



BOOKS FROM TAIWAN



BOOKS FROM TAIWAN

<http://booksfromtaiwan.tw/>

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Design and Layout | Wei-Jie Hong

Issue | Children's Books, 2021

Publication Date | December 15, 2021

ISSN | 2410-0781

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**ABOUT
TAIWAN
CREATIVE
CONTENT
AGENCY**

Gifted with cultural and natural diversity, Taiwan has created admirable economic and political miracles over time that empowers many fascinating stories. Even though cultural industries in Taiwan have been prosperous and prolific, in response to the knowledge economy and evolving technologies, we stand at a critical point to adapt and innovate.

Founded in 2019, TAICCA is a professional intermediary organization supervised by the Ministry of Culture to facilitate cultural industry development, including but not limited to publishing, audiovisual, music, animation, comics, games, and cultural technology applications. TAICCA drives industrial investments, innovations, and formulates Taiwan's cultural brand that enriches the international cultural landscape through our diverse and rich cultural content.



**GRANT FOR THE
PUBLICATION OF
TAIWANESE WORKS IN
TRANSLATION (GPT)**

**MINISTRY OF CULTURE,
REPUBLIC OF CHINA (TAIWAN)**

GPT is set up by The Ministry of Culture to encourage the publication of Taiwanese works in translation overseas, to raise the international visibility of Taiwanese cultural content, and to help Taiwan's publishing industry expand into non-Chinese international markets..

- Applicant Eligibility: Foreign publishing houses (legal persons) legally registered in accordance with the laws and regulations of their respective countries.
- Conditions:
 1. The so-called Taiwanese works must meet the following requirements:
 - A. Use traditional characters;
 - B. Written by a natural person holding an R.O.C. identity card;
 - C. Has been assigned an ISBN in Taiwan.
i.e., the author is a native of Taiwan, and the first 6 digits of the book's ISBN are 978-957-XXX-XXX-X, 978-986-XXX-XXX-X, or 978-626-XXX-XXX-X.
 2. Applications must include documents certifying that the copyright holder of the Taiwanese works consents to its translation and foreign publication (no restriction on its format).
 3. A translation sample of the Taiwanese work is required (no restriction on its format and length).
 4. The translated work must be published within two years, after the first day of the relevant application period.
- Grant Items:
 1. The maximum grant available for each project is NT\$600,000, which covers:
 - A. Licensing fees (going to the copyright holder of the Taiwanese works);
 - B. Translation fees;
 - C. Marketing and promotion fees (limited to economy class air tickets for the R.O.C. writer to participate in overseas promotional activities related to the project);
 - D. Book production-oriented fees;
 - E. Tax (20% of the total award amount);
 - F. Remittance-related handling fees.
 2. Priority consideration is given to books that have received the Golden Tripod Award, the Golden Comic Award, or the Taiwan Literature Award.
- Application Period: Twice every year. The MOC reserves the right to change the application periods, and will announce said changes separately.
- Announcement of successful applications: Winners will be announced within three months of the end of the application period.
- Application Method: Please visit the Ministry's official website (https://grants.moc.gov.tw/Web_ENG/), and use the online application system.

For full details, please visit: https://grants.moc.gov.tw/Web_ENG/

Or contact: books@moc.gov.tw

MONSTER MUM

怪獸媽媽

Monster Mum's baby is so adorable that she can't bear the thought of her little one suffering outside. So she decides to bring him back inside her! And so that her little one can experience the world, she brings the world inside too. Until one day, her belly is so big, it can't take any more....

Monster Mum has loved her baby since before he was born, and she is determined to protect him! But the world is full of danger: what if her little one falls into a ravine, or is swept away by the river, or loses his way in the forest? Monster Mum has a great idea: she decides to bring her baby back inside her! If her little one wants to know about the world outside, then she will bring little bits of the trees and the sea and so on inside too. Problem solved! Or is it?

Parents want to protect their children. They also want to give their children as many good experiences as they can. Taking the mother's perspective, Chiang Meng-Yun highlights in a humorous and incisive way the impact of over-parenting, and how overwhelming love can create anxiety and fear. The hope is that by the end of the story, parents and children alike will be able to find a way to embrace the world together like Monster Mum and her baby.



Chiang Meng-Yun 貓魚

Chiang Meng-Yun began her career as an illustrator after finishing her college degree in philosophy. She is proficient with several different kinds of media, and has experience with animation as well as still visual art. She has been a featured illustrator at the Bologna Children's Book Fair.



- **Publisher:** Global Kids
- **Date:** 12/2020
- **Rights contact:** booksfromtaiwan.rights@gmail.com
- **Pages:** 48
- **Size:** 21 x 26.6 cm
- **Age:** 3+
- **Rights sold:** Simplified Chinese

I AM MONSTER MUM

Written by Chiang Meng-Yun

Translated by Sarah-Jayne Carver

"I'm dead on my feet, I wish I could stuff you back in my belly!" I've shouted this deep down in my core more times than I can count during these years of learning to be a mother. Naturally, before I'm even done shouting I'm back to running around after my kids, but when I see their sleeping faces I understand the sheer boundlessness of love.

I love my children dearly as all mothers do, even though it often feels futile. I wish I could love them as tenderly as the hare does in *Guess How Much I Love*

You. Unfortunately, more often than not I'm like a mother penguin who's always screaming and running around manically scooping up her children after scaring them by flying into a rage. It feels extremely therapeutic to read stories like this in picture books about parent-child relationships, they give you space to relax and reflect on your own circumstances. I feel deeply influenced by books like this and they have made me want to accurately portray the conflicting emotions that I've perceived in parent-child relationships.





Monster Mum is the first picture book I have ever written. It tackles several subjects that have always been tremendously important to me: the possession of love, the sense of security, the way we both need and fear relationships, and how we should place these feelings and respond to them. What is love? How do we love? These age-old questions are still issues I contemplate every day. The entertaining anecdotes that crop up in daily life when you're interacting with children have provided a never-ending stream of inspiration and creative motivation. People are moved by stories that are rooted in real life and I strongly believe that storytelling allows adults and children to better understand one another and gain a deeper sense of how their lives are closely connected.

I am a "monster mum" and I'm in the process of learning how to love without being anxious. I think adults

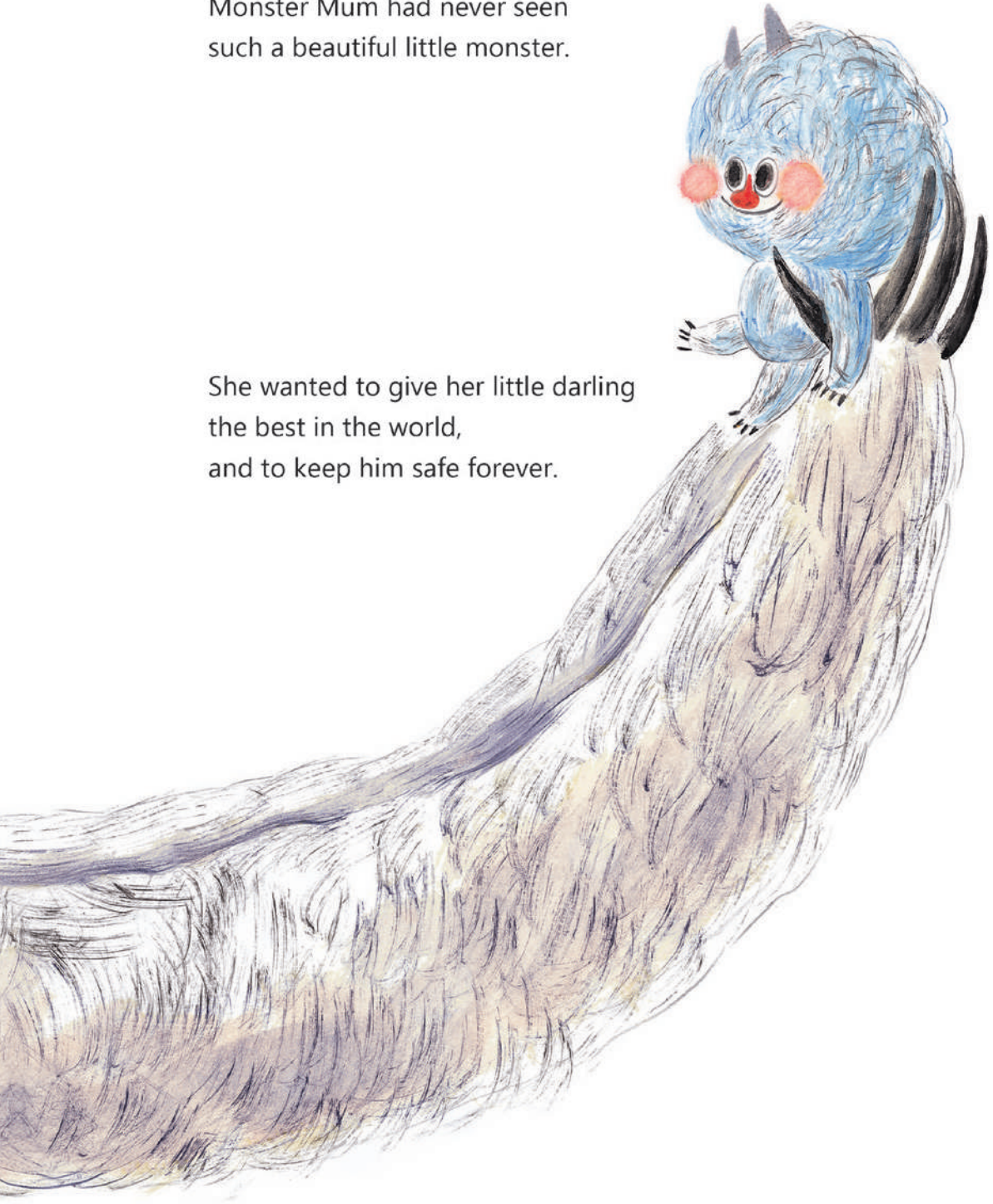
often pretend to understand, they pretend to know more than children when in reality adults are just children with more experience. Growing up makes us recognize the harshness of the real world but we also lose our sense of courage in the face of adversity. I believe that when adults are willing to let go of the fact they've grown older and taller, they can go back to seeing the world through a child's eyes and this doesn't just give them the courage to face the world but also lets them return to a beautiful kind of simplicity. The world really is so big, it's large enough that we can set ourselves free. We can unleash our courage on the world and know that love may bring unconditional happiness.

I hope that my fellow monsters like this story and that all the baby monsters can go through the world knowing true freedom and happiness.



Monster Mum had never seen
such a beautiful little monster.

She wanted to give her little darling
the best in the world,
and to keep him safe forever.



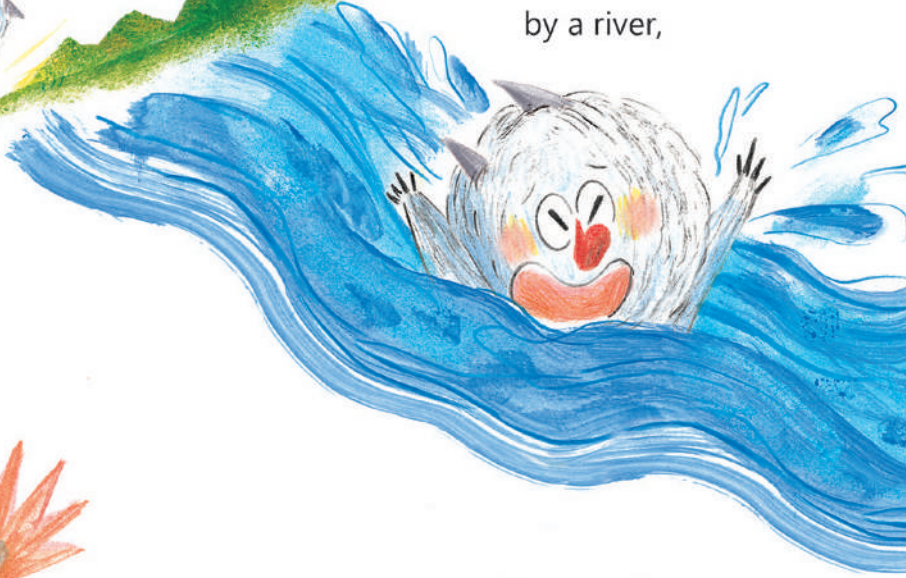
But the world is full of danger.



Monster Mum worried that her little darling might roll down the hill,



or be swept away by a river,



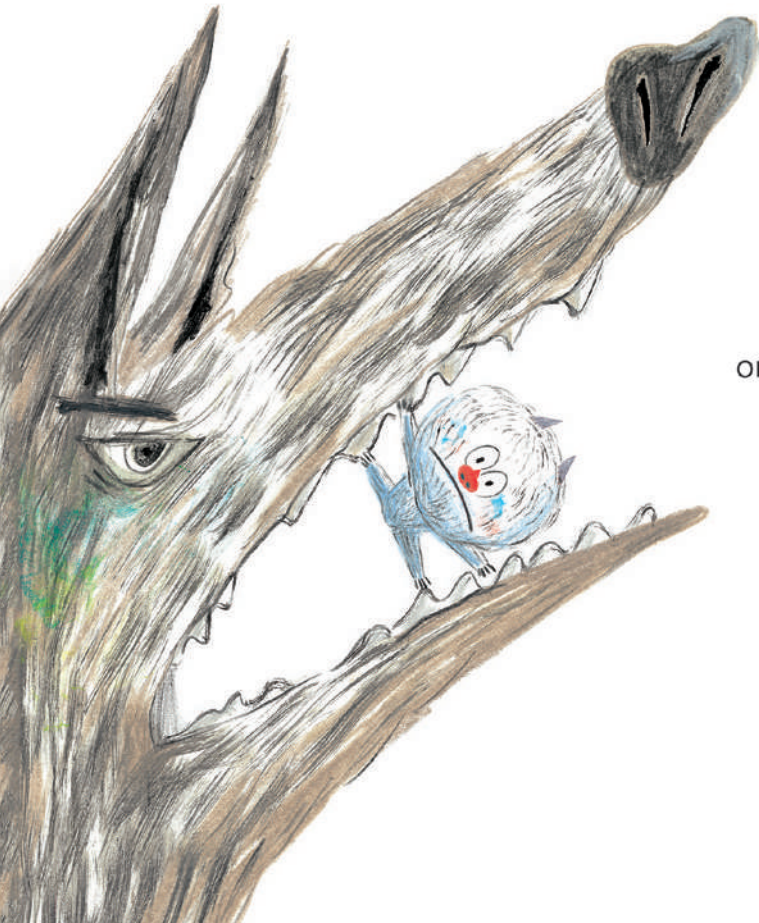
or lose his way in the forest.



She worried that he might be seized by a pterodactyl,



or eaten by a wolf.



She worried that germs might make him ill...



She worried about everything!

A MILLION KISSES

一百萬個親親

Have you ever counted how many kisses you've had in your life? A mother's kiss is an intimate expression of her love for a child, and of her warmth and hope as the child grows up.

From the moment she hears her baby's heartbeat, a mother can't wait to give her child all the love in the world. Birth, crying, crawling, learning to walk - ordinary things that we take for granted are precious memories for mothers. A mother's kiss is an expression of love that cannot be conveyed in words, and her kisses create an environment of love in which her child can grow.

Author Chen Shu-Ting takes the mother's point of view, and in small, meaningful details of everyday life, tells of her own love and tenderness towards her newborn baby. Using warm colors and cleverly bringing in pets, illustrator Deer Jan makes the story appropriate for modern-day family life.



Text by Chen Shu-Ting 譚淑婷

Former newspaper reporter Chen Shu-Ting is now a freelance writer. She cares strongly about the rights of children and animals and the living environment of the future. Her publications include *The Road to a Warm and Productive Life: Mother and Child*, *Adults as Partners*, *Dancing the Slow Dance Together* and *Mums Swap Diaries: Same Parenting Challenges, Different Thinking*.



Illustrated by Deer Jan 詹迪爾

Deer Jan works in art education and illustration projects, drawing and painting by hand with colored pencils and watercolors. Known for her meticulous and restrained images and her soft colors, she is the creator of *Dear*, and *I Don't Want a Haircut!*



- **Publisher:** Yes Creative / Papa Publishing
- **Date:** 1/2021
- **Rights contact:** booksfromtaiwan.rights@gmail.com
- **Pages:** 40
- **Size:** 21 x 25 cm
- **Age:** 3+
- **Rights sold:** Korean (Spoonbook)

THE BIRTH OF A MILLION KISSES

Written by Chen Shu-Ting & Deer Jan

Translated by Sarah-Jayne Carver

Love from Parents (Author)

From the day after my son was born, I discovered one key thing: The happy days we have now will always fly by but it's such a busy time that we don't get to feel much of it, until one day we look back and discover that there is no way for us to do it all again.

I have watched my child grow taller each day as his body gradually lost its roundness. He is less dependent on me today than he was yesterday, and tomorrow he will be even less dependent still. Where I once enjoyed the sweetness of taking care of him as a newborn baby, in the

last few years I have started to worry that I am always one day closer to the time he will eventually let go of my hand.

The most common mood I've felt since becoming a mother is a mixture of irritability and guilt. I feel tired of doting on my son and I wish he would give me a bit more time to myself, but sometimes I'm elated by how much he clings to me. Now and then, he'll sense my impatience and conflicting feelings. He will try and please me by asking whether he's been well-behaved and I will repeatedly reassure him that I love him so much, regardless of whether he's been good or not. No matter how many times I say it he never seems to be



completely convinced, just as I secretly doubt whether I am the center of his world in the same way I was during those pre-school days. In the end it doesn't really matter, we still love each other very much.

This is how *A Million Kisses* came into being. When my son was born, he was so soft with that sweet newborn baby smell and I couldn't bear to leave him even for a minute. Every time I picked him up I would kiss him. In the years that followed, I would just hold him close and kiss him when he threw afternoon tantrums or couldn't sleep late at night, when he fell down or was angry at something. Even now, he's in primary school and I still often hold my arms out wide for a hug and give him a kiss.

I hope I hold fast to the beautiful memories I have of this time. Every morning, when I see him come out of his bedroom bleary-eyed and just waking up, I immediately get ready to give him a hug and a kiss. I know that an entire day spent together is about to begin and that we'll never have these days again.

A Happy Time for You and Me (Illustrator)

When illustrating this story, I struggled with the ending for a long time.

When exactly is the one millionth kiss?

Is it when your child gets married? Or when they have children of their own?

Or is it when they leave and say goodbye?

I believe that you should always treat "right now" as the final moment to love with all your strength.

Not a single moment should be missed!

This is my interpretation of *A Million Kisses*.

Thank you for this story that reminded me how I grew up surrounded by love.

And I hope that this book will make readers feel a little bit of that same warmth.







The **3**rd kiss
is for when you had
hiccoughs inside me.





The 4th kiss
is for when your tiny feet kicked inside.



The 11th kiss





is for when Dad cut the cord.



I AM THE BLACK SWAN

我是黑天鵝

A little boy who loves ballet and who is not afraid of hard work, dances beautifully. His dream is to be the Black Swan and do the very difficult continuous pirouettes. When people say that only girls can dance the Black Swan, he feels frustrated. After all, there are male black swans, aren't there?

Amin can't wait to get up on Saturdays and go to his favorite place - the ballet school. He doesn't care about getting sore feet and bruised knees, or about being laughed at. He just wants to be the Black Swan in the ballet show. But the others tell him only girls can dance the Black Swan, and even though he has practiced until he can do the difficult pirouettes, the teacher gives him the part of the prince. He is so frustrated, but what can he do?

Children's dreams should not be limited by gender or any other external conditions. The hope is that the little boy in this book will help readers to break through gender barriers, and enjoy the beauty of ballet at the same time!



Text by Liu Ching-Yen 劉清彥

A journalist by training, Liu Ching-Yen has always maintained a love for children's literature. He spends most of his time translating and writing children's books. Liu Ching-Yen travels frequently both in Taiwan and abroad to speak to grownups who also love story books. He has also hosted a children's television program, winning a prize for best children's presenter in 2013. His greatest wish is to be a little magpie himself and spread the seed of reading around the globe.



Illustrated by Chang Pei-Yu 張蓓瑜

Currently living in Germany, where she works in illustration, picture book creation, and book design, Chang Pei-Yu is a lecturer in the Illustration Department at the University of Münster. Winner of a silver medal from the 3x3 International Illustration Award (USA), and selected for the Most Beautiful German Books, and the Bratislava Biennial of Illustration. Her picture books in German include *Hundebraten Süßsauer*, *Mr. Benjamin's Suitcase of Secrets* (Der geheimnisvolle Koffer von Herrn Benjamin), *Snow for Everyone* (Wem gehört der Schnee?).

文·劉清彥 圖·張蓓瑜

我是黑天我鳥



- **Publisher:** Commonwealth Education
- **Date:** 7/2021
- **Rights contact:** booksfromtaiwan.rights@gmail.com
- **Pages:** 36
- **Size:** 21 x 26 cm
- **Age:** 4+

WHEN LIFE AND ART INTERTWINE

Written by Chang Shu-Chiung

Translated by Sarah-Jayne Carver

It is clear from Liu Ching-Yen's previous works that he has a specific fondness for character-driven narratives, which he says derives from his background in journalism. Interviewing people and finding out their stories was a daily exercise for Liu as a reporter and he developed a particular passion for human-interest stories.

A Boy as the Black Swan

Liu based the story of *I Am the Black Swan* on three people he had encountered. The first was a teenaged boy he met in church who was dancing one of the lead

roles in his high school's production of *Swan Lake*. Next was a young girl who Liu met while hosting his children's TV show *My Reading Bakery*. She studied ballet and her passion for dance was immediately evident in every moment of her life. Lastly, during his university days Liu had interviewed the famous Taiwanese dancer and choreographer Lin Hwai-min, as well as Lin's roommate at the time who'd said: "If you see someone leaping instead of walking down the street, that's Lin Hwai-min."

Thus, Liu tied the figure of Lin Hwai-min together with the story of the boy who danced the Black Swan and the little girl who loved to dance so much she skipped across the street, to create a narrative about gender roles, pursuing your dreams and how art merges with life.

Connecting with the Stirring Topic of Gender

When she first read *I Am the Black Swan*, illustrator Chang Pei-Yu said she was immediately drawn to the part on gender roles. She remembered her own childhood experience of being forced to use a pink schoolbag even though she really liked the color blue. Later, when she studied early German literature at university, she realized that the field was solely occupied by male writers. In *I Am the Black Swan*, she was particularly interested in Amin's character and was extremely curious about how gender roles would be handled in a children's book.



Naturally Curly Hair and a Red Dance Costume

When Chang contemplated how to lay the groundwork for Amin as a character, she kept debating whether to emphasize his artistic nature and make him stand out from the crowd, or to depict him as an ordinary child. She also felt that Amin's slight rebelliousness and stubborn perseverance were typical childhood traits. In the end, she decided to do a combination of the two: she gave Amin naturally conspicuous curly hair but a very simple dance costume to show the side of him that is just an ordinary child.

However, when it came to the color of his clothes, Chang decided to use bright red to represent Amin's inner-life and to show his strength. This red appears constantly throughout the illustrations and is crucial to the book. Finally, Chang decided to use a combination of colored pencils and collage which she hoped would

convey the effortless feeling of agility that comes with dancing.

Chang and Liu's Key Hopes for the Reader

Chang says she hopes readers will enjoy the simple pleasure of the illustrations and that children will get a sense of the more relaxed, happy side of art. She hopes that the dynamic artwork will let children experience the movement and rhythm of dance and gain a sense of its beauty.

Liu hopes that children can understand: "No matter what your parents demand that you learn, the most important thing is that you know whether or not you like it, because you are going to need passion if you want to master it. You can do anything you want regardless of gender, but you must embrace it and pursue it with a burning passion."



Then, he skips and leaps all the way to his favourite place.





Amin warms up.



His steps are soft and light.
His spins are fast and balanced.
He leaps through the air like a dolphin.



暖身區



Amin doesn't care that his feet are sore,
or that his knees are bruised,
or that he has to do the same movements over and over again.
All he thinks about...



FRED AND GINGER

阿福與阿金

Fred and Ginger have completely different personalities, but they both love to dance. However, whenever they dance together, they get all tangled up, so they decide to find the best way to dance with each other.

Fred and Ginger are good friends. They live together, but have their own particular ways. Fred likes to be neat and tidy, while Ginger is always tripping on threads of wool and cardboard boxes. Despite their differences, they share one thing in common: dancing! But every time they dance together, their arms and legs go all over the place, and they get tangled up. Eventually they decide to try lots of different dances, to try and find the best dance for them both.

What happens when two people with completely different habits and personalities, but similar interests, become friends? Author Chang Ting-Yu's simple but profound storyline, with its lively illustrations, tells children that there can be conflict and differences within a friendship, but the most important thing is to accept each other's differences and support each other.



Chang Ting-Yu 張庭瑀

Passionate about illustration and all kinds of picture books, Chang Ting-Yu was a landscape architect before turning to picture books. She is now a freelance illustrator, working mainly in colored pencils, gouache, silhouettes, and digital drawing.



- **Publisher:** Yes Creative / Papa Publishing
- **Date:** 11/2020
- **Rights contact:** booksfromtaiwan.rights@gmail.com
- **Pages:** 40
- **Size:** 20 x 26 cm
- **Age:** 4+

FINDING FRIENDSHIP IN DANCE

Written by Chang Ting-Yu

Translated by Sarah-Jayne Carver

I came up with the story for *Fred and Ginger* during graduate school when I met my roommate from South America. She was from a country whose cultural background was completely different from Taiwan's: Colombia. Her love of dance and her uninhibited personality were a huge culture shock for me at the time. We clearly had different ways of life and personal preferences, but we also had a lot of incidents involving cultural differences while we shared a room together but of course a certain amount of disagreement is inevitable. Colombia is the birthplace of salsa and my roommate had always loved dancing since she was small, she introduced me to so many Latin dances and it was a totally new life experience for someone like me who had no background in dance. This was why I chose to use

dance as a subject to bring out the friendship between the two characters.

The story was initially conceived in English, so when I was naming the characters I researched famous dancers from history and came across two celebrities who had been renowned dance partners during the 1930s and 40s: Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers. By chance, the English word for an orange cat is "ginger", so I decided there and then to call the two characters "Fred" and "Ginger". However, the hardest part was choosing a title for the book, it was a huge challenge for me as a someone who is not a native English speaker. I considered so many dance-related titles but none of them were quite right, until I gave a talk at the end of term and mentioned the concept behind naming "Fred"





and “Ginger”. Various teachers and classmates who had grown up in the West immediately picked up on the names and the dance connection, then they went on to suggest that there couldn’t be a more fitting title for the book than *Fred and Ginger*. I decided on that for the title, and when it came to translating it into Chinese I made the names more local and decided that instead of directly translating the English names, I would use the homophones “fu” (meaning “luck”) for Fred and “jin” (meaning “gold”) for Ginger.

Also, the dance studio that appears in the story is called “Dansa” which combines the English word “dance” with “casa”, the Spanish word for home. The general idea is: as long as you like to dance, this is your home!

Lastly, what I really want to say is that in a lot of cases the end result isn’t the most important thing. What matters most is how we feel during the process and I hope that during these difficult times we can all cherish one another because there’s really nothing more important than each other’s company.

This is Fred.



This is Ginger.



Something will go wrong.





So one day, they have a serious conversation.

They decide to find the best dance for both of them.





SOMBRITA

小黑

A little girl welcomes a newcomer to her family one summer. The newcomer is an injured stag beetle called Sombrita. She carefully makes a home for Sombrita, and checks on it every day, until one day it disappears....

Every summer holiday, a little girl goes with her father to Grandma's old house in the mountains. This year, they find an injured stag beetle in the woods, and take it home. They call it Sombrita. The little girl makes a special home for Sombrita, with leaves for it to rest under, and its favorite food like apple. Sombrita creates many happy memories for the little girl that summer. She never expects that one day it might disappear....

Sombrita is a picture book about meeting and parting. Author Lee Jo-Shin uses a fresh, warm visual voice, to tell the story of a little girl welcoming a new friend into her life, and other life lessons that the stag beetle brought in.



Lee Jo-Shin 李若昕

Lee Jo-Shin writes and illustrates children's books. She teaches illustration and printmaking in the Fine Art Dept at National Changhua University of Education. Her style is affectionate and child-like: for example, in her books *Benjamin* and *Still a Family*.



- **Publisher:** Les Gouttes
- **Date:** 7/2020
- **Rights contact:** booksfromtaiwan.rights@gmail.com
- **Pages:** 40
- **Size:** 21.6 x 27 cm
- **Age:** 3+

THE INSPIRATION BEHIND SOMBRITA

Written by Lee Jo-Shin

Translated by Sarah-Jayne Carver

Where did the inspiration for the story come from? Is it based on personal experience?

The initial inspiration for *Sombrita* came from a true story about a friend's child. One summer, they accidentally ended up raising a stag beetle and, as a friend of the father, I was there to see the child confront the reality of death for the first time. The child's calm and collected response made it feel like they had their own way of dealing with it even though they'd never had this experience before.

After we talked it over, I felt that the whole thing had been an interesting experience in itself and I found the delicate emotions at play deeply moving. Some scenes appeared in my mind and I hoped that I could develop

them into a picture book. To create the story for *Sombrita*, I linked the incident with some of my own childhood memories of our family home in the mountains where my brother and I would play games together on the steep terraced fields.

Why did you choose to make the protagonist a stag beetle rather than a cat or a dog, or maybe another animal that humans encounter more often in the modern world?

I envisioned the scenes from the book taking place in the mountains and forests, but most pets today are kept at home which is far from the natural world of plants and





external environments that I wanted to portray in the story. I hoped it would feel like leaving the city behind. Thus, I didn't give much consideration to replacing the stag beetle with another animal. Part of me also hoped that I could encourage children to understand and care about animals other than cats and dogs. However, once the book was published I got some feedback from readers who said that the book reminded them of their own relationships with their dogs or other pets and it made me really happy to hear them share these feelings.

What is the significance of the "dad" character in the story?


After I started creating picture books, I often heard people mention that most of the adult characters in children's books were mothers, and a lot of fathers really felt that disparity when they were reading books aloud to their children. I didn't have a set stance on it when I was writing the story and I believed that whether the parent was a mother or a father wouldn't have an effect on the development of the plot. Given the vast number of picture books in the world, I thought perhaps it would

be good to give fathers a chance to see themselves in a picture book as they read it aloud.


Which is your favorite illustration in the book?

Personally, I really like the page where the young protagonist is surrounded by various plants, insects and butterflies (P.60-61). It was a deep memory from childhood when I was very young and instantly felt the atmospheric rhythm of nature, the tranquillity felt wonderful to me as a child from the city and I tried to capture this feeling in the illustration.

When I was playing tag in the mountain field terraces that had been left to lie fallow, I noticed all sorts of creatures and sometimes I came across tadpoles or strange insects in the small pools of water. I remember one time just as I was about to jump over a ridge between the fields, I discovered a fat green caterpillar happily munching away on some leaves about ten centimetres in front of me. I had no choice but to hold onto that fear and it was only after I leapt steadily over the ridge that the feeling started to ferment within me.



In the summer holidays Baba always takes me
to our house in the mountains.
It was Ama's old house, and it's fun there,
and very different from home.



Our house in the mountains is like a castle in the forest, surrounded by lush green leaves.

The air in the mountains is cooler and we don't need air-conditioning there.



Baba takes me to the river by house,
where the water is shallow and icy cold.
We see little brown fish and tadpoles.
Sometimes the fish come and nibble our toes,
which tickles, and makes Baba laugh.



There are lots of insects in the forest,
Some I recognise; some of them look peculiar and
extraordinary.

I try not to go too close.

The dust on the butterfly's wings looks a bit scary.





THE THREE LITTLE MOLES SERIES

三隻小鼹鼠系列

Grandpa Mole and the two young moles live under the roots of a big tree. When they go out in the forest they meet new friends, and have all kinds of adventures. This series of three books takes readers into the forested mountains of Taiwan, and encourages them to be positive, help each other and share.

In *A Special Gift*, the three moles go in search of their natural talents. On the way, they meet a little duckling that has fallen down a hole, and the moles use their talent for digging holes to rescue the little duckling. They affirm their own abilities and learn to appreciate others. In *Let's Roast Sweet Potatoes*, the moles start to argue with chipmunks when digging up the sweet potatoes. In the end, they learn to share their food and help each other. In *Adventure in the Forest*, the moles meet some baby birds, and rescue them from the owl's clutches. As they do so, they see a wonderful Mikado Pheasant in the mist.

Chang Che-ming uses water colors to great effect and creates a beautifully detailed forest scene, featuring animals that are found in the forested mountains of Taiwan. The stories are fresh, charming and meaningful – they are quietly elegant animal stories.



Chang Che-ming 張哲銘

Chang Che-ming creates picture books and art. His work has been selected for exhibition at the Bologna Children's Book Fair, and he has received the National Book Prize, and the Hsin-Yi Children's Literature Award. His style is elegant and detailed, and often filled with references to the natural world and local customs in Taiwan, showing a deep affection for Taiwan.

3隻  小鼯鼠

了不起的本事

文·圖——張哲銘



- **Publisher:** Pace
- **Date:** 6/2020
- **Rights contact:** booksfromtaiwan.rights@gmail.com
- **Pages:** 36
- **Size:** 19 x 27 cm
- **Age:** 3+

EXPLORING THE DEPTHS OF TAIWAN'S FORESTS

By Sarah-Jayne Carver

Every single one of us has our own set of skills, no matter how big or small we might be.

Award-winning author-illustrator Chang Che-ming's picture book series *The Three Little Moles* uses exquisite hand-painted watercolors to bring the magic of Taiwan's forests to life and tell the story of two young moles as they discover the world with the help of their knowledgeable grandfather.

The first book in the series, *A Special Gift*, sees

the three protagonists set out from their cosy home in a tunnel beneath a tree stump and encounter a mother duck whose baby is stuck in a deep, well-like hole. The three moles use their digging skills to make a tunnel and rescue the duckling. The mother duck is thrilled and later returns the favor by rescuing the moles from a huge fish while they're crossing a river on a raft.

The second two books, *Let's Roast Sweet Potatoes* and *Adventure in the Forest*, build on the themes of the first story but can be read as standalone books as well.





The three moles use their digging skills to unearth some delicious sweet potatoes only to find that as they pull the roots from below, a family of chipmunks is pulling the potatoes up from above! The moles use a kiln to roast the sweet potatoes and the chipmunks declare that the potatoes are absolutely delicious, so the moles offer to teach the chipmunks how to roast them. *Adventure in the Forest* sees the three moles go out in the fog and stumble across two baby birds and an egg. An owl swoops overhead preying on the moles and baby birds, so the moles quickly dig a hole for them all to hide in. The egg hatches while they're in the hole and then the birds' parents arrive, a pair of beautiful Mikado pheasants (the unofficial national bird of Taiwan).

All three books have the same fundamental themes of self-affirmation, learning from ones' elders and the importance of sharing. The moles expressive faces and gestures create a focal point against the beautifully

rendered forest landscapes in the background. Most of the illustrations are sweeping double-page spreads that capture the scale of the forest and the tininess of the protagonists, although occasionally the pages are divided into smaller scenes which work especially well when the moles are hiding underground with the baby birds while the owl flies overhead. Chang's delicate use of watercolors and fine brush strokes gives the illustrations a timelessness which still feels fresh and original. Captivatingly depicting Taiwan's local culture and customs is a priority for Chang, as seen in his previous works *Food Market* and *Night Market*, and it's a joy to see him apply a new blend of scale and attention to detail in his portrayal of Taiwan's flora and fauna in *The Three Little Moles*.

Set against the backdrop of Taiwan's deep mountain forests, *The Three Little Moles* is a series about universal values that already feels like a classic.

"Are moles always so small?" asked the two young moles after they'd managed to climb over the tree root.

"I'm afraid there's nothing we can do about it," said Grandpa.

"We may be small, but we have a special gift."

"A special gift? Like a super power?"

"A mole's special gift is..."





But before Grandpa could finish his sentence,
they heard an anxious voice behind an old tree.

"Quack, quack, quack."

"Who could it be?"





"Ah, it's Mama Wild Duck with her ducklings."



“But, why is she sticking her head in the ground?”



The three moles hurried over, and discovered that a duckling had fallen down the hole!

Grandpa was worried. "We must rescue it," he said, "but it won't be easy."



"Quick, you two, come and help."

"Shall we throw it a rope and pull it out?" the two young moles asked.

"No! We'll use our special gift."

Grandpa knew what to do.

A PLACE LIKE THE SEA

一個像海的地方

A little boy goes with his parents to a place that seems like the sea. When he turns around, he finds his parents have disappeared. Lost in the aquarium, he feels all alone and helpless, like the sea creatures that have been brought there from the sea.

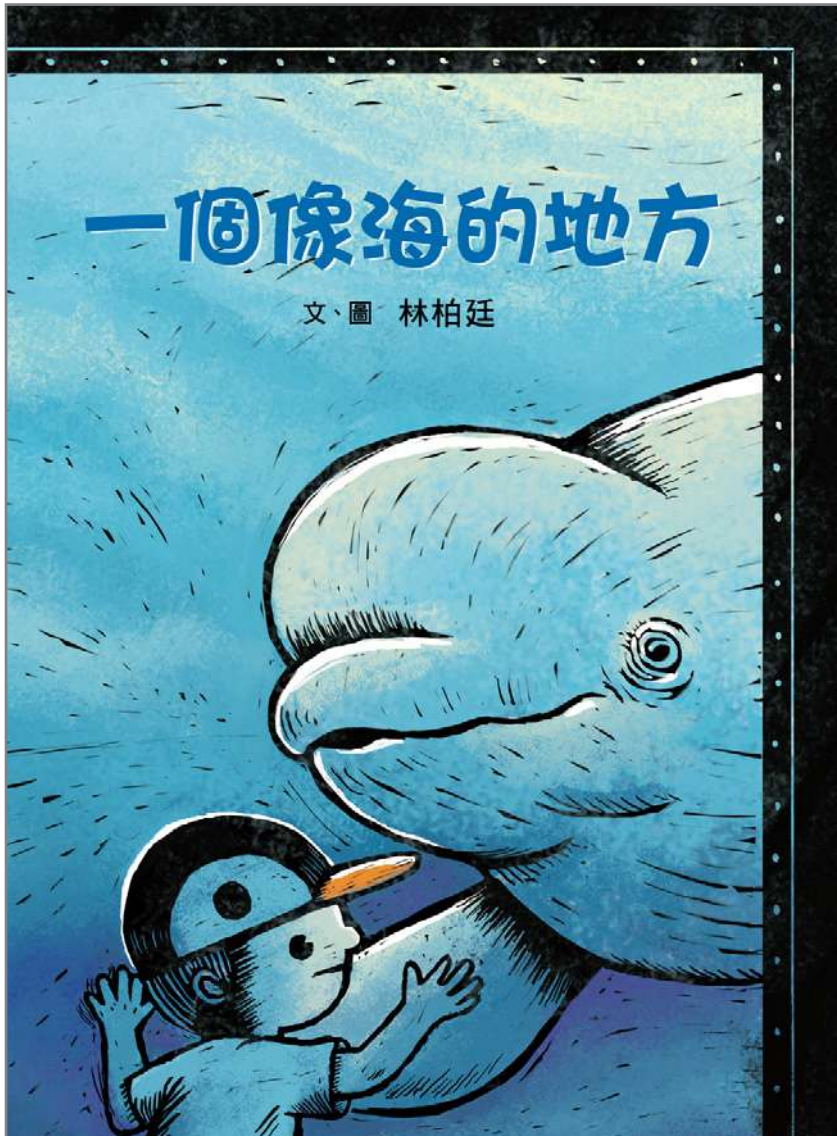
A little boy goes with his parents to the aquarium. Like the sea, it's a place with whales, dolphins, starfish, and many different kinds of fish. He walks around slowly, feeling as though he is in the sea too, and as though humans can talk to animals. At one point, he loses his parents. On his own in the aquarium he feels sad and helpless, like the animals that have been brought from the sea to the aquarium. When will they all see their parents again? The little boy will soon find his parents, but the creatures in the aquarium will probably never be able to go back to the sea.

Lin Po-Ting cleverly associates the child's sadness with that of the sea creatures at the aquarium. In the first few pages, the text is in the voice of the little boy, but as the story develops, the boy's inner voice seems to join that of the animals. The book is presented in a printed style with swathes of blue like the ocean. It is attractive, though tinged with sadness. The ending encourages readers to think about aquariums and why they exist, and the importance of marine conservation.



Lin Po-Ting 林柏廷

Lin Po-Ting is an accomplished illustrator, a coffee addict, and a lover of children. An accomplished artist in traditional media, he produces work through digital illustration. His children's titles have won the Feng Zikai Chinese Children's Picture Book Award and the Hsin-Yi Children's Literature Award.



- **Publisher:** Yuan-Liou
- **Date:** 8/2020
- **Rights contact:** booksfromtaiwan.rights@gmail.com
- **Pages:** 40
- **Size:** 21 x 28.5 cm
- **Age:** 5+
- **Rights sold:** Simplified Chinese

AS DEEP AS THE OCEAN

Written by Sung Pei

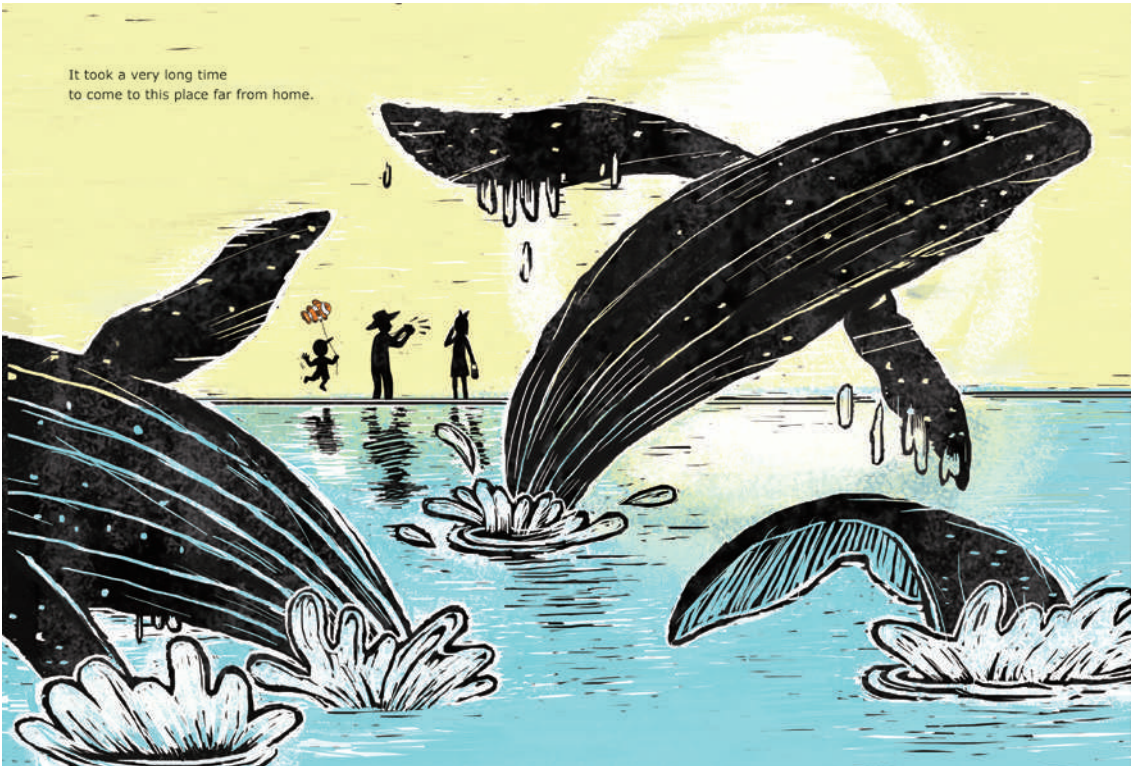
Translated by Sarah-Jayne Carver

A vast expanse of blue-green water unfurls in front of you as if lit from behind, enveloping you in a fantasy-like atmosphere where fish large and small swim beside you and come up close to meet you....

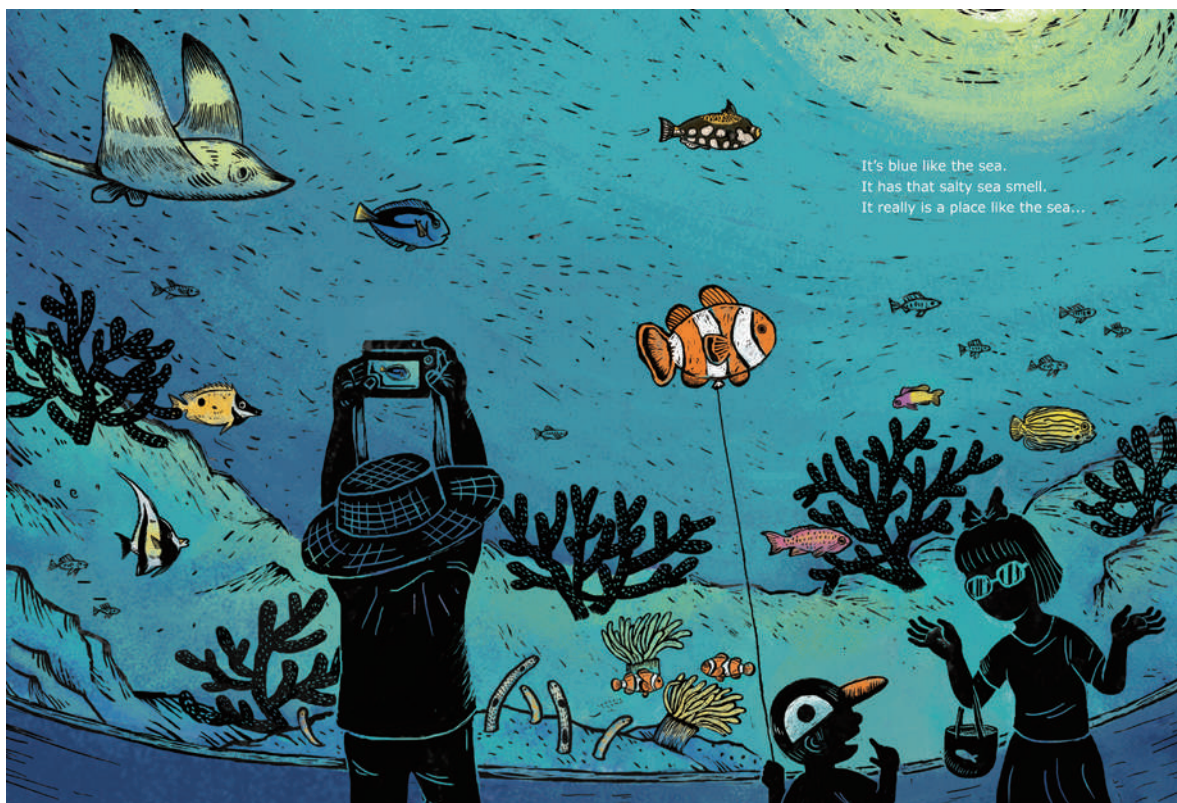
The pictures in *A Place Like the Sea* evoked memories of the dazzling and unforgettable experience I had the first time I entered an aquarium. The pictures don't just portray the underwater world separated by a curtain of glass, but also the penguin exhibit and the theater where

the dolphins perform. These small human-made oceans are teeming with marine life, some of the species were moved here while others were raised within its walls, all to be exhibited before our very eyes.

Lin Po-Ting uses a drawing technique that makes his illustrations feel reminiscent of printmaking, he draws silhouette-like figures whose black outlines contrast with the dappled light of the brightly colored seawater, creating a unique atmosphere in the space. The book is filled with illustrated double-page spreads which feel



It took a very long time
to come to this place far from home.



It's blue like the sea.
It has that salty sea smell.
It really is a place like the sea...

like movie screens, they have an immediate emotional impact and go far beyond what the text describes. There are very few words in the book and they are only used to state the boy's inner thoughts. When the boy walks into the huge aquarium with his parents, we see his initial amazement and curiosity turn to fear and then panic as he gets separated from his family, then the nervousness and anticipation that set in when he's on his own. These various emotions form the content of the text.

The first-person narrative mostly conveys the boy's subjective experience, while the illustrations usually take an omniscient perspective to objectively depict the environment around him. Sometimes the words and illustrations are not completely consistent, and at times even go so far as to contradict one another, which lets the reader discover another layer of hidden meanings in these small gaps and contradictions. There are also places where there aren't any contradictions but the text and illustrations create a play on words, where the text is describing the boy's subjective experience but at

the same time is also conveying the thoughts of other characters in the pictures.

A Place Like the Sea uses these puns between the text and illustrations to cleverly tie the characters and setting to the marine life as the young boy's inner thoughts and feelings can become those of the aquatic creatures themselves. By expressing their situation from the boy's perspective, the book prompts readers to think about it from the creatures' point of view and raises the question: Do aquariums force marine animals to leave their homes forever?

Moreover, comparing the front and back endpapers raises an additional question: If we take the sea creatures who have lived in captivity and return them to their natural habitats, will they even still be able to live in an ocean which has been so heavily polluted by humans? What a profound question for the author to hide in amongst the book's beautiful illustrations and missing-child plot!





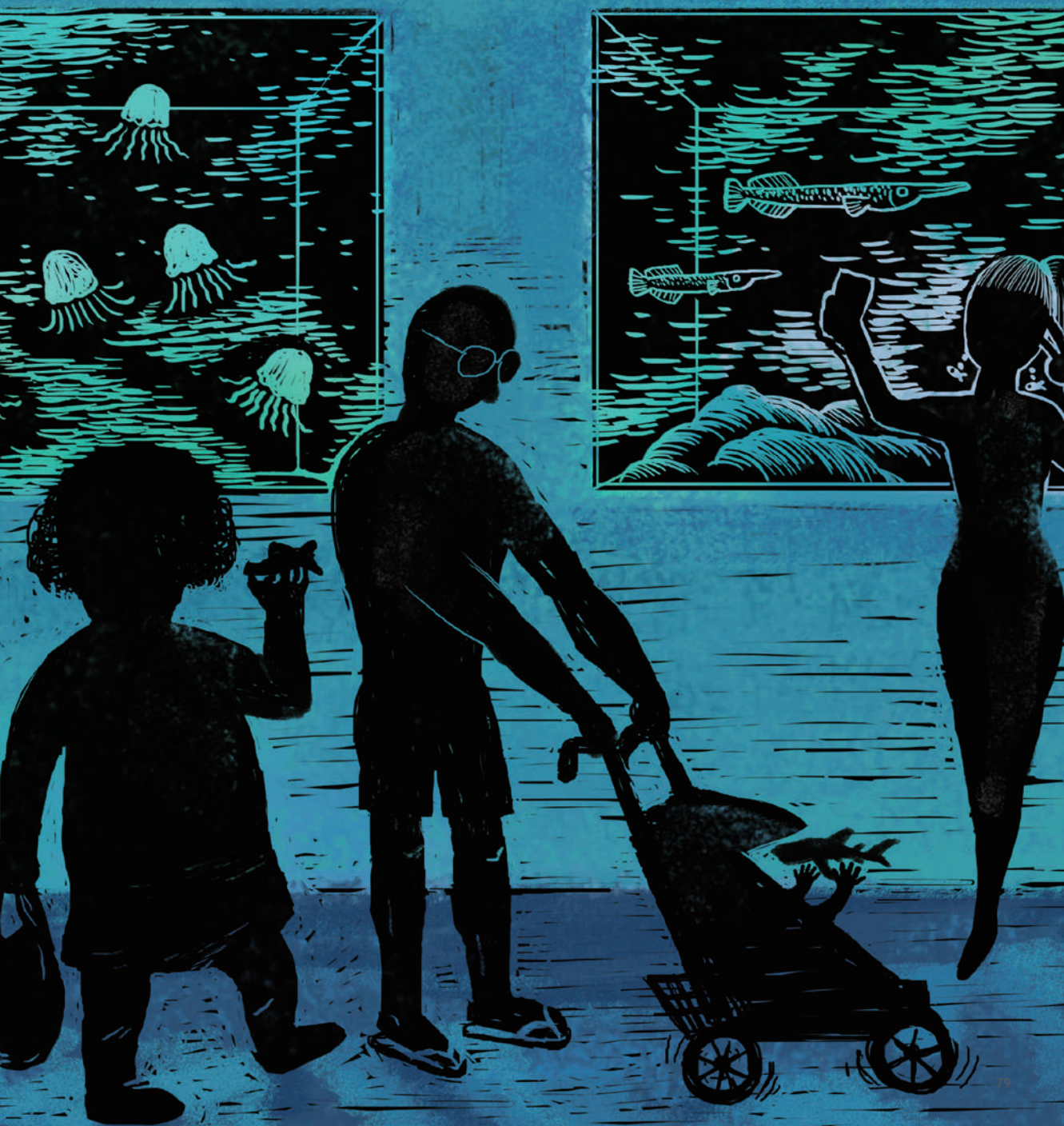
Where are Mum and Dad?

I can't hear their voices,
and they can't hear me!

Mum and Dad have gone.



This place suddenly feels strange.
I'm scared, and look everywhere.



I wander through the crowd. I feel worried.





WATCHING THE SEA

看海的地方

An artist who cannot focus on his painting, a man who fishes in the harbor every day, a girl enjoying a stroll... on a quiet summer's day, they all watch the same stretch of sea, and enjoy the everyday pleasures of the fishing harbor.

What is a day in the life of a fishing harbor like? An artist watches the swallows outside his window, hoping for heavy rain. An angler dozes at the waterside, until something pulls on his fishing rod. A girl on holiday enjoys a snack and the soft caress of the wind on her face. In the little fishing harbor, everyone has their own way of enjoying themselves, which includes watching the sea.

Watching the Sea was inspired by illustrator HOM's experience of staying in a fishing port in northern Taiwan. He takes three characters often seen by the water side - an artist, an angler, and a tourist - and through a combination of spreads and multiple frames he draws readers through the images, so they can experience the unhurried and interesting scenes at the harbor side too.



HOM 徐至宏

HOM is a freelance illustrator who has contributed work to magazines and books. He is especially adept at crafty portrayals of old urban and suburban Taiwanese living spaces. His works include *Before Sunset*, *The Diary Blues*, and others.

看海的地方

徐至宏 HOM —— 文·圖



- **Publisher:** Pace
- **Date:** 8/2020
- **Rights contact:** booksfromtaiwan.rights@gmail.com
- **Pages:** 32
- **Size:** 19.8 x 28 cm
- **Age:** 5+

NOTES FROM A FISHING VILLAGE RESIDENCY

Written by HOM

Translated by Sarah-Jayne Carver

Before I had the chance to visit the Zhengbin Fishing Harbor, I was quite unfamiliar with Keelung and like most people I just held the preconceived notion that it was an “overcast, rainy mountain town”. When I came here in mid-May, I left Keelung Station and saw several black kites circling overhead in the gloomy gray sky which matched the image of the place in my mind. The misty, overcast sky continued for about a week and then the weather gradually turned, becoming more summery as the sky over the harbor steadily turned to blue. The veil of my initial impression of Keelung lifted and the harbor’s beautiful scenery appeared before me.

During the month I lived in the village, I often walked to the harbor. It was a small, secluded space where fishermen gathered. I quietly looked out at the dark green sea and followed the path beside the harbor before coming to the colorful buildings now known as the “Rainbow Houses”. I frowned, I didn’t really like bright colors. Later when I searched online, I found some old photos of the harbor and saw that the Rainbow Houses had previously been a row of buildings that alternated between white and light blue in a way that was simple but elegant. As well as feeling it was a shame, I began to use my own perception of beauty to size up these heavily-painted buildings. Pretty much every day, there were tourists who came to the Rainbow Houses specifically to take photos and you could even see newlyweds doing wedding photoshoots. Clearly the Rainbow Houses were a powerful form of publicity and had already become important to the local area.

As I passed the Rainbow Houses every day, I looked at them from the same angle as all the tourists taking photos. The colors reflected on the water and the light of the sky varied at different times of the day, together they magically transformed the surface of the water and every day I took lots of photos of the harbor. The sky, whether it was blue, violet, pink, or gray, embellished the colors of the Rainbow Houses and made them feel even more fleeting and ever-changing. I don’t know when it started but my gaze gradually became drawn to them.

After carefully thinking it through, I realized it didn’t have anything to do with the colors of the houses but rather that the history and geography of Zhengbin Fishing Harbor were what gave the place its charming retro appearance and made the scenery what it is today.

This residency has given me the chance to get to know more places in Taiwan. Thank you very much to the team at Zhengbin Art for inviting me to the residency, it gave me plenty of time to discover so much of the fascinating scenery that Zhengbin Fishing Harbor has to offer.



Angler

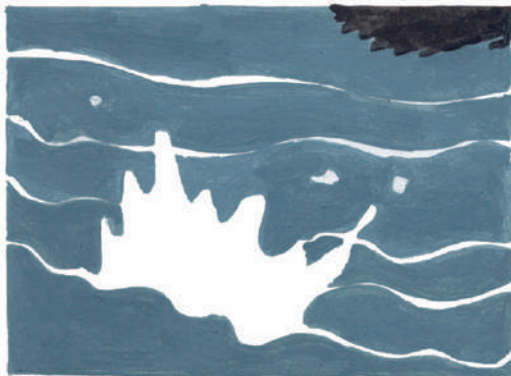
I like to sit in my rock and roll place, and listen to the singing sea.
It may be a rousing galloping song, or a quiet song from the heart.

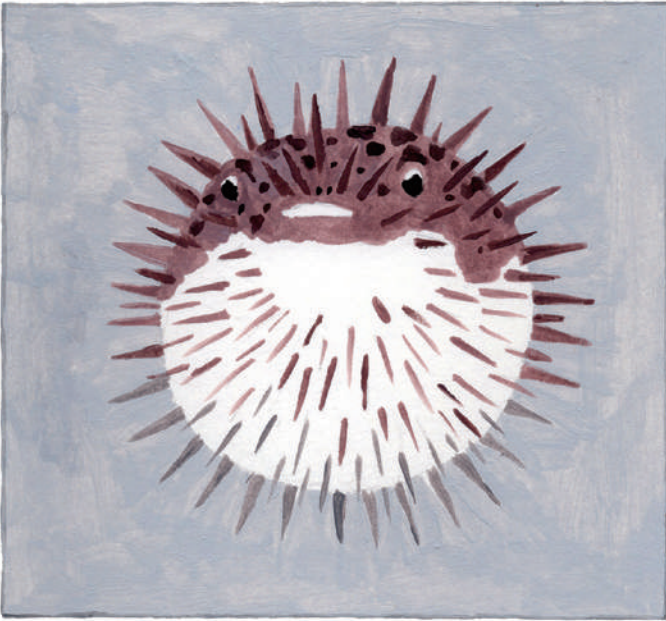
It's not about catching fish.

It's about being by the sea.













I DON'T WANT TO EAT BROCCOLI

我不想吃花椰菜

When a little boy doesn't want to eat broccoli because he's scared of hurting it, his imaginative mum suggests he gives it a haircut instead!

"I don't want to eat broccoli because I don't want to hurt it!" When a little boy who doesn't want to eat broccoli gives such an imaginative reason, how should a parent respond? With an imaginative solution, of course! His mum suggests he use his teeth as scissors and give them a haircut instead!

A lot of children don't like broccoli. This book offers an appealing and interesting way to encourage children to eat it.



Text by Sui Ri 日穗

A children's author, her works include *I Don't Want to Eat Broccoli*.



Illustrated by Hsueh Hui-Yin 薛慧莹

Hsueh Hui-Yin is an illustrator, mother, and housewife. Her work is often seen on covers of children's novels. Her comic book publications include *Big and Small: Everyday Battles between Mothers and Children*, and her picture books include *Sleepwalking*, *Mr. Alzheimer* and *Dear Grandma*.



- **Publisher:** Kang Hsuan
- **Date:** 11/2016
- **Rights contact:** booksfromtaiwan.rights@gmail.com
- **Pages:** 32
- **Size:** 29.7 x 21 cm
- **Age:** 3+
- **Rights sold:** Korean

AN INTERVIEW WITH THE CREATORS OF I DON'T WANT TO EAT BROCCOLI

Written by Kang Hsuan, Sui Ri, Hsueh Hui-Yin

Translated by Sarah-Jayne Carver

Publisher: Kang Hsuan

Q: What was the collaboration process like for the author and illustrator? Did the story come first and then an illustrator was asked to draw the images, or did the two of them create the book together?

A: You could actually say that there were three parties involved in the creation of this book. Almost every year, Kang Hsuan puts out a call for picture book submissions and our team votes on the winning story. After *I Don't Want to Eat Broccoli* won the prize, our editor discussed various modifications to the story with the author before inviting suitable illustrators to draft artwork for the book. An early editorial suggestion was that the illustrator should use photographs of different types of broccoli to create a collage. However, when the illustrator tried to use photographs for the entire book she was filled with a slight sense of horror, so instead she revised the brief and decided to use other materials to create the images. This added a degree of playfulness to the story and the end result was an extraordinary book that encapsulates a very personal illustration style. Our editor helped coordinate the author's and illustrator's ideas right up until the end when the book was finally complete. By tying together the author's story, the illustrator's creativity and the editor's professionalism, the three of them were able to produce a truly wonderful picture book.

Q: Can you share the unusual story of how you chose the cover design?

A: The illustrator designed two covers and our editors found it difficult to choose which one to use, so on a whim we decided to conduct a poll on Kang Hsuan's Facebook page to let readers vote on it. To our surprise, one of the covers won by an overwhelming majority and that is the cover we ended up using.

Author: Sui Ri

Q: Do you like broccoli? Why did you want to create a story about not eating broccoli?

A: I didn't like broccoli until I was an adult. When you consider it on a visual level, broccoli's appearance is quite unusual in the vegetable world. On several occasions when I had no choice but to eat it, I wondered whether it was the heads or the stalks of the broccoli that I disliked so much. I think it's alright to be picky about food to a certain degree, but every now and then I feel it's good to be flexible and give these foods another try. Maybe one day you'll suddenly find it tastes okay.

Q: In the book, the mother gets the child to chop up the broccoli by making it into a game where the child is a barber giving the broccoli a haircut. Where did the inspiration for this come from?

A: It's always easier to do eat food you don't like in small mouthfuls, and making it into a game is a great way to divert a child's attention.

Q: Did you encounter anything interesting during the creative process? Or anything frustrating?

A: The evening I sat down to edit the pages, I ate my favorite pizza and was in a pretty good mood. The illustrations hadn't been done at that point so I imagined what the images would look like and that was the basis for separating the text into pages. It felt relaxing to split it into paragraphs and then have the words leap to the next page. I'm also used to dividing up paragraphs when I write novels and screenplays, but when you're cutting between scenes in picture books there needs to be a concise, nimble rhythm to it. After readers finish the last line of a page, they can flip to the next page and experience a whole new atmosphere. When I'm writing novels and screenplays with big overarching structures, I occasionally find myself wishing that I could turn the page in the same brisk, straightforward way I can with a picture book. Lastly, I also felt extremely grateful when the editor sent me the vivid images that the illustrator had created.

Illustrator: Hsueh Hui-Yin

Q: What were your thoughts on reading the story? Do you worry about picky eaters too?

A: It's a lovely story about parent-child interactions and as I was reading I immediately saw the scenes unfold in my mind. Although I can be picky about food, I still quite like broccoli.

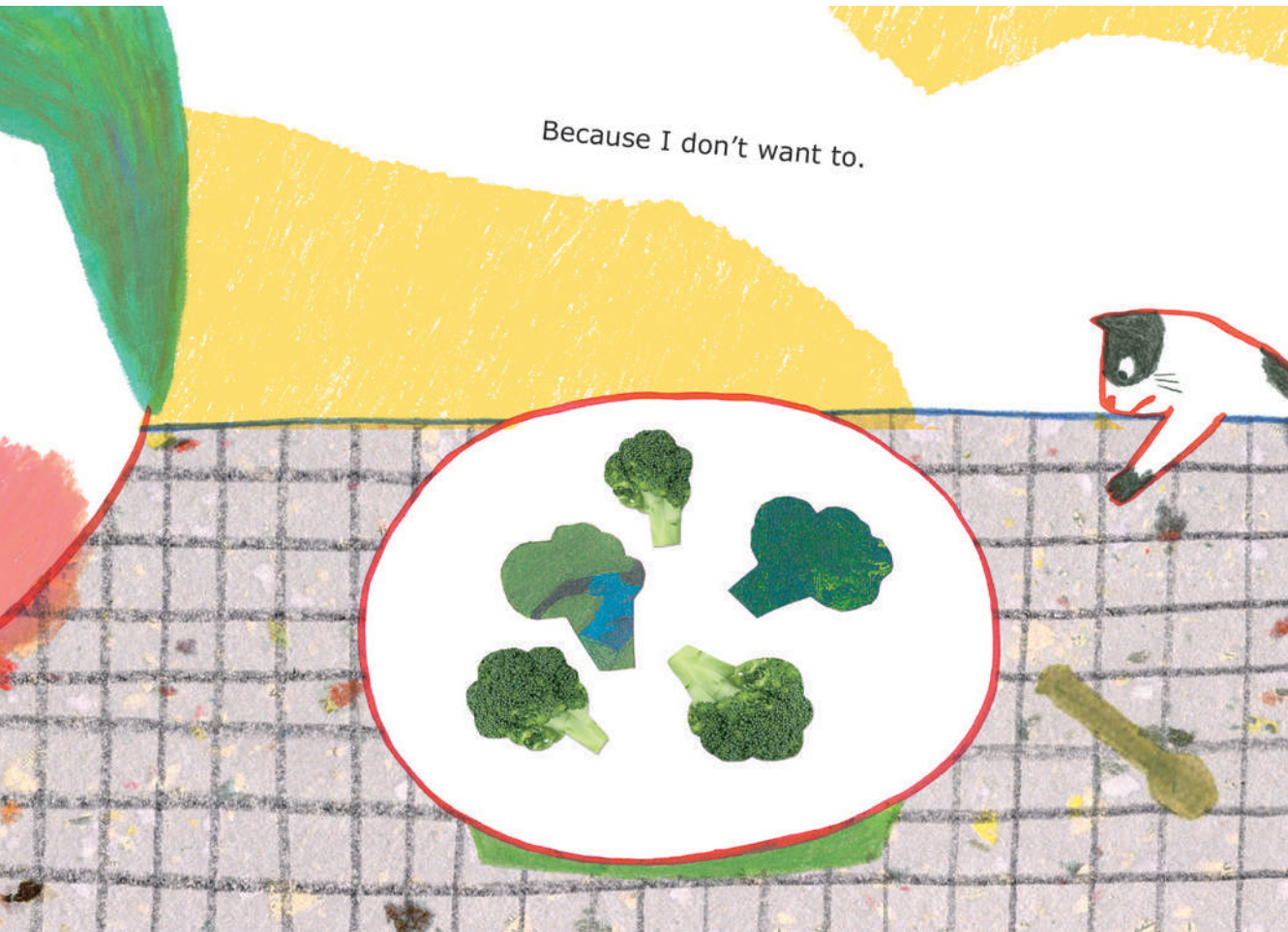
Q: The book presents broccoli in all kinds of different ways, why did you design it like this? And which broccoli is your favorite?

A: There are some spreads in the book where broccoli fills the entire page, so the editor suggested that I use a range of source materials (physical objects, collages, drawings) to portray the broccoli and give it a richer appearance. My favorite is the broccoli where I used bubble wrap to create the pattern of the florets.





Because I don't want to.



Oh... Does it hurt when you have your hair cut?





Then why don't you be a barber,
and cut their hair instead?



You can use your teeth as scissors.



CHEETAH 57

57 號小豹

The chubby Cheetah 57 wants so badly to be as muscular as all the other cheetahs in the zoo. “If you don’t look fierce enough, you would be killed to make bags or rugs,” say his strong companions. Scared and ashamed, Cheetah 57 digs himself a hole to hide in, but he never expects just how far it will take him.

Cheetah 57 lives in a zoo. He always feels bad because he looks so different from all the other cheetahs. They warn him, “Humans like cheetahs that look fierce. If you don’t look that way, they’ll turn you into a scarf....”

Afraid of seeming different, Cheetah 57 tries his best to imitate others but it is all in vain. He decides to dig a hole to hide in, but he goes too far, and the hole ends up leading him out of the zoo.

Everyone wants to fit in, but our differences will always stand in the way. This picture book explores how it feels to be different, and how to embrace your differences and make the best of them. The cartoonish lines and neutral colors of the illustrations invite young readers to engage their imaginations in this story of a chubby little cheetah who breaks stereotypes.



Text by Tina Kuo 郭瀟婷

Tina Kuo is the author of 12 titles for children, including the middle-grade fiction series *Ding Xiaofei's Diary* and the YA novel *The Signal Detective Agency*. She also works as a screenwriter for children's television. Her dream is to create works that allow children to truly enjoy the wonders of childhood.



Illustrated by Fu Hsinyi 傅馨逸

Fu Hsinyi is an illustrator from Southern Taiwan. Her humorous and vivid illustration style makes it easy for readers to immerse themselves in the stories.



- **Publisher:** Commonwealth Education
- **Date:** 9/2020
- **Rights contact:** booksfromtaiwan.rights@gmail.com
- **Pages:** 40
- **Size:** 26×18.5 cm
- **Age:** 4+

MEAT-LOVING CHEETAH OR GENTLE HOUSE CAT?

Written by Chen Ying-Hui

Translated by Sarah-Jayne Carver

One of the most interesting parts of picture books are the clues and messages that arise in the moments when the text and illustrations seem to spar with one another.

Readers are often taken aback by the combination of the cover illustration and the title *Cheetah 57* scrawled across the image in large letters. The animal in the image is clearly a cheetah but it's difficult for us to reconcile his chubby body, his innocently wide eyes and his docile stance lounging on a giant piece of meat with our standard image of a cheetah. What exactly does this so-called cheetah look like?

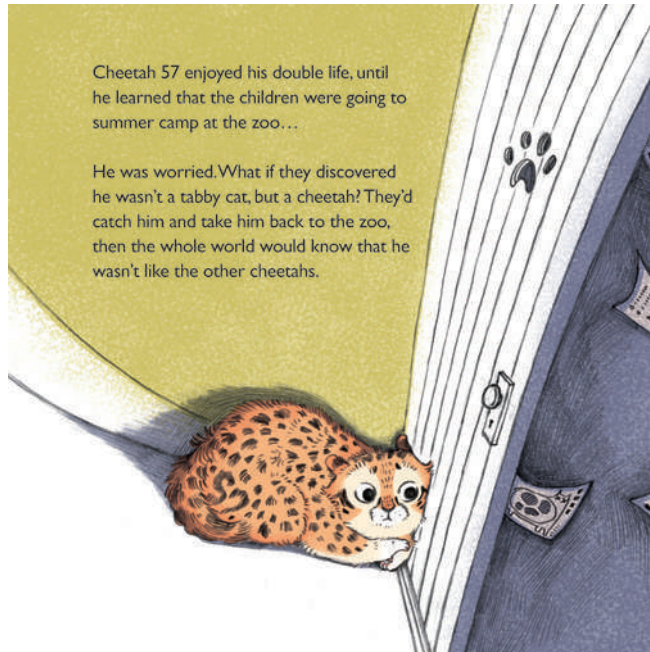
Our preconceived notions often affect our judgement. As expected, Cheetah 57 is swayed by peer pressure to look more like a typical cheetah and he embarks on a sinister plot reminiscent of "Aunt Tiger" (a Taiwanese legend similar to "Little Red Riding Hood" that features a tiger who disguises himself as an aunt in an attempt to eat three children). Illustrator Fu Hsinyi uses a dull green color to show that if Cheetah 57 can't live up to these expectations then this might be "the end" for him and shows the cheetah looking heavy and out of breath. After this, Cheetah 57 starts to exercise and practice howling. For these scenes, Fu has a few small, bright illustrations which show Cheetah 57's determination but in the end he's shown helplessly giving in to the huge black shadow on the wall and choosing

to hide. Seeing him crying in the corner, you can't help but feel sad about everything that's happened so far in the book. Surely it can't be so important to look like a cheetah that he'd shed this many tears over it?

He starts to dig a tunnel but is shocked when he ends up out in broad daylight and two children think he's the son of a large Bengal cat. The image is from Cheetah 57's perspective so we see the innocence in the children's eyes as they're filled with surprise. He spends the day living among humans and feels the kind of warmth he has never had the chance to experience before. The little boy tries to drag Cheetah 57 around in an upturned

Cheetah 57 enjoyed his double life, until he learned that the children were going to summer camp at the zoo...

He was worried. What if they discovered he wasn't a tabby cat, but a cheetah? They'd catch him and take him back to the zoo, then the whole world would know that he wasn't like the other cheetahs.



umbrella and his older sister persuades their parents to be thrilled about it all, then they tell stories together, they give Cheetah 57 a bath, and he even eats cat food!

Then the story turns to another challenge: deception. Cheetah 57 senses that his human friends feel like he is family to them and this is something he craves so he pretends to be what he hopes they will like. However, he also worries that one day they will discover that he doesn't just look like a cheetah but actually is one, and then he'll have to deal with the unimaginable consequences. Those deep-rooted fears push against his longing to be looked after by his human friends, so he lives in fear of being exposed. The projected stereotypes and various threats, meaningful or otherwise, gnaw away at his self-confidence and leave him feeling panic-stricken like he's walking a tightrope.

No one could have guessed that being exposed would actually turn out to be a liberating moment for him. The siblings look at their Bengal cat and realize that he's actually Cheetah 57. The incident makes the news

and the public feel a lot of love for this cheetah who looks like a big cat, so by the end of the story he has thousands of fans! It turns out that his distinctive "look" means that he can be both: he can eat a lot of meat and be a gentle house cat, it's these differences that make him multifaceted and full of surprises. Even though the children decide that they can't tell their parents, maybe we as readers can try to be the kind of adults where if we found out that our new cat was actually a cheetah we could still appreciate him all the same, then give him a piece of meat. The unique American-style illustrations feature flexible, unrestrained lines that hint at the possibility of freedom for Cheetah 57 and the kind of brilliance that arises when you dismantle limiting framework.





Cheetah 57 accidentally dug his way out of the zoo, and found himself face to face with a human! He turned around, and saw another human behind him. He was too frightened to move. "Look! It's a big tabby cat!" said the boy.



“Isn’t he lovely!” said the girl. “He must be a stray! Let’s take him home!”
At first Cheetah 57 refused to move. He was scared they might discover he wasn’t like the other cheetahs.





The children read
Cheetah 57 a story
every day.



They washed him every day.



Cheetah 57 loved living with the humans.
But he couldn't stand the cat food!





BOOKS FROM TAIWAN