


VISHRAMBU'S BUS JOURNEY





Story by Karthik Rangappa
Illustrations by Tarun Andrews

Bank manager Sharmaji's son, Vishrambu was one of the most mischievous boys in Beneras. Although unintentional, Vishrambu would create a lot of trouble and destroy things around him. Sharmaji would not only be embarrassed, but would also end up spending money towards the damages caused by his son. One day both the father and the son embark on a bus journey and an incident occurs in the bus, which would forever change Vishrambu, much to his father's delight.



A responsible citizen pays his share of taxes to the government. Taxes are an important part of our in our financial lives. In line with this thought, this story attempts to explain the concept of tax, and why one needs to pay them.





Vishrambu



Sharmaji



Kukuji



Conductor




Bank manager Sharmaji was one of the most respected men in Banaras.



Every evening, on his way back home he would stop at Kukuji's tea stall for a cup of hot tea and a samosa.





One day, Sharmaji looked very worried.
“Sharmaji, why do you look so worried?” asked Kukuji

Sharmaji looked at him, and said,
“It’s my son Vishrambu, Kukuji.
He gives me sleepless nights!”



“Vishrambu? He is such a sweet boy,” confronted Kukuji.

“Oh! You have no idea! He must be one of the most mischievous boys in Banaras. He creates trouble everywhere, and I end up paying a price for it,” said Sharmaji, looking very annoyed.





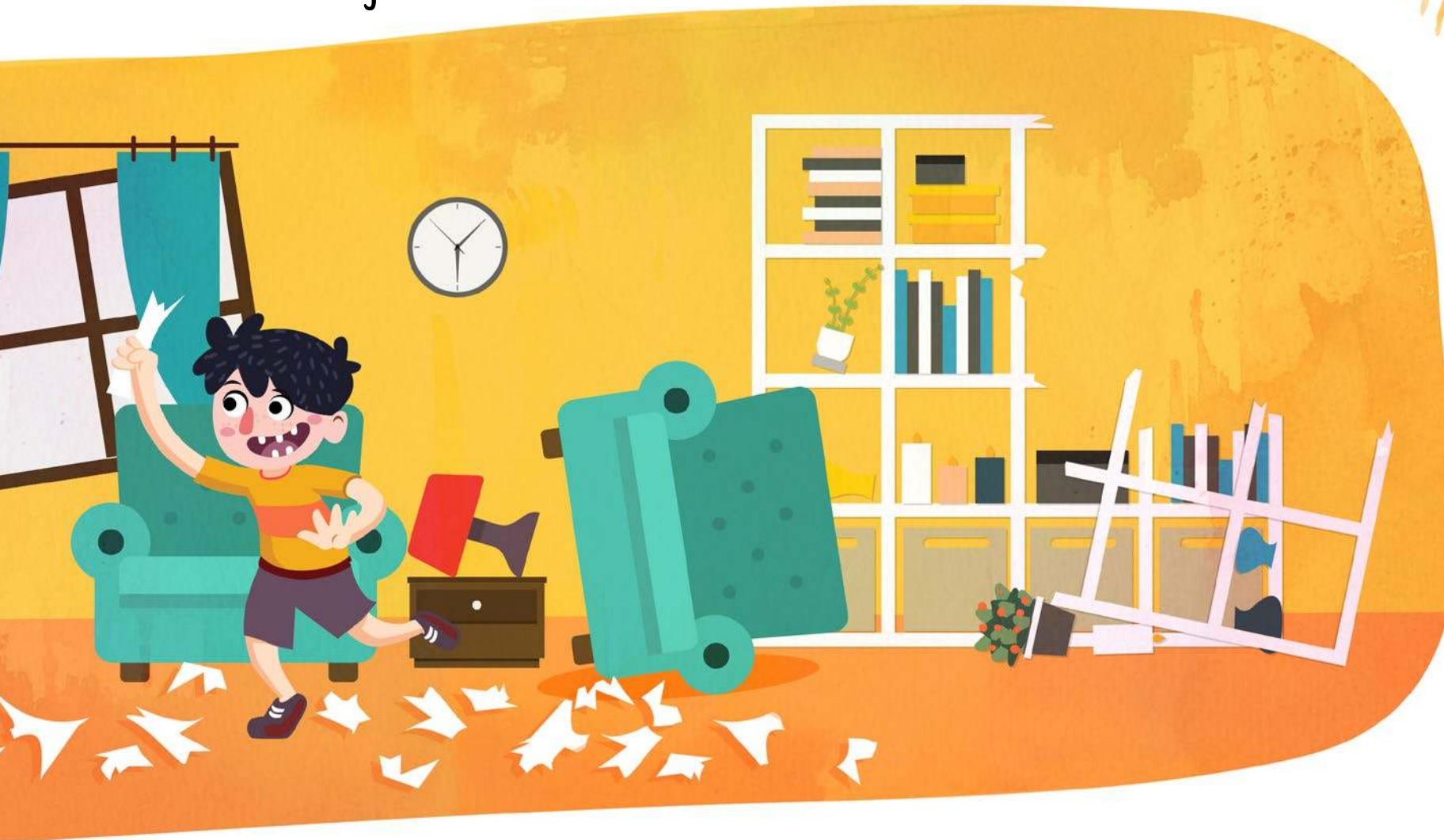
He continued -


“The other day Vishrambu was playing at his friend Hyder’s house. In all his excitement he pulled down the curtains, broke the showcase, and tore the newspaper to bits”



“Little Vishrambu did all this?” asked Kukuji, in utter disbelief.

“Oh yes! Hyder’s father was very furious looking at the mess, and I had to spend 1000 Rupees to get things repaired,” said Sharmaji.





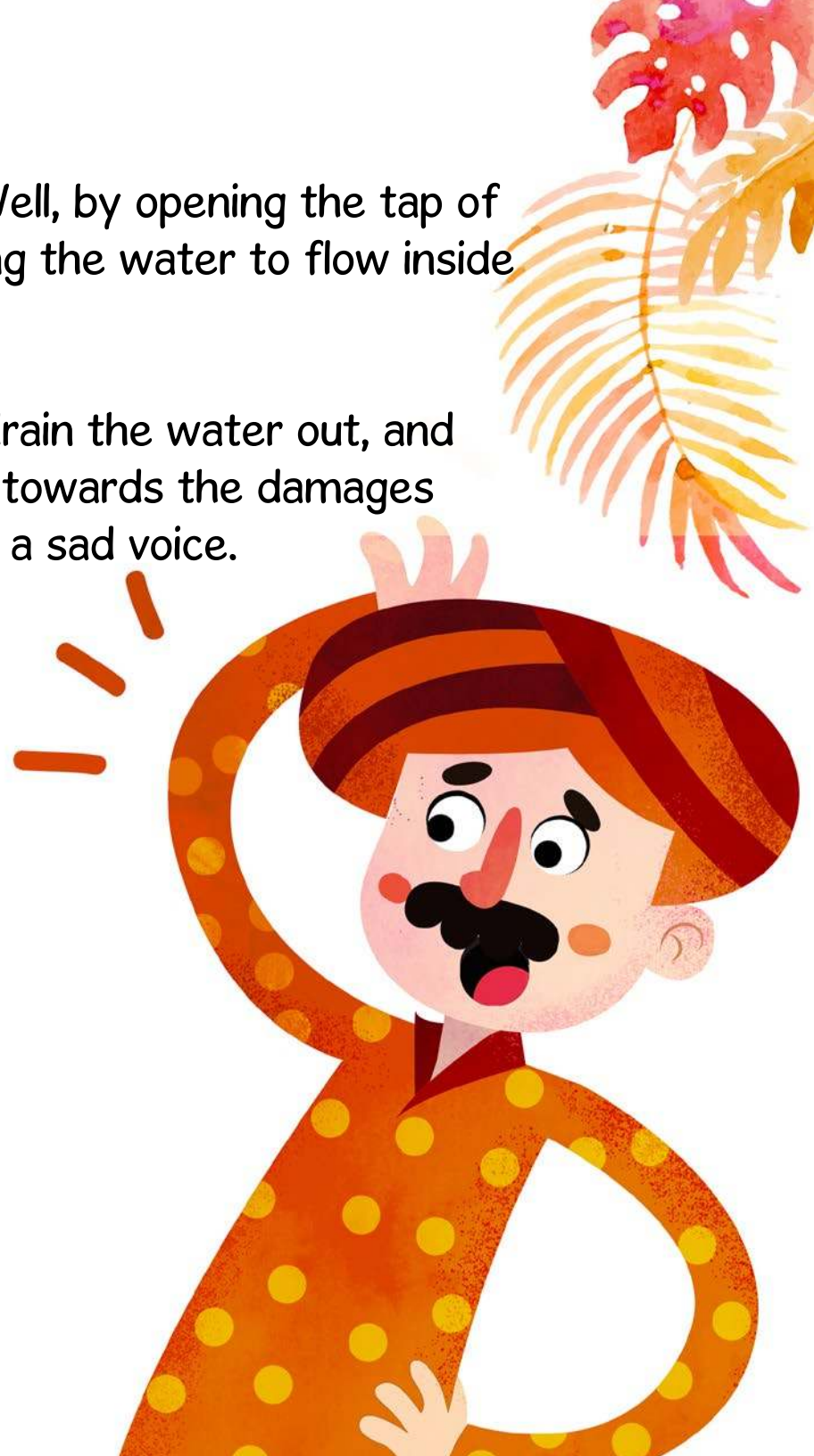
“That’s not all,” said Sharmaji, “Last week he convinced his friend Raghu that he could get the Ganga river to flow into his house!”

“Oh, and how did he plan achieve this?” asked Kukuji, in amusement.



Sharmaji frowned, and said, “Well, by opening the tap of their overhead tank and allowing the water to flow inside the house!”

“They had to hire workers to drain the water out, and I ended up paying 800 Rupees towards the damages caused,” continued Sharmaji, in a sad voice.




“Sharmaji, I never imagined Vishrambu was so naughty. Here, have another Samosa and take it easy,” said Kukuji.



“How can I take it easy? Tomorrow I’m taking Vishrambu to his aunt’s house in Lucknow. He will stay there for a week, and I’m already dreading the damage he could cause,” said Sharmaji.





So, the next day, father and son set off on their bus journey to Lucknow.

Sharmaji warned Vishrambu to behave himself during the trip.



One hour into the journey, Sharmaji fell asleep. Vishrambu was now bored. He tried looking out of the window but it was dark!



However, something interesting happened. Vishrambu spotted a white, soft spongy thing jutting out of a tiny hole from his seat. He pulled it out and realized it was fun to play with. He wanted some more of it!

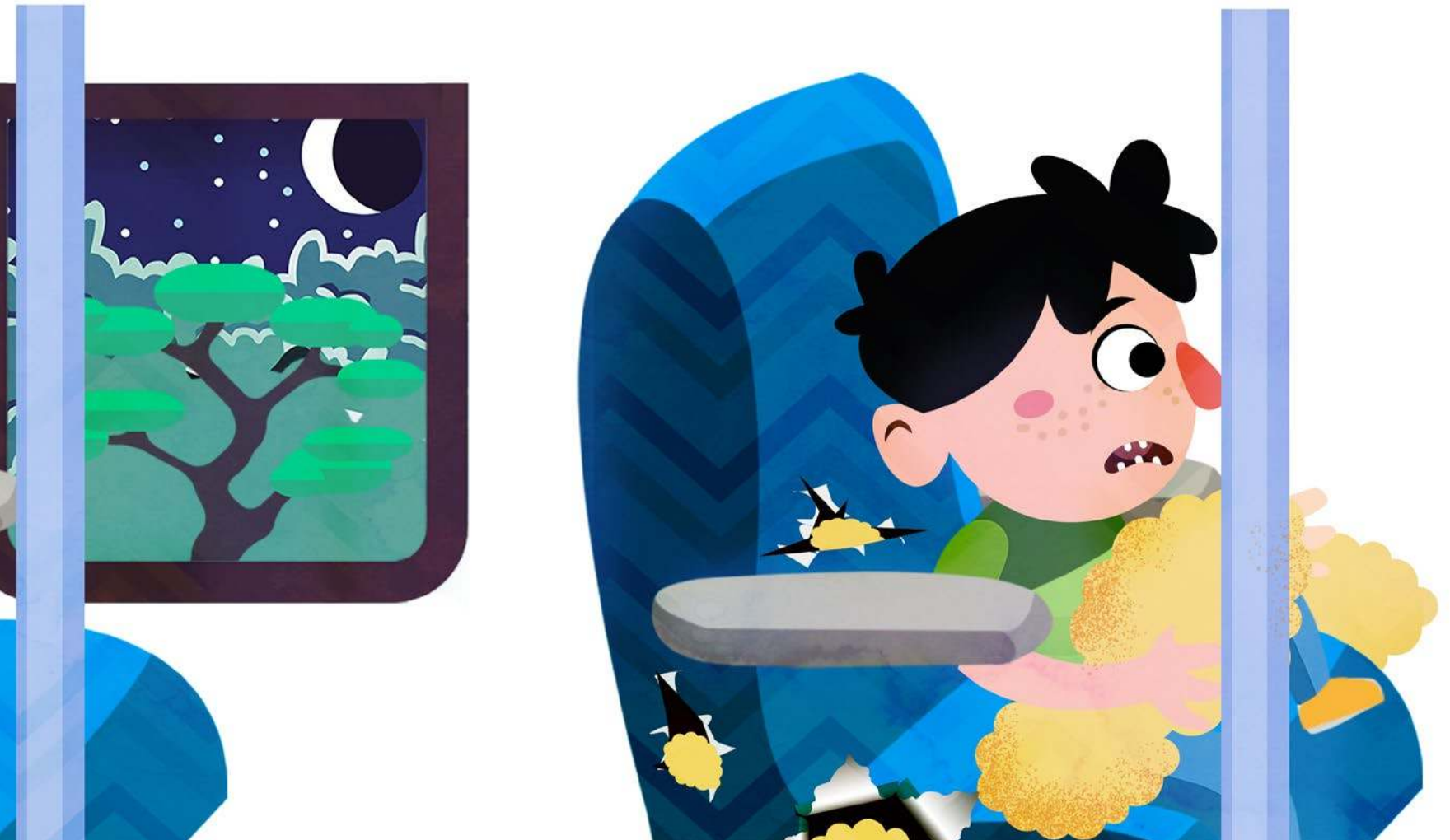


Vishrambu pulled another bit, and then a bright idea struck him! He decided to make a soft ball with the sponge, and gift it to his cousin in Lucknow.



Vishrambu started pulling out everything from inside the seat. In no time, he had torn the seat, pulled out all the sponge, and created a big mess!

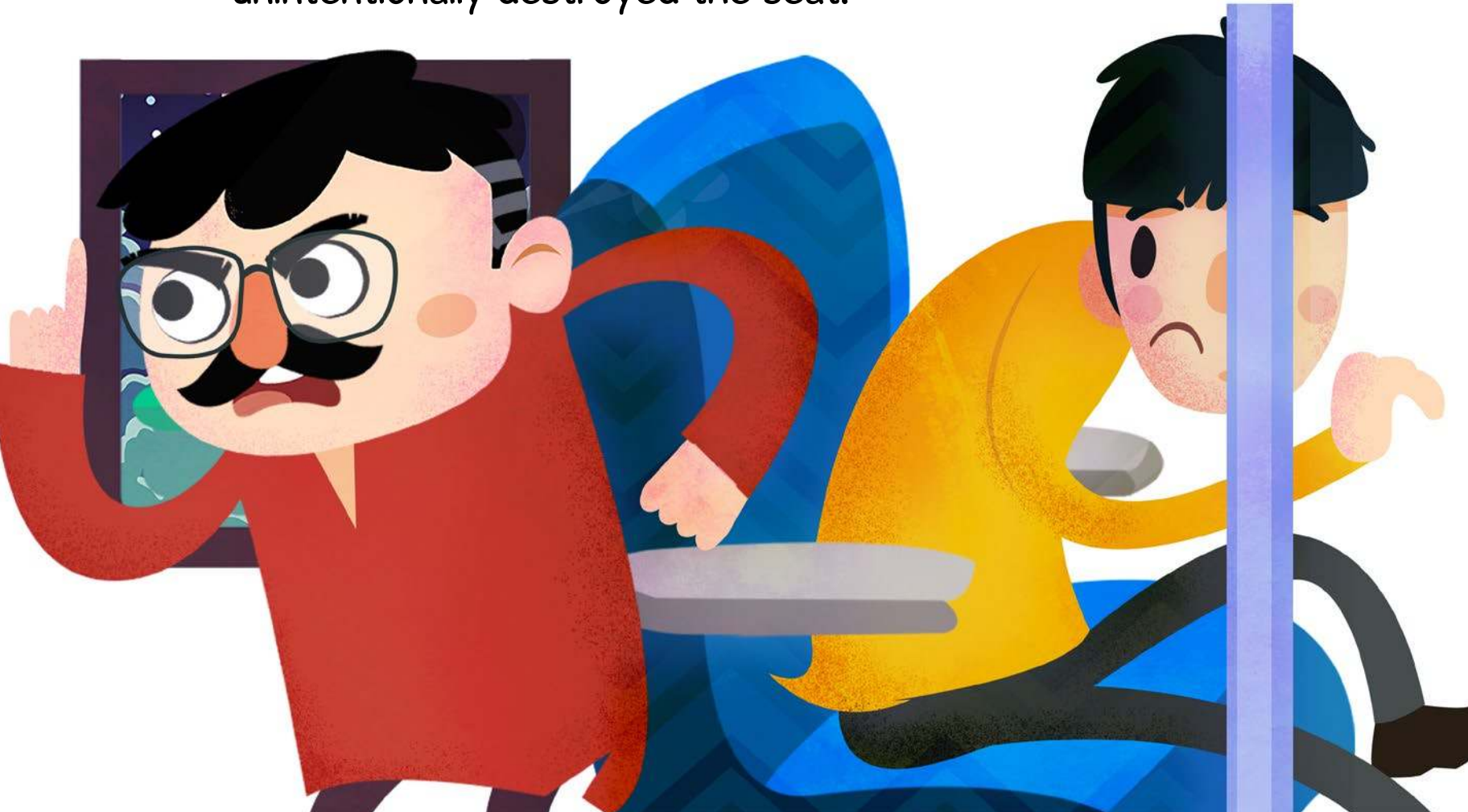
He now only needed something to wrap his little present in. Not knowing where to find one, he innocently woke his father up.



Sharmaji woke up reluctantly, and couldn't believe what he saw! "Vishrambu, what on earth is this?" he yelled.

The passengers in the bus woke up to all the commotion.

Vishrambu was now petrified and realized that he had unintentionally destroyed the seat.



The bus conductor rushed, and saw all the mess. He didn't know what to say, and the three of them looked at each other.



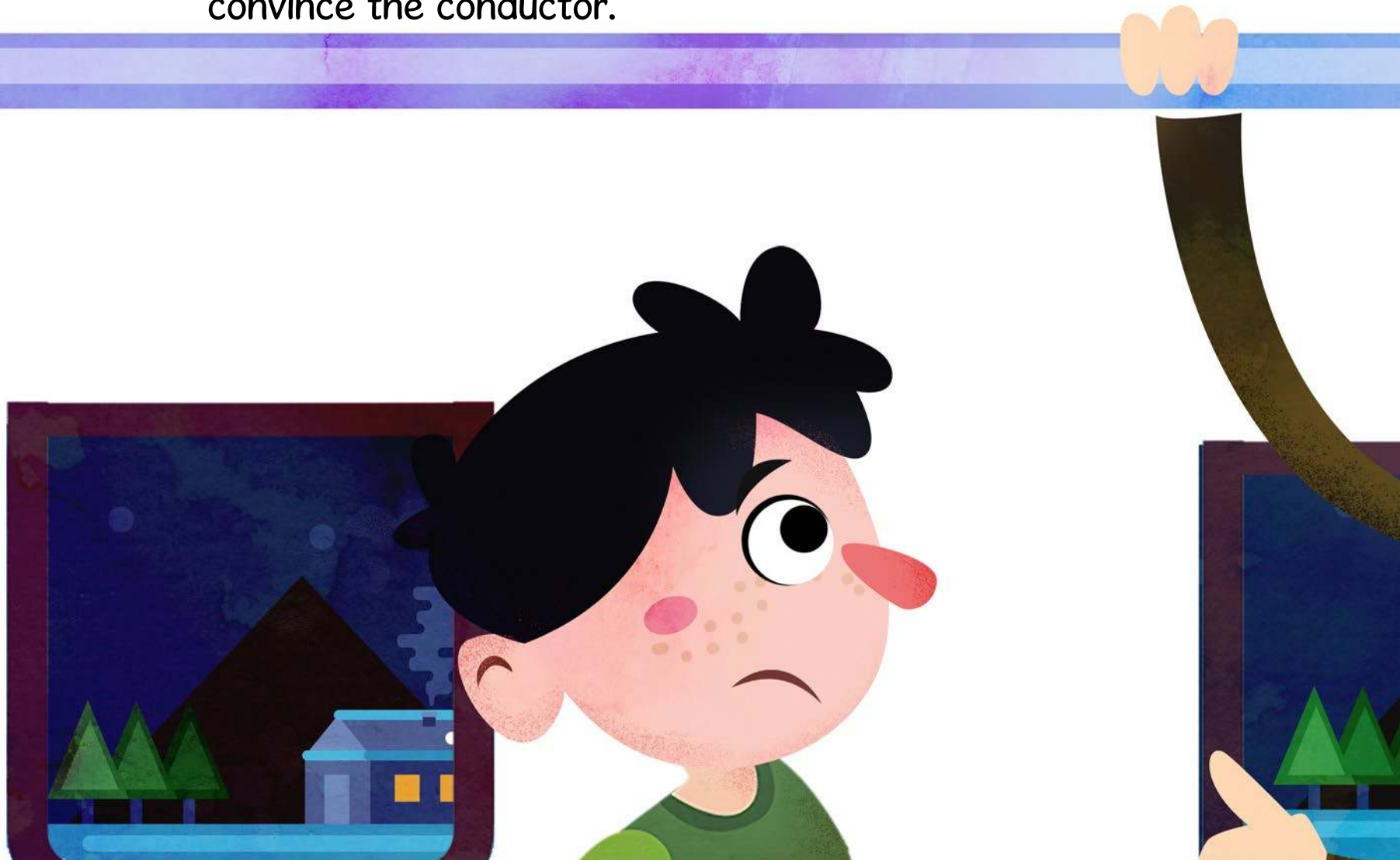
Vishrambu mustered some courage, and meekly said,
“Papa, can you please give some money to conductor uncle
to repair the seat?”

Sharmaji’s face turned red!



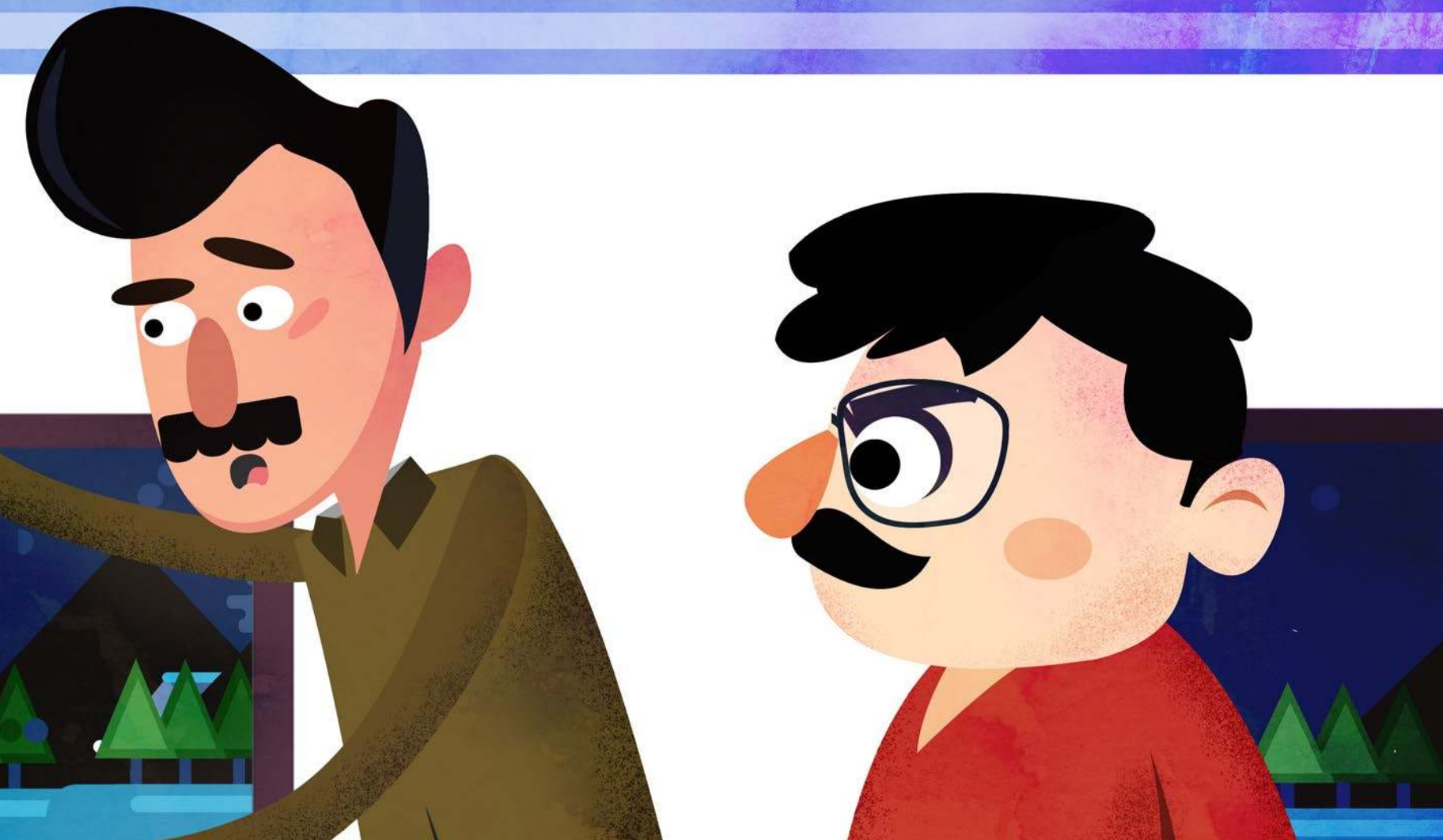
Sensing danger, the conductor stepped in and said,
“Vishrambu, your papa cannot pay me money.”

“Papa can! He’s done it before!” said Vishrambu, trying to
convince the conductor.



“Vishrambu, I don’t own the bus, so I cannot accept the money,” said the conductor.

“Ok, then papa can pay the owner of the bus!” suggested Vishrambu.

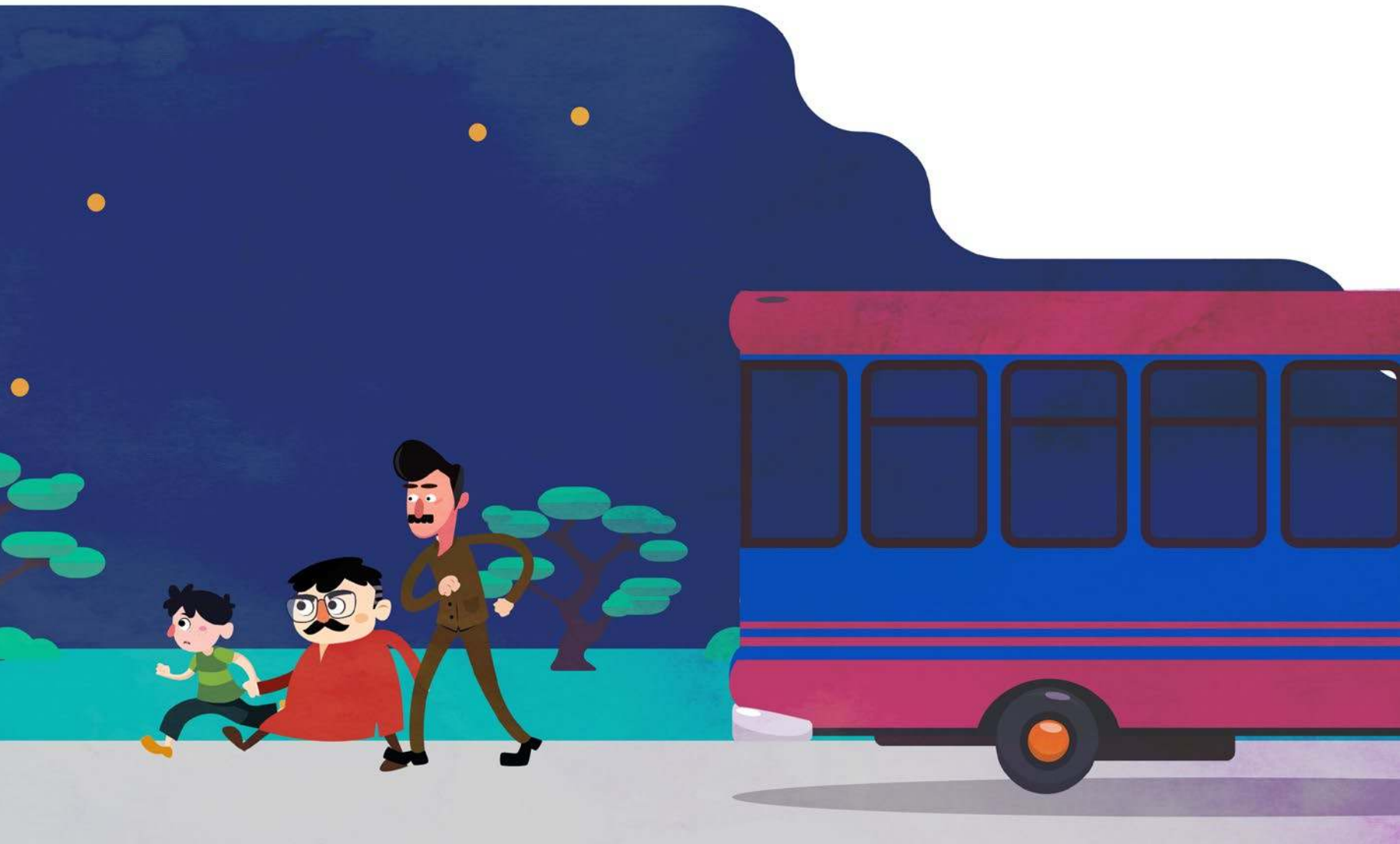


Meanwhile the bus stopped for a short break at a small highway hotel.

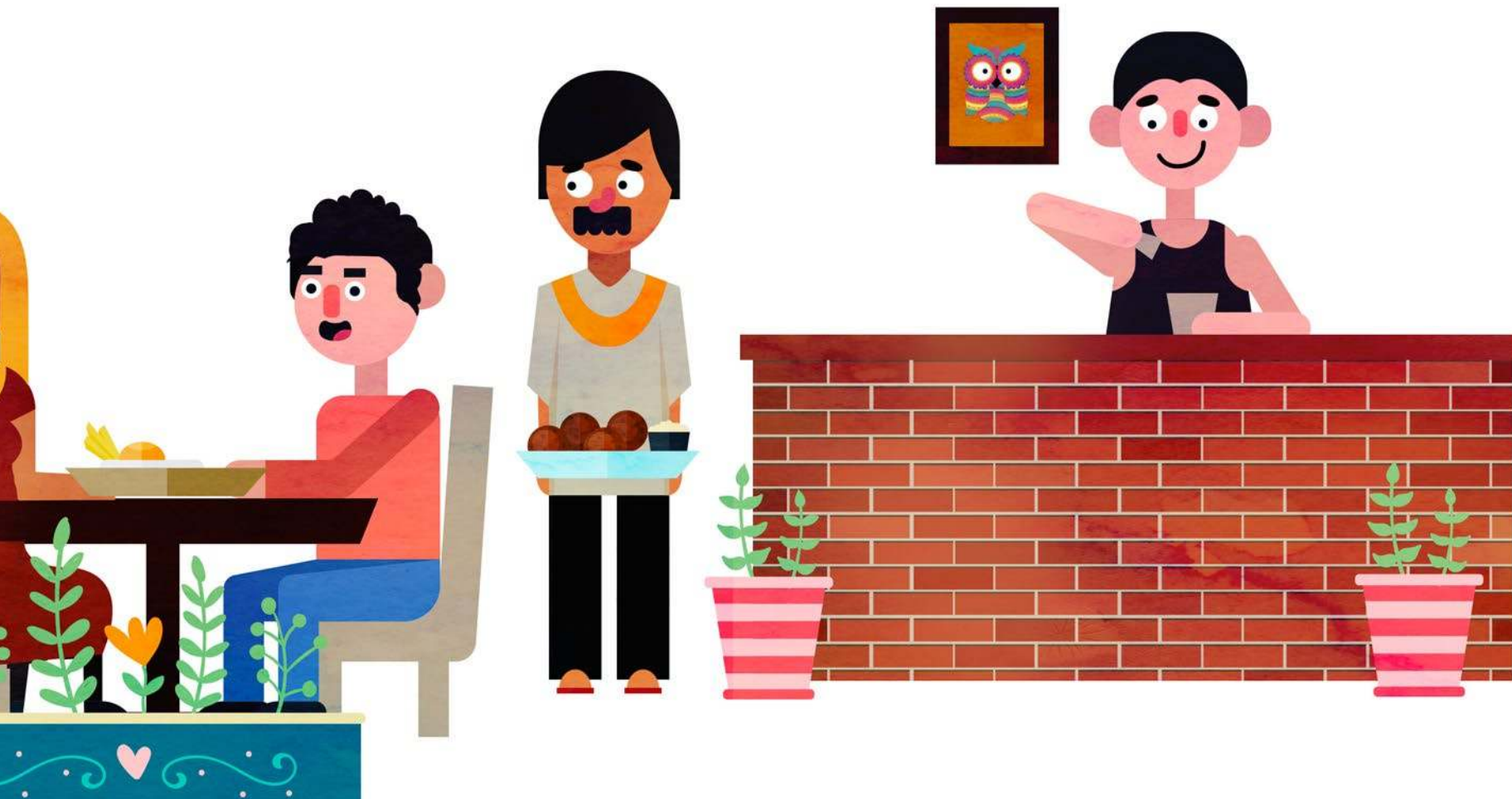
The three of them sat down at a table.



The conductor explained further, “Vishrambu, the government owns this bus, and whatever the government owns belongs to all of us! So, your papa cannot pay all of us, right?”



“How can the bus belong to the government and all of us at the same time?” said Vishrambu, looking puzzled.



The conductor explained, “It is because of the taxes we pay, Vishrambu”.

“Taxes?? What is that?” asked Vishrambu



The conductor tried to explain -
“With the money we all earn, we buy things like vegetables, clothes, toys for kids, and many other things. But a portion of our money also goes to the government. This is called tax”.

Vishrambu was puzzled, he said,
“But uncle, why should we give our money to the government?”



The conductor explained further -

“You see, there are a few common facilities that all of us use. Like roads, bridges, buses, schools, and even the playground you play on! Have you ever thought of who pays for these facilities?”



Vishrambu looked confused.
“Who pays?” he asked.

“The government!
You see Vishrambu, if we do not pay
our taxes, there will be no facilities
for us to use - like this bus or the
road we are travelling on,” said the
conductor.



The conductor continued -

“So Vishrambu, it is not only important for us to pay our taxes to the government but also very important for us to take good care of things that belong to all of us.”



Sharmaji intervened, and said, “Vishrambu, do you now realise that you have destroyed something that belongs to all of us?”

Little Vishrambu’s eyes looked teary.

He said, “I know papa, I’m very sorry. I didn’t destroy it on purpose. I promise to be more careful next time.”



Sharmaji could sense that Vishrambu really meant what he said.

“Good Vishrambu, I’m happy you’ve finally understood. I can now leave you in Lucknow without any worries,” he said, while biting into a samosa.

The three of them laughed out loud!





Vishrambu's Bus Journey

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