

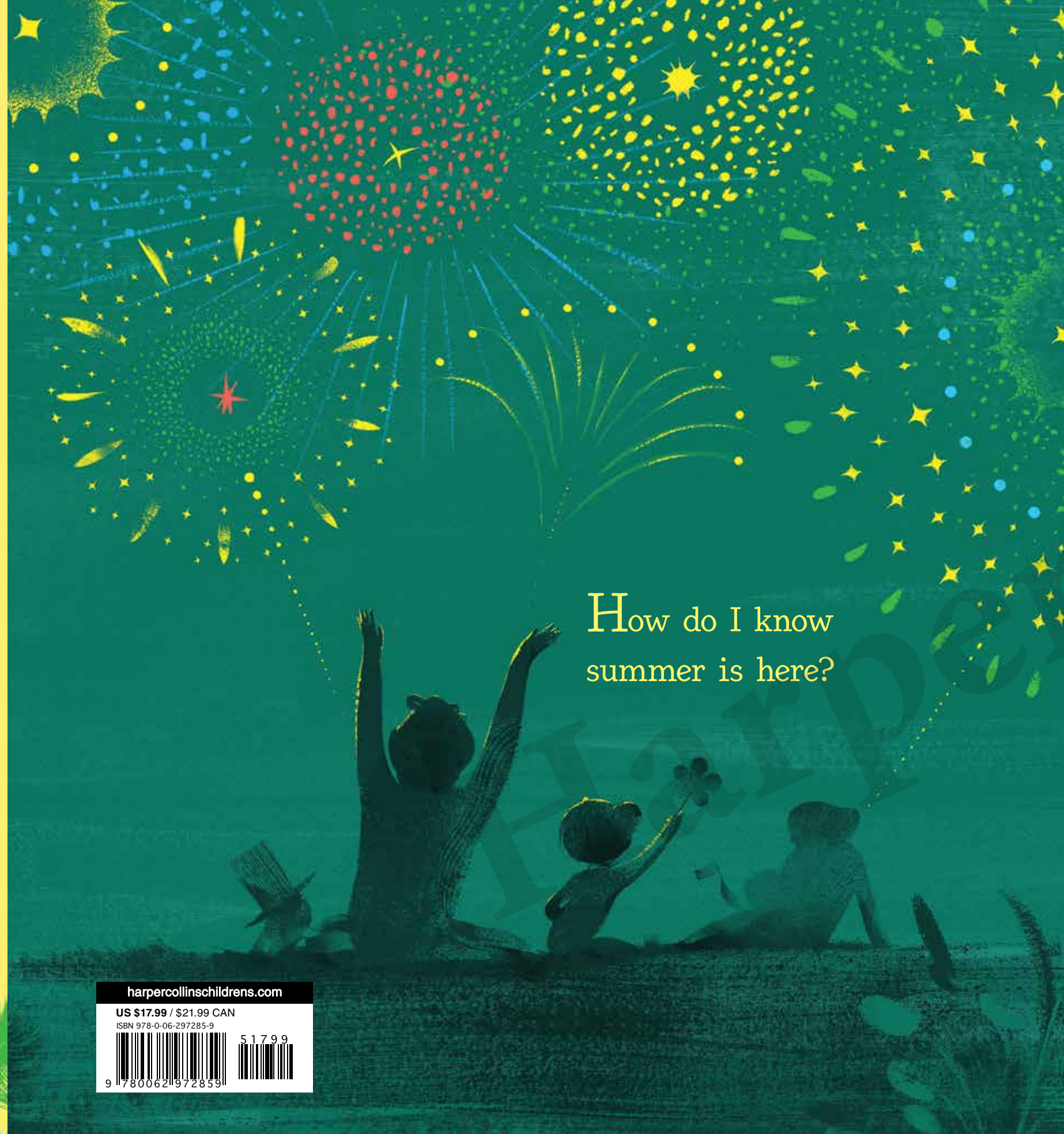


**MICHELLE STERLING** is an author, photographer, and speech-language pathologist. She lives in Southern California, where her summers are filled with reading, homemade ice cream, and long, golden hours at the park. *When Lola Visits* is her first picture book. Find Michelle online at [www.averyandaugustine.com](http://www.averyandaugustine.com).



**AARON ASIS** is a Filipino illustrator best known for his use of vivid colors and expressive brushstrokes. Having illustrated a couple of children's books, he also aspires to create his own book one day.

Jacket art 2021 © by Aaron Asis  
Jacket design by Rachel Zegar

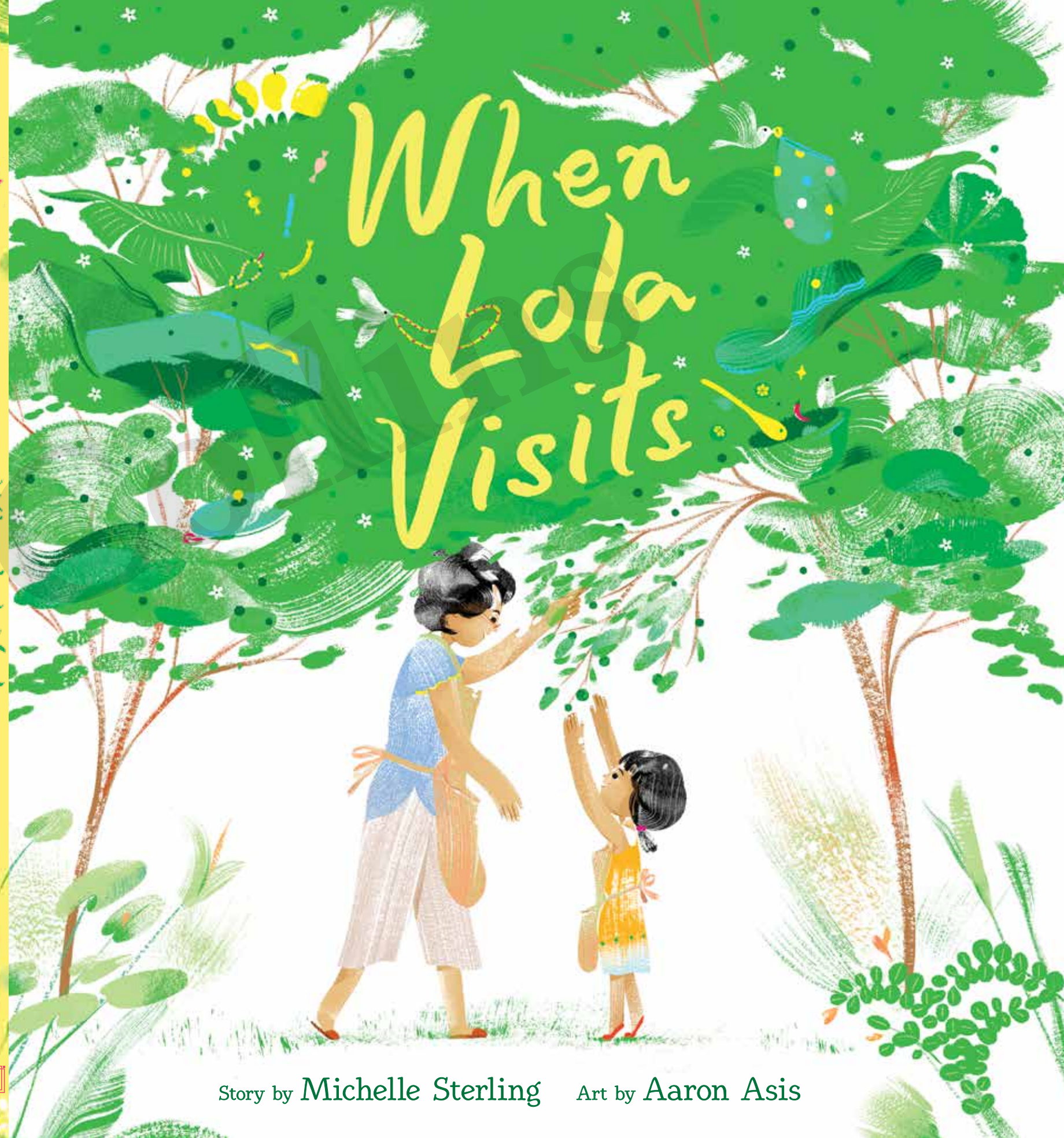


How do I know  
summer is here?



Sterling ✨ Asis

When Lola Visits



# When Lola Visits

Story by Michelle Sterling Art by Aaron Asis

What does summer  
mean to you?

For one young girl, summer is the season of no school, of days spent at the pool, and of picking golden limes off the trees. But summer doesn't *start* until her lola—her grandmother from the Philippines—comes for her annual visit.

Summer is special. For her lola fills the house with the aroma of mango jam, funny stories of baking mishaps, and her quiet, sweet singing in Tagalog. And in turn, her granddaughter brings Lola to the beach, to view fireworks at the park, and to catch fish at their lake.

When Lola visits, the whole family gathers to cook and eat and share in the happiness of another season spent together. Yet as summer transitions to fall, her lola must return home—but not without a surprise for her granddaughter to preserve their special summer a bit longer.







To all my family, past and present  
—M.S.

For my grandmothers, whose beautiful  
stories enriched my sense of wonder  
—A.A.

When Lola Visits

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First Edition

# When Lola Visits



Story by Michelle Sterling

Art by Aaron Asis

 KATHERINE TEGEN BOOKS  
An Imprint of HarperCollins Publishers





How do I know summer is here?



Summer smells like stone fruit ripening on the kitchen counter  
and jasmine on the bloom everywhere in the neighborhood.



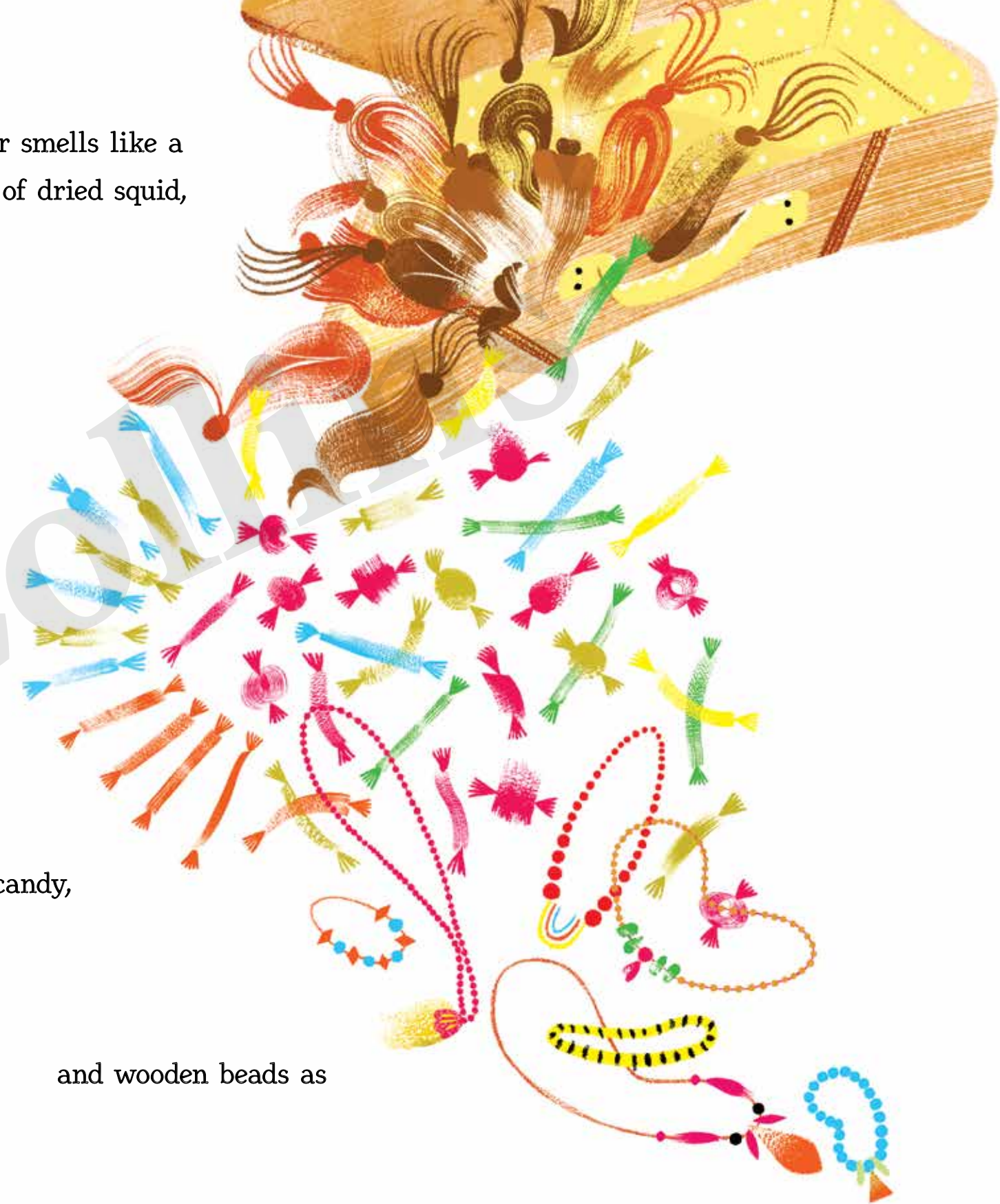
Like my baby brother finger-painting out on the deck,  
and like trouble brewing on a day of absolutely nothing to do . . .



It smells like mango jam simmering on the stove—  
the first thing my lola makes after she flies in for her summer stay.  
It smells like the sampaguita soap she uses:  
a scent both familiar and far away.



Summer smells like a  
tumble of dried squid,



milk candy,

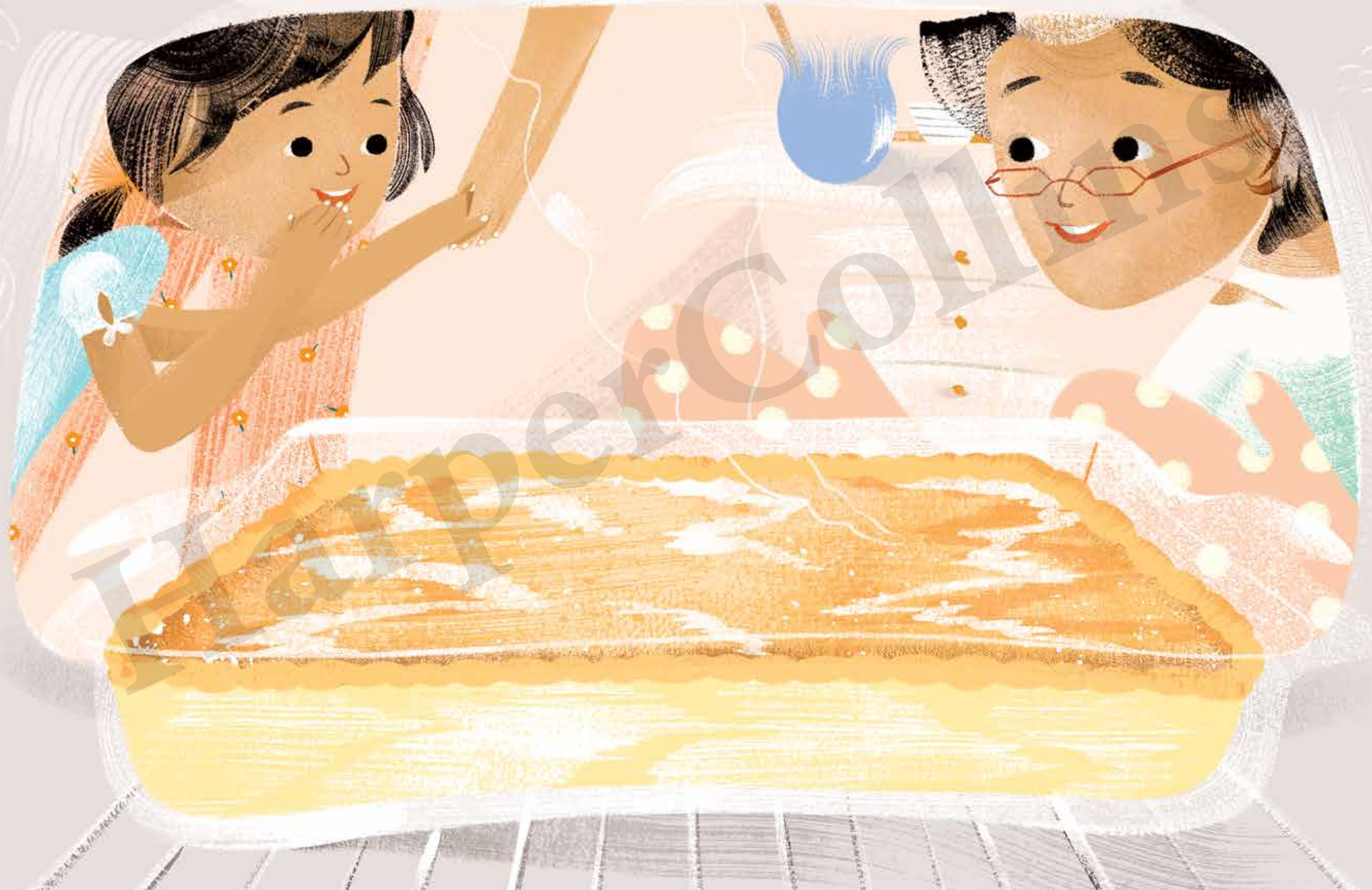
and wooden beads as

Lola unzips her old leather suitcase.

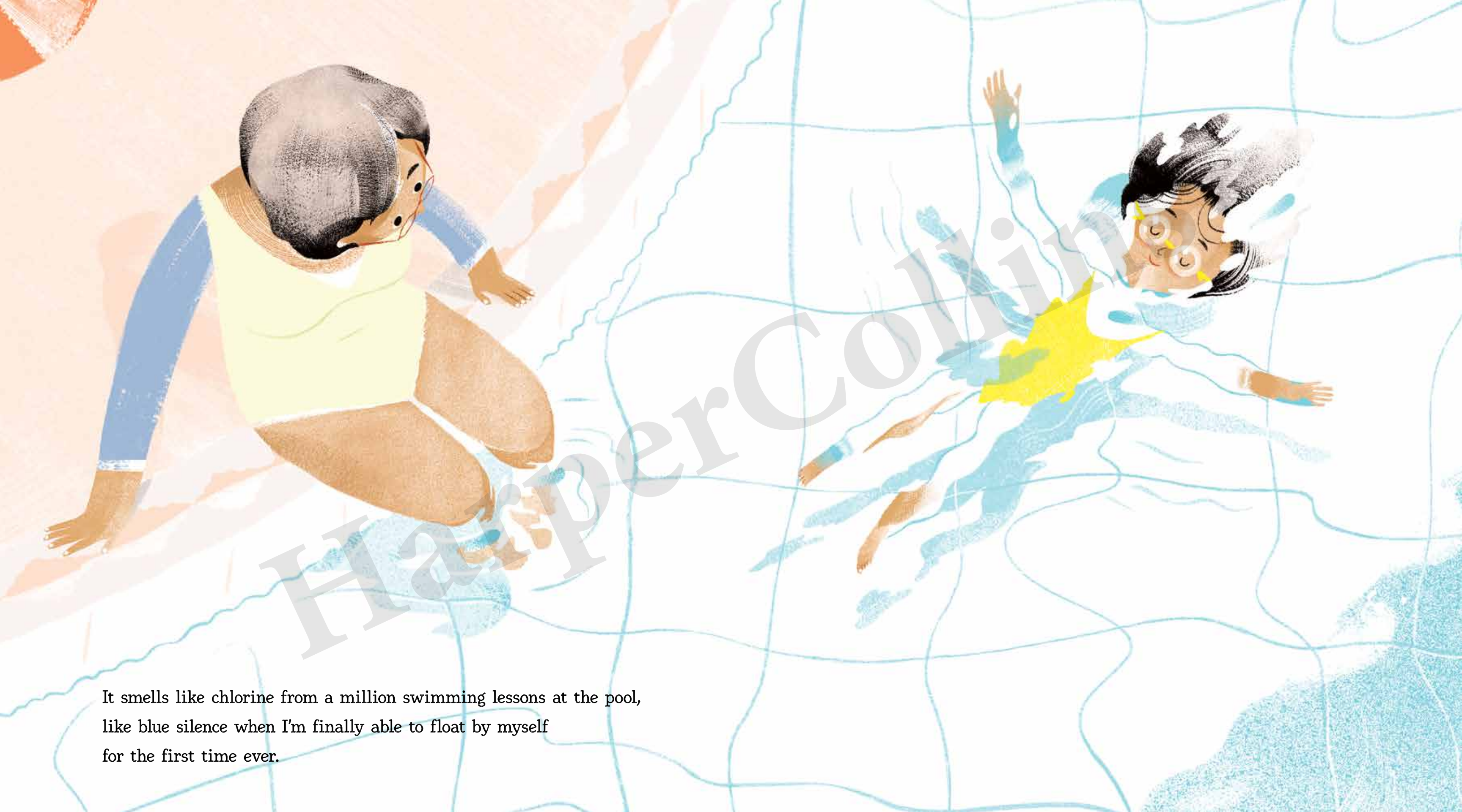


It smells like cassava cake covered with smooth and glossy custard,  
sliding out of the hot oven

as Lola tells us a story about the first time Mom made this cake  
and confused the sugar with salt.







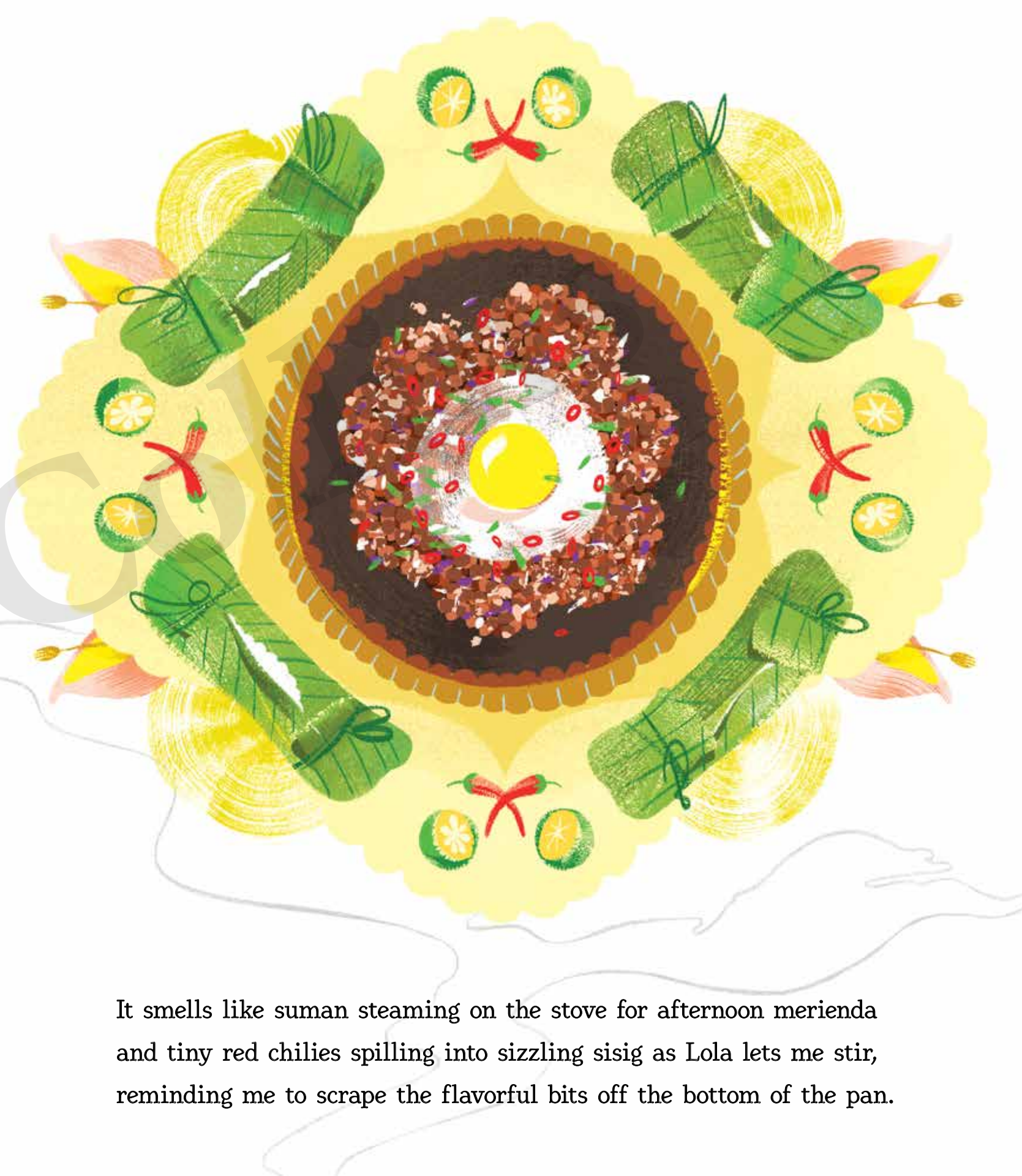
It smells like chlorine from a million swimming lessons at the pool,  
like blue silence when I'm finally able to float by myself  
for the first time ever.



Summer smells like a  
freshly opened can of tennis  
balls to bounce against the  
side of the house



and gooey sunscreen and  
salt-soaked swimsuits at  
the beach.



It smells like suman steaming on the stove for afternoon merienda  
and tiny red chilies spilling into sizzling sisig as Lola lets me stir,  
reminding me to scrape the flavorful bits off the bottom of the pan.





Summer smells  
like standing under  
crisscrosses of tree  
branches with an apron  
full of small golden limes.

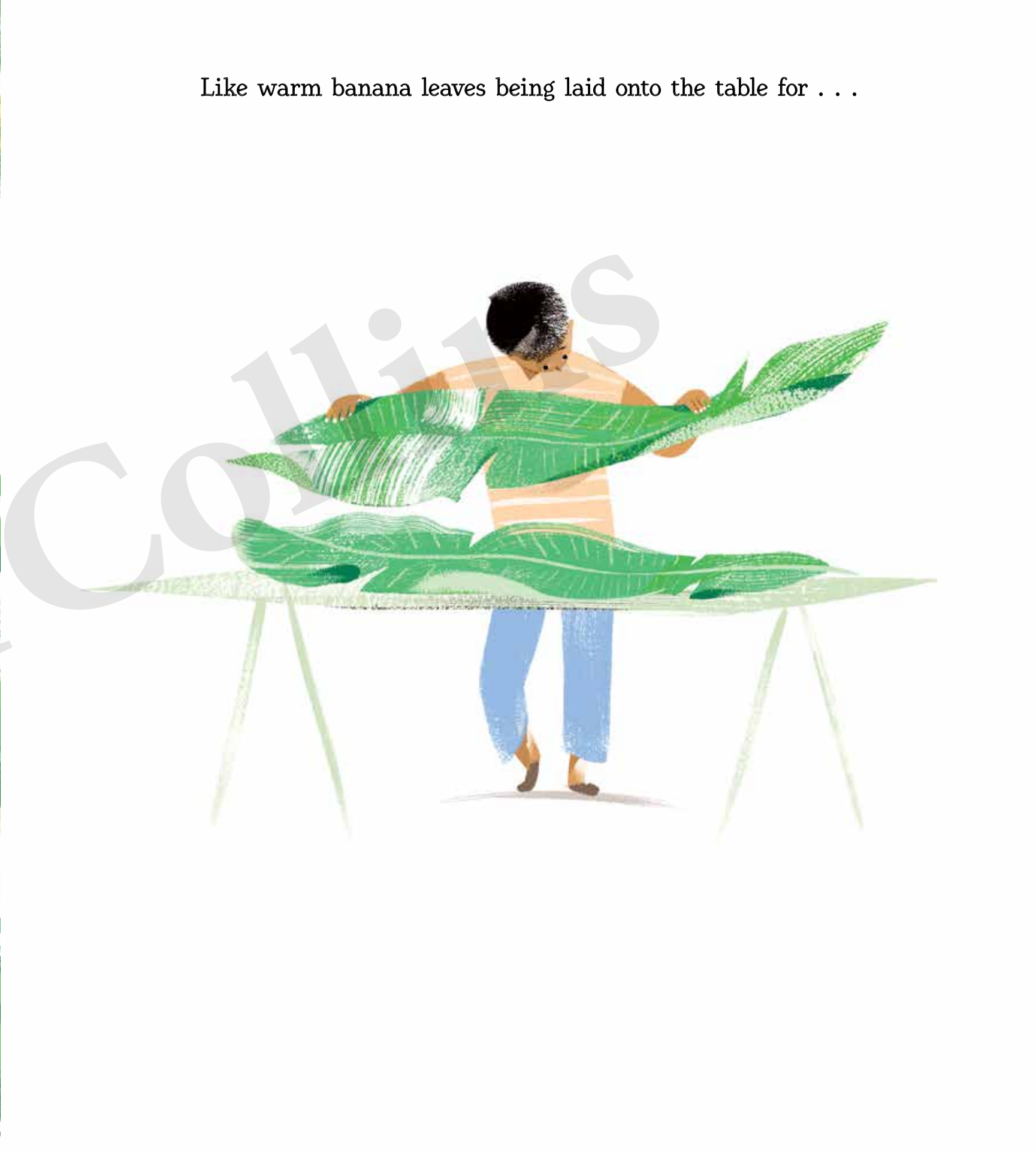
Like kalamansi pie  
and fireworks on the  
Fourth of July.



It smells like rolling hundreds of lumpia and mixing together pinches of garlic and sharp vinegar.



Like warm banana leaves being laid onto the table for . . .





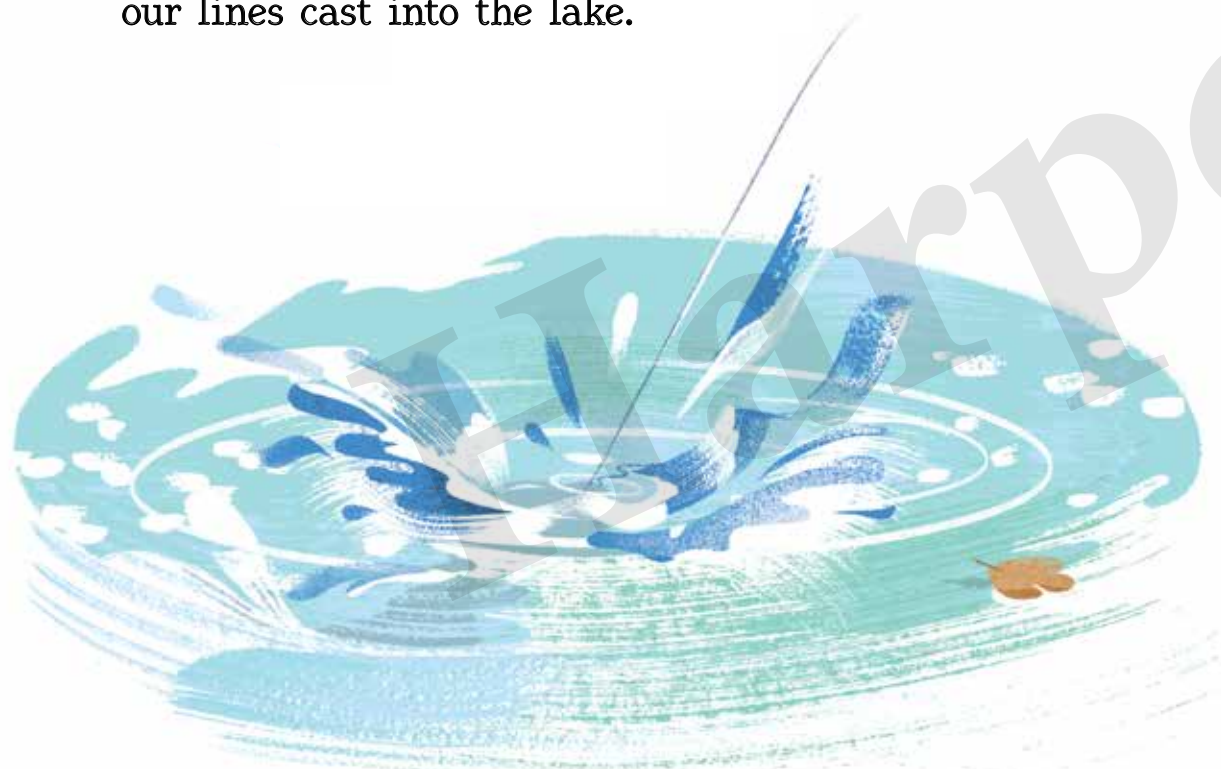
Kamayan.



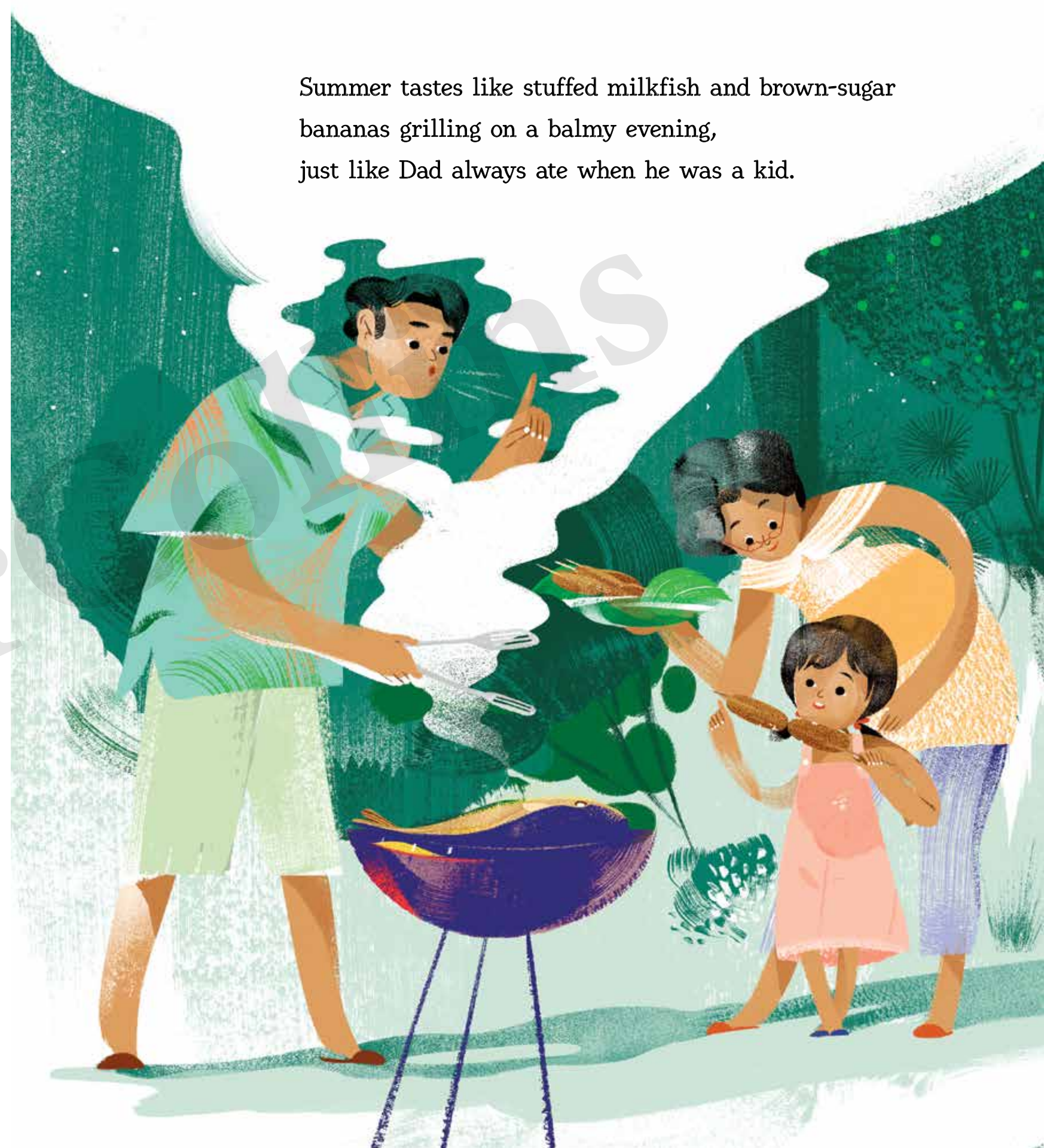




Summer smells like the earliest hours of morning,  
our lines cast into the lake.



Smells like we just caught dinner!



Summer tastes like stuffed milkfish and brown-sugar  
bananas grilling on a balmy evening,  
just like Dad always ate when he was a kid.



It smells like an unexpected,  
warm,  
sticky  
summer rain



and getting drenched while saying goodbye to Lola at the airport.



Our house is a little grayer without her soft, sweet  
singing in Tagalog and Ilocano.  
And the bitter melon tastes extra bitter in  
tonight's dinner—not like how Lola makes it at all.





It feels like chilly bits of evening blowing  
through the kalamansi trees.  
Leaves are starting to pile up in the spot where  
Lola used to sit next to me.





Summer smells like a letter to Lola  
sealed in a mint-flavored envelope,  
with bubblegum-scented ink,



wishing that I had a bowl of her arroz caldo to settle my  
butterflying stomach.



Summer feels like the last golden hour of the  
day drifting into an indigo night.



And it smells like melting cherry ice cream cones  
as we race our scooters around the block one last time . . .





Until finally it smells like freshly sharpened pencils,  
a stiff new backpack,  
and the last sweet bits of summer—  
in Lola's mango jam.



