

# Kun||a's Questions



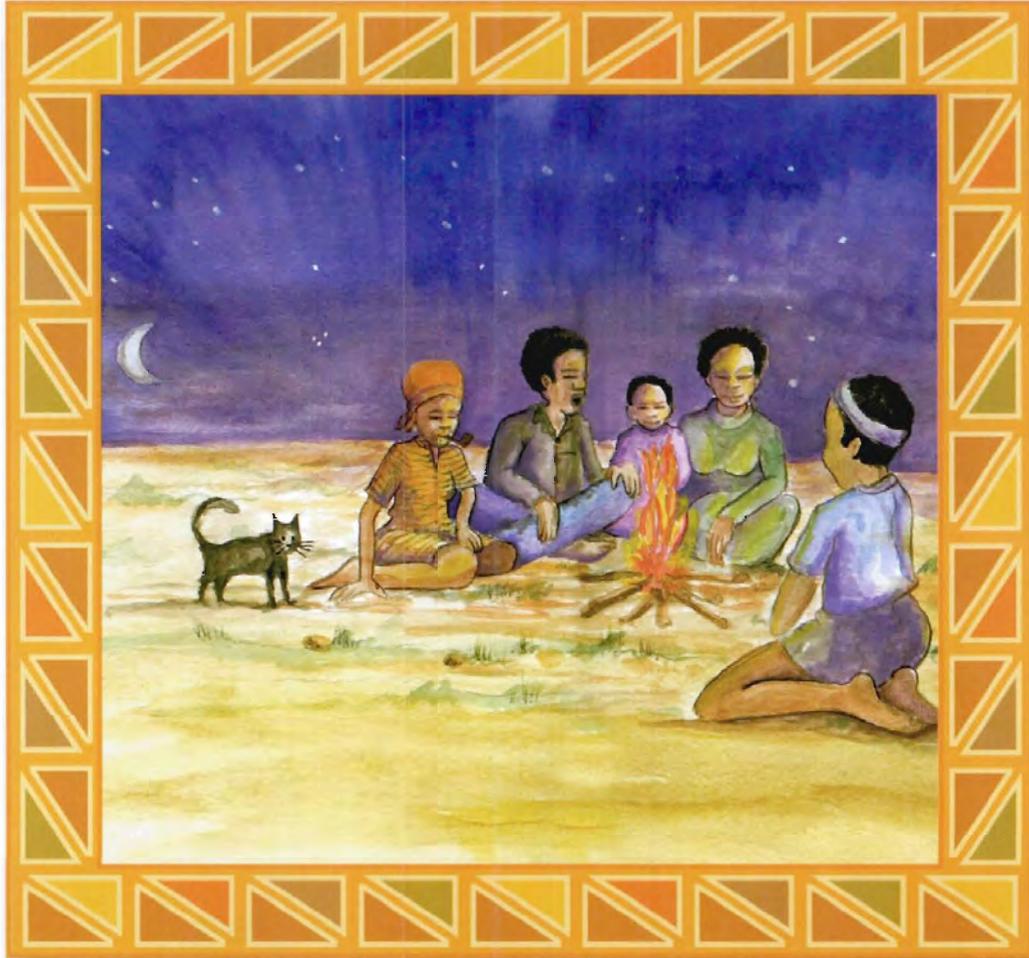
*English*

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The **Writing for Kids** project is a joint venture of the National Institute for Educational Development (NIED) and the BES II and III Projects. Through the development of readers for young learners in the African Namibian languages, we hope to promote literacy development under young learners through stories which carry positive, local messages.

**Writing for Kids** invested in Namibian students, taking them through a writing and illustrating process. Emmerentiana Sebetwane and Eliawe Mandjoro are students from the Windhoek College of Education, who wrote this story with Sadrag Themba from the Rundu College of Education. The illustrations were done by Josia Shilongo from the John Muafangeyo Art Centre.

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On Friday morning Kun||a sat listening to the sounds of the morning. The birds sang. The old brown dog sniffed for scraps. The chickens clucked as they pecked the sand. N!ani splashed as he washed in the cold water.

"I don't want to go to school! I want to play with ||uce. She doesn't have to go to school."



"Mum, please tell her to hurry up. I don't want to be late for school again," said her older brother N!ani.

"Kun||a. You will go and wash, get dressed, eat your breakfast and go to school. NOW!" said her mother in THAT voice.



Kun||a could hear the sudden silence as everyone looked at her.

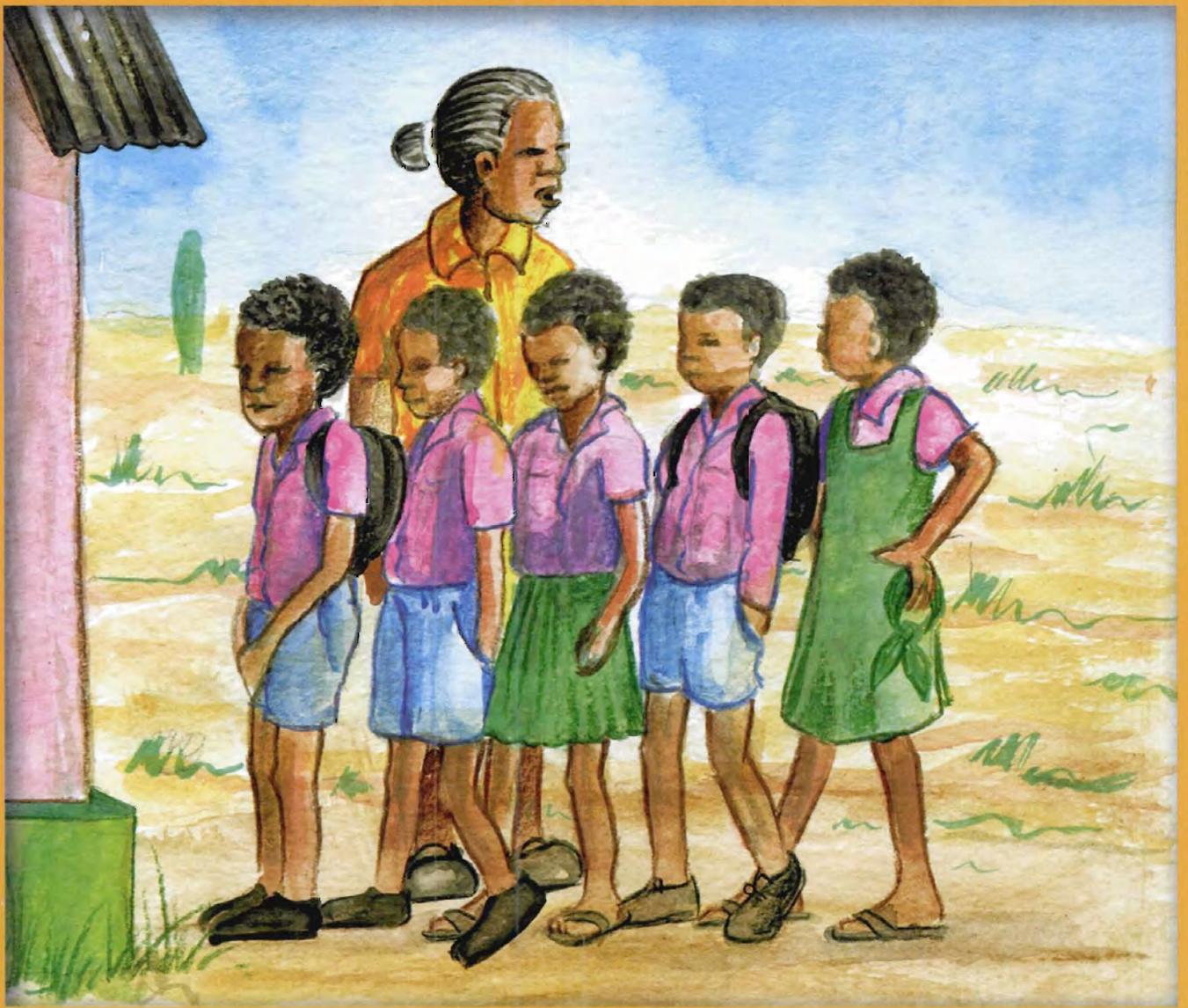
Her brother stopped splashing. The old brown dog stopped sniffing. The chickens stopped clucking and pecking. The birds stopped singing. They were all looking at her.

She got ready for school very quickly!



As they walked to school, N!ani exclaimed excitedly, "Look, a herd of springbok were here last night."

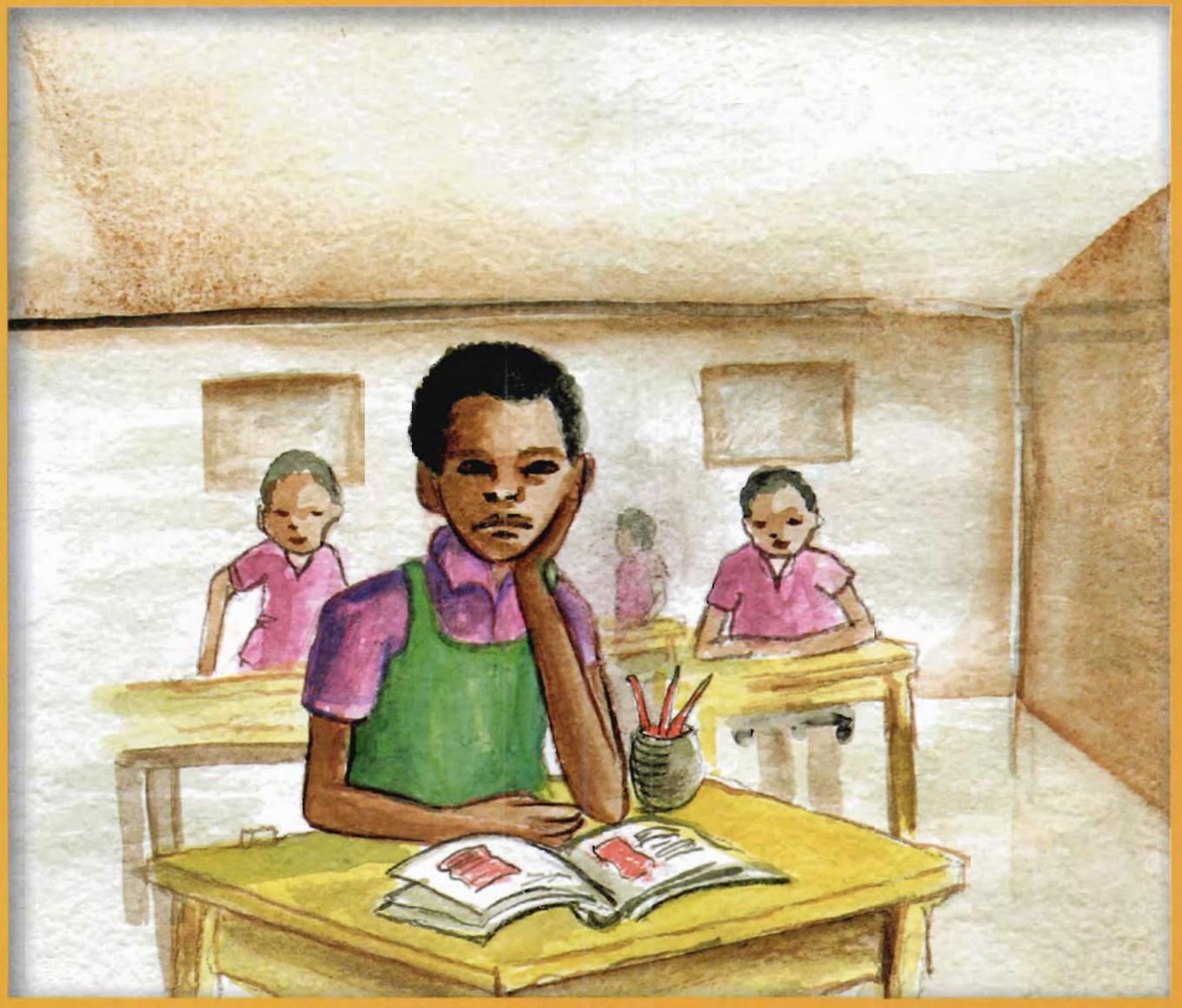
He showed Kun||a the animal tracks and the broken branches. "They are going to the waterhole."



"Listen. The bell's ringing," said N!ani. They ran quickly to make sure they were standing in line before their teachers came out.

But it was too late. Ms Pina looked at Kun||a as she ran to the end of the line. "Late again, Kun||a!"

"No," thought Kun||a. "I'm not late. I'm just in time."



The children worked hard. They drew different kinds of houses, made a map of their school and did multiplication, listened to a story and acted it out, and did lots of reading.

"Why do I have to learn all these things," thought Kun||a.  
"Grandma never went to school and she can do all sorts of things."



"T.G.F.," said Kun||a to her brother as they walked home.  
"I can sleep late and go and play with ||uce tomorrow."



"Yes. Thank Goodness it's Friday," he laughed. "Tomorrow I can go out tracking with Dad." He took off his shoes and threw them over his shoulder.



On Saturday morning Kun||a's grandmother woke her up just as the sun was rising. Kun||a yawned.

"Kun||a," her grandmother called again.

Kun||a jumped out of her warm bed. She loved to go to the bush with her grandmother.



First they went to the maize field. Kun||a's grandmother told her to open the top of the maize very carefully. She slowly peeled back the green leaves.

"What colour is it?" asked her grandmother.

"It's bright yellow, Grandma."

"Then it's ready. We can take some home to cook."



On the way home Kun||a's grandmother stopped. "Look over there. Can you see those oval green leaves? That's g||oeh."



"What's it for, Grandma?" asked Kun||a as she tasted it.  
"Yugh! It's horrible," she said, screwing up her face.  
Her grandmother laughed. "You don't eat it like that! It's for ear-ache. I'll take some for Mr Kxao."



That night Kun||a and her family sat around the fire. Kun||a listened to the voices of the night birds and the whisper of the wind in the trees. She looked up at the moon and the stars and thought of Dr Tsamkxao, her father's friend.

"Father, how come Dr Tsamkxao has a big house with lights shining out of the windows, and we sit under the moon and the stars?"



Her father explained, "Kun||a, my daughter, your grandfather didn't send me to school. He kept me at home to work with him. Dr Tsamkxao's father sent him to school. He studied hard at school and got a scholarship to go to university. He studied at university for six years to be a doctor."



On Sunday morning Kun||a and her family walked to church. Kun||a was dragging her feet, kicking up dust clouds.

"Hurry up, Kun||a or we'll be late," said her father. "You must learn to get up when you're told."



"You got up quickly to go with Grandma yesterday," her mother smiled.

"That's different," said Kun||a.

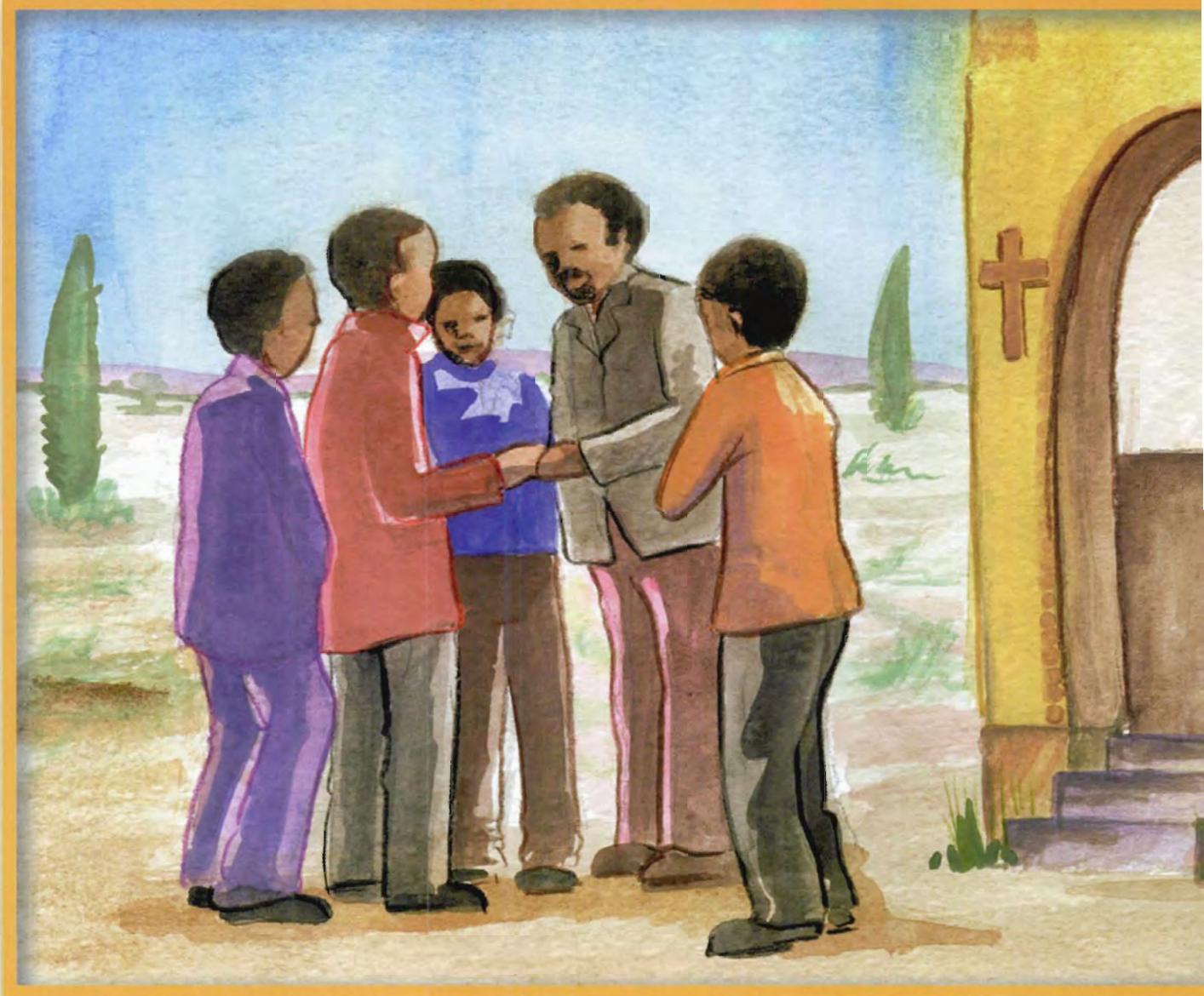


Outside the church Kun||a saw the young boy who always sold necklaces and bracelets made from ostrich eggshell. "Why does that boy always try to sell his things here?" she asked.



"His father died last year," said her father. "His mother is sick now. He works to get money for food and medicine. He also sends his little brother to school. He is a good boy and cares for his family."

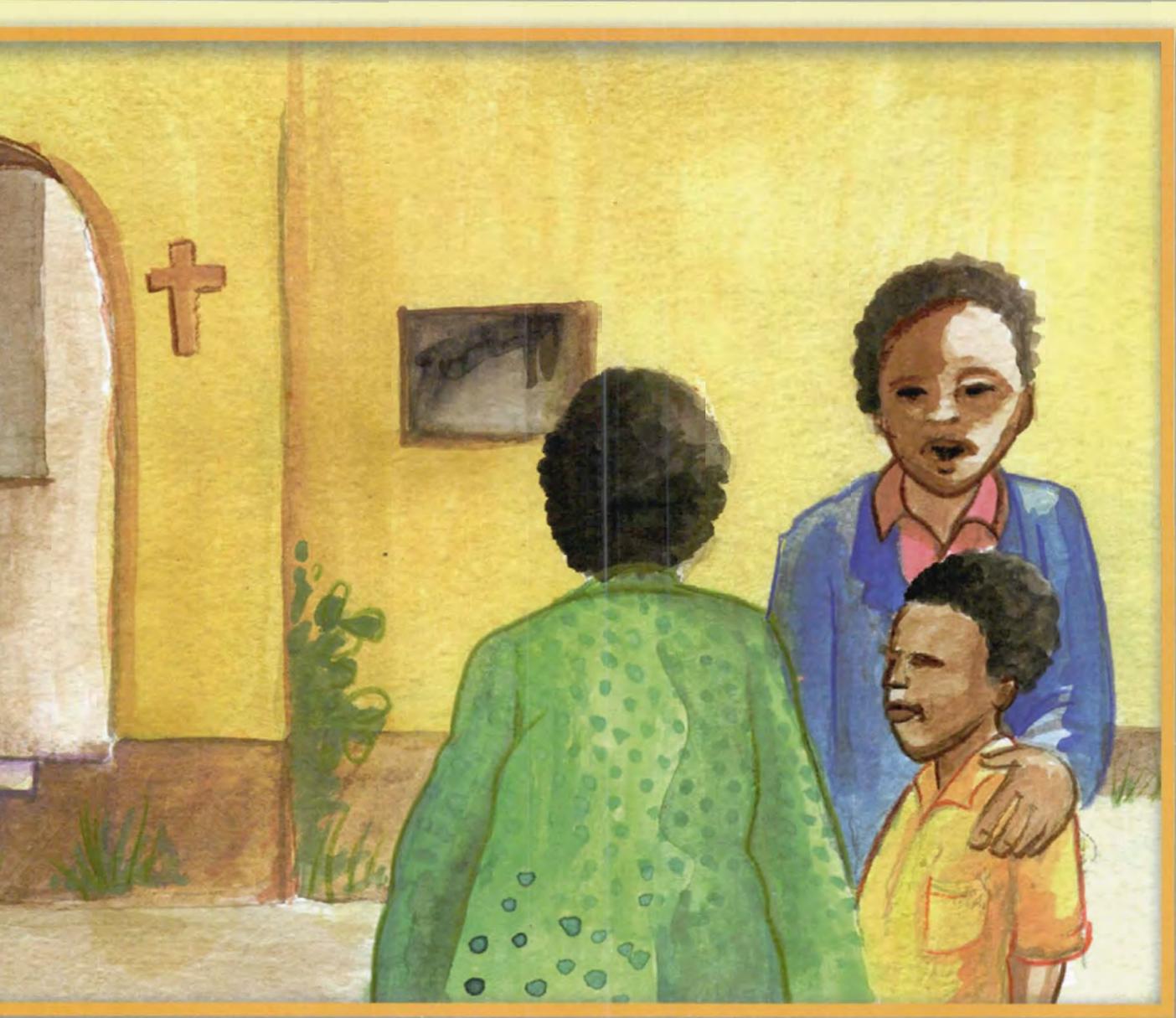
"His name is Daqm," said her mother. "I've watched him sit by the door of the church so that he can listen to the pastor and watch for tourists at the same time."



After the service all the people streamed out of church and made little pools of friends who talked about their week.

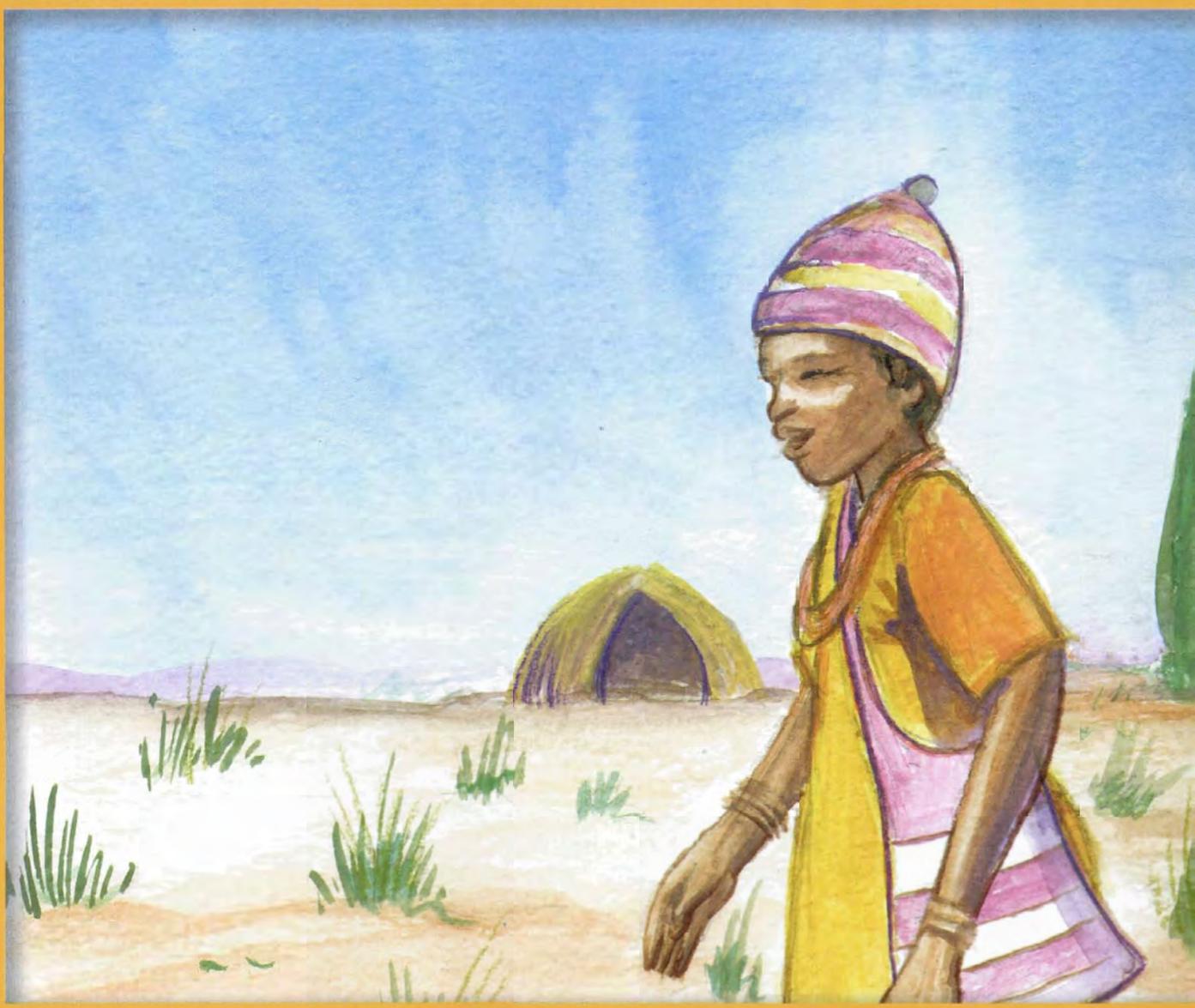
As usual lots of people went to greet Mr Kxao. In turn, they shook his hand and asked about his family. Everyone liked him and wanted to speak to him.

Kun||a pulled at her mother's skirt, "Why does everyone want to greet Mr Kxao?" she asked.



"Kun||a, I'm speaking to Mrs Beesa, you mustn't interrupt," her mother replied.

Mrs Beesa smiled, "Everyone respects Mr Kxao, he is a good man who tries to help people whenever he can. People go to him when they have a problem. He listens to them and they trust him."



When they were walking home they met Mrs Boo, she was a 'headman'. They stopped to greet her.

"Did you wake up well?" asked Kun||a's father.

"I woke up well. Did you also wake up well?" responded Mrs Boo.

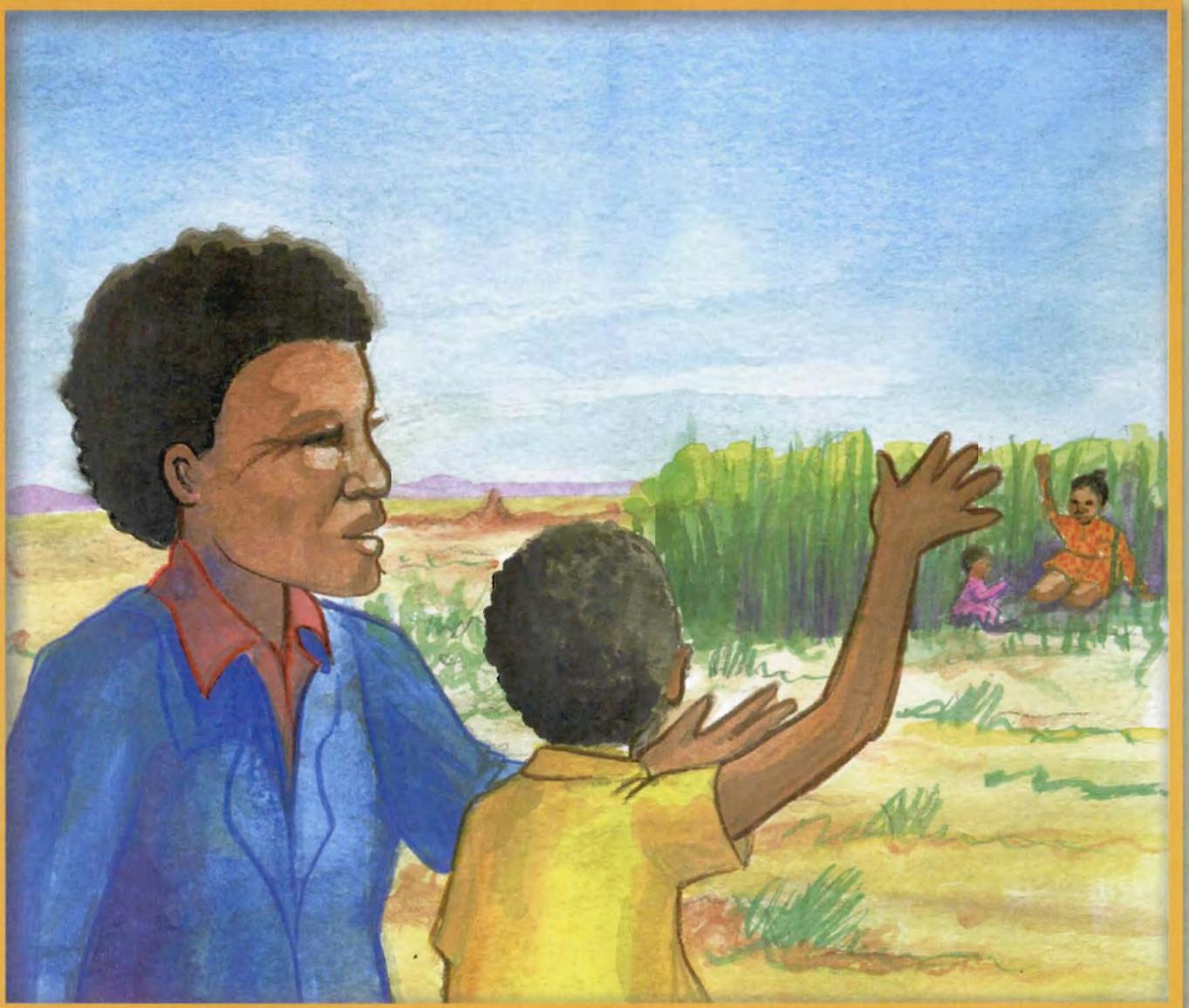
"I woke up well," replied Kun||a's father.

When Mrs Boo left them, Kun||a asked, "Grandma, how did Mrs Boo get to be a 'headman'?"



"She is a strong woman. She works hard for the community. She asks people what they need and then makes it happen. It's because of Mrs Boo that we all have a tap in our yard," replied her grandmother.

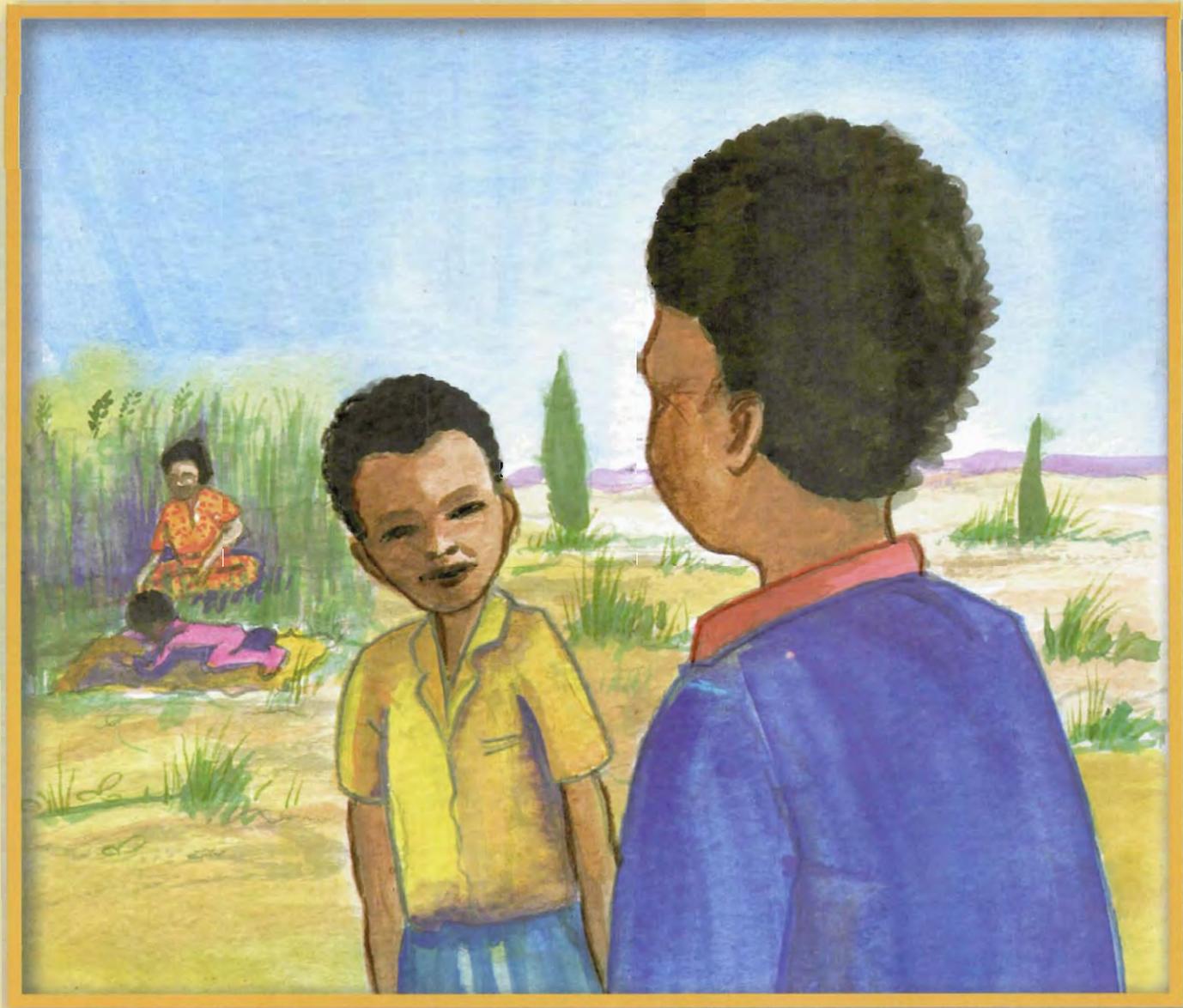
"Yes, she went to Namwater and the MP many times to make them do it," said her mother.



"Hi ||uce," Kun||a shouted to her friend who was sitting with her baby brother in the garden. "Mum, can I go and play with ||uce after lunch?"

"When you have finished your homework. You didn't do it yesterday," her mother replied.

"Why do I have to do homework and go to school? ||uce gets to stay at home now," she pouted.



"She had to leave school to stay at home and look after her baby brother. Her mother grows vegetables to earn money to care for them." Her mother looked at Kun||a, "Do you miss ||uce at school?"

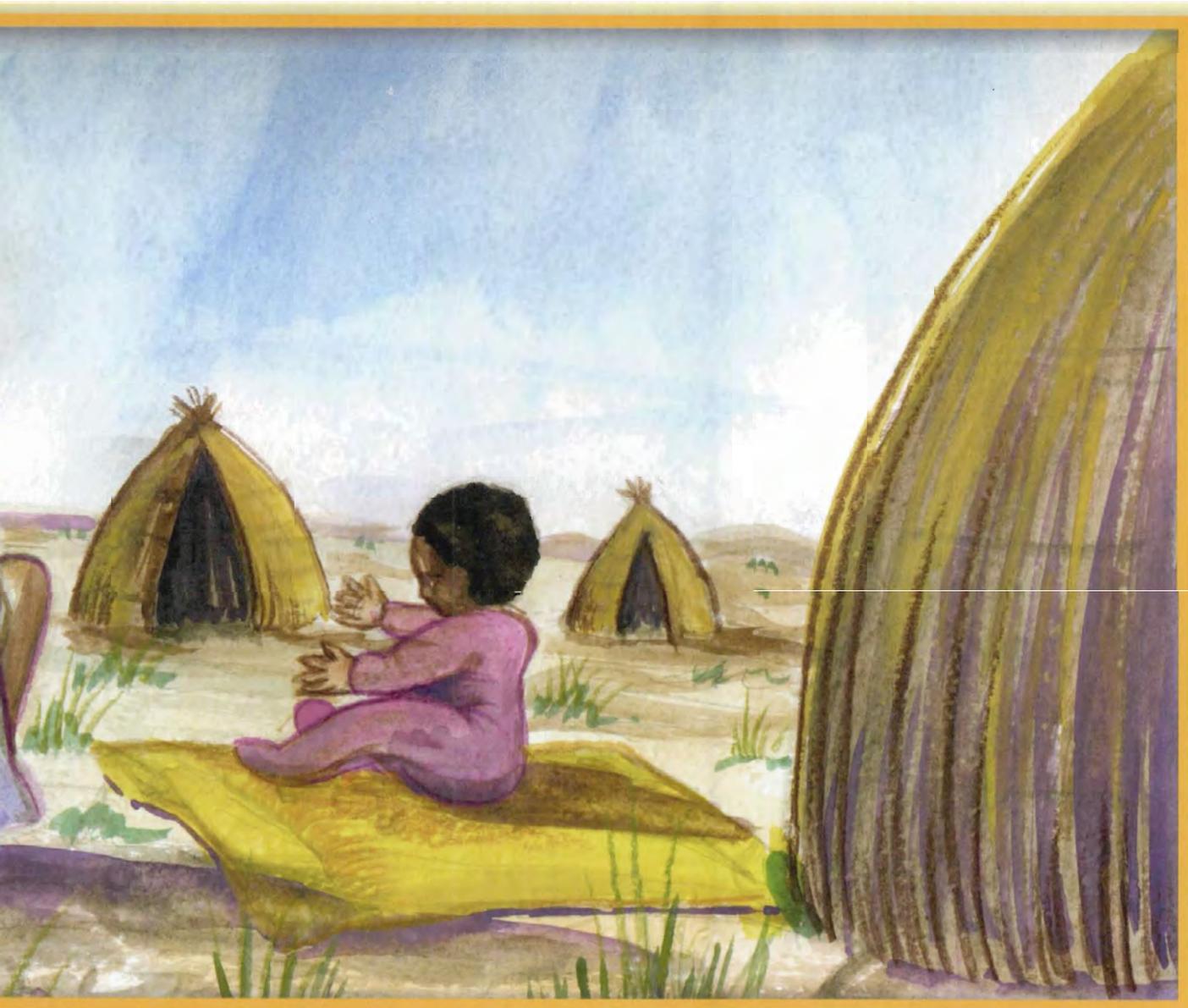
"Yes, she used to walk to school with me, and home again. We used to do our homework together too."



In the afternoon Kun||a went to play with ||uce.

"You're lucky," Kun||a said to ||uce, "You don't have to go to school tomorrow."

"I wish I could go to school," said ||uce. "I have to stay here all day to look after my baby brother. Mum can't take him with her."



"When you grow up you'll be able to do anything you want. You can be a teacher or a doctor or a pilot because you'll finish school. When I grow up, I'll have to grow vegetables to sell like Mum. Nobody will give me a job if I don't go to school."

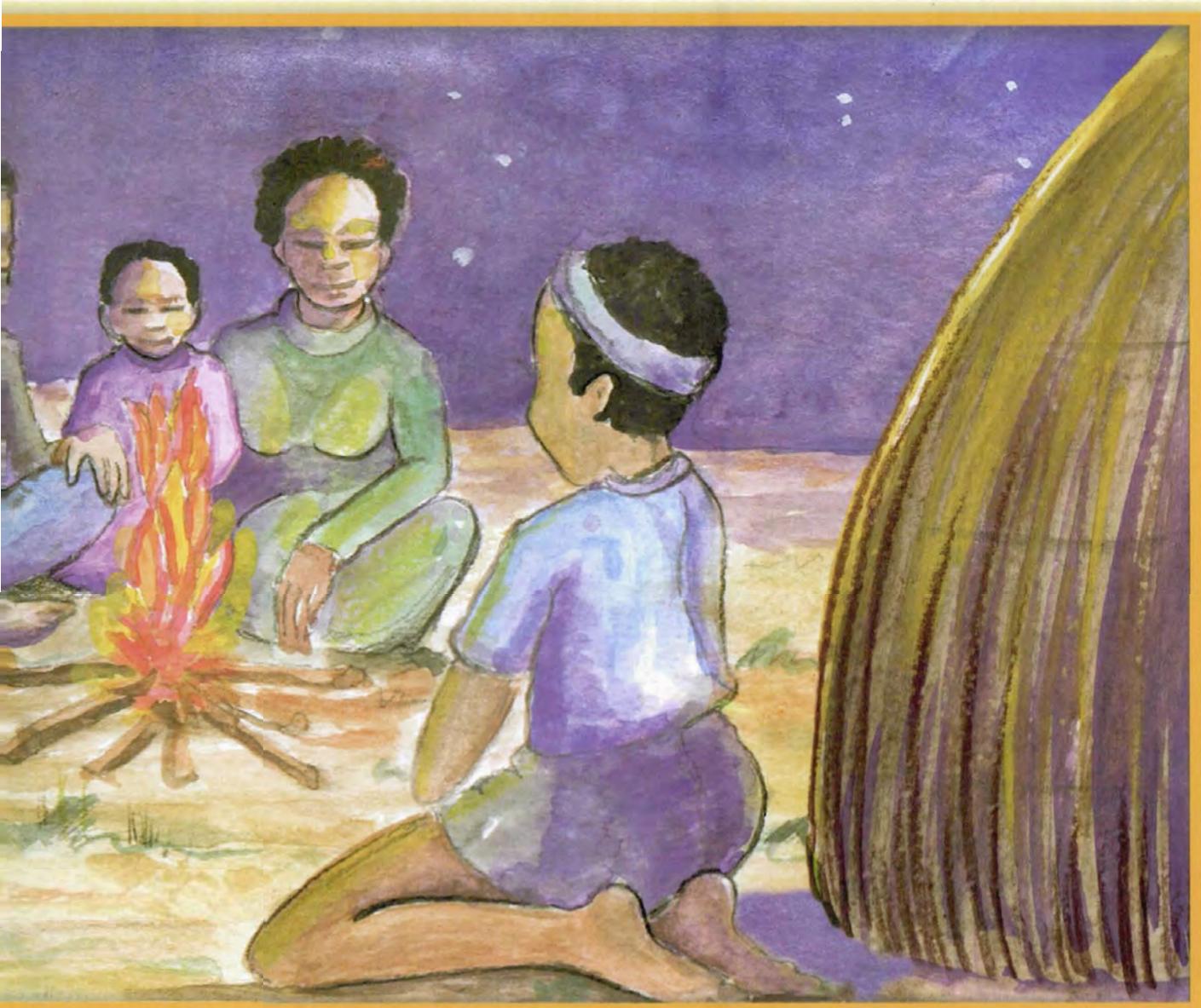
"Would you like to do homework with me?" asked Kun||a.  
||uce smiled happily, "Yes."



That night Kun||a sat very quietly. She was thinking about all the things she had found out.

"You are very quiet tonight, my inquisitive daughter," teased her father.

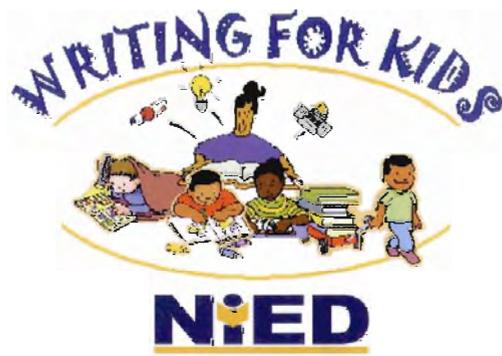
"I'm just thinking about you and Mum and Grandma and Dr Tsamkxao and Mr Kxao and Mrs Boo and Daqm and ||uce. ||uce is very sad because she doesn't go to school. She wants me to teach her. Mum, will you help me?"



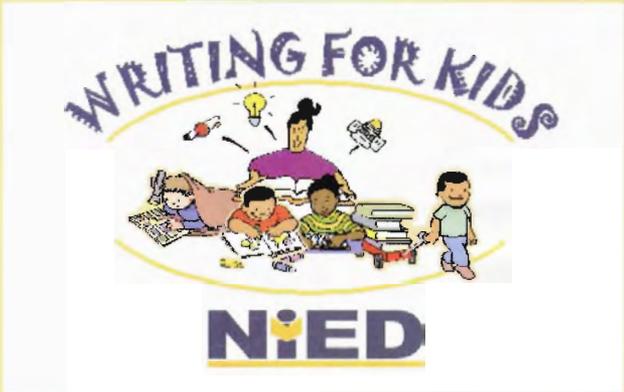
"Yes, Kun||a my daughter. I'll help you," her mother said gently.

"If I study hard can I be someone important too?" asked Kun||a. "Like Dr Tsamkxao and Mrs Boo? And I'll try hard to be good as well."

"Yes, my child. If you study hard you can become anything you want to be. We will work hard for you too," said her father.



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