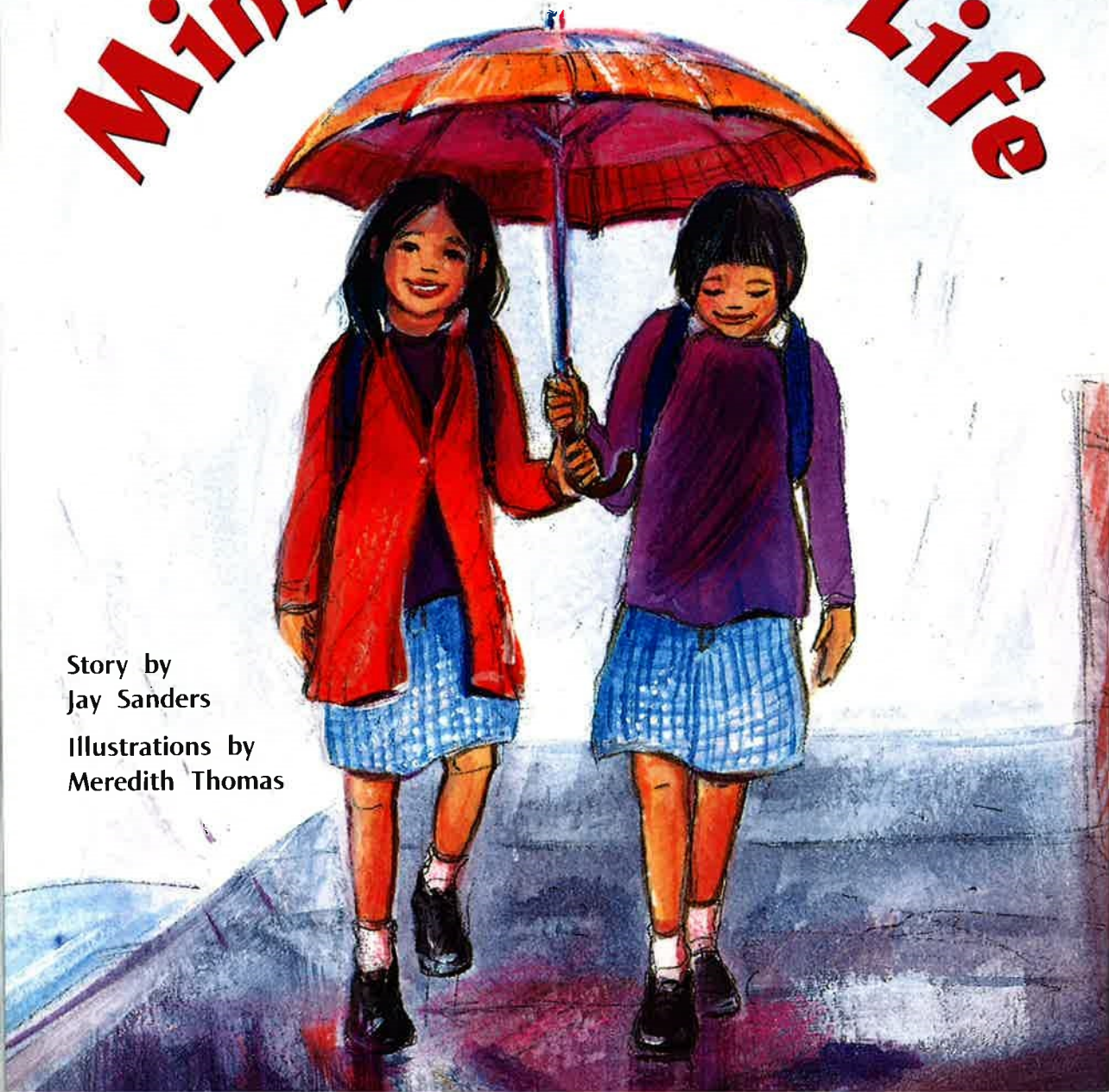
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Minh's New Life



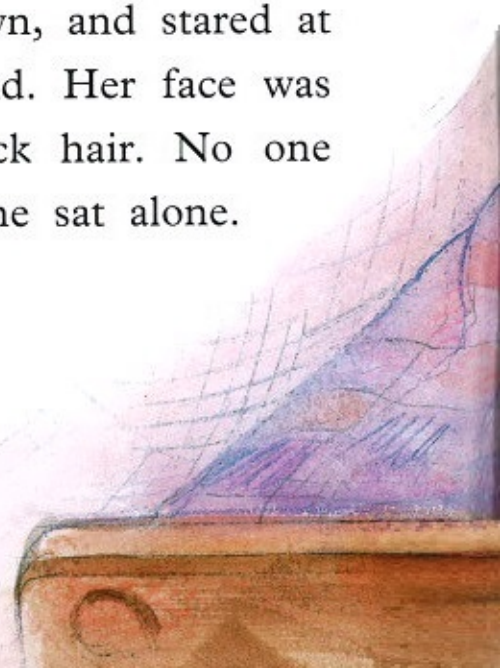
Story by
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Illustrations by
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For teachers' inspection ONLY

Minh could hear the gentle breathing of her two younger sisters as they slept peacefully beside her. She could hear the *swish-swish* of car wheels on the wet road outside, and the rumble of the tram heading north into the city. Minh wished she could go back to sleep, but the cold and her own fear kept her wide awake.

She had been in this new country only three weeks. It always seemed to be cold and rainy, and she couldn't understand the strange language that the teachers and students spoke at her new school. Whenever the teacher talked to her, she kept her head down, and stared at a book she did not understand. Her face was hidden behind her thick, black hair. No one spoke to her at playtime — she sat alone.





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Until a month ago, Minh had lived in Vietnam with her two sisters and her grandmother, where the country was green, warm and familiar.

She remembered her grandmother's soft voice calling, "Get out of bed, sleepy head." How she missed her grandmother — her gentle hugs, her happy laughter, and her smile.

Minh could picture so clearly the women of her village working in the rice fields, their colourful clothes bright against an emerald sea.





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Minh's father had left Vietnam two years earlier to begin a new life. He had written often, telling Minh and her sisters of this new country. He had worked very hard until, finally, he had been able to buy a small grocery shop. He lived above the shop in a busy street in a large city. At last, he had saved enough money to pay for Minh and her sisters to join him.

As the dawn light filled the room, Minh slid out of bed. She gazed out the window, afraid of what the new day would bring. When Minh had started school, her father and sisters had travelled with her each day. But today, she would have to go by herself for the first time! She felt very scared.

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