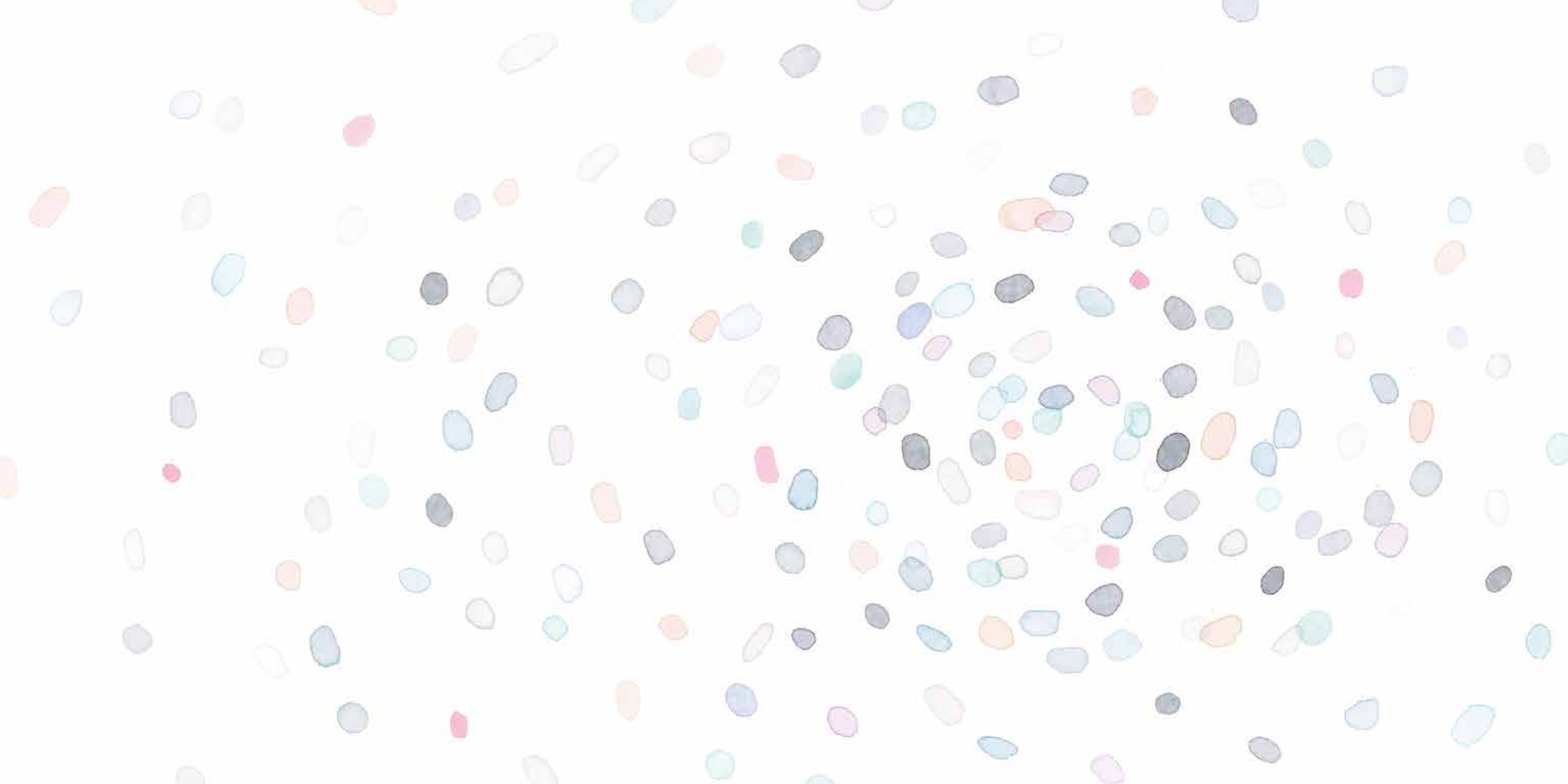


SNOWFLAKES

Helena Kraljič

Illustrated by Maja Lubi



Who am I? Who are we?

How often is it that our lives reflect the events in this story about Eve? Often? Too often? Or perhaps just often enough to learn something? Eva is a bright little girl: she observes her classmates and notices that one of them is great at drawing, another at singing, a third can run really fast, a fourth can do math with lightning speed. A fifth is as brave a fairy-tale hero, a sixth seems to know just everything... and then along comes number seven... These types of children big and small are truly special, because their great hearts are full of friendship, generosity and compassion. Eva, the hero of Snowflakes, belongs to this group. She looks without envy at her classmates. But she is perhaps just a little sad because she too wants to be the best at something! And there's no harm in that desire. All of us, young and old alike, want to develop, want to grow and grow up, to be happy – and, as the poet Tone Pavček once wrote, happiness comes “when you do things well and when you have someone to love.” That's why Eva, too, is also the best – at having a good heart, which is a gift and grace from the heavens, like any other gift or grace. And the most beautiful thing of all is that we are happy in different ways, that we come together and understand each other in our differentness. After reading this book, young and old alike will look with new eyes at snowflakes as they fall from the sky, at spring flowers growing in the fields, and when your eye falls upon the brightly-coloured covers of new books, you'll know why the lovely thought whispers itself in your ear: “Each one is different. Each one is so special.”

Dr. Igor Saksida

Helena Kraljič

SNOWFLAKES



Illustrated by Maja Lubi
Translated by Jason Blake



It's snowing,
it's snowing...

The children sprang from behind their school desks and ran to the window. Eva stared with rapture at the falling snowflakes:

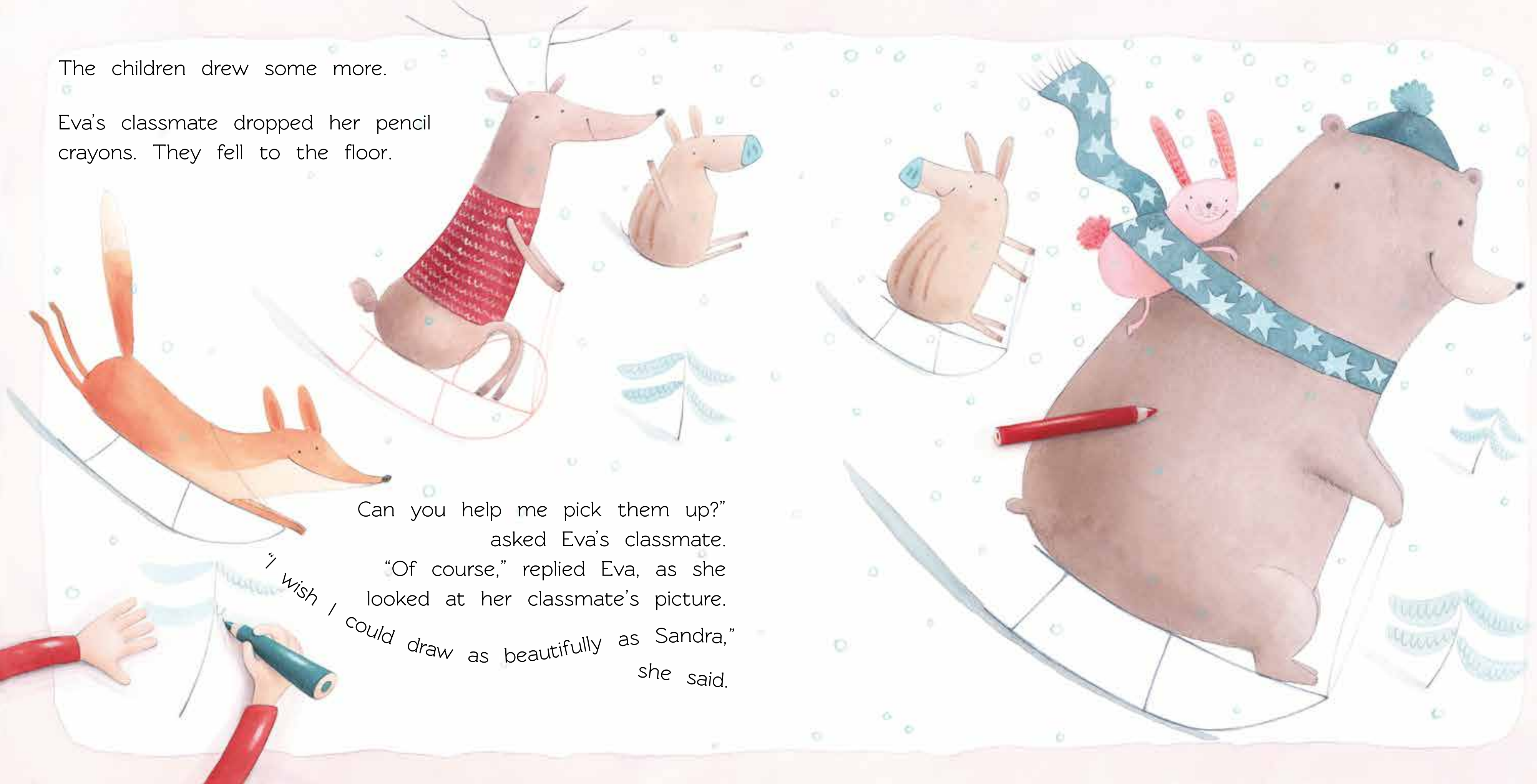
“Each one is different. Each one is so special.”

“Sit down, children,” warned the teacher after a moment or two. “You have to finish up your drawings so I can grade them.”



The children drew some more.

Eva's classmate dropped her pencil crayons. They fell to the floor.



Can you help me pick them up?"
asked Eva's classmate.

"Of course," replied Eva, as she
looked at her classmate's picture.


"I wish I could draw as beautifully as Sandra,"
she said.

In music class the children practised the song they were going to sing for New Year's.



“Eva,” asked Anna, “Can we change places, so I’m in the first row?”
“Of course,” replied Eva, then listened gleefully to Anna.

*“I wish I could sing as beautifully as Anna,”
she thought.*

A whimsical illustration of a snowy winter scene. In the foreground, a large, friendly-looking snow globe with a smiling face and a blue scarf is partially visible on the left. In the center, a young girl with long orange hair, wearing a red hooded coat and pink shoes, is running towards the right. To her right, another girl with long brown hair, wearing a blue hat, a purple scarf, and a light blue dress, is running. Further right, a boy wearing a blue hat, a brown coat, and a backpack is running. In the background, another snow globe with a smiling face and a blue scarf is visible. The sky is a soft yellow, suggesting a sunset or sunrise, and there are small white snowflakes falling. The overall atmosphere is warm and cheerful.

After school, all the pupils raced to the bus stop, where the bus was already waiting for them. But however hard she tried, Eva was always the last to get there.

“Can you lend me a handkerchief?” asked Lara.

“Of course,” replied Eva, then murmured to herself,

“I wish I could run as fast as Lara.”



When she got home, she knew she'd have to study for math class.

"I wish I was as good at math as Nick is," she thought to herself.



Evening had arrived.

It was still snowing. Once again Eva stared at the falling snowflakes that were melting on her window.

She drifted off to sleep.



She was on her skis at the top of a steep hill, but didn't dare to go down it. She heard the coaxing voice of her classmate Zoe saying, "Come on, Eva! There's nothing to it!"

"I wish I were as brave as Zoe," she said wishfully.

She woke up into a snowy morning.
Again her eyes were gazing at snowflakes.
She smiled and rushed off to school.
On the way, she met Sara.





“My daddy and I made a new birdhouse. We sprinkled a bunch of millet and other seeds, and along came a chickadee and nuthatch... Will you come with me to the store to get some nuts for the birds?”
“Of course,” replied Eva, thinking,

“I wish I knew as much about birds as Sara does.”

Just as school was ending Zoya popped into the classroom. "Soon I'll be back at school. I'm almost healthy. Could somebody please lend me their notes?" she asked her classmates. "Of course," replied Eva.

"Thanks! You're my best friend," said Zoya. She hugged Eva, then said to herself,

"I wish I were as good a friend as Eva is."

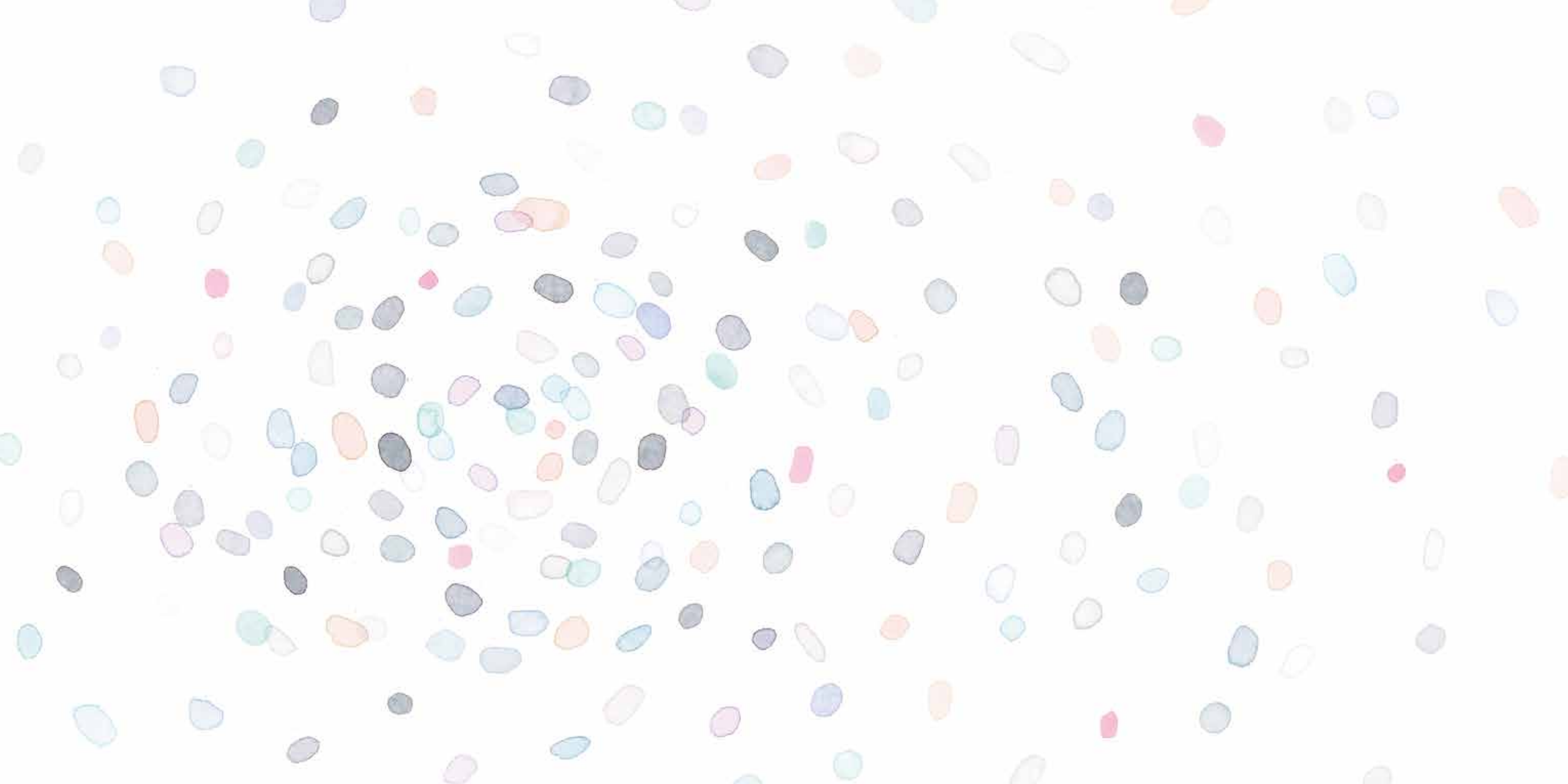
The friends stood there hugging each other in the middle of the classroom.



Eva was delighted. She looked towards the window. The snowflakes were still twinkling down to the ground.

“Each one is different. Each one is so special.”





Eva is a bright little girl: she observes her classmates and notices that one of them is great at drawing, another at singing, a third can run really fast, a fourth can do math with lightning speed. A fifth is as brave a fairy-tale hero, a sixth seems to know just everything... and then along comes number seven... These types of children big and small are truly special, because their great hearts are full of friendship, generosity and compassion. Eva, the hero of Snowflakes, belongs to this group.

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