

THE

SACRED

LIFE OF

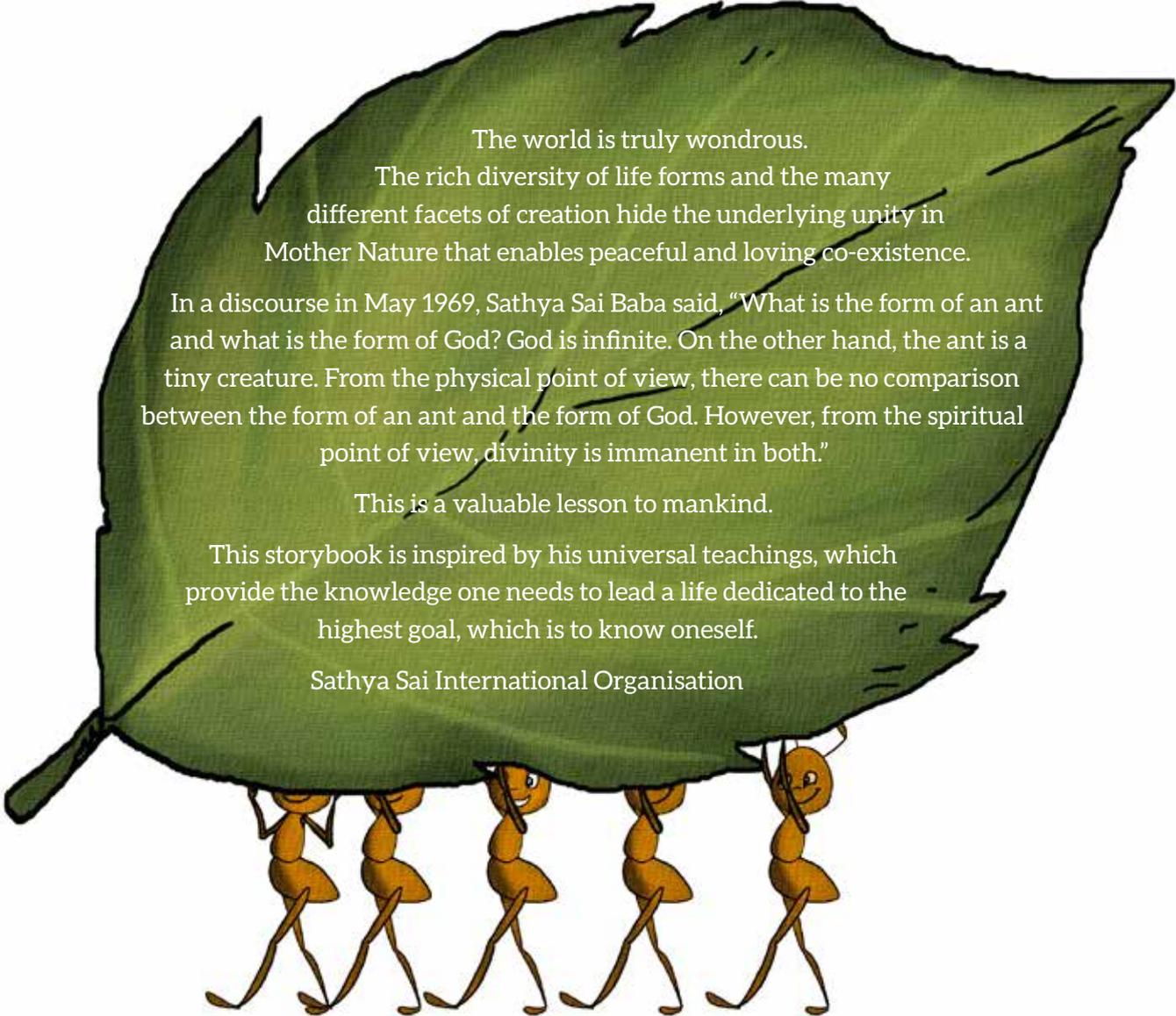
ANTS



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The world is truly wondrous.
The rich diversity of life forms and the many
different facets of creation hide the underlying unity in
Mother Nature that enables peaceful and loving co-existence.

In a discourse in May 1969, Sathya Sai Baba said, "What is the form of an ant and what is the form of God? God is infinite. On the other hand, the ant is a tiny creature. From the physical point of view, there can be no comparison between the form of an ant and the form of God. However, from the spiritual point of view, divinity is immanent in both."

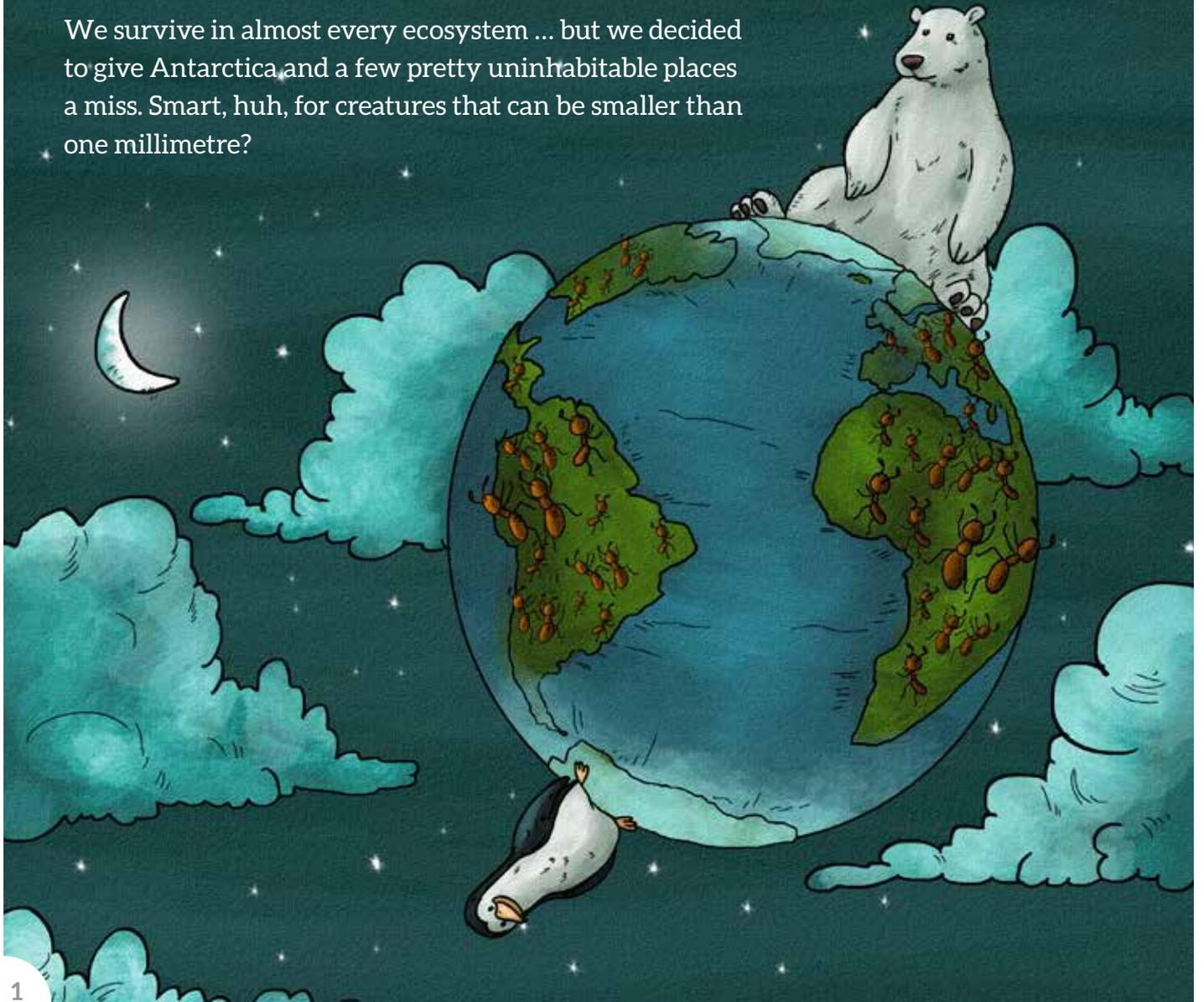
This is a valuable lesson to mankind.

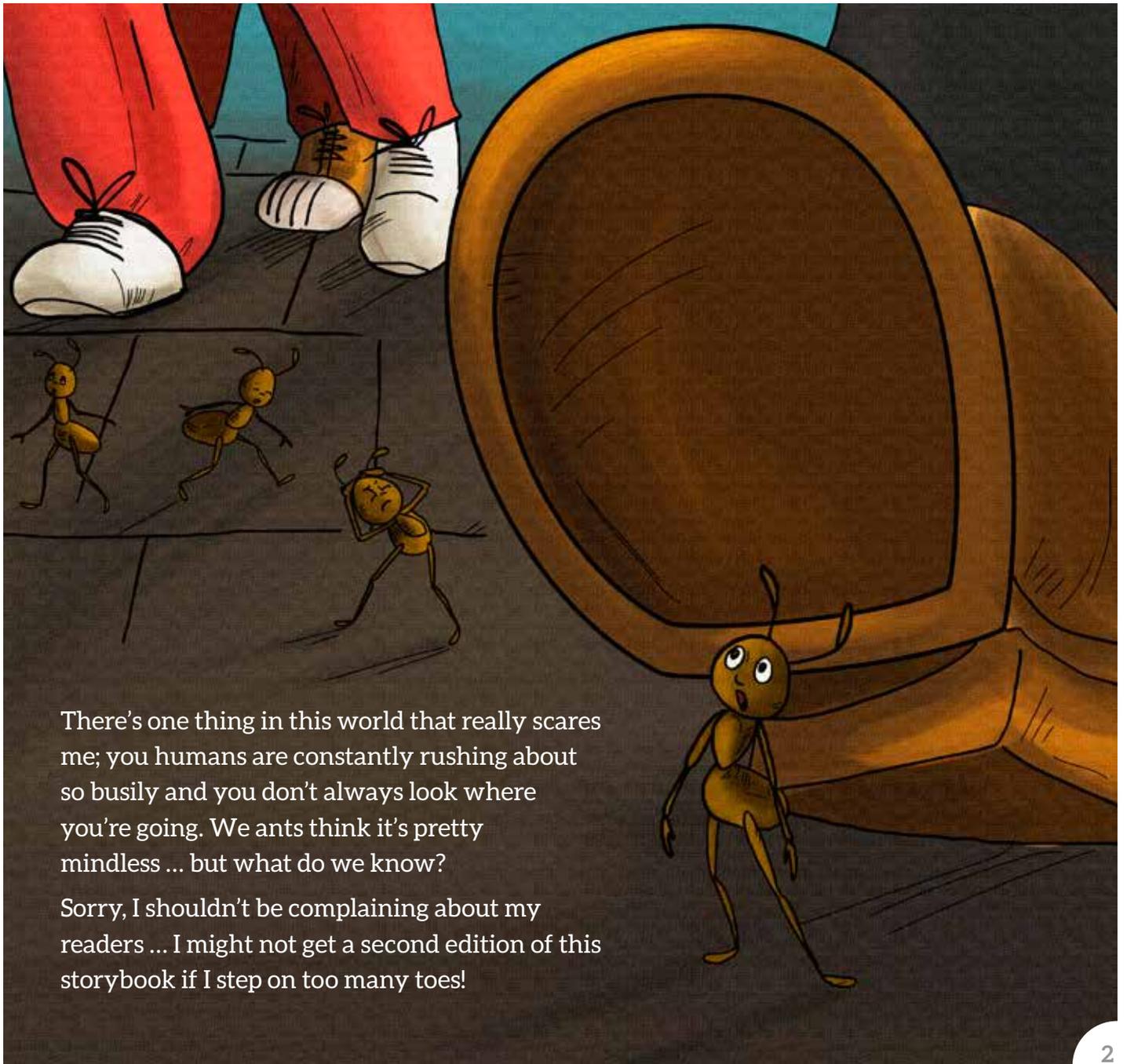
This storybook is inspired by his universal teachings, which
provide the knowledge one needs to lead a life dedicated to the
highest goal, which is to know oneself.

Sathya Sai International Organisation

As tiny as we ants are, we have populated just about every place on earth. There are zillions of us!

We survive in almost every ecosystem ... but we decided to give Antarctica and a few pretty uninhabitable places a miss. Smart, huh, for creatures that can be smaller than one millimetre?





There's one thing in this world that really scares me; you humans are constantly rushing about so busily and you don't always look where you're going. We ants think it's pretty mindless ... but what do we know?

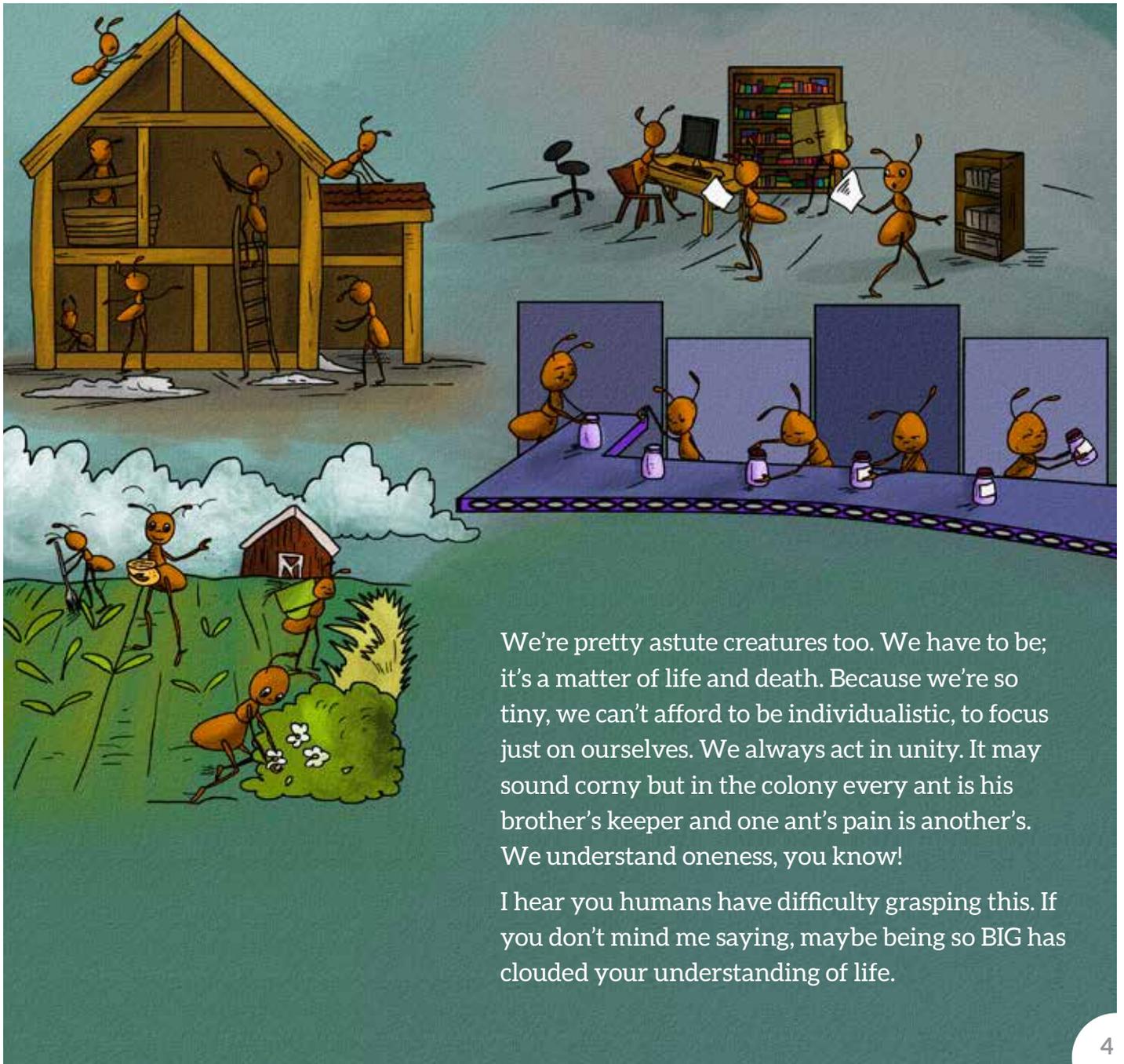
Sorry, I shouldn't be complaining about my readers ... I might not get a second edition of this storybook if I step on too many toes!

“All the ills of man today are due to the fact that his mind is never restful and quiet. The mind is preoccupied with worries (and) no rest is given to the mind.”

We ants are citizens of the world. We believe
“No ant is an island” – see, we’ve learnt a thing
or two from you humans.

We live in colonies to organise and defend
ourselves, and we’ve learned to make ourselves
at home and find food in every habitat. We
don’t get attached to places or trivial things;
that way, we carry less luggage in life ... not
that we can carry much anyway!

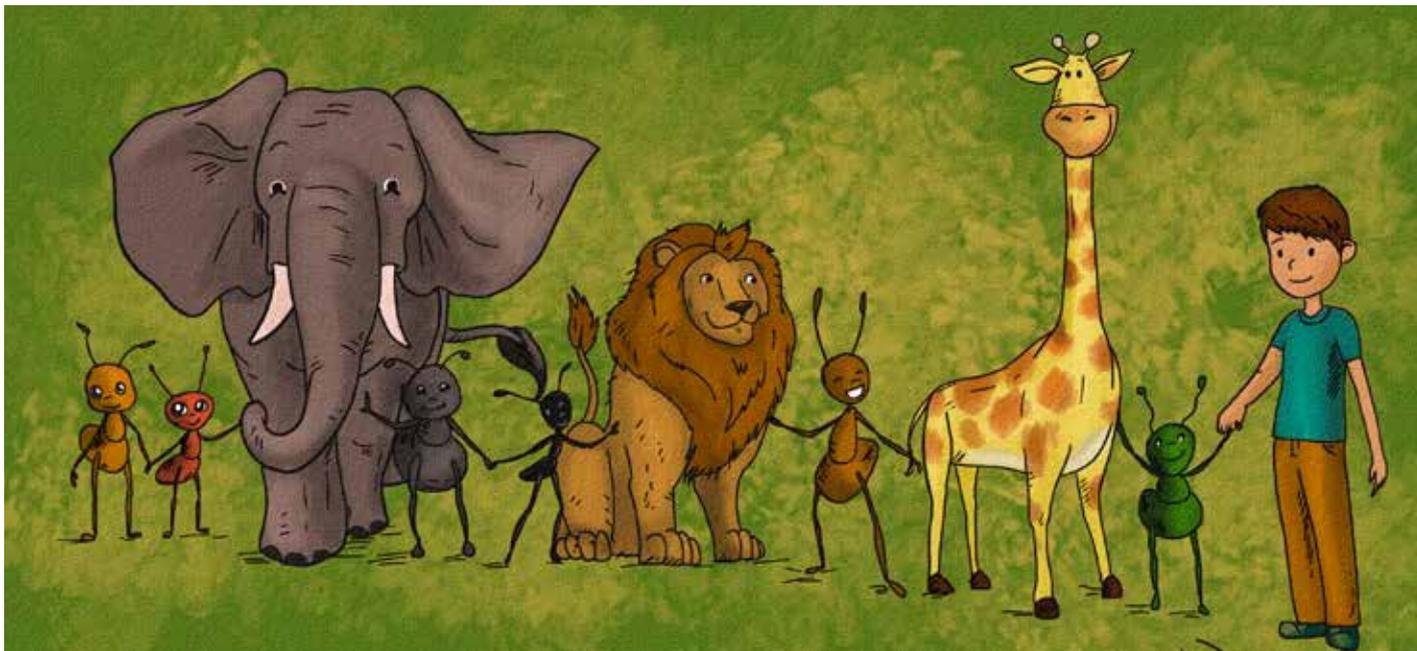




We're pretty astute creatures too. We have to be; it's a matter of life and death. Because we're so tiny, we can't afford to be individualistic, to focus just on ourselves. We always act in unity. It may sound corny but in the colony every ant is his brother's keeper and one ant's pain is another's. We understand oneness, you know!

I hear you humans have difficulty grasping this. If you don't mind me saying, maybe being so BIG has clouded your understanding of life.

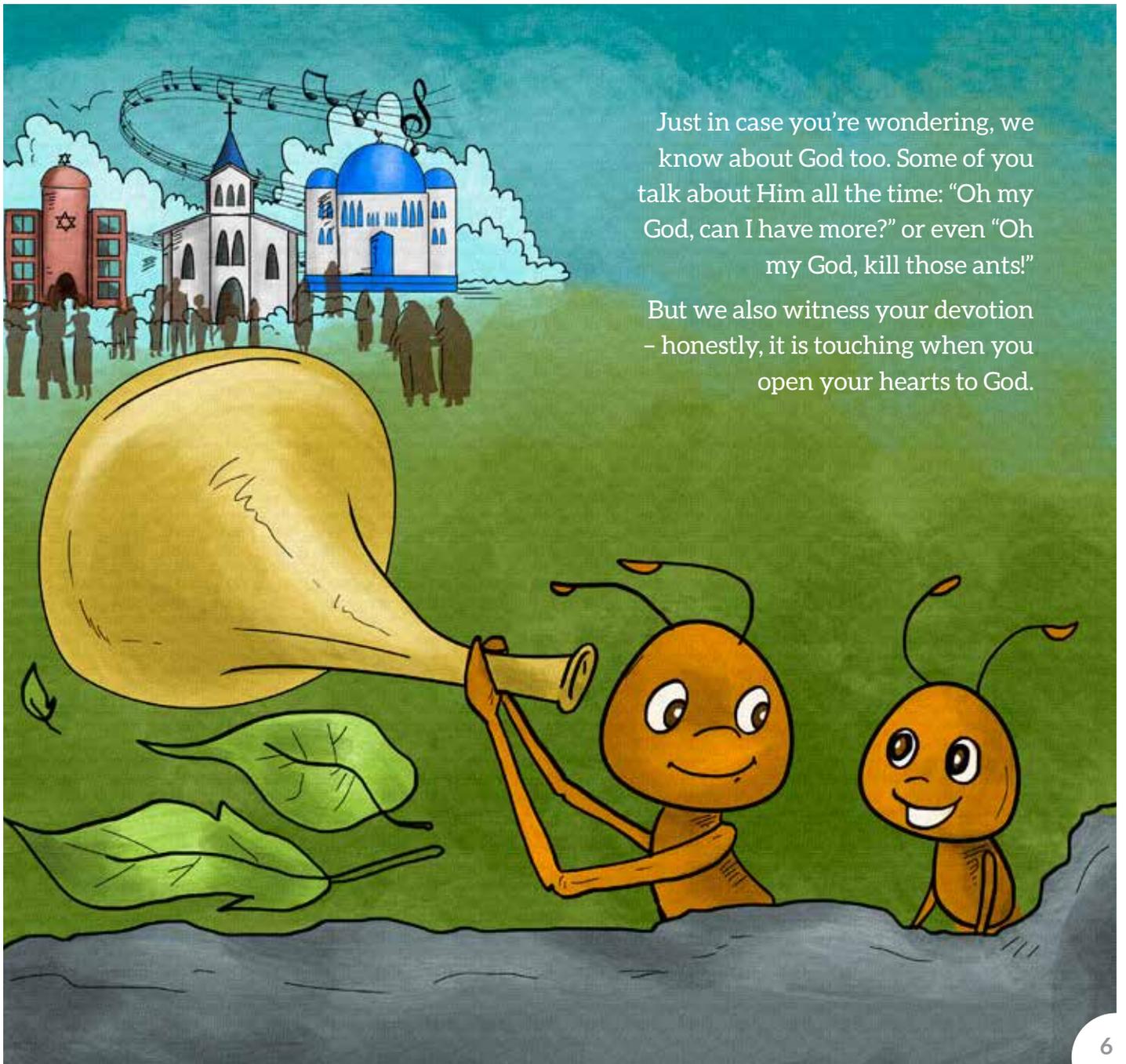
"It is meritorious to help others; it is sinful to harm others."



Believe it or not but there are at least 12,000 species of ants; most are red or black. We have minorities too, a few species are green and some have a metallic sheen, but we're actually colour blind to these differences because fundamentally ... WE'RE ALL ANTS! Sure, some ants are aggressive and some not but, hey, that's unity in diversity.

Come to think of it, there's unity in all creation. But it seems that sometimes humans focus more on the differences and hurt others. Thank God many of you do see the oneness in creation - it's how our planet will survive!





Just in case you're wondering, we know about God too. Some of you talk about Him all the time: "Oh my God, can I have more?" or even "Oh my God, kill those ants!"

But we also witness your devotion - honestly, it is touching when you open your hearts to God.

"Prayer is the yearning one experiences to awaken the divinity latent in the heart."

Every ant has an exoskeleton ... that's right, we wear our skeletons on the outside. And we breathe through spiracles on the exoskeleton. The good news is: with ants, you get what you see!

In case you didn't notice, we've got eyes but most of us don't see too well with them.

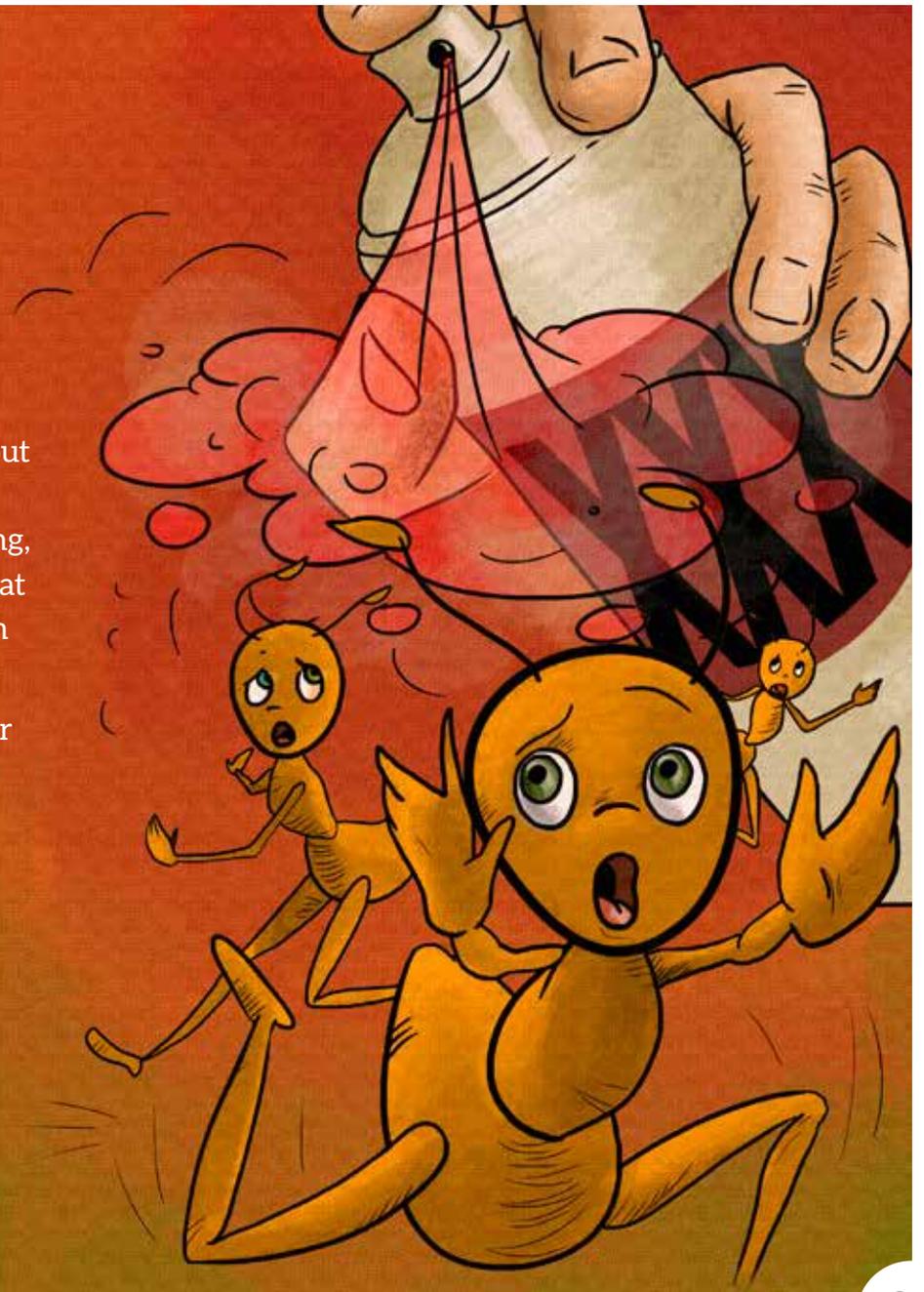


We've also got a jaw to carry food but we really rely on our two antennae to detect chemicals, air currents, scents and vibrations. The antennae transmit and receive signals too. That makes us pretty tuned in.

“Ants, though tiny in form, are able to acquire food, share it and also store for the future ... There is so much you can learn from ants, birds and animals!”

There's an old ant saying about our antennae: "Don't leave home without them." Meaning, be alert for illusory things that might cause the end of us. I'm not joking, really!

We've all lost members of our colonies that were crushed, gobbled up or sprayed while searching for sweet things. Take it from me, desires kill!

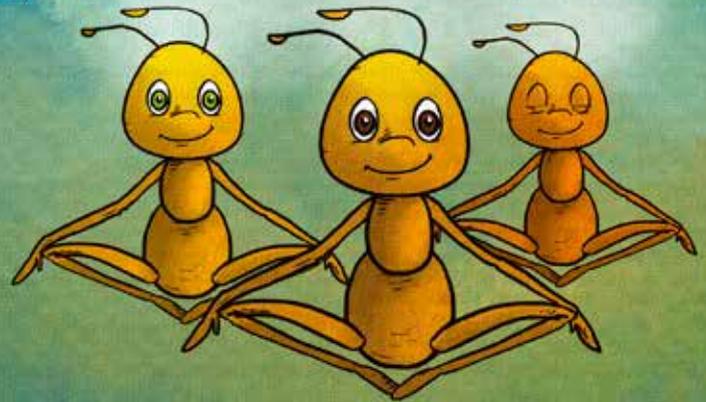


"Men do not realise that as their desires increase, their happiness diminishes. There is no limit to desires. (Hence) there is no sense of satisfaction."



Our sensory organs help us survive. But if I may be a tad bit honest with you, we ants just don't understand why you use your sensory organs to indulge in things that cast a spell on you, like smoking and killing for food. That really messes with your mind! Take it from an ant, learn to say "No" and put a 'Ceiling on your Desires' – it's ancient wisdom.

Ooops, sorry, I'm lecturing. I should learn to talk less ... but then again this storybook wouldn't work if I did.



We communicate by secreting a hormonal chemical called pheromones. It allows us to send signals to other ants to keep the colony together. Using pheromones, the leader ant lets other ants know which trail to take.

Now you know why we mostly march in a straight line ... it's about being disciplined in following the right path in life.



“If you are once established in right conduct, you will automatically follow the right path.”

Ants learn from imitation. Really! Believe it or not, we have common behavioural patterns with humans. The follower obtains knowledge from the leading ant, who keeps an eye on its progress and may even slow down to allow the follower to keep up. It's like having a life coach or guru. We ants persevere and actually practice what we learn.

I'm just thinking out aloud, but I think humans have adopted some ant traits.



Geez, I'm talking a lot about us ants. For fear of sounding really self-absorbed and egotistical, I've got to say we're not just pesky insects – we actually have many ecological roles that benefit humans. I'm not kidding, we do serve the world. Really!

We suppress pest populations and help fresh the soil. Okay, okay, I know what you're thinking: we can be pesky and we have a sense for sweet things, and we infest your homes.

Although we're not perfect, we do only what we instinctively know and what we've been created to do. We ants live in the way ants were meant to live.

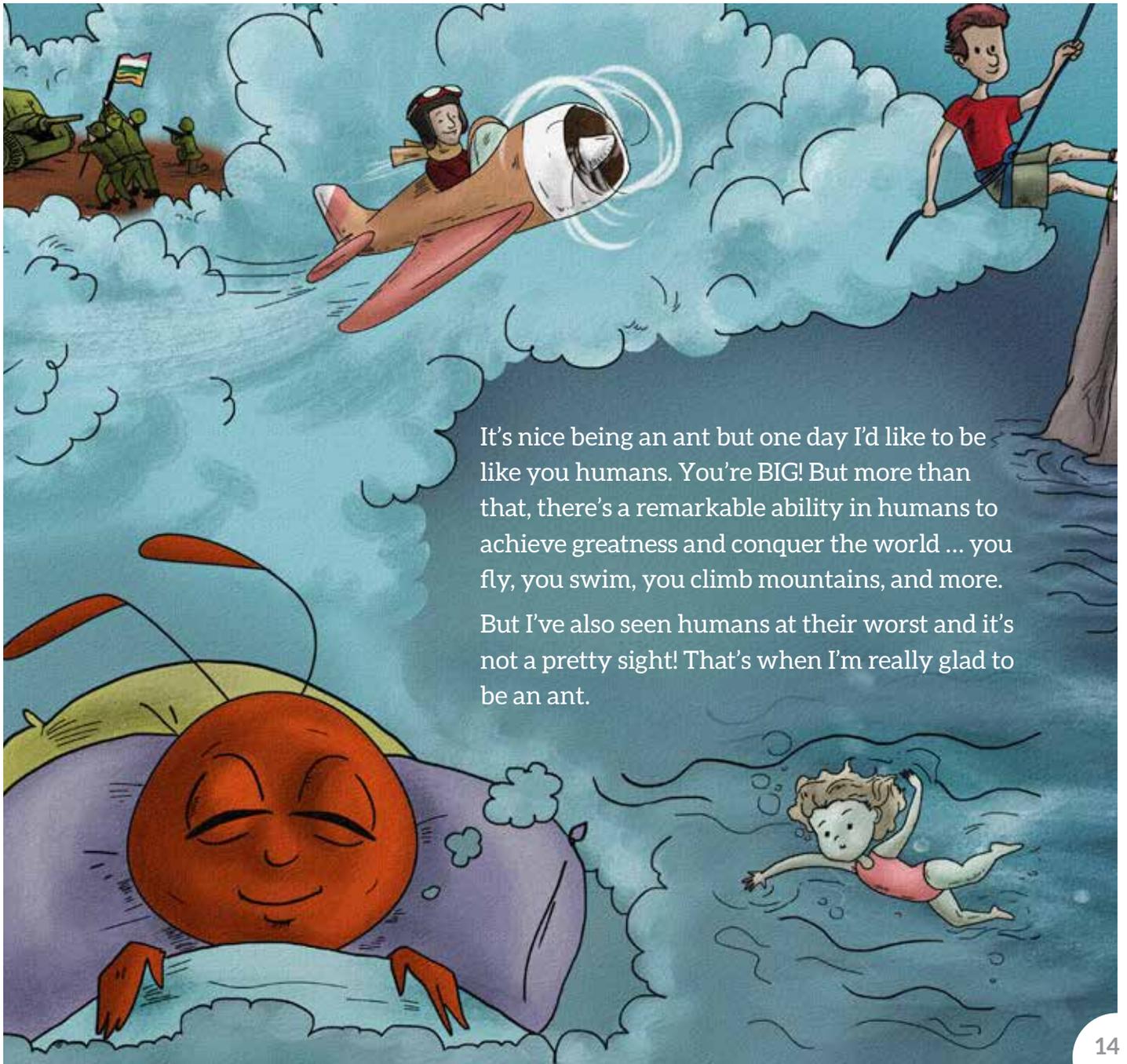


**“Birds, beasts and trees have not deviated from their nature; they are still holding it valid.
Man alone has disfigured it ...”**

By now, you've probably figured out that the life of an ant is actually sacred. However insignificant we may appear, we've realised that the world is ginormous and every living being is somehow connected in a master plan that is perfect. There's no other way to explain how tiny creatures like us can thrive just about anywhere, and be of value to this world. Oh yeah, we ants are pretty Self-confident!

What's behind this creation? Who knows, it may be your God - I've yet to hear a better answer. Although you can't imagine it, we listen to your conversations from the tiny places you don't look in.



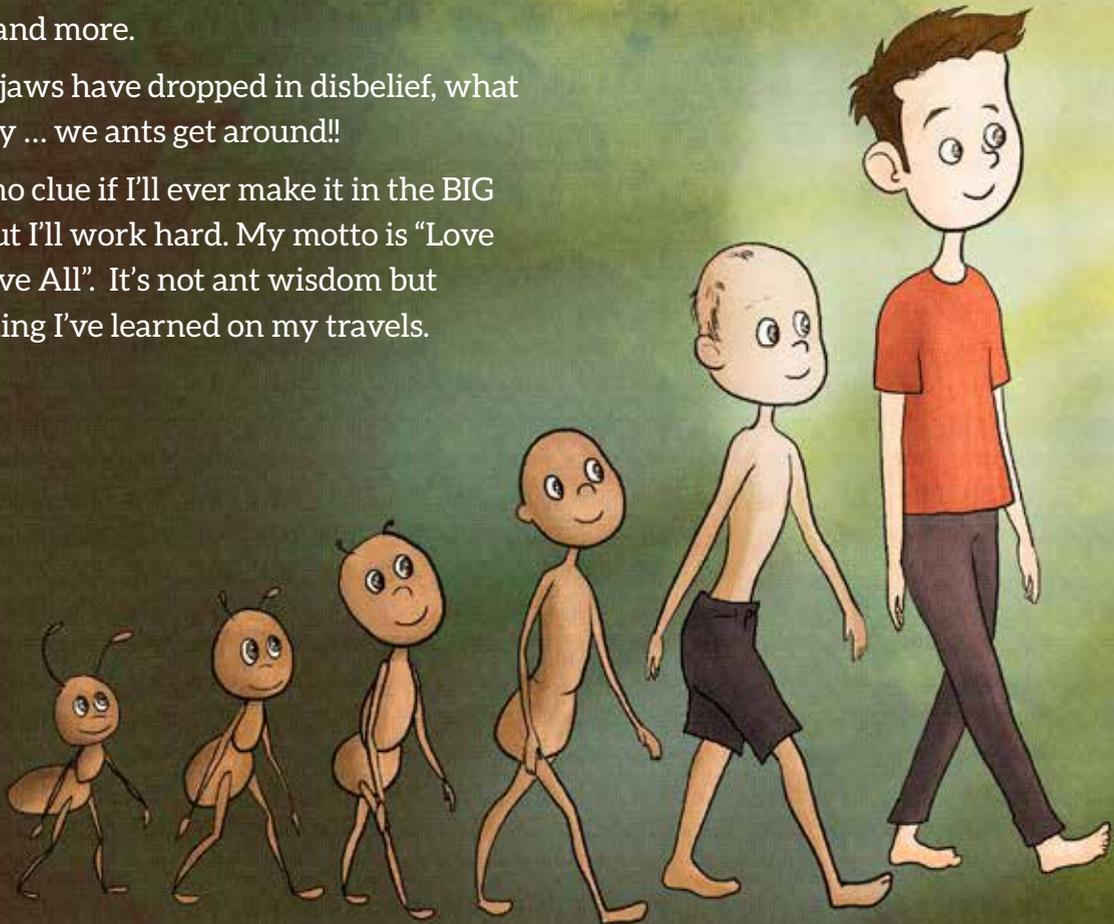


It's nice being an ant but one day I'd like to be like you humans. You're BIG! But more than that, there's a remarkable ability in humans to achieve greatness and conquer the world ... you fly, you swim, you climb mountains, and more. But I've also seen humans at their worst and it's not a pretty sight! That's when I'm really glad to be an ant.

Why I still wish to be a human? Because in this life I'll always be an ant, but you humans have the potential to soar. Look at Adi Shankaracharya, the Sufi saints, Mother Teresa and more.

If your jaws have dropped in disbelief, what can I say ... we ants get around!!

I have no clue if I'll ever make it in the BIG time, but I'll work hard. My motto is "Love All, Serve All". It's not ant wisdom but something I've learned on my travels.





Thanks for reading
my
spiritual
story

THE
SACRED
LIFE OF
ANTS

*“Start the day with love, fill the day with love, and end the day with love.
This is the quickest and most direct path to God.”*

Sathya Sai Baba