



Room to Read®

Level 3



Think Before You Act

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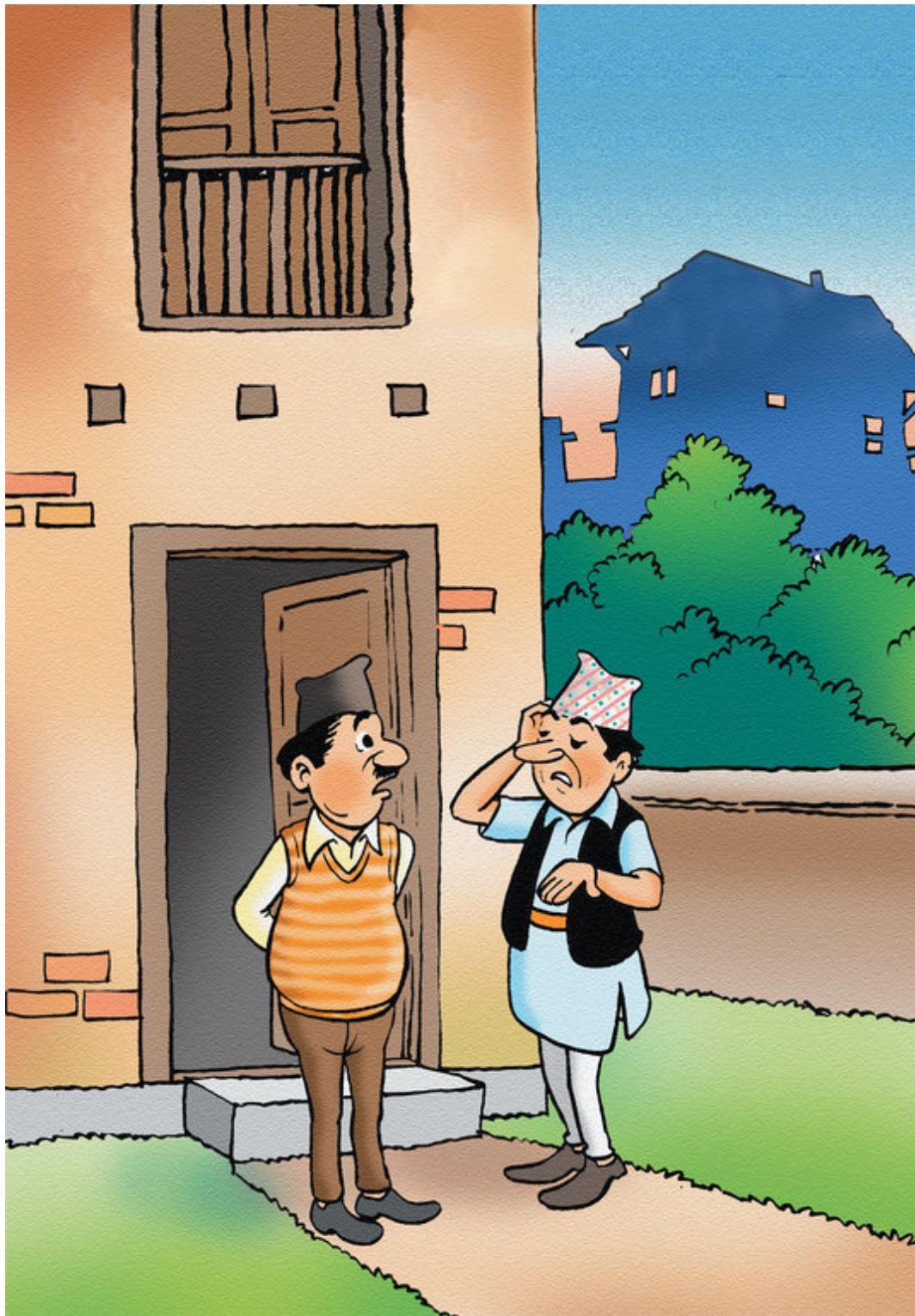
Buddhi had a beautiful garden. Many different flowers bloomed in his garden.

He often felt happy as he looked at his garden and flowers.



One year, it didn't rain at all.

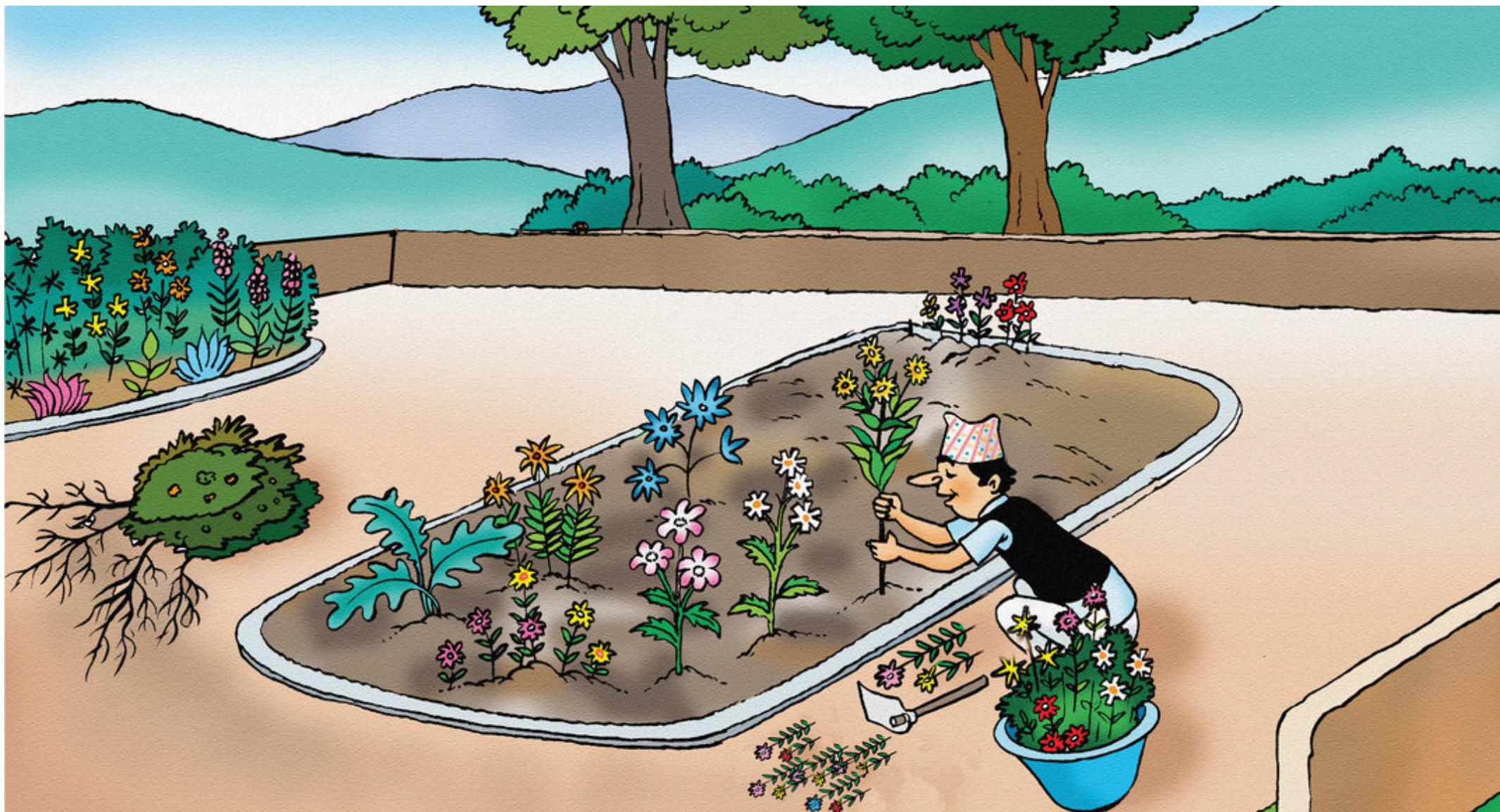
The flowers began to wither and dry in the heat.



Buddhi had a friend called Aarti. He visited him and asked, "My friend, this year's drought has dried all the flowers in my garden. Do you know of any flowers that don't wither away or dry up?"

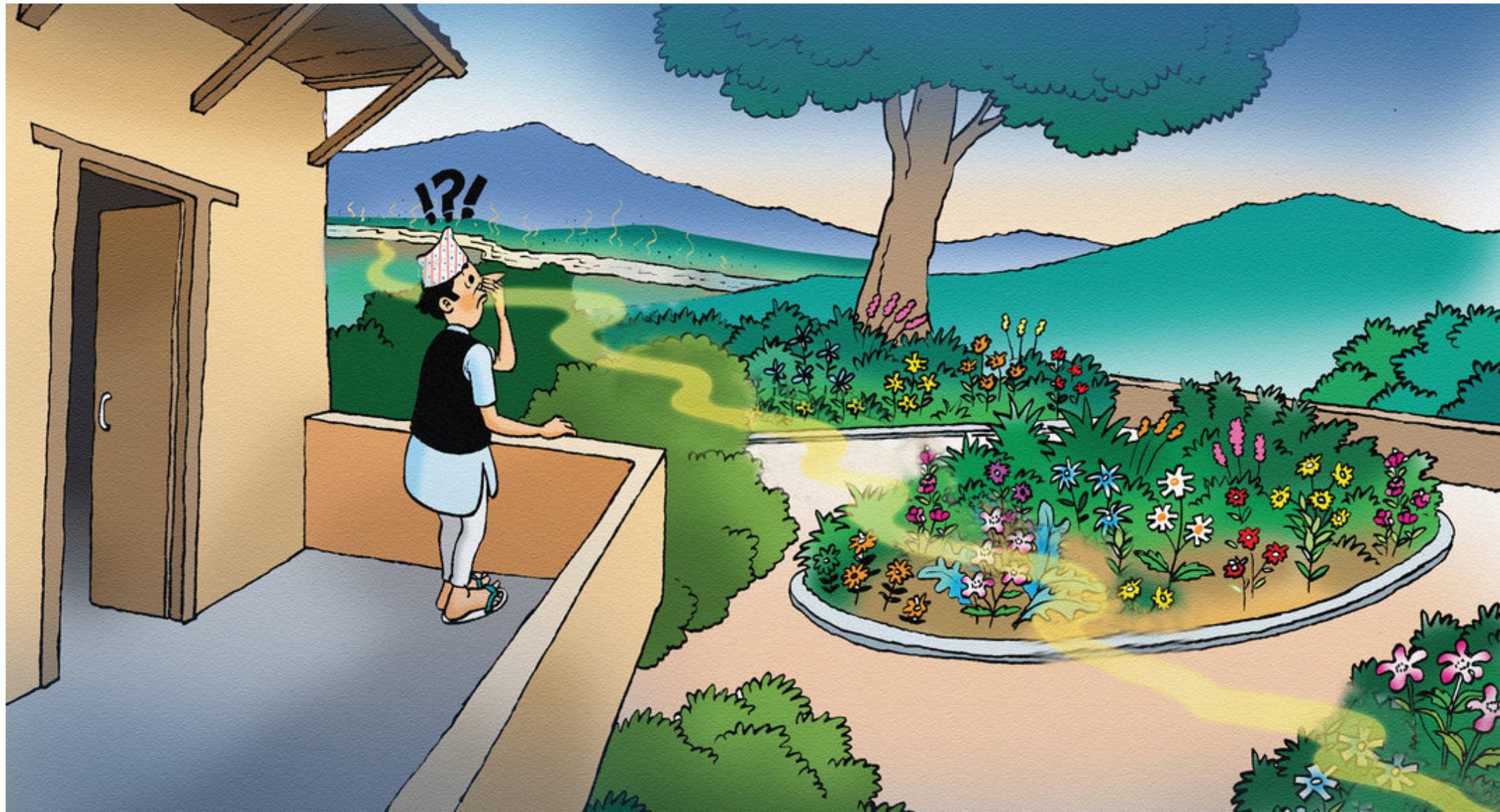


"Hmm, paper and plastic flowers neither wither away nor dry up. If it rains, paper flowers will get damaged but the plastic flowers won't," said Aarti.



Buddhi went back home and uprooted all the flowers.

He bought plastic flowers and planted them in his garden.



One evening, while standing on the verandah overlooking his garden, Buddhi felt a breeze blow by.

Instead of the fragrance of flowers, he smelled the stench of the gutter.



He went to Aarti's house the next day. "My friend, the garden is beautiful, but it has no fragrance of the flowers at all. The air smells of the terrible stench of the gutter. What should I do?"

"Sprinkle perfume on the flowers," Aarti advised him.

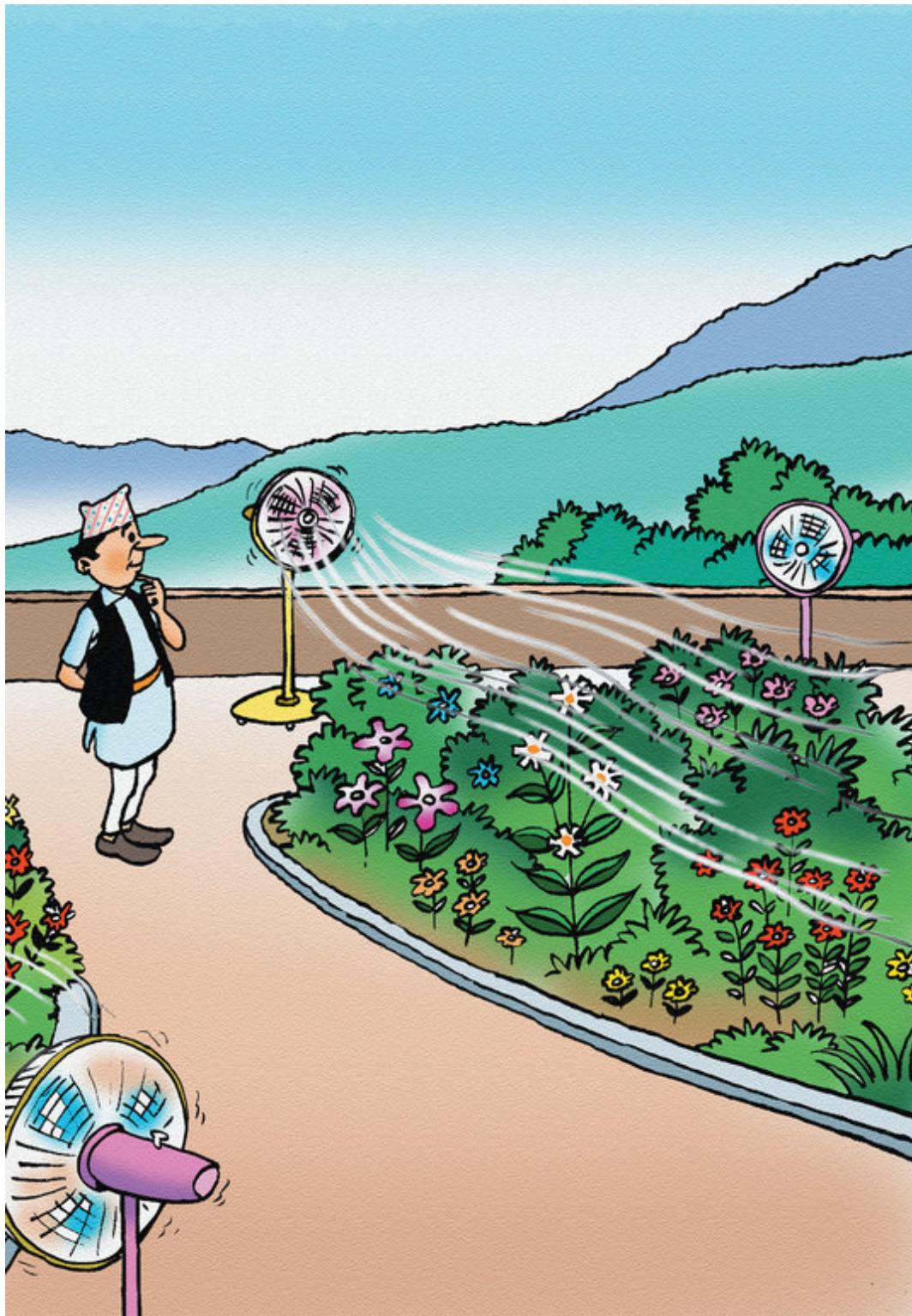


Buddhi sprinkled perfume
on the plastic flowers.

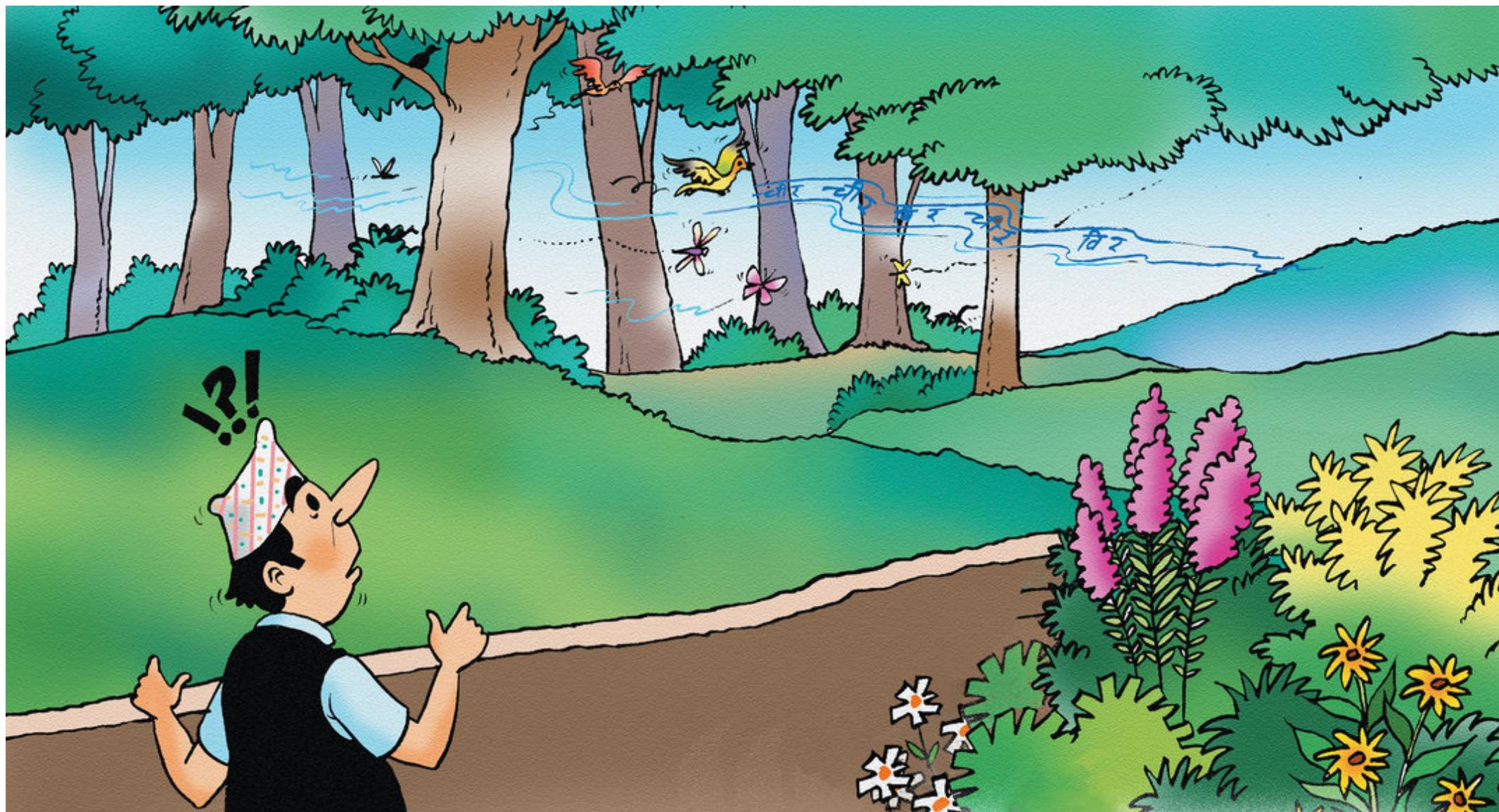


But, he could still smell that awful gutter. He went to Aarti again. "My friend, my garden still smells of the gutter."

"Buddhi, it is the wind that spreads fragrance around. Put a fan near your garden. Then you'll smell only the fragrance of the flowers," said Aarti.



Buddhi put fans in the garden to spread the perfume.



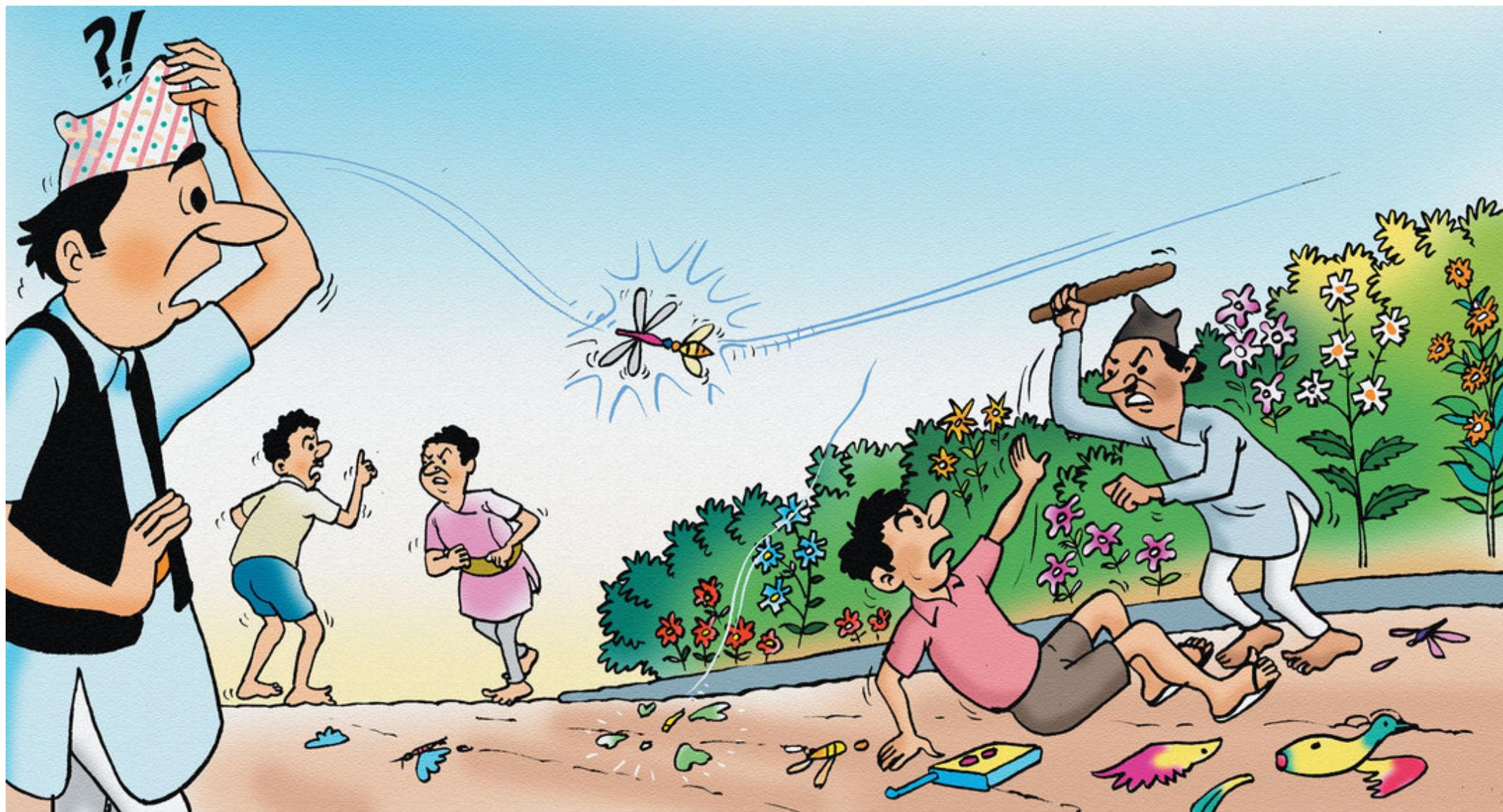
Now he could smell the perfume from his garden.

But, he missed the butterflies and bees and birds that would visit his garden every day.



Aarti advised him to buy toy birds, bees, and butterflies. Buddhi bought the toys and began flying them in his garden.

Soon, his friends and neighbours joined in too.



But soon, accidents began happening. The toys would collide with each other and crash to the ground. People started becoming angry.

They argued and quarreled all day.



Buddhi complained to Aarti, "The toys are a disaster! They collided and crashed and people began arguing and fighting with each other."

"Oh dear," said Aarti. "It's very bad to quarrel. If people quarrel we should tell them not to do so. But if they don't calm down, we should punish them."



"You're the one responsible for this mess!" said Buddhi angrily.

"I destroyed my garden, spent so much money and made everything artificial. The flowers, the fragrance, the air, the butterflies, the bees, the birds - everything! YOU deserve to be punished."



Aarti said calmly, "My friend, we should listen to other peoples' advice. But, we must act on it only after we have thought over it carefully ourselves. If someone tells you that a crow has stolen your ears, will you chase the crow or think carefully first?"



Aarti's words made Buddhi realise his mistake. "It is natural that as seasons pass, flowers bloom and also wither away. I shouldn't have gone against the laws of nature," he thought.



Aarti saw his friend deep in thought. He asked him, "My friend, do you need any more advice?"

"No, no," laughed Buddhi.
"I know what to do now."



The next day, Buddhi uprooted and threw away all the plastic flowers. He put the fans back in his house. Using a hoe, he planted real flowers in his garden.



He patiently watered and checked each flower carefully.



A few weeks later, his garden bloomed once again with real flowers. Birds, bees and butterflies came visiting. Buddhi was overjoyed to see his garden come to life again and felt grateful to nature for this precious gift.



Aarti hadn't seen his friend for a while, so he visited him. Buddhi showed him around his garden. He smiled and embraced his friend among the beautiful, fragrant flowers.



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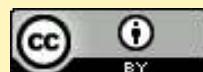
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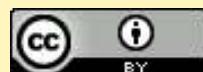


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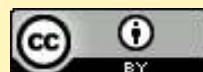


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Think Before You Act

(English)

A man takes advice from his friend without thinking twice about it himself. Where do you think this will lead him?

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