

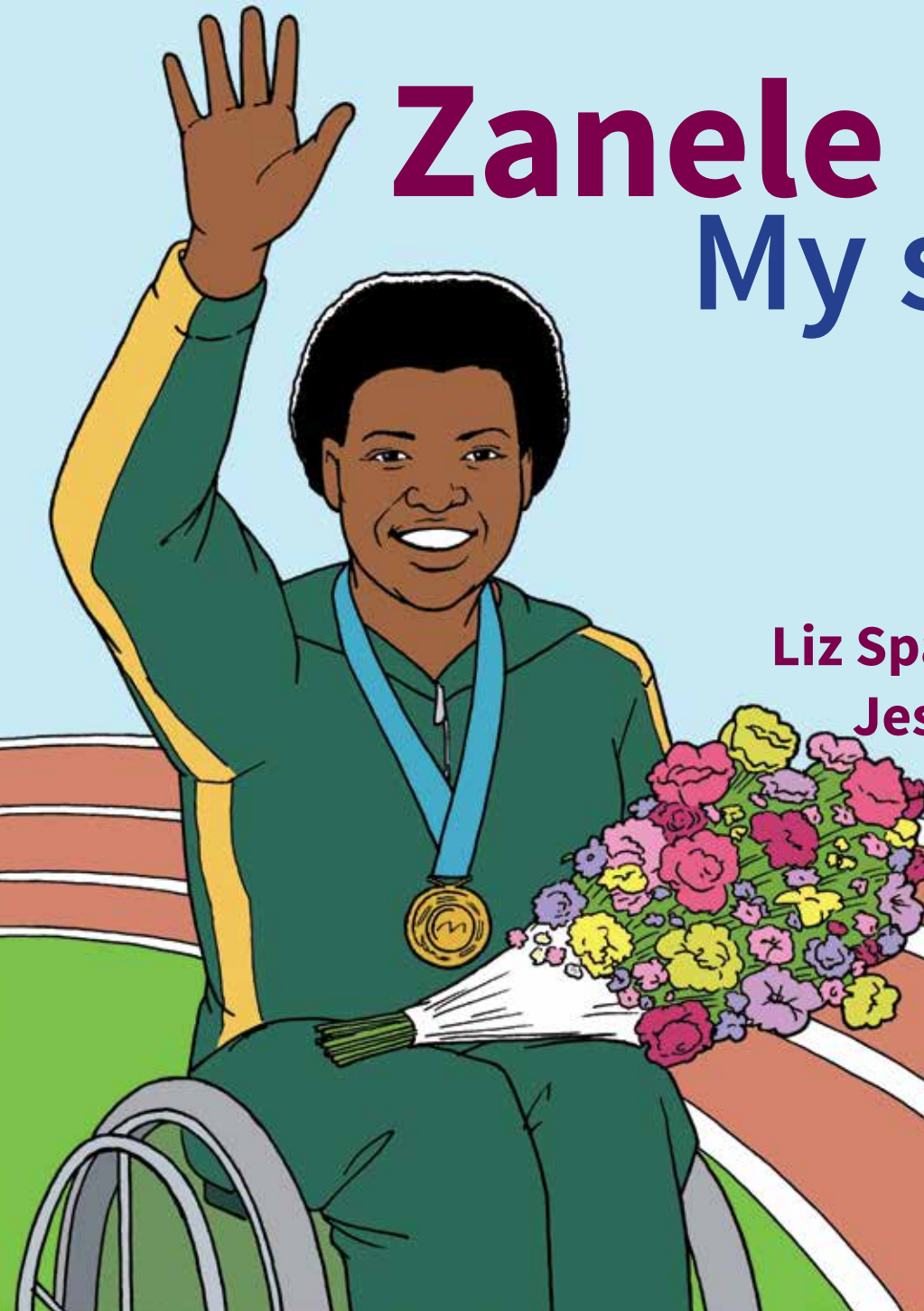
Zanele Situ

My story

Liz Sparg

Jesse Breytenbach

Andy Thesen



Zanele Situ

My story

This book belongs to



Please send a photo of the child holding this page open to pic@bookdash.org or on social media with [@bookdash](https://www.instagram.com/bookdash)



Zanele Situ: My story

Illustrated by Jesse Breytenbach

Written by Liz Sparg

Designed by Andy Thesen

with the help of the Book Dash participants in Cape Town

on 30 August 2014, listed here:

Event URL <http://bookdash.org/20140830-cape-town>

ISBN: 978 0 9922358 9 5

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 Licence (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>). You are free to share (copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format) and adapt (remix, transform, and build upon the material) this work for any purpose, even commercially. The licensor cannot revoke these freedoms as long as you follow the following license terms:

Attribution: You must give appropriate credit, provide a link to the license, and indicate if changes were made. You may do so in any reasonable manner, but not in any way that suggests the licensor endorses you or your use.

No additional restrictions: You may not apply legal terms or technological measures that legally restrict others from doing anything the license permits.

Notices: You do not have to comply with the license for elements of the material in the public domain or where your use is permitted by an applicable exception or limitation.

No warranties are given: The license may not give you all of the permissions necessary for your intended use. For example, other rights such as publicity, privacy, or moral rights may limit how you use the material.

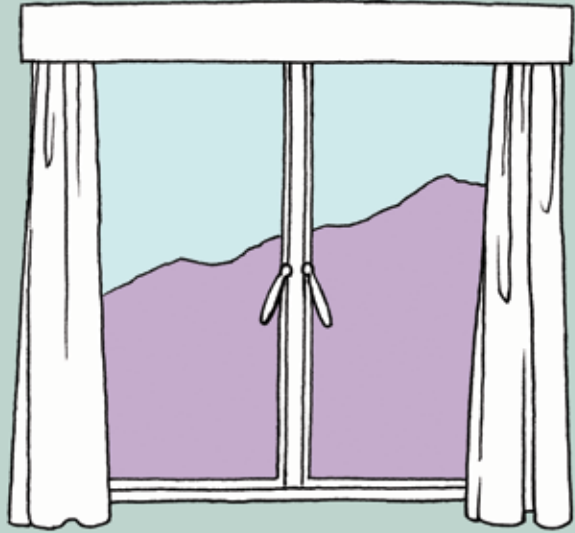
Zanele Situ

My story

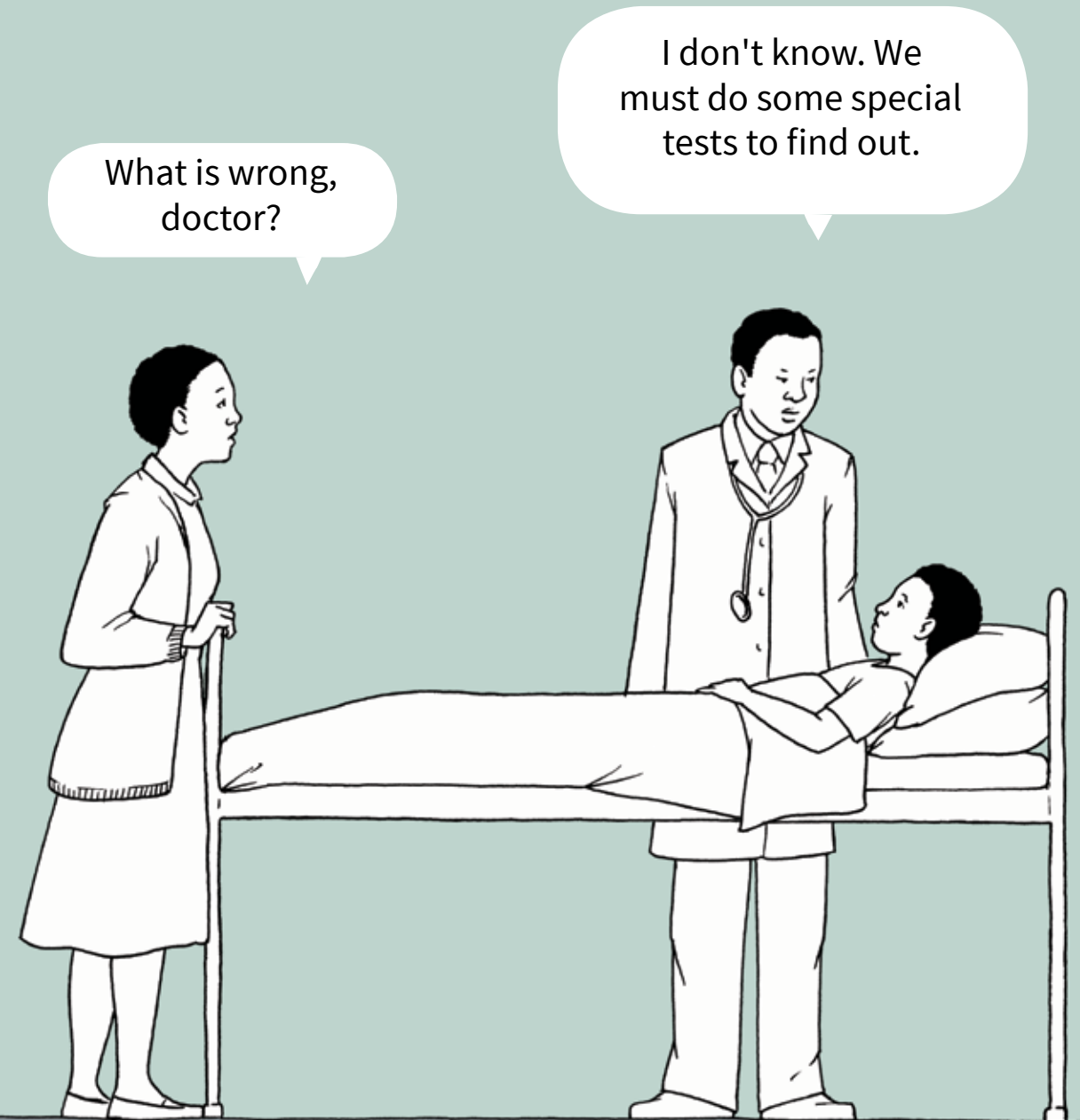
Liz Sparg
Jesse Breytenbach
Andy Thesen

I was born in summer, in a town called Matatiele in the Eastern Cape. Matatiele is near Lesotho where there are many mountains. In the winter they are covered with snow.





My father was a builder and he moved from place to place to find work. We moved to Lesotho and that's where I started school. I was very happy. But when I was eleven years old, I grew tired and weak, and then I couldn't walk. My parents took me to the hospital.



I had to stay in hospital for three years.
I was very tired and I slept many hours
every day. After three years the doctors
told me I would not be able to walk again.

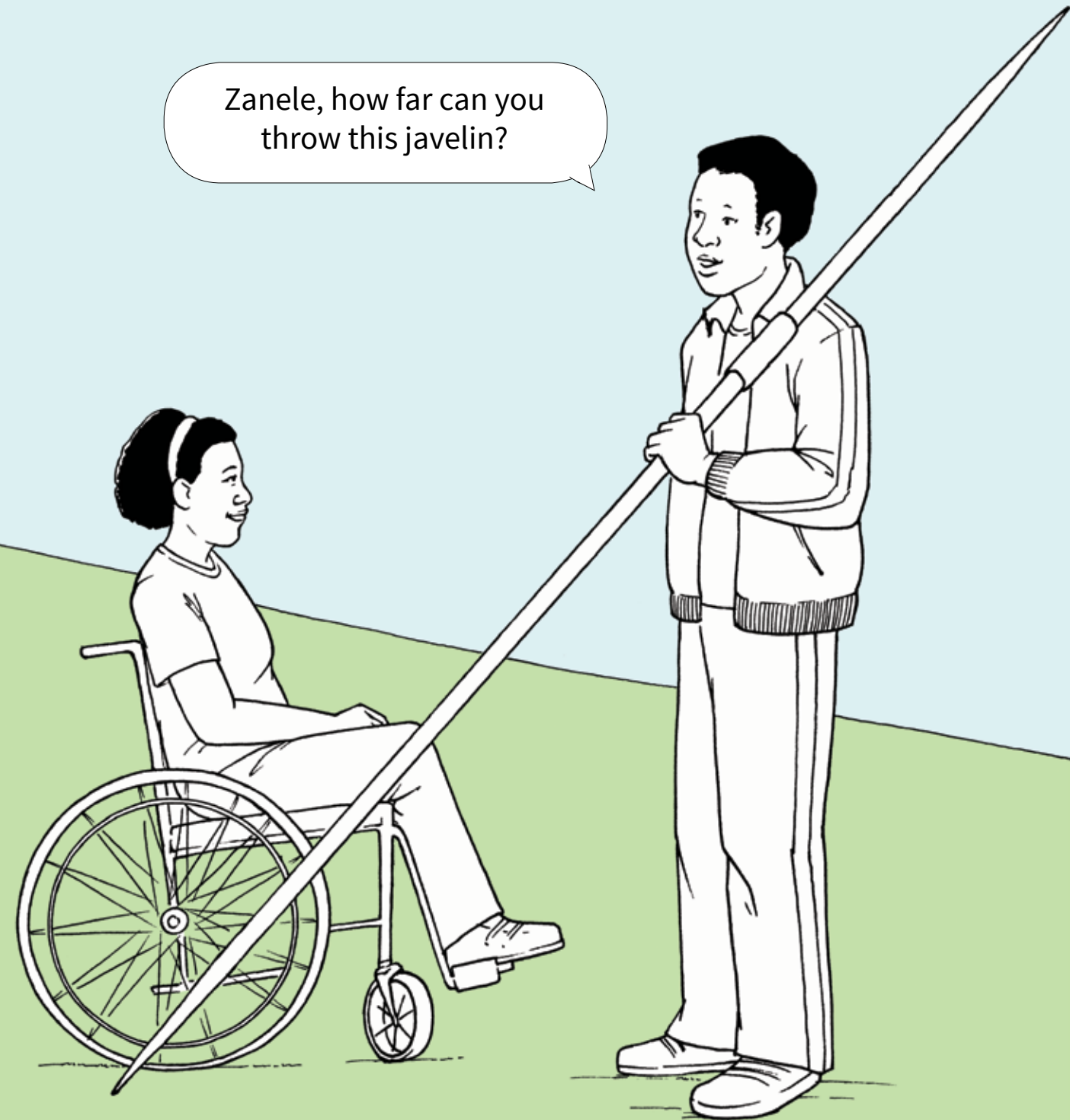
I was very sad because I love sports.

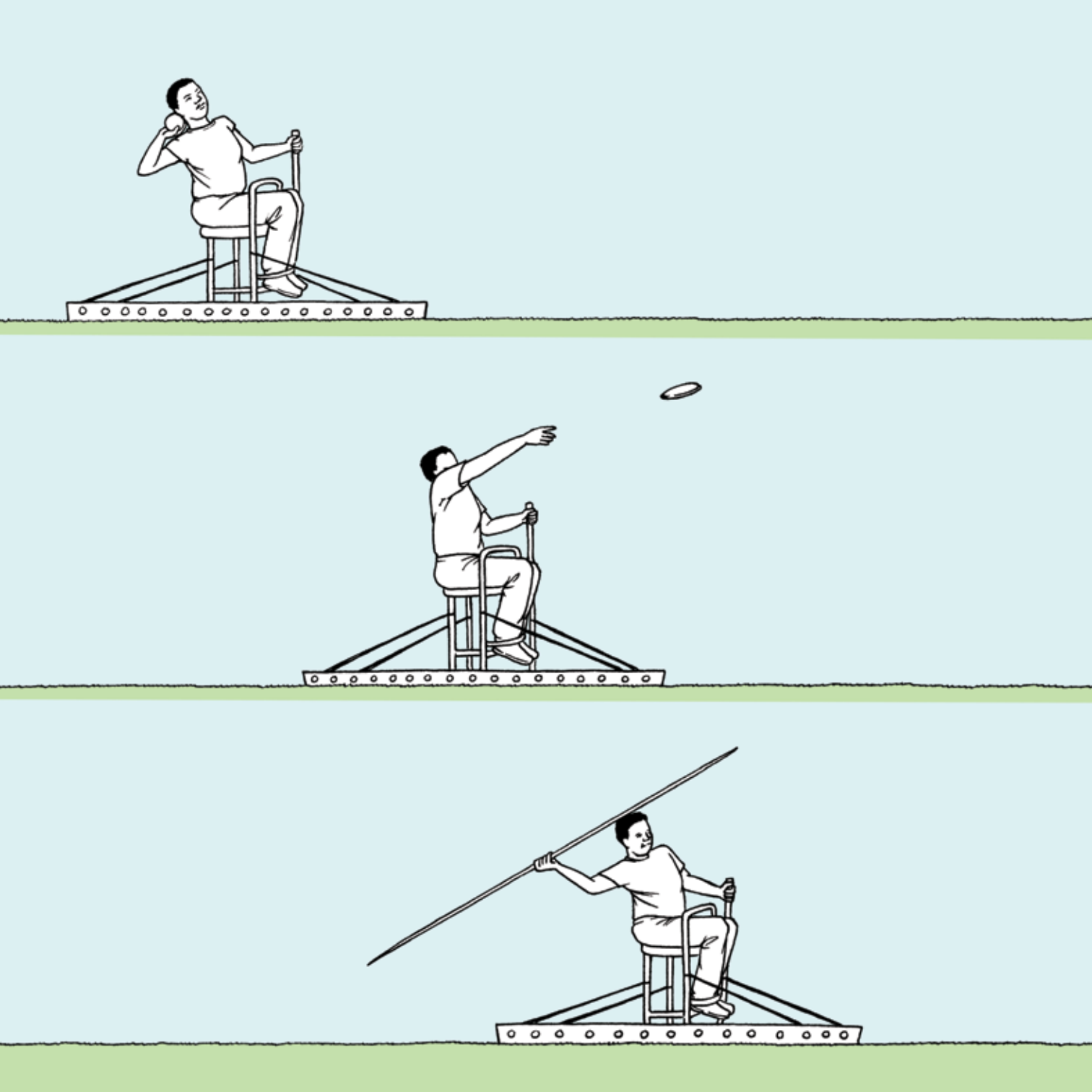


We think Zanele has
got TB in her spine. It has
attacked her nerves. I am
very sorry, but she will be in
a wheelchair for the rest of
her life.

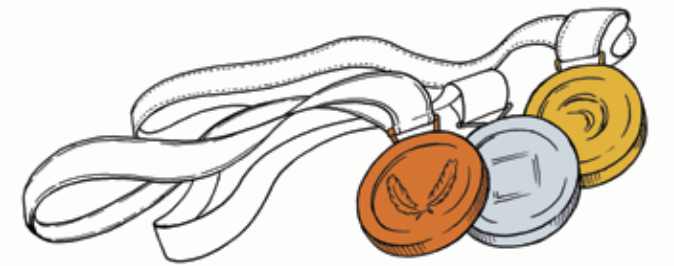


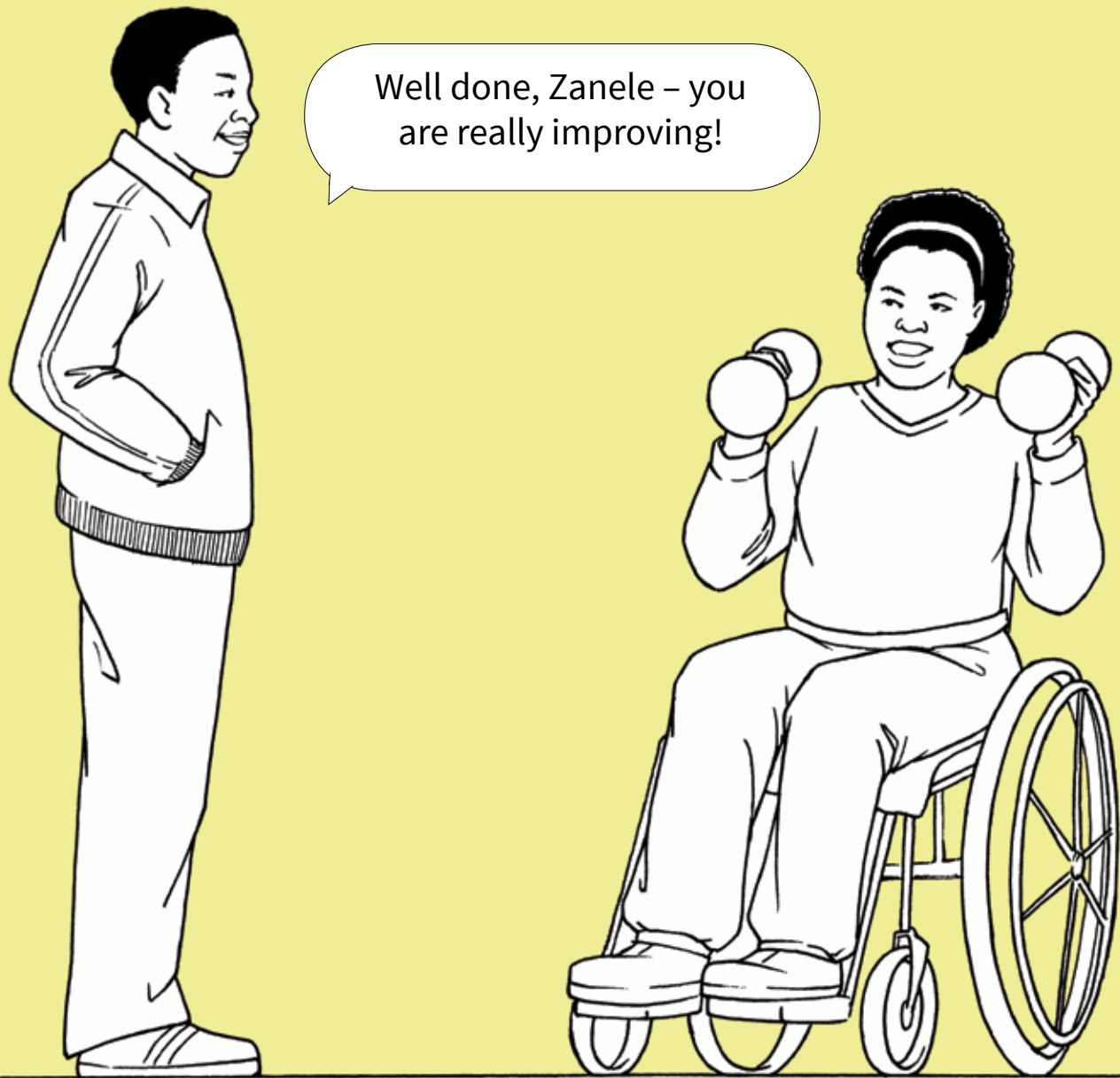
I went to a special school in Umtata, and my teachers encouraged me. It was a very busy school, with lots of activities like sport and sewing. On weekends we had tasks to do. We had to clean our rooms, polish our shoes and clean our wheelchairs.





I decided to keep trying, and never give up. If you have a disability, you can still do something you love. I love to see how far I can go, so I entered a competition. I won a bronze medal for shot putt, a silver medal for discus and a gold medal for javelin.



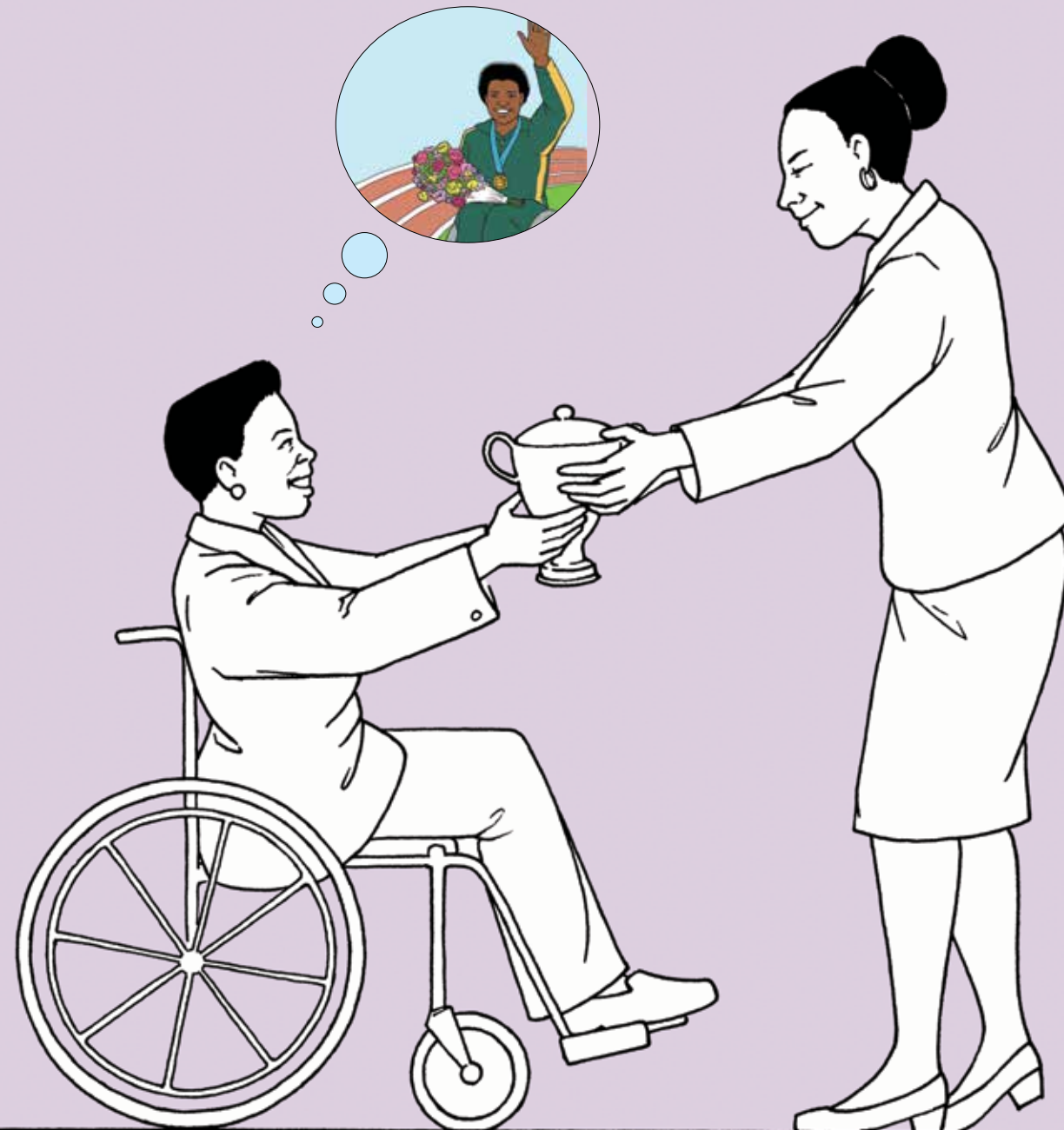


I wanted to get better and better at my sports, so I trained very hard.



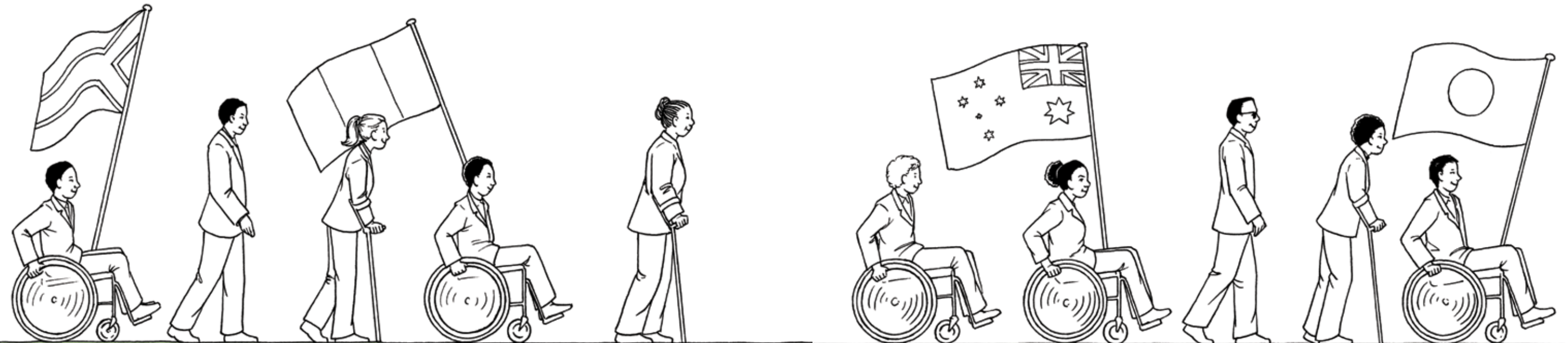
When I rested, I loved to sew and listen to gospel music.

I entered more competitions and I got many medals and prizes. I started to dream about maybe competing in the Paralympics one day.



The Paralympics are just like the Olympics, where the best athletes in the world compete for gold, silver and bronze medals.

But in the Paralympics, the athletes are disabled in different ways, so they have to try even harder to train and win!

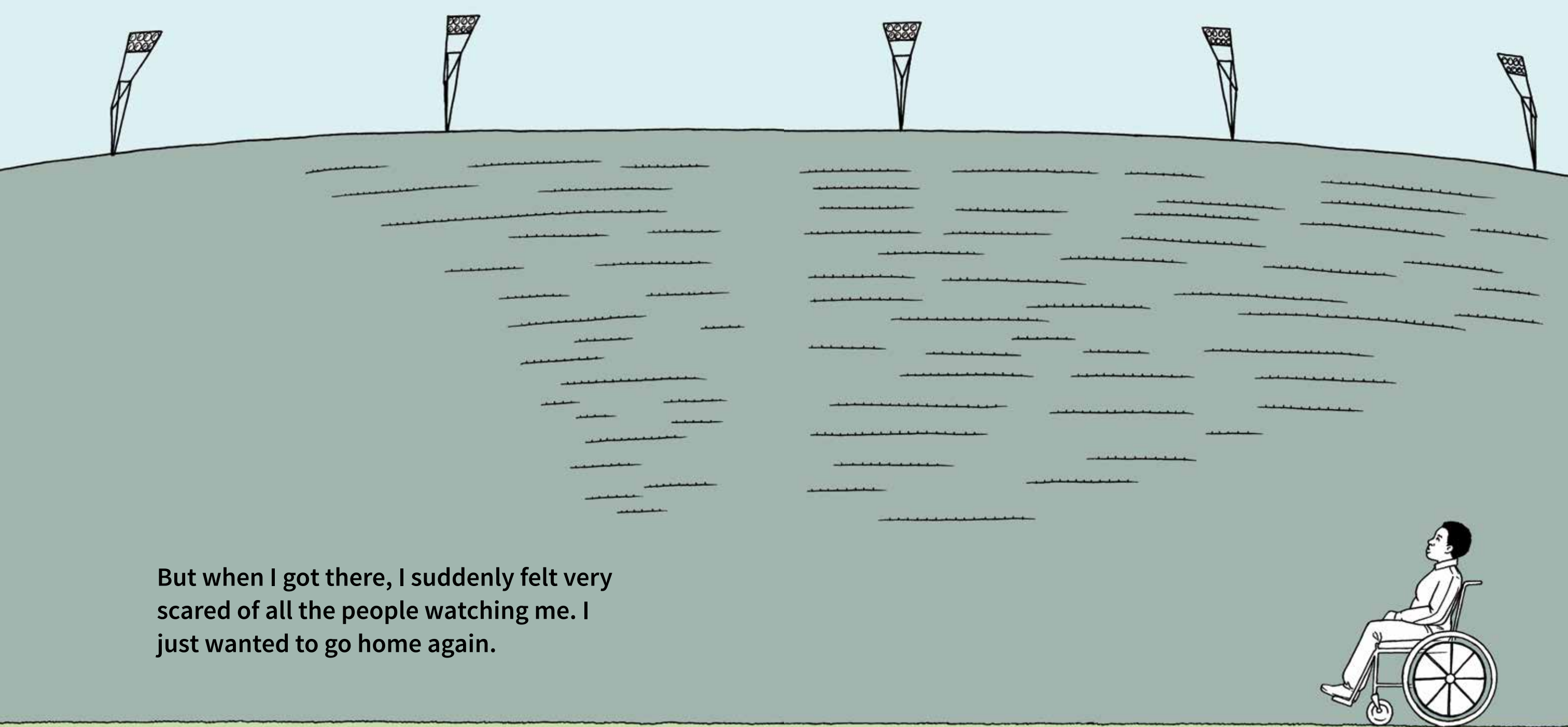


Then I heard that I was going to Sydney in Australia, to take part in the 2000 Paralympics. At last we were in the plane, flying over the Indian Ocean!



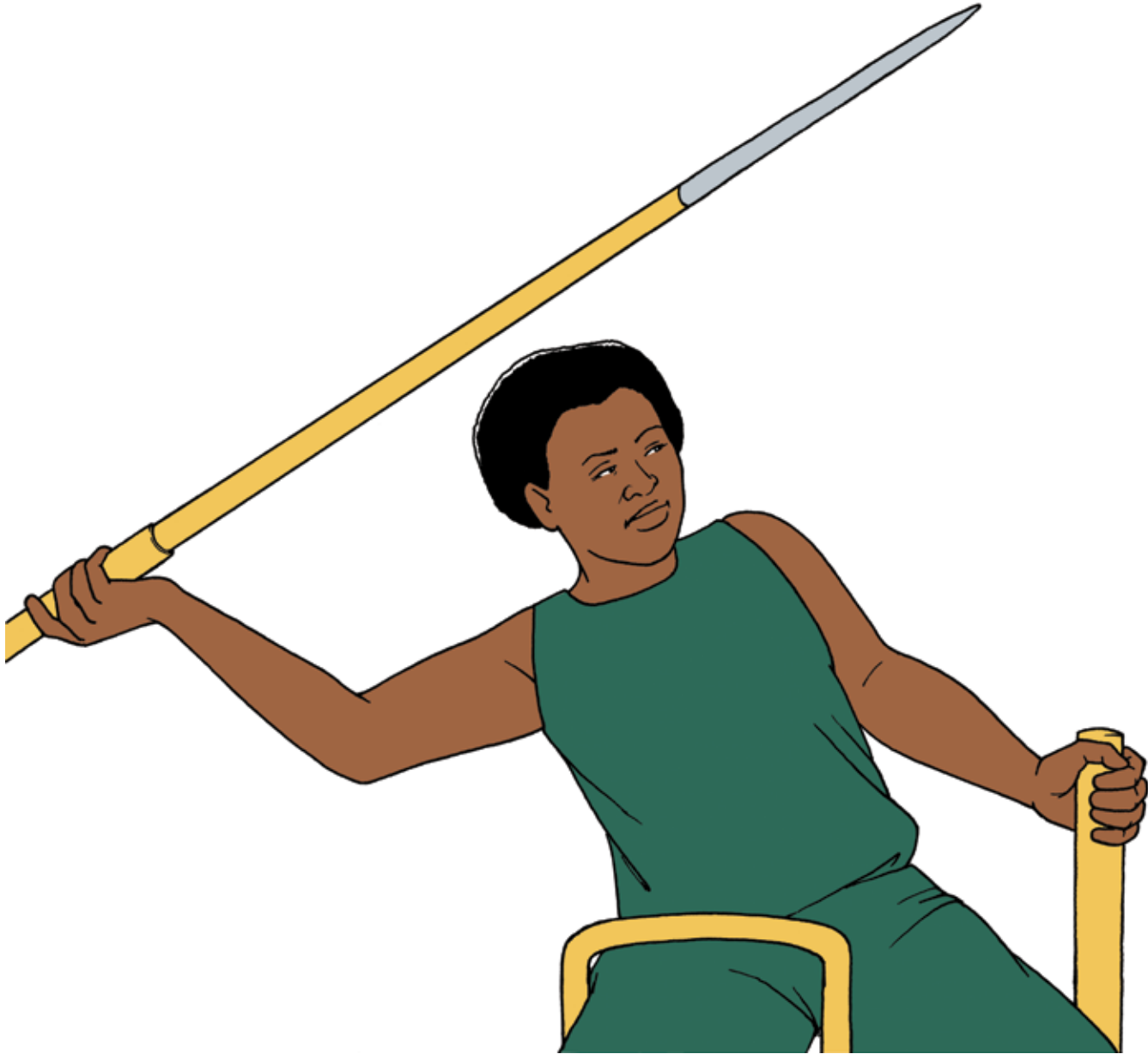
I am so excited!





But when I got there, I suddenly felt very scared of all the people watching me. I just wanted to go home again.





Then, when I threw my javelin it landed far in front of everyone's. I broke the world record and I got a gold medal! I was the first African woman to win a gold medal in the Paralympics. I was so happy and very proud.

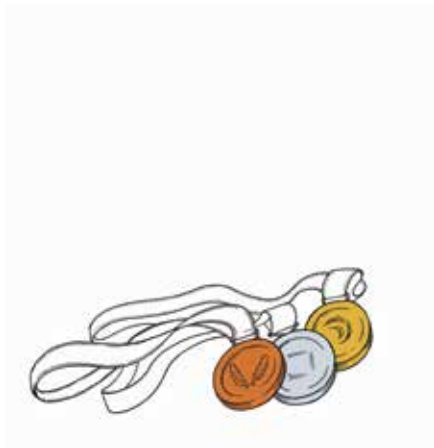


My motto is: Keep going, follow your dreams and never give up. Even if something happens to make you sad or scared.

That is what I teach my little girl, Azamazi. She is eight years old and she also loves to do athletics and gymnastics.

I am still training and going to competitions, and in 2016 I hope to go to the Paralympics in Rio de Janeiro.





As a young girl Zanele Situ was told that she would never walk again. Being in a wheelchair did not stop her. She worked and trained hard and became a winning athlete on the world stage. This is her story ...

