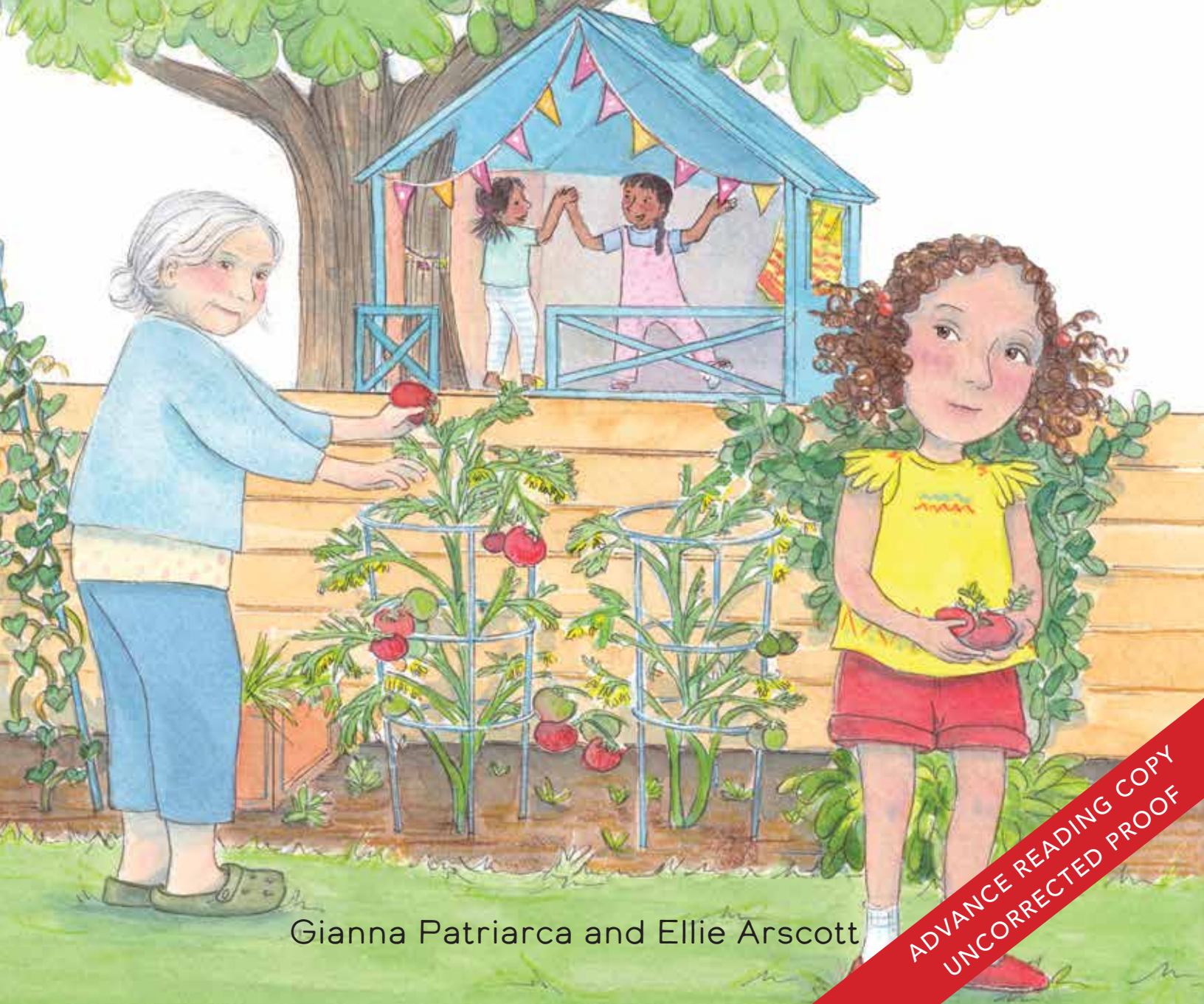


Nonna & The Girls

Next Door



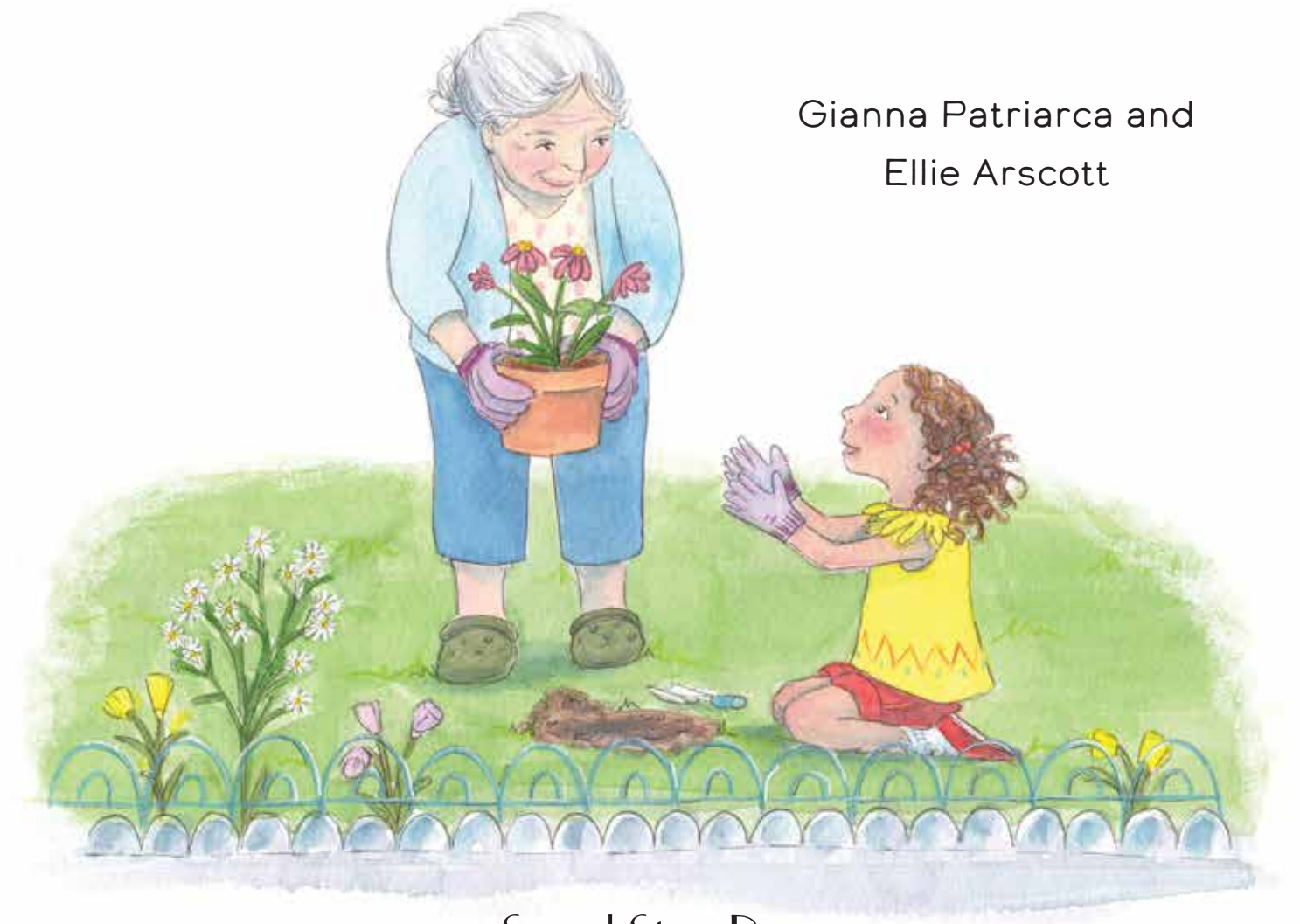
Gianna Patriarca and Ellie Arscott

ADVANCE READING COPY
UNCORRECTED PROOF

Nonna & The Girls

Next Door

Gianna Patriarca and
Ellie Arscott



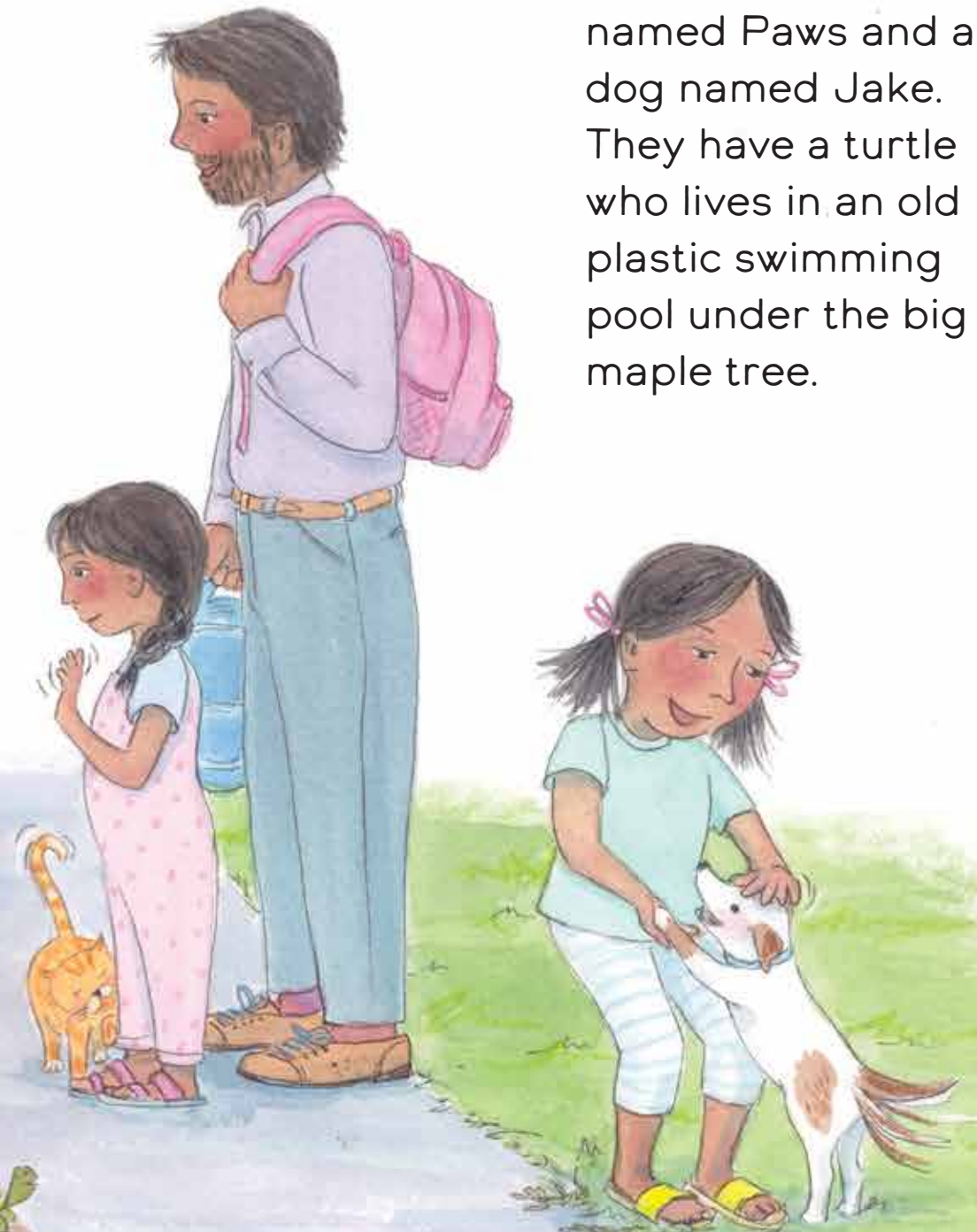
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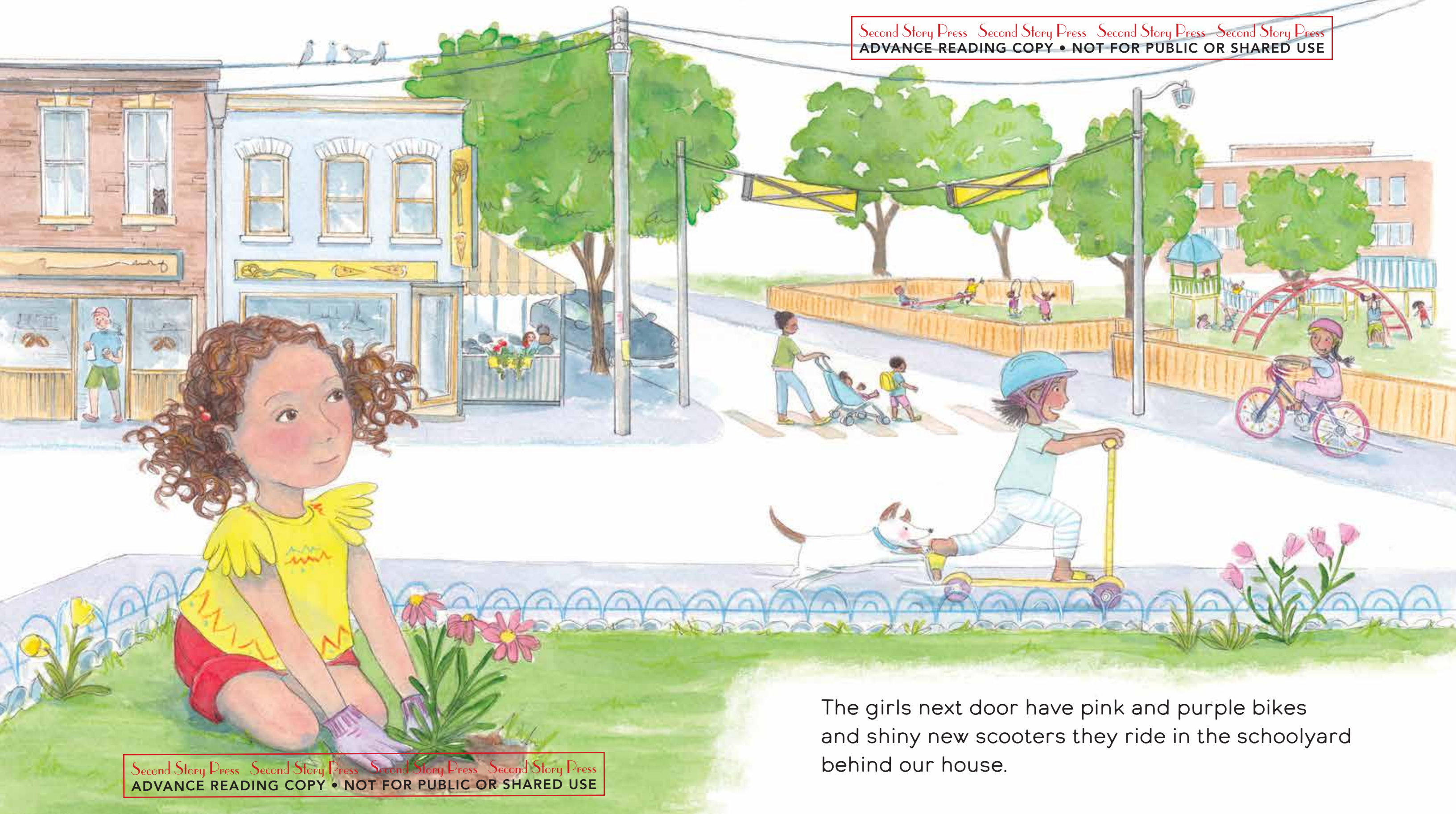


The girls next door
have everything.



They have a cat
named Paws and a
dog named Jake.
They have a turtle
who lives in an old
plastic swimming
pool under the big
maple tree.





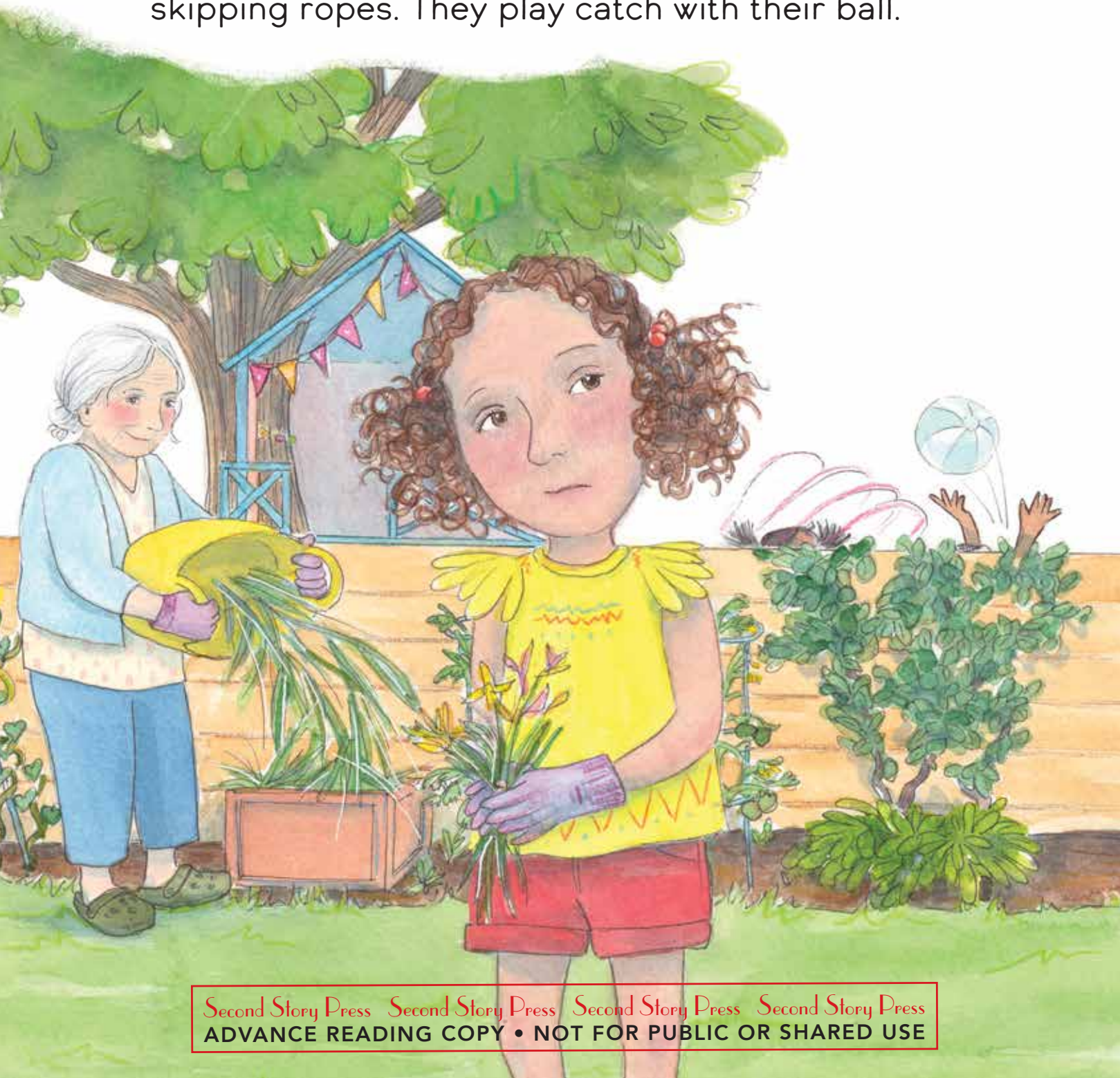
The girls next door have pink and purple bikes and shiny new scooters they ride in the schoolyard behind our house.



The girls next door have a tree house with a real wooden ladder and a tiny window with a striped red and yellow curtain. When the wind blows the leaves dance all around the tree house.

They climb up and have tea parties with their dolls and their stuffed toys. They drink pretend tea from little ceramic cups. The wind sneaks in under the red and yellow curtain to keep them cool.

I watch them play over the fence from my backyard.
They have so much fun. They skip with their
skipping ropes. They play catch with their ball.



Sometimes they hold hands
and swing in fast circles,

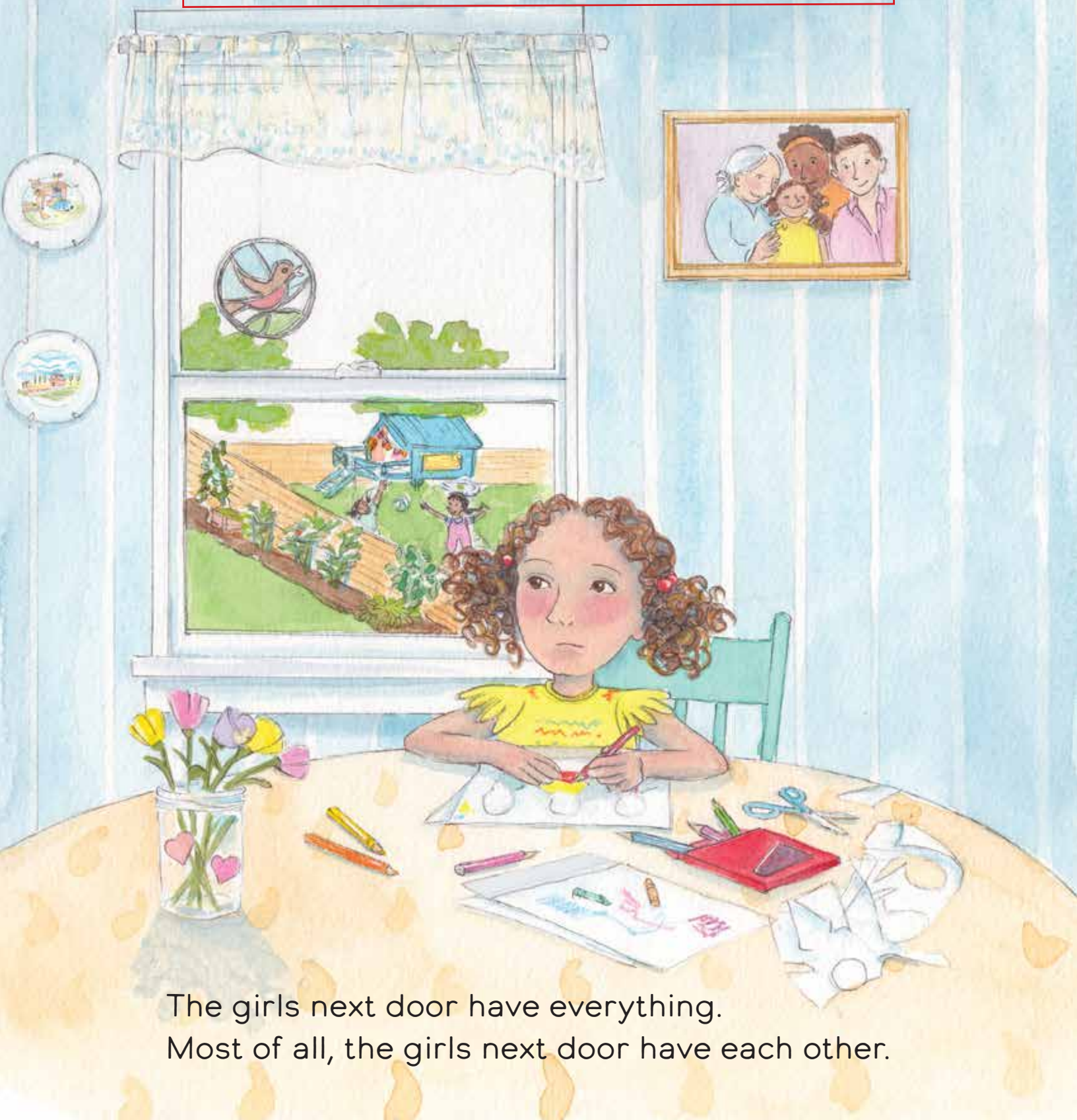


round and round
and round



until they fall down
on the grass laughing.



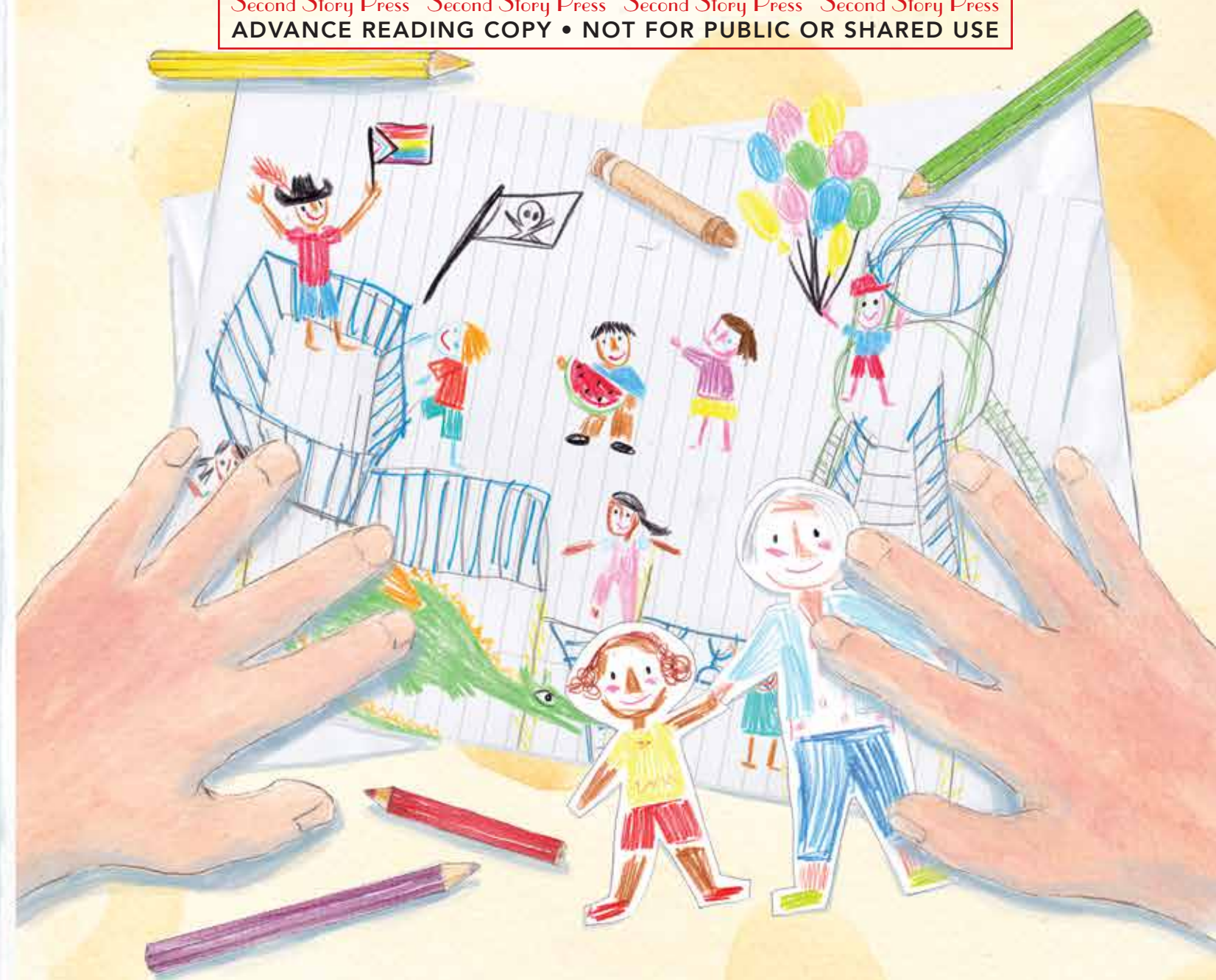
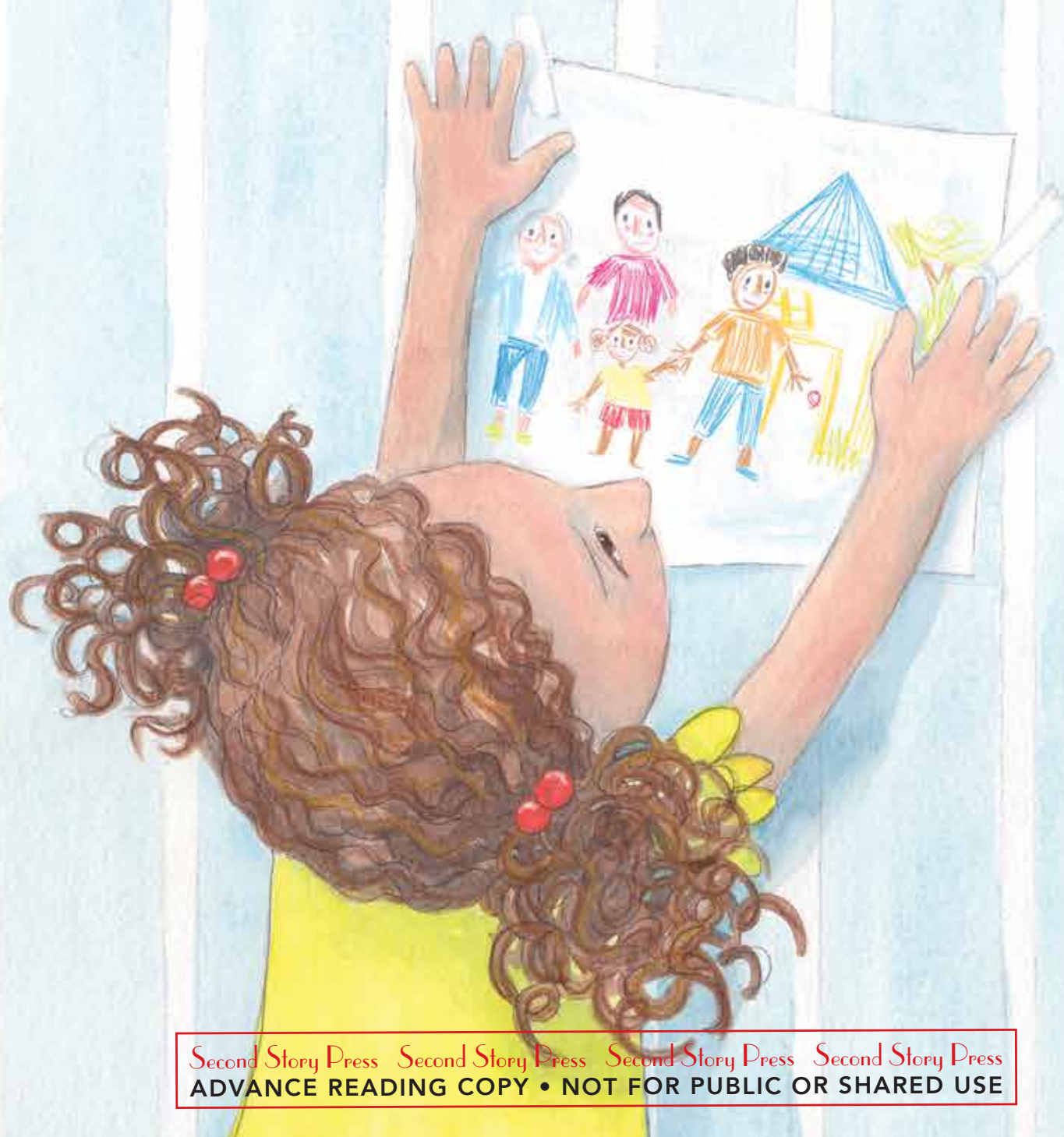


The girls next door have everything.
Most of all, the girls next door have each other.

Sometimes I wish I was one of the girls next door.



I live on Grace Street with my mommy, my daddy,
and my nonna. My nonna takes care of me when
Mommy and Daddy go to work and when I come
home from school.

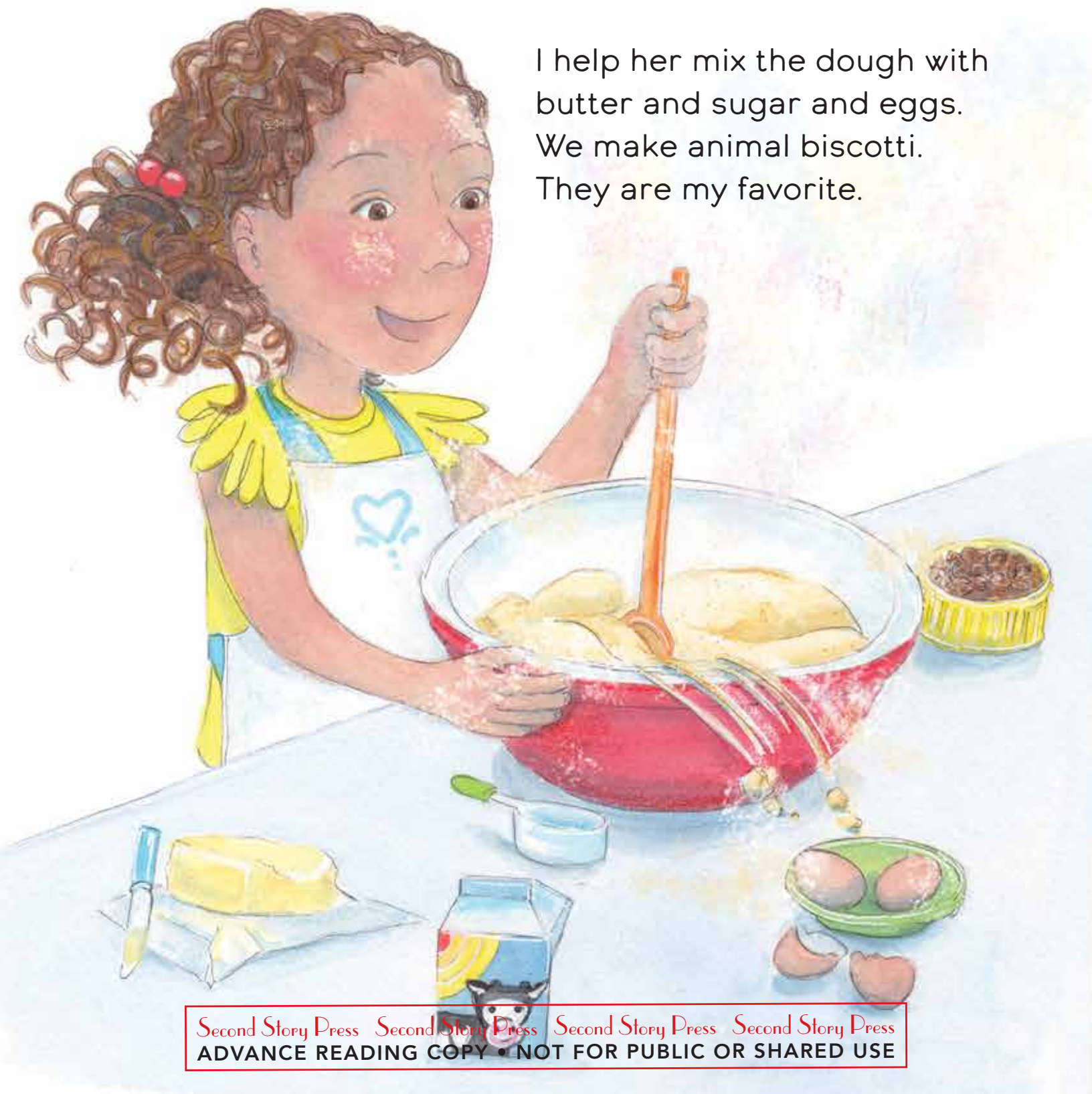


The girls next door go to daycare after school and
in the summer they go to day camp. I want to go to
daycare too where there are lots and lots of children
to play with, but then my nonna would be very lonely.

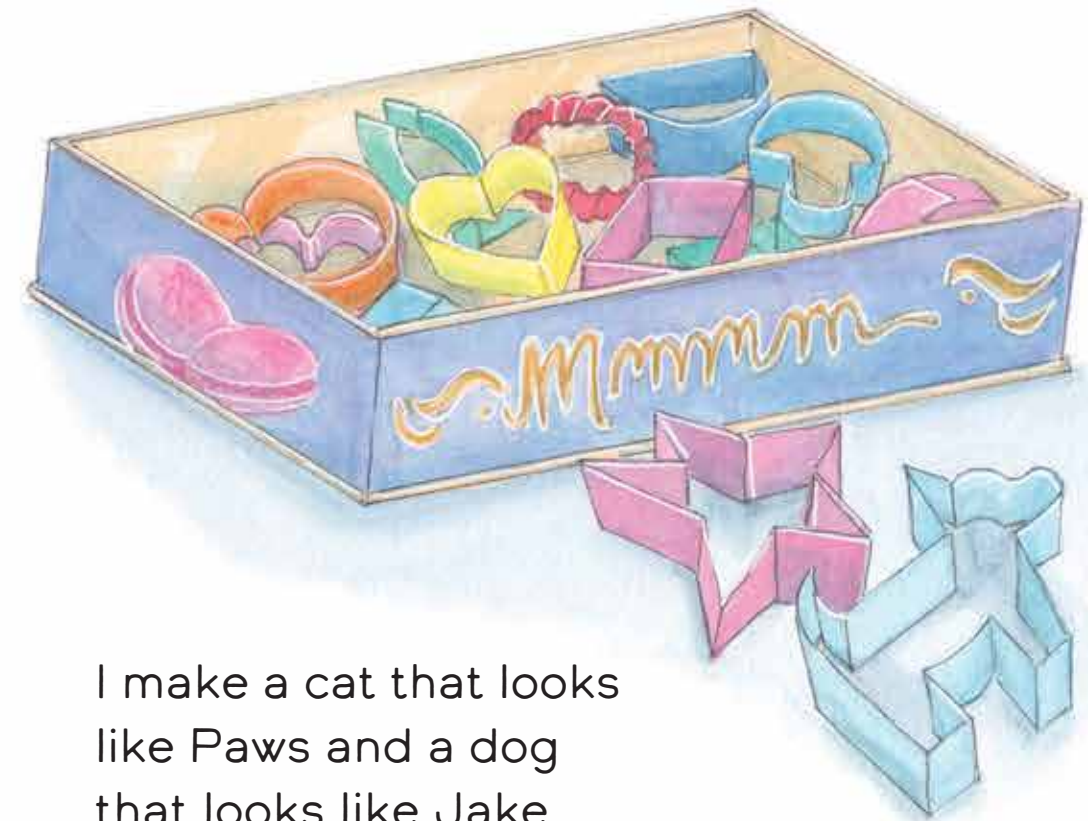
My nonna says she will play with me. But my nonna is old and she can't swing round and round in fast circles. Her knees hurt and she can't skip with a rope, or ride a bicycle, or climb a wooden ladder.

Nonna says she isn't too old to tell me stories and to bake my favorite biscotti.





I help her mix the dough with
butter and sugar and eggs.
We make animal biscotti.
They are my favorite.

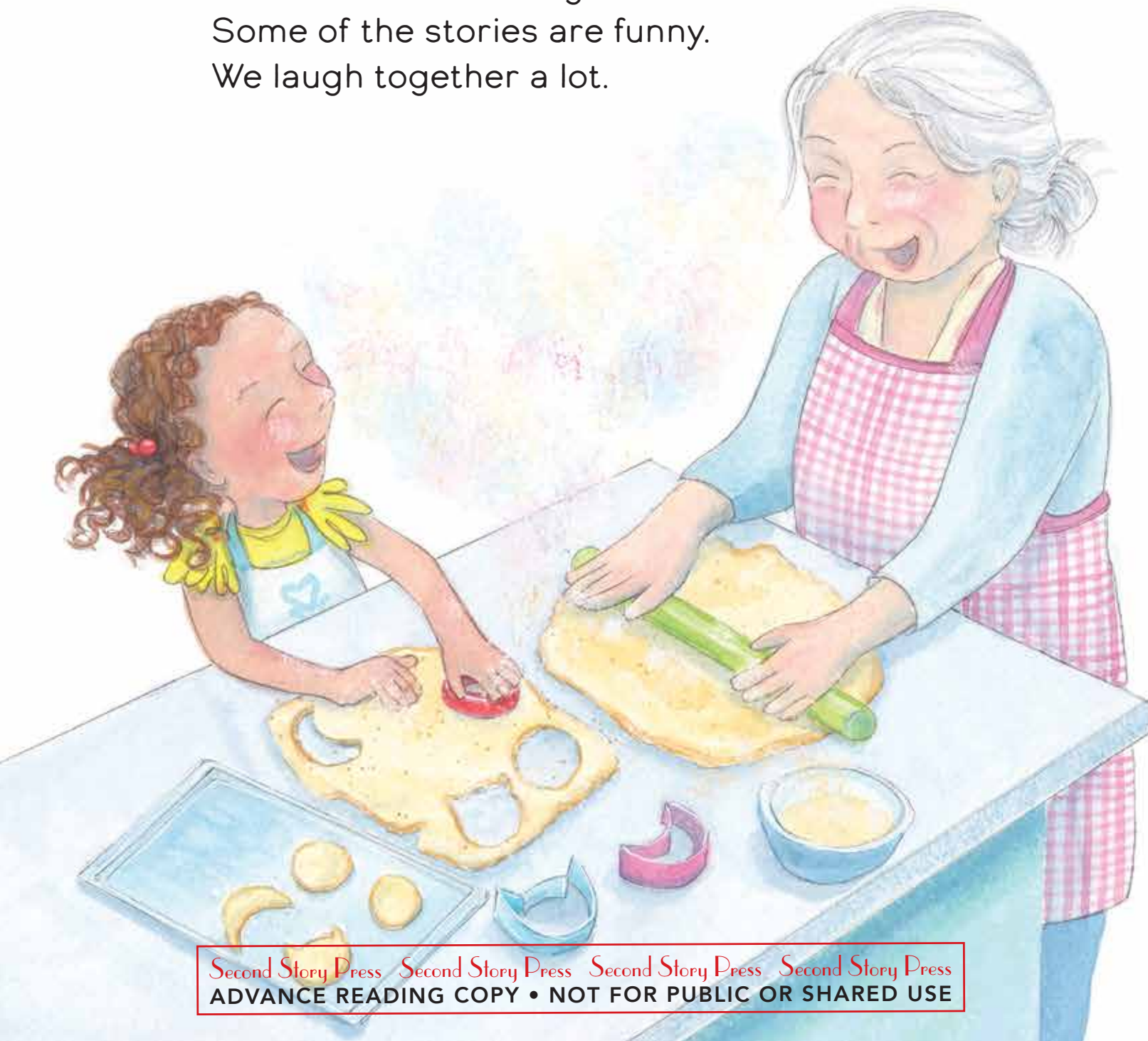


I make a cat that looks
like Paws and a dog
that looks like Jake.



Nonna likes to make stars and moons and angels.

While we make the biscotti,
Nonna tells me stories of
when she was a little girl.
Some of the stories are funny.
We laugh together a lot.

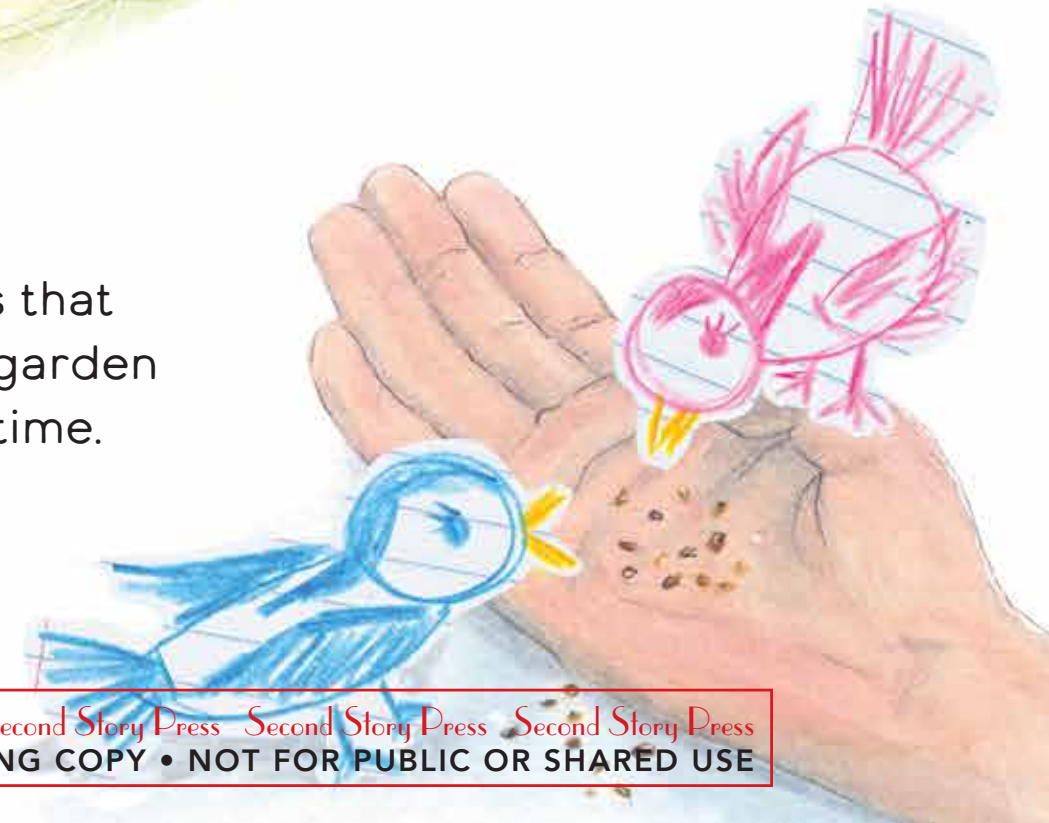


When she was little, she
lived on a farm in another
country far away.



She learned how to milk
a cow and feed rabbits
and chickens.

I feed the birds that
come into our garden
in the summertime.



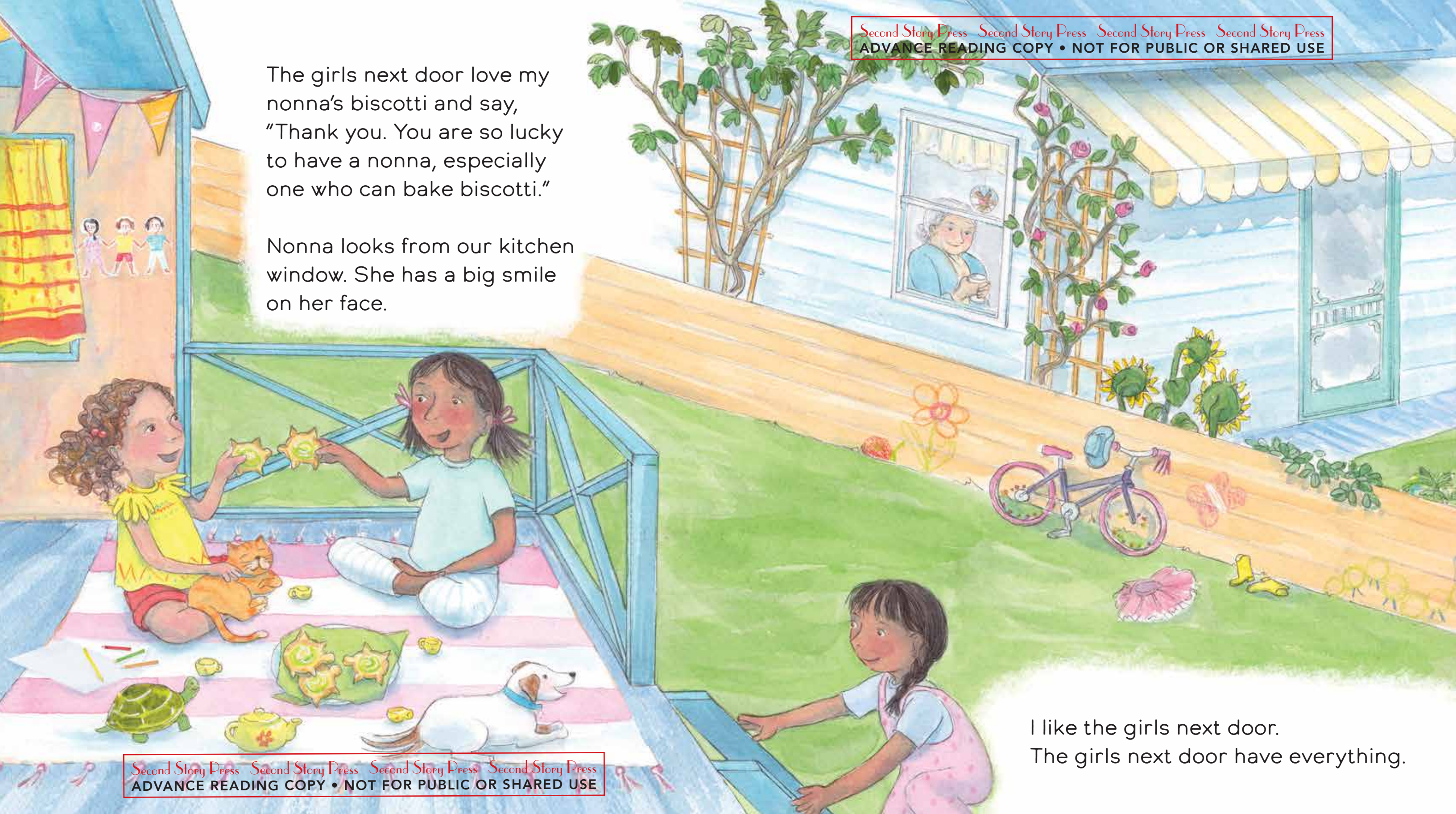


Nonna asks if I would like to make some biscotti for the girls next door. We make some that look like the turtle.



The girls next door love my nonna's biscotti and say, "Thank you. You are so lucky to have a nonna, especially one who can bake biscotti."

Nonna looks from our kitchen window. She has a big smile on her face.



I like the girls next door.
The girls next door have everything.

But they don't
have my nonna.





The girls next door have **EVERYTHING**...



They have a dog named Jake, a cat named Paws, a turtle, and a tree house. Most of all, the girls next door have each other. But there is one thing that they don't have...and it might be the most special thing of all.

A heartwarming story about the bond between grandmothers and grandchildren.

Gianna Patriarca is an award-winning author of 11 books, poetry, and short fiction. Her first book, *Italian Women and Other Tragedies*, is in its 4th printing and was runner-up for the Milton Acorn People's Poetry Award. Her work is extensively anthologized and adapted for screen. Gianna lives in Toronto.

Ellie Arscott grew up in a small Ontario town where three generations of "Nonnas" before her also called it home. Ellie graduated from Sheridan College in Interpretive Illustration. Her illustration debut, *Night Walk*, was awarded a SCBWI Canada East Crystal Kite. Ellie lives in Toronto's east end with her family.



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