



Tine and the Faraway Mountain

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Level 4

*“I completely let go of fear. Fear of norms and fear of society.
I was neither afraid of failure, nor dying. I believed in my own strengths and nurtured
my natural talent. I improved my weaknesses. And above all, I always followed my heart”
—Tine Mena, mountaineer*





Today is a big day for Tine Mena.
At the age of 25, she has become the first woman
from Northeast India to climb Everest. At 8,848 metres, Everest is
the highest mountain in the world. It's as high as five thousand
men (who are six feet tall) standing on top of each other!

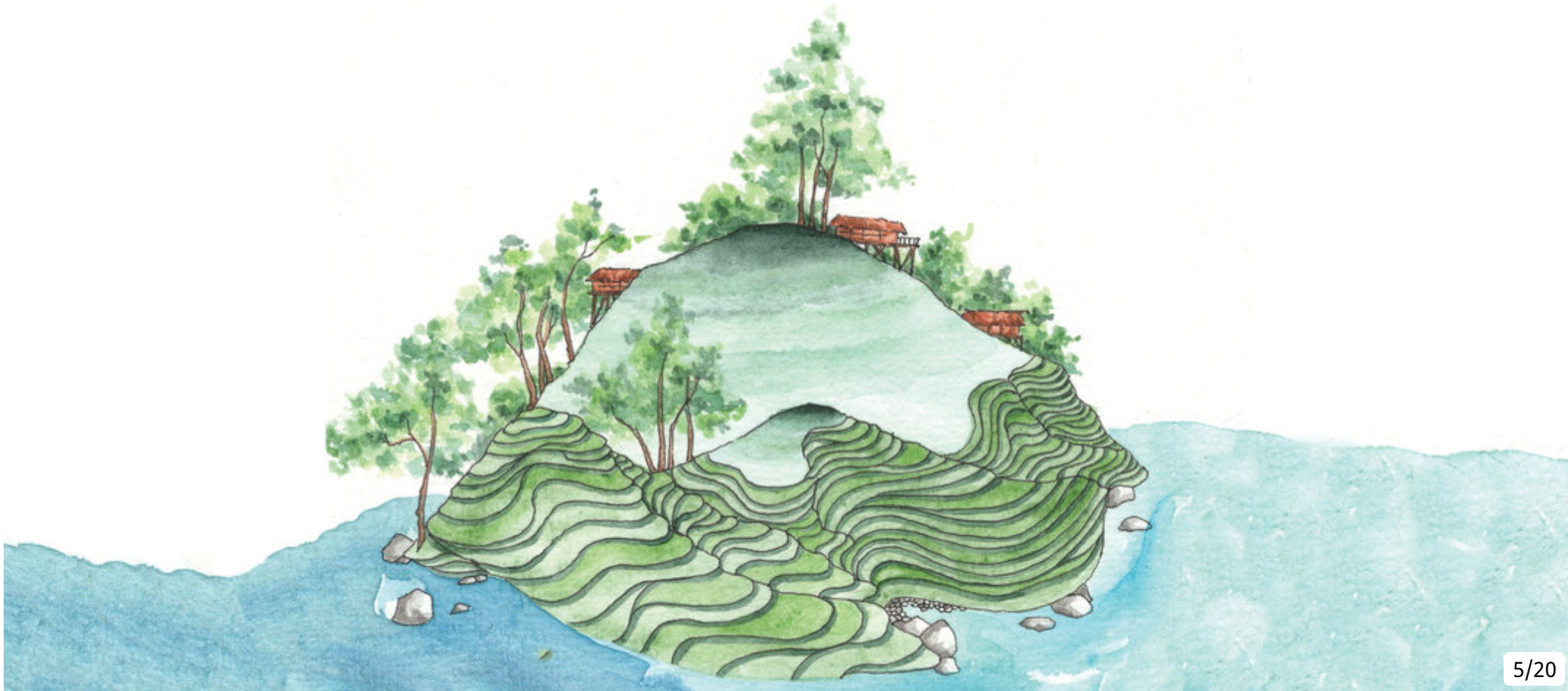
This is the story of Tine's journey,
a girl who loves to climb mountains.

Whooshoo! Whooshoo!

In the Mishmi hills of Arunachal Pradesh, Tine heard a wondrous call from the distant mountains. She was drawn to it, a sound only she could hear.

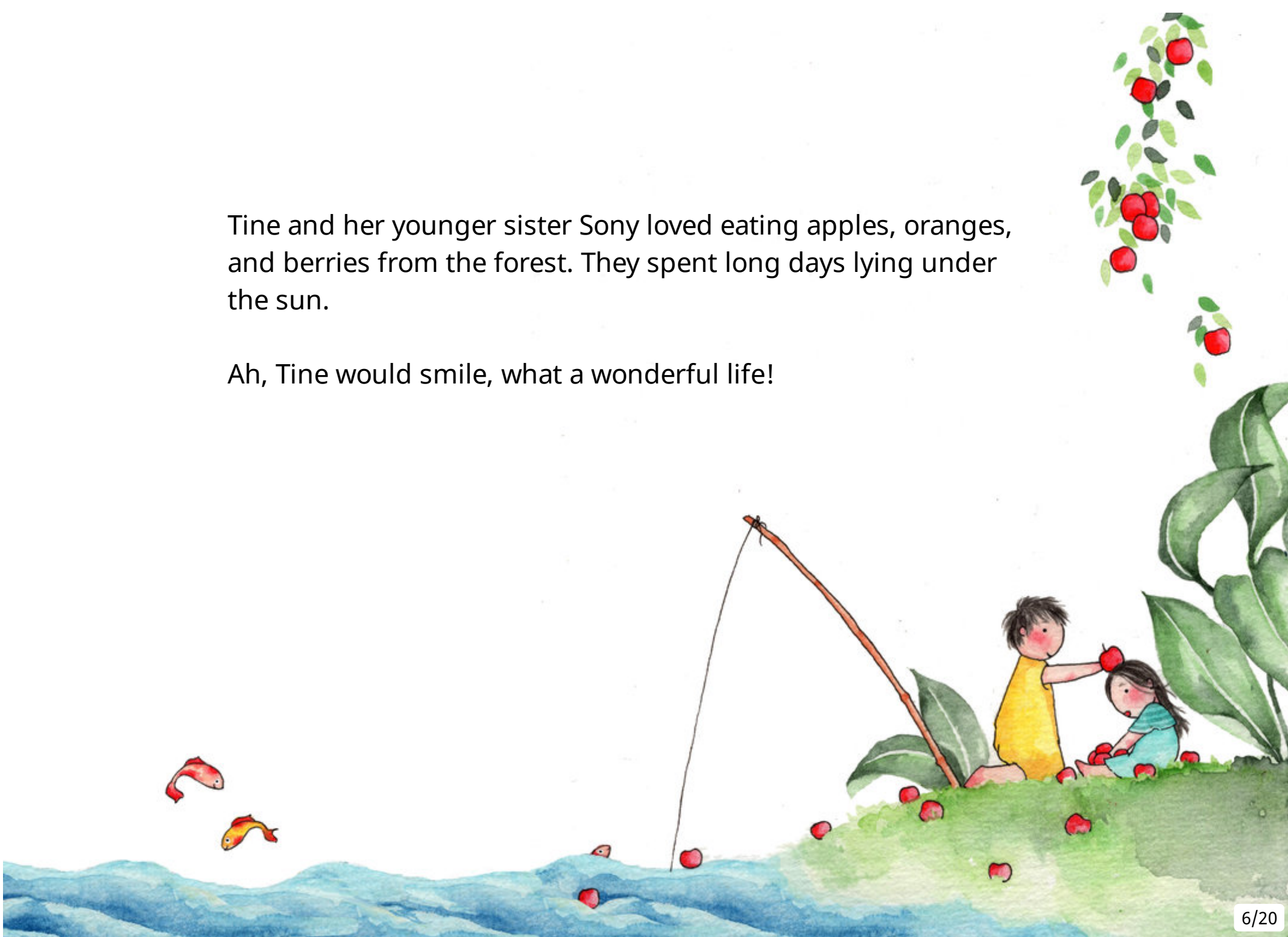


Tine loved to climb. She climbed trees, ran through the jungle and went fishing in the river. She was as fearless and strong as Naaya, her grandmother. If Tine fell down, Naaba, her father, would tell her to get up and carry on.



Tine and her younger sister Sony loved eating apples, oranges, and berries from the forest. They spent long days lying under the sun.

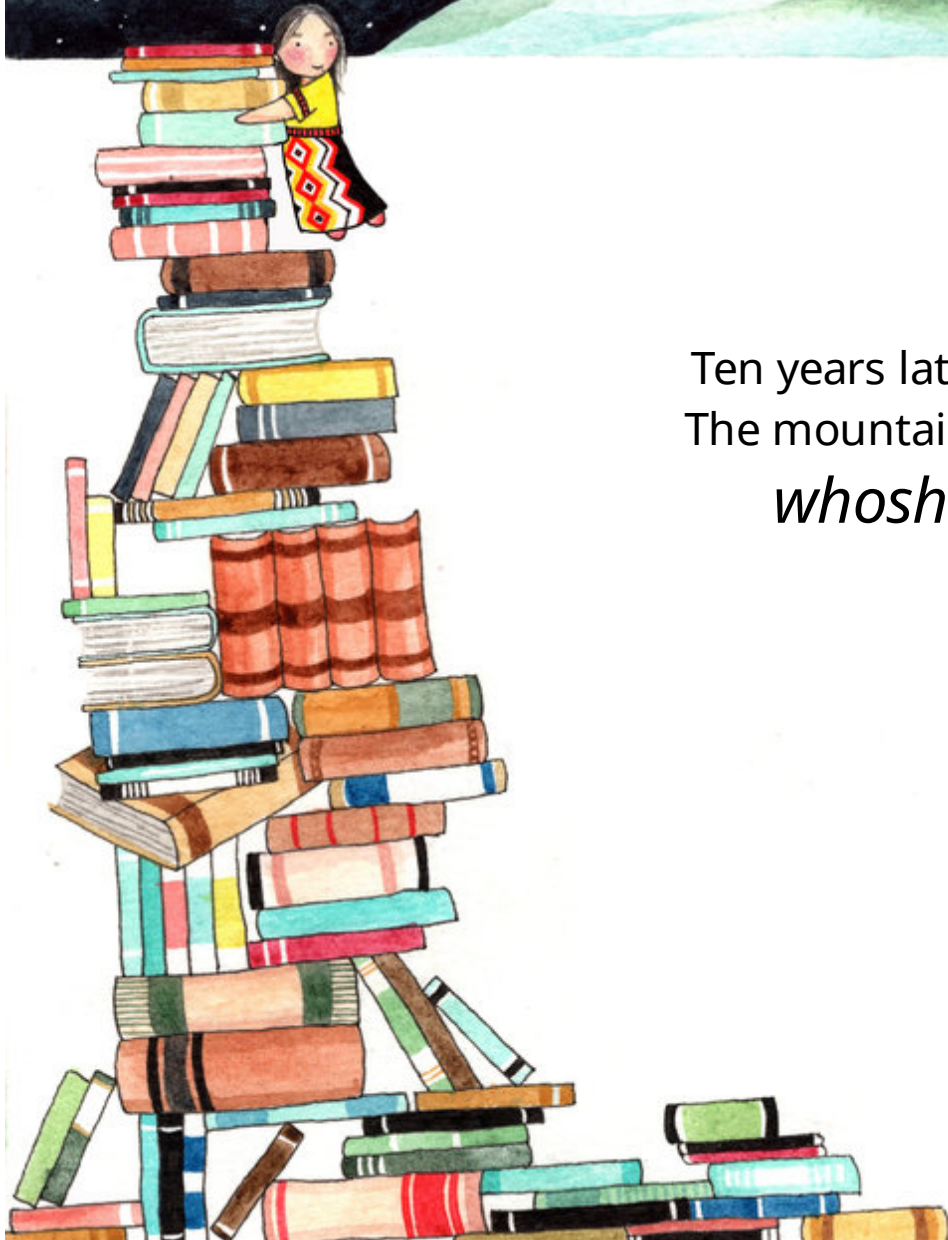
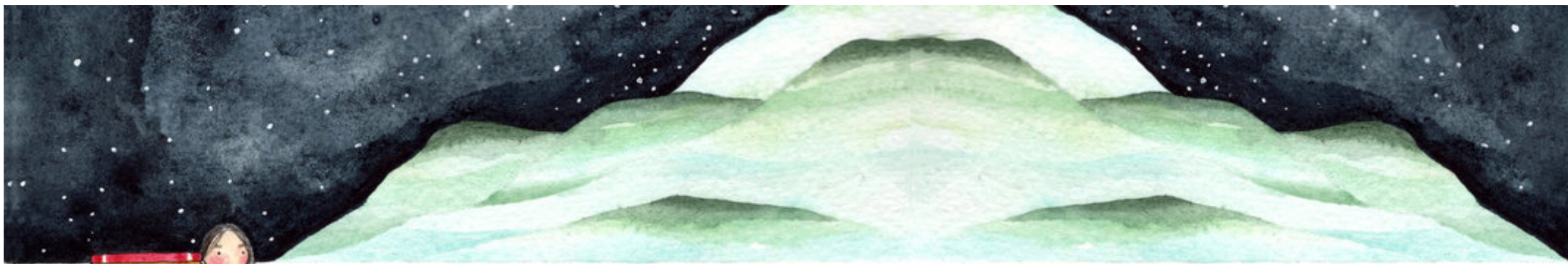
Ah, Tine would smile, what a wonderful life!





But one day, Tine's world turned upside down. There was no school in Echali, so her family moved to the closest big town, Roing.

There, the 'Whooshoo' became a faint whisper. All she wanted was to be in the mountains.



Ten years later, Tine finished school.
The mountain call was strong again -
whoshooo, whoshooo.

To be close to her mountains, Tine applied to be a porter for an army expedition. She could carry heavy loads and march for days, shoulder to shoulder with others. But there was one small problem—women were not allowed to be porters.

But did that stop her? Of course it didn't! Tine dressed as a boy and began working. She'd carry nearly 25 kilos every day. It took a week for everyone to realise that she was a girl disguised as a boy!





Tine was scolded for breaking the rules. But she could work as much as the boys and knew the route better than anyone. So the officers agreed to let her continue working. Her act would later help lift the ban on female porters.



Tine worked hard and became a coordinator, someone who plans mountain trips. That's when she met Dr. Romeo Meitei, the leader of an expedition. "I must say that you have all the makings of a naturally gifted climber," he said. "You have the build, the strength, and the determination. Now all you need, is technique."

Dr. Meitei became her mentor and Tine began her training.

But it was when Tine saw *The Race for Everest*, a film about the first climb of Mount Everest, that she heard about her dream mountain. The Whooshoo became a roar. Climbing Mount Everest became Tine's dream.



Finally, Tine left for Nepal. She was anxious, but determined. At the Everest base camp, it was cold and the air, thin. After her training, Tine began her climb with Cherring Sherpa*.

The climb was divided into four sections so climbers could rest at different camping points and continue to the top over a few days. By the time Tine and Cherring Sherpa reached the second camp, the weather had worsened.

**Sherpas are a Tibetan ethnic group living in high Himalayan regions who are known for their climbing skills.*



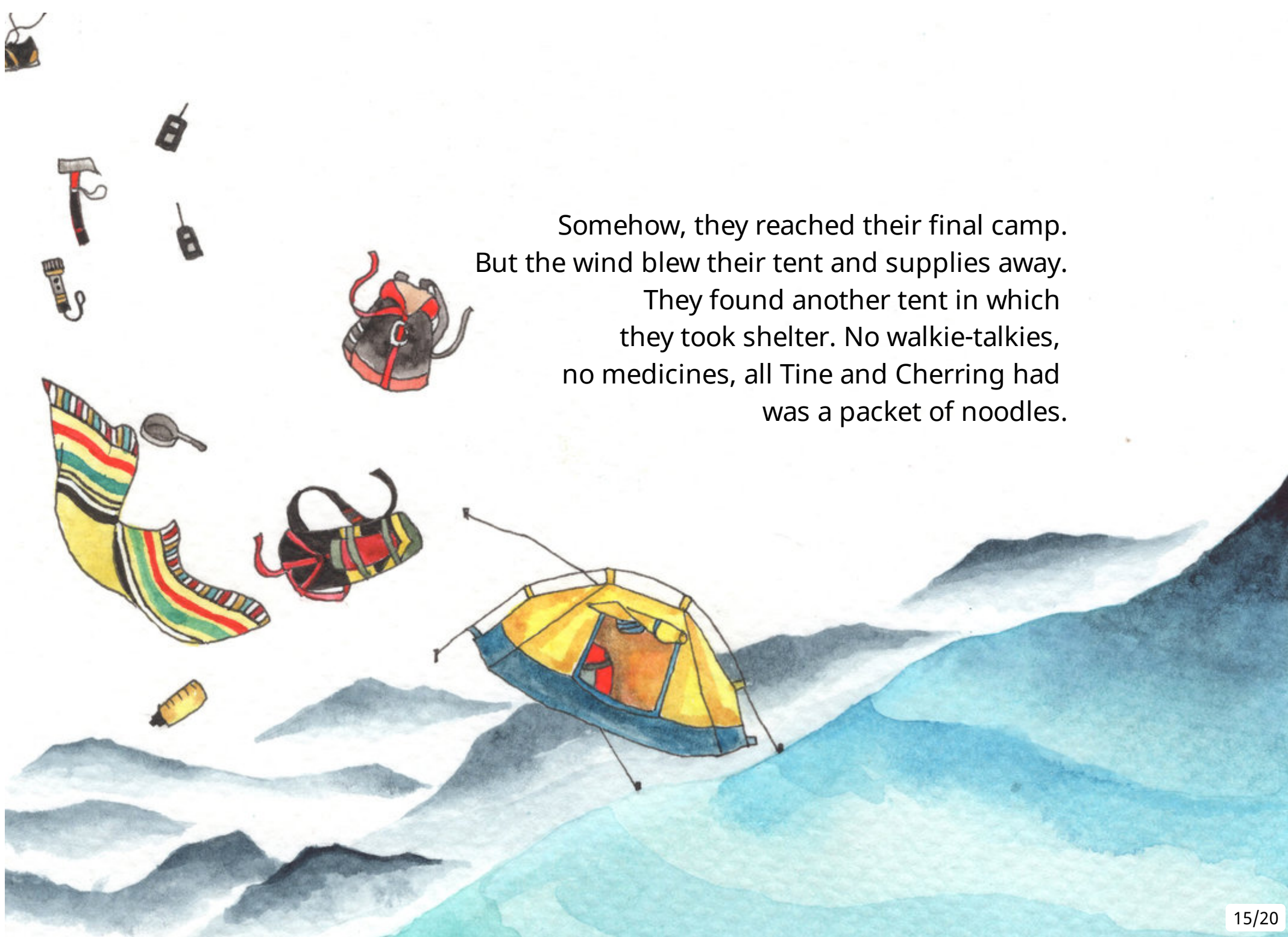


But the musical
Whooooshooing was
also growing louder and
hypnotic!

“Do you want to go ahead?”
Cherring asked.

“I don’t think I will get
another chance to do this,”
Tine said.

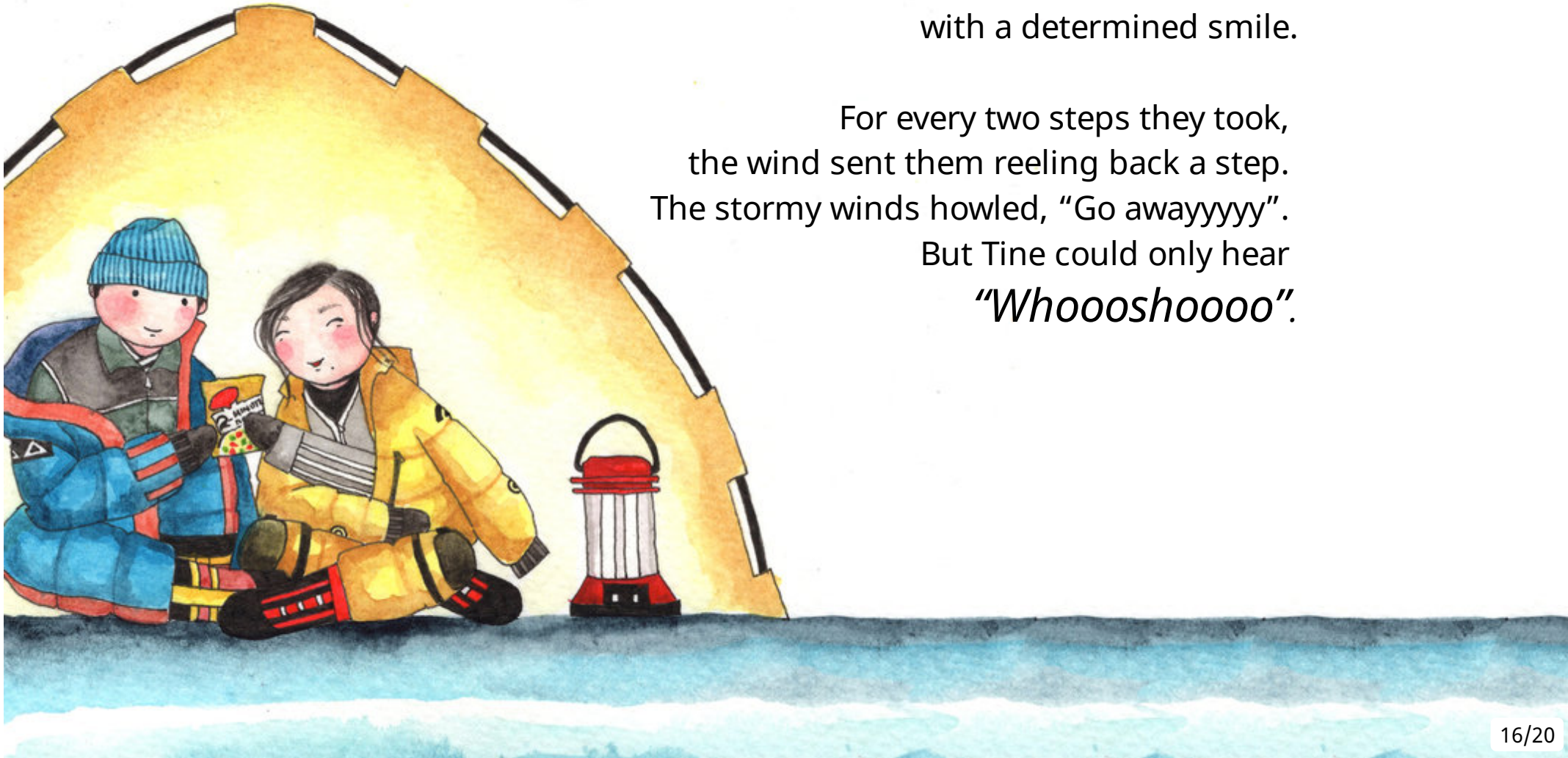
Somehow, they reached their final camp.
But the wind blew their tent and supplies away.
They found another tent in which
they took shelter. No walkie-talkies,
no medicines, all Tine and Cherring had
was a packet of noodles.



“Let’s share half of it,” Cherring suggested.

“If we make it alive, we will eat the other half,” Tine said with a determined smile.

For every two steps they took,
the wind sent them reeling back a step.
The stormy winds howled, “Go awayyyyyy”.
But Tine could only hear
“Whooshooooo”.

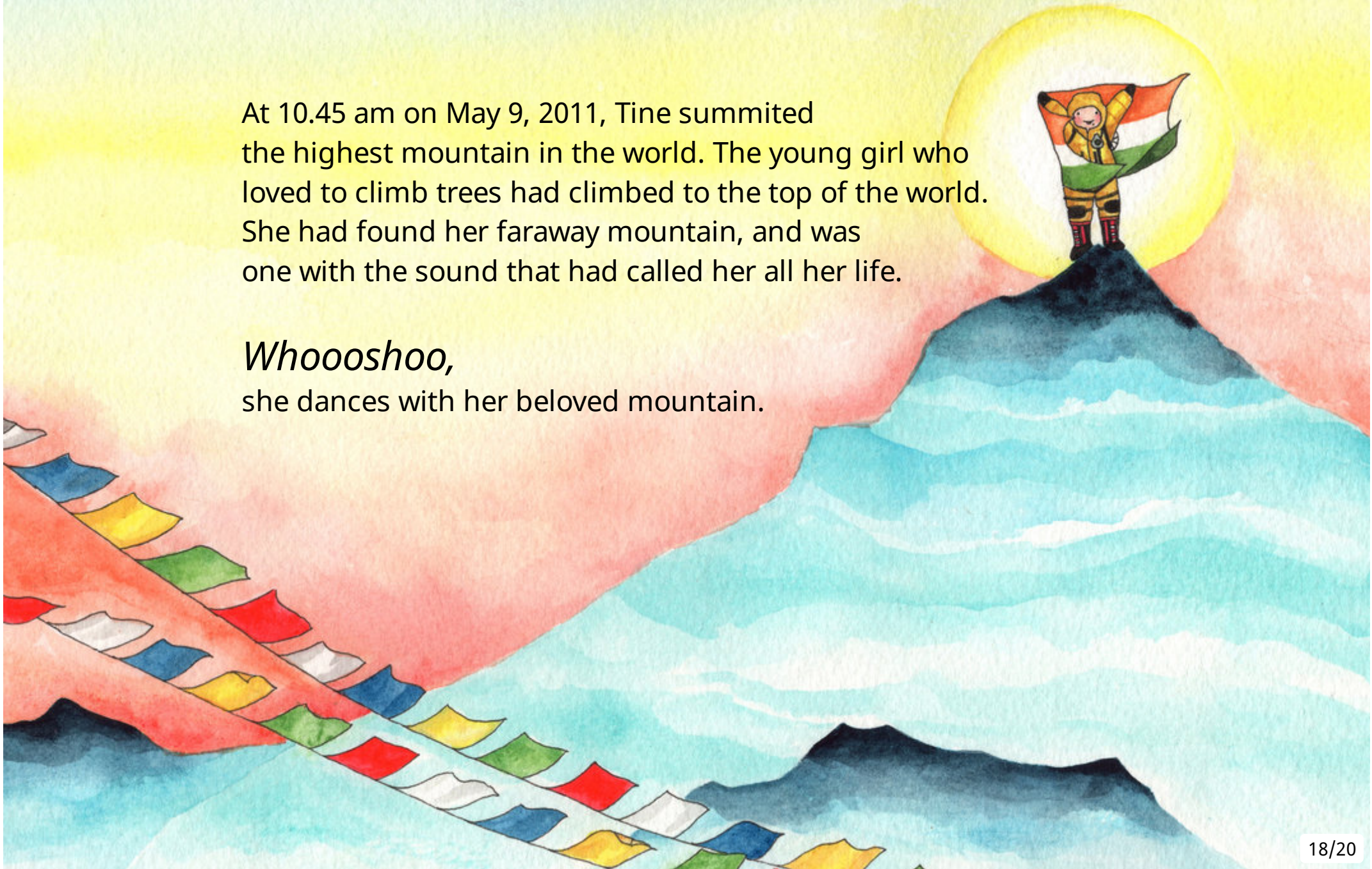




With new resolve, they fearlessly began the last push to reach the top.

At 10.45 am on May 9, 2011, Tine summited the highest mountain in the world. The young girl who loved to climb trees had climbed to the top of the world. She had found her faraway mountain, and was one with the sound that had called her all her life.

Whooshoo,
she dances with her beloved mountain.



Tine Mena, the mountaineer

Tine Mena is an adventurer who holds the distinction of being the first female Everest from Northeast India.

At Dr. Romeo Meitei's suggestion, Tine enrolled at the Manipur Mountaineering and Training Association in Imphal. She won a gold medal at the course and another for best student of the basic mountaineering course at the Himalayan Mountaineering Institute in Darjeeling.

Tine turned down a well-paid job as a mountaineering instructor to chase her Everest dream. She raised private sponsorship for her expedition.



Tine has inspired many youngsters in the northeast, starting with her cousin Ruby Lombo, a cycling athlete. Tine continues to be a role model for adventurous children.



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Tine and the Faraway Mountain

(English)

Whooshoo! Whooshoo! In the hilly town of Echali, Tine hears a whisper. It's the mountains calling to her. As she grows up, Tine dreams of getting closer to her beloved mountains. But can she reach the top of the highest mountain in the world? Based on the life of a mountaineer from Arunachal Pradesh, this book celebrates the power of dreams and believing in yourself.

This is a Level 4 book for children who can read fluently and with confidence.



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