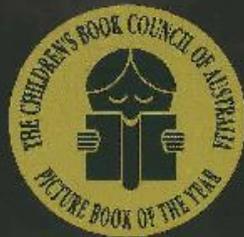
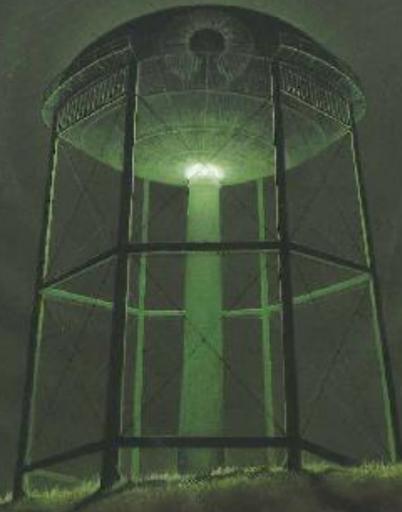


GARY CREW



STEVEN WOOLMAN

THE
WATER TOWER



Be on the hunt
for Tier 2
Vocabulary!

THE WATERTOWER



GARY CRITW

STEVEN WOOLMAN

THE WATERTOWER

Written by
GARY CREW

Illustrated by
STEVEN WOOLMAN

Nobody in Preston could remember when the watertower was built, or who had built it, but there it stood on Shooters Hill — its iron legs rusted, its egg-shaped tank warped and leaking — casting a long, dark shadow across the valley, across Preston itself.

for Janet

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1. What adjectives are used to describe the water tower?
2. Identify the punctuation used and evaluate how it paces and shapes meaning in the text.
3. What repetition has been used and why is it effective?
4. How does the written orientation of the narrative develop suspense?
5. How does the visual orientation of the first page usurp (take a position of importance) traditional reading expectations of text?





One summer afternoon, Spike Trotter met Bubba D'Angelo by the service station and together they went up to the tower for a swim.

Spike led the way, as usual.

"My mother says it's dangerous up there," he said, "but it's worth it, hey?"

Bubba puffed on behind. His mother couldn't have cared less where he went.

1. What is implied by the author's language characterization of Spike?
2. What is implied by the author's language characterization of Bubba?
3. What is implied by the author's language characterization of Spike's mother?
4. What is implied by the author's language characterization of Bubba's mother?
5. What is implied by the adverbial phrase at the end of this sentence: 'Spike led the way, as usual'?
6. What is the nature of the relationship between Spike and Bubba?

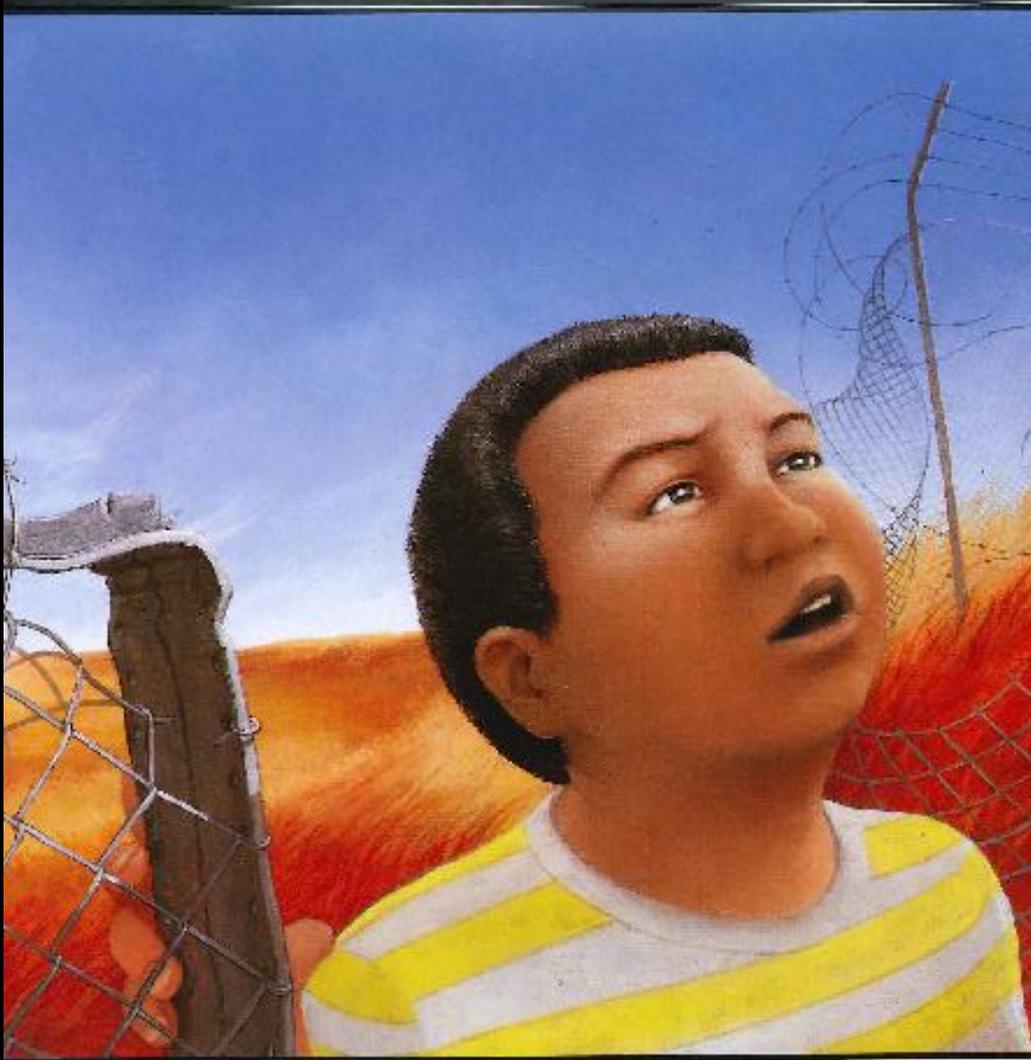


At the summit, Spike stopped to look down on the sweltering town. "Suckers," he grinned, and headed for the tower.

Last summer, a security fence had kept trespassers out, but now the metal posts were twisted and flattened and barbed wire lay coiled on the ground.



Predict a range of possibilities for what has happened to damage the fence.



"You reckon vandals done that?" Bubba asked, recovering his breath.

But Spike was already on the top. "Hurry up," he yelled, throwing open the access hatch. "It's scorching up here."

He pulled his shirt over his head, dropped his shorts and clambered down into the tank.

Identify and list the verbs and adjectives in this passages.



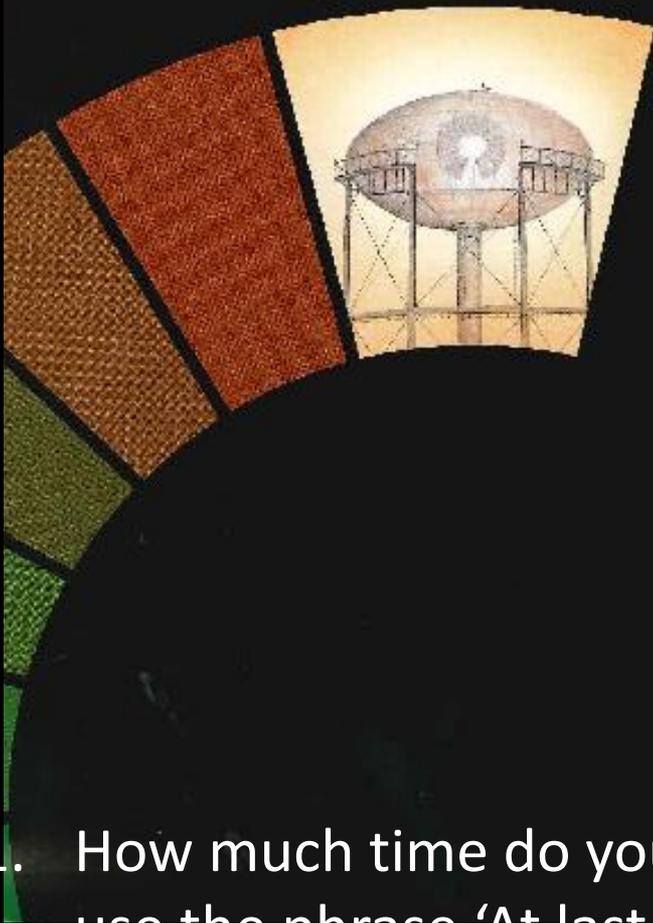
It was dark inside. “The dark’s got a sort of a colour,” Bubba said, squatting on the bottom rung of the ladder. “It’s sort of green. Like moss. Like slimy, dead moss.”

Spike didn’t answer. Except for the ghostly wailing he kept up for the fun of hearing the echo, he might not have been there at all.

“Spike?” Bubba called. “Spikey?” Still no answer; so Bubba whistled for a while, then splashed a bit — but only up to his knees. He didn’t particularly like the water. He wasn’t keen on slipping down, naked, into its murky dark. And from time to time he glanced up at the shaft of sunlight angling in from the open hatch, imagining.



1. What reasons would you suggest exist for Spike not responding to Bubba’s call?
2. What ‘imaginings’ could Bubba be indulging in?



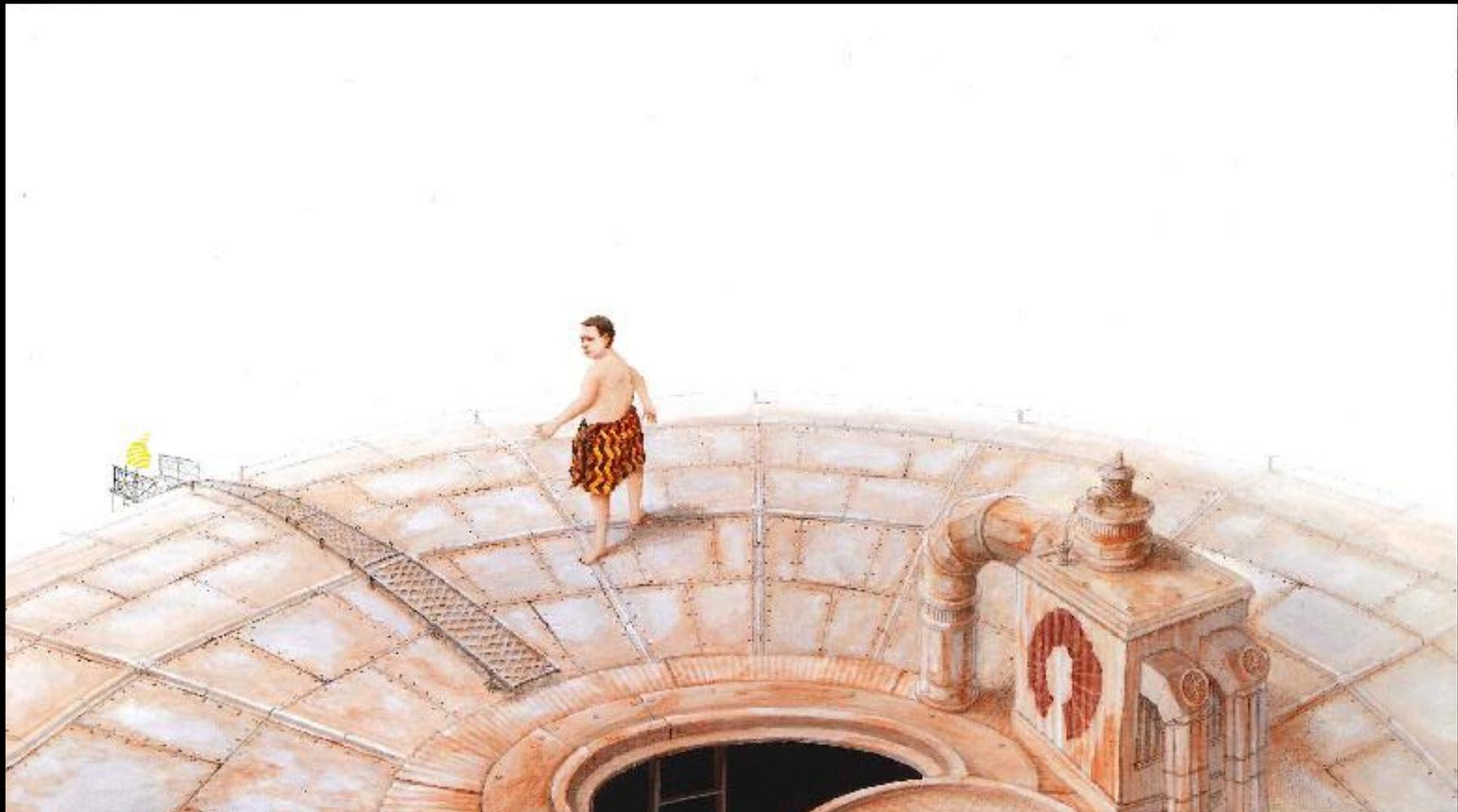
At last, Bubba called, "Spikey, I'm going up now. I'm going to get dressed."

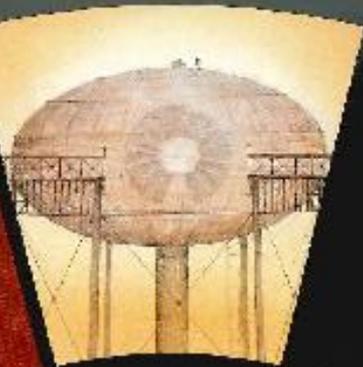
He guessed that Spike was somewhere beneath him, in the water that eddied and swirled.

1. How much time do you think may have passed for the author to use the phrase 'At last...'



1. What tone is implied through the verb 'eddyed and swirled'?
2. If the tank is closed to the weather, what phenomena could be causing the water to eddy and swirl?



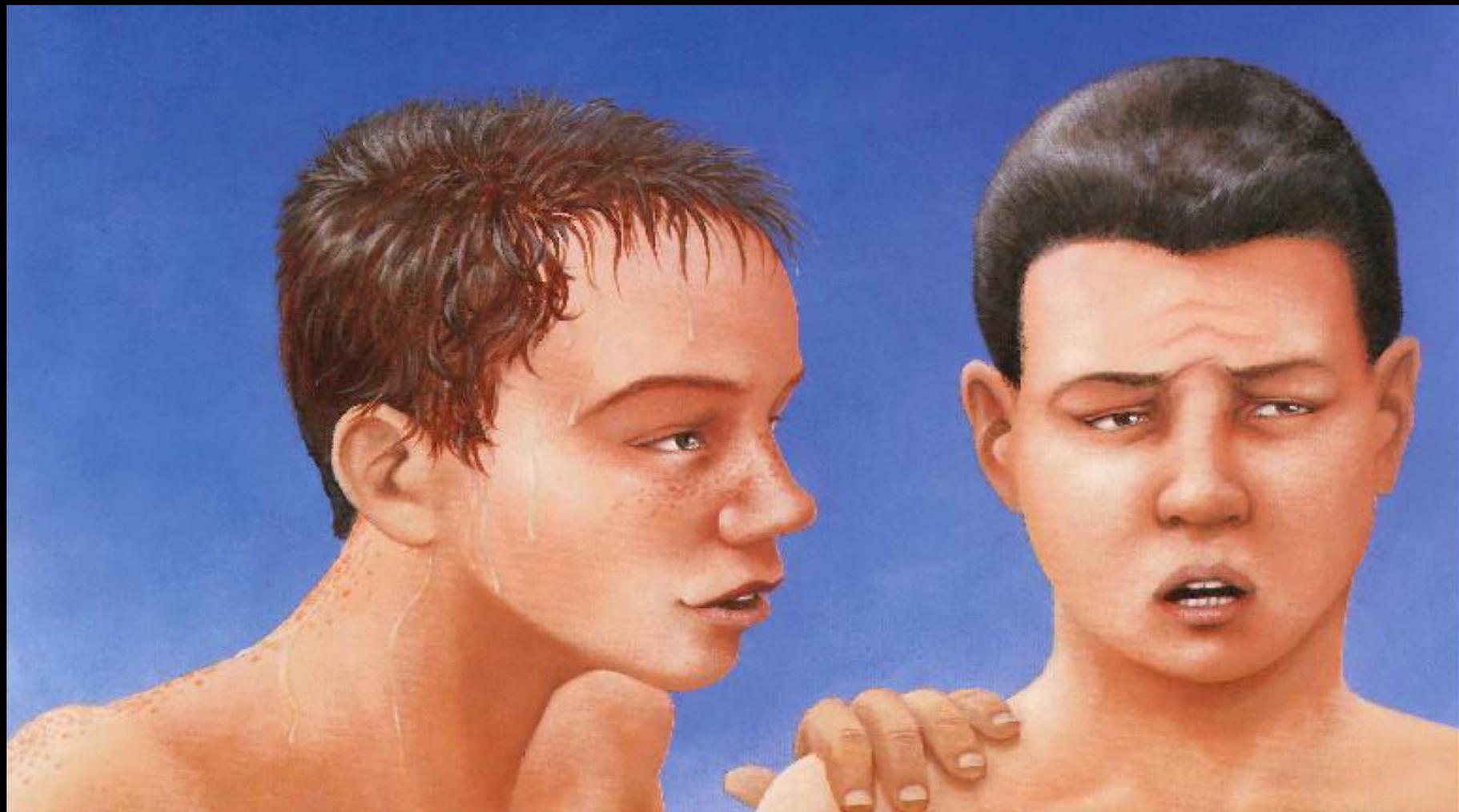


1. What rhetorical question is asked and what is the intended purpose of the rhetorical question?
2. If Bubba has not had a response from Spike prior to climbing back to the top of the tower, why does he think he will respond now?

Bubba stepped out on to the top of the tank. The wind was hot; the glare terrible. Blinking and squinting he looked about for his towel. It had blown to the far side of the tank and hung there, caught on the head of a valve. "Maybe I should have stayed down," he muttered to himself, tippy-toeing across the burning metal. With the towel wrapped around him, he looked for his clothes. Spike's were there, wedged beneath the hatch; and he saw his shirt, flapping at the top of the ladder; but where were his shorts?

He turned around and around. Nothing. He dropped on his hands and knees and crept to the side of the tank, yelping with each movement as the burning surface seared. He peered over the side. Nothing.

He made his way back to the hatch, calling, "Hey, are my pants down there?"



"What?" came the response.

He repeated the question, then waited, standing on his crumpled shirt, keeping his towel tight around him. Spike's dripping head suddenly appeared. "Nope," he spluttered. "Nothing's down there but water," and he pulled himself free of the dark.

Bubba looked about him again. "Then they've blown away. That's what happened, I bet."

Spike laughed. "Doesn't matter," he said, shaking himself and reaching for his clothes. "You've got your towel. Go home in that."

Bubba shook his head. "No way. If my mother finds out that I lost my pants, I'm dead."

They looked at each other. They knew that this was true. Mama D'Angelo could land a wallop like nobody else in town.

1. What contradiction is presented on this page in relation to Bubba's relationship with his mother?





"I'll go back," Spike volunteered. "I'll run the whole way. I'll sneak in through your bedroom window and get another pair. Top drawer of your dresser. Right?"

Bubba nodded. "I'll wait here. I'll get back down, out of the sun. Will you . . . Will you be long?"

Spike was already on the ladder. "I didn't win the cross-country for nothing, did I? I'll run . . ." His last words were lost in the wind.

What does the verb phrase 'lost in the wind' infer?





Bubba climbed into the tank. "I'll be all right," he muttered. "I'll be all right." But when he looked, the bottom rung was a long way from the light. And the water seemed darker. So he stopped halfway, and waited.

All about him the tower creaked and groaned. *That's the heat*, he reasoned. *The heat expanding the metal.*

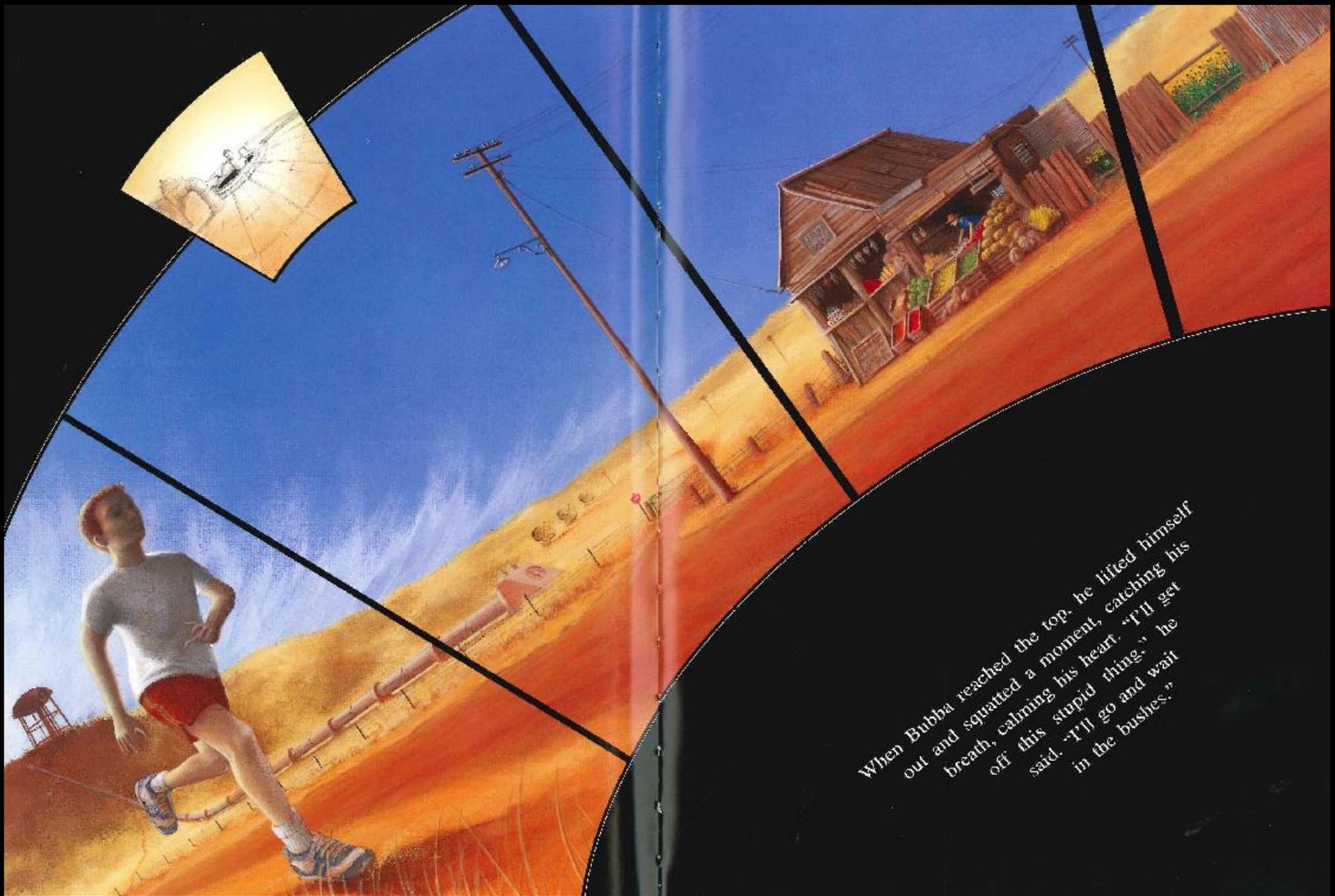
There was a smell. *That's the algae. All rotten and festering.*

The water eddied and swirled. *That's the wind shifting the tower. It's old and rickety.*

But he was frightened, very frightened and, rung by rung — so as not to shake the ladder, not to disturb anything — he crept upwards, towards the sun.

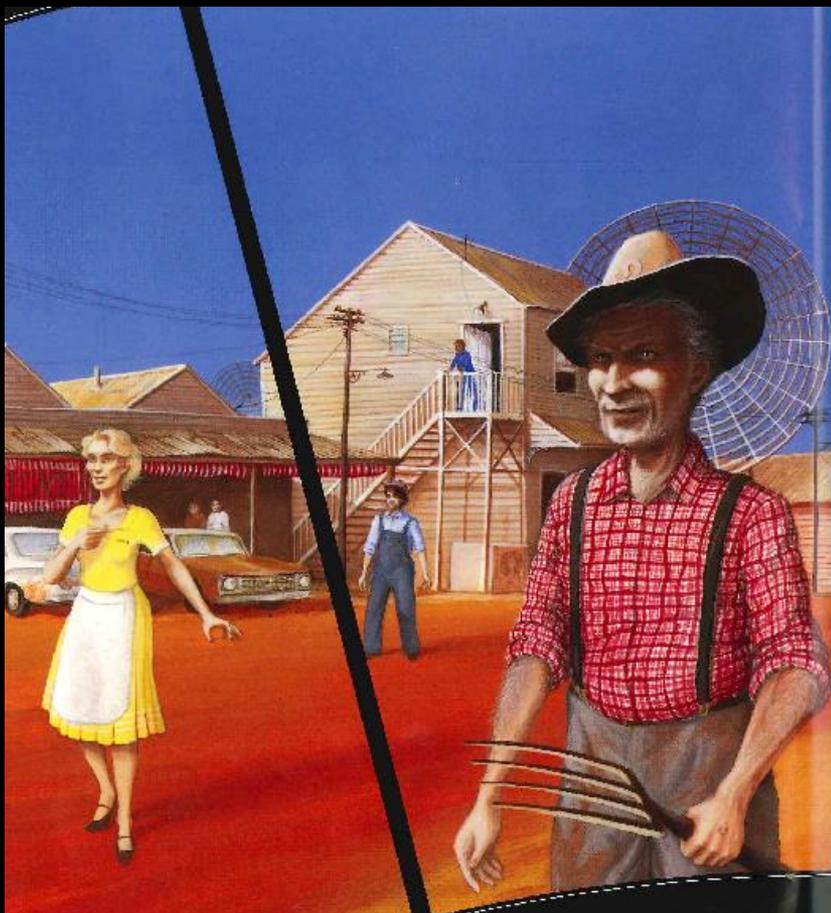


1. How does the passage establish the climax of the narrative?

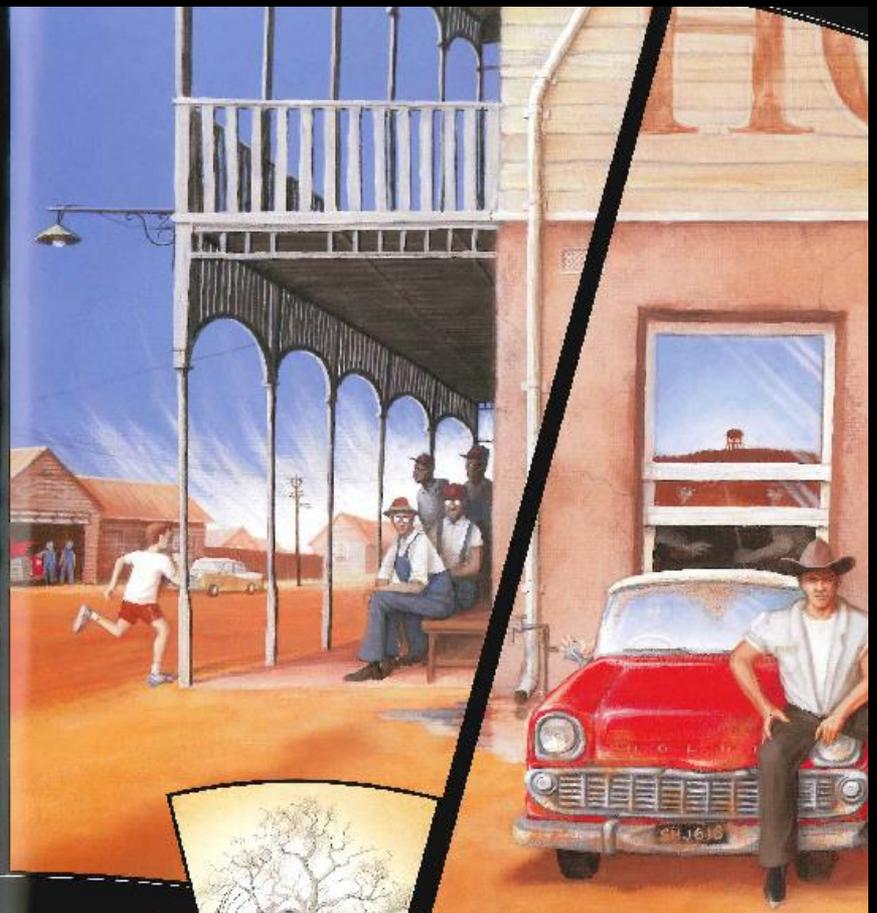


When Bubba reached the top, he lifted himself out and squatted a moment, catching his breath, calming his heart. "I'll get off this stupid thing," he said. "I'll go and wait in the bushes."

1. How has language been used to imply that Bubba is afraid of the tower?

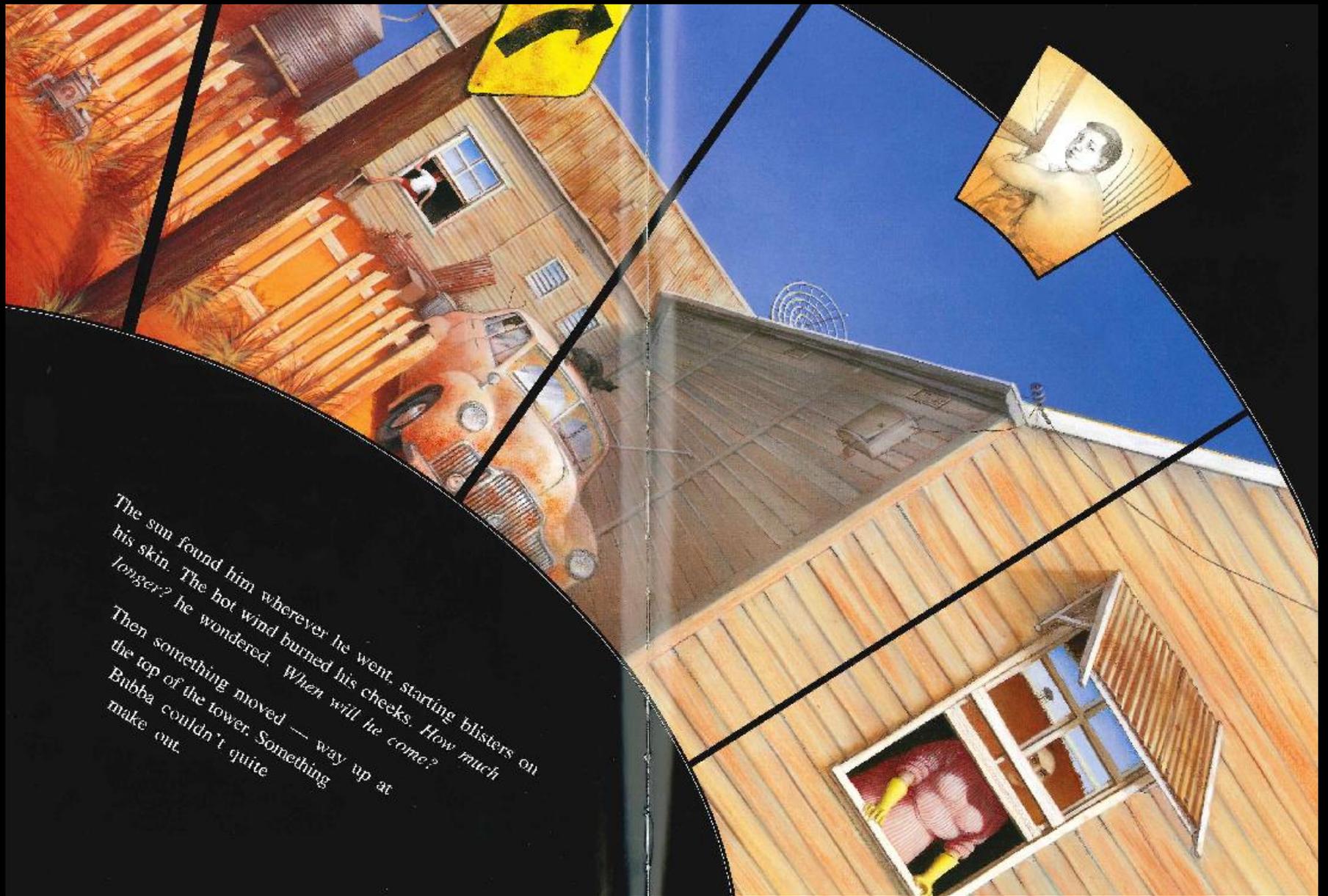


So he did. He tightened the towel around his stomach, climbed down the outside ladder and hopped across the burning earth to the patchy shade of a grey-leaved bush.



I'll be safer here, he thought; though from what, exactly, he could not imagine.

Crew uses the verb 'imagine' in the final sentence; the second time the word or its derivation has been used in relation to Bubba. Considering the context of the narrative, how is Crew manipulating the reader's view of Bubba?



The sun found him wherever he went, starting blisters on his skin. The hot wind burned his cheeks. *How much longer?* he wondered. *When will he come?* Then something moved — way up at the top of the tower. Something Bubba couldn't quite make out.

1. What is the effectiveness of repeating the pronoun 'something' in this passage?
2. How does Crew establish a new climax in this passage?





“Spike?” Bubba called. “Is that you?”

No answer.

“Spike?” he whispered, getting up.

“Spikey . . .”

1. How has punctuation been used in this passage to develop the tone of suspense?



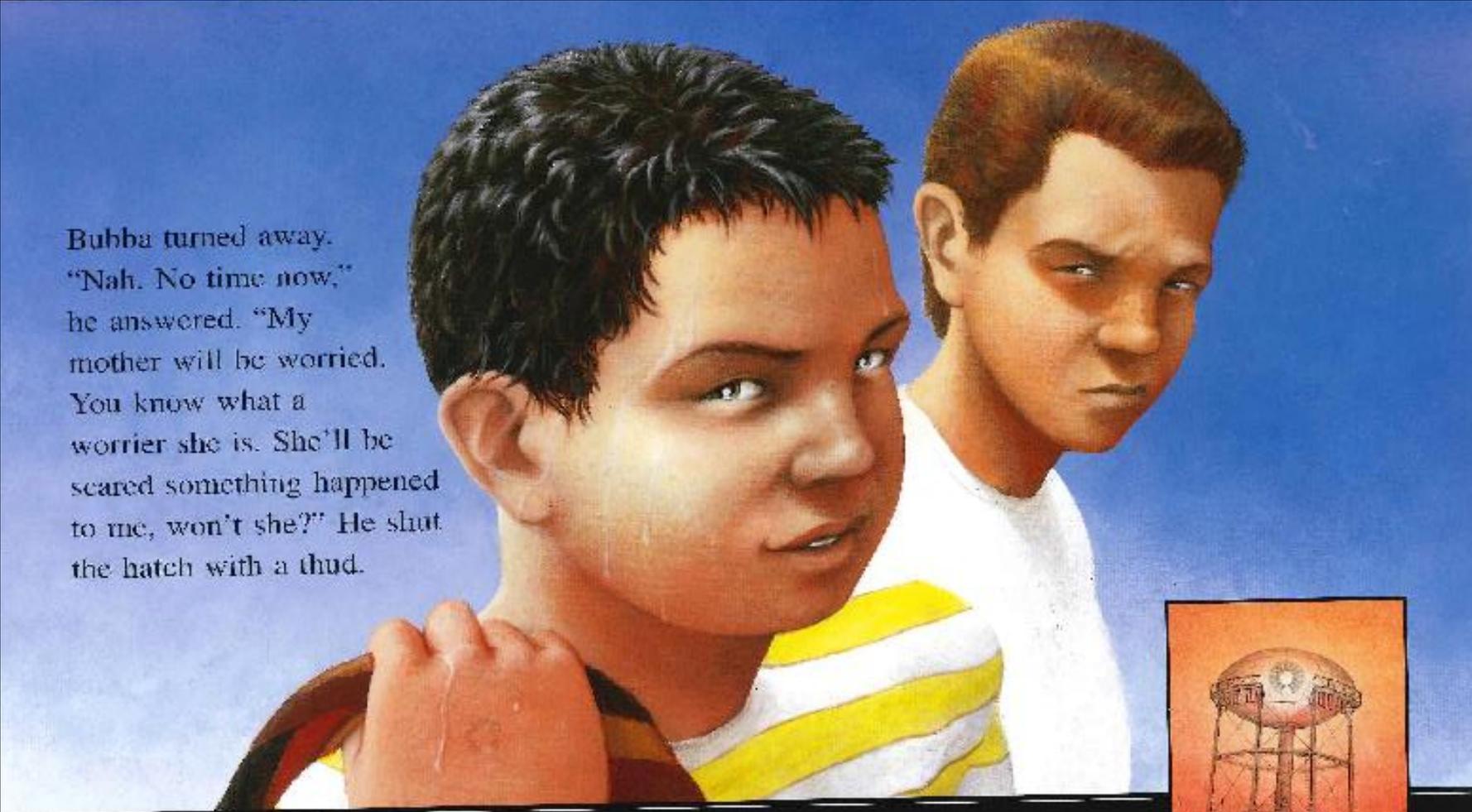
1. If you could write the text for this image, what would it be?



When Spike returned, calling and waving the shorts, Bubba stuck his head straight out of the tank. "Oh boy," he said, dressing himself, "if I stayed down there a minute longer, I reckon I would have dissolved. The water was great. I had the best swim. I taught myself to lie on the bottom. I could do it to the count of a hundred and twenty. No lie. Two minutes. Boy that was good."

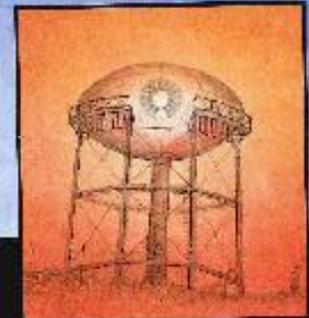
Spike's eyes narrowed. This was not like Bubba. Not like Bubba at all. "Go on," he said, shoving him. "Show us your fingers then; show us the water wrinkles. Come on . . ."

1. How has language been used to change the tone of fear and trepidation implied about Bubba to one of satisfaction and self assuredness?
2. There seems to be narrative missing here. Write the narrative between the previous page and Bubba being back in the tank?



Bubba turned away.
“Nah. No time now,”
he answered. “My
mother will be worried.
You know what a
worrier she is. She’ll be
scared something happened
to me, won’t she?” He shut
the hatch with a thud.

Deep in the tank, the water eddied and swirled.



1. What has happened to Bubba?
2. Why is the final line of the text significant?