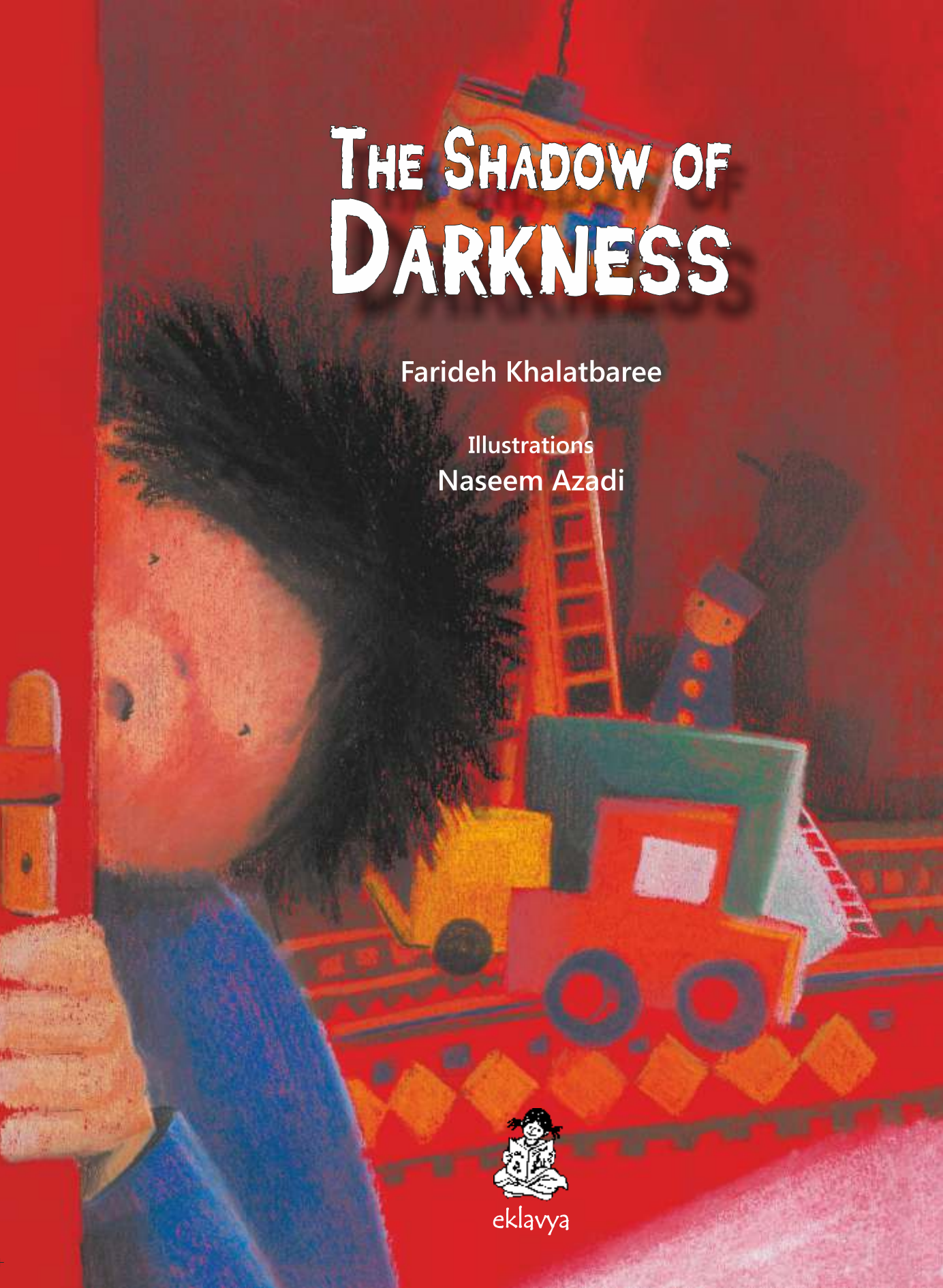


# THE SHADOW OF DARKNESS

Farideh Khalatbaree

Illustrations  
Naseem Azadi



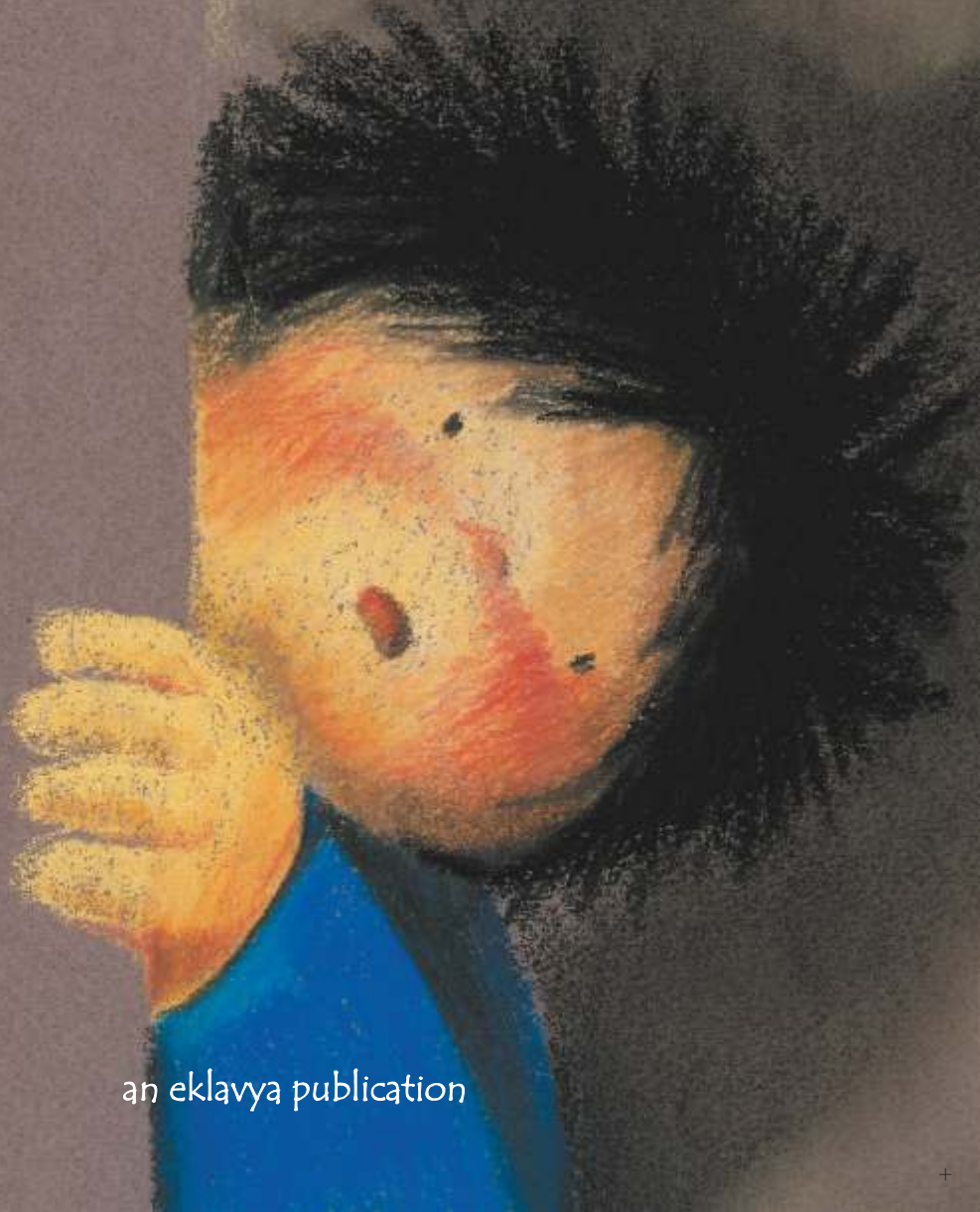
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an eklavya publication

## **THE SHADOW OF DARKNESS**

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Illustrations: Naseem Azadi

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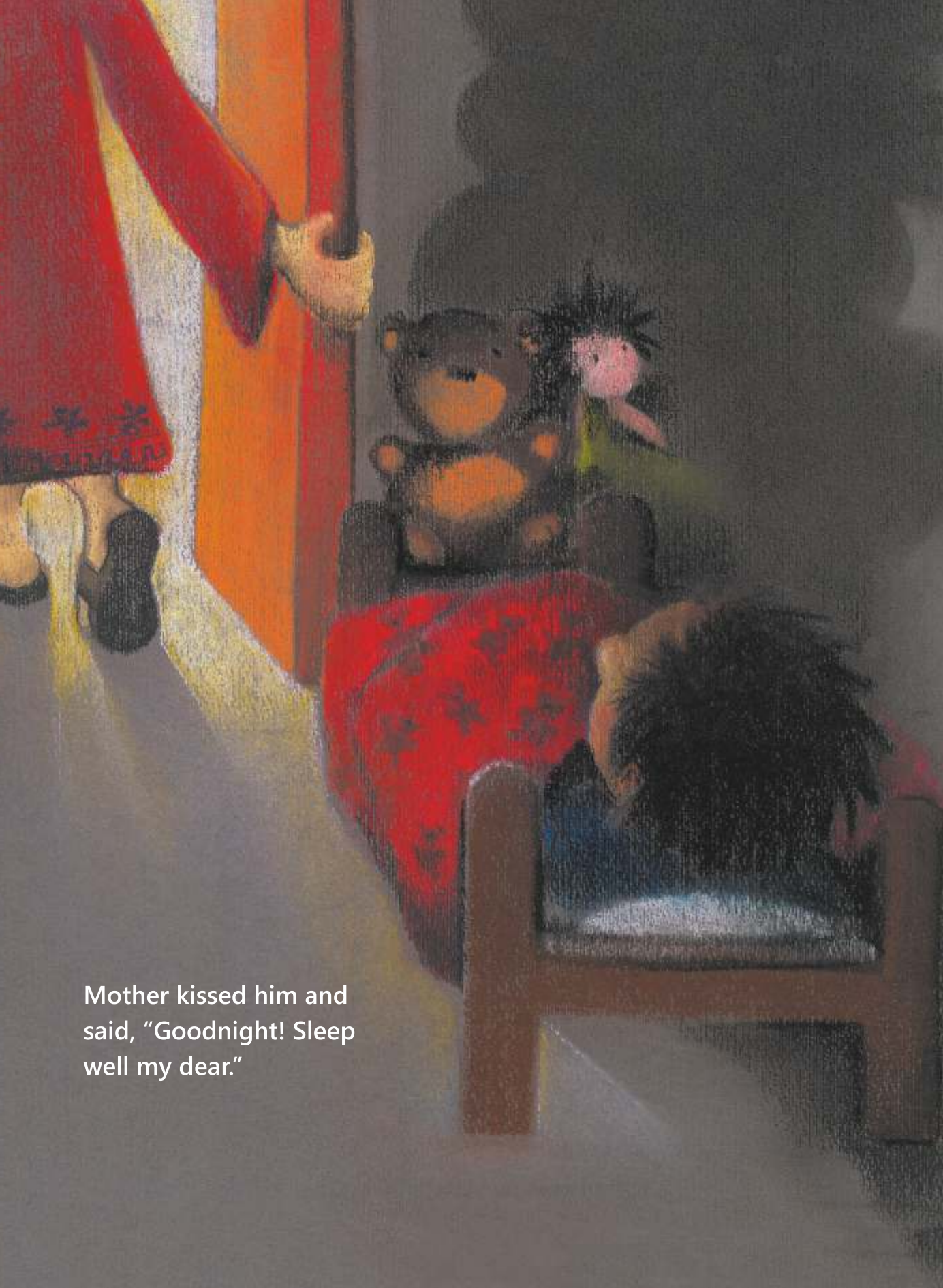
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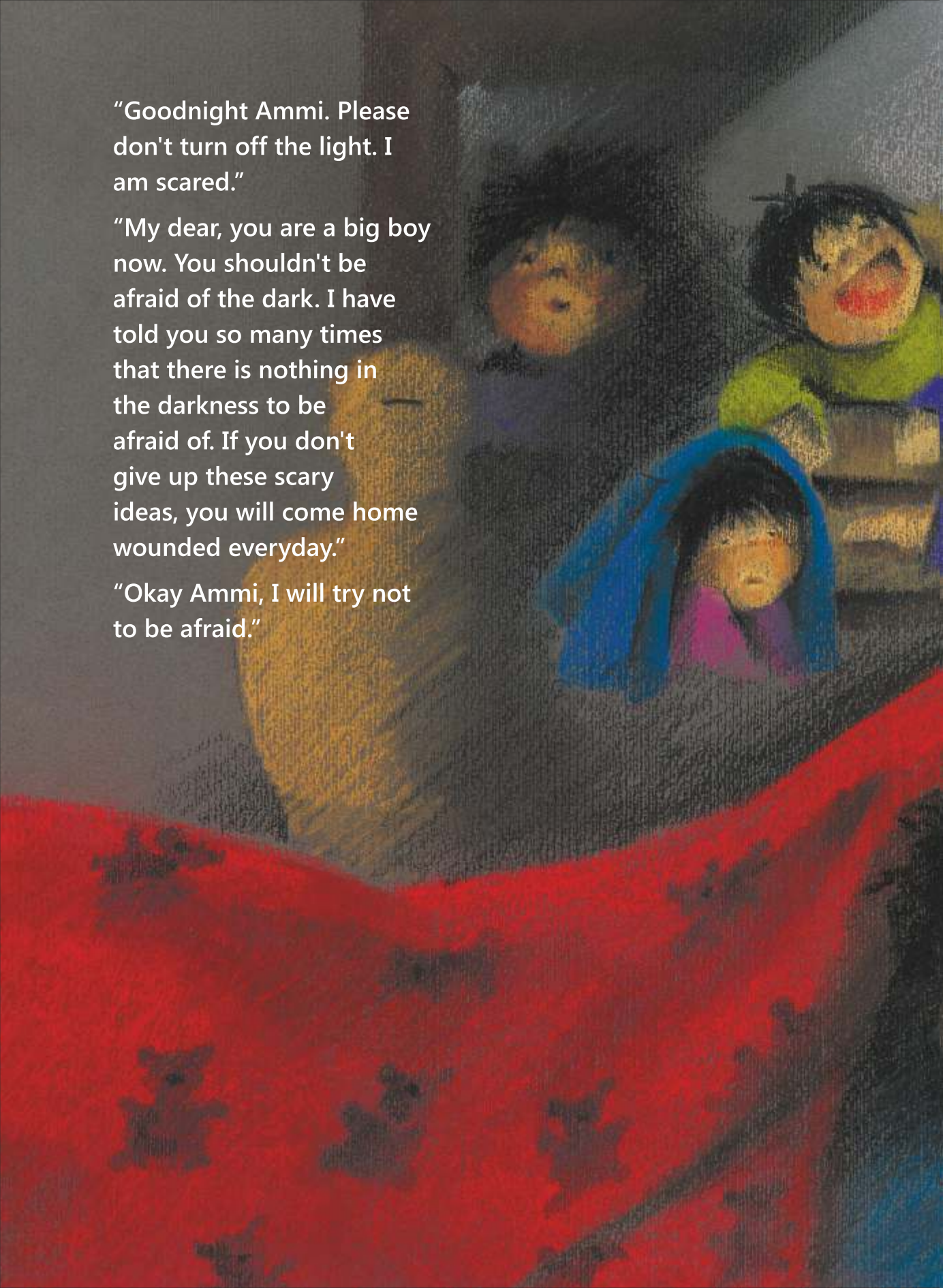


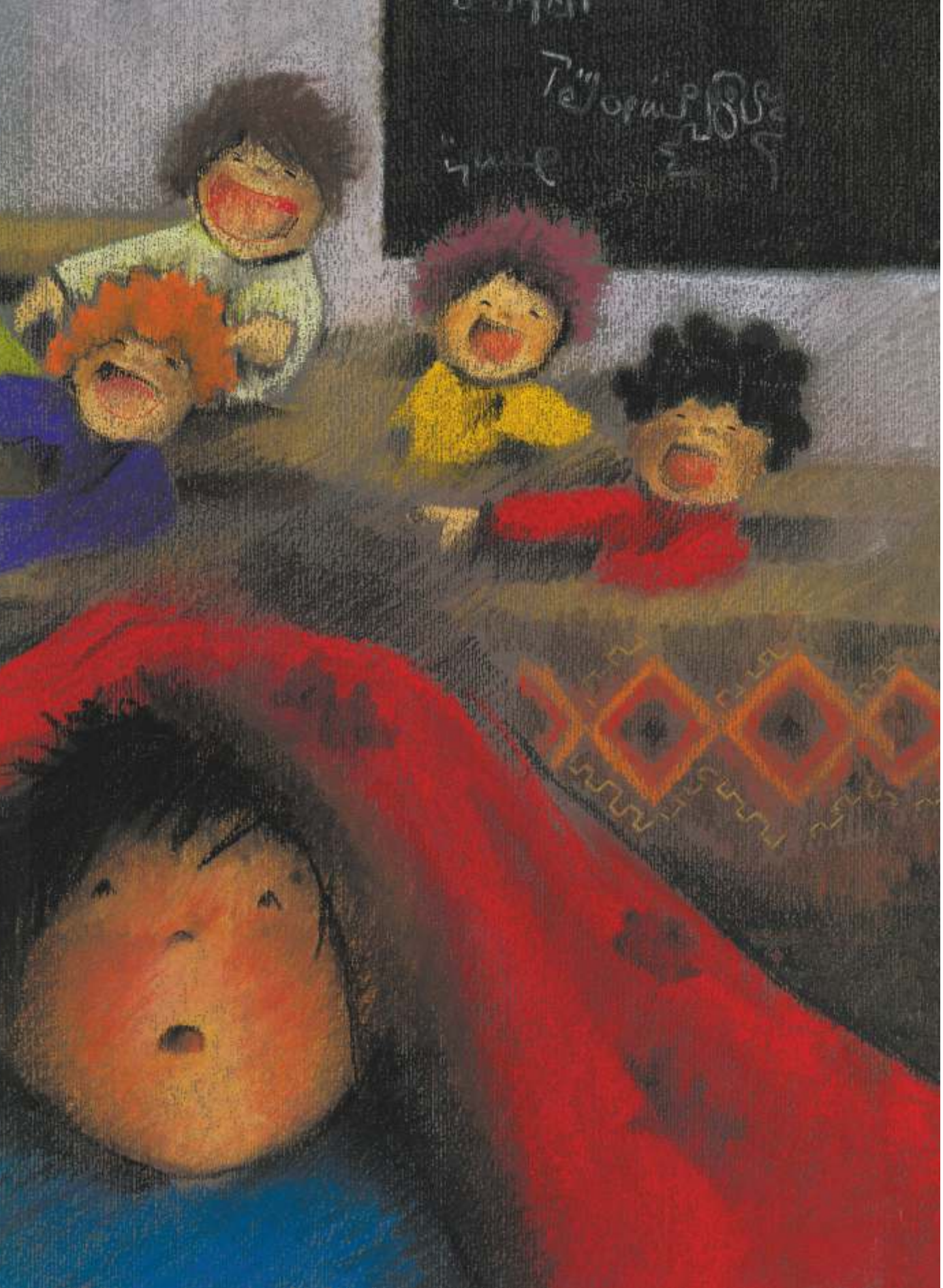
Mother kissed him and  
said, "Goodnight! Sleep  
well my dear."

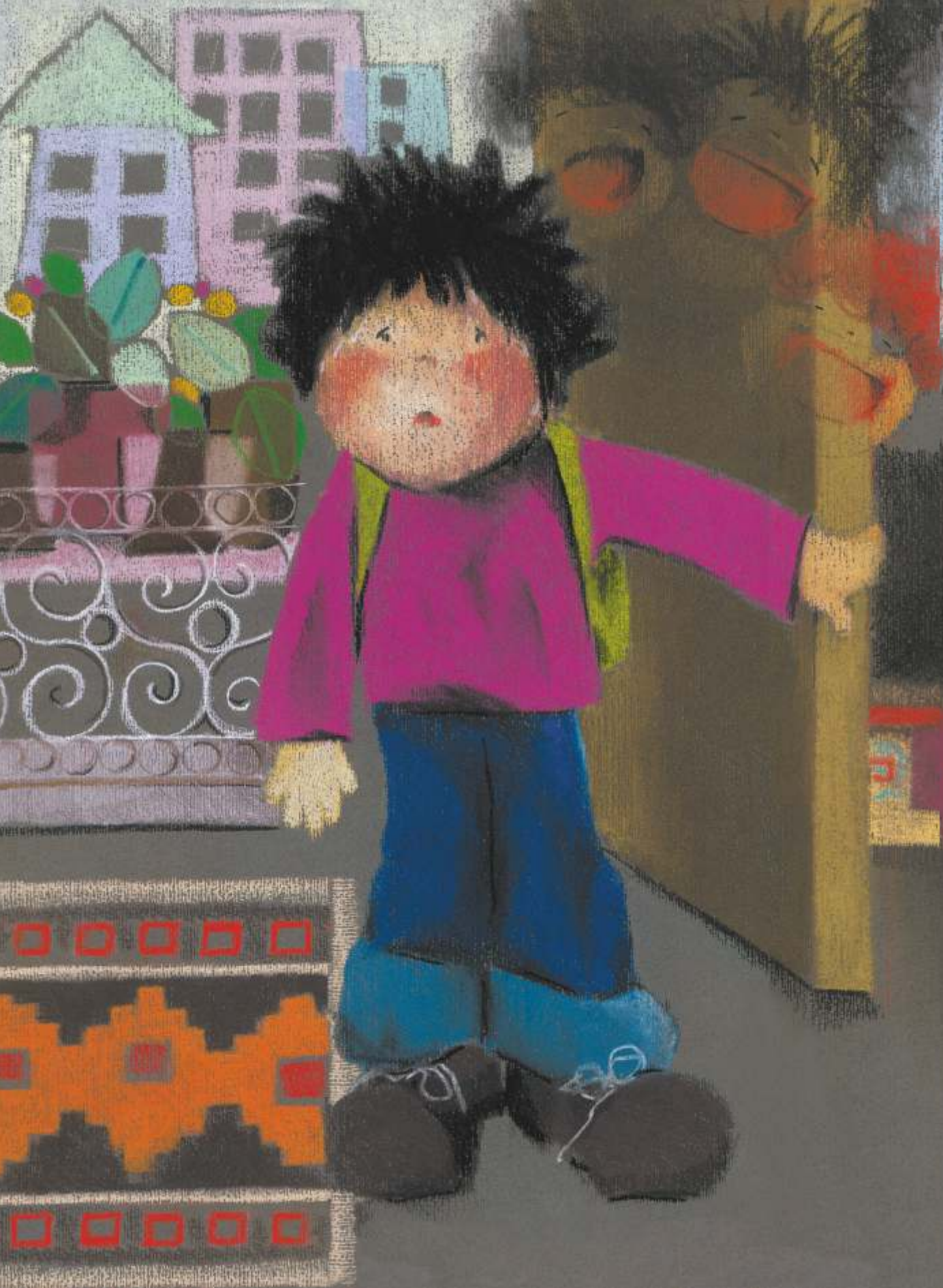
"Goodnight Ammi. Please don't turn off the light. I am scared."

"My dear, you are a big boy now. You shouldn't be afraid of the dark. I have told you so many times that there is nothing in the darkness to be afraid of. If you don't give up these scary ideas, you will come home wounded everyday."

"Okay Ammi, I will try not to be afraid."











When all the lights went off, he pulled the blanket over his head. The school kept coming back in his thoughts. All the kids made fun of him. They called him "Little Mouse" mockingly because he would often hide in a corner afraid of even the slightest sound. The children knew this, so they played tricks to scare him even more.

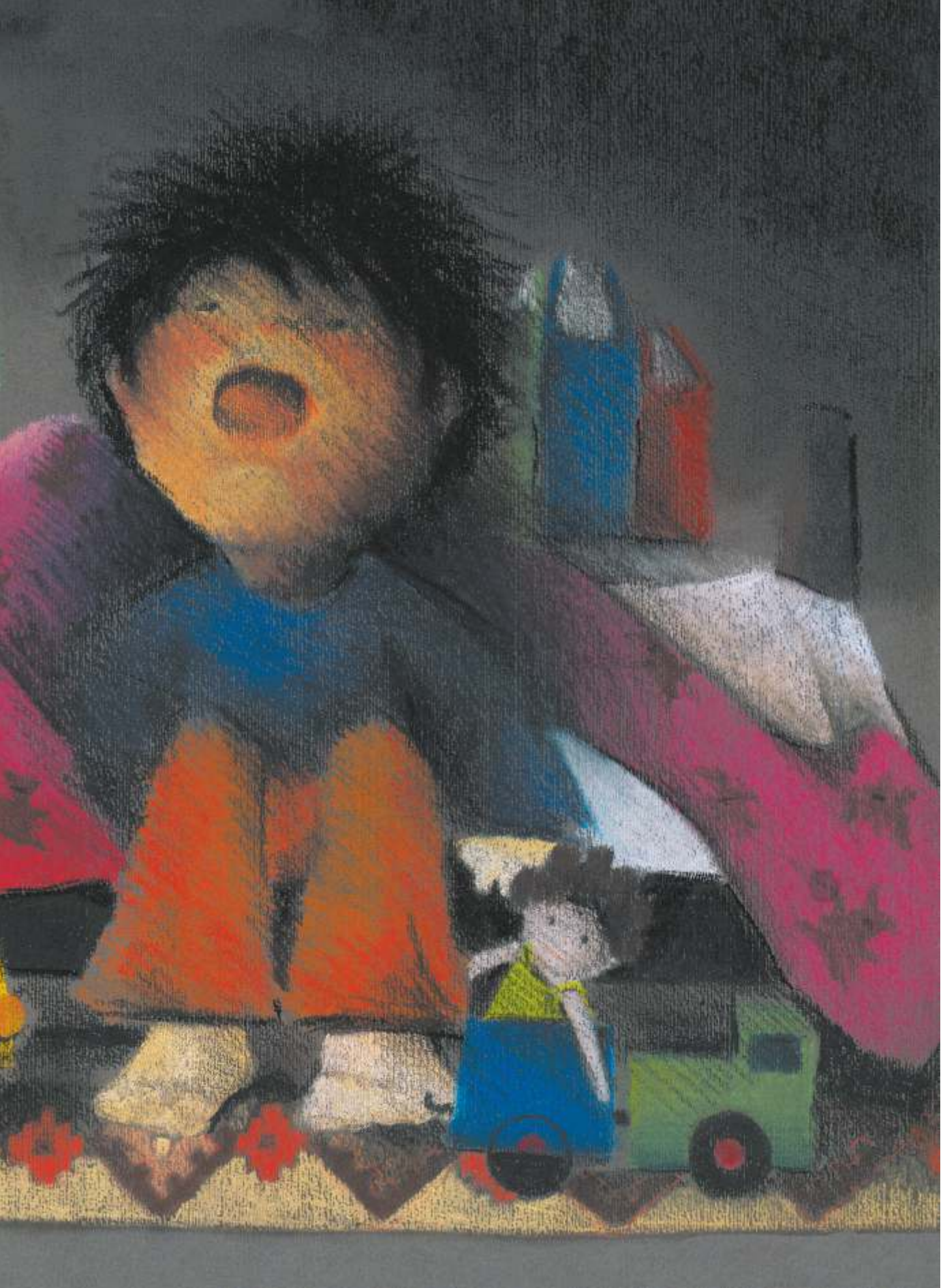




That day one boy hid behind the tree. When he was returning home, the boy scared him. He ran all the way home – tripping and falling on his way. When he finally reached home, his clothes were torn and dirty and his head and hands were wounded.

He decided to fulfill his promise. He sat up on the bed and shouted, “O Shadow of Darkness, come out. I am not afraid of you.”







All of a sudden his bed started shaking. He could see a huge black monster standing in front of him in the moonlight.

The monster said, "Of course, you should not be afraid. I don't hurt those children who invite me. Right, Little Mouse?"

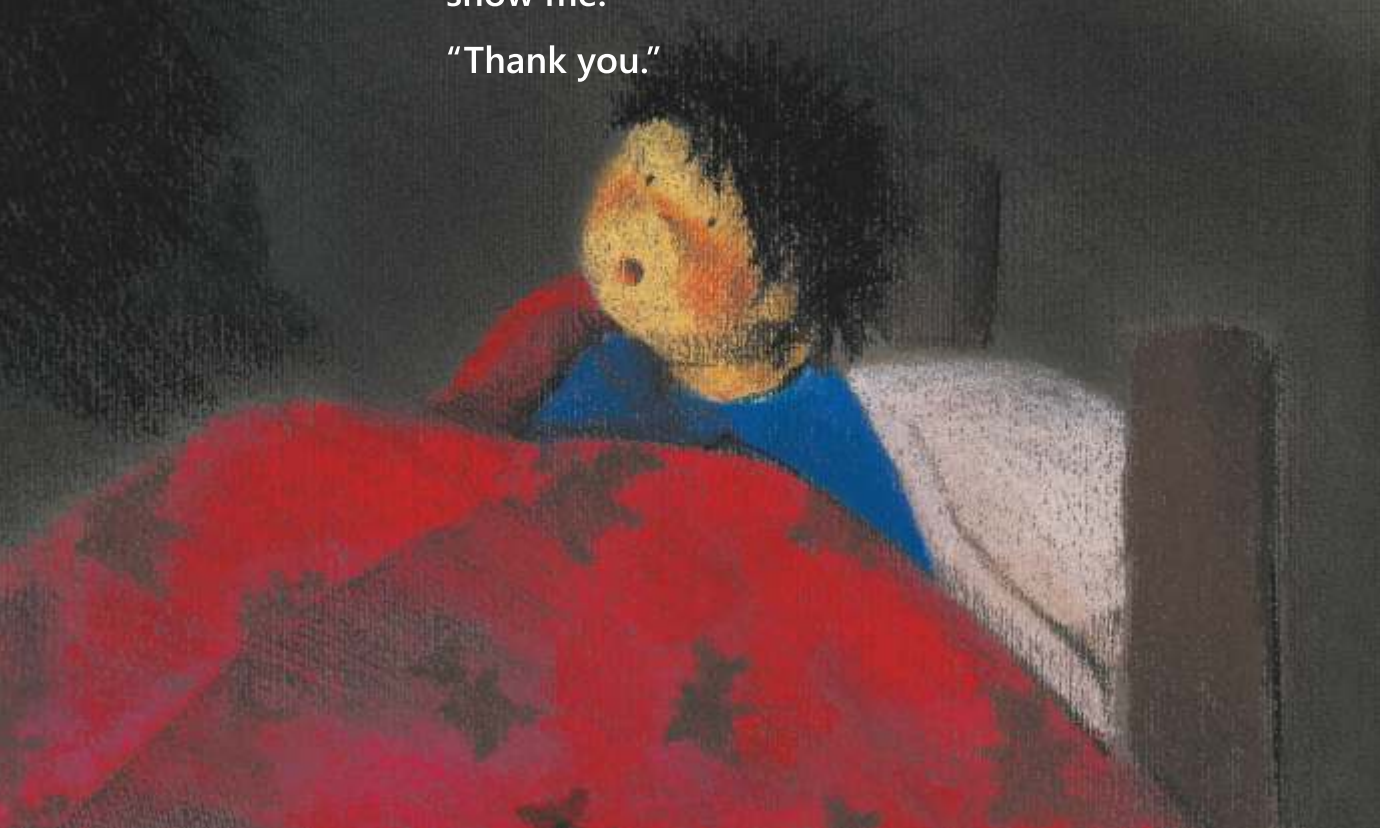
His eyes went wide with fear. He stammered, "My... name... is... not... Little... Mouse. Children call me that. But how did you know?"

"I know everything."

"Then you know that I don't like being mocked. Will you help me frighten the kids who make fun of me?"

"Okay. Let's go. I will frighten any kid you show me."

"Thank you."





From then on, every night the two would go out to scare kids. Now there was only one kid who was not afraid of the dark and this was Little Mouse. No one knew about his friendship with the Shadow of Darkness. But everybody knew that something was going on because the Shadow Monster never hurt him. One kid was very mischievous. His nickname was "Little Devil". Little Devil decided to find out about the mystery and so he invited Little Mouse to his birthday party.

"Tomorrow is my birthday. You must come. But come early because all the kids want to go home before dark."





"Okay. Let them go early. I'll stay."

"You mean you are not afraid of the dark any longer?"

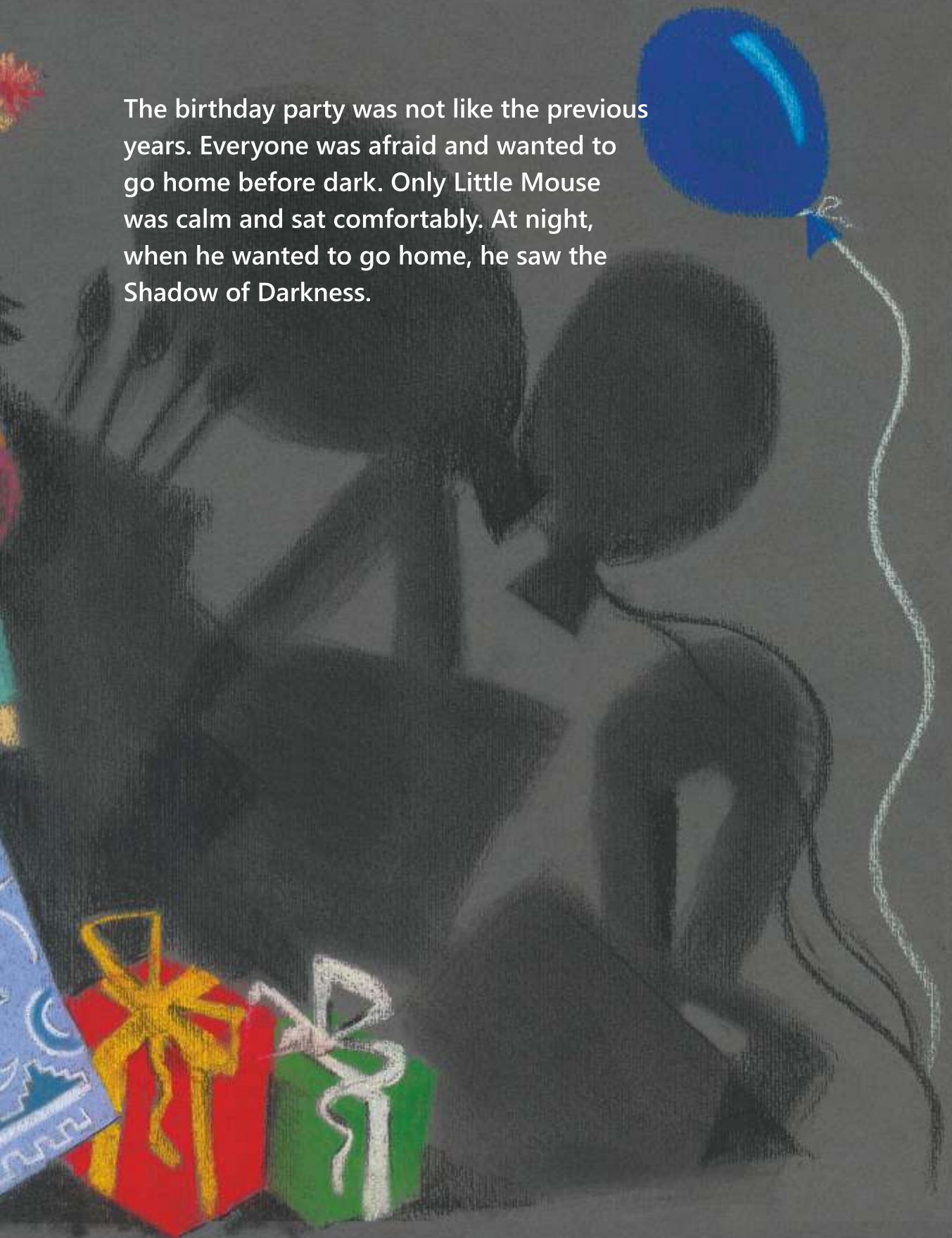
"Of course not. The Shadow of Darkness is my friend. He does not scare those kids who invite him."

Little Devil began thinking but he didn't say anything.





The birthday party was not like the previous years. Everyone was afraid and wanted to go home before dark. Only Little Mouse was calm and sat comfortably. At night, when he wanted to go home, he saw the Shadow of Darkness.





Astonished, he asked, "What are you doing here? All the kids have gone. There is no one to scare."

"Yes, I know. But I don't scare the kids who invite me."

Little Mouse took a few steps backwards in fear and said, "But I didn't invite you!"

"Yes. Today Little Devil invited me!"



He would get scared at every little thing. And all the kids would make fun of him for this. They called him "Little Mouse" and teased him. But one day Little Mouse befriended the **SHADOW OF DARKNESS.**

What happened then?



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