



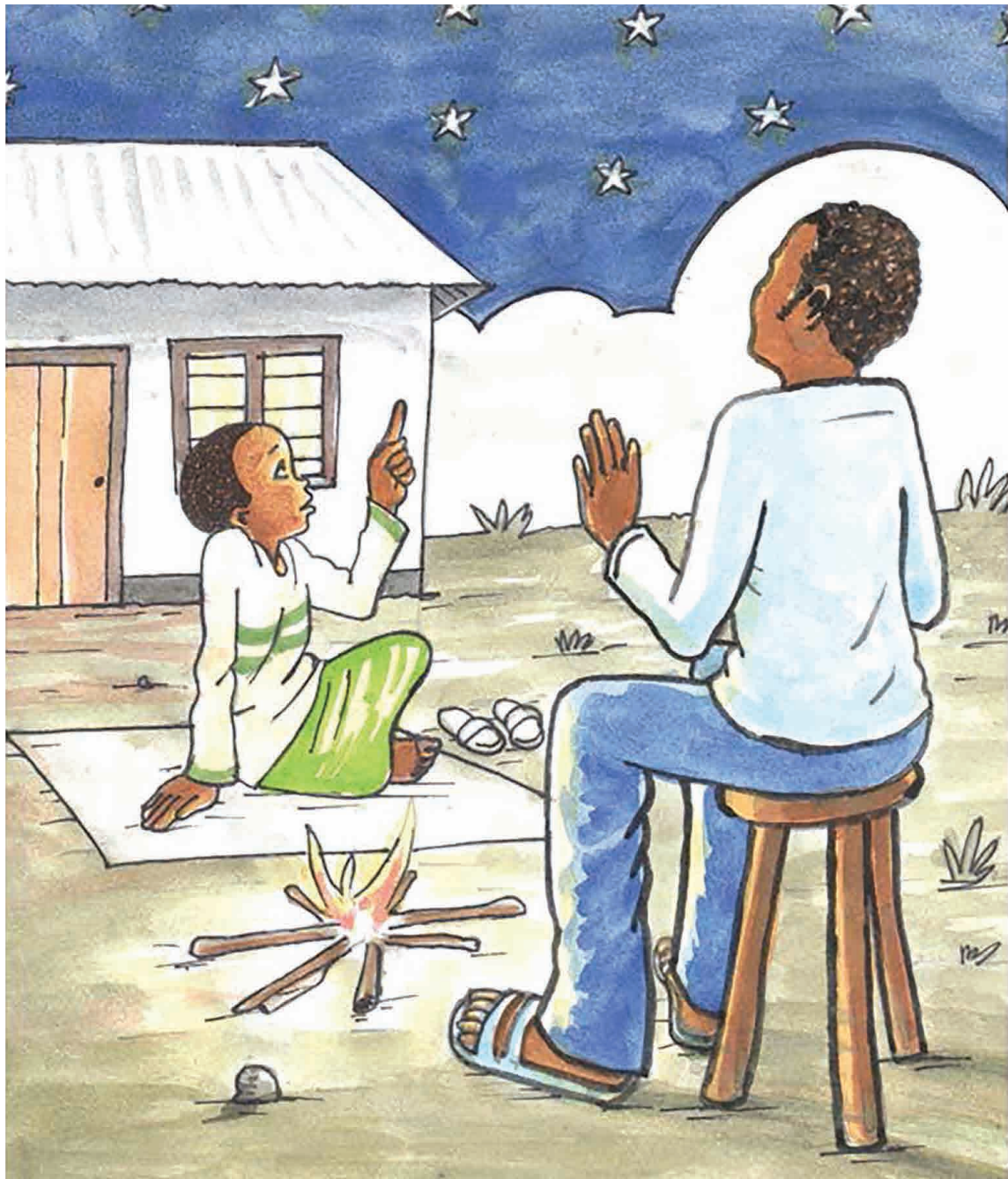
Tina and the Stars



Author:
Deogratias Simba

Illustrator:
Iddi Marumba





One evening, Tina was sitting outside with her father. She looked at the sky. She could see the bright stars twinkling.

“Dad, the stars look like sparkling butterflies. How lovely they are!” Tina sighed. “Dad, I want the stars. Will you buy me some?”

Tina’s father laughed.

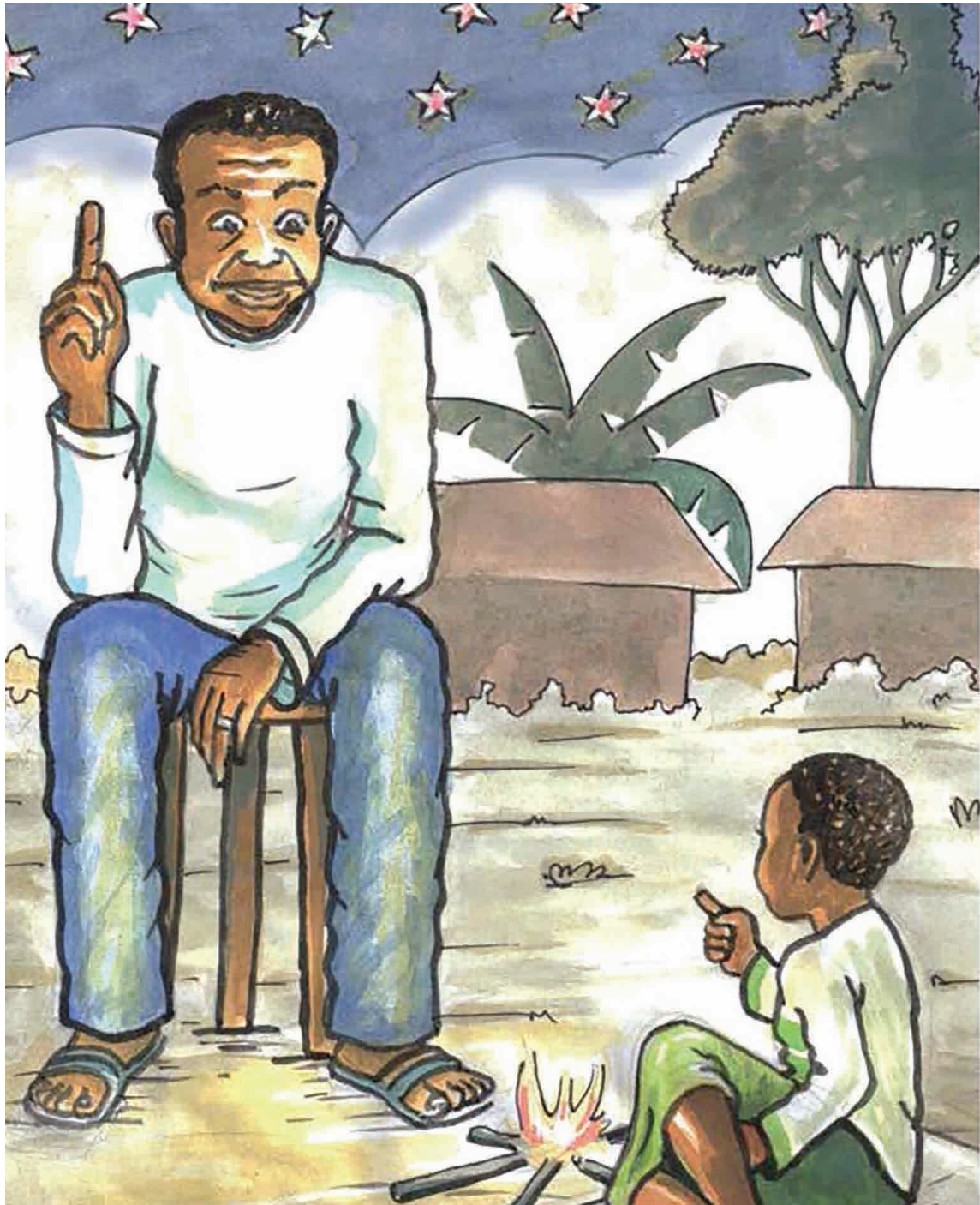


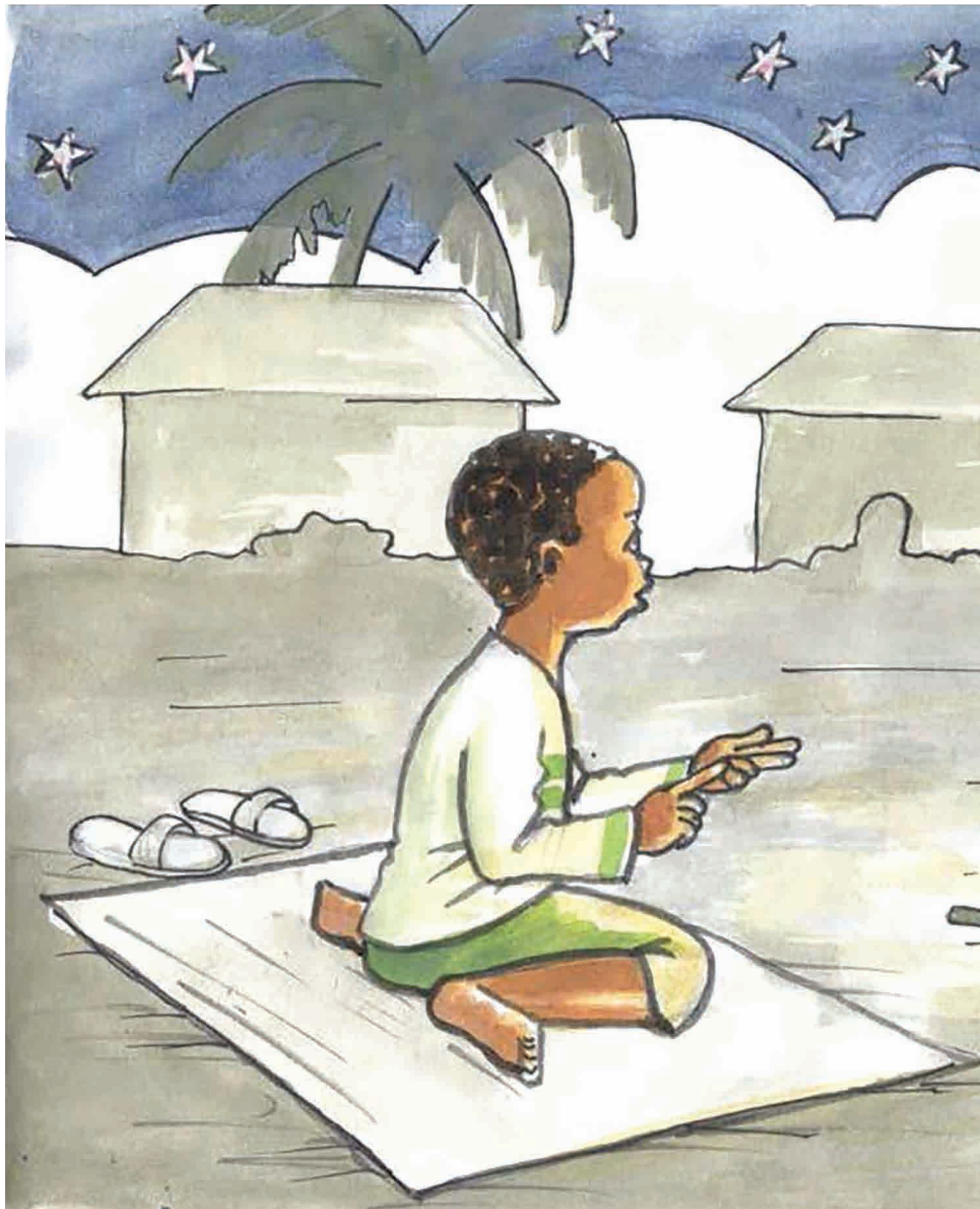


“Oh! Tina. The stars are not for sale. They can only be found up there in the sky,” her father told her.

“So, will you go up there someday to get them for me?” Tina asked.

“Wait patiently, Tina. I’ll find you the stars.”





“Oh! Okay.” Tina paused. “Friday is close to Saturday, isn’t it?”





“Yes,” Tina’s father responded. “Friday is close to Saturday. These days come one after the other.”

“Can you look for the stars on Saturday, Dad?” Tina asked.

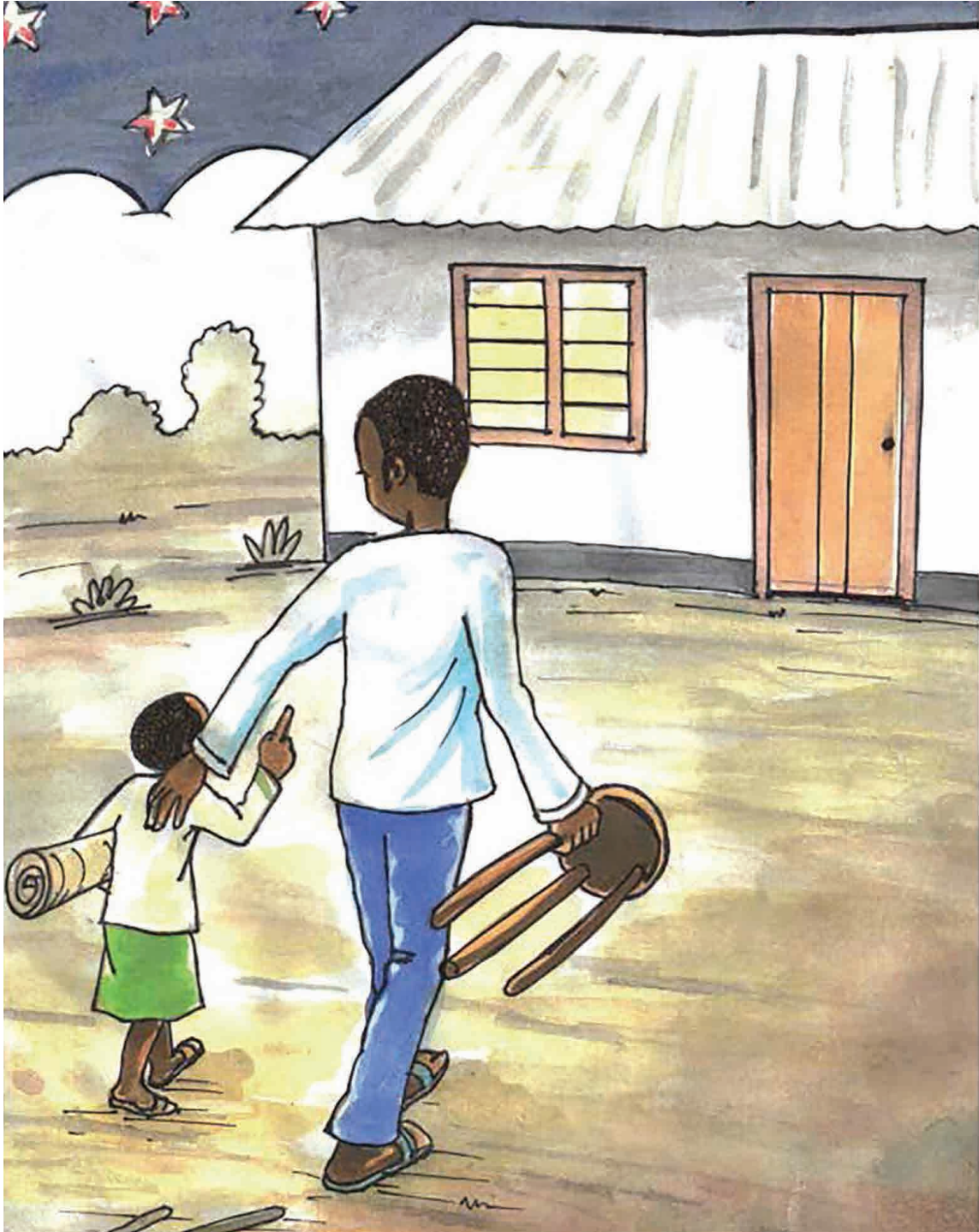




Tina's father was quiet. So was Tina.

Then she said, "When I grow up, I'll go and get the stars."

The two laughed and went back in the house.





Tina was playing. Suddenly, an angel appeared. The angel was shining brightly. He shone like the stars.

Tina smiled and asked, “Can I become an angel too?”

The angel just laughed, lightly.

“Tina, you’re a very curious girl. Why do you ask?”

“I love the stars. They amaze me. I wish I could fly up close to them. They twinkle, and I’m happy when I look at them,” said Tina.





“I’ll give you wings,” the angel said. Then the angel touched Tina on her back. Wings sprouted from her shoulders! “Thank you very much!” Tina called.





The angel had disappeared.





Tina raised her head. I can't go on my own to pluck the stars from the sky, she thought.

She then shouted to the stars, "Hey, dear stars, I'm coming to get you."

The stars showed that they had heard her. They shined even brighter.





**A pigeon passing by heard Tina calling out to the stars.
She followed Tina.**

“Are you talking to the stars?” she asked her.

“Yes! And I’m looking for a friend to accompany me into the sky.”





“I will go with you,” the Pigeon said.

Then, together they flew up, up, and up. They flapped their wings. They traveled until they reached the gates of heaven.

They found an old guard. “Can we come inside?” they asked.





The old guard said, “Whoever manages to answer my question will have permission to step inside. Okay?” “Okay,” Tina and the pigeon responded.

“If you add one star to four other stars, how many do you get?” the guard asked. “The answer is five stars,” Tina responded quickly.

Tina worked hard at school. She liked all the subjects. But she loved math best. The guard was impressed.

He told her, “That’s right! Go inside, but take no more than five stars each.”





Tina and her new friend the pigeon selected five big stars each. Tina wanted to give one to her dad, another to her mom, another to her brother, and another to her friend, Fatuma.





Her fifth star, she would keep for herself.





Was it all a dream? It felt real to Tina.

As she slept, her face shined with a smile. One hand was closed in a tight fist, as if she was holding stars.





Tina laughed a bit in her sleep. Her parents went into the room to make sure she was okay.

Tina's mother kissed her on the forehead.





**A week later, Tina's father brought her a surprise. Two toy stars!
Inside the stars were miniature lights.**

**They twinkled. They gave out a beautiful light. Tina loved them! She
placed the two stars in her room.**

**She couldn't wait to fall asleep and share them with her friend, the
pigeon.**





