The Doll That Bommakka Made

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I am the doll, the dancing doll that Bommakka made a long time ago.

This is the clay, the soft brown clay, *that was scooped up one day for crafting me, the dancing doll that Bommakka made.*
These are the hands, the supple hands that kneaded the clay that was scooped up one day for crafting me, the dancing doll that Bommakka made.
This is the tool, the simple tool that trimmed the shape that was cast in the mould that made me smooth

in the supple hands

that kneaded the clay that was scooped up one day for crafting me,

the dancing doll that Bommakka made.
This is the sun
that rose up high
that watched the tool
that trimmed the shape
that was cast in the mould
that made me smooth
in the supple hands
that kneaded the clay
that was scooped up one day
for crafting me,
the dancing doll
that Bommakka made.
These are the brushes, the bamboo brushes that dipped and danced in the colourful paints that looked to the sun to bake me dry, and this is the tool that trimmed the shape that was cast in the mould that made me smooth in the supple hands that kneaded the clay that was scooped up one day for crafting me, the dancing doll that Bommakka made.
This is the market, the Sunday market, where a cheerful girl skipped up one day as I smiled at her from a wicker basket while I stood on my feet waiting for someone to take me home. With a joyful look, she picked me up, and took me home, and played with me, the dancing doll that Bommakka made.
These are the steps, the seven steps in a special nook in the little girl's home. The happy girl who skipped to the market, where I stood on my feet in a wicker basket and hoped to find a loving home where I could live for a long long time.
I am the doll, the dancing doll who graced the steps of the display of dolls arranged with care year after year in the little girl's house...
...before she wrapped me in layers of cotton and tucked me in a family trunk -an old, old chest handing me down to her very own daughter who presented me to her own daughter down through the years.
I am the doll, the very same doll wearing a shiny blouse and a long pleated skirt, swaying my hips as I gently twirl, bobbing and nodding my neck in turn inviting you sweetly to pause and to gaze.
I am the graceful dancing doll that Bommakka made a long time ago!
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This charming cumulative tale celebrates the tradition of hand-crafted dolls, inspired by the South Indian Thanjavur Thalai Atti Bommai. Starting with a little ball of clay, we see the fine dancing doll grow before our eyes. The rhythmic descriptive words, stacked in a delightfully repetitive way, invite children to chant along. The vibrant illustrations complete the vivid imagery.

This is a Level 2 book for children who recognize familiar words and can read new words with help.

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