



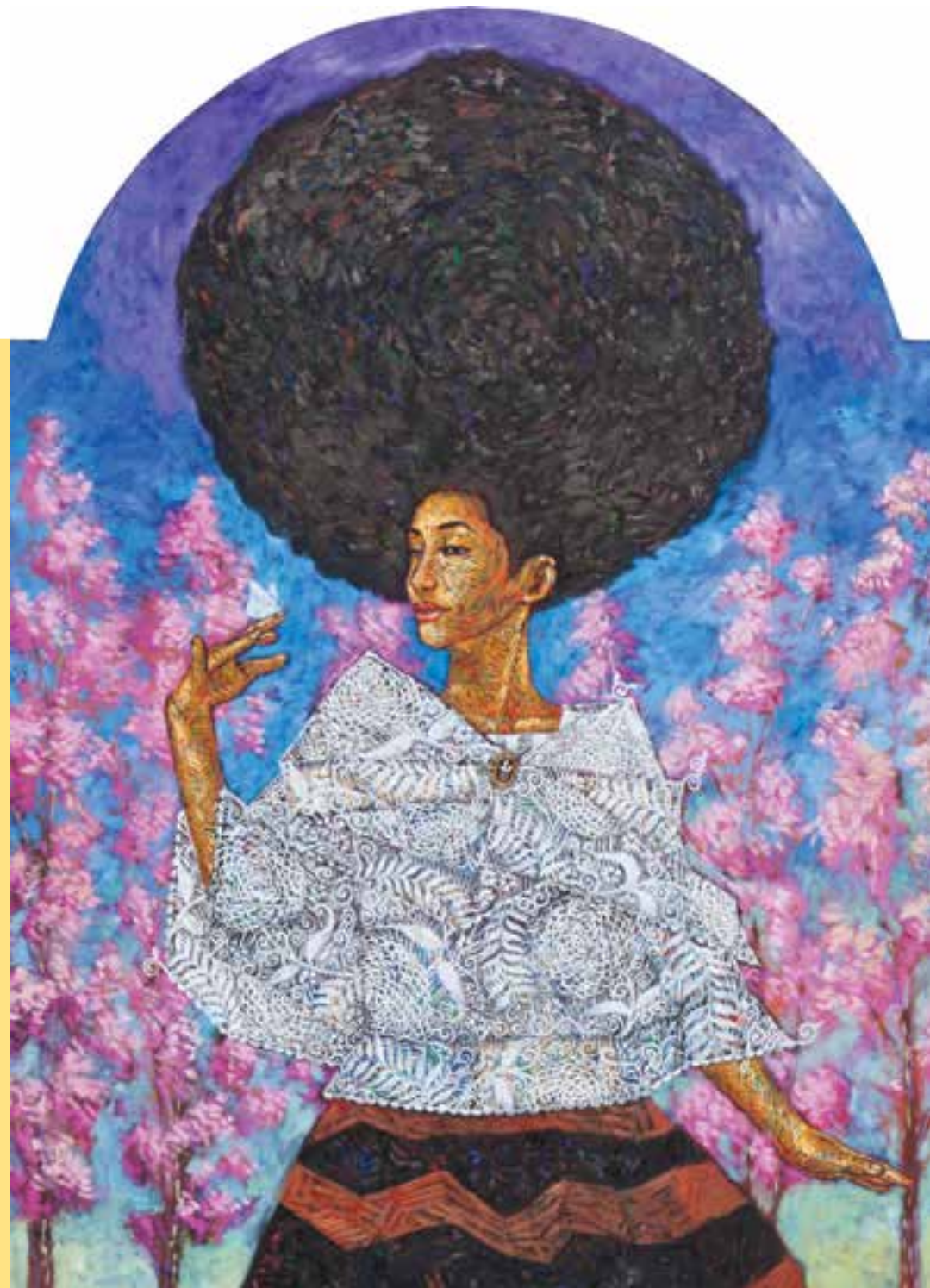
Winner of
CANVAS'
Romeo Forbes'
Children's
Storywriting
Competition

INANG KALIKASAN'S Bad Hair Day

written by
Reele Etino Vibal

illustrated by
John Paul Antido

Inang Kalikasan wore the rich fertile soil and the clear blue sea as her skirt. A garden of white flowers, with all its beauty and fragrance, served as her blouse. The smooth brown bark of young, sturdy forest trees covered her from head to foot. She had the beauty of nature and life on her face, and her hair was a globe of night as round as the Earth.





Branches and leaves sprouted from her head, and that is where Inang Kalikasan's problem lay. The branches and leaves attracted birds that started making nests on Inang Kalikasan's head.

She loved the company of birds and their songs, of course, but their nests messed up her hair. Straws, twigs, and bird poo began to fill her once beautiful head.



She tried shooing the birds away, but they simply returned and built their nests when Inang Kalikasan slept.





“What should I do with this hair of mine?”
Inang Kalikasan asked the Sun. “I think
birds are great, but not on my head.”

“Have you tried covering it with a hat?”
The Sun asked.

“My leaves will die if they don’t catch your
light, oh silly Sun, and the rain cannot water
my head if I wear a hat.”



“Then teach the birds of cleanliness
while they live on your head.”

“Birds are free, dear Sun. I will not
change their nature just to please
myself.”

“Then I am lost for more intelligent
advice. Please forgive me, my queen
without a crown.”





“That’s it!” Inang Kalikasan said.
“You are very wise, oh bright bright Sun!”

“I am?” The Sun scratched his head.

“A crown! A crown!” Inang Kalikasan jumped up and down.
“That’s what I need—a crown!”



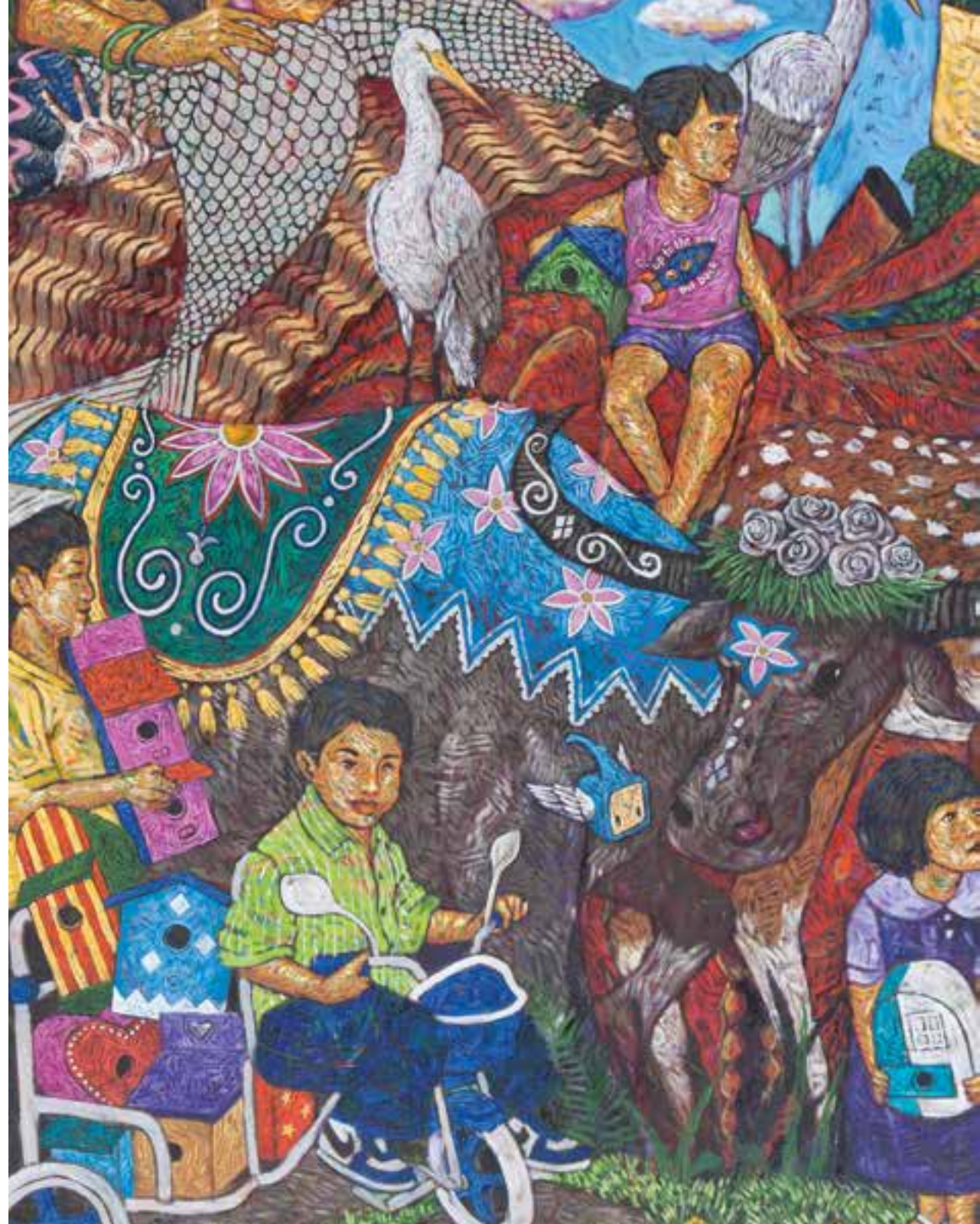
Inang Kalikasan ordered the Wind,
“Fly far and wide. Tell everyone that their
Inang Kalikasan needs a crown. Whoever
brings the best crown for my head will
receive a reward.”

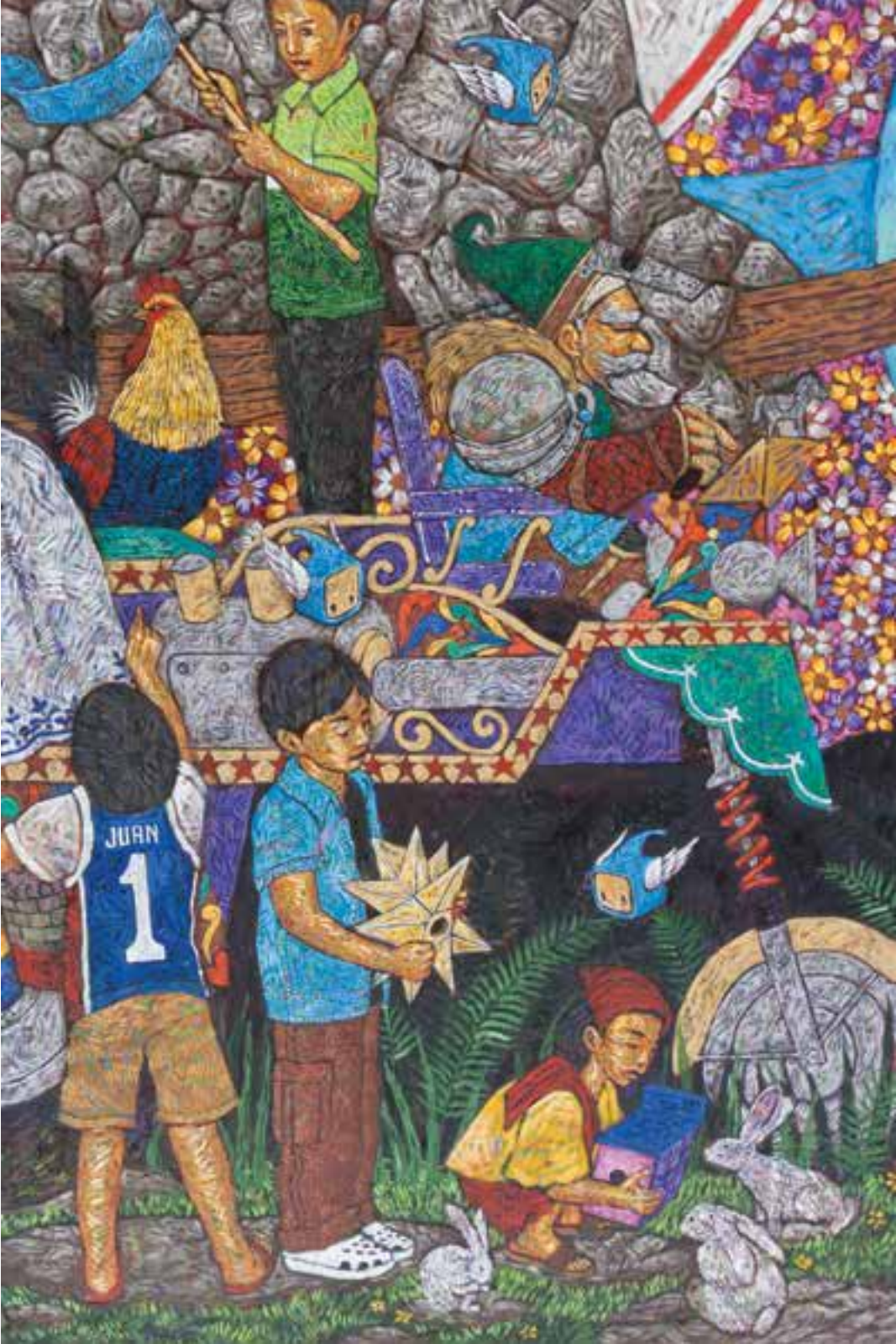


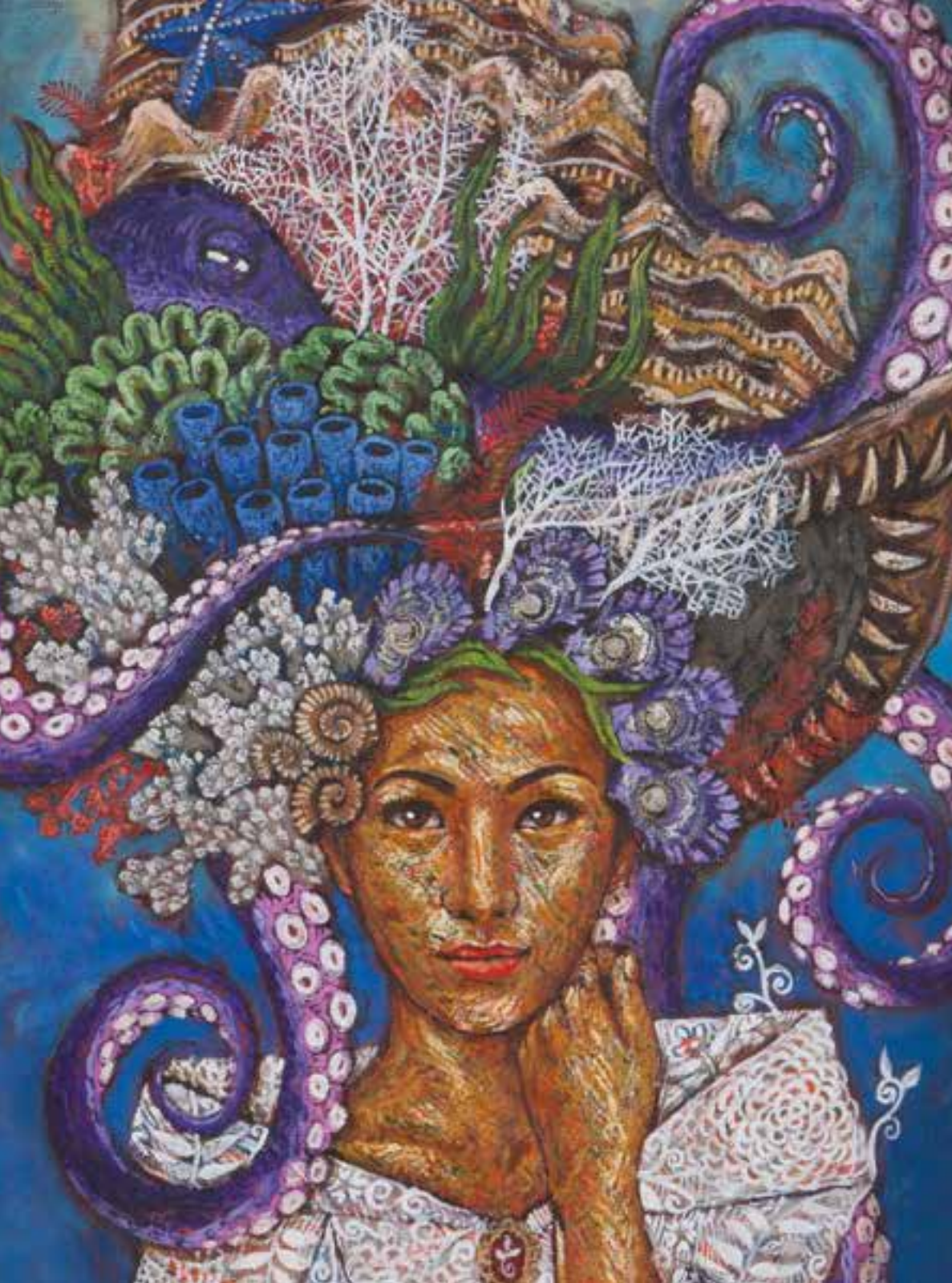
The wind flew and whispered the queen's message to all creatures all over the world.

The next day, Inang Kalikasan looked outside her window and saw the long line of nature's citizens.

Each had a crown for their queen.





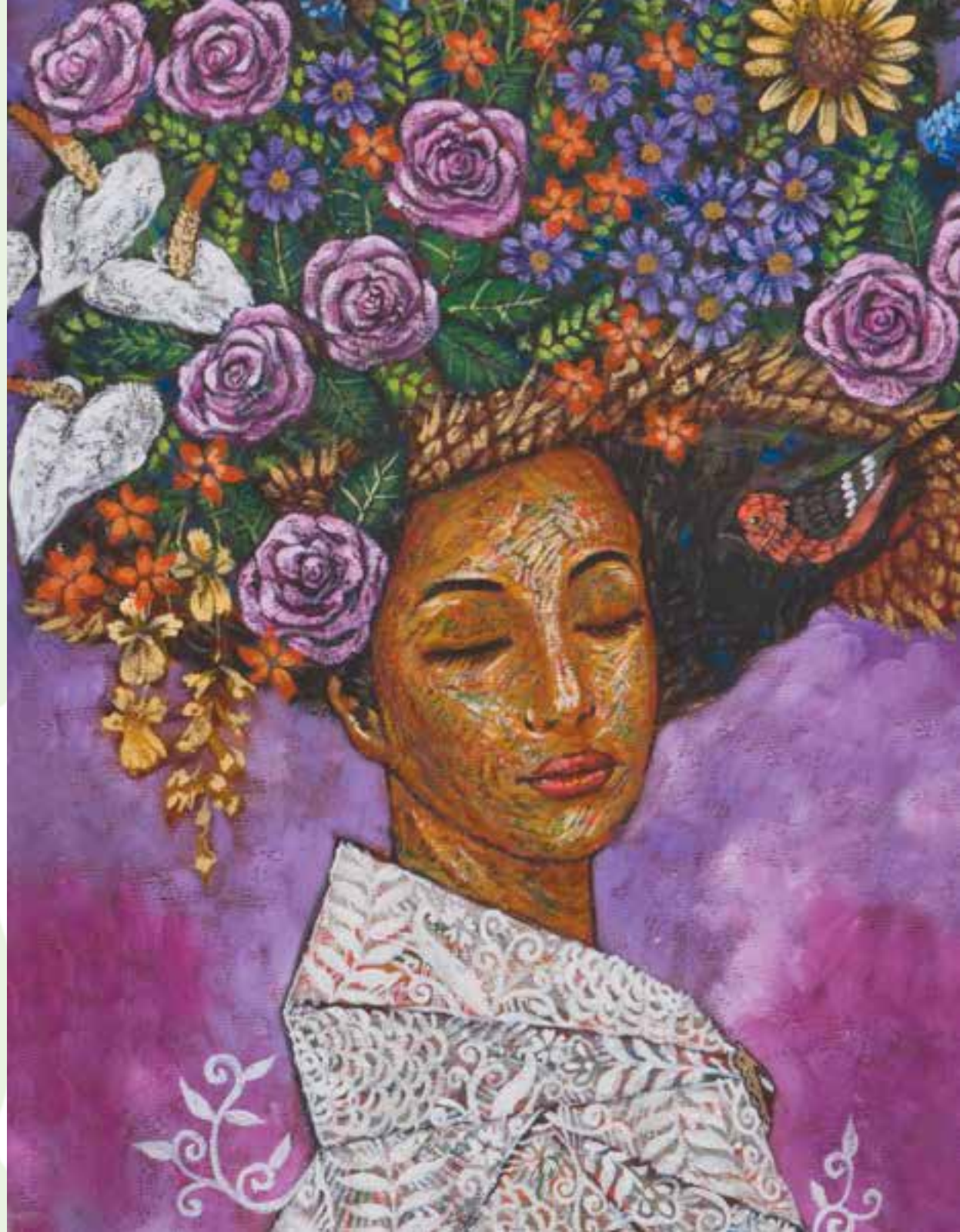


A group of mermaids and mermen offered a crown of corals, sea water, and fish. But their crown felt hard and hurt her head. Worse, water from the crown kept her wet, and the fish fought with the birds.

She thanked the citizens of the sea, and called for the next crown.

Fairies from the nearby garden brought a crown made of flowers. Chains of different colors and clusters of petals wove in and out of the fairy crown.

Inang Kalikasan smelled the crown's fragrance. When she tried it on, the flowers hugged her hair and branches. Unfortunately, the crown did not last very long as the birds quickly took the petals and vines and used them for their nests.





The next crown came from the Forests' wildlife. Their crown was made of bark and branches. Inang Kalikasan looked in the mirror and saw that the crown looked just like the branches on her head.



Angels brought a crown made of clouds that always went up and never stayed on Inang Kalikasan's head.



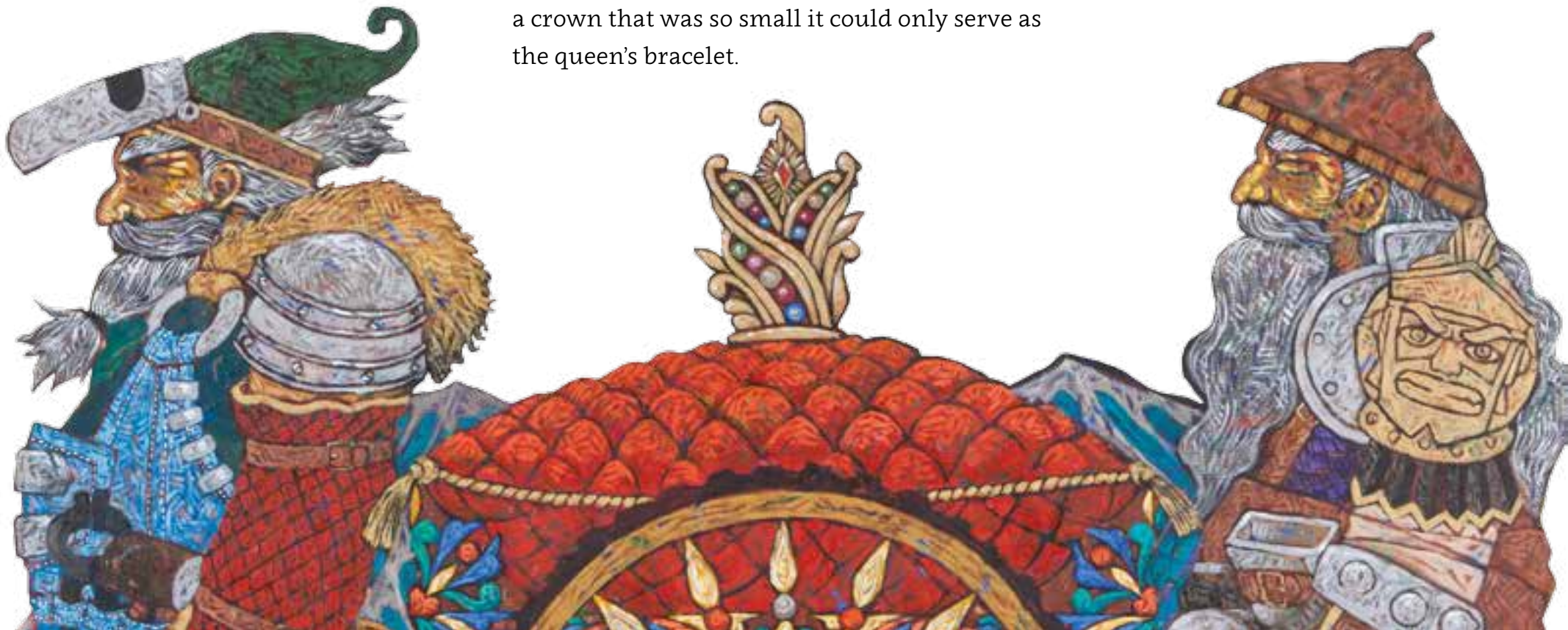


Giants brought a crown made of boulders that the queen simply waved off and didn't even try to put on. It was too big and too heavy!





Dwarves forged gold and precious metals into a crown that was so small it could only serve as the queen's bracelet.



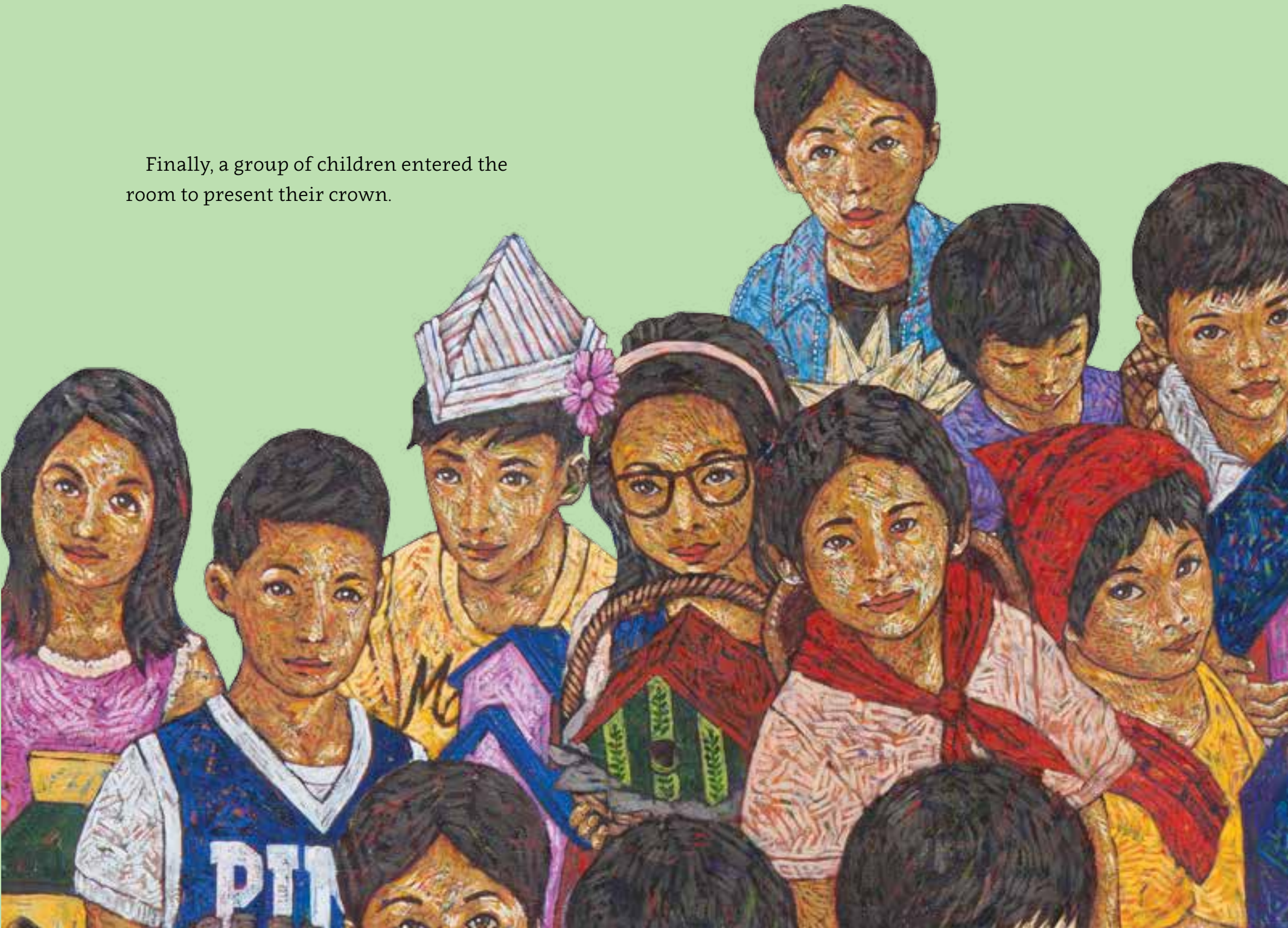


The Sun offered a crown made of sunlight and fire. But it burned so bright it hurt Inang Kalikasan's eyes.

The moon and stars presented a crown torn from the night sky that unfortunately, could hardly be seen against the queen's jet black hair.



Finally, a group of children entered the room to present their crown.





“Greetings, Inang Kalikasan!”
Maya, the children’s leader, said.

Maya took out from her basket a
birdhouse that she had made.

“I painted mine green,” Maya said.
“I know it’s your favorite color.”





Inang Kalikasan picked up Maya and allowed the little girl to place the birdhouse on her head. Before she could put down Maya, a bird had already claimed the first birdhouse.





The other children followed Maya's lead. Each offered a birdhouse, and each was of a different color and shape. Each child carefully placed the birdhouse on Inang Kalikasan's head, and each was immediately occupied by another bird.



After the last child placed his birdhouse on Inang Kalikasan's head, the queen looked in the mirror. Her crown accentuated the branches and leaves, made her head beautiful, kept her hair clean, and gave the birds a nice home.





Inang Kalikasan smiled. "I choose these children's gifts as my crown," Inang Kalikasan told the whole world. "Now, children, what are your wishes?"



An open field so you can run all day? A forest filled with trees to climb and animals to play with? Or a lake of your own where you can swim and play with fish from sunrise to sunset?

Maya stepped forward and said, “All of those, you have already given us, Inang Kalikasan!”

Inang Kalikasan smiled.

The birds began to sing.

The queen and the children began to dance. Everyone smiled, then laughed, and joined the dance.

The party lasted until the moon and the stars finally came, and it was time to sleep.



About this BOOK

CANVAS' flagship activity, the **Romeo Forbes Children's Story Writing Competition**, as far as we know, is the only one of its kind anywhere on the planet.

We commission an artist to come up with an artwork, and Filipino writers are encouraged and invited to join a storywriting contest based on its image. The same artist, then, will bring the story to life through a series of new works.

This book is the latest product of this unique process.

In 2015, we asked John Paul Antido for a contest piece (*shown below*). His oil on canvas piece inspired over one hundred forty stories from all over the world from which Recle Etino Vibal's "Inang Kalikasan's Bad Hair Day" emerged victorious.



In the coming months and years, we will donate tens of thousands of copies of this book directly to children in poor and disadvantaged communities throughout the Philippines. Our hope is that by doing this, we are helping to create a generation not only of readers, but of lovers of books.

Your purchase of this book supports our mission, and we are truly grateful. Thank you!

About the AUTHOR

RECLE E. VIBAL, a son of a Bicolano and an Ilongga, is proudly Filipino. He earned his degree in BS Chemical Engineering at the University of the Philippines, Los Baños, but found his passion in writing and learning. He reads books of every genre, but devours more fantasy, history, and mythology than what is good for the body. He has a couple of works floating around on the Internet and in anthologies. He keeps a blog at ibongtikling.wordpress.com. Recle is an advocate of proper hygiene and taking care of Mother Earth.

About the ARTIST

JOHN PAUL ANTIDO, or Japs for short, hails from Antipolo and is a graduate of the University of the Philippines Fine Arts Program, major in painting. Impressionistic and Van Gogh-esque, Japs' works are lively in color and movement. By mixing traditional and modern symbols – fiestas and "natives" wearing Rolling Stones t-shirts – he is able to succinctly capture the vibrancy of Filipino culture, its hybridity and ever-changing nature.

Japs has received praise and awards for his work – grand prize in the 2005 Art Petron 5th National Student Art Competition, shortlisted in the 2011 Philip Morris Philippine Art Awards, the 2008 Metrobank Art and Design Excellence National Competition, the 2nd GSIS Annual Painting Competition in 2005, just to name a few. He has also exhibited in Lao, Singapore, Malaysia, and Denmark.







CANVAS' **1 Million Books for One Million Filipino Children Campaign** aims to inspire in children a love for reading by donating its award-winning books to public schools, hospitals, and disadvantaged communities throughout the country.

A child that reads is a creative, empowered, and imaginative child who will learn independently, envision a brighter future, and ultimately lead a productive and meaningful life.

You can help us!

For more information, visit www.canvas.ph, email info@canvas.ph, or find us on Facebook: **Center for Art, New Ventures and Sustainable Development**.

CANVAS, a non-profit organization, works with the creative community to promote children's literacy, explore national identity, and broaden public awareness of Philippine art, culture, and the environment.