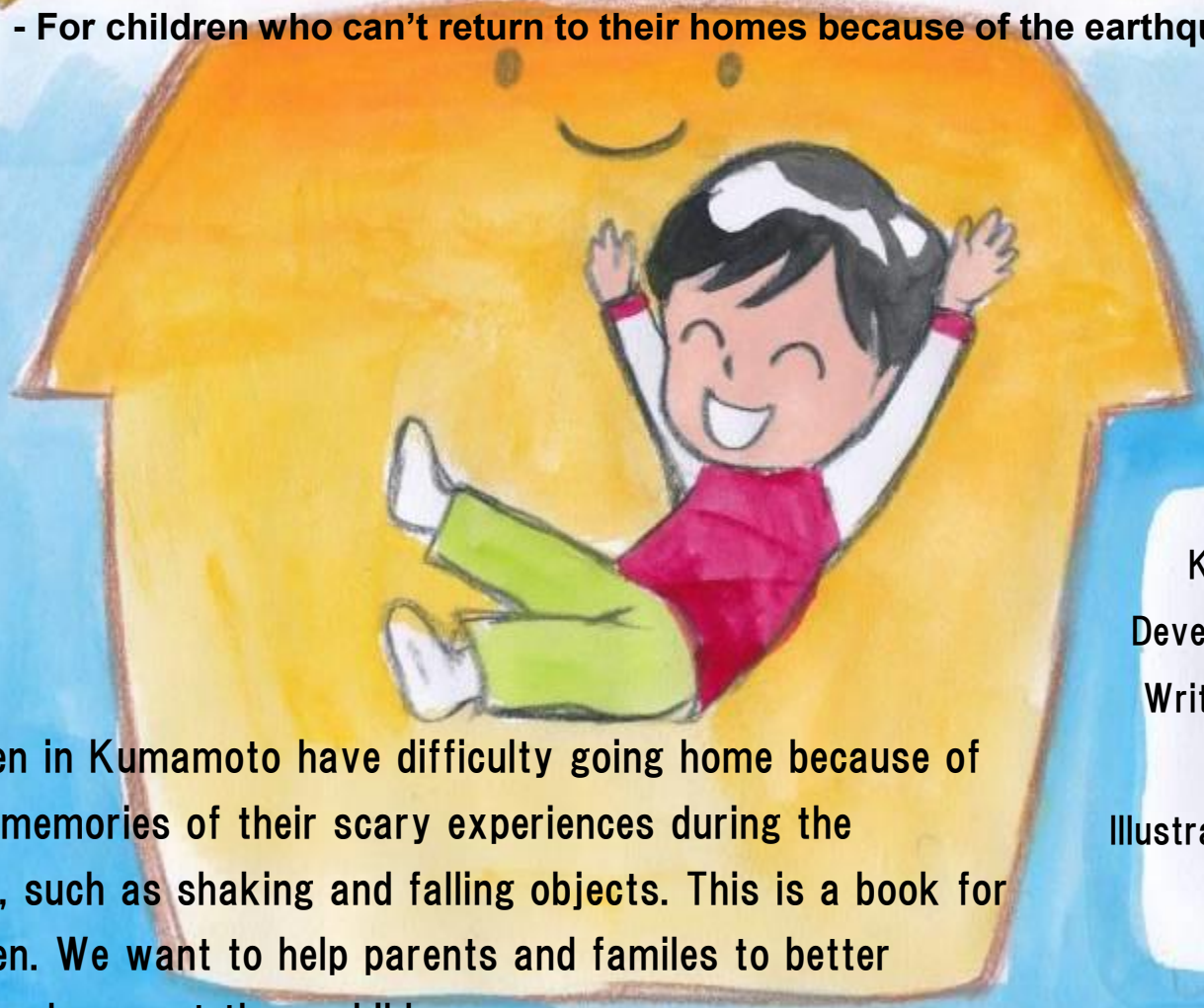


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There's No Place Like Home

- For children who can't return to their homes because of the earthquake trauma



Some children in Kumamoto have difficulty going home because of trauma and memories of their scary experiences during the earthquakes, such as shaking and falling objects. This is a book for those children. We want to help parents and families to better understand and support these children.

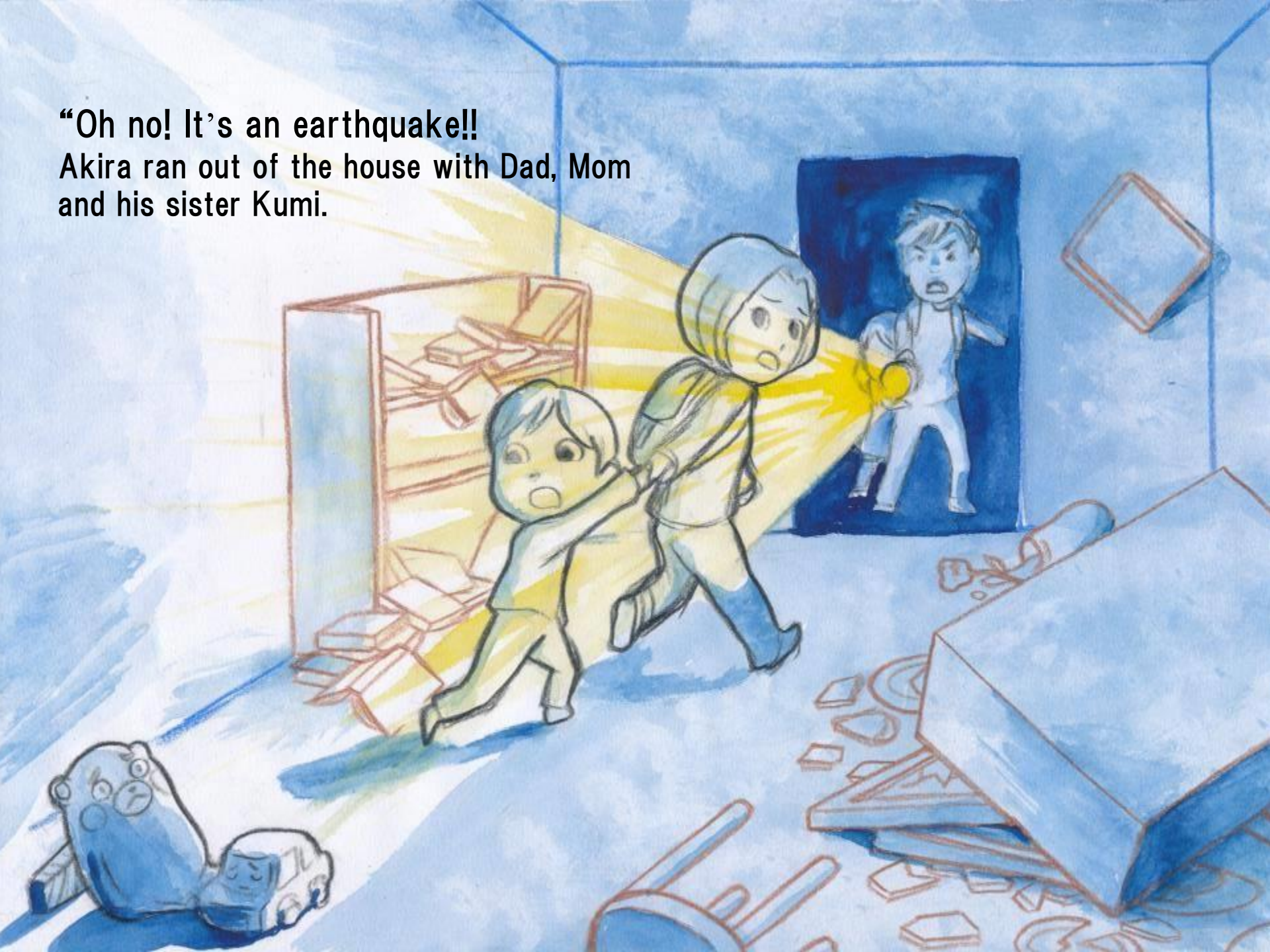
Kumamoto City Child
Development Support Center
Written by Shigemi Kimura
and Yukimi Saigo
Illustrated by Kumi Kawashima

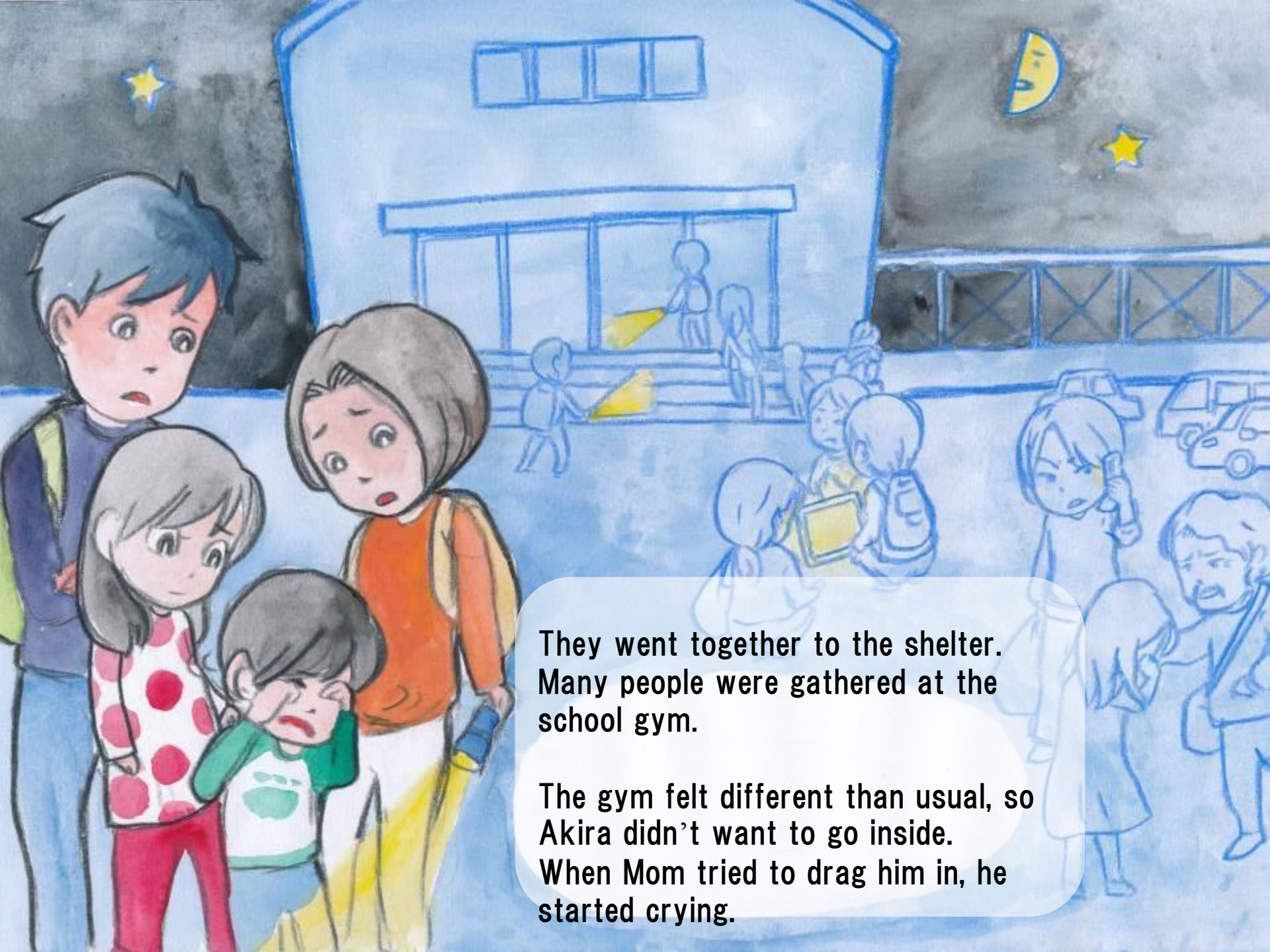
The earth caught a cold.

“Ah.. Ah.. Achooo!”



**“Oh no! It’s an earthquake!!
Akira ran out of the house with Dad, Mom
and his sister Kumi.**

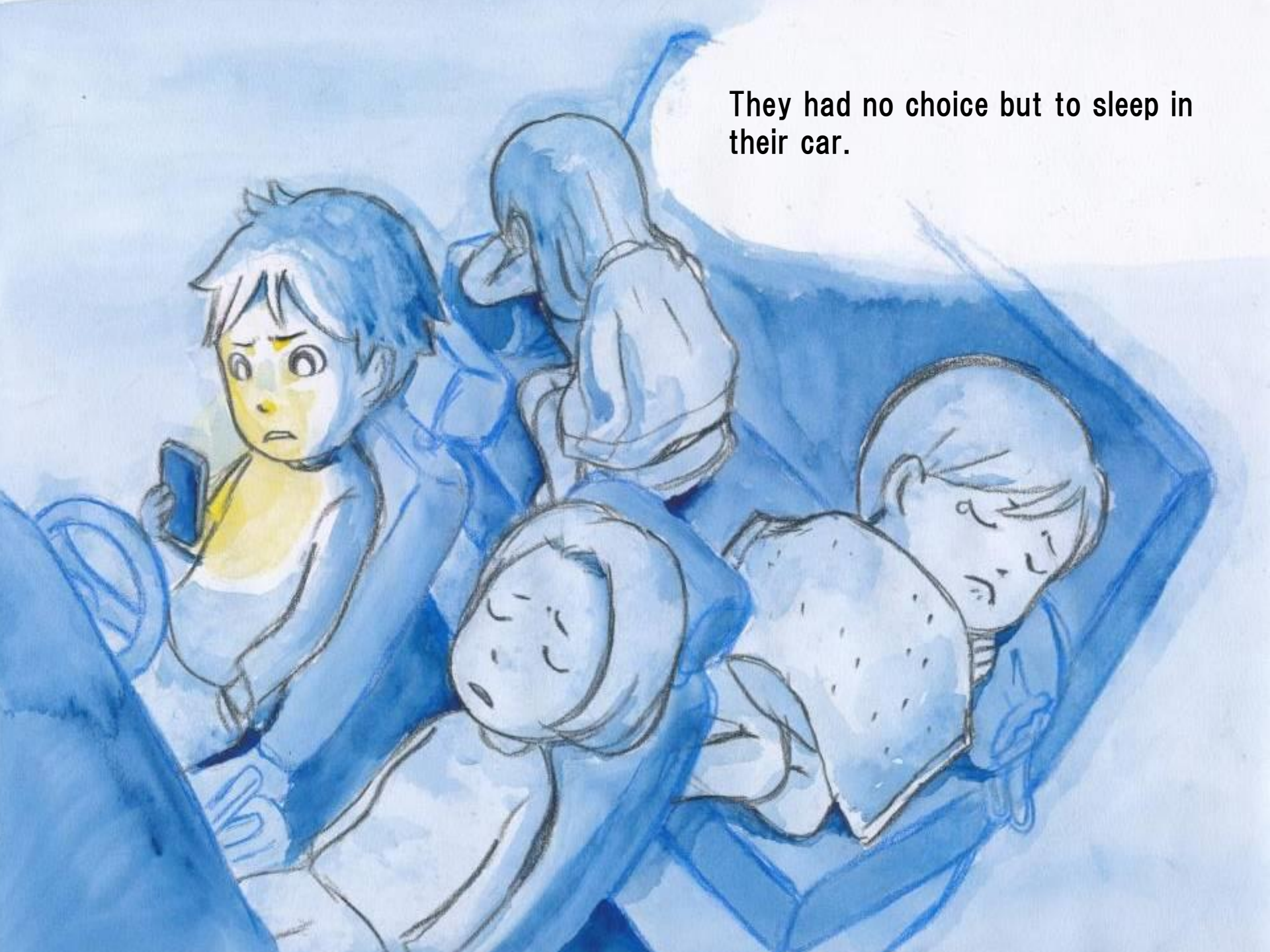




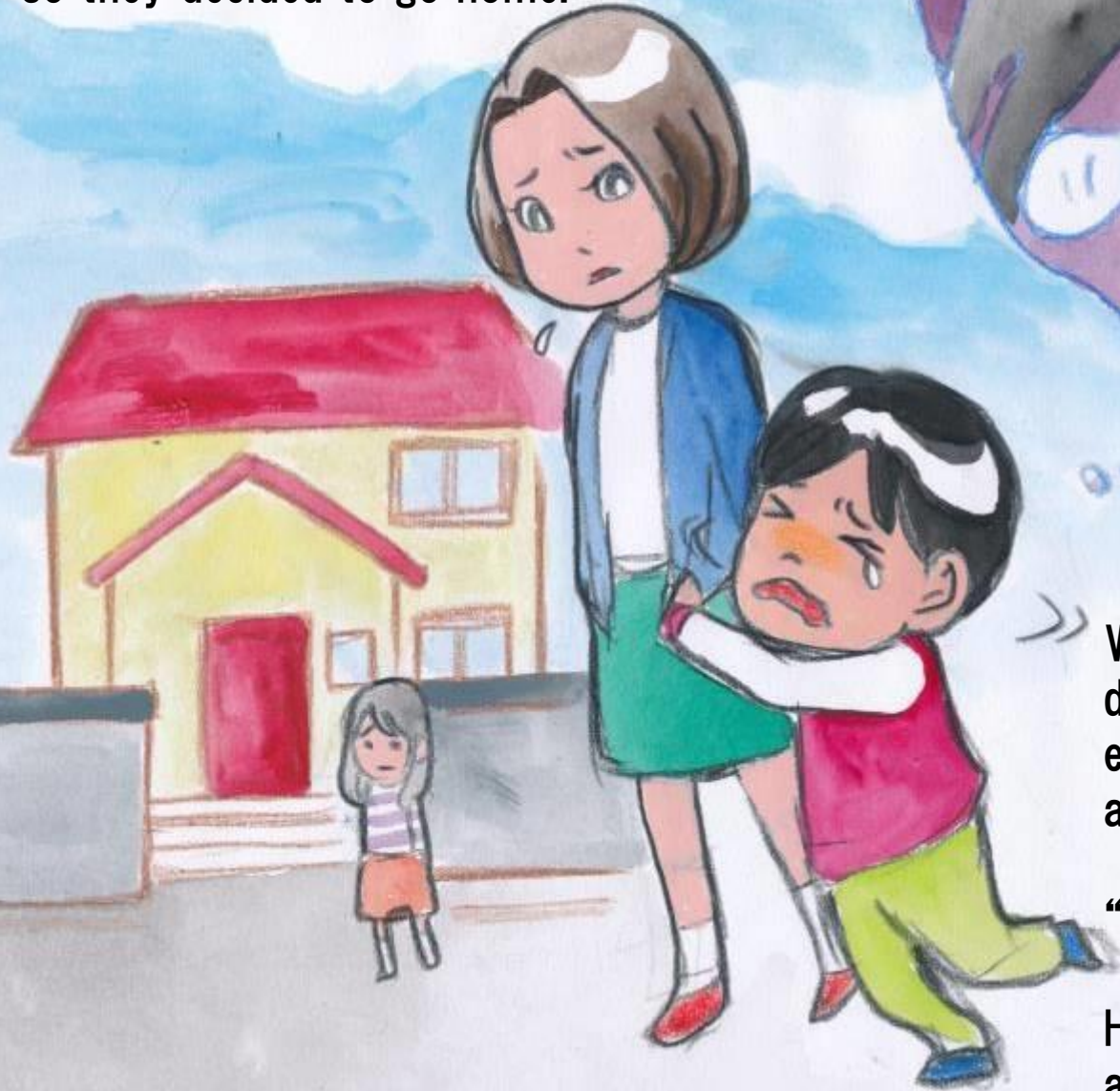
**They went together to the shelter.
Many people were gathered at the
school gym.**

**The gym felt different than usual, so
Akira didn't want to go inside.
When Mom tried to drag him in, he
started crying.**

They had no choice but to sleep in their car.



For two weeks, they lived in their car, getting food at the shelter. Finally the earthquake settled down, so they decided to go home.



When they reached their front door, Akira remembered the earthquake and he was too afraid to enter the house.

“The house is scary!” he cried.

He threw his arms around Mom and burst out crying.



Kumi entered the house bravely. The house was not as tidy as usual, but it was almost back to normal. Dad had already come back earlier and cleaned the house.

Kumi found Kumamon, and brought him outside to Akira
“Hey, Akira, Kumamon is waiting for you inside the house.”



One step at a time,
Akira gathered up
his courage and
slowly walked into
the house.

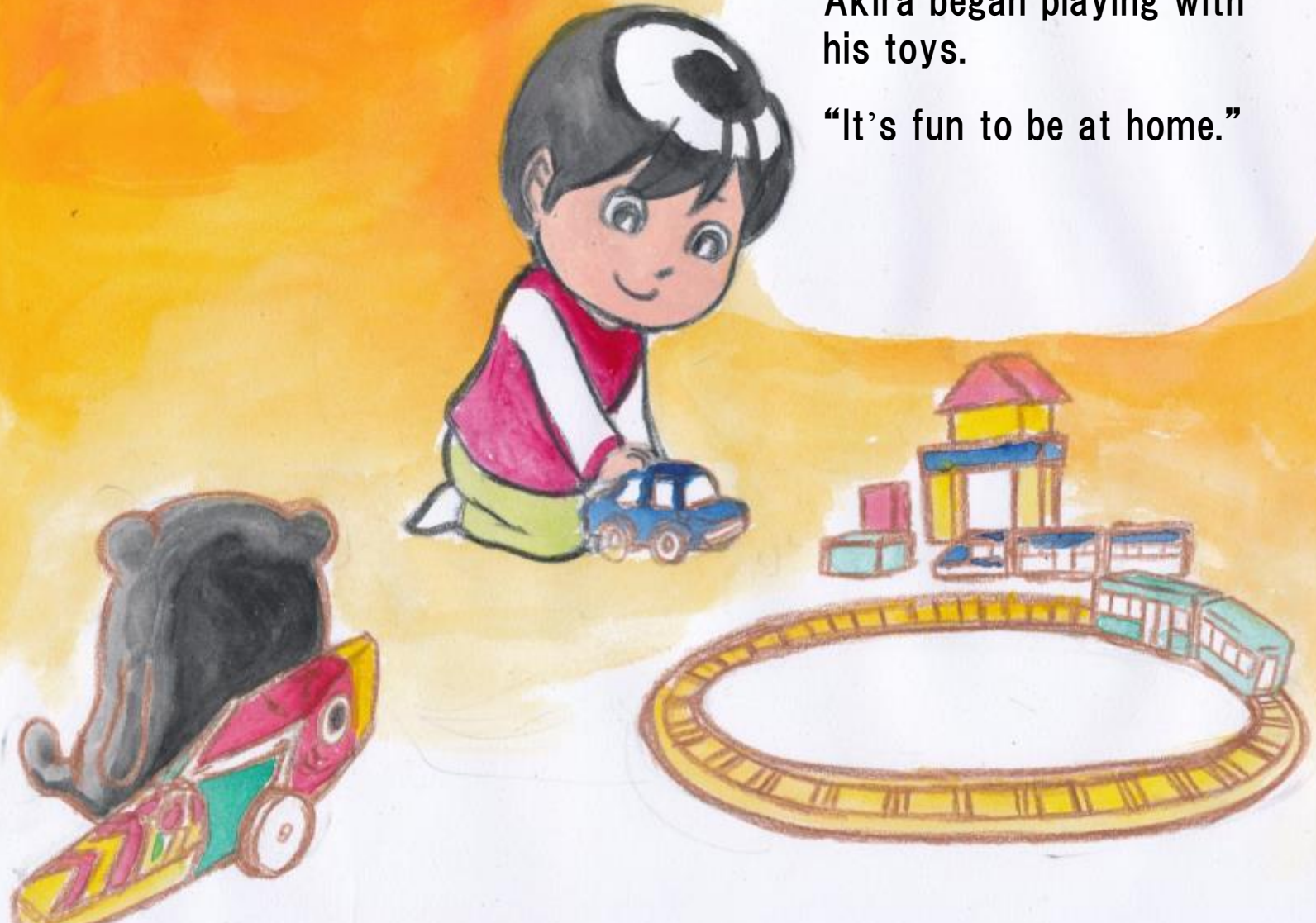


Once inside, he found his toys - Kumamon, trains, and miniature cars - all together welcoming him with a big applause.

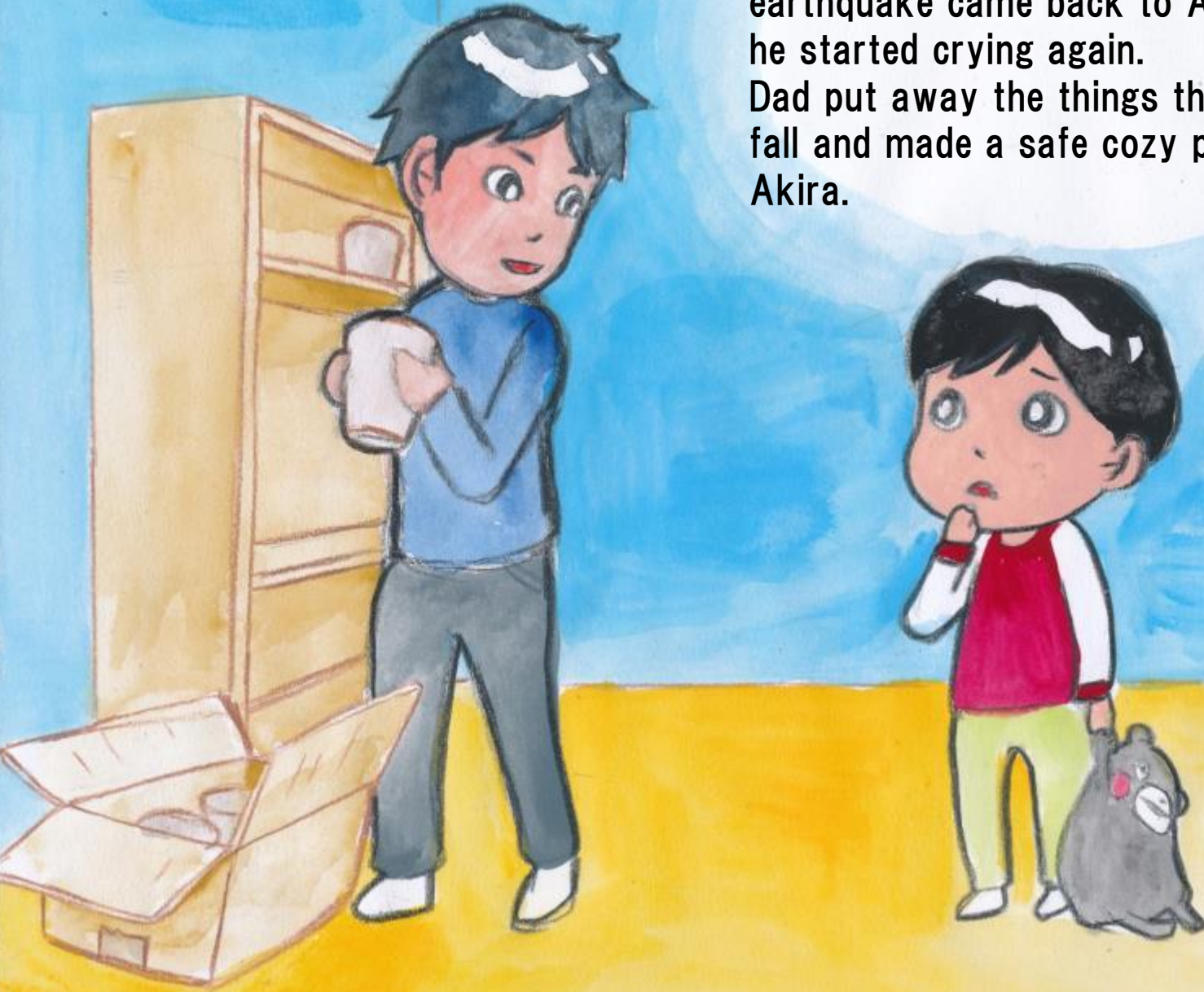


Akira began playing with his toys.

“It’s fun to be at home.”



That evening the memories of earthquake came back to Akira, and he started crying again. Dad put away the things that might fall and made a safe cozy place for Akira.



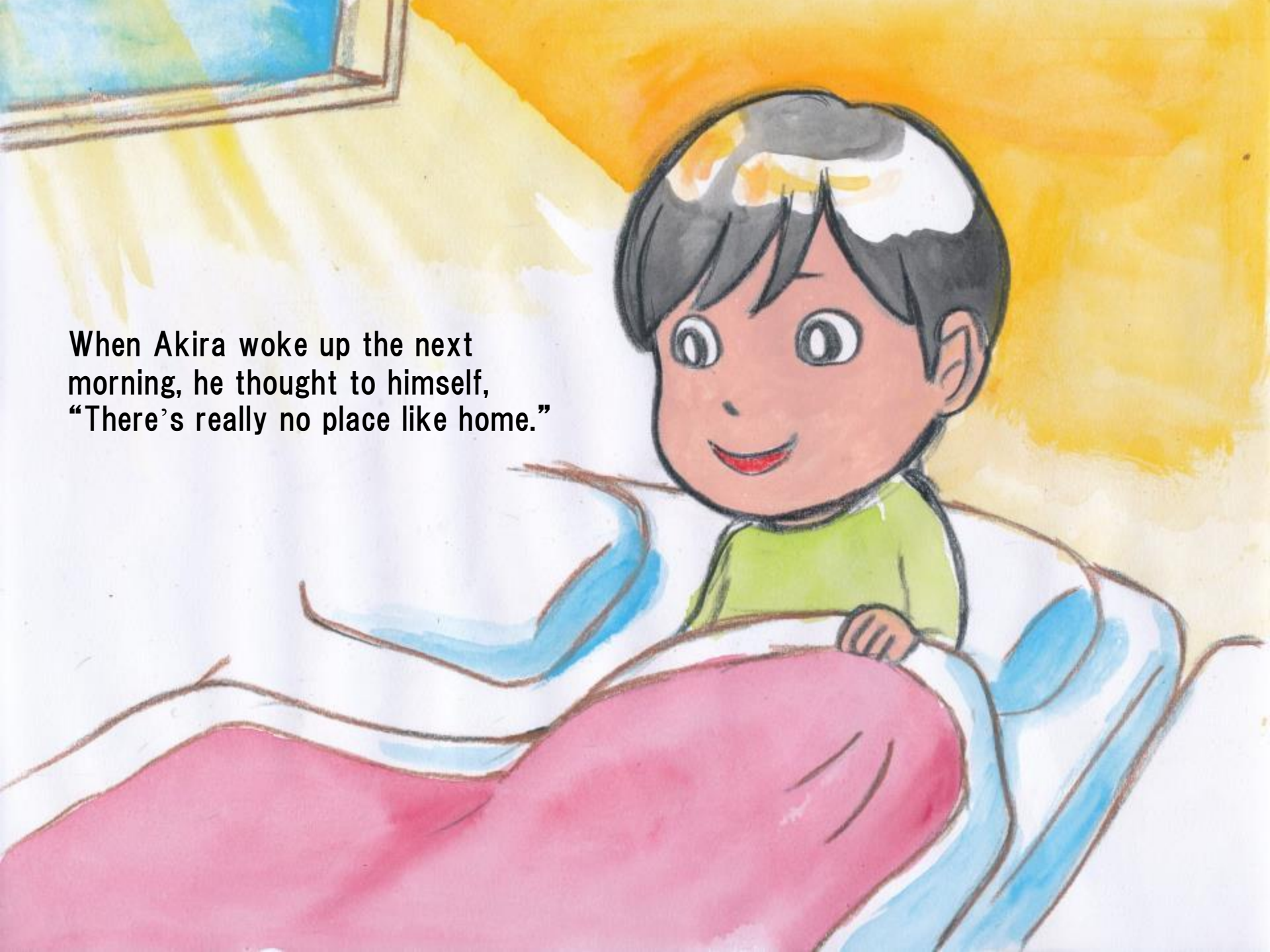


Mom gave him a tight hug and said, "If there is another earthquake, hide here and we will all escape together. Don't worry, it will be OK!"

That night, the whole family
slept together in the same
room.



When Akira woke up the next morning, he thought to himself, "There's really no place like home."





Sometimes, the earth
sneezes.

“Get well soon, Earth,”
said Akira.

~ To families ~

Some children are unable to return to their homes after experiencing earthquakes. They are afraid that earthquakes might occur again. Remembering the following points can help.

1. Try your best to return their lives to as normal as possible. One good idea is to keep their favorite toys nearby.
2. Please make a safe space for your children. It should be somewhere where they can feel at ease, without fear of things shaking or falling over.
3. Carefully explain the evacuation procedure. Teach them the first actions they should do in case there is another earthquake. You should reassure them that any adults nearby will protect them and keep them safe.

* Please be sure to enter the house only after safety inspections have been completed.





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Translated by Kanako Yamamoto
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