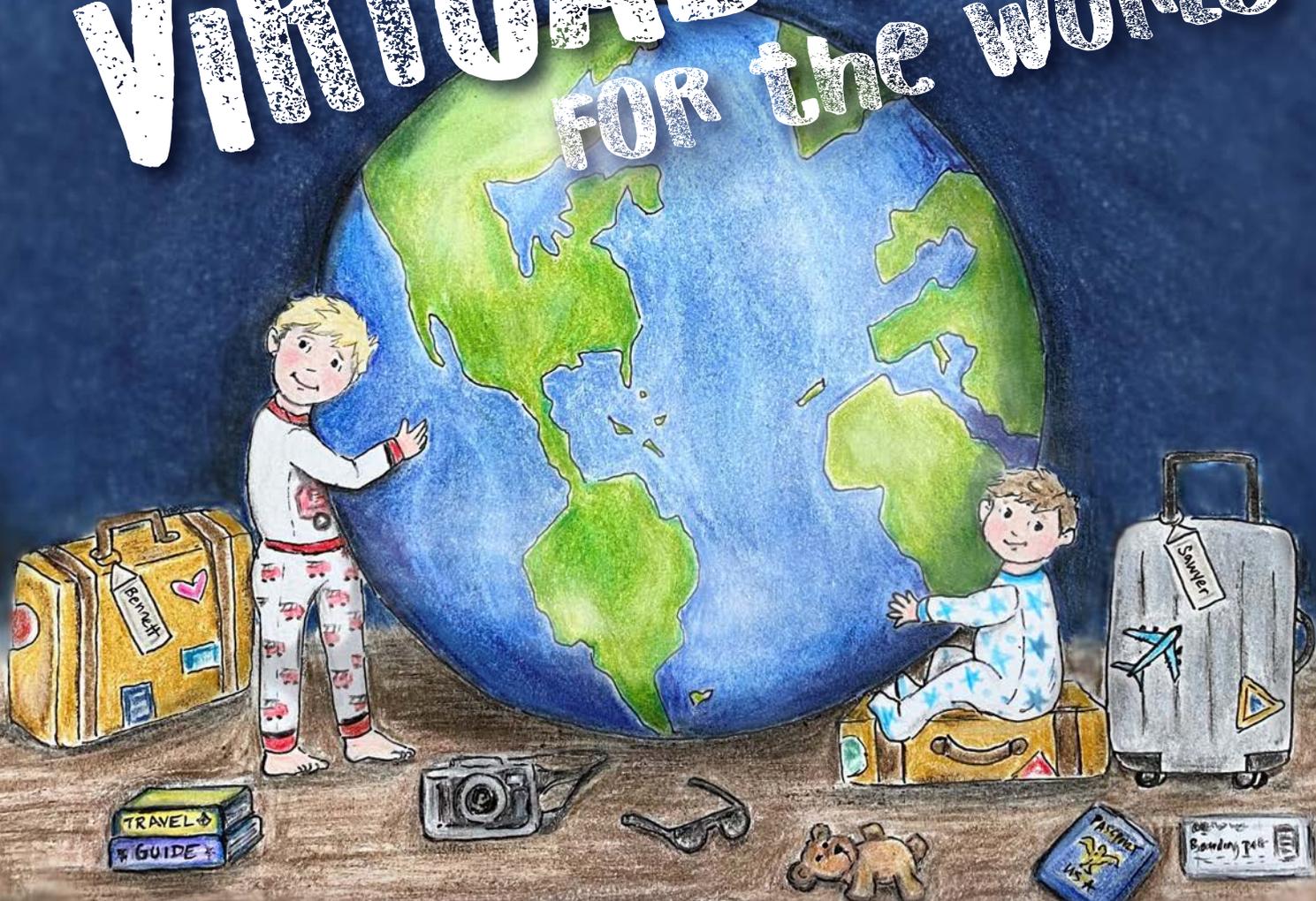


VIRTUAL HUG FOR THE WORLD



INSPIRED BY THE TRUE STORY OF A PRETEND JOURNEY

Written and Illustrated by Amanda Perlyn Jackson

For Bennett and Sawyer

My two precious boys, you are the light of my life.

I'm so blessed to be a mother and wife.

No matter what life brings, know you are strong,

And I will always be there to help you along.

May you travel the world and make memories to pack.

I love you forever, to the moon and back.

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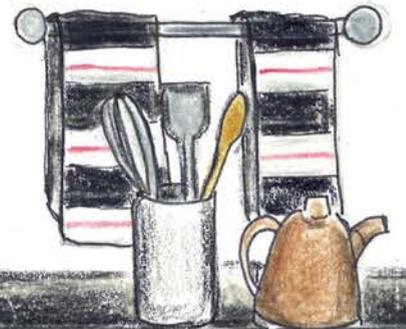
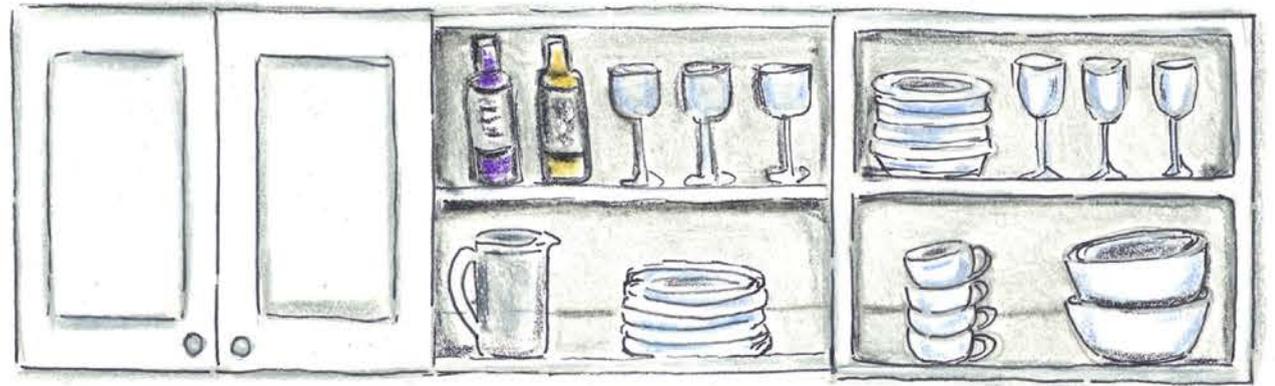
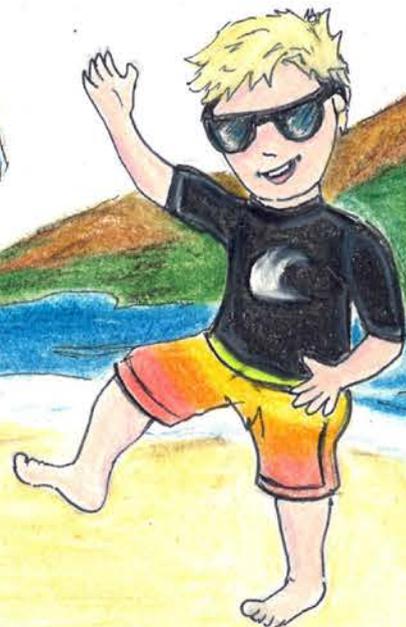
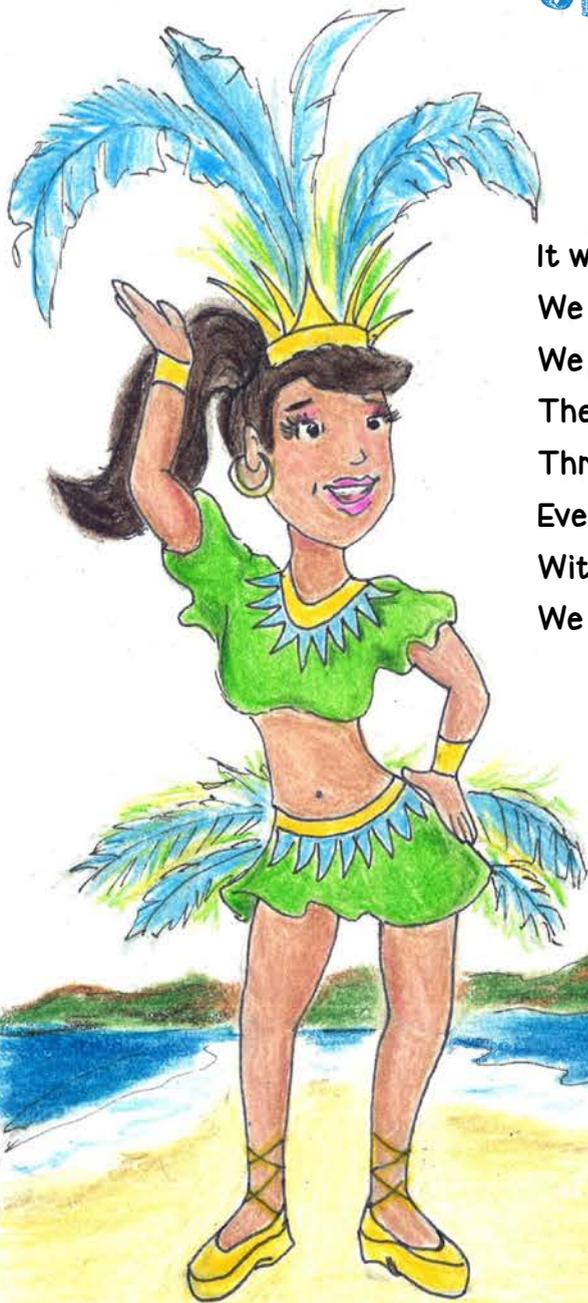
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There once was a time we could not travel on planes.
We could not see our friends; we could barely stay sane.
We thought very hard about what we could do...
And decided the world could use a virtual hug from me and you.
Our dreams were still big and our hearts open wide,
So we packed pretend bags and headed "outside"!



ON MONDAY WE WENT TO RIO.

It was hot and sunny so we went to the beach.
We surfed epic waves and had two wipeouts each.
We danced and we sang in a carnival parade.
There were costumes galore and all handmade.
Through the mountains and jungle the party was bumping,
Even toucans and monkeys were everywhere jumping.
With our passports stamped and suitcases packed snug,
We gave Rio a virtual hug.



ON TUESDAY, WE WENT TO TANZANIA.

We climbed Mt. Kilimanjaro, just like our mom and dad.

It was a long trek up and down, but so much fun was had!

We went on a safari and saw lions, zebras, and a baby giraffe.

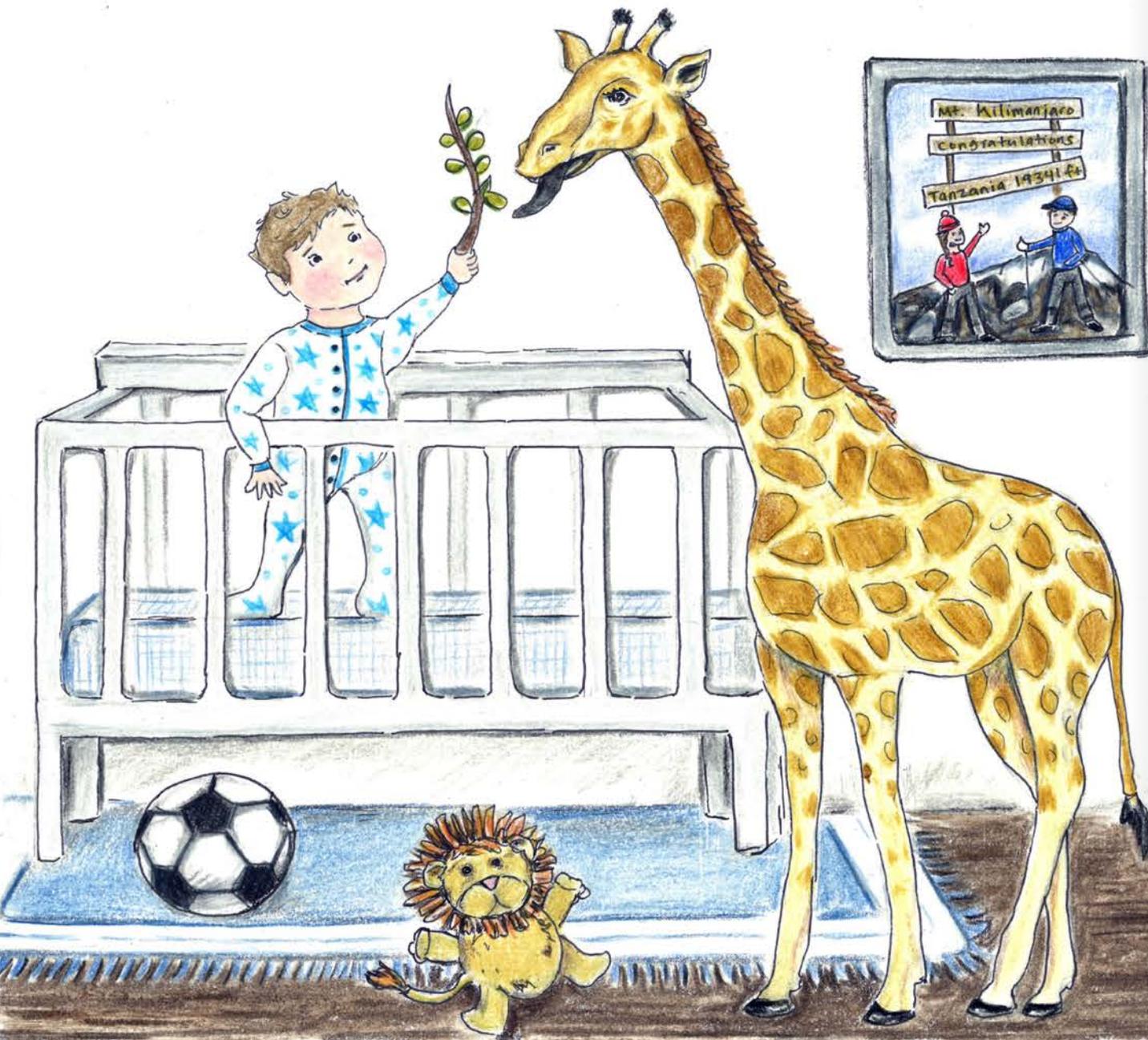
His funny black tongue made us laugh.

We visited local villages, bringing books and soccer balls.

Because we know that giving back, makes a difference even if small.

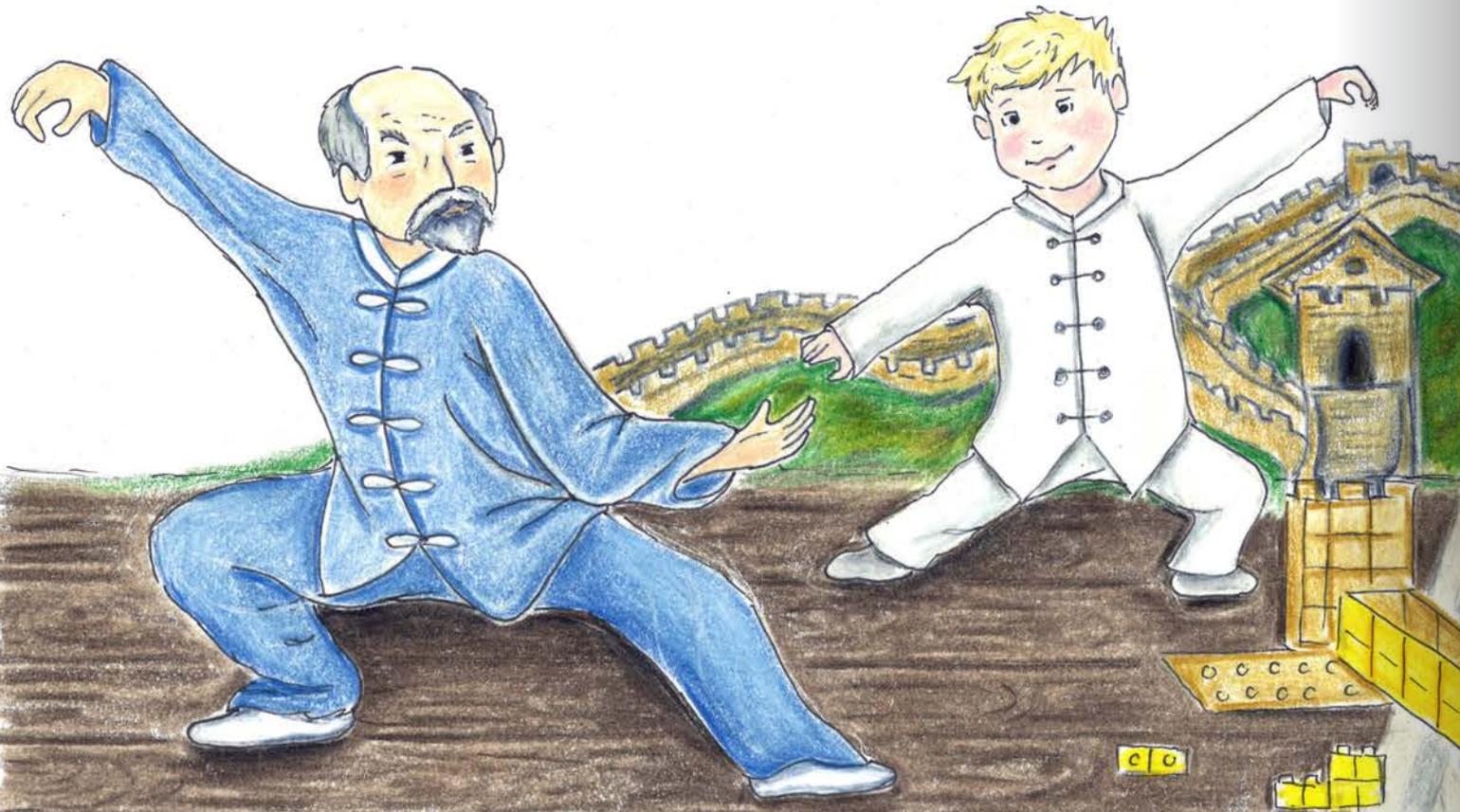
With our passports stamped and suitcases packed snug,

We gave Tanzania a virtual hug.



ON WEDNESDAY, WE WENT TO BEIJING.

Oh, what sight was China's Great Wall to see,
We built it from Legos and had a lesson in history.
We practiced Tai Chi with an elder master.
We tried to move slowly instead of faster.
Then a panda bear came by to sit and have lunch.
We welcomed her as she ate bamboo by the bunch.
With our passports stamped and suitcases packed snug,
We gave Beijing a virtual hug.



ON THURSDAY, WE WENT TO ANTARCTICA.

When we arrived it was freezing so we tried to stay warm.

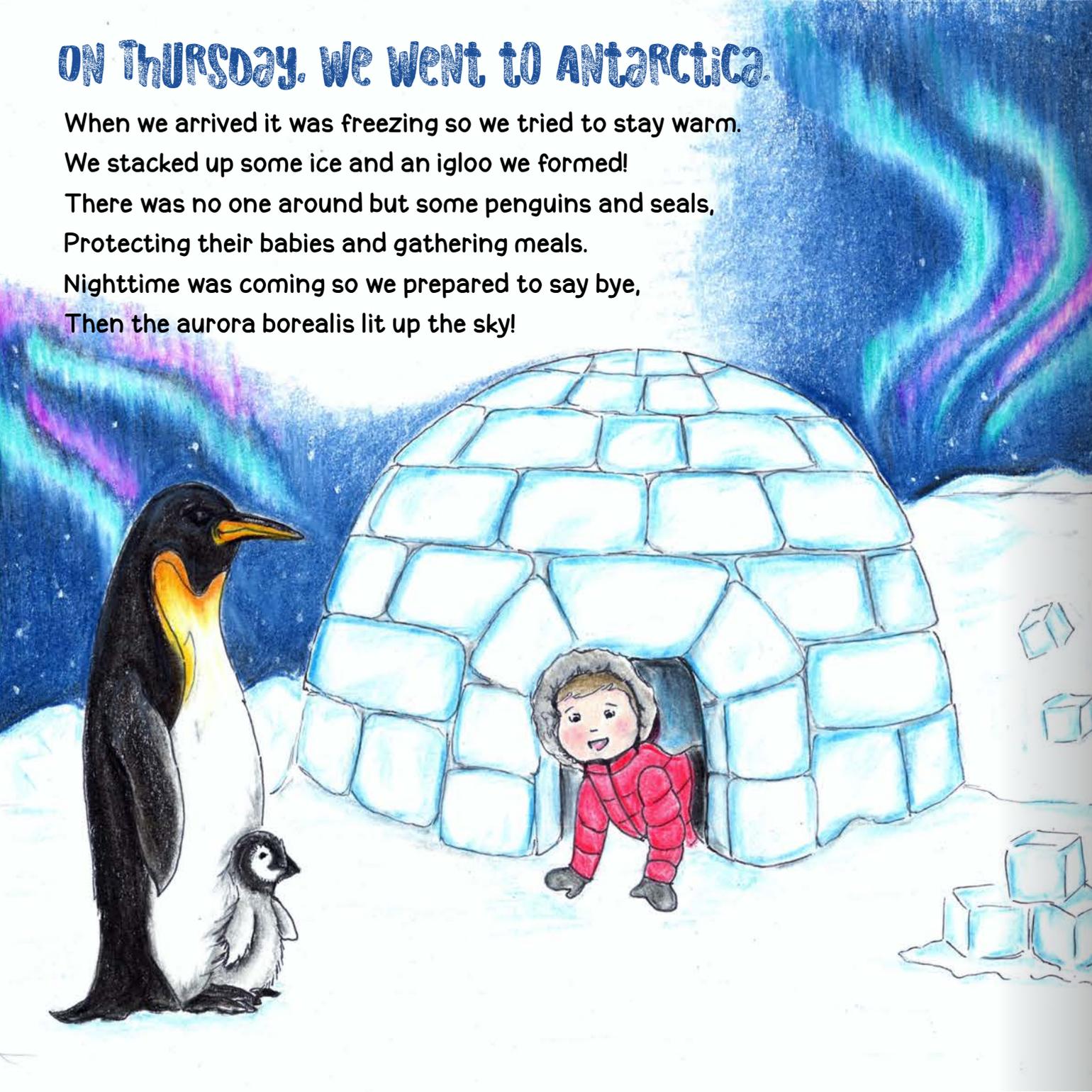
We stacked up some ice and an igloo we formed!

There was no one around but some penguins and seals,

Protecting their babies and gathering meals.

Nighttime was coming so we prepared to say bye,

Then the aurora borealis lit up the sky!



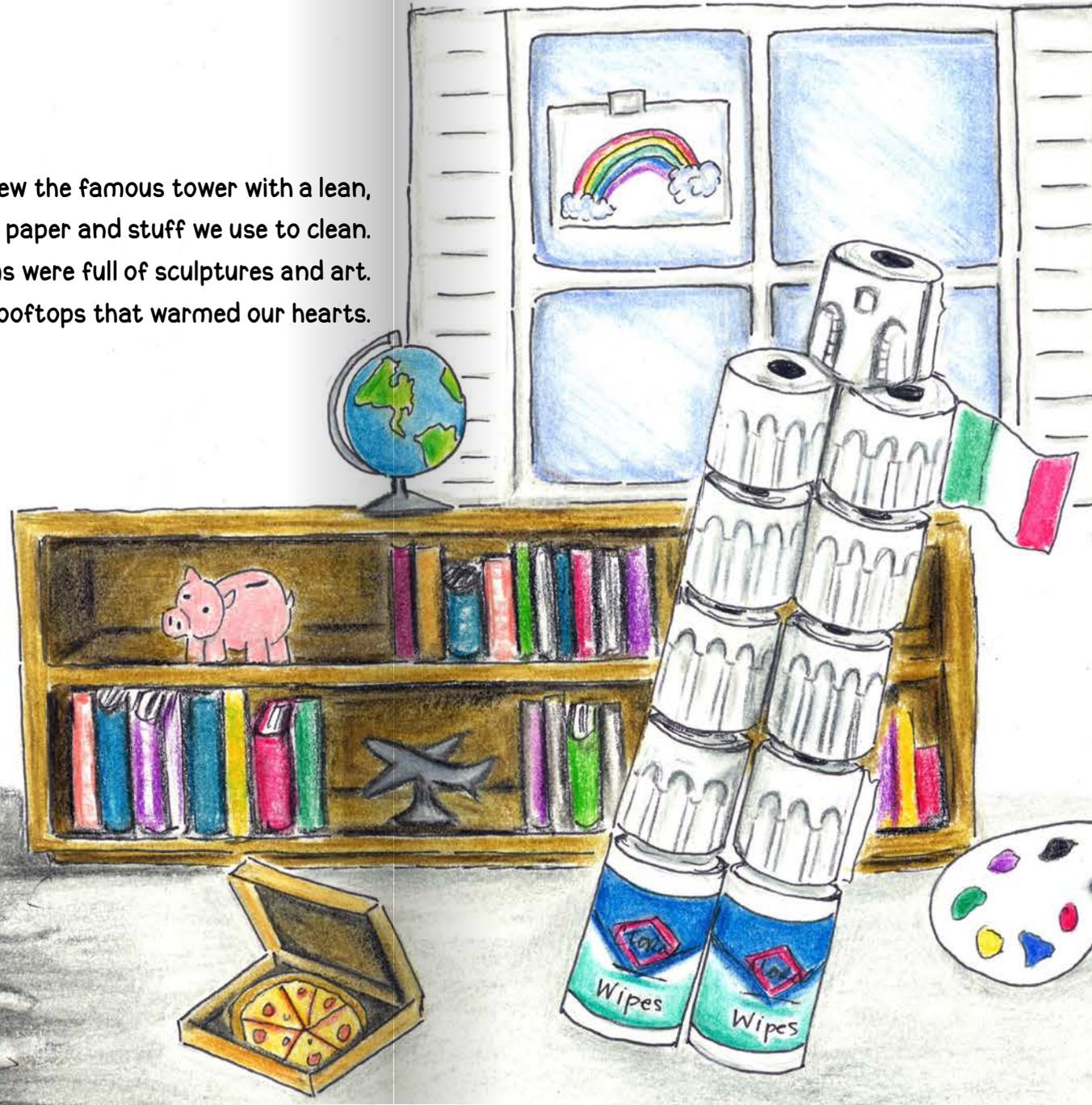
With our passports stamped
and suitcases packed snug,
We gave Antarctica a virtual hug.

ON FRIDAY. WE WENT TO ITALY.

We rode fast on our Vespa down the cobblestone street,
Stopping often at delicious places to eat.
Pasta, pizza, gelato and more!
Our bellies were full from this culinary tour.

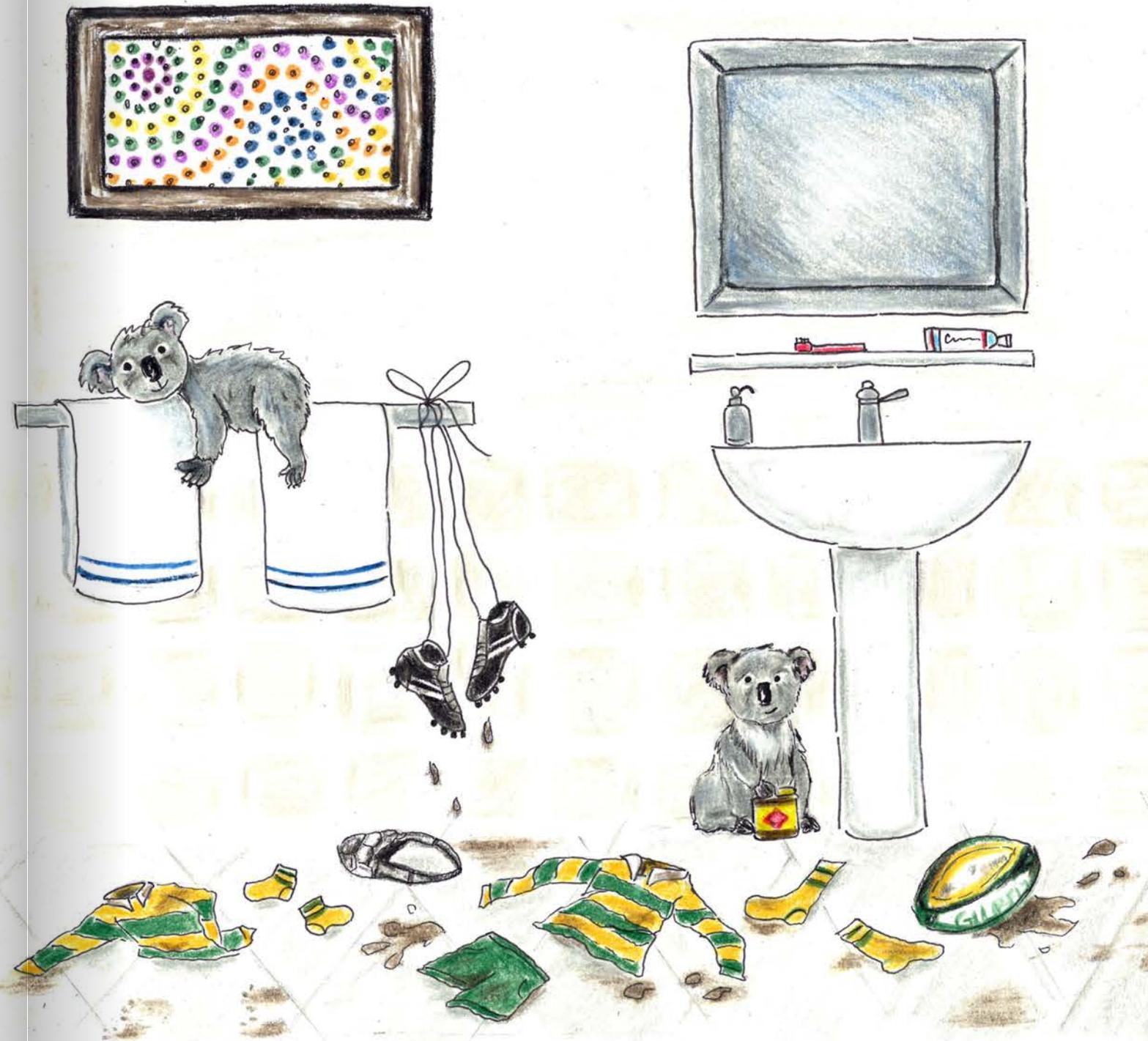
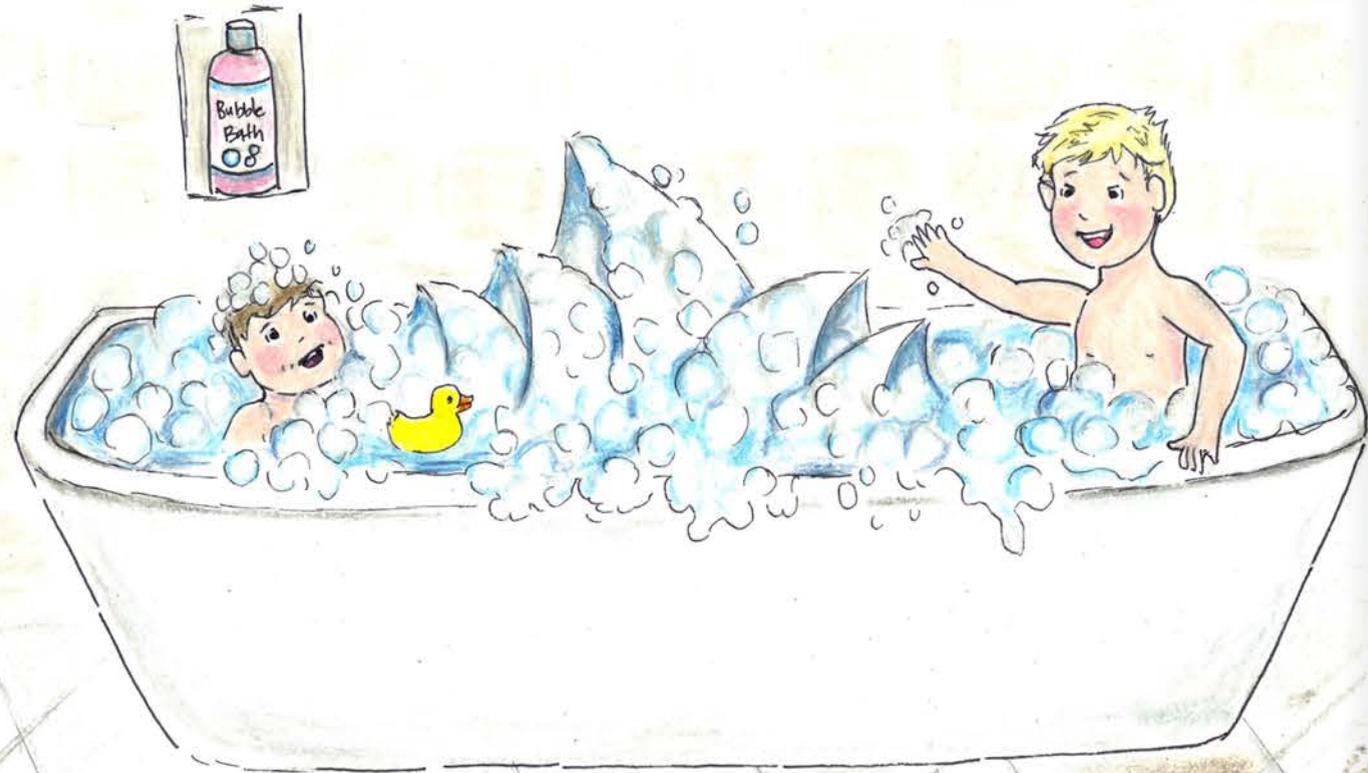
Then off to view the famous tower with a lean,
We made it from toilet paper and stuff we use to clean.
The museums were full of sculptures and art.
We heard singing from rooftops that warmed our hearts.

With our passports stamped and suitcases packed snug,
We gave Italy a virtual hug.

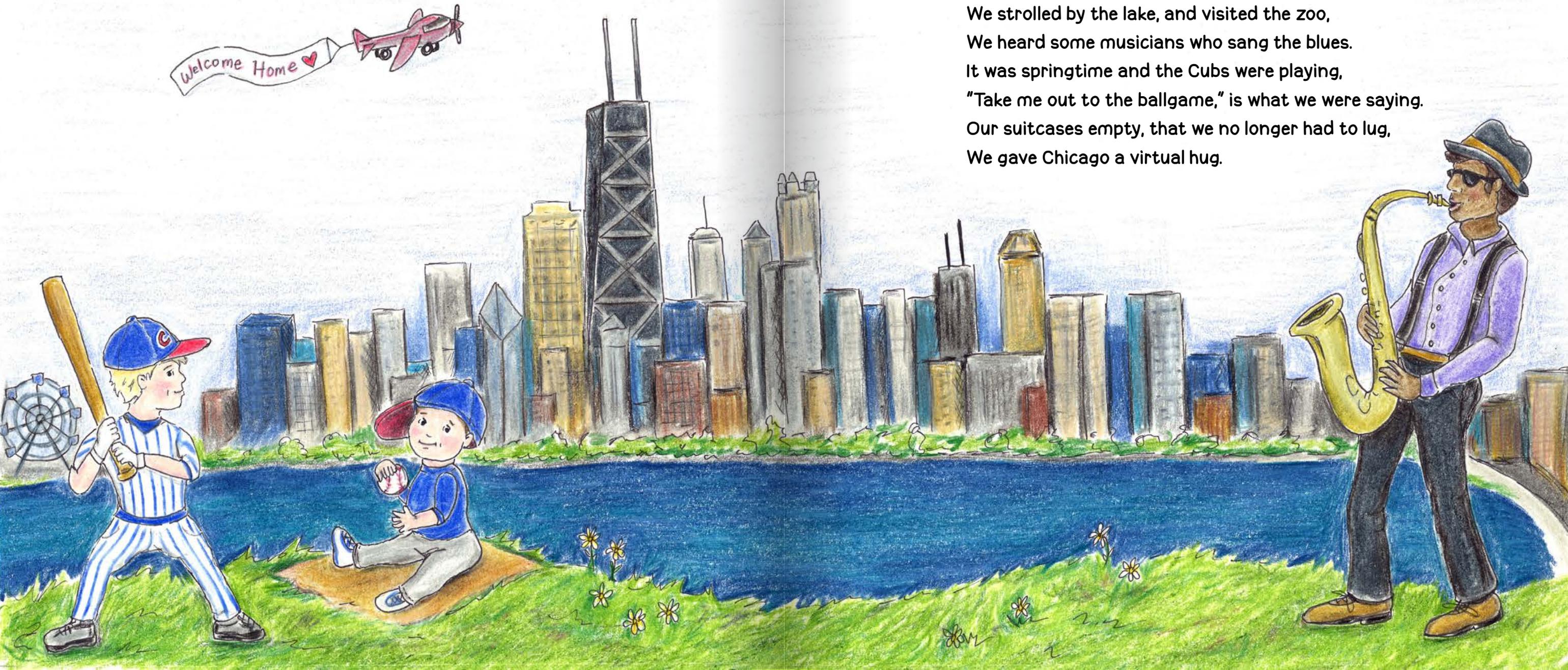
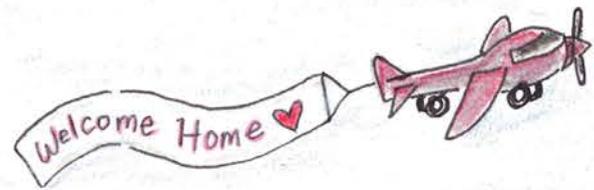


ON SATURDAY. WE WENT TO SYDNEY.

The view from the harbor was certainly pretty.
We made a bubble bath Opera House and sudsy city.
As breakfast approached and we needed a bite,
We ate classic sandwiches with Vegemite.
We said "g'day" to some koalas who were tame.
Then finished the day with a rugby game.
With our passports stamped and suitcases packed snug,
We gave Sydney a virtual hug.



ON SUNDAY, WE CAME HOME TO CHICAGO.



Sweet home Chicago, we were glad to be back.
It was time to unwind and finally unpack.
We strolled by the lake, and visited the zoo,
We heard some musicians who sang the blues.
It was springtime and the Cubs were playing,
"Take me out to the ballgame," is what we were saying.
Our suitcases empty, that we no longer had to lug,
We gave Chicago a virtual hug.

We are grateful for this journey, even though it was pretend.
It allowed us to travel and meet imaginary friends.
There are so many people lending a hand,
Including doctors and nurses in every nation and land.
For every boy and every girl, there is something you can do...
Be kind to others and send love from me and you.
When you go to bed at night and are tucked in snug,
Say a prayer for the world and give it a virtual hug!



"We sat and we thought about what we could do.
Then decided the world could use a virtual hug from me and you."



the PRETEND ADVENTURE OF A LIFETIME

Virtual Hug for the World was written and illustrated during the Covid-19 pandemic. The story is set in a Chicago home where two young boys are quarantined. In a time where real travel is limited, the boys decide to take an imaginary journey around the world sharing love and kindness. Visiting seven continents in seven days, they have an adventure of a lifetime, learn about culture, and share virtual hugs with new friends.

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