

My Magic Ears

A Misophonia Story

Written by Vicki Sladowski
Illustrated by R. M. Hansani.

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Dedicated to Chris, my devoted husband,
my wonderful children Kevin and Rebecca
and my pup, Suzy Bear. Thank you for your love,
understanding and continued support. I love you!



My name is Susie, and I have magic ears. My mommy bought them for me because noises make me hurt and mad! So mad! I just want to punch a wall! I am 10 years old, and I have Misophonia. That is a very big word that means that certain sounds make me very angry.



A few years ago, when I was 5 years old, my mommy picked me up from kindergarten, and I was always in a really bad mood. As soon as we got home, I started crying. Mommy would ask me, "What is wrong Susie?" I stayed very quiet.

A colorful illustration of a classroom. In the background, a green chalkboard with a brown frame displays the alphabet in three rows: 'a b c d e f g h i j k l', 'm n o p q r s t u', and 'v w x y z'. Four children are seated at wooden desks. On the left, a girl with long black hair and a yellow dress with pink polka dots is crying, covering her mouth with her hands. Behind her, a boy with short black hair and a yellow shirt is smiling and holding a pink pencil up in the air. In the center, a boy with short black hair and a red shirt is smiling and holding two pencils. On the right, a girl with curly brown hair and a red shirt is smiling and waving her hand. Each desk has some school supplies like pencils and books. The background wall has vertical pink and white stripes.

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I did not know why, but all of the other kids were so loud—
always Clanging pots and pans together during playtime.



Then during recess, they played jump rope, always laughing and screaming. It hurt my ears. I hated recess.



One day, I screamed, “Just shut up!” Everyone stopped playing and stared at me. I ran to the other side of the playground where I found a great big tree. I sat down under the tree and started to cry. That tree became my special place. Every day at recess, I would go sit under my special tree, away from the other kids, away from their giggles. I made it my own special game to stare up at the clouds and make special wishes. I wish my ears did not hurt. I wish I were normal like the other kids. I didn’t have any friends; no one wanted to talk to the weird girl by the tree.



I hated going to school. Kids were always being so obnoxious—tapping their pencils on the desks, sniffing and coughing. Some days, I would get so upset, I would run out of the classroom and start punching myself in the head, pulling my hair and crying.



Miss Sull, my teacher, would come after me.

"You cannot just run out of the classroom anytime you want, Susie! Now, you need to go back in that classroom and sit down," she would say.

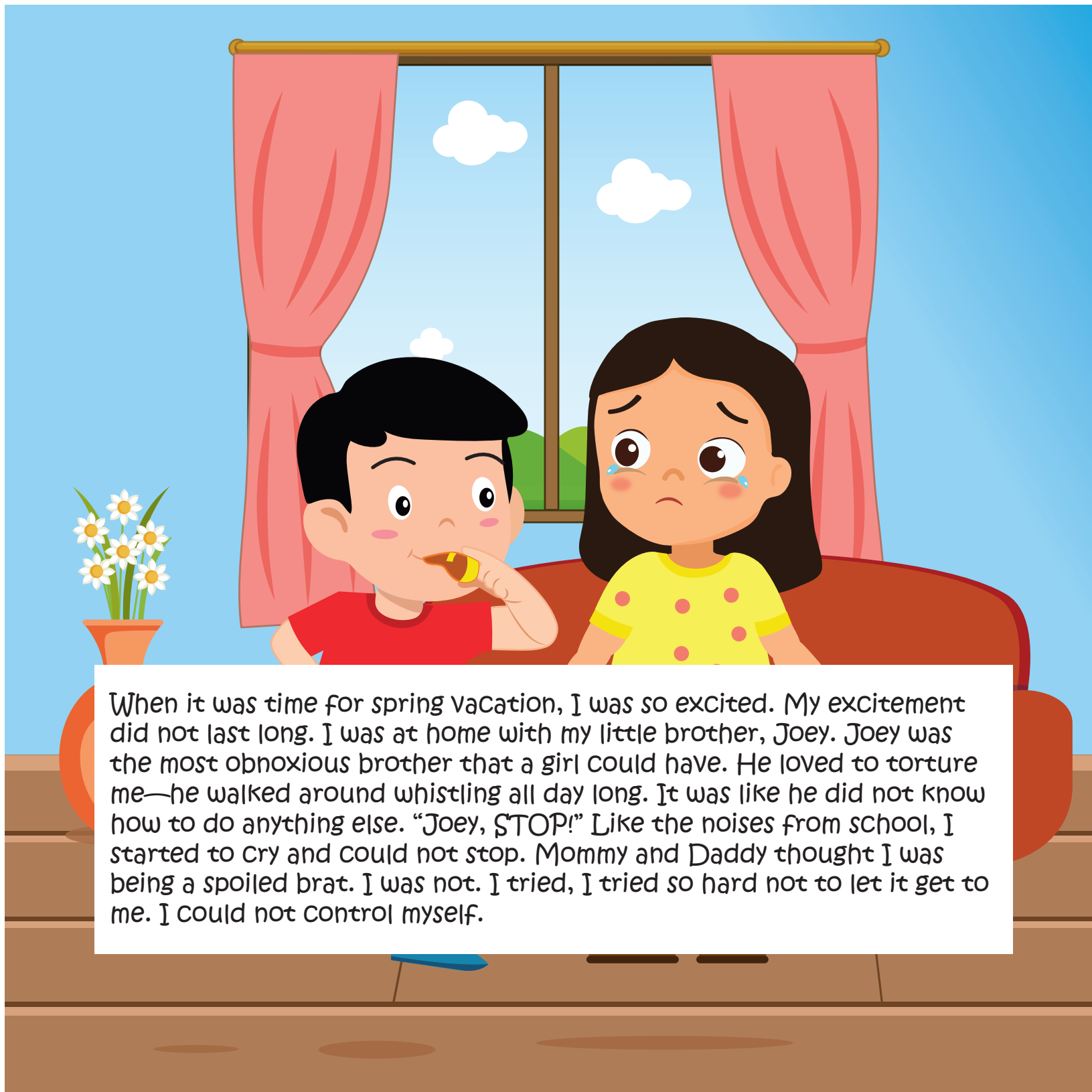
"But, Miss Sull, I can't."

"Yes, you can, Susie, now go!" I followed her back to the classroom, crying. This was my routine for the rest of the school year.





Mommy and Daddy have had several meetings with the principal. The principal told them that I have behavioral problems and that I was just trying to get attention. No! That is not it. I do not want attention. I just want to be left alone!



When it was time for spring vacation, I was so excited. My excitement did not last long. I was at home with my little brother, Joey. Joey was the most obnoxious brother that a girl could have. He loved to torture me—he walked around whistling all day long. It was like he did not know how to do anything else. “Joey, STOP!” Like the noises from school, I started to cry and could not stop. Mommy and Daddy thought I was being a spoiled brat. I was not. I tried, I tried so hard not to let it get to me. I could not control myself.

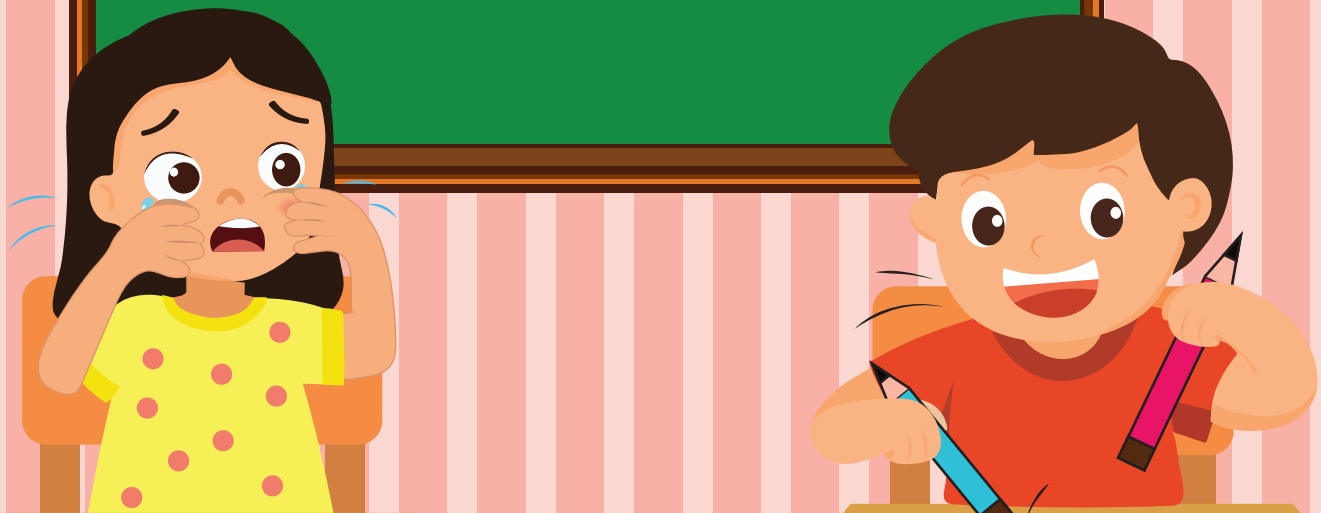




Lunchtime! “Joey, stop chewing like that! You sound like such a pig! Mommy, tell Joey to chew with his mouth closed!” Mommy would look up, roll her eyes, and say, “Oh Susie, you need to just ignore him and eat your lunch.”

“But Mommy...”

Mommy snapped, “No! Just ignore him and eat your lunch!” Sigh. After a few minutes, “Mommy, I am not hungry, may I be excused?” I marched off to my room and burst into tears. Later that night, I heard Mommy telling Daddy, “I do not know what is wrong with her. She is so moody. She has a tantrum over every little thing.” Great, my parents did not love me either. I was not lovable. Everybody hated me—even I hated me.



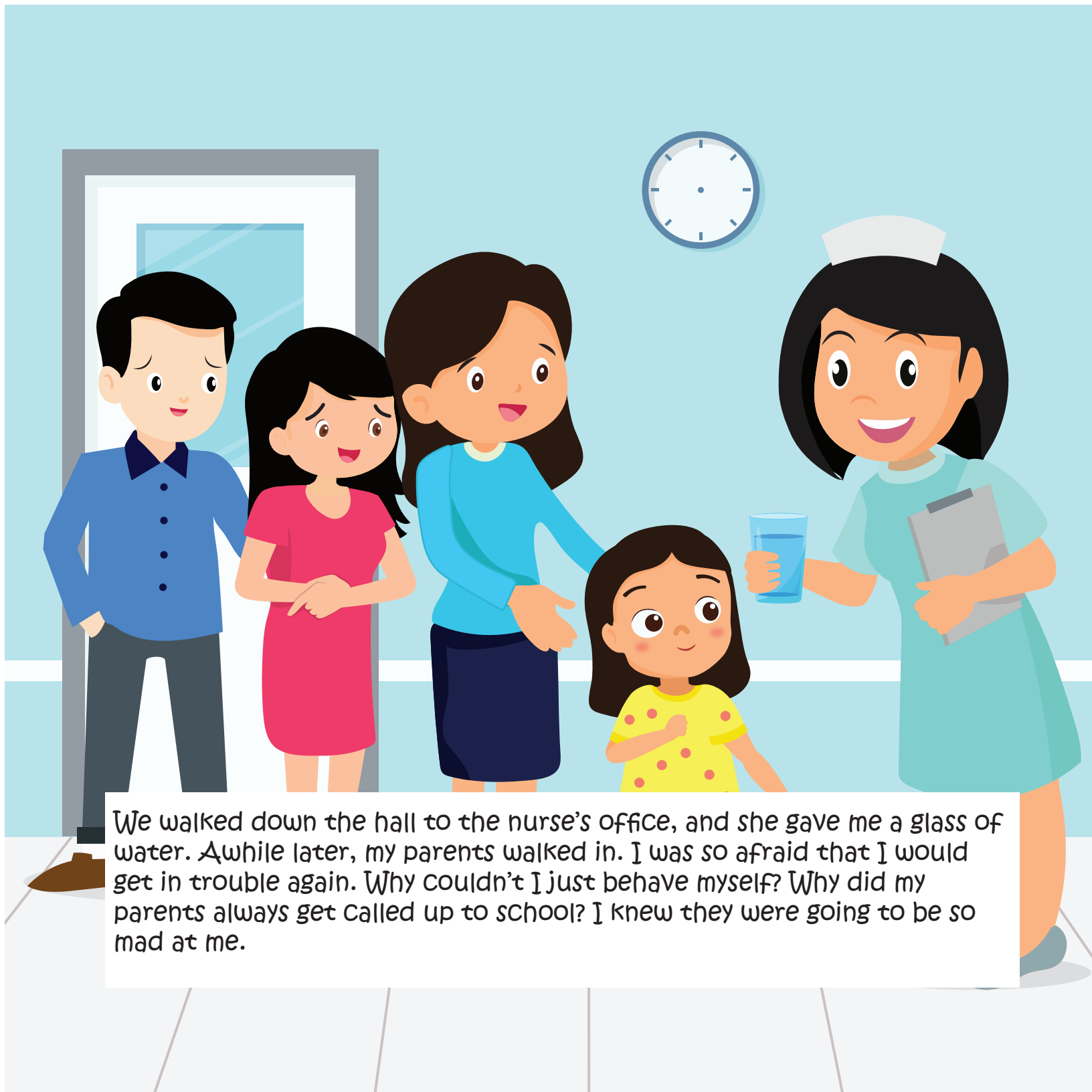
One Thursday afternoon, we had a substitute teacher, Miss Joseph. Jimmy, a boy who sat next to me, started tapping his pencil. "Please stop?" I said quietly. He continued to tap his pencil even harder. "JUST STOP IT." I ran out of the classroom and into the hallway where I was crying and pulling my hair. Suddenly, Miss Joseph came up to me. "Please do not make me go back in there?" I pleaded.

Miss Joseph sat down on the floor next to me. "I just need you to take some deep breaths, Susie. I will breathe with you. Come on, let's take a really deep breath together, and when you exhale, push that anger out with the air." She sat with me for a really long time until I finally stopped crying. She calmly asked, "Are you ready to talk?" I nodded my head. "Can you explain to me why you ran out of the classroom?" she asked.

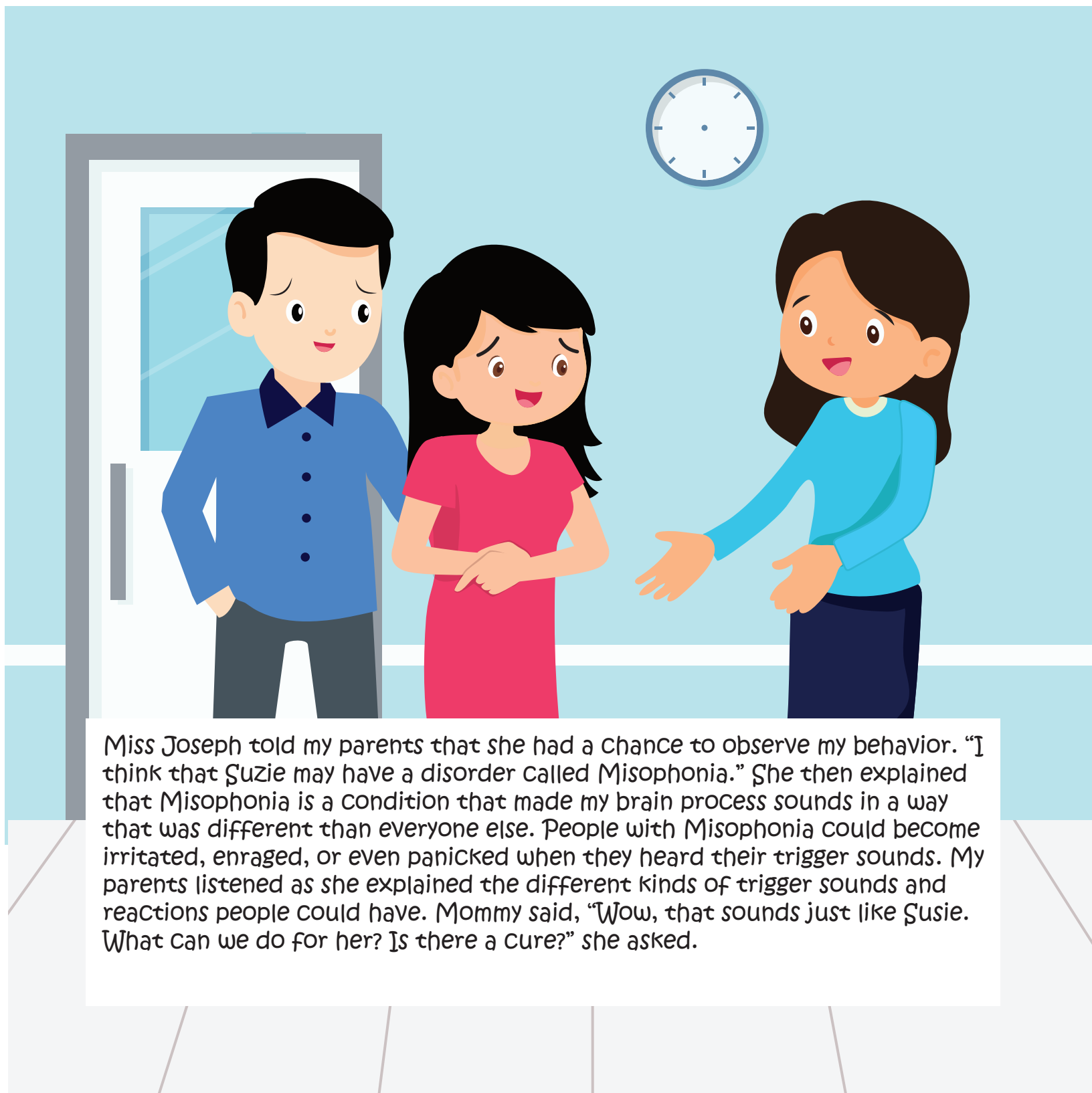




"I don't know. Jimmy was tapping his pencil, and he just would not stop. I just had to get away from him."
Miss Joseph looked at me, grabbed my hand in hers, smiled, and said,
"Don't worry, Susie. I think everything is going to be okay."



We walked down the hall to the nurse's office, and she gave me a glass of water. Awhile later, my parents walked in. I was so afraid that I would get in trouble again. Why couldn't I just behave myself? Why did my parents always get called up to school? I knew they were going to be so mad at me.



Miss Joseph told my parents that she had a chance to observe my behavior. “I think that Suzie may have a disorder called Misophonia.” She then explained that Misophonia is a condition that made my brain process sounds in a way that was different than everyone else. People with Misophonia could become irritated, enraged, or even panicked when they heard their trigger sounds. My parents listened as she explained the different kinds of trigger sounds and reactions people could have. Mommy said, “Wow, that sounds just like Susie. What can we do for her? Is there a cure?” she asked.



A week later, we visited the audiologist, and after she asked me a bunch of questions, she did some hearing tests. She confirmed that I do have Misophonia.



My mommy bought me a pair of magic ears. When I put them on, I did not hear all of the sounds that triggered me. I love my magic ears! Today, I am 10 years old, and I wear my magic ears everywhere.



Now because of my magic ears, I love to go to school, and guess what? I even made some friends. All because of that special day when Miss Joseph came into my life.

