

Level 6



Teliaki the Dangerous Devil

By Andrew Bebemwelgel
Illustrated by Shaina Nayyar



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“Don’t go to the beach by yourselves!” shouted the elders as the children ran down to the beach. Every day, as soon as the parents left for their gardens, the children would sneak out to the beach to play by the sea.



But, in a cave near the beach, a devil
named Telieki lived. He watched the
children play every day.



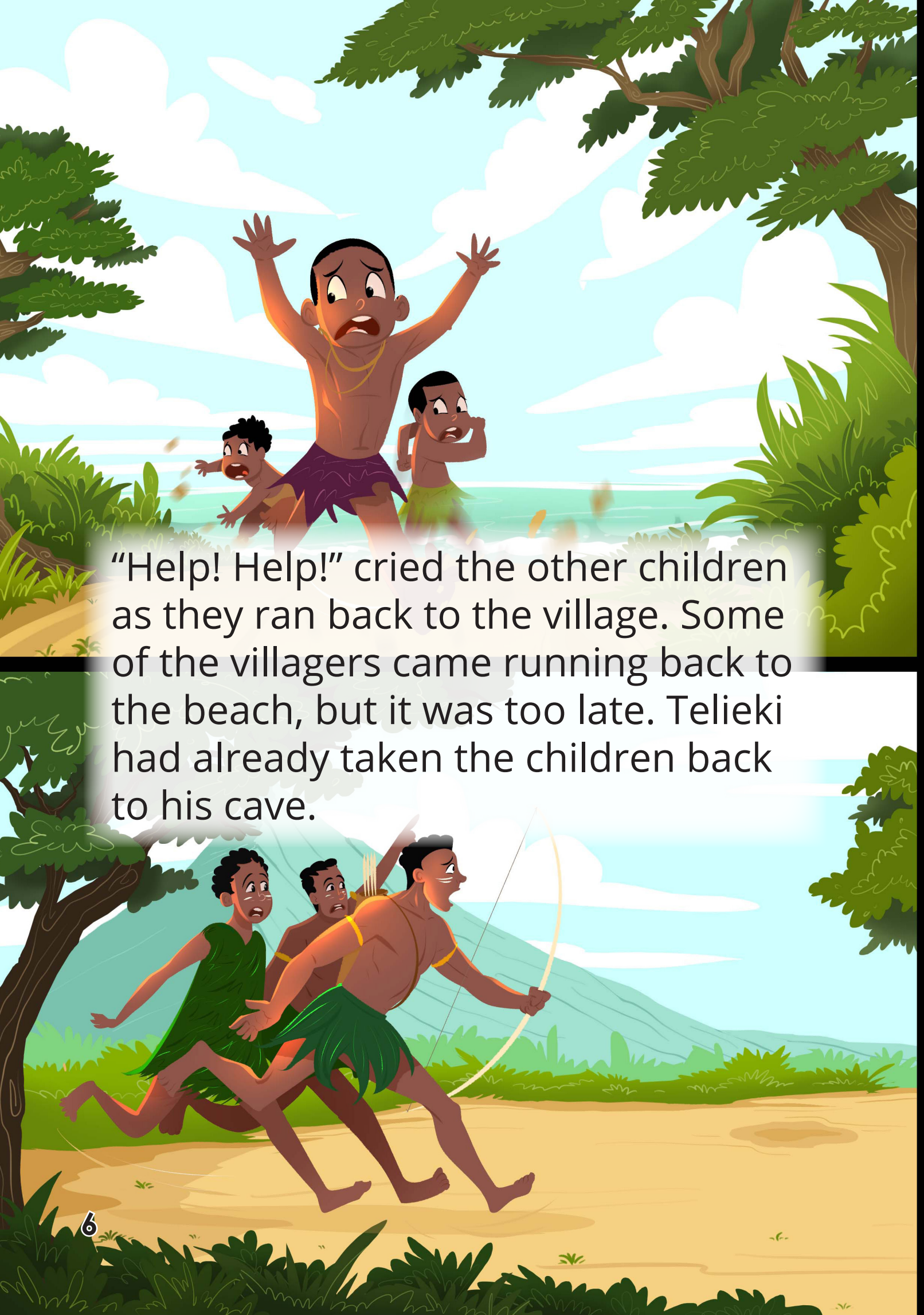
Early one morning, Telieki turned himself into a big stone and lay on a beach.



“Look at that huge stone!” shouted one of the children.

“Let’s go and play on it,” called another. As soon as they stepped on the huge rock, the devil turned back to his normal form, snatched the two children, and ran to his cave!



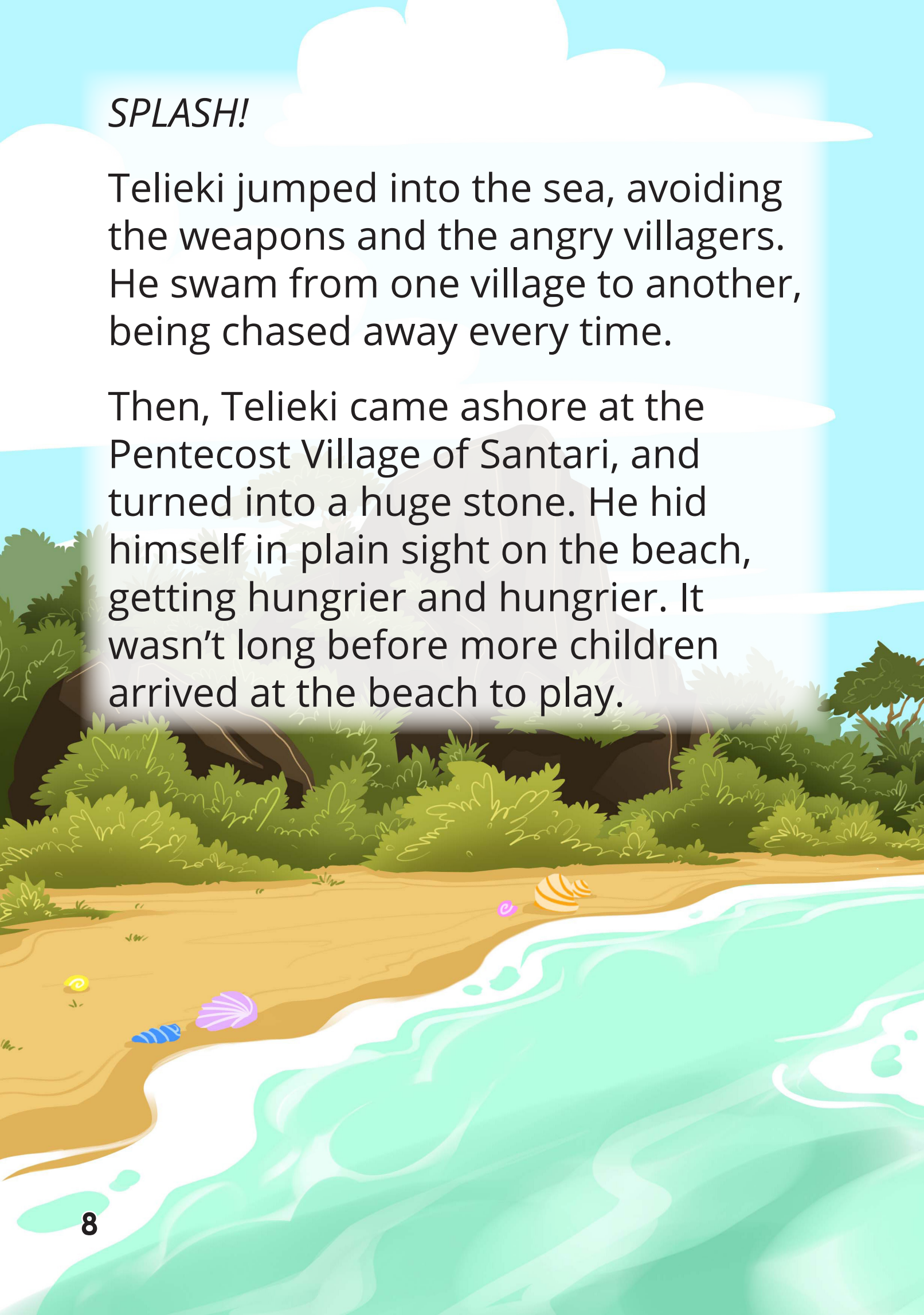


“Help! Help!” cried the other children as they ran back to the village. Some of the villagers came running back to the beach, but it was too late. Telieki had already taken the children back to his cave.

Telieki stole more children over the next few days, and the villagers decided it was time to do something.

While Telieki was still sleeping, some of the villagers approached his cave. They drew their spears and arrows, yelling as they attacked.





SPLASH!

Telieki jumped into the sea, avoiding the weapons and the angry villagers. He swam from one village to another, being chased away every time.

Then, Telieki came ashore at the Pentecost Village of Santari, and turned into a huge stone. He hid himself in plain sight on the beach, getting hungrier and hungrier. It wasn't long before more children arrived at the beach to play.





As more and more children arrived at the beach for a swim, Telieki's stomach rumbled. Within seconds, he had changed back into a devil, grabbed two of the children, and disappeared.

The other children ran back to the village, crying for help.

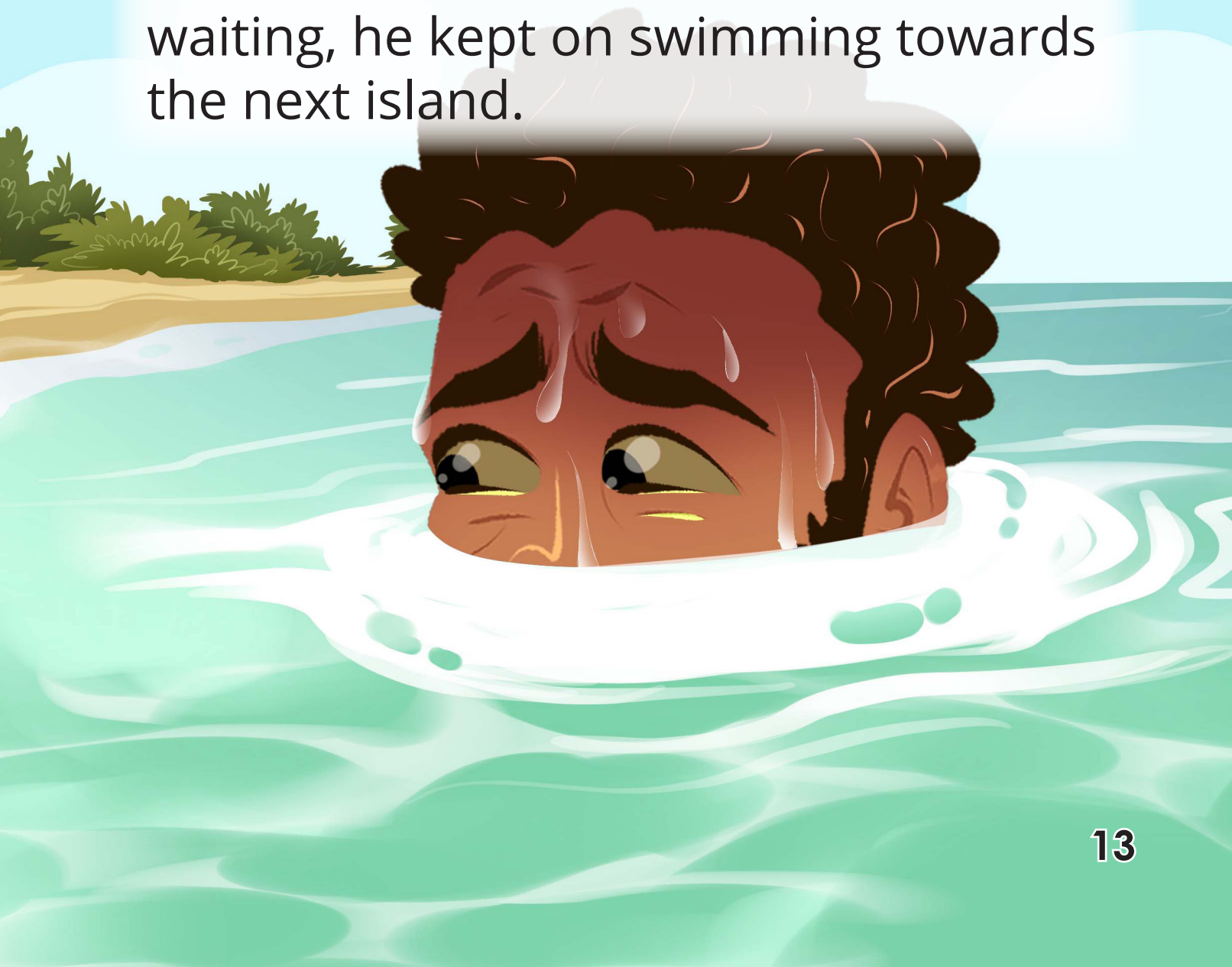


Telieki swallowed the two children whole and dived back into the ocean. He started swimming towards Bay Barie, beside Saint Henry Village.



But word had spread fast, faster than Telieki could swim, and the other villages were ready. They knew to look out for a devil who could change himself into a large stone and kept their children away from the beach.

Strong men from the village waited along the shore for Telieki to appear. But Telieki was too smart for them, and when he saw all the adults waiting, he kept on swimming towards the next island.

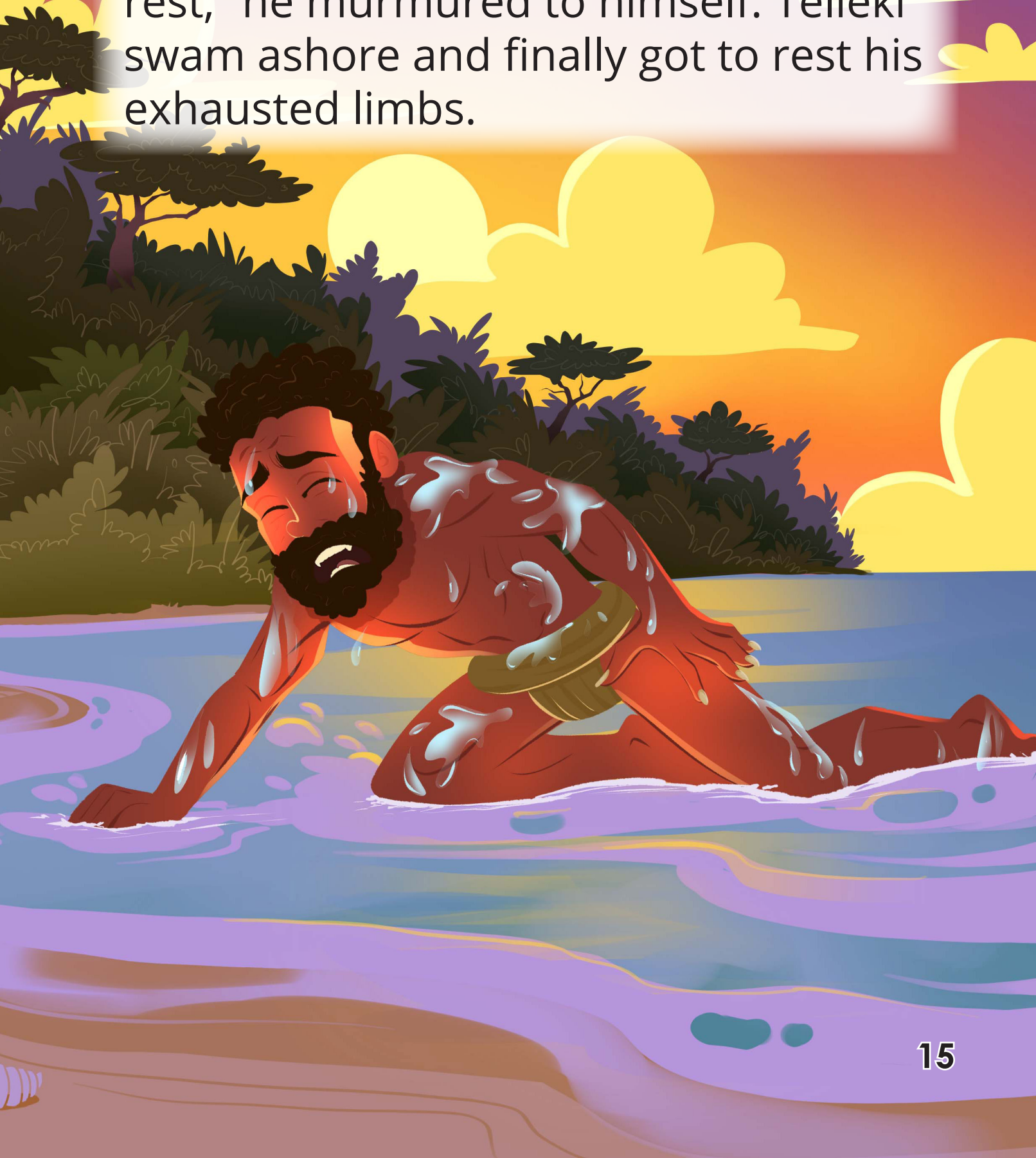




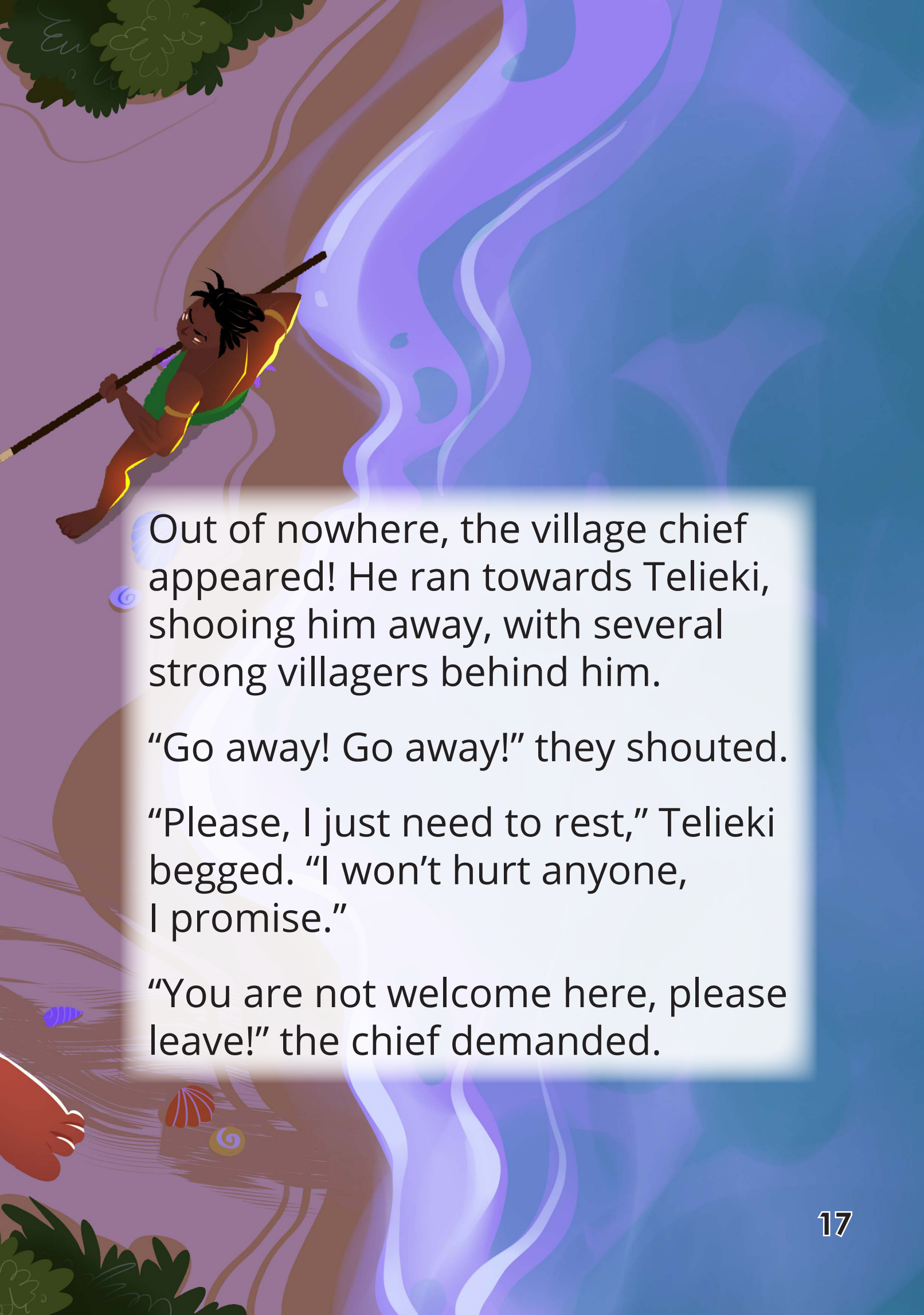
Telieki kept on swimming for three more days until he was too tired to keep going. He needed to rest, so he looked around for another village — one without people waiting for him.

He found Point Cross village — once called Rapaen — and headed towards it.

“This could be the perfect place to rest,” he murmured to himself. Telieki swam ashore and finally got to rest his exhausted limbs.







Out of nowhere, the village chief appeared! He ran towards Telieki, shooing him away, with several strong villagers behind him.

"Go away! Go away!" they shouted.

"Please, I just need to rest," Telieki begged. "I won't hurt anyone, I promise."

"You are not welcome here, please leave!" the chief demanded.

"I'll stay away from the village. I won't hurt the children. Please let me stay," Telieki sobbed. He was too tired. If he tried to swim now, he would drown.

After a moment, the chief replied. "If you promise me that you won't hurt any children from the village, I'll let you stay."



"I promise you that I will not hurt any of your children. A man can be forgiven his wrongdoings if he forgives himself first," Telieki said.

The chief's heart softened at those words, and he allowed Telieki to stay.



Telieki turned into a large stone one last time and sat on the beach. He is still there to this day and can be seen at Point Cross Village beach when the tides are low.

The people of Point Cross Village kept Telieki's last words close, remembering that anyone can change for the better.





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



Why does Telieki eat the children?



**Why does Telieki have to leave
each village?**



How could you avoid Telieki?

**Have you ever seen a large rock
on the beach?**



**Discuss with friends or family what you
would do if Telieki appeared near you.**

About the author

Andrew Bebemwelgel is from Point Cross Village on Pentecost Island but now lives in Port Vila and studies at the University of South Pacific. He loves telling Vanuatu custom stories, as he believes it helps everyone understand those customs better. As a child he used to read *Nabanga Pikinini*.



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Original illustrations by Shaina Nayyar

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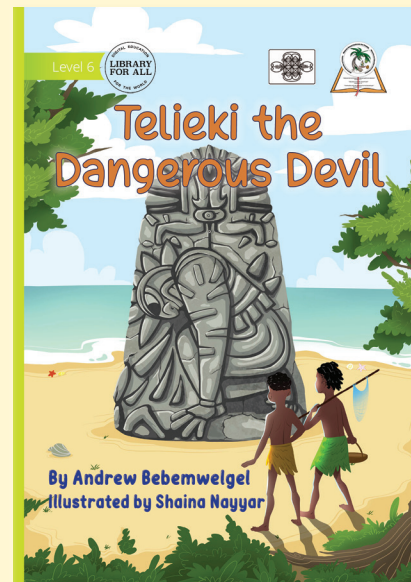
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Telieki the devil terrorises the villages of the Vanuatu islands, stealing children to feed himself. But what will happen when he's caught?



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