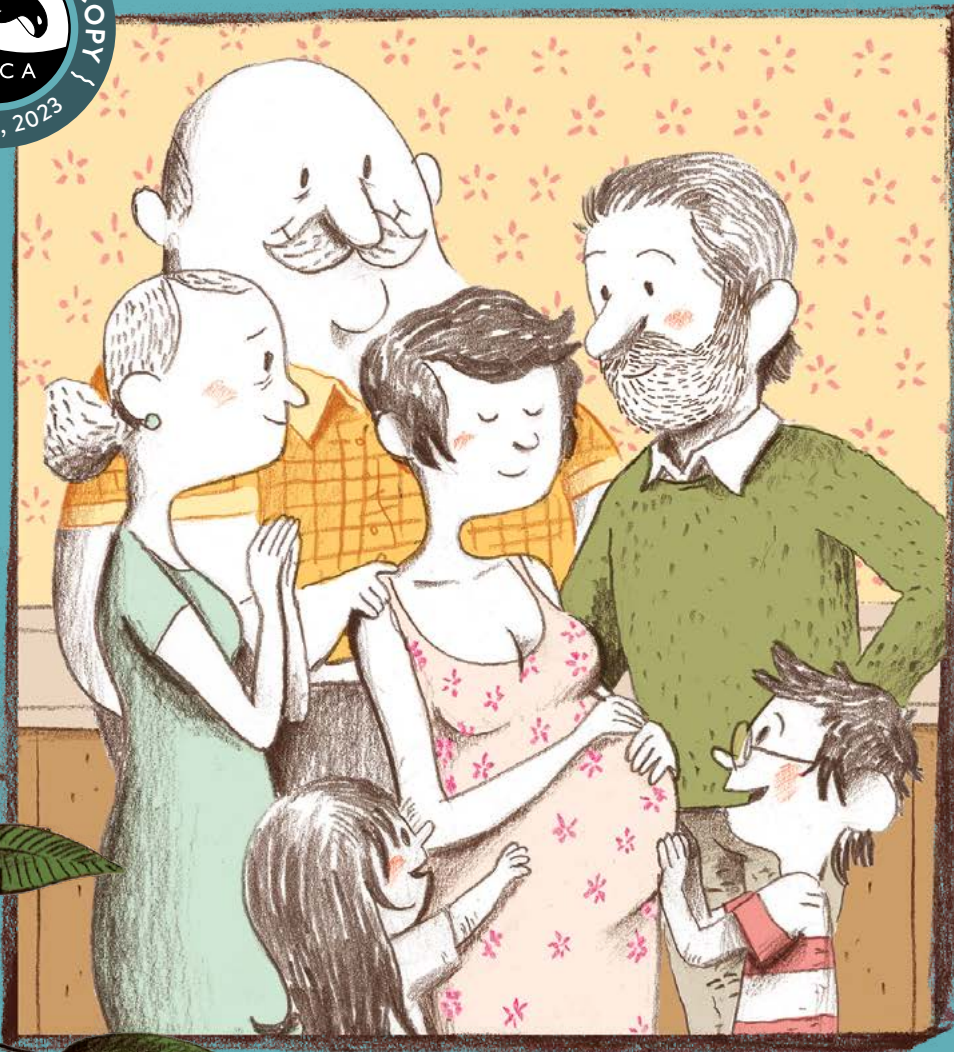
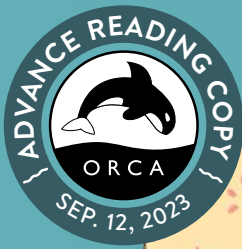


# MAMA LOU'S BELLY



MARIE-FRANCINE  
*illustrated by*  
GUILLAUME PERREault **HÉBERT**



Mama Lou is pregnant and everyone's guessing what's in her belly. Who is hiding in there? The bird thinks it's a cat because everyone keeps petting it. The cat thinks it's a mouse because Mama Lou is craving cheese. The brother thinks it's a boy, and a good soccer player too. And the sister thinks it's a doll she can dress up. Everyone has their own idea.

"But I'm not any of those things!" the baby says from inside Mama's belly. "I'm me! Don't you understand?" No one can hear it. Until...WHAAA! The baby is tired of being ignored. It's time their voice was heard. Finally the guessing is over and the baby can show their family who they really are!

# WHAT COULD BE IN MAMA LOU'S BELLY?

This is an advance reading copy of the uncorrected proofs and is not for sale. Changes may be made to the text before publication, so **all quotations for review must be checked against the final bound book.**

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# MAMA LOU'S BELLY

AUTHOR: MARIE-FRANCINE HÉBERT  
ILLUSTRATOR: GUILLAUME PERREAULT  
TRANSLATOR: CHARLES SIMARD

SEPTEMBER 12, 2023

In this illustrated picture book, everybody is guessing what's in Mama Lou's belly. The bird thinks it could be a cat, the cat thinks it might be a mouse and the sister thinks it could be a doll. But only the baby knows who they truly are!

FORMAT	HARDCOVER	PDF	EPUB
8.75 × 10.75"	9781459833883	9781459833890	9781459833906
32 pages	\$19.95		

## KEY SELLING POINTS

- *Mama Lou's Belly* captures the exciting time before a baby is born when everyone in this multigenerational family (and some other creatures) are wondering who—or what—it's going to be.
- In a fun and funny twist, speech bubbles from Mama's belly show the baby speaking for itself ("Me, a mouse? Don't be silly!")...until the baby is tired of being ignored and arrives ("WAAA!").
- This book is also a gentle look at identity and how, no matter what everyone projects, only the baby knows who they are.
- Author Marie-Francine Hébert has won the Mr. Christie's Book Award and has been nominated for a Governor General's Literary Award.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



**MARIE-FRANCINE HÉBERT** is an award-winning author and playwright. Over her thirty-year career she has won the Mr. Christie's Book Award, the Prix Alvine-Bélisle and the Prix Marcel-Couture, and she was nominated for the Governor General's Literary Award and the Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award, among others. Marie-Francine lives in Montreal.

## ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR



CREDIT: RÉMI ALLEN

**GUILLAUME PERREAULT** is a graphic designer who now works mainly as a freelance illustrator and author. His techniques vary according to his projects, but balance, contrast and humor are present in all of his work. Guillaume lives in Gatineau, Quebec.

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- Promotion at national and regional school, library and trade conferences
- Extensive ARC distribution, including NetGalley
- Blog and social media promotion
- Outreach in Orca newsletters

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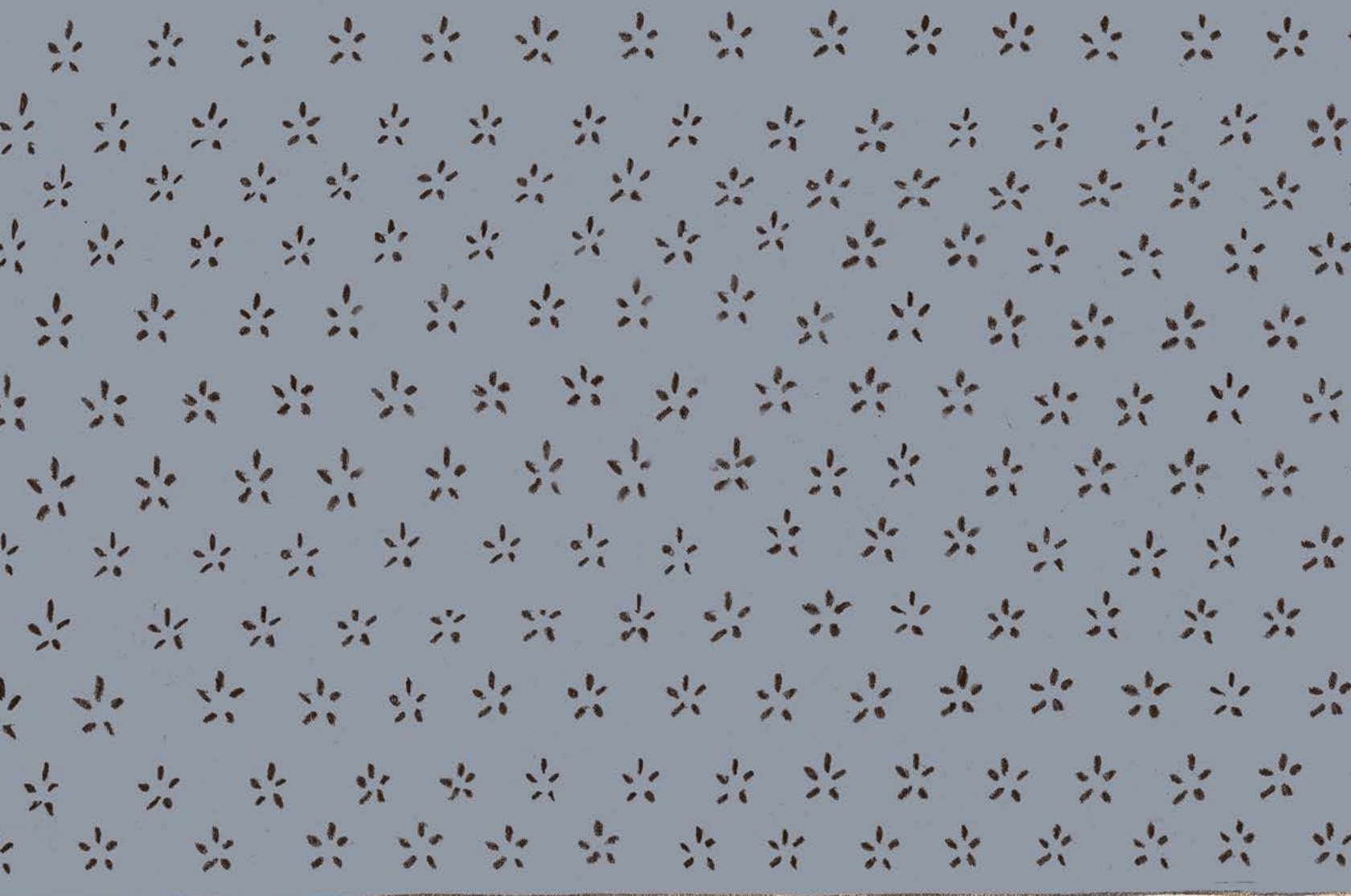


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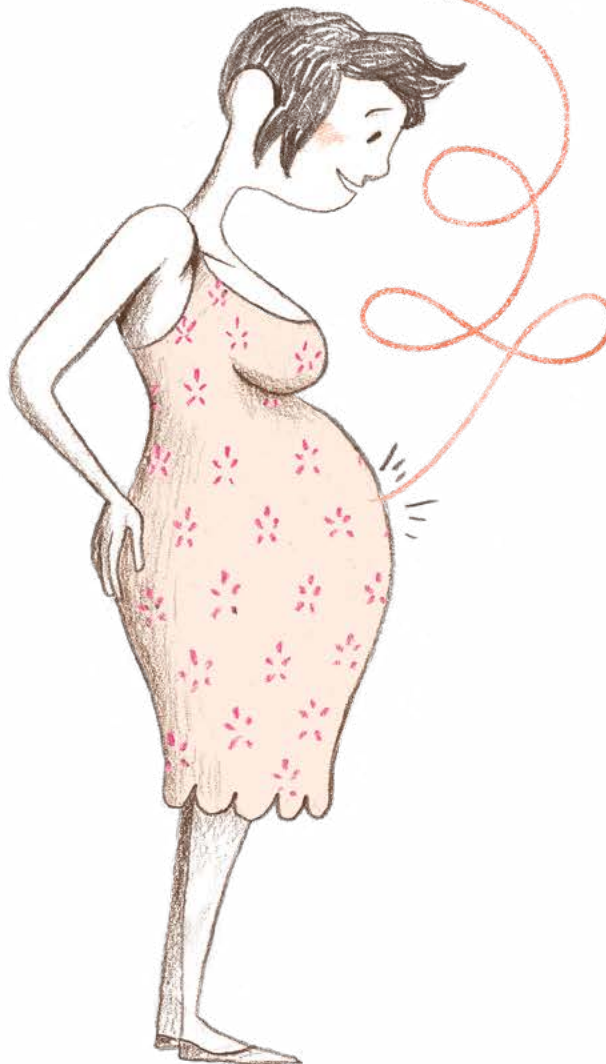




# MAMA LOU'S BELLY

MARIE-FRANCINE  
HÉBERT

illustrated by  
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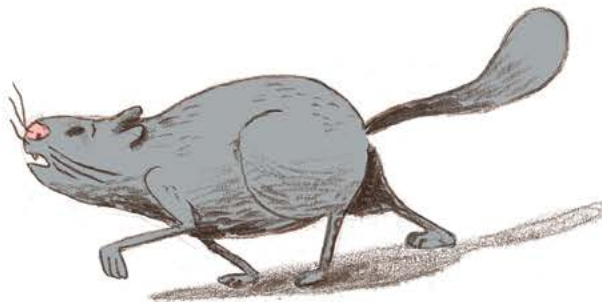


Who is that hiding  
in Mama Lou's belly?

Everyone is wondering.

Hello, it's me!

says the little voice  
inside Mama Lou's belly.  
But no one hears it.



One of the neighborhood birds watches Mama Lou and chirps.  
He's very afraid a cat might be hiding in there.

“Why do I think that?  
They spend so much time petting her belly.”







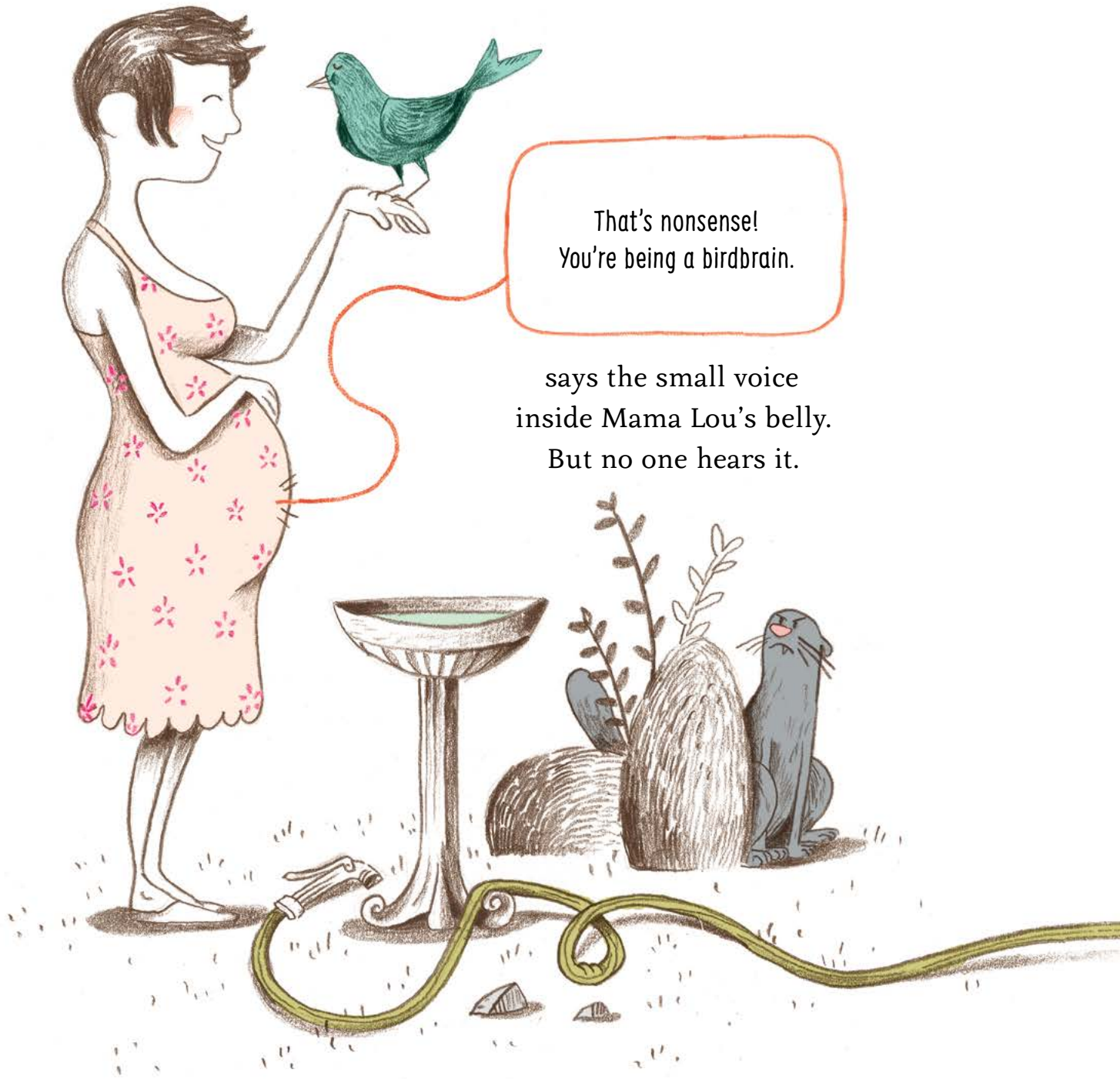




“They already have one house cat  
who tries to eat me!  
Soon there will be two of them.  
Poor me!”







That's nonsense!  
You're being a birdbrain.

says the small voice  
inside Mama Lou's belly.  
But no one hears it.

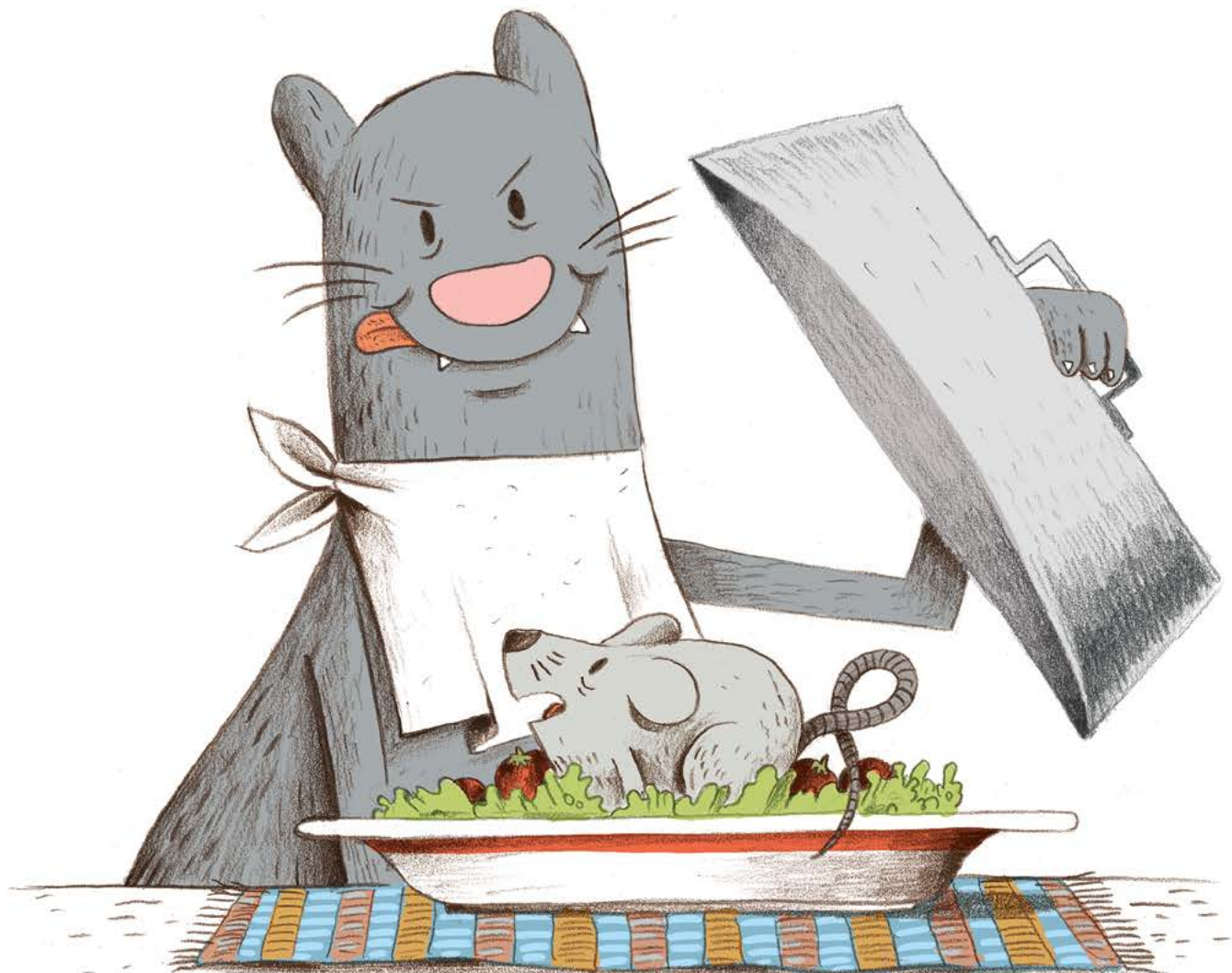






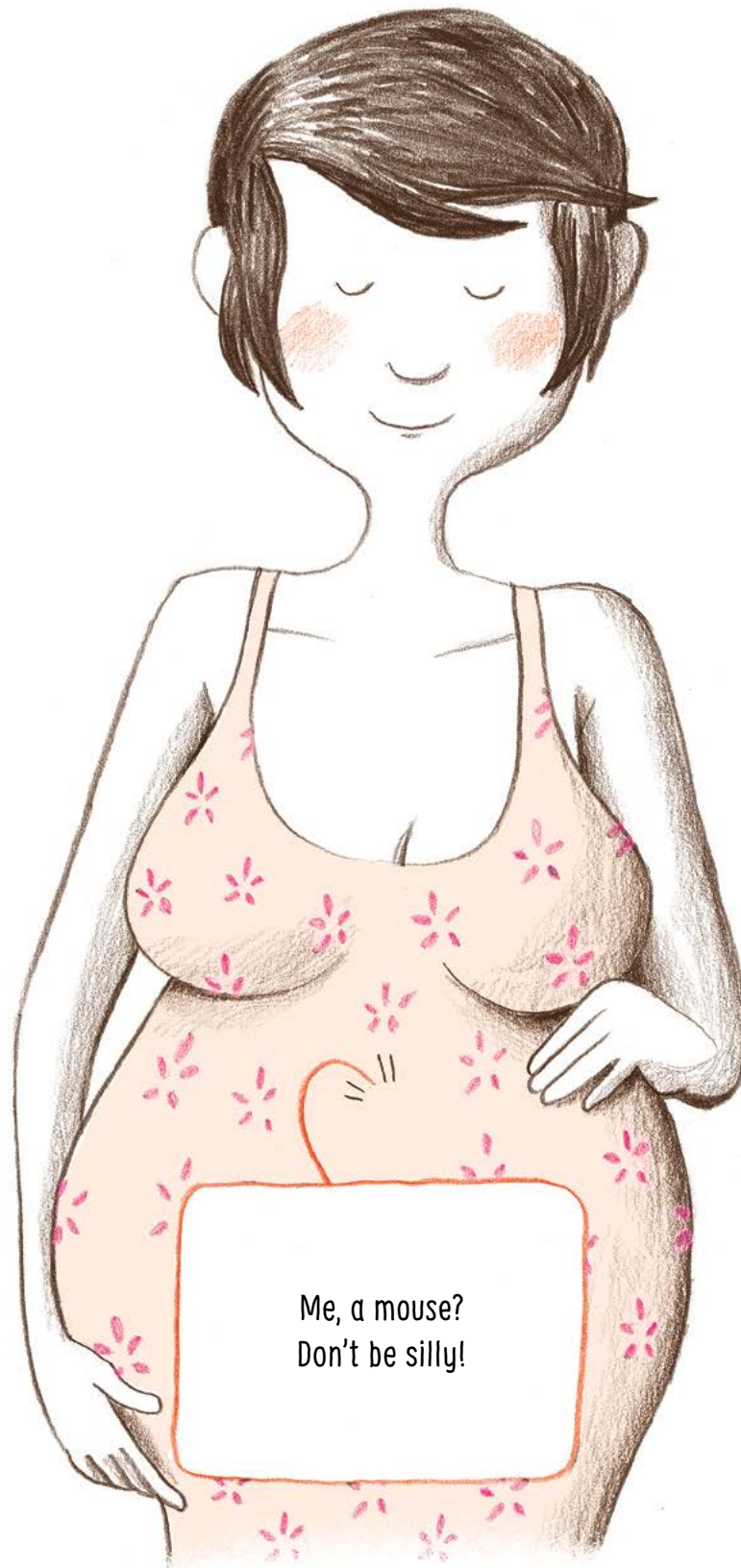
Snuggled up against Mama Lou's belly, the cat purrs.  
She's convinced she knows what's going on in there,  
because Mama Lou has been craving cheese.





“It’s a big juicy mouse!  
And it won’t fly away like that bird  
when I try to catch it. Mmm!  
What a feast that will be.”





says the small voice  
inside Mama Lou's belly.  
But no one hears it.

The ball, which spends a lot of time alone in the corner,  
gets really excited when it sees Mama Lou's belly.







"It's easy to guess what's growing inside.  
Another ball, of course!"







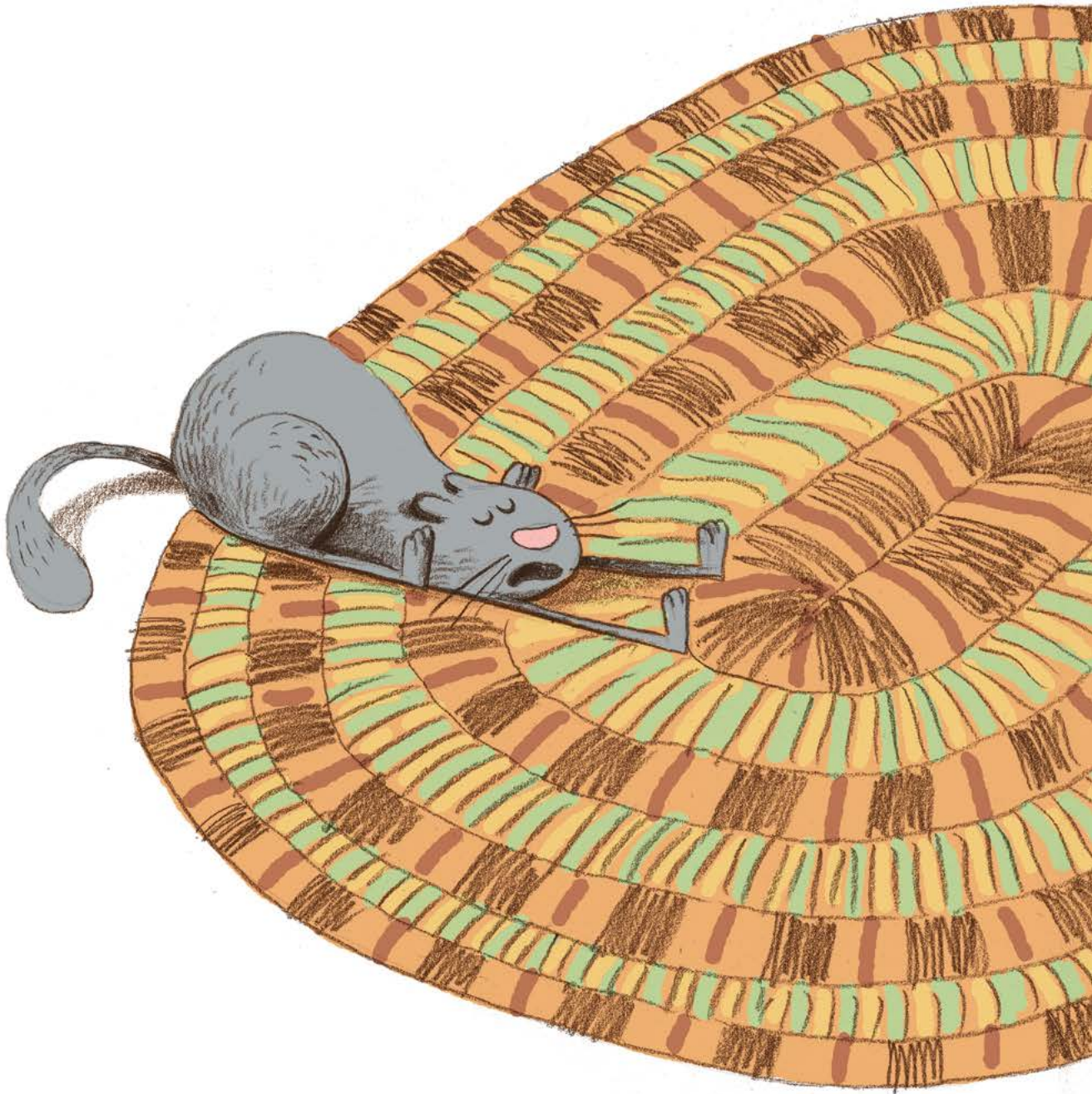
“Finally I’ll have a friend to play with!  
I can already imagine how it’ll look.  
Pink, blue, green or orange...  
with stripes, lines, squares or polka dots...”

I’m not a ball,  
but I think I will enjoy  
playing with you!

says the small voice  
inside Mama Lou’s belly.  
But no one hears it.



Mama and Daddy are sure  
it's a baby hiding in her belly.  
They can even feel it move.  
The whole family is thrilled.







“A boy, obviously,” says the older brother.

“And judging by his kicks,  
he already knows how to play soccer.  
He’ll be great on my team!”



“We’ll know who it is when it’s born,”  
say Mama and Daddy.



"I want you to be a boy! Please!"  
begs the older brother, and he covers  
his mother's belly with kisses.

It's too dark in  
here—I can't see  
if I'm a boy.

says the small voice  
inside Mama Lou's belly.  
But no one hears it.











“Well, I want you to be a girl! Please!” begs the older sister.

“You’ll be my doll. I’ll dress you up and do your hair.

And I’ll have to teach you everything,  
because a baby like you doesn’t know anything.

But don’t worry—I’ll tell you what to do.”

I know at least one thing.  
I'm not a doll!

says the small voice  
inside Mama Lou's belly.  
But no one hears it.





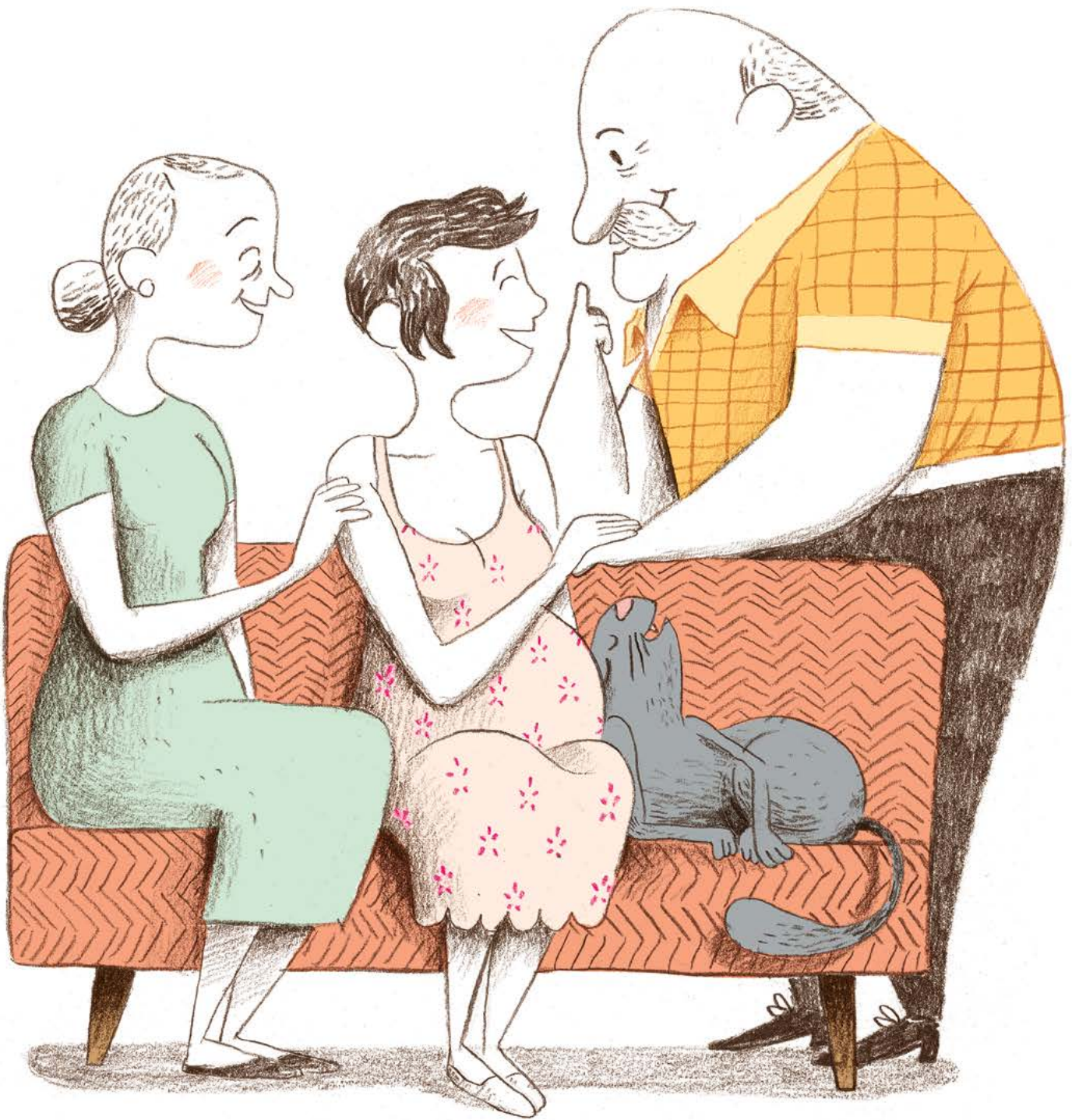




“I hope the baby has its mom’s rosy cheeks  
and its dad’s twinkly eyes,” says Grandma.

“I hope it’s not as bald as me,” adds Grandpa.





The family laughs.

“Expecting a baby is like being given a gift,” says Daddy.

“You can’t wait to see what it is!” finishes Mama.

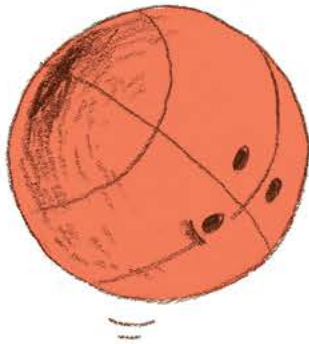
Everyone agrees.  
Except for the baby.

A cat,  
a mouse,  
a ball,  
a soccer player,  
a doll,  
a gift and what else?!  
That's enough!  
I'm *me*!  
Don't you understand?



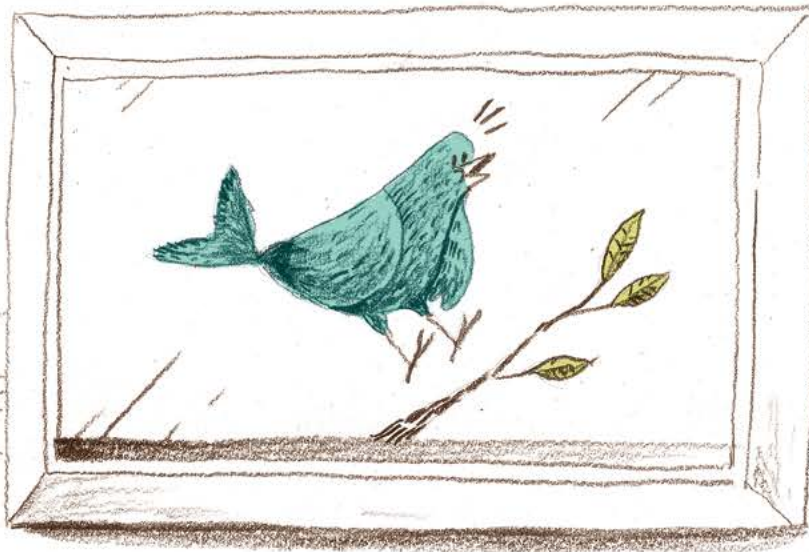
says the small voice  
inside Mama Lou's belly.  
But no one hears it.





Tired of being ignored,  
the baby decides it's time to be heard.  
When they are born, they let out a loud cry.

“WAAAAAA!”





Mama and Daddy gaze in awe.  
Grandma and Grandpa too.  
And the baby *does* have rosy cheeks  
and twinkly eyes and is as bald as Grandpa.

“What a sweetheart,” they say, over and over.







“It will be a while before  
we can start playing with the baby,”  
says the older brother.

“The only thing they know  
how to do is ask for milk.”

“Or for hugs,” adds the older sister.

“Just like you two when you were born,”  
Mama and Daddy remind them.

“See you later, baby!”  
shout the brother and the sister.



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Cover and interior artwork by Guillaume Perreault  
 Translated by Charles Simard

To my daughter, Lou,  
 and my granddaughter,  
 Billie, who inspired this story.  
 M.-F.H

For Arthur, Roxanne and Julien.  
 G.P.

