

Outside Time, Inside Time

Story by Carmel Reilly

Illustrations by Miriam Serafin



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Contents

Chapter 1	Outside Time	2
Chapter 2	Kicking the Ball	8
Chapter 3	Catching Up	12
Chapter 4	Things to Do When You're Stuck Inside	18
Chapter 5	Reaching Out	22

Chapter 1

Outside Time

“Outside time!” called Mum, walking into the living room.

I looked up from my desk in the corner of the room.

“Great!” I said. “I’m just finishing my last maths question.”

My sister Misha ran out from her bedroom and jumped up and down. “Outside time! Outside time!” she squealed.



“At last!” said Dad, getting up from where he had been working at the kitchen table.

“It’s lovely to see how popular our family walks are these days!” said Mum, smiling.



About a month ago, a virus started spreading around our city, making people sick. To stop us from catching the virus, we were all told to stay at home as much as possible, and to keep a distance from people we don't live with.



We're only allowed to leave our home for an hour of exercise each day. So, now we go out every afternoon when we've all finished our work. We call this "outside time", and it is the best part of our day.

“Are you ready to go, Sienna and Misha?” asked Dad, as he and Mum each put on a face mask.

“I am!” I said eagerly, grabbing the ball to take with us.

“Me, too,” giggled Misha.

Misha and I don’t need to wear face masks because we are kids. But Mum and Dad do.



As always, it felt amazing to be outside. The air smelled fresh, and everything was incredibly quiet. Our road is usually fairly busy, but these days there are hardly any cars driving around. Instead, the people we saw were walking, running and riding their bikes.



Even though all the adults and teenagers were wearing face masks, I still recognised a few of our neighbours. Many of them waved or said hello, even the ones we don't know very well.

