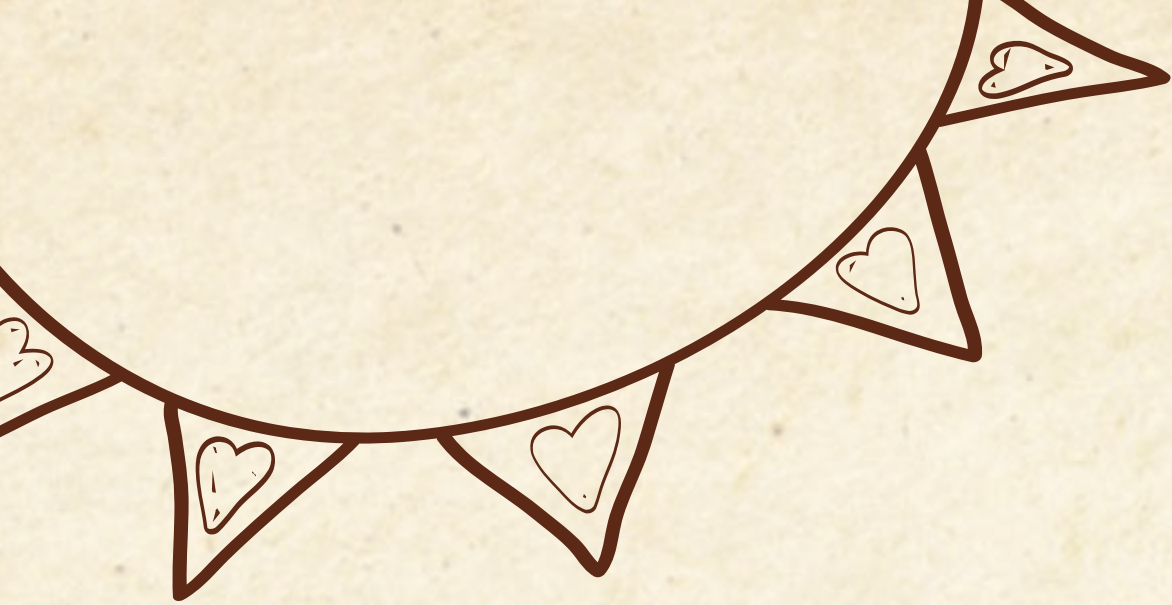


Zoya Master

How Was School Today?



Today is Day Three



* Back to school *

$$a^2 + b^2 = c^2$$

ZOYA MASTER

*How
Was School
Today?*

BOSTON • 2018



Zoya Master. How Was School Today?

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ISBN 978-1-940220857

Library of Congress Control Number: 2018940472

Illustrations by Giorgi Chachanidze © 2018

Cover Design by Natali Cohen © 2018

Published by M•GRAPHICS, Boston, MA

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Printed in the USA

*For Katia (Kate), who inspired me
to write these stories
and for Zhenya (Eugene),
without whom this book
would not be possible*

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Dvery day, when my mom drives me home from school, she asks the same question, “Mike, did anything exciting happen today?” Luckily, I always have some cool stories to tell, because something bizarre happens in our class every day.



Jerry and the Fly

Jerry is a new kid. He moved from New York to our town a week ago. You would think that people from big cities are noisy, but Jerry speaks in a very soft voice. Mrs. Jansen always asks him to speak up when he reads. Jerry even has trouble yelling when we play outside, which I find weird. The only thing he does very loudly is yawn. I think he is a world champion in that type of sport. When he does it in the middle of math class, every head turns to his direction. The funny thing is that while yawning, he never covers his mouth.

This morning, Anita Flores, a girl who sits next to Jerry, joked that he had to be careful because a fly might get into his open mouth — and guess what, she was right. I don't know where this fly came from because it is already fall, and usually all the bugs are gone by this time of year. Maybe it flew into our classroom to teach Jerry some manners, regardless, it came just in time. At first, poor Jerry did not even understand what happened. His mouth was open so widely that everyone could see past his teeth and down his throat. The sound of



his yawn was like a trumpet. It all ended suddenly, and Jerry's eyes became big and round. He shut his mouth, and all we heard was that disgusting buzzing coming from the inside.

"I told you so," said Anita solemnly. She always feels sorry for everyone. However, I almost fell on the floor from laughing so hard, and because of that, I missed the moment when Jerry finally spit the fly out.

"You should not be laughing so hard," Anita said to me, "the fly is still buzzing somewhere around."

So, I stopped laughing immediately because I did not want Anita to be right again; this time, about me.



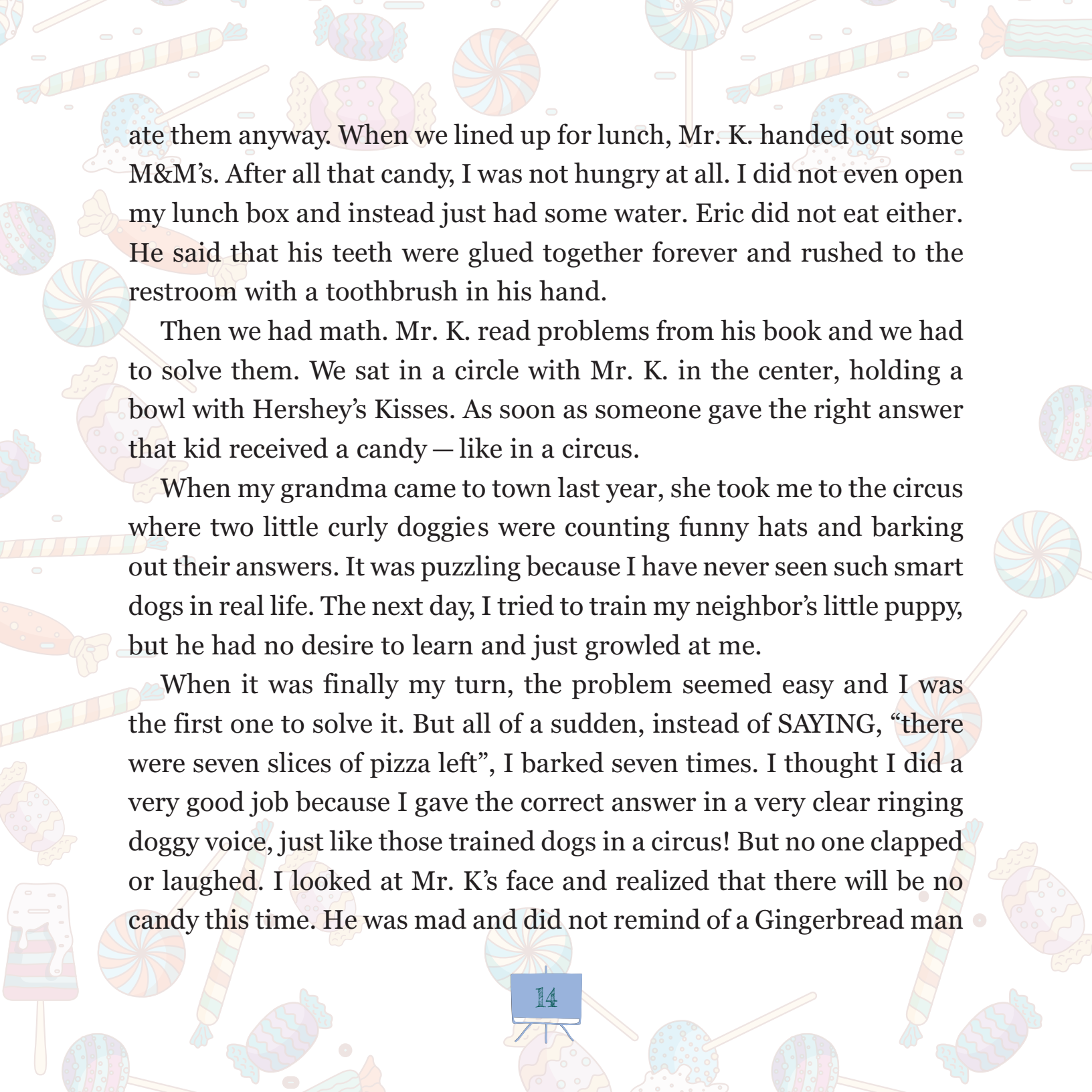
The Candy Day

Who does not like candy? I personally have not met such a kid. Even Eric, who says that sweets are horrible for our teeth, munches them when he thinks no one is watching. His father is a dentist and this is why Eric is so freaked out about chewing sweets. He even carries a toothbrush to school and brushes his teeth after lunch. But sometimes, when I offer him a Kit-Kat, he snatches it out of my hand, asking me not to tell anyone.

Anyway, today we had a substitute. I bet Mrs. Jansen got sick from Karina Moor, who was sneezing all day yesterday.

Our substitute teacher looked like the Gingerbread man. His head was very round, and his eyes reminded of big dark raisins. Even the buttons on his sweater were made of chocolate chips. He walked with a slight waddle — more like a Gingerbread penguin. He smiled at us and said that we will have an amazing day — and we did! In our reading class we ate Jelly Beans. In writing class, everyone who wrote ten sentences about farm animals got Snickers bars. I find them way too sweet, but



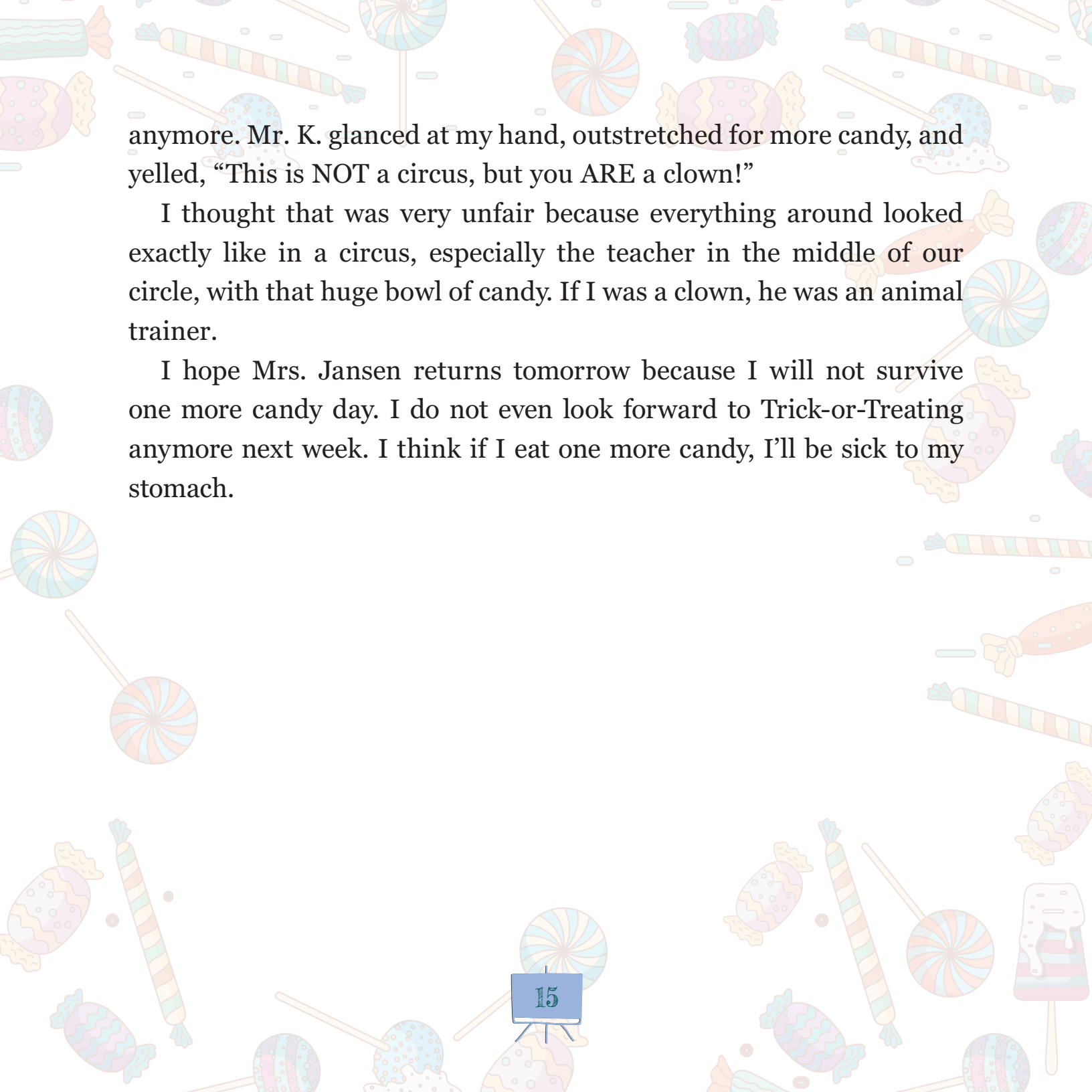


ate them anyway. When we lined up for lunch, Mr. K. handed out some M&M's. After all that candy, I was not hungry at all. I did not even open my lunch box and instead just had some water. Eric did not eat either. He said that his teeth were glued together forever and rushed to the restroom with a toothbrush in his hand.

Then we had math. Mr. K. read problems from his book and we had to solve them. We sat in a circle with Mr. K. in the center, holding a bowl with Hershey's Kisses. As soon as someone gave the right answer that kid received a candy — like in a circus.

When my grandma came to town last year, she took me to the circus where two little curly doggies were counting funny hats and barking out their answers. It was puzzling because I have never seen such smart dogs in real life. The next day, I tried to train my neighbor's little puppy, but he had no desire to learn and just growled at me.

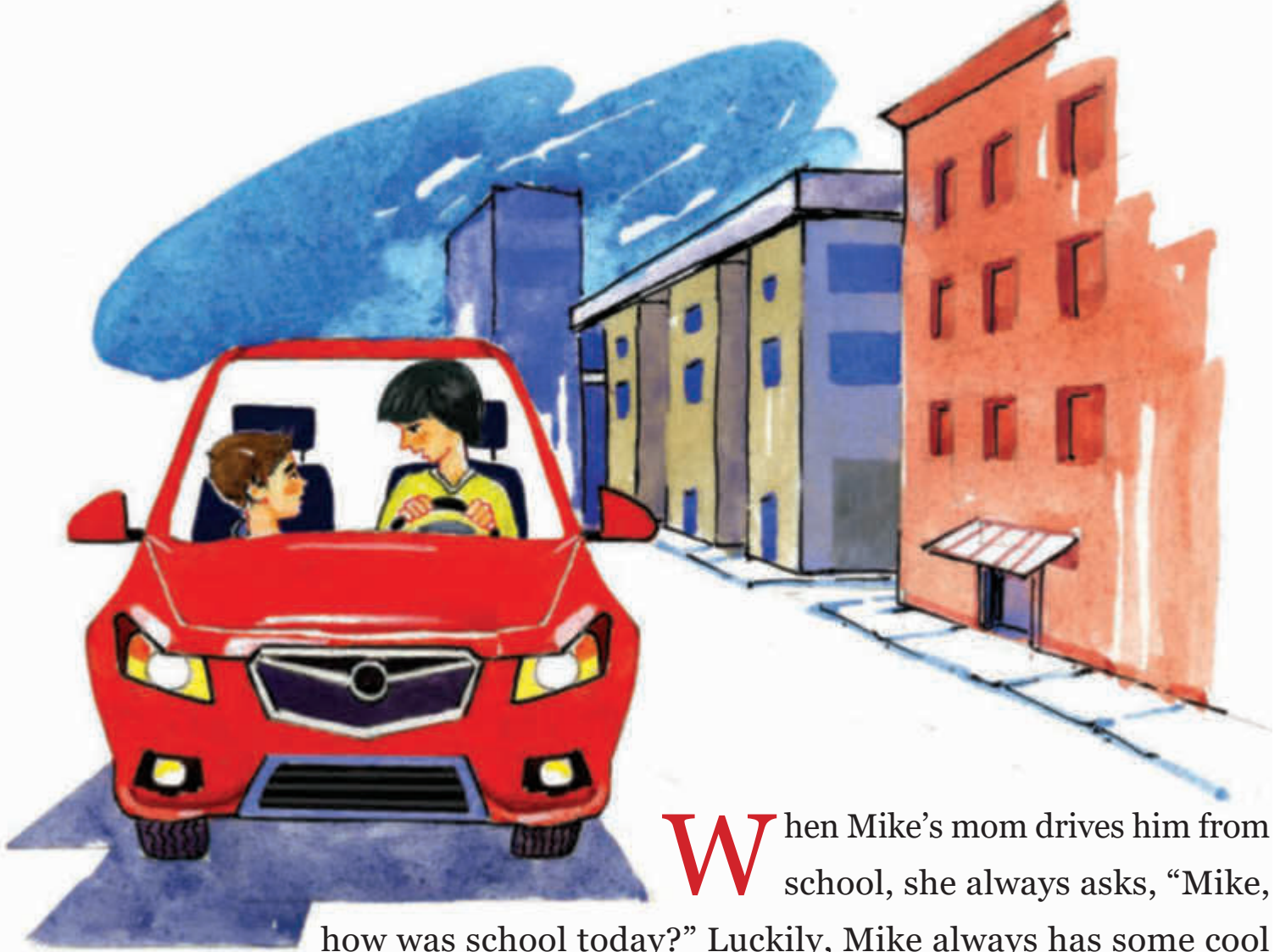
When it was finally my turn, the problem seemed easy and I was the first one to solve it. But all of a sudden, instead of SAYING, “there were seven slices of pizza left”, I barked seven times. I thought I did a very good job because I gave the correct answer in a very clear ringing doggy voice, just like those trained dogs in a circus! But no one clapped or laughed. I looked at Mr. K's face and realized that there will be no candy this time. He was mad and did not remind of a Gingerbread man



anymore. Mr. K. glanced at my hand, outstretched for more candy, and yelled, “This is NOT a circus, but you ARE a clown!”

I thought that was very unfair because everything around looked exactly like in a circus, especially the teacher in the middle of our circle, with that huge bowl of candy. If I was a clown, he was an animal trainer.

I hope Mrs. Jansen returns tomorrow because I will not survive one more candy day. I do not even look forward to Trick-or-Treating anymore next week. I think if I eat one more candy, I’ll be sick to my stomach.



When Mike's mom drives him from school, she always asks, "Mike, how was school today?" Luckily, Mike always has some cool stories to tell, because something bizarre happens there every day...

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www.mgraphics-publishing.com
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ISBN 978-1-94022085-7



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