The Purple Lozenge



Violet Mackerel has an extremely sore throat.

It feels awful to talk, terrible to swallow and horrible to eat.

Her older sister, Nicola, and her brother, Dylan, have just left for school.

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Violet has been home from school all week and today Mum is taking her to see Doctor Singh.

Violet likes Doctor Singh because he asks good questions such as, "Would you like to hear your heartbeat through my stethoscope?" and "Do you want to see how my examination table goes up and down?"

Also, his name makes her slightly wonder if he might be a singing sort of doctor, especially as he doesn't mind making up a little tune like

Good morning Violet Mackerel
And how are you today?
That's quite a nasty bruise you have
But it should fade away.

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When Violet and Mum get to the doctor's surgery, they sit in the waiting room. Mum knits a few rows of a soft rosy cardigan. She is a very good knitter.



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Soon the lady at the desk says, "**VIOLET MACKEREL**", which means it is time for Violet and Mum to go and see Doctor Singh.

"How are you this morning?" he asks, feeling her forehead.

"My throat hurts," croaks Violet. "It feels as if there is a cactus in it."

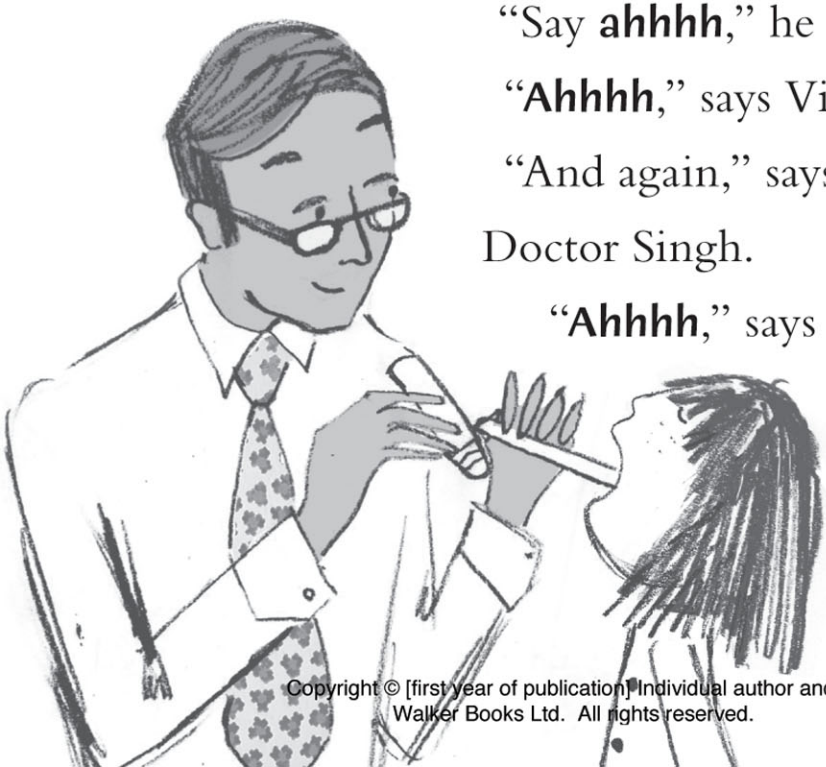
Doctor Singh presses a big flat lollipop stick on her tongue.

"Say **ahhhh**," he says.

"**Ahhhh**," says Violet.

"And again," says Doctor Singh.

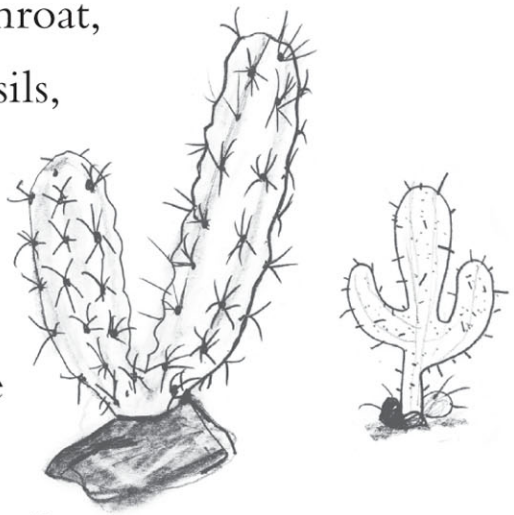
"**Ahhhh**," says Violet.



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"Hmmm," says Doctor Singh, who has been looking down Violet's throat. "I'm afraid that's a bad case of tonsillitis."

Violet has had tonsillitis before. Lots of times. It is when the two bits at the back of your throat, which are called tonsils, swell up and feel as though you have swallowed a cactus.



"I'll give you some lozenges for now, to help with the prickles," says Doctor Singh, "but I think it would be a good idea to have your tonsils taken out."

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Violet, however, does *not* think this is a good idea. She generally prefers *not* to have things taken out.

"It's a very simple operation at the hospital," explains Doctor Singh, "and you'll be asleep all the way through it. And then you'll need a while at home afterwards, resting and eating ice-cream."



Violet quite likes the idea of resting at home and eating ice-cream. But she is not sure about the hospital part. She has never had an operation before.

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