



Anuradha Dances the Bihu

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Level 3

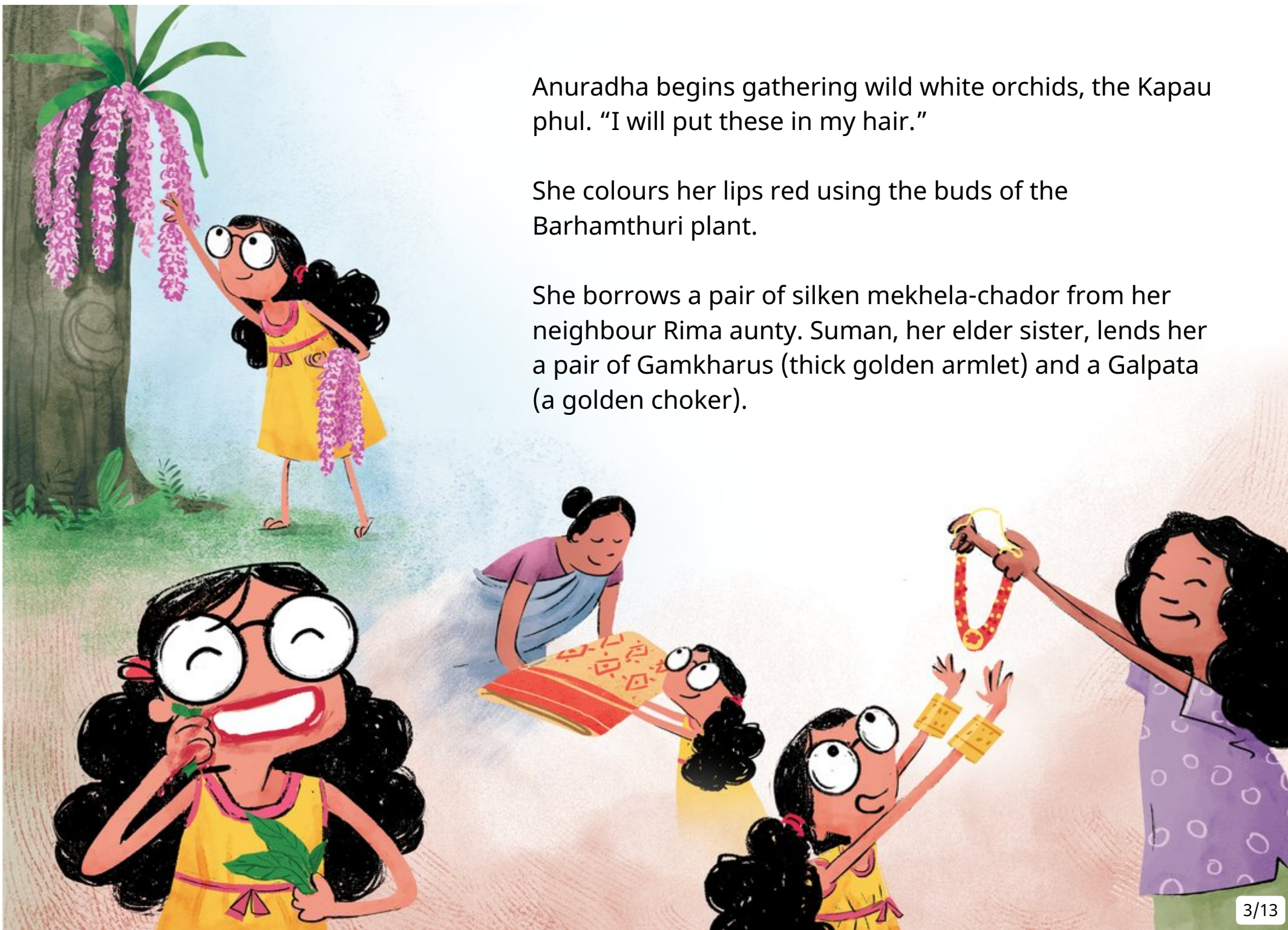
Bihi is almost here. Anuradha can hardly wait! She is in a hurry, just like the weather.



Anuradha begins gathering wild white orchids, the Kapau phul. "I will put these in my hair."

She colours her lips red using the buds of the Barhamthuri plant.

She borrows a pair of silken mekhela-chador from her neighbour Rima aunty. Suman, her elder sister, lends her a pair of Gamkharus (thick golden armlet) and a Galpata (a golden choker).





Girgir girgir khit, Girgir girgir khit
Anuradha hears the sound of the dhol, and runs out.

But what is this? There is no dhol,
only thunder. The wind is blowing
and rain is pouring down.
Anuradha is very sad.





Her Koka asks her, "My darling Anuradha, what makes you so sad?"

Anu said, "See Koka, this rain shows no sign of stopping."

"This is quite natural, my dearest Maina. This is the season of howling winds and rains."

"You mean I will have to sit indoors during Bihu? No, no, I can't let that happen Koka! Please do something."

Koka whispers to her, "The gusty wind is called 'Bordoisila' (Bordoixila). If you want her to go away, you should place a comb and a mirror on a peera (a low wooden stool) outside."



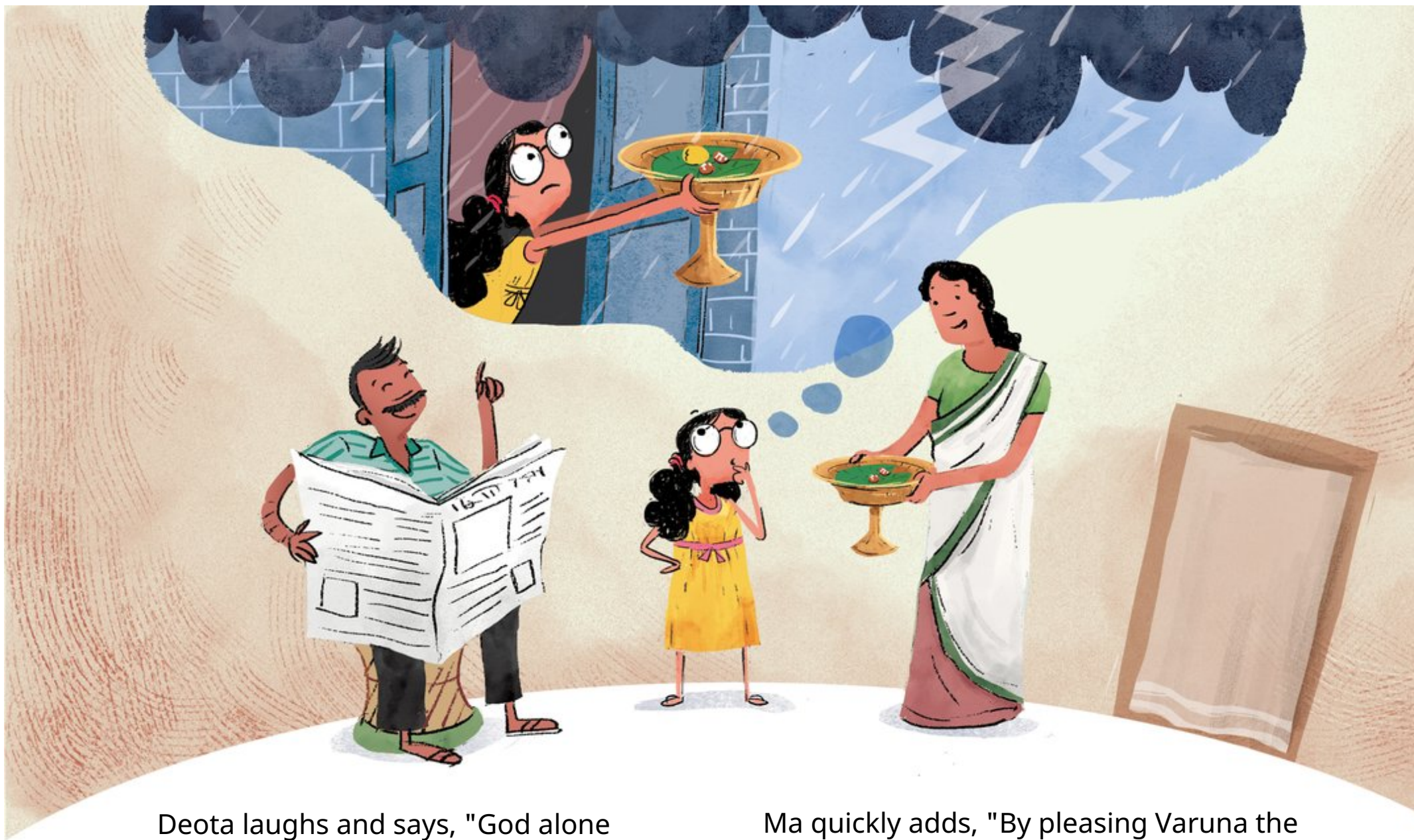
Anu asks everybody at home if Koka is right.





"Yes, yes it is true," her Ayita says. "But you should pierce a ripened red chili with a bamboo stick and plant it in the open. Then the sun will come out quickly after the rains are gone."





Deota laughs and says, "God alone can help you in this situation, Anuradha."

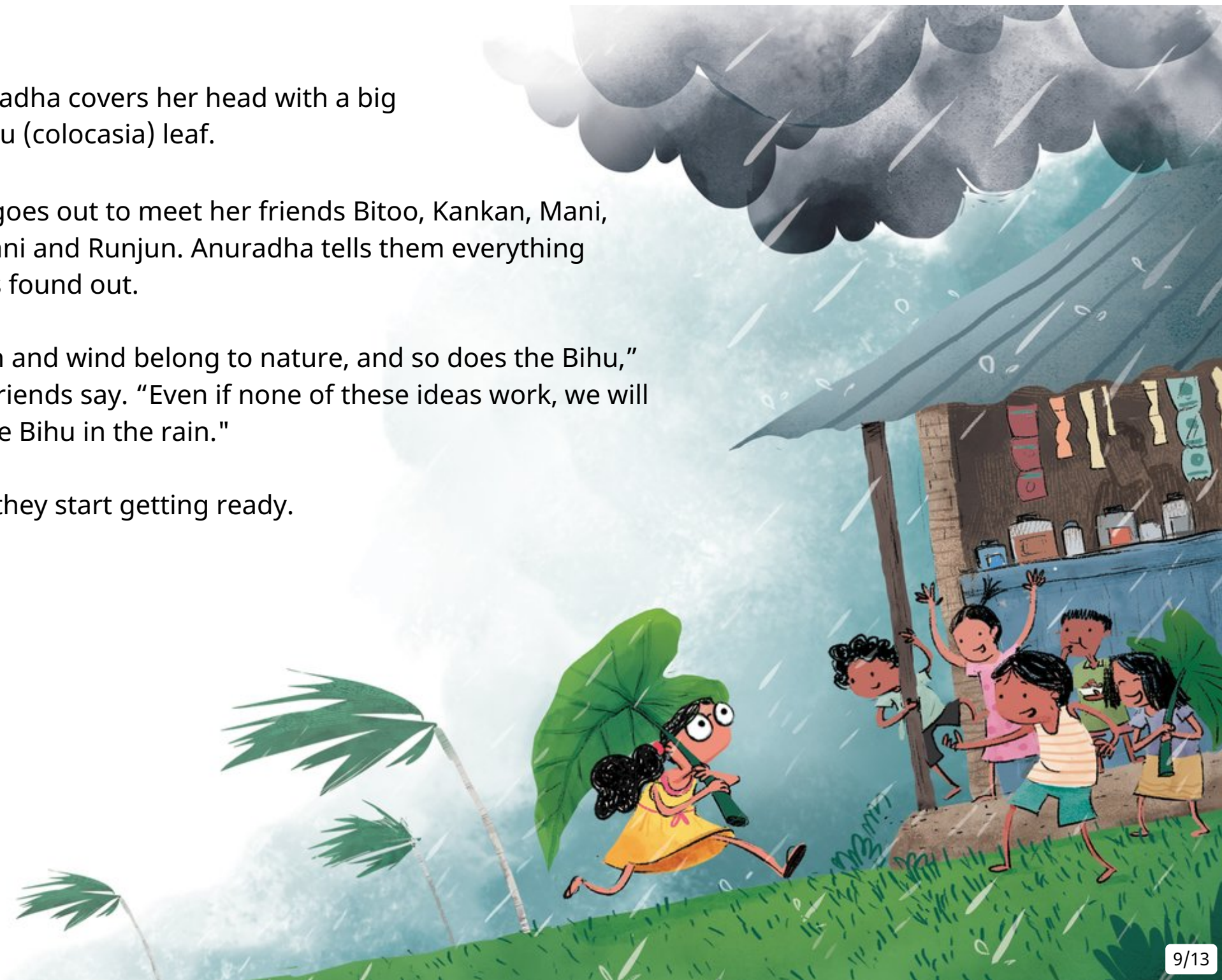
Ma quickly adds, "By pleasing Varuna the rain god by offering him pan and betel nut to make the rains stop."
Anuradha is not convinced.

Anuradha covers her head with a big Kochu (colocasia) leaf.

She goes out to meet her friends Bitoo, Kankan, Mani, Himani and Runjun. Anuradha tells them everything she's found out.

"Rain and wind belong to nature, and so does the Bihu," her friends say. "Even if none of these ideas work, we will dance Bihu in the rain."

And they start getting ready.





They keep a comb and a mirror on a peera.
It keeps raining.

They plant a bamboo stick pierced through
a red chilli. It keeps raining.

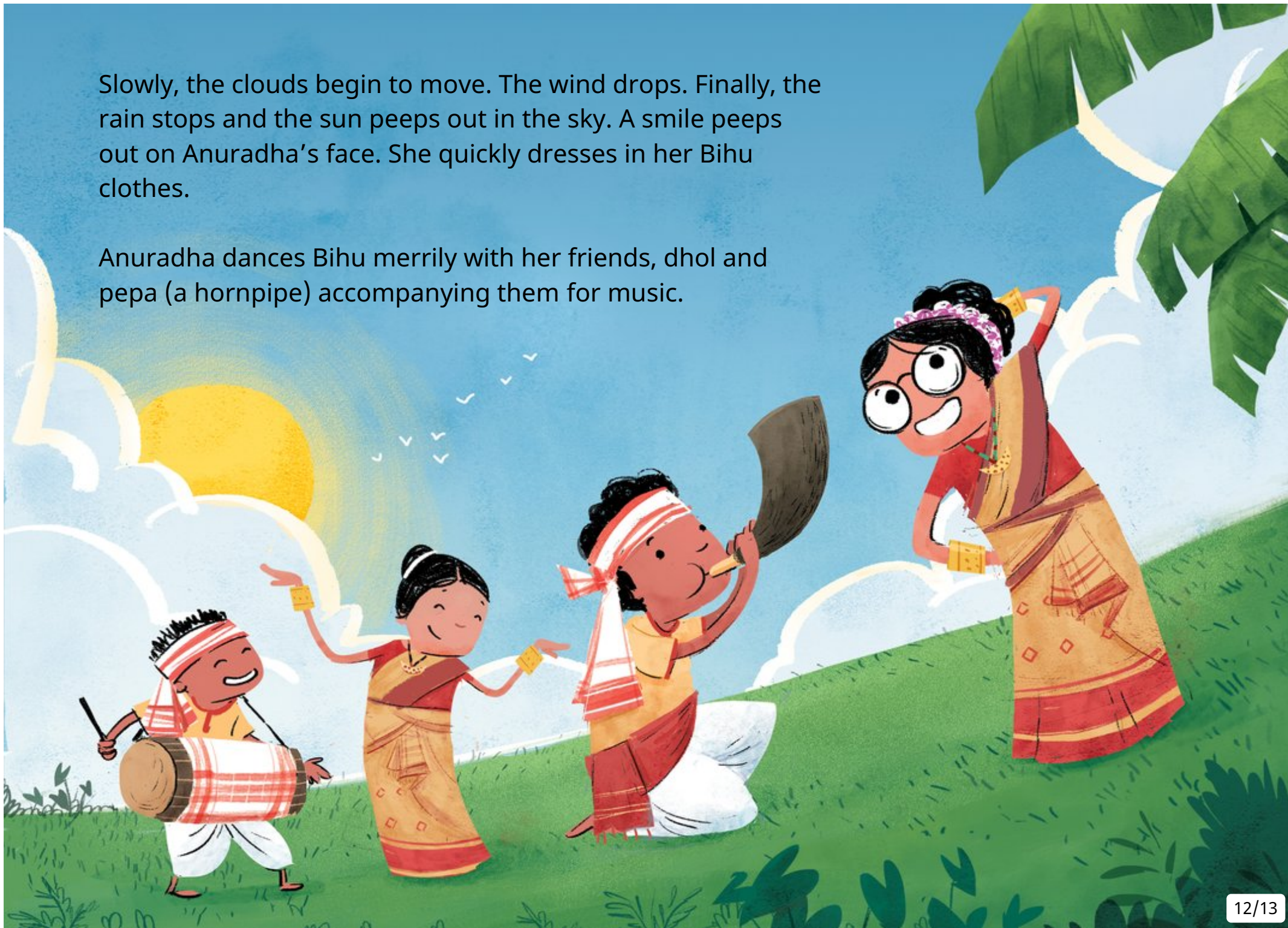


They keep paan and a beetel nut to please Varuna. It keeps raining.

Anuradha keeps staring at a big puddle of rainwater.

Slowly, the clouds begin to move. The wind drops. Finally, the rain stops and the sun peeps out in the sky. A smile peeps out on Anuradha's face. She quickly dresses in her Bihu clothes.

Anuradha dances Bihu merrily with her friends, dhol and pepa (a hornpipe) accompanying them for music.





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Anuradha Dances the Bihu

(English)

Bihu's just around the corner, and Anuradha cannot wait. But, there's one small problem — it just won't stop raining. Will Anuradha be able to go out and dance the Bihu with her friends?

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



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