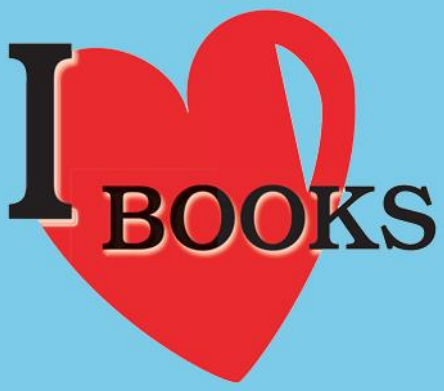


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Opening extract from

Mango & Bambang Tapir All at Sea

Written by

Polly Faber

Illustrated by

Clara Vulliamy

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Mango Allsorts

Kind and resourceful; Bambang's champion and best friend.



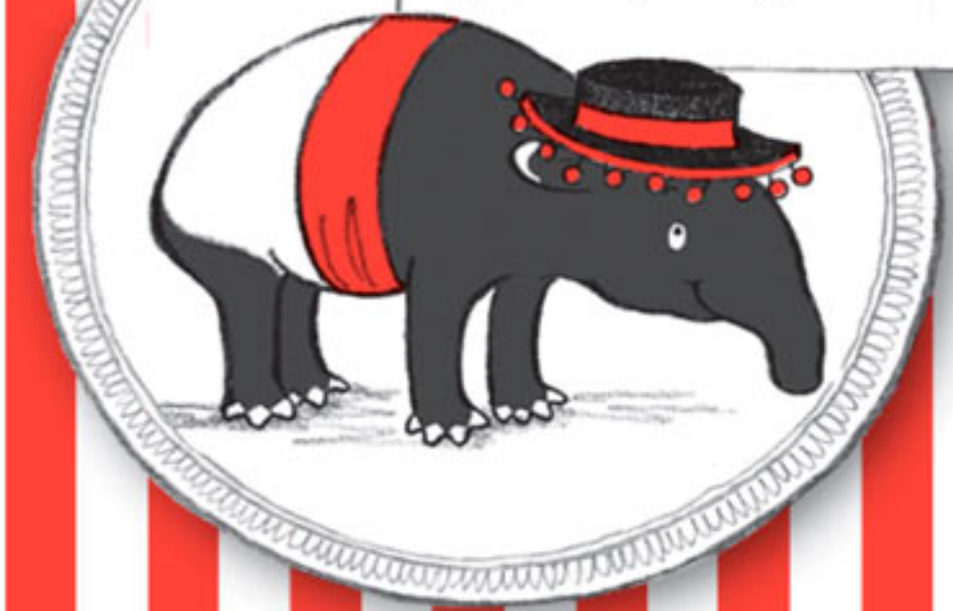
Rocket

Curly-tailed adventurer; full of bounce and lick.



Bambang

A hat-wearing, toe-tapping tapir; Mango's biggest fan.



George

Prepared to brush hair in an emergency



Señore Churros

Heel-stamping, hand-clapping master of flamenco.



Dr Cynthia Prickle-Posset

Untrustworthy Collector of the Unusual.



For Andy, who knows how to dance, with love. P. F.

For Leah, daughter and dearest pal, with love. C. V.

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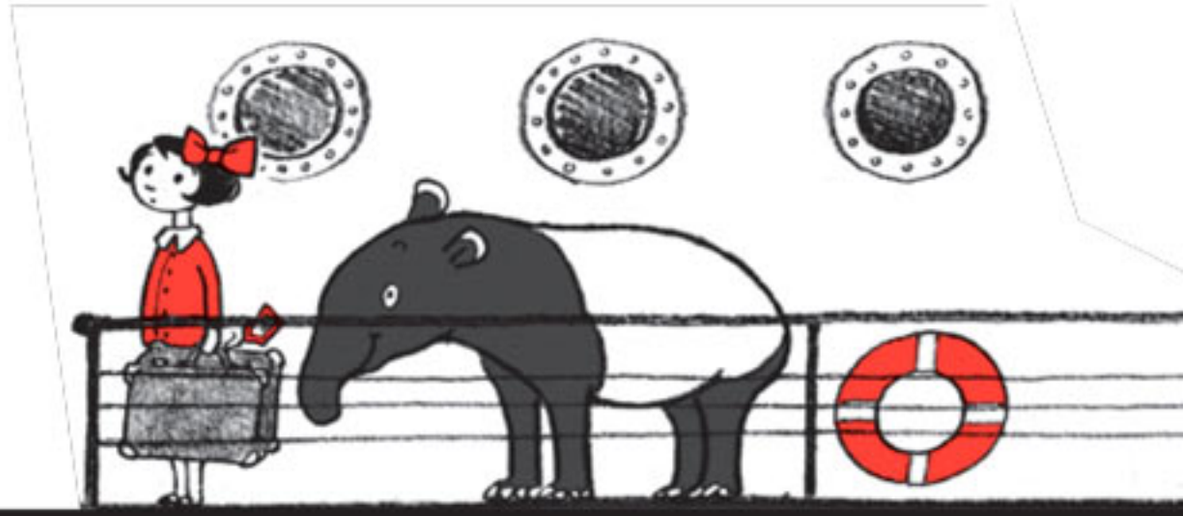
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Mango & BAMBANG

Tapir All at Sea



POLLY FABER
CLARA VULLIAMY

WALKER BOOKS

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"The problem is my feet. They don't seem to be very good at managing *fiddly* things, Mango. And my snout is too busy wanting a taste to hold on to the whisk firmly." Bambang looked sad as he came out of the Fancy Cakes and Bakes class. He also looked rather less tapir-like than usual. His normally black stripes were dusted with quite a lot of flour and icing sugar, while his white stripe, snout and ears seemed to be coated with a mixture of chocolate, butter and little sugar flowers. If only it had been a class about *becoming* a cake instead of making one.



"I'm sorry, Bambang. It wasn't quite the right hobby for you. I thought you'd enjoy having something of your own to do while I practised my chess, but perhaps NOT baking after all."

Mango, Bambang's very best friend, studied the list of evening classes in the busy city hall. There were all sorts available. Mango played chess in one of the rooms every Thursday evening. Bambang got a little fidgety watching her.



And that sometimes meant he got into a little trouble. There had been an incident with a water cooler only last week...

"Oh!" said Mango, looking down the list. "What about dancing Bambang? Your legs *are* lovely – and you've got more of them than most people, too!"

"Dancing?" said Bambang. "Oh, yes! I *might* like dancing!"



There were a few different dance classes. Mango was uncertain which to choose. After cleaning him up, she took Bambang upstairs to ballet – the one she was most familiar with. "Ballet didn't suit me – my legs turned out more karate-ish – but you're a different shape."

In a bare room, with mirrors on the wall, a line of neat children in tights and leotards were holding on to a bar. Mango watched them bend their knees, sink down and push up again, in time to

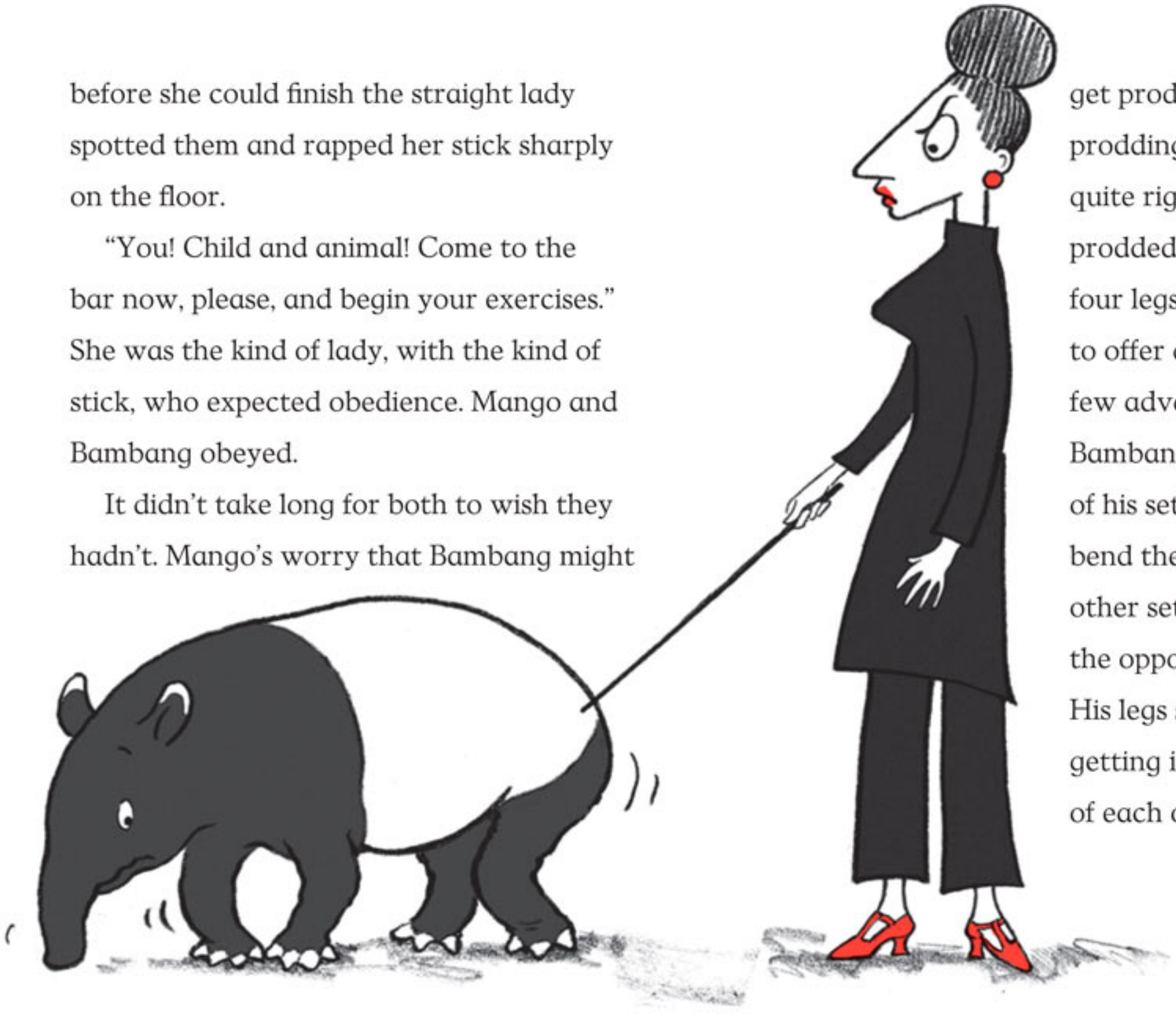
music from a slightly out of tune piano. A very straight lady with a very tight bun was walking back and forth observing. She had a thin stick and occasionally she prodded bits of children that were sticking out in places they shouldn't be. Mango suddenly knew this wasn't going to be right for Bambang, either. She wasn't entirely certain he *had* knees, let alone which way they bent. She didn't want Bambang to get prodded.

"Actually, Bambang..." she began, but

before she could finish the straight lady spotted them and rapped her stick sharply on the floor.

"You! Child and animal! Come to the bar now, please, and begin your exercises." She was the kind of lady, with the kind of stick, who expected obedience. Mango and Bambang obeyed.

It didn't take long for both to wish they hadn't. Mango's worry that Bambang might get prodded by the prodding stick was quite right. He got prodded a lot. Having four legs again seemed to offer disappointingly few advantages. When Bambang did get one of his sets of knees to bend the right way the other set would go in the opposite direction. His legs seemed to like getting in the way of each other.





Poor Bambang got more and more droopy around the snout and ears. "Are you sure this is dancing, Mango? I thought it would be jollier."

Mango felt awful.

"Naughty toes! NAUGHTY TOES!" the lady with the bun kept shouting. Bambang looked down at his feet baffled. A tapir's toes are splendidly grippy in mud, but not built for *pointe* work. It seemed unfair to call them naughty when they couldn't help it in the slightest.