

Can you imagine a career as a ballet dancer?

**Thank you for purchasing this book and stay tuned
for my next book.**

**Visit my website at
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The book writing process appears to be quite simple. But this book writing journey would not be complete with out the help of KSD; and the illustrator Afzalkhan.

Thank you

People all over the world are taking ballet lessons. Some start very early and some start late. Could Roscoe follow the likes of Karel Shook, Arthur Mitchell, Alvin Ailey, Carmen de Lavalde, Geoffrey Holder, Diane Adams, Lyn Seymour, football player Willie Gault....and become a ballet dancer?



The kitchen is the main place in the Washington's home to enjoy Grandma's delicious meals, listen to poppa's amazing stories, enjoy breaking news and witty discoveries from their neighbor, Mr. Jenkins, and take care of family business.

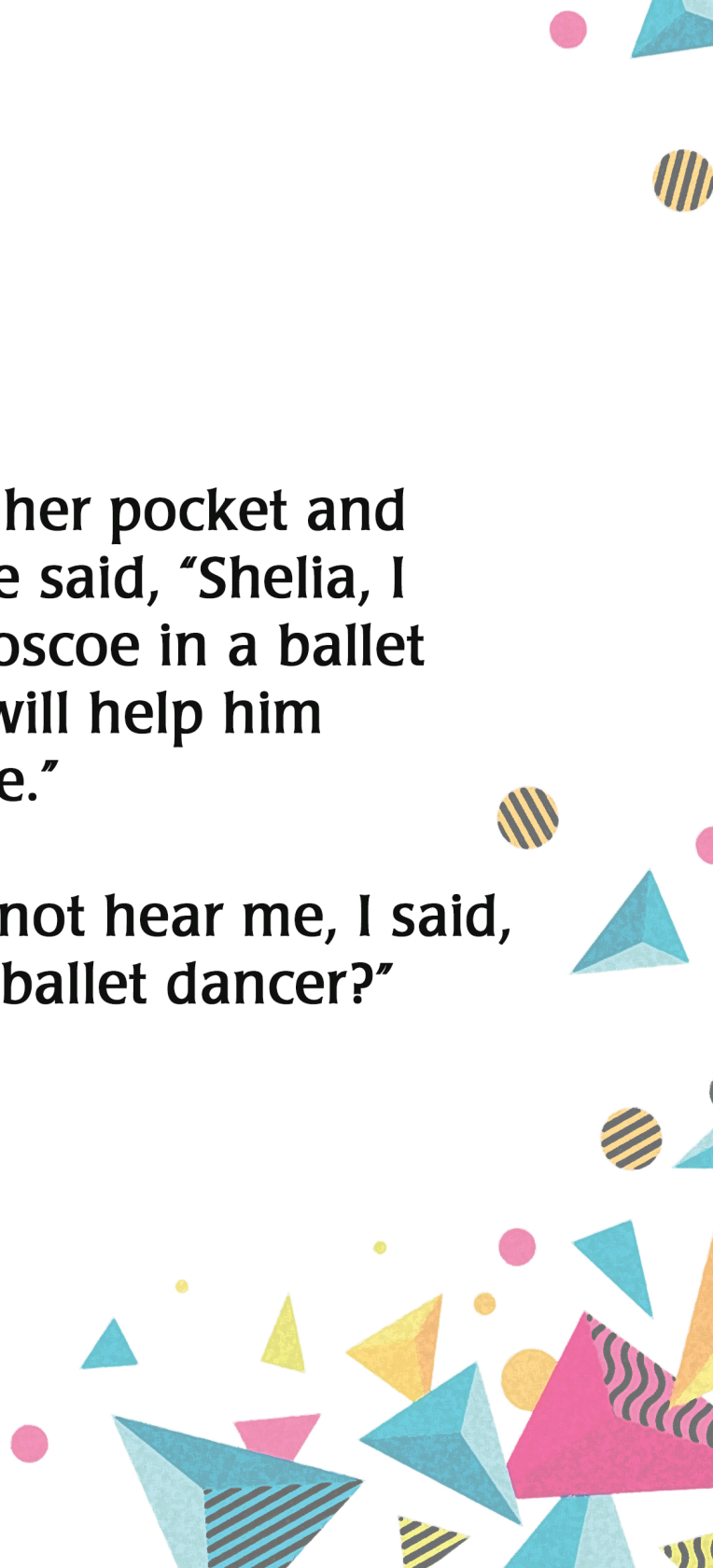
Grandma, as well as everyone else, wants what's best for her grandson, Roscoe, the kid who likes to play video games, text friends, spend time on his tablet, and lay around the house watching television.

Today, Grandma knows what's best for Roscoe.



Grandma reached in her pocket and pulled out a flyer. She said, “Shelia, I want you to enroll Roscoe in a ballet class. Ballet lessons will help him develop good posture.”

Softly, so they could not hear me, I said, “Oh Grandma, me, a ballet dancer?”

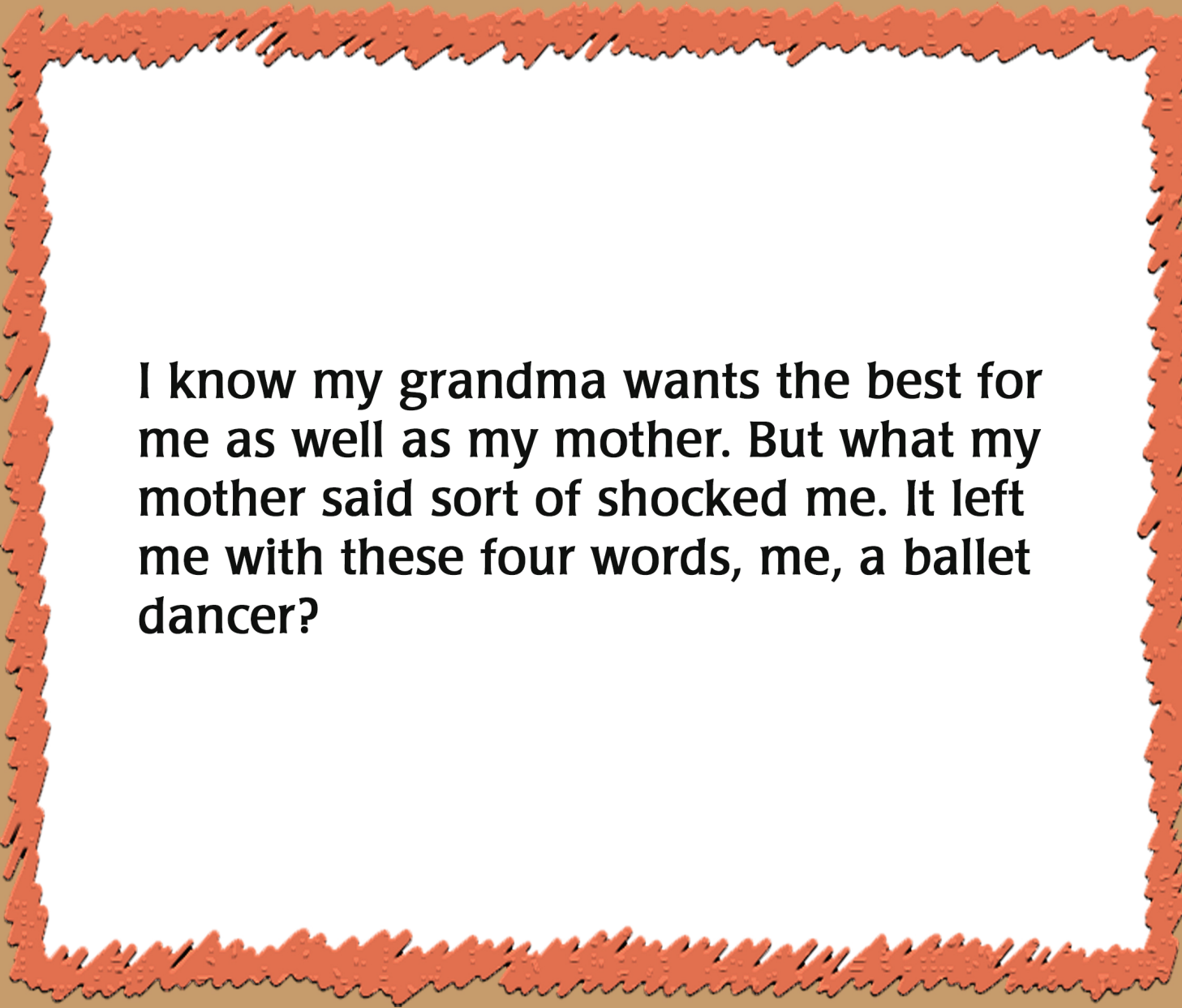




My mom said, “Roscoe, as a baby you were quite a kicker. I can see you kicking and leaping in ballet classes. You might be a natural at it.”

In my mind, ballet dancing fit like walking in shoes on the wrong feet. I thought to myself, me, a ballet dancer?





I know my grandma wants the best for me as well as my mother. But what my mother said sort of shocked me. It left me with these four words, me, a ballet dancer?



“Roscoe ballet lessons may give you something real special,” quipped Mr. Jenkins.

“What?”


Very sure about himself and beaming like a bright sun, Mr. Jenkins added, “Roscoe, thanks to ballet lessons, I have style.”

“But I’m only seven years old.”

“That’s the perfect age Roscoe. It’s better to start when you’re young or you may never get it.”

I thought, hmMMM, me, a ballet dancer?





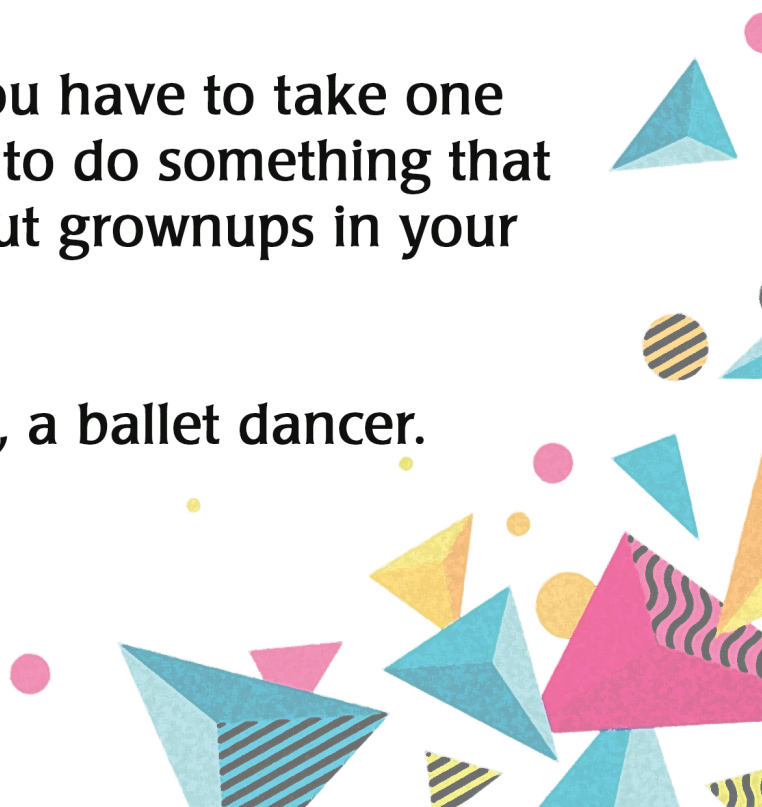
I left the kitchen to talk to my grandfather about ballet lessons.

“Let me get this right, Roscoe. Grandma and your mother want you to take ballet lessons.”

“I don’t want to take ballet lessons.”

"Sometimes, Roscoe, you have to take one for the team. You have to do something that you don't want to do but grownups in your family want you to do."

I thought to myself, me, a ballet dancer.





**Roscoe's father held up the flyer Grandma
had placed on the table and read it aloud.**

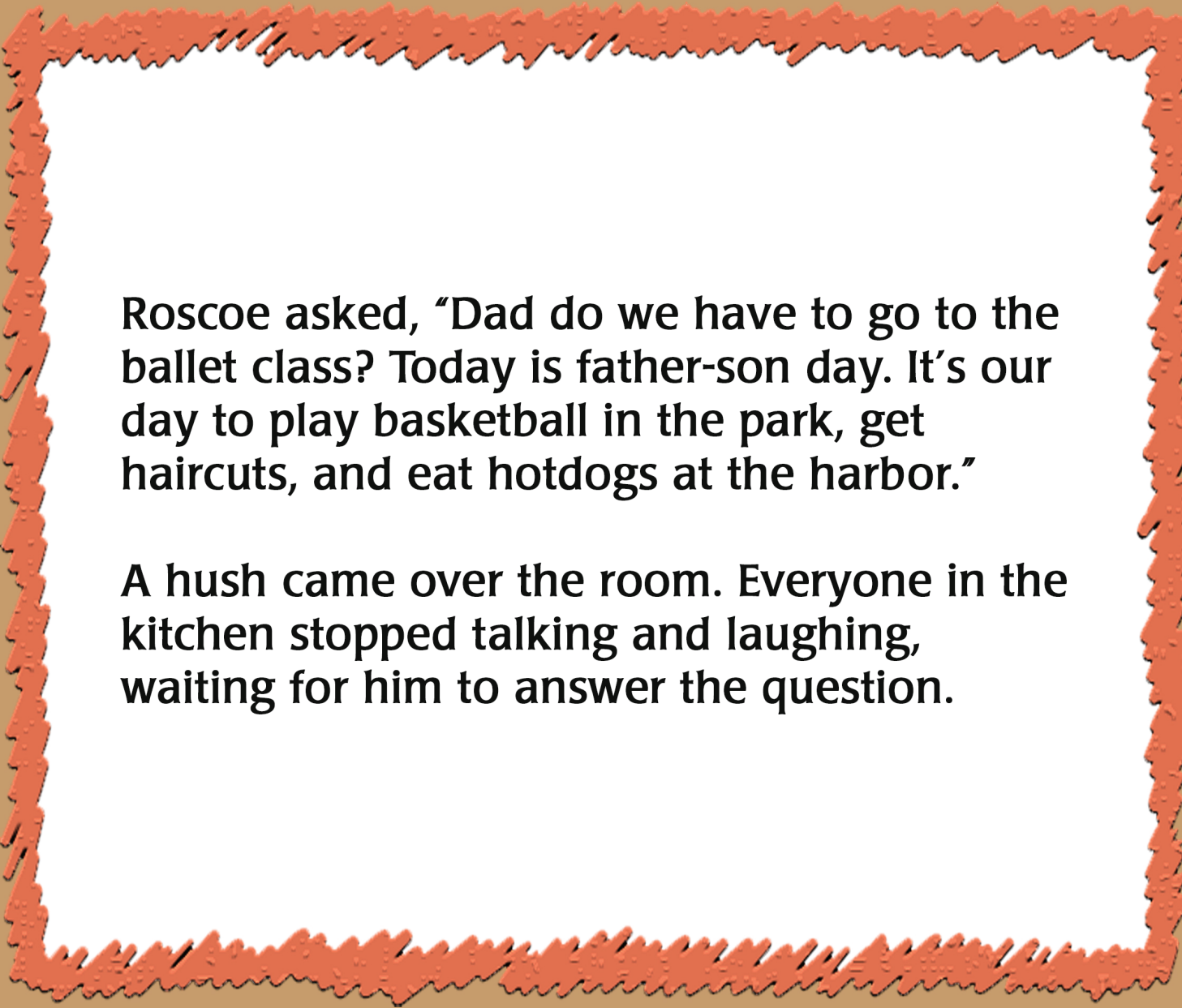
The Public Library Presents

**A Ballet Demonstration by Jerome Johnson
Saturday**

4 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Are ballet lessons for you?





Roscoe asked, “Dad do we have to go to the ballet class? Today is father-son day. It’s our day to play basketball in the park, get haircuts, and eat hotdogs at the harbor.”

A hush came over the room. Everyone in the kitchen stopped talking and laughing, waiting for him to answer the question.



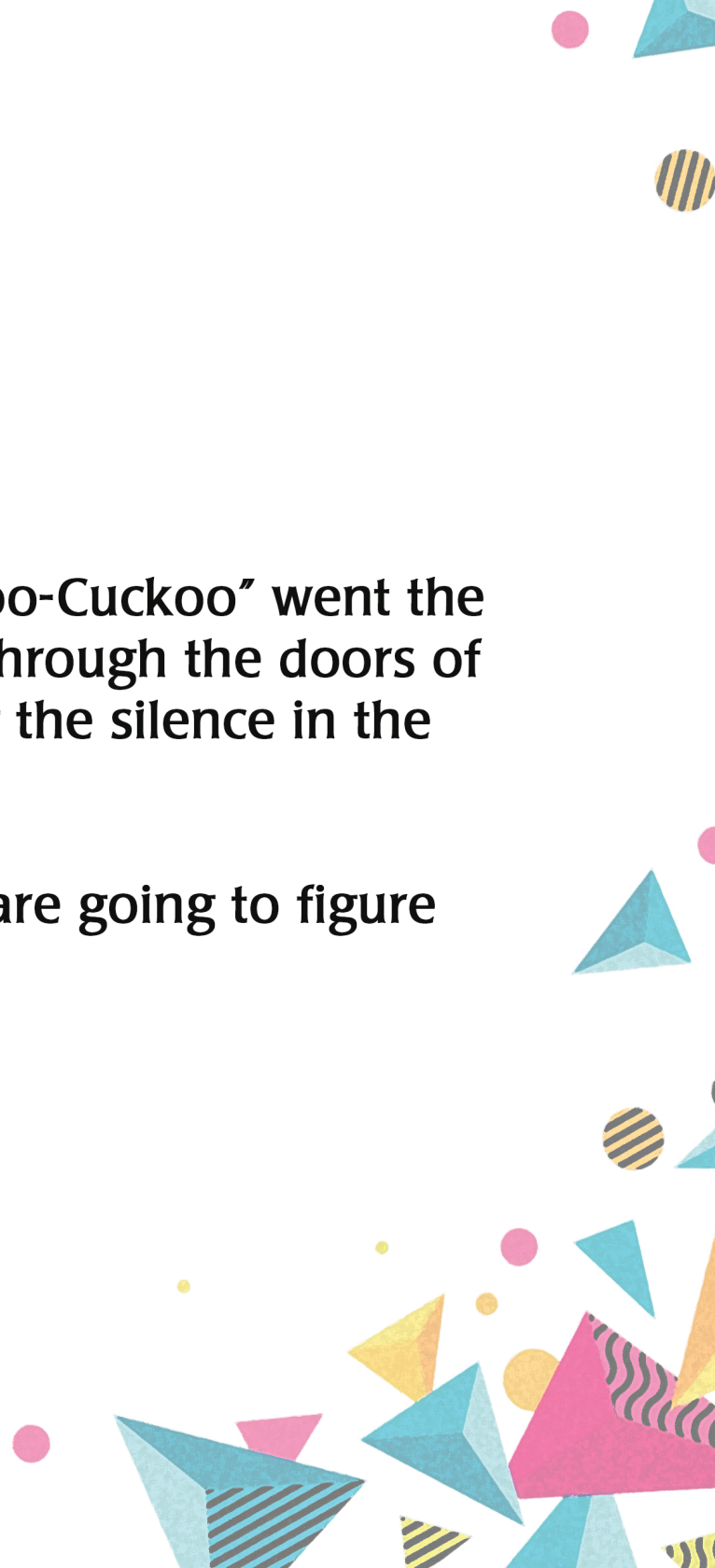
The only sound in the kitchen came from the cuckoo clock. Tick, tock, tick tock, tick, tock...

My eyes were glued on my dad as he sat in the thinking man's position.



“Cuckoo-Cuckoo-Cuckoo-Cuckoo” went the Cuckoo bird, bursting through the doors of the clock and breaking the silence in the kitchen.

“Come along, son, we are going to figure this out.”





**While riding in the car all I could think of
now were the words spoken in the house.**

Posture

Leaping and kicking

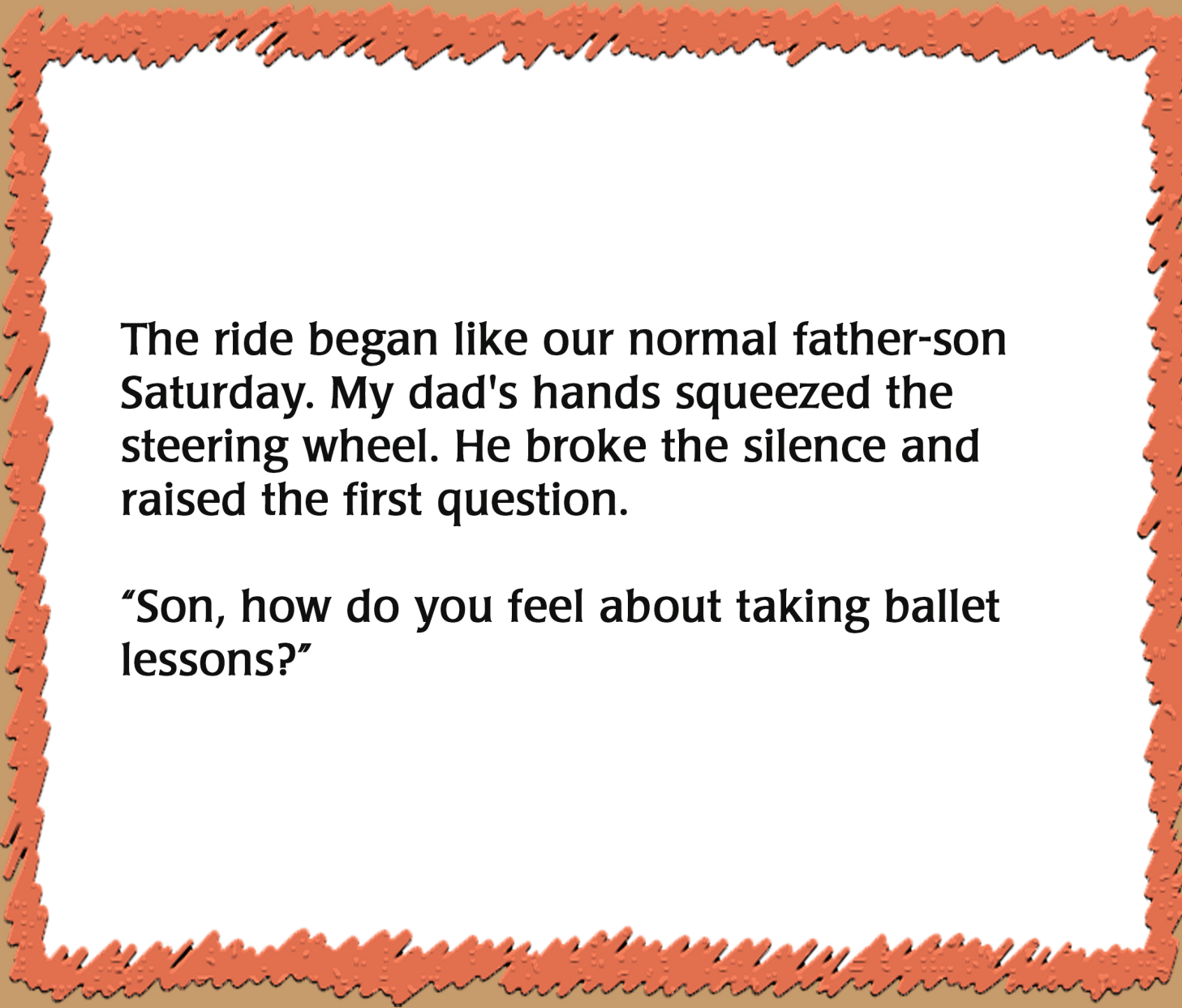
A natural

Style

Take one for the team

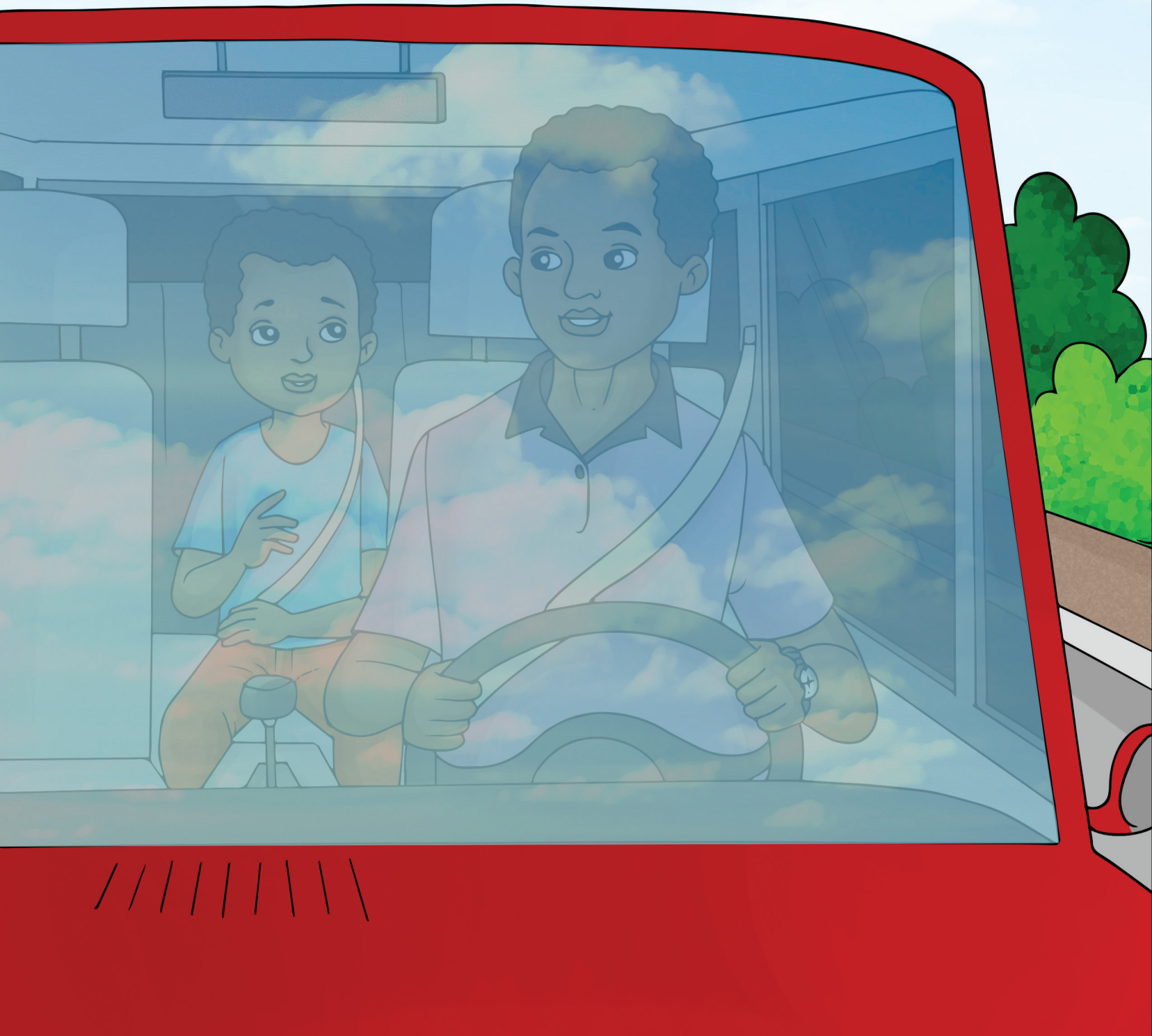
**As I got comfortable sitting in the back seat,
I thought to myself, me, a ballet dancer?**





The ride began like our normal father-son Saturday. My dad's hands squeezed the steering wheel. He broke the silence and raised the first question.

“Son, how do you feel about taking ballet lessons?”

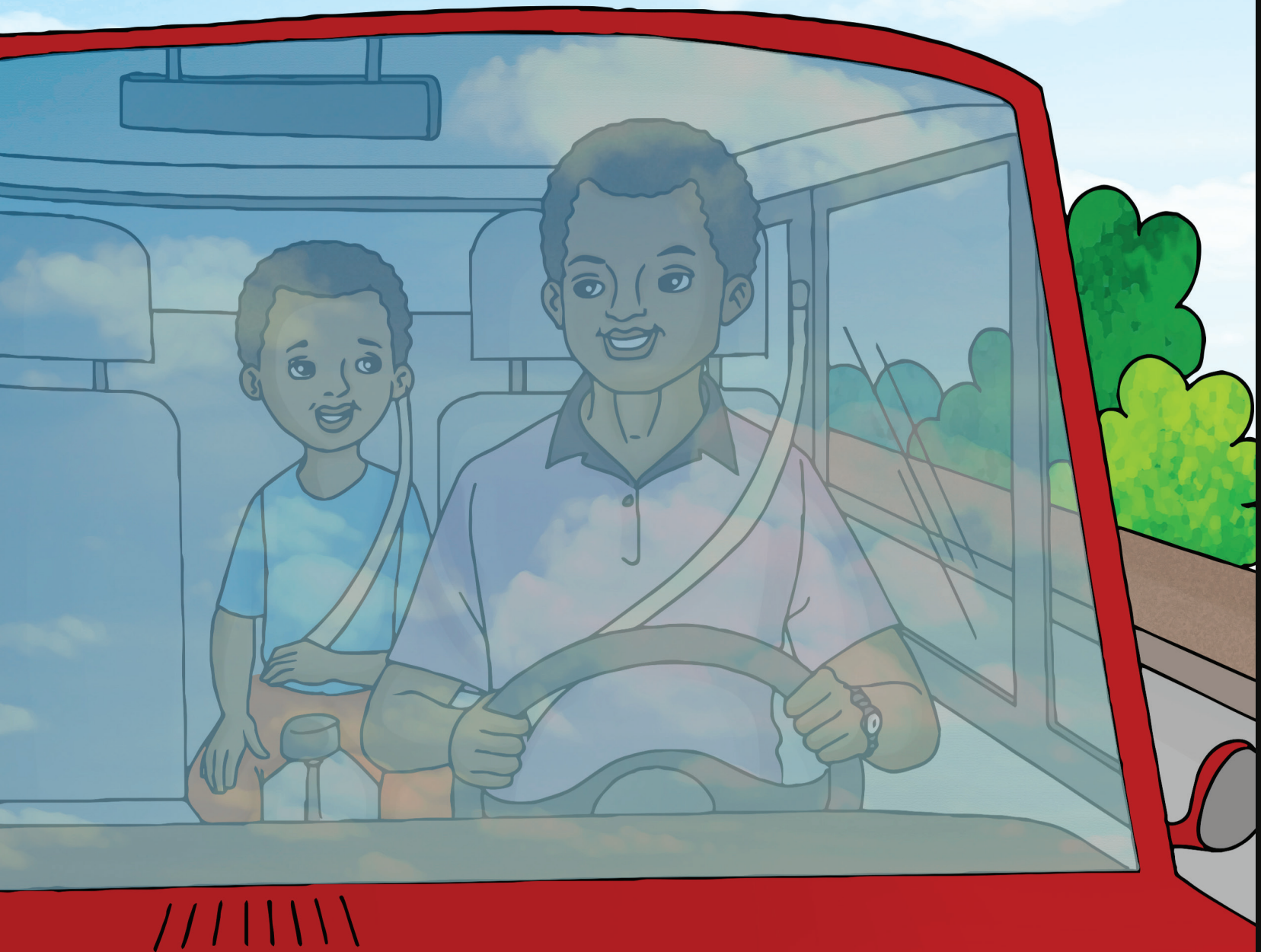


“Oh Dad, I can do many things. I can play video games on my tablet. I can watch TV. But what I want to do most is our regular father-son day stuff. Dad, how do you feel about me taking ballet lessons?”



“Roscoe, I see you scoring points on the basketball court and scoring touchdowns on the football field. I see you scoring goals on the soccer field, too. I never imagined you taking ballet lessons. It looks like you and I are taking one for the team.”





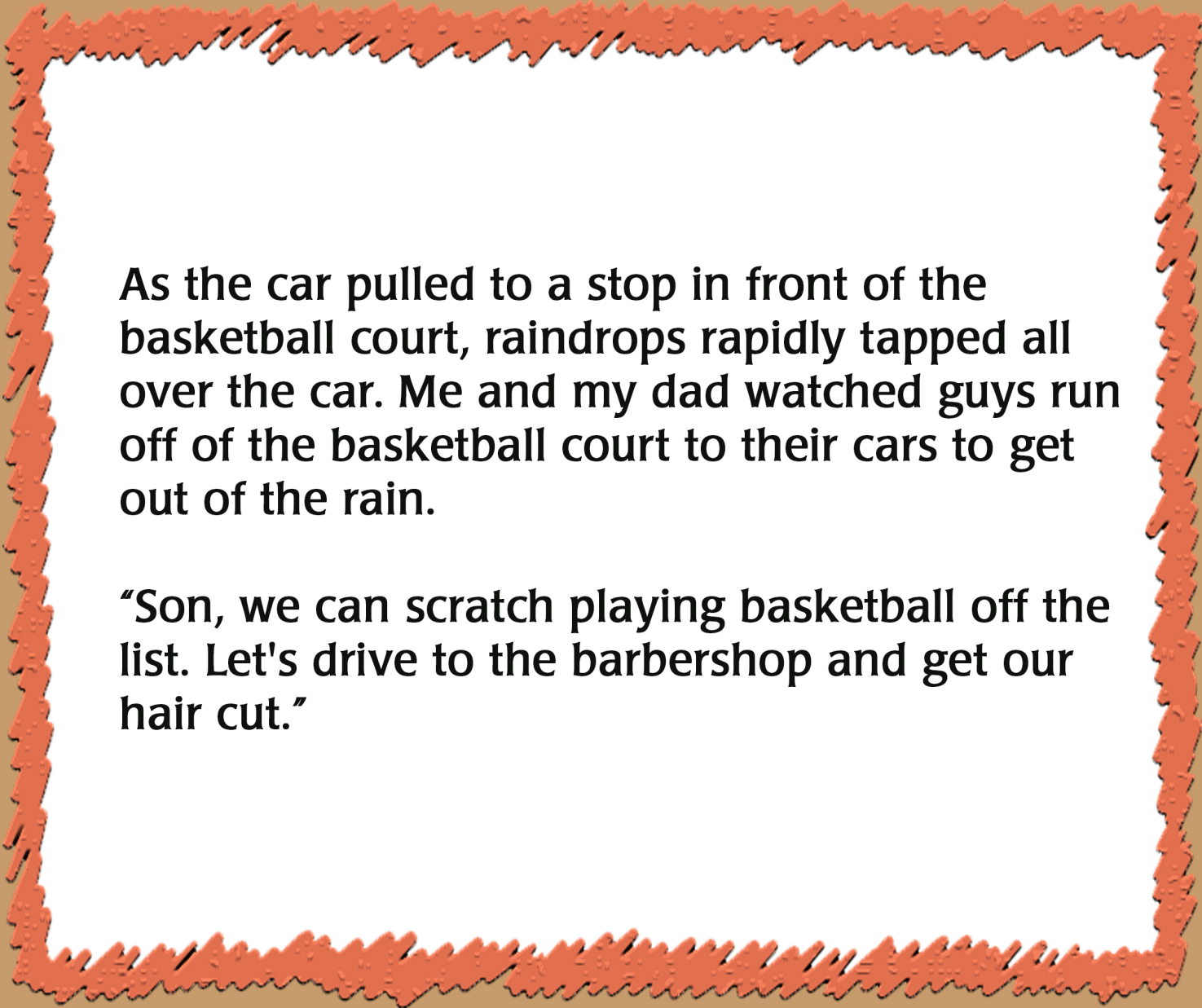
After driving awhile a huge smile appeared on my dad's face. Then the words raced from his mouth, "Son I figured it out."

"We have time for father-son day and for going to the library. Our first stop is the basketball court in the park."

"Yes!" screamed Roscoe.

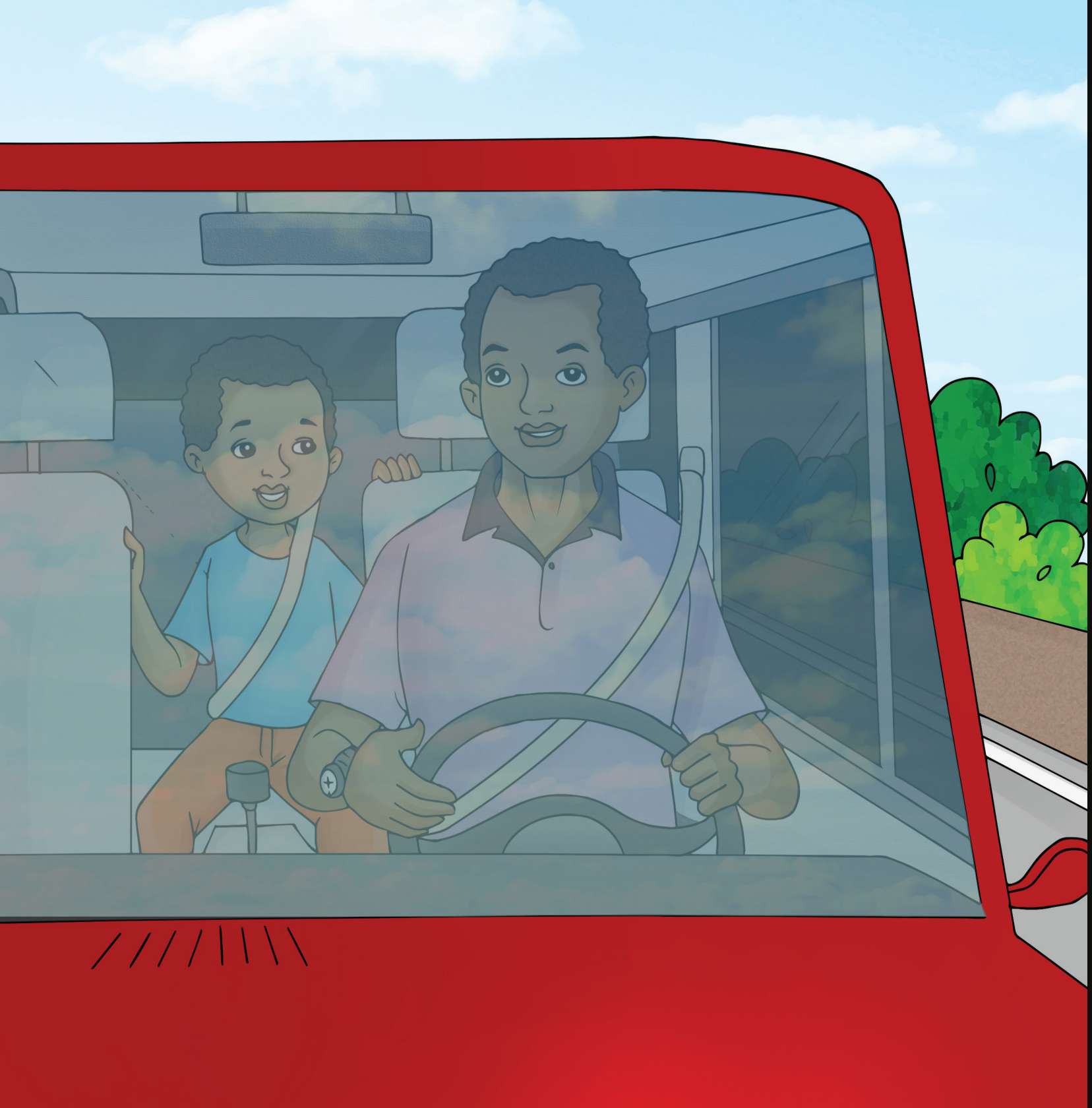


A.k Football
Field



As the car pulled to a stop in front of the basketball court, raindrops rapidly tapped all over the car. Me and my dad watched guys run off of the basketball court to their cars to get out of the rain.

“Son, we can scratch playing basketball off the list. Let's drive to the barbershop and get our hair cut.”



As we drove to the barbershop, Dad laughed about the comments made in the kitchen about ballet lessons, especially Mr. Jenkins' comment about style.

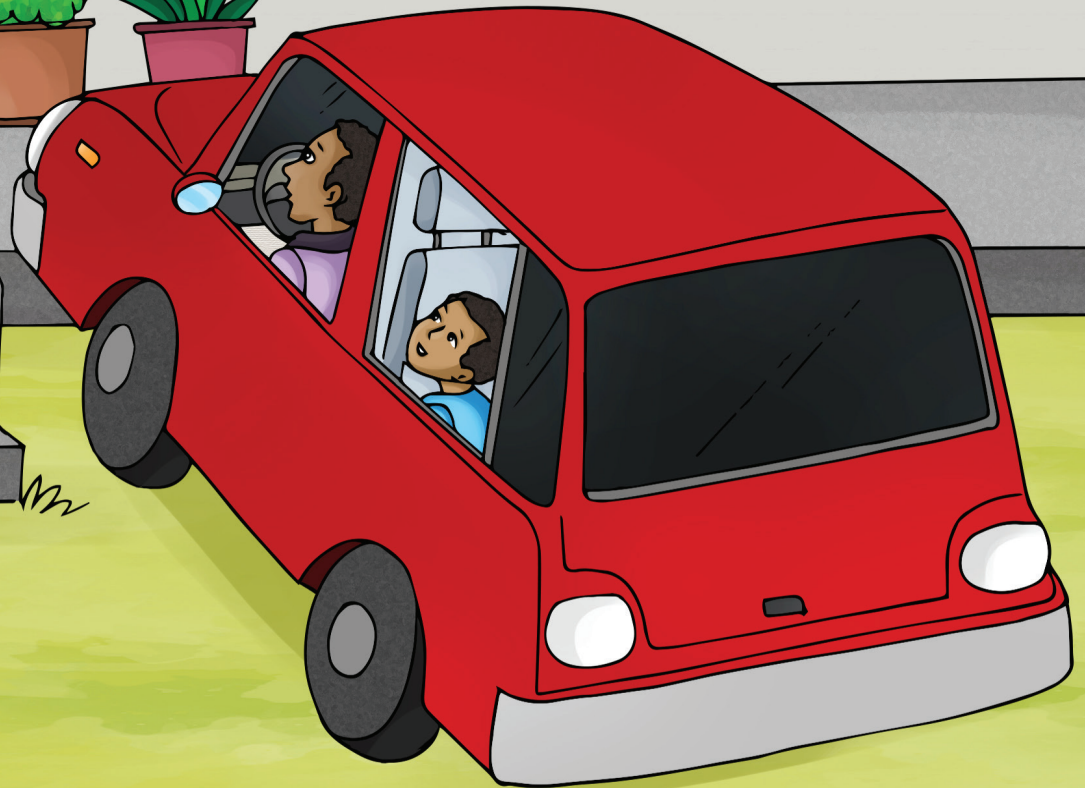
Little Roscoe always had style and something extraordinary to say at odd times. He would pick the right time and the right words. Now was that time.

"Dad, I never hear any barbers or customers in the barbershop talk about ballet dancing. Can we talk about it today?"

Reluctantly, Dad said, "Sure Roscoe, we can talk about it today."

BARBER SHOP

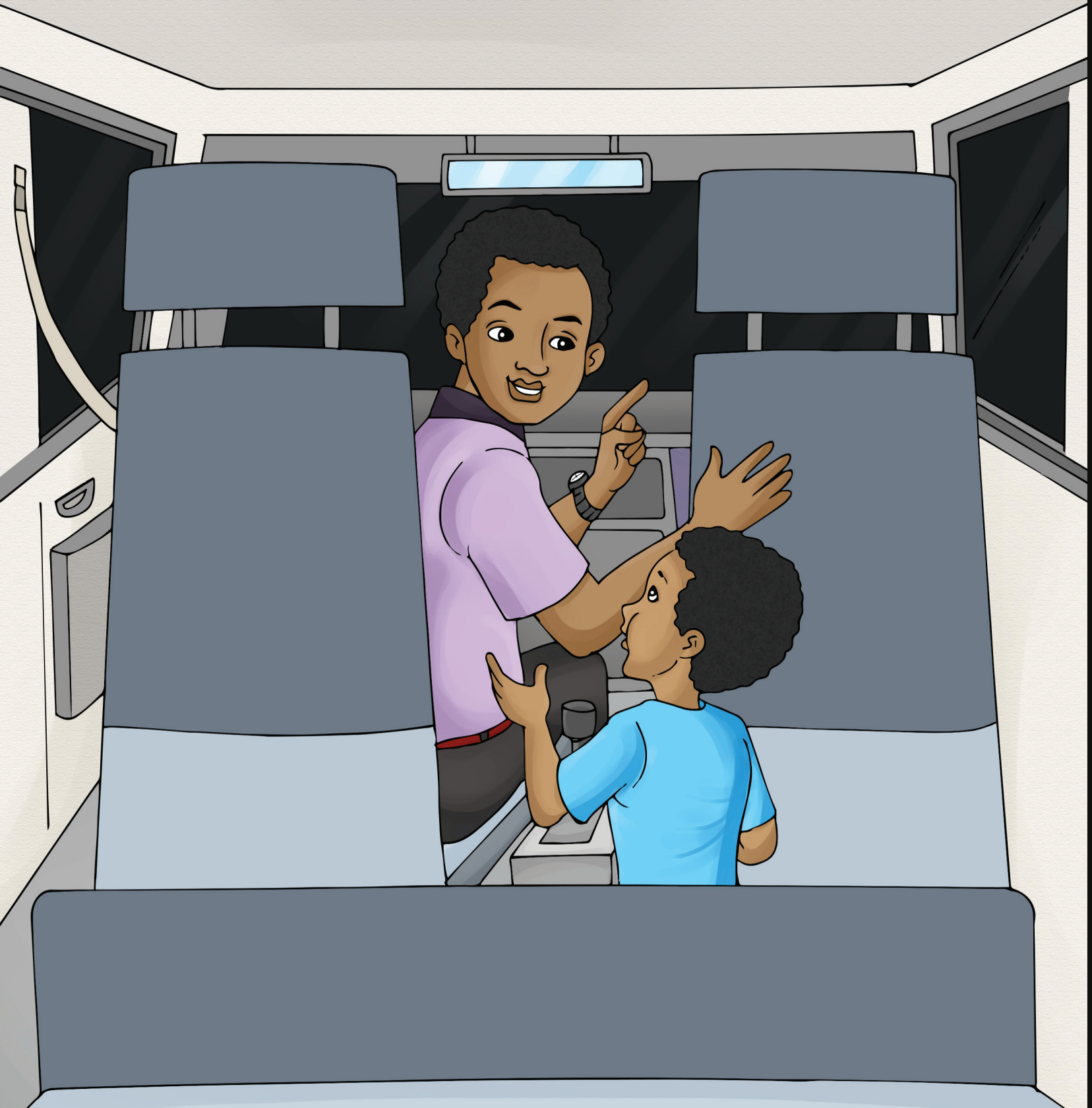
CLOSED FOR
REPAIR



Roscoe and his dad arrived at the barbershop. They were surprised to find parking spots in front of the shop. When they read the sign on the door, they knew why.

The barbershop is closed for repairs.

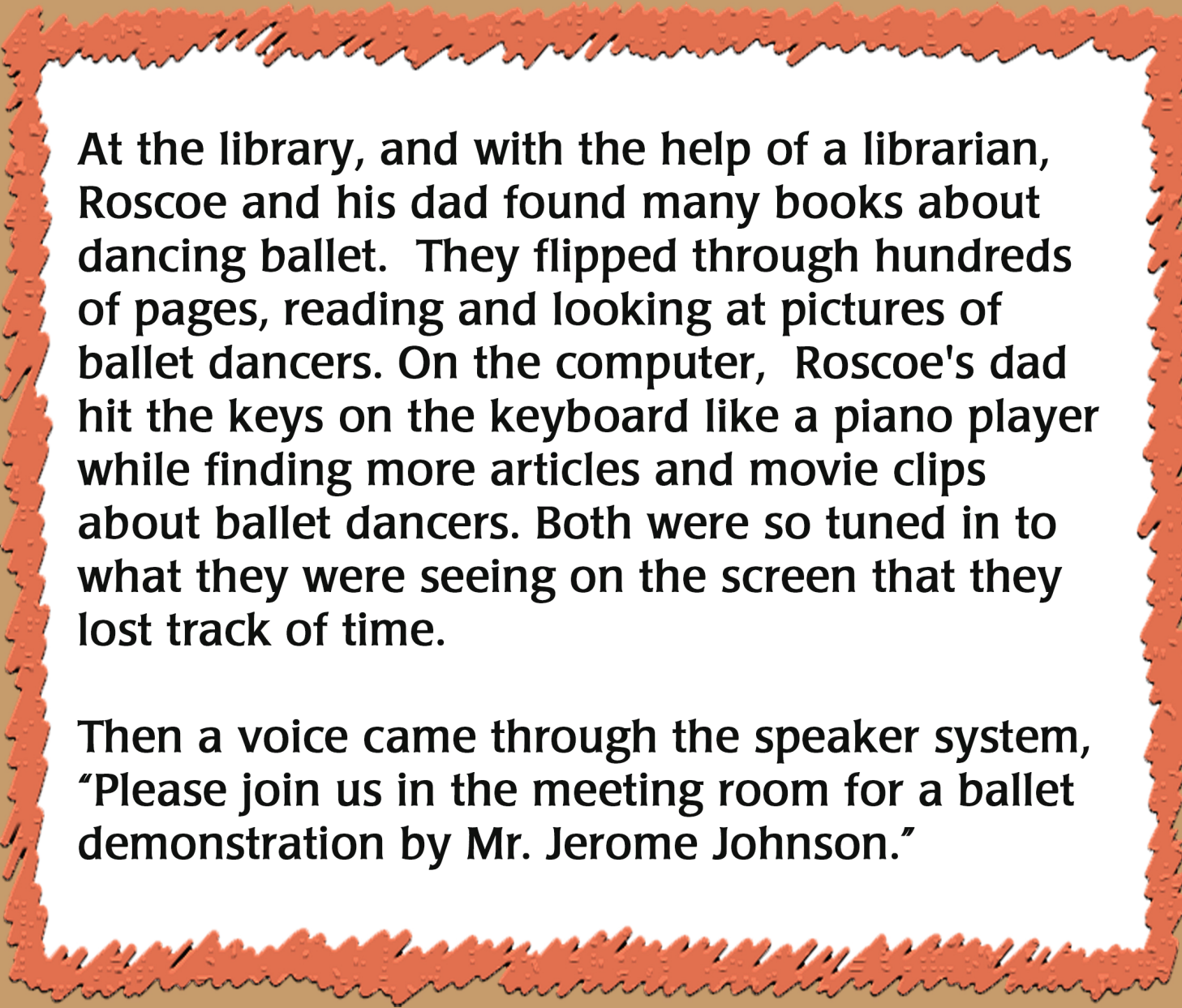




My father was disappointed. Getting a haircut was a big part of father-son day. Yet, he was smiling. We didn't have to talk about ballet dancing so that must have made him happy.

"Son, it's too early to eat at the pier. Let's go to the library."





At the library, and with the help of a librarian, Roscoe and his dad found many books about dancing ballet. They flipped through hundreds of pages, reading and looking at pictures of ballet dancers. On the computer, Roscoe's dad hit the keys on the keyboard like a piano player while finding more articles and movie clips about ballet dancers. Both were so tuned in to what they were seeing on the screen that they lost track of time.


Then a voice came through the speaker system, "Please join us in the meeting room for a ballet demonstration by Mr. Jerome Johnson."



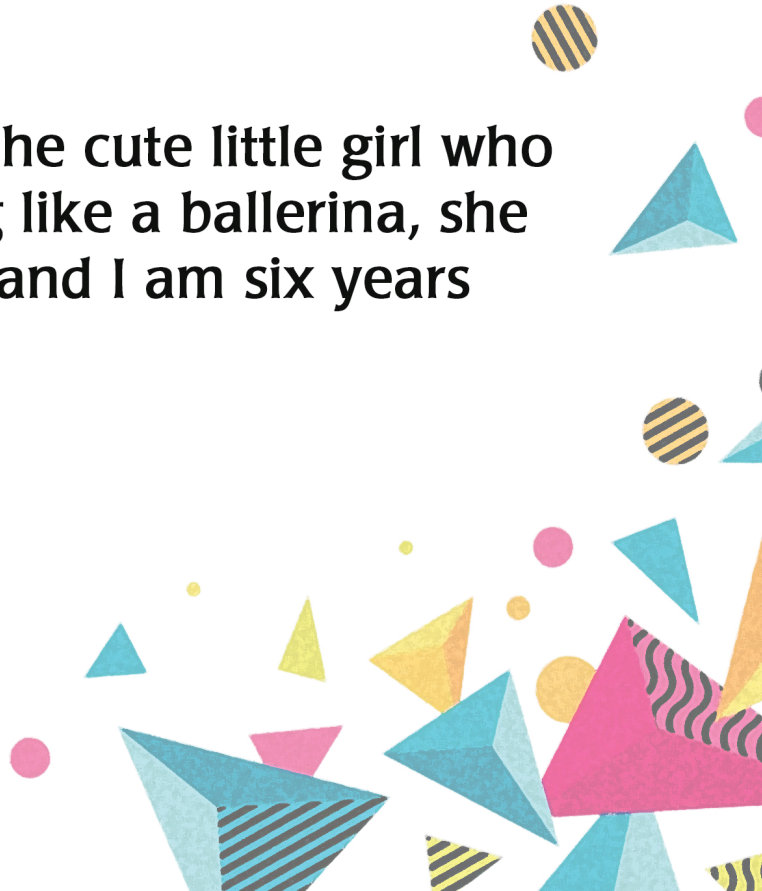
We entered the huge meeting room. Men, women, and children stood quietly waiting for Mr. Jerome Johnson.

Among the people were Lenny the barber and his two children. There was one odd thing about the room. In the middle of the floor was an empty chair.



A collection of colorful geometric shapes including circles, triangles, and squares in shades of teal, pink, yellow, and black with white stripes, located in the top right corner of the page.

Suddenly, and out of nowhere, a tall man appeared at the center of the floor. He looked like a soccer player. He said, "Good afternoon, I am Mr. Jerome Johnson. Welcome to the ballet demonstration."

A larger collection of colorful geometric shapes including circles, triangles, and squares in shades of teal, pink, yellow, and black with white stripes, located in the bottom right corner of the page.

All eyes were on him and the cute little girl who stood next to him. Looking like a ballerina, she said, "Hi, my name is Sara and I am six years old."





Instead of talking about ballet, Sara demonstrated it.

Sara the ballerina posed like a statue.
She tap danced.
She tiptoed in a circle.

Then Sara did her curtsy.

Mr. Johnson and the others in the room clapped their hands.



Mr. Johnson asked, "Is there someone else in the audience who would like to share something about ballet dancing or dancers?"

Roscoe's hand punched the air. "My name is Roscoe. I am seven years old and ballet lessons are for guys too--football players and movie stars--but I am not sure if ballet is for me."



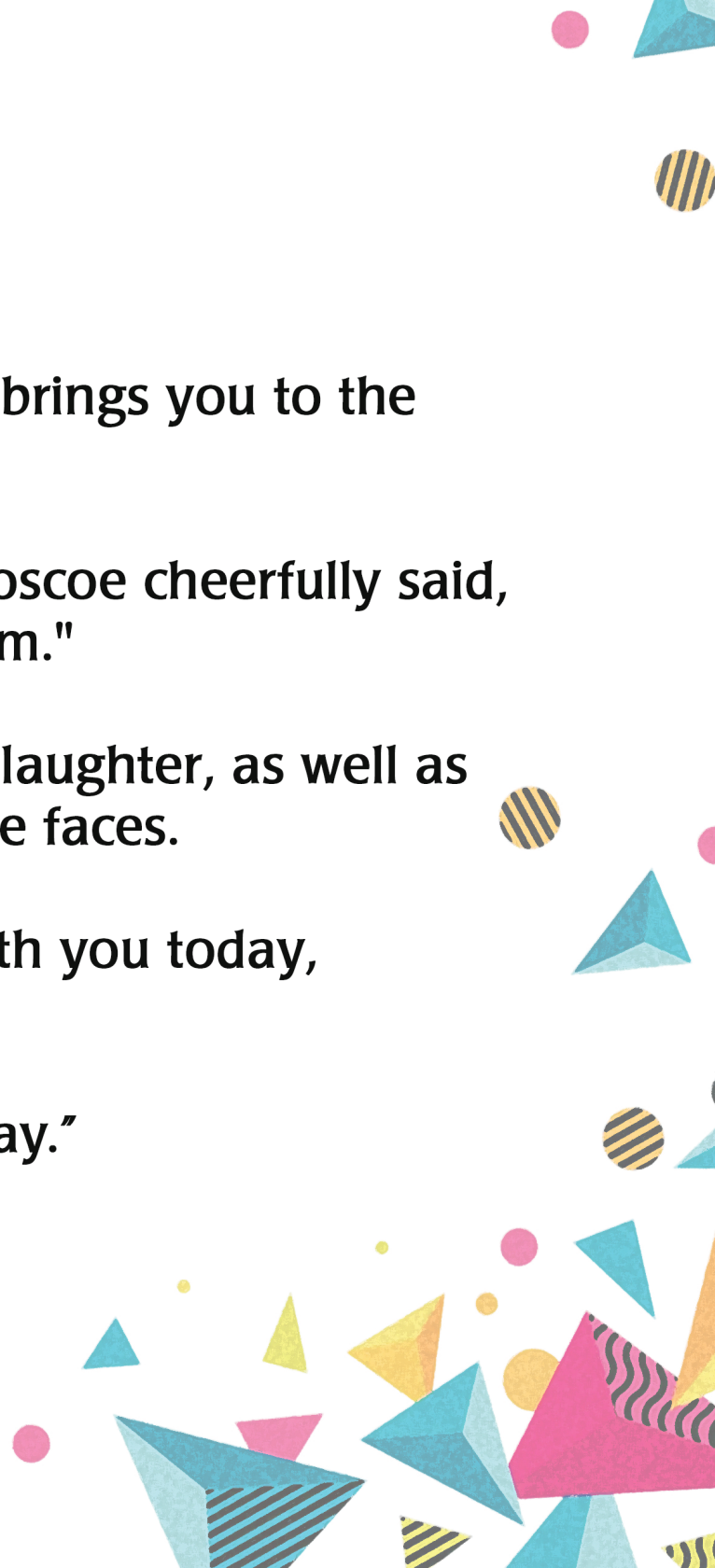
Mr. Johnson asked, "What brings you to the ballet demonstration?"

With his hand in the air, Roscoe cheerfully said, "I'm taking one for the team."

There was a smattering of laughter, as well as looks of confusion on some faces.

"Anyone from the team with you today, Roscoe?"

"Yes, my father is here today."



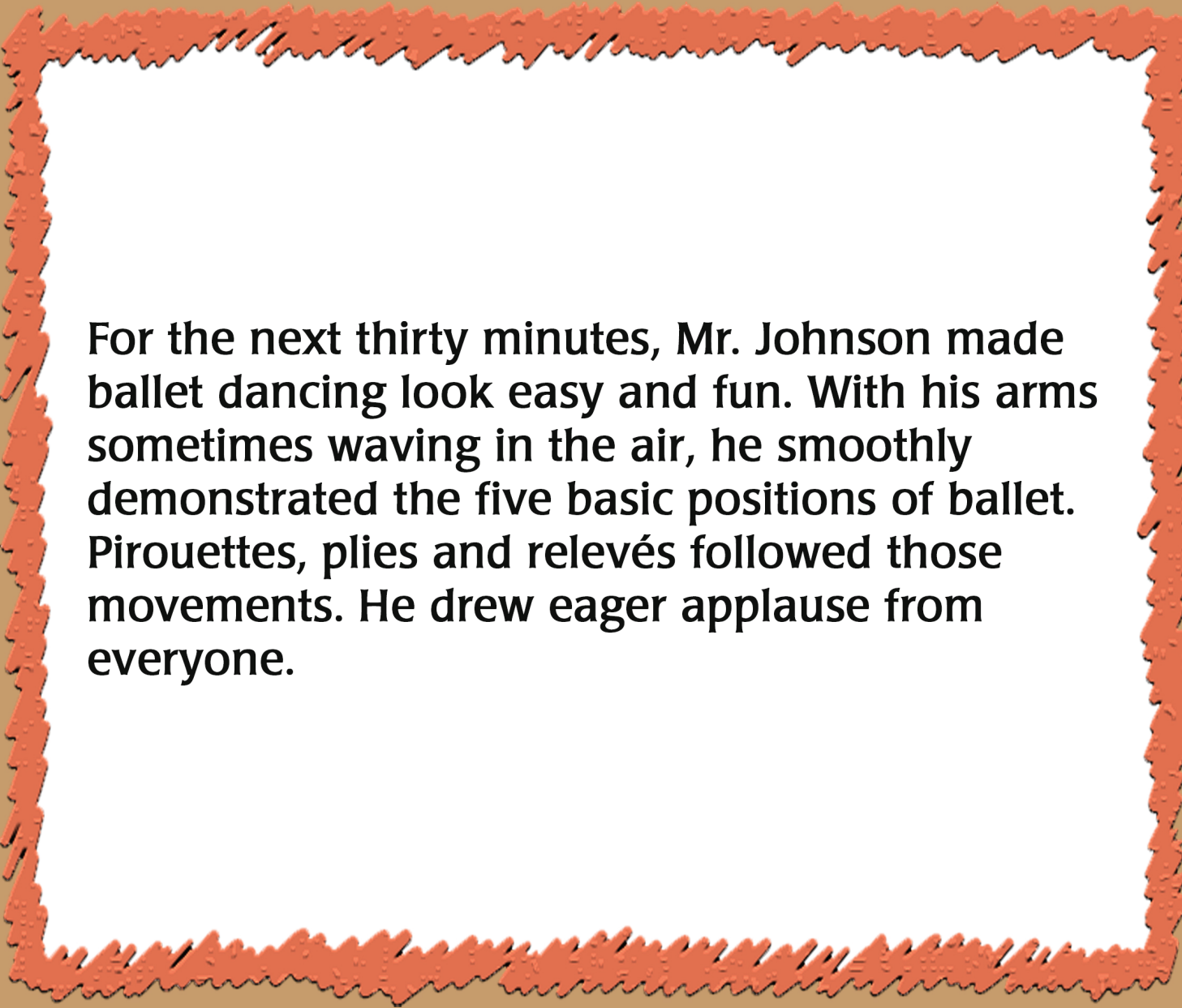


Mr. Johnson noticed that Roscoe and Sara sat side by side at the edge of the floor. He said, “I would like to dedicate this presentation to Roscoe and Sara.”

The people in the room clapped.

Roscoe sat and thought to himself, Mr. Johnson appears to have style and good posture. He must be a natural, too.



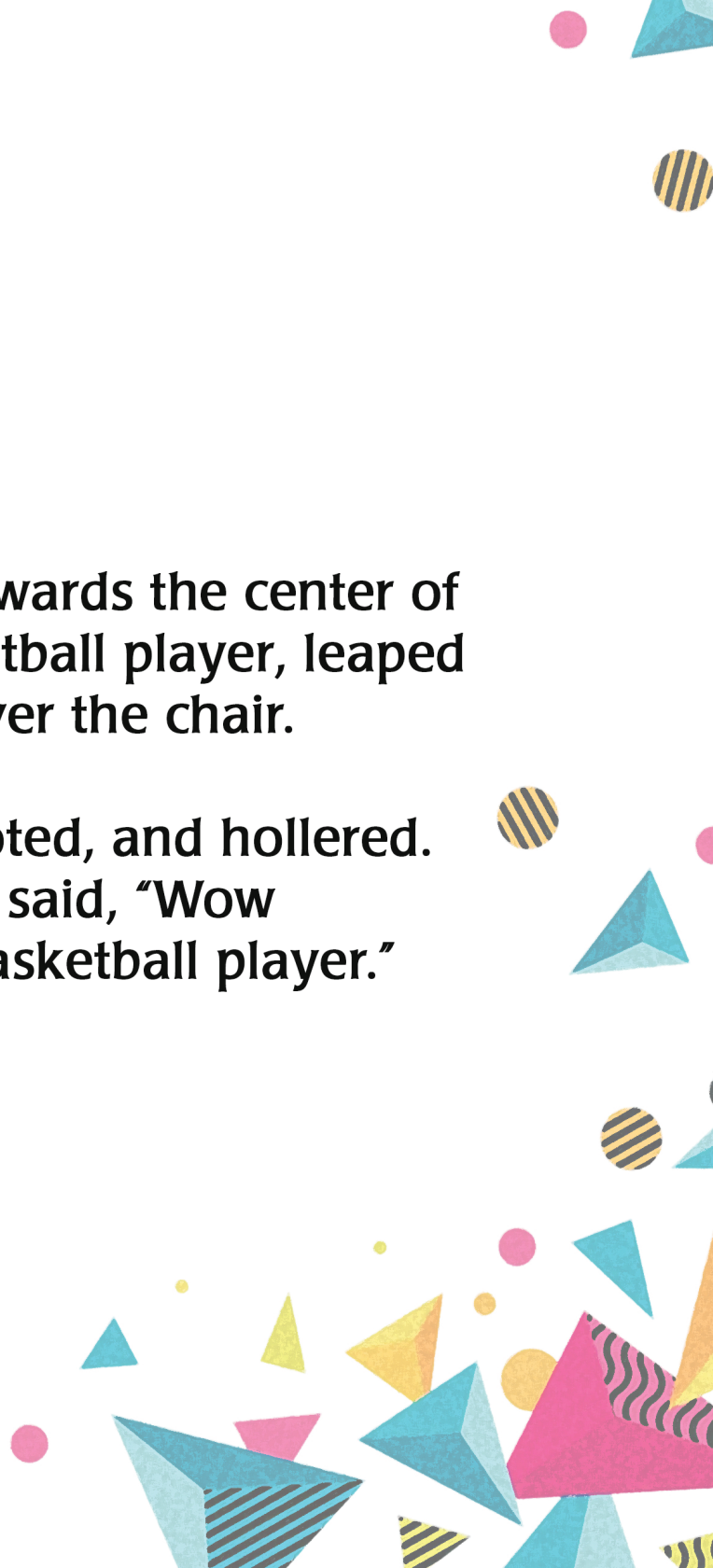


For the next thirty minutes, Mr. Johnson made ballet dancing look easy and fun. With his arms sometimes waving in the air, he smoothly demonstrated the five basic positions of ballet. Pirouettes, plies and relevés followed those movements. He drew eager applause from everyone.



Mr. Johnson raced back towards the center of the room and, like a basketball player, leaped high in the air and back over the chair.

The audience clapped, hooted, and hollered. Roscoe turned to Sara and said, “Wow Mr. Johnson leaps like a basketball player.”





Mr. Johnson jogged to the far end of the meeting room. He whipped around, paused, and dashed back across the room, leaping high in the air. High above the chair he kicked the air, wack-wack, and landed on the opposite side of the room. Roscoe looked at Sara sitting there with eyes opened wide and said, "That's a karate kick."



Quickly, Mr. Johnson walked to the middle of the room and announced, "This final move was made popular by a guy named Bill Baily."

Mr. Johnson spun in a circle, came to a complete stop, and walked backwards. Then he left the room.

While the audience was cheering for Mr. Johnson, a smiling Roscoe turned and saw a cheesing Sara. Quickly she shouted, "That's the moonwalk."



That night at the dinner table an animated Roscoe retold the entire Saturday afternoon experience.

"Grandma, I learned a lot, a whole lot today. Researching ballet dancers was an eye-opening moment. Mr. Johnson's performance was super. You know what I'm thinking now?"

"What?"

"I can be a ballet dancer."

The end