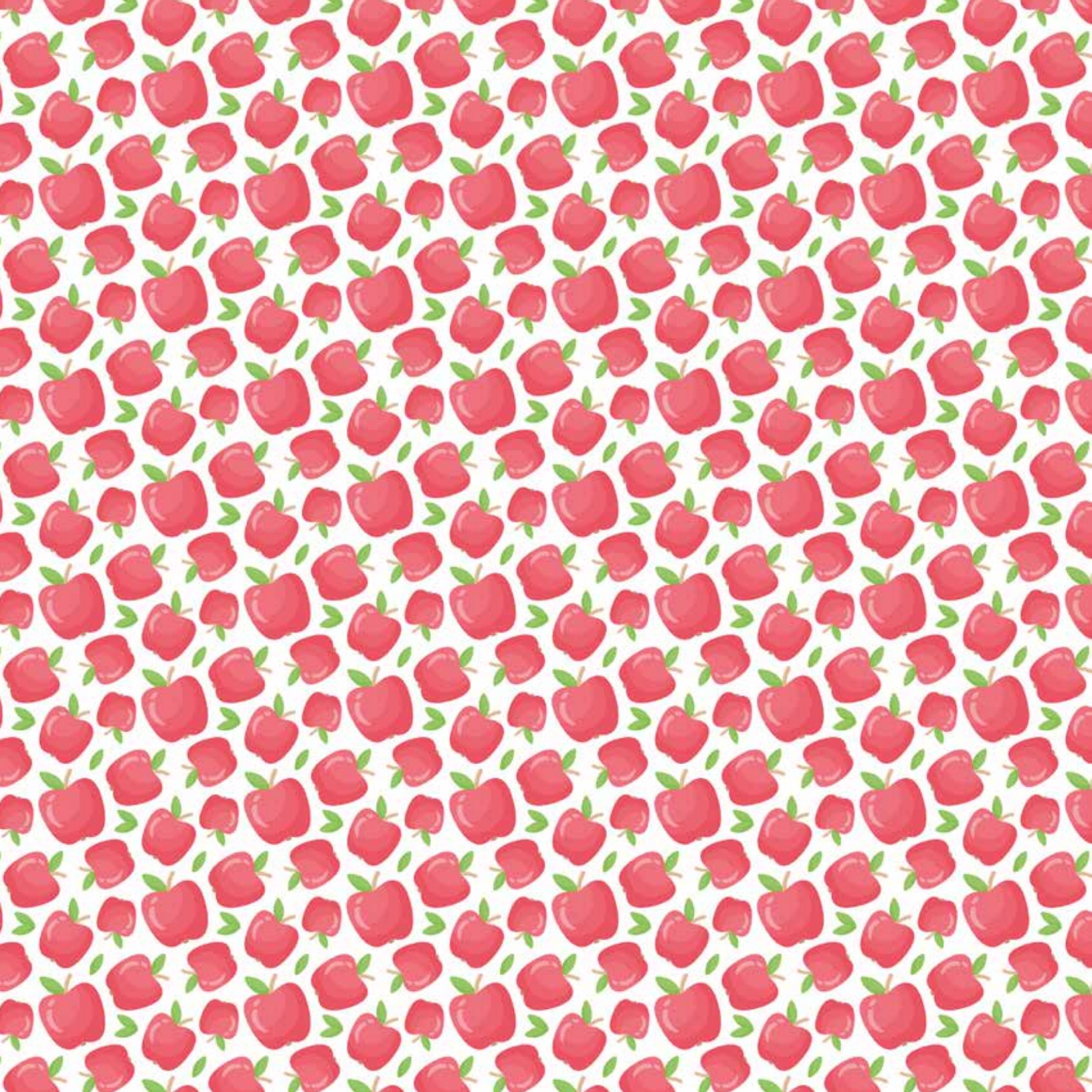


Our Home Our Family



Writer: Anuradha

illustrator: Palpasa Manandhar



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(Picture Book)

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Foreword

This book is the result of a collaboration between Adara Development, The Himalayan Innovative Society (THIS) and Kopila Kitab.

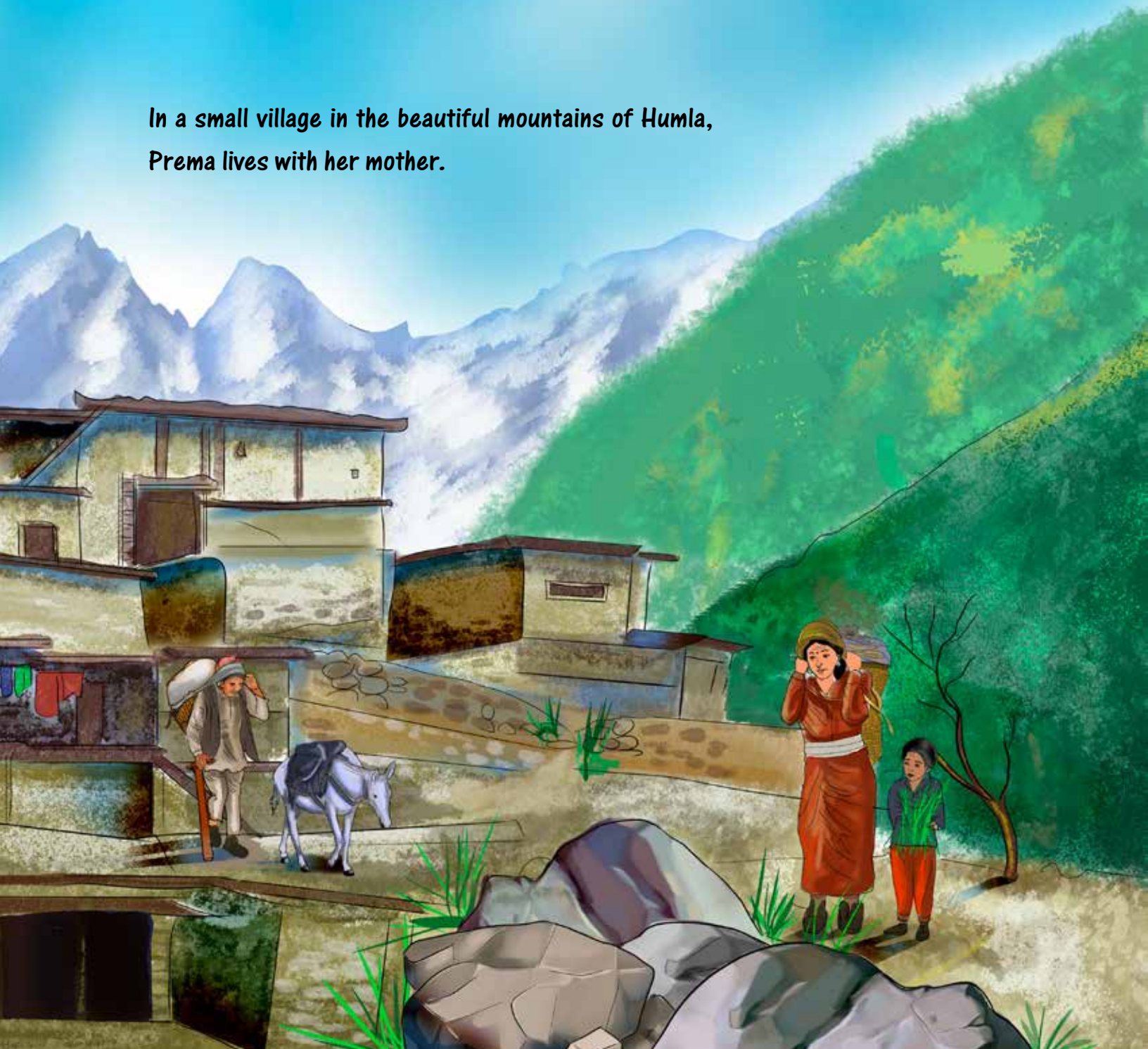
Drawing on over 25 years' experience, the organisations have used storytelling to address key challenges faced by children in the Karnali province of Nepal.

The objective of the book is to raise awareness of topics including child protection, child rights and gender inequality. It also emphasises the important role families can play in the safety of their children.

We hope that this book will be helpful to not only educate and empower local children but will also encourage others to fight for equality.

If you have any questions or feedback regarding the book, please contact Pralhad Dhakal, Country Director Adara Nepal at pralhad.dhakal@adaragroup.org.

**In a small village in the beautiful mountains of Humla,
Prema lives with her mother.**



At school one day, Prema noticed that her friend Gagan was upset and asked if he was ok. “My family want to send me to the city,” he replied. “One of my father’s friends have promised to enroll me in a good boarding school but I do not want to go.”



Jaysara, another friend of Prema's shared, "Four years ago, a family friend took my eldest brother to the city. We have not heard of him since. I miss him a lot."

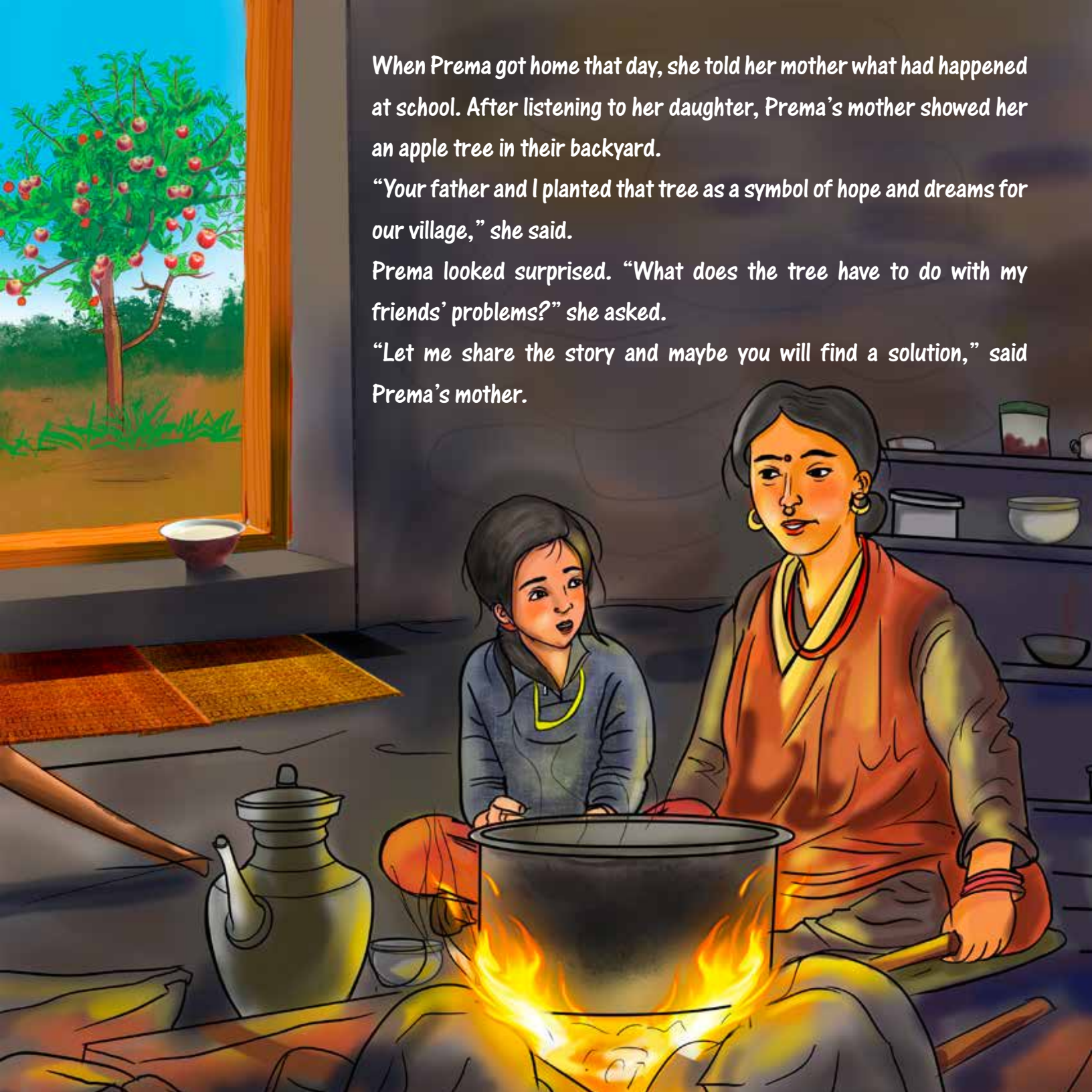


When Prema got home that day, she told her mother what had happened at school. After listening to her daughter, Prema's mother showed her an apple tree in their backyard.

"Your father and I planted that tree as a symbol of hope and dreams for our village," she said.

Prema looked surprised. "What does the tree have to do with my friends' problems?" she asked.

"Let me share the story and maybe you will find a solution," said Prema's mother.



“Many years ago, your father left the village and went to the city. While he was there, he saw many children from his village working tirelessly and facing hardship. It was very upsetting for him.”





“When you were born, he would tell me, ‘I hope our daughter is lovely and courageous just like you. We must educate her to ensure she has a bright future. We must keep her close and take good care of her.’”

“We planted the apple tree to remind us of our commitment to improve the future for you and other children in the village.”



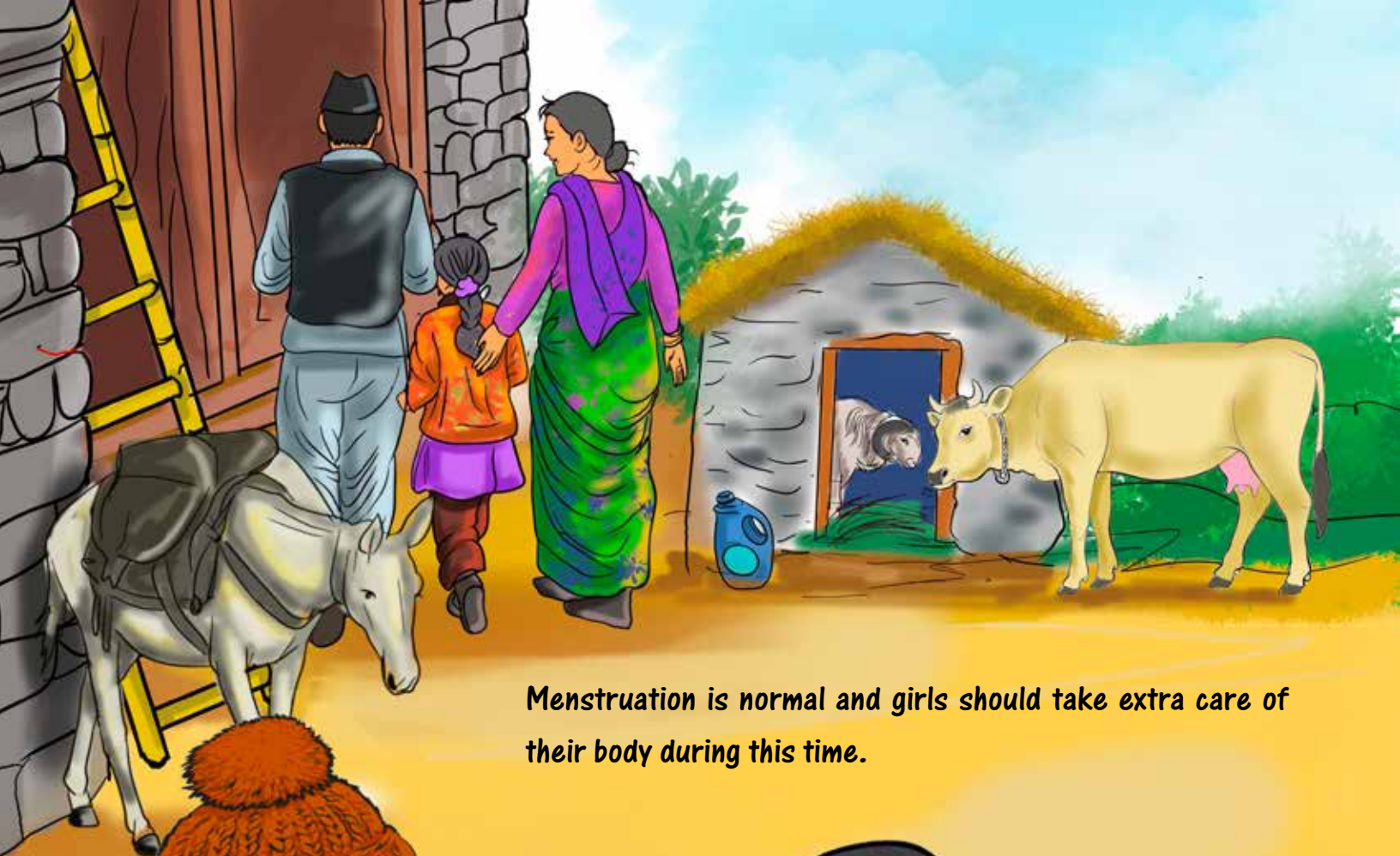


“A few years ago important matters like education, health, child marriage and chaupadi (banishing people to a shed or hut during menstruation) were not seen as a priority in our village.

Your father was determined to share what he had learnt about good practices with me and our friends.

We then shared these lessons with the rest of the village.”





Menstruation is normal and girls should take extra care of their body during this time.



Families should eat nutritious food grown in their home such as grains, beans, vegetables and fruit.





The government should focus on stopping harmful practices such as child marriage.



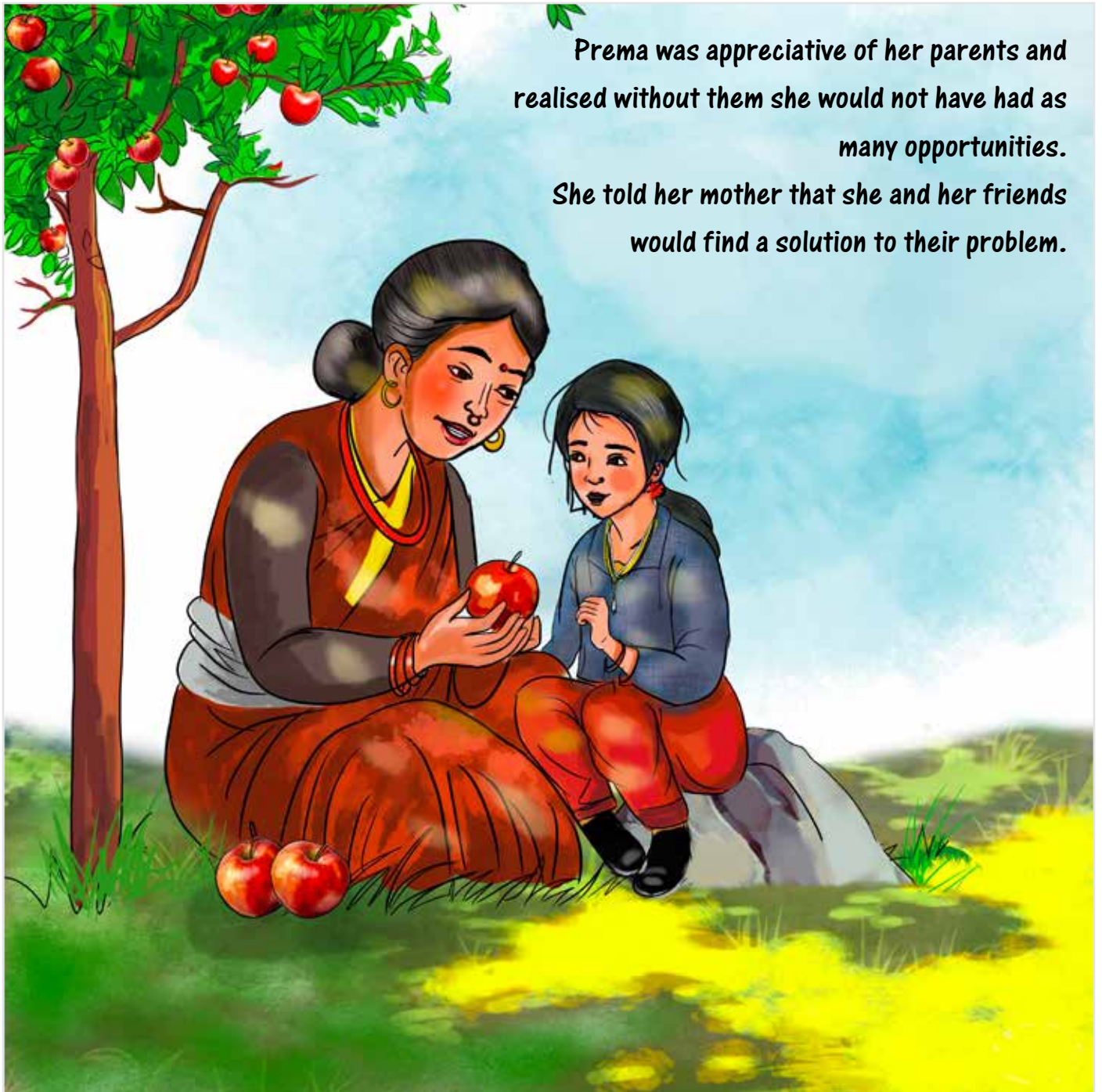


Both girls and boys must be educated so they can dream big.

“When your father passed away, I promised to continue his dream. Seeing the apple tree motivated me to continue having conversations to change perceptions and I worked hard to make sure you could still attend school.”



Prema was appreciative of her parents and realised without them she would not have had as many opportunities. She told her mother that she and her friends would find a solution to their problem.

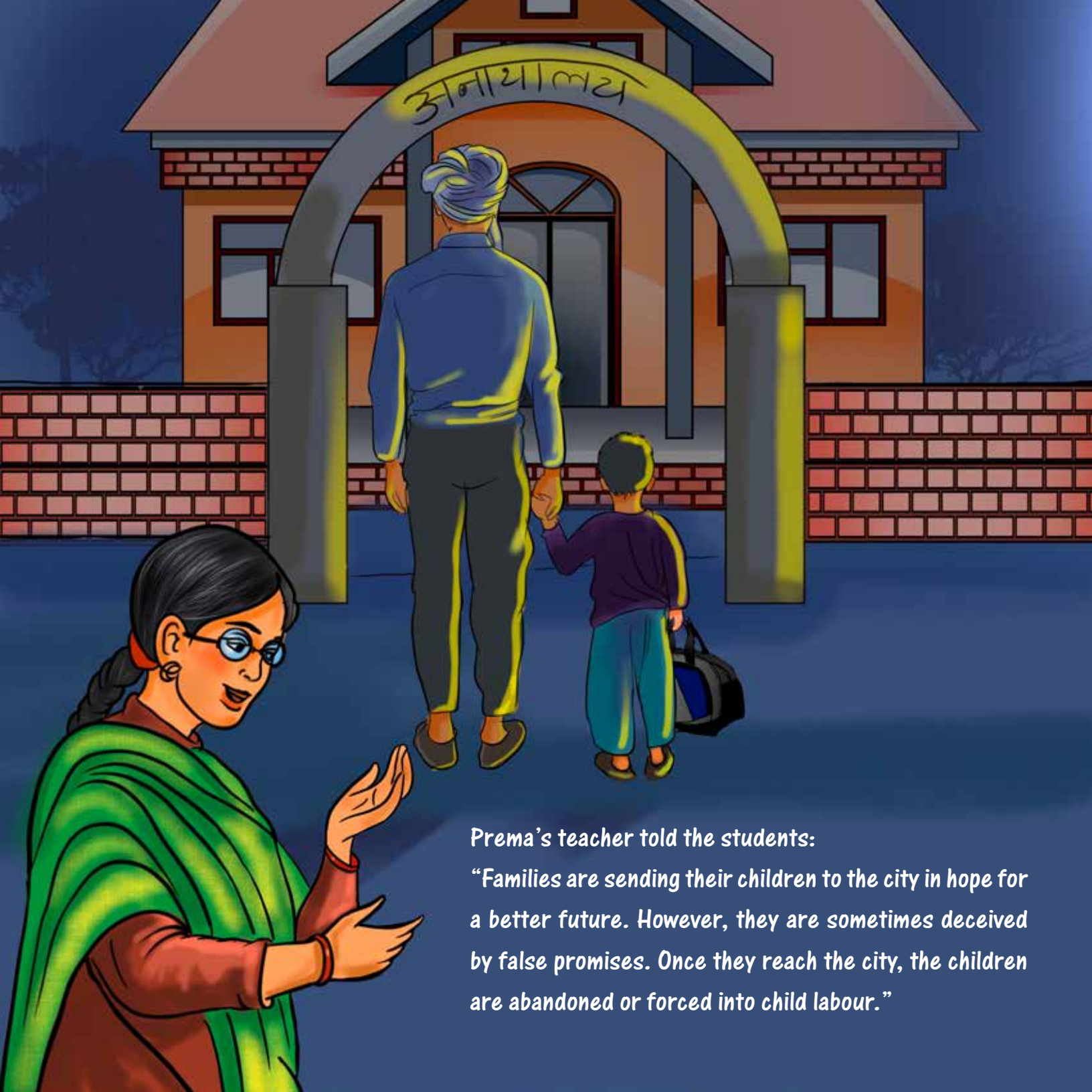


The next day, Prema shared what she had learnt from her mother.

Other students had also heard similar things from their parents and agreed it was their turn to solve the problem.

The biggest problem at the moment was that parents were sending their children to the city.





Prema's teacher told the students:

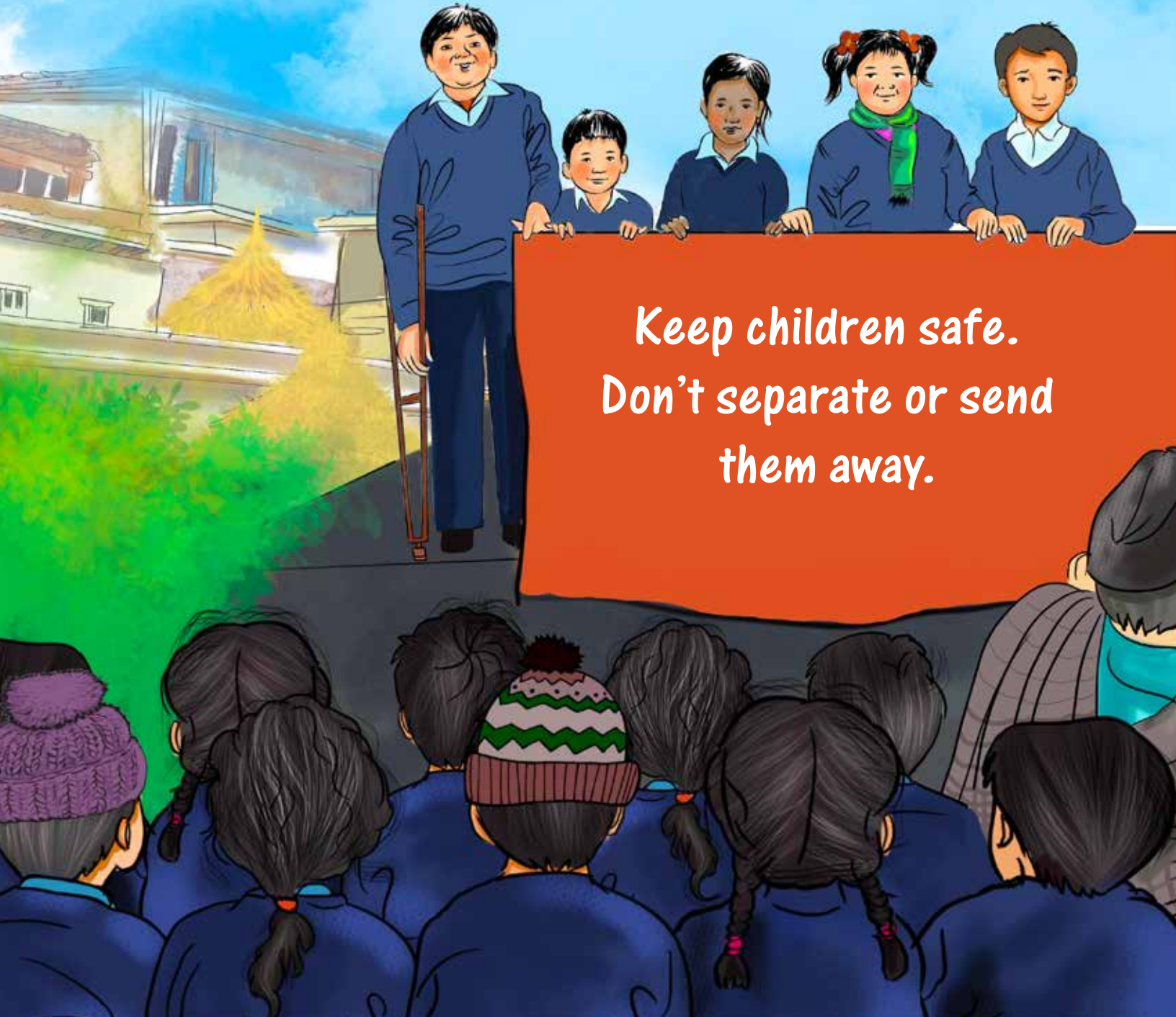
“Families are sending their children to the city in hope for a better future. However, they are sometimes deceived by false promises. Once they reach the city, the children are abandoned or forced into child labour.”

After lots of discussion, Prema, her friends and her teacher made a plan. They went door to door educating and raising awareness in the village.





Prema and her friends organised a stage show in the local community.



Keep children safe.
Don't separate or send
them away.



*We need our family's love
and support*

After listening to the children, their parents all came together to share what they had learnt.

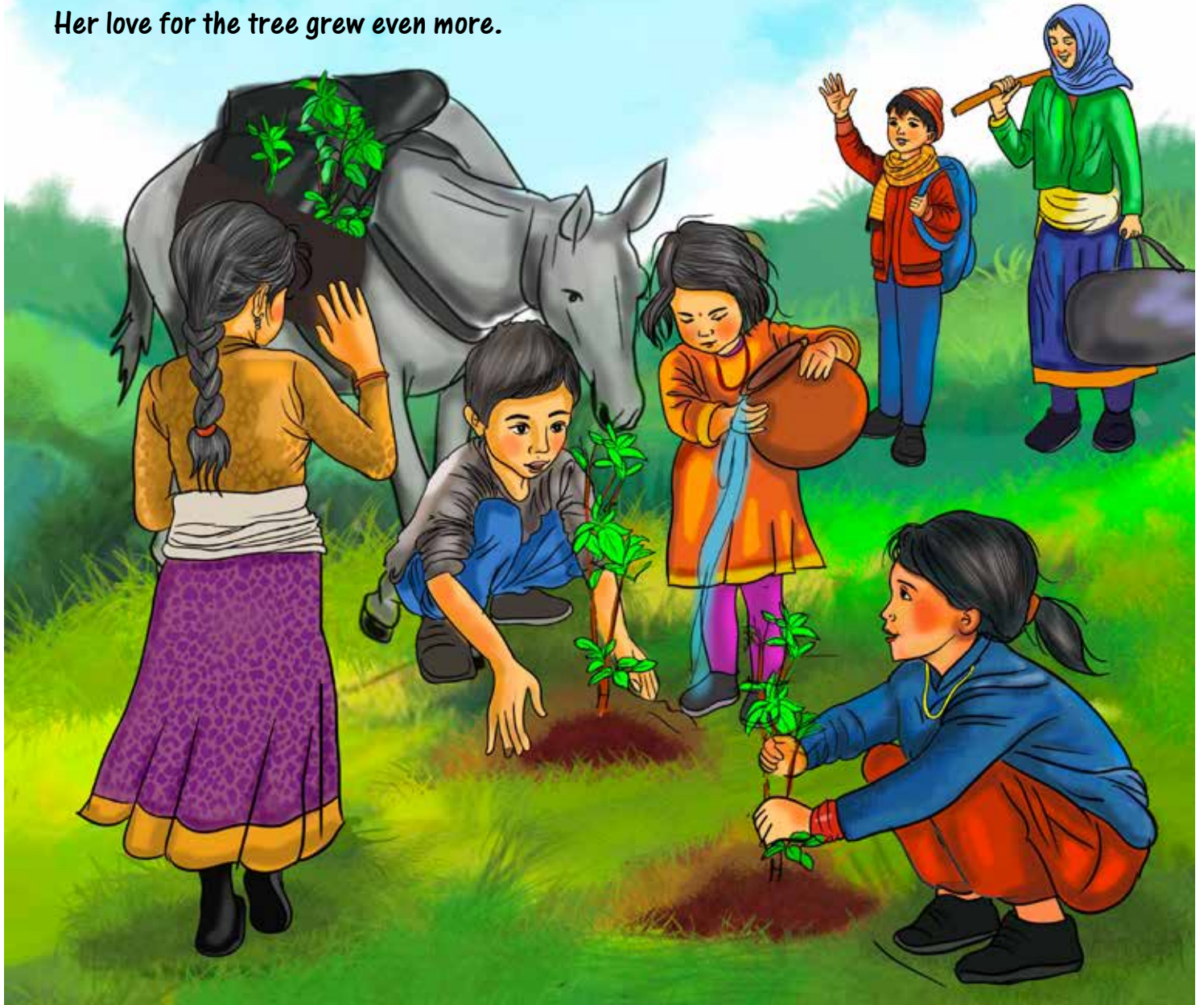
Gagan's parents reflected it would have been a mistake to send him away and felt lucky that they had been warned.

Jayasara's father expressed that he hoped to find his son who had already been sent away so they could bring him home



Prema now understood the significance of the apple tree. It was symbolic of her parents' dream to change the mindset of people living in her village and protect the children.

Her love for the tree grew even more.





Prema and her friends continued to share her parents' story and raise awareness and educate the village.

"They hoped that as the apple tree continued to grow, it would act as a reminder of what they were trying to achieve. One day, once their dreams for the village came true, their reward would be sweet. Just like apples."





This book is dedicated to children around the world like Prema