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Opening extract from **When the Rain Come**

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*For Annunciata, Beatrice, Charity and Dorothy
with huge admiration for the work they do and
for the love and joy they bring to it.*

TOM

*To Hélène, Marie and Ouiza for being amazing mums,
with love MALIKA*

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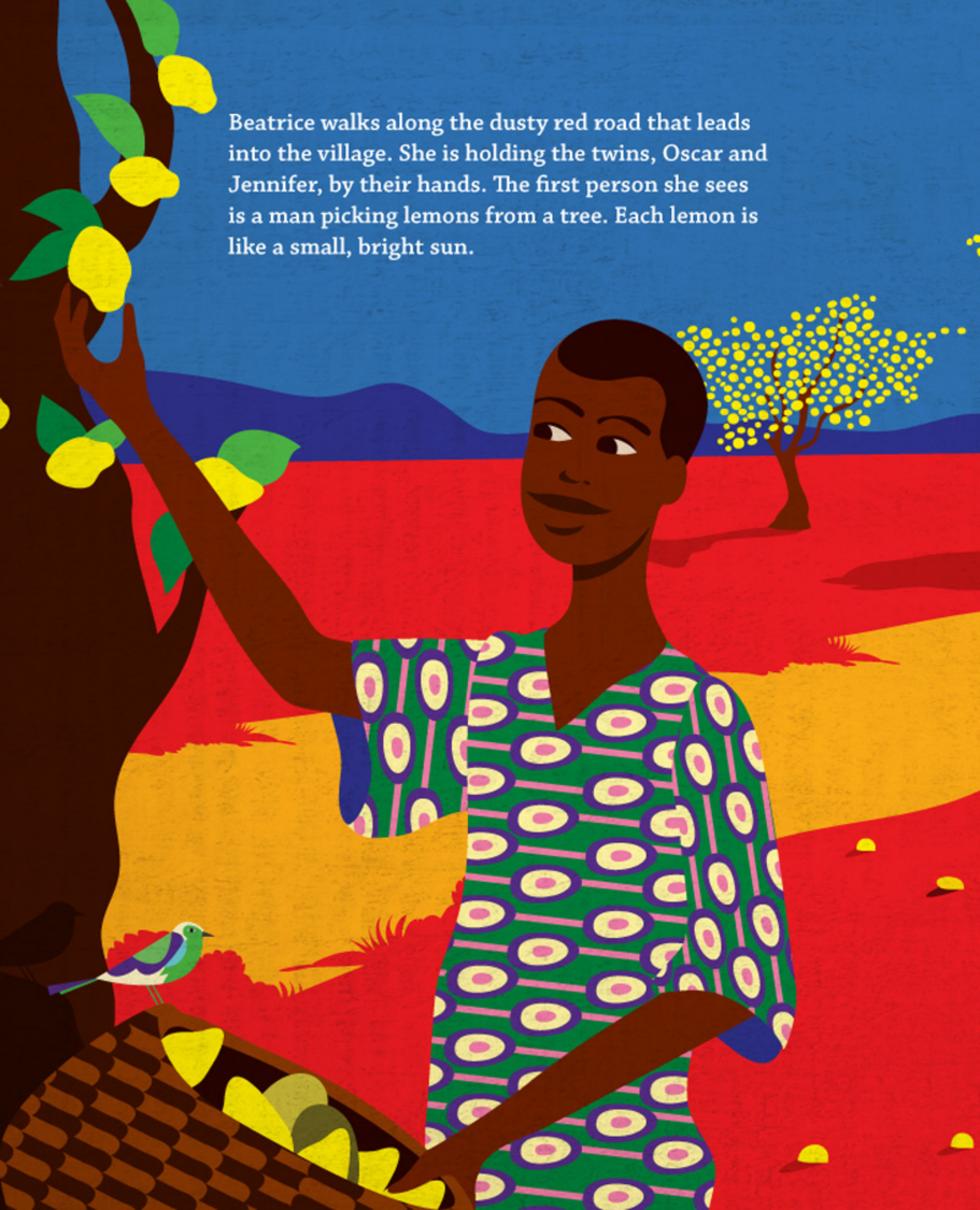
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Beatrice walks along the dusty red road that leads into the village. She is holding the twins, Oscar and Jennifer, by their hands. The first person she sees is a man picking lemons from a tree. Each lemon is like a small, bright sun.





“Moni. Muli bwanji? Hello, how are you?” she says.

“Ndili bwino. Muli bwanji? I’m fine. How are you?”

he replies.

“Hot,” says Beatrice. “It’s a long and dusty road to get here.”

“Yes it is,” says the Lemon Man.

“I’m looking for Grandmother Rose,” says Beatrice.

“Well, you’ve almost found her. Past this tree, on you go, and you’re there,” says the Lemon Man.

“Zikomo. Thank you,” says Beatrice.

They find Grandmother Rose in her vegetable garden, chasing a hen from the fresh, green shoots. She flaps her arms like a large, colourful hen herself.

