

Parker's Brain Storm

Created by Jennifer Moliterno, MD, FAANS and Trisha Gupte, BS





CHILDREN'S
BRAIN TUMOR
FOUNDATION

RESEARCH • COMMUNITY • COMPANIONSHIP



About the Authors

Dr. Jennifer Moliterno is the Chief of Neurosurgical Oncology for Primary Brain Tumors in the Yale Department of Neurosurgery and Co-Director of the Yale Brain Tumor Center at Smilow Cancer Hospital. She is a board certified, fellowship-trained neurosurgeon who devotes her career entirely to treating patients, mainly adults, with brain tumors.

Dr. Moliterno wrote and illustrated the original book, “Parker’s Brain Storm,” when she was a medical student and first touched and humbled by the strength and courage of patients with brain tumors, especially children and their families. Based on the overwhelmingly positive response and how it has helped so many children, she was fortunate enough to collaborate with an immensely talented future doctor, Trisha Gupte, in creating additional books and revising Parker’s original story.

Trisha Gupte graduated from the University of Texas at Austin with a B.S. in Neuroscience. She first became interested in oncology while volunteering for a cancer care service program at Texas Children’s Hospital, where she formed many special relationships with pediatric patients and their families. Later, Trisha took part in a charity bike ride, cycling from Texas to Alaska to raise funds for cancer research.

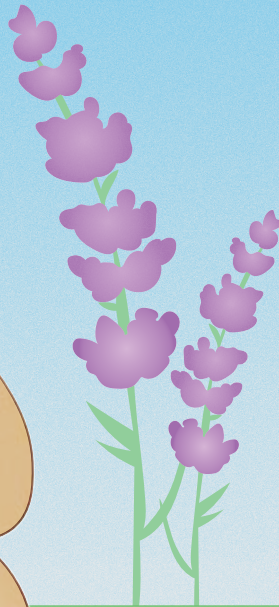
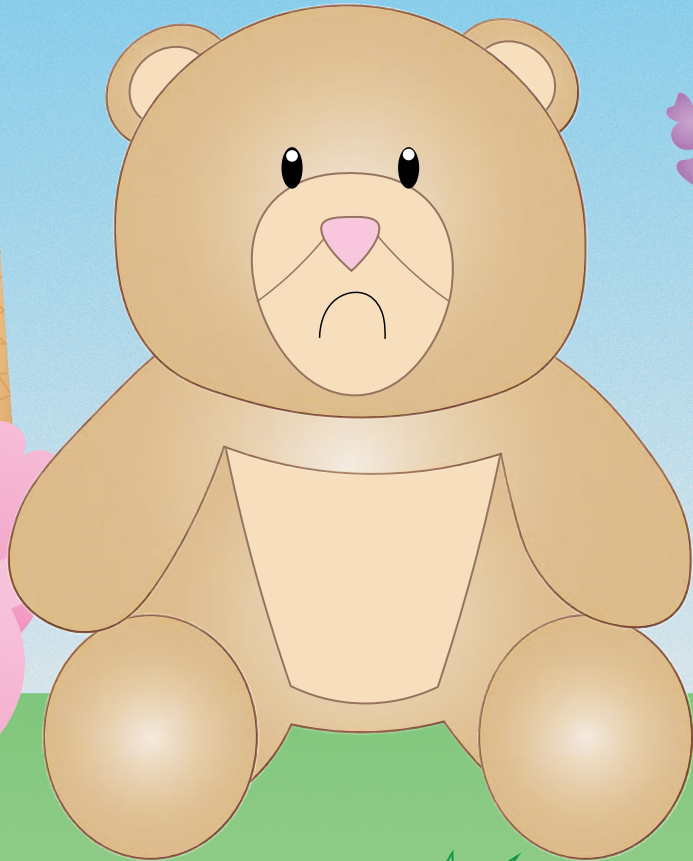
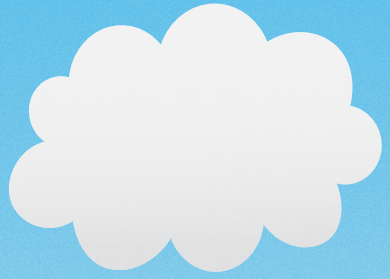
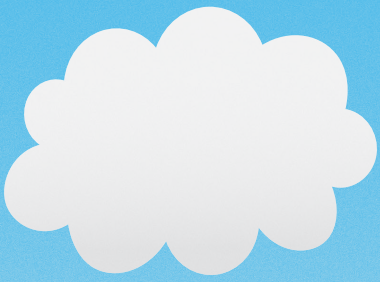
After graduating, she started working as a postgraduate research associate under the incredible guidance and mentorship of Dr. Moliterno in the Yale Department of Neurosurgery. Trisha began medical school in the fall of 2020. She is very excited to continue developing her passion for art throughout her journey in medicine.

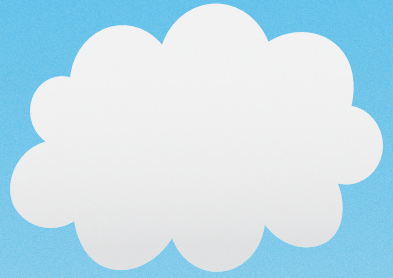
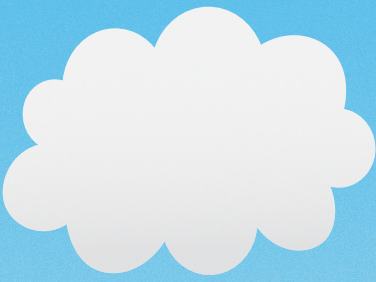


Dr. Jennifer Moliterno dedicates this book to her greatest loves, her pride and joy, husband Murat and son Aydin Gunel, and to her parents for their love and support and of course for giving her Snuggles, her teddy bear, whom Parker is based. She also wishes to acknowledge and thank all of her amazing patients for the privilege of entrusting her to care for them at their most difficult time.

Trisha Gupte dedicates this book to her two loving parents, Sandhya and Parag Gupte, and all of the pediatric patients she met at Texas Children’s Hospital.







This is Parker.

Parker is usually the happiest little bear in the whole wide world. But right now, he's sad.

For some time, Parker's head and tummy have been hurting really bad. He doesn't even want to eat his favorite food, strawberry ice cream.

His mommy and daddy have taken him to see lots of doctors, but no one knows what is making Parker feel so sick.





ALPHABET BRIDGE



Finally, Parker's parents brought him to see a special doctor. They hoped this doctor could make Parker well enough to eat his favorite ice cream again.

Parker had always dreamed about going to the city. But even the trip and going over the Alphabet Bridge didn't make him happy. His parents had promised to take him for pizza and ice cream after the visit. But that still wasn't enough to make Parker happy.

Parker just felt sick.



COLLEGE OF
MEDICINE

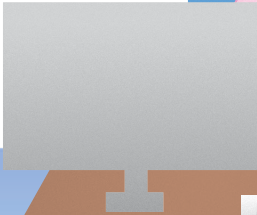
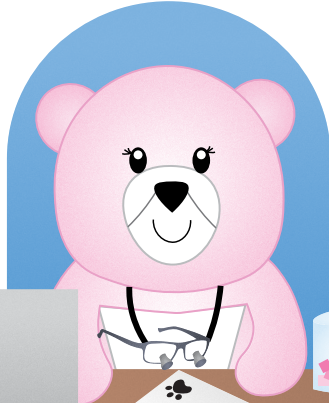


Beary J. Bear, MD

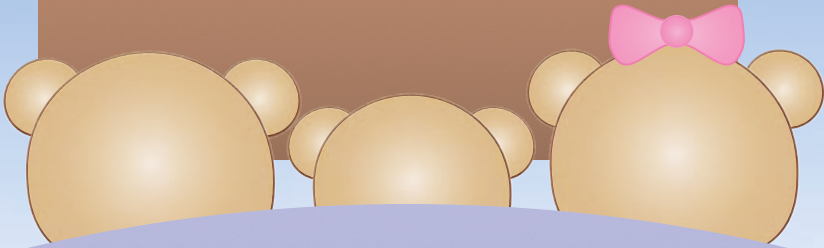
BEST DOCTORS
IN AMERICA



Beary J. Bear, MD



Dr. Beary Juice Bear



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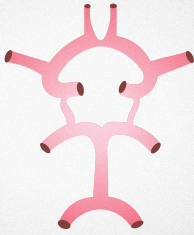
Parker, his mommy and his daddy met with the special doctor, Dr. Beary Juice Bear.

“I am a neurosurgeon. I operate on the brain when it’s sick,” explained Dr. Beary. “First, I need to understand if your brain is sick and the best way to do that is to take a picture with an MRI.”

Dr. Beary sent Parker for an MRI. Parker laid down on a table which moved toward what looked like a big camera. It made lots of noise, which was a little scary at first, but it did not hurt at all. Parker’s mommy and daddy waited outside the whole time and he was happy knowing they were there.



Circle of Willis



Parker's Brain Pictures



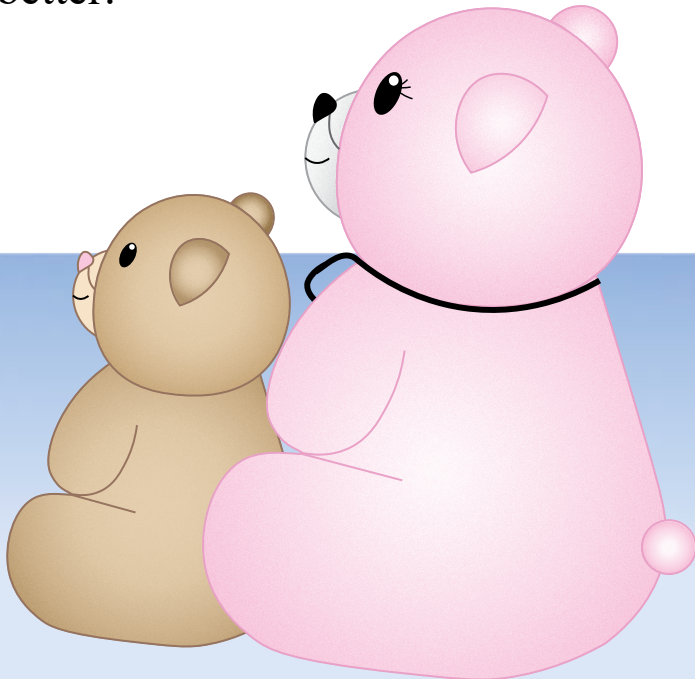
Afterward, Dr. Beary showed Parker, his mommy and his daddy the pictures of his brain.

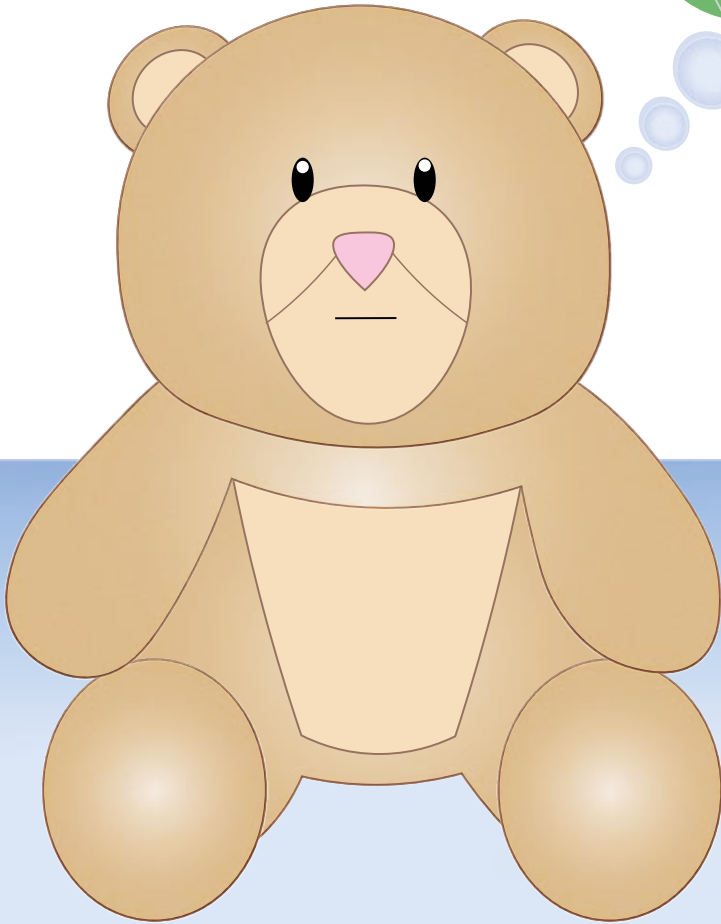
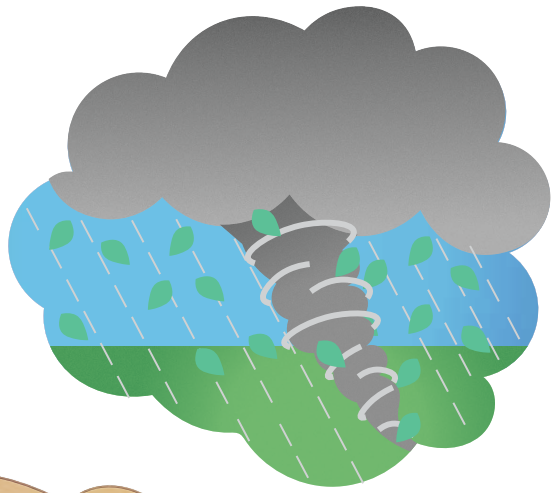


“See that little white glob in the middle?” Dr. Beary asked. “That’s a brain tumor. It’s like a big bump inside your brain.”

“No one really knows why tumors start to grow, but we do know that we need to make it go away. This is what is making you feel so sick.”

Parker was confused. He didn’t understand why a brain tumor would make him feel so sick and why a brain operation would make his tummy feel better.





Dr. Beary explained. “Do you know how a big storm can blow rain and leaves everywhere and cause a lot of problems all over outside?” she asked Parker.

“Well,” she continued, “a brain tumor is sort of like a storm. It can cause a lot of problems for your brain and for your body. It can make you feel really bad.”

“Your brain and body don’t like the stormy weather. Your brain needs some help to fight the storm that the tumor has started,” said Dr. Beary. “I can help by taking the tumor out.”

Parker would have an operation and Dr. Beary would remove as much of the tumor as safely as possible. Dr. Beary explained that they would use a special sleep medicine to make sure Parker would not feel a thing during the operation.



The next day, Parker, his mommy, and his daddy waited for Dr. Beary to take Parker into the operating room. There were really neat machines everywhere, telling the doctors what Parker's heart and lungs were doing. But even with all the cool stuff to look at, Parker was worried about his operation.

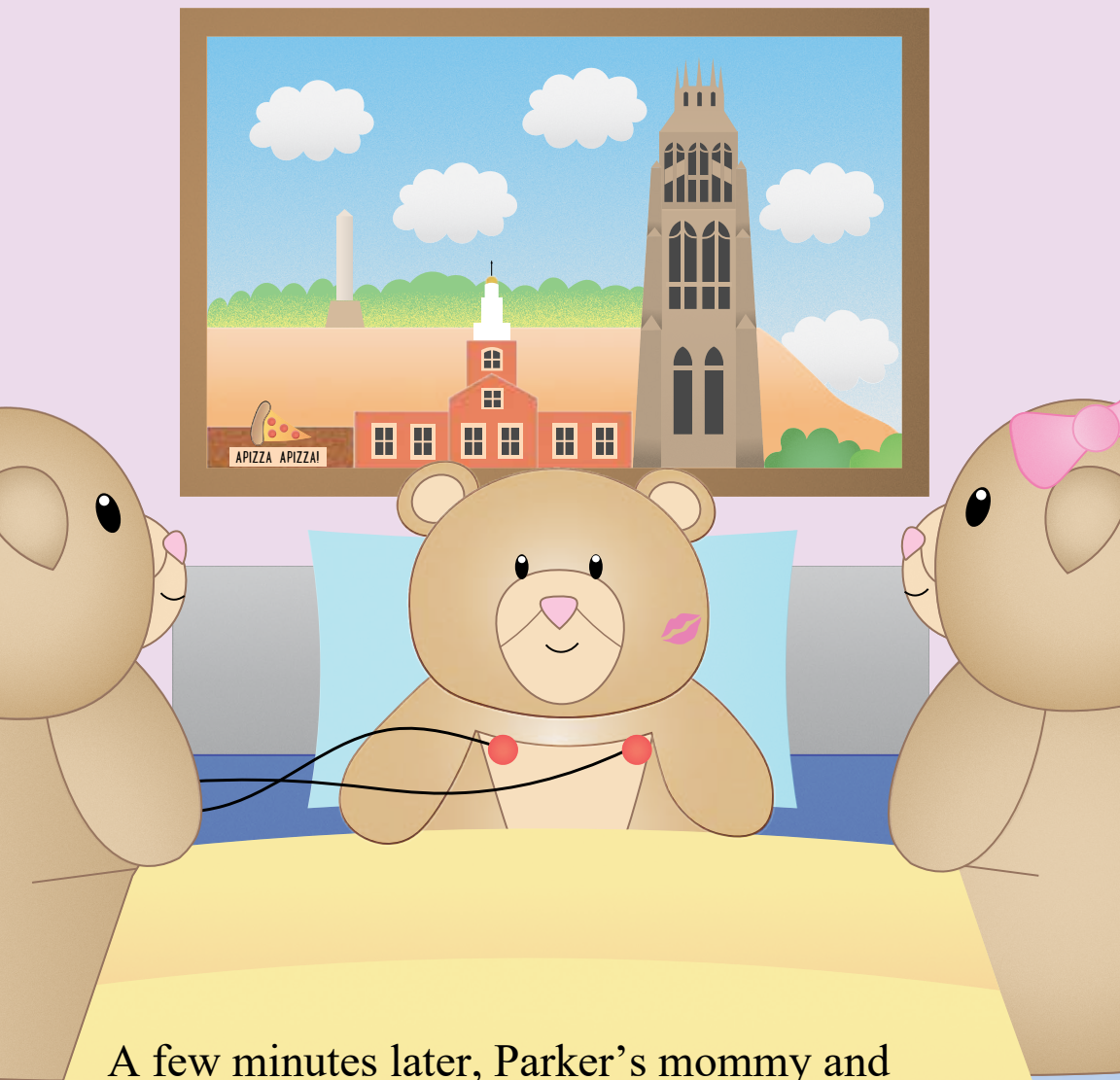
“Momma, Dada,” Parker whispered. “I’m scared.”

Parker's mommy nodded. “It's okay to be scared, honey. Everyone gets scared sometimes, even mommies and daddies.”

Parker's daddy added “The operation will be all over soon, and then you'll feel so much better.”

Parker smiled faintly.

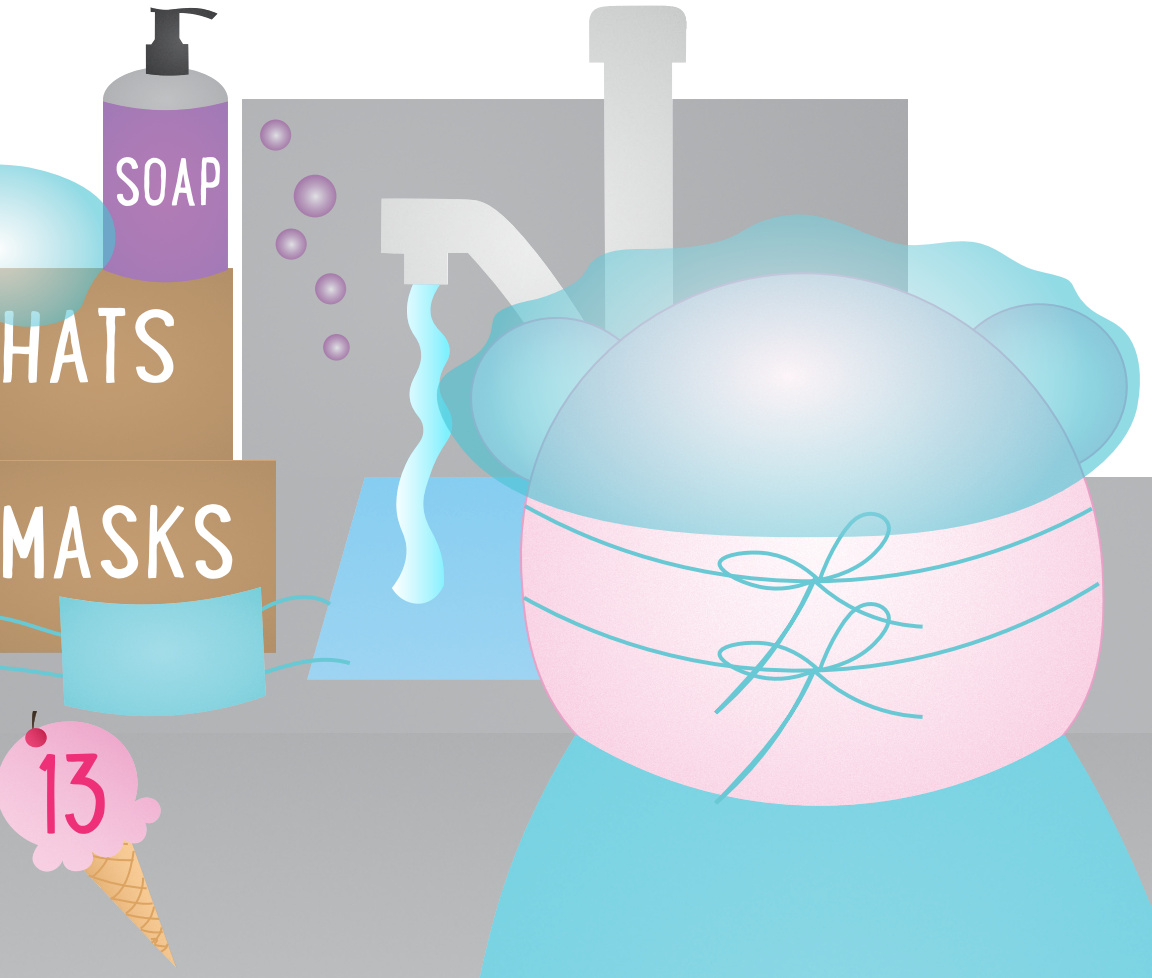


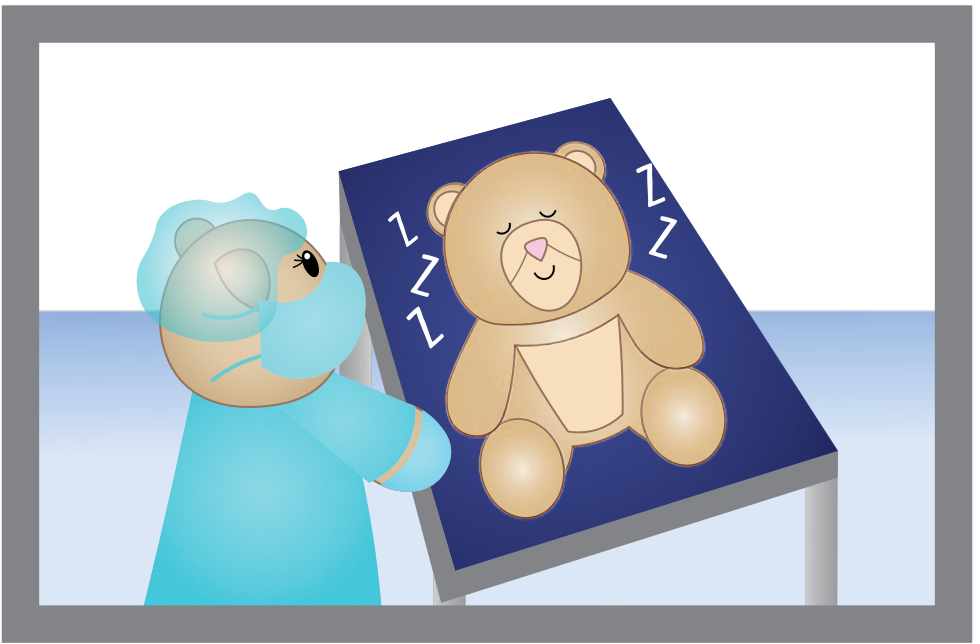


A few minutes later, Parker's mommy and daddy each gave him a big kiss. They promised to be there when he woke up from his operation.

The special sleep doctor rolled Parker into the operating room. Parker lay there, looking at the lights and all the different machines. There were a lot of nice people in the room with him.

“Okay, Parker,” the sleep doctor said. “I just gave you your special sleep medicine. Do you think you can count backwards from ten?”





“Sure,” Parker agreed.

“10...9...8...7...6...zzzz...zzzzz...zzzzzz...”

Parker fell fast asleep.



Parker slept on the operating room table the whole time Dr. Beary and her helpers worked to remove the tumor from his brain.

They used their fancy GPS system and found the tumor hiding in the brain and took out as much as they could. Then they put a great big white bandage on Parker's head.

Dr. Beary and her team were so excited; they couldn't wait for Parker to wake up. They knew the brain storm in Parker's head and body was all over. He was going to feel a lot better in no time!



Parker woke up after his operation and saw his mommy and his daddy. They were holding his paws and smiling at him.

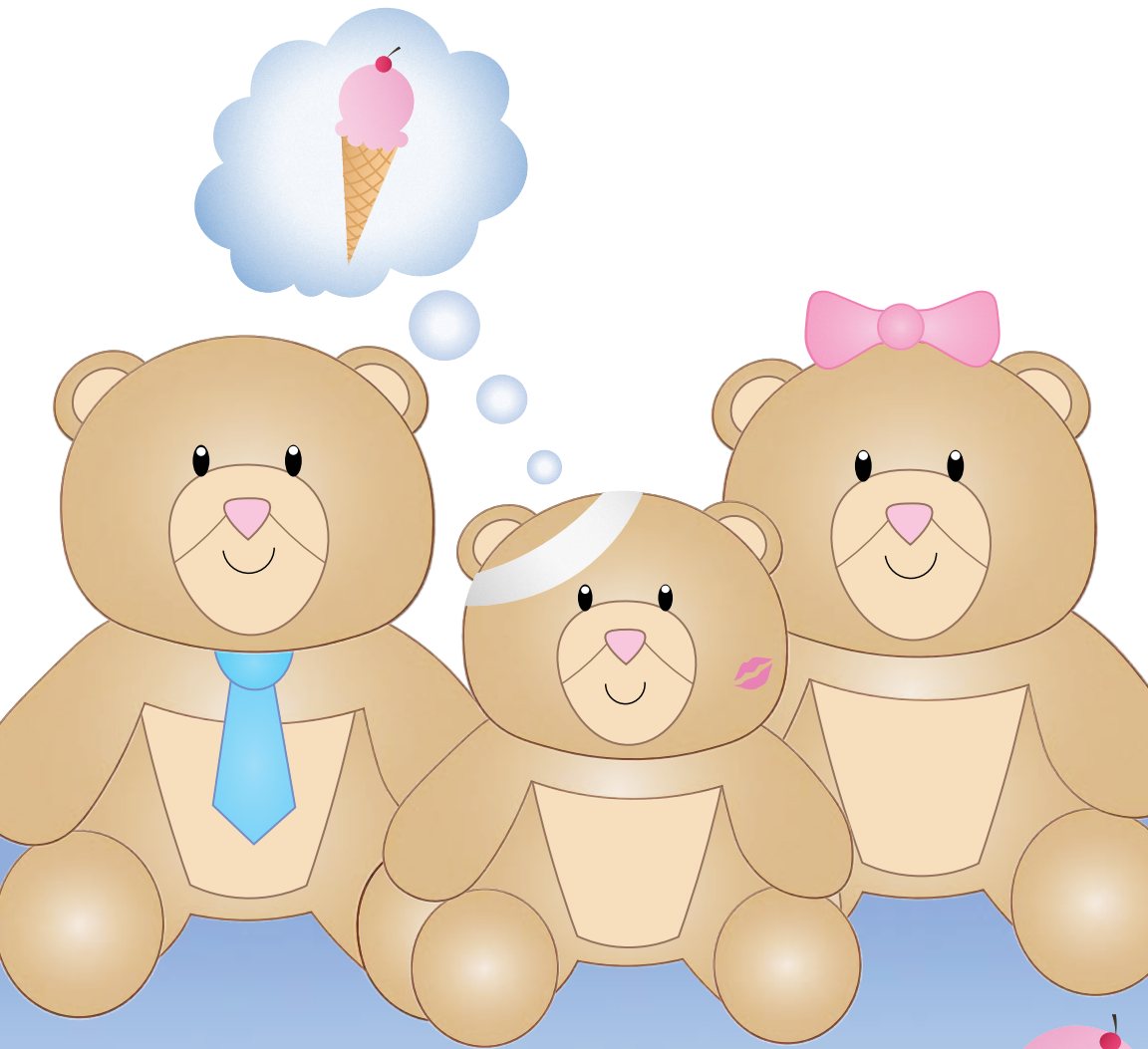
“Dr. Beary told me that you did great during the operation and that the tumor is gone. You were so brave!” Parker’s daddy said proudly.

“How do you feel?” said Parker’s mommy. “Is there anything you need, little bear?” she asked.

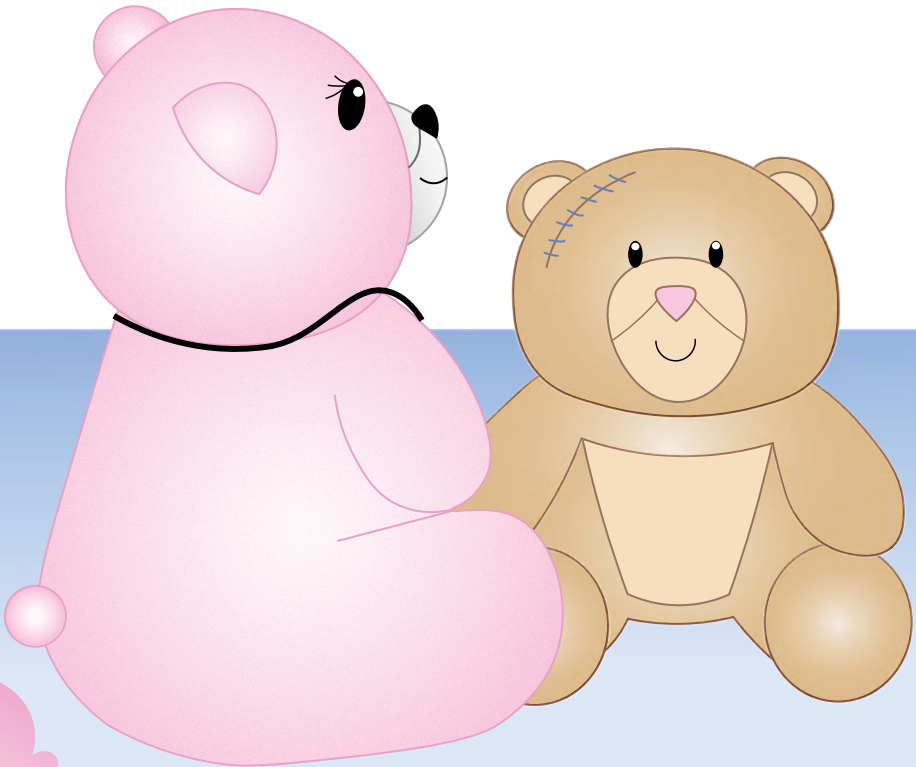
Parker’s throat felt sore, but he was able to say what his parents had been waiting to hear:

“Can I please have a strawberry ice cream cone?”

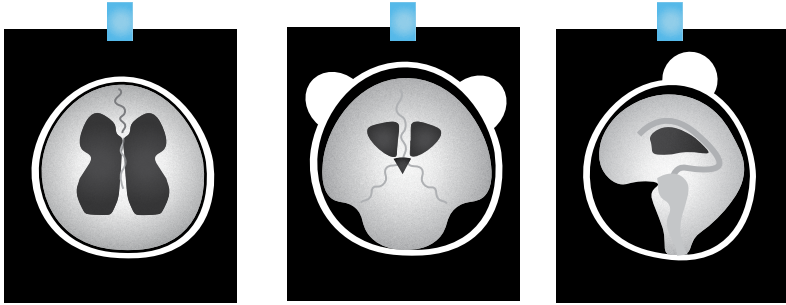




A few days later Parker was allowed to leave the hospital and a short time thereafter, he returned to see Dr. Beary. She carefully removed the stitches from his boo boo. “You are healing so nicely Parker. Keep up the good work little bear. Continue to keep your boo boo nice and clean and dry.”



Parker's Brain Pictures



With Parker and his parents, Dr. Beary reviewed the type of brain tumor Parker had, with a special name. She spoke about whether the tumor could grow back and if Parker would need additional treatment for the tumor she removed. Parker felt a bit dizzy by all he heard, but he was calm knowing his parents and Dr. Beary would take good care of him.



Sometime later, at one of his follow-up visits after his surgery, Parker and Dr. Beary met at the green down the street from the hospital.

“Dr. Beary, thank you for making me feel so much better!” Parker said.

Dr. Beary grinned. “My pleasure.”

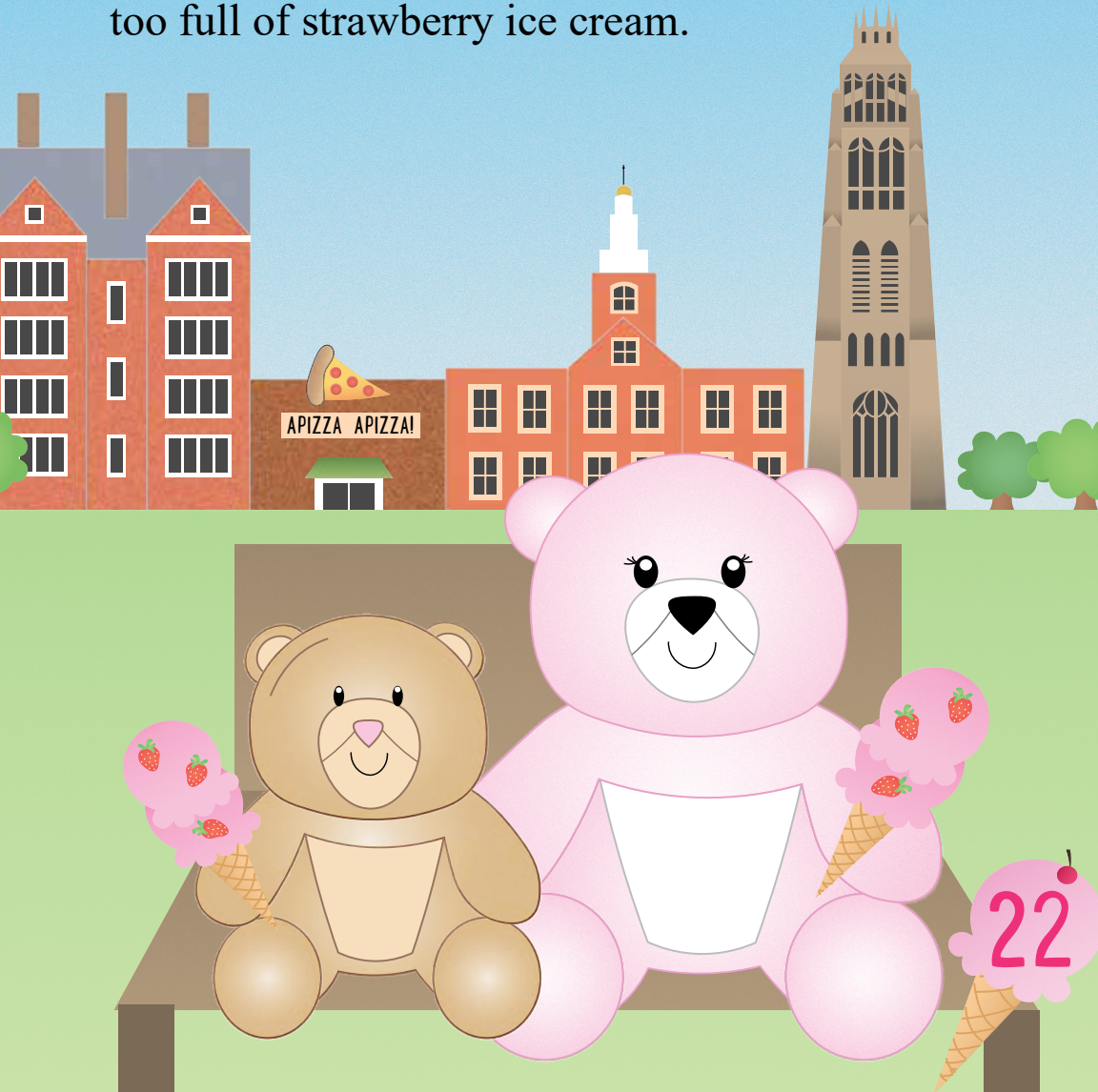
Parker licked up a little bit of ice cream that was dripping down the side of his cone. “You know, Dr. Beary,” he said. “I have had another kind of brainstorm.”

“Really, Parker?” Dr. Beary replied. “What is it?”

Parker smiled. “I want to be like you when I grow up and help sick brains by getting rid of tumors!”

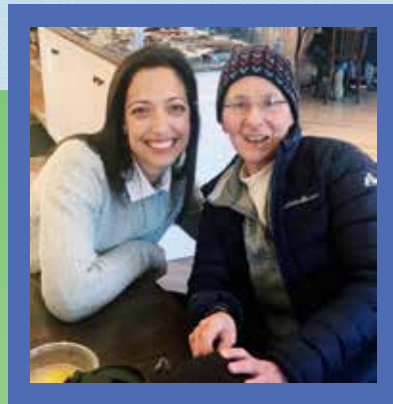
Dr. Beary laughed. “You’ll be a great doctor, Parker. But first things first – how do you feel right now, little bear?”

Parker tried to say “great!” ...but his mouth was too full of strawberry ice cream.



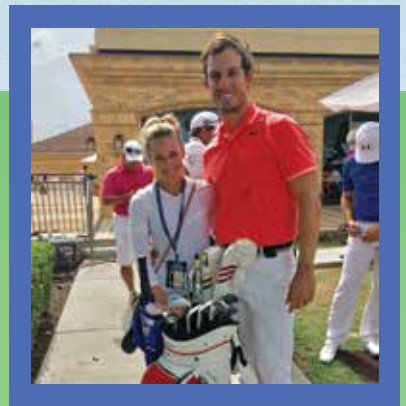
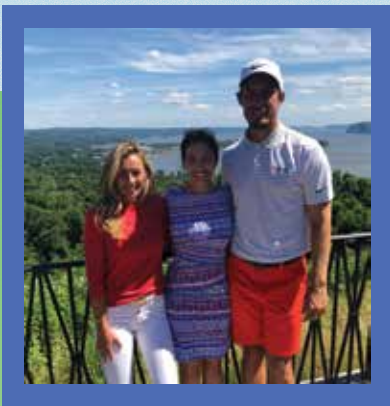
Thank You!

We wish to acknowledge the generosity of Dr. Susie Beris. In 2018, Dr. Beris, a well-loved, Yale-trained, Connecticut pediatrician was diagnosed with a brain tumor and underwent surgery performed by Dr. Jennifer Moliterno. She was so grateful for the tremendous care she received that she started the “Susan Beris, MD Fund for the Yale Brain Tumor Surgery Program.” Part of her substantial donation has supported the publication of this book, combining her lifelong love of helping and comforting children with a more recent passion for raising awareness about brain tumors.



Thank You!

We want to also express our gratitude to the Lovemark Foundation for their support of the publication of this book. Founded by PGA golfer Jamie Lovemark, and his wife Tiva, the mission of the Lovemark Foundation is to help patients with brain tumors, and their families, by providing support to allow them the opportunity to primarily focus on fighting their disease, as well as to assist in their travel to receive exceptional care. Since its inception, the Lovemark Foundation has graciously donated their significant proceeds to the Yale Brain Tumor Center at Smilow Cancer Hospital with every penny given directly to patients with brain tumors under the leadership of Dr. Jennifer Moliterno. The Lovemark Foundation's empathetic commitment to ease the concerns of patients with brain tumors and their families is in complete alignment with the purpose of Parker's books.

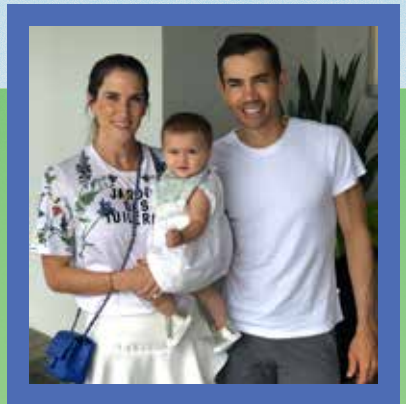


Thank You!

Founded by PGA Professional Golfer, Camilo Villegas and wife Maria Ochoa, Mia's Miracles Foundation provides small blessings with large impacts, bringing smiles and positivity to children and families facing challenging circumstances. This vision of Mia's Miracles Foundation is that all children and families receive access to reliable resources and a supportive network that leads to a hopeful future.

Mia lived a short life on earth, twenty-two months and two hours to be exact. Throughout this time, she brought light and joy to all that came into her presence.

During her battle with brain cancer, the Villegas family lived at Nicklaus Children's Hospital for five months. After passing away on July 26, 2020, Camilo and Maria have continued to honor Mia's legacy through Mia's Miracles Foundation. Since its launch, Mia's Miracles Foundation has devoted resources to Nicklaus Children's Hospital in Miami, FL and a number of organizations in Colombia, providing vulnerable children and families with assistance to ease the burden of financial hardships and emotional stress during difficult times.



Self-Care Tips for Parents

- **Taking care of yourself when your child has a chronic health condition frequently takes a backseat. Parents feel responsible for everything that happens each day. When things happen, which are out of anyone's control, parents still feel guilty. Stopping everything and taking time out for yourself, feels impossible. But when you don't take care of yourself, you will struggle to take care of others.**
- **Below are some tips to encourage self-care. Do not feel guilty about not always following them. The important thing is taking steps to care for yourself. Even finding 10 minutes a day is a good start. Find a partner or good friend who can remind you about self-care.**
- **Ask for support-Friends and family want to help, but often do not know how to. You may feel uncomfortable asking, but their desire to assist is genuine. Helping with siblings, housework, yard work, and even helping with your sick child are requests you can make.**
- **Take time out to eat-It is much easier to eat quick fast food when you are stressed and do not have time. However, thinking about eating a balanced diet and planning nutrition into your day will boost our resistance against the impact stress has.**
- **Acknowledge and address your feelings-Find space and time to acknowledge your feelings and “feel” them. Whether this is meditation, journaling, running, a short walk, talk with a friend, listening to or making music, or even just time for a hot bath.**
- **Sleep- Getting enough rest is essential to good health and stress relief.**
- **Children's Brain Tumor Foundation offers monthly groups for parents at all different stages of the brain tumor journey. People who have been and are traveling the same journey can provide tips and crucial support.**





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**CBTF is here to make sure
no family goes through the brain tumor
journey alone until we find a cure.**



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