



WRITTEN BY
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COME NOW, HOME

ILLUSTRATED BY DON M. SALUBAYBA



Translated into English by Lawrence L. Ypil



One day,
Nanay brought me some news.
She said, "We're moving house!"
Bigger, more beautiful, better,
more colorful.
The new house that was waiting
for us would be just that.

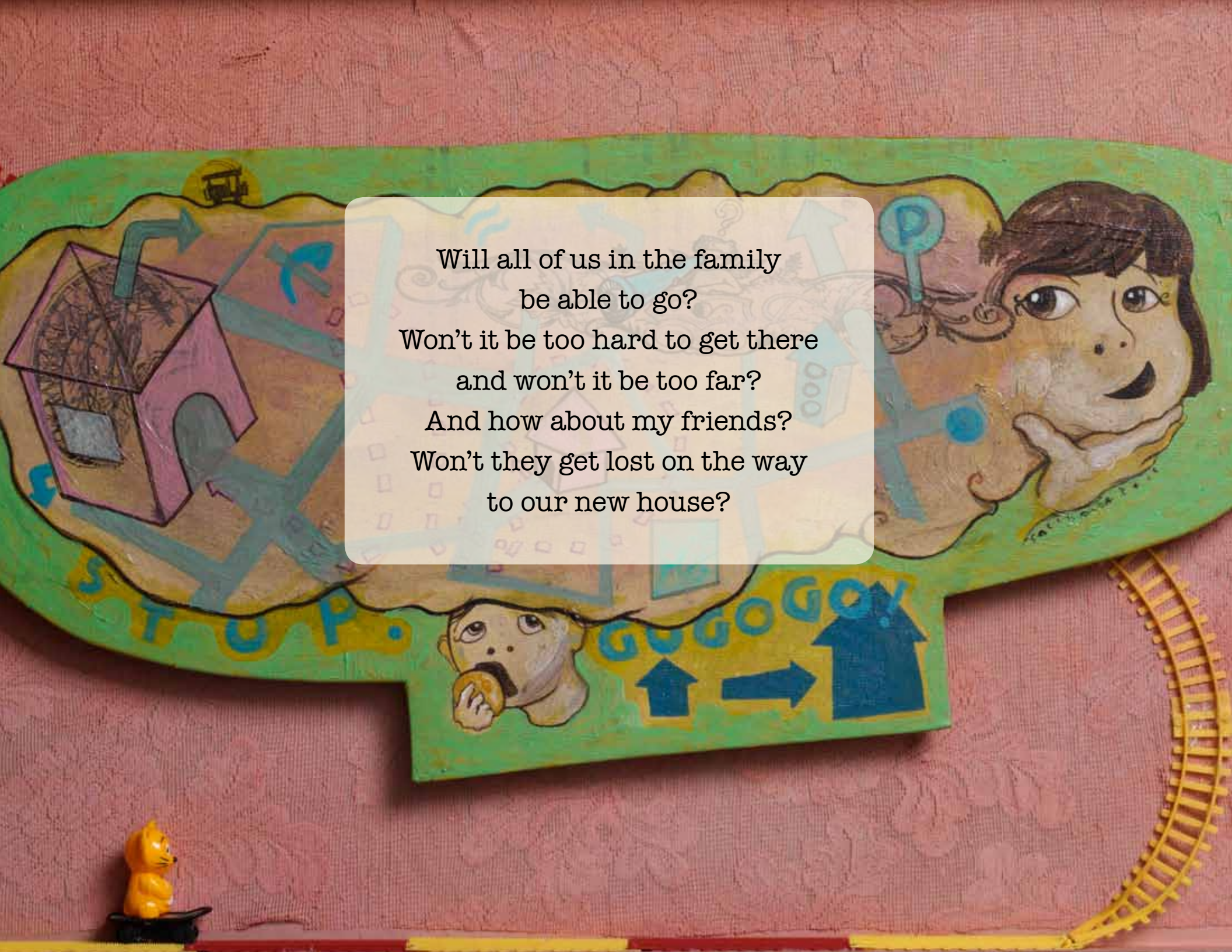


Wow! I was surprised
and overjoyed.
I even jumped up with joy
and clapped.
I thought, this was going to be
an exciting chapter
for me and our big family.





But wait!
I suddenly stopped.
A number of questions
entered my young mind.
Will we be able to bring
all of our things?
Will not something important
be left behind?



Will all of us in the family
be able to go?
Won't it be too hard to get there
and won't it be too far?
And how about my friends?
Won't they get lost on the way
to our new house?

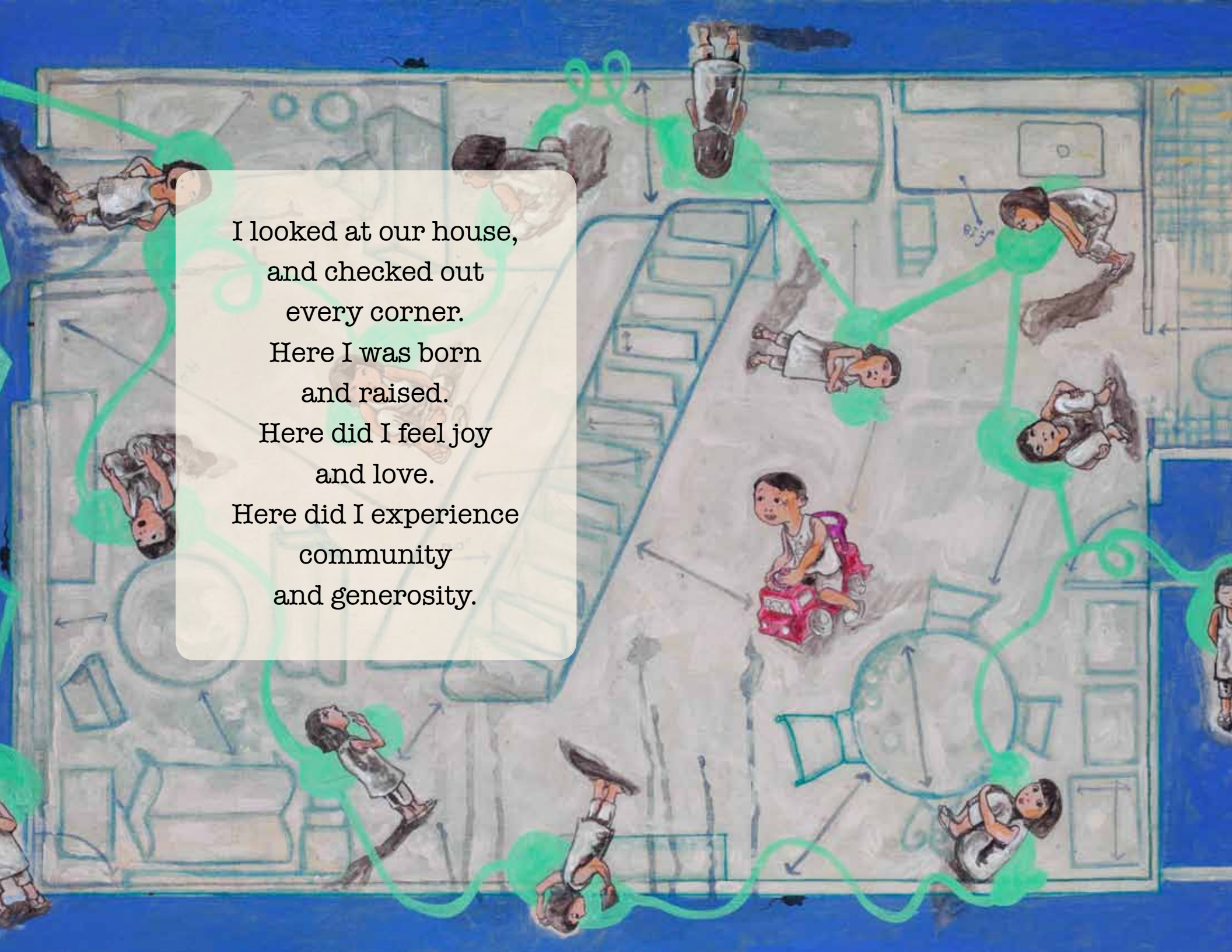
Will there be a garden
in our new place?

Will there be a playground
that's full of fun?

Will there be a lot of places
to explore?

Will it be able to give us
everything that we need?



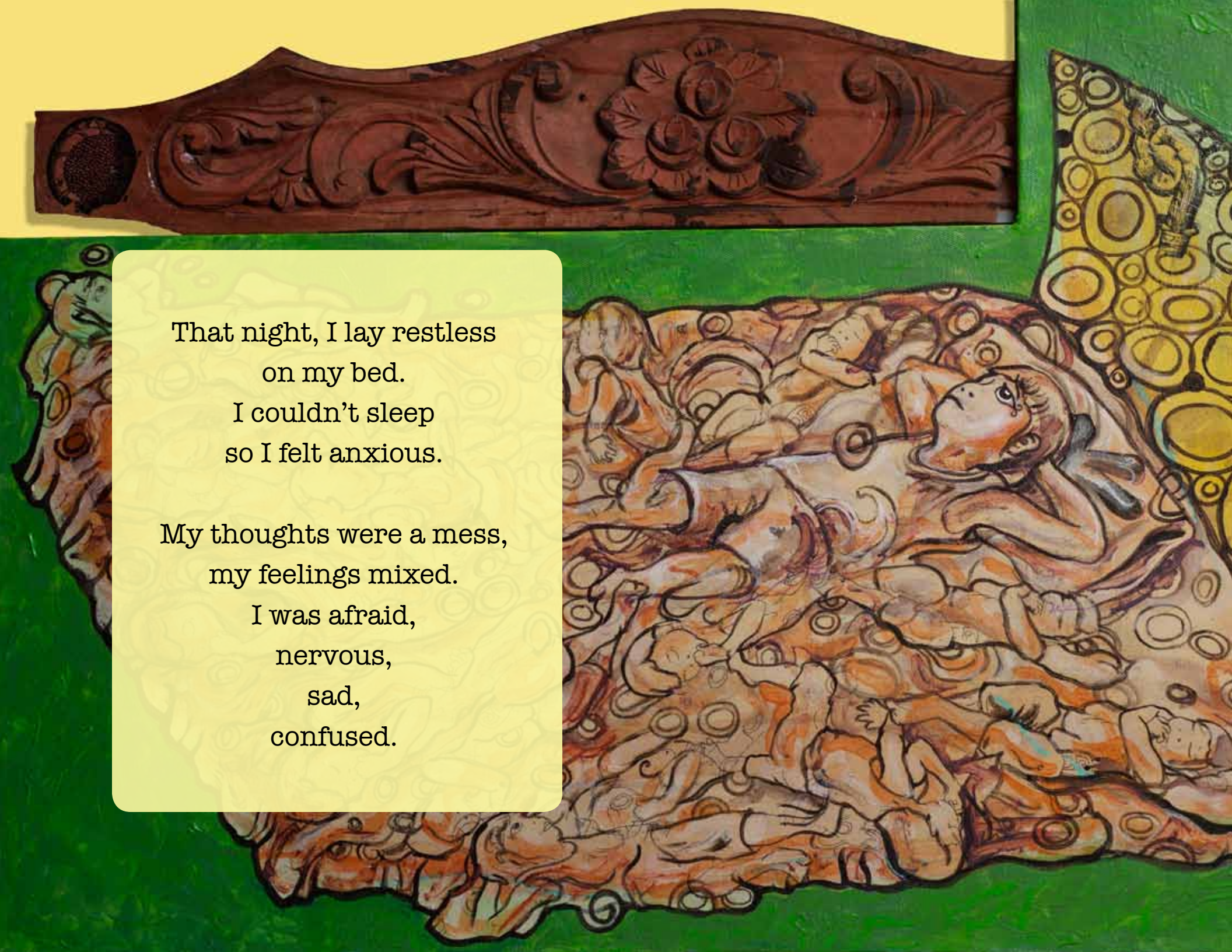


I looked at our house,
and checked out
every corner.
Here I was born
and raised.
Here did I feel joy
and love.
Here did I experience
community
and generosity.

Many typhoons this house
has weathered.
But all of these it was able
to survive.

This is where we found
protection,
escape,
and shelter.
Oh, how could I ever leave
and forget this place?



The background is a painting. At the top is a dark brown, ornate headboard with floral and scrollwork carvings. Below it is a bed with a patterned blanket featuring a repeating circular motif in shades of brown, tan, and green. A person with long, dark hair is lying in the bed, looking upwards with a thoughtful or anxious expression. The overall style is expressive and somewhat abstract, with visible brushstrokes and a rich color palette.

That night, I lay restless
on my bed.
I couldn't sleep
so I felt anxious.

My thoughts were a mess,
my feelings mixed.
I was afraid,
nervous,
sad,
confused.



Slowly
they felt heavy,
my eyes.

My tired mind
and heart
wanted to rest.



But wait!
What is this I see?

Our house took the shape
of a man!



I could clearly see
his teardrops racing down.
I could clearly feel
his deep, deep sorrow.

I hugged him
and embraced him
affectionately.
Whispering to him,
“Here now, Home.”





I knew then what needed to be done.
I invited him to come with me.
We would we go to a faraway place
Where no one would be able
to follow or see us.

So carrying a few things,
we started
The journey even if we were not
very sure where we'd go.

But just when we had
not gone very far,
Something happened
which surprised us both.



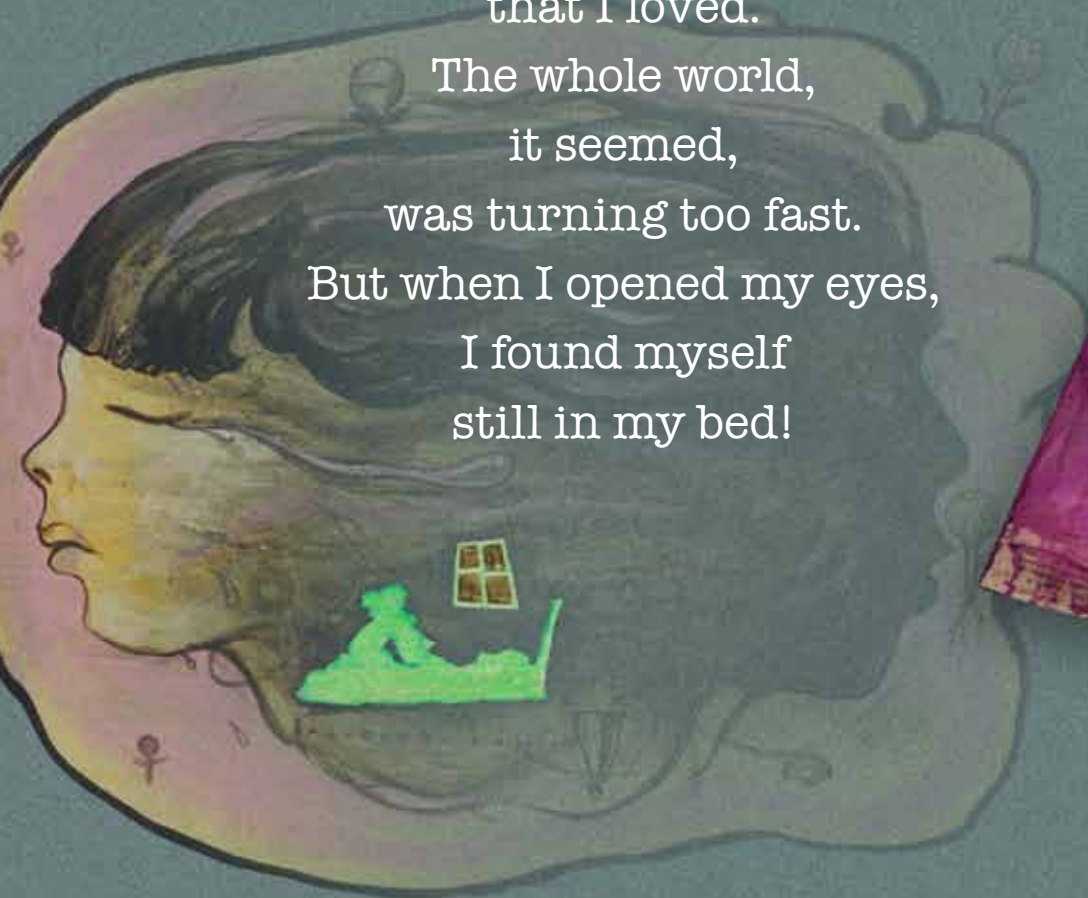


A strong wind and
a fierce downpour of rain
Suddenly met us
on the way.

The rushing waters
were terrifying.
We were swept away,
as were our hopes.

All I could do
was close my eyes
out of fear.
I tightened my grip
on the home
that I loved.

The whole world,
it seemed,
was turning too fast.
But when I opened my eyes,
I found myself
still in my bed!





I couldn't stop
my tears from falling.
Nanay came and held me close.
She said, "Sssssh...
Come now, my child.
It's normal to be afraid
of change.

"But don't worry,
because I promise you,
There we will be much happier.
Just remember that I only
always wish for what is best,
And what will be good
for our family.



“You don’t really need
to let go or forget,
The happy memories of this home.
Instead, gather and take all
of them with you,
As an important part of your life.

“Child, hopefully you will
also remember,
The true meaning of home.
This is not just a place
or a physical concept;
This is to be found
in the depths of our hearts.”





Nanay's words
made me smile.
This is a precious lesson
for our lives.

We bring our homes
wherever we may go
As long as our love
for each other is true!



About the AUTHOR

Maria Isabel “Issa” Alarilla-Arellano wrote “Tahan Na, Tahanan” based on her own experiences, having lived in at least 20 different houses throughout her life. Joining Romeo Forbes Children’s Storywriting Competition for the first time, she considers this book a dream come true.

A graduate of the University of the Philippines, Issa loves to write, especially stories and poems for children. After more than a decade of working as editor-writer of educational magazines, she decided to venture into the advertising world overseas.

She and husband Carlos are presently living in Dubai, UAE.



About the ARTIST

Don Maralit Salubayba was born in Davao from a Batangueña mother and a father from the Quezon province. He grew up in Laguna, and is married to OJ who is part-Ilongga and part-Ibaloi.

His art background is rooted from the Philippine High School for the Arts in Mt. Makiling and at the University of the Philippines in Diliman. A 2009 Thirteen Artist awardee from the Cultural Center of the Philippines, he has also had numerous exhibitions and residencies locally and abroad.

Don is a proud ‘Tatay’ to Amaya and Elias and a loving ‘Kabiyak’ to his wife.





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