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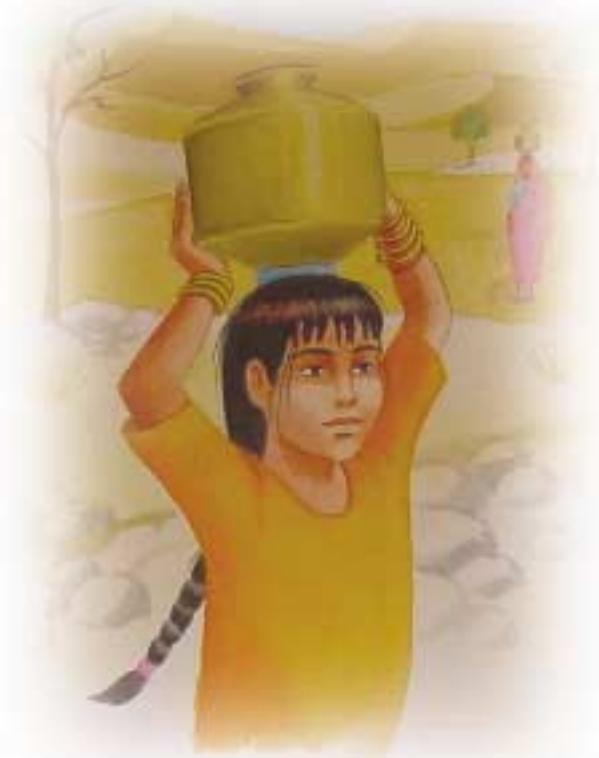
Trishna and the Dream of Water

UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

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Trishna and the Dream of Water is part of the Tunza Environmental Series for Children, sponsored by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

“Tunza” means “to treat with care or affection” in Swahili. UNEP hopes to inspire caring for the Earth through creative literature that sparks the interest and awareness of children, their parents and teachers.

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Trishna was daydreaming again as she slowly lit the oil-lamps for Diwali, the Festival of Lights.

She was lighting a splendid lamp in a palace where there was water all around.... Water in fountains, canals, pools.....

“Stop your dreaming,” her mother broke in, “and go and get some water. With all the guests, we’ve run out.”

It was no use arguing. After all, she was the eldest daughter at home now. Her older sister, Raji, had left for the city to find work.





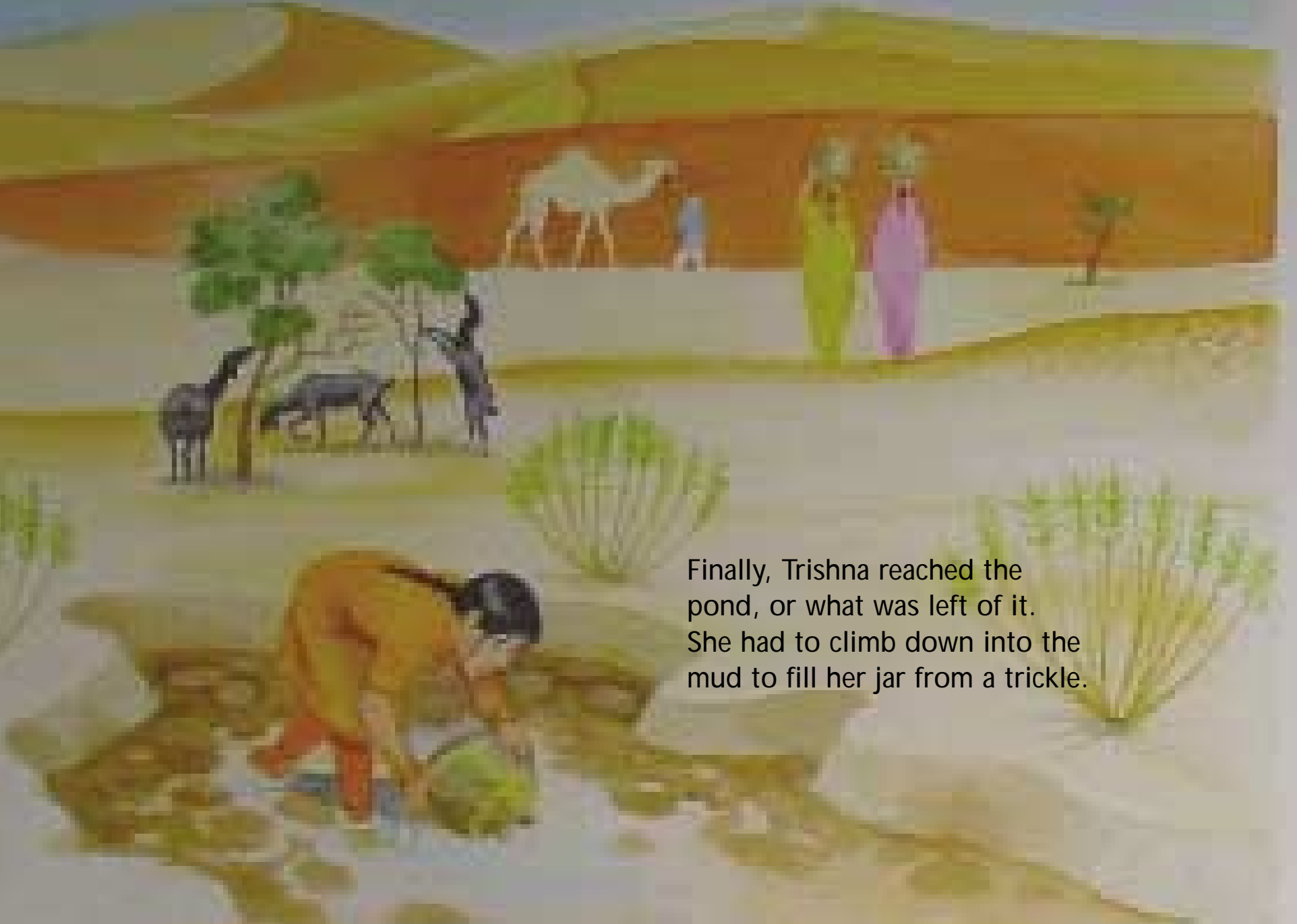
Trishna put down the match, lifted the water jar onto her head—and stuck some red and blue threads into her pocket before starting down the dusty path.

“I wish there were water all year long in our village so girls didn’t have to carry it so far,” she thought, strolling by the old well—out of use for years.

“I wish our village stayed green so we could have more of a harvest. And people wouldn’t have to leave to look for pasture for the animals,” she mumbled, passing the dry riverbed, then the abandoned borehole pump.



"I wish the dunes would blow away from us instead of coming closer every year," she said, as she passed goats pulling leaves off the few trees in the sand.



Finally, Trishna reached the pond, or what was left of it. She had to climb down into the mud to fill her jar from a trickle.



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