



Beauty Is Missing

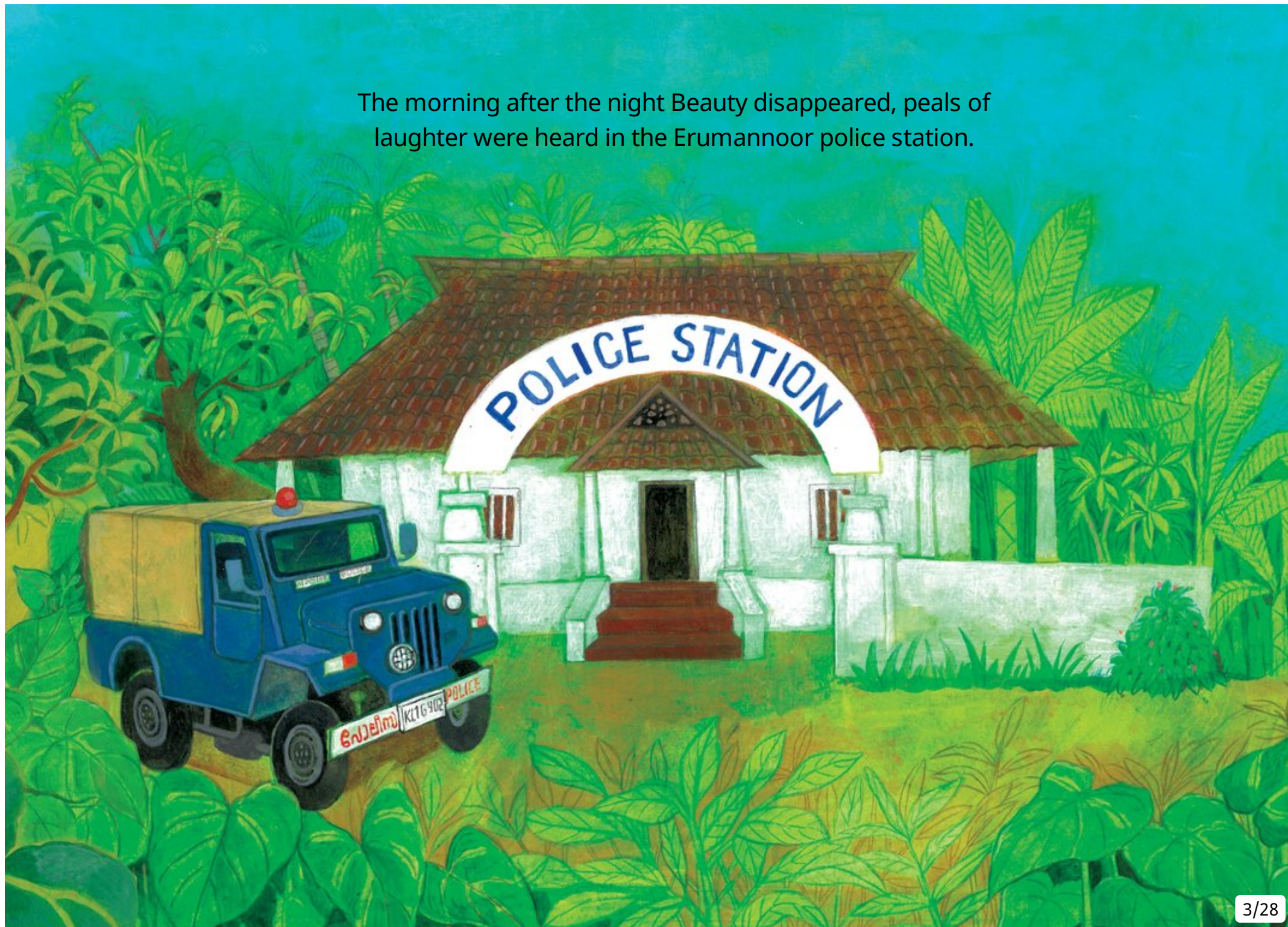
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Illustrator: Priya Kuriyan

Level 3

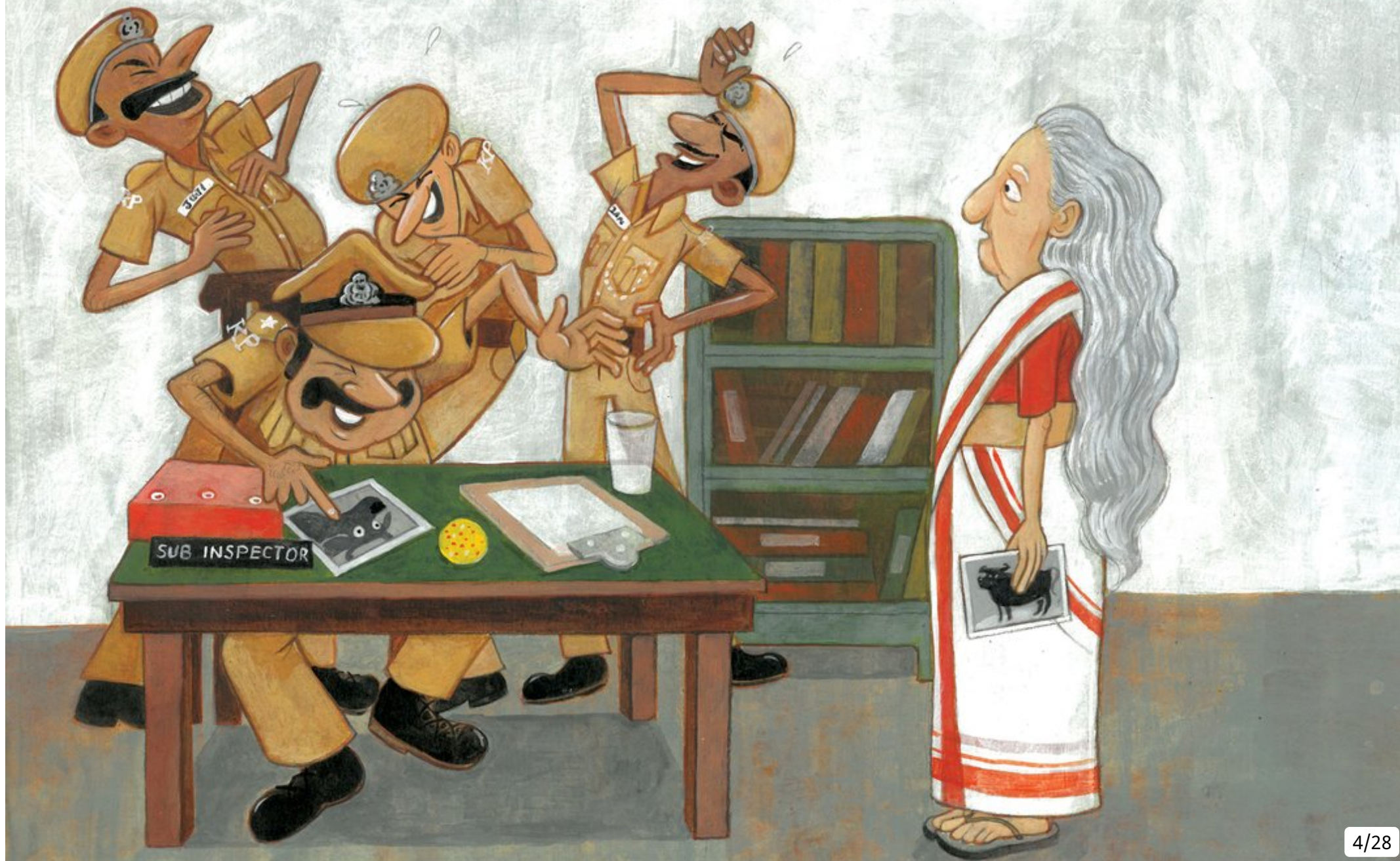


The morning after the night Beauty disappeared, peals of laughter were heard in the Erumannoore police station.



HOOO... HAAHAHAHAHA!

"Who names a buffalo Beauty!" guffawed inspector Gopi.





Only two people did not find the whole situation funny.

Tessamma, whose beloved buffalo Beauty was missing, and Jincy Jose, the new constable at Erumannoor police station...

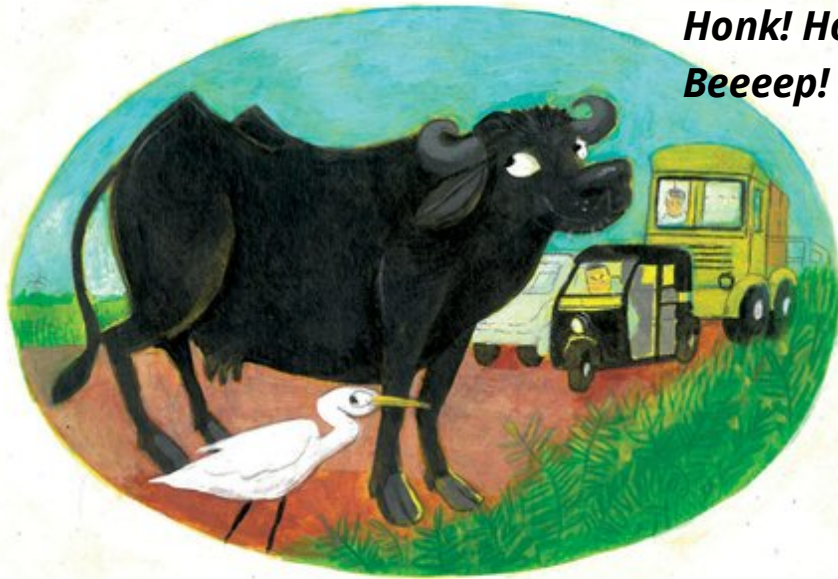
who immediately got down to work.



"So, tell me about Beauty," Jincy said.

"Well, first things first, she *is* a beauty," said Tessamma.





Honk! Honk!
Beeeeep!

"Honestly, she's a traffic stopper."

"While she's being milked at dawn, she insists on listening to Western classical music on her radio."



"While she grazes, it's always music from Bollywood."

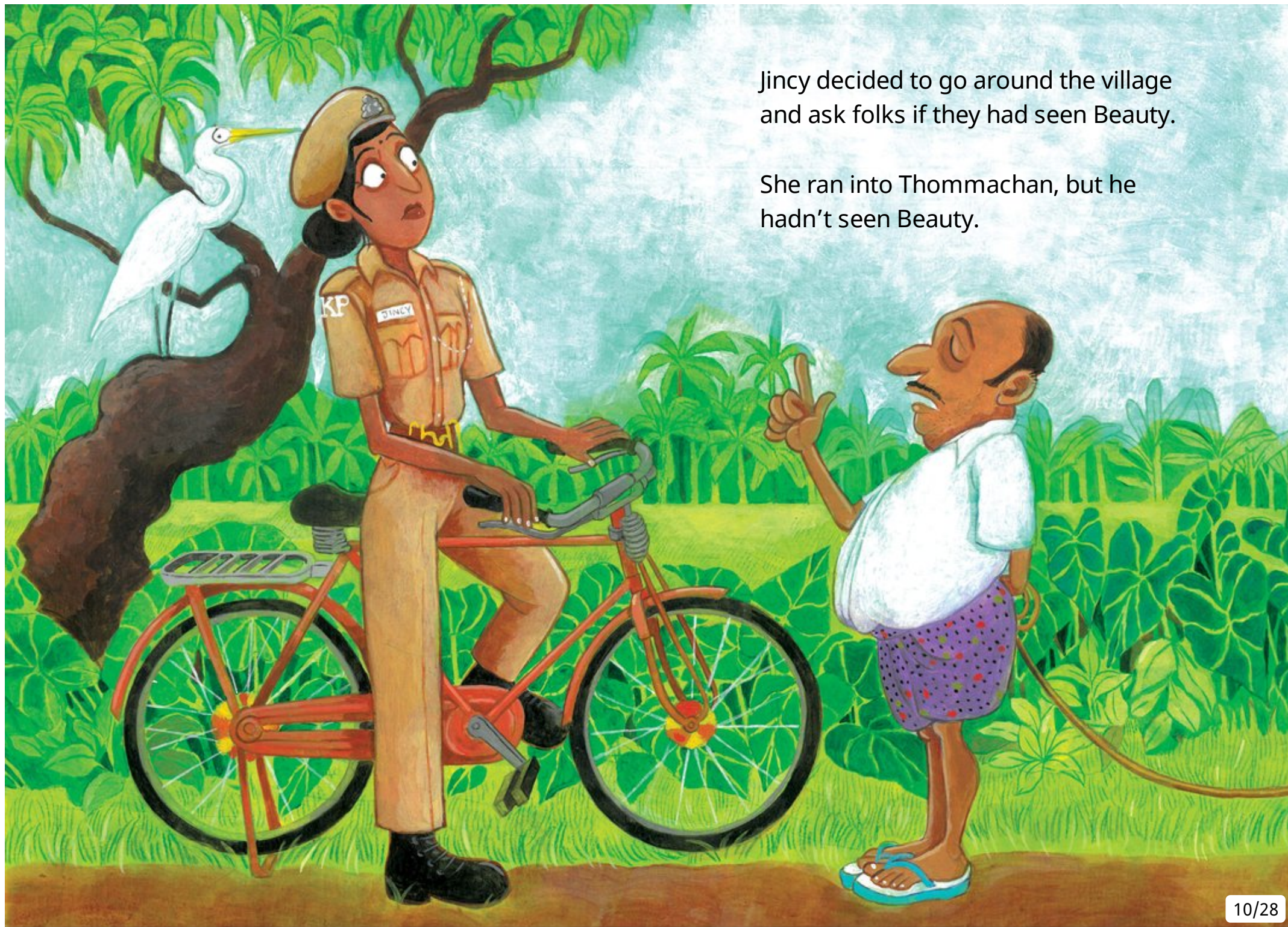
“When she wallows in the pond — it’s her beauty regimen, you see — she prefers romantic Malayalam songs.



“And at night, she always sleeps to soft instrumental tunes.”



“What excellent taste in music,” thought Jincy.



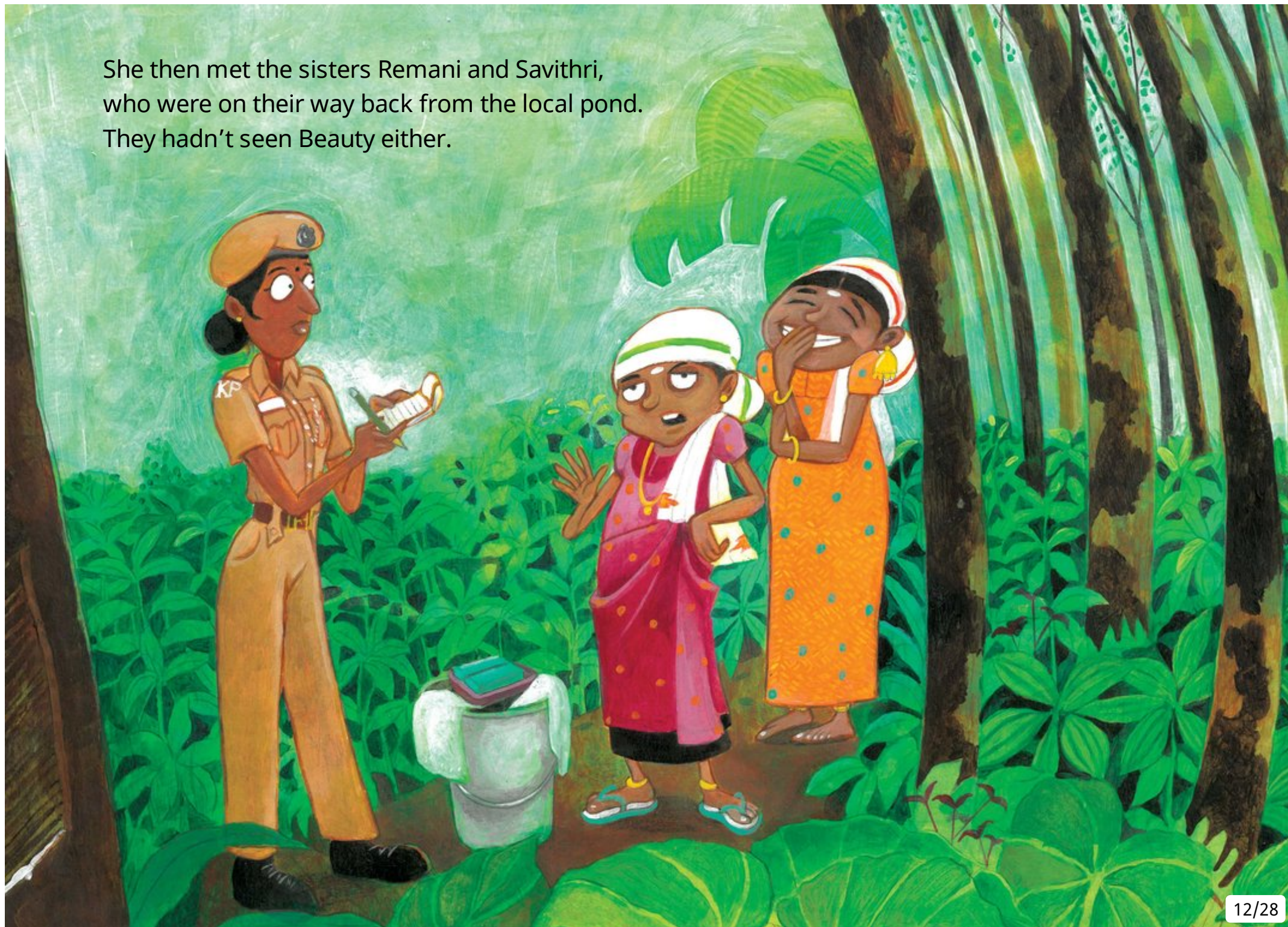
Jincy decided to go around the village and ask folks if they had seen Beauty.

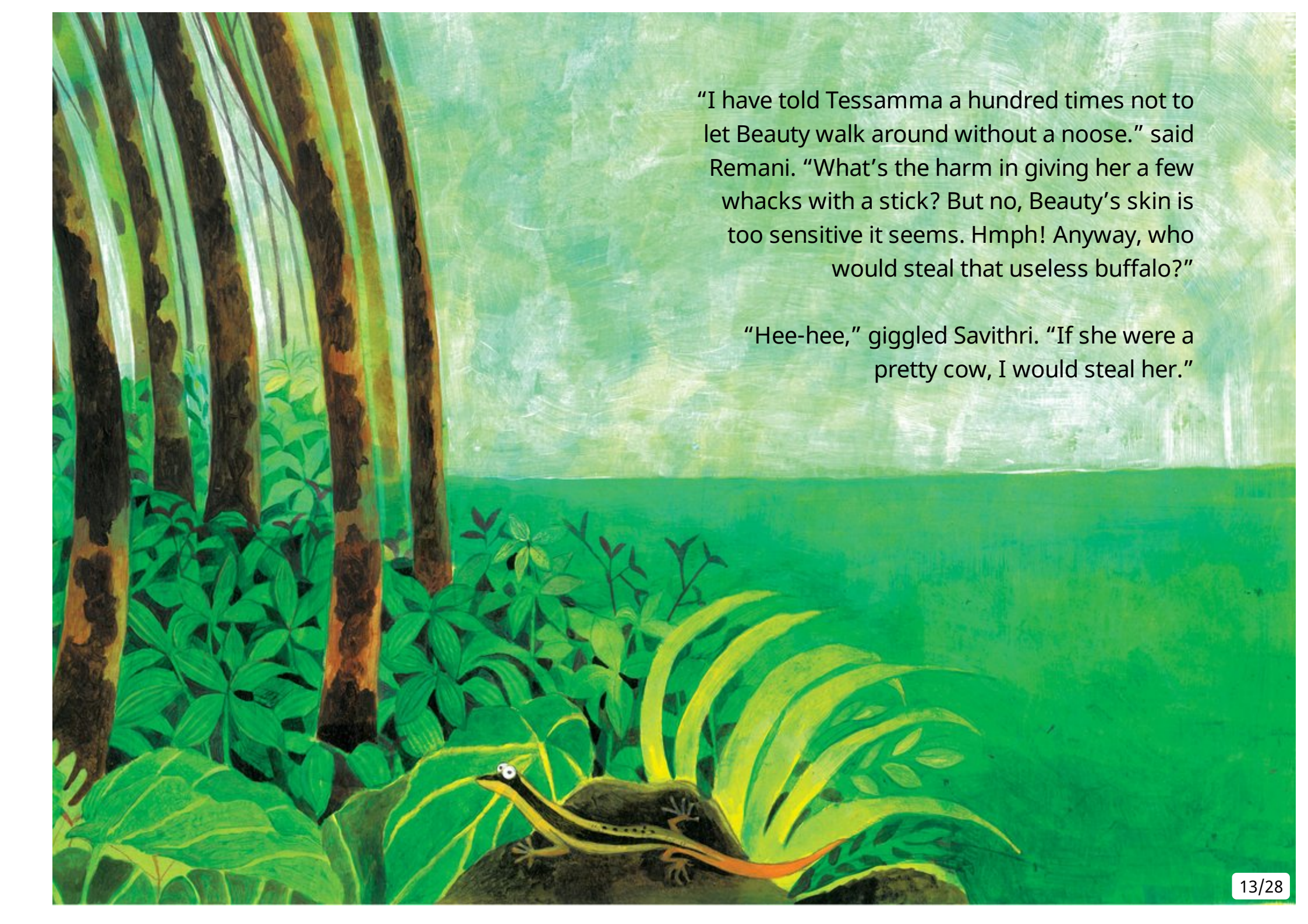
She ran into Thommachan, but he hadn't seen Beauty.

"Sorry, I don't know any buffalo called Beauty and frankly, I don't like buffaloes. I only like my cow Chandanakutty and she doesn't wallow in the mud like those buffaloes."



She then met the sisters Remani and Savithri,
who were on their way back from the local pond.
They hadn't seen Beauty either.



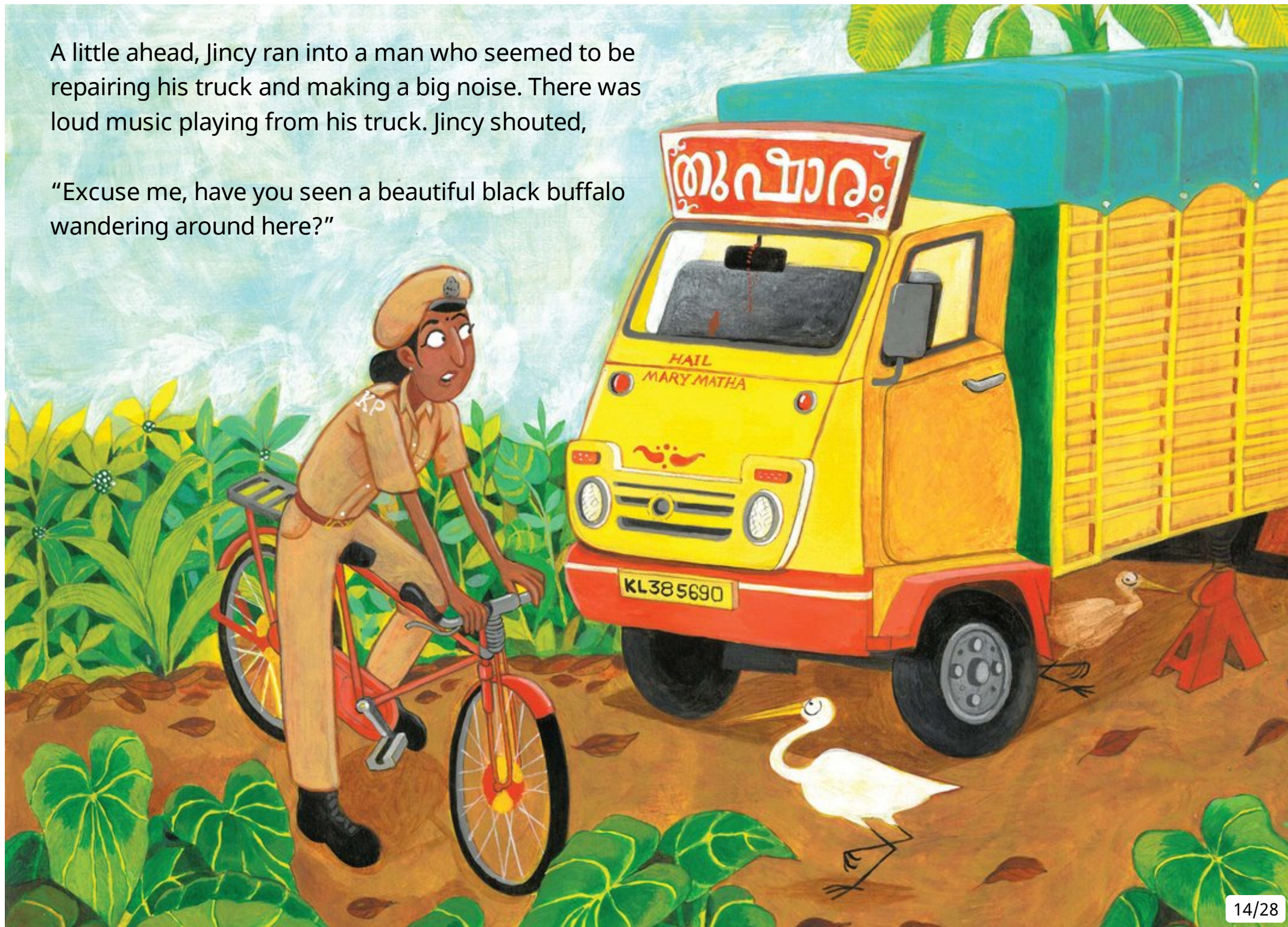


"I have told Tessamma a hundred times not to let Beauty walk around without a noose," said Remani. "What's the harm in giving her a few whacks with a stick? But no, Beauty's skin is too sensitive it seems. Hmph! Anyway, who would steal that useless buffalo?"

"Hee-hee," giggled Savithri. "If she were a pretty cow, I would steal her."

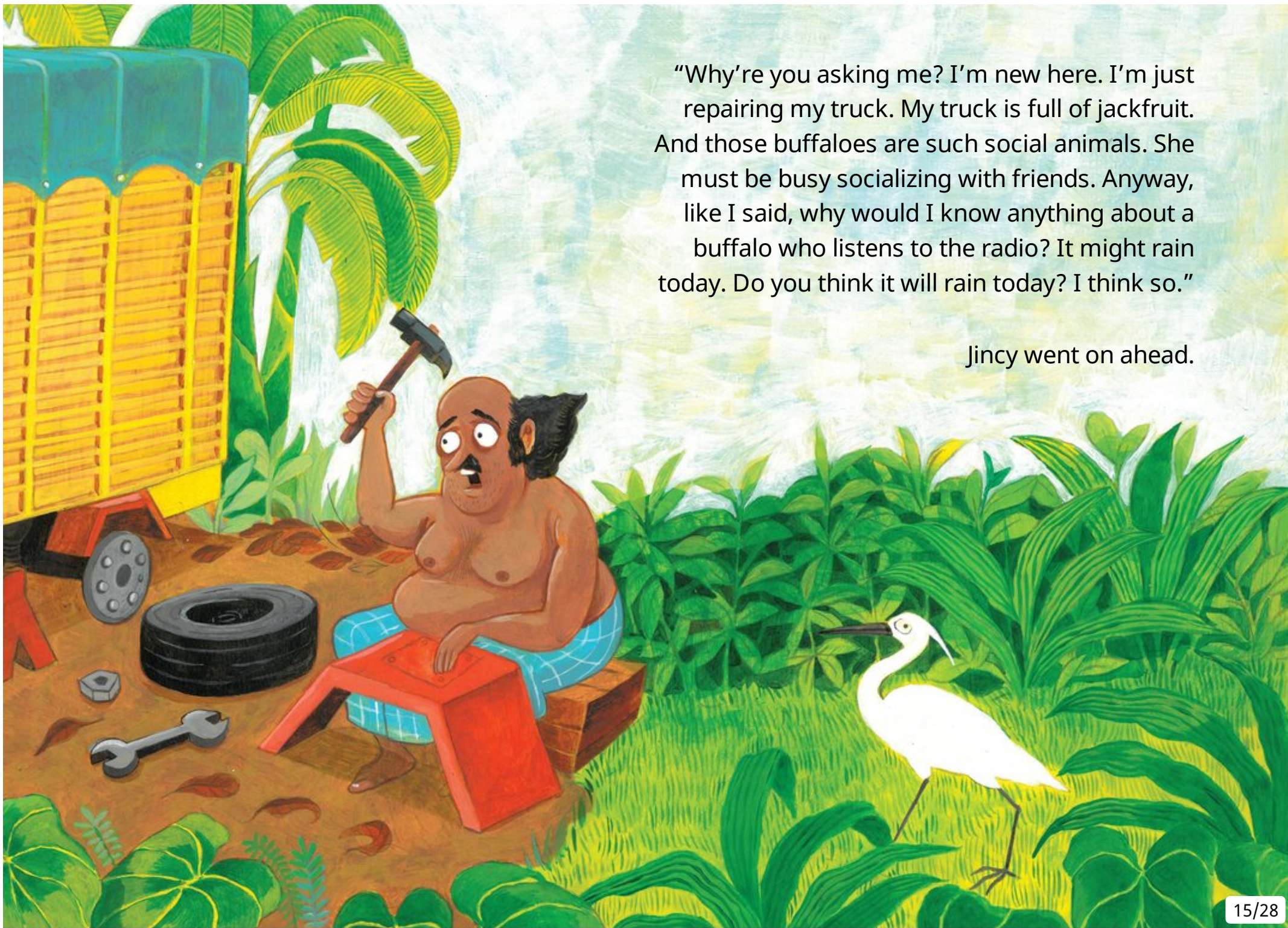
A little ahead, Jincy ran into a man who seemed to be repairing his truck and making a big noise. There was loud music playing from his truck. Jincy shouted,

“Excuse me, have you seen a beautiful black buffalo wandering around here?”



“Why’re you asking me? I’m new here. I’m just repairing my truck. My truck is full of jackfruit. And those buffaloes are such social animals. She must be busy socializing with friends. Anyway, like I said, why would I know anything about a buffalo who listens to the radio? It might rain today. Do you think it will rain today? I think so.”

Jincy went on ahead.



Jincy cycled all around Erumannoor with very little luck.

"Sorry, haven't seen
any buffaloes."

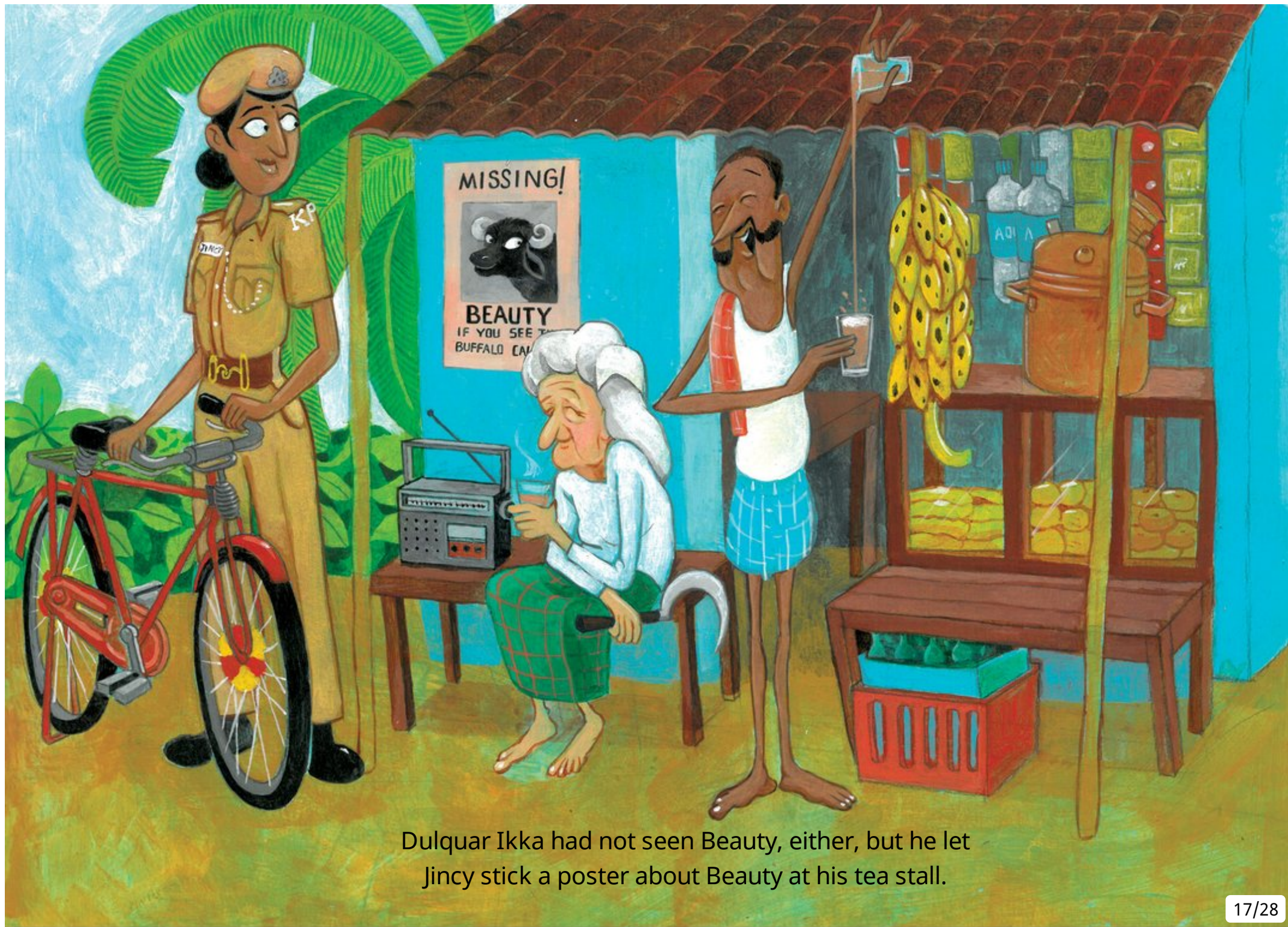
"Disappeared in the
middle of the night? She's
probably been sold off at
the meat market
already."

"Maybe she
just decided to
run away?"

"Beauty?
My daughter's
name is also
Beauty!"

"How will you find her
when you can't make
out one buffalo from
another?"

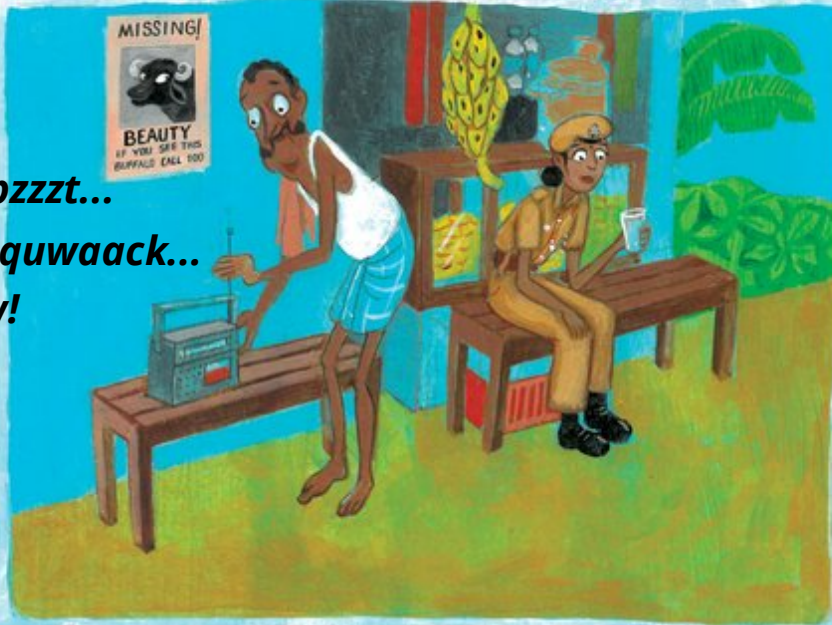




Dulquar Ikka had not seen Beauty, either, but he let Jincy stick a poster about Beauty at his tea stall.

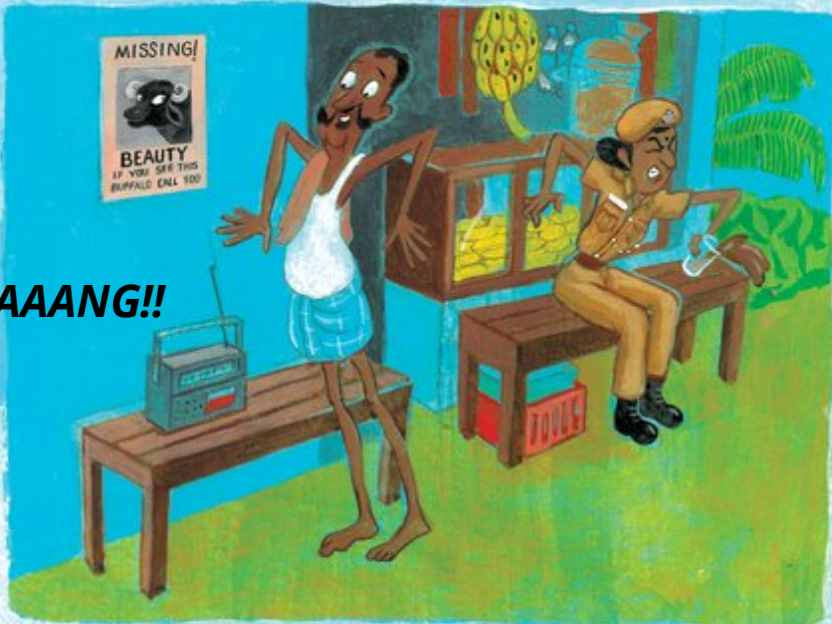
Jincy was tired.

*Bzzzt...bzzzt...
bzzz... squwaack...
psheww!*



Just then...

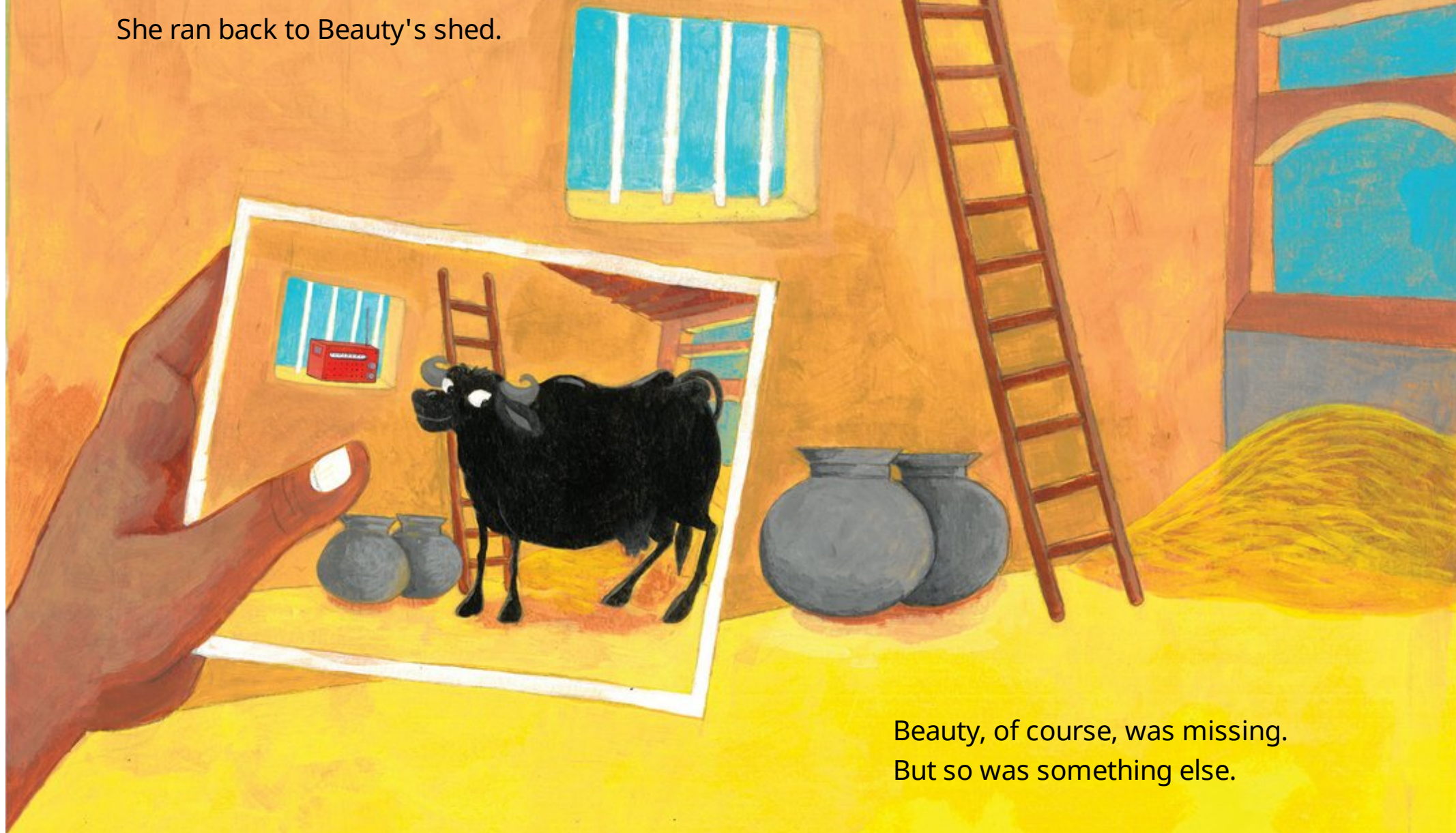
BRAAAAANG!!



Jincy had a brainwave!



She ran back to Beauty's shed.



Beauty, of course, was missing.
But so was something else.



That night, Jincy ventured out to set some things right.
In the darkness of the truck, something other than the fireflies was shining.



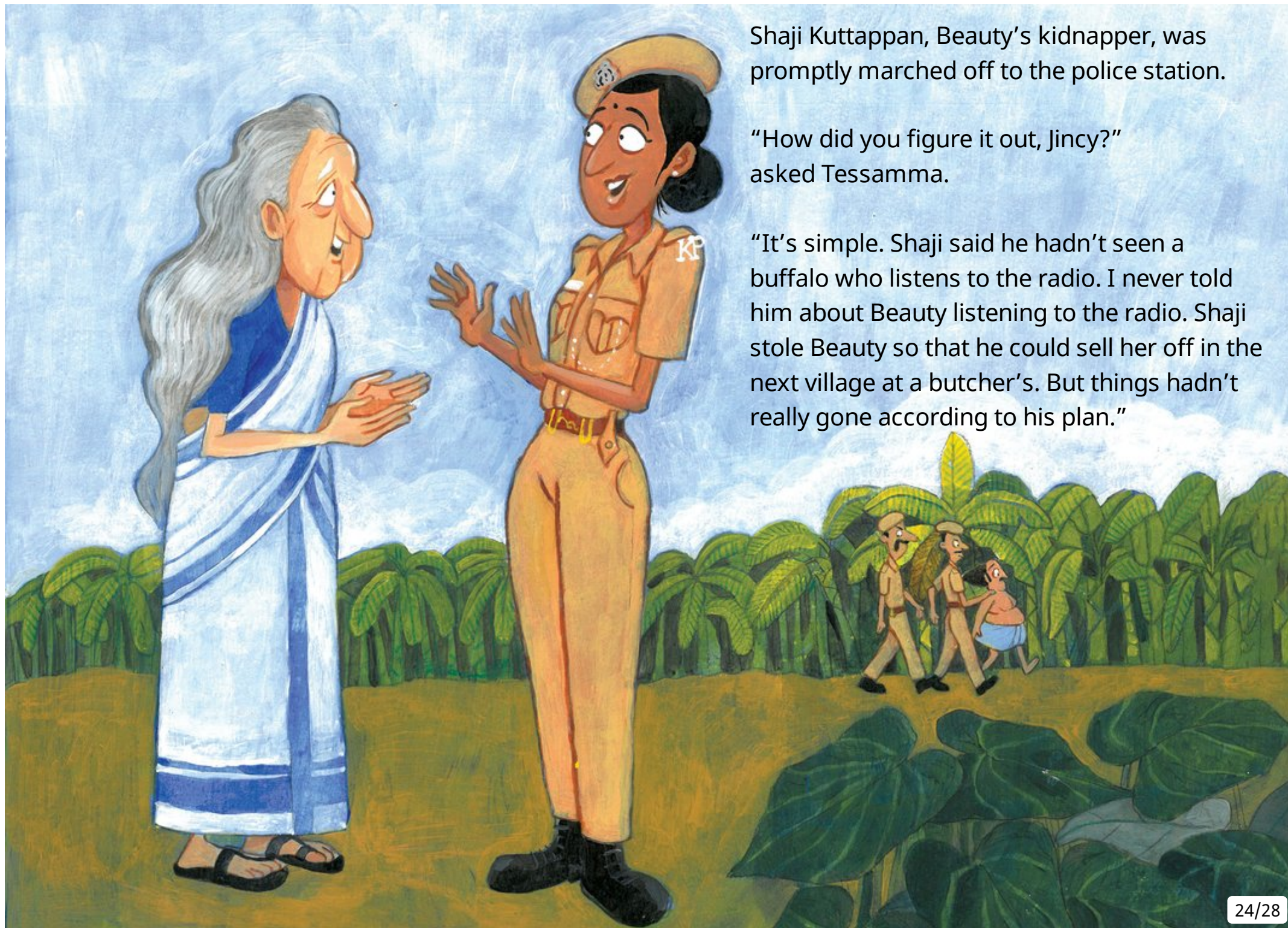




SCHSSSHEWWWW...



Jincy had found Beauty!



Shaji Kuttappan, Beauty's kidnapper, was promptly marched off to the police station.

"How did you figure it out, Jincy?" asked Tessamma.

"It's simple. Shaji said he hadn't seen a buffalo who listens to the radio. I never told him about Beauty listening to the radio. Shaji stole Beauty so that he could sell her off in the next village at a butcher's. But things hadn't really gone according to his plan."

Shaji had tried hard to get Beauty out of her shed. But Beauty refused to move.



So Shaji thought he might as well take the radio.



To his happy surprise, Beauty couldn't imagine being without her radio.

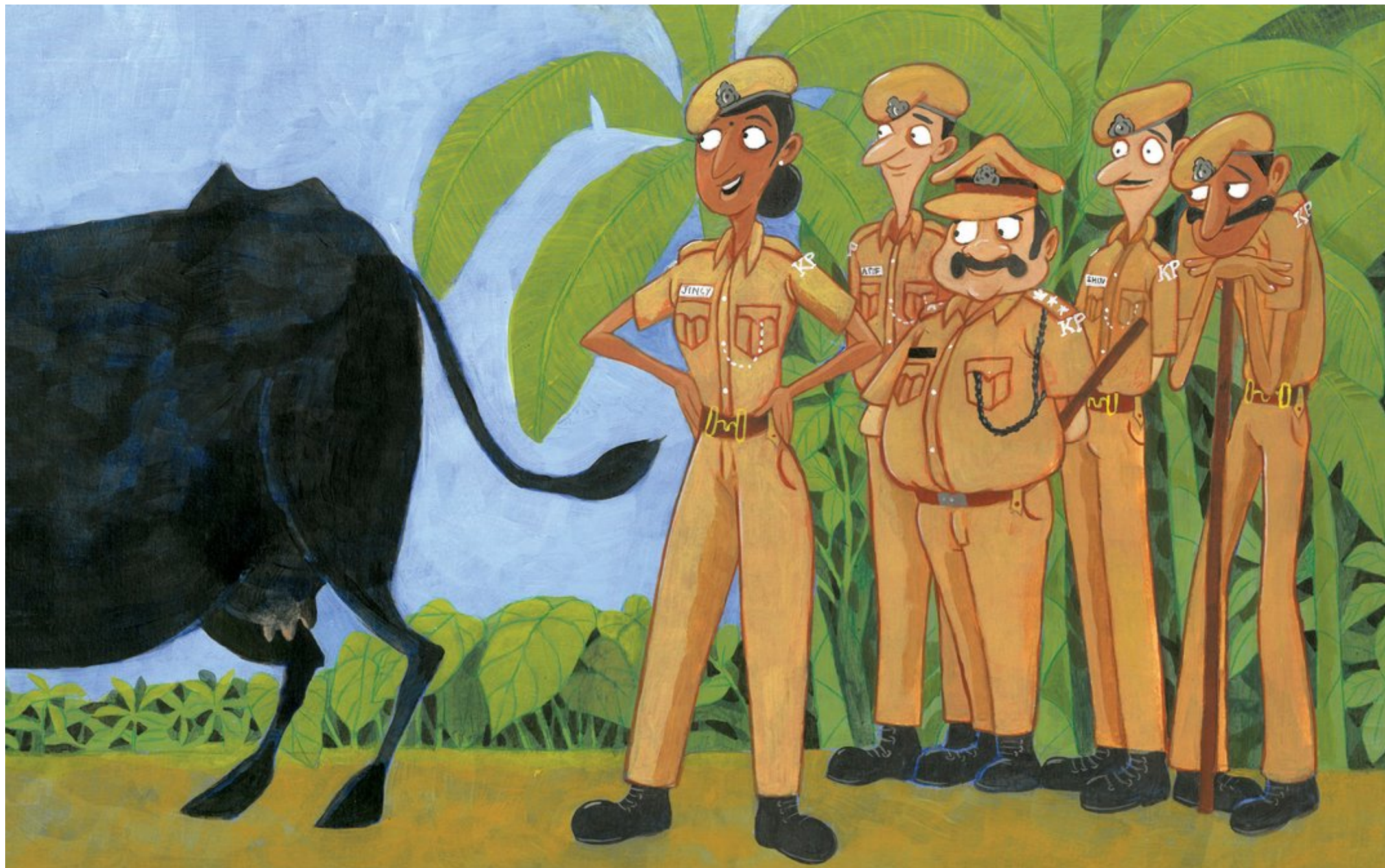


So she followed him into his hideout — his truck, which was under repair.



Tessamma was thrilled to have her beloved Beauty back.





"I must say," said Inspector Gopi, "Beauty is indeed a beauty."



Beauty and Other Buffaloes

Buffaloes are highly intelligent animals who love socializing with others of their kind. They're often found wallowing in mud or taking dust baths in order to protect their sensitive skin from sunburn and insects that bite. They enjoy grazing and being outdoors. Research shows that buffaloes also like listening to slow music. It helps alleviate stress and relaxes them.

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Beauty Is Missing

(English)

Tessamma's beloved buffalo is missing! No one knows what happened to her but constable Jincy is determined to find out. She goes all over the village, questioning people and looking for clues. Will Jincy be able to find Beauty the buffalo? The game is afoot in this mystery about a music-loving buffalo.

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



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