


A cartoon illustration of a man with a mustache, wearing a black tuxedo jacket, a white shirt with a black bow tie, and patterned trousers. He is hanging upside down from a white, leafless tree branch. He has a content expression with his eyes closed. A few yellow leaves are scattered around the branches.

# CAPS FOR SALE

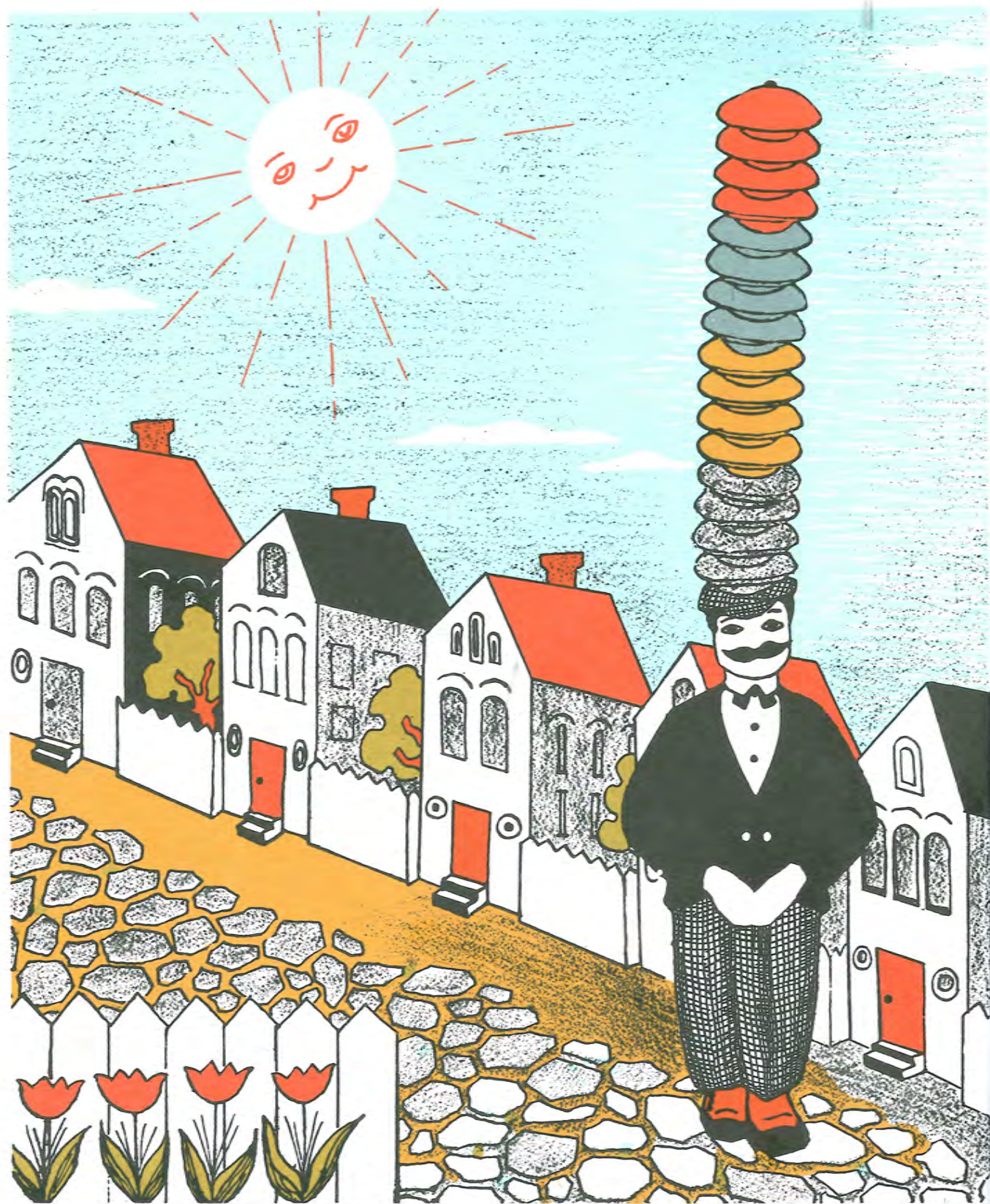
*A Tale of a Peddler, Some Monkeys  
and Their Monkey Business*

A cartoon illustration of a monkey sitting on a green hill. In front of it is a tall, vertical stack of caps. The stack is composed of several layers: the top layer is red, followed by a layer of orange, then a layer of green, and the bottom layer is grey. The monkey is looking up at the stack.

TOLD & ILLUSTRATED BY

**Esphyr Slobodkina**



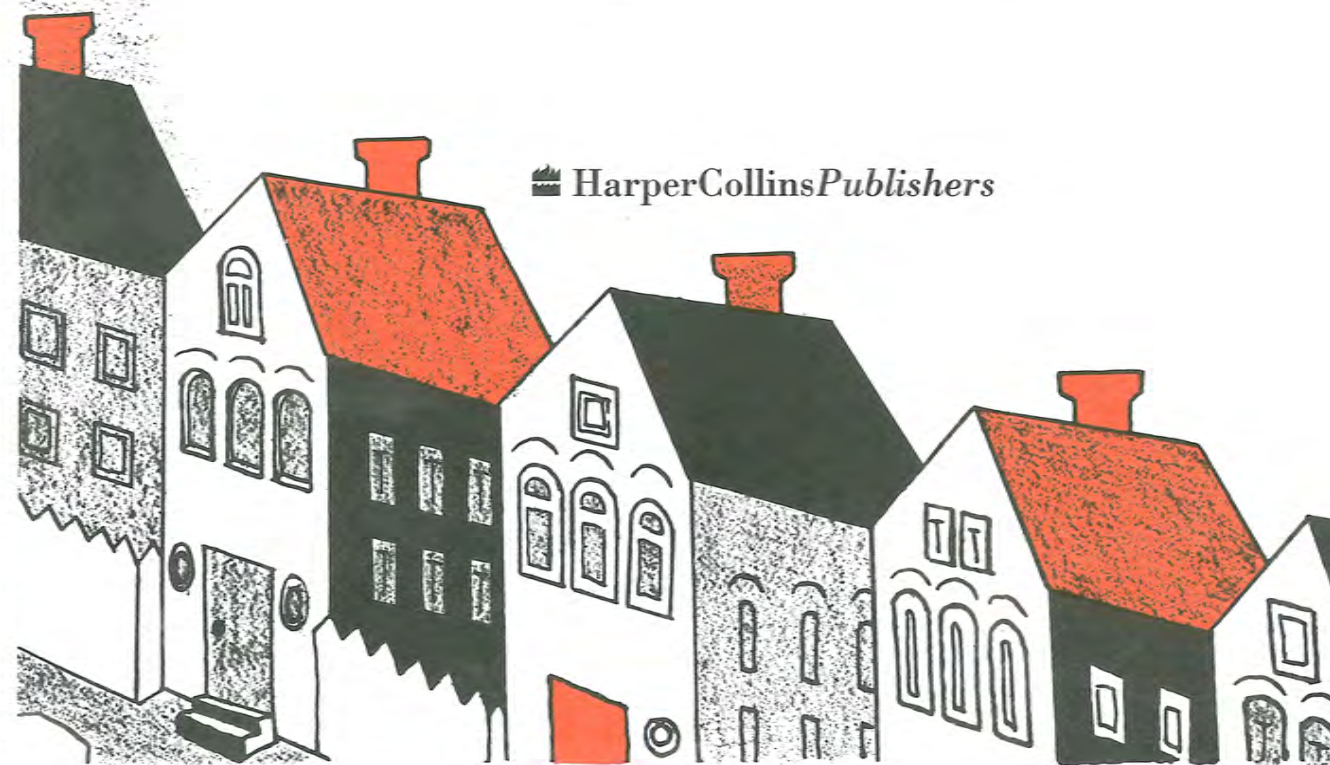


# CAPS FOR SALE

*A Tale of a Peddler, Some Monkeys  
and Their Monkey Business*

*Told and Illustrated by  
Esphyr Slobodkina*

 HarperCollins Publishers





*To Rosalind and Emmy Jean,  
and to their grandfather  
who loved to read to them*

Caps for Sale

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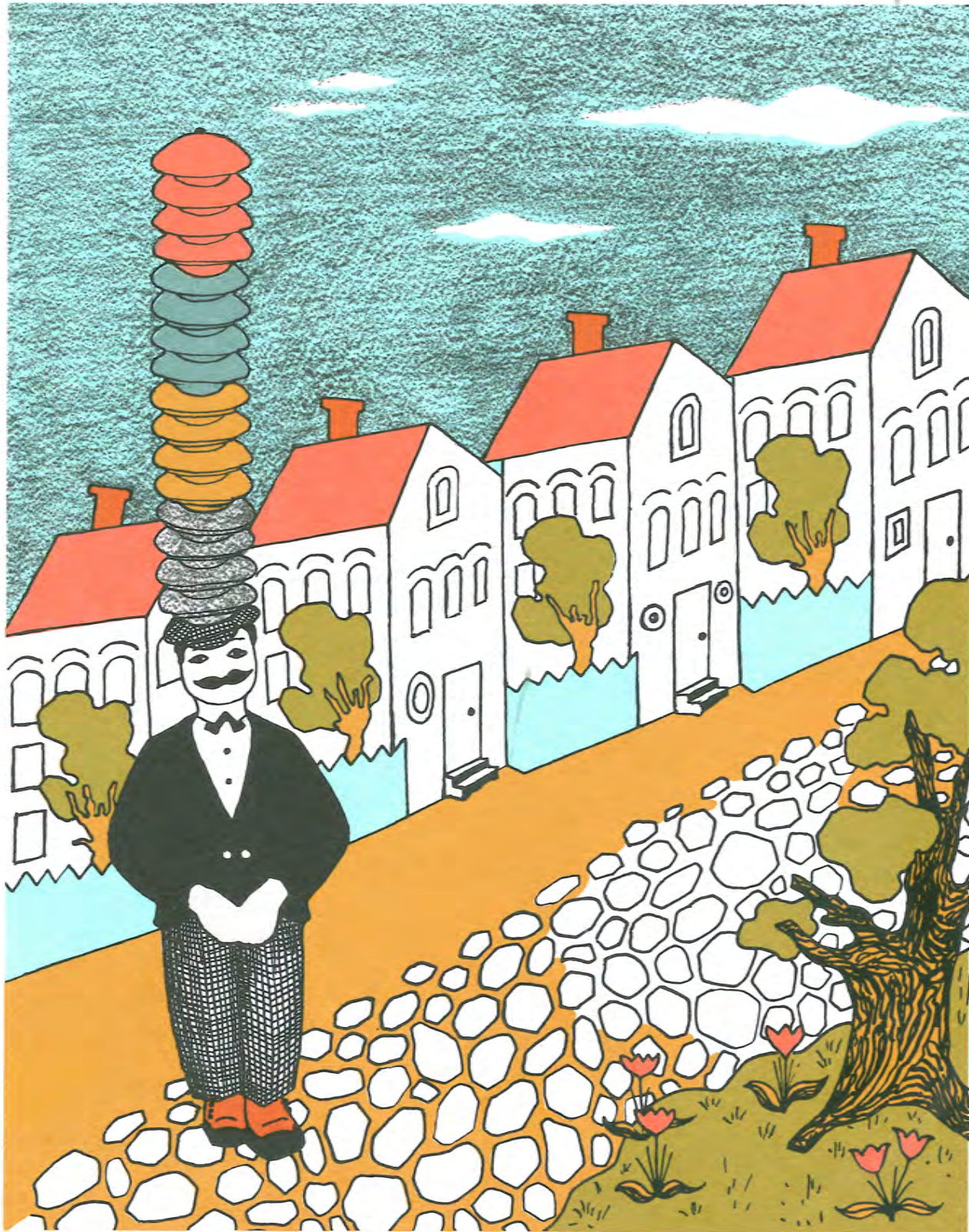
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Once there was  
a peddler who sold caps.  
But he was not like  
an ordinary peddler  
carrying his wares on his back.  
He carried them  
on top of his head.

First he had on his own  
checked cap,  
then a bunch of gray caps,  
then a bunch of brown caps,  
then a bunch of blue caps,  
and on the very top  
a bunch of red caps.





He walked  
up and down the streets,  
holding himself very straight  
so as not to upset his caps.

As he went along he called,  
“Caps! Caps for sale!  
Fifty cents a cap!”





One morning  
he couldn't sell any caps.  
He walked up the street and  
he walked down the street calling,  
“Caps! Caps for sale. Fifty cents a cap.”

But nobody wanted any caps  
that morning.  
Nobody wanted even a red cap.

He began to feel very hungry,  
but he had no money for lunch.

“I think I'll go for a walk in the country,”  
said he.

And he walked out of town—  
slowly, slowly,  
so as not to upset his caps.





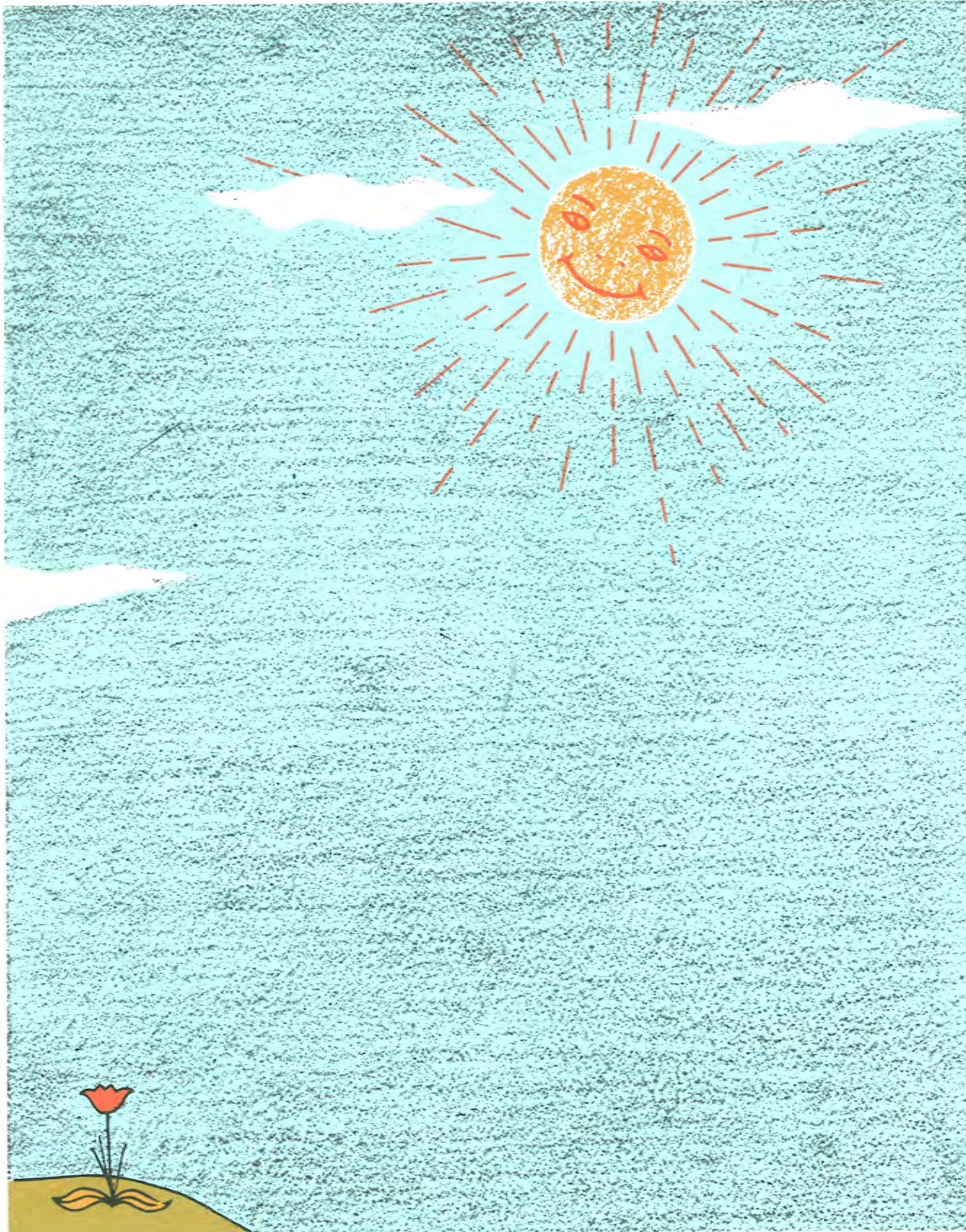
He walked for a long time  
until he came to a great big tree.

“That’s a nice place for a rest,”  
thought he.

And he sat down very slowly, under the tree  
and leaned back little by little  
against the tree-trunk so as not to disturb  
the caps on his head.

Then he put up his hand to feel  
if they were straight—  
first his own checked cap,  
then the gray caps,  
then the brown caps,  
then the blue caps,  
then the red caps  
on the very top.





They were all there.

So he went to sleep.

He slept for a long time.





When he woke up  
he was refreshed  
and rested.





But before standing up  
he felt with his hand  
to make sure his caps were  
in the right place.

All he felt was his own  
checked cap!





He looked to the right of him.

No caps.

He looked to the left of him.

No caps.

He looked in back of him.

No caps.

He looked behind the tree.

No caps.

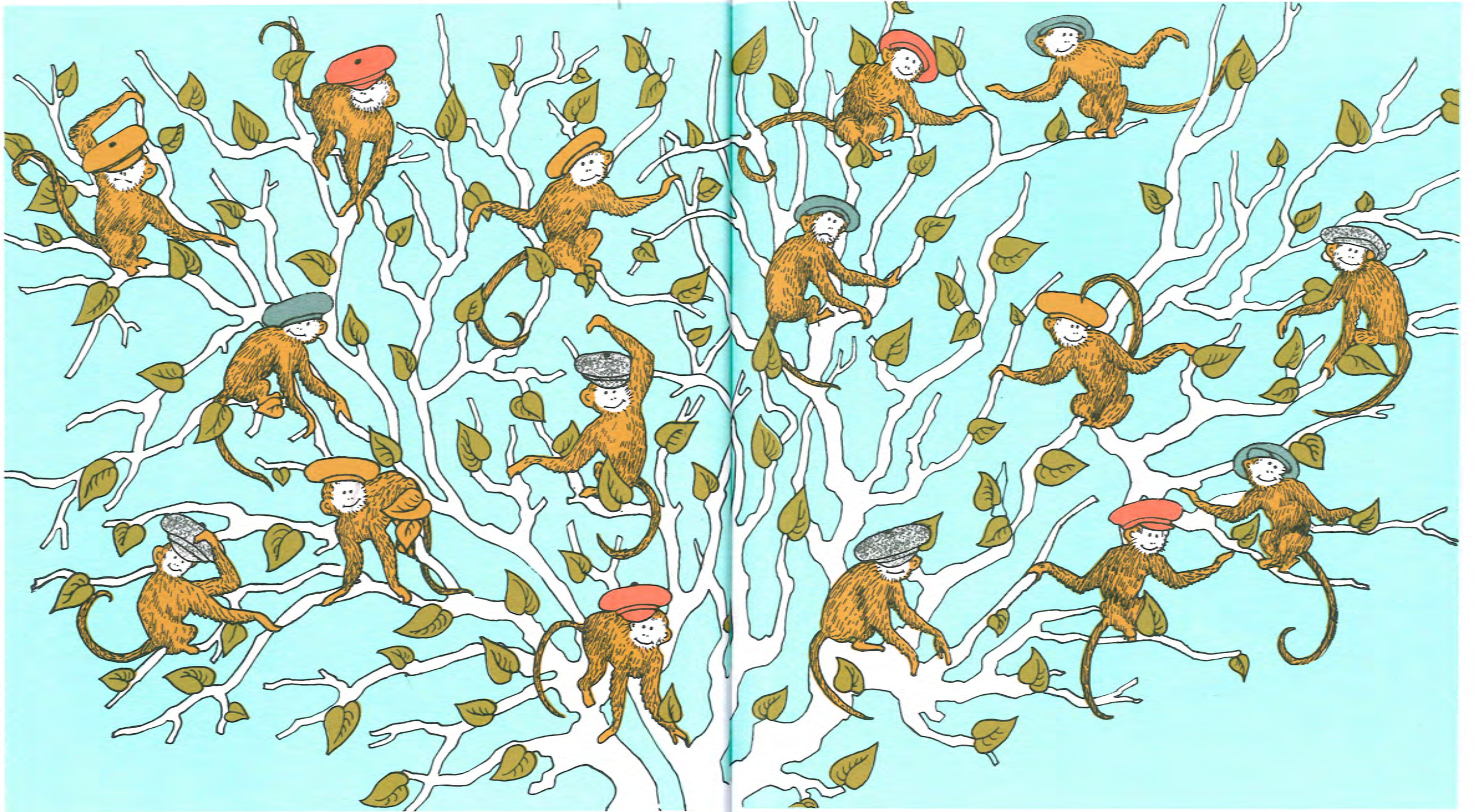




Then he looked up into the tree.

And what do you think he saw?





On every branch sat a monkey. On every monkey

was a gray, or a brown, or a blue, or a red cap!



The peddler looked  
at the monkeys.

The monkeys looked  
at the peddler.

He didn't know  
what to do.

Finally he spoke to them.





“You monkeys, you,”  
he said,  
shaking a finger at them,  
“you give me back my caps.”

But the monkeys  
only shook their fingers  
back at him and said,  
“Tsz, tsz, tsz.”





This made the peddler angry,  
so he shook both hands  
at them and said,  
“You monkeys, you!  
You give me back my caps.”

But the monkeys only  
shook both their hands  
back at him and said,  
“Tsz, tsz, tsz.”





Now he felt quite angry.  
He stamped his foot,  
and he said,  
“You monkeys, you!  
You better give me back my caps!”

But the monkeys only  
stamped their feet  
back at him and said,  
“Tsz, tsz, tsz.”





By this time  
the peddler was really  
very, very angry.  
He stamped both his feet and  
shouted, "You monkeys, you!  
You must give me back my caps!"

But the monkeys only  
stamped both their feet  
back at him and said,  
"Tsz, tsz, tsz."





At last he became  
so angry that he  
pulled off his own cap,  
threw it on the ground, and  
began to walk away.





But then,  
each monkey  
pulled off  
his cap . . .





and all the gray caps,  
and all the brown caps,  
and all the blue caps,  
and all the red caps  
came flying down  
out of the tree.





So the peddler  
picked up his caps and  
put them back on his head—

first his own checked cap,

then the gray caps,

then the brown caps,

then the blue caps,

then the red caps  
on the very top.





And slowly, slowly,  
he walked back to town calling,  
“Caps! Caps for sale!  
Fifty cents a cap!”

