

The Hug Button



For my newest nephew Finley who loves a cuddle. N.J.
To my friend Alan—the best hugger. R.A.

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Great Clarendon Street, Oxford OX2 6DP
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First published in 2025

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British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

Data available

ISBN: 978-0-19-279482-6

1 3 5 7 9 10 8 6 4 2

Printed in China

The manufacturing process conforms to the
environmental regulations of the country of origin.

Naomi Jones

Rebecca Ashdown

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Matilda woke up feeling excited. It was her first day at The Meadows.



She put on her clothes,

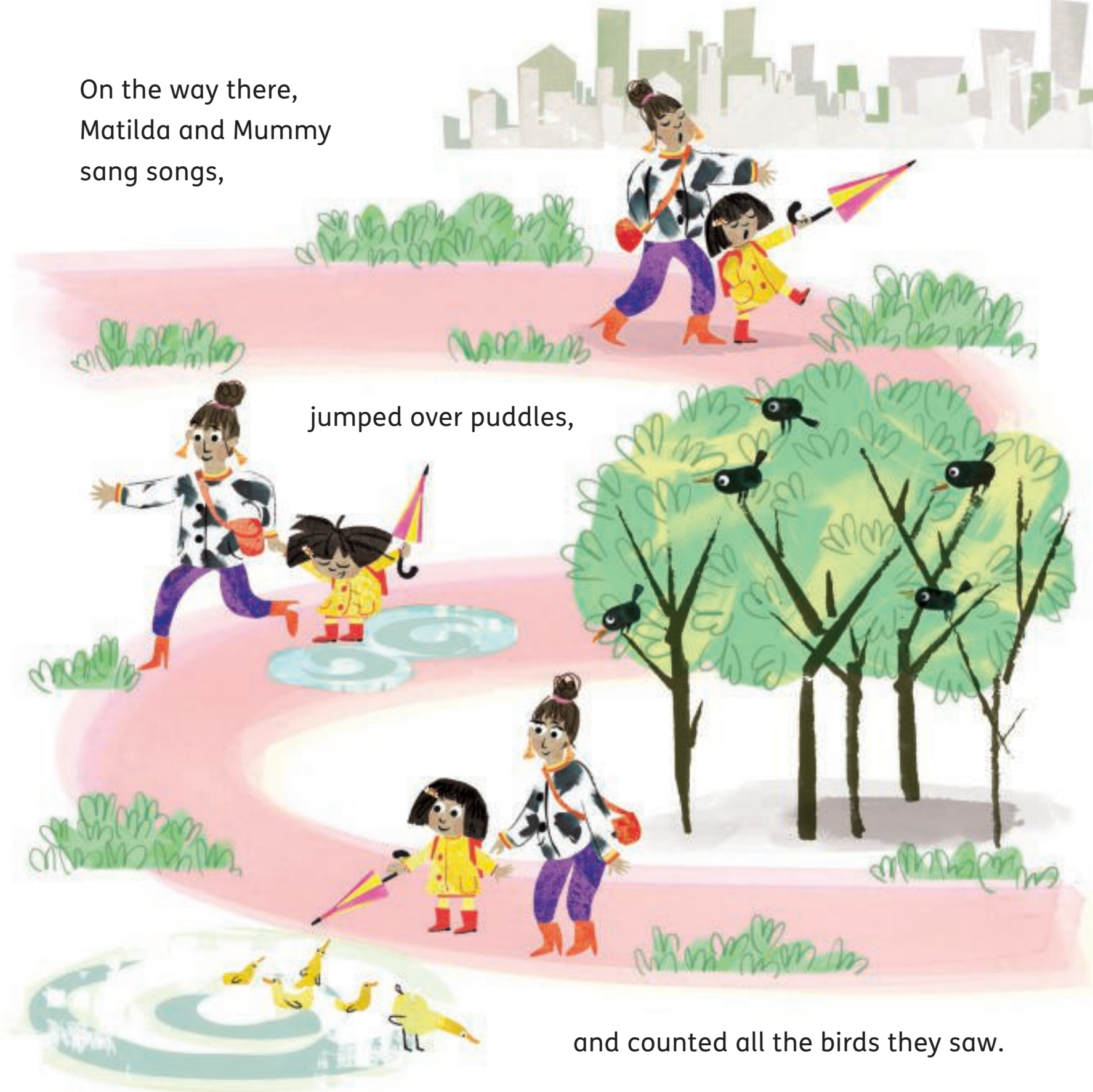


ate her breakfast,

and brushed her teeth.



On the way there,
Matilda and Mummy
sang songs,

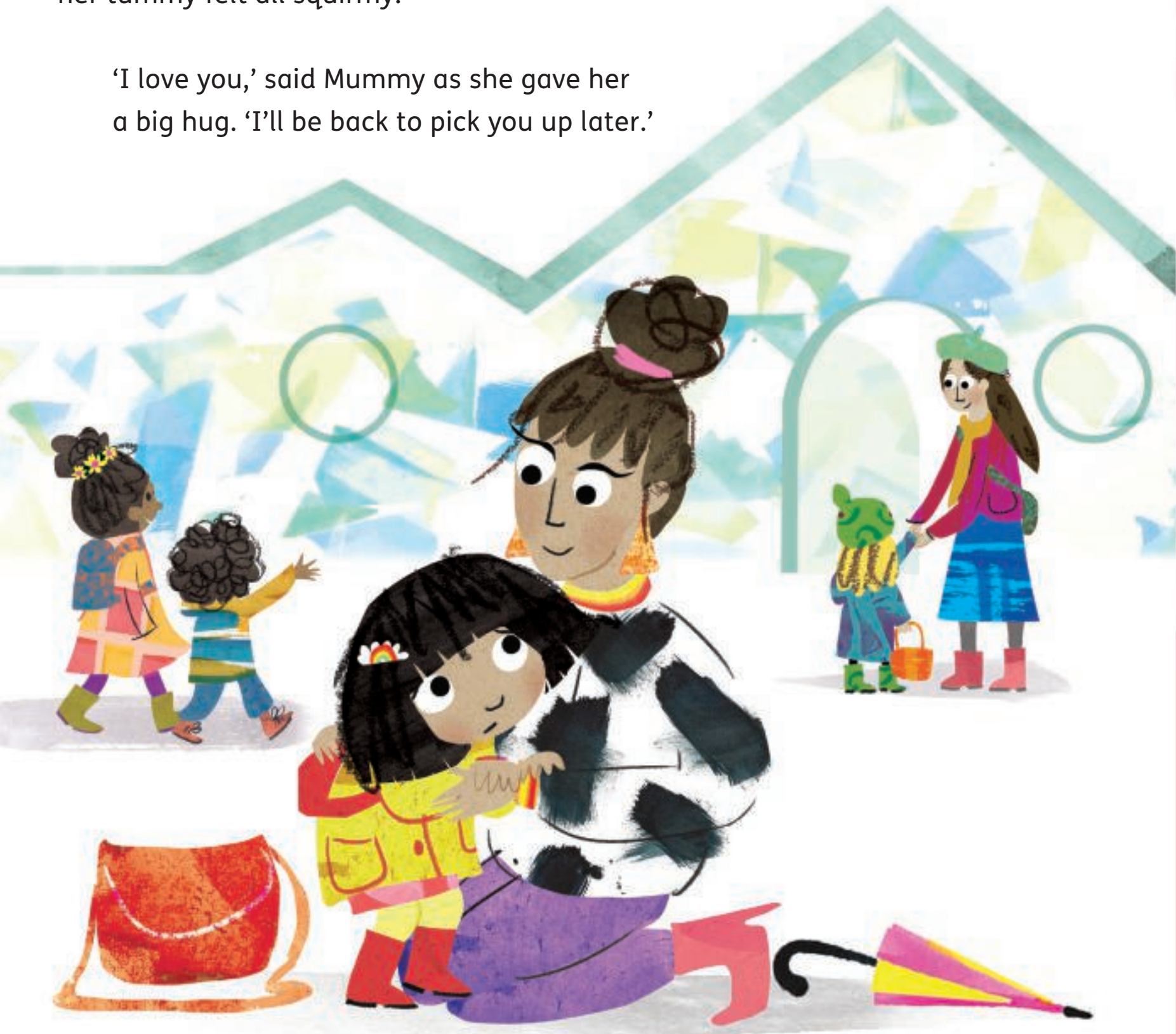


jumped over puddles,

and counted all the birds they saw.

But when Matilda arrived outside The Meadows,
her tummy felt all squirmy.

‘I love you,’ said Mummy as she gave her
a big hug. ‘I’ll be back to pick you up later.’



Suddenly Matilda didn't
want Mummy to go.

It was hard saying goodbye.



'I'm Miss Cartwright,' said her teacher.
'What would you like to play with?'

But Matilda didn't know what
to do now Mummy had gone.



A girl called Ana showed
her the dinosaur toys



and a boy called Leo asked if she
wanted to do some drawing.



Matilda still missed
Mummy though.
She was so happy
to see her at home time.



The next day Matilda
got dressed slowly,



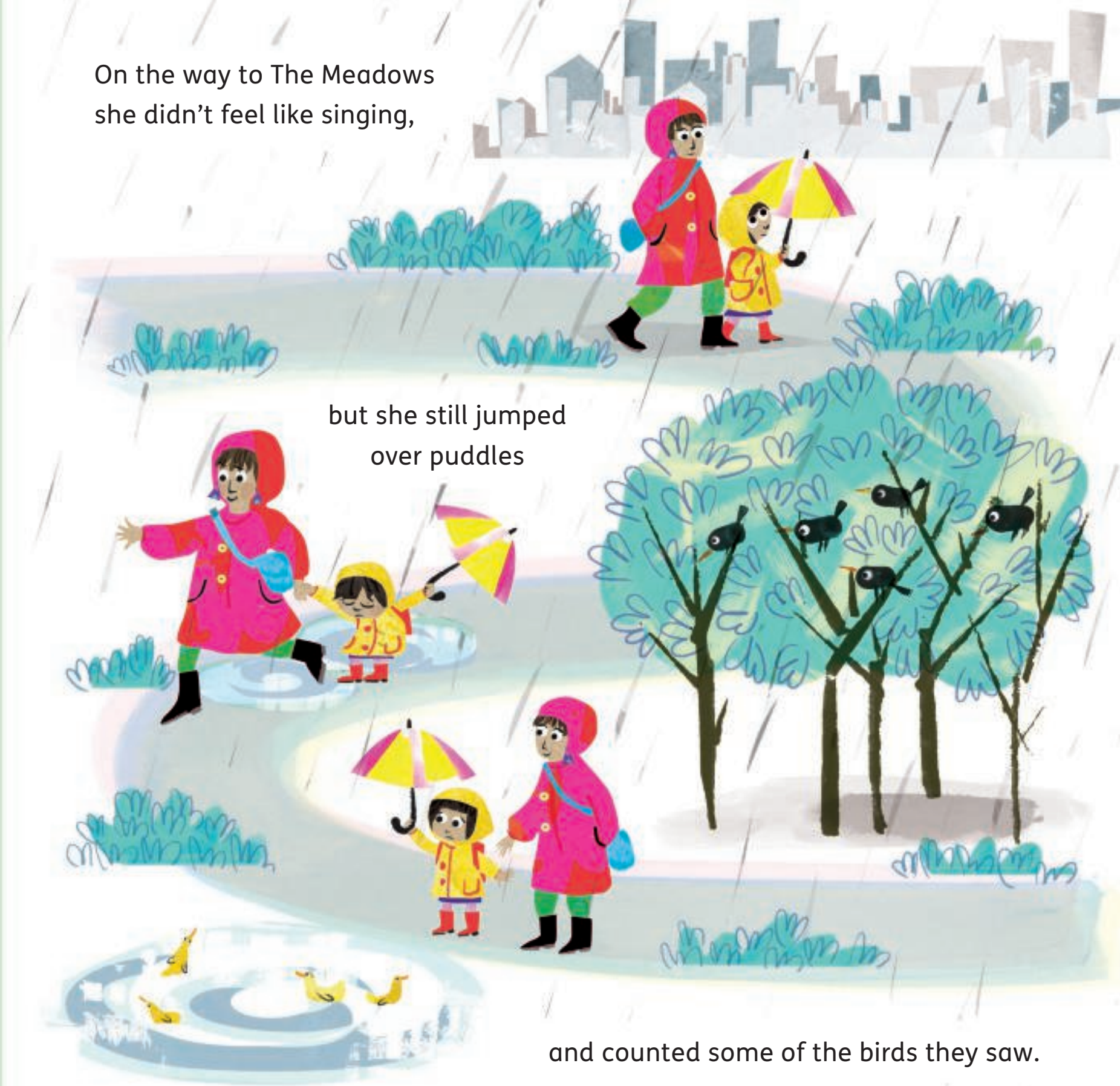
ate her breakfast slowly,



and brushed her teeth slowly.



On the way to The Meadows
she didn't feel like singing,



but she still jumped
over puddles

and counted some of the birds they saw.

When they got to the gates, Matilda clung to Mummy and wouldn't let go.

‘What's wrong?’ asked Mummy.

‘I don't like saying goodbye,’ said Matilda in a tiny voice.

‘I miss you when you're gone.’

‘Goodbyes *are* hard,’ said Mummy, ‘but I think there's something we can do to help.’



Mummy found a pen in her bag and drew a small circle on Matilda's wrist with a dot inside.



Then Mummy drew one on her own wrist too. 'This is a hug button,' said Mummy. 'What does it do?' asked Matilda.

'Well, love is always there, even when we're not together. When I press my button, I can send you my love in a hug.'

'Can I send you my love in a hug if I press my button too?' Matilda said. Mummy nodded.

