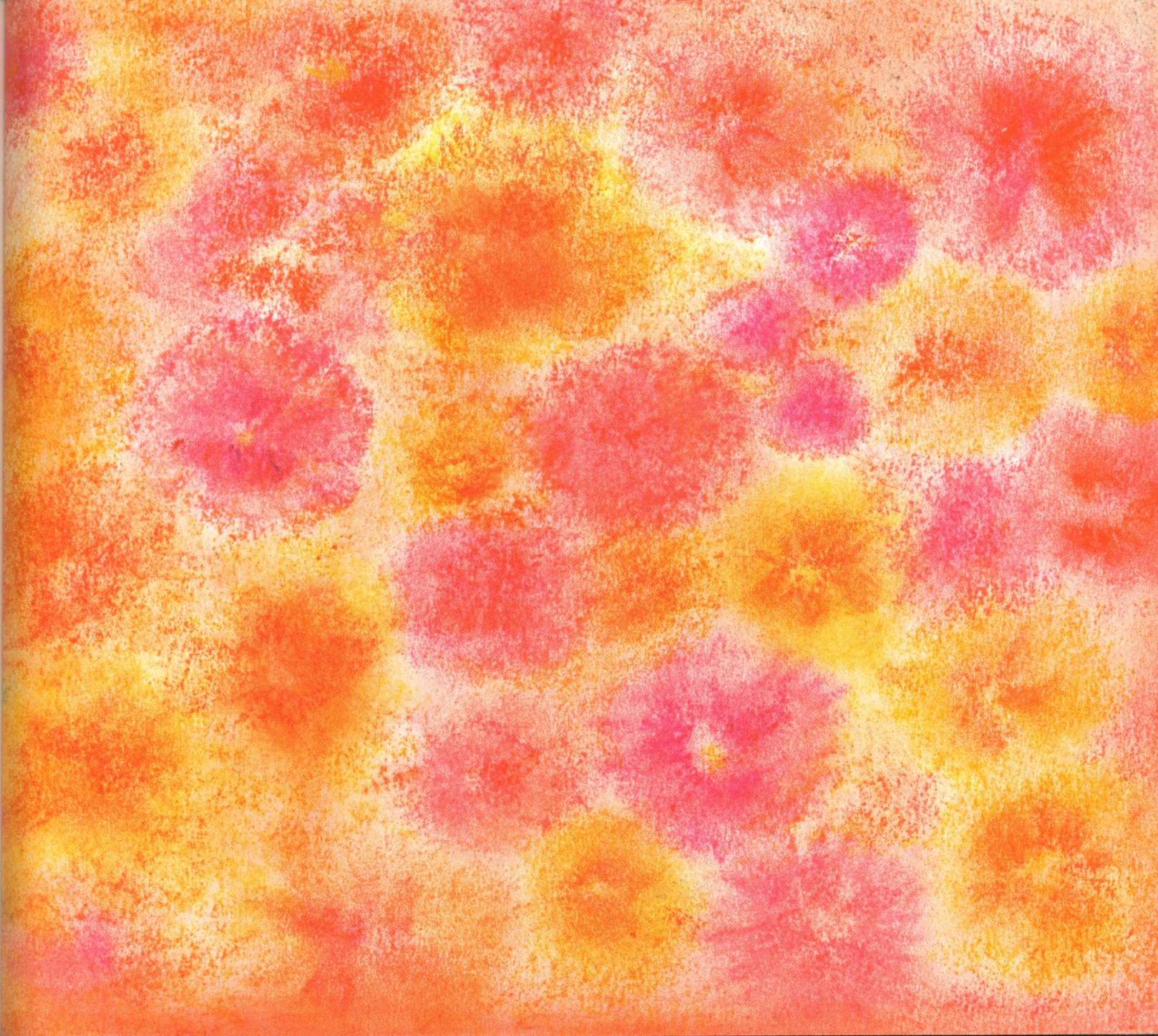




CHINESE EYES



Blessings!
Marjorie Waybill

CHINESE EYES

Story by Marjorie Ann Waybill

Pauline Cutrell, Artist



HERALD
PRESS

Scottdale, Pennsylvania

Waterloo, Ontario



Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data

Waybill, Marjorie Ann, 1929-
Chinese eyes.

SUMMARY: An adopted Korean girl gets a lesson in how unimportant it is that some people think she is different.

1. Prejudices — Fiction] I. Cutrell, Pauline,
illus. II. Title.

PZ7.W35125Ch

[E]

74-5751

ISBN 0-8361-1738-7



The paper used in this publication meets the minimum requirements of American National Standard for Information Sciences—Permanence of Paper for Printed Library Materials, ANSI Z39.48-1984.

CHINESE EYES

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Waterloo, Ont. N2L 6H7. All rights reserved

Library of Congress Catalog Number: 74-5751

International Standard Book Number: 0-8361-9228-1

Printed in the United States of America

Design by Alice B. Shetler

13 12 11 10 09 08 07

12 11 10 9 8 7 6

To order or request information, please call 1-800-245-7894 or visit
www.heraldpress.com.

To Peter, Steven, and Lois,
who inspired us to adopt
Becky, our little Chinese Eyes.



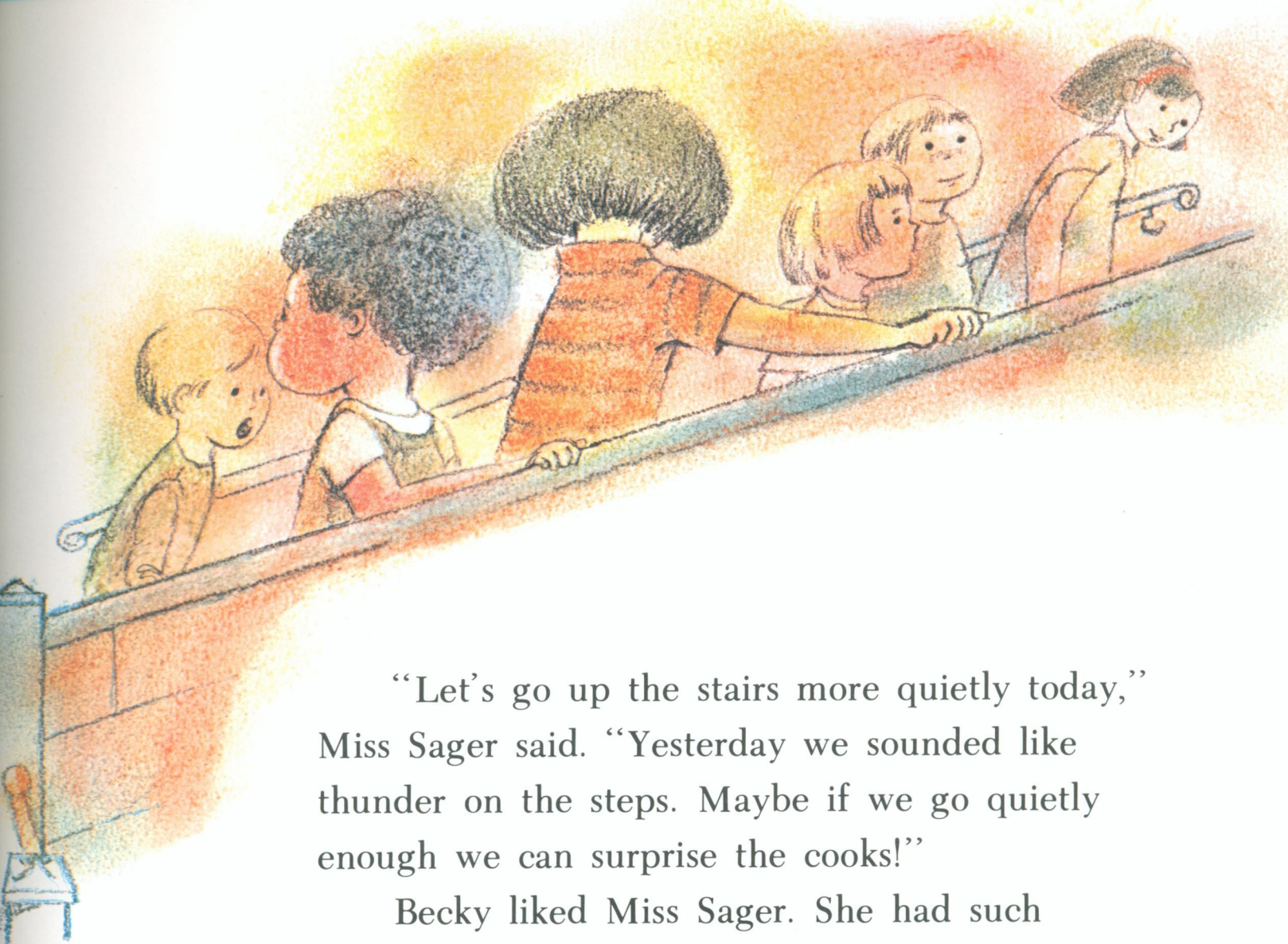


Becky's stomach told her it was lunchtime. She looked up from her number paper to check the big clock on the wall. Just then Miss Sager said, "Time to line up for lunch, boys and girls." Becky quickly put her number paper in her desk. She asked Laura to get in line with her.



“Today we’re having spaghetti,” Becky whispered to Laura.

Laura rubbed her stomach. “I’m hungry enough to eat a thousand spaghettis!” she said. They both giggled.



“Let’s go up the stairs more quietly today,” Miss Sager said. “Yesterday we sounded like thunder on the steps. Maybe if we go quietly enough we can surprise the cooks!”

Becky liked Miss Sager. She had such good ideas.

The class tiptoed up the stairs to the cafeteria. Just as they came to the big serving window, Stuart sneezed! The head cook jumped! "I didn't hear you first-graders coming," she said.





Becky picked up her tray of food and went to the cafeteria. “I forgot today was ice-cream day,” she said. She pulled the paper from her ice-cream bar. She always ate her ice cream first, before it got soft.

Lunchtime went too fast. Becky pushed her tray through the cafeteria window. Then she walked to the glass doors to wait for Laura.

Two third-grade boys came by on their way to lunch. The tall, dark-haired one turned and pointed at her. “Hey, look!” he said. “There’s little Chinese Eyes!” The others turned to stare at her.



Becky didn't
know which way to
look. She just wanted
to hide her face.



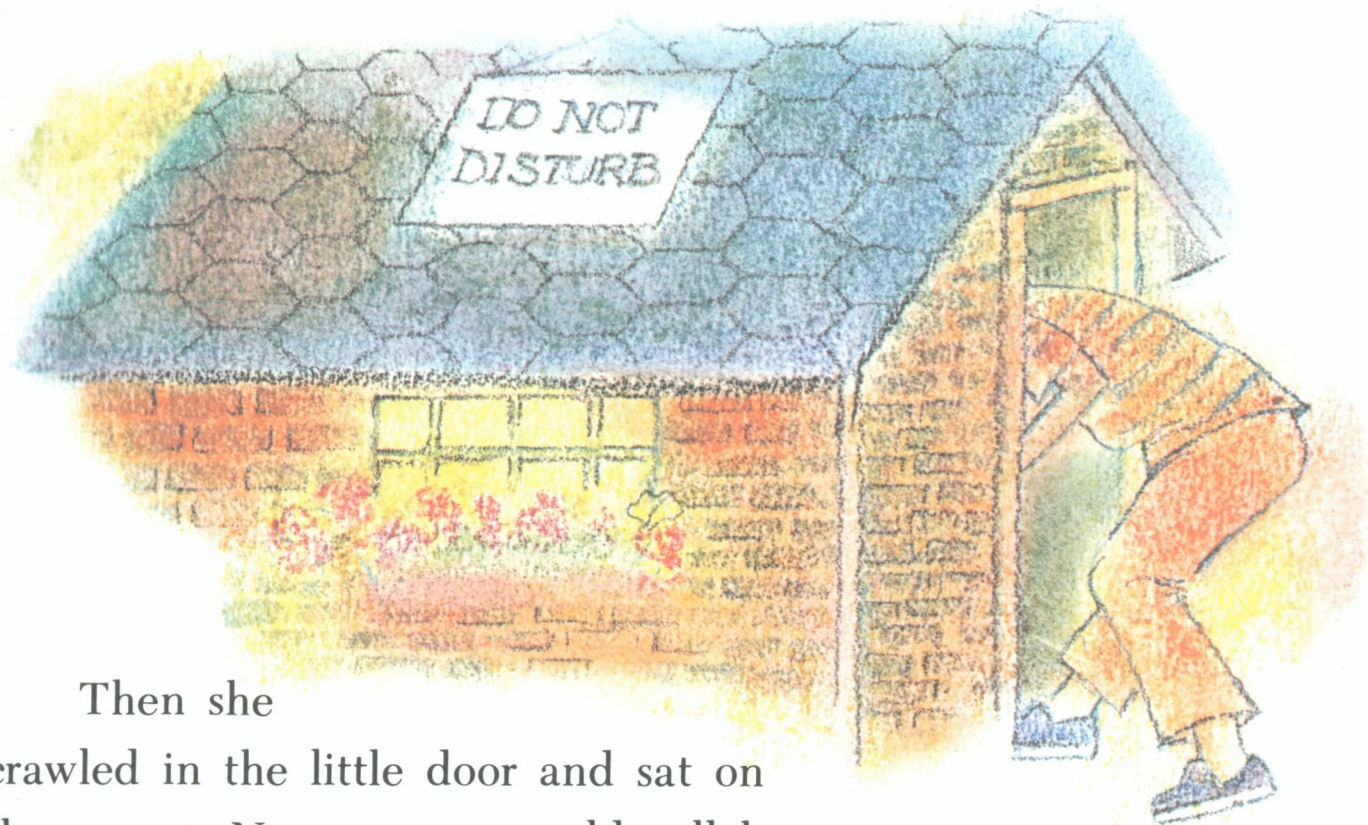
“Hey, Becky,” Laura called, “please wait for me.” She sipped the last drop of chocolate milk through the straw. She wiped her mouth with the back of her hand and came running over.

“Shall we play Hide the Thimble again?” Laura asked.

Becky shook her head. She didn’t want to play with anyone. Not right now!



When they got back to the room, Becky went right to the playhouse. First she turned the sign on the roof to read “Do Not Disturb.”



Then she crawled in the little door and sat on the carpet. Now no one could call her names. At least if they did, she couldn't hear them.

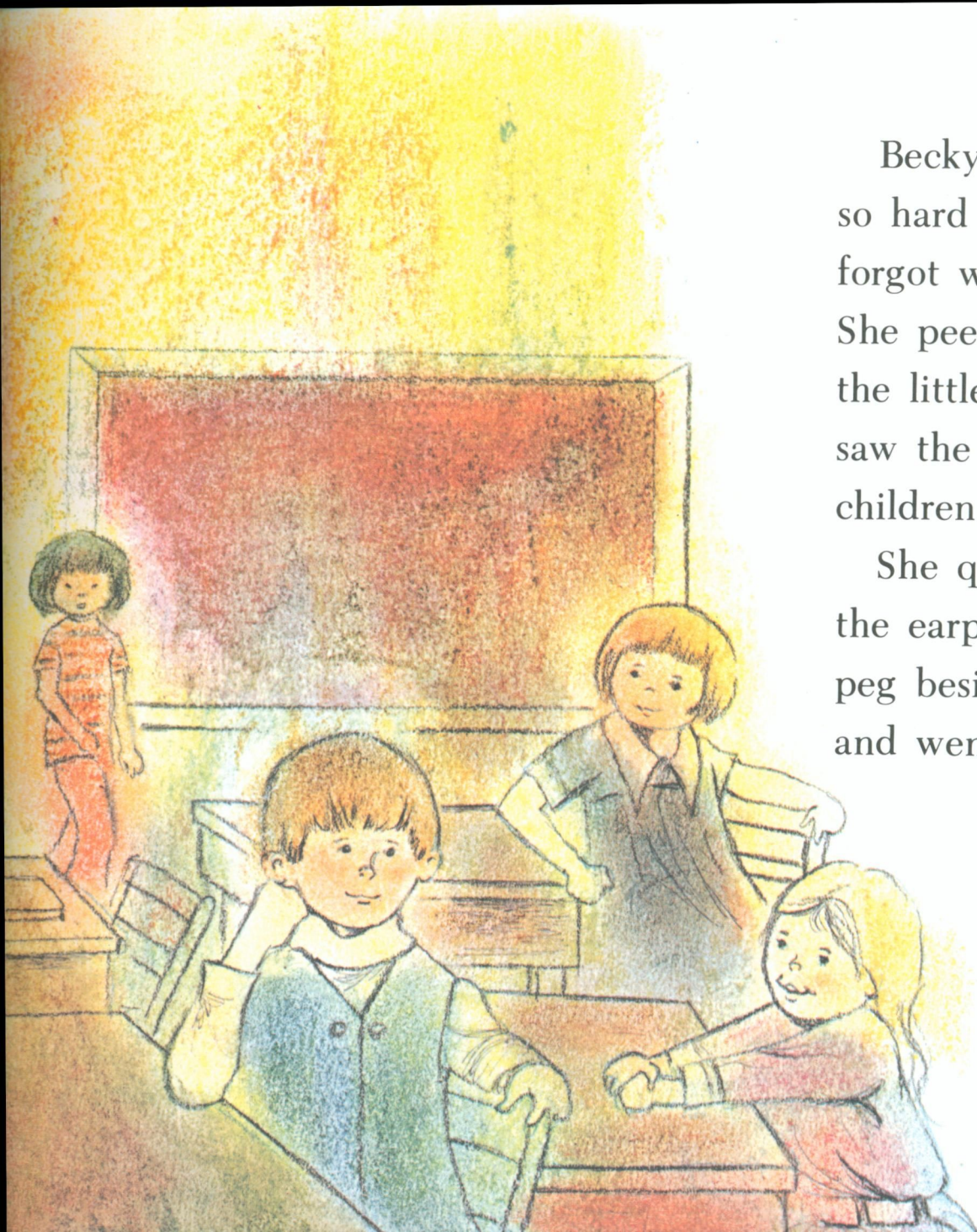


She put the earphones on
and pretended she was listening to records.
But she was thinking about Chinese eyes.

She couldn't understand it. That's exactly what the
boy at the park had called her. And those who heard
him laughed. Why did they say "Chinese eyes?" she
wondered. Mother said she had Korean eyes.

Becky was thinking so hard she almost forgot where she was. She peeked out of the little house and saw the other children in their seats.

She quickly hung the earphones on the peg beside the door and went to her seat.





It seemed the afternoon would never end. Nothing was going right. She made a mistake on her writing paper and had to start over. Once she leaned back too far on her chair and fell. Then her head hurt!

And when she came back from milk break Brian pointed at her orange, brown, and blue pants suit and sang, “Orange, brown, and blue makes a monkey out of you.” Sometimes she laughed when he said that but not today. She pinched him instead.

Miss Sager saw her. “Becky,” she said, “what seems to be the trouble?”

She couldn’t answer. She was afraid if she opened her mouth to talk she would cry. So she just sat.

She wished she could kick Brian hard. She wished she could stand up and scream. She wished the last bell would ring. Just then it did ring.



“Good-bye, Becky,” Miss Sager said as she squeezed her hand. Becky thought of asking Miss Sager about Chinese eyes. But she heard Laura calling her to come. Maybe she would ask Miss Sager about it tomorrow.



It was nice to be outdoors. The patrol boy helped Becky and Laura cross the street. Farther up the street, they saw Stuart waiting at the curb. “Hey,” he yelled, “you promised to help me pick up nuts for my collection.”

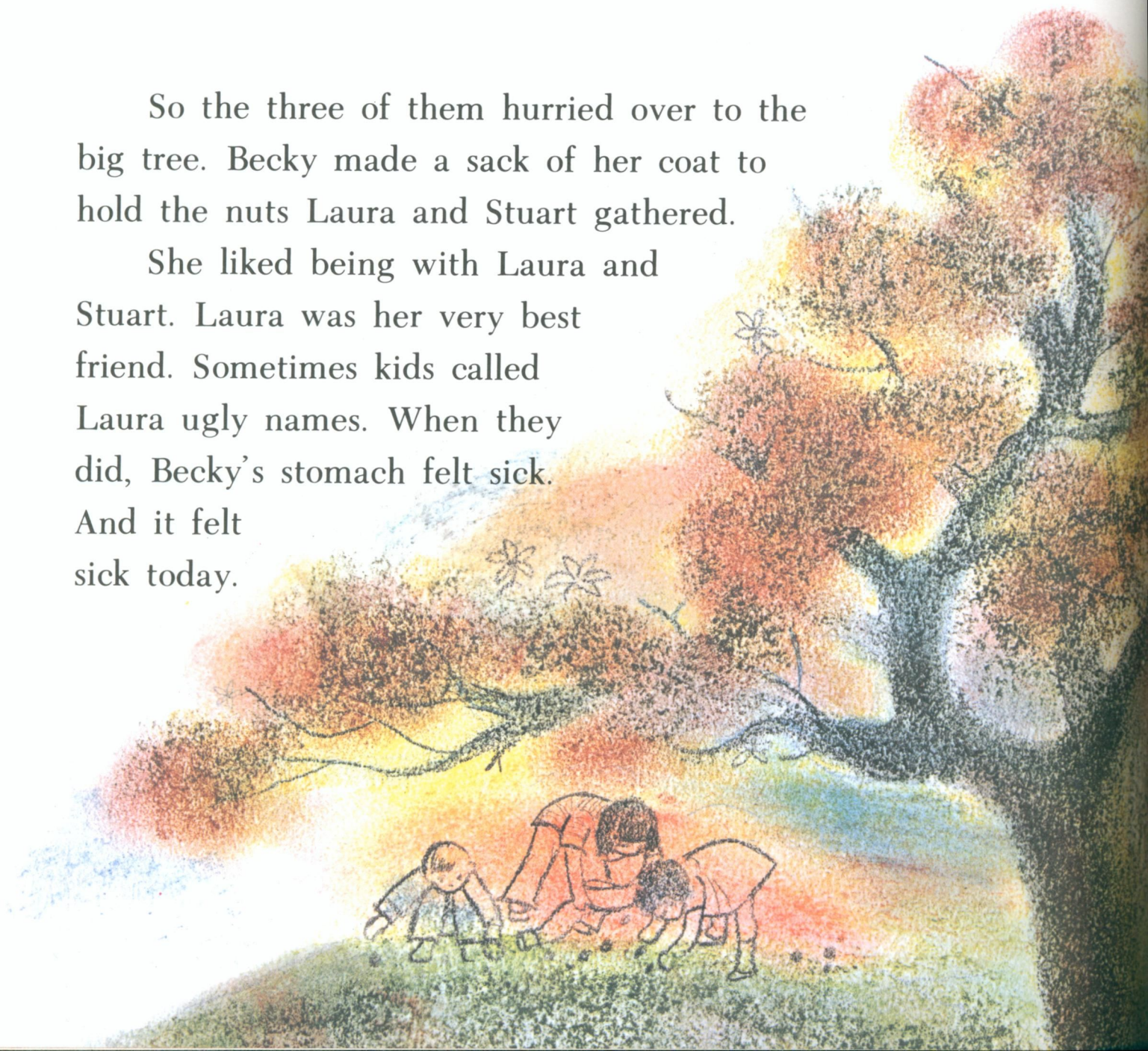
“I’d rather go home and get a drink first,” said Laura. “My mouth is so dry it can’t even sweat.”

“Oh, come on. It won’t take long if we hurry,” Stuart begged.



So the three of them hurried over to the big tree. Becky made a sack of her coat to hold the nuts Laura and Stuart gathered.

She liked being with Laura and Stuart. Laura was her very best friend. Sometimes kids called Laura ugly names. When they did, Becky's stomach felt sick. And it felt sick today.

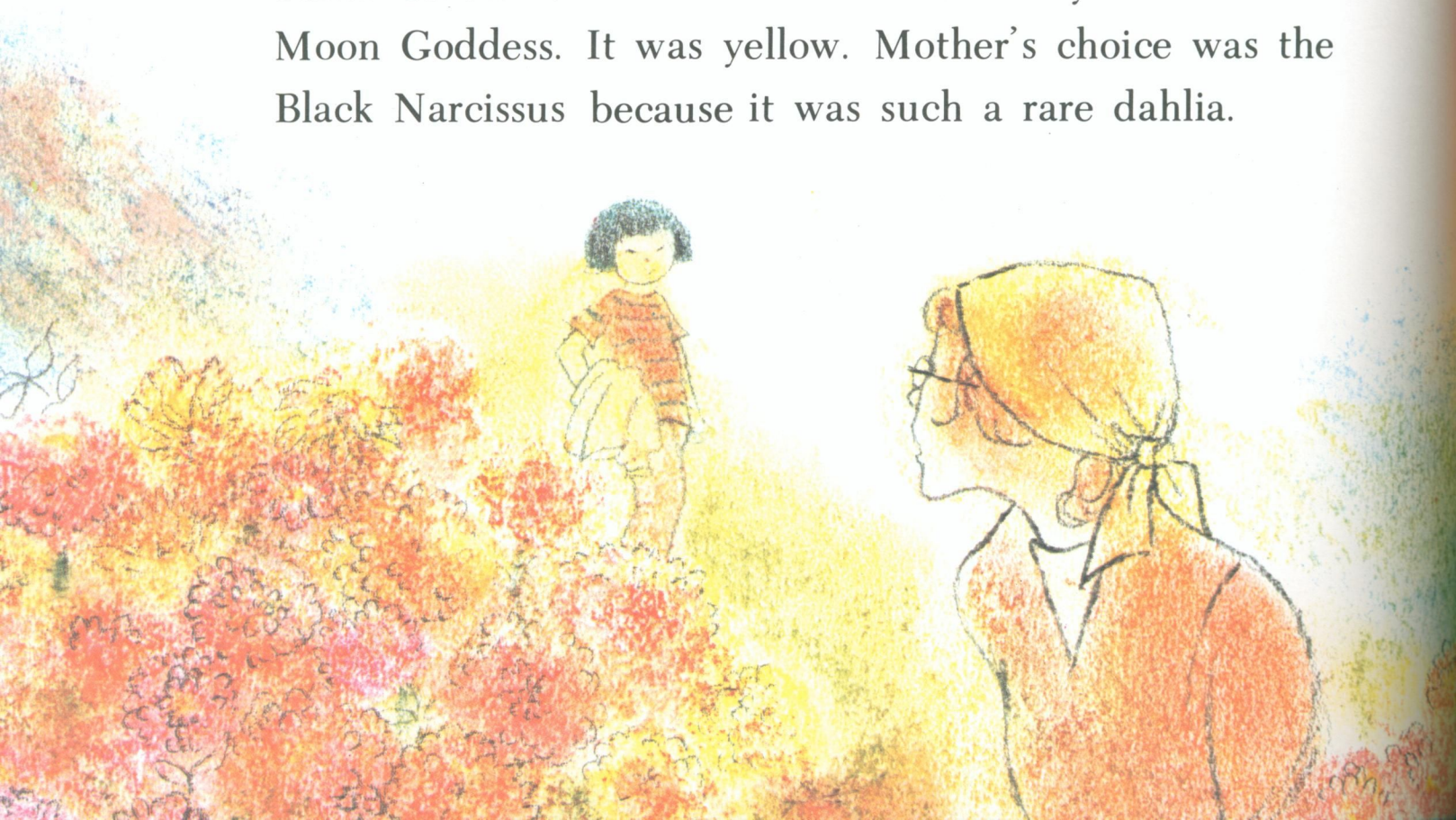


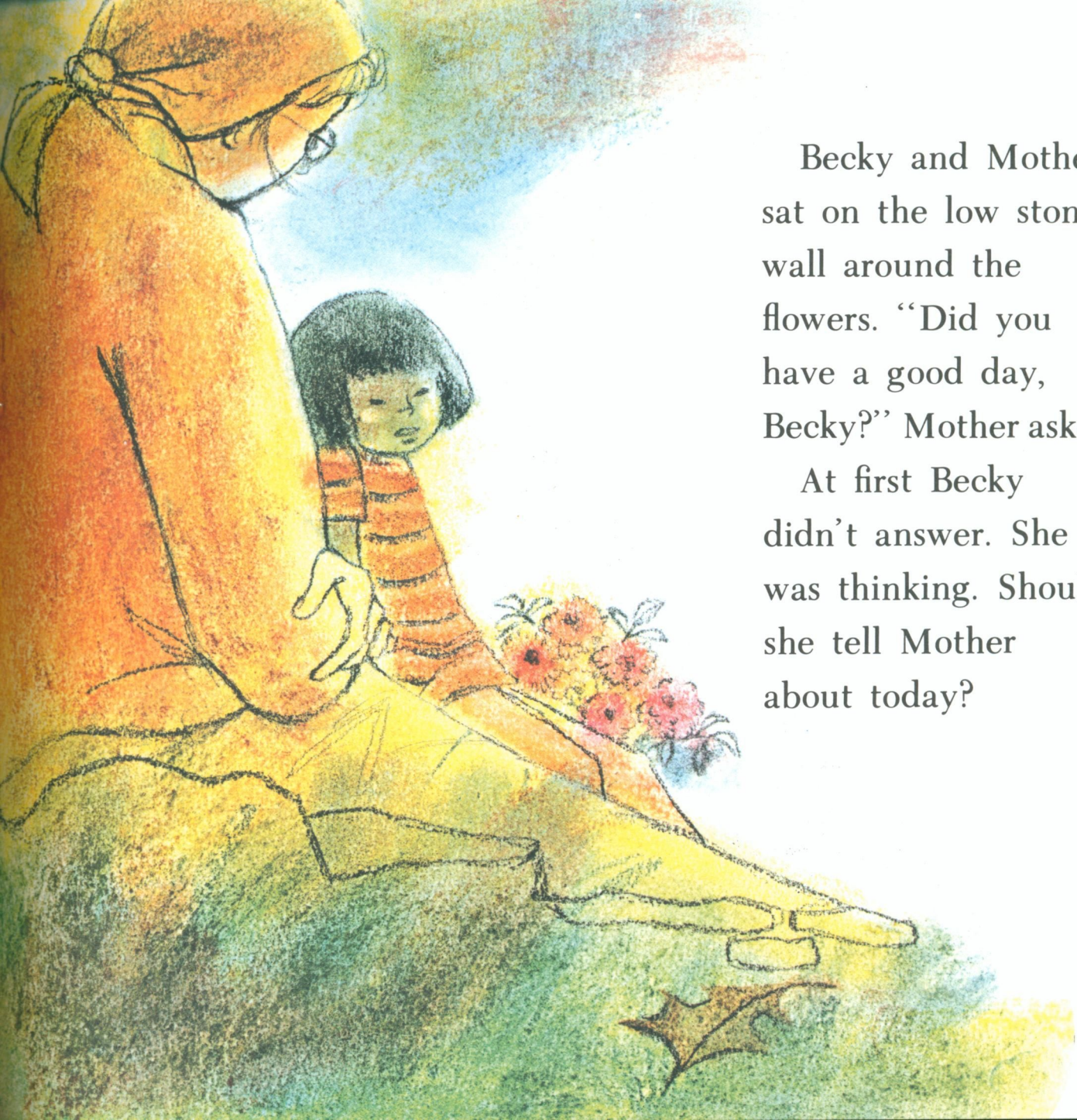


After they
had gathered the
nuts, they headed
down the street. Becky
cut across the empty
lot and was soon home.

“Hi, Becky,” Mother called from the backyard.
“How about bringing me a good, cold drink?”

Becky found Mother by the big flowers. These were special flowers called dahlias. Mother had a name for each one. Becky’s favorite was a big one called Santa Claus. It was red and white. Daddy liked the Moon Goddess. It was yellow. Mother’s choice was the Black Narcissus because it was such a rare dahlia.





Becky and Mother sat on the low stone wall around the flowers. “Did you have a good day, Becky?” Mother asked.

At first Becky didn’t answer. She was thinking. Should she tell Mother about today?

“It was okay until lunchtime,” Becky began. “But then some boy called me a name.”

“What kind of name?” Mother asked. Becky sat quietly looking down at her feet. She didn’t answer.

“People call each other all kinds of names,” Mother said. “Sometimes they say, ‘Slowpoke.’ Sometimes they say, ‘Fatty.’ Sometimes they say, ‘Cutie.’ Did he call you any of those names?”

“No,” Becky said as she looked up. “He called me ‘Chinese Eyes.’ ”

Mother didn’t seem shocked. She just said, “He was pretty close, wasn’t he?”

Becky didn’t know what she meant.



“Come indoors,” Mother said, taking Becky by the hand. Mother laid the flowers on the kitchen table. “Now, you put the dahlias in a vase while I put my tools away.”

“Okay, Becky,” Mother said, returning to the kitchen. “Let’s go look at ourselves in the big mirror.” For a minute they stood looking. Then Mother said, “Can you see that my eyes are different from yours?”

Becky nodded. “You have blue eyes and mine are brown,” she said. And then Becky noticed something else different. “Our eyes aren’t shaped the same, either, are they?” she asked.

“No,” Mother agreed. “But the children in China have eyes shaped like yours.”





“CHINA?” Becky asked in surprise. “I didn’t know there was a place called China.” Suddenly she smiled all over. “They have Chinese eyes!” she exclaimed.

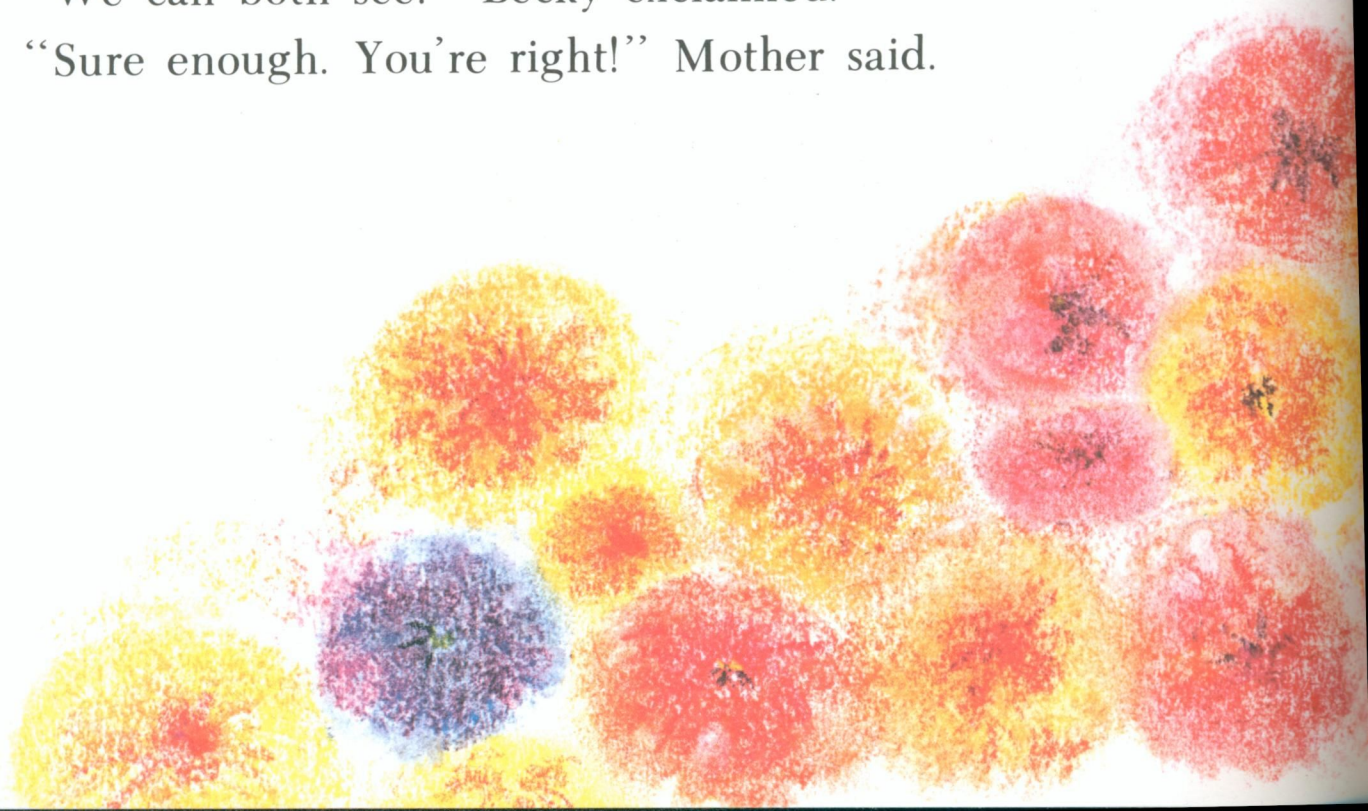
“And their eyes are beautiful,” Mother added,
“just like your eyes.”

Becky smiled again. “But I know one way our
eyes are alike,” Becky said.

Mother thought a while. “How are they alike?”
she asked.

“We can both see!” Becky exclaimed.

“Sure enough. You’re right!” Mother said.





“I know something else,” Mother said as she tapped Becky’s nose.

“What’s that?” Becky wondered.

“Well,” Mother began, “you have a short nose and I have a long nose, but — ”

“But,” Becky giggled, “we can both smell the flowers!”

“You’re right again!” Mother agreed.

Becky wrinkled her nose and they both laughed.



THE END

The Author

MARJORIE ANN WAYBILL is an editor and writer who lives in Harrisonburg, Virginia. For twenty-two years she worked at the Mennonite Publishing House, Scottdale, Pennsylvania, where she edited *Story Friends*, a magazine for children ages 4-8, and the Jubilee Sunday school curriculum. Previous to editorial work, Marjorie was an elementary school teacher.

Becky, the leading character in this book, came to the Waybill home from Korea through Holt Adoption Program, Inc., Eugene, Oregon. She was almost two years old when she joined her new family on December 13, 1967.

The Artist

PAULINE CUTRELL, a freelance illustrator for children's periodicals, books, and curriculum, lives near Scottdale, Pennsylvania.

