

Earthquake
Response



Safe Again

By Aga Kochanowicz

Illustrated by Shaina Nayyar and Jovan Carl Segura



Younger
Readers

Safe Again



By Aga Kochanowicz
Illustrated by Shaina Nayyar and
Jovan Carl Segura

Library For All Ltd.

Rosemate and Malkusun lived in a village with their parents and lots of their family. Their favourite thing to do was spend time together on the beach. They loved to swim, collect shells, and play with other kids.



But an earthquake came, and then things were different.

After the earthquake, Rosemate and Malkusun didn't want to play. They didn't feel good, and they avoided each other.





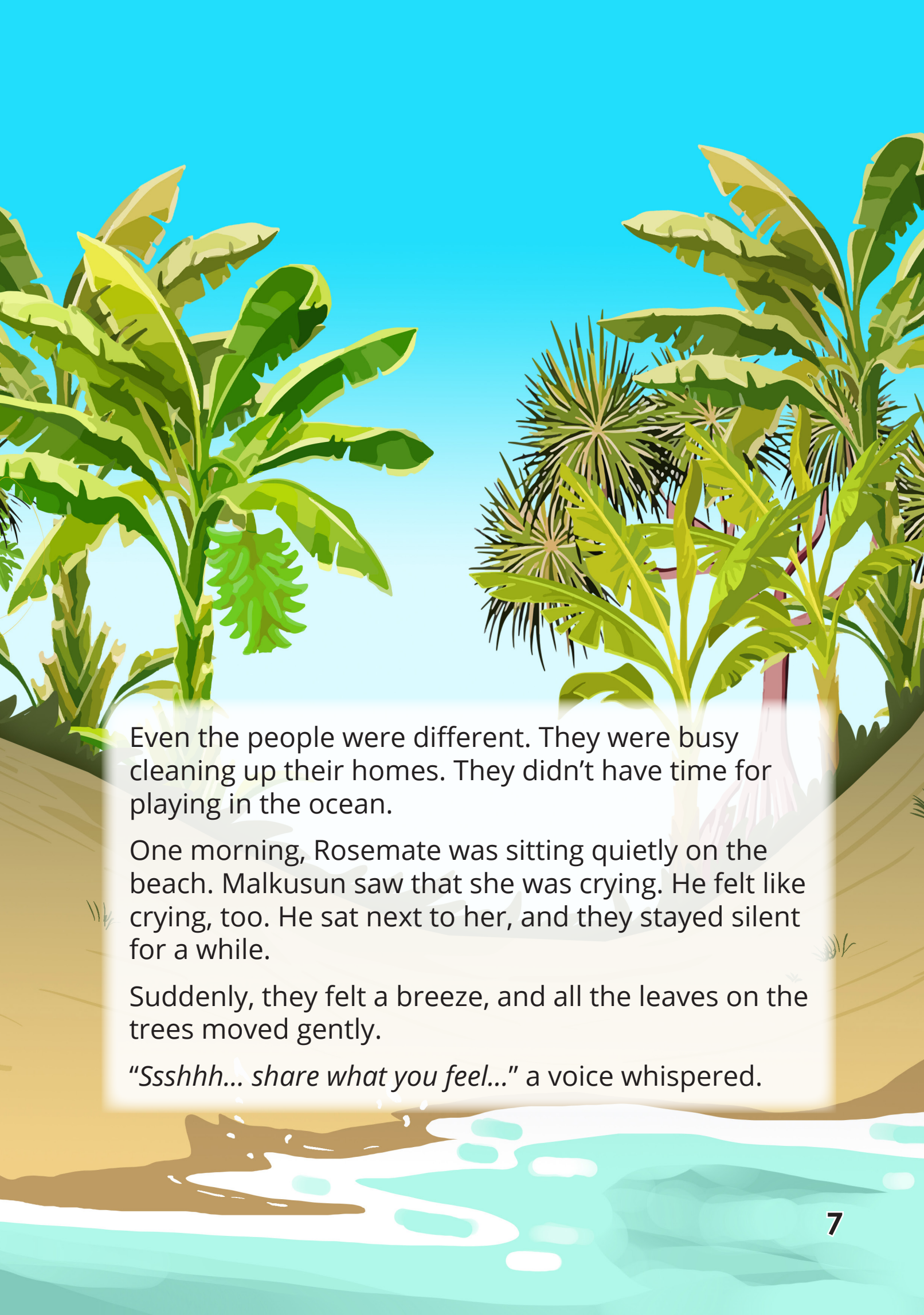
A young girl with dark skin and curly hair, wearing a purple dress with white flowers, is sitting on the ground in a doorway, crying with her hands clasped. The background shows a village scene with a thatched roof, trees, and a blue sky. The foreground is sandy with some debris like a blue pipe and a brown cloth.

Rosemate was sad and worried all the time. She just wanted to be close to her mum and dad. She cried when they left for work each morning.

Malkusun pretended that everything was okay, because his cousin Joseph told him he needed to be strong. Joseph was always calm. But inside, Malkusun was scared and easily got angry when things didn't go his way.

Things in the village were different, too. Some houses had cracks, and the water tank was overturned. A landslide had pushed trees and mud all the way down to the street.





Even the people were different. They were busy cleaning up their homes. They didn't have time for playing in the ocean.

One morning, Rosemate was sitting quietly on the beach. Malkusun saw that she was crying. He felt like crying, too. He sat next to her, and they stayed silent for a while.

Suddenly, they felt a breeze, and all the leaves on the trees moved gently.

"Ssshhh... share what you feel..." a voice whispered.



They both sat up, startled. They looked at each other, and then looked all around. But they were still alone.

The gentle voice came again. *"Share what you feel."*

Rosemate looked at Malkusun and shyly whispered, "When the earthquake came, I was so scared."

"Me too," Malkusun admitted quietly. "I was scared, too."





"And I'm still scared," Rosemate said.

Malkusun hugged her when he heard that.
Rosemate felt safer.

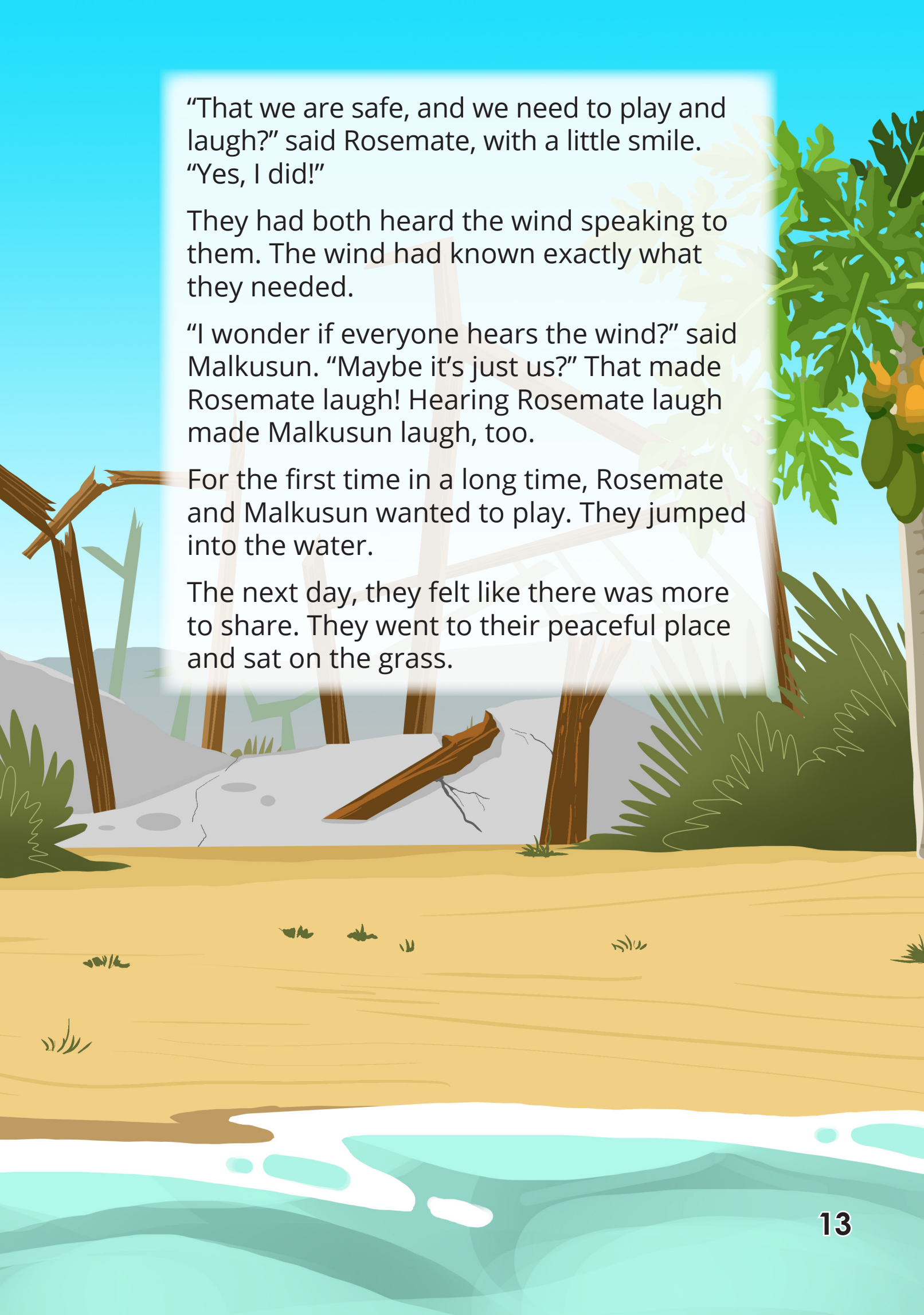
As they hugged, the wind spun around them
and said softly, *"You are safe now. You have each
other. Go and play! Laugh! Let the fear go."*

Malkusun and Rosemate looked into each
other's eyes, checking if they had heard the
same sound.

"Did you hear that?" Malkusun asked.







"That we are safe, and we need to play and laugh?" said Rosemate, with a little smile.
"Yes, I did!"

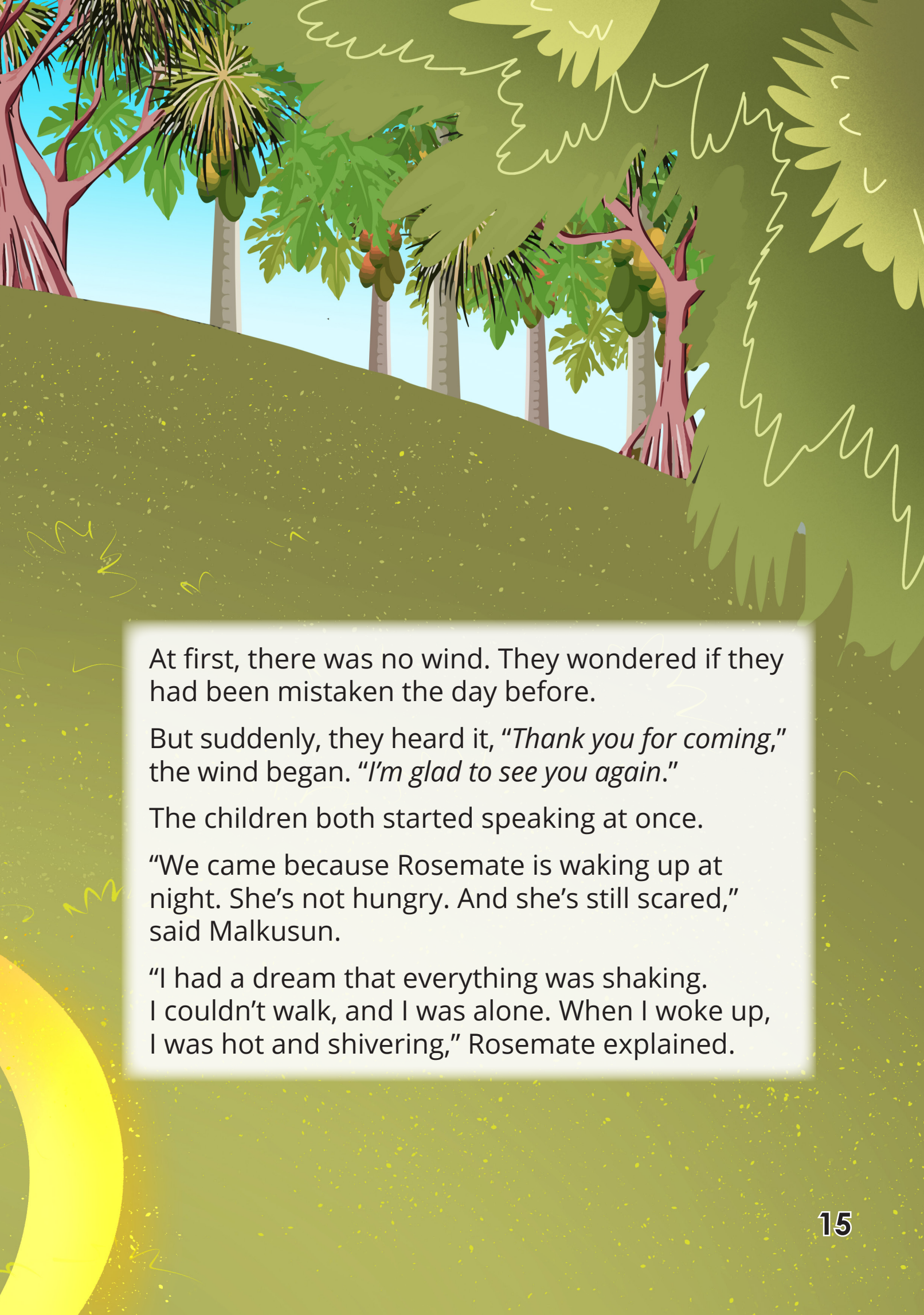
They had both heard the wind speaking to them. The wind had known exactly what they needed.

"I wonder if everyone hears the wind?" said Malkusun. "Maybe it's just us?" That made Rosemate laugh! Hearing Rosemate laugh made Malkusun laugh, too.

For the first time in a long time, Rosemate and Malkusun wanted to play. They jumped into the water.

The next day, they felt like there was more to share. They went to their peaceful place and sat on the grass.





At first, there was no wind. They wondered if they had been mistaken the day before.

But suddenly, they heard it, *"Thank you for coming,"* the wind began. *"I'm glad to see you again."*

The children both started speaking at once.

"We came because Rosemate is waking up at night. She's not hungry. And she's still scared," said Malkusun.

"I had a dream that everything was shaking. I couldn't walk, and I was alone. When I woke up, I was hot and shivering," Rosemate explained.



The wind wrapped her up with warmth and whispered:

"You are safe now. Breathe with me... in... out... in... out... Now shake! Shake your hands. Shake your legs. Shake your whole body."

Rosemate was a bit shy, but nobody was watching, so she started to shake.

As she shook, Rosemate smiled. The wind watched them both smiling and shaking their bodies like jelly. It was fun and relaxing for them.

"What about you, Malkusun?" the wind asked, encouraging him to share his worries.

"Oh, I'm just fine," he answered straight away.





"I see you are very brave and strong, but it's OK to be scared or angry. I saw you angrily kicking a ball and not talking nicely to your friends."

"Yes, I don't know why, but I just can't have fun or take things easy. Everything makes me angry."

"I see, Malkusun. Remember, you are not a bad boy. You are just scared inside and angry outside."

"I thought we would all die," he admitted. "I thought I was going to die, and I didn't want that."

"I see, my dear," said the wind gently, wrapping Malkusun up and holding him through the terrifying thoughts.



"Do you see yourself in that moment when you had those thoughts? Close your eyes and see yourself then."

Malkusun closed his eyes and saw himself terrified, thinking, *I don't want to die.*





"Let him know that he is alright," the wind asked Malkusun to repeat his words. "You are safe. You did not die, because I'm telling you that now. You can trust me."

Malkusun took a moment to tell his past self that things would be alright. His past self looked surprised and eventually calmed down.

"He's not as scared now," Malkusun said.

"Yes, that's good," the wind said. "He is listening to you. Tell him that you are all safe and that he can find a safe place now."

Malkusun repeated what the wind said to his past self. The boy in his mind smiled and turned to leave.



"He found it," Malkusun said.

"Beautiful. Thank him for listening to you."

Rosemate was watching Malkusun as he talked to himself, his eyes closed and his expression softening. She realised how much she'd missed playing with her brother.





Malkusun opened his eyes and smiled at Rosemate. She grabbed his hand, and they started running along the beach.

That day, they had lots of fun.



For the rest of the week, Rosemate and Malkusun came back to their safe, special place. It was comfortable. When they saw friends and family members struggling, they invited them along. They all sat there and shared their feelings. Malkusun, Rosemate, and the wind patiently listened to everyone's stories.



After sharing their feelings, they hugged and made promises to take care of each other, making sure everyone felt safe and seen.



Later, they sang a song about their strength and love. The wind passed their songs along to other villages and islands.

**You can use these questions
to talk about this book with
your family, friends and
teachers.**



**Where did Rosemate and Malkusun
like to play?**



**Why was Malkusun angry after
the earthquake?**

**How did talking about their feelings
help Malkusun and Rosemate?**



**Do you have a special place you like
to go if you are worried or scared?**



**Everyone in Vanuatu is scared during an
earthquake. It's okay to feel worried!
Find a friend to sit with and together
you can tell the wind your feelings.**

About the author

Agnieszka Kochanowicz has lived in several places. While writing this story, she was based in Vanuatu before moving with her family to Europe. As a psychologist, she enjoys supporting children through therapeutic stories about feelings, hoping to inspire greater understanding and kindness towards themselves and others.



Did you enjoy this book?

We have hundreds more expertly curated original stories to choose from.

We work in partnership with authors, educators, cultural advisors, governments and NGOs to bring the joy of reading to children everywhere.

Did you know?

We create global impact in these fields by embracing the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.



libraryforall.org



Library For All is an Australian not for profit organisation with a mission to make knowledge accessible to all via an innovative digital library solution. Visit us at libraryforall.org

Safe Again

First published 2025

Published by Library For All Ltd

Email: info@libraryforall.org

URL: libraryforall.org



This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License. To view a copy of this license, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>.

This book was made possible by the generous support of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and Global Partnership for Education (GPE). The publication of this book was supported by the Australian Government through the Australian Humanitarian Partnership.



Save the Children



AHP

Australian Humanitarian Partnership

Original illustrations by Shaina Nayyar and Jovan Carl Segura

Safe Again

Kochanowicz, Aga

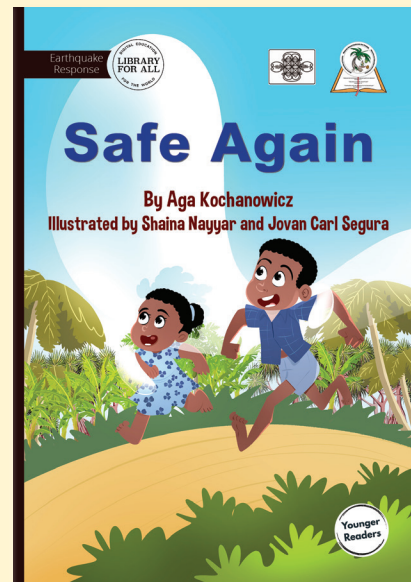
ISBN: 978-1-923429-35-2

SKU04836



Safe Again

Malkusun and Rosemate's lives are changed forever after an earthquake hits their village. Rosemate can't sleep and Malkusun's fear turns into anger. Eventually, they find a special place to share their feelings.



libraryforall.org
#lettheworldlearn

ISBN 978-1-923429-35-2



9 781923 429352

