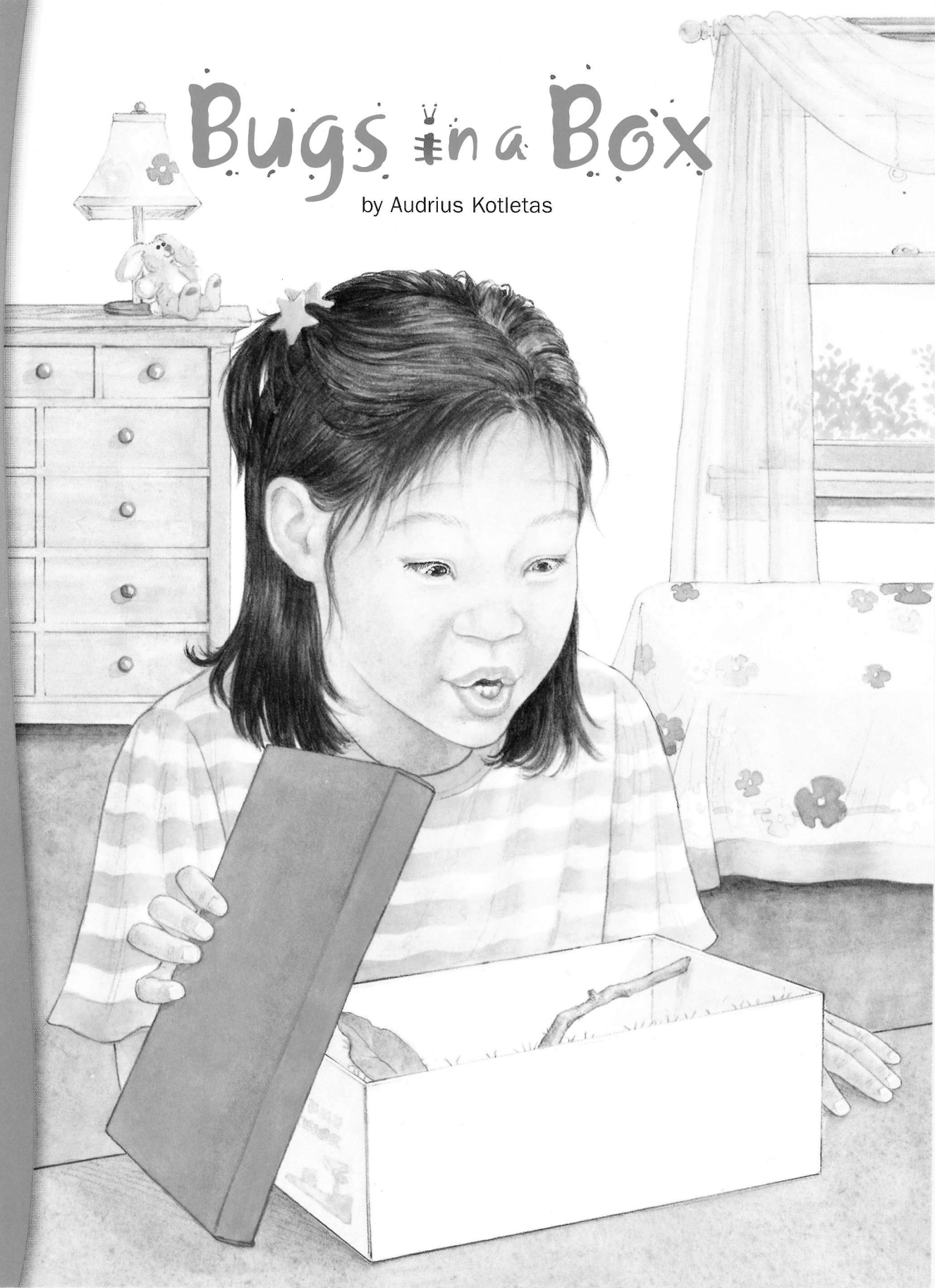


Bugs in a Box

by Audrius Kotletas



1 Lin loved nature, and nothing was too small or unimportant to escape her notice. She dug in the dirt, looked under rocks, peeked in the bushes, and studied the flowers. She found the most amazing creatures everywhere.

2 One day when Lin had been out in her yard all morning, exploring as usual, she found a very interesting brown lump attached to a twig in the bushes. She used her magnifying glass to look at it more closely. She had no idea what it was, but she was curious. After a while, Lin went to look at other things, but soon she came back to the brown lump.

3 Lin used scissors to cut the twig out of the bush and took the brown lump inside. What could it be? Maybe it was a seed pod. Maybe it was a cocoon. She intended to find out. She put it in a shoebox and started to look in her nature books. She looked for two hours, but there were so many interesting pictures in her books that she kept getting distracted. She still had not found an answer when her brother told her supper was ready. Lin put a lid on the shoebox and left her room.

4 After supper Lin had to go to a club meeting. By the time she came home, she had forgotten about the lump on the stick. Several days passed before Lin thought of her nature treasure again.

She went into her room and spread out her books. Then she took the lid off the shoebox to have a look at the brown lump. "Yikes!" squeaked Lin, and she quickly put the lid back on the box. Then she picked up the box and headed for the door.

5 "Where are you going in such a hurry, Lin?" her brother Matt asked.

6 "Come see," Lin called over her shoulder. Outside she put the box under the bush where she had found the brown lump and opened the lid. Matt's eyes widened. He could not believe what he was seeing. There were hundreds of tiny praying mantises in the box! They immediately crawled out of the box and onto the bush.

7 "Well, at least now I know what the brown lump was," Lin said. "It was an egg case. I learned something else too."

8 "What's that?" Matt asked.

9 "To leave nature outside where it belongs," Lin laughed. "That was a close call. I will never bring the outside inside again."

10 Lin was more curious than ever and wanted to learn more about praying mantises. She read her books for hours and looked on the Internet. Then she prepared a poster of mantis facts and shared them with her class.

COMPREHENSION

A Choose the best ending for each sentence. Write *a*, *b*, or *c*.

- 1 Another good title for this story would be
 - a** Lin Learns a Lesson.
 - b** The Shoebox.
 - c** Matt Is Amazed.
- 2 Lin came back to the brown lump because she
 - a** hadn't looked at it closely enough.
 - b** was curious about what it was.
 - c** wanted to see if it had changed.
- 3 When Lin took the lid off the shoebox, she squealed because
 - a** the insects bit her.

- b** the insects jumped out at her.
- c** she didn't expect to see all the little insects.

- 4 When Lin took the insects outside, she moved
 - a** quickly.
 - b** carefully.
 - c** slowly.
- 5 Lin did not show Matt what was in the shoebox inside because
 - a** she knew he was afraid of praying mantises.
 - b** she didn't want the praying mantises to get loose in the house.
 - c** Matt didn't seem interested.

LEARN ABOUT WORDS

B Often you can find out the meaning of a word by seeing how it is used in a story. The other words in the story give you clues.

Find the word in the story that best fits each meaning. (A paragraph number tells you where to look.) Write the word.

- 1 get away from; avoid (1)
- 2 searching for something (2)
- 3 hooked on; connected (2)
- 4 wanting to learn more (2)
- 5 a silky, protective case made by an insect (3)
- 6 something of value (4)
- 7 started off toward; moved in the direction of (4)
- 8 got bigger (6)

C **too** = also

two = the number after one

Words that sound alike but have different spellings and meanings are called homophones. *Too* and *two* are homophones.

Look at each word in **bold type**. Note the paragraph number. Look at the paragraph and find the homophone for the word in bold type. Which of the homophones fits in the blank in the sentence? Write the word.

9 **peaked** (1)

Matt _____ through a hole in the fence in the backyard.

10 **sea** (6)

Lin did not _____ a brown lump like hers in any of her books.

THINK ABOUT IT

- D** A story has a beginning, a middle, and an end. A story has a problem. A story is about how someone tries to solve the problem.

Parts of a Story

Beginning tells

- Who
- Where
- The problem

Middle tells

- How someone tries to solve the problem

End tells

- How the problem is solved

Read each sentence. Does it tell about the beginning, the middle, or the end of the story? Write *beginning*, *middle*, or *end*.

- 1 Lin took the praying mantises outside.
- 2 Lin found an interesting brown lump on a twig.
- 3 Lin forgot about the brown lump in the shoebox.
- 4 Lin was exploring in her yard.
- 5 Lin searched through her nature books.

- E** A pronoun is a word that replaces one or more nouns.

Janet gave a book to Jerry and Gail. She gave it to them.

Read each sentence. Which pronoun in the box should take the place of the underlined word or words? Write the pronoun. (*Hint: You may use a pronoun more than once.*)

them it she they

- 6 Lin found the brown lump in the bushes.
- 7 Lin took the twig and the lump inside.
- 8 Lin put the twig in a shoebox.
- 9 Lin and Matt went outside.
- 10 Lin and Matt watched the praying mantises crawl into the bushes.