

BIG

feelings
come and go



CANADIAN CENTRE for CHILD PROTECTION®
Helping families. Protecting children.



NEW DIRECTIONS

Big feelings come and go



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Helping families. Protecting children.

The Canadian Centre for Child Protection Inc. (Canadian Centre) is a registered charity dedicated to the personal safety of all children. The Canadian Centre offers a number of programs, services and resources for Canadians to help them protect children and reduce their risk of victimization. For more information visit the Canadian Centre website at www.protectchildren.ca.



New Directions for Children, Youth, Adults & Families (New Directions) is a non-profit organization providing a combination of services that are responsive to the changing social, psychological, cultural, educational and vocational needs of people in their communities. We offer programming ranging from family counselling to resources for youth, job training to specialized living support, community treatment homes to foster care, and a variety of resources utilized by individuals with intellectual disabilities, the Deaf community and the Indigenous community. For more information visit www.newdirections.mb.ca.

For more information about children and trauma and how grown-ups can help, please visit www.makingsenseoftrauma.ca. There is a free webinar ***Making Sense of Trauma: Practical Tools for Responding to Children and Youth*** and additional resources available.

To order books visit www.protectchildren.ca/order.

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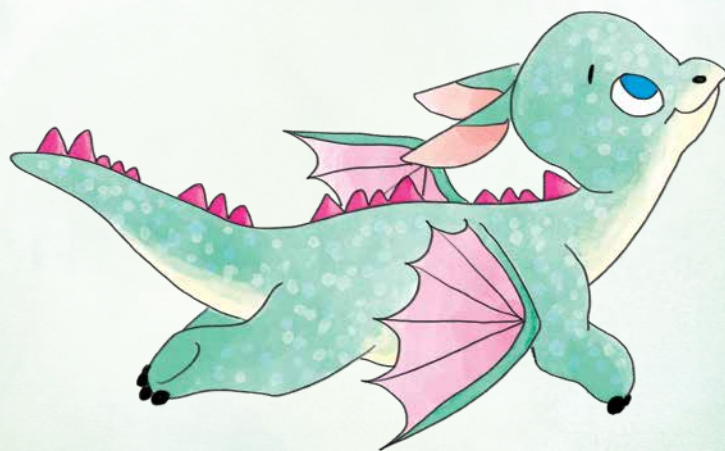
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For everyone reading this book

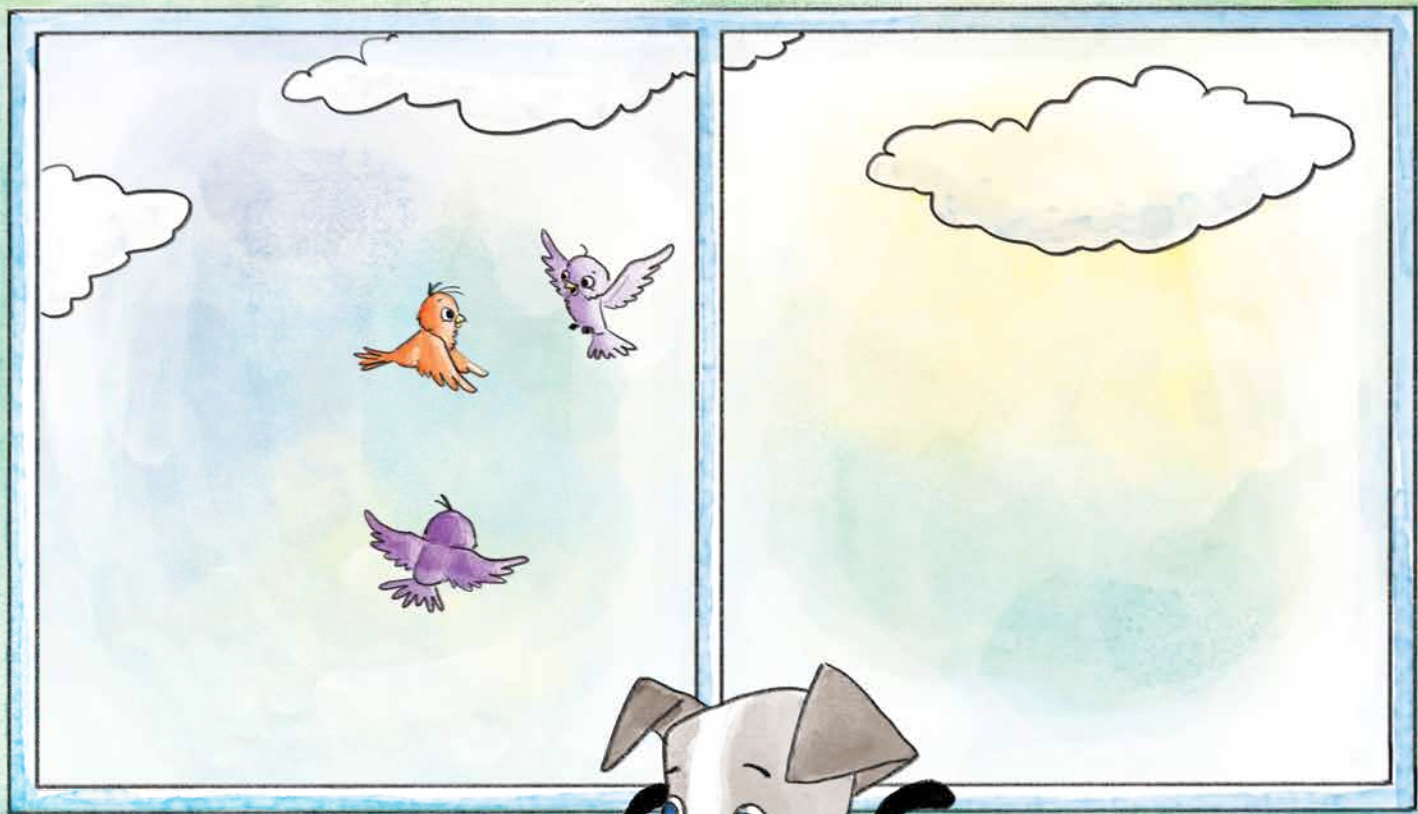
Thanks so much for taking the time to read this story and learning about freeze, flight, and fight, our bodies' way of protecting us when our feelings get big.

Everyone gets big feelings, grown-ups and kids. Please take all the time you need to read this story. Read it all at once or a bit at a time. Pay attention to what works best for you.



Today we are going to learn about what our bodies do when we feel worried or scared and our feelings get big.





We have a part in our brain that is like an alarm called the **amygdala**.



It goes off by itself when
we feel worried or scared.

It helps protect us.



We go into freeze, flight, or fight
when the alarm in our brain goes off.



Sometimes we feel like
we can't move or think.

That's called **freeze**.

Sometimes we feel like
we want to get away.

That's called **flight**.



And sometimes we feel like
we want to hit and yell.

That's called **fight**.

We are going to learn and practice what to do when the amygdala sounds the alarm.



Grown-ups and kids all go into freeze, flight, or fight when they feel worried or scared.

This is how our bodies help us.



Let's imagine a dragon looking in the window!
Our brain sounds the alarm and we go into **freeze**...

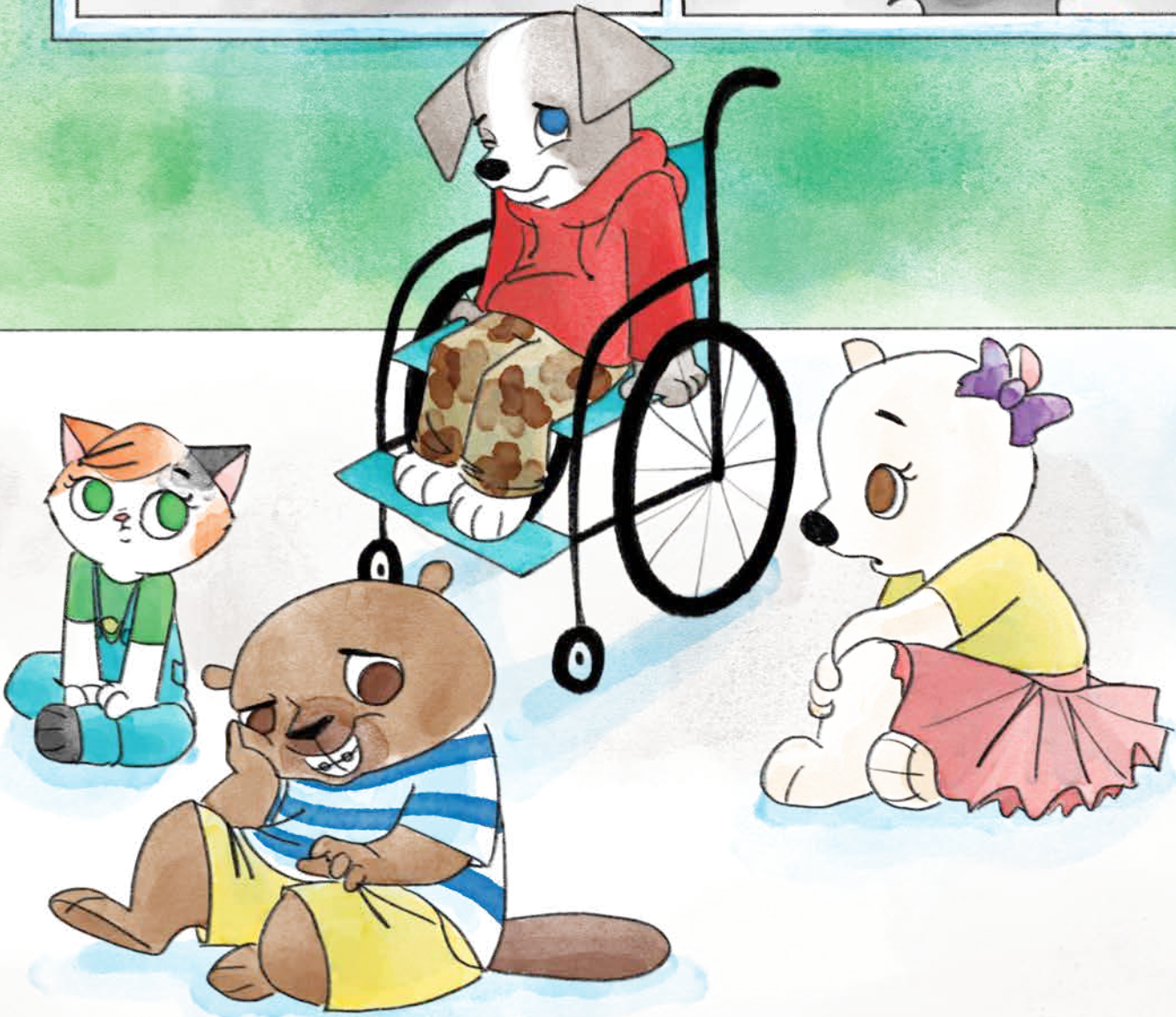
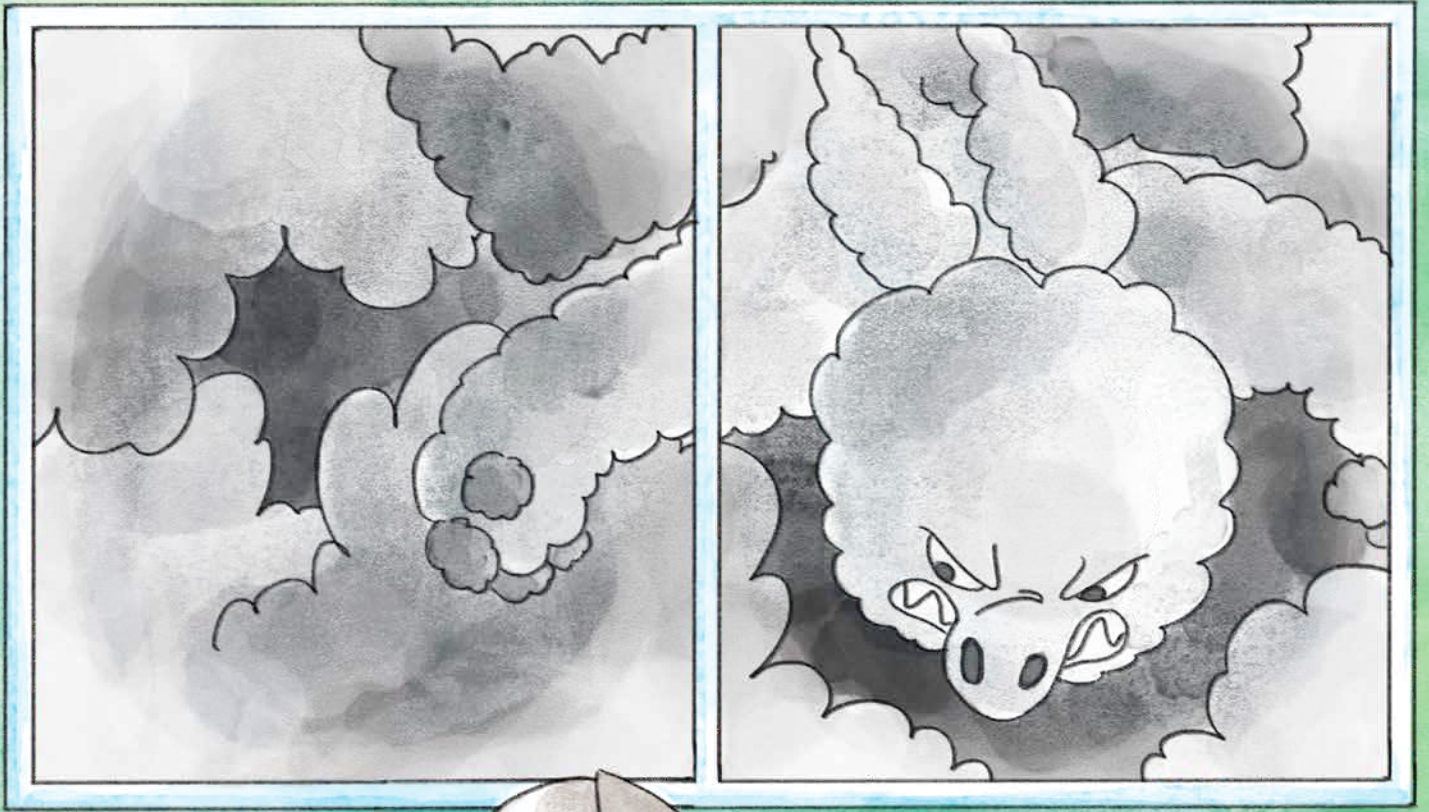
Freeze is when our feelings get big
and we can't run or fight.

Our heart beats faster and our breathing speeds up.

Everybody goes into freeze
a little differently.

Imagine...what does
freeze feel like for you?





I would
feel like...



...my head
is floating

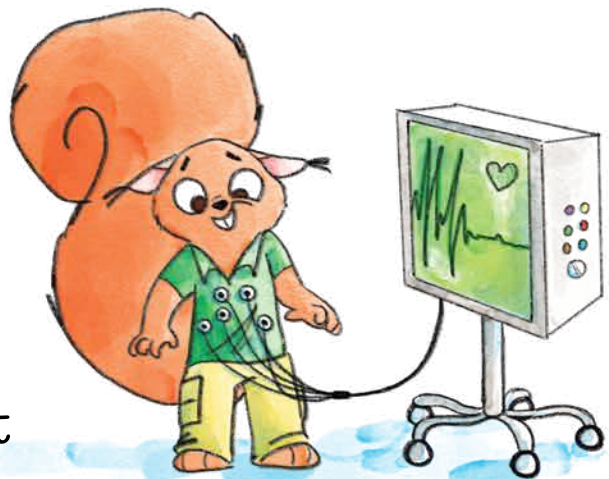


...disappearing



...I am stuck

...my heart
is beating faster
and then so quiet
I can't hear it





...making myself
very little

...I am frozen



...I am invisible



...I can't get
my words out



We settle our bodies after feeling worried or scared.

Here is what we can do.

Look around and count **three blue things** in the room.



Take a **breath in...** and a long slow **breath out.**

Take another **breath in...** and a long slow **breath out.**

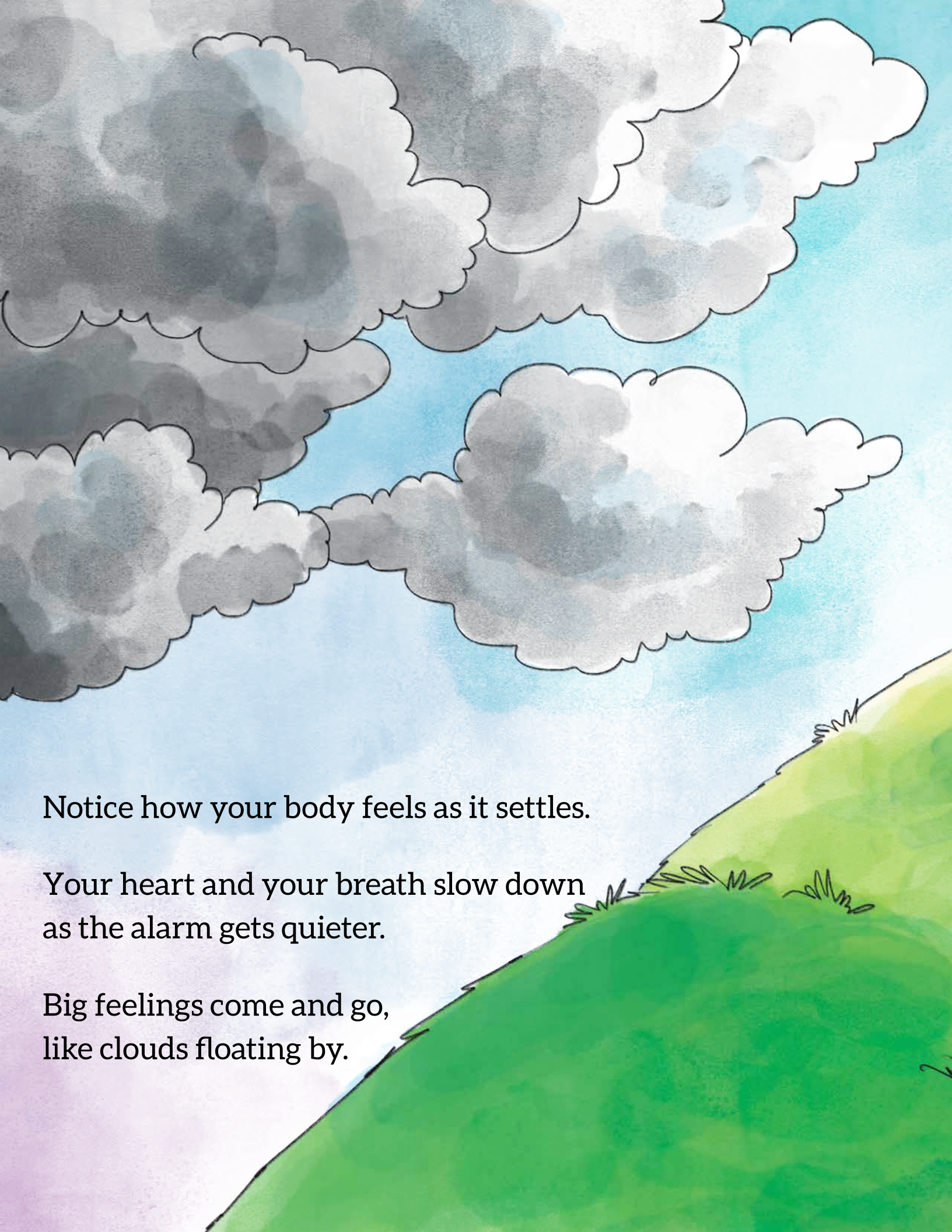




Notice if you are **sitting** on something **hard or soft**. Wiggle **your toes**.



Take one more **breath in...** and a long slow **breath out**.



Notice how your body feels as it settles.

Your heart and your breath slow down
as the alarm gets quieter.

Big feelings come and go,
like clouds floating by.



Now, this time when we imagine a dragon looking in the window, our brain sounds the alarm and we go into **flight**...

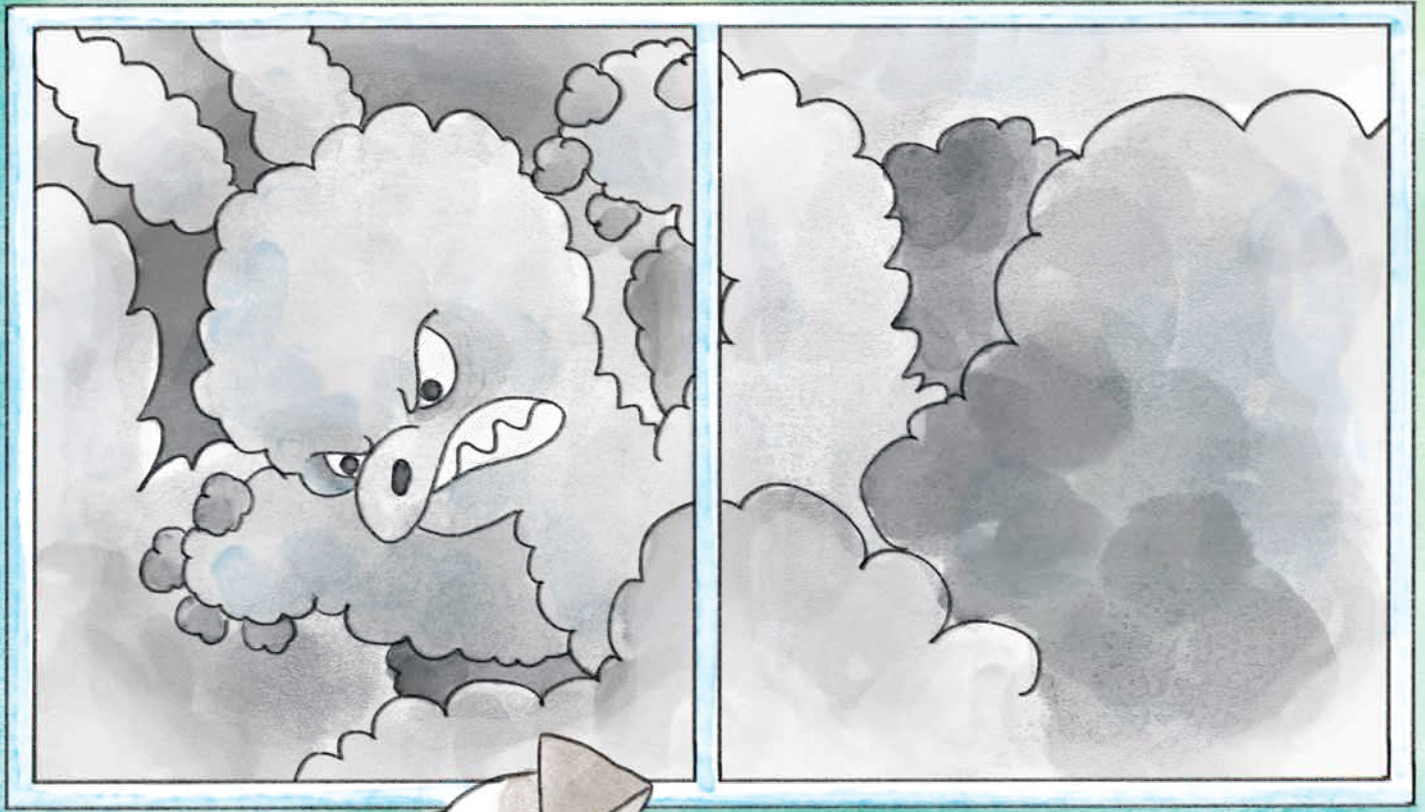
Flight is when our feelings get big and we want to move and even run away!

Our heart beats faster, our breathing speeds up and our legs might feel jumpy.

Everybody goes into flight a little differently.

Imagine...what does flight feel like for you?



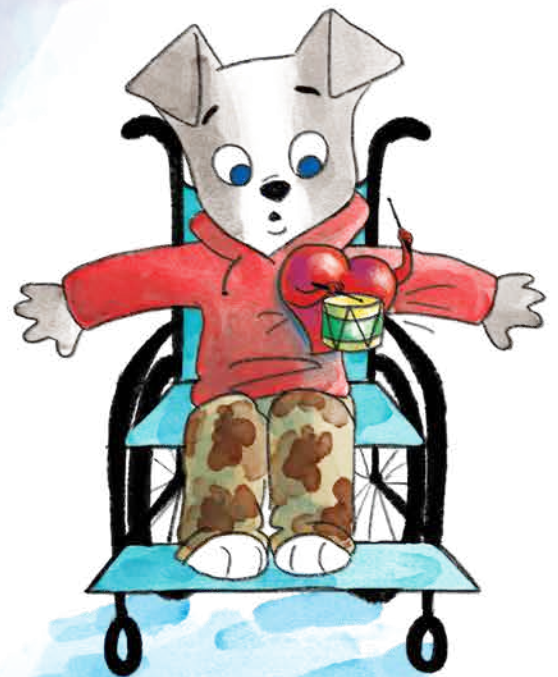


I would
feel like...

...I want to get
far, far away



...I want to run
like a racehorse



...my heart is pounding
like a drum

...jumping out
of my skin



...I can't catch
my breath



...I am dizzy



...talking as fast
as a runaway train



...I want to escape
as fast as I can



We settle our bodies after feeling worried or scared.

Here is what we can do.

First, **curl your toes**. Notice how the muscles in your legs tighten.



Let your toes **relax**.



Take a **breath in...** and a long slow **breath out**.

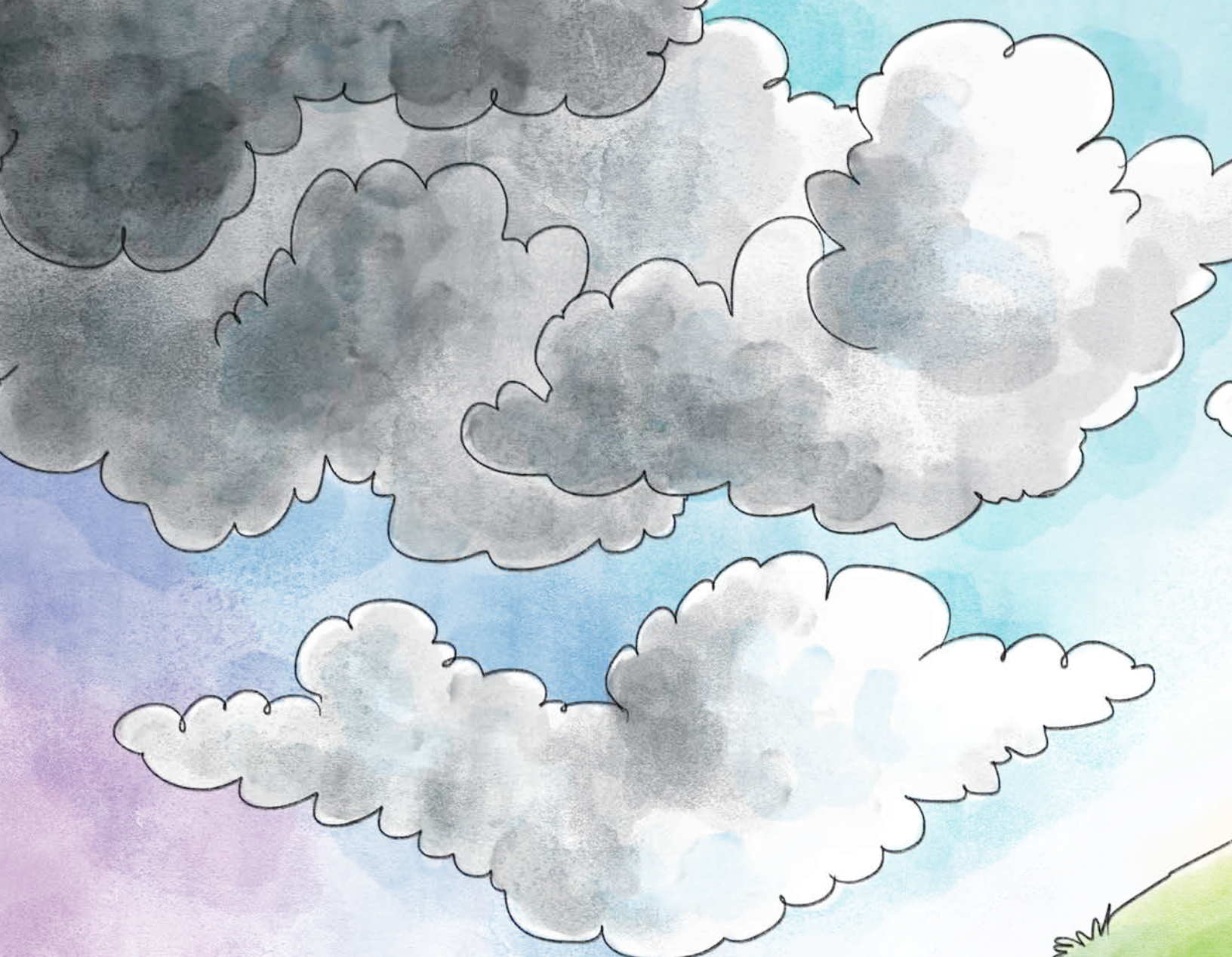
Now take another **breath in...**
and a long slow **breath out.**



Notice if you are **sitting** on something
hard or soft. Wiggle **your toes.**

Take one more **breath in...**
and a long slow **breath out.**

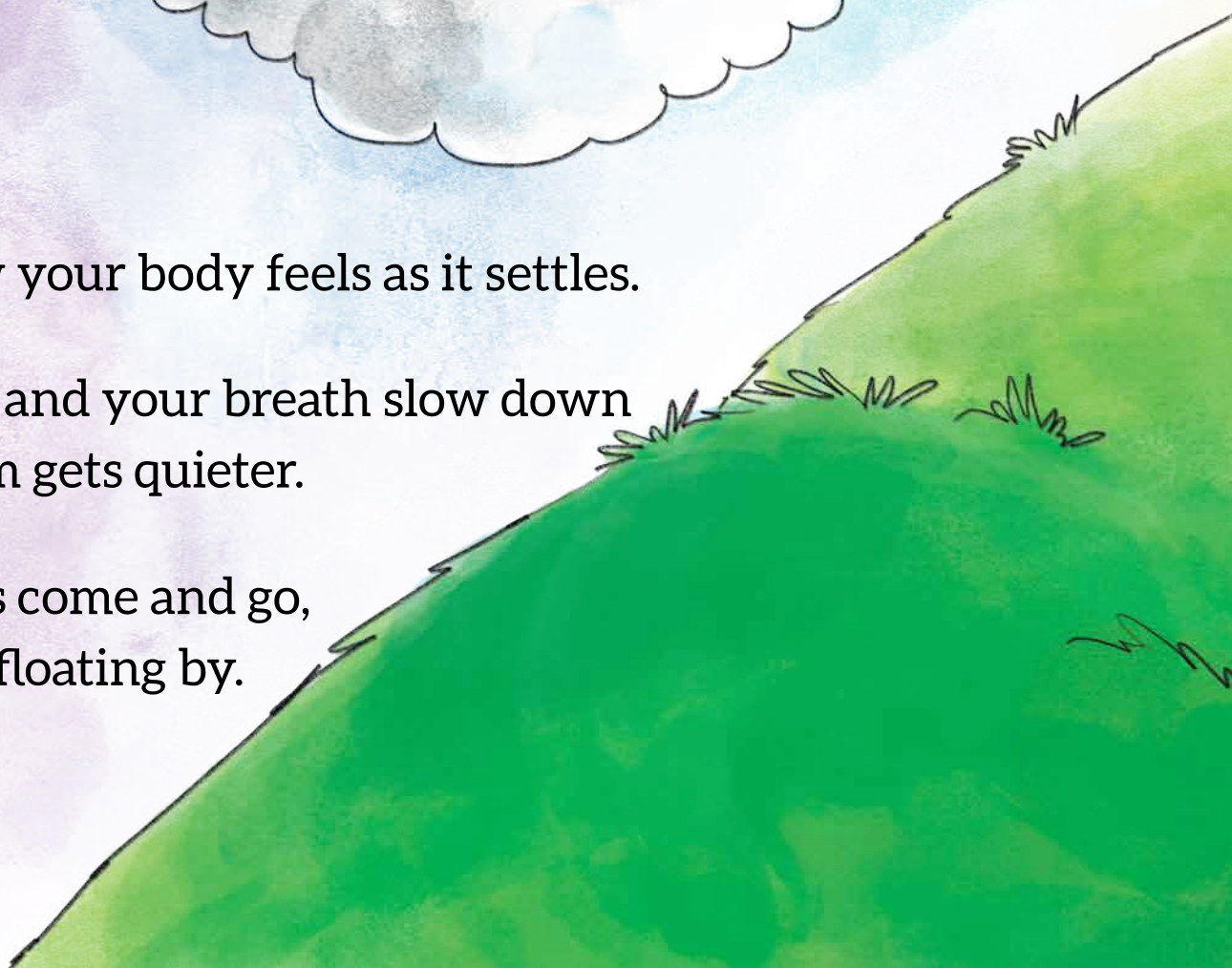




Notice how your body feels as it settles.

Your heart and your breath slow down
as the alarm gets quieter.

Big feelings come and go,
like clouds floating by.





Again, this time when we imagine that dragon looking in the window, our brain sounds the alarm and we go into **fight**...

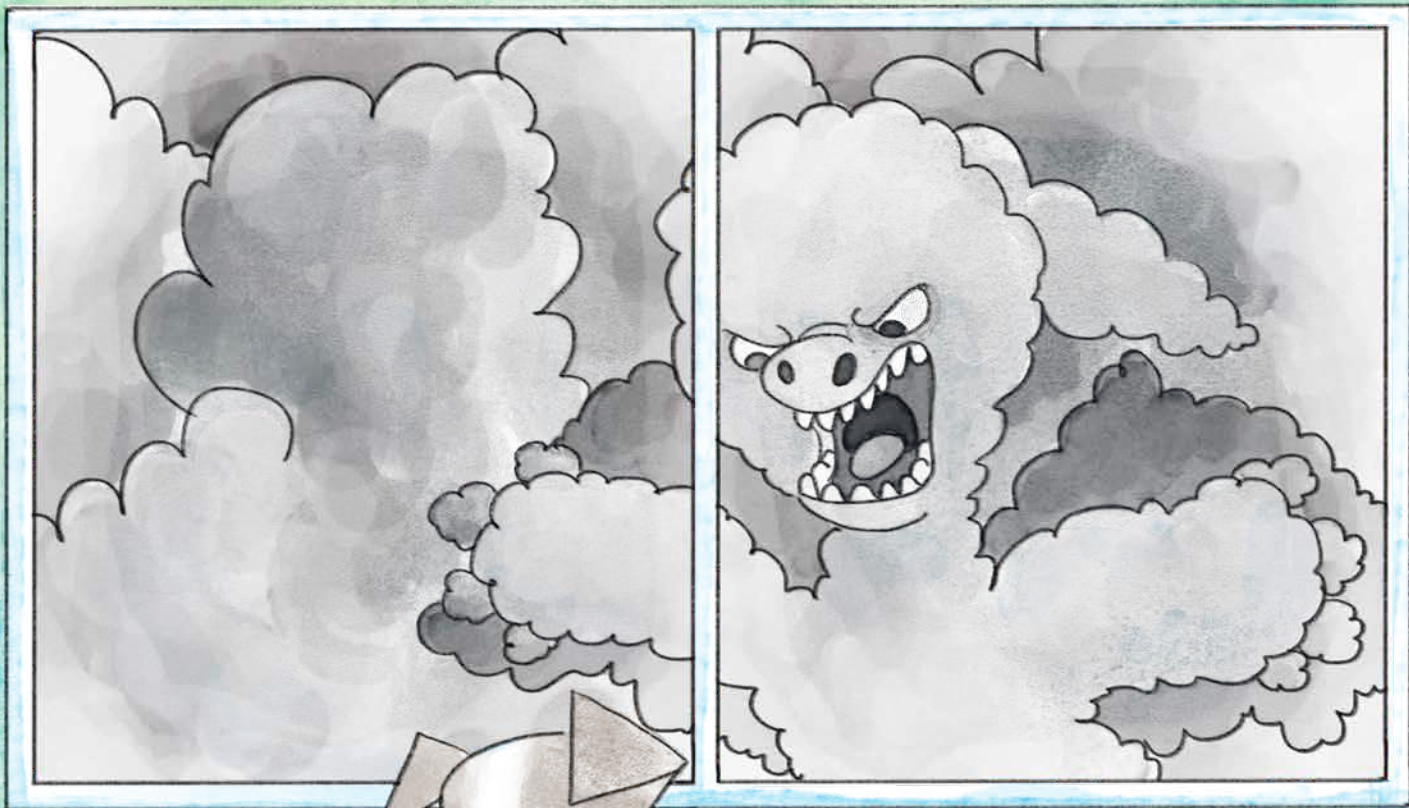
Fight is when our feelings get big and we want to make a fist or stomp our feet!

Our heart beats faster and our breathing speeds up.

Everybody goes into fight a little differently.

Imagine...what does fight feel like for you?





I would
feel like...



...breathing fire



...I want to
hammer something

...I'm as big
as a giant





...I want to
kick and stomp

...fighting
like a knight



...roaring
like a lion



...I'm hot
like a volcano



...wrestling
like a gorilla



We settle our bodies after feeling worried or scared.

Here is what we can do.



Push your hands together
like you are squishing a ball...
breathe in... and then **let go.**

Now take a **breath in...**
and a long slow **breath out.**



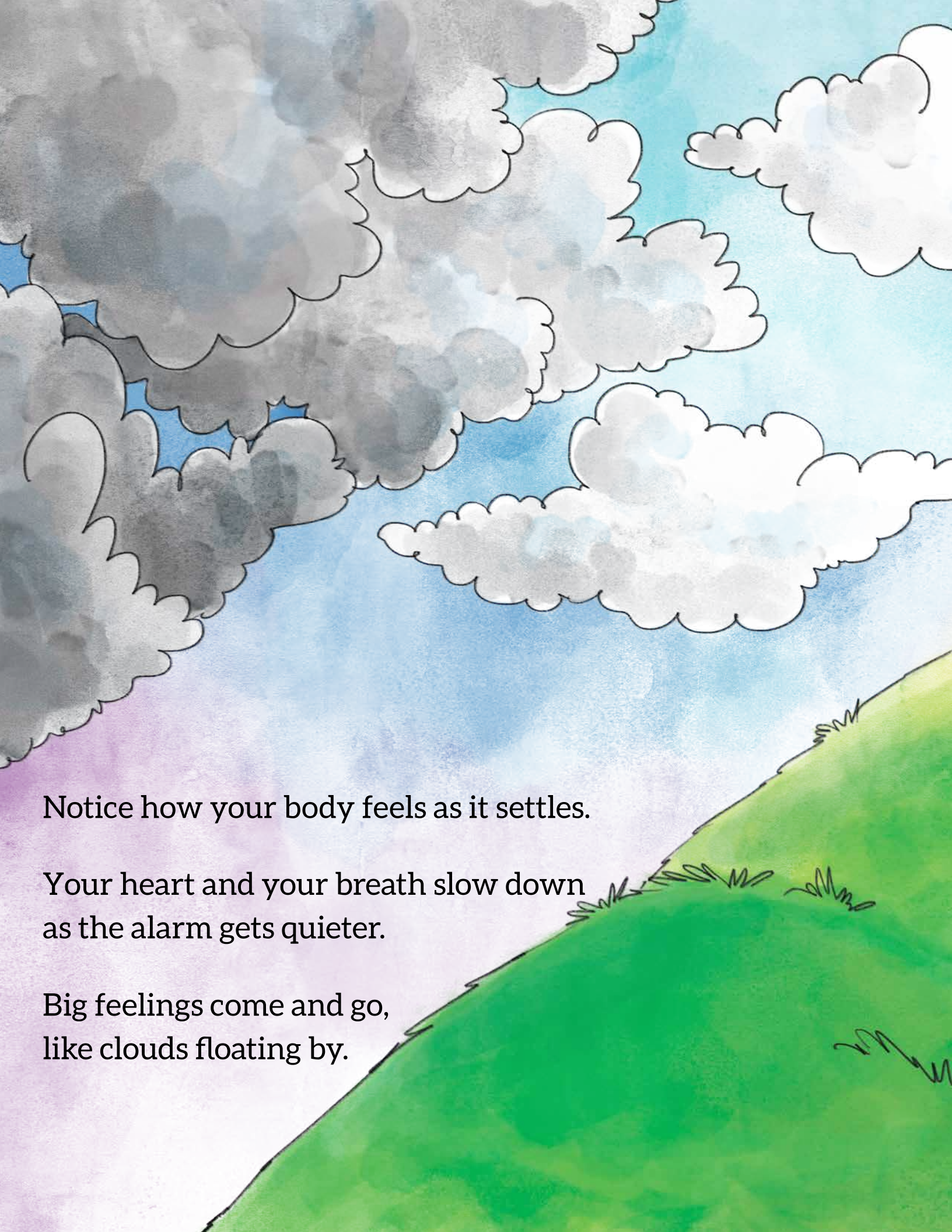


Now take another **breath in...**
and a long slow **breath out.**

Notice if you are **sitting** on
something **hard or soft.**
Wiggle **your toes.**



Take one more **breath in...**
and a long slow **breath out.**



Notice how your body feels as it settles.

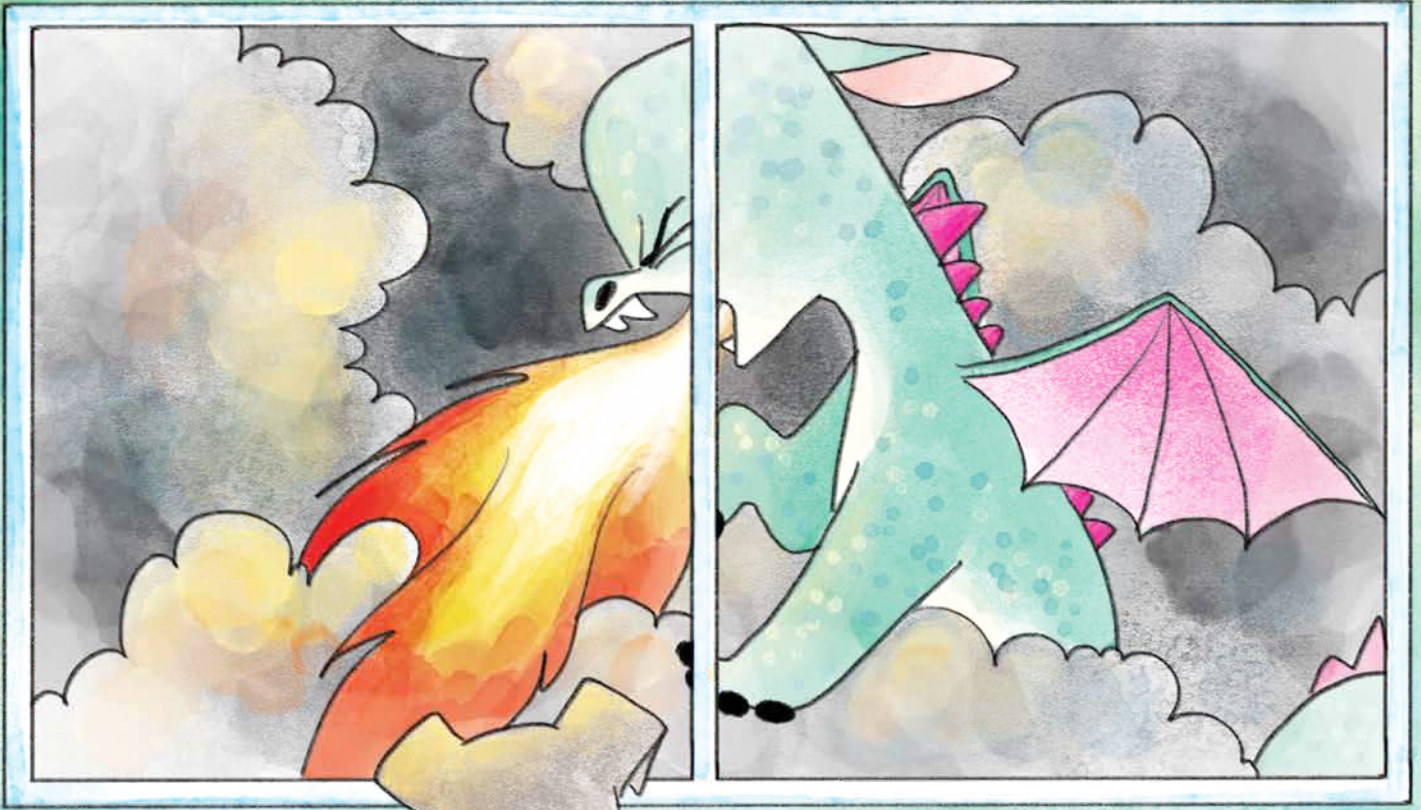
Your heart and your breath slow down
as the alarm gets quieter.

Big feelings come and go,
like clouds floating by.



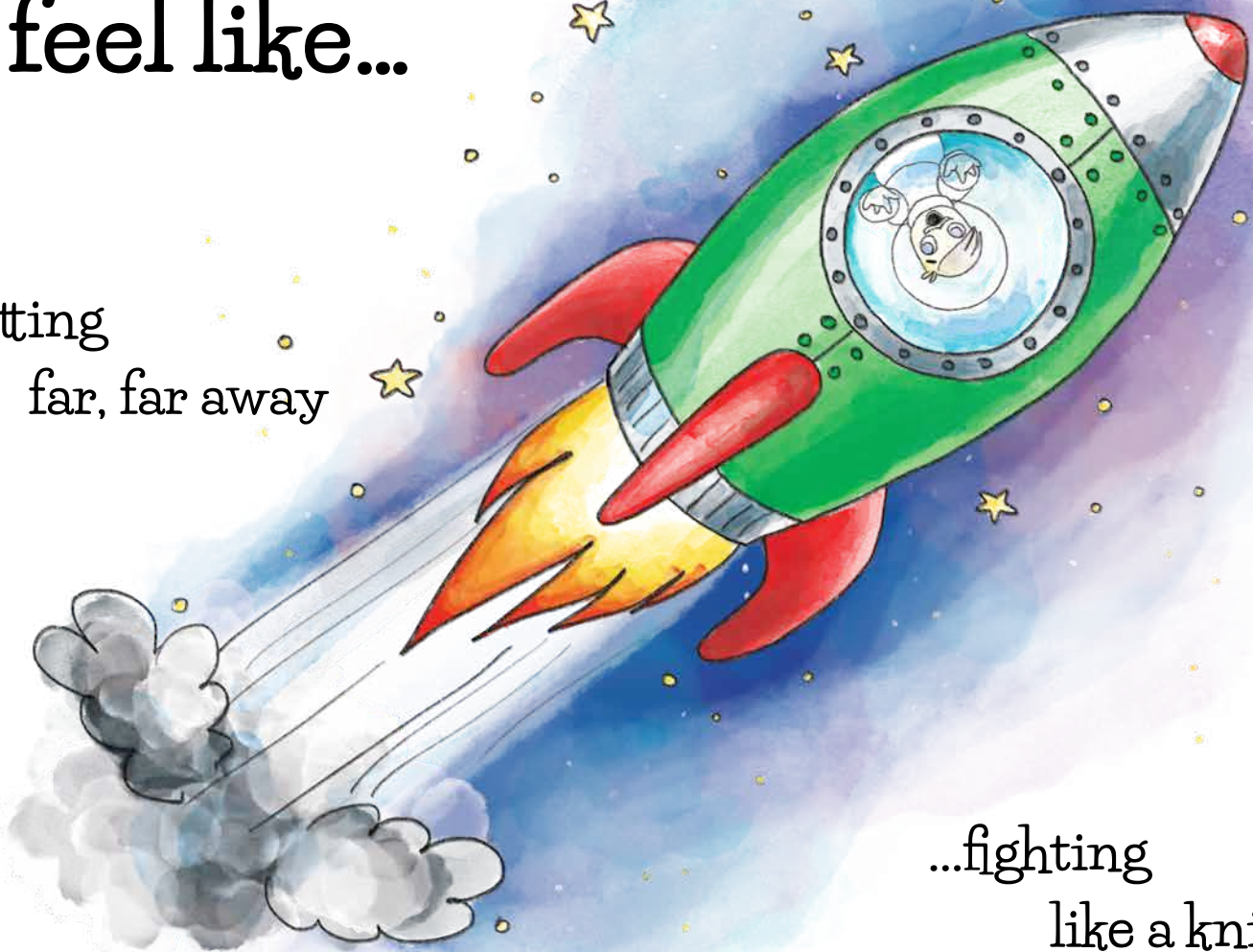
Look,
there really is
a dragon
at the window!





I feel like...

...getting
far, far away



...fighting
like a knight

...being invisible



...I can't get
my words out





...running
like a racehorse

...my head
is floating



...I'm hot
like a volcano

...I want to escape
as fast as I can





That was scary seeing the
dragon outside the window.

Our bodies did what
they needed to do.



Let's practice settling
our bodies after feeling
worried or scared.

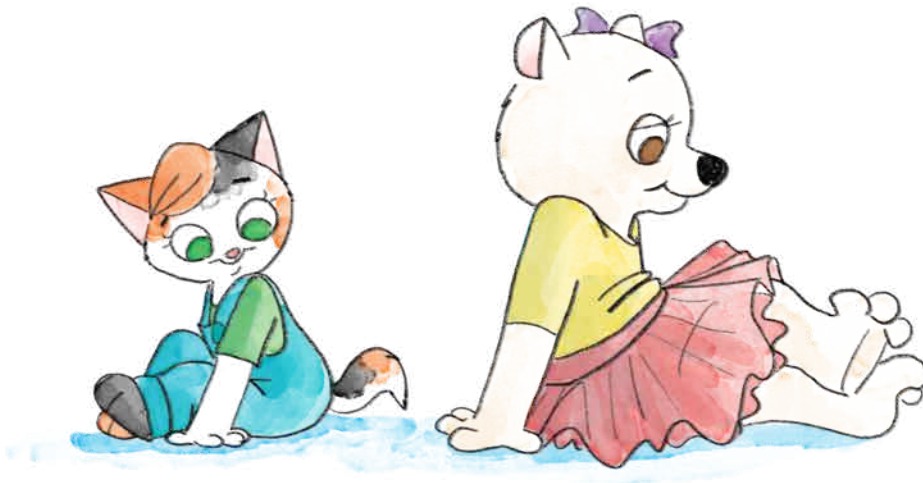


Take a **breath in...** and
a long slow **breath out.**

Take another **breath in...**
and a long slow **breath out.**



Notice if we are **sitting** on something
hard or soft. Wiggle **our toes**.



Take one more **breath in...**
and a long slow **breath out**.



What does your body want to do now
when you feel **settled and safe**?





I notice that I...



...laugh
like a monkey

...want to play



...can take
a big breath



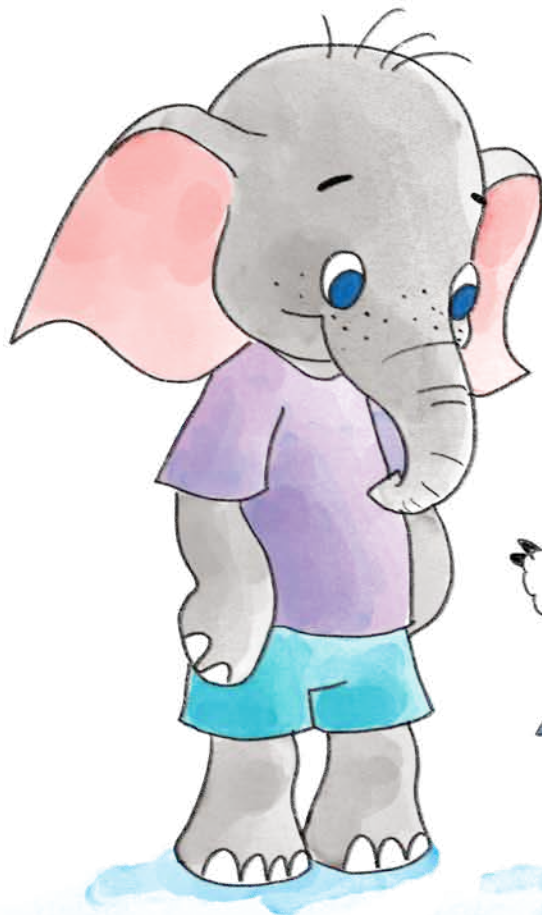
...am in charge
of my feelings



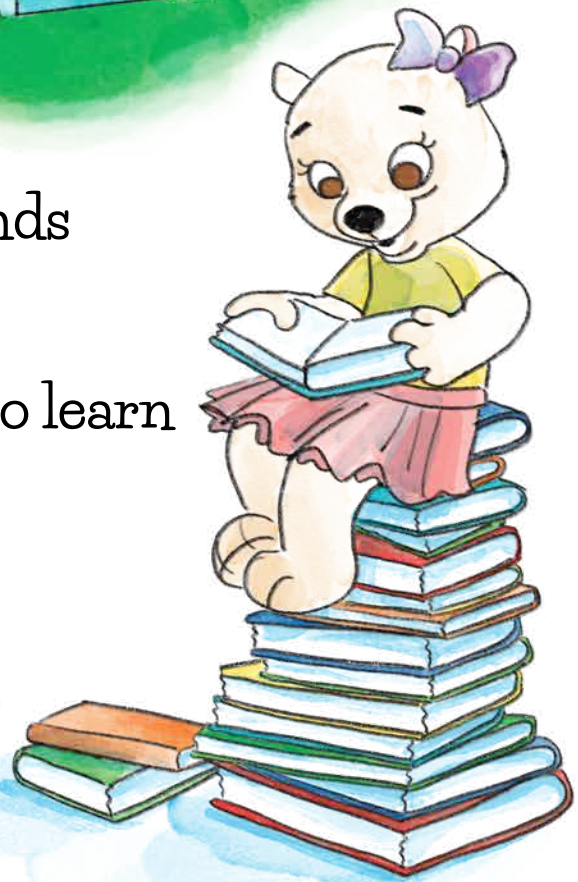
...am curious
like a detective




...am silly
with my friends



...want to learn



...can speak so people hear
and understand my words



Aren't you proud you know
how to settle your bodies
and turn down the alarm?

We know we can manage our
feelings when they get big.



Now let's go out and play!







