



Note on the Illustrations



The illustrations for *The Mountains of Mumbai*, by Pallavi Jain, are hand-done using watercolor on paper, and detailed over with black outlines using a micro-tip pen. A bright, warm color palette, with bold use of contrasting colors, lends vibrancy, dynamism, and busy-ness to the cityscape of Mumbai. The stark, urban character of this coastal city is brought out by the use of cool blues and gray. The fluidity and texture of watercolor is used to show the city of Mumbai as a living, breathing organism made up of its infrastructure and its people, each with a story of their own.

Drawn mostly from memory, along with a few specific references to the city, the illustrations are a creative expression of the essence and spirit of Mumbai. The intention is to allow young readers to find familiarity in some of the places based on their own experiences from real life – the crowded, bustling market places, and the streets jammed with traffic, for instance. Elements of detail are added to lend character and layering to the story so that something new can be noticed and interpreted by readers every time they revisit the book. The identity of Mumbai is captured through its iconic architecture, art-deco interiors, terrazzo terraces and more in the meticulously detailed spreads.

Pallavi Jain visualized Veda and Doma in the backdrop of this warm bustling city, which is a confluence of diverse cultures, distinct ideologies, and changing times. This very fascinating quality of Mumbai being a metropolitan city in India, where everybody grows up in a mix of diverse cultures and lifestyles, makes it an interesting setting for this narrative. The characters were imagined to look like typical city kids, wearing urban clothes, and yet, their different roots were distinguished with subtle references to their features, habits, and ideas.

Pallavi interpreted *The Mountains of Mumbai* as a story that celebrates diversity without 'exoticizing' it. Through her stunning illustrations, she looked to celebrate this city of dreams that is home to so many who are far away from home.

