

Diary of Igor the Piano Pug



Far dis-tant
Quel - to ch'io
Ich will's Euch

Cool sil - v'ry
È per me
Euch will ich's

Sound
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a è mar -
Angst mir

Michelle Meade

Ped

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Copyright

Dedication

Sunday—

Hi, I'm Igor! I'm a pug full of energy—or, as I like to call it, talent!

I'm named after the great Russian composer Igor Stravinsky, famous for writing music for the ballet. His melodies are full of tail-thumpity-thumping passion, just like me! I love to sniff out a great classical tune.

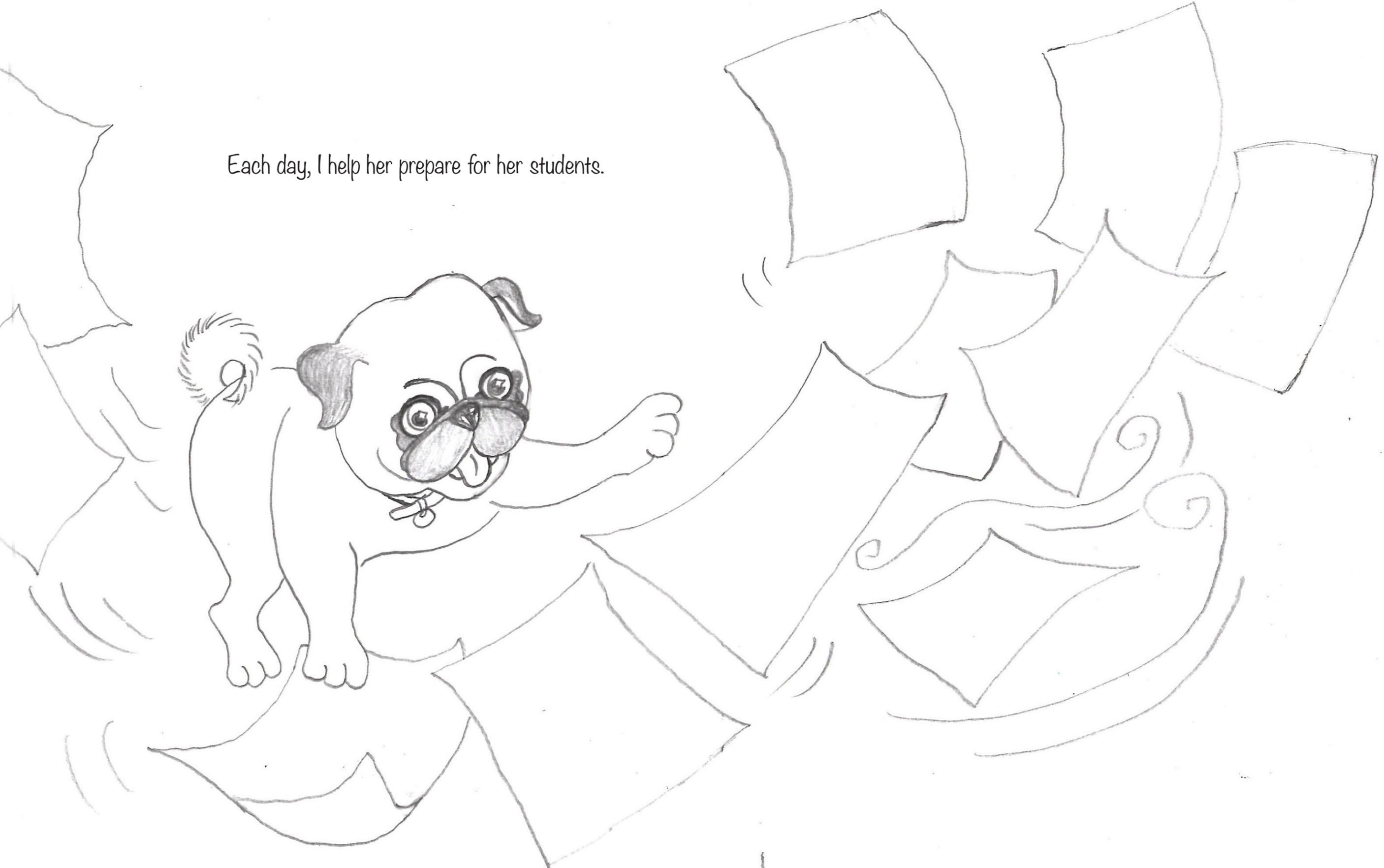
Oh, how I would love to play the piano myself!! But when I try, I just roll off the piano bench.

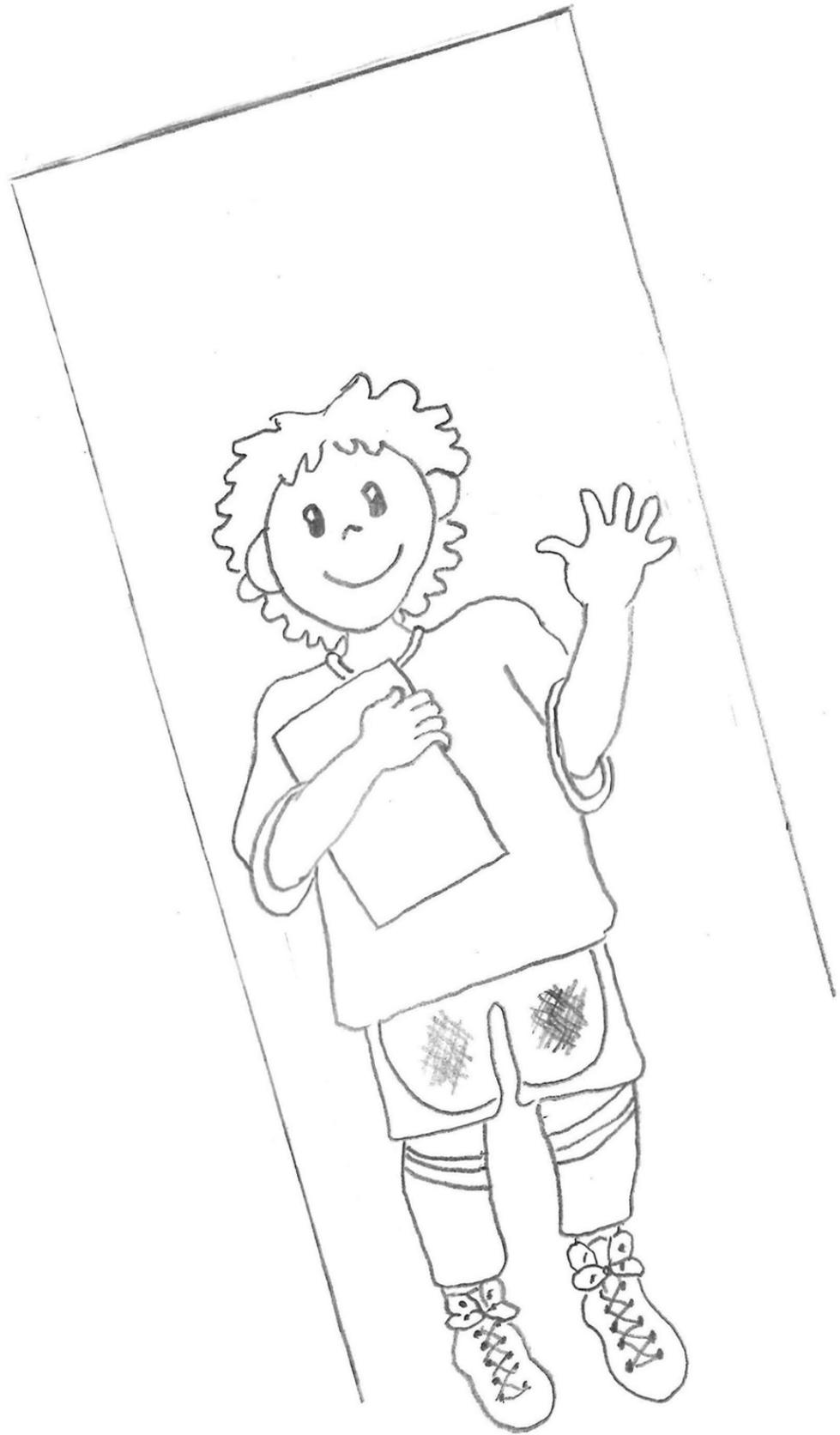
So instead, I sing. My voice is actually my best instrument—*woooof!* I dream of having a spectacular stage career someday.

My mom, Mrs. Fig, is a piano teacher, and she agrees I have a gifted musical ear.



Each day, I help her prepare for her students.





Monday—

The doorbell rings at three o'clock, which Mrs. Fig says is after school.

Henry comes in straight from his soccer game.

He's wearing shorts and sneakers, and smells like dirt. Just like classical music—when it comes to smells, I'm an expert!

"Go wash your hands!" says Mrs. Fig.

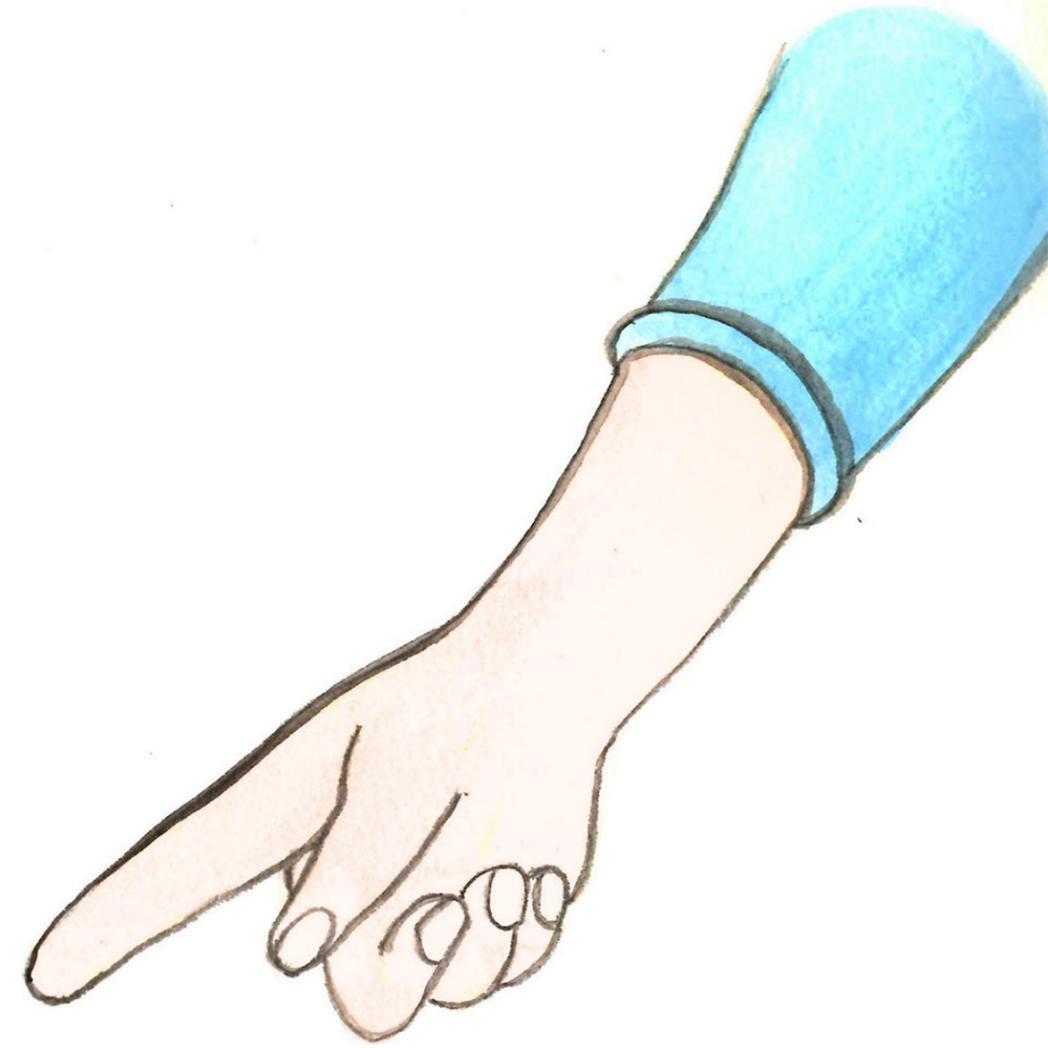
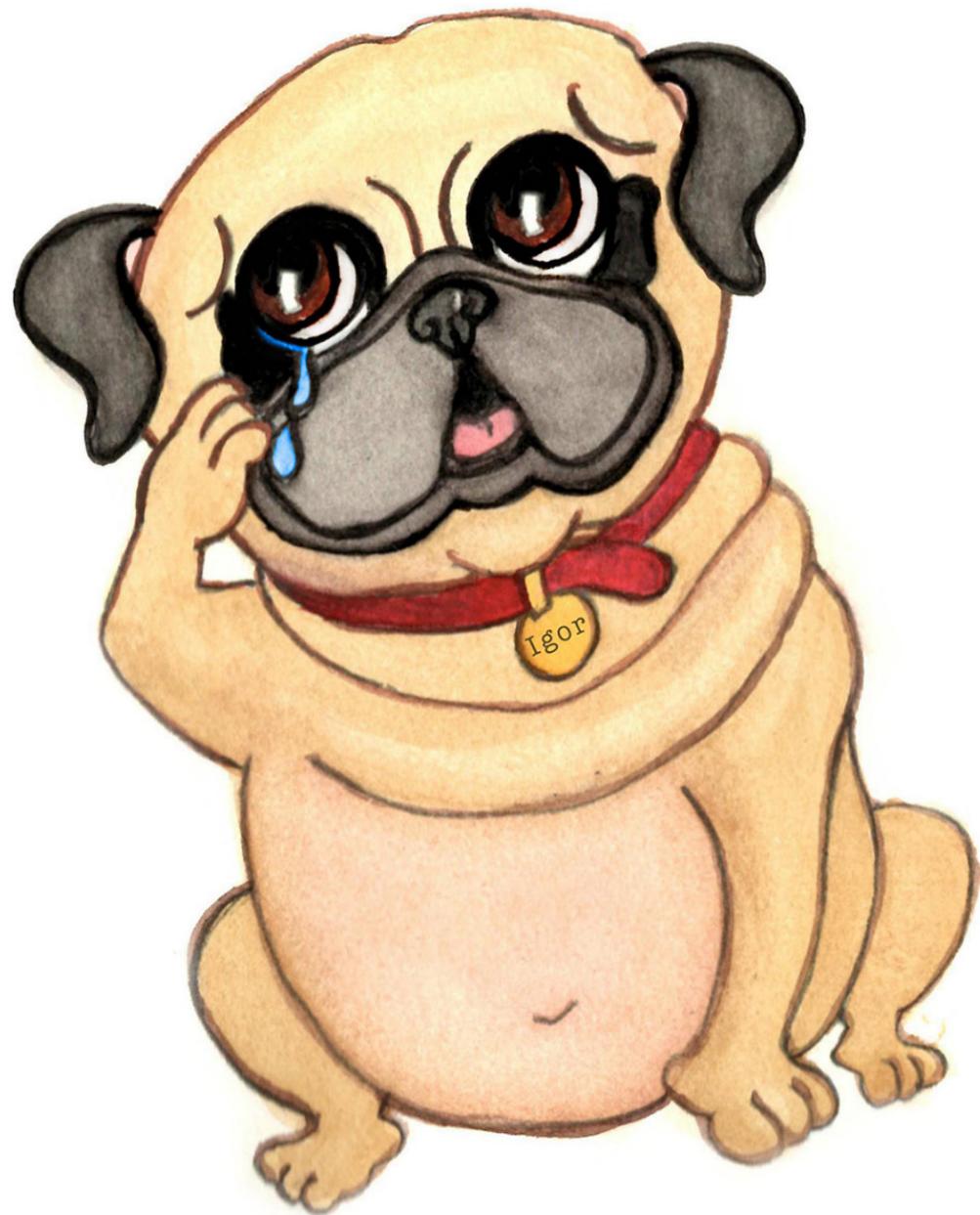


Henry plays his scales a bit ruffity-rough, but he steadily improves.

"Very good," says Mrs. Fig.

Henry is working on a Frederic Chopin nocturne. A nocturne is a dreamy piano song that feels like the night.

You know, Chopin was already an excellent pianist at age six and eventually became better than his teacher! Oh, his etudes and sonatas bring me to tears.



“Woo, woo, woo!” I moan, feeling the emotion in the piece.

Mrs. Fig shushes me. *“This is listening time.”*



Tuesday—

Pepita's always very prepared. She smells like clean blue-lined notebook paper and red rubber erasers.

I wiggle my tail in excitement when she gives me a scratchy-scratch-scratch behind the ears.



I cuddle up on the rug just near the piano's foot pedals. I like to stay close to Mrs. Fig so I can perfectly hear the notes.

Mrs. Fig can tell if her students have been practicing—or not.

So can I.

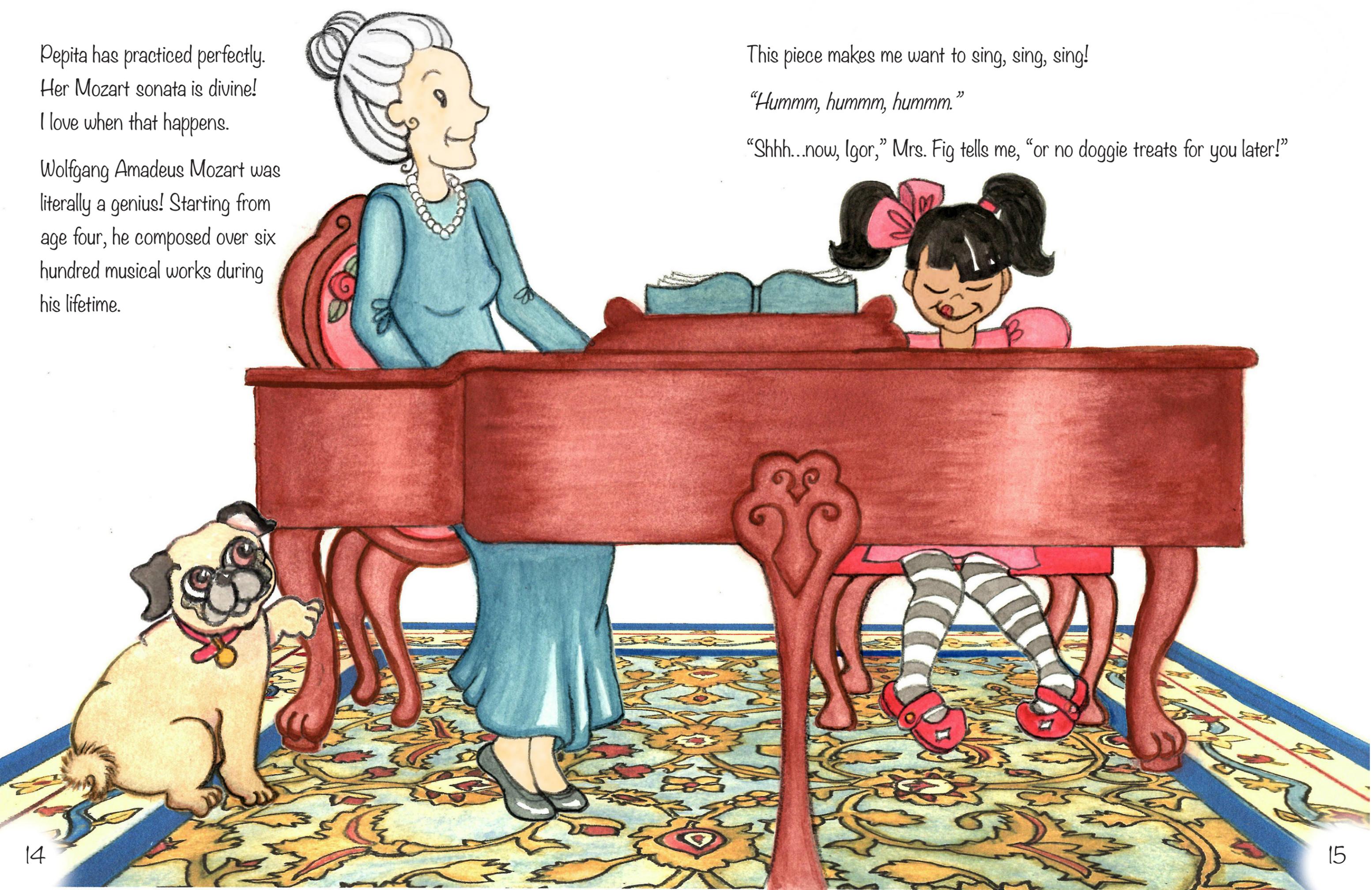
Pepita has practiced perfectly.
Her Mozart sonata is divine!
I love when that happens.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was
literally a genius! Starting from
age four, he composed over six
hundred musical works during
his lifetime.

This piece makes me want to sing, sing, sing!

"Hummm, hummm, hummm."

"Shhh...now, Igor," Mrs. Fig tells me, "or no doggie treats for you later!"





Wednesday—

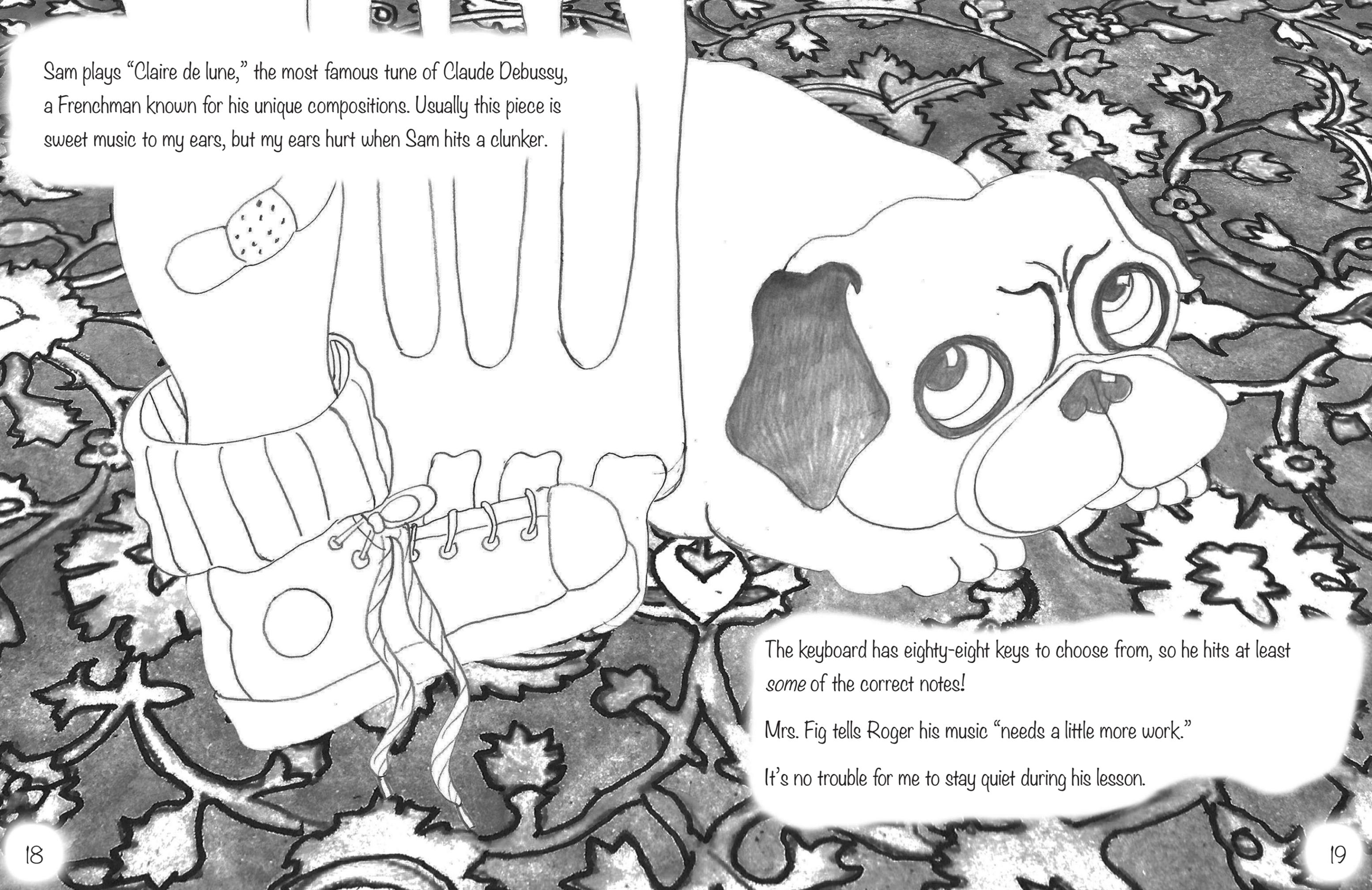
Sam smells like freshly cut green grass.

“Go wash your hands!” says Mrs. Fig.

Then he performs his scales. I wonder if he practiced during the week.

So does Mrs. Fig.



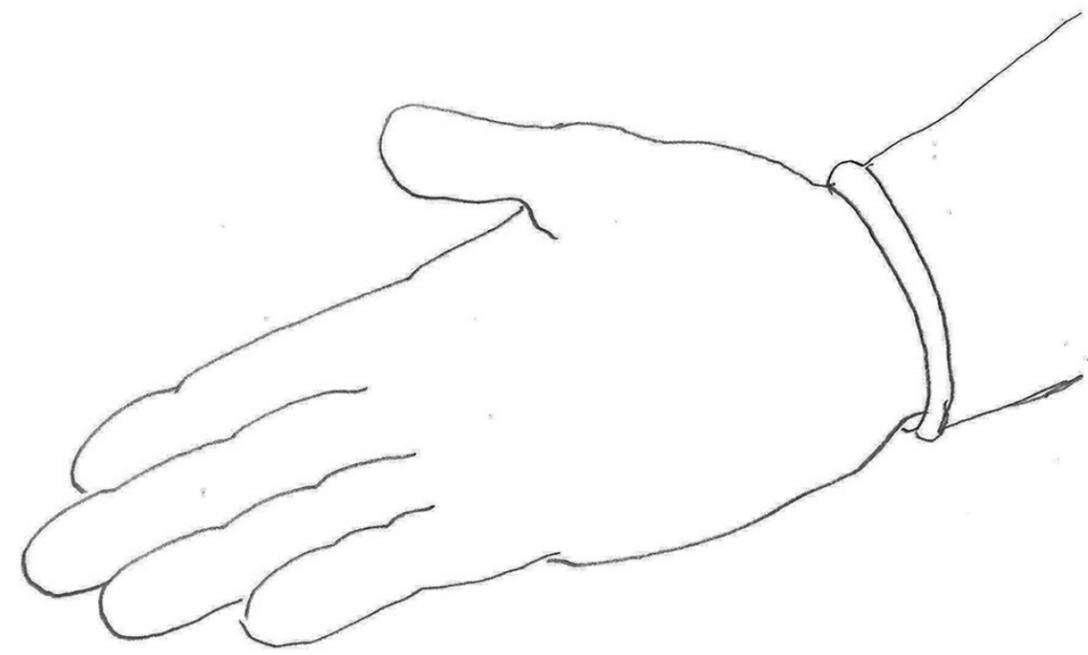


Sam plays “Claire de lune,” the most famous tune of Claude Debussy, a Frenchman known for his unique compositions. Usually this piece is sweet music to my ears, but my ears hurt when Sam hits a clunker.

The keyboard has eighty-eight keys to choose from, so he hits at least *some* of the correct notes!

Mrs. Fig tells Roger his music “needs a little more work.”

It’s no trouble for me to stay quiet during his lesson.



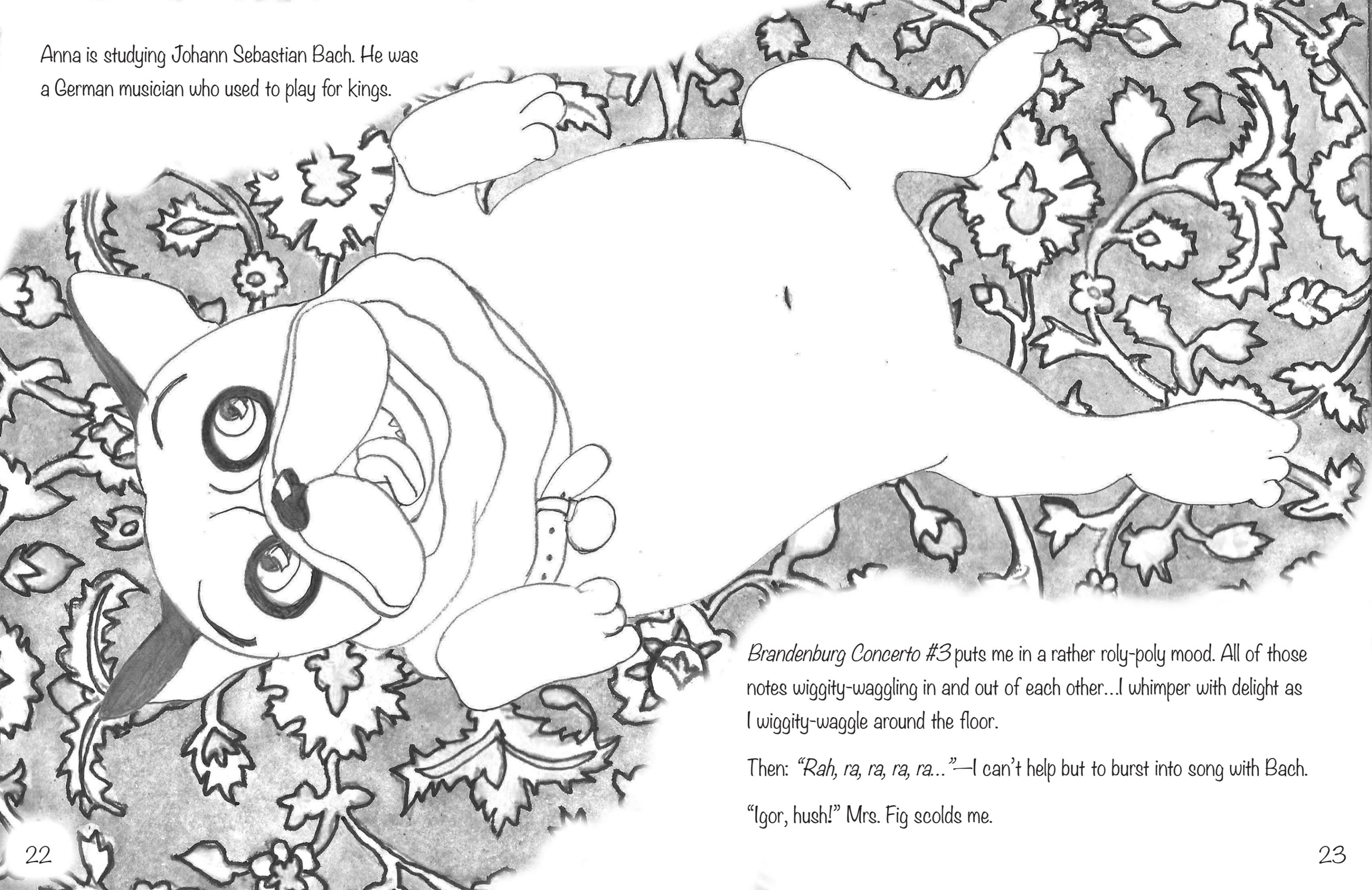
Thursday—

Anna arrives just in time, smelling like bubble gum.

Mrs. Fig makes her spit out her gum before they begin.

“Go wash your hands!” says Mrs. Fig.

Anna is studying Johann Sebastian Bach. He was a German musician who used to play for kings.



Brandenburg Concerto #3 puts me in a rather roly-poly mood. All of those notes wiggity-wagging in and out of each other...I whimper with delight as I wiggity-waggle around the floor.

Then: “*Rah, ra, ra, ra, ra...*”—I can’t help but to burst into song with Bach. “Igor, hush!” Mrs. Fig scolds me.



Friday—

Today is Malik's lesson.

Malik smells like those dusty cheese puffs that make his fingers all orange.

"Go wash your hands!" says Mrs. Fig.



He plays his scales very wiggity-wag well.

I hum softly to myself to warm up my voice.

Malik is learning a composition by Ludwig van Beethoven. That's the guy who kept writing music even after he went deaf! "Ode to Joy," the most famous piece of music in history, is by him.

Beethoven has such a deep, rhythmic tone, I can feel his music bellowing up through the floorboards.

And so it happens... *"Ruffity, ruff, ruff, ruff, ruff. Wooo, woooo!"*

"Igor, shush up!" says Mrs. Fig. "You'll have your turn tomorrow."



Saturday—

Oh, woofity-woof-woof! Musical bliss is mine!

Saturday is the day Mrs. Fig plays only for me. She lets me sit on my puffity-pug pillow on top of the piano, and then...I get to sing as loudly as I want to.

“Ro, re, ri, ra, ro, ra, ri, ro!”

Now all I have to do is convince Mrs. Fig to let me sing a grand solo at the piano recital!

Ahh, sweet music. It is my life!

Igor Stravinsky

Igor Stravinsky was born in Russia on June 17, 1882. His mother was a skilled pianist and his father an accomplished singer, so Igor grew up with music. But he studied law due his father's wishes. Thankfully, he went back to music and eventually gifted the world with his beautiful ballet scores such as *The Firebird* and *The Rite of Spring*. In 1945, he became a U.S. citizen.

Frederic Chopin

Considered one of the world's greatest composers, Chopin was born in Poland on March 1, 1810. Introduced to music at an early age by his mother, young Frederic was a child prodigy, composing tunes on the piano at just age six. He published his first composition when he was seven and began performing one year later. Chopin took lessons from a professional musician but quickly surpassed his teacher in both technique and imagination. His work of etudes, sonatas, and nocturnes is an important part of music history, with masterpieces that include the *Piano Sonata No. 3 in B Minor* and the *Opus 55 Nocturnes*.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Born in Austria on January 27, 1756, Mozart is considered a musical genius. After mimicking his six-year-old sister playing the piano, at age three, he soon created his first composition at age four and performed his first concert when he was just six. Mozart learned to play many instruments and composed over six hundred musical pieces during his lifetime.

Claude Debussy

Debussy was born in France in 1862 to a poor family. The oldest of five brothers and sisters, he displayed an obvious gift at the piano. So at age eleven, he went to the Paris Conservatory to study music, where his compositions were so groundbreaking, his teachers were confused on how to instruct him. At age twenty, Debussy got a job teaching piano to a wealthy family's children, which gave him the opportunity to travel all over Europe and learn about different cultures and musical styles. Through writing operas and piano solos, he became the leading figure in French music. One of his best-known pieces is "Clair de lune."

Johann Sebastian Bach

Born in Germany on March 31, 1685, Johann Sebastian Bach came from a family of musicians, stretching back several generations. As a young boy, Bach was a talented singer, but as he grew up his voice changed, so he switched to playing instruments. It is believed his father, Johann Ambrosius, taught him to play the violin and harpsichord. He also played the organ, creating complex arrangements by weaving together different melodic lines. At age eighteen, Bach was hired as a musician at the court of a duke. That led to him playing for churches and even kings during his career. His famed works include *Tocatta* and *Fugue in D Minor* and "Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring."

Ludwig van Beethoven

Born in Germany on December 16, 1770, Beethoven was the key musical figure in the changing period between the Classical and Romantic eras. From a young age, Ludwig received piano lessons from his father, who was very strict. He performed in his first concert at age six. Beethoven displayed flashes of the creative genius that would eventually reach farther than any composers before or since, but in school he struggled with math and spelling. He may have suffered from the learning disorder we now know as dyslexia. As an adult, he continued to write music even after becoming deaf. Beethoven's "Moonlight Sonata" and "Ode to Joy" are perhaps the most famous pieces of music in history.

