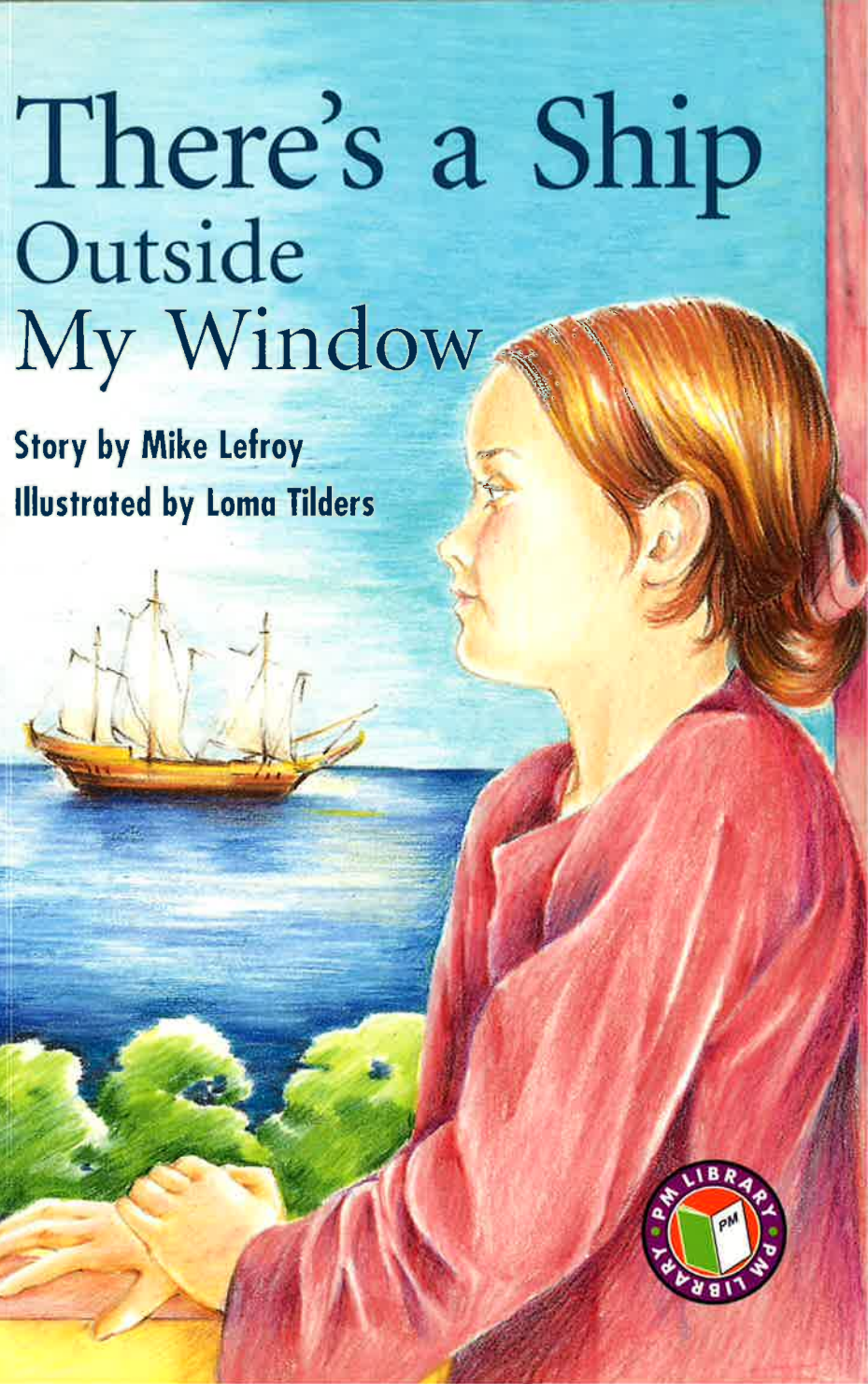
There's a Ship Outside My Window

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Chapter 1

A Shed for a Ship



The first thing I do when I get up in the morning is look out at the sea. It's always there, a patch of blue next to the old museum.

From my home I can walk to the beach in a couple of minutes. I cross the one-way street and the lawn in front of the museum, go over the railway line, past the circling seagulls dive-bombing for scraps of food. Then I'm there, looking out to the long, blue horizon.

But one morning I didn't even notice the sea. Something very strange was happening right below my window. There were people everywhere. Some were working with a digger to scoop up the lawn in front of the museum and load it into a truck. Others were unloading building materials and hammering in posts.

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The next day, three large trucks arrived and began pumping concrete over the place where the lawn used to be. I wandered down to have a look.

"What are you building?" I asked the man wearing a yellow safety helmet.

"A shed, and we're laying this concrete for the floor," he replied.

"What's the shed for?" I asked.

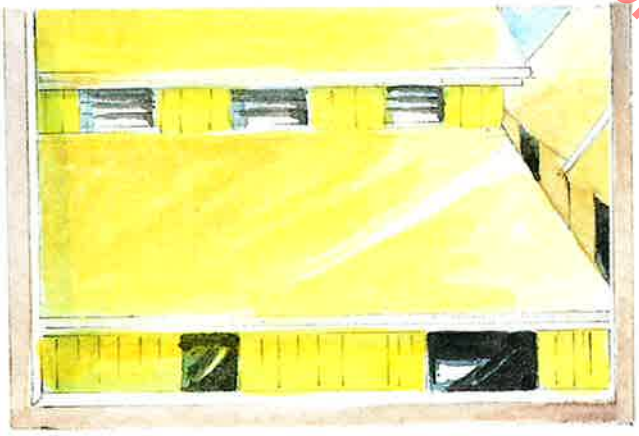
"A ship," he answered.



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Chapter 2

From Faraway Forests



Within a couple of weeks a skeleton of grey metal appeared on the concrete floor. It was soon covered by a layer of yellow tin. Finally the shed was finished and I couldn't see the sea any more from my window.

"Don't worry," said Mum. "The shed won't be there forever. And when it comes down you will see a beautiful ship."

I was beginning to get used to the idea of having a ship outside my window.



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A rumbling truck delivered the first part of the ship. I stood and watched the crane as it lifted the huge logs and stacked them beside the shed.

"These logs are from oak trees that grew in a forest on the other side of the world," said Bill, the shipbuilder, who was guiding the logs into position. "When they leave here they will be part of the ship and able to sail away by themselves."