

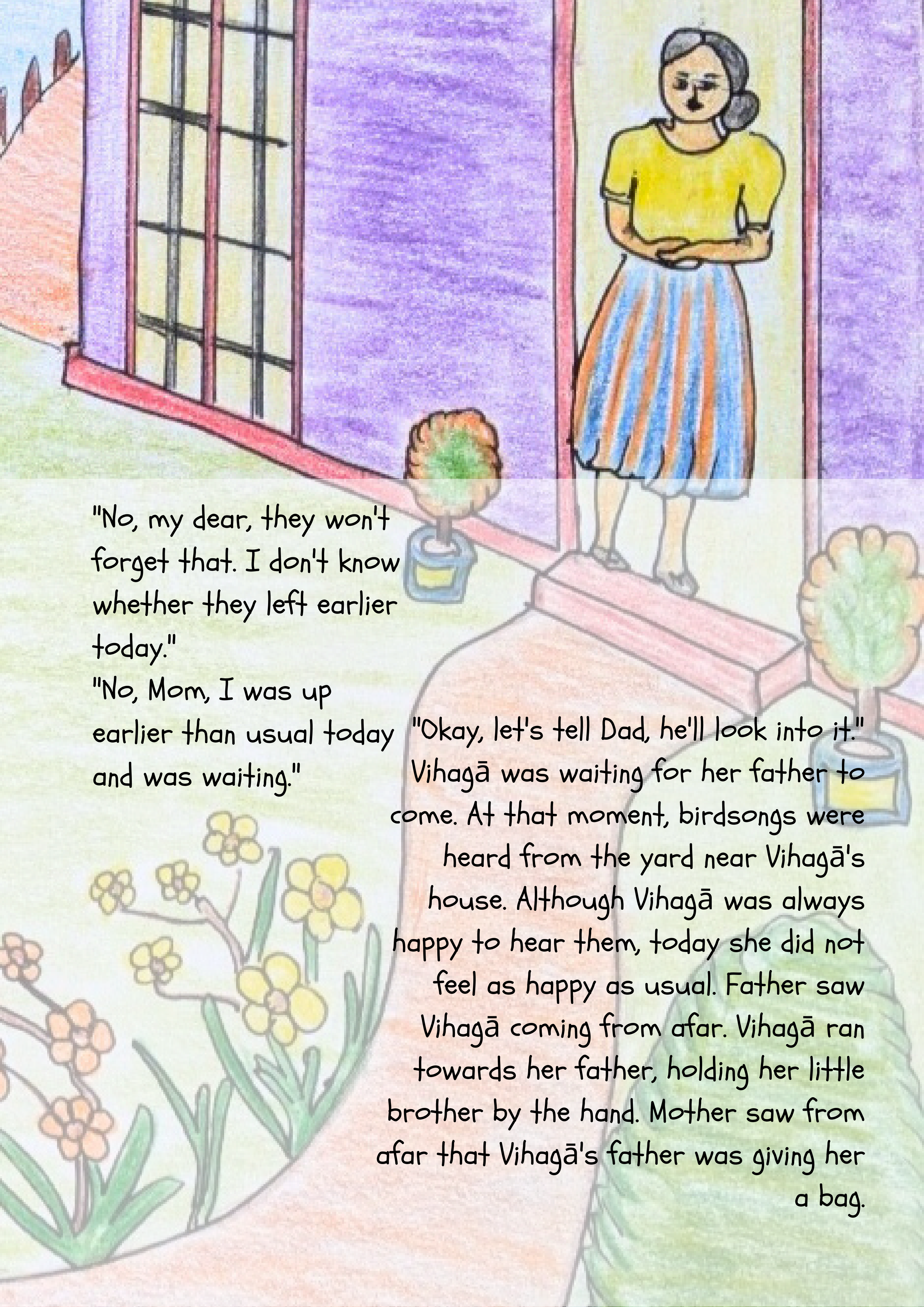
# Vihagā

By Ruwani S. Amarakoon

Vihagā was a little girl. She had a little brother. Her mother and father were nature loving parents, so Vihagā loved trees, flowers, and animals very much. So, after finishing her school work little Vihagā always loved to look up at the sky in the evening and watch the birds flying in the sky.

Every evening, he watched a flock of egrets fly over Vihaga's house. One day, Vihaga was looking at the evening sky as usual. "Oh, mother, look, that flock of egrets didn't fly today. I wonder if they forgot the path above our house."





"No, my dear, they won't forget that. I don't know whether they left earlier today."

"No, Mom, I was up earlier than usual today and was waiting."

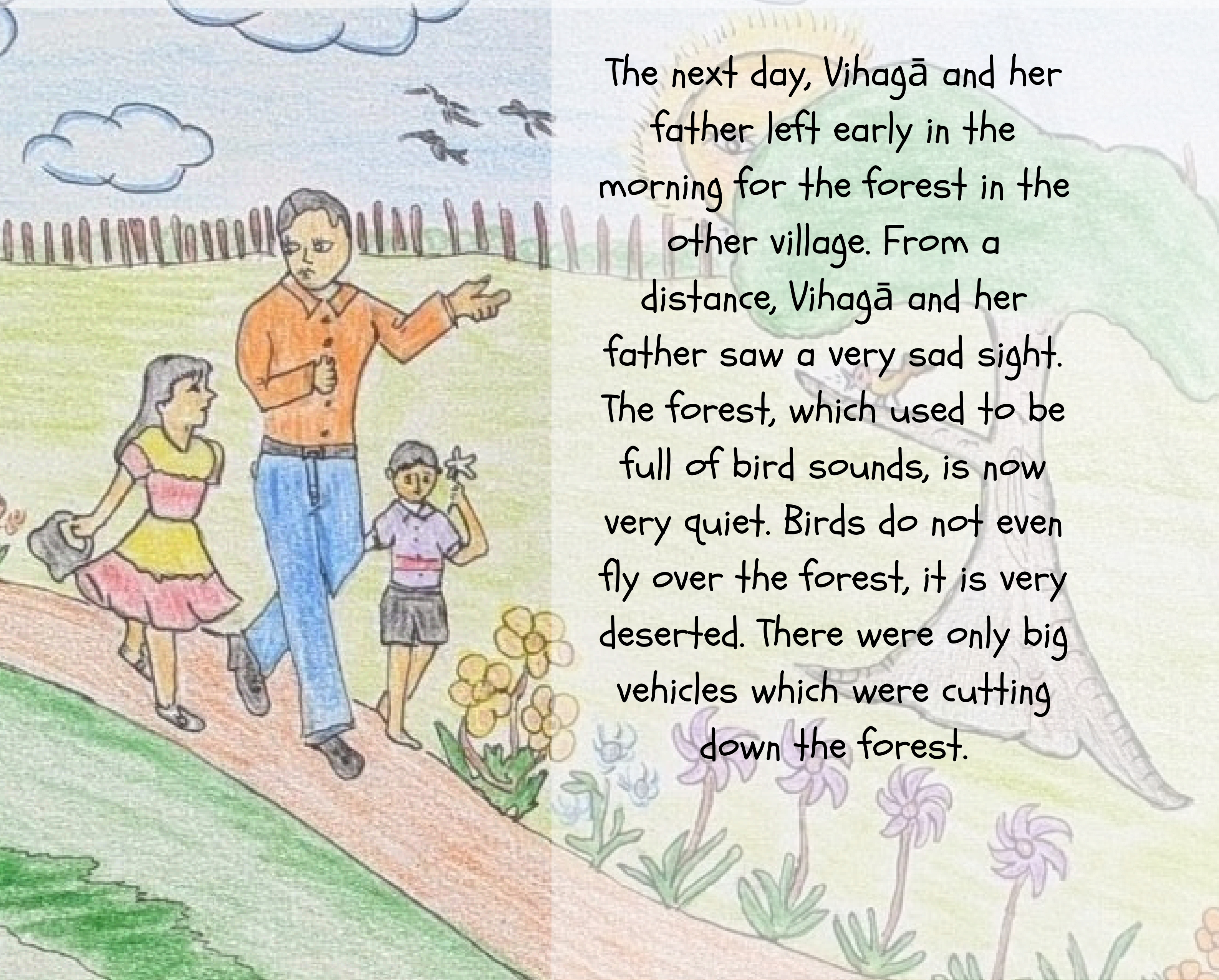
"Okay, let's tell Dad, he'll look into it." Vihagā was waiting for her father to come. At that moment, birdsongs were heard from the yard near Vihagā's house. Although Vihagā was always happy to hear them, today she did not feel as happy as usual. Father saw Vihagā coming from afar. Vihagā ran towards her father, holding her little brother by the hand. Mother saw from afar that Vihagā's father was giving her a bag.

Vihagā wanted to tell his father about the egret flock, but her mother had taught her to talk about household stories only after father got refreshed. So Vihagā remained silent for a while and then told his father all about the egret flock.

"Okay, my sweet heart, don't worry now. Eat and go to sleep. Tomorrow is Saturday, and I'll be home tomorrow, so let's find out what happened to them."

"Okay, thanks dad. That night Vihagā dreamt of the egret flock."

The next day, Vihagā and her father left early in the morning for the forest in the other village. From a distance, Vihagā and her father saw a very sad sight. The forest, which used to be full of bird sounds, is now very quiet. Birds do not even fly over the forest, it is very deserted. There were only big vehicles which were cutting down the forest.



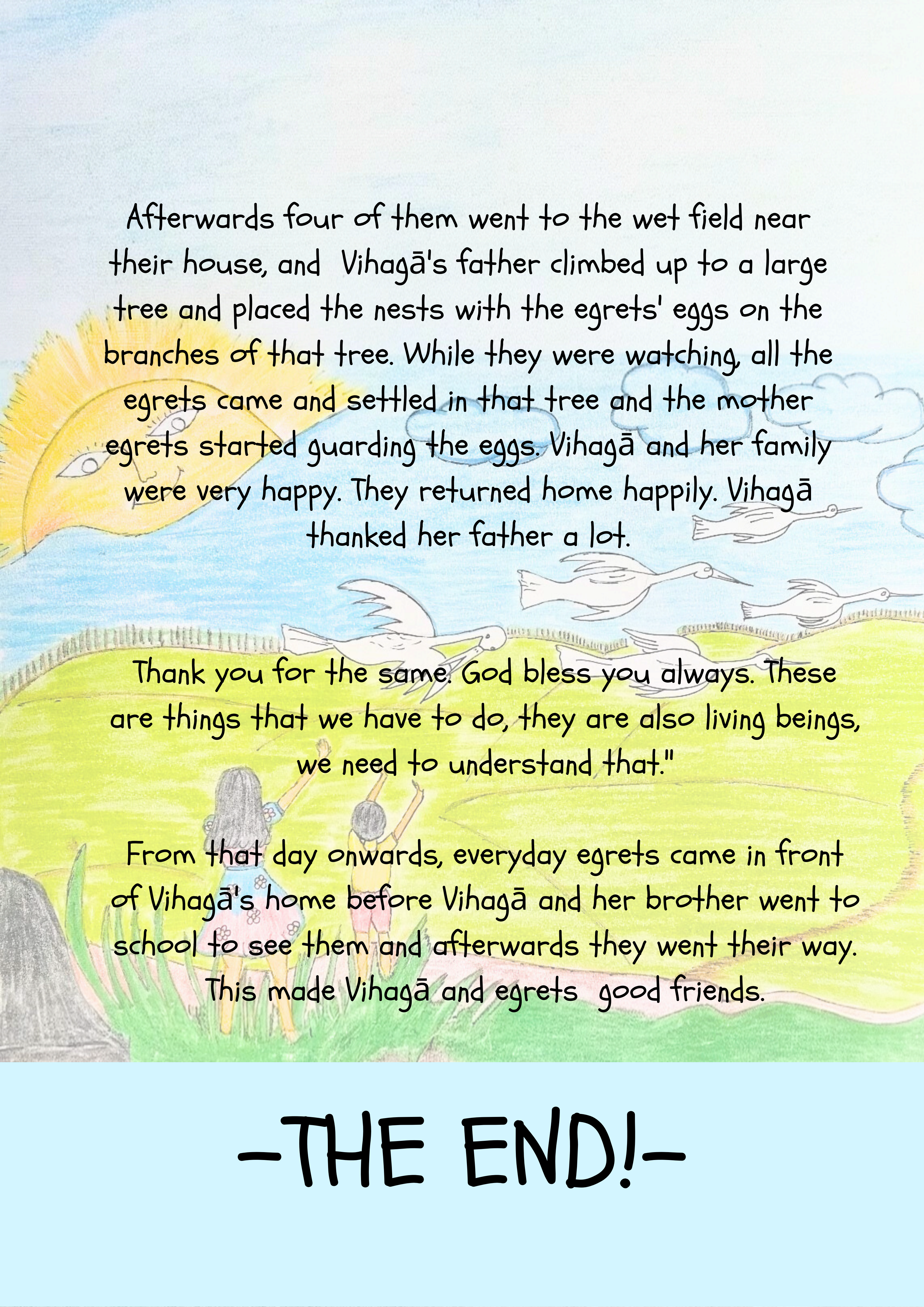
"Did you see, my little girl, that people are filling the land with soil and uprooting all the trees that were there?" "Dad ... dad ..."

Vihagā shouted during her father's speech. "Look, dad, they've demolished the houses of the egrets. Their eggs are also on the ground," Vihagā said, running towards them quickly.



Oh...the innocent egrets were flying everywhere, some eggs were broken, some eggs fell near the houses, and some eggs were inside the nests. Vihagā and her father were very sad. Vihagā and her father quickly collected all the remaining eggs with nests and put them into a basket. All the egrets at once flew back with Vihagā.

Vihagā and his father went home and explained everything that had happened to their mother and younger brother.

The illustration depicts a bright, sunny day in a rural landscape. A large, smiling sun with eyes and a mouth is on the left. Several white egrets are flying across the sky. In the foreground, two children, a girl and a boy, stand with their arms raised, looking towards the sky. The background shows rolling green hills and a blue sky with fluffy clouds.

Afterwards four of them went to the wet field near their house, and Vihagā's father climbed up to a large tree and placed the nests with the egrets' eggs on the branches of that tree. While they were watching, all the egrets came and settled in that tree and the mother egrets started guarding the eggs. Vihagā and her family were very happy. They returned home happily. Vihagā thanked her father a lot.

Thank you for the same. God bless you always. These are things that we have to do, they are also living beings, we need to understand that."

From that day onwards, everyday egrets came in front of Vihagā's home before Vihagā and her brother went to school to see them and afterwards they went their way. This made Vihagā and egrets good friends.

**-THE END!-**