



## **The Festival Dress**

Mary is frustrated because her mother refuses to buy her new dresses so she decides to write a story about a girl who wears a new dress every hour. What will Mary do when the girl comes out of the story?



The Festival Dress  
Lamis Al-asaly

---



# Let's Read

 **The Asia Foundation**



Mary stomped into her room.



Her mother had refused to buy her a new dress for her friend's birthday party. None of her old dresses would do!



Mary decided if she couldn't have new dresses, she would write a story about a girl who could! "In my story, the girl will get a new dress every hour. Her name will be Sasha," she muttered. And so she wrote . . .





Sasha woke up early to put on her new dress. Then she skipped down the road to the spring festival. She had been waiting all year for this day! But on the way, she slipped and fell. Mud covered her face and dress.



Suddenly, Mary heard a voice calling to her. She looked around and asked, "Who is that?" The voice replied, "It's me, Sasha!"





Mary rubbed her eyes in disbelief. "How did you come out of the story?" "I'm don't know exactly. I just know that I am very angry you spoiled my dress!" Sasha replied.



Mary laughed. "Don't worry, I'll get you a brand new one." "But I only want this dress! You must change the story before the festival ends," Sasha protested. "As you wish," Mary grinned slyly, and she wrote on . . .

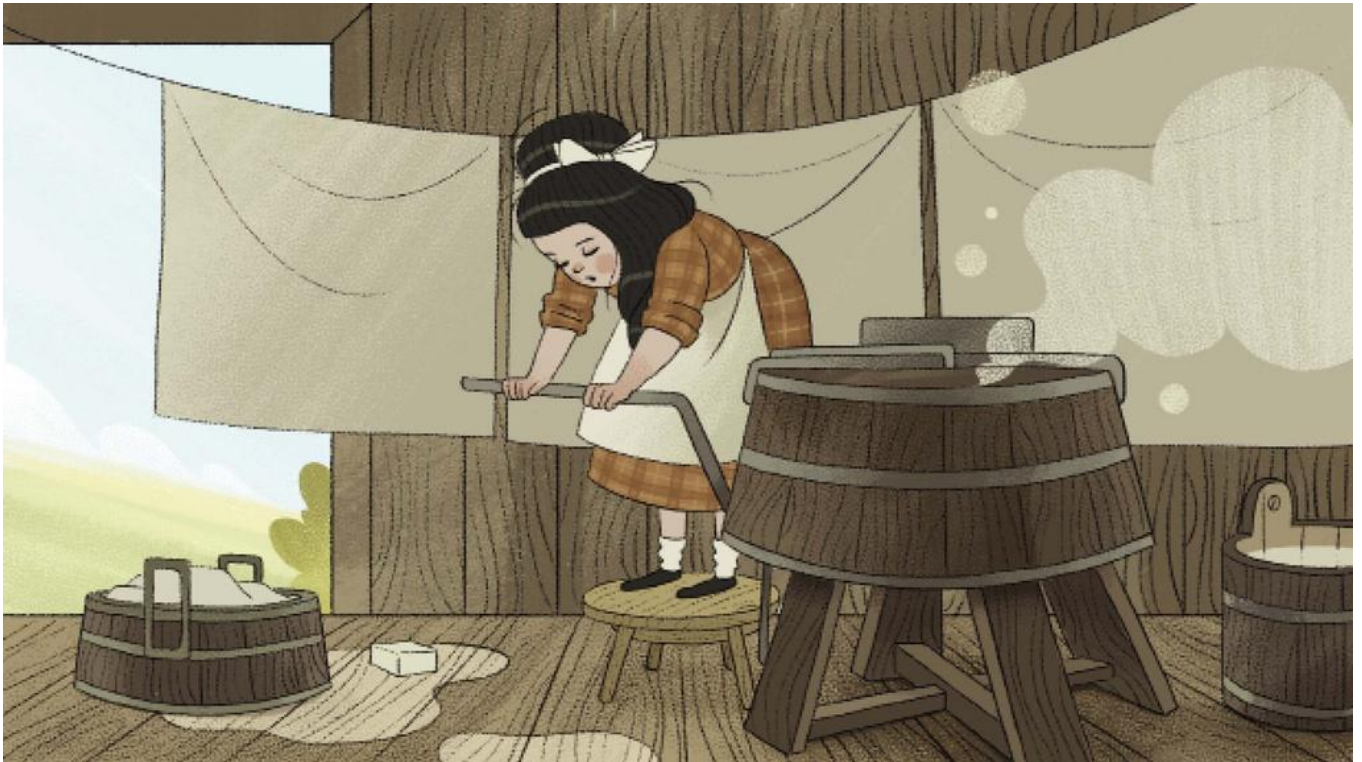


Sasha changed her clothes and carried her muddy dress to the river. She soaked it in water, then hit it against the rocks over and over again. But it was still dirty.



Sasha jumped out of the story again, flaming with anger. "My dress is still dirty!" "Why did you come out? You soaked the page with water!" Mary protested. "Cleaning my dress this way will take all day. And the festival will be over by then." "Then wear a different dress," replied Mary cunningly. "Never, I want this dress!" insisted Sasha. Mary pursed her lips, knotted her eyebrows and went back to writing . . .





Sasha heated some water in the boiler, poured it into a wooden washing barrel, and added some soap. She put her dress in and turned the crank. She turned and turned while the dress sloshed inside the machine.





After a couple of hours, she took it out, squeezed it, and hung it on the clothesline to dry. But then it started raining! The dress got soaking wet.



Sasha jumped out of the story again, bursting with frustration, "My hands are tired from turning that crank, and once the dress was dry you made it rain. Now I will miss the festival!" "Wear another dress," Mary suggested. "You have many. Pick one."



But Sasha would not budge. "I will not get back into the story until you fix my dress!" Mary sighed a big puff of air, nearly blowing Sasha off the edge of the book, and continued writing.





Sasha put her muddy dress in the electric washing machine, added some detergent, and pressed a button. The washing machine washed, dried and steamed the dress.



That evening, Sasha finally put on her dress, and went to the festival. It was a wonderful evening of fun and dancing.





At the end of the festival, a clown put on a show and threw a pie into the sky! Unfortunately it fell on Sasha's dress.



Sasha jumped out of the story with a red face, "I want to take a photo with my friends to remember the festival. But now I am covered in pie! We need a solution fast." "I have an idea . . ." replied Mary with a wink.



"I won't wear another dress," Sasha interrupted. "And I won't finish the story until you do," answered Mary.





Mary waited and waited for Sasha to go back into the story, but she refused. Finally, Mary had to leave for school. She came home, ate dinner, went to bed, and when she woke up Sasha was still there on top of the book, eating sweets!



Mary put her face close to Sasha's. "Why do you only want this dress? I'll give you red ones or whites ones, dresses with roses or stars on them, really really nice ones."





Sasha looked at the ground sadly. "Do you remember Anna and Mika?"  
"You mean the characters from my other stories?" Mary replied.  
"Exactly. Their dresses are old and torn. They deserve a new dress more than I do. I'm happy with one beautiful dress."



So Mary promised she would keep Sasha's one dress clean and pretty, and she would give Anna and Mika beautiful new dresses in their next story.



But Sasha still refused to get back in the book. "My belly is so round from eating too many sweets last night. And I still have cake on my dress. I can't have my photo like this!" Mary thought of a solution and went on writing . . .





Sasha went back home to find that her family had bought an interesting new washing machine. "A bit of exercise and a lot of savings," Sasha's mother said.



In just thirty minutes, her dress was clean again and Sasha was feeling her best, just in time to get back to the festival and take photos with her friends.





After finishing the story, Mary realized she had something important to do. She picked up the dresses that had been thrown on the floor earlier, hung some in her closet, and put others in bags. Then she walked out of the room with a smile on her face.





THE END

---

Brought to you by

Let's Read is an initiative of The Asia Foundation's Books for Asia program that fosters young readers in Asia and the Pacific.

[booksforasia.org](http://booksforasia.org) To read more books like this and get further information, visit [letsreadasia.org](http://letsreadasia.org).

Original Story The Festival Dress, Author: Lamis Al-asaly. Illustrator: Ilinora Martha taeva. Published by Asafeer,

<https://www.digitallibrary.io/en/books/details/1388> © Asafeer. Released under CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

This work is a modified version of the original story. © The Asia Foundation, 2018. Some rights reserved. Released under CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

For full terms of use and attribution,

<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/>