

A Checklist for Dad



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Illustrated by Gwen Le Rest

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**This book is dedicated to children
and families everywhere**

100% of the proceeds from the sale of this book go to the Education and Training Group at the International Agency for Research on Cancer to support courses, fellowships, and training of cancer researchers worldwide.

Chapter One



It was the middle of the night when Ella overheard her parents talking. She had woken up to go to the toilet and was surprised to see the kitchen light on. Why are Mum and Dad still awake? Ella wondered. And what are they talking about? Ella tiptoed to the toilet and back, carefully avoiding the squeaky spot on the floor. She stood quietly at the top of the stairs and squeezed her ear through the banisters.

“What did the doctor say?” asked Mum.

“I’m lucky they found it at an early stage,” replied Dad.

“Hopefully I won’t need surgery.”

“When will we know more?” asked Mum.

“I have another appointment at the hospital next week,” replied Dad.

“The doctors will finalise the treatment plan then.”

Ella couldn’t hear what Dad said next, but Mum was silent in response.

“At least my hair won’t fall out,” said Dad with a chuckle.

Ella was confused. She couldn’t believe her ears. Dad had to go to the hospital? Dad was ill? He didn’t look ill. He didn’t sound ill. Maybe I’m still asleep, thought Ella. Maybe this is all a dream.

When Ella next opened her eyes, the sun was streaming through the bedroom curtains. It was Sunday morning and the house was quiet and still. Jasper, the family dog, was fast asleep next to Ella’s bed. She was reaching down to stroke his head when she remembered hearing her parents talking.

“Dad said he had to go to the hospital,” Ella whispered to Jasper, who whined in response. It doesn’t make any sense, thought Ella. Mum hasn’t even made him chicken noodle soup to eat. Maybe I’m wrong. Maybe I misheard.

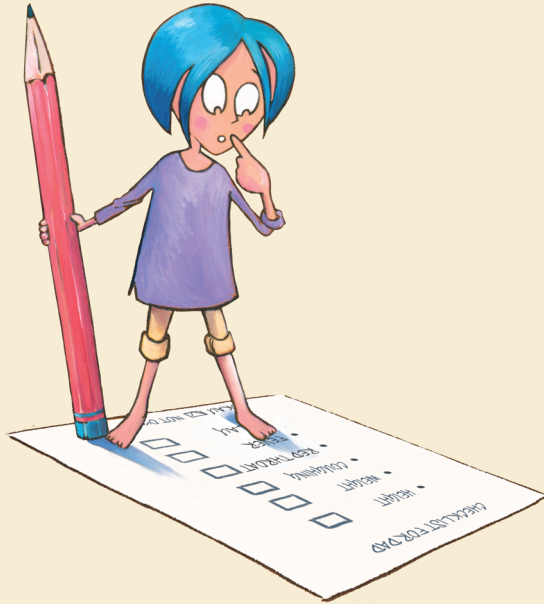
After all, it was the middle of the night.

“Do you know what’s wrong with Dad?” she asked Jasper as she slid out of bed, even though she knew he couldn’t answer. “How can I find out?” They sat together on her bedroom floor while Ella thought.



"That's it!" she exclaimed.
"I need to make a checklist
for Dad!"

One night, Ella overhears her parents talking.
It sounds like something is wrong with Dad.
Ella decides to make a checklist for Dad to find out whether he is okay.



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