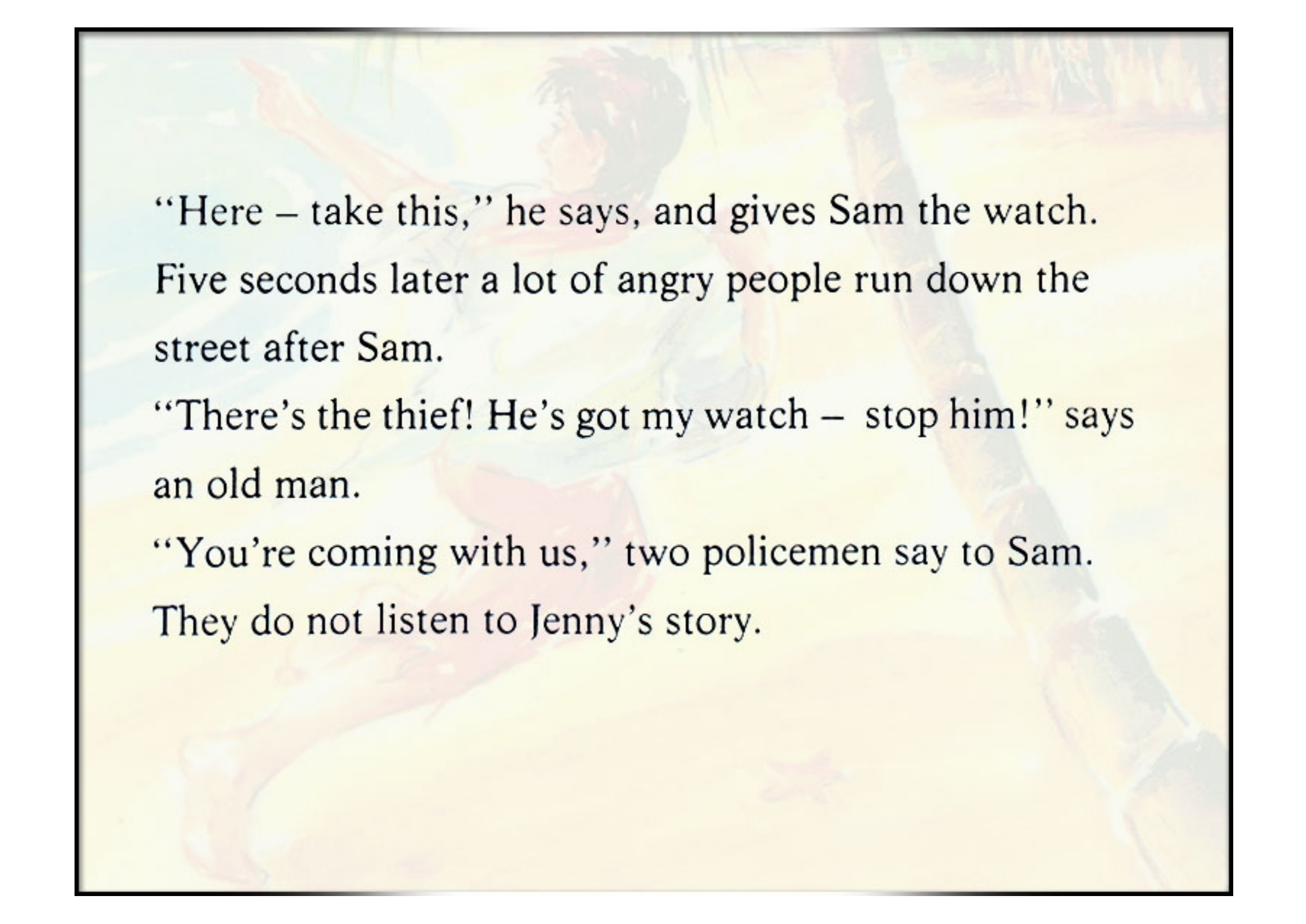


*London, November 1798*

Jenny Tinker is fourteen. She and her father, Sam, work in Covent Garden market. They sell fruit and vegetables. The Tinkers get up early every morning and work very hard.

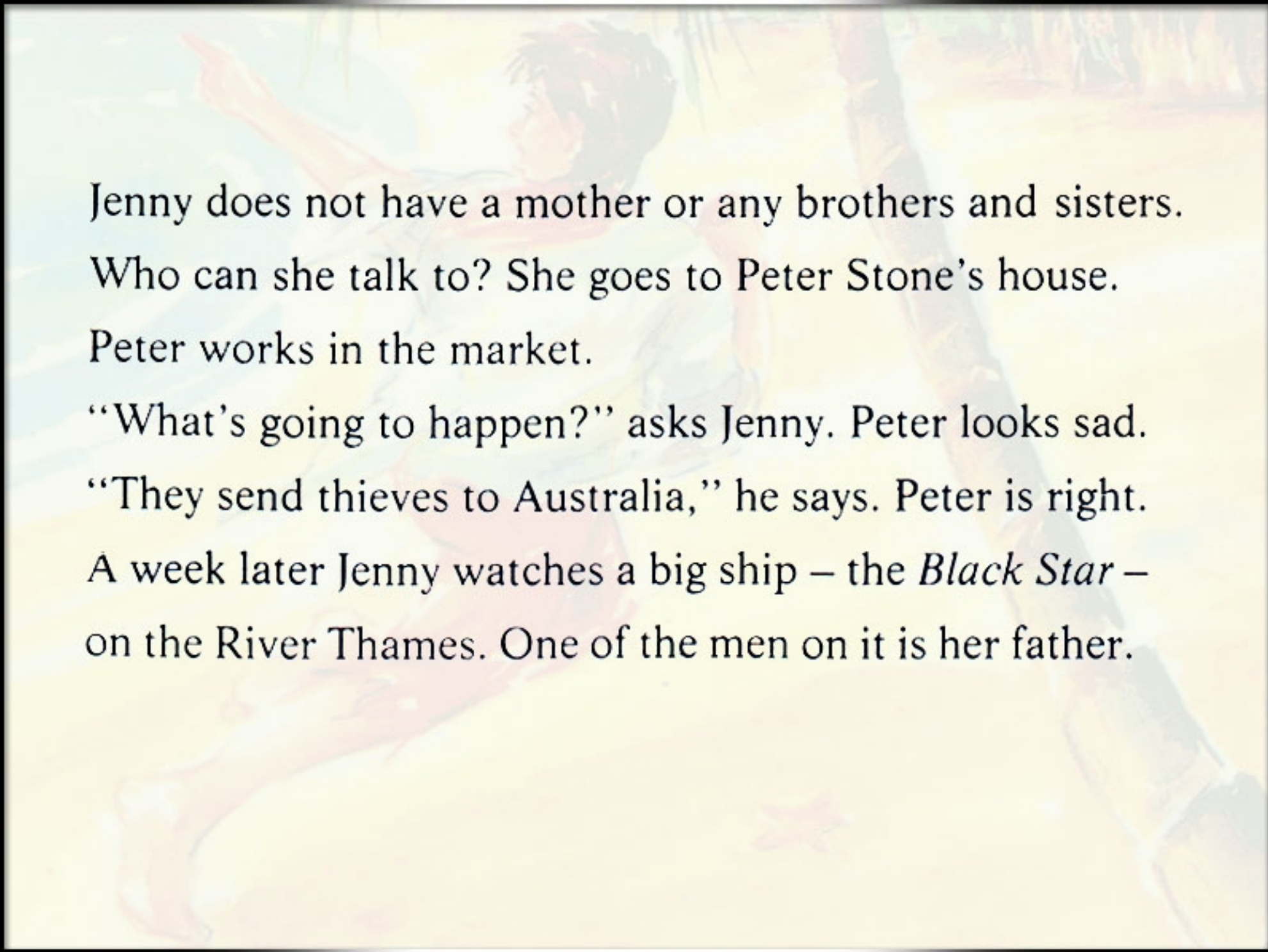
One day after work Jenny sees a man. He is running and he has got a watch in his hand.



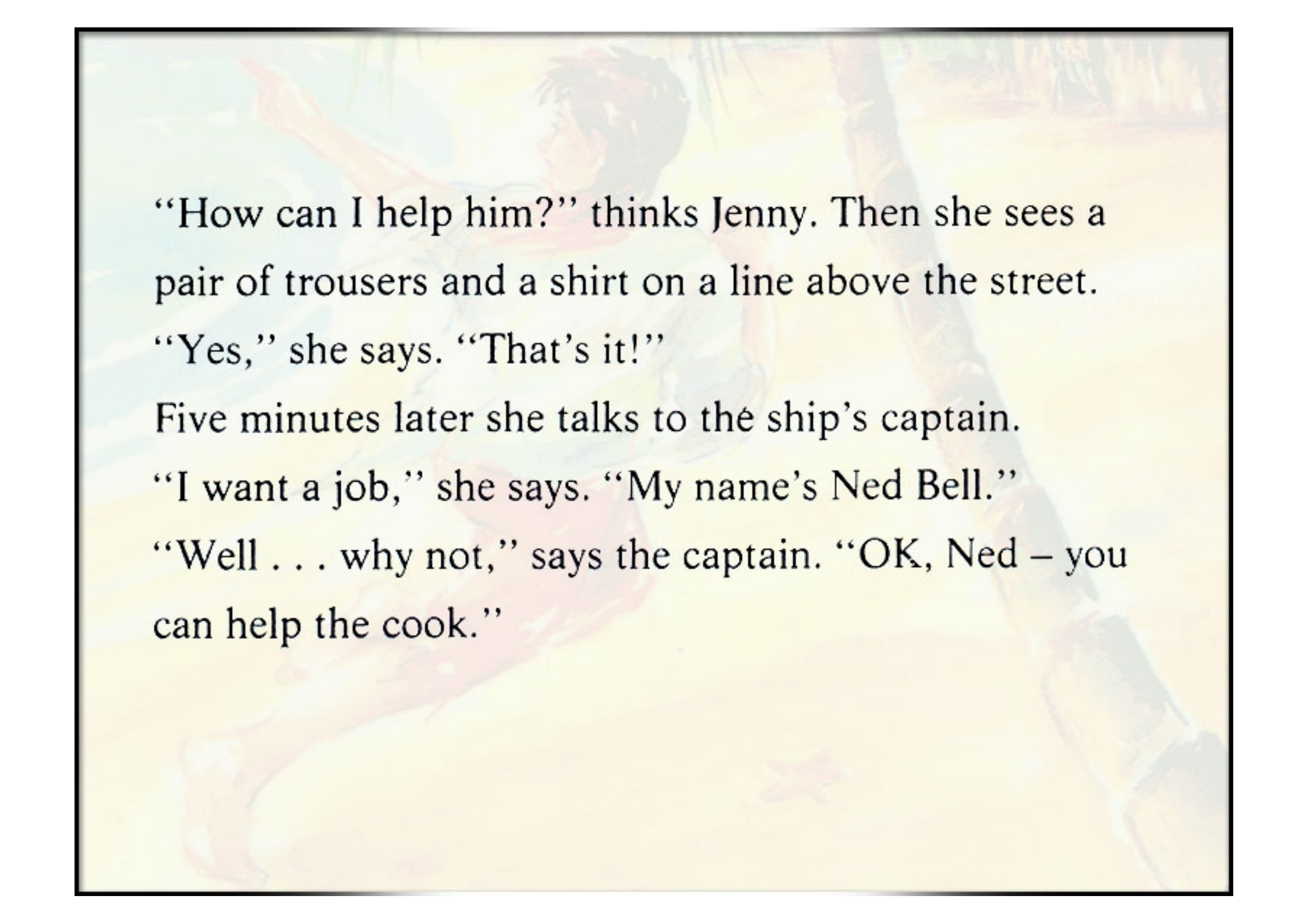
“Here – take this,” he says, and gives Sam the watch. Five seconds later a lot of angry people run down the street after Sam.

“There’s the thief! He’s got my watch – stop him!” says an old man.

“You’re coming with us,” two policemen say to Sam. They do not listen to Jenny’s story.



Jenny does not have a mother or any brothers and sisters. Who can she talk to? She goes to Peter Stone's house. Peter works in the market. "What's going to happen?" asks Jenny. Peter looks sad. "They send thieves to Australia," he says. Peter is right. A week later Jenny watches a big ship – the *Black Star* – on the River Thames. One of the men on it is her father.



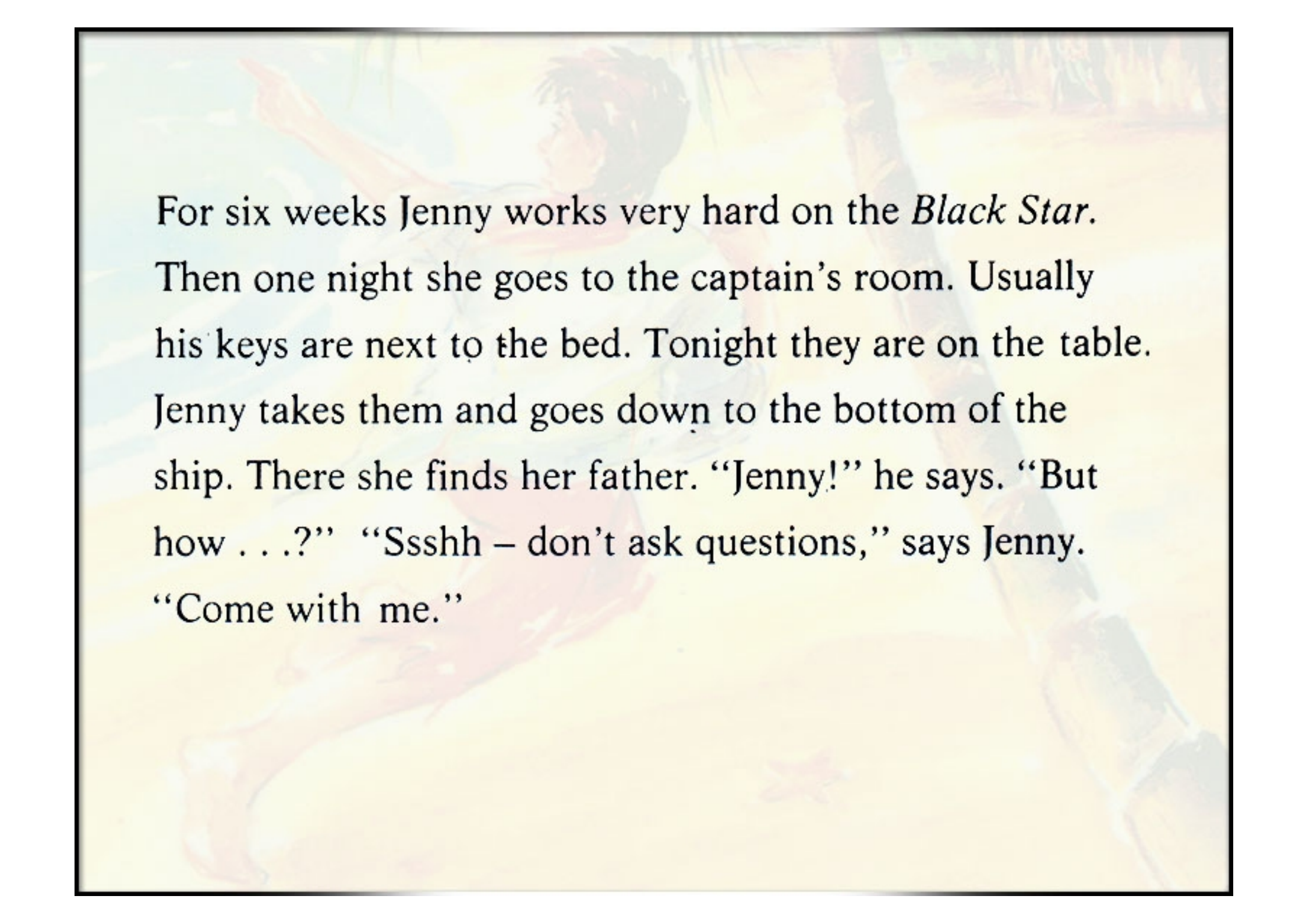
“How can I help him?” thinks Jenny. Then she sees a pair of trousers and a shirt on a line above the street.

“Yes,” she says. “That’s it!”

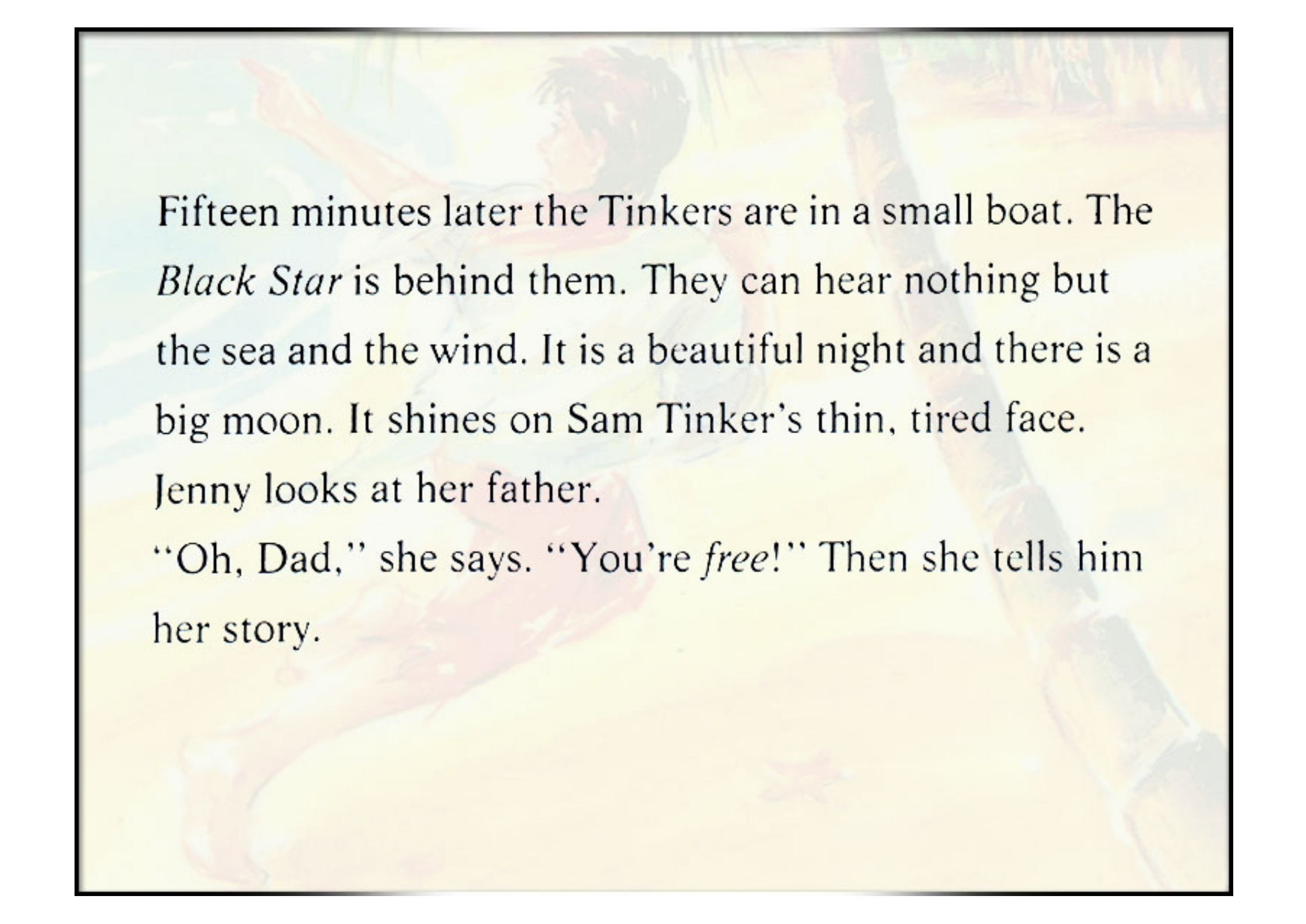
Five minutes later she talks to the ship’s captain.

“I want a job,” she says. “My name’s Ned Bell.”

“Well . . . why not,” says the captain. “OK, Ned – you can help the cook.”

The background of the text is a faint, artistic illustration. It depicts a woman with dark hair, wearing a red dress and white shoes, running through a field. She is pointing her right hand towards the sky. The scene is set in a bright, sunny environment with a yellowish ground and a blue sky. The overall style is soft and painterly.

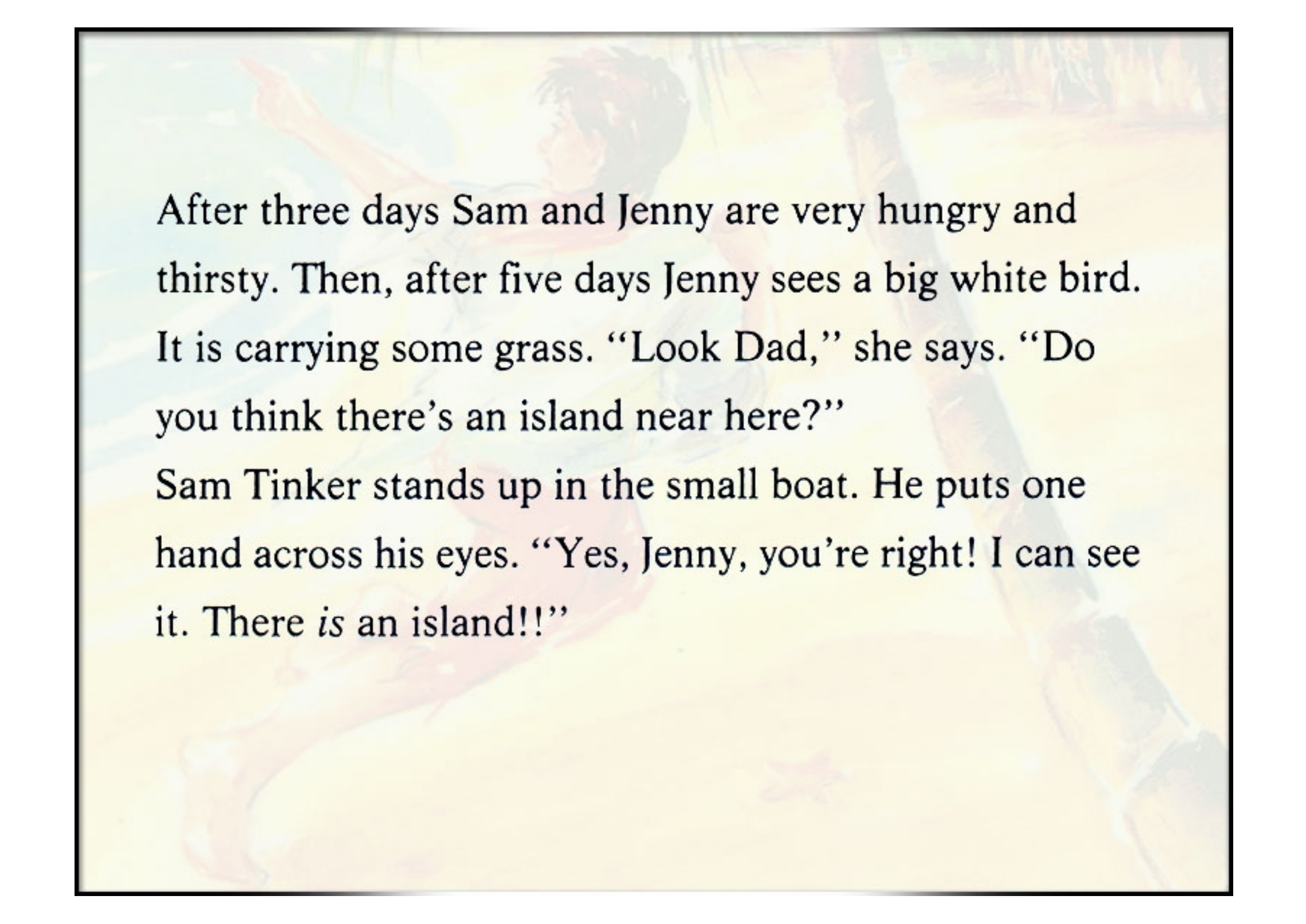
For six weeks Jenny works very hard on the *Black Star*. Then one night she goes to the captain's room. Usually his keys are next to the bed. Tonight they are on the table. Jenny takes them and goes down to the bottom of the ship. There she finds her father. "Jenny!" he says. "But how . . .?" "Sssh – don't ask questions," says Jenny. "Come with me."



Fifteen minutes later the Tinkers are in a small boat. The *Black Star* is behind them. They can hear nothing but the sea and the wind. It is a beautiful night and there is a big moon. It shines on Sam Tinker's thin, tired face.

Jenny looks at her father.

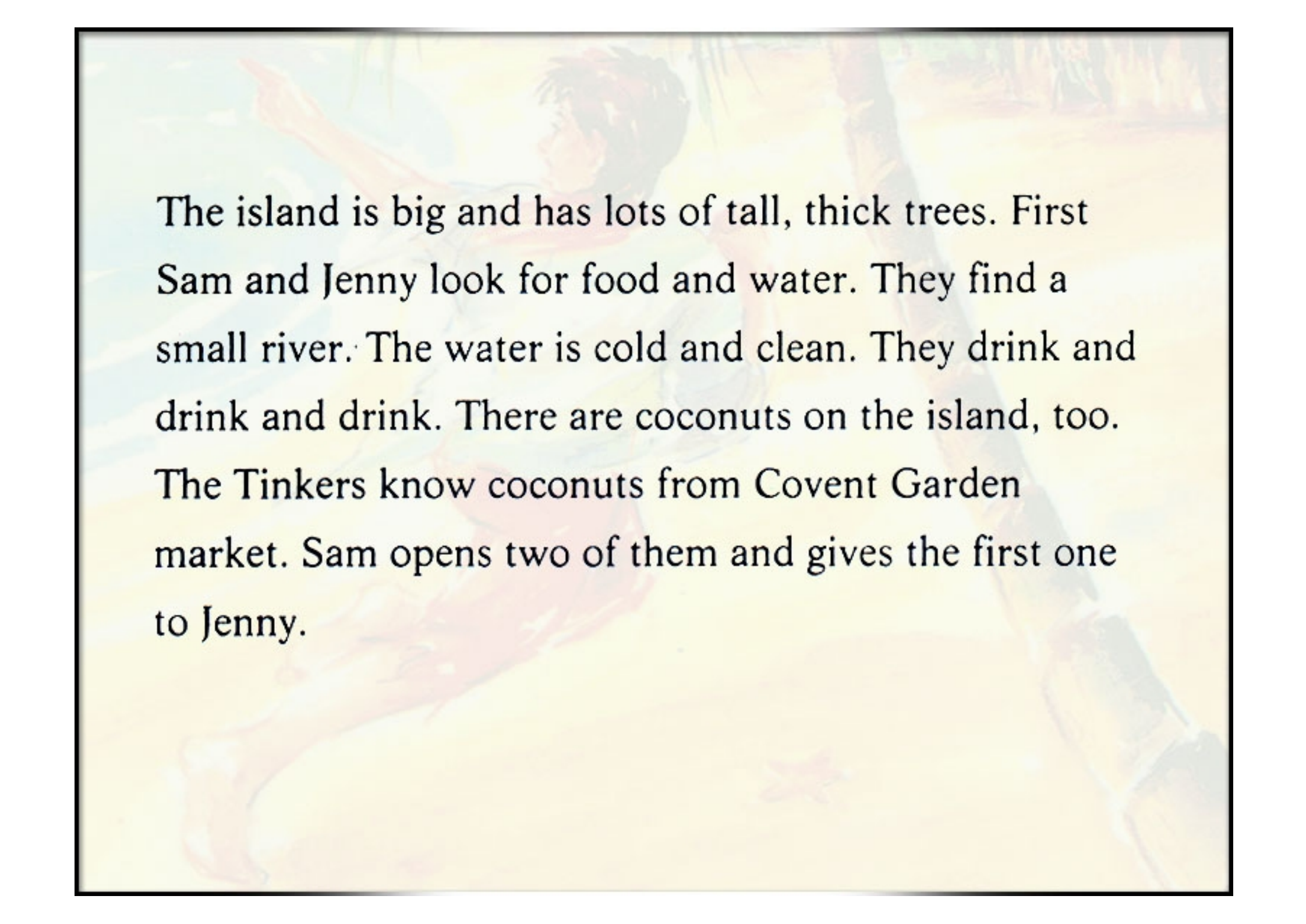
“Oh, Dad,” she says. “You’re *free!*” Then she tells him her story.



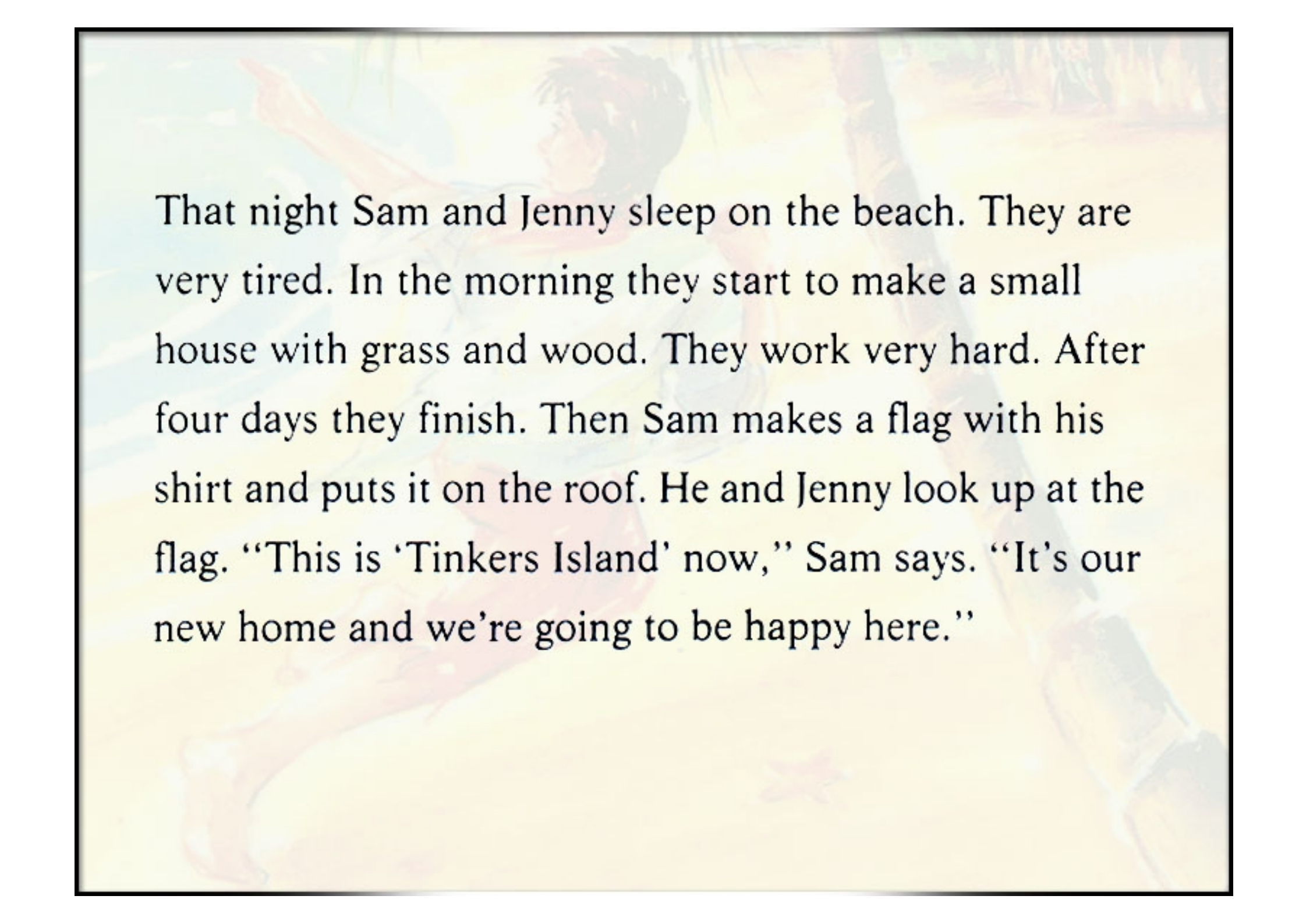
After three days Sam and Jenny are very hungry and thirsty. Then, after five days Jenny sees a big white bird. It is carrying some grass. “Look Dad,” she says. “Do you think there’s an island near here?”

Sam Tinker stands up in the small boat. He puts one hand across his eyes. “Yes, Jenny, you’re right! I can see it. There *is* an island!!”

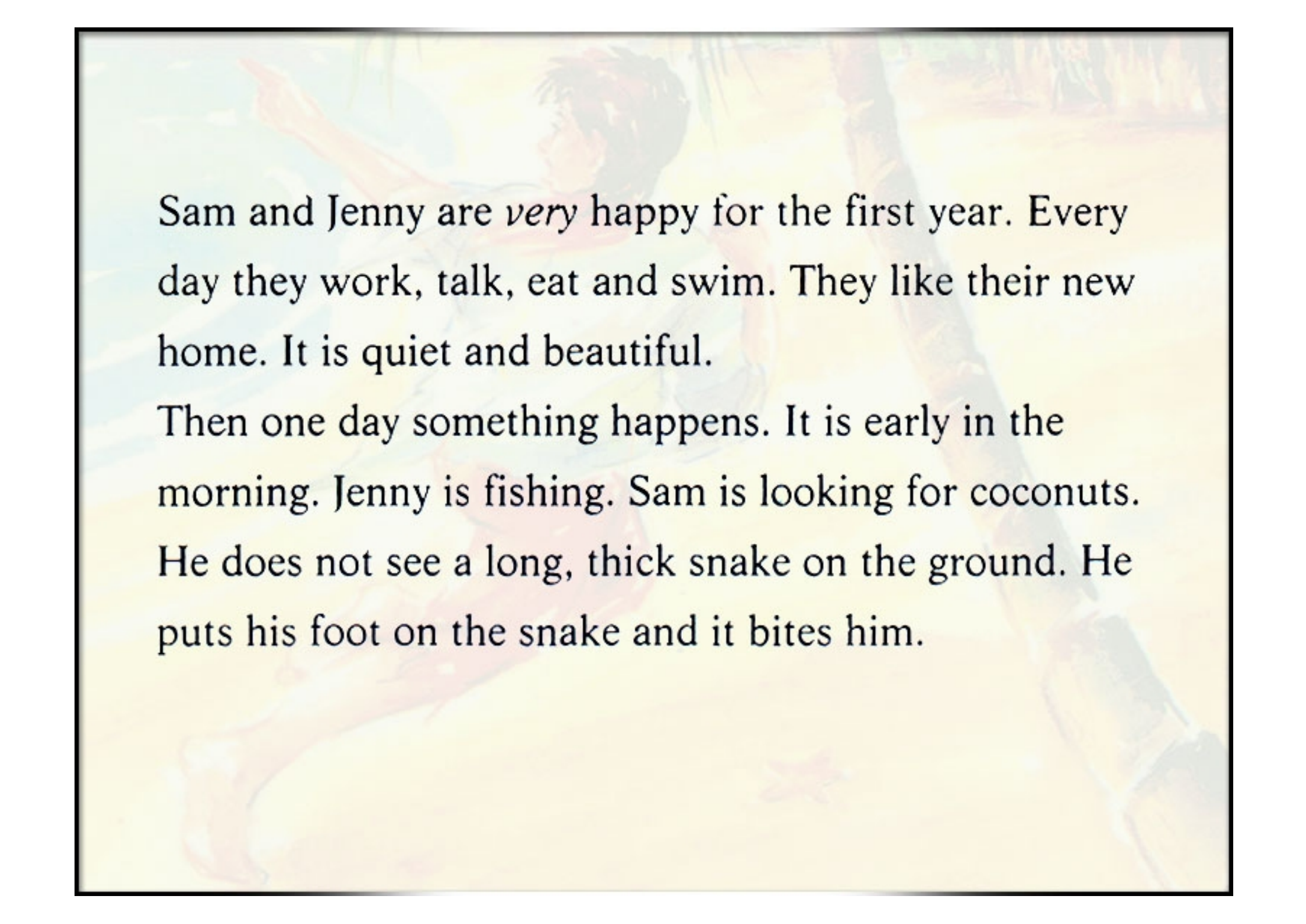




The island is big and has lots of tall, thick trees. First Sam and Jenny look for food and water. They find a small river. The water is cold and clean. They drink and drink and drink. There are coconuts on the island, too. The Tinkers know coconuts from Covent Garden market. Sam opens two of them and gives the first one to Jenny.

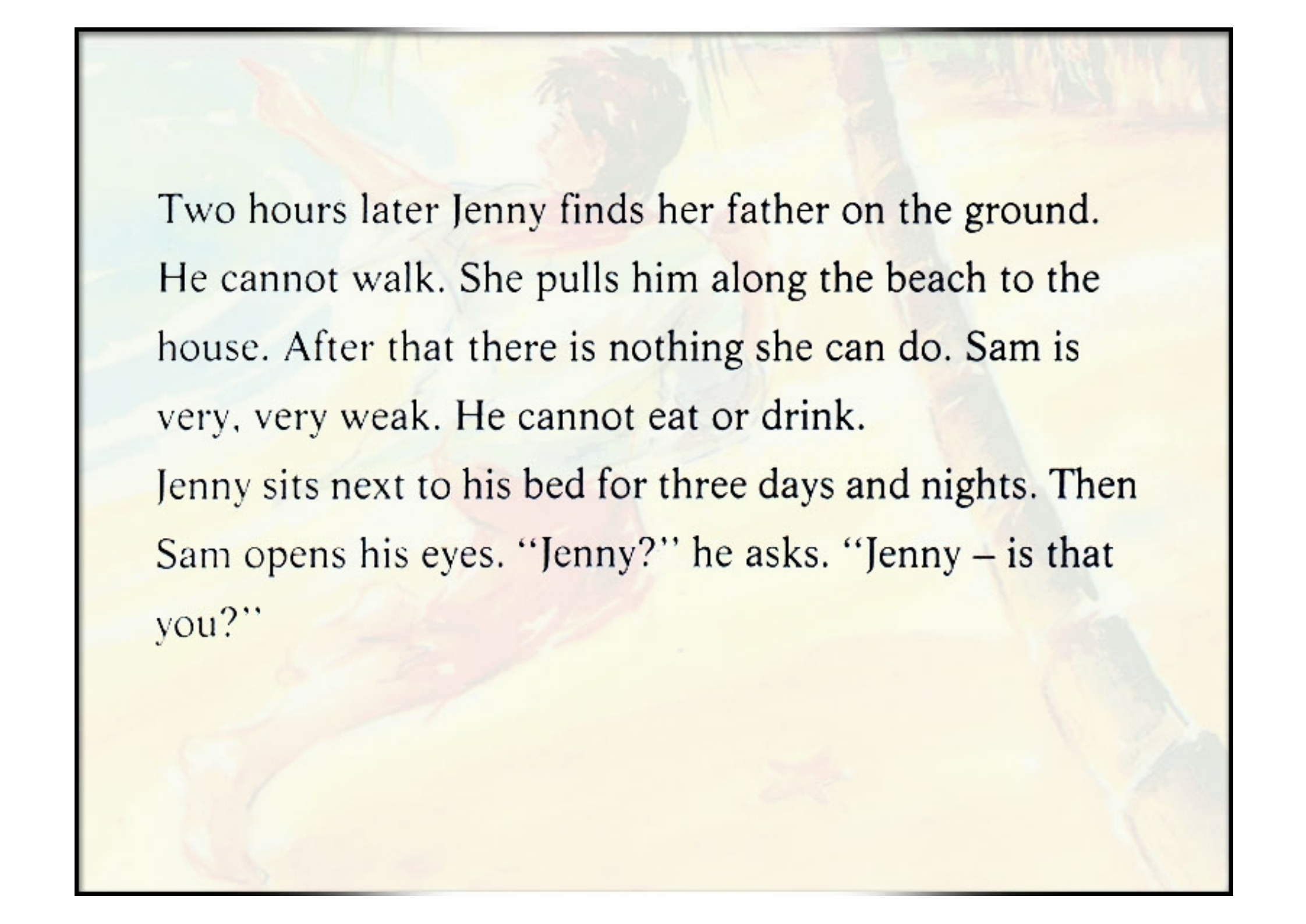


That night Sam and Jenny sleep on the beach. They are very tired. In the morning they start to make a small house with grass and wood. They work very hard. After four days they finish. Then Sam makes a flag with his shirt and puts it on the roof. He and Jenny look up at the flag. “This is ‘Tinkers Island’ now,” Sam says. “It’s our new home and we’re going to be happy here.”



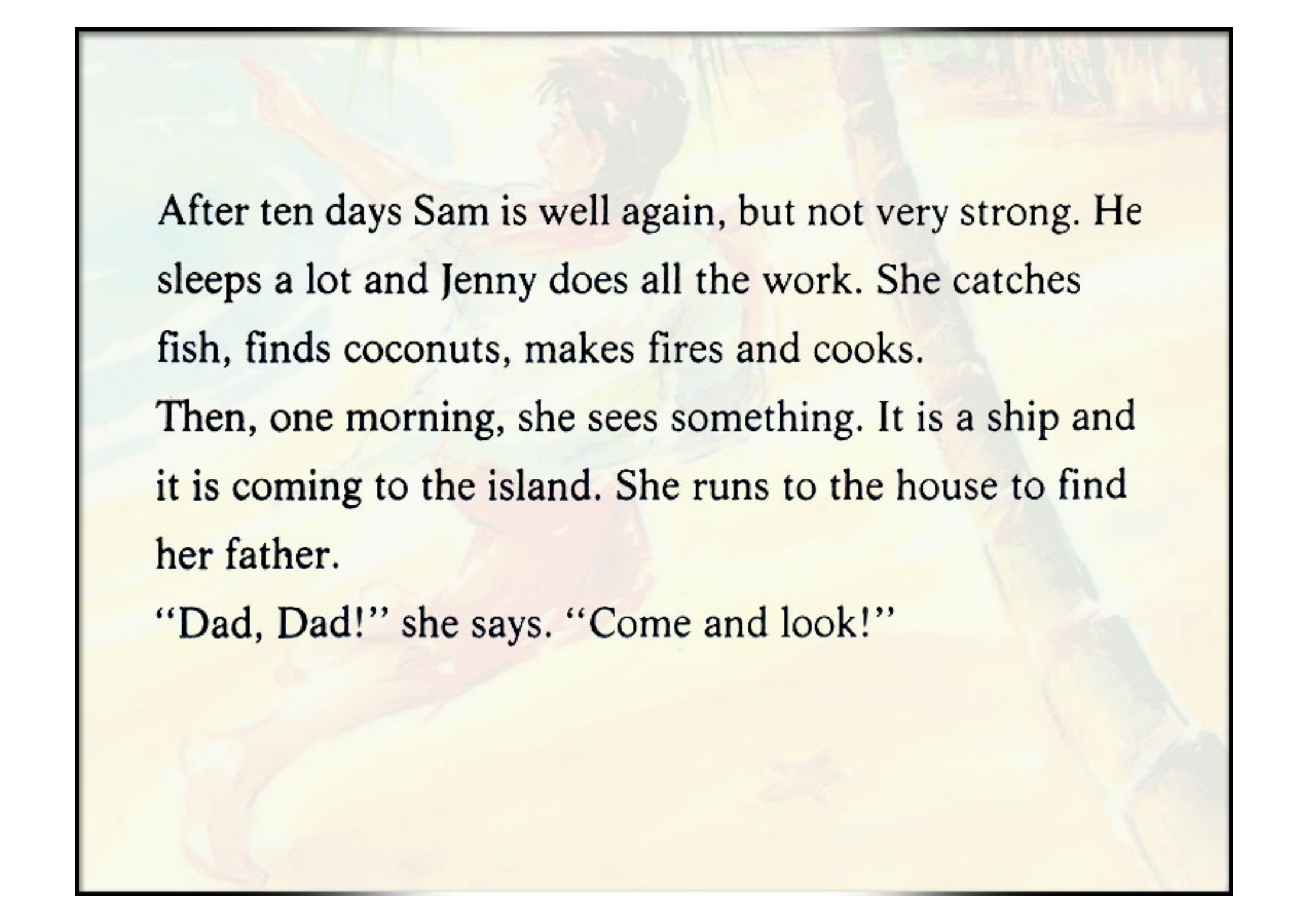
Sam and Jenny are *very* happy for the first year. Every day they work, talk, eat and swim. They like their new home. It is quiet and beautiful.

Then one day something happens. It is early in the morning. Jenny is fishing. Sam is looking for coconuts. He does not see a long, thick snake on the ground. He puts his foot on the snake and it bites him.



Two hours later Jenny finds her father on the ground. He cannot walk. She pulls him along the beach to the house. After that there is nothing she can do. Sam is very, very weak. He cannot eat or drink.

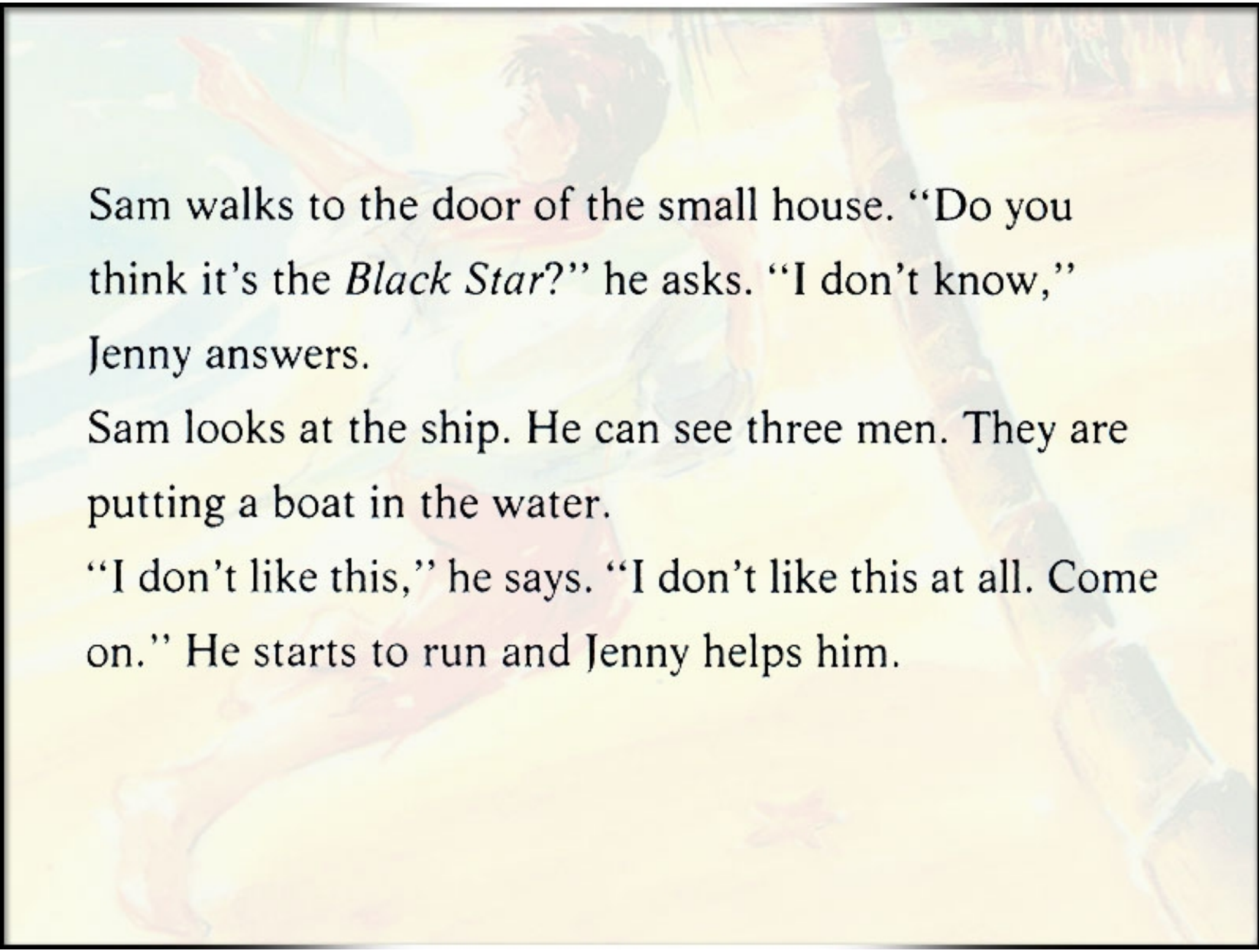
Jenny sits next to his bed for three days and nights. Then Sam opens his eyes. “Jenny?” he asks. “Jenny – is that you?”



After ten days Sam is well again, but not very strong. He sleeps a lot and Jenny does all the work. She catches fish, finds coconuts, makes fires and cooks.

Then, one morning, she sees something. It is a ship and it is coming to the island. She runs to the house to find her father.

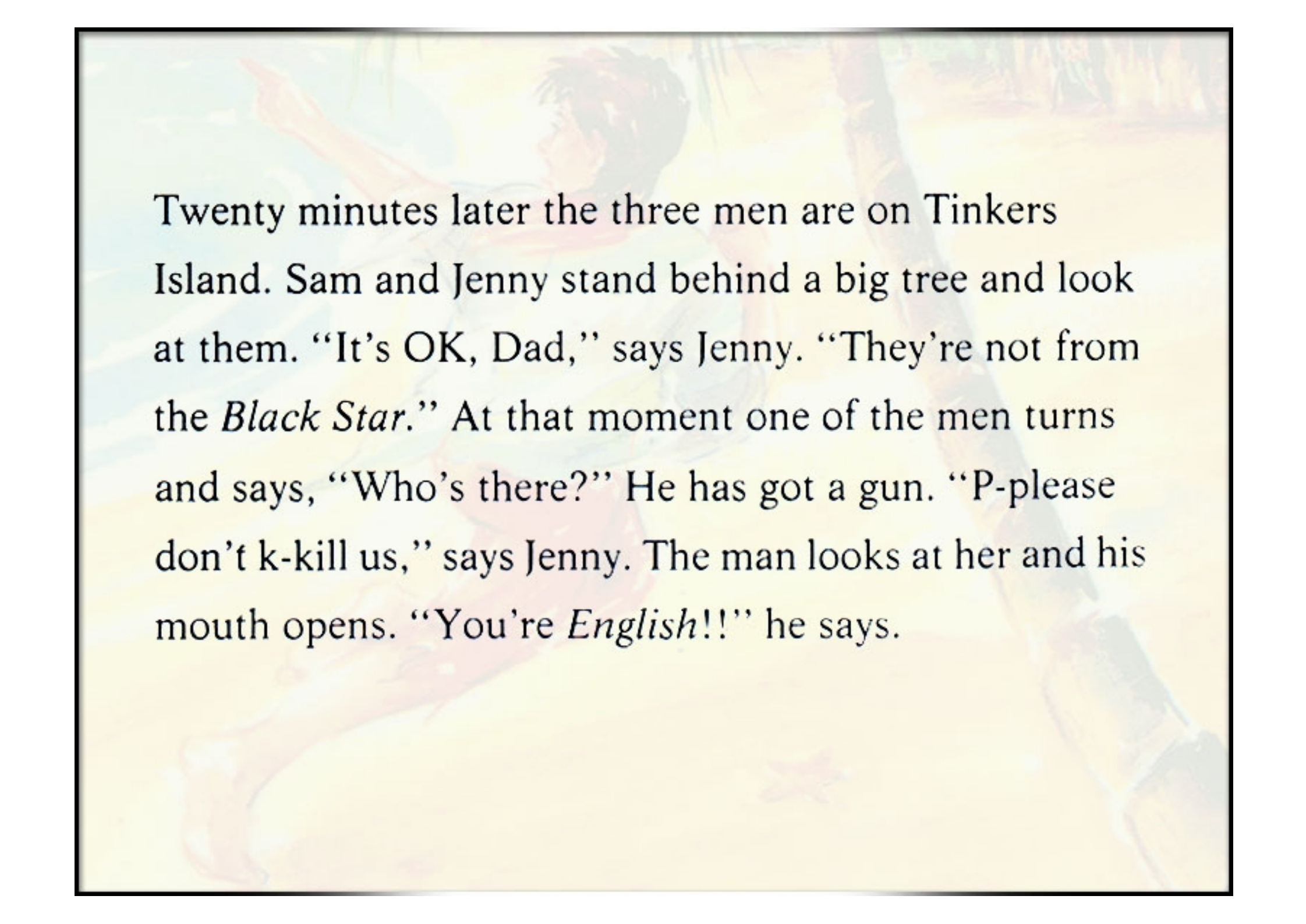
“Dad, Dad!” she says. “Come and look!”



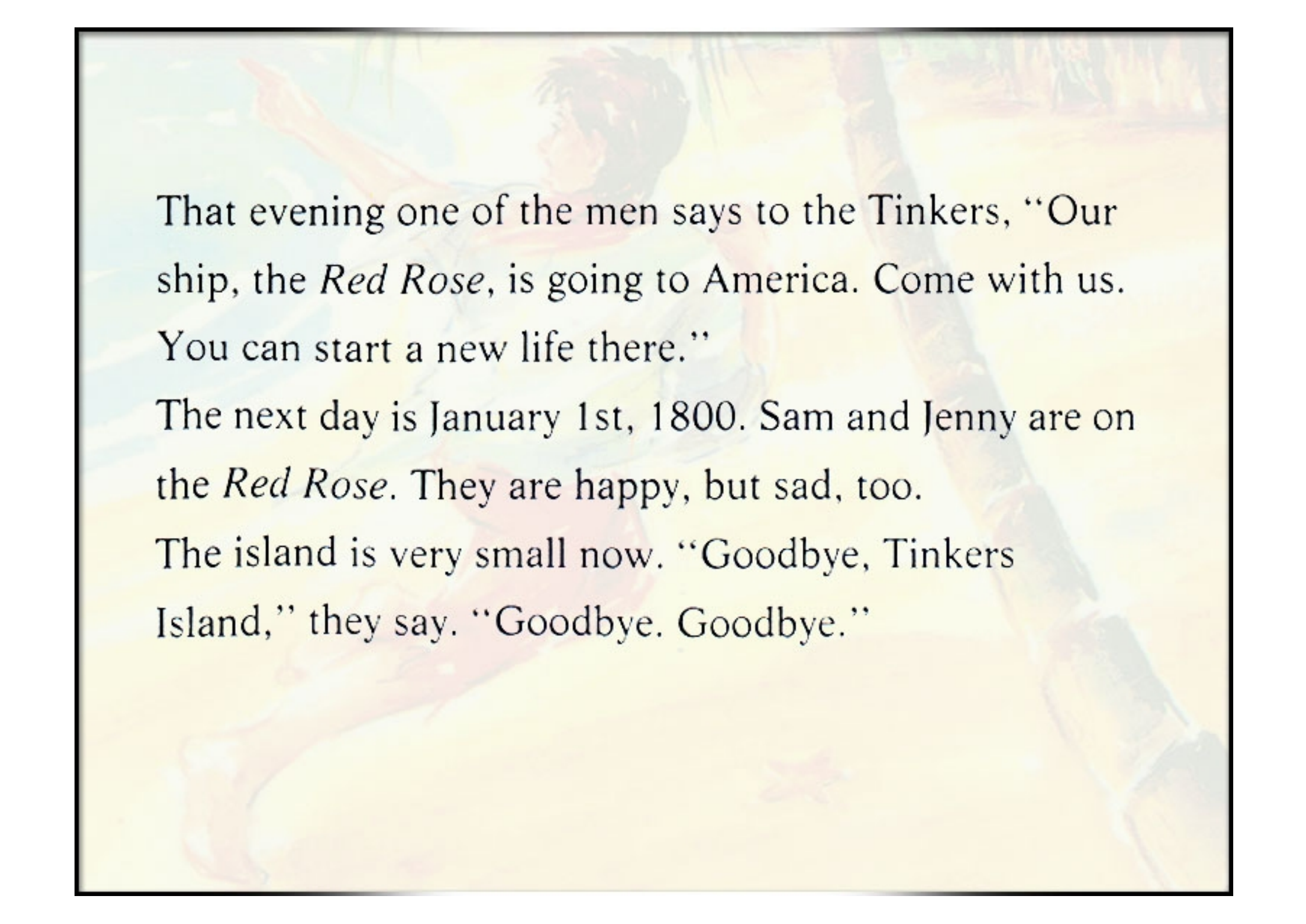
Sam walks to the door of the small house. “Do you think it’s the *Black Star*?” he asks. “I don’t know,” Jenny answers.

Sam looks at the ship. He can see three men. They are putting a boat in the water.

“I don’t like this,” he says. “I don’t like this at all. Come on.” He starts to run and Jenny helps him.



Twenty minutes later the three men are on Tinkers Island. Sam and Jenny stand behind a big tree and look at them. “It’s OK, Dad,” says Jenny. “They’re not from the *Black Star*.” At that moment one of the men turns and says, “Who’s there?” He has got a gun. “P-please don’t k-kill us,” says Jenny. The man looks at her and his mouth opens. “You’re *English!!*” he says.



That evening one of the men says to the Tinkers, “Our ship, the *Red Rose*, is going to America. Come with us. You can start a new life there.”

The next day is January 1st, 1800. Sam and Jenny are on the *Red Rose*. They are happy, but sad, too.

The island is very small now. “Goodbye, Tinkers Island,” they say. “Goodbye. Goodbye.”