

I LOVE YOU



AUTHOR:
Michael Ross

ILLUSTRATOR:
Bruno Iradukunda

**HELPING CHILDREN
FIGHT COVID-19**

NABU

NABU's mission

NABU is a New York-based 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, with a mission to solve the imbalance in children's book creation and distribution, so all children can read and rise to their full potential. We disrupt the cycle of poverty by leveraging technology to publish children's books for free on digital platforms in mother tongue languages.

About the Health - COVID-19 Collection

As we publish this book in April 2020, the world is facing a global pandemic which will impact children and their families in every country. As a result of COVID-19, an estimated 1.37 billion students globally are out of school today and face interruptions to their learning. As a digital platform, NABU is providing the most vulnerable children with resources at home to ensure that they are able to stay safe and continue their learning. Moreover, misinformation about the virus is pervasive, and parents and families need access to accurate information and sensitive ways to talk to their children about the virus, to help keep them and their communities safe.

In response, NABU created this collection with the support of experts in the field of health, neuroscience and child development, and a team of authors who pitched in to create information-rich, compelling stories. Created in Rwanda and illustrated by NABU's incredible Rwandan illustrators, the stories were published in Kinyarwanda, and also made available in English for families globally. Wherever you are reading, we hope you and your family stay safe and that this story brings you comfort and hope for brighter days ahead.

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“Mama, why can’t I see grandma and grandpa? Do they still love me?”



“My darling Kwizera, they love you more than anything. They love you as much as the sun. They love you as much as the sound of waves dancing on the beach. They love you like birds singing in the morning. Their love for you is as endless as the rainbow. But it’s not safe for them to see you at this time.”



“Because of the new coronavirus?” Kwizera asked.

“Yes darling,” Her mother replied.

“But I am not sick! I am healthy and I want to play with grandma and grandpa. It’s not fair!” Kwizera argued.



Kwizera wept:

“I want to play hide and seek with them. I want to play football with them. I want grandpa to read me my favorite story ‘Kazungu’ and I want grandma to sing me my favorite song ‘Kabuye Kanjye’. I miss them.”



Kwizera's mother replied soothingly:

“You are right, you are very healthy. But the virus doesn't affect young children like you, the way it affects older people. Even though you don't look like you are unwell, and you feel very strong, you may be carrying the virus, and that means grandma and grandpa could catch it from you.”



“Does that mean I will never be able to see them again?”

Kwizera’s eyes swelled and her mother hugged her and replied, “Of course not Kwizera. I have an idea! You can still see them, but we need to keep a safe distance from them until there is medicine that can prevent and cure the virus.”



“How do we do that, mama?” Kwizera asked.

“Well, we can go for a walk, just the two of us, as it’s not safe to be in a large group. We can walk to grandma and grandpa’s house and see them through the window.”



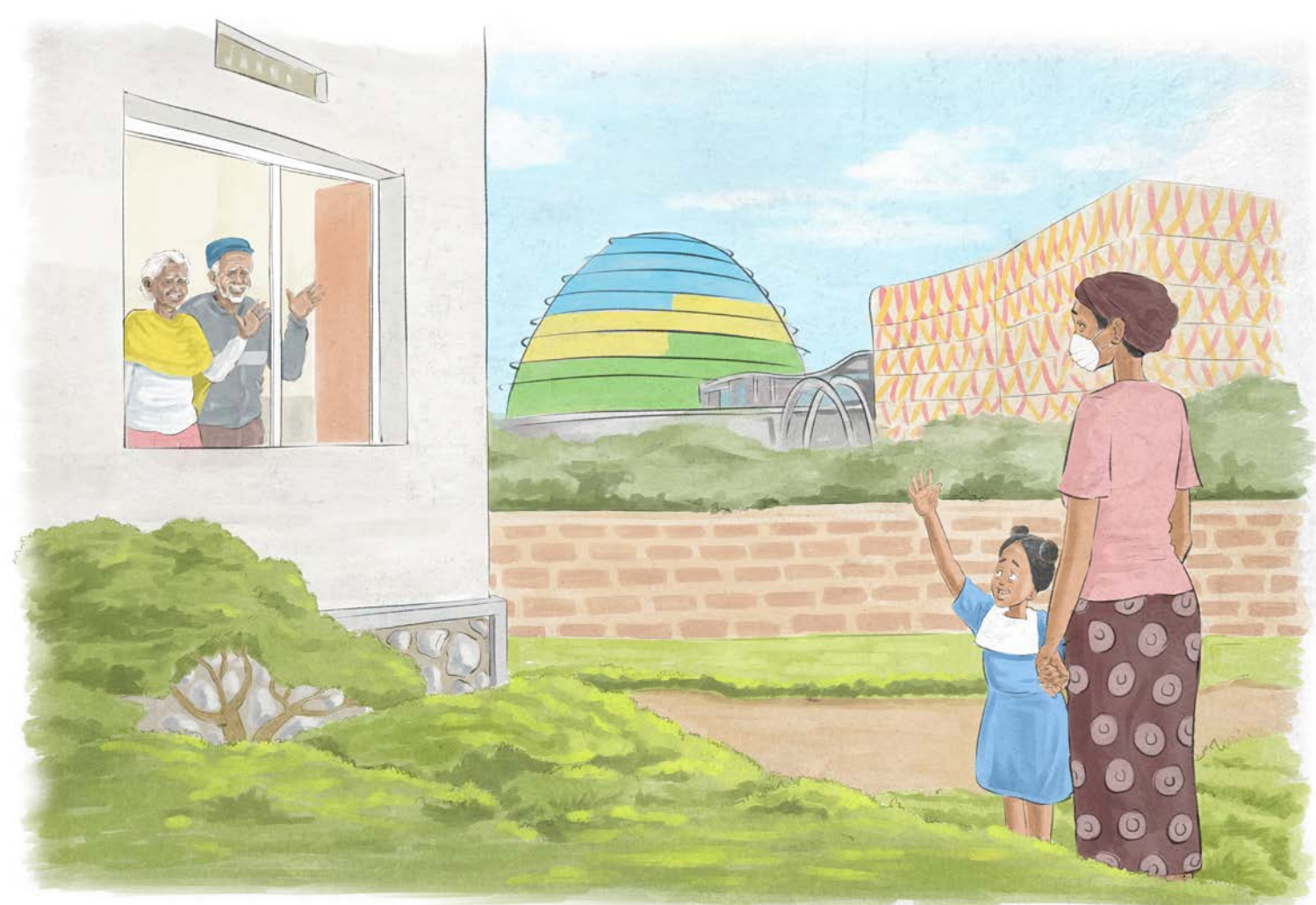
“But I still can’t hug them and tell them I love you?”
Kwizera sighed.

“You can my dear. You see, love is one of the most powerful gifts in the world. Love can travel through the thickest walls, over the highest mountains, under the deepest valleys. Nothing can stop love. So their glass window is no match for your love.”



“So can we walk past their home every day, so I can call out to them I love you so they know how much I miss them?” Kwizera asked excitedly.

“I promise we can do it every day, until the virus is defeated and we can all be together again.” Her mother said. “Let’s go visit them now!”



“Yay!” Kwizera jumped up with excitement and they walked to grandma and grandpa’s home. Kwizera waved, blew them kisses, and called out - **“I love you!”** - just as she said she would. She felt happy knowing that she was able to deliver her message to her grandparents, and that she will see them again tomorrow.

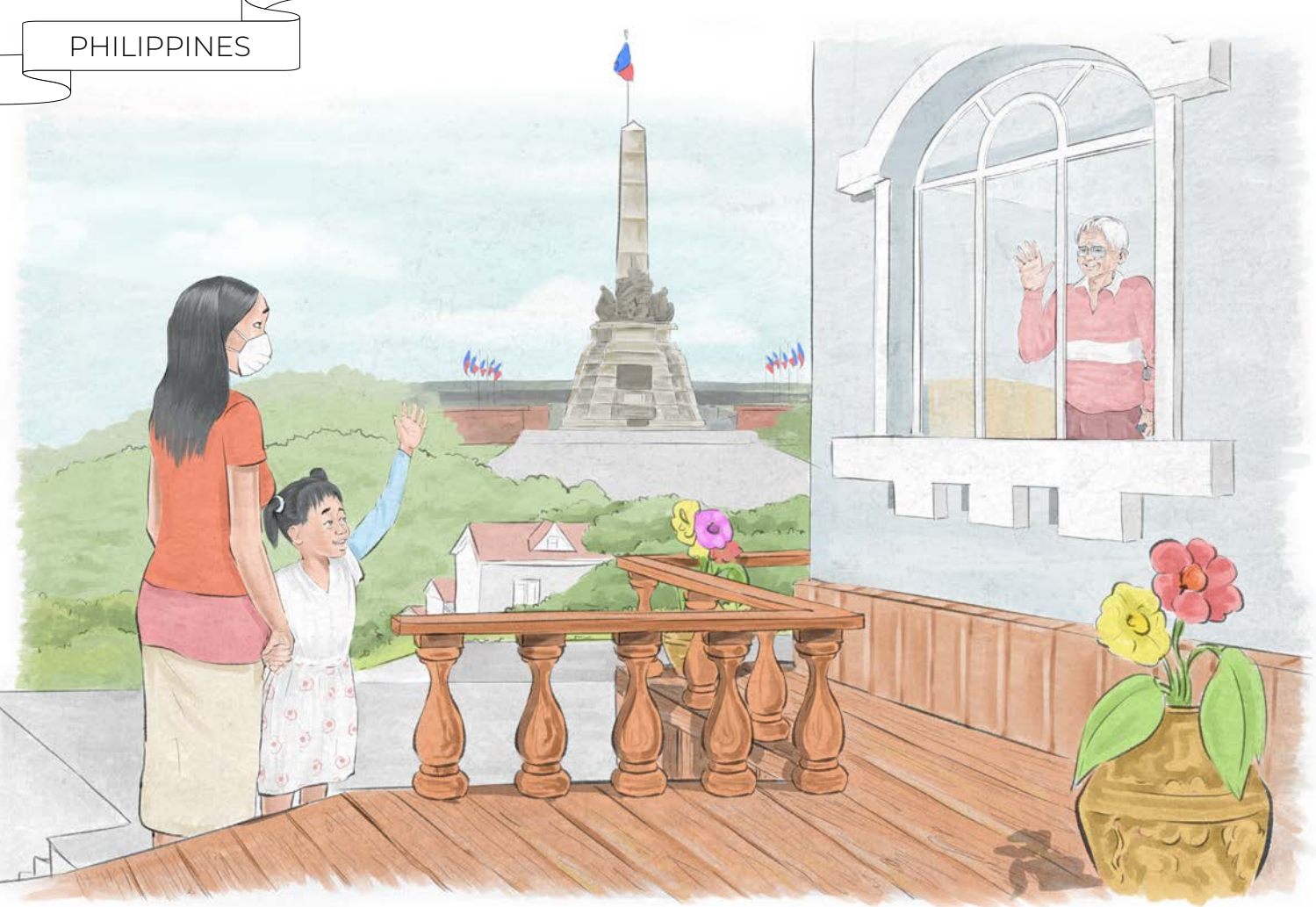


As they were walking home, Kwizera asked her mother, **“Do all children need to keep their distance from their grandparents right now?”**

“Yes dear,” her mother replied. **“All over the world, children are keeping a safe distance, but they are still sending their message of love to their grandparents, the same way you are.”**



I Love You Grandpa Agwé!



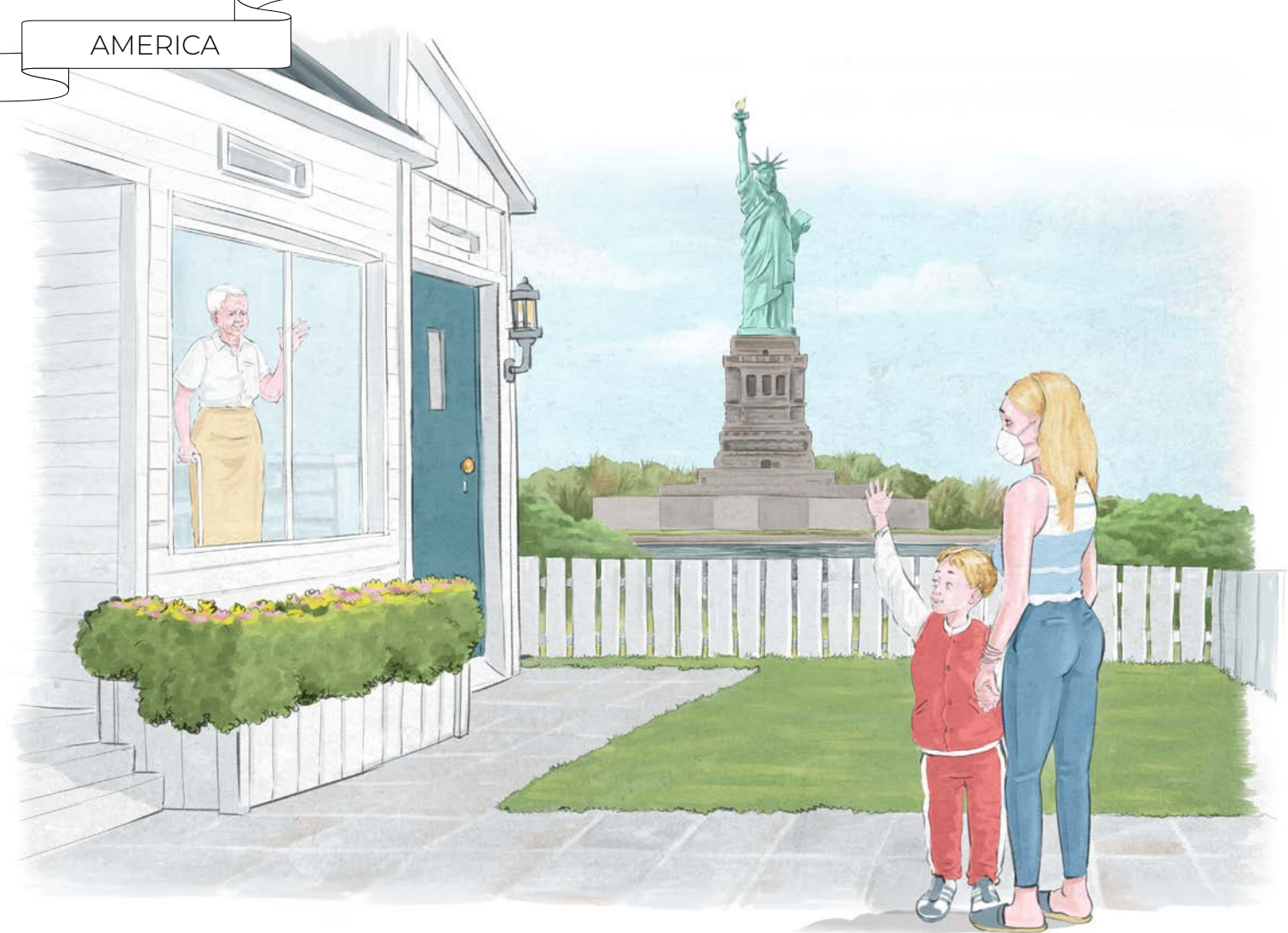
I love you Grandma Mutya!



I love you Grandma Izabel and Grandpa Lucas!



I love you Lao Lao!



I love you grandma Elsie!

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About NABU Stories

NABU creates children's stories with a cultural point of view. Children who are exposed to multiple cultures and languages are more likely to become lifelong learners and compassionate global citizens. We believe that culturally relevant stories that reflect who children see when they look in the mirror help to develop healthy self-esteem and a sense of pride, and children who learn about cultures different from their own are much more likely to develop into adults who value the dignity of human life and making the world a better place for all.



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Bruno IRADUKUNDA is an artist practicing in the fields of painting, illustration, sculpture and graphic design, and he has been illustrating children's books since 2017. In 2018, the International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY) awarded Iradukunda as one of the best illustrators of the year for his illustrations in "La Troisième Perle", written by Kai HIRWA and published by EDITIONS Bakame. In 2019, Iradukunda was awarded with a certificate from World Bank Group for participating in "reading ready" in Rwanda. Bruno has recently established his own art studio in Rwanda.

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