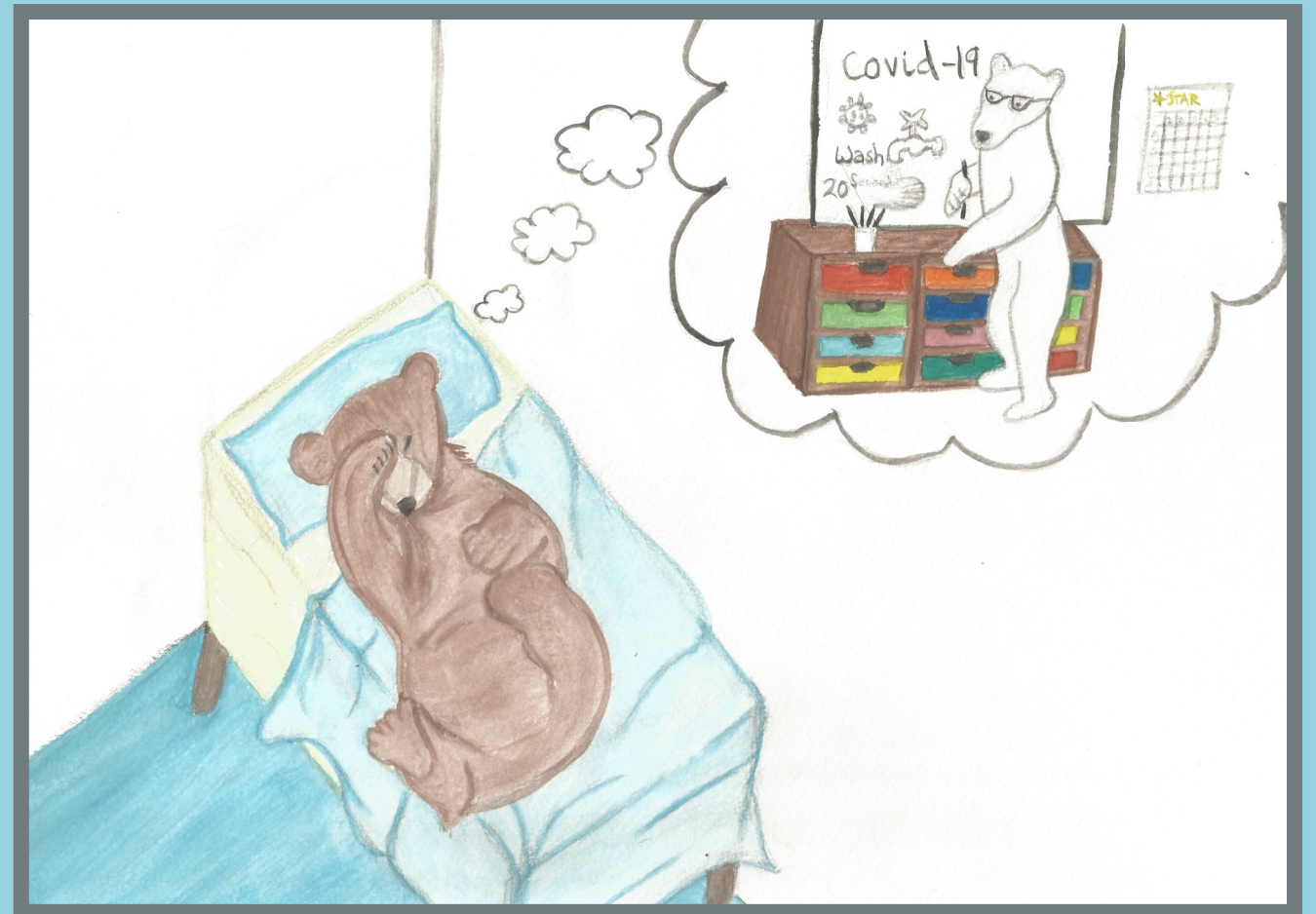


Little Bear Stays Home

- an emotions story



by Jenny Eldridge

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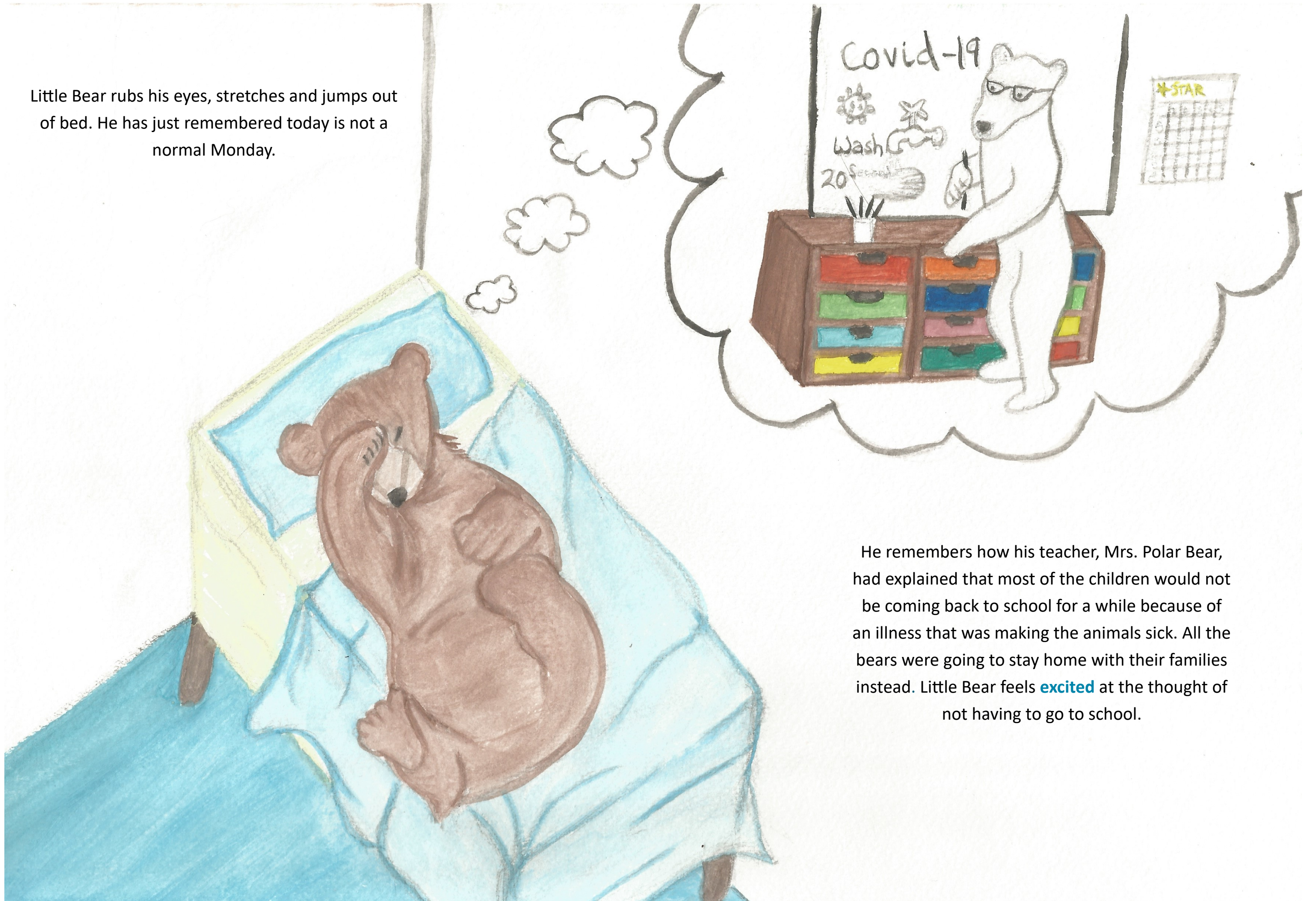
For little Sofia,
I hope this is all over before you are old enough
to really understand and remember the
particular challenges of growing up during the
COVID-19 outbreak.
With my love now and always xxx

How to use this book
(a note for parents/carers)

I am aware there are a number of books and stories available that explain the situation we now find ourselves in and provide suitable answers to questions about the COVID-19 virus, many of which are written by individuals much more knowledgeable on the subject than myself. This book is therefore not designed specifically for that purpose, but is instead intended to recognize that many are experiencing similar difficulties in the current time and to help you as a family to feel less alone.

It is also designed to help you to explore together the variety of emotions which you may all be feeling during the current situation. It is important to recognize that many of these are completely natural and understandable feelings. That being said, sometimes feelings can become overwhelming and both adults and children may express these strong emotions in ways that can be harmful to themselves or others. The hope of this book is that it will provide an opportunity to encourage your children to discuss their feelings with you, and with your help and support, to find healthier, safer and more helpful ways of experiencing and expressing these emotions.

Little Bear rubs his eyes, stretches and jumps out of bed. He has just remembered today is not a normal Monday.



He remembers how his teacher, Mrs. Polar Bear, had explained that most of the children would not be coming back to school for a while because of an illness that was making the animals sick. All the bears were going to stay home with their families instead. Little Bear feels **excited** at the thought of not having to go to school.

Little Bear runs downstairs to the front door excitedly. He wants to go out and play with his friends, but Mummy Bear tells him, "Sorry, little one, but you must stay at home. You still have your school work to do and we are all only allowed to go outside to shop for food when we really need it, or to exercise with our family, or to go to work if grown up bears have special jobs that they can't do at home. You won't be able to go and see your friends for a while."

Mummy Bear explains that this isn't her rule, it's a rule for everyone; the Head Bears in the government have decided that this is the best way to keep as many of the animals safe as possible, because if they go out they might get sick or spread the illness to other animals. Little Bear starts to feel **worried** about the illness outside but goes, with Mummy Bear, to get some breakfast.



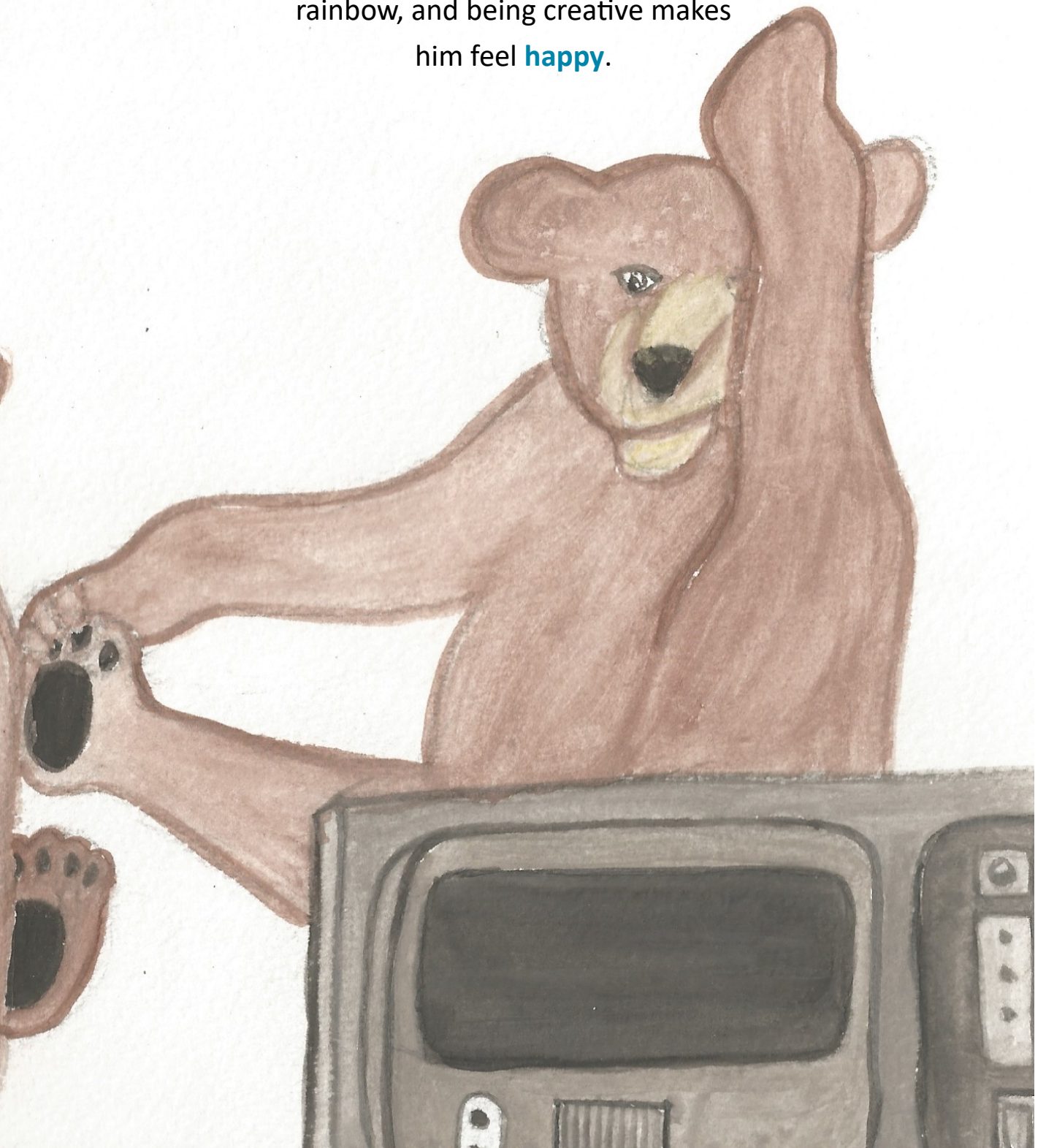
After breakfast, Mummy Bear explains that she has made Little Bear and Brother Bear a timetable for the day, starting with their Maths homework. She gives them their worksheets and promises she will be there to help them, but she also has her own work to do from home, so she asks Little Bear and his brother to do their best to be helpful.

Little Bear tries to do his Maths but he is soon **distracted** by what Mummy Bear is doing on her laptop. Little Bear has never seen Mummy do her work before and he is **curious** to see what she is doing. Mummy Bear tells Little Bear that if he gets on with his school work, they can all do a special PE lesson with Joe Panda on the television. Little Bear thinks about how much he enjoys P.E. and television, and he feels much more **motivated** to finish his Maths.





After his school work is done, Little Bear, Brother Bear and Mummy Bear all do P.E. together with Joe Panda. Little Bear feels very **energetic** as they do their exercises, but by the end all three bears feel quite **exhausted**. Afterwards, Mummy Bear suggests Little Bear and Brother Bear do some reading and paint some pictures while she does some more of her work. Little Bear paints a rainbow, and being creative makes him feel **happy**.



Little Bear finishes his painting and starts to feel **bored**. Mummy Bear tells him to do some reading, but instead, he decides to watch some videos on the tablet. Brother Bear gets **jealous**; he tries to take the tablet so he can watch different videos and the two bears start fighting.

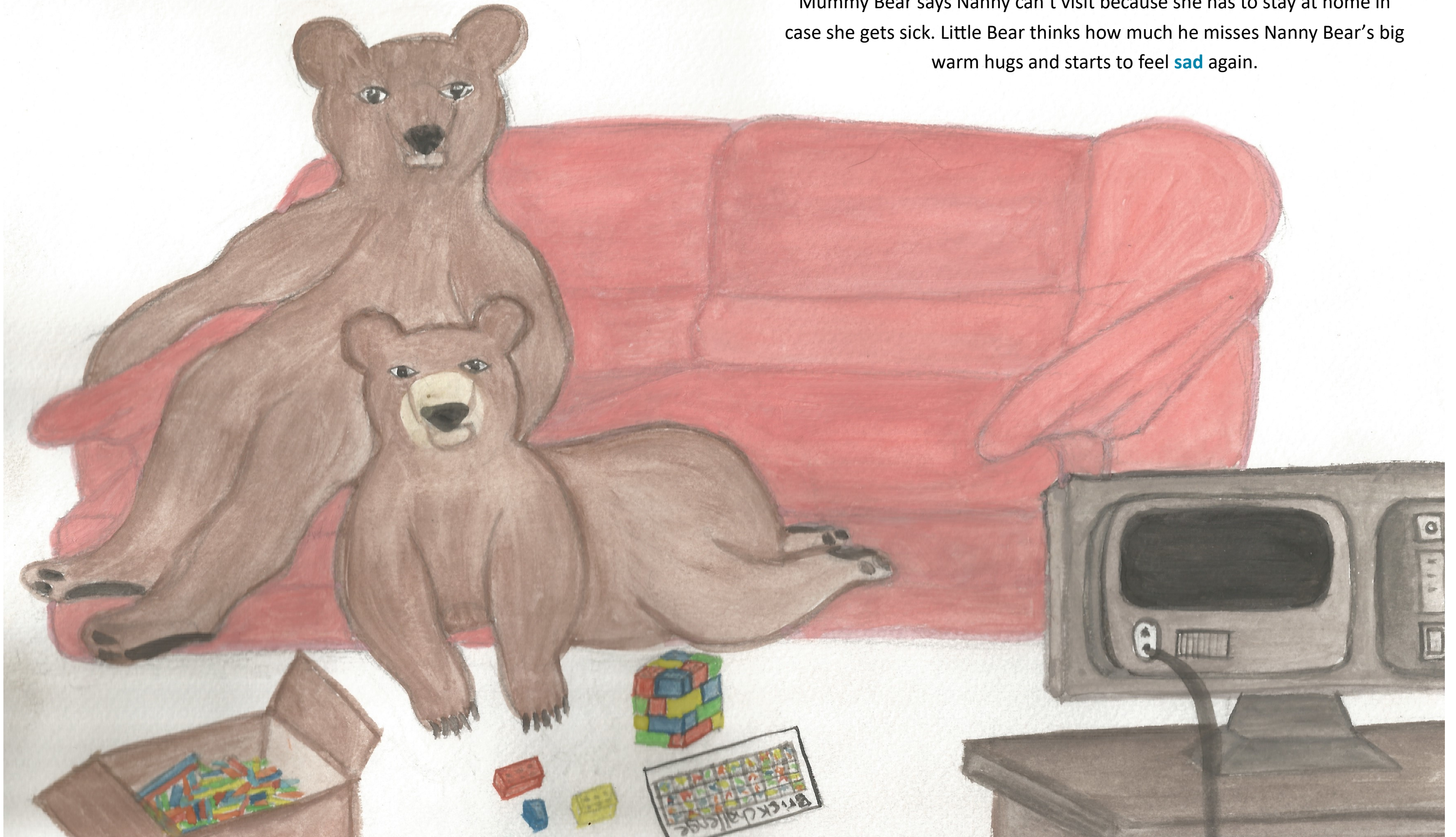
Mummy Bear overhears the noise and comes to see what is going on. She is very **cross** at the bears for fighting and disturbing her while she is trying to work. She is also **worried** that they might accidentally break the expensive tablet by fighting over it. She shouts at them to stop, and Little Bear feels **sad** and a little bit **scared**.



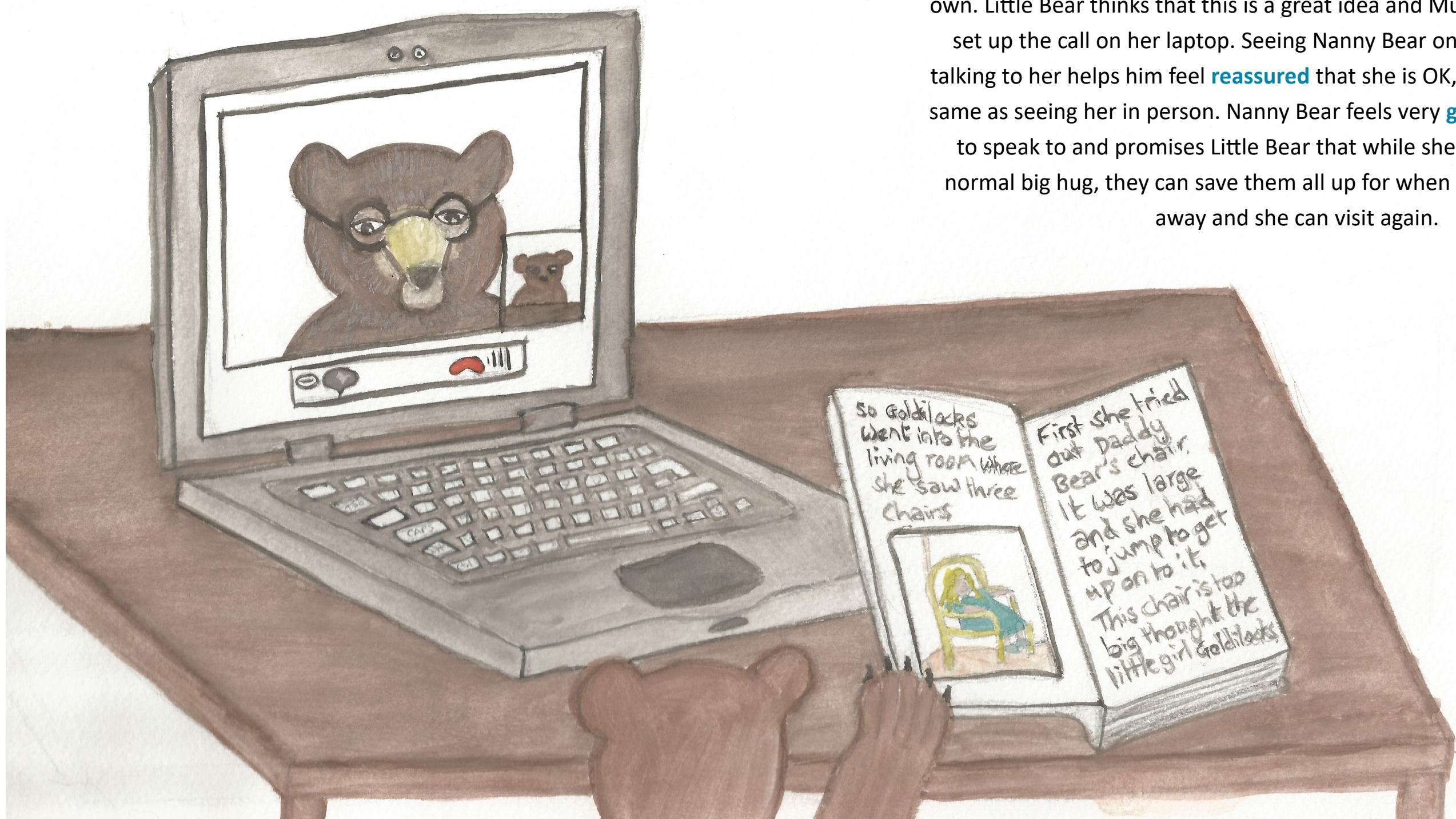
The bears apologise for fighting and Mummy Bear says that she is **sorry** too, for shouting, but that they shouldn't be fighting. Mummy Bear gives Little Bear and Brother Bear a snack and Little Bear feels **contented** again.

Then Mummy Bear sets Little Bear a challenge with his building blocks while Brother Bear does some more school work.

As he builds, on the living room carpet, Little Bear sees the news on the television that his mummy is watching. All the reports of animals getting sick make Little Bear feel **scared** again. He feels especially **worried** about Nanny Bear. Normally Nanny Bear comes to visit every Sunday, and she always gives him a big hug and sometimes a special treat, but this week Mummy Bear says Nanny can't visit because she has to stay at home in case she gets sick. Little Bear thinks how much he misses Nanny Bear's big warm hugs and starts to feel **sad** again.



Mummy Bear notices Little Bear looking **sad** and **worried** and asks him what is wrong. "I miss Nanny Bear," says Little Bear, "what if she has caught the illness?" Mummy Bear reassures him that she had spoken to Nanny Bear last night and that she was not sick, so Little Bear doesn't need to worry. Nanny Bear is staying at home, just like them, following the rules to stay safe from the illness, but she misses Little Bear very much. Then, Mummy Bear suggests that Little Bear make a video call to Nanny Bear and read her a story because she is probably feeling **lonely** at home on her own. Little Bear thinks that this is a great idea and Mummy Bear helps him set up the call on her laptop. Seeing Nanny Bear on the computer and talking to her helps him feel **reassured** that she is OK, although it's not the same as seeing her in person. Nanny Bear feels very **glad** to have someone to speak to and promises Little Bear that while she can't give him her normal big hug, they can save them all up for when the illness has gone away and she can visit again.



By the time Little Bear has finished reading to Nanny Bear he is starting to feel **hungry**. Brother Bear is also **hungry** and they realise it must be time for lunch. Just then, Mummy Bear comes out of the kitchen with a big plate of sandwiches and suggests they all have a picnic in the garden. Being outside makes the bears all feel more **relaxed**, even if they have to stay in their own garden. Afterwards, Mummy Bear and Brother Bear both go back inside to do some work but Little Bear stays in the garden, and plays with his ball, although it isn't as much fun playing on his own. Little Bear feels **lonely** and misses his friends. *I even miss school a bit* thought Little Bear, *at least I get to see and play with my friends there!*



Feeling **lonely** and a bit **bored**, Little Bear asks Mummy Bear if he can play on his PawStation. Mummy Bear says that he can't right now, as she needs the internet and some peace and quiet to do her work. She suggests Little Bear plays a board game instead. Little Bear feels **frustrated**. He misses his friends and really wants to talk to them on the PawStation. Little Bear keeps pestering, but Mummy Bear keeps saying no, eventually ignoring him, as she tries to get on with her work. She feels a little bit **annoyed** herself by Little Bear's behaviour.

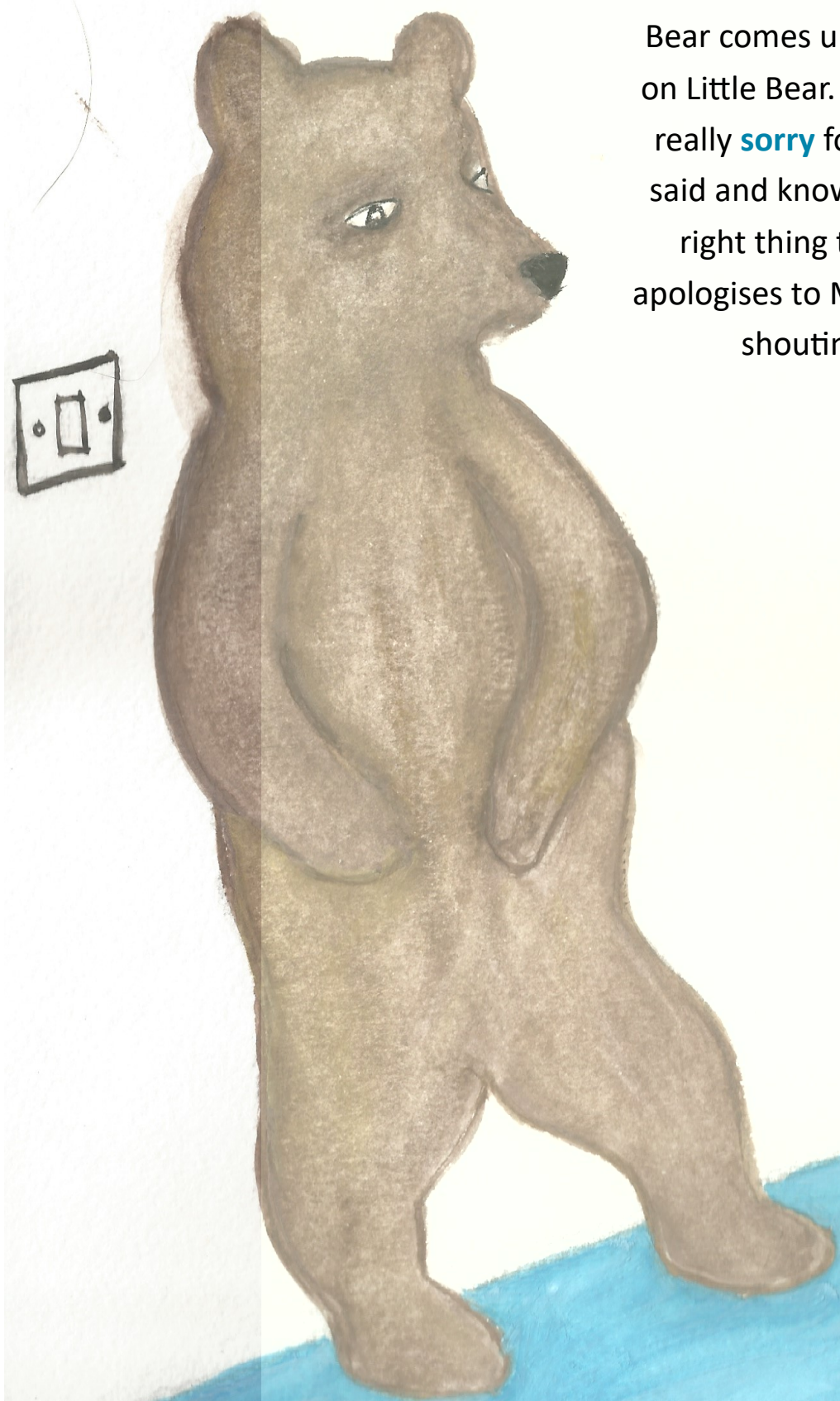


Little Bear feels very **angry** when he realises Mummy Bear isn't paying him any attention and won't give in. Finally he screams, "It's not fair! All the other bears get to play! You're so mean! I hate you!" and then storms up to his room.



He feels so full of **anger** that he slams the door and kicks over his bin too. Not knowing what else to do, Little Bear sits on his bed and thinks about what has just happened. Slowly Little Bear starts to **calm** down. He still feels **lonely** but also a bit **guilty** for how he had shouted at his mummy. *I don't really hate her, I just said that because I felt so cross and lonely,* he thinks to himself, *all I really wanted was for someone to play with me!*





A little while later, Mummy Bear comes upstairs to check on Little Bear. Little Bear feels really **sorry** for what he had said and knows it wasn't the right thing to do, and he apologises to Mummy Bear for shouting at her.

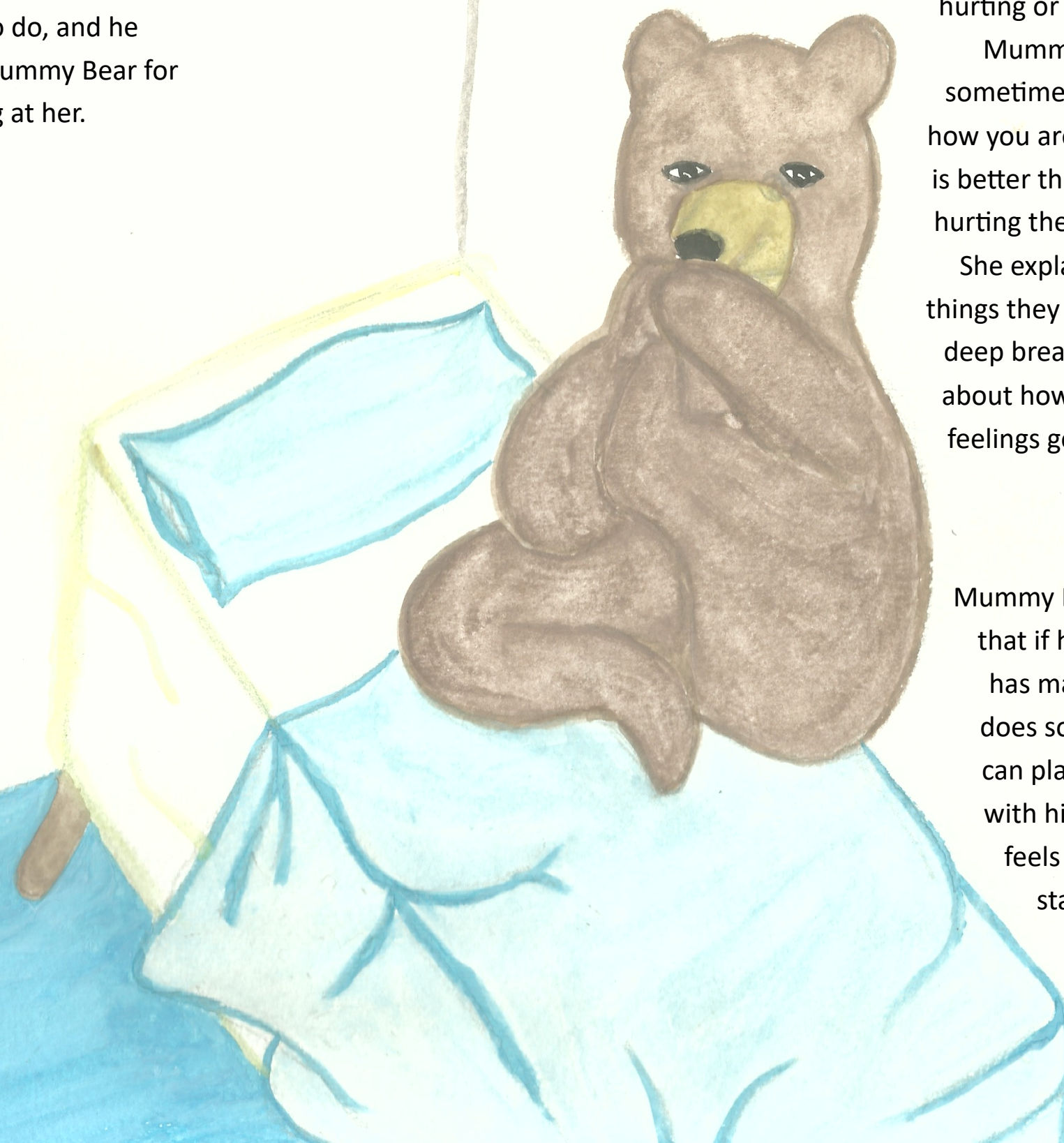
Little Bear feels so **sorry** that he starts to cry, telling Mummy Bear how **sad** and **lonely** he feels. Mummy Bear tells Little Bear that she forgives him and **loves** him very much. She explains that she knows it's hard for him, not being able to see his friends. It's hard for all of them, and they all feel **lonely** sometimes, even her, but they all need to find better ways to let their feelings out without

hurting or upsetting each other.

Mummy Bear says it can sometimes help to write down how you are feeling, and that this is better than shouting at others, hurting them or breaking things.

She explains there are other things they can try too, like taking deep breaths and trying to talk about how they feel before the feelings get really big and take over.

Mummy Bear tells Little Bear that if he tidies the mess he has made in his room and does some writing, later he can play on the PawStation with his friends. Little Bear feels **enthusiastic** as he starts to clean up.



Once Little Bear has tidied his room, he comes back downstairs and Mummy Bear suggests they all start writing their own diary to record what they have been doing while staying at home. She tells Little Bear and Brother Bear that one day, when the illness is gone and life is back to normal, bear cubs all over the world will probably learn about what has been happening at school, just like Little Bear and Brother Bear have learnt about important things that have happened in the past in their history lessons. Mummy Bear gives them each a special book to write in and tells them to use their best handwriting, because when they are grown up they might want to show the diaries to their own children.

Little Bear writes about his school work, doing PE with Joe Panda, painting rainbows, playing with his building blocks, video calling Nanny Bear and playing in the garden. Writing down what he has been doing makes him feel **calm** and **thoughtful**.



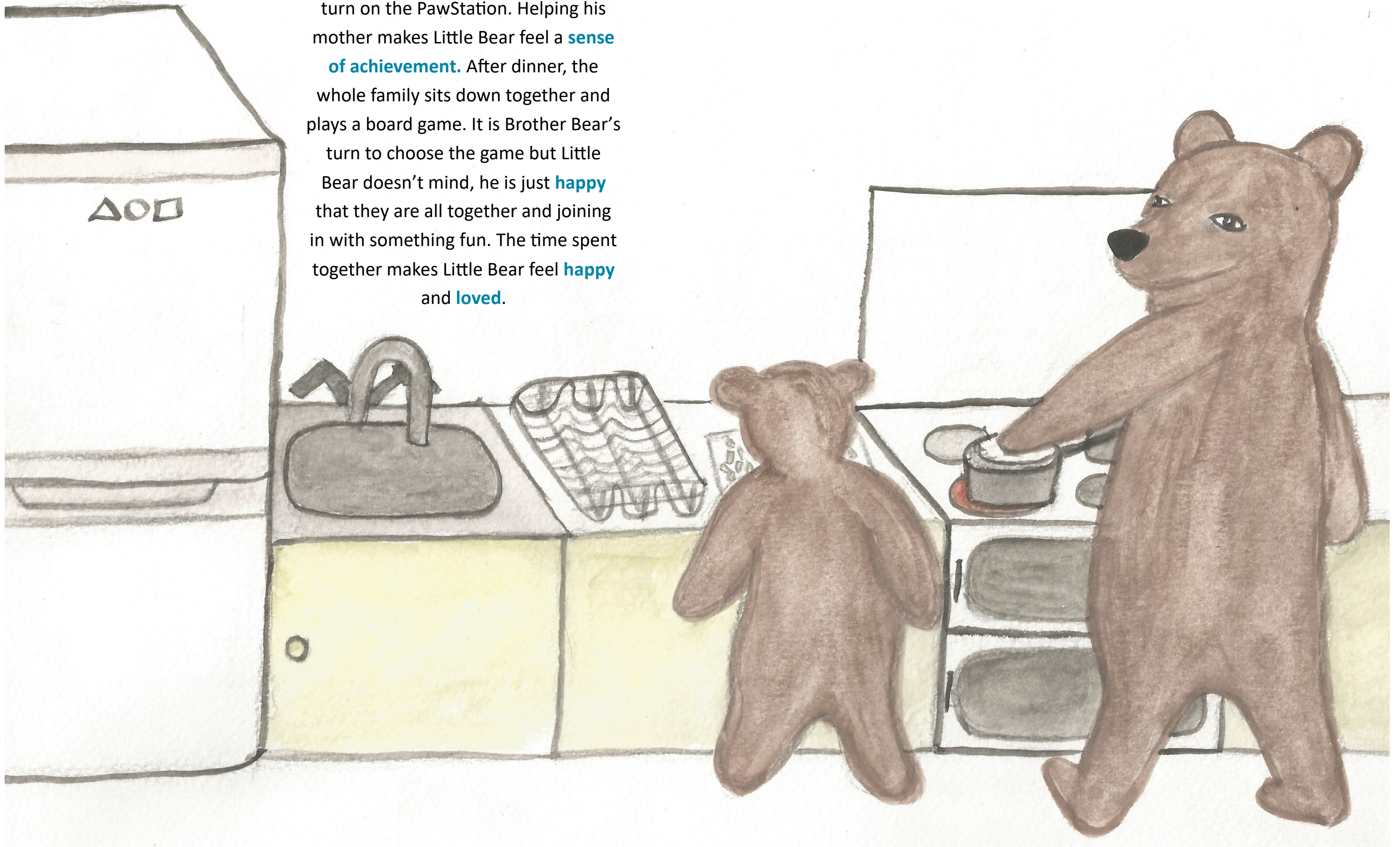
With his diary all filled out, Mummy Bear keeps her promise and lets Little Bear go and play on the PawStation. He meets up with his friend Koala online and they play games together. The games are **exciting**

and make Little Bear feel **thrilled**. While they play, Little Bear and Koala talk about being stuck at home and how they miss seeing their friends and playing in the park.

Talking to Koala makes Little Bear feel **grateful** for having good friends.



That evening, Little Bear helps Mummy Bear cook a yummy dinner in the kitchen while Brother Bear takes his turn on the PawStation. Helping his mother makes Little Bear feel a **sense of achievement**. After dinner, the whole family sits down together and plays a board game. It is Brother Bear's turn to choose the game but Little Bear doesn't mind, he is just **happy** that they are all together and joining in with something fun. The time spent together makes Little Bear feel **happy** and **loved**.

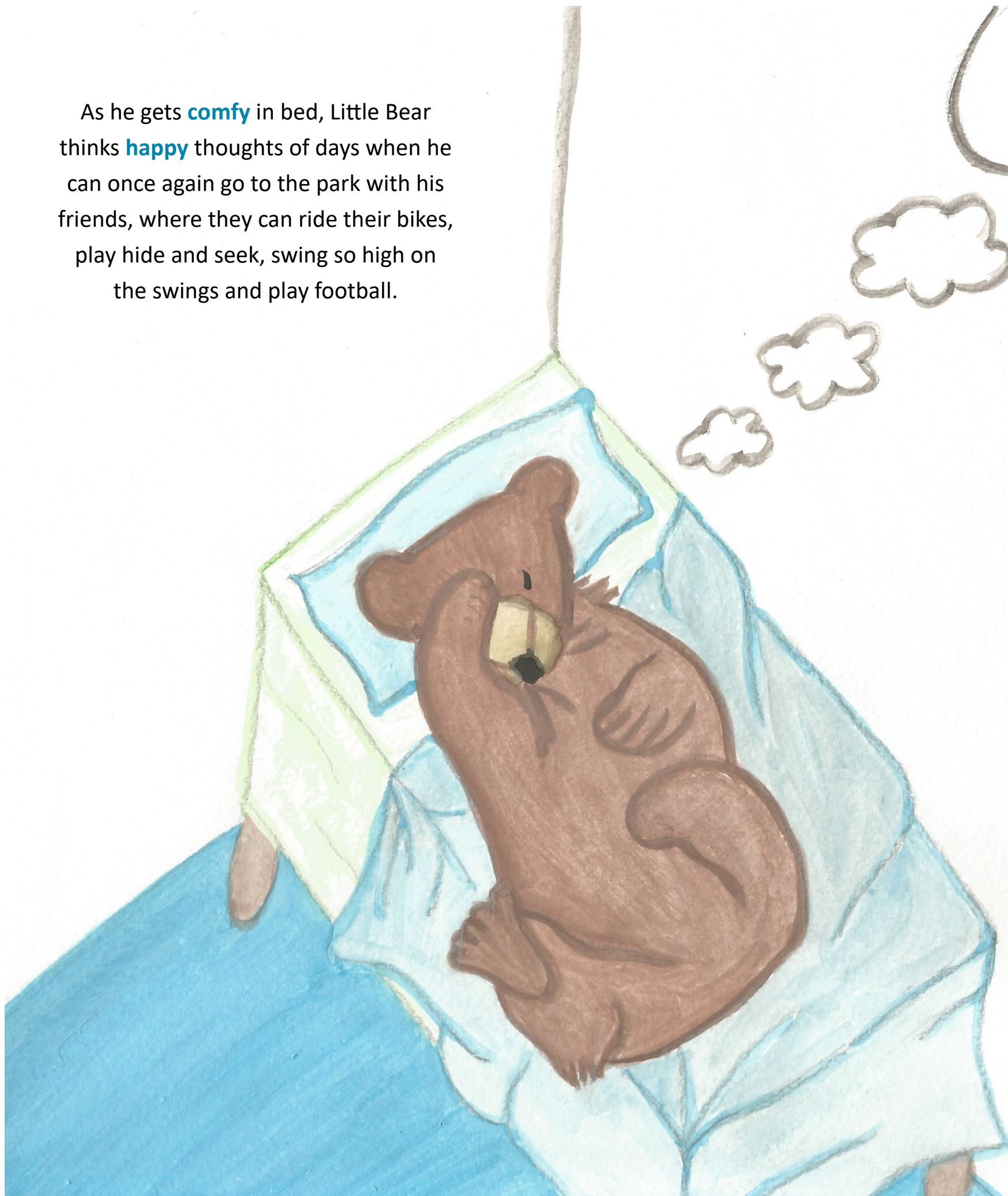


Little Bear is getting **tired**, and it is time for bed. Mummy Bear reads to Little Bear and then talks to him about how he is feeling. She explains that it is difficult for everyone when routines change so much, so suddenly and that it is normal to feel **sad**, **worried** or **lonely** sometimes, especially when you can't see your friends or go out like you can normally.



Mummy Bear says it's important that Little Bear tells her how he is feeling, especially if he is feeling **scared** or **worried**. She explains that this new way of life will take a bit of getting used to for all of them, but they are going to work together to find new ways to stay in touch with their friends and learn at home, to make it as **happy** a time as possible. Mummy Bear also reassures Little Bear that one day the illness will be gone, even if they don't know how long it will take, and once it is, they can all go outside and see Little Bear's friends again. Little Bear lies down under the covers feeling **tired** and **peaceful**. "Sleep tight and think of **happy** things," Mummy Bear whispers, before she turns off the light and shuts the door.

As he gets **comfy** in bed, Little Bear thinks **happy** thoughts of days when he can once again go to the park with his friends, where they can ride their bikes, play hide and seek, swing so high on the swings and play football.



Thinking back to his day spent at home, Little Bear realises it wasn't so bad after all. In fact, he had lots of fun exercising with Jo Panda, painting with Brother Bear, having a picnic in the garden, gaming on the PawStation, cooking with Mummy Bear and playing a board game with his family. Little Bear feels **calm** and **restful** as he drifts off to sleep.

Little Bear's ideas for expressing different emotions:

Little Bear wanted to share some of the methods he has learnt to help him let out his strong feelings. He thought you might like to try some of them too, but Little Bear wanted to remind you it is also really important to find a person you trust and talk to them about how you are feeling. They can help you work out what may work best for you, just like Mummy Bear helped him.

Anger:

- Dance
- Jumping jacks exercises
- Kick a football in the garden
- Draw/paint your feelings
- Sing out loud to music
- Blow bubbles
- Dig in the garden
- Poke and squeeze play dough
- See how long you can run on the spot for
- Watch/read something funny and laugh
- Eat a snack
- Imagine a place where you can feel happy and calm.

Lonely:

- Talk to someone in your house/family
- Call or text a friend
- Write a letter to someone you know
- Draw/paint a picture for someone you care about

-Listen to music

-Write a song/poem

-Read a book

-Stroke a pet/your favourite soft toy/teddy

-Make a gift for a friend or relative (you could do a craft or bake something)

-Play make-believe (imagine a new friend to play with or that your toys have come to life)

-Play a board game with your siblings or parent/carer

Anxious/Worried:

- Write in a diary
- Have a bath with nice smelling bubbles
- Talk to someone about what is worrying you
- Drink a glass of water or squash
- Tidy your room
- Organise something (your toys/music/pens/wardrobe etc.)
- Eat some fruit
- Look for nature in the garden or birds/clouds out of the window
- Do some colouring in
- Cuddle a pet or soft toy
- Plan some activities for the rest of the day
- Learn or practice skipping

Excited:

- Talk about it
- Capture memories in photos or notes

-Write a journal about how you feel and what you are excited about

-Find something fun to do

-Complete some chores

-Research or prepare for the thing you are excited for

-Try some calm breathing or meditation

-Do some exercise

-Do a crazy dance

-Go for a walk outside or in your garden

-Draw or paint the thing you are excited about

-Make a poster about the thing you are excited about to help you remember it

Bored:

-Make a collage out of pictures from old magazines

-Bake a cake/cookies

-Read a new book

-Do junk modelling; make a rocket etc. out of the recycling

-Build a den with cushions and spare sheets

-Make paper airplanes and see which one will fly the furthest

-Make a list/jar of things you are grateful for

-Make up a script for a play

-Have an indoor picnic/tea party

-Do a craft

-Make up a new game

-Make your own play dough

Curious:

-Look at old photos

-Draw what you know of your family tree (Your parent/carer might be able to help you add some more relatives once you've added the ones you know)

-Write a story

-Read a non-fiction book and learn some new facts

-Use a website/app to learn or practice another language

-Pick an interesting event in history and research it

-Write a letter to your future self

-Time or measure yourself doing something; what is the highest you can jump/
fastest you can run?

-Choose an animal and learn 5 new facts about it

-Design a new food and write a recipe for it

-Do a 'science' experiment with things at home (remember to get your parent/
carer's permission)

-Do some art and mix colours on your page; how many different colours or
shades can you make?

Guilty/ Sorry/ Regretful:

-Talk to an adult you trust

-Write down what happened and how you felt then and now

-Say sorry or write an apologetic card/letter

-Try to fix something if you broke it or do something to show you are sorry

-Draw/paint how you feel

-Make, learn or do something you can be proud of

- Write a list of good things about yourself
- Make an action plan so you are less likely to do the thing you are sorry for again (you might want to ask someone you trust to help with this)
- Find out the facts; just because you feel like this doesn't always mean it was your fault or that you did anything wrong.
 - Listen to music or a podcast
 - Have a nap
 - Take a shower

Sad:

- Have a cup of hot chocolate or a cozy drink
- Wrap up in a blanket or your favourite jumper
 - Look at pictures of funny animals
 - Remember happy times
 - Make a memory journal
- Sunbathe indoors or in the garden
 - Help to cook something tasty
 - Make a dream jar or vision board
 - Call or text a friend
- Watch a TV show or movie that makes you smile or laugh
 - Do a puzzle
 - Do a wordsearch or crossword
- Try a 'new look'; change your outfit/try a new hairstyle

Joyful:

- Capture happy moments on video/camera
- Write a letter to a relative telling them about why you feel so happy
 - Take a walk
 - Do some school/home work
 - Do a chore you had been putting off
 - Offer to help your parent/carer with something
 - Make a positivity poster
- Notice how each part of your body feels when happy and relaxed
 - Call and chat to a friend
 - Do some exercise
- Make a music playlist to cheer you up when you are feeling less happy.
 - Make a memory jar of happy moments

These are just a few ideas; you can definitely think of your own too.

Some of these ideas might require your parent/carer to agree and/or help you, so do remember to talk to them or an adult you know and trust. Try to explain how you are feeling, as well as what you want to do to let the feeling out.

