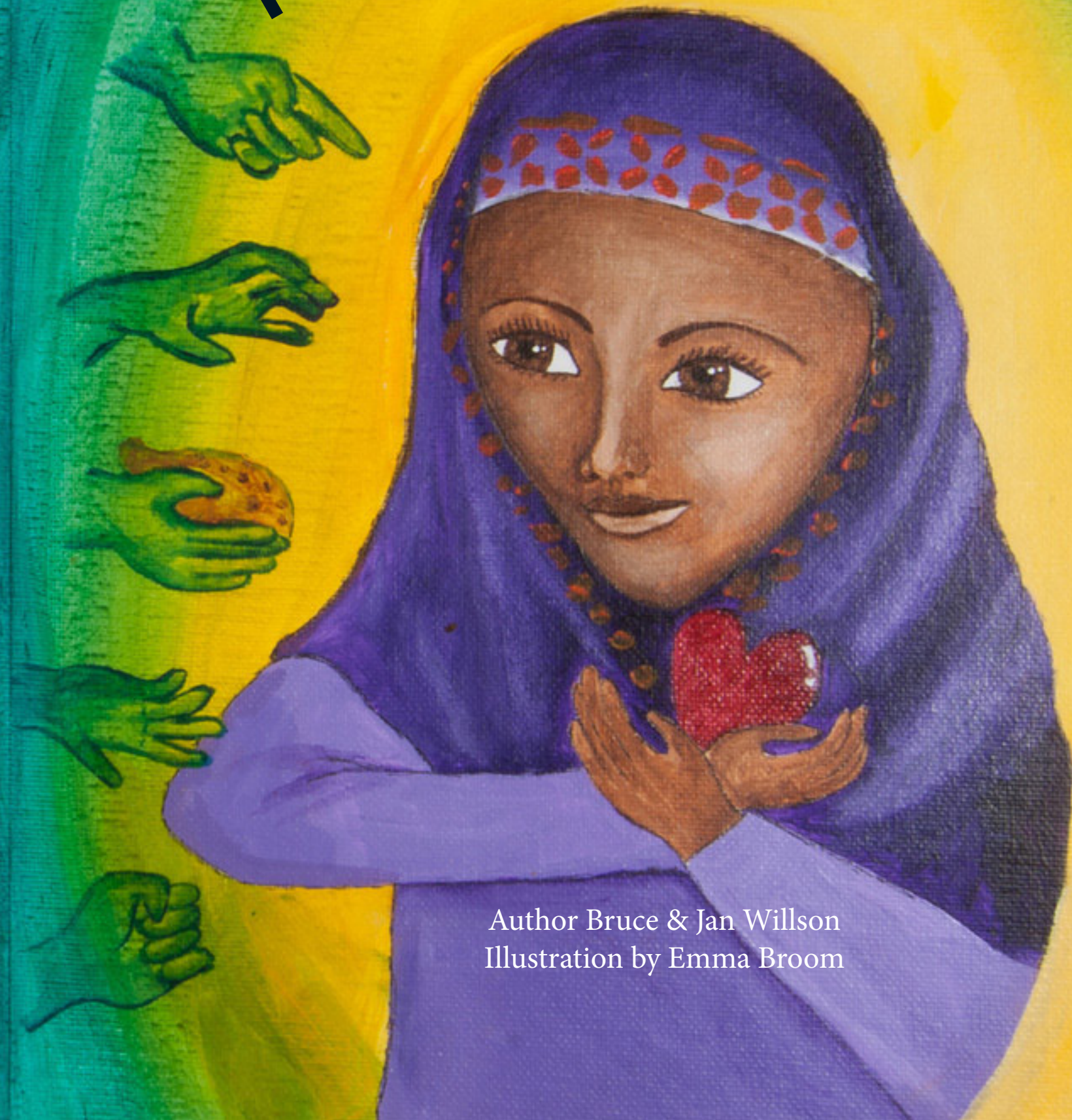
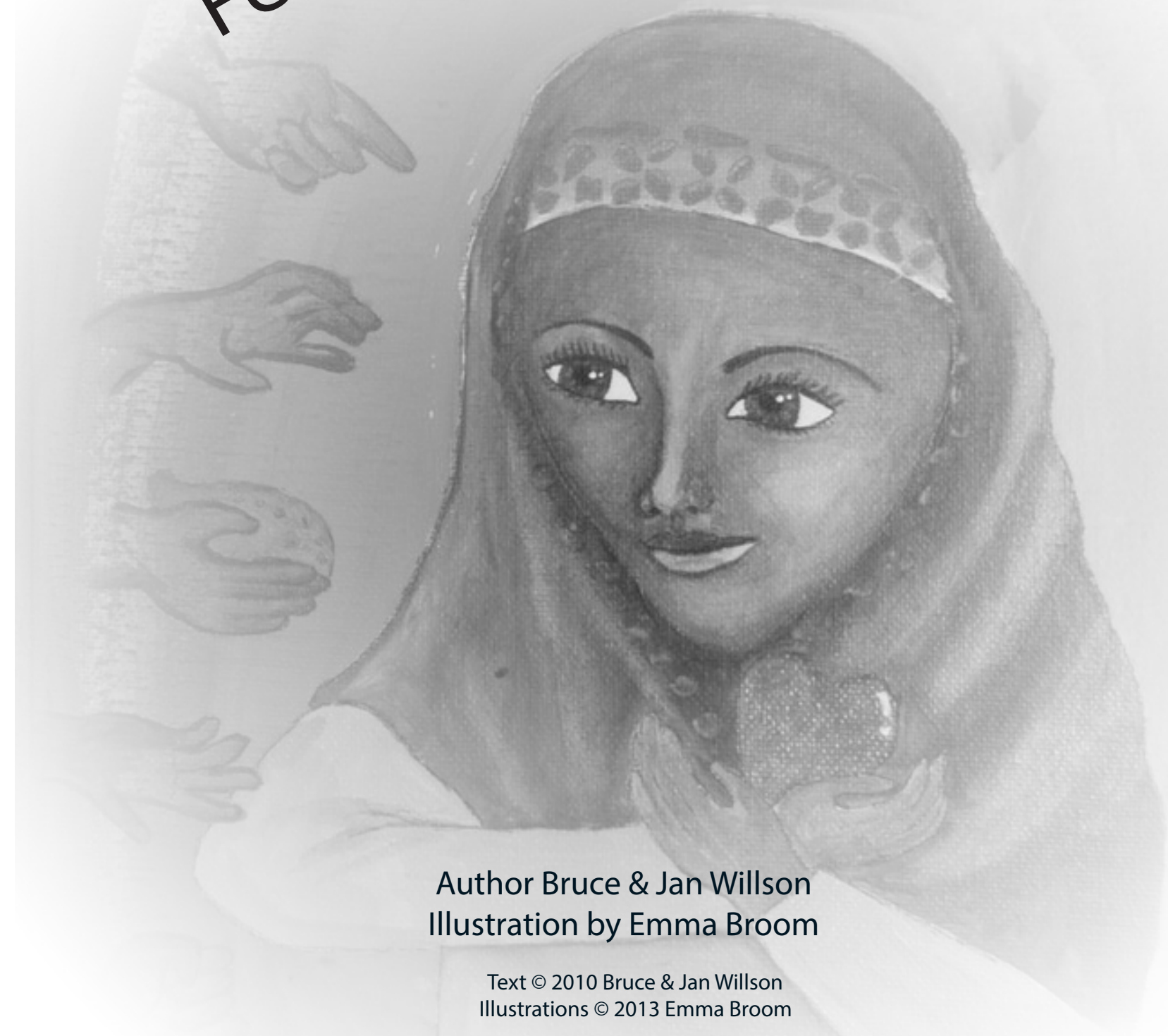


Feeling Safe Again



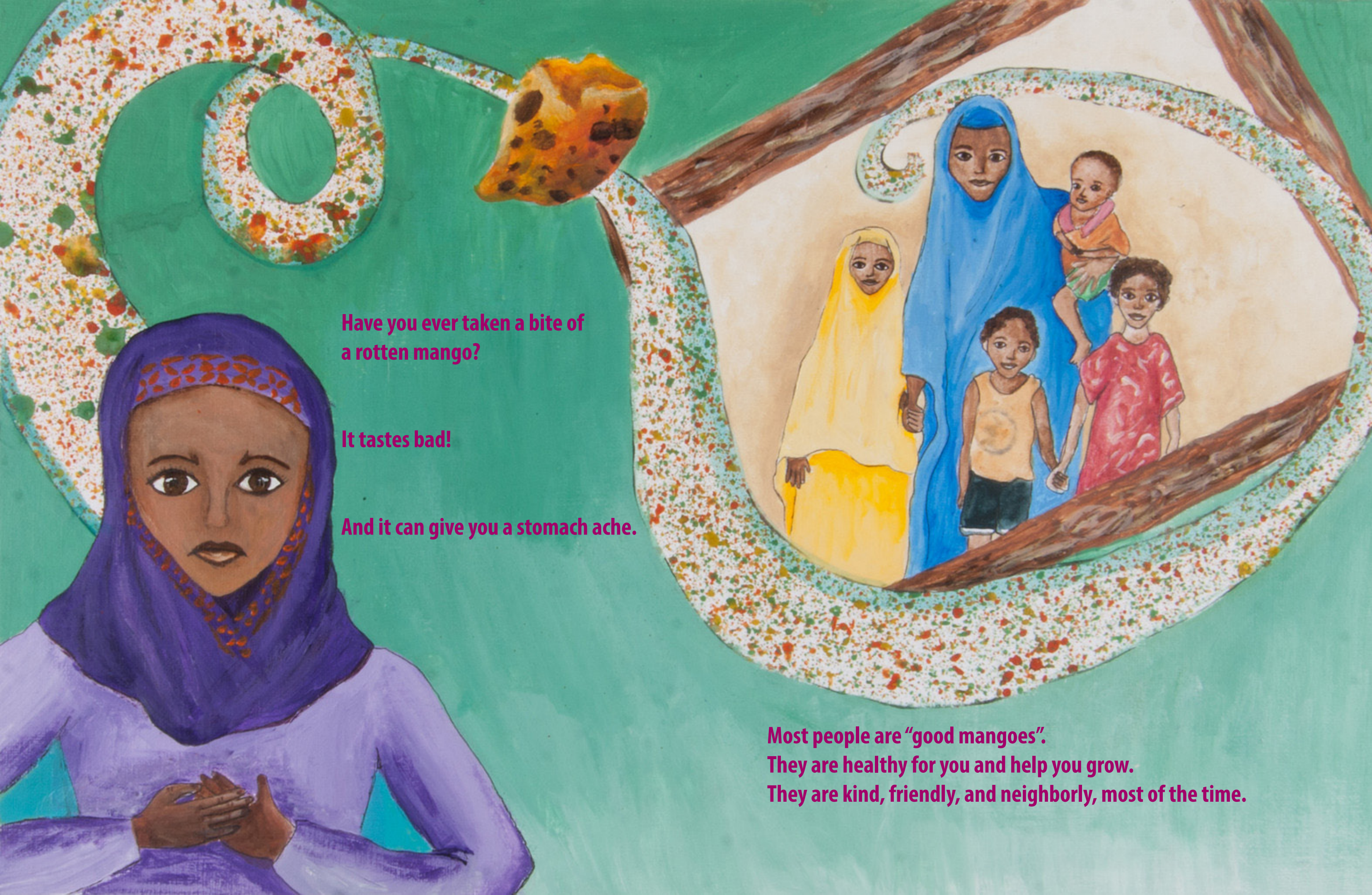
Author Bruce & Jan Willson
Illustration by Emma Broom

Feeling **Safe** Again



Author Bruce & Jan Willson
Illustration by Emma Broom

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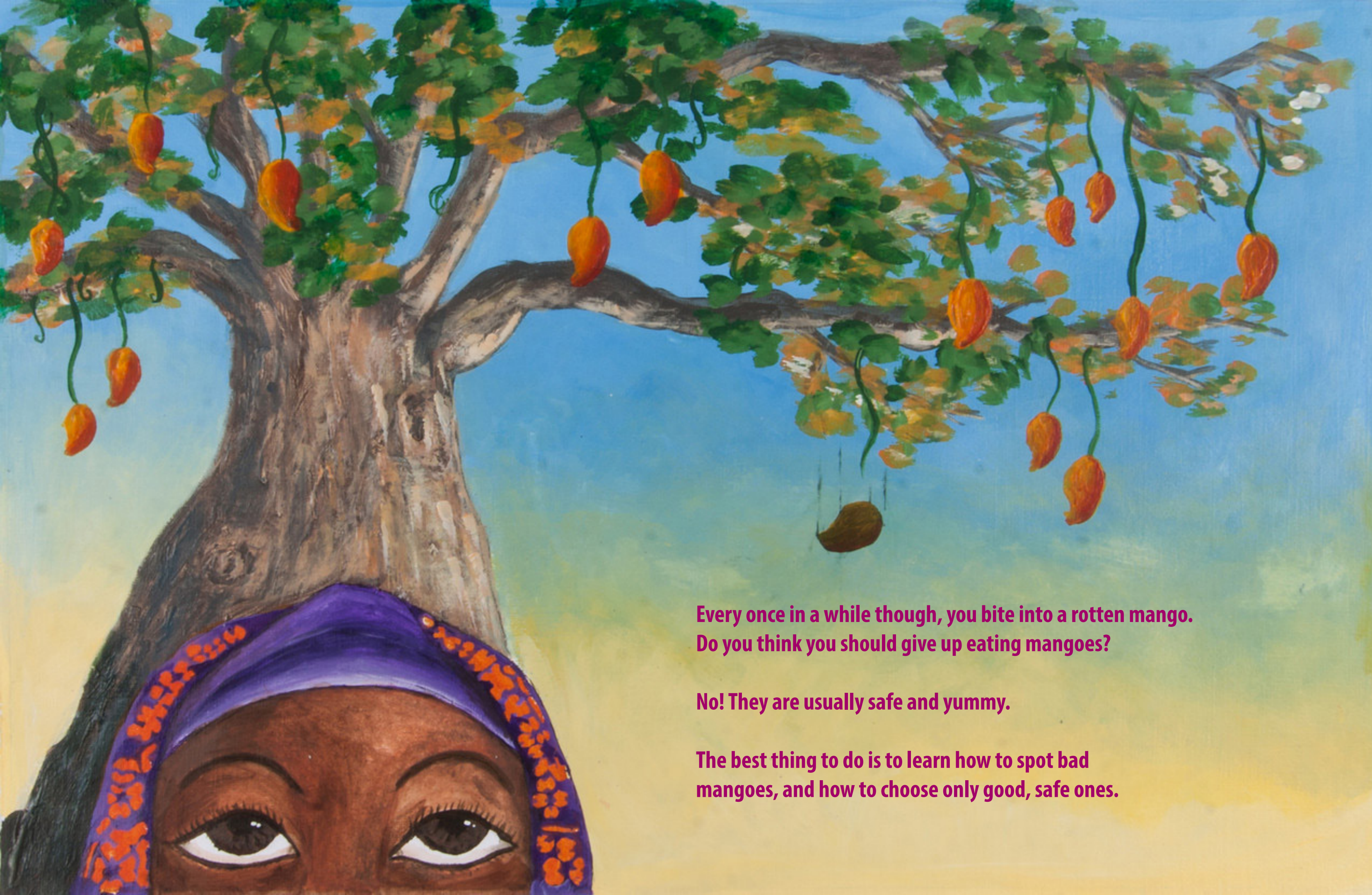


**Have you ever taken a bite of
a rotten mango?**

It tastes bad!

And it can give you a stomach ache.

**Most people are “good mangoes”.
They are healthy for you and help you grow.
They are kind, friendly, and neighborly, most of the time.**



**Every once in a while though, you bite into a rotten mango.
Do you think you should give up eating mangoes?**

No! They are usually safe and yummy.

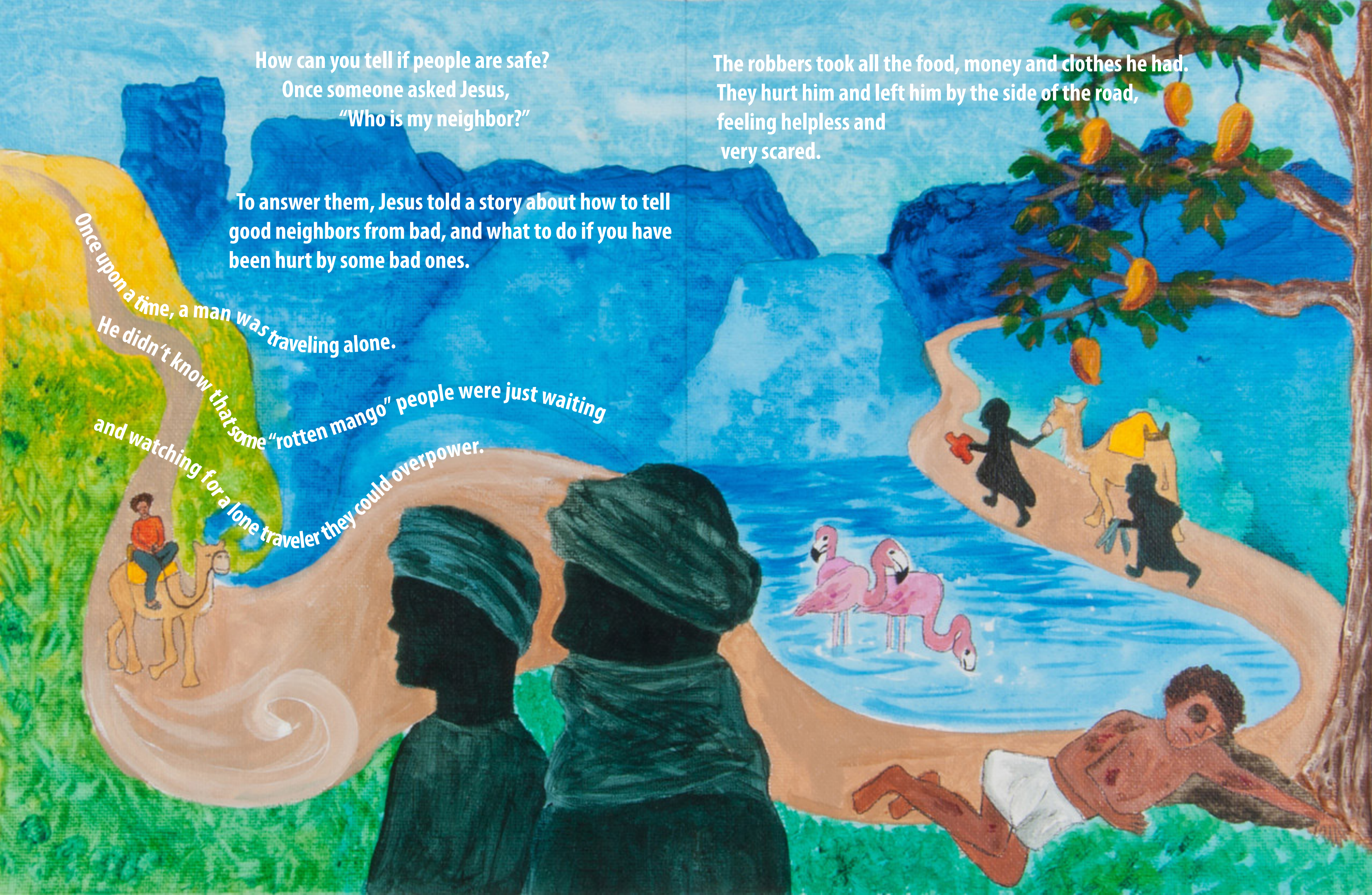
**The best thing to do is to learn how to spot bad
mangoes, and how to choose only good, safe ones.**


How can you tell if people are safe?
Once someone asked Jesus,
"Who is my neighbor?"

To answer them, Jesus told a story about how to tell
good neighbors from bad, and what to do if you have
been hurt by some bad ones.

Once upon a time, a man was traveling alone.
He didn't know that some "rotten mango" people were just waiting
and watching for a lone traveler they could overpower.

The robbers took all the food, money and clothes he had.
They hurt him and left him by the side of the road,
feeling helpless and
very scared.





Why do you think those people were so mean to the man?

Did he do anything to deserve such meanness?

No, he just happened to come across some "bad mangoes".

Finally the wounded man heard footsteps.

Yeah!

Someone was coming!
This person would stop and help him, he thought. But the traveler went right on by.

Sigh...

Then another set of footsteps were heard...and again the footsteps kept right on going.

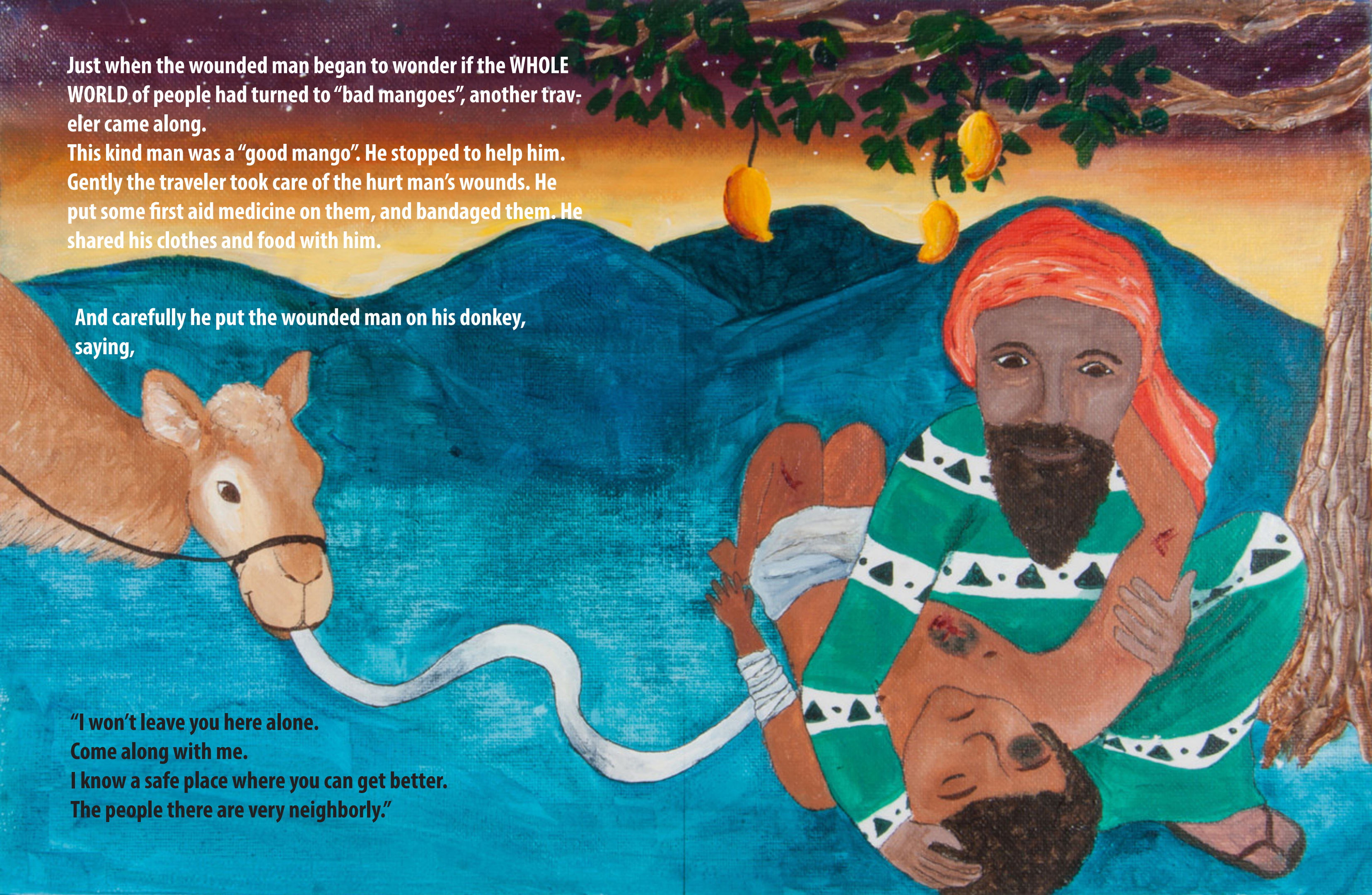
Bigger sigh...

Just when the wounded man began to wonder if the **WHOLE WORLD** of people had turned to “bad mangoes”, another traveler came along.

This kind man was a “good mango”. He stopped to help him. Gently the traveler took care of the hurt man’s wounds. He put some first aid medicine on them, and bandaged them. He shared his clothes and food with him.

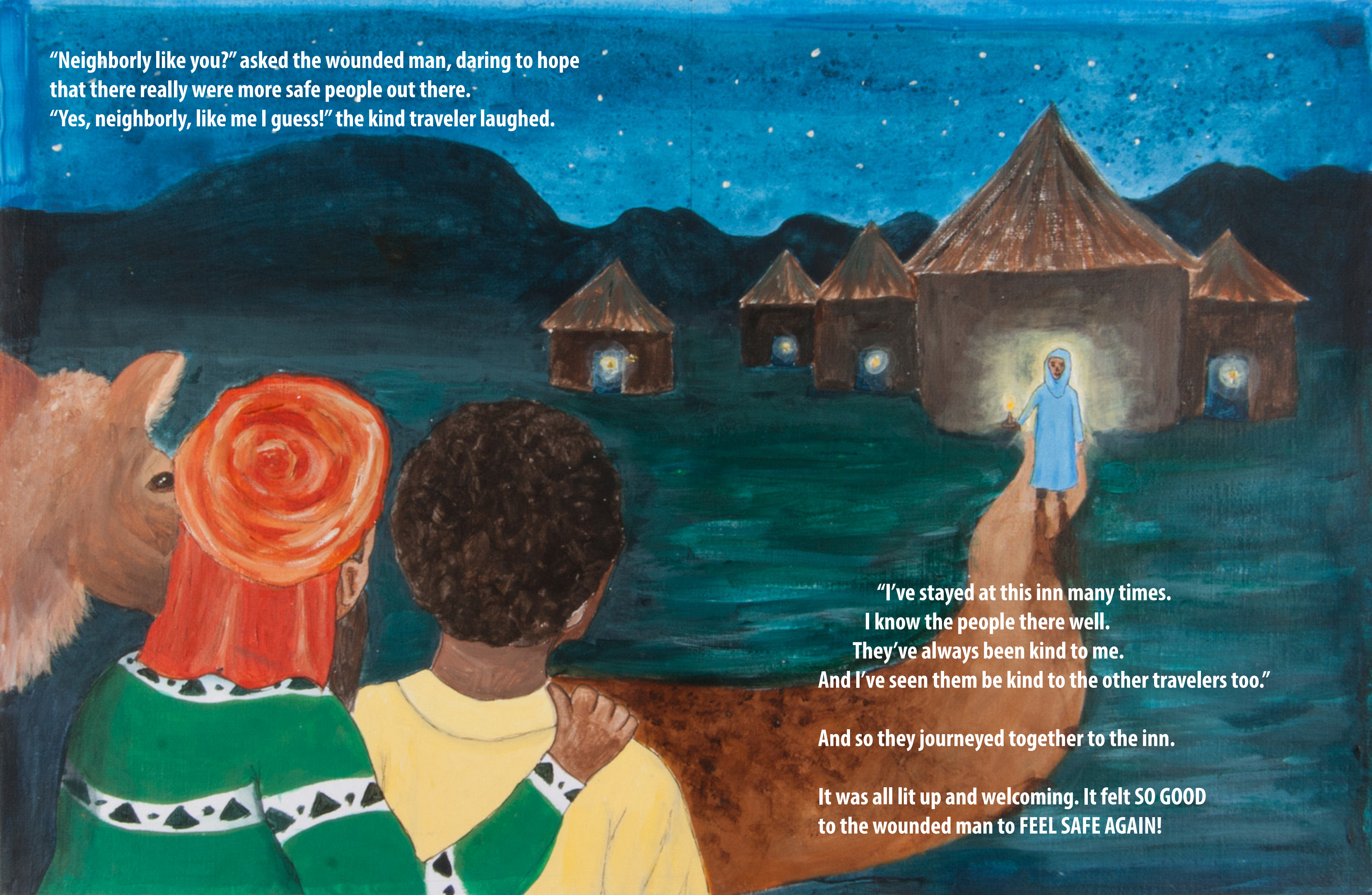
And carefully he put the wounded man on his donkey, saying,

“I won’t leave you here alone.
Come along with me.
I know a safe place where you can get better.
The people there are very neighborly.”



"Neighborly like you?" asked the wounded man, daring to hope that there really were more safe people out there.

"Yes, neighborly, like me I guess!" the kind traveler laughed.



**"I've stayed at this inn many times.
I know the people there well.
They've always been kind to me.
And I've seen them be kind to the other travelers too."**

And so they journeyed together to the inn.

**It was all lit up and welcoming. It felt SO GOOD
to the wounded man to FEEL SAFE AGAIN!**

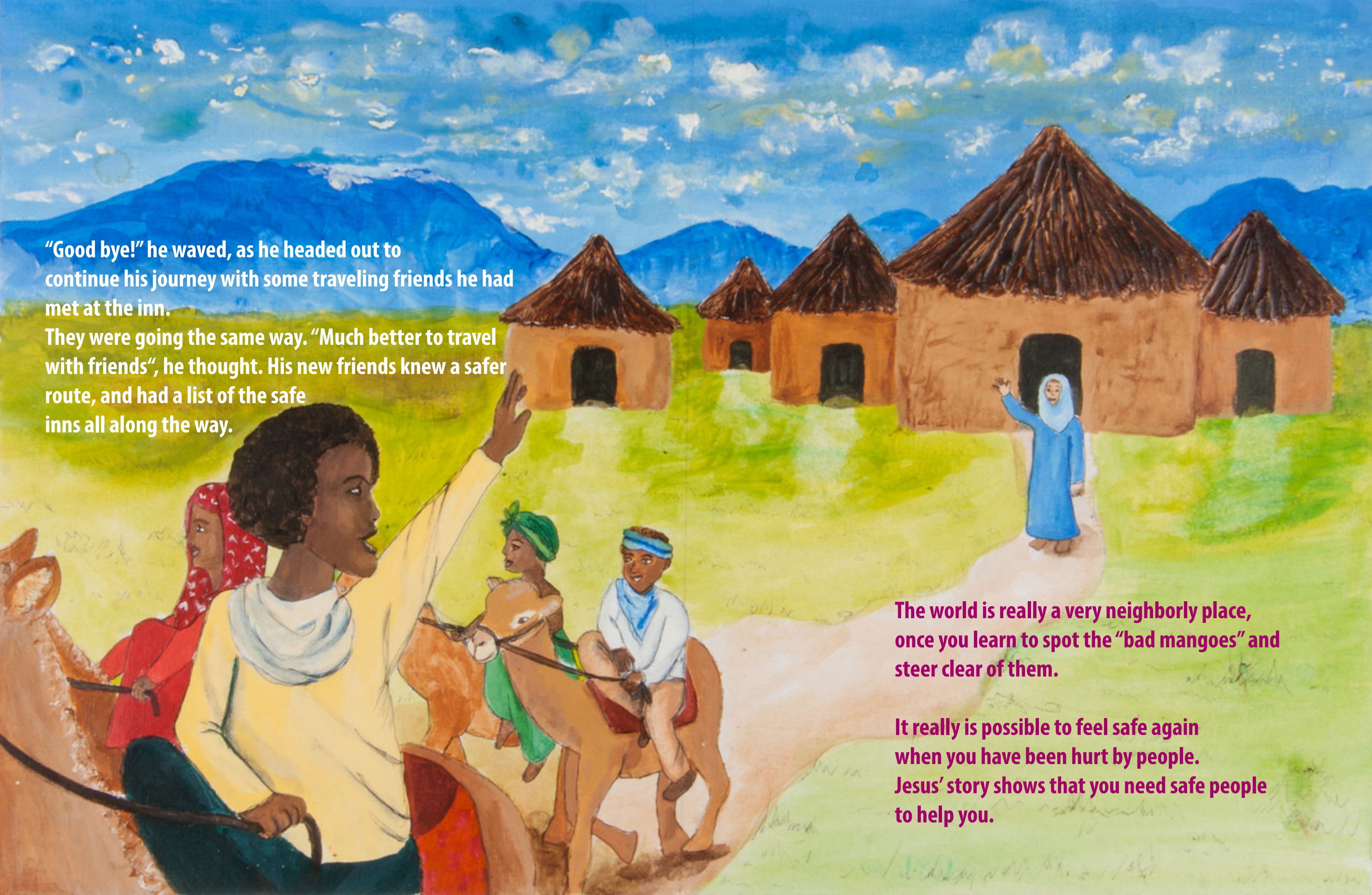
The background of the page is a painting. On the left, a large tree with green leaves and yellow-orange fruit hangs over a scene where three people are sitting on the ground. One person in a yellow shirt is handing a fruit to a person in a red patterned headscarf. Another person in a green dress and a man in a white shirt and blue headband are also present. On the right, a large, close-up portrait of a smiling Black man with a large afro and a yellow shirt is set against a blue sky background.

Each day the wounded man felt a little safer and a little stronger.

After a while his wounds healed.

He could rest easy inside the inn's big walls, knowing that no robbers could get inside. The people there took good care of him, just like his new neighborly friend promised.

As he got to know the innkeeper and other travelers, he could tell they were all "good mangoes".



“Good bye!” he waved, as he headed out to continue his journey with some traveling friends he had met at the inn.

They were going the same way. “Much better to travel with friends”, he thought. His new friends knew a safer route, and had a list of the safe inns all along the way.

The world is really a very neighborly place, once you learn to spot the “bad mangoes” and steer clear of them.

It really is possible to feel safe again when you have been hurt by people. Jesus’ story shows that you need safe people to help you.

It can be hard to believe that safe people are around. Sometimes you have been hurt and disappointed so much that you try to just go on and forget your hurt. But that usually makes the hurt worse.

Once you find a safe person, you need to tell them about the hurt that was done to you, like the hurt traveler letting the kind friend take a look at his wounds.

Here are some questions to answer as you think back:

What happened when you were hurt?

Who hurt you?

What did they steal from your heart when they hurt you?

What makes you the saddest when you remember that time?

What makes you the most afraid as you remember it?

What makes you the angriest?

Do you think there was anyone who knew you were hurt but didn't help?

How did they make you feel?

What did you do to make it through that scary time?

What do you do when you remember it?



Now that you have thought more about
the hurt that happened to you,
you can see what a BRAVE person you are!

You are strong,
much stronger than the hurt.

It's really important to know that no one deserves to
be treated badly by others.

YOU DID NOT DESERVE TO BE HURT.

Jesus said for people to treat others
as they would treat themselves.

If you were hurt, know that God did NOT want
you to be.

It made Him very sad.

If you ask Him, He will comfort you,
just like the kind traveler pouring
soothing medicine on the wounded man.





Would you like to feel God's soothing medicine? Just ask Him.
God made you, He loves you, and He's why you made it through.

He has good things planned for you! He has safe people all over, ready to help you.
Being with them is like being in a safe place.
Do you know any "safe inns", all lit up and welcoming?

What do safe people look like? Safe people are the ones who treat you kindly.
They let you know you are a special child of God.
Safe people do not use you to make themselves feel powerful.

They do not take away your clothes or embarrass you. They do not cause you pain or shame. Safe people help you stay safe.
They care how you feel and they listen to you.

Do you know any safe people?



God is the MOST SAFE person. Talk to Him, and ask for His help.

Do this every day.

It's like staying in His inn of safety and care.

Ask God to bring safe people to you, and to warn you of unsafe ones.

Ask for His protection.

When you feel afraid, talk to Him.

He cares for you, and He is stronger than any bad thing.

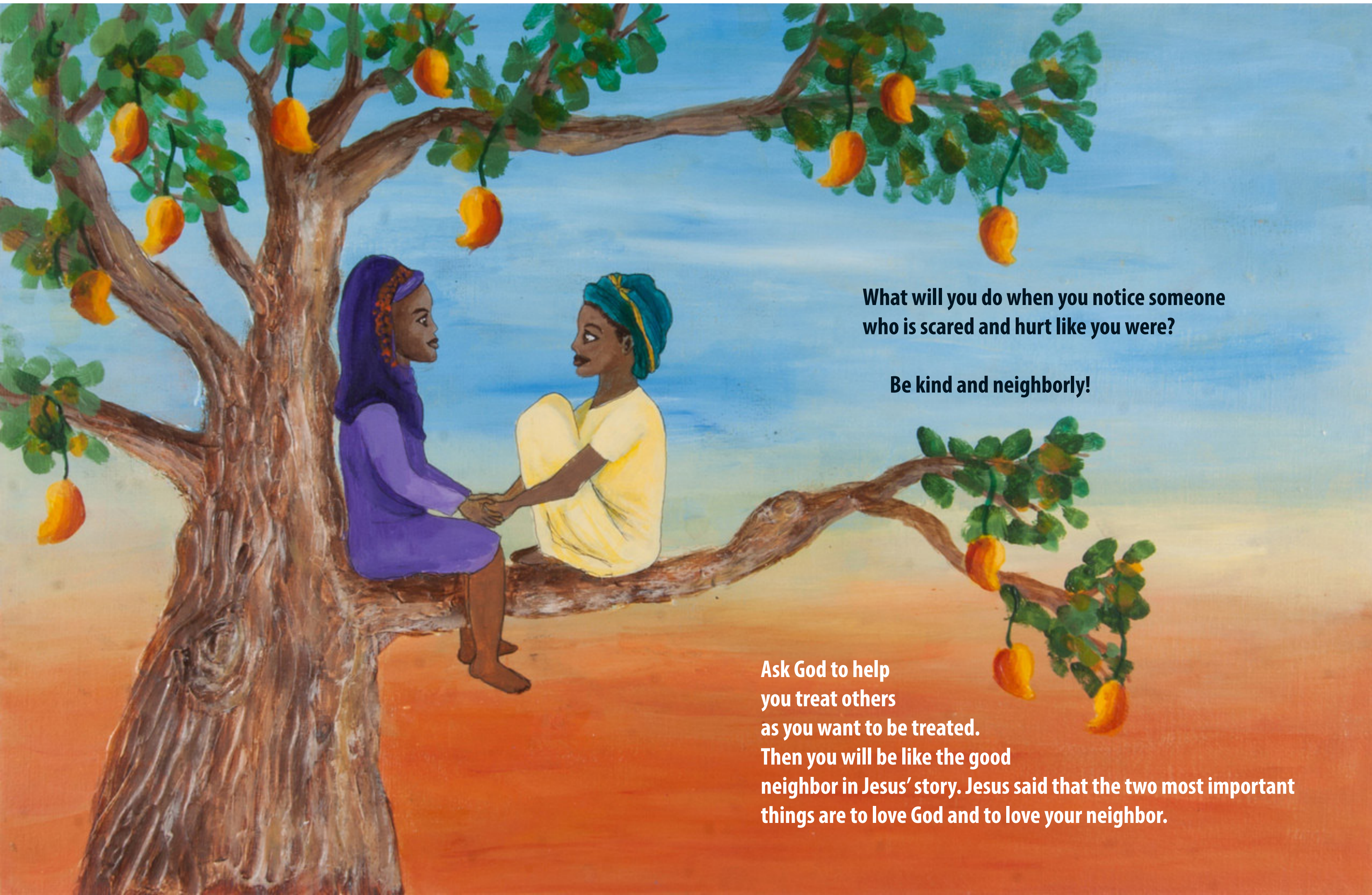
**If your hurt and sadness is very deep,
it may take a while for you to really feel safe again.
But you will.
On days or nights when you remember the hurt,
think about how God helped you through.
Thank God that He helps you to be stronger than
the hurt.**

After a while you will be less and less afraid.

**Hurt is like biting into a bad mango,
but you can learn to spit out the bad taste.
As you do, you stop being afraid.
Then you see there are people all around,
as sweet as good mangoes.**

**They help you dream big,
so you can become all you were meant to be.**





What will you do when you notice someone who is scared and hurt like you were?

Be kind and neighborly!

Ask God to help you treat others as you want to be treated. Then you will be like the good neighbor in Jesus' story. Jesus said that the two most important things are to love God and to love your neighbor.



By loving your neighbor,
you can help make the **WHOLE WORLD**
feel safe again!

