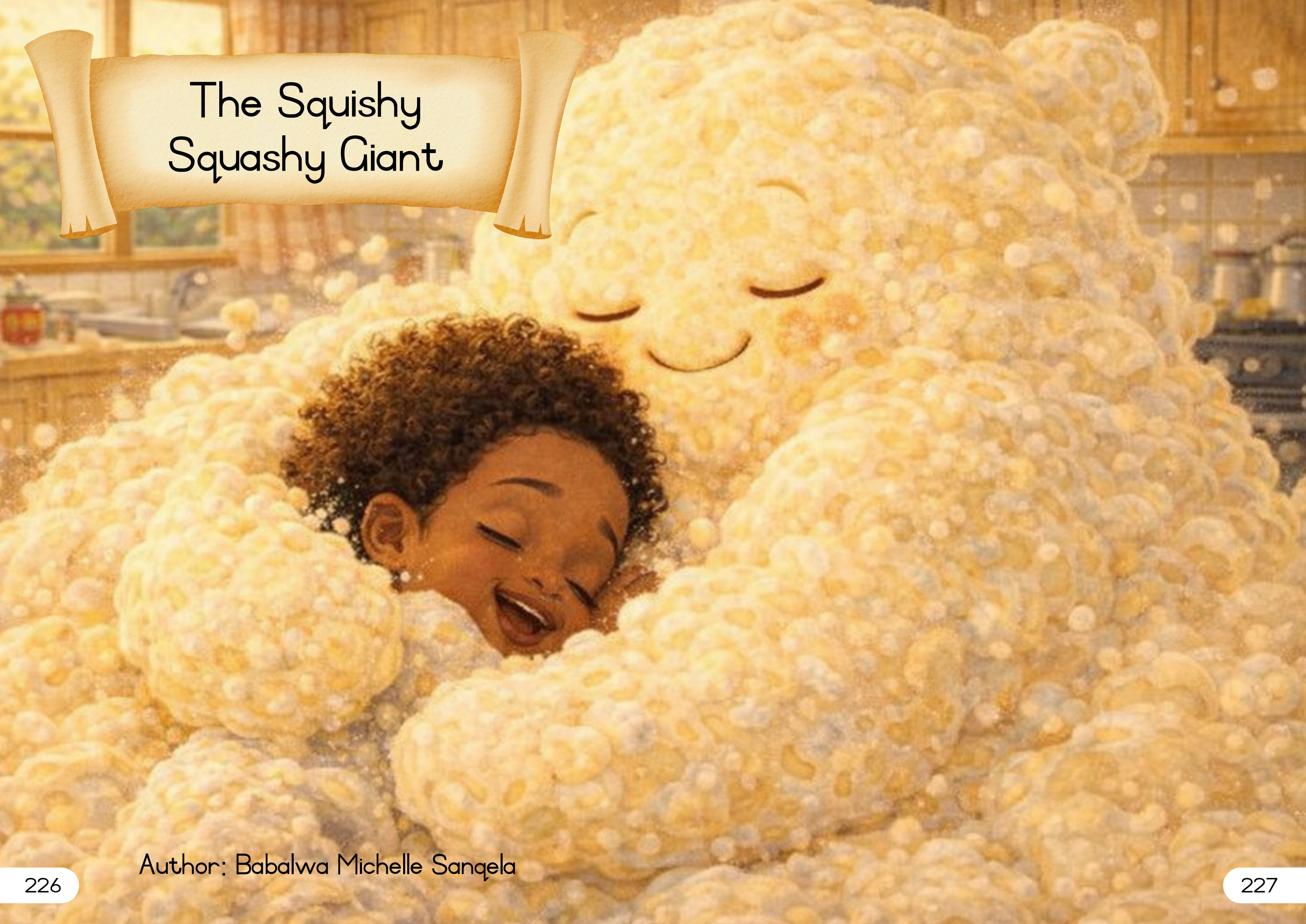
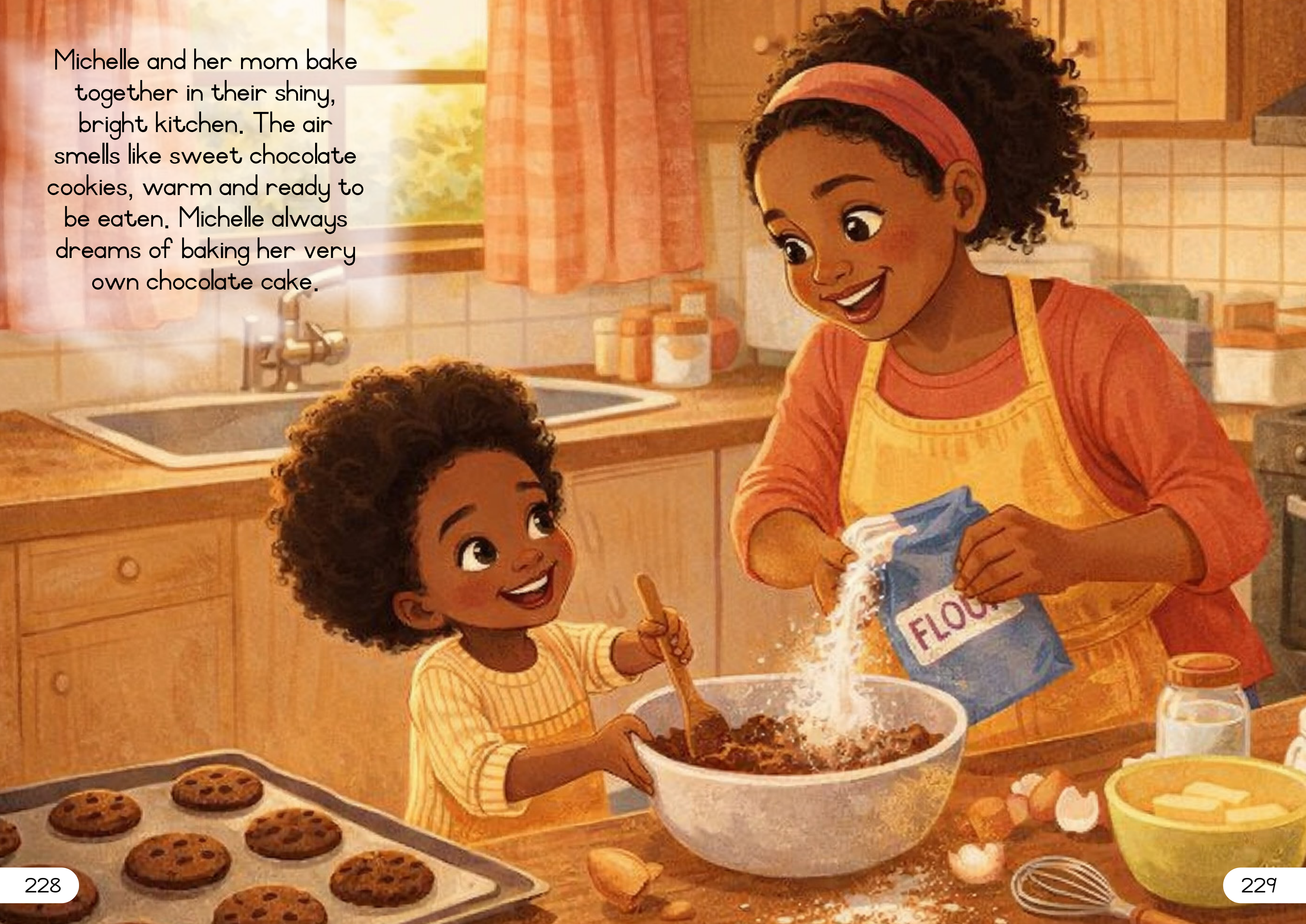


The Squishy Squashy Giant



Author: Babalwa Michelle Sanqela

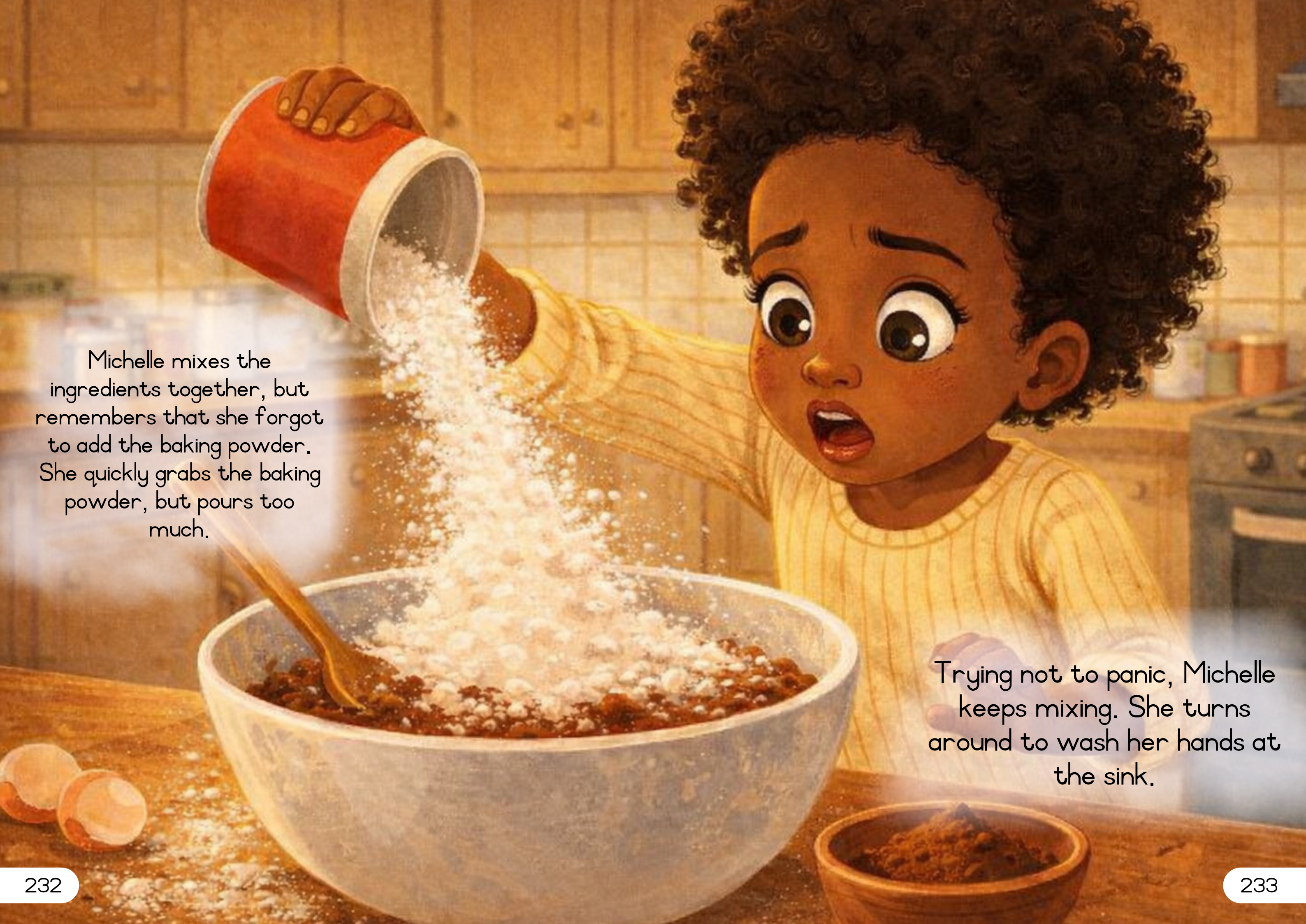
Michelle and her mom bake together in their shiny, bright kitchen. The air smells like sweet chocolate cookies, warm and ready to be eaten. Michelle always dreams of baking her very own chocolate cake.



One day, while her mom is in the bath, Michelle decides this is her chance to bake her dream cake all by herself.

She sneaks into the kitchen and grabs a bowl. She pours in flour, cracks in eggs, and adds sugar and butter. Then she drops in a spoon of cocoa, and the chocolatey smell makes her eyes sparkle.

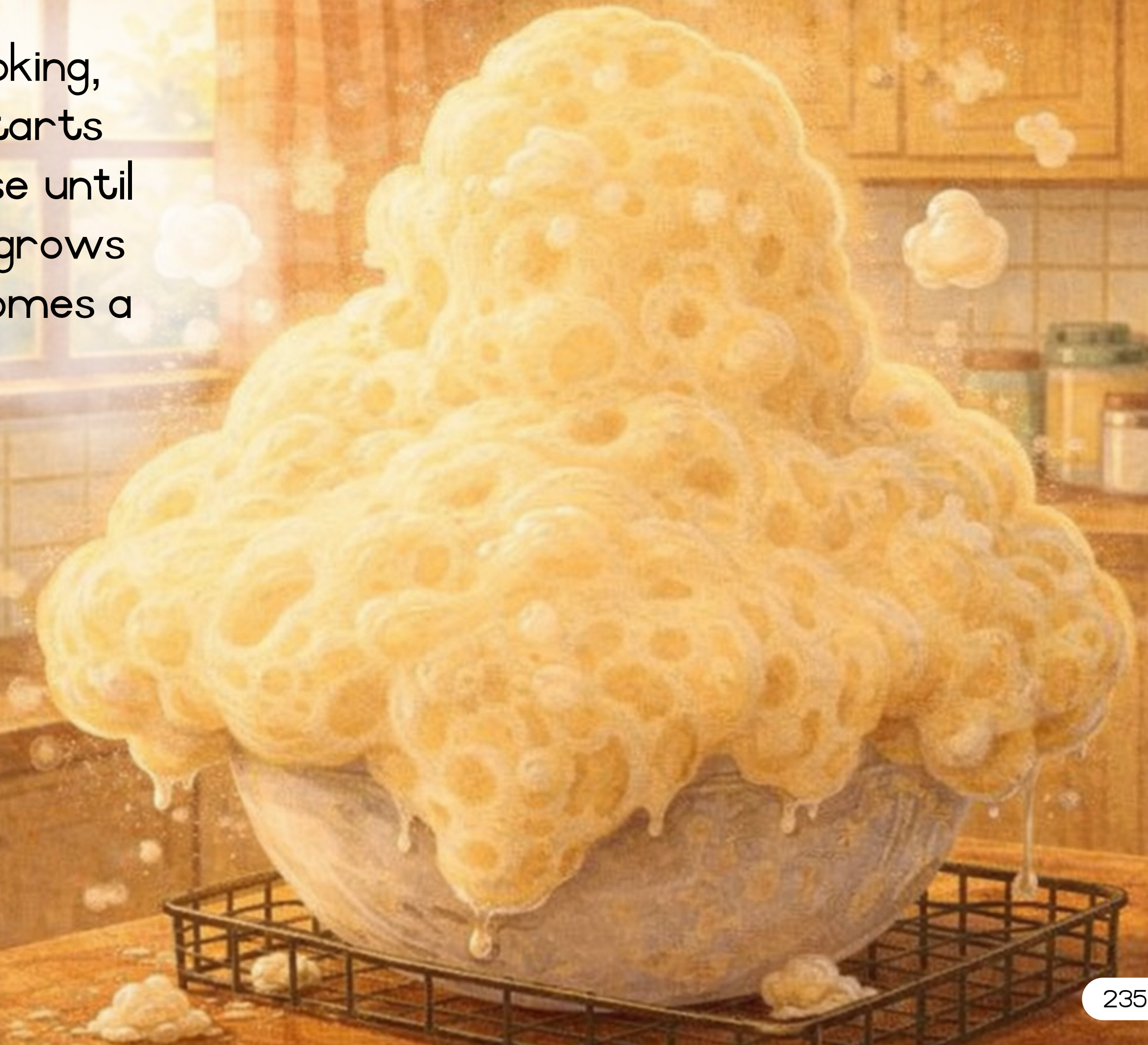


An illustration of a young girl with dark skin and curly hair, wearing a yellow and white striped shirt. She is in a kitchen, pouring a large amount of white powder from a red container into a large white bowl. The powder is flying through the air, creating a cloud. She has a surprised expression on her face. In the background, there are wooden cabinets and a tiled wall. On the counter, there are some eggs and a small bowl of brown powder.

Michelle mixes the ingredients together, but remembers that she forgot to add the baking powder. She quickly grabs the baking powder, but pours too much.

Trying not to panic, Michelle keeps mixing. She turns around to wash her hands at the sink.

While not looking,
the dough starts
to rise and rise until
it's huge. It grows
so tall, it becomes a
giant!



A detailed illustration of a kitchen in a state of chaos. A massive, billowing cloud of yellow dough has erupted from the stove area, spreading across the tiled floor, climbing up the wooden cupboards, and stretching over the windows. The dough is thick and bubbly, with some dripping liquid. In the foreground, a wooden countertop is covered in dough, with a red blender jar and a glass tipped over. A plate of small, round, browned items sits on the left. The background shows more kitchen details like jars on the counter and a window with pink curtains. The overall scene is one of a runaway baking disaster.

The dough spreads
across the floor,
climbs up the
cupboards, and
stretches over the
windows until it fills
the whole kitchen.



Michelle feels something sneaking up behind her. She turns around, and there it is: the GIANT dough.

She tries to run,
but her feet stick
to the floor. She
wobbles and wiggles,
but she cannot get
free. The giant dough
has trapped her, and
Michelle starts to
cry.

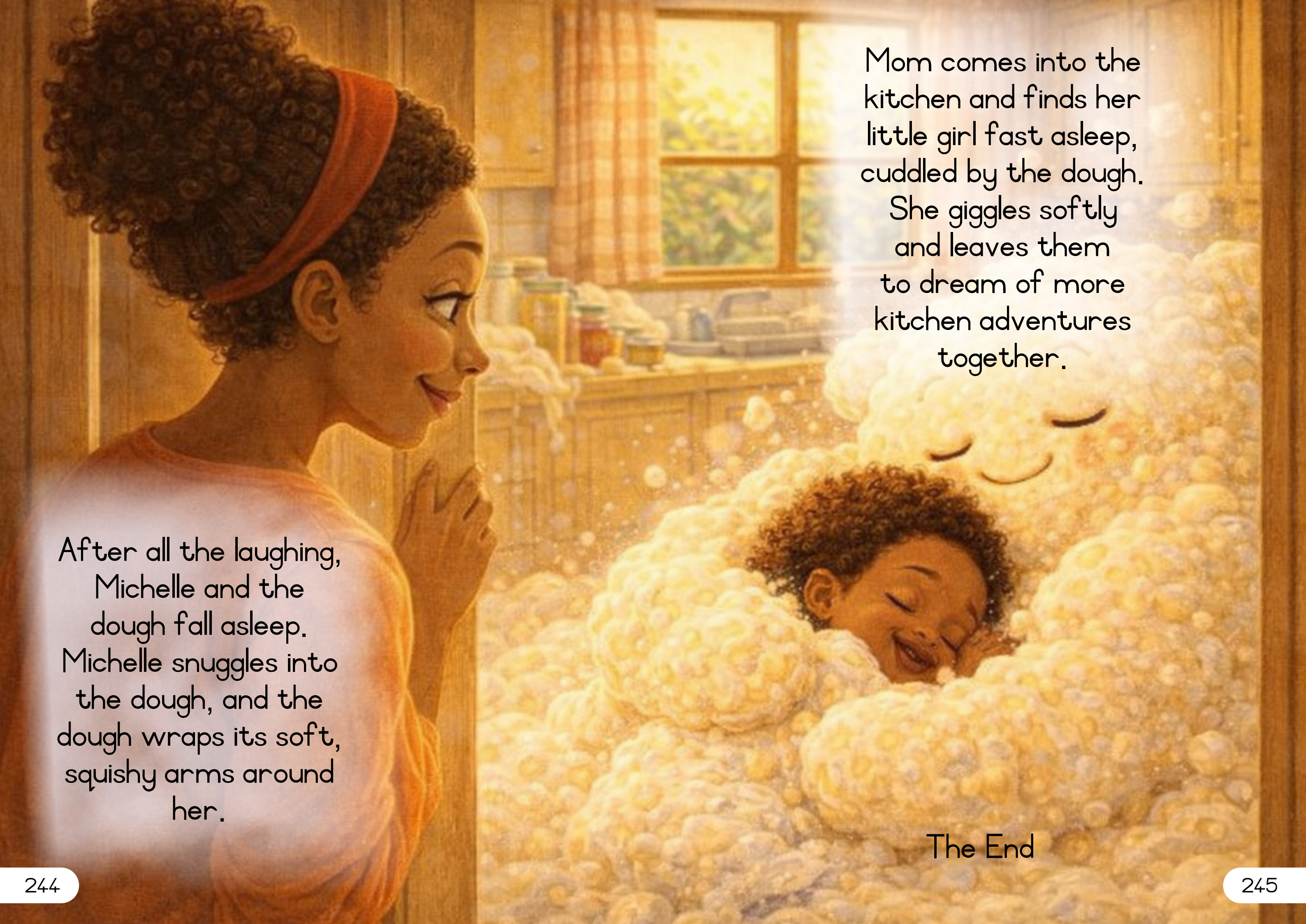


Then she hears a
funny squishy-squashy
sound. A gentle giggle
tickles her ears.
Before she knows it,
the giant dough gives
her a soft, warm,
squishy teddy bear
hug.





The dough reaches for more flour, but WHOOPS! Its squishy arms knock the bag over. POOF! Flour bursts into the air and sprinkles all over Michelle's head. She looks like a snowman, and they both laugh so hard their bellies hurt.



After all the laughing,
Michelle and the
dough fall asleep.
Michelle snuggles into
the dough, and the
dough wraps its soft,
squishy arms around
her.

Mom comes into the
kitchen and finds her
little girl fast asleep,
cuddled by the dough.
She giggles softly
and leaves them
to dream of more
kitchen adventures
together.

The End

Scientific explanation:

When Michelle added the baking powder, something magical happened inside the dough. Baking powder is like tiny sleepy bubbles hiding in the flour. When it's mixed with wet ingredients and heated, the bubbles wake up and start to fizz. They make lots of little air pockets inside the dough, just like blowing up lots of tiny balloons.

As more and more bubbles fill up with air, the dough gets puffier and bigger. That is why the dough rises and grows taller instead of staying flat. This is called **chemical leavening** or an **acid-base** reaction. Michelle added a little too much baking powder, so the bubbles went extra wild and made the dough grow into a giant.

That is how baking powder helps cakes and bread become soft, fluffy, and delicious.