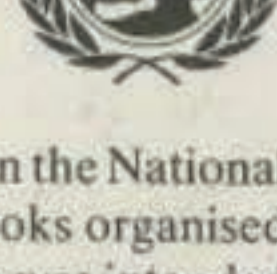


"THE Sun is Like a Football.."

Gitanjali Prasad



The Sun is Like a Football was an entry in the National Competition for Writers of Children's Books organised by CBT and UNICEF in 1985. The theme was intended to portray boys and girls as equals.

The author contributes articles to journals.

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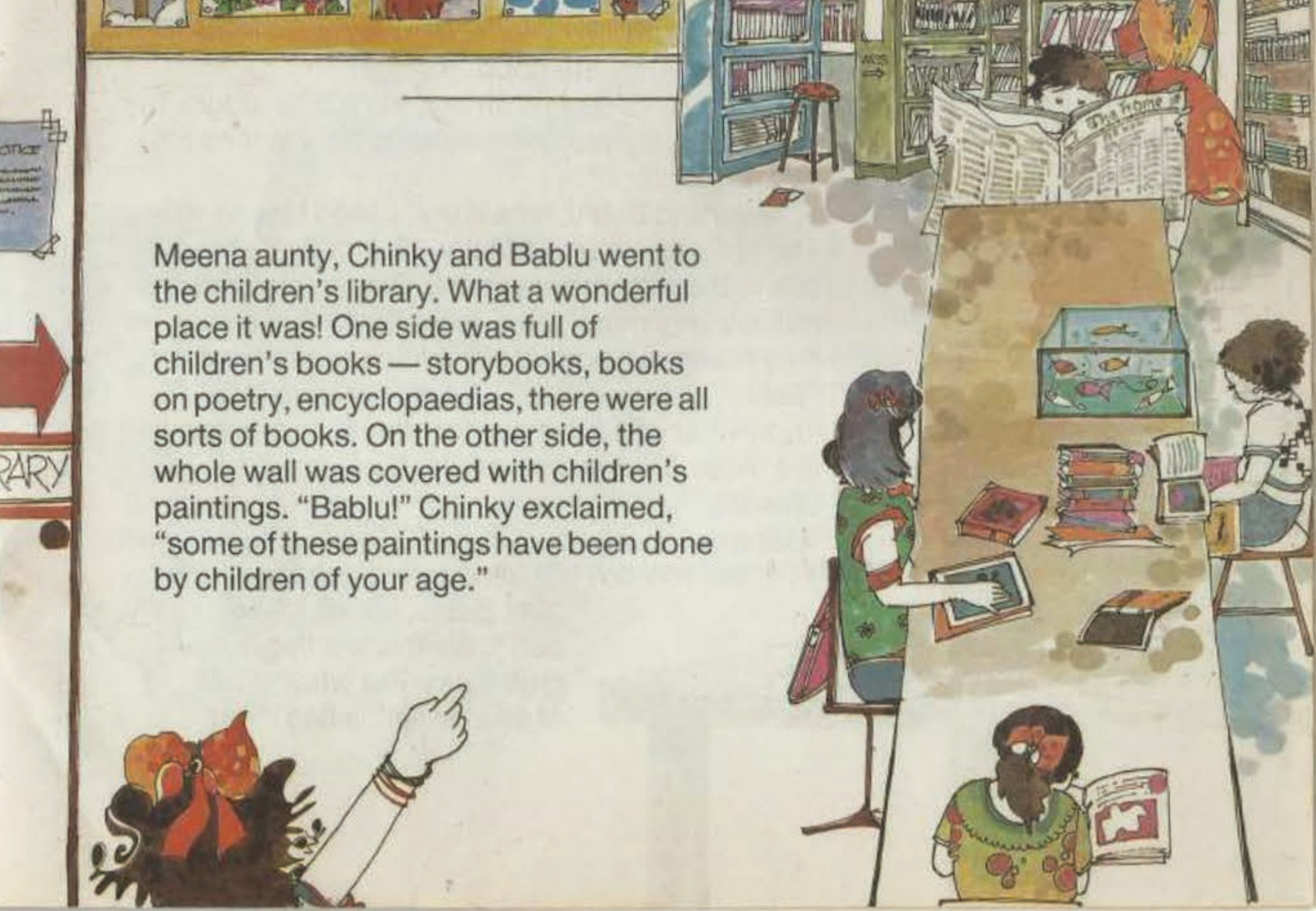
Chinky and Bablu were feeling very sad. "What will we give Mama when we say 'Happy Birthday' tomorrow? Nothing," said Bablu. It was their mother's birthday the next day. And since their father was away on tour, there was going to be no party, no cake and no presents.

"Hi, kids! What are you doing? Would you like to come to the children's library with me? Just wait till I go and ask your mother." The children waited. Five minutes later Meena aunty came out laughing.

"Come on! Your Mummy says I must cheer you up. You haven't smiled all evening."



Meena aunty, Chinky and Bablu went to the children's library. What a wonderful place it was! One side was full of children's books — storybooks, books on poetry, encyclopaedias, there were all sorts of books. On the other side, the whole wall was covered with children's paintings. "Bablu, I have an idea!" Chinky exclaimed, "some of these paintings have been done by children of your age."



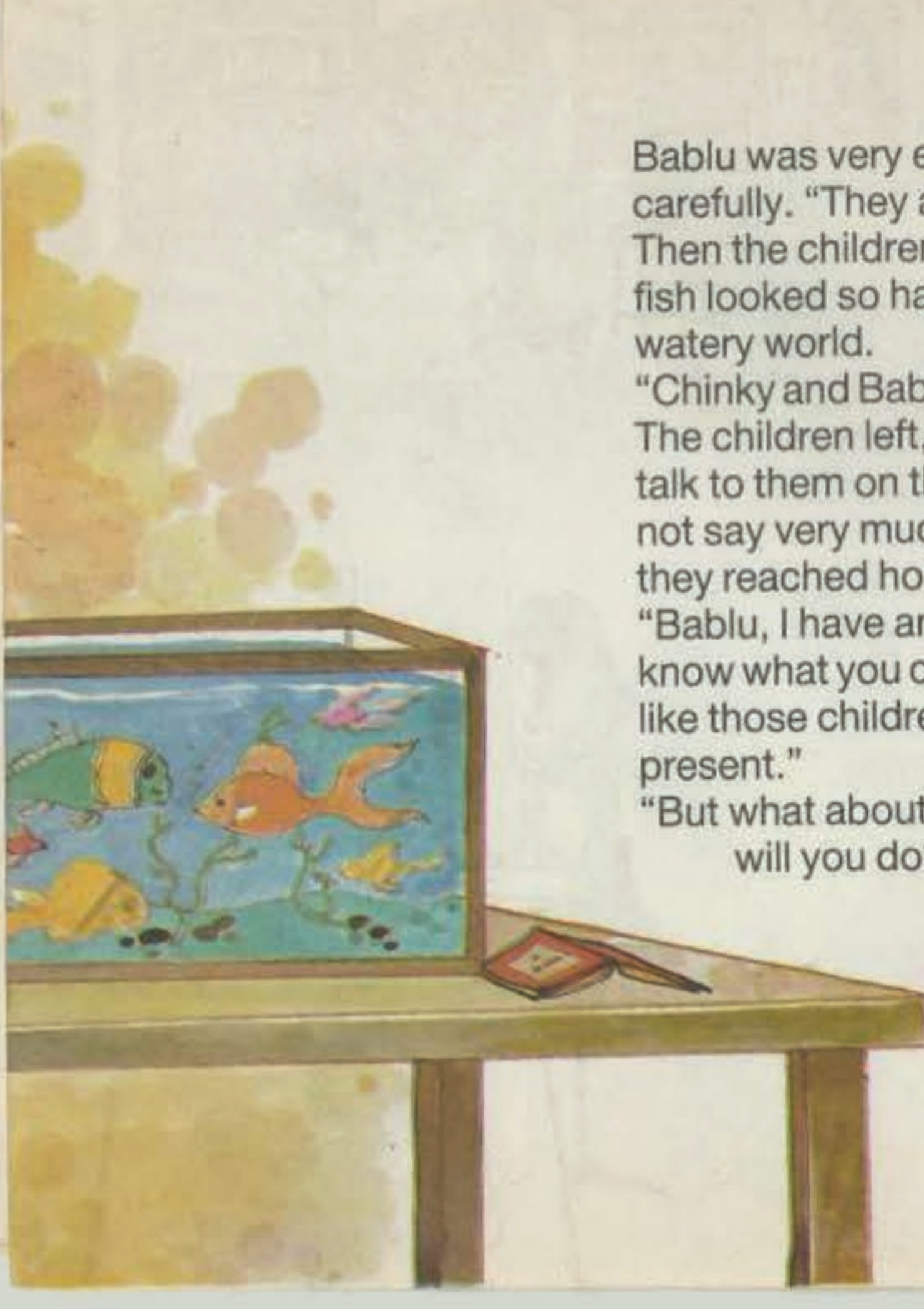
Bablu was very excited. He looked at them very carefully. "They are good," he said. Then the children saw an aquarium on a ledge. The fish looked so happy swimming about in their little watery world.

"Chinky and Bablu, time is up!" called Meena aunty. The children left, reluctantly. Meena aunty tried to talk to them on the way back. But the children did not say very much. They were thinking. As soon as they reached home, the children ran to their room.

"Bablu, I have an idea!" Chinky said excitedly. "I know what you can make for Mama. A painting. Just like those children had made. It will make a lovely present."

"But what about you, Chinky?" Bablu asked, "what will you do?" Chinky looked unhappy again.

"Oh, Bablu, I don't know. I really don't. We made a flag in our craft class. But what would Mama do with a flag?"



"Chinky," said Bablu, "I wish we could make Mama a fish-house just like the one in the library."

"An aquarium," said Chinky. "Oh Bablu, you clever little boy! What a good idea! I will make Mama an aquarium. Not a real one but one made with plasticine. It will look so nice in her kitchen." Quickly the children set to work. Chinky got hold of an empty box made from clear, transparent plastic. Bablu got a picture of an aquarium from his alphabet book.

"Now it is your turn, Bablu," Chinky said. "Let us see what you can draw."

"Oh, I know what to draw, Chinky," said Bablu. And he took a clean white paper and drew on it a round and very bright sun.

Then as soon as they heard their mother singing "Happy Birthday to you!" Mama was so surprised when she saw the presents, she could hardly speak. She hugged Chinky and Bablu and said, "Thank you." She even cried a little. She said she was crying because she was happy. Mothers are funny. Chinky smiled when Mama said her aquarium was beautiful. And Bablu was delighted when she thanked him for his picture. He said, "Mama, I actually wanted to give you a football. I drew a sun because the sun is like a football."

