

## BIG BOY FOUR

My name is Mikey. I am "Big Boy Four", and I am hurting. My little brother, Thomas is hurting too, but he doesn't know why. But I do, because I am "Big Boy Four."

When I was little, like Thomas (he is "Little Boy Two"), Mummy and Daddy laughed a lot. They loved me a lot. Daddy would come rushing home after his work, and he would throw his arms wide open and I would jump into them. He would scoop me up, hold me high and call me his "Big Boy". I was so happy I could burst with it.

But now they don't laugh any more, Mummy and Daddy, when they're together. And now Mummy has told me that Daddy doesn't want to live with us any more. He will live in another house. She has told me he loves me - and Thomas, but I can't see how he can love us if he has gone, and I don't know why he has gone.

Often I think that the reason Mummy is so sad and Daddy doesn't want to live with us any more must be because Thomas and I have been too naughty. Yes, I do push Thomas around a bit, when Mummy and Daddy aren't looking, and I really don't like him playing with my toys. But Mummy says I must share my toys with Thomas and so I do try ... Thomas can be very naughty, too, but then he is only "Little Boy Two".

Now I know that I must always be very careful. When I am with Mummy, I don't talk about Daddy at all. And when I am with Daddy I don't mention Mummy. Nobody has told me to do this but somehow I do. And, even though I am "Boy Four", I find it difficult to remember this sometimes, and it always hurts when I do. It hurts, too, when I wake up in the night and have this funny pain in my tummy ... Sometimes I feel I don't know why, and then I remember, and I do. And it hurts. It hurts terribly much.

Daddy has come to live near us, and Thomas and I have been to his new house. Daddy tells me that he is going to get me a "Bat Bed". I have always wanted a "Bat Bed." I try to sound very pleased, but it would be so much better if he came back to live with us at home. Thomas and I would try to be so good... I remember the fun we used to have, the walks, the trips to the places Daddy and Mummy thought we would find fun.

I remember all the friends we had. They still come and stay and play with us, but it all seems different somehow. Why can't it all be the same again? Daddy has an important job, so he is away on his aeroplane a lot. Mummy has always told us that sometimes Daddy is so tired with

his important work we must be good and not disturb him too much. He spends hours in his study working on his computer. His work must be very, very important to keep him so busy. Thomas and I try very hard to be good for him.

Perhaps, though, we have not been good enough - because he has gone.

And today he came to see us and to take us to his new house. There was another lady there, not Mummy. Even though I am "Big Boy Four" I don't understand. why she is there with Daddy? And why Thomas and Mummy and I are in another house, our old house, our home?

It must be because we are bad and we are to blame. But I can't talk to Mummy about it, and I don't think I can talk to Daddy. Even though he hugs us a lot and tells us he loves us and buys us lots of toys it isn't the same... He's not there when we have our baths at night, and he's not there when we wake up in the morning. It's like he's not Daddy any more, he's more like Uncle or Grandad, someone we see sometimes, but someone who is not "there". Thomas and I would give away all our toys if he would come back and live with us at home. Perhaps I should tell him that - it might help. I don't want to think that he doesn't love us any more. We want him back as Daddy - the way it used to be.

What really frightens me is if Mummy decides to go away too. I don't think I could bear that. Sometimes, at night, I get so frightened that I creep into Mummy's bed and snuggle up to her so she knows I love her, and so that I know that she is still there. And sometimes Thomas does the same so, although he is only "Little Boy Two" I know that he is frightened too - as I Being "Big Boy Four" is so difficult. You hear and you know things are going wrong, and you don't know why, and you don't know what you can do to help. You want to say how sorry you are because you know that it is probably your fault - but it's too late now.

"Big Boy Four" means a lot of hurting... When will it get better? Will it ever get better?

"Big Boy Four" means understanding a lot - but not understanding at all - all at the same time.

"Big Boy Four" means hurting a lot... but "Little Boy Two" also means hurting a lot.

It is all so difficult - When will the fun come back?