

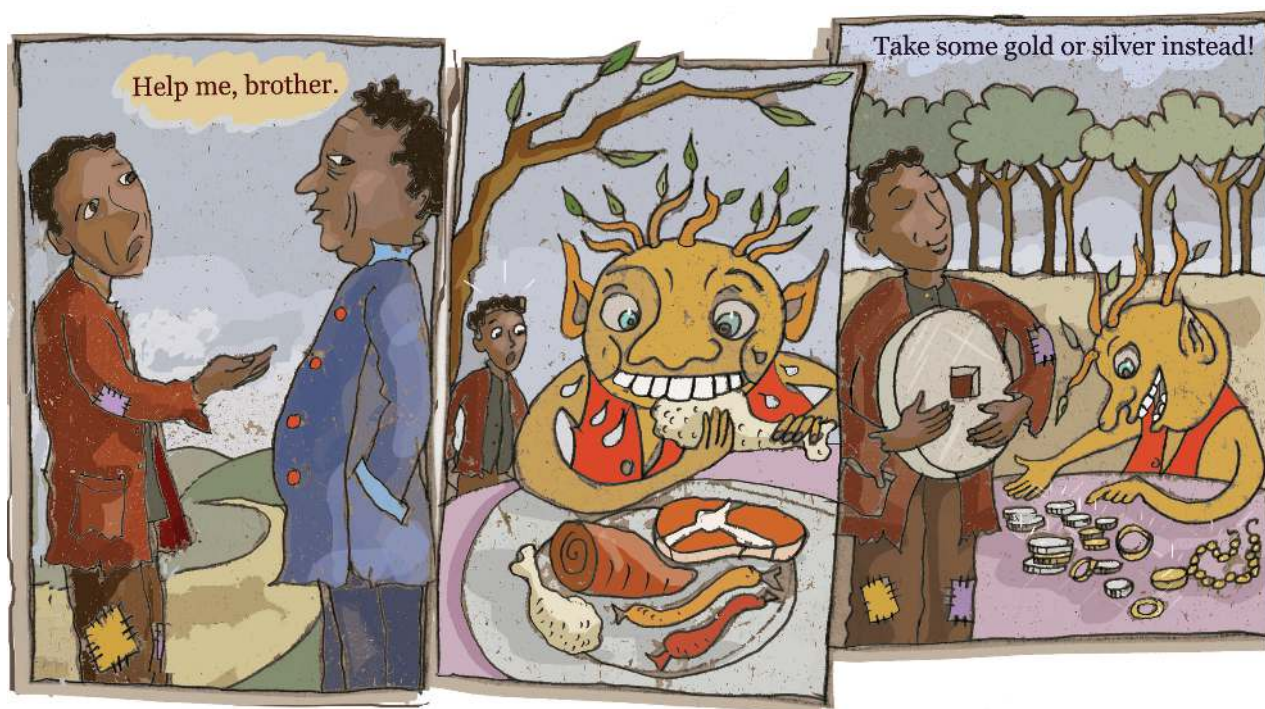
## Why the sea is salty

Long ago, there were two brothers. The older brother was rich and nasty. The younger brother was poor, but kind.

One day the poor brother and his wife had nothing to eat in their house. He went to visit his brother to ask for help. His brother was rude to him. He threw some meat at him and said, "Take this to Hyisi, the goblin who lives in the woods. You can have whatever is left over." The poor brother thanked him, and set off for the woods.

When he reached Hyisi's hut, the goblin was so excited that he grabbed the meat and ate it all up! The poor man was sad, so the goblin, who had a kind heart, offered him the pick of anything on his table.

The poor man chose a simple millstone. "No, no!" said Hyisi, take some gold or silver instead!" But the poor man would not change his mind.





“Oh well,” Hiysi said at last. “Take it. But this is a magic millstone. It will give you whatever you wish for. Just make your wish and say, ‘Grind, my millstone!’ When you have enough and want the millstone to stop, say, ‘Enough and have done!’ And it will stop. Now go!”

The poor man ran home and told his wife about his adventures. Then he put the millstone on the table, and said, “Grind, my millstone! Give us a feast fit for a king.”

The millstone began to grind, and out came the most wonderful food ever. The poor man and his wife ate and ate till they could eat no more.

“Enough and have done!” commanded the poor man, and the millstone stopped.

From then on the poor man and his wife always had enough. The millstone gave them a fine new house, fields full of crops, enough food to eat and clothes to wear.

The rich brother was jealous. He stole the millstone and ran off, without asking how to make it stop. He rowed out to sea in his boat.

“I want some salt with my lunch,” he thought. “Grind, my millstone! Give me salt, as much as you can!” he said. The millstone began to turn and out poured a stream of fine, white salt. Soon the boat was full. “Stop!” shouted the rich man.

But he did not know the magic words. Eventually, the boat was so full of salt that it began sinking. “Help!” cried the rich man.

The boat sank to the bottom of the sea, taking the rich man and the millstone with it. The magic millstone kept grinding, pouring out the finest, whitest salt. It is still grinding there, to this very day.

And that, believe it or not, is why the sea is salty.



# The Rainbow Snake

## AUSTRALIA

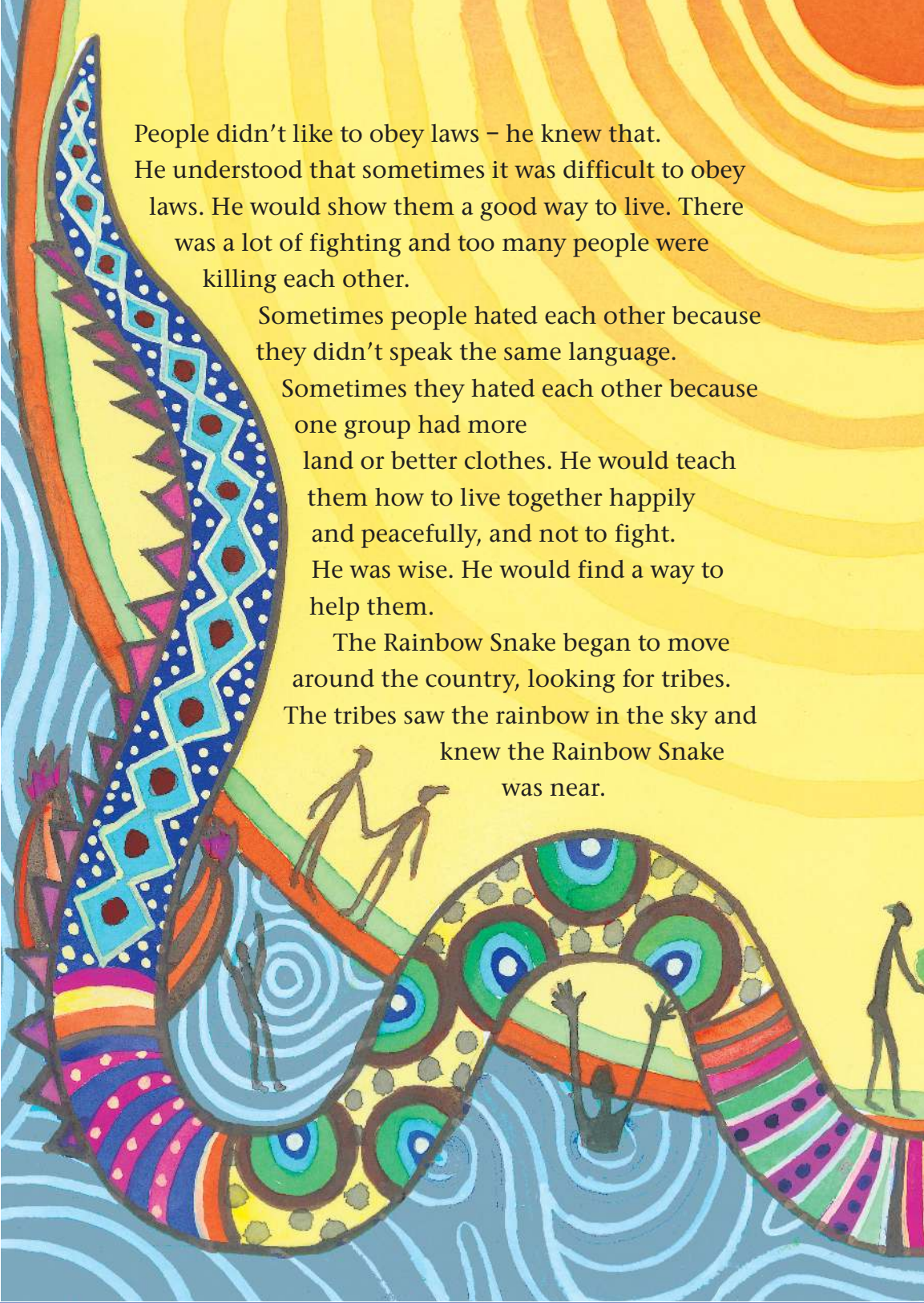
Long, long ago in the Dreamtime, the earth was born. The Rainbow Snake came out from deep down in the earth. He was huge. He had a python's body, a kangaroo's head and a crocodile's tail.

He was one of the most important spirits sent to create the earth. He came to help all people to live together peacefully. But he also came to punish people who broke the law.

The earth was very different at that time. There were no mountains, no hills and no valleys – everything was flat. The earth was soft and muddy and there were no rocks and no stones.

The Rainbow Snake came out from deep under the earth. He pushed up the soft sand and started to move, slithering across the land. He lifted his head to look around – and he made huge, spiky mountains and small, rounded hills. He moved his tail – and so he made wide river valleys to carry rainwater to the sea.

The Rainbow Snake had a special job to do. He would find his people and teach them to make laws. They had to have laws to stop them stealing and killing and cheating each other. They had to have laws to help them be kind and generous.



People didn't like to obey laws – he knew that. He understood that sometimes it was difficult to obey laws. He would show them a good way to live. There was a lot of fighting and too many people were killing each other.

Sometimes people hated each other because they didn't speak the same language.

Sometimes they hated each other because one group had more land or better clothes. He would teach them how to live together happily and peacefully, and not to fight. He was wise. He would find a way to help them.

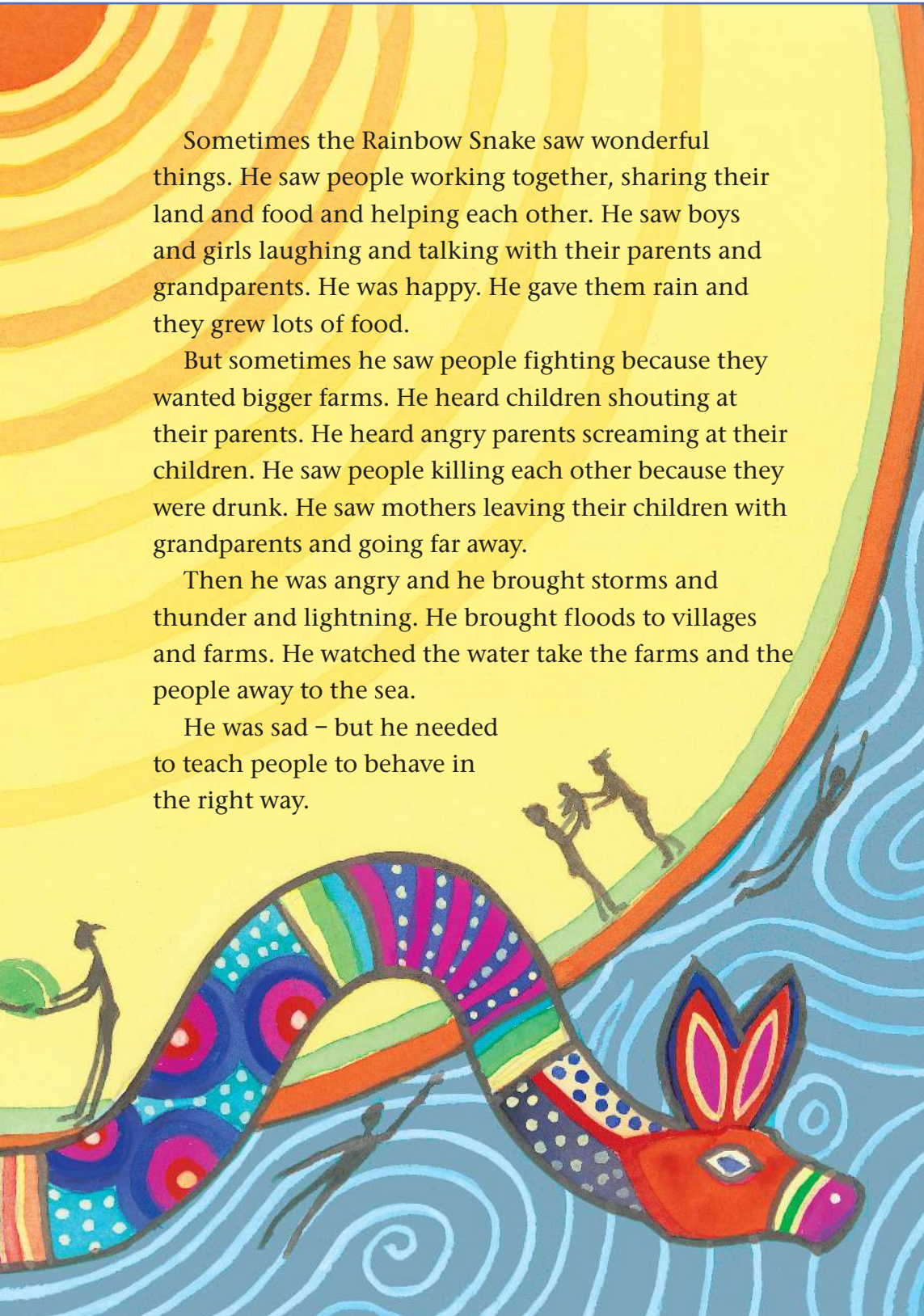
The Rainbow Snake began to move around the country, looking for tribes. The tribes saw the rainbow in the sky and knew the Rainbow Snake was near.

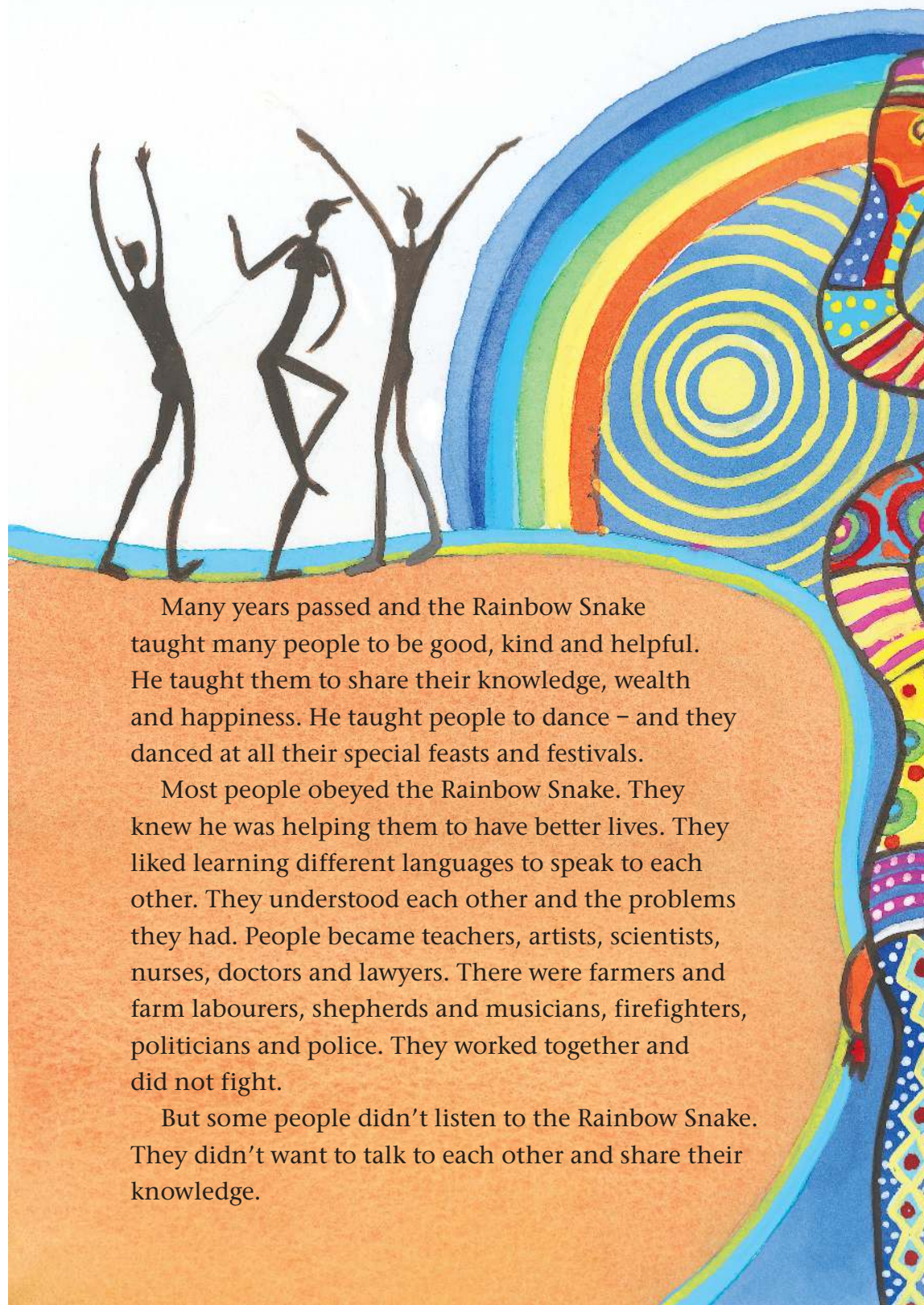
Sometimes the Rainbow Snake saw wonderful things. He saw people working together, sharing their land and food and helping each other. He saw boys and girls laughing and talking with their parents and grandparents. He was happy. He gave them rain and they grew lots of food.

But sometimes he saw people fighting because they wanted bigger farms. He heard children shouting at their parents. He heard angry parents screaming at their children. He saw people killing each other because they were drunk. He saw mothers leaving their children with grandparents and going far away.

Then he was angry and he brought storms and thunder and lightning. He brought floods to villages and farms. He watched the water take the farms and the people away to the sea.

He was sad – but he needed to teach people to behave in the right way.

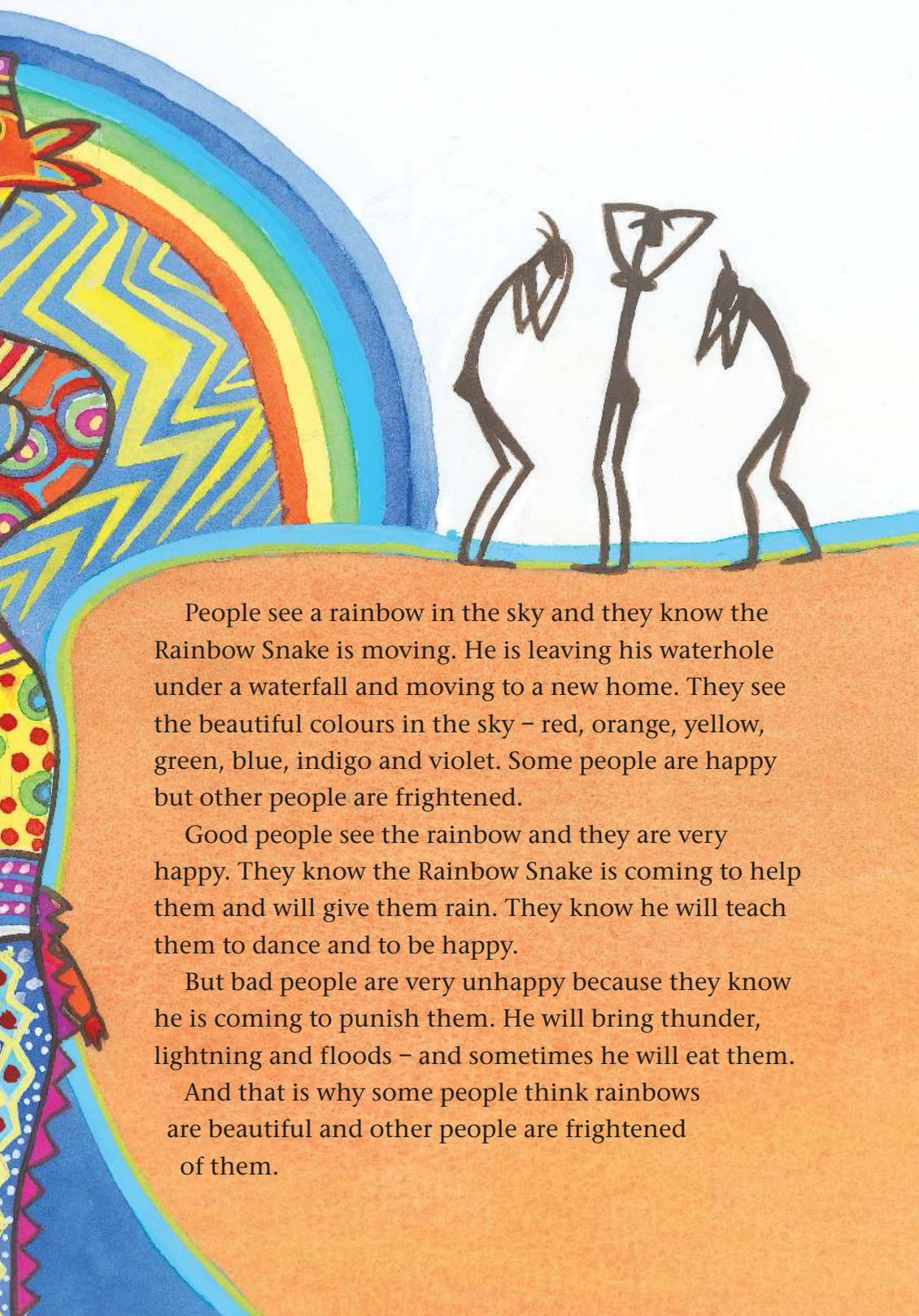




Many years passed and the Rainbow Snake taught many people to be good, kind and helpful. He taught them to share their knowledge, wealth and happiness. He taught people to dance – and they danced at all their special feasts and festivals.

Most people obeyed the Rainbow Snake. They knew he was helping them to have better lives. They liked learning different languages to speak to each other. They understood each other and the problems they had. People became teachers, artists, scientists, nurses, doctors and lawyers. There were farmers and farm labourers, shepherds and musicians, firefighters, politicians and police. They worked together and did not fight.

But some people didn't listen to the Rainbow Snake. They didn't want to talk to each other and share their knowledge.



People see a rainbow in the sky and they know the Rainbow Snake is moving. He is leaving his waterhole under a waterfall and moving to a new home. They see the beautiful colours in the sky – red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo and violet. Some people are happy but other people are frightened.

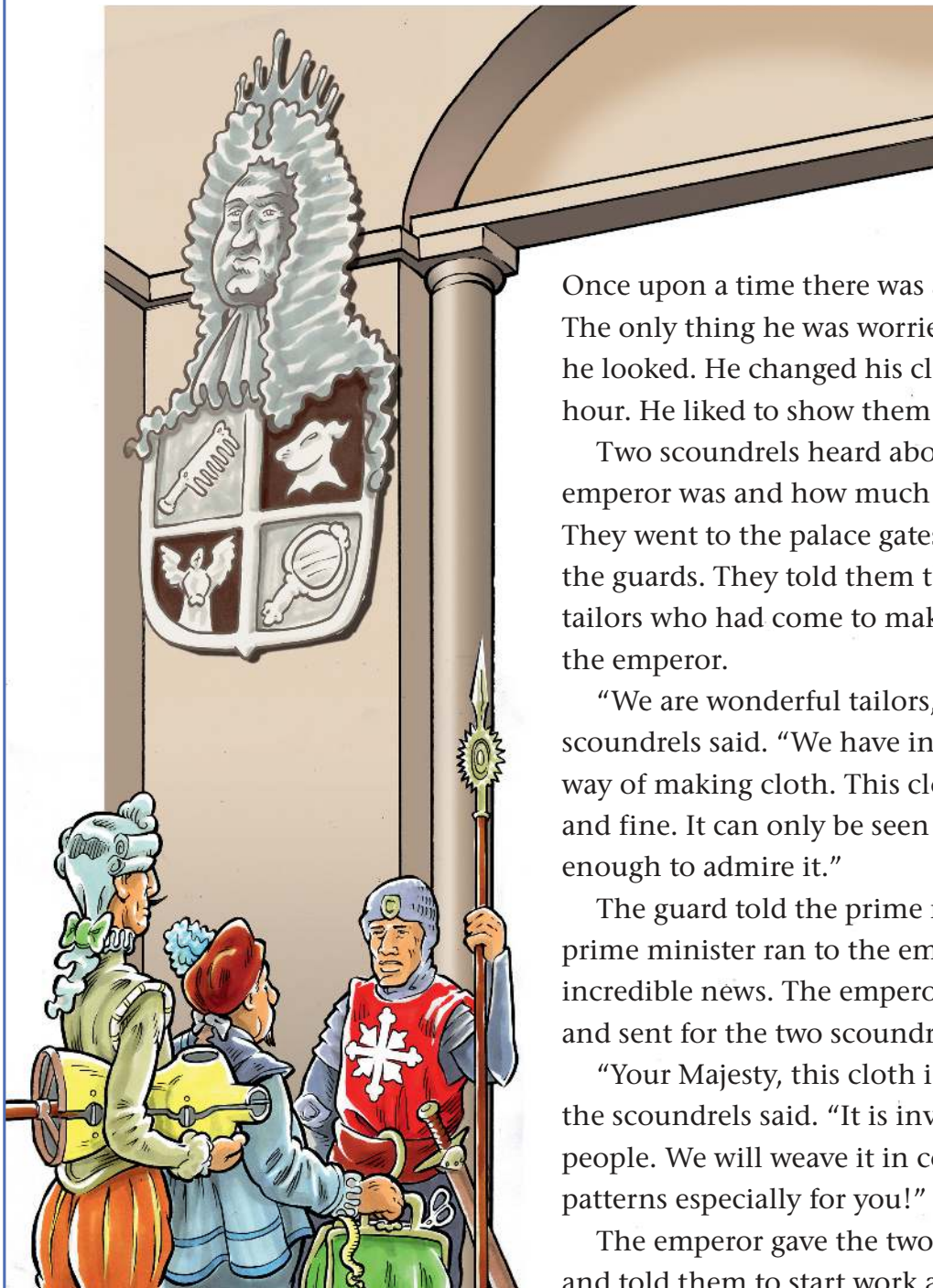
Good people see the rainbow and they are very happy. They know the Rainbow Snake is coming to help them and will give them rain. They know he will teach them to dance and to be happy.

But bad people are very unhappy because they know he is coming to punish them. He will bring thunder, lightning and floods – and sometimes he will eat them.

And that is why some people think rainbows are beautiful and other people are frightened of them.



## The emperor's new clothes



Once upon a time there was a vain emperor. The only thing he was worried about was how he looked. He changed his clothes almost every hour. He liked to show them off to his people.

Two scoundrels heard about how vain the emperor was and how much he liked clothes. They went to the palace gates and spoke to the guards. They told them that they were tailors who had come to make clothes for the emperor.

“We are wonderful tailors,” the two scoundrels said. “We have invented a special way of making cloth. This cloth is so light and fine. It can only be seen by people clever enough to admire it.”

The guard told the prime minister and the prime minister ran to the emperor with the incredible news. The emperor was very curious and sent for the two scoundrels.

“Your Majesty, this cloth is very special,” the scoundrels said. “It is invisible to stupid people. We will weave it in colours and patterns especially for you!”

The emperor gave the two men a bag of gold and told them to start work at once.

The emperor thought his money was well spent. Not only would he get a new suit, but he would also find out who was stupid.

A few days later, the emperor asked the prime minister to go and see how the tailors were getting on.

“We’re almost finished,” the two scoundrels said. “Just look at these colours! Feel the softness of the wonderful material!”

The prime minister couldn’t see anything, but he pretended to admire the cloth. He didn’t want them to think he was stupid.

“What marvellous fabric! I shall certainly tell the emperor,” he said.

The two scoundrels were pleased and asked for more gold.

Before long, the scoundrels arrived at the royal apartment ready to take measurements for the new suit.

“Come in, come in,” the emperor said eagerly.

The scoundrels bowed low and pretended to stagger under the weight of the cloth.

“Here it is, Your Majesty,” they said. “What do you think of it? Just look at the rich colours! Feel how soft it is!”

