



*When I Was Young  
in Worthington: 1950s*

*written and illustrated by  
Chelsea Ostiguy, Kelsie Scudder,  
Chrissy Singell, and Bryan Hoffman*

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This Book is Dedicated  
to the 6th grade teachers  
who made this project possible.





The Doss's lived in a beautiful house in Worthington, at 210 East South Street with a bomb shelter in the back yard. The family was made up of James the father, Nanci the mother, and their two wonderful children: Lucy, who was a fifteen year old girl in high school, and Ricky, a twelve year old boy in middle school.



Ricky walked in the house humming an Elvis Presley song, "Return to Sender". He placed his book bag on the stairs as he walked toward the kitchen. He saw his older sister, Lucy, and his mom standing by the counter with gloomy looks on their faces. "Hey, what's going on?" Ricky asked, wondering where his dad was. "Where is dad?" Now he was getting suspicious.

"Your dad, well, uh," his mom paused.

"Gosh," Lucy chimed in, "He is going to war." This took a minute to sink in for Ricky.

"But he already went to war, a couple of years ago, remember?" Ricky remembered how worried he was just about five years ago, when he was seven.

"Yeah, we all remember, Ricky, but he has to go again to the Korean War," Lucy said, in a mean tone. She was always mean to him. It seemed that all she did was watch American Bandstand and wear her poodle skirts. Ricky hated poodle skirts; that was all Lucy ever talked about.

"Wait a second, Dad is going to war AGAIN?" Ricky said.

At that moment, Ricky's dad stepped into the kitchen. Everybody just stared at him in disbelief. "I guess you found out about my assignment in Korea," said their father gloomily.

"Yeah. He got assigned last week," said Mom. "We didn't tell you until now because we didn't want you to be sad on your birthday."



"Hey, don't be so down in the dumps! Let's all have a snack to cheer us all up," said Nanci, trying to cheer up the family. No one said anything during that snack because they were too surprised that their father was going to war again! Lucy was afraid that because her own Daddy was going to war, it might ruin her reputation! Ricky was afraid that his old man might die. Nanci was afraid that her husband was risking his life for the last time. James was afraid that he might not be doing a good job of taking care of his kids by going to war.

James accidentally said his feelings out loud and Lucy complained, "Don't have a cow, Dad, we're fine with the way you raised us!" She was afraid she'd get in trouble, but she took the risk.





Ricky and Lucy sat up in the bathroom with the door closed so they could talk about their father going to war. "So, Lucy, when do you think Dad is going to get back?" Ricky questioned.

"I don't know!"

"Okay! Geez! Don't go ape, my gosh!"

"Sorry, I'm just a little sensitive. Plus, I'm kind of frosted that Dad is going to war."

"Well, I do have to agree with you, it is pretty scary that Pops is going."

"I know! I know! Dad is going to war! Why is everyone repeating it?" Lucy said, running out of the bathroom and slamming the door shut behind her.

"Cool it! Hey! Come back here!" Ricky walked out of the room without saying a word with a frown on his face. Ricky felt so bad even though he didn't know what he did to make Lucy so mad.





At dinner time they sat at the table and finally talked about everything. "So what's up with you, Luc?" asked Ricky, trying to hold his tears back as he looked across the table at his father.

"Nothing, really, these days, just hanging around, I guess, and Mom, can I go to a party tonight?" Lucy said in response.

"I guess. Since tomorrow is Saturday, you can sleep in," Nanci said, glad that she might have the night to just her and her husband.

"Okay, thanks! I am going to Molly's house," Lucy said with her eyes fluttering.

"May I be excused?" asked Ricky.

"What, are you going to pile on the Z's?" Lucy smirked.

"Drop Dead Twice!" Ricky shouted back at her.

"And what, look like you?" Lucy replied. Lucy was great with comebacks. Ricky guessed it was because she had so many boyfriends and when they dumped her she needed to shout back at them. Ricky remembered her worst date has been with this guy named Bill; he was such a nerd. Ricky just got up and left, without even trying to come up with his own comeback.

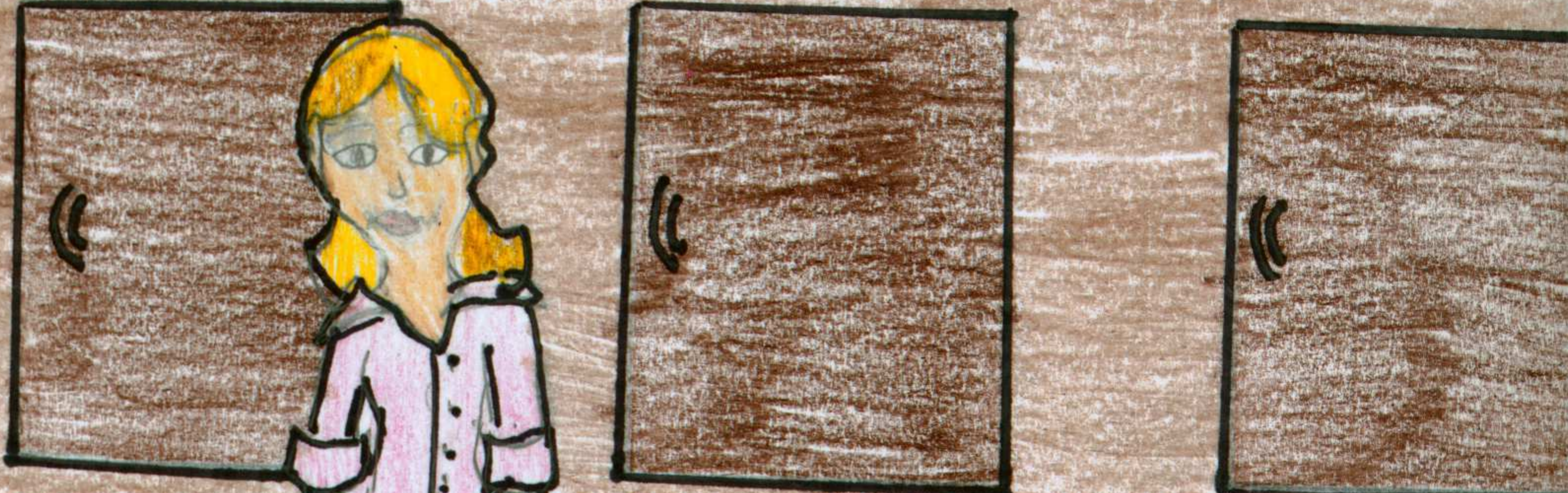
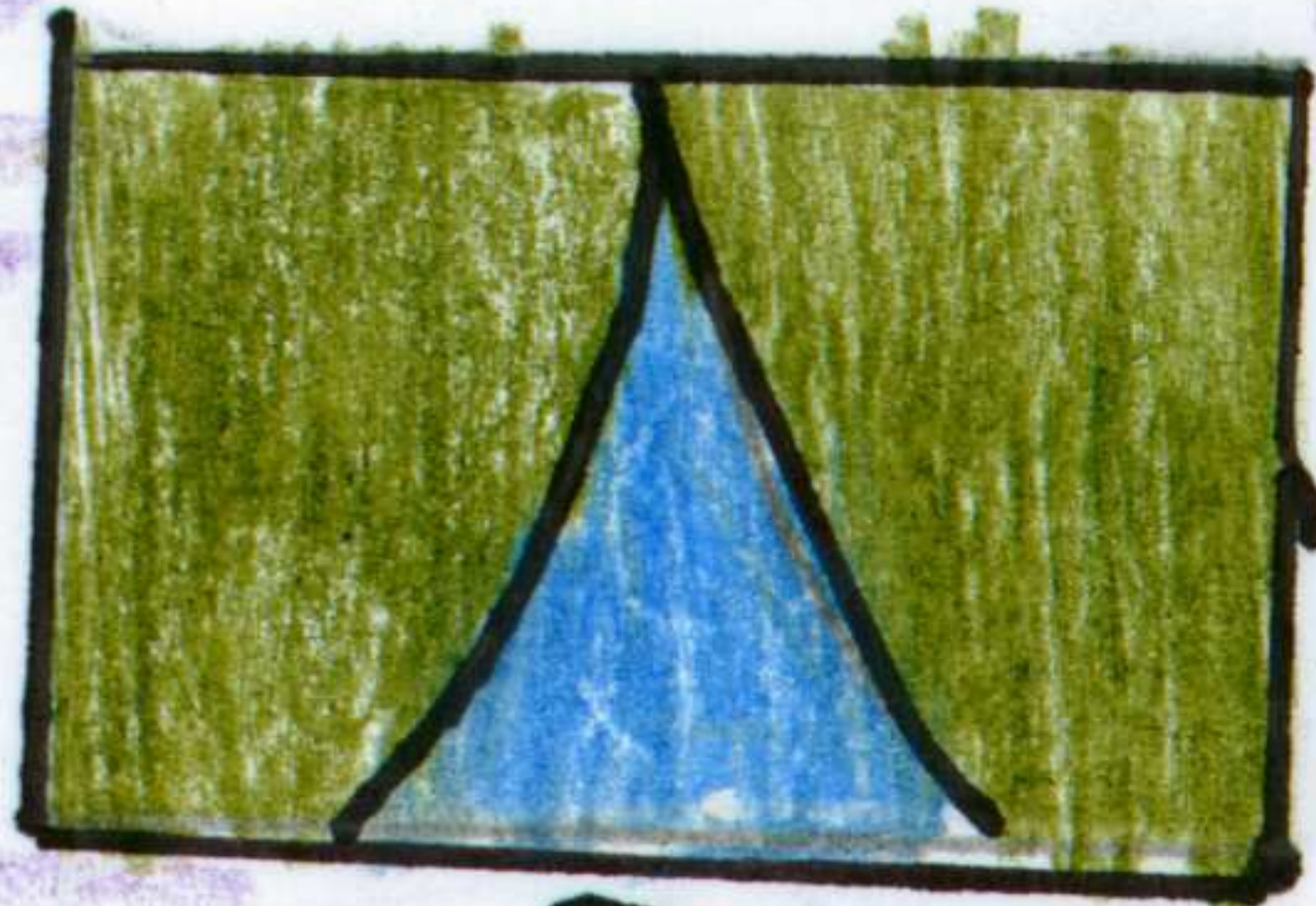
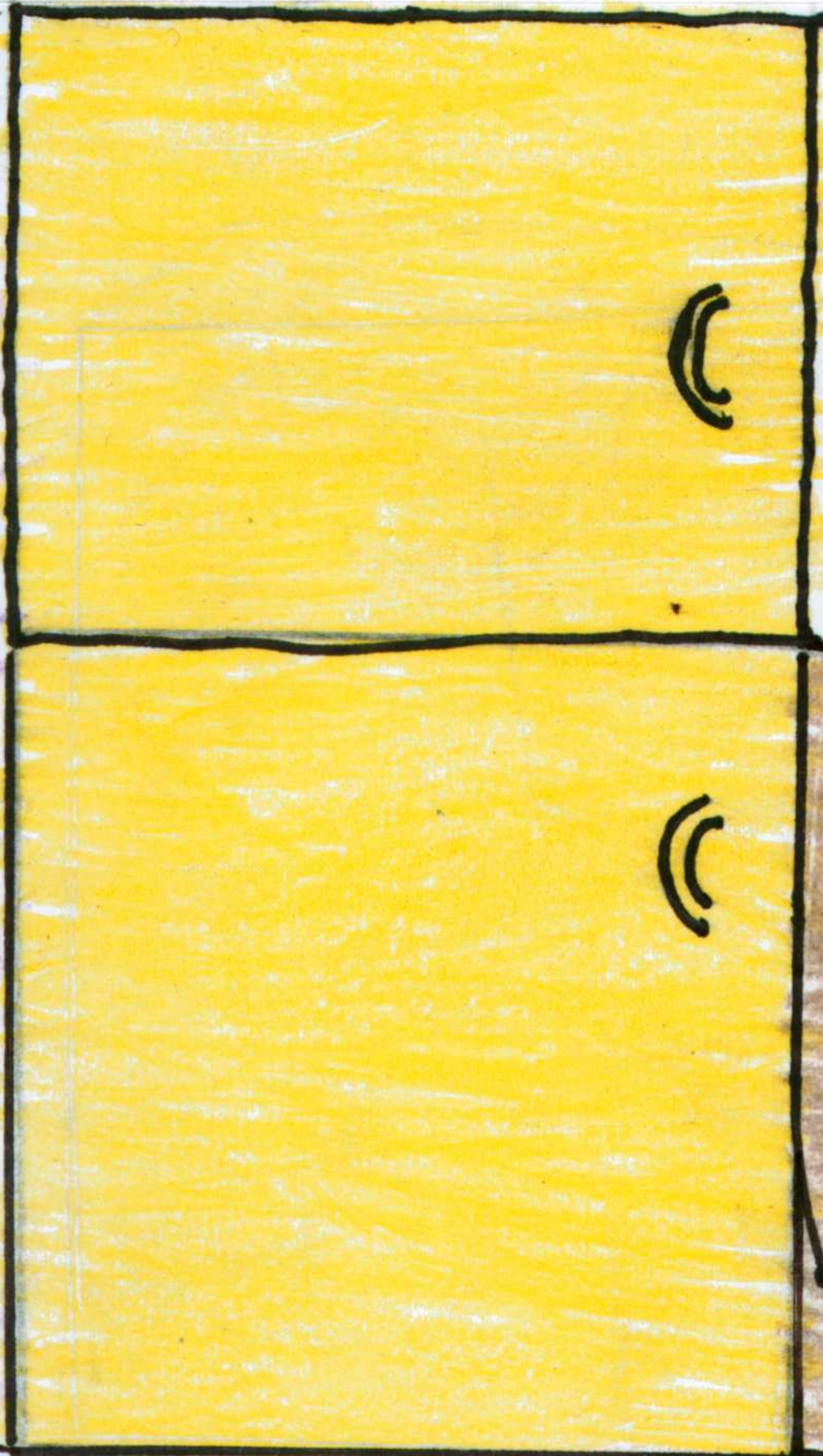
"Ricky, since your father is going away soon, he and I are going to see a movie. It's called Broken Arrow," called Nanci.

"Okay," Ricky called, his voice sort of scratched up.

"Do you need a babysitter?" asked James.

"No, Dad. I will be fine." And that was the end of the conversation as James and Nanci left with a slam of the door.







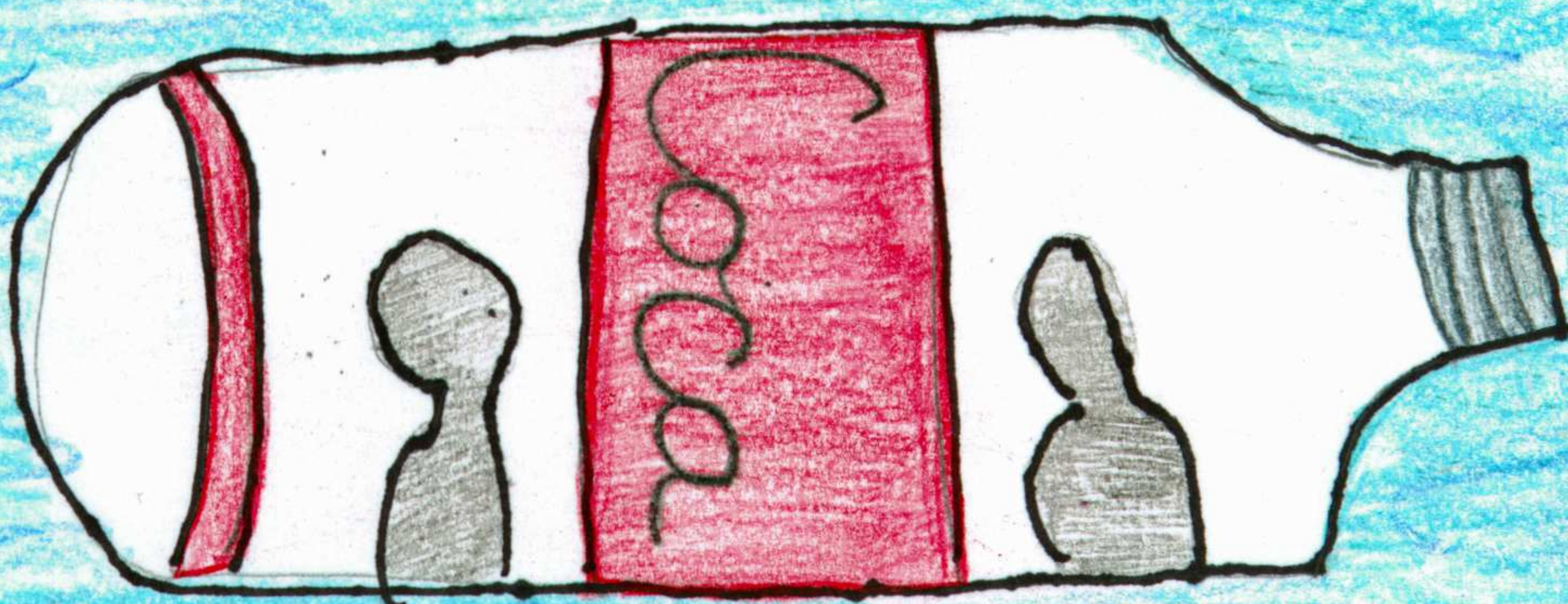
"OUCH!" Ricky screamed at the pain in his stomach. "I wish Mom and Dad were here," Ricky moaned.



Meanwhile Lucy was having the best time at Molly's party. Her favorite song was playing and her crush, Robert, was there. She had had a crush on him since before she could remember. "Oh, hello, Lucy," said Carol and her best friend Brenda at the same time. They were always mean to Lucy. Brenda was going steady with Robert and Lucy was so jealous sometimes. "So do you want to play spin-the-bottle?" asked Carol.

"Or will your mom not allow it?" Brenda threw at Lucy.

"I would LOVE to play!" said Lucy, shoving them out of her way.







It was 11:25 when Nanci and James got home. The first thing they heard when they walked in the room was the pitiful sounds of Ricky's moaning and groaning. Nanci knew something was wrong. She rushed up to his room where Ricky was bent over holding his stomach. His mom ran down to get some medicine. Ricky explained that his head also hurt. She called the doctor right away.

The doctors appointment was three days away, but to Ricky it seemed like three years. One day he was walking to his room and just couldn't make it, he fell to the floor. His parents were there in a snap to help him.





It was Sunday and the last time that the whole family could go to St. John's church together, because James would be leaving that week for the War. Ricky was feeling up to going with the family even though he still felt bad. Ricky didn't want to ruin this family get together.



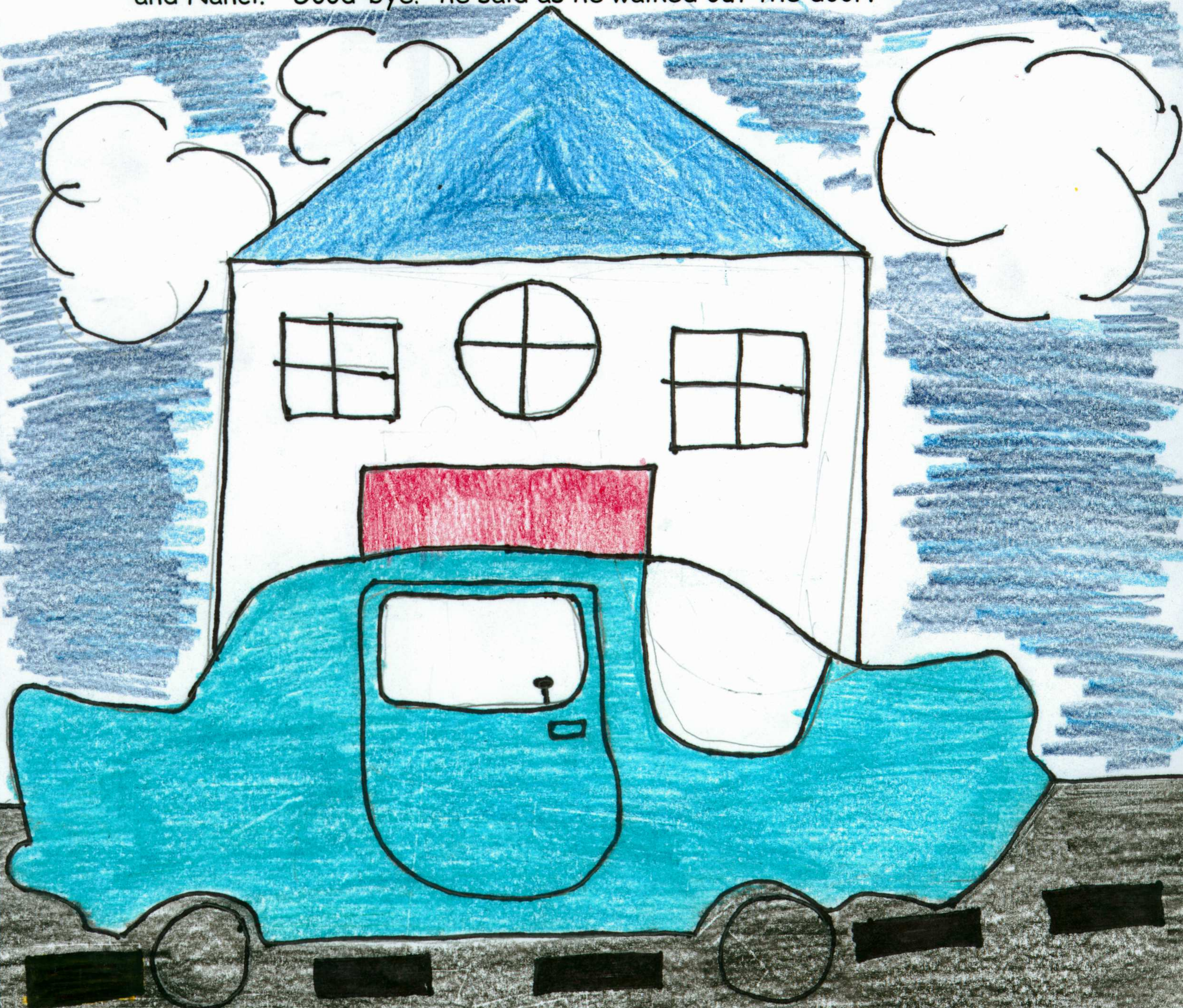
Then, finally it was Monday, the day they went to the doctor. He felt a little better. When they got there the doctor said it just a bad virus, and the best thing for him to do was get some rest. So when they got home he begged his mom to play Hangman with him. They spent a pleasant afternoon beating one another at Hangman.





All of a sudden it was Tuesday, the day, and James had to leave. Nanci was the most sad out of the whole family. Ricky barely made it downstairs because of his virus. James was now questioning if going to war was the best thing for the family. But there was nothing that he could do now. He had to go.

"I love you, and I will miss you all," said James as he kissed Lucy and Nanci. "Good-bye!" he said as he walked out the door.







A few weeks had passed, each day longer than the last, since the family was anxious to find out if father was safe.

The phone rang. "Hey, this is Mary," Nanci recognized the voice as that of her next door neighbor.

"Hi," she responded "They are about to air who died from Worthington on the radio," said the neighbor. "Oh, thank you." She called to her kids, then she quickly ran over toward the end table by the couch and got out the radio. *New news from Sharon Township. The fire department has purchased their first emergency vehicle. And in other news, although several Worthington men served in Korea, none from Worthington have died.*

Nanci, Lucy, and Ricky were jumping up and down. James was coming home!

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They all were so glad the war was over and no one they knew had died. The family went on to live a happy 50's life. Ricky and Lucy both attended Worthington High School, which was built on the original school farm in 1952. Part of it is now the main portion of Thomas Worthington High School. Color television arrived in Columbus in 1954. Swiminc opened Worthington's first public swimming pool in 1954. Worthington became a city in 1956, when its population exceeded 5000. In 1959 John H. McConnell moved his steel processing operation to a site just northeast of Worthington. Today, it employs 7500 people in 22 states and 10 countries.

