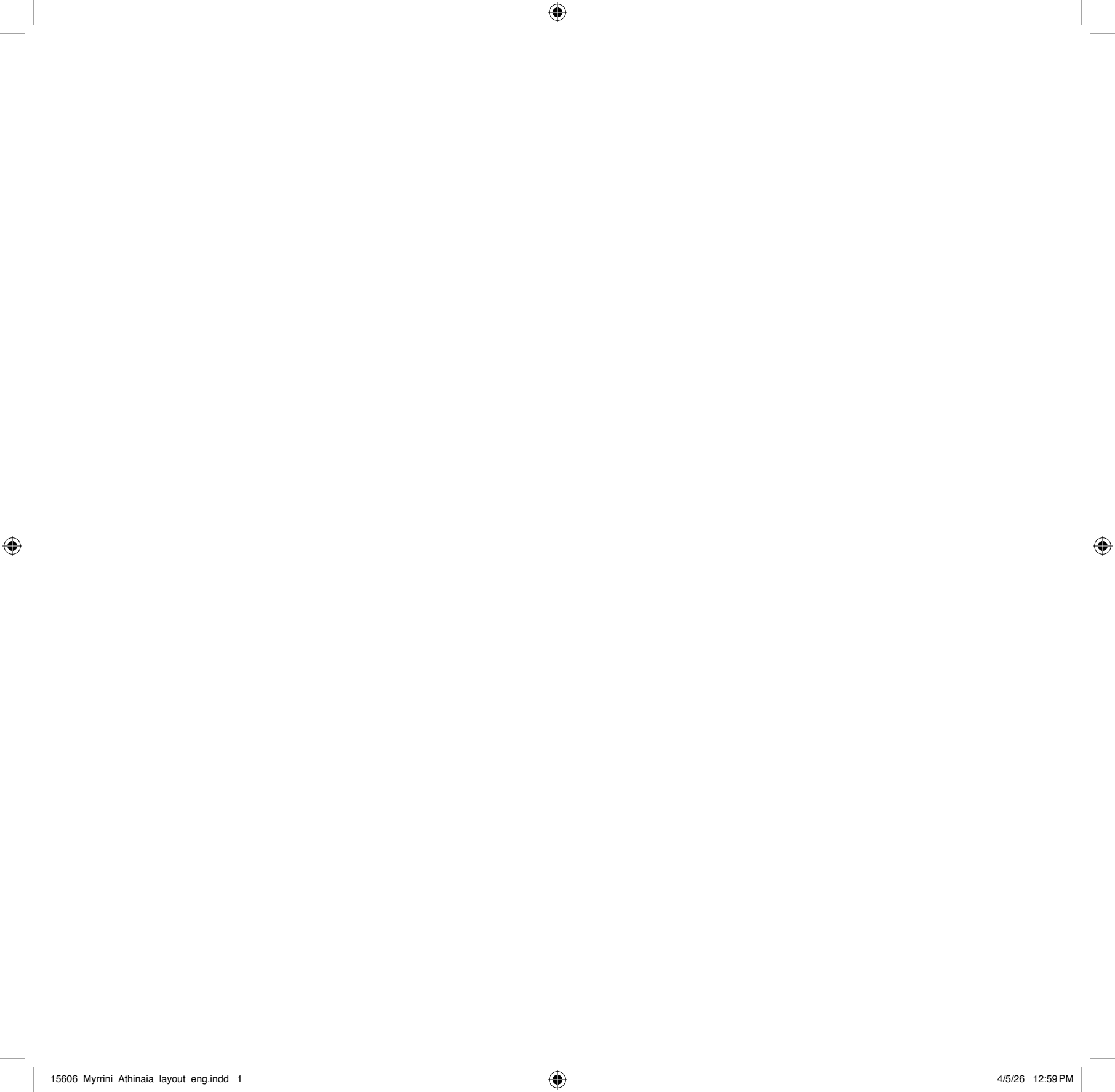








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Series: Friends from Ancient Times

Katerina Servi, *Myrrine, the Little Athenian, 432 BCE*

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KATERINA SERVI

Myrrine, the Little Athenian

432 BCE



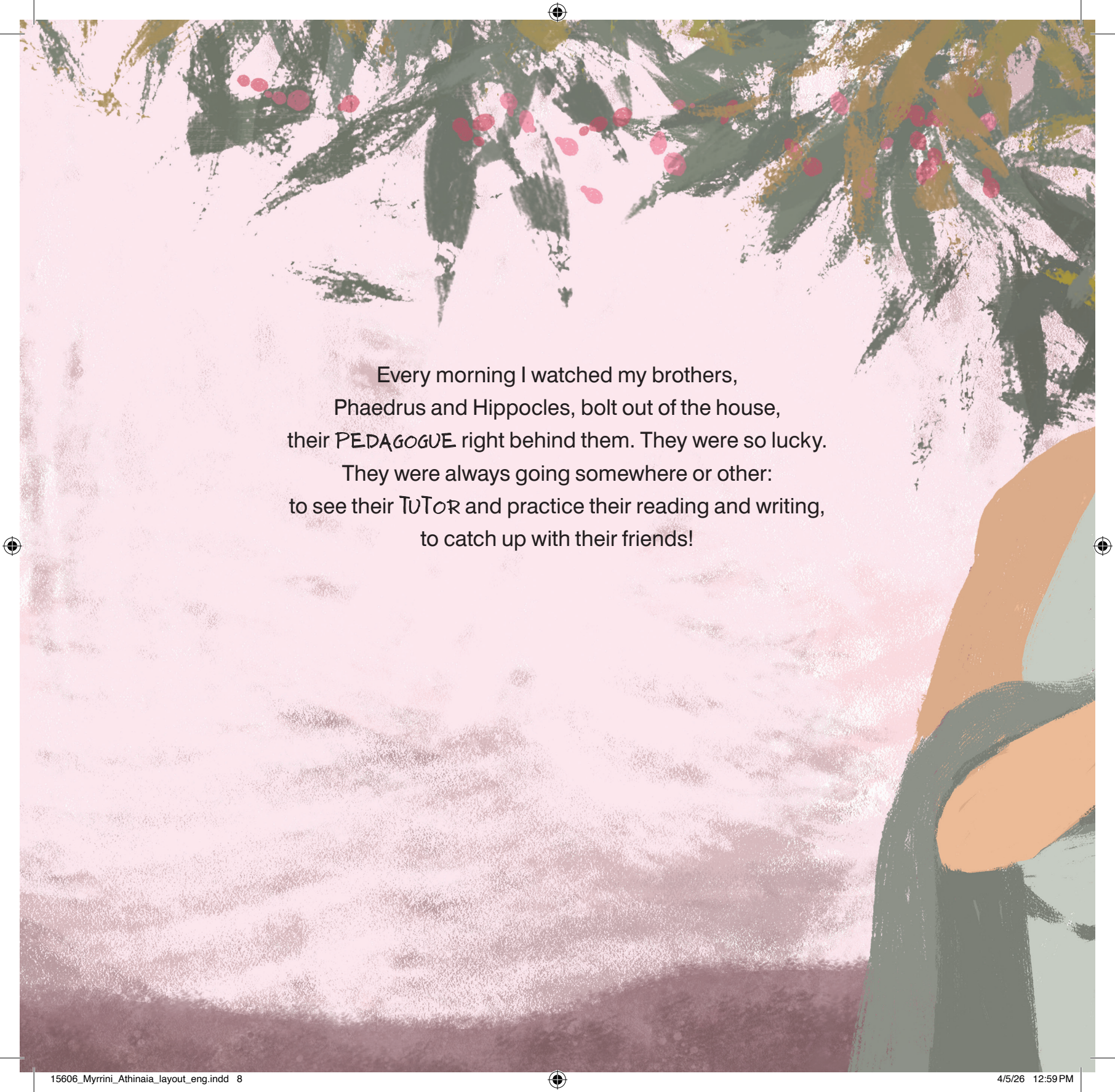
ILLUSTRATED BY
LELA STROUTSI



I used to watch
the whole world go
by from the safety
of my doorstep...



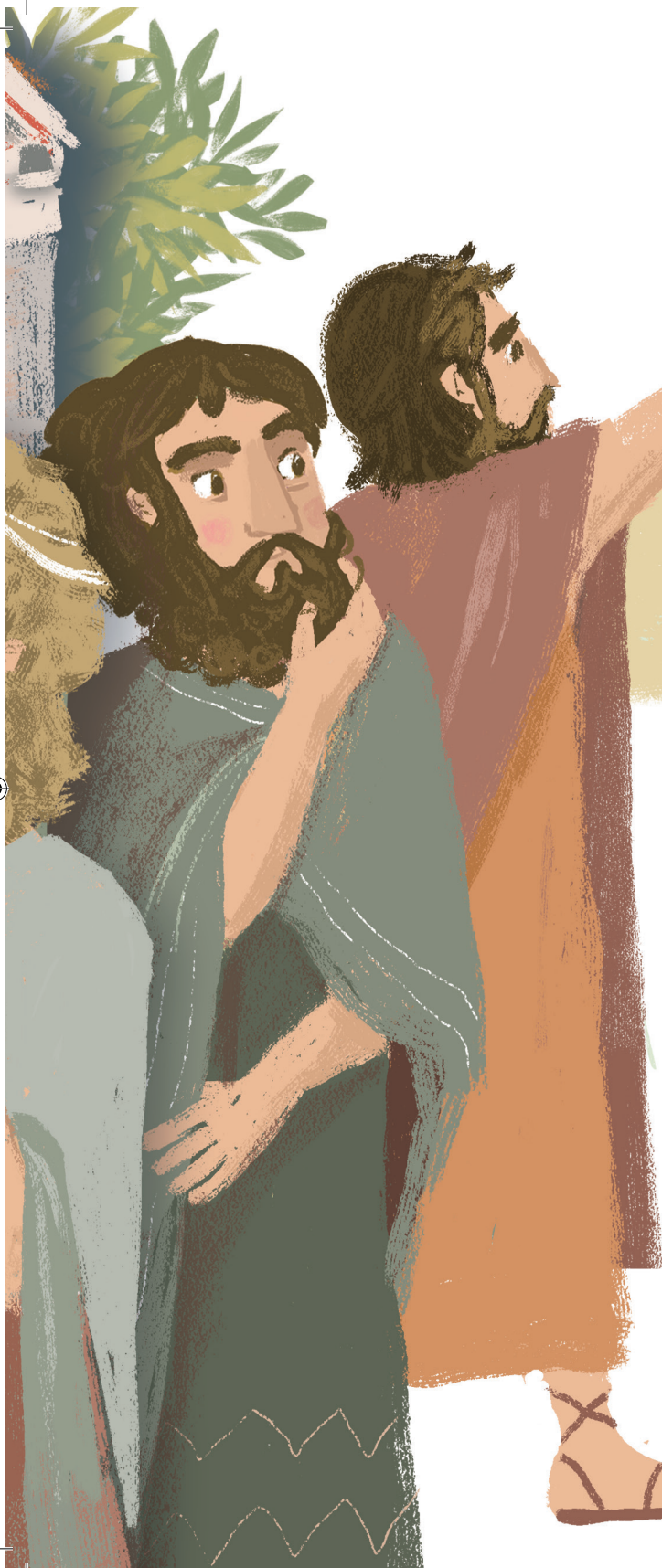




Every morning I watched my brothers,
Phaedrus and Hippocles, bolt out of the house,
their PEDAGOGUE right behind them. They were so lucky.
They were always going somewhere or other:
to see their TUTOR and practice their reading and writing,
to catch up with their friends!







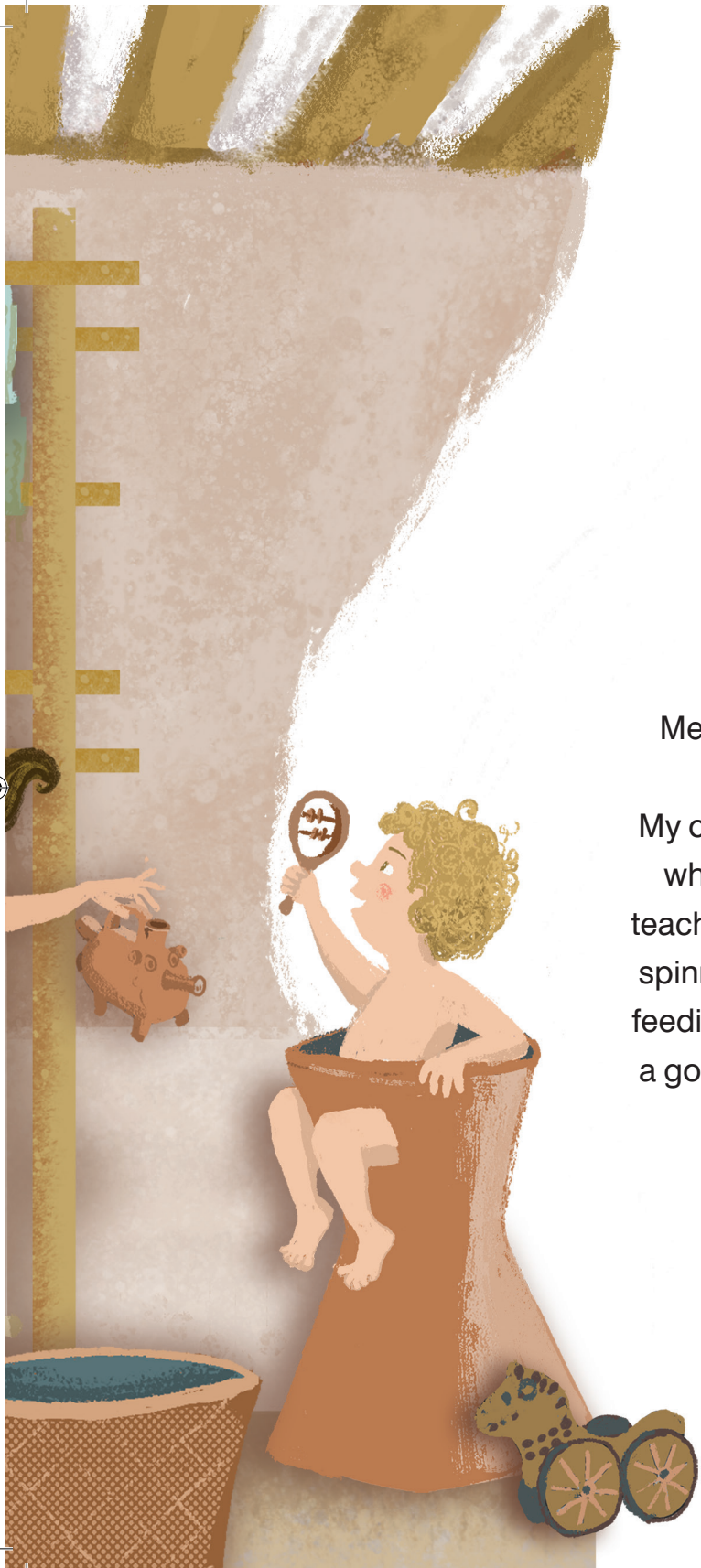
I watched my dad march off to the PNYX and the AGORA. He got to see his friends all the time, too! They strolled together through the STOAS of our city, talking about everything and anything that was going on in Athens. They VoTED, too, and were keen to learn the news of the day from their favorite source...
the barber shop!

I watched our SLAVES run out on errands.
Sikkinos might be at the AGORA looking for the
freshest fish, while SWEETY and CAVITY fetched
water from the FOUNTAIN and Syros brought home
some new KRATER from KERAMEIKOS that Dad
had ordered for a SYMPOSIUM. Funny, it used to be
that all the VESSELS had black painted figures,
but now they all have red.



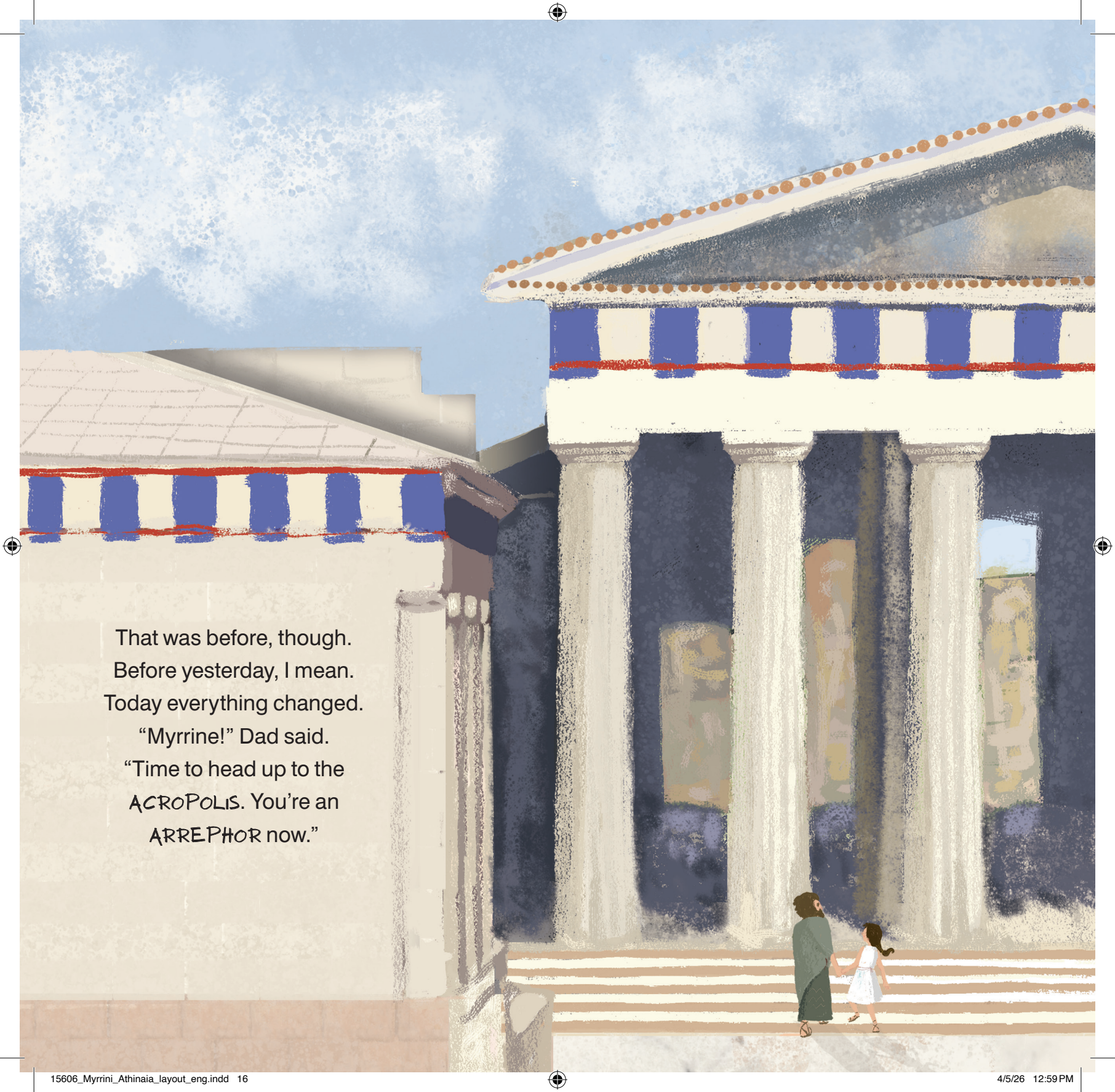






Meanwhile I stayed home
in the *GYNECONITIS*.
My only friend was my mom,
who was always trying to
teach me something or other:
spinning, weaving, watering,
feeding. Basically, everything
a good Athenian girl needed
to know!

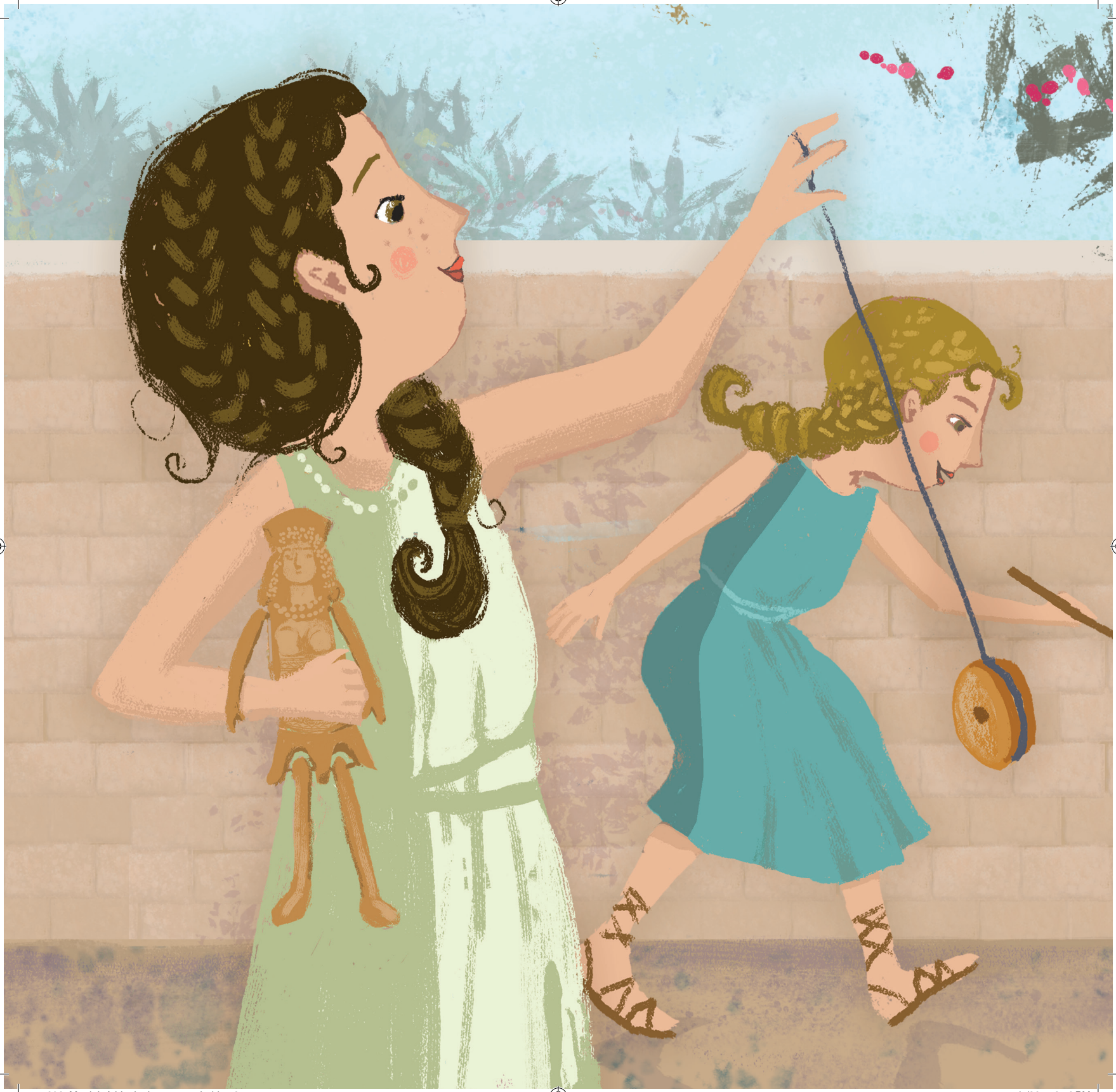


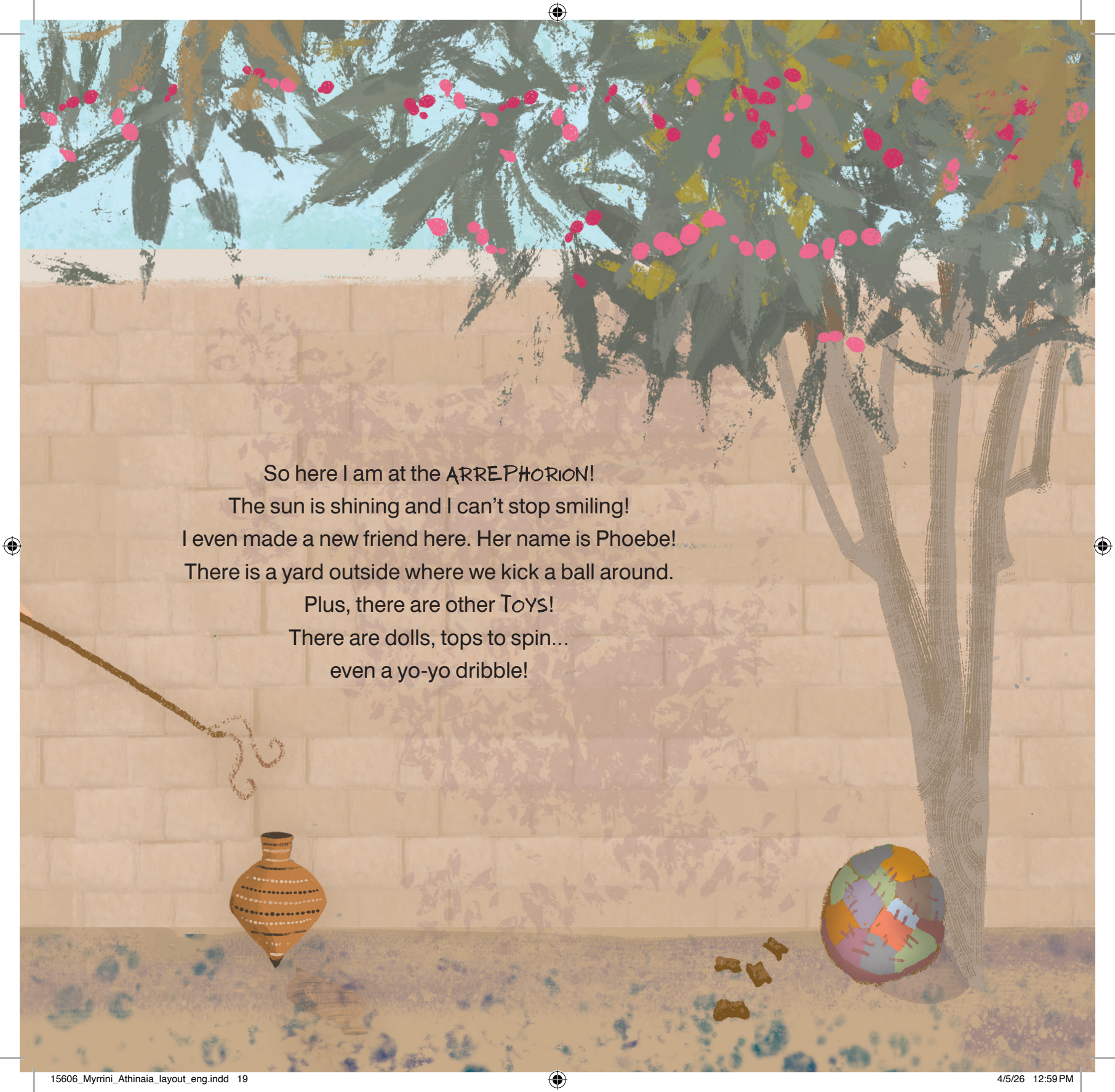


That was before, though.
Before yesterday, I mean.
Today everything changed.

“Myrrine!” Dad said.
“Time to head up to the
ACROPOLIS. You’re an
ARREPHOR now.”







So here I am at the ARREPHORION!
The sun is shining and I can't stop smiling!
I even made a new friend here. Her name is Phoebe!
There is a yard outside where we kick a ball around.
Plus, there are other Toys!
There are dolls, tops to spin...
even a yo-yo dribble!

There's even this wall you can climb up. And when you're at the top you can see something amazing. It's a new temple, the one that the city built for the goddess **ATHENA**. It has the biggest **COLUMNS** I've ever seen, and it's decorated with gods and heroes, **AMAZONS** and **GIANTS**, **CENTAURS**, horses, horsemen and maidens on the **PEDIMENT**, on the **FRIEZE**, and on the **METOPES**.









The city looks so beautiful from the Acropolis.
And the best part is we get to live here for the next few months!
It's not a vacation or anything. There's work to do! But it'll be fun.
We'll take care of the OLIVE TREE.
We'll help weave a glorious dress to adorn the STATUE of our goddess.
And when the big day comes, the celebration of the ARREPHORIA,
we'll put on our whitest outfits and our shiniest gold jewelry and head down
to the Temple of Aphrodite. Why? Shhh! It's a secret.
I just hope we don't get a moonless night, since we'll have to watch our step!





Then, when the time comes for me to head back home, I'll be a whole new Myrrine! Older, for sure. Maybe even a little taller. But the best thing is that I'll finally have tons of stories to tell my brothers and my parents about the ARREPHORIA. I can't wait until the next time my dad comes into the women's quarters and says: "Alright, Myrrine. Stop doing those chores and change into your nicest dress. It's time to celebrate!"





ANCIENT ATHENS FROM ABOVE

LEARN MORE ABOUT MYRRINE BY FINDING THE PLACES FROM HER STORY:



AGORA

The word “Agora,” or marketplace, comes from an Ancient Greek verb meaning “to gather together.” And, true to its name, the Agora was at the heart of every Ancient Greek city, bringing people together for shopping, catching up with friends, haircuts (Ancient Greek authors wrote a lot about how chatty Athenian hairdressers were!), formal public discussions and trials, and, of course, religious ceremonies that honored the gods of Mount Olympus.



ACROPOLIS

The Ancient Greek word “Acropolis” meant the highest point in any city: a hilltop with a bird’s-eye view of all the action down below that could be function as a strategic fortress. By far the Acropolis of Athens is the most legendary Acropolis in Greece. As famous now as it was back in Myrrine’s day, the Acropolis was once a shrine to the goddess Athena, and houses the Parthenon, a temple dedicated to that goddess.



PNYX

Another hill in Athens, where the Ecclesia, or Assembly of Athens, met to discuss and vote on important issues. Only citizens could vote, and only men were considered citizens, meaning that women in Ancient Athens were denied the right to vote.



KERAMEIKOS

A neighborhood in Ancient Athens where pottery workshops flourished and artisans made amphoras, kraters, and other practical and beautifully decorated wares, from clay.



MYRRINE'S GLOSSARY



STATUE: Myrrine mentions a statue in her story, one that really existed. It was a wooden statue of the goddess Athena. The Athenians worshipped the statue and dressed her in beautiful gowns, adorned her in jewels, and offered her fruit. Once a year they even gave her a bath, washing the statue in the salty water of the Mediterranean Sea.



VESSELS: Athenian ceramicists were highly skilled and developed two styles of decoration for their clay vessels. The first, older style was called the “Black-figure” style, with dark figures painted against a reddish background. The second style was called the “Red-figure” style, with red figures painted against a dark background.



PEDIMENT: Pediments are the triangular formations atop Ancient Greek temples. In Ancient Greek they were called *aetomata*, from the word for “eagle,” since they resembled outstretched eagle wings. Pediments were often decorated with detailed marble statues.



ATHENA: The goddess who watched over the city of Athens. She was the goddess of wisdom and of the arts, as well as an accomplished warrior.



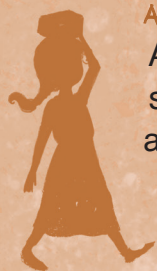
AMAZONS: Legendary women warriors in Ancient Greek mythology, famous for their horseback riding skills.



ARREPHORIA: A yearly celebration in honor of the goddess Athena, held during Skriophorion, one of the months of the Ancient Greek calendar that fell between June and July.



ARREPHORION: The building on top of the Acropolis where *arrephors* like Myrrine would stay. Conveniently for them, there was a yard out front for playing ball!



ARREPHOR: An arrephor was a young Athenian girl like Myrinne, between seven and eleven years old, who spent a few months living on the Acropolis.

The arrephors played a major part in the Arrephoria celebrations, moving secret objects back and forth from Arrephorion at the top of the Acropolis to the Shrine of Aphrodite, which was farther down the hill. When the celebration was over, they returned home, passing on the torch to the next generation of girls.



GIANTS: Massive, mythical monsters that Gaia, the Earth goddess, created to get revenge on the gods of Olympus. You might be asking: what did the gods ever do to her?

They had waged a war against Gaia's children, the Titans, and locked them in an underground jail called the Tartarus.



GYNECONITIS: A separate section of an Ancient Greek house where women lived.



SWEETY AND CAVITY: Slaves in Ancient Greece were often given names inspired by their personality traits or their appearances. Can you guess why these two were called Sweety and Cavity?



TUTOR: Ancient Athens didn't have any schools like the ones kids go to today. Instead, there were private tutors who taught boys (and a few girls) reading, writing, math, and music. Boys also played sports, while girls stayed home and learned about housework.



SLAVES: Unpaid, unfree workers. In Ancient Athens there were a few kinds of slaves. The luckiest among them worked in people's homes, while some less fortunate slaves worked the silver mines in the town of Lavrion, a dangerous and difficult job.



OLIVE TREE: The sacred olive tree that was given to Athens by the goddess Athena when she quarreled with Poseidon over which of them would become protector of the city. The tree was situated on the Acropolis, in the Pandroseion, a shrine dedicated to Pandrosus, one of the daughters of the mythic King Cecrops.



FRIEZE: A narrow strip of marble that wrapped around the tops of the walls of the inner part of Ancient Greek temples. On the Acropolis, the Parthenon's frieze featured sculptures of people and animals parading during the Panathenaic Games.



CENTAUR: A mythic beast: half-man, half-horse!



COLUMNS: One of the most characteristic architectural element of ancient Greek temples, such as the Parthenon.



KRATER: A large clay vessel that the Ancient Greeks used to mix water into their wine, diluting the drink to prevent drunkenness.



FOUNTAIN: In Ancient (and even not-so-Ancient) Athens, there was no indoor plumbing. But there were public fountains. Women carried their clay vases to the fountains and filled them with water before carrying them home.



METOPES: Square slabs of sculpted marble that sat above the columns of Ancient Greek temples. The metopes of the Parthenon showed scenes from Ancient Greek mythology. The north side of the temple depicted the Sack of Troy. The west side depicted a war between the Athenians and the Amazons. The south side depicted a war between the Athenians and the Centaurs. And the east side depicted a war between Gods and Giants.



MYRRINE: The young heroine of this story is named after a sweet-smelling plant.



TEMPLE: The temple that Myrrine admires so much is none other than the world-famous Parthenon, still standing atop the Acropolis of Athens.



SYMPOSIUM: A symposium was an Ancient Greek party! But only for men. The guys all met up at someone's house and piled into a men-only room called the *andron*. They ate, drank, and lounged on couches.

The only women who were ever seen at a symposium were there to entertain the men, such as dancers, musicians, and acrobats.



PEDAGOGUE: A trusted slave whose job it was to accompany young boys to their tutor's house.



TOYS: Kids in Ancient Athens like Myrrine played with all sorts of toys, some of which are not so different from the toys kids play with today. There were dolls, yo-yos, spinning tops, clay animals, baby rattles, and wheels that

kids pushed around with sticks, like the one we see on the first image in this book. The little pig that Myrrine hands the baby is actually a clay pacifier, and the highchair that the baby sits on is also made of clay!



STOA: In Ancient Greece, a stoa, or portico, was a long, narrow building with a covered outdoor walkway that connected the rooms and protected people from the elements.



VoTE: The Ancient Athenians came up with something brilliant: democracy! That's a system of government where each citizen can

vote on the issues that are important to them, without a king or other leader deciding what's best.



KATERINA SERVI was born in Athens in the 1960s, which was very nice. But she always wanted to be “somewhere else.” In Minoan Crete, perhaps, or in prehistoric Mycenae. In Ancient Egypt, Mesopotamia, China, Athens, Macedonia, Rome, Pompeii (not on a day when Vesuvius erupted!), Constantinople, Mystra, or in a medieval European village. Maybe even on Viking drakkar or a pirate ship! To make her dreams come true she became an archaeologist, a museologist, and an author, making countless friends who take her by the hand and lead her to other places and different times. And now she’s excited to share a lifetime of discovery with her young readers!

LELA STROUTSI was born in Athens in 1972. She doodled in the margins of all her textbooks in school, then at the Athens School of Economics, and also in graduate school in England while earning an advanced degree in marketing. There was even a time when she doodled on pages of notes for her work in advertising...until the day when her drawings found their way into the pages of children's books! This led her to the world of art classes, illustration courses, and photography lessons. Since 2013 she has been illustrating books, dustjackets, packaging, posters, and game applications. And she somehow finds time to paint canvases and make the occasional book of her own!







