

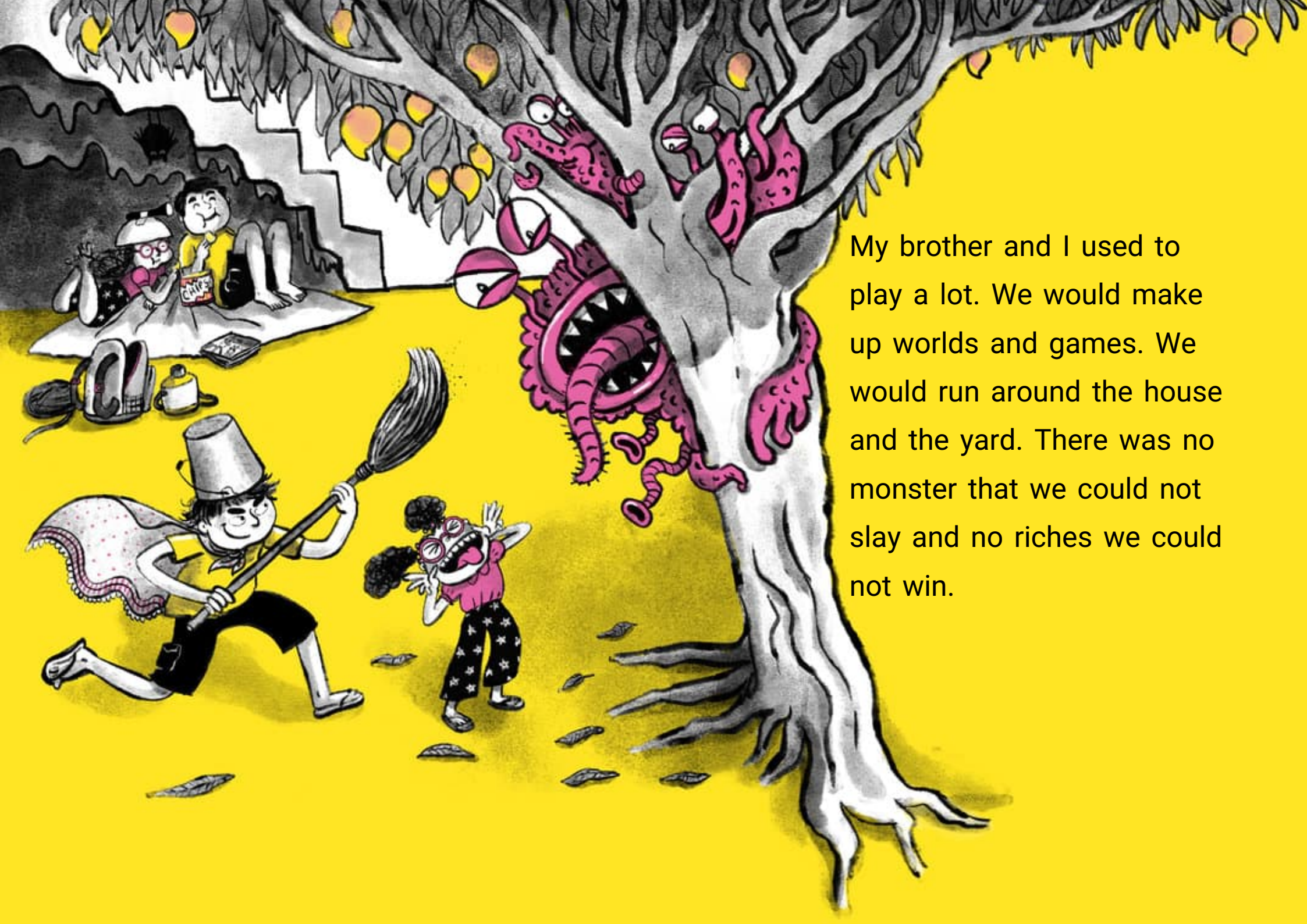


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# THE MONSTER





My brother and I used to play a lot. We would make up worlds and games. We would run around the house and the yard. There was no monster that we could not slay and no riches we could not win.



But then a new monster came. It got Sam. It is like he does not care about games and fun. He walks around all day in a fog. He is not himself.





Sam sleeps a lot. The monster taxes his health. He does not look after himself like he used to. It makes me mad that he does not want to play. All he wants to do is lie in bed and mope. Some days he will not move from his room.

I yell at him. Sam does not want to hear it. He does not care that I am upset. The monster is like a dark cloud that has come over him. It is a fog that stops us from getting in. It leaches him of the things that make him Sam.





Mum makes some of his favourite food. He does not want to eat it. That makes me sad. Sam loves his food. He does not want to talk with Mum or Dad. He does not want to hear their jokes and tales.





Sam is not himself at all. The monster has changed him. My wishes are doing no good. I keep trying to think of ways that we can slay it, but nothing seems to work on this monster. It is so strong.





Nan and Pop try as well. Nan tries to lift him up. She tells him how proud she is of him. Pop tries to understand. He fusses over him. He says that Sam can call him at all hours of the day and night. Sam does not want to talk to Nan or Pop. He just sits there until they say that he can go to his room if he wants to.





I want to try one more thing. I tell Sam that I miss him. When I say that, there is a change in his eyes. It is like they have more life than they have in a while. I can see that I have gotten through the fog. He says that he will talk to Mum.

Mum had a monster when she was a kid. She gets it. She says that she does not want to push Sam before he wants to work on things. He says that he wants to try. Mum has a look around for a doctor that will be able to help Sam feel like his old self.





Now, Sam goes to see the doctor each week. She talks to him and helps him to change the way that he thinks. He opens up to her and speaks about what is going on for him. Even just talking to her feels like it is helping. She tells him that we need to look after our mind like we look after our body.



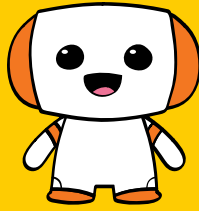


Sam still has a lot of work ahead of him. It is no quick fix to change the way that you think. The monster will not go away so easily. It is fighting to stay. But now, Sam knows how he can slay the monster bit by bit.





I can see it working. The monster will still be here sometimes, but it is like we have our old Sam back. Mum, Dad, and I do what we can to help Sam through. We can slay any monster that comes our way.



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