



My sister Lucía and I take the bus to school, and as soon as we get on, she's immediately surrounded by kids.

"What's up, Lucía?" someone says.

"How are you, LuLu?" someone else jokes, using Lucía's nickname.

"I am so fabulous!" LuLu says, smiling. "It's going to be a fun day!" Everyone loves Lucía, and she has lots of friends. I have plenty of people who love me, but most of them aren't at Martin



Luther King Jr. Elementary. Luckily, a few are, like my favorite librarian, Ms. Milligan; my band teacher, Ms. Cruz; and my new best friend, Christina. I have an old best friend, Isa Lopez, but she moved to Washington, D.C., last month. I was really sad at first, but then I met Christina McKay, and I felt a whole lot better. Christina is quiet and spends a lot of time writing in her journal, but she's really fun too. Isa and I are now best pen-pal friends. It's fun having a pen pal—it's kind of like

writing in a diary, except that you know someone else will read it!

“Hi, Christina!” I say when she gets on the bus. She’s easy to find, even though she usually wears dark clothes. I just look for curly bright-red hair, and there she is. “How’s it going?”

“Good,” Christina says. “I finished two whole chapters last night.”



“Congratulations,” I say, smiling. “What were they about?” Christina is writing an EPIC adventure called *The Unicorn Tales* about magical kingdoms and fantasy places. She wants to be a writer when

she grows up. Christina explained to me that an epic story is an especially long one that stars a hero, or, in the case of her story, a heroine. I like the idea of a special girl saving the day!

Christina plays the triangle in our band, which is perfect for her because she's really precise and has a delicate touch. I like to bang things.





Once, Valéria teased Christina, saying, “You got the easy one.”

Valéria thinks she’s extra special just because she plays the flute. “The triangle’s not even a real instrument!” she told Christina.



But unfortunately for Valéria, Ms. Cruz overheard.

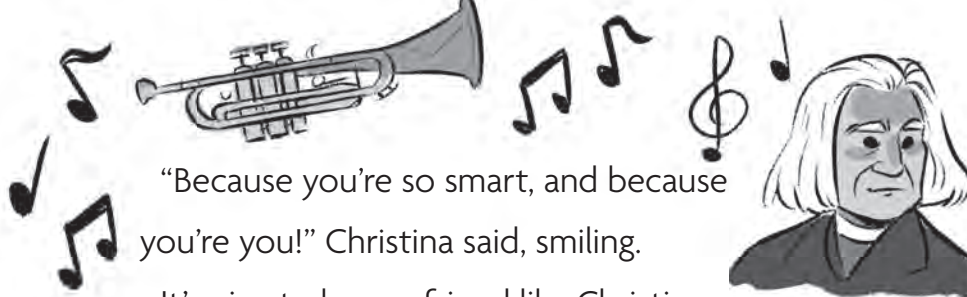
“The triangle is a beautiful and complex instrument,” Ms. Cruz explained. “It’s used in classical music, folk music, and even rock music. Mozart, Liszt, and Beethoven used it, and we will too!” Valéria was quiet after that, which was nice. I don’t know why she likes to tease me and whoever I’m friends with, but Christina has a few ideas.



“She’s just jealous of you,” she told me one day, after Valéria rolled her eyes at something I said.

“Jealous?” I said. “Why?”





“Because you’re so smart, and because you’re you!” Christina said, smiling.

It’s nice to have a friend like Christina.



We have music class after lunch three times a week. The other two days we go to the library. While we wait for class to start, it’s usually pretty loud because it takes a little bit of time to settle down after recess. We are supposed to warm up, but we also play around, talk, and have fun. Auggie is the lead percussionist, and he has a whole drum kit with lots of different drums. I’m on the snare drum, along with a couple of others, and a girl named Ellie plays the bass drum. I like watching Ellie play because she sort of dances when she plays. Christina is with our group because the triangle is in the percussion family too.

Valéria and her best friend, Kayla, are in the woodwind section with the flutes and clarinets.

