

# Apu's Giant Earthquake

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Level 3


"This is the story of the giant Bey-asura, the asura who loved to sing," says Apu, beginning his story.

Dida and Pia move closer to Apu to listen.

"Bey-asura LOVED to sing, but his fellow asuras HATED his voice," says Apu. "So they sent him away to the top of the mountain, where no one could hear him sing."







Apu climbs up on Dida's big bed, pretending it is a tall mountain.  
In his scariest asura voice, Apu as Bey-asura begins to sing.


**"Saaaaaaa..."** Bey-asura began, warming up.

**'Rayyyyyyyyy....'** he sang louder.





The sun's rays dimmed a little in alarm.





**'Gaaaaaa....'** he yelled even louder.



Bey-asura was feeling happy now. So he decided to do some  
Kathak dance."







" '**Dha-dhin-dhin-dha**,' Bey-asura kept time, stamped his feet and twirled.

Feeling more and more happy, he sang along, '**Maaaaaa... Paaaaa....**'

The mountain, which had been sleeping in peace, woke up, all frightened. The asura's singing and dancing made the mountain tremble.

**KABOOM!** Fell the rocks.

**DHADAAAAM!** The rocks shook the Earth."



"Do you know what happened when the rocks fell?" Apu asks his audience.

Dida shakes her head, with a naughty smile.

"I will tell you what happened," Apu says. "The earth shook! As the mountain trembled, everything started moving. Even Bey-asura, a gigantic giant, swayed from side to side!"

"The earth swung this way..." says Apu, rolling on the floor.  
"Then it swung the other way." Apu rolls some more.





Just then, the earth actually starts to move!  
The bed shakes just like the mountain in Bey-asura's story.

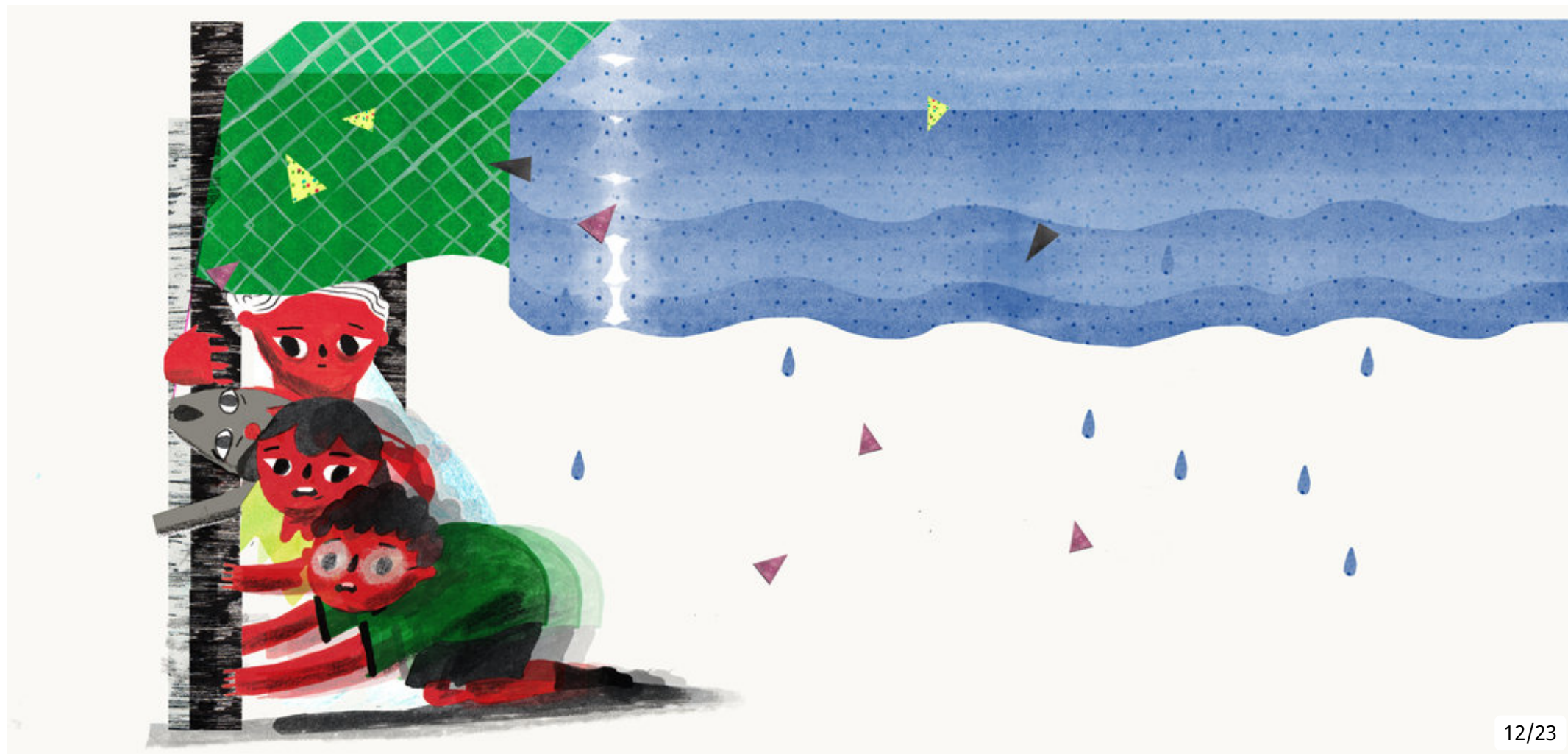
"Apu, stop singing!" yells Pia. "You are frightening the mountain."  
"It's not me," says Apu. "The whole room is shaking."



Dida, Apu and Pia fall silent. Even Bholu doesn't bark. Then, there is another bigger jolt.  
"The floor is shaking!" yells Apu.  
"It's all Bey-asura's fault!" cries Pia.  
"No, no," says Dida, calmly. "It is an earthquake."



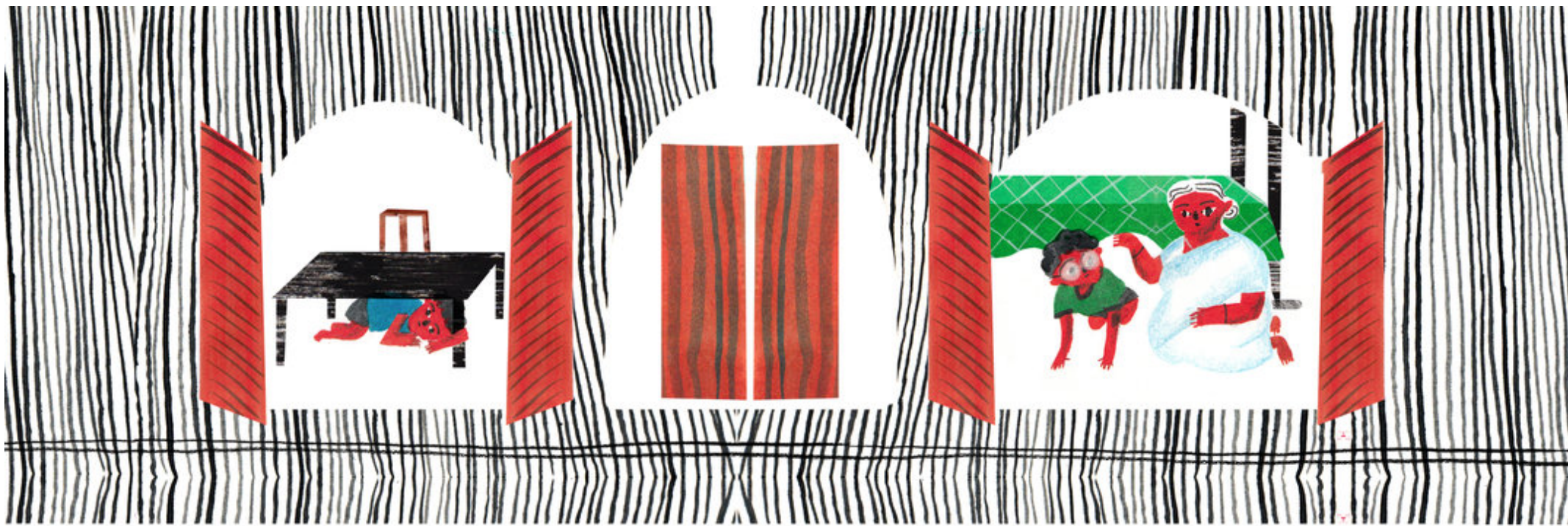
"There's no time to run outside. Quick, go under the bed," says Dida. They all sit under Dida's tall bed and hold on to its legs. But the earth continues to shake.





**TUMBLE!** The dolls on the shelf shake and fall.  
**SPLASH SPLASH!** The water in the jug starts splashing around.  
"Whooooa!" Apu yells as he feels the floor shake.  
"Aaaaooooo!" whimpers Bholu.  
Apu's stomach feels like Bey-asura is stomping inside it.





Finally, the shaking stops. Dida waits for two minutes to see if it starts again. But now the earth is firm. It has stopped quaking!

They all crawl out from under the bed. "We can go outside now," says Dida.

"Shouldn't we have run out?" asks Apu.

"Only if you are near an exit," says Dida. "If you are upstairs and in a strong building, you should go under the bed or a sturdy table and hold on so it does not move away from you. If there is nothing, go to a corner of the room and stay away from windows, doors and anything that can fall like light bulbs and fans."



Apu, Dida, Pia, and Bholu go out of their house.  
Some of the flower pots have fallen and are smashed.  
A crack has appeared on the outside wall of their house.

People are standing on the road, talking to each other. Is it safe  
to go back indoors?



Apu picks up a fallen plant. He puts his hand on the earth.

"Bey-asura will sing softly next time," he promises the earth.



## Did Bey-asura really make the earth shake with his singing?

No, earthquakes have been occurring ever since the earth was formed, even when it was a really young planet.

The top layer of the earth, the one that we can see, is called the **crust**. Underneath it is another layer called the **mantle**. Then there is the **inner and outer core**. The crust is made up of **tectonic plates** that glide over the mantle, and move very slowly and rub against each other.

Sometimes, the plates get caught against each other. Then the plates are not able to slide as they usually do and tension builds up. When the plates suddenly move away, energy waves are released. This makes the earth quake as the waves travel through the ground. And that's how an earthquake happens!

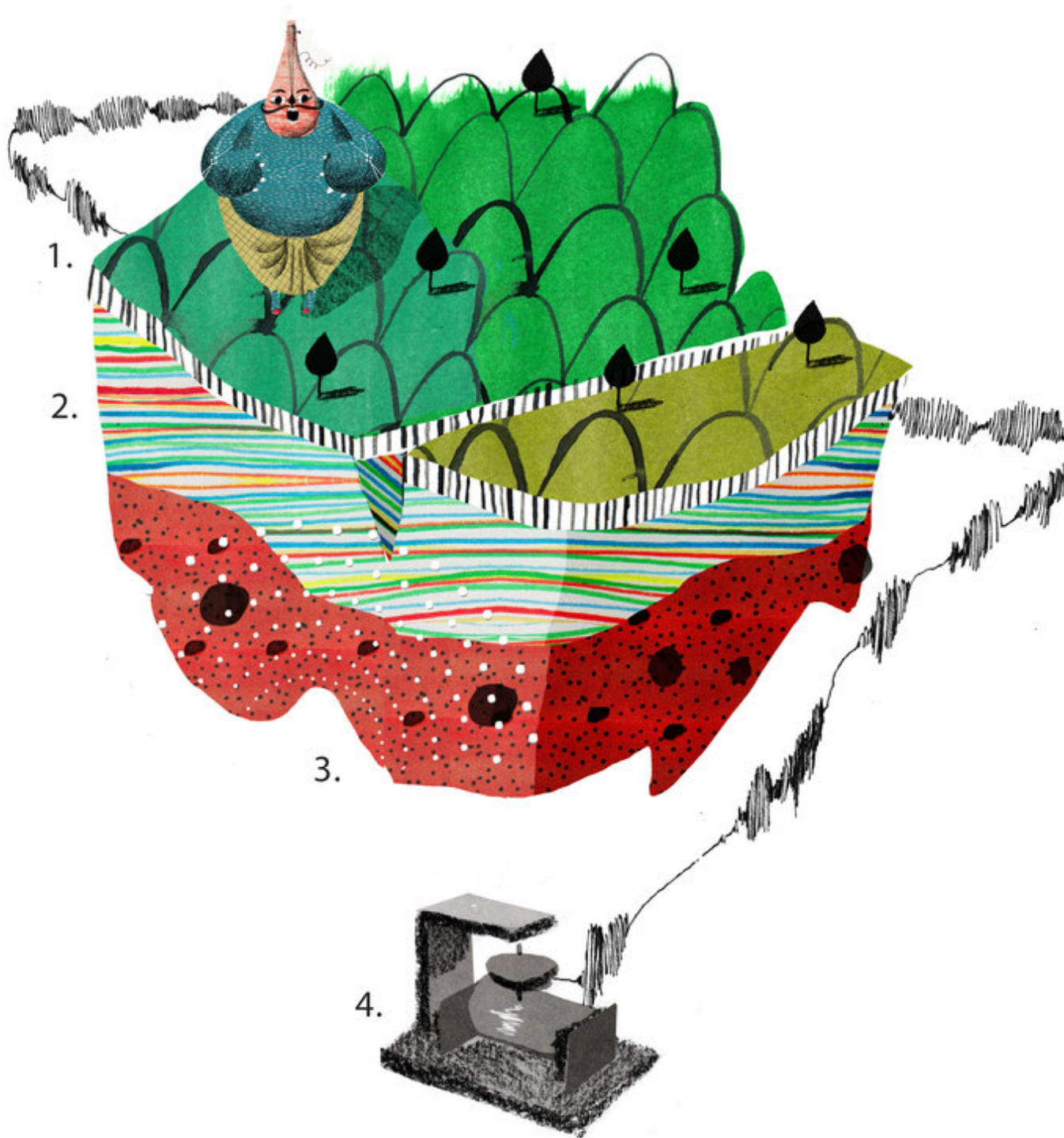
The spot where the plates move apart is called the **focus**. The place on the earth right above the focus is called the **epicenter**.

## Layers of the Earth

The layers mentioned here are shown in the picture on the left.

1. Crust
2. Mantle
3. Core

Earthquakes are measured on a scale called the **Richter Scale** that ranges from 1-3 (small, very less damage), 4-6 (moderate), 7-10 (very severe). The instrument that measures earthquakes is called a **seismograph** (shown as 4 in the picture).



## Where in India and the world can earthquakes happen?

The tectonic plates run under the surface of the earth throughout the globe and have been mapped by scientists.

In India, the most earthquake-prone areas are Kashmir, the middle and central Himalayas, the north-eastern states, parts of Bihar and the Rann of Kutch. Places like Delhi, Jammu and Kashmir, Maharashtra, Andaman and Nicobar Islands also get earthquakes often. More earthquakes happen here because the Indian land mass is moving and pushing against Asia.

Places where earthquakes strike often are called **high seismic zones** (shown on pg 21).

Some other places around the world that have seen devastating earthquakes are Japan, Indonesia, Italy, Turkey, Chile, Alaska and California in the United States.



*{Map not to scale. Artistic representation only.}*

## **What to do if you are in an earthquake**

1. Don't panic.
2. If you are indoors and in a high rise building or a building that is strong, drop to the ground and take cover under a bed or a sturdy table, and hold on. Stay away from objects that can break away from the walls and fall on you. Do not go near a door unless it is very strong.
3. If you are near an exit or in an old, unsteady building, move out quickly and calmly.
4. If you are outside during the earthquake, find an open spot away from buildings, streetlights and walls, and stay there.
5. If you are on a steep hillside, move away from the side of the hill in case of landslides and falling rocks.



1.

2.



3.



4.



5.

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# Apu's Giant Earthquake

(English)

Did Apu's singing cause the earth to tremble and shake? Or was it an earthquake? Find out more in this humorous and fascinating story about earthquakes.

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



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