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the magazine for children



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by Jane Dippold

takeout pages:

Monkey Racers

front cover by
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OH!
WOE IS ME!
ME POOR POOR TUMMY
DOETH ACHE FOR
LACK OF FOOD.



SPIDER'S MAILBOX

Dear Sam,

You're my favorite! I like you because you're funny and active. Caterpillars are my favorite insects. I like them because they have different colors and kinds. I hope you're having fun with your friends! Hi, buggies!

Aoife Zamacona, age 9
St. Paul, Minnesota

Dear Spider,

I love *Spider* magazine. Ophelia, do you know how to say cute in Japanese? It is *kawaii*. Sam, I have a lot of dandelions at my house. Sonya, I really wish you could come to my house so I can see your double-floop-humdinger roll.

Maria De Paz Lopez, age 9
Oxnard, California

Dear Spider,
I love your magazine. When all of my family gets here, I'm going to do "Ophelia's Last Word." I have a Webkinz that is very fun to play with. When I grow up I want to be a marine biologist.

Benjamin Dubin, age 8
Venice, Florida

Dear Spider and Sam,
I love reading your magazines. You are my best friends. You are both very, very funny. Do you like soccer? I love soccer. What is your favorite move?

Kaitlin Dowling, age 9
Raleigh, North Carolina

Dear Kaitlin,
We love soccer! We can't pick one favorite move, because we have so many great ones!
Go, Bugs!
Spider and Sam

Dear Miro,

I really like your flapjacks (www.spidermagkids.com/miroskitchen). Are you a toadstool? You aren't a bug, so why is everybody called everybuggy? And why are you the only plant? I hope I didn't ask too many questions!

Eva H., age 7
Petaluma, California
[via spidermagkids.com](http://www.spidermagkids.com)

Bonjour, Eva,

Sometimes I shelter a toad from zee rain, but usually moi eez in zee kitchen cooking. Everybuggy eezn't just for bugs. Anyone who lives in zee magazine or loves zee magazines can be included. Talking mushrooms are très magnifique, too!

Bon appétit,
Miro

FEED ME,
I IMPORE
THEE...

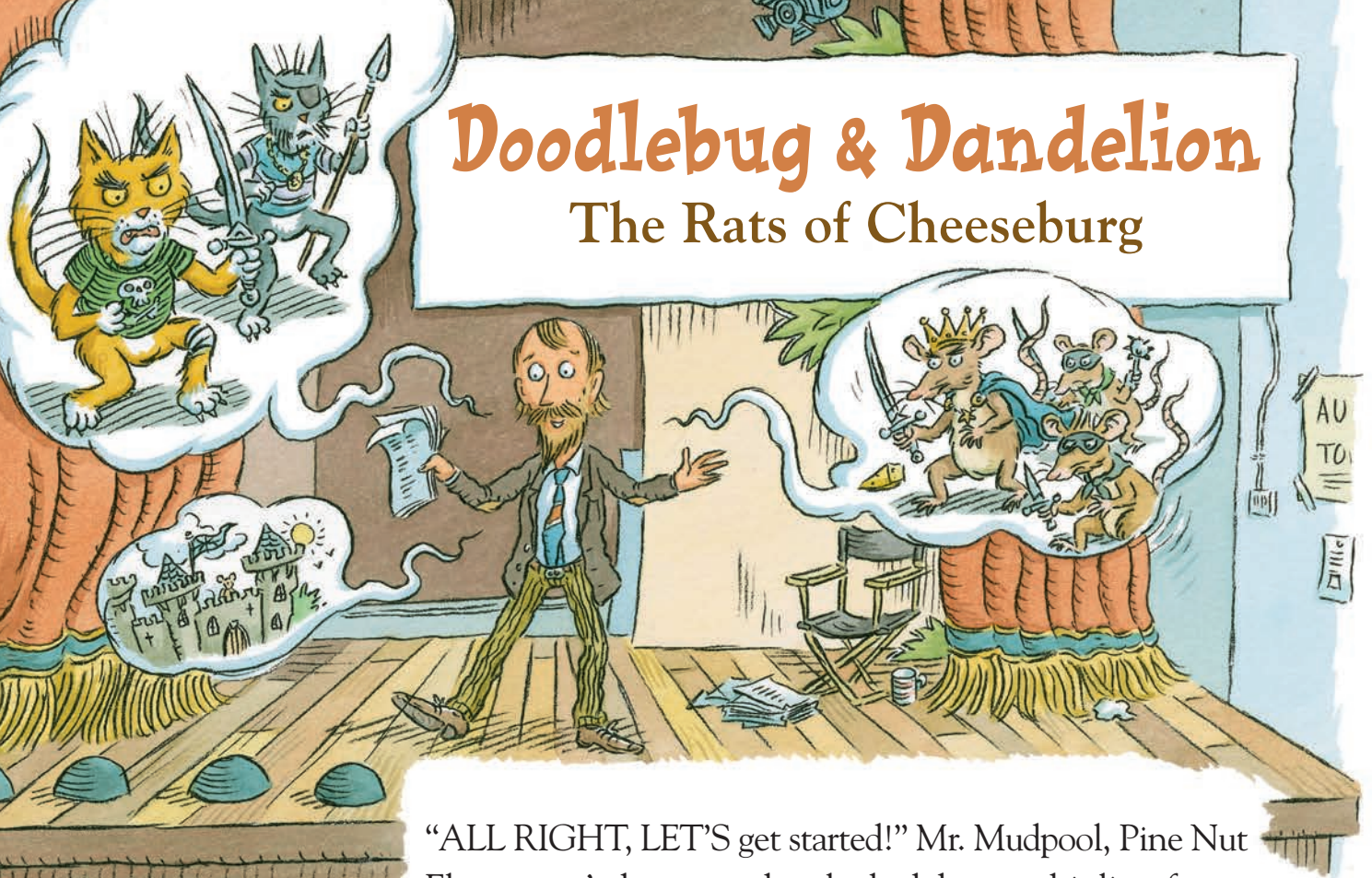


SPIDER,
YOU JUST
HAD BREAKFAST
AN HOUR AGO—
REMEMBER?

Send your letters to **Spider's Mailbox**, P.O. Box 300, Peru, IL 61354.
Please write your complete name, age, and address on your letter!
You can send us mail at www.spidermagkids.com/mailbox, too.

Doodlebug & Dandelion

The Rats of Cheeseburg



“ALL RIGHT, LET’S get started!” Mr. Mudpool, Pine Nut Elementary’s drama teacher, looked down at his list of names. “Is someone here named Doodlebug? Doodlebug Pinkley? Come up here, thespian, and take this stage by storm!”

“Me first?!” Doodlebug spluttered.

“Don’t worry, you’ll be great!” whispered Dandelion, giving him a nudge. Doodlebug gulped and shuffled up onstage, aware that everyone else trying out for the play was staring at him.

“This year we’ll be putting on *The Rats of Cheeseburg*, a real gem of a play, if I may say so, written by moi—yours truly, in other words,” Mr. Mudpool announced. “It’s the dramatic tale of two ravenous cats who invade the rat kingdom of Cheeseburg. Our audience will thrill to the



OH, BUT FOR
JUST A CRUMB
OF CHEESE, PLEASE!

WHAT A TERRIBLE
THESPIAN,
ACTOR.

YOU MEAN HE’S
ONLY ACTING
RAVENOUS,
EXTREMELY
HUNGRY?

THAT’S ACTING?
HE’S ALWAYS
RAVENOUS,
EXTREMELY
HUNGRY.



by Pamela Dell

Art by Dom Mansell

action as King Rat and his mighty Masked Mouse Battalion drive them out!”

Mr. Mudpool waved Doodlebug to center stage with a sweep of his hand and nodded. “Just begin at the top of the page, Pinkley—the part of a rodent guard.”

Doodlebug’s throat felt tight. He swallowed hard and began to read. “Halt! What sly feline foe lurks in the shadows?” He stumbled a bit over a few words but continued reading. “Show your fuzzball whiskered head!”

Someone in the audience giggled. Doodlebug didn’t think it was because the line was funny.

“Thank you, Pinkley,” said Mr. Mudpool. He pinched the bridge of his long, skinny nose and studied his script. “Would you turn to page five and try a few King Rat lines, please?”

“Drats, rats!” Doodlebug read now, but his voice sounded small. “We shall drive these felines out by dawn!”

“Louder!” someone in the audience called.



"I can't hear you!" shouted another.

"Students," Mr. Mudpool commanded, "let's give our reader some respect! Now, just a tad more volume if you please, Pinkley."

Doodlebug felt every hair on his head prickle straight upward, even higher than usual. "Yes!" he bellowed. But then his voice started to squeak. "Order the mice to hang fifteen stinking fish from every rooftop!"

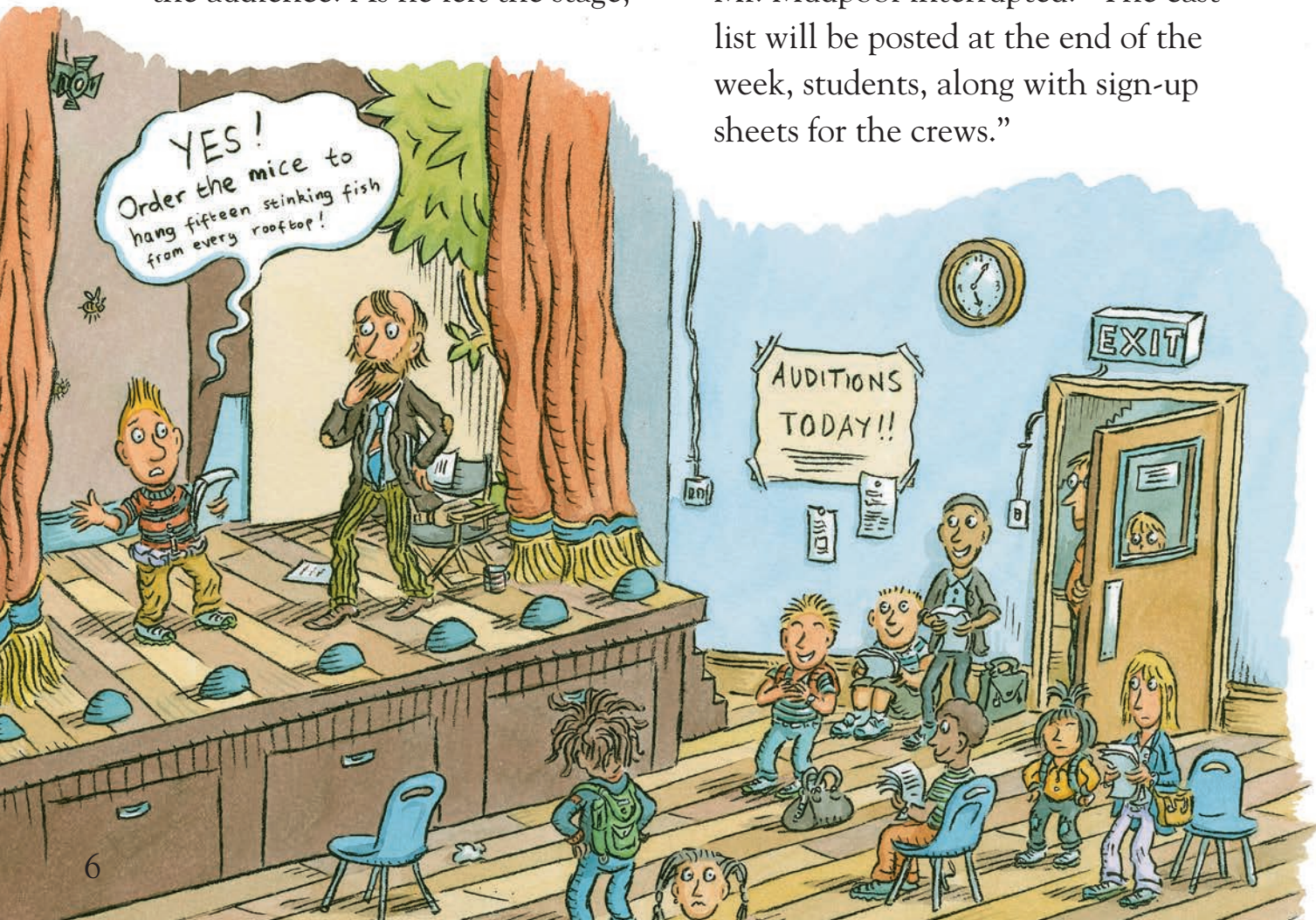
A wave of laughter spread through the audience. As he left the stage,

Doodlebug wasn't sure he wanted to be an actor anymore.

"You have to be in the play!" Dandelion insisted as they were gathering their things at the end of tryouts. "If you just practice, you'll get better."

Doodlebug shrugged. "I don't know, Dandelion. I think I might throw up if I have to go onstage again. It could happen, you know. I'm serious."

Before Dandelion could respond, Mr. Mudpool interrupted. "The cast list will be posted at the end of the week, students, along with sign-up sheets for the crews."





“How many parts are there?” someone asked.

“Oodles—enough for everyone!” Mr. Mudpool exclaimed, fluttering his fingers. “And we need people to work on props, costumes, makeup, sound, and set design, too. So please sign up for the crews!”

On Friday afternoon Doodlebug and Dandelion gathered with the other hopefuls to check the cast list.

“Yay!” Dandelion shouted. “I’m Relay Rat!”

Doodlebug read the words next to his own name. “Mute Mouse Number

Three. Is that a speaking part?”

“No,” Dandelion said gently, putting her arm around her brother’s shoulders. “I’m sorry, Doodlebug.”

But Doodlebug was grinning wide. “No, this is really good!” He pushed his way out of the crowd of kids around him—and right into Mr. Mudpool, who was passing by. The folder Doodlebug was holding scattered all over the floor.

“Dear me! Apologies, Pinkley!” said Mr. Mudpool, stooping to help gather Doodlebug’s papers. His eyes landed on a sketch Doodlebug had

drawn earlier that day, titled “Rat Castle.”

“Did you draw this?” Mr. Mudpool asked, straightening up and looking quite impressed.

Doodlebug nodded.

“Well, I’d say we’d better get you signed up for the set design crew to help with scenery!” Mr. Mudpool boomed. “You agree, Pinkley?”

“Really? Sure!” Doodlebug replied, surprised and thrilled.

When the curtain rose on the first performance of *The Rats of Cheeseburg*, a gasp of awe rose from the audience. There before them onstage was the magnificent kingdom of Cheeseburg. The most brilliant feature was the towering Rat Castle, created from an original design, the program mentioned, by one Doodlebug Pinkley.

In Act Two, when Mute Mouse Number Three skittered across the stage holding up high a lifelike giant trout, the audience chuckled. This time, Doodlebug knew for sure, the laughter was *for* him, not *at* him. The wild applause that followed proved it. 🐭



Dancing Broccoli

by Nancy Kangas

Past the rice it waltzes
Over the ketchup it hops

“Tra-la Tra-loo Tra-lee,”
It sings, “I’m SO broccoli!”



Art by Jeffrey Ebbeler

© 2009 by Nancy Kangas

Stillwater's Story

Story and Art
by Jon J Muth

“MICHAEL! THERE’S A bear outside!” said Karl.

“A what?” called Michael.

“A bear. He’s really big. And he’s in the backyard.”

“What’s he doing?” Michael asked.

“He’s sitting. He has an umbrella,” said Karl.

“An umbrella?”

By the time the boys got outside, their sister, Addy, was already talking with him.

“I’m sorry for arriving unannounced,” said the bear. “The wind carried my umbrella all the way from my backyard to your backyard. I thought I would retrieve it before it became a nuisance.” He spoke with a slight panda accent.



Michael introduced himself. Then Addy introduced Karl because Karl was shy around bears he didn't know.

And this is how Addy, Michael, and Karl met Stillwater.

The next day, Addy went to have tea with Stillwater.

"Hello," Addy said as she stepped inside.

"Come in! Come in!" a faraway voice called.



Then she heard the voice say, "Oh yes . . . Come out! Come out!" Stillwater was in the backyard.

CHEESE, OH CHEESY CHEESE,
WHEREFORE ART THOU,
CHEESE?



He was in a tent.

"This is a birthday present from my Uncle Ry," Stillwater said. "He always gives presents on his birthday, to celebrate the day he was born. I like it so much, that I'm not staying in my house right now."

Stillwater invited Addy to sit with him.

"You brought me some cake!" said Stillwater. "That was very nice of you. Is it your birthday?" he asked.

"No," said Addy.

"It's not mine either," said Stillwater. "But let me give you a gift for my uncle's birthday. I'll tell you a story."





UNCLE RY AND THE MOON

My Uncle Ry lived alone in a small house up in the hills. He didn't own many things. He lived a simple life.

One evening, he discovered he had a visitor. A robber had broken into the house and was rummaging through my uncle's few belongings.

The robber didn't notice Uncle Ry, and when my uncle said "Hello," the robber was so startled he almost fell down.

My uncle smiled at the robber and shook his hand.

"Welcome! Welcome! How nice of you to visit!"

The robber opened his mouth to speak, but he couldn't think of anything to say.

Because Ry never lets anyone leave empty-handed, he looked around the tiny hut for a gift for the robber. But there was nothing to give. The robber began to back toward the door. He wanted to leave.

At last, Uncle Ry knew what to do.

He took off his only robe, which was old and tattered.

"Here," he said.

"Please take this."



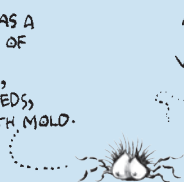
The robber thought my uncle was crazy. He took the robe, dashed out the door, and escaped into the night.



ALL I HAD WAS A
SINGLE SLICE OF
CHEESE,
TATTERED,
TORN IN SHREDS,
AND FUZZY WITH MOLD.

AND NOW
IT'S
VANISHED!

POOR
SPIDER...



My uncle sat and looked at the moon, its silvery light spilling over the mountains, making all things quietly beautiful.



“Poor man,” lamented my uncle. “All I had to give him was my tattered robe. If only I could have given him this wonderful moon.”

THE END

SPIDER
LAMENTED,
SPOKE WITH
SORROW,
OF THE LOSS OF
HIS FAITHFUL
CHEESE FUZZY WUZZY.
OH WOE!

OH NO,
NOT YOU
TOO...



“Your uncle sounds nice,” said Addy. “I don’t think I could have given away my only robe.”

“I know how that is,” said Stillwater. “But there’s always the moon.”

“That was a good story,” said Addy.

“Thank you,” said Stillwater. “And this is good cake.”

“Thanks,” said Addy. “I made it myself.” 🕸



Visit www.spidermagkids.com
for Miro's favorite cake recipe.



What Am I?

Four Riddles

Eyes without eyelids,
Looking around,
Can't see much
Buried in the ground.

I have feet but no toes.
I wear a cloth but no clothes.
I have legs but no knees.
My legs can be many
but not less than three.

My keys don't open locks,
My hammers don't pound nails,
Though I've never held a fish,
I'm quite comfortable with scales.

A spine with no nerves,
And leaves with no sap,
My covers never warm a bed,
But I might help you take a nap.



Find more riddles
at www.spidermagkids.com!

by **Daphne Dykeman**

Answers on page 33

Photos courtesy Shutterstock.

Seek the Sun

by Phillis Gershator

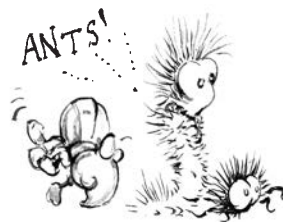
THE OLD SANDALMAKER and his wife lived in a little wooden house on a sunny street in Asakusa, Japan. For fifty years, husband and wife prayed at the great temple nearby. After they prayed, they chose a paper fortune. Before tying it to a tree, alongside the other paper fortunes fluttering in the breeze, they studied it awhile. Was it a good fortune or a bad one? Sometimes it was hard to tell.

One week their fortune announced: *You will find a way.*

“Yes, I suppose we will,” said the sandalmaker.

The next week their fortune advised: *Seek the sun each day.*

“That will be easy,” said his wife. “It’s springtime, and in the spring, the sun always shines.”



Art by Taeun Yoo

© 2009 by Phillis Gershator.



But that spring, in the year 1966, a builder came to measure the empty lot across the street. He was followed by three machines and a truckload of men. The men and machines dug a square hole in the ground and drove pilings deep down into the earth. They built walls high up into the sky—one hundred and fifty-four feet high! The new building towered above all the other buildings on the block.

Now the sandalmaker's small two-story house stood in the shade of a nine-story building. When the sandalmaker and his wife rolled up the bed quilts in the morning, even on a sunny morning, it was still dark and cold in their house.

Next door, on the left, the tatami maker's house stood in the shade of the same tall building. The tofu maker's house, on the right, stood in its shade, too. The



ANTS ARE
NATURAL
SEEKERS.



I'VE BEEN A SUCCESSFUL
SEEKER OF:
TUNA,
TATAMI,
WOVEN STRAW MATS,
TOFU,
A SOFT FOOD MADE
FROM SOY BEANS,
TINSEL,
TONSILS,
TUNING FORKS,...



building cast such a long shadow, it kept the sun from shining on all the houses in one whole corner of Asakusa.

The sandalmaker tended to his plants as lovingly as he always had, but his holly tree grew weak in the shade. His tiny bonsai trees stopped bearing fruit.

The breezes that once blew gently in Asakusa now whipped around the tall building. The breezes turned into gusts of wind

that lifted the sandalmaker's wife's skirts when she went outside. The wind tore up her umbrella when it rained. The wind grew so fierce, it spun the dust and dirt into swirling tornados—and it even uprooted the sandalmaker's precious plants.

"You would think a dragon had moved into the neighborhood!" he cried. "How can we wrestle with a dragon? How can we seek the sun each day here in the shadow of a tall building?"



BISON,
BULLDOZERS,
BONSAI TREES,
MINIATURE PLANTS,
BREAD,
BASEBALLS.....



YES, YES,
BUT CAN YOU
FIND
CHEESE?



IF THE CHEESE
IS LOST,
WE SHALL
FIND IT.



COME,
WATSON!
THE GAME'S
AFOOT!

AND THE FOOT
SMELLS OF
CHEESE.





"We will find a way," said his wife. "Our fortune said so. We will find a way to seek the sun, and our neighbors will help us. We will go to the courthouse and talk to the judge!"



"Our house is cold all the time," the sandal maker's wife told the judge. "The clothes don't dry. The bed quilts smell musty. The tatami mats are gathering mold."

"My sandal shop is dark," said the sandal maker. "I cannot see well enough to work."

"The straw for my mats cannot dry and stretch," said the tatami maker.

"The wind blowing around the tall building blows my cart away," said the tofu maker.



After the judge listened to the townspeople, he listened to the owner of the building.

"We do not have enough land, yet we need more space for offices," explained the builder. "We have no place to build on the ground so we must build up into sky."

SNIFF SNIFF,
I'M PICKING UP THE
MUSTY,
DAMP AND STALE,
SMELL OF FUZZY WUZZY...



NOOOOOO.
THAT'S JUST SPIDER,
OUR MOLDY,
MUSTY,
THESPIAN.



I MAY BE
MOLDY,
BUT I'M NOT
MUSTY!
NOR AM I A
THESPIAN!



I'M A HUNGRY
ARACHNID
WHO'S LOST
HIS CHEESE.
SNIFFLE...



“Yes, that is true,” said the judge.
 “When a city prospers, it does need more space to grow. But it is also true that people live in this city.” And he asked the builder one question: “Would you like to live in a house without sunlight?”

The owner of the tall building bowed his head. “No,” he said.

“Sunshine,” declared the judge, “is essential to a comfortable life. A citizen’s right to enjoy the sunshine in his own home must be protected by law.”

The judge ordered the builder to pay the sandalmaker and his neighbors for taking away their sunshine. The judge also ruled that builders could never again build buildings tall enough to block the sun in the narrow streets of Asakusa.

The next time the sandalmaker and his wife visited the great temple, they offered a prayer and chose a paper fortune. The sandalmaker read their fortune out loud. “This one says: *Light will fill an empty space.*”



WHAT'S SO SPECIAL ABOUT FUZZY OL' CHEESE?



WHOEVER HAS THE MUSTY FUZZY WUZZY PROSPERS, DOES WELL AND GAINS WEALTH.



THAT'S SILLY! I'M SURE ALL YOU GET IS A TUMMY ACHIE.



“It sounds like a good fortune,” his wife said, tying it to the branch of a cherry tree. “I hope it comes true.”

When the couple arrived home, the only light to fill their house was lantern light. Yet they were happy in the house where they had lived and worked for fifty years, next door to the shops, the temple they loved, and all their good friends. They were happy knowing they had helped to change the laws. “From now on, in neighborhoods like ours,” the sandal-maker proudly told his friends, “buildings taller than thirty-three feet will not be allowed.”

One sunny morning, after the old couple visited the temple and watched the birds and tourists coming and going, they saw machines and a truckload of men working in an empty lot nearby. The men and machines were digging a hole.

“Oh no! Not another tall building!” cried the sandal-maker’s wife. “How can that be?”



“They are digging a very small hole,” observed the sandal-maker.

The next day the hole was filled with water, and the men returned to plant trees, build benches, and



lay stone paths. The empty lot had become a park!

“Light will fill an empty space,” the sandmaker exclaimed. “Our fortune has come true!”

In the park, the sandmaker’s bonsai and holly trees found a new home, and he and his wife found a home away from home: a light-filled space where the bonsai once again bore fruit, schoolchildren and frogs hopped among the stones, and colorful koi swam to and fro in the pond—red, white, and gold beneath the noonday sun. 🌞

This story was inspired by an actual court case in Japan, brought by an eighty-year-old sandmaker, Koji Watanabe, and three of his neighbors in Asakusa, an area in Tokyo known for its famous Buddhist temple and traditional old-style neighborhoods.

Today in Japan, when tall buildings are constructed, the amount of shadow that can fall on nearby buildings is limited by law. In new homes, the law requires that sunlight shine in a family’s living room for a certain number of hours each day.



Greeting the Sun

Art by Lynne Avril

1. Heart Pose. Stand up with your feet together, joining your palms at your heart.



2. Hands up over head.



3. Touch toes.



4. Downward Dog. Plant your palms on the ground in front of you and hop your feet back. Push your heels down and keep your hips lifted high.



5. Come down on your knees, then lower your chest and chin onto the floor. Your bottom should stick up in the air.



begin

Greet the sun with these yoga poses and imagine you are giving thanks for its warmth and light. Try to do the poses all the way through in one smooth motion. Breathe softly in and out as you complete the greeting.

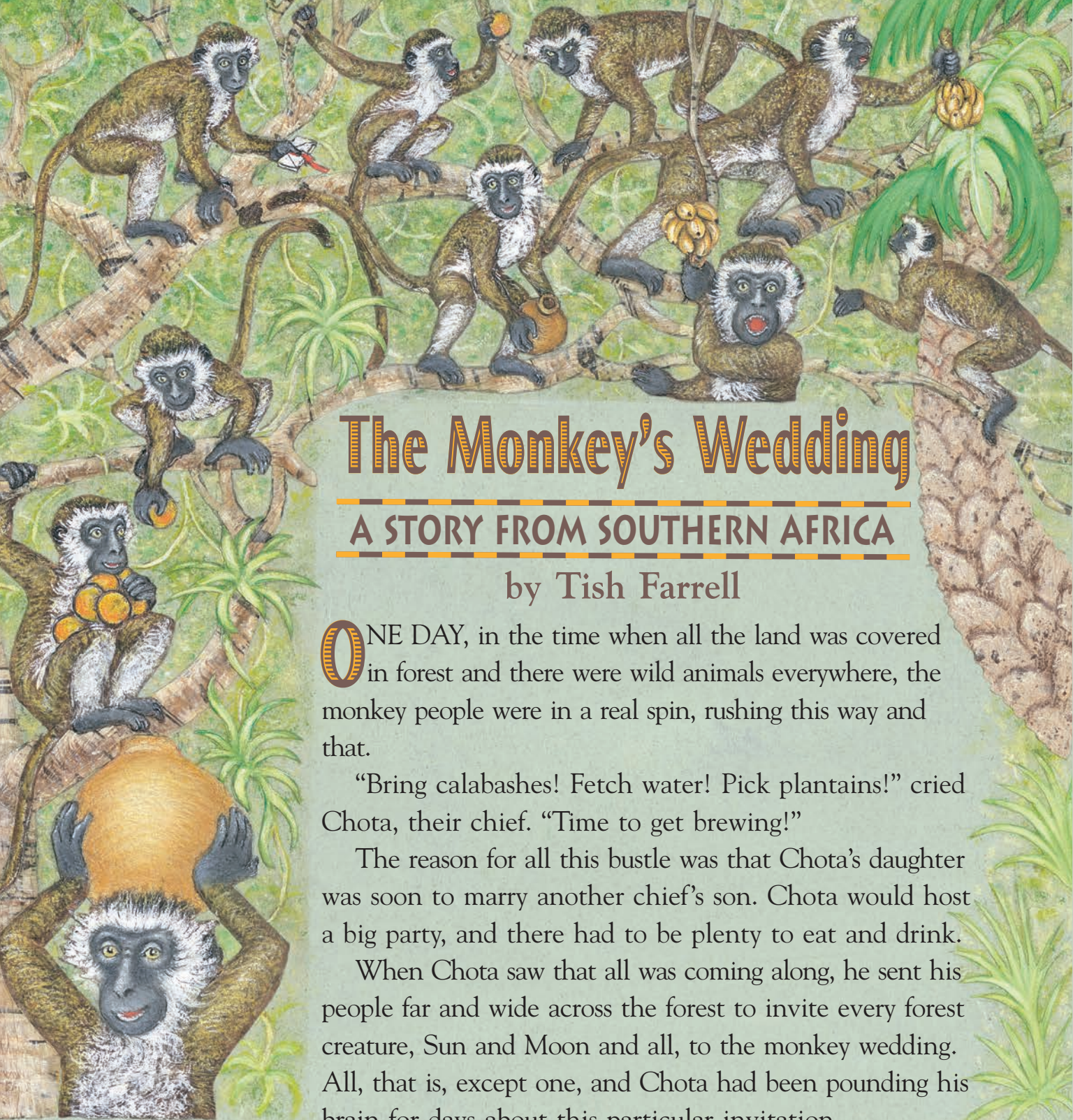
10. Return to Heart Pose.

9. Slowly come up to standing, hands over head.

8. Hop your feet forward to your hands. Straighten your legs and touch toes.

7. Push back up to Downward Dog.

6. Cobra. Slide forward onto your tummy and raise your head and shoulders.



The Monkey's Wedding

A STORY FROM SOUTHERN AFRICA

by Tish Farrell

ONE DAY, in the time when all the land was covered in forest and there were wild animals everywhere, the monkey people were in a real spin, rushing this way and that.

“Bring calabashes! Fetch water! Pick plantains!” cried Chota, their chief. “Time to get brewing!”

The reason for all this bustle was that Chota's daughter was soon to marry another chief's son. Chota would host a big party, and there had to be plenty to eat and drink.

When Chota saw that all was coming along, he sent his people far and wide across the forest to invite every forest creature, Sun and Moon and all, to the monkey wedding. All, that is, except one, and Chota had been pounding his brain for days about this particular invitation.

I'VE FOUND IT!
I'VE FOUND IT!



GOOD JOB,
HOLMES!
HOW EVER DID
YOU MANAGE
IT?

THAT'S NOT
FUZZY CHEESE,
THAT'S A
CALABASH,
A GOURDLIKE,
TROPICAL FRUIT.



AND
PLANTAINS, A
BANANA-LIKE
FRUIT,
WHICH IS SORT OF
LIKE FUZZY CHEESE,
IF YOU SQUINT YOUR EYES.



Art by Kathleen Collins Howell

© 2001 by P. M. Farrell

Should he or should he not invite Rain? It was a hard question. Rain was the best of fellows when it came to filling up the forest pools and fattening fruits, but who wanted him at a wedding?

“He can’t be trusted,” decided Chota. “He might have a cloudburst and soak the guests and splash into the wine and make it runny.” And so Rain was not invited. It seemed a wise decision.

But three days before the wedding, the skies above the forest turned black. Down came the rain in soaking sheets.

“Cover the calabashes!” cried the monkey chief in alarm. “All will be ruined!”

The next day, too, the rain poured down, splashing from every leaf. The monkey people crouched miserably in wet trees.

“The wedding will be a washout!” wailed Chota’s wife.

“That wretch Rain is paying me back for not inviting him to our party. You just can’t win with some people,” cried Chota. “There’s only one thing to do. I must go and reason with him.”

The monkey chief set off, leaping from tree to tree until he reached the forest’s edge. Then he scrambled up through the clouds to the black, rocky peak where Rain lived.

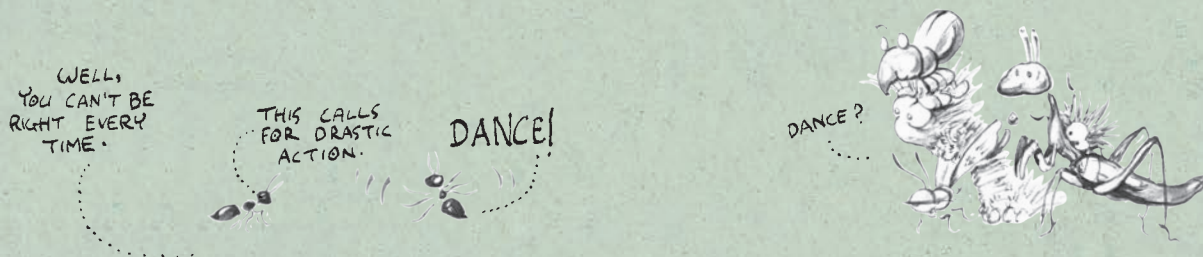
Chota’s teeth chattered as he peered through the swirling mists. “Rain! Rain! Where are you?” There was no reply. “Oh, this is too bad!” muttered the monkey, and he sat down on a slimy rock and waited. Damp clouds slapped round him like a wet coat.

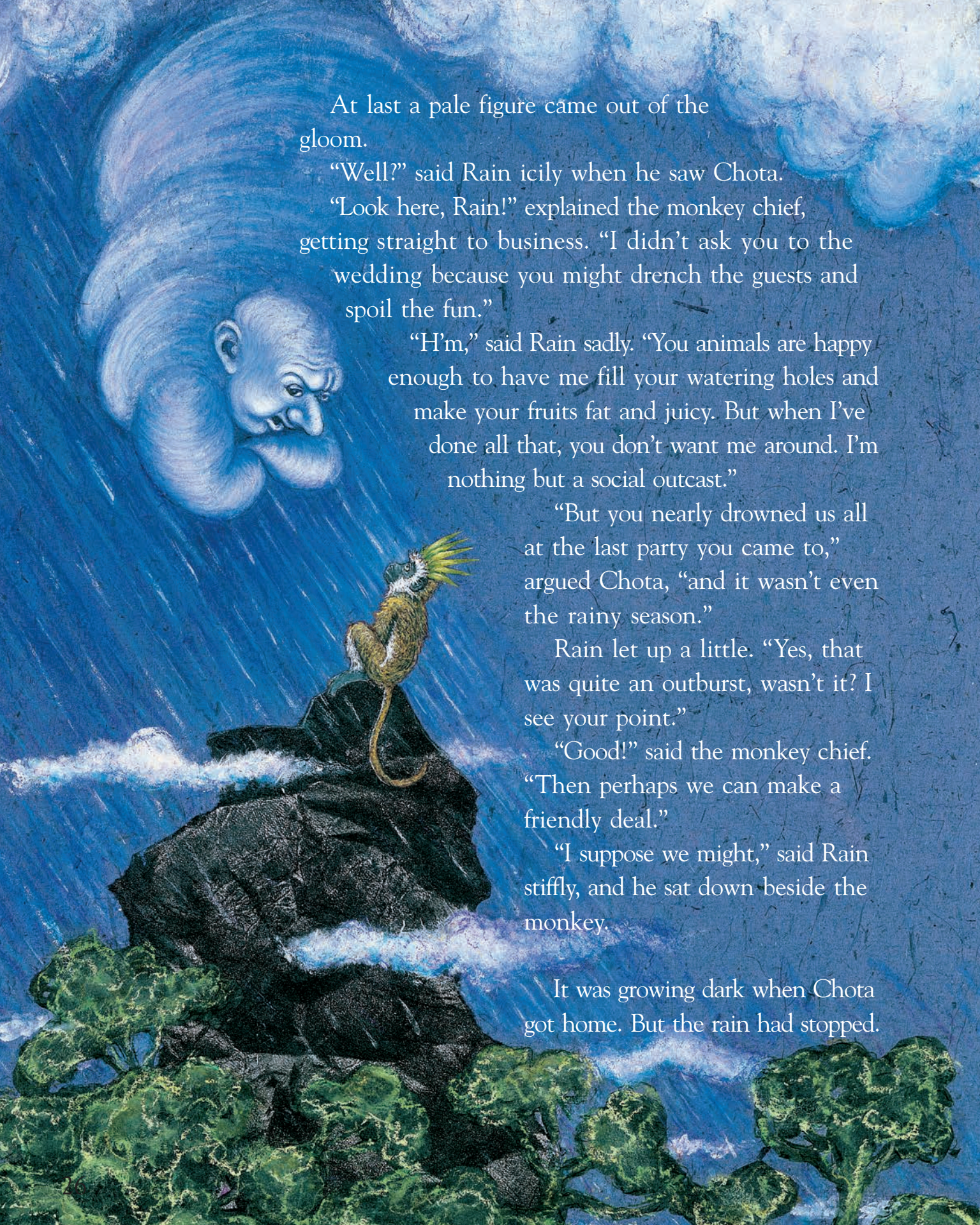
WELL,
YOU CAN'T BE
RIGHT EVERY
TIME.

THIS CALLS
FOR DRASTIC
ACTION.

DANCE!

DANCE?





At last a pale figure came out of the gloom.

"Well?" said Rain icily when he saw Chota.

"Look here, Rain!" explained the monkey chief, getting straight to business. "I didn't ask you to the wedding because you might drench the guests and spoil the fun."

"H'm," said Rain sadly. "You animals are happy enough to have me fill your watering holes and make your fruits fat and juicy. But when I've done all that, you don't want me around. I'm nothing but a social outcast."

"But you nearly drowned us all at the last party you came to," argued Chota, "and it wasn't even the rainy season."

Rain let up a little. "Yes, that was quite an outburst, wasn't it? I see your point."

"Good!" said the monkey chief. "Then perhaps we can make a friendly deal."

"I suppose we might," said Rain stiffly, and he sat down beside the monkey.

It was growing dark when Chota got home. But the rain had stopped.

"You haven't gone and asked Rain to the wedding?" asked Chota's wife as soon as she saw him.

"I might have," replied the monkey darkly. But he would say no more.

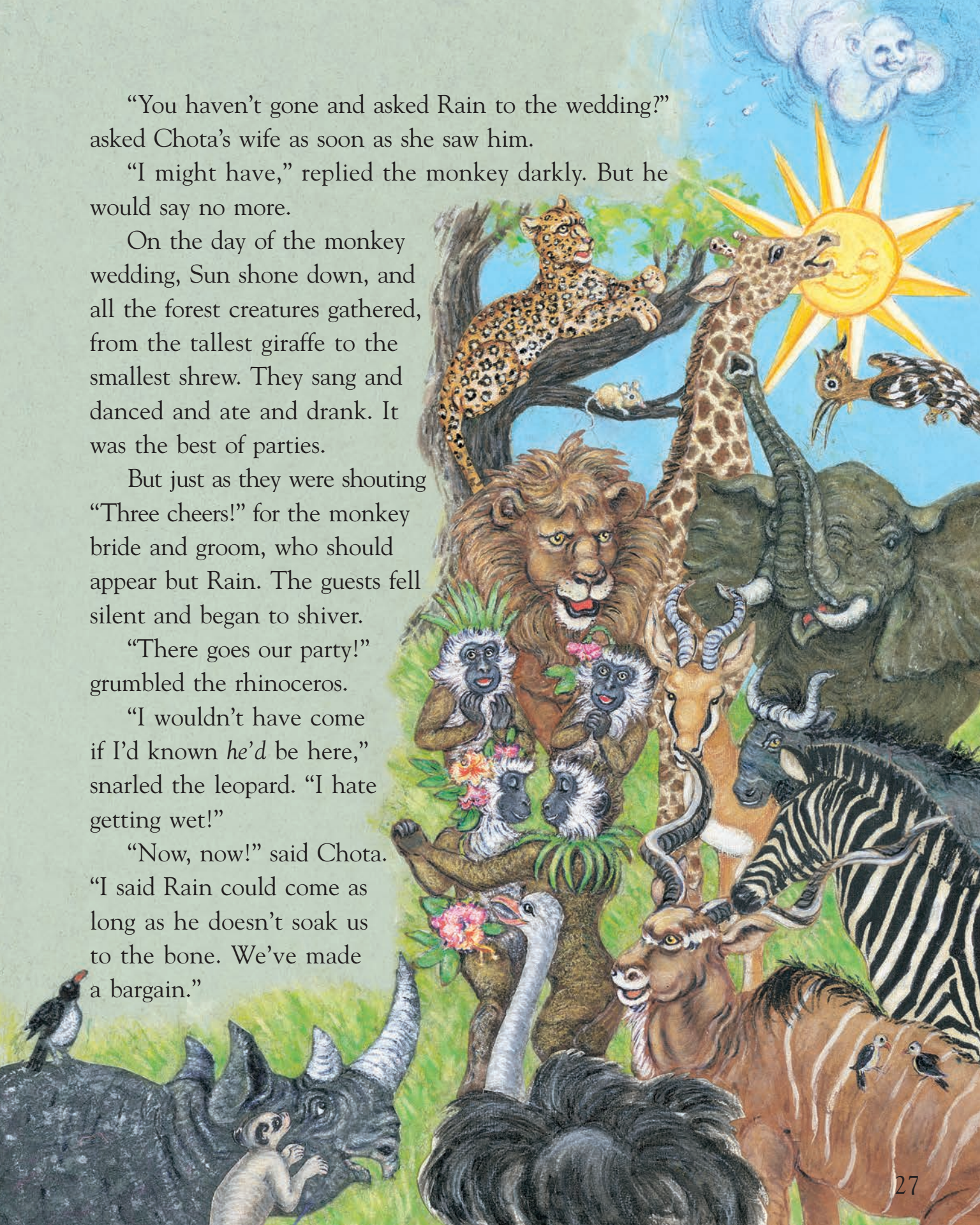
On the day of the monkey wedding, Sun shone down, and all the forest creatures gathered, from the tallest giraffe to the smallest shrew. They sang and danced and ate and drank. It was the best of parties.

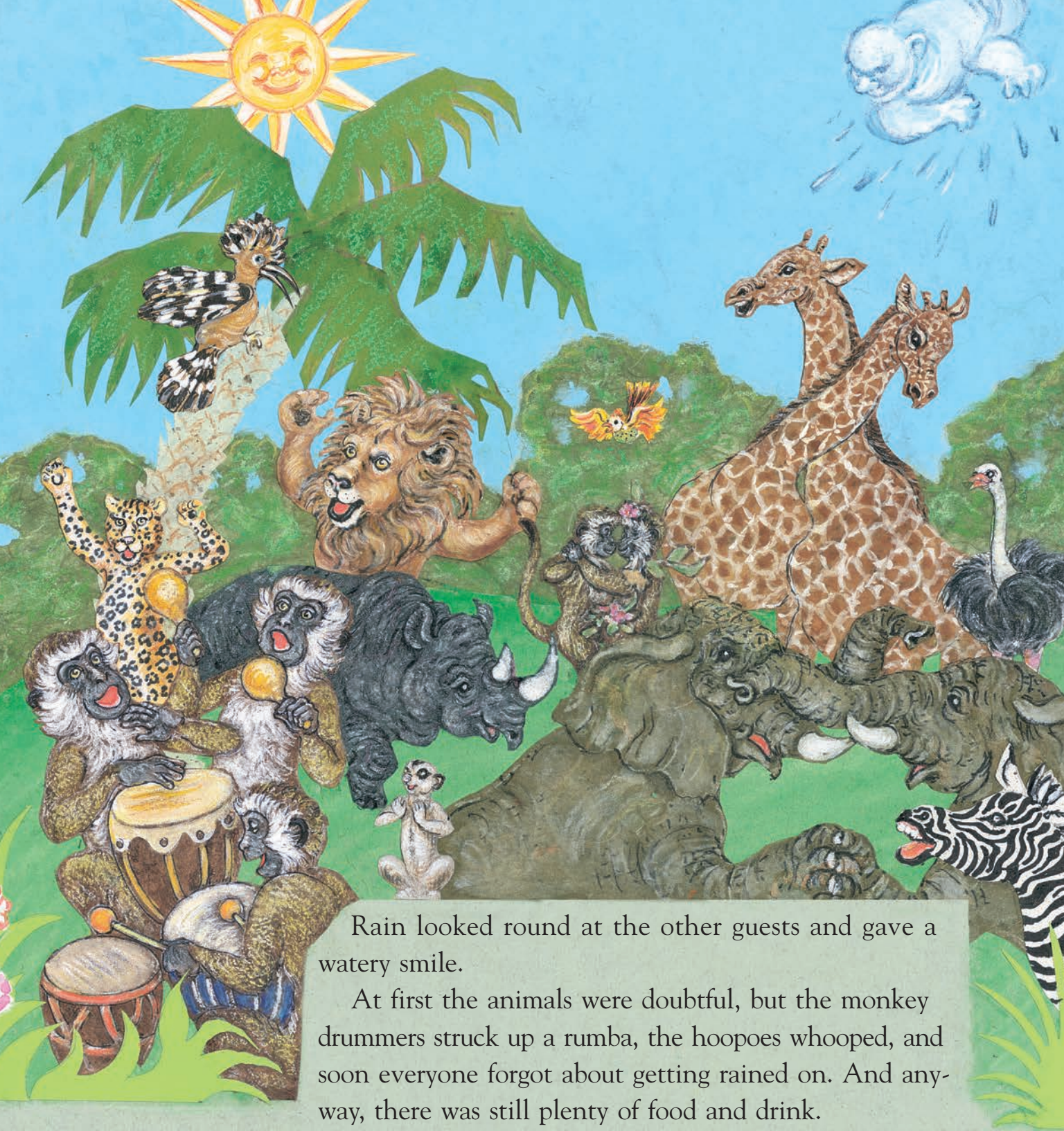
But just as they were shouting "Three cheers!" for the monkey bride and groom, who should appear but Rain. The guests fell silent and began to shiver.

"There goes our party!" grumbled the rhinoceros.

"I wouldn't have come if I'd known *he'd* be here," snarled the leopard. "I hate getting wet!"

"Now, now!" said Chota. "I said Rain could come as long as he doesn't soak us to the bone. We've made a bargain."





Rain looked round at the other guests and gave a watery smile.

At first the animals were doubtful, but the monkey drummers struck up a rumba, the hoopoes whooped, and soon everyone forgot about getting rained on. And anyway, there was still plenty of food and drink.

WHAT ON EARTH
ARE THEY DOING?

I THINK IT'S
THE RUMBA,
A RHYTHMIC
DANCE.

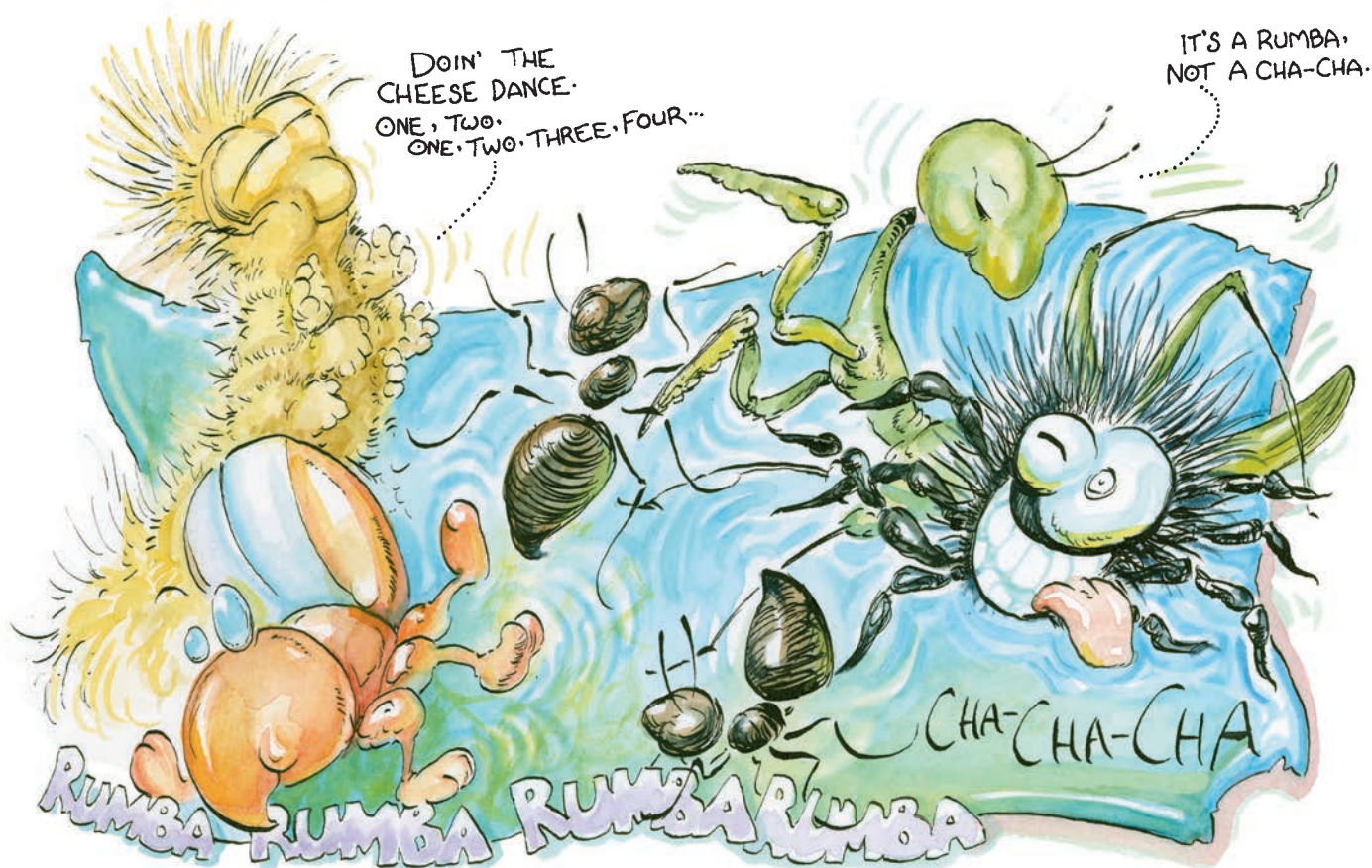
WITH THIS
SACRED CHEESE DANCE,
WE SHALL SUMMON
FORTH THE SPIRIT OF
THE FUZZY CHEESE!

YOU LOOK LIKE A
HOPOE,
A EUROPEAN BIRD
WITH A FANLIKE
CREST ON ITS HEAD.

But from time to time, the monkey chief saw Rain slip quietly away from the gathering. A few seconds later he'd hear raindrops pattering in another part of the forest, far away from the party where Sun still shone.

"Rain's a good fellow," Chota whispered to his wife. "He promised he'd slip off as soon as he felt a shower coming on. I knew if we tried, we could make a friendly deal."

And so the party rolled on in the sunshine. The monkeys were happy. The guests were happy. Rain had his party, and no one got drenched. And from then on, sunshine and rain always meet at a monkey's wedding. 🐼



Ants in Their Pants

by Patricia Nikolina Clark

IF YOU ACCIDENTALLY sat on an anthill, and little black ants started to crawl all over you, would you stay there? Of course not!



Robins, crows, and blue jays are just a few of the birds who take ant baths. A robin might squat on top of an anthill, squirm around to annoy the ants, then spread its wings and let the angry ants swarm through its feathers. With eyes closed, the bird may appear to be sick—or in a trance. This is called passive anting.

Yet many birds actually *look* for dirt mounds full of busy ants and deliberately sit on them! Scientists call this unusual behavior “anting.” Some scientists believe it helps birds stay healthy. Why? They know that ants, when threatened, spray a smelly substance called formic acid. This chemical kills the tiny lice and feather mites that bother birds.



ARE YOU
DELIBERATELY,
ON PURPOSE,
DANCING LIKE YOU
HAVE ANTS IN YOUR
PANTS?

CHA-
CHA?

I BEG YOUR
PARDON!
I HAVEN'T
BEEN ANYWHERE
NEAR THAT
SPIDER'S
PANTS!

I DON'T
KNOW WHOSE
PANTS I'M IN,
BUT I'M
DEFINITELY
IN
SOMEBLUGGY'S
PANTS.





A crow is sometimes more aggressive: It may clamp an ant in its beak and use it like a comb, carefully rubbing it under its wings and through its feathers. After it has squeezed all the juice out of the ant, the crow might eat the “comb.” This is called active anting.



Some birds get so carried away with active anting that they fall over backwards! If there are no ants around, birds have been known to try anting with orange peels or mothballs.

A good time to watch birds anting is late in the summer when they are molting, or losing old feathers and growing new ones. It's possible that an ant bath soothes a bird's itchy skin in the same way that lotion helps you relieve itchiness caused by a skin rash or sunburn.

So the next time you see an anthill, just step back, stay quiet, and see if you can catch a bird in the act of anting. 🐜



A robin is caught in the act of anting.



The Hungry Bird

by James Young

The bird woke early
For she had heard—
That's what you do
when you're a bird.

The worm slept late.

He'd also heard
that thing about
the early bird.



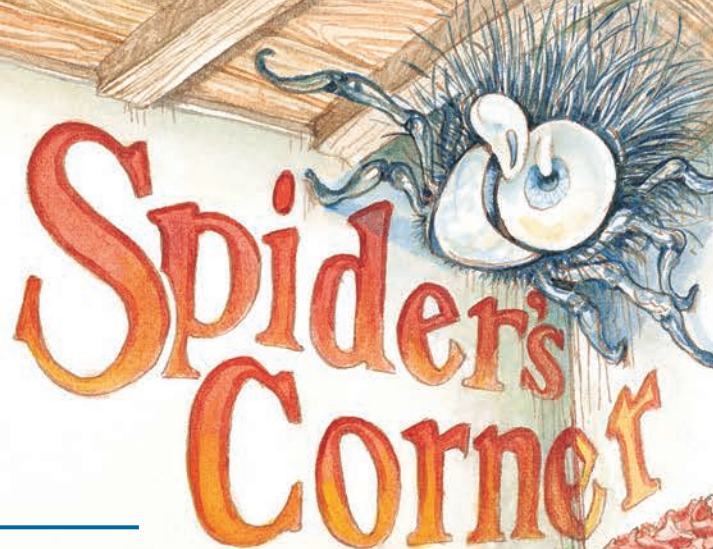
This Month for Spider's Corner:

Send us a picture of Mother Nature.

Here are the only rules:

1. Draw your picture all by yourself, without help from anyone.
2. Your entry must be signed by a parent or legal guardian, authorizing its publication in print and/or online and saying it's your own work and that no help was given.
3. Be sure to include your complete name, age, and address.
4. Your picture has to be here by September 25, 2009, so we can publish our favorites in the January 2010 *Spider* and on our Web site at:
www.spidermagkids.com/corner.

Send your picture to **Spider's Corner**, P.O. Box 300, Peru, IL 61354.
(No faxes or e-mail submissions, please!)



The Wind

Caitlin Caughlan, age 6
Seattle, Washington

I love how the wind whisks through
my hair
And breezes through the trees.
It cools me down whenever I'm hot.
Oh I love the wind.

Mina Alexandra Oates, age 7
Birmingham, Alabama

Wind

Race the clouds. Fly a kite.
Sea gull hanging in midflight.

Smell the ocean. Hear the ships.
Waves kiss you with salty lips.

By the fire snuggle tight.
Roast marshmallows through the night.

Sticky fingers. Heavy head.
Wind and sky go to bed.

Audrey Hui, age 6
San Francisco, California

Wind

Wind blowing in the night,
Silver stars gleaming bright,
Trees shaking and quivering in fright,
Wind sharp with its bite.

Ella Zodrow, age 7
Tampa, Florida

The Wind's Word of Wisdom

The sea told me what it heard from the
birds
Who heard it from the sky
Who heard it from the wind.
The dirt told me what it heard from the
trees
Who heard it from the bees
Who heard it from the wind.
For the wind told the world her word of
wisdom:
Peace.

Frances Ostensen, age 7
Hope, Maine

Listen listen the wind is whispering
through the willows
Listen listen the wind is rattling on the
windows
Listen listen the wind is whistling in
the keyhole

Kelly M., age 9
Palm Harbor, Florida

Wavy air
In the sky
Notice the plants shake
Dancing through the trees

Robert Love, age 10
Columbia, Maryland

A Windy Wednesday

The wind is blowing on the street.
I will be carried off my feet.
A little boy can be a little kite
When it's a windy Wednesday night.

Jonah Ramón Begleiter, age 6
Linwood, New Jersey

Whoosh goes the wind
As it rattles the trees
And blows the curtains,
Whoosh whoosh whoosh
Goes the wind.

Answers to "What Am I?" (clockwise from top left):

potato, piano, book, table

Answer to "The Parade of Boats":

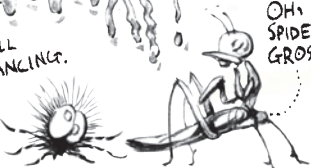


like this:
is at center right. It looks
The boat without a match

Read more terrific poems by
Spider readers at:
www.spidermagkids.com/corner.



BUUUURP!
SORRY,
IT WAS ALL
THAT DANCING.



OH-
SPIDER-
GROSS.

SMIFF.
I THINK
WE FOUND
THE CHEESE.



A LITTLE
RUMBA
MADE THE
TUMMY
RUMBLE
AND THE
FUZZY WUZZY
SPEAKS!

YOU MEAN...
SPIDER...?



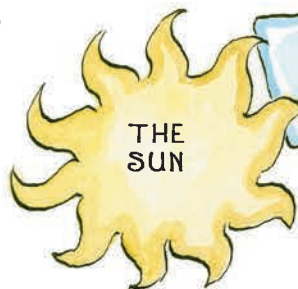
WHO WOULD
HAVE GUESSED...

WAIT!
COMPASS!

OPHELIA'S LAST WORD

IT'S AMAZING HOW HELPFUL THE SUN CAN BE. NOT ONLY DOES IT BRIGHTEN OUR DAYS, WARM US, AND HELP PLANTS GROW, YOU CAN USE IT TO FIGURE OUT WHICH WAY IS NORTH, SOUTH, EAST, AND WEST. HERE'S HOW:

WHAT YOU'LL NEED:



TWO
STICKS

A
WATCH



AN OPEN SPACE WITH
A PATCH OF DIRT

WHAT TO DO:

1 PLANT ONE STICK
IN THE GROUND
SO IT STANDS UP
STRAIGHT AND
MAKES A SHADOW.



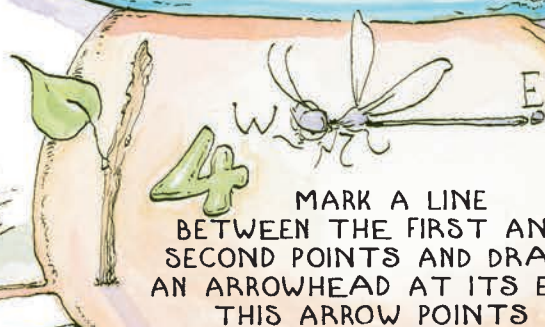
2 USING THE OTHER STICK,
MARK THE SPOT IN
THE DIRT WHERE THE TOP
OF THE SHADOW FALLS.



3 CHECK YOUR WATCH
AND WAIT 15 MINUTES.
MARK THE SPOT
WHERE THE TOP OF
THE SHADOW HAS MOVED.



4 MARK A LINE
BETWEEN THE FIRST AND
SECOND POINTS AND DRAW
AN ARROWHEAD AT ITS END.
THIS ARROW POINTS
(ROUGHLY) EAST TO WEST.



5

STAND IN FRONT OF THE LINE
WITH THE ARROW POINTING TO YOUR LEFT.
LABEL THE POINT ON THE LEFT W FOR WEST
AND THE POINT ON THE RIGHT
E FOR EAST.

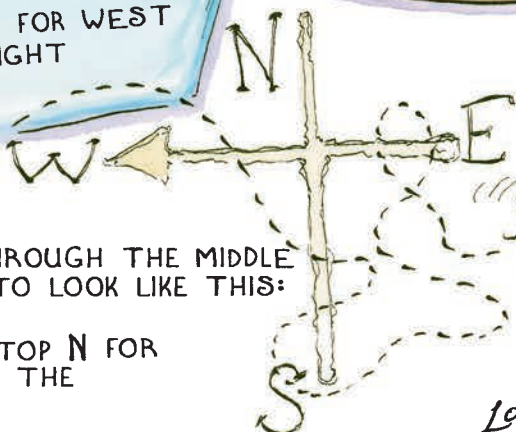


6

DRAW A LINE STRAIGHT THROUGH THE MIDDLE
OF THE EAST-WEST LINE TO LOOK LIKE THIS:

7

LABEL THE POINT AT THE TOP N FOR
NORTH AND THE POINT AT THE
BOTTOM S FOR SOUTH.

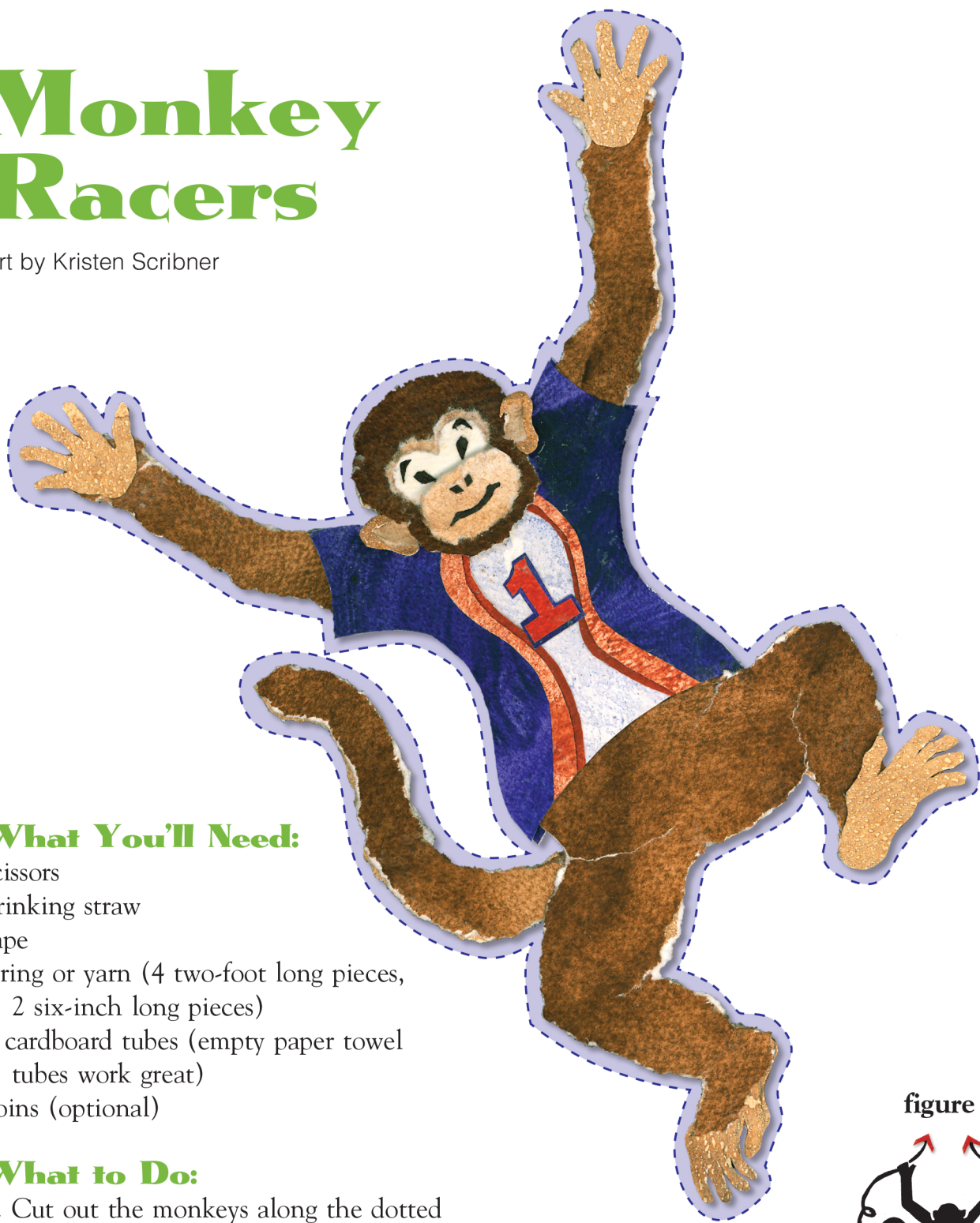


NOW ANYONE WHO SEES YOUR COMPASS WILL KNOW WHICH WAY TO GO!

Love
Ophelia

Monkey Racers

Art by Kristen Scribner

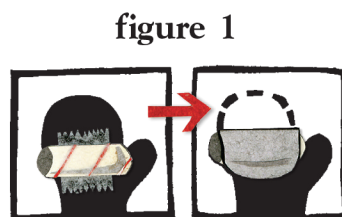


What You'll Need:

scissors
drinking straw
tape
string or yarn (4 two-foot long pieces,
2 six-inch long pieces)
2 cardboard tubes (empty paper towel
tubes work great)
coins (optional)

What to Do:

1. Cut out the monkeys along the dotted lines.
2. Cut 4 one-inch pieces of straw.
3. Tape a piece of straw to each monkey's hand, then fold the hand over the straw and tape shut (figure 1).



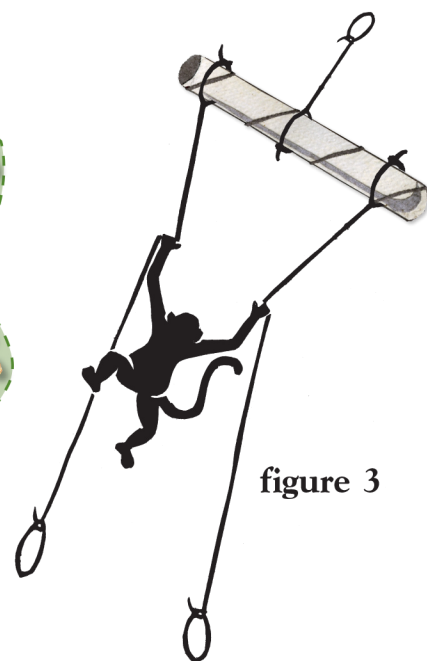


figure 3

4. Thread the long pieces of string through the straws and tie loops at the bottom ends. (figure 2). Tie the top ends of the string to the ends of the cardboard tube.
5. Tie a short piece of string to the middle of the tube and then to something up high that is sturdy, such as a coat hook (figure 3).

How to Play:

On your own or with a friend, get ready to race! Slide a monkey down just above the loops and gently tug one loop, then the other, to make your monkey climb. For a more challenging climb, tape a coin to the monkey's back.







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www.spidermagkids.com!

