



Special Seeds

Junaidah owns a bag of special seeds. However, planting and taking care of them isn't as easy as she thought it would be.



Special Seeds
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Let's Read



The Asia Foundation



Junaidah's feet treaded lightly along the rice fields. Her parents had

passed down some special rice seeds to her. It was Junaidah's task to plant and care for them. "This doesn't seem so hard," Junaidah thought.



Junaidah's parents had passed away, and her older brother had traveled

far away. Junaidah was used to living on her own. She was lucky to have Aunt Siti. Aunt Siti was the one who taught her how to farm.



Hey, there's another plant growing near the seeds! Wild grass and

weeds spring out from every direction. They'll take up all the nutrients for Junaidah's rice. So they must be pulled out.



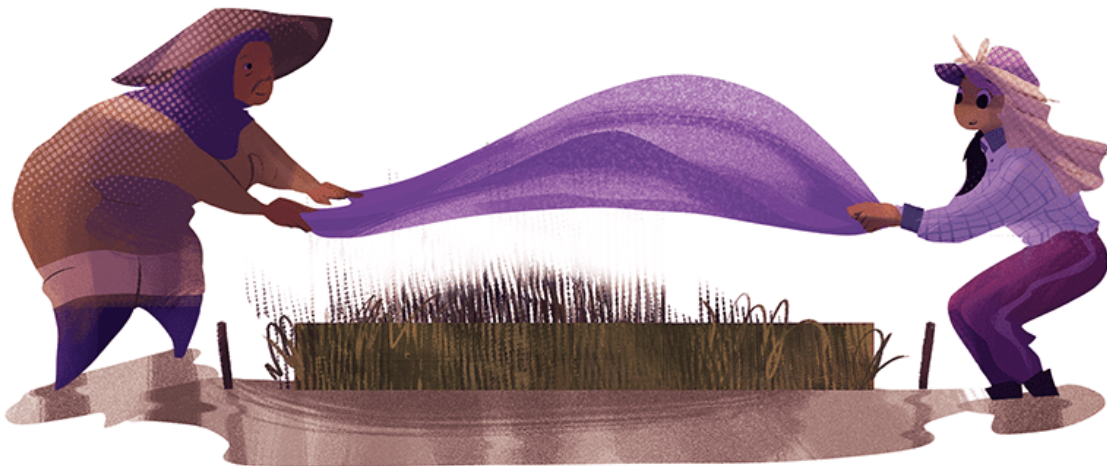
Pull here, grab there. It was Junaidah against the weeds. However,

Junaidah had to be very careful. She mustn't pull out the rice plants by accident. Growing rice wasn't as easy as Junaidah thought.



Dark clouds and sparks of lightning filled up the sky. This was a sure

sign of heavy rain to come! Junaidah's rice shoots were still weak. The heavy rain would squash them for sure.



Aunt Siti gave her some advice. A plastic cover could protect the

shoots. Junaidah hammered the cover down with pegs. Now, the seeds would be safe from the rain.



The seeds were growing so fast! They had to be moved. Junaidah

watched and followed Aunt Siti's moves. She took a patch and planted it carefully. She kept in mind to leave some distance between the patches.



Uh-oh, Junaidah's rice patches were messy! They looked very different

from Aunt Siti's neat line of patches.



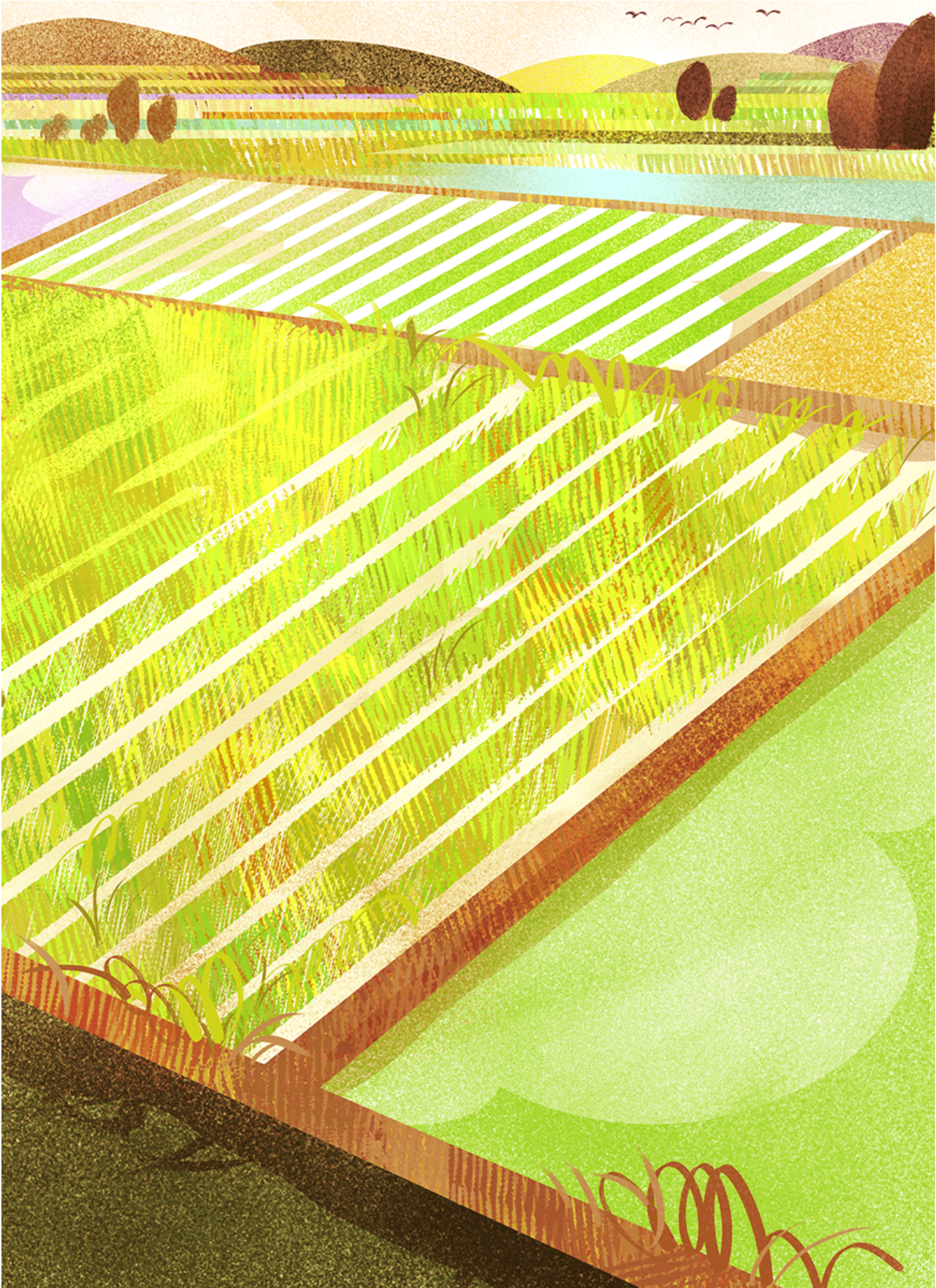
“If the rice patches are lined up neatly, harvesting them will be much

easier. You can move between the patches with ease,” Aunt Siti explained. So be it, Junaidah will find a way to fix this.

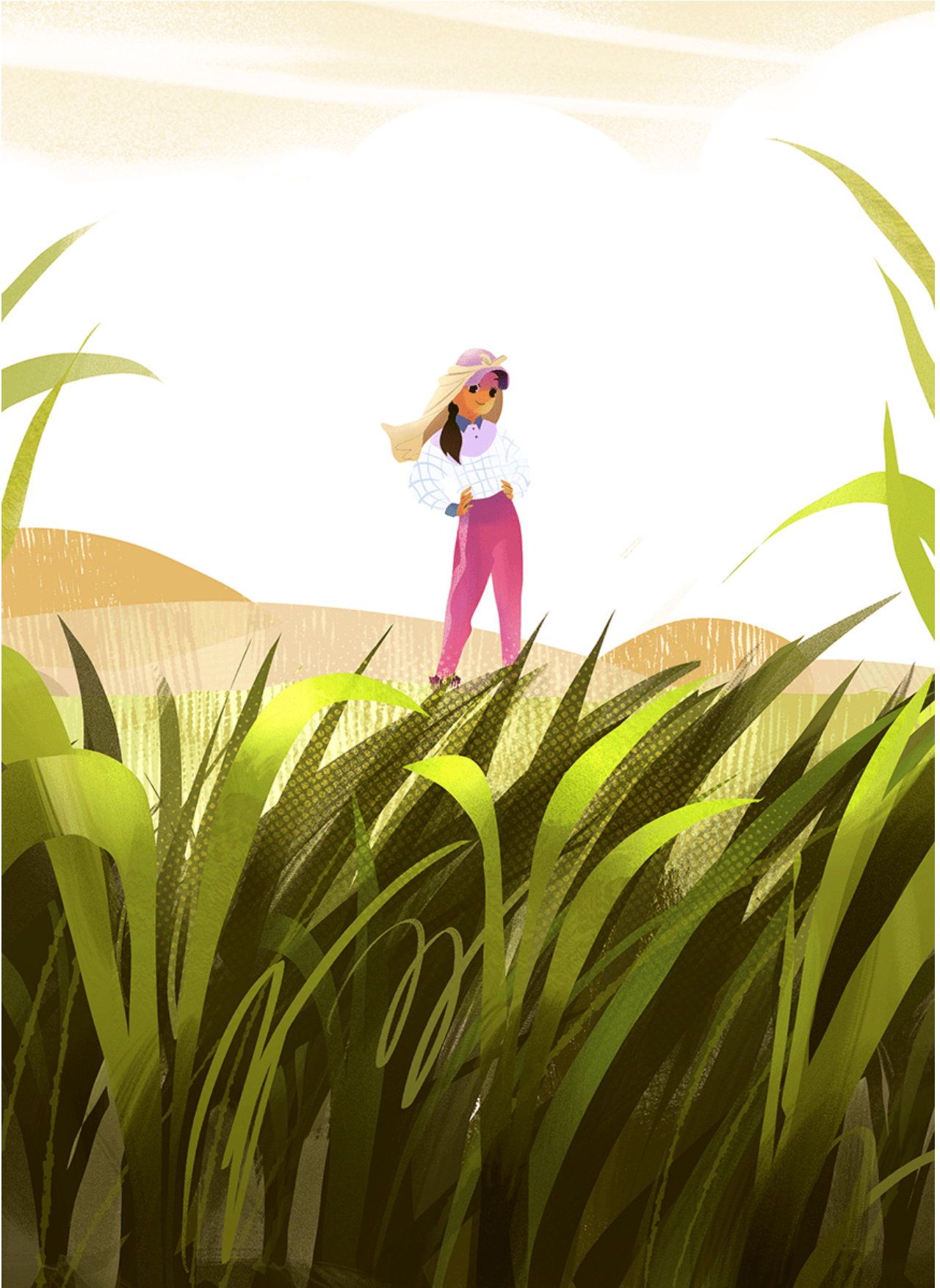


An idea popped up in her mind. The rope! She spread out lines of ropes

across the field. She planted the rice patches along the rope.



Wow, Junaidah's rice was now neatly aligned.



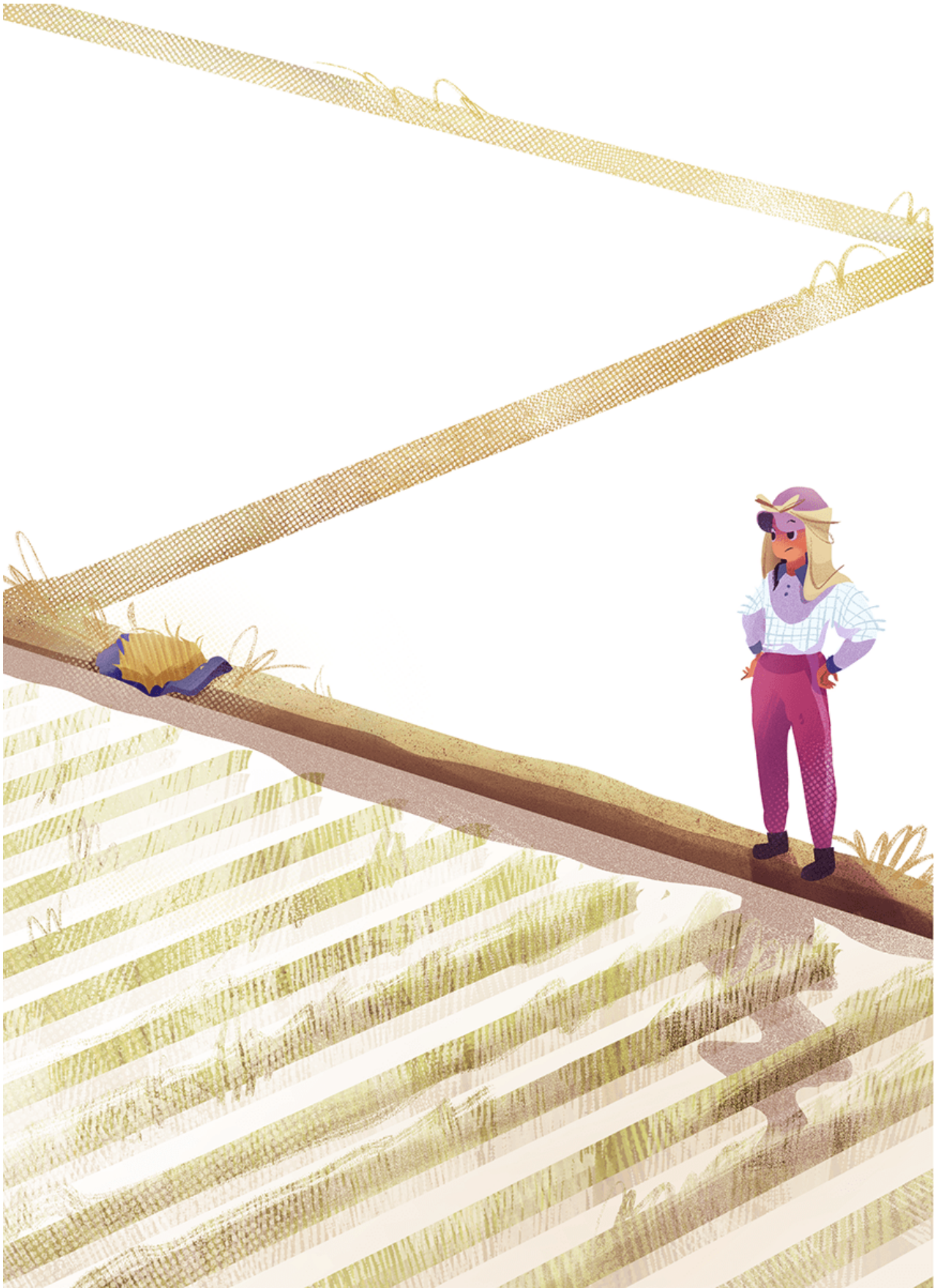
How nice it was to see the special seeds grow tall. The leaves turned

green, and a fragrant smell wafted in the air. Junaidah just couldn't wait for harvest season to come.



However, why were Junaidah's rice fields almost dried up? This could be

very bad. Water is very important for a rice field.



She noticed that water was flooding in Aunt Lela's fields. Her fields were

higher up than Junaidah's. Usually, water would flow down from there to Junaidah's rice fields.



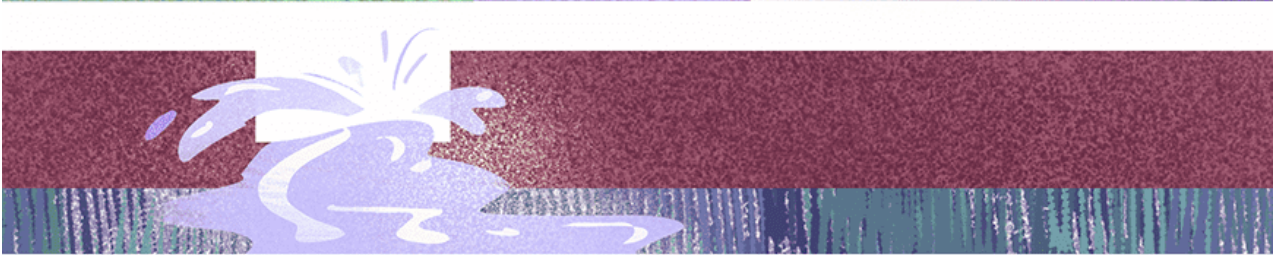
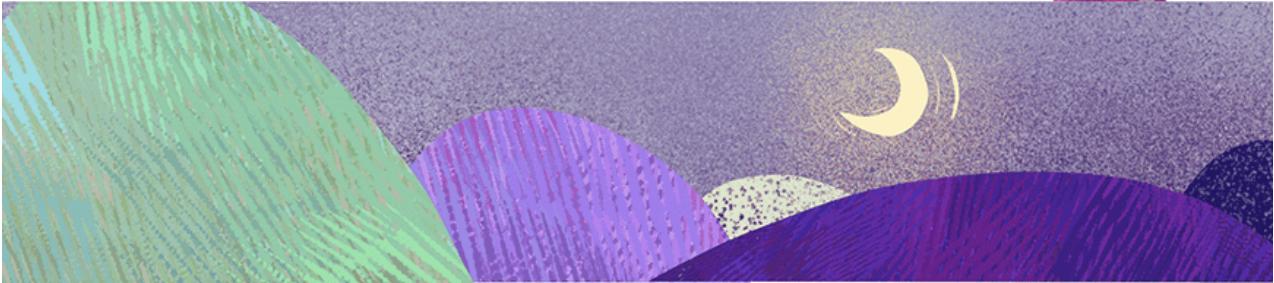
Junaidah unplugged the stopper, so that the flow of water was no longer

blocked.



Aunt Lela came over in a hurry. “Don’t remove the stopper,” she

pleaded. “My rice is only a week old. The plants need a lot of water.”



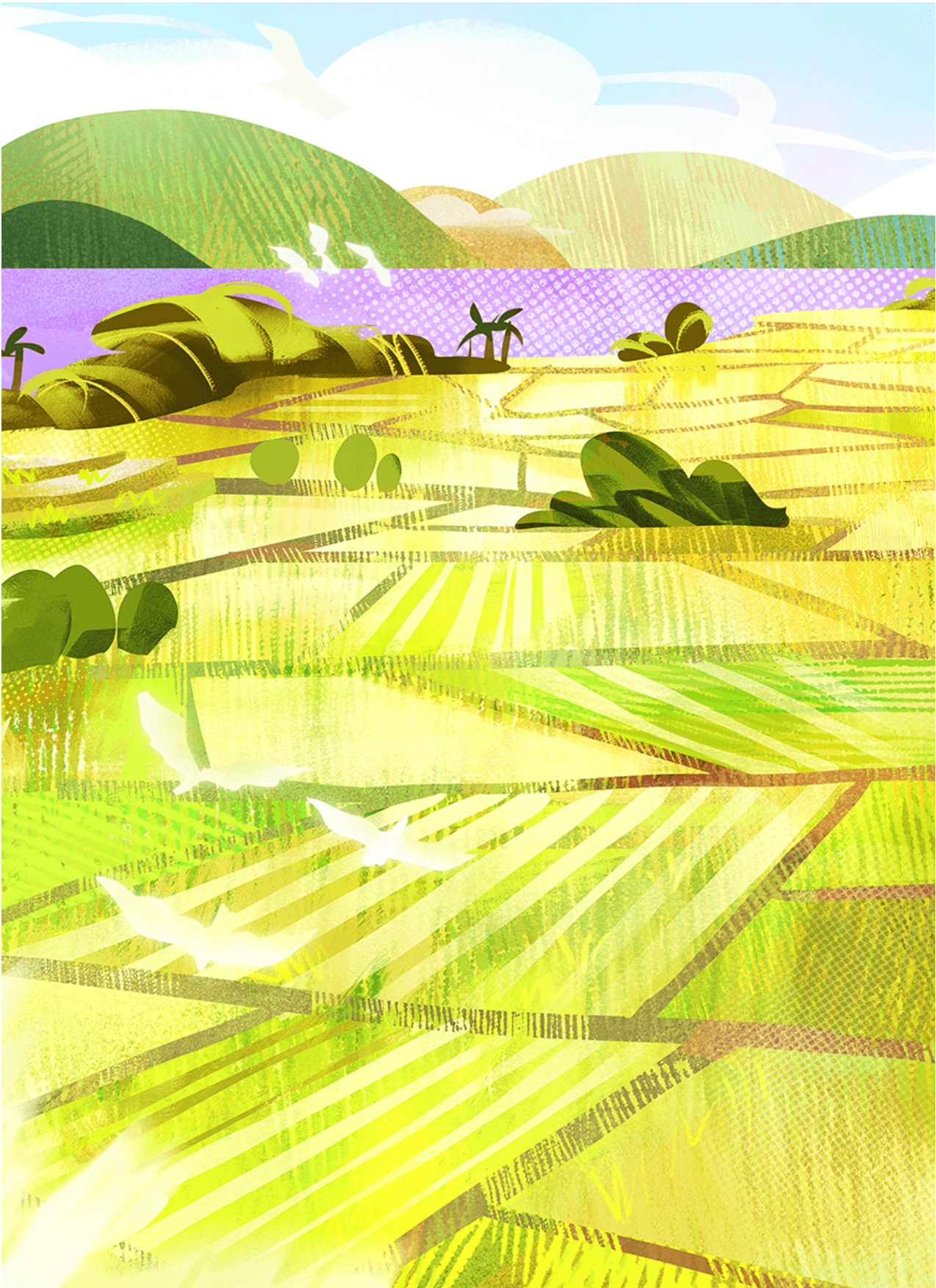
“How about we take turns?” Junaidah suggested. “During the day, Aunt

Lela can use the water for her fields. At night, the water can be drained to my fields.”



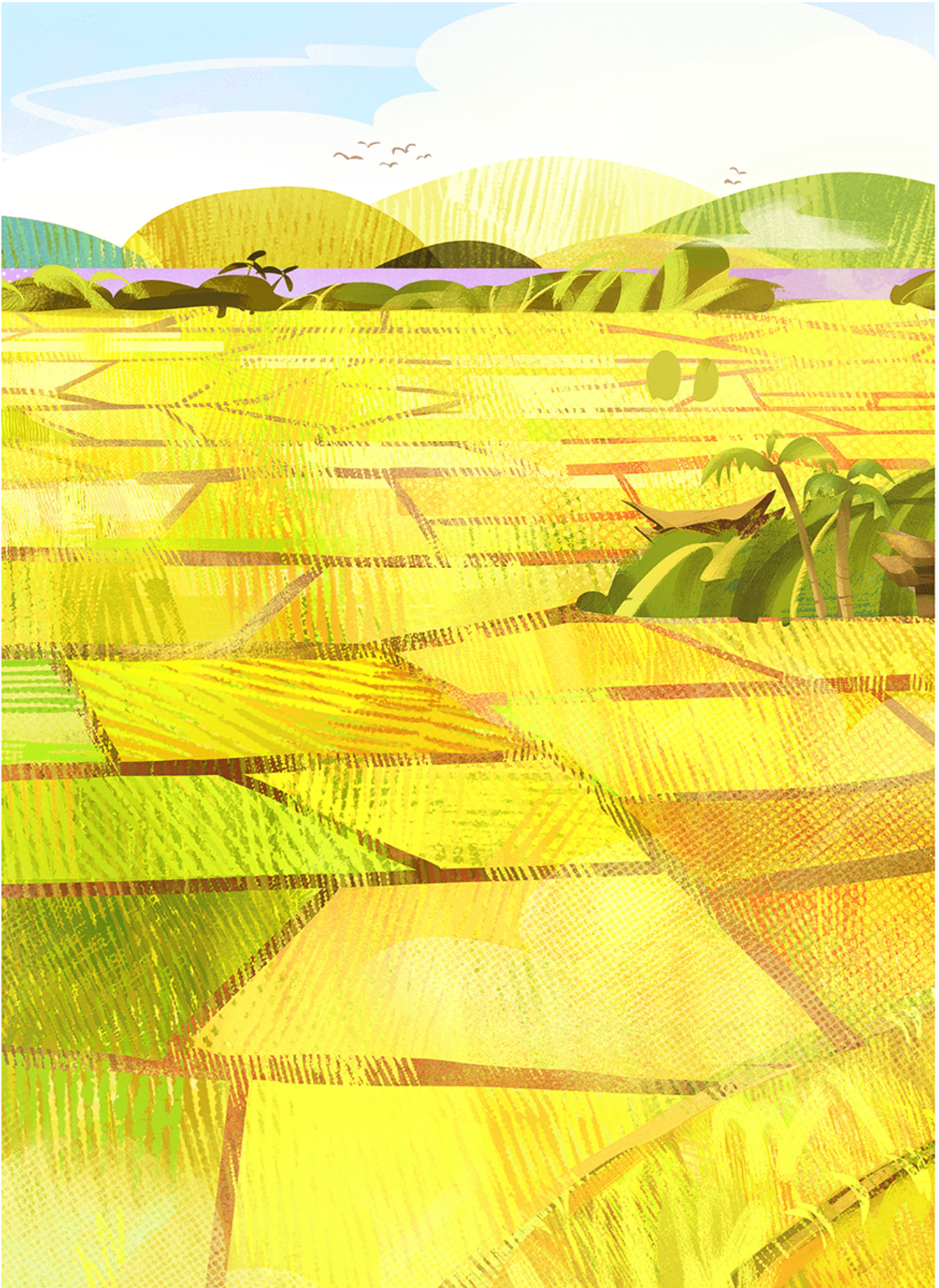
Junaidah's suggestion seemed fair, but Aunt Lela wasn't on

board. Going back and forth to plug and unplug the stopper would make her bones ache. Take it easy, Aunt Lela,” Junadiah reassured her. “No need to worry, I’m here to help.”



Junaidah's special seeds grew perfectly, on the edge of the beautiful

Lake Singkarak



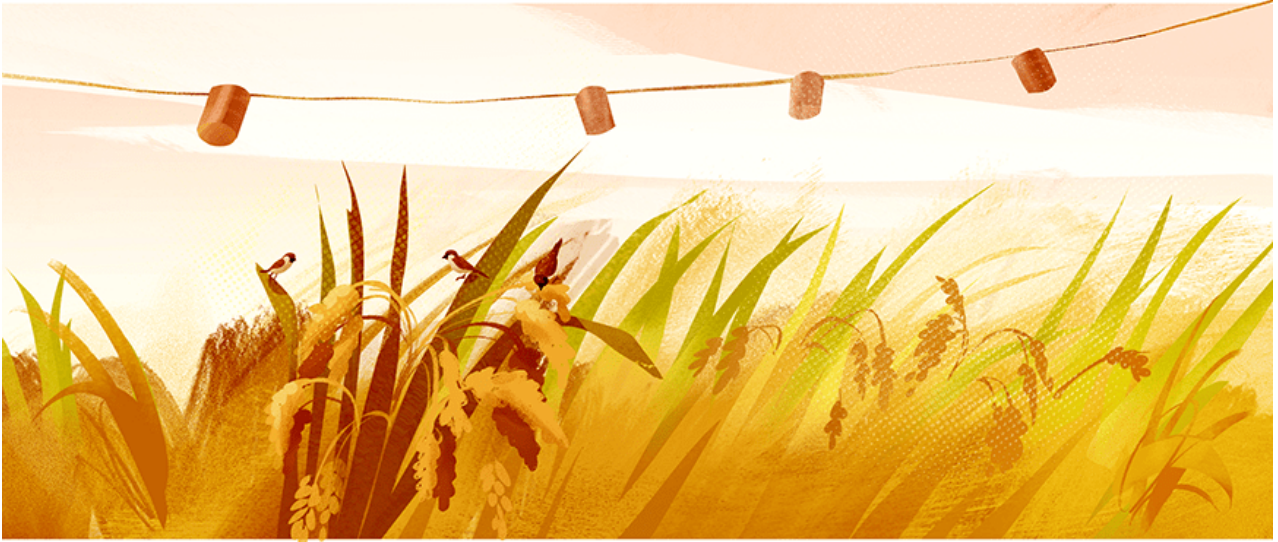
Junaidah's rice leaves were now a golden yellow. Ripe grains of rice

were clinging to their stalks.



Flocks of birds came to celebrate. But alas, this meant more work for

Junaidah.



Junaidah tied together some cans with a rope. She then stuck some

poles in the field and hung the rope on them. She put some gravel in the cans and shook the pole. This was what the farmers did to shoo away the birds that came. It turns out that planting these special seeds wasn't so easy after all. Taking care of them is a tiring task. However, ...



... behold the beauty of the harvest season. From just one bag of

special seeds, millions of rice grains are produced. All of Junaidah's weariness vanished at once!



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