

Singing Sisters

A Story of Humility



Katherena Vermette
Irene Kuziwi

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Singing Sisters

A Story of Humility

the Seven
Teachings Stories

Katherena Vermette

Illustrated by Irene Kuziwi


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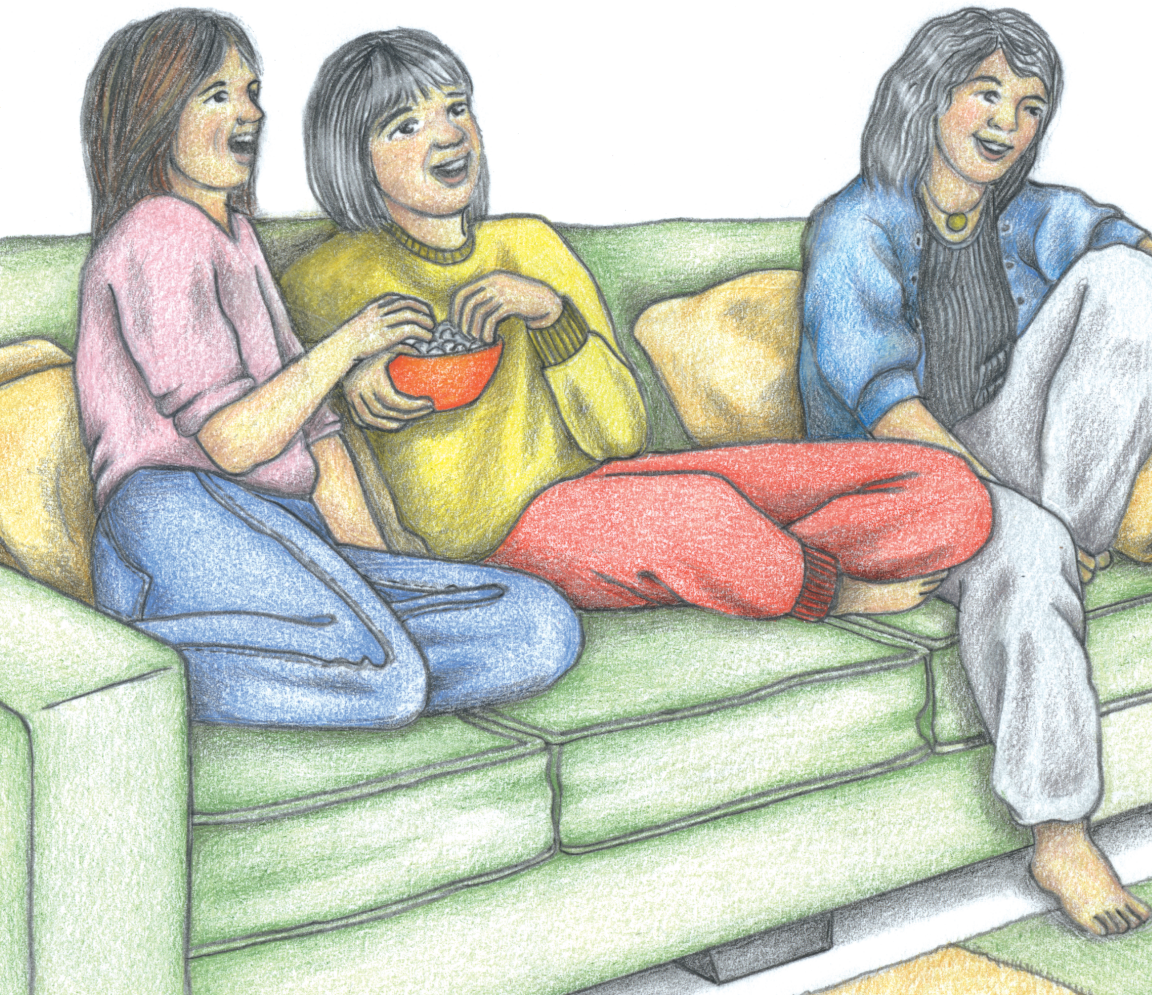
Ma'iingan is a very good singer.

She can sing high.

She can sing low.

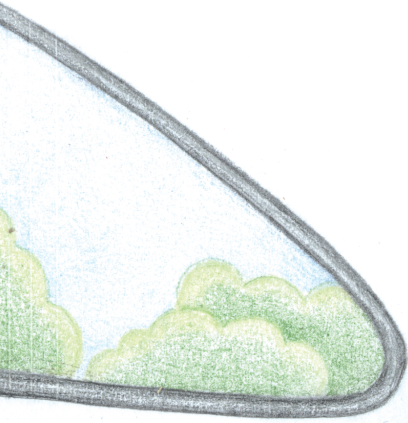


She can sing in the car.
She can sing to her aunties.
They love to hear her sing.
They tell her she is
amazing!





Ma'iingan's little sister
wants to sing, too.



She tries to sing high. She tries to sing low.
She tries to sing in the car.





Ma'iingan is not happy.
She doesn't want her sister to sing, too.



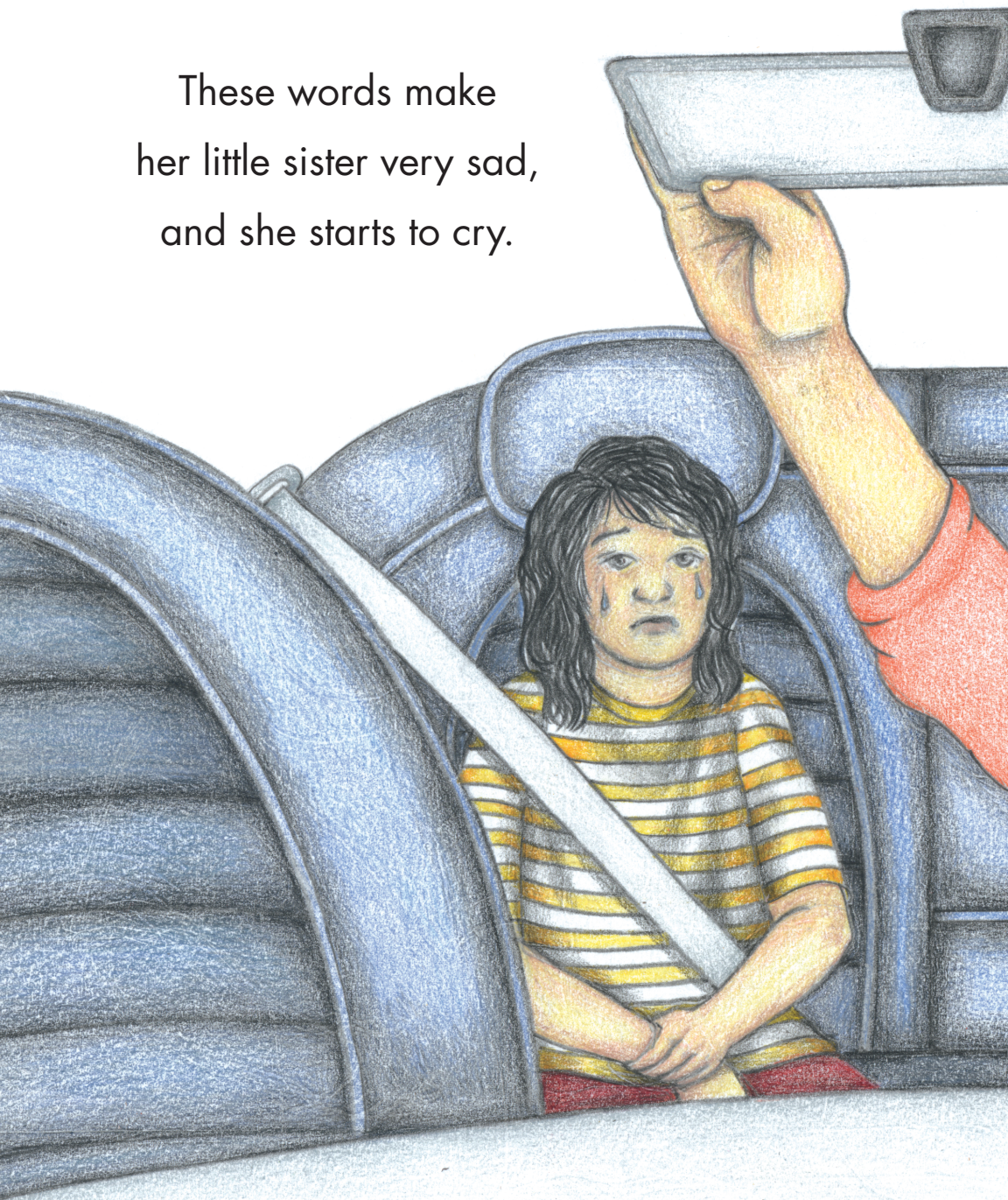
She tells her sister,
"You can't sing like me.
You can't sing high."



You can't sing low.
You shouldn't sing in the car.
You shouldn't sing to our aunties."



These words make
her little sister very sad,
and she starts to cry.





Pronunciation of Anishnaabemowin words

Short Vowels: *i* as in *pit*, *o* as in *book*, *a* as in *cup*, *e* as in *bed*

Long Vowels: *ii* as in *peek*, *oo* is between *soup* and *soap*,
aa as in “open up and say *ahhhh*”

g, *b*, *j*, *d*, *h* are softer than their English equivalents; *g* sounds very much like *k* and sometimes *k*, *p*, *t* are aspirated, as if an *h* was in front of them.

m, *n*, *y*, *h*, *w* are very similar in sound to their English equivalents.

Apostrophes are used to separate vowels (with distinct sound for each).

Acknowledgments

My sincere thanks to those who helped review the content of these books: Ruth Norton, Ko'ona Cochrane, and Mary Courchene. Special thanks for all the language guidance from the incomparable Patricia Ningewance and her book *Talking Gookom's Language* (pronunciation guide, above, used with permission from that publication).

I would also like to acknowledge Little Red Spirit Aboriginal Head Start program and all my fabulous former workmates, parents, and students. Inspired by my young friends and the work I was privileged to do, these books are dedicated to my former students, as well as all my beautiful nieces and nephews.

— K.V.

I would like to thank Katherena for entrusting me with her stories. This has truly been an adventure and an experience in getting to know all the kids and helping them come to life. I would also like to thank Annalee and Cathie from HighWater Press for giving me this opportunity. I dedicate these stories to little JayJay.

— I.K.

Ma'iingan knows she is a very good singer.
Conflict erupts when her little sister wants
to sing just like her.



The Seven Teachings of the Anishinaabe—love, wisdom, humility, courage, respect, honesty, and truth—are revealed in these seven stories for children. Set in an urban landscape with

Indigenous children as the central characters, these stories about home and family will look familiar to all young readers.

Katherena Vermette is a Métis writer from Treaty 1 Territory, the heart of the Métis Nation, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. Her first book, *North End Love Songs* (The Muses Company) won the Governor General's Literary Award for Poetry. Her National Film Board documentary, *this river*, won the 2017 Canadian Screen Award for Best Short, and her novel, *The Break* (House of Anansi), won the 2017 Amazon.ca First Novel Award. She holds a Master of Fine Arts from the University of British Columbia, and lives in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Irene Kuziw has worked in galleries, museums, and schools. Her artwork has been featured in many shows. Irene now devotes her time to doing what she loves—drawing and exploring the abstraction of reality, whether it be the human face or the animal spirit. A graduate of the University of Manitoba School of Art, she lives in the Interlake region of Manitoba.