


Why the Sky is So Far Away

Part 2

UMUIGBO

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A vibrant, colorful illustration of a village. The scene is set in a valley with rolling green hills in the background. In the foreground, several round huts with conical thatched roofs are built on a reddish-brown dirt ground. The sky is filled with large, fluffy clouds in various colors: bright blue, yellow, pink, and orange. In the bottom left corner, there are four birds: a blue one, a green one, and two yellow ones. In the bottom right corner, there are four small, smiling, anthropomorphic clouds with legs. The overall style is whimsical and child-friendly.

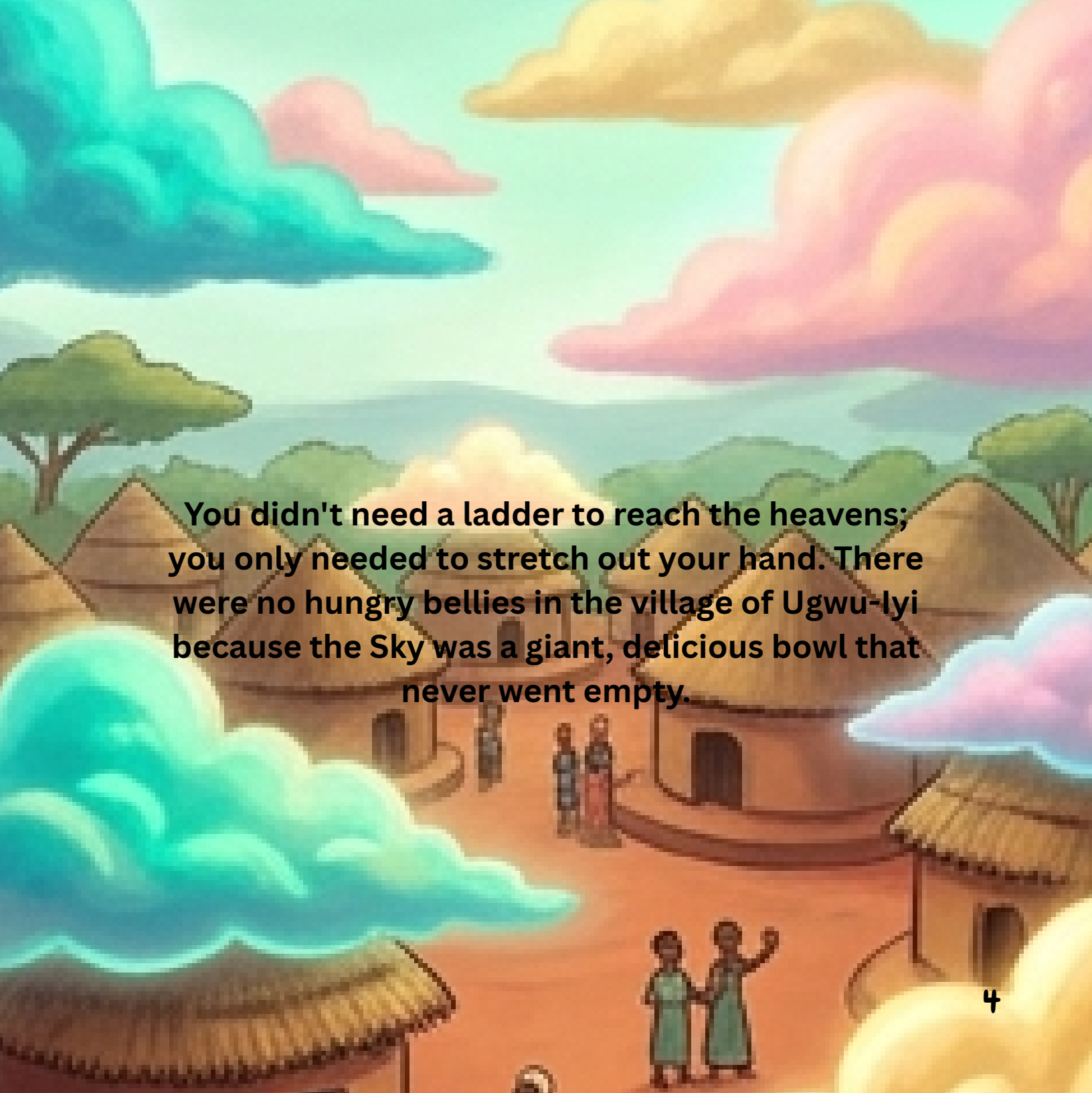
Chapter 1

The Sky Who Was Our Neighbor

Did you know that a long, long time ago,
the Sky was not a stranger living far
above the birds?

A vibrant, stylized illustration of a village scene. In the foreground, several round huts with conical thatched roofs are arranged on a reddish-brown dirt path. The huts are simple, with small arched doorways. The background features rolling green hills and a few trees. The sky is filled with large, fluffy clouds in shades of blue, pink, and yellow, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. The overall style is soft and painterly.

In those days, the Sky was our neighbor. He lived so close to the earth that he brushed against the shoulders of the tall men and tickled the ears of the little children.

A vibrant, stylized illustration of a village. The scene is filled with colorful, fluffy clouds in shades of blue, green, yellow, and pink. In the foreground, several traditional huts with thatched roofs are scattered across a reddish-brown dirt path. A few people are depicted: two women in the lower center, one in a blue dress and one in a red dress, and another person further back. The background shows rolling green hills under a bright sky. The overall style is reminiscent of a children's book illustration.

You didn't need a ladder to reach the heavens; you only needed to stretch out your hand. There were no hungry bellies in the village of Ugwu-lyi because the Sky was a giant, delicious bowl that never went empty.

Chapter 2

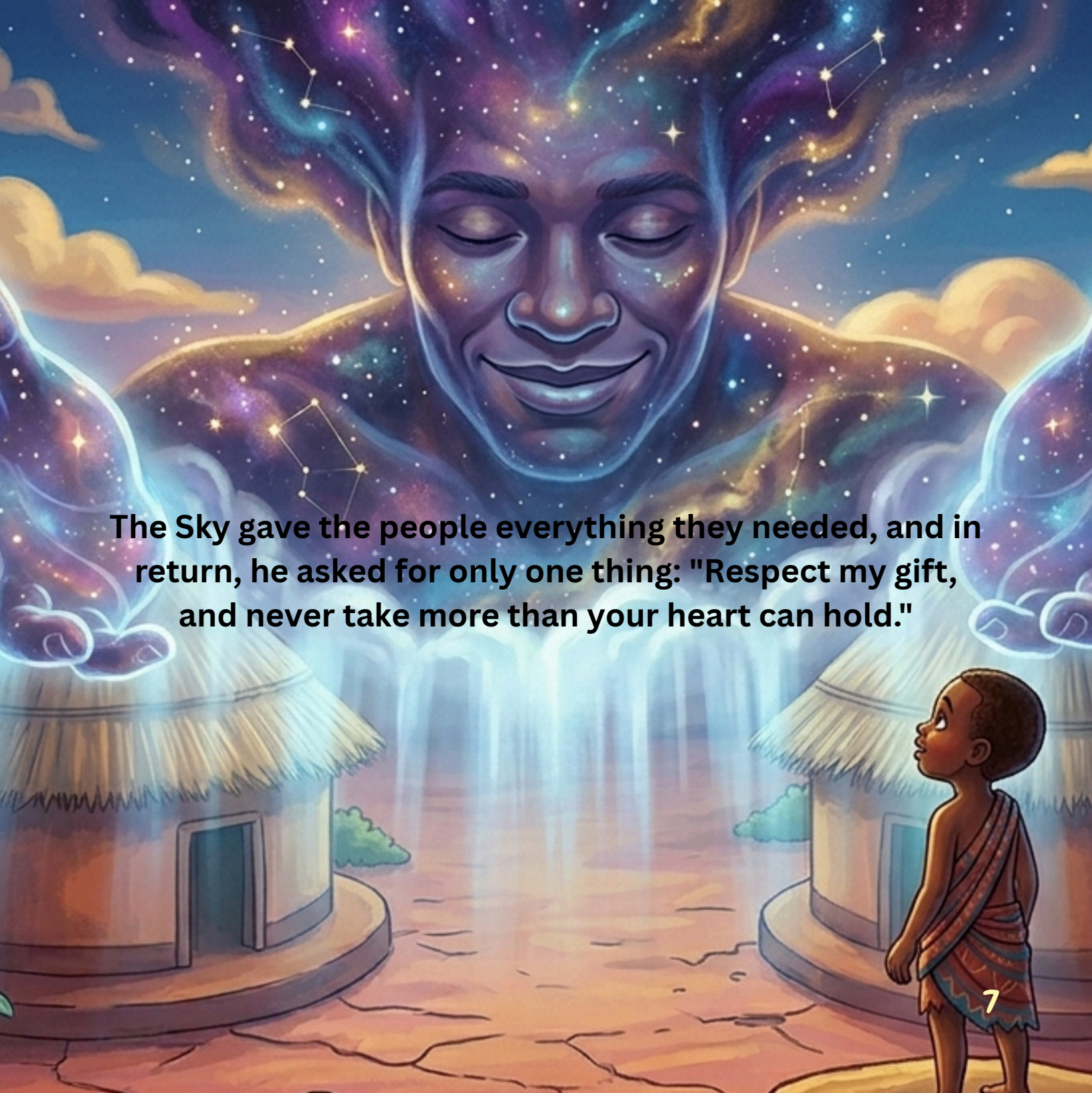
A Taste of Heaven

Whenever someone felt a little bit hungry, they didn't have to pick up a hoe or a machete to farm the hard ground. They simply reached up, pinched off a piece of the Sky, and ate it.



And oh, the taste! It was a miracle on the tongue. One bite tasted like the first corn of the harvest, dripping with butter. Another bite tasted like wild honey found in the heart of the forest.





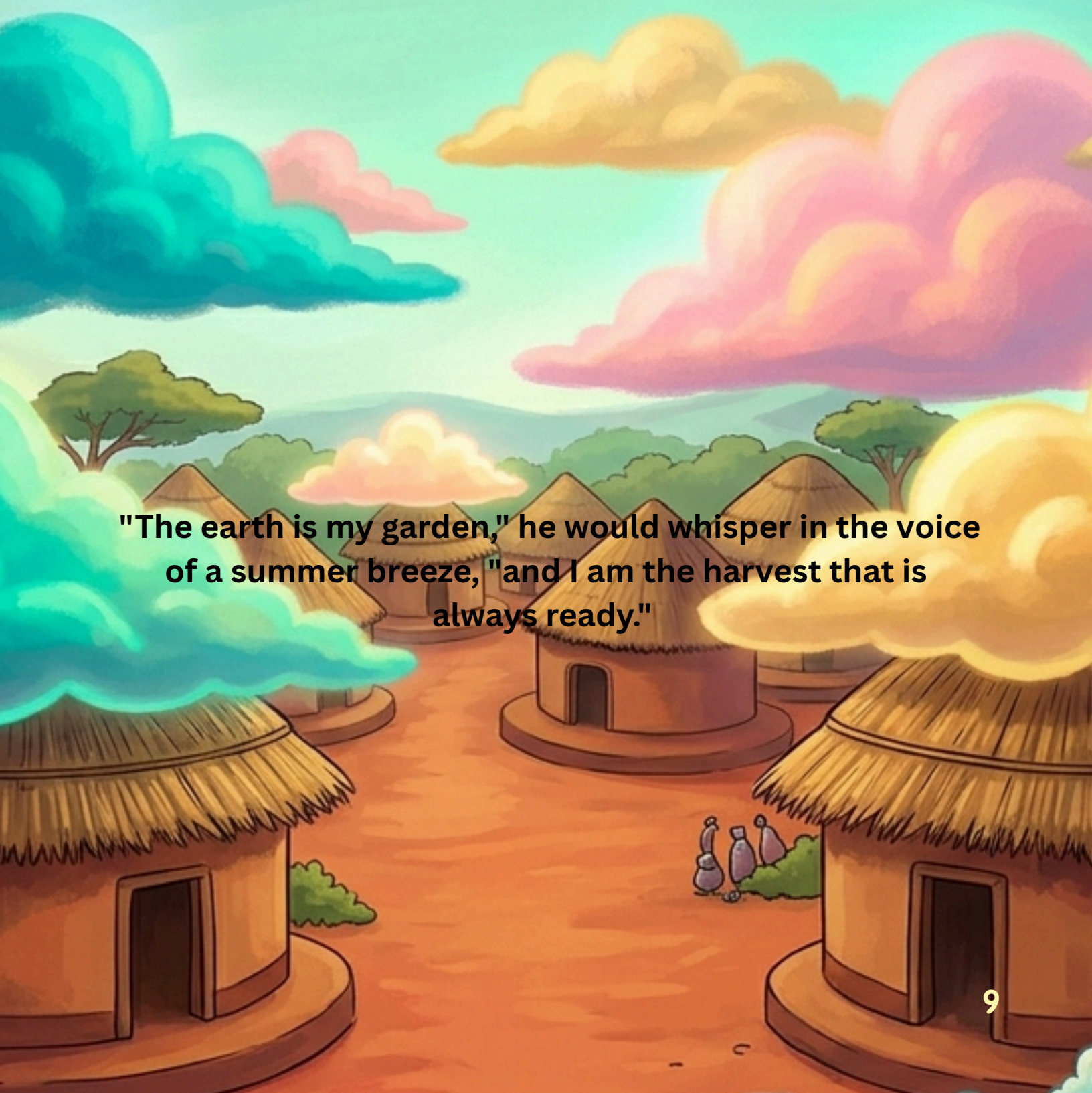
The Sky gave the people everything they needed, and in return, he asked for only one thing: "Respect my gift, and never take more than your heart can hold."



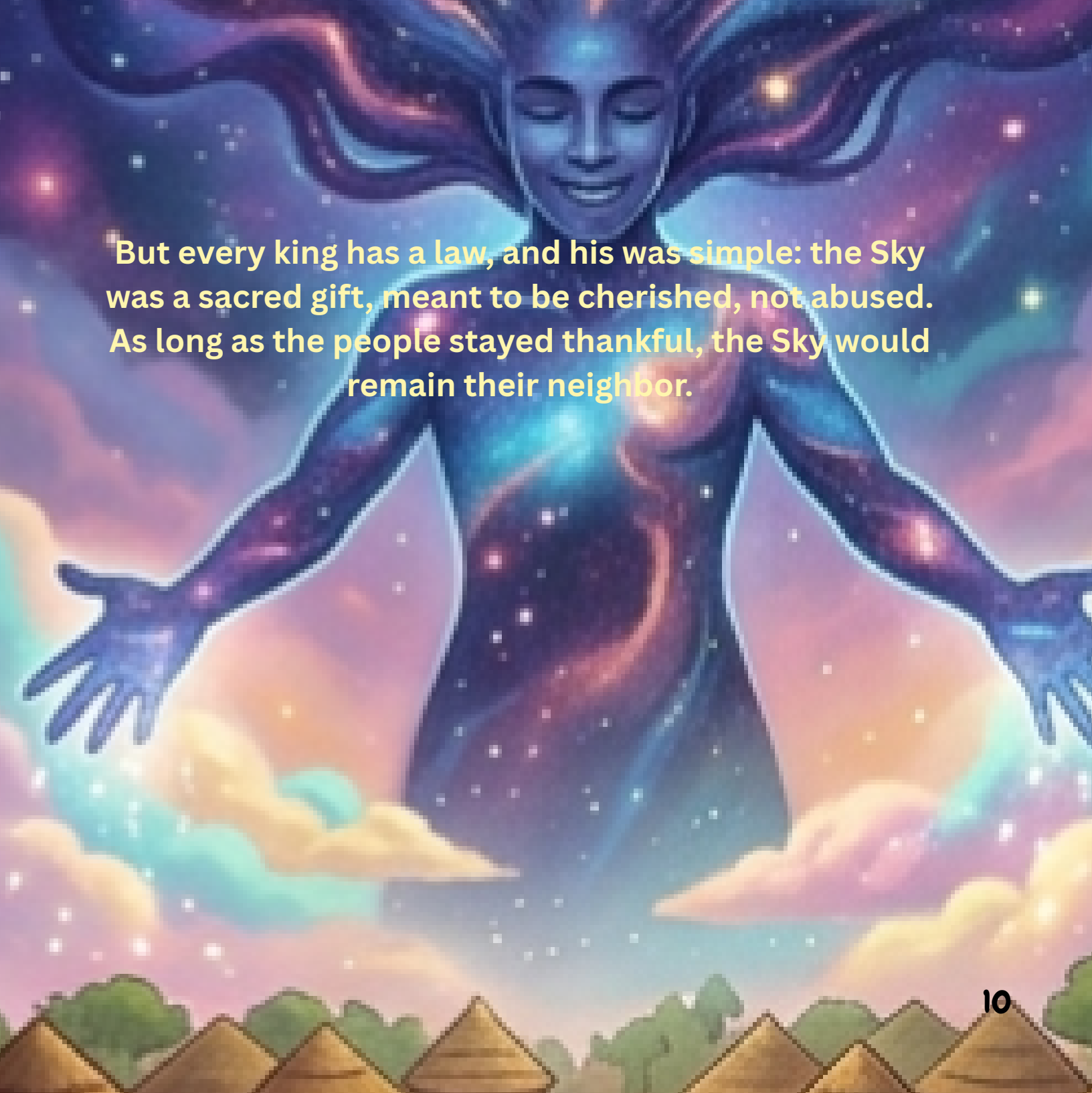
Chapter 3

The King of the Stars

The Sky-King was a generous ruler who loved the people of the earth like his own children. He watched from his throne of clouds as the villagers danced and told stories by the moonlight.



"The earth is my garden," he would whisper in the voice of a summer breeze, "and I am the harvest that is always ready."



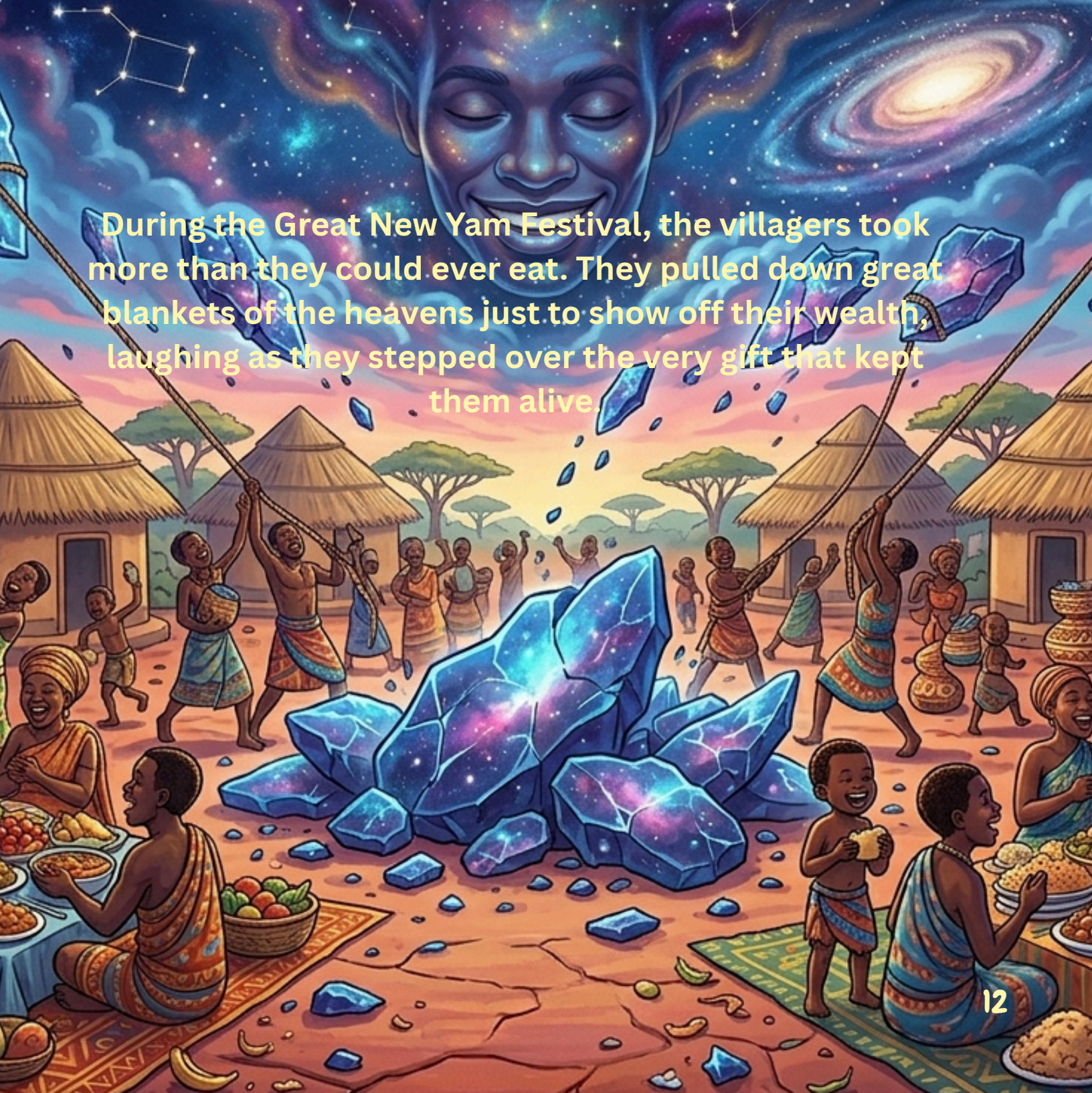
But every king has a law, and his was simple: the Sky was a sacred gift, meant to be cherished, not abused. As long as the people stayed thankful, the Sky would remain their neighbor.



Chapter 4

The Seeds of Forgetfulness

But as the years passed, a strange thing happened. Because the food was so easy to get, the people began to forget how precious it was. They stopped looking up with wonder and started looking at the Sky with greed.




During the Great New Yam Festival, the villagers took more than they could ever eat. They pulled down great blankets of the heavens just to show off their wealth, laughing as they stepped over the very gift that kept them alive.

The background is a grayscale illustration of a village. In the foreground, there is a large, central pile of rotting food, possibly sky, with smaller piles scattered around. The village consists of several houses with thatched roofs and simple doorways. The sky is overcast and gray, matching the overall somber tone of the scene.

Chapter 5

The Graying of the Heavens

What was once holy soon became a mountain of waste. In the dark corners of the village, piles of uneaten sky began to rot, turning from glowing blue to a cold, muddy gray.



The Sky-King felt every pinch and every throw-away. He felt the sting of being treated like common rubbish. "They do not see me anymore," the Sky-King sighed, and his breath turned into a chilly wind that made the villagers shiver for the first time.

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