



The Tortoiseshell Beetle

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Level 3

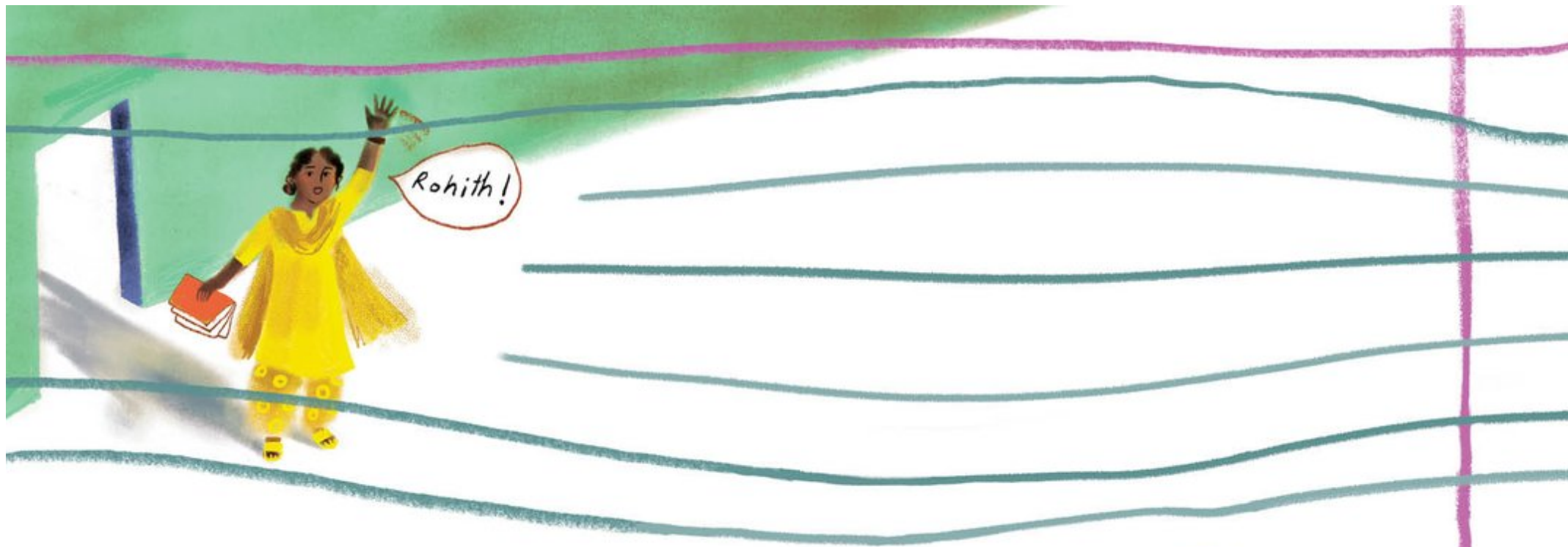


There's a boy in school
Who sits near the blackboard every day,
Squinting at the chalk-words
To get his spellings right.

DATE 9-2023

the large banyan
tree

Rohith tries hard to fix himself
With his small, blunt pencil,
Which won't stop inverting his letters.

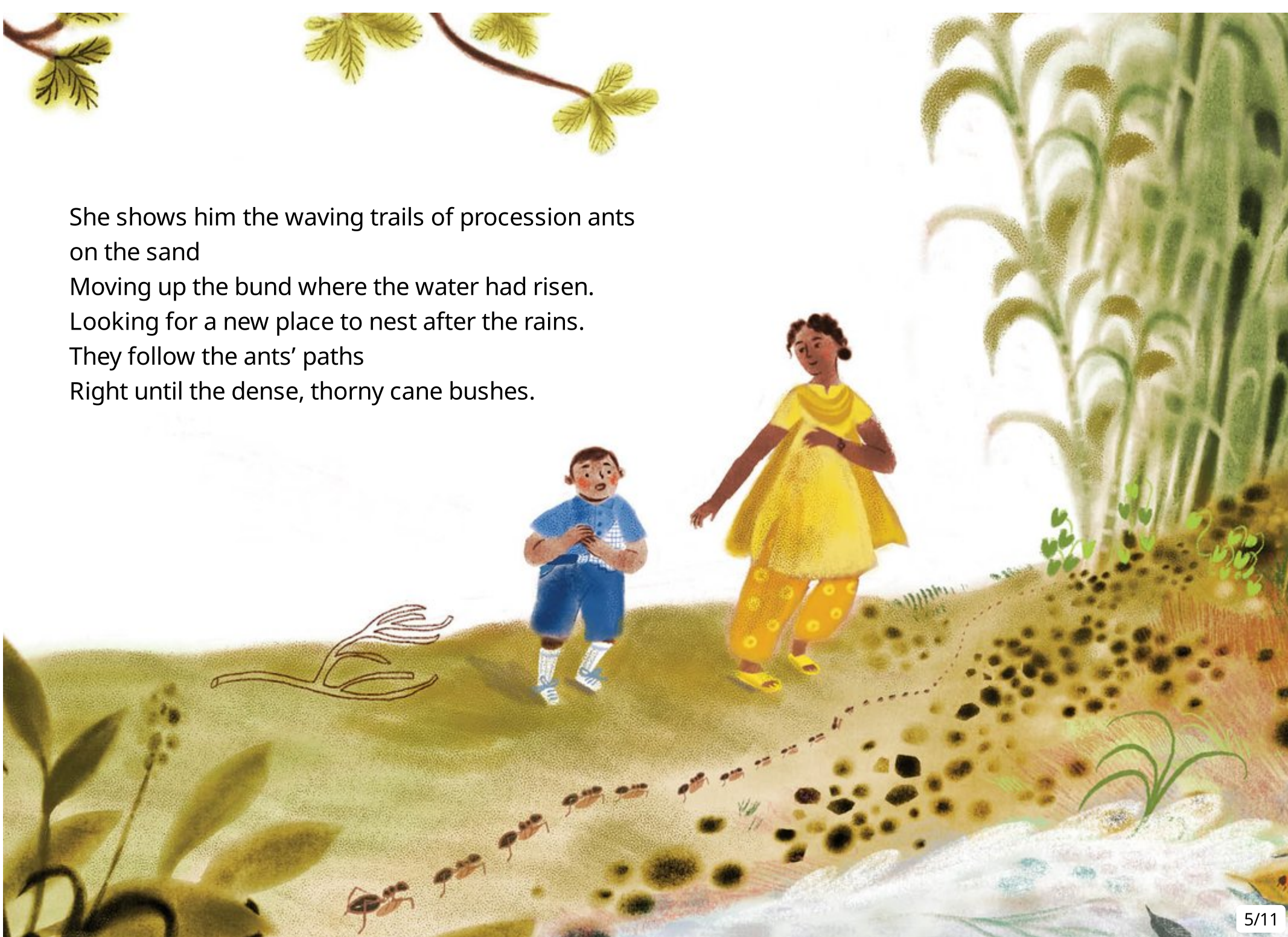


One monsoon day as he sits alone,
Staring at the margins in his notebook,
Uneasy to the noise within the school's four walls,
Sudha Ma'am calls him outside.

With his small, chequered handkerchief
She wipes away the dejected faces of other adults
And takes him on a walk along the lake nearby.



She shows him the waving trails of procession ants
on the sand
Moving up the bund where the water had risen.
Looking for a new place to nest after the rains.
They follow the ants' paths
Right until the dense, thorny cane bushes.







Sudha Ma'am and Rohith watch the skittering frogs
As they run on the water's surface.
When they walk close to them, the frogs plop into
the tea-brown lake,
Which grows lily pads for the frogs to rest on.

Palm swifts make long ribbons with their flight,
then settle among the palm fronds.



A colorful illustration of a young boy with dark skin and hair, wearing a blue shirt, looking up with a curious expression at a morning glory plant. The plant has large, heart-shaped green leaves and several purple flowers. Some leaves show small, dark, hairy specks and tiny white paths, which the boy is pointing at. The background is a soft, light blue sky with a few white clouds.

Under the heart-shaped leaves of the morning-glory plants,
Rohith finds strange black hairy specks
Nibbling little paths on the leaves' laminae.
He shows them to Sudha Ma'am and asks who they are.

An illustration of a young boy and a young girl in a garden. The boy, in the foreground, is looking up with a surprised expression, his hand raised. He has dark hair and is wearing a blue shirt. The girl, behind him, is also looking up and has her hands raised. She has curly hair and is wearing a yellow shirt. They are surrounded by green leaves and purple flowers. Several insects, including beetles and caterpillars, are shown on the leaves, some with holes in them. The background is a bright, hazy white.

She says,
“No one would ever guess that,
months later, these small, slowly
crawling creatures...



"Transform into tortoiseshell beetles.
The only creatures that shine like golden star-glitter
By this lakeside."

Rohith's face brightens like the morning sun
rising over the palmyras.
He says, "Let's go find the beetle."



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The Tortoiseshell Beetle

(English)

Sudha Ma'am knows that Rohith struggles inside the four walls of the school. So the two of them go for a walk by the lake. They meet a tortoiseshell beetle who, just like the boy, walks its own path.

This is a Level 3 book for children who are ready to read on their own.



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