



THE OCEAN DREAM

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"I wish I
could swim
like a fish!"
Coral thinks.

Coral loves to explore the river.



She spends hours
playing in the clear, blue water.

“How many rivers are there on Earth?” Coral wonders. “Where does this river lead? I wish I could swim to the ocean.”

One day, a rainbow fish
appears, struggling in the
river grass.

“I’ve never seen such
a beautiful fish,” thinks Coral.



An illustration showing two hands reaching down from a light brown, textured background into a dark blue sea. The hands are positioned as if offering help to a small, pink and red fish with a large white eye. The sea is filled with stylized, teal-colored seaweed. The overall style is soft and artistic.

“Let me help you,
little one.”



The fish swishes its tail. "Come with me," the fish says.

"You saved me, so I will share a gift from the ocean with you."

"A gift from the ocean?"

Coral dives into the river. Cool water swirls around her body.



Coral and the rainbow fish
swim and swim.



They swim
through the river . . .



over an enormous, cresting wave . . .



and into the ocean.





Finally, they reach
the ocean's heart.



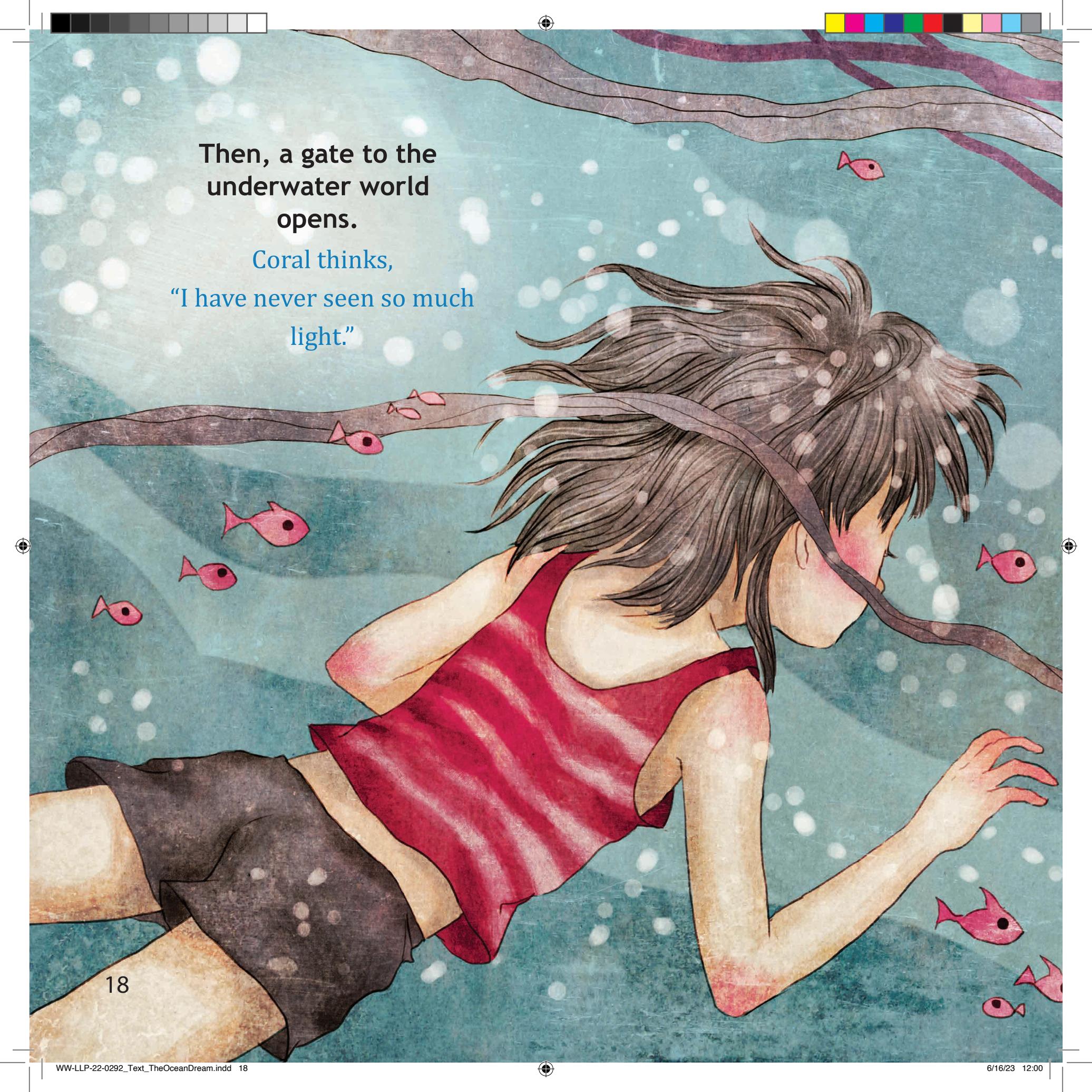


Coral can
hardly
believe what
she sees.



The rainbow fish waves its tail in a water dance.
The ocean water is cool and fresh. It wraps itself
around Coral like a sweet hug.





Then, a gate to the
underwater world
opens.

Coral thinks,
“I have never seen so much
light.”





“Welcome to our world, beautiful explorer,” the fish say.



“With this crown,
you are now
one of us.”



The fish take
Coral to rest on a bed
of the softest
seaweed.



“Please stay with us,”
the fish say.



A salty drop
falls on Coral's
eyelashes.
She blinks.

The underwater
world disappears.

Coral is lying next to
her beloved river.

She wonders, "Was it all a dream?"





Everyone she knows has
their own dream.

Coral dreams of becoming
a great explorer.







“Rainbow fish,
I will return to you,”
Coral whispers.



Someday, I will return to you.





Coral is the best swimmer in the village. One day, while swimming in the river, she follows a rainbow fish deep into the water where she discovers an amazing underwaterworld.



Nhà Thuyên has been working as a freelance writer in Hanoi for many years, and has recently discovered a passion in writing for children. With every story she writes, she reconnects with her inner child, and has realized that no matter what age - a child exists in each of us.



Le Thi Bích Khoa graduated from HCMC University of Fine Art and currently works as an art editor at Kim Dong publishing house, as well as a freelance writer, illustrator, and children's book designer. She is an acclaimed artist with a distinguished style of illustration. In 2010, her exhibition entitled Unravel was held at the L'Usine Gallery, and in 2010, she was awarded second prize from the Vietnam-Denmark Children's Literature Support Project for her work on the book The Sunless City. Recently, Bich Khoa was invited to be an official jury member for the competition Beyond the Cover 2012



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