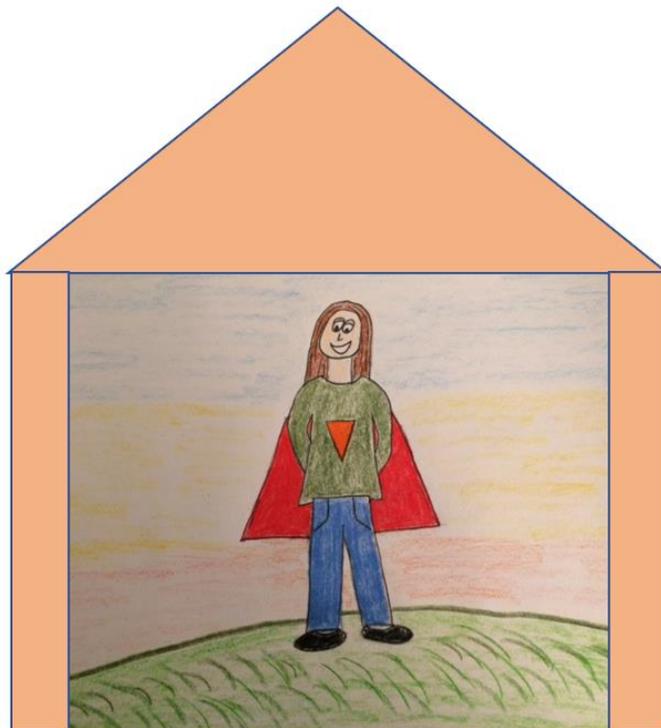


Adventures of a  
**Stuttering Superhero**

Adventure #4:  
Melissa Stays Home



By Kim Block

*Illustrations by:*

Tyler Block, Cecilia Cameron, Leila Cieszewski,  
Zoe Cieszewski, Vivian L. Jaeger, Isabella Khotsing,  
Evan Thompson, Rebecca Wong and Anna Young

# A special thank you!

Thank you to all of the young artists who helped illustrate this story.

I appreciate all of your hard work and you are all very talented.

The ages of the children who donated their art work range from age 6 to age 15.

Half of the artists are children who stutter or who have parents who stutter.

## Dedication

This book is dedicated to every single person on this planet.

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### **Other books in the series:**

Adventures of a Stuttering Superhero Adventure #1 Interrupt-it is

Adventures of a Stuttering Superhero Adventure #2 Melissa Meets her Stamily

Adventures of a Stuttering Superhero Adventure #3 Eye Contact

Why do I stutter? Stuttering Adventures A Drawing Storybook

Adventures of a Person Who Stutters Reflection Guide

Melissa is a stuttering superhero who lives in Burnaby, BC.

She isn't afraid to stutter...sometimes, and she teaches other people about stuttering.

It isn't always easy, but she is brave.



Leila Cieszewski

It's 3 pm and Melissa and her Mom gather as usual to watch the news report.

"I feel so grateful to have such knowledgeable people working so hard to keep us all safe." Melissa's Mom says with a smile.



Anna Young

Melissa doesn't feel like smiling. She doesn't want to stay home.

She wants to go to school and see her friends and have sleepover parties.

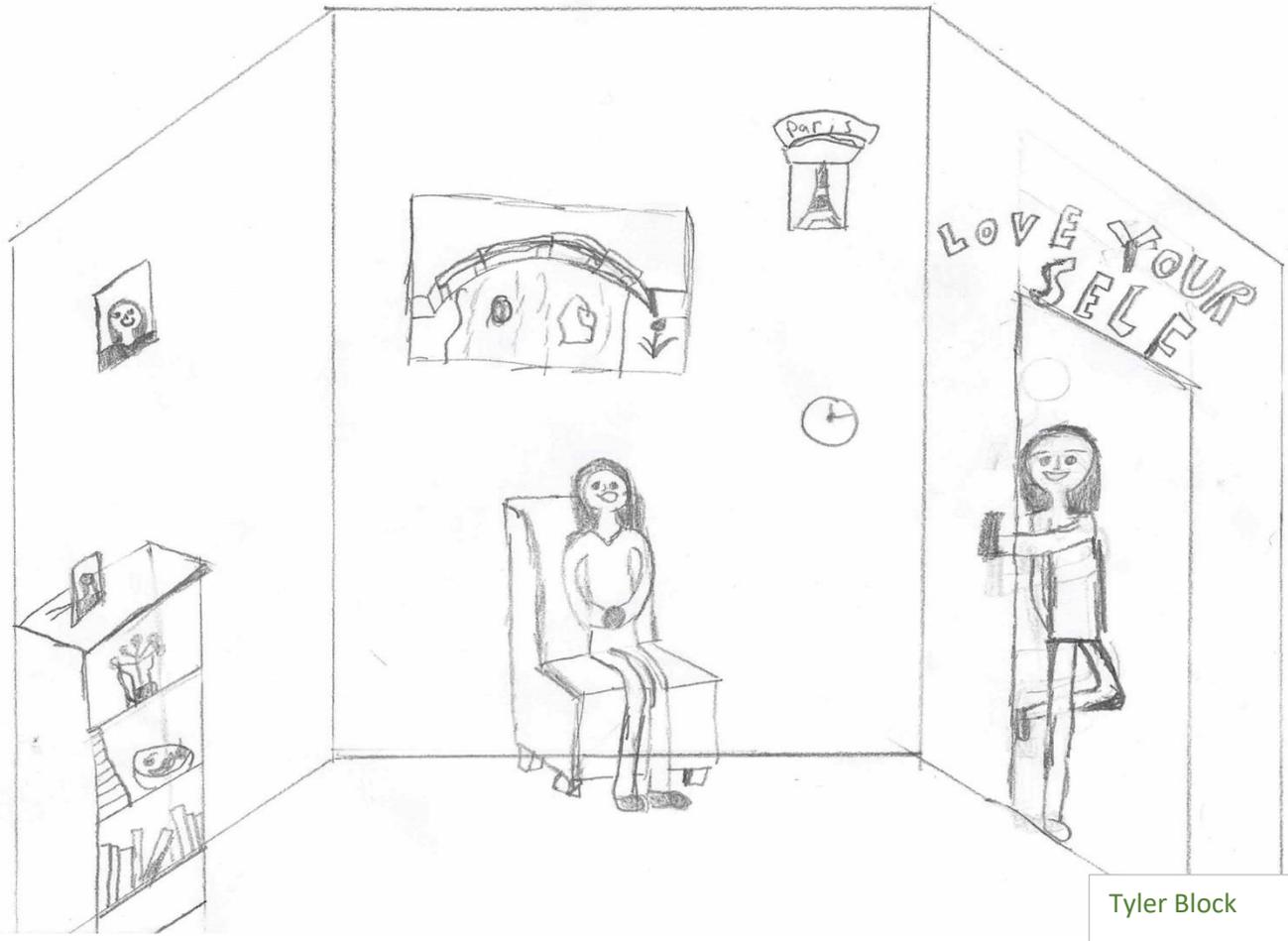
When Melissa and her Mom went for their daily afternoon walk, she saw that parks were closed.

What was so unsafe about little kids playing at the park? Melissa wondered.

The phone rang and Melissa froze. The phone has been ringing a lot.

Family have been calling, friends have been calling, and Melissa hasn't wanted to talk to anyone.

Melissa's Mom popped her head around the corner from picking up the phone, "Melissa, Anika is on the phone for you" she called out.



Tyler Block

"I d-d-don't want to talk to h-h-her", Melissa sadly told her Mom. Melissa's Mom covers the phone with her hand and looks at her with a puzzled face.

"Why do you not want to talk to your friends? I can't exactly tell them that you are not at home. What do you want me to say?", Melissa's mom asked.

Melissa thought for a minute. What could she say? Tell them the truth? That she hates talking on the phone because of her stuttering. That it's too much work and that she is sometimes embarrassed.



Zoe Cieszewski

Melissa's mother walked back around the corner. Melissa heard her saying something but couldn't hear exactly what she said. She came back around the corner and sat down beside Melissa on the couch. "Sweetie, what are those thoughts floating around in your head?" Melissa's Mom asked while placing a hand on Melissa's back.

"Talking on the phone is just really hard. You w-w-w-ouldn't understand, you d\_\_\_don't stutter." Melissa quietly told her Mom.

Melissa's Mom took a breath, sat quietly for a moment and then said, "You are right. I don't stutter. I don't understand what it must feel like for you to talk on the phone. But I do understand something very important and this is something that everyone understands. Fear."

"Right now, it can feel like it's a scary time. Some people are feeling afraid. We don't want to get sick. We don't want to get the people we love sick, so we are all doing our part and staying home.

It's **ok** to feel afraid.



Cecilia Cameron

We cannot control what is happening outside of our house but we can control what is happening inside our house and what is happening in our heads. We can decide what time to wake up, what games we play, what meal we cook, what we want to learn when we go on the computer, how we treat each other and who to talk with on the phone."

"You don't need to talk to anyone if you don't want to. But I can promise you this, if you don't learn to face your fear of talking to your friends on the phone, you will miss them.

*They will miss you.*

Feed the fear monster and it will grow and grow. Face your fear and the fear monster will shrink."



Rebecca Wong

"So, if we are afraid of g-g-g-etting sick, should we go outside?"  
Melissa slyly looks at her mother, waiting to see what she will say to that!

Melissa's Mom chuckles, "Nice try! We are staying at home not because we are afraid, but because we **love**. We love our family, we love our friends, we love our community and we love our country."

Melissa's Mom paused and thought for a moment. "I have an idea."

"Let's try this. Close your eyes. I want you to use your imagination. I want you to pretend Anika is sitting right in front of you. Do you remember what her face looks like? The clothes she likes to wear?" Melissa nods.

"Now pretend you are both sitting on this couch talking and you are enjoying your conversation," Melissa's Mom describes.

"Also remember this, Anika already knows you stutter. She is calling you because she wants to talk to you. We are going to need to stay at home for a while and this is the perfect opportunity for you to overcome your fear of the phone. Agreed?" Melissa nods her head.

She knows her Mom is right.



Isabella Khotsing

"Ok Mom, I'll get the p-p-phone." Melissa smiles nervously.



Vivian L. Jaeger

Melissa sits on the couch alone and dials her friend's phone number. Her heart is beating like a drum.

She has butterflies swirling around in her stomach. She can hear the phone ringing.

She closes her eyes and visualizes her friend.

Ring 2...

Ring 3.

"Hello?" Anika answers.

"H-H-Hi A-A-A-n-n-n-nika.  
It's M-M-Melissa."

Anika waits for Melissa to finish and then squeals with delight.

**"Melissa!** I am so glad you called - oh my, I have so much to tell you! How are you? What have you been doing? I am so bored! Isn't everything so weird right now?" Anika is talking so fast; she is so excited to hear Melissa's voice.

"Sooooo??? How did your phone call go?" Melissa's Mom asks. She was reading a book on her bed. Melissa crawls up and snuggles up to her Mom. Her Mom put her arm around her and put her book on her night stand.

"Well b-b-before I made the phone call, my fear monster was huge. As the phone rang it was even lar-larger, and then as soon as Anika started t-t-talking, the monster started to shrink. That closing-your-eyes trick really worked. I kept my eyes c-c-c-losed for the whole conversation. It just made it easier to think we were in the same room; I don't know why. I was still n\_\_\_nervous but I think it will get easier the more I call." Melissa said.

"That's great! I am so proud of you. You are right, you need to keep going. Call Grandma tomorrow. She'd love to hear from you." Melissa's Mom said as she kisses the top of her head. "She needs to connect with people too!"



Evan Thompson

"For love!" Melissa smiles and pretends to raise a glass to cheers.

"For love!" Her Mom cheers.