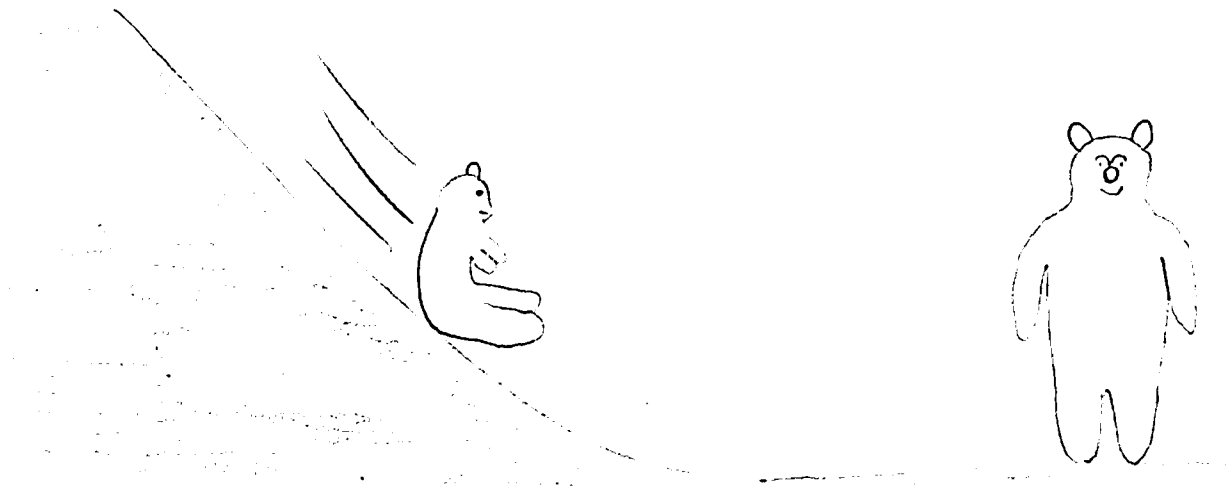


Never Give Up

Once upon a time there lived a happy little polar bear named Ben. He was only one year old and lived with his father, Paw, in the icy terrain of Antarctica. Ben was white and fuzzy and loved to roll around in the snow. He would slide down icy hills and go swimming in the icy ocean. Ben would play while his father would catch them both food.



At night, the two would eat supper and cuddle up in bed so Ben could stay warm from the harsh elements. Life as a polar bear was going great for Ben until one warm day in August. The two were walking along the frozen ocean surface. Ben was slipping and sliding while Paw was searching for fish beneath the surface.

“Look at me daddy”

“You’re too close to the edge Ben,” Paw.

“I’m fine dad. You’re just being worrisome.”

“You’re too close to the edge. Please come over here.”

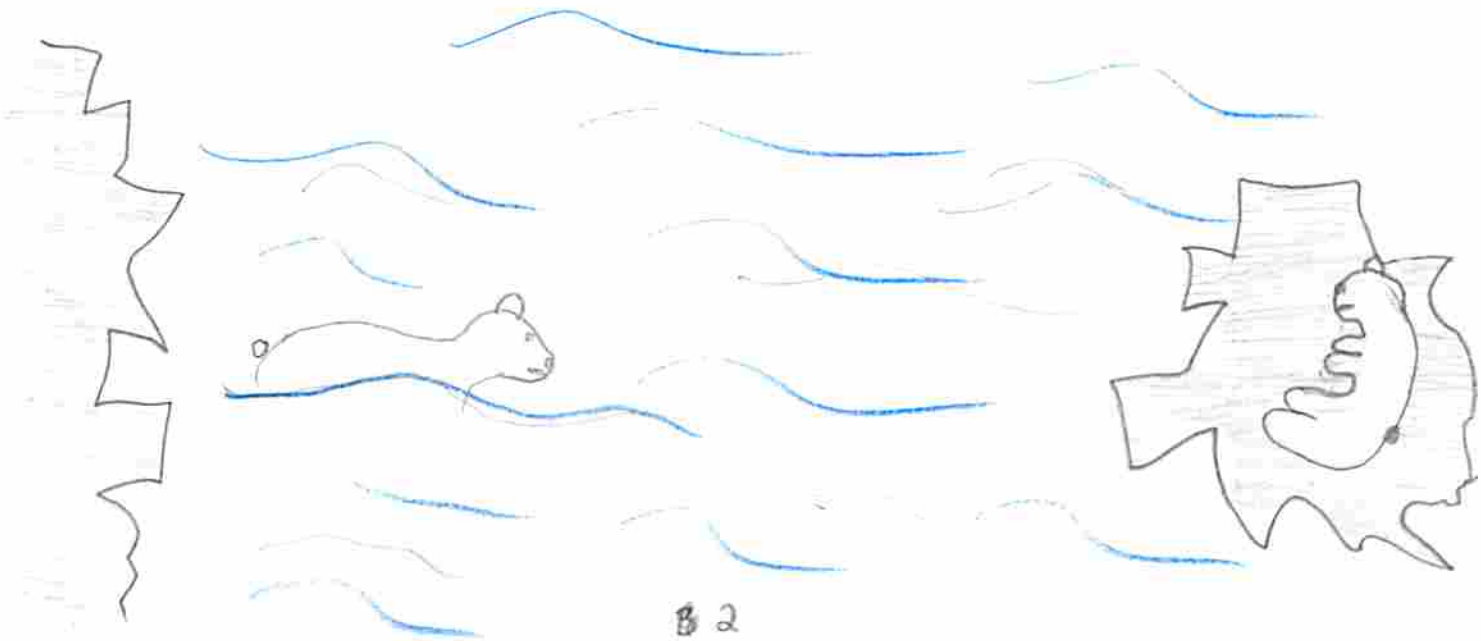
Just then they both heard a loud crack. The ice had cracked in between Ben and Paw. Ben was now on an island of ice that was floating away.



“Ah help!” Ben was very frightened.

“I’m coming!” Paw replied.

Paw ran over to the edge where the ice had cracked. Another loud cracking noise echoed through the icy plains as Paw fell into the ice cold water. He tried to swim to the piece of ice where his son stood but the current was too strong. Ben was being taken into the open waters.

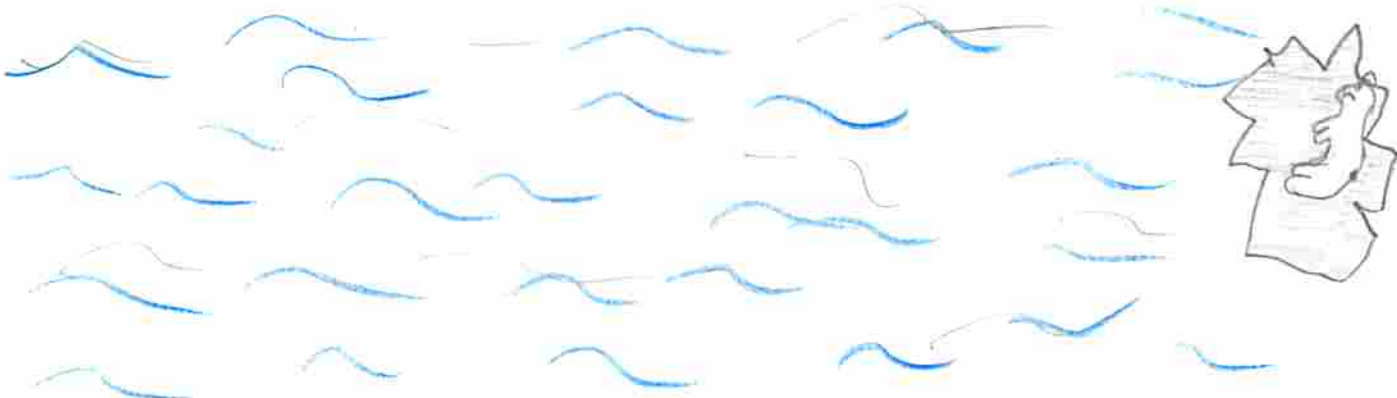


“Daddy, help me!” Ben screamed in terror.

Ben was scared but Paw was even more scared. He couldn’t stand to see his son drift off to sea.

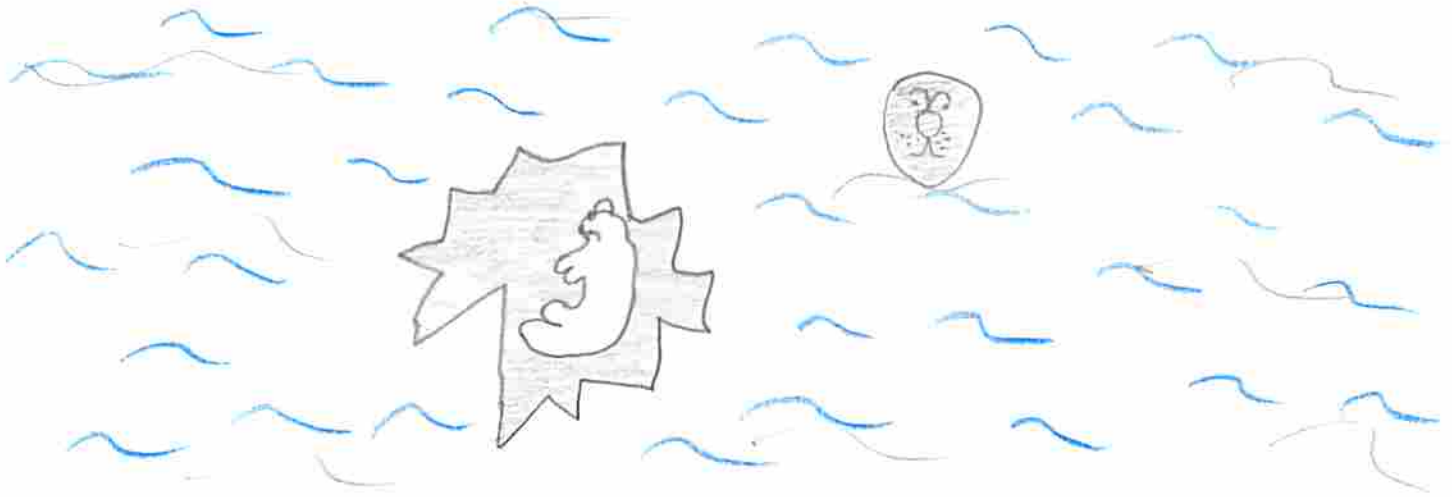
“I will see you again Ben. I promise you.”

Paw and his son stared each other in the eyes until they were distant specs on the horizon. They were both overwhelmed with sadness. They were scared they would never see each other again.



As clouds passed by overhead, Ben could do nothing but sit on his patch of ice and float with the current. All he could think about was how much he missed his father. He had no idea where he was and no idea how to get back to his home. He was floating through places he had never seen before. There were ice burgs all around him and water surrounding him in every direction. All of the sudden, a seal popped its head out of the water right in front of Ben.

“Hey there. Are you ok?” The seal asked Ben.



“No. I got separated from my dad and now I’m lost,” Ben said as he began to cry.

“My name is Sam and I would love to help you find your dad,” The seal replied.

“Really?”

“Absolutely. So tell me how you got separated from your father.”

Ben began to tell Sam his story. Ben described the ice cave that they lived in and the slippery hills he used to slide down. Sam did not know exactly where this place was but he believed they could find it with a little help. Using his powerful flippers, Sam directed Ben’s ice chunk towards a patch of mainland where a group of penguins were resting.

“Excuse me. May ask you for some help?” Sam said to the group of penguins.

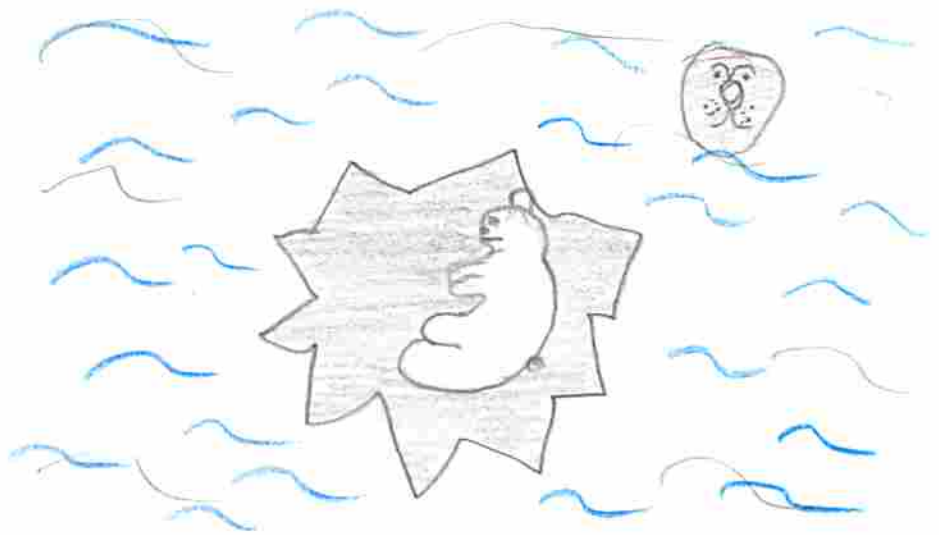
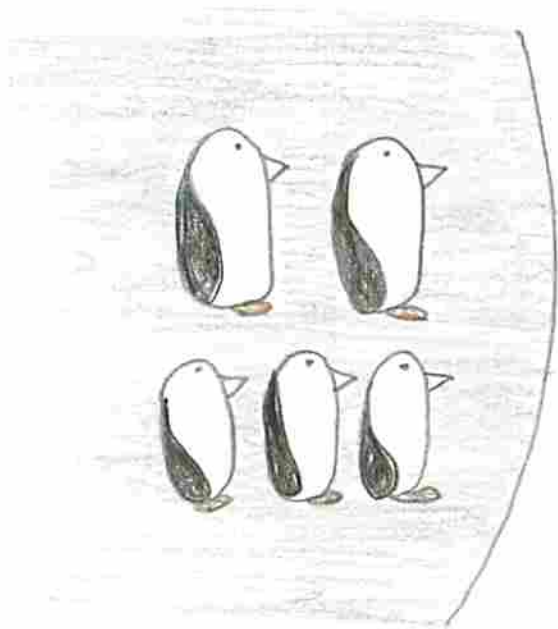
“Of course you can,” They all said at the same time.

Sam began to tell Ben’s story and described the place they were looking for with the ice cave and the slippery hills.

“Do you know where I might be able to find such a place?” Sam asked.

“That way!” All the penguins pointed to the North.

“Thank you very much!”



Ben got a burst of excitement. He had new hope that he would see his father once again. The two continued North for hours and hours, and hours and hours. There was no sign of Ben's home. Ben was losing hope. He was beginning to accept the fact that he would never see his father again.

"Maybe we should just give up Sam," Ben said to Sam in a soft voice.

"Give up? No way! This is your whole life. Your dream is to be with your father again. You can't ever give up on your dreams Ben. We will find your dad."

"Ok."

Sam directed the ice chunk towards an ice burg where a whale was resting.

"Excuse me. May I ask you for some help?" Sam said to the whale.

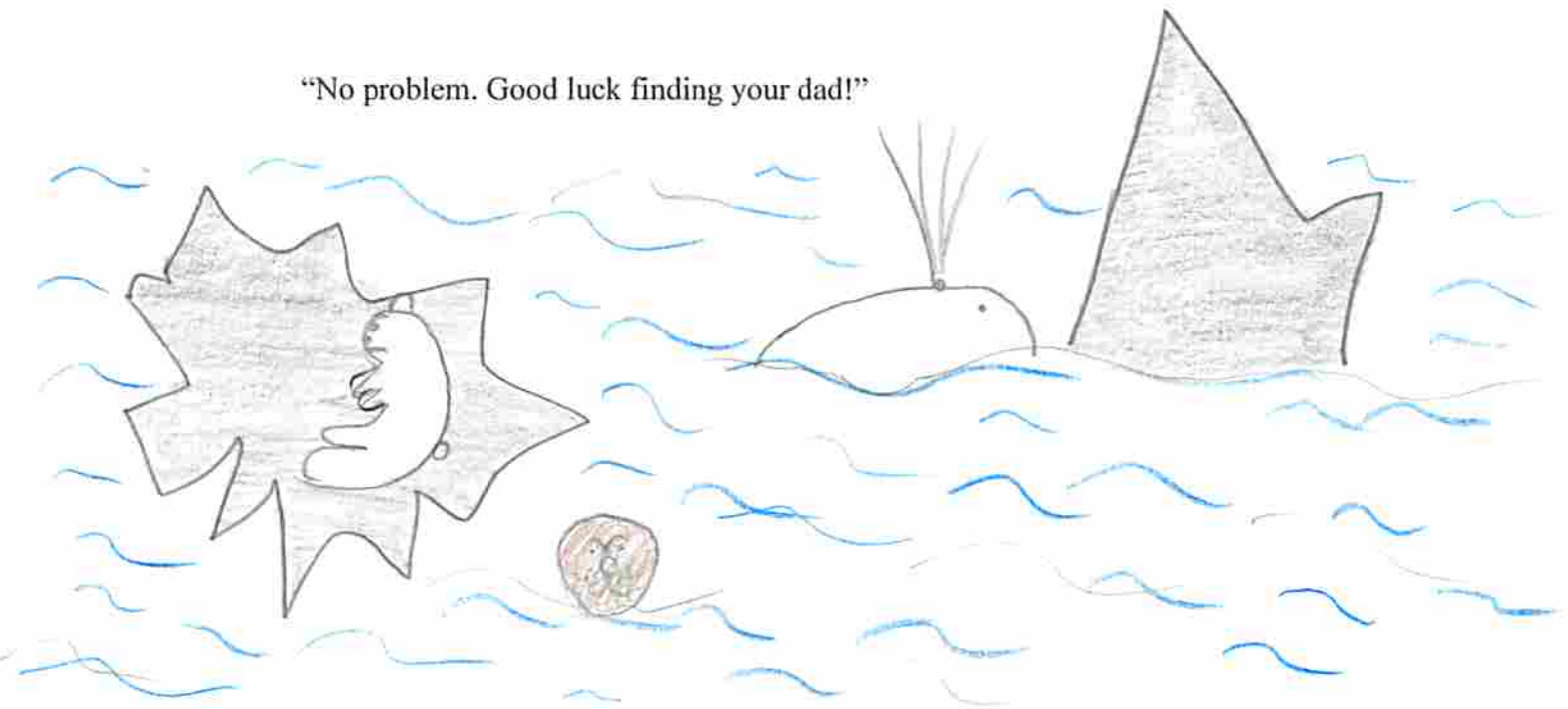
"Of course. What can I help you with?" The whale replied.

Sam once again began to describe Ben's story and the place they were trying to find with the ice cave and the slippery hill.

"Oh yes I know where that is. You must go North East for about two miles and you should be very close," The whale said with confidence in his voice.

"Thank you very much!" Ben and Sam replied.

“No problem. Good luck finding your dad!”



Ben got an even bigger burst of excitement this time as he was certain he would find his father. The two traveled north east for hours and hours until they reached a patch of mainland that looked very familiar to Ben.

“This is my home!” Ben shouted.

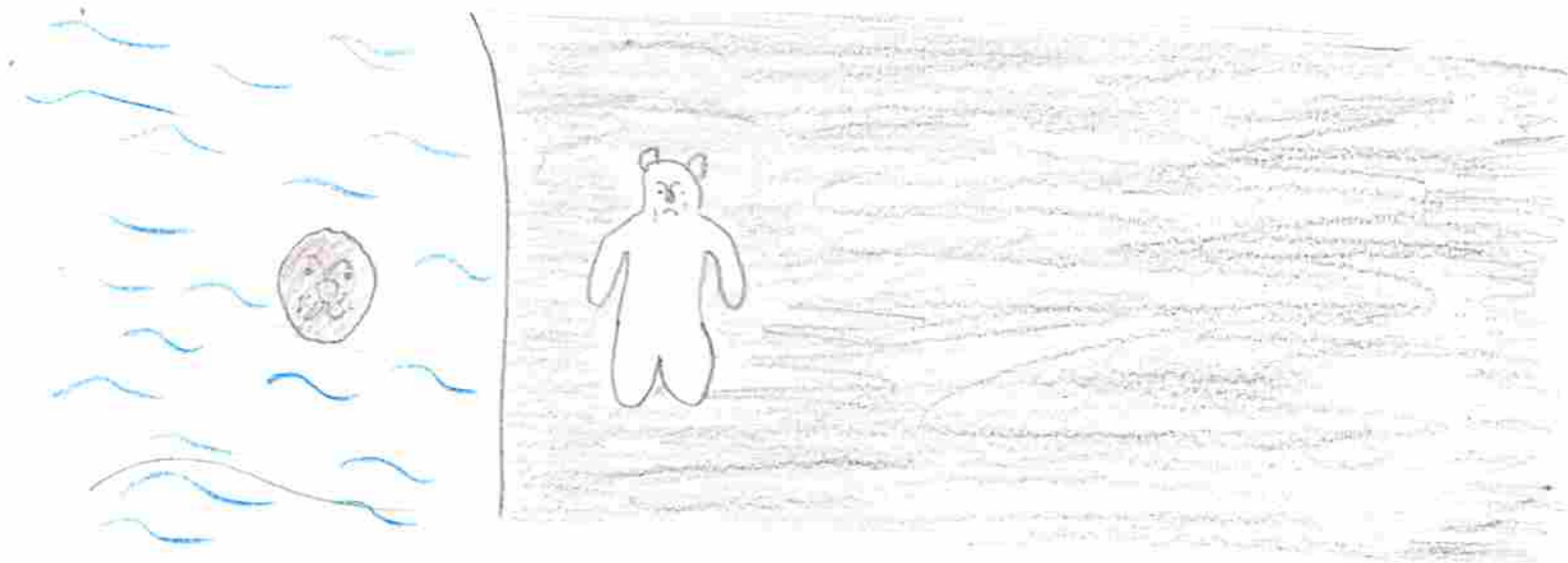
Ben was overwhelmed with excitement. When they reached the shore, Ben jumped off the ice block and ran as fast as he could to his home. He reached the ice cave and called at the top of his lungs,

“Daddy I’m home!”

But there was no response. Paw was nowhere to be seen. Not in their ice cave home and not on the slippery hill. Ben was devastated. He couldn’t believe his dad was gone. Ben slowly walked back to the shore where Sam was waiting.

“He’s not here,” Ben said as he began to cry once again.

“I’m sorry Ben but we can’t give up. We will find your father.”



Just then the two were interrupted by a familiar call.

“Ben!!!”

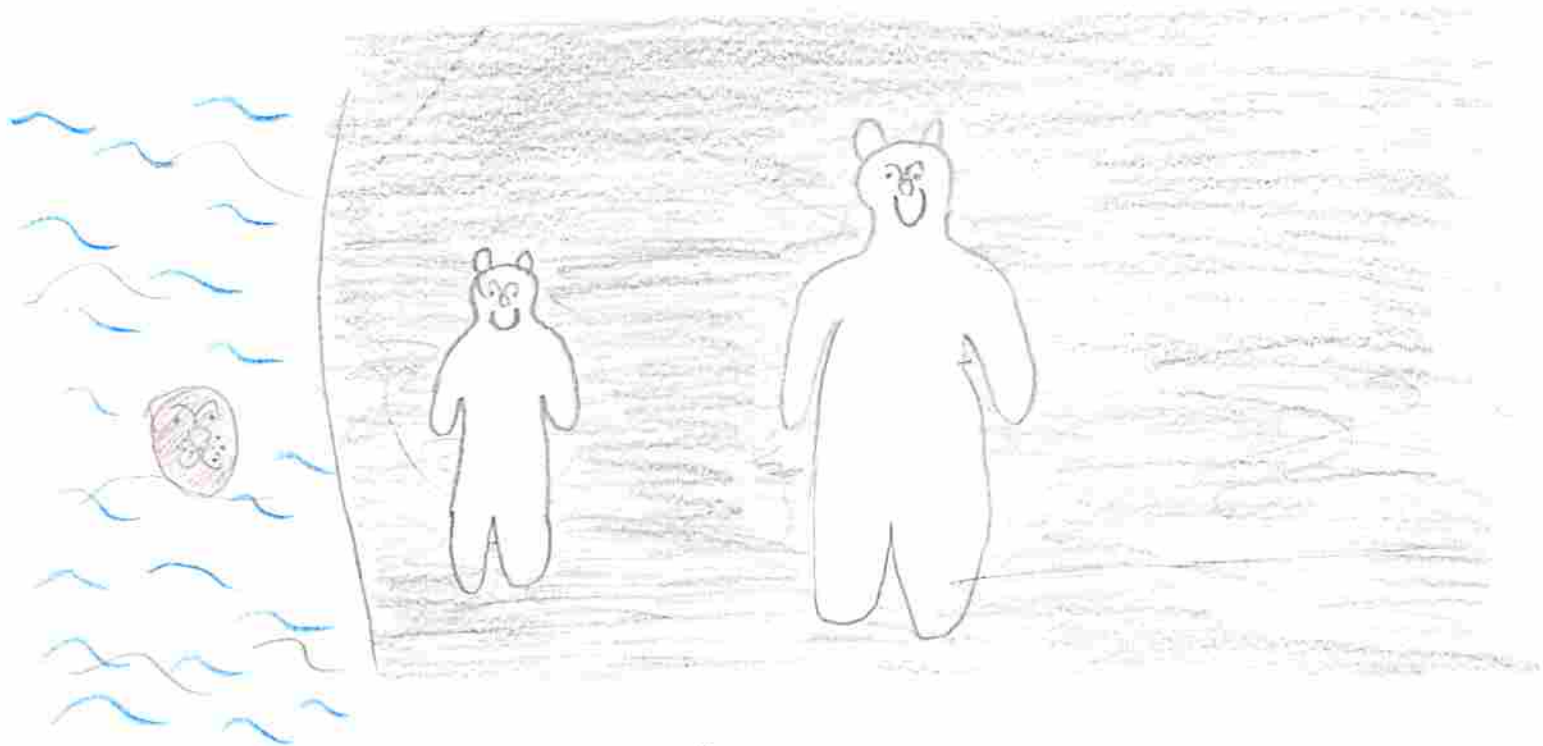
It was Paw! He was running full speed towards them. Ben’s heart leaped high into the air. He was the happiest he’s ever been.

“Dad!!!” Ben yelled at the top of his lungs.

The two embraced each other with a huge bear hug.

“I love you son.”

“I love you too dad.”



Paw and Ben were overwhelmed with joy. Their dreams had come true. They were reconnected. Ben looked over towards Sam and thanked him.

“Sam, I could have never found my dad without you. You gave me hope and never let me give up. Thank you.”

“It was my pleasure,” Sam replied.

Paw and Ben lived happily ever after as father and son and were consistently visited by there new best friend, Sam the seal.

