

*Meet...*

---

# Mary MacKillop

---

WRITTEN BY SALLY MURPHY  
ILLUSTRATED BY SONIA MARTINEZ

---



*For Dad.* Sally Murphy

*Thanks to TL.* Sonia Martinez

A Random House book  
Published by Random House Australia Pty Ltd  
Level 3, 100 Pacific Highway, North Sydney NSW 2060  
[www.randomhouse.com.au](http://www.randomhouse.com.au)

First published by Random House Australia in 2013

Text © Sally Murphy 2013  
Illustrations © Sonia Martinez 2013

The moral right of the author and the illustrator has been asserted.

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted by any person or entity, including internet search engines or retailers, in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying (except under the statutory exceptions provisions of the Australian Copyright Act 1968), recording, scanning or by any information storage and retrieval system without the prior written permission of Random House Australia.

Addresses for companies within the Random House Group can be found at  
[www.randomhouse.com.au/offices](http://www.randomhouse.com.au/offices)

National Library of Australia  
Cataloguing-in-Publication Entry

Author: Murphy, Sally  
Title: *Meet Mary MacKillop* / Sally Murphy; Sonia Martinez, illustrator.  
ISBN: 978 1 74275 721 6 (hbk.)  
Subjects: MacKillop, Mary, Saint 1842–1909.  
Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart – Pictorial works.  
Nuns – Australia – Pictorial works.  
Other Authors/Contributors: Martinez, Sonia  
Dewey Number: 364.155092

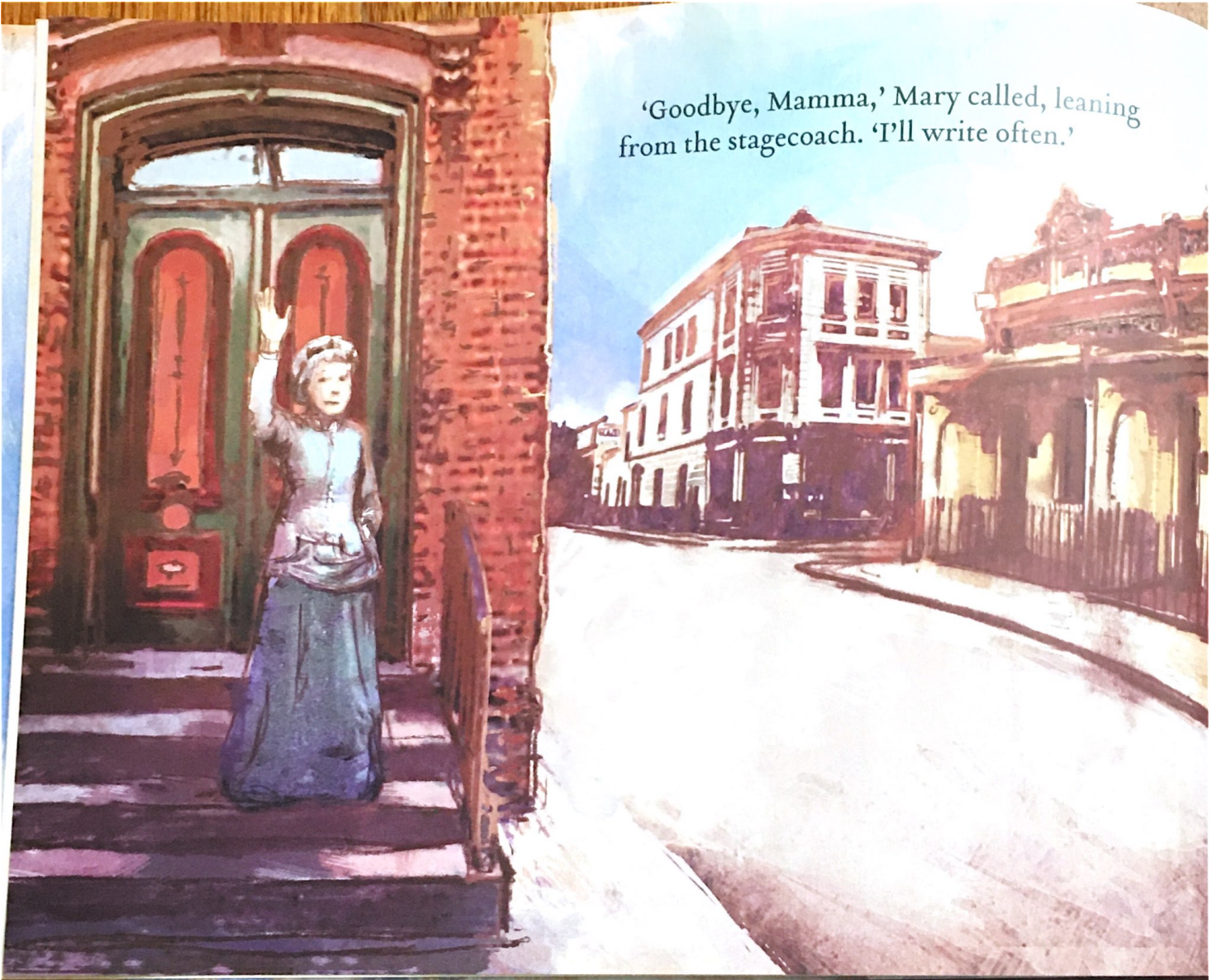
Cover and internal illustrations © Sonia Martinez  
Internal parchment background © badahos/Shutterstock.com  
Cover and internal design by Kirby Armstrong  
Typeset by Kirby Armstrong  
Printed in China by 1010 Printing International Limited

Mary MacKillop is Australia's first saint.

Mary believed all children, no matter how rich or poor, should have the chance to learn.

Mary set up many schools around Australia, especially in remote areas. This is the story of the first school she opened with her sisters in 1866 in Penola, South Australia.

'Goodbye, Mamma,' Mary called, leaning  
from the stagecoach. 'I'll write often.'





'Poor Mamma,' Mary said to her sisters Annie and Lexie. 'She'll miss us.'

'Will she be okay?' Lexie asked. 'We're going so far away.'

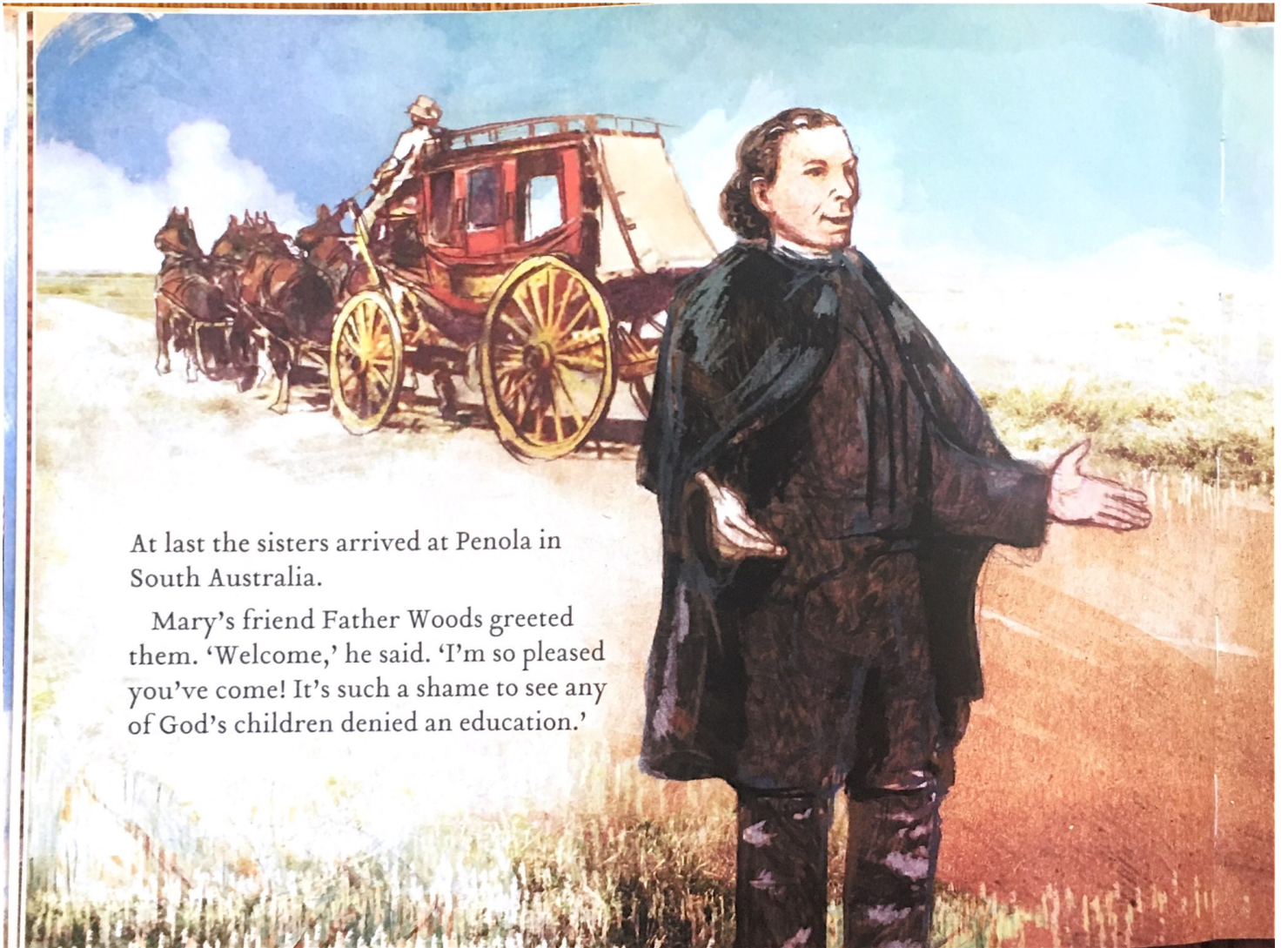
Mary hugged Lexie. 'Don't worry. Mamma will be fine. She's strong, and she knows we're going to do important work.'

A smile lit up Mary's face as she thought about what lay ahead.

'At last! A school for children in the bush,' she said. 'I'm so glad you are both with me. We will have such fun.'

'Fun?' Annie shook her head. 'I'm not sure teaching is fun. But it's an important job – and we'll do it together.'



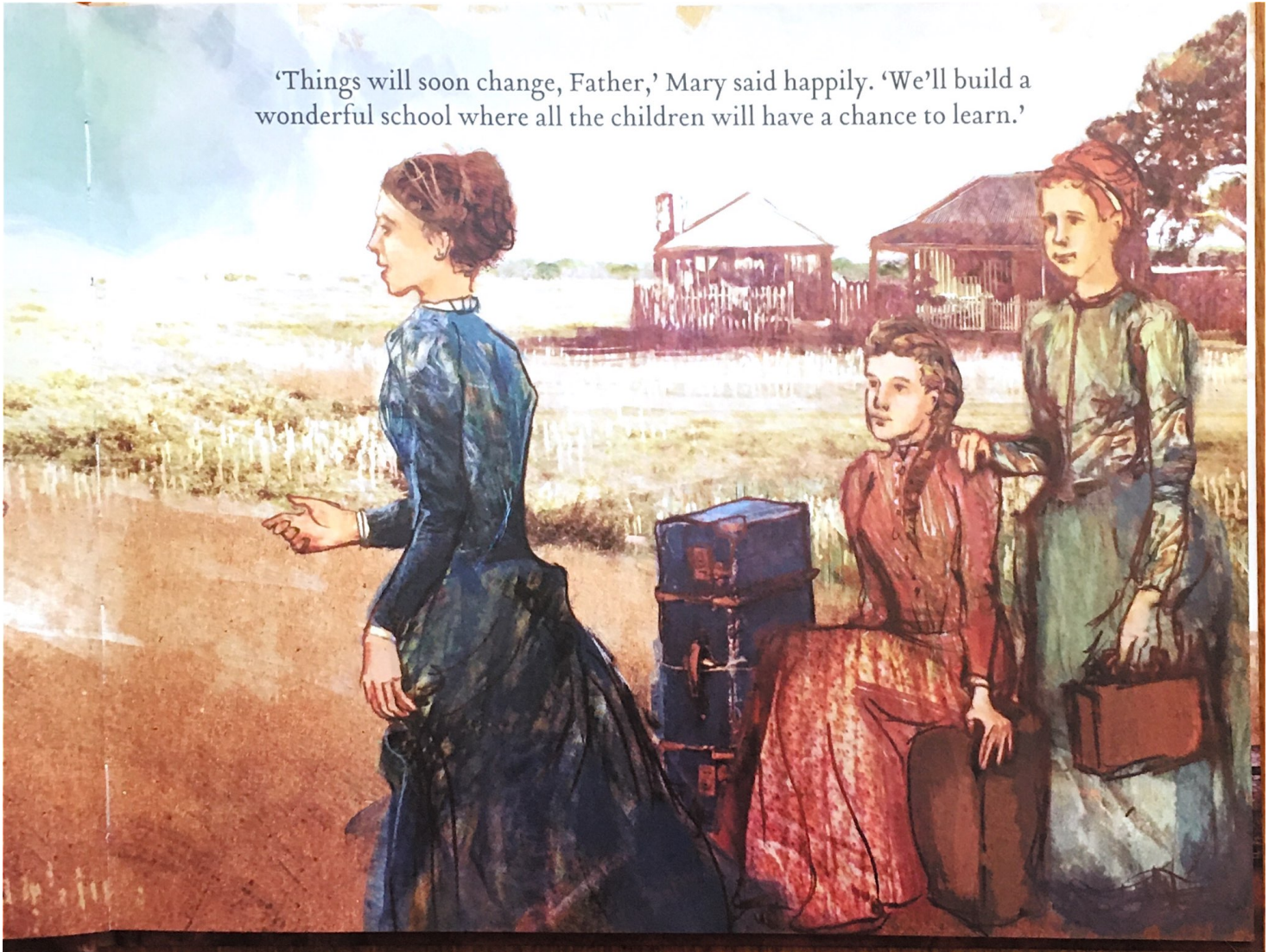


At last the sisters arrived at Penola in South Australia.

Mary's friend Father Woods greeted them. 'Welcome,' he said. 'I'm so pleased you've come! It's such a shame to see any of God's children denied an education.'



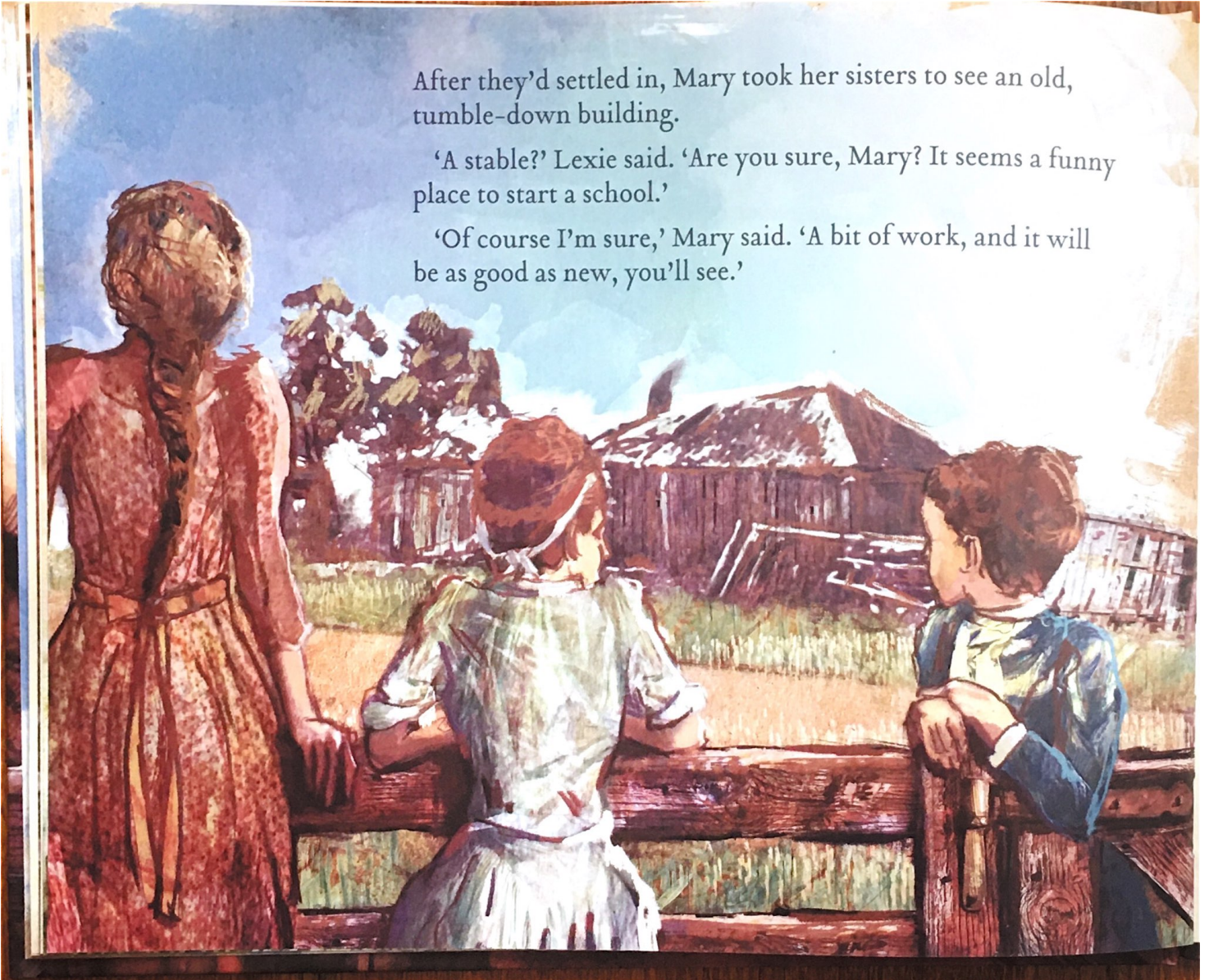
'Things will soon change, Father,' Mary said happily. 'We'll build a wonderful school where all the children will have a chance to learn.'



After they'd settled in, Mary took her sisters to see an old, tumble-down building.

'A stable?' Lexie said. 'Are you sure, Mary? It seems a funny place to start a school.'

'Of course I'm sure,' Mary said. 'A bit of work, and it will be as good as new, you'll see.'





Soon after, their brother John came to visit and offered to help. He got to work fixing up the old stable. He repaired the walls, floor and roof, and the girls worked together cleaning the building to get it ready for their students.

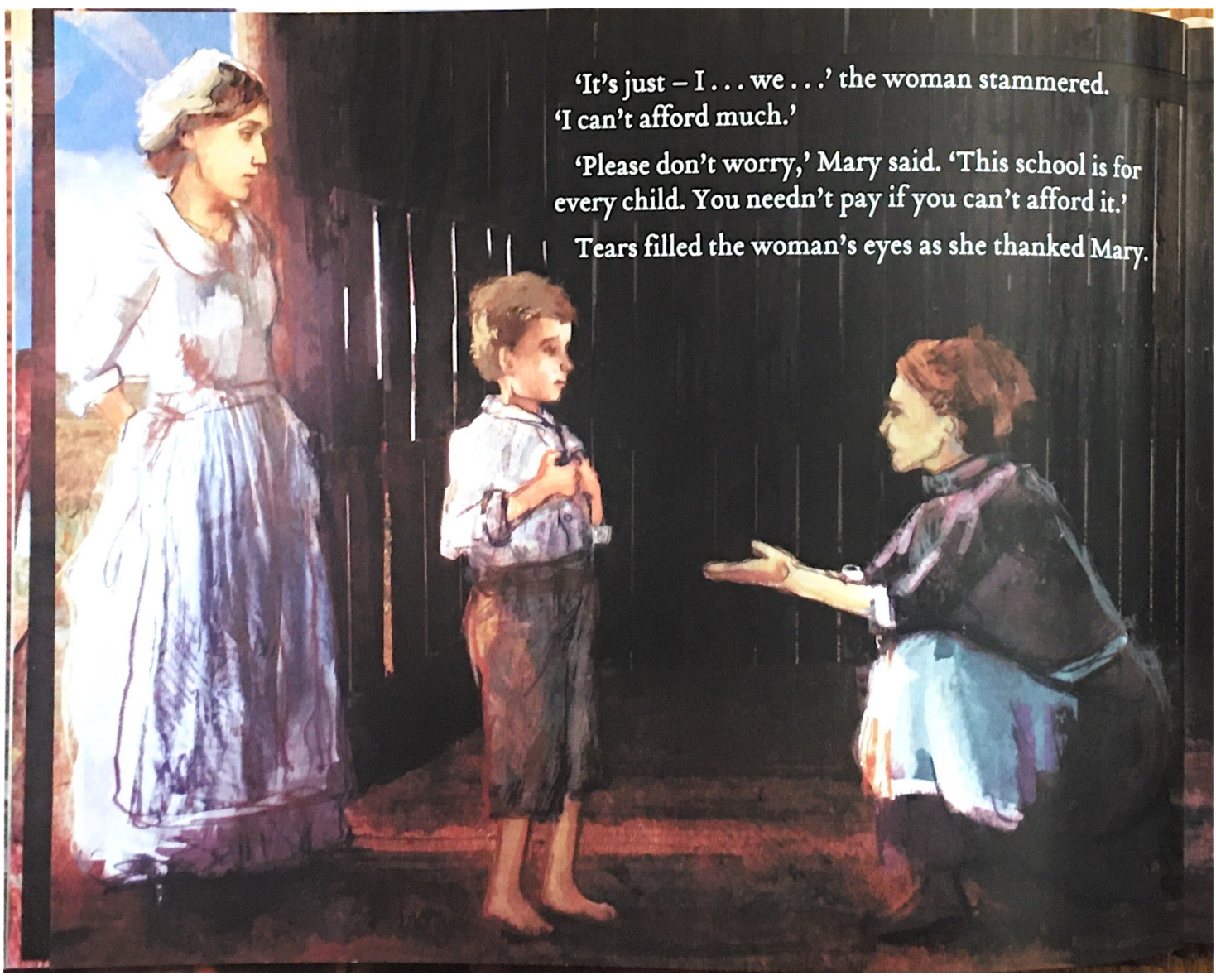


One day as they worked a woman came to the door of the new schoolroom. 'Excuse me, Miss,' she said to Mary.

Mary brushed the hair from her face and put down her broom. 'How can I help you?'

'It's just that . . . I heard you were starting a school,' the woman said. 'My Matthew here, he can't read or write. I wonder if . . .'

Mary smiled. 'A new student? How wonderful!' she said, calling the boy forward and offering him a sweet from the pocket of her apron.



'It's just – I . . . we . . .' the woman stammered.  
'I can't afford much.'

'Please don't worry,' Mary said. 'This school is for every child. You needn't pay if you can't afford it.'

Tears filled the woman's eyes as she thanked Mary.







'How will we pay the bills, Mary?' Annie asked, after the woman had left. 'We have to eat. And there's rent and supplies for the school and –'

Mary hushed her. 'The Lord will provide, Annie. We will live simply and help will come, you will see.'

A few days later another woman arrived at the stable.

‘I have come to enrol my son in your school,’ she said. ‘It will be good for him to have a change from his governess, and we will pay you well.’

Mary was happy to hear that news of the school was spreading.

‘But,’ the woman continued, ‘my son must have a space of his own. Perhaps he can sit near the teacher, and have screens to keep him apart from the poor children?’

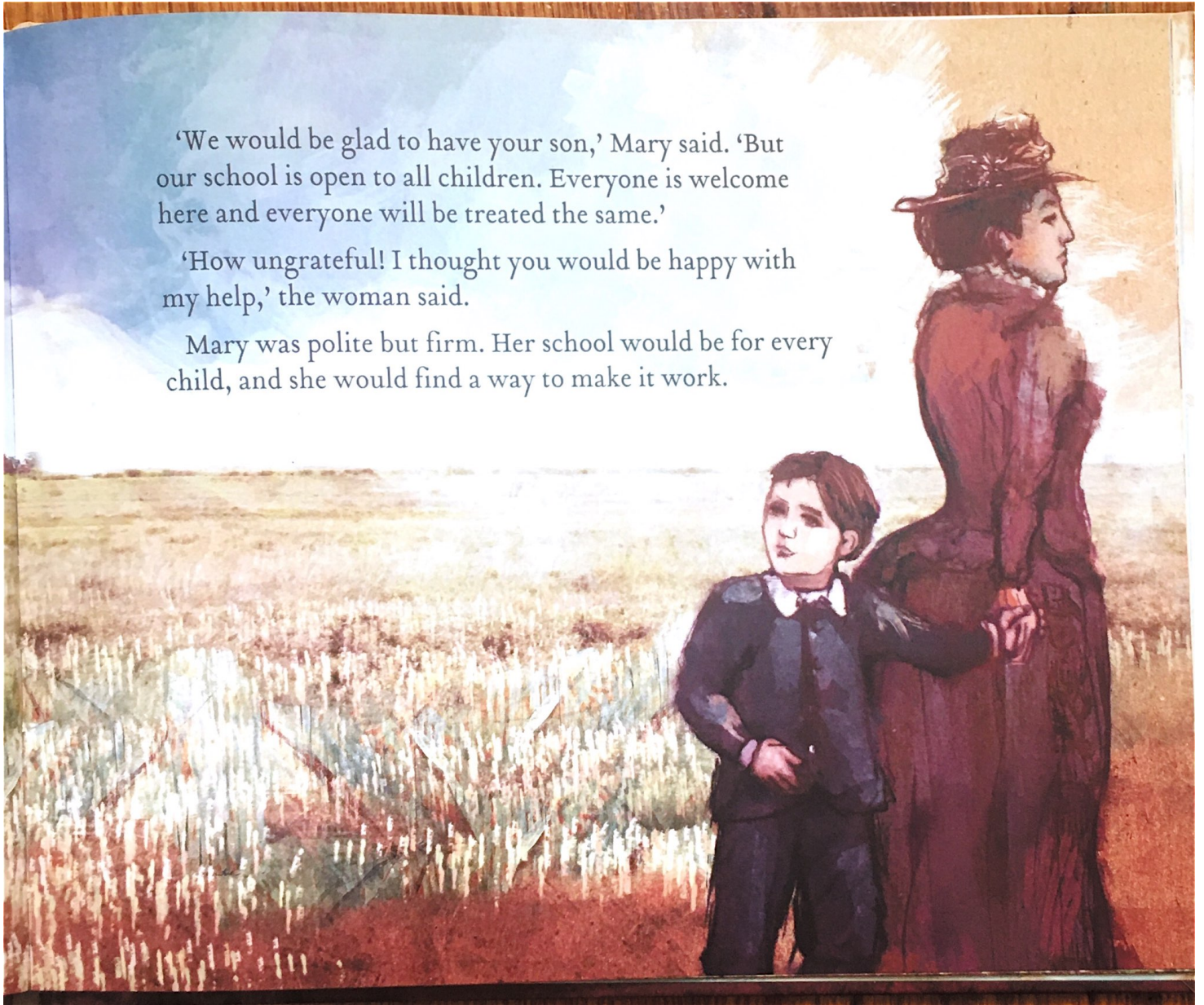




'We would be glad to have your son,' Mary said. 'But our school is open to all children. Everyone is welcome here and everyone will be treated the same.'

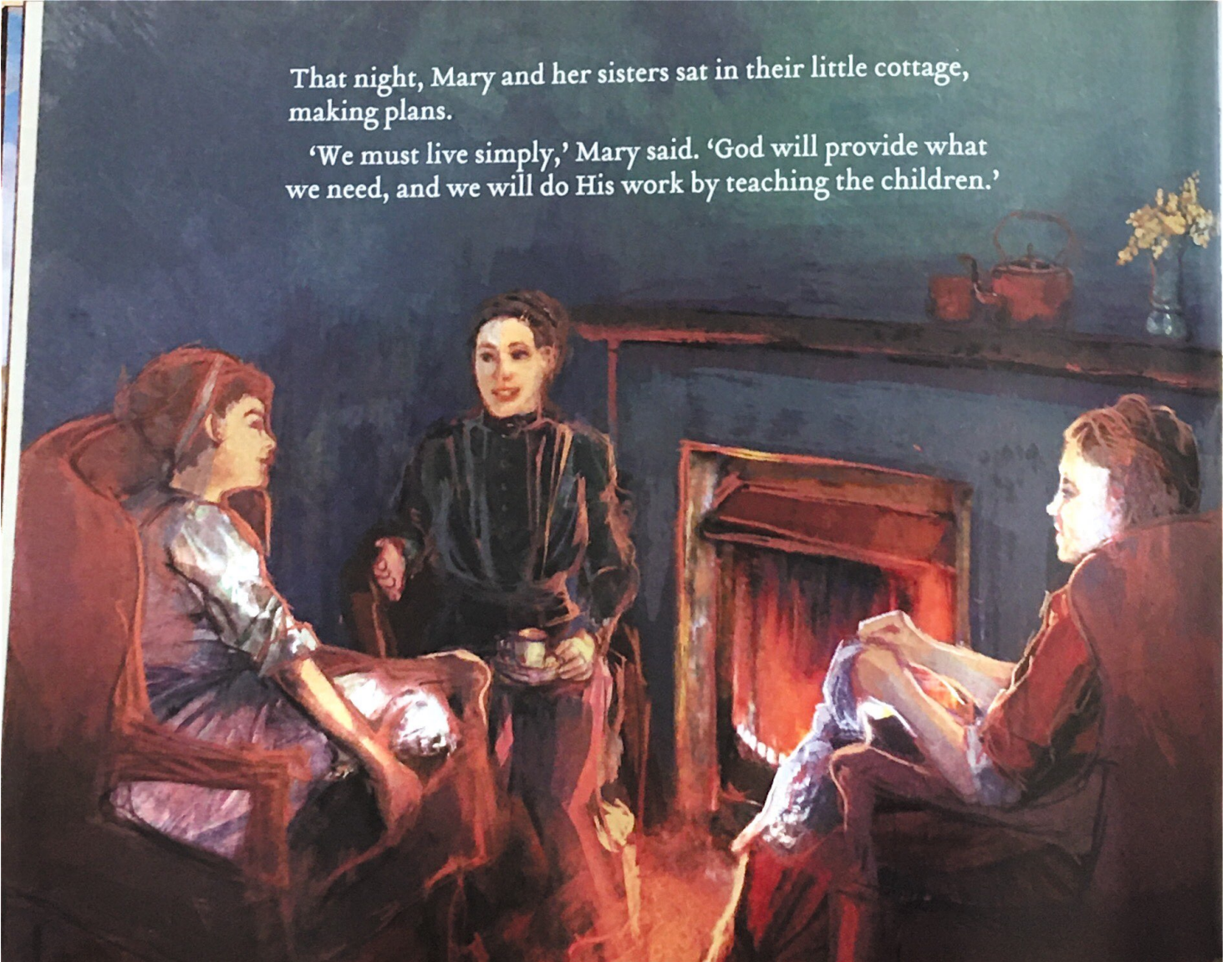
'How ungrateful! I thought you would be happy with my help,' the woman said.

Mary was polite but firm. Her school would be for every child, and she would find a way to make it work.

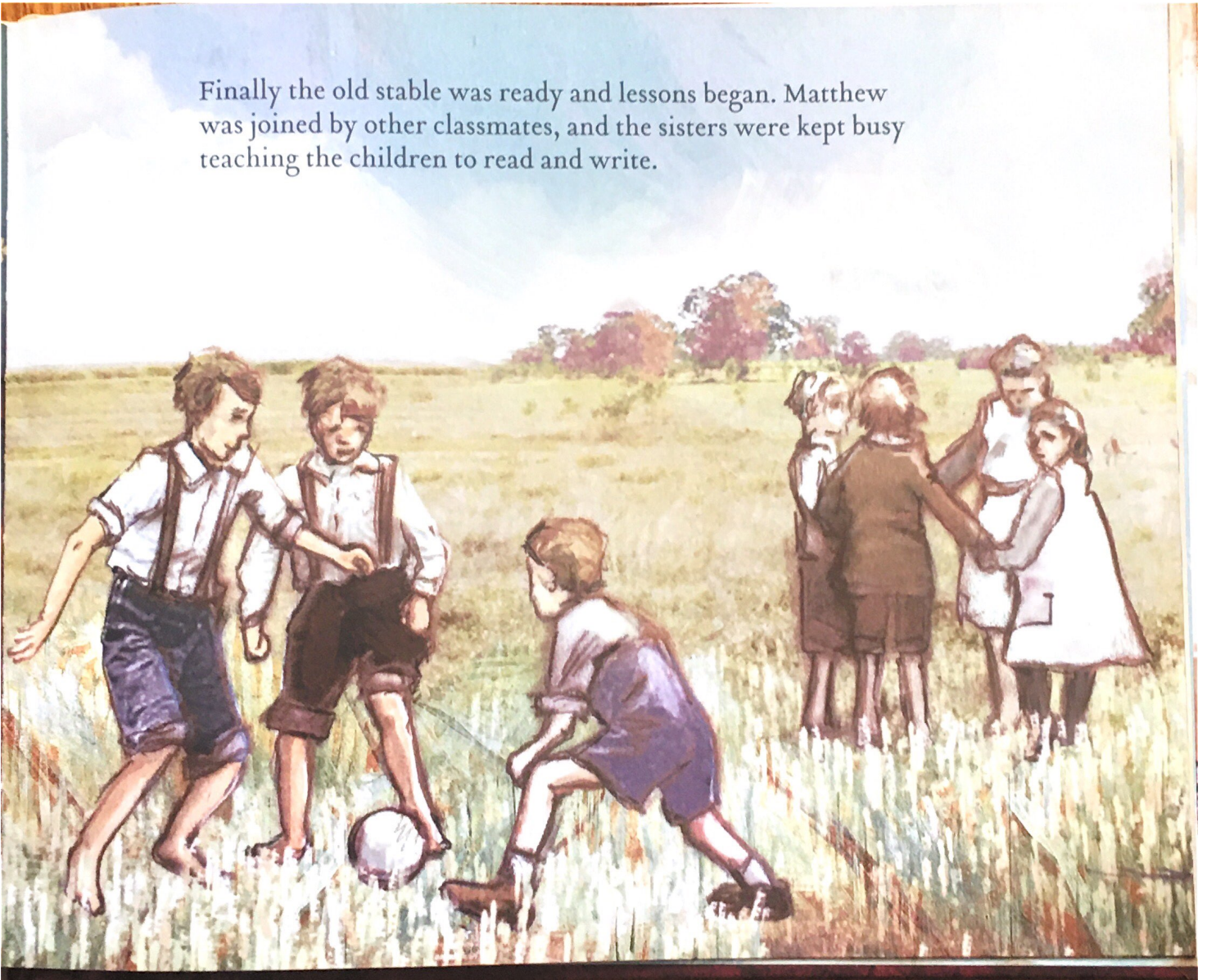


That night, Mary and her sisters sat in their little cottage,  
making plans.

‘We must live simply,’ Mary said. ‘God will provide what  
we need, and we will do His work by teaching the children.’



Finally the old stable was ready and lessons began. Matthew was joined by other classmates, and the sisters were kept busy teaching the children to read and write.





Mary wrote home often to tell her mother of their progress. 'My school is growing,' she said. 'And I am happy. I'm going to give my life to God and become a nun, Sister Mary of the Cross. Father Woods says other women will join me. We will live like Saint Joseph, doing God's work and helping the poor wherever we can.'