

S. BIRTHDAY



2 9 10 20 8
B I R T H
4 1 25
D A Y

1=A 2=B 3=C 4=D
5=E 6=F 7=G 8=H
9=I 10=J 11=K 12=L
13=M 14=N 15=O 16=P
17=Q 18=R 19=S 20=T
21=U 22=V 23=W 24=X
25=Y 26=Z

EXMMVI 3
HAPPY
E G
X Z
M NO
M NO
W X



Dedicated to my beloved parents
and Giovanni, who always played
the code game with me.
- Cedar Wang

Cedar Wang

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Codebreaker Charlotte



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First Edition
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Today is Charlotte's ninth birthday. She has already received many presents, but she hasn't yet found the one from her great-grandmother. Charlotte and Nana—that's what she calls her sweet great-grandmother—love to solve puzzles.

"As usual, your gift is a quest," Nana whispers. Just as Charlotte had hoped! She's looking forward to a day full of code-cracking with Nana.



On a little card in the kitchen, Charlotte finds a hand-written note from Nana. It's a code!

Charlotte stares at the note but only sees a bunch of letters.



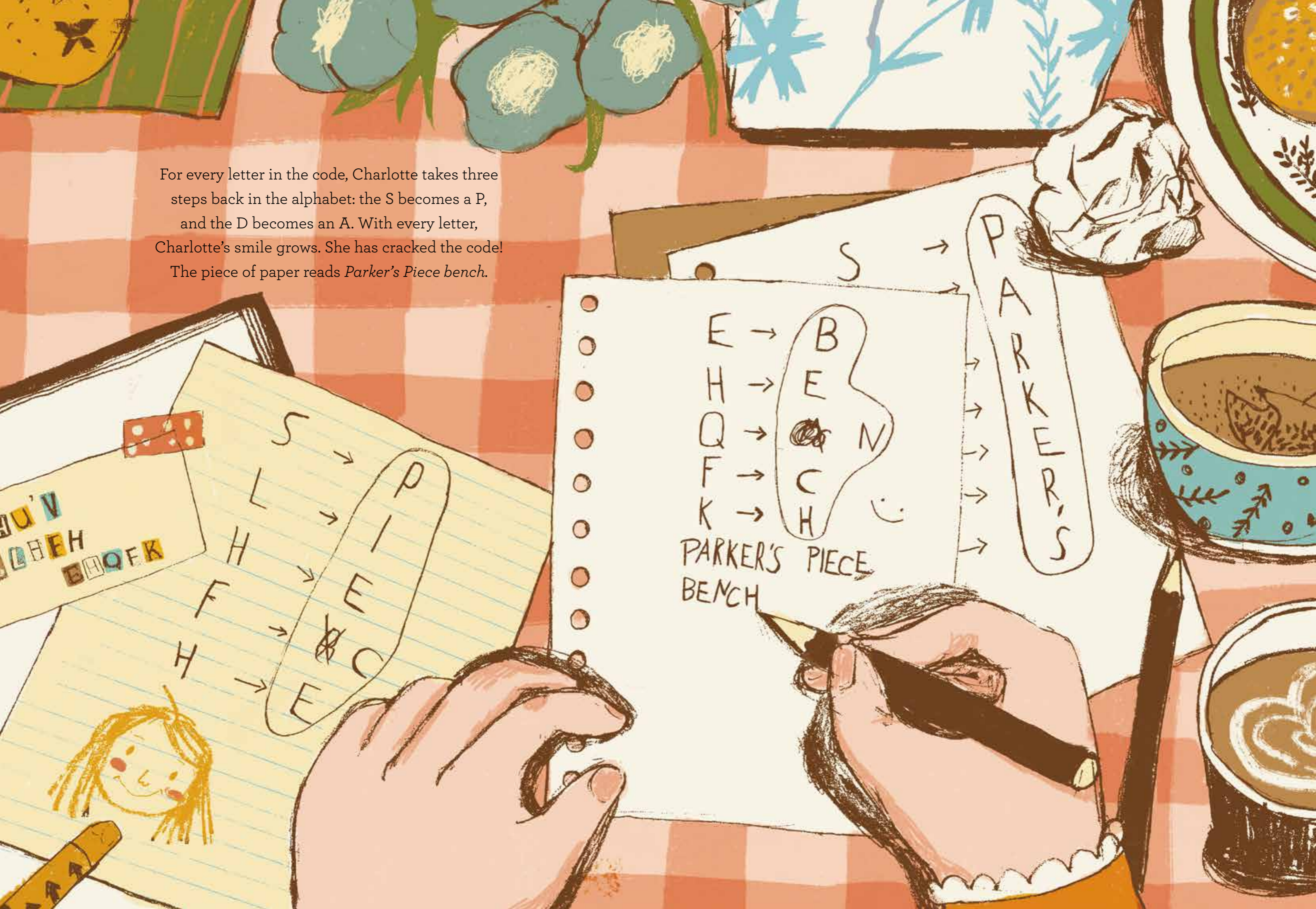
Charlotte looks around. Something doesn't feel quite . . . right.

On the table, there are three tea cups and a plate with three pastries. Today is Saturday, but on the calendar, it says it's Wednesday.



Three cups, three pastries, three days. That must be a hint!

For every letter in the code, Charlotte takes three steps back in the alphabet: the S becomes a P, and the D becomes an A. With every letter, Charlotte's smile grows. She has cracked the code! The piece of paper reads *Parker's Piece bench*.



S → P
A
R
K
E
R
S
P
I
E
C
E
B
E
N
C
H
PARKER'S PIECE
BENCH

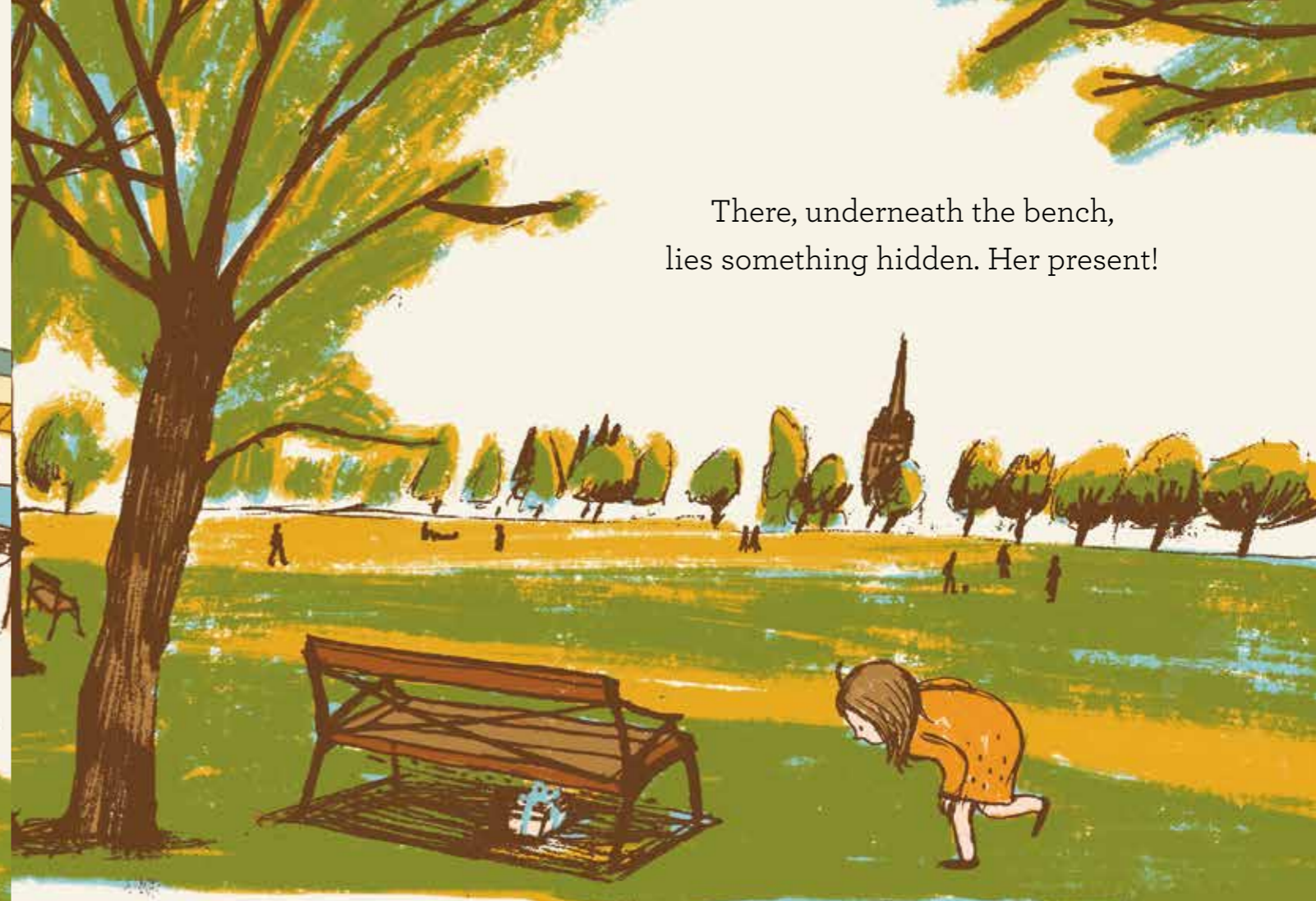
S → P
L → P
H → E
F → C
H → E
P
I
E
C
E
B
E
N
C
H
PARKER'S PIECE
BENCH



Parker's Piece is a big square in Cambridge, England.
Charlotte knows it well. Would her present be
there somewhere? Charlotte rushes to the square.



There, underneath the bench,
lies something hidden. Her present!



Inside the package, she finds
two things: a beautiful wooden
music box, which looks like
a typewriter, and an old
photograph. The photo is
of a sweet girl who looks
strangely familiar.





Suddenly, several rocks and twigs on the ground attract Charlotte's attention.
Could that be a new code? Is there another gift?


With the music box in her hand, Charlotte studies the pattern.
It looks like Morse code. Nana taught her that a while ago.





Quickly, Charlotte runs to the River Cam.
There, Nana is already waiting for her.

“Nana!” Charlotte calls out, “I saw the code in the kitchen,
and I found the music box. I cracked the second code too . . .”
“Oh, how wonderful! You’re a true codebreaker now!”
her great-grandmother smiles.



“Who’s the girl in the picture?”

Charlotte asks, but actually,
she already knows the answer.

“It’s you, isn’t it?”

Nana smiles. “That’s
a picture from when I
worked at Bletchley Park.”

“Bletchley Park?”

“I was studying math
at the University of
Cambridge. I loved
it there, but in my
final year, the Second
World War began.

Through my teacher, I ended up at
Bletchley Park—a British center
for codebreakers. That’s where
I tried to crack codes during the war.”

“More than ten thousand people worked at Bletchley Park. There were chess champions, crossword puzzle experts, people who spoke other languages, and math nerds. Many of them were women, which was unique in those days.”





“During the Second World War, the Germans used a cipher machine, the Enigma machine, to encode their messages.



That machine looked like the music box you’re holding in your hands now. At Bletchley Park, we tried to decipher the code.”



“On our team, there was a very talented mathematician, Alan Turing. He and a couple of Polish scientists came up with a way to decipher the code. That’s how he helped stop the war.”



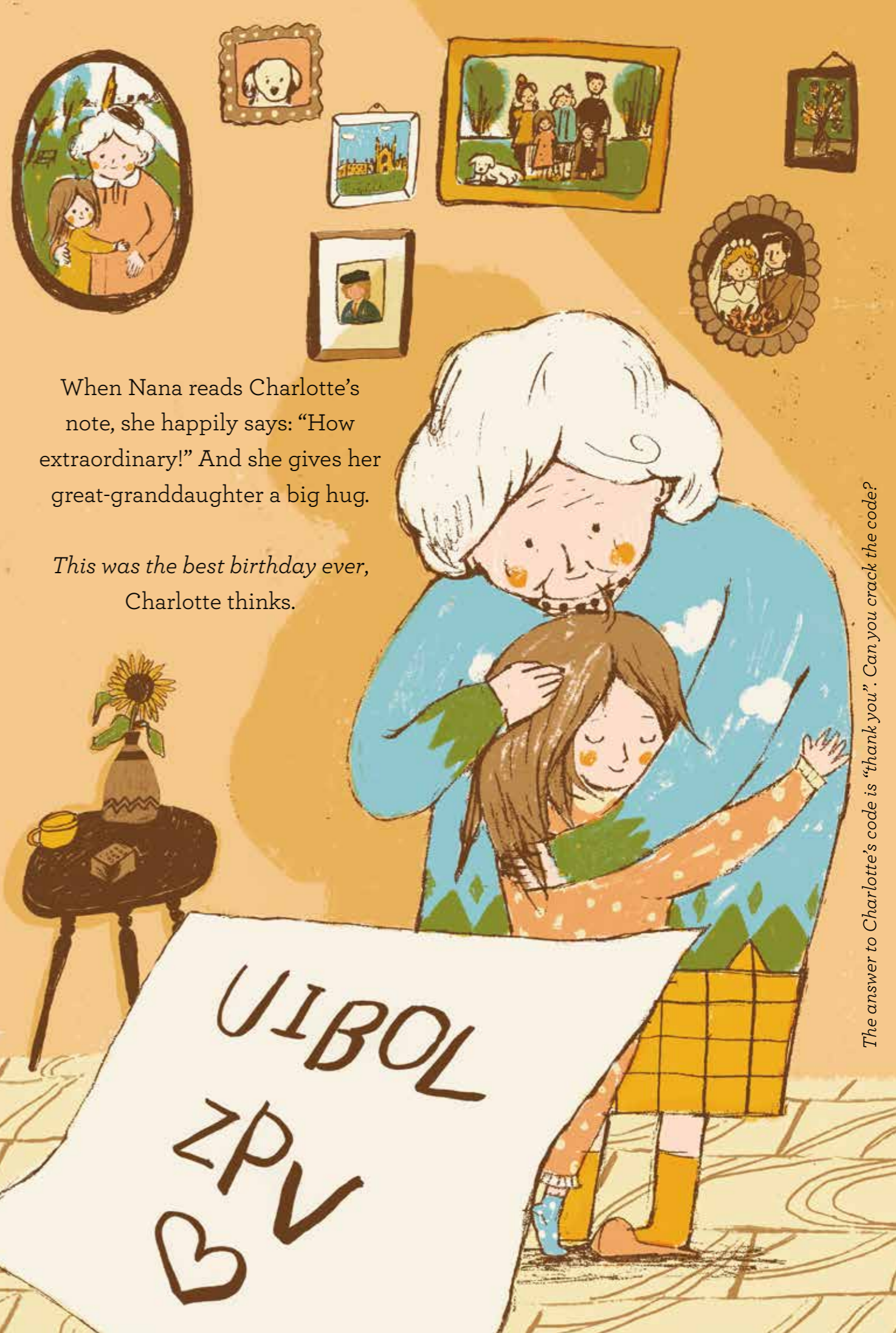
“After the end of the war, we weren’t allowed to talk about what we did at Bletchley Park. It remained a secret until many years later.”

“Wow, Nana, this is amazing!”
Charlotte says with wide eyes.





Once back home, Charlotte is eager to give something to her Nana. She decides to write her a note.



When Nana reads Charlotte's note, she happily says: "How extraordinary!" And she gives her great-granddaughter a big hug.

This was the best birthday ever, Charlotte thinks.

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B I R T H
25
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1=A 2=B 3=C 4=D
5=E 6=F 7=G 8=H
9=I 10=J 11=K 12=L
13=M 14=N 15=O 16=P
17=Q 18=R 19=S 20=T
21=U 22=V 23=W 24=X
25=Y 26=Z

LOOK AT
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