

CHEWBAKA

My Life at the Cheetah Conservation Fund

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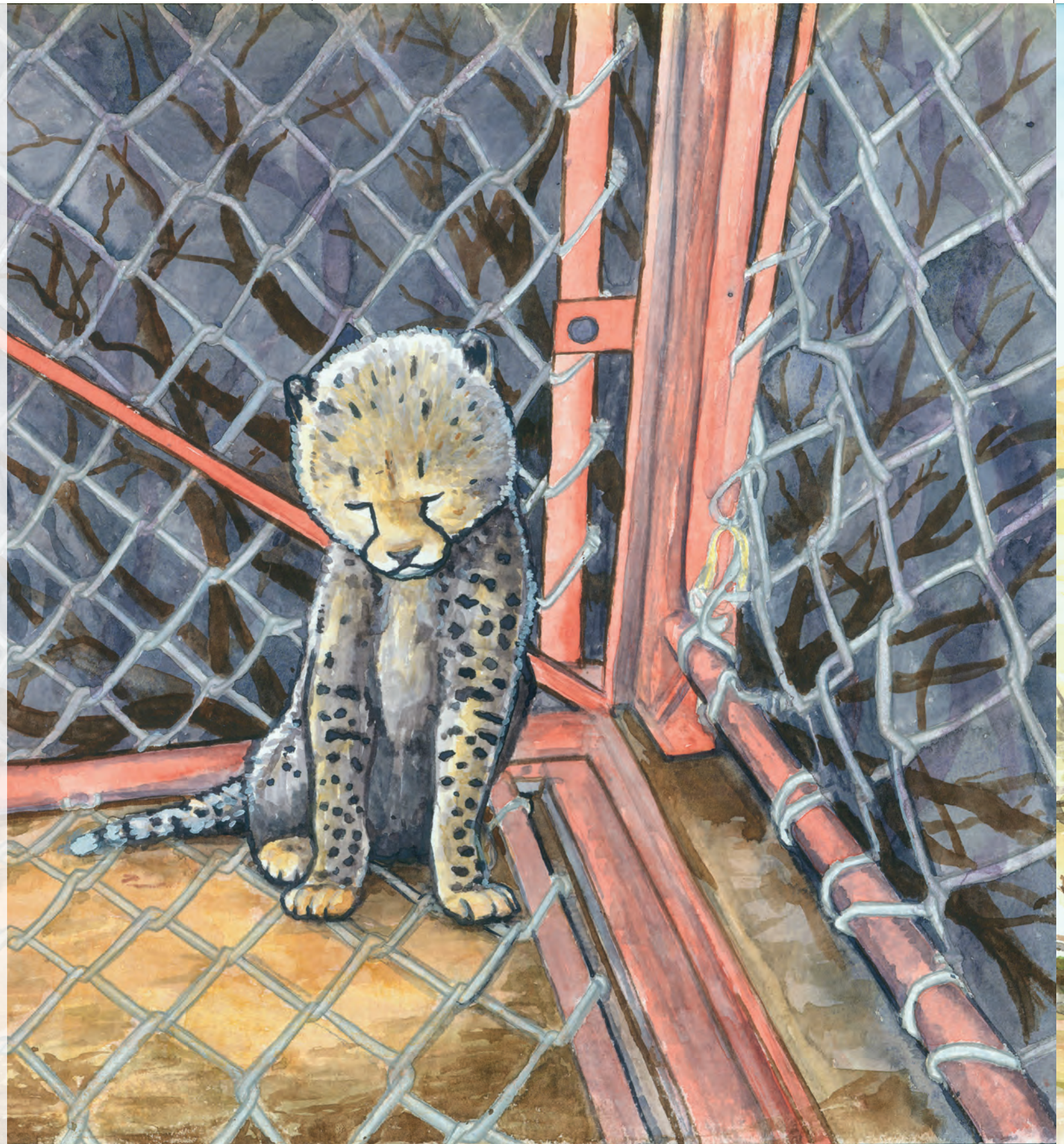


Hi there! My name is **Chewbaaka** (the French spelling). I was named after the big hairy Wookiee who flew the spaceship in *Star Wars*. I lived at the Cheetah Conservation Fund (CCF) in Namibia since I was three weeks old. Dr. Laurie Marker told people how I could help guide Earth's future.



The first couple months of my life were a big struggle for survival. When I was two weeks old, a farmer disturbed my family. He set a cage trap for us and the trap door accidentally fell on my brother and sister and they were killed. My mother was not in the trap with us.

The farmer was scared that I might die without my mother and he gave me cow's milk to drink. It made me very sick, as it is not the right milk for cheetahs.





I soon learned that I could trip her with my front paws, and that was really fun! Dr. Laurie called me "Dit-Dit" when I was a little cub, and together with my faithful guardian, Koya, I would follow her everywhere through the bush, with my baby hairs sticking out all over my back!

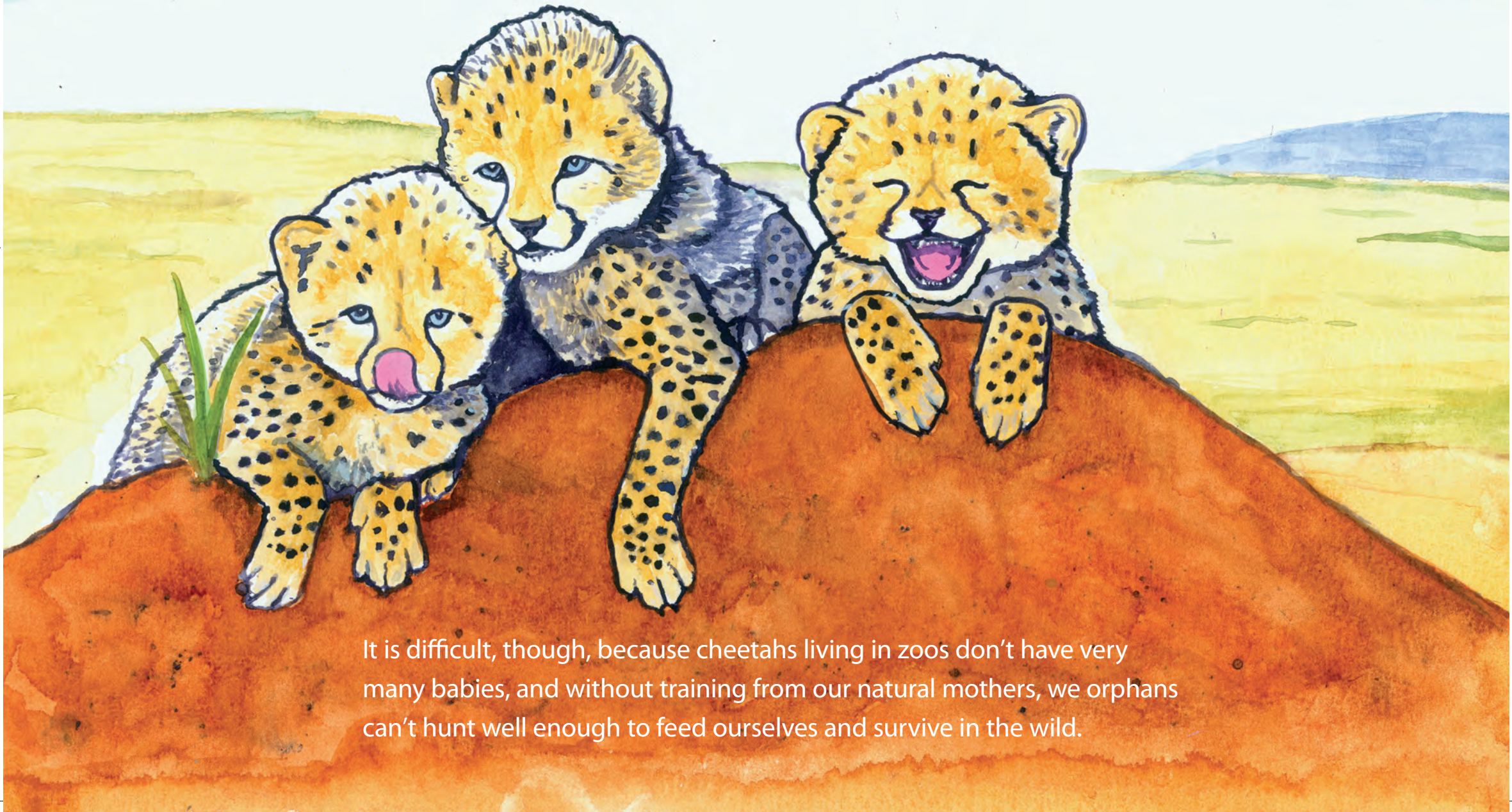




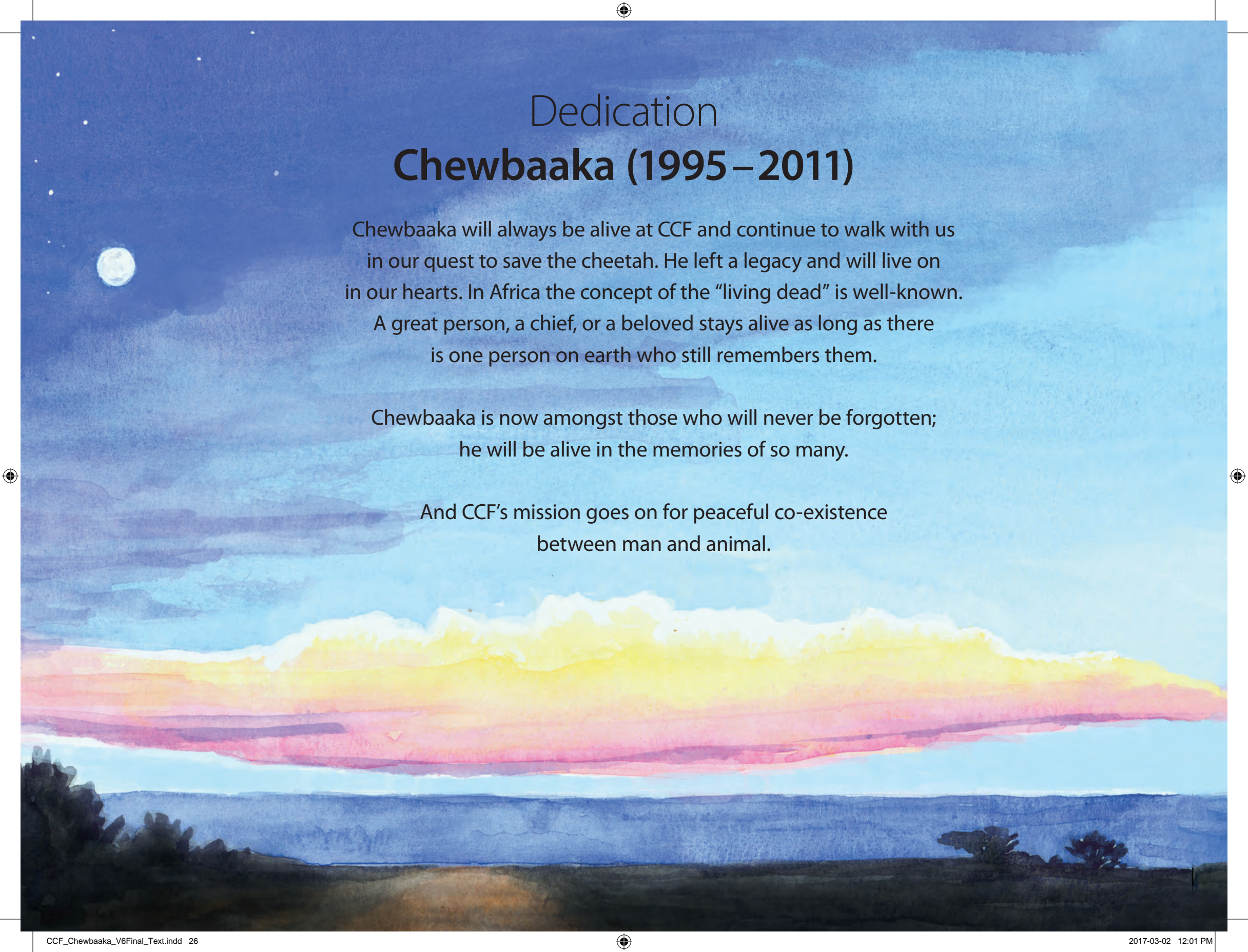
But I couldn't get down. Dr. Laurie came to the rescue by climbing up a ladder to get me down.

The next day I was determined to do it myself. When I started climbing down the tree, I got about half way down and then jumped to the ground. "Doof!" I landed a little harder than I expected, but at least I did it! The more I practiced, the better I became. Soon I was a tree-climbing expert!

I am lucky I don't have to worry about farmers shooting me. We can live longer and are protected in zoos and sanctuaries like CCF, but we do belong out in the wild and not as pets. However, cheetahs like me, an orphan ambassador, play an important part in keeping the wild cheetahs alive. We help teach people about our species.



It is difficult, though, because cheetahs living in zoos don't have very many babies, and without training from our natural mothers, we orphans can't hunt well enough to feed ourselves and survive in the wild.



Dedication

Chewbaaka (1995 – 2011)

Chewbaaka will always be alive at CCF and continue to walk with us in our quest to save the cheetah. He left a legacy and will live on in our hearts. In Africa the concept of the “living dead” is well-known. A great person, a chief, or a beloved stays alive as long as there is one person on earth who still remembers them.

Chewbaaka is now amongst those who will never be forgotten; he will be alive in the memories of so many.

And CCF’s mission goes on for peaceful co-existence between man and animal.