

The Berenstain Bears *and The* **BLAME GAME**



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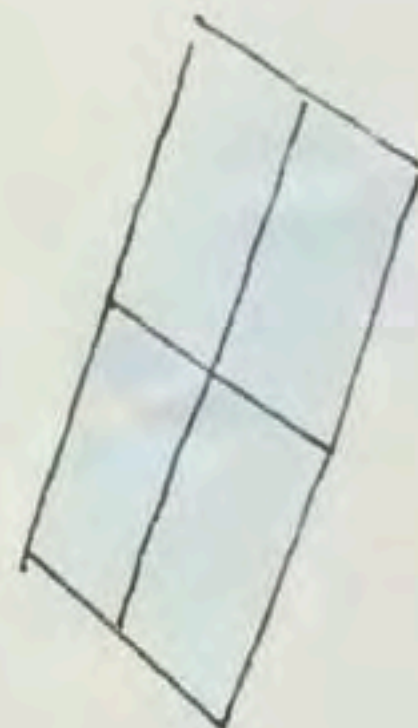
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Stan & Jan Berenstain

The Berenstain Bears *and The* **BLAME GAME**



When cubs are at play,
it's always the same.
Accidents happen.
Who's to blame?





The Berenstain Bears *and The* BLAME GAME

Stan & Jan Berenstain

Random House  New York

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SUMMARY: Members of the Bear family try to solve their problems without playing the blame game of arguing over who is responsible for every disaster.

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15 16

You all know the Bear family that lives in the big tree house down a sunny dirt road deep in Bear Country. And, of course, you know Mama Bear—warm, friendly Mama Bear, from whom seldom is heard a discouraging word.



But lately, Mama hadn't been all that friendly. Her smile was gone and she was feeling *very* discouraged. Why? Because life in the big tree house had turned into one long, miserable, never-ending blame game.



HE STARTED IT!

NO, SHE STARTED IT!



HE STARTED IT!

NO, SHE STARTED IT

Cries of "He started it!" "No, she started it!" and "It was her fault!" "No, it was his fault!" filled the air from day to night.



IT WAS HER FAULT!

NO, IT WAS HIS FAULT!



HER FAULT!

HIS FAULT!

Life in the big tree house had become one long argument about who started it and whose fault it was. And Mama had had quite enough of it.

So when she heard the sounds of breaking glass and spilling water, she rushed into the living room. There she found a mess of broken glass, spilled water, and a scatter of roses on the floor.



Standing over the mess
were Brother and Sister Bear.
They were pointing at each
other and shouting, "It was
her fault!" "No, it was *his*
fault!" over and over again.

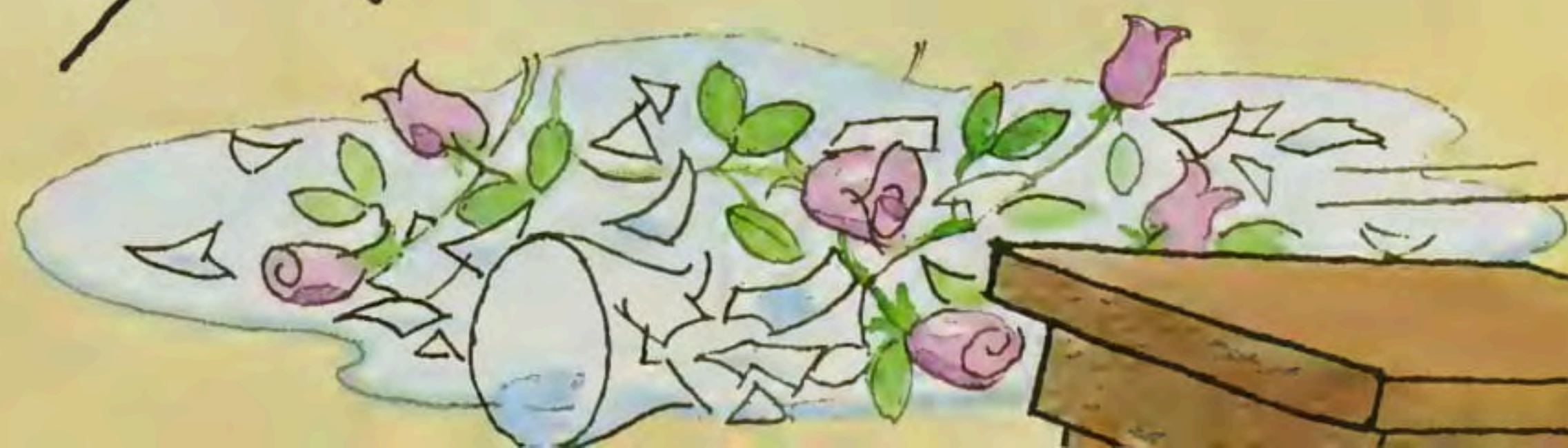


A colorful illustration of a bear family in a room. On the left, a large female bear (Mama) in a blue polka-dot dress and matching cap looks on with a concerned expression. In the center, a small male bear (Brother) in a red shirt and blue pants is shouting and pointing his finger at a small female bear (Sister) who is wearing a pink dress over a white polka-dot shirt. They are standing over a broken white vase on the floor, which was previously holding pink roses. To the right, a small wooden table holds a pink pot with a bouquet of purple flowers. In the foreground, another female bear, also in a blue polka-dot dress and cap, looks on with a stern, angry expression. The background is a simple light green wall.

Mama looked at the mess.
She had cut those roses and
put them in a vase with water
just that morning.

She looked at Brother and
Sister, who were still pointing
and shouting at each other.

It was time to put a
stop to the blame game.
Mama decided to put her
foot down—*hard*. So hard
it shook the room.





“Enough of this blame game!” she shouted. “I want to know who really started it, and I want to know right now!”

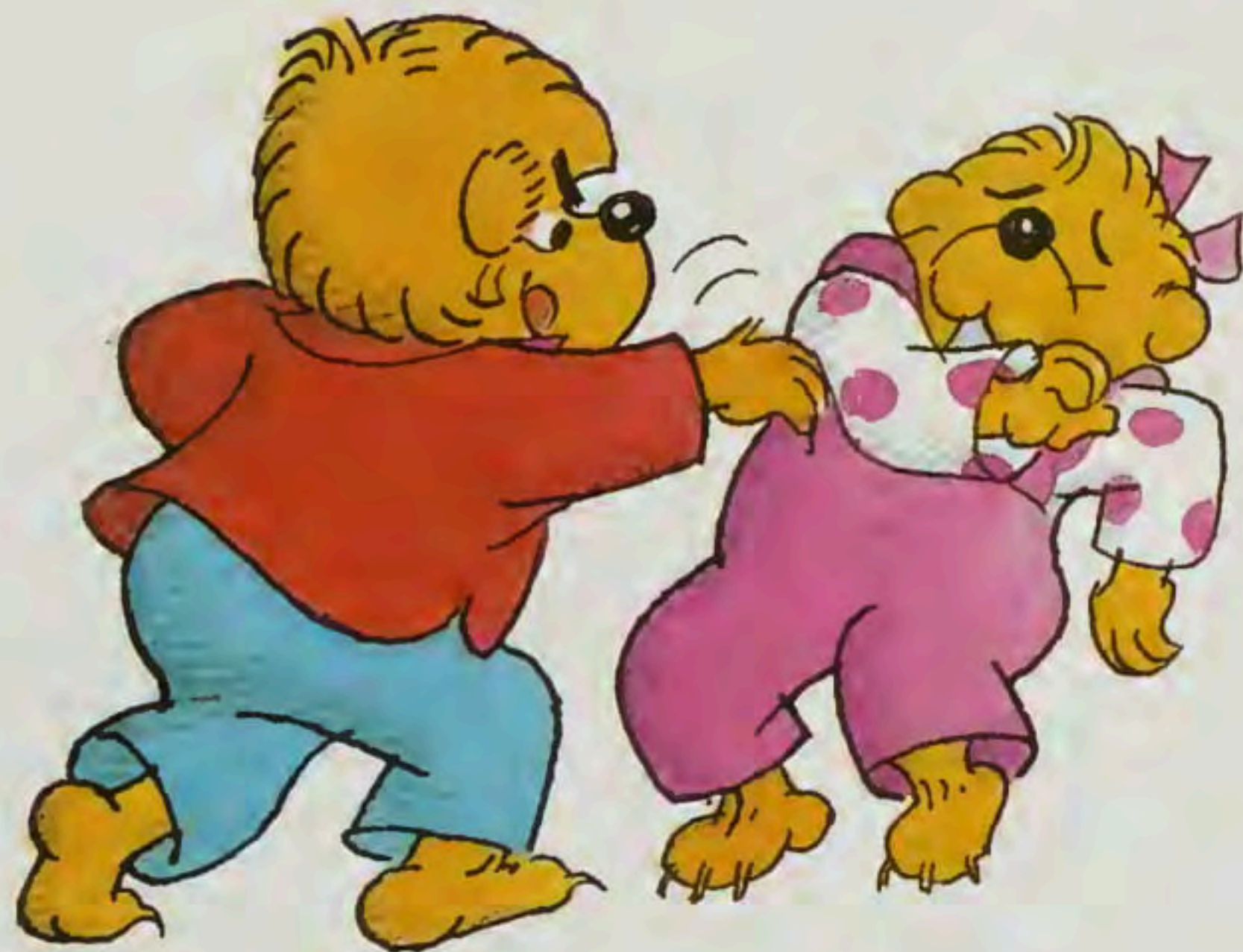
Well, it was like peeling back the layers of an onion. It was enough to make you cry. Mama might have if she hadn't been so angry. And the more Brother and Sister pointed and shouted, the angrier Mama got.



"He knocked it over!" cried Sister. "He made the mess!"

"But that was only because she was trying to poke me in the ribs!" shouted Brother.

"I was *not* trying to poke him," protested Sister. "I was just trying to tickle him because he tickled me this morning."

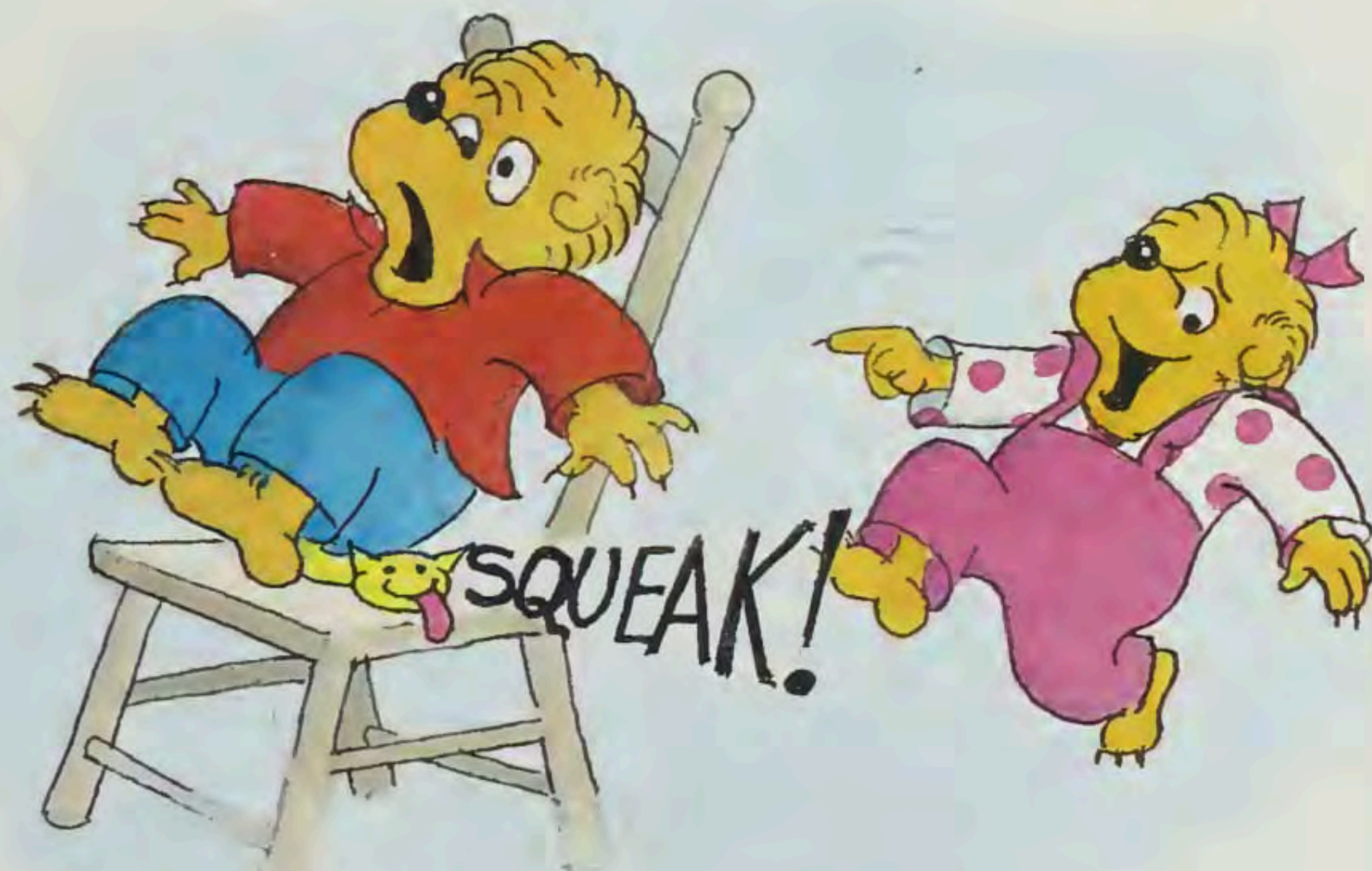




"But that was because
she tickled me last night."

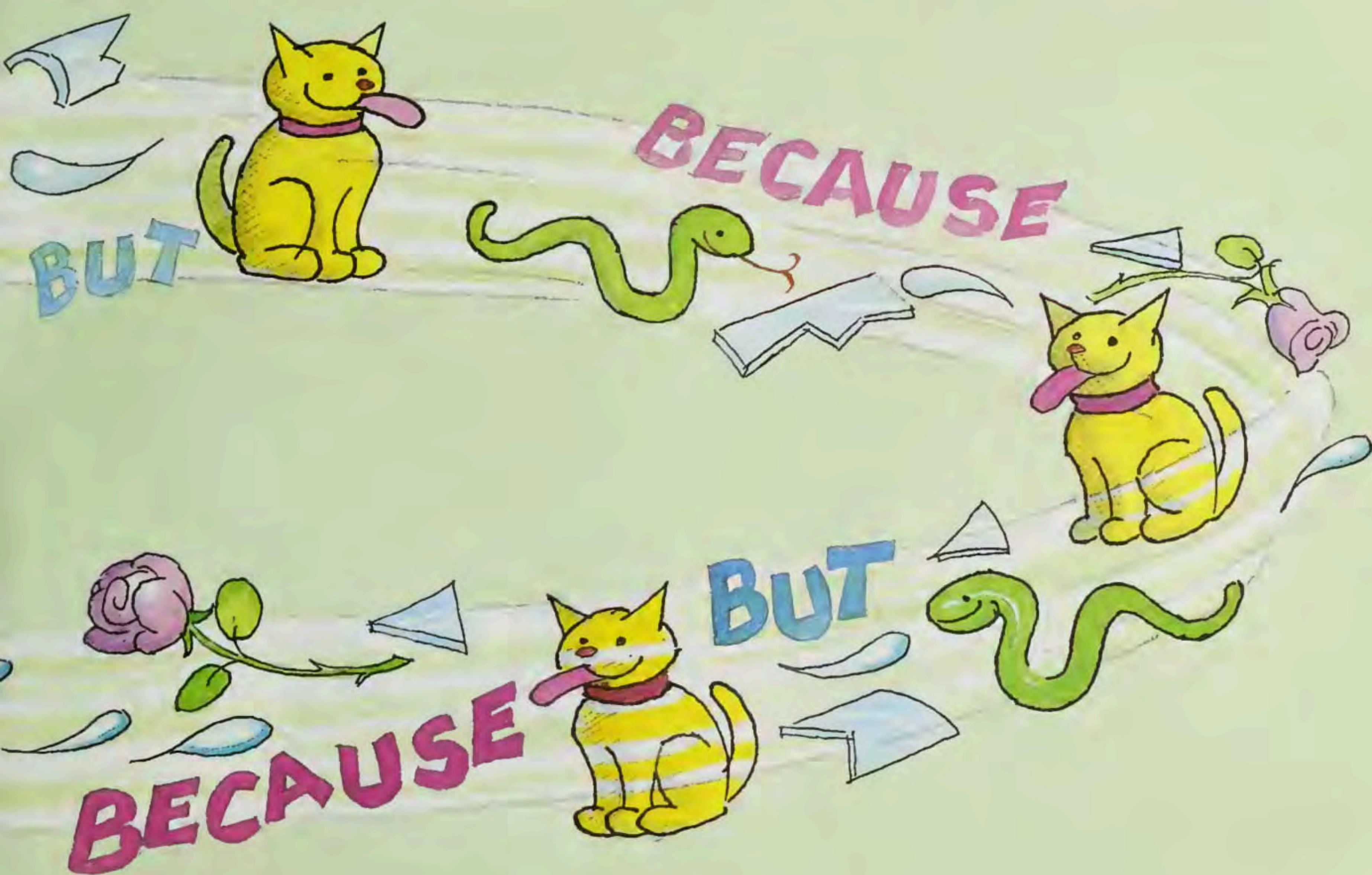


"But that was because he put a rubber snake on my bed."



"But that was because she put a squeaky toy on my chair and it squeaked when I sat down"





And so it went. But, but, but. Because, because, because. Mama understood that she wasn't getting to the bottom of anything. But she *was* getting to the end of her patience. Her head was awl with "buts," "because," rubber snakes, squeaky toys, broken glass, spilled water, and scattered roses.

"ENOUGH!" she shouted.



“Enough of what?” asked Papa Bear.

He had been fixing up the downstairs bay window and heard the shouting. “From what I’ve heard,” he said, looking at the mess on the floor, “there’s more than enough blame to go around. So instead of playing the blame game, why don’t we just go to work and solve the problem?”



“Let’s deal with the broken glass for starters. Brother, you fetch the dustpan and broom. Sister, you bring the paper towels from the kitchen.”



Papa quickly swept the bigger pieces of broken glass into the dustpan.



"What about the water and the roses and the little pieces of broken glass?" asked Sister.



“Mama,” said Papa,
“will you please pick up
the roses? But look out for
thorns and broken glass.”

Then he laid paper
towels on the whole
wet mess.



He swept what was left
into the dustpan.



Mama put the roses
into another vase.





Good for Papa! He had put a stop to the blame game!

Papa went back to his workshop. The cubs went out to play.

But while Papa was putting away his paint and putty, *he* heard the sound of breaking glass.





He rushed outside. The bay window he had just painted and puttied was broken! There stood Brother and Sister, pointing at each other. Sister had a bat. Brother had a glove. There was a baseball in the grass among pieces of broken glass.

Papa bit his lip, counted to ten, took a deep breath...

...and did a very good imitation of a volcano.



**IT WAS HIS FAULT!
HE'S THE ONE WHO
WANTED TO PLAY BALL!
HE'S THE ONE WHO
THREW IT!**

**HIS FAULT!
HIS FAULT!
HIS FAULT!**

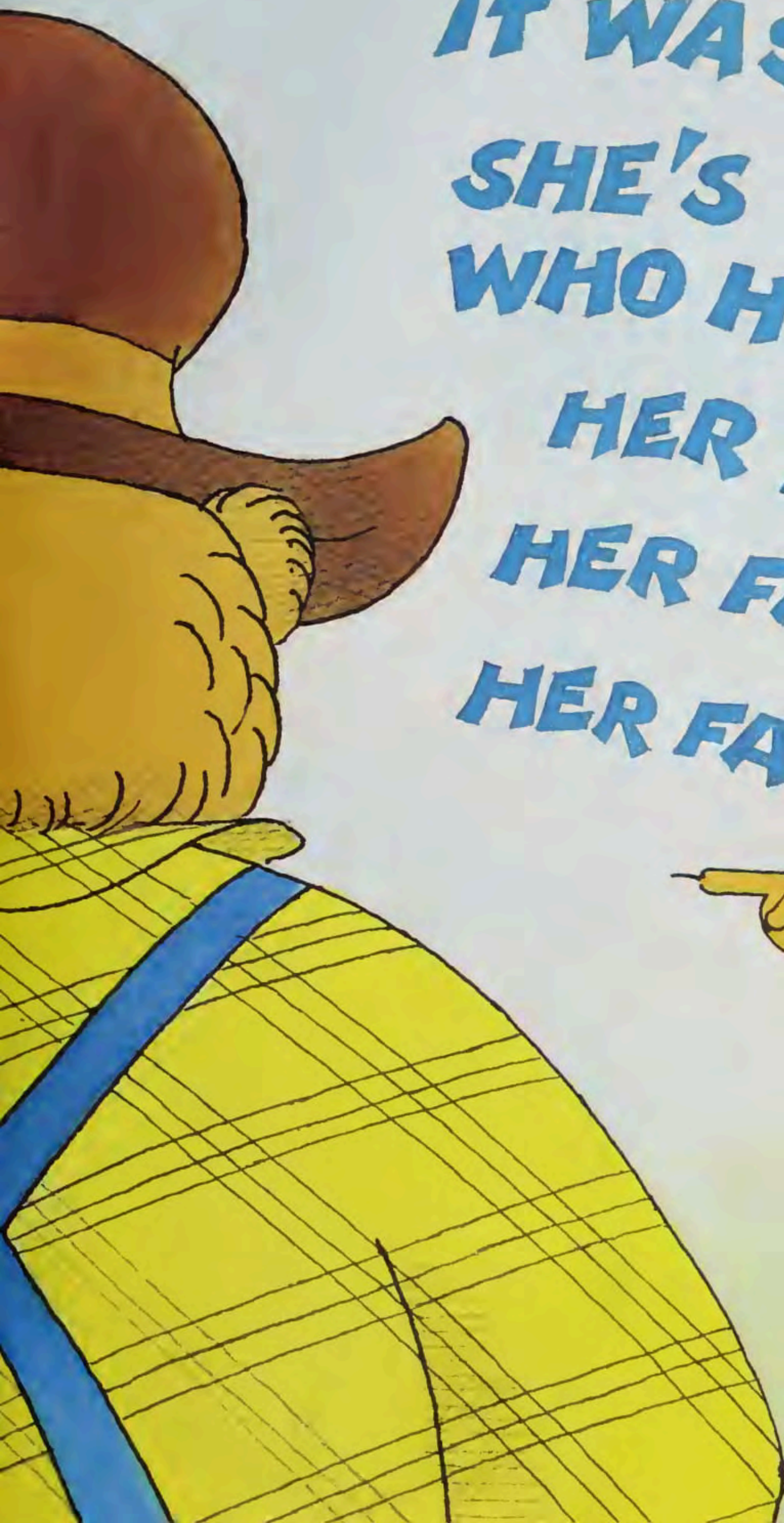


**IT WAS HER FAULT!
SHE'S THE ONE
WHO HIT IT!**

HER FAULT!

HER FAULT!

HER FAULT!





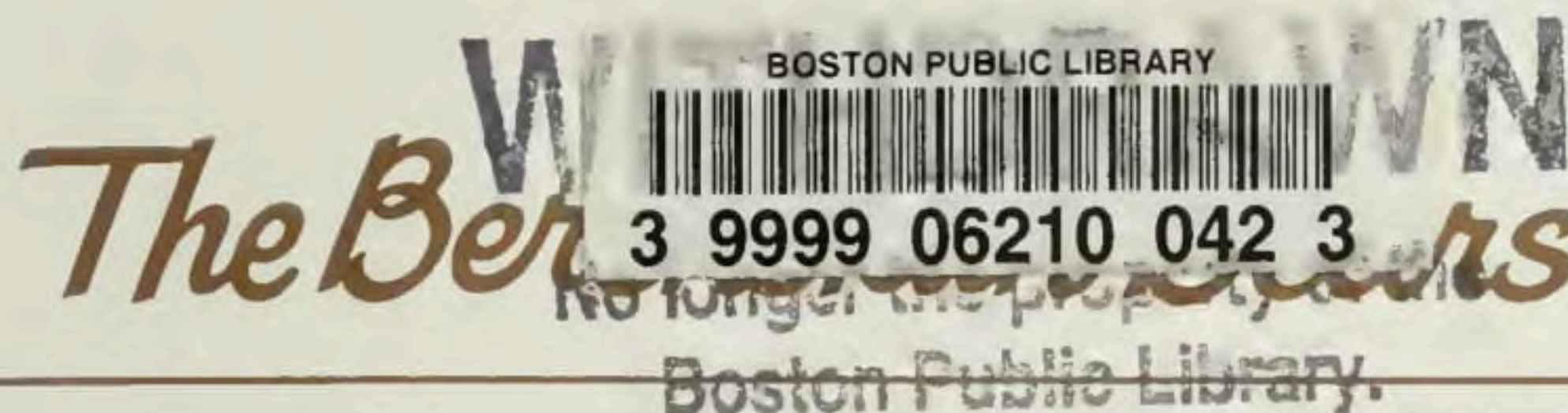
"It seems to me," said Mama, who had heard the crash, "that instead of shouting and pointing fingers, we should get to work and solve the problem."



And that's what they did. They picked up the glass and went to work. It took some doing, but after a while the window was painted and puttied as good as new.



“Of course, there *are* times,” said Papa, “when somebody really *is* to blame for something. But most of the time, it’s important to remember there’s usually enough blame to go around.”



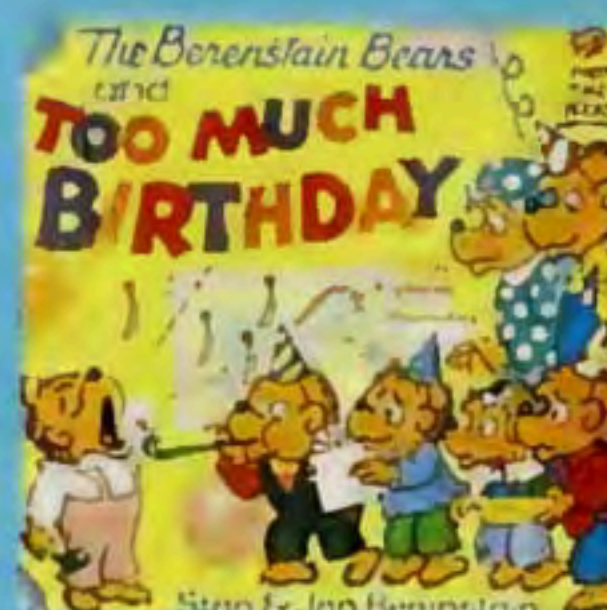
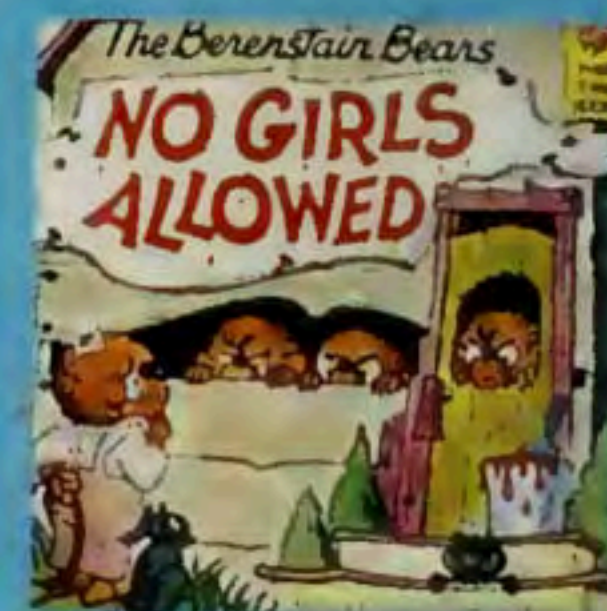
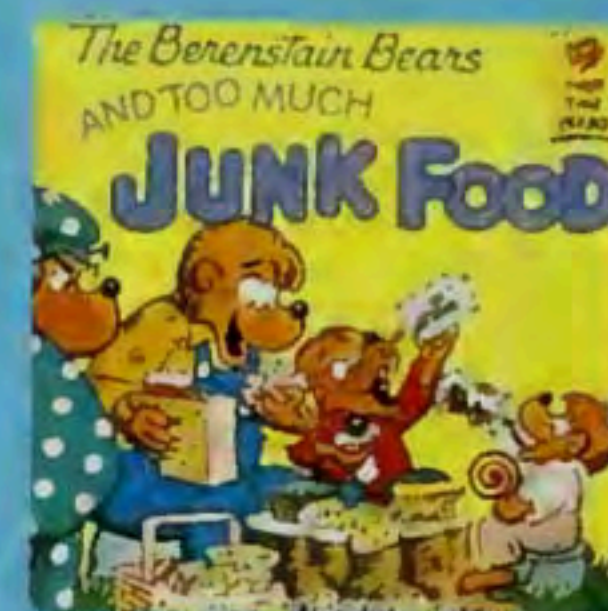
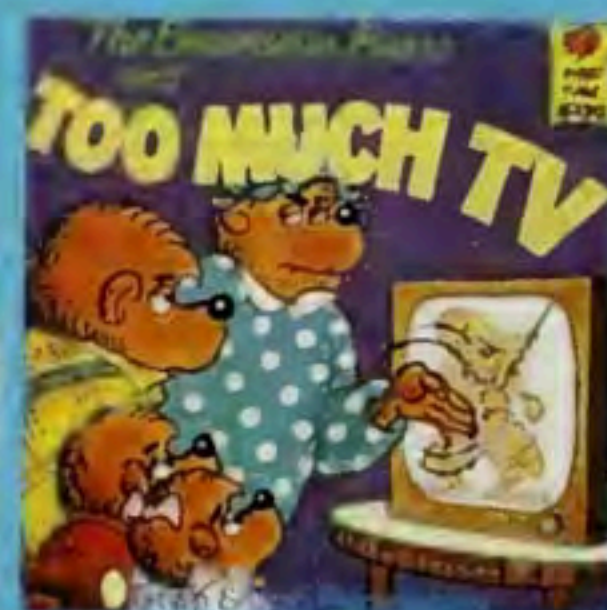
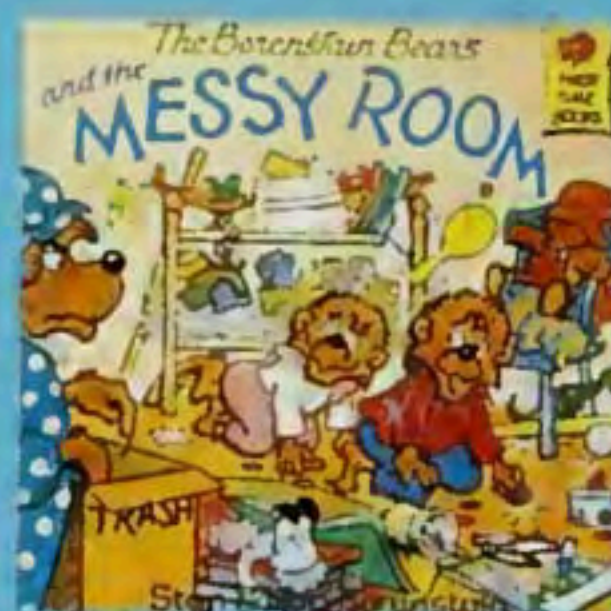
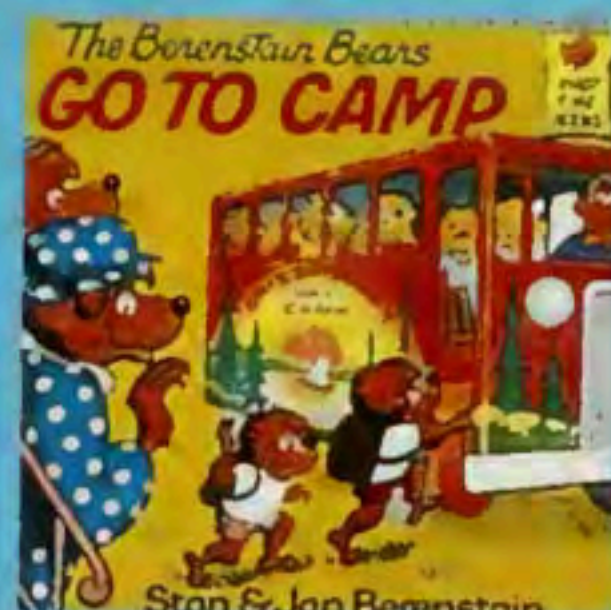
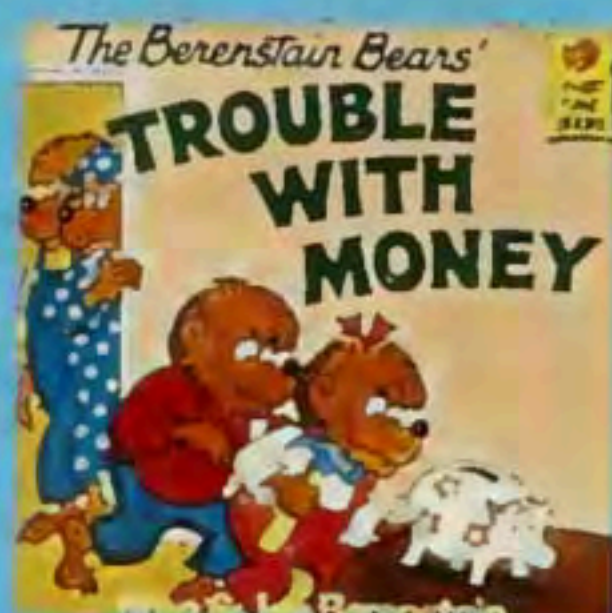
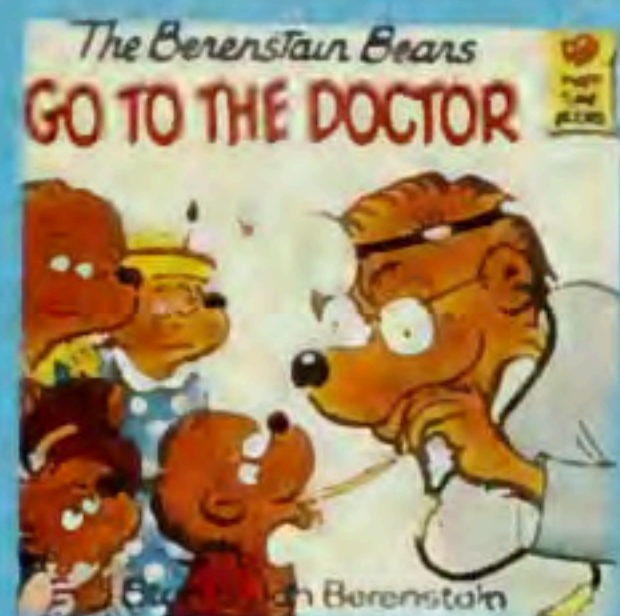
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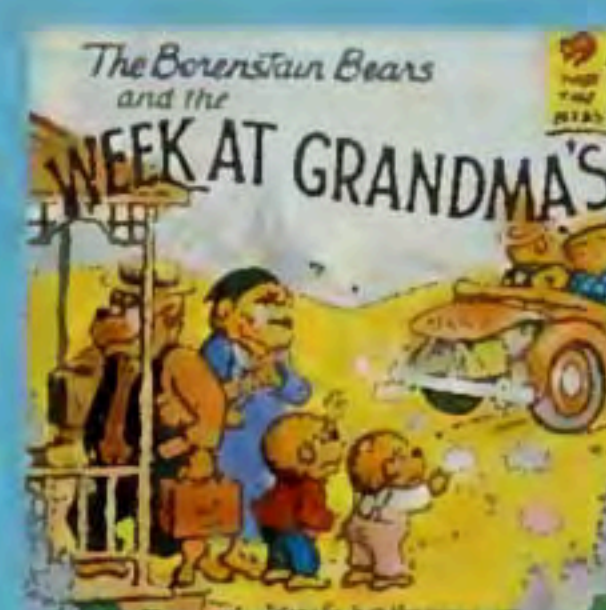
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