

Life's Challenges

THE NIGHT DAD WENT TO JAIL

What to Expect When Someone
You Love Goes to Jail



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This is one of my *before* drawings.

Before means “before my dad went to jail.” Dad and I didn’t catch anything, but we had fun anyway.

My dad calls me Sketch because I like to draw.

Miss Sanchez, my school counselor, says drawing is a good way for me to show my feelings.

I must have a lot of feelings. I draw all the time!





We were at Dad's apartment the night the police came. Lights flashed. Neighbors stared. The officers put my dad in handcuffs. Jasmine and TJ started crying.



One of the officers walked over to us. I thought he was going to arrest us too! But he smiled and handed TJ a teddy bear.

"Where are you taking my dad?"

I asked. "What did he do?"

"Your dad may have broken a law," the officer said. "We need to ask him some questions at the police station."



Laws are rules that tell people how they should behave. When people break a law, they may be put in jail or prison. They have to stay there for a period of time. How long depends upon what law they broke.

The next morning, I kept my head down. I tried to hide behind my books. But Kenny saw me. Kenny lives on Dad's street. He saw Dad get into the police car.

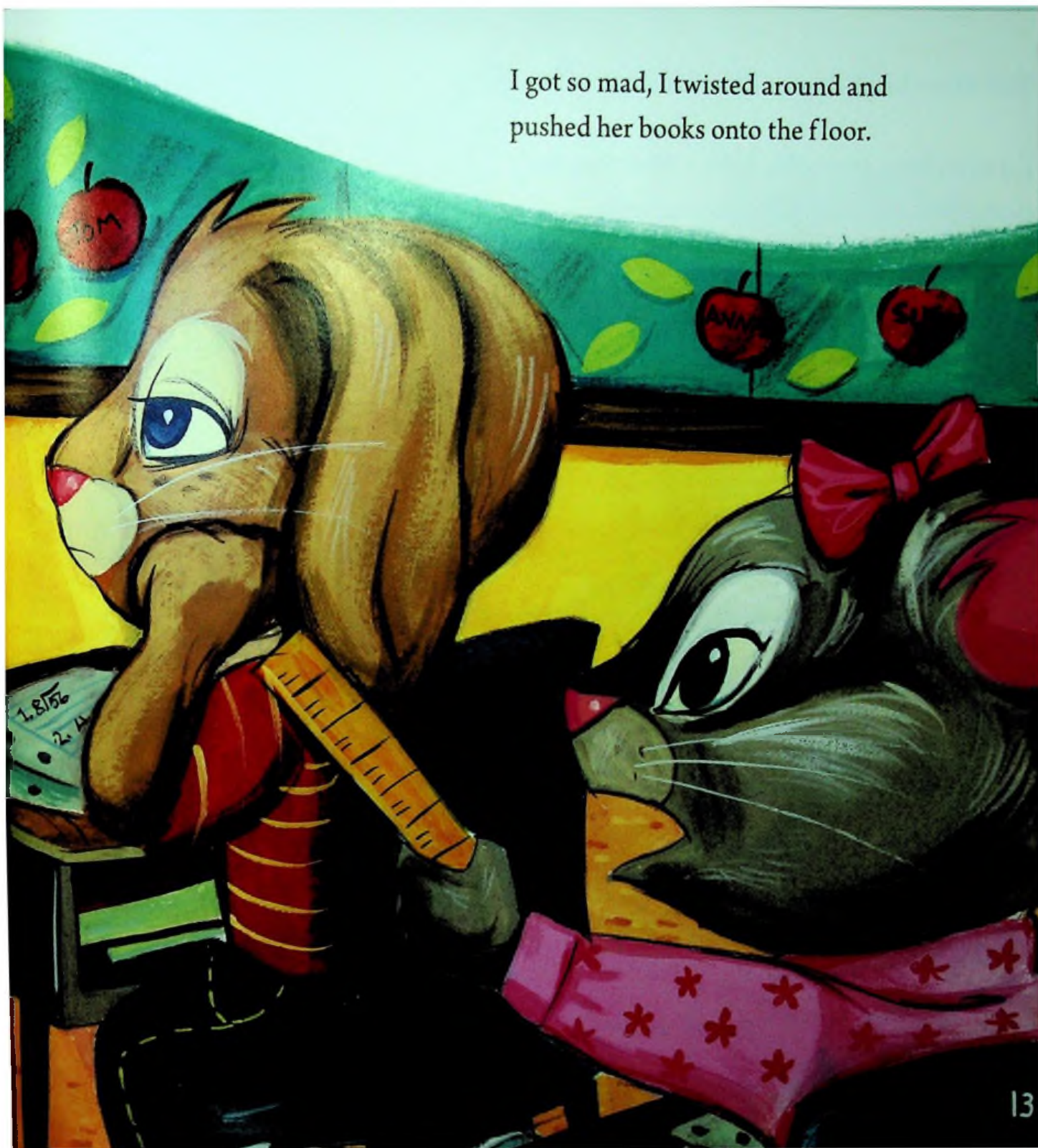
"Bailey's dad got picked up by the cops last night!" Kenny yelled.





Hola!

I got so mad, I twisted around and
pushed her books onto the floor.



For a while, Dad was in jail nearby. Mom visited first and told us what it was like. When we all went, we took the bus. Dad sat on the other side of a glass wall. We each talked to him on a telephone. When it was my turn, I couldn't look at him.



"I messed up, Sketch," Dad said. "What I did caused a lot of problems, and I'm sorry. I hope you'll forgive me."



I wasn't sure what to say. I just nodded.

Lots of kids don't know what to say to their parent in jail or prison. Talking about school and everyday life is a great place to start.