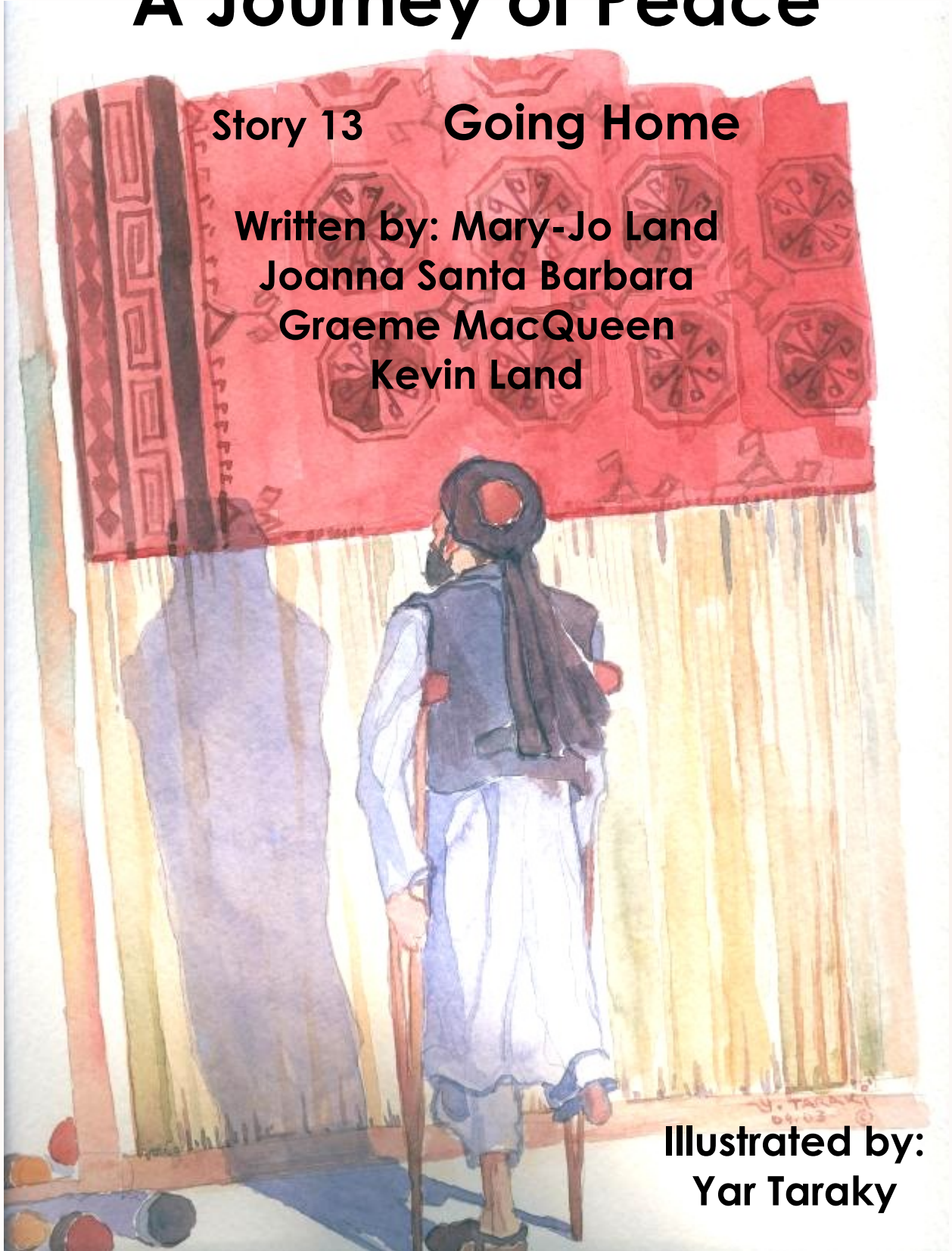


A Journey of Peace

Story 13 Going Home

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Second Edition

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Story Characters:

Jameela: a ten-year-old girl who lives with her family in a rural area of Afghanistan.

Ahmed: Jameela's five-year-old brother.

Abdullah: Jameela's fifteen-year-old brother.

Haleema: The children's mother.

Merza: The children's father.

Bibi Jan: The paternal grandmother.

Kaka Ghulam: The paternal grandfather.

Yunus: The children's uncle who was killed by a landmine at age 20, youngest son of Bibi Jan and Kaka Ghulam.

Fatima: The children's aunt, young widow of Uncle Yunus.

Aly: The children's uncle, who lives in the city.

Aisha: The children's aunt, Aly's wife, who lives in the city.

Story Synopsis:

Jameela lives with her family in a village in Afghanistan. They were already experiencing a great deal of difficulty during the domestic struggles of their homeland when tragedy struck. After coming in contact with a landmine while working in the field, her Uncle Yunus was killed and her father lost a leg.

In "**Jameela's Garden**", Jameela and her younger brother Ahmed try to understand the anger and estrangement demonstrated by their older brother Abdullah. With the guidance of their grandmother, Bibi Jan, they learn how they might help him get over the loss of his Uncle Yunus, with whom he was very close.

“The Wisdom of Bibi Jan” further demonstrates the grandmother’s role as comforter and adviser. Abdullah’s concern over the change in personality of a school friend due to the trauma of the war triggers Jameela’s revelation that she is having nightmares, and Bibi Jan provides her with a special cure for her fears.

Much more of what is troubling Jameela is presented in **“Making Cookies”**. Her fear of landmines is so strong that, much to Abdullah’s annoyance, she is even frightened walking along a path that has already been cleared. Bibi Jan uses the opportunity of making cookies to help Jameela come to terms with her father’s injury, as well as finding for Fatima a positive means of expression of grief for Yunus.

Jameela is finding it very difficult to fathom the mysteries that are locked up inside **“Merza’s Heart”**. She mourns the loss of the cheerful man she knew before his injury, the one who was full of stories. Her innocent questions bring him to tears, but they also remind him of the man he used to be, and create the yearning in him to be that way again.

The sadness and grief of Fatima, young widow of Yunus, is felt by Jameela and Ahmed, who attempt to cheer her. Bibi Jan notices and suggests ways for the family to come together and celebrate good memories of Yunus, especially by singing **“Yunus’s Song”**.

When their village is shelled through the night, the family faces the grim truth that they must abandon what is most dear to them in **“Leaving Home”**. Each of them deals with this traumatic thought in his or her own way, but ultimately they know it is for the best and put on a brave front as they face the future.

In **“A New Friend”**, the family is staying with an old friend of Merza’s while they are on their journey to the safety of his brother’s place in the city. While there, Abdullah learns a valuable lesson about the nature of making judgments about people who are different in either the language that they speak or their beliefs.

As the family continues its journey to the city, Abdullah discovers that Jameela has brought her kitten from home and has kept it hidden the entire journey. In anger, he takes the kitten from her and throws it in the undergrowth on the side of the road. Jameela is angry with her brother and refuses to acknowledge his existence. It is up to Bibi Jan to find a way for there to be **“Reconciliation”**.

In **“Merza’s Anger”**, Merza’s loss of control over his temper frightens both Jameela and Ahmed. The emotional upheaval wreaks havoc on both children, and causes them to be short with each other. While hiding, Ahmed overhears his father talking to Bibi Jan about his own insecurity regarding the loss of his leg. When the child is discovered, it becomes an opportunity for bridges to be mended between father and son.

Bibi Jan's diplomatic skills are once again put to the test in **“Making Peace”**. While looking for Merza’s brother Aly and his wife Aisha in the city, the family is staying at a camp for displaced persons located in an old schoolhouse. While in the cramped quarters where they must make their temporary home, Abdullah gets into a fight with a boy his own age over the intrusion of his bicycle in the others' living space.

As **“Abdullah and the Ten-foot Man”** opens, Abdullah, now living with his family at his uncle’s house for a week, comes down with a fever. He recalls his childhood dreams about wanting to grow up to be a soldier before he falls asleep. He dreams about meeting a giant soldier in the market who teaches him a lesson about the reality of war.

In **“A New Life”**, Jameela expresses her joy at being able to meet Aly and Aisha as helping to offset being away from her home. However, when Haleema tells her that she will soon have a baby sister or brother, Jameela’s anxiety over the instability of their lives takes over. Her mother helps her to understand why this is a blessing for them all.

"Going Home" begins with the news that after a year, the family is finally going to make the journey back home. As the family makes their preparations for their return, it is clear that there is still some tension between Haleema and Fatima.

Healing Elements:

Healing images and symbols: hope for the future, returning home, happiness.

Modeling of peaceful and virtuous interactions: caring, cooperation, family unity, affection, industry, religious devotion, leadership and responsibility, creativity.

Problem Issues: fear of the unknown.

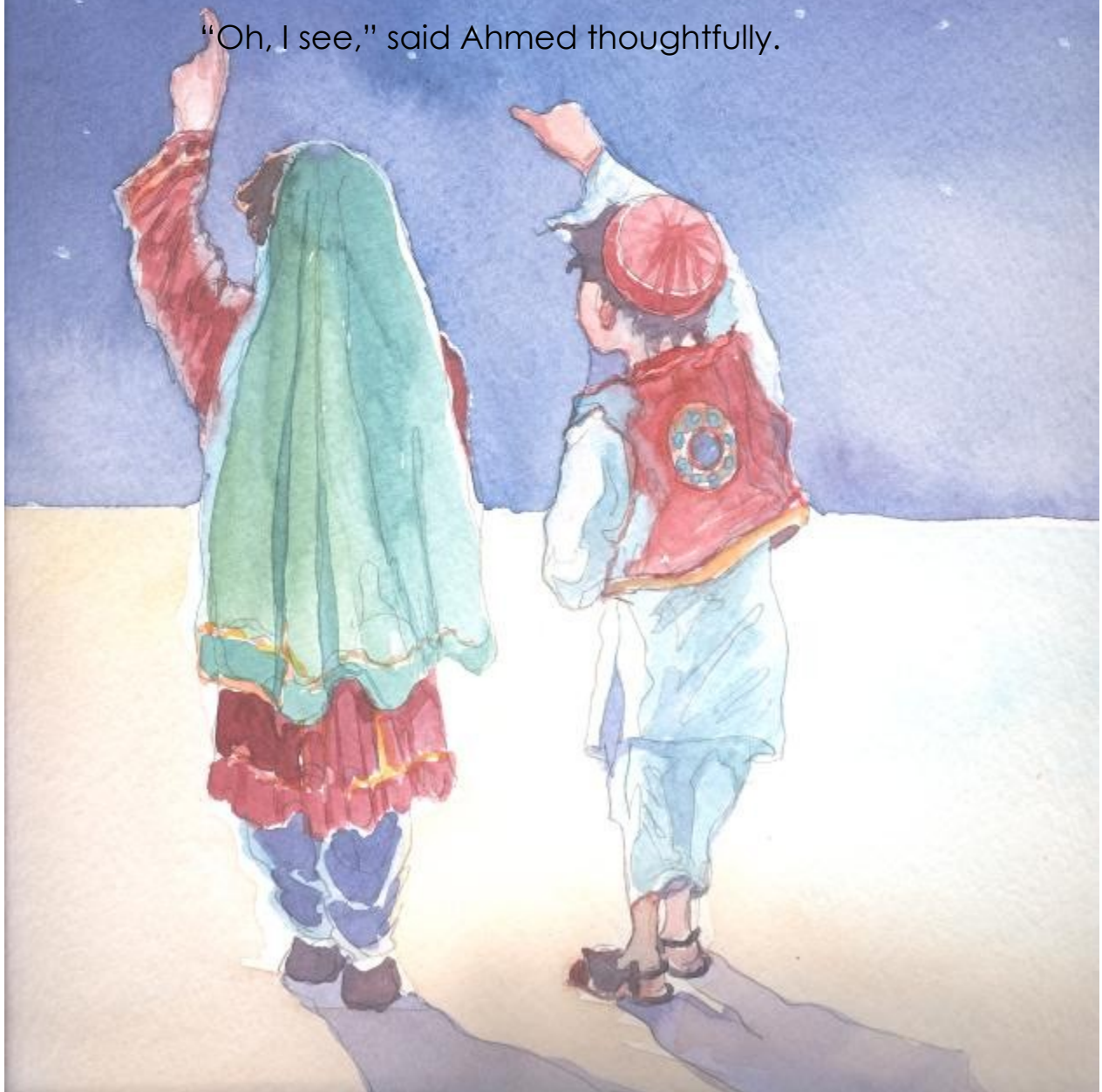
Healing Strategies: persevering to achieve one's dreams, acknowledgement of other's work and contributions.

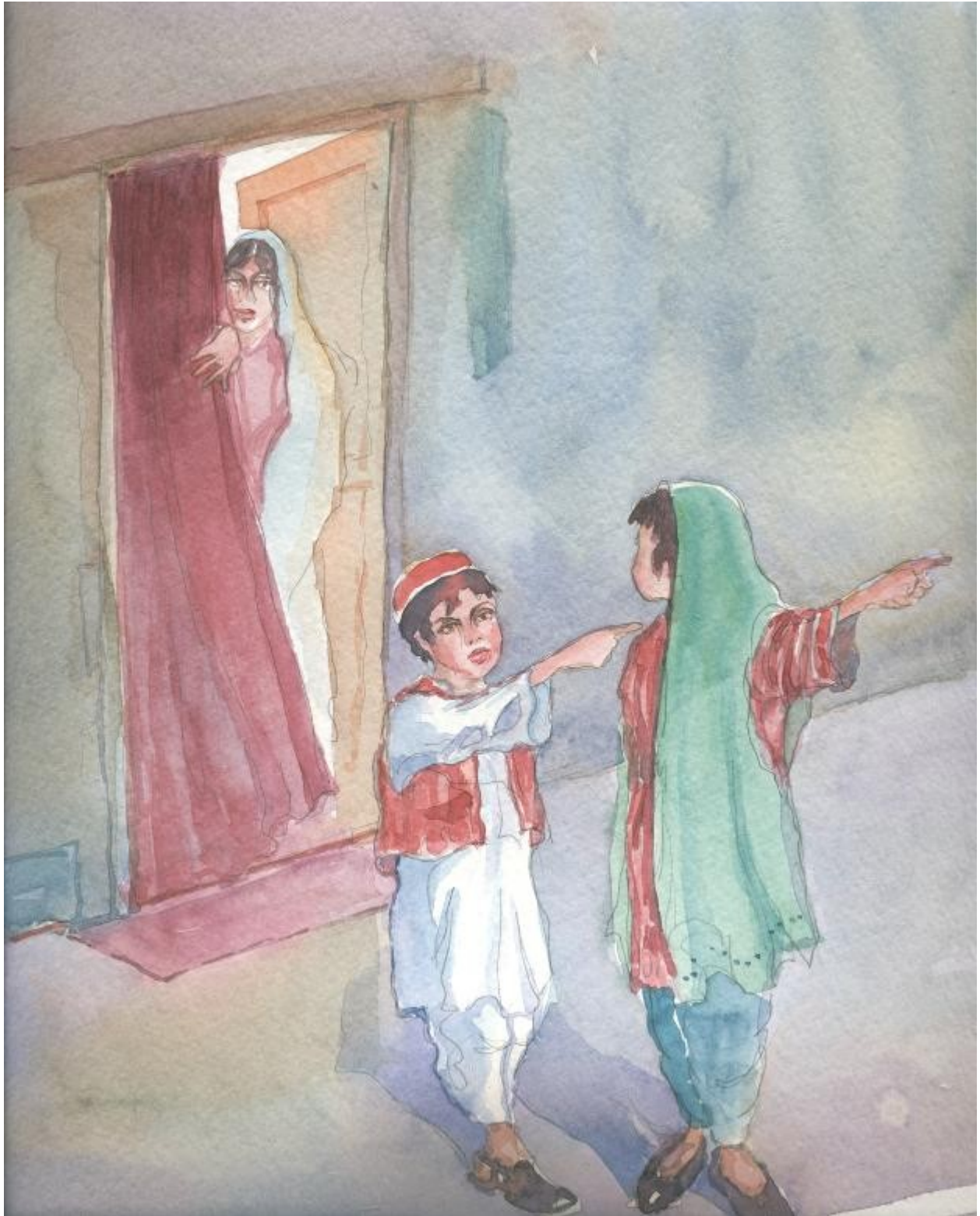
Jameela and Ahmed stood together outside Uncle Aly's house. They were trying to count the stars.

"Why are there so many stars at home and almost no stars here?" Ahmed asked his sister. "Did they run away to the country?"

"No, Ahmed," laughed Jameela, "the lights in the city are too bright for the smallest stars to shine through."

"Oh, I see," said Ahmed thoughtfully.





"Jameela! Ahmed! Come inside, please," called their mother, Haleema.



The children jumped up and ran inside where they found their grandparents, parents, brother and uncle and aunts. Everyone was trying to look serious.

“What’s wrong?” asked Jameela hesitantly.

“Surprise! We’re going home!” Everyone shouted in unison.

“Jameela, Ahmed, we’re going home!” laughed Auntie Fatima. “Now you can grow your tomatoes again and play with your kittens down by the river!”

Abdullah rubbed his brother’s head.



W. TARA R^U
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"Auntie Aisha and Uncle Aly are taking a holiday. They are going to come with us and help get the farm working again."

"But Mother, are you able to travel so far just now?" asked Jameela.

"Yes, Jameela, we will be fine," smiled Haleema. " We will pack tomorrow and leave the next day."

"Yes," said Merza, "we have sold some carpets and have enough money to go home."

Ahmed looked puzzled. "But will people in the country buy your carpets, Daddy? You make such beautiful carpets now."

"Ahmed, you are so thoughtful," said Merza, giving his son a hug. "Everyone will buy my carpets, they will be the best in the region. All I need now is a loom."

"Abdullah, are you coming home, too?" asked Jameela
"What about your job?"

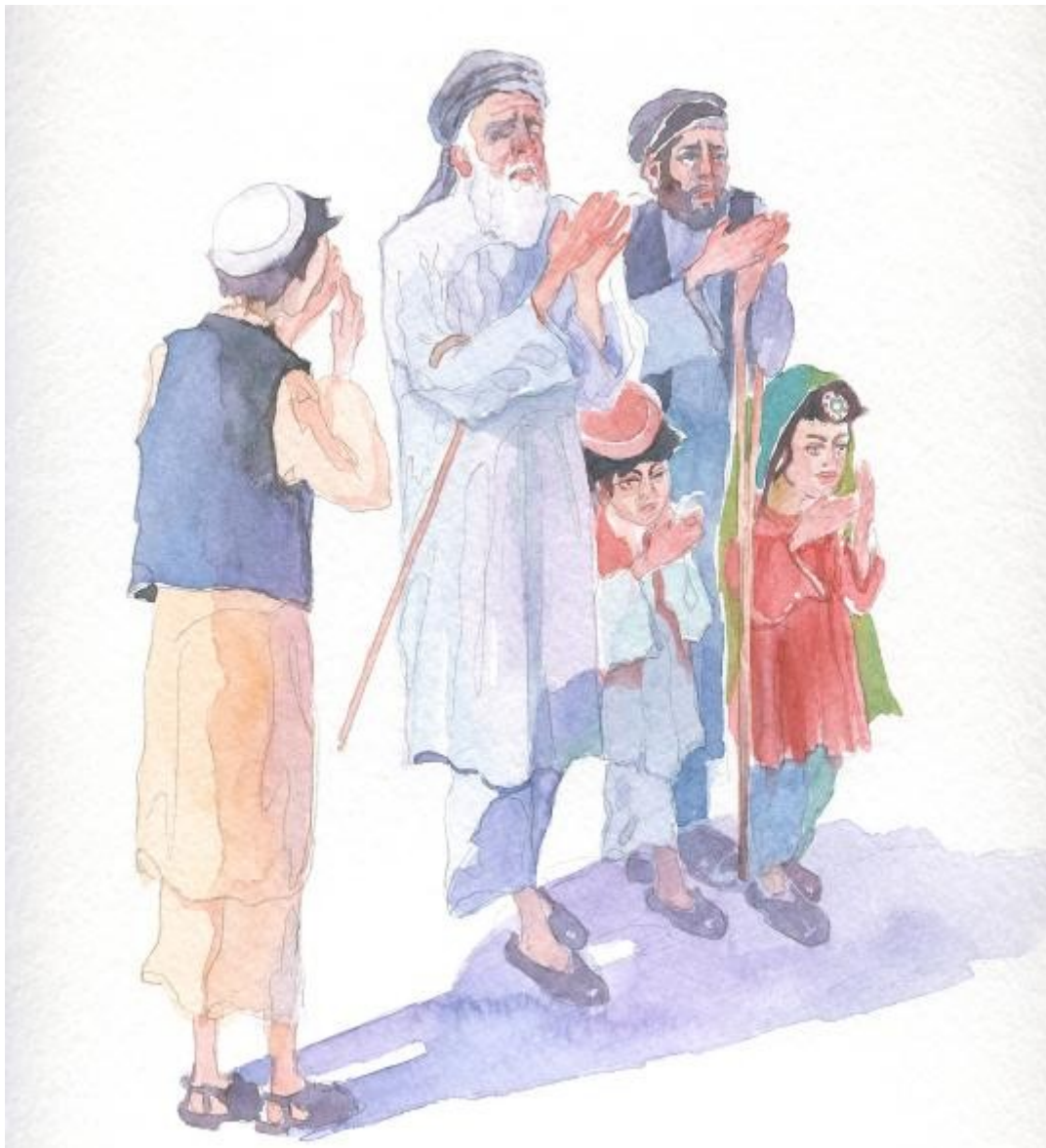
"I finished today," said Abdullah, proudly. "I've been transferred. Now I'm the Landmine Educator for our region. I start work in two weeks."

Jameela looked around the room. Everyone was smiling. She could not remember seeing everyone smiling before. Tears streamed down her cheeks, gathering at the ends of her grin. Everyone was together and everyone was happy. Jameela was overjoyed.



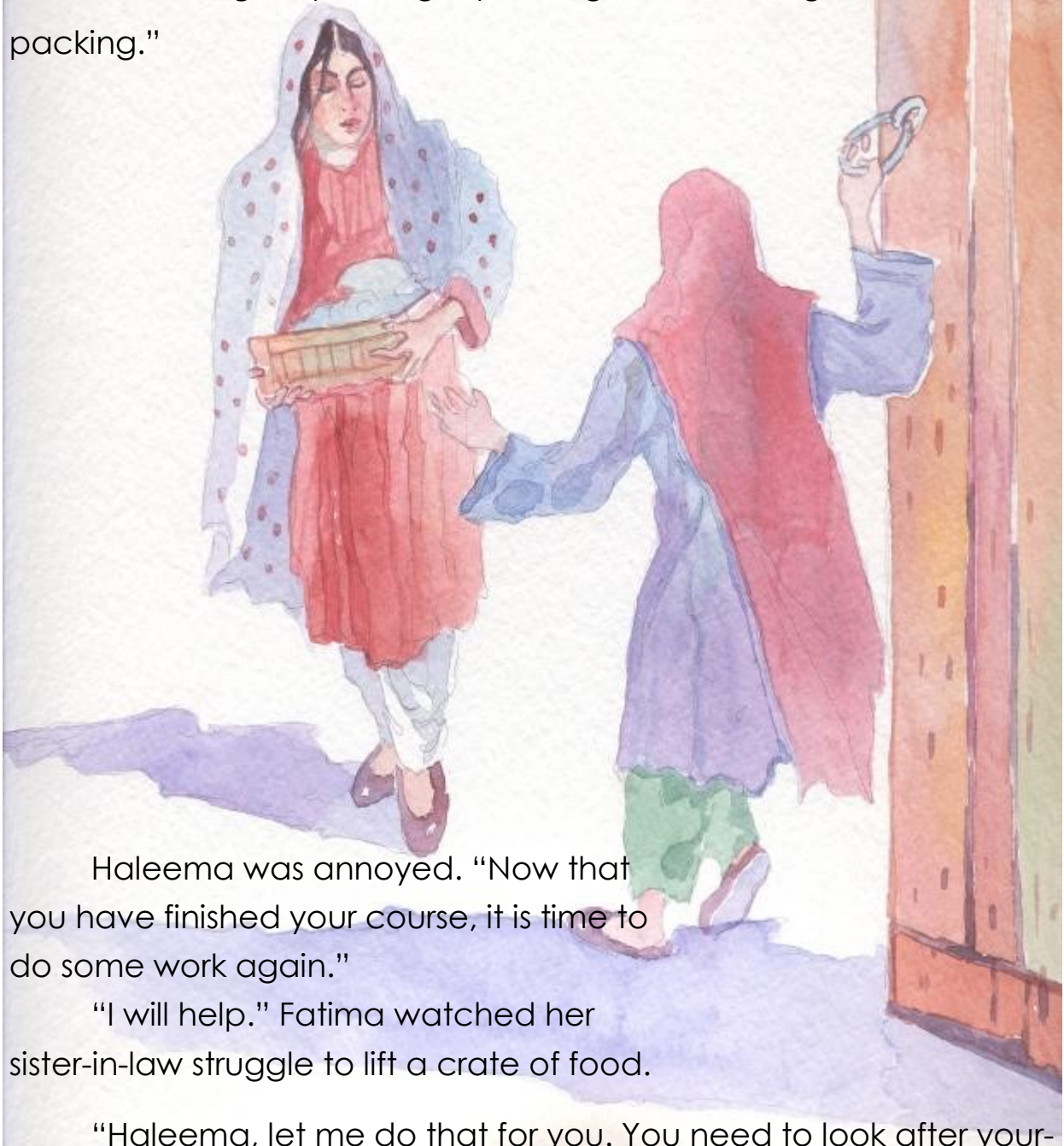
Bibi Jan took her granddaughter's hand. "We don't know if the house will be damaged or completely destroyed. Our village won't be the same. Many of our friends died in the fighting. We must be prepared for the changes."

"We shall pray for our friends and neighbours," added Kaka Ghulam. "We shall pray for a safe journey and a home at the end of the journey." The family prayed together. Hope and fear mingled in their hearts.



The next morning, Haleema was awake early.

"Fatima, get up and get packing. We have a great deal of packing."

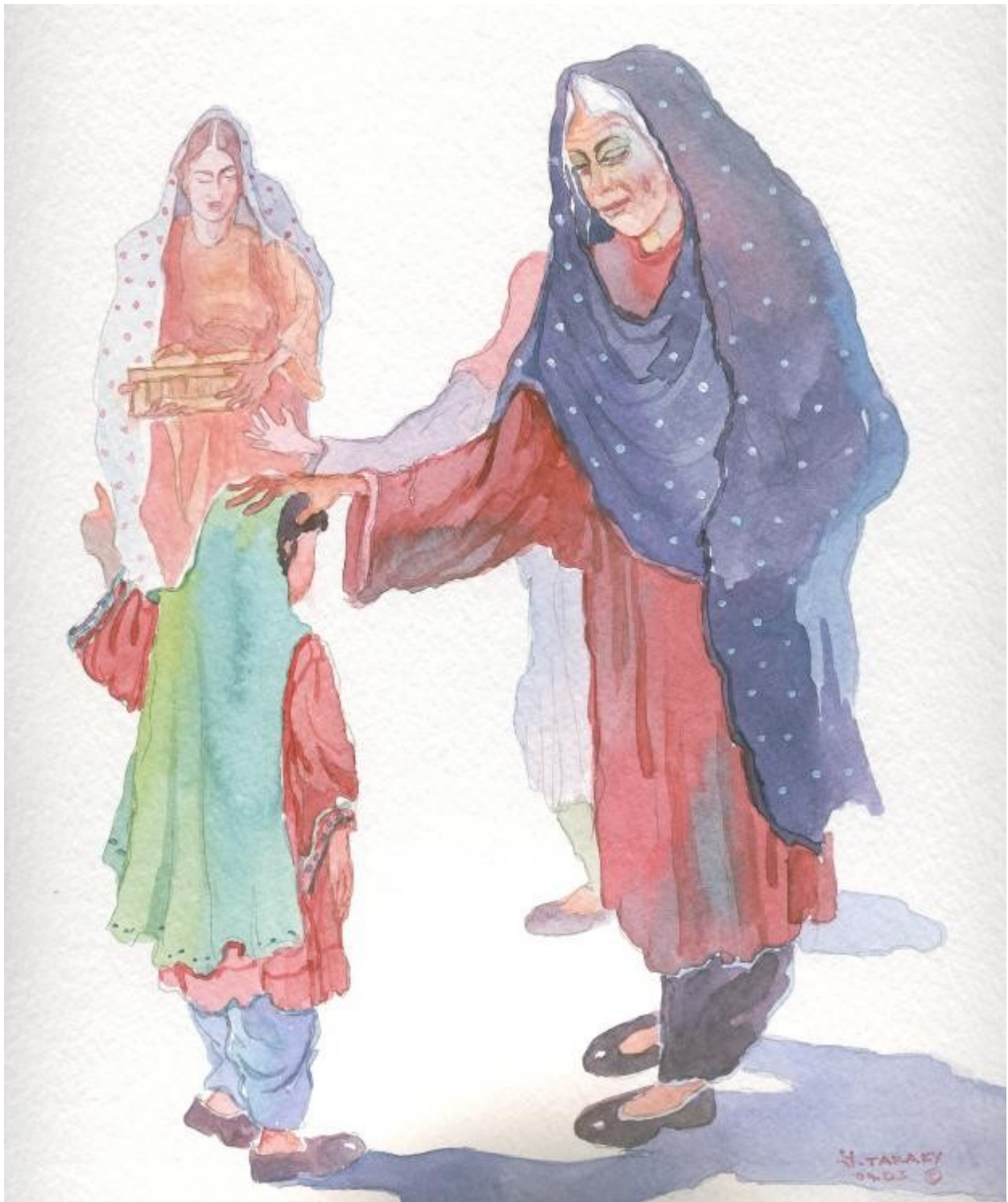


Haleema was annoyed. "Now that you have finished your course, it is time to do some work again."

"I will help." Fatima watched her sister-in-law struggle to lift a crate of food.

"Haleema, let me do that for you. You need to look after yourself."

"You don't need to tell me what to do just because you are a midwife now," said Haleema as she walked out of the door with the crate.



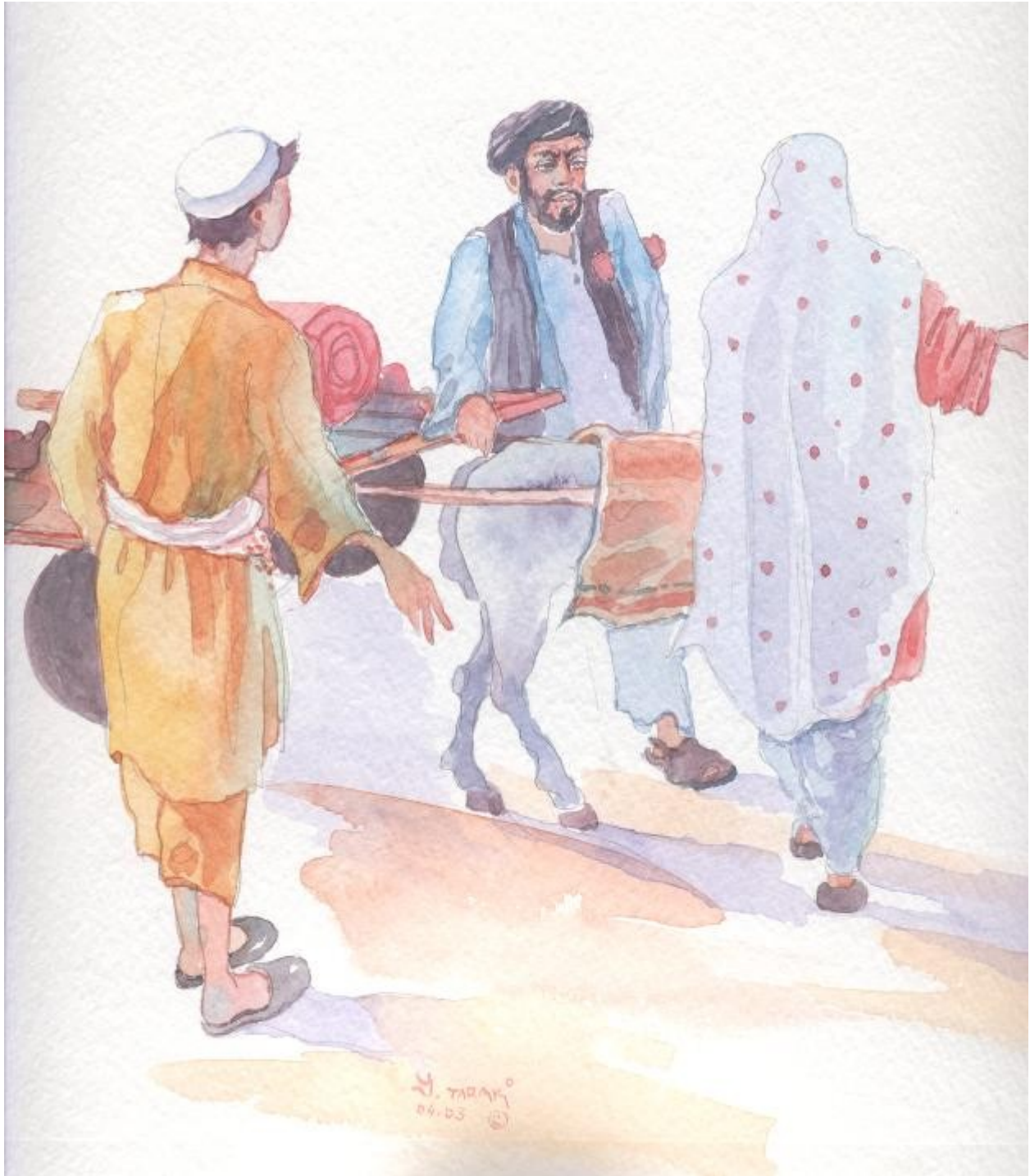
“Why is Mother always mad at Auntie Fatima?” whispered Jameela to Bibi Jan.

“Auntie Fatima needs to work hard to help this family. Your mother is making sure that she does,” said Bibi Jan.



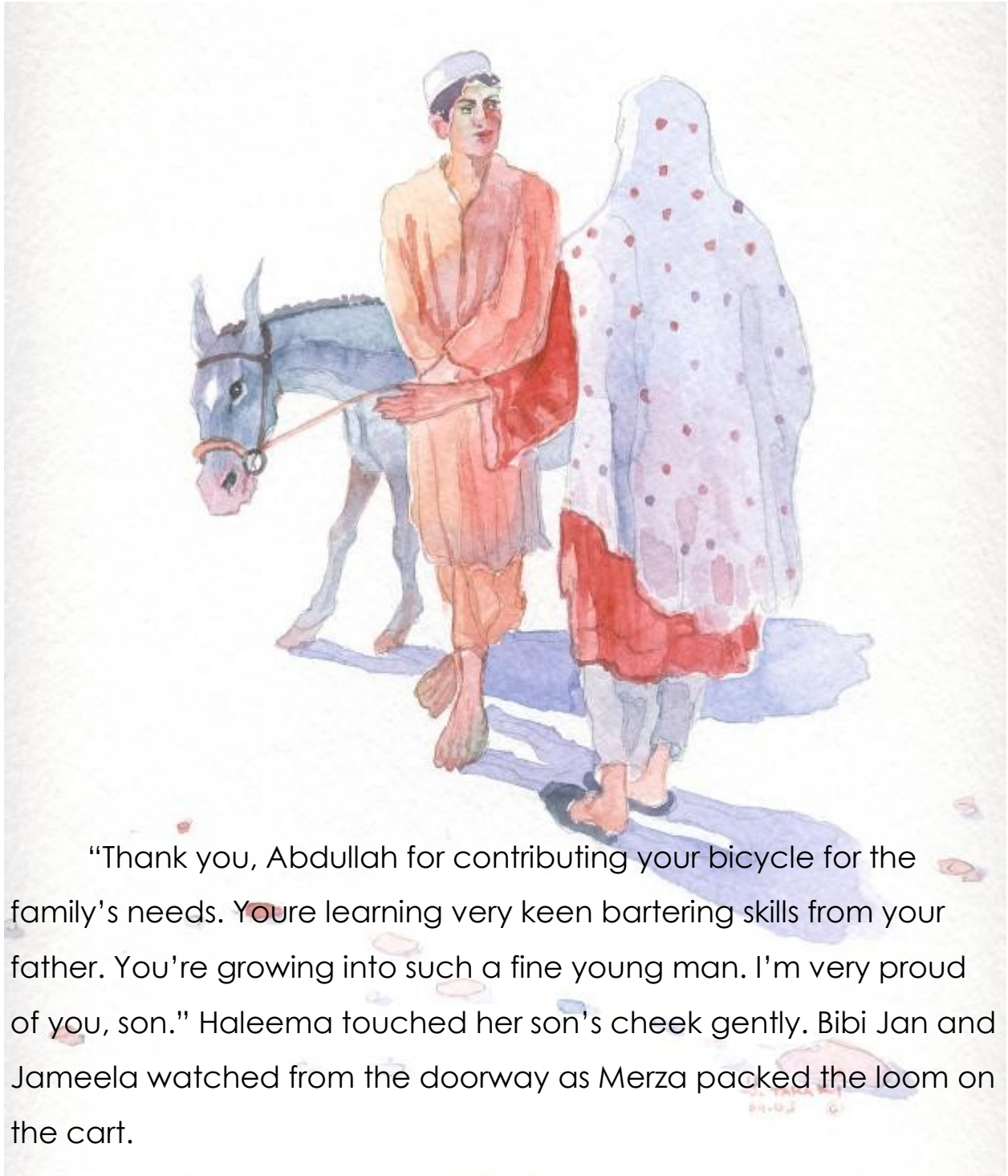
"I wish they could be friends," sighed Jameela.

"Mother! Mother!" Abdullah called from the yard. "We bought a loom for Dad! Look! And we bought another donkey and a cart to carry all our belongings back home. The cart needs a little fixing but now you and Bibi Jan can rest in the cart on the journey."



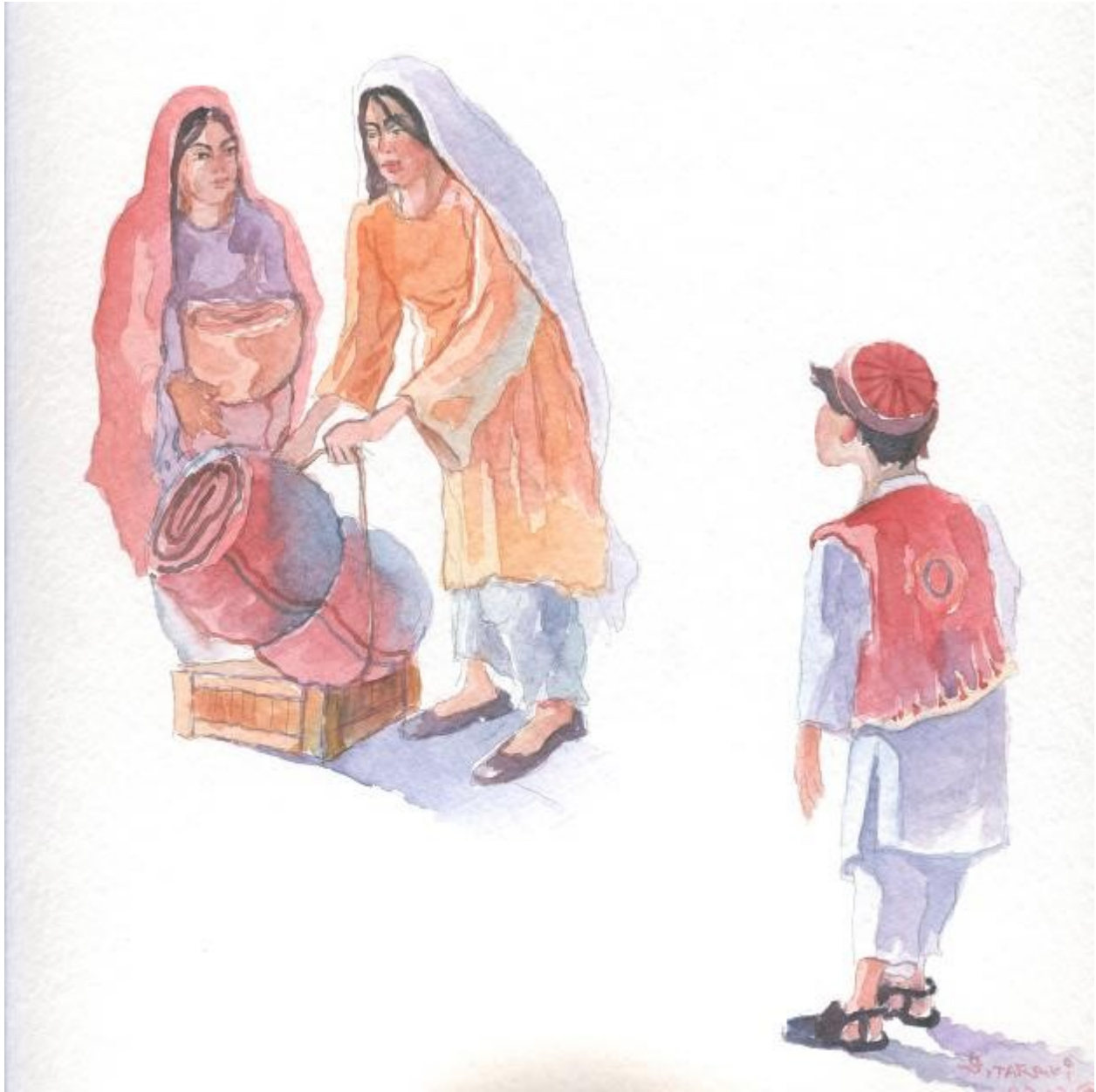
“Abdullah, how did you and your father pay for all these? They must have been expensive.” asked Haleema.

“ I met a man who had just come into the city and he wanted to buy my bike. Then he asked us if we knew where to sell the donkey and cart. We got to talking and we told him we are going home and could use the cart. He said the cart was not much good without the donkey so we traded my bike and one of Dad's carpets for the donkey and the cart. He was very generous but we both got what we needed. As for the loom, Dad sold another one of his carpets to my teacher and that was enough money to buy the loom,” exclaimed Abdullah excitedly.



"Thank you, Abdullah for contributing your bicycle for the family's needs. You're learning very keen bartering skills from your father. You're growing into such a fine young man. I'm very proud of you, son." Haleema touched her son's cheek gently. Bibi Jan and Jameela watched from the doorway as Merza packed the loom on the cart.

"It's a fine donkey and cart. Well done, Abdullah," praised Bibi Jan. "And I am sure that your father is very happy to have the loom. Everything is working out so well. I hope our house has been blessed with some good fortune too."



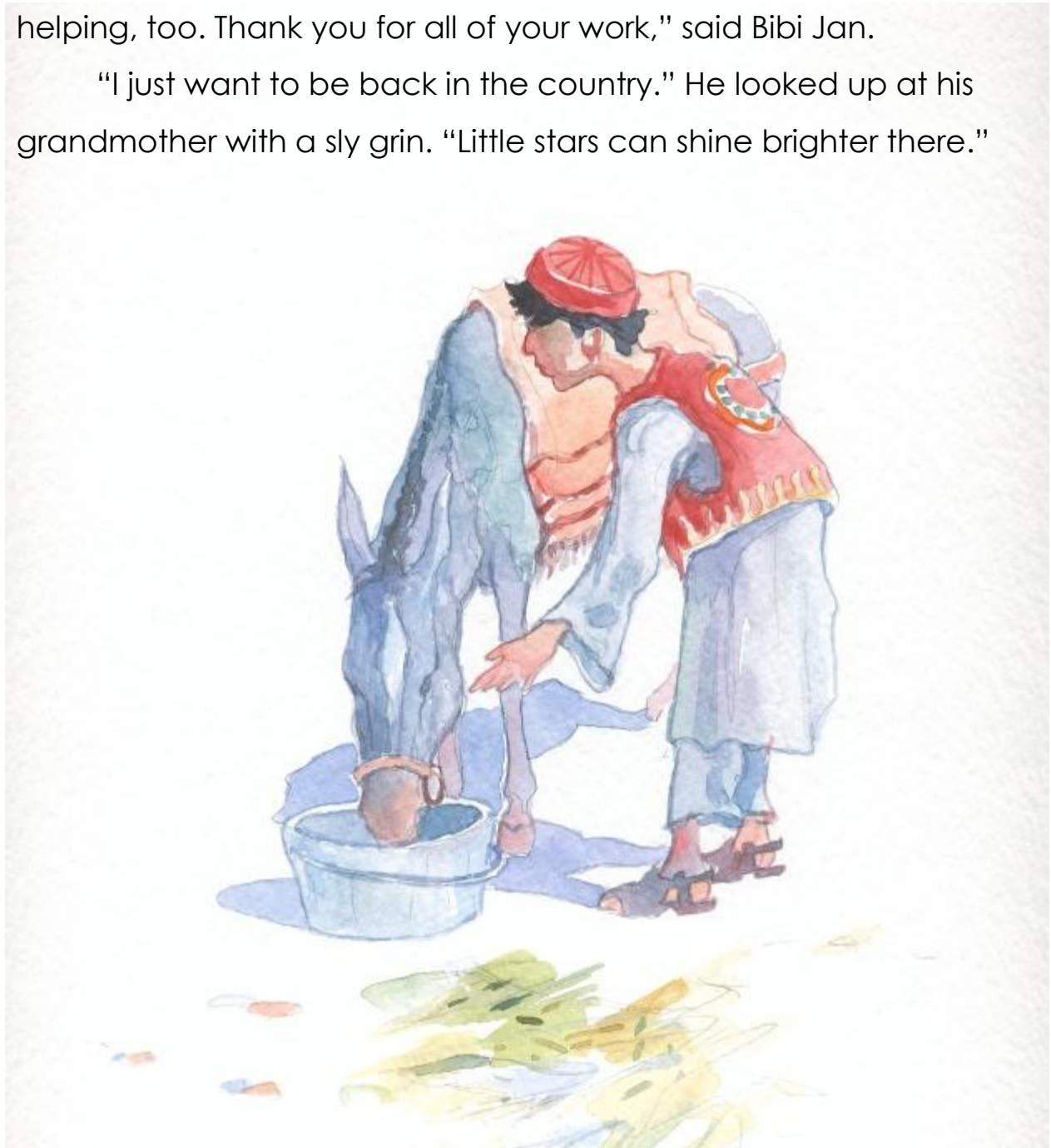
Inside, Ahmed woke to find Auntie Fatima and Auntie Aisha packing and sorting. No one noticed the little boy as he dressed and packed and tidied. He opened the door each time someone needed to pass through. He gave fresh water to the donkey. Everyone was so busy that they took no notice of his efforts to help. Finally, he sat down in the middle of the floor and folded his arms across his chest.

Bibi Jan frowned at the pouting child. "What's wrong, my little Ahmed?" she asked.

"I've helped and helped and no one has noticed. I've worked very hard."

"Everyone is working hard, Ahmed. It is good that you are helping, too. Thank you for all of your work," said Bibi Jan.

"I just want to be back in the country." He looked up at his grandmother with a sly grin. "Little stars can shine brighter there."



Story 13 Going Home

Things to Talk About:

1. Talk about the happiest day in your life. What happened? Why were you so happy?
2. How can you help others every day? What can you do at home, at school, in your community to be helpful?
3. What can you do to show others that you appreciate their help or their work?

Things To Do:

1. Try to do at least one helpful thing every day at home, at school and in your community.
2. With your friends, plan a small project to work on together that will help your school or your community

