

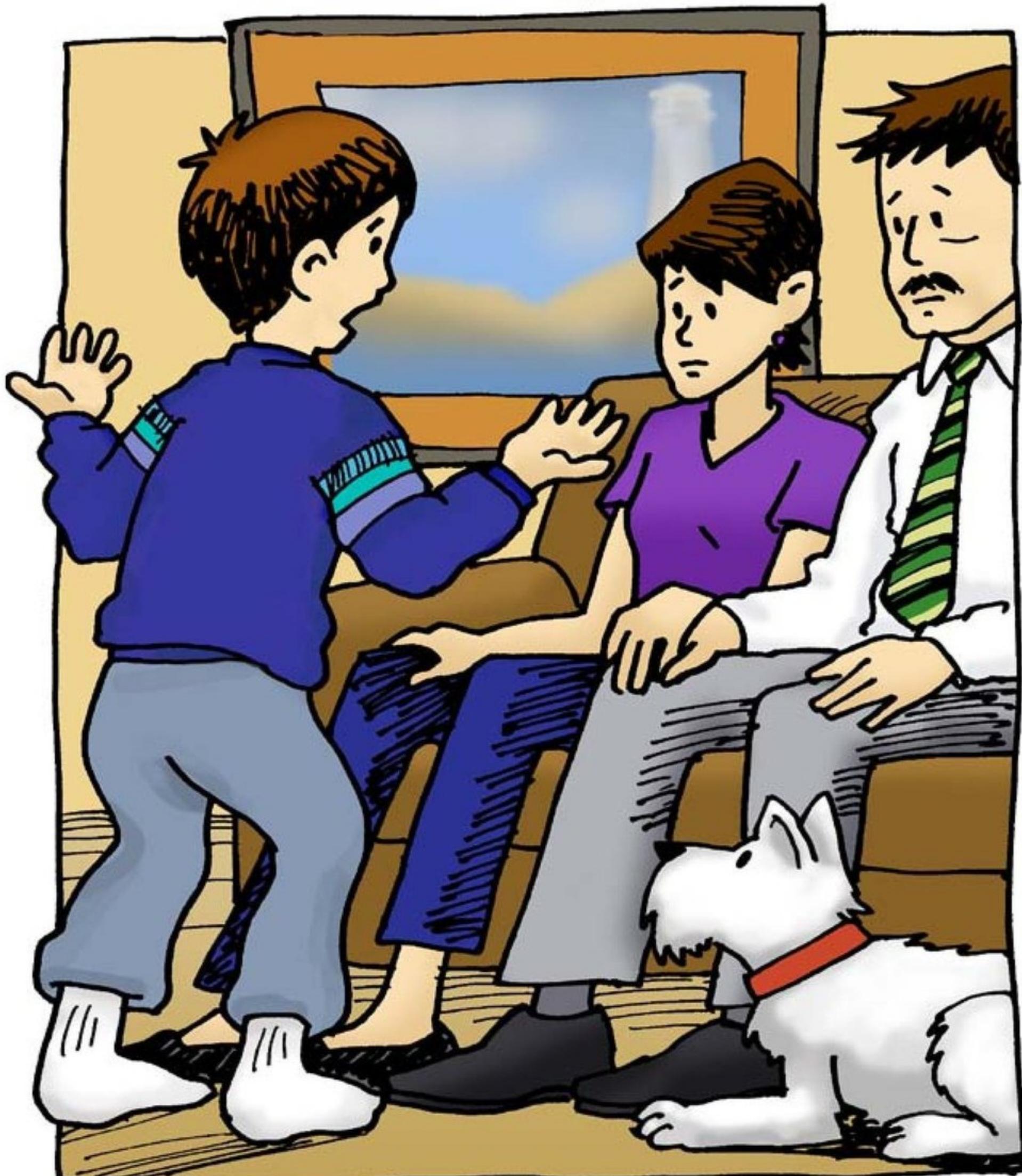
LEVELED BOOK • P

MAX



Written by Kira Freed • Illustrated by John Kastner

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Max Is Angry

Max was a very angry boy. All day long, from morning until evening, he was angry. He stomped his feet on the ground. He kicked rocks, cans, fences, and walls. He slammed the drawers of his dresser, and he slammed every door he walked through.

When Max's mom asked him to take out the garbage, he made a mean face at her. After the fourth time she asked, he finally took out the garbage. But he spilled it and made a big mess on the floor. When she asked him to clean up the mess, he made another mean face.





One day Max was so angry that he kicked Dusty, the dog. Dusty howled in pain. From that day on, Dusty darted under a chair whenever he saw Max coming. Who wants to play with someone who is angry all the time?

Max's parents tried to talk with him.

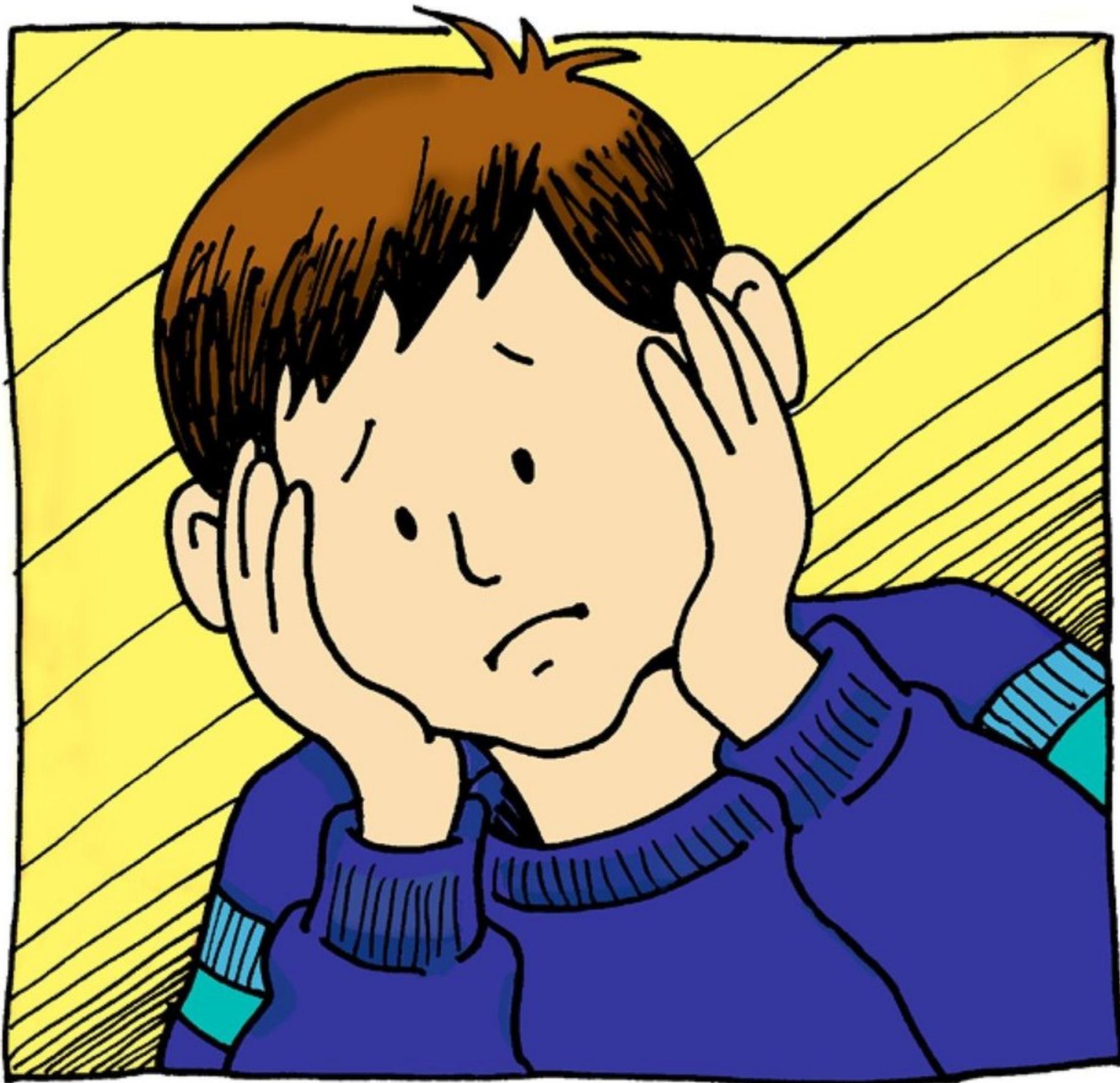
"Why are you so angry?" his mom asked. Max made an angry face and stayed silent.

"What's troubling you?" his dad asked. Max only stared at the floor. Max's dad added, "Whenever you're ready to tell us, we're here to listen and help."





Max went upstairs to his room and slammed the door. He threw himself on his bed, grumbling loudly. He buried his face in his pillow and tried to hide from the world. He didn't want to talk or think. He just wanted to be alone.



Max Begins to Think

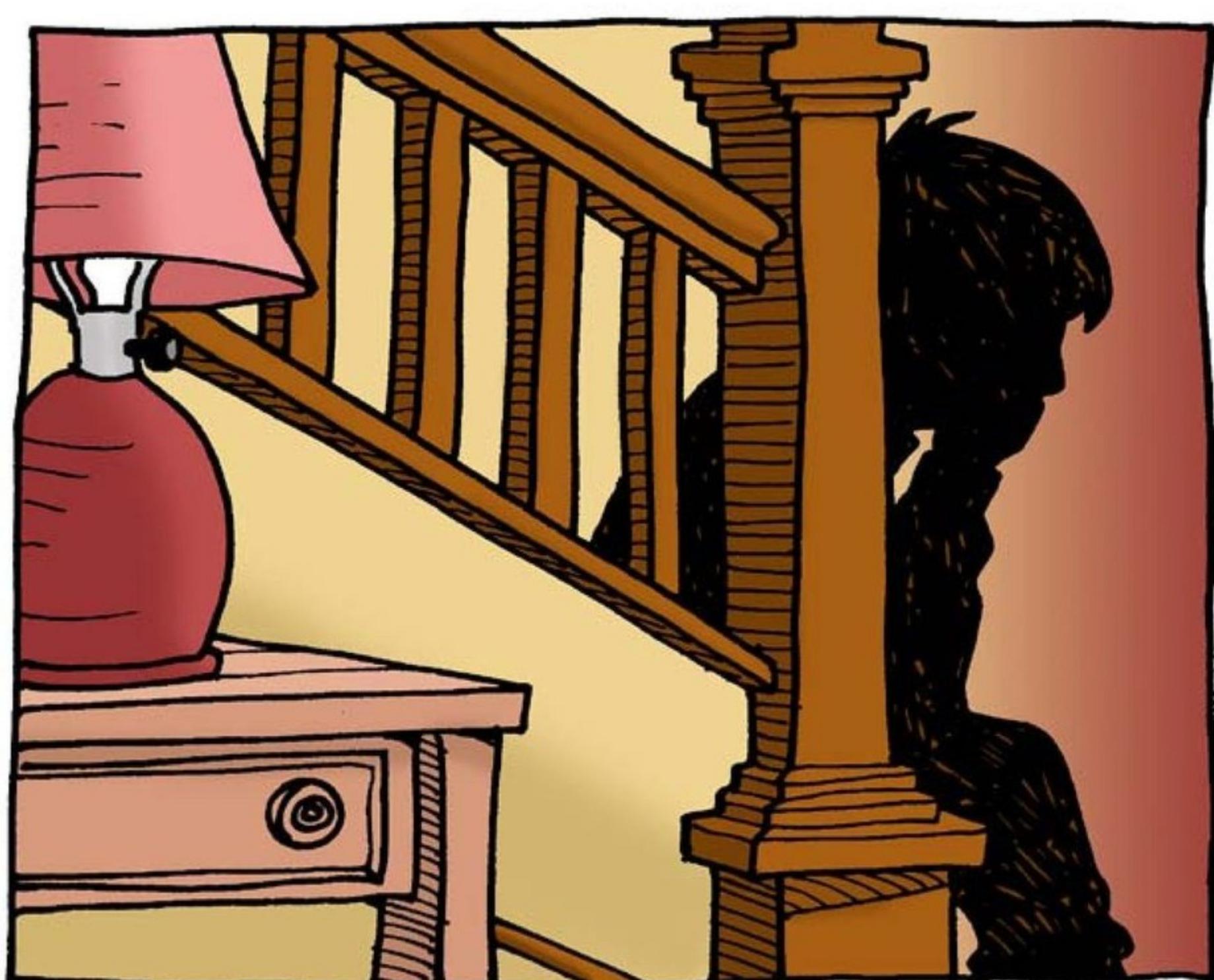
But Max's thoughts were loud, and they kept sneaking into his mind. When he tried to push away the thoughts, they kept coming back stronger. Max started thinking about what his parents had said. Suddenly he felt horrible for having kicked Dusty. "I don't want to hurt anyone," he thought to himself.

Max got up off his bed and went back downstairs. He sat quietly at the bottom of the stairs. He wanted to ask for help, but he didn't know how to because he was still too angry.

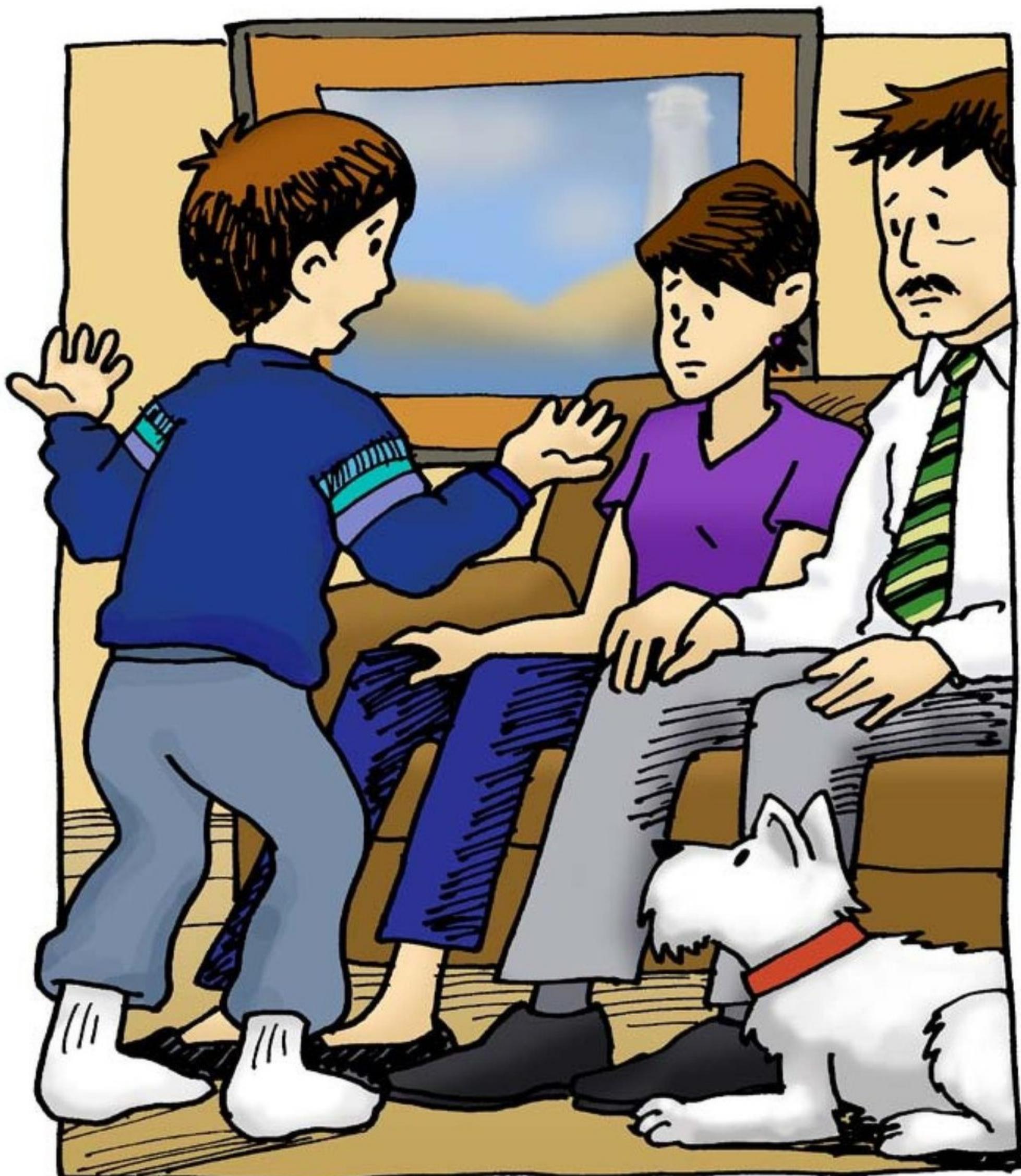
When Max's parents saw him, his dad asked, "Son, would you like to talk?"

"Yes, Dad, I would," Max said.

"We're here," said his mom. "Please tell us what's going on."



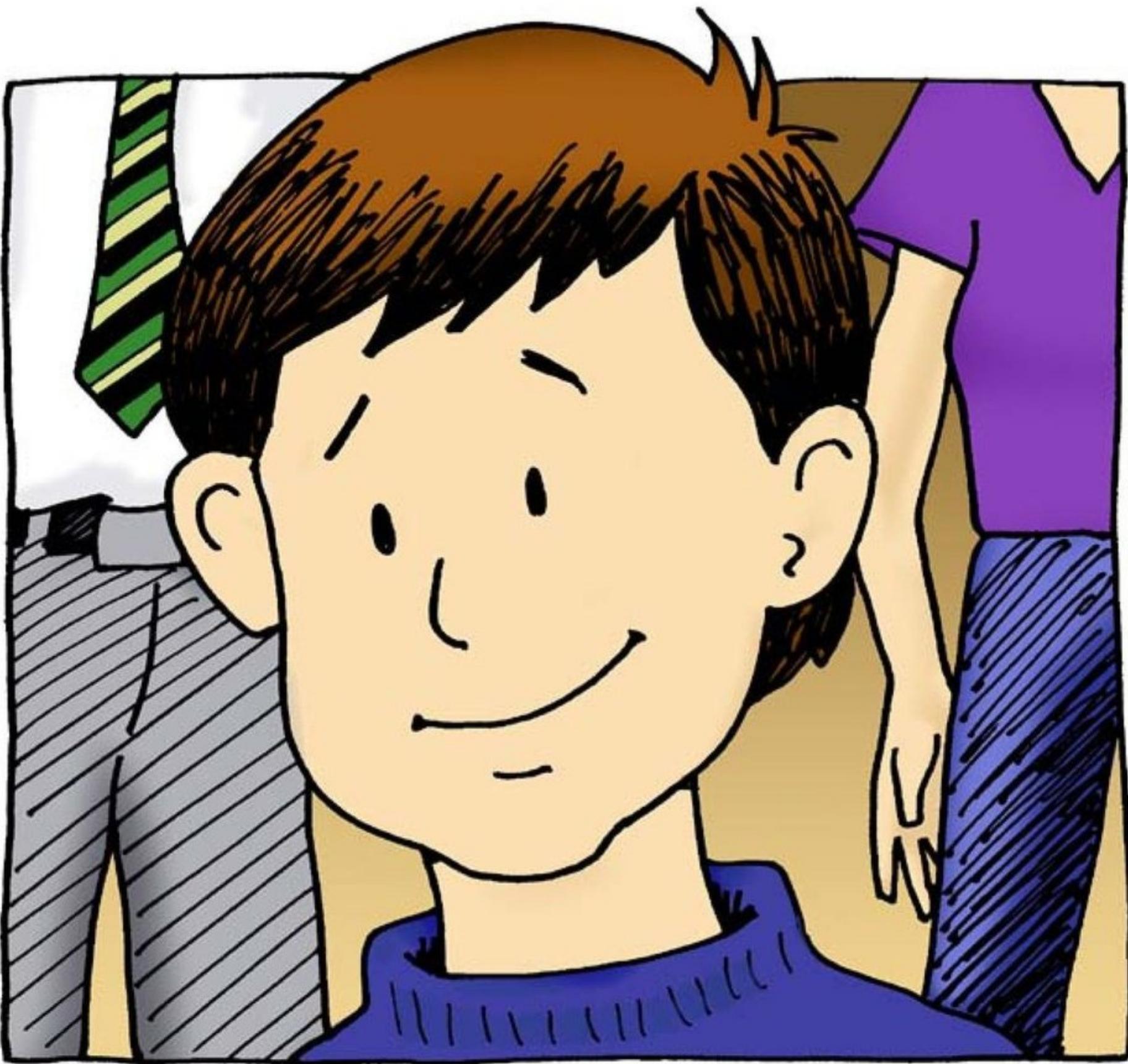
Max said, “No one listens to me.
At school the teacher is the boss.
At home you two are the bosses.
There’s nowhere that I’m the boss.
I’m tired of always being told what
to do. It makes me mad.”





Max's dad smiled. "I'm glad you could tell us what you've been angry about. We're proud of you. Now, what can we do about this?"

Max's mom said, "Max, how about if you be the boss of something? What would you like to be boss of?"



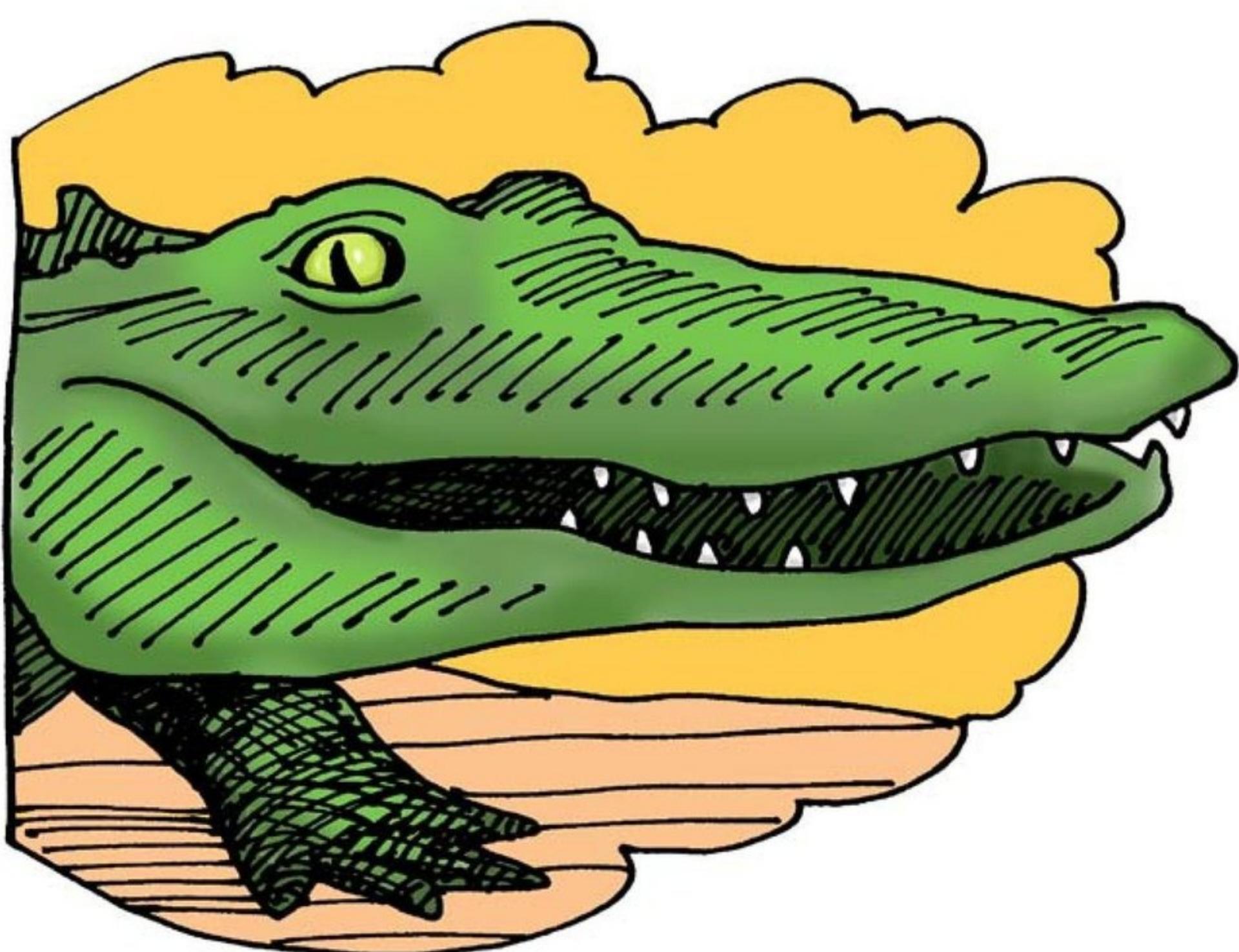
Max Becomes Boss

Max thought for a few minutes, and then a grin slowly crept on his face. “How about if I plan our next family vacation?”

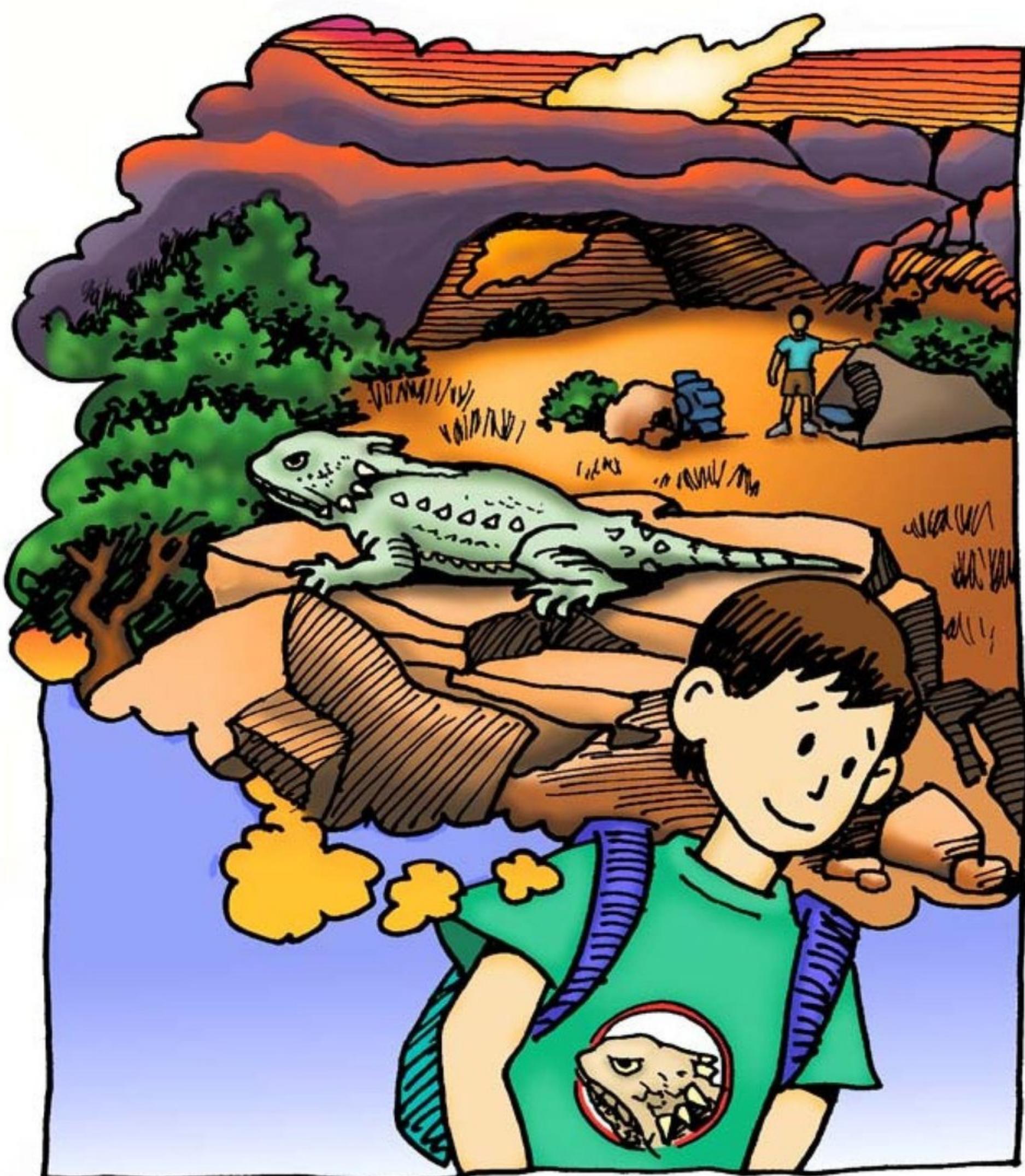
Max’s mom and dad looked at each other and nodded. Then they looked at Max and asked, “What do you have in mind?”

Max was excited. Looking happier than he had in months, he said, “I’ve got a great idea—we’ll go on a reptile tour! This will be the best vacation of my life!”

Max’s face lit up as he told his parents about the alligator swamps they would visit. Then they’d go to a zoo that raised rare snakes. They would end the trip with three days of camping near a lizard research station. “This will be the best time of my life!” Max declared with glee.



The next day Max was happy as he walked home from school. Even though the teacher told him what to do all day, he wasn't bothered. Even though the class bully was mean to him, he wasn't bothered. Finally, he was the boss of something in his life.



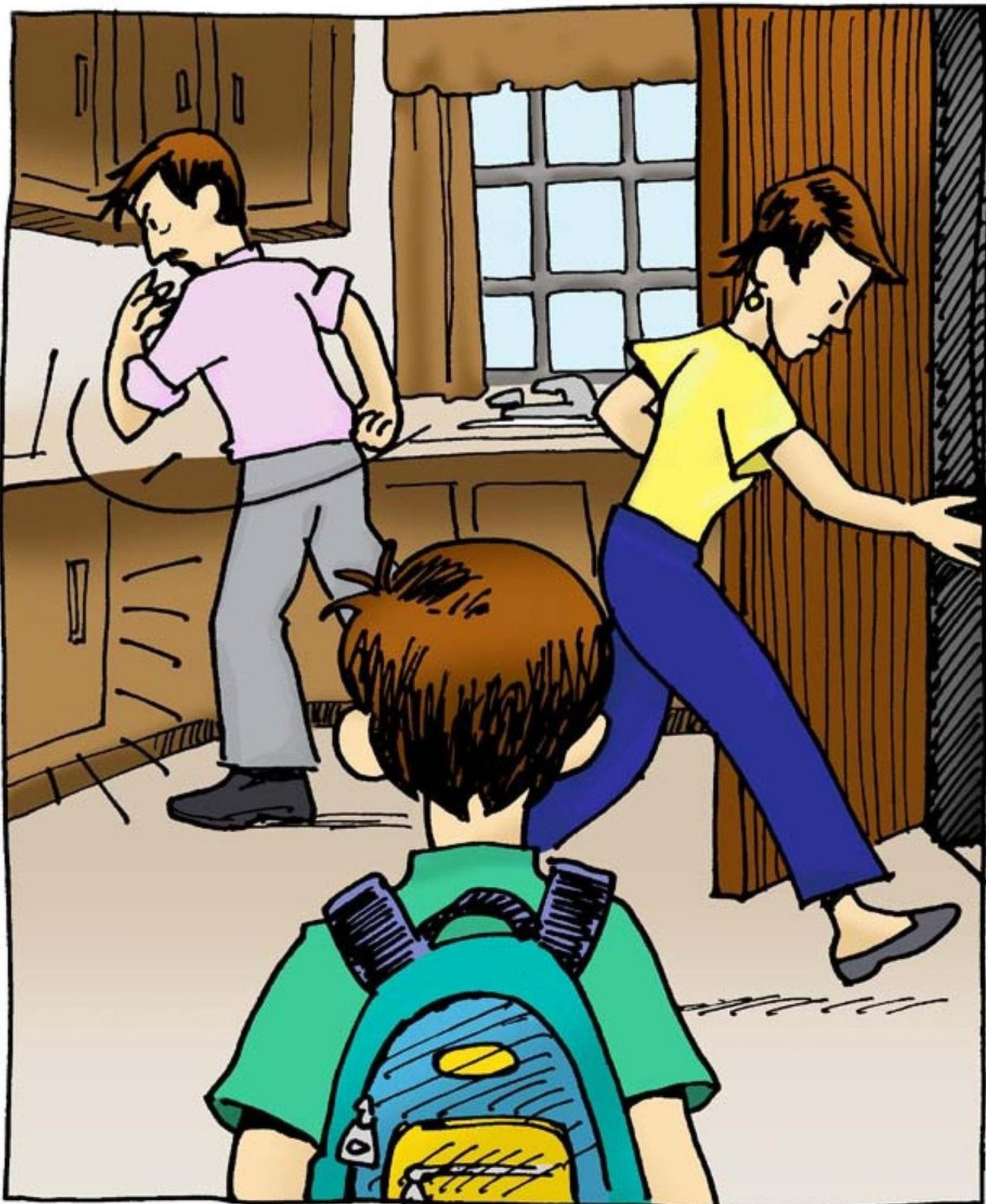


Someone Else Is Angry

As Max walked up the front steps to his house, he heard strange noises coming from inside. He heard slamming doors and angry voices. He stepped inside to see what was happening.

Max's dad was slamming drawers in the kitchen and shouting angry words that Max should not have been hearing.

Max's mom was grumbling loudly as she slammed the basement door. They both had nasty looks on their faces.





Max decided to have a talk with his parents. “Why are you so angry?” he asked. Max’s dad made an angry face and stayed silent.

“What’s troubling you?” he asked his mom. She only looked at the floor. Max added, “Whenever you’re ready to tell me, I’m here to listen and help.”



Max went up to his room and waited. He thought about how his parents had helped him to talk about his anger. He knew they would talk with him when they were ready.

Ready to Talk

Max's mom and dad slowly came up the stairs. They sat on the top step, looking at each other sheepishly. Finally, they mustered up the courage to knock on Max's door.



Max opened the door and saw his parents standing there with embarrassed looks on their faces. “Would you like to talk?” he asked.

“Yes, Max, we would,” they replied.

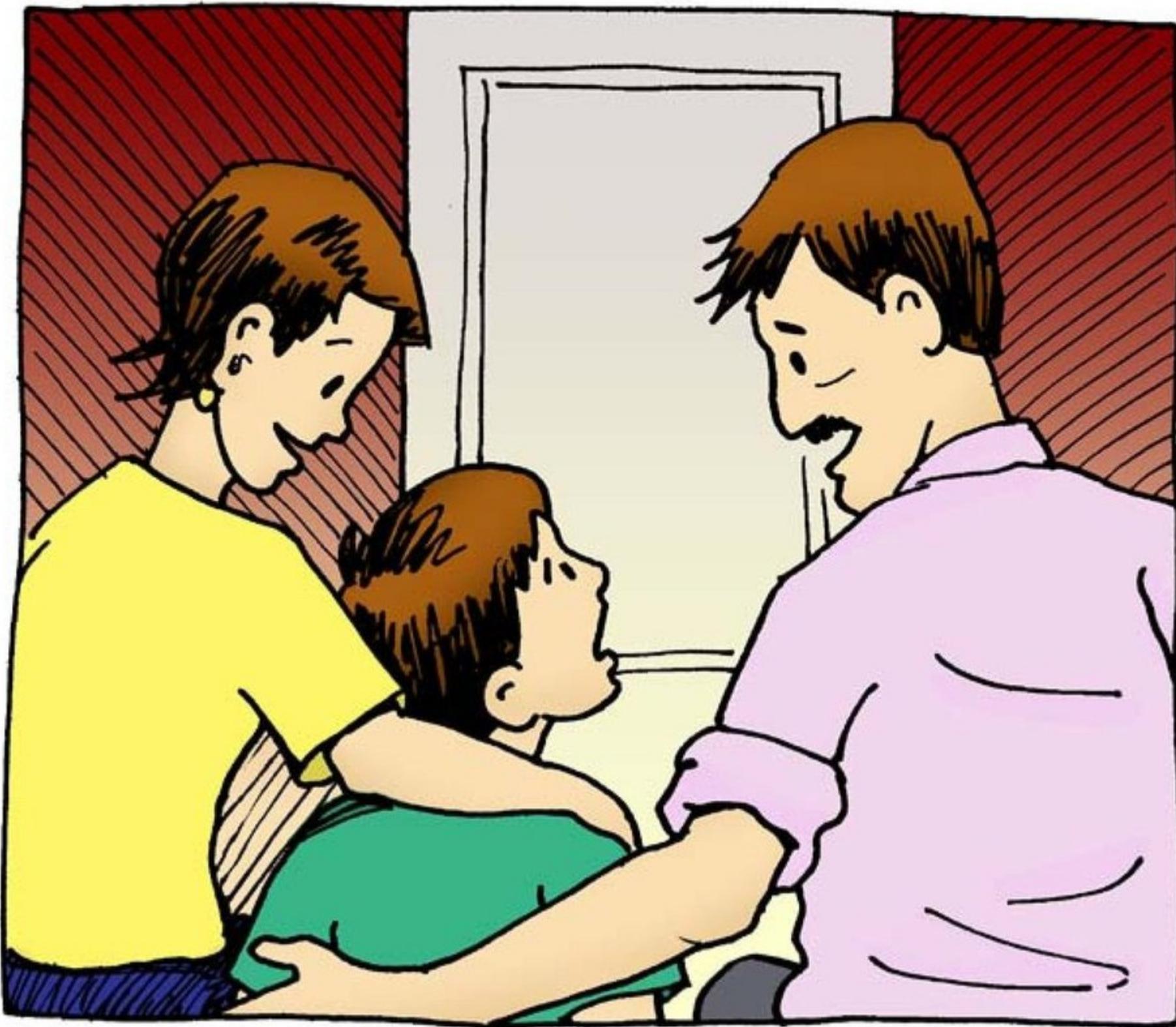
“I’m here,” said Max. “Please tell me what’s going on.”





Max's dad said, "We want you to be in charge of something in your life. Really, we do. But we don't want to go on a reptile vacation. We have to confess that we're afraid of snakes."

Max smiled. "I'm glad you could tell me what you've been angry about. I'm proud of you. Now, what can we do about this?"



Max's mom spoke up. "How about if you go on a reptile trip with a friend? The science club sponsors a reptile trip every summer."

"What will you do while I'm gone?" Max asked.

Max's dad said, "We'll get some help for our fear of snakes. Maybe next year we'll be ready to handle a family reptile trip."

Max
Level P Leveled Book
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