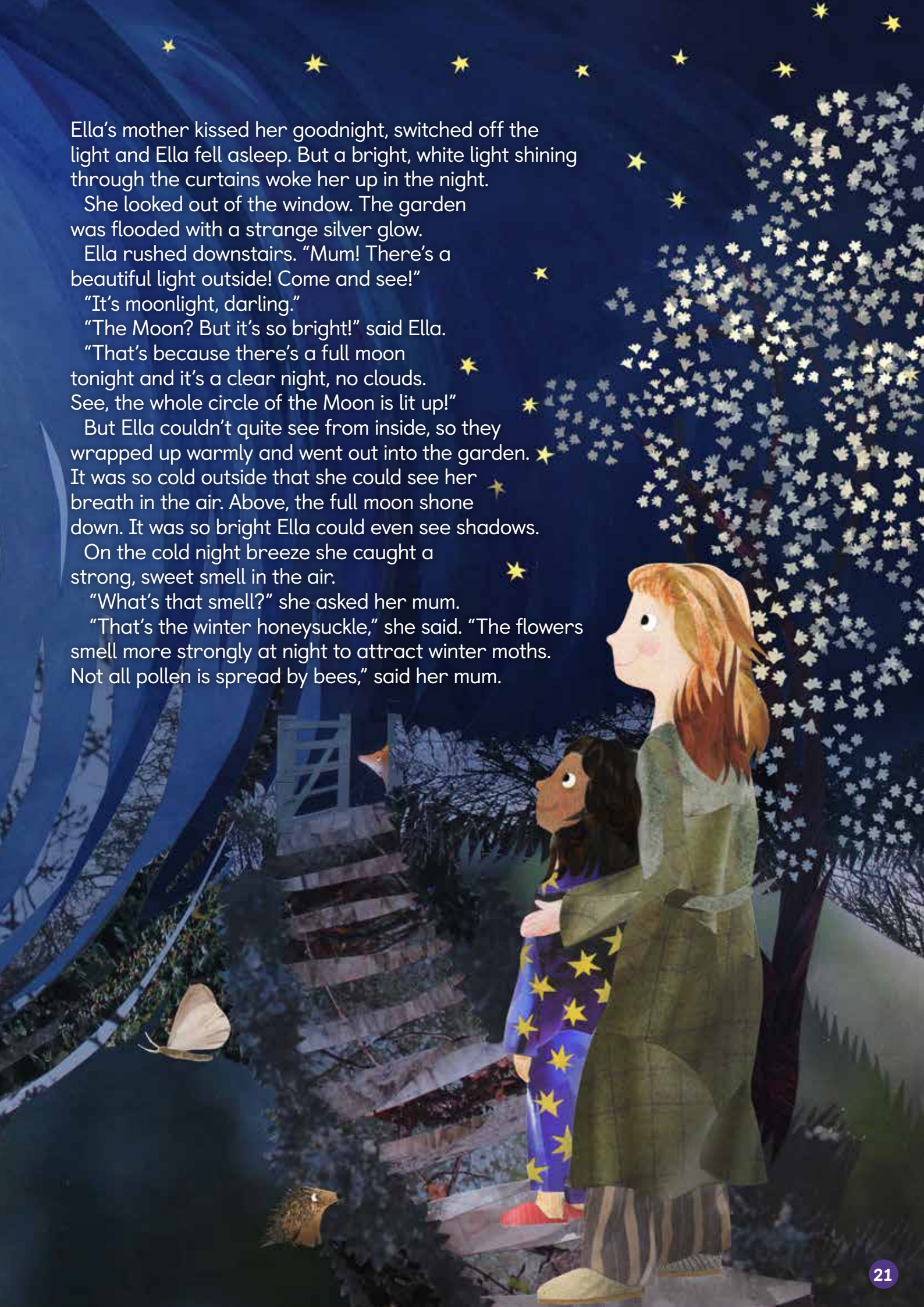


Read

The night of the FULL MOON

Moonlight reveals the
secrets of Ella's garden...





Ella's mother kissed her goodnight, switched off the light and Ella fell asleep. But a bright, white light shining through the curtains woke her up in the night.

She looked out of the window. The garden was flooded with a strange silver glow.

Ella rushed downstairs. "Mum! There's a beautiful light outside! Come and see!"

"It's moonlight, darling."

"The Moon? But it's so bright!" said Ella.


"That's because there's a full moon tonight and it's a clear night, no clouds. See, the whole circle of the Moon is lit up!"

But Ella couldn't quite see from inside, so they wrapped up warmly and went out into the garden. It was so cold outside that she could see her breath in the air. Above, the full moon shone down. It was so bright Ella could even see shadows.

On the cold night breeze she caught a strong, sweet smell in the air.

"What's that smell?" she asked her mum.

"That's the winter honeysuckle," she said. "The flowers smell more strongly at night to attract winter moths. Not all pollen is spread by bees," said her mum.



“Do any other animals come out at night?”
Ella asked.

“Oh yes,” said her mum, “badgers and foxes, hedgehogs, mice and moths. They are all nocturnal – creatures that prefer the night and darkness.”

Keeping still and quiet, Ella spied a mouse as it darted for cover, and spotted a hedgehog having its last meal before hibernating.

She was so excited she wanted to see more.

“The Moon is too bright,” said Ella’s mum. “Animals come out in the dark because they feel safe from predators that might eat them. But if we can see them in the full moonlight, so can predators – so they’d rather keep safe and out of sight.”

“For how long?” Ella asked.

“Until the Moon starts to wane. Once we see less and less of it, the nights become darker.”

A few nights later, Ella went out again. Now that the Moon was less full and not as bright, the animals weren’t as shy. She saw a fox prowl through the bushes. And above, an owl screeched in a tree.

She knew now that while the animals didn’t mind the moonlight, they preferred the dark.

But though they may have been nocturnal, Ella wasn’t. Feeling tired, she went to bed, knowing that she’d be able to see the animals again. After all, there would be another full moon next month...

