

The title 'Chapter One' is written in a large, black, handwritten-style font. It is surrounded by several small, simple line-art icons: two tennis rackets (one on the left, one on the right), two tennis balls, and two starburst shapes. There are also several small circles scattered around the text.

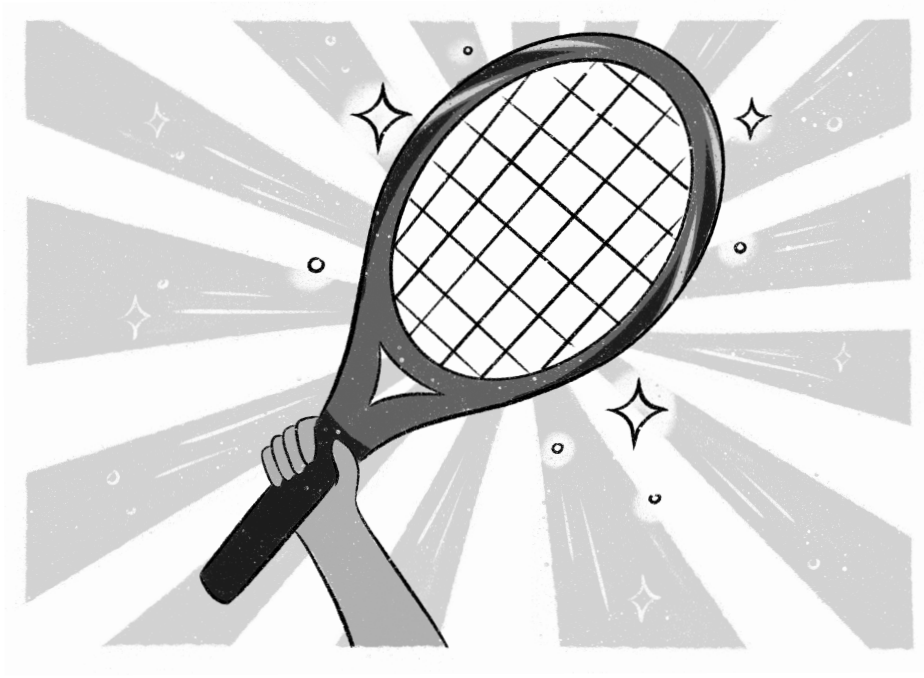
# Chapter One

Hi there! My name is Ash. I'm seven years old and I love tennis!

Today, I'm going to a fancy-dress party with my best friend, James. I'm going as a **mega tennis star**. I have frilly socks on, and the most colourful tennis outfit I own.

I even have a light blue hat on with pictures of tennis racquets and balls printed all over it.

‘I love your racquet, Ash,’ James says as he stares at the **shiny** racquet I’m holding. It has black and silver stripes.



‘It’s brand new,’ I tell him.

‘Mum and Dad almost didn’t let me bring it.’

‘That’s right, you have to take **good care** of it, Ash. Now, will one of you please knock on the door?’ Mum says from behind me and James.

The three of us are standing outside the party house. There are yellow balloons taped to the front door.

James knocks and then fixes his purple bow tie. He's dressed as a magician. He has a big top hat and is holding a fake bunny rabbit.

'You look **awesome**,' I tell him, and he grins.

We do our secret handshake, which is a double high five, a hip bump, and then we grip hands before we wiggle our fingers.

The door opens just as we finish.

'Hi! Welcome to my birthday party!' says Noah.



**‘Happy birthday, Noah!’**

James and I say at the same time.

‘You’ve got a mini race car!’ I say.

‘Yes! I’m a racing car driver,’

Noah says. He turns the mini race  
car’s steering wheel this way and

that way. ‘I got this car for my birthday from my aunty!’

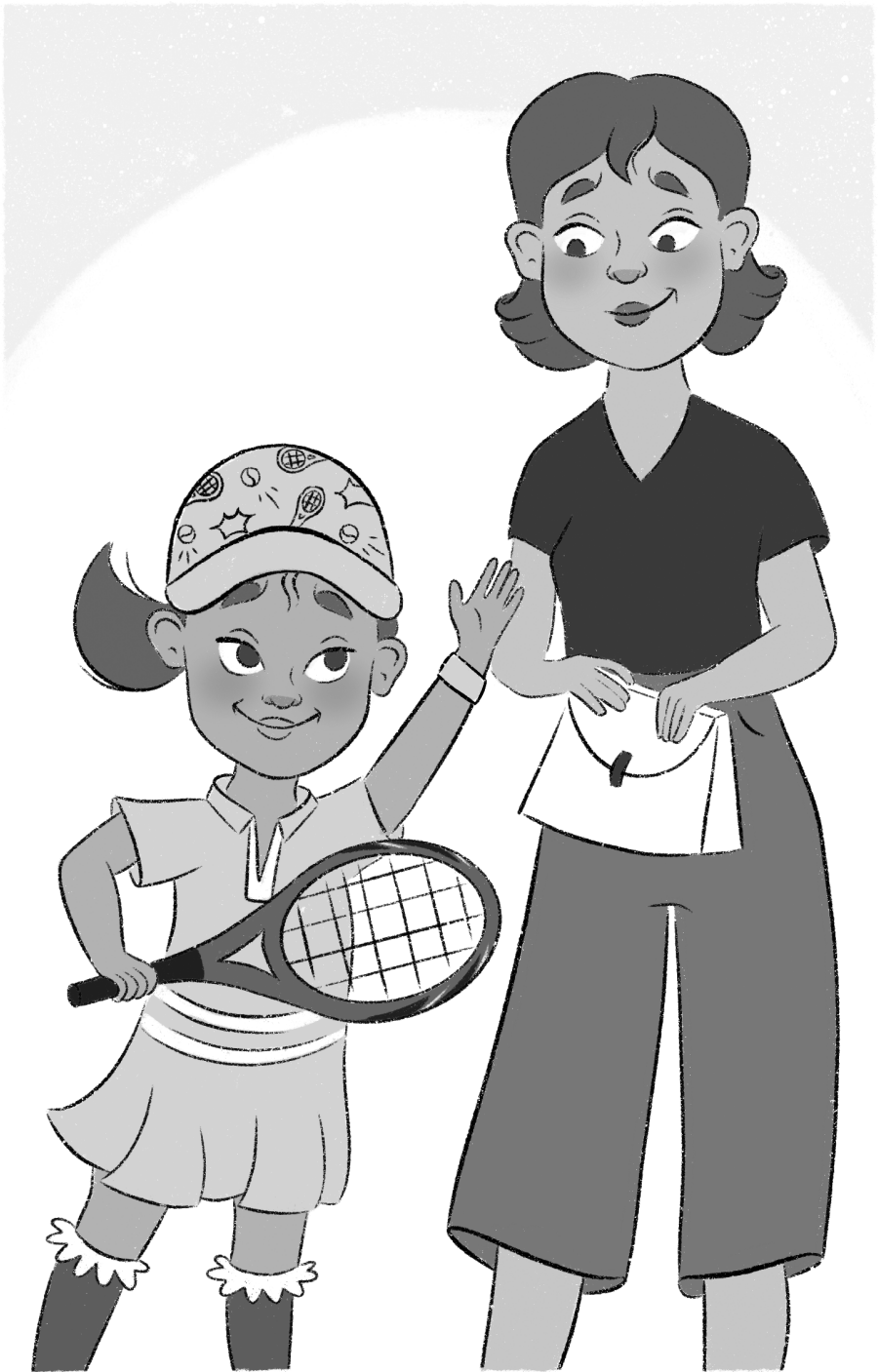
‘That’s so **cool!**’ I say.

Noah drives his car inside and James and I follow him into the house.

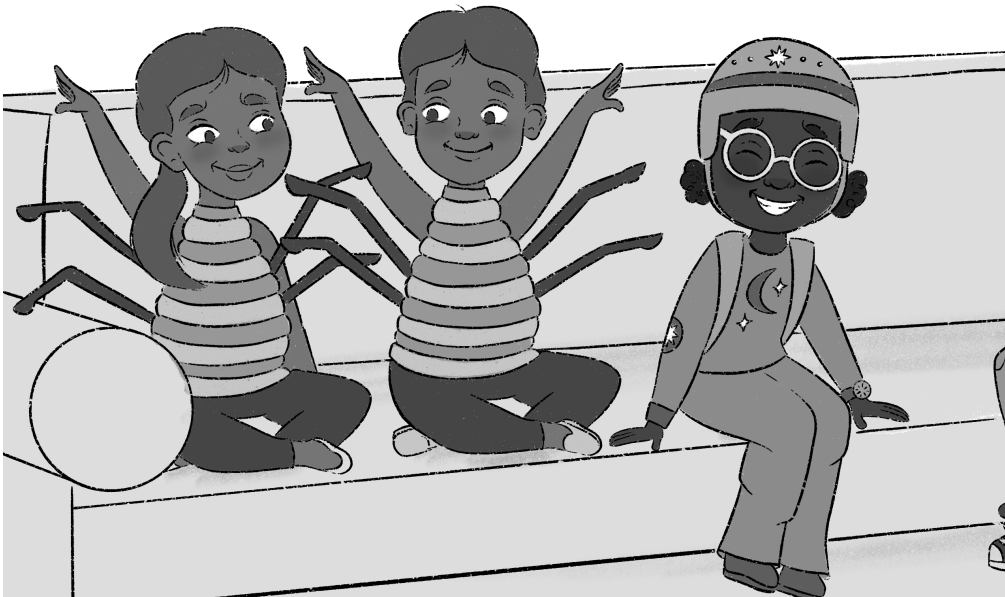
‘Okay, bye Mum, see you later!’ I say.

‘I’ll just be in the next room with the other parents, Ash! Remember, **don’t lose** that racquet!’

James and I follow Noah to the living room where some of our



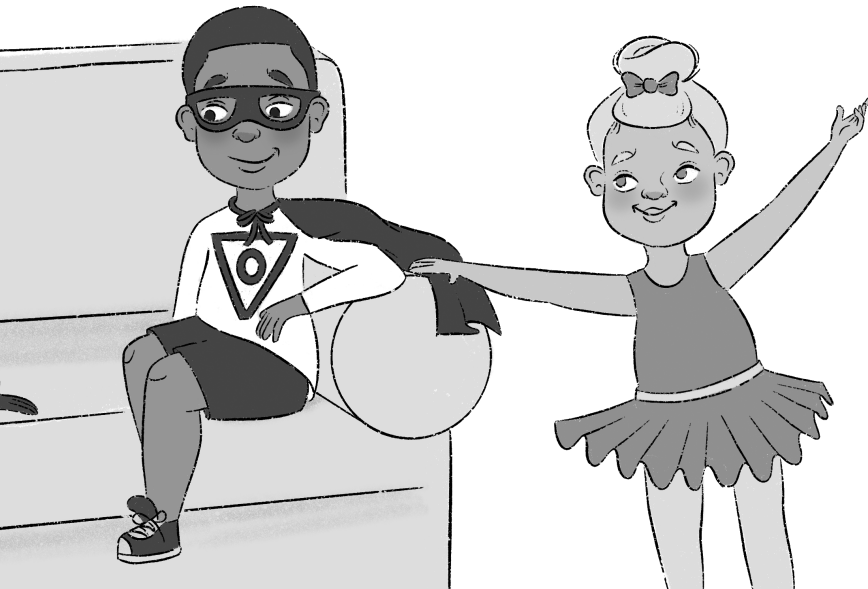
friends are sitting on the couch.  
They all look **fantastic!** Riley is dressed as an astronaut. She has made a round helmet and painted it with **sparkles**. Omari is dressed as a superhero with a bright blue **cape** tied around his neck. Jada is a





ballerina in a pink **tutu**. The twins, Tilly and Toby, are dressed up as bugs, with four **wriggly** pretend arms coming out of their bodies.

‘We have the costume competition after lunch,’ Noah says. ‘The winner gets a prize.’



‘What’s the prize?’ I ask.

Noah’s eyes get big. ‘It’s two  
gigantic chocolate bars!’

My mouth waters as I think  
about eating a gigantic chocolate  
bar.

‘James,’ I say. ‘We’ve got to **win!**’