



Level 1

Mansour and the Donkey



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Mansour and the Donkey

Retold by Sue Arengo
Illustrated by Jamel Akib



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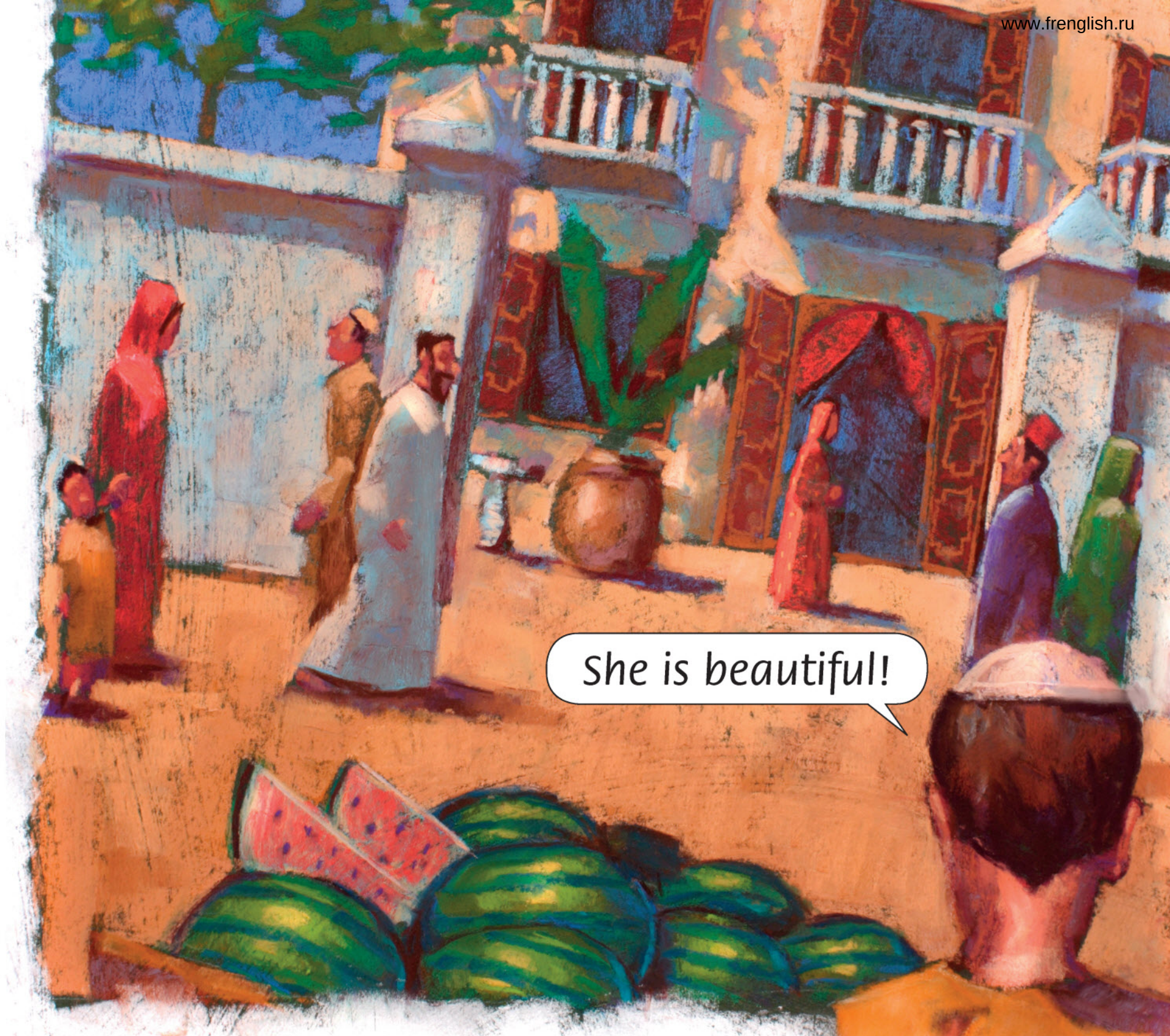
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This is North Africa, in the afternoon. The sun is hot. Very hot.

Mansour comes to sell watermelons. He sees a beautiful girl. A beautiful girl with big brown eyes.

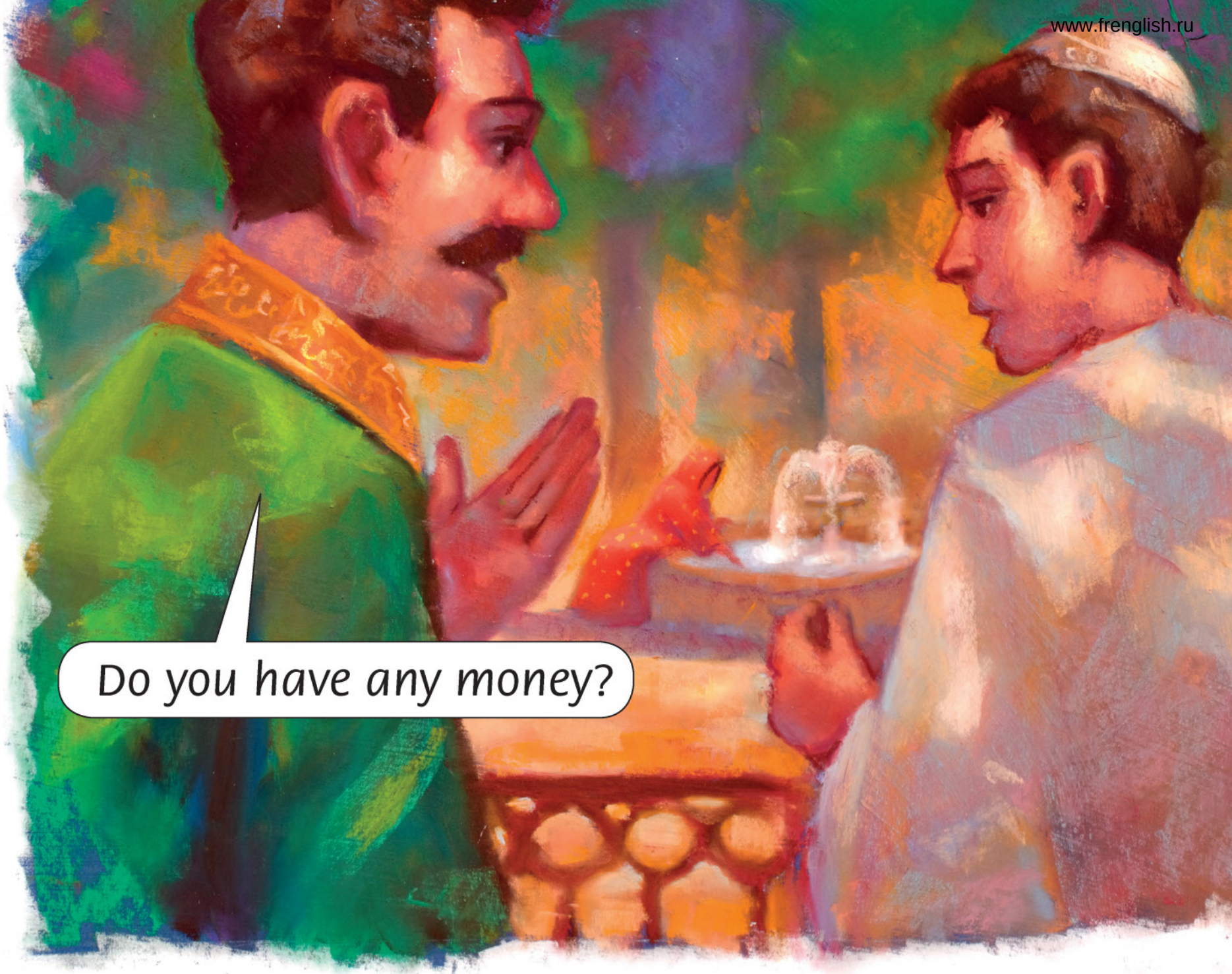




The girl's name is Marissa.
'She is beautiful!' Mansour
thinks. 'I want to marry her.'
Marissa lives in a big house.
But Mansour does not have
a lot of money.

The next day Mansour goes to Marissa's house. He wears his best clothes, and he takes some flowers. Marissa's father opens the door. 'Sir,' says Mansour. 'I want to marry your daughter.'





Marissa's father likes Mansour.

'Do you have any money?' he asks.

'Yes, sir,' says Mansour. 'Twenty coins.'

Marissa's father smiles.

'Come back when you have five hundred,' he says. 'Then you can marry Marissa.'

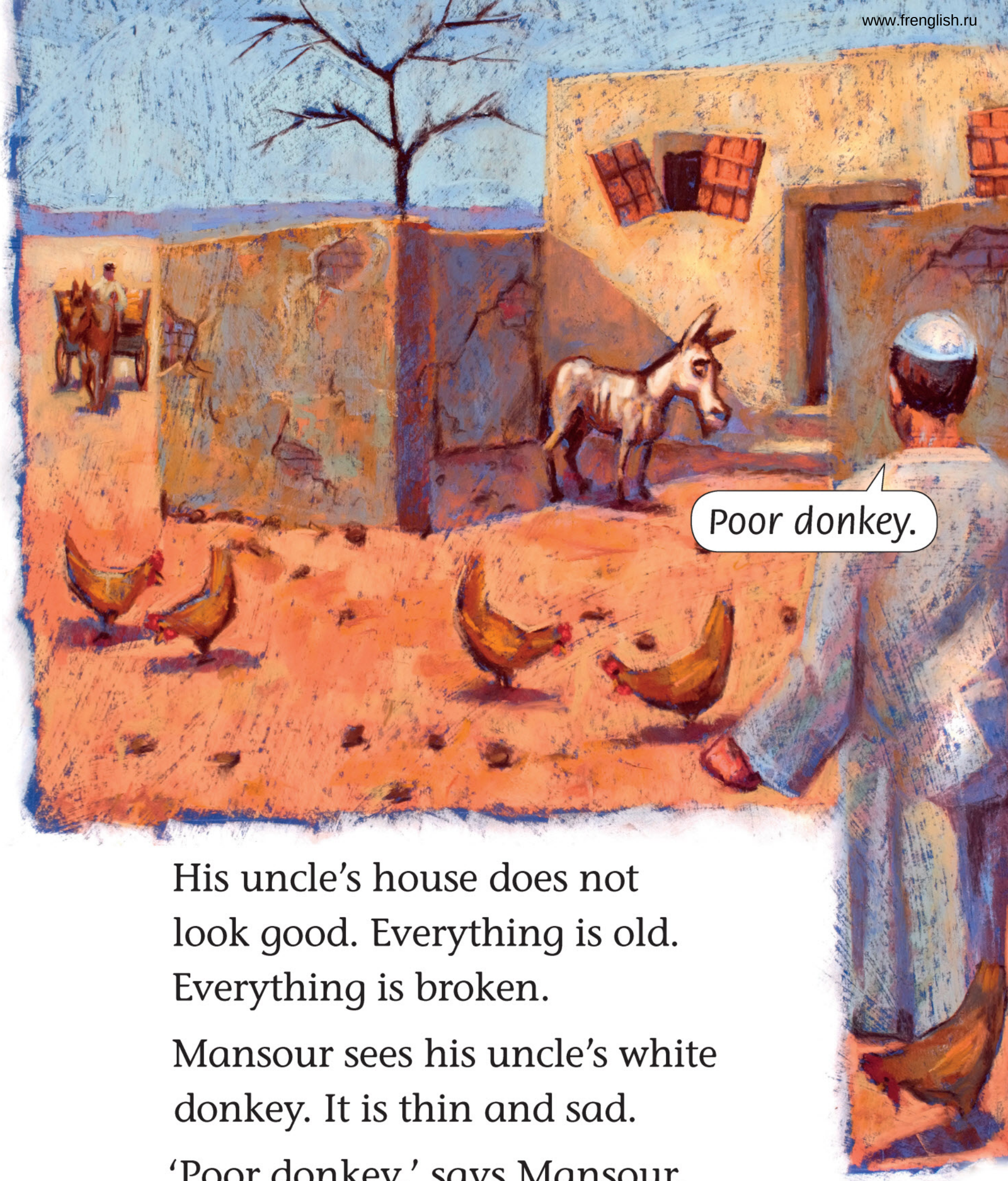
‘Five hundred coins!’
thinks Mansour. ‘How can
I get five hundred coins?’



Then he remembers.

‘My uncle! My rich uncle! Perhaps
he can give me some money.’

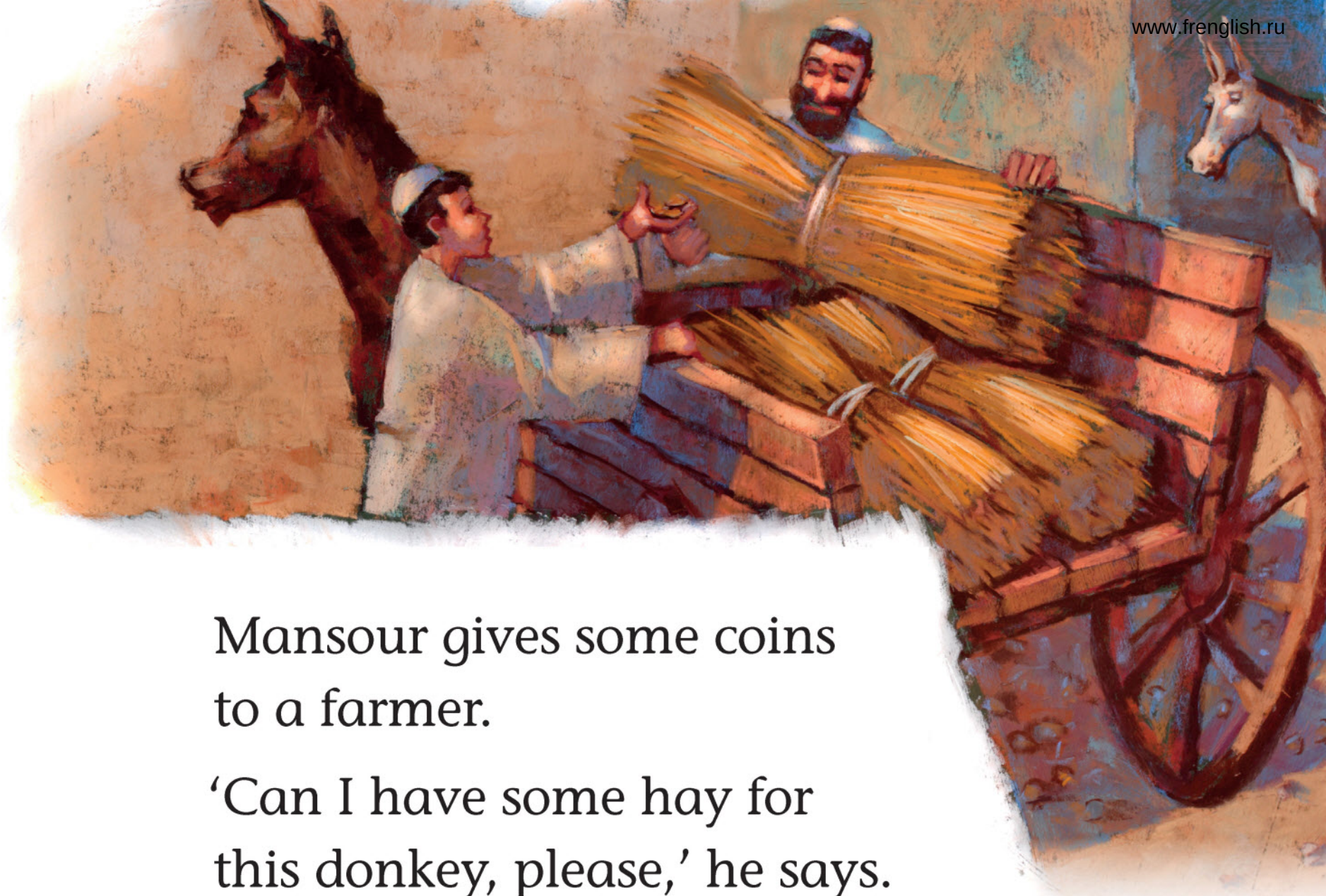
So he walks to his uncle’s house.



His uncle's house does not look good. Everything is old. Everything is broken.

Mansour sees his uncle's white donkey. It is thin and sad.

'Poor donkey,' says Mansour.
'Are you hungry?'



Mansour gives some coins to a farmer.

‘Can I have some hay for this donkey, please,’ he says.

The donkey eats hungrily. Then it scratches the ground with one foot.

Mansour smiles. ‘Are you saying thank you?’



Are you saying thank you?

Mansour goes into the house.

‘Mansour!’ says his uncle.

‘Come in! Come in!’

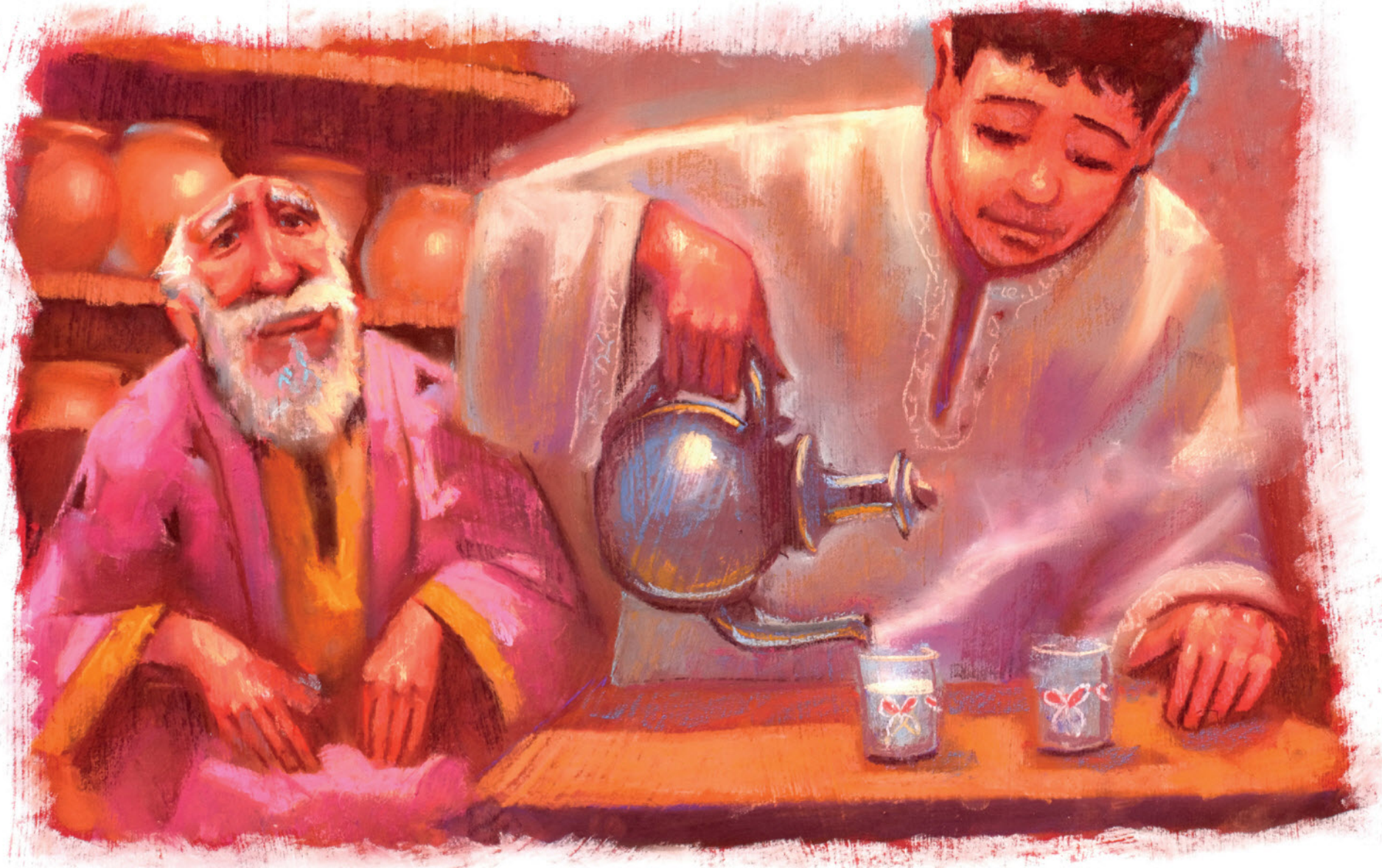
Mansour’s uncle is very old.

He does not look rich. He looks thin and sad.

‘I am not very well, Mansour,’ he says. ‘I can’t remember anything these days.’



Come in!



Mansour makes some tea, and his uncle smiles.

‘Uncle,’ says Mansour. ‘There is a beautiful girl. I have to get five hundred coins. Then I can marry her. Can you give me some work?’

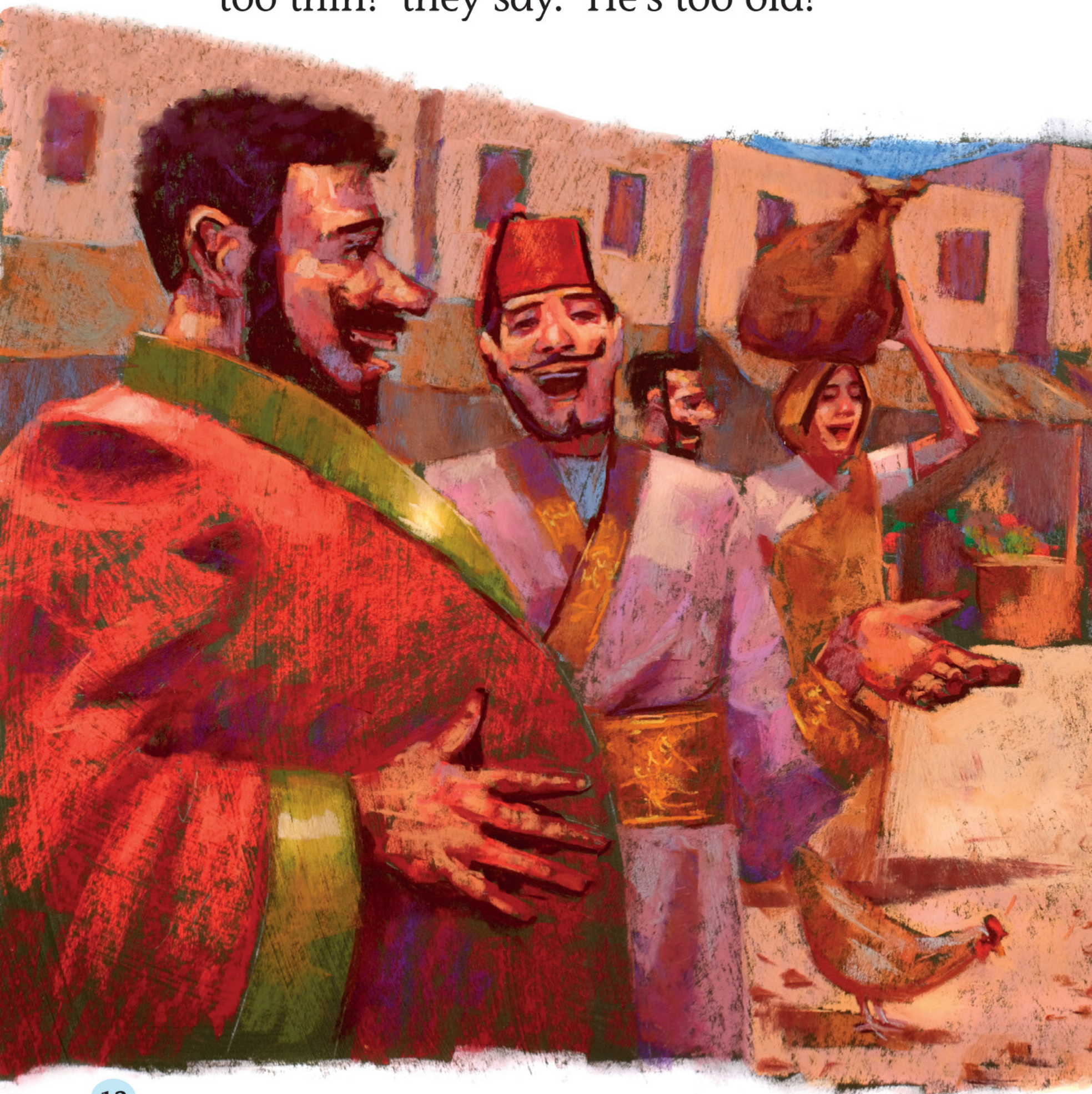
‘I’m sorry, Mansour,’ says his uncle sadly. ‘I don’t know where my money is. I can’t remember. I have no money. And no more food.’

They look for the money.
They look all day. But they
can't see it anywhere.



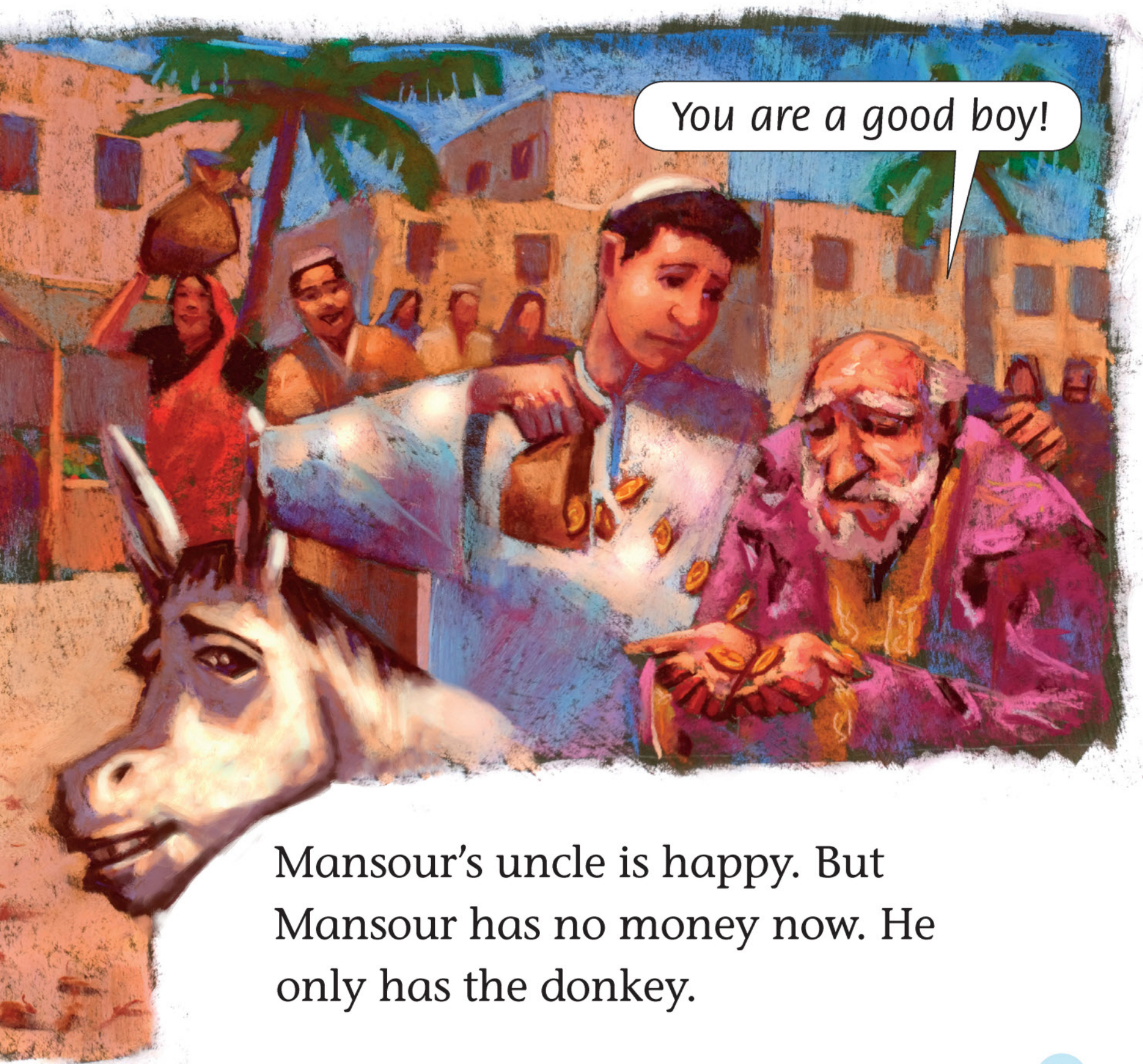
‘Oh dear,’ says the old man sadly.
‘No money! And no more food!
Tomorrow I must sell my donkey. My
little white donkey.’

So the next day they walk into town.
But no one wants the donkey. 'He's
too thin!' they say. 'He's too old!'

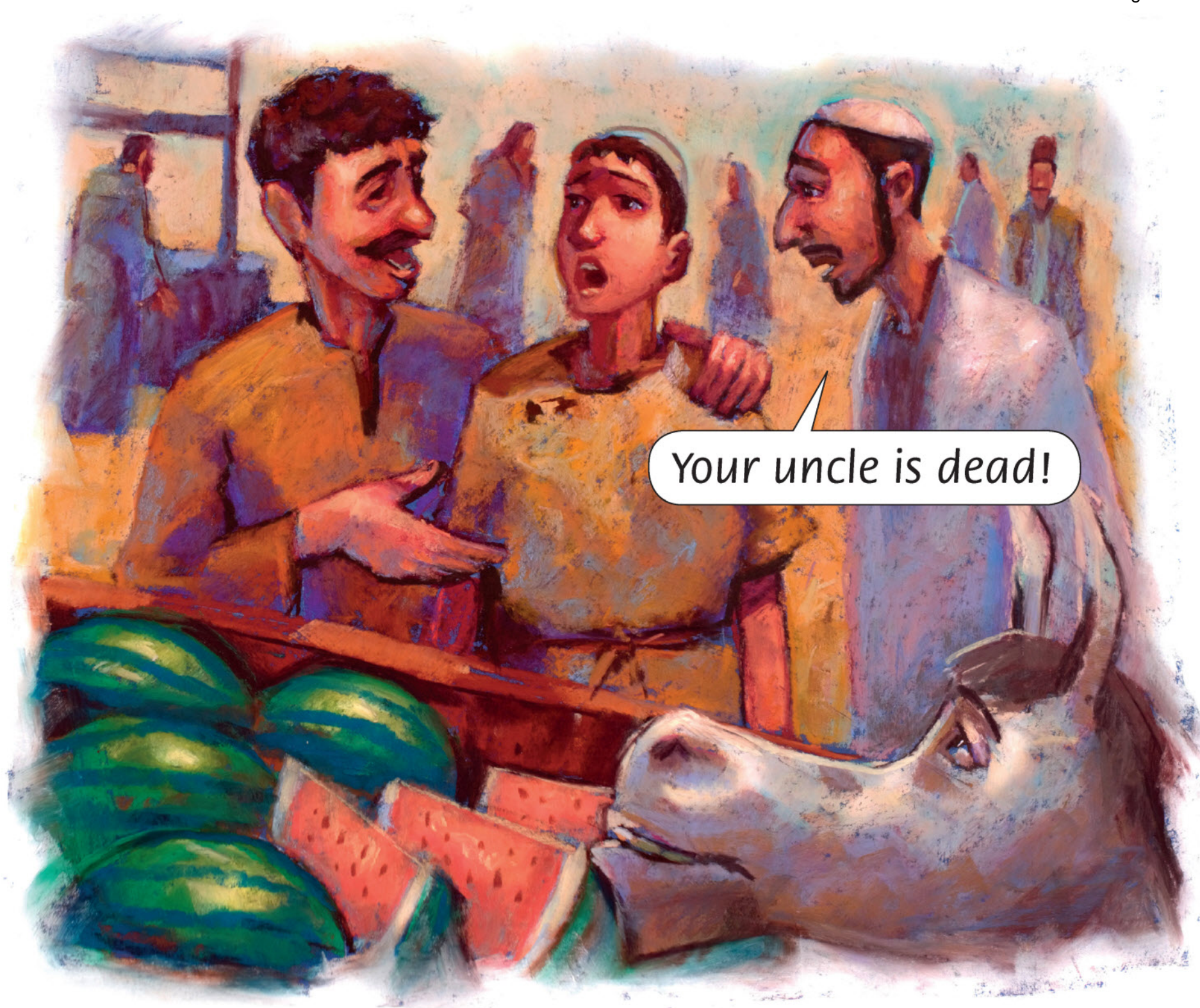


‘Here, Uncle,’ says Mansour. ‘Take my money. Sell your donkey to me.’

‘Thank you, Mansour!’ says his uncle. ‘You are a good boy!’



Mansour's uncle is happy. But Mansour has no money now. He only has the donkey.



A few weeks later, two men come to see Mansour.

‘Mansour!’ they cry. ‘Your uncle is dead! We are so sorry. But his house is yours. It is old and broken, but it is yours.’

Mansour and the donkey walk to the house. The sun is hot. Very hot. Mansour thinks about Marissa.

‘I have to get five hundred coins, donkey,’ he says. ‘I want to marry Marissa.’

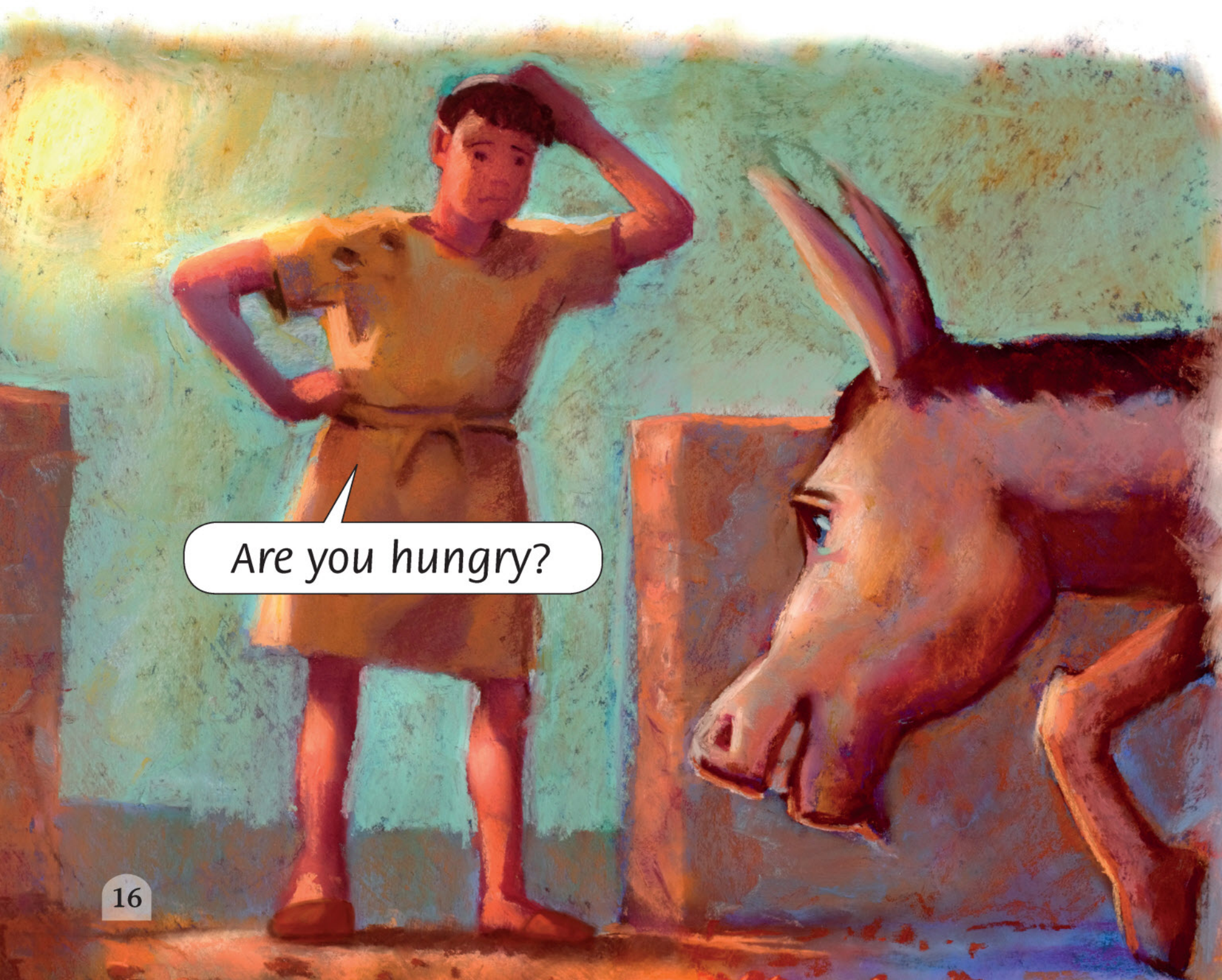
An illustration of a young boy, Mansour, and his donkey in a desert setting. Mansour is standing on the right, shirtless, wearing a white headband and a brown loincloth. He is looking down at the donkey with a determined expression. The donkey is on the left, looking up at Mansour. A speech bubble from Mansour says, "I want to marry Marissa." The background shows a sandy desert with palm trees and a blue sky.

I want to marry Marissa.

At last they come to the house. The donkey looks at Mansour, and it scratches the ground.

‘Are you hungry?’ says Mansour.

He gives the donkey some hay, but the donkey isn’t hungry. It just scratches the ground again.



Are you hungry?

‘Are you thirsty?’ says Mansour.

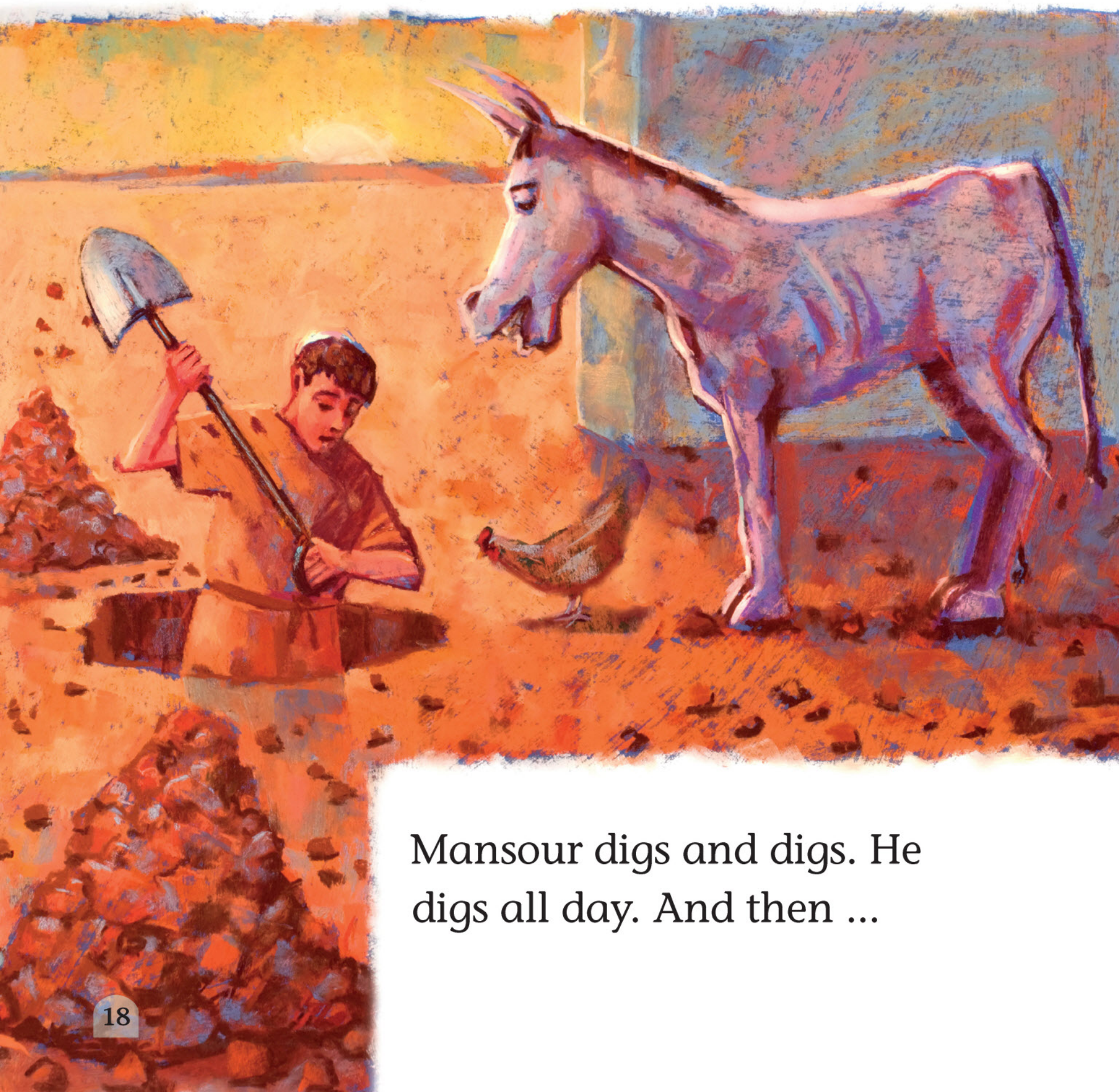
He gives the donkey some water,
but the donkey isn’t thirsty. It just
scratches the ground again.

‘Are you telling me something?’
asks Mansour.



There is an old spade by the house.
Mansour gets it.

‘Do you want me to dig here?’ he says.
The donkey scratches the ground.



Mansour digs and digs. He
digs all day. And then ...



Now I can marry Marissa!

He finds a box! A box full of money.
His uncle's money.

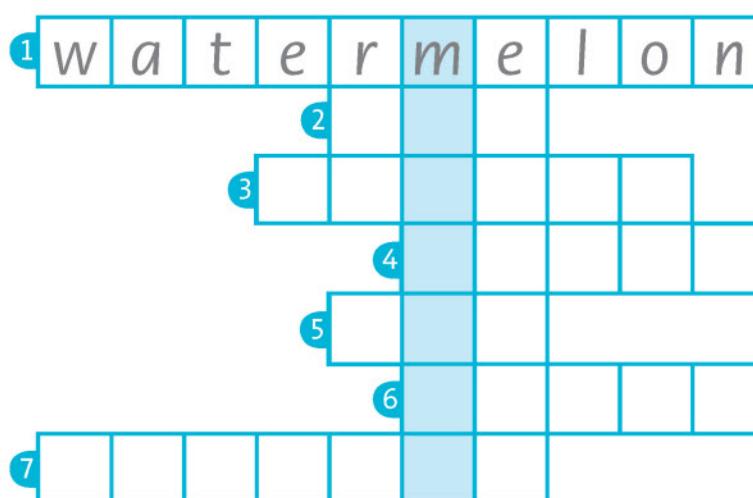
'Oh!' shouts Mansour. 'Now I have
five hundred coins! Now I can
marry Marissa! Thank you, donkey.
You are a good friend. A very
good friend.'

The donkey looks at Mansour
and smiles.



Exercises

1 Write the words and find the name of somebody in the story.



2 Write the words.

beautiful white ~~hot~~ hungry brown old

- 1 The North African sun is hot.
- 2 Mansour sees a beautiful girl.
- 3 The girl has big big eyes.
- 4 Mansour's uncle is very old.
- 5 Mansour's uncle has a little white donkey.
- 6 'Poor donkey,' says Mansour. 'Are you hungry?'

3 Answer the questions. Write *Yes* or *No*.

1 Is this Mansour? Yes.

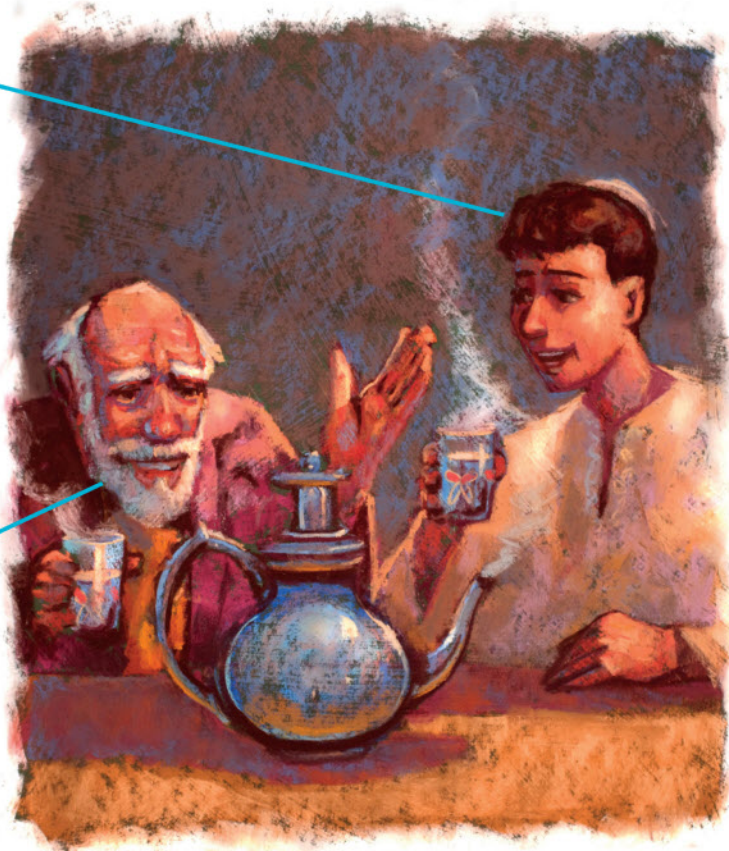
2 Is he rich? _____

3 Is this Mansour's uncle? _____

4 Is he old? _____

5 Does he look rich? _____

6 Can he remember things? _____



4 Who has what? Join the words and write sentences.

1 The donkey

2 Marissa and her father

3 Marissa

4 Mansour's uncle

5 Mansour

has
have

big brown eyes.

some hay.

twenty coins.

a nice big house.

an old broken house.

1 The donkey has some hay.

2 _____

3 _____

4 _____

5 _____

Picture Dictionary

box



donkey



broken *It is broken.*



farmer



coins



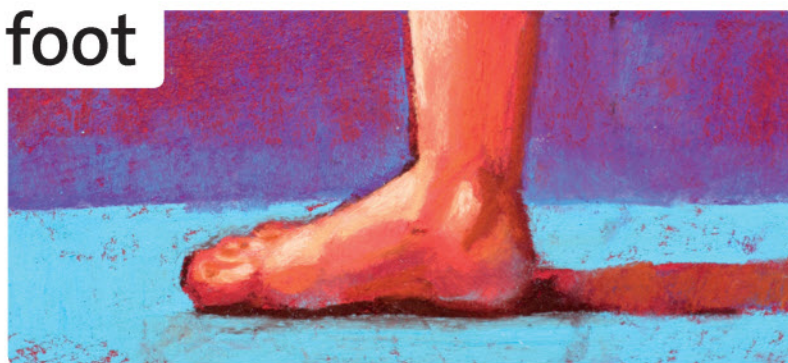
food



dead *It is dead.*



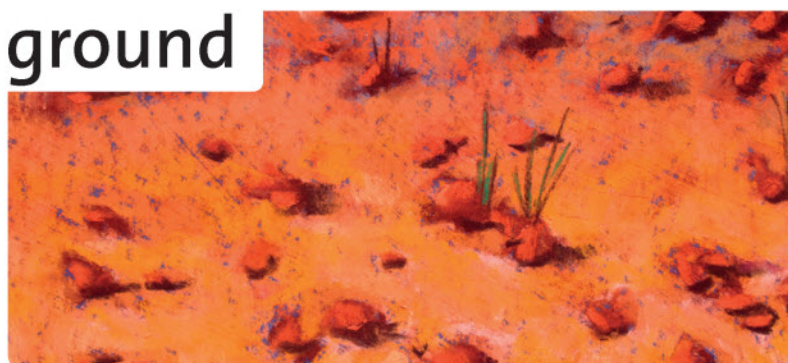
foot



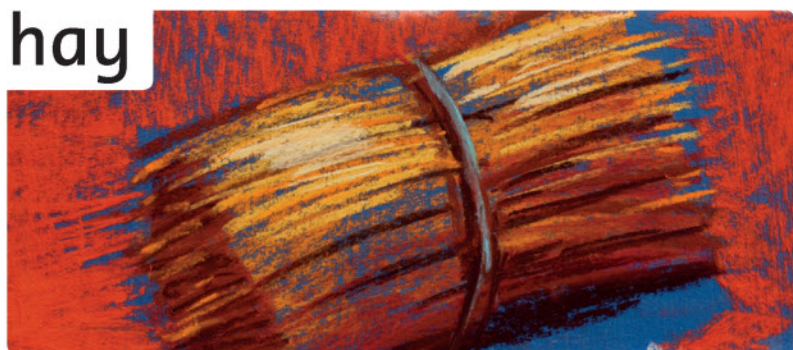
dig



ground



hay



sell



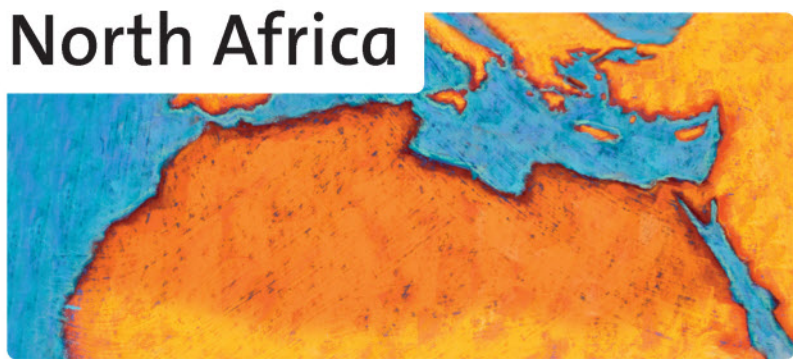
marry



spade



North Africa



tea



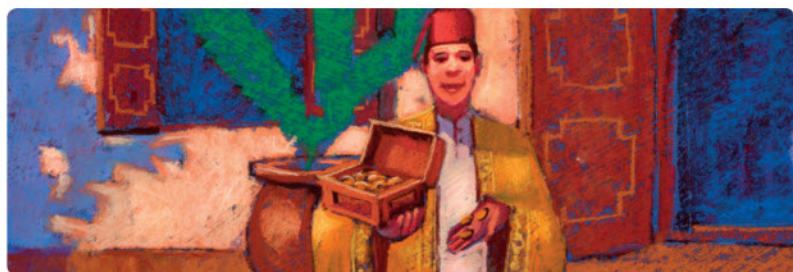
remember



thin *It is thin.*



rich *He's rich.*



thirsty *She's thirsty.*



scratch



uncle



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- The Little Red Hen
- Lownu Mends the Sky
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- Mansour and the Donkey
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- The Princess and the Pea
- Rumpelstiltskin
- The Shoemaker and the Elves
- Three Billy-Goats

Level 2: 150 headwords

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- Big Baby Finn
- The Fisherman and his Wife
- The Gingerbread Man
- Jack and the Beanstalk
- Thumbelina
- The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse
- The Ugly Duckling

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Level 1

Mansour and the Donkey

Enjoy this tale from Morocco, and find out how the hungry old donkey helps Mansour.

A retelling of the classic story for learners of English

Retold by Sue Arengo
Illustrated by Jamel Akib

Classic Tales – bringing the magic of traditional storytelling to language learning

The stories are carefully graded at Levels 1–5 to provide easy and enjoyable reading. Beautiful illustrations on every page work closely with the text to help understanding. Each *Classic Tale* also includes activities related to the story, and a picture dictionary or glossary.



Level 1: 100 headwords



Level 2: 150 headwords



Level 3: 200 headwords



Level 4: 300 headwords



Level 5: 400 headwords

Word count for this story: 643

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