

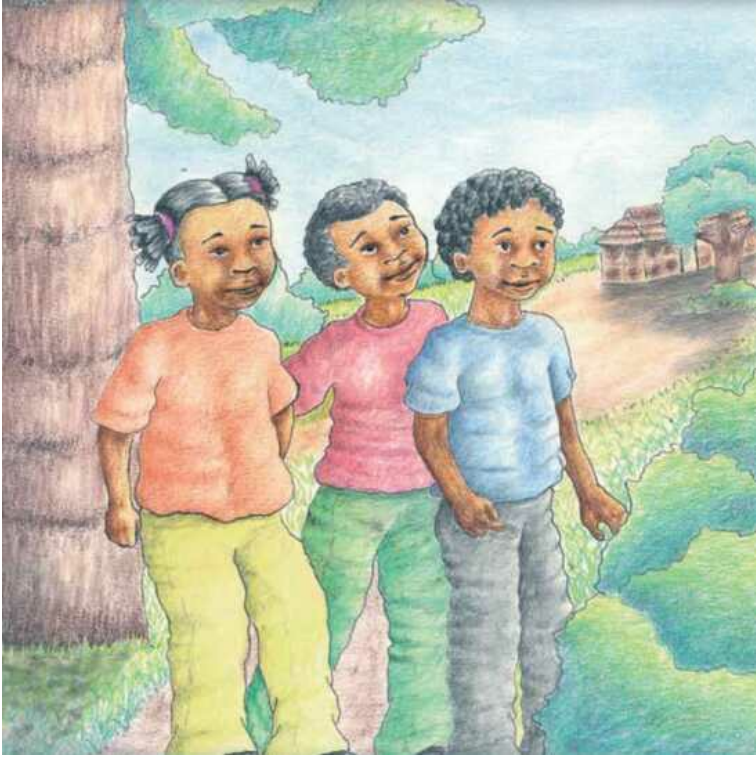
Swimming in the Zambezi

✎ Imelda Lyamine, Albius Chunga Mulisa, Maria Simasiku, Florence Habayemi Shitaa

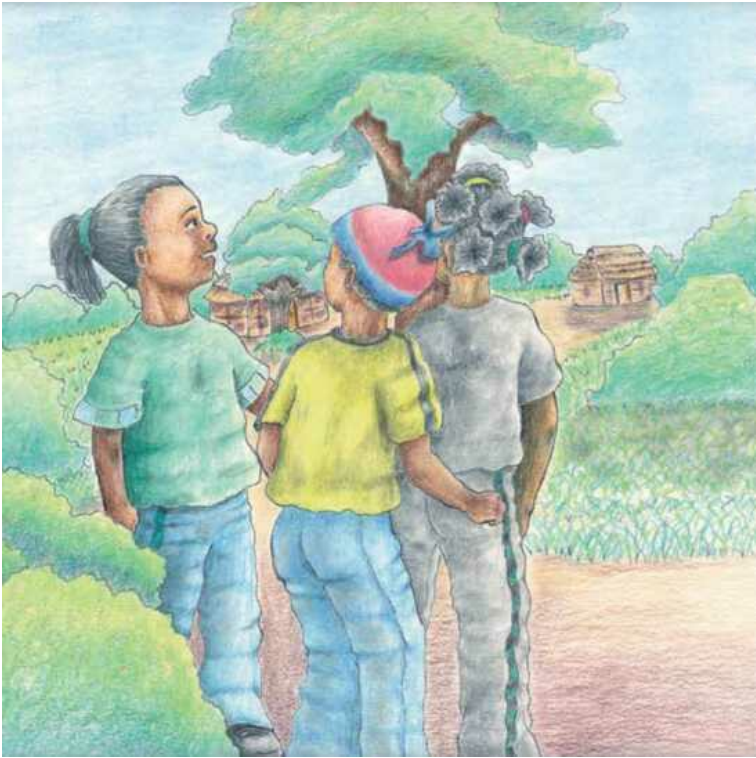
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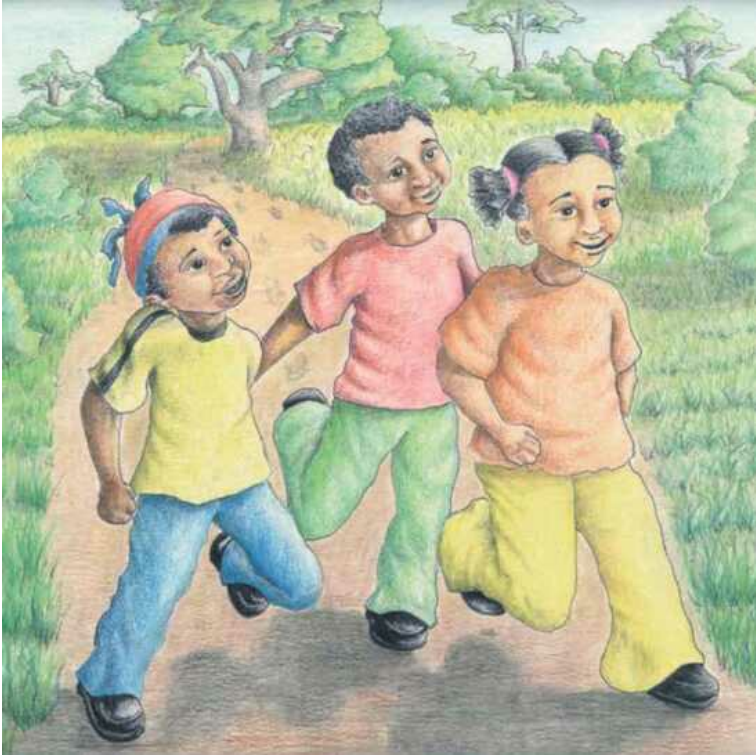
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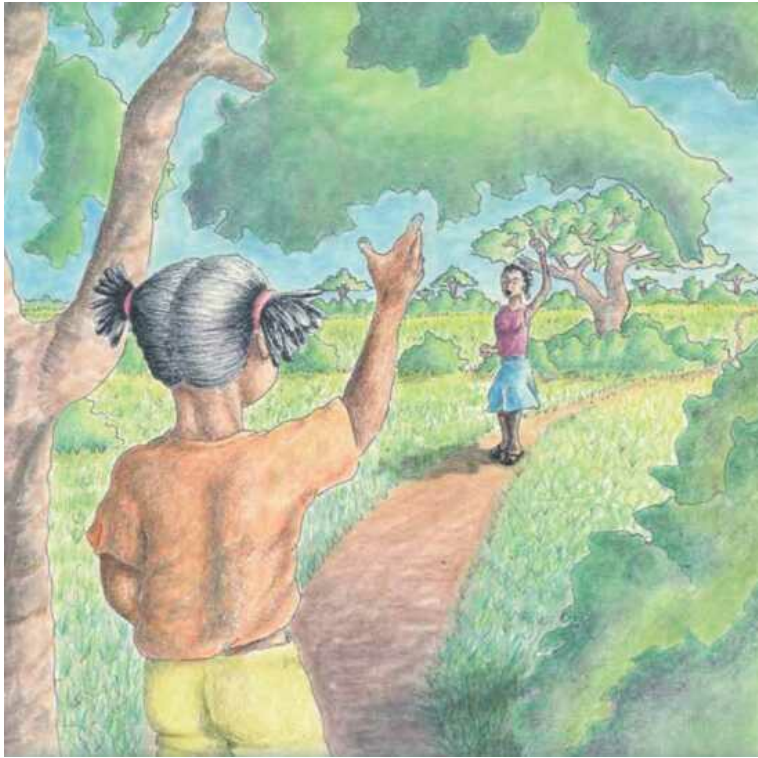
It was a bright sunny Sunday afternoon. The young girls in Lusese were gathering under the branches of the biggest Musikili tree in Caprivi.



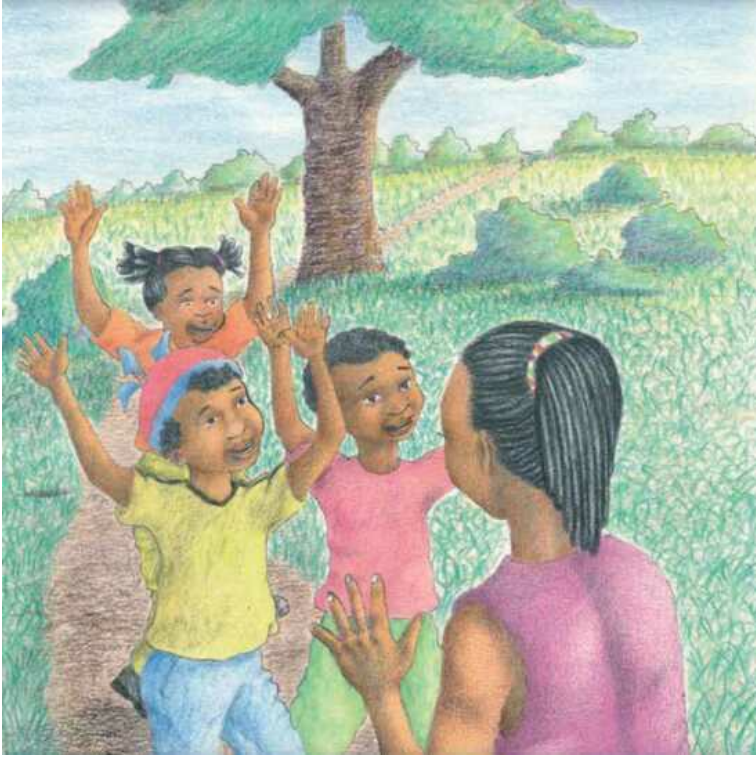
The excited buzz of their voices was heard all over the village. They called their friends. "Nakamwu, I'm waiting for you." "Hurry up, Chaze." "Silume! Come on!"



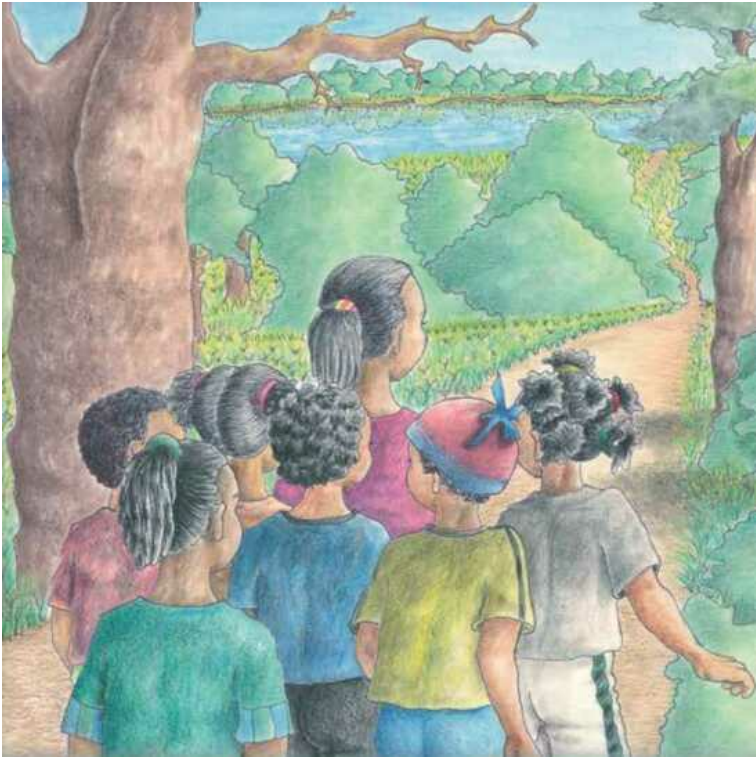
Maria looked around for Ntwala. Ntwala took them swimming every Sunday. "Ntwala! Ntwalee! Ntwalaaa! Ntwaloo!" she called.



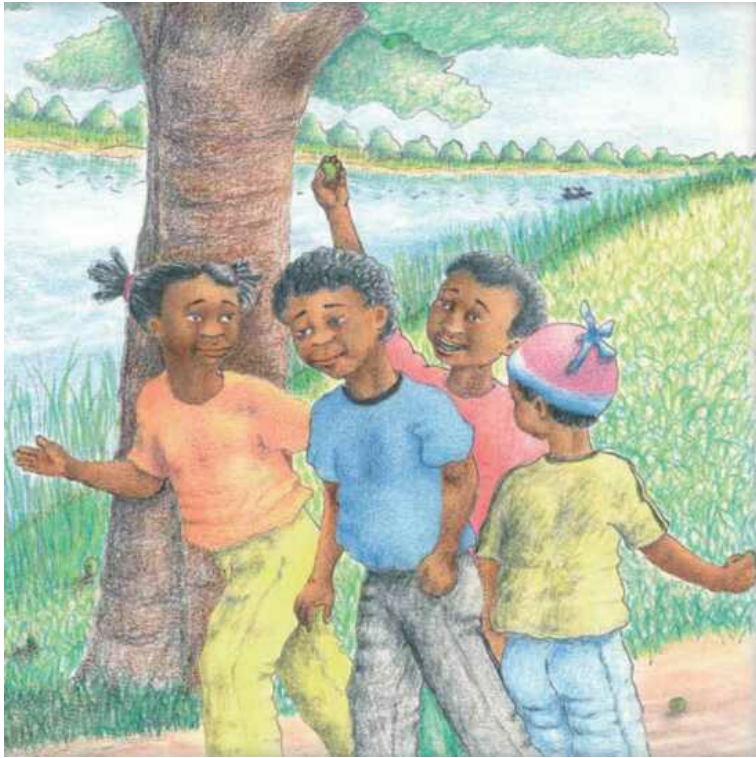
Ntwala shouted from the other side of the village, "I'm here! I'm waiting for you." All the girls ran to find her.



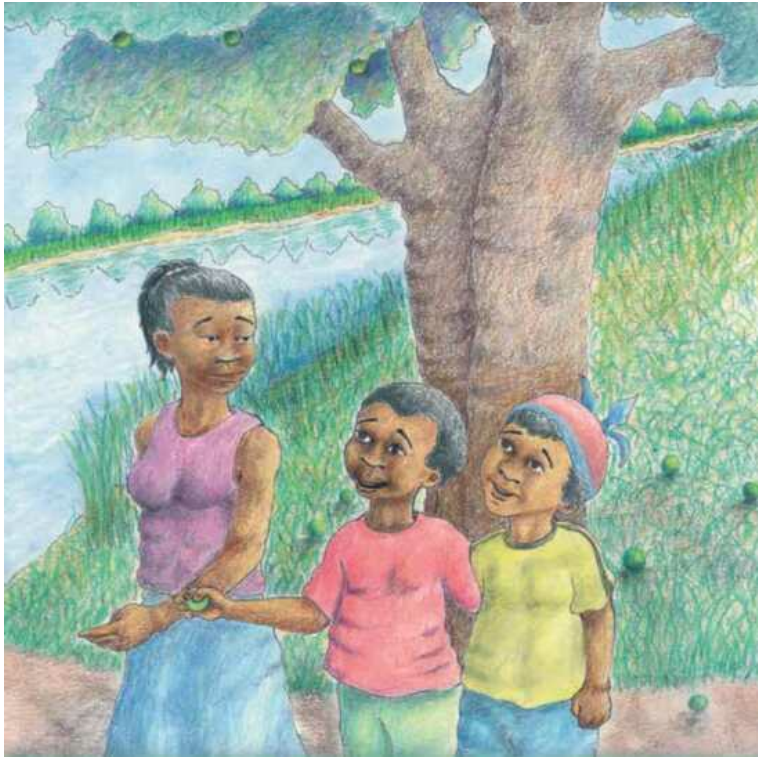
“Are you ready to go swimming today?” Ntwala asked them. “Yes,” they shouted happily as they hopped and jumped with excitement.



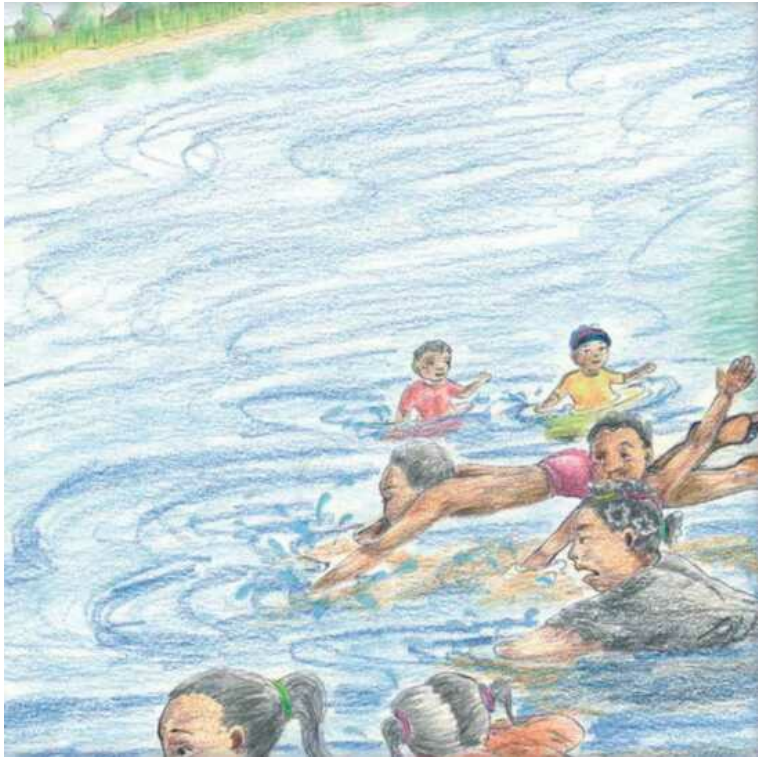
As they walked to the river Ntwala told them stories. "Tell us about when our village was flooded," they called. "Tell us about the Jackal and the Baboon."



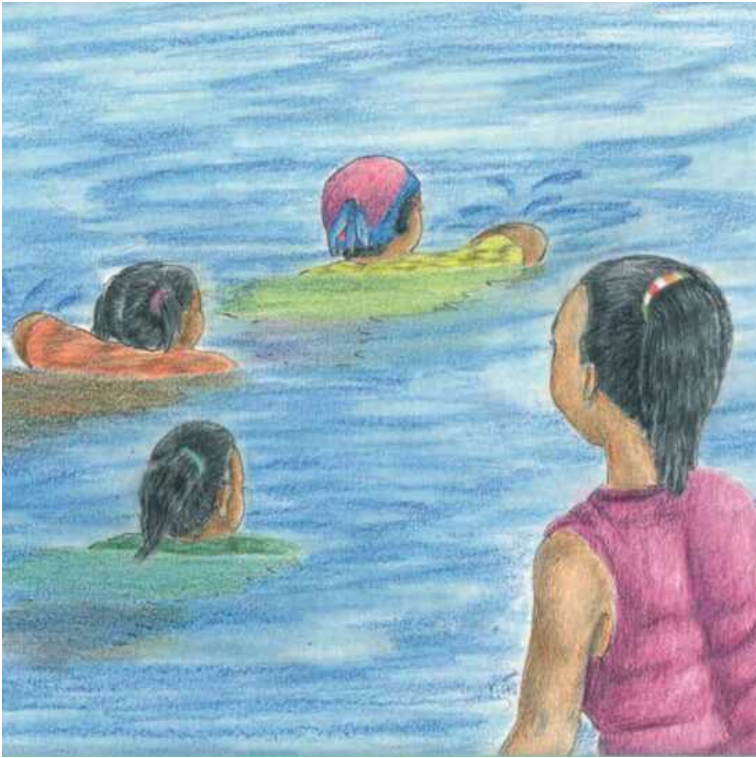
Beside the river there was an enormous Marula tree. The girls looked for the biggest marula fruit for Ntwala.



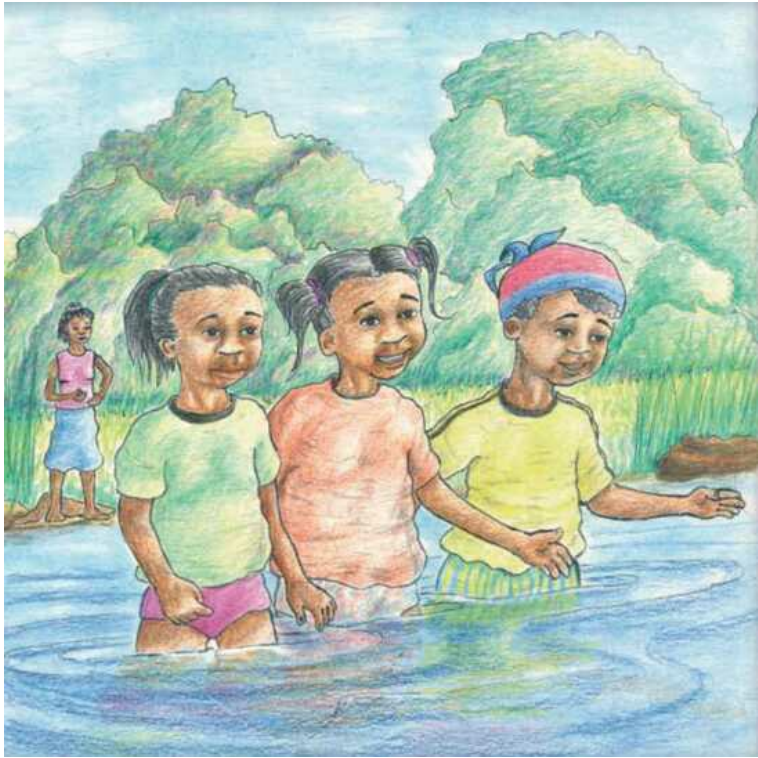
“I’ve got the biggest,” shouted Joy. She gave her marula fruit to Ntwala.



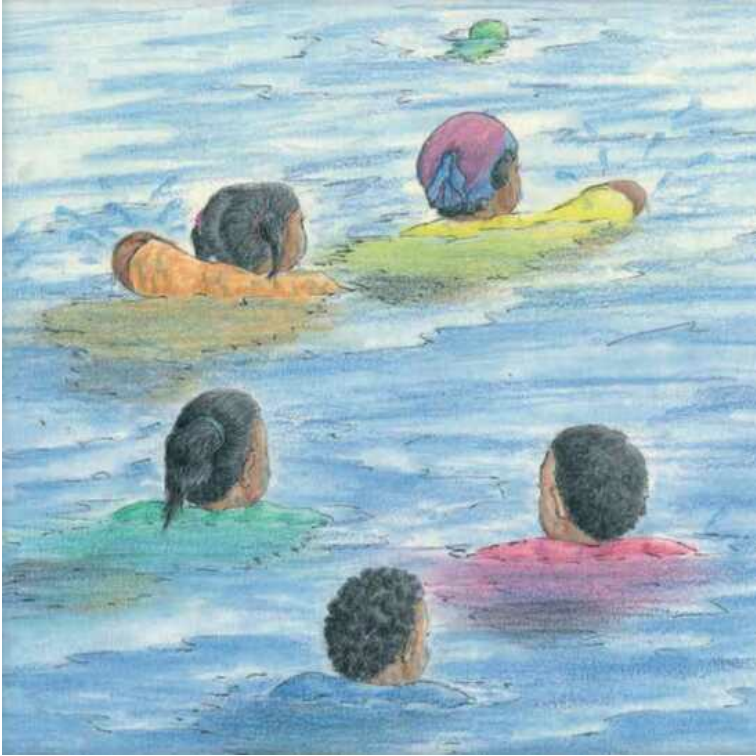
“Off you go and swim,” said Ntwala to the girls. They all ran into the water, shrieking and giggling as they felt the cold water of the Zambezi River.



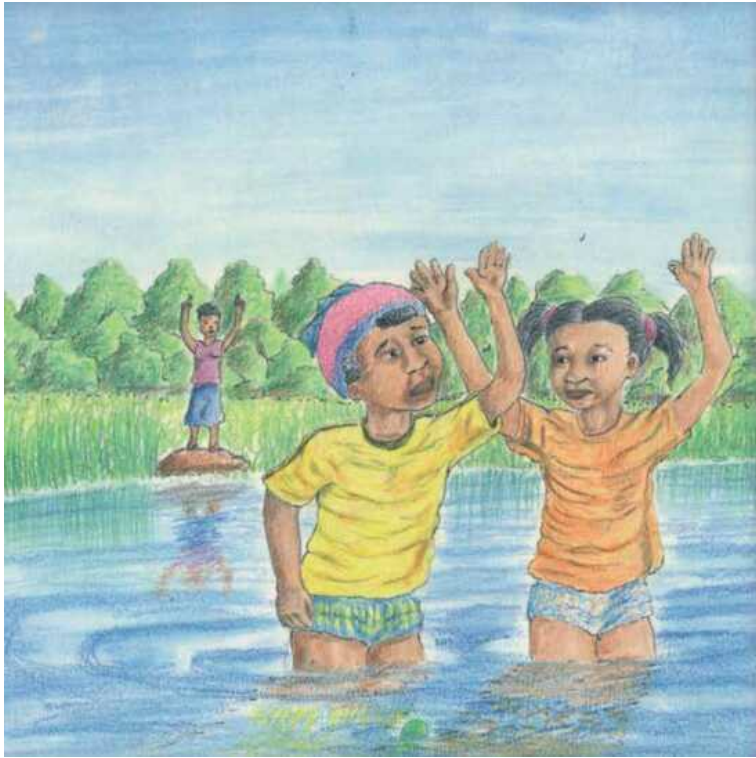
Ntwala stood on the bank. She watched for crocodiles. She watched the older girls racing and diving. She watched the younger girls splashing and learning to swim.



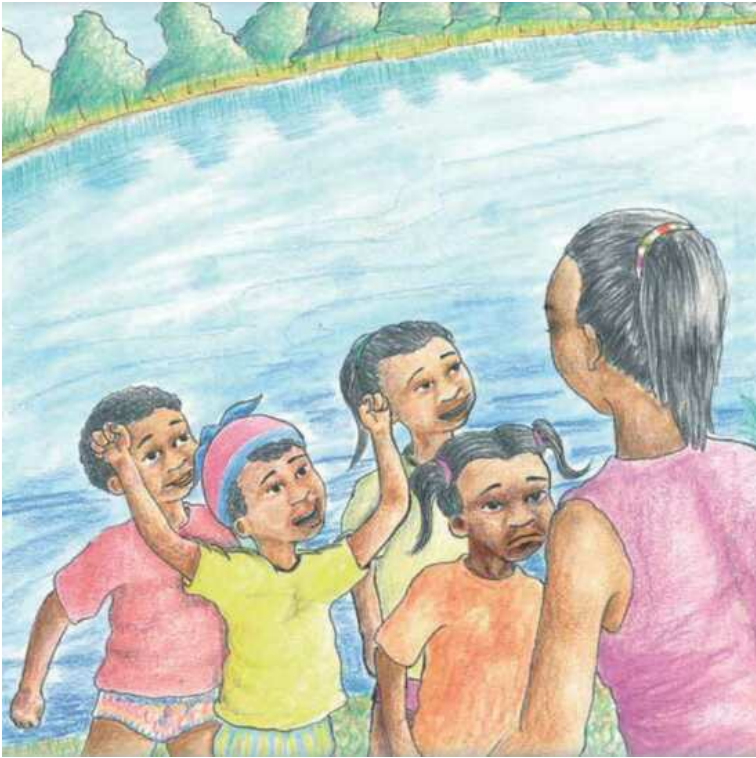
“Competition time,” she shouted at last. “Stand in a line.” She picked up the biggest marula fruit. She threw it as far as she could into the water.



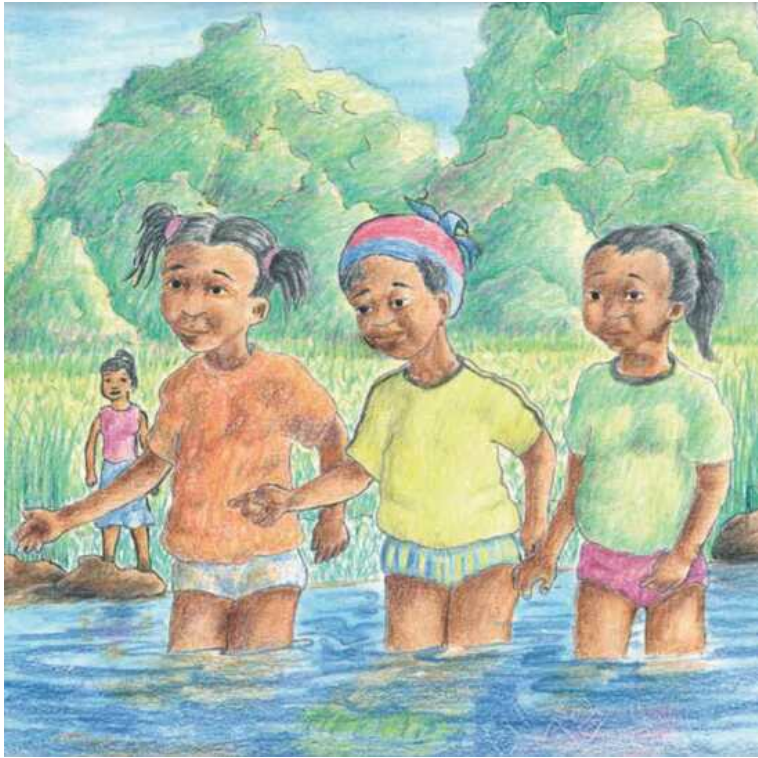
“One, two, three. GO!” she called. The children ran into the water and swam to the marula fruit. Ntwala watched them.



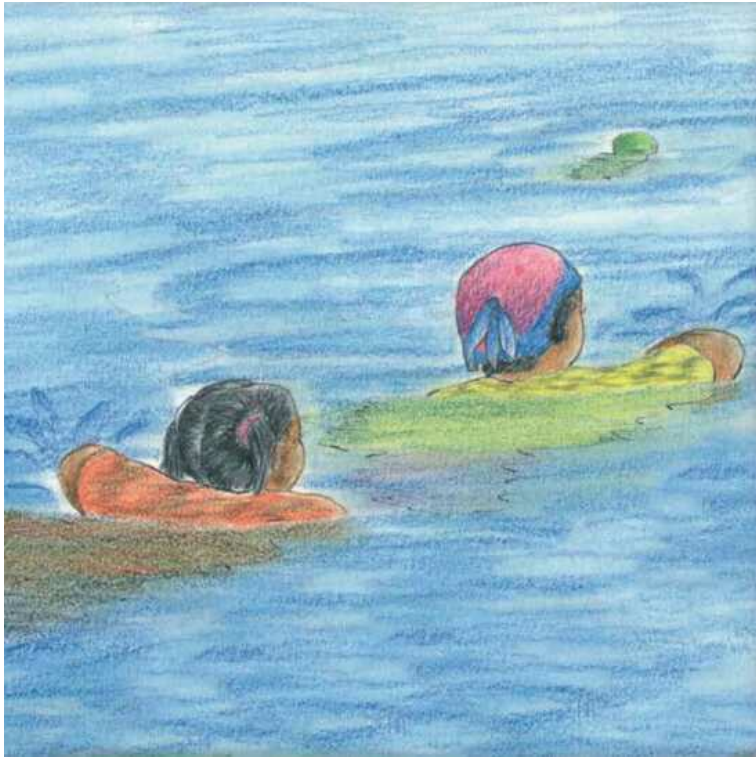
“I’m first!” shouted Maria and Chaze at the same time.
“You are both first,” called Ntwala.



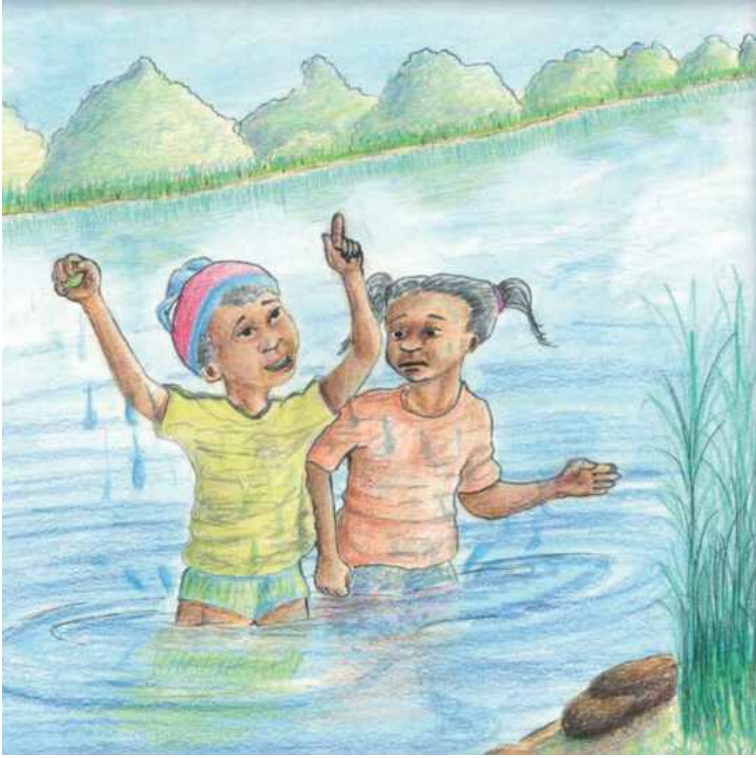
"I want to race again," said Maria. "OK!" said Chaze.
"Can we, Ntwala?" asked the other girls.



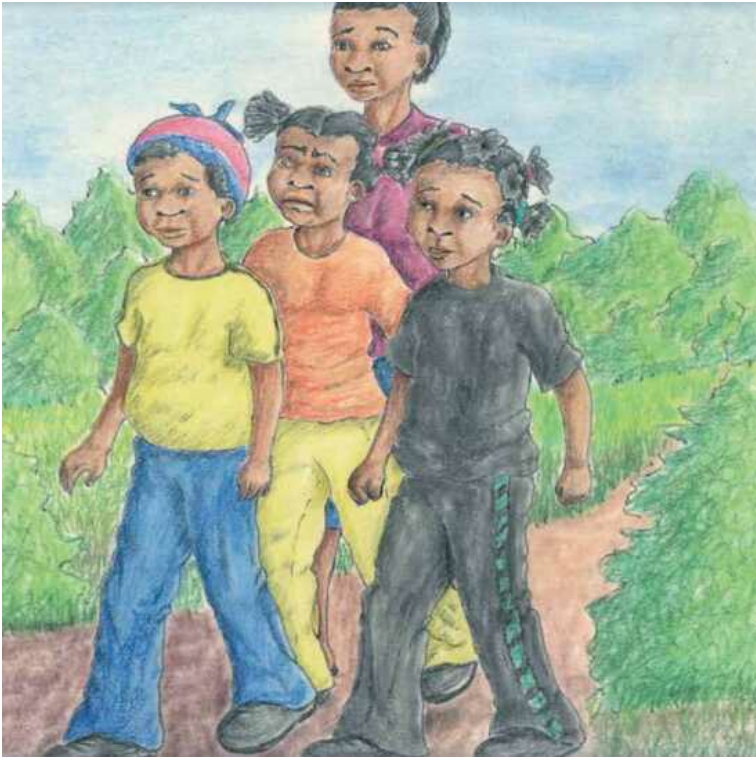
“Stand in line again,” Ntwala told them. She picked up a marula fruit and threw it as far as she could.



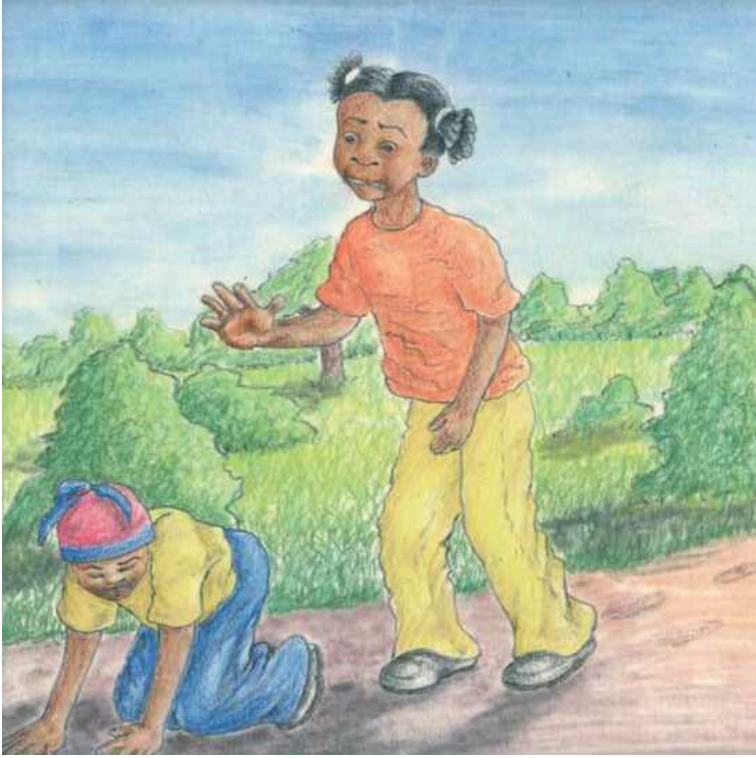
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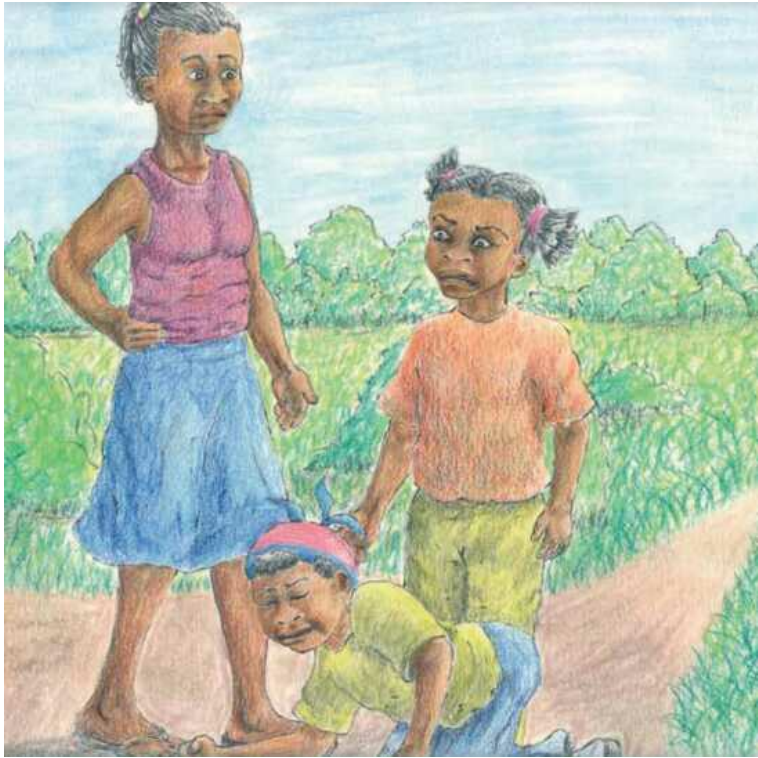
“I’m first!” shouted Chaze. Maria stopped swimming.
“Chaze is the winner,” said Ntwala. “Well done, Chaze.
Let’s go home now.”



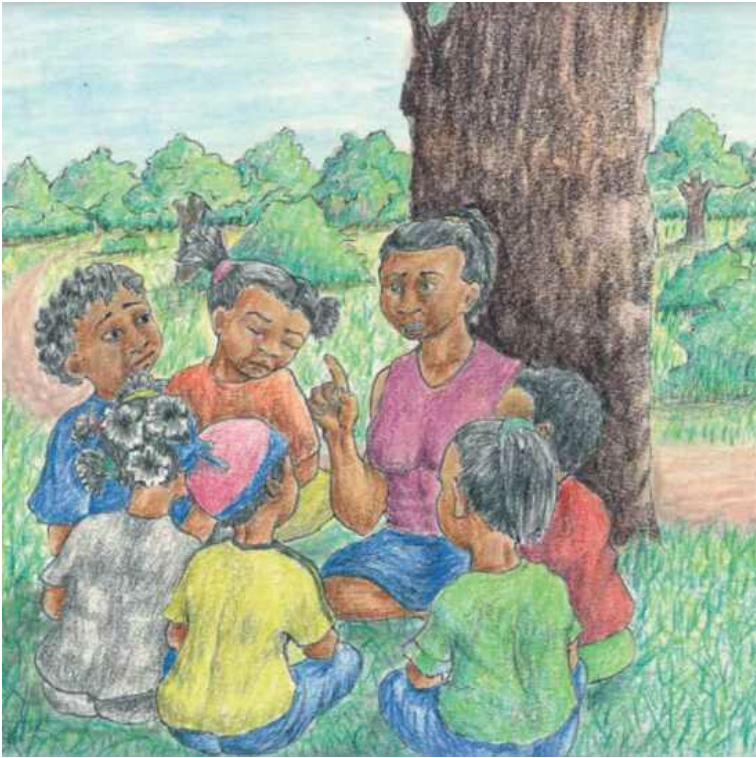
The children walked home with Ntwala. "Tell us a story, Ntwala," they asked. They loved to listen to her stories.



Maria crept up behind Chaze and pushed her to the ground. Chaze started to cry. "Chaze's mother will beat you," said Joy to Maria.



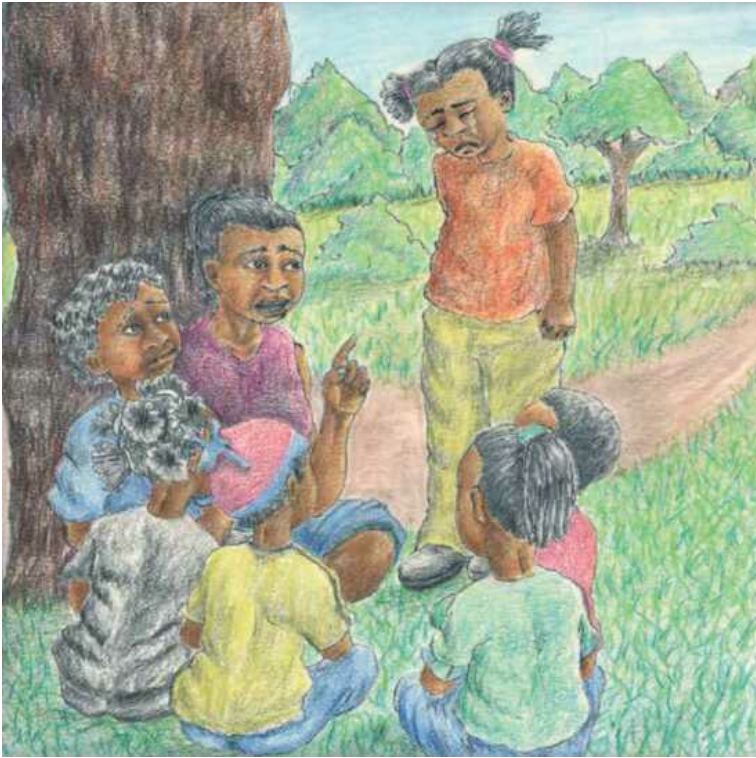
“Maria! Why did you hit Chaze?” asked Ntwala. “She won at swimming. It’s not fair,” Maria said.



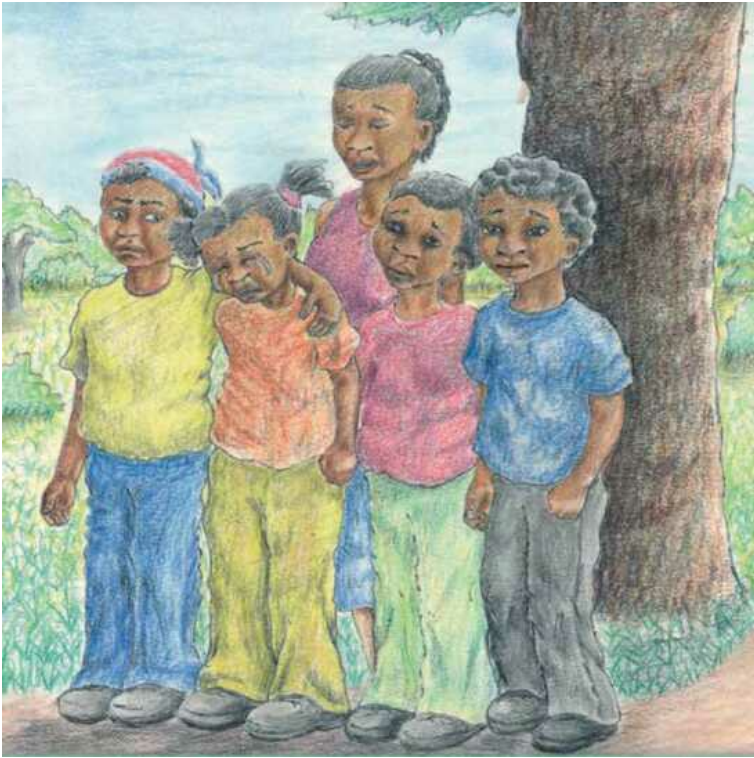
Ntwala asked all the girls to sit in a circle. "What did the principal tell us?" she asked. "It's bad to fight. People who fight must be punished," said Nakamwu.



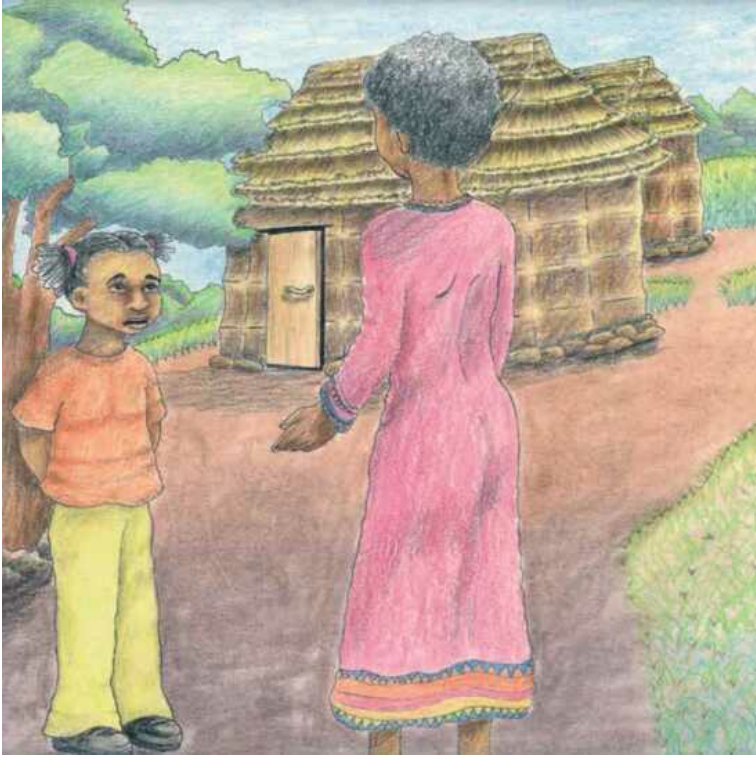
“Maria must say sorry,” said Namasiku. “Chaze must hit her back,” said Joy. “No, it is wrong to hit each other,” said Ntwala.



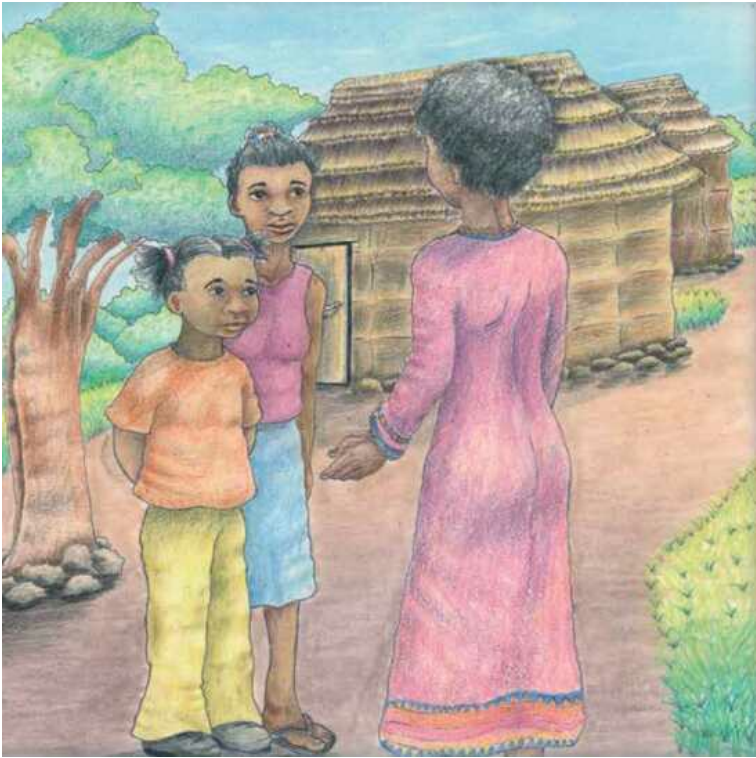
Ntwala said, "I think Maria should miss swimming next Sunday." Maria cried a flood of tears. "I... I... I'm sorry Chaze. I'm sorry I hit you. I'll never hit anyone again," she apologised.



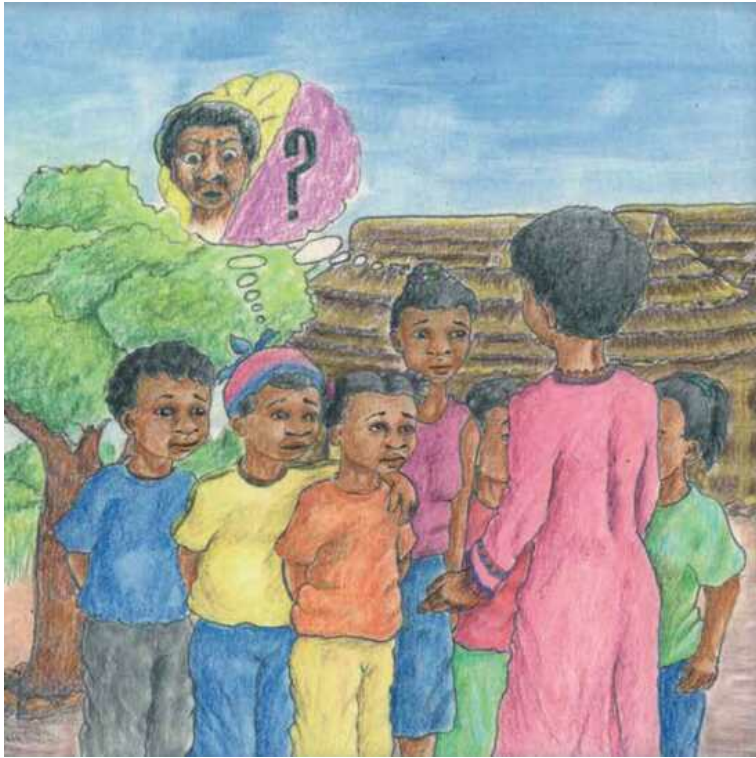
“I forgive you,” said Chaze and put her arm around Maria. “Maria and I will come home with you,” said Ntwala to Chaze. “Maria will apologise to your mother too.”



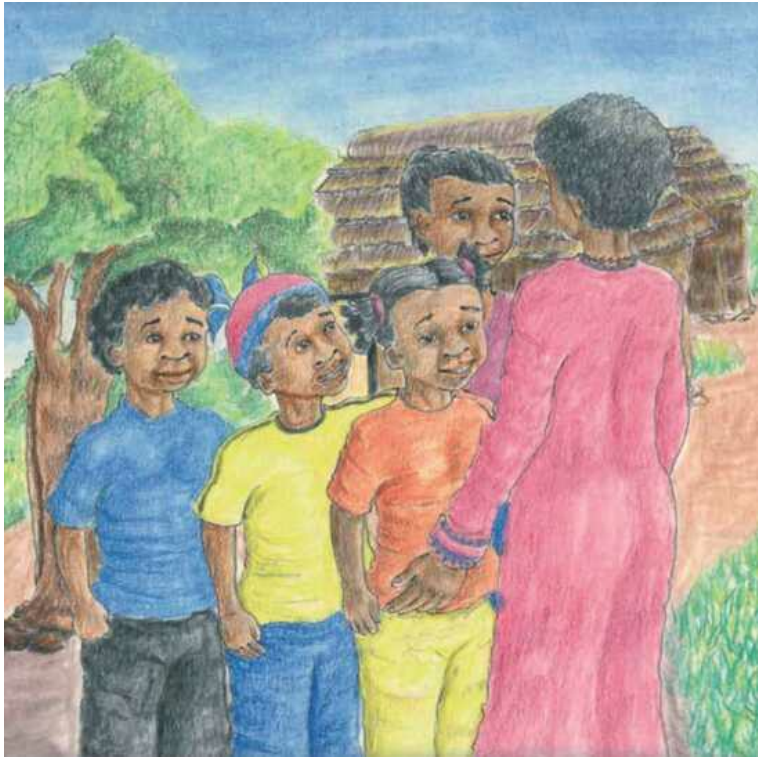
Maria told Chaze's mother, "I hit Chaze because she won the race. I'm sorry. Chaze is my friend, it was bad to hit her."



Mrs. Sibungo listened to Maria. "That was wrong Maria, it is bad to hit people. Thank you for apologising to me. I forgive you." Mrs. Sibungo told Ntwala, "You are a good leader."



Mrs. Sibungo spoke to all the children. "Ntwala thought of a good punishment for Maria. She hit Chaze because she lost the swimming race. Now she will not be able to race."




“But Mum,” Chaze smiled, “I don’t want Maria to stay at home next Sunday. I want to race her at the swimming next week too!”



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