

White Sunday in Sāmoa



by Sarona Aiono-Iosefa
photographs by
Jill MacGregor

*Ready
to Read*

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Tafu (tah-foo)

lavalava (lahva-lahva)

Tesa (tessa)

Veta (veh-ta)

Fili (fee-lee)

umu (oo-moo)

pale (pah-le)

Laumua (lau-moo-a)

fale (fah-le)

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Ministry of Education



Soon it will be White Sunday.
Mum goes to town to buy new clothes
for Tafu to wear to church.

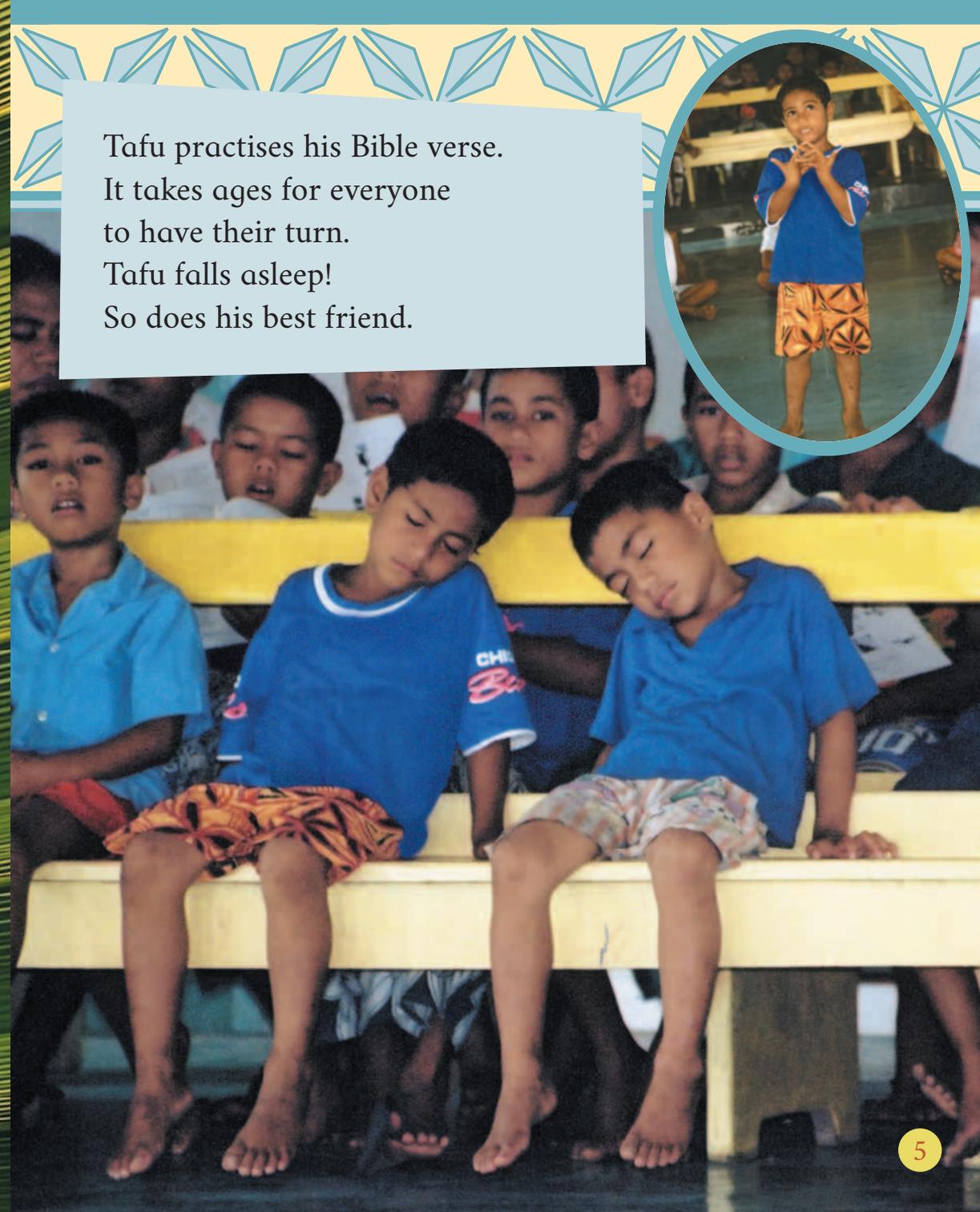
When Mum gets home,
Tafu tries on the new clothes.
The lavalava is too big.
Tafu will have to wear his white shorts.

“Never mind,” says Mum.
“You can wear the lavalava next year,
when you’re bigger.”





White Sunday will be a very special day.
The children all have a Bible verse to say,
and they will sing hymns together.
They must practise hard.



Tafu practises his Bible verse.
It takes ages for everyone
to have their turn.
Tafu falls asleep!
So does his best friend.





On Saturday, everyone helps to get ready. Aunty Tesa and Mum decorate the church. Tafu and his brother, Veta, collect ferns to pin on their shirts and wear on their heads. Uncle Fili gets the food ready for the umu.



After dinner, Dad prays that everything will go well. Tafu feels a bit nervous. Will he remember his verse tomorrow?



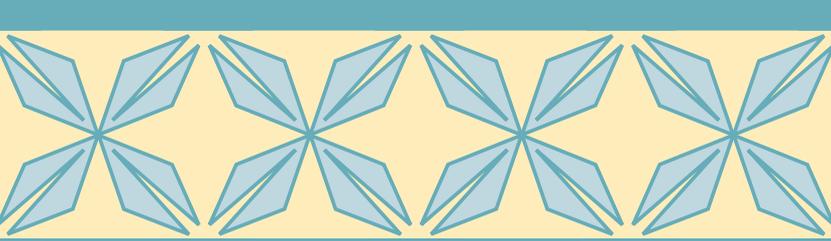


White Sunday at last! Time to get dressed.
Mum fixes his pale.

“I feel nervous, Mum,” says Tafu.
“What if I forget my verse
in front of all the people today?”

Mum gives him a hug.
“You’ll be fine,” she says.





Tafu walks to the church with his sister, Laumua. The children line up and sing as they go into the church.



Soon it is Tafu's turn to say his Bible verse. He is nervous, but he says it loudly.



Afterwards, Tafu changes out of his church clothes.



Then there is a special lunch with lots of food. Today, Tafu and Laumua can sit in the main fale like grown-ups. Auntie Tesa brings them their food. The children eat and eat.

Tafu puts away his new white clothes.
He feels sad that the day is over.
White Sunday is such a special day.

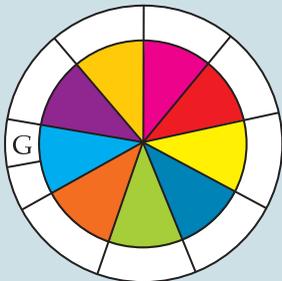


White Sunday is celebrated on the second Sunday in October. The children dress in white to go to church. They sing and say Bible verses they have learnt off by heart. After church, there is a special lunch. The grown-ups make the food, and the children eat first.



Glossary

fale	A Samoan house
lavalava	Traditional clothing worn wrapped around the waist
pale	A headdress
umu	An earth oven



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