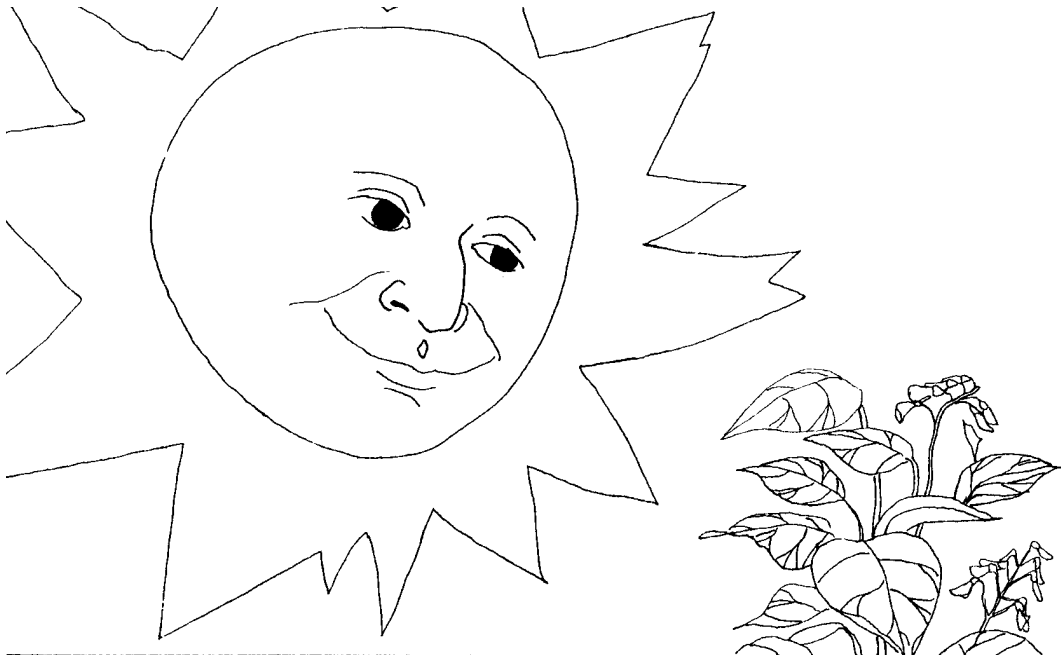


Leaf for Life



coloring book

Drawings by Terri Hogan

story by David Kennedy





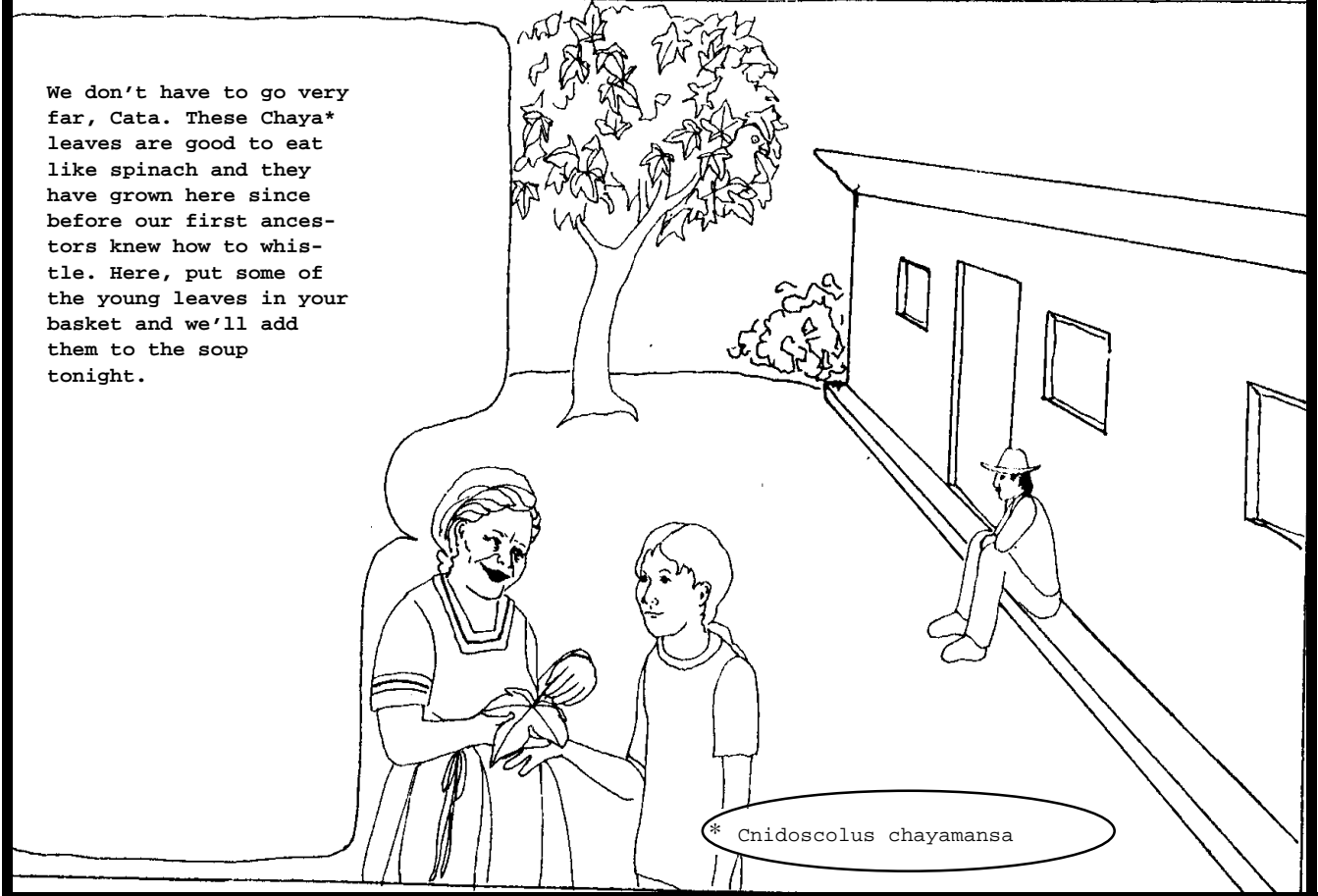






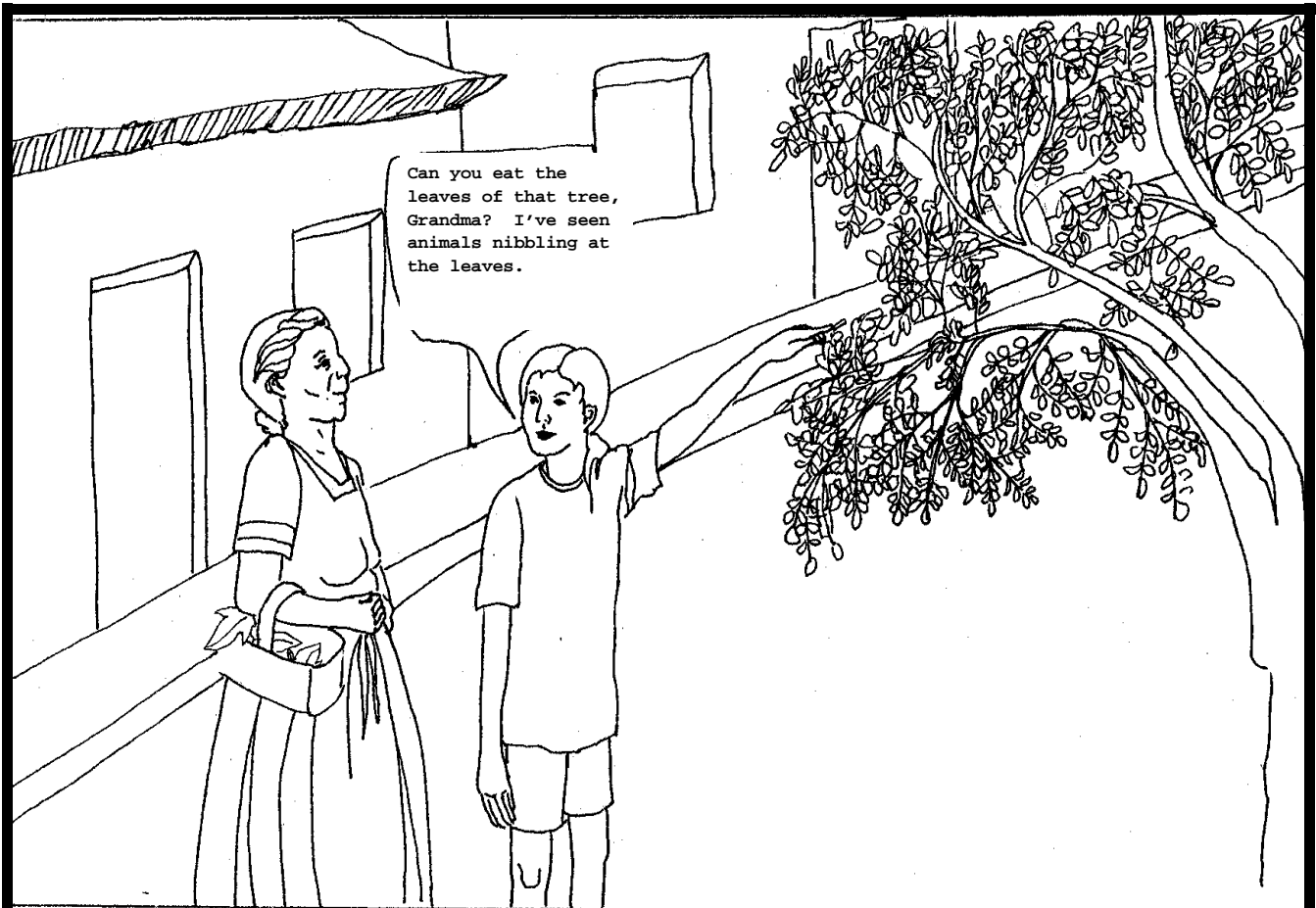


As soon as you finish those tortillas and beans, Cata.



We don't have to go very far, Cata. These Chaya* leaves are good to eat like spinach and they have grown here since before our first ancestors knew how to whistle. Here, put some of the young leaves in your basket and we'll add them to the soup tonight.

* *Cnidoscolus chayamansa*

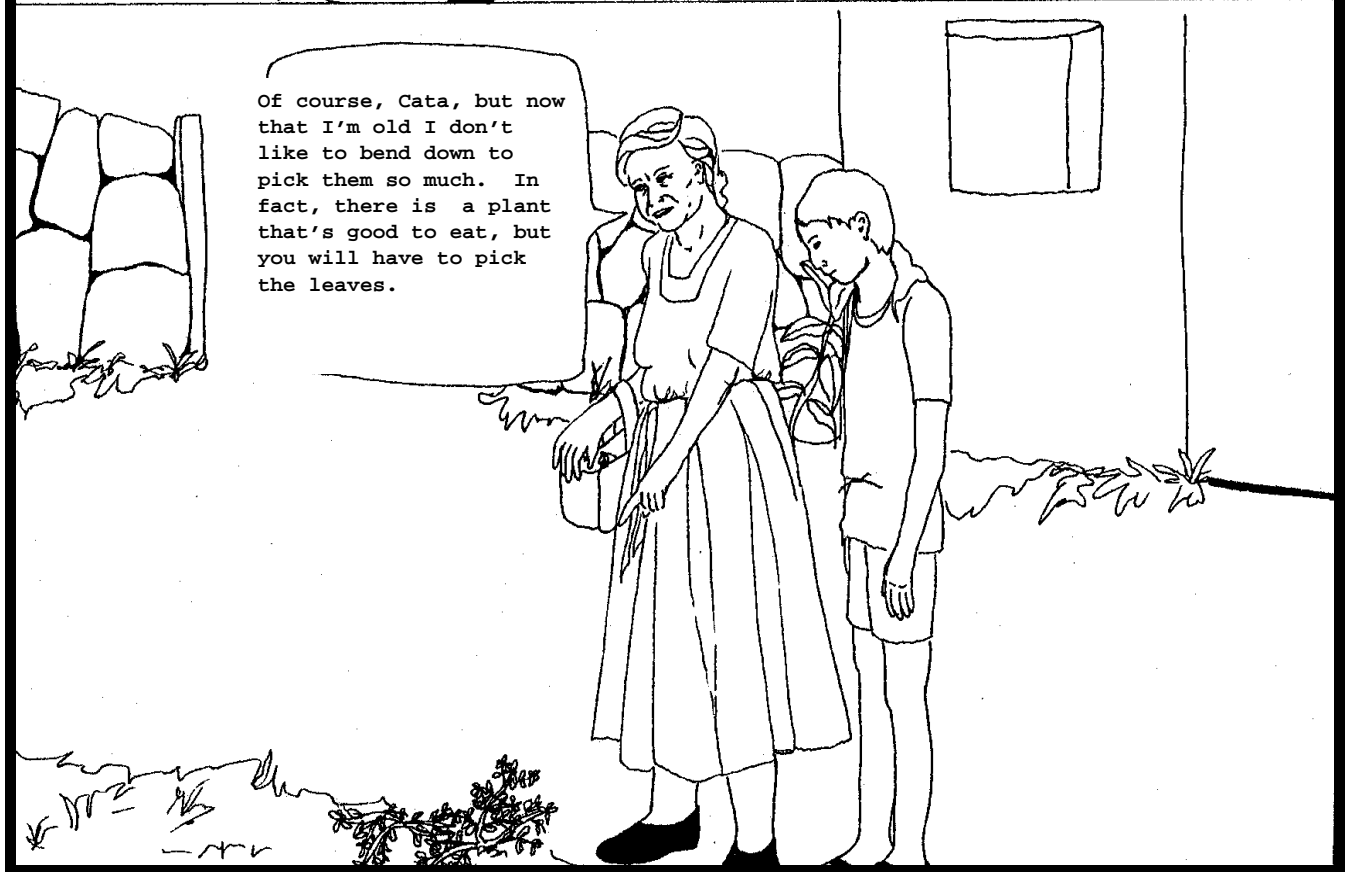


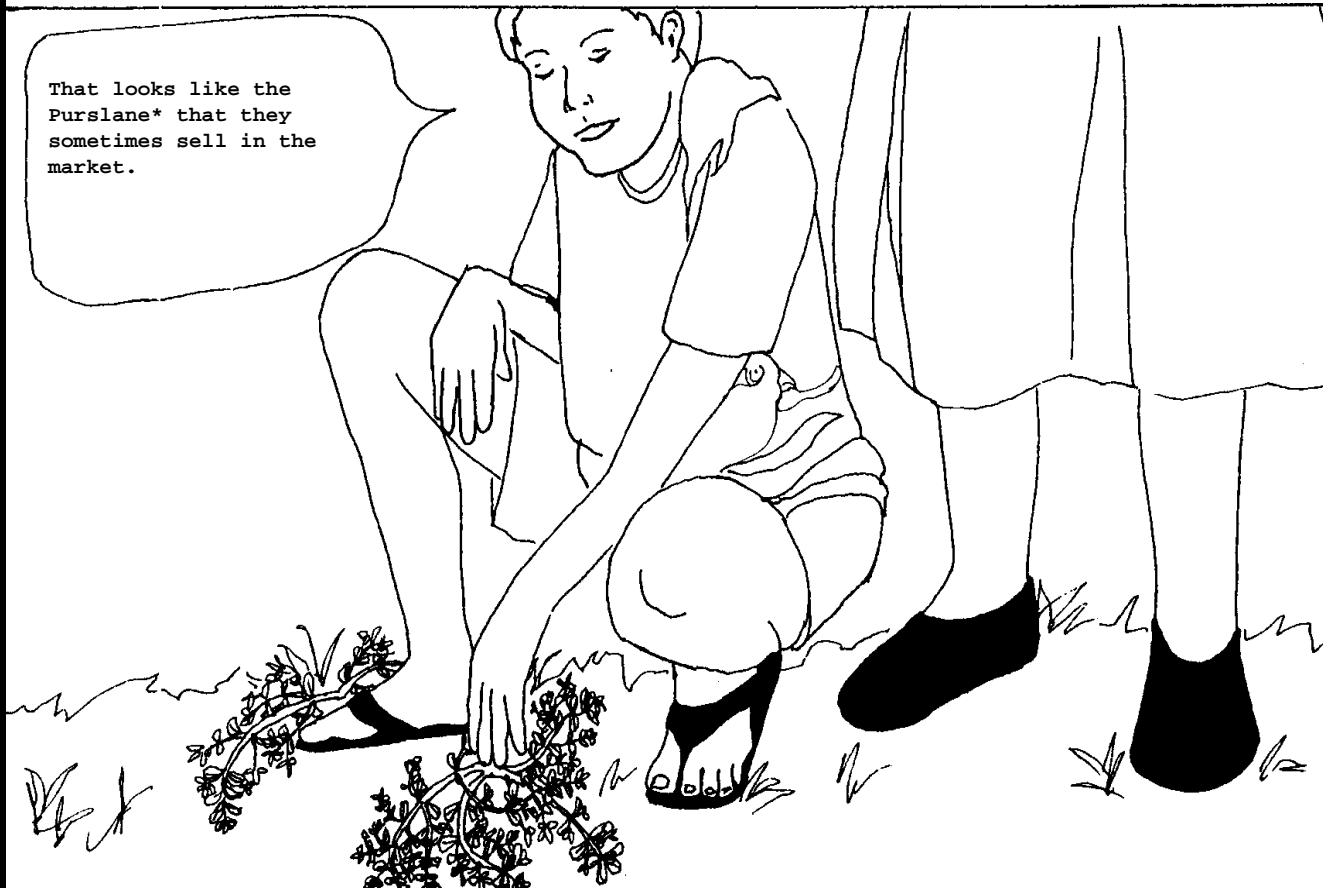
Can you eat the leaves of that tree, Grandma? I've seen animals nibbling at the leaves.




Yes, that is called Moringa*. Its leaves are very tasty . They are rich in iron to make your blood red instead of pink, and vitamins to help you see better in the dark. I think the animals have more sense than the people these days.

* Moringa Oleifera



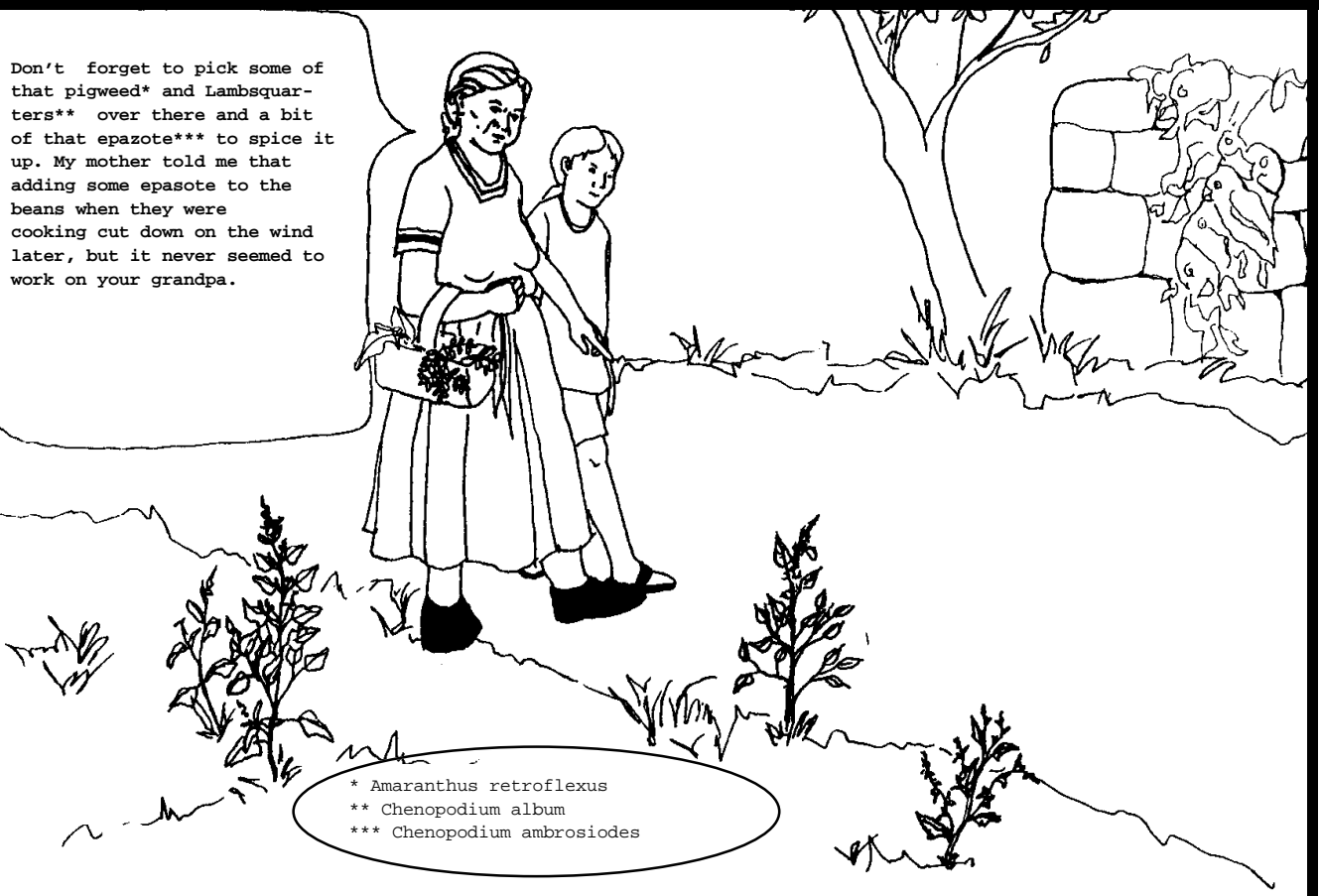


That looks like the Purslane* that they sometimes sell in the market.



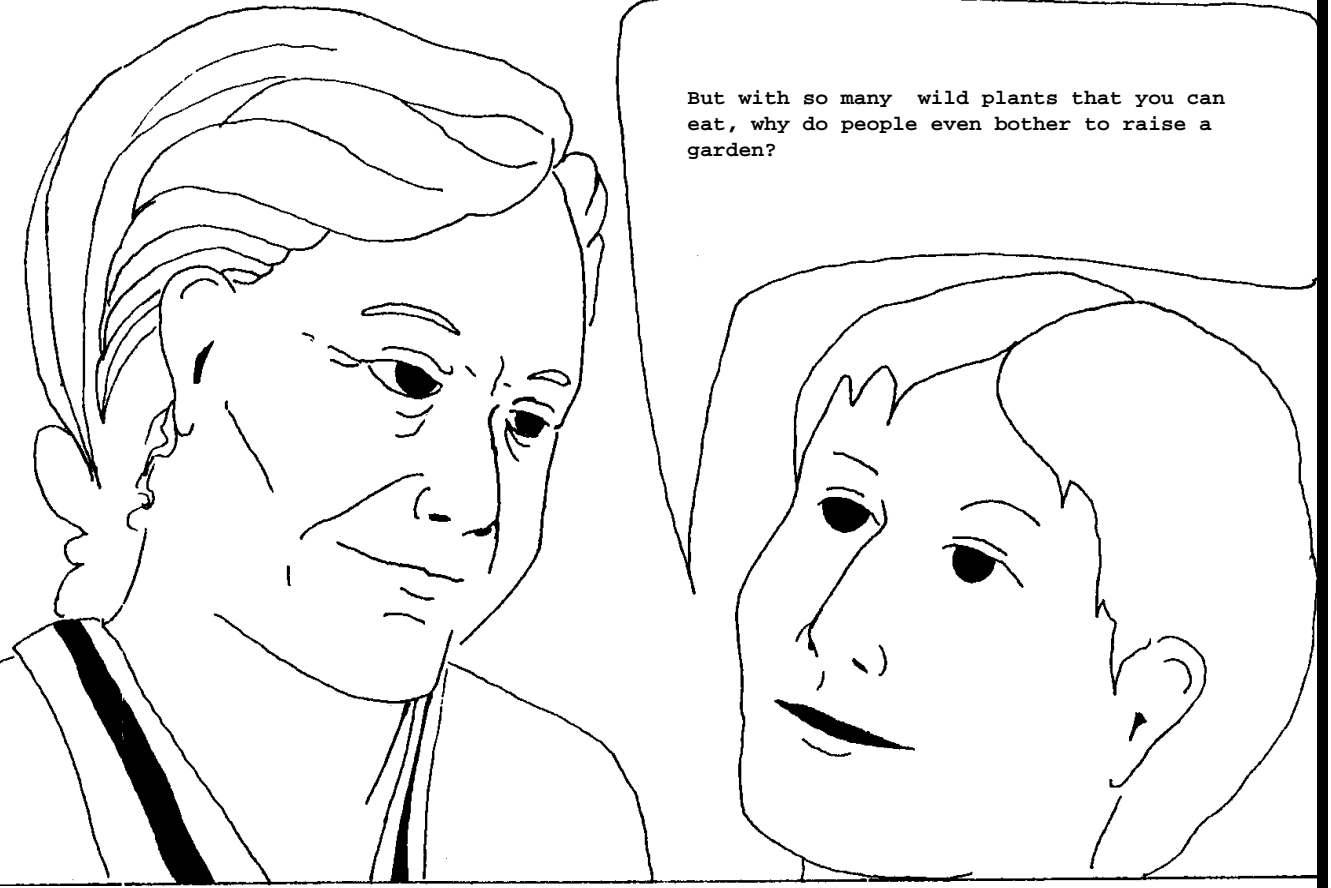
It is the Purslane that they sometimes sell in the market. Except this is a lot fresher and the price is much better. You just need to be careful picking wild leaves. Make sure you know what plants you are picking and don't harvest any leaves growing along busy roads where they will be contaminated with automobile fumes. And even more important, don't eat any part of plants growing near outhouses or sewage runoff."

Don't forget to pick some of that pigweed* and Lambsquarters** over there and a bit of that epazote*** to spice it up. My mother told me that adding some epasote to the beans when they were cooking cut down on the wind later, but it never seemed to work on your grandpa.



* *Amaranthus retroflexus*
** *Chenopodium album*
*** *Chenopodium ambrosiodes*

But with so many wild plants that you can eat, why do people even bother to raise a garden?





The wild plants have lots of power to make us strong and smart, Cata, but only in a garden will you find a tomato as big and soft as your head.



Mom says my head is hard as a rock.

Like one of the new tomatoes in the market. But the garden is full of secrets, not just tomatoes that look like balloons.



Are there secrets hiding in my aunt Rosa's garden? She has one of the tidiest gardens in the village.



Especially here in Rosa's garden, because she got the seeds from a witch. Do you know what that plant is, Cata?



Sure, that's a chili pepper plant for spicy chilis.



But did you know that you can eat the leaves on the chili plant as well as the chilis?




Really?

Oh yes. And you can also eat the leaves of those sweet potato plants. Gather a few young leaves for our basket, it wont reduce the yield of sweet potatoes by much.




And while were sneaking around in Rosa's garden, gather a few leaves from the pumpkin plants and the okra.






We can eat the leaves of all of these?



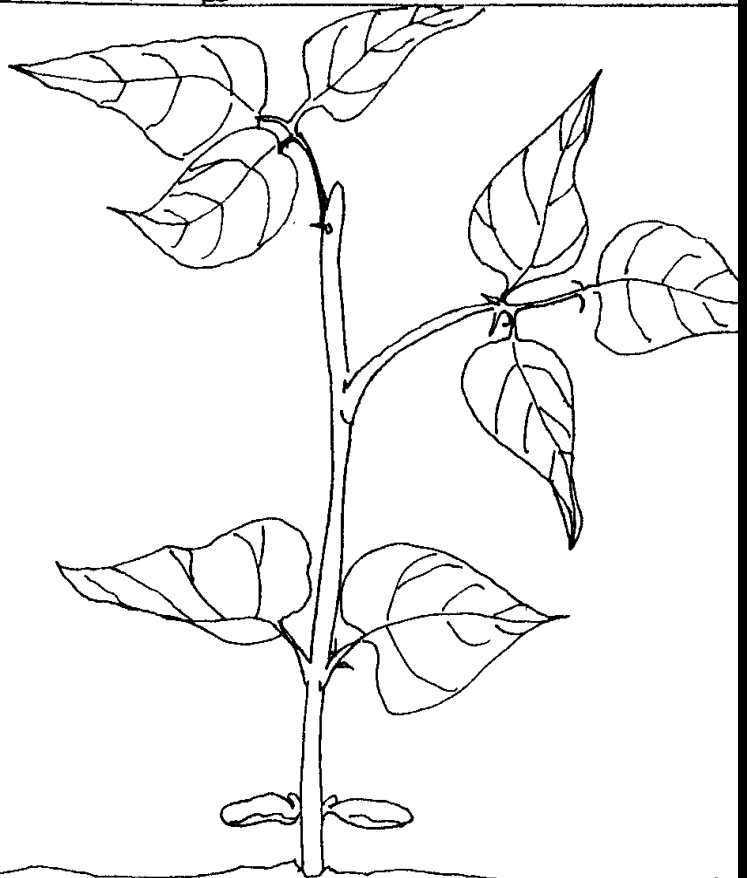
Yes, and you can get a lot more food from your garden by harvesting some of the edible leaves before the plants set fruit. But some leaves, like the tomato are poisonous, and some are just too tough and fibrous, like corn.





I'm glad, because we eat plenty of corn and beans already.

Well, bad luck, because the leaves of the bean plant are very good to eat. In fact they are one of the best leafy vegetables around, so gather us a few.

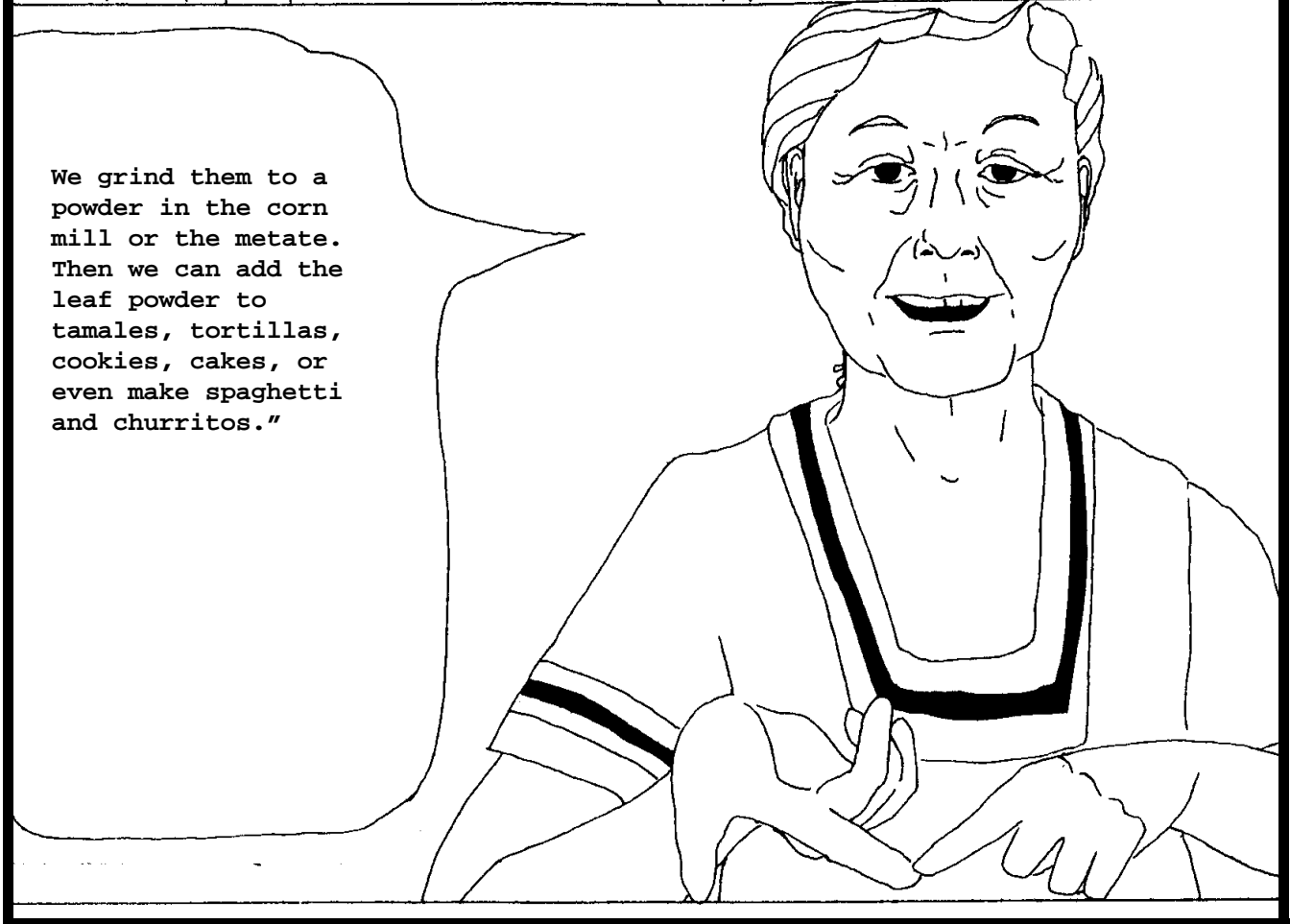
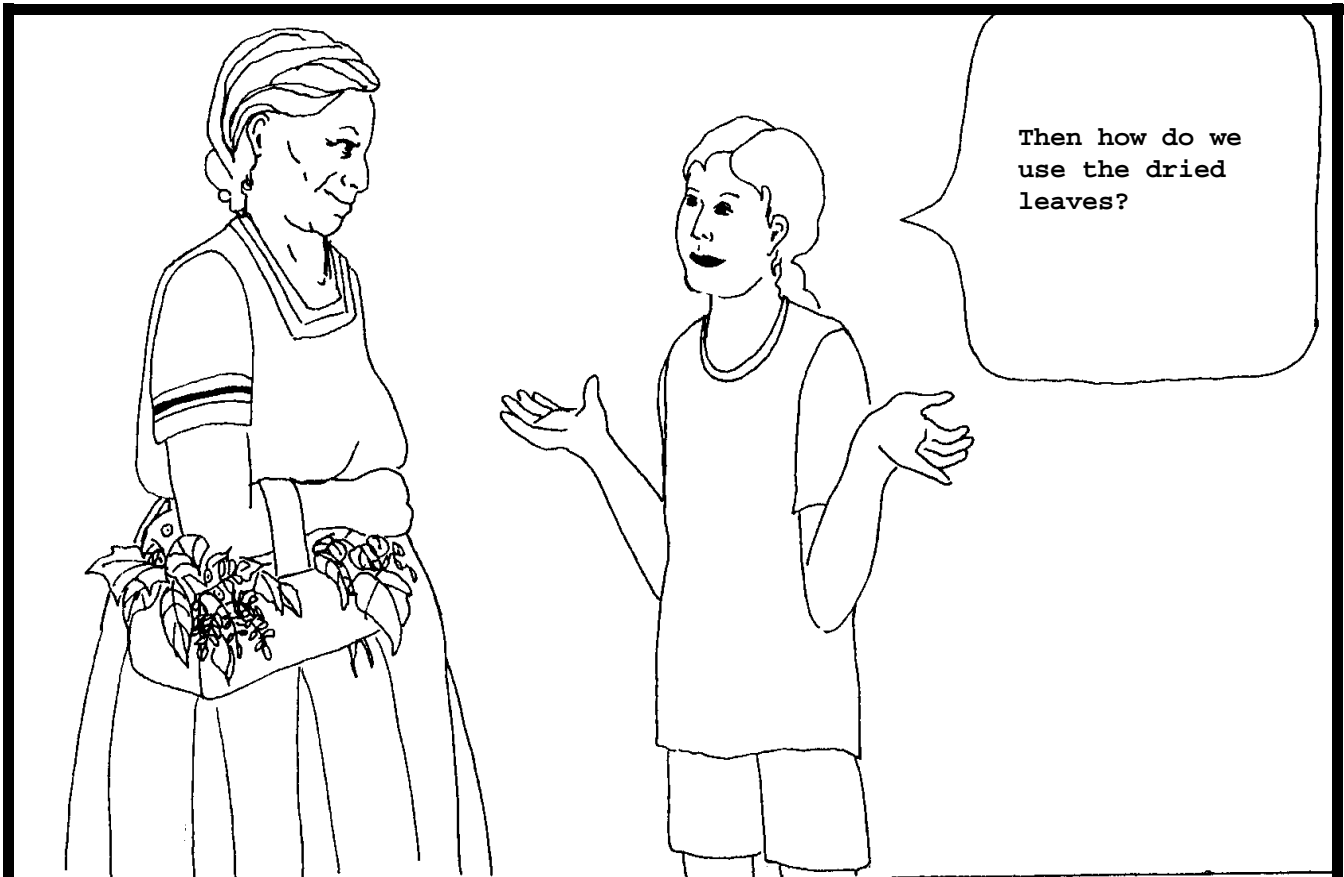




Grandma, this is fun, but we already have way too many leaves to put in our soup tonight.

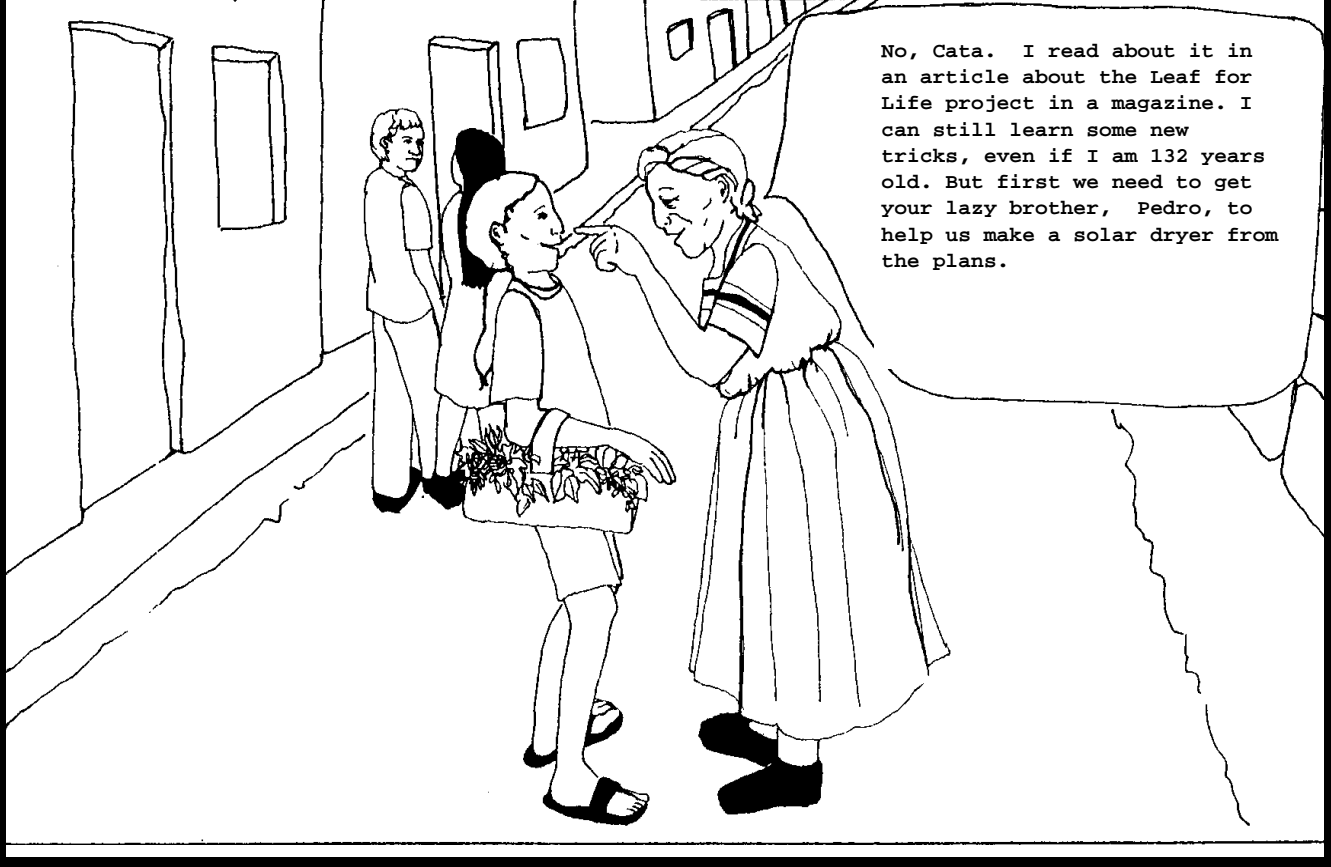


Well, your grandmother knows a way to store the extra leaves by drying them.

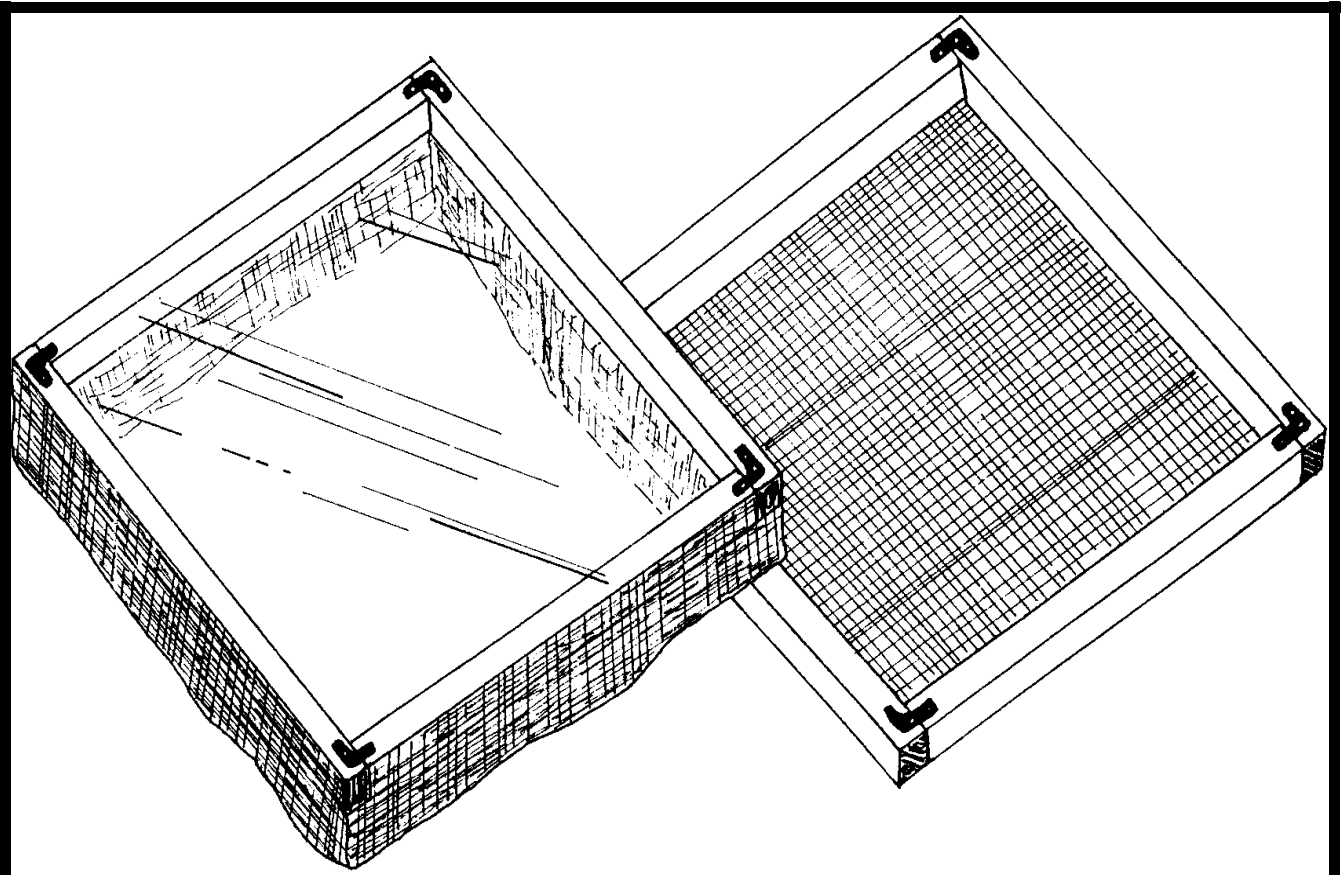




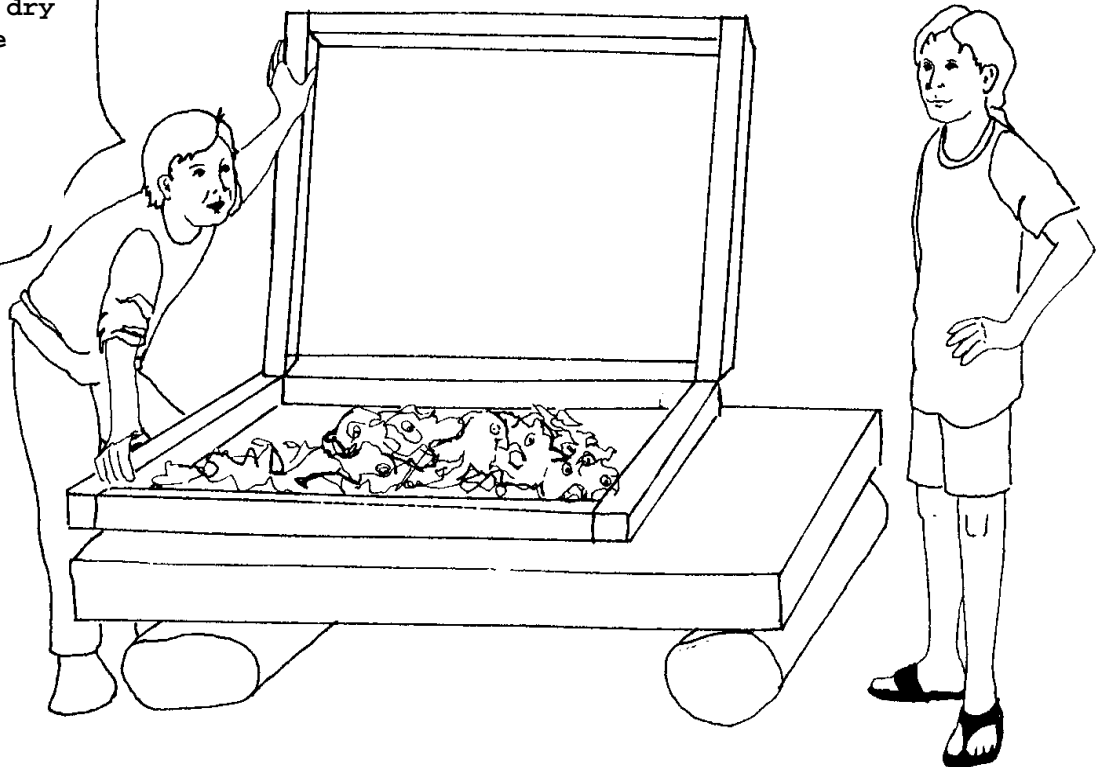
Grandma, did your parents teach you how to dry the leaves and make all those things when you were a little girl ?



No, Cata. I read about it in an article about the Leaf for Life project in a magazine. I can still learn some new tricks, even if I am 132 years old. But first we need to get your lazy brother, Pedro, to help us make a solar dryer from the plans.



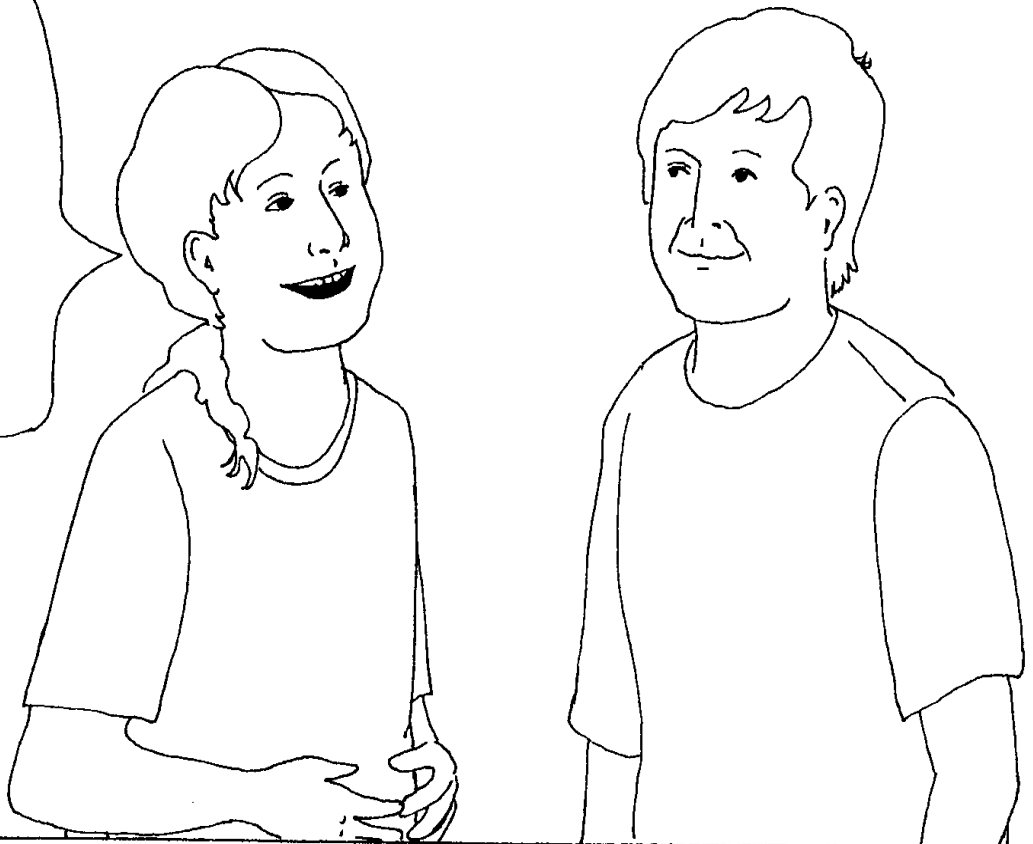
The leaves are completely dry in just one day!

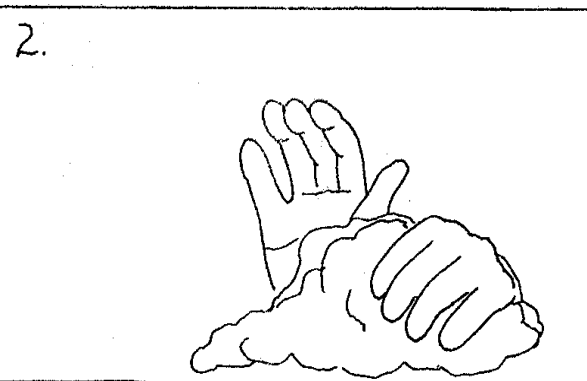
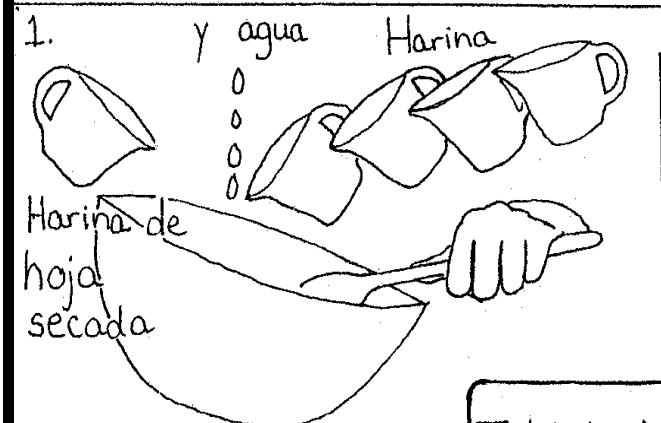


At least these
leaves are eas-
ier to grind
than corn or
sorghum.

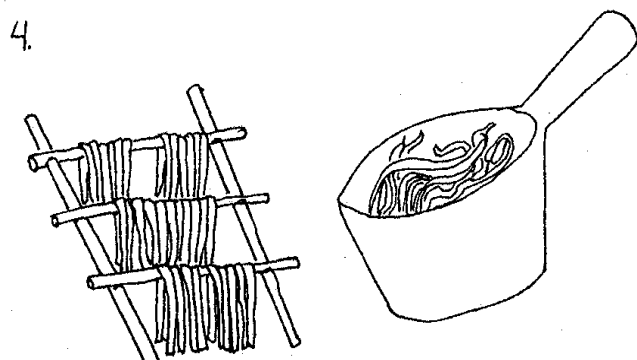
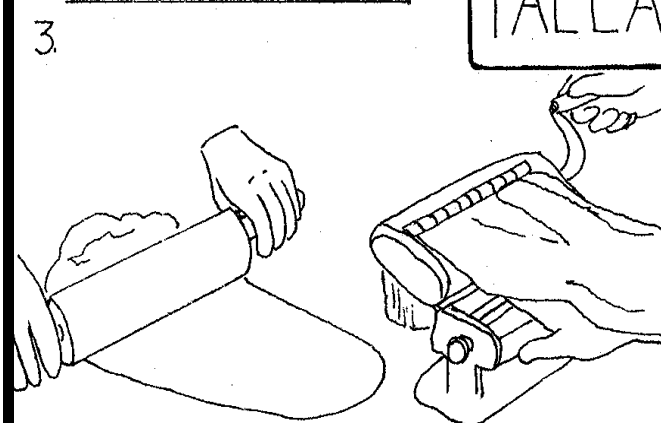


Let's make
green
spaghetti! I
love spaghetti
!!

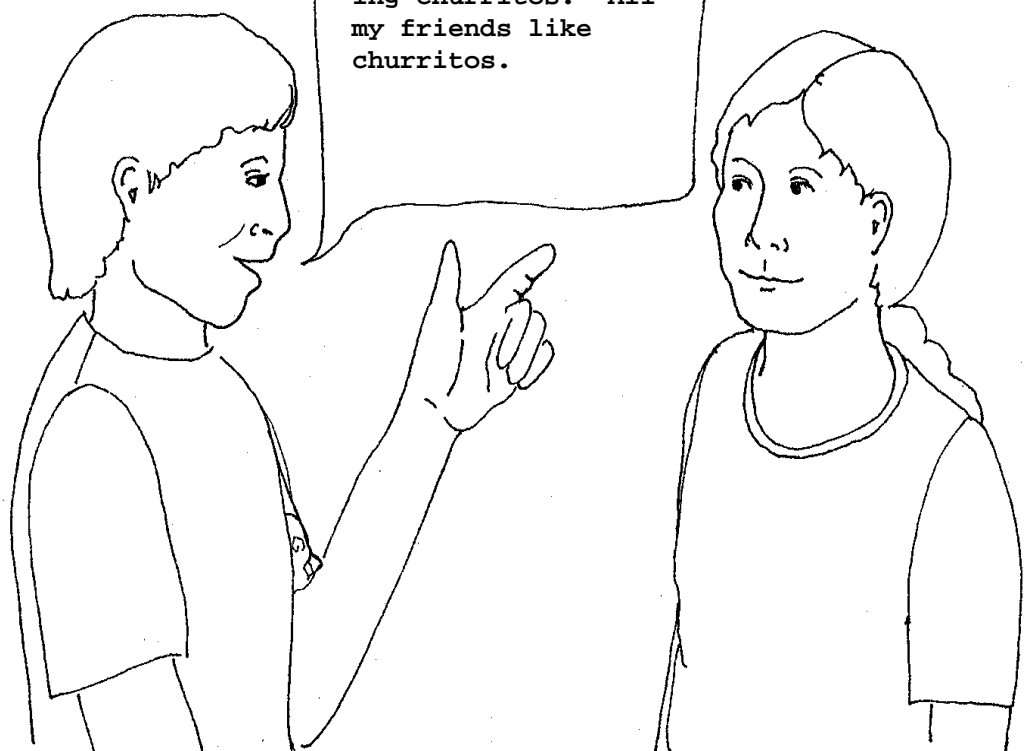




TALLARINES



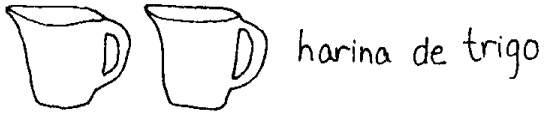
I'd like to try making churritos. All my friends like churritos.



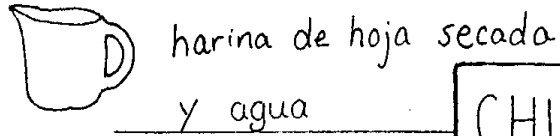
1.



masa de maiz



harina de trigo



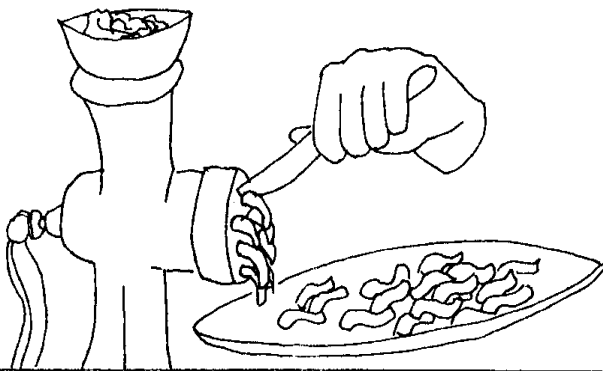
harina de hoja secada y agua

2.

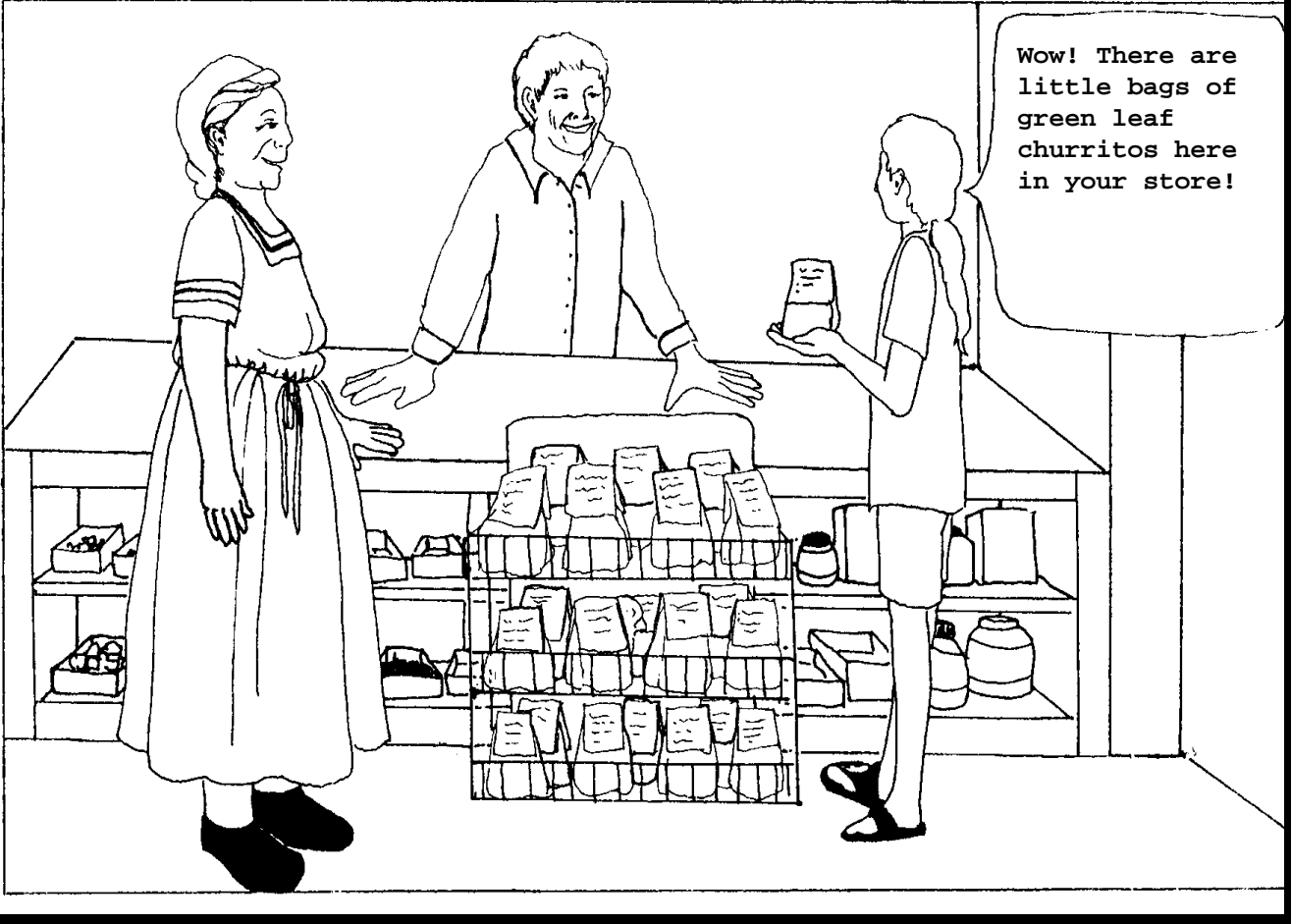
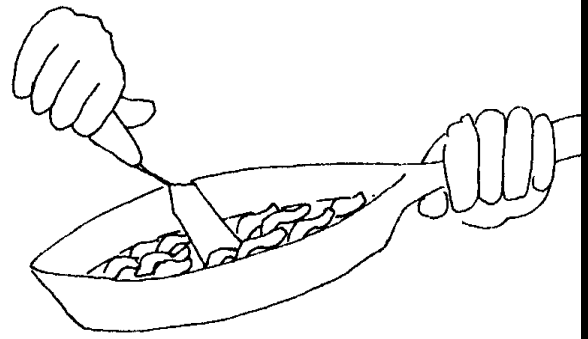


CHURRITOS

3.



4.



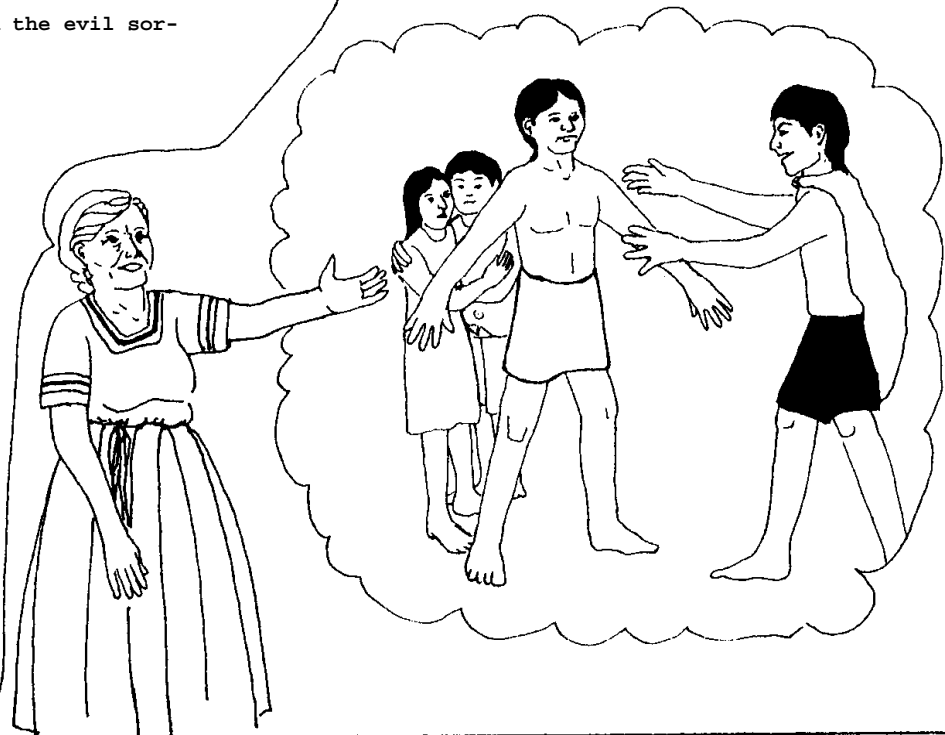
Wow! There are little bags of green leaf churritos here in your store!

Yeah. Your brother brings me them every Saturday. They are selling well, and now all the parents can't get so mad at me for selling junk food to their kids. That Pedro isn't as lazy as you think. He'll be a millionaire someday.

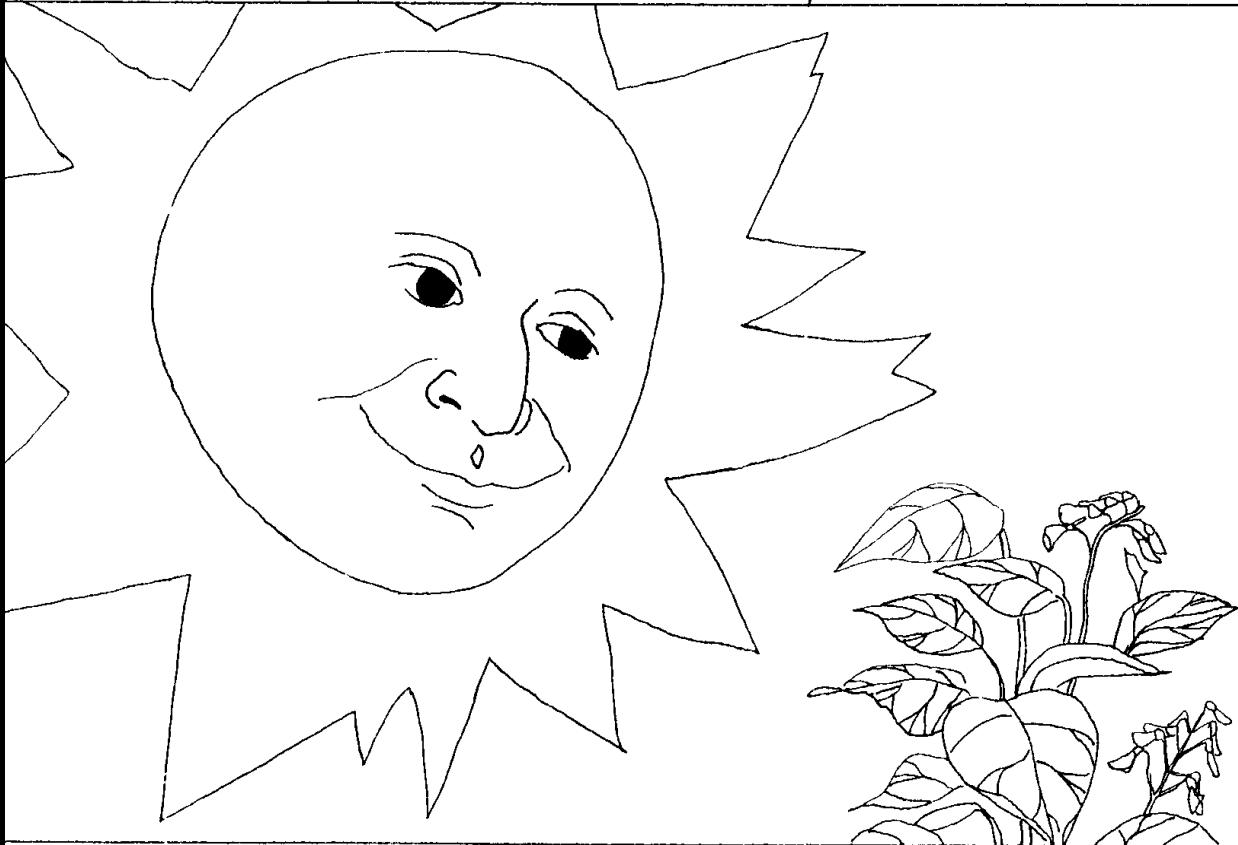


Well, at least he understands that green leaves can capture the power of the mighty sun god and free the children from the evil sorcerer.

Cata, did I ever tell you the story of the evil sorcerer from beyond the black mountain?



Maybe later, grandma.
I've got to go see if I
can steal Pedro's
secret churrrito
recipe.





for more information contact:

Leaf for Life

260 Radford Hollow Rd.

Big Hill, KY 40405 USA

tel/fax 606 986 5418

e-mail dlkennedy@kih.net

on the web at: