



Dancing to the Beat

Mentari wants to learn to dance. She can't hear the music, but she can feel the vibrations. Will she be able to fulfill her dream and perform with her friends?



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Let's Read



The Asia Foundation



Wow! Look how beautiful they are! Mentari wants to be like the dancers: moving beautifully and watched by many people.



Can she be like them? Is dancing difficult? Maybe Mentari can join a dancing class at her school.



The next day, Mentari goes to the school hall. She sees that her friends are dancing fast. Their movements are sharp and smooth. To the right, to the left, forward and back. Can she be like them?



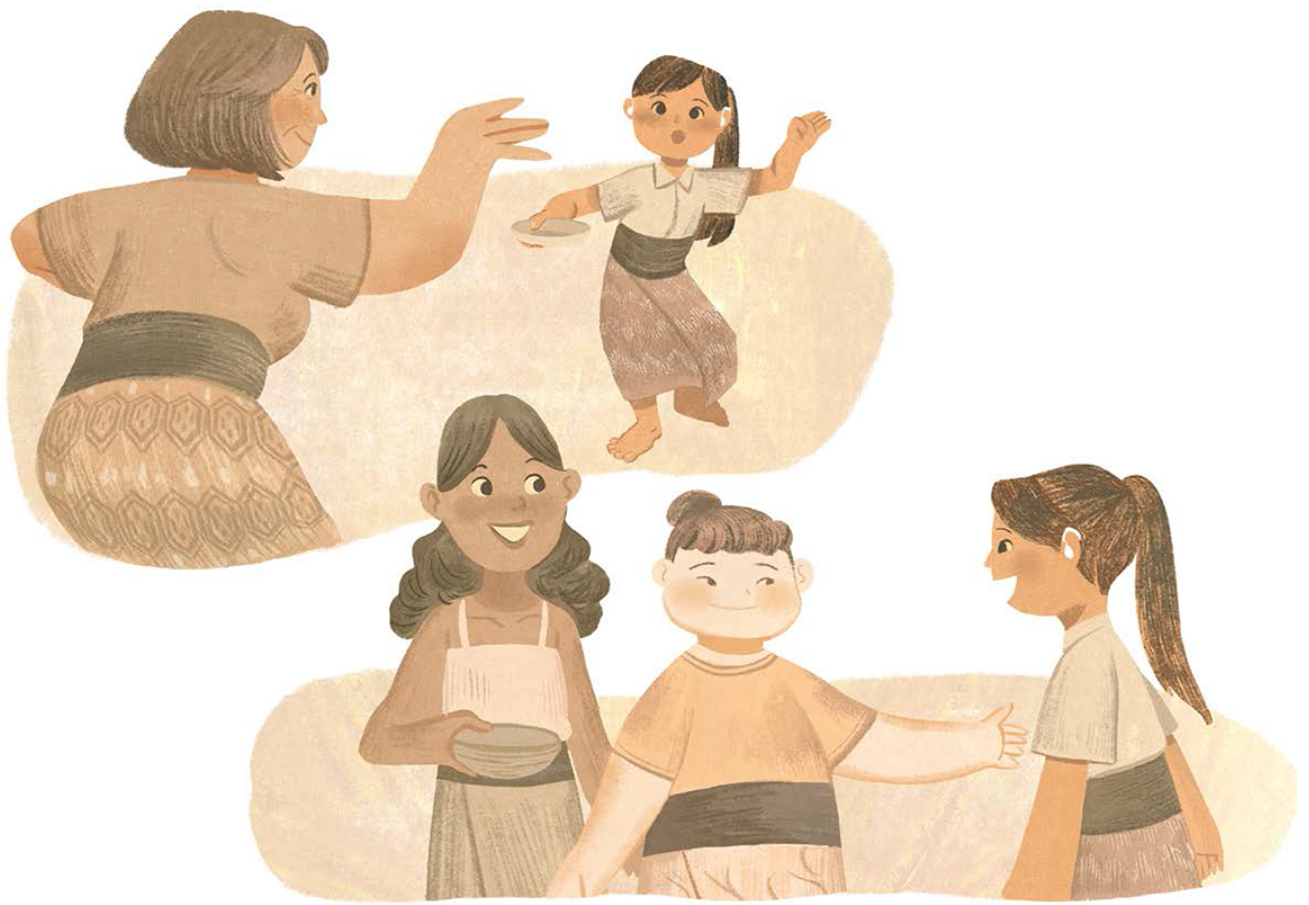
Mentari wants to try. She dares herself to enter the hall.



Thump...thump! Mentari feels pounding in her feet! She also feels her heart beating. She sees her friends dancing in the same rhythm as the pounding she feels.



“Hi, do you want to join this class?” Miss Ayu asks Mentari. Mentari answers in sign language, “Yes, I want to try.” She points to a big black box. “What is that?” she asks. “We are dancing to music coming out of the box. That is called a speaker,” explains Miss Ayu.



Miss Ayu starts to show Mentari the dance steps. “Now let’s try to do this together,” says Tara. “Yes!” adds Galuh.



Mentari gets ready to dance. Suddenly she realizes the other girls are already dancing. “Oh, the music has already started?” Mentari asks, confused.



Mentari keeps trying to dance with the others. But why are her movements always different? Mentari dances the wrong way, again and again.



“It’s okay, Mentari. You’ll be able to do this sooner or later,” says Tara. Mentari feels embarrassed. She leaves the hall.



Mentari keeps picturing the beauty of Balinese dance. She can clearly remember the makeup and costumes of the dancers on television. I have to try again!



Mentari returns to the hall and keeps trying until she is able to dance with the other girls.



Thump...thump... Mentari closes her eyes so she can feel the vibrations. But—FLOP! Mentari bumps into her friends.



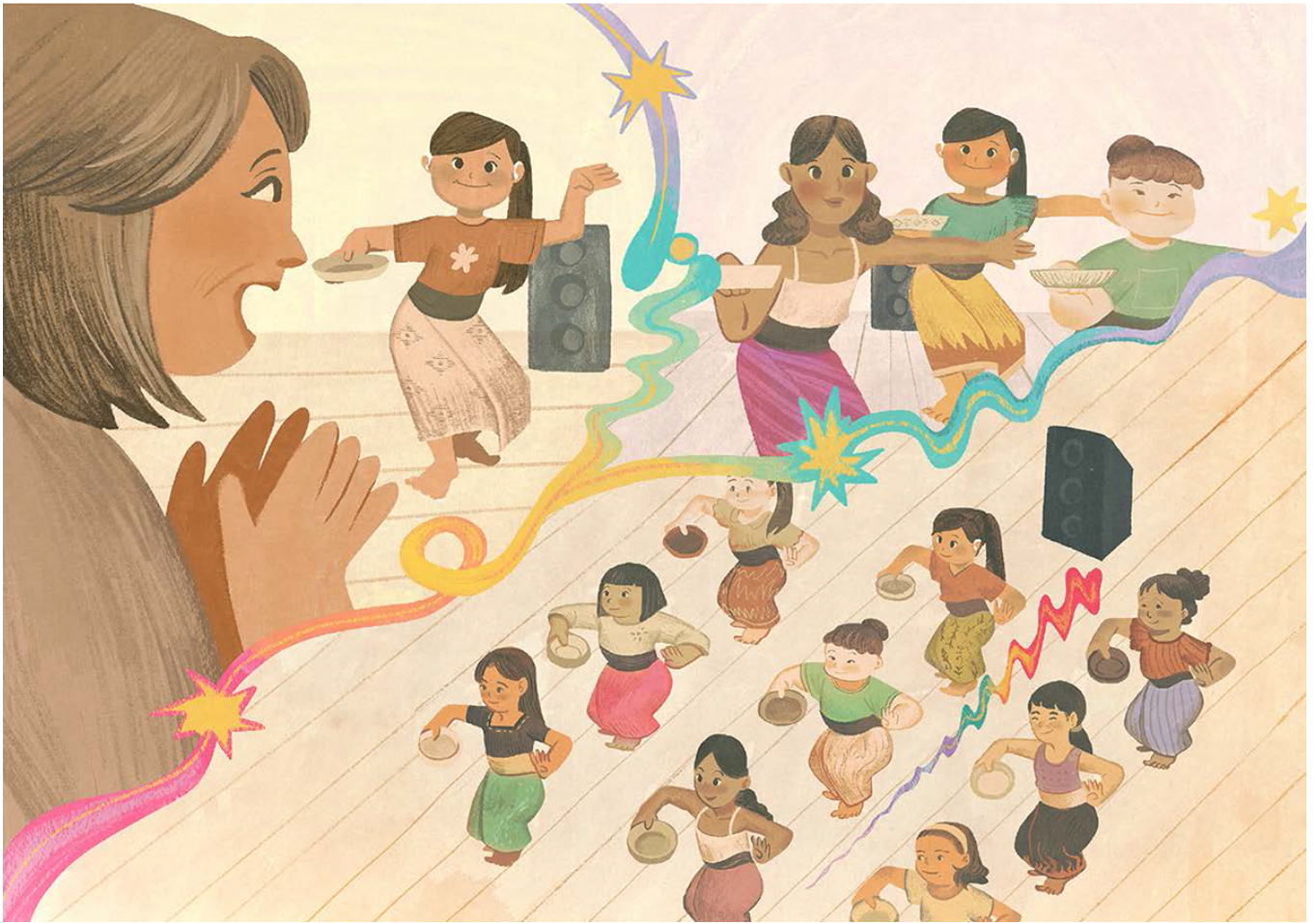
“Open your eyes, Mentari!” says Galuh, laughing. Thank goodness Tara and Galuh are understanding.



The speaker is too far from Mentari. She cannot feel the vibrations clearly. Mentari tries to move the speaker closer. “Ugh, this is very heavy!”



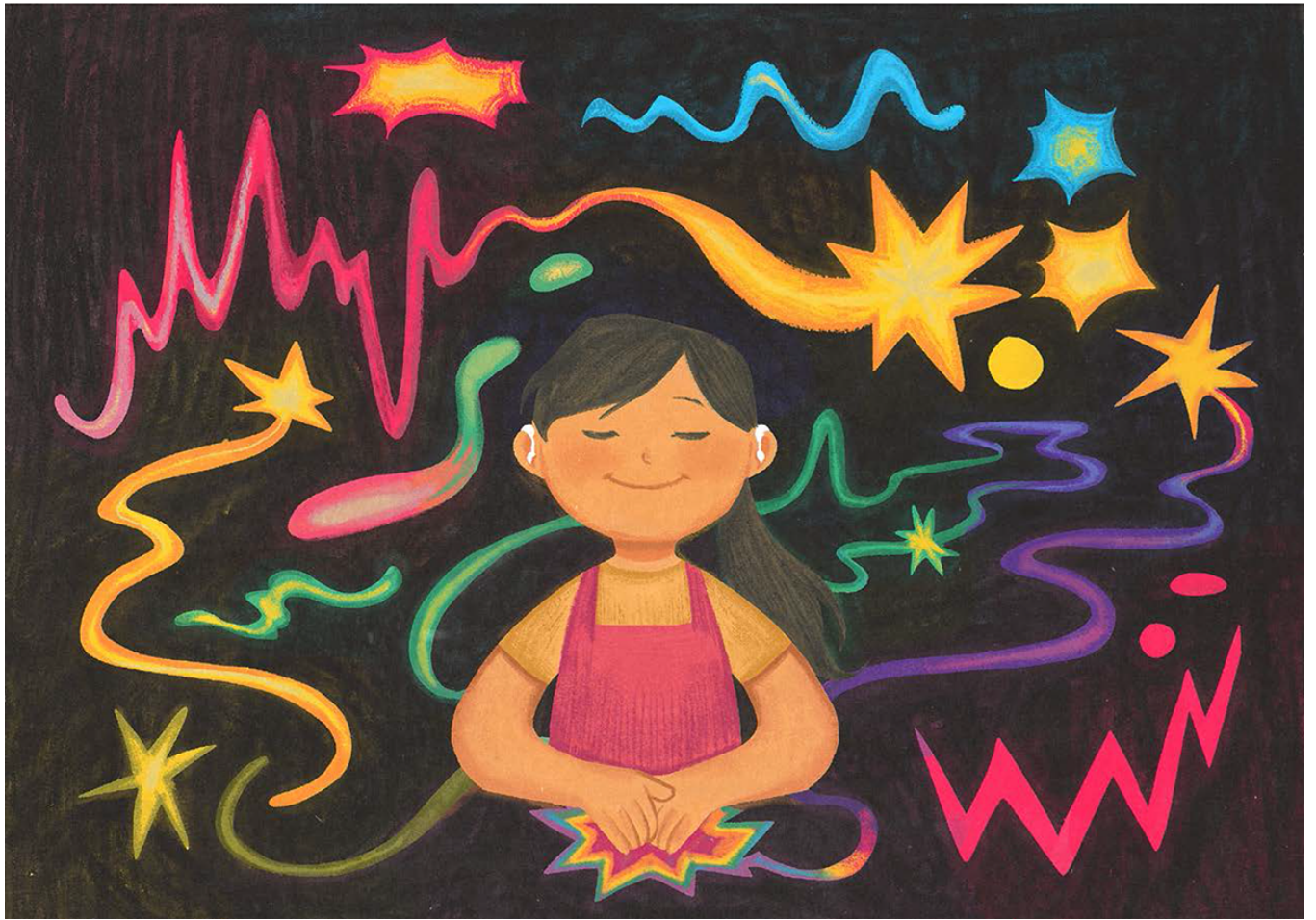
“One, two, three! Up!” Mentari’s friends help her lift the speaker.



The girls start practicing again. Miss Ayu tells Mentari when to begin dancing. Mentari is glad. The signal from Miss Ayu is really helpful. The speaker sends the vibrations to Mentari's feet and gives beats to her heart. Mentari dances along with the beats.



Mentari keeps practicing at home. Mother tells her that music has different tempos and beats. Mentari can feel that.



Mentari feels the sounds: high, low, loud, soft.



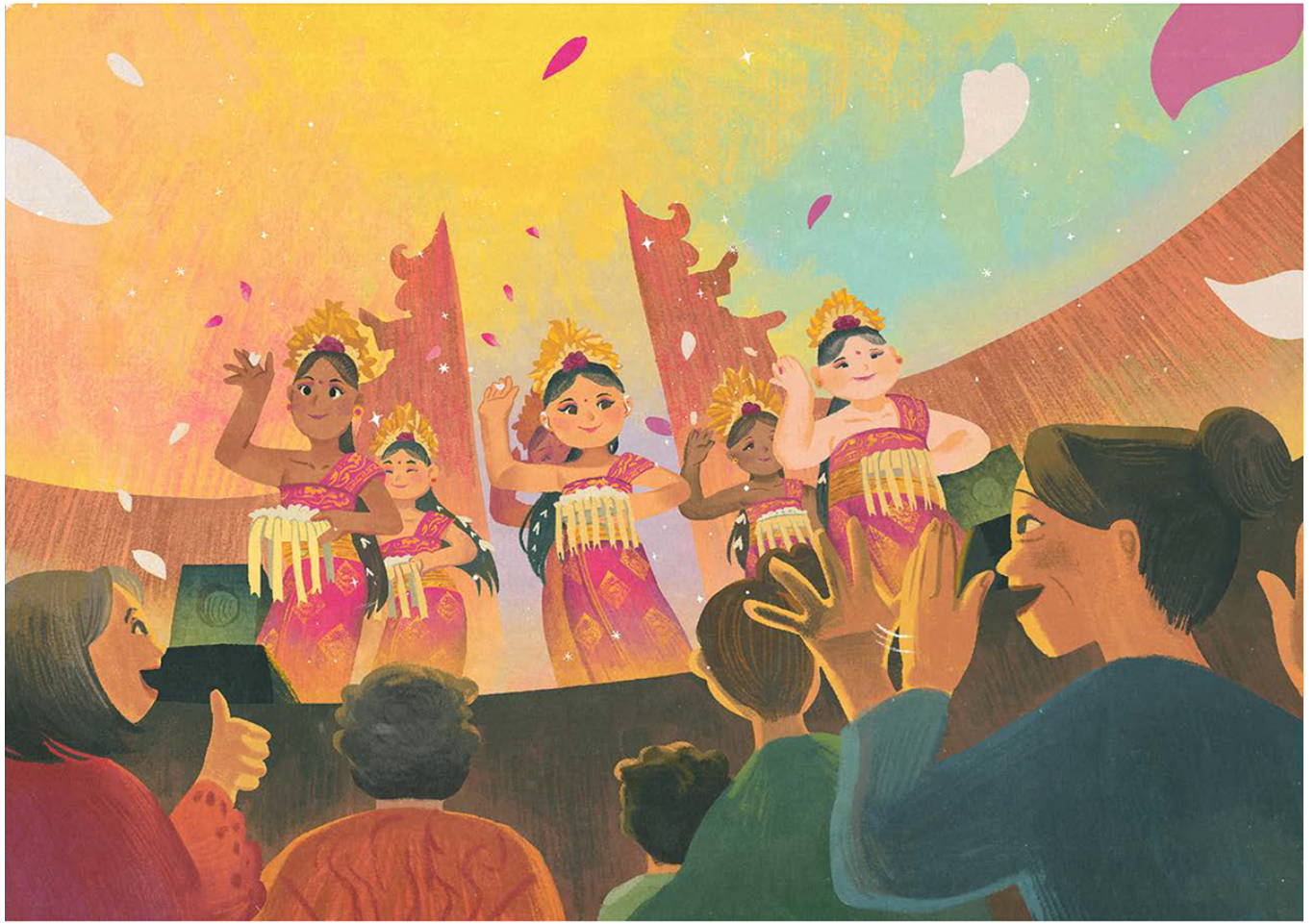
Mentari feels the beat getting faster, then slower. She keeps practicing her dancing. Her movements follow the beats of the music.



Thump...thump... Today is the big day.



Mentari feels the music beat in her heart. She also feels the vibrations in her feet.



One, two, three. Sprinkle the flowers! Mentari can do it!



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