

The Night Before

Change of Plans

Last week the school sent Mama a letter.
She read it to me,
and it had lots of words, but mostly it said
Miss Kring won't be my teacher
for second grade
like I wanted.
Instead I'll have a new teacher,
someone I don't even know.
The letter said his name is Mr. Patterson.
Teachers at my school aren't called Mr.
Their names begin Miss or Mrs.,
like they're supposed to.
Except for Mr. Liu, but he's for fourth grade,
so that's OK.



In the Morning

Seven O'Clock Butterflies

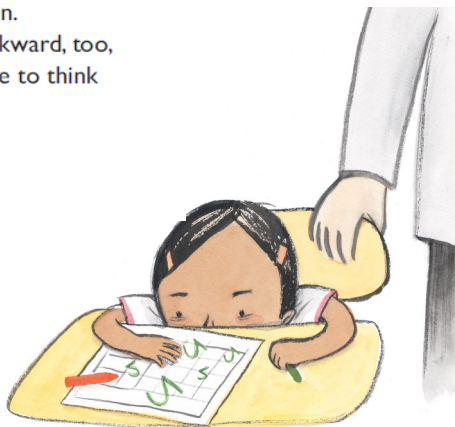
I think I have a stomachache.
And it wouldn't be smart to start second grade
on a day when I'm feeling sick.
Maybe tomorrow
would be better than today
for starting back to school.
But Mom says, "Your stomach just has butterflies."
And Gram says, "Guess we'd better
call an ambulance."
"That's exactly the way you teased me
when I was Katie's age,"
Mom says to Gram.
"You know how angry it made me,
so why do you do it to Katie?"
Gram shrugs.
"So butterflies aren't teasing?" she asks.
"Katie doesn't mind.
She knows what I mean, don't you, honey?"
I do. What she and Mom both mean is
they're not going to let me
stay home today.



At School

Mistake

I made my twos backward.
We were making calendars
for September,
and all my twos were backward.
I didn't know they were
till Melissa told me.
I put my head down on my desk
for a while,
because you can't erase crayon.
Mr. Patterson asked me what was wrong.
And when I told him,
he said, "Never mind—
you'll get them right soon.
I used to make mine backward, too,
and sometimes I still have to think
how they go."
That's funny.
I didn't think teachers
were ever wrong.



After School

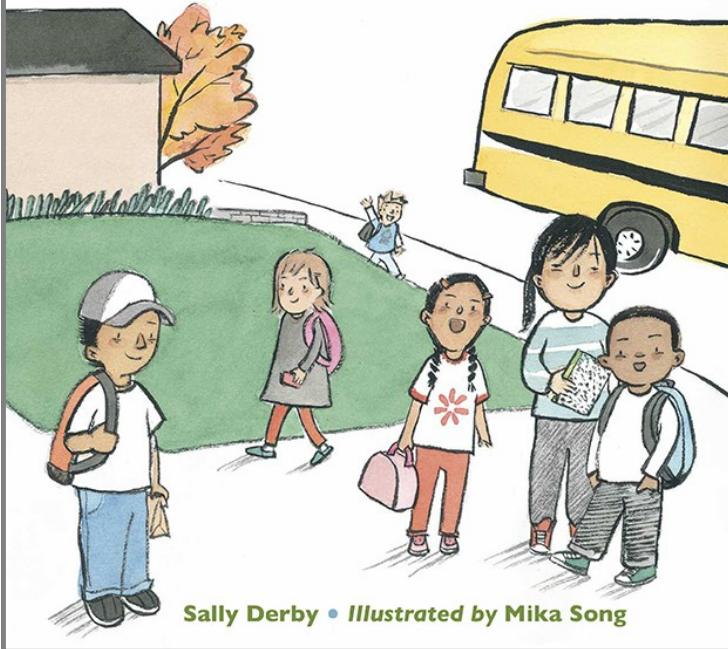
Mr. Patterson

Our class was kind of noisy today,
but Mr. Patterson doesn't mind noise.
This afternoon when I had a question,
he asked me, "Why are you whispering?
Speak up, Quiet Katie!"
I asked a little louder, and he said, "Better, but . . .
show Katie how it's done, Danny Boy."
Then Danny repeated my question.
Danny has the loudest voice in school.
"Think you can beat that, Quiet Katie?"
Mr. Patterson dared me.
So I asked louder, and then Danny did,
and we kept taking turns,
and everybody was laughing
until Mr. Patterson put up his hand.
He said, "Maybe we should be
a wee bit quieter
before we all get in trouble.
Good job, Quiet Katie.
Good job, Danny Boy."
I wonder if I could get Mom and Gram
to take turns getting louder.
Would they start to laugh,
and we could all have fun
together?



A New School Year

Stories in Six Voices



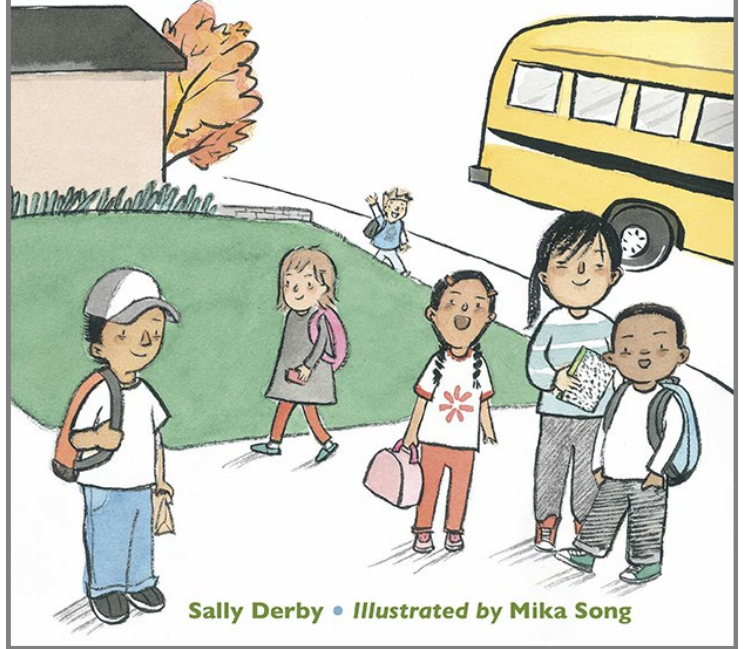
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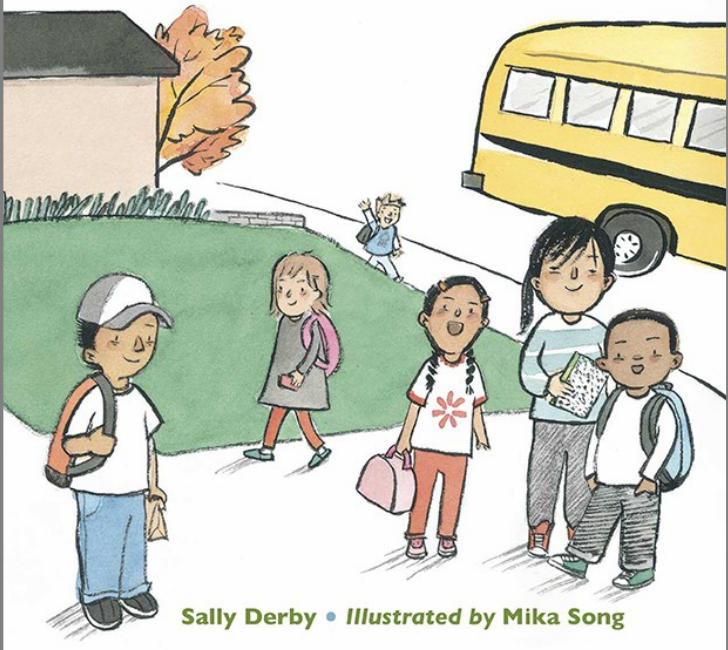
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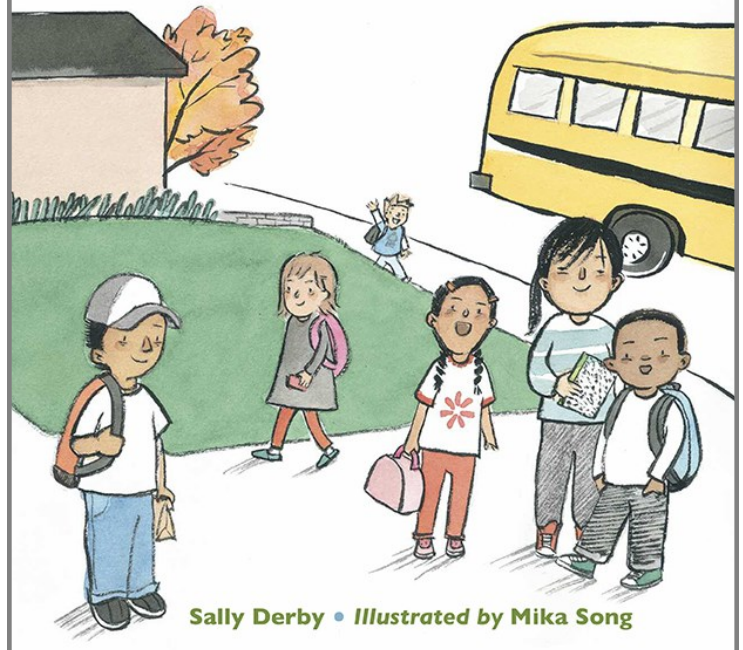
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