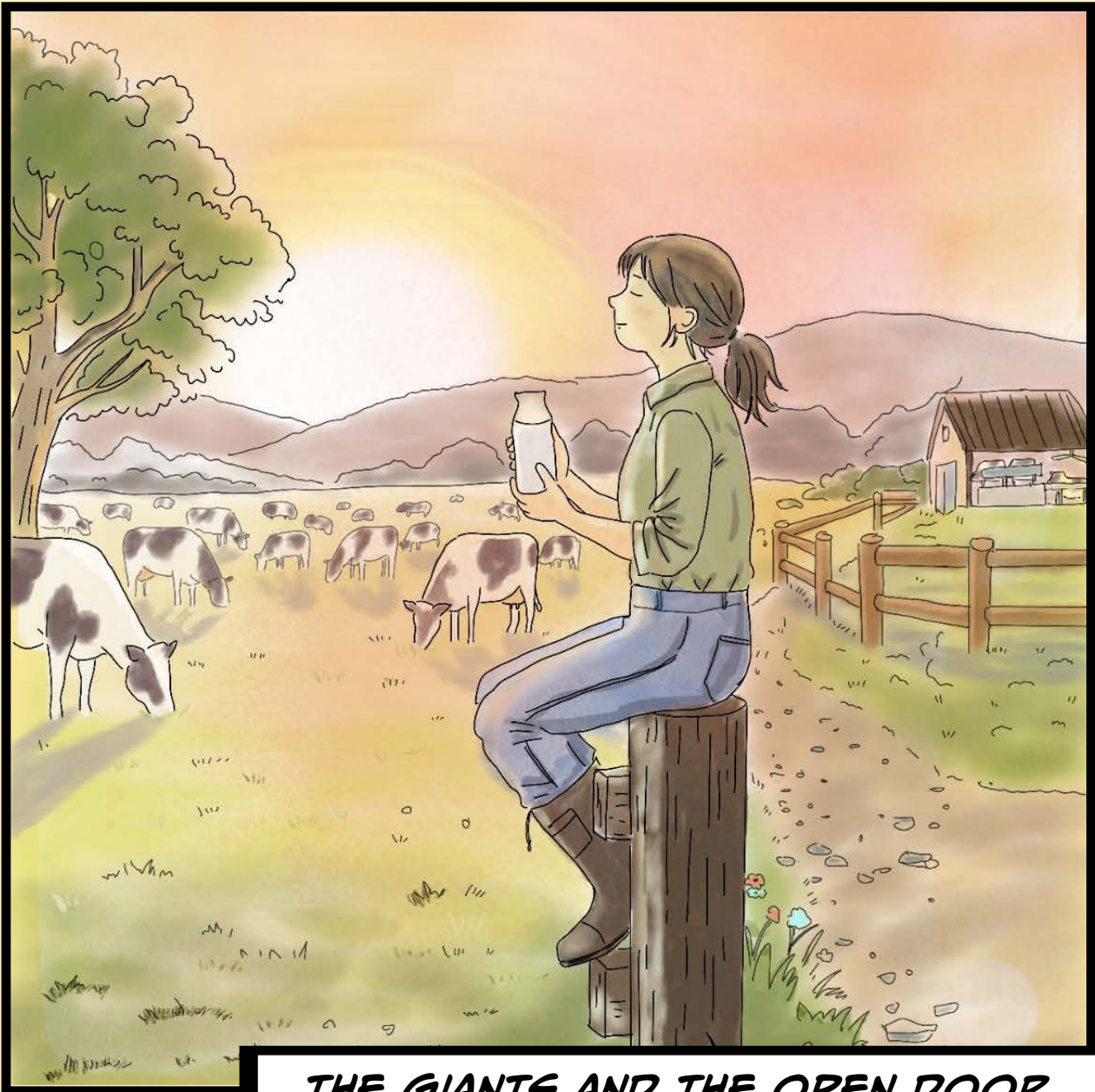




World Organisation
for Animal Health

SKETCHING CHANGE

TALES FROM VETERINARIANS ACROSS ASIA-PACIFIC



THE GIANTS AND THE OPEN DOOR



Scan the QR code to access the comic stories in this publication in digital format, and to read several others.

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Note: Designations, statements and opinions in the material do not imply any official position of WOA or partner organisations, and responsibility for interpretation lies solely with the reader.

ABOUT THIS VOLUME

The World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) is committed to strengthening gender equality, disability and social inclusion (GEDSI) within the veterinary sector. Our recent work in Asia and the Pacific has shown that, while there is a growing number of qualified women and diverse professionals in the sector, many still face barriers shaped by longstanding norms, insufficient adjustments and unequal opportunities.

As noted in regional studies conducted by WOAH in Asia-Pacific, gender stereotypes influence perceptions within the veterinary sector, and the absence of reasonable accommodations reinforces the exclusion of persons with disabilities. These findings highlight the need for continued awareness and action across institutions, training systems, and professional communities.

To foster this change, WOAH has expanded its GEDSI initiatives, including awareness raising events and partnerships with veterinary associations and networks in Asia and the Pacific region, in particular the Federation of Asian Veterinary Associations (FAVA), the Asian Association of Veterinary Schools (AAVS) and the International Veterinary Students' Association (IVSA). The Comics Competition Promoting GEDSI in the Veterinary Sector, organised between December 2025 and January 2026, invited veterinary students and professionals to reflect creatively on what an inclusive profession looks like.

The competition aimed to celebrate storytelling, artistic talent, veterinary commitment and GEDSI values, and to inspire dialogue through accessible and engaging narratives. Among the winning submissions, the comic presented here captures the imagination, concerns, and aspirations of veterinarians in different parts of the Asia and the Pacific region. The story reminds us that inclusion is not only a policy goal—it is a shared cultural commitment that strengthens the profession and the communities it serves. While we could not award all participants with prizes, we appreciated all entries and will be sharing additional comic stories of note on our website (see QR code on the cover inner page).

We extend our heartfelt congratulations to the winners of this competition, and thank all participants for adding their voices to this important conversation. This comic enriches WOAH's ongoing efforts to promote a veterinary sector where everyone can thrive, advancing our mission to improve animal health and welfare globally and ensure a better future for all.

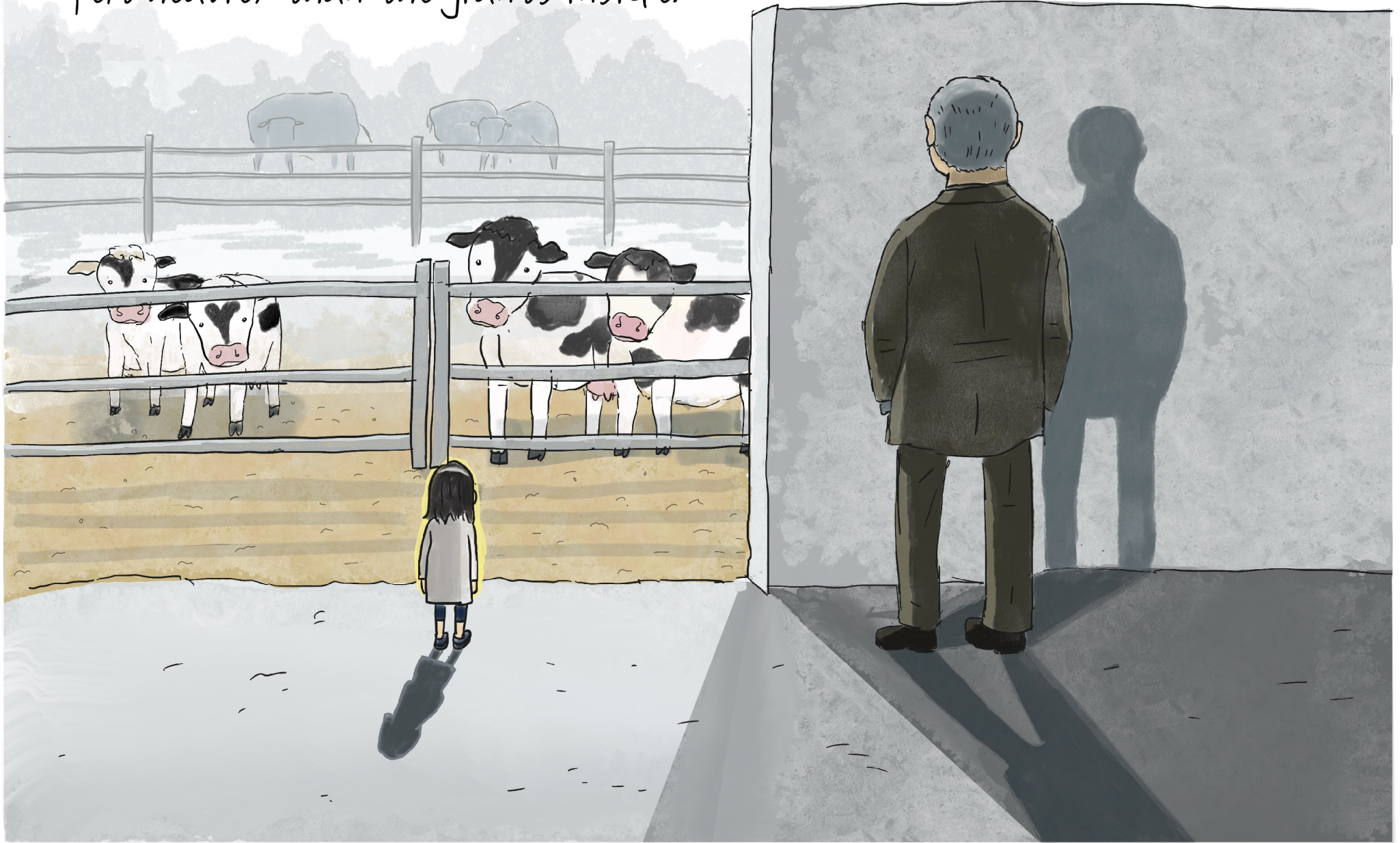


Dr Tomoko Ishibashi
WOAH Regional
Representative for Asia and
the Pacific



Dr Naree Ketusing
WOAH Sub-Regional
Representative for South-East Asia

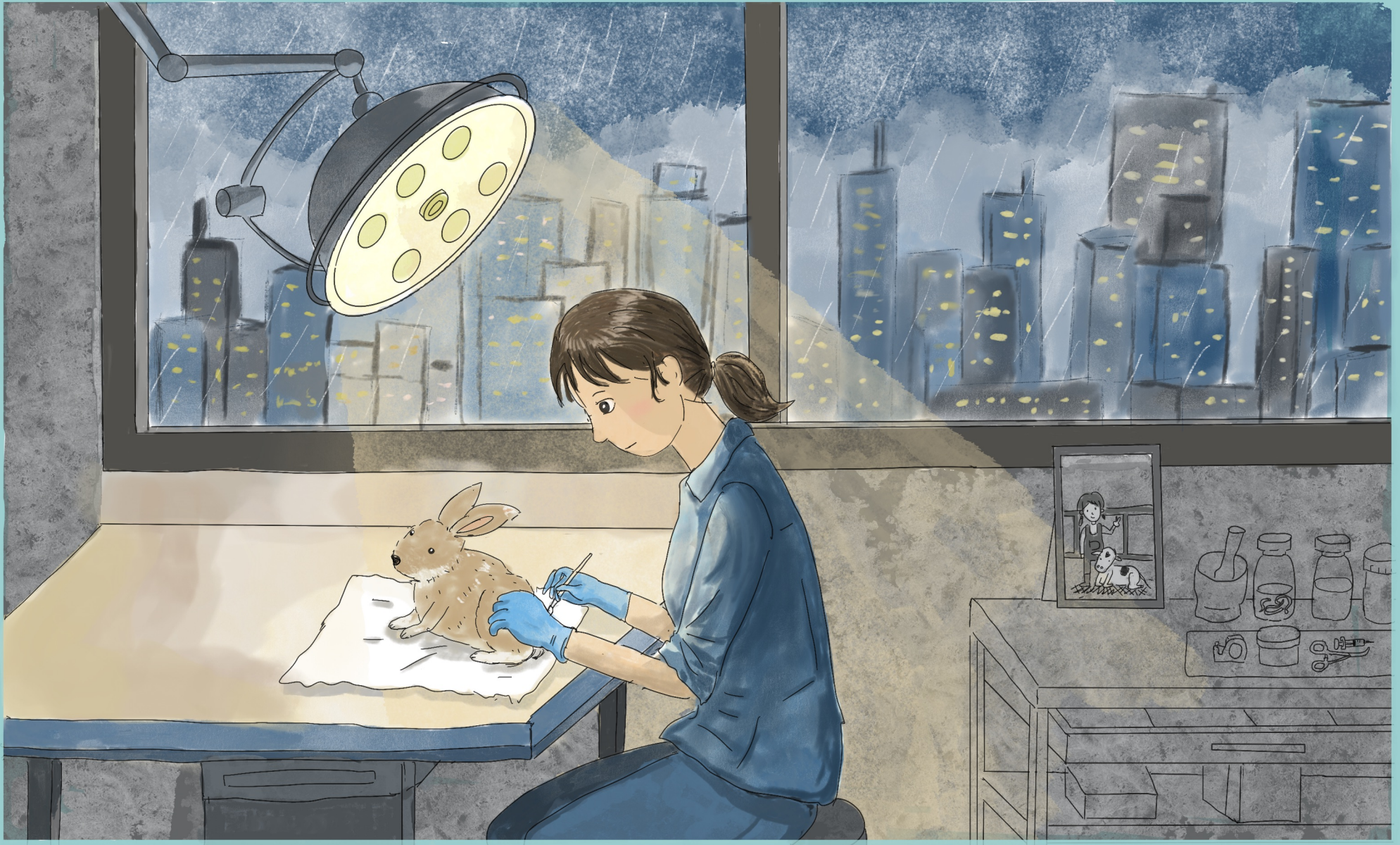
They said the cows were too big for a girl like me. That day, the barn door felt heavier than the giants inside.



"I walked through forests and zoos, healing creatures from all corners of the world. But my heart kept wandering back to a different smell—the scent of hay and wet earth."



"in the quiet surgical nights, I learned that every life is fragile.
but i still remembered the warmth of a thousand-pound breath."



“Opportunity is like a sudden breeze. It whispered :’ Come back. The path is still there.””





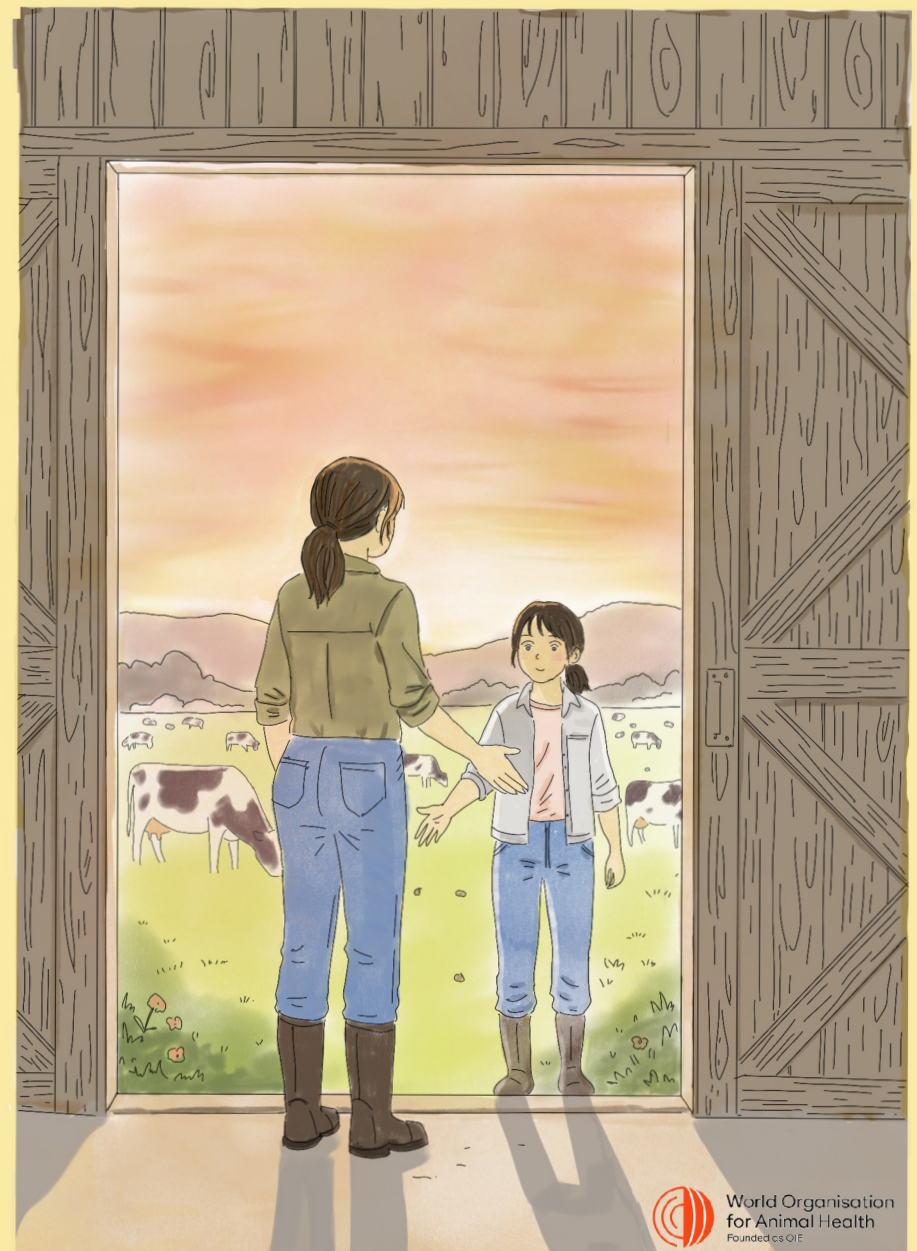
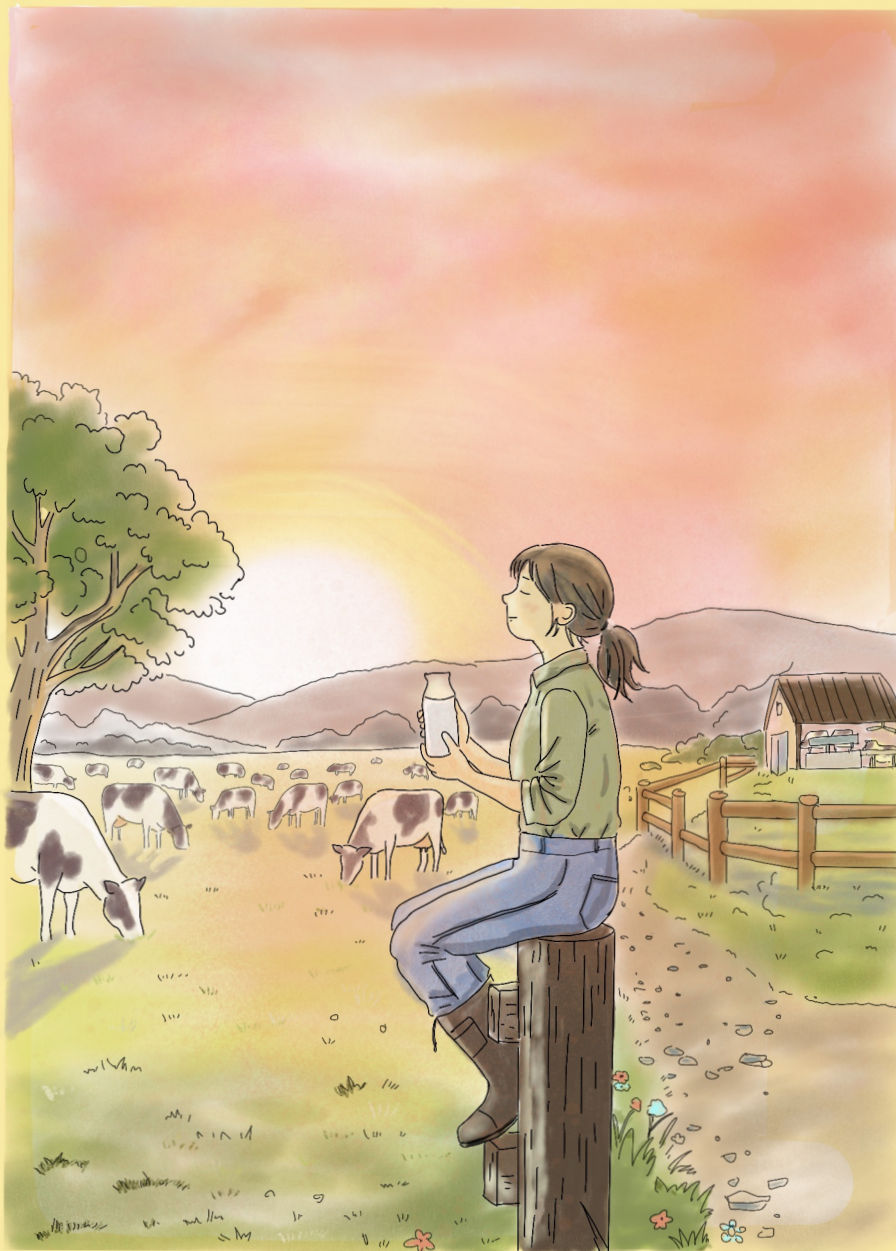
My fingers remembered what
the eyes has forgotten.
Expertise has no gender; it only
speaks through the pulse of life.



When science meets sincerity, the
wall of prejudice begin to crumble.
We both want the same thing :
a healthy, happy cow.

“ The familiar rhythm of their beating hearts told me what my eye had long forgotten . In the warmth of these giants, I am finally home.

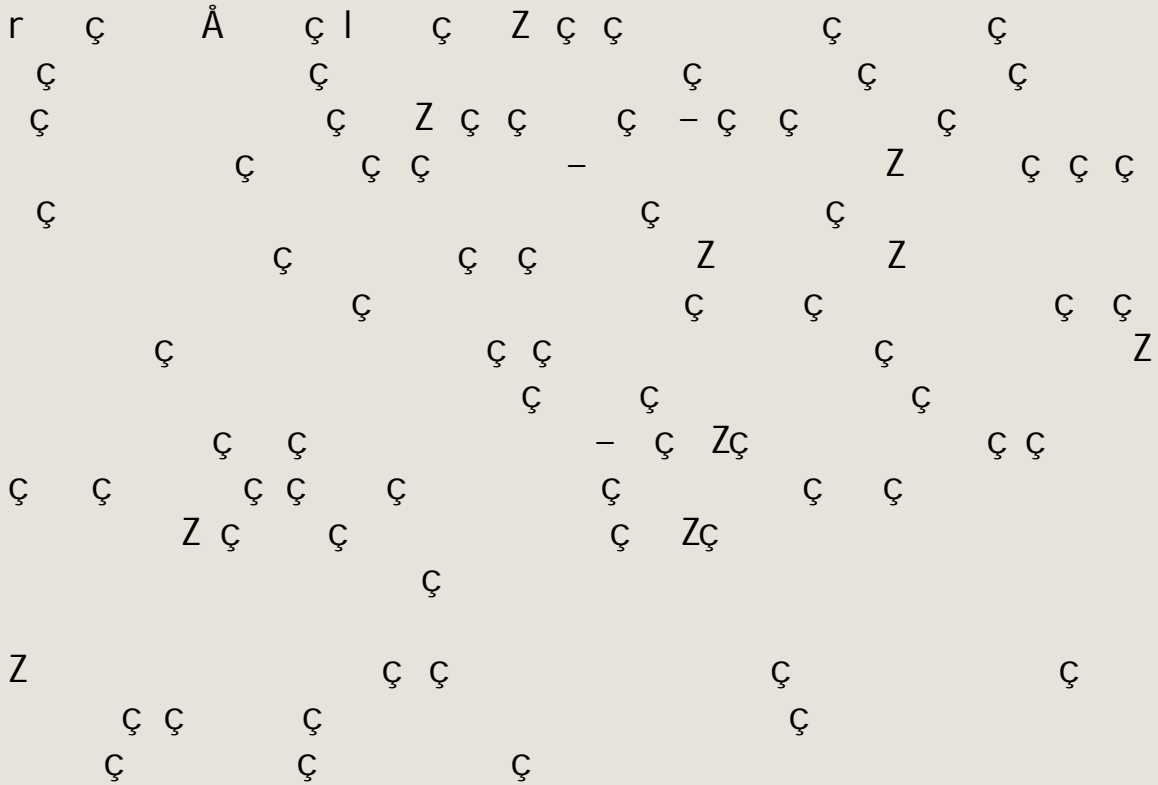




"I took the long way home to learn that I was never too small.
Now I leave the door open, so the next girl can walk in with courage
to love the giants."

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Comic description: The Giants and the Open Door

Overview "The Giants and the Open Door" is a visual memoir of Virginia, a veterinarian whose journey was defined by a spirit that refused to surrender. It explores the emotional landscape of being told one is "too small" for a dream, and the eventual realization that true strength is found in the connection between a healer and a life—no matter its size.




(Note: Subtle references to WOA and FAVA are integrated within the artwork to celebrate the global and regional support for female veterinary professionals in the dairy industry.)

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