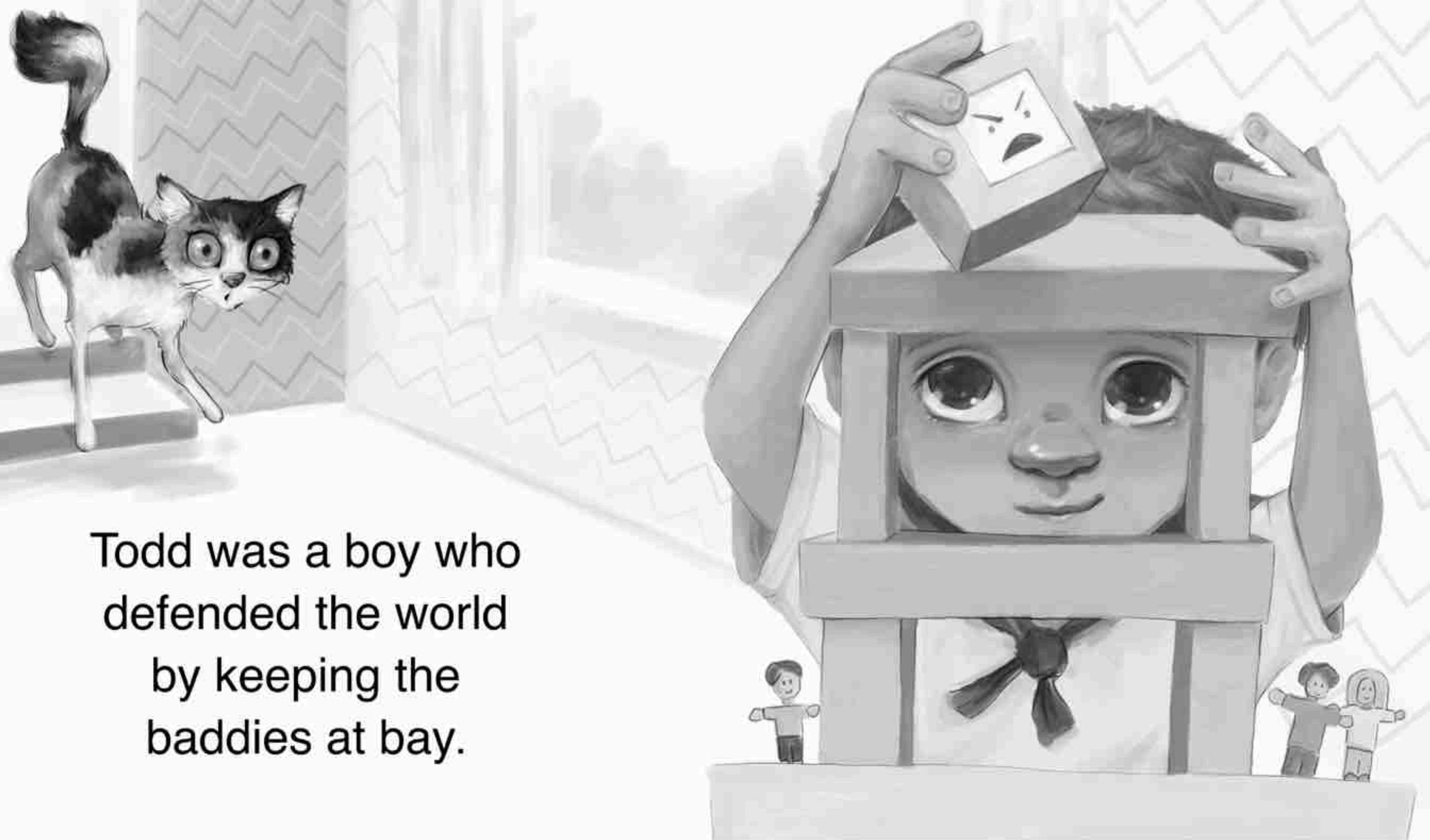




The Baddest of Baddies

Heather Bell

Todd was a boy who
defended the world
by keeping the
baddies at bay.





His Kitty demolished the
town when she twirled,
so Todd had to shoo her
away.



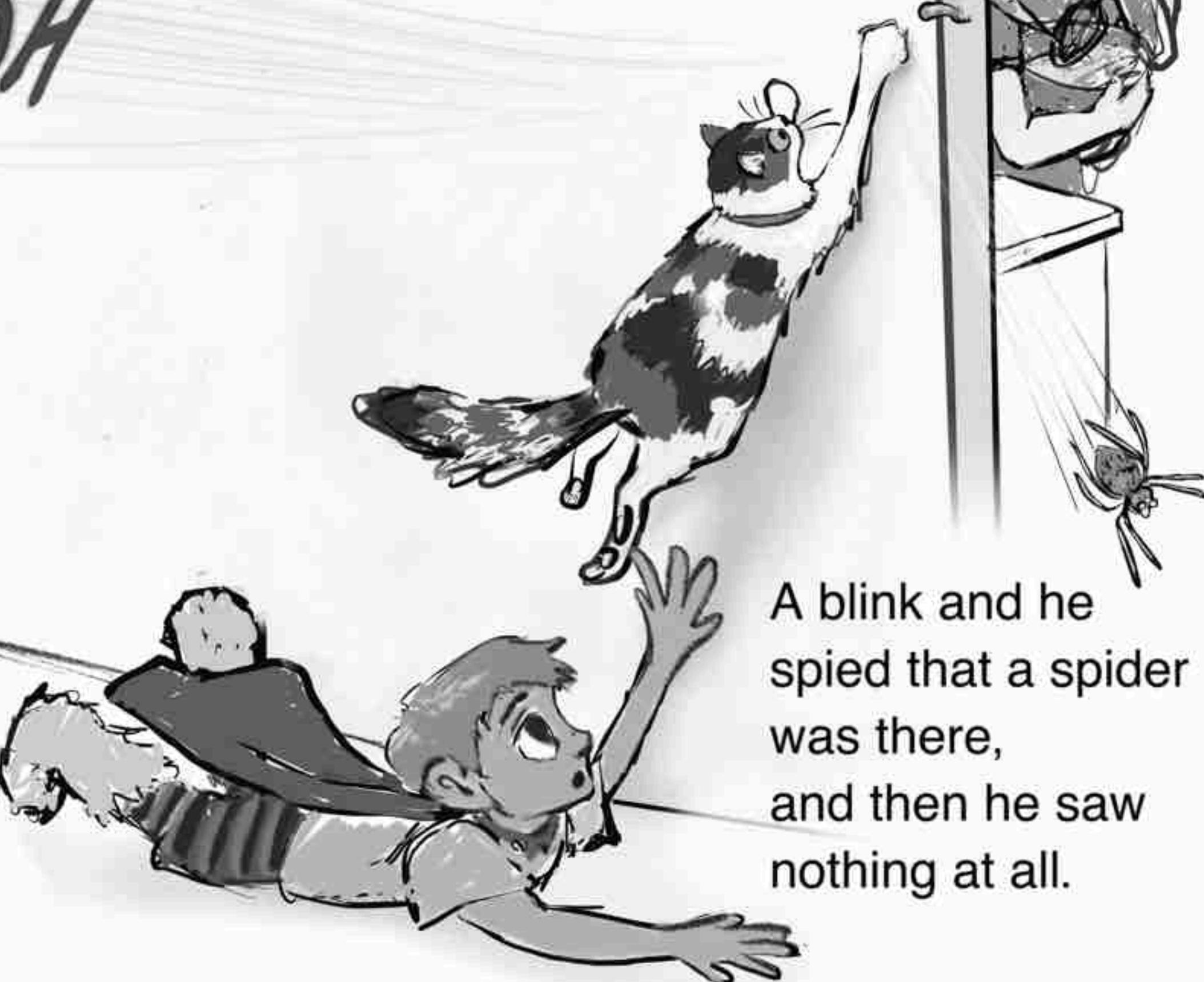
he would roar in his best hero voice.
Yet Kitty ignored all his pleas.



“I’m saving this town
and you give me no choice!”
But something caused Kitty to freeze.

WHOOSH

in a flash, Kitty leapt in the air.
A flutter of paws struck the wall.



A blink and he
spied that a spider
was there,
and then he saw
nothing at all.

Not “nothing” exactly, as something remained—the wall had a rainbowish splat.



shouted Todd with his awe unrestrained.
“Such fun I’d have squishing like that!”



Then off the cat scrambled and
Todd turned around
to find that his town was kaput.



He searched for his car that was
faster than sound.
There had to be baddies afoot.

A spider meandered, with much on his mind,
and forgot about looking both ways.

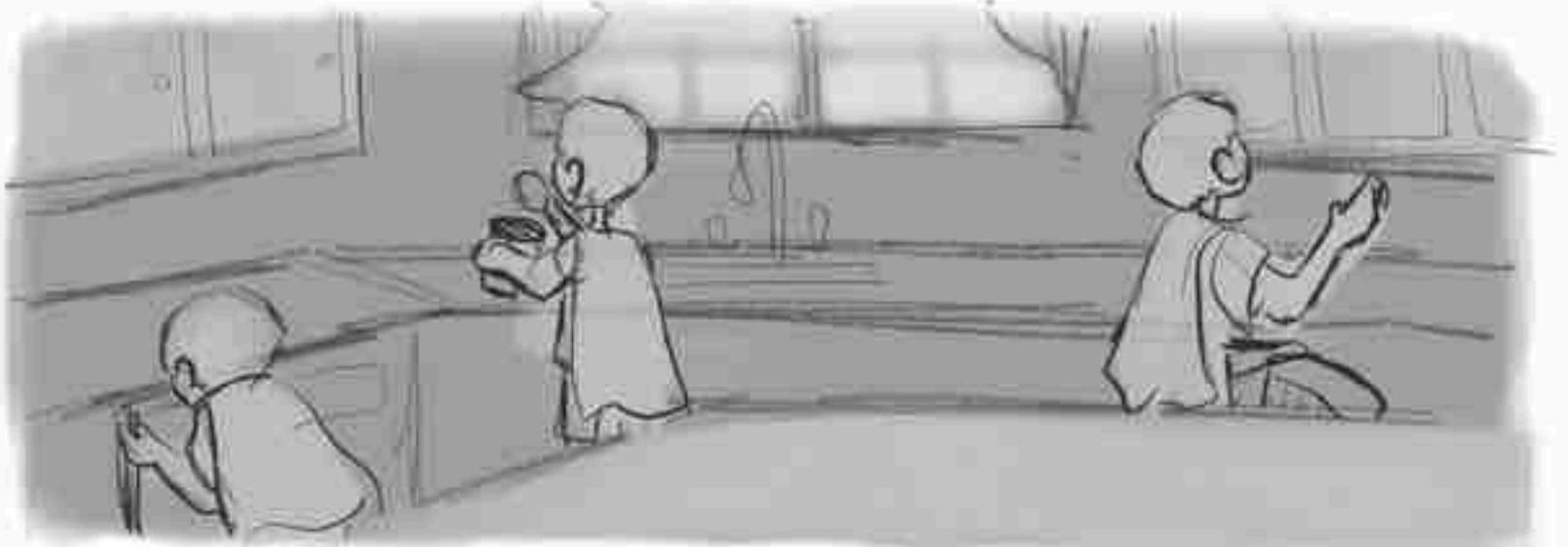


But soon he would find
that his fate was entwined
with a car that had wheels all ablaze.

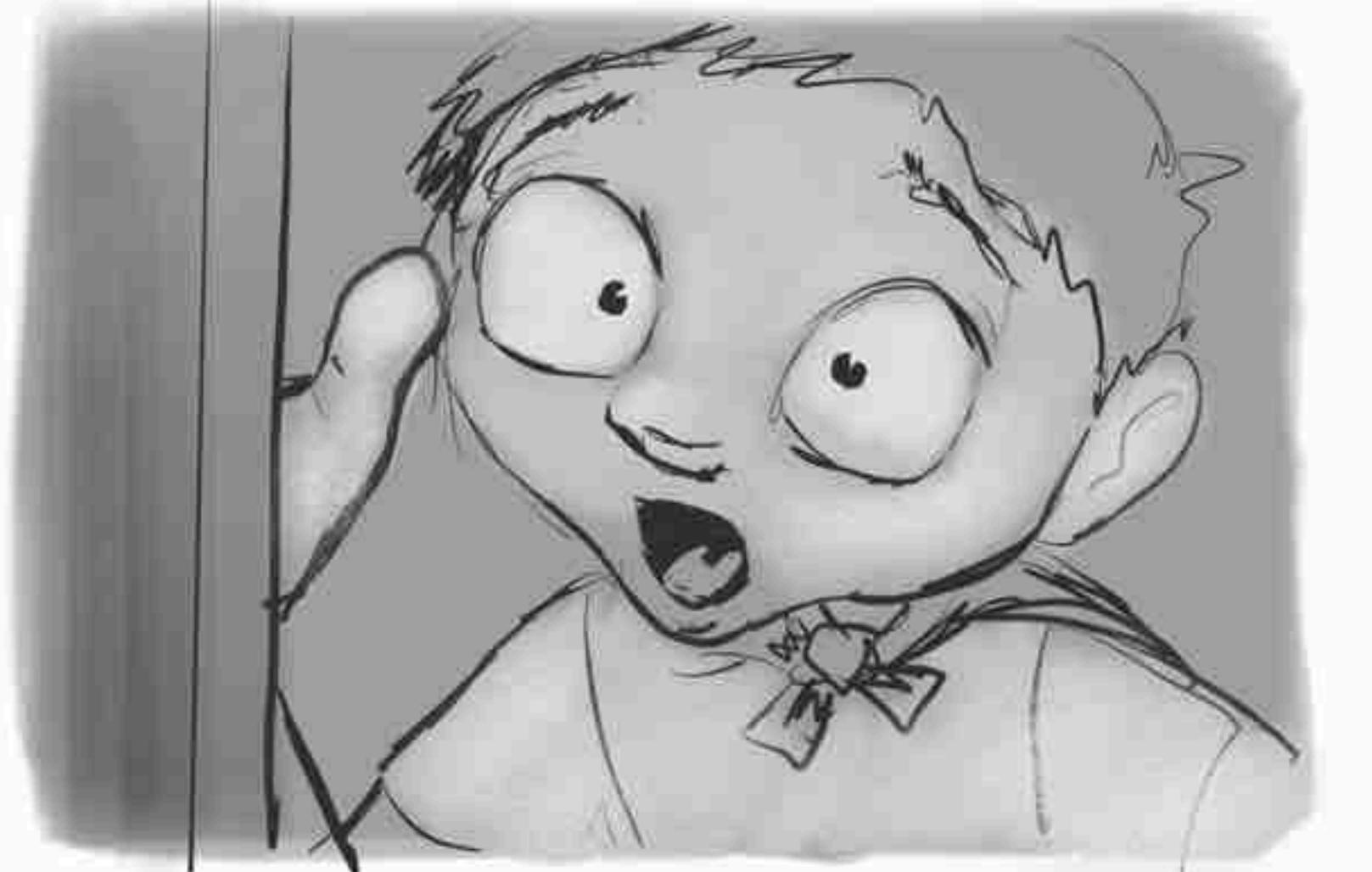


Todd picked up the car but did not
find the bug.

There was only chartreuse colored goo.
"Look there!"
shouted Todd to the cat from the rug.
"See, I got a baddie now too!"



A rumble began like a storm in his belly.
No question a snack was required.
He searched in the cupboard for something with jelly.
The splat left him strangely inspired.



He froze, and he gawked as a spider descended
to land on his most favorite snack...



“**MY COOKIES!**”

he shrieked. Left alone. Unattended.
“Don’t worry, sweets, I’ve got your back!”

With a gasp...



and a grasp...

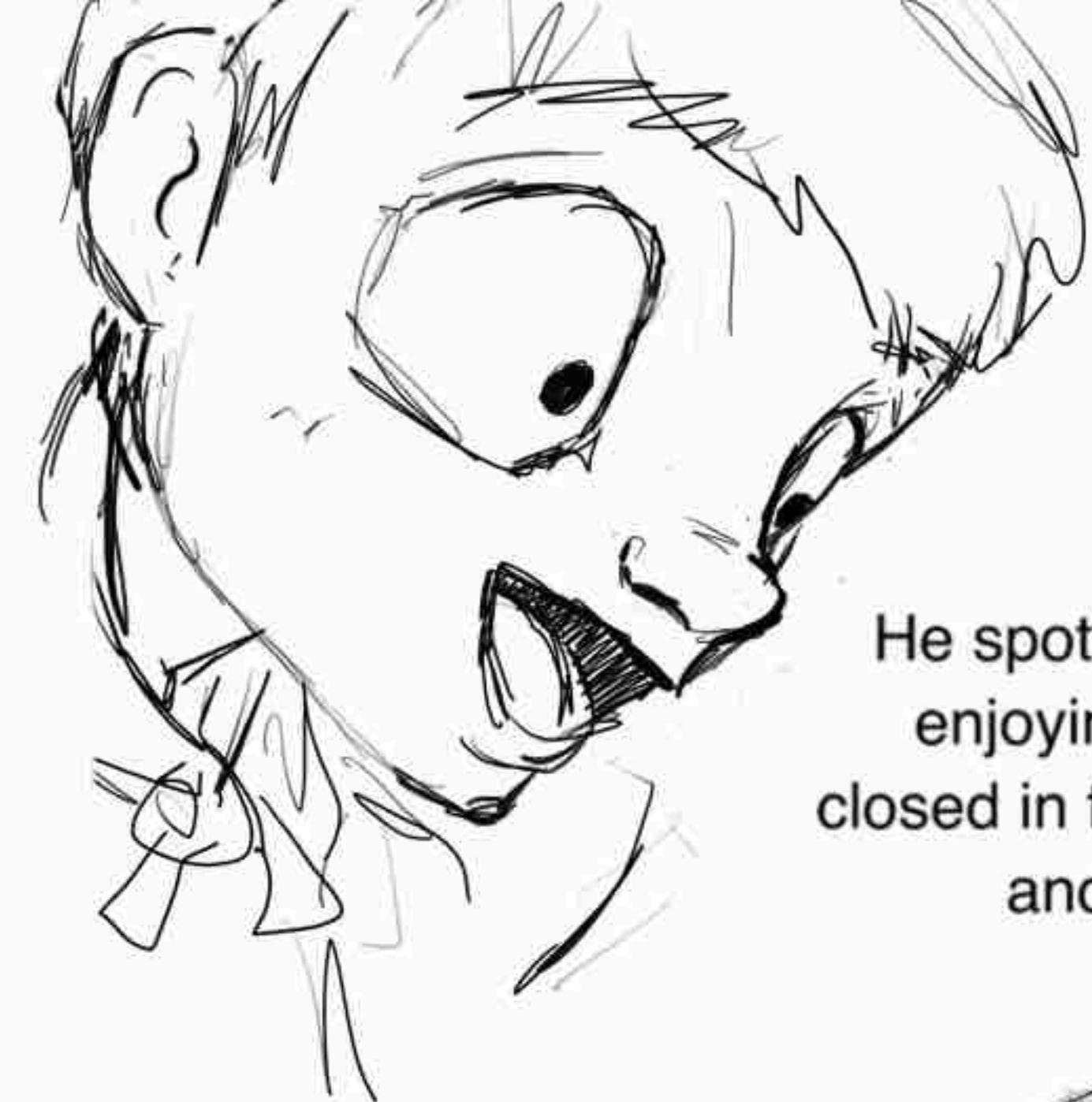


...of bananas to fling,
Todd gallantly wiped out the pest.
The cookies were safe, so he started
to sing,
“Take THAT, baddies, I am the best!”





Off once again, he discovered his ball,
Which was perfect for fending off foes.

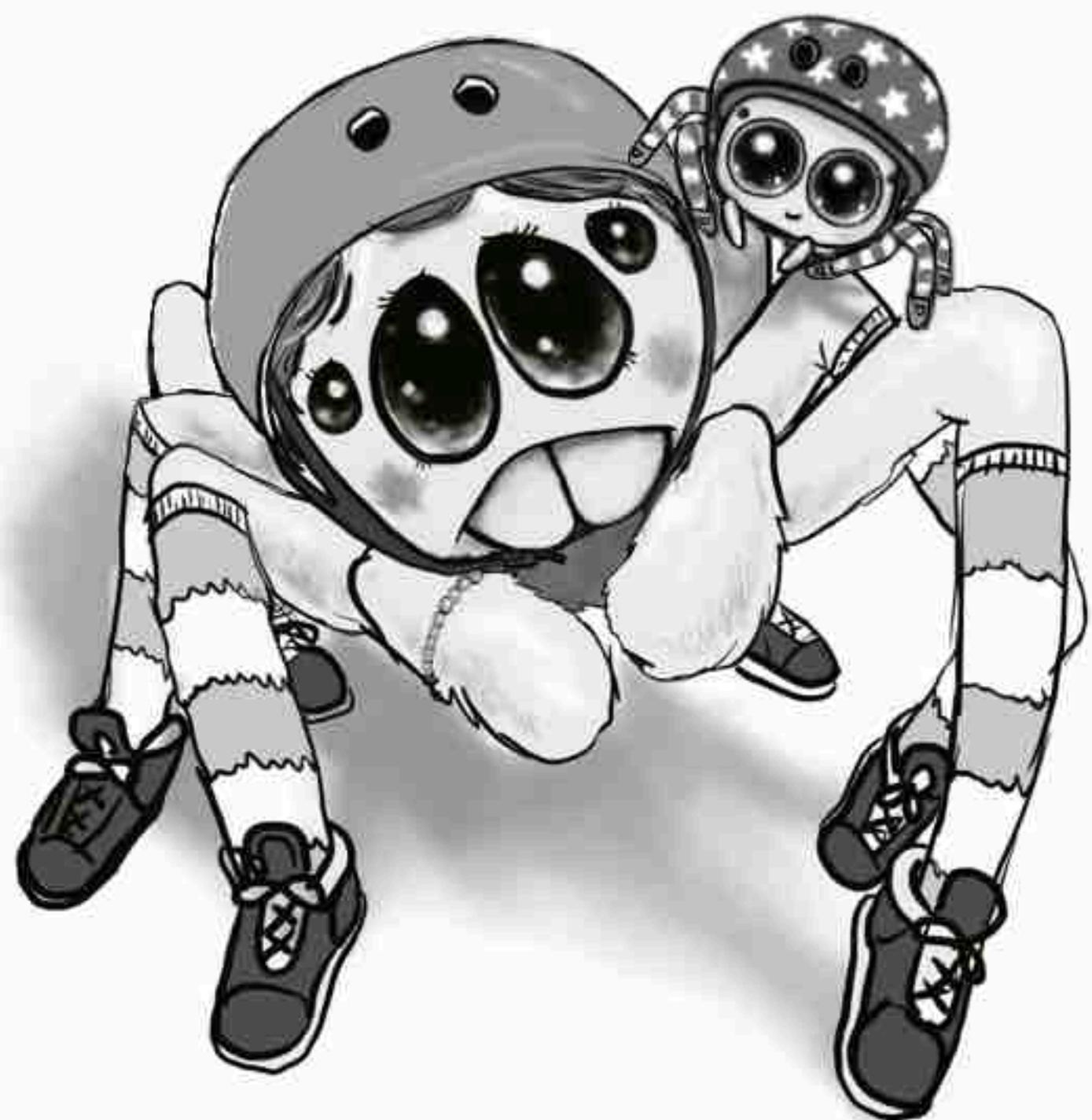


froze.

He spotted a spider
enjoying a crawl,
closed in for the squish,
and then...



There on her back was the tiniest tot.



“A baby!?”

Todd dropped to the floor.

“How can a baddie have babies?” He thought (feeling bad he’d been squishing before).

Then WHOOSH went a paw...

...but the cat overshot.



Todd knew that he had to be quick.
"I have to protect the poor spiders," he thought.

And that's when he spotted
the stick.



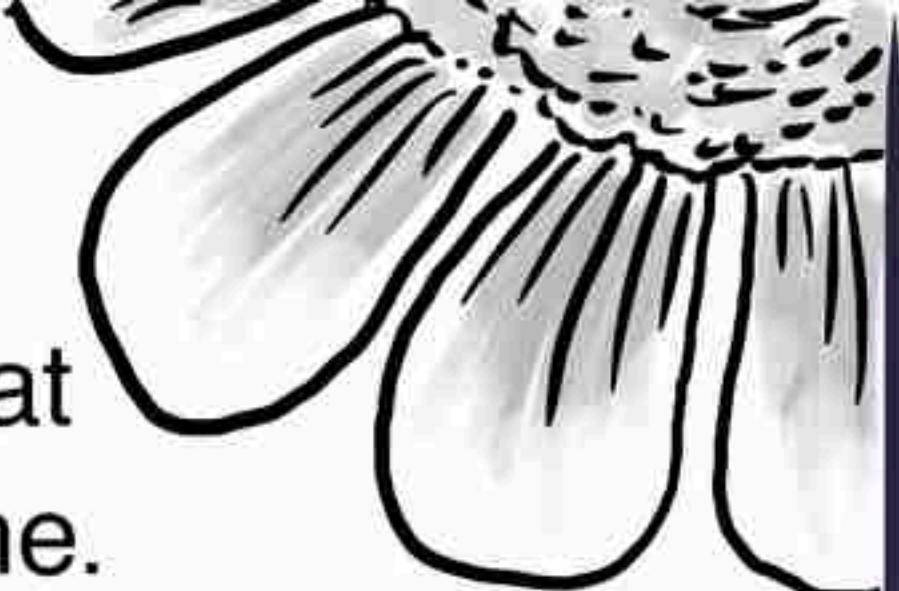
He kept the arachnids away from the cat
while thinking of where they could hide.
He noticed a window; said, "Hey, look at that..."



What if I take you
outside?"



He opened the window, and then
they were free
to live out their days in the sun.
A hero was what the boy wanted
to be...



...and that is what
Todd had become.

