

ACADEMY AWARD WINNER

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WITHERSPOON

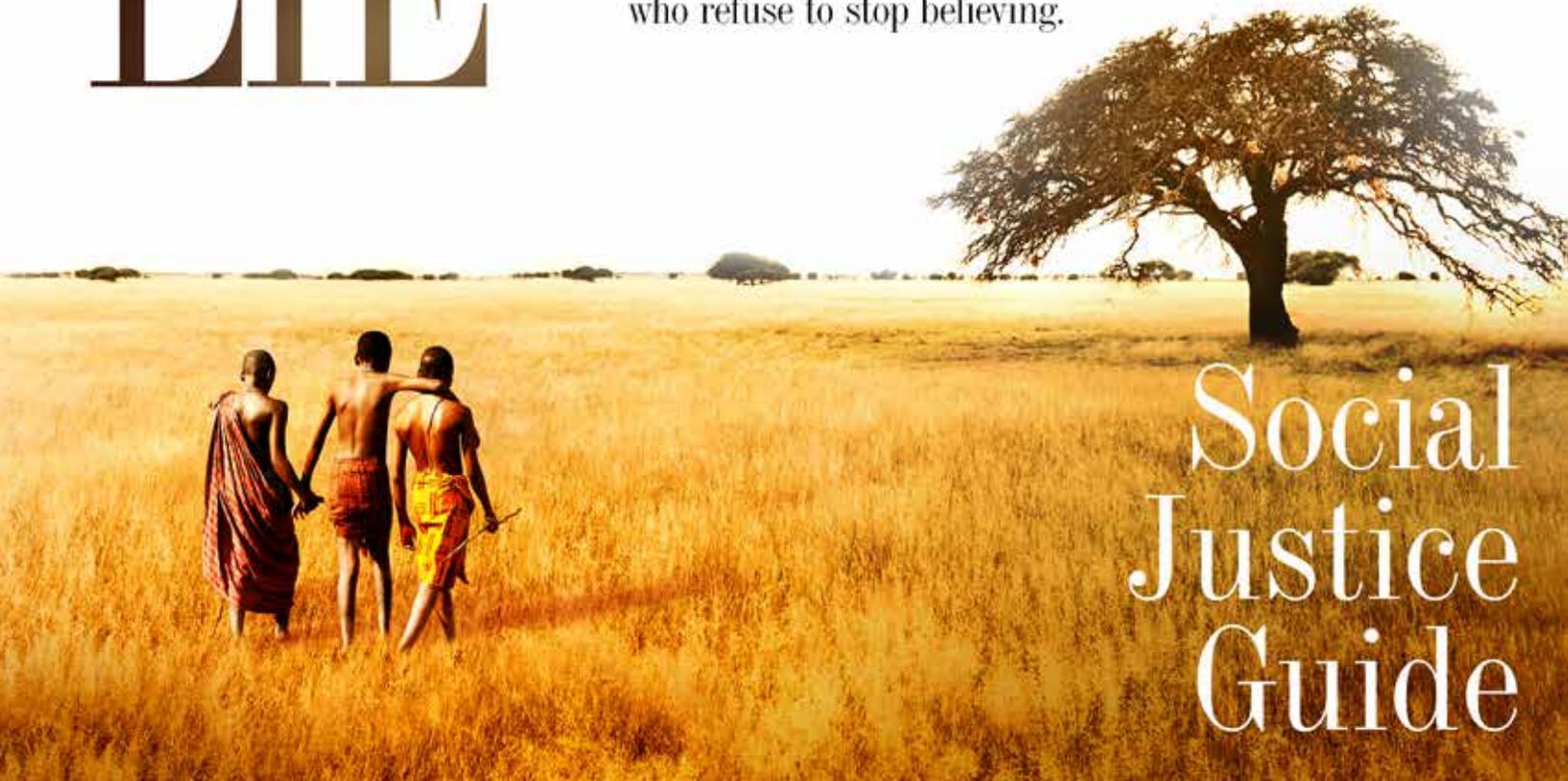
"The Good Lie is not only an honest and powerful portrayal of the refugee experience, it is also a timely story reflecting the faith, hope and resilience of those forced to flee their homes. This film is a must-see."

—Tom Albinson, President, International Association for Refugees



THE
GOOD
LIE

Miracles are made by people
who refuse to stop believing.



Social
Justice
Guide

THE GOOD LIE

We are excited about an upcoming film *The Good Lie* opening in theaters on October 3rd (www.thegoodliemovie.com). *The Good Lie* presents a great platform to share about your organization's unique work alongside a moving story of triumph and transformation. As a partner, we can accomplish more together. Here are some creative steps of partnering:

1. SHARE:

Post, blog, tweet about the film and your organization. Take advantage of the film's publicity to bring awareness to the advocacy work you are doing. Visit TheGoodLieResources.com for sample posts and co-branding ideas.

2. DISCUSS:

Free downloadable resources have been created to spark provocative discourse on poverty, immigration, bureaucracy, and our social system, to name a few. Invite a group of thinkers to the movie and initiate a meaningful dialogue about important issues facing your communities.

3. HOST:

Buy-out an entire screen or purchase group tickets as a fun and fresh way to raise fund for your organization. With a buy-out (approximately \$2,500 or less depending on the size of the theater) or a set group of tickets, your organization can pre-sell the tickets by asking guests for a suggested donation. Your organization can host its own private screening for your investors, supporters, and members. Let us know where we can assist you in this fundraising effort!

Thank you for championing the rights of those in need, for being a voice to those without, for advocating where those are overlooked. You and your work are making a difference.

TOPIC GUIDES:

Theo's Sacrifice

Forefathers—Brotherhood

Jeremiah's Integrity

The Ultimate Good Lie

It Was My Fault

Where is She From?

Where Do We Start?



THE GOOD LIE

Theo's Sacrifice

TO REFLECT ON

Out of all the tragedies the boys and girls experience as they flee for safety, this incident seems to be the most horrific as it is the one that haunts them the most as they grow into adults. They watch as Theo, their leader, willingly sacrifices himself to save them. Later in the film, they are barely able to talk about the event, and Mamere's desire to set this right drives the narrative.

Too often, we think of America as a land of opportunity that everyone else can't wait to get to. We overlook the hardships that newcomers to the U.S. have experienced, focusing instead on the assumed opportunity before them. The opportunity is real, but so is the trauma. America is a safe haven for many people, but often, they do not come here as a first choice. They would rather be home.

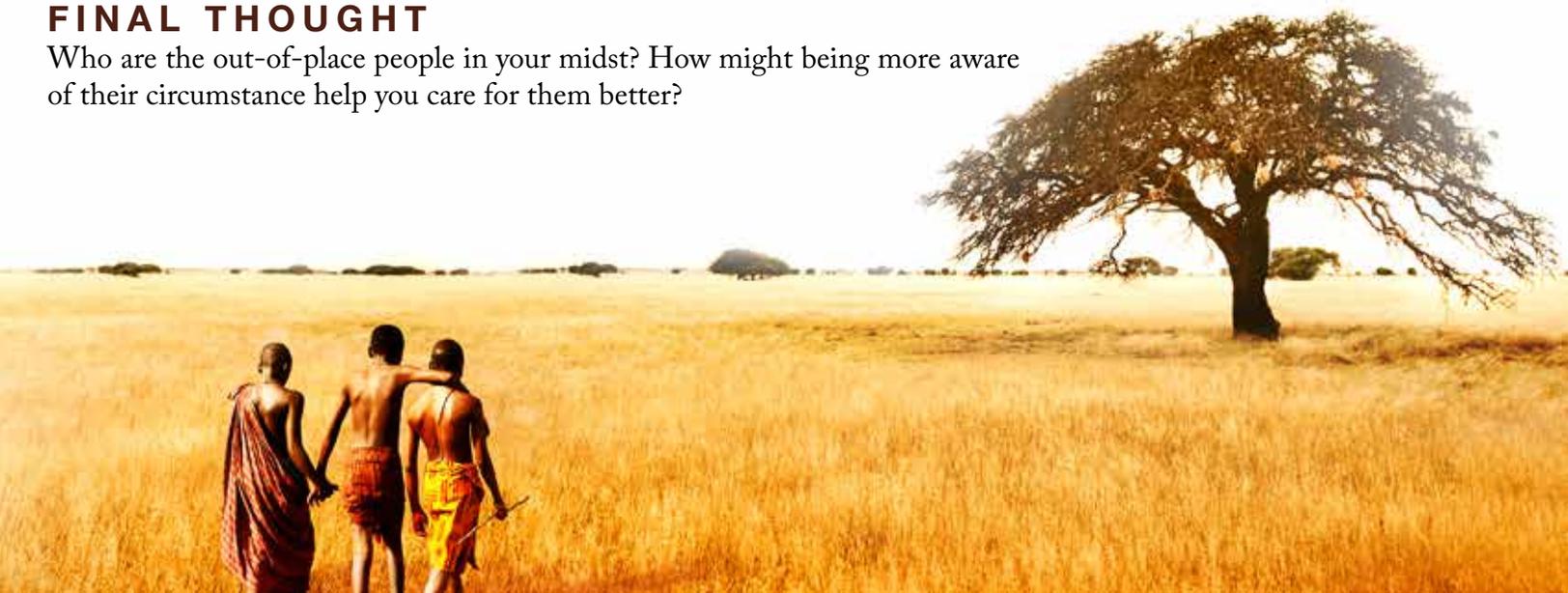
As we work with people like these "lost boys," it's imperative that we remember that they are carrying loss with them. It is not easy for them to be here. Many were running from something. Many are still dealing with the hardships they experienced.

FINAL THOUGHT

Who are the out-of-place people in your midst? How might being more aware of their circumstance help you care for them better?

SCENE

The boys finally rest after days of walking. The morning after, soldiers come dangerously close to the boys hiding in the grass. Mamere awakes, still wrapped in his blanket, stands up and is seen by one of the soldiers. Theo, the oldest of the boys, quickly grabs the same blanket and stands up saying he is alone. Theo sacrifices himself and is taken by the soldiers so that his brothers would not be captured.



THE GOOD LIE

Forefathers—Brotherhood

TO REFLECT ON

Loss of a homeland due to war isn't simply a loss of land. It's a separation from a history as well. The boys play a game where they take turns reciting the names of their many generations of forefathers as a way of binding themselves to their heritage. Then, they have to run for their lives and they lose that deeply rooted sense of belonging.

Later, when Mamere loses his brother, Theo, he is separated even further from his heritage. The immediate loss of his parents, their home, and his brother is substantial, but the uprooting, the complete razing of a people in a place is even greater. Mamere is no longer part of something greater than himself. He is simply himself, more alone than many of us can understand.

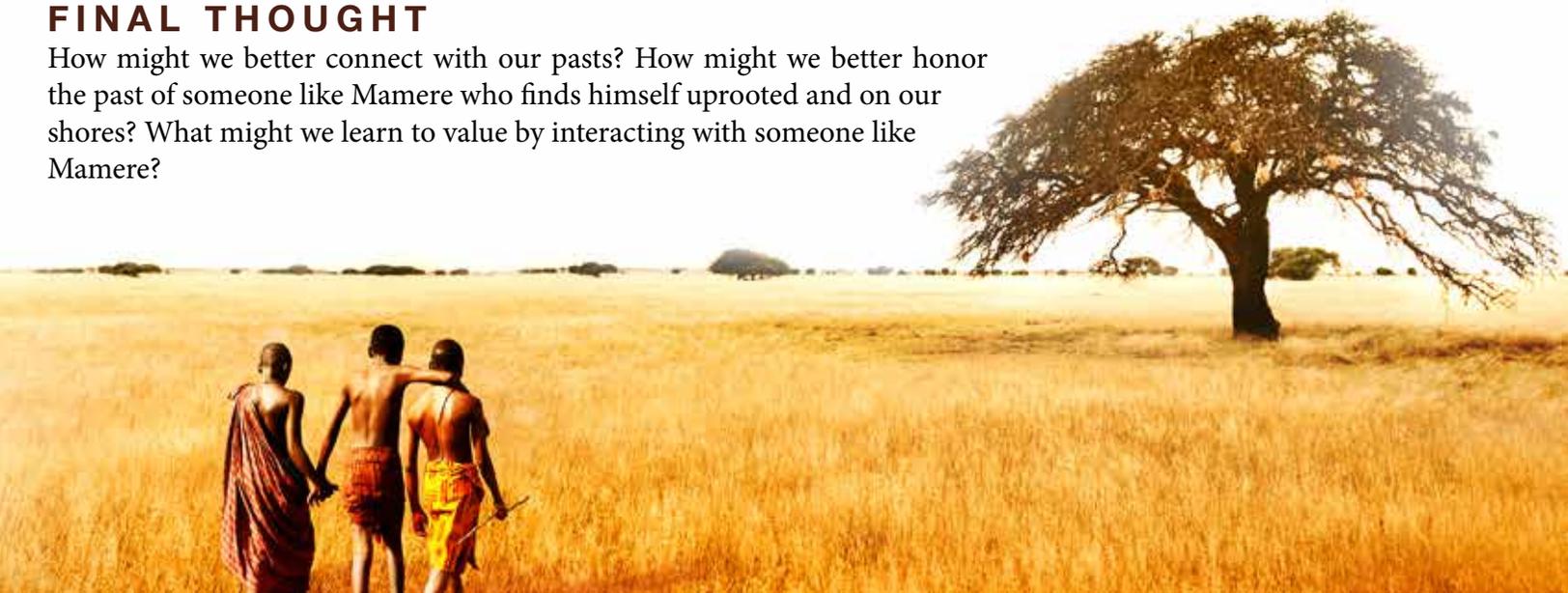
Few of us in the United States have that same sense of connection to a people or a place. Our country is young, and many of our families came here from someplace else. Our ancestral ties were cut many years ago, and all we have now is our recent history to recount. Mamere's life in Sudan, steeped in memories of his ancestors, seems rich compared to the brief history we Americans share.

FINAL THOUGHT

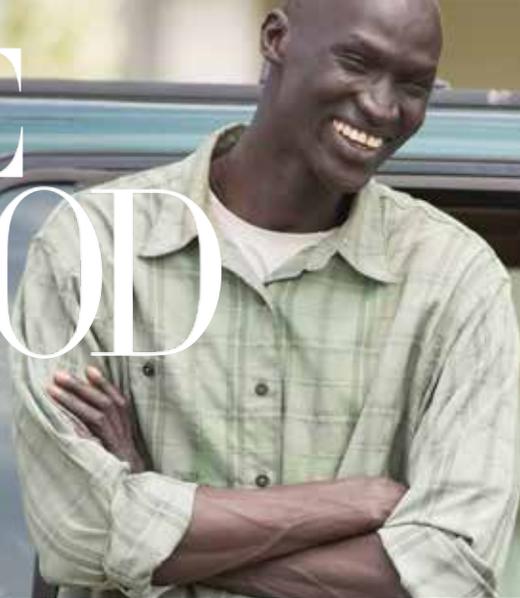
How might we better connect with our pasts? How might we better honor the past of someone like Mamere who finds himself uprooted and on our shores? What might we learn to value by interacting with someone like Mamere?

SCENE

Theo and Mamere play a simple hand over hand game reciting the names of their forefathers. The film opens with this game but the main scene is the morning of Theo's capture where Mamere draws a box in the sand and initiates the game.



THE GOOD LIFE



Jeremiah's Integrity

TO REFLECT ON

Need isn't particular to Africa, of course. There are many people in great need right here in America pushing shopping carts through our back alleys and praying for a fruitful dumpster dive to feed their families for a few more nights.

Jeremiah's decision to quit his job rather than participate in his boss' wasteful practice is a more radical decision than most of us are willing to make. Yet, Jeremiah felt that serving those around him was essential to his life. He chose to meet someone's needs even though it directly cost him. When there are needs around us, it will take effort to meet those needs.

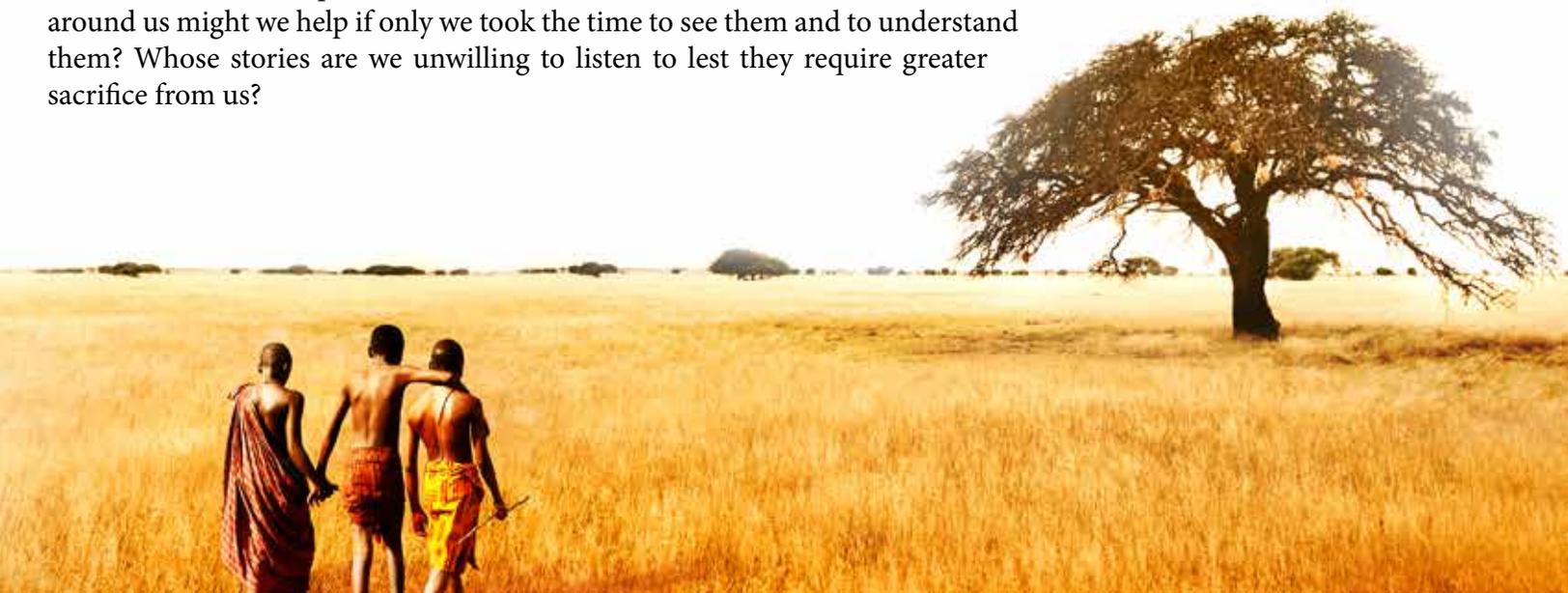
That inability to look past our immediate concerns to see the struggles of another is close to the heart of many of our unethical and selfish practices. Jeremiah's boss sees neither Jeremiah nor the woman Jeremiah is helping. All he sees is an FDA regulation and a cart full of expiring food.

FINAL THOUGHT

When do we let our present concerns blind us to the needs of others? Who around us might we help if only we took the time to see them and to understand them? Whose stories are we unwilling to listen to lest they require greater sacrifice from us?

SCENE

One of the tasks of Jeremiah's job is to discard food that have expired dates. He and Mamere have a difficult time accepting this wasteful requirement in light of their experience with poverty in Sudan. When Jeremiah is scolded for providing this to a homeless woman, he finds this unconscionable and quits.



THE GOOD LIE



The Ultimate Good Lie

TO REFLECT ON

Mamere is taking classes in the United States and studying *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* by Mark Twain. In the classroom, he is asked about Huck's lie and if it was a good lie. Mamere responds that because the outcome saved his friend's life, that it was a good lie.

As well, Huck's lie was considered a good lie because it was done to help someone else and it could've cost Huck if he'd been discovered. The focus of the good lie was serving someone else. Often, lies are self-serving. Mamere, in class, make a key distinction that the lie became good because it saved the life of another person.

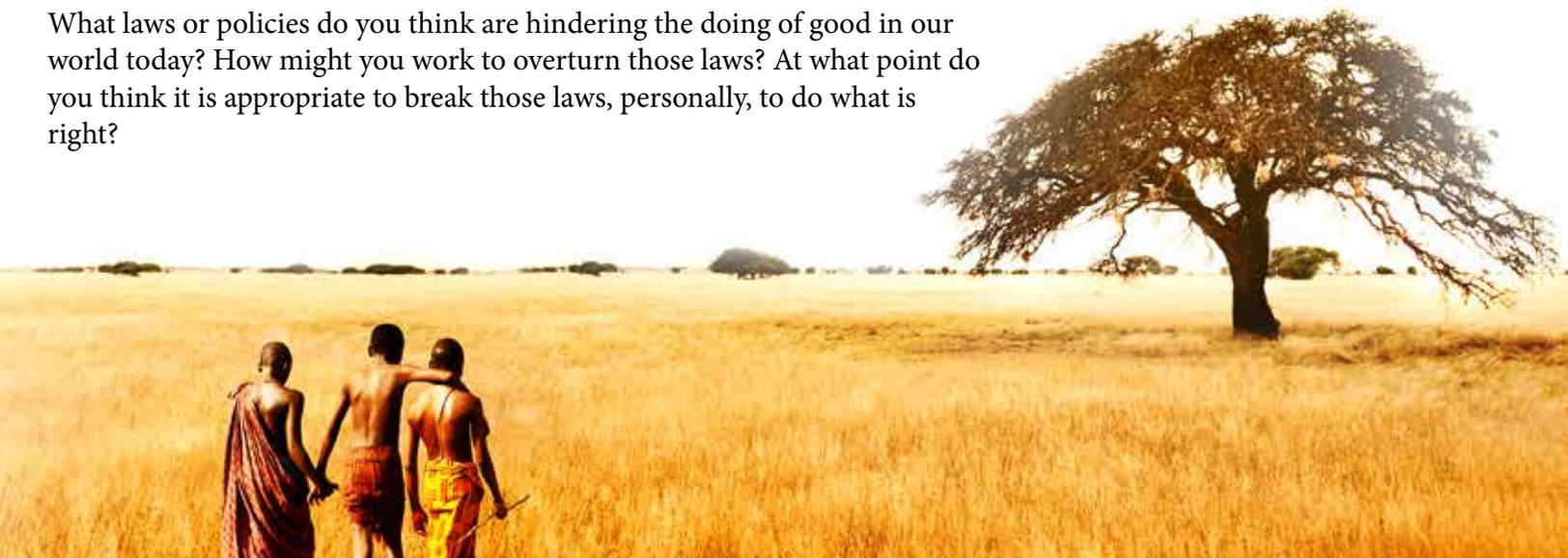
Are there such things as "good" lies? Is it right to break the law to do the right thing? Certainly it is, because the ultimate law we are supposed to obey isn't the state. The ultimate laws are the laws of justice and love. Those laws supersede all others, and sometimes, when what is right is clear and there is no other way, we must adhere to the laws of justice and love no matter the cost.

FINAL THOUGHT

What laws or policies do you think are hindering the doing of good in our world today? How might you work to overturn those laws? At what point do you think it is appropriate to break those laws, personally, to do what is right?

SCENE

Mamere is taking classes in the United States and studying *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* by Mark Twain. In the classroom, he is asked about Huck's lie and if it was a good lie. Mamere responds that because the outcome saved his friend's life, that it was a good lie.



THE GOOD LIE

It Was My Fault

TO REFLECT ON

Mamere has become overwhelmed with his circumstances. Escaping difficulty in Africa, he and his family have encountered obstacles in America. With every choice Mamere makes, he struggles to escape the guilt of the past. He feels as if he is at the center of everything that has gone wrong and thus, concludes incorrectly, that he is the fault of it all, beginning with the taking of Theo by the soldiers.

When we are facing difficult situations, it's easy to begin to turn towards blame. We can blame others or we can blame ourselves. And yet, blaming just misdirects. While sometimes there are people at fault for the tragedies of life, sometimes terrible things happen and no matter what we tried to do, they can't be stopped.

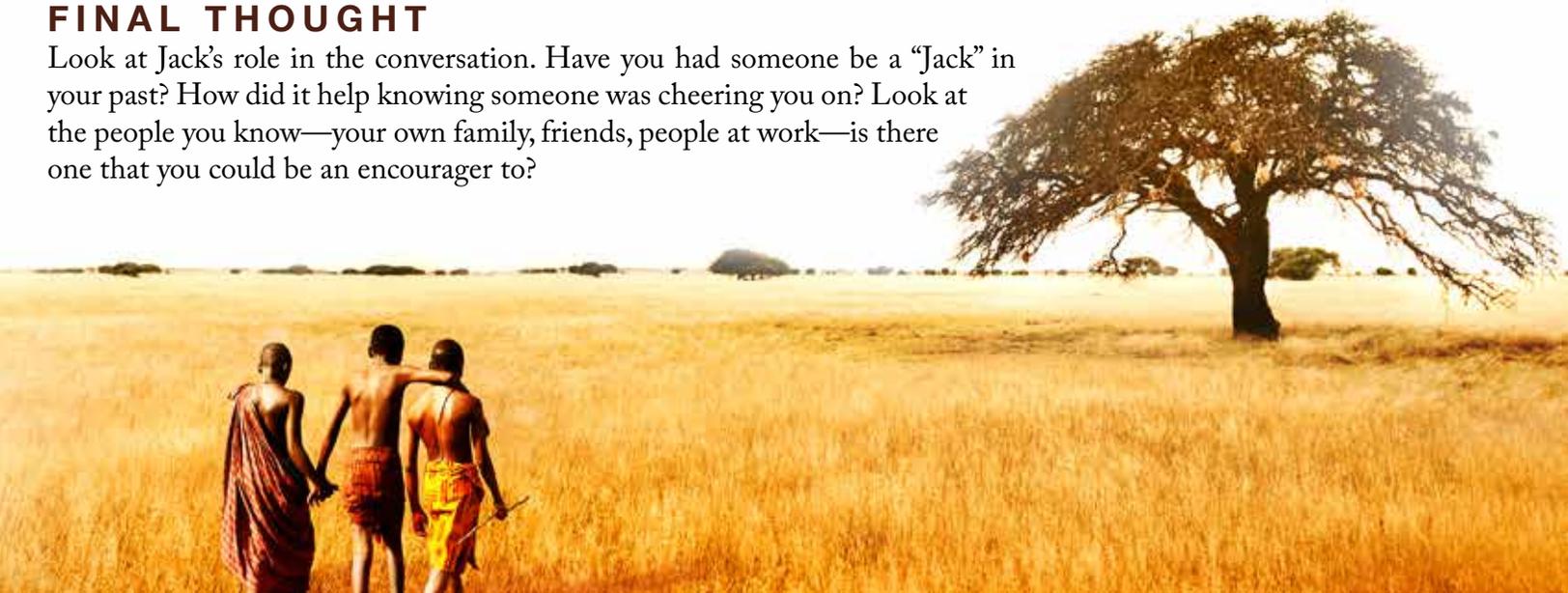
Success in life is to move past the moment and place it behind us. We can not blame our way to success and happiness. Blaming keeps our eyes focused on the past. And yet, success lies in the future.

FINAL THOUGHT

Look at Jack's role in the conversation. Have you had someone be a "Jack" in your past? How did it help knowing someone was cheering you on? Look at the people you know—your own family, friends, people at work—is there one that you could be an encourager to?

SCENE

Late at night, Jack talks with Mamere who is wrought with guilt. Mamere feels as if he has once again failed the family and lost another brother as he had lost Theo. Jack reminds Mamere that his brother Theo made his choice and that Mamere should not live in the guilt of that one moment.



THE GOOD LIE



Where is She From?

TO REFLECT ON

Immigration is a difficult subject in America. There are strong opinions on both sides. There are concerns as to how immigration affects the security of current citizens, yet, there are also concerns about the country's legacy as an collective immigrant population. It's easy to become discouraged in the wake of so many strong opinions and the seemingly unsurmountable obstacle of reform and change. Is the system broken? Is there too much "red tape?" Is it impossible for someone to become a citizen legally? What is our obligation to those that are immigrants? These are questions that still need answered. They will not be answered if we are unwilling to discuss them.

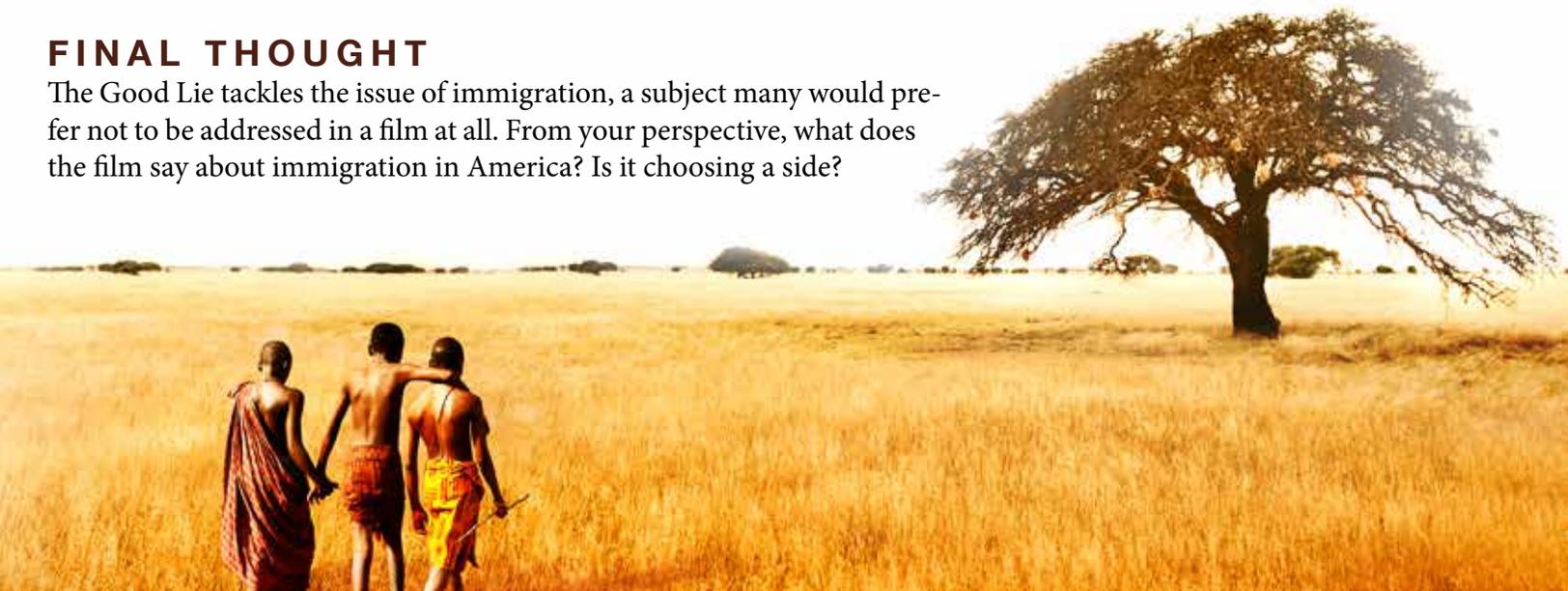
The first step to creating change is to create conversation. Where can you share on this subject? How can you share in a way that creates effective and reasonable communication? What other questions should we be discussing in regards to this topic? Consider also educating yourself first. Read and research on the topic of immigration. Look at the current and upcoming laws that are moving through the legal system. And then share your discoveries with someone else. Again, the first step towards change is conversation.

FINAL THOUGHT

The Good Lie tackles the issue of immigration, a subject many would prefer not to be addressed in a film at all. From your perspective, what does the film say about immigration in America? Is it choosing a side?

SCENE

Carrie works to reunite the boys with their sister. She encounters layers of bureaucracy in her way. Despite the barriers, she persists.



THE GOOD LIFE

Where Do We Start?

TO REFLECT ON

We look around and we can so easily see the needs of others. Yet, we struggle to help. Helping others around us can feel daunting. Often, we see the need and the need becomes bigger than us. We feel as if there's too much work to do in order to just get ready to meet the need. We can feel overwhelmed and under-equipped.

The hardest part of facing the injustices of the world and meeting the needs of others is sometimes just starting. The old physics concept is very true: an object at rest tends to stay at rest; an object in motion tends to stay in motion. So how do we get "in motion?" First, we must accept our responsibility. Then, break the big task down into the smallest part possible. Maybe it's just a phone call, or a flier, or simply researching more information about it. Whatever that first step is, make it a small one, and then take it.

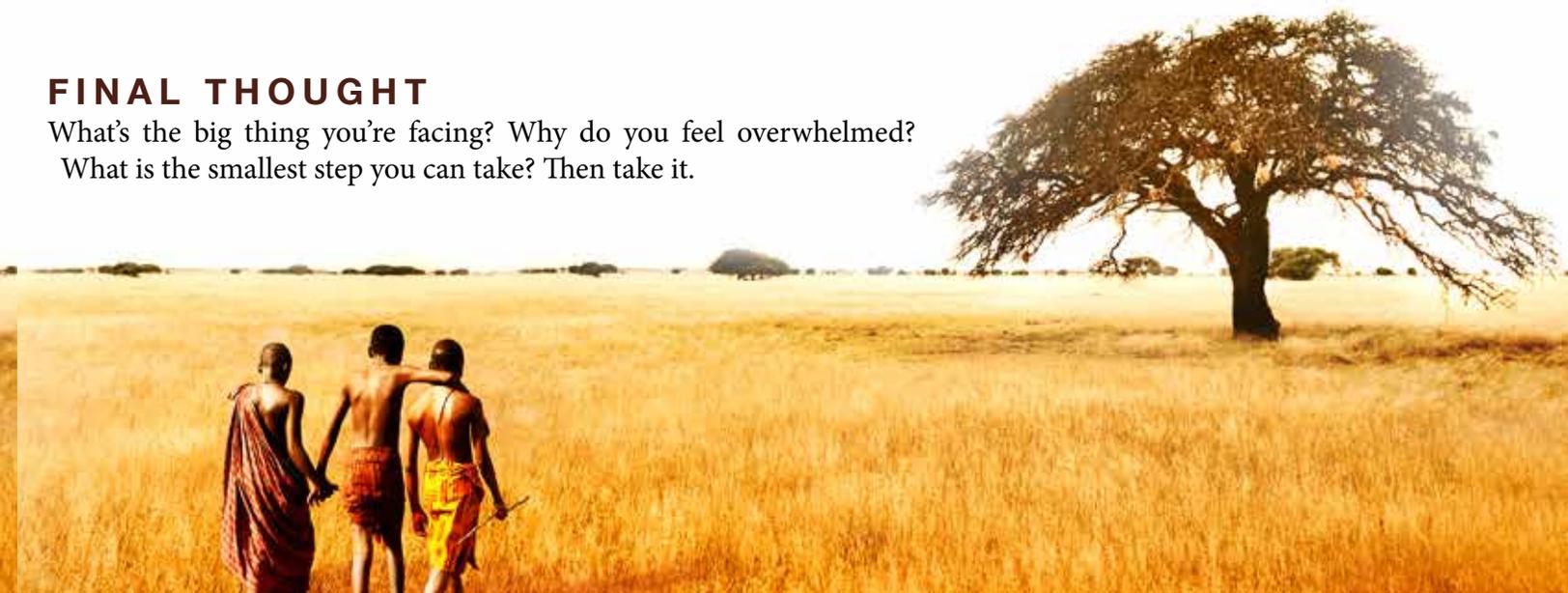
The best first step is to get someone else involved. Whatever your choosing to tackle, tell someone else about it. Recruit them. Having someone alongside you makes the big seem smaller. So, start your team. Where do you start? Start by making this a team-effort. Start with something small. But whatever you do, you must start.

FINAL THOUGHT

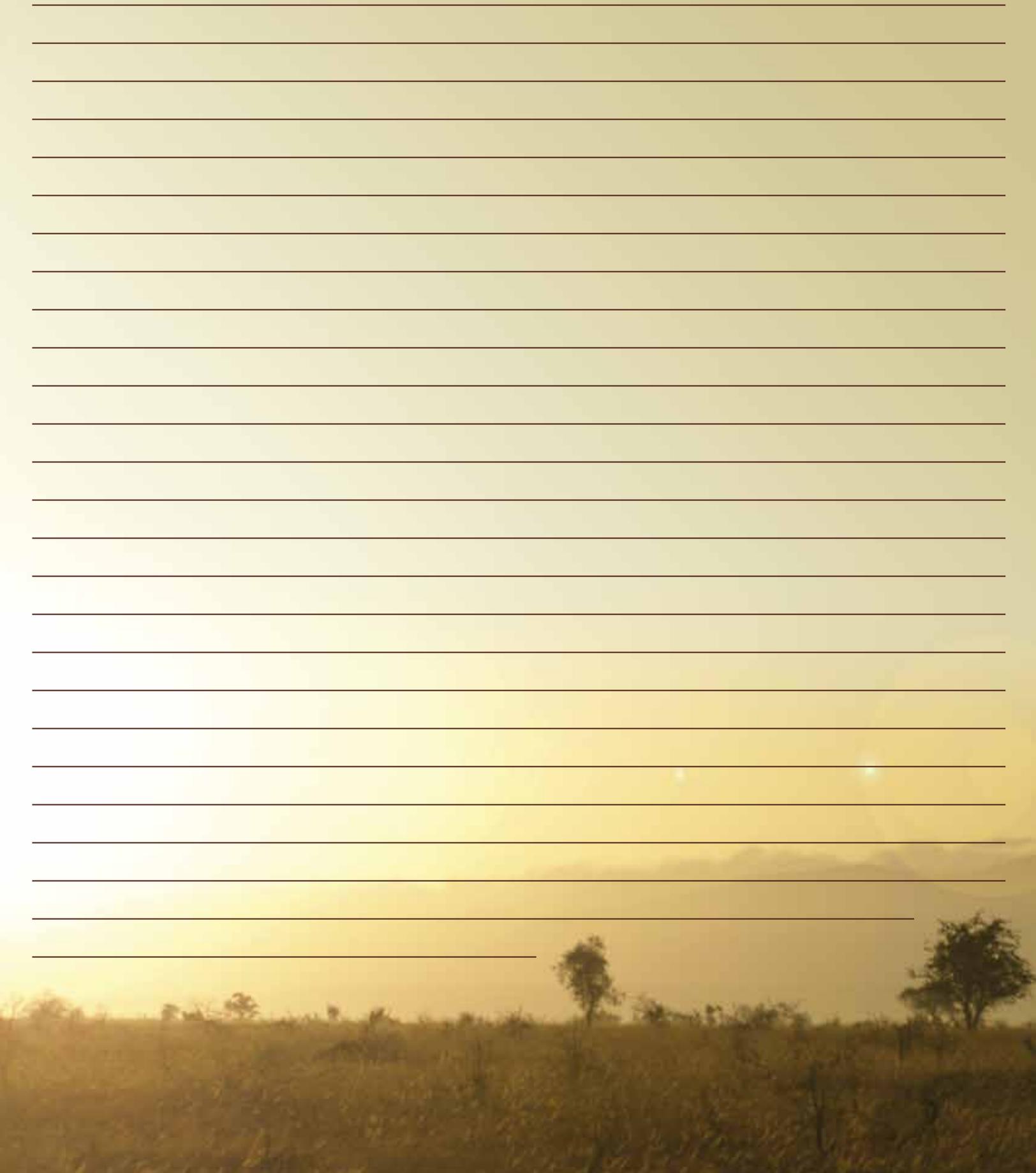
What's the big thing you're facing? Why do you feel overwhelmed?
What is the smallest step you can take? Then take it.

SCENE

Carrie works to ready her home for a young woman she has not met. She opens up her life and her home to reunite Mamere's family and bring their sister back to them. She does not know the sister and yet, she not only welcomes her but she prepares her house in order to receive her.



THOUGHTS & REFLECTION





“*The Good Lie* is the best portrayal I’ve seen of the countless stories I’ve heard first hand. It beautifully tells a very difficult story while capturing the heart of the Sudanese people. It’s a story of determination, love, and sacrifice that resonates with and connects each one of us. With so much conflict erupting around the world, including afresh in South Sudan, this film is a must-see.”

—Missy Williams, Co-founder and Chairman, *Seed Effect*

“War and persecution forcibly displaced over 30,000 new people every day in 2013. This overwhelming trend continues into 2014. *The Good Lie* is not only an honest and powerful portrayal of the refugee experience, it is also a timely story reflecting the faith, hope and resilience of those forced to flee their homes. This film is a must-see.”

—Tom Albinson, Ambassador for Refugees,
Displaced and Stateless People, World Evangelical Alliance
President, *International Association for Refugees*
Source of statistic: UNHCR, 2013 Global Trends (published June 2014).



*“The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself
in the service of others.”*

—Mahatma Gandhi



TheGoodLieResources.com