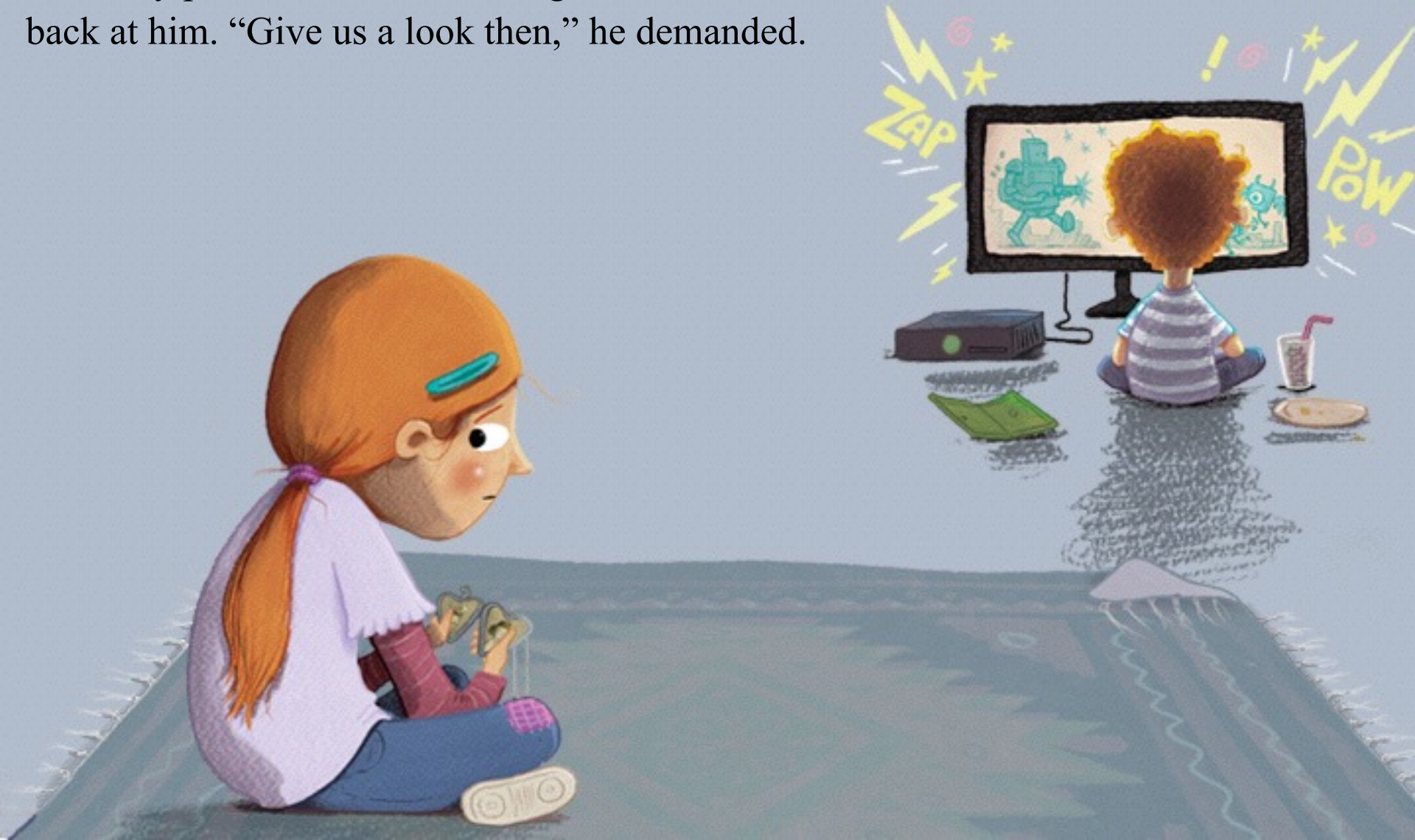


It had been her grandmother's and now it was hers. Leah held the locket tight in the palm of her hand and squeezed her eyes shut.

Gary peered at her, "You alright?" She nodded back at him. "Give us a look then," he demanded.



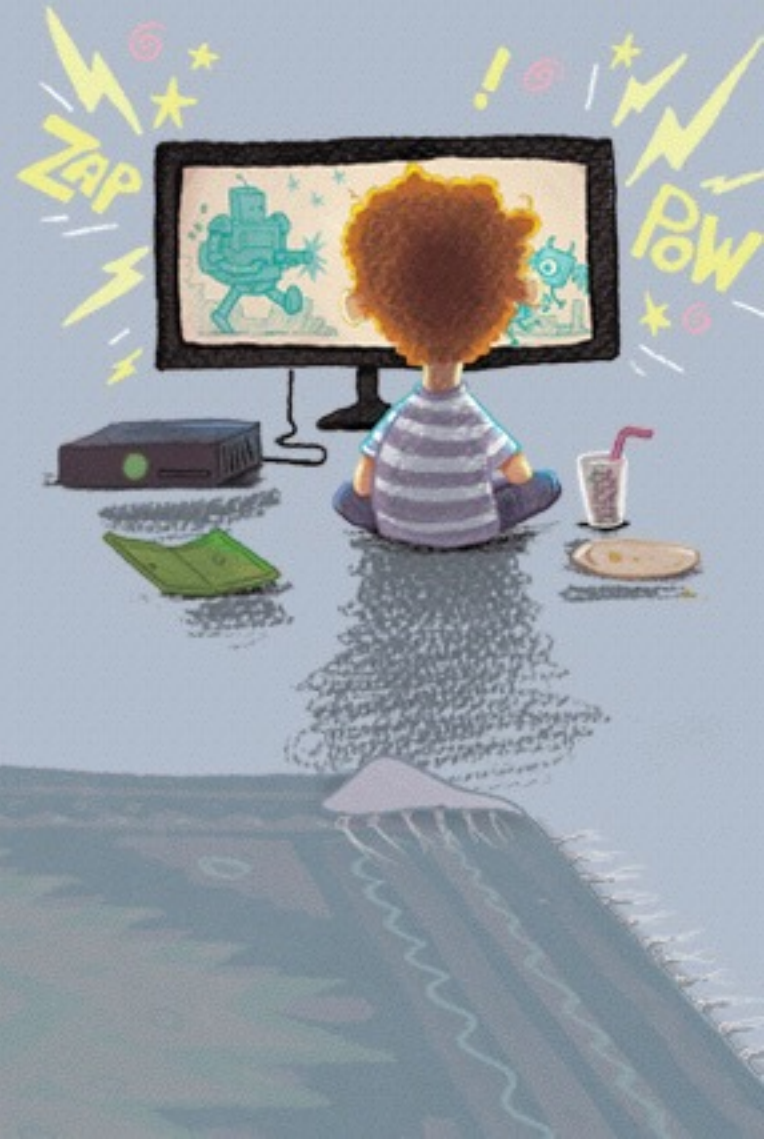
The silver locket was the shape of a small heart and on the outside surface, someone had etched the letters GH/SH above the date – 1954. Gently, Leah opened the catch and inside Gary could see two tiny photos – his gran and grandad when they had been younger. He grunted and ran off to play on his Xbox. Gary never seemed to mind anything. Leah envied the way he took everything in his five-year-old stride.



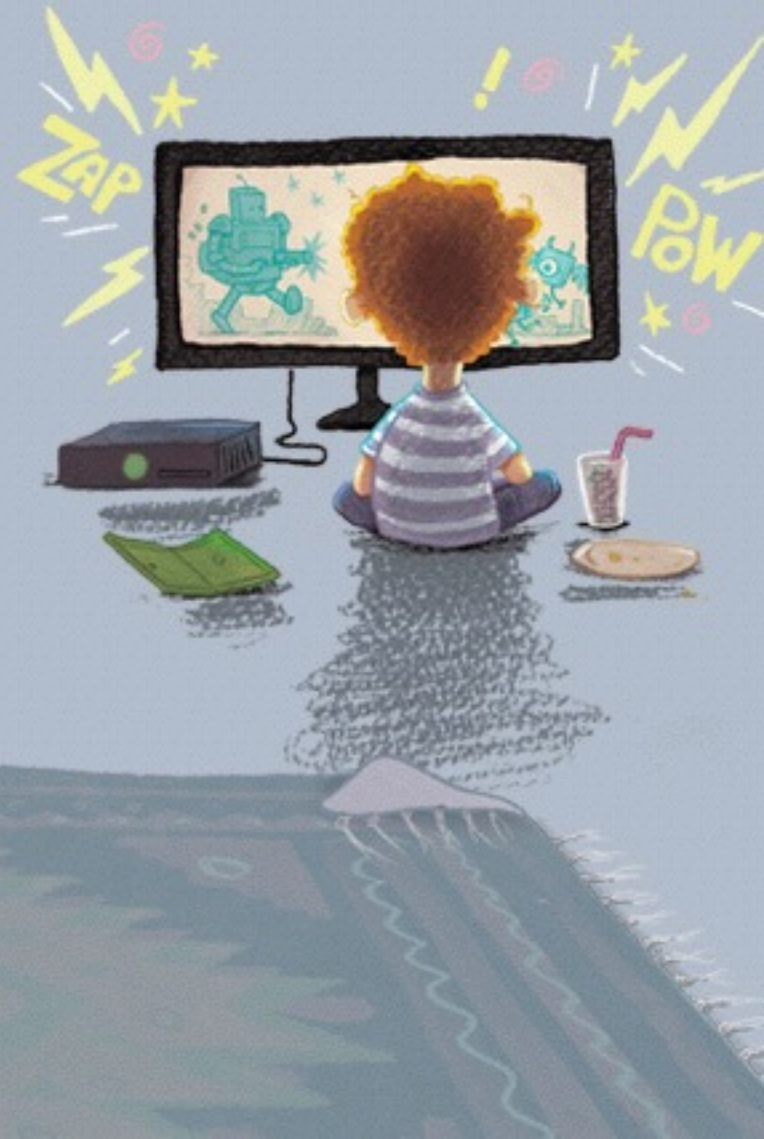
That night Leah hid the locket in her room. Carefully, she tucked it under the radiator where surely no one would ever dream of looking. Living with six other children was all very well but it did mean it was hard to keep a secret. She lay awake for a while, listening to Tamara's steady breathing from the bunk below. The moon crawled across the floor and, eventually, cast its bright light onto her bed. She often stayed up and waited for this moment. To be bathed in silver light somehow made her special.



The next morning was Saturday. Saturday meant taking the shopping down to Gran's but that wasn't going to happen anymore. Instantly, a dull, heavy sadness crept over Leah that felt as if it would never go away. What could she fill the morning by doing? Tamara was already downstairs and she could hear the TV mumbling from below, accompanied by Gary's excited whoops. At least he was happy.



Clambering out of bed, Leah felt under the radiator and at once realised that the locket had gone. She lay down on the carpet and squinted into the space between the wall and the radiator but it was not there. It had to be Tamara who'd taken it! No one else could have known her secret hiding place.

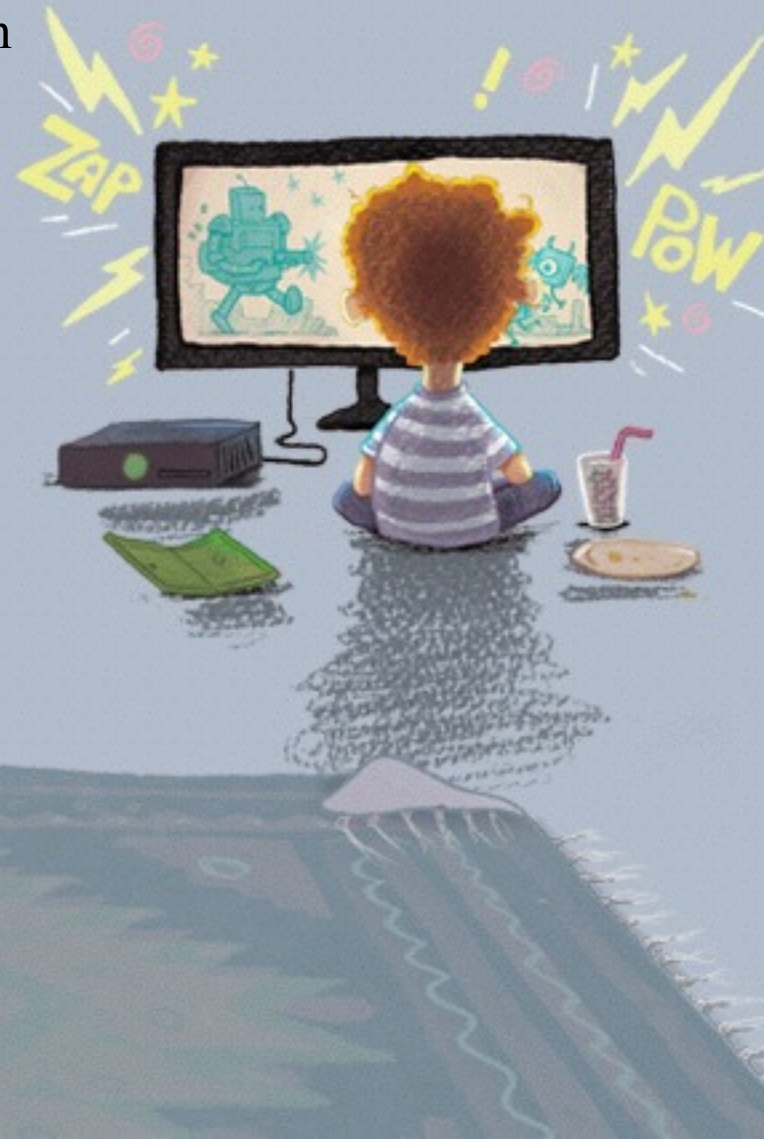


Twenty minutes later, the pair of them were standing outside, fists clenched and panting heavily. Mrs Mac was having none of that sort of behaviour! The two girls stood glaring at each other.



“I never took it!” Tamara hissed, once again.

Not believing her, Leah turned away and peered through the back window. She could see Gary watching the TV. He was sitting on his own and, as he sat there, she seemed to see him more clearly than before. He was alone, with his thumb in his mouth, rocking gently side to side. In one hand, he was holding ‘monkey’, his bedraggled soft toy that he dragged everywhere.



Then she saw it. Clenched in the other hand, he was holding the locket.

Leah saw him peer at the photo of their gran. He sniffed and stroked the picture with his pudgy fingers.

