

Big Sister, Little Sister

Tuakana, Teina

“Waaaaaa,” cried Sasha’s baby sister.

“Can you get Emma, for me?” shouted Sasha’s mother.

Sasha threw her pyjamas on the floor and pulled on her school uniform.

“I’m busy.”

When Sasha walked into the kitchen she saw Emma on her mother’s hip.

“Hold her please.”

Emma reached towards Sasha.

Sasha turned away. “Do I have to? I want my brekkie.”

“I wish you helped a bit more, Sasha,”
her mother said.

Sasha chomped on her jam toast and
looked away. Everything was different
now Emma was here. Her mother was
always asking her to do things.

Sasha wished it would
go back to how
it was before
the baby came.

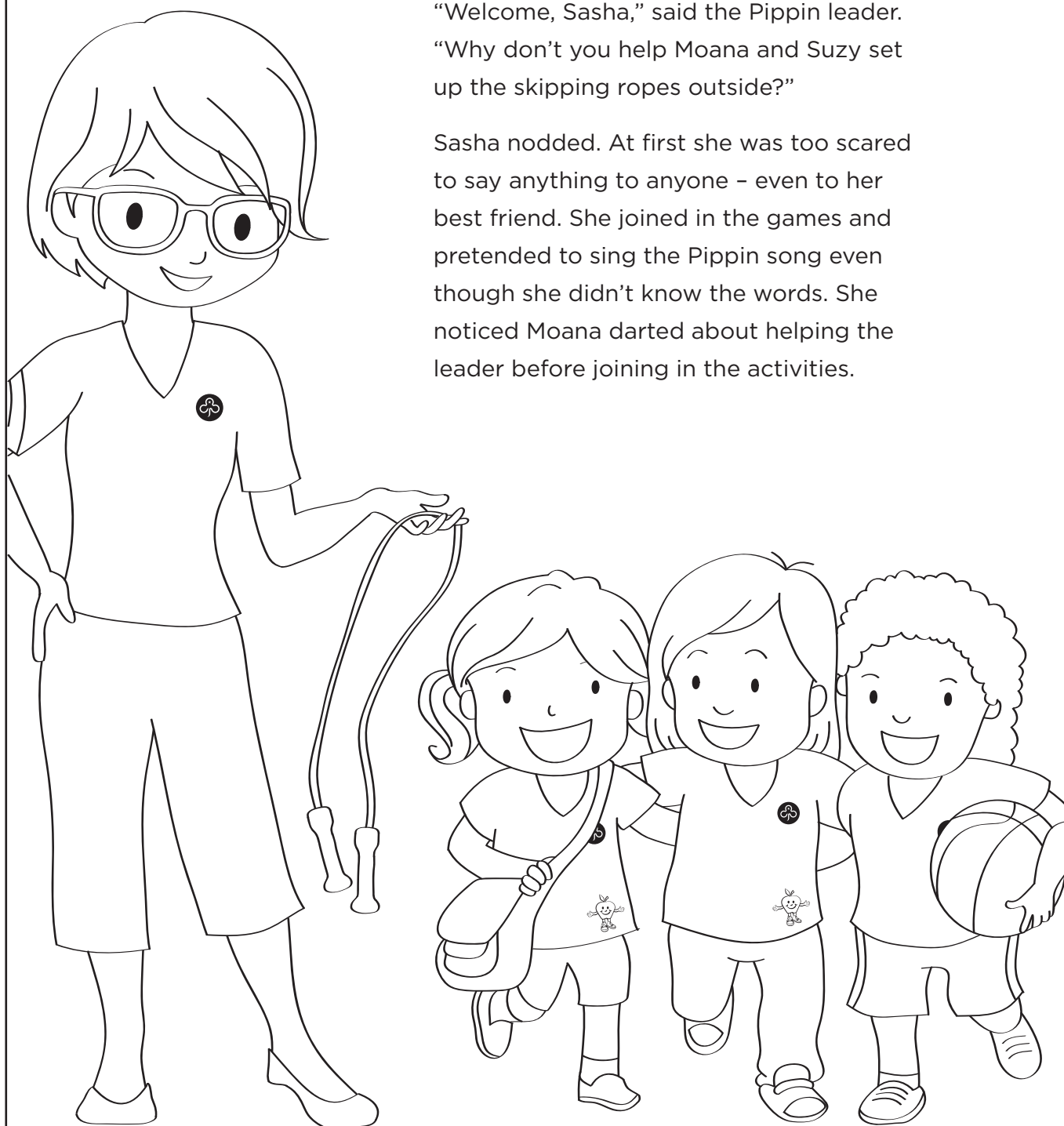


After school Sasha's mother took her to Pippins. Sasha's stomach felt jittery and her hand shook. She wasn't sure she wanted to go now.

Her friend from school rushed up to her.
"I'm glad you came," said Moana.

"Welcome, Sasha," said the Pippin leader.
"Why don't you help Moana and Suzy set up the skipping ropes outside?"

Sasha nodded. At first she was too scared to say anything to anyone – even to her best friend. She joined in the games and pretended to sing the Pippin song even though she didn't know the words. She noticed Moana darted about helping the leader before joining in the activities.



At the end of the session Sasha saw her mother. She beamed a big smile. Then she saw her sister on her mother's hip.

Why did she have to be here? Sasha scowled.

"Is that your baby sister?" asked Suzy.

"Yep," said Sasha. Her lips pressed together in a line.

"She's so cuuuute," said Moana. "Can I hold her?"

Sasha's mother handed over Emma to Moana.

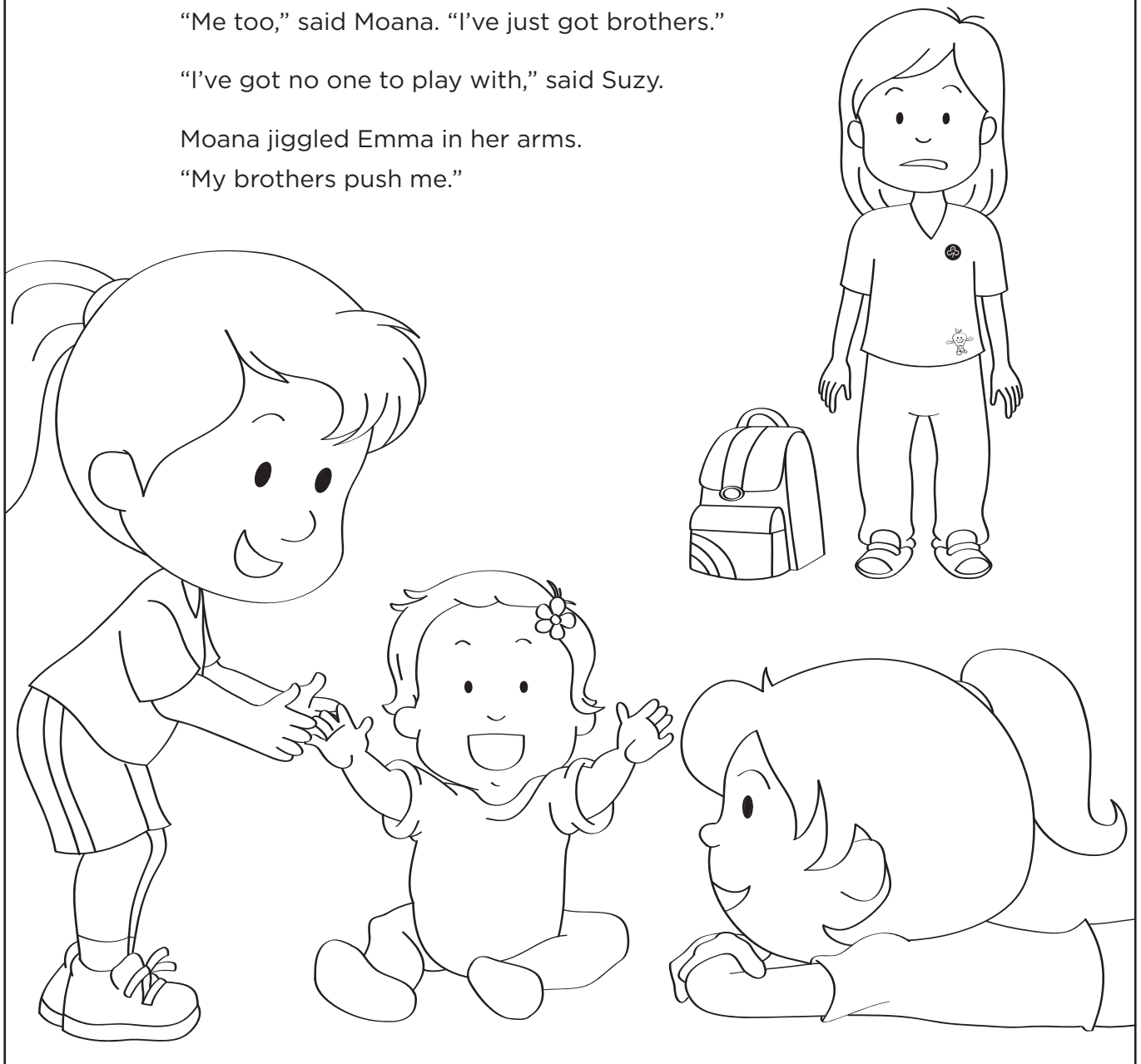
"You're so lucky," said Suzy. "I wish I had a sister."

"Me too," said Moana. "I've just got brothers."

"I've got no one to play with," said Suzy.

Moana jiggled Emma in her arms.

"My brothers push me."



Sasha did not say anything on the drive home. When her mother parked the car, she looked at Emma blowing bubbles and gurgling.

“Do you want me to unbuckle Emma’s seat, Mum?”

“Yes please, love. I’ll just unlock the front door.”

Sasha eased Emma onto her lap. Emma nuzzled into her neck. She smelled of apples and sunshine. Maybe she wasn’t so bad after all.

Her mother opened the car door and took Emma in her arms.

“I’ll bring your bag, okay?” said Sasha.

Her mother stopped and looked at her.

“Did Pippins put a magic spell on you?”

“Nah, it’s just what Pippins do.”

“I’m loving Pippins,” said her mother.

“Me too,” said Sasha.

