

THE GIRL WHO DIDN'T NEED GLASSES



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The girl who didn't need glasses

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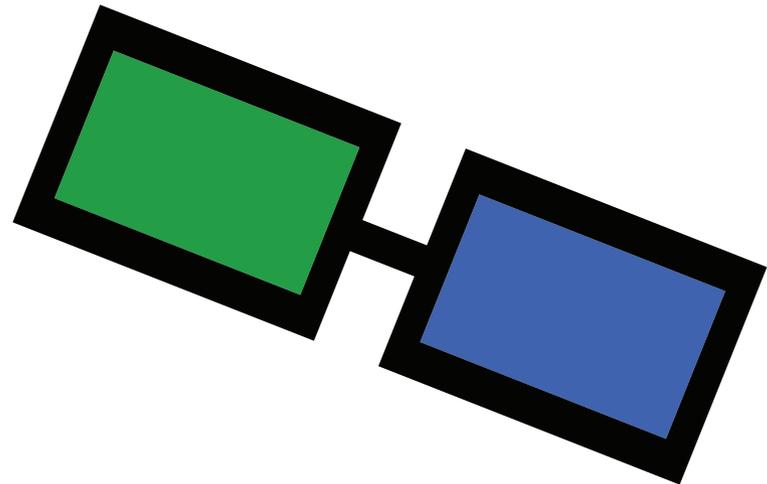
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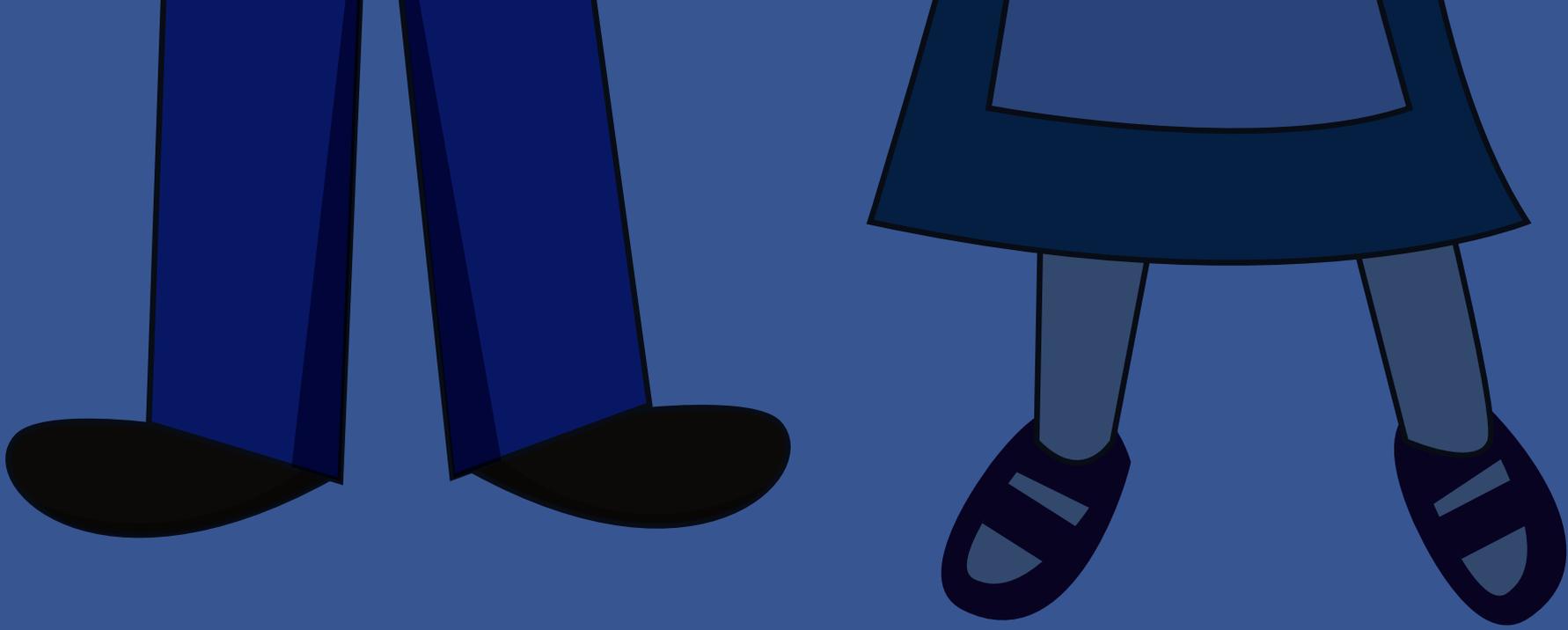
For a moment they were all staring at Duda. They examined her face, her clothes, the little shoes she was wearing... Duda didn't understand why that silence. She thought that everyone, without exception, after a quick surprise, finally and immediately, would understand everything and be as happy as she was until that moment. Maybe, a little surprised, for not having noticed sooner something so obvious. Something that Duda, deep down, not quite understanding, always knew.

Duda was not green... she was a beautiful blue little girl.

But nobody said anything. That silence seemed totally meaningless for Duda. She wanted to get out from there the faster she could. She imagined that perhaps she had said something wrong and they hadn't understood her. She thought to repeat what she had said. But the words would just be the same:

“Look. Don't you realize? I am blue!”.

Then, Duda ran into the bedroom... scared... not knowing what to do... without having done anything wrong... and lying on her bed, eyes closed, she wanted to wake up without even being asleep, from that bad dream that wasn't a dream.



“I don’t know what to think”, said Duda’s father.

“I’m sure that... well... I’m not sure”, said the mother.

After some time, they continued not understanding the meaning of it. They knew it was not just words said by a child. It was simple and yet it wasn’t. Was it really this? What now? Forget? Act like nothing was wrong, maybe wanting that nothing had happened? Forbid Duda to say that again? There were so many possibilities... They thought of many, but they forgot about one, the most important: listen to everything Duda had to say.

Certainly, it wasn’t a situation that they knew how to deal with. Ever since the world began, in that distant world where they lived, from very early on, everybody learned that there were only people of two colors. If someone was green, they were green. If someone was blue they were blue. Who was blue couldn’t be green neither who was green could be blue.

Duda’s parents talked a lot that night, something that they didn’t usually do. They were very worried and, still very confused. They decided to wait for the next few days. If everything didn’t come back to be as it was before, then they would do something.



The days followed and Duda, more and more thoughtful, didn't talk a lot. Not even with her mother, to whom she always told everything. Time seemed to move more slowly for everyone in that house. The joy became more distant, the silence increasingly deeper between them, Duda sadder and her parents more worried.

Duda knew: she was a happy, fun, sleepy girl, many other things... and blue. Simple as that. Then why did everything seemed so weird and so disturbing to her parents that Duda could feel it just by looking at them?

By her side, the mother waited and didn't wait. She thought about saying something and didn't say it. She suffered for thinking that maybe she couldn't help. But she could. Duda felt it. Nevertheless, the mother tried what she hadn't even thought until that moment:

– “Do you want to talk about what you said yesterday?”, she asked to Duda.



It was the opportunity that Duda had been waiting for. But now, with a little fear, she wasn't quite sure how to begin. Even so, she decided to risk it and then said the one thing she was certain about:

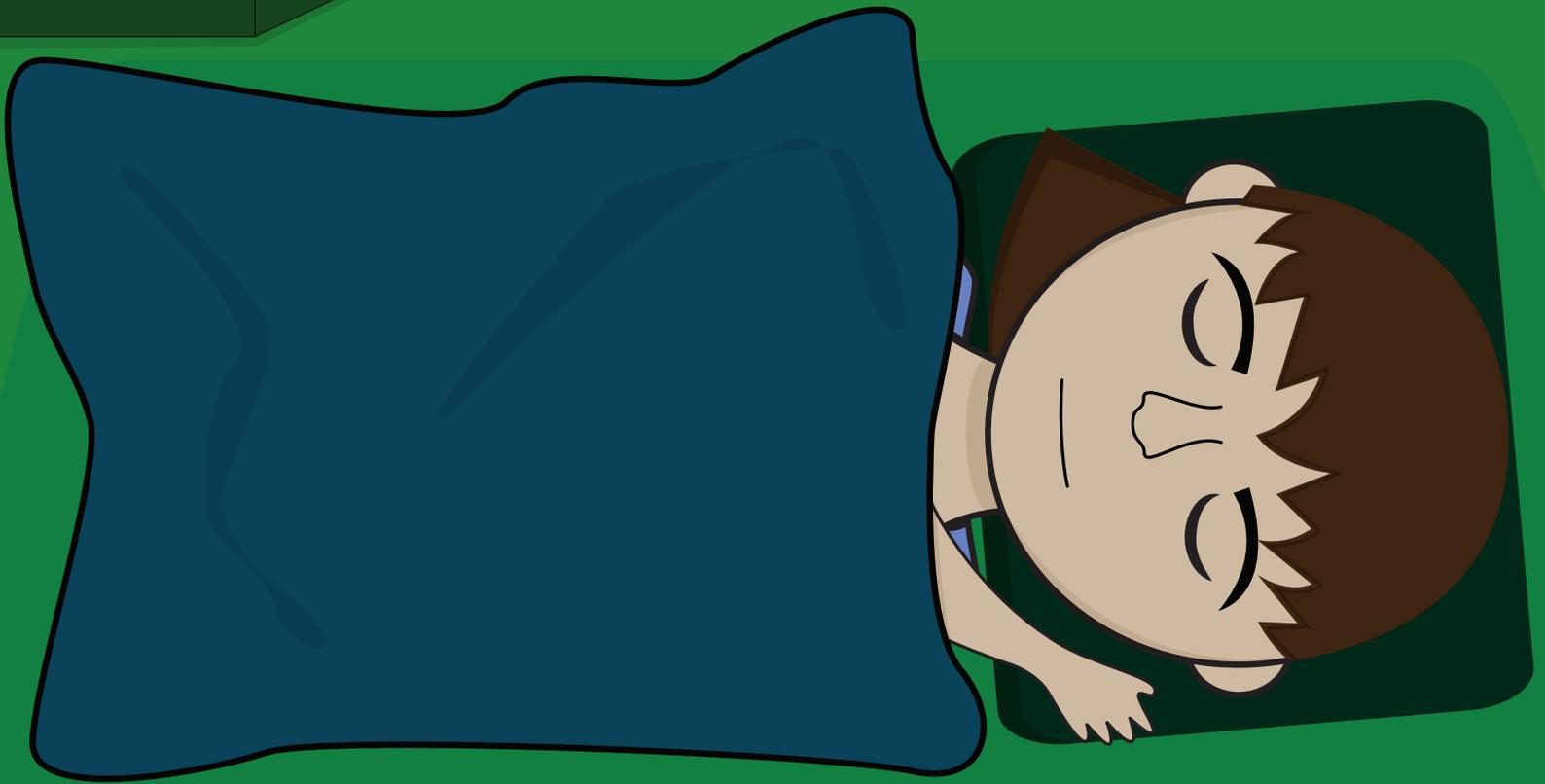
“Mom... you know... you ought to know... Don't you see?... I'm not green... I'm blue! Like you!”.

Not knowing quite well what to say, even somehow already waiting for those words, the mother smiled at Duda, trying to hide from her, as best as she could, her worries.

Duda enjoyed that smile. She deeply loved her mother and felt once more protected. The mother, choosing her words, knew she should listen more and understand better. It might not be the best words, but it wasn't so easy for her. Then she continued:

“But... don't you mean, in fact, that you want to be blue?”, asked the mother.

“No, I am! Always. Like this”, answered Duda and began to cry.



The mother knew she needed to do something. But she realized that words, at that moment, weren't necessary anymore. So, she gave Duda a long and tight hug.

For a while, Duda felt so protected by that embrace that the sadness went away and she went back being happy and fun as she always had been.

The day went away and at night, when Duda was already sleeping, the mother had a long talk with the father:

"It seems totally pointless", said the father, "This is not right. It doesn't seem right. And what can we do?"

"If we're not sure what we can do, we need to find someone who can help us", said the mother.



In that green and blue world where they lived, that actually had nothing only blue and green, finding someone who could help in a situation like that wouldn't be easy.

In addition to real experts like doctors, for example, there were many other people who considered themselves knowledgeable about everything that one can imagine and were usually sought by those who needed some help or advice. They were the Knowers. There were Knowers of Words, Knowers of Choices and many others until Knowers of Everything. The most interesting thing is that, unlike the experts, the Knowers not always knew much. Sometimes, they knew almost nothing, but they were very respected and sought by people. It was not even necessary to become a Knower. Sometimes it was enough just to say: "I'm a Knower!", and that's all. Many among them thought they knew so much, so much, that they considered that everyone who thought different from them knew nothing.

The mother, then, not quite sure, suggested:

"We can see a doctor, maybe a psychologist".

But the father had a different idea:

"Let's see a Knower of Colors!", he said.

"But will a Knower of these really be able to help?", the mother asked, wondering.

"It's their specialty. They know all about the blue and all about the green. I can't imagine anyone better suited for this".

And they decided, therefore, to go with Duda see a Knower of Colors.



However, this wasn't a good idea and deep inside, they themselves knew it. But that was a path that seemed natural for Duda's parents. Almost everything that they knew about the blue and the green they learned with what the Knowers of Colors said.

In the world where they lived, there were many, many colors, but only two, said the Knowers of Colors, should be considered. The others, for them, shouldn't even exist.

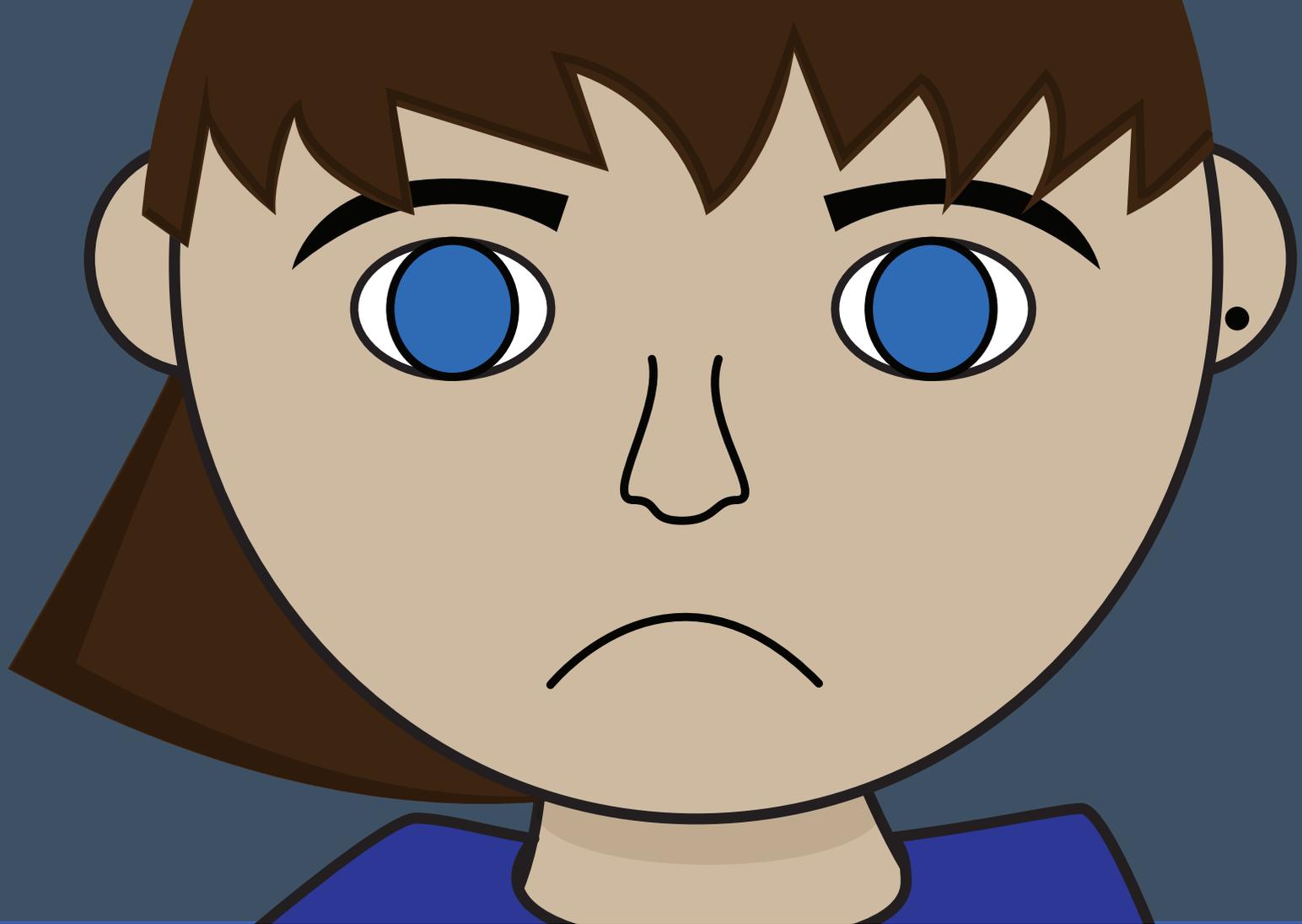
Many people thought it was strange and not right, an absolute nonsense, but few people had the courage to challenge what these Knowers said. After all, they had said it for so long now, and so many times they repeated and repeated and repeated... so it seemed true.



But Duda didn't know that. When her parents told where they were going to take her, she became hopeful and happy. She could barely wait for the day when she would talk with that Knower of Colors.

Her anxiety was great and the week that preceded the interview with the Knower seemed endless. She thought that if she explained to the Knower everything she was feeling, he would understand her and, perhaps, he could make everybody understand her too: her parents, brothers, uncles, teachers, friends from the school... Duda wished that everyone soon knew, or finally realized and said, maybe:

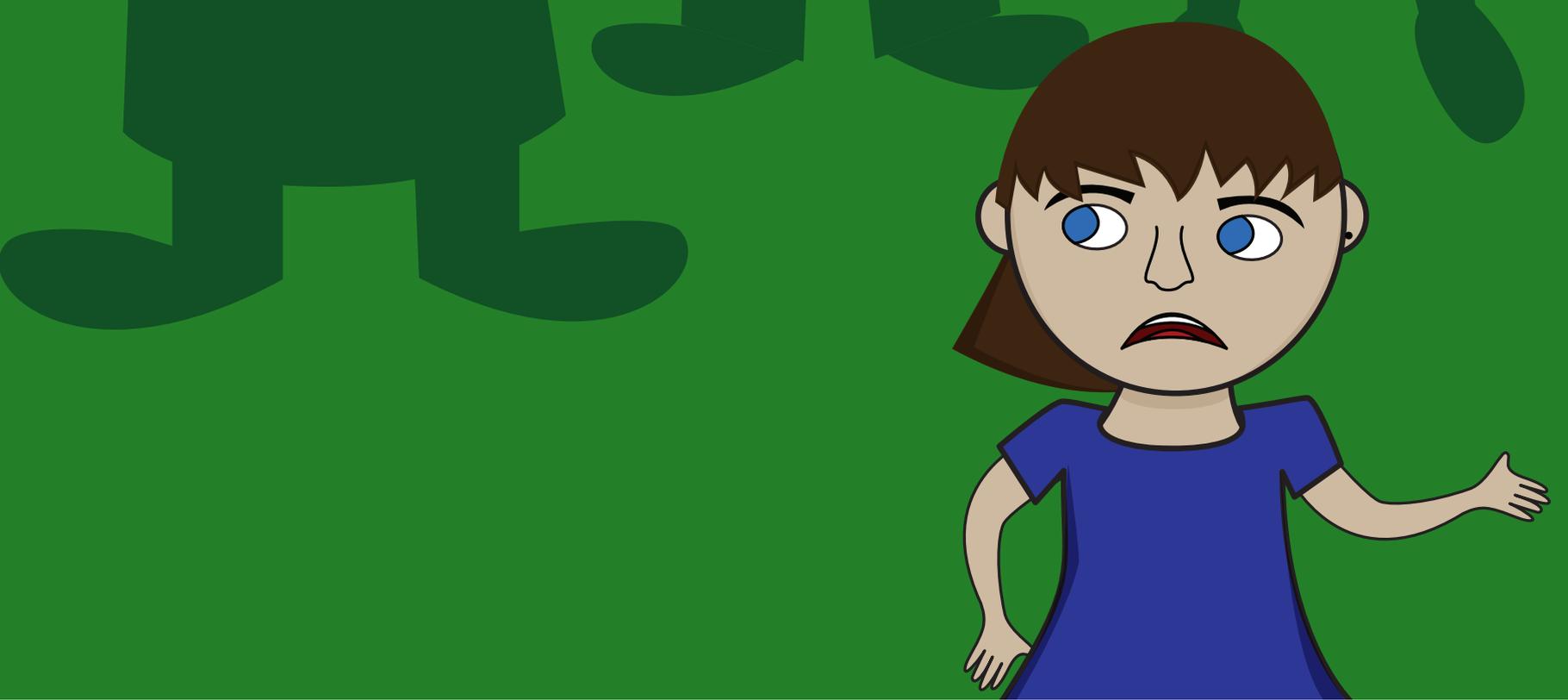
-“How didn't we realize this before, Duda?! Of course you are a blue little girl!”.



Finally the day came. Duda and her parents left home early to go to the interview with the Knower of Colors. A little while later, they were waiting in a room full of people to be called. And while waiting, Duda imagined how it would be nice when everyone could see her as she saw herself, and how it would make her happy.

Not long after, the secretary called for them and guided them to the interview room.

“So, are you the one with an eye problem?”, the Knower asked Duda, as soon as she and her parents approached.



Duda got confused about that question. It wasn't what she expected to hear. But before she could speak, the Knower continued, speaking more to her parents than to her:

"Don't worry. It is a very serious problem, but we will fix it".

"I don't know if it's that", replied the mother, who noticed Duda's disappointment and distress.

"Of course it is", said the Knower, more serious. "There is only one truth about it. And you should already know. Who is blue is blue, can't be green. And who is green is green, can't be blue".

"But...", the father tried to argue.

"There is no 'but'. It was always like this, and it should not change. Calm down, because we have a permanent solution".

Duda, who was so afflicted that it was like she was paralyzed listening to the conversation, stared at those last words. "A permanent solution?", she thought.

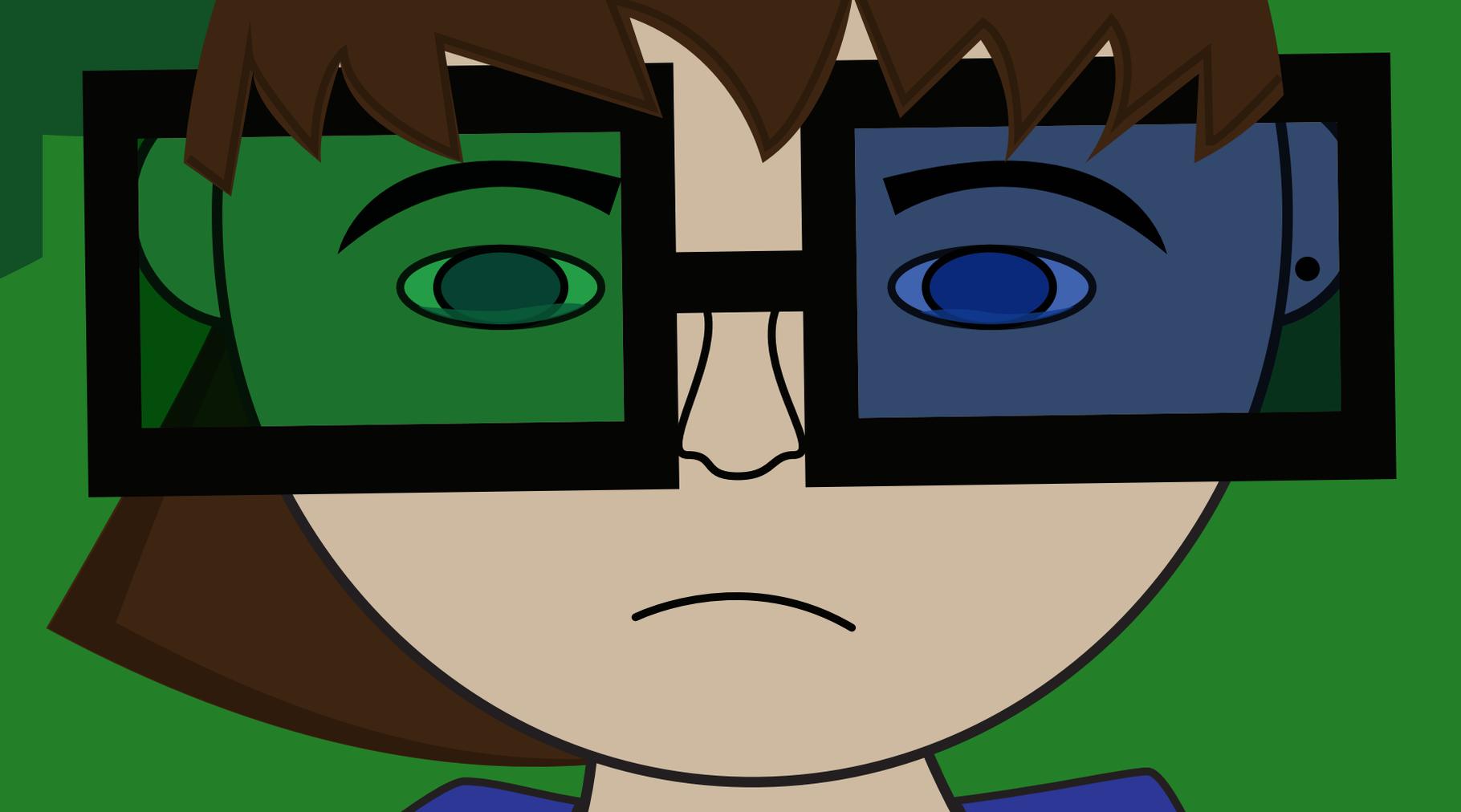


“Exactly”, continued the Knower of Colors. “It’s an eye problem, there is no doubt. And in this case, the only solution is to use a special device: Glasses to See Alike”.

Duda’s parents had never heard about that. And before they asked more about that strange suggestion, the Knower completed:

“It isn’t a rare case. It happens, in fact, with many people. But the Glasses to See Alike will solve it. When someone thinks one is not what one is or thinks one is different from the others, these glasses are the best and the only solution. I’ll get one for you that will serve you properly”, said the Knower, now looking at Duda.

The parents were apprehensive, but the conviction with what the Knower had said everything inhibited them to ask anything more. And Duda, who had so much to say and waited so anxiously for it, hadn’t even been heard.

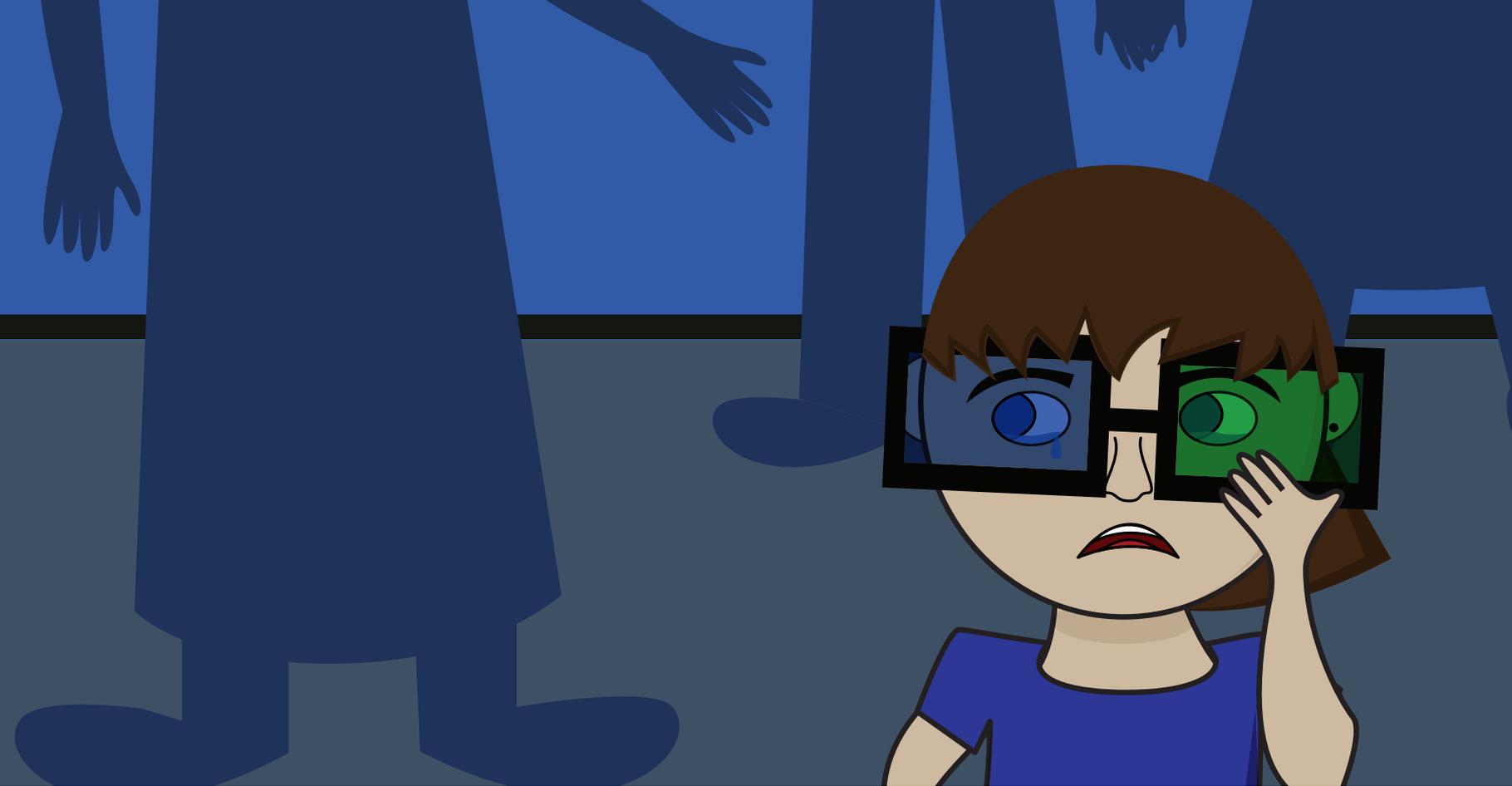


Quickly, from a cabinet that stood in the back of the room, the Knower of Colors took out huge and strange glasses, different from all that Duda had ever seen.

She loved glasses. She had never needed glasses, but she always thought anyone using them was gorgeous. Those, however, that the Knower brought, Duda didn't know why, made her very annoyed.

On one side there was a green lens... and on the other, a blue lens.

When the Knower put the glasses on Duda, she felt a discomfort that she had never felt before, a strange sensation. A little bit of shame... and fear too. She was sure she was a blue girl, but those glasses, immediately, made the joy she felt in being blue all fall apart.

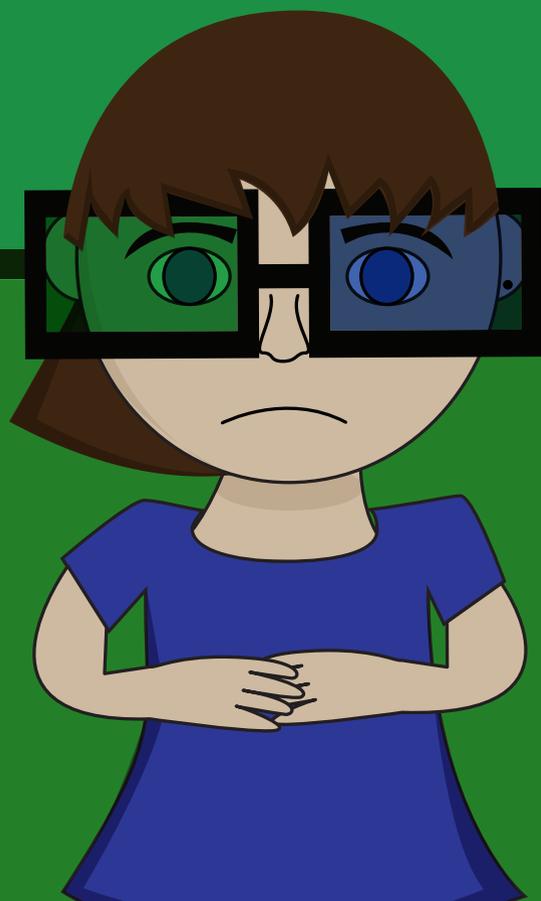


The Knower of Colors, turning to Duda's parents, commented:

"They're amazing, aren't they? An old but very efficient technology. Unrivalled in the treatment of eye problems. You need to use them every day never removing even to sleep. Wear them your whole life. From now on, this problem will surely be solved".

"But it seems they're bothering her so much...", the mother ventured to contradict the Knower.

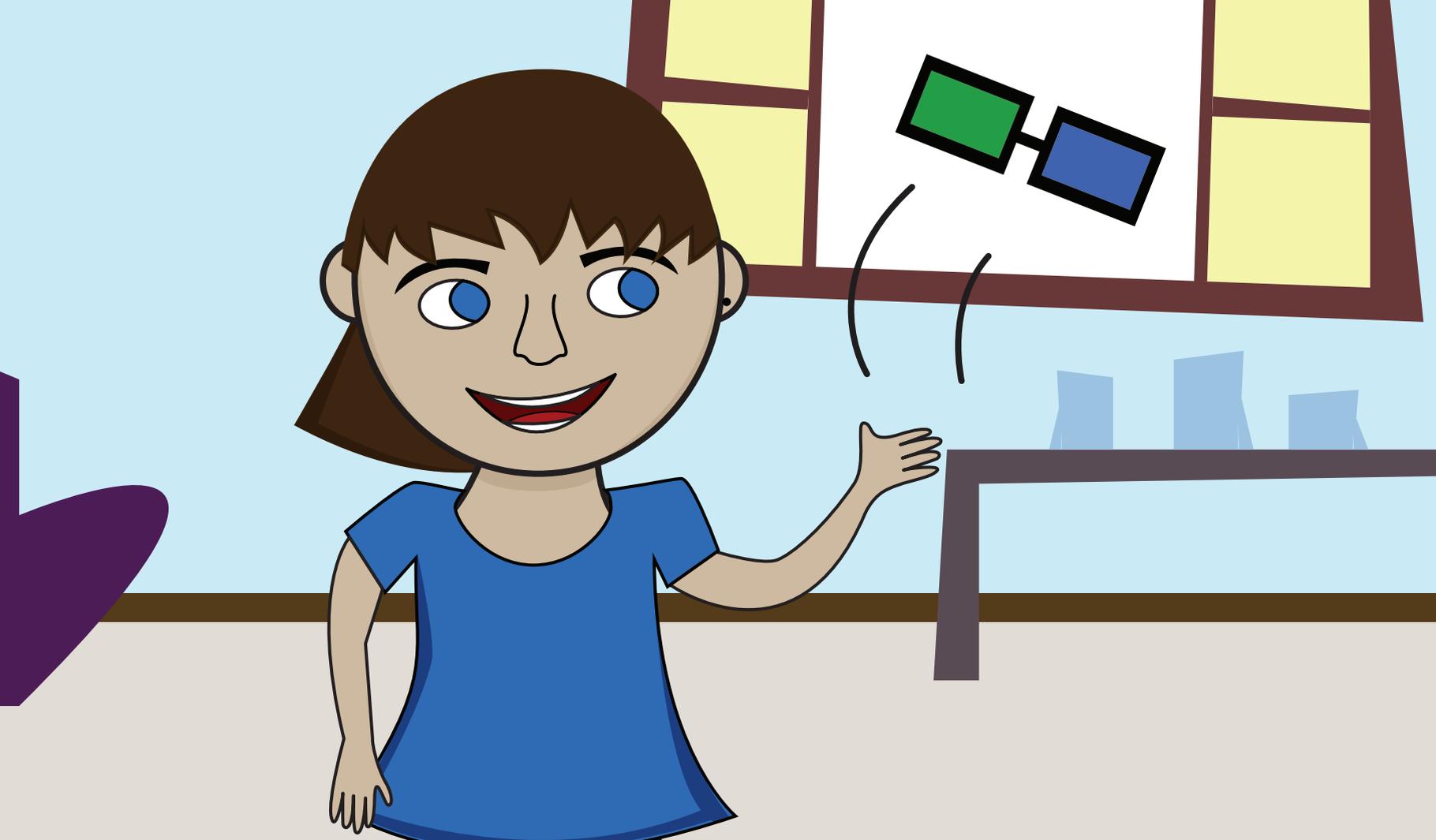
"That's natural", he said with conviction. "The only side effect of the use of these glasses is a certain sadness, something deep... and painful, but the child will learn to live with it. The most important thing is that she will see the world the right way. And there is only one right way: blue is blue and green is green, of course. She will never go around saying she's a blue girl anymore. Don't worry, the child will eventually get used to the Glasses to See Alike and also to this side effect".



The mother still tried to argue a bit more with the Knower, but it didn't work out. In the end, she concluded that if he was indeed a great Knower, he could be right. They left that room with many doubts. Duda, wearing those horrible Glasses to See Alike, was disappointed and feeling very unhappy. The father wasn't pleased either, but he thought that the best thing to do was just wait to see what would happen. Perhaps, he thought, the Knower was right.



But he wasn't. The days passed by and Duda became more and more sad and unhappy wearing those huge Glasses to See Alike. She felt that the glasses forced her to see things in a way they were not. With them, she couldn't see properly the many, beautiful and different colors she always saw, although many people insisted that there should exist only two. When she saw herself in the mirror, it seemed that her image was not reflected properly. She was sure that her eyes had no problem. They never had. She knew she was blue, and now she felt guilty because she knew it was so, without having done anything wrong.



Duda's parents realized that this weird treatment was not working, but they still thought this could change. Duda tried in vain to convince them, but even she was confused with all that. How could her parents understand that there was not a problem with her eyes if it also appeared to them that Duda wasn't blue? And the Knower seemed to be so knowing...

After a few weeks, Duda could not help it. She couldn't stand wearing that strange device. So, determined, she took those Glasses to See Alike off, wiped her tears, and seeing everything again the way it really was, she threw them out of the window as far as she could. She didn't want to have to wear them ever again. She could not. She wanted to be what she always was: cheerful, fun, studious, playful, caring, happy ... and blue.



The mother, seeing Duda do it, ran toward her, and looking at Duda, very closely, hugged to her. She saw for the first time clearly, that she was right. Duda was not a green boy, as so far the mother believed she was. She was really a beautiful blue little girl.

Duda didn't say a word. She didn't need to. She was not crying anymore. She knew just by looking into her mother's eyes that a lot of things were different. Her mother finally could see her as she really was. That was, for Duda at that moment, the most important thing in the world.



Much has changed from that day on. Duda never wore those horrible Glasses to See Alike again. The father took a little longer than the mother, but also ended up seeing and understanding that there was nothing wrong with Duda. Together, to better understand Duda and help her to be even happier, they began to read and study everything about boys and girls, green and blue.

Both started to talk more with Duda... and hear everything she had to say. She always had many things to tell about the school, her friends, and everything she felt.

They found that many boys were green and many girls were blue. Also that many boys were blue and many girls were green and that the world was beautiful like this... with so many colors as stars in the sky. Over time, many other people also saw that Duda was not green, but a beautiful blue little girl.

They didn't go see the Knower of Colors again, or any other Knower. He might know much about something, but about colors... he didn't know anything. From then on, they would only look for people who could really help Duda, like good doctors who would see and understand her just the way she was: beautiful, sweet and a wonderful daughter to her parents.

And Duda? Well, she was so happy she could even fly.



This book speaks of affection, care and understanding. It speaks of boys and girls, and of one in particular, that everyone thought was a little boy, Duda...
This book speaks, above all, of love.

