

I Am Not Afraid of SPIDERS

A Narrative Poem by
ASHLEY AYA FERGUSON

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Manufactured in the United States of America.

This book is dedicated to my babysitter
Mayola Johnson.

It is also dedicated to anyone who
has ever been hurt because they were
misunderstood.

It is inspired by a true story and the poem,
Allowables by Nikki Giovanni.



I am not afraid of spiders.

Almost everyone is afraid of
spiders but me!





Some are jumpy, some are colorful,
some fast, some slow.

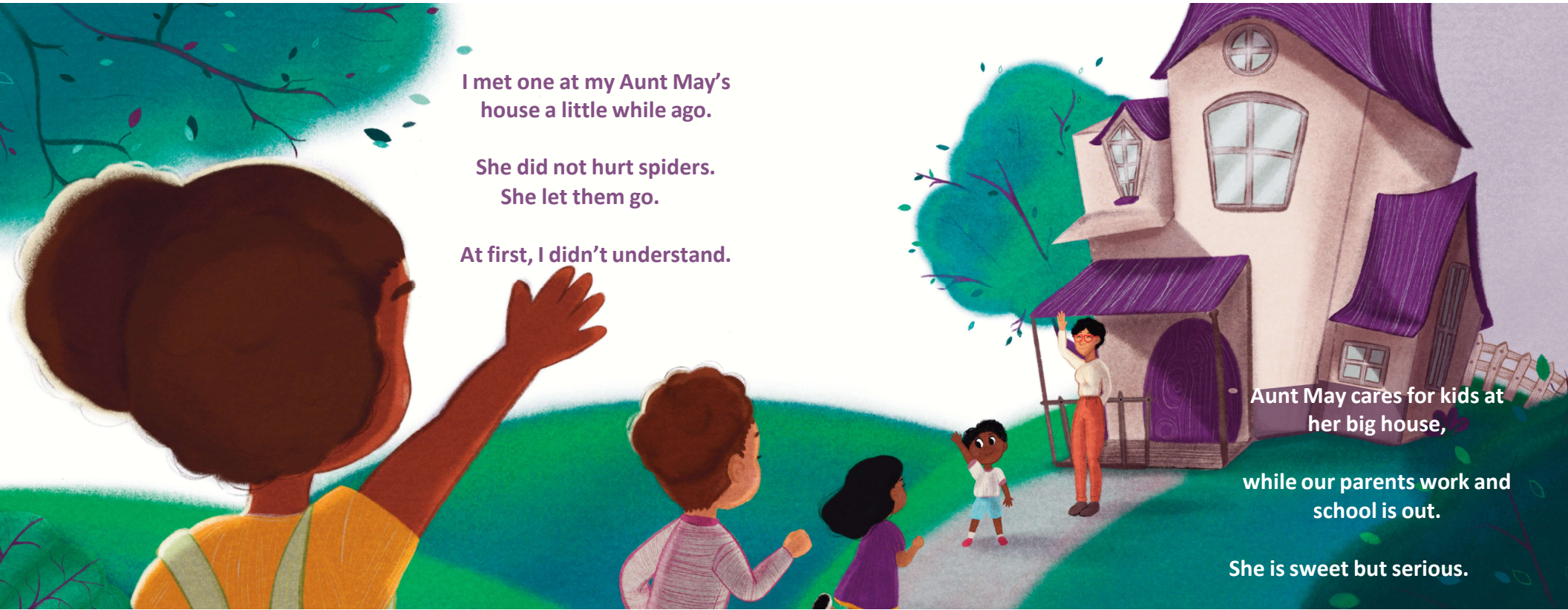
Some of them like to play hide and
seek, even when you don't know.

I actually kind of like them.

Sometimes they are
curious and exploring
about.

Sometimes they are far from
home and lost around the
house.

Sometimes they need
food or a friend.



I met one at my Aunt May's
house a little while ago.

She did not hurt spiders.
She let them go.

At first, I didn't understand.

Aunt May cares for kids at
her big house,

while our parents work and
school is out.

She is sweet but serious.



She has toys and games and
cribs and desks;

a big backyard and a
play kitchen set —

for kids like me, younger,
smaller, taller and older.



We can make mud pies and
climb up trees —

we can perform, sing and be
anywhere we dream.



There are not so
many rules like
at school and at
home.



At Aunt May's we are free.

We use our imagination to play and pretend. Nothing is
out of reach for me and my friends,

until the day we saw a spider.



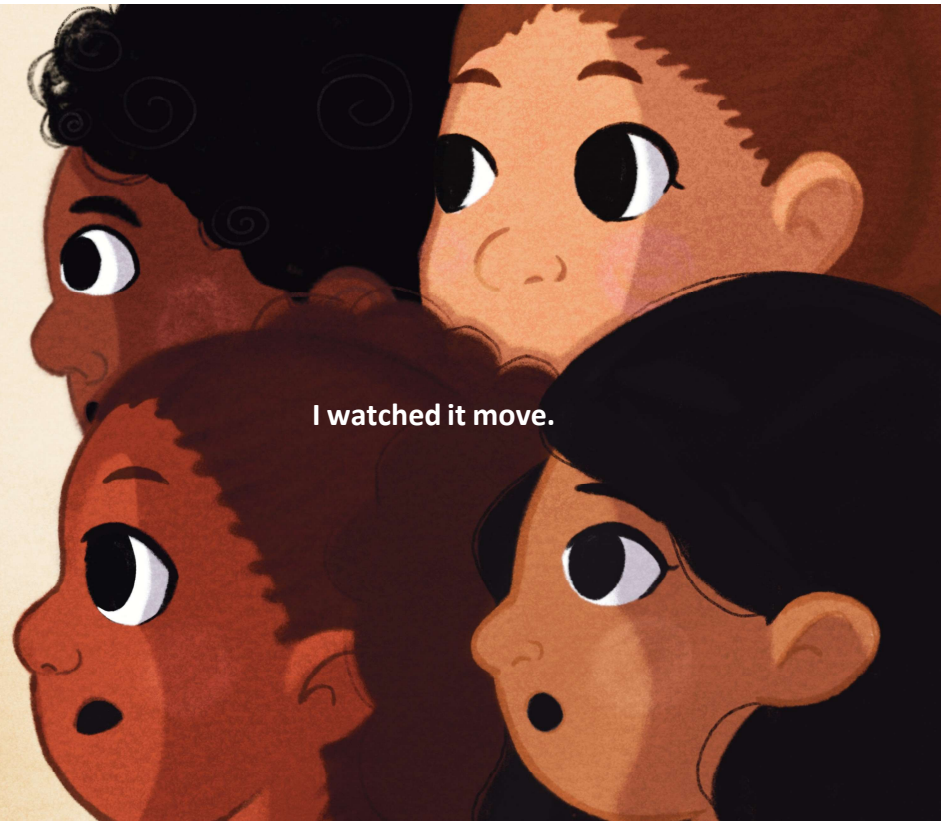
I got up close and
stared it down.

Its thin prickly legs were
barely touching the
ground.

It was very small
and fragile.

It peeked out from
under a chair.

We were surprised and
a little scared.



I watched it move.

We were a thousand times
bigger than the little guy.

There were plenty of us there, but I
thought I should try

to save us.

I picked up a shoe,
because that's what we
were taught to do.



That spider didn't
stand a chance.

“Don’t you kill it!” Aunt
May swooped in to save
it while she screeched at
us.

But at home, our
parents would make a
great fuss
if a bug was inside and we
didn’t squash it.



I couldn't sleep during my nap
because I was concerned.

Why did she care about
those spiders?

I had to learn.

I thought about all of
the options.

Maybe she has a tiny
spider school,

and collects all the
spiders up in her room

where we're not
allowed to go.





Maybe she takes them out for a drive.

I mean, how would we know what she does during our naptime?

They probably get ice cream and little spider cookies.

Maybe she's created a spider circus act!

When we're sleeping, she trains them to jump, spin and clap!

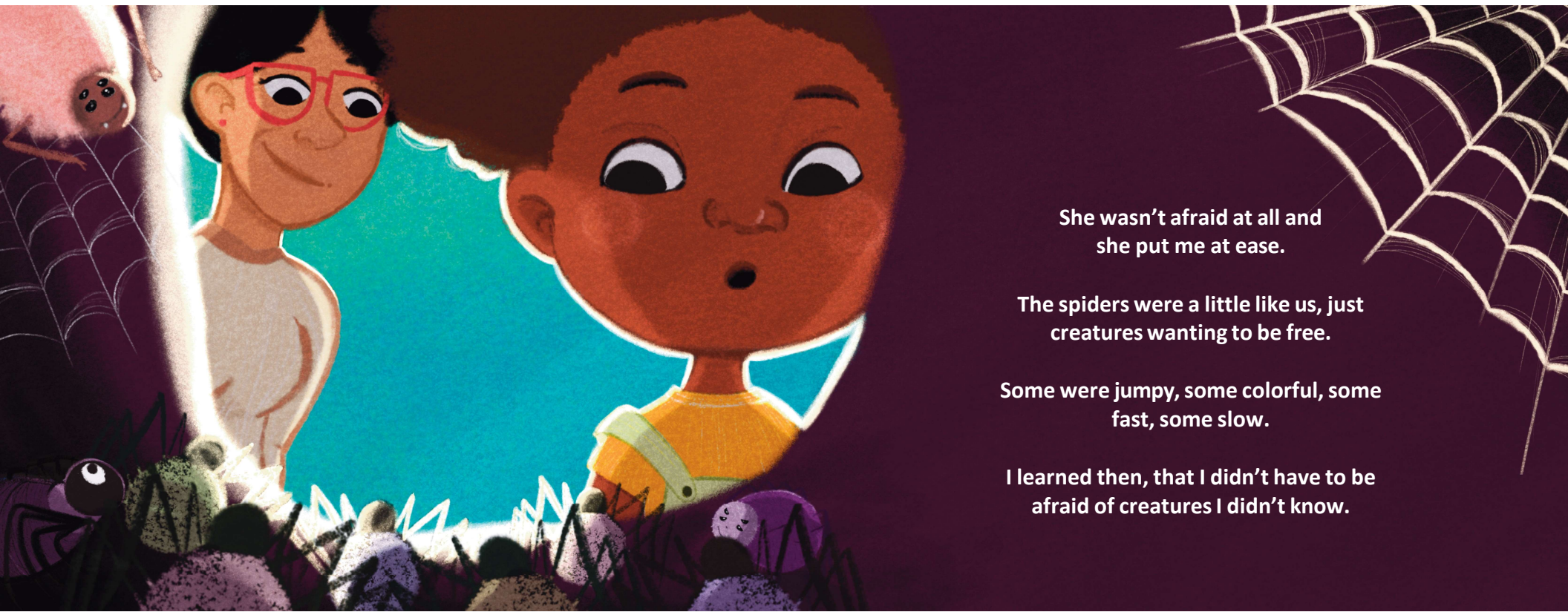
One day we'll see the show!

That day, she saw me stirring and said,
"Come with me."

She took me outside and
showed me a tree.

Inside a little cubbyhole was
a spider sanctuary.



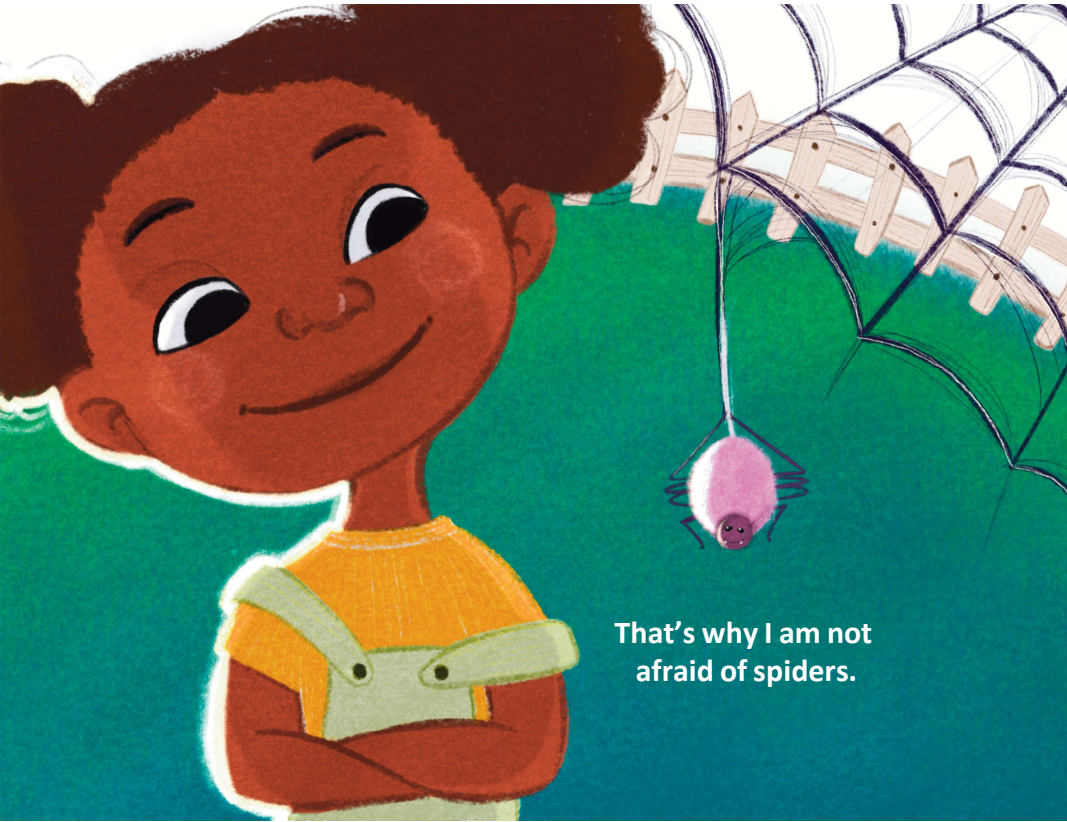


She wasn't afraid at all and
she put me at ease.

The spiders were a little like us, just
creatures wanting to be free.

Some were jumpy, some colorful, some
fast, some slow.

I learned then, that I didn't have to be
afraid of creatures I didn't know.



That's why I am not
afraid of spiders.



Ohio native **Ashley Aya Ferguson** is a writer most inspired by real life. Through poetry, children's literature and creative nonfiction, she invites readers to live inside of a feeling, creating access that can't be ignored.



Ashley is the author of two five-star rated children's books: *Girl, You Are Magic!* and *Boy, You Are Brilliant*.

Are you afraid of spiders?
I am fascinated by them.

Some are big, some are little,
some are fast, some are slow,
some greet you and surprise you
when you don't know. But, have
you ever considered that maybe
they just want to be free? Go on
a journey with me to learn why I
am not afraid of spiders!



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