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PRESENTS

THE
C O L O R E D

WATER FOUNTAIN

Tales of Society Book I

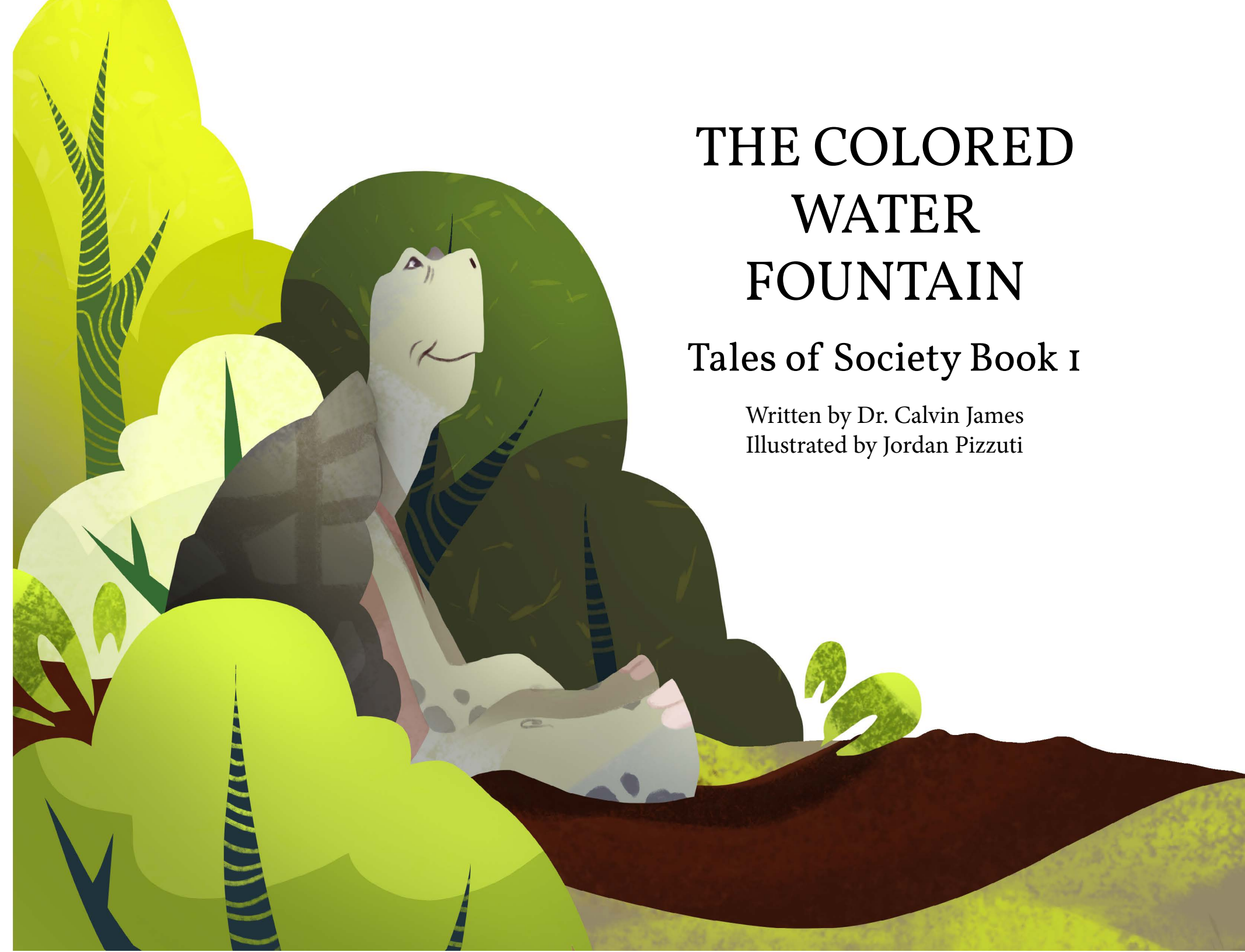
For my sons Asher & Zephyr.
My love goes from A to Z.

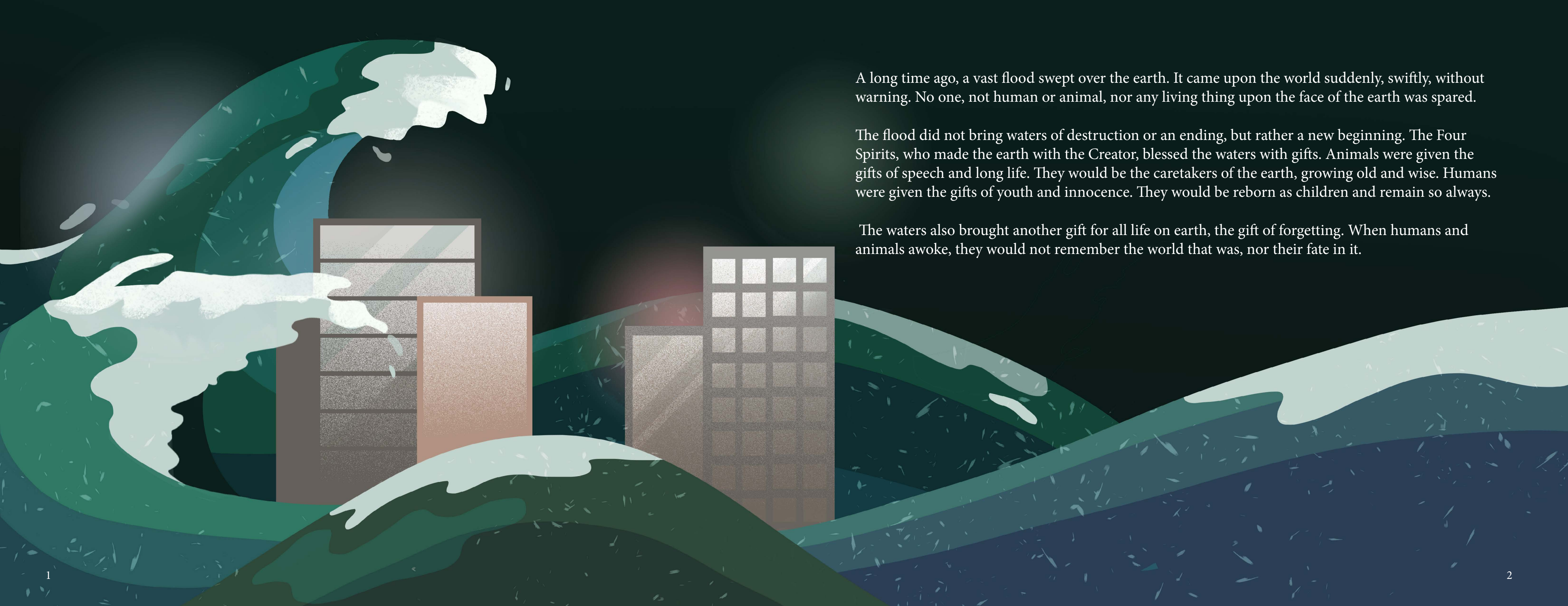


THE COLORED WATER FOUNTAIN

Tales of Society Book I

Written by Dr. Calvin James
Illustrated by Jordan Pizzuti





A long time ago, a vast flood swept over the earth. It came upon the world suddenly, swiftly, without warning. No one, not human or animal, nor any living thing upon the face of the earth was spared.

The flood did not bring waters of destruction or an ending, but rather a new beginning. The Four Spirits, who made the earth with the Creator, blessed the waters with gifts. Animals were given the gifts of speech and long life. They would be the caretakers of the earth, growing old and wise. Humans were given the gifts of youth and innocence. They would be reborn as children and remain so always.

The waters also brought another gift for all life on earth, the gift of forgetting. When humans and animals awoke, they would not remember the world that was, nor their fate in it.



Asher awoke with no memory of his life before the flood. He saw the world as if for the first time, through the eyes of a child, but somehow, some things, Asher simply knew.

He knew the brilliant light amidst the vast blue plain was the sun, and the blue plain itself was the sky. He knew the white puffs were clouds. The tall brown structures with lush green at their tops were trees. The endless colors within a sea of green were flowers in a glade.

As Asher marveled at all he saw, he could feel the rightness and goodness in the world. He knew all that he saw was true.



“Hello,” a voice behind Asher said. It startled him “Sorry, I didn’t mean to frighten you.”

Asher turned and saw a girl. “It’s ok. My name is Asher.”

“Nice to meet you, Asher. My name is Adeline.”

“Do you know where we are?” Asher asked.

“No,” Adeline said, “but it’s very beautiful.”

“Yes, it is.” Asher agreed. “Would you like to explore with me?”

Adeline smiled. “I would like that very much.”



So Asher and Adeline explored the world. They met other boys and girls, lions and tigers, bears and deer, cats and dogs. They spoke of the things they knew to be true: the sun, the sky, the trees, the grass, the flowers, the glade... They felt nature’s goodness and rightness, and the world was a beautiful, happy place.



One day, Asher and Adeline were exploring as they loved to do, and came to a place they had never seen before. The grass ended and there was gray, hard ground.

Some how, the two friends knew that these were sidewalks and roads. Then they saw structures as tall as trees; made of materials Asher and Adeline knew to be glass, steel, and brick. Just as they couldn't know what they had forgotten, they didn't understand how or why certain memories had remained.

They looked at one another and said at the same time, "This is a town!" for they felt its rightness, and knew it to be true.



After some time, they came upon what they knew to be a water fountain, and hanging above it was a sign. Both Asher and Adeline could read, but they could not understand the words written upon the sign.

“‘Colored’ water fountain...?” Asher was confused.

Adeline shrugged her shoulders and said, “I don’t see how it’s colored. It’s gray, like the roads and sidewalks; and has a bit of steel, like the buildings.”

“Maybe,” Asher said, “...it gives us colored water, like a rainbow?”

Asher and Adeline thought about this, feeling the goodness in the idea, and believed it must be true.

“Well,” Adeline said. “Let’s find out.”

But the fountain did not give them red water, or green, or blue, or any colored water of any kind. They thought and thought of why the water fountain was called “colored”, but try as they might, they were unable to understand the meaning.



That night, Asher slept badly. He dreamt of a world he didn't know, and yet it felt all too familiar. In his dream, the meaning of the colored water fountain was given to him at a great cost, and a heavy burden was imparted to his heart while easing the burden of another.



When Adeline awoke, Asher was gone. She went all over the glade trying to find him. She asked the other boys and girls, lions and tigers, bears and deer, cats and dogs if they had seen him, and eventually learned that Asher was headed to the peak of Mount High, the tallest mountain in all the land. Adeline raced after Asher, and later that morning, caught up with him.



“Adeline!” Asher said. “What are you doing here?”

“What am I doing here?” Adeline said, gasping for breath. “What are YOU doing here?! Why didn’t you tell me you were going to the peak of Mount High?”

Asher’s face saddened. “I had a dream last night of a world I did not know, and yet it felt all too familiar. I dreamt I was different. I dreamt you were different. The world that we know was different.”

“In what way?” Adeline asked.

Asher’s brow furrowed in concentration and he closed his eyes, thinking hard. Then he opened his eyes and shook his head.

“I can’t remember, but in my dream the answer of why the world was different and the meaning of the colored water fountain were given to me on the peak of Mount High.”

“Who told you this in the dream?” Adeline asked.

“I can’t remember that either,” Asher said, “but I feel the rightness and goodness of this journey, so I know it to be true. I must go.”

“Then I’m coming with you.”




“In my dream I was alone,” Asher said sadly, but Adeline took his hand.

“You’re never alone, Asher. You always have me.”

Asher’s eyes filled with tears of happiness. Then he smiled and said, “Adeline, would you like to explore the peak of Mount High with me?”

Adeline grinned and said, “I would like that very much.”

An illustration of a young boy and girl standing on a mountain peak. The boy, Asher, is on the right, wearing a yellow shirt and blue pants, looking up at a large, glowing yellow sun. The girl, Adeline, is on the left, wearing a blue dress, looking towards the boy. The mountain is covered in snow and has a small red and orange object, possibly a lantern or a small fire, hanging from a branch. The background is a dark, cloudy sky.

Asher and Adeline tried to continue their journey. Though they found Mount High, they saw no clear way to reach the peak. Many times they believed they had found a path, only to end up in the very same spot they had begun. The sun was nowhere to be seen. A vast, endless sea of gray clouds blanketed the sky; it felt like it was dusk, no matter the hour of the day. And it was cold, so very cold. Then, out of nowhere, a snowstorm descended upon the mountain.



“We have to find shelter!” Asher called above the din of the howling wind.

“Look, over there!” Adeline pointed to a hole in the hillside. They instinctively knew it was a cave, for they felt its rightness.

They raced toward it and collapsed with exhaustion once inside.

They huddled together for warmth, but it was still freezing cold.

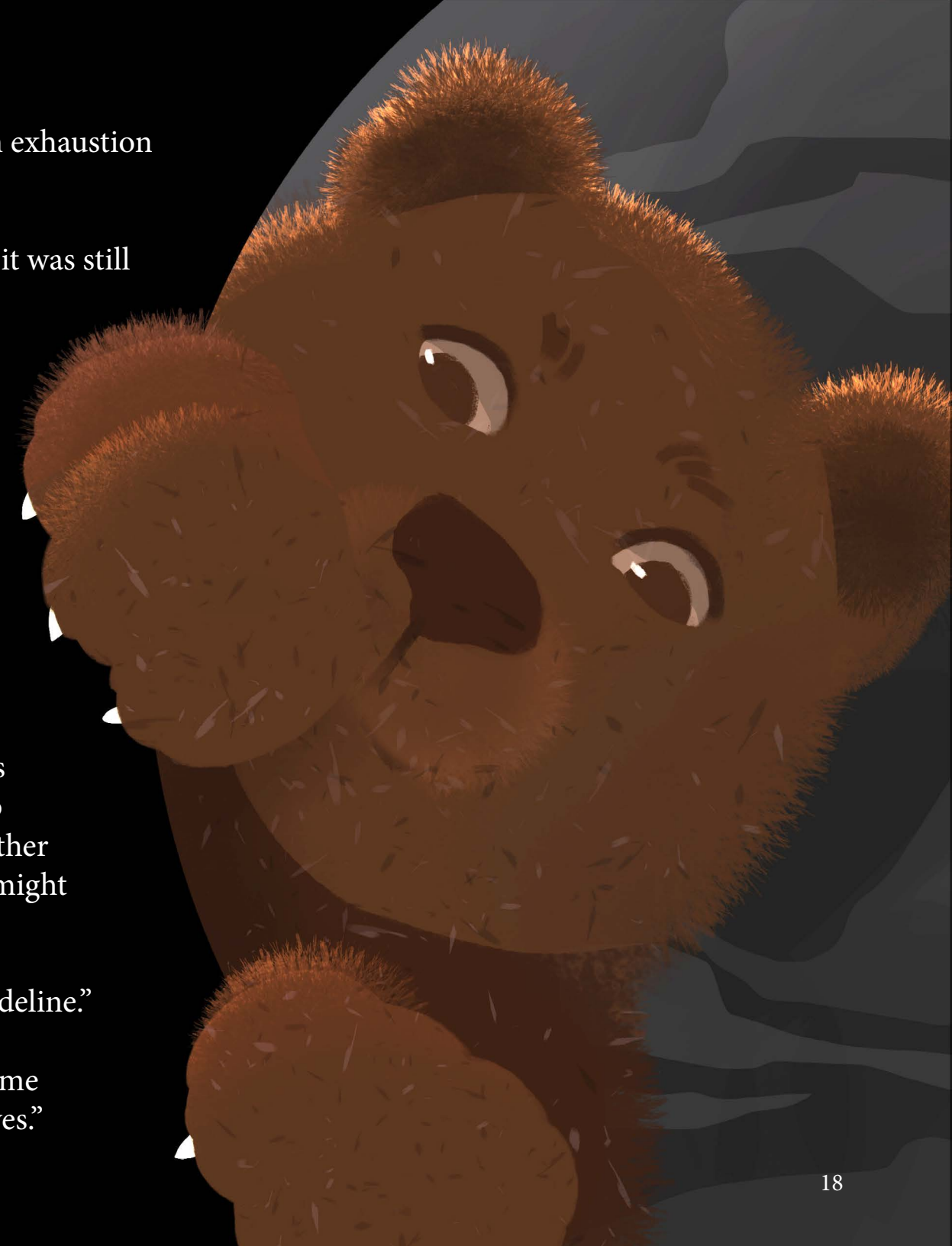
Suddenly, a gigantic figure stirred in the cave and out of the darkness stepped an enormous brown bear.

“Oh my!” Asher said. “We’re so sorry! We didn’t mean to invade your home. We will go.”

The bear stared at them for a moment, then smiled and said, “Well, what a surprise! I don’t see many boys and girls here on Mount High. There’s no need to apologize. No one should be out in weather like this, my friends. I’m Brenda. Who might you be?”

“I’m Asher and this is my best friend, Adeline.”

“Pleased to meet you both. Come in, come deeper into the cave and warm yourselves.”



Deeper in the cave, Brenda had a fire going.

“So where are y’all headed in weather like this?”

“To the peak of Mount High,” Asher said.


“The peak of Mount High, you say? Well, the clothes you have simply won’t do for a journey like that.”

Brenda left the fire and came back with mounds of soft brown fur.

“This is my fur that I’ve shed. Brown bear fur is the warmest in the entire world. It has the power to brighten your heart and show you the way when your path feels cold and dark.”

Asher and Adeline took the furs, feeling the goodness in Brenda’s words. After the storm passed, Brenda wished them luck and sent Asher and Adeline on their way.



An illustration showing two children climbing a mountain path. The child in front is a girl with red hair in a blue dress, holding the hand of a boy in a yellow shirt and blue shorts. They are walking up a steep, rocky slope with patches of snow. In the background, there are green mountains and a small tree.

The journey to the peak of Mount High was easier with warm fur on their backs. Within a few minutes of leaving the cave, they stumbled upon a path that circled Mount High in a gentle climb. The summit was not what Asher or Adeline had expected. It was not a peak as they had assumed from afar, but a flat, barren plane.

In the center of the plane, was a single, ancient, weathered tree with a hollowed trunk.

“There’s no one here,” Adeline said.

Asher stepped closer to the tree. “Hello!” Asher’s voice echoed in the silence, but then they heard movement. A moment later, a tortoise holding a cane emerged from the trunk.

“Well, hello there,” the tortoise said in a deep, resonant voice. He smiled. Asher and Adeline felt his rightness and goodness, but they also sensed sorrow and a heavy burden in their new friend’s eyes.

“Hi, I’m Asher, and this is my best friend, Adeline.”

“I am Aeon. I don’t get many visitors to my home. Have you come to ask a question about the world that was?”

Asher and Adeline looked at each other, confused. “The world that was?” Asher asked. “I don’t understand. There was another world before this one?”

Aeon nodded. "A long time ago, a vast flood swept over the earth. It came upon the world suddenly, swiftly, without warning. No one, not human, nor animal, nor any living thing upon the face of the earth was spared, except me.

"I've always loved to explore. I happened to be climbing to the peak of Mount High before the flood. It is so high that the floodwaters did not reach this place, so I and I alone know of the world that was, and our fates in it. Have you ever wondered why somehow, some things, you simply know?"

"Yes!" Asher responded happily, pleased to make some sense of what had been nagging at him.

"It is because it was deemed so by The Four Spirits, that things from the world that was, things which had goodness or rightness would be remembered."

"Why not all things?" Adeline asked.

Aeon lowered his head and a great weariness fell upon his face.

"Because some things must be forgotten." And Aeon said nothing more of that. Then, he continued, "So, what is your question about the world that was?"





“Well,” Asher began. “I had a dream that you could tell me the meaning of the colored water fountain.”

Aeon sighed and looked very sad. “Tell me, Asher, what did you think the word ‘colored’ water fountain meant when you read it?”

“I thought it meant the water was colored, like a rainbow.”

Aeon nodded. “And why do you now believe that this is not the truth?”

“Because I felt the goodness in the words, but not the rightness; and no colored water came out of the fountain, so I know my understanding of the words was not true.”

“So you believe that something must have goodness and rightness to be true?”

“Yes,” Asher said.

Aeon was silent for a moment, then said, “How do you think you found your way here?”

“We followed the path,” Adeline replied.

“Really...” Aeon raised his brow. “Or perhaps it was the brown bear’s fur, the warmest fur in the entire world that has the power to brighten your heart and show you the way when your path feels cold and dark.”

Asher thought for a moment, then said, “I guess it could have been the fur.”

“Yes,” Aeon said, “If you believe it could have, which you did, therefore the colored water fountain could also be exactly what you believed it to be.

“But that does not give it the same feeling of rightness, so how can it be true?”



“The more you explore the world, Asher, the more you will find things in life that have goodness but no rightness, or rightness but no goodness, yet are nonetheless still true. Have you found other things in the world - besides the brown bear’s fur - that have goodness but no rightness, or rightness but no goodness, and yet are still true?”

“The bears’ cave!” Adeline said. “The sidewalks, the buildings, and the town itself. We felt the rightness, and we knew them to be true.”

“Very good, Adeline,” Aeon said. “So you may leave now with your own knowledge of what you believe the colored water fountain is, or you may know what it meant in the world that was.”

Without hesitation, Asher said, “I want to know what it meant in the world that was.”

Aeon again looked sad. “Even though this knowledge will serve you no purpose in the world that is now?”

“Yes”

“Very well. The colored water fountain was made for you, Asher, and others like you.”

Asher was confused. “For me and others like me? Like what? What does that even mean?”

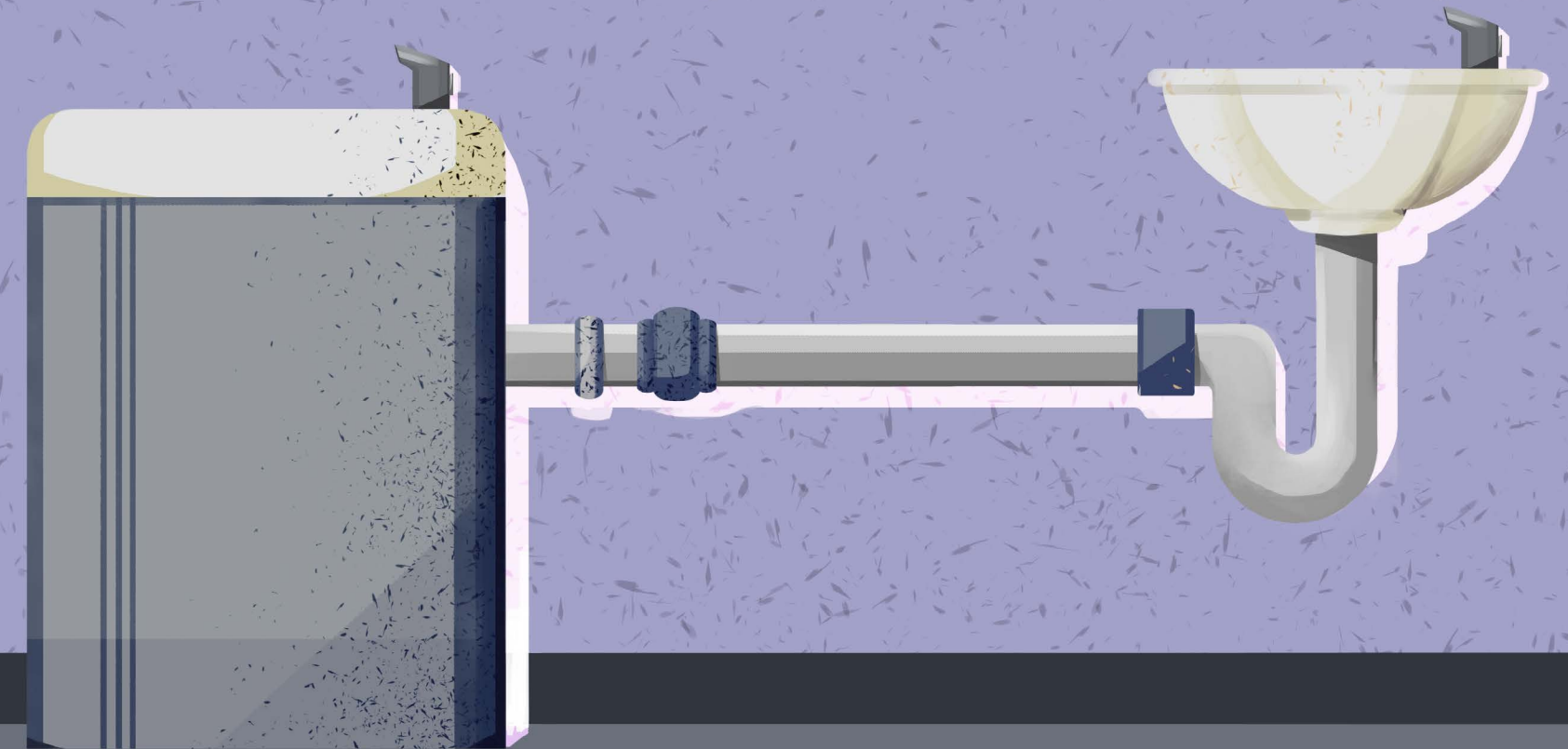
“In the world that was, people were frequently judged based on the color of their skin. The darker your skin, the less rightness and goodness it was believed you had to offer. You, Asher, would have been looked upon very unfavorably, and you, Adeline, much more favorably.”

“But,” Adeline said, “how does the color of a person’s skin tell you how much rightness and goodness they have? You have to get to know someone.”

“It does not tell you how much rightness or goodness someone has, but people believed that it did, in the world that was. In that time, Adeline, you and Asher would not have been friends. It would have been frowned upon. You would not have gone to the same school. You would not have lived in the same neighborhood, and you would not drink from the same water fountain.”

WHITE

COLORED



Asher and Adeline were shocked, pained beyond belief. They were silent for a long time. Then, Asher said, “I now know why we could not understand the word ‘colored’ water fountain. It is because the words have no rightness or goodness, and therefore they are not true. Why would anyone have such an idea or create such a thing?”

“That, Asher,” Aeon said, “would require understanding the hearts of men, which you cannot and never will, for you are a child and always will be. The Four Spirits deemed it that the earth may never again be filled with so many things that have no rightness or goodness and are not true.”

Asher and Adeline suddenly felt a great burden on their hearts. However, in the eyes of Aeon, they saw his long-carried burden lifting. They walked back to the glade in silence, pondering what they had learned.

“Others will go to the town. Others will see the colored water fountain. We now know the truth. Should we share it with them?” Adeline asked, but Asher did not answer.





After Asher and Adeline returned to the glade, many days and weeks went by, but nobody came to ask what the colored water fountain meant. They hoped nobody would. Then, one day a girl named Dai came to Asher and Adeline and said, "I heard you were the first to find the colored water fountain. Do you know what it means?"

Adeline looked to Asher. He sighed heavily, "it gives us colored water, like a rainbow."

Dai furrowed her brow. "But no colors come out. It looks like regular water."

Asher smiled. "That's because when all the colors of the rainbow come together they become clear. No color is above or beneath the others. They are as one."

Dai thought about Asher's words, and felt the rightness and goodness in them; she knew they were true. "Thank you for telling me what the words meant, Asher. That makes me happy."

"You're welcome."

Dai skipped away.





Adeline looked at her friend. “I think I’ve realized a new truth, Asher.”

“What’s that?”

“The world alone is a beautiful place, but it’s the people in it that make it a very beautiful and happy place.”

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

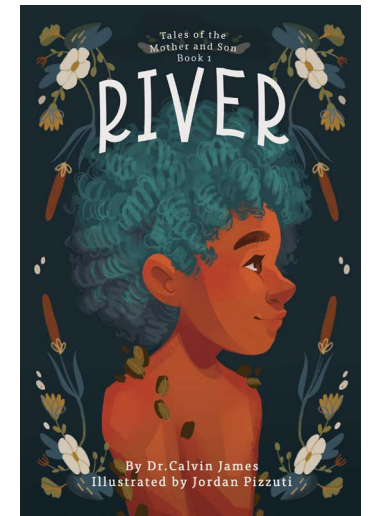
Dr. Calvin James founded CALVIN JAMES CREATES in 2019 with a mission to share children’s stories, novels, and music promoting truth, kindness, friendship, love, and hope.



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