



It's Not Fair

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Level 3

Aisha and Maria were best friends.
They walked to school together.
They played hopscotch together.
They fell sick together.

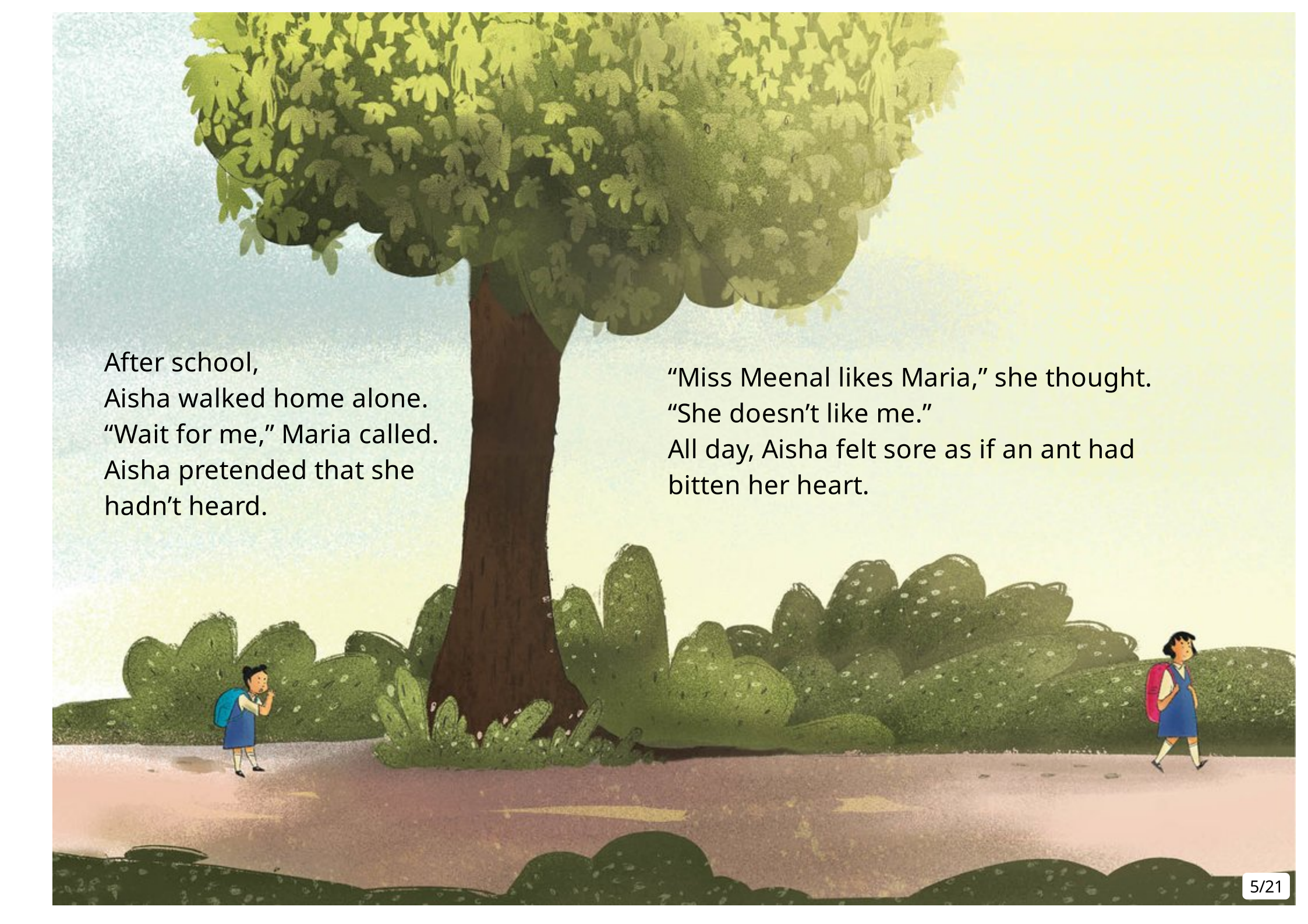


One day, they sang a song
for their classteacher.
"Lovely," Miss Meenal said.
Aisha and Maria smiled.
"Maria, you have a beautiful voice,"
Miss Meenal continued.
Maria smiled even more.





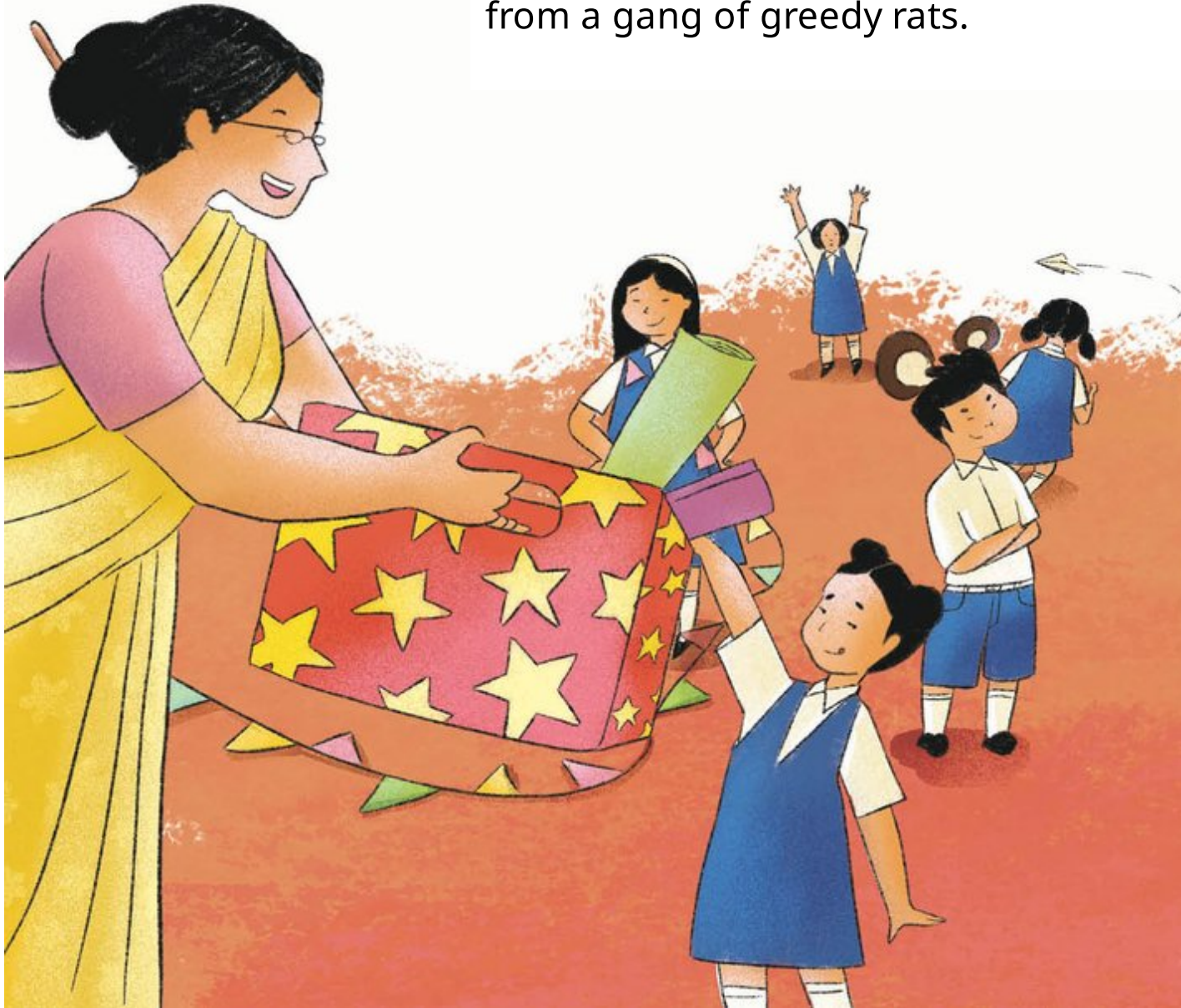
But Aisha stopped smiling.

A large, leafy tree with a thick brown trunk stands in the center. Two children, Aisha and Maria, are walking home on a path. Aisha is on the left, wearing a blue dress and a blue backpack, looking back over her shoulder. Maria is on the right, wearing a blue dress and a pink backpack, walking away. The background features green bushes and a light blue sky.

After school,
Aisha walked home alone.
“Wait for me,” Maria called.
Aisha pretended that she
hadn’t heard.

“Miss Meenal likes Maria,” she thought.
“She doesn’t like me.”
All day, Aisha felt sore as if an ant had
bitten her heart.

A week later, Miss Meenal had news for the class.
“We are going to put up a play,” she said. Everyone was excited.
The play was about a brave butterfly who saved her friends
from a gang of greedy rats.



Aisha really, really, really wanted
to be the brave butterfly.



The next day, the students
were given their parts.
Amol was a greedy rat.
Sarika was a dancing flower.

Maria was
the brave butterfly.



Aisha was only a silly snail.
Aisha wanted to howl and stamp her feet.
Her heart felt as if it had been stung by an angry bee.



At lunch break, Maria offered Aisha a chocolate biscuit.
Aisha turned away.
All day, Aisha wouldn't talk to Maria.

She wouldn't talk to Amol because he smiled at Maria.
She wouldn't talk to Sarika because she said Maria would
make a pretty butterfly.
"Everyone likes Maria," she thought.
"No one likes me."



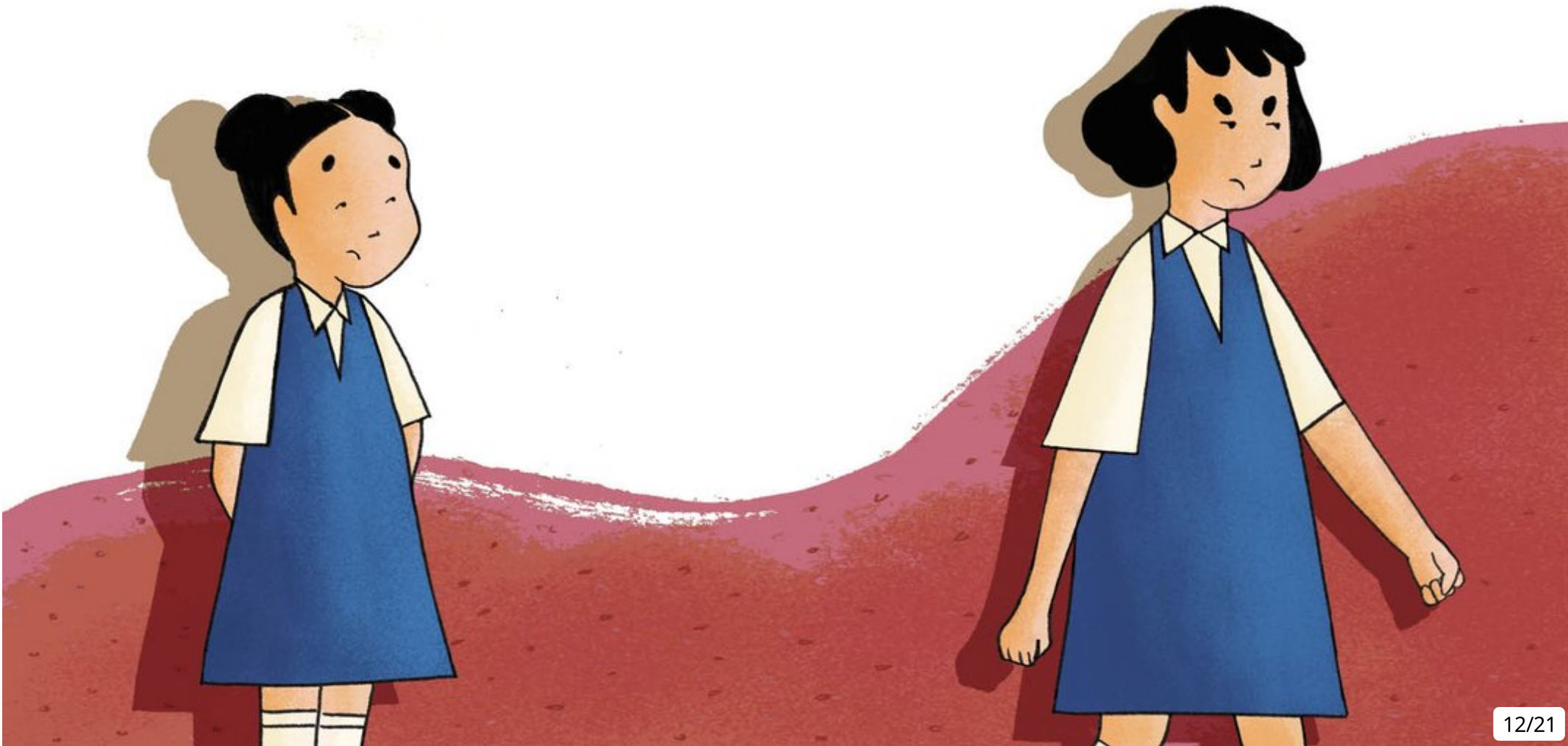
Rehearsals started.
Maria had to sing two full songs.
Aisha had to sing three lines of a song,
along with two other snails.

Every day, Aisha's heart became
fatter with fury and pain.
"It's not fair," she thought.
"Good things happen only to Maria."



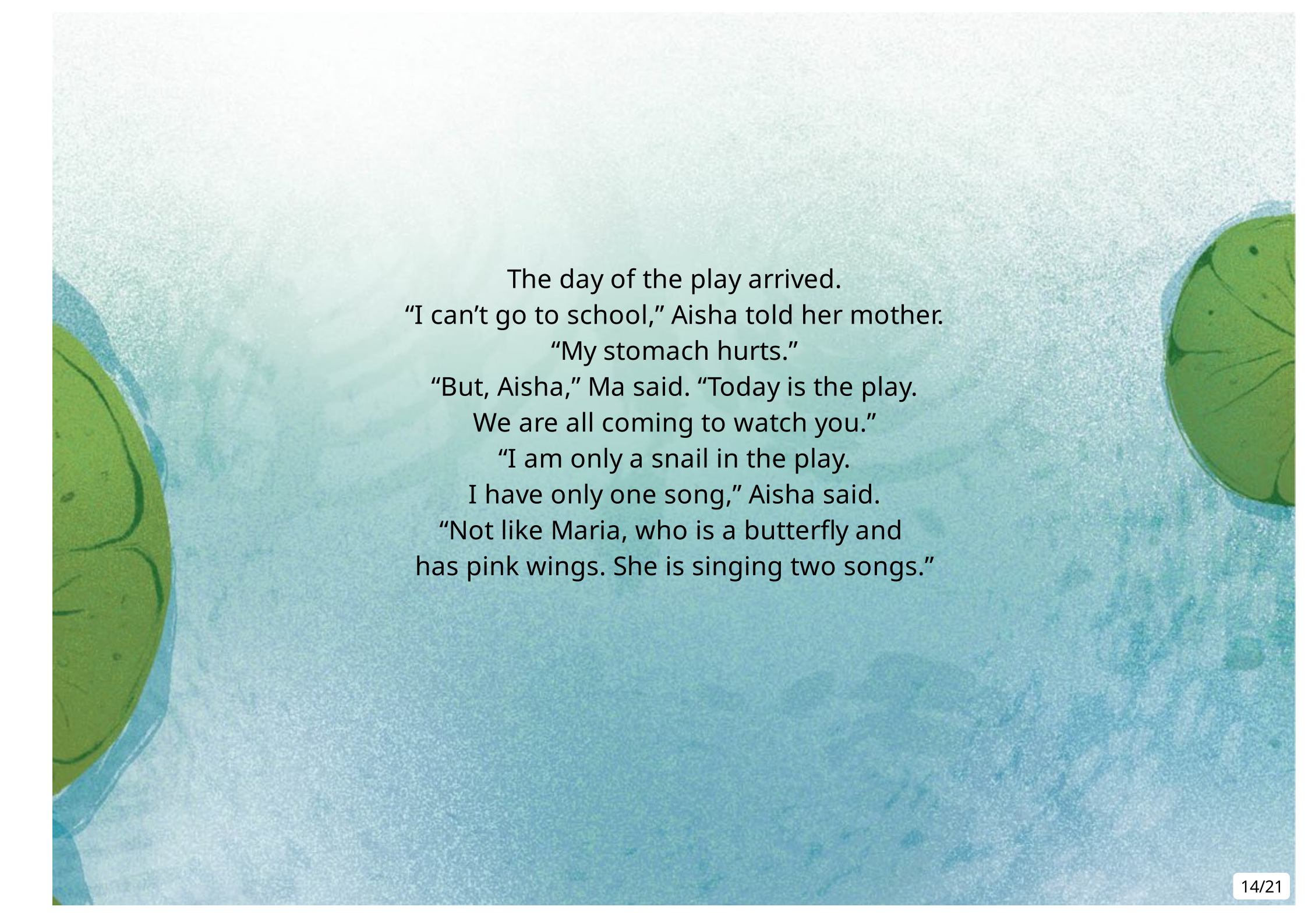
The costumes arrived.
Maria had pink and silver wings.
Aisha had a dull grey T-shirt and grey tights.
Maria came to look at Aisha's costume.

Aisha would not show it to her.
"Is something wrong?" Maria asked.
"Are you angry with me?"
Aisha just walked away.

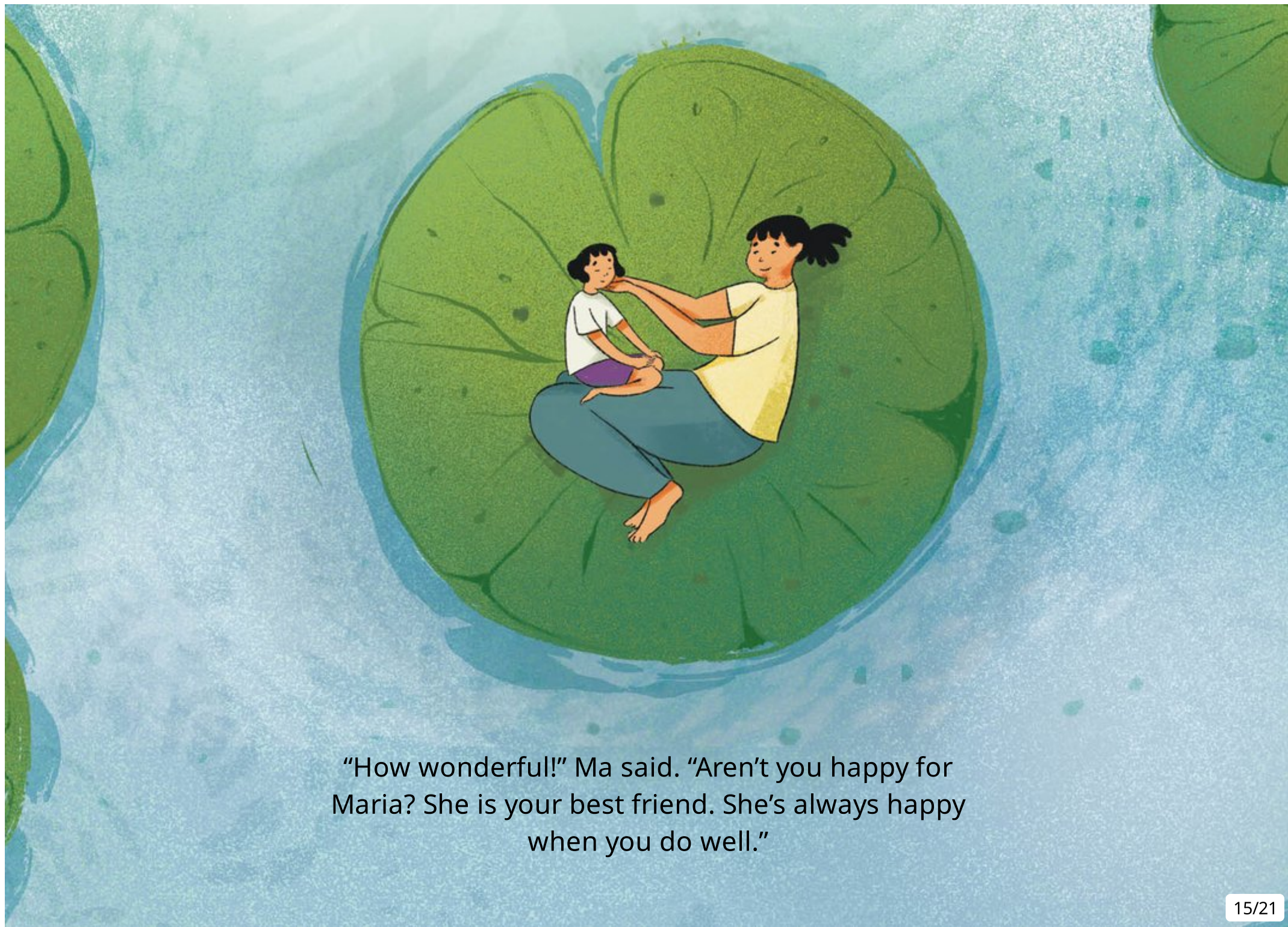


Aisha was always alone now.





The day of the play arrived.
“I can’t go to school,” Aisha told her mother.
“My stomach hurts.”
“But, Aisha,” Ma said. “Today is the play.
We are all coming to watch you.”
“I am only a snail in the play.
I have only one song,” Aisha said.
“Not like Maria, who is a butterfly and
has pink wings. She is singing two songs.”



“How wonderful!” Ma said. “Aren’t you happy for Maria? She is your best friend. She’s always happy when you do well.”

Ma's words made Aisha think.
She thought about how Maria sat under the hot sun
and cheered for Aisha during Sports Day.





Maria clapped when Aisha won prizes for Maths and English.
Maria told everyone, "Aisha writes the best stories."

Aisha's heart was still hurting.
But in a different way.
She was afraid.
Had she pushed Maria away?
Had she lost her best friend?



In school, Maria was sitting with Amol and Sarika.
Maria looked nervous when she saw Aisha.
But Aisha was even more nervous.
“Good luck, Maria,” Aisha mumbled finally.
Maria didn’t reply.

Aisha walked away.
She was very, very sad.





Aisha jumped when a voice said, "Thank you." It was Maria. "I think you will be the best butterfly in the whole world," Aisha said.

Suddenly, her heart didn't feel swollen and painful any more. "And I know you will be the best snail in the whole world," Maria said.

After the play, the class took a bow.
Maria and Aisha stood on the stage together.
After a long time, things felt right again.

As they left the hall, everybody told Maria
that she had a beautiful voice.
Maria beamed. Aisha beamed even brighter.



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It's Not Fair

(English)

Aisha and Maria are best friends. Until, one day, their classteacher praises Maria for her singing. Then Maria gets the part of a butterfly in a play, and Aisha does not. Aisha's heart hurts so much that she thinks it could burst. A story about envy and the confusion that comes along with it.

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



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