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Step into my shoes

illustration
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To Cybele

A. X.



English edition first published in the United Kingdom in 2024 by Lantana Publishing Ltd.
Clavier House, 21 Fifth Road, Newbury RG14 6DN, UK
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Originally published in Greek as Τα παπούτσια των άλλων
by Ikaros Publishing SA, Greece in 2019.



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Illustration © Fotini Tikkou, 2019
English Translation © Konstantine Matsoukas, 2024

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A CIP catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

Hardback ISBN: 978-1-915244-95-6
PDF ISBN: 978-1-915244-96-3
ePub3 ISBN: 978-1-915244-97-0

Printed and bound in China using sustainably sourced paper and plant-based inks.
Original artwork created digitally using photography and collage.

Hello, I'm Matou. This is my neighbourhood: quiet, fairly green and with a small lake. Nothing "wow!" about it. All the wow things are in the big city: museums, libraries, parks... Oh, and a tower of steel reaching to the sky!



Yes, I live just outside Paris and not IN Paris, as much as I'd like to.

My school is close to home. Up until last year, I walked to school with my mum. This year, things have changed. I'm now grown up! Actually, Mum's changed jobs and hasn't time to walk me to school. She would miss her train to Paris and there's no way she could walk fourteen miles!

The fourteen miles from my house to the Eiffel Tower is enough to make me the resident of a place nobody has ever heard of.



The door was closed but there was a sea of shoes laid out in front of it. Shoes everywhere! So many shoes! Most were black men's shoes but there were others, too: ankle boots, welly boots, heels, even flip-flops! *At this time of year?* I went closer for a better look.

The sports shoes I like! With orange shoelaces, too! I looked around. There was no one nearby. *I'm going to try them on! They're nearly my size!*



A few weeks later, a day I'd been looking forward to came around. Mum had promised me a visit to the shops, just the two of us, so I could finally show her the sports shoes I liked. She would leave work early so we could have lunch together, and we'd go back out again straight away. We'd have ice cream, too, if the weather was nice.

I raised my eyes and saw Mum looking down at me.
"Someone who works really hard," I said out loud.

Mum gave me a tight hug, and didn't say a word.



