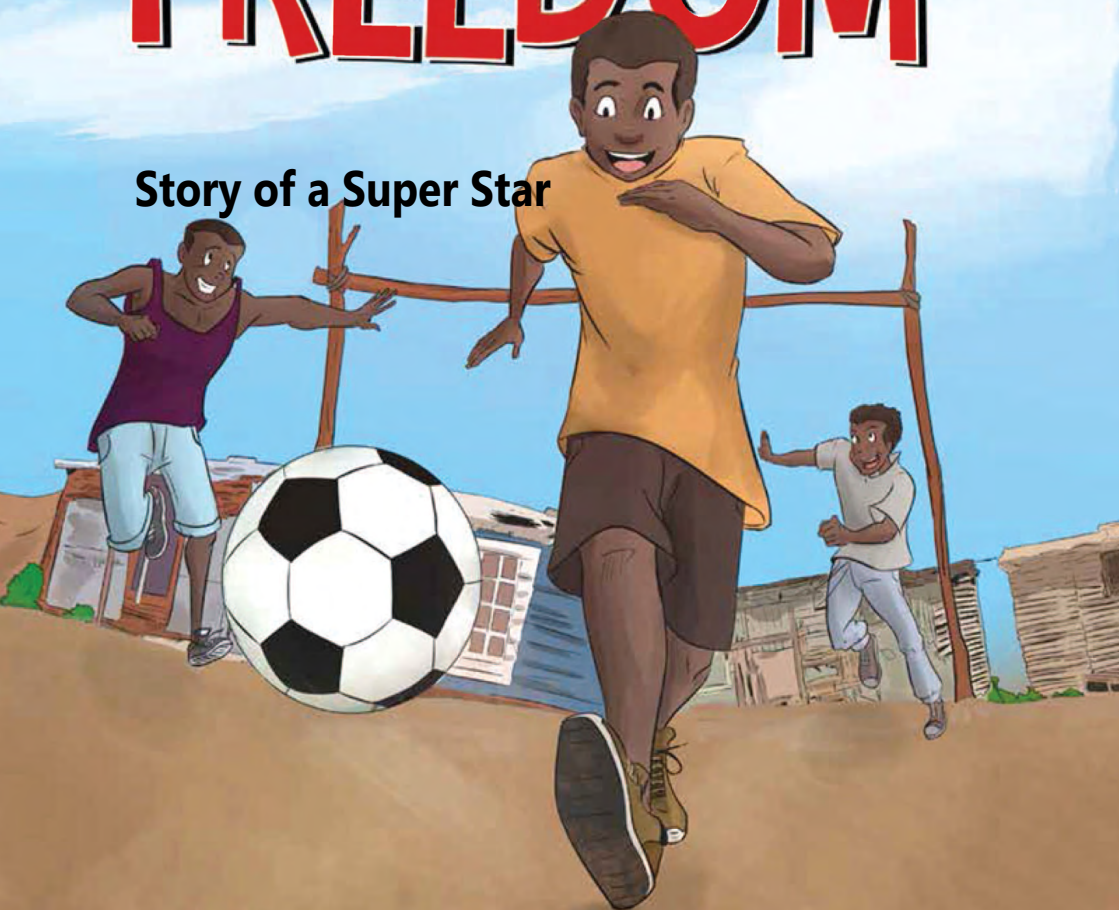


FOOT To FREEDOM

Story of a Super Star



By Suzanne Popp

Illustrations by Anthony Zaza


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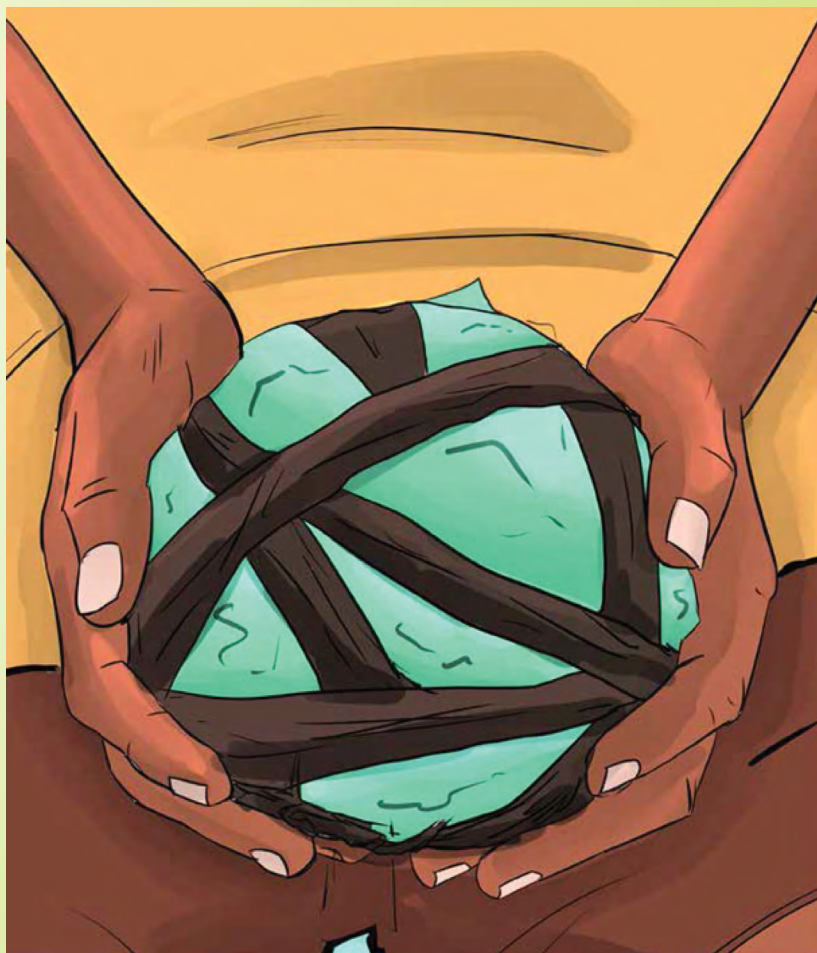
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Christopher loved soccer so much, his homemade soccer ball went everywhere with him.



“Take that ball outside. Your kicks are too strong for the house,” his mother said.



“Mother, someday, I will put my soccer ball in a new cabinet, along with my trophies. I will buy that cabinet from the money I earn from playing soccer.” I will buy us a house where everyone has room to sleep. My foot will earn us freedom from poverty, he added to himself.

Mother shook her head. Christopher was more cocky than their rooster.



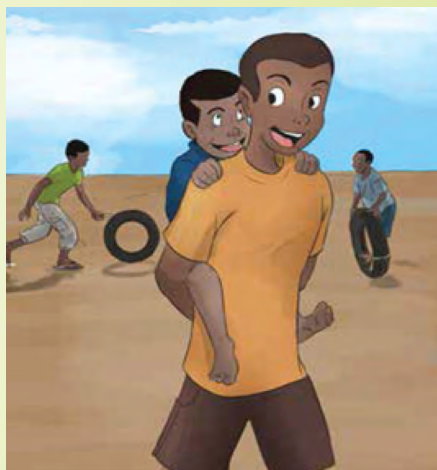


There were eighteen people in the family, a total of thirteen children. Father worked in the mines. "Listen, Christopher, forget soccer. It's a game."

“Mother, our boy’s mind is in the clouds. Playing soccer for a national team? Impossible. No man wants to be the father to a foolish son.”



Christopher's mother asked, "Should we complain? Does he pester us for favors? No. He does his homework, completes his chores, and shows respect to everyone. His teachers say Christopher is a leader."

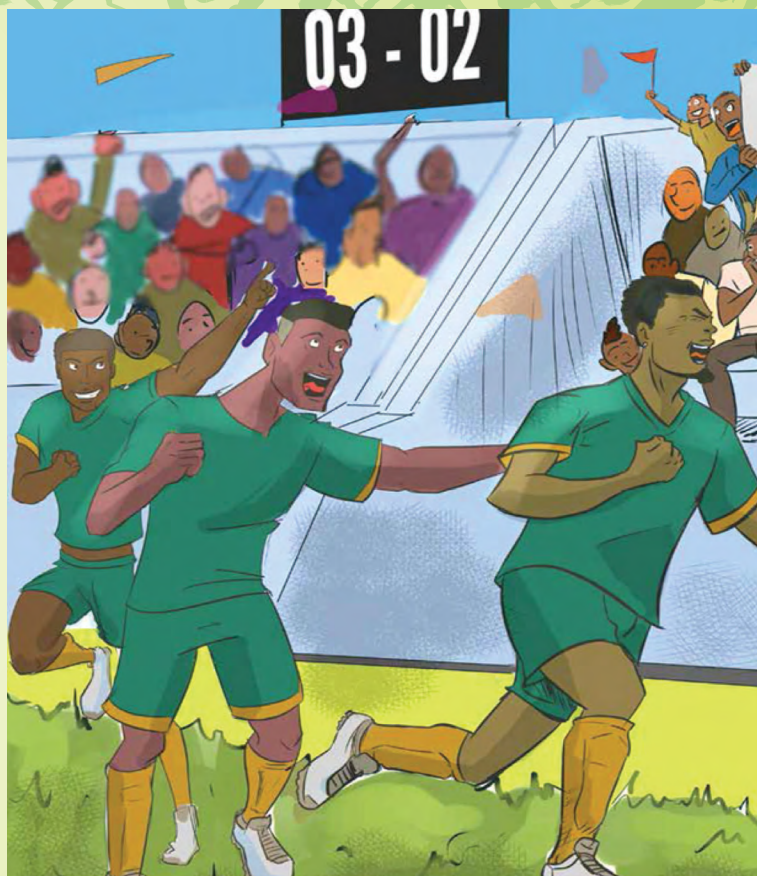


Father said nothing.

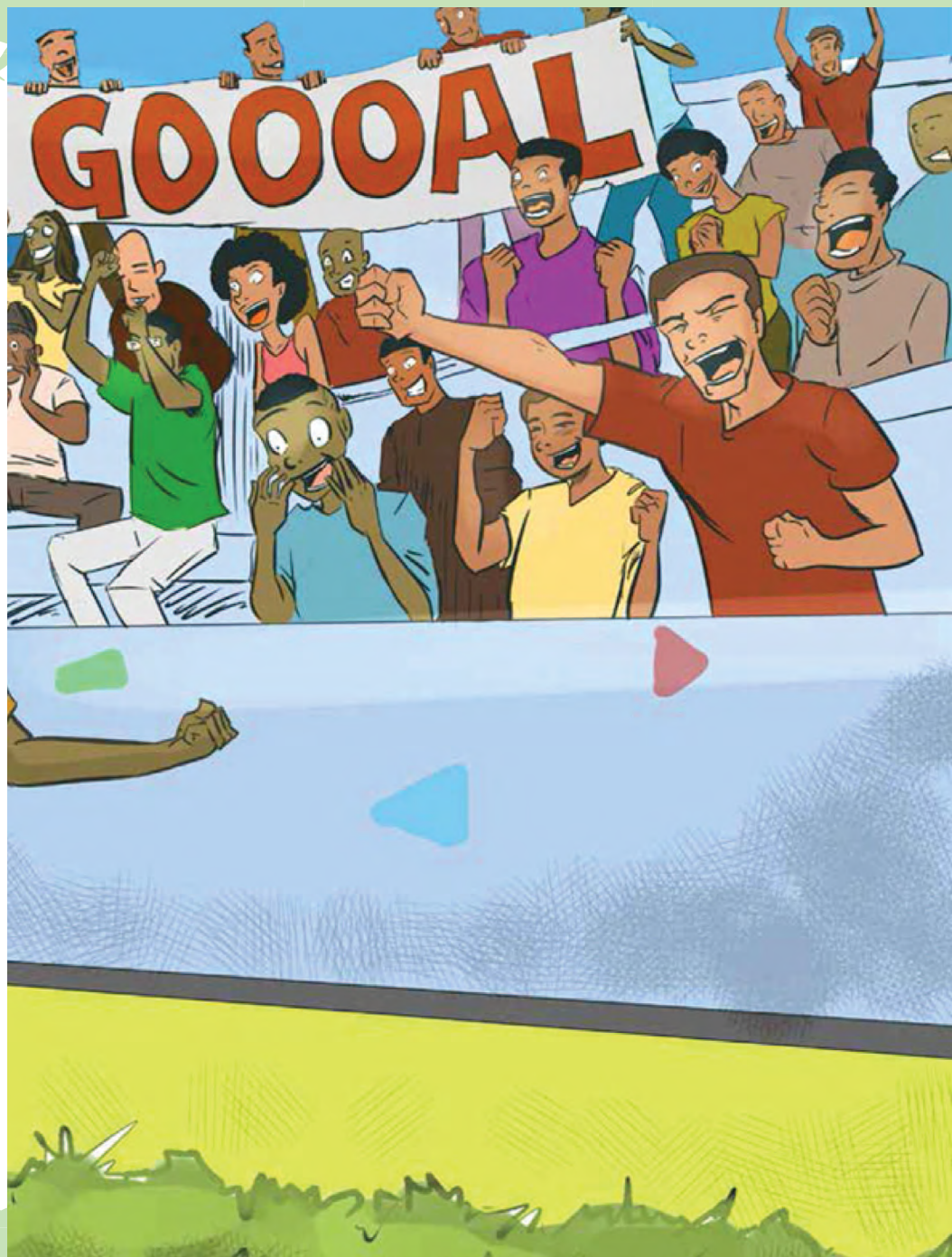


At the holiday break, Coach Bwalya gave Christopher two tickets to the regional soccer match. Christopher asked, "Father, will you go with me?" The mineworkers put together a pool of money to pay for our bus fare.





At the soccer match, flags were waving, the national anthem played, the army marched alongside the teams. The fans were chanting the names of players. GOAL! SCORE! Applause rippled around the stadium. "Someday, I will be in the army, on the national team, and bring honor for my country. People will know the name Katongo", he thought.



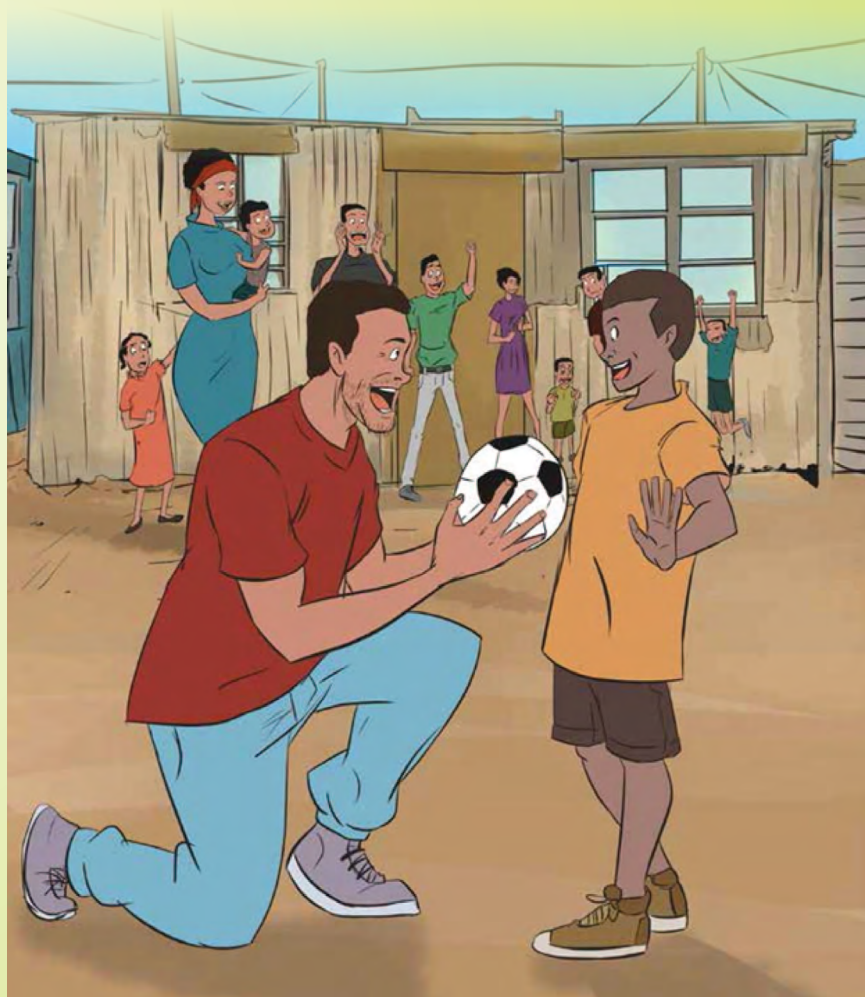
“Father, here’s the notebook I keep on my sport.”



"I am going to bring honor to our country!" Katongo assured his father.



That holiday, his father gave him a regulation soccer ball.



Step by step, Christopher made the team, scored, and encouraged his fellow players. He grew in grace and power. He made winning a habit.

“You are taking a foot towards freedom”, his mother said.



Every day, Christopher put his best foot forward. He felt power in his legs as he dribbled and passed the ball down the pitch. He loved the thwack of his foot hitting the leather.

Step-by-step, his plan would be for freedom. God would direct his steps to the goal. He would bring honour to his family, his school and the nation.



The boy whose head was in the clouds was now a star.

Today, we honour the name of Christopher Katongo, having captained the 2012 Afcon Winning Team, Assistant Head Coach of Green Buffaloes Football Club, MVP, national hero and star athlete.



We hope this book will be educational and inspirational to all our readers. We look forward to more of our young ones achieve their dreams. They say dreams come true, but here in this book, we have presented a living example of such.

Let's learn from legends before they are gone.

From Christopher Katongo, and all staff at Christopher Katongo and Foundation with great gratitude to our partners and writer, Suzzane Popp of Village Steps.

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CHRISTOPHER KATONGO





Thank you so much for taking time to read my book. My name is Christopher Katongo. Raised from a humble background, I had challenges rising from that background to where I am now: having captained the 2012 Zambia

National AFCON winning team and currently coaching one of Zambia's best clubs.

I want to give students and all with passion for success the chance that I had to succeed in life by sharing the principles I applied to rise to this level. Sometimes to get to a new place, it helps to have someone show you the map and the steps they took to become free of poverty and want.

This book was written with this intention and hope, to inspire the next generation of athletes and scholars to achieve all their potential.

Enjoy the reading and have courage. You can also make it.