

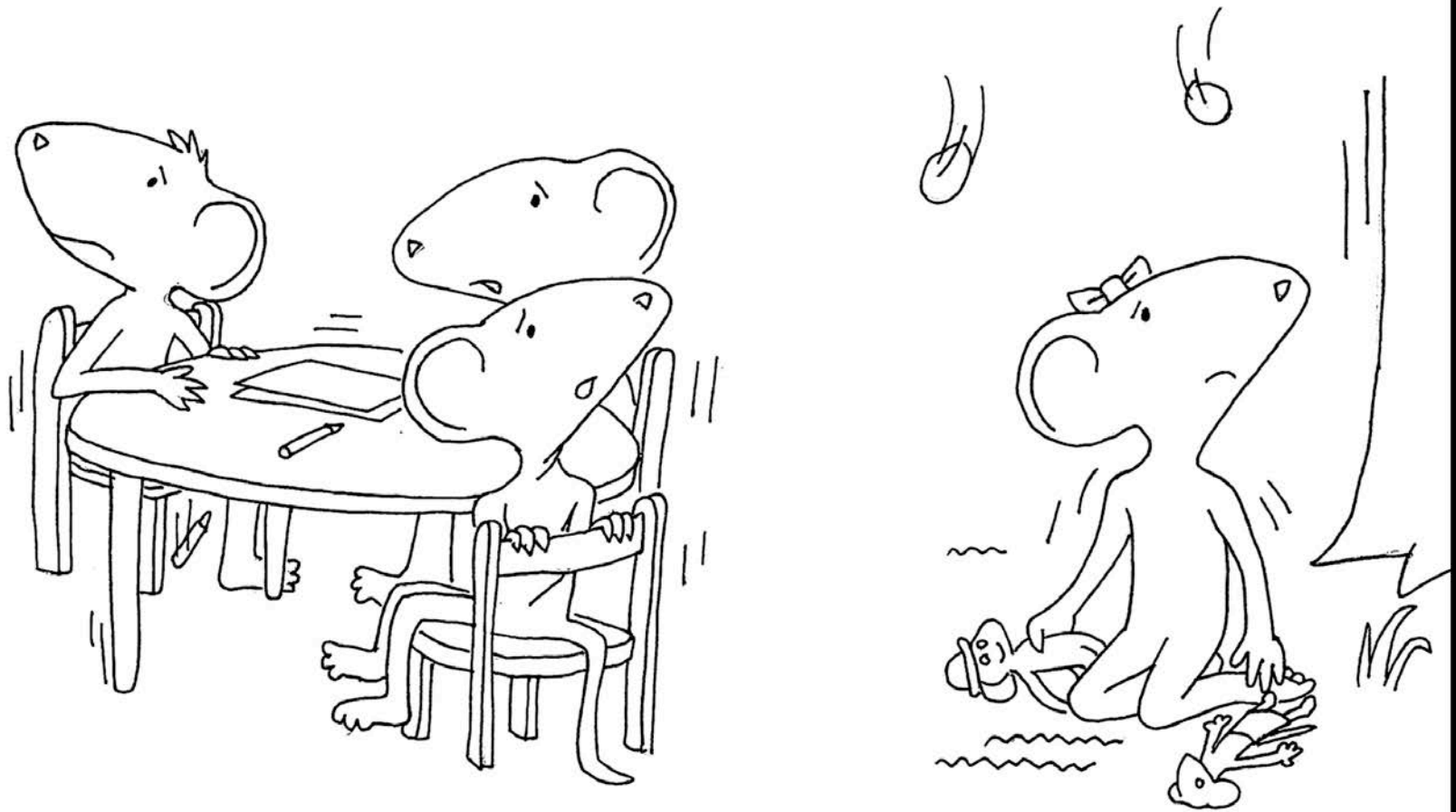
# Trinka and Sam

## The Day the Earth Shook



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# Trinka and Sam The Day the Earth Shook

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This story was developed in collaboration with the Early Trauma Treatment Network, a partner in the National Child Traumatic Stress Network.

The story was developed to help young children and their families begin to talk about feelings and worries they may have after they have experienced an earthquake

More information about how to help children who have experienced disasters or other traumatic events can be found at [nctsn.org](http://nctsn.org).

More information about the story, the use of the story, and the team who created the story can be found at: <http://piploproductions.com/stories/trinka-and-sam/>.

For children and families who have experienced earthquakes.

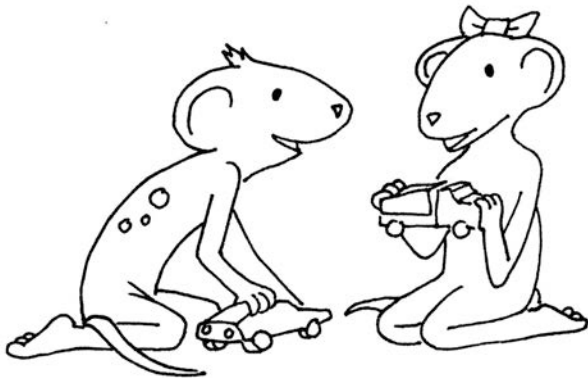
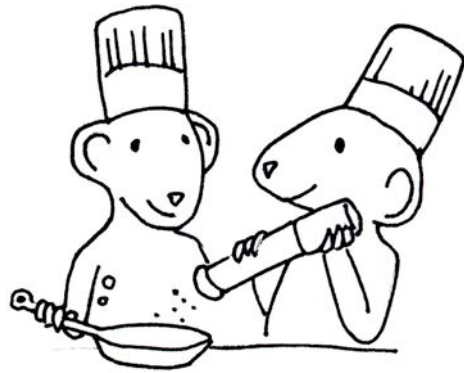
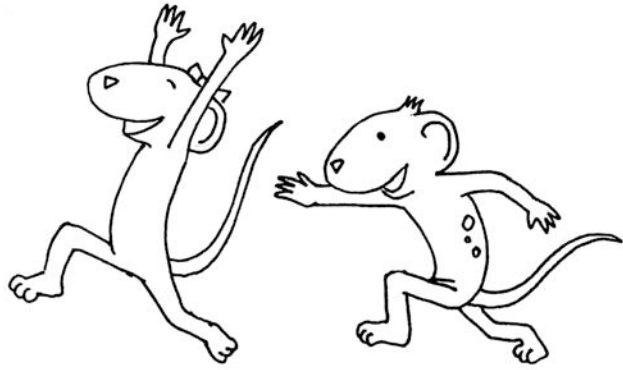
Adults: This story was designed for children who have experienced serious earthquakes. Please read it by yourself first and decide whether this is a good story to read with your child. If your child has been through a mild earthquake, you may decide that this story presents details that may not be helpful for your child to hear. Even if you choose not to read the story to your child, the story and the parents' guide, which is at the end, may help you better understand your child's reactions to the earthquake.



This is Trinka.



And this is Sam.



They are neighbors, and they like to play together.



In the summer, they play at the park.





In the winter, they go puddle stomping.

- - - Come on Sam

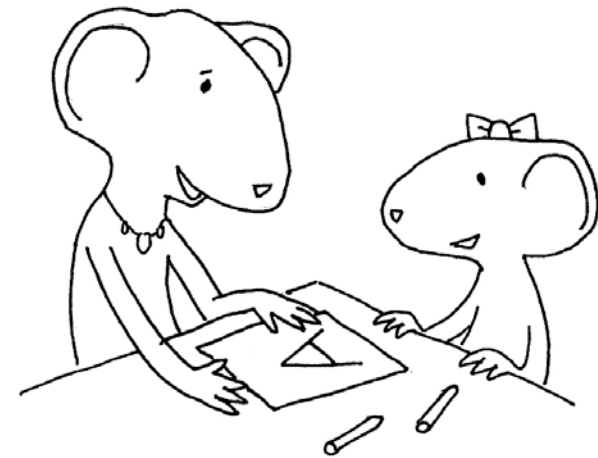
Coming

Trinka let's go - - -

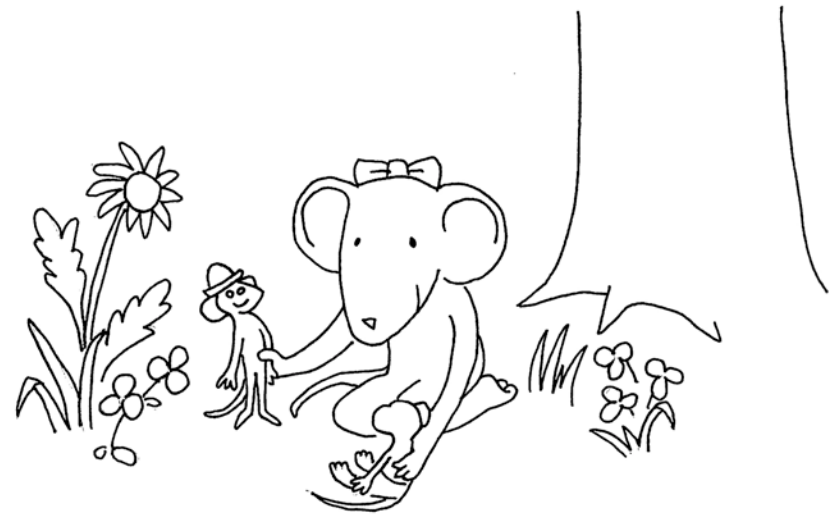


But it's so much fun.

And they always listen when it's time to stop ... well ... almost always.

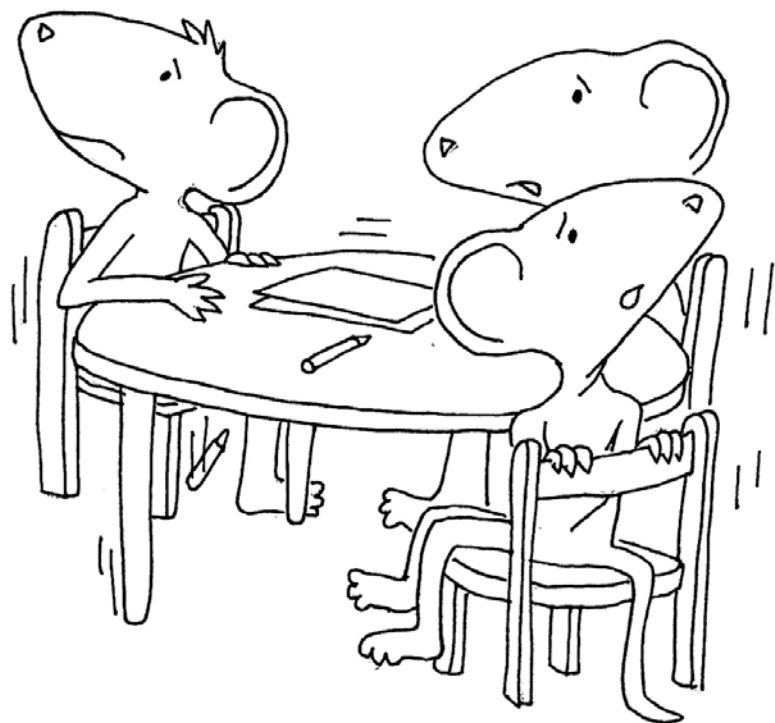


They were growing up and learning lots of things. Sam just started school.

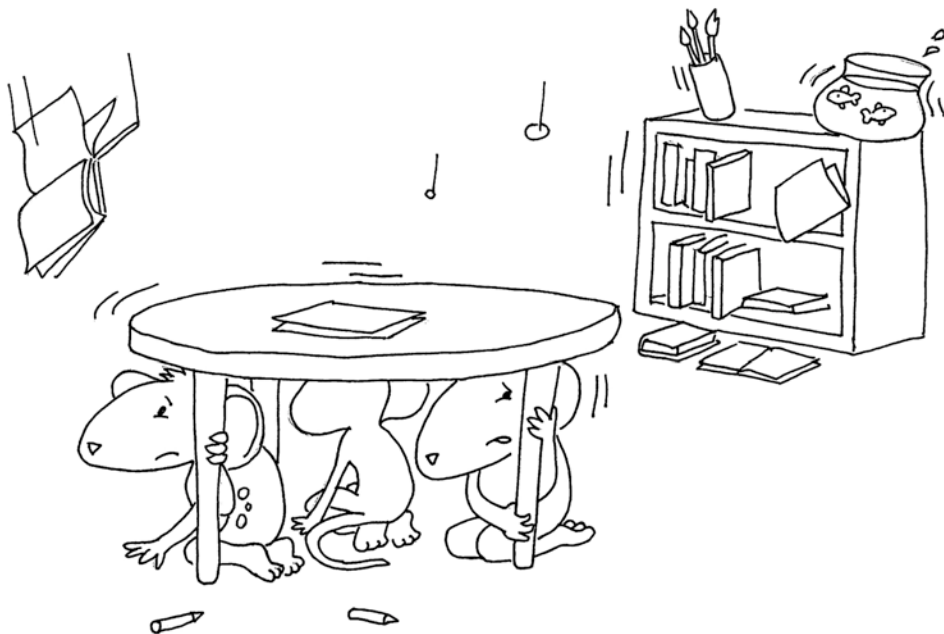


Trinka was too little for school, but her mom taught her the alphabet, and she played school with her dolls.

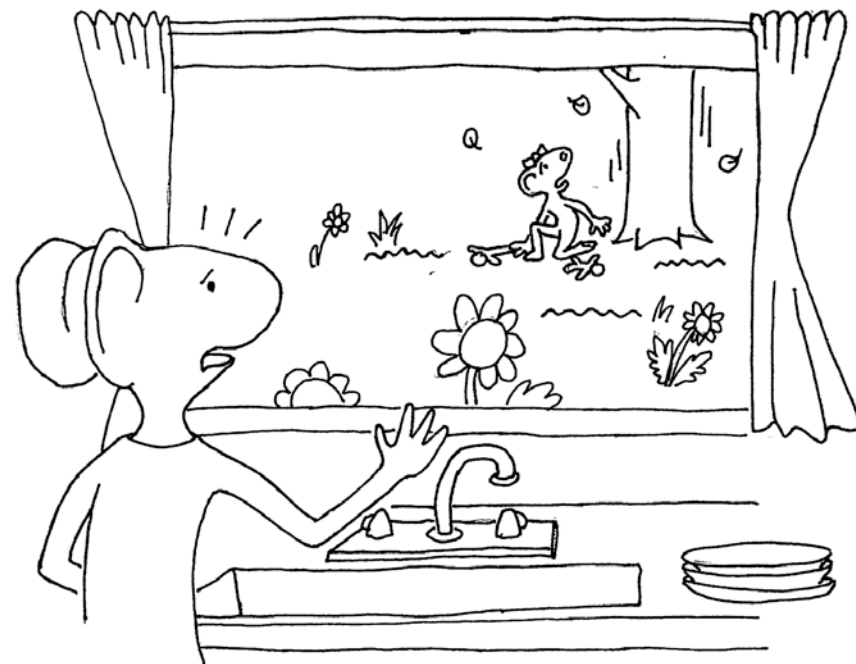




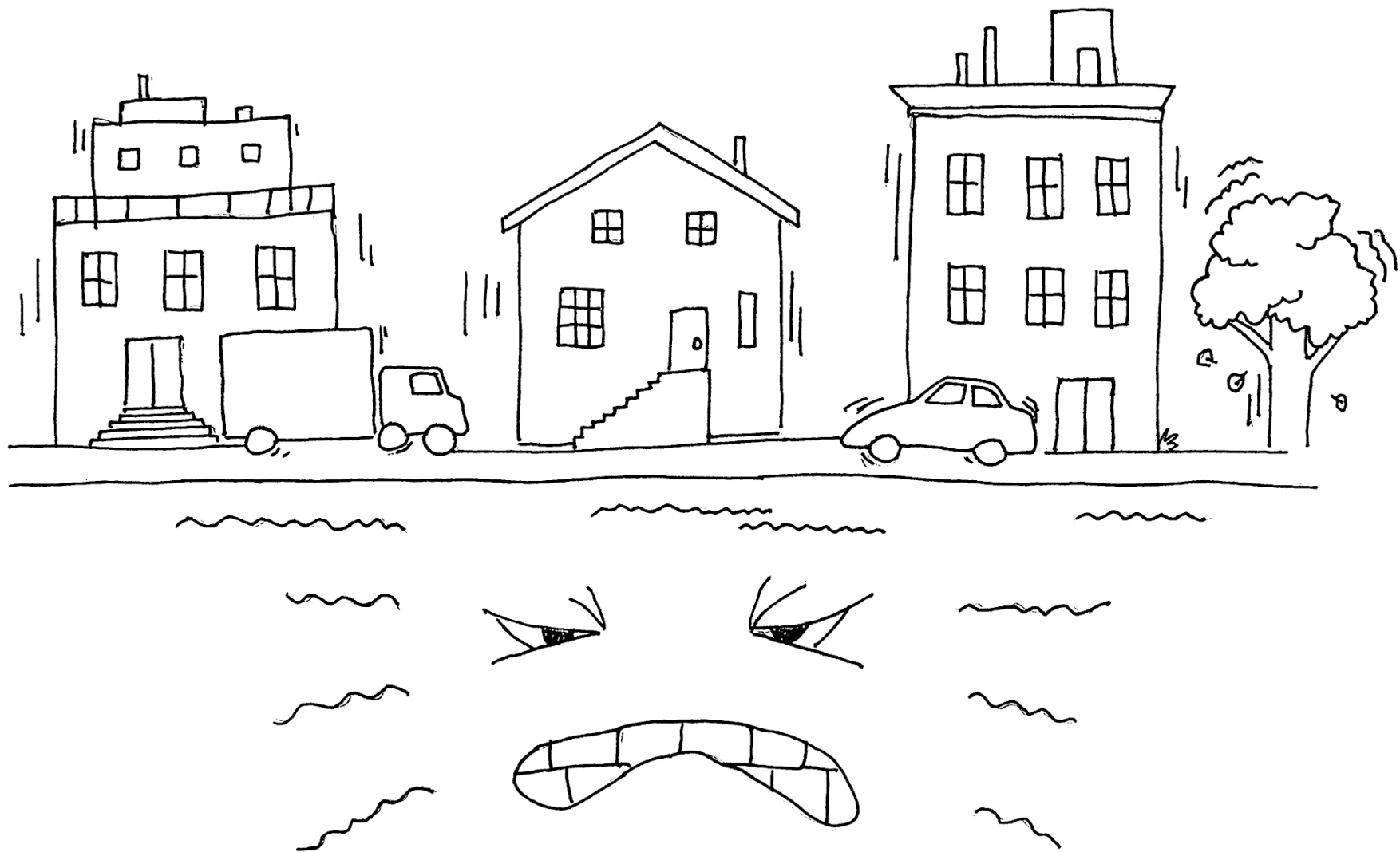
But one day, something scary happened. The ground started to shake.



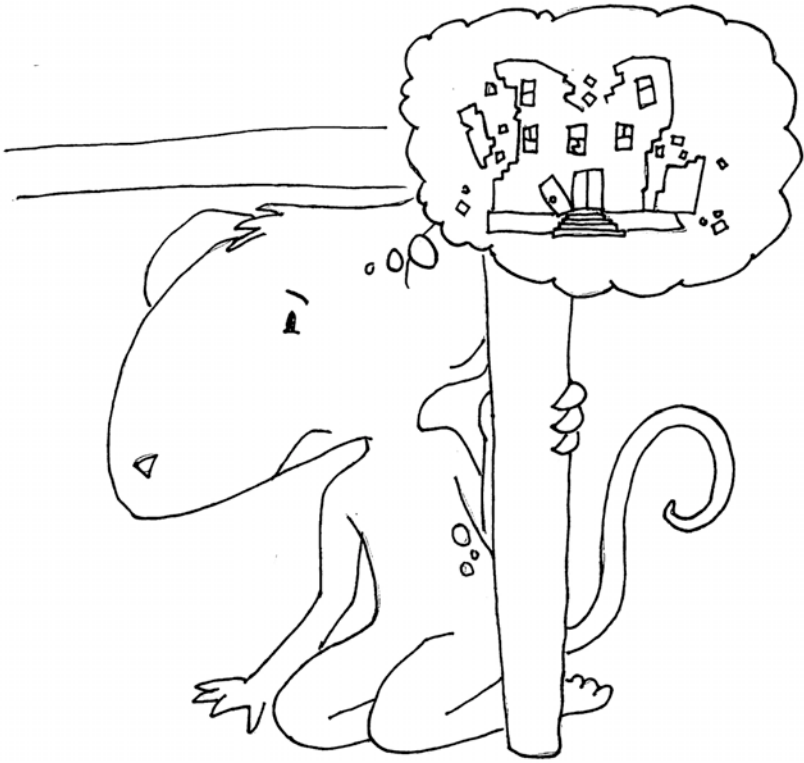
Sam hid under the table  
with his teacher and his friends.



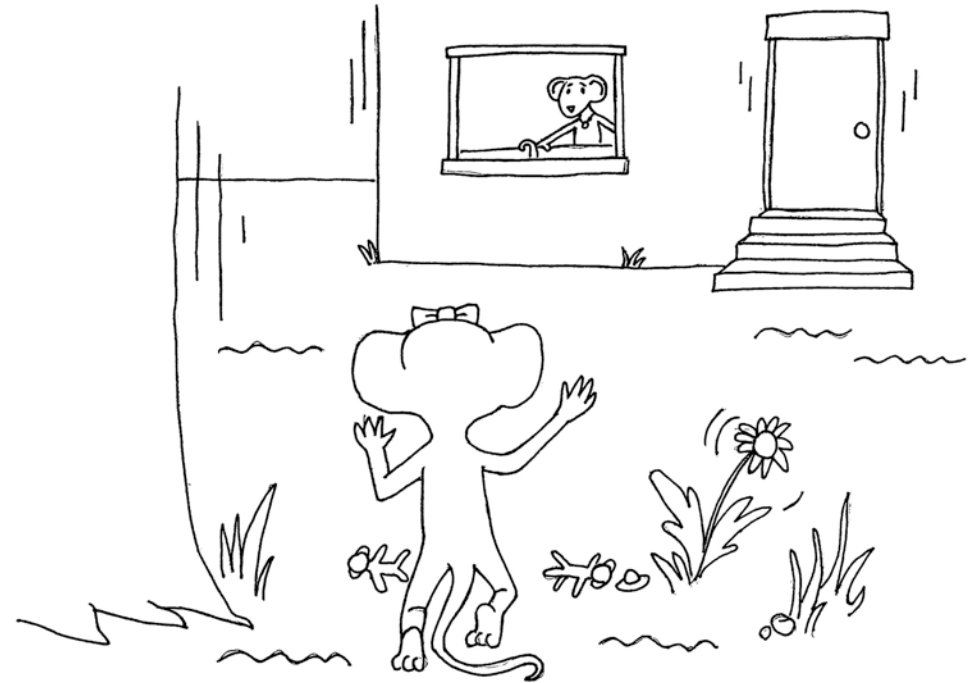
Trinka was in the yard playing.  
She didn't know what to do.



The Earth growled, grrr like it was angry.  
It shook and shook and shook.  
It seemed like it would never stop.

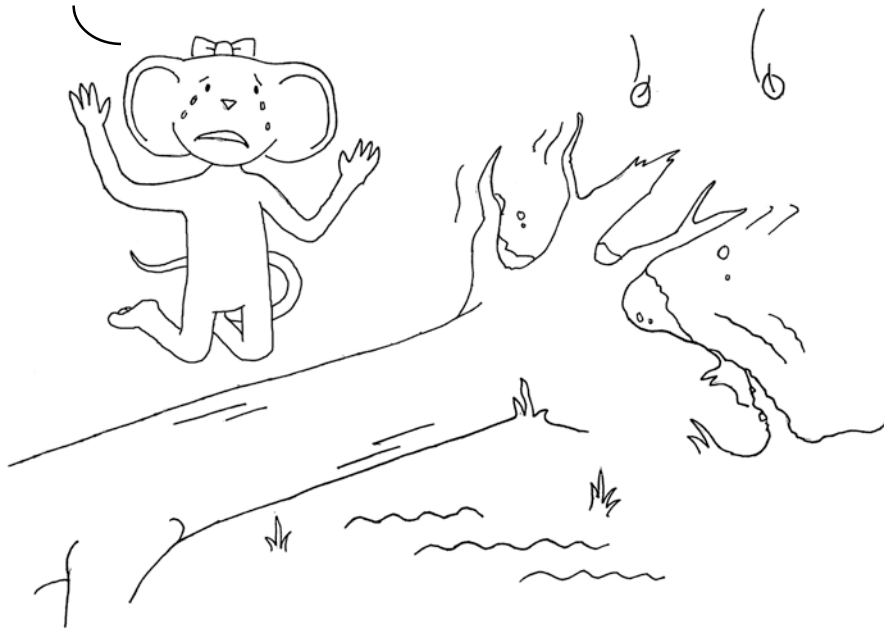


Sam worried that the school  
would fall down.



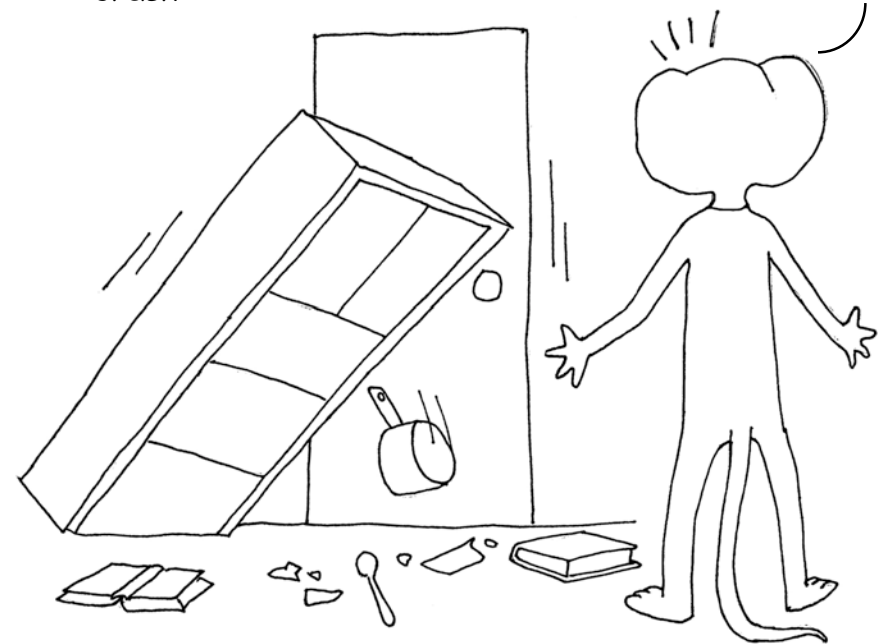
Trinka wanted her mommy.

Mommy, mommy, mommmmy!



Then crack boom, a tree fell down. Trinka yelled "mommy, mommy, mommy!"

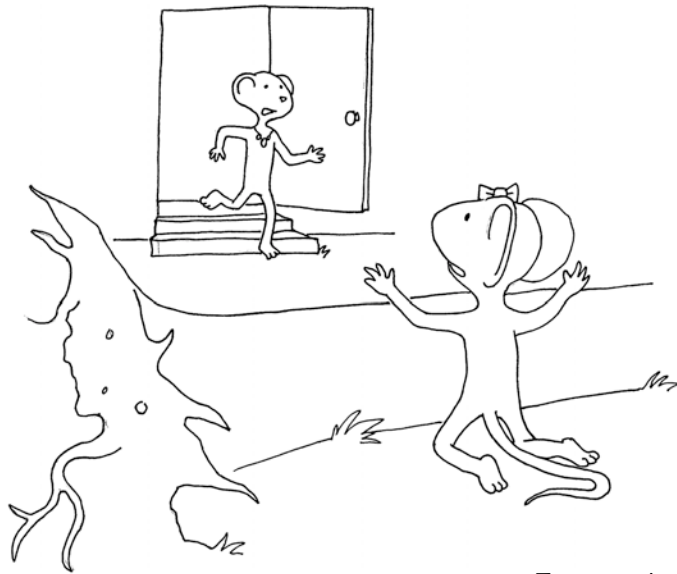
Crash



Trinka! Trinka!

Trinka's mom heard her, but the door was blocked. She couldn't get to Trinkka.





Mommy, mommy!  
Where were you  
mommy?

I was stuck in the  
house. I was trying  
to get to you.



She tried and tried until finally  
she got the door open and ran  
out to find Trinkka.

It's ok. You're ok. I'm here.  
It was an earthquake. It's over.

Let's sit over in the grass  
where it's safe.



I was so  
scared.

She hugged Trinkka. Trinkka started  
to cry. Her mom started to cry  
too. They were scared.

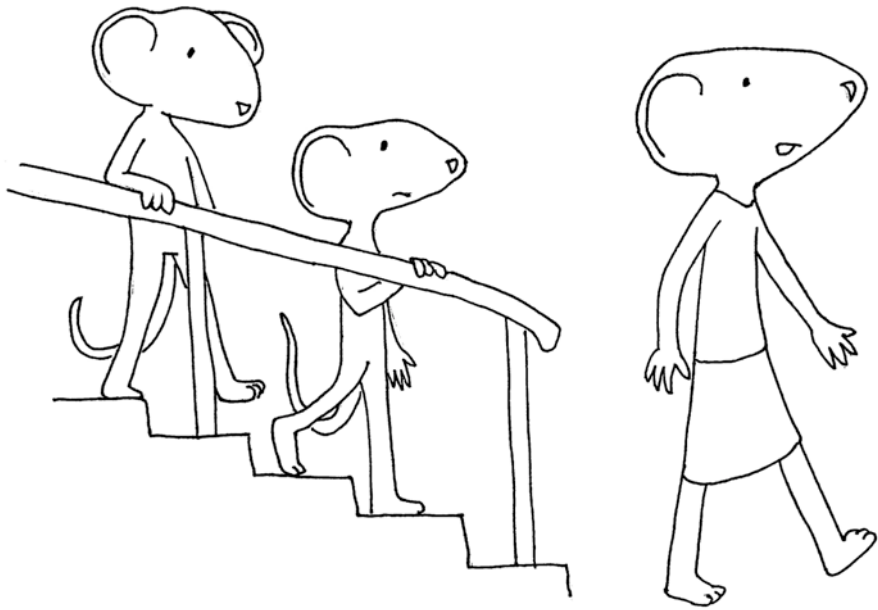
"It was an earthquake" her mom  
said. "It's over."



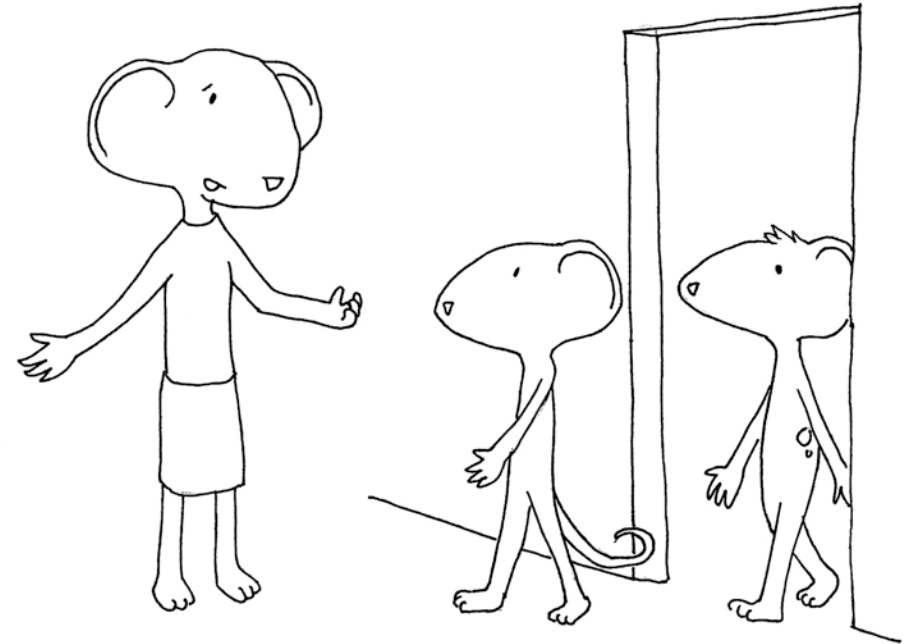
Sam was with his class. Their teacher said it was safe to come out, but there were no lights.



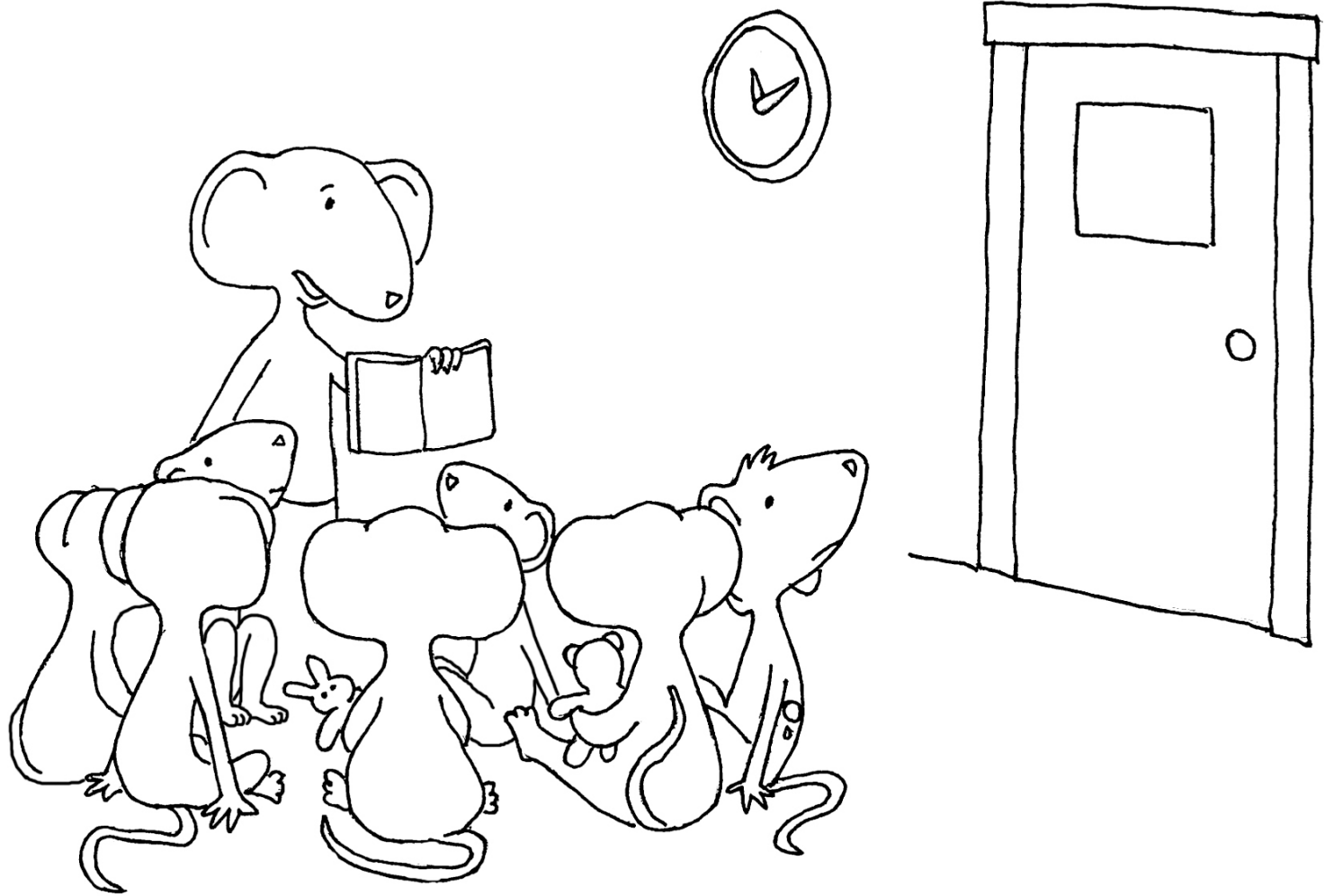
Their cubbies had fallen down. Their stuff was broken. Sam wanted his mom and dad. Some kids were crying.



The teachers said that they were safe, but now they had to go outside like they practiced in the drill. They all lined up and followed their teachers.



After a while their teachers said it was ok to go back in. There had been an earthquake, and they had listened and done really well.



Now they would wait for their parents to pick them up. Their parents knew where they were. They sat in a circle and read a story. Sam tried hard to listen. He wanted his mom and dad to come soon. It was hard to wait.

*It was hard to get to your school.*

*I had to get your little brother.*

Why didn't you come sooner?



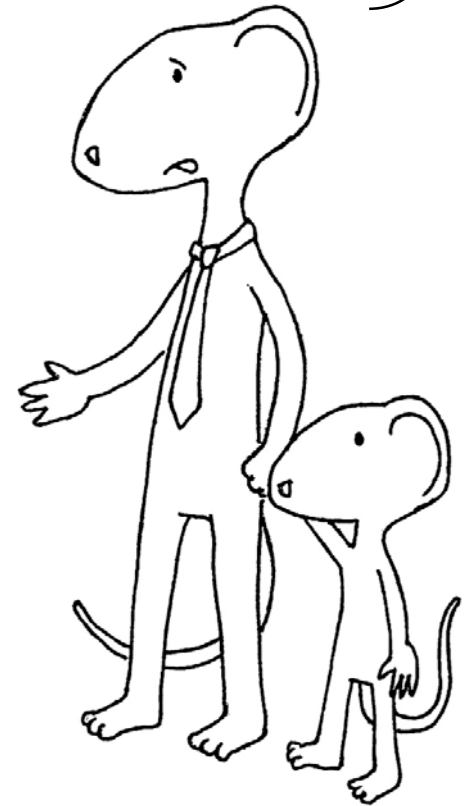
After a long time, Sam's dad came. Sam was mad.

Where's mom?

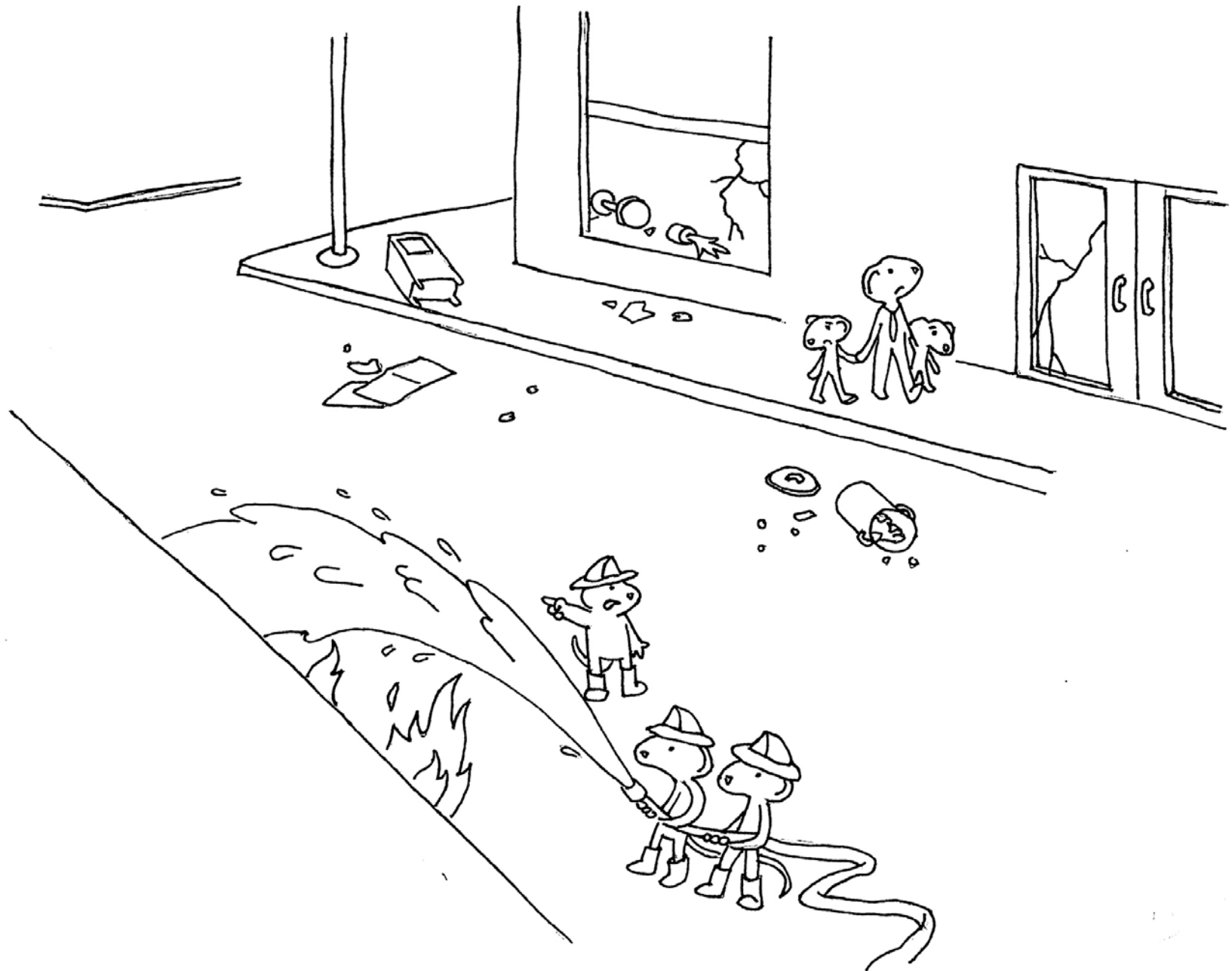


Sam was worried about mom. Why wasn't she there?

Mom will meet us at home.



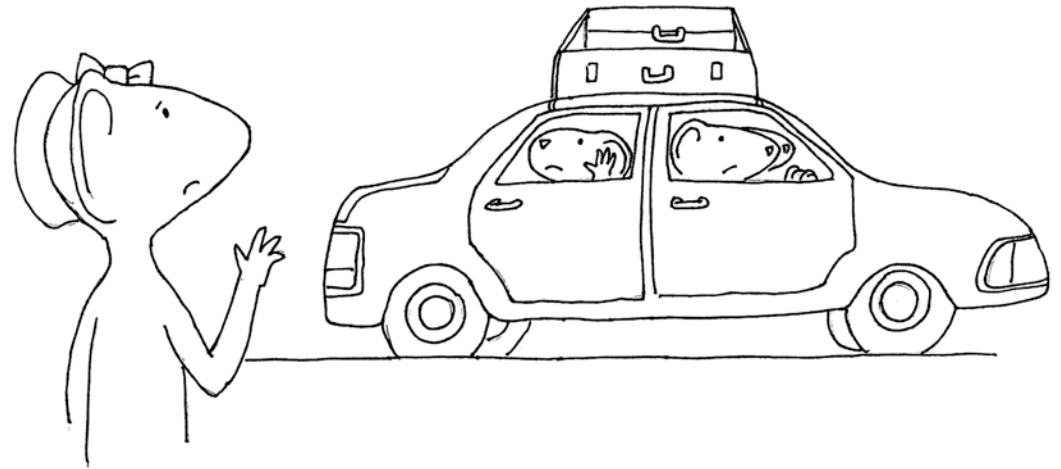




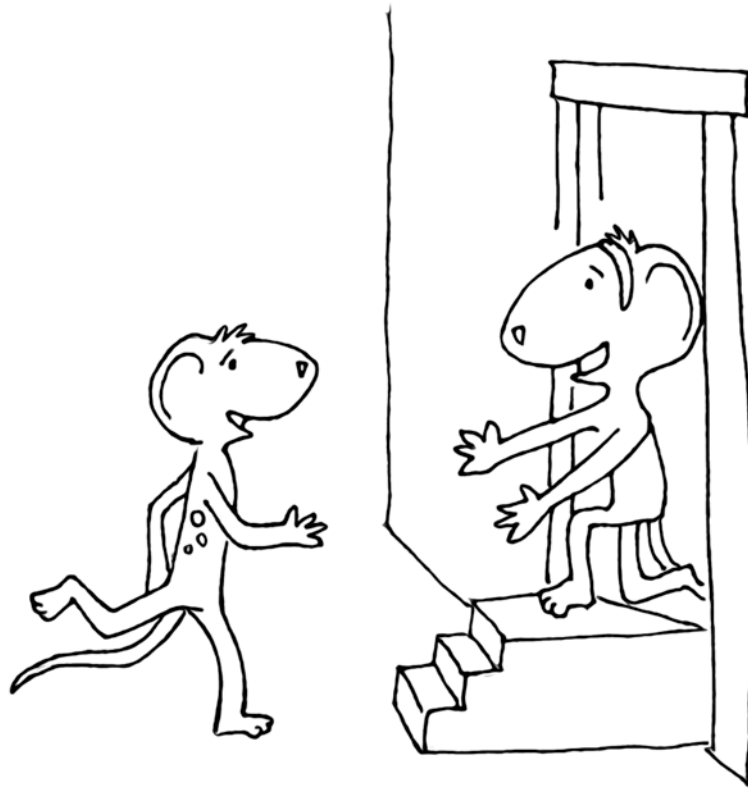
They went home. All along the road, Sam saw what the earthquake had done.



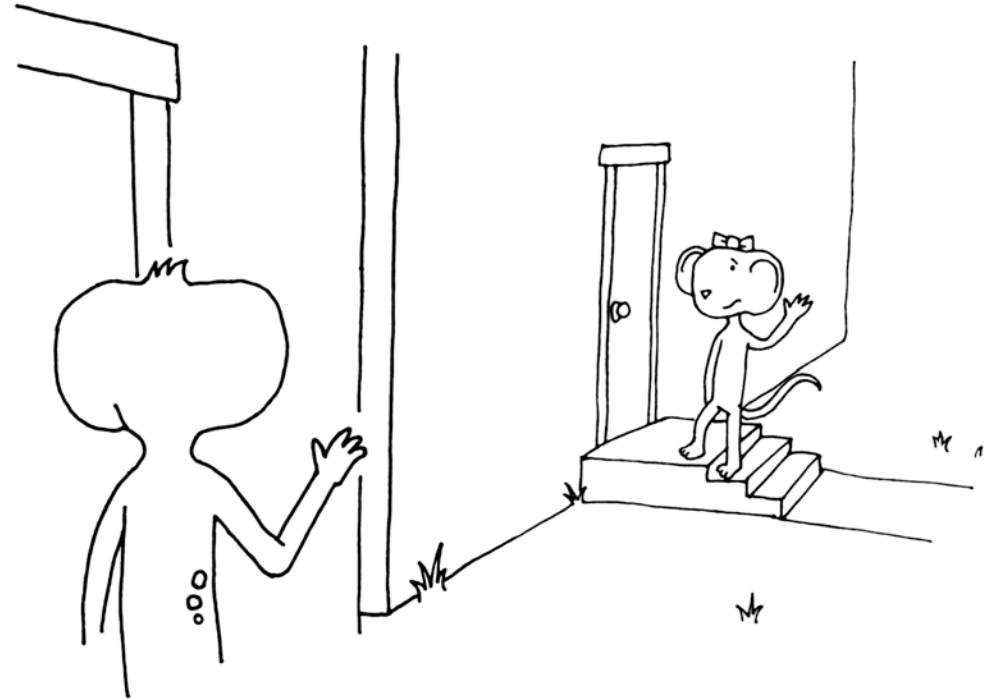
Trinka stared out the window.  
The playground was broken.



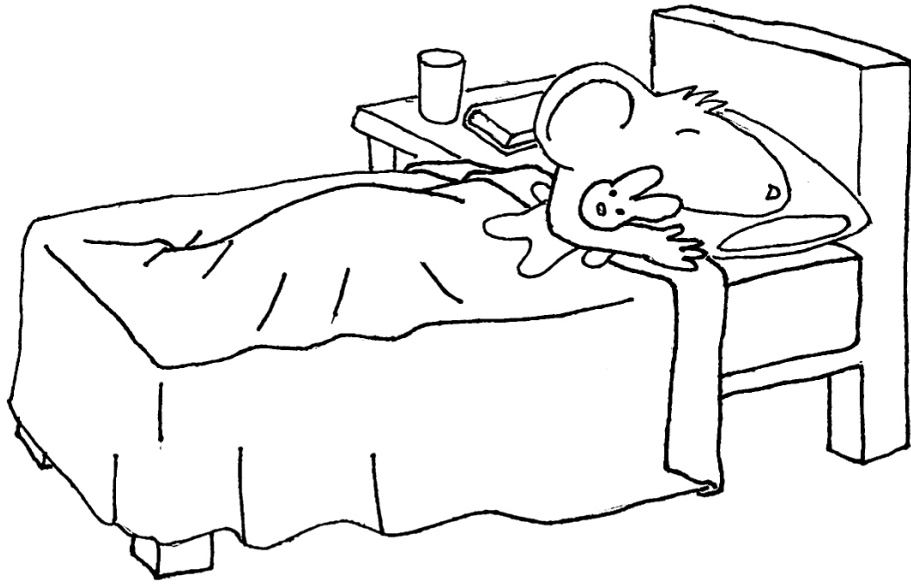
The house next door fell down.  
Piplo and his family had to stay  
somewhere else.



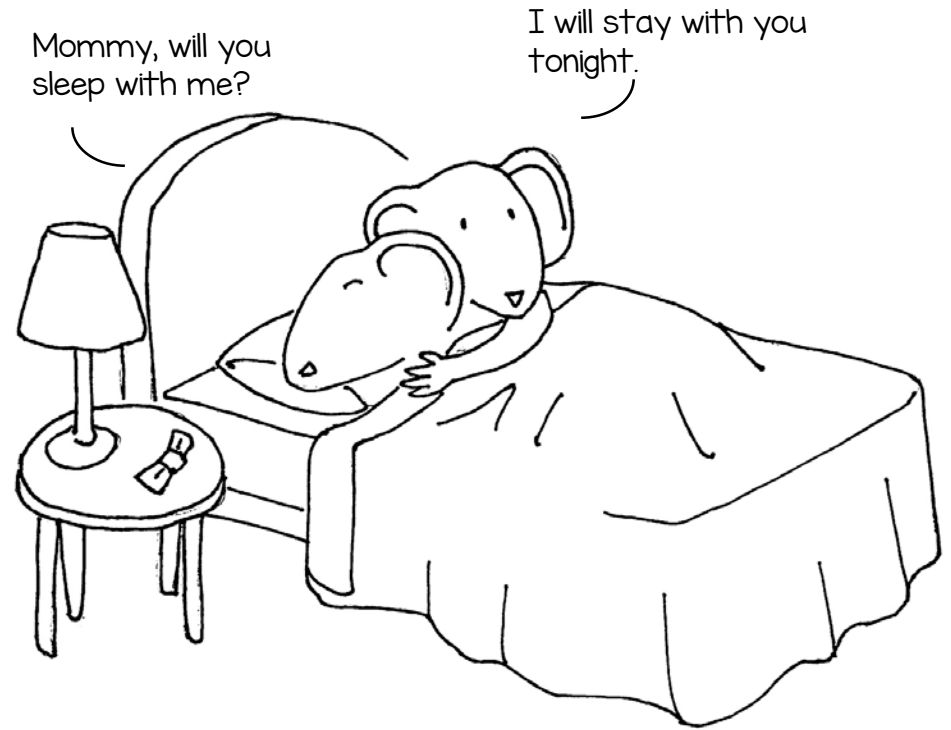
Trinka saw Sam come home.



She was glad he was ok. He was happy to see her too.



The earthquake was over, and it was time to sleep. Sam went to bed.



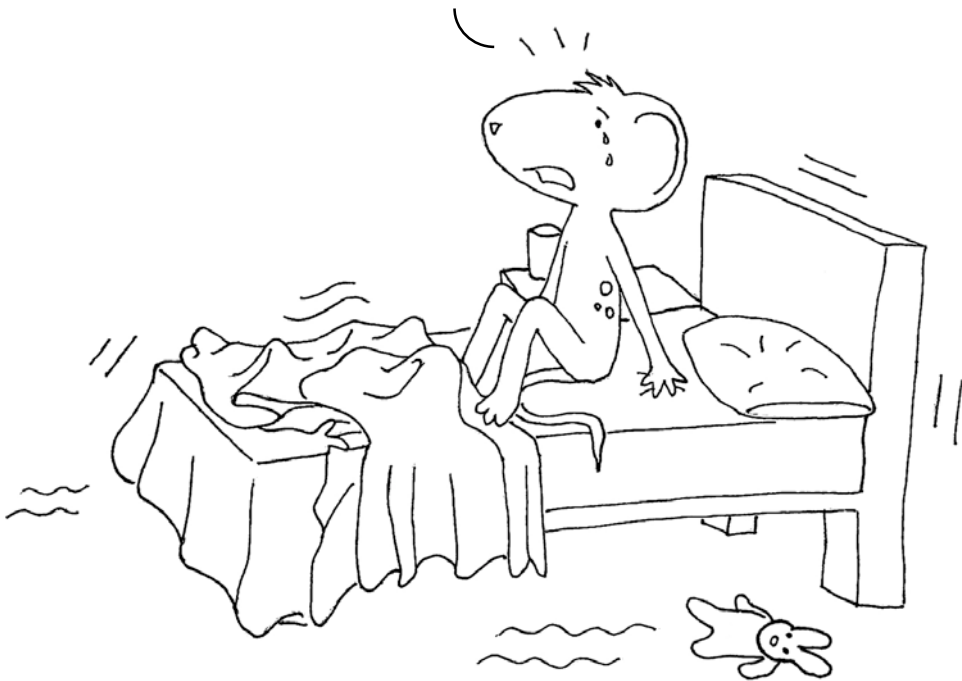
Mommy, will you sleep with me?

I will stay with you tonight.

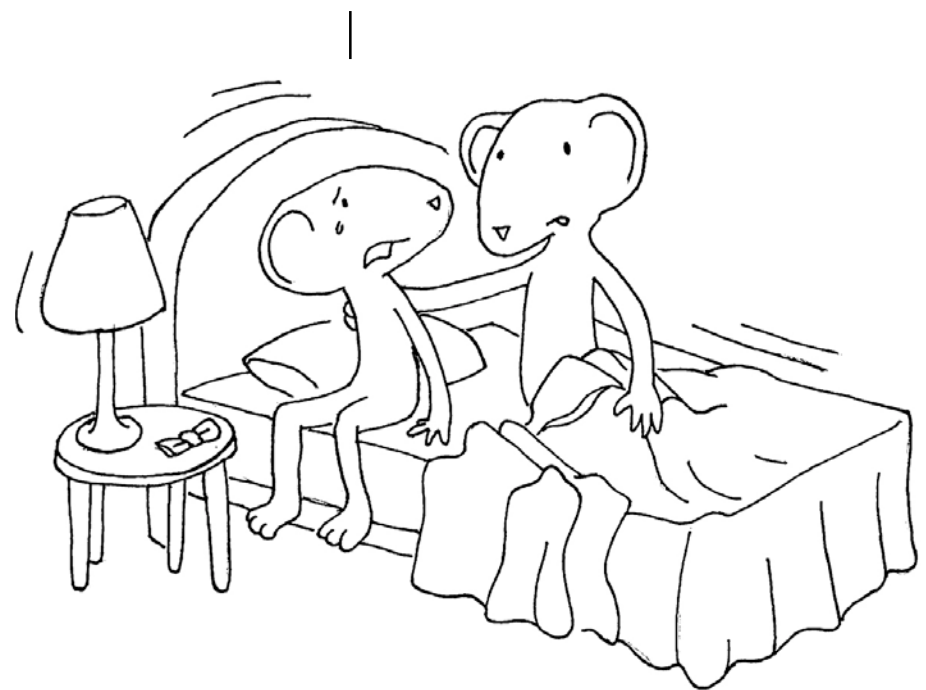
Trinka went to bed, but she needed her mommy and her mommy slept with her.

Waaa waaaa!!!

What's happening?



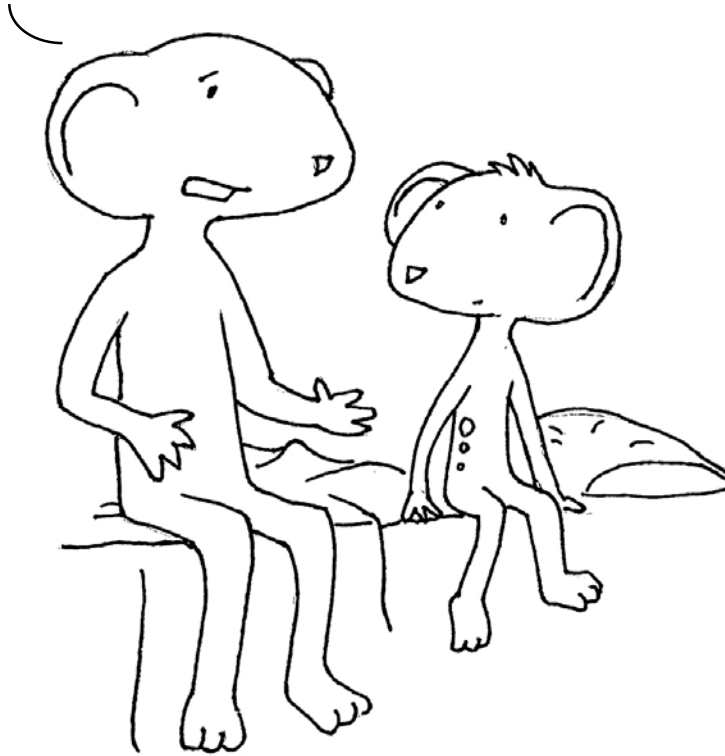
I am scared.  
You said it was over.  
You lied. It's not over.



But while they were in bed, the earthquake came back. The ground growled "grrr" again. It wasn't over. The beds shook. Trinkka and Sam woke up and jumped out of bed.

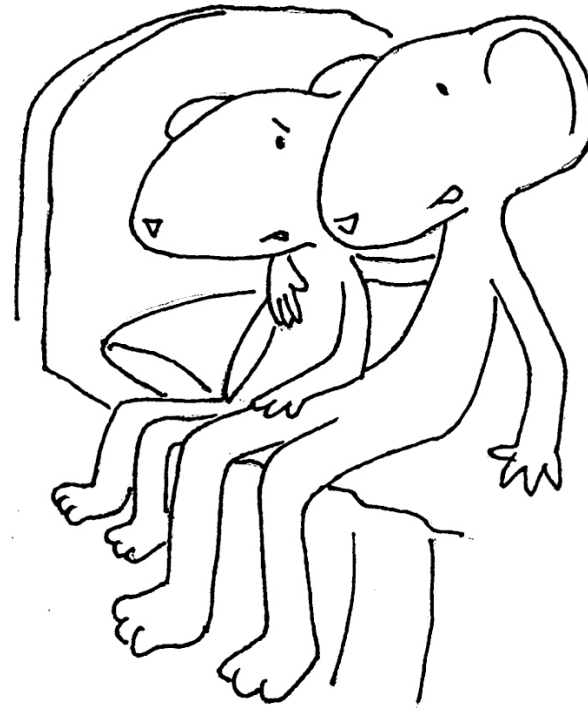


Aftershocks are scary. They remind us of the earthquake. When one happens, we will stay in bed, curl up, hold on, and protect our heads with our pillows.

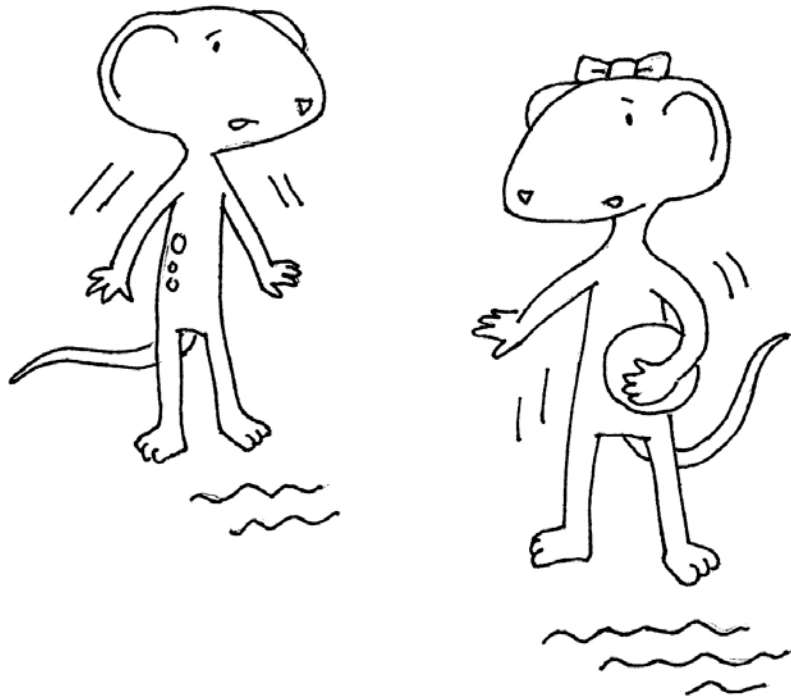


It's ok to be scared. I got scared too.  
I am sorry I didn't tell you about aftershocks.

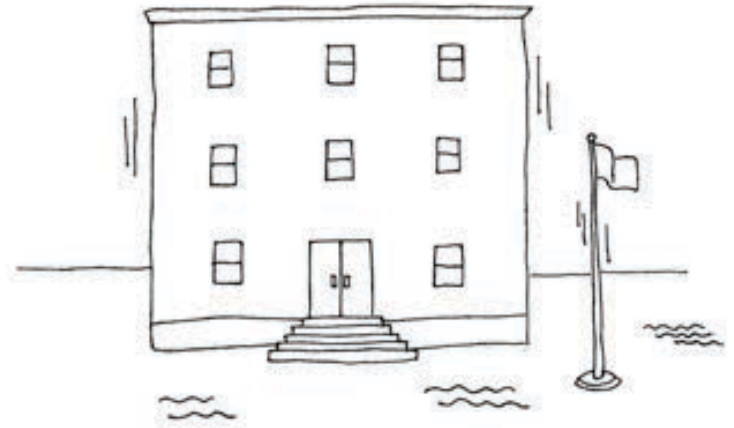
The big earthquake ended, but after a big earthquake there are often lots of little quakes called aftershocks.



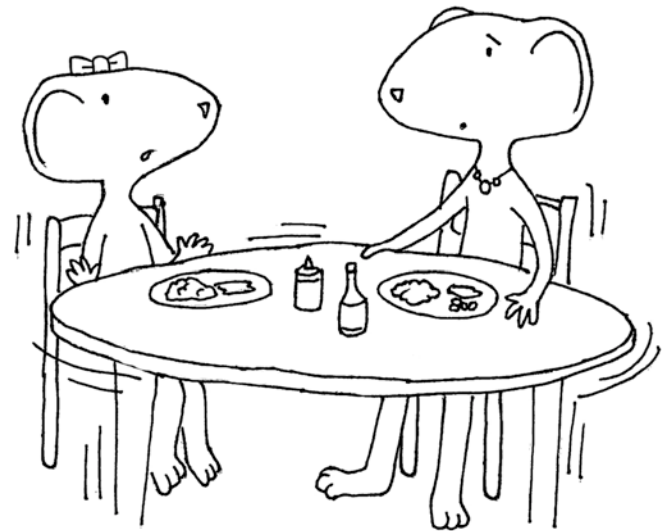
Trinka's mom explained, and Sam's dad explained, "That was an aftershock. After an earthquake there can be lots of aftershocks. They can be just as scary and make us jump inside." Trinka's mom and Sam's dad talked about what to do when one happens.



The aftershocks kept happening.  
They happened when Trink and  
Sam played.

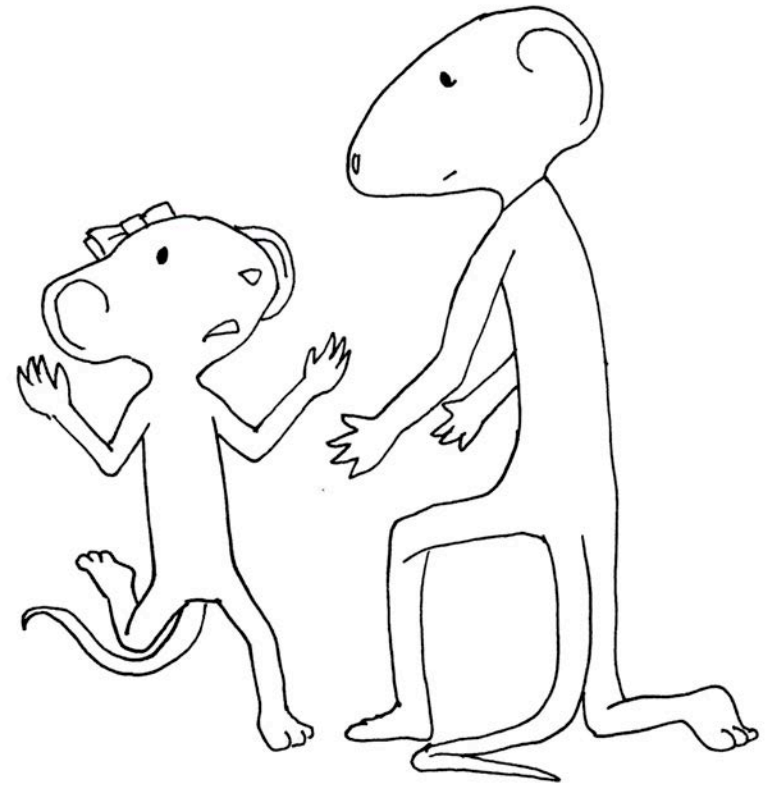


They happened at school.  
They happened at dinner.

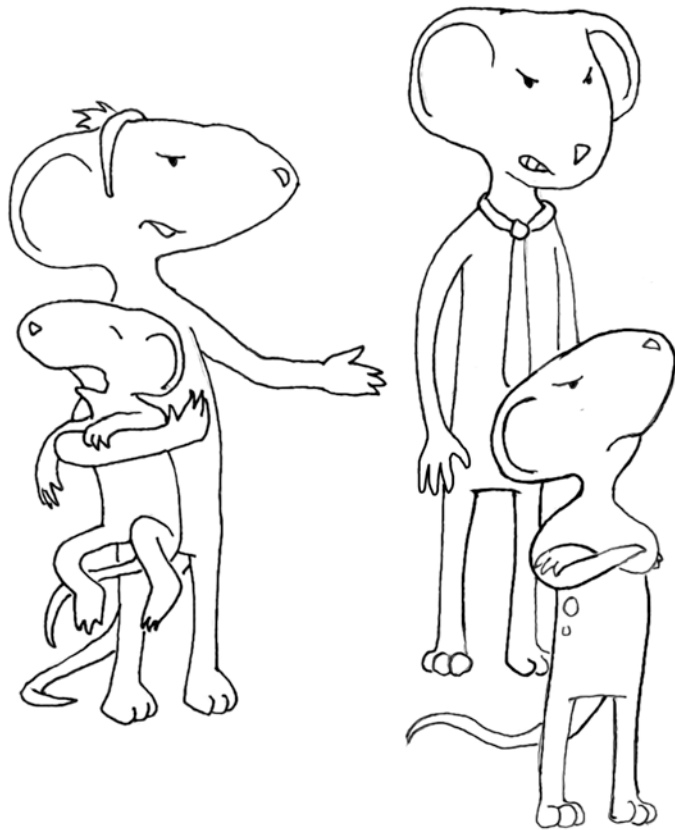




When it rumbled, Trink got scared.



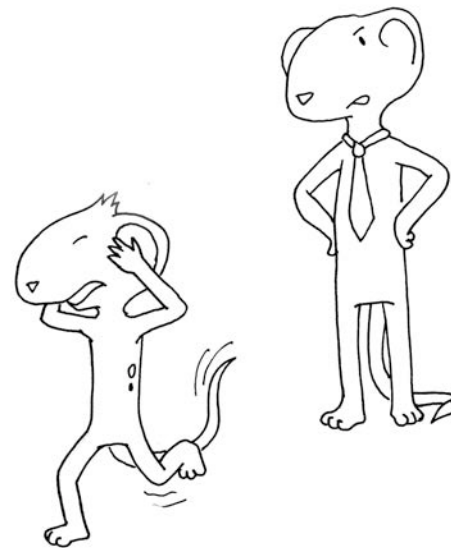
When she got scared, she needed her mommy. Her mommy helped her find a safe place where they could sit, and her mommy helped her feel safe inside.



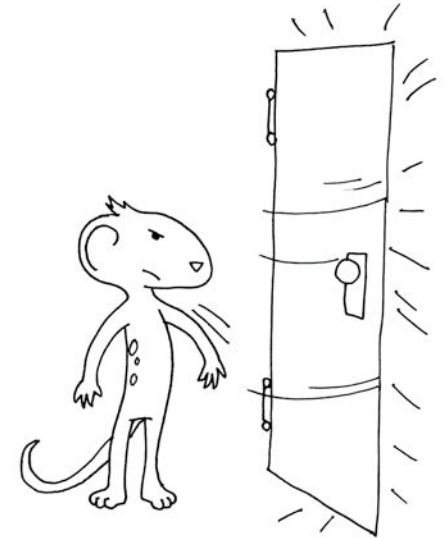
When it rumbled, Sam's tummy hurt. He didn't want to go to school.



*He took his brother's toy.*

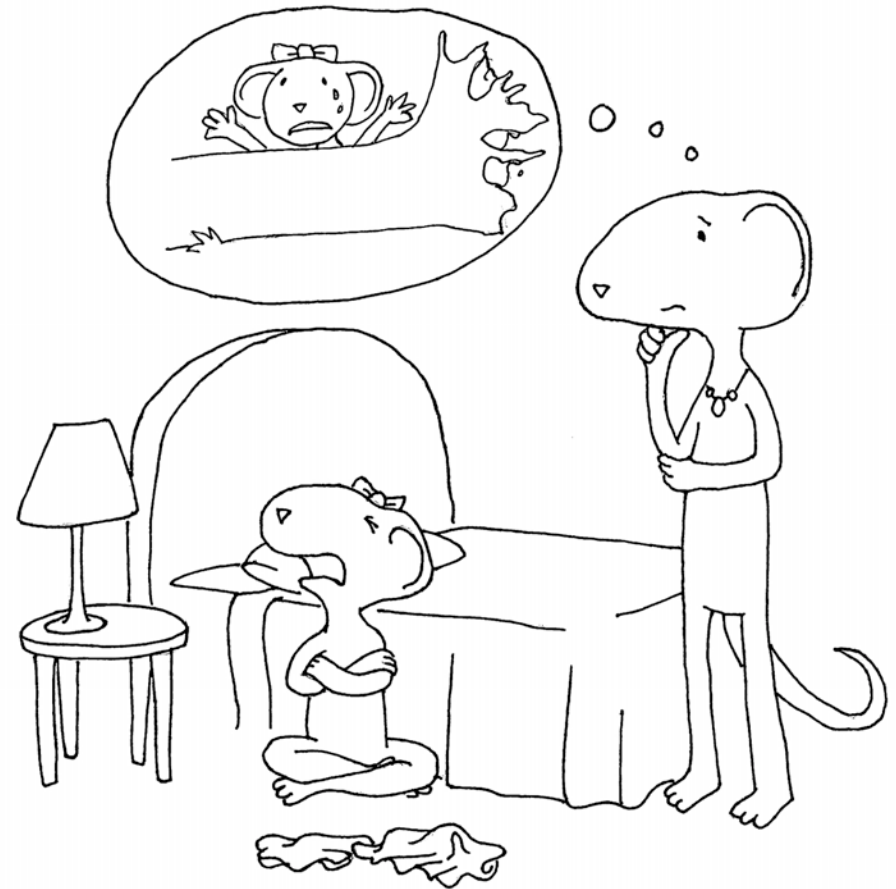
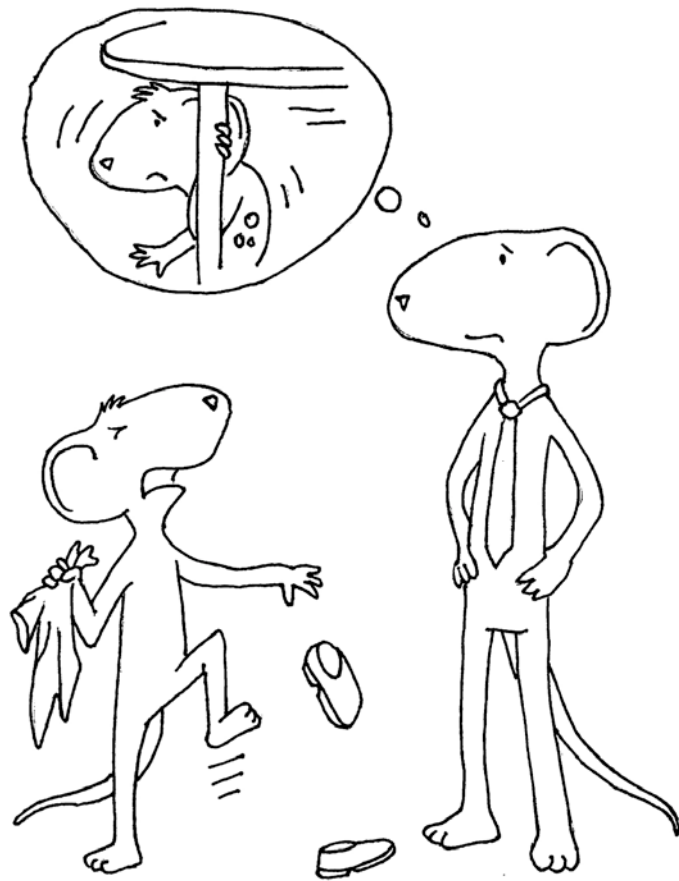


*He didn't listen to his daddy.*

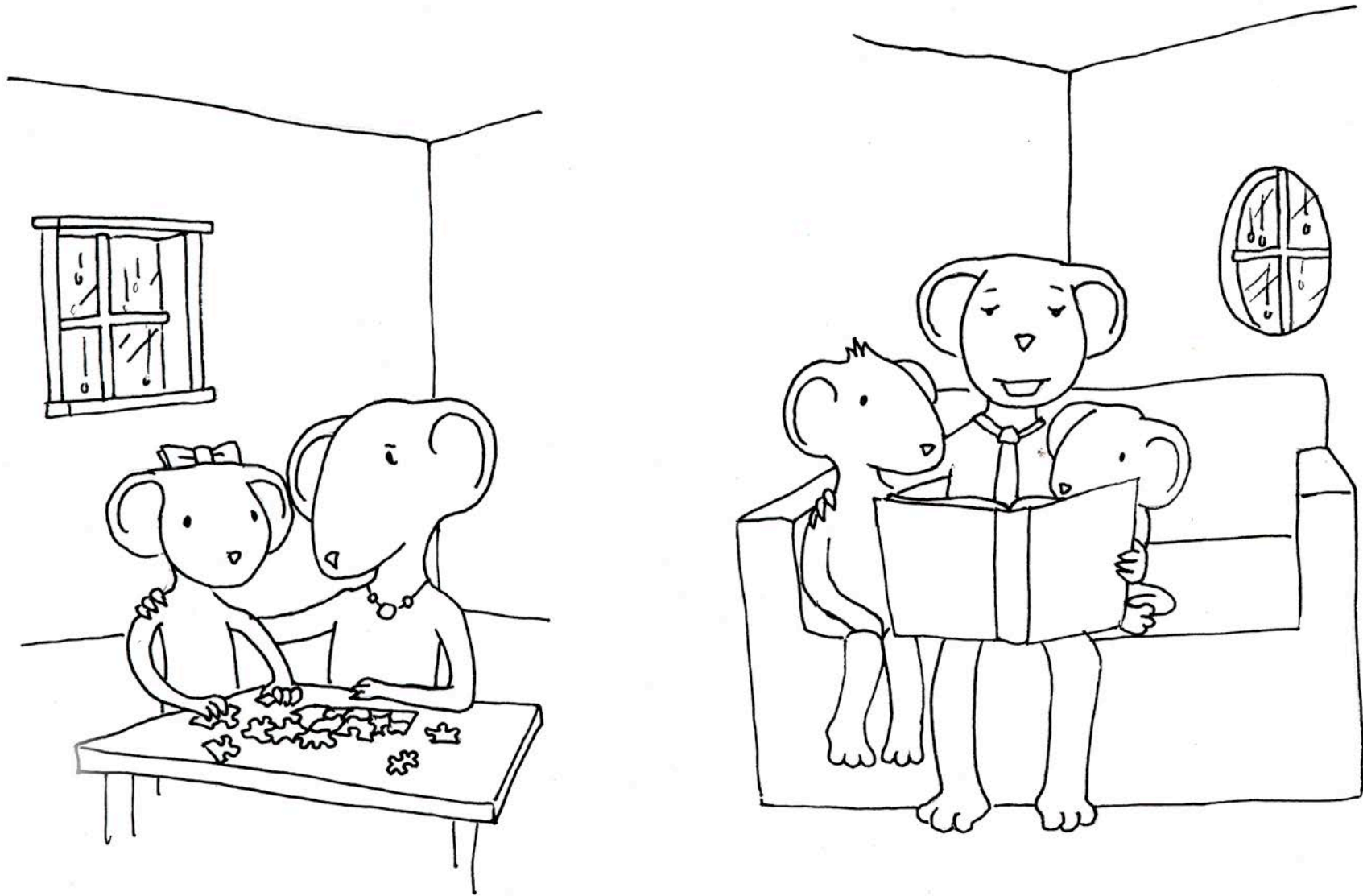


*He slammed the door.*

He felt cranky.



Trinka's mom understood. Sam's dad understood. Even though the earthquake was over, Trinka and Sam were still shook up.



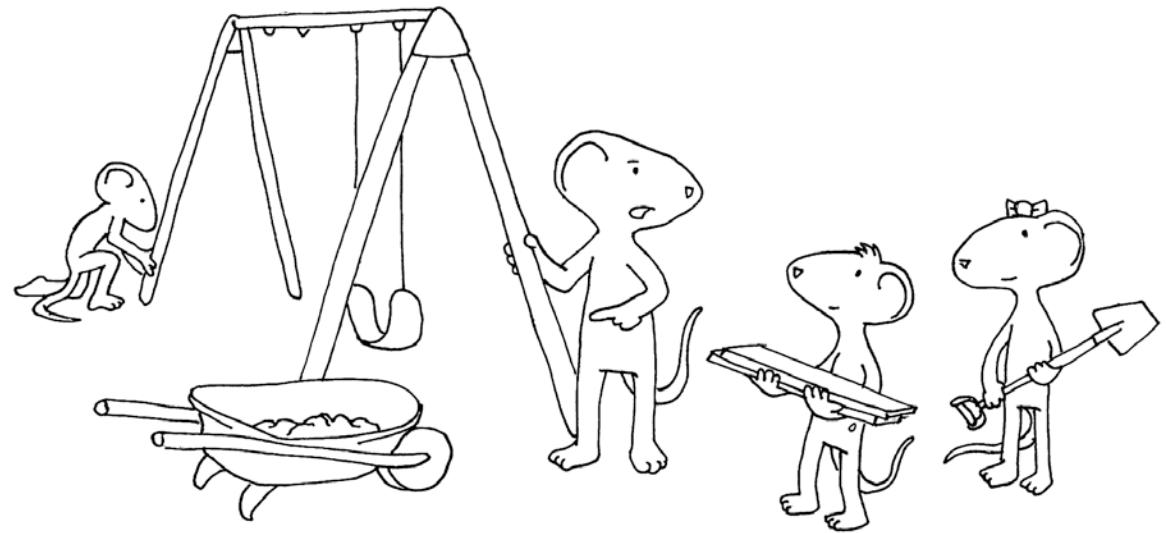
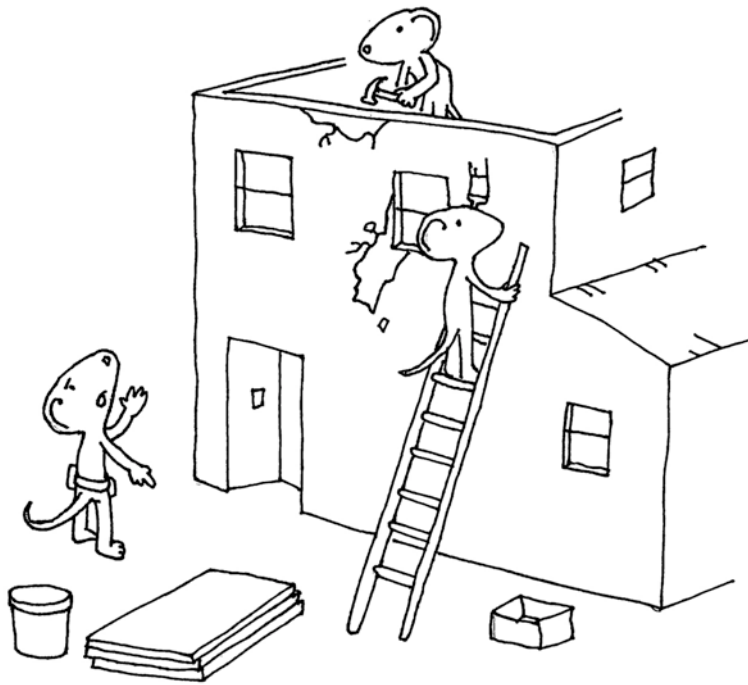
It would take some time. Slowly the earth would stop shaking; the aftershocks would stop. Slowly Trinka and Sam would feel safe again.



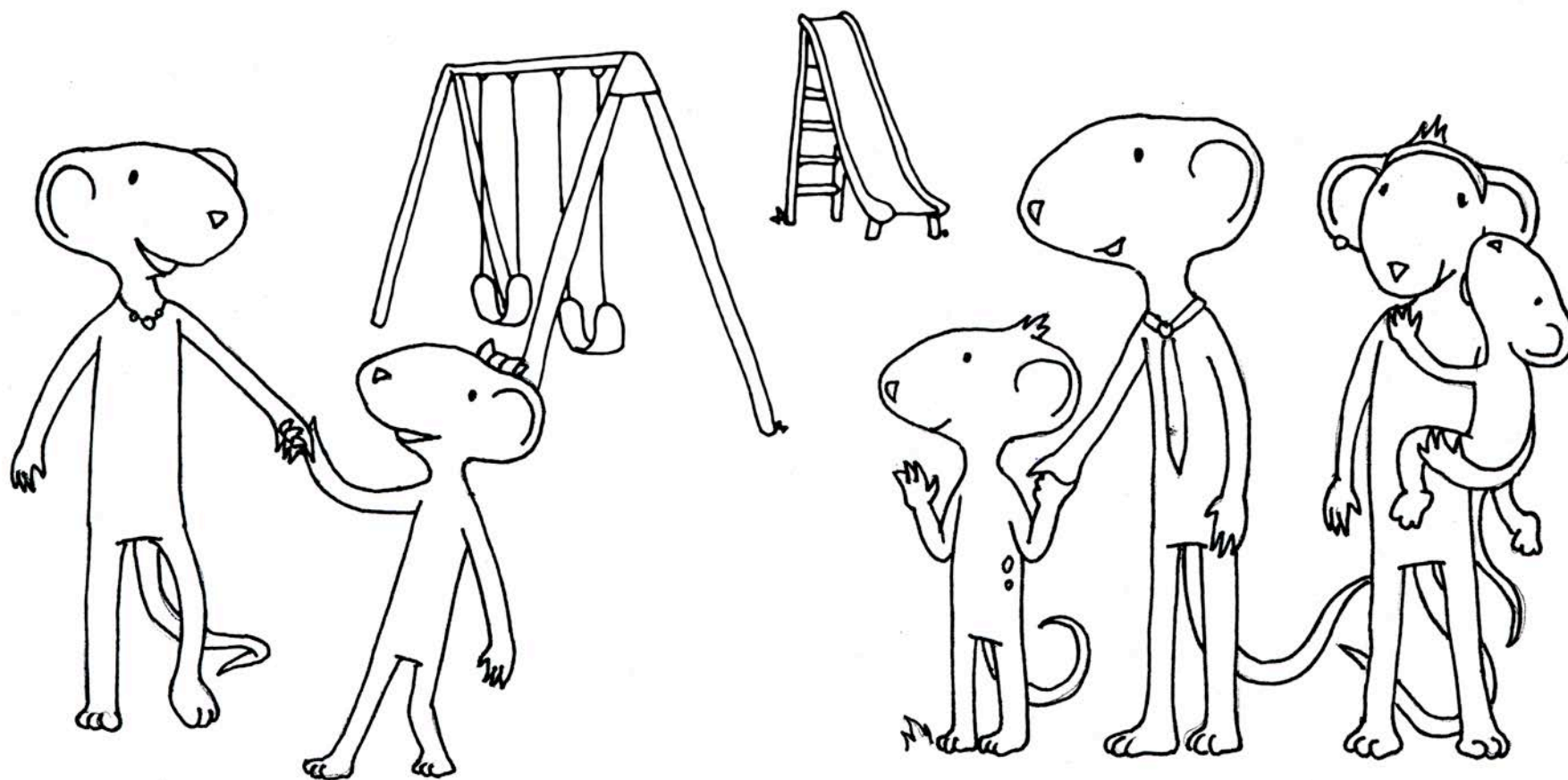


And while they waited, their parents would be there to help them.





It might take a while. The school and house would be put back together. They would work together to fix the playground.



And eventually they would all go out to play.

My Story

My Story

## Parents' Guide

The purpose of the story is to help children who have experienced an earthquake learn to deal with their fears and worries. As the story shows, you can help your child by letting your child know s/he is safe and loved.

### Ways to Use This Story

1. Read and talk about this book with your child.
  - Follow your child's lead.
  - Some children may want to stop and talk about what's on the page. Let them. This is how they will begin to express how they feel and what they remember.
  - Some children may get worried while reading the book and need to take a break. That's ok. You can say something like "It's hard for me to talk about the earthquake too. It is good to take a break."
2. Use it as a coloring book.
  - Coloring is fun and relaxing.
  - Children can use different colors for different feelings. For example, when Sam gets angry, they might color that picture red. When Sam and Trinka are scared, they might choose a color for fear and color "scary" pages with that color. Doing this will help your child begin to think about different feelings.
  - As children are coloring, they will often begin to talk about what they are thinking.
  - Some children may want to scribble on the earthquake pictures to show how angry they are with the earthquake or how much they didn't want the earthquake to happen. This is a good way to share feelings.
3. Use it to begin talking about what happened to your family during the earthquake and its aftermath.
  - Stories are important to young children. They help them understand what is happening.
  - When you read the story to your children, they will know it is ok to talk about what is happening and ask questions.
  - Each family will be impacted differently. Use this time

to talk with your children about your family's experience. Give the facts in simple words.

- If your child saw you get upset, talk about it. It is ok to admit that you were scared or upset. Help your child to see that you are doing better now, that you are strong, and that you will do all you can to keep your family safe.
- By talking to you, they may be able to share difficult feelings. When children can talk and don't have to act out their feelings through their behavior, often their behavior improves.
- To help your children begin to talk, ask them what they remember and whether they ever feel the way that Trinka and Sam felt. Offer that you have felt scared too and be open to answering their questions.
- Sometimes when children are not comfortable or ready to talk about their own feelings, they can express themselves by talking about how the characters in the story felt or behaved. If you have noticed similarities between Trinka and Sam's feelings and behaviors and those of your own children, you can direct the conversation to those parts of the story.
  - For example, after the earthquake, Sam is mad at his dad because Sam thinks his dad took too long to come and get him. Young children often get upset with their parents and blame them for what happened even when it's not the parents' fault. This is because they believe that parents are so strong and powerful that if they don't do something, it is because they chose not to do it. For Sam, it is important that his dad did not react to his anger but recognized that Sam was very scared and needed him. It may help if he talks to Sam about how much he wished he could have been there to hold Sam and keep him safe and how he came as fast as he could.
  - After the earthquake, Trinka is also upset with her mom because she thinks her mom lied when she said the earthquake was over. Her mom was just trying to make Trinka feel safe but Trinka doesn't understand that. It is important that Trinka's

mom support her and help her understand what is happening.

- If your children seem angry with you, talking about how Sam and Trinkia are upset with their parents may help your children begin to talk about their feelings.

4. Use it to begin talking to your children about earthquakes.

- Young children may have a lot of questions about earthquakes, but because they are little, they may not know how to ask them. Here are some questions they may have.
  - What is an earthquake?
  - Why do they happen?
  - Will it happen again?
  - When will it happen?
  - What will we do if it happens?
- When children have their questions answered, they feel less scared. Even if they are still scared, they know they are not alone. They know that they can talk to you.
- Here is some information you might share with children to help them understand earthquakes. To start the topic you can say, "It is helpful to know about earthquakes. Here is what I know about them."
  - The earth has pieces like a puzzle. We call the pieces tectonic plates. They are always moving. Usually they move slowly. Earthquakes happen when the plates (puzzle pieces) bump into each other.
  - Earthquakes happen all the time. Most are so small we don't even feel them.
  - The shaking may be sideways, up and down, or wave-like.
  - Earthquakes typically last less than one minute. They usually start with a rumbling noise that can be low or as loud as a freight train.
  - Earthquakes occur suddenly and without warning.
  - During an earthquake, we want to make sure that things do not fall on us. This is why your teachers and I tell you to drop, find cover, and hold on.
  - A big earthquake is often followed by more earthquakes. These are called aftershocks. They

are usually smaller than the first earthquake, but they can still be scary. Aftershocks happen because the earth is adjusting itself (the puzzle pieces are settling down) after the first quake. Typically, the larger the first quake, the larger and more numerous the aftershocks.

- Remember to drop, find cover, and hold on even in an aftershock, as objects can still fall or break.
- When an earthquake or aftershock happens at night, stay in bed, curl up, and hold on. Protect your head with a pillow.
- For families that live near the ocean, big earthquakes can cause large ocean waves, called tsunamis. Listen for the tsunami warning. If the warnings say to evacuate, do so immediately. Evacuate means you leave an area that might not be safe and you go to a place that will be safe (typically inland and to higher ground).

### Key Points to Remember

- Even after a natural disaster is over, it can continue to affect us.
- Many things may remind you or your child of the earthquake.
  - Aftershocks
  - Large trucks passing by that shake the ground or house
  - Separations
  - Seeing people upset or crying
- Young children often cannot tell us that they are remembering. They show their fear through their behavior. Trinkia wants to be picked up. Sam takes his brother's toy and runs around the house. Some children get stomach aches.
- Different children react in different ways. Trinkia is scared, and she becomes clingy. Sam is scared, and he acts out.
- In the story, the parents are upset and frustrated by their children's behavior, but they try to understand why their children are behaving the way they are and they try to help the children understand why too.

- Even when children are scared, angry, or sad, it is not ok for them to behave aggressively – setting limits for your children will help them feel safe.
- Young children ask the same questions over and over. This is not because they forget what you told them but because this is their way of learning about what happened and making sense of it. They need you to answer the same questions over and over, as patiently and lovingly as possible.
- Let your children know that even though scary things may have happened in the past, they are safe now. Remind them of the family plan to keep safe.

### **Thinking About Your Child**

- Has your child acted differently since the earthquake?
- What makes your child scared?
- How do you know when your child is scared?
- How does your child tend to behave when stressed or scared?
- What can you and your child do together that will help your child feel better?

### **Ways You Can Help Your Children**

- Help your children talk with you about what happened.
- Help your children identify feelings they may be having, and let them know it's ok to feel that way.
- Help your children feel safe. Focus on psychological safety (how your children feel) and actual physical safety (what to do if there is another earthquake, where they can go that will be safe).
- Young children feel safe when you hold them.
- Children feel safe when they have predictable routines (regular meals and schedules and consistent rules) and know what is going to happen next.
- Develop a family disaster plan, so that your children know what will happen if there is another earthquake. To prepare, practice the Drop, Cover, and Hold On as a family. Secure furniture or other objects that can fall or break. Put together an emergency supplies kit that is easily accessible. Keep flashlights and shoes by everyone's

bedside at night. Make sure that everyone knows the safest places at home and school to take cover during an earthquake or tsunami, and where to go if you have to evacuate.

### **Ways You Can Help Yourself**

- Adults can also be affected by natural disasters. You may be scared, and you may feel sad, angry, or guilty about all that has happened.
- In order to best help your children, you need to take care of yourself. Children, even very little children, notice when the grown-ups around them are not doing well.
- The first step to taking care of yourself is taking time for yourself. Ask yourself. . .
  - Does thinking about the disaster keep me from being able to do what I want or need to do?
  - Am I trying to completely avoid thinking about the disaster?
  - Do I feel anxious, distracted, or irritable?
  - Do I feel very sad or depressed?
  - Could my attempts to cope cause me problems later? Am I ignoring things I need to do or doing things that are not good for me?
  - What good things am I doing?
- If you notice that you are having strong reactions to the disaster
  - Talk to friends or family members.
  - Take time for yourself and do things that you enjoy.
  - Stay healthy. Eat well, exercise, and get enough sleep.
  - Allow yourself to feel sadness and grief.
  - Try to return to a normal routine.
  - If you feel very overwhelmed, try to take small steps to deal with large problems.
- Many adults feel guilty about focusing on or taking care of themselves, but remember your children feel happiest when they know that you are ok.



### **Additional Resources**

- NCTSN.org – information about children, natural disasters, and trauma  
<http://www.nctsn.org/trauma-types/natural-disasters>
- Piplo Productions: “Once I Was Very Very Scared”, a story written to help children and grown-ups (parents, teachers, and other important adults) understand how stress can affect children and ways to help them:  
<https://piploproductions.com/stories/once>
- Futureunlimited.org – information about young children and mental health
- FEMA – Earthquake information for children:  
<http://www.fema.gov/kids/quake.htm>
- Sesame Street – *Let’s Get Ready! Planning Together for Emergencies* with tips, activities, and other tools to help the whole family prepare for emergencies (both in English and Spanish):  
<http://www.sesamestreet.org/ready>
- Redcross.org
  - Earthquake-related activities for families with children ages 5-14  
<http://www.redcross.org/preparedness/familymodule/family-cd-earthquakes-14.html>
- Zerotothree.org – information about young children and early childhood development