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My Best Friend Next Door

Dishani Senaratne

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**My Best Friend
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Dishani Senaratne

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Dedication

To my niece Sandithi and nephew Radin

Please don't grow up so soon.

Acknowledgements

I wish to express my gratitude to the U. S. Embassy to Sri Lanka and Maldives for funding Writing Doves as part of the Small & Mighty Grants Program and Sarvodaya Sri Lanka for administering the project. I'm deeply pleased and honoured to have had the opportunity to turn my idea into a reality.

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I'm so thankful for Mrs. Sarasi Gunasena for the beautiful artwork.

Dear Amma and Thaththa, without your love and support, nothing is possible. Thank you Akka and Ayya for being there for me. I'm so glad that we are family.

Dishani Senaratne



***Thilini's home garden is very beautiful
with many flowers.
In the evening,
she plays with her dog Tommy in the
garden.***





One day, while coming home from school, Thilini saw that the next-door house was open.





“Has someone moved in?”

Thilini asked Amma.

“I’m not sure. But I saw a little boy just like you,” Amma said, patting Thilini on the head.





“What are those drawings on the ground near the door?” Thilini asked Amma, while looking out of the window. “Let’s go to their place in the evening and ask about them.”





After having a bath, Thilini started to have lunch. Tommy was sitting under the table.





“We will make some welithalapa for your new friend,” Amma said, entering the kitchen. “Tommy and I will help you,” Thilini said happily.

Some time later, the smell of welithalapa filled the house.





“Duwa, we will share some welithalapa pieces with Thaththa also.”

“Sure, Amma.....Look! Tommy has already gone to their house.”





“Please come inside. Welcome to our new house,” said neighbour aunty.
“Aunty, here is a little gift for you.”
“Thank you.”





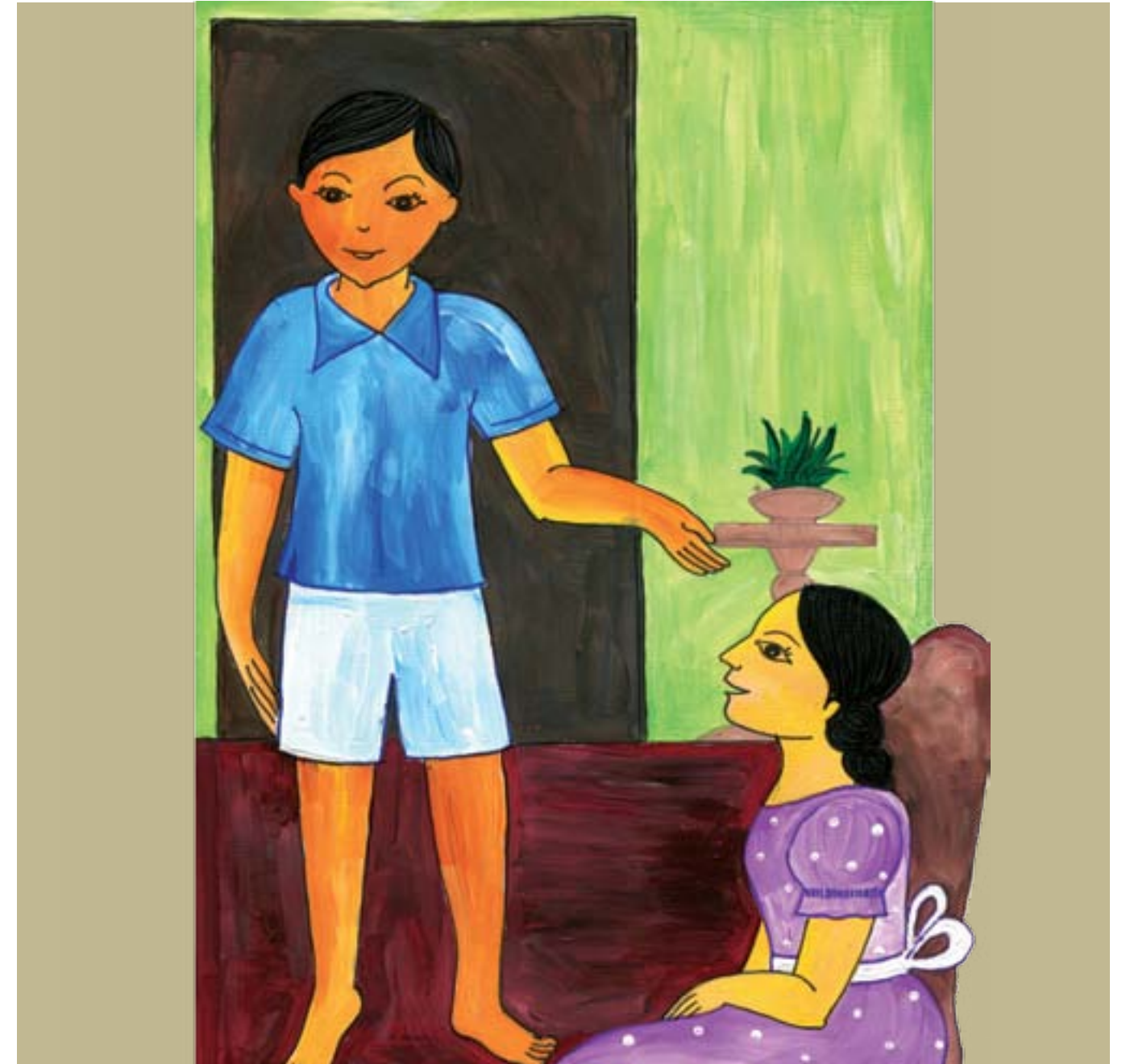
“What’s your name, Duwa?”

“Thilini.”

“That’s a nice name....Thilini, this is Raju. Raju, this is Thilini.”

“Nice to meet you.”

“Nice to meet you, too.”





Raju and Thilini played with Tommy for a long time.

***“Tommy runs so fast. Let’s chase him,”
Thilini said loudly.***





“Watch your step! There are drawings on the ground,” Thilini’s Amma advised. “What are those?” Thilini was surprised. “Flower kolam designs. We draw them to seek God’s blessings,” Raju’s Amma explained.



“Let’s have tea with welithalapa and laddu,” Raju called everyone.

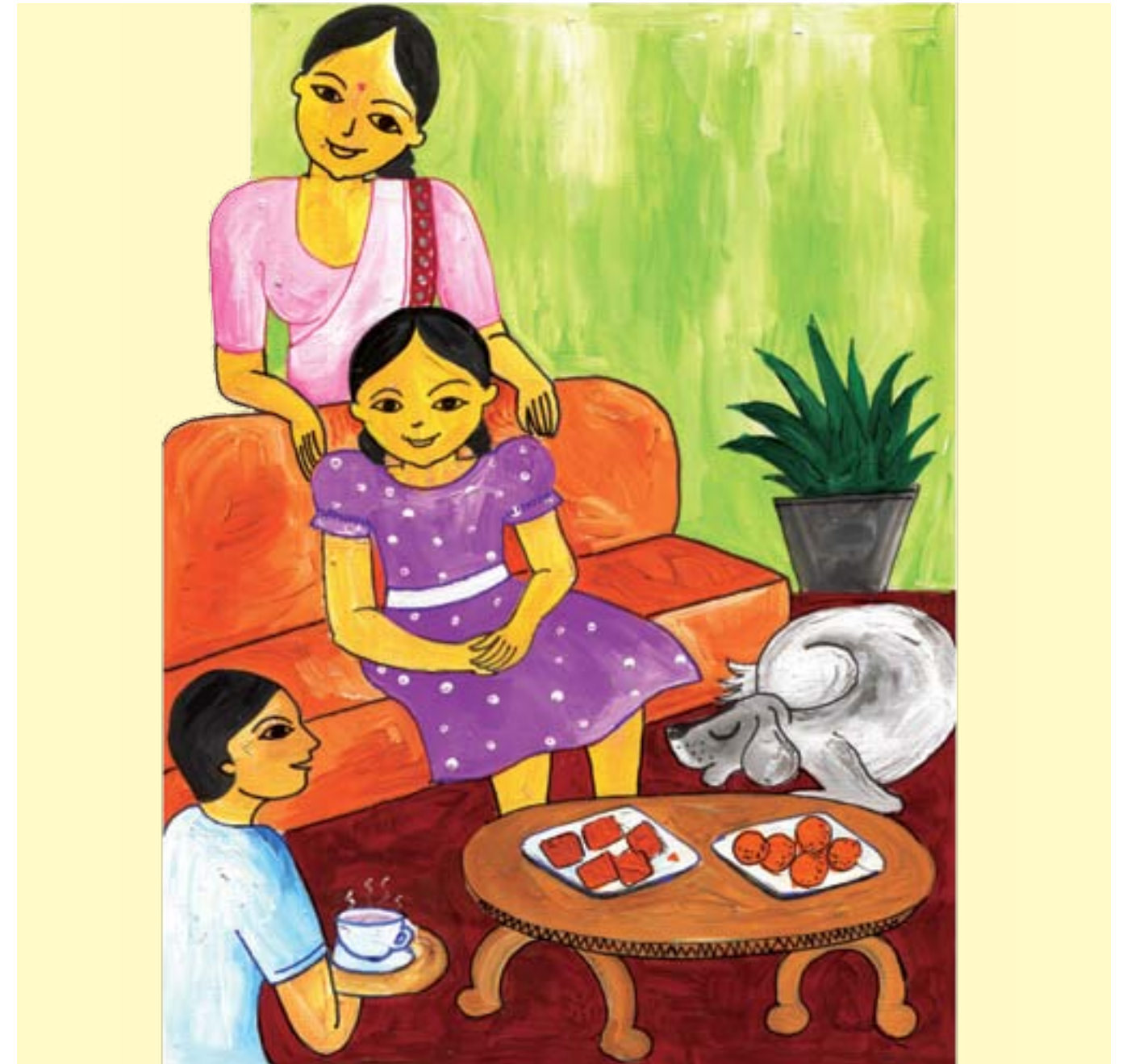
“Mmm.... Yummy laddu,” Thilini told Raju.

“We will come to your place tomorrow,” while enjoying a slice of welithalapa Raju told Thilini.

“We can draw kolam designs together,” Raju’s Amma said as she held Thilini’s hand.

Thilini smiled.

Tommy wagged his tail.



Writing Doves



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www.writingdoves.lk

<https://www.facebook.com/WritingDoves/>



Dishani Senaratne is an independent researcher and a published author whose work has been featured in *Write to Reconcile*, *FemAsia Magazine* and *ActiveMuse*. She is also an Interfaith Fellow of the *South East Asia: Advancing Inter-religious Dialogue and Freedom of Religion or Belief* (SEA AIR FoRB) *Interfaith Fellowship Programme*.