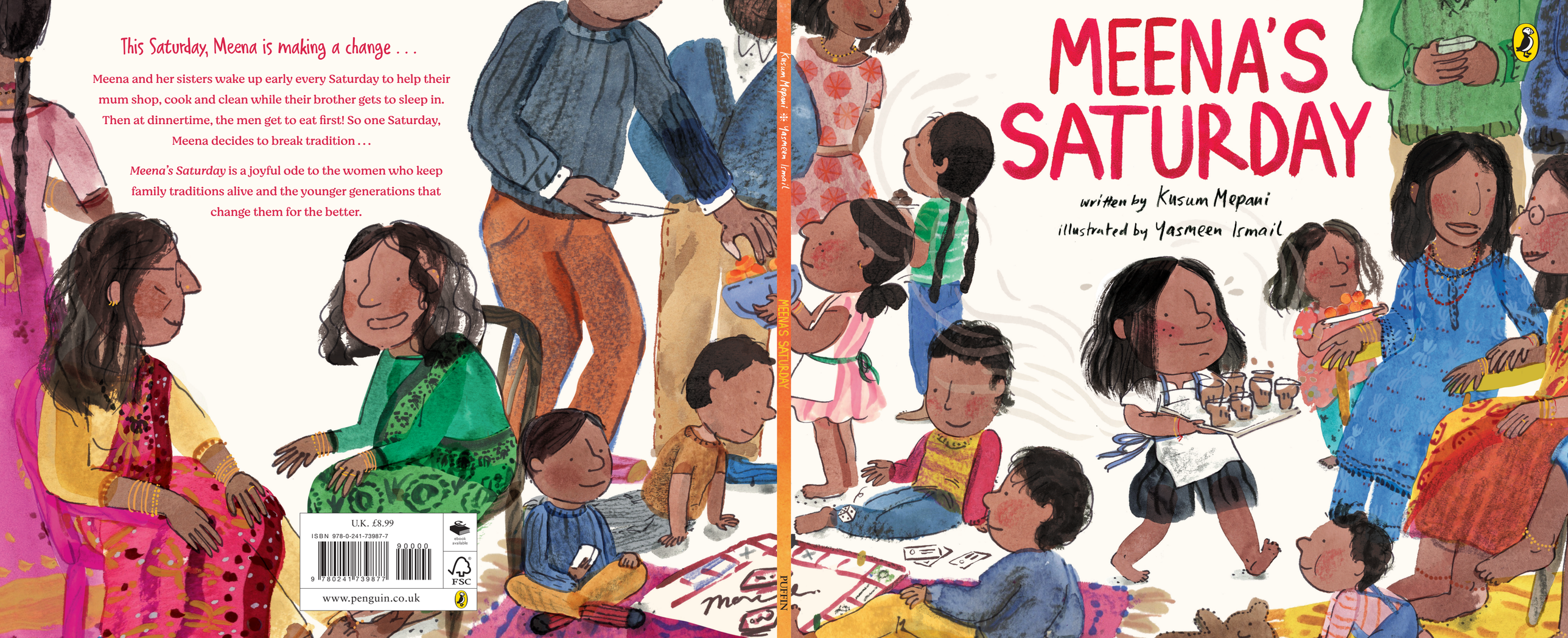


This Saturday, Meena is making a change . . .

Meena and her sisters wake up early every Saturday to help their mum shop, cook and clean while their brother gets to sleep in. Then at dinnertime, the men get to eat first! So one Saturday, Meena decides to break tradition . . .

Meena's Saturday is a joyful ode to the women who keep family traditions alive and the younger generations that change them for the better.

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Kusum Mepani ✻ Yasmeen Ismail

MEENA'S SATURDAY

PUFFIN

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illustrated by Yasmeen Ismail

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To the women in my family,
for their support and love. To Ian, Theo,
and Dylan for keeping me grounded!
– K. M.

For Theresa, Elaine, Suneetha,
Levina, Narika, Leela and Anisha.
And for Uncle Negi, too.
– Y. I.

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In my house,
Saturdays start early.

My dad is just getting home from the night shift at the factory, so he gives us a hug and goes to bed.



My mum has already been awake for a while. She made chai.

She gives me and my sisters a cup, and we sit and sip and watch the sunrise colour the crowded city sky. I like this part. It's quiet.

It's also the last time I get to sit down for the rest of the day.



On Saturdays, everyone comes to our house, so we have to get ready.
We have to clean the house from top to bottom. My mum takes charge.

Then we have to go to the shops. When we're outside the house, us kids take charge.

My mum speaks five languages, but she can't read English yet, so it's our job to be her guide.



Meanwhile, my brother gets to sit in bed and read.

It's not fair. I love books. But when I tell my mum, she just says, "He's studying."

In my family, boys get special treatment because they're boys.

Mum says that when she grew up in Gujarat, India, that's just the way it worked.

I say those were the old days and things are changing.

Someday, I'm going to be super-successful. Then I'll read in bed all day and make my brother do the chores.

