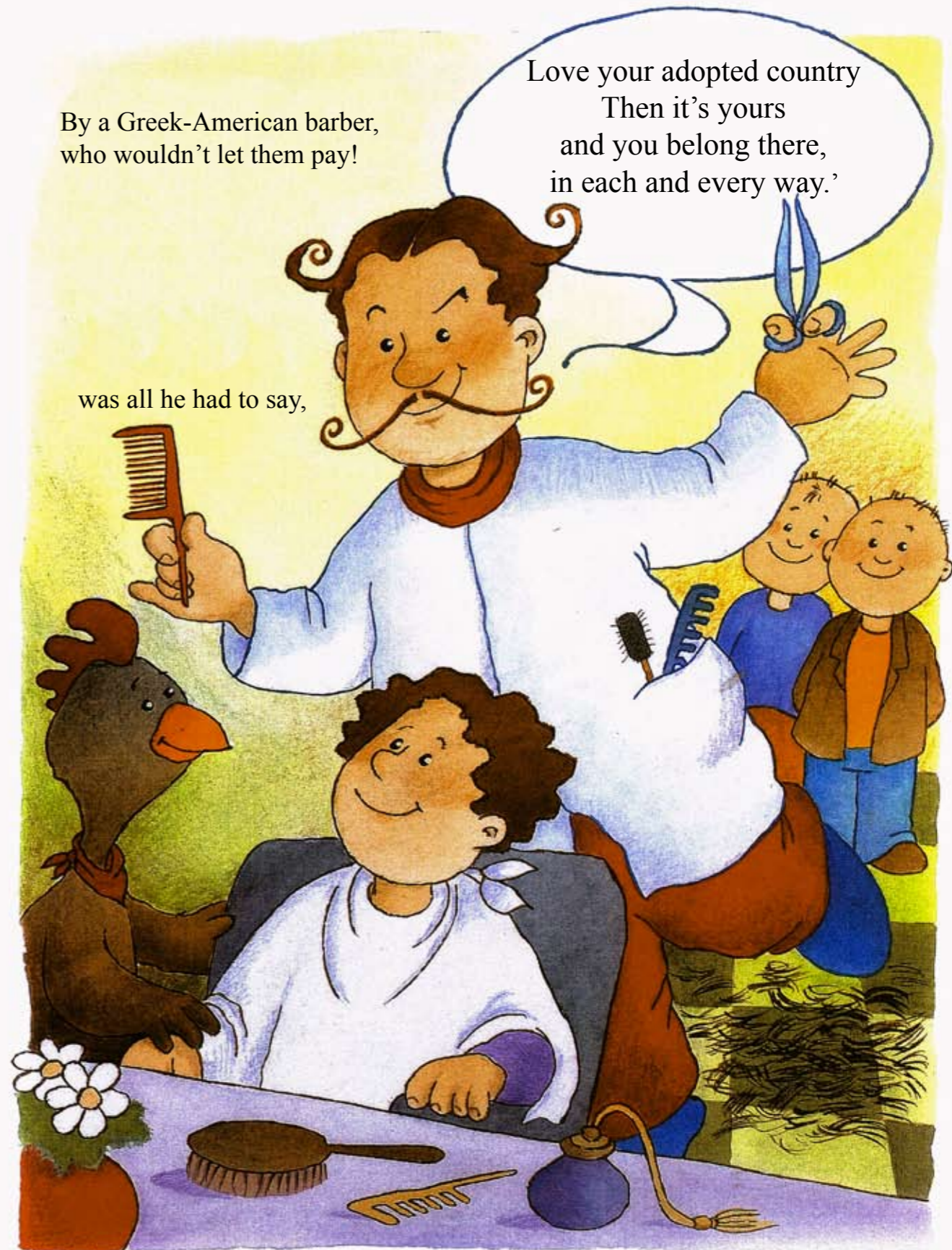
He's a sinister  
influence on the  
others,

Decided these bigoted  
fathers and mothers.

Why, one of them even went ahead  
And cut all the hair off his poor son's head  
Simply because he heard him say  
That he and Riko had been out to play.



But next day Riko's class all showed him their support  
By coming into school with their hair cut very short

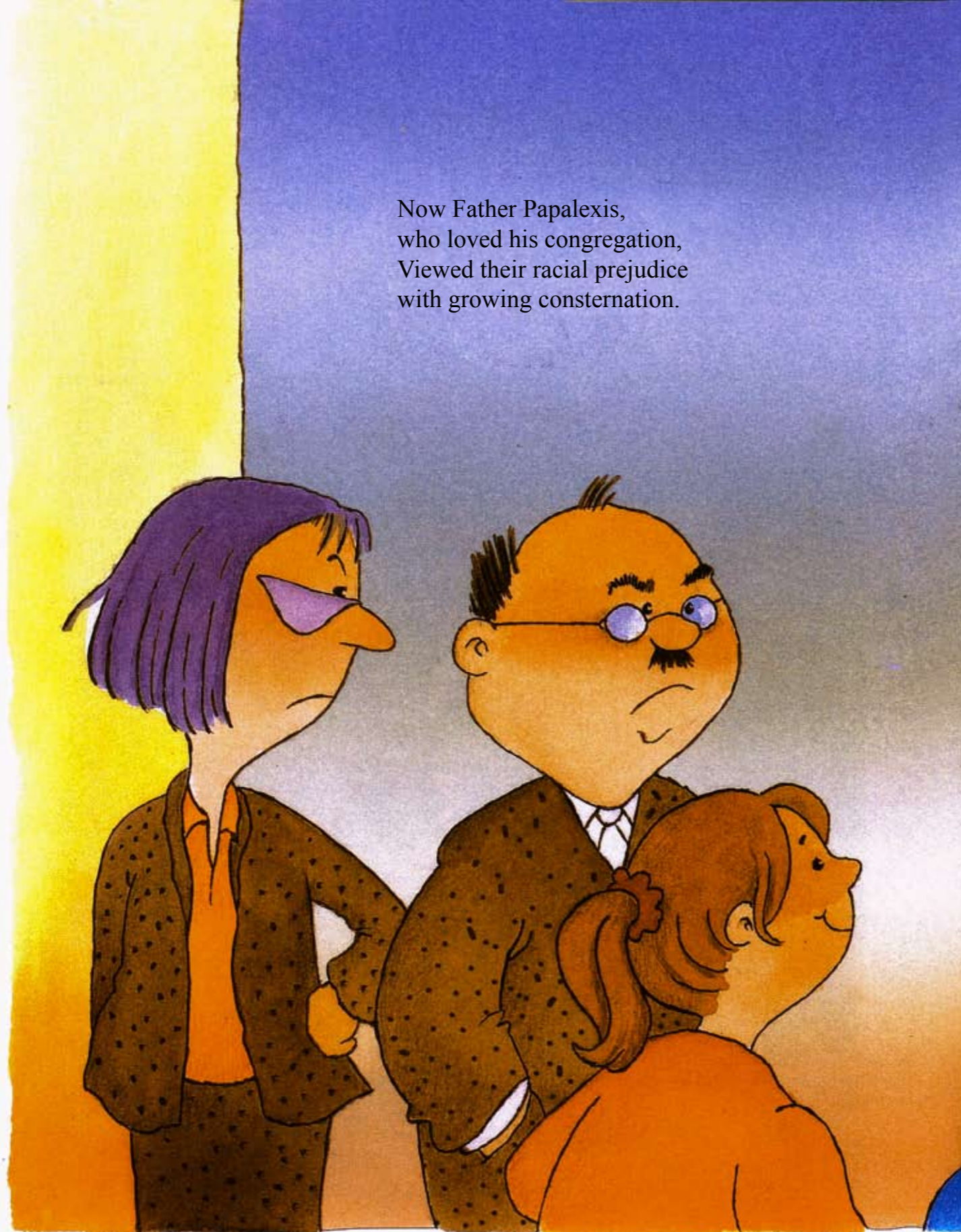


By a Greek-American barber,  
who wouldn't let them pay!

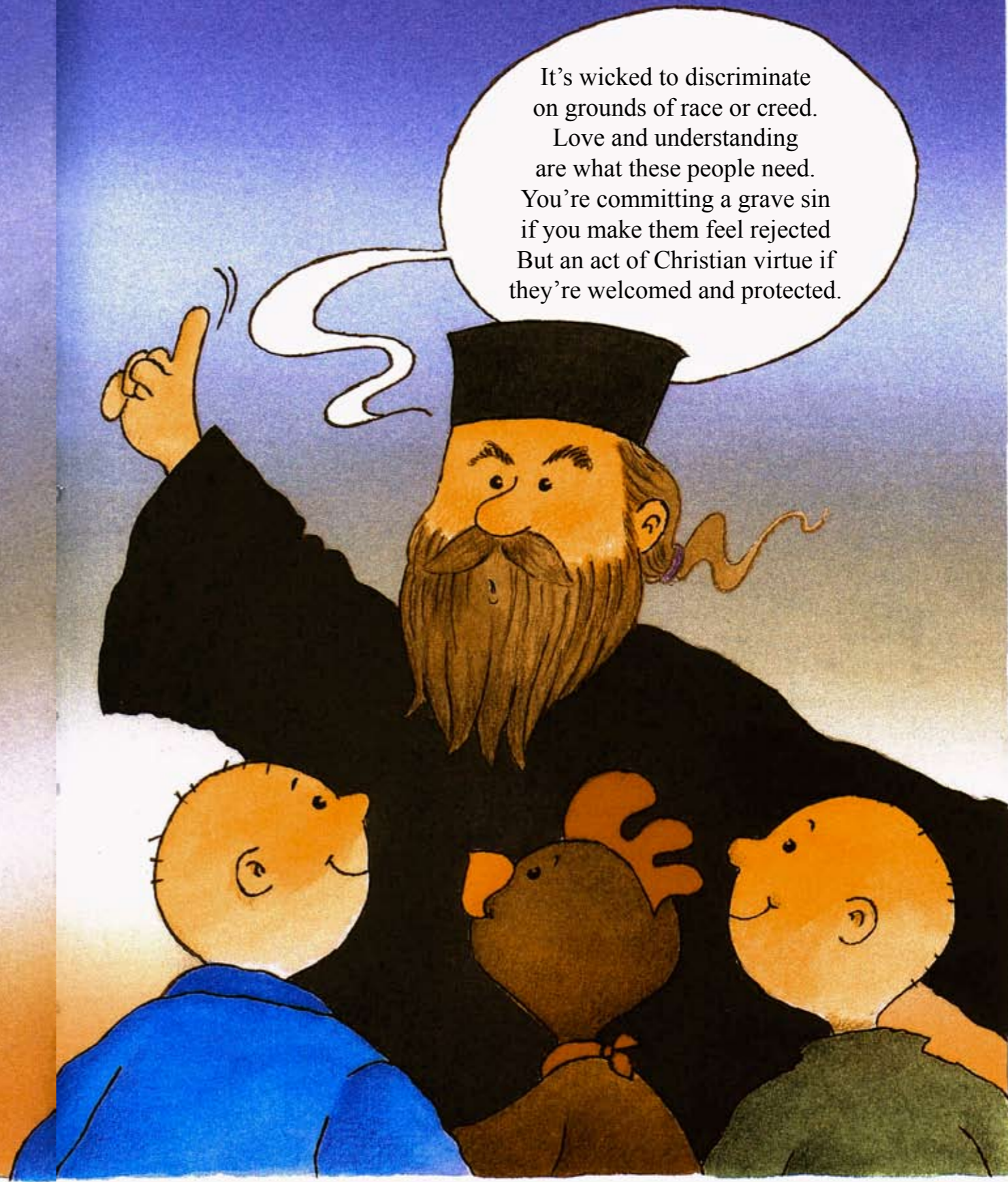
was all he had to say,

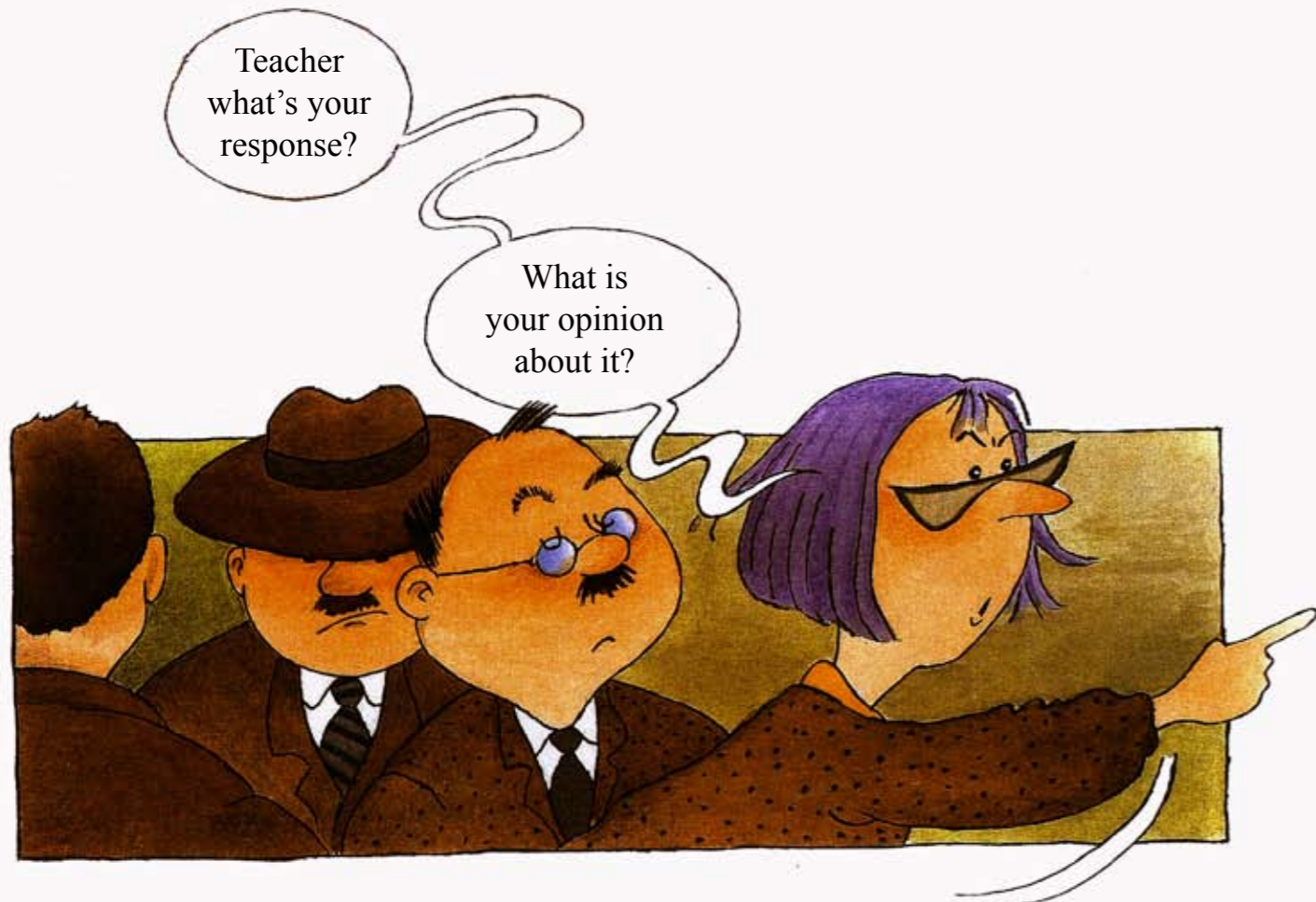
Love your adopted country  
Then it's yours  
and you belong there,  
in each and every way.'

Now Father Papalexis,  
who loved his congregation,  
Viewed their racial prejudice  
with growing consternation.



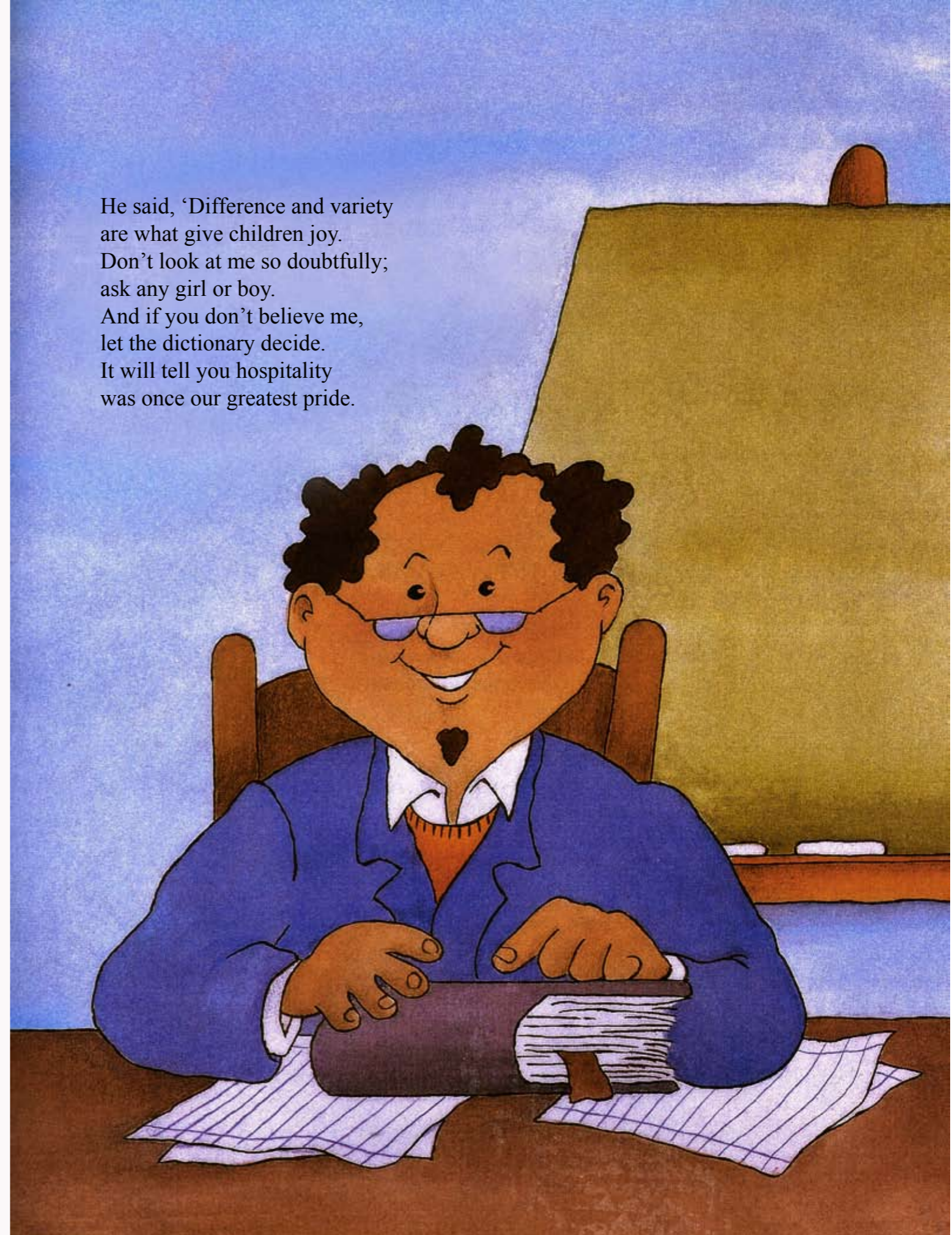
It's wicked to discriminate  
on grounds of race or creed.  
Love and understanding  
are what these people need.  
You're committing a grave sin  
if you make them feel rejected  
But an act of Christian virtue if  
they're welcomed and protected.





Now their priest's stern warning all the board had heard  
They turned to Riko's teacher to give the final word.

He said, 'Difference and variety  
are what give children joy.  
Don't look at me so doubtfully;  
ask any girl or boy.  
And if you don't believe me,  
let the dictionary decide.  
It will tell you hospitality  
was once our greatest pride.'



'The ancient Greek word "xenos"\* meant both "visitor" and "friend",  
Something to which you parents should carefully attend.'

And turning to the children, he gave a secret wink  
As if to say, 'Well, that's that, kids, let's hope it makes them think!'

\* foreigner

ΤΟ ΒΙΒΛΙΟ ΤΗΣ ΣΟΦΙΑΣ ΜΑΝΤΟΥ-  
ΒΑΛΟΥ «Ο ΡΙΚΟ ΚΟΚΟΡΙΚΟ» ΤΥ-  
ΠΩΘΗΚΕ ΣΤΟ ΤΥΠΟΓΡΑΦΕΙΟ ΤΟΥ  
Ι.ΠΕΠΠΑ ΚΑΙ ΒΙΒΛΙΟΔΕΤΗΘΗΚΕ  
ΣΤΟ ΒΙΒΛΙΟΔΕΤΕΙΟ ΤΩΝ ΑΦΩΝ ΜΑ-  
ΝΤΗ ΓΙΑ ΛΟΓΑΡΙΑΣΜΟ ΤΩΝ ΕΚΔΟ-  
ΣΕΩΝ ΜΙΚΡΗ ΜΙΑΗΤΟΣ ΤΟ ΔΕΚΕΜ-  
ΒΡΙΟ ΤΟΥ 2002.

## Σοφία Μαντουβάλου



Μικρή όταν ήμουν, κοίταζα μια εμένα,  
και μια τον κατάξανθο αδελφό μου.  
Έκλαιγα με μαύρο δάκρυ γιατί πίστευα  
πως οι γονείς μου με είχαν αγοράσει  
από τους γύφτους.

Όταν πήγα στο νηπιαγωγείο, στις καλόγριες  
της Σμύρνης, συνέχισα να κλαίω γιατί δεν  
με έπαιζαν τα παιδιά· δεν ήξερα ούτε  
μια λέξη τουρκικά.

Στο δημοτικό, ο καλύτερός μου φίλος  
είχε Ιταλό μπαμπά, Ελληνίδα μαμά  
και Γαλλίδα γιαγιά. Ακόμα μου τρέχουν  
τα σάλια για σπαγγέτι, μουσακά και γαλλική  
μηλόπιτα.

Στο γυμνάσιο καθόμουνα στο ίδιο θρανίο  
με τη Ρόζυ, μια αφρικάνα πριγκίπισσα  
που όσπου να μάθει ελληνικά μου μιλάγε  
με φοβισμένα μάτια.

Ευτυχώς στο πανεπιστήμιο συνάντησα  
όλες τις φυλές του κόσμου.

Τις γνώρισα, τις αγάπησα, τις ξεφοβήθηκα.  
Σήμερα έχω πολλούς «ξένους» φίλους.



## Τέτη Σώλου



Σπούδασα μουσική γιατί ενώνει  
τους ανθρώπους.

Νομική για να υπερασπίσω το δικαίωμα  
που έχει κάθε άνθρωπος  
να είναι διαφορετικός.

Ευτυχώς για όλους,  
οι άνθρωποι είμαστε διαφορετικοί.

Τόσο διαφορετικοί  
όσο τα επτά χρώματα  
που ζωγραφίζουν τον κόσμο.





This tale in verse  
reveals a secret  
known only to children  
with clever hearts:  
that when love comes to rule,  
racial prejudice  
will disappear.

Κατάλληλο  
για την αντιρατσιστική  
εκπαίδευση



Για παιδιά  
4-8+ χρόνων  
και  
εκπαιδευτικούς

