

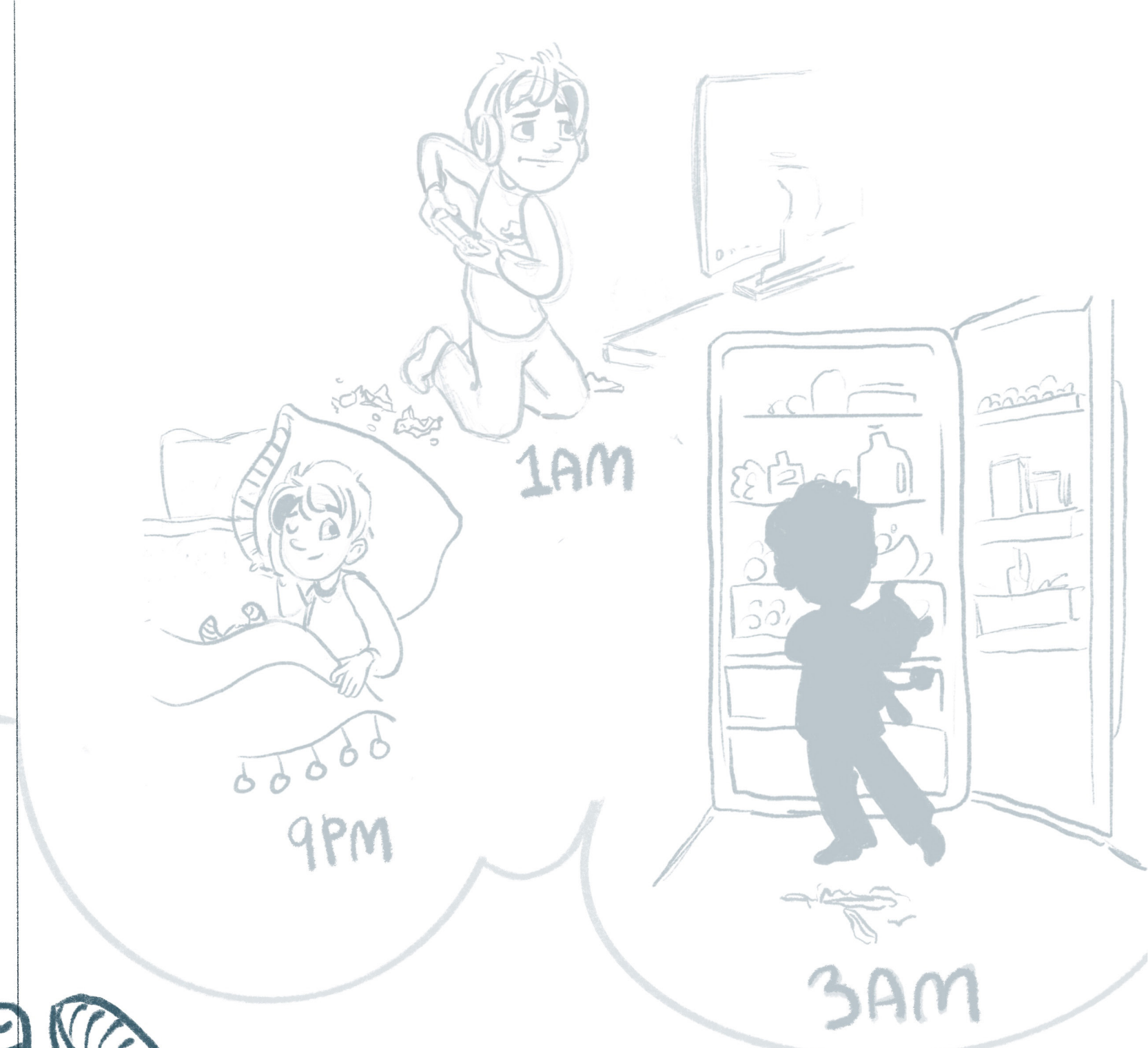
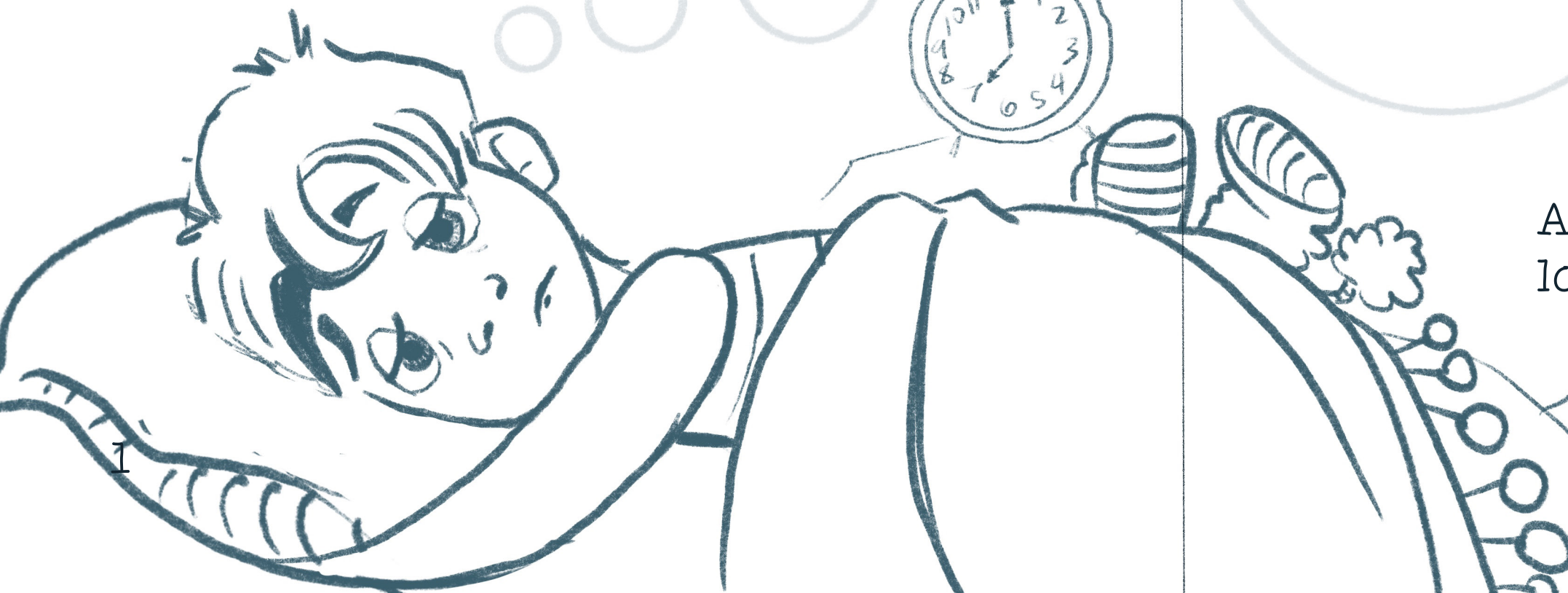
That morning when Walter  
woke up he didn't feel like  
himself at all.

All night long,  
he refused to sleep.

Playing games.

Sneaking candy.

Whining, moaning, and  
harrumphing. Tossing  
and turning and  
kicking until dawn.



And when he got up and  
looked in the mirror, he saw...



...a monster.

“Who are you?”

Walter said.

“My name’s Retlaw.  
Horrible to meet you!”

“I need sleep,”  
said Walter, rubbing his eyes.

“No you don’t,”  
said Retlaw, as he  
jumped out of the mirror.  
“That would be very bad for me.”

“Why?”  
asked Walter.



Retlaw flipped the mirror  
over and showed Walter why.



“Look in the mirror. See?  
The more sleep  
you get, the less me I get.”

“I don’t know,” said Walter.  
“I’m gonna brush my teeth and wash up.”

“And get rid of all that lovely dirt?  
Are you crazy? You know what happens  
when you get rid of dirt?  
You look like you!  
And who wants that? Just look.”



“I need some breakfast,” said Walter.

“No you don’t,” said Retlaw.

“Just skip it or better yet...

**HAVE SOME CAKE!**

The less good food you eat the  
morerotten I feel.

And I looooooove feeling  
rotten. See what happens?”



“Get away,”  
shouted Walter,  
“I gotta get ready for school.”

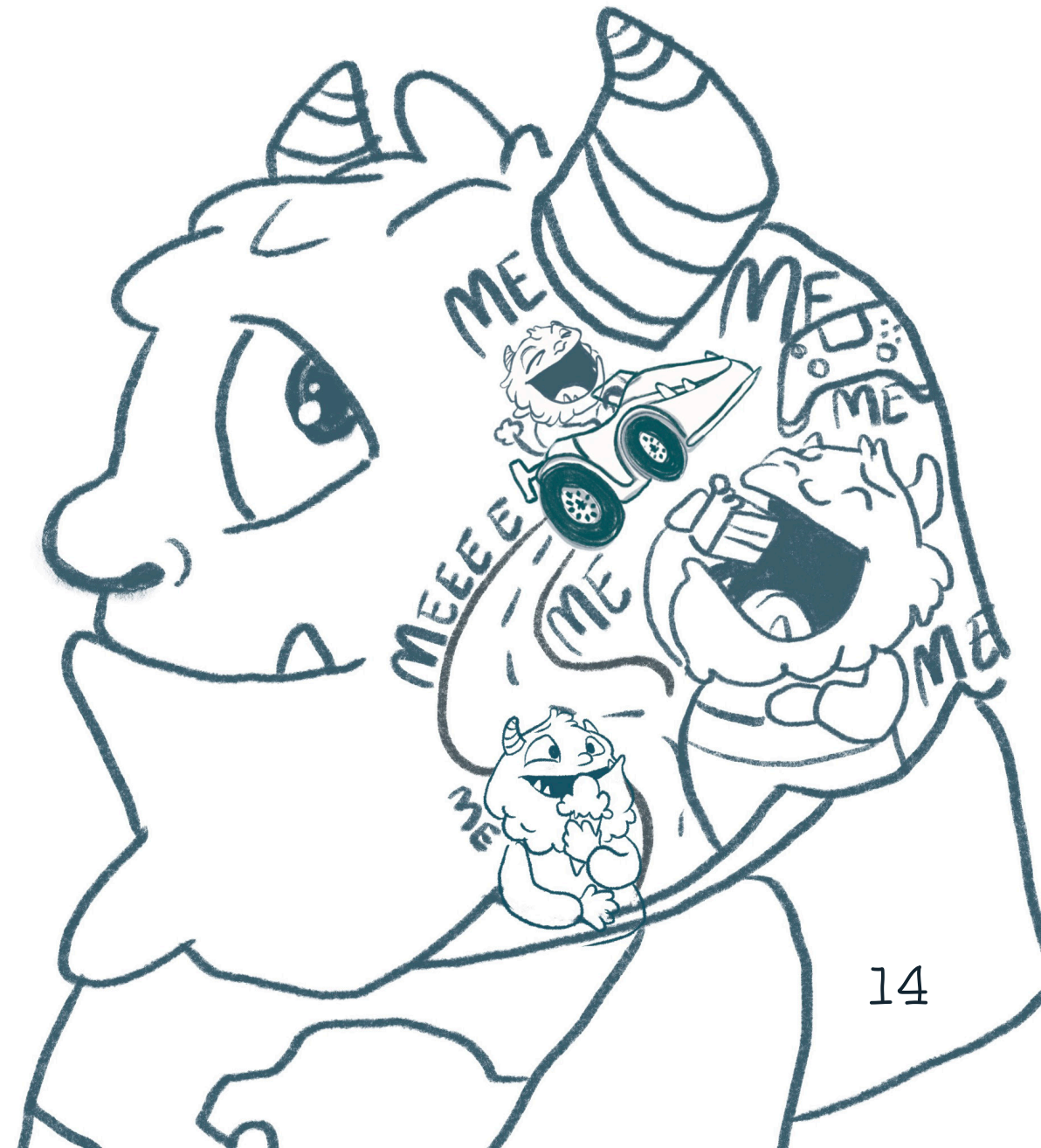


“School?” said  
Retlaw, “If you  
feel rotten, stay  
home and goof off.  
Plus, I’m  
working hard  
to be last in  
my class.”

“See? If you go to school. You’ll learn things.  
And be able to do more for yourself.  
Look at the awful things that happen  
when you open books.”

“But those are good things. Aren’t they?”  
Walter asked.

“Not to me,” said Retlaw,  
“Those things are terrible.”



Walter wanted to scream.

“Good idea!”  
said Retlaw.

“The louder you scream  
the less you accomplish.

Much better than using words  
that might help you out.

It’s music to my ears.”





Walter got dressed  
to play outside.

“Don’t do that!” said Retlaw. “I’d  
rather be lazy. I like lazy. See what  
happens when you don’t get exercise.

Everything builds up in you like a  
volcano. Instead of using your energy in  
a crazy good way, you get to let it build up  
inside you. Until...here’s the best part...you  
get to explode...and wreck things!”

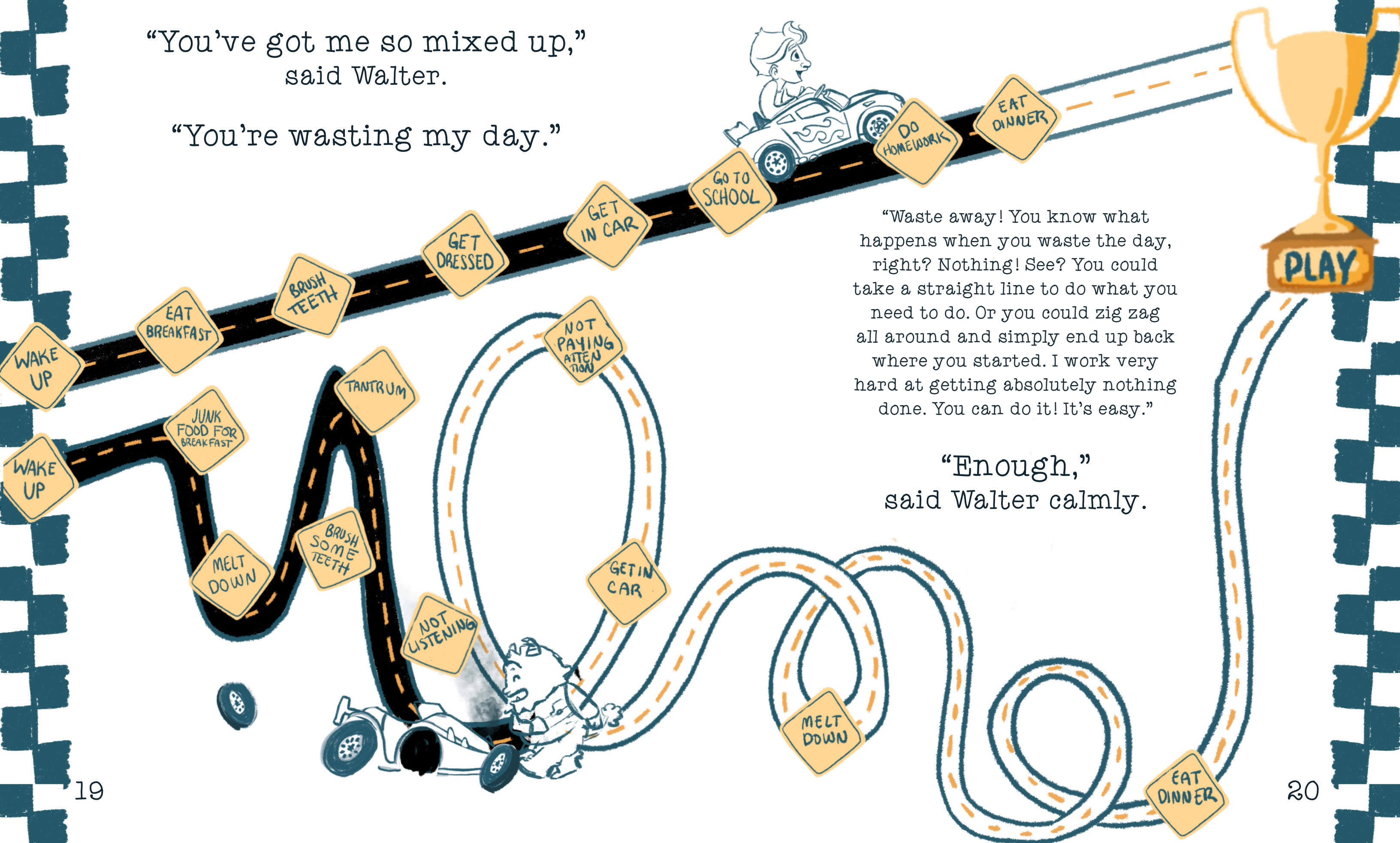


you could ruin  
soooooo  
much!



“You’ve got me so mixed up,”  
said Walter.

“You’re wasting my day.”



“Waste away! You know what happens when you waste the day, right? Nothing! See? You could take a straight line to do what you need to do. Or you could zig zag all around and simply end up back where you started. I work very hard at getting absolutely nothing done. You can do it! It’s easy.”

“Enough,”  
said Walter calmly.



For a moment, Walter did nothing but take one  
 looooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooong  
 breath in. And let another  
 looooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooong  
 breath out.

Take a deep breath: breathe in the  
 Take a deep breath: breathe in the pizza, blow  
 Take a deep breath: breathe in the pizza, blow out to cool it down





“Are you sure you don’t want to shout at me?” asked Retlaw.

“No,” said Walter.

And he said it in a voice not at all sough or gritty or even scratchy. But warm and comfy and soft and nice.

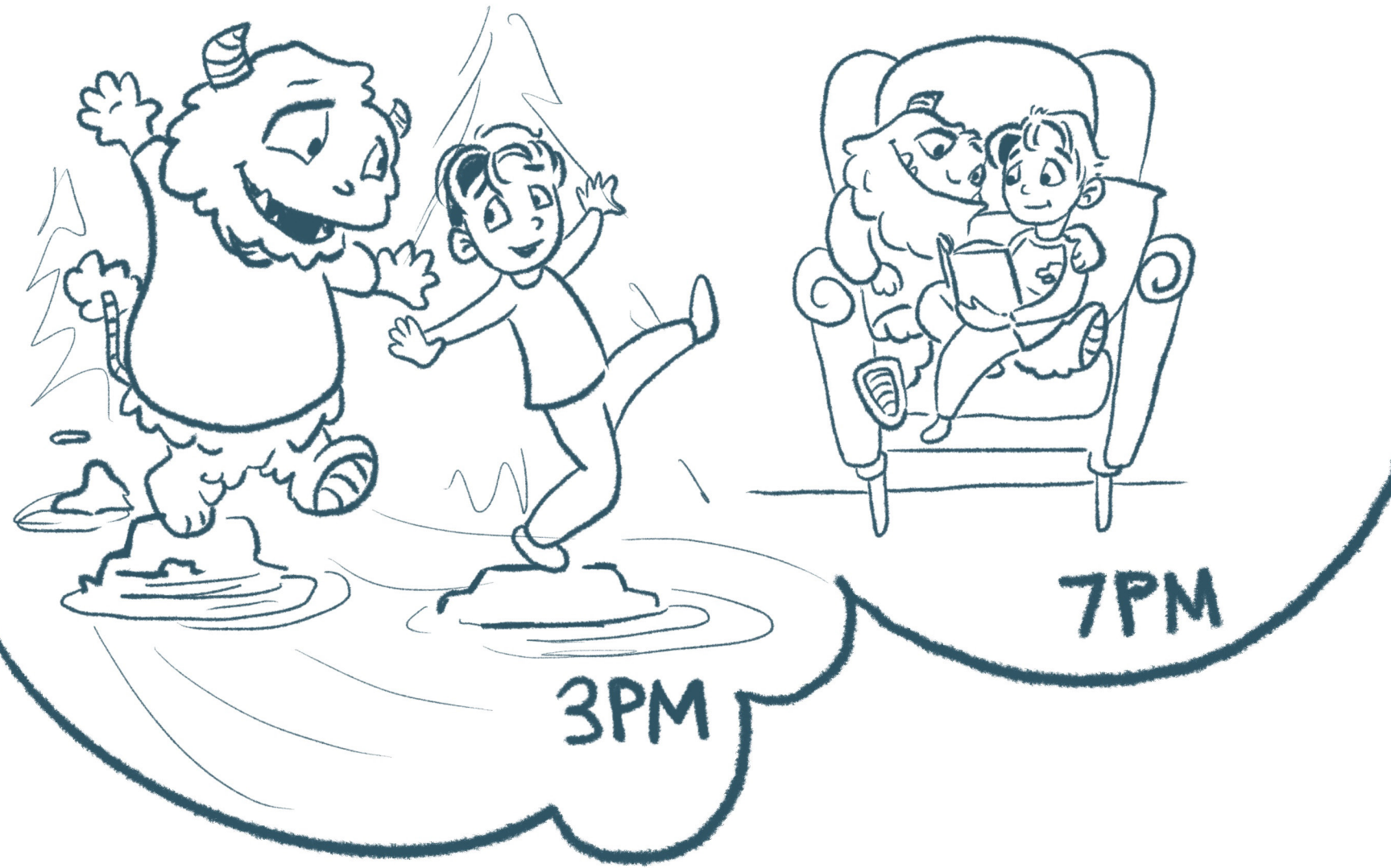
Walter’s voice was so nice, in fact, that Retlaw felt something warm in the pit of his stomach. And he hated warmth.



With that, Walter brushed his teeth.  
Washed up. And got dressed.

He had a nice big healthy breakfast.

And once he felt a little less rotten,  
he went to school and learned that  
the capital of Mali is Bamako  
which made him feel super smart.

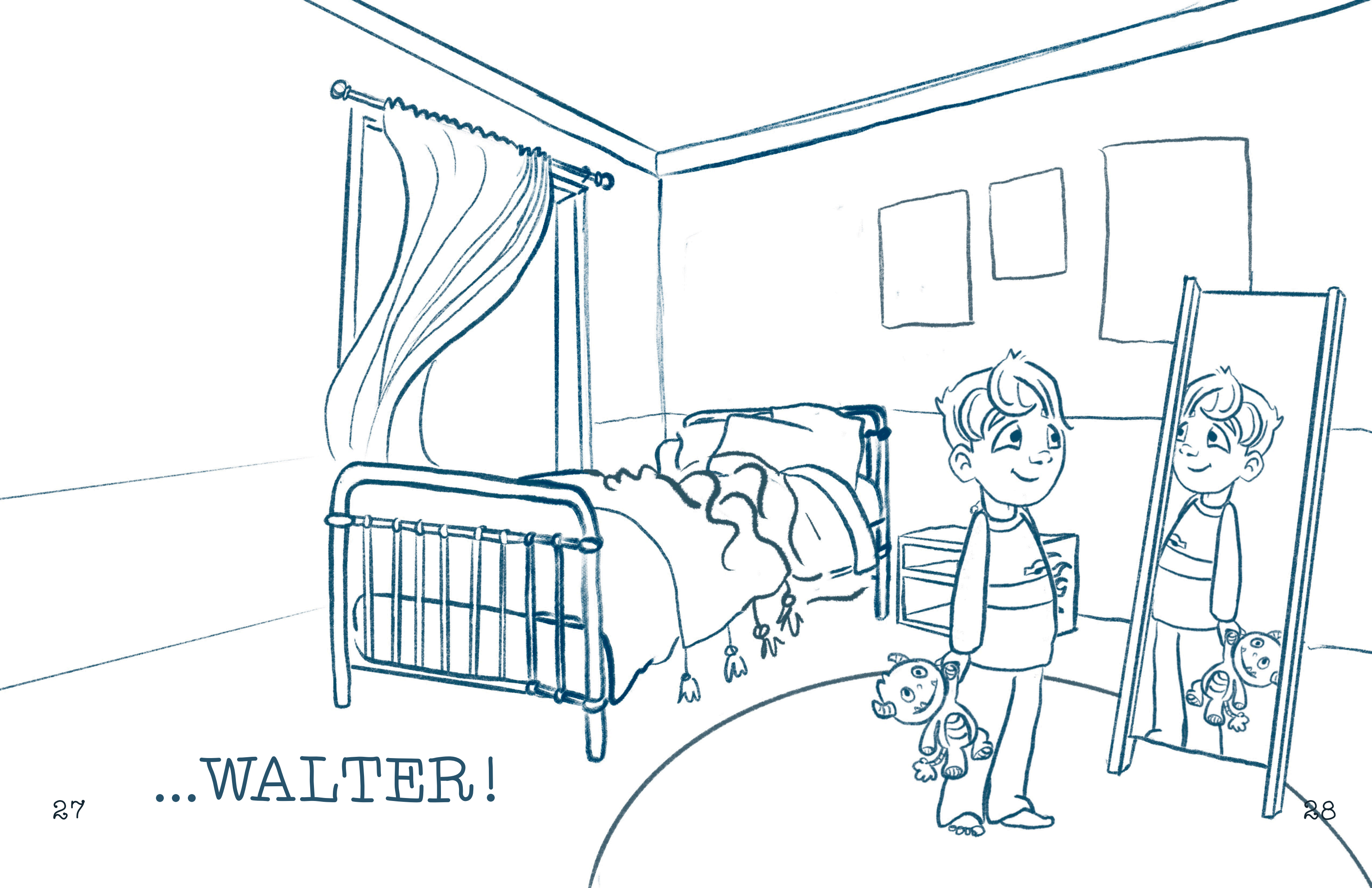


He had a good lunch and came home and did  
his homework when he was supposed to and  
went outside and played too.

After dinner he played games, watched TV,  
put on his PJs, went to bed and fell asleep.

So when Walter got up the next morning,  
he looked in the mirror.

And the only one looking back at him was...



...WALTER!