

Babalwa and the Three Baboons



**Story adapted from
W.W. Denslow's Three Bears**



Million word gap project

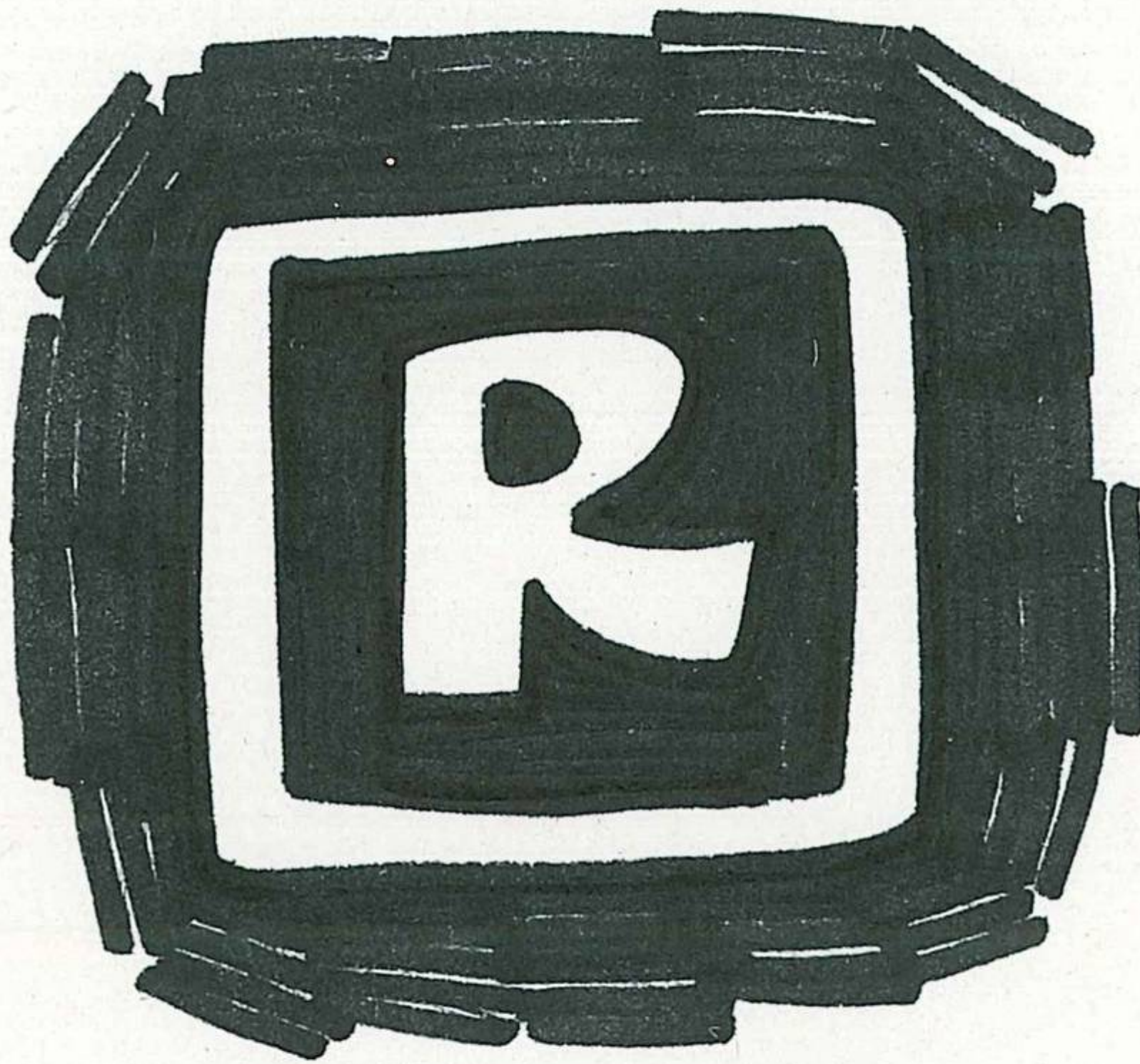
Children whose parents read to them have heard 30 million more words before they start school. Help your children prepare for school.

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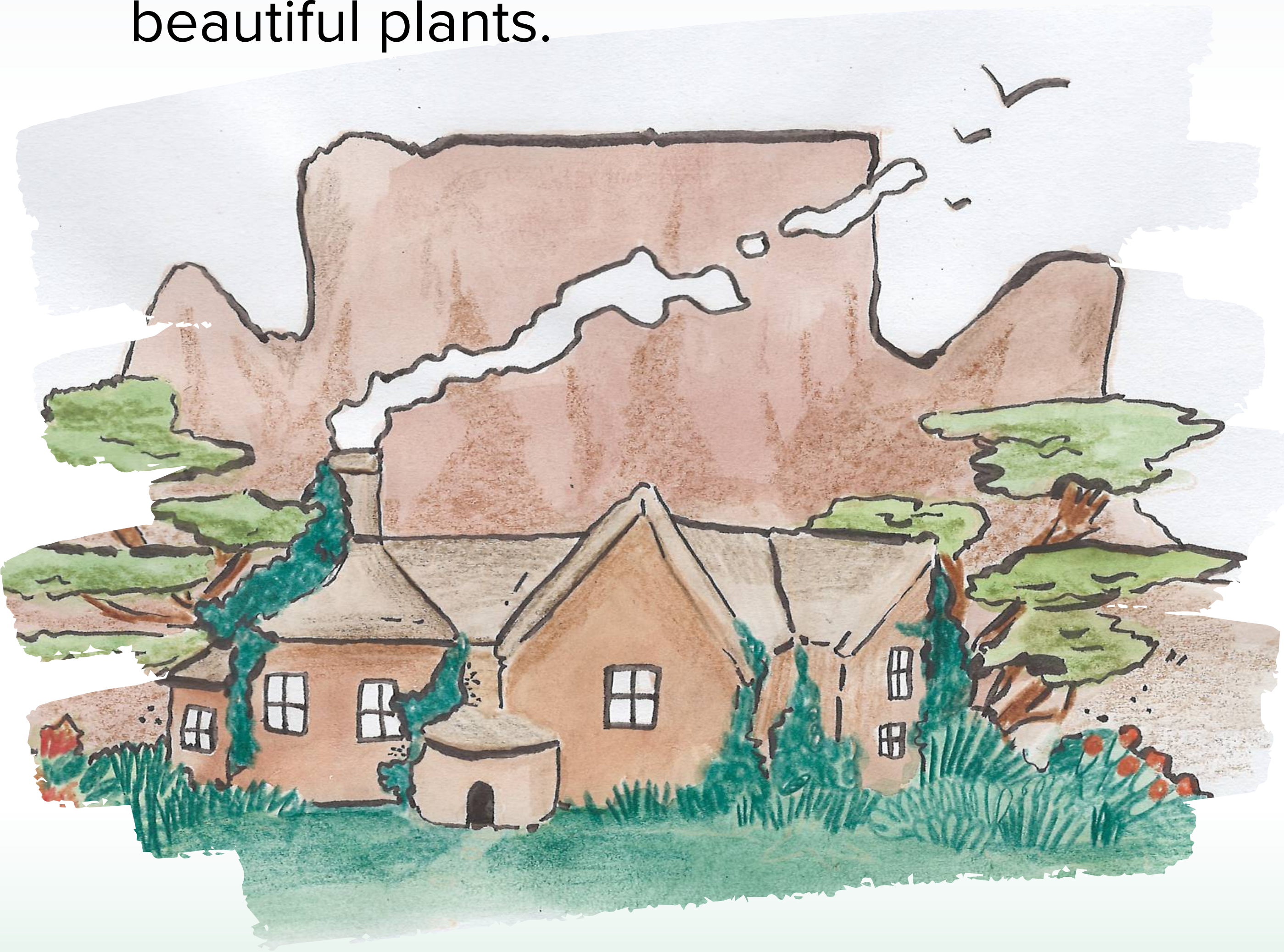
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Once upon a time, a long, long time ago, a little girl lived at the bottom of Table Mountain with her grandmother, “Gogo”. Near their small cottage was a forest full of towering trees and beautiful plants.



Babalwa was a brave and clever little girl, and everyone loved her vibrant laugh and her beautiful smile. She was also a very good and a very kind little girl.

Gogo was extremely old. She struggled to see clearly, and she could not hear.

Babalwa would wake up every morning. She would make her bed and make porridge for Gogo and herself.

After school she would do her homework and then she would clean and tidy the cottage. Gogo thought that she was the luckiest granny in the world to share her life with Babalwa.



There weren't any children who lived near Babalwa and so, she spent her weekends playing with all the wild animals in the forest.

Gentle, soft-eyed klipspringers would come to feed out of her hands and birds were drawn to her musical voice. It was as though she knew their language.

Babalwa had never wondered far into the forest, but one day when she was collecting firewood, she strayed further than she knew.



She came upon a lonely, grey cabin set against the mighty rocks in the mountain.



A slab of wood beside the half-open door showed her who lived inside. It read: “Daddy Baboon, Mummy Baboon, and the Tiny Baboon.” Babalwa thought, “I want to meet them,” as she knocked at the door. There was no answer.

So slowly, she nudged the door with her toe and peeped inside.

It was the most terribly messy house! She noticed a big black pot on the stove, which was bubbling and boiling.

As she walked to the stove to switch it off, she noticed three bowls of porridge on the table.



“A big bowl for Daddy Baboon, a medium sized bowl for Mummy Baboon, and a little bowl for Tiny Baboon,” said Babalwa, smiling.

Babalwa decided to clean and tidy the house while she waited for the baboons to return.



Once she had finished, her tummy started to rumble. “It must be late afternoon,” thought Babalwa, “and I have had nothing to eat all day.”

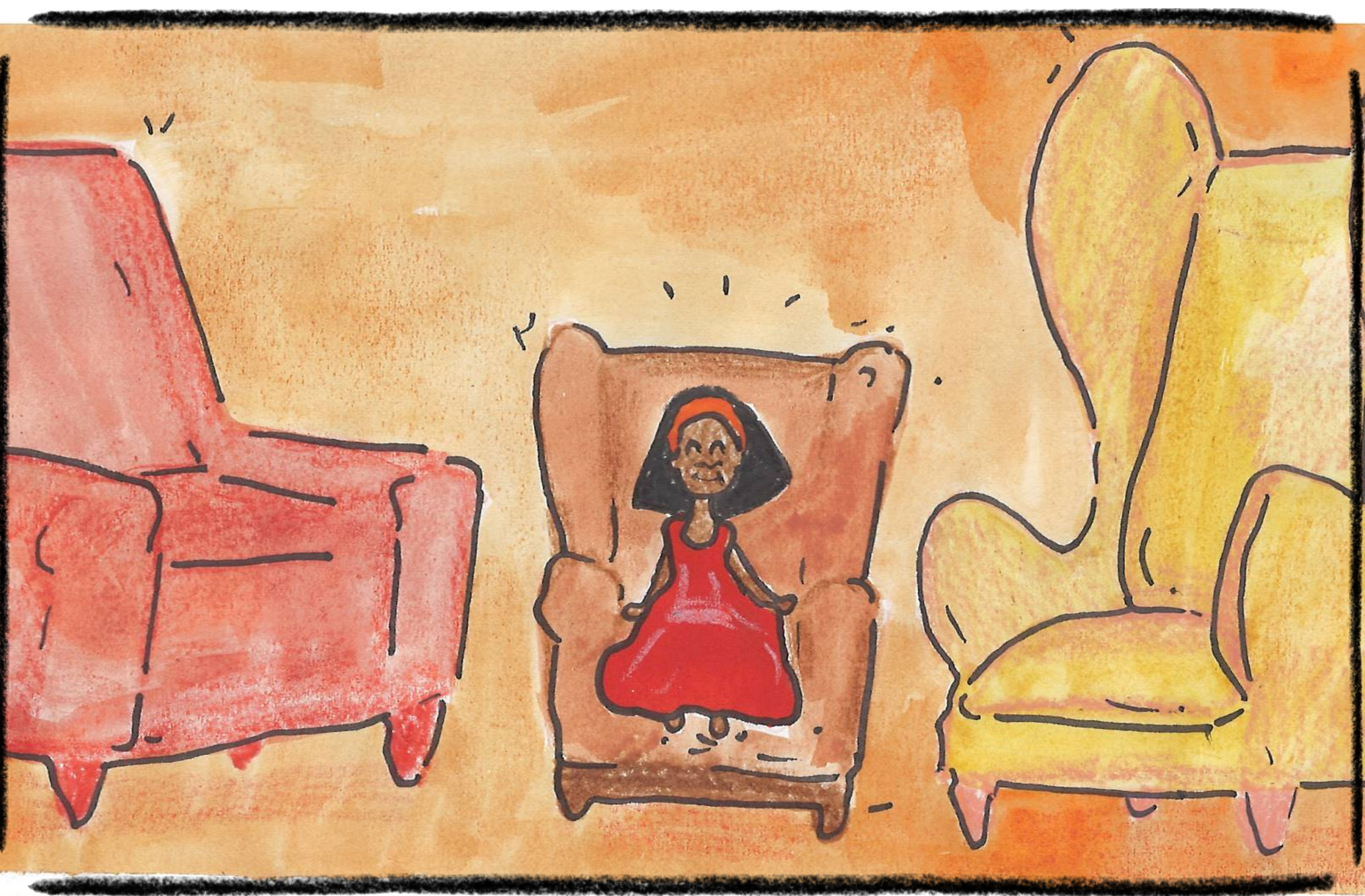
She was sure that the baboons would not mind if she ate a little of their porridge.

She took a spoonful of Daddy Baboons porridge, “too hot” she said. Then she took a mouthful of Mummy Baboons porridge, “too cold” she thought.

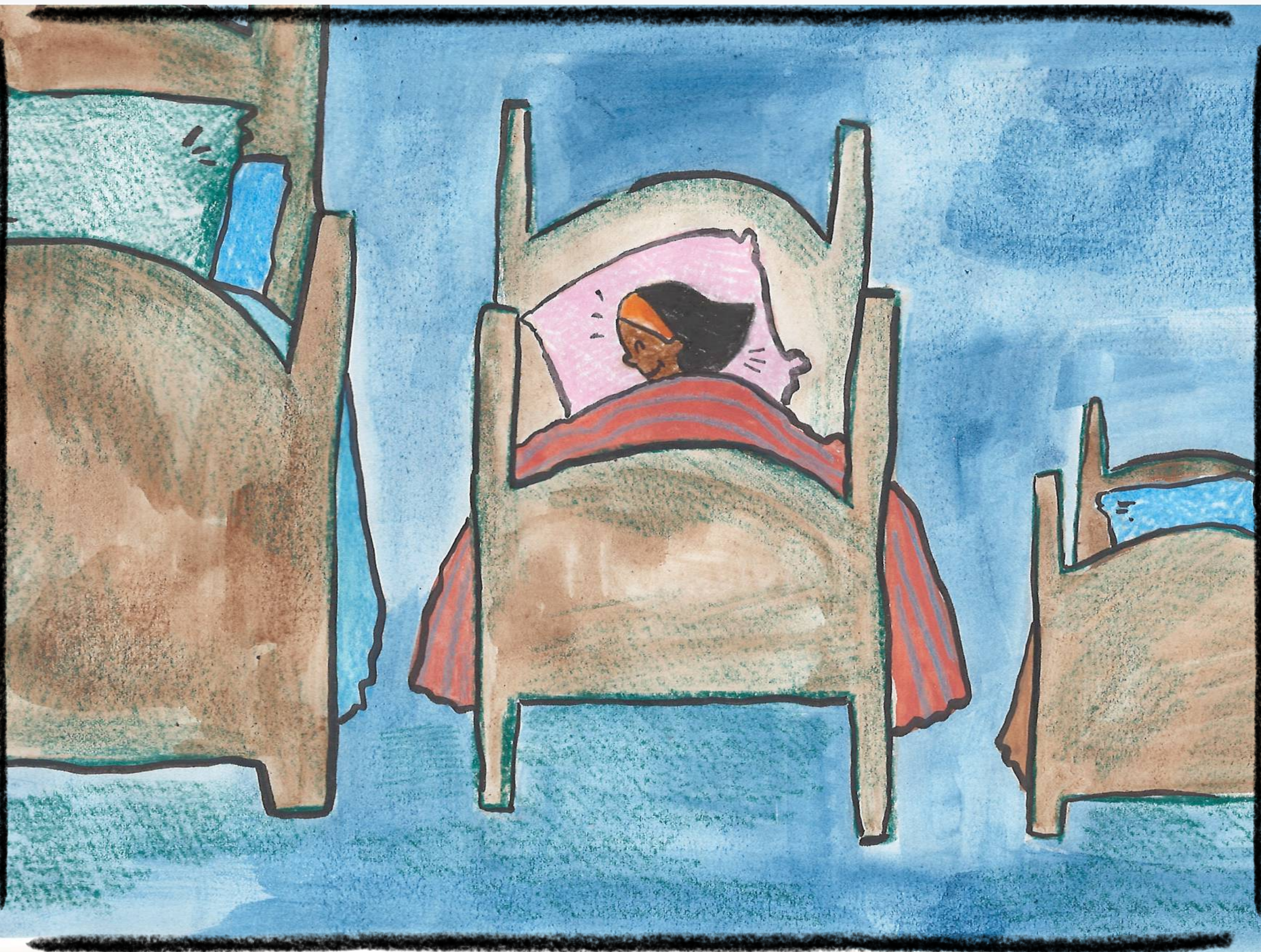


Then she took a spoonful of Tiny Baboons porridge, “mmmm just right,” and she gobbled it all up.

She decided to sit and wait for them. First, she sat in Daddy Baboon's chair: "too hard," she said. Next, she sat in Mummy Baboon's chair, "too soft" she moaned. At last, she tried Tiny Baboon's chair, and it was just right.



Hours past and still the baboons had not returned home. Babalwa looked out the window and realised that it was too dark to return home.



She wondered if she could sleep in one of the baboon's beds. First, she tried Daddy Baboon's bed: "too big," she thought. Then she tried Tiny Baboon's bed: "too small!" At last, she climbed into Mummy Baboon's bed and curled up and fell fast asleep.



The Baboons got the fright of their lives when they found Babalwa curled up asleep in Mummy's bed, but they were so grateful and happy to have a tidy and clean house. They woke her up and swung her around in a big bear hug. Then they turned on the music and they danced late into the night.



The next morning, as Babalwa made the slow walk back to Gogo's house, she smiled to herself knowing that no one would believe this wonderful story when she told them at school on Monday morning.

