

Kylie & Kyle: Siblings Living in Foster Care

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≡ DEDICATION ≡

This book is for all the children who have suffered from childhood traumas and feel they have been abandoned by their caregivers when placed in foster care homes. Remember, you are not alone.

You are loved.

≡ LIVING WITH MRS. WALKER ≡

Kylie and Kyle have been living with Mrs. Walker for about six months. They love living in their foster parent's home. A family team meeting was scheduled for later today. Kylie had been feeling anxious about the meeting because she feared she and her brother might have to leave Mrs. Walker's home.

Kylie woke up early and walked into Kyle's room. She patted her younger brother on the shoulder.

"Wake up, sleepyhead. It's time for school!"



Kyle woke up and smiled.
"Mornin," he said.

He walked into the bathroom, brushed his teeth, and washed his face. Kylie placed her brother's clothes on his bed and then returned to her room to finish getting dressed.



The smell of bacon lingered in the hallway, and Kylie smiled. Mrs. Walker was cooking pancakes, bacon, grits, and eggs for breakfast.



"Kylie and Kyle," Mrs. Walker yelled from the kitchen, "hurry, before your breakfast gets cold!"

Kylie popped her head into Kyle's room. He was struggling to get his shirt on. She walked over and pulled it down for him.

"Ready?" He nodded and followed her to the kitchen.



“Mmm. I smell something good!” Kyle took a deep breath as he walked into the kitchen. “Blueberry pancakes? My favorite!”

Kylie took her seat at the table and said, “Mine too!”

They looked at each other and smiled. “Grandma’s famous blueberry pancakes,” they said in unison.

The siblings laughed and said, “Thanks, Mrs. Walker.”

“You’re both welcome.” A smile spread across Mrs. Walker’s face. “Alright. Let’s say grace. Kyle, you say it this morning.”

Everyone bowed their heads and closed their eyes.

“Thank you, Lord, for my sister, for Mrs. Walker, and for the food we are about to receive. Amen.”

Kyle quickly picked up his fork and began to eat.



After breakfast, Kylie and Kyle grabbed their lunch boxes and backpacks. Mrs. Walker walked them to the bus stop and waited with them.



“Good morning, Mrs. Julie.”

Mrs. Walker waved at the bus driver when the doors swung open.

“Good morning,” Mrs. Julie said. She waved back and looked at the children. “Kyle, Kylie, how are my two favorite students? How was your evening?”

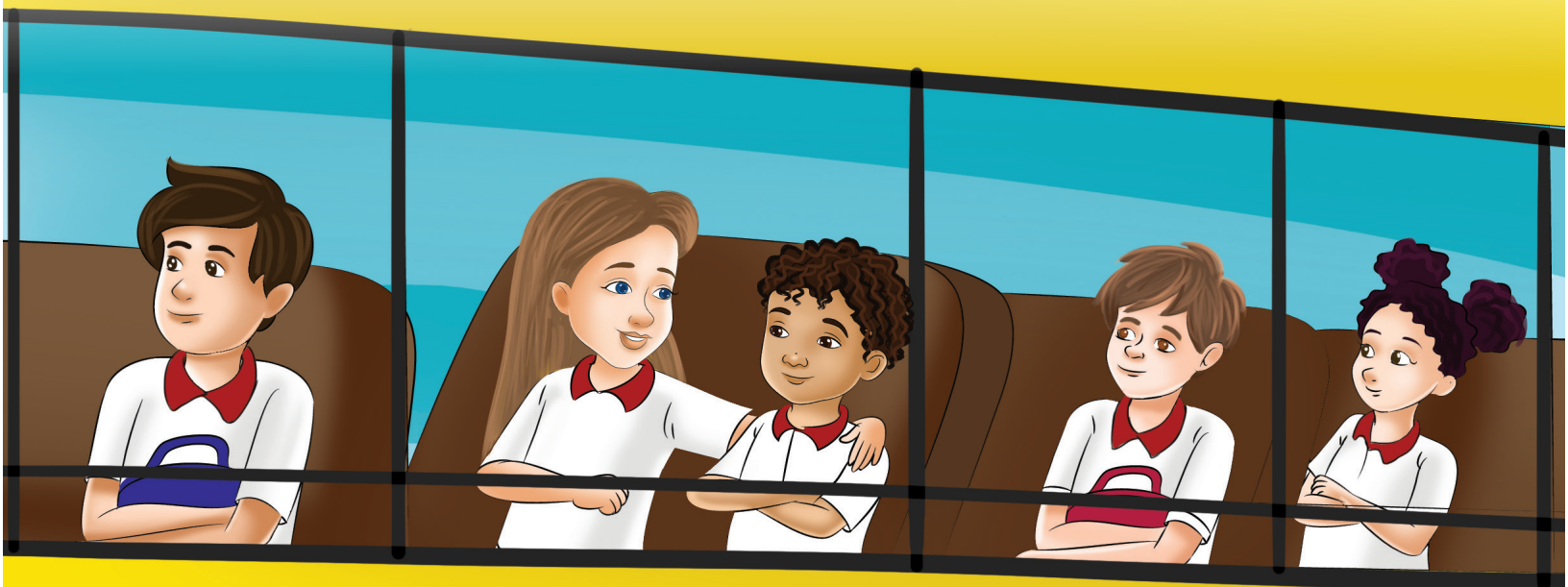
“Good,” they replied.

They walked to their seats, and Kyle looked out the window. After a few moments, he turned to his sister.

“Do you think we will stay with Mrs. Walker or go back with Mama?”

Kylie took a deep breath.

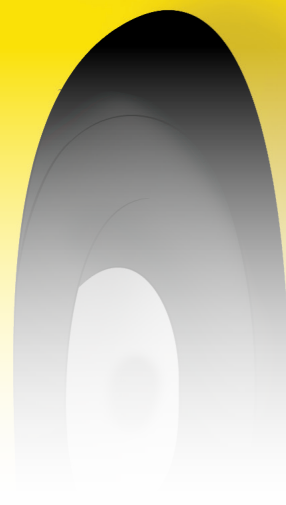
“I love Mama, Kyle, but she’s got to get help right now.”



SCHOOL BUS

Kyle nodded slowly but said nothing.

“We are safe with Mrs. Walker. I think we
might be with her for a long time.
But don’t you worry. Okay?”



Kyle sighed. "Kylie, I like it at Mrs. Walker's house. I didn't like it when we were with Mama. I...I hope she finds another place to live." He looked at his sister. "Is that bad for me to say?"

Kylie put her arm around her brother. "No, that's not bad, Kyle. It's okay. I like it there too."

"Do you think we will have to leave?"

Kylie shrugged. "If we do, I just want you to know that I will always take care of you. Forever. Okay?"

"I know." Kyle smiled and hugged his sister. "I love you, Kylie. You're my best friend for life."

Kylie hugged her brother back and laughed. "You're silly."

≡ AFTER SCHOOL ≡

Mrs. Walker arrived at the school and drove to the pickup area.

Kylie opened the door for her brother to get into the car.

“Hi, Kylie and Kyle. How was your day? Did you have fun today?”

“Yes, ma’am,” Kylie replied, “We saw a movie in class today about a dolphin who was trapped in the sea, but a swimmer got him out and rescued him.”

“That sounds interesting, Kylie,” Mrs. Walker said. She looked at Kyle in the rearview mirror and asked, “Kyle, did you do anything exciting in class today?”

“Mrs. Jones let us go outside and play. I also got to play the drums in music class,” Kyle added with a smile.

“That seems fun. So, you both had a pretty good day at school.”

Both said, “Yes.”

“That’s good,” Mrs. Walker replied. “Kyle, you have a dental appointment, so I got here as soon as I could. I needed to make sure we arrived at the dentist’s office on time.”

Everyone buckled up their seat belts, and Mrs. Walker drove away.





Dentist Office



They arrived at the dentist's office and went inside.
Mrs. Walker signed in at the front desk.



Ten minutes later, the receptionist, Ms. Kim, called Kyle back for his routine cleaning.



"Mrs. Walker, Dr. Mathis is ready for Kyle."

"Alright," Mrs. Walker replied.

"Do you need me to go with him?"

"No ma'am. I will walk him back."

"Okay. Kyle, go with Ms. Kim."



“Okay.” Kyle hopped off his chair and followed Ms. Kim to the back.
Kylie looked at Mrs. Walker. Now was her chance.

She asked, "How did the family meeting go?"
Mrs. Walker smiled. "I think it went well."



Kylie sighed. "So... how is my mom doing?"

Mrs. Walker said, "Well, we didn't talk much about your mom or Kyle's dad because they did not show up. But your case manager assured me there is no reason for you and your brother to leave my home. Don't worry. It will be fine."

She gave Kylie a hug.

THE CAVITY

Dr. Mathis entered the room after the assistant had cleaned Kyle's teeth.

"Hi, Kyle. How are you doing today?"

"Good," Kyle said.

"That's great. Now, let's look into your mouth to make sure your teeth are also good. Open wide for me."

Kyle opened his mouth, and Dr. Mathis examined his teeth.

"Kyle, your teeth look good, but I see you have a small cavity."

"What's a cavity?" Kyle asked.

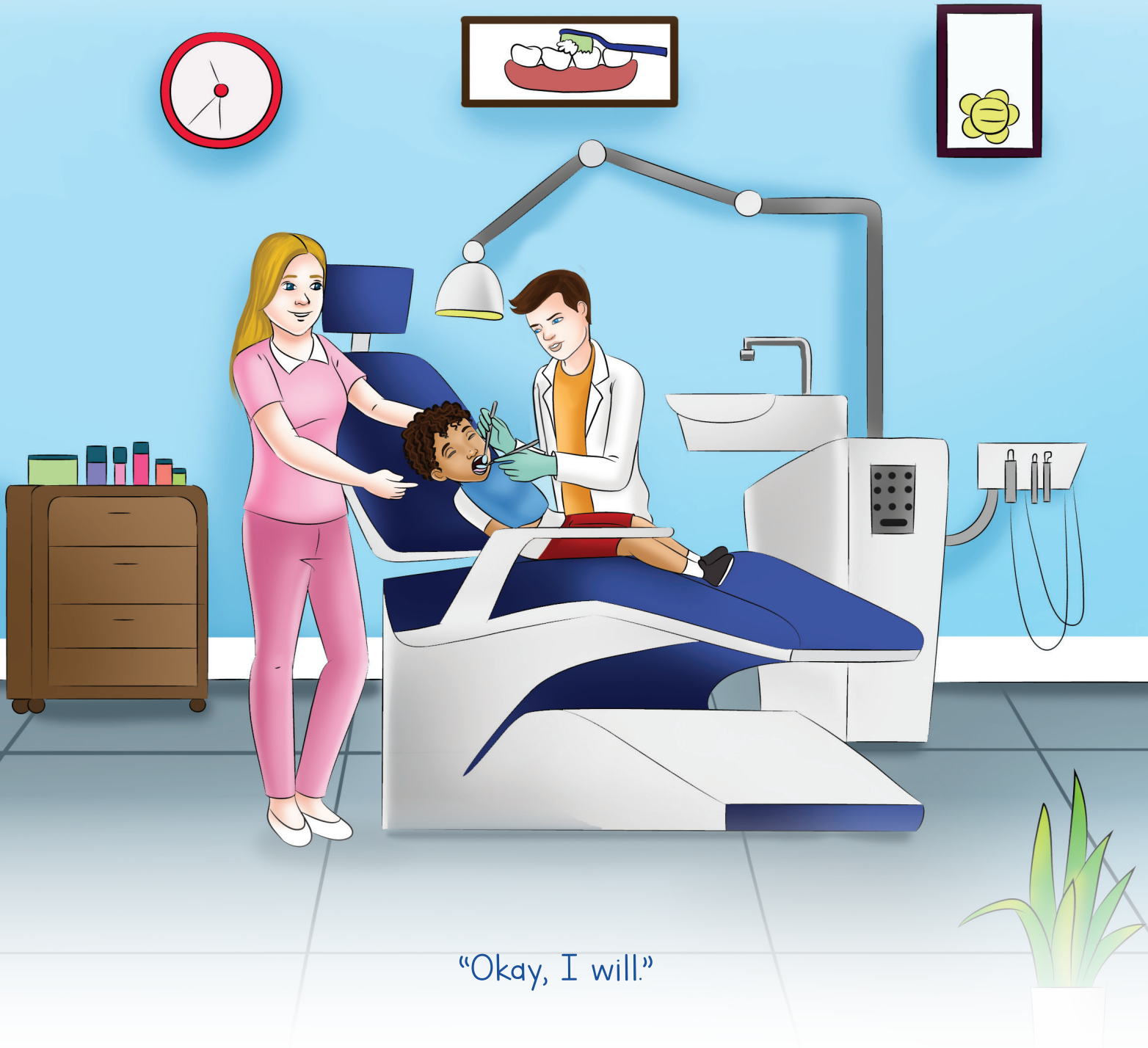
"Well, it's just a little decay. It's a dark spot that comes on your teeth when you don't brush or floss enough. It's alright for today, and we will take care of it the next time you come in. Are you brushing after you eat breakfast?"

Kyle nodded.

“And what about before bed?”

“Not all the time before bed,” Kyle admitted.

“Kyle, I want you to brush in the morning, after dinner, and before bed.” Dr. Mathis gave Kyle a big smile. “Can you do that for me?”



“Okay, I will.”

“Good,” Dr. Mathis replied. “Well, Kyle. We are all set, and I’ve got a toy for you for being so good today.”



He handed Kyle a keychain with a dog on it that spun around.
“Wow! Thank you.”

“You’re welcome,” Dr. Mathis replied.

He left the room as Sue, the dental assistant, removed the dental sheet from Kyle’s chest. Sue led Kyle back to the front desk and informed Mrs. Walker about his cavity.

“Be sure to have him brush three times a day.”

“Okay, thank you. I will make sure he brushes after he eats and before bed, too.”

Mrs. Walker led the children out to the car. “Well, Kyle, looks like you’ll need to start brushing those teeth more.”



“Yep!” Kyle held up his keychain. “Check out the cool toy I got.”

Kylie sighed and looked out the window.

“Kylie, is everything okay?” Mrs. Walker asked.

“I don’t remember Mama ever taking us to the dentist’s office,” Kylie said. “Thank you for making sure we get to our appointments.”

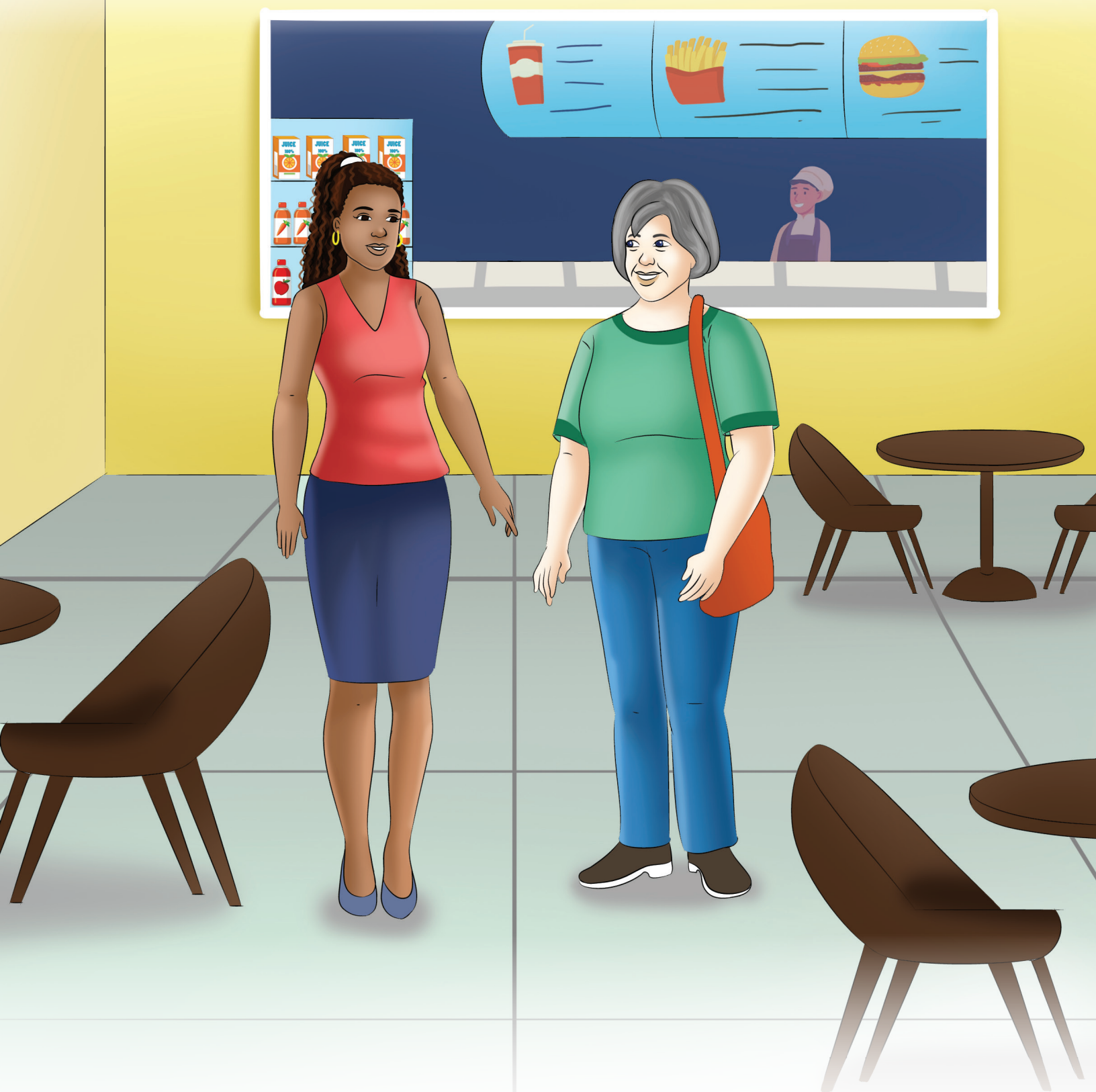
Mrs. Walker smiled. “It’s my pleasure, Kylie.”

≡ VISIT WITH GRANDMA ≡

While driving home, Mrs. Walker stopped at McDonald's for ice cream. She, Kylie, and Kyle got out of the car and walked into the restaurant. After ordering, they sat down at a table.



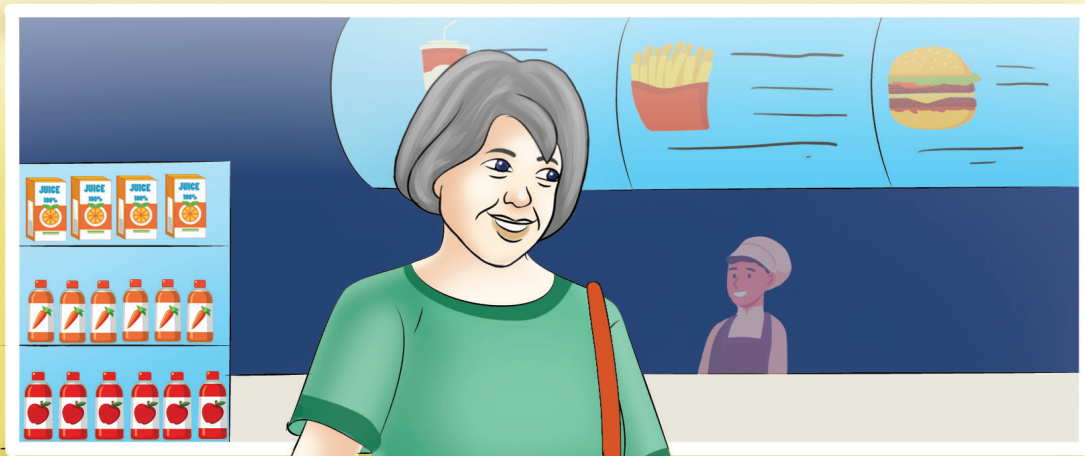
Ten minutes later, Ms. Alice walked in with their Grandma Jessie.



“Grandma! Grandma!” Kylie and Kyle cried out as they rushed over to give her a hug.

Grandma Jessie hugged them back. “I miss you both so much. You are getting so big!”

“We miss you, too, Grandma,” Kylie said.



Kyle looked past her out to the parking lot. "Did Mama come with you?"

"No, Baby. Not this time. Karen is working on getting better. But you'll see her soon. She loves you so much."

Kyle sighed.



"I brought something for you," his grandmother said.

Kyle's eyes widened. "What did you bring me?"

"I got this puzzle for you, and I got these earrings for Kylie."

"Thank you, Grandma," they each said as they received their gifts.

Ms. Alice excused herself from the children and went to speak to Mrs. Walker.

Kylie looked over at Ms. Alice and Mrs. Walker as Kyle began telling their grandma all about his cavity. They were sitting at the next table. Ms. Alice leaned across the table with a serious look on her face, but Kylie couldn't hear what they were saying. She sighed. Mama was probably not doing what she needed to be doing in the program—again. Kylie wondered if David had talked their mama into walking away from treatment again. David was Kyle's father, but he was not her father, and she was glad.

Kylie focused hard on Ms. Alice's lips. Something about home and kids. Her mind was spinning at the thought of having to move to another home. Was that what Ms. Alice was talking with Mrs. Walker about?

“Kylie!” Kyle’s shout caught her attention. She turned quickly to her little brother.

“What?”

“Grandma asked how your day was.”



“Oh,” Kylie said. She told her grandma about her day, even though her mind was still wondering about the conversation happening at the next table.

A short while later, visitation time ended. They hugged their grandma and said goodbye.

“I’ll see you later. I love you. Be good,” she said.



Kylie and Kyle waved as she walked outside with Ms. Alice. Soon after, they left with Mrs. Walker, and she drove them all home.

≡ A WEEKEND WITH BRIAN ≡

While riding home, Kylie asked Mrs. Walker about their placement in her home.

She blurted out, "Is Ms. Alice going to place us in a new home?"

"Why would you think that?" Mrs. Walker asked.

"I heard her say something about a home," Kylie replied sheepishly.

"Ms. Alice was asking me if I would be open to taking in another child," Mrs. Walker explained.

"Cool! A new kid! I hope it's someone my age," Kyle said.

Mrs. Walker smiled. "I think he is a little older, Kyle. I told Ms. Alice I would need to speak with the two of you first. What do you think?"

Kylie let out a sigh of relief. She and Kyle would still stay with Mrs. Walker for now. "That's fine with me," she said.

"Me too," Kyle said with a smile.





When they got back to the house, Mrs. Walker called Ms. Alice and let her know the new boy was welcome to spend the weekend with them. She wanted to make sure he got along well with Kylie and Kyle before agreeing to have him come live with them. Kylie appreciated Mrs. Walker for always looking out for her and her brother.

“Okay, Ms. Alice. We will be here waiting to meet him. What’s his name?” Mrs. Walker asked. “Great. We will see you and Brian on Friday.”

Two days later, Ms. Alice and Brian arrived.

"Brian," Ms. Alice said, "this is Mrs. Walker, Kylie, and Kyle."

"Hello, Brian. How are you doing?" Mrs. Walker asked.

"Fine," Brian answered.

Both Kylie and Kyle said, "Hi."



“You’re gonna sleep in my room,” Kyle said with excitement.

“Come on, Brian. I have some toys.”

“What kind of toys? Do you have a PlayStation or Xbox?”



“Yes,” Kyle replied. “Mrs. Walker has a PlayStation, but we’re only allowed to play it on the weekends because we have homework during the week.” He added, “So maybe we can play it tomorrow. Kylie knows how to hook it up. Let me show you which games we have.”

Brian followed them to Kyle's room. He turned to Kylie as Kyle rambled through the games they had in his room.



“So, how long have you guys been here with Mrs. Walker?”

“About six months,” Kylie said.

“Do you like it here?”

Kyle answered before Kylie could reply. “Yes! Mrs. Walker is very nice. We used to be in a foster care home where the lady was mean to us. She didn’t even let us eat snacks, and she yelled at her husband all the time.”

“Kyle!” Kylie shook her head at her brother. He shrugged.

“Where did you live before coming here, Brian?” Kylie asked.

“I lived with my mom, but she and her boyfriend would fight all the time.” He looked at Kyle, “And they didn’t give me snacks either. They left me home alone a lot, and we didn’t really have any food, so Ms. Alice came and took me to my aunt’s house.”

“What happened to your aunt?” Kyle asked.

“Kyle!” Kylie objected again.

“It’s okay.” Brian smiled. “I don’t know what happened. Ms. Alice said my aunt couldn’t take care of me anymore. So, I went to live with Ms. Sims, but she made me leave after I got into a fight with another boy there.”

“Did he deserve it?” Kyle asked. “I bet he deserved it.”

“Kyle!” Kylie slapped her palm against her forehead. “I’m really sorry about him!”

Brian laughed. “He did deserve it, or at least I thought he did. He was talking about my mom being ugly and not wanting me. He stole my video, and Ms. Sims didn’t do anything. So, I ran away.”

“Wow,” Kyle said. “Kylie ran away before, too. She usually does when we have court dates because she gets nervous about—”

“Kyle!” This time, Kylie put her hand over her brother’s mouth. “Just stop talking,” she warned.

Brian laughed again. “What about you guys? Why are you in foster care?”

Kylie gave her brother a look and took her hand off his mouth. She turned to Brian and said, “Kyle’s dad, David, didn’t come around much because he was on drugs and would yell at our mom and they would fight. Then, Mama met her new boyfriend, Corey, at her job.”

“Before Corey came, we used to make cookies, and go to the park and to the movies with Mama,” said Kyle.

Kylie said, “I didn’t like him because his breath always smelled like beer, and he would hug me too tight.”

Tears fell from Kyle’s face. “I didn’t like him because he hit Mama in the eye.”

Kylie hugged her brother. “It’s okay, Kyle. Mama is safe from him now.” “Our mom lost her job after she was caught stealing and doing drugs. So, we lost our home and had to move into a hotel,” she said.

“So, was that how you got into foster care?” Brian asked.

“Well, it was because Mama and Corey left us in the hotel for days without food, and we missed school. We were hungry, so we went to the manager and asked for a snack, and he asked where our mama was. I told him she went with a friend to the store. I could tell he didn’t believe me because he rubbed his face and looked nervous. He gave us some chips and juice, and he told us to wait in the lobby.”

Kylie paused and let out a deep sigh before continuing.

"Next, the police showed up. They talked to the manager. He called our mom's cell phone, and she came back to the hotel. The police asked her questions, and they arrested her right there in the lobby. A social worker picked us up, and we ended up in a foster care home."

"Wow!" But what about your father, Kylie? Couldn't you go stay with him?

Kylie lowered her head. "My dad died in a car accident two years ago," she said.

"Oh, I'm sorry, Kylie."

"Thank you, Brian. It's alright now."

Kyle said, "We like staying at Mrs. Walker's house, and we never miss a meal or school. Right, Kylie?"

Kylie smiled. "Right, Kyle."

"So, where is your mom now?"

"She's in rehab."

"That's where people go to get off drugs," Kyle added. "Right, Kylie?"

She nodded.

Brian said, "I hope she gets better."

"I hope so, too," Kylie said.





Mrs. Walker called from the living room. "Kids, can you come down here?"

They headed back downstairs.

Ms. Alice asked, "Well, Brian, are you getting along with Kyle and Kylie?"

"Yes, Ma'am."

"Great. I am going to leave you here until Sunday night. Be sure to be respectful, alright?"

"Okay," said Brian.

≡ BRIAN'S VISIT ENDS ≡

Ding. Dong.

Mrs. Walker opened the door. "Hello, Ms. Alice. I told Brian you were on your way, and he has all his things ready."

Ms. Alice looked at Brian. "Did you enjoy your visit?"

"We had fun," Brian said. "But I would rather be at Aunt Tanisha's house."

"Well, right now, that's not—"

"I know," Brian snapped, before she could finish.

"Let me speak with Mrs. Walker for a moment while you say goodbye to Kylie and Kyle."

"Ms. Alice, is Brian going to stay here for a while?" Kyle asked with a big grin.

"Let me talk with Mrs. Walker now. Okay, Kyle?"

Kyle nodded, and he and Brian joined Kylie in the kitchen.

Brian turned and stared at Ms. Alice and Mrs. Walker. Their voices had gotten softer.

"I never like it when they talk so softly that I can't hear them," Kylie said.

Brian looked at her and smiled. "At least I know she doesn't have anything bad to say. I didn't get into any fights."

"Alright, Brian, get your things." Ms. Alice waved at him to follow her.



"So, is he going to stay?" Kyle asked again.

Mrs. Walker smiled. "Ms. Alice is going to bring Brian back next weekend."

Kyle threw his fist in the air. "Yes!"

THE BIG DAY

Kylie rubbed her eyes and walked into the kitchen. Mrs. Walker was making another big breakfast. “Do we have another family meeting today?” She raised her eyebrow. She didn’t remember Mrs. Walker saying anything about a family team meeting.

Mrs. Walker continued cooking, “No, we don’t. Will you go wake up your brother? Ms. Alice will be here shortly.”

“Ms. Alice?” Kylie asked.

“Yes, she’s picking us up for court.”

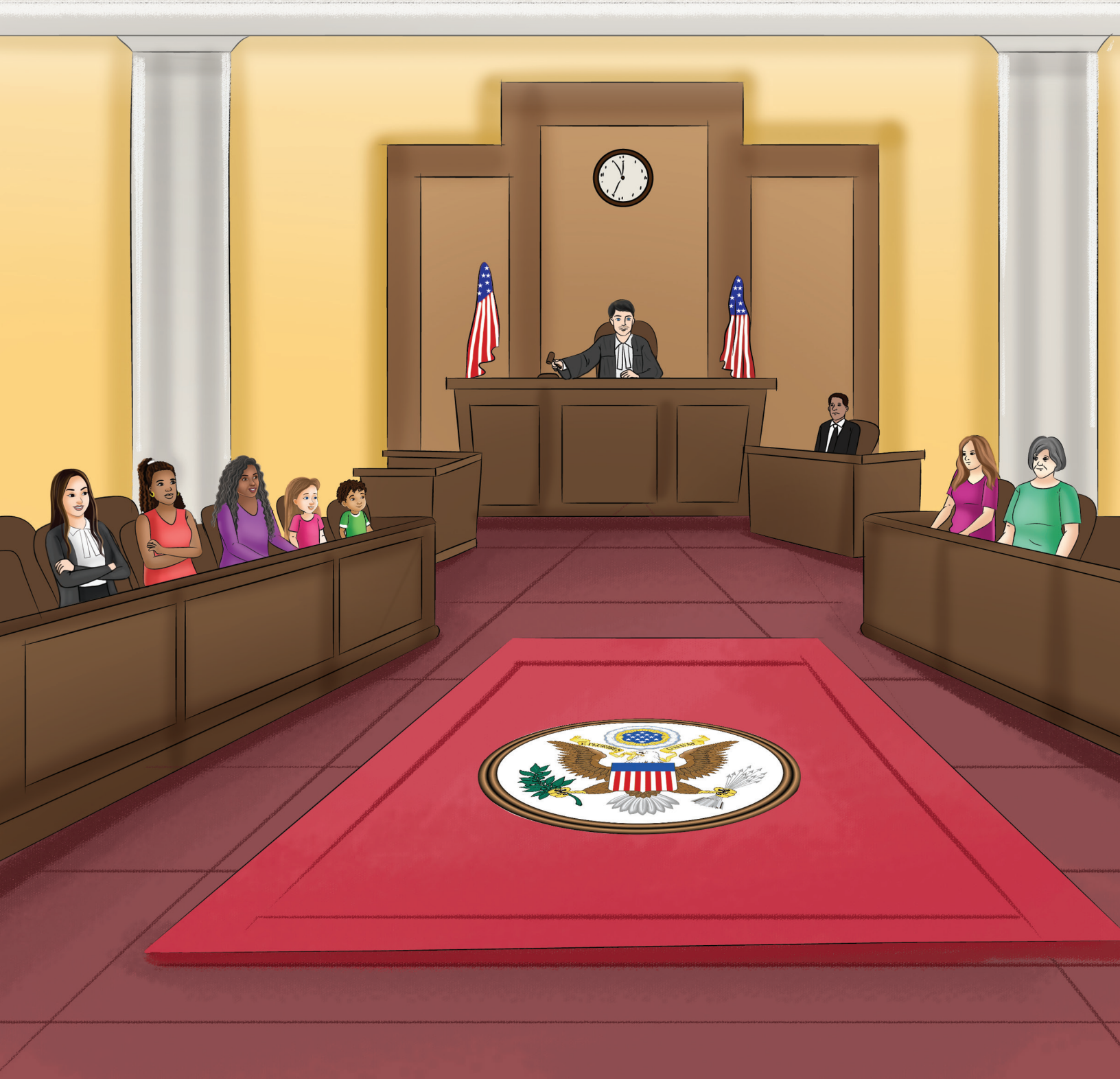
“We have court today?” Kylie scratched the back of her neck, “I didn’t know we had court today.”

Mrs. Walker looked her in the eyes. “Kylie, it’s going to be okay. Go wake up your brother.”

When Ms. Alice arrived less than thirty minutes later, everyone was dressed and had eaten breakfast. They all got into Ms. Alice’s car and soon arrived at the courthouse.



Inside the courtroom, Kyle and Kylie were happy to see their mom, Karen, and their grandma, Jessie. They all smiled and waved at each other as they took their seats.



Kyle whispered to Kylie, "Where's my dad?"

Kylie shrugged. David wasn't always the best at showing up for court. Mrs. Walker sat down behind Ms. Alice and the children. Judge Reiner entered the room.

"All rise," the bailiff said. Everyone stood up. "The Honorable Judge George Reiner presides," he continued. "You may be seated."

The judge looked out at the courtroom audience and then at the papers on his desk. "We have the case of Johnson and Davidson. Attorney for the children is Mrs. Smith, and their social worker is Ms. Alice Jones. Are all parties here?" The judge looked up again.

"Yes, Sir. The mother, Karen Davidson, is here, but the father of Kyle Johnson, David Johnson, is not present," Attorney Smith replied.

Judge Reiner asked, "Does anyone know why he is not present?"

"May I approach the bench, Your Honor?" Attorney Smith asked.

The judge waved her forward. She stepped up to the bench and spoke quietly.

Kyle whispered to Kylie, "I think my dad's in trouble."

"Shhh." Kylie hushed him, trying to hear what was being said.

"Thank you, Attorney Smith," Judge Reiner stated. He looked toward Kylie and Kyle. "Attorney Smith, would you escort the children to my chambers while I have a word with Ms. Davidson?"

"Yes, Sir."

Kylie looked back over her shoulder at her mother as Attorney Smith escorted them out of the room.

Judge Reiner walked into his chambers a few minutes later. He sat down at his desk. "Kylie, Kyle, how are you doing today?"

"Good," they replied.



He asked, "Kylie, do you like being at Mrs. Walker's home? Are you eating and sleeping well?"

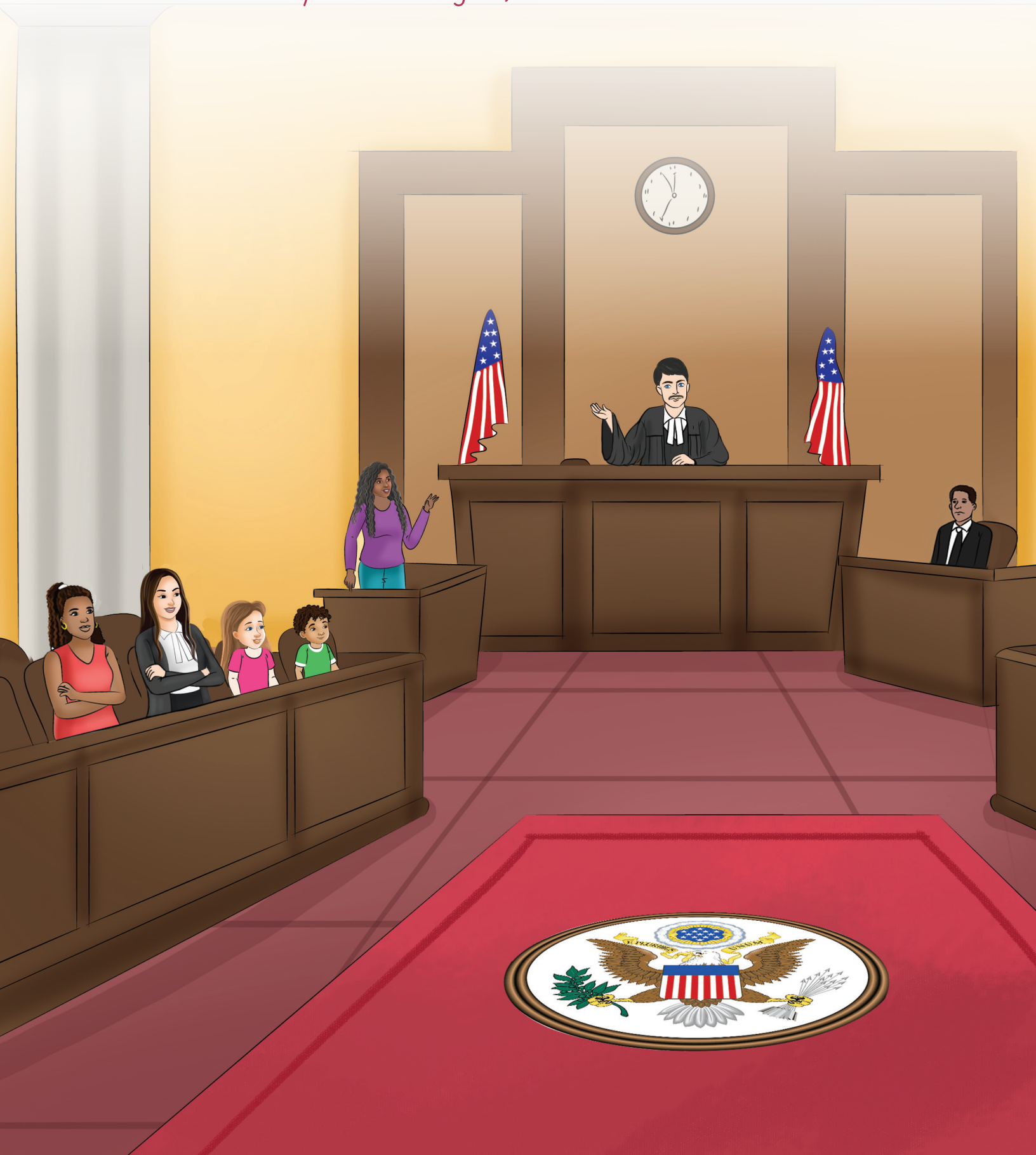
"Yes, I like it there," Kylie replied. She fidgeted with the edge of her shirt. "I don't want to leave and go to another home. I feel safe there."

Judge Reiner nodded. "Kyle, do you like living with Mrs. Walker? Are you eating and sleeping well?"

"Yes. I want to stay there with my sister."

"Very well. Thank you, both. Attorney Smith, you may escort them back to the courtroom."

When they returned to the courtroom, their mother and grandmother were no longer there. Judge Reiner came back into the courtroom. Everyone rose again, and he took his seat.



"Mrs. Davidson and Mr. Johnson are not ready to take the children back into their custody," he said. "Is Mrs. Walker here?"

Mrs. Walker stood up. "Yes, Your Honor."

"Mrs. Walker, please come to the podium."

Mrs. Walker did as she was asked. The bailiff stepped up to her and said, "Raise your right hand and answer. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you, God?"

"Yes," Mrs. Walker replied. She turned to face the judge.

"Mrs. Walker, how are Kylie and Kyle doing at your home?"

"They are doing great, Your Honor. They follow directions, and their grades and behavior are good."

"You have had them for about seven months now, correct?"

"Yes, Sir."

"Do you have any concerns as to why they should not be in your home?"

"No, Sir. I enjoy having them in my home."

“Thank you.” Judge Reiner read the papers before him. Then he wrote something on a few of the pages. He said nothing. Everyone was quiet. Kylie stared at the judge for what seemed like an eternity before he looked up at everyone seated before him. Finally, he spoke.

“It appears that the parents are not ready to take custody of the children, Kylie Davidson and Kyle Johnson. Therefore, they will remain in foster care with Mrs. Walker until Mrs. Karen Davidson and Mr. David Johnson, their parents, have completed their family treatment case plan. This order is set on this day, June 26, 2023.”

Kylie exhaled deeply as Kyle leaned over and hugged her. He was grinning. “We get to stay with Mrs. Walker!”

Kylie smiled back at her brother and nodded. She looked at Ms. Alice and Mrs. Walker, who were both smiling as well.

Mrs. Walker asked, “What do you kids say about stopping for some ice cream?”

Both replied, “Yes, please!”

Mrs. Walker and Ms. Alice took turns hugging the children. Then they all left the courtroom together, with Kylie and Kyle hand in hand.



A bright yellow sun with rays is in the upper left, and a vibrant rainbow is in the upper right, both set against a clear blue sky with soft white clouds.

THE END

