

THE  
HEART  
WHO WANTED  
TO BE  
WHOLE



Beth Guckenberger  
Illustrated by Irina Mileo



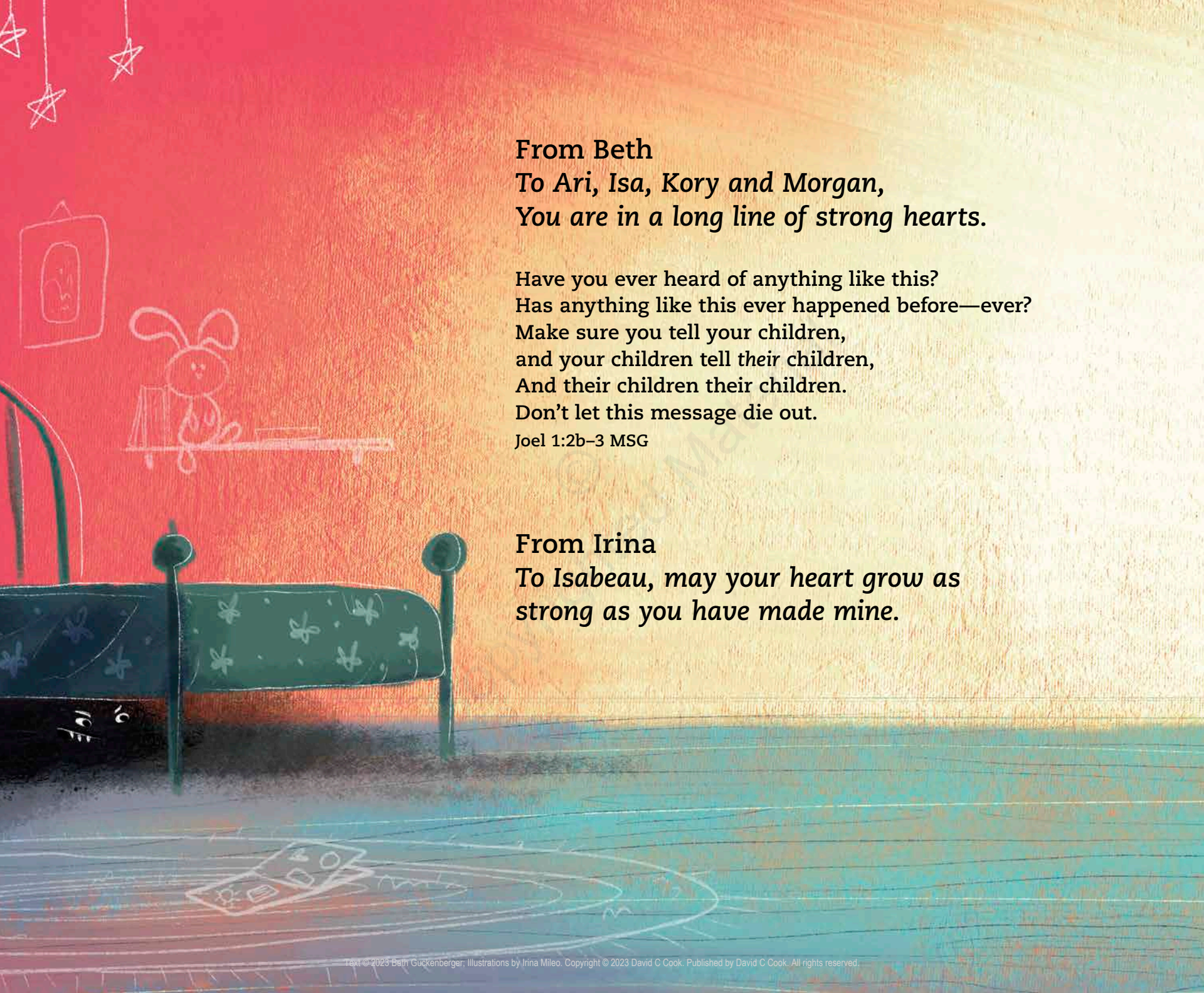


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A child's bedroom with a red wall. On the left, a green bed with a floral pattern is visible. On the wall, there is a framed picture of a person and a white rabbit sitting on a shelf. The floor is blue and green with some white lines. In the top left corner, there are some white stars hanging from the ceiling.

**From Beth**  
**To Ari, Isa, Kory and Morgan,**  
***You are in a long line of strong hearts.***

Have you ever heard of anything like this?  
Has anything like this ever happened before—ever?  
Make sure you tell your children,  
and your children tell *their* children,  
And their children their children.  
Don't let this message die out.

Joel 1:2b–3 MSG

**From Irina**  
**To Isabeau, may your heart grow as**  
***strong as you have made mine.***



# THE HEART WHO WANTED TO BE WHOLE

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Illustrated by Irina Mileo



DAVID  COOK™  
*transforming lives together*



THE HEART WHO WANTED TO BE WHOLE

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**This heart was created whole.  
Solid.  
Happy.  
Free.**







The heart wanted to stay that way.  
But ... there was an enemy who had other plans.





The sneaky enemy planned to hurt the heart ...  
with whispers.



“Nobody cares about you,”  
the enemy whispered.  
The heart hurt.



NOBODY CARES  
ABOUT YOU



YOU ARE  
ALL  
ALONE

**“You are all alone,”  
the enemy prodded.  
The heart cracked.**





“You should be ashamed,” the enemy taunted.



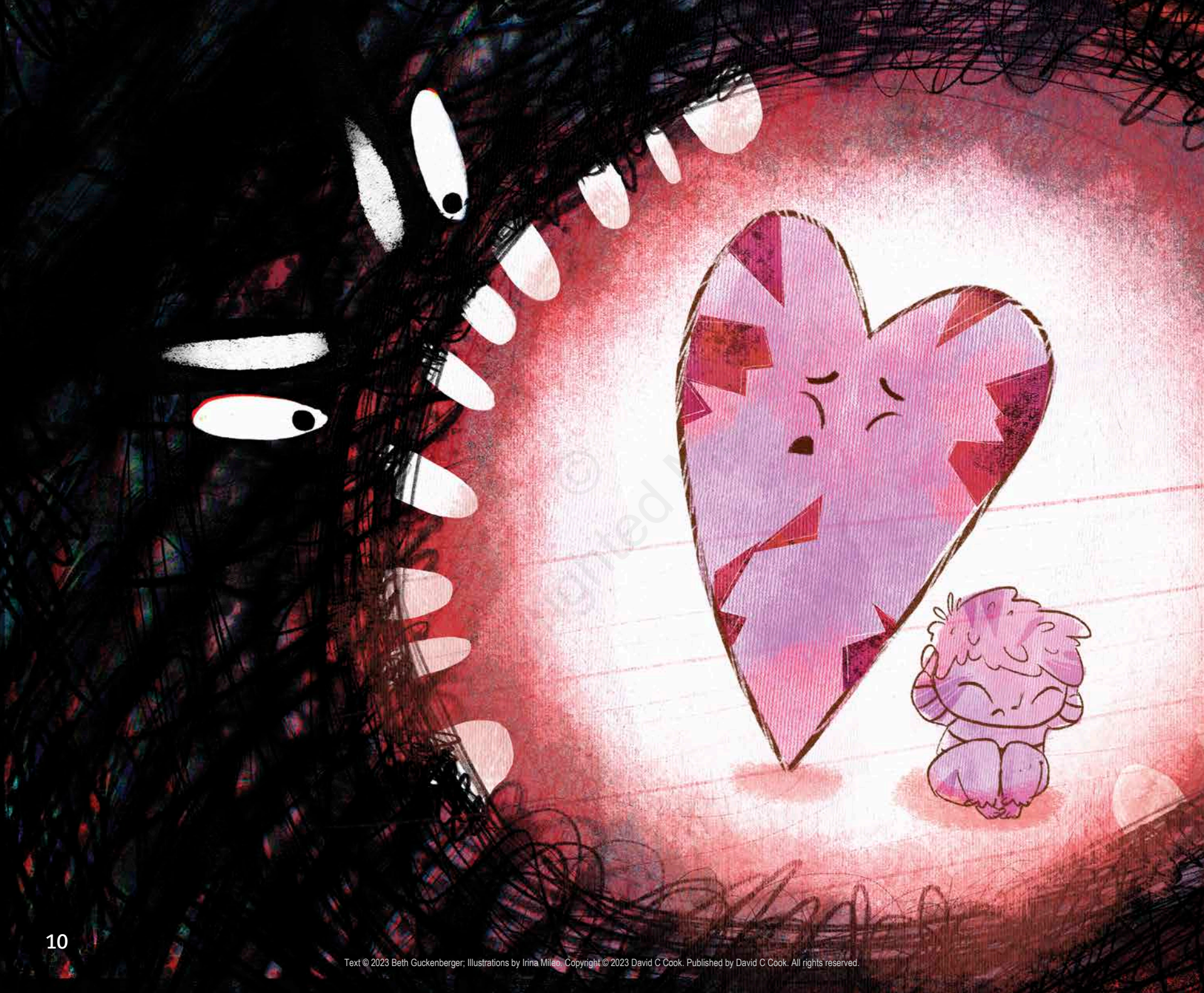
YOU  
SHOULD BE  
ASHAMED



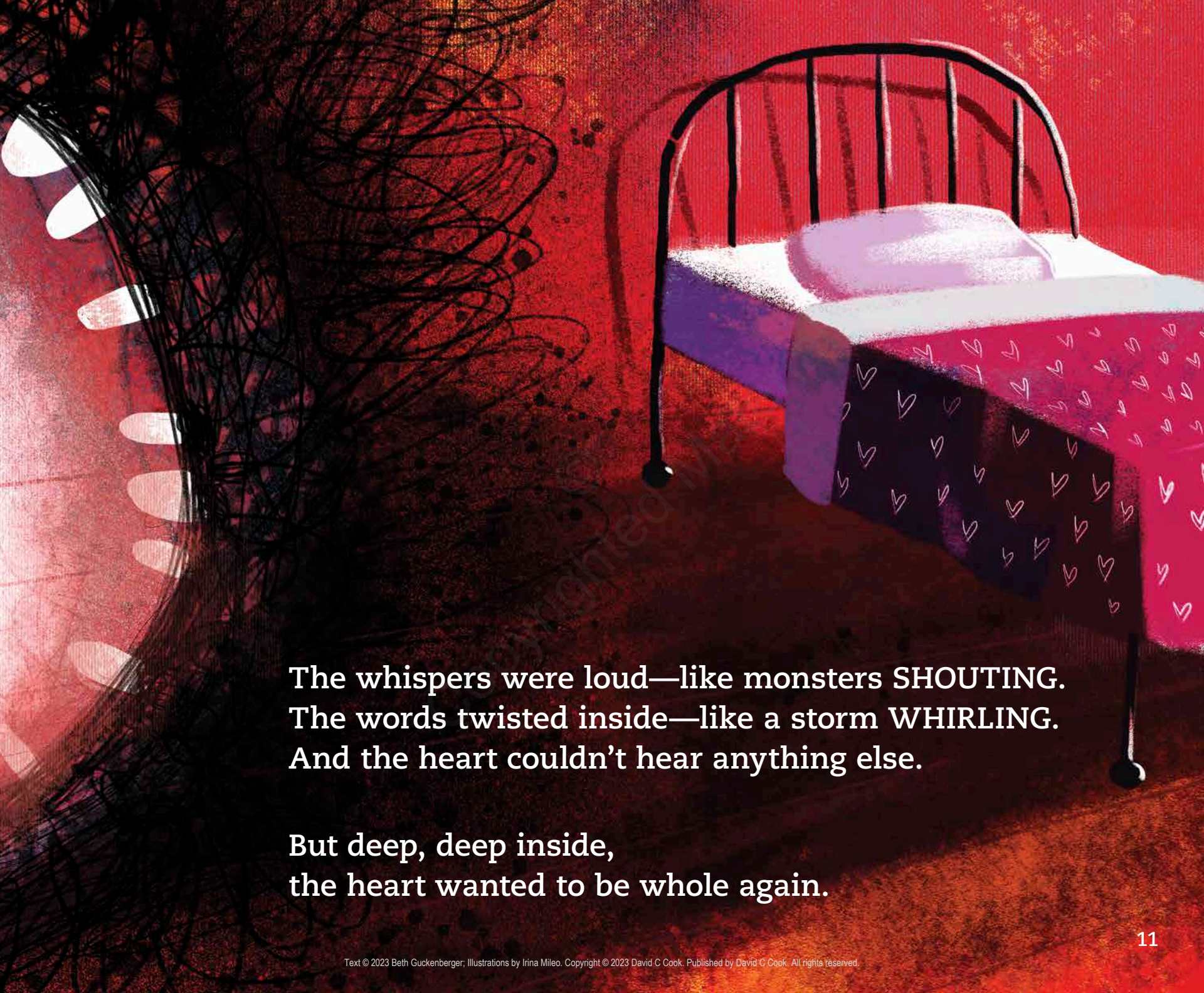
The heart was broken.  
Torn.  
Sad.  
Stuck.











The whispers were loud—like monsters SHOUTING.  
The words twisted inside—like a storm WHIRLING.  
And the heart couldn't hear anything else.

But deep, deep inside,  
the heart wanted to be whole again.







First, it tried to pretend it was perfect.  
It tried to pick up ALL the missing pieces.

But there were SO many pieces.  
The heart felt frustrated.





Then it tried to pick apart others.  
But that just made the heart feel angry inside.







**It even tried to fill itself up with fun.  
But that just made the heart feel empty.**





*What can I do?* the heart wondered.

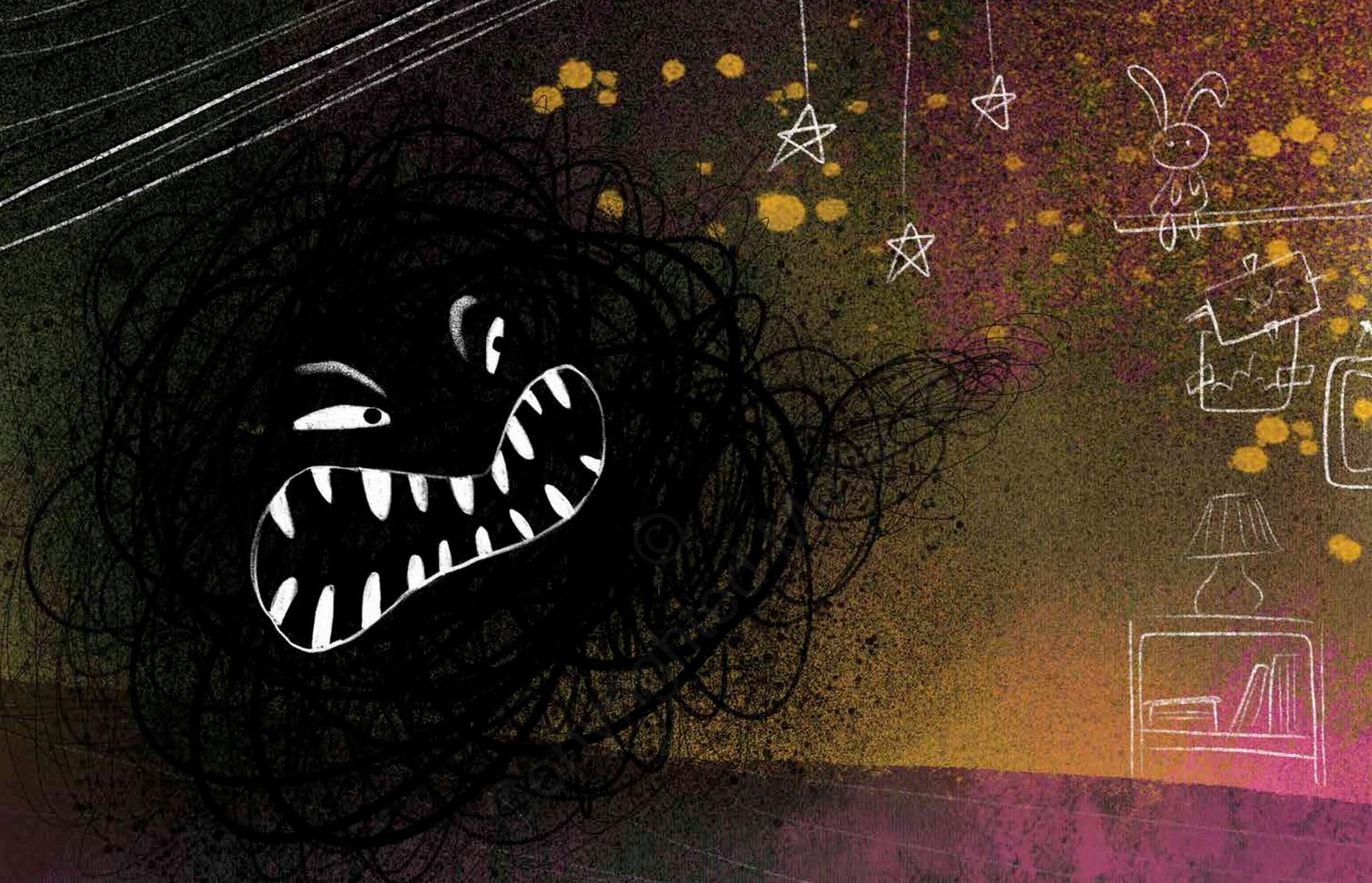
It needed help. It wanted help.  
It asked for help in whispers.





“Please, help!”





And Help came! It came in words—strong and bold and true:  
“I SEE YOU. You are precious.\*

\*Isaiah 43:4



# I SEE YOU

# I HEAR YOU



**I HEAR YOU.  
I know your voice.”\***

**\*Psalm 64:1**

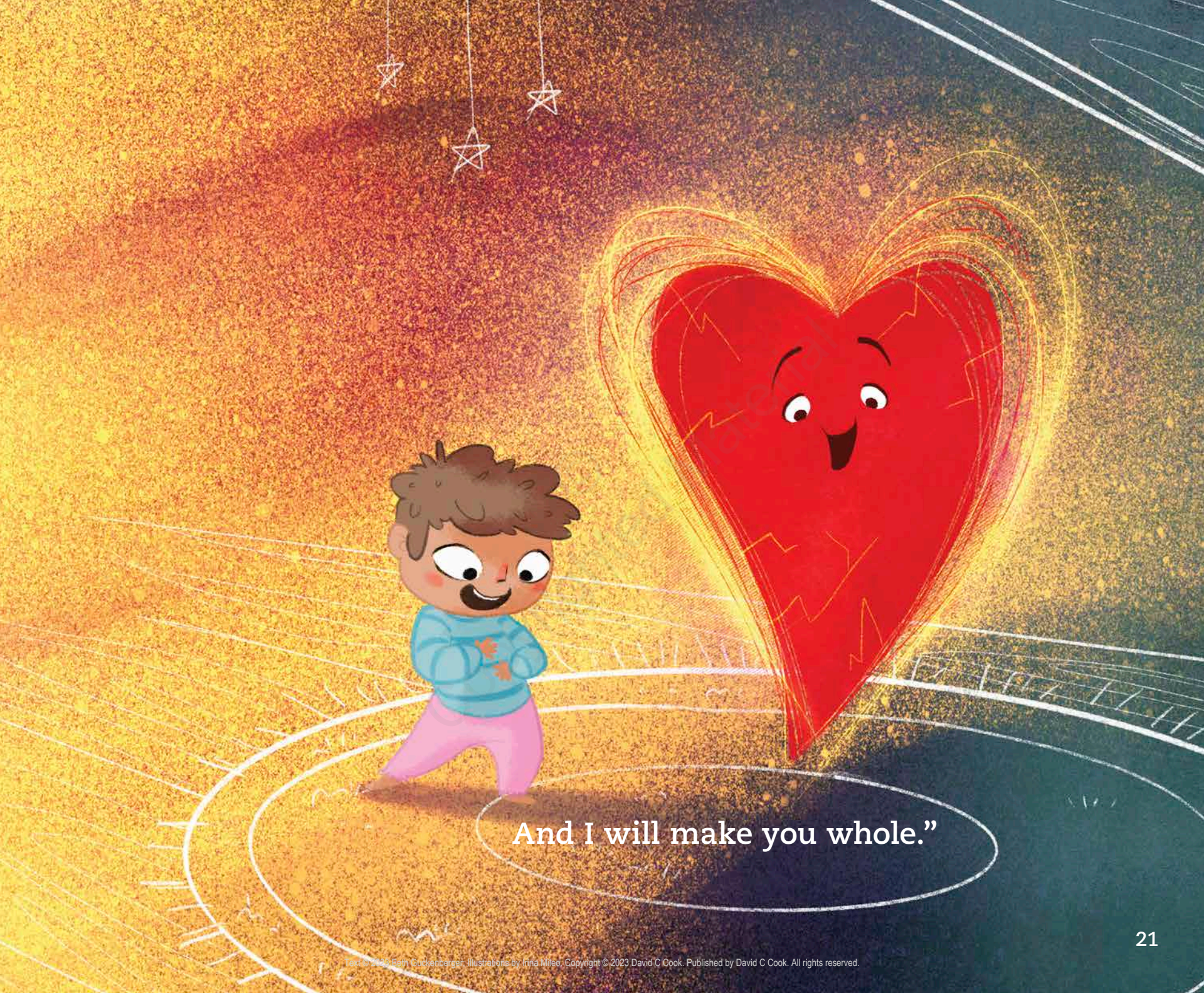


I  
LOVE  
YOU

**“I LOVE YOU. Just as you are.\***

**\*John 15:9; Romans 15:7**





And I will make you whole.”



# YOU ARE MINE

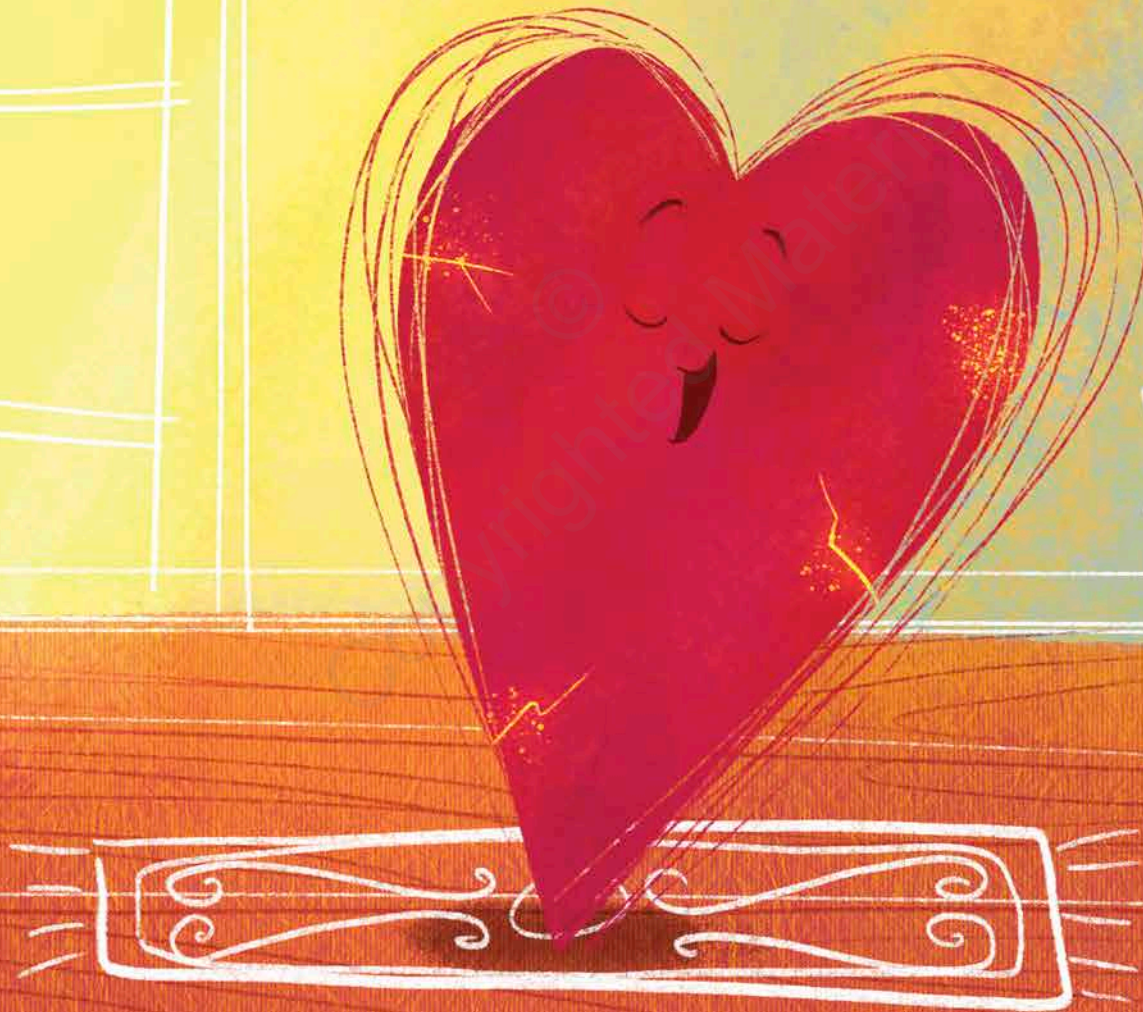
The words kept coming:  
“YOU ARE MINE.  
Nothing can separate us.”\*

\*Romans 8:38–39

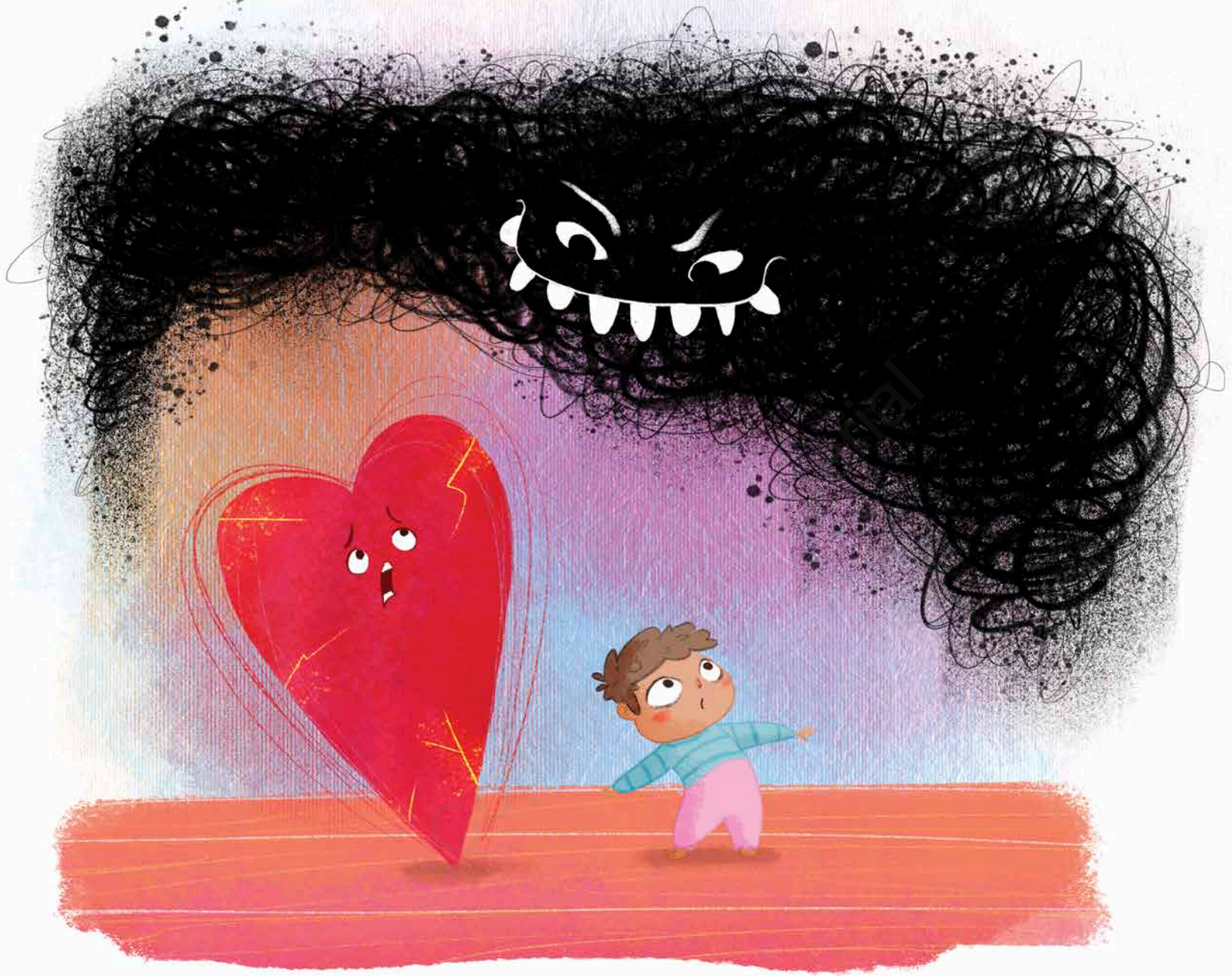




**The heart listened to the words.  
It believed the truth.  
And it felt safe at last.**







The slippery, sneaky enemy came again.  
It tried to tangle up the heart.

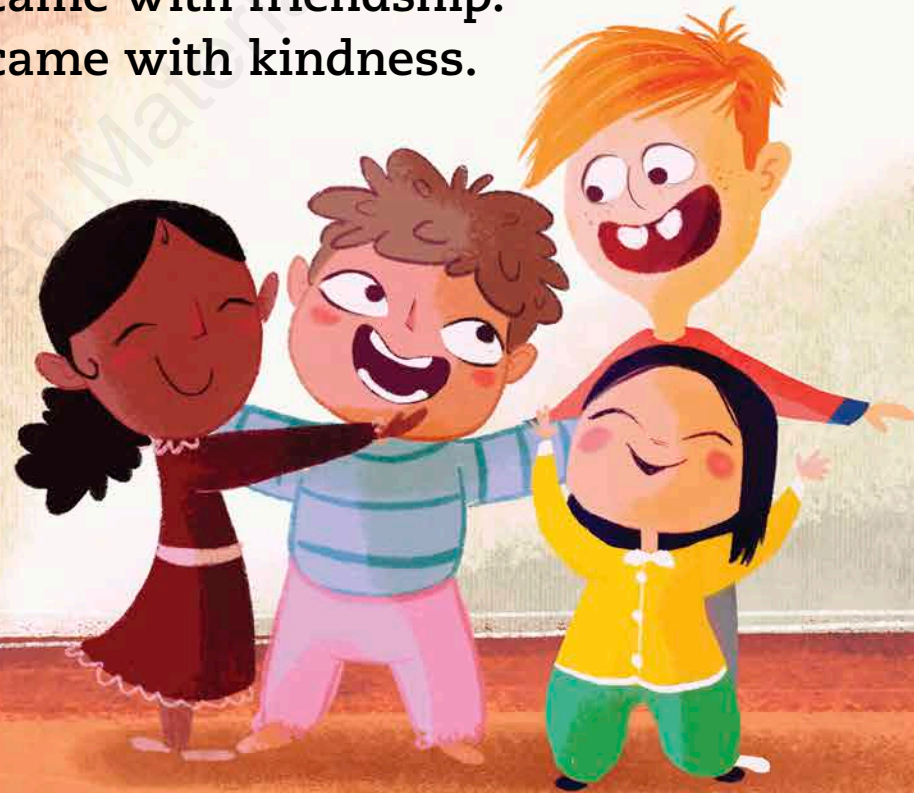




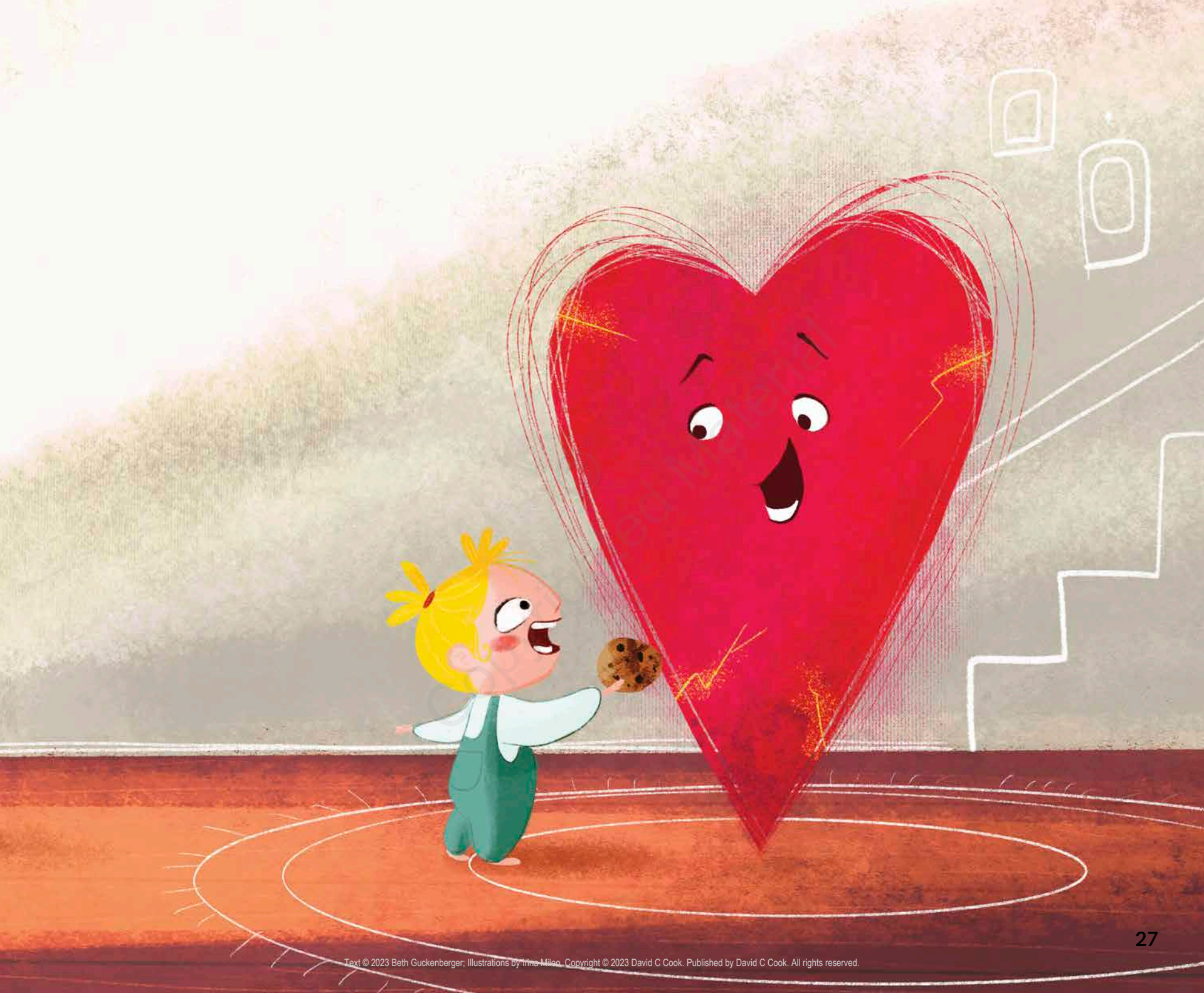
**But each time the enemy came, the heart prayed.  
It asked for Help.**



And Help came with light.  
Help came with friendship.  
Help came with kindness.

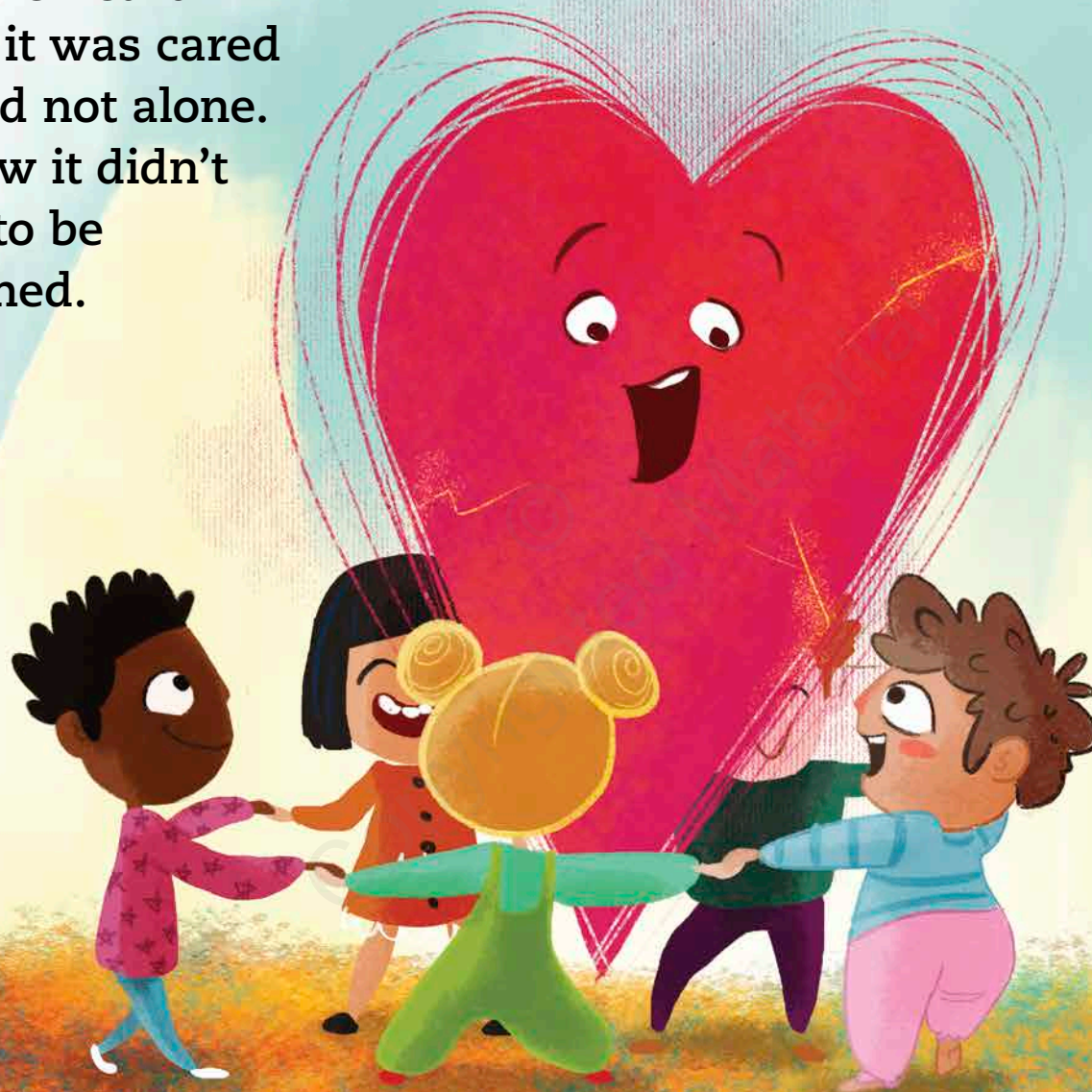








And the heart  
knew it was cared  
for and not alone.  
It knew it didn't  
need to be  
ashamed.







**Because it was healthy and healed and whole again.\***

**\*Jeremiah 30:17**







The heart wondered,  
*Where does my Help come from?\**  
*Who is the One who made me whole?*

\*Psalm 121:1











I AM  
THE  
ONE

**“I AM the One,” the Voice said.  
“Your Help comes from Me,  
maker of heaven and earth.”\***

**\*John 8:58; Revelation 1:8; Psalm 121:2**

**And I will always be with you,  
even to the end of all time.\*  
You can always call on Me.  
I will answer.  
And I will come for you.”**


**\*Matthew 28:20**



The heart trusted this good news.  
And it felt ready for anything.  
Now it tells the story of how it became ...







Solid.  
Happy.  
Free.  
WHOLE.



Dear Safe Adult,

Jesus has always called children to Himself, and longs to strengthen and comfort them in the midst of their battles. We can lead our children to grow strong hearts in Him, teaching them to call out for Him who is always present.

I wrote this story for the son of a good friend, who struggles with overwhelming and hard feelings about his story. I wanted him to understand no matter how attacked his heart might feel, or how loud the voices are, God is *more*. He's *more* big, *more* strong, *more* present, *more* powerful.

I taught him to say this prayer when he felt darkness:

Dear Jesus, I am \_\_\_\_\_ (scared, confused, lonely).

Help my heart to feel Your peace. Come for me. Amen.

It's my prayer you can have your eyes open to the children around you who need discipled with the same truth.

A handwritten signature in white ink, appearing to read 'Beth', with a stylized, flowing script.



## God's Words of Truth to Remember

I see you. You are precious. (Isaiah 43:4)

I hear you. I know your voice. (Psalm 64:1)

I love you. Just as you are. (John 15:9; Romans 15:7)

You are mine. Nothing can separate us. (Romans 8:38–39)

I will restore you and heal your hurts. (Jeremiah 30:17)

When you ask, “Where does my help come from?” you can know this: “Your help comes from God, who made heaven and earth.” (Psalm 121:1–2)

Jesus said, “I am who I am.” He is everything from A to Z. He’s the One who is now, who was, and who is coming. (John 8:58; Revelation 1:8)

I will always be with you, even to the end of all time. (Matthew 28:20)





# STRONGHEART STORIES

*Growing strong hearts  
with God's help*



*This heart was created whole.*

*Solid.*

*Happy.*

*Free.*

*The heart wanted to stay that way.*

*But ... there was an enemy who had other plans.*

**When the heart gets hurt, who will help it become whole again?**

God created our hearts to be whole and free! But we have an enemy who whispers lies that hurt our hearts and make us wonder what's true.

*The Heart Who Wanted to Be Whole* leads children to hear, know, and speak God's truths loud and clear. This powerful story will remind us that no matter how hurtful the enemy's lies are, God's Word is stronger, and He can make us whole.

Beth Guckenberger has lived among and loved children from around the world. An author of twelve books, she serves with Back2Back Ministries, an international orphan care organization. Beth speaks regularly at conferences, youth gatherings, and churches, and loves playing games and traveling with her large family.

Irina Mileo was born in Tuscany and lives there with her family, including her strange cat Sir Boo and her beautiful baby girl. Trained as an engineer, Irina now constructs imaginative, colorful worlds for children, just like the worlds that so inspired her as a child.

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