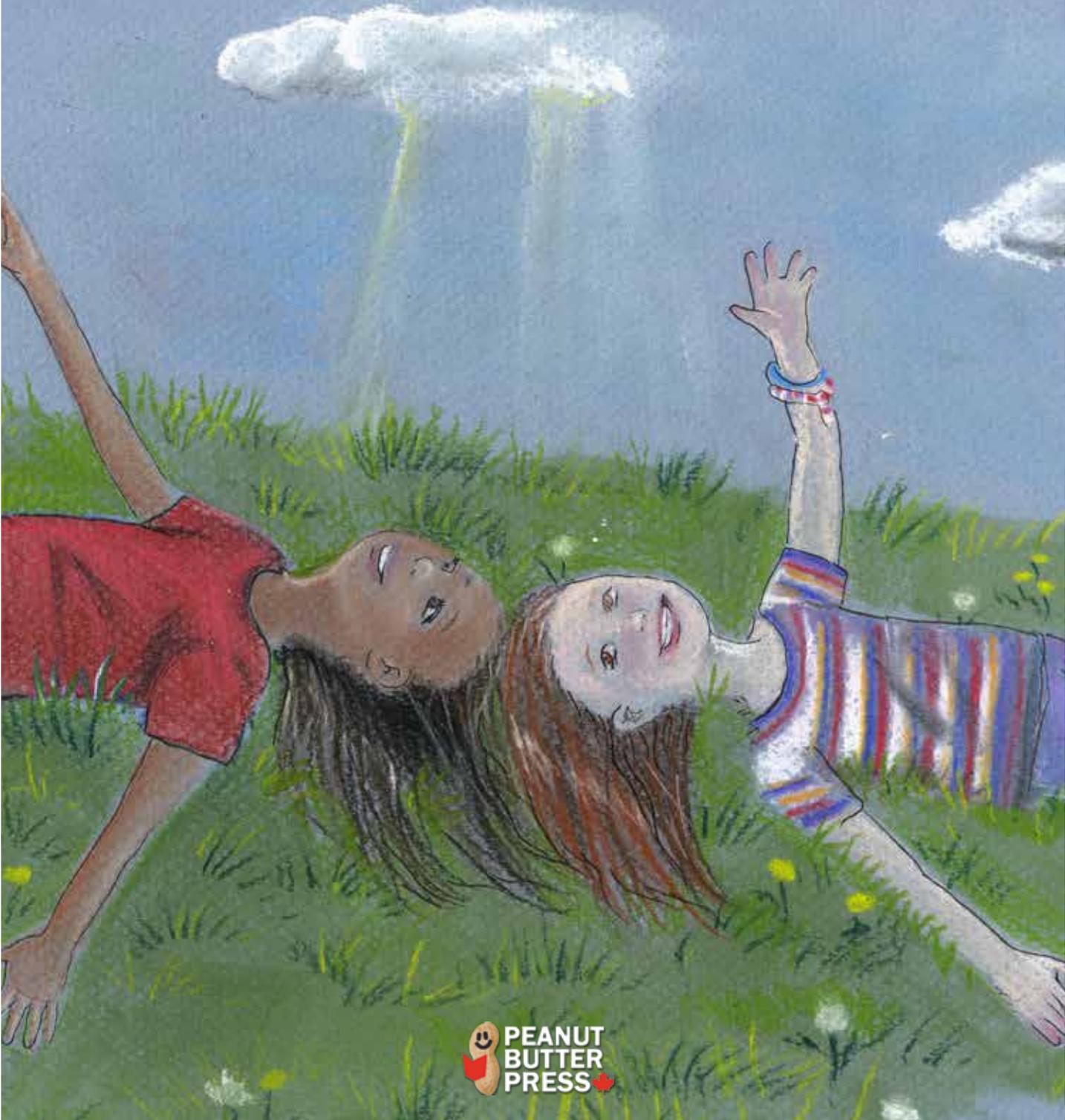


FABULOUS FEATHERS IN HER HAIR



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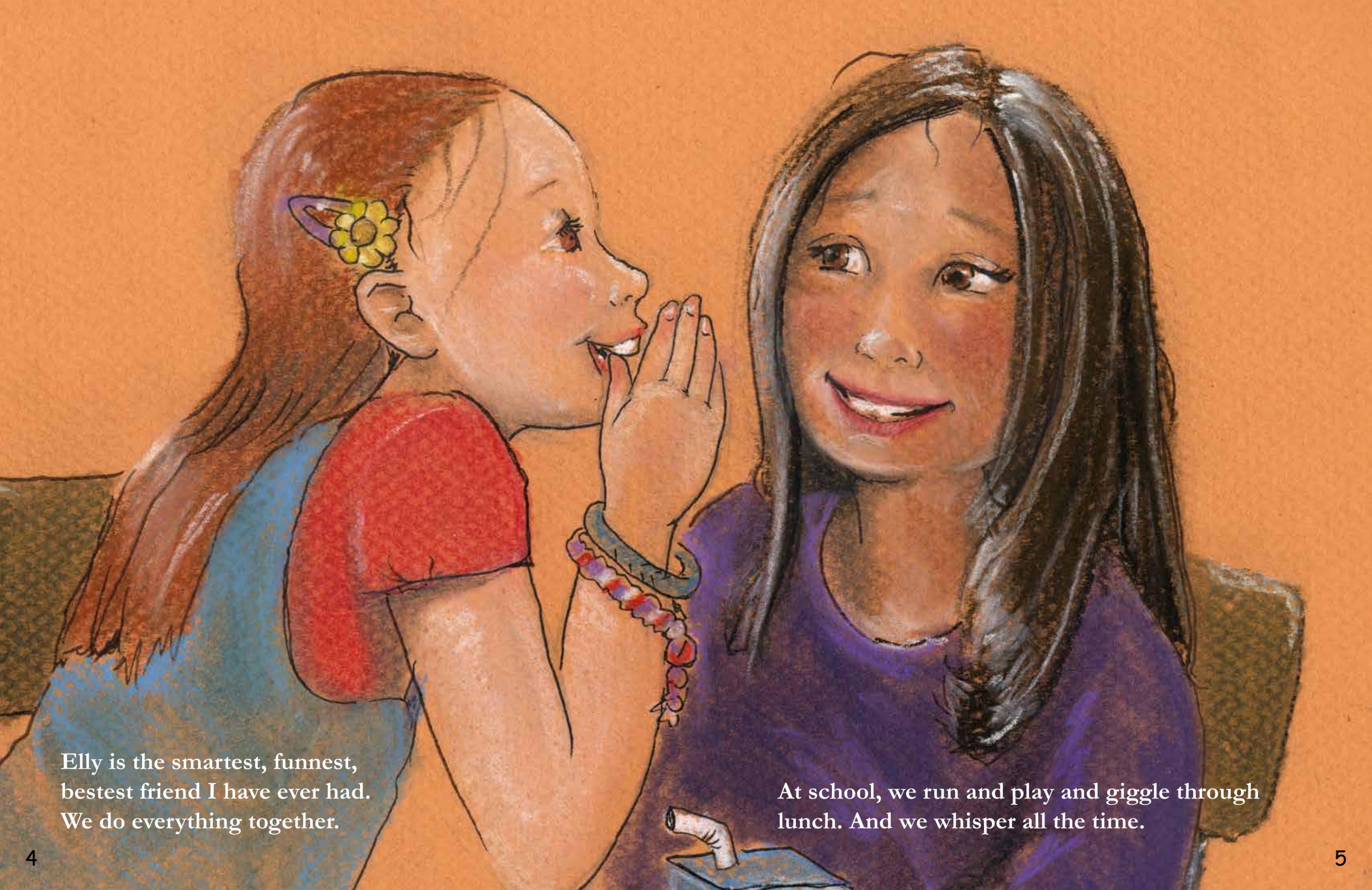
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To those who have lost a best friend—L.L.
To Carol for her hard work—S.N.



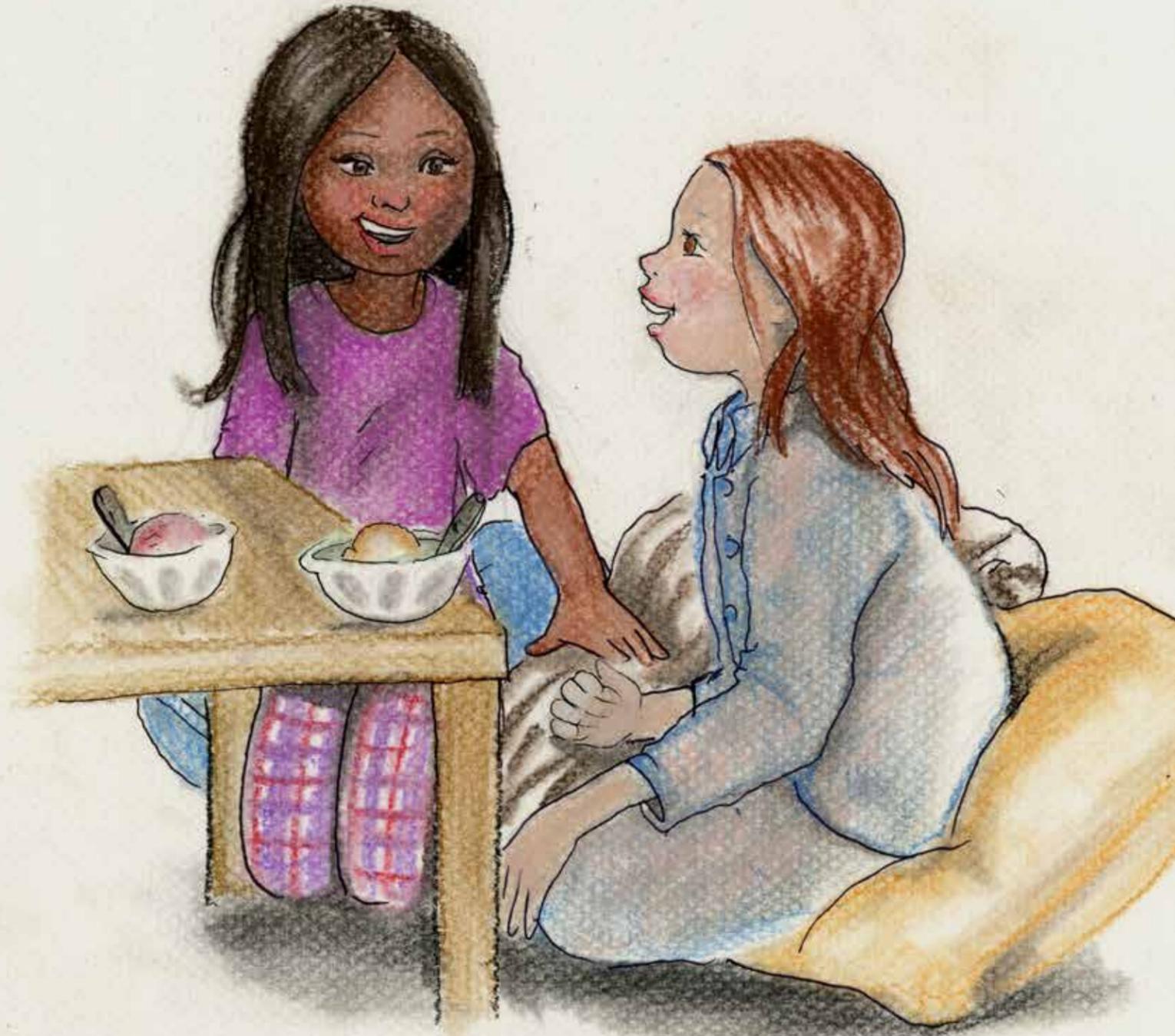
Elly is the smartest, funnest,
bestest friend I have ever had.
We do everything together.

At school, we run and play and giggle through
lunch. And we whisper all the time.

At the park, we feed the birds and chase the squirrels, and we fly kites together.



At home, we watch movies and eat ice cream and have sleepovers. And we dream. We dream about what we will do when we are all grown up.





“When I grow up, I will fly like a bird,” Elly says,
“and go high, high, high until I’m a silver speck in
the great big sky.”

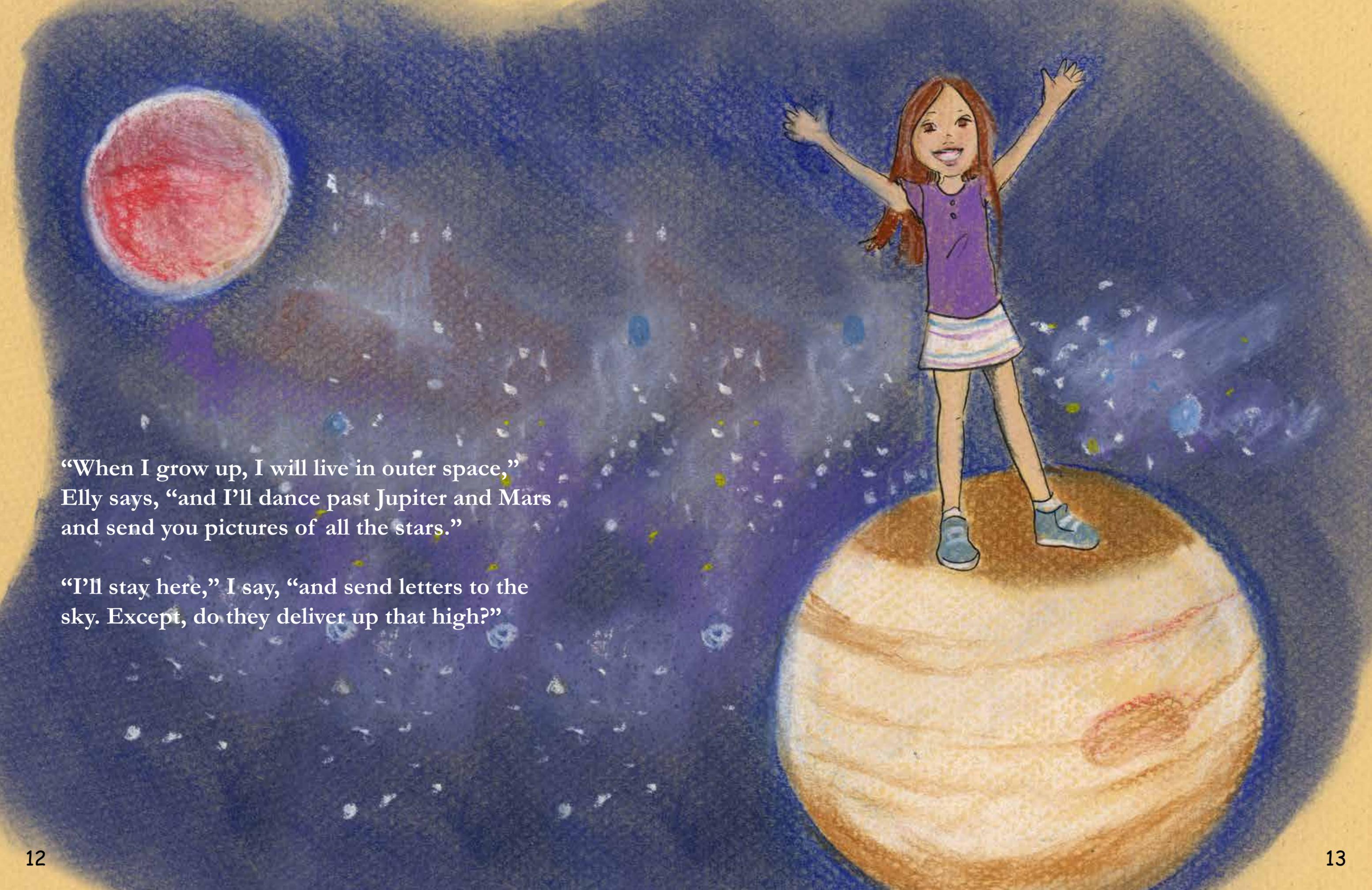
“I will live in a mansion by the sea,” I say, “and
swim in a huge, round pool. And when you fly by,
you can wave to me.”



“When I grow up, I will sing like the wind,”
Elly says, “and wear fabulous feathers in my
hair, and people will know me everywhere.”



“We’ll have a band and be on TV,” I say. “I’ll play
guitar and you can sing. And the whole world will
know you and me.”

A colorful illustration of a young girl with long brown hair, wearing a purple shirt and a striped skirt, standing on the top of a large, striped planet (Jupiter). She has her arms raised in a joyful gesture. The background is a dark blue space filled with stars and a large red planet (Mars) in the upper left corner.

“When I grow up, I will live in outer space,”
Elly says, “and I’ll dance past Jupiter and Mars
and send you pictures of all the stars.”

“I’ll stay here,” I say, “and send letters to the
sky. Except, do they deliver up that high?”

“It doesn’t matter,” Elly says, “because when I grow up, I’ll plant a fairy garden. And a tiny little fairy will swoop like a nightingale and deliver all my mail.”



Elly is the smartest, funnest, bestest dreamer I have ever known.

One day Elly goes away on holiday.

Except, she doesn't come home.

Mom cries and says she is never coming back.

Dad gives me a hug and says Elly died.

I don't believe them.

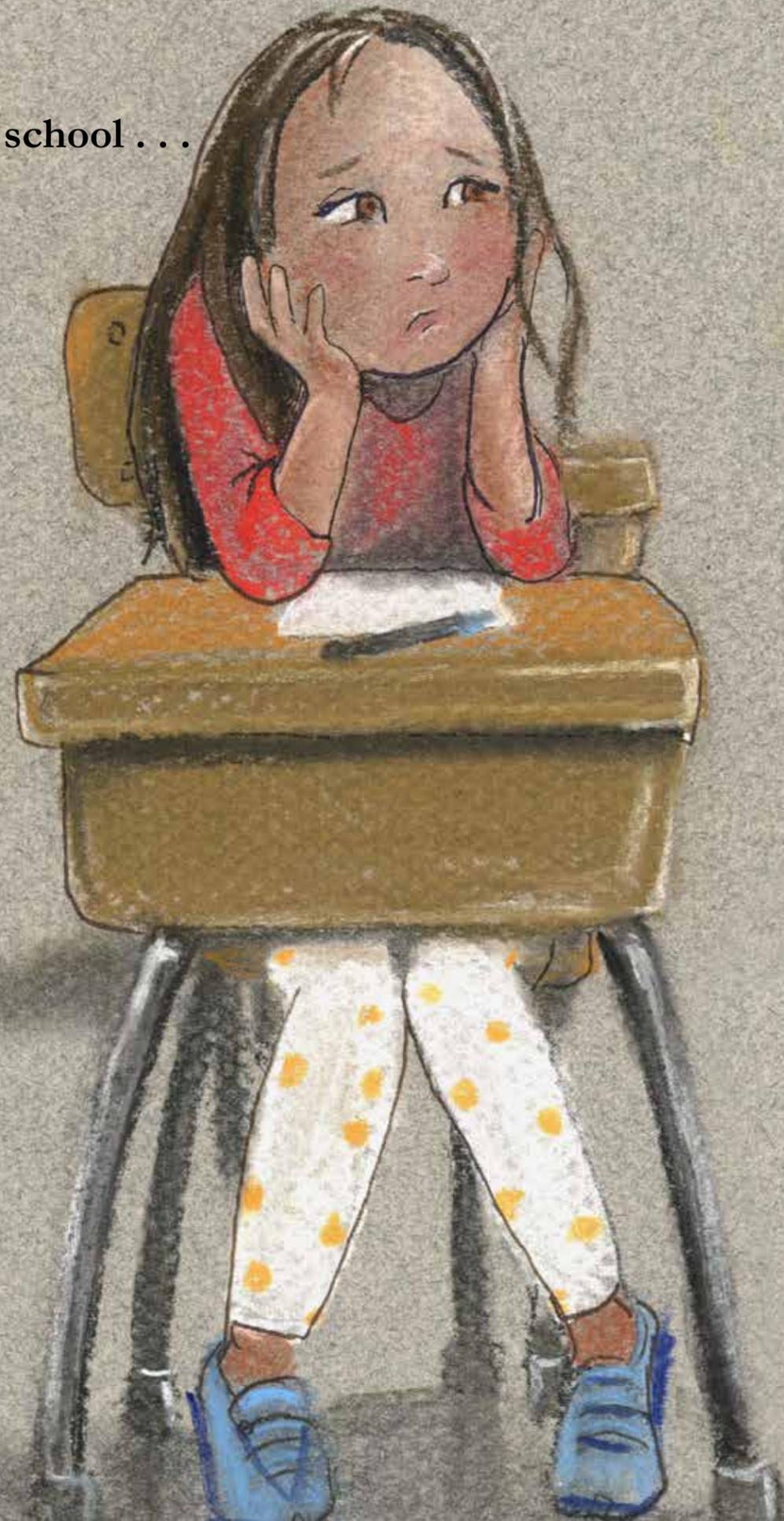
Elly is too real to die.



She'll come back.

She always has before.

I go to school . . .



but Elly isn't there.

