

Adam's First Fast.



Amaan Ishaq



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To my Amma and Abba, for giving me everything I ever needed.

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FIRST EDITION

RUMBLE RUMBLE

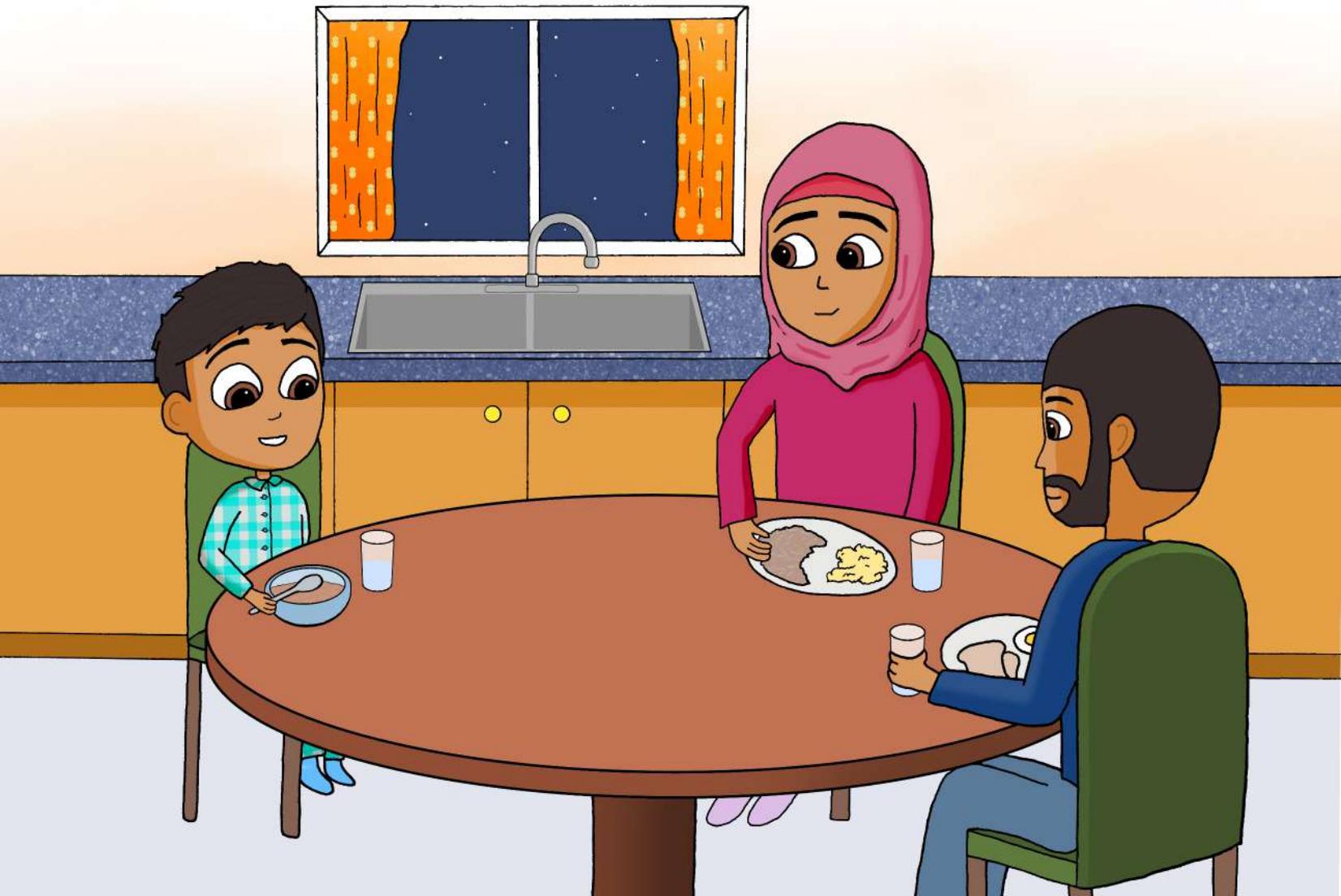
Adam could feel his stomach grumbling,
begging him to feed it.

But he couldn't, because today was the first
day of Ramadan, and Adam was trying to keep
his first ever half-day fast.



He was excited to be taking part in Ramadan this year. He loved the feeling of waking up even earlier than the sun and joining his family for suhoor.

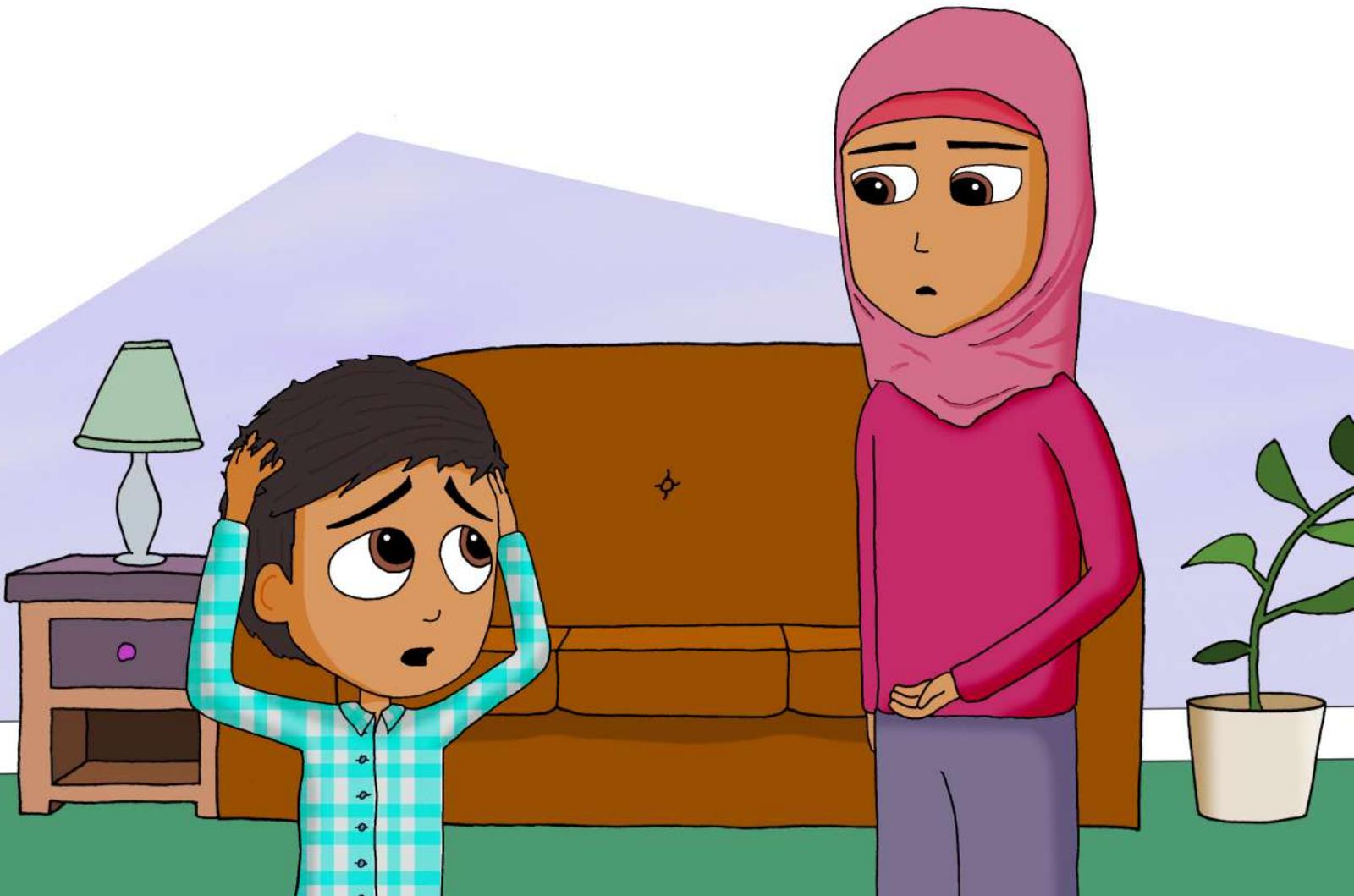
But even though he filled his tummy as much as he could, this was turning out to be harder than he imagined.

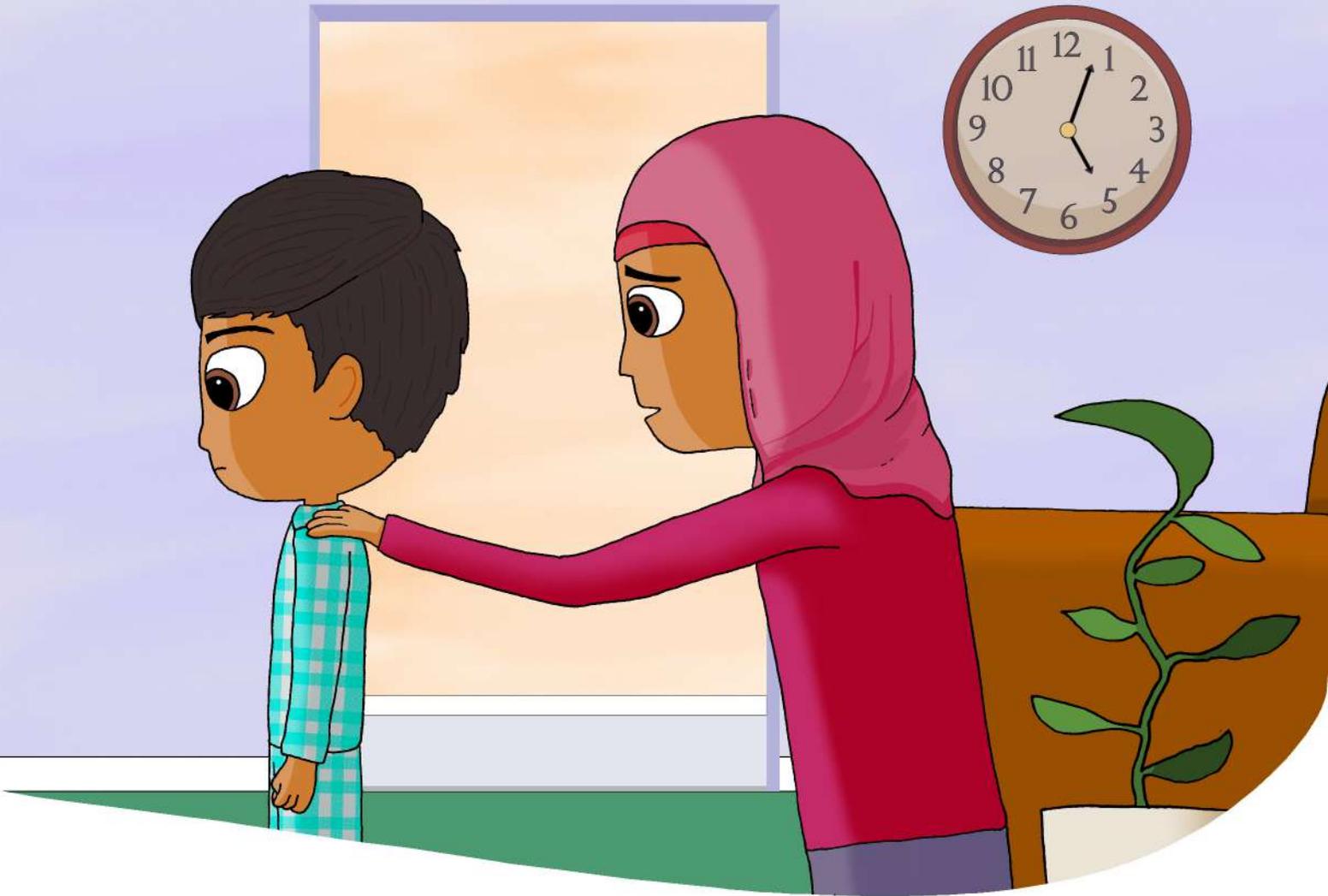


"I don't know if I can do this. I'm so hungry! How long have I been fasting for?" he asked his mom.

"It's been three minutes..." she replied.

"Three minutes?! That means I still have seven hours and twenty-seven minutes to go!" he groaned.





"Are you sure you want to go through with this?" his mom asked.

Adam took a moment to settle himself down. "Yes, I'll try my best, insha'Allah."

He went back to his room to lay down.

'Maybe I can just sleep until it's time to eat,'
he thought.

So he closed his eyes and hoped for the best.



A little while later, Adam's eyes opened.
'I wonder how many hours have passed.
Six? Seven?' he hoped.

It had only been three.

"Oh great. Still four hours and twenty-one
minutes to go. What am I going to do now?"
he asked himself.





Adam couldn't believe how hungry he was. Normally, he didn't even like to eat. If it was up to him, he would skip all his meals. But now that he wasn't supposed to eat, it was all he could think about.

'Maybe Dad can help,' he thought.

"Dad, fasting is so hard. What should I do?" he asked.

"Well, I'm going to the bank, you can come with me if you like?" his dad suggested.

"Hmm, okay. Maybe that will distract me from feeling so hungry," Adam replied.



So off they went to the bank.
Adam didn't know why they were
there, but he noticed his dad was
taking out some money.
A lot of money.

"There must be hundreds,
maybe even *thousands* of
dollars there!" Adam
whispered excitedly.





After leaving the bank, Adam wondered why his dad had taken out so much money.

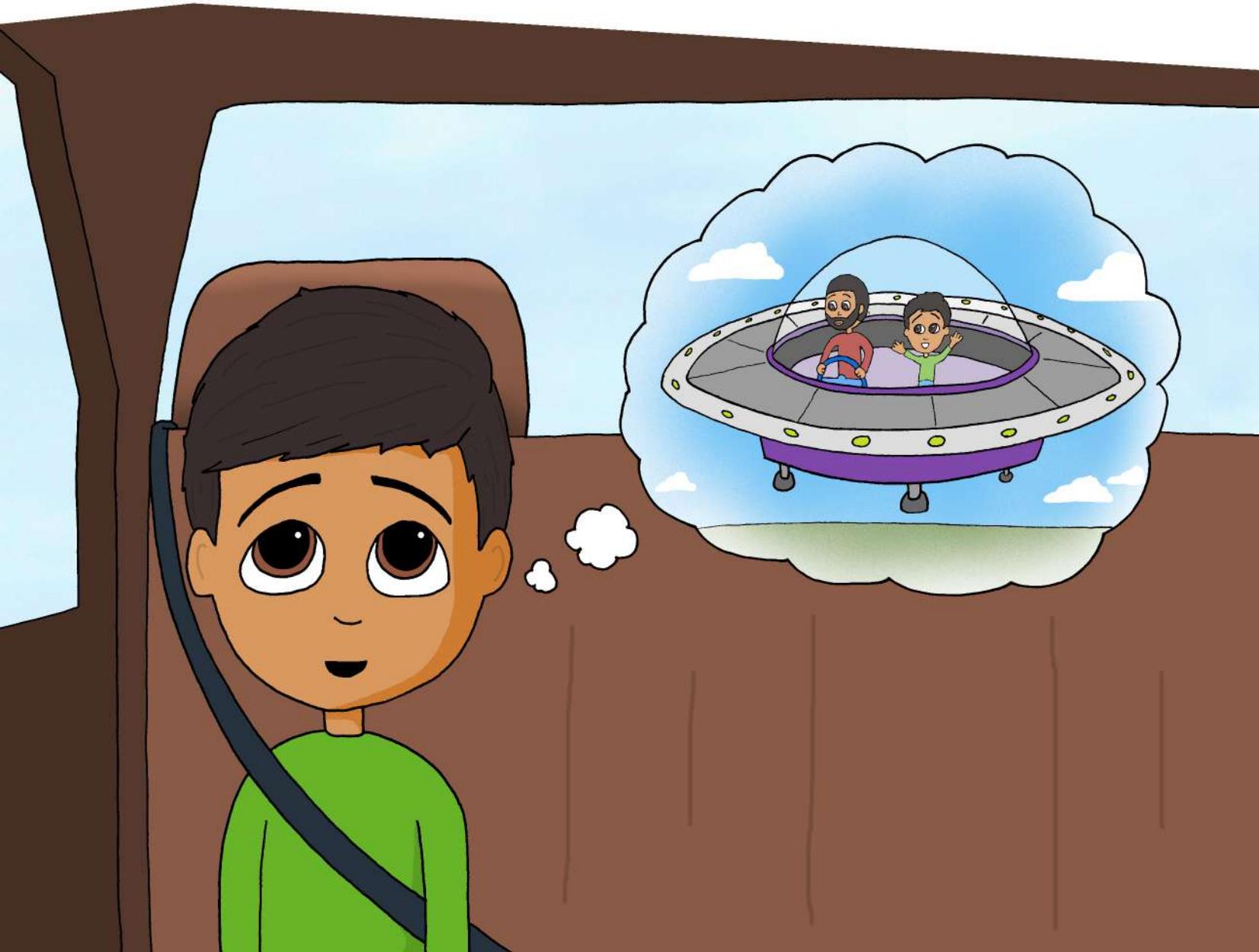
He remembered his mom had asked them to pick up milk on the way home.

'Is that how much milk costs?!'
he gasped.

Next stop was the mosque. The ride there was taking a lot longer than usual though. Adam looked out the car window and saw traffic as far as his eyes could see.



'Maybe he's buying a spaceship so we never have to wait in traffic ever again,' Adam imagined. 'No wait, that doesn't make any sense. We don't have enough space in our driveway to park a spaceship...'



Then, it hit him. A thought so great that it caused his brain to overflow with happiness.

'Of course! He's getting me a *Funtendo Glitch!*'

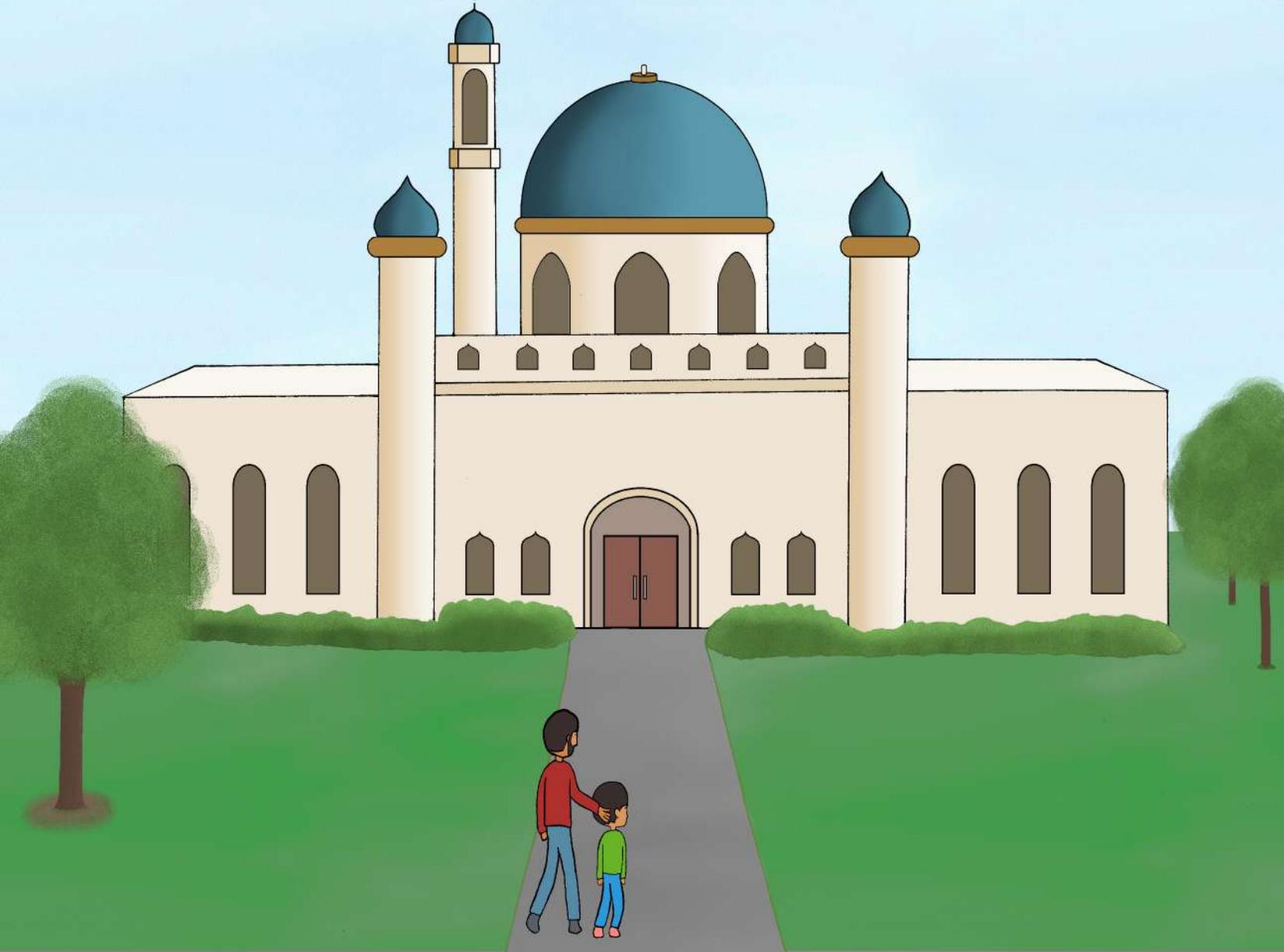




The Funtendo Glitch was the most exciting video game system in the world. Adam had been asking his dad to get one for months, but he always replied, "Those things cost a lot of money."

Well, THIS was a 'lot of money!'

Adam could hardly contain his excitement. Even after arriving at the mosque for prayers, he couldn't stop thinking about what he was getting.



That is, until they finished praying and Adam saw his dad dropping an envelope from the bank into the donation box.

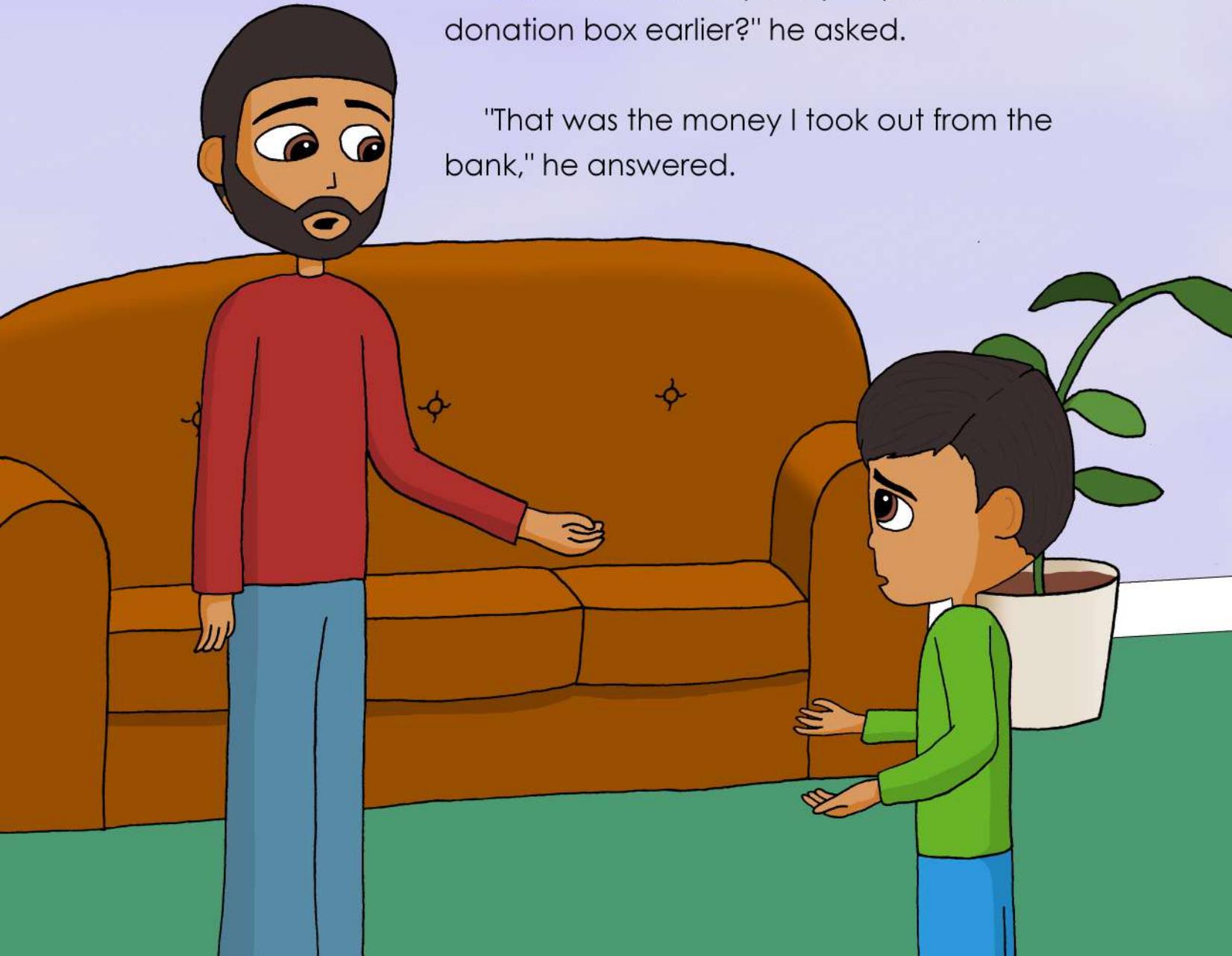
Then he began to worry.



After coming home, Adam tried to distract himself, but it was no use. He had to find out what was in that envelope.

"Dad, what exactly did you put in that donation box earlier?" he asked.

"That was the money I took out from the bank," he answered.



"What? All of it? You just gave it all away?!" Adam cried out.

His dad could tell that Adam had other ideas for that money. But before their conversation could turn into an argument, he asked his son a question.



"Adam, do you know why you are fasting today?" his dad asked.

"Of course, because it's Ramadan," Adam responded.

"But do you know why we fast during Ramadan?" his dad added.

Adam thought about it for a moment before realizing that he didn't. "No, not really," he replied.



"During the month of Ramadan, Allah (SWT) asks us to fast to remind us of those who have less than we do. But it's not enough to *think* about those in need. It's also about *giving*," his dad explained.

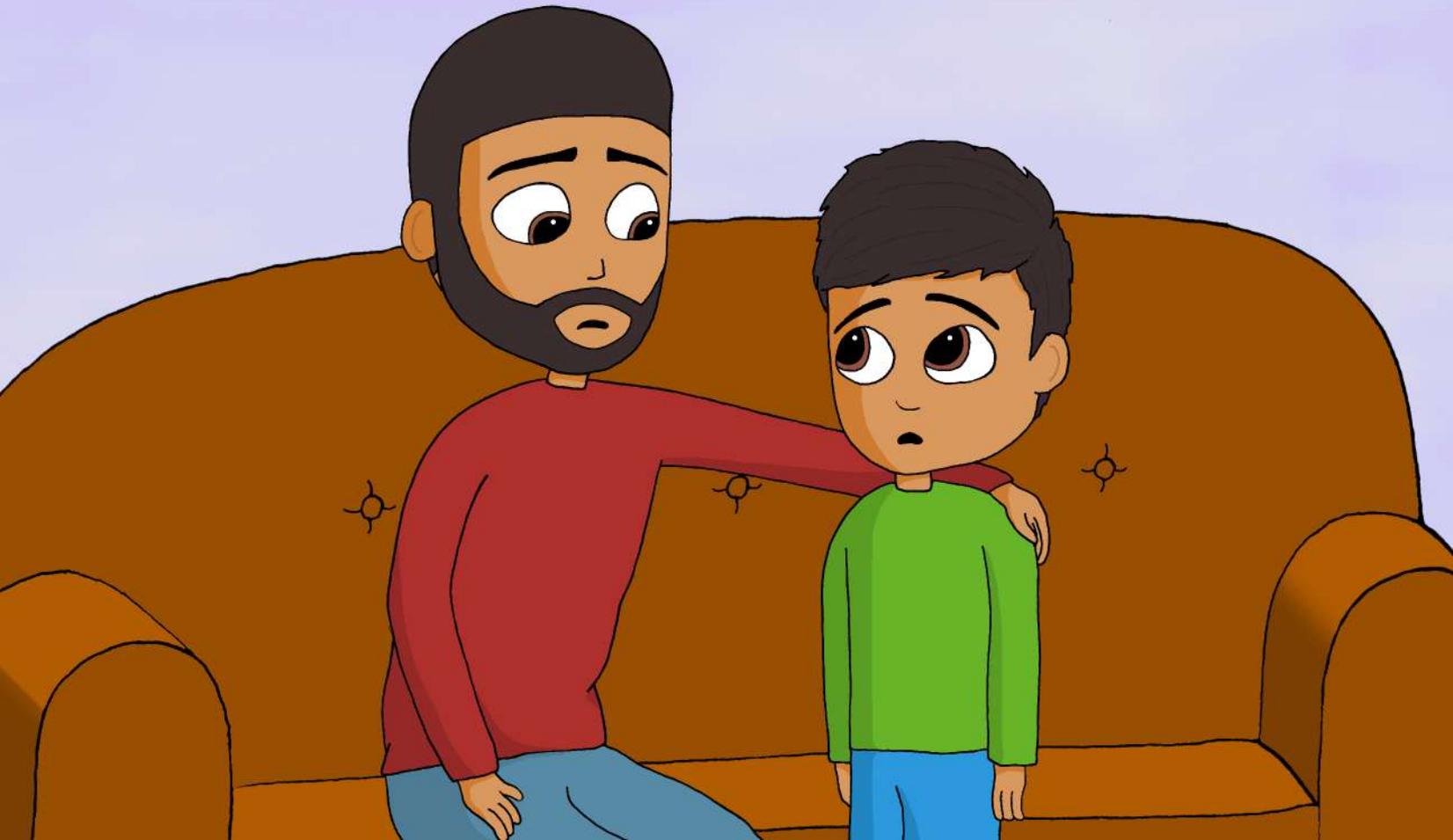
"But you could've *given* that money to me! I have less than you. And I'm in need of a Funtendo Glitch," Adam pleaded.



His dad wrapped his arm around him and asked gently, "Adam, are you hungry right now?"

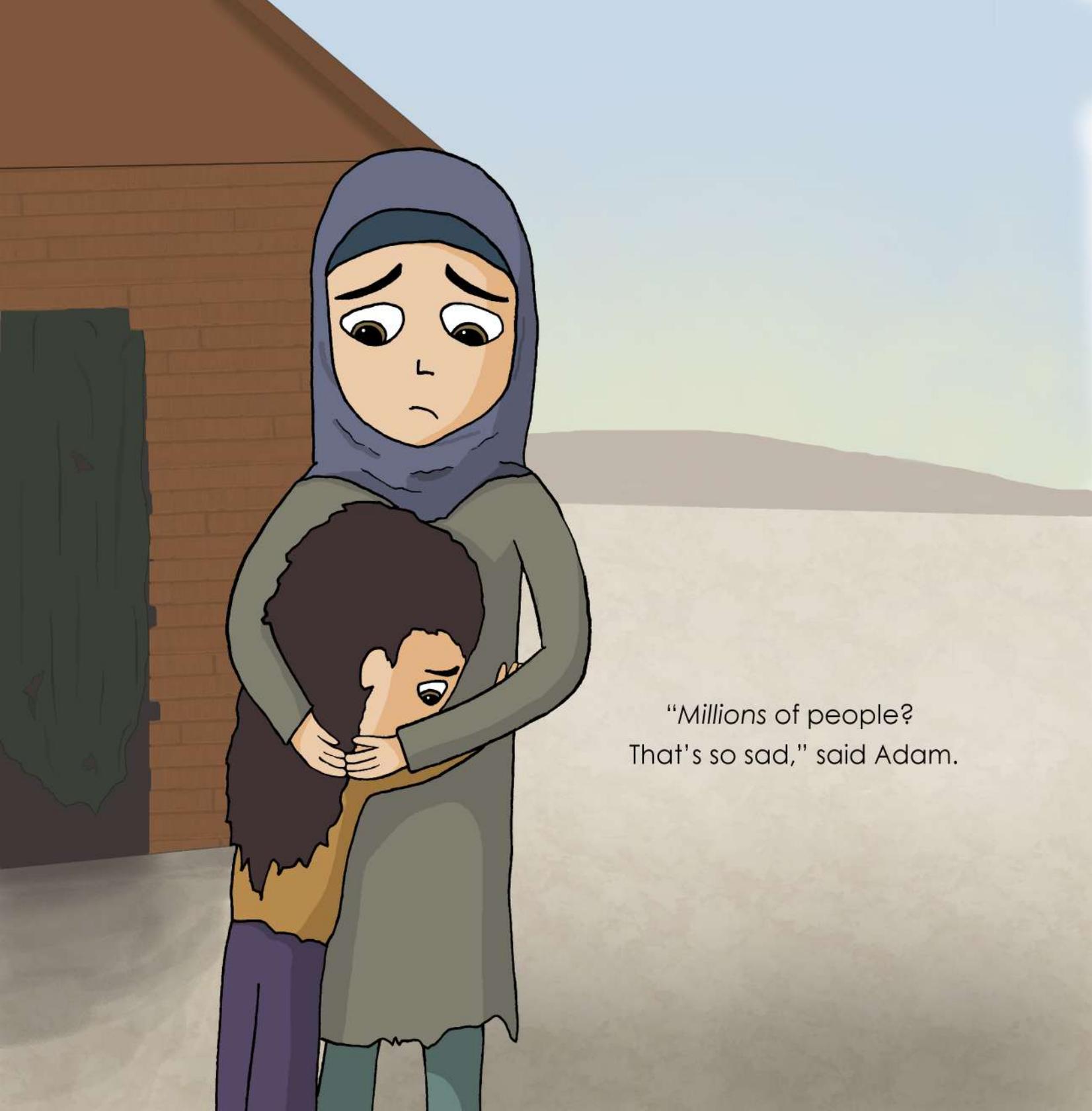
Adam was so worked up that he had nearly forgotten about his hunger.

"Yeah, I'm starving! I could even eat *broccoli*! I'm not even joking. If you gave me broccoli right now, I would eat it! That's how hungry I am," said Adam.





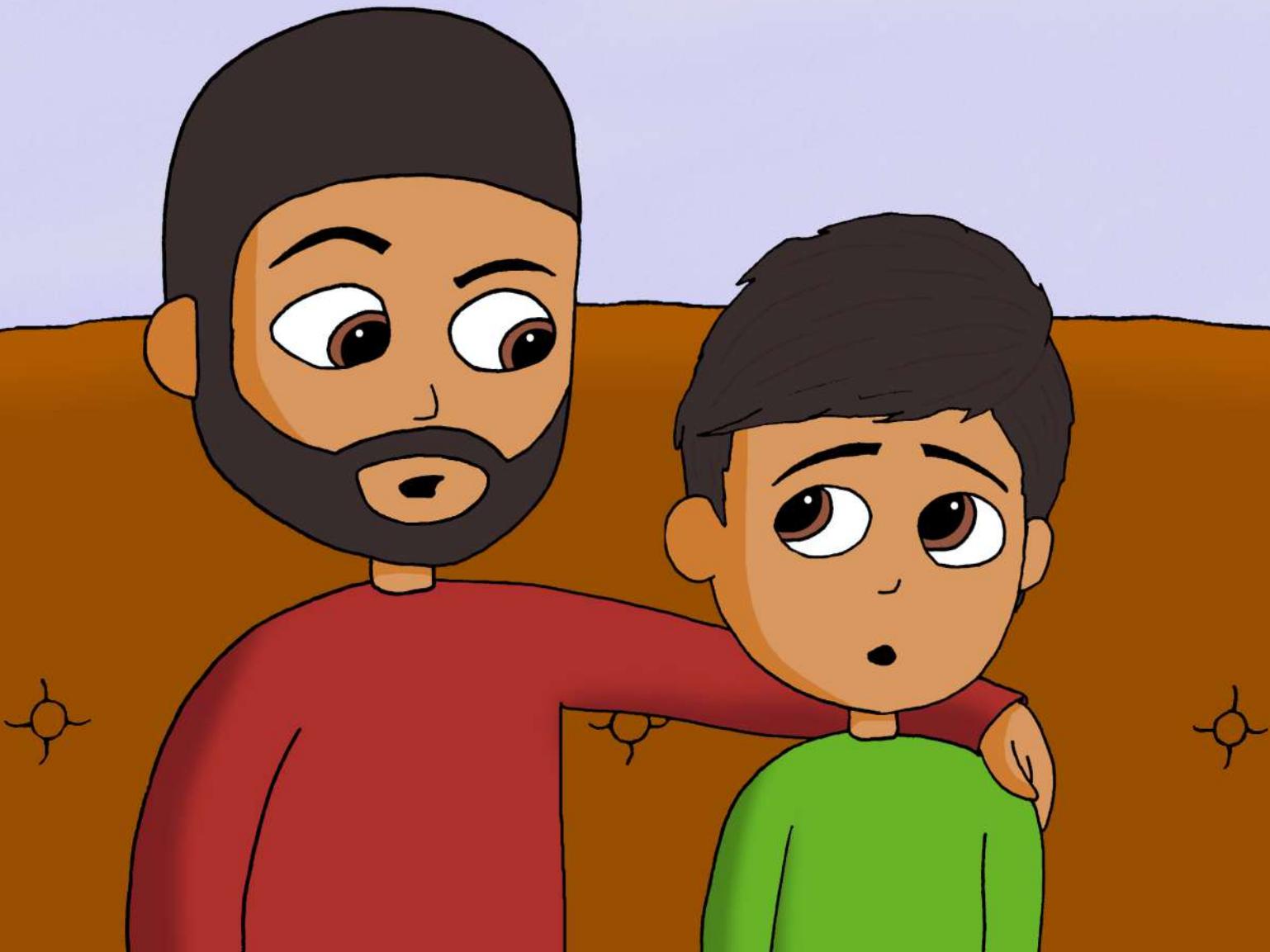
“And you've only been fasting for a few hours,” his dad replied.
“Our family is blessed to have food we can eat whenever we choose. But throughout the world, there are millions of people who don't have that choice. They don't have food to eat, nor clean water to drink.”



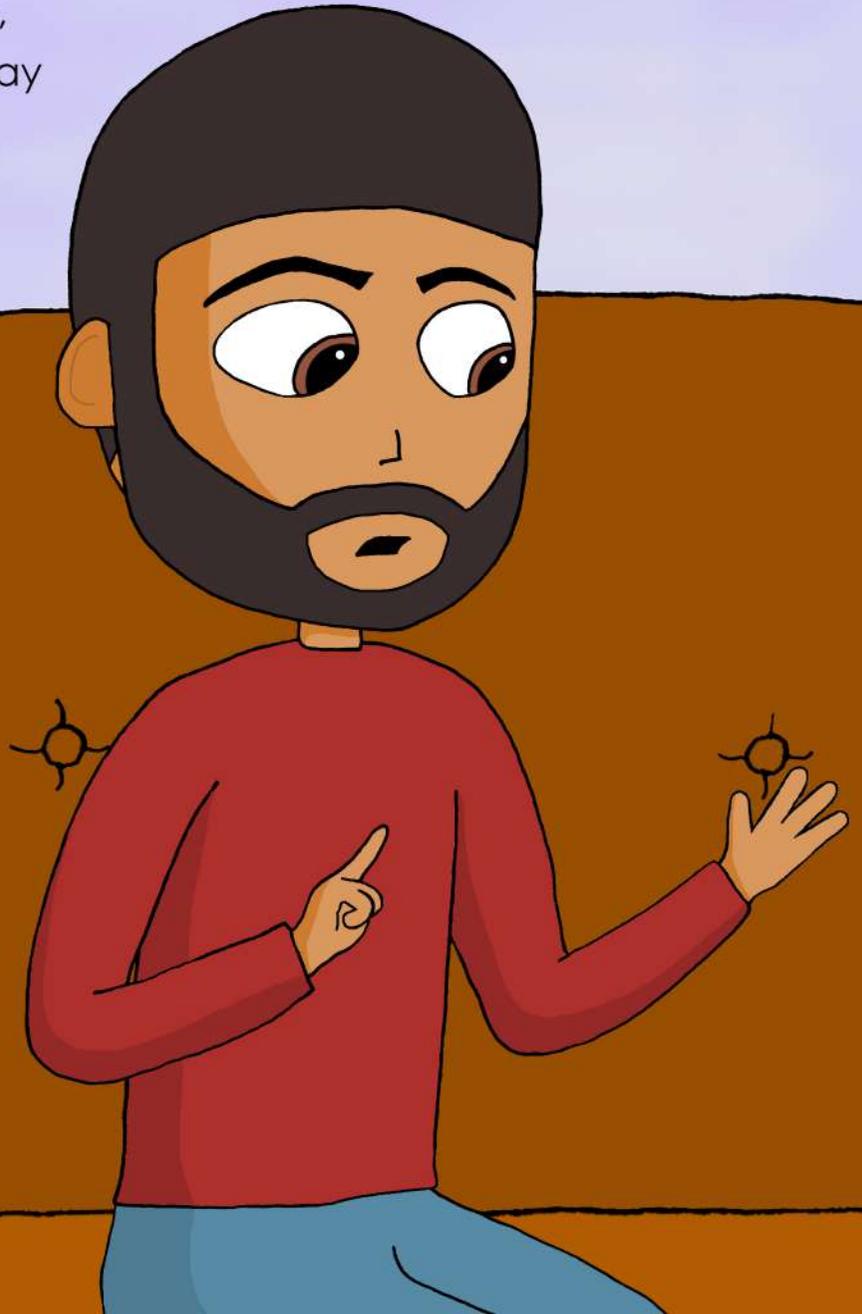
"Millions of people?
That's so sad," said Adam.

"It is," said his dad. "You might want a Funtendo Glitch, but you don't need it the same way that you need food. That's why every year, Allah (SWT) asks us to not only fast, but to also give Zakat."

"What's Zakat?" asked Adam.

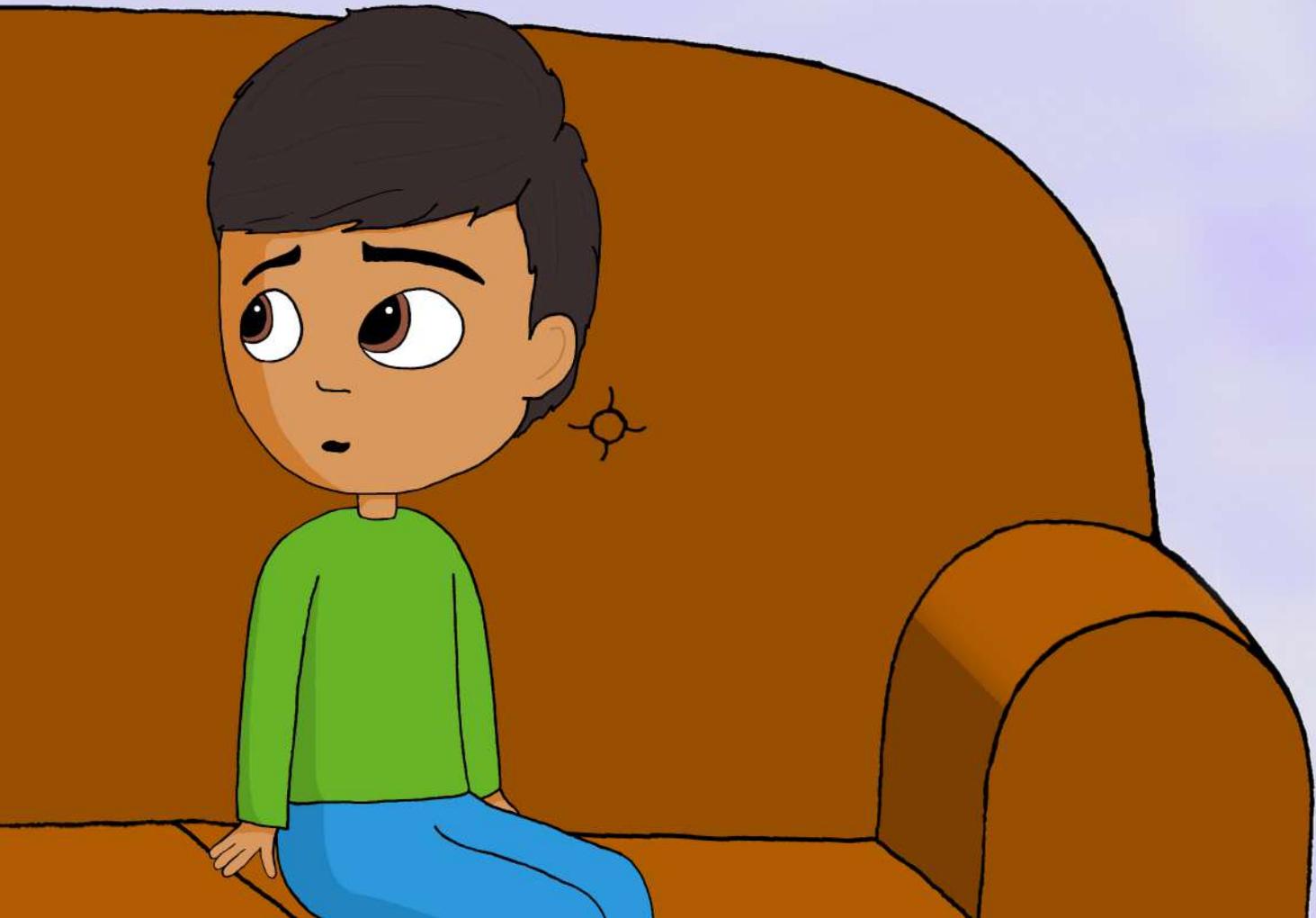


“As Muslims, we are responsible for donating a portion of our wealth to charity every year, to help those less fortunate than us. This is called Zakat. For the same cost as one Funtendo Glitch, the money we donated today will help to feed five families for an entire month, insha'Allah.”



After going just a few hours without food, Adam couldn't imagine not knowing when his next meal was coming. While he was still a little disappointed, he was happy knowing all that money would be going to people who really needed it.

"I'm glad you did what you did," said Adam. "I think everyone should be able to eat when they're hungry."



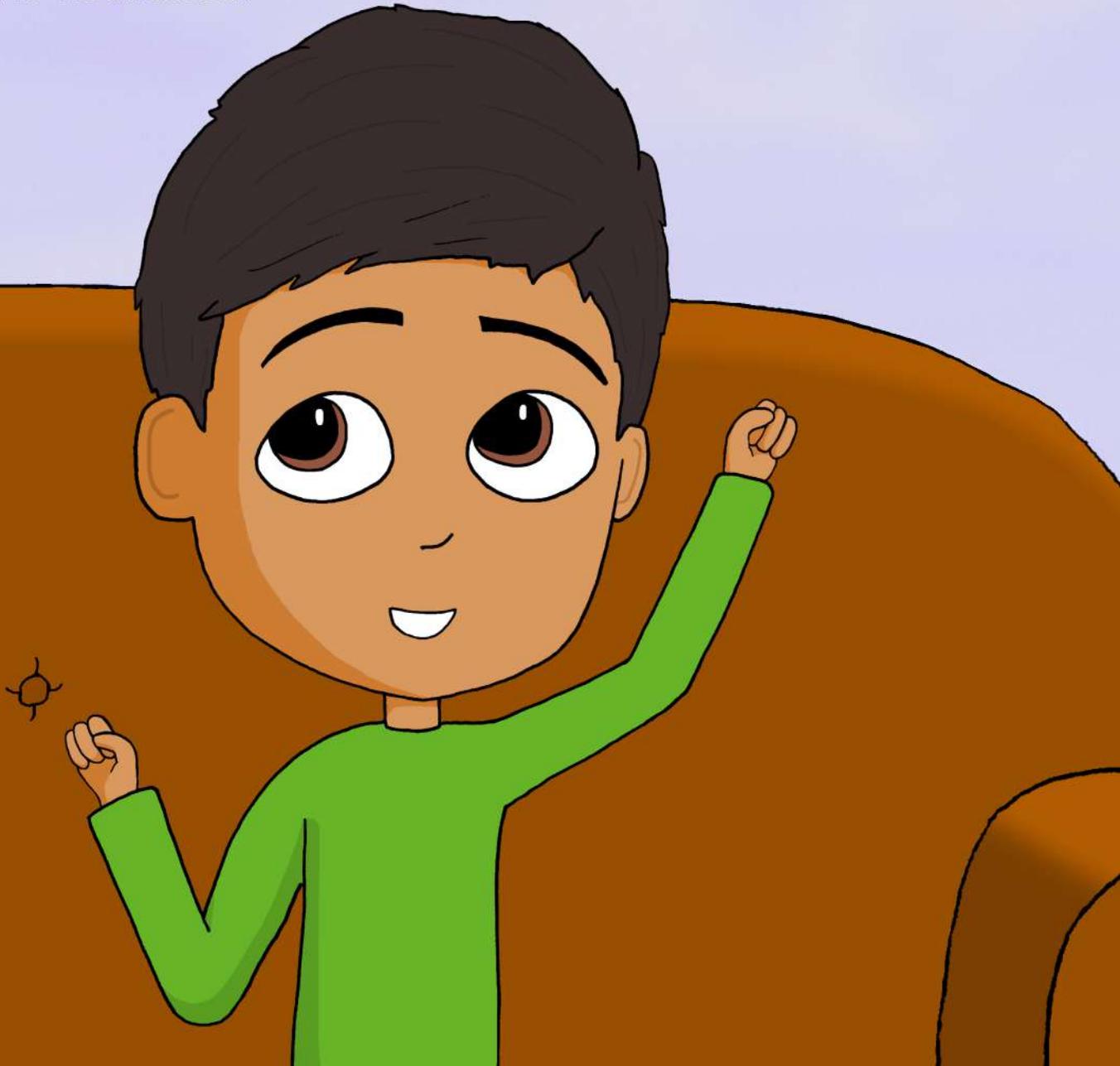


"I couldn't agree more," his dad said. "Speaking of which, did you notice the time?"



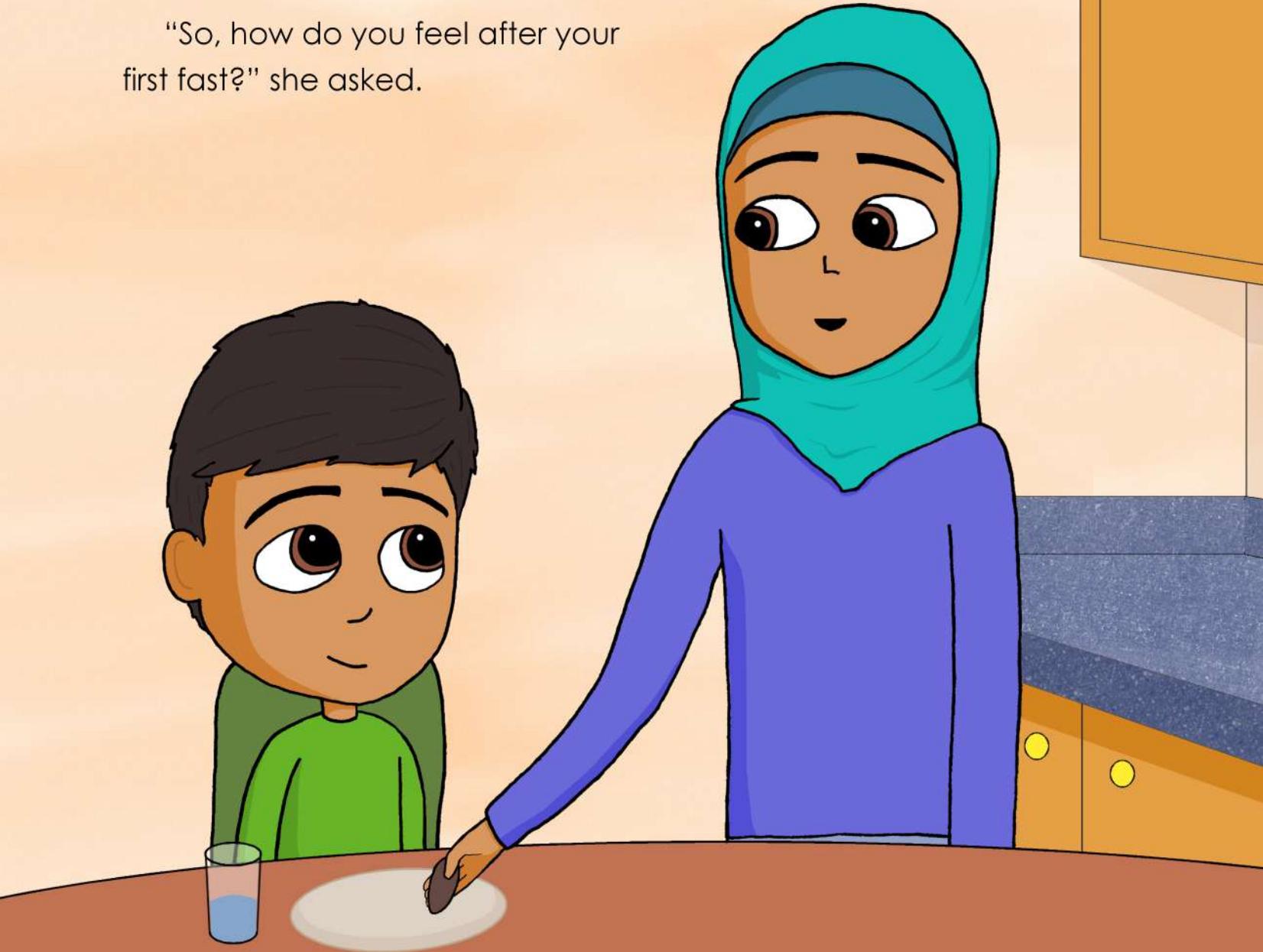
Adam's eyes lit up when he looked at the clock and saw that his half-day fast was finally complete.

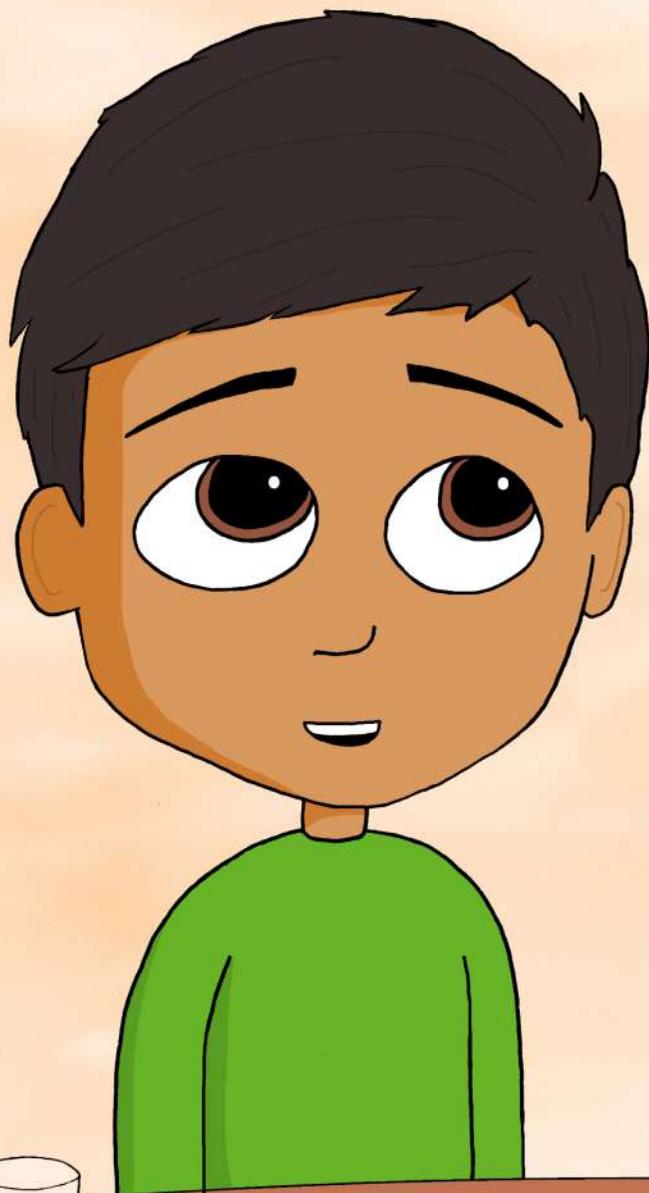
"I did it!" he shouted.



Adam's mom handed him a date to break his fast with.

"So, how do you feel after your first fast?" she asked.





Adam took a moment to think back on all the feelings of hunger and disappointment from the day, and all that he and his dad had talked about.

He then smiled at her and said, "Alhamdulillah, I feel grateful."

Let's learn about: Zakat!



What is Zakat?

Zakat is one of the five pillars of Islam. It is a donation that Muslims give to help the poor and those in need. This money is used for things such as purchasing food, building wells to provide clean water, or providing education and healthcare. Every adult Muslim who is able to, must donate 2.5% of their wealth for Zakat each year, based on the lunar calendar.

Do kids have to pay Zakat?

Children do not need to pay Zakat, but if you want to make a difference and donate some of your own money, you can talk to your parents about paying your Zakat for you to help those in need! Every little bit helps!

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About the Author:

Amaan Ishaq is a father of two and a husband of one. He loves basketball, kids, and videogames (not necessarily in that order). His stories teach valuable life lessons in an honest and relatable way and are filled with fun and humor that both kids and parents will enjoy.