

The terrible lie

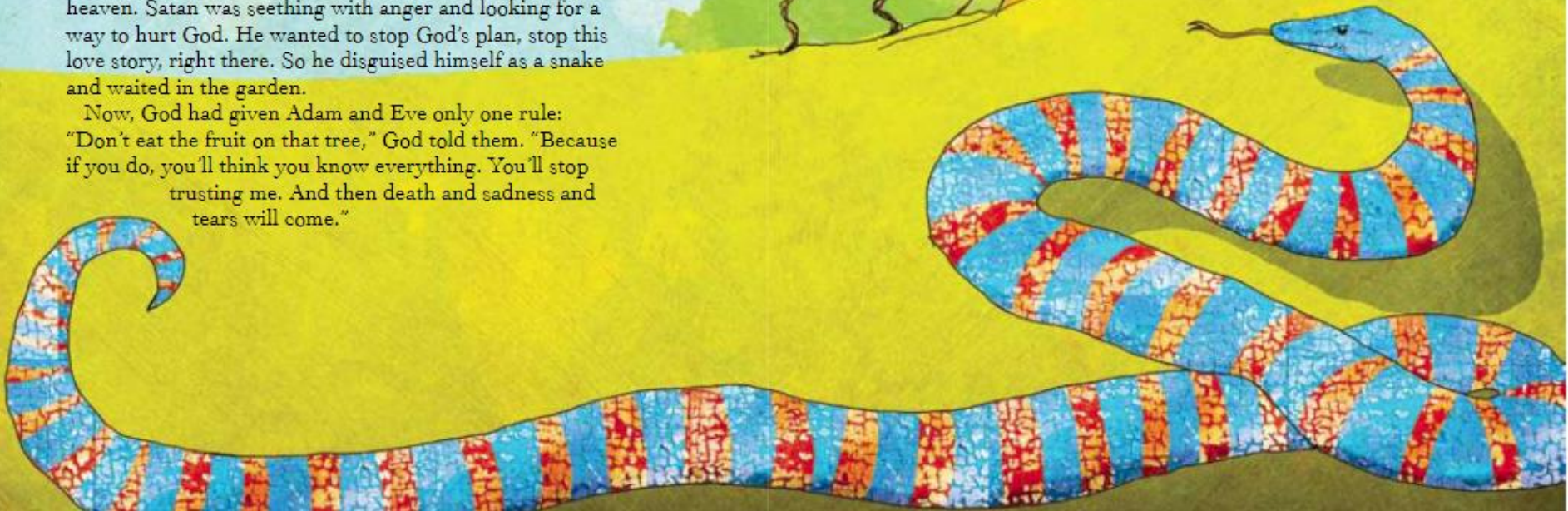
Adam and Eve lose everything, from Genesis 3

ADAM AND EVE lived happily together in their beautiful new home. And everything was perfect — for a while.

Until the day when everything went wrong.

God had a horrible enemy. His name was Satan. Satan had once been the most beautiful angel, but he didn't want to be just an angel — he wanted to be God. He grew proud and evil and full of hate, and God had to send him out of heaven. Satan was seething with anger and looking for a way to hurt God. He wanted to stop God's plan, stop this love story, right there. So he disguised himself as a snake and waited in the garden.

Now, God had given Adam and Eve only one rule: "Don't eat the fruit on that tree," God told them. "Because if you do, you'll think you know everything. You'll stop trusting me. And then death and sadness and tears will come."



(You see, God knew if they ate the fruit, they would think they didn't need him. And they would try to make themselves happy without him. But God knew there was no such thing as happiness without him, and life without him wouldn't be life at all.)

As soon as the snake saw his chance, he slithered silently up to Eve. "Does God really love you?" the serpent whispered. "If he does, why won't he let you eat the nice, juicy, delicious fruit? Poor you, perhaps God doesn't want you to be happy."

The snake's words hissed into her ears and sunk down deep into her heart, like poison. *Does God love me?* Eve wondered. Suddenly she didn't know anymore.

"Just trust me," the serpent whispered. "You don't need God. One small taste, that's all, and you'll be happier than you could ever dream . . ."



Eve picked the fruit and ate some.
And Adam ate some, too.

And a terrible lie came into the world. It would never leave. It would live on in every human heart, whispering to every one of God's children: "God doesn't love me."



And it wasn't a dream. It was a nightmare.

A dove flew from Adam's hand. A deer darted in a thicket. It was as if they were frightened by something. A chill was in the air. Something strange was happening. They had always been naked — but now they felt naked, and wrong, and they didn't want anyone to see them. So they hid.

Later that evening, as God was taking his walk, he called to them. "Children?"

Usually Adam and Eve loved to hear God's voice and would run to him. But this time, they ran away from him and hid in the shadows.

"Where are you?" God called.

"Hiding," Adam said. "We're afraid of you."

"Did you eat the fruit I told you not to eat?"

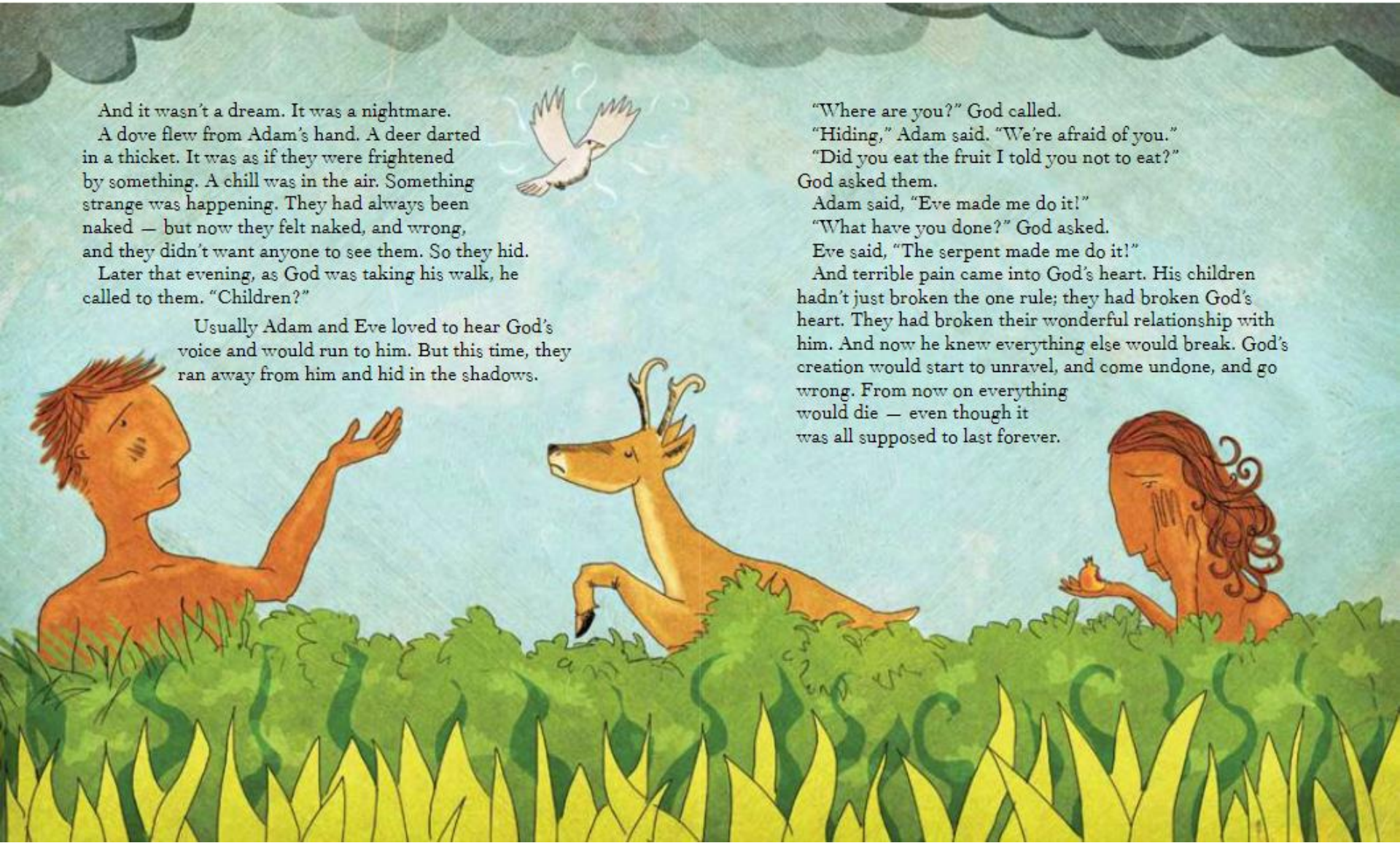
God asked them.

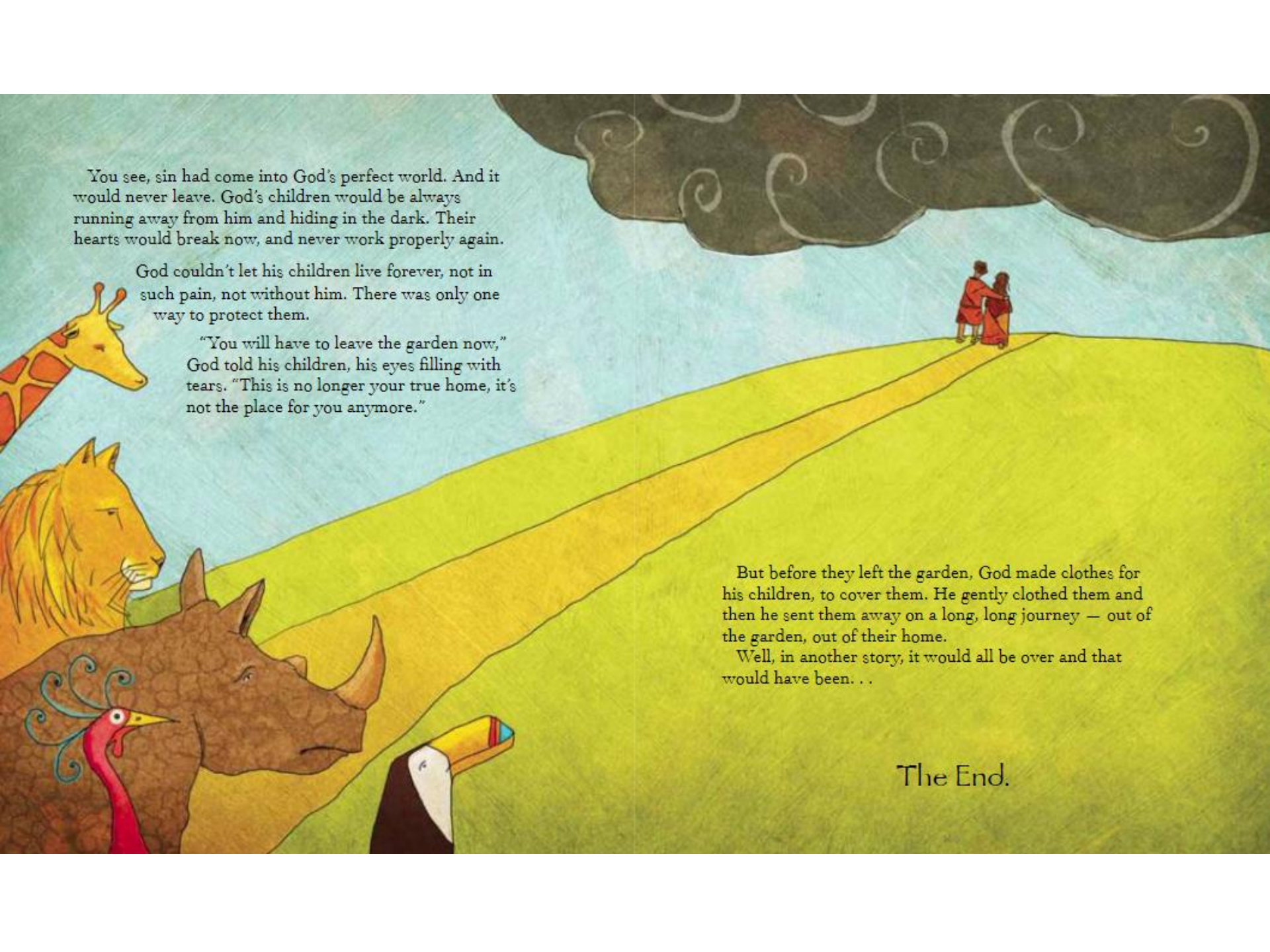
Adam said, "Eve made me do it!"

"What have you done?" God asked.

Eve said, "The serpent made me do it!"

And terrible pain came into God's heart. His children hadn't just broken the one rule; they had broken God's heart. They had broken their wonderful relationship with him. And now he knew everything else would break. God's creation would start to unravel, and come undone, and go wrong. From now on everything would die — even though it was all supposed to last forever.





You see, sin had come into God's perfect world. And it would never leave. God's children would be always running away from him and hiding in the dark. Their hearts would break now, and never work properly again.

God couldn't let his children live forever, not in such pain, not without him. There was only one way to protect them.

"You will have to leave the garden now," God told his children, his eyes filling with tears. "This is no longer your true home, it's not the place for you anymore."

But before they left the garden, God made clothes for his children, to cover them. He gently clothed them and then he sent them away on a long, long journey — out of the garden, out of their home.

Well, in another story, it would all be over and that would have been. . .

The End.

But not in this Story.

God loved his children too much to let the story end there. Even though he knew he would suffer, God had a plan — a magnificent dream. One day, he would get his children back. One day, he would make the world their perfect home again. And one day, he would wipe away every tear from their eyes.

You see, no matter what, in spite of everything, God would love his children — with a Never Stopping, Never Giving Up, Unbreaking, Always and Forever Love.

And though they would forget him, and run from him, deep in their hearts, God's children would miss him always, and long for him — lost children yearning for their home.

Before they left the garden, God whispered a promise to Adam and Eve: "It will not always be so! I will come to rescue you! And when I do, I'm going to do battle against the snake. I'll get rid of the sin and the dark and the sadness you let in here. I'm coming back for you!"

And he would. One day, God himself would come.

