

Alkmini Giampanidou

The Clown's Wife

Illustrations by

Georgia Panori





Alkmini Giampanidou was born in Thessalokini in 1982. The last few years she has been living in a small village outside the city that offers her peace and comfort. She has studied in the Department of Pre-School Education of the University of Ioannina and since 2004 she has been actively involved with the field of pedagogy. She has worked as a substitute preschool teacher in the public sector, but also both in private and municipal preschools offering her services up to this day. She loves her job and dedicates most of her time looking for and creating new and imaginative activities for her little friends. She stays constantly informed through online or experiential seminars and she likes inventing verses for puppetry performances and preschool festivals. The decoration of children's rooms with paper crafts on the walls is one of the activities she occupies herself with in her spare time. She loves reading books, traveling and observing the nature. A hug and a smile from the children is her ultimate happiness.

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Georgia Panori was born in Thessaloniki in 1984. She grew up in the village Kato Gefyra of Thessaloniki where she lived until 2009. Having given birth to a little girl she is now married and lives in Giannitsa. She has studied Preschool Education of Creativity and Expression Activities in Vocational Training Institute of Sindos. She has worked in both municipal and private kindergartens, as well as in positions not relevant to her studies. She is occupied as an amateur with the arts such as iconography, oil painting with acrylic on canvas, pyrography, and confectionery (fondant cakes) while lately she has been illustrating children's tales through electronic means.

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ALKMINI GIAMPANIDOU

THE CLOWN'S LIFE

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Translated from Greek by
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Alkmini Giampanidou, The Clown's Life
ISBN: 978-618-5040-89-5
August 2014
Original Title: Η ζωή του κλόουν

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website: www.saitapublications.gr

Note: The font used is offered by Aka-acid (www.aka-acid.com).



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Prologue

There are many times when we, the educators, try to put ourselves in our little friends' shoes, to understand their worries, their desires, their needs and mostly, their fears.

These little souls that step by step begin to acknowledge the world and reality are not always ready to accept those things; things that for us, the adults, seem simple and funny.

An image or even a thought of something they do not know causes them intense worry and fear.

Sometimes through our effort to give our children the best, to make them happy and have fun, we forget the most important thing...to prepare them.

A very easy way to pass on an idea or an emotion is through tales. Through these valuable treasures we can moderate and eradicate children's fears.

One of these fears, at the sensitive age of 2 - 6 is the image of a CLOWN.

"Who is this weird guy with the colorful clothes and the bright make up? What does he want to do? Why is he so different from the others I have already known? He does weird and crazy things. I am not used to it. I am afraid.

These are only some of the children's thoughts who, every time we organize a Halloween or a birthday party, run to hide behind us as soon as they see our guest.... the clown!

Some of them just need some time to become familiar with his appearance and get excited with his magic tricks.

There are, though, some other children who need a little bit more preparation so that they can love him!

To these little friends I dedicate *The Clown's Life* in an effort to drive out their fears.

Love is the one that always defeats everything, even the biggest fears.

Introductory Note

Somewhere far away, in a magic place, there is a big forest full of colorful trees.

These trees are different; they have neither flowers nor nuts.

They are full of tales and they always bloom!

Tales full of knowledge, stories and myths.

They hang from the branches like colorful butterflies and every day one of them opens, shakes its pages lightly like wings and tries to fly... but it does not succeed...it falls down and waits.

The secret in order to be able to fly is for someone to read it!

And fortunately, somewhere near this magic forest Orfeas and Nefeli, two young siblings, live with their parents.

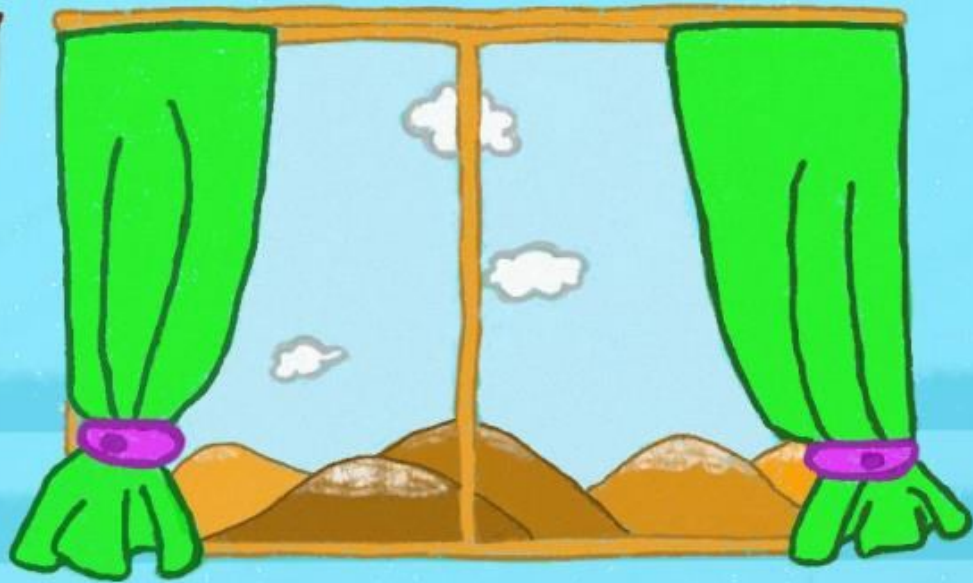
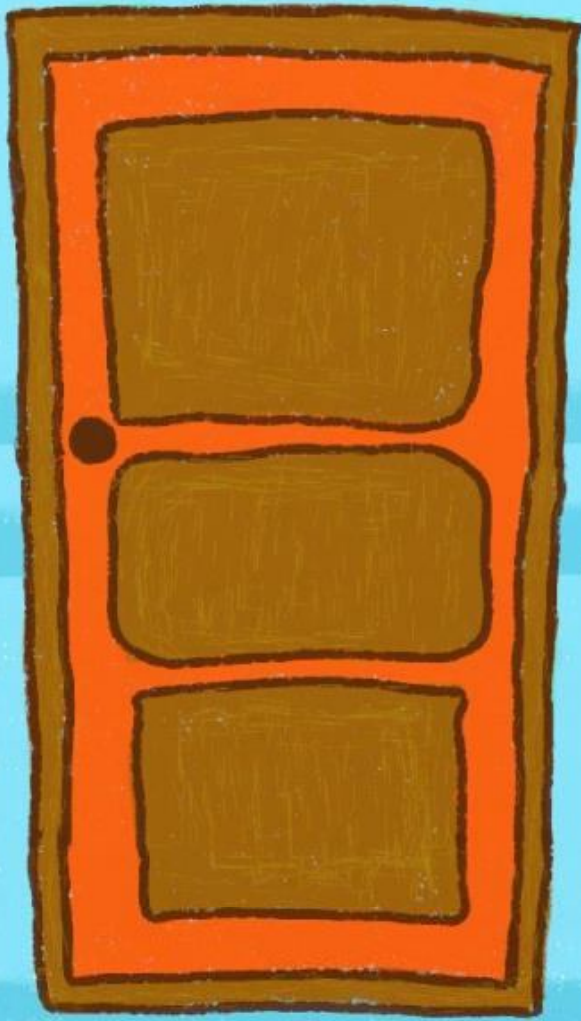
They both love tales and every morning, as soon as they wake up, they run towards the magic forest to catch the book that is going to fall from any little tree.

Sometimes they even race, so one of them reaches it first!

Today, Orfeas caught a tale called *The Clown's Life* and the two siblings sat in the woods to read it and watch it later fly free in the sky.

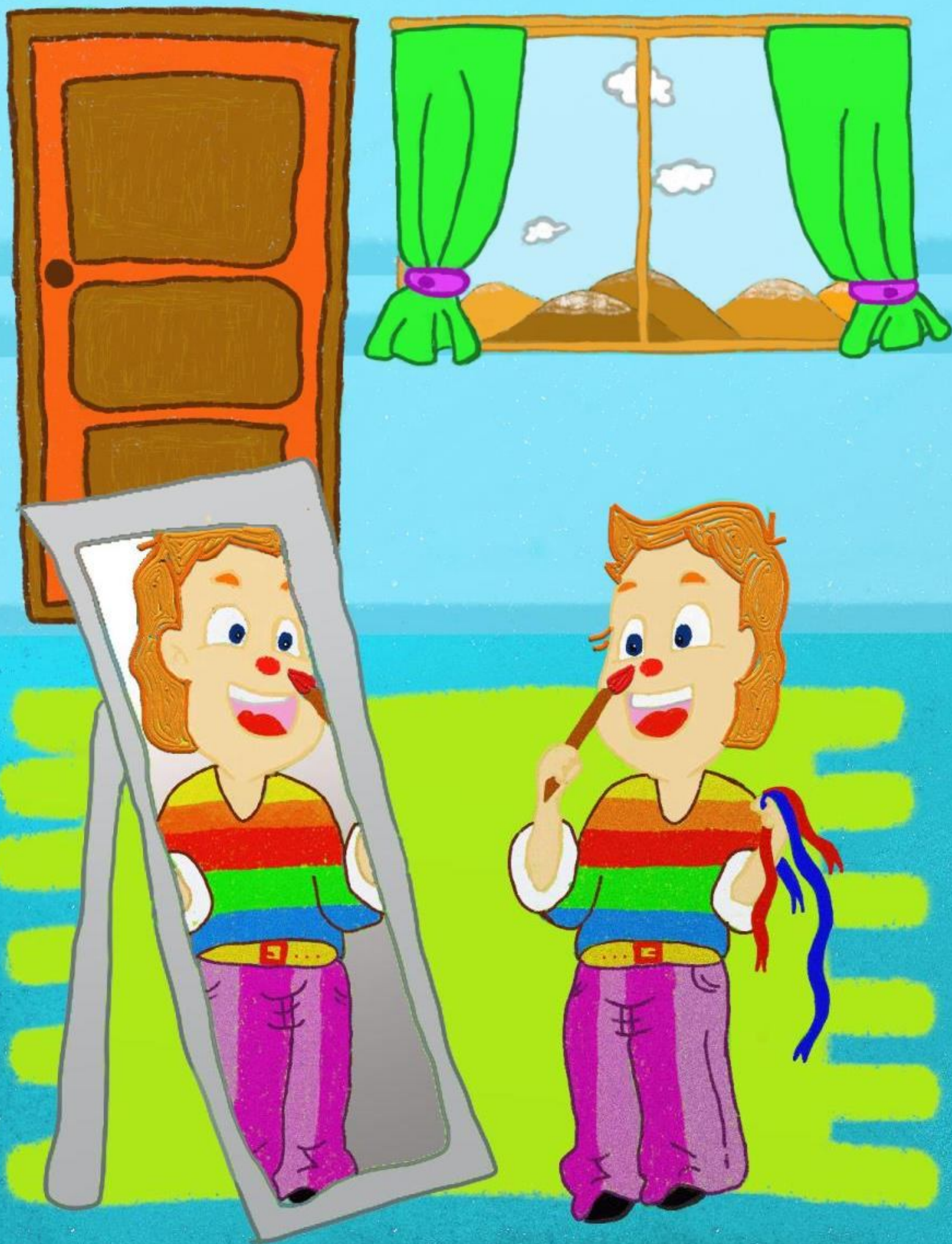
Join Orfeas and Nefeli in the magic forest and enjoy the tale, because it will fly away soon!!!





Since I've been a young boy
My only thought was how to give joy.
I wanted to make my friends laugh with me
And wait with impatience to see me.





I wore clothes sparkling,
colorful, weird but startling.

I used bright colors to paint my face
And I did funny and magic tricks with grace.



I wanted to scatter joy to the entire world
Both to the young and to the old.
No man ever be sad and cry
Be bored or whine.





2.0

So my decision was this: when I grow,
Giving joy to all the people
Will be my goal.

1.8

And so

1.6

I grew.....

1.4

and grew.....



until I made it!

and grew.....

2.0

1.8

1.6

1.4



HAPPY
BIRTHDAY



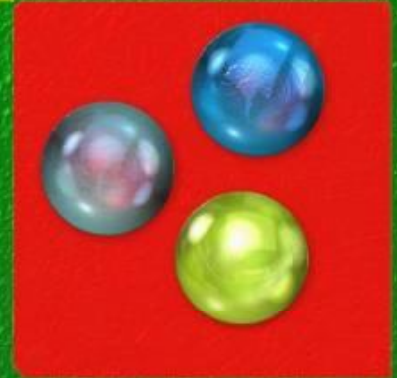
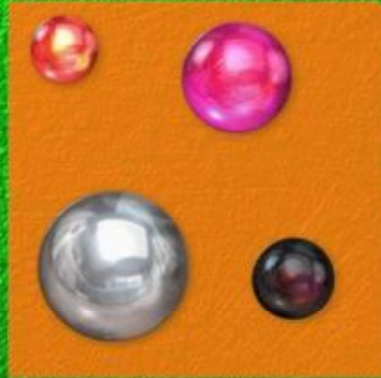
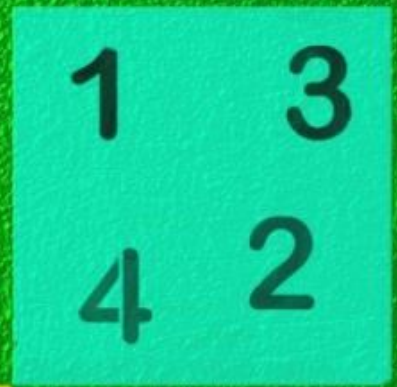
I became a famous clown that all stare
I've studied in a circus in order to be fair.
In any party or dance I get invited
Because I'll meet the kids I am always delighted.





HAHAHA!!!





Everyone gets crazy with my magic tricks
And presents I give to all the kids.
I play with them, dance and sing
But I also slip and trip.

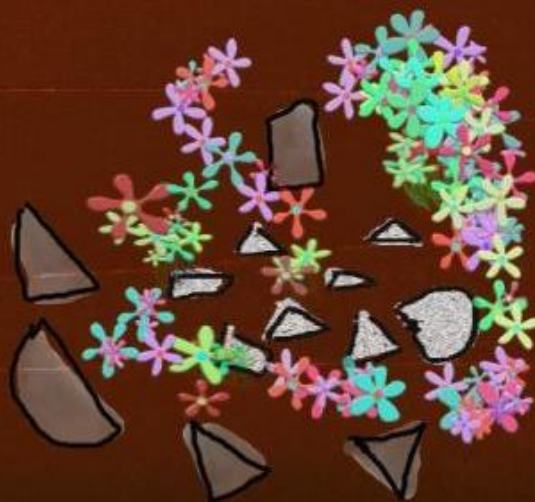


The balloons I can crease
So they can take the shape of any animal you wish.
I can walk over a rope
And on big wheels to balance is easy to cope.

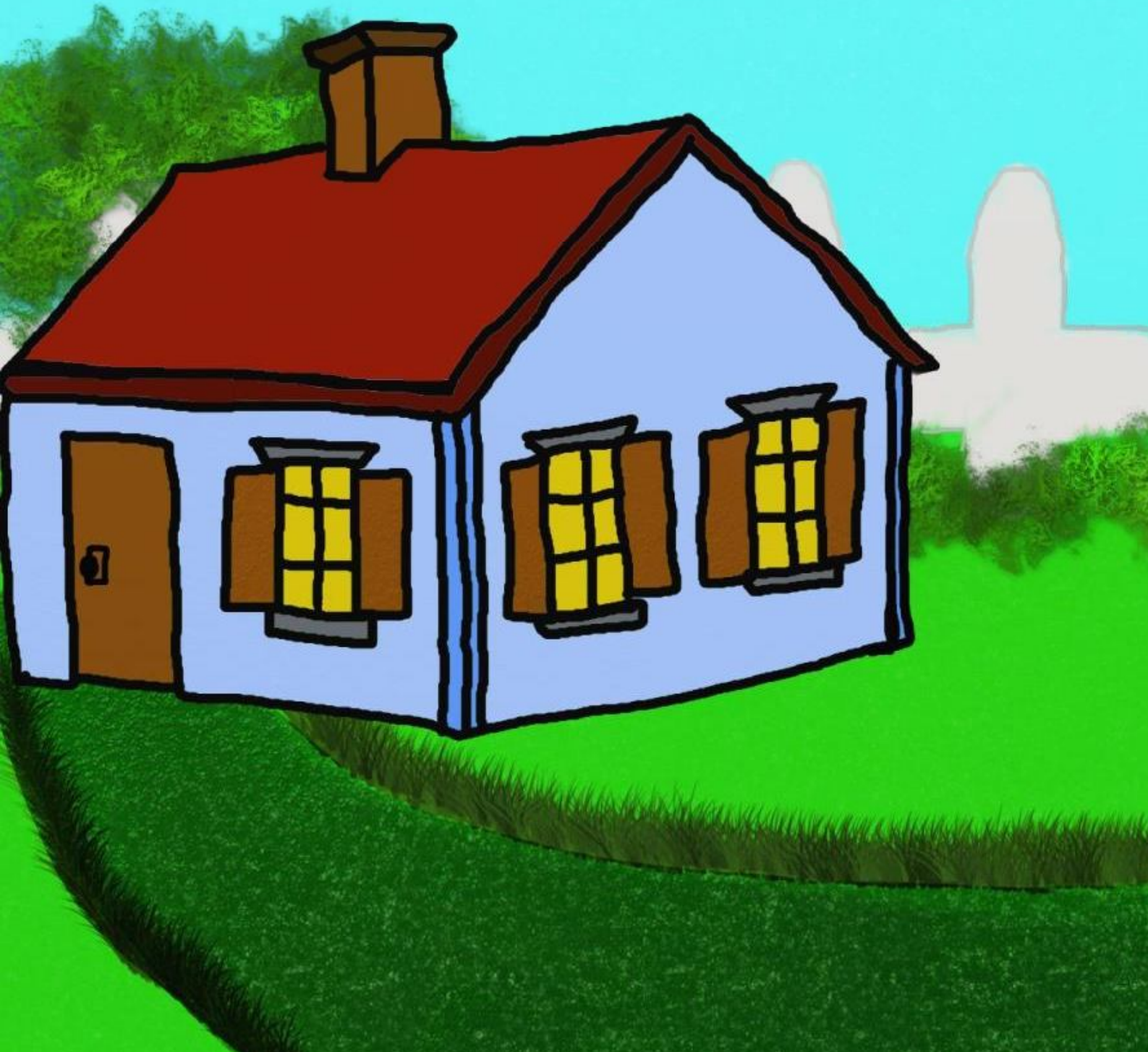




My most enjoyable time is
When my little friends and I play
Because I love them so much
That I want them in my hug to stay.
But when my little friends do not feel well,
I'm always there
To give them laughter and joy
Like a true friend.



And after many years when I will not be so strong,
You will know how to make a magic world,
So long as you don't forget
This advice that you will get:



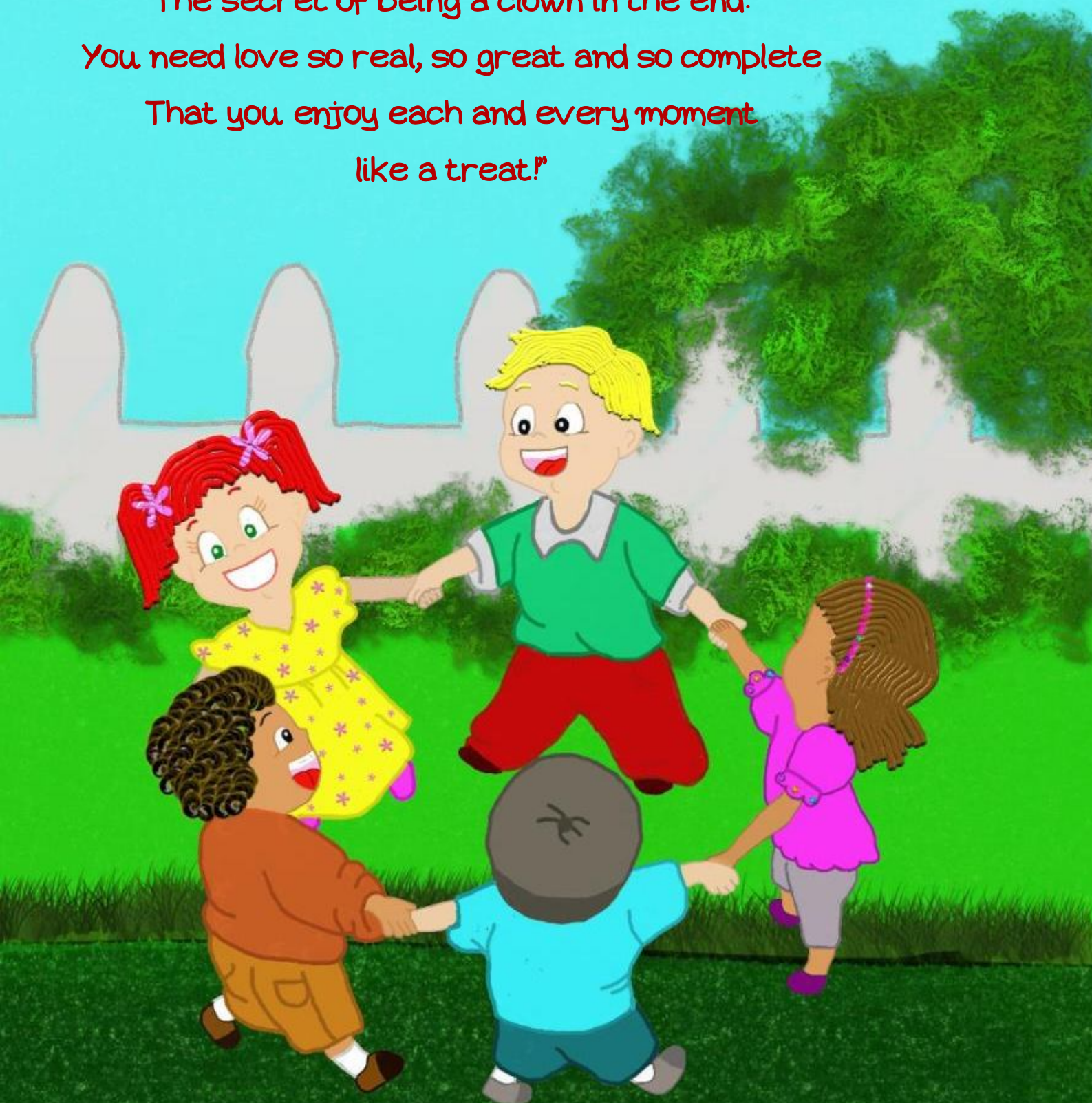




“With a little red nose so bright
And a colorful costume full of light
You can make every child
Feel happy day and night.

But don't forget the most important thing my friend!

The secret of being a clown in the end:
You need love so real, so great and so complete
That you enjoy each and every moment
like a treat!”



Epilogue

Orfeas closes the book and suddenly, he feels it flitting inside his arms.

The tale has been read and it is now ready to travel to another magic world.

Next time it might be Nefeli the one to catch the new tale that will fall and help it fly away!

Maybe one day, if you are lucky and you love tales, you will find yourselves in this magic forest where there are:

"A THOUSAND BRANCHES OF TALES."



THE TALE MAY HAVE ENDED BUT THE GAME NEVER ENDS!!!

Each tale is a cause of educational activities with our little friends. Keep, therefore, the tale as your companion and play creative games, having pleasant moments with the children.

Indicative activities-games for parents and kindergarten teachers:

1. Play with the letters of the word CLOWN. The witch Messy jumbled the letters of the CLOWN's name and we must help him. Print tags with the letters of the word CLOWN and ask children to form the word.
2. Write a letter to the clown, in which the children will explain the reasons for their love and will talk about which of his tricks they most like, send him a picture and ask him to visit you one day.
3. Look in the newspaper and magazines for the letters of the words CLOWN or LOVE, cut them and create a beautiful collage forming the words.
4. Print images showing the clown to grow and put them in the correct time sequence, from the youngest to the oldest and vice versa.
5. A child plays the role of the clown wearing a red nose or a hat and counts his friends. As soon as he closes his eyes, some of the children hide and when he opens his eyes he should count again to find out how many children have been hidden, who they are and how many there are left. The game goes on and every time another child plays the role of the clown.
6. Dramatize *The Clown's Life*. Transform yourselves into clowns and dream of your friends laughing with you. Wear various colorful clothes borrowed from the corner of the puppet show or from your dressing room, paint your face, dance, sing, fall down, inflate balloons, walk on a fine line, laugh, pretend to be sad, give your friends a hug and give them a painted heart.
7. Inflate several balloons and over each one draw a happy or a sad face. Put music and dance among them. Once the music stops the child that will hear their name has to pop or hold in their arms the balloon in question: e.g. "Maria, the clown is sad", Maria must find and pop a balloon with a sad face.
8. Do magic like clowns! Place on the floor in front of you a number of 4-5 small objects and name them along with the children. Cover them with a large cloth and while saying the magic words: "Abracadabra, Hocus Pocus, games will be lost", lift the cloth grabbing subtly one of the objects underneath it without our little friends realizing it. Once children find which object disappeared, put again the cloth onto the rest of them and by saying your magic words again: "Abracadabra, Hocus Pocus, games will appear" put back the object in place. We can all become magicians with a little effort!

9. Scatter on the floor various clothes, hats and shoes and ask two children to participate. As soon as the music starts they must quickly disguise themselves as clowns. Anyone who gets dressed first is the winner.
10. Paint your noses red as a clown does, and dance to the rhythm of music. Once the music stops you must perform the instructions given to you e.g. stand on one leg, roll etc. The music starts again and whenever it stops, you make a different move.
11. Get into pairs and get ready to play. One child plays the role of the clown and their partner is the clown's friend. Stand opposite each other and play the mirror game. The clown is the mirror and his friend is asked to make the same moves quickly.
12. Find a hat and decorate it either with a paper flower or a true one. Sit round in a circle and by singing a song of your choice, wear the hat and then pass it to your neighbor. The hat goes from head to head and when the song stops, the child with the hat gets up and imitates some of the clown's moves e.g. stumbles; balances on an imaginary rope, etc.
13. Approach the concept of diversity. Find with the children images in which people are represented by different appearances from the conventional one, for example a jester, a disabled man, a gypsy, etc. Try to imitate their lives, their daily routine, emphasizing on the feeling that remains the same regardless of appearance.
14. Create the face of the clown by using simple materials. In a large white paper plate, glue colored cardboard to form the mouth and eyes or draw them, stick threads for hair and a paper hat. Open a hole in the middle of the plate; insert a red balloon, and then inflate it to make the nose. Tie the balloon in the back side of the plate and the clown is ready. You can also fold a napkin and turn it into a bow tie.

Let imagination fly
towards unique experiences along with your children.

Have fun!!!



The idea of Saita publications emerged in July 2012, having as a primary goal to create a web space where new authors can interact with the readers directly and free.

Saita publications' aim is to redefine the publisher-author-reader relationship, by cultivating a true dialogue and by establishing an effective communication channel for authors and readers alike. Saita publications stay far away from profit, exploitation and commercialization of literary property.

The strong wind of passion for reading,
the sweet breeze of creativity,
the zephyr of motivation,
the sirocco of imagination,
the levanter of persistence,
the deep power of vision
guide the saita (paper plane) of our publications.

We invite you to let books fly free!

When a young boy's dream is to make the
whole world happy, there is no choice left but
to become a... CLOWN!

His love for young children leads him to play for
the rest of his life the nicest role!

He disguises himself and with his tricks he
gives his friends laughter and LOVE.



ISBN: 978-618-5040-89-5