



# *Just Breathe*

a story about the effects of housing disparity

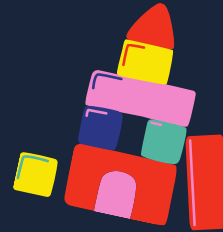
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Alana John, and Steven Shafeek



Dedicated to every breath we take, every move we make, every bond we break, and every step we take.



Created on Canva for ENGL 21003  
Spring 2023



# Characters

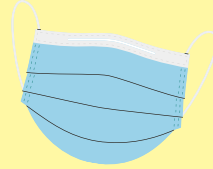


Nina

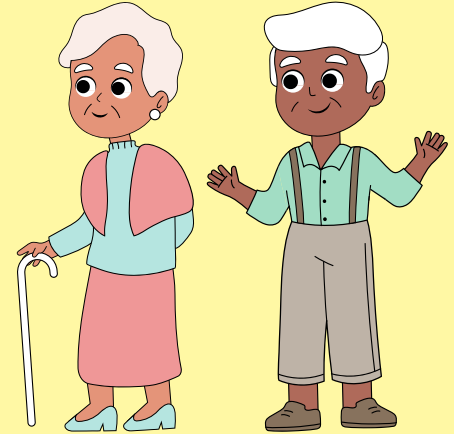
Rami's friend



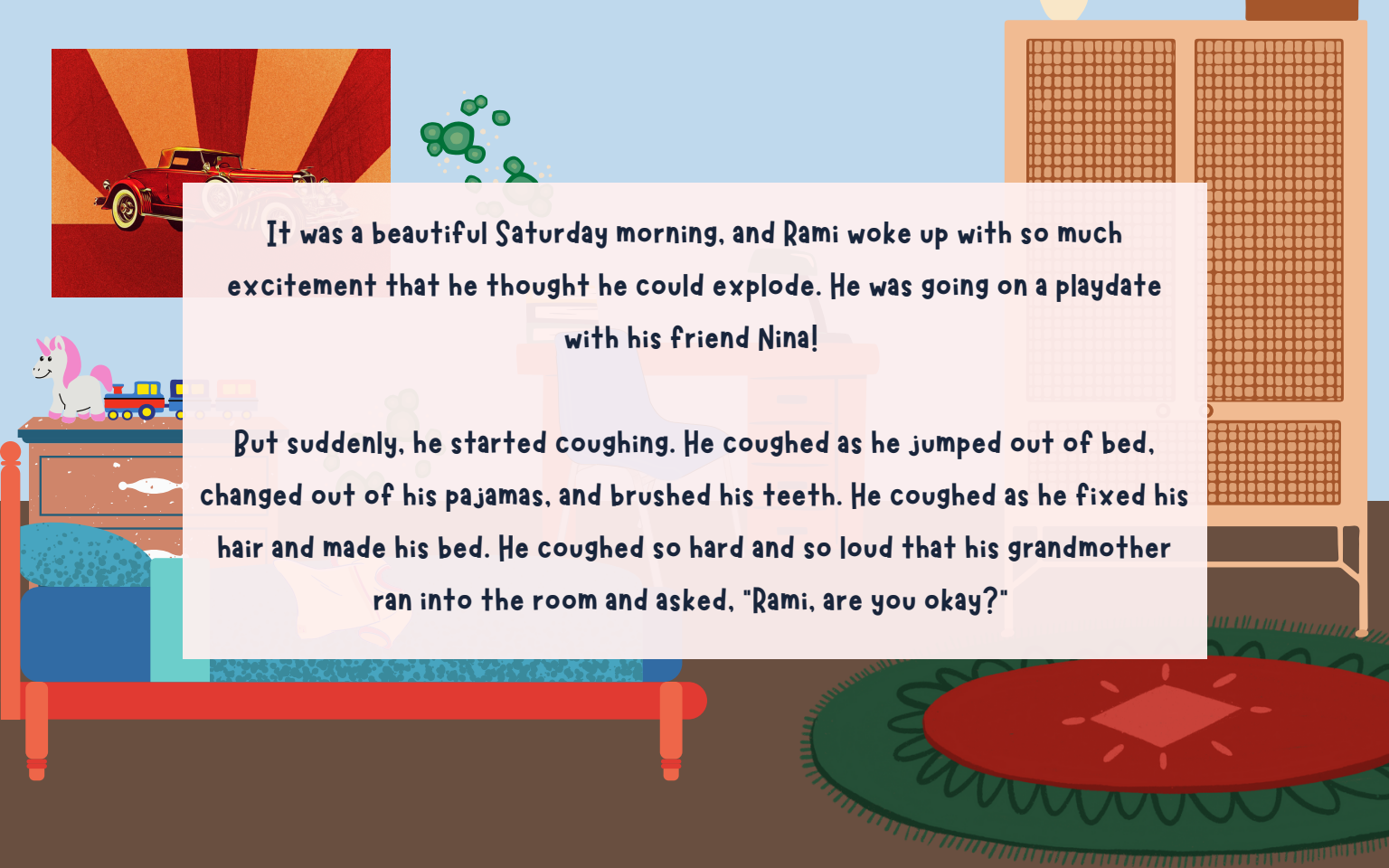

Rami



Dr. Martens  
Rami's  
doctor



Grandma and Grandpa  
Rami's family



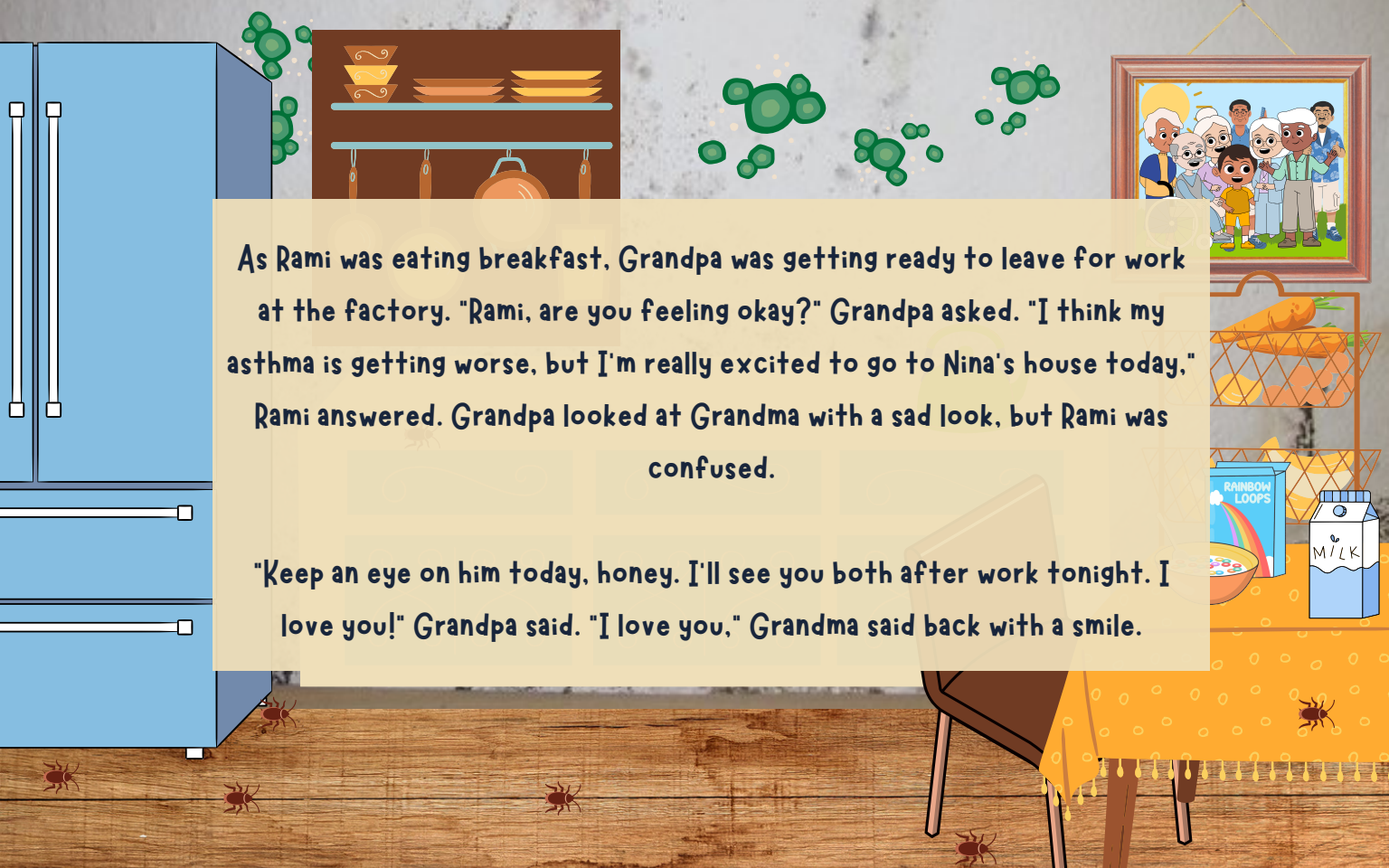
It was a beautiful Saturday morning, and Rami woke up with so much excitement that he thought he could explode. He was going on a playdate with his friend Nina!

But suddenly, he started coughing. He coughed as he jumped out of bed, changed out of his pajamas, and brushed his teeth. He coughed as he fixed his hair and made his bed. He coughed so hard and so loud that his grandmother ran into the room and asked, "Rami, are you okay?"



In the middle of another cough, Rami said "Grandma, can I have my inhaler?  
It's so hard to breathe." She gave him his inhaler and they got ready for  
breakfast.





As Rami was eating breakfast, Grandpa was getting ready to leave for work at the factory. "Rami, are you feeling okay?" Grandpa asked. "I think my asthma is getting worse, but I'm really excited to go to Nina's house today," Rami answered. Grandpa looked at Grandma with a sad look, but Rami was confused.

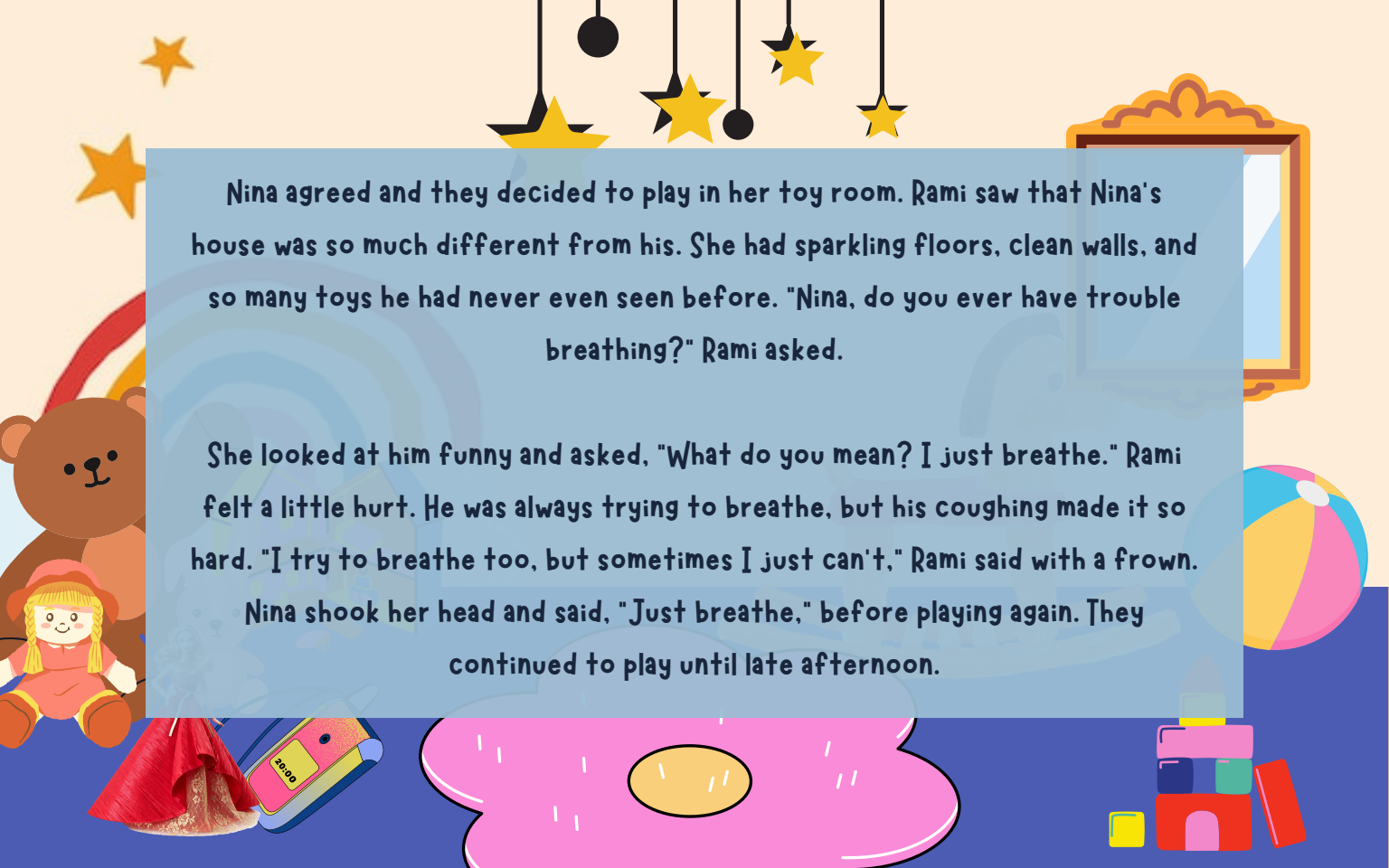
"Keep an eye on him today, honey. I'll see you both after work tonight. I love you!" Grandpa said. "I love you," Grandma said back with a smile.







An hour later, Rami arrived at Nina's house. "Hi, Rami, are you ready to play tag today?" Nina asked. "Yeah, but is it okay if we don't run? I was coughing all morning." Rami said.



Nina agreed and they decided to play in her toy room. Rami saw that Nina's house was so much different from his. She had sparkling floors, clean walls, and so many toys he had never even seen before. "Nina, do you ever have trouble breathing?" Rami asked.

She looked at him funny and asked, "What do you mean? I just breathe." Rami felt a little hurt. He was always trying to breathe, but his coughing made it so hard. "I try to breathe too, but sometimes I just can't," Rami said with a frown.

Nina shook her head and said, "Just breathe," before playing again. They continued to play until late afternoon.



Soon, Grandma took Rami home. "Grandma, while I was at Nina's house, I didn't cough at all!" Rami said.

"Oh that's great, my dear!" Grandma exclaimed. Grandpa came back from work and suddenly, Rami started coughing again.

"It looks like Rami's asthma is getting worse, so maybe it would be a good idea to visit Dr. Martens," Grandpa said. Grandma and Rami got ready to go to the doctor's office.





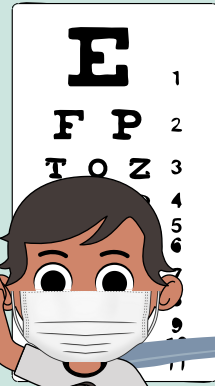
As Grandma and Rami walked towards the doctor's office, they passed the factory where Grandpa worked. Grandma looked sad, but said "Rami, you'll feel better in no time." As Rami was coughing, he responded, "I really hope so."



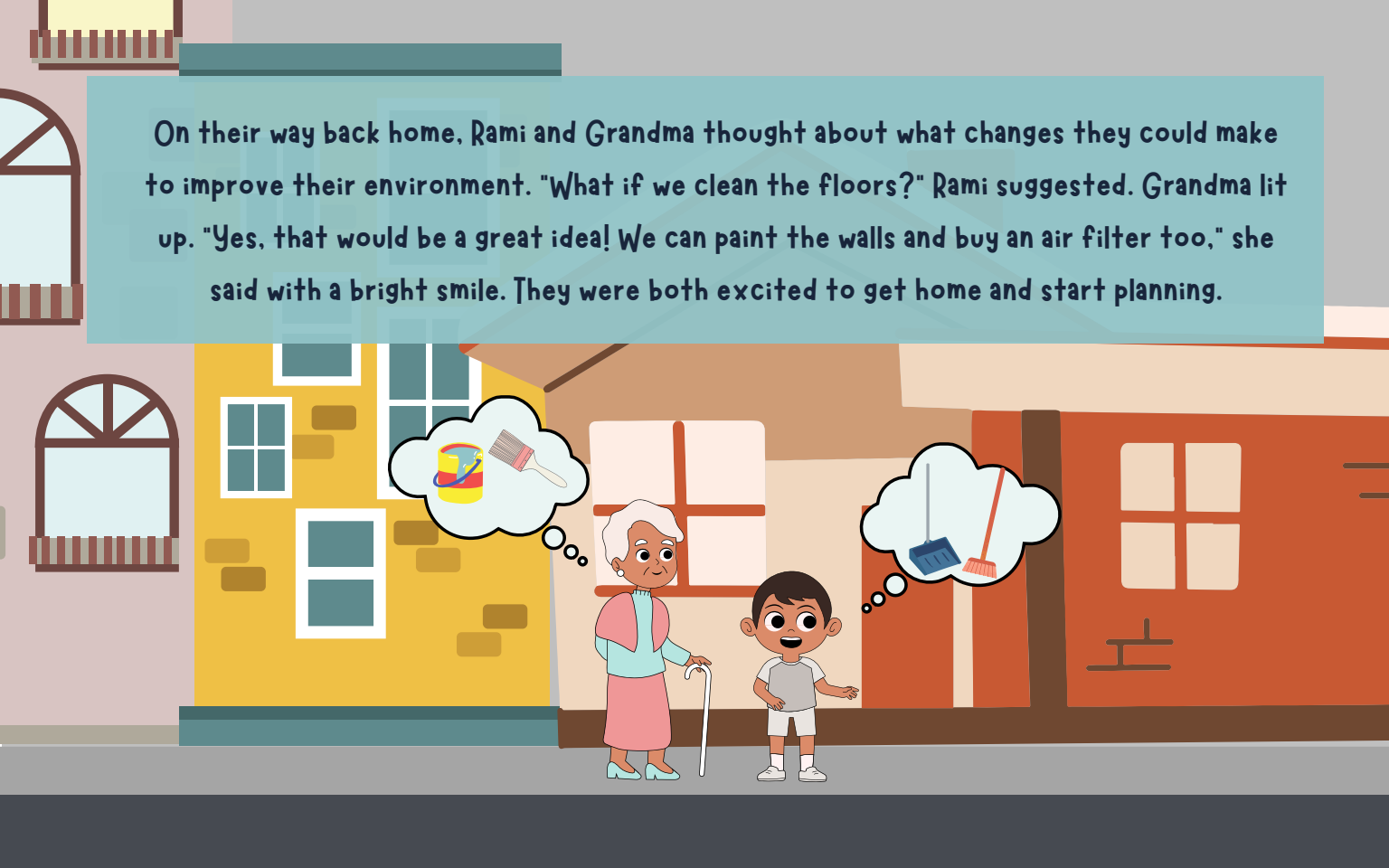
At the doctor's office, Dr. Martens asked "What brings you in today, Rami?" Rami tried not to cough and answered saying, "Well, this morning, I was coughing a lot. My chest was hurting so much that it felt like an elephant was sitting on it. I even had to use my inhaler."

"I'm sorry, Rami," Dr. Martens said. Rami looked at the clean floors of the doctor's office and remembered how different his floors looked at home. "I noticed that when I was at my friend's house, I didn't cough at all, but when I'm at home, I cough a lot."

Dr. Martens stopped to think for a moment before asking, "Do you notice anything that causes you to start coughing?" Rami said, "At my friend's house, I didn't see any mold or roaches, while my house is full of them. And the air outside her house is clean, while the air outside my house is so dirty." Dr. Martens answered, "Let's try to improve your living environment as best as we can."



On their way back home, Rami and Grandma thought about what changes they could make to improve their environment. "What if we clean the floors?" Rami suggested. Grandma lit up. "Yes, that would be a great idea! We can paint the walls and buy an air filter too," she said with a bright smile. They were both excited to get home and start planning.






The next day, Rami invited Nina to come over. Together with his grandparents, they removed the mold, painted the walls, and cleaned up the kitchen, and dusted the floors. Rami was already starting to breathe better.



"This box is heavier than a car! Rami, could you come help me?"  
Grandpa said after they cleaned up. Rami helped Grandpa unbox a new  
air filter. It would clean the air and help Rami breathe.

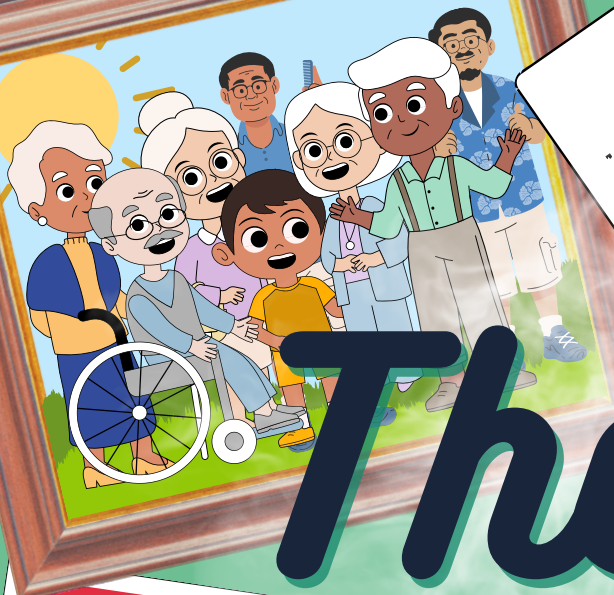
Before they knew it, the house was finished and looked beautiful.





At night, Rami brushed his teeth, changed into his pajamas, and jumped into bed without the slightest cough. After his grandparents came to kiss him goodnight, he took a deep breath and felt really happy.

Finally, he could "just breathe."



# The End

PLEASE  
HANDLE WITH CARE

FRAGILE

**ASTHMA**  
MAKES IT HARD TO BREATHE

1 IN 10  
CHILDREN IN THE  
U.S. HAVE ASTHMA

10.5  
MILLION  
CHILDREN UNDER  
18 YEARS OLD  
HAVE ASTHMA

53%  
OF PEOPLE  
WITH ASTHMA HAVE  
AN ASTHMA ATTACK  
EACH YEAR

ASTHMA  
IS NOT  
TAGIOUS

ACTION PLAN W...