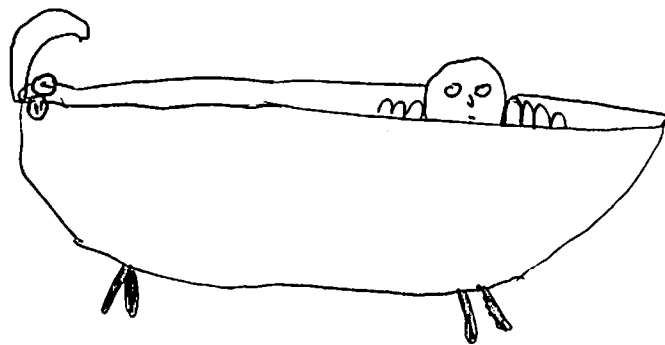


Baby on the Way

Once there was a boy named Charlie. Charlie was a good kid, who always ate his vegetables and never missed a bath.



One day Charlie's mother approached him and said with a smile. "Charlie, you're a very lucky boy. I've got a special surprise for you."

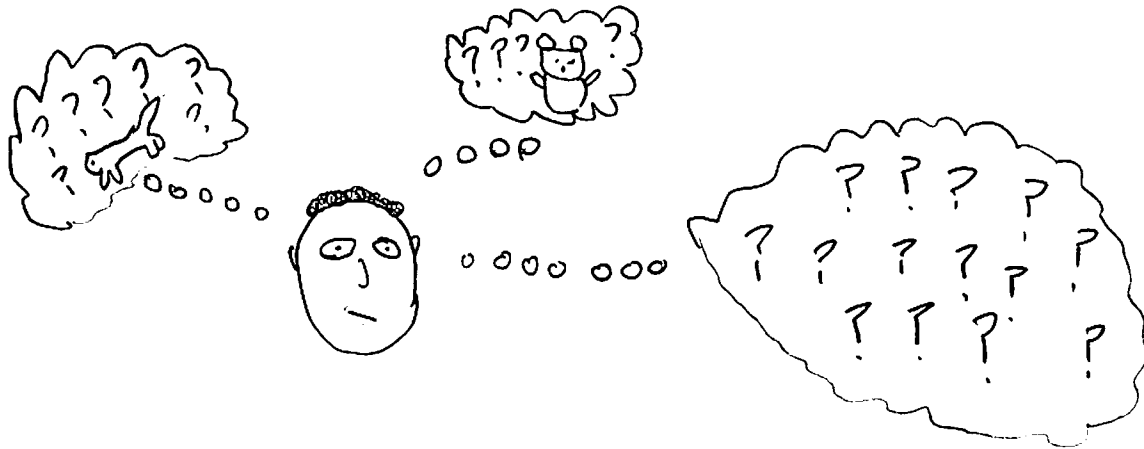
Charlie loved surprises, especially surprises that were given to him. But he wondered what this one could be. He had always wanted a pet dinosaur, but he doubted that what his mother was going to get him. She didn't like it when Charlie brought his toy dinosaurs to the table and he doubted she would enjoy having one beg for food at every meal. Maybe it would be a bike. Charlie loved to watch the kids outside ride up and down the block on their bikes. He always wanted to go out there and try it with them. But every

time he asked his mom if he could, she always replied that he was too young and to wait until when he was older.

Charlie began to grow more and more curious about what this surprise for him could be. He decided to ask his mom for hints.

"It's small and cute," she replied "And you'll love it."

Charlie wondered what was small and cute that he would love. He didn't love anything that was small and cute. He liked big kid things. Like trucks and sports and games. Big kids didn't like things that were soft and cute. He grew more curious.



Maybe his dad could give him a better hint than his mom, so he asked him.

"It's soft and fragile," said Charlie's dad.

Charlie didn't sleep with stuffed animals anymore, so it couldn't be that. And Charlie's parents didn't give him fragile things to play with because their fear that he would break

Finally Charlie grew too curious and asked his mom to tell him what the surprise was. "You're going to have a sister," she responded.

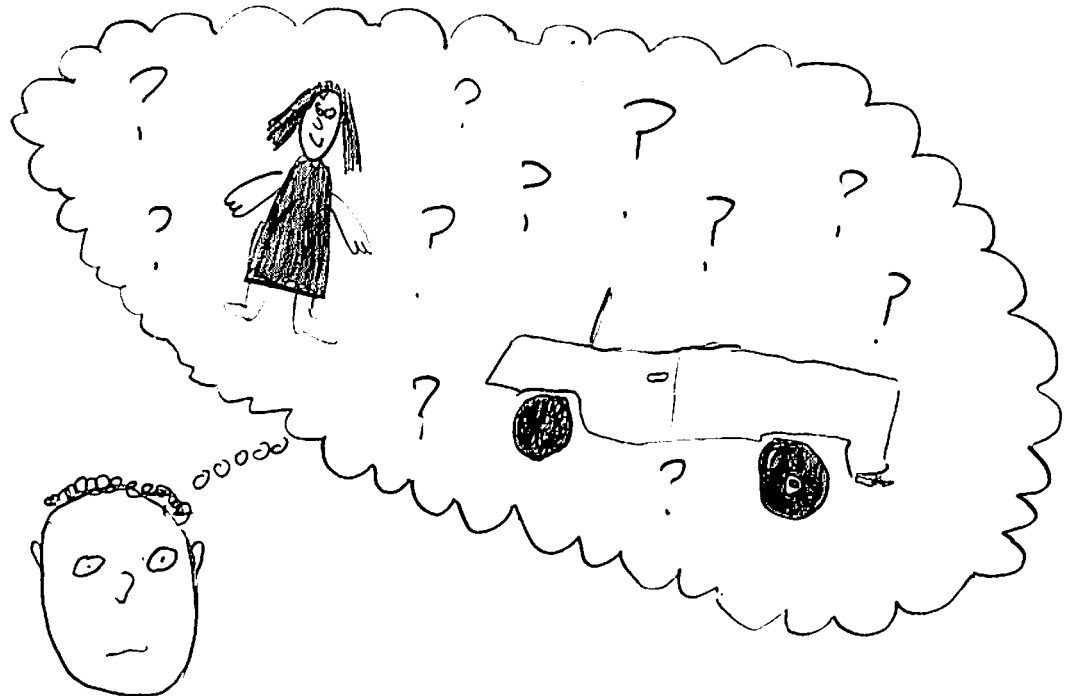
A sister? Charlie didn't think that was such a good surprise. Girls were slimy and weird. He didn't want to share his things with one. He liked his life the way things were. He began to grow worried.

The next day he approached his mom and told her how he felt about having a sister.

"Charlie, growing up means learning to share and love your family, this is a way to do both. You want to be a big kid one day, right?"

Charlie did want to be a big kid. And in order to do that he had to grow up, and if this would help out he decided that living with a sister wouldn't be that bad.

But what would it be like living with a little kid? Charlie wanted to do big kid things, he didn't think that his little sister would want to do these things. She would want to do girly, little kid things. She wouldn't want to ride bikes up and down the block with him. She would want to sit and play with dolls. The only dolls Charlie liked were ones that played with guns and rode in Army Jeeps. He doubted that a little sister would like those.



Charlie needed to find something that he had in common with a baby sister, but he just couldn't think of what.

None of Charlie's friends were girls, so he couldn't ask them what girls like. He thought that maybe he could ask his mom. She would definitely know what girls liked.



Charlie was nervous. He wanted to have something to have in common with his baby sister, but was worried that they wouldn't have anything in common at all. He went up to his mom, but something was different about her. Her stomach was growing.

"Mom, your stomach, it's getting bigger!" exclaimed Charlie.

"You're right it is. That's where the baby is growing," said Charlie's mom.

"That's what I wanted to talk to you about. I'm worried that her and me won't have anything in common. I really want us to get along with each other, but I'm not sure if we will or not," said Charlie, looking sad.

“That’s the beautiful thing about a sister Charlie, you don’t have to have anything in common with her. I just know that you will love her regardless. That’s the beauty in having a little sister.”

Charlie felt a lot better now. He now knew that even if he had nothing in common with her he would still love her. Now he wanted to have a sister more than ever.

“So mom, are you sure my new sister in there?” asked Charlie, pointing at his mothers stomach.

“Of course she is. Why don’t you come over here and feel her kick for yourself,” offered Charlie’s mom.

Charlie walked over and placed his hand on his mom’s stomach and felt a jerk. “Mom! I felt it,” exclaimed Charlie.

“That’s her way of letting you know that she thinks you’ll be a great brother no matter what,” said Charlie’s mom with a smile.

