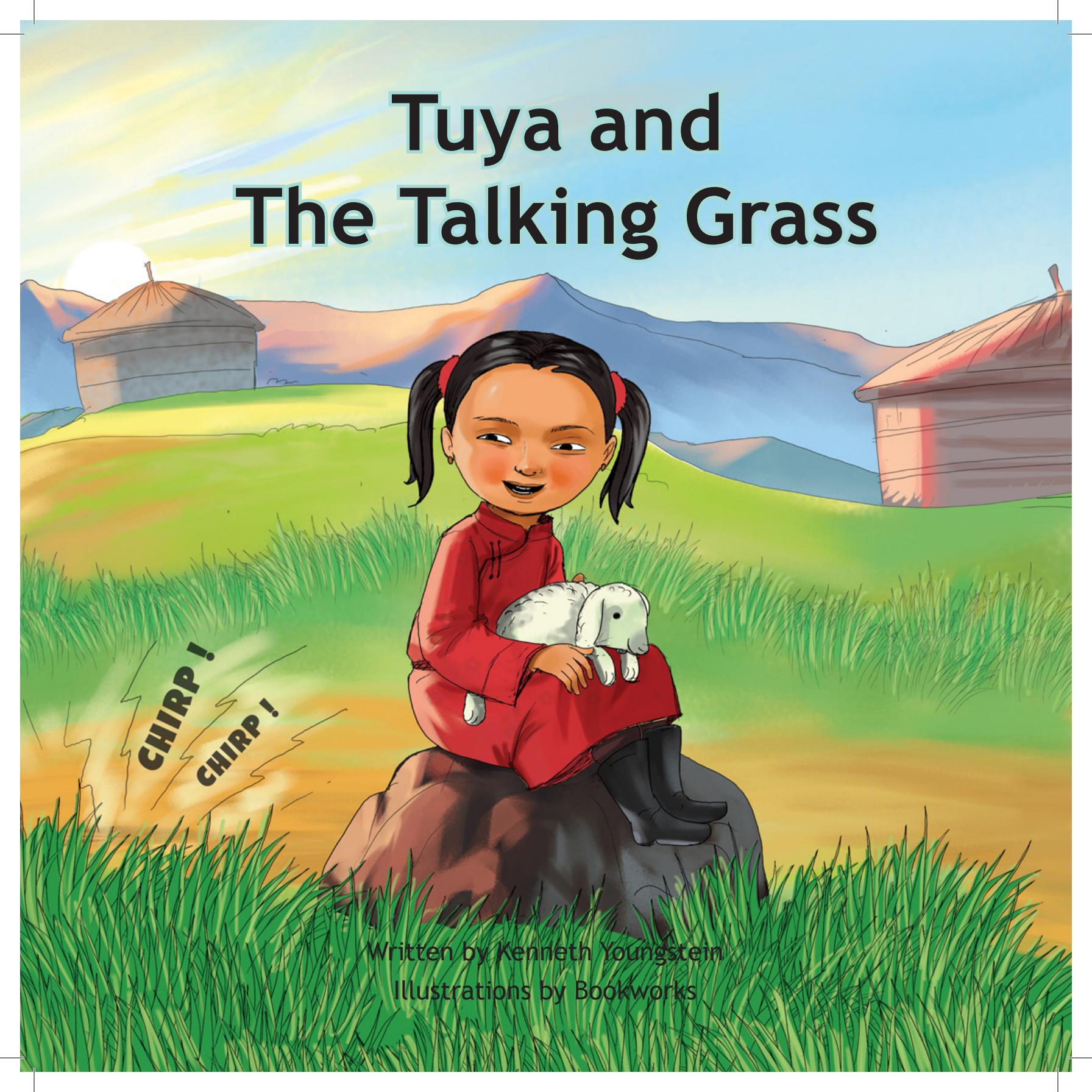


Tuya and The Talking Grass



CHIRP!
CHIRP!

Written by Kenneth Youngstein
Illustrations by Bookworks

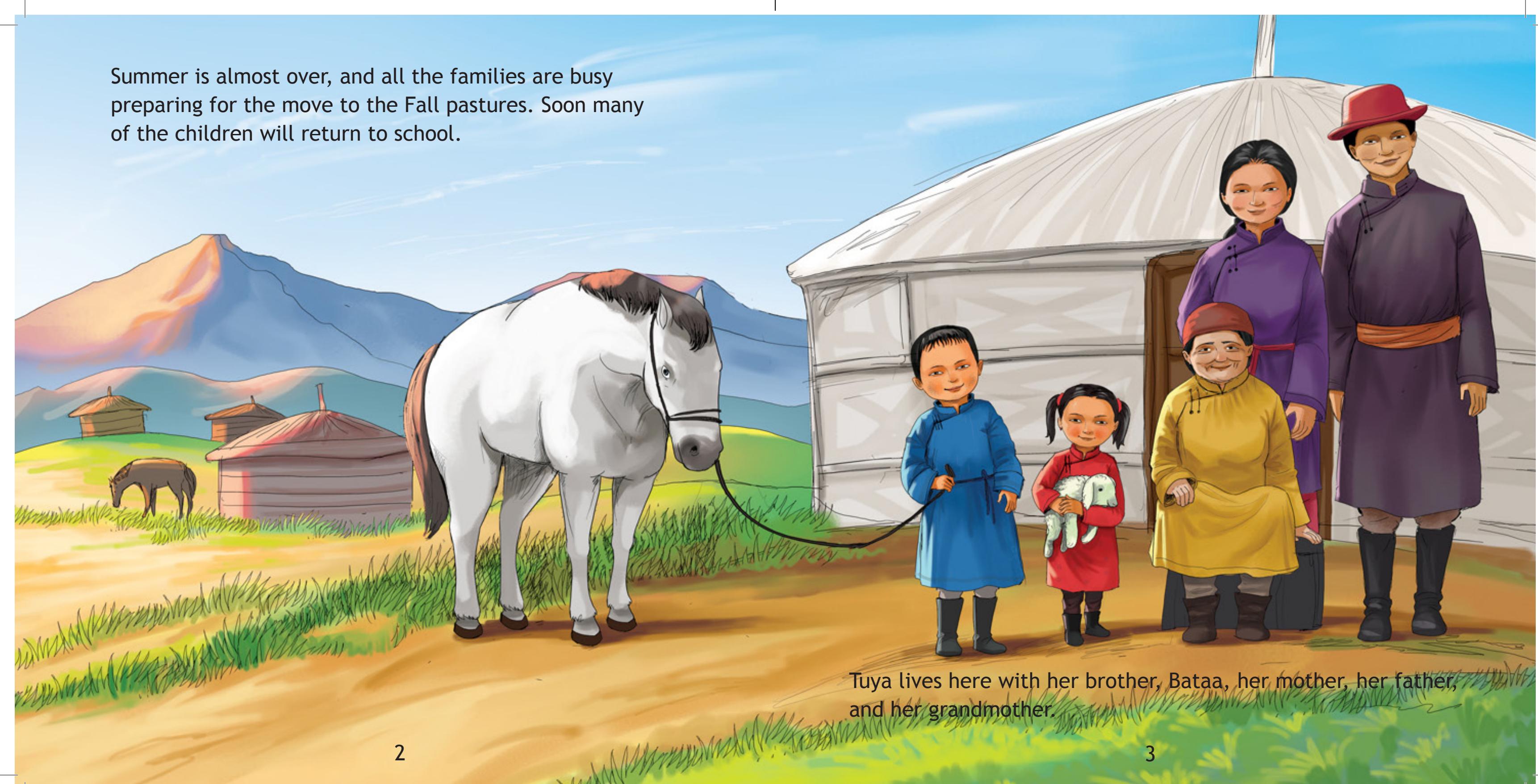
Tuya and The Talking Grass



Written by Kenneth Youngstein

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Summer is almost over, and all the families are busy preparing for the move to the Fall pastures. Soon many of the children will return to school.



Tuya lives here with her brother, Bataa, her mother, her father, and her grandmother.

This morning, Bataa helps his mother as she milks the mare.
“Bataa, have you seen Tuya?” asks mother.
“I am not sure, but lately I have seen her sitting alone in the field behind the ger,” replies Bataa.

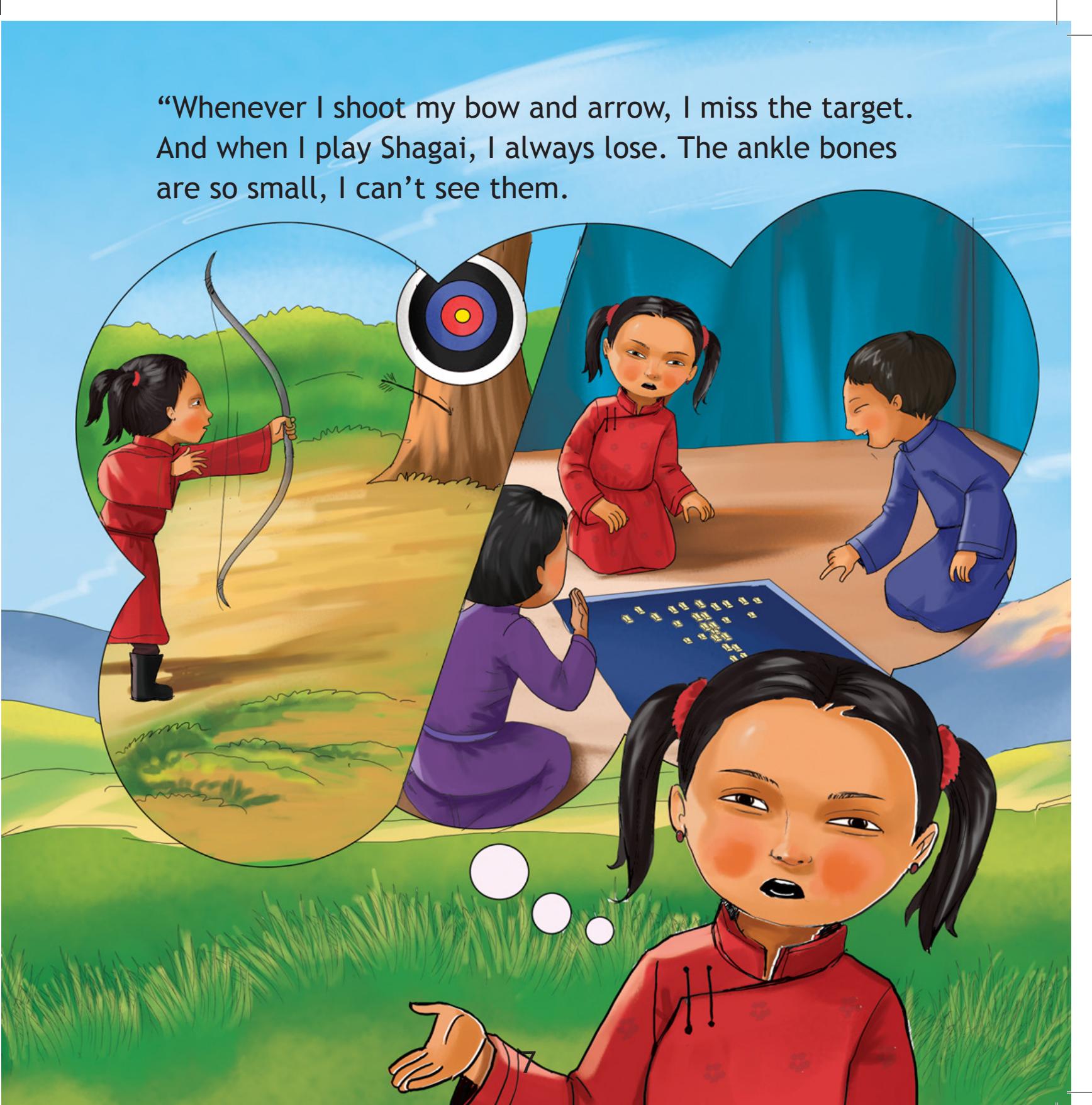
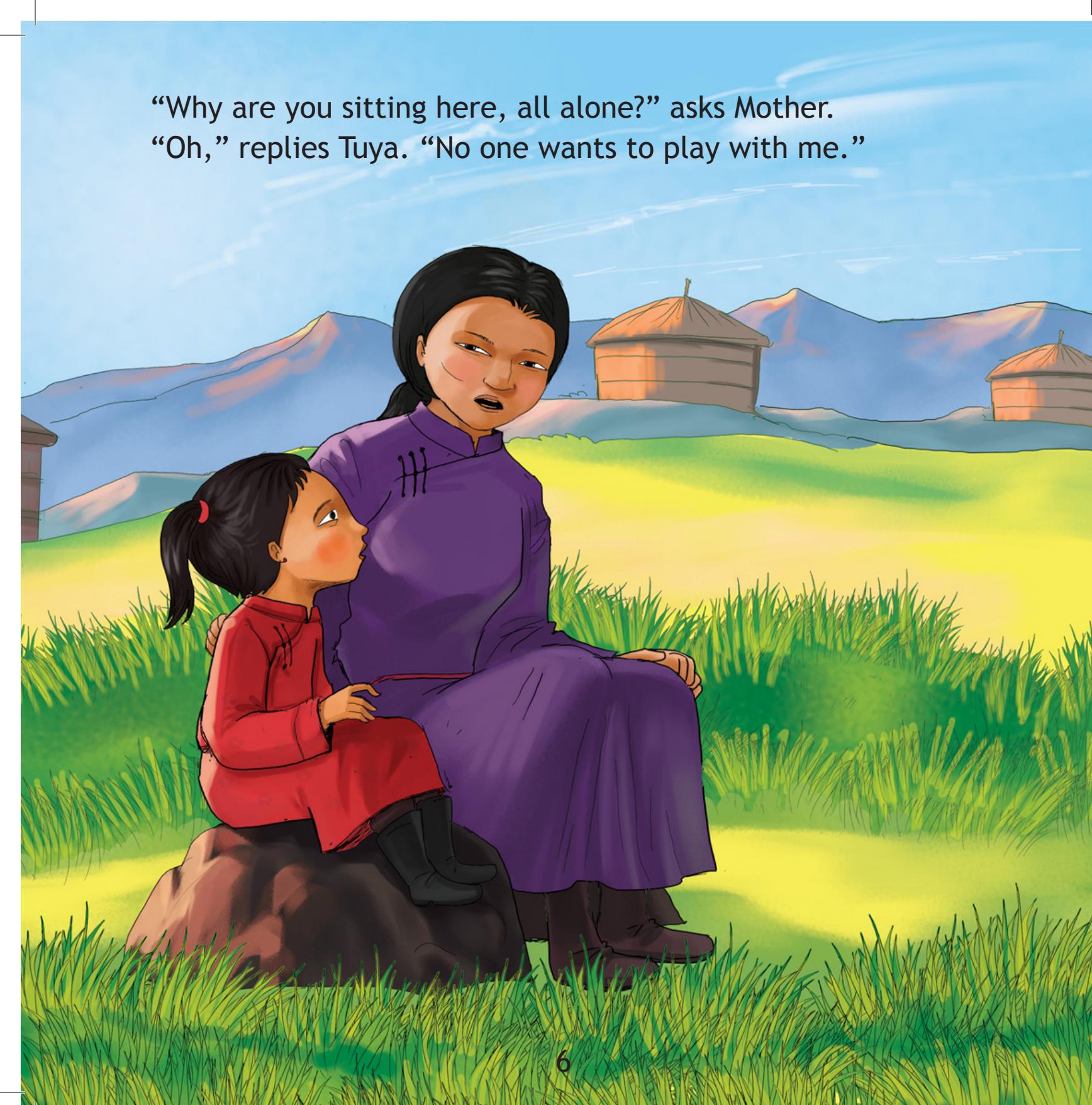


Just as Bataa said, mother finds Tuya sitting in the field of grass.



“Why are you sitting here, all alone?” asks Mother.
“Oh,” replies Tuya. “No one wants to play with me.”

“Whenever I shoot my bow and arrow, I miss the target.
And when I play Shagai, I always lose. The ankle bones are so small, I can’t see them.”



“But soon you will go back to school. Surely, you must have friends there.” Says mother.

“Everyone at school thinks I am stupid.” Replies Tuya. “When the teacher writes on the board, I can never read it. And they laugh at me because I always hold my book so close to the face.”

As Mother listens, she think how Tuya always sits closest to the television.



“But aren’t you lonely, sitting here alone?” asks Mother? “I am not alone”, replies Tuya. “I talk to my friends, the grass.” “You talk to the grass?” asks Mother? “And does the grass talk back to you?” “Yes”, answers Tuya. “But I don’t understand what they say. They must belong to another tribe.”

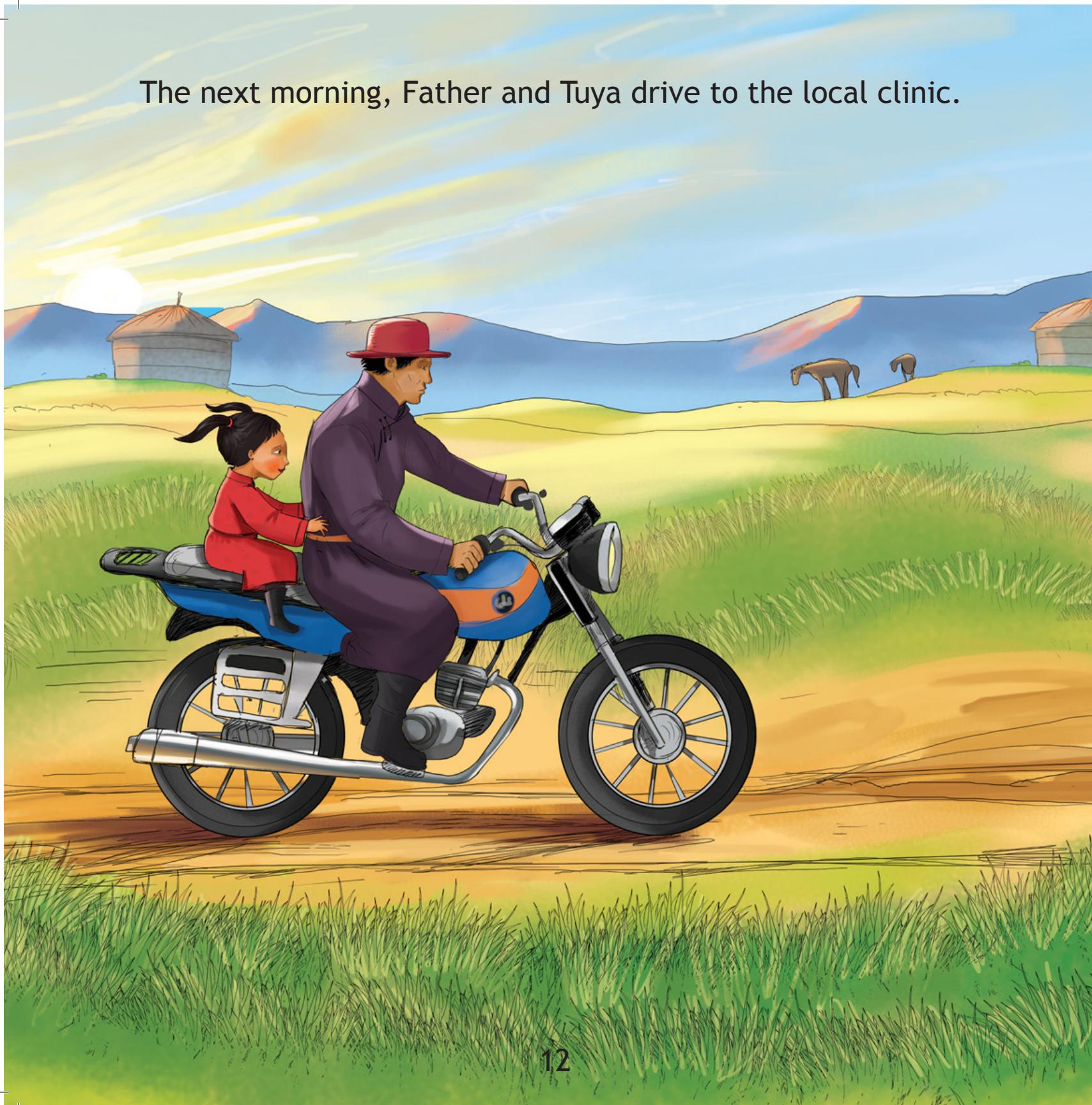
Mother reaches down and pushes aside the grass. There, on the ground, she sees the grasshoppers and hears their chirping sounds.

CHIRP!
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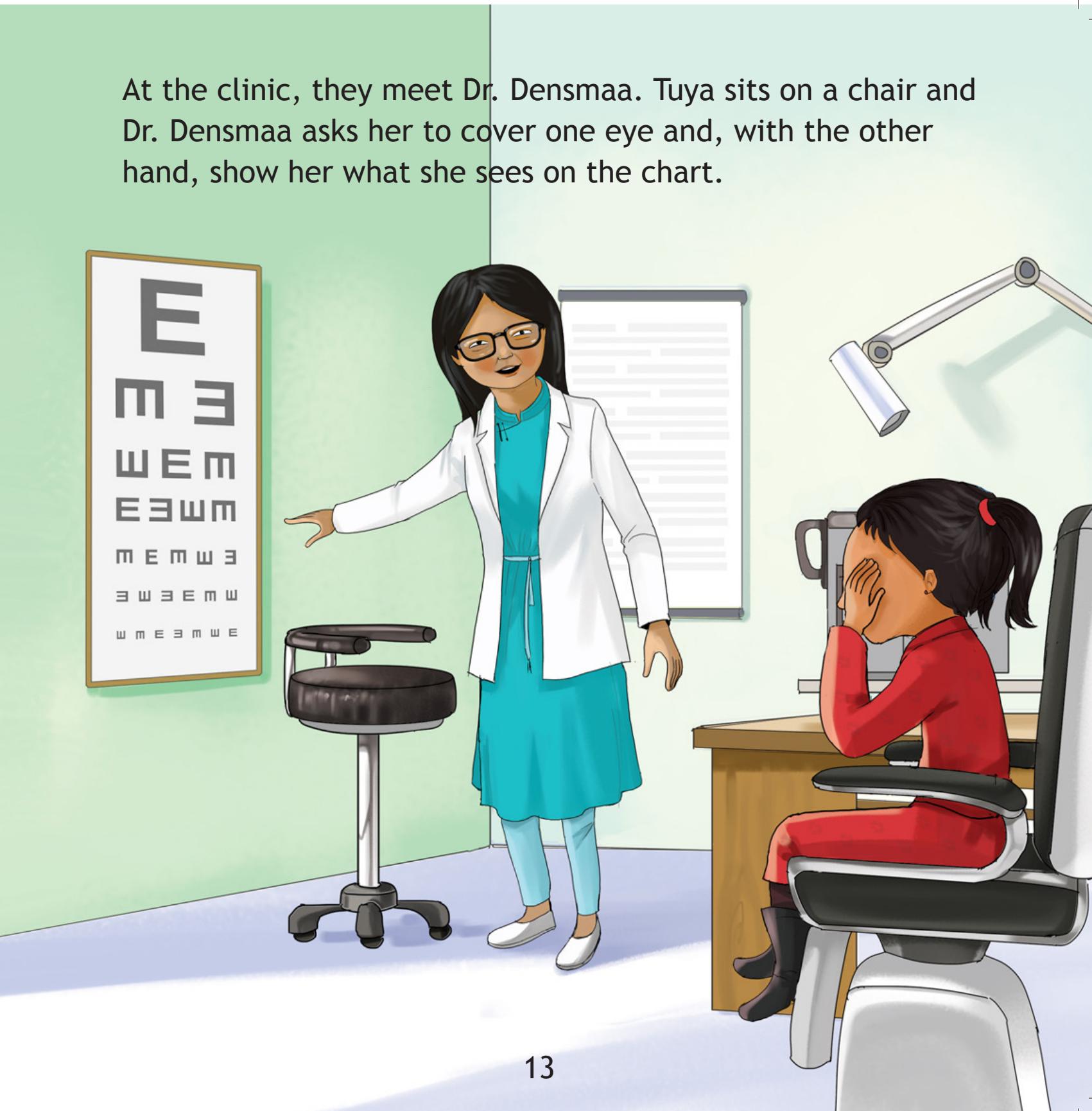
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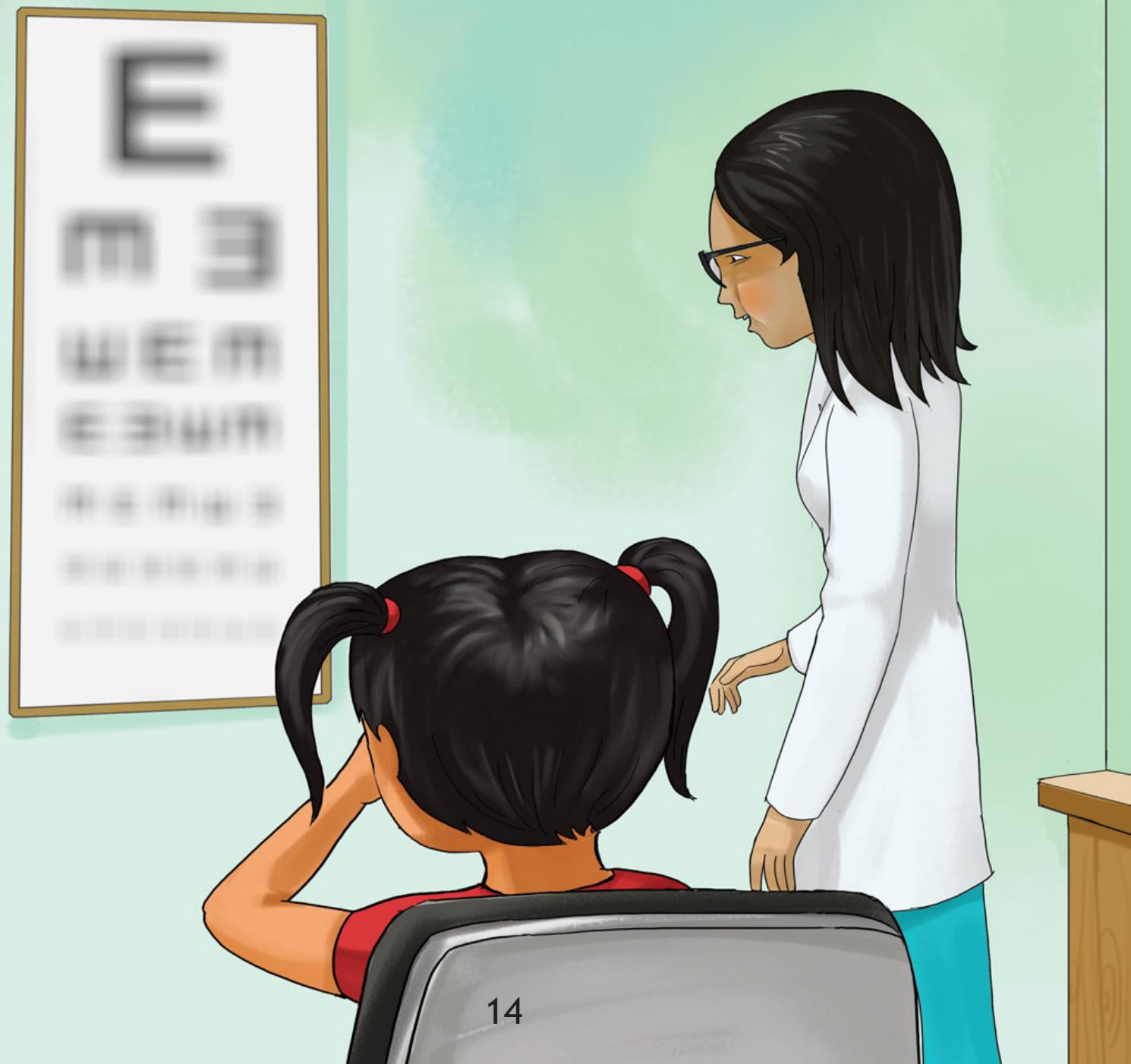
The next morning, Father and Tuya drive to the local clinic.



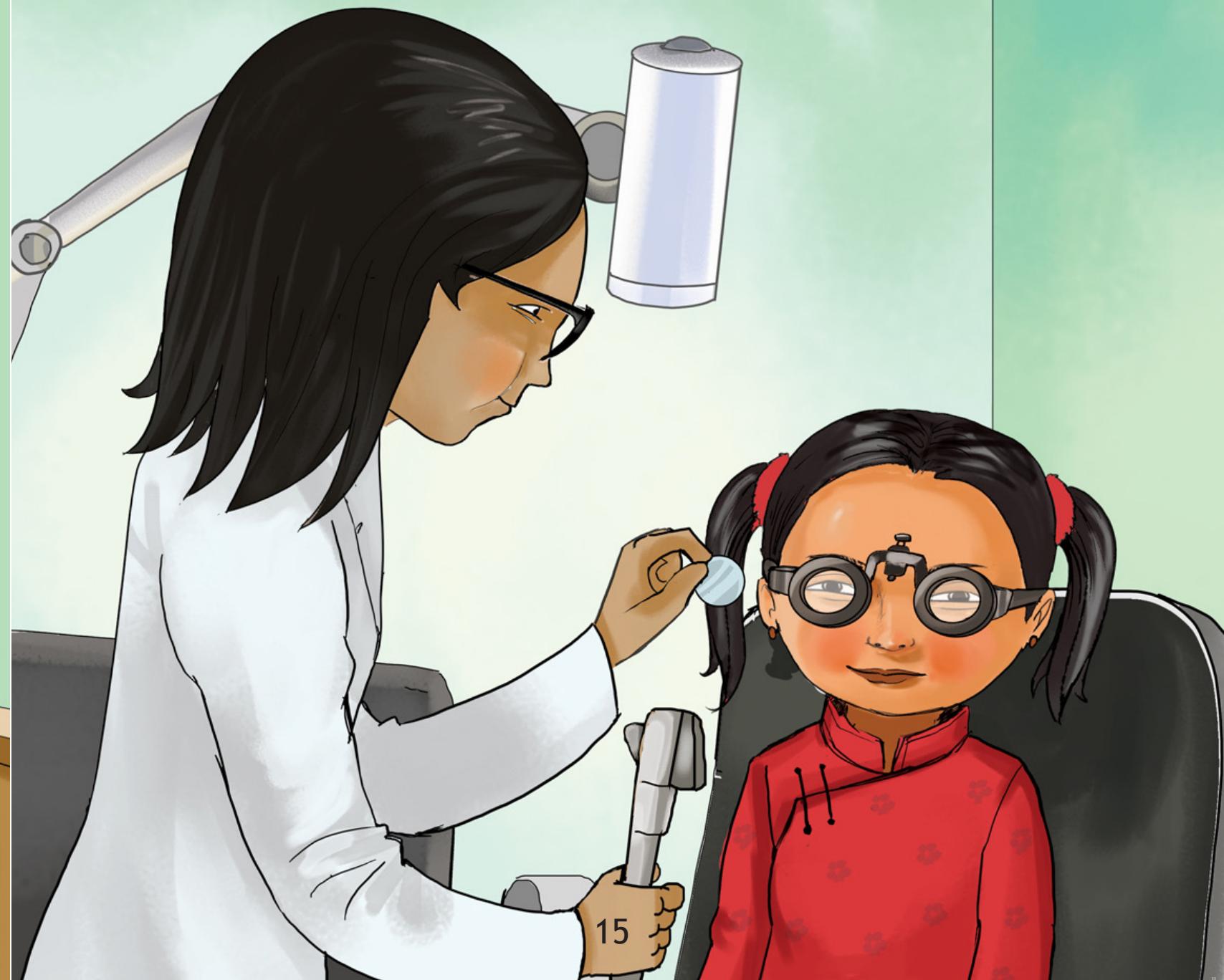
At the clinic, they meet Dr. Densmaa. Tuya sits on a chair and Dr. Densmaa asks her to cover one eye and, with the other hand, show her what she sees on the chart.



Tuya looks and looks and says, "I can see something, but I am not sure what it is."

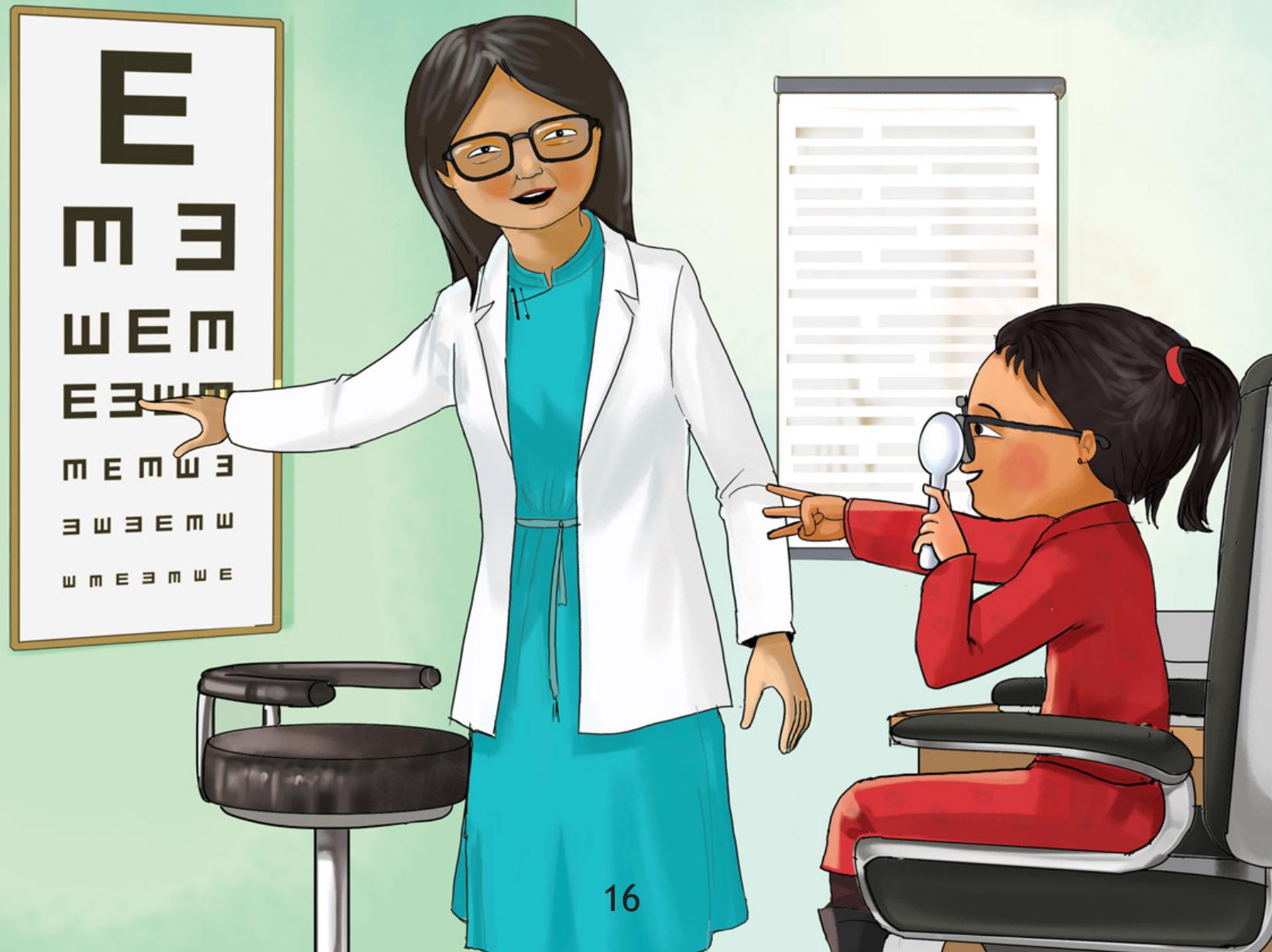


Dr. Densmaa puts a metal frame of Tuya's nose. He then slides a round glass into the frame and asks, "Now, what can you see?"



I can see everything!” shouts Tuya. As Dr. Densmaa points to each line on the chart, Tuya moves her hand up or down, to the left or to the right.

“That’s perfect” says Dr. Densmaa. “All you need are eyeglasses and you will see just fine.”



“But I don’t want to wear eyeglasses,” says Tuya. My friends will make fun of me and call me Bankhar - because I have four eyes.”



Dr. Densmaa replies, “When I was your age, I got my first eyeglasses. I was also afraid that my friends would make fun of me. But I learned that anyone who made fun of me was not really my friend and my true friends all liked me just the same as before.”

A nurse takes Tuya and Father to another room where there are many shelves fill with eyeglasses of all shapes and colors. Tuya chooses the bright red ones. “A good choice,” says Father



After one week, they return to the clinic and Tuya tries on her new eyeglasses for the first time. As she looks out of the clinic window, she shouts, "Father, I can everything! I can see that man on a red motorcycle and an eagle, flying high above that building."



"Tuya," says Dr. Densmaa. "I want you to promise me that you will wear your eyeglasses every day, especially when you are at school."
"Oh yes," says Tuya. "I promise. I promise to wear them every day. I love my eyeglasses and all the wonderful things I can see."



On their way home, they meet some children.

“Oh Tuya. I love your new eyeglasses,” says one girl.

“They make you look very smart,” comments the boy.

“Maybe I also need eyeglasses?” questions the other girl.



As they near their ger, Tuya can see her brother practicing archery.

“Do you want to try?” asks Bataa.



Tuya takes the bow and arrow.
She looks down the arrow and releases the string.
The arrow flies through the air and hits the target in the center. “Well done,” says Bataa. Do you want to shoot some more?” “Later,” replies Tuya. “I have something very important to do.”



Tuya walks to her grassy spot behind the ger.
She kneels down and, with her hand, she pushes aside the grass.



She looks at the small grasshopper and says, "Thank you for talking to me. I hope we can meet again next year."



Some tips for eye health and safety

Do



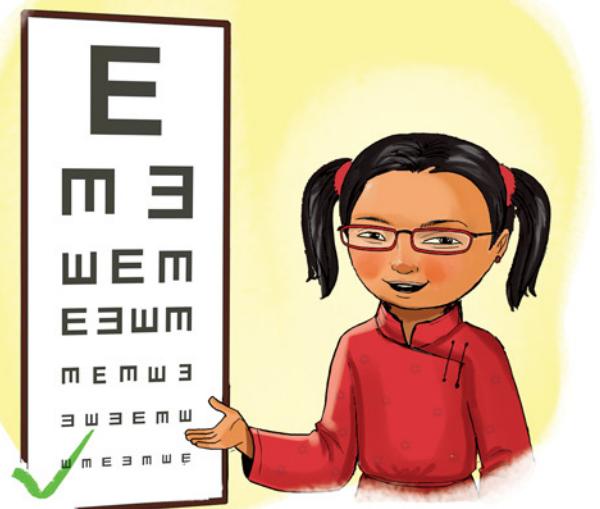
Wash hands regularly with soap



Take care while using sharp objects



Sleep for 8 hours



Get an eye check up every year

Some tips for eye health and safety

Do not



Touch your eyes frequently



Share towels or handkerchiefs with others



Look at the sun directly



Play dangerous games

Turned away by her brother and friends, little Tuya sits alone in the field behind her ger, talking to her new friend, the grass. Tuya's mother worries about her daughter not playing with the other children and decides to find out why.



TUYA AND THE TALKING GRASS

Mongolian Version

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Author

Kenneth Youngstein has spent forty years developing health education programs for professionals and patients throughout the world.

Illustrations

Bookworks (India) is helping children's book authors and publishers from across the globe to communicate their stories in an engaging way by providing them with customized illustrations in a variety of styles.

Orbis is a leading global non-governmental organization that has been a pioneer in the prevention and treatment of blindness for over 30 years. Orbis transforms lives by providing the skills, resources, and knowledge needed to deliver accessible quality eye care. Working in collaboration with local partners, Orbis provides hands-on training, strengthens eye care infrastructure and advocates for the prioritization of eye health on public health agendas.

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