



Level 2

# Thumbelina



OXFORD



# Thumbelina

*Retold by Sue Arengo*

*Illustrated by Elena Selivanova*



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'I want a child,' says the woman. 'Please help me.'

'Here!' says the old woman. 'Plant this seed! And wait!'

The woman plants the seed. She waits.  
At last a flower grows. A beautiful flower.



The flower opens in the sun. And there's a little girl inside.

The woman is very happy. She calls the girl Thumbelina.

The woman makes a bed for Thumbelina. She makes a blanket.

Thumbelina is very happy. She plays and sings all day.





But one night a toad comes.

‘Mm!’ says the toad. ‘My son wants a wife.  
You can be his wife.’

She carries Thumbelina away.

‘Where am I?’ cries Thumbelina.

‘This is a river,’ says the toad. ‘And here is  
my son. You can be his wife.’





Thumbelina begins to cry.

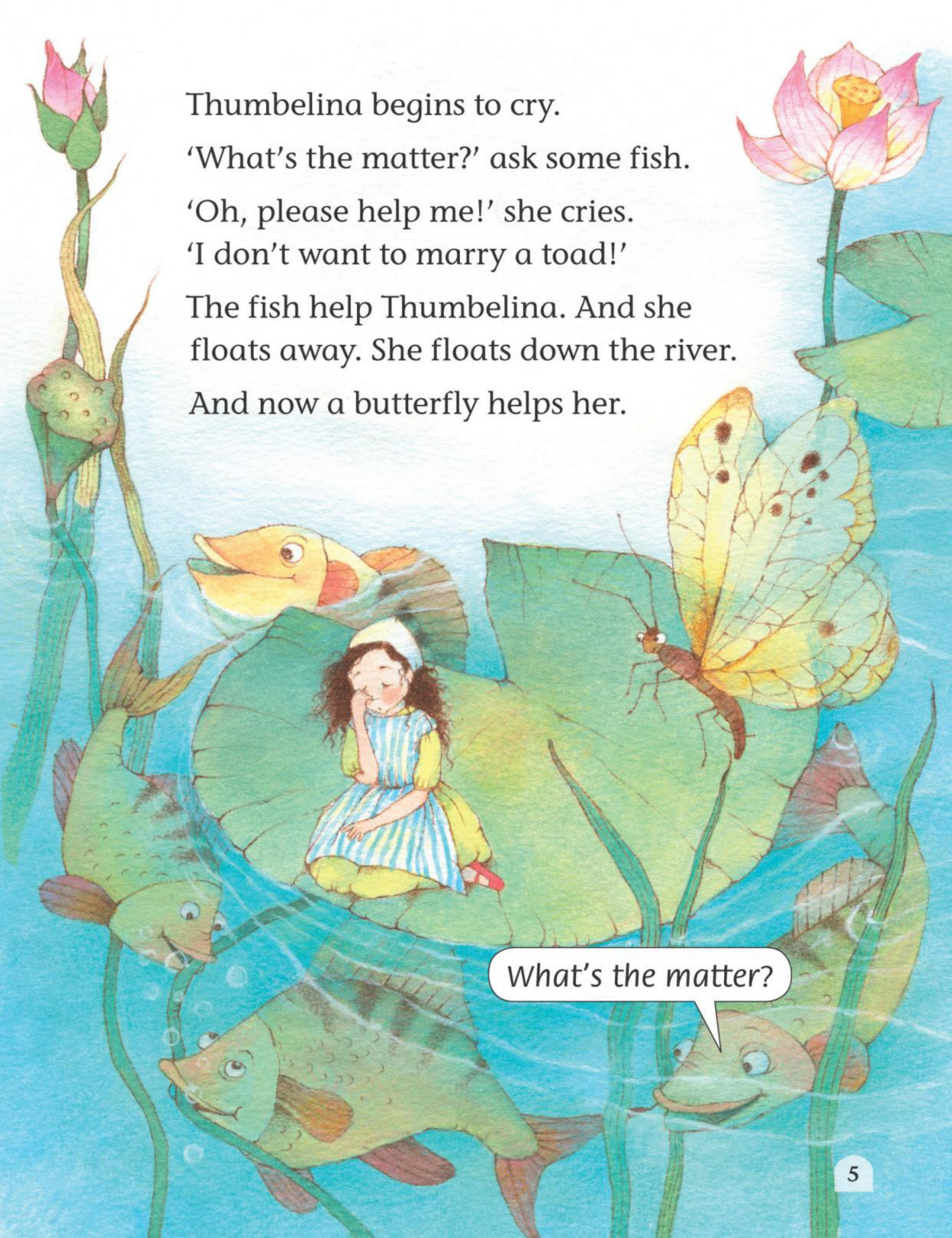
‘What’s the matter?’ ask some fish.

‘Oh, please help me!’ she cries.

‘I don’t want to marry a toad!’

The fish help Thumbelina. And she floats away. She floats down the river.

And now a butterfly helps her.



What's the matter?



‘What a beautiful day!’ says Thumbelina.

But then a maybug sees her.

‘Mm! You can be my wife!’ he says.

He carries her up to a tree.

‘Look!’ he shouts. ‘She can be my wife!’

But the other maybugs laugh at him.

‘Ugh! She’s pink!’ they say. ‘She only has two legs!’





‘Ugh!’ says the maybug. ‘I don’t want you now!’

And he flies away.



It's summer. Thumbelina makes a green grass bed. She makes a green grass blanket. The birds are her friends.





Then winter comes. And all the birds fly away. It is cold and Thumbelina is hungry.

‘Come in, girl,’ says a mouse. ‘This is my house. You can live here and work for me.’



One day a mole visits them.

'He's very rich,' says the mouse.

'He needs a wife. Think about it, Thumbelina.'



This is my house.

'Look! This is my house,' says the mole.

But it is dark under the ground.  
And Thumbelina doesn't like it.





There's a bird under the ground. A dead bird. It's cold.

'That's sad!' says Thumbelina.

But the mole says, 'I don't like birds.'

That night Thumbelina can't sleep. She thinks about the bird. She gets out of bed. She makes a grass blanket for the bird.



‘Here’s a blanket,’ says Thumbelina.

She puts the blanket over it. Then she hears something. A quiet ‘Thump! Thump!’

The bird is not dead. It’s alive! And now it opens its eyes.

‘Thank you,’ it says. ‘I am warmer now.’



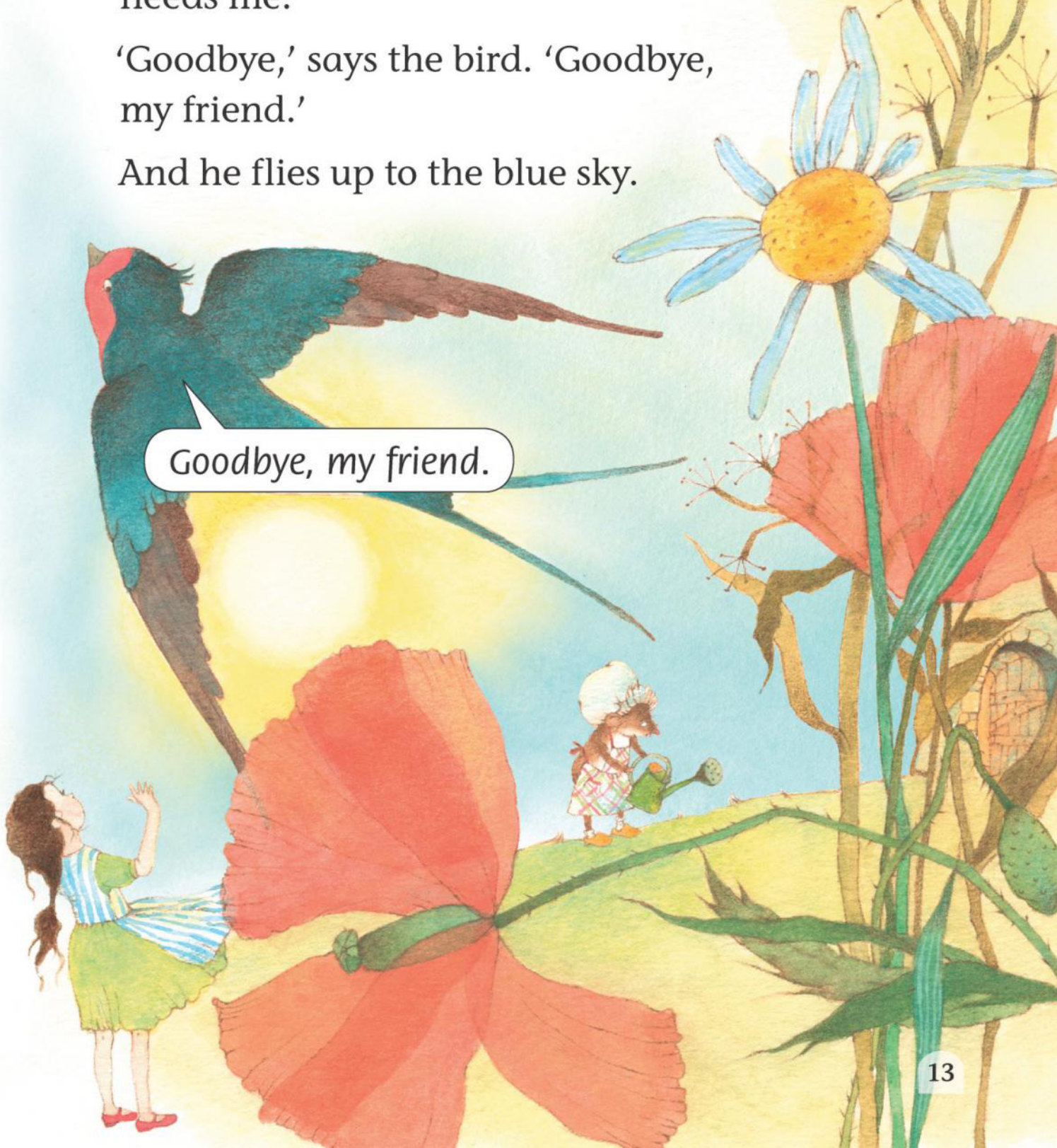




All winter Thumbelina works for the mouse. The mole visits them every day. Sometimes Thumbelina sings for him. And every day Thumbelina visits the bird. 'Here's food and water,' she says. 'Thank you, my friend,' says the bird. 'I am warmer now.'



Spring comes. The bird is better now.  
'It's time to go!' it says. 'Come with me!'  
'I can't,' says Thumbelina. 'The mouse  
needs me.'  
'Goodbye,' says the bird. 'Goodbye,  
my friend.'  
And he flies up to the blue sky.







Thumbelina wants to go outside.  
But there is always more work.  
'The mole wants to marry you,' says  
the mouse. 'You need some new clothes.'  
That evening Thumbelina looks out.  
'I don't want to marry the mole,'  
she thinks.



‘Your clothes are ready!’ says the mouse. ‘The mole wants to marry you tomorrow. Go outside. Say goodbye to the world.’

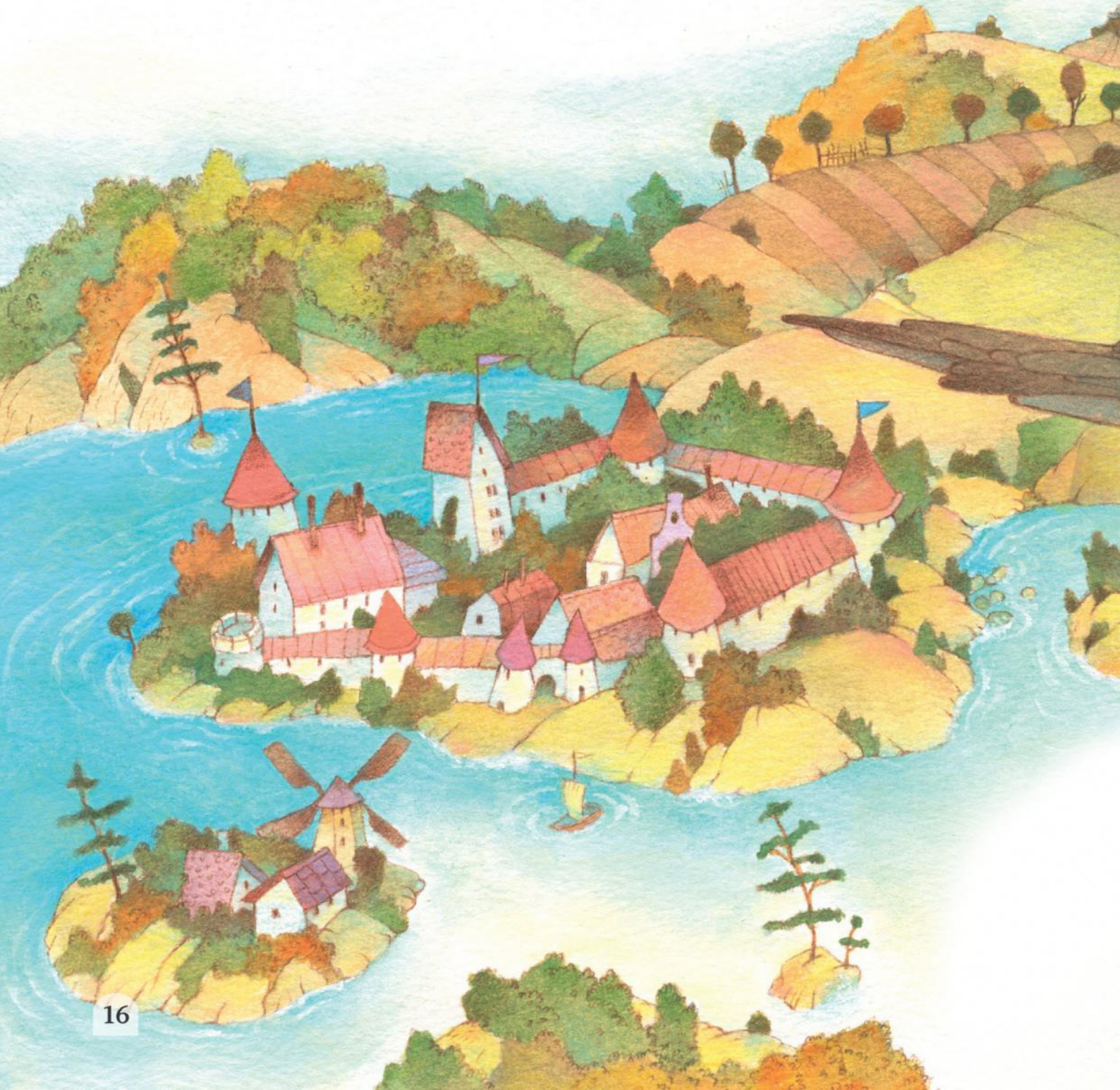
‘Goodbye, bright sun!’ says Thumbelina.

Suddenly she hears something. It’s the bird. It’s her friend, the bird.






'I am flying away today,' says the bird.  
'Come with me. Quick! Sit on my back!  
'Leave the mole behind. Leave him  
in the dark rooms. Come, friend!  
Sit on my back!' says the bird.





A vibrant, storybook-style illustration. A young girl with long brown hair, wearing a blue and white striped shirt and green pants, is riding on the back of a large, dark blue bird with a red beak. The bird is in flight, soaring over a landscape of rolling hills in shades of yellow, orange, and green. A blue river flows through the lower left. In the background, a windmill sits on a hill, and a small castle with purple-roofed towers is visible on the right. The sky is a pale blue.

The world is beautiful!

‘Yes!’ cries Thumbelina.

She gets onto the bird’s back.  
And up they fly. Into the blue sky.

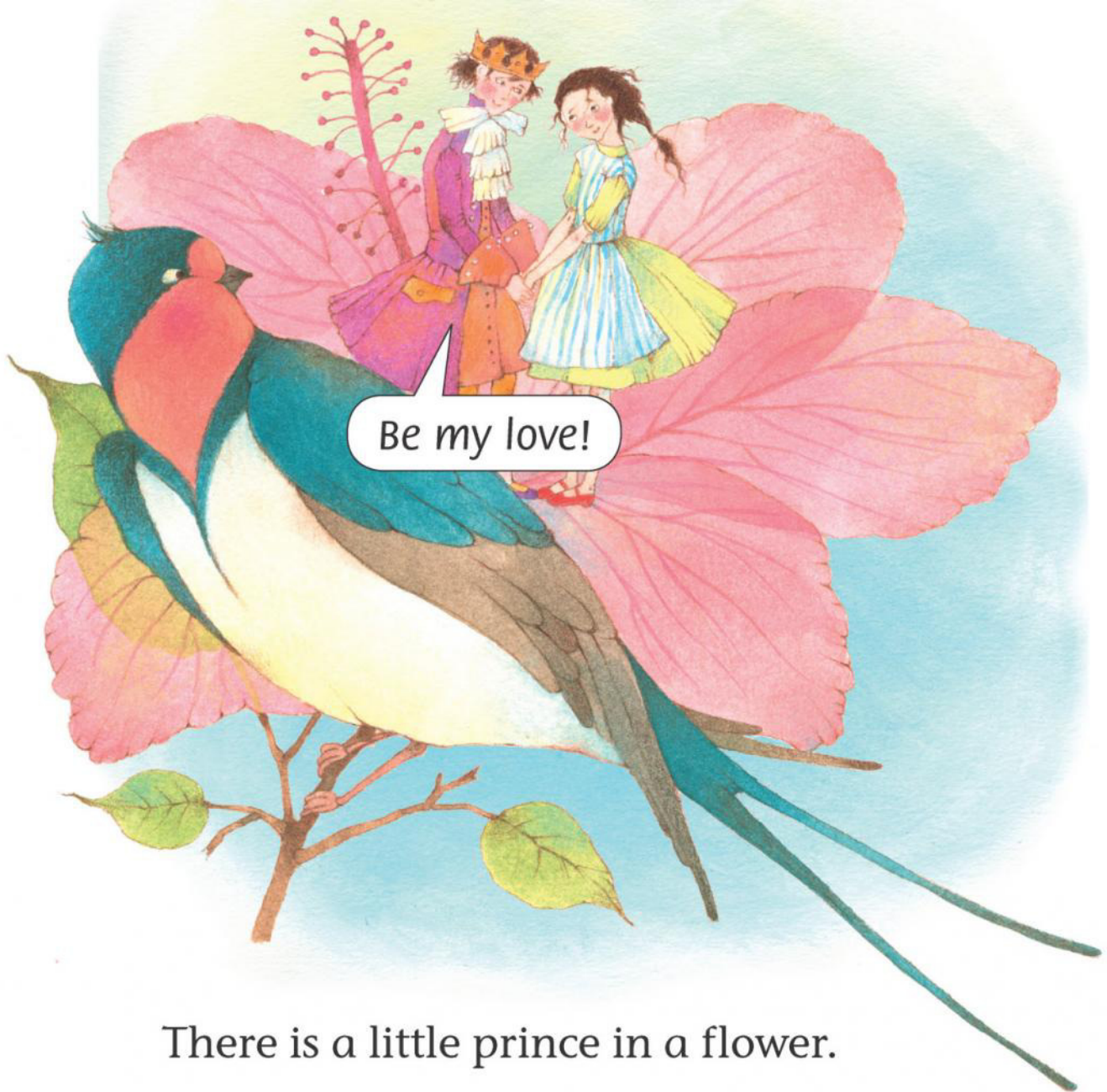
‘Oh! The world is beautiful!’ cries  
Thumbelina. ‘Look at the colours!’





They fly to another country.  
The sun shines. There are  
flowers and butterflies.  
There are oranges on the trees.  
'This is my home, here!' says  
the bird. 'Look, Thumbelina!  
Your home is in a flower!'





There is a little prince in a flower.

'Be my love!' he says to Thumbelina.

'Yes!' says Thumbelina. 'And you ... be my love!'

'Thumbelina!' says the bird. 'Your dark days are over. Be happy!'





# Exercises

## 1 Write the words.



1 It's a toad.



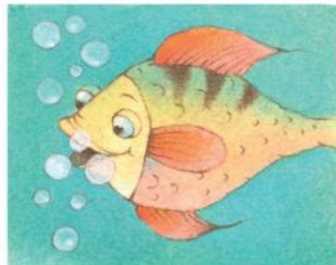
2 It's a



3 \_\_\_\_\_



4 \_\_\_\_\_



5 \_\_\_\_\_



6 \_\_\_\_\_

## 2 Put the words in the correct order.

1 marry want toad to don't I a.

I don't want to marry a toad.

2 carries tree her He to up a.

\_\_\_\_\_

3 grass blanket makes green a She.

\_\_\_\_\_

4 winter Thumbelina All mouse for works the.

\_\_\_\_\_

5 a little flower prince in is There a.

\_\_\_\_\_



### 3 What do they say? Write the words.



### 4 Write the end of the story again, correcting the mistake in each sentence.

Thumbelina gets onto the mole's back. They fly up into the pink sky. They fly to another house. There are flowers and maybugs. There are bananas on the trees. Thumbelina's home is in a river. There is a little mouse in a flower. The bird tells Thumbelina, 'Be sad!'

Thumbelina gets onto the bird's back.

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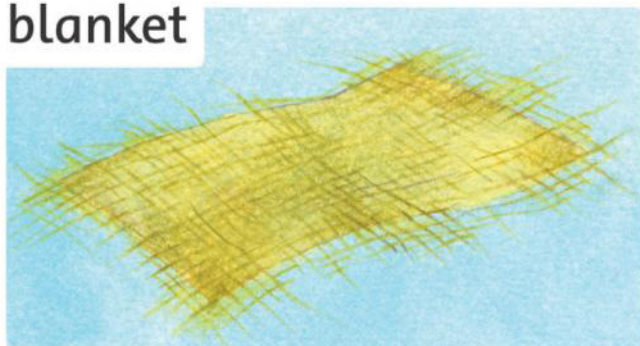
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# Picture Dictionary

blanket



butterfly



country



cry



dark *It is dark.*



dead *It's dead.*



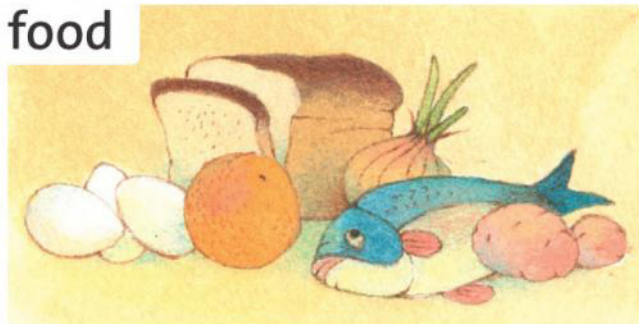
float



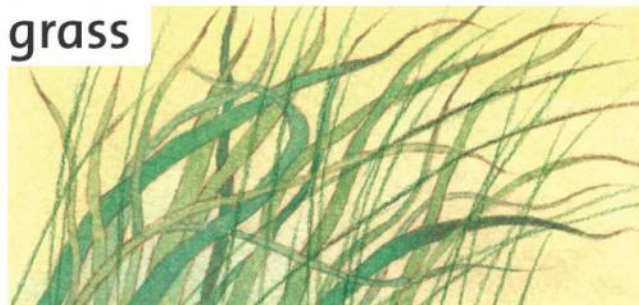
fly



food



grass





ground



legs



marry



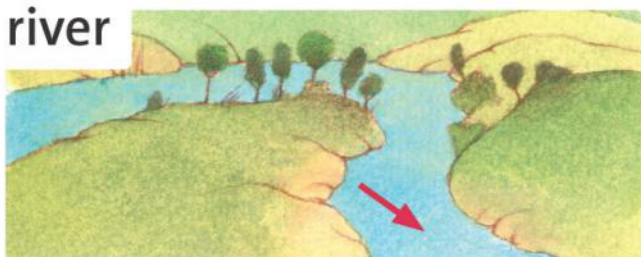
plant



rich *He's rich.*



river



sky



son



spring *It's spring.*



tree



wife



winter *It's winter.*





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- Lownu Mends the Sky
- The Magic Cooking Pot
- Mansour and the Donkey
- Peach Boy
- The Princess and the Pea
- Rumpelstiltskin
- The Shoemaker and the Elves
- Three Billy-Goats

## Level 2: 150 headwords

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- Big Baby Finn
- The Fisherman and his Wife
- The Gingerbread Man
- Jack and the Beanstalk
- Thumbelina
- The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse
- The Ugly Duckling

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- The Little Mermaid
- Little Red Riding Hood

## Level 4: 300 headwords

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Level 2

# Thumbelina

Follow the adventures of Thumbelina, the little girl who comes from inside a flower.

A retelling of the classic story for learners of English

Retold by Sue Arengo

Illustrated by Elena Selivanova

**Classic Tales – bringing the magic of traditional storytelling to language learning**

The stories are carefully graded at Levels 1–5 to provide easy and enjoyable reading. Beautiful illustrations on every page work closely with the text to help understanding. Each *Classic Tale* also includes activities related to the story, and a picture dictionary or glossary.



Level 1: 100 headwords



**Level 2: 150 headwords**



Level 3: 200 headwords



Level 4: 300 headwords



Level 5: 400 headwords

**Word count for this story: 702**

Also available:

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