

# Thatha at School



Richa Jha  
Gautam Benegal



I'm with Thatha, my grandfather. And this is my most favourite story of his.  
What's yours with your grandparents?



# Thatha at School





RJ - For Runs, Usha, Asha and those countless ruined weekend mornings.

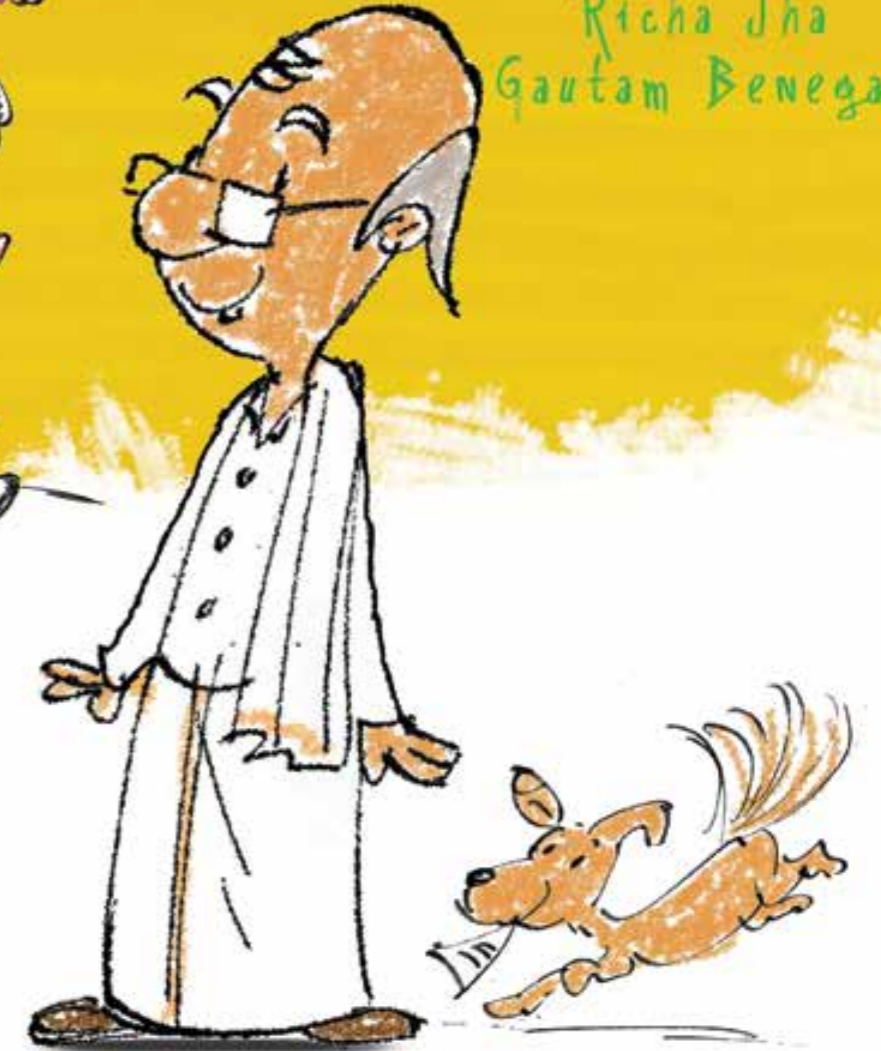
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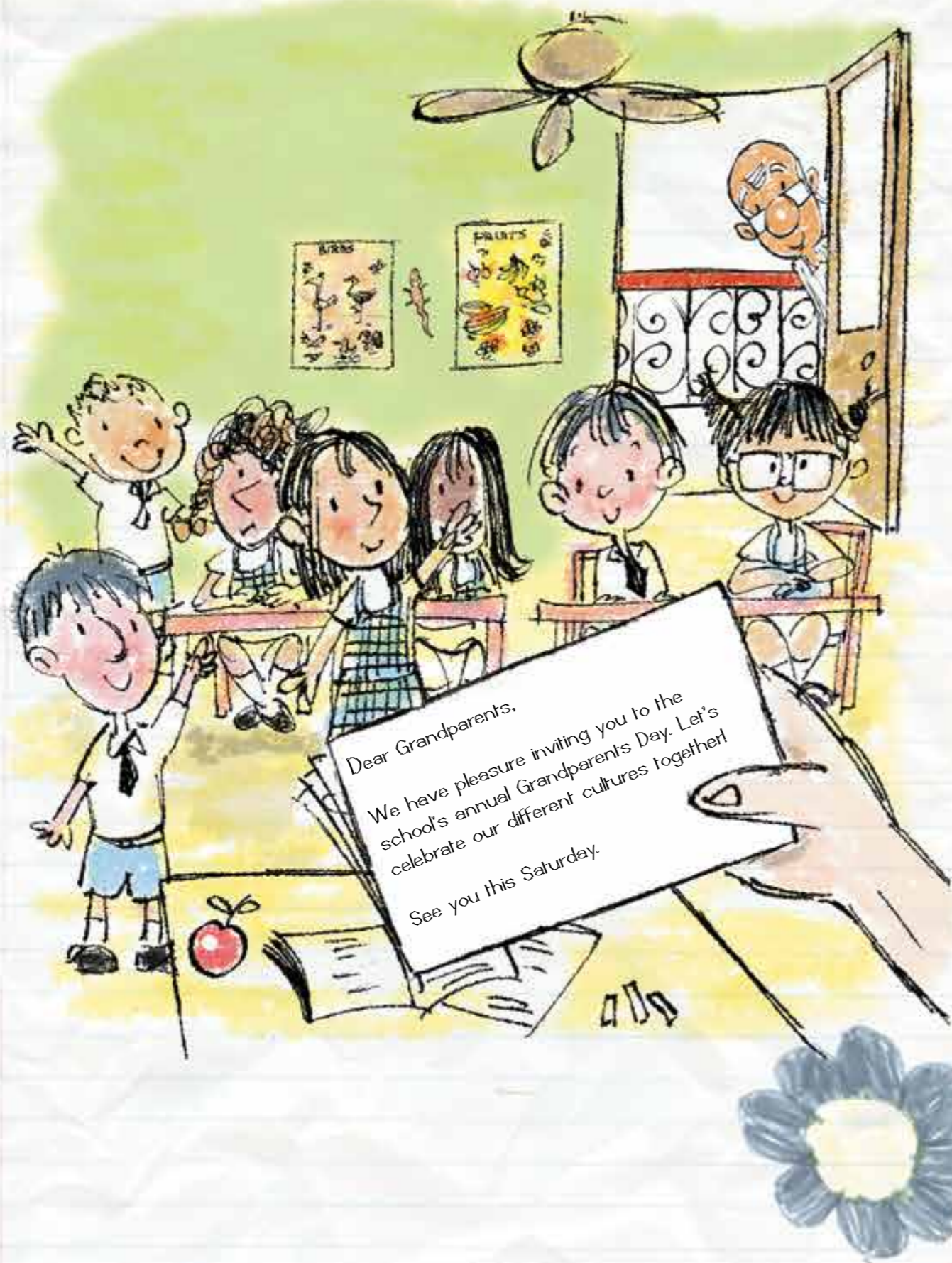
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PICKLE YOLK BOOKS





Grandparents Day is a BAD idea.

It is TERRIBLE.

It is CATASTROPHIC.

My Thatha wears a dhoti whenever he goes out.

It looks silly.

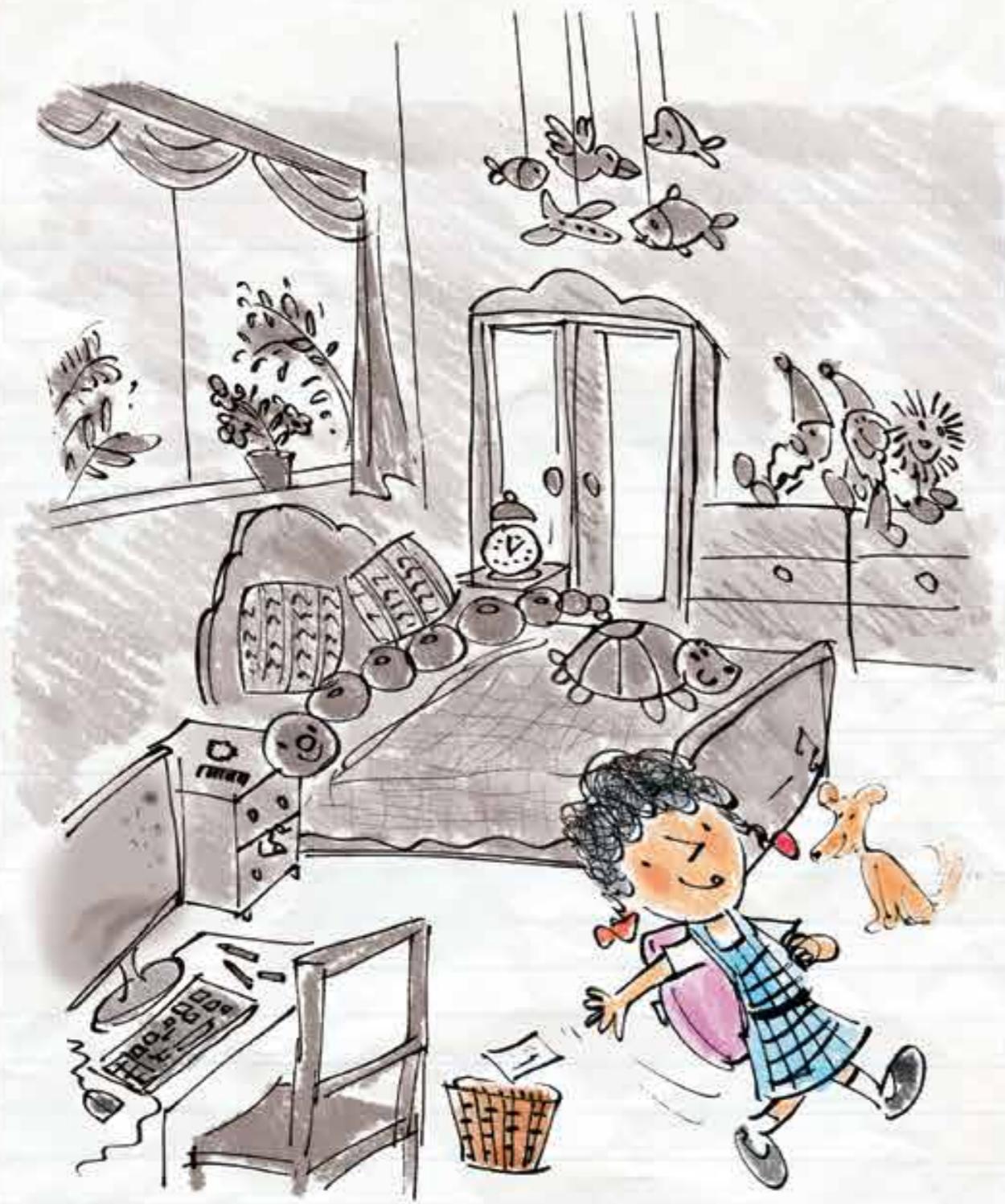
Every day when Thatha comes to pick me up, I hide from him and leave the classroom only after all my friends have gone.

What will I do on Grandparents Day?

I told you; it is a BAD idea.





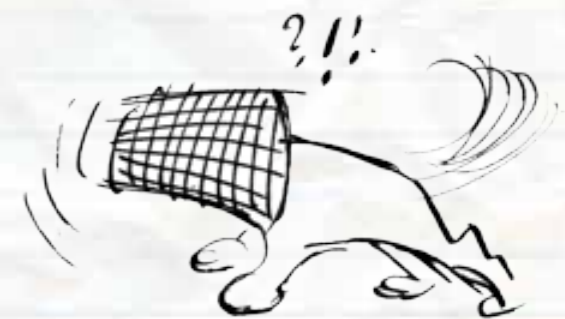


But Thatha will go only if he gets to know of it.

Which he won't.

'Good riddance!' I grin. I'm clever, aren't I?

Puppies  
with  
some  
talent





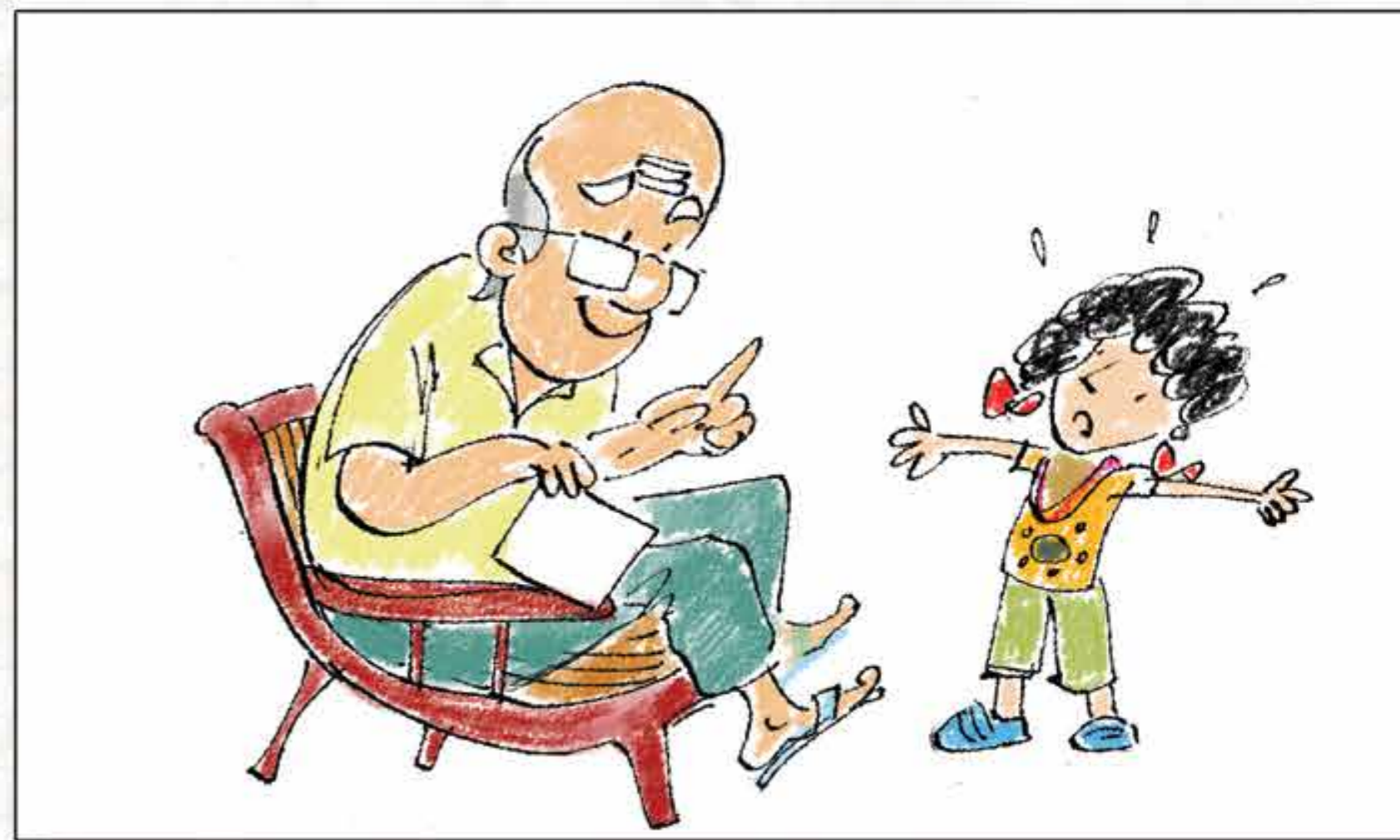
BUT DISASTER strikes.

The yellow night 



'It will be boring, Thatha,' I explain.

Thatha says he wants to go.



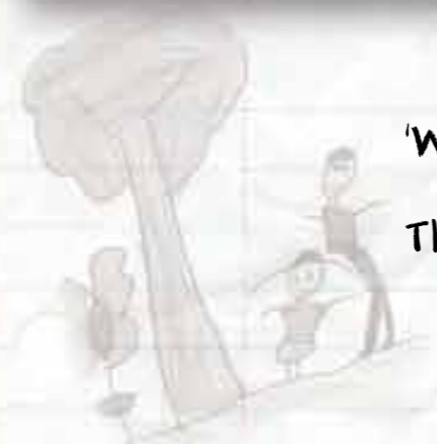
'Pyro, you bad dog, NO,' I want to scream.

It is too late.

Thatha is already doing his funny dance.

'We'll have a better picnic in our lawn!' I try again.

Thatha says he WILL go.







My friends laugh and jeer and boo that night.

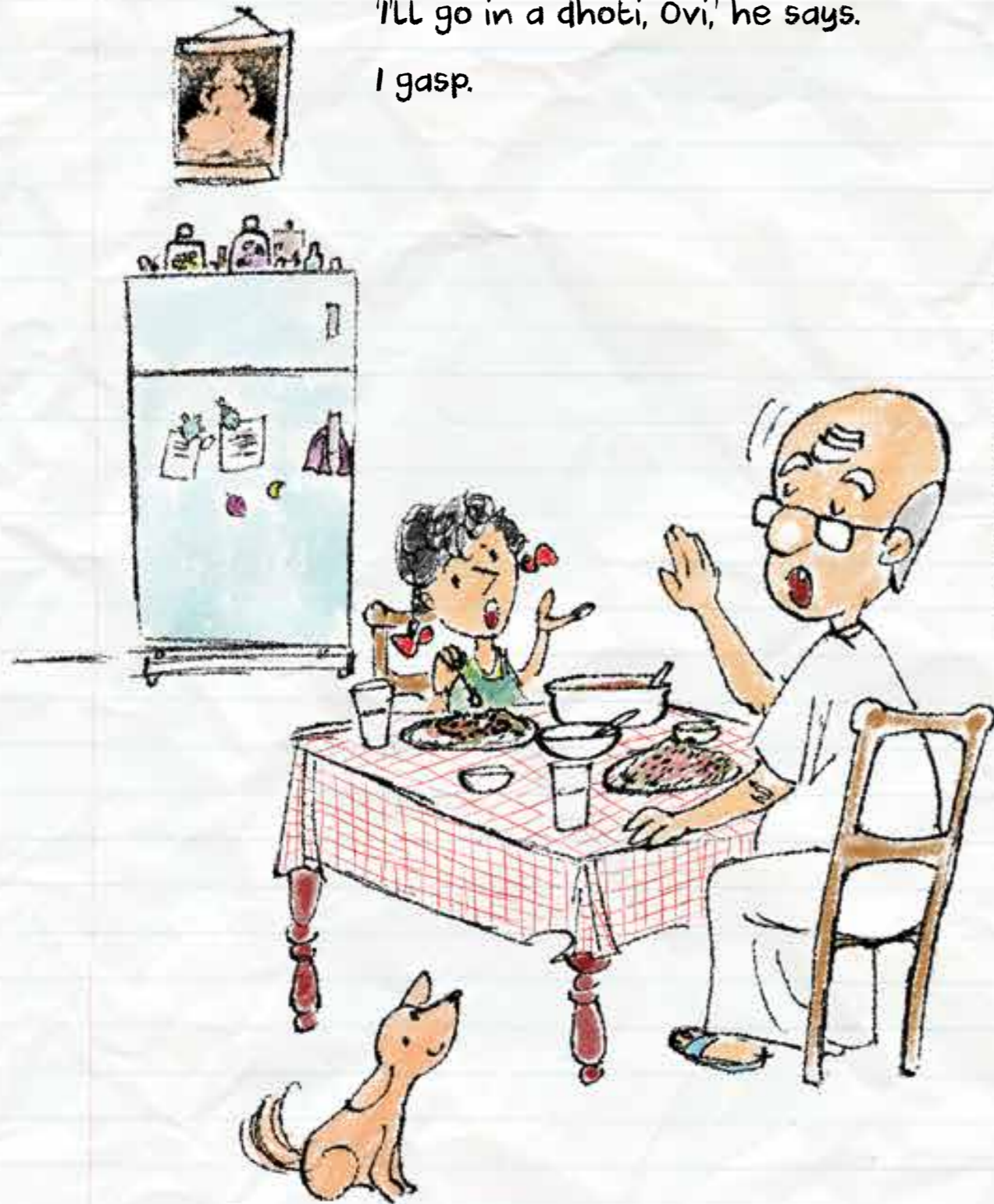


My eyes are swollen in the morning.

'Let's pick the pants you'll wear to school on Saturday, Thatha,' I suggest.

'I'll go in a dhoti, Ovi,' he says.

I gasp.



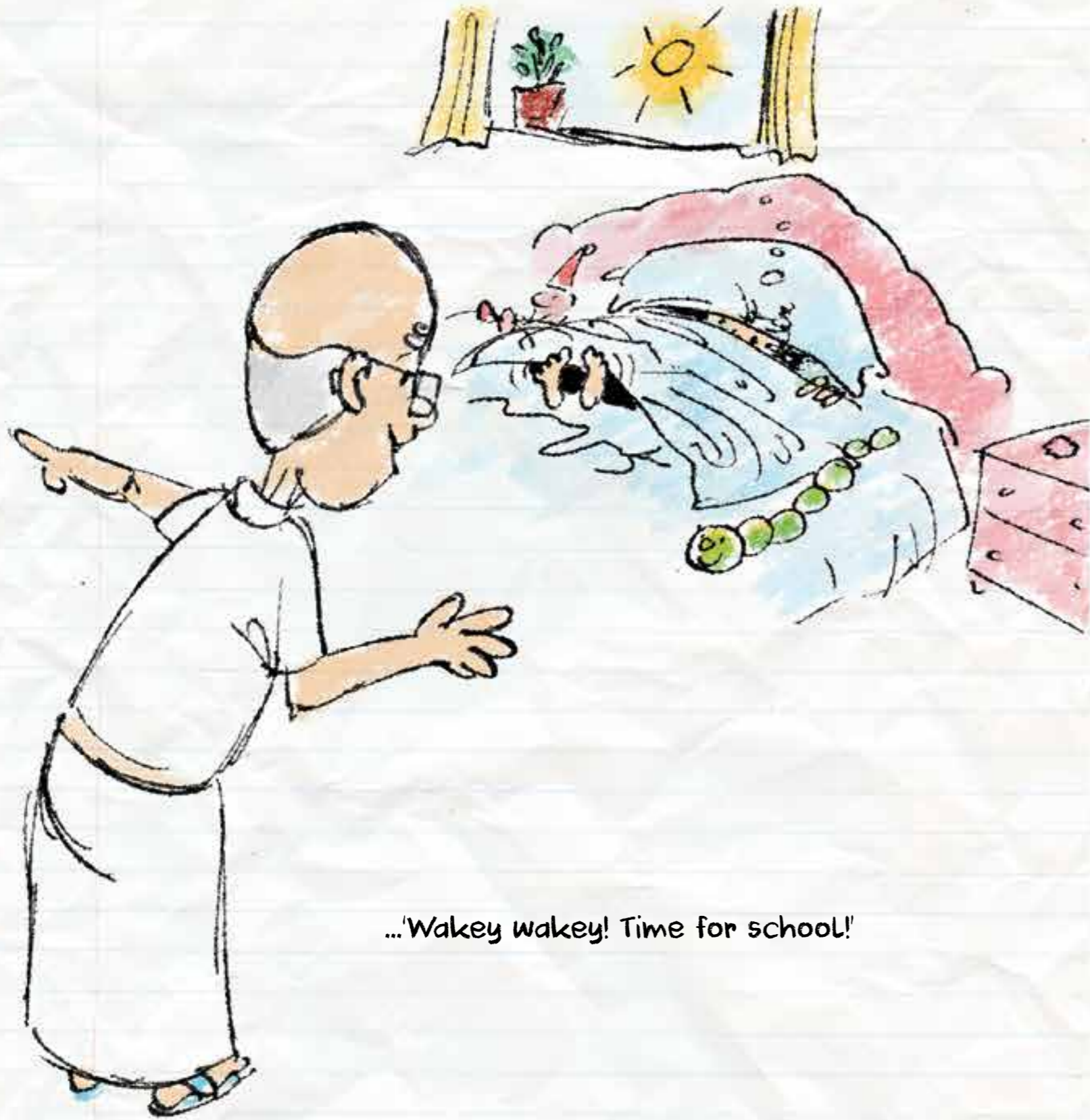
These are the WORST days of my life.

It is Friday evening, already. My head hurts.

I don't want this night to end. I don't want the morning to come. I don't want to hear...







...'Wakey wakey! Time for school!'

'I'm sick, Thatha. Can we leave it today?' I plead.

BUT Thatha is too excited to hear that.



To the dustman  
Dear Dustman, Thanks  
for putting me and other  
kids to sleep. I see you in real  
anyway. Thank you a lot  
oh Thank you. Thank you!





I pray for THINGS to happen.

Nothing happens. NOTHING.





There's no escaping now...



So many cars.

And garlands.

The school looks different.



My heavy feet drag along the corridor. Is there still a way out?

I try.

'Miss Venu has some work for me, Thatha. I'll join you soon.'

It is a lie. I won't come back.



Is everyone laughing at Thatha?

I need to RUN.



and his heavy feet  
Just 10 days later  
My grandfather was on his way  
and once he heard  
at times.









200 million hours pass.



I wonder what Thatha is doing now.





'Oviyam!'

Oh, no, it's Linzy.

'Oviyam, my Abok and Pupu! They know all our secrets!'  
Linzy looks happy.

I don't like it when she is happy and I am not.

Linzy's grandparents are wearing something different.  
Something strange. But beautiful.

'You should have heard Abok sing in class today! Where  
were you?'

I don't reply.



I am thinking of MY secret keeper.

My ears start burning.

'What if Thatha is lost?'

I need to run back.





Thatha looks different. I have never seen him like this.



But I know what will make him look like my Thatha again!





I walk to the middle of the room and announce, 'This is MY Thatha. He is the BEST storyteller in the world!'

And Class 1A has a rollicking Grandparents Day!



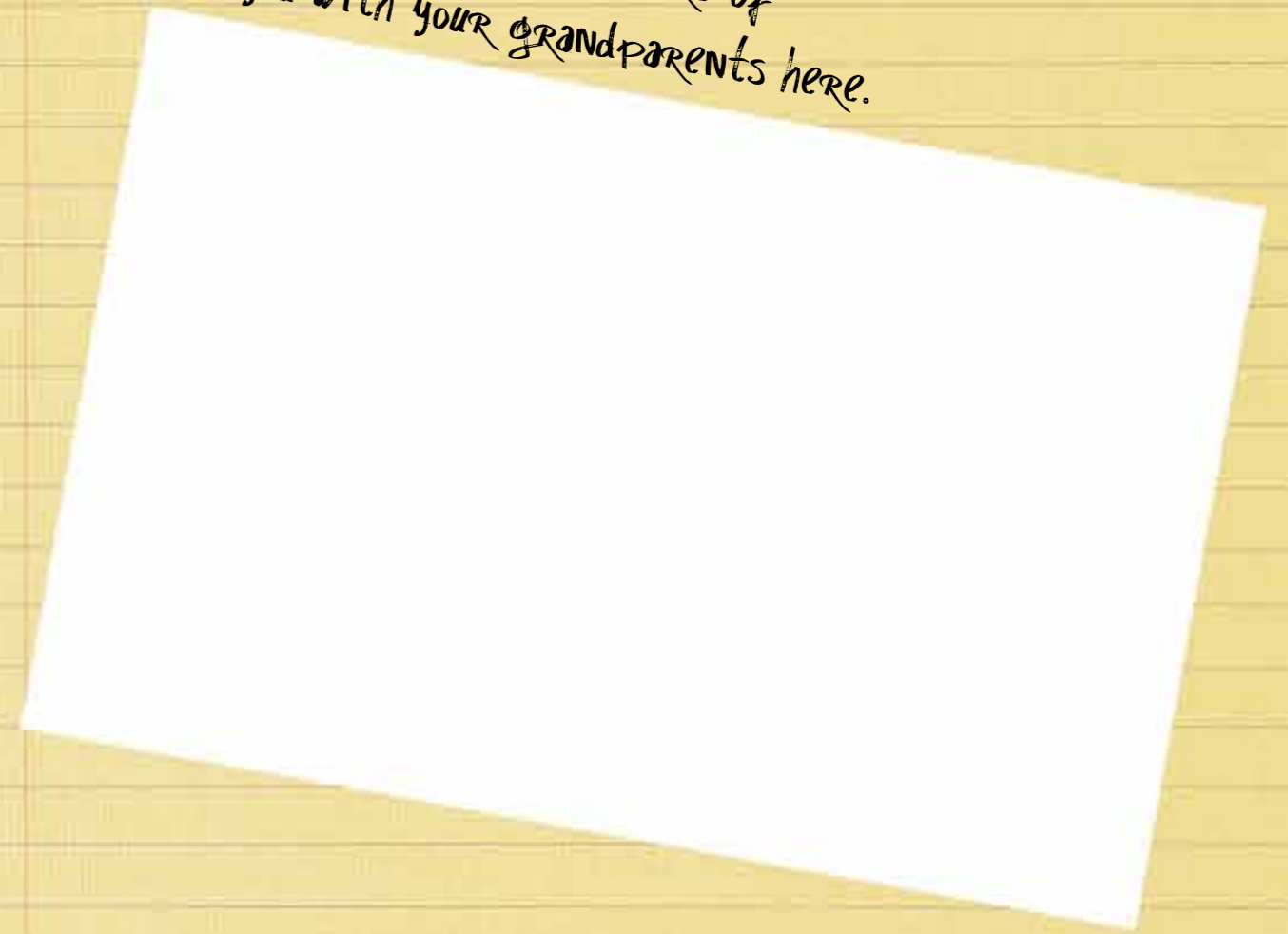








Draw or stick a picture of  
you with your grandparents here.



Fun with Thatha's dhoti!





It is Grandparents Day at school.

Everyone is excited.

Everyone.

Except Oviyam.

Grandparents Day is a bad idea, she tells us.

Find out why.



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Catch the creators of this book in their elements at [www.richajha.com](http://www.richajha.com),  
[www.gautambenegal.wordpress.com](http://www.gautambenegal.wordpress.com) and [www.facebook.com/AtonalIndian](http://www.facebook.com/AtonalIndian)

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