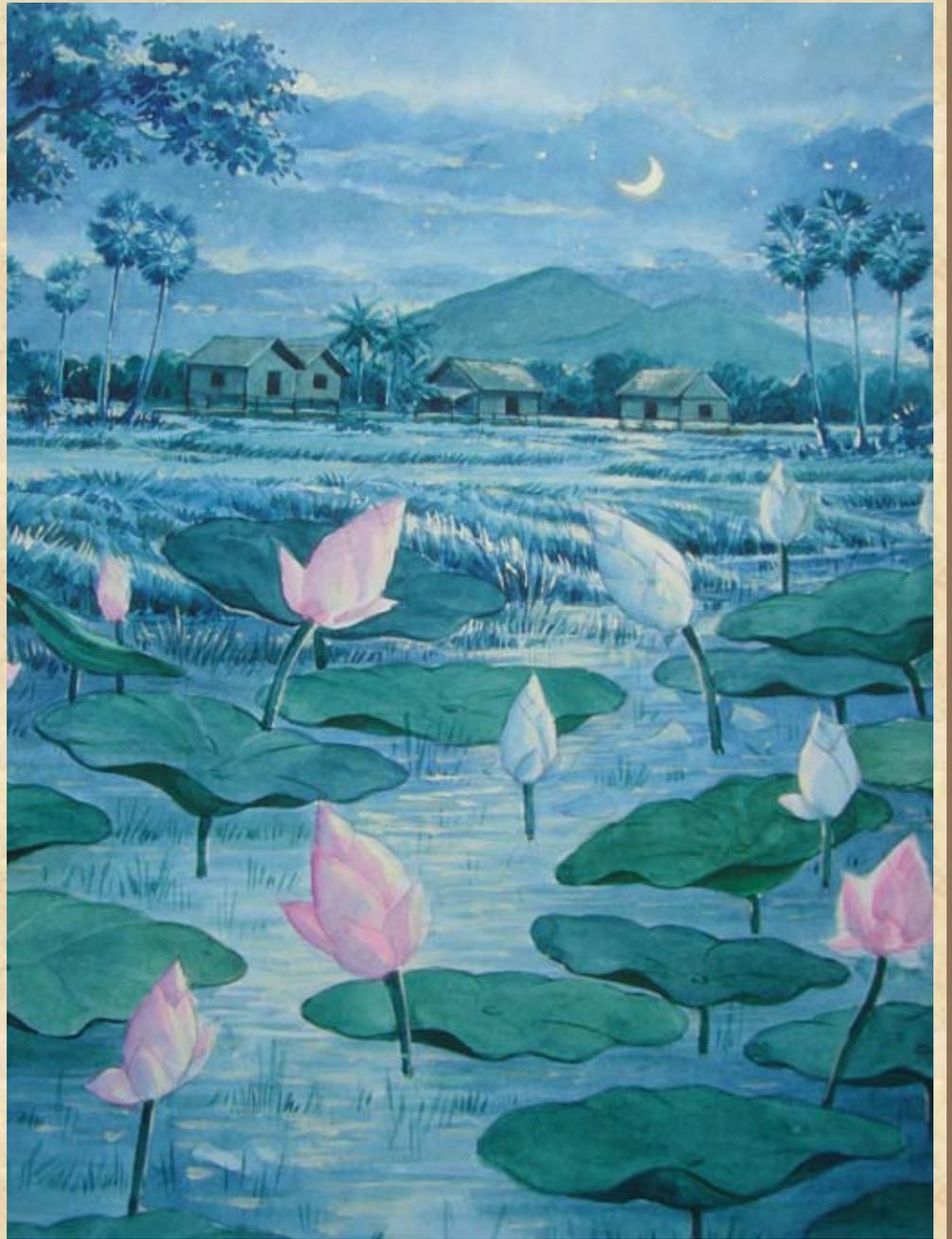


THE
WHITE
LOTUS



Once upon a time, there was a beautiful White Lotus growing in a pond near a village. She and her friend always liked to open their lotus petals to the sunshine to show off their beauty to the people in the nearby village.

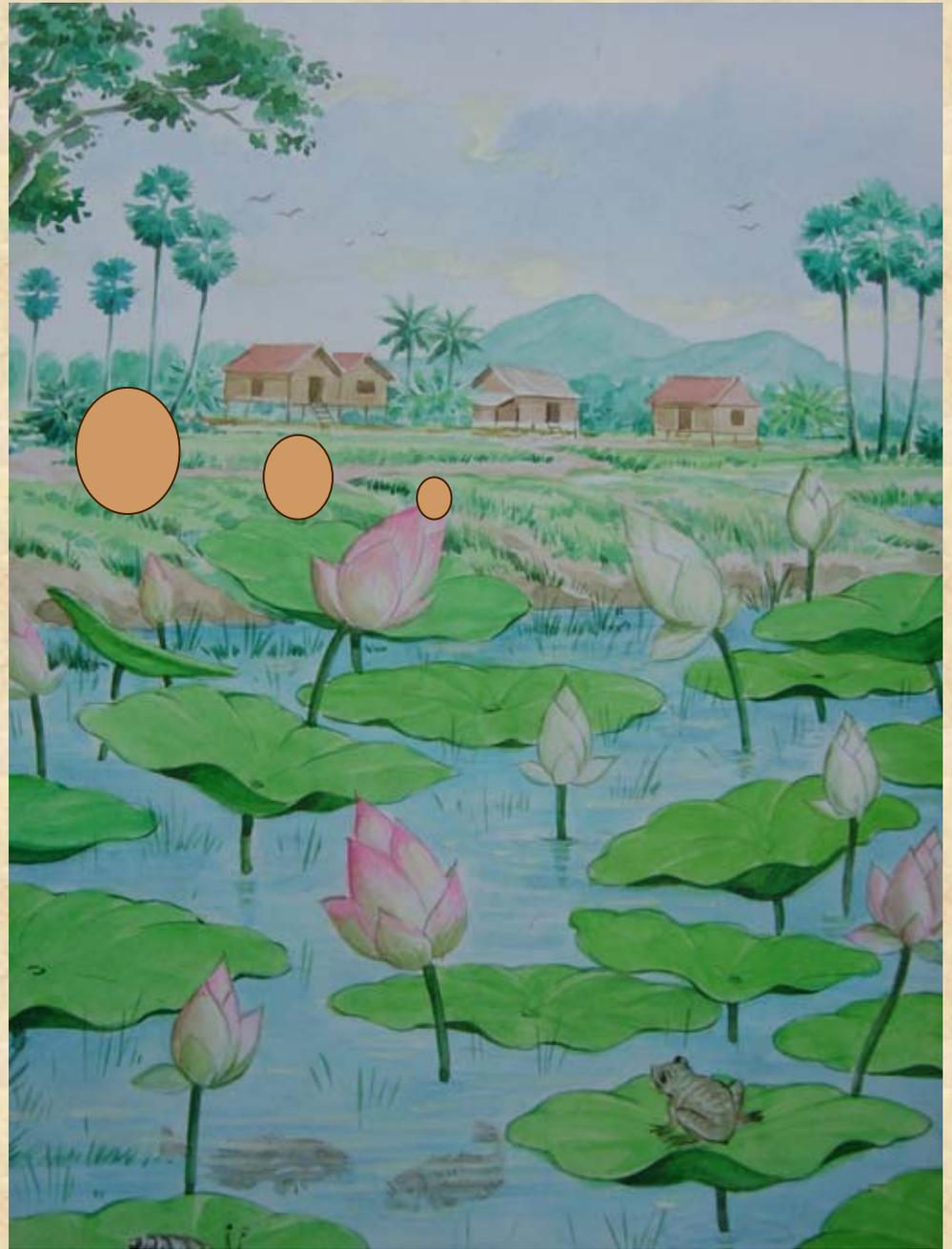


One day, a white lotus heard the beautiful music of a wedding parade walking by their pond. Some guests were carrying different fruits. There was a handsome boy and pretty girl carrying different coloured flowers on either side of the groom.

The white lotus told her friend
“one day I would
like to be in a
wedding parade
like this”.



Listening to her hopes a group of pink lotus said “Oh white Lotus! You are small and ugly. Why do you have such high hopes? Only we are truly beautiful in this pond”.



The rabbit who was passing by heard what the pink lotus said. Then the rabbit encouraged the white lotus, “Don’t listen to them! You are also beautiful. All flowers have the same beauty. It doesn’t matter what colour they are...”

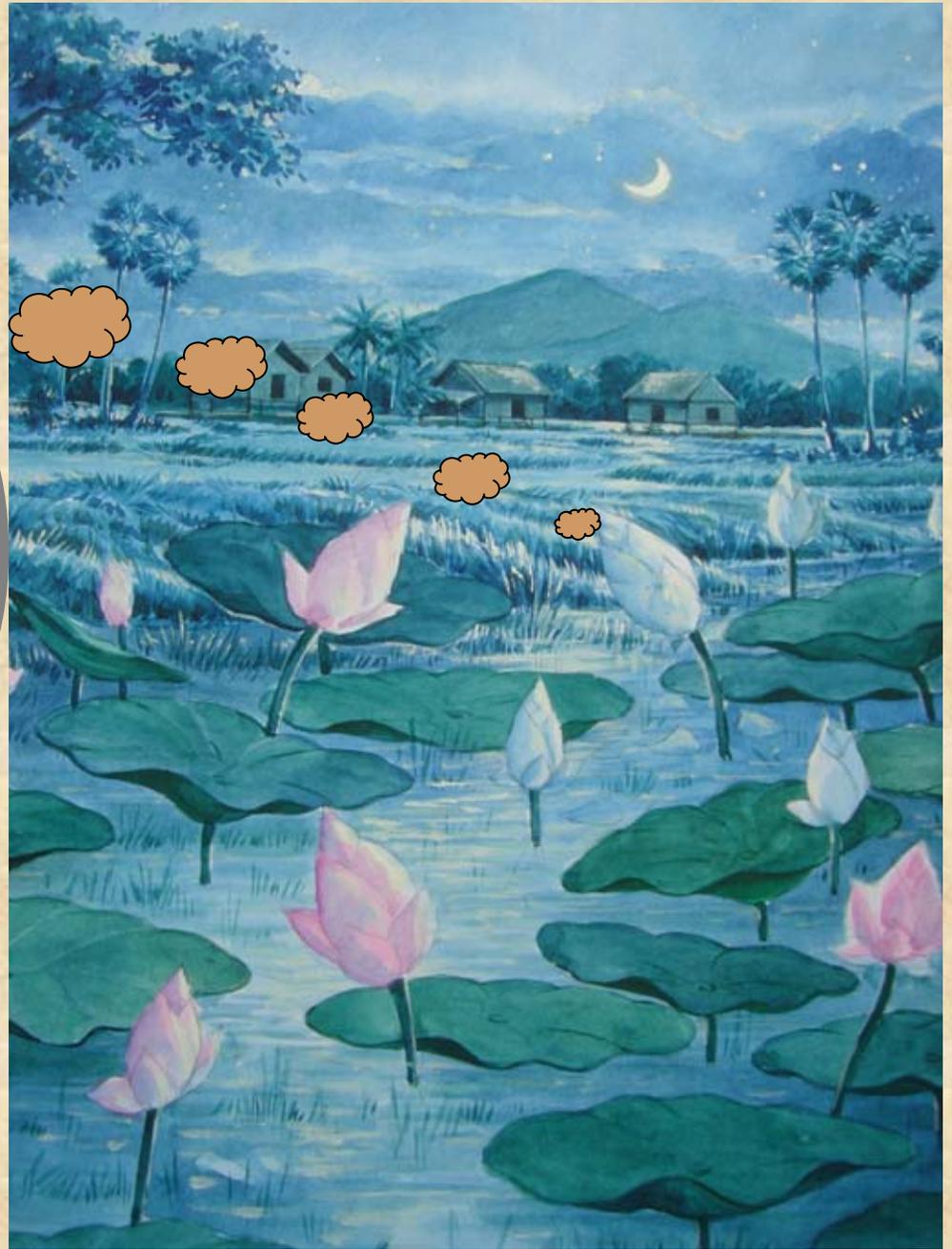
But the white lotus is not sure in her heart if what the rabbit says is true or not?



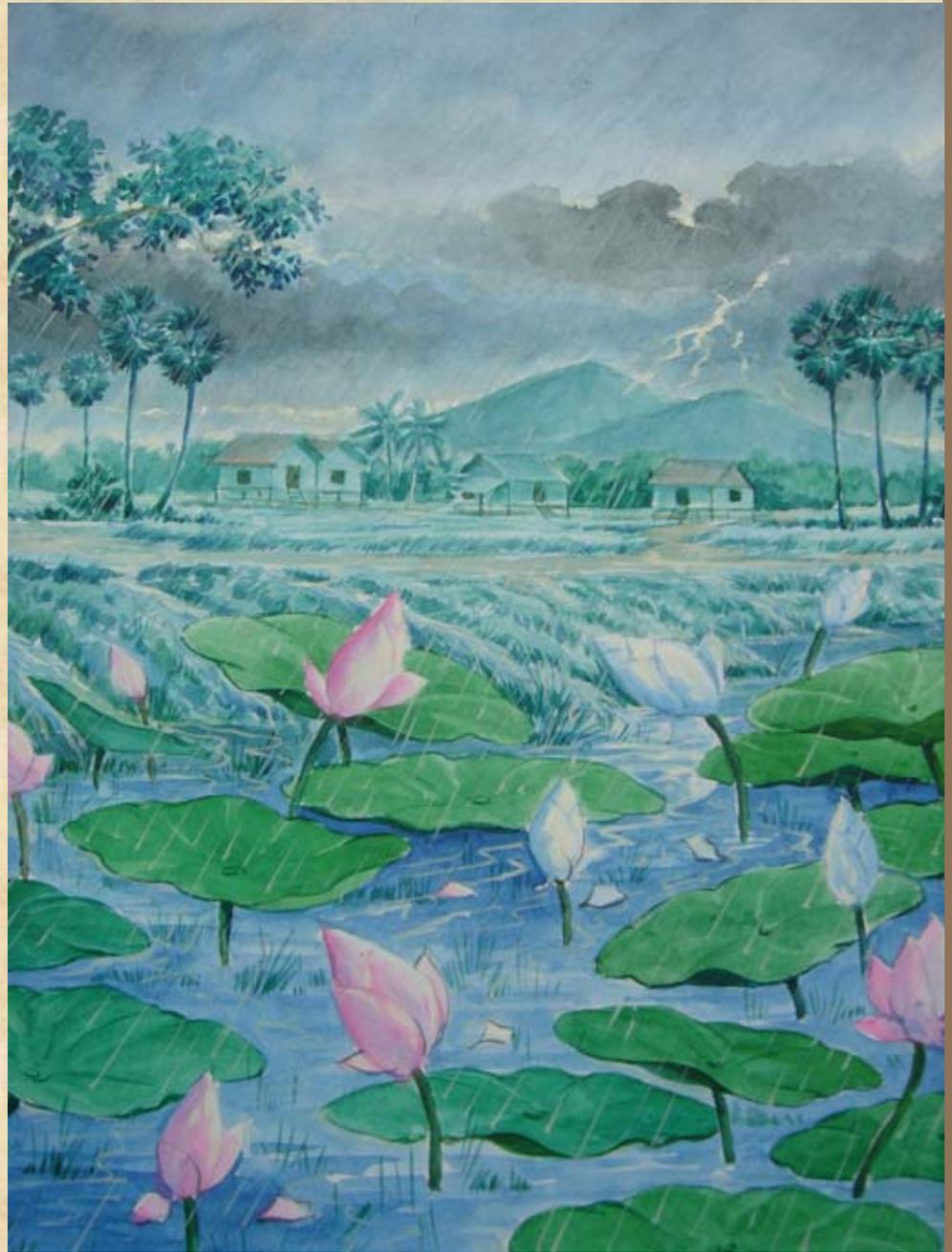
The next day there was a boy who was very angry sitting on the edge of the pond holding a stick. He poked the white lotus petals and broke them to express his anger.



In the quiet of that night, the white lotus was so sad. She thought that her life was over. Her hopes felt as though they were destroyed. She felt she had nothing left and that to die was the best solution for her.



The next day the white Lotus felt very alone under the rain. The group of pink lotus flowers said that it was her fault because she had grown close to the edge of the pond. Other lotus said that she was nothing anymore. Only her friend didn't say anything unkind but she didn't know what to say because she had never been damaged and so she went away from her.

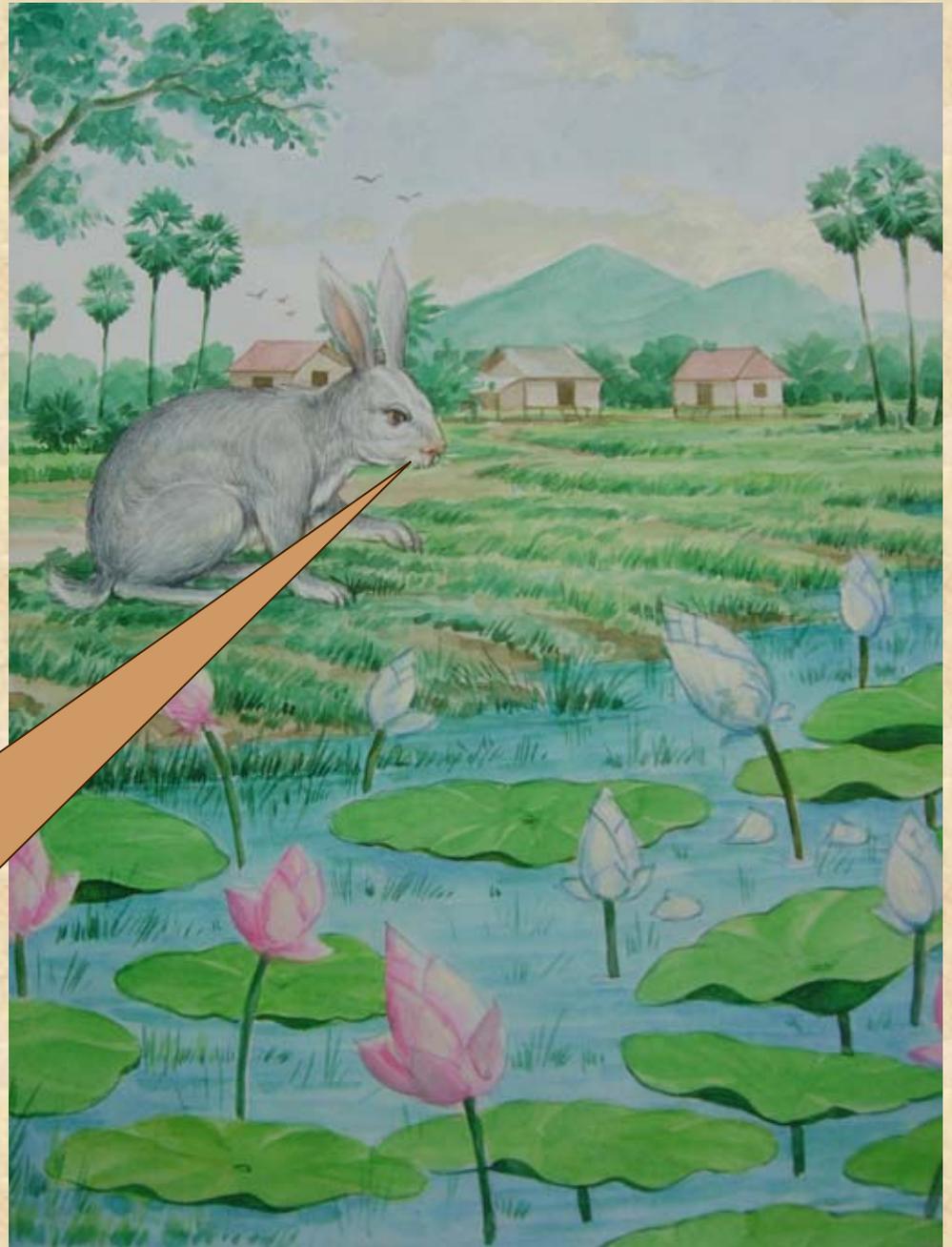


In the evening the people came back to the village from the fields. The rabbit also came to the pond and sat close to the white lotus. She told her story to the rabbit. She felt grateful when the rabbit listened to her compassionately without advice. The rabbit said good bye to her and promised to come back again the next day.



Early the next morning the rabbit returned to meet the white lotus as he had promised.

He said “Oh, White Lotus, a lot of bad things happen to us. Sometimes we cannot understand it, but even if they do something bad to us or say something bad to us we are still very important and of value”.



After the rabbit spoke to her the white lotus started to feel a little bit better. Her hope was restored. Even though the pink lotus were still unkind, her close friend realized she had not been a support and came to her side again.



The next day a girl and her mother came to pick some lotus for the wedding and the girl went to pick up the white lotus and her friend

but her mother said “don’t pick the white lotus because it is damaged”.

Then the girl said please wait and see.



The girl carefully folded the petals of the white lotus then the damaged petals were hidden. The beauty of the white lotus was restored again.



The White lotus
and her friend
were proud to be
in the wedding
and the people
kept commenting
how beautiful the
flowers were.





Additional comments from Author

This comic is a beautifully illustrated story of a lotus who becomes damaged. It is a parable of a child being abused and what happens next.

As well as a story book for children this comic is also a way of explaining to children about abuse. Sexual abuse can do children much harm, but many children believe that if they are abused that their lives are over. This is not true.

All children are special and have value. It doesn't matter what people say to them or what people do to them. No one can avoid some bad things happening to them. But afterwards, Their lives can be restored. The hope and a good future is possible.

When adults or children are unkind to children it can affect the way they think about themselves in a negative way. This comic encourages children to support other children when something bad happens to them by listening to them and being their friend. As Khmer proverb says “**After it rains, the sky is clear**”



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