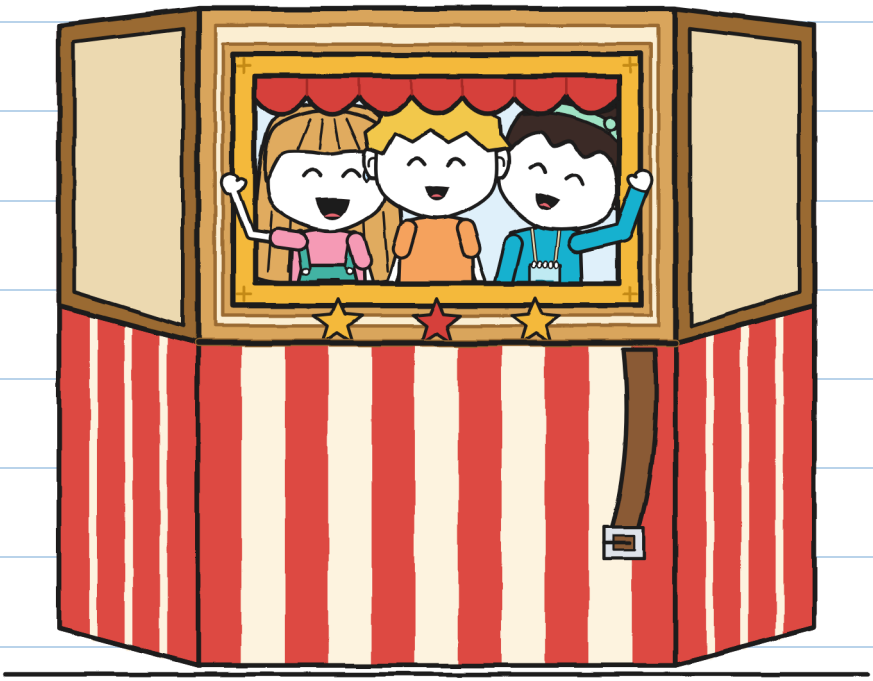
IMPOSSIBLE DELIVERIES · 6

A Spot for Three

LinguAula



(Gus's notebook)

SIZE XS
First readers · 5+

IMPOSSIBLE DELIVERIES · 6

A Spot for Three

Text and illustrations: LinguAula

SIZE XS · First readers · 5+

English version: LinguAula

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Sixth book in the series.

LinguAula

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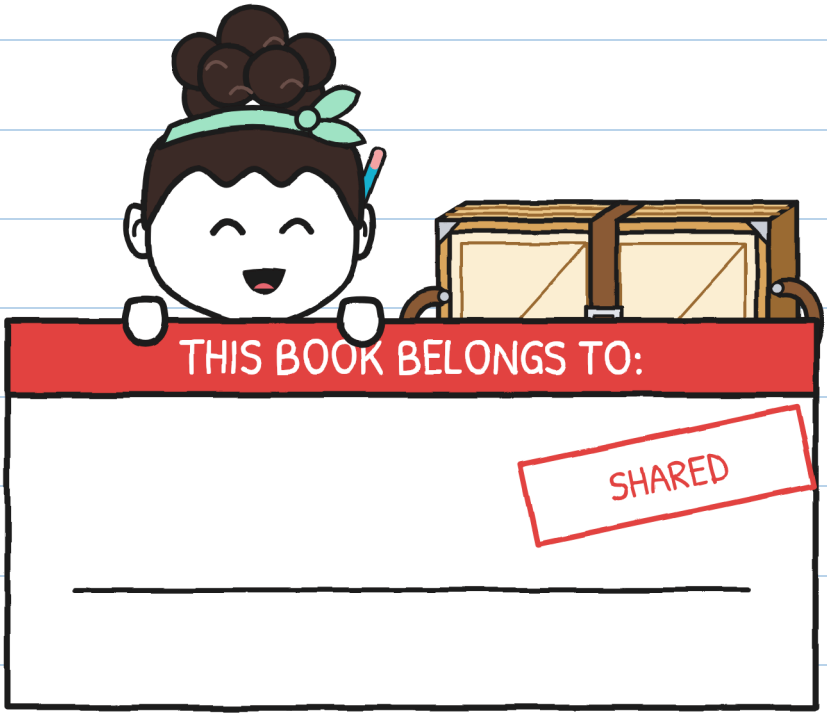
Three carry it. I've chosen a handle. —J.



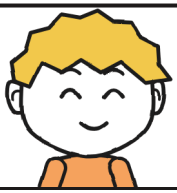
Shared. We fit. –J.

If you find it, return it folded.

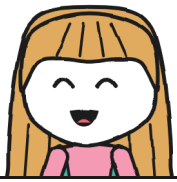
ONLY IN THE STORY

Really, see page 76. –J.

WHO'S WHO



Gus measures in centimetres.



Julie knows the way.



Noa measures in steps.



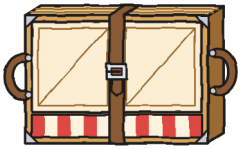
Irene says "stop".



Tony keeps the time.



Mara lends the package.



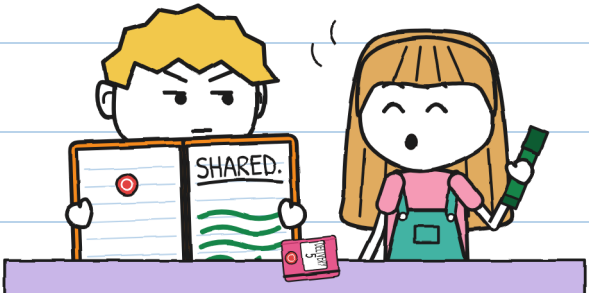
A folding theatre.



R. left a line.

DELIVERY NOTEBOOK 6
by Gus

SHARED.



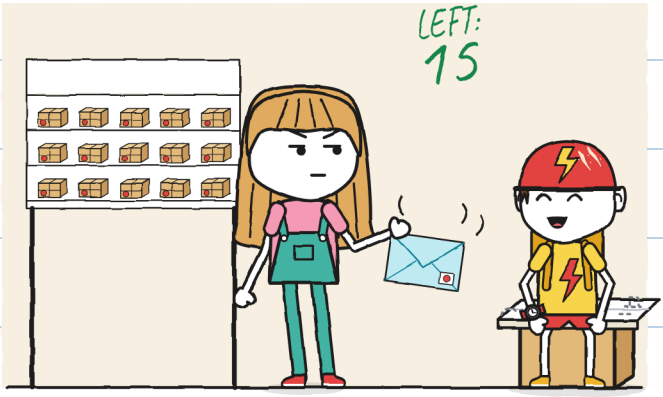
Notebook 5 is over. This one is orange.
I wrote one word. I left half
a page free. It didn't stay
free for even a minute.

I wrote on your first page. —J.

CHAPTER 1

Why Does It Take Three?

On Monday I left school. Julie was waiting with a turquoise envelope.
"I'm not opening it," said Julie.
"Twenty-eight minutes," said Tony.

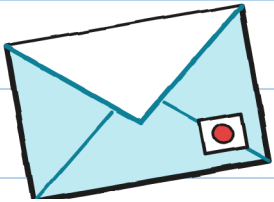


It wasn't mine. It weighed a lot. —J.

Mara opens the envelope.

I'm Irene, from the theatre.
A line is missing:
"Little theatre: pending receipt."
Do you have it?
Saturday the 31st: rally.
If it comes folded,
with three, I'll sign.
Noa needs two more.

Julie: it's me!
Bring someone. —Noa

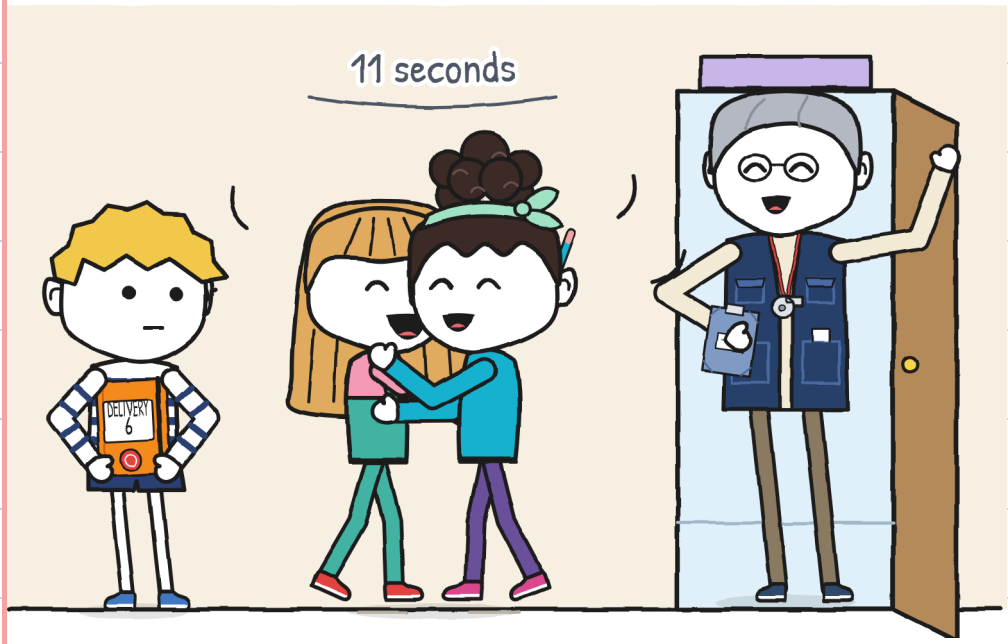


"Someone who knows about packages." That was me.

Irene and Noa came at five.

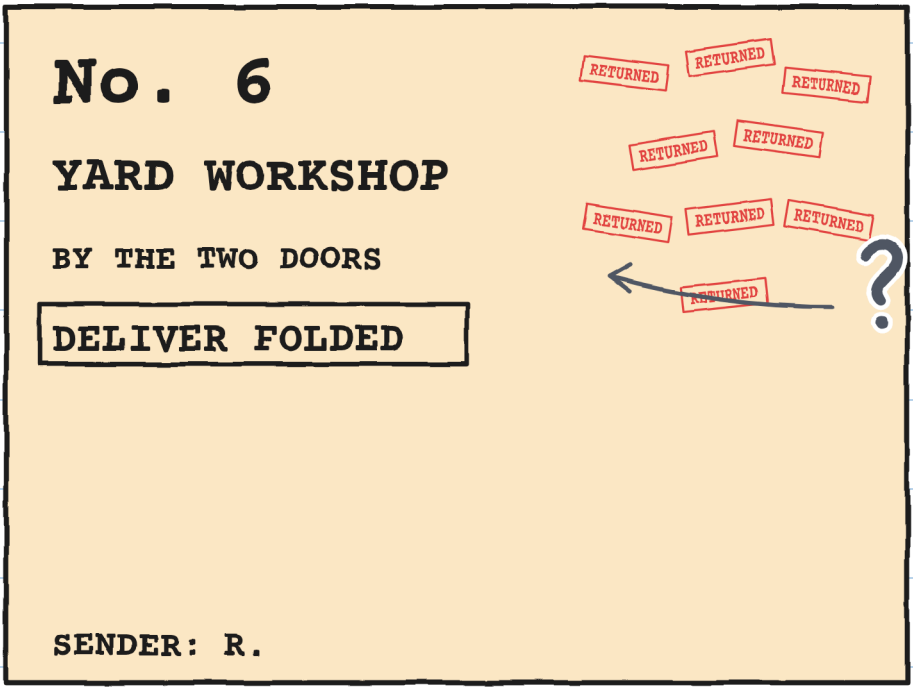
Julie and Noa hugged. Eleven seconds.

"This is Gus," said Julie.
"Hello, Gus," said Noa.



Mara took down No. 6.

A box like all the others.



"Nine stamps," said Julie.

"What two doors?" said Noa.

Nobody knew.

"I took it nine times," said Mara.
Nobody signed for a workshop.
"The theatre rehearses
in the yard," said Irene.
Irene showed a stamped
sheet. Now somebody signs.



"Why doesn't Mara carry it?" asked Julie.

"I already took it nine times," said Mara.

"My kids have to manage it," said Irene.

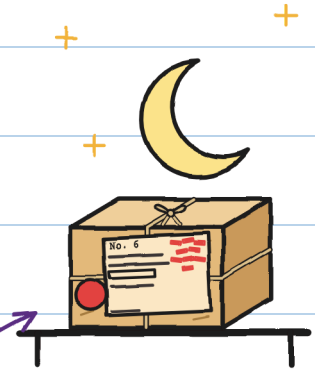
THE LOAN

No. 6, lent.

Goes out with Irene.

Comes back folded.

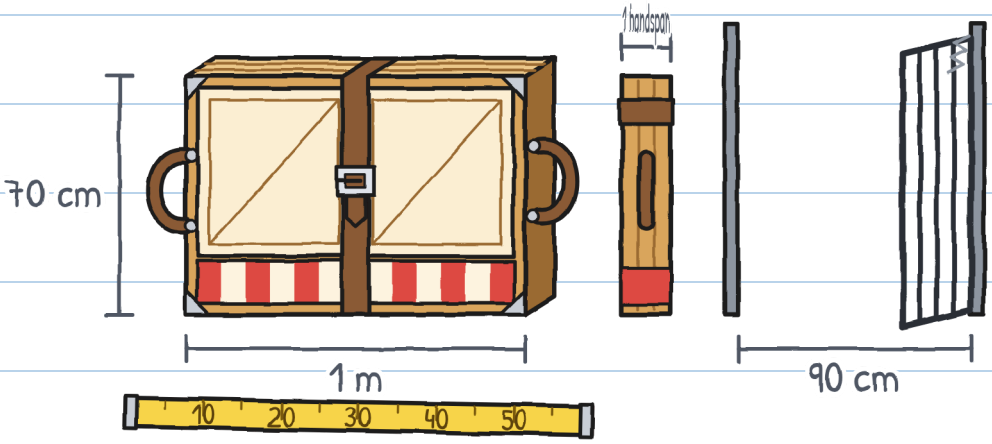
Sleeps here.



It sleeps on its shelf. —J.

On Tuesday we went to the yard.
There is a gate. It closes by itself.
The little theatre came out
and grew. I took out my tape.

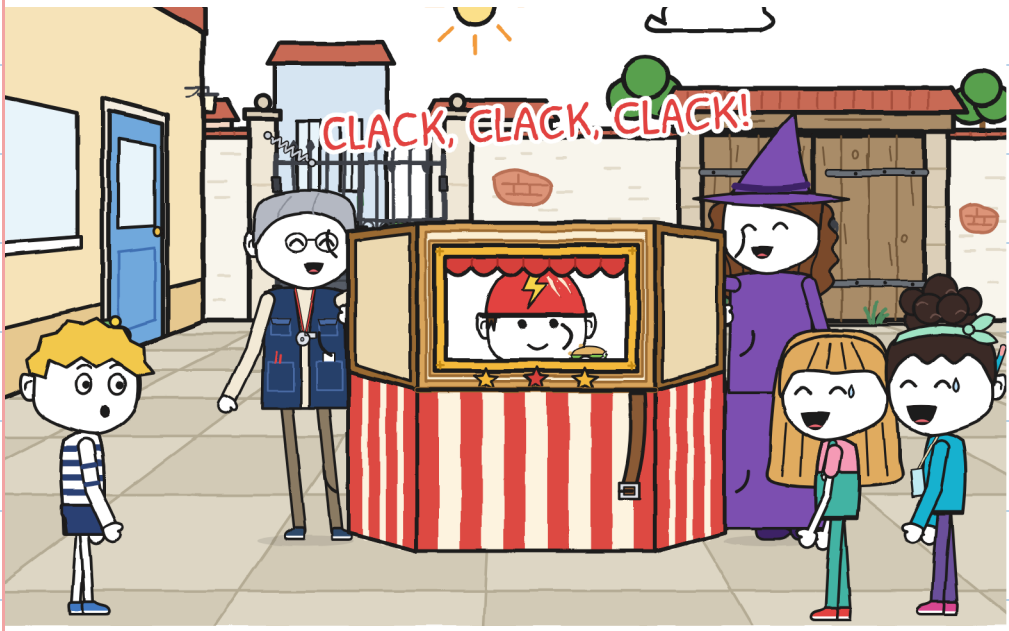
MEASUREMENTS OF NO. 6



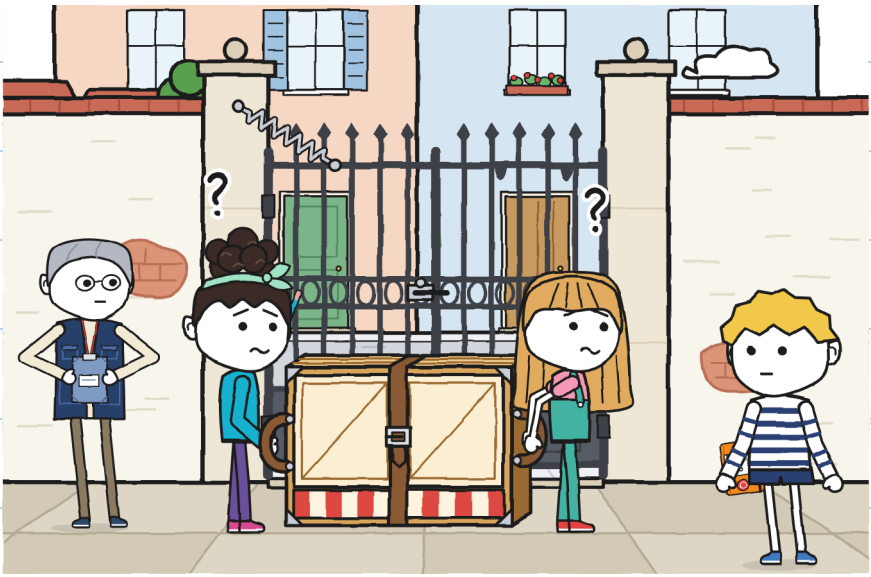
It fitted on its side.

The panels opened by themselves:
clack, clack, clack.

Through the window you could see Tony.
"It's all there," said Irene. Hands
on the handles, not on the hinges.



Irene and Mara folded
the little theatre.
"We'll try it," said Julie. Noa was
already at the other handle.
They lifted it. They reached
the gate. It was shut.
My hands were free.



I held the gate with my back.
They went through.

That afternoon I invented the gauge.

THE THREE-GAUGE

who does what

	CARRY 	GUIDE 	CLEAR THE WAY 
yard, first try	Julie and Noa	Julie and Noa	
yard, second try	Julie and Noa	Julie and Noa	Gus

An empty box: it doesn't pass.

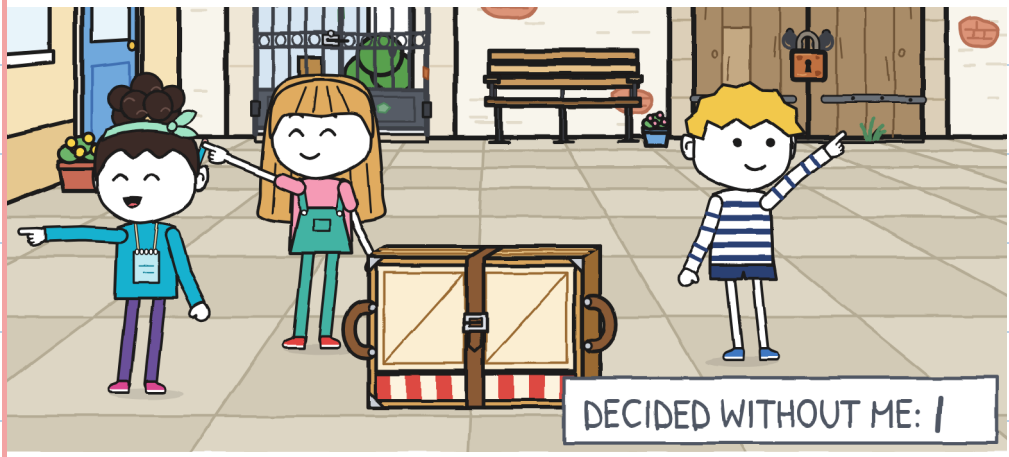
I noted: "A gate can
be held by a stone too."

We still had to work out the label.

"It's the two halves," said Julie.

"Later," said Noa.

I went alone. When I came back, they had already decided. I closed my mouth.



That tally mark was mine. —J.

CHAPTER 2

Who Knows the Way?

Wednesday was the first journey.
"You and Noa carry," said Julie.
"I guide and clear the way."
Green doesn't come
off. Second tally mark.

THE THREE-GAUGE

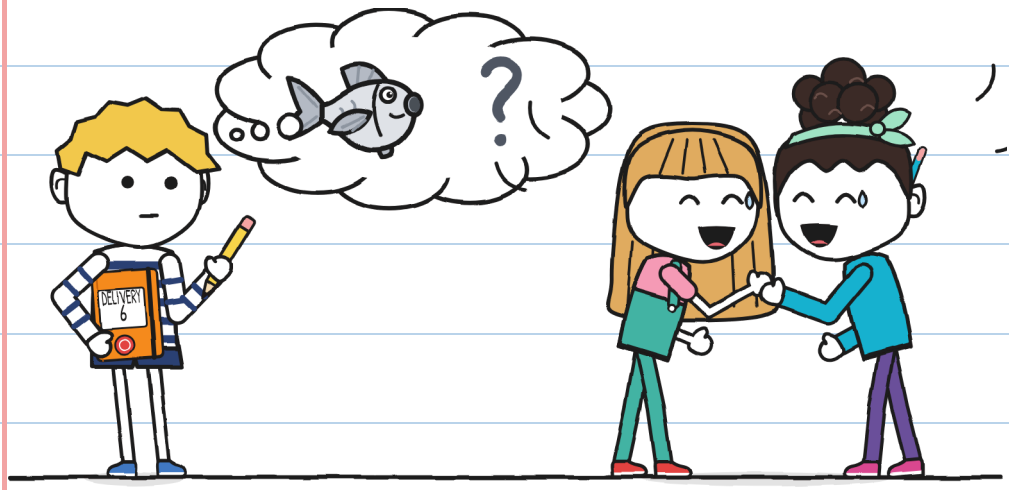
	CARRY 	GUIDE 	CLEAR THE WAY 
yard, first try	Julie and Noa	Julie and Noa	
yard, second try	Julie and Noa	Julie and Noa	Gus
shop → yard	Gus and Noa	Julie	Julie



DECIDED WITHOUT ME: 11

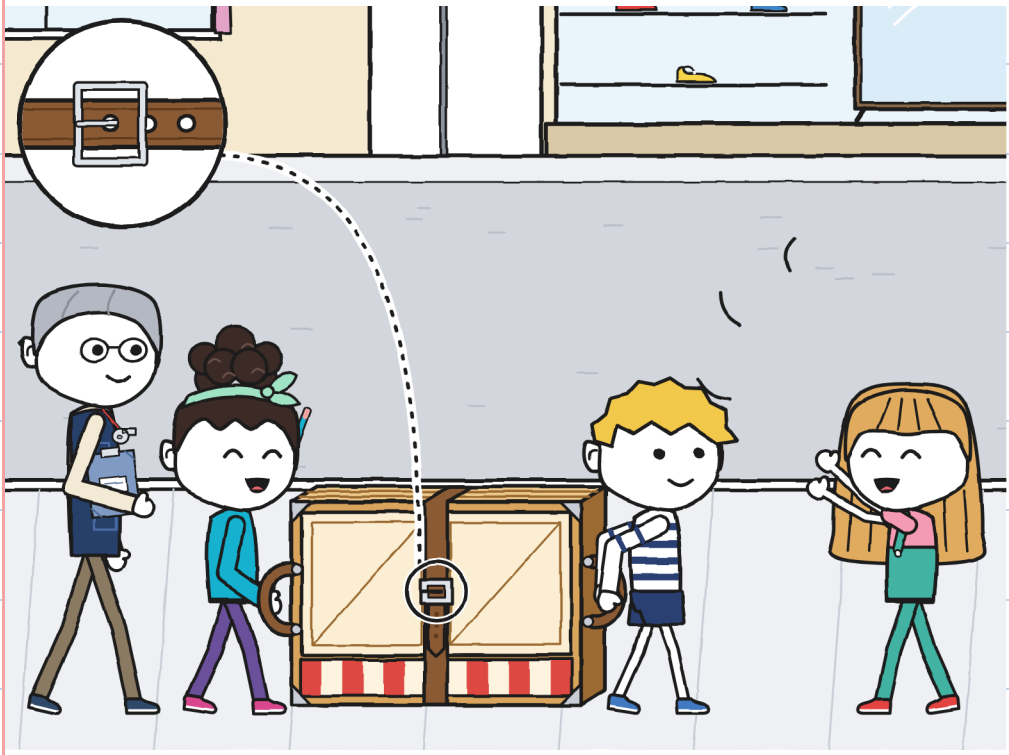
"Shall we make a plan?" I said.
"Straight on to the
limping fish," said Julie.

"What fish?"
"A long story," said Noa.
They didn't tell it to me.
Third tally mark.



Noa fastened the
strap on the first hole.

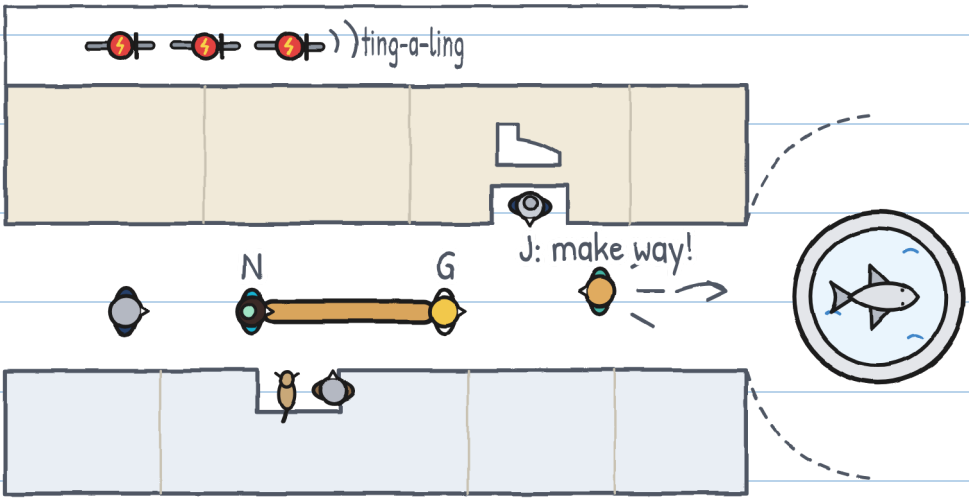
I went in front. Irene came last.
She said "stop" at every kerb.



Julie was very good at clearing the way.

"Make way, there's a theatre coming through!"

A little bell rang. Ting-a-ling.
"You don't run with this," said Irene.

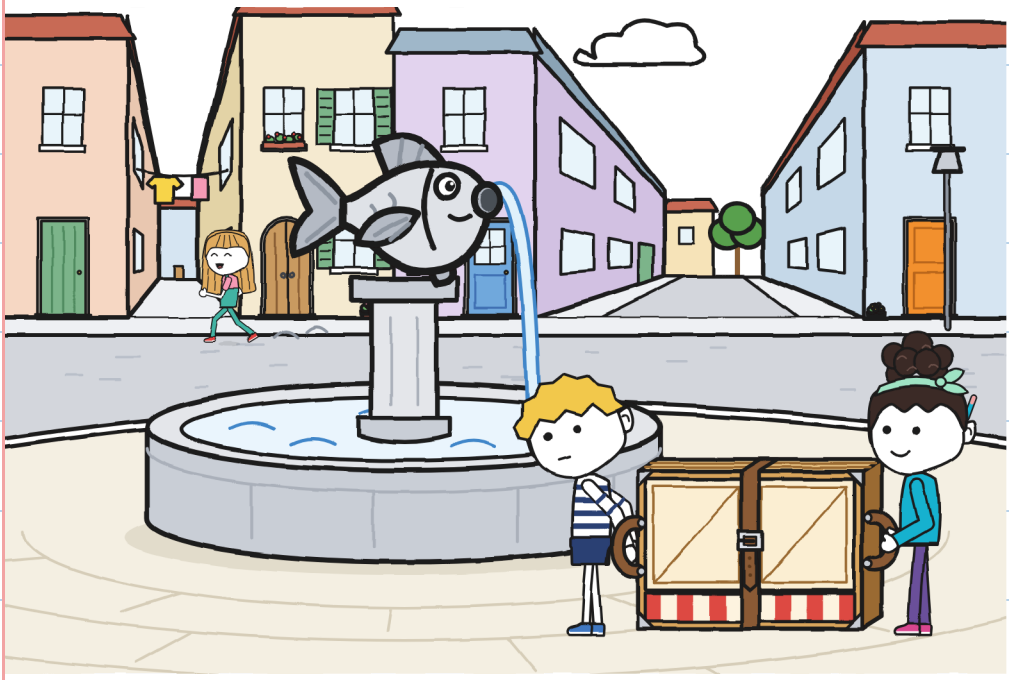


We reached the fountain. Julie went off.

"Up to the limping fish and turn!"

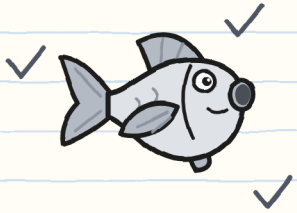
And she was gone.

A stone fish. It had all its fins.

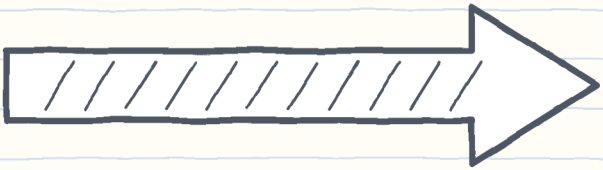


I thought fast. It's not my thing.

Fish: all its fins.
It isn't limping.
There must be another fish.



Turn: which way?
Left, narrow street.
Right, wide street.
Better down the wide one.



"Do I turn now?" I asked.

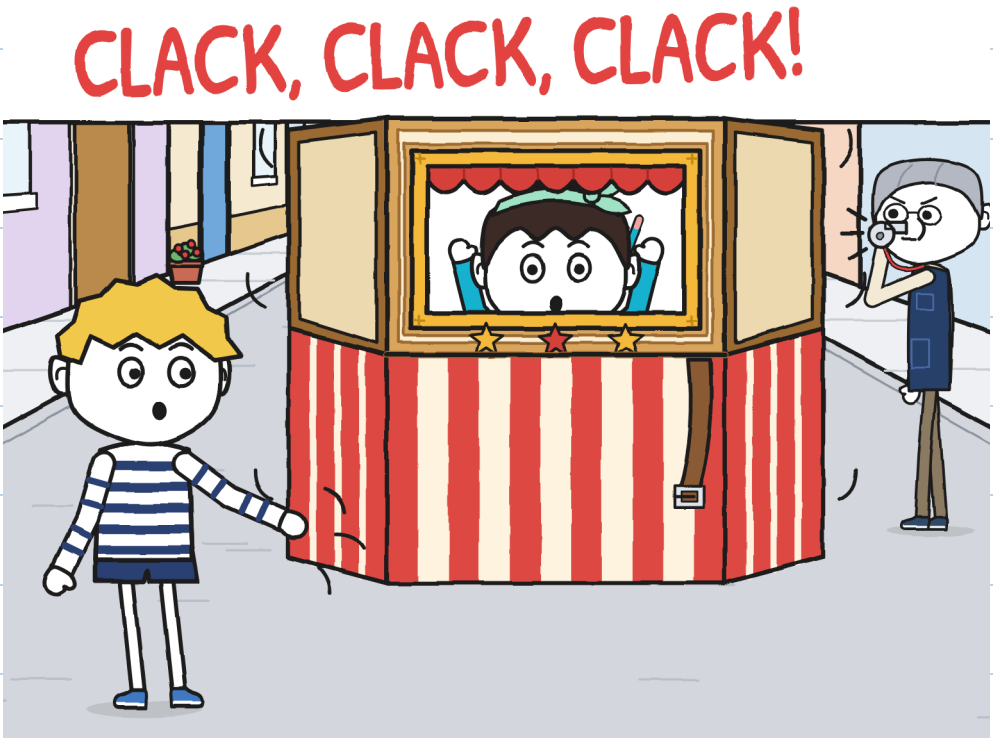
"At the limping fish!" said Noa.

I saw no other fish. I turned right.

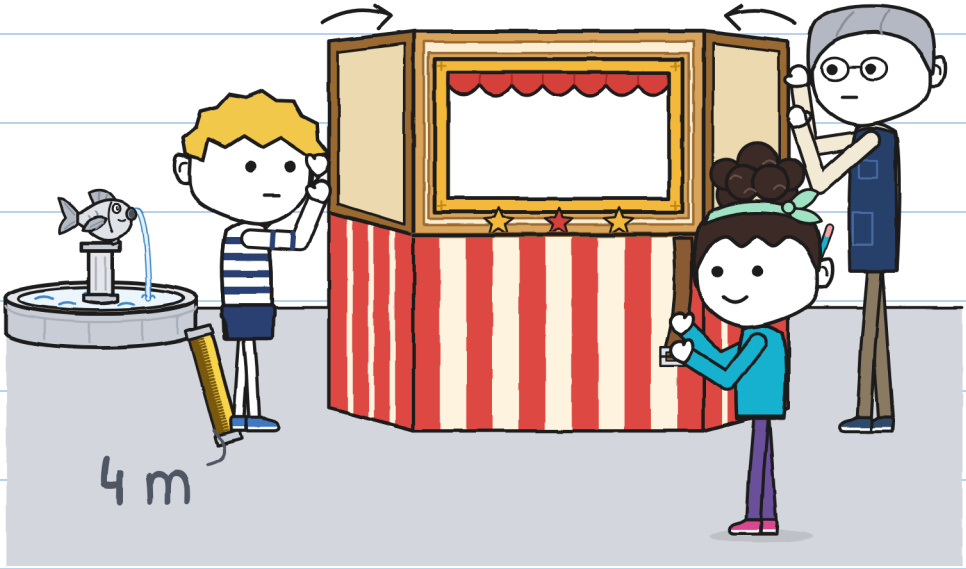
Nobody said "turn". Nobody held the strap. The buckle on the first hole doesn't hold much.

Clack. Clack. Clack.

The panels opened. Inside, Noa.



Irene looked at Noa's hands.
Then at mine.
"Who was guiding?" she asked.
Nobody answered. Julie was
guiding, two streets away.
I measured: four
metres to the fountain.



"It was at the limping fish!"

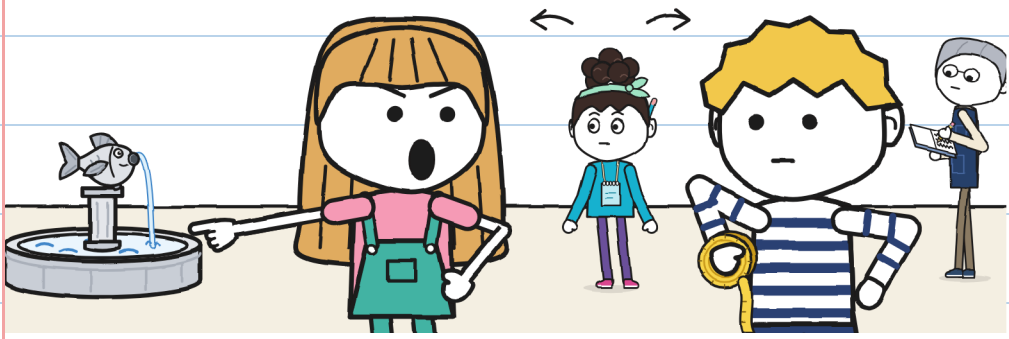
"Like always."

"'Always' is from before I was here."

Julie turned to Irene.

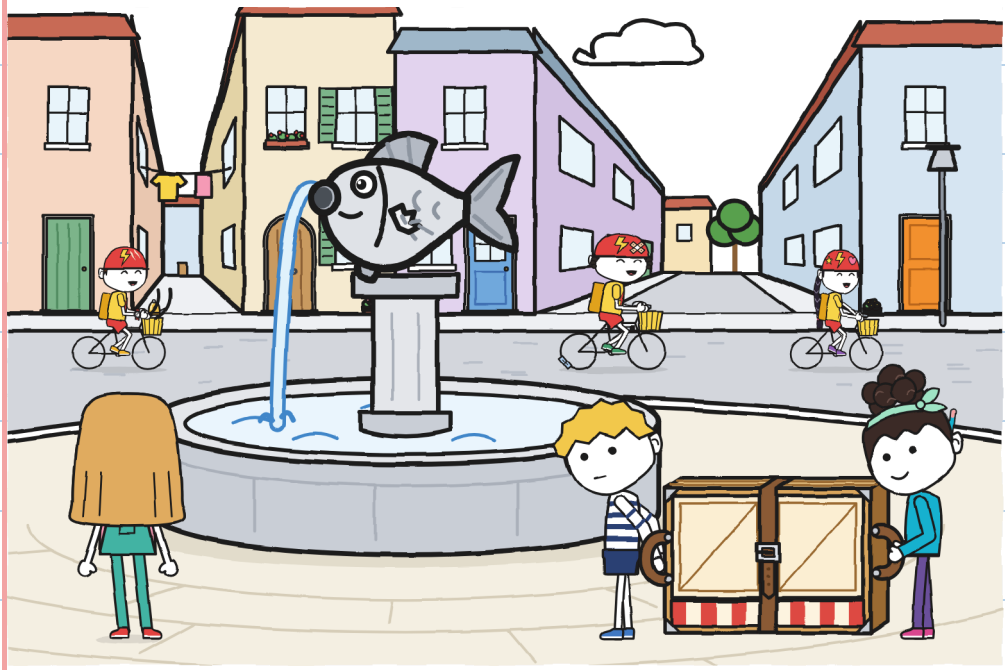
I wasn't lost. I measured it.

Fourth tally mark.



I said it in front of everyone. —J.

They showed me the other side
of the fish. It's missing a fin.
We repeated the turn.
It worked, but nobody spoke.
LIGHTNING went
by on bikes. Ting-a-ling.



We got there almost at night.
Mara put the little theatre away.
I noted the day in the gauge. Something was missing. I didn't know what.

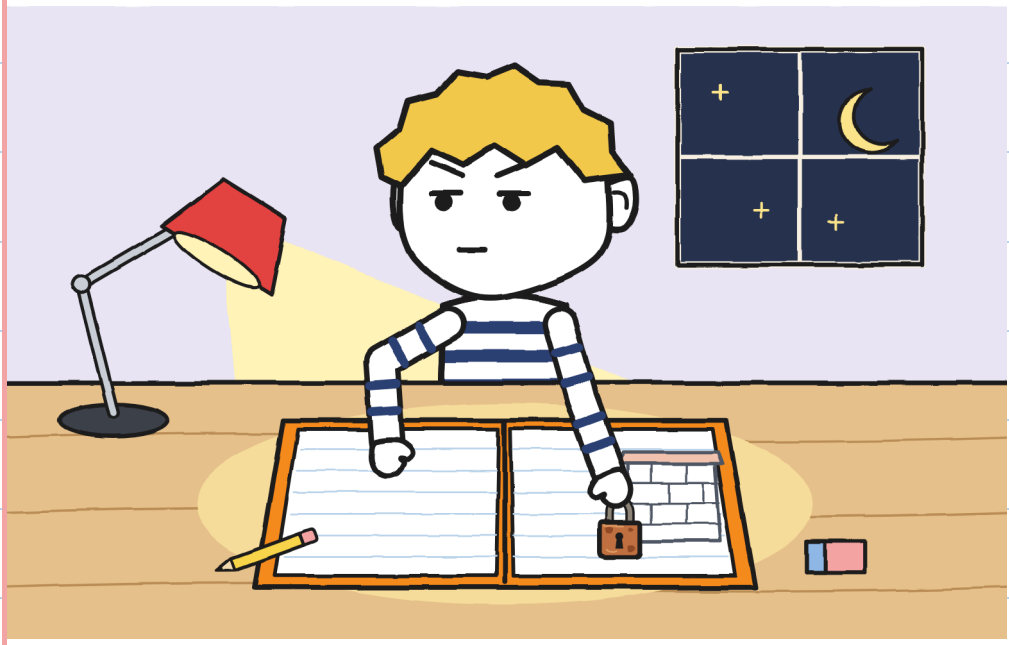
THE THREE-GAUGE

	CARRY 	GUIDE 	CLEAR THE WAY 	
shop → yard	Gus and Noa	Julie	Julie	
shop → fountain	Gus and Noa	Julie	Julie	it opened: 3 times

?

I'm in it twice. I wasn't there. —J.

At home I drew what I found
behind the yard wall.
I thought: "Tomorrow they'll get
it wrong again. Then I'll bring it out."



I didn't like it. —J.

CHAPTER 3

Is Gus's Plan Any Good?

That night I made the whole plan. It turned out a very good plan. I folded it in four.



On Thursday Noa was counting steps.
"I measure in steps," said Noa.

I measured one of Noa's steps: fifty-eight centimetres. Noa counts.

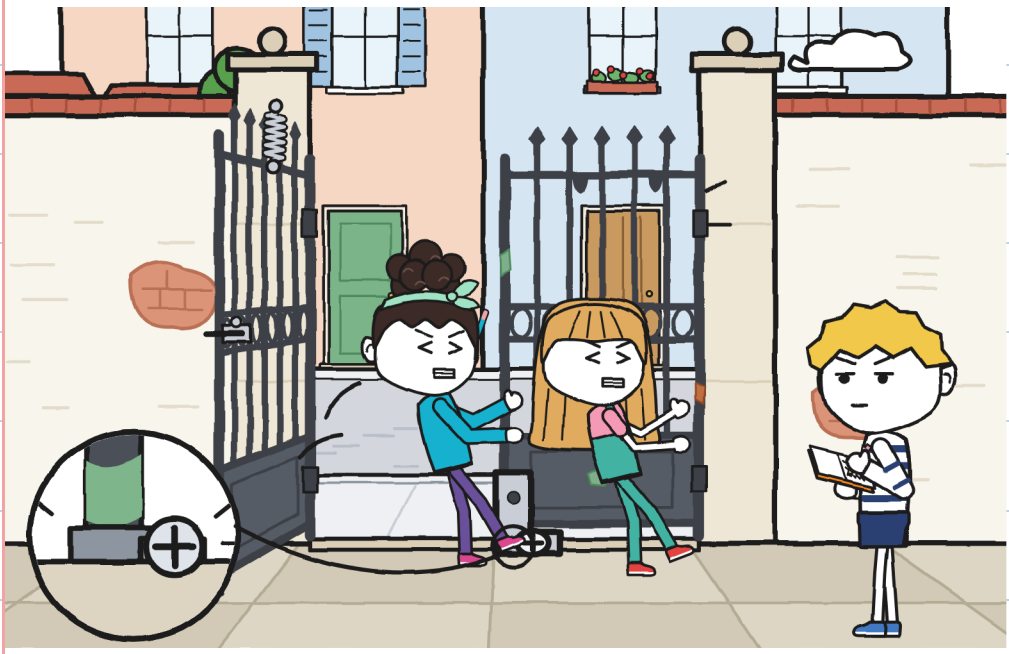


We went to the yard. Julie and Noa wanted to open both halves. The second didn't open.

"The label is wrong," said Julie.

"Definitely," said Noa.

I took out my pencil.



I didn't make it.

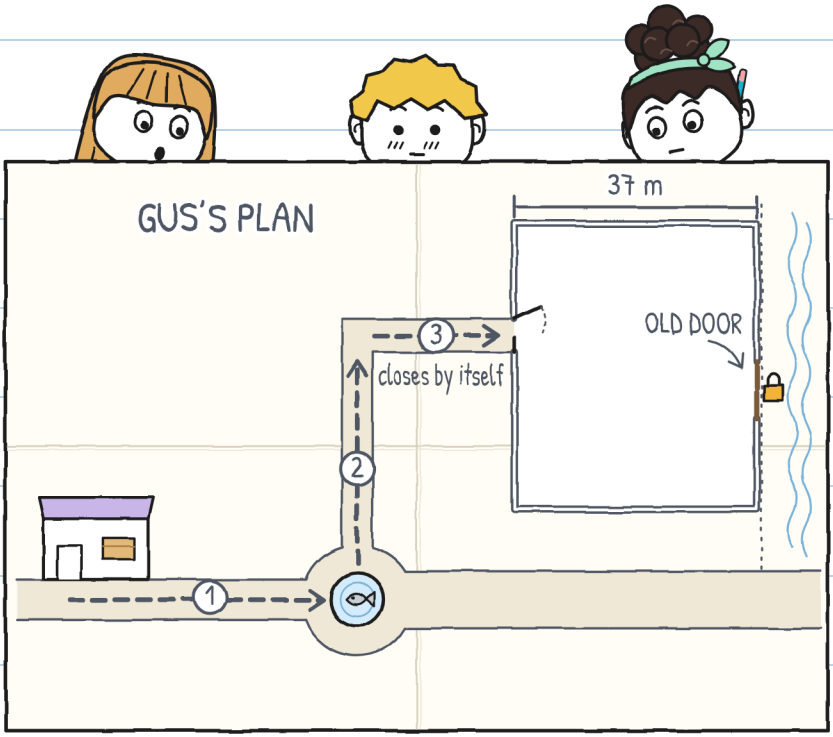
I looked at the row of tally marks. One was missing, mine. On Tuesday I decided to keep quiet.

DECIDED WITHOUT ME: ||||

DECIDED WITHOUT THEM: |



"The label isn't wrong,"
I said. "The yard has another
door. I found it on Tuesday."
"On Tuesday?" said Julie.
"I kept it back so I could be right later."



"OK," said Noa.
Julie didn't say "OK". She
was moving one foot.
"We really needed that
yesterday," said Julie.
"I know."



It wasn't true yet. —J.

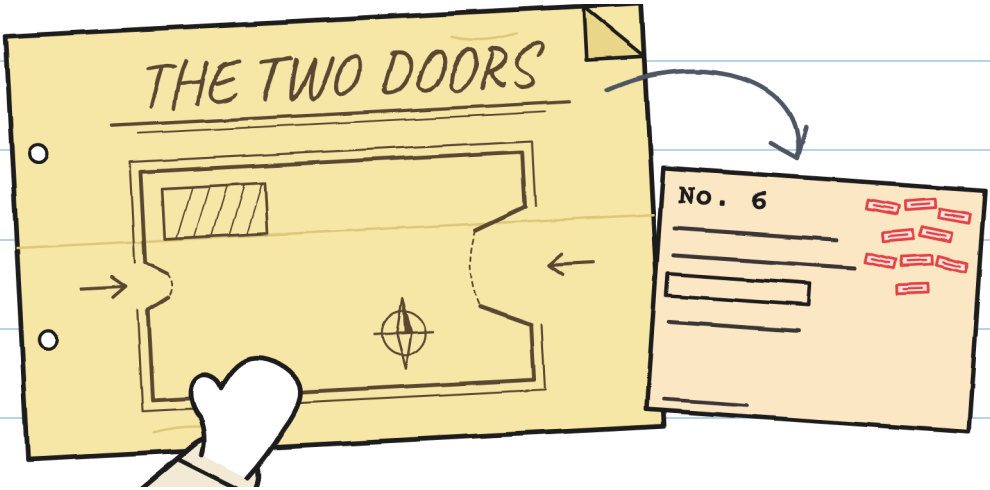
We went to see the door. Noa
counted sixty-four steps.
I measured thirty-seven metres.
It's made of wood. Its padlock
has more rust than padlock.



Irene found a yellow sheet.

"You used to come in two ways."

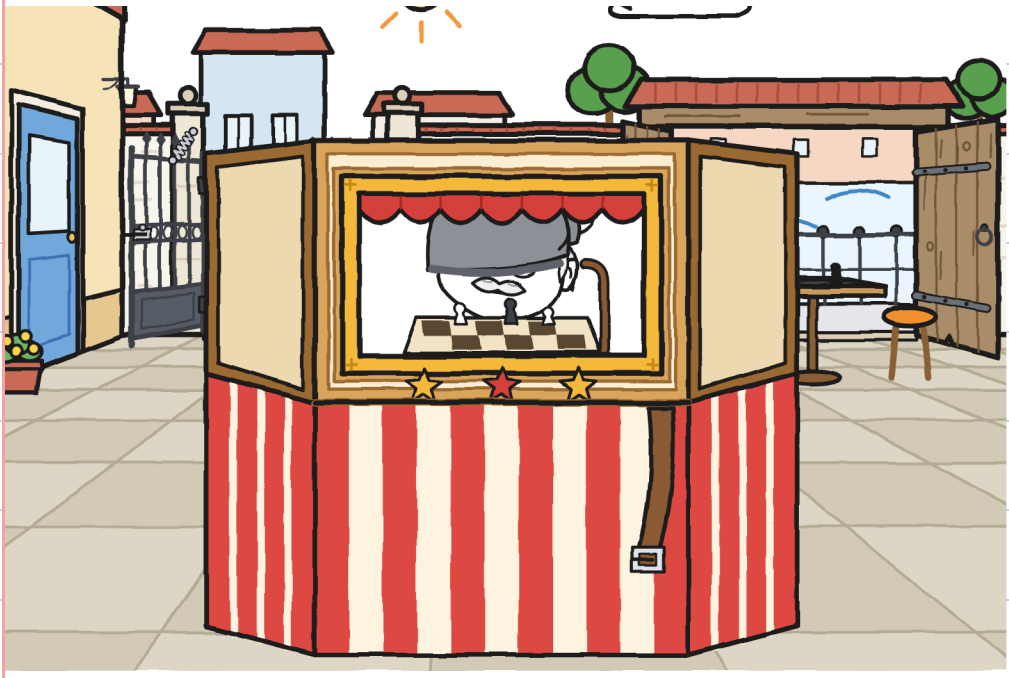
"It was an old address," I said.



Mara saw it nine times. —J.

The key was in an envelope.
Irene opened the padlock.

Through the window you could see
Don Antonio. He was snoring a little.



"On Saturday I'll open both:
bikes by the old one," said Irene.
"What do you say?" Julie asked me.
It was the first time all week.



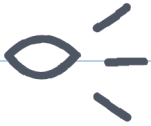
I said the gate, but with a rehearsal.

Noa, the same. Julie said "OK".

We added a box to the gauge.

THE GAUGE WITH FOUR

	CARRY	GUIDE	CLEAR THE WAY	WARN
yard, second try	Julie and Noa	Julie and Noa	Gus	Gus, no
shop → fountain	Gus and Noa	Julie	Julie	nobody

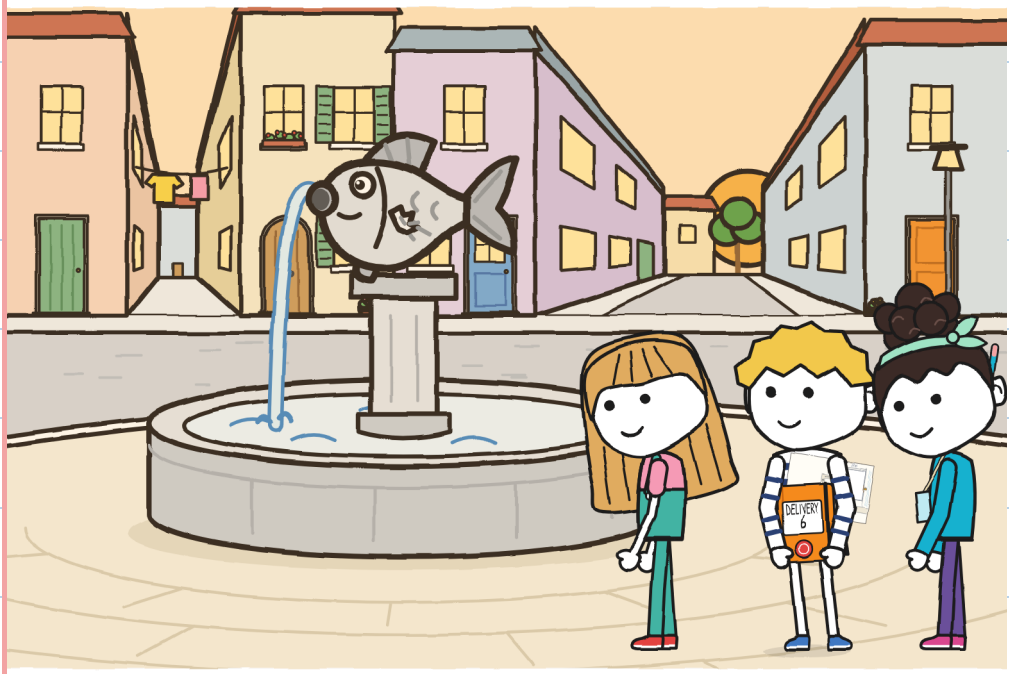


WARN: what you know

The fourth box is hard. —J.

We went back by the fountain.
I stopped in front of the limping fish.

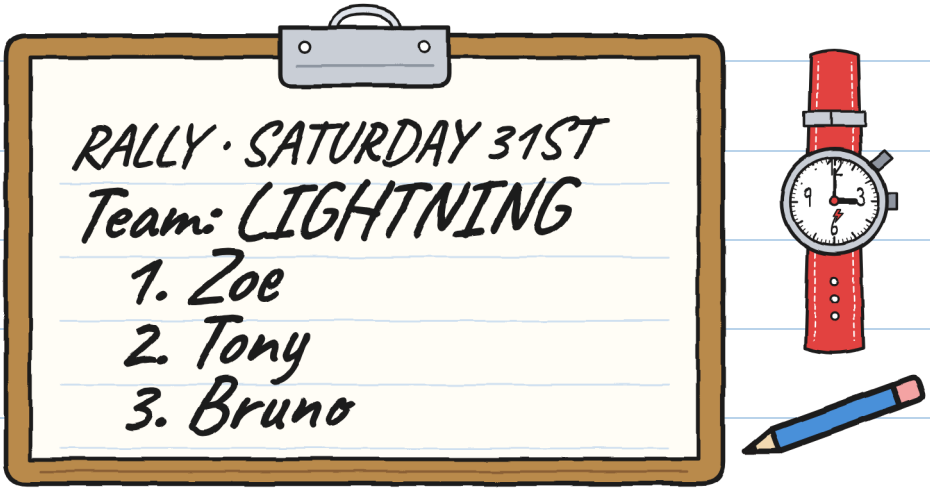
"Will you tell me the story?" I asked.
"On Saturday," said Noa.
It wasn't a no.



CHAPTER 4

Can Anyone Lead?

Tony brought his watch and LIGHTNING's form.

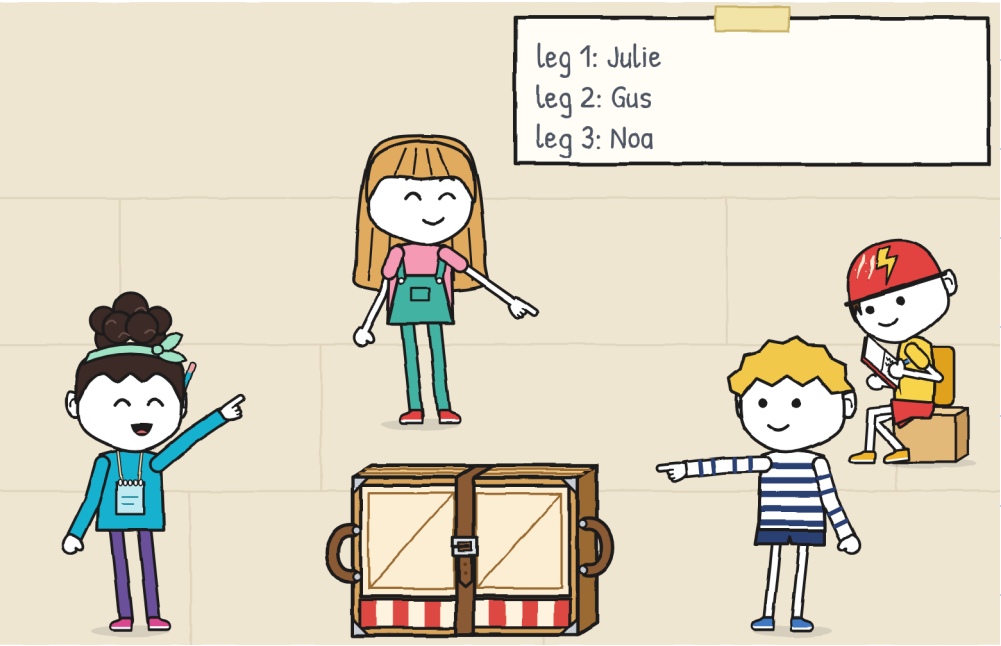


"Zoe wrote it," said Tony.

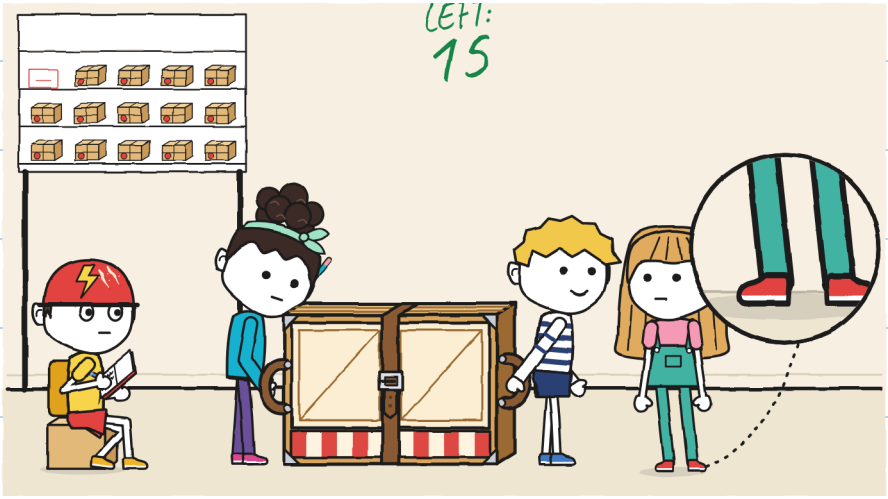
Bruno told her: "with a B."

"Today I time," said Tony.

Noa said: turns. I said:
whoever isn't carrying
guides. Julie said: start now!
"Who guides first?"
We pointed. Each of us pointed
at someone else.



"I gave a direction only
Noa understood," said Julie.
"Then I said: 'Gus is lost.'"
"OK," I said.
"Which fin is the fish missing?"
"The left," said Julie.



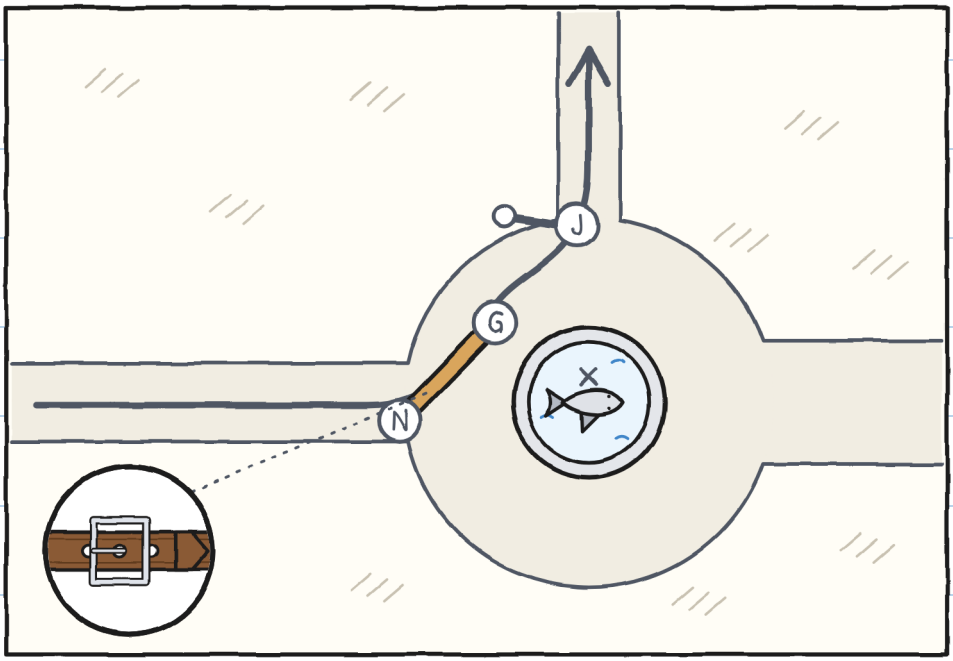
Look at my feet: still. —J.

Leg one. Noa fastened the strap on the second hole.

"Five steps... Turn left!"

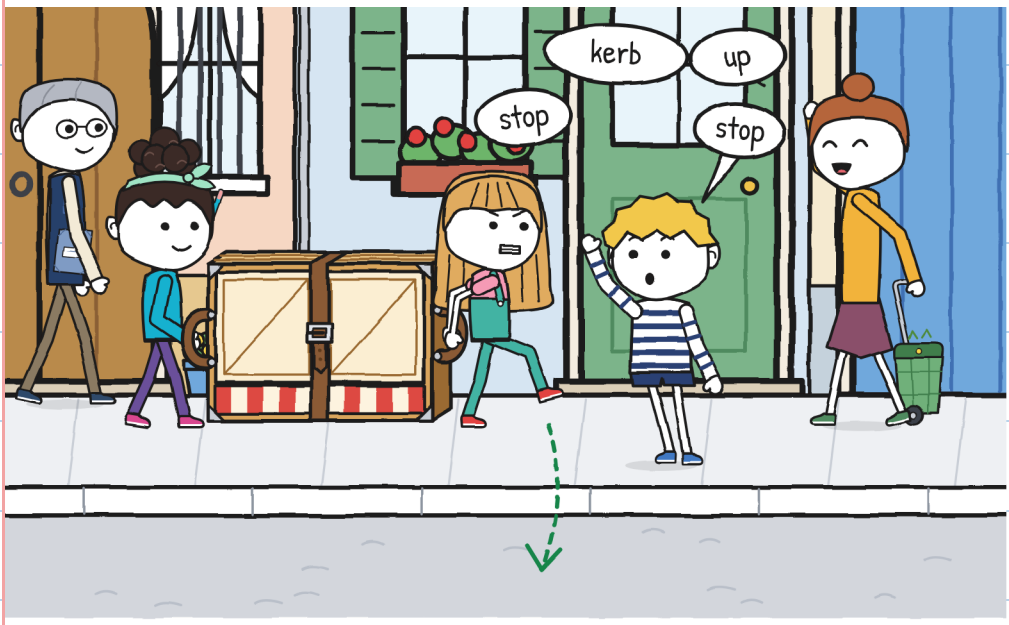
"Strap!" said Noa.

We turned round the limping fish. No clack.



Leg two. Julie and Noa carried. I guided.

This is how I guide:
"Three steps, stop, kerb, up."
Julie went in front, quiet. Her
foot wanted the short way.

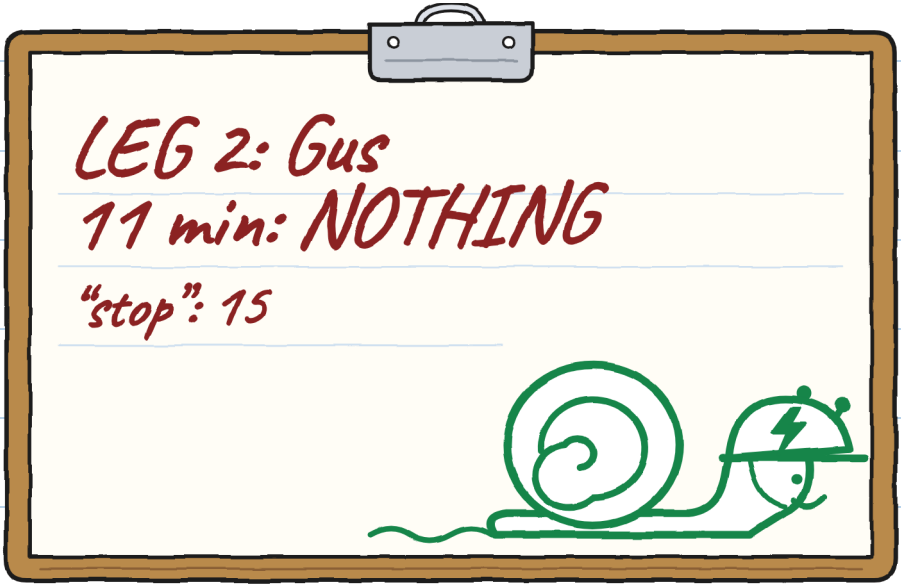


"Eleven minutes," said Tony.

I led for the first time.

Nothing to repeat.

"You said 'stop' fourteen times," said Julie.



I didn't argue about any of them. —J.

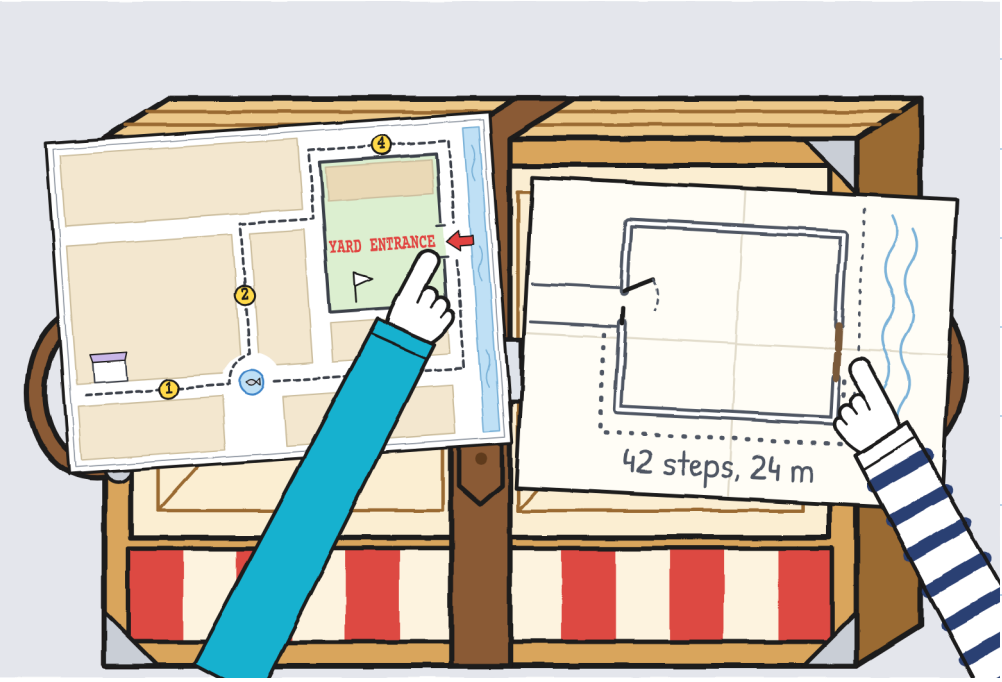
Leg three. Julie and
I carried. Noa guided.

Noa stopped in the canal alley.
"The map sends us to the old door."



We put the little theatre on the ground.
First you put it down; then you argue.
"It's an old map," I said.

To the gate: 42 steps, 24 metres.



"Do we tell Irene?" asked Julie.

"And the others," said Noa.

Irene corrected the
maps with a red marker.



We repeated leg three as far
as the gate. Noa guided,
cleared the way and warned.
"Stop! Holding the gate! Go!"
We went through.

	CARRY 	GUIDE 	CLEAR THE WAY 	WARN 
corner → yard	Gus and Julie	Noa	Noa	Noa: "the map is wrong"

Noa filled the fourth box.

Noa held the gate. –J.

Tony showed us his sheet.



"That's an opinion," said Julie.

"It's a fact," said Tony.

Tony put on his helmet
and left. Ting-a-ling.

That night Mara put the little theatre away. Noa looked at the buckle.

"Tomorrow, on the third hole," said Noa.

Today I made no tally marks. I counted four disagreements. I won one.

DECIDED WITHOUT ME: ||||

DECIDED WITHOUT THEM: |

Friday.

Disagreements: 4.

Said: 4.

Won: 1.

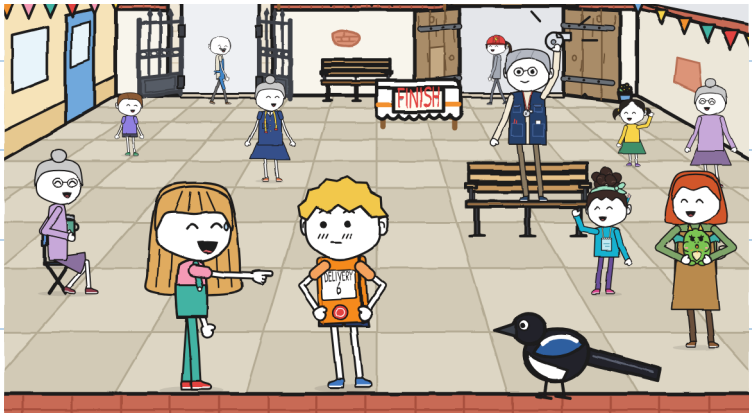


I'll give you the ground. —J.

CHAPTER 5

Does It Matter Who Arrives First?

On Saturday I put
on my orange T-shirt.
At eleven, the yard had
both doors open. Irene said:
"You don't run with a load."

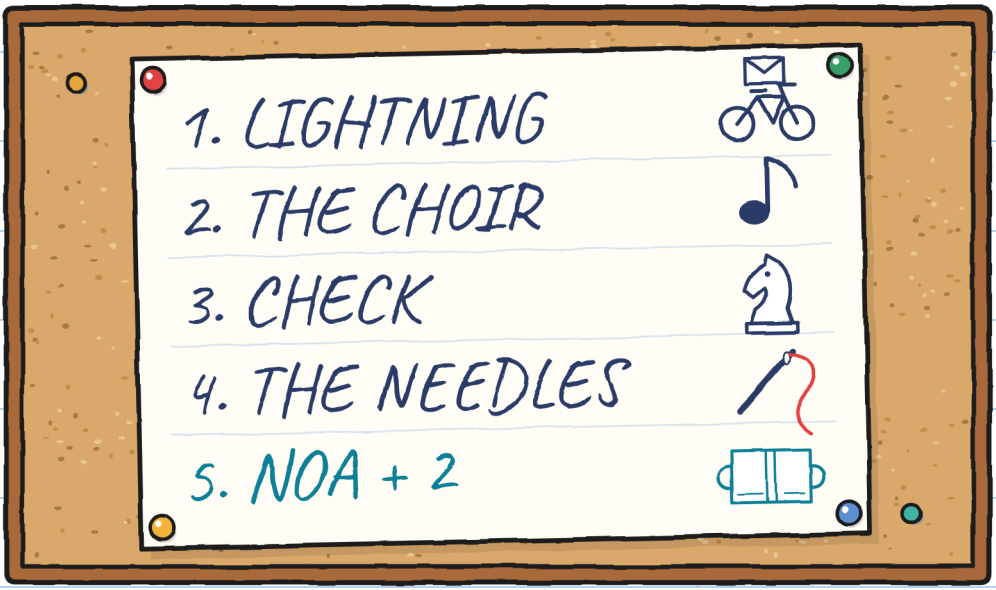


There were five teams.

LIGHTNING carried an envelope.

The choir, a lectern.

Noa wrote down our team:



"We're 'Noa + 2'," I said.

"I'm the 2," said Julie.

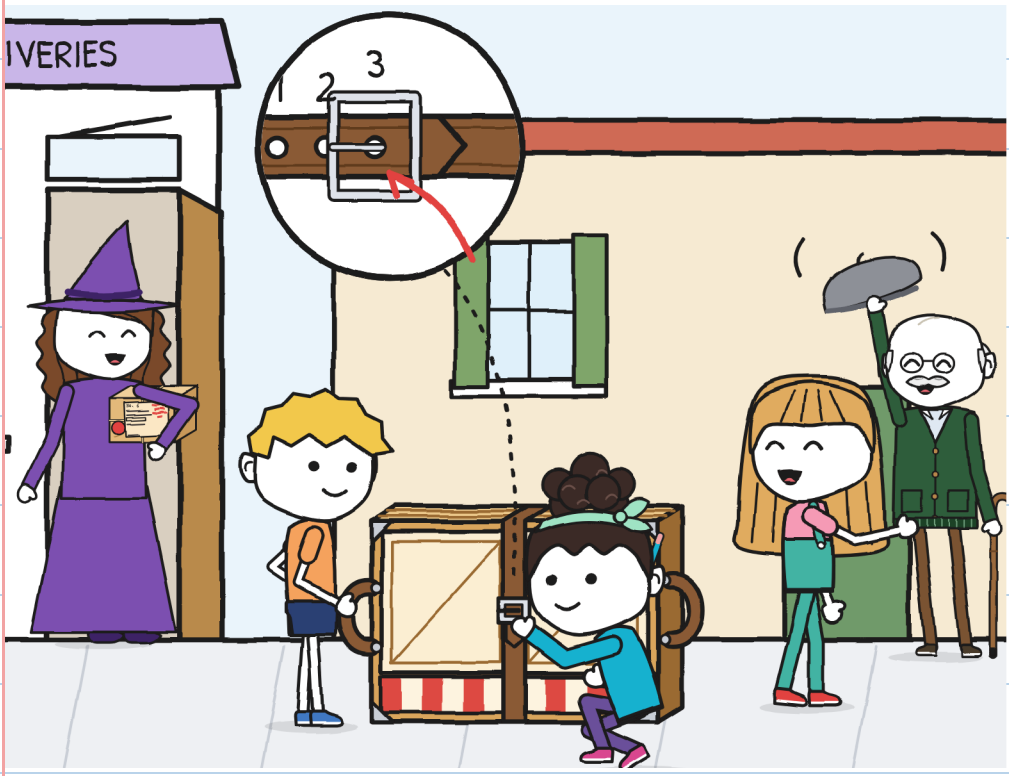
Noa fastened the strap quickly. Clack!

"Down," I said.

Noa fastened the strap

again, on the third hole.

Don Antonio lowered his beret: start.



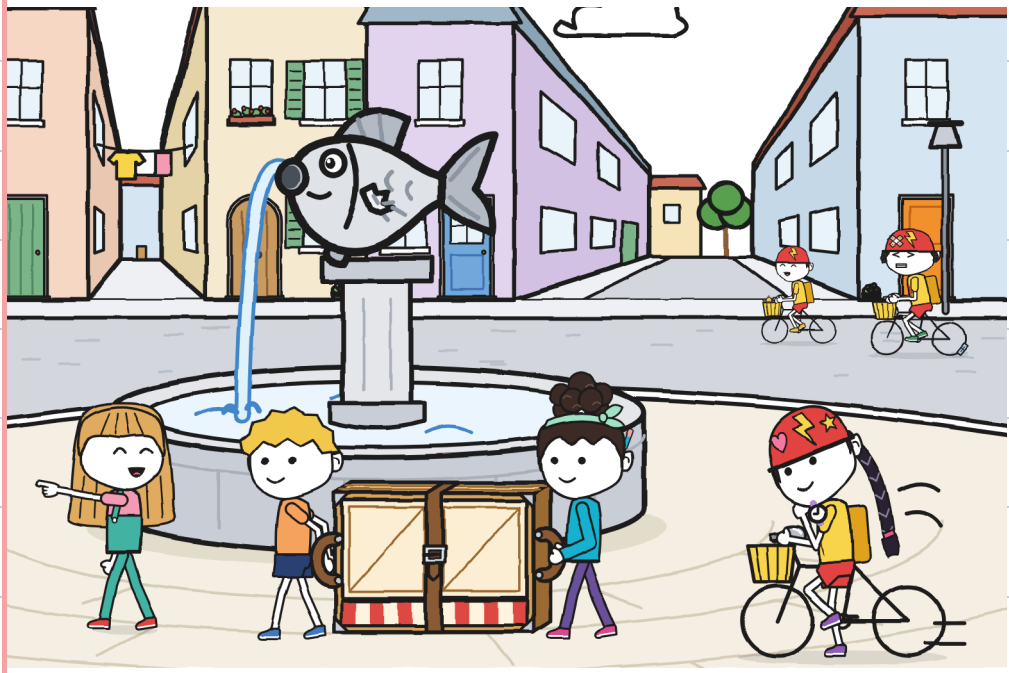
Leg one. Julie guided.

"Turn left."

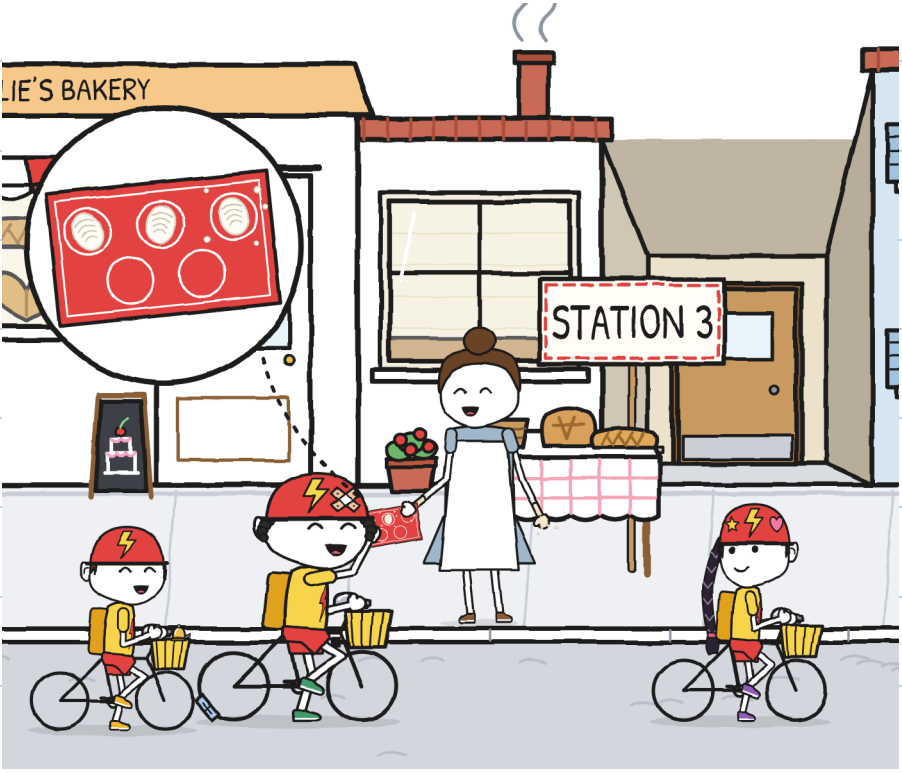
Zoe came on her bike. She braked.

"You go ahead."

We were ahead for twenty seconds.



At each station they stamped a card. Ellie stamped with a thumb covered in flour. LIGHTNING passed us three times. Tony rang the little bell.

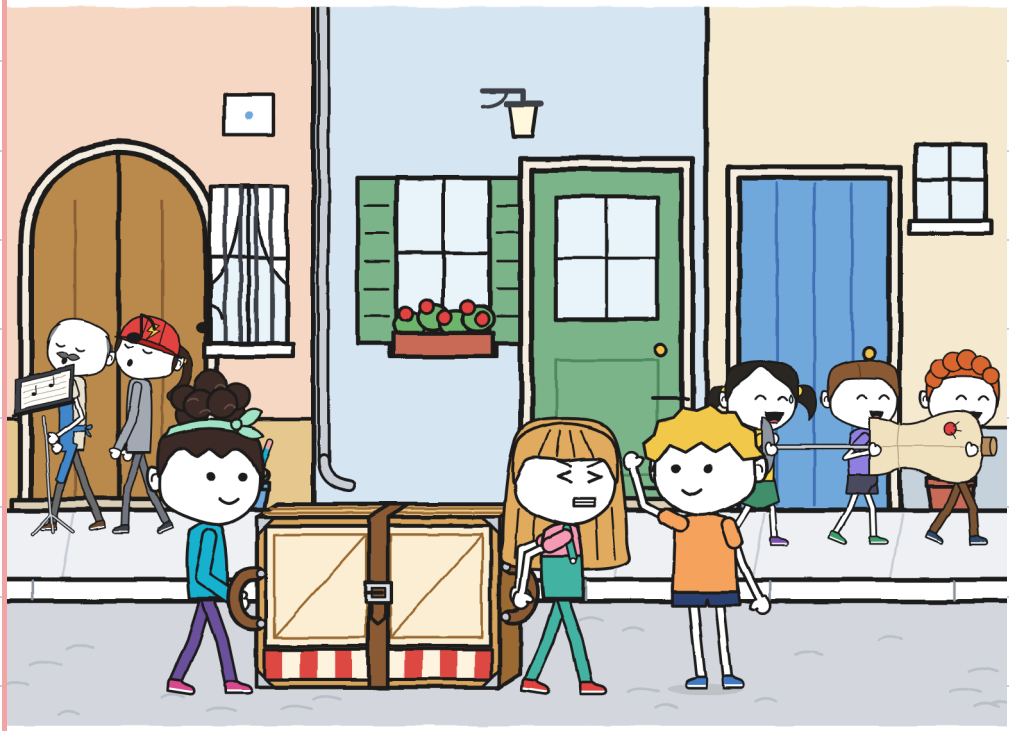


The choir overtook us.

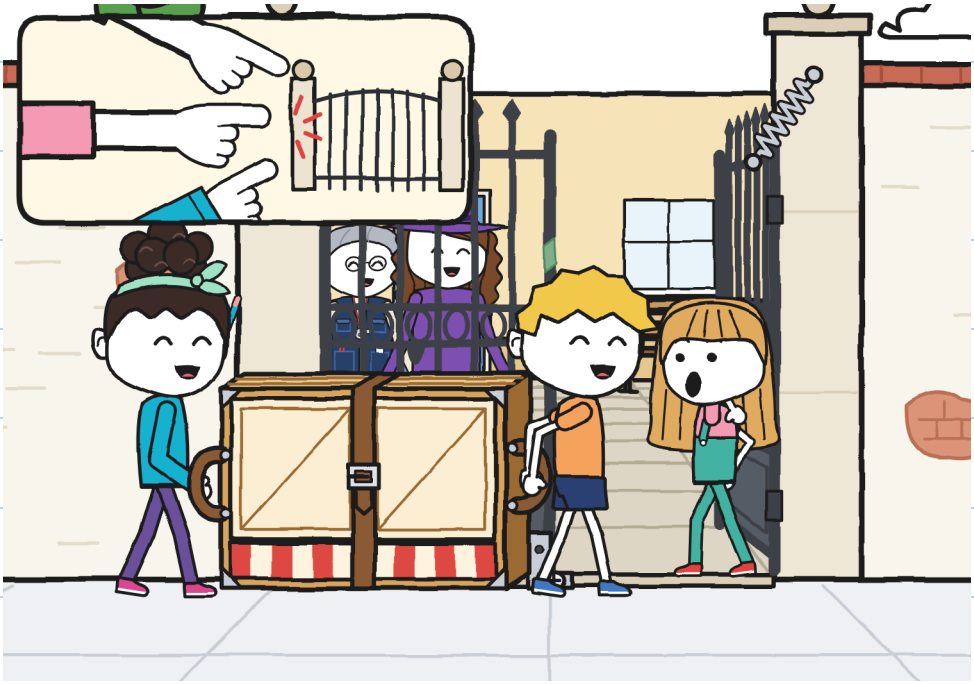
"Does it matter who arrives first?"

"The label says 'folded'," said Noa.

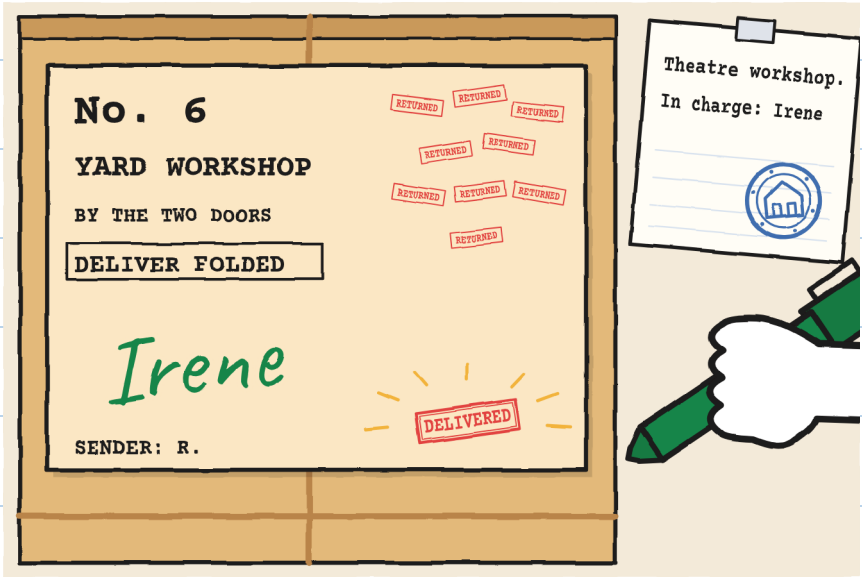
Julie didn't run. Well: one foot got away. She brought it back.



Leg three. Noa guided
as far as the gate.
"Who opens?" asked Julie.
Julie held the gate.
"Stop! Go!"
We went through. Folded. In one piece.

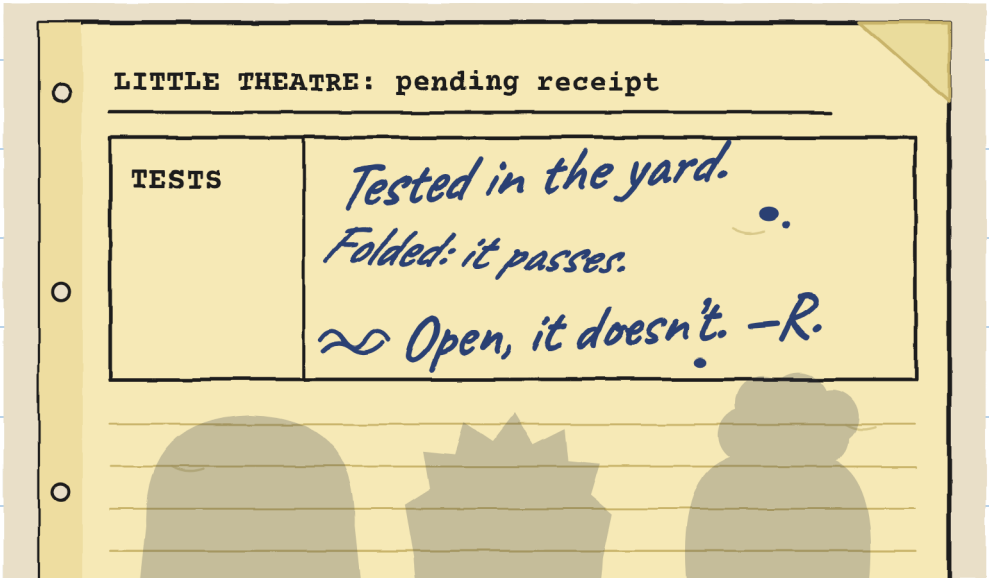


"Forty-one minutes," said Irene.
LIGHTNING took fourteen minutes.
Irene looked at the
folded little theatre.
"It works for me," she
said. And she signed.



DELIVERED appeared. Nobody wrote it.

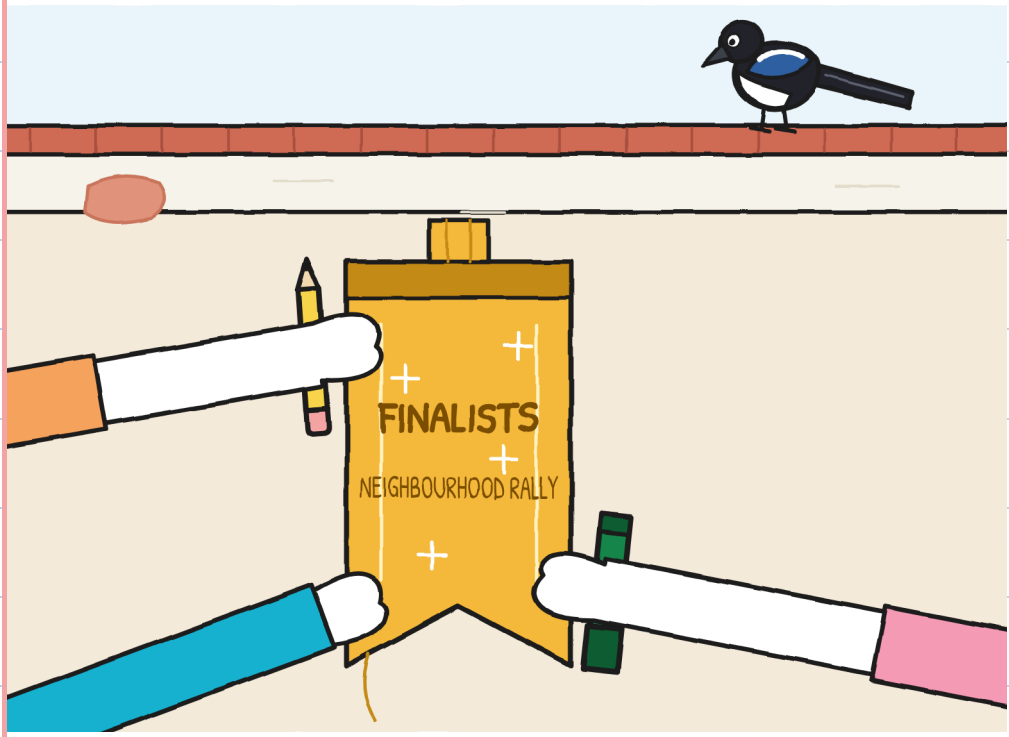
Irene opened the inventory. The little theatre had an old line.



"It's from before me," said Irene. R. tested the little theatre in that yard.

R. measures doors. I'm noting it. —J.

LIGHTNING won, without repeating any leg. The prize: a loaf from Ellie.



"A finalist is the last one," said Julie. "It's the one who reaches the final," said Noa.

"We're using it for the
first time," said Irene.
Two minutes to make up a play.
"Who wants to say very little?"
I raised my hand.
Crumb landed on a panel.



We made a play. Noa was all
the doors. I was the package.
I said RETURNED nine times.
The three of us fitted. Squeezed in.



You squeeze up. —J.

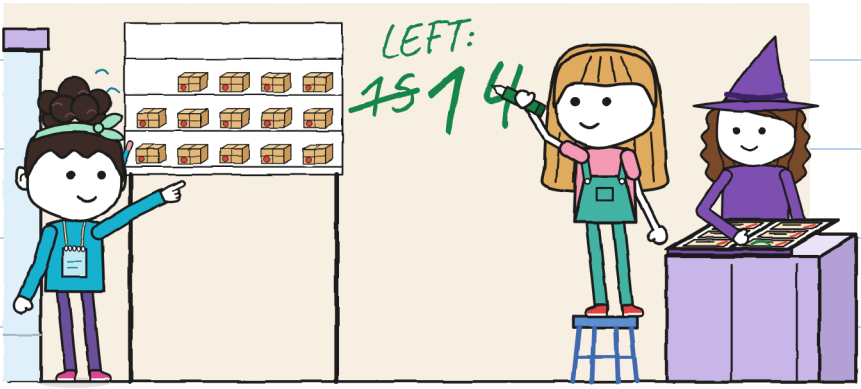
CHAPTER 6

What Remains When the Test Is Over?

We went back to the shop.

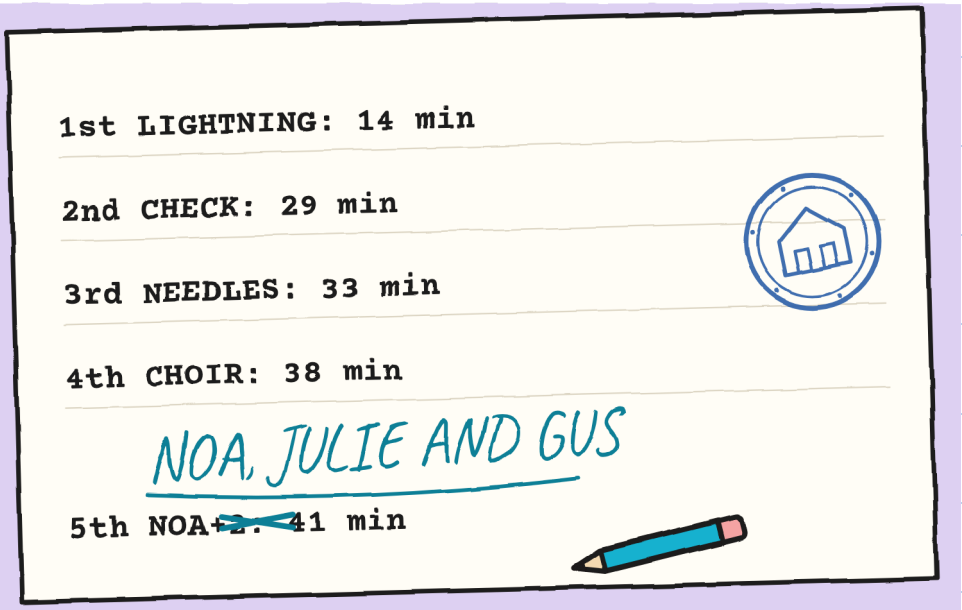
"Can I?" asked Julie.

She crossed out the 15 and wrote 14.



Noa counted them quietly: fourteen. —J.

Tony brought the results table. I noted it down.



I looked at it twice. "Bruno" was whole.

Noa fixed our team with her turquoise pencil.

I added a clue to R.'s card.

"R. tested the little theatre," said Tony.

"My little bell, no."

WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT R.

?

R.



clues 1-11

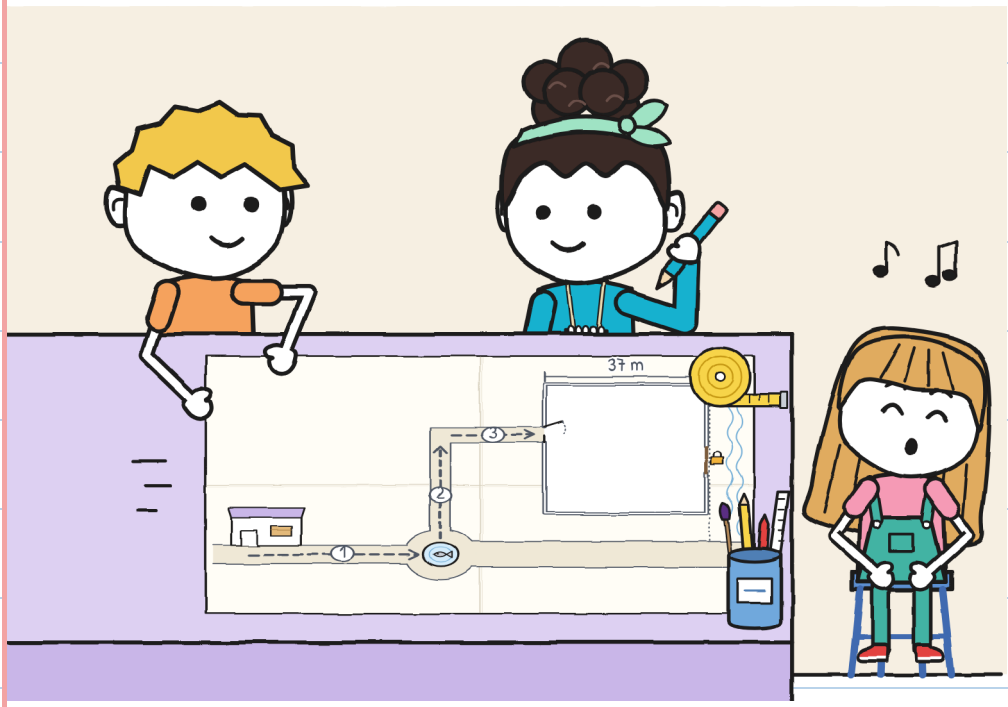
12. Tested the little theatre.
before sending it.
It's in the inventory.

PENDING: an explanation

Me too. —V.

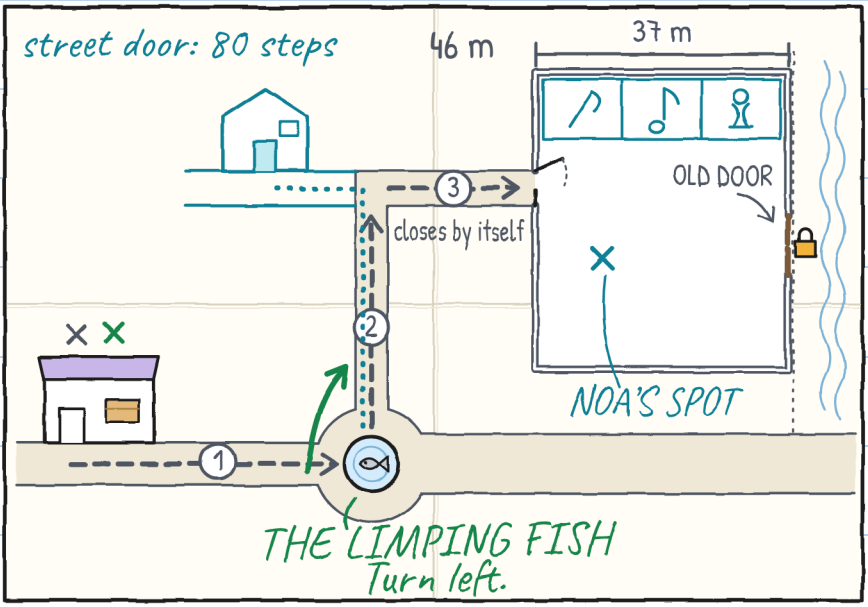
Late, but it fits. —E.

I put the plan on the counter.
"Your part is missing," I told Noa.
"Can I draw on it?" asked Noa.



Noa added her street and the steps. I added the metres.

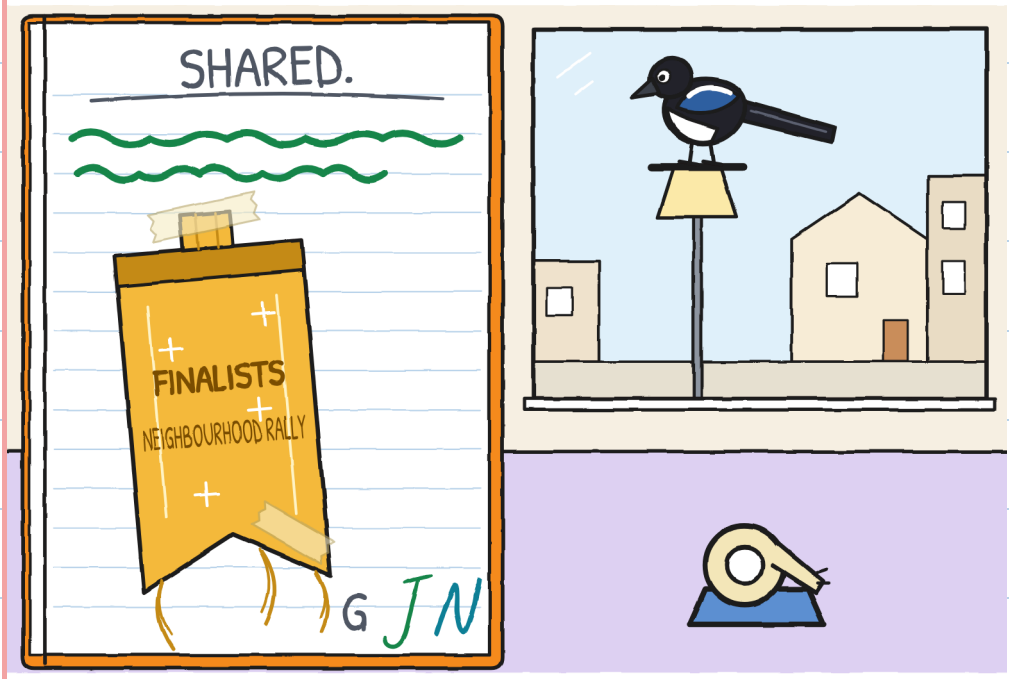
PLAN OF THE THREE



They told me the story of the limping fish. Now I know it.

It's brilliant. We told it badly. –J.

Julie had the ribbon on her wrist. It had loose threads. We stuck it under SHARED.



My notebook closes worse. —J.

Noa read: "A gate can
be held by a stone too."
"A stone doesn't say 'kerb'," she said.
I didn't rub out the tally marks.



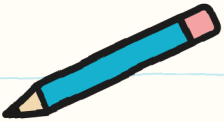
Don't rub them out. They're mine. —J.

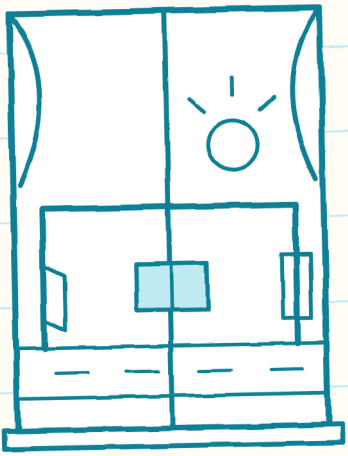
On Sunday, at dawn, Noa kept watch. At nine she brought a note.

7:38: the little theatre, folded.

7:44: dawn breaks. It isn't moving.

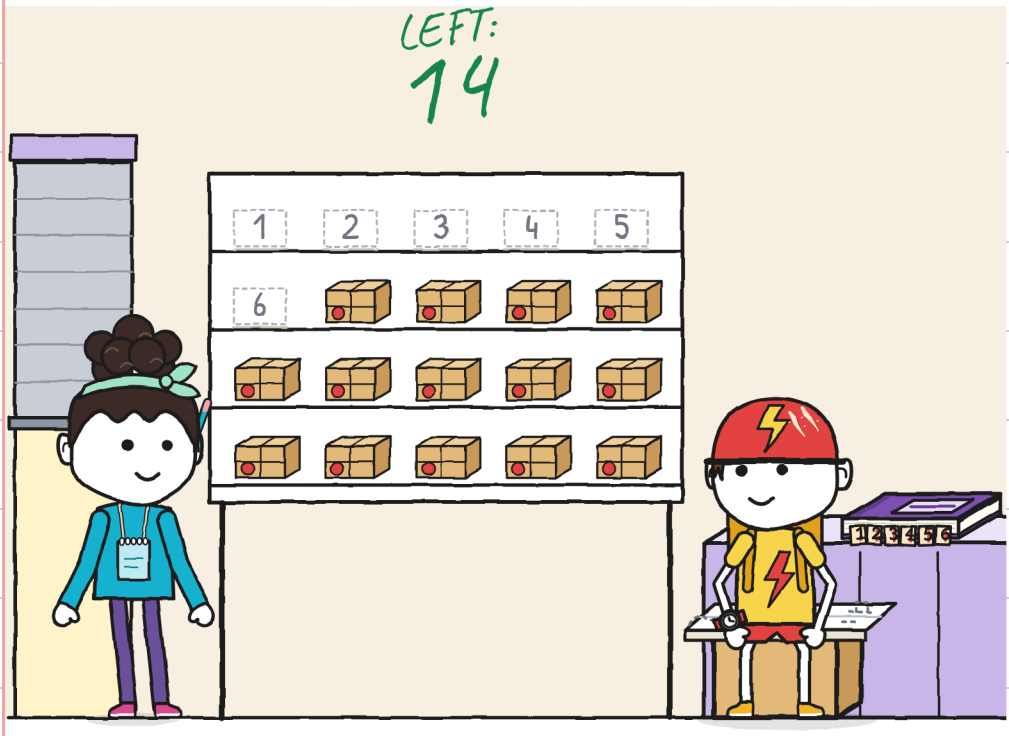
7:50: still there. Zero steps.



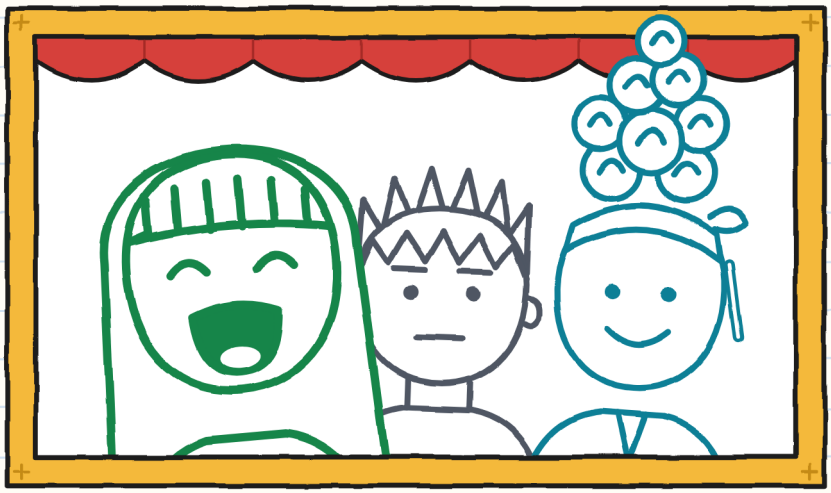


Keeps watch and counts better. —J.

Mara raised the shutter
a little. I drew the shelf:
fourteen packages and six gaps.
Noa stayed by the door.



To finish, I drew the little theatre's window, empty. Each of us drew ourselves inside, in our own colour.



we fit

Shared is shared. –J.

Leg by leg:

LEG		WHO CARRIED	WHO GUIDED	WHAT HAD TO BE REPEATED
	Shop → limping fish fountain	Gus and Noa	Julie	the turn (three times)
	Fountain → corner	Julie and Noa	Gus	nothing (but slowly)
	Corner → yard	Gus and Julie	Noa	the entrance: the map was old
	On Saturday	all three	all three, in turns	the strap (third hole)
	Before us	Mara, alone	nobody	nine trips
	R.	?	?	we don't know

	CARRY 	GUIDE 	CLEAR THE WAY 	WARN 
1	Gus and Noa	Julie	Julie	Julie
2	Julie and Noa	Gus	Gus	Gus
3	Gus and Julie	Noa	Noa	Noa

None empty. —J.

IMPOSSIBLE DELIVERIES · 7

(coming soon)

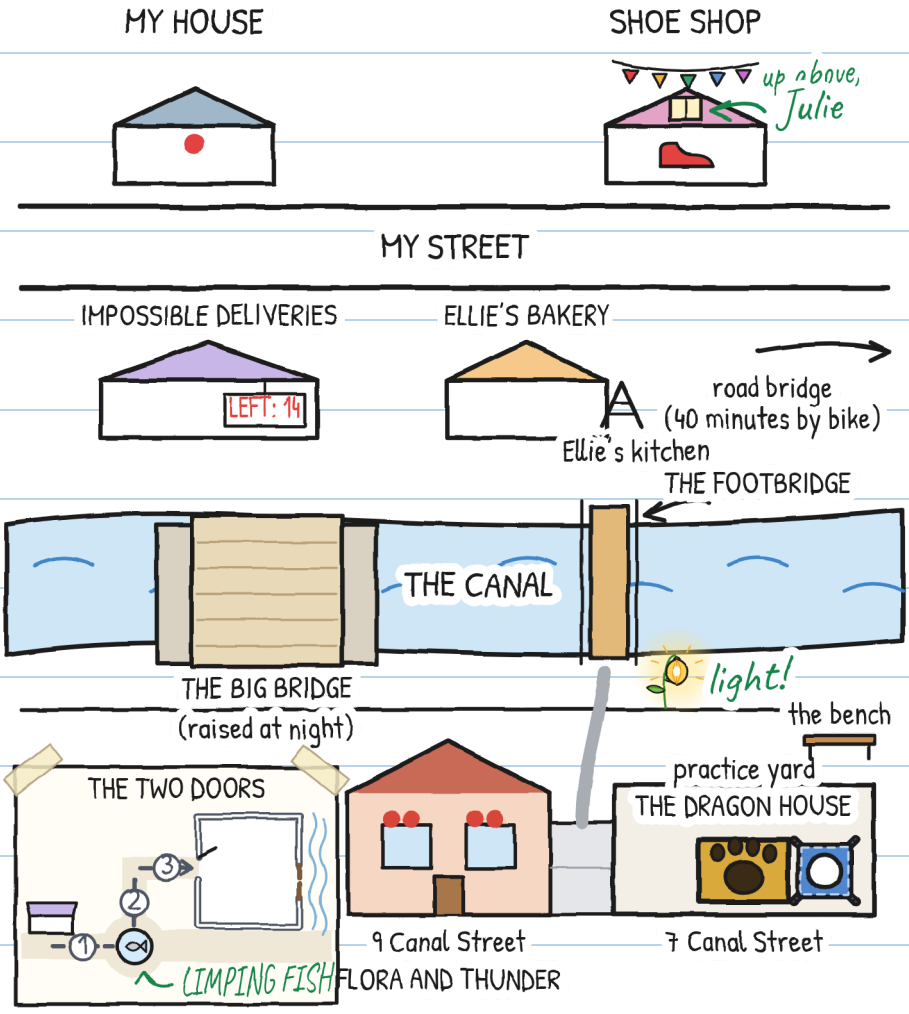


At that hour

I'm already in my pyjamas.

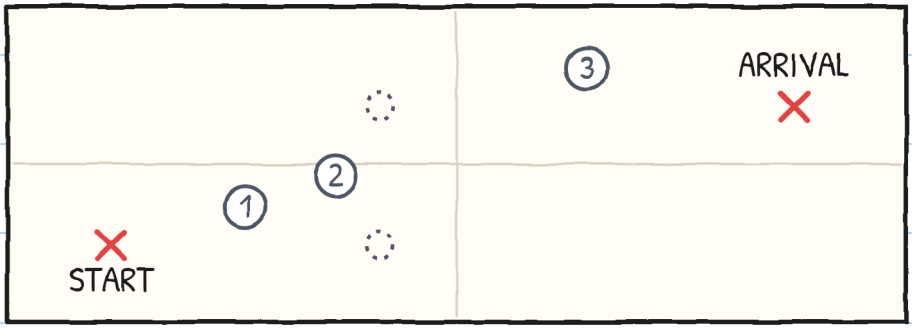
Who's awake, apart from me? —J.

THE NEIGHBOURHOOD (version 6)



YOUR JOURNEY

Who carries? Who guides?



THE THREE-GAUGE

	CARRY	GUIDE	CLEAR THE WAY	WARN
leg 1				
leg 2				
leg 3				

Change the repeated name. —J.

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SIZE XXS · PRE-A1

GUS WROTE A WORD AND LEFT ROOM. CAN YOU SEE THE WORD "SHARED"?

SIZE XS · A1

I wrote one word. I left half a page free. It didn't stay free for even a minute.

SIZE S · A2

On the first page I wrote one word. I left half the page free, just in case. It wasn't free for even a minute.

SIZE M · B1

On the first page I wrote a single word. I left half the page free, just in case. It didn't stay free for even a minute.

SIZE L · B2

On the first page I wrote a single word and left half the page free, just in case. It didn't stay free for even a minute.

SIZE XL · B2-C1

Illustrated novel · 13+

The CEFR levels are a rough guide for learners of English.

Each in their own size. —J.

FOR FAMILIES AND TEACHERS

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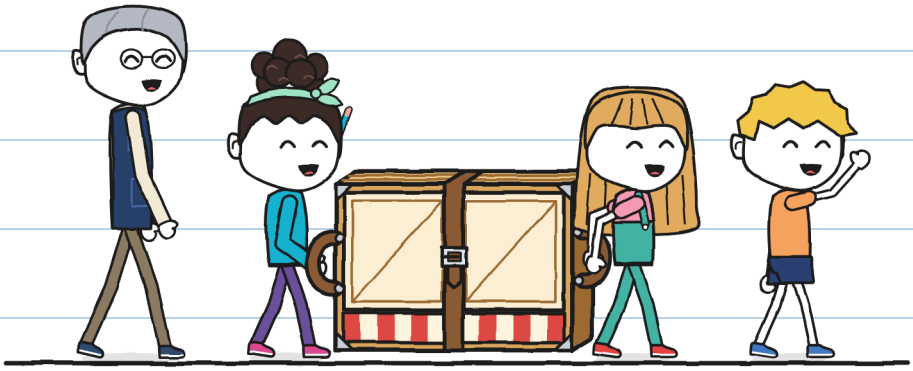
A REAL TRANSFER: WHAT TO DO

1. Before setting off, look at the whole route.
2. One person goes free: opens doors and warns.
3. Hands on the handles, away from hinges and fastenings.
4. You don't run or race with a load.
5. If anyone says "stop", everyone stops.
6. First put it on the ground. Then argue.
7. Anything big is opened and folded by two people, with a grown-up.

The ONLY IN THE STORY stamp marks what isn't real.



If you know something, say it first. —J.