

When the world slowed down

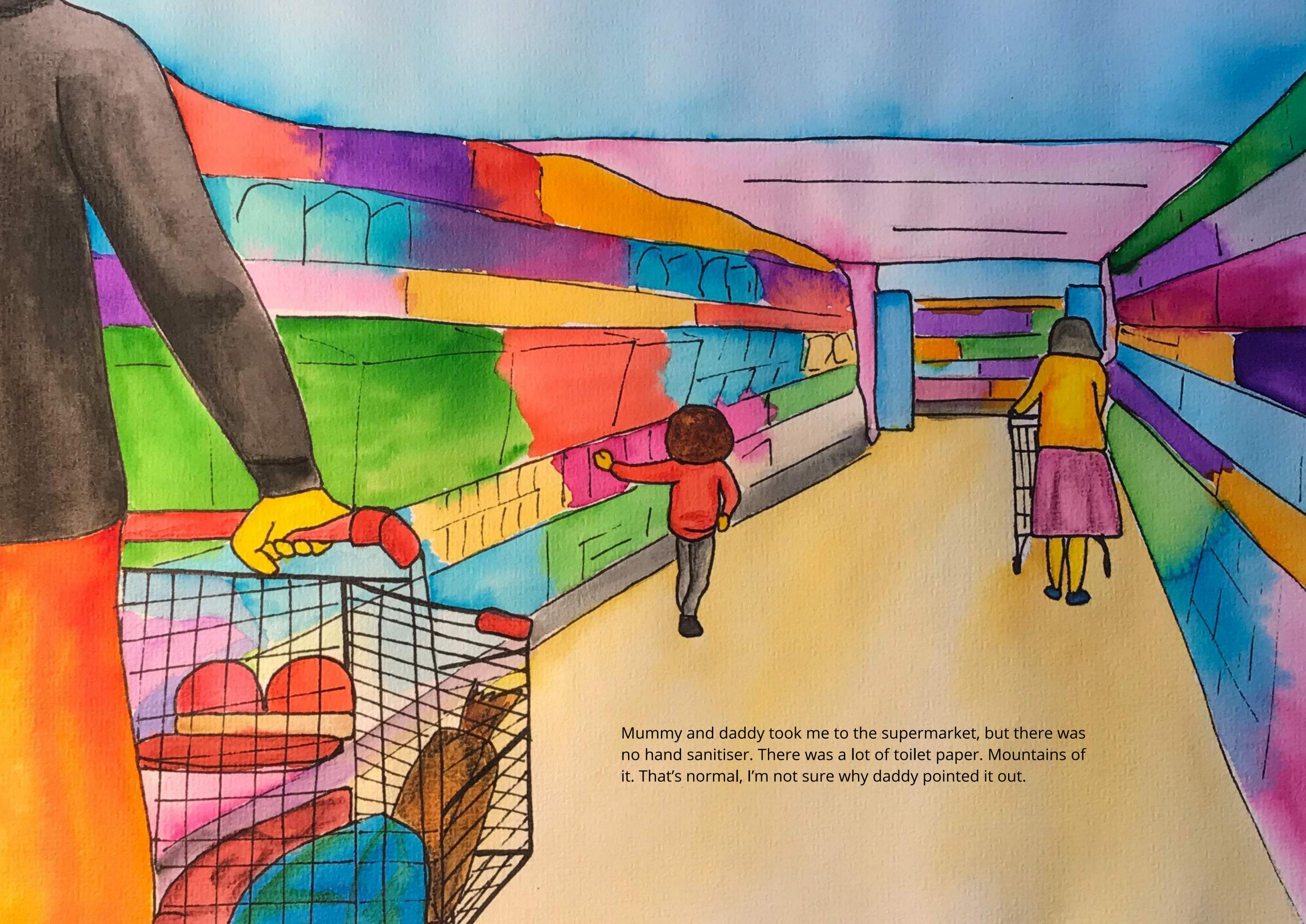
A story for children during the pandemic



Charlie Cristi



Something scary was coming. The adults talked about it all the time. The serious man on the television talked about it every night. Our teachers suddenly started to focus on washing our hands and sneezing into our elbows. I had a sniffle so I couldn't go to school. But then I could because my sniffle went away and the bad thing wasn't here yet. But it was coming.



Mummy and daddy took me to the supermarket, but there was no hand sanitiser. There was a lot of toilet paper. Mountains of it. That's normal, I'm not sure why daddy pointed it out.



Then the scary thing got here and the nice lady on the television asked the old people and the sick people to stay inside. She asked us not to travel around the country. Mummy and Daddy cancelled our Easter trip. Our grandparents couldn't come anyway because the borders were closed, but I can still see planes landing over the bay, so I wonder if we could just invite them, and then they would be able to come.



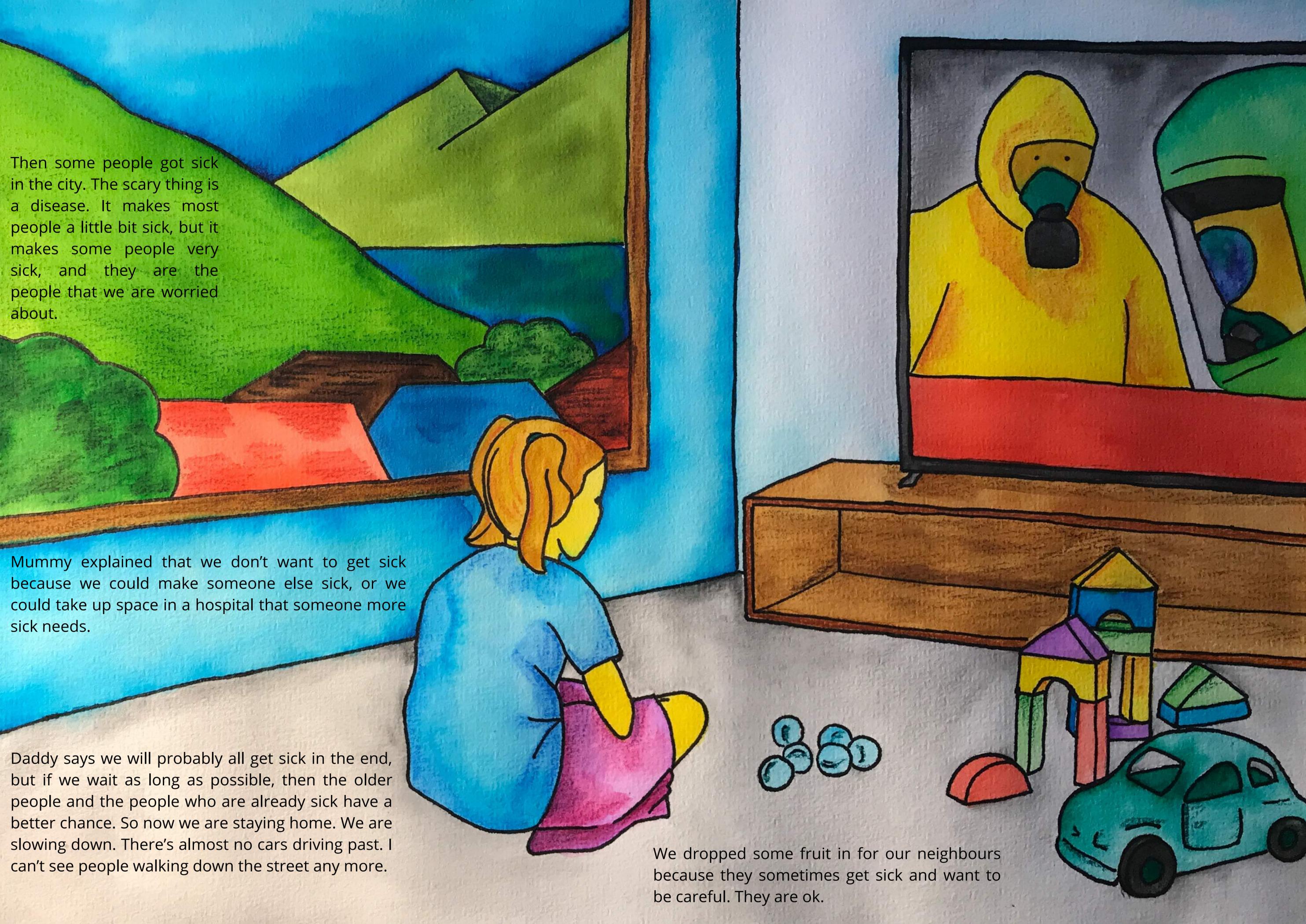
I still get to go to school, but mummy has started talking about home schooling us again, like we did when we were travelling. I wonder if we are going on another adventure.

Then some people got sick in the city. The scary thing is a disease. It makes most people a little bit sick, but it makes some people very sick, and they are the people that we are worried about.

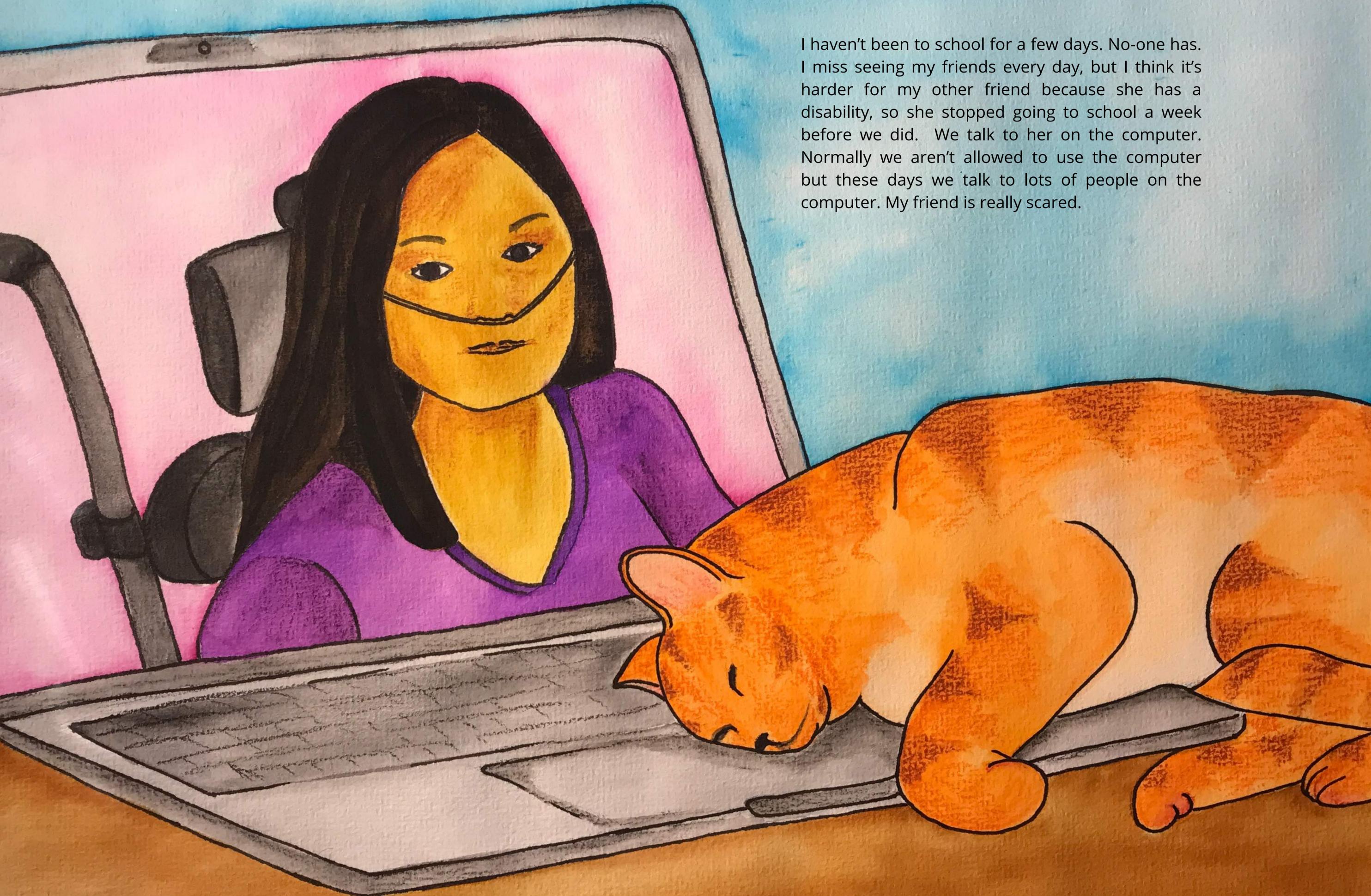
Mummy explained that we don't want to get sick because we could make someone else sick, or we could take up space in a hospital that someone more sick needs.

Daddy says we will probably all get sick in the end, but if we wait as long as possible, then the older people and the people who are already sick have a better chance. So now we are staying home. We are slowing down. There's almost no cars driving past. I can't see people walking down the street any more.

We dropped some fruit in for our neighbours because they sometimes get sick and want to be careful. They are ok.



I haven't been to school for a few days. No-one has. I miss seeing my friends every day, but I think it's harder for my other friend because she has a disability, so she stopped going to school a week before we did. We talk to her on the computer. Normally we aren't allowed to use the computer but these days we talk to lots of people on the computer. My friend is really scared.



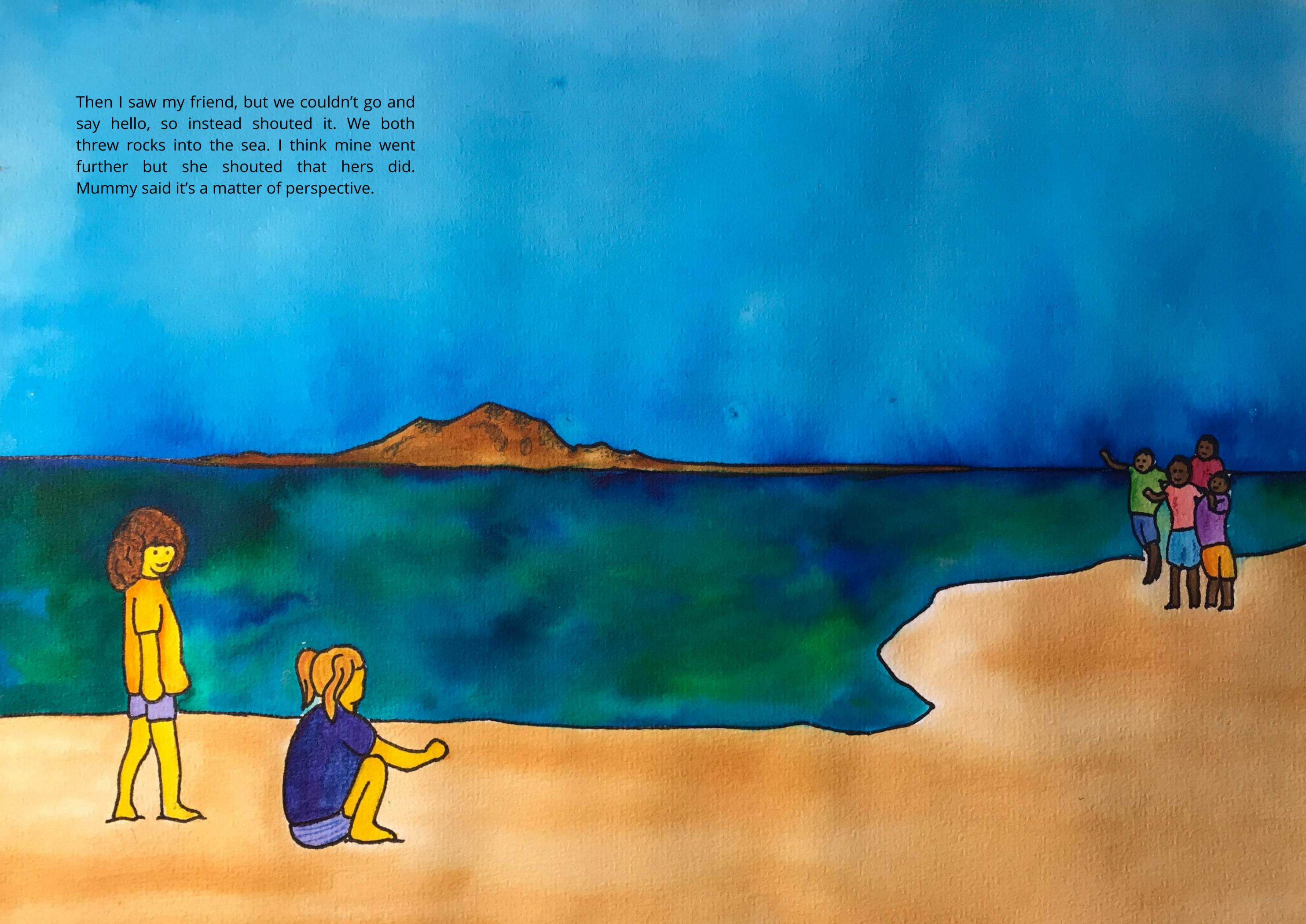


Yesterday my mummy built a garden. She sifted all the dirt through a bucket with holes and took all the big rocks out. She covered it with mulch and we helped her to spread it out. Now we have lots of vegetables growing.

We also went to the beach. There was no one else there so we got out of the car and daddy found a rock pool with lots of little creatures in it.



Then I saw my friend, but we couldn't go and say hello, so instead shouted it. We both threw rocks into the sea. I think mine went further but she shouted that hers did. Mummy said it's a matter of perspective.

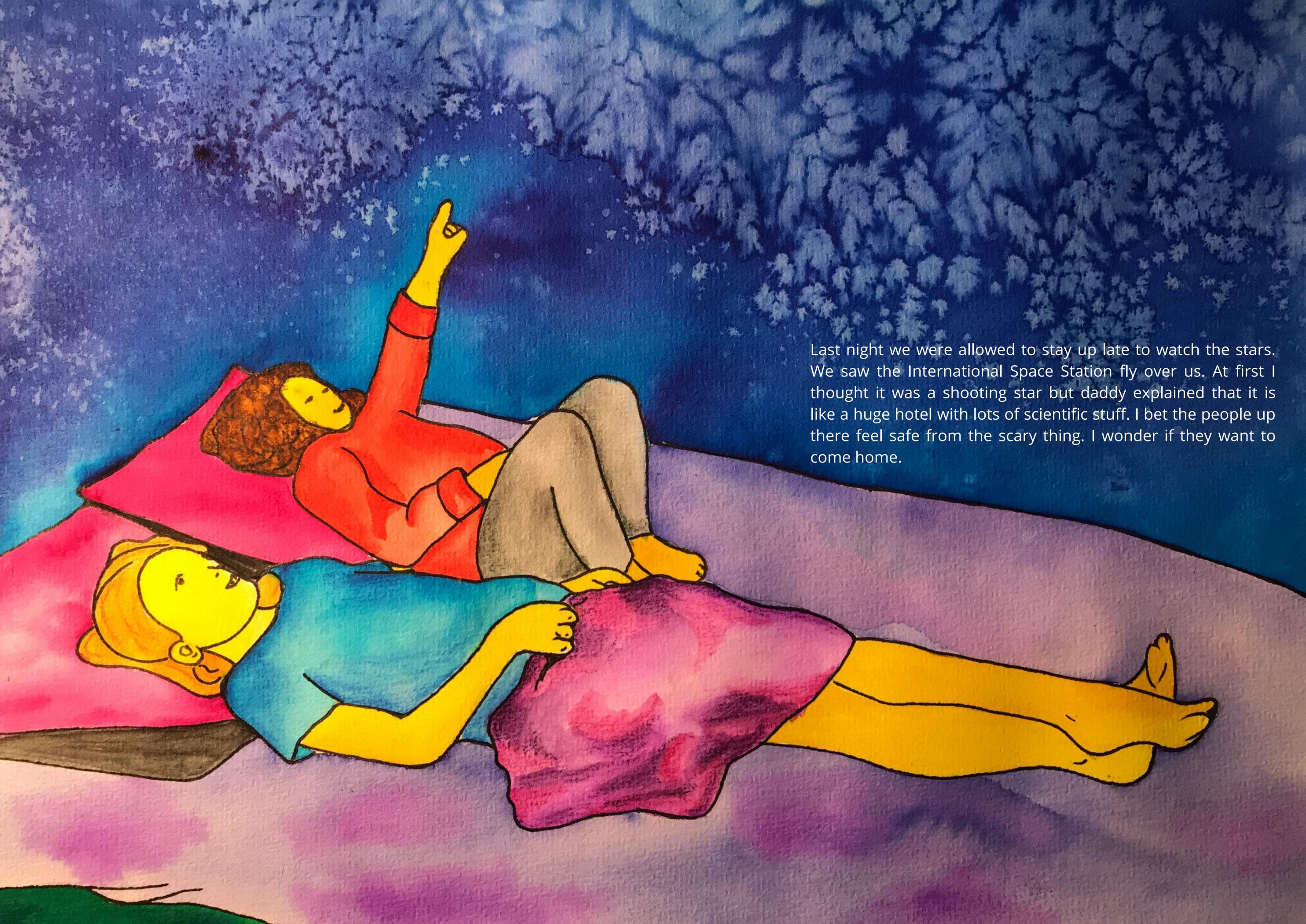




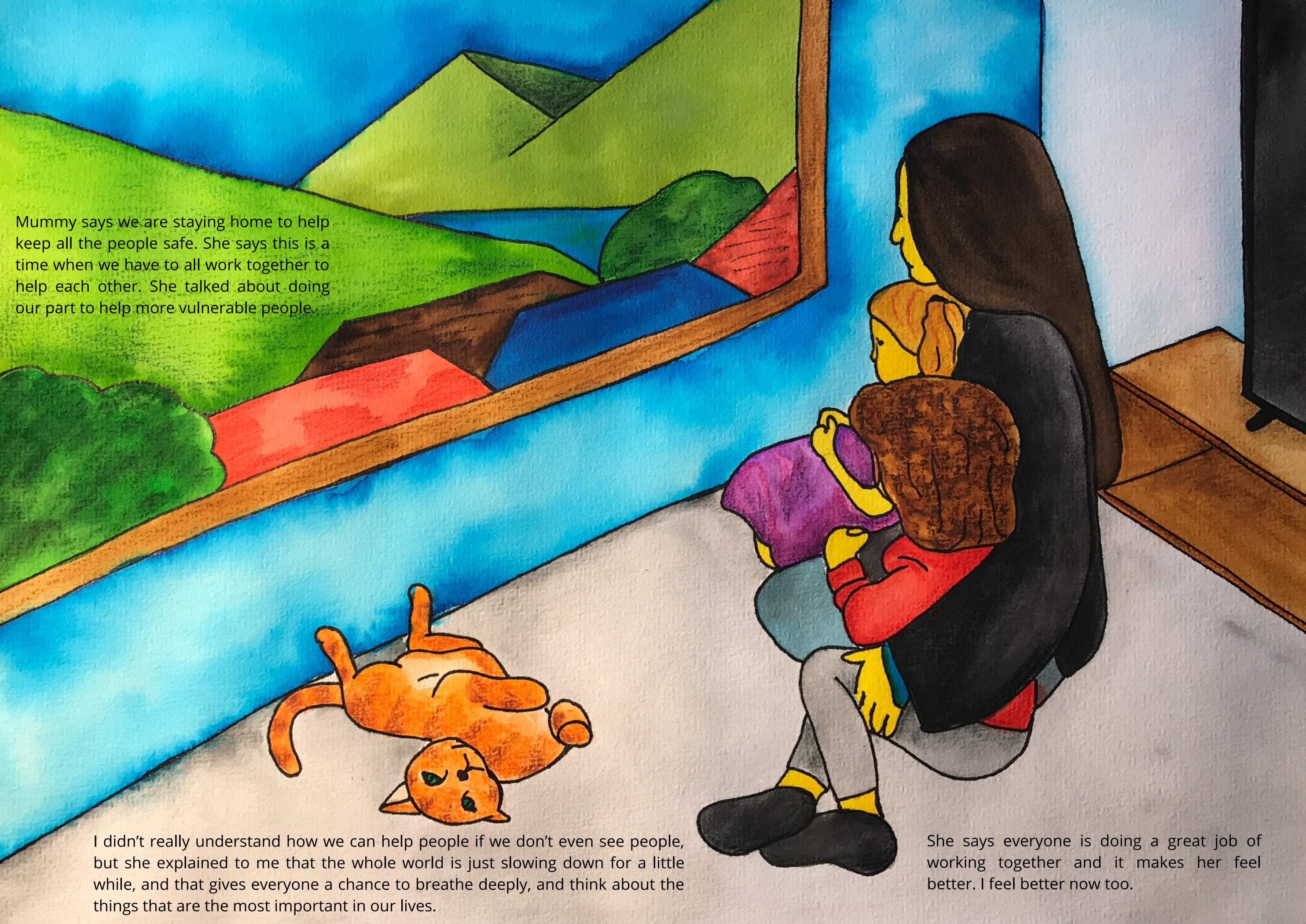
The sun is shining today, so we are practicing forward rolls in the garden. We are also learning how to do cartwheels, but mine are more like bunny hops still.



Daddy is still working on his computer but he takes time off to read *The Animals of Farthing Wood* to us. I saw a wood pigeon in the garden this morning.



Last night we were allowed to stay up late to watch the stars. We saw the International Space Station fly over us. At first I thought it was a shooting star but daddy explained that it is like a huge hotel with lots of scientific stuff. I bet the people up there feel safe from the scary thing. I wonder if they want to come home.



Mummy says we are staying home to help keep all the people safe. She says this is a time when we have to all work together to help each other. She talked about doing our part to help more vulnerable people.

I didn't really understand how we can help people if we don't even see people, but she explained to me that the whole world is just slowing down for a little while, and that gives everyone a chance to breathe deeply, and think about the things that are the most important in our lives.

She says everyone is doing a great job of working together and it makes her feel better. I feel better now too.



The scary thing is here now, but I am with my family, I can talk to my friends. The world has slowed down and it doesn't feel so scary any more.