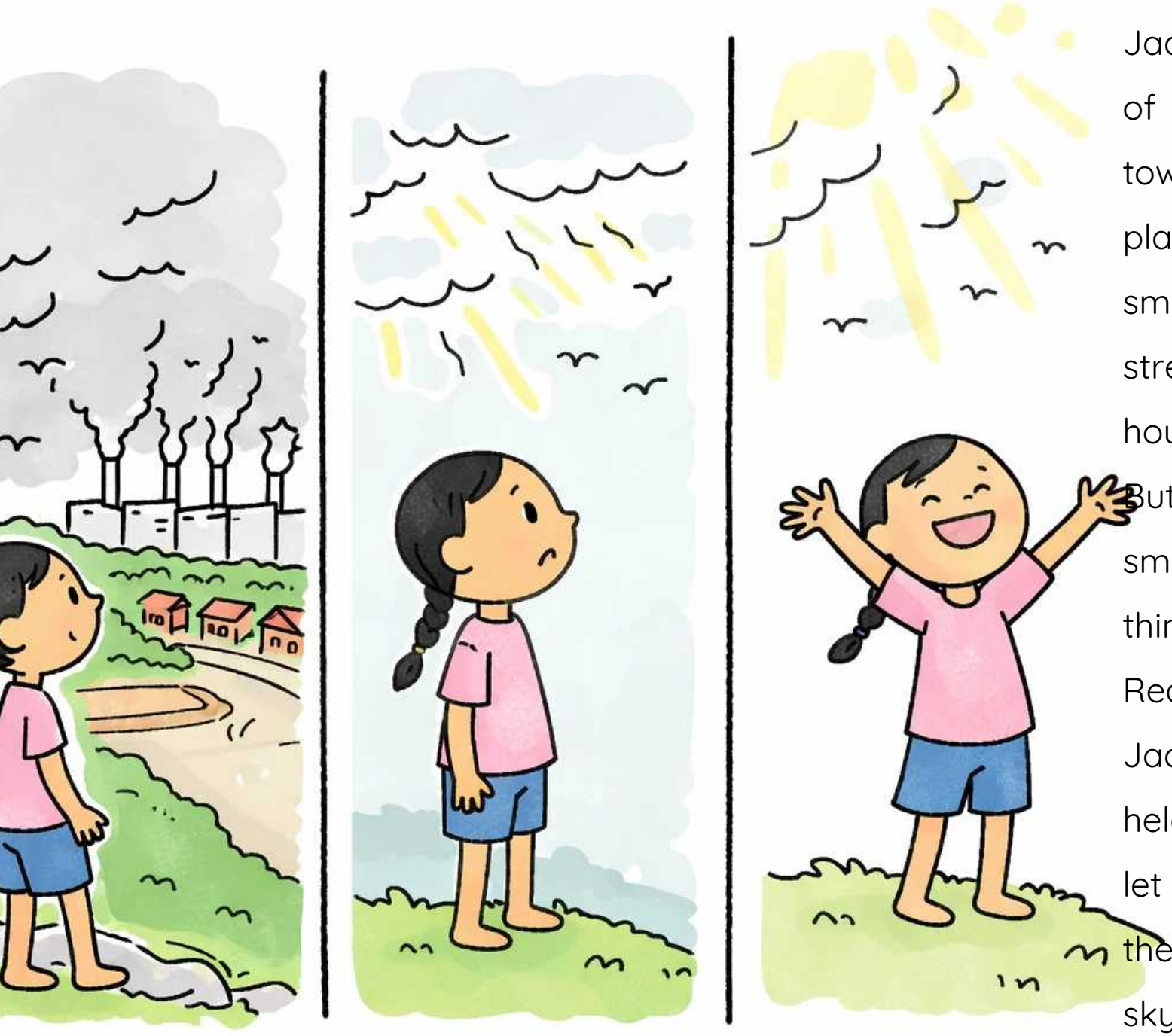
The Girl Finds the Sun

Jade hated the sky above her town. It was grey and thick and smelled like old socks, and smog from the big plant hung over the rooftops and never left. Jade **knew** blue was up there. She had seen it in a book. Two small dogs ran past on the road, noses low, and even they did not bother looking up.

'Dad,' Jade said. 'Was the sky always this ugly?' Dad went still and looked up. His face went soft. 'When I was a boy, the sun came out each day. I could feel it on my face, hot and bright.' 'I want that,' Jade said. 'Me too, kid.' Dad gave a **wry** smile and kept walking. But Jade did not smile. Jade made a plan.

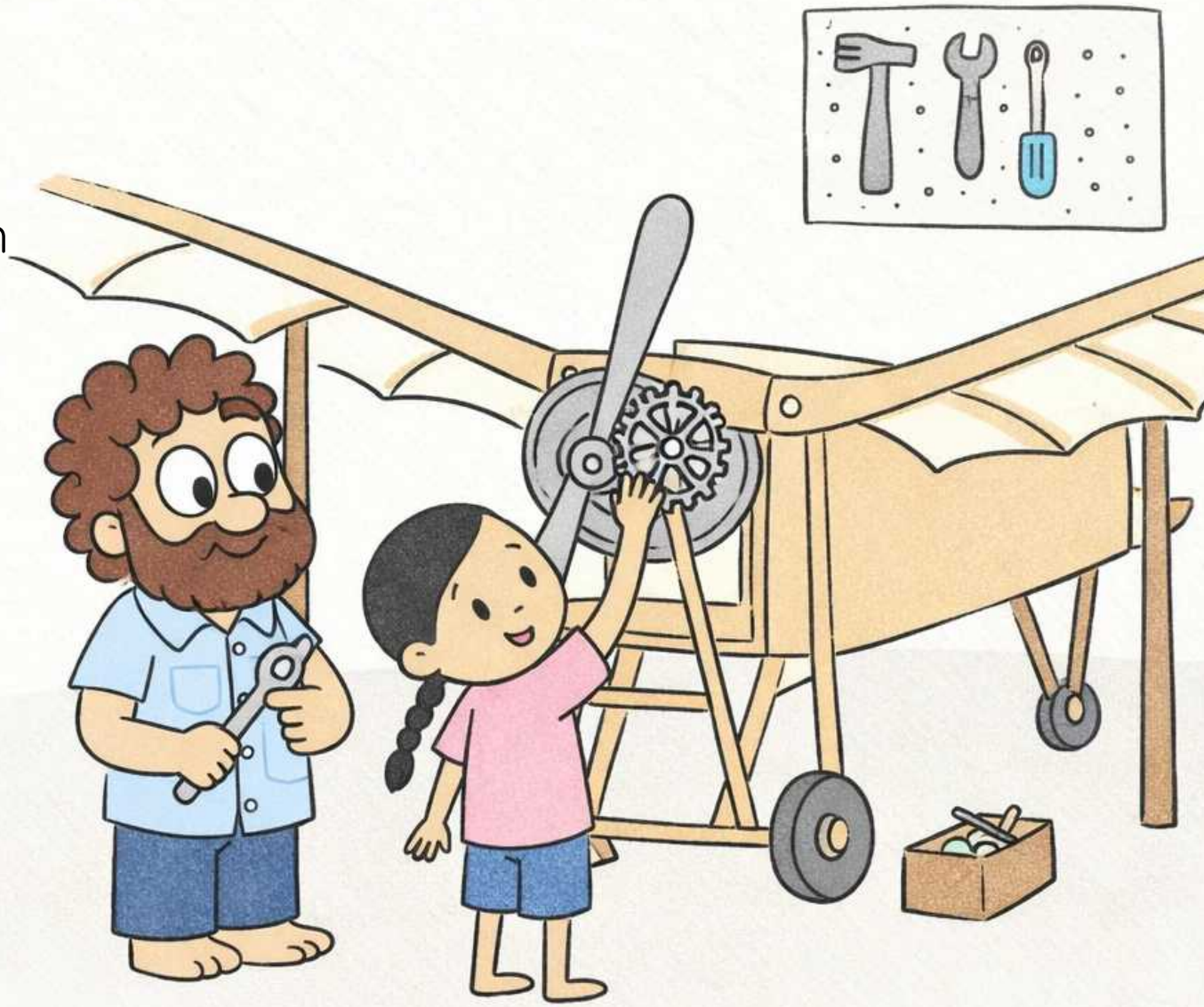


Jade **climbed** to the top of the tallest hill outside town. Down below, the plant puffed out thick smoke. The grey cloud stretched over every house and every street. But up at the top, the smog got thin. And thinner. And then... sunlight. Real, bright sunlight hit Jade right in the face. She held her arms wide and let out a yell. 'You are up there!' she shouted at the sky. 'I **knew** it!'

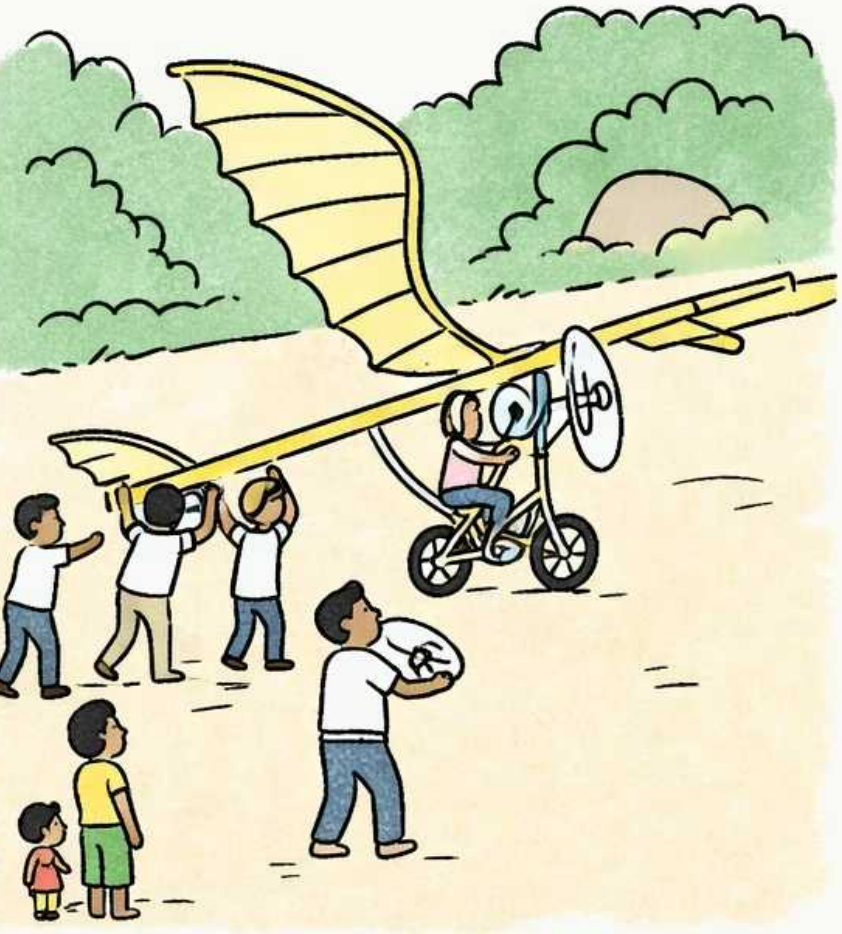
Jade burst into the shop. **Wrenches,** saws, and hammers hung on every wall. Parts and planks lay all over the floor. It was a grand mess. 'I need to get above the smog,' Jade said, picking up a big stack of parts. 'So I am making a plane.' She pressed part after part into a wooden frame. She had never made a plane before. How hard could it be?

Very hard, as it turned out. Her plane shot off the hilltop like a rocket. For three perfect seconds, she was flying. Then both wings wobbled, and the plane broke apart as it fell. What a **wreck!** Jade crashed into the tallest tree on the hill. She **climbed** down, branch by branch, with a bolt in her braid. 'Fine,' Jade said. 'That plane was bad. The next one will not be.'

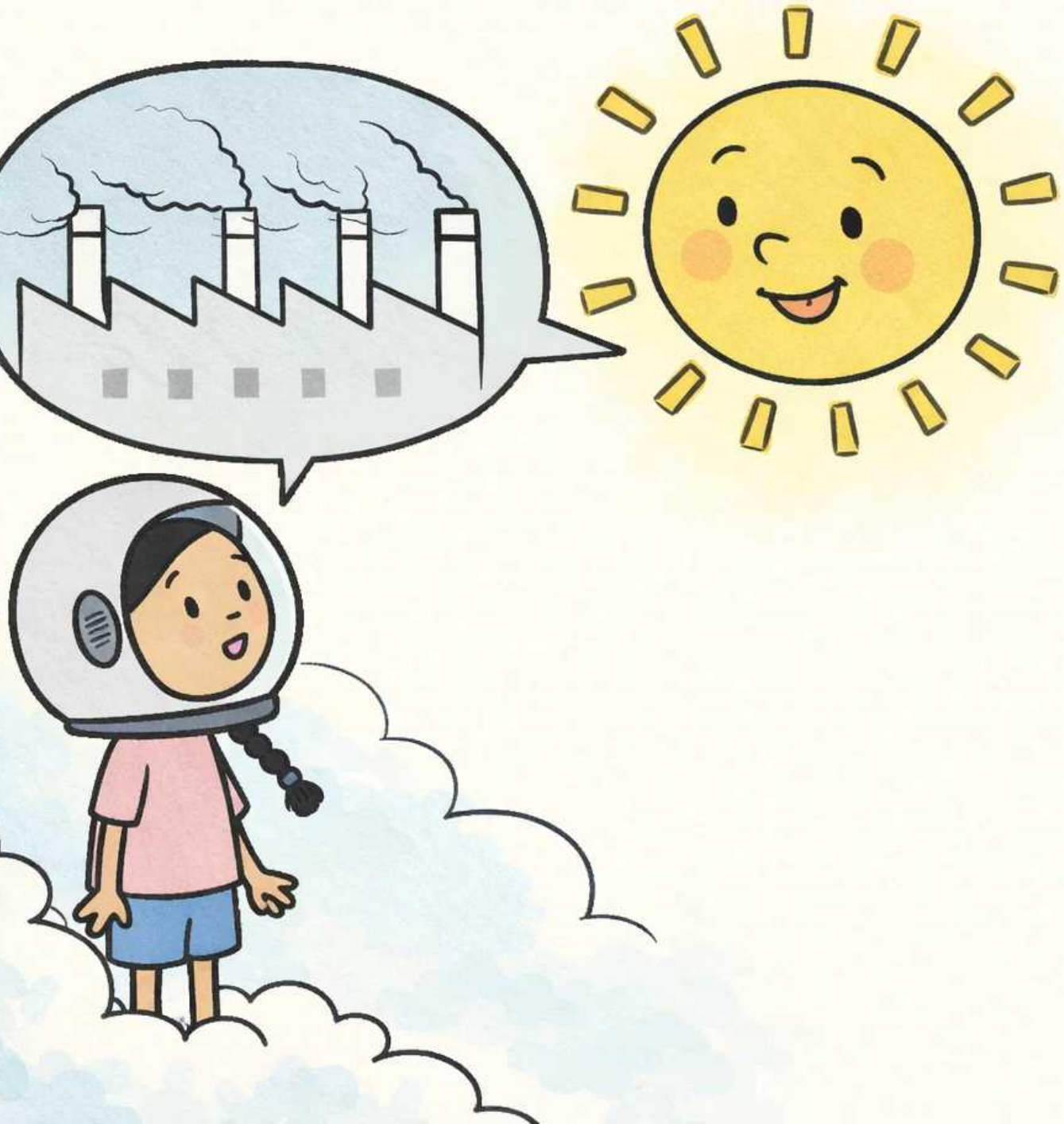
This time, Dad helped. He took a **wrench** and bolted on two wide, strong wings. Jade fit each cog in tight until the prop spun smooth and strong. No wobbles. No rattles. They stood back and looked at the new plane. It was twice as big and ten times as strong. 'Think it will fly?' Dad asked. Jade smiled. 'Only one way to find out.'



Word spread fast. By the time Jade wheeled her plane up the path, most of the town had come out to watch. 'She crashed last time!' a man yelled. 'She will crash again!' said another. Jade did not mind. She **climbed** in and gripped the frame. Dad held out a helmet. 'Do not come back without the sun,' he said. Jade pulled it on. 'I won't come back until I find it.'

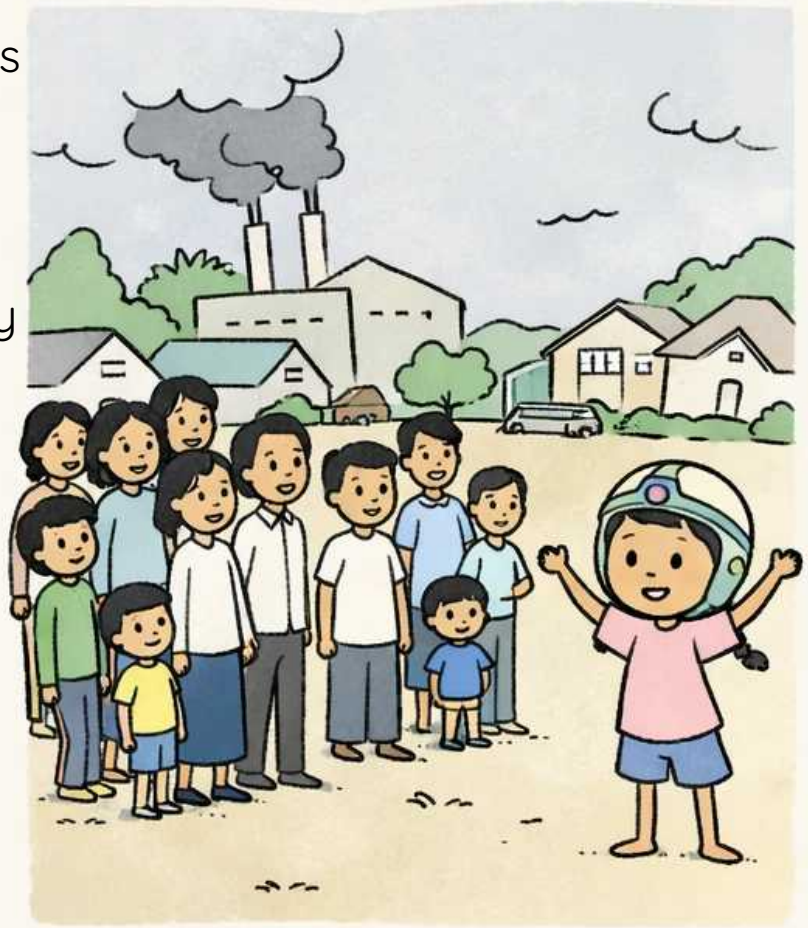


The plane roared. The wheels bumped off the cliff edge, and then there was nothing but sky. Jade was really flying, no trees this time. Jade whooped and waved at the tiny crowd far below. Dad waved with the rest of the town. The town let out a shout. She held the frame with both hands and aimed the nose up. She **climbed** past the grey, past the thick smog. Higher and higher, until...



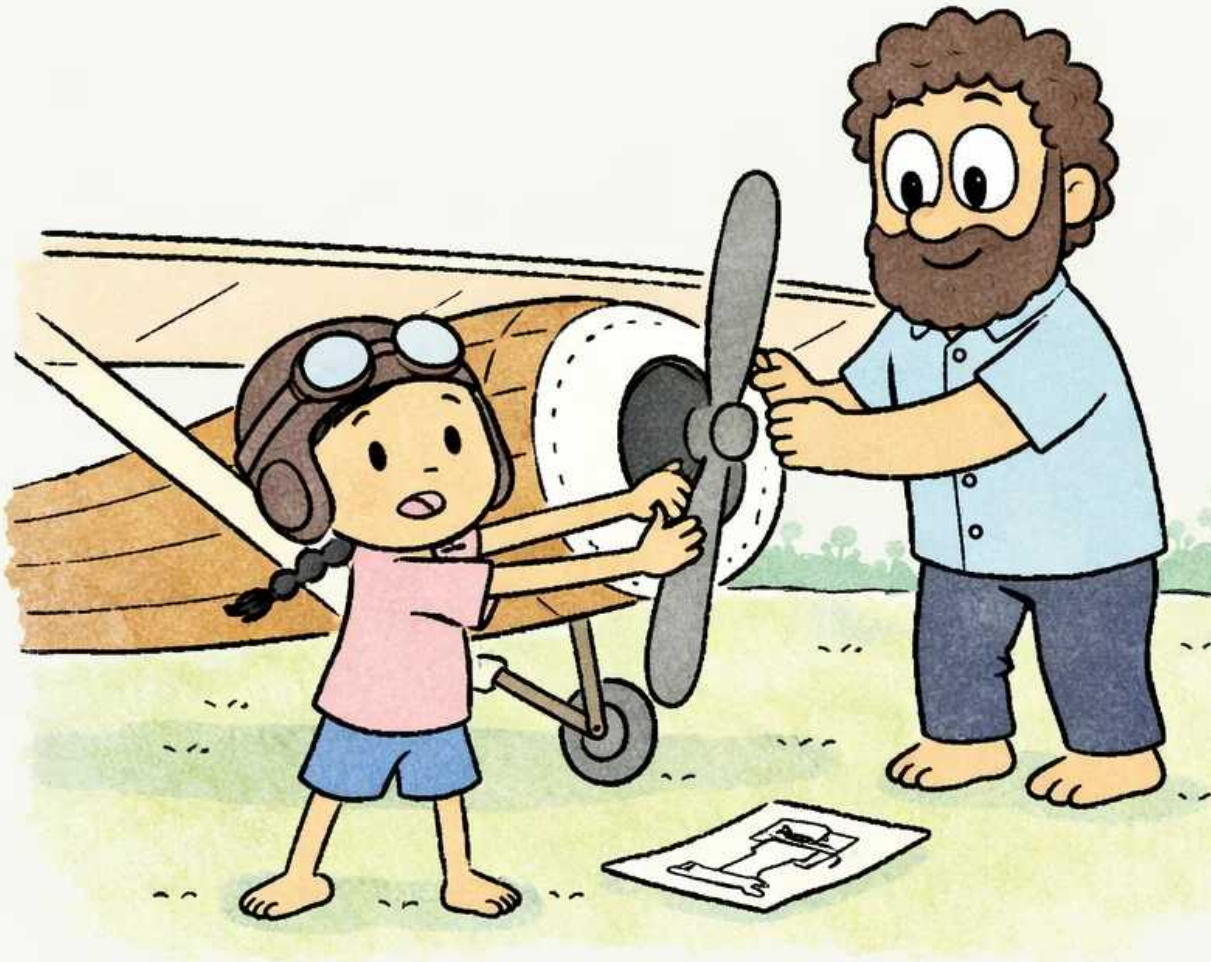
Jade burst past the top of the clouds into blazing golden light. And there was Sun. Not just sunlight. Sun, a big, round, glowing face, looking right at her. 'At last!' Sun called. 'Do you **know** how long I have been stuck in this spot? Nobody gets my call past all that smoke!' Jade blinked. 'You can... talk?' 'I can!' Sun said. 'That smoke blocks everything. Shut it down, kid. Or my rays will never reach the town.'

Jade zoomed home fast. She landed in the middle of town, **climbed** on top of her plane, and held her hands to her mouth. 'I met the sun!' Jade yelled. 'Sun says the smoke is blocking everything. We have to fix this. All of us. Right now.' For one second, nobody moved. Then one man took a spade. Then another. Then all of them. They planted trees and cleaned the river, side by side, until the smog started to thin.



And then, one morning, Sun burst free. Not a little peek. The full sun, beaming down with the widest, boldest smile Jade had ever seen. 'There you are!' Sun called. 'I missed you people!' Bright light washed over the town. Children ran to the beach and splashed into the water. Jade stood on the sand with Dad. Her tired **limbs** felt light at last. Dad put his hand on her arm. 'You got it back,' he said.

'Dad,' Jade said the very next morning. She stood beside a brand new plane, helmet on, prop set to go. A plan lay at her feet. 'There are other towns with grey skies. I checked. I **know** just where to go.' Dad smiled and put both hands on the nose of the plane. 'Then you had better go tell them.' Jade gave the prop a spin. She had a sun to deliver.



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The Girl Finds the Sun

A girl hates the grey, smoggy sky over her town, but one day sunlight breaks through, and she knows there is blue up there somewhere. She climbed a hilltop and built a plane to fly above the smog, but her first flight ended in a wreck in a tree. Will her next plane, fixed with a wrench and tighter parts, finally get her high enough to find the sun? Created to align with the UFLI Foundations scope and sequence (Lesson 98: kn /n/, wr /r/, mb /m/), this book practises words like 'climbed', 'knew', 'wreck', 'wrench', 'limbs'.

Phonics Focus: **kn /n/, wr /r/, mb /m/**

climbed, knew, know, limbs, wreck, wrench, wrenches, wry

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