

Irís helps out

By Carg85

March – May 2021

Copyrighted material, do not publish this without the writers permission.

Contents

1.	Sunday - The Encounter	4
2.	Monday - The Story.....	6
3.	The Playdate	10
4.	Lunch.....	14
5.	The Sitting	21
6.	Evening.....	22
7.	Bed Time	26
8.	Tuesday Morning	29
9.	The Drive	33
10.	A New Car Seat	35
11.	Lunch.....	40
12.	A New Rain Suit.....	43
13.	Even More Shopping.....	49
14.	Back Home	57
15.	Wednesday – Being Helpful	62
16.	Experiment.....	69
17.	Bike, Bite, Bench and Bed	75
18.	Thursday Morning.....	82
19.	Plans and Play	88
20.	Friday Morning - Doctor.....	99
21.	Relationship	104
22.	Practice	110
23.	Retrospective	117
24.	Saturday – on their Way	123
25.	Morning at the Aquarium	126
26.	Lunch on the Beach.....	135
27.	Afternoon at the Aquarium	137
28.	New Arrangements	144
29.	Sunday – Movie Time.....	150
30.	Refreshed and Lunch	158
31.	Chores and Fun	162
32.	Sleepover	170
33.	Fun or Beauty.....	173
34.	Loads of Water	180
35.	Lots of Trees.....	184

36.	The Last Evening	189
37.	Last Time Little	192
38.	Maternal Mayhem	202
	Notes from the writer	215
	Image credits.....	215

1. Sunday - The Encounter

Summer vacation was overrated, Iris Tomas considered. You always were very excited when it started - no more middle school, no more tests, no more rising early. But with Anna on riding camp and Mindy away on a trip with her parents to Mexico, there were not many people to hang out with. Her father was away again for another week with his work on the oil platforms, and her mother was not exactly the greatest person to have fun with. For example she made sure Iris didn't spend more than 2 hours per day on her phone, wasn't allowed to wear what the popular kids at school wore because that was supposed to be indecent, and treated generally as a child while she was already 13.

So when she asked Iris to come along to Picc-a-dilly Flea Market, she wasn't exactly thrilled, but it was still better than staying at home - perhaps she could get a hold of a few magazines or clothes her mother didn't really approve of. So she made sure she brought along some money of her pitiful allowance.

Naturally her mother made sure she went to the bathroom before they left, since she had a weak bladder, and brought along her hoody, even though it was 75F (22C), 'because it could always get cloudy and windy'. Fat chance. In the car they had the old argument again about the booster seat: that was for children. She actually did some research online and found it was only required for children of 12 and younger. But her mother countered that the child also needs to be at least 57 inches (1.45m) tall, because otherwise the seat belt is not effective. And of course Iris was still only 55.5 inch (1.42m). She blamed her father who was originally from the Philippines, and she also was late in hitting puberty. She couldn't wait for her chest to start developing, but until now nothing much was happening there. Anyway, her mother again insisted on her sitting in the booster seat in the back, checked that Iris had correctly buckled the seat belt, and off they went.

The flea market wasn't huge; probably no bigger than the gym at her school, but her mother still insisted she stayed close, and when she went only a little further to check out a rack of clothes, while her mother was looking at some boring antiques, she got chewed out in public! The flea market wasn't crowded, but there were quite a few people strolling through the stands. Iris's attention was drawn to a woman pushing a stroller, moving towards them. Strollers were common enough, but this one was a lot larger than she was used to, and the child inside was probably bigger than Iris herself! She couldn't see much of the girl's face since she was wearing a straw hat, but Iris assumed she was disabled.

Then the girl looked at her and suddenly started shouting "Iwis! Iwis!". That startled Iris - was the girl calling out her name? The woman then also looked at her, and suddenly Iris recognized her - that was Sabine's mother! Sabine Fletcher was her big friend in the first years of Edison Elementary School, who defended her when she was teased because she once or twice had an accident when she didn't make it to the toilet in time. Then in third grade the Fletchers moved from Eugene to Thurston, and Sabine went to a different school. Being 10 miles apart, they gradually lost contact.

But that couldn't be Sabine in the stroller: she was a strong girl who did a lot of sport! Looking at the girl once more, she started seeing some resemblance anyway. In confusion she looked at Mrs. Fletcher, who now recognized her too, greeted her and asked if she recognized Sabine. So it was her! But how could this be? Seeing Mrs. Fletcher was waiting for an answer, she replied "Hello Mrs. Fletcher, I think so, but she looks different. And why is she in a stroller?" Iris's mother now also joined the conversation "Hello Imogen, how are you doing?" Imogen Fletcher replied "I'm doing OK now, thank you. But Sabine ended up with Acquired Brain Injury 2 years ago. That has really changed her, and she will probably be mentally disabled for the rest of her life." Iris could see that this was still very hard for Mrs. Fletcher,

and felt sorry for both of them. She looked again at Sabine, who was having trouble looking up because of her hat, and because she seemed to be strapped into the stroller with a sort of harness. Iris knew she had to say something to her, but she didn't know what. She had no experience with retards and was afraid of how Sabine, who had clearly changed, would react.

In the meantime Iris's mother had kept up the conversation and expressed her sympathy to Mrs. Fletcher. "Yeah, me too." came from Iris, but Mrs. Fletcher continued "I'm sorry, but I don't feel so comfortable talking much about what has happened in these last years in such a public place.", while dabbing her eyes with a handkerchief. Then Iris suddenly noticed she had to go to the toilet, and knew she didn't have much time. She gave her mother a secret signal, which she had proposed a long time ago so she didn't have to embarrass herself by talking about a bathroom visit in company, but her mother just ignored her feelings and said to Mrs. Fletcher that they needed to go find a toilet urgently, but that they would still like to hear more about what happened. "Oh, yes, of course, please go. But if you'd like, why don't you two come visit us tomorrow? Sabine will love to get reacquainted with Iris, and I would enjoy some catching up as well." Iris's mother replied "Oh yes, that would be great. Iris is bored stiff anyway." and quickly checked her phone if the address she had of the Fletchers was still up-to-date. "How about 10 in the morning?" "Yes, that would be great. See you then." Iris sank to her knee and said to Sabine "Hello Sabine, it is very nice to meet you again. I have to go now but will come and visit you tomorrow. OK?", to which the girl answered in a slow and somewhat halting way "OK. Goodbye Iwis, see you then", but with a big grin.

Sinking to her knee had not been such a good idea for her bladder, so Iris quickly got up again and started looking around where there might be a bathroom, spotted one close to the entrance, and took off with a quick "Goodbye Mrs. Fletcher, see you tomorrow". With an apologetic look and a wave to Imogen, her mother quickly followed her.

On the way back home, with Iris in the booster seat again, they of course talked about the encounter, and Iris confessed that she was nervous about the meeting the next day, because she didn't know what to expect or how to talk to someone mentally handicapped. "Oh, but you didn't do bad at all there at the end. Even with the handicap she is your age, so don't talk to her like to a small child, although you might need to use shorter sentences and avoid difficult words. Just look at how she reacts, and if necessary repeat what you said in other words. I'm sure you will be best buddies again in no time, because she might look and behave a bit different, but inside there is still your old friend."

"But why was her mother so mean to her, that she had to wear a hat inside, and be strapped in a harness holding her in the stroller?"

"I'm sure she was not mean: Mrs. Fletcher always was a caring and loving mother. I don't know what Sabine's limitations and issues are, but her mother will have her reasons. Perhaps the flea market is a bit busy and crowded for Sabine now, and the hat helps because she can't see the people staring at her the whole time. And people with mental disability are often unaware of danger and behave impulsively, so keeping her strapped in the stroller might prevent her from getting lost or in danger, and of course from touching and perhaps damaging the merchandise. God knows I find it hard enough to keep you from getting lost!" Of course that was nonsense, and Iris could cope perfectly well by herself, but it was no use arguing about that with her mother. And apart from that her mind was more on Sabine. She was still a bit anxious about it, but also looking forward to the visit tomorrow. At least it wasn't going to be boring...

2. Monday - The Story

With the appointment at 10, her mother wanted Iris to get up at 8:30, which was earlier than she liked, but she was excited enough not to mind this time. For her clothes she decided on jeans of stretch denim, which wouldn't get in the way during play, and chose a knitted red sweater with a fish on the front in glitter. She remembered Sabine used to have an aquarium at home and that she loved the fish. As usual she let her long black hair, that she inherited from her father, just hang down.

During breakfast she chattered quite a lot, and her mother had to remind her to eat as well. But her mother was happy to see her daughter enthusiastic again – that hadn't happened a lot lately. Of course she needed to bring a jacket (she selected a denim one that buttoned up the front) and visit the bathroom. This time Iris even had to pack her toothbrush since they might not eat lunch at home ("You know what the dentist said: Three times a day, no exceptions."). Then they could finally leave, and for once Iris didn't even complain about the booster seat.

It wasn't far by car, and they had visited the Fletchers a few times after they moved, before the contact faded, so they were a bit early, and waited in the car until it was 10. Then Iris was finally allowed to unbuckle her seat belt and storm to the door to ring the bell.

Mrs. Fletcher opened the door fairly quickly, dressed in a nice summer dress, but on top of that she had some sort of cloth with a few stains hanging in front, tied around her neck – almost like a bib. When she saw Iris look at it, she suddenly realized she still had it on, and said "Oops, sorry about that. Eating with Sabine sometimes can be a bit messy, and it doesn't always land only on her.", and quickly pulled it off. "Anyway, welcome Iris and Maria Tomas. Please come in." She led them through the hallway into a fairly large living room. It did not look at all the way Iris remembered it, but the one thing that drew her attention first was a sort of hexagonal tent. It was orange, but the 6 walls were mostly see-through netting, and at least 7 foot wide and 5 foot high (2.15m x 1.50m). One side seemed to have a zipper all around, to make an opening, but it was closed now. (See Figure 1) They could see Sabine sitting in it, and when she saw them enter, she smiled and waved to Iris. She was wearing a cute unicorn onesie.

Another unusual thing in the living room was a big high chair with tray and harness in the dining area.

Imogen pointed them towards the sitting corner with a couch and some comfy chairs, and invited them to make themselves comfortable, while she cleared the breakfast table. But Iris first went to the tent, kneeled next to Sabine, put her hand on the netting and said hello to Sabine. The girl understood the gesture, put her hand on the other side, and said "Hello Iwis. Nice you come visit." Her speech was still a bit labored and slow, and she seemed to not quite be able to pronounce the 'r', but it was less halting than the day before. Apparently it was a bit easier for her in her familiar surroundings without other people around. Then Mrs. Fletcher said that it would be best if she first told them about what happened these last years, and about the challenges in dealing with Sabine. After that they could get to know each other again, while the mothers could continue to catch up.



Figure 1 Sabine's playpen

"But first let me get you something to drink. What will it be?" The two mothers ended up with coffee, and there was a juice box for Iris and Sabine. Then, after a few pleasantries about the trip and the weather, the serious part began. "I'm sure you already have a lot of questions," she started, looking specifically at Iris, "but please let me tell the story first. It is still not easy for me to talk about everything that happened. And some of your questions might already be answered."

"We moved here early 2015, 4 years ago now. We settled in nicely, and things were wonderful, until more than a year later I suddenly get a call from Jake's work." To Iris she explained "That's Sabine's father." "It was the tenth of June 2016, and I was told that he had a serious accident at work and was rushed to the hospital in an ambulance, unconscious. I quickly got Sabine out of school and when we arrived at the hospital he was still hanging on, but he never regained consciousness and they gave up trying to keep him alive less than an hour later."

"Sorry, I probably should have let you know then, but it was such a hectic time that I just didn't think of you – we already hadn't seen each other in a while." Iris saw that Imogen was already close to tears, but she still was considerate enough to apologize to them, although that of course wasn't necessary. She had only met Mr. Fletcher a few times, since he was usually at work when she played with Sabine. Still it was very sad of course, especially for her friend who lost her father at such a young age – she couldn't imagine what life would be like without her father, because even though he was away to the oil platforms for weeks at the time, he was also back home for a number of days in between, and then had a lot of time for her. She only wasn't sure what this had to do with Sabine's mental state. Could you become retarded from grief?

Iris's mother offered her condolences to Mrs. Fletcher, and Iris hastened to add hers, but she tried to be patient and not ask questions yet. Then Sabine's mother continued "I don't know how, but somehow we got through it all and managed to pick up our lives again. Sabine was a big support, although of course she had her break downs too. Luckily with the Widow's Pension and the insurance money from his work, we had enough income to stay here in this house and live relatively comfortably."

“But the biggest challenge was yet to come. In May 2017, not a year after Jack’s death, Sabine got ill. At first it was just a cold, combined with an ear infection. She had a bit of fever, was irritable and sometimes complained of headaches. Our doctor thought it was a common cold and send us home with the advice to keep her home from school for a few days and everything would be fine again. But it wasn’t, the symptom only got worse, and she also developed a rash. So the doctor gave us a cream to help with the itching. Only when she also started vomiting and didn’t want to eat anymore, he finally took it serious and sent us to a neurologist for further testing. She quickly had a suspicion of what it might be and ordered a lumbar puncture.”

Seeing that this was not something that Iris had heard of, she explained that they tap some fluid from her spine to test it for infections. “That confirmed the neurologist’s suspicion that it was meningitis, an inflammation of the membranes around the brain, and that it was the most severe variant, the bacterial infection. Sabine was immediately hospitalized, and by then she was already in a bad state, and was soon after moved to the Intensive Care.”

“You can’t imagine what it is to have your husband die and then less than a year later have your daughter in the same hospital, fighting for her life.” Mrs. Fletchers voice broke and tears started. She stood up and left the living room saying “give me a few moments, I’ll be right back”.

This caused a worried and anxious cry from Sabine: “Mummy?” Iris quickly sat down next to Sabine and explained that her mother was sad about something that happened long ago, when Sabine was ill, and that she would be back quickly. This seemed to calm Sabine down a bit, although she didn’t appear to understand the part about her being ill. But she put her hand to the netting again, and Iris did the same. She didn’t understand yet why Sabine was in the tent, but didn’t dare to open it for more direct contact. For now this seemed enough though.

A few moments later Mrs. Fletcher returned, still red-eyed and with a handkerchief in hand, but apparently in control of herself again. That made Sabine relax more too. She continued “But my Sabine was a strong girl, and managed to pull through. The hospital saved her life, but there was brain damage, most of which will likely be permanent.” That triggered some more tears, but she could talk on. “Sabine now has something that is called ABI – Acquired Brain Injury. This means that she doesn’t have the brain capacity anymore of a thirteen-year-old, but more like a two-year-old. You already have seen that she can speak, but it is difficult for her. And she can understand when you speak to her, as long as the sentences are short and the words not too difficult.”

“She has still memories from her past, like that she recognized Iris, but she doesn’t remember anything of her illness and her stay in the hospital. And learning new things now is a lot harder. Like a two-year old, she has no impulse control, meaning that once she wants something, she just goes for it without realizing the consequences. So I always have to be careful that she doesn’t damage something, hurts someone, of herself. She is still a very sweet girl, but sometimes she gets frustrated and has a tantrum. It’s not like she can help it, but I think that at those times her whole brain is only filled with anger and she just lashes out indiscriminately. And she is getting a big and strong girl now, so she can do a lot of damage. Then after she calms down again, she is very sorry if she broke anything and especially if someone got hurt. But it is not her fault. It can happen suddenly, so for everyone’s protection I have to keep her contained most of the time, in her playpen tent, her high chair, her buggy, and so on. But mostly she seems to understand and not mind it too much. And she really loves her little tent. I believe that she feels safe there, with her world reduced to a few square yards it is easier to manage.”

“When I said she had the mental capacity of a two-year-old, I don’t mean she is totally like a toddler. Obviously not physically, but she also has more memories and more complex feelings. So even though I

also cared for her when she was actually two, this is quite different. Perhaps one of the hardest things is that with normal two-year-olds, you can teach them things, and watch them learn and develop. But for Sabine, this is mostly as good as it gets, and any progress is very slow, if at all possible.” This caused a few more tears, but she quickly resumed. “Of course there is a lot more to tell, but I think these are the most important things to know if you want to play with her. Now, do you have any questions?” she asked the both of them.

Both Iris and her mother Maria were silent for a moment after this tragic story. Then Iris blurted out “So she is going to be a retard for the rest of her life?”. Mrs. Fletcher answered “Yes, that seems very likely. But we don’t really use the word ‘retard’ – that is a bit derogatory, and also used for name-calling. We prefer to say ‘special needs’, or, if is specifically about brain capability, ‘mentally disabled’.” “Oh, sorry, I didn’t know that. I didn’t mean to offend!” “I know you didn’t, and it’s OK. Lots of people don’t know, but now you do.”

“So yesterday she was in the buggy to protect herself and others? And now in her tent? You were right about that, Mum. But can’t she just open the buggy harness or the tent zipper if she is being impulsive or angry?” “No, all her things are made in such a way that she can’t reach the closures or that you need a key to open them. Like the zipper on the tent only has a pull on the outside. And the tent is more robust than it might seem. The harness in the buggy has a buckle that needs a magnet to open. I don’t like locking her up like that, but it is the only way to keep everyone safe. And she seems to understand that it is for her own protection and to prevent her from doing things she is sorry for later.”

“OK, I think I understand. But why did she need to wear a hat yesterday in the flea market – that is inside!” “Well, Sabine is a bit sensitive to light, so outside in the sun she needs the protection, and inside the lighting in such a hall can be a bit much too. Apart from that, busy areas with lots of unknown people can be overwhelming for her, and limiting her field of view a bit makes it a bit better for her. But there was still a lot for her to see, and she was quite tired when we got back home.”

“Wow, there is so much you do for her that I would never think of!” “But I have had 2 years of experience by now, and made a lot of mistakes in the beginning. By now it goes pretty well, but we need to keep adapting and trying to find better solutions. Especially since, even when her mind is staying behind, her body is starting to develop into a woman, and the changes and hormones also affect her emotions and behavior.”

This was a lot to take in, and Iris sank into thought. She felt so sorry for Sabine and her mother, and all they had gone through in the last years. She wanted to help and make it better, but how? It was not like she could raise Mr. Fletcher back from the dead or cure Sabine’s brain injury. She just didn’t know what she could do.

In the meantime her mother had a question too. “You told us about how your family doctor kept ignoring the seriousness of Sabine’s illness for quite some time. Wasn’t that malpractice?” “Of course I wondered myself, and had been quite angry with his attitude at times, so I asked the neurologist. But she said that meningitis is not always an easy diagnosis, especially in children. And Sabine didn’t have the most obvious symptom, the neck pain. So yes, he was a bit slow to refer, but unluckily she saw that a lot. They were working on a program to increase awareness with general primary care physicians. So let’s hope this will happen less often in the future. I did change to another family doctor though; it was too hard to keep trusting his judgment.”

Iris suddenly jumped up and asked Mrs. Fletcher where her bathroom was, and then sped off in that direction. Maria Tomas told Imogen that this weak bladder of her daughter was a bit of a challenge - although of course nothing like Imogen had with Sabine. She had already tried to suggest that Iris wear

some sort of incontinence material for longer car trips, outings and such, but that was something Iris always adamantly refused. She had been teased at elementary school when she had one or two accidents, and also with her not being very tall, she was trying to avoid anything that could make her look childish.

3. The Playdate

When Iris came back she asked “Can I go and play with Sabine now? And do we have to be on the other sides of the tent?” “When I’m here it is safe enough to go into the tent if you want to. But you have to promise that if I tell you to come out, you do so right away. We could leave the tent open if you feel more comfortable that way.” Iris considered for a moment, and then replied “Thank you, but if it is better for Sabine to keep it closed I don’t mind. I know you will let me out when I ask.”

She went to the tent and waited for Mrs. Fletcher to open the flap. Then she crawled in and the flap was zipped up behind her. The noise gave her a slight shiver as she realized she was locked in now, but there was also some strange feeling of excitement about that. But she was her for a reason, and her friend was waiting for her, so she gave it no further attention. The tent had a sort of air mattress covering the whole floor, and there were several dolls and stuffed toys lying around. There was a lot of floor space, and Iris thought she would probably be able to stand up straight in the middle.

Sabine had a stuffed elephant in her arms and had been quietly talking or mumbling to it, but now she looked straight at Iris, who opened “Hi there, Sabine, we can play now.” Sabine just nodded, apparently unsure yet what to do. So Iris complimented her on such a beautiful onesie, of a unicorn, with all the colors of the rainbow. That made Sabine smile, and she put up the hood to show the horn and the eyes on there. Then she pointed at Iris’s sweater and said “fish!”. “Yes, I put it on today because I know you like fish. You had a beautiful aquarium here before.” Sabine didn’t react to that as she expected, but suddenly looked very sad and said “Daddy!”. Oh yes, the aquarium was the hobby of Mr. Fletcher, so they must have done it away after he died. They hadn’t even begun playing and she had already upset Sabine! She crawled over and gave her a big hug, even though she was a bit scared that Sabine might throw a tantrum. But after a few moments she felt Sabine relax in her arms, and hug her back.

Then the ice was broken, and they started playing. She got introduced to all the toys and dolls, and soon they had a tea party going. After a while Iris realized what a good time she was having; she had been afraid that she didn’t know what to do and how to deal with a mentally handicapped person, but it was actually easier than with her normal friends or at school. She didn’t have to pretend to be all grown up, compete, or be weary of teasing or meanness. Even when her old friend didn’t talk so easily, and sometimes didn’t understand everything, it was very easy to know what she meant and how she felt, since her whole body radiated her emotions. Especially when she smiled it was brilliant, and you had to smile along.

She also realized it was true what Mrs. Fletcher said about the tent: even though you could see and hear easily through the netting, the outside world seemed further away and less important. The space in the tent was your cocoon, and easy to oversee. Still she now and then listened to what the mothers were talking about, since she didn’t need her full attention to keep Sabine occupied.

The first thing that drew her attention was when Mrs. Fletcher exclaimed that she would never put Sabine in a home. “I know that Sabine needs a lot of care, and would definitely qualify for placement in a care facility, but I couldn’t bear the thought of being separated from my daughter, when we have

already lost a husband and father. But most importantly I believe that Sabine has a better life with me here than in a facility.”

Some time later she was talking about money, and how incredibly expensive all that special needs equipment was. “Luckily we have a good medical insurance, and since a home is much more expensive for them, they are willing to work with me, and I get a yearly budget for declaring expenses. It may seem like a lot of money, but we still have to make choices, and improvise for the rest. I am on a special needs forum where we share tips on what normally available things are useable, like the playpen tent. It is really great, and sturdier than you’d expect. I’m not sure if I would be able to get out, or damage it from the inside. And it can be easily collapsed, taken somewhere else, and it folds out again like magic. So I can take it with us into the garden, to the park or the beach, and so on.”

Then there was something about that Sabine normally went to daycare for a few days per week, but that it was closed for the summer. That made it hard for Mrs. Fletcher to get things done: “I can’t just get one of the neighboring girls to babysit Sabine: they wouldn’t know how to handle her. There is a professional childminder that I sometimes employ, but he is pretty expensive, and not always available. Like this afternoon I have to go to the insurance company about some of the bills and contract renewal, but I’m afraid I just have to take Sabine along. I see no other solution, but that will make it hard to get anything done.”

Iris realized that there *was* something she could do for the Fletchers, and exclaimed “I can stay and watch Sabine while you are gone, Mrs. Fletcher! Can I, mom? Please?” This startled the parents, who were not even aware that Iris was listening, and Sabine’s mother had to think for a moment, while her own mother replied “Well, if it is OK with Mrs. Fletcher... I need to go home to send some orders out, but I could come and get you at the end of the afternoon.” Iris’s mother ran a little side business where she went to flea markets, garage sales and such to buy interesting things, and then sell them on eBay for a profit, and it was important for her to ship items quickly after the bidding ended so she got positive reviews. Mrs. Fletcher didn’t look quite convinced yet “I don’t know, it is quite a responsibility. But she does seem to like you and not get upset or anxious.” “Please Mrs. Fletcher, I can be very responsible, and I can always call you when there is something.” Maria gave a little nod to Imogen that Iris could indeed be responsible if she wanted, and of course it was very tempting, so Mrs. Fletcher agreed. Which immediately earned her a little dance of joy. Of course she couldn’t hug her because she was still in the closed tent.

Maria Tomas was surprised to see her daughter so enthusiastic: at home she often was a bit grumpy and introvert, and she had never been interested in babysitting. She must have been quite bored, or really touched by the sad story of the Fletchers; probably a bit of both. She was happy to see it, but didn’t want to spoil it by commenting on it, so she just said that she would leaving shortly, and that Iris should call her when she was ready to be picked up again. In the meantime Iris told Sabine that she was going to stay for the whole day, and take care of her when her mother was away for a short while. Sabine didn’t seem too happy that her mother would go out without her, but signaled her consent by giving Iris a tentative smile.

After Mrs. Tomas had said her goodbyes and made Iris promise to be careful, keep warm, and to brush her teeth after lunch, Mrs. Fletcher said “So, I think it is high time to change Sabine’s diaper now”, and opened the playpen flap. Iris reacted surprised “Oh, does Sabine wear diapers now? But it wasn’t it only her brain that got damaged? So why would she need them?” “Well, when she came home from the hospital she was not really incontinent, but it was not so easy for her to hold it up for long – perhaps a bit like with you?” Iris made a face; she didn’t want to be reminded of that. “Anyway, she often forgot to tell me in time and then had accidents. We started with diapers at night, because she

woke up wet every night. Then we tried pullups during the day, but those just weren't absorbent enough, so now we use diapers around the clock. I think by now Sabine is fully incontinent." Seeing the proverbial question mark floating over Iris's head, she explained that pullups were like paper underwear with an absorbent pad integrated, while disposable diapers you taped closed and had much more absorbent material. "Oh, I see. Can I come and watch?" "Hmm, I don't think Sabine will mind much, so yes, come along."

She turned to Sabine, stuck her hand out and said "Come, honey, we will make you dry again." To which Sabine immediately came forward and took her hand. Iris also crawled out of the tent and followed them. Stepping out of the tent suddenly made her feel a bit different again: participating in the grown-up world again instead of being in the cocoon she shared with Sabine for the last hour.

Seeing Sabine standing up for the first time, she noticed her friend was quite a bit bigger than her – perhaps as much as 6 inches (15 cm). She was used to most people in her class being taller, but because of the way Sabine acted now, it surprised her anyway. Her mother was still a fair bit taller though.

Mrs. Fletcher took them upstairs, where there was a landing with several closed doors. She opened the second door on the left, which led to a spacious bedroom that was obviously Sabine's. The biggest thing in the room was probably the bed, which might be 7 foot (2.10m) long, had probably at least 6 foot (1.80m) high walls all around, mostly of some glasslike material, and double doors in the front (see Figure 2, although Sabine's actual bed had higher walls).



Figure 2 Sabine's bed

It looked beautiful and cozy, but in the same time also quite sturdy and escape proof. Mrs. Fletcher saw her looking and explained that this bed was just new, full sized and safe enough to hold Sabine in and not damage herself in one of her rages. Sabine was just going through another growth spurt and they already needed to replace a number of things they got two years ago.

Apart from the bed there was a closed cupboard with 2 sliding doors, and an open cupboard that contained all sorts of toys and books. Then there was a sort of table with a padded, leather-like surface, with a cupboard built-in underneath and a shelf on the wall above it, which apparently contained the ingredients of a clean and dry bottom. This is where Sabine and her mother were

headed. Mrs. Fletcher grabbed Sabine under the arms and lifted her to sit on the table. “Oof, are you getting a big girl!” she exclaimed and Sabine laughed. Then she laid down, with her head on a sort of pillow of the same material and color as the rest of the table. “Hands” made her put her hands above her head, where Mrs. Fletcher secured them with Velcro cuffs. “No helping or playing allowed” she said cheerfully and Sabine nodded. Iris assumed they had their ritual, and was no longer surprised that her friend needed to be restrained here too.

But what came next did surprise her: she had already noticed that there didn’t seem to be a zipper down the front of the unicorn onesie, and now she could see that there was one up one leg, through the crotch and down again to the other foot. Mrs. Fletcher took out her keys and fiddled for a moment with the zipper pull before she opened it. She explained to Iris that Sabine didn’t like the diapers in the beginning, and had tried to take them off. This meant cleaning up puddles of pee several times, but worse than that Sabine had also started to try to take the poop out, perhaps because she really didn’t like the feeling of that sticky goo in her diaper. “You can imagine that after a few times of trying to clear poop out of every nook and cranny of the house, I was ready for any solution. So we got some nice clothes that Sabine can’t take off herself. After a few months I thought she might have gotten used to the diaper and gave normal clothes another try, but within days it started all over again. So now we just stick to clothes that she can’t get out of, so mostly onesies, jumpsuits, overalls and such. Some that just close at the back, and some with locking zipper or locking buckles. Luckily they have clothes like that in fun colors and patterns nowadays, and there also is a seamstress that will make custom clothes for Sabine or make adjustments. But of course that is expensive, especially when she’s growing so fast. Here, take a look at the zipper.” (see Figure 3)



Figure 3 A locking zipper

Iris could see that it looked like a normal zipper, but the pull was a bit larger. You had to look closely to see there was a tiny keyhole in the zipper head.

In the meantime Mrs. Fletcher had removed Sabine’s legs from the now open onesie, and her diaper became visible. It had all sorts of little toys on it in bright colors. “Now let us inspect the damage. Looks like someone did their poopoo’s !” Sabine giggled. With opening the diaper the smell was immediately obvious. With practiced movements she quickly removed the diaper, retaped it closed and discarded into the pedal bin next to the table. Iris could see Sabine’s relief from getting rid of the dirty mess in her pants. Mrs. Fletcher got a small bowl and a wash cloth from the shelf, and said that she’d be right back. While she was gone Iris looked a bit more around the room, and noticed that there was a sort of foil on the windows that made the outside look a bit gray/blueish, and made it a bit darker in the

room. She assumed this was for the light sensitivity of Sabine. And there were rolling shutters on the outside.

Mrs. Fletcher came back with the bowl filled with warm water, and started to clean the diaper area thoroughly. Then she took a jar of cream and spread some over the buttocks. "We wouldn't want a rash, would we?" And finally she picked 3 diapers with different designs from the shelf, and asked Sabine which one she wanted. The choice was between the toy animals, flowers and balloons. "The colorful diapers are a bit more expensive, but they makes it easier since Sabine accepts them more readily," she explained. Sabine said "balloons!". When Mrs. Fletcher folded it out, Iris remarked how big it was, knowing only baby diapers. "Yes, our big girl already use Adult size Small now." She gave Iris one of the others to let her take a better look, but warned her not to use the tapes since they were one-time use. Iris saw that the diaper had a plastic exterior that crinkled a bit, and a cloth-like inside that felt very soft. It was pretty thick, and even unused a bit heavier than she expected. "I like the balloons" she said, mostly to Sabine, and gave the diaper back.

When Mrs. Fletcher finished putting the diaper on, she asked Sabine if she wanted to wear a nice dress, and Sabine nodded. So Mrs. Fletcher opened the cupboard with the sliding doors and pulled out a pink dress with Minnie Mouse embroidered near the left shoulder. Then she released Sabine's hands, got her to sit up, and pulled the onesie off over her head. "There we go." Iris wondered how a dress would prevent Sabine from getting at her diaper, but before she could ask she saw that Sabine's mother held the dress open for her to step into, and that it had integrated shorts. Sabine obediently stepped into the legs, and the dress was pulled up and over her shoulders. It buttoned in the back, with quite a few small buttons, and it apparently was a bit of a struggle to get them through the holes, so it took a while. Sabine started to move a bit, impatient, and her mother said she needed to hold still for a few moments more. Iris decided to try and help by stepping in front of Sabine, touched the embroidery, and asked who that was. "Minnie .. Mouse". "What a pretty dress, you must like to wear it a lot." Sabine didn't seem to understand what reaction was expected of her, so she just smiled. "All ready. Now we can have lunch."

4. Lunch

So all three went downstairs again, Sabine once more on her mother's hand. This time to the dining corner, where Iris got a better look at the big high chair. It had wheels underneath, a complicated metal frame with several handles and pedals, a footboard with straps, arm rests, and a padded seat with a high back and a harness. (see Figure 4, although Sabine's actual chair did not have a headrest or laterals, and Figure 5 for a better look at the butterfly harness) There also was a tray on the table that looked like it could be used with the chair.

Mrs. Fletcher said to Sabine "Let's first get you seated", rolled the chair a bit away from the table and to the side, blocked the wheels, did something with a handle and a pedal so that the seat was low and slightly tilted forward. That way Sabine could step on the footboard and sit down in the chair. "Here comes the harness..." and Mrs. Fletcher folded that harness, that was still attached on one side, over Sabine's body, and clicked the straps in place at the back of the chair. Iris realized the buckles would be out of reach for Sabine. Then the chair was tilted slightly back and raised to the level of the other seats, rolled back to its place at the table where Sabine was facing the other chairs, and the tray on the table was clicked onto the chair, resting on the armrests. Then she took some wet wipes and cleaned Sabine's hands.



Figure 4 Sabine's activity chair



Figure 5 Butterfly harness

"Will you come and help me in the kitchen to get everything for lunch?" she asked Iris, who of course complied. "That chair was quite an expense, but it is so easy and versatile that it was worth it. And the memory foam in the seat makes it possible for her to sit in it for hours." And then "Could you first wash your hands? Then take this tray, put 3 plates on it from that cupboard, and get 2 knives and forks and one spoon out of that drawer? We'll just eat bread; I didn't expect to have someone over for lunch." While Iris cleaned up and collected the cutlery and brought it over to the dining table, Sabine's mother collected the food on another tray. Then they set up the table, where Mrs. Fletcher first made a plate with two slices of bread for Sabine, asked her what she wanted on them, and cut them up into bitesize pieces. Then she put the plate on Sabine's tray. Iris of course made her own lunch. "After lunch Sabine gets her nap for an hour, and then I'll set her up in that chair again. Then you can let her play, or play with her, until I get back. I will need to leave around 2:30 PM, and hope to be back some 2 hours later."

When they had finished eating, Mrs. Fletcher said that Sabine got a cup of yoghurt for dessert, and asked if Iris would like one too. She declined politely. Sabine got a bib, and her mother opened the cup and reached for the spoon. "She can eat it herself, but her coordination is not so great, so it often gets quite messy, and it takes a while, so usually I help her." "Oh, can I help her? Please?" "Go ahead. Make sure to not heap too much at the spoon at once." So Iris went over to Sabine and stood half in front of her, half to the side, and started feeding her the yoghurt. Sabine didn't seem to mind, and apparently liked her dessert, because she cooperated well. Iris was glad about that, because she wasn't sure "Here comes the plane" or "One bite for Mama" would be appropriate.

But then suddenly Sabine vomited, and a lot of it ended up on Iris's sweater and pants. Sabine was startled herself and started crying, and her mother comforted her and told her it wasn't her fault. She got a sip of water against the nasty taste. Then Mrs. Fletcher apologized to Iris "Oh, I hadn't expected that at all. I guess all the excitement of the morning must have upset her stomach." Iris looked at her clothes and realized she had to change, but she only had a jeans jacket with her and that was not suitable to wear on its own. And the smell and sight made her a bit nauseous too. "Wait a second, I'll get you something so you can take your clothes off." She stormed up the stairs and returned with a robe that was probably hers. Why don't you take your clothes off and put this on for now. Then I'll put Sabine to bed, and then we have time to find you something more suitable. Iris needed to go to the toilet anyway, so she took the robe and changed in there. The robe was way too big, so she rolled up the sleeves, but it still hung down to her feet.

When she came back into the living room, Mrs. Fletcher was busy getting Sabine out of the chair. Sabine said "Sowwy Iwis, I didn't mean to" and Iris gave her a hug and said she knew, and that everything was alright. Mrs. Fletcher took the dirty clothes and put them in the kitchen for the moment, and then said that she would now bring Sabine up to her bedroom, and that it perhaps was better if she stayed downstairs, because Sabine had had enough excitement for the moment, and needed to go to sleep without distractions." "OK, I understand. I'll wait here then." Iris realized she had not checked her phone for messages all morning, so she got it from her backpack, and saw the toothbrush that she promised she'd use, but first she wanted to check her phone.

Then suddenly Sabine's mother was back while she was still busy on her phone, and suggested they go upstairs to find some more suitable clothes for Iris. With Sabine's latest growth spurt they had quite a few clothes and other equipment now that no longer fit her, and she hadn't found the time yet to find a new purpose for them, so there should be something that would fit Iris. "One second please, I'm just finishing typing a message." Mrs. Fletcher wasn't happy to be kept waiting, but allowed it this time and Iris was indeed ready within half a minute. "Could you please put away your phone again for now, follow me up, and be careful on the stairs that you don't trip over the long robe?"

So Iris lifted the lower part of the robe like with a ball gown and made it safely to the second floor, where Mrs. Fletcher opened the first door on the left, next to Sabine's bedroom. This room apparently was used for storage, and one of the major things in there was a sort of hospital bed with high railings. That must be Sabine's previous bed, Iris concluded. Then she put her attention to the cupboard that Mrs. Fletcher had just opened, where a lot of clothes lay folded. Sabine's mother pointed to three shelves that could hold something suitable for Iris to wear. It were mostly bright colors and patterns, but she also saw a denim item that might be less childish, so she took it out.

It was a pair of overalls that had some Pooh characters on it. Iris used to love Pooh bear, but now she was too old for it. Mrs. Fletcher said "Good choice, that should fit", and since Iris didn't see anything more appropriate, she acceded. It's not like anybody outside this house would see her wearing them. They weren't quite like a normal pair of overalls, like she had at home though: the sides were much higher and didn't have buttons, but instead there was a zip at the back. And the straps didn't have buckles in the front, but seemed sewn directly to the bib.

Mrs. Fletcher said she needed to wear something underneath, pulled out a peach-colored t-shirt which she handed to Iris, and took the overalls so she could put it on. When unfolded it turned out to be a body, with 2 snaps in the crotch. Iris didn't have experience with that, and struggled to get the ends together to snap closed, so Mrs. Fletcher said "Let me help you", gently pushed her hands out of the way and closed the snaps. Then she held the overalls up for her to step into, the zip being already open. Iris bit back a remark about her being old enough to dress herself by now, since Sabine's mother was only trying to help, stepped into the overalls and allowed them to be pulled up and over her shoulders. The shoulder straps had a bit of slack, but Mrs. Fletcher fiddled with them a bit at her back and then they fit just right. "Just a second. Now where did I put it? Ah, here it is." she heard, and then the zipper was pulled up. With the high sides it was much more fitting around her upper body than she was used to with overalls, and the denim didn't stretch. Just when she wondered if the suit was too small for her, it passed the highest point of the sides and easily went up the last inches to the top. Not only the sides were high, but the front bib came also up higher than she was used to. The straps definitely wouldn't slide off her shoulders this way. There was a bit more fiddling high up her back and then "Oh yes, that fits very well, and it looks great on you!" Iris did a twirl to show off the overalls, and had to admit that it was a good fit, and even though she was not used to having clothes so snug around her upper body, it felt more like a hug than a constriction. On the other hand the bottoms were fairly wide, with a lot of room around the crotch. "Now you let me know in time if you need to go to the

toilet, so I can let you out.” “Oh, I have some clothes at home that zip up the back, I think I can manage.” “OK, give it a go then”.

So Iris started feeling up her back where the top of the zipper would be, but couldn't find it. There seemed to be some fabric over the top of the zipper, perhaps closed with a button? “Yes, there is a flap over the end of the zipper as an extra security, but also to prevent too much stress on the zipper ends when the shoulder straps are pulled apart. Is guess that is not necessary for you”, and she undid the button. Now Iris could find the top of the zipper, but there didn't seem to be anything she could pull on. Mrs. Fletcher explained that the zipper didn't have a puller attached, but that you used a little tool to open it, and showed her a small metal piece with a hook at the end. (See Figure 6)



Figure 6 A detachable zipper pull

“But can't I just use that tool then?” She was handed the detachable pull and tried to hook it into the zipper head, but she got nowhere: the fabric flap was in the way, even when unbuttoned, the zipper head was just between her shoulder blades where she hardly could reach, and the close-fitting denim didn't allow pulling it to a place she could reach better. After a few minutes, with her arms getting tired and sore, she had to admit defeat. She would just have to get help to undress. So she gave the little tool back.

Then she wanted to put her hands in the pockets, but there weren't any. “Sabine can't have pockets in her clothes: more than once she tried to store foodstuffs in her pockets to save for later, like unwrapped chocolate, and that made a big mess. Apart from that there is a risk that if she got hold of something like scissors or a knife, she could conceal it, although I don't think that is likely with her.”

Having resolved the clothing issue, Mrs. Fletcher put the robe away and they went downstairs again. Then Iris was reminded of the promise she made her mother to brush her teeth, so they went upstairs again with her toothbrush and -paste, and Mrs. Fletcher showed her the bathroom, which was opposite Sabine's room. While Iris cleaned her teeth, Imogen went into the storage room and

apparently cleaned up a bit. Then they went down together once more, where Mrs. Fletcher had already thought of the next activity: she explained the working of Sabine's activity chair to Iris, so that when the girl was taking care of Sabine while she was away, she could adjust it according to what they wanted to do. So she learned how to raise and lower the chair, tilt it forward or backward, and remove and attach the tray. That last one clicked into place behind the arm rests, also out of reach of the occupant. Mrs. Fletcher also showed her how the harness buckled, but warned her not to undo the harness for Sabine while she was away, and if there was a good reason she should call her first.

While they were busy going over the most important handles and pedals, Iris felt the pads and noticed how firm and yet yielding they were, and wondered how it felt to sit in it. So when she knew how to operate it, she asked Mrs. Fletcher if she could try it out. "Hmm, it is probably a good idea that you know how Sabine feels in the chair, so let's give it a go. I am not going to change all the adjustments to your size though, so it won't be quite so good as for Sabine." She turned the chair a sideways so the seat was turned towards Iris, and tilted it forward until the footboard rested on the ground. Then Iris could step onto the footboard and sit down, while her 'caregiver' held the harness to one side. She hadn't meant to be actually strapped in, but the harness was folded over her and connected in the back. She couldn't very well protest after she had asked to try it, so she let it happen. Then the chair was first tilted backward as far as it could go, so that Iris felt like she was in a dentist's chair, then back to only a slight backwards tilt, and raised so high that Iris's head was at about the same level as when she stood.

Next she needed to raise her arms and the tray was snapped into place. It was close enough to her chest that she wouldn't be able to get her arms underneath, so now she couldn't touch anything below her diaphragm anymore. Then Mrs. Fletcher even used the ankle straps on the footboard. Now Iris could only move her head and arms. She was in a very comfortable position though, and the pads were great. Suddenly she decided to goof around a bit, and started waving her arms around a bit, banging them on the tray, and making baby sounds. Mrs. Fletcher played along and said "just a moment, mouse, your YumYum is coming", went into the kitchen and came back with a bowl with a little bit of apple sauce, a spoon and a bib. She tied the bib around Iris's neck and started feeding her. Iris found this hilarious and started to laugh, which was not a good idea with a mouthful of apple sauce, half of which came out of her mouth and the other half through her nose. "Oh, honey, you should be more careful. Let me clean you up. Good thing you were wearing that bib!" With some wet wipes she cleared away the spilled apple, then held one to her nose and said "blow".

Iris decided she had enough of pretending to be a baby, and started behaving her age again. But when Sabine's mother asked if she wanted out of the chair, she decided that it was actually so comfortable that she would prefer to sit in it a bit longer, and asked if that was OK. Mrs. Fletcher didn't mind, but she needed to clean up a bit and get her things ready for her appointment later, so she asked what Iris wanted to do while in the chair, and in the meantime brought her a glass of milk. It came as no surprise that Iris asked for her phone, but when she got it she didn't immediately start using it. She first wanted to try for a bit if she could escape the chair, but of course that was very secure. Then Mrs. Fletcher came back and asked what they should do with her dirty clothes. She had already brushed it clean a bit with a moist cloth. She could put it in the washing machine, but would have no time to put it in the dryer and give it back dry when Iris would be leaving. "So shall I just put it in a bag dirty and put it in the hall for you to take back home and wash it there?" Iris didn't have a better idea, so she agreed. Then Mrs. Fletcher went back to the kitchen and then upstairs, while Iris started on her phone.

A bit later Mrs. Fletcher came down again, lowered Iris's chair to normal sitting height and sat on the chair next to her. "Iris, I was thinking about how you could go to the toilet while I am away. Since you cannot undress yourself, and I have no clothes for you that would allow that, I thought you might be

willing to wear a diaper underneath?" That triggered an immediate reply "I won't wear no f*cking diaper, I am not a baby!" and only then Iris realized she was not talking to her mother, but to the kind Mrs. Fletcher who had had such a difficult time. Her face turned as red as a tomato, and she stammered an apology "Oh, I am so sorry, it was like my mother brought that up again, and if anyone would see it or know I wore a diaper, my life at school would be over." "But who would see you here? The only one here is Sabine, and it's not like she would spread the word. Apart from that she might like to not be the only one in diapers." Iris felt guilty and understood the reasoning, but suddenly the chair felt confining and she found it hard to breathe, so she asked if she could get out now.

Mrs. Fletcher saw that she was struggling with her feelings, consented, and started to free her by lowering the chair, removing the tray, releasing her feet, undoing the harness on one side, and titling to chair forward so she could step out. Iris didn't know what to do, with so many emotions going through her. The fear of being discovered and teased again, the resentment of her mother trying to push her on this issue, the guilt of shouting at Mrs. Fletcher, the sadness about what happened to the Fletchers and the urge to help them all warred within her. And the reasonable arguments from Mrs. Fletcher had also joined the battle. Sabine's mother put an arm around her for moral support, but also added more ammunition: "I would actually find it comforting to know that you wouldn't need to leave Sabine alone while going to the toilet." Finally Iris calmed down a bit, and said in a tiny voice "OK then". So she took Iris's hand and went upstairs again. Since Sabine was still in bed, they couldn't use the changing table there, so Mrs. Fletcher took her to the storage room to use the bed there instead. She quietly went into Sabine's room to get the supplies, and when she returned started to undress Iris.

Since she had to start by opening the overalls, it seemed natural for her to continue, even though Iris could have taken over. After the overalls were off Iris was asked to lie down on the bed. It was much higher than a normal bed, and the mattress was probably almost three feet (0.9m) above the ground, but Iris just took a little jump and landed neatly with her buttocks on the bed. Then she laid down with her knees in the air, the body was unsnapped, and this time the panties also needed to come off. Iris thought it was supposed to be strange and unwelcome to be seen naked by a woman you didn't know that well, but she trusted Sabine's mother, and it all happened so matter-of-factly that it wasn't. Then the diaper was unfolded, making Iris uncomfortable once more, and Mrs. Fletcher said "Look, I brought the balloons you like." That made her smile wanly, and she obediently lifted her buttocks off the mattress so the diaper could go underneath. Once more Iris noticed how soft the inside felt, while the front was folded over her lower abdomen and the tapes were closed. "These are a bit big on you, I'd better get some plastic pants in case they would leak", got a pair out of the cupboard and pulled them on over the diaper and closed the snaps of the body.

Then Iris could come off the bed, and Mrs. Fletcher helped her into the overalls and closed the zipper and the button. It was obvious that the overalls were made to be used with diapers, and they still easily went over her hips, but now when the zipper closed they were a bit more close-fitting around her pelvic area, like they were around her torso. "And how does that feel" Mrs. Fletcher asked Iris seriously. "It's strange, and I still feel a bit anxious about them, but they are also very soft, and somehow feel right, for this moment. They are pretty thick though, and I need to push a bit to get my knees together." "Thank you for being honest, and I am sure you'll be used to them in no time." Iris was glad that she had already done number 2 at home this morning; she definitely didn't want to use her diaper for that! When she started moving, it made a rustling sound, and Iris had to remind herself that nobody outside this house would have a chance to hear it.

"Since we are upstairs anyway, let's go and get Sabine out of bed – it has almost been an hour by now." When they quietly entered Sabine's room, Iris saw her lying in the bed behind the closed doors, but she was already awake. She was in her unicorn onesie again, had a pacifier in her mouth, and her

elephant toy Bobo in her arms. She looked at them and waved. Her mother started opening the bed, which required first putting her fingers in 2 different holes at once, and then one more on each side, with which she could fold the two doors sideways, opening almost the whole side of the bed. There even were two brackets for an extra bar to block the doors, which lay beneath the bed, but apparently wasn't used for this nap.

Sabine sat on the edge of the bed, yawned and stretched her arms, stood up and took her mother's hand. Her mother took the pacifier out of her mouth and asked "Do you want to keep wearing your onesie?" Sabine nodded, but her mother said "Use your words, honey", so she answered "Yes, mama". Mrs. Fletcher felt her daughter's behind, and concluded that the diaper would hold for a while yet, so they went downstairs, while she explained that Sabine loved her pacifier, but she shouldn't use it all the time since that was not good for her teeth, and she wanted her to keep practicing speaking too.

While her mother installed her in her activity chair again, Sabine gradually became more awake and took a closer look at Iris. "You weah my clotes!" Iris could hear that she didn't mean that possessively, but simply stated that she spotted that Iris wore her old clothes. "Yes, I do, because my other clothes are dirty. Then I could borrow yours." Sabine's face dropped "I'm sowwy for youh clotes" "No problem, my mother will wash them. And these are nice too." "Yes, they look nice. And a diapeh too?" Oops, Iris hadn't expected that it would be noticed so quickly, although of course she was dealing with an expert. Perhaps she heard the crinkling? Anyway, there was no use denying it. "Yes, I can't take off these clothes myself, so I got some protection." Sabine smiled; apparently her mother was right in that she liked not being the only one in diapers and such clothes. That made Iris feel a bit better about the situation. "We are going to have a lot of fun while your mother is away!"

"Mrs. Fletcher, I need to go to the toilet. Can we do that before you go?" "Oh darling, I'm afraid we don't have time for that anymore. Could you just use your diaper?" Iris didn't want to, and feared the prospect of walking around for hours in a wet diaper, but she didn't have much choice, so she tried to let go. But after more than 10 years of being careful only to let go on the toilet, just releasing on command wasn't so easy, and even though the pressure mounted her bladder refused to obey. Mrs. Fletcher noticed the trouble, and advised her to try and sit on the toilet dressed. That did the trick, and gave immediate relief. She wasn't totally unused to the wet feeling spreading through the diaper, since it was not too different from the times she had had an accident, but within seconds the wet feeling disappeared as the diaper did its work, and soon it felt like it hadn't happened. When she stood up (strange without wiping!) she did feel the diaper was a bit heavier and more swollen, but the body and the overalls did a good job of holding everything in place.

When she got back Mrs. Fletcher had already finished with Sabine in the chair, and set up several things on the table. "These are the wet wipes, in case something needs to be cleaned up. Here are 2 juice boxes for you to drink; if you want more you can get them from the fridge. Here are a few coloring books and blank paper, crayons and colored pencils. And of course Bobo the Elephant. You can also go to her room and get any toys from the open cupboard there. This is Sabine's bib jacket, to protect her nice onesie if you are going to do something that might get messy. Just let her stick her arms through, as if you put on a jacket the wrong way around, and tie the strings in her neck. But, before I forget, please get your phone so you can enter my number, in case of problems or if you need something and you don't know where to find it. Now, did I miss anything? Any questions?"

"I can't think of anything. Don't worry, we'll manage, and I'll call if there is anything." Glad to get the boring details out of the way, Iris sat down next to Sabine and asked her what she wanted to do. In the meantime Mrs. Fletcher had collected everything she needed, came over and gave Sabine a kiss and a hug, wished them fun, and left through the front door.

5. The Sitting

Sabine wanted to make a drawing on blank paper, with the crayons. Iris wasn't sure that would fall under 'messy', like if the crayons made stains on the sleeves, so she decided to be safe and picked up Sabine's bib jacket. It was bright red and of a sort of sturdy leathery material. She remembered that online clothing stores often called that vegan leather nowadays. At the front bottom there was a sort of wide pocket – that would probably prevent things from dripping off the bottom onto the clothes. Sabine obediently held out her arms, and the jacket slipped on easily. With the open back it could be used without needing to undo the chair harness, so Iris just tied the strings together with a simple bow knot, checked that it was not too tight around the neck, and straightened the front.

Then Sabine got her paper and crayons, and immediately started drawing. Since her phone was there on the table anyway, Iris started to check her messages and usual haunts, while still regularly checking on Sabine. But there weren't so many new posts, so after a while she started looking through the coloring books. Most of them were the expected children's themes, but there was also one special needs book with pictures of people in wheelchairs, a blind person reading braille, etc. There wasn't much colored in there.

Iris thought Sabine might like to hear some singing, or even join in, so she started "Itsy Bitsy Spider". Sabine didn't obviously react, but gradually started humming and then singing along. Iris noticed that when singing, Sabine's speech was not halting, and she even seemed to be able to pronounce the 'r', like in 'spider'! "Hey Sabine, you can sing the 'r'!" she exclaimed, and her friend nodded. Somehow singing was different than talking. So Iris tried "Iris Iris Iris" on the melody of the song, and Sabine picked it up, and now pronounced her name correctly, earning her a hug. She looked both surprised and delighted, and kept on singing it.

After a while Iris felt sorry she tried it: Sabine kept on repeating it endlessly, and it was getting on her nerves. So to distract her Iris looked at the drawing and asked who the figures were that she had drawn. Sabine explained that it was Iris and Sabine in the tent, with her mother watching over them, and Iris felt moved by how her old, but also new, friend had accepted her. The drawing itself was not so precise, and the lines were wobbly, but on the other hand it did not look like the drawing of a two-year-old, since the proportions and the composition were a lot better. It actually looked quite good, and Iris said so, which earned her another one of those radiant smiles.

But as soon as they stopped talking the "Iris Iris Iris" began again, so she needed another diversion. 'Old McDonald had a farm' proved to do the trick, and soon both were trying to outdo each other with all the animal sounds, and Sabine got quite animated. But then suddenly she stopped singing, and her face clouded over. Iris could just see a big crayon line across the drawing, where Sabine apparently slipped when she tried to do the song and draw at the same time, before all hell broke loose. This must be one of those tantrums Mrs. Fletcher had told her about: she was clearly in a rage, and crayons and fragments of the torn drawing flew everywhere. She was screaming and kicking with her legs, which had not been secured in the footboard straps. But the harness and the tray held firmly, and after the initial shock Iris realized that there was no danger to her or her friend, so she relaxed and thought about what to do.

Should she call Mrs. Fletcher? But she was busy with the insurance people, and it wasn't really an emergency. Telling Sabine to calm down was obviously not going to work: she was way too deep into the rage. So she finally decided to just sit down next to her and started to talk in a quiet voice about when they were at Edison Elementary School together. While that didn't have an immediate effect,

gradually the storm calmed down, until Sabine was just sobbing. "Sowwy Iwis, Sowwy, Sowwy" Iris was still a bit weary to come close enough for a hug, but instead went to Sabine's side and started stroking her head and telling her that it was over now, and no harm was done. And that she wasn't mad, and knew Sabine didn't do it on purpose. Gradually the strong emotions settled down and she became her usual self once more.

When Iris was convinced that it was over, she took some tissues and wiped the tears from Sabine's face. "Thank you" She decided it was time for the juice boxes, and they sat quietly drinking for a bit. Iris was careful though to stay out of the 'line of fire' in case the juice upset Sabine's stomach again. Then they started talking again about their old school, and while Iris did most of the talking, it was clear that Sabine also still remembered a lot about their days there. While they were talking Iris gradually cleared up a bit, collecting all the crayons and the pieces of paper from the room. She didn't quite know what to do with the torn drawing – it didn't feel right to just throw them into the garbage, so she just put them on the table, out of sight from Sabine. She'd ask her friend's mother what to do with them later.

6. Evening

And then suddenly they heard the front door opening, and Mrs. Fletcher came back in. She looked relieved when everything seemed to be in order, put her briefcase and shoulder bag on the couch, and came over and gave them both a hug and a kiss. That was new for Iris, and showed her how glad Mrs. Fletcher was that everything was OK, and that Iris helped her out with Sabine. "Did you have fun?" Iris told her that they had a great time, with drawing and singing, and that Sabine even could pronounce her name right when singing. She tried to say it in a longer sentence though, hoping that Sabine wouldn't understand and start demonstrating again. Sabine's mother was amazed. But of course she also had to be told about the tantrum and how they weathered it.

"Why didn't you call me?" "Well, I thought about it, but we were both safe, so it wasn't really an emergency, and what could you have done over the phone anyway?" "You definitely handled it well, and thank you very much for that, but next time please give me a call anyway. I might have some warnings or tips on how to deal with her in that state, and I just prefer to know. But like I said, you did great and I'm very, very thankful that you helped me out today. You can come and sit with Sabine any time you like." Iris blushed a bit with the compliment, and realized it was time to call her mother to collect her. But the idea of leaving here suddenly made her very sad, and she wished that it didn't have to end yet.

"Thanks Mrs. Fletcher, it was so much fun that I would be happy to help out more. Actually I wish I wouldn't have to go home now. How about ... Could I ... What if ..." Iris didn't quite know how to put it, and if she could ask something like this. "Come on, tell me. I promise I won't get angry, or laugh." "Well, I was thinking that if I enjoy it here so much, and you could use a little help, that I perhaps, maybe, could stay here for a bit longer? A few days perhaps?"

"That is an interesting suggestion. I must say it has been a bit hard to get things done here, while Sabine's daycare is closed for the summer. But I don't have a guestroom or a bed for you to sleep in." "Yes you do, there is that bed in the room where you changed me after the accident at lunch." "But that is not a normal bed; I couldn't ask you to sleep on that. Even if you are still small enough to fit." Iris started believing this might actually happen, so she went on "Oh, but I don't mind. I'm sure we can make it work." "Well, I must say it sounds tempting. But you don't have anything with you for a sleepover." "My mother was going to come over anyway to pick me up. She could just as well come and drop my things off instead." "OK, that could work. But don't you have any plans or appointments

in the next days?" "No, it is summer vacation, my friends are away, and my father will only come back from the oil platform in a week. I do want to be home when he gets back, but until then there is nothing that I need to be at home for." Mrs. Fletcher was quiet for a moment, and then decided "Then it is fine with me, but of course your mother also needs to give permission. How long exactly are you thinking of?" "Hmm, my father will be back home next Wednesday, so I would like to be back home by Tuesday. That would be 7 more days – would that be possible?" "Yes, I think so. There will be a few things I need to take care of, but then you can watch Sabine again, and you can come along if we need to go somewhere together. So I guess you need to call your mother now. She will probably be waiting on a call from you already."

Iris wanted to jump for joy and hug her friend and her mother, but first she needed to call her own mother to get permission, and ask for her to bring her stuff over. She didn't think her mother would object, but she didn't want to disappoint Sabine if she had already told her and it was not allowed anyway. So she had to think for a moment on how to ask her mother, and what things she wanted to have brought over.

And she needed a toilet visit. But she was wearing one, so she might as well use it again. She decided to sit at a chair and try to pretend she was sitting on the toilet, and that worked. Mrs. Fletcher must have seen on her face what she was doing, because she said "Good girl" and stroked her head. Then she grabbed her phone, went into the kitchen for a bit more privacy, and made the call. Her mother sounded surprised, but gladly allowed it, and together they determined what she would need to bring for the next week. Of course her phone charger was very important for Iris, and she specified what pants, leggings, sweaters, t-shirts and shoes she wanted. Some nightwear – she was not allowed to sleep in the nude. Of course some assorted toiletries, and a few assorted other things. Being 13 she of course didn't need her dolls or stuffed toys anymore. Her mother estimated that she'd be over in 45 minutes.

After the call she went back into the living room, where Mrs. Fletcher was releasing Sabine from the chair. She told them the happy outcome, and Sabine, who had not understood what they were planning, was surprised and very happy. She grabbed Iris's hand and squeezed, because she was not free of the chair yet. Ouch, that girl definitely had some strength. Iris would need to be careful when she had another tantrum. When she was out of the chair they properly hugged, and her mother asked her to walk around in the living room a bit, since she had been sitting for so long.

"Now that I think of it, you haven't had any exercise today yet. Let's go upstairs to the workout room." She took Sabine's hand, picked up her briefcase and shoulder bag in the other, and went upstairs. Iris followed. This time they went into the first door on the right, leaving only the door at the end of the landing, which must be the parent bedroom. When both girls were in the room, Mrs. Fletcher said "just a sec" and went into her own room to drop off the bags. Iris looked around the room, and saw they had both an exercise bike and a treadmill. There was a big TV screen on the wall, that both machines were pointing towards. Of course the equipment had some adjustments you would not find in a normal gym: the exercise bike had a seat instead of a saddle, of course with harness. (See Figure 7 for the version without the straps and harness.) The treadmill looked pretty normal, but from the ceiling above it came down a cable from which a sort of climbing harness hung. Both machines had straps on the handgrips, and the exercise bike also on the pedals.

Sabine's mother re-entered the room, and asked her daughter if she wanted to bike today. She nodded, so her mother helped her on the bike seat, loosely strapped on the chest harness, strapped her feet to the pedals, and looked to see if Sabine grabbed the handles next to the seat or those on the pole in front of her. She chose the latter, and was strapped there as well.



Figure 7 The exercise bike

“Do you want to keep her company?” Iris realized the question was aimed at her, and was curious how Sabine’s workout would go and hoping that the TV would be turned on, so she agreed. “OK, then let’s get you on the treadmill.” That wasn’t what Iris expected, and she was not really into sports and exercise, but she didn’t want to go against Mrs. Fletcher, so she obediently but hesitantly stepped on the treadmill, while Sabine’s mother moved the harness out of the way. “You won’t need this. You have not been on a treadmill before?” “No, never. Can I fall off?” she asked, hoping to dissuade Mrs. Fletcher from making her exercise. “If you are unsure, just hold on to the handlebars.” Iris tried to grab them, but the straps were in the way and her small hands couldn’t get a good grip. There seemed to be a strap running over the hand grip and an attached strap that hung down in front of the handle. Sabine’s mother said “Hmm, I can’t easily remove the straps. Perhaps it is best if you put your hand between the handlebar and the strap here”, while she lifted the loose strap, which opened a gap. Sabine did so, and now could grip the handle properly. Mrs. Fletcher pondered what to do with the loose ends, and concluded “It is probably easiest to just use these as intended”, and wrapped the Velcro strap around Iris’s wrist, and then did the same on the other side.

Now Iris’s hands were suddenly connected to the treadmill, and she wouldn’t be able to get off even if she wanted to. Like in the tent, this gave her a strange mixture of unease and excitement. “Let me start the band slowly. I’ll leave it at walking speed for now, so you can get used to it.” Suddenly Iris’s legs started moving away from her, so she needed to step forward to stay upright. After an initial stumble she got into the stride, and it felt just like she was actually walking. One more adjustment to the speed made her step a bit quicker than she normally walked.

“So, that will get you some exercise. Let me turn the TV on.” She got the remote, turned it on, and selected an option from the menu that appeared. Then the TV began to show a forest in such a way that it looked like you were moving along a path, giving the illusion that you were actually walking/biking outdoors. “Have fun, I’ll come and get you in a while.” Iris had no choice but to keep on walking, and she could not even adjust the speed with her hands tied. She looked over to Sabine, who was already pedaling enthusiastically. And apparently the handlebar could move as well, because Sabine was also pulling that towards her and then back, in rhythm with her feet. Looking sideways and down while on a treadmill was not a good idea though, and Iris almost lost her balance, but with her hands firmly on the handles she could recover her balance.

At first Iris tried to talk a bit with Sabine, but soon she was winded enough that that didn't go so well, so they just labored on in silence while enjoying the beautiful forest. After a while Iris started wondering how long this would go on, but there was no sign yet of her being released, so she had to keep walking. Without a clock she had no idea of how long they were training, but finally the door opened again, the machines were stopped, and they were released. Iris felt tired and windy, but also a warm glow and a satisfied feeling. Sabine cheated a bit by leaning into her mother, and said "Thank you." Of course Iris had to thank her as well then, although she was not certain it was something she was grateful for. "Exercising is really good for Sabine; she always liked her sports, it keeps her fit, and she can also burn off negative emotions." Then she took them down.

"I didn't expect three mouths to feed, and it has been a busy day, so I'm not going to cook. How about pizza?" Sabine might not have completely followed the first part, but every child recognizes the word 'pizza', and both reacted enthusiastically. "Is there any topping you don't like or are allergic to, Iris?" "I only don't really like those small salted fish. And olives." "OK, no anchovies or olives then. Let me call for delivery", and she made a quick call for a family pizza Quattro Stagioni. Then she helped Sabine in her chair, and also put on her bib jacket. Then there was milk for the three of them, Sabine's in a sippy cup.

Ding Dong. It was Iris's mother with a large carry-all. After the greetings she looked at Iris with surprise and asked what she was wearing. Her daughter hadn't realized she was still dressed in Sabine's overalls, but explained the accident at lunch, and the temporary solution. Then she remembered the dirty clothes and gave them to her mother for washing. Her mother thanked Imogen for helping her out, and in turn Imogen apologized for not having time to return them cleaned. Iris opened the carry-all to check if everything was there, and didn't miss anything essential. After a bit more small talk her mother said her goodbyes and left. Iris followed her to the door to say goodbye separately; even when they often argued, and her mother had all those unnecessarily strict rules, it was still unusual for her to be away from her for a whole week. Just before pulling the door closed behind her, she gave Iris a slap on her behind and winked. Then she was gone, leaving her daughter behind flabbergasted.

Her mother must have somehow noticed that she was wearing a diaper. Disaster! When she got home, she would have to make it very clear that this had been a special circumstance, and not ever to be repeated. No way her mother was ever going to persuade her to wear one. But there was nothing she could do about it now, so she browsed a bit more through the carry-all and saw that of course her mother had also packed some extra warm clothes and the skirtall (overalls with skirt bottom) that she had recently bought for Iris, who didn't wear skirts much and didn't really like it.

Ding Dong. Pizza time! Mrs. Fletcher made sure all hands were clean, then cut bite-size pieces for Sabine, and allowed them to eat with their hands, as long as Iris folded a paper napkin over the top of her overalls front to protect her clothes. Not in vain, because once a piece of topping slid out of the folded pizza and made a red streak over the napkin before it fell on the table. They had great fun and managed to almost finish the big pizza. After the excitement and exercise Iris also ate more than she was used to.

"I'm going to give Sabine a quick shower and then put her to bed. That is probably easiest if you are not present. Feel free to turn on the TV, or whatever you want to do." And so they disappeared upstairs. Iris looked around for a bit, deciding what to do. She couldn't unpack her bag since that would be upstairs, and Mrs. Fletcher would need to show her some cupboard space she could use. The dirty dishes were still on the table; at home it was her task to clear the table and put the dishes in the dishwasher, and she hated it. But here it was different, and she could see how busy Mrs. Fletcher was and how nice that she could stay a whole week, so she decided to make herself useful and do the same

here. When the table was cleared and the dishwasher loaded, she also cleaned the table and Sabine's tray. Then she felt she earned a rest, sank down on the couch and turned the TV on. Apparently there were no streaming services like Netflix or Disney+, so she just zapped through the regular channels until she found a show she liked on Comedy Central. After a while she was joined by Mrs. Fletcher, who thanked and complimented her for the clean table, and sat next to her on the couch.

"At what time do you normally go to bed?" "I don't really have a bed time." "Come on, be honest, or do you want me to call your mother and check?" "Well, my mother says I should sleep for 9 hours, so it depends on how early I have to get up." "With Sabine there is always a lot of work in the mornings, so we normally start around 7. That means you need to be asleep by 10. So let's go upstairs at 9, since we need to get everything set up for you, next to your normal evening routine. Do you shower in the mornings?" "Yes, so I do only a quick wash in the evening." Then they watched TV again.

During a commercial break Mrs. Fletcher said that it was really nice to have her over, since it could get lonely for her. Of course she loved Sabine and enjoyed taking care of her, but she couldn't have a serious conversation or discussion with her, and the only TV programs the Sabine could understand were for small children. Then she excused herself for a small bathroom break, and Iris needed to as well. She managed to let go while sitting on the couch. Gradually it became easier to overcome the training of years, and she realized that wearing a diaper could also be convenient. Of course only here, inside, with people who didn't judge her for wearing one and wouldn't tell anyone. Certainly never with her mother!

When Mrs. Fletcher came back and set on the couch again next to Iris, the girl snuggled up to her, so she put her arm around her. While they watched more TV, Mrs. Fletcher noticed that Iris was getting sleepier, and she finally ended up lying with her head on the woman's thigh. Obviously the very eventful day had quite tired her out. Though it wasn't yet nine, Mrs. Fletcher invited Iris to go upstairs together, and she just got a nod.

7. Bed Time

In the storage room there was only a sheet on the hospital bed (see Figure 8), but Mrs. Fletcher got a pillow out of the cupboard, and brought a light duvet from her own room. Together they made up the bed. She warned Iris that the bed was much higher than she was used to, so she needed to be careful when she got out at night. "I assume you need to go to the bathroom during the night?" "Yes, often twice. Do you have a small light or something so that I can find my way out of the room? And perhaps the light in the landing can be left on?" She had already seen, when she brushed her teeth after lunch, that there was a toilet in the bathroom opposite Sabine's room, and now she actually practiced getting out of bed to the toilet and back, so that she could also do it while not fully awake." Sabine's mother complimented her on her foresight.

"Now let's get you some closet space." Mrs. Fletcher looked around a bit in the cupboard and decided that she'd move some of the own winter clothes to her room, and cleared 3 shelves for Iris. "Would that be enough?" "Yes, I think that will do fine, thanks you. Oh, my bag is still downstairs." She rushed down the stairs and came back with her things. Since her mother had neatly folded them, she could just lift whole stacks of clothing out of the bag, and divided them over two shelves. The third she used for the toiletries, phone charger and her other stuff, like bands for her hair. Then she selected pajamas for the night. Since it didn't seem cold she selected a t-shirt and shorts set with 'sweet dreams' on it.



Figure 8 Iris's drop-side bed



Figure 9 Night light

In the meantime Mrs. Fletcher returned with a night light that she plugged in, which spread a soft light in the shape of a crescent moon, and also projected stars on the walls and ceiling. Iris was too tired to worry whether or not that was childish, but just enjoyed it and was glad to be able to find her way at night with the illumination. (see Figure 9)

The woman went out of the room again, and then returned with a bowl of water and some cloth. She helped Iris out of the overalls, and asked her to lie on the bed. There she unsnapped the body, pulled off the plastic pants and opened the diaper. "Definitely used, but not to capacity." was her judgment. She pulled it from under Iris, who lifted her behind on cue, folded it and reused the tapes to make it an easy to discard package. Then she used the wet cloth to clean the pelvic area, looked closely to see there were no indications of a diaper rash, and dried it with a towel. "All done. You can put on your PJ's now. And remember, you're not wearing your portable toilet anymore!" Then she left again to discard the diaper, water and towels.

After putting on the shorts and t-shirt set, she started to crawl into the bed, when Mrs. Fletcher said "Not so fast. Aren't we forgetting something?" Iris looked blankly for a moment, and then realized she had not done her evening bathroom routine, including the tooth brushing Sabine's mother was probably referring to. And she also had better go to the toilet before going to sleep. When she had done all of that, and put her hair in a braid, she was finally ready to crawl in, so she hopped on the high mattress and laid down. The bed was shorter than at home, but she still could lie with straight legs, and she mostly slept curled up on her side anyway. Mrs. Fletcher tugged her in, warned her once more not to fall when she got out of the high bed during the night, gave her a kiss on the forehead and wished her goodnight. Then she turned off the main light and left. By then Iris was already asleep.

Later that night she woke up because she needed to go to the toilet. She quickly remembered where she was, so she carefully went to sit on the edge of the bed before jumping down. There she felt a thicker roll of fabric that she didn't remember being there when she went to sleep. In the low light she half looked, half felt what it was, and she concluded that there was a large towel that ran from the center to the open side of the bed, where the rest of the towel was rolled up into a roll of some 4

inches (10 cm) thick at the edge of the mattress. She didn't know why it was there, but it must have been done by Mrs. Fletcher while she slept, so she left it as it was.

Jumping down, finding her way to the bathroom, doing her thing, and back were easy, since she already practiced it, and soon she was back in bed. But the discovery of the towel and the unusual circumstances had made her wider awake than normal, and she lay there thinking for a while about everything that happened in the last day. When she thought about how cocooned she felt in the tent with Sabine, she wondered if she would feel that too if the open side of the bed would also be up, and if that would make her feel the same strange excitement she felt when the zipper closed. So she decided to lift it and see how that made her feel - of course not to the top, since she might not get it down again then.

It wasn't easy to pull the sliding side upward from within the bed, so she had to kneel on the side of the mattress and grip the side with both hands. After a strong heave the side started sliding up, but then the resistance was so much less that it shot up all the way and engaged at the top. Clank! That made her heart accelerate all right. But since she was unsure what had happened and if she could still get out, not in a good way. She lay down for a bit to rest and experience how confining it felt, but she couldn't relax. So she got up again and started to explore how to get the side down again.

It seemed logical to first explore the top where the side connected to the frame at the head and foot end, and there was indeed a knob she could pull on. That created a little slack in the side, but the knob had a spring in it, an as soon as she released it, it reengaged the sliding side. On the other side was a similar knob, so she concluded she would probably have to pull them both at the same time to release the side. But she just wasn't big enough, and she could not even touch both knobs at the same time. It seemed she had gotten herself stuck! Climbing out seemed out of the question: the sides were probably some 6 feet (180 cm) off the ground, and even if she managed to get over the top, she had a scary drop down that she could very well hurt herself with, and then no way to get back in.

Trying further seemed useless, so she lay down on the mattress again and considered her options. She didn't have her phone with her in the bed, so she didn't know what time it was and couldn't call someone. There was no light at all coming through the windows but the nightlight revealed that there were rolling blinds on the outside that probably darkened quite well, so that didn't mean much. She decided she just had to go back to sleep, and Mrs. Fletcher would rescue her in the morning. She just hoped that she wouldn't need a second bathroom visit this night. Of course sleep was evasive, and her mind swirled with many thoughts, but she must have fallen asleep at a certain time, because when she woke next she felt groggy enough that she must have slept a good stretch longer.

But the reason she woke was not a good one: her bladder was clamoring for her attention once more. This was what she had feared. Still no indication how late it was, and no light from the windows. But the way her body felt suggested that at least the biggest part of the night should have passed. She decided to call out for Mrs. Fletcher, although she didn't want to wake up Sabine or the neighbors. After calling several times there was no reaction. Well, she just would have to hold on and hope she would get rescued before it was too late. She tried to think of other things, but then suddenly the flow started. Hastily she folded back the duvet and crawled into the far bottom corner to at least not have the major wetness where she would have to lie for the rest of the night, and miserably let nature take its course. She started crying. When the flow stopped, she thought it would be best not to keep wearing the wet panties and bottoms, so she took them off and threw them away through the bars. Then she tried to dry herself off a bit with a corner of the towel, which had absorbed some of the pee anyway. Then she crawled up into the opposite corner of the bed and cried herself to sleep.

8. Tuesday Morning

Next thing she knew the light was turned on and Mrs. Fletcher came in and cheerily said good morning. Then she of course immediately recognized the smell, and saw the bed was closed up. "I'm sorry Mrs. Fletcher, I locked myself in and then I had to wet the bed." Iris surmised, tearing up again. "Oh dear, you will have to tell me all about what happened, but first we need to get you out of there and cleaned up." So she opened the bed by pulling on both knobs at the same time, just as Iris suspected, and then she could lower the side by gripping two handles at the top of the sliding side. "Come here, girl" and she was embraced in a firm hug. She cried for a while more while she was gently rocked, and then she was put onto the ground and sent off to the shower, while Mrs. Fletcher started to clean up the mess.

In the shower Iris gradually relaxed, and when she came out again she was ready to leave the bad experience of the night behind her. In her room she saw that the blinds were open and the bed had been fully stripped, and noticed that the mattress was covered by a sort of close-woven nylon surface that was probably water-tight, so at least her stupid action in the night hadn't ruined the mattress. Her wet panties and pajama shorts were also nowhere to be seen, and there was only a faint smell of urine left, combined with some cleaning agent.

She picked a pair of leggings, a t-shirt and a thin zipper sweater with rainbow stripes. She heard noises from the next room, so she assumed Mrs. Fletcher was getting her daughter out of bed. She knocked, not sure if she could disturb them, but was invited in. Sabine laid on the changing table, and her mother was just taping her new diaper. Then she was put in a soft green long sleeve bodysuit that snapped closed in the crotch, and a pink cotton sleeveless frilly jumpsuit with an embroidered flower and a normal, hidden back zipper. (see Figure 10) This didn't look like special needs clothing, but to make sure it couldn't be taken off, a special-looking side-release buckle was added over the top of the zipper. Mrs. Fletcher showed Iris that you needed to needed to press on the top with one hand, while squeezing the sides of the buckle with the other at the same time to open it.



Figure 10 Sabine's frilly jumpsuit

Then it was off to the bathroom, where Sabine washed her own hands and brushed her teeth, while her mother coached her. "It would be quicker if I did it for her, but I often try to get her to practice what she can." After she finished, her mother said "Why don't you brush her hair and then take her downstairs? I'll set up breakfast in the meantime." Sabine had fairly short blonde hair, and Iris could imagine that would be practical in her situation, so when Sabine sat down on a stool, brushing her didn't take long. Then Sabine asked "can I do youws?". Iris wasn't sure this was a good idea, and whether her friend would be gentle enough, but she decided she'd give it a try, so they swapped places. It wasn't as bad as Iris feared, but still not quite so pleasant as when for example her mother

did it. After a few minutes she said "Thank you very much, Sabine. Can you make me a ponytail with this band? Then I think we need to go down now for breakfast." So she took her friend's hand and led her downstairs.

There her mother put her in the chair, and offered a choice of bread or muesli in milk for breakfast. Iris chose the latter, while Sabine got bread again. Then Mrs. Fletcher invited Iris to tell what had happened during the night, so Iris explained that the first time she had to go to the toilet, she felt the towel. Sabine's mother explained that she had been rather worried that Iris would roll out of the high bed, or would be so sleepy when going to the bathroom that she'd fall, so she snuck into the room and improvised a little barrier with a towel, hoping that would help just enough for her not to fall out. "Oh, that was kind of you, but I never fall out of bed, and I was very careful when I went to the toilet." Then she continued that she was curious how it would feel if the side was up, and that she tried to not do it all the way. Mrs. Fletcher explained that the side slid easily if you grabbed the handles, but that you could force it up too. But for down you needed the handles: otherwise children leaning over the side could lower it and fall out. Iris continued that she didn't know how to escape, and so called for help. "Oh, I'm sorry. I never heard you. The rooms are on opposite sides of the house, and the isolation is pretty good. If I had known I would have put a baby monitor in your room, like I have with Sabine." "When I needed to go to the bathroom again, I tried to hold it, but it came anyway. I tried to do it in the corner, to still have a dry place to lie down, but I'm afraid I spread it all over. I hope I haven't ruined anything." "That should be alright: the mattress obviously was waterproof for Sabine, and the sheets I can wash. The duvet too, although that is a bit more tricky, and will need time to dry. We'll have to see what you can use the coming night." Iris could hear some sounds from the far end of the kitchen that could be a washing machine, so Mrs. Fletcher probably started it already.

Then she laid out her plan for the day "Sabine needs a new car seat, since the current one is getting too small for her. There is a great special needs store in Roseburg, and I thought we could go there today. There are a few more things I need from there anyway. I'll give them a call as soon as they open, so we get a dedicated sales person to help us around. You know Roseburg? It's about 80 miles to the south."

When Iris had finished eating, she continued "There is something I want to propose, but I'm afraid you will not like it." Iris, who felt quite guilty that she caused Mrs. Fletcher all that extra work with the wet bed, instead of helping her as she was supposed to, replied "Anything Mrs. Fletcher, anything I can do to help." "Well, it is a pretty long car drive, about 1.5 hour each way, and I would really prefer not to need to stop for you for toilet breaks at gas stations. Not only are they disgusting, but you never know who might hang around there, and I can't go in with you because I can't leave Sabine alone. Would you terribly mind to wear a diaper again?" Iris could see Mrs. Fletcher braced herself for an angry reply, and she actually surprised herself that the proposal didn't upset her too much. That didn't mean she was happy about the request, but at least she could answer calmly "I understand why you ask, and yesterday it wasn't so bad, but that was here inside the house, and a onetime thing. If we go out I'm really scared that someone would see, or hear, them and talk. Yesterday both Sabine and my mother noticed!"

Mrs. Fletcher, visibly relieved that they Iris reacted without getting angry, said "Thank you for staying calm, and perhaps we could see what we can do about the noise and the visibility. Why don't we try what we can come up with, and if you're still convinced that it is noticeable, you can go without." Of course Iris had already promised that she would do anything, and it sounded like a fair compromise so she nodded, even though she felt pretty anxious about it still. Then she got up, said "Let me help you", and took Sabine's bib jacket off. "This is really nice fabric. I asked my mother for a vegan leather jacket, like you see so often at the moment, but she won't allow it. Apparently they are not that warm and

don't last long. And not modest enough, whatever that's supposed to mean." Then she started clearing the dishes and cleaning the table again, while Mrs. Fletcher made the telephone call.

Sabine, who until now seemed content to watch the two others eat and talk, even when she could not follow much of the conversation, now wanted her Bobo. Iris didn't see it around, so she went upstairs to see if she could find it in the bedroom, and came back with it in her arm. "Here you go." When her mother had finished the call, said everything was taken care of, and that they were expected at the store between 11 and 11:30, giving them an hour at most before they had to leave. "Sweetie, I need to go upstairs with Iris for a while, but just call if you need anything. Do you want a puzzle?" Sabine nodded, and her mother took Iris upstairs to her bedroom. She let Iris select one of the puzzles in the toy cupboard, and take it downstairs.

When she came up again and entered Sabine's room, she was first sent to the toilet. That was a good idea, and Iris managed to excavate her bowels too, which was a relief for her because she wasn't sure if she would be allowed out of the diaper for it. Back in the room she was asked to take off her leggings and lie on the changing table. "Hands". Iris hesitantly raised her arms above her head, not understanding why *she* needed to have them restrained. Then Mrs. Fletcher said "Oh sorry, that is just the routine with Sabine. You will leave your hands out of the way, won't you?" Iris quickly pulled them back and placed them along her sides. "Hmm, yesterday it went well, but let me put some cream on anyway, to be sure. A diaper rash is no fun." So she started to spread some cream all over her buttocks. It smelled vaguely of herbs. But when it came close to her genital area, Iris had an involuntary reaction and her hands moved to protect that sensitive area. "No. Hands away." She quickly redrew them. "Sorry" "I understand. You're not used to it."

"Which diaper do you want today?" "Could I have the flowers?" "Oh, wait a second, I believe I still have one or two cotton-backed diapers. They don't have the nice prints, but they don't crinkle. When they were on her and Iris could get up again, she moved a bit around and indeed there was no noticeable noise. "These fit a bit better too. I think we can do without plastic pants." decided Mrs. Fletcher. "Sorry that they don't have flowers, like you wanted." "Oh, I don't mind. They will be hidden under my clothes anyway."

"Do you have anything to wear that is wide enough to hide them?" Iris pondered "I guess my pants and leggings are not wide enough. My mother also brought a skirtall. I don't really like it, but perhaps it would work. Let me get it." She got it from the next room and tried it on. But it didn't work, because the skirt was pretty short, so especially sitting the diaper would be visible, and the back didn't do a good job of hiding the extra bulk. So they agreed that that was not the solution.

"But your remark about the bib jacket gave me an idea that might work, and you might even like it." She went to the cupboard with the sliding doors, and got out a dark green dress. "I got this dress for Sabine not too long ago, because I also wanted her to have something that looks more mature, for instance for eating at a nice restaurant, and with the leather-like material it is easy to clean, so a bib would not be needed. But Sabine doesn't like it, so it is almost never worn yet. Might be a bit big on you, but worth trying I suppose. Here, put this body on first; the dress might be a bit sweaty otherwise. You could also keep your t-shirt on, but the body works a bit better for keeping the diaper in place." (see Figure 11)



Figure 11 Sabine's green leather dress

Iris agreed, so the t-shirt was pulled out over her head, and a simple yellow body on. Mrs. Fletcher did the snaps up again, and then held the dress up for Iris to step into. It also had integrated pants, that looked a bit like lycra bike shorts. Iris could imagine that they were of a different material since vegan leather would not be an ideal material for them. She put her legs in and the dress was pulled up and over her shoulders. Then the back was zipped up. Iris had caught a glimpse of the large zipper pull that she recognized from Sabine's onesie when she stepped into the dress, so she assumed it was locking. The dress had puff sleeves that were buttoned around her upper arms.

"Come, take a look in the mirror." Iris followed her into the bathroom, and saw she was wearing an a-line dress, with a fairly close-fitting bodice and waistband, and a rapidly widening skirt that stood out from her body because of the somewhat stiffer material. Yes, the top was a bit too loose on her, and the crotch of the integrated shorts hung a bit low, but that was pretty minor, and Iris actually felt mature and sophisticated in it. With the wide skirt there was no sign of any diaper bulk, and the shorts made sure that there would be nothing to see when she was sitting either. "Oh, yes, this is wonderful. And of vegan leather too! Now I wouldn't even mind if someone from my class saw me." She twirled around in front of the mirror and the skirt obediently widened, only to revert quickly to the A shape when she stopped. It came to a few inches under her knees.

She realized that the zipper still might give away that it wasn't a fully normal dress, but since she knew from web shops that back zippers currently were often clearly visible, and some had cords on them or had pulls with a large ring, so she didn't think it would raise eyebrows, unless someone would specifically know these locking zippers.

"You know, Sabine asked before if she could also do my hair, so I let her for a bit. It wasn't too bad." "That is very sweet of you, Iris, but please don't do that anymore. There is always a risk of a tantrum when Sabine tries to do something and it doesn't go like she wants. And I'm sure you can imagine what the results could be, with her standing over you with a brush in her hand, in a small room. She would never deliberately hurt you, but in the rage she has no control at all." That was a scary thought, having seen one of her tantrums and having felt her strength, and Iris knew she'd be more careful next time. Then she had to look at the dress in her mirror once more.

"When you're done admiring yourself, please brush your teeth and come downstairs. I'll collect the things we need for today." Sometimes Mrs. Fletcher just sounded like her mother. But then her father once in a while did, as well. Iris supposed that was just how parents were. While taking care of her oral hygiene, she noticed that she felt very relaxed, not unlike the last time she had a diaper on. As if she normally was constantly stressed about having accidents and acting all grown up, even if she didn't realize it, and now didn't need to. And not being able to take her clothes off gave her also a bit of an excited feeling, like in the tent. When she locked herself in the bed she didn't, and she wondered if that was just because she was too scared to feel it, or that the tent and the clothes were done by someone she trusted and would make sure no harm came to her.

All done, she put her toiletries in her room and took the backpack she had arrived with. This dress didn't have any pockets either, so she needed something to hold her phone a few other essentials. Then she went down, and checked on Sabine's progress with the puzzle she had selected. It didn't have that many pieces, perhaps 60, and Sabine was about halfway. Iris helped her for a few moments, but then Mrs. Fletcher also arrived with two bags and told them it was high time to go. Sabine wanted to finish her puzzle, and it seemed like there might be another tantrum, but her mother managed to defuse the situation by promising that they would keep the puzzle on the tray, and she could finish it when they got back. She wasn't totally happy but allowed her mother and Iris to carefully slide the tray off the armrests and put it on the table.

Sabine noticed Iris's dress and said "That is mine too! But it is hot and cold. And not fun." Iris thought she understood the 'not fun' part, since there was no embroidery or print, but looked questioningly at the mother for the 'hot and cold' part, who didn't seem to know either. Sabine tried again "It is warm and not warm." Her mother humored her "yes, dear" while continuing to get her out of the chair.

9. The Drive

Then they were ready to leave. Mrs. Fletcher asked Iris to carry the diaper bag and a weekend bag, while she took her purse and Sabine, who in turn grabbed her toy elephant. In the hallway she put a pink jacket on Sabine, and asked Iris to wear her jacket too. With the puff sleeves of the dress it was a bit of a struggle to get the denim jacket over them, but she managed.

The car of Mrs. Fletcher was a dark red, with only 3 doors. Two things immediately drew attention: a missing front seat next to the driver's, and a big red car seat on the back seat behind it. Iris was asked to put the bags on the parcel shelf behind the normal back seat, while Sabine's mother put her daughter in the car seat. (see Figure 12)



Figure 12 Sabine's current car seat

Iris sat down on the only available seat for her: the back seat behind the driver. She was quite glad to see there was no booster seat, and of course didn't mention that her mother thought she still needed one. When Sabine was secured, with Bobo in her lap, they drove off.

While driving Mrs. Fletcher explained to Iris that she got this car not long before her husband died, when of course she didn't know yet that she would be taking care of a special needs child. Otherwise she would not have chosen a 3 door model, because with the other front seat in place, it was very hard to get Sabine into and out of the car seat. Especially in the beginning they had so many expenses that getting another car was out of the question, but with the front seat removed it was actually pretty convenient, and she hardly ever had other people in the car anyway.

The trip took them through Eugene, and Iris saw the place the Fletchers used to live. "Look Sabine, there is your old house." Sabine had a bit of trouble looking: her body was kept firmly to the back rest

by the 5-point harness, and the wings on the sides of her head limited her vision somewhat. But she managed to catch a glimpse of it, smiled and waved. Then they turned onto the highway, and the view became a bit boring. Lots of greenery, but at the speed they were going it soon became more of a green curtain.

Mrs. Fletcher told Iris that the weekend bag contained several juice boxes that they could take if they wanted to. They both did. Then Iris took a better look at the car seat. I looked quite big, and Sabine easily fitted in, so she asked why she needed a new one. "Look at where the harness comes out of the back rest: that is lower than Sabine's shoulders. And that makes it less safe. Apart from that it might not be long before she passes its weight limit too. The car seat is constructed to keep the occupant safe in a crash, but if she is too heavy the construction might not hold."

Gradually Iris started to notice a disadvantage of not having a booster seat. Well, two actually. One was that she was so low that she could hardly see past the driver seat. But bigger issue was that the diagonal strap ran so close to her head that it kept rubbing her neck, which started to become painful. She had already pushed it away a few times, and tried to find a different position, but it wasn't enough. So she came up with the idea to move her head to the other side of the belt, pull her arm through, and the diagonal strap ran behind her back where it didn't bother her anymore. The waist strap would surely be enough to keep her in her seat if something happened.

She considered this a fine solution, and it also gave her more room to look out of the window. But after a while Mrs. Fletcher looked at her through the rear view mirror and asked where her seat belt was. So Iris explained what she had done. "You need to immediately do your seat belt up properly: that is not safe at all! If we bumped into something all the force would end up on your stomach and cause serious internal damage!" Iris hastily complied, but also complained about the belt rubbing her neck. "Can't you put the collar of your jacket up, so it is between your neck and the belt?" That actually worked pretty well, although it still wasn't totally comfortable. "Thanks Mrs. Fletcher, that helps. And sorry, I didn't know it was dangerous. With the booster seat in my mother's car the seat belt doesn't rub like that." Oops, now she mentioned it anyway. But luckily Mrs. Fletcher didn't react.

By now Sabine became a bit fiddly, getting bored with the trip, so Iris started doing the 'old MacDonald had a farm' song again, since that had been such a success the day before. Soon they were in full flow again, and had a lot of fun. Even Sabine's mother joined in when the situation on the road allowed. Then Iris spotted a 'Welcome to Roseburg' sign and knew they were almost there. And indeed, a few minutes later they turned into an industrial area, and then onto a large parking lot, where the building on one end had a big sign with the unimaginative name "Roseburg Special Needs Superstore". There were cars all over the lot – apparently it was not only being used for their destination - but they could still get parking spot pretty close to the store entrance.

When Mrs. Fletcher got out of the car, she first asked Iris for the weekend bag, and got a bundle of straps out, which she put on the hood. Iris got out too, and noticed it had warmed up nicely, so she took off her jacket and put it in her backpack. After Sabine was freed from the seat, her mother took off her jacket too, and then held up the straps. "Today you don't need to ride in the buggy, so let me put your harness on." she said to Sabine, for whom this apparently was good news, so she obediently stuck out her arms. The harness was draped over her, and the buckles in the back were closed. Iris could see it were the same type of buckles as on her jumpsuit. Then the rein strap was connected to both sides of the lower belt. It looked pretty short; less than 3 feet (90cm), so Sabine had to stay quite close to her mother. (see Figure 13 and Figure 14)



Figure 13 Sabine's harness, front



Figure 14 Sabine's harness, back

In the meantime Mrs. Fletcher warned Iris that it was a very large store, in an unfamiliar city, so she needed to say close to her. "Shall I bring the diaper bag?" Iris suggested. "Thank you for offering, but let's leave that in the car for now. We might not need it, so why drag it along." the woman replied, while she took the weekend bag, locked the car and started towards the entrance.

10. A New Car Seat

Inside the store there was a big service desk at the side, where they went to, and Mrs. Fletcher announced that they had an appointment, and gave her name. "Oh yes, I see. I'll signal Mark and he will be right with you." Iris looked around for a shopping cart, but didn't see any. So she asked Mrs. Fletcher, who said that they used a different system here. Before she could explain further, a tall man in his thirties arrived and greeted Mrs. Fletcher by name, and she replied likewise. Obviously he had helped them before. "And here we have Sabine. How are you? Do you want a lollypop?" She nodded and got an orange one, which she immediately unwrapped and started licking on.

"And who is this young lady?" Mrs. Fletcher explained that she was called Iris, and was a guest with her at the moment. Mark bent over to her and greeted her, speaking in the same sort of voice he used on Sabine "Hello Iris. So nice to meet you. Do you want a lollypop, too?" "No thank you. And I am *not* disabled!" "OK, I will remember that." Iris wasn't sure that he believed her, but had no reply to that.

Mark turned again to Mrs. Fletcher, did something on his phone and said "OK, I have opened a new shopping cart at your account, so we can begin straight away. Where do you want to start?" "Let me open the shopping cart too, so I can follow what we decided upon and perhaps add a few basic things myself." She got out her phone too and logged in on the app. "Let's start with the main reason we're here: a new car seat for Sabine. She's getting too big for her old Diono." "Great, please follow me."

He started off across the store, and Iris saw that it didn't just consist of the large hall they arrived in, but that there were even passages to adjacent halls. This hall was filled with all sorts of wheelchairs, strollers, rollators, and a lot more she didn't pass yet or didn't recognize. While they were following Mark, Sabine's mother explained to Iris that they used an app, just like a web shop, where you selected your items in the app or by scanning the barcodes on the shelves, then you could pay with your phone or at a register, and finally you could pick up everything that was in stock at the separate warehouse entrance, where it could be loaded directly into your car. That was a lot more convenient than having

all the stock inside the store, and you didn't need to load any big and heavy items into shopping carts and drag them all through the store. That sounded like a very clever system to Iris.

They arrived at the car seats section, which was in a corner of the first hall. Again the assortment seemed overwhelming to Iris, with seats in all sorts of sizes and colors. Many were mounted on benches at a height comparable to a car. Mark took an estimating look at Sabine, and concluded that they had best look at the adult-sized seats, and asked Mrs. Fletcher if she already had one in mind, or else what she looked for in the new car seat. "I have heard a few names and read a few things, but nothing definite, so I'll leave it to you to make some suggestions. As you see Sabine is getting a big girl, and still growing a lot, so we need to expect her to come close to 5 foot 10 (1.75m), so it needs to be a large one, but it also has to fit in my car." "Is the car more than 10 years old?" "No, I have it about 5 years, and it was 3 years old when I got it." "OK, then I'm sure it will support LATCH for easy installation." "Yes, I believe her current Diono Radian uses that too."

She continued "As you know, with Sabine it is important that she can't get out herself, so we need a 5-point harness with a locking system. With the Diono we use the Merritt Buckle Guard and Chest Strap, which work well. Occasionally I might need to restrain her feet, and possibly her hands as well. For the rest she likes the brighter and warmer colors best, so that would be an advantage. And it would be nice if it can also have a tray that I can add. That is about all I can think of."

For Iris this was all way too technical, and of course Sabine had also zoned out, but now that her lollypop was finished, she became a bit restless. So Iris suggested to Mrs. Fletcher that she might take Sabine to some of the seats and see what she liked. Mrs. Fletcher seemed hesitant about it, but Mark reacted first "Sorry, we can't have kids running around on their own here. And we will very soon go look at the car seats and try them out, so please be patient for just a little longer." Then he continued to Sabine's mother "I think her expected size is the biggest limiting factor here, so let's go over the options. The Merritt Roosevelt is a very popular option, but she is already close to its height limit. Merritt also has the Churchill though, that is big enough. Of course the Buckle Guard and Chest Clip work with those. I can demonstrate the Roosevelt, but the Churchill is not so popular, and I don't have a demonstration model at the moment. But of course we can order it for you."

While talking to them he led them to the section with the largest car seats, all quite impressive-looking. "Here is the Roosevelt." and he pointed to one of the more noticeable car seats, in dark red with white stripes along the side and the headrest. (See Figure 17) He crouched down for Sabine and invited her to come and sit in it. When she did, it became clear that the highest shoulder strap positions were only slightly above her shoulders. "Of course an inch or so too tall is not too bad, but if you expect her to grow much more, I think we need to move on. Here is a brochure of the Churchill. As you see it goes all the way up to 72 inch (1.83m) and 175 lbs. (80kg). But it is only in grey with blue accessories, and there is no tray option. It does have quite a few options like to fixate the head, to spread the legs, etc. but those are more for the physically challenged."

Iris had already peed in the car, and it had not been hard to let go anymore. Now she felt the urge again, but apparently it was different with standing or walking, than with sitting, and she was struggling again to let go. Mark continued "Now, for Iris this would be an ideal seat. If you could take Sabine's place for a moment I can demonstrate some of its features." Iris didn't really want to be put into a child's car seat in the middle of a store, but it would be nice to sit for a moment, and it would help for her bladder. And apart from that the activity chair at the Fletcher's house had been kind of nice too, so she was also a bit curious how this would compare to her own booster seat. So she stepped forward, took off her backpack, and sat down. Mark asked her to pull up her dress a bit for the harness, normally a strange request for a girl sitting down, but Iris realized hers had the built-in

panties, so she complied. Next she needed to stick her arms through the harness, which was like putting on a jacket. The harness of the activity chair was more like an 'X' where the crossing point had been lowered, with no buckles in the front, while with her booster seat she used the normal seat belt. So this was new for her. Then he pulled a strap with a block at the end through her legs, and connected the two buckles of the shoulder straps to it. Then he connected a cross strap between the shoulder straps, which resembled the ones she had seen on some back packs, although the buckle was larger. It was still pretty loose, but that changed when he started adjusting the straps, and soon her torso could hardly move.

Mark stepped for a moment towards Mrs. Fletcher, and showed her some of the options in the brochure of the Churchill. This gave Iris a nice opportunity to let her pee go, but although she tried not to show it, when Mark and Sabine's mother looked towards her again, Mark said "She is wearing protection, I assume?" and received a nod for reply. How embarrassing! But at least she knew now that even a professional hadn't spotted them when she sat down and pulled up her skirt. Small comfort. He came back to her, and continued with the demonstration. "As you can see, the Merritt Buckle Guard and Chest Clip are already in place. (see Figure 15 and Figure 16) By the way, these come in 10 different colors, so a lot of choice for discerning young ladies." and he winked to Iris. "Other options include an incontinence cover that can be put on and off without removing the harness." Iris wondered if it was coincidence that he mentioned that first, after her just using her diaper.



Figure 15 Merritt Buckle Guard



Figure 16 Merritt Chest Clip

"Then there is the Abductor Pommel", and he pressed a foam block between her legs, that he secured with Velcro on the seat cushion front. This forced Iris's legs apart, and made sure she couldn't slouch at all. "The EZ-up headrest is already mounted on this seat, and that works together with this EZ-Up Cap." He got something a bit like a baseball cap and put it on Iris's head the wrong way around. Then he adjusted the Velcro in front to closely fit her head. Last he did something with the cap at the back of her head, and suddenly it was stuck to the headrest, and she couldn't move her head anymore. Until now she had been mostly amused about all the options, and a bit excited again, even though she still didn't like this Mark who treated her so childish. But this was a bit much, and her hands went up to see if she could release her head. But he caught her hands and said "just a minute more, sweetie, so that we can see how the cap works."

"That brings me to your request for restraining the hands." Now Iris was getting a bit scared; this was going too far for her. But she was reassured when he next said "None of the car seats have that as a standard option. You would need to add a separate product for that, like the EZ-on harness or Humane Restraints transportation straps. I can show you the options", and they started to move away, out of Iris's limited sight (due to the cap and the wings of the headrest). Iris got scared of being left alone like this, and started to seriously struggle to get out. But where the release button of the harness should be, she only felt a metal cylinder with nothing to press on. It seemed to have a small hole in front and

to be open at the bottom, but her arms were in totally the wrong position to get into the opening with her fingers. Then she tried to get her arms through the shoulder straps, but the cross strap prevented that, and also from pulling them over her shoulders. So she tried to open the clip, but the side release buttons wouldn't move. She couldn't even move the clip down; it was somehow connected around the back of her neck. At least the Velcro closing of the cap she could undo, and then her head was free. She quickly noticed that the others hadn't moved away very far, and were watching her struggle. "You can see how effective the security measurements are, even for a child that is 'not disabled'." Again Iris heard in his voice that he hadn't really believed her, and of course the diaper use wouldn't have convinced him otherwise.

Then Iris was released from the chair. Mark used a sort of plastic key on the chest clip, and easily put his thumb in the metal cylinder from below to open the harness. The seat and the position she was held in had actually been quite comfortable, but nonetheless Iris was quite relieved to be free again. Especially since several passersby had stopped to watch the 'show', and only now dispersed again. She went to Mrs. Fletcher's side and stayed close to her for comfort. Then she got a hug "Sorry honey, that was a bit mean of us. But your demonstration was very useful for me; I can't really ask Sabine to do something like that, and this gives me confidence that she really won't be able to get out, even if she is out of control. And having a raging Sabine loose in the car while I try to drive safely scares the crap out of me." Sabine was not quite sure what had been going on, but she had seen her friend struggling and unhappy, so she came over and gave her a smile, a hug, and took her hand. Iris felt moved.

Together they walked on to the next candidate, with Iris still a bit shaken. Luckily she had time to recover, since Mark first started with listing all sorts of details again. He showed them two more car seats, the Columbia Spirit and the Carrot 3 with its XL version, but neither quite matched what they were looking for.

When he moved to the next seat, he said "This might be the most interesting choice for you: the Recaro Monza Nova 2 Reha. It can be adjusted very tall, and only has a weight restriction of 110 lbs. (=50 kg). Normally they are only available in black with gray, but this is a limited edition version in the colors eggplant with orange. I believe these colors are not to everyone's tastes, and that sales of it have dropped because of that. So we decided to sell this show model, and get a regular gray/black one instead. If you like the colors, or can at least live with them, we can make you a great deal, and we'll include all the accessories in that color as well. Plus you can take it with you today instead of waiting for it to be delivered."

Mrs. Fletcher and Iris didn't like the colors, but Sabine took a step forward and seemed interested, so her mother asked what its features were and the accessories. "This is a very feature-rich car seat. Of course it has all the normal adjustments, but one of the specialties is the headrest that can be moved up and down in 11 positions, and the harness straps automatically move with it. Another unique feature is the inbuilt speakers in the headrest, so you can play music to keep the occupant calm, or listen to what they want. It also has extra features to keep the occupant cool."

"It has an inflatable neck pillow, removable side supports, and also extra effort is taken to protect against side impact accidents. Sabine, would you like to try it out? Then I will show you more cool features." She nodded without hesitation, cooperated with the harness, wiggled a bit and sat there radiating contentment.

"The harness has this soft cover to prevent the occupant from playing with the release buckle, and a chest clip that also has a cover. But if that is not safe enough, the harness is also compatible with the Merritt accessories. Then the extra options that we can include in the deal: There is this Abduction

block that goes between the legs like this, and a seat depth extension that you just slide in on the front, and soft harness strap covers. But one that will surely make you happy is this table. Raise your hands please Sabine? And then you Velcro it here on the sides, outside the occupant's reach."

"There are a few extra accessories that you could consider, but are not part of the deal since they are not color-specific. There is a swivel base so you can turn the seat sideways, making it easier to enter and leave, and there is a footrest. It has no straps, but could be used as an anchor point for your own."

Mrs. Fletcher looked quite impressed, and Iris also concluded this sounded much better than the previous options. She wondered if she could put up with those dreadful colors though. Mrs. Fletcher inquired about the price. "Normally the seat plus all the extras I mentioned would be around \$2000,-. But I can offer it to you for \$1200. That is lower than any of the seats we looked at with the extra options you asked for. If you want the better security of the Merritt Buckle Guard and Chest Clip – those are \$30 each. The Footrest is \$270."

"Sabine, would you like this to be your new car seat?" She nodded vigorously. "You like the colors?" Another nod. "Well, it seems like our princess has decided on her new throne. What would you offer if I traded in the current one, a Dione Radian RTX?" "Sorry, we don't do secondhand car seats. There can always be hidden faults or damages, and with safety we are just not prepared to take risks." "OK, that sounds fair. I'll find someone for it then. So let's add this Recaro to our shopping list, and please add the 2 Merritt items. I'll leave the footrest for now. And about wrist restraints: I'll first see what I already have that would also be suitable in a car seat. And I assume the table also limits the arm range." (Figure 18 shows the Recaro car seat, but in the normal gray/black colors.)



Figure 17 The Merritt Roosevelt car seat



Figure 18 Sabine's new Recaro car seat

"Mommy, can you clean me?" Sabine asked softly. Her mother felt her diaper, and agreed that it was time. Then she looked at her phone for the time, and said to Mark "I guess we need a visit to the change room. And then we'd better go have lunch at your restaurant. Let me see, I also need some incontinence supplies, but we can do that on our own. Perhaps browse a bit through the toys and see if there are any nice clothes that are affordable, but I'm not looking for anything specific. Then I want some new security mittens for her, maybe a swim diaper, and she needs a bigger rain suit too. For that I would like help. Shall I look for an assistant at the clothes section when we get there?" "I would be

available after lunch too. So if you want I can meet you in, say 1.5 hours, and then we go look at the things you want help with, and then I leave you to further look around on your own?" "Oh, that would be great. I'll meet you outside the restaurant at 1:30 PM then."

11. Lunch

"Come on girls, let's go get you cleaned up. The diaper bag is still in the car, so we need to get that first." When they reached the entrance area, she pointed to some seats and told them to go sit there and wait for her return. Then she handed Sabine's leash over to Iris. "It might be best if you also hold her hand when you walk with her. Otherwise she might try to bolt off, and I'm not sure if you'd be able to hold her then." Iris was pretty sure she was right, so she took Sabine's hand and took her to the seating area, where they talked for a bit about Sabine's new chair, or throne as her mother called it.

It wasn't a long wait, and soon the leash was given back and they were on their way again through the store. Mrs. Fletcher didn't hesitate and took off to one of the further halls. Iris kept being surprised by the enormous range and selection of items; they also seemed to have supplies for normal babies, toddlers and the elderly. The store had wide lanes between the isles for wheelchairs, and there was a wide range of shoppers, from those that appeared normal to children in strollers, people in elaborate electric wheelchairs, and even a few elderly in scoot mobiles. "Come on Iris, let's keep moving and relieve Sabine from her messy underwear." Iris could see that her friend was straining on her leash, trying to pull her mother along. "Sorry, I'm coming."

They seemed to be going towards the restaurant, judging on the smells, and they could already see its entrance when they got to the toilet area. Next to the regular Men and Women entrance, there was also one with an extra wide door titled Diapering Station. Entering it, it at first glance looked like a normal restroom, with water basins on one side, and a row of stalls on the other. Only the stalls were bigger and everything was spaced further apart. They entered an empty stall, which contained a changing table, diaper pail, and a wet wipes holder. There also was a sign on the wall with the rules. Next to the usual things like 'no smoking' it mentioned that the use of the safety features was required, and that extra supplies, like diapers, could be purchased from the cleaning lady. The changing table contained several straps and there also some Velcro straps that hung above the center of the table from ropes that ran via the ceiling, and down along the wall, where they ran through a simple mechanism.

Mrs. Fletcher obviously had been here before, and knew her way around. She took Sabine's harness and jumpsuit off and hung them on the coat rack. Then Sabine was put on the table, and her hands secured out of the way. Next the bodysuit was unsnapped and moved high enough up the girl's body to keep it clean. On this table there was also a waist strap. Mrs. Fletcher applied that, went to the ropes on the wall and lowered the cuffs. Those she wrapped around Sabine's ankles, and by pulling on the ropes her legs were raised and spread, and her hips just left the table, granting perfect access to the diaper area. She activated the mechanism to hold the rope at fixed length. "These are mostly for handicapped people who have limited or no use of their legs, but they are convenient for Sabine too. Now she can just lie back and leave everything to me." After removing the dirty diaper, which contained stool too, and cleaning, all the necessary supplies came from the diaper bag. After the new diaper was put under the girl, her mother lowered the ankle straps just enough for her hips to rest on the diaper, and then everything went as normal, Sabine's legs were freed, and soon she was dressed and leashed again.

Putting the handle of the leash on a coat hanger, she turned to Iris. ‘And how is your diaper?’ “I have used it once during the ride, and once at the car seats, so I don’t think it will be full yet.” “That is probably right, although the ones you’re wearing don’t have quite the same capacity as Sabine’s. But I’m not coming back here again, so are you sure it will hold until we’re back home?” Iris didn’t really want to have her diaper changed in a public place, but a leaking diaper would be a lot worse, and at least this stall was private. So she agreed to be changed, and took off her backpack. “Now, I hope I brought the key for your dress along. Ah yes, here it is.” Mrs. Fletcher unlocked her dress and took it off, and Iris hopped on the changing table. “I’m sorry, but the regulations say that I have to use the wrist cuffs and waist strap on you too. There are always stupid people who create unsafe situations and then blame the store if things go wrong, so they must have such policies. But I’ll not use the ankle straps if you don’t want.” Iris felt a bit excited about the idea of being strapped like Sabine was, but didn’t really want to admit it, so she compromised “It’s OK if it is more convenient to you.”

Then first her hands were strapped. The Velcro cuffs were attached to opposite sides of the top of the table with short straps, allowing her to move her arms somewhat, but not enough to reach the other cuff and undo the Velcro. The waist strap was only for not rolling off the table, and Mrs. Fletcher applied it loosely, after moving her bodysuit out of the way. Then Mrs. Fletcher carefully took one ankle, watching for any negative reaction from Iris, but she just laid there relaxed and let it happen. When her legs were hoisted into the air and apart, it was such a vulnerable position that Iris did fight it a bit, and immediately Mrs. Fletcher stopped pulling, but a few seconds later Iris nodded that she could continue. It still was a strange position, especially when her hips were lifted from the table an inch or so, which also caused the waist strap to tighten, but not uncomfortably.

Her caregiver said “oh, one of the tapes has gotten loose. I remember now that was a downside of these diapers. But no harm done; the clothes held them in place nicely.” Iris soon relaxed and enjoyed the treatment, like she would at the hairdressers or manicurist. Even applying the cream at her sensitive area was not unpleasant. Occasionally she pulled a bit on the cuffs to enhance the helpless feeling. Soon she was up and dressed again.

Sabine had found it interesting to watch – this was always done to her, but she never saw much of it. Having shared this experience with her friend as well, she took Iris hand when they left the stall, but not for long, because her mother required them to wash their hands for lunch, while she also cleaned hers thoroughly.

Then they left the diapering station and entered the restaurant, where at the entrance Mrs. Fletcher registered at a counter with her customer number. “Welcome Fletcher family. The buffet for one adult, and two special needs?” Iris wondered if she was wearing a sign or something declaring her disabled, but before she could react Mrs. Fletcher said yes, which of course upset Iris, but she didn’t want to make a scene and draw more attention to her. “Have a nice meal. Do you need any additional materials, or have any special dietary needs?” “No, I’m sure we can manage with what is standard available.” Then Mrs. Fletcher selected a free table. This was not as easy as it sounded, because there were a number of different setups, some with larger tables or tables at different heights. Then the tables also had different configurations of chairs, with regular seats with blue fabric padding, wooden chairs with adjustable height and a simple harness, all the way up to things that looked like Sabine’s activity chair and beyond. At the back of each chair was a plaque with the type and brand of chair, and the price. Apparently the restaurant was also used to show off their wares. The table that Sabine’s mother chose was one of the most normal: a regular 4 person table, 2 fabric-backed chairs and two adjustable wooden ones. The plaque at the back called these Stokke Tripp Trapp adjustable chairs. There was a little sign on the table with more policies. This one mentioned that diapered persons were

not allowed on the fabric chairs, again that the available safety features were required, and also that extra support and safety straps were available on request.

Mrs. Fletcher explained “This is a buffet restaurant, where you pay a fixed amount and then can eat whatever you want, and as much as you want. Sorry I agreed you were special needs, but it is cheaper for disabled minors, and since the cashier already suggested it, I thought we might just as well save some money. Why don’t you go first and pick out whatever you like. Be careful though what you put on your plate: we’ll need to pay extra if the plates are not empty when we leave. I’ll put Sabine in a chair, and when you come back you can sit with her while I get food for the two of us.”

Then she put her bags on an empty regular chair, and started to adjust one of the wooden chairs, while Iris went off exploring. First a tray, plate and cutlery, and then off to all the delicious foodstuffs, both hot and cold. She didn’t know quite know where to start, but in the end she had a fair amount of food on her plate, and a cola for drink. It was wonderful to do this without her mother, who always insisted on the healthy choices, but she tried to be responsible and also added some vegetables.



Figure 19 The restaurant's Tripp Trapp chair

When she returned, Sabine was in the chair, complete with bib, and Mrs. Fletcher started to adjust the other wooden chair opposite her daughter. (see Figure 19) “The rules say you need to sit in one of these, honey, with the harness, so let’s see how we can adjust this to your size.” The horizontal boards could be moved to different heights, and soon Iris was able to sit on it with the lower board at its lowest position, and the upper one fairly high. That put her head at about the same level as Sabine, whose upper board was a bit lower and the lower board removed. Mrs. Fletcher then asked Iris to put her arms through the harness, and connected the shoulder straps to the receptacle in the crotch strap, not unlike with the car seat she sat in earlier. But this was a simpler harness, and of course the chair was not as comfortable as those elaborate padded car seats. Still it was not bad, and with her higher

position she had a good overview over the table. Then she went behind Iris's back and tightened the straps so that it fit snugly, and shoved the chair to the table with the waiting foodstuffs.

"Now it's my turn to get food. It is probably kinder to Sabine if you wait with eating until she has her food too. I'll try to be quick." So there Iris sat, once again restrained. Sabine's mother did it so naturally that she had hardly noticed it happening, especially with all that was already done to her today: diaper, locking dress, (normal) seat belt, locked in and trying to escape a car seat, and the diapering here. Good thing they were far from Eugene, so it was extremely unlikely that anyone she knew would see her, and who of her school would visit a special needs store?

Then Mrs. Fletcher returned with a lot of food on her plate, and a second, empty plate that she put in front of Sabine. She moved some of the food that was bitesize onto Sabine's, sat down and said "enjoy". Sabine and Iris immediately started eating, and for a while there was no talking. Occasionally Mrs. Fletcher cut up some more of the food on her plate, so that Sabine could eat it with her hands. Iris first tried to eat the civilized way, with her cutlery, but when she saw that Mrs. Fletcher used her hands for the French fries and such, she followed her lead and enjoyed the relaxed atmosphere. The higher position in the chair, and the fact that her harness didn't allow her to move her head straight above her plate made it somewhat harder to not spill anything, and a few times she did. The first time she was startled, and ashamed she dirtied her borrowed clothes, but then she remembered Mrs. Fletcher telling her that the dress was selected to be used without a bib, and realized she could just wipe off any spillage with a paper napkin. 'Was that only this morning?' she wondered.

With 2 people eating from her plate, Mrs. Fletcher's was empty before Iris had finished, and she excused herself to get more. Sabine also had some left, so Iris just ate on, and not long after the woman returned she had finished hers too. She had noticed some pretty interesting desserts too, so she decided she would go and get some, and tried to undo her harness buckle, which was conveniently in front. But it wouldn't budge. Sabine saw it and shook her head, while her mother said "Iris, leave that. If you want out you should ask me. These buckles are locked anyway, but remember to ask, if for some reason you might find yourself restrained by me again. Please tell me why you want out." "I just wanted to get some desserts." Iris replied, not quite sure what the harm in that was. "OK, let me help you." She got up, took a little tool that was on a rope connected to her chair, held it up to the buckle, and then pressed the release.

Now Iris could get out and go to the dessert bar. It was hard to choose, so in the end she took two, confident that she could finish both. "You can close the harness yourself" she heard when she got back, so she did and then started eating again. Mrs. Fletcher also went and got some. Halfway through the second dessert Iris so full that she couldn't finish and had to leave the last bit. When all had finished, Mrs. Fletcher asked her if she was going to empty her plate. "Sorry, I'm just too full." "But I warned you at the start that we would need to pay extra if your plate wasn't empty. So you'll just have to finish it. Iris didn't like that, but she had to concede that she had been warned, so she forced the last bit in too. "Good girl. Come, we need to go. Mark will already be waiting for us." So the girls were released, and they went to the exit, dropping off their plates near the end, where an employee took them, checked that they were empty, and clicked a few times on a touchscreen.

12. A New Rain Suit

Mark was already waiting for them, doing things on his phone. When he saw them he greeted them once more, asked if they had enjoyed their meal, and offered to carry one of the bags. Mrs. Fletcher handed over the diaper bag, but also said "We won't be needing it anymore, so if we pass the entrance

I will put it in my car. So they did, and then Mark asked what they wanted to look at first. “The rain suits, please”. “OK, please follow me to the clothing section in the next hall. Your car seat has already been moved to the warehouse, where one of our service people will install it for you when you go there after the shopping.”

Off they went again, through sections with even more kinds of goods, like a large bed and crib section. In the meantime Mark was already explaining options for the rain suits, and pointing out interesting items they were passing. Iris didn’t quite know where to look, gaping at all the extraordinary items, when suddenly her phone rang. So she stopped to take the backpack off her back, and dug her phone out. Perhaps this was her father, who occasionally gave her a call during a break. But when she answered, there was just a computerized voice explaining to her that she paid too much for her electricity. Disappointed, she disconnected and put her phone in her backpack again. Only then she noticed that the others were no longer in sight. She quickly moved in the direction they had been going, but there were quite a few customers in this section, and she couldn’t spot them.

Now Iris knew that she would find them, and the worst that could happen was that she would have to go back to the front desk and ask for help, but that would be pretty embarrassing, so she first searched a bit more by herself. Then she tried calling Mrs. Fletcher and Mark, although she didn’t want to draw the attention of other shoppers. Finally she saw them coming towards her, and they were reunited. It might not be very mature, but she had to put her arms around Mrs. Fletcher and hug her. “Iris, I told you to stay close. Why were you suddenly gone? Don’t make me get you a harness too!” Iris explained about her phone, but Mrs. Fletcher replied she should have at least warned her that she needed to stop. Mark said “I might have something, please wait here.”

After a minute or so he returned with a small package that contained a few straps connected by a coiled wire. He proceeded to wrap one of the straps around Iris’s left wrist, without asking anything, used the Velcro to close it tightly around her wrist, and then did up a buckle of a type she had not seen before, over the Velcro. Then he offered the cuff on the other end of the wire to Mrs. Fletcher, who wrapped it around her wrist too, but her side didn’t have the extra buckle. (See Figure 20)

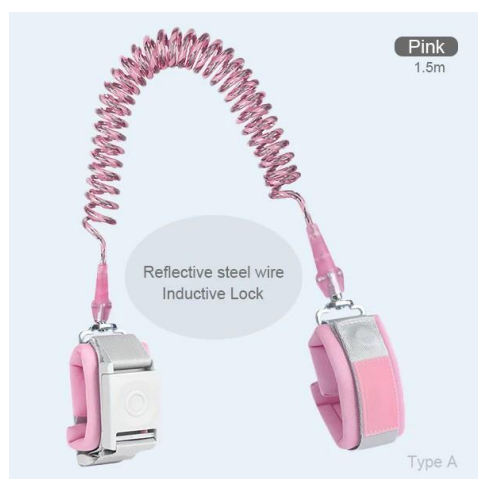


Figure 20 A wrist leash similar to Iris’s



Figure 21 Wrist strap magnetic buckle and 'key'

“We buy these ones cheap in bulk out of China, and a fraction of them have issues. With these ones the two wrist straps are not the same color. Since returning it would cost more than its value, we give them away to good customers who need one.” Then he pointed to a slight bump in the end of the Velcro strap at the parent end “there is a magnet that you hold to the center of the buckle to open it. (See Figure 21)

Iris was stunned at the audacity of this salesman putting a leash on her without even asking. So she tried to get it off. It was too tight around her wrist through, and there was nothing to press or pull on the buckle. Neither could she get a finger under the buckle to try and wiggle the Velcro open. It had a metal connector to the steel coiled wire that totally ignored whatever she tried. She was stuck again! She tried to move away from Mrs. Fletcher to see what range she had, and the wire stretched a fair bit, but also started pulling her back. "Iris, please don't do that. Why don't you practice a bit staying close; if that goes well we'll see if you can walk free again." Then they started moving again towards the clothes section, and Iris had no choice but to follow. Now she and her friend were both leashed. She threw another dirty look at Mark, and decided to ignore him from now on.

The perpetrator was asking several questions about which rain suit would be best, and ignored her right back. "With rain suits there is always a balance between comfort, meaning warmth and sweatiness, the level of waterproofing, and the security. And of course the price. How important are those aspects for you?" "Of course I'd like them all, but if I had to choose I'd say that my little cutie here doesn't seem too quickly bothered by warmth, and she'll normally wear something under it that can absorb sweat. So I'd say 6 out of 10 for comfort. Waterproofing would be more important, since she might play outside for hours, and once it starts leaking she might get a chill. Say 9 out of 10. Of course she shouldn't be taking her suit off in the rain, but when she's outside she almost always wears a harness, or is secured in a buggy, and in either case that should stop her from undressing I think. Still, it can't hurt to make doubly sure, so let's give it a 4. Of course my budget is limited, but I still find good quality important, and that often saves money in the long run, so say a 4 as well."

"OK, I can work with that. Then let's go look at the different types of suits." They had arrived at the right section, so Mark walked along the racks and showed them the different options. There were the long raincoats, the regular pants-jacket combinations, the overalls-jacket combinations, and the coveralls, also called jumpsuits. "I suggest discarding the raincoats and pants-jacket combo's. The raincoats are not so suitable for playing, and regular pants can be taken off if she wears a harness without a crotch strap, and are hard to make escape-proof." "Yes, let's concentrate on the overalls and coveralls." "As a rule of thumb coveralls are a bit less comfortable: no opening around the waist means no ventilation, but on the other hand no water can come in there either. But that is hardly a problem with our selection of overalls either. They are also quick to put on and easy to secure, for instance with a locking zipper." (see Figure 22)

"On the other hand the overalls-jacket combinations are more versatile, since she can wear the jacket separately if she goes out only briefly, or is wearing water-resistant bottoms. And when you go in temporarily, you can take quickly her jacket off. We have two sorts of overalls: the regular ones with an inch wide strap over the shoulders that buckle to the bib (see Figure 23), but also a sort of sleeveless jumpsuit that closes at the top the shoulders. (see Figure 24 and Figure 25) Those are a bit more like coveralls in comfort and waterproofing, but of course still offer the flexibility of taking the jacket off. And here we have a combo: with this zip you can connect the jacket to the overalls, making it like a one-piece combo. What do you think?"

"I like the flexibility best, and I could even put on only the overalls if she is playing outside in the dirt or the wet grass, while it is not actually raining. In that case they should probably be locking. Could we try out a few options, and also see which ones Sabine likes?" "Sure. Note that we mostly have the same choice of colors and patterns for each of the types, since they are of the same brand. Not quite the same, because some are of thicker and sturdier material, and we also have breathing materials. Let's start with these basic coveralls. Sabine, which color would you like?" Iris expected her to pick the cute pink one, but instead she went for a yellow one with giraffe theme, including eyes, ears and horns on the hood. Quite similar really to animal onesies.



Figure 22 Rain coveralls in Yellow, with matching boots



Figure 23 Regular overalls-jacket combo



Figure 24 Example of high overalls and jacket



Figure 25 High overalls shoulder detail

Sabine allowed Mark to help her in it, after her mother had disconnected the leash from her harness. Then he highlighted several of the details “These have a nice transparent brim on the hood, a zipper in front with an extra cover that closes with snaps. These straps are reflective. Elasticated cuffs at arms and legs, and a strap under the foot. It is fairly lightweight, and only costs around \$29 for the basic version. (See Figure 22) For all suits we offer the locking zipper option for \$5 per zipper pull, and we sell matching mittens in a few qualities, and matching boots, either step-in or with a zipper. As with all clothes, our service department will take care of the added options, like replacing the zipper pulls. Unless there are many, they are usually ready an hour or two after ordering. With the installation of the car seat that should not be a problem.”

Sabine didn’t seem to particularly like it or hate it, but her mother checked it out, felt the fabric, and said that she would prefer a sturdier quality. So Mark got the suit off the girl, and replied “Yes, I can imagine. We have sturdier coveralls too, but let’s first go to this combo. It consists of these regular type rain overalls with shoulder straps that buckle in the front, like this. These can be replaced by key-

locking buckles for \$5, or magnetic locking buckles, like on the wrist leash, for \$7. (see Figure 26 and Figure 27) The key-locking buckles have a simple plastic key, but something like a screwdriver will work too. Some escape artists succeed in opening them with their fingers., though. Then there is this jacket over, or under it. I would advise over for when it rains, and under for playing in the dirt. This set has very similar characteristics as the coveralls. I've picked the version with the thicker fabric, although it is still light enough to be easily folded and carried. These go for \$49 without extras."



Figure 26 Magnetic locking buckle



Figure 27 Key-locking buckle

Neither Sabine, nor her mother seemed clearly more enthusiastic, so Mark picked out the next set, once more in yellow to keep Sabine's reactions comparable. "This is a pretty big step up in quality, but the price also goes up to \$149. The material is a lot higher quality, but also a bit thicker and heavier. That doesn't mean it is less comfortable though, since the material is breathable, but still higher rated waterproof than the previous suits. It also has reinforced knees and seat, and elastic at the back waist. As you can see, there are no separate shoulder straps, but the material goes up all the way to the arm pits and to the top of the shoulders, where it connects to the back side with side-release buckles. This is the matching jacket, with reinforced elbows, and the cuffs have a Velcro strap to make a perfect fit. When the zipper is all the way up, the wearer can't take off the hood because the face opening is smaller than the size of the head. Many parents like that option."

This was definitely more like what Mrs. Fletcher was looking for, so she asked Sabine if she liked it better than the one before, and she said that it felt better. But Mark had one more suit he wanted to demonstrate. "Here we have the top of the line, especially concerning security. Not for everyone, but it definitely has its interesting features. The pants are mostly the same as with the previous set, but it has a full tunnel at the waist. The strap through it can be adjusted at the back for the preferred tightness. At the bottom of the legs there is an extra sleeve that fits over the matching boots and attaches with Velcro for a perfect fit, almost like with waders. You can also see the half of the zipper that connects it to the jacket."

"The jacket is rather special, in that it is back zipping, from high up the hood down to the waist. It normally can only be used with the hood up, and the hood doesn't have a brim like the previous ones, but more of a visor where the clear plastic is covering the top half of the face, leaving only nose and mouth free. Before you put on the hood, you can even connect this mesh on the inside that covers the lower half as well, making sure that the wearer won't put things in her mouth that she shouldn't, or keep a pacifier in, without hampering breathing. To put it on you let the wearer first put her arms in, pull it over the shoulders, then put the hood over the face. The zipper guard will help make sure no hairs are in the zipper, and pull it all the way down. The zipper cover with this jacket closes with Velcro. With the zipper in the back it is extra important that it is waterproof. Then you can close the zipper around the hips, to turn the suit into a one piece. The zipper ends meet at the center back, where you can put this little snap hook, which is attached to the jacket, through the holes in the zipper pulls to

make sure they stay closed. For even more security you could also use a zip tie or padlock. This set totals at \$199 without extras.”

To Iris this seemed almost like a portable prison, or one of those suits people wear when they have to deal with aggressive chemicals or poisonous fumes, and she was sure Sabine would not like it, but when her mother asked she nodded vigorously. Could it be that the fully enclosed suit gave a feeling similar to the play tent in the living room, where you were in your own cocoon and were less affected by the outside world? The idea to wear such an imposing suit felt both scary and exciting to her. But there was no reason for her to try it, and apart from that she was busy ignoring Mark, who continued with the next items “Shall I also show you the matching mittens and boots?” “Yes, please.”

“These are the best quality mittens, in the same material as the suit. I wouldn’t advise to combine the suit with one of the cheaper qualities mittens, but that is also possible. As you can see these are also sturdy, and with a strap around the wrist to keep the hands totally dry. The strap buttons at the back of the wrist, and makes them neigh inescapable. Especially if you put the gloves on first, so the underarm part disappears under the jacket sleeve. But for the moment we’ll leave them on top. (see Figure 28) And these are the boots, also with giraffe design, and zippers on the insides. Of course they can also be made lockable.” He removed Sabine’s sneakers and put the boots on, zipped them up, and folded the extra sleeves from the pants over the top and closed the Velcro. “But this way they are already hard to remove, especially if the wearer also has the mittens on.”



Figure 28 High quality mittens

“So what will it be? You want this suit in yellow?” Mrs. Fletcher thought for a moment, and then decided that this wasn’t so much more expensive than the previous one, she did like the extra options. It was also Sabine’s favorite, so she asked Sabine if she was sure she wanted the yellow, and not the pink or the green, Sabine answered “Yellow. Now I am tall as a giwaffe”, so her mother confirmed the order. “You should probably get a size 15, if you want it to fit for a while. If you will be using it a lot in winter, over thick clothes, perhaps even a 16?” “Can you put a 16 next to a 13 so I can see the difference?” He did, and she decided the 16 would be too large on Sabine, especially without thick clothes underneath, so it would have to be the 15. “Thank you for this purchase.”

“And what about the options? Do you want the mittens and the boots as well? If you order the complete set I can give you the locking options for free: the overalls buckles, the boot zippers, and we’ll also make the jacket zipper 2-way with a locking pull at the top: that way you can still lower the hood without taking off the whole jacket. How about that?” “That would be great. Yes please.” “Would you like the key-locking or the magnetic buckles?” Mrs. Fletcher took another look at the buckle on Iris’s wrist and decided the magnetic ones would be best. “The magnetic locking buckles we use here are slightly different, and open by using the magnet and pressing the two sides at the same time. These are a bit flatter and slightly curved, so they don’t make bumps under the jacket and the wearer doesn’t feel them. (See Figure 26) You can use any magnet that is a bit stronger, like those for patient bed restraints, but we also sell these convenient ones in a small plastic frame that you can

attach to your keyring or hang around your neck. They're just \$5." "That looks convenient. Two please." (see Figure 29)

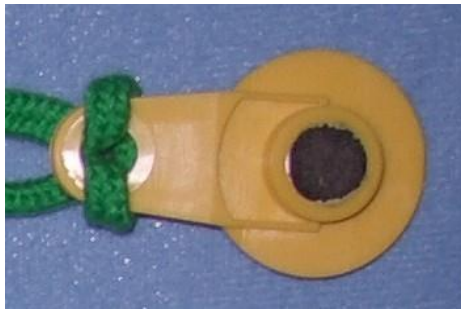


Figure 29 Key for magnetic lock

13. Even More Shopping

Once the order was added to the virtual shopping cart and double-checked by Mrs. Fletcher, they went in search of the next item on the list: safety mittens. "She doesn't need them often, luckily, but occasionally I need to prevent her harming herself, continually scratching itches or scabs, and such. Her current ones are child-sized, and are getting too small. They are the basic padded underside, gauze over the back of the hand, and a Velcro strap around the wrist." "Yes, I know the type; you might have gotten them here. We also have those in adult sizes." "She doesn't like them, but who can blame her. Still, let's look at the options; perhaps we can find one that is more acceptable to her."

"Sure. Here we have the same type in an adult small; let's see how that fits." He tried to put one mitten on Sabine, but she wouldn't have it, first turning away, and then 'hiding' her hands in her armpits. Iris noticed she looked tired and fed up with constantly trying on things. Particularly something she really didn't like in the first place. Her mother took the mitten from Mark, and gave it a try too, but Sabine was determined. Then Iris saw an opportunity to help "Why don't you put mittens on me; that might make it more acceptable for her." Mrs. Fletcher could see she was serious about it, so when the girl held out her hands, she slid the mittens over them and closed the wrist strap. (See Figure 30) Iris noticed they were quite comfortable and soft, and although she could compress the padding, she couldn't grip anything. She could see Sabine showing a bit of interest, but she still had her hands tucked away.

Then she had another idea. She put her arms up diagonally and said "I am a bear, and I am going to eat you!" while moving mock-threateningly towards Sabine. Mrs. Fletcher had to move along a bit to not let the wrist leash get too taut. The girl giggled and tried to move away, but of course that was limited by the harness leash. (Of course her mother had reconnected the leash as soon as she was out of the last rain suit.) So Iris managed to catch her and gave her a big bear-hug. That made them both laugh, and when Iris released her, she tentatively put her hands towards her mother. "Thank you sweetie. We are only going to try one of them out for a very short time; you are not being punished." One mitten was soon on her hand, and they could see that there was room to spare. So her mother quickly took them off again, and gave her daughter a one-armed hug.

"Iris, that was a great idea. Thanks a lot. While you are wearing them, could you show me how effective they are, and if you can get them off?" So Iris showed she could not grab anything, except between her two mittens. Then she tried to shove them off, grab at the closed strap with the padded side, and even with through gauze side, but she could not get a grip. Then she tried her teeth to pull

the strap open, and was out in a few seconds. She triumphantly smiled at Mrs. Fletcher and Mark, before she remembered she was ignoring him, and quickly turned away again.

“I think we’d best go quickly here, before our good client refuses to cooperate again. Let me get a selection that you can choose from.” A minute or two later he was back with an armful of mittens that he spread out over a nearby table. (See Figure 30 to Figure 33)



Figure 30 Patient safety mittens



Figure 31 Magnetic lock fist mittens



Figure 32 leather mittens with fox embroidery



Figure 33 Fist mittens with paws

“Next to the basic white ones, these pink cottons ones require the hands to be folded into fists, and close with a magnetic lock. They come in white, pink, green and blue. The other two might be a bit more unusual and not to everyone’s taste, but Sabine seems to like the animal theme, so I brought them along. They are both leather and both have a wrist strap with a buckle. The red ones again require fists, and have a removable extra pin for locking the strap with a padlock. They are also available in black. The white ones have a buckle with a loop at the end of the buckle tongue that also allows locking with a padlock. (see Figure 34 Lock tongue buckle) The ones where the hands need to be fists make it even harder to manipulate things with, but can be a bit less comfortable when worn for long. These are all between \$70 and \$100. Of course we have a lot more choice, so if you have any other requests or ideas don’t hesitate to ask. What do you think?”



Figure 34 Lock tongue buckle

Iris decided to see if she could help further to stimulate Sabine, so she hooked her arm in her friend's, and took her over to the table. She started looking over the mittens and asked her things like if she liked the softness of the pink ones, or the paws,... While moving Mrs. Fletcher again had to follow to allow her to do so, and for a fleeting moment it felt like the roles were reversed and Iris was leading Mrs. Fletcher with the leash. Sabine's mother also looked at the options, felt the sturdiness and tried to estimate the relative comfort in wearing them. "Do you want to see if you can escape from the others, too?" Mark challenged her, and at first she still ignored him, but after a warning 'Iris?' from the mother she shook her head.

Sabine seemed most drawn to the pink one and the red one, so Iris suggested she'd put on one on each hand. Sabine said "ok", not thrilled, but obviously still willing to cooperate. Iris didn't quite know how they worked, but decided to give it a try to put them on her friend, assuming the adults would help – especially the black knob she didn't know what to do with. So she started with the red leather one, sliding it over Sabine's outstretched hand until it didn't go further. But her hand was not yet all the way in. Then she remembered they were called fist mittens, so she asked her friend to make a fist, and then the hand slid all the way in and she could close the zipper at the back and buckle the wrist strap. It felt so sturdy that she was sure she wouldn't be able to escape that one. "See, if you put your fist down on the table, it is just like a cat or dog paw."

In the meantime Mark had opened the pink cotton one and handed it to Iris, glad he didn't have to wrestle with an unwilling teenager. That one went on the same way, and when she wrapped the strap around the wrist, it was clear that she needed to put one of the eyelets on the strap over the metal post to secure it. "Now just push this black cap over the post" Mark said, and Iris did so. Then she couldn't pull the cap off anymore. They also seemed quite secure, and soft, but not as playful as the red ones. She asked Sabine how they felt, and she nodded. "Do you like the red one better, or the pink" "I like the paw" Sabine answered. Iris wondered for a moment if she deliberately chose a name for the mitten that didn't contain that difficult letter 'r'.

Mrs. Fletcher also checked them thoroughly, and made sure she knew how to use or remove the post for the padlock, but she could clearly live with Sabine's choice, so she ordered them. Iris removed the red paw from her friend's hand, but didn't know how to open the black cap. Mark did something to it she didn't quite see, and lifted it off. Then she could unwind the strap and let Sabine pull her hand out. "I don't think I have padlocks small enough to use with them." "We have a nice set of 10 heart-shaped ones, in different colors for \$15. They are nicely rounded, so no sharp edges, and fun because of the shape and colors. The simple key works on all locks, and they wouldn't stand a chance against a thief or someone decent tools, but you're not going to get them open with your bare hands. Or your teeth. But if you want top security, we also have a set of 5 keyed-alike master padlocks for the same price. We have a fair selection of items and clothes that can take such locks, for example with buckles like those

on the white leather mittens, with D-rings, or like with Sabine's new rain suit you can lock the zipper pulls together. So a few extra won't hurt." Mrs. Fletcher nodded her agreement and chose the heart-shaped ones. (see Figure 35)



Figure 35 Set of heart-shaped padlocks

When the order was registered, and the mittens placed back on their shelves, Mrs. Fletcher asked about swim diapers. She was considering taking Sabine to a pool during their special needs hour, or get a kiddie pool in the back garden, and wondered if and how much protection she would need to give Sabine. "Let me first clear up a common misconception: a swim diapers don't hold urine. They are only for catching stool. So if Sabine would be regular, and you could prevent her being in the water around that time, you wouldn't even need one. If you would want to stop urine too, you'd need to use a diaper in combination with watertight diaper pants, from silicone or rubber. But at the moment we don't have a product that is so good that we would unconditionally advise it: there are just too many differences in body types to make them work well for everyone. So they are a bit of a gamble. Of course I am here to sell them, but to me it is no use selling you something that you could very well be disappointed about. But if Sabine is not so regular, or a swimming class would require it, I would love to show you our assortment."

"OK, thanks for the information. I actually didn't know about the pee. Sabine is normally regular, unless of course she is sick or something, and I don't know yet about any requirements from a swimming class, so we'll skip them for now then. And if I do need one, I could order it on the website, or call if I need more info. That was the last thing on my shopping list that I needed advice on; diaper supplies I can manage on my own, and we'll just browse a bit through the clothing, and the toys if there is still time, but I don't have anything specific in mind."

"Be aware that with the clothing, some items might be complicated to pull on, and with the locking closures, the keys are not with the items to prevent the potential wearers from getting their hands on them. So you might need assistance. But of course my colleagues there can help you as well." "I don't think we can stay too much longer anyway, so we might not even try anything on; if we do we'll ask a staff member there. I feel I'd be wasting your time if you would stay with us while we are just browsing." "OK, then I will leave you now. But before I leave, shall we go over the order list one more time to make sure everything is correct?" They did, while Iris and Sabine were getting a bit bored, but luckily it didn't take too long until Mark said "Everything seems to be in order, so thanks very much for all your purchases, and I'll hope to see you again soon. Bye Sabine, bye Iris."

The clothing section was right next to the rain wear and the mittens isles, and soon they were browsing the racks. Iris confessed "I'm glad Mark is gone. I don't like him." "Yes, I saw you got off on the wrong foot, and he wasn't so tactful. But you must also understand how much trouble some of the kids here can create, which he then has to clean up again. So it is not so surprising to me that he prefers children not to run around free." Mrs. Fletcher gave the wrist leash a little pull to prove her point, which triggered Iris "Now that he is gone, can you take it off again? I promise to stay close." "It is not only Mark here who likes the children on a leash; but let's compromise: I'll take it off your wrist and attach it to your backpack. Then you have your hands free again, but we'll still notice if you accidentally get too far away." "Aw, But haven't I behaved well? And I helped with the mittens!" "Iris,

if you are starting to whine like a toddler, I'd better leave it where it is." "OK then, do it on the backpack if you must."

So they did, and then looked through the clothes on offer. Suddenly Iris saw her own dress on a rack, of course in multiple sizes and also in several colors. "Oh, you bought this dress here. No wonder everyone thought I was special needs too!" "Yes, many of Sabine's clothes are from this store. But I hadn't realized that the staff would recognize it and draw that conclusion. I'm sorry about that, but still I think we had no better option." "Well, I do like the dress, and the people outside the store won't recognize it, so I guess it is not too bad. I do understand now though what Sabine meant with that this dress is hot and cold: if I'm warm it doesn't ventilate the heat well, but if I'm cold it doesn't give much warmth either. It is not bad here – the temperature is comfortable here. And of course as women we are used to some discomfort to look good." Mrs. Fletcher had to hide a smile, the way Iris called herself a woman, but replied "I think you figured it out! Well done."

They came to a discount clothing rack, which of course was extra interesting to Mrs. Fletcher, so she looked a bit more closely. She found a pair of short overalls with the bib in the shape of a bunny, and the straps as its ears. "What do you think of this one?" she asked Iris, who replied that they were cute. "Do you want to try them on, then?" and she held the suit up in front of Iris. "Oh, I meant for Sabine!" "Of course you did, darling, I'm just joking." But Sabine had watched it too, took another one off the rack, held it in front of herself, and said "Like sisters", and looked at Iris with big eyes. Oops, that caught Iris unawares; she had no intention of walking around in such very childish clothes. "Those are two for the price of one" a new voice suddenly said. A middle-aged woman, who was clearly a staff member, had walked up to them.

"Sabine, do you like them? Shall we try them on?" Mrs. Fletcher asked Sabine, who nodded strongly. "Well, Iris, if we get her one, yours would be free. You don't have to wear it, but perhaps you might one time do Sabine a favor and wear them around the house for a while?" Iris found it hard to disappoint her friend, so she reluctantly agreed. "Then let us find the right sizes. Do you want something for under them too? I suggest these bodies would do nicely, say in dark blue or dark green. These are also two-for-the-price-of-one. They don't have snaps between the legs though, but a row of buttons down the back. But that may be an advantage, because the shortalls have limited security features." This sales lady knew how to sell, but Mrs. Fletcher liked the choices and the discount, so she went along with it.



Figure 36 Kawaii bunny shortalls

"But let me introduce myself first. I am Yvon." She turned to Iris and said "and what is your name?" Iris could feel the woman judged her to be special needs as well, but in contrast to Mark she didn't belittle her, so she said her name, and went on to introduce the other two. "Hello Iris, very nice to meet you. That dress looks very good on you, and quite mature. Now let me see, I think these should fit you, and these should be right for Sabine. Would it be an idea that you put the green body on you, and Sabine gets the blue one? Or do you want the same color?" They agreed to do green and blue, and then Yvon suggested that she'd help Iris change, while her mother helped Sabine. Iris didn't like that idea at all, to have a woman she didn't know dress her, and she would surely see her diaper then too. Mrs. Fletcher had already agreed, but Iris still tried "I can dress myself." "I think you might need some help with these ones. But come, let's go to a fitting room and we'll see how far you get."

She held her hand out for Iris's leash, and so Mrs. Fletcher took her wrist strap off and handed it over. Yvon put it on her own wrist, and then held her hand out to Iris to invite her along, who didn't seem to have much choice and decided it was easiest to just cooperate. At least the sales lady was respectful enough to not just pull on her leash. To Mrs. Fletcher Yvon said she should put on the body, and if the shortalls gave her trouble she'd help her after Iris was dressed.

In the fitting room Iris took off her backpack, and then Yvon opened the zipper on her dress. Of course she had a suitable key for that. Iris took it off, and then asked if she needed to take her yellow body off too. "If you don't want to, we'll just put the green one on top of it for now. So Iris did, but the small buttons on the back soon defeated her, so Yvon took over. Then the sales lady undid the straps at the back of the shortalls, and let them hang down from the bib in front. She held them up for Iris to step into, who felt too tired to try and do it herself, just stepped into the short legs. Then the straps in front were pulled over her head and crossed and buttoned to the waist band in the back, but there also seemed to be fabric in her neck. Then the small zipper in the back was closed, and a small button flap over it, and Iris was ready. Yvon didn't immediately take her out of the stall, but detached the wrist strap from her backpack and redid it on Iris's wrist. Sorry kid, but if children are leashed when they enter a stall with me, I am required to have them leashed when they leave it too. And we'll leave the backpack here: is not convenient when we are trying clothes on."

Then they left the stall to see how Sabine and her mother were doing. Iris asked "Mrs. Fletcher, can you tell this lady that I don't need the leash?" "Iris, stop whining. If it is store policy we will do as they require." "Whatever". Mrs. Fletcher had noticed that Iris had become quite tired, and decided to not react to her attitude. Instead she looked closely on what Yvon explained about the shortalls. (See Figure 36 for a version of the shortalls without the hood.)

"These are in a Japanese style called Kawaii, or Lolita, which focuses on extreme cuteness. As you can see it has puffy shorts, creating enough room for incontinence material while the tight cuffs at the bottom prevent access. The bunny face on the front is embroidered so it doesn't come off or bleach. The ears on the shoulder straps are connected with a few snaps, so you can also let them hang down from the bib. Another unusual thing about these is they have a hood that is fixed to the shoulder straps around the shoulders, which prevents the straps from sliding off the shoulders and keeps the wearer dressed properly. Then the straps go all the way down to the waist band, where they button on the inside of the waist band, with two buttons for more strength. Those are not accessible when this short back zipper is closed. Then this small flap buttons over it. For more security, there are also these 2 D-rings on either side of the zip on the inside that you can use a little padlock on. It will hang below the waist band in the puffy area where it won't be felt or seen. We sell cute little padlocks for it." "Yes, I know, we have already ordered a set of 10."

When Sabine was all dressed as well, she took Iris's hand and moved to the mirror. Mrs. Fletcher quickly took Sabine's other hand, since she had obviously had to remove her harness. Yvon followed closely too, because of Iris's wrist leash. Iris had to admit that the two of them looked a very cute pair, for five-year-olds. The dark blue and dark green underneath were a good match. Perhaps, if no one else would see her, she could imagine wearing it for a while for her friend. Sabine did look so happy to share an outfit with her friend. Her mother noticed it too, and told Yvon that she would buy the two shortalls and the two bodies. "Will they keep them on?" Mrs. Fletcher, who was pretty sure Iris would not accept that, said that it was better to change them back, so both groups disappeared again in their fitting rooms. To remove the body, Iris's wrist strap had to be removed again, and when she was safely locked in her vegan leather dress again, and put her backpack on, Yvon connected the leash to the backpack once more. Then they reunited with Sabine and her mother, the former once more in her harness.

"Perhaps I can interest you in these dresses as well? If you have someone on a leash who tends to pull a lot, wearing a long straight dress will limit their stride, making it easier to keep them under control. We have several styles, with a full top and arms, without arms, and also with an overalls top. They are here on this rack." Yvon was obviously trying to get them to buy more, and Mrs. Fletcher was interested enough to go along for now, so they started looking at the different dresses. Iris, who usually just wore tops and pants, and wasn't allowed anything fancy or sexy, participated too, even though she didn't really like skirts. But she did like her dress, so perhaps she should keep an open mind.

But Sabine got bored after a few minutes, took one of the dresses off the rack, hardly looked at it and then let it drop to the floor. "Sabine, NO" her mother called, but she was ignored, and a second dress followed. "Young lady, do it one more time and it is wrist straps for you." But Sabine was fed up with all this shopping and trying on things, and did it again. So Mrs. Fletcher dug 2 straps out of her bag, and started to put them on Sabine's wrist. She tried to keep her arms away, even when the harness didn't allow her to move away from her mother, and shouted "No No No". Then Yvon assisted, and soon the wrist straps were on and connected to the sides of her harness.

Iris thought 'here comes the tantrum' and moved a bit further away. But instead of a full rage, Sabine just sat down on the ground and refused to move anymore. "I'm sorry, but I'm afraid we need to stop with the clothes for today." "Would you like me to get you a stroller? We have several that can be borrowed for such situations." "Yes, I think that would be best. I don't feel like dragging her along over the floor all through the store." A few minutes later she came back with a stroller for two. "I couldn't quickly find a single stroller, but this way Iris has the option to ride as well." It was a stroller with two seats next to each other, of course complete with harnesses, in a sturdy metal frame and with relatively big, air-filled wheels. (See Figure 37)

"Sabine, if you cooperate and sit in the stroller, I will release your wrists." But the girl was not responsive, so the two adults hoisted her in the stroller together, with harness and all, and clicked the stroller harness closed over it. This put her arms in a somewhat awkward position, but not so bad that it would hurt. Then Mrs. Fletcher crouched in front of Iris, and asked her "would you to keep Sabine company? You don't have to, but I think she will appreciate it, and it has been a long day for you too. It would make the rest of the shopping quicker, so we can leave sooner." Iris felt a bit like everybody seemed to want to make her more like a child or special needs, but she was tired and didn't want to argue. Apart from that sitting sounded quite attractive at the moment, and it might also help letting go of her complaining bladder. So she took off her backpack, sat next to her friend, took her hand, and allowed them to lock her in the harness. She kept her backpack on her lap, and Mrs. Fletcher removed

the wrist leash and put it in her bag. Yvon pointed her to the key for the harnesses on a short chain from the handle, and then they were off, all though the store once more.



Figure 37 A special needs stroller

Iris only now noticed just how tired she was, and realized that last night had not been a very restful one. Soon her eyes fell closed, and when she woke they were outside, next to the warehouse entrance. She felt Sabine starting to move too, and noticed her friend's hands were no longer held to her sides. Apparently the wrist straps had been removed while she was asleep. Both girls looked at each other sleepily and smiled. Sabine apparently had fully recovered from her black mood.

"Oh, good. You are both awake. I am parking you here next to the warehouse entrance, and then I will get the car so the car seat can be installed, and all our purchases loaded. Please wait here, I will be back in no time." Iris realized the irony of the 'please', since they didn't have a choice. Iris was sure by now that she wouldn't be able to get out if she wanted, and decided not even to try, because if she'd succeed Sabine would also try to get out, and that would not be a good idea here. Then the red car drove up to the entrance and parked with the back door towards the warehouse entrance. She identified herself with her order number, and soon the first items were brought to the car.

A technician came with the car seat, and started talking to Mrs. Fletcher about the what and where. She explained to him that the new seat should come in place of the existing one. Then she realized that the only way to take Sabine's old car seat back home was to put it on the other back seat, where Iris had sat in the morning. She walked up to Iris and told her about the problem, that she hadn't expected the new seat to be available immediately, and that she really didn't want to leave the perfectly good car seat behind. "So would you awfully mind to sit in it on the way home? It would be safer too, since you apparently are still supposed to sit in a booster seat, which you didn't mention before!" Ouch, Mrs. Fletcher didn't forget much. "Well, they are definitely more comfortable than sitting on the back seat with the seat belt rubbing my neck. But what if someone sees me when we drive through Eugene?" "I might have a solution for that: you see those wings at the sides of the headrest? You can bend those wider or closer together. If we put them close to your head, nobody from the side will be able to see your face. Only you won't be able to look out of the window easily, either." That sounded acceptable to Iris, and she nodded, still a bit sleepily.

So the technician first moved the old seat and then installed the new next to it. The girls had to get into their seats one by one, to make all the necessary adjustments. When they were not needed, they were put back in the stroller. The guy was clearly experienced, because within 15 minutes everything was ready. By then all the purchases were also stowed away in the trunk. But not everything fit in there, so there were a few larger boxes still outside the car. Then Iris had to get into the car seat first, and Mrs. Fletcher settled her in for the drive home. Her dress needed to be pulled up for the crotch strap, and again Iris was glad for the attached shorts. The shoulder straps clicked into the buckle at the end of the crotch piece, with the same black cylinder that Iris recognized from the car seat experience earlier in the day, and then the chest clip was closed and locked. Finally Mrs. Fletcher bent the headrest around Iris's head, so far that she could hardly move her head towards her shoulders, and the ends were limiting her in looking to the sides, like they had agreed upon.

Then Sabine was installed in her new seat, and looked very comfortable. Actually Iris was extremely comfy as well: with the seat fully adjusted to her body, it supported her everywhere, so it was even better than in the store, in the Roosevelt seat. Then the last boxes were moved into the area where the front seat had been removed, and secured. Mrs. Fletcher returned the stroller to the store entrance, and then they started the drive home. When Iris and Sabine both moved their heads forward, as far as the harnesses would allow, they could look at each other, but that was tiring, and soon Iris just sat back and relaxed.

14. Back Home

"Wake up sleepy heads, we're home!" Iris wasn't so surprised that she slept, but the whole trip? The car seat supported her so well that she didn't have a sore neck or anything, and the headrest had not only limited her sight, but also dampened sound. "Shall I help you unload?" "Thank you, but not yet. I first have to get these boxes next to me out so I can reach you. Then you can help me bring in some of the boxes. So there Iris sat, again unable to decide for herself what to do or where to go. She felt she should be frustrated from being restrained like this, and if it had been her mother she would have surely made her opinion loud and clear, but sitting here next to her friend, still a bit woozy from her nap, was actually nice, and so she started chatting a bit with Sabine, while her Mrs. Fletcher slaved away with the purchases for Sabine. Then Mrs. Fletcher came to release her. That was not as simple as when they left, because with Sabine still in the next seat, Mrs. Fletcher couldn't quite reach the release for the harness, since she had to put her thumb in from below. "I'm sorry Iris, this is not working. I will need to get Sabine out first. Let me bring her into the house, and put her in her tent. Then I'll return for you."

Iris nodded, since she had no choice, and tried to watch how Sabine was taken out of her seat, but again the headrest was in the way, so she settled back to wait, and let her thoughts go over everything that happened today. It felt more like 3 days. "Are you asleep again?" "No, I was just in thought. It was such an eventful day." "OK, now I should be able to get you out." And this time it worked. Together they emptied the trunk and brought all the boxes into the house. For the moment they just put all the boxes on and around the couch, until Mrs. Fletcher had time to check if everything was there and put it where it needed to go.

"Now, what's next? So much to do. I think I should first get Sabine out of her play tent, take off her harness, and put her in the activity chair. By the way, how is your diaper, Iris? Anxious to get it off and change back into your own clothes?" "That would be nice, but my diaper should hold for a while – I have only peed in the stroller and just now, while I was waiting in the car seat. So I think you should first do the important stuff." While Mrs. Fletcher started with Sabine, she said "Hmm, that reminds me,

we haven't drunk anything since lunch. I'll remedy that as soon as this big girl is in her chair." Sabine was quite awake again, and glad to be involved in the action. As soon as she was in her chair, she asked for her puzzle, so the others carefully slid the tray with the half-finished puzzle back on the chair. Then Mrs. Fletcher got them big glasses of milk, her daughter's in a sippy cup. Iris drank a little too fast, and some milk escaped from the glass and down her dress. She felt guilty spilling on her borrowed clothes again, not yet being used to wearing something that could simply be wiped clean, which Mrs. Fletcher promptly did.

As soon as the glasses were empty, she took them back to the kitchen and started with the laundry. Iris went to see if she could help. There was a separate area at the back of the kitchen for the washer and dryer. Mrs. Fletcher explained that she had forgotten to move the clean laundry into the dryer this morning, so she had to do that now. And she hadn't even started with the duvet: that needed a separate cycle, which she started as they spoke. After that she went back to the kitchen, to check their supplies. "I really don't want to go out again to do groceries right now, but we need something for dinner. Let me see. We have already had a warm lunch with dessert – some of us two – so perhaps we could do with a can of soup and some bread. That is running low too, but with these crackers we should be able to make do until tomorrow morning."

Since it was already fairly late when they had arrived back home, they started with dinner immediately, and then it was time to get Sabine to bed. Iris was asked to stay down again, and if she wanted to start unpacking the boxes, find the packing slip, and mark the products on it that she found. But she might also give her mother a call. She didn't really feel like calling her mother – they had seen each other only yesterday, and what could she tell about today without mentioning she was in a car seat, wore diapers, wore a locking dress, and all the other things that she really didn't want her mother to know about, so she started with the boxes. She was curious about why there were five of them, since the big car seat was already installed in the car, and apart from that she could only think of the rain suit, the mittens, and the 2 sets of clothes. So even though she knew what should be in the boxes, it still felt a bit like opening Christmas presents.

The first large box contained strangely formed parts in eggplant and orange colors. Now Iris remembered that the car seat came with all the extra's, and apparently not all of them were on the car seat at the moment. It didn't seem useful to unpack them, so she went on. The next box was smaller, and on top was the packing slip, so she could start ticking the boxes. She skipped the extra parts of the car seat, since she didn't know what they were called. The box also contained the mittens, a set of cute padlocks in different colors, and the two bodies and bunny shorts, nicely wrapped in sealed plastic, and with the sizes clearly marked. She marked the list and wanted to put the clothes and mittens on the dining table, when she saw it hadn't been cleaned yet, so she did that first.

In the next box was the complete rain set: the mittens, the boots, the overalls and the jacket. On the packing slip the added locking closures were mentioned separately, so Iris checked those too. They all seemed to be there, and Iris couldn't see that they were alterations, while it was done quite neatly. There was a separate little Ziploc bag with the keys, including the two magnet ones that she also ticked off. Looking at the suit again was different than in the store, and she could take time to feel the material, pull on the zippers, and so on.

"Do you like the suit?" Iris was so in thought that she hadn't noticed Mrs. Fletcher's return. "It scares me a bit, the idea of being covered from head to toe, and even hands and face, and not being able to take it off on your own. But on the other hand I can't help but wondering how it would feel being inside. I wonder why Sabine liked it best." "I have given up trying to anticipate what she would like, so I just ask her. It makes things so much easier if she likes what she has to wear. Although her opinion

can just as suddenly make a full flip. It is best to go with the flow and see if I can come up with alternatives if something suddenly stops working.” “You are good in that, like coming up with this dress, the car seat headrest to keep me hidden, and such things.”

“Thank you. I do my best. But let me see how far you got with the packing slip.” About the car seat parts she said that if it wasn’t on the seat at the moment, they would probably not use it, so she put it aside to browse through at a quiet moment. Iris suggested that an empty box that size could be fun for Sabine to play with, like using it as a doll house or a cave. “Good idea. So there are only 2 boxes left with diapering supplies. Let me quickly browse through. Yes, it all seems to be there. I’ll take them upstairs later, with the clothes and the mittens. These are yours though, and handed Iris the green body and the smaller shortalls. Iris hesitated; her actually owning them, and taking them back home with her? “Go on, you can have them. We got them sort of for free anyway, and apart from that call it a thank you for your help today.”

Iris didn’t really have a choice but to accept them, but also said “But I have been more of a hindrance to you today than a help! First with the trouble in the bed, then you needed to diaper two people instead of one, then I got myself lost in the store, and in the end I was whining and unkind!” A few tears escaped from her eyes. “I came here to help you, not make it harder!”

“Oh my girl, come sit on the couch with me, and we will talk. Because you are seeing it all wrong!” “I am?” Iris looked up in surprise, while Mrs. Fletcher put one arm around her, steered her to the couch, and settled down with her, keeping a firm one-armed hug. “Often you act and talk so mature that I forget that you are only 13, and still have a lot to learn and mistakes to make.” Iris looked at her in surprise again – that could have been the nicest thing anyone ever said to her. She relaxed a bit and tried to snuggle up even closer to her friend’s mother. “And yes, a few things did not go perfect, but I didn’t expect them to when I decided you could stay. And nothing you did wrong was intentional. You see, people learn more from their mistakes than when they do things right, so as long as you show you try to do better, and see what you can do to prevent them a next time, I am not angry or disappointed.”

“And apart from that, you have been quite flexible yourself, and you helped me big time by accepting to wear diapers, sit in the car seat on the way back, and so on. Then you helped by demonstrating that you couldn’t get out of the car seat, and especially later on when Sabine refused to put on the mittens. You got her to cooperate, and even feel good about the mittens she chose. And then you helped me again by showing those regular mittens were not inescapable. Perhaps we should make you my product tester!” “I wouldn’t mind if that will help; I trust you will always let me out when I don’t want to anymore or get scared.” “Of course! And what I also appreciate is to have someone I can discuss things with, and hear their opinions. But the most important help you have been today you might not even realize. You saw that Sabine stopped being cooperative with the mittens, and later with the clothes. But before that she let herself be put in several car seats, behaved well during diapering and lunch, and then with all those different rain suits, mittens and boots. I have *never* seen that before; usually it will be an hour at most before she gets fed up. You have been such a good influence on her.”

“So forget about not having been a help. But the next few days I could really use your assistance as well, so if you are still not convinced you are more help than hinder, you’ll have plenty of time to prove it. To yourself that is; I already know.” Hearing such praise really moved Iris, and she started crying seriously, while murmuring “thank you” and holding her tight. A lot of stress, insecurity and other emotions from this enervating day suddenly all came out, and it took a while before she could calm down dry her tears. Mrs. Fletcher got some wet wipes and dried her face. “Are you feeling better

now?" "Yes, thank you. I don't know what came over me, but you are so kind to me." After a while Iris felt really relaxed and at peace.

"Let me get a few snacks and something to drink. Is a juice box OK?" "Yes please." When she returned she asked if Iris wanted to watch some TV, or just chillax. Iris wasn't in the mood for TV, so they just sat and talked about everything and nothing, until Mrs. Fletcher remarked that it was time to get Iris ready for bed, since they still had to figure out what to use instead of the filthy duvet. Iris didn't really want to get up, feeling all relaxed and having a great time, but she followed Mrs. Fletcher upstairs anyway, not wanting to protest after all those super kind words from the woman.

Upstairs, Mrs. Fletcher explained again that the duvet was still in the washer, and she didn't have another spare. "Oh, I should not forget to get it out of the washing machine when I get down. But back to the sleeping arrangement. I can only think of 2 options: I have a sleeping bag of Sabine that you could use. But that is a mummy bag design, and has little room to move inside, and a hood so only your face sticks out. And you can't get out of it yourself. (see Figure 38 for an example of a mummy sleeping bag) The alternative is a warm enough sleep suit that you can sleep under only a sheet. Then you at least move around in bed and spread your arms and legs. But you might not like the design..." "Can I see them?" "Well, I have to dig around a bit to get at them, but I will if you find it hard to choose." "Could you describe the design of the sleep suit then?" "Well, it has been a while, but I remember it is sort of a cross between a Halloween costume and a onesie. It is blue, and from a children's TV series, but I'm not sure at the moment which." "Let's just do the onesie then; when I sleep it doesn't really matter what I look like, and no one else will see it anyway. I do like to be able to move my arms and legs."

"Now where did I put it? Let me check my bedroom." But after a minute or so she came back empty-handed. "Hmm, could it be in one of these boxes, and she started checking out several boxes stacked in the room Iris was sleeping in. Then she triumphantly pulled out a big blue fluffy garment and said "ah, it was here all along. Now I remember, it is a Carebear costume. I remember being surprised Sabine liked the Grumpy Bear version best. This should keep you warm enough. But I'm afraid you'll need to wear a diaper again." Realizing she had never removed the one Iris was still wearing, she apologized that she had all forgotten of getting Iris out of it when they started to talk. "Oh, I didn't think about it either. But perhaps a diaper for the night would have been useful anyway after last night. I would feel awful if I would somehow wet the bed once again, although I hardly ever had accidents at night lately. And I will definitely not do something like last night again."

"Perhaps we make up the bed first, then you do your evening routine in the bathroom, then I'll change your diaper and put you in the onesie last." And that was how it was done, with the diaper change on the bed again, with the changing table unavailable. She got one of Sabine's diapers this time, because it could absorb more over a whole night, and plastic pants too. Then it was time to put on the onesie, and Iris had to shudder a bit when she saw it in its full glory: you couldn't get much more childish than Carebears. But that was her choice, and being warm in such a soft suit might not be too bad.

The onesie had a zipper in the back, all the way up the hood. That reminded Iris of the rain jacket, although that zipped down where this one went up. She stepped into the legs Mrs. Fletcher held up for her, and then stuck her arms in. She hadn't noticed it until now, but the sleeves ended in mittens, so her hands were also fully enclosed. It was not like the white mittens she tried on in the store, since this was just a single layer of fur-like fabric, but without separate fingers and without touch it would still hamper her a bit. She could see now why she had to do her evening routine first. Before the zipper

went up, the hood was pulled over her head, and then the suit closed around her, with the zipper ending high up the hood. She tried to get her braid she always wore her hair in for the night out of the hood in front, but that proved tricky with the mittens, so Mrs. Fletcher did it for her. (see Figure 39)



Figure 38 Mummy sleeping bag



Figure 39 Carebear costume Grumpy Bear

“Let me look at you. Oh yes, that looks adorable. I know you don’t like being adorable, but I must say I was disappointed when Sabine suddenly decided she didn’t like it anymore, and refused to wear it. It might be a little large on you, but that shouldn’t be a problem. Let me close the Velcro around the cuffs though, so your hands won’t slip out of the mittens. I believe it even came with some matching socks. Would you like to have your feet warm too?” “I’m not sure, I never sleep with socks on, but then again I never sleep without a duvet or blanket either. I guess cold feet is worse than warm ones, so let’s make the costume complete then.” Sabine’s mother found them in the same box and slid them over Iris’s feet. Socks might not have been quite the correct word though, they looked more like animal feet slippers, which made moving around in them slightly awkward.

“OK, time for bed now. Hop on.” Iris was tucked in under the sheet, and got a kiss on the forehead. “Would you be OK if I close the side of the bed, so I don’t have to worry about you falling out in the middle of the night or forget you wear a diaper and try to go to the bathroom on those clumsy socks? Don’t worry, I’ll put a baby monitor here so I can hear you if you need anything.” Iris remembered finding the makeshift barrier with the towel last night, and realized Mrs. Fletcher must have been quite worried. “I’m a bit scared after last night, but I guess if I know you are watching over me it will be OK. Can you stay here for a few minutes though, so that I can get used to it?” “Of course dear. Now just relax and enjoy the warmth of the soft suit. Would you like the night light on again?” “Yes, please” Mrs. Fletcher turned it on, and the main light off, and then started stroking her head through the bars, which was sort of hypnotic, and within minutes Iris was asleep. Then she quietly left the room.

Later in the night Iris was woken up by her bladder. Trying to rub her eyes felt all wrong and she couldn’t feel her hands touching her face, and she seemed to be wearing a hood and something weird on her feet. After a few more moments she remembered where she was and what she was wearing. The suit was really comfortable, but she was a bit hot so she lowered the hood. Then she tried to relax and use her diaper, but it didn’t work. This was weird, because yesterday the flow started when she didn’t want it too, but now it wouldn’t. After a while she decided to sit up, but with her legs straight it

didn't resemble sitting on a toilet enough. She couldn't get her feet through the bars to sit on the side. Sitting on her knees finally worked though, and she breathed a sigh of relief.

Being awake, and looking at the locked side of the bed, it felt totally different than last night. Without a need to leave the bed, and knowing she was watched over by a woman she trusted made all the difference, and she felt protected and relaxed. For fun she grabbed the bars for a moment and put her face against them, like a toddler in a playpen. Her furry hands were slippery on the metal, and she was sure that in this suit she would definitely not be able to climb out. For a moment she considered trying to see if she could get out of the suit, but decided not to risk mishap again after last night. She still felt a bit warm though, so she took off the socks, put them on the side of the bed, and crawled under the blanket again. Not so easy with the mittens, but she got there and quickly drifted off to sleep again.

15. Wednesday – Being Helpful

"And how is my Grumpy Bear this morning?" dragged Iris out of a deep sleep. It surely wasn't time to go to school yet, Iris thought, grunted "Not yet, mom" and turned on her other side, not willing to wake up yet. But Mrs. Fletcher pulled the side of the bed down, shook her gently and said "Come on, wake up. We have another full day ahead of us." Gradually it dawned on Iris that she wasn't in bed at home on a school day, and that it wasn't her mother waking her up. She sat up and said a sleepy good morning. The rolling blinds were already up, and the sun shone into the room. She noticed again that rubbing her eyes didn't really work with furry mittens on. "I'll let you out of the suit shortly, but I would like you to come and wake up Sabine in it; perhaps she will change her opinion of it if she sees you in it. Were the socks a bit too warm in the night?" "Yes, I took them off. Perhaps I should put them on again for Sabine?" "That sounds like a good idea."

So Iris sat on the edge of the bed and put the socks on again, and then jumped down. But she hadn't realized the socks didn't have anti-slip soles, and she her left foot slid away on landing. Grabbing the edge of the bed didn't work very well with the mittens either, and if Mrs. Fletcher hadn't caught her, she would have fallen to the ground. As it is she bumped her head on the side railing, which made quite the sound, but wasn't that painful. "Oh girl, take care now. Let me help you next time. But how is your head?" "It hurts a little bit, but it is no big deal. I hardly felt it." "Good to hear, but please let me know if you feel any headaches or dizziness today." "I will." Mrs. Fletcher put the hood of the suit up again; Iris wasn't sure if she did it to protect her head, or to make the image complete for Sabine.

Then Mrs. Fletcher grabbed Iris's paw and took her to the next room, where Sabine was just waking up, and when she saw them, took her pacifier out, and said "Good mowning". Her mother said that Iris just came to say hello, and show her the pajamas she had worn in the night. "Gwumpy Beah!" Iris went up to her, but with the bed still closed, and the glass-like panes in the lower part of the sides, they could not even touch, so they just put their hands on either side of the glass again. "I chose Perspex sides for Sabine's new bed, hoping she might have less chance to hurt herself if she had a tantrum than with bars. I could also have gotten padded sides, but then we wouldn't have been able to look out or in."

"Sabine, I will first help Iris get ready for the day, and then I will come and get you. So you can lie there a little longer." Sabine nodded and laid down again – she obviously didn't mind lying in bed for a bit longer, and Iris envied her a bit for that. Then they went back to her own room, and Mrs. Fletcher started to open the zipper, but Iris said "Could you let me try first if I can get out? As your official product tester?" Mrs. Fletcher pulled the zip up to the top again, and said "Please go ahead". It wasn't easy to even find the zipper pull with what little feeling she had through her mittens, but after a bit of struggling she got it and managed to get it a few inches down, before it slipped from her hands again.

She tried again, and got it a bit further. Then it was getting harder to reach, between her shoulder blades. But the suit was roomy enough that she could pull it up enough with one hand that she could get it down a bit more with the other. Her arms were getting tired though, and she concluded that she was pretty sure she could get out eventually, with enough time.

“Wait here, I’m going to try something” Mrs. Fletcher said, zipped her up again and soon came back with one of the new little padlocks. “Suppose I would add a D-ring close to the top of the zipper, and put this lock through the zipper pull and the ring, it would not be possible anymore to move the zipper down.” She clicked the lock closed on the zipper pull and asked “do you feel the lock there?” Iris didn’t feel anything through the hood and hair, so she shook her head from side to side, and then could feel a tiny bit when the lock hit her head at the sides of the zipper. “This is hardly noticeable. Let me try lying down.” “Wait, let me help you up on the bed.” Iris allowed her to, although she found it unnecessary, and laid down on her back. Again the small lock had no effect through the hood and hair. She pulled the hood down, but that only made it disappear between the folds. “No, nothing. And I don’t even sleep on my back usually.”

“Thanks Iris, that is very good to know. Now let’s get you going so I can also let Sabine out. Today I need to get some groceries, a lot paperwork and house cleaning, so I’d like you to care for Sabine. No diaper or special clothes needed today.” She pulled the zipper down and helped Iris out of the suit, and then the diaper. No need to clean because Iris went into the shower right away. Mrs. Fletcher took the padlock off, and stared at the suit for a few moments. Then she put it on the bed and went to get Sabine.

When Iris got out of the shower, she looked at her clothes to decide what to wear today. It seemed to be nice weather, so she put on the same top and zipper sweater she started with yesterday, but with shorts underneath. It actually felt strange in panties instead of a diaper, which she had worn for almost 24 hours straight, but it was also nice to pick her own clothes and not be restricted by anything. Then she went down and looked around a bit. The big box with the car seat extra’s was still there, but the clothes and mittens were gone from the table. She thought she should set the table for breakfast, but first wanted to check her phone. She realized she hadn’t touched it since that unfortunate incident in the store when she lost the others – most unusual for her. There were some new posts and pictures from her friends’ vacations which was nice, but also somehow felt far away, as if part of a different world than she was in now. When she thought of posting pictures of her as well, in the diapers and the childish outfits, that felt so absurd that she had to laugh.

She was just thinking she’d need to put her phone down and prepare for breakfast when the two others came down. She heard rustling, and then saw Sabine in her new rain overalls and boots. Mrs. Fletcher looked at Iris’s surprise, and explained that Sabine insisted on being a giraffe today, and ignored that it was not necessary indoors, and the sun was shining. She barely accepted that she couldn’t wear the jacket and mittens too because she would hardly be able to eat that way. Iris came over to look at her. The overalls were pretty large, but the adjustable waistband made them look less baggy. There were some stripes that looked like they might be reflective, brown spots all over, and a picture of a giraffe on her left leg. The boots integrated almost seamlessly, and the locked zipper pulls tingled lightly with each step. Sabine liked that her suit was getting attention, and claimed “I am a giraffe now. Much bigger than you!” Iris played along, made herself a bit smaller by bending her knees a bit, and put her hand above her eyes as if she was trying to look up very far. That made them both burst into laughter, and it took a while before they got themselves under control again. “You are one silly girl, but I love you” she said and hugged her friend, who giggled and hugged her back.

After breakfast Mrs. Fletcher announced that she would first go and get groceries. “I can leave Sabine in her activity chair and you can entertain her here, but perhaps it would be nicer to go into the garden, and enjoy the sunny weather.” Iris nodded, and the Sabine too. “Come with me to the garden, and I’ll show you the options.” They went through the kitchen into the garden, which Iris hadn’t been in until now. On the side the duvet hung to dry. Mrs. Fletcher quickly checked it, and concluded that the morning dew had only made it wetter, but that that should change once the sun reached it.

The garden consisted of a patio next to the house of about 10 feet deep, followed by a fair stretch of grass of perhaps twice the length of the house. There was a 7 foot (2.1m) high fence all the way around, and along the edges were a number of borders with plants and a few trees. There was also a wooden shed near the end. “As you can see Sabine can’t get out of the garden, but we still have to make sure you are safe too. So we have 3 options: I could move the play tent outside, but if I am not there you can’t be in it with Sabine. Then there is this special swing hammock for Sabine (see Figure 40), with a harness to keep her in. But that is in the shade in the mornings, so might be a bit chilly. Perhaps the best option is to have her leashed on the grass. In the center there is a metal ring secured into the ground, where I can secure a leash to from the harness I put on Sabine. That cable is about 15 foot (5 m), so she has room to move around, without ruining my plants or trying to climb the trees or fence. If she would get a tantrum, you could move out of her range and be safe. In the shed we have balls, hoops, and more things to play with.

“The only issue is that the grass is still a bit wet. Coincidentally Sabine is already wearing her waterproof overalls, but I don’t want you to get all wet. Do you have any raingear with you?” “No, I don’t. But I have only a raincoat anyway, and the only times I wear it is when my mother makes me. It’s not like I’d melt from a little water.” “Hmm, I don’t really want to put you in Sabine’s old rain coveralls, because you would also need a diaper again for while I’m gone.” “Oh, I am not going to be rolling around on the grass anyway, so that’s OK.” Mrs. Fletcher seemed to still have some doubts, but accepted Iris’s promise, and only asked her to at least put on some long pants and her jacket, since it was not so warm yet. So Iris went back into the house to change, and Mrs. Fletcher got the harness and the cable for Sabine, and then released her daughter from the activity chair.



Figure 40 Sabine's swing hammock



Figure 41 Sabine's garden harness

Sabine wanted the rest of her giraffe outfit, and this time that was actually a good idea, so Mrs. Fletcher went up to get the jacket and the mittens, helped her daughter out of the chair, put the mittens on and buttoned them. By then Iris joined them, in long jeans and her jacket, and looked

interested and ready to help if needed. For Mrs. Fletcher it was the first time to put on the jacket, so she needed to figure out what exactly to do. First the arms in, and the jacket over the shoulders. Then the hood. Make sure the zipper guard was not folded, and no hairs were in the way, and then the zipper down, and the cover over it. "Should I use the waist zipper to connect the overalls with the jacket as well?" she wondered, and Iris thought it best to do it all the way since Sabine wanted the complete experience, so she closed that too. Iris reminded her that there should be a little snap hook to keep the zipper pulls in place, so she applied that as well. The straps around the wrists were the final touch.

"All wrapped up now. Let me look at you..." They admired the suit from all sides, the jacket also covered in brown spots, and a strip that resembled a giraffe's manes down the back. On the hood there were eyes, ears and little horns sticking out. And a small image of a giraffe head on the chest, and also on the noses of the boots. All in all a little girls dream, and Sabine enjoyed herself. They noticed that the gauze covering her nose and mouth was still in place from the fitting in the store, but the jacket would have to come off again to remove that, and there was no need for Sabine to put something in her mouth anyway, so they just left it.

Then they went outside, where the harness was fitted on top of that. It was a different harness than the one used in the store, this one more like a climbing harness, with also loops around the upper thighs, in orange with blue. (see Figure 41) Mrs. Fletcher seemed to put it on Sabine the wrong way around, with the opening at the back, and connected the cable with a 3-digit locking carabiner through the red loops in the center of the back. Now Iris could see that it actually made sense to use the harness the wrong way around, since for playing around a leash connected to the back was less in the way. And closing in the back might also add a little extra to the security.

Sabine had obviously been secured like this before, since she took off and ran away until the cable halted her and made her fall back. The harness obviously did a good job of distributing the force over her body. Landing on the grass with a diapered behind obviously didn't hurt either, and she was laughing out loud. This was apparently one of her games. Mrs. Fletcher said to Iris that she should call her if anything was wrong, and if there was a need she could pass on the combination of the carabiner. She hoped to be back in an hour or so, and left the garden.

Iris went up to Sabine and asked her what she wanted to play. "Can we play ball?" "I'll look what there is in the shed. I'll be right back – don't run away!" Sabine seemed to understand that that was a joke, and immediately took off to the opposite side of her circle and banged into the end of the leash again. Iris found a number of balls in the shed, some the size of a soccer ball, a few beach balls, and also 2 hopper balls¹. Iris chose to start with 2 beach balls; Sabine's coordination, especially in her new suit, might be challenged with the smaller balls.

At first they tried just throwing one ball over, and it was clear that the mittens didn't help with catching. Next they both threw their ball at the same time and tried to hit the other's in the air. After a while Sabine asked "Could we do big bouncy ball?" That was a funny alliteration, and they had to repeat it and laugh at it for a while, until Iris went to the shed again to swap the balls. The hopper balls were quite big, and it was great fun to bounce around on them. Gradually they became a bit more boisterous, until Iris didn't watch out enough and Sabine's leash unseated her. The grass was wetter than she thought, even though her trainers were soaked anyway, but now her jeans and jacket were also quite wet. Thinking it now didn't matter much anymore, Iris was not so cautious anymore to stay

¹ Hopper balls are also called space hoppers (mostly UK), skippyballs, hippity hop, etc. Big rubber balls with handles that you can bounce around on.

dry, and for a while they were letting themselves fall onto the ball on their chests, and bounce off again. When they got tired they just sat for a while and chatted a bit more. Sitting on the ground soaked Iris's bottom all the way through, but she ignored it since in the sun it was warm enough. She noticed that Sabine seemed to talk a bit less haltingly then before. Perhaps she was just more relaxed around her than in the beginning?

Mrs. Fletcher found them that way when she came back, and both girls stood up and tried to tell her what they did and how much fun it was. She tried to make sense of it for a moment, but then noticed how wet and grass-stained Iris's clothes were. "Iris, how could you. You promised me to stay off the wet grass, but look at you now! Go and change into something dry right now, before you catch a cold. And bring me those dirty clothes." Iris obeyed, even though she couldn't quite see what the fuss was about, and murmured "Sometimes you sound just like my mother." Mrs. Fletcher didn't react, but released Sabine from the leash and harness, and took her back inside. There they encountered Iris again, who had changed and brought the stained clothes. "I'm sorry Mrs. Fletcher, it was an accident first, with Sabine's leash knocking me off my hopper ball. And then I was already wet, so it didn't matter anymore." "It's OK, Iris. I should have insisted that you wore something appropriate."

"And there is a reason why I can sound like your mother: I have to follow her rules for you. It is the same with Sabine, you and me: you are at times responsible for her, but you still have to do what I ask you to with her, or risk that I don't trust you anymore, and will not ask you to sit with her again." Iris nodded. "Your mother is the 'big boss' where you are concerned, and I try to be worthy of her trust by keeping you safe, healthy, and stick to her rules for you. So yes, sometimes it is her rules that I pass on to you. For the rest of the time I guess that all responsible parents are a bit alike, and sometimes need to take action that isn't appreciated, but come from greater experience." "I never looked at it that way, but I think I understand." "Of course you didn't. There are very few teenagers who would realize that, but I think you are capable of understanding it, so I took the time to explain." Iris just gave her a small hug, and felt everything was alright again between them.

"So, let's see what is next. I think it is time to give the kitchen and bathroom a good cleaning. Iris, would you be willing to clean the bathroom for me?" Iris hated such chores at home, and didn't feel much like it here, but didn't want to refuse either, so she agreed without much enthusiasm. "I think this time we must make sure you are adequately dressed for such a wet and messy job. It's probably best if you put on Sabine's old rain suit now. This time at least I'll be around to let you out for the bathroom." Iris felt she ought to be glad not to be made to wear a diaper again, but they were actually so soft, and a lot easier than going to the bathroom 10 times a day, that she wouldn't have minded. "Is there some way that Sabine can keep me company while I clean?" "Hmm, let me think. Perhaps we could move her tent up to her room, just in the door opening. With both doors open you'd be within a few yards from each other, and still be safe. Yes, I think that should work. As long as you keep working too." "Oh, I will. I'm sure the company will make the work go faster."

Iris cleared out the toys from the tent, and then Mrs. Fletcher did something to the frame at the top to make it collapse into a bundle that could easily be carried. Then they went upstairs, where Sabine wanted to keep wearing her full suit, so her mother wiped it roughly dry and clean with an old towel. Then she found a suitable spot and flipped the tent open again. "In you go, my dear. Now you can keep Iris company." Sabine dutifully crawled in, but then asked for her Bobo. Iris got it from downstairs and then she was zipped in.

The rain suit for Iris was quickly found between Sabine's other old clothes in the cupboard in Iris's room, and there were boots too. Of course both were extremely childish again; the bright pink rain coveralls with a sort of face in the front that Iris didn't recognize (see Figure 42), and the boots in pink

with stars and unicorns (see Figure 43). After what happened in the garden Iris wasn't going to complain, and she was sort of getting used to it, and as long as it was in the house, she didn't really mind that much anymore. She did use the toilet first, hoping that she didn't need to ask to be released while wearing the coveralls. She put her hair in a bun to keep it out of the way, and then needed to first step into the boots, which surprised her, since that would make it harder to get her feet in the coveralls legs, but she did and with help from Sabine's mother she soon was in the suit too. It closed up the back with a zipper and then over that a flap with snaps that apparently required some strength to close, and closed with sharp clicks. The coverall legs had straps for under the boots that didn't seem stretchy, and Iris realized that probably meant she couldn't take the boots off anymore, and why they needed to be put on in that order. The arms ended in elastic, and apparently there were no mittens, which would probably make the cleaning too hard anyway.

Then both girls were all set up, and Mrs. Fletcher explained what needed to be cleaned, and supplied the cleaning materials. So Iris got going, and she made good progress while first chatting with Sabine, and then also doing some songs. When she did 'Itsy Bitsy Spider' before she had forgotten the accompanying hand movements, but had since looked it up online, and now demonstrated it a few times until Sabine could do it herself, for as far as the mittens allowed. Then she went back to the cleaning, while they kept the song up for a while more. When Sabine started with the "Iris Iris Iris" again instead of the real words, she let her for a little bit, but then started 'Row, Row, Row your boat'.

She was cleaning the toilet when her bladder started asking attention again, probably because of all the wetness around her. Ironical since she couldn't use it without help, so she went downstairs to get out of the suit. She found Mrs. Fletcher scrubbing in the kitchen, and of course she opened the suit for Iris, and she could relieve herself. Then back to get it closed and up again. When she was back with Sabine, the girl was making some strange noises "gghrrrhgghh ggrrrrhghh ghghrrrhgghh" so she asked if her friend was OK. Sabine nodded, looked unconcerned, but started making the noises once more. Iris started cleaning again, thinking for a while what other songs she knew. 'The wheels on the bus' – that was a fun one that you could also move your arms with.



Figure 42 Sabine's old rain coveralls



Figure 43 Sabine's old rain boots

After a while a third voice joined them, and Mrs. Fletcher came up the stairs. "How are my girls doing?" she asked when the verse was done. "Are you not too hot in the suit, Sabine?" Sabine shook her head,

although she looked a little flushed. “And how is the cleaning coming along? Any problems?” Iris showed her what she’d done, and received compliments and a few tips. “I want to thank you so much for bringing singing back into our house. With all the grief and the changes a few years back, we were not in the mood for a long time, and then didn’t think about it anymore, and never picked it up again. But it is so good for everybody, and mentally stimulating, especially for Sabine, that I am very grateful to you for helping us rediscover it.” They had to hug once more. Iris worried for a moment that the water and dirt on her coveralls would get on Mrs. Fletcher, but she was wearing an apron with some stains herself, and a smudge on her forehead. Sabine came as close to them as the tent would allow, and seemed sad she could not join in. So Iris asked “could we open the tent for a moment and let Sabine join us?” That seemed like a good idea to her mother, so they did and hugged for a while with the three of them. Then Sabine needed to go back into her tent, Iris picked up cleaning again, and Mrs. Fletcher descended to her work in the kitchen. Soon the wheels on the bus were going round and round again.

A while later Mrs. Fletcher came up again, and helped Iris with the last few bits of cleaning. “OK, let’s clean ourselves up, and then my girl will probably like her diaper changed. Is it messy, Sabine?” “Yes, mama, please change it” “Iris, would you like to learn how the change her? It might come in handy when I am otherwise occupied.” “Yes please, what do you want me to do?” “We’ll get to that in a moment. Sabine, would you like Iris to change you?” A nod. “OK, then let us first clean ourselves a bit. I think I will leave you in the coveralls a little longer, just in case there is some unexpected spilling when you change her.” Both washed at the sink, and then Sabine’s mother got her out of the tent and collapsed it, so they could enter the room. “Go help her out of the rain suit then.” Snap hook loose, open the zipper connecting the jacket to the overalls, then get the Velcro zipper cover loose, open the zipper all the way, and pull the jacket off.

Mrs. Fletcher gave her a little keyring with the zipper pull she recognized from the denim overalls she wore on the first day, and one of the magnetic keys that they bought yesterday. There were 2 more tiny metal keys and a plastic one. “Hold the magnet right above a buckle on her shoulder, and press both sides at the same time.” A little fiddly, but Iris managed, and then the second was easy. The top of the overalls came loose, but with the waistband still in place it didn’t drop far. Then Iris had to fiddle underneath to release the waist, and the overalls dropped about halfway down the girl’s legs, where the sturdy fabric prevented them dropping all the way to the floor. Now the legs had to be removed from the boots – again hard to get at with all the fabric in the way, but in the end she got them loose and could help Sabine step out of them.

“The smallest key unlocks the boot zippers: just turn it 90 degrees.” When they were open, Iris pulled the boots off one by one. “It’s best to already turn the zipper lock 90 degrees again – then they will automatically be locked when the zipper is closed the next time, just in case you forget to lock them then.” And finally the mittens: that was simply undoing the buttons of the wrist straps and pulling them off. “Next time perhaps we can try to start opening the overalls from the bottom up; that might be easier. Or perhaps even remove the boots first? I guess we’ll have to experiment a bit.” Sabine stood there only in a bodysuit, and shivered a bit, her sweaty skin suddenly exposed to the air again. Her mother quickly wrapped her in a towel and rubbed her a bit dryer.

Then Mrs. Fletcher talked Iris through the diaper changing, which she had already watched, and experienced, a few times. Doing it herself of course was different, and not as easy as her tutor had made it seem. There were a few things that required special attention: she shouldn’t try to lift Sabine on the table, like her mother did, but simply ask her to hop on. When Iris applied cream on the sensitive area, Sabine started wiggling a bit, trying to rub against the fingers. “Sabine, NO” her mother commanded, and explained to Iris that stimulating the clitoris was not part of the diapering, and if

Sabine continued then just not to touch the area anymore. Then when Iris applied the diaper tapes, one didn't stick very well. "You have to be careful to wipe your hands thoroughly after creaming: if any of it comes on the tapes or the place they stick, that happens. But wait, I have something for that." Mrs. Fletcher retrieved from the cupboard under the table a roll of wide tape with cartoon characters on it. "Just put a line of tape across the front, from hip to hip, at the top of the diaper. That should hold it. I actually got this yesterday for the cotton-backed diapers you wore then, since those tapes sometimes come loose."

When Sabine was ready, the bodysuit was closed and her hands were released. "Let's put her in her sleeper now, so we don't need to change clothes again when she has her nap after lunch. No sweetie, you've worn your giraffe suit all morning, and soon you will again, but not now. Iris, the sleeper goes over her head. Ask her off the table, and just let the fabric fall down. Now you can close the zipper all the way from one ankle to the other. The zipper should already be locked, but double check and try to open it again. OK, then we are all ready. Honey, just wait here for a moment in your bed, and I will help Iris get her coveralls off too."

When Sabine was locked in her bed, and they left the room, Iris tried to see if she could open the coveralls herself. With effort she managed the first snap, but the second one down she could reach, but not exert enough force to pull it apart. So Mrs. Fletcher helped her out. Since it went on over her normal clothes, she didn't need to put anything else on, although it was a little chilly after having worked in a suit that didn't ventilate. So Mrs. Fletcher insisted she put a warmer sweater on to not cool off too abruptly. With her mother having done the packing, a suitable one of course was available.

In the meanwhile Iris asked why the changing table didn't have a waist strap like the one in the store. "It came with such a strap, but since Sabine is glad to have her diaper changed, she always cooperates, and it didn't seem needed to me." "But what if Sabine gets a tantrum and starts moving wildly. If she rolls off the table with the hands still in the straps, that might get very uncomfortable, or worse." "That is very well spotted, Iris. I had not thought about that. I'm sure I still have the strap, so I will find it and put it where it belongs." When they went to get Sabine to go downstairs, Mrs. Fletcher opened the cupboard under the table again, found the two parts of the strap, and attached them to the sides of the table. "So, that's done. Better do it immediately than postpone and forget, don't you think?" Then the three of them went down together, set the play tent back up, and had lunch, with some nice fresh buns and some salad.

16. Experiment

When Mrs. Fletcher had brought Sabine to bed after lunch, and came back to Iris in the living room, the girl brought up a subject she had been thinking about. "Ms. Fletcher, this morning it was so nice to play with Sabine in a way that we could touch, hug, chase and such, while I could still be safe enough. I am missing that in the house, where either she is in the tent, or in the activity chair. I was thinking if perhaps we could find a way to be able to interact like outside, that would be even more fun, and not needing to sit still for long periods would probably also better for Sabine. I understand that we can't just let her running loose all over the house. So I was thinking about the situation outside: perhaps we can have a few places in the house too where she can wear the harness and the leash, so that we could move outside her range if necessary. And the second idea I had was thinking of the dresses at the store that limit how quickly the wearer can move. If Sabine could also wear something that would keep her elbows near her body, or limit how far the wrists can go, she might be hampered a bit while playing, but cause a lot less damage when she had a tantrum."

"I like your ideas! You're on fire today, first with the strap on the changing table, and now this. Of course there may easily be practical problems, and it could even be that we cannot solve them, but it definitely seems worth a try." "Shall I pretend to be Sabine then? I wouldn't mind if it can make things better for her." "That would be very helpful. I can think of a few things that we could try, let me quickly go upstairs to get them." She returned with an armload of straps and clothes, and dumped them on the dining table. "Let's do your leash idea first. Here is the harness, please step into the leg openings. Then the harness went over her shoulders, and the connecting strap clicked closed. That didn't feel too bad, but it was still too loose, so Mrs. Fletcher pulled some straps and soon it felt like she was being hugged. Only the solid piece that would normally be high up the back was a bit close to her throat, especially when she bent forward, but that was not too bad. Then the carabiner with the attached cable was attached to her back, and she was ready.

Iris could feel the strong control the leash holder had: with the wrist strap in the store there was a stretchy cable, so she could move away and gradually it became harder the further she went. But this was a strong cable, and it stopped her abruptly when she tried to move away. Again she got a mix of feelings: of frustration of suddenly not being able to go where she wanted, and again also of protection and relaxation, and some excitement. "So, let's see where the cable could be attached that I would be able to get away from you, and you also wouldn't be able to damage too much or hurt yourself. I don't think there is much I would be able to connect the cable to that would be able to resist the pull of a determined Sabine. But we could always mount a ring or something on the wall that we could use. Now where should we put that? If the leash is too short, it would not be much of an improvement, so we probably should try about 5 foot (1.50m); more if we can."

Then Mrs. Fletcher started guiding Iris to different places in the living room, but there were always problems with fragile things within reach, like the TV, sharp edges, and so on. Until Iris suggested the area where they had just set up the play tent again. "Wait here while I move it out of the way again" Mrs. Fletcher said, and tied the cable for the moment to the stair banister. Iris was surprised that she would do that to her, and although she could probably have untied herself, it felt like she was really in Sabine's position now. She suspected that it was just the routine that was needed for Sabine. After the tent was collapsed again and moved out of the way, Mrs. Fletcher came to get her. "And, are you getting into your role as Sabine already?" and gave her a wink. "It's strange, but it is no problem since it is just play and testing."

At the moment there was nothing to attach the cable to, but Mrs. Fletcher just stood and held the cable where the attachment point could be. She started with a short leash of about 3 feet (1m) and Iris tried to move around and touch things, but she got nowhere. Even with 6 foot (2m) there was nothing problematic, so they decided that this was definitely an option. Removing the tent each time would not be ideal, but so quick that it was definitely doable. "Now I don't have something like a wall mounted ring, and I also have to get a shorter cable. It would be ideal to have a leash where I could choose the required length, like with a chain and padlock, but I don't think an actual chain would be suitable: too harsh, too noisy, and I wouldn't like the idea of chaining my daughter to the wall, even if it would be the same effect as using a leash or cable. So we can't make it happen right now. But soon." "Perhaps an attachment point on the ceiling, like with the treadmill, would work even better: then she wouldn't have the risk of tripping over the cable." Iris suggested. "Yes, that could very well be. I'll decide when I have everything I need: we also need to be careful that the cable can't wind up around her neck."

"Now let's get you out of the harness, and look at your second idea. But first, why don't you behave like Sabine having a tantrum, and flail with your arms and such. Then I will try to subdue you, and see how hard that is. Then we have a baseline against which we can compare our ideas. Try not to hit me

too hard, and not to the face.” So Iris tried to flail around but only hit Mrs. Fletcher with the sides of her arms. When the woman moved in and tried to grab her in a hold, she felt she could struggle harder without causing much damage, but after a minute and a half or so she was held in such a way that she could not cause any more damage. By then both were panting from the struggle.

“Phew, you manage to put up quite a fight. But let me show you what I have collected that might work. These are patient wrist-to-waist straps and ankle straps. If we put the wrist straps higher up the arms, they might hold the elbows in place instead. And this is a special jumpsuit of very strong material, where you can use locking zippers to connect the arms to the torso, and the legs together. The mittens can be removed. I thought we might lower those zips to elbows and knees, so the underarms are free and small steps are possible. It might even be possible to pull the zippers further down during a tantrum, disabling the wearer much more. Only I am not sure if the zippers can stand up to much force when they are only half-closed. But let’s start with the patient straps.”

“Let me first make sure you can’t run away from me fast.” Mrs. Fletcher joked. She wrapped a strap with many holes first around one ankle, put a post through two opposite holes and a black cap over it. The rest of the strap went to the other ankle, she judged how wide a step would still be allowed, and locked that one too. Iris felt the material of the straps, and tried to get the black caps off, but they were stuck and everything felt very sturdy, and snug enough not to pass over her ankle. She would not get her legs free without a way to remove the caps.

Next Mrs. Fletcher wrapped two short straps around Iris’s arms, just above the elbow, and then a long strap that she put through loops on the cuffs, around the outside of the arms, and around her chest. One more post and cap, and Iris’s elbows were held tight to her ribs. Of course she had to test this contraption too. Brute force didn’t achieve anything, like expected. But Iris managed to use one hand to pull the cuff on one arm down with the other hand, and then on the other side too, so the straps hung loosely around her waist and wrists. Then she managed to wiggle her hands out. “OK, that is a problem. I can’t make the straps much tighter without hampering the blood flow through your arms and restricting your breathing. But perhaps a few more straps can solve that. She redid the straps at elbow height, then took another strap, connected it with another post and cap to the chest strap, near the arm cuff, ran it over the shoulder, and then connected it to the back of the chest strap closer to the other arm. The remainder of the strap she doubled up and also put it through the post, making a loop at the back. Once more with a strap over the other shoulder, and Iris was ready to try again. Now pulling on the arm cuffs didn’t work anymore: the shoulder straps held them where they were. Higher didn’t work either, and the shoulder straps themselves were not easy to reach, and couldn’t be pulled over the shoulder anyway since they crossed in the back. She was not getting anywhere now. While she was applying the straps, Mrs. Fletcher had explained that these straps were not cheap, but quite versatile: they could also be used to secure someone on the bed, with waist, arms, legs, or shoulders, or any combination. They were also used in hospitals and institutions, and were very sturdy. (see Figure 44 for an idea of the ankle and wrist straps)

“Time to go berserk again!” This time Mrs. Fletcher had it much easier. With her elbows to her sides, Iris couldn’t put any force in her blows, and she couldn’t even get away with her legs hampered. Mrs. Fletcher first grabbed one of the loops she created at her back, and gave a pull to unbalance Iris. Iris tried to step to not fall over, but the leg strap stopped her foot short and she started to fall down. That wasn’t a problem since Mrs. Fletcher had a good grip on the loop and held her up. Then she grabbed Iris’s wrists and held her immobile. Iris concluded “This is very effective! I’m sure that I would be able to cope with Sabine strapped like this too, especially if I’d manage to get a hold on one of those loops.” “OK, that is great. Now try to play a bit and see if you are not hampered too much.” So Iris tried several things out, like drawing at the table, and playing with a doll. “My reach is definitely hindering me a bit,

but if my caregiver helps me put things within my reach, I could do mostly what I'd want. Not wild things like playing tag, but we shouldn't be doing that inside anyway. Only the strap between the legs worries me: unless I pay attention it tends to trip me up, like already happened when we struggled. I could probably get used to it, but if I were in a rage it seems likely that I would fall." "OK, thanks for the analysis. This is such a great help for me. I need to think about the tripping danger." Then she guided Iris back to the table by the loops in the back. Iris tried once more to hit Mrs. Fletcher, but the loop prevented her from turning towards the woman, and she didn't even manage to touch her.

Mrs. Fletcher didn't immediately start freeing her, but first explained the final thing she brought with her. It was a jumpsuit in a peachy color, made out of a sturdy cotton. It zipped up the back, and had attached feet and thumbless mittens, but the latter had a zip around the wrist with which they could be removed. Like Mrs. Fletcher had already mentioned, there were zips between the insides of the arms and the torso, and on the inside of the legs. All zippers seemed to be locking. Mrs. Fletcher first removed the mittens and opened all zippers, making sure they were already in locking position. All the while having her wrist through one of Iris's loops, forcing her to stay close. Only then she started to release Iris. She used a blue plastic tool that she put over a black cap, and then could lift it off the post. With the locks removed, it was easy to pull the straps loose and open the cuffs.



Figure 44 Patient restraint straps



Figure 45 Patient safety jumpsuit

But Iris couldn't enjoy her freedom for long, and had to get into the jumpsuit right away. She did first remove her warm sweater though. The attached feet had elastic around the ankles, so her feet stayed in the suit's feet, in contrast to the grumpy bear sleepsuit, which didn't have attached feet. But with this suit she did get the full use of her hands. The zip up the back was similar, although without the hood it ended in her neck. Then Mrs. Fletcher pulled the arms and the leg zip halfway down, and suddenly Iris's elbows couldn't move far from her body again, and with her knees connected, could only take steps with her lower legs. Since the suit was fairly wide on Iris, she had more arm room than with those patient straps. Mrs. Fletcher saw that too, and promptly pulled all three zips a bit further down. Iris tested if she could do anything to get out or at least create more room to move, but the locked zippers refused to go up, and she definitely didn't want them further down, the neck opening

was much too small to wiggle out, and the attached feet prevented pulling up the legs to take bigger steps. So she admitted defeat. (see Figure 45)

Then she started a mock tantrum once more. It took a bit longer for Mrs. Fletcher to get her under control than with the patient straps, since she missed a convenient loop at the back, but still Iris didn't have a chance to hurt her at all, and once her 'attacker' managed to pull the zips all the way down, she was fully helpless and could only squirm and flap her hands, like a fish on dry land. Once she became quiet again, and both had caught their breaths, Mrs. Fletcher moved the zips back to their halfway position, and Iris could test how hampered she was when playing. With the arm zips slightly below her elbows, she had a little less reach on the table than with the patient straps, but not much. For the rest it was similar, but she didn't feel like she would trip with this jumpsuit: apparently it made a big difference to have her knees together instead of her ankles connected.

This was interesting, and Mrs. Fletcher wanted to try one more thing: she opened the leg zip completely, but applied the patient strap for her ankles around her legs just above her knees. Now the strap functioned much like the half-closed zipper. At first the straps were just loose enough for Iris to slide down over her knees, and when they were tightened one hole further, they became very tight when bending her legs. "It's not too bad, but I think it might become uncomfortable after a while." Iris concluded. "I think I like the jumpsuit best, since it doesn't feel like you are restricted at all unless you try to take a big step or reach further away with your arms. And then it is more of a gentle reminder than a harsh block, if that makes sense. But the patient straps worked fine too, and it was even easier to control me. And somehow the hug of those straps, or indeed the harness, also somehow feels nice. But I don't like the ankle straps, even if at knee height." "Are you also convinced with the jumpsuit that you could handle a tantrum from Sabine? She is quite a bit heavier and stronger than you." "I think so; I spent most energy fighting the jumpsuit restrictions. I could probably even handle you."

Mrs. Fletcher ignored that challenge, and removed the straps from Iris's legs. But then she pulled the zipper halfway down once more. Iris looked at her questioningly and heard "Well, you said you wanted to pretend to be Sabine for a while, and this is what I would do with Sabine." But then Mrs. Fletcher continued "But mostly it is time to wake Sabine from her nap, and I was hoping that you'd be willing to demonstrate the options, and try to explain to her that wearing restraints will give her more freedom." "Oh, yes of course I will – that is what we did this for."

While waiting for the Fletchers to return, Iris experimented a bit more with the restrictions from her jumpsuit. How fast she could walk, how high she could reach, how easy it was to sit on the ground and get up again, and more. After a while she sat back at the table, and explored the items that were still on it. The blue tool was missing, so she couldn't experiment with the black caps, but at least she could take a closer look at the materials. But even looking at a black cap from up close, she couldn't figure out how they worked. On the table were also the mittens that Mrs. Fletcher removed from her suit. She looked at them a bit, but there was not that much to see; they were just small sacks with a zipper at the open end, made out of the same material as her jumpsuit, but with two layers. No separate thumbs.

She had just put her hand in one to feel and see what it would be like, when she was joined again by the two others. Sabine was not in her giraffe suit anymore, but was now dressed in a girly dress with blue flower pattern, a large white lace peter pan collar, and split skirts, or culottes as they were also called. (see Figure 46) When Iris got a look at the back, there seemed to be something woven though the eyelets of the lace between the two halves of the collar, probably extra security against her taking it off. When Mrs. Fletcher saw Iris with the mittens, she said "Oh, let me help you" put the other one on too and zipped them to the suit. Iris had not expected that at all, and looked flabbergasted at her

disabled hands, and then to Sabine's mother, who clarified "Just try them on for a while and let me know how that feels" and gave her a pat on the head. Oh, this was still product testing. That was alright then, she supposed.



Figure 46 Sabine's culotte dress

Sabine in the meantime was looking at her friend with both surprise and amusement. "Have you been naughty?" she asked. "No, we are trying something out, like a game. If it works maybe we can play in the house like we did outside. Then maybe you don't need to be in the tent or your chair all the time." Sabine seemed to get the idea, or at least nodded. "Would you like to play and see?" "OK". Mrs. Fletcher took over "I am going to put some straps on you, but remember you are not being punished. This is just a test, or a game. Like Iris, with the straps you can't move your arms as much, and must take smaller steps. Then you can play with Iris for a while and we will see if that works, and if you like it." So Sabine's mother started putting the patient straps on her ankles, her arms and around her chest, and also the shoulder straps. "Now be careful to take short steps, and not fall down."

"OK, you both go and play now for a while, and I will be right here in the kitchen, so call me if there is anything." Iris was now more hampered than Sabine, with the mittens, but since this was a test she accepted it and would experiment what she could still do. Mrs. Fletcher noticed that the tent was still collapsed from their earlier test, so she set it up again and put the mattress in. "Perhaps you could start by collecting the toys and put them back in the tent." So they did, and Iris noticed that it wasn't too hard to pick things up by clamping them between her two hands. When the last toys were in, Iris said "Look Sabine, we can play in the tent, but now it can stay open, and we can also move out again." Sabine nodded, and then said that Iris was her baby, and she needed to be cleaned. Iris could imagine why Sabine got that idea: the peach suit made her look a bit like an overgrown baby without clothes on. So she played along, like making baby noises. When the 'diaper change' was finished, Sabine said "wait hehe, baby" and left the tent, zipping it closed behind her! Now Iris was seriously stuck and she went to the side where Sabine was going and looked what she was doing. She realized that Mrs. Fletcher was there and she could always call for help, but she decided to wait and see what Sabine's plan was. But she also concluded that when she would be alone with her friend, she needed to make sure she stayed in control.

"Take small steps" she warned her friend, remembering how easy it was to trip when you didn't expect that your ankles were connected by a fairly short strap. But it seemed like Sabine was more used to being restrained, and almost automatically adjusted. She walked to the kitchen, and asked her mother if she could have a sippy cup with some milk. Mrs. Fletcher realized why she asked, and cooperated. "Warm the milk a bit with your hands, so it is not too cold for the baby." Sabine nodded and accepted the flask. "Mommy" Iris called out impatiently, and Sabine came back opened the tent again and came

in. "Hush baby, hehe is your bottle." She sat on her knees next to Iris, took her head in her lap, and put the sippy cup to her lips. Iris drank the milk, and then Sabine said "Now baby must go to sleep." "Don't forget to burp her, her mother called from the kitchen, and even with her restricted arms Sabine managed to get her baby to sit, hold her against her and pat her on the back. "burp" Iris spoke, not able to produce a real burp. Then Sabine laid her down and pretended to tuck her in. Even though it was just pretend, Iris enjoyed the love and care Sabine showed towards her. It reminded her of when they were both at Edison Elementary, and Sabine shielded her from teasing, like a big sister.

"Girls, can you come here for a moment?" Mrs. Fletcher had in the meantime put something that looked like a shower rod in the opening to the kitchen, a bit lower than knee height, in such a way that you needed to step over it to enter the kitchen. "Let's see if this will keep you out of the kitchen. Could you try to step over it?" Iris tried first and just managed to stand sideways against the bar and lift her leg enough to flip it over, and then the second one. "OK, good. Now back." Which proved no harder. "And you, Sabine?" Her daughter tried too, but with the strap between her ankles she could lift her foot high enough, but the strap didn't allow her to put it down on the other side. She kept on trying though, since her friend managed as well, and got frustrated. Then she suddenly stopped moving and became silent.

Iris thought she recognized the symptoms of an upcoming tantrum, and moved a bit behind Sabine's back. She could reach just high enough with an arm to put her mitten though a loop at Sabine's back and grabbed it tightly by folding her hand over it. To Iris it seemed like Sabine had retreated inside herself and slammed the door shut, so she tried to get the door open again, feeling that she had a safe position now. "Sabine, it's a game. You couldn't win. But we love you. Please calm down." She called out, hoping to get through. She also tried to stroke her friend, although she could reach no higher than her arm. Mrs. Fletcher stood by, ready to intervene, but for now let Iris handle it.

Disappointingly for Iris her efforts didn't help, and Sabine started raging. Iris managed to hold on to the loop, and got Sabine far enough from things she could damage or damage herself on, but not much more. Then the mother stepped in, got a good hold on her daughter, sank to the ground and sat down, taking Sabine with her on her lap, and holding her tight. Talking softly, she calmly waited for the attack to pass. Iris, careful to stay out reach of Sabine's limbs, crawled next to her and put her head against Mrs. Fletcher. When sitting down she noticed how tired she was, with all that testing and struggling she first did with the mother, and just now with the daughter. While Sabine calmed down and started crying and apologizing, Iris half dozed off. When everything had settled down again, Mrs. Fletcher said "Come girls, go take a little nap in the tent. You are both exhausted." And to Iris "Even though Sabine has just slept, the tantrums drain a lot of energy from her, and I want you both fit for the next activity." So they went into the tent, too tired to complain that they were both still restrained, and laid down right next to each other. Mrs. Fletcher closed the zipper, and both cuddled next to each other, even though they couldn't really embrace, and dozed off.

17. Bike, Bite, Bench and Bed

A while later they woke from the zipper opening, and Mrs. Fletcher said they had been lazy long enough now, and that she really needed to start working on her administration and finances. "So let me first help Iris out of her suit." She unlocked and opened the back zipper of the jumpsuit, and stripped it off her. Suddenly Iris had full control over her limbs again, and that felt wonderful, so she stretched and moved around a bit. "Here, put your sweater on for a bit so you don't cool off too suddenly." Sabine came over too. "Iris, how was that for you?" "I got used to it pretty quickly, and some of the time didn't even notice. Well, apart from the mittens. It is strange not to feel what you

touch, although I got a little bit used to that with the sleepsuit. And I wouldn't be able to draw with them or make a puzzle." "And Sabine, do you like this better than in the chair? You can move in the room, but then you need to have the straps so we are protected when you have a tantrum?" "Yes, I like this better. We can play more." "OK, then the experiment, the game, was successful. Perhaps next time we try the jumpsuit on Sabine, see if that is even better. And I might even adapt a few other clothes for the same purpose."

"Now, like I said I need time behind my computer, and I thought you two might take a bike ride. A friend loaned me a special bicycle, or better tricycle, that has two seats next to each other, and both people can pedal, but one is in control of the steering and brakes. Since I got it we only managed one ride, but I think it would be very nice for you two. But Iris, can I trust you to always watch the traffic, and stop the bike by the side of the road if you want to look around or do other distracting things?" "I am used to biking, Mrs. Fletcher. When daddy is home we sometimes go for a bike ride into nature together, and I bike to school too." "You realize this is not like getting wet on the grass, but that I trust my daughter's life to you." "Yes Mrs. Fletcher, I understand" she said with a slight note of exasperation, but added "I will be very careful, and call you if anything is wrong. Thank you for trusting me."

"I think what you both are wearing should be good enough on the bike, but you should be wearing jackets too: there can be a chilly breeze here in the afternoon, and that will blow right through your sweater. Now your denim jacket is still in the laundry, so let me quickly go upstairs to see what you can borrow. Sabine, can you wait in the tent for the moment?" She did, and when Mrs. Fletcher came back from upstairs she had 2 jackets. "I'm sorry, the choice is not great: I have a denim jacket with a hood, which has cute eyes and ears, a picture of a hamster on the front, and long rabbit ears hanging from the hood in the back. Otherwise it is this yellow jacket, but that is also waterproof, is lined and has locking buckles. You wouldn't be able to open it or take it off if it is too hot." (see Figure 47 and Figure 48) "Hmm, I guess it will have to be the denim one then. But I really hope no one who knows me will see me. Are you certain I need a jacket?" "You talked about that I need to do what your mother wants, and what do you think she would say?" "OK, I guess I do need one then."



Figure 47 Sabine's old summer jacket



Figure 48 Sabine's old rain jacket

"Now let me get you a few other things, while you get your backpack and your phone." She got a few juice boxes and some cookies for underway, and a few tie wraps and a pair of wire cutters. Mrs. Fletcher explained that the harness on the bike for Sabine wasn't locking, so she would just put a tie wrap around it to keep it closed. But in case of emergencies Iris should be able to release her, and, if needed, replace the tie wrap after. But only for emergencies. Now get your phone out, and make sure you have this address in there. If you have trouble finding your way back, you should be able to use a route planner to find your way here again. And of course you can always call me as well."

“Now, let’s go look at the bike for a moment.” So they went outside, and Mrs. Fletcher showed her the tricycle, the basket where she could put her backpack, her seat on the left with the actual handle bars and brake. Sabine’s seat on the right had a simple harness around waist and over shoulders and a central buckle. Her pedals had straps on them for the feet. (see Figure 49) “You want to coordinate Sabine’s efforts with your own, so that you don’t try to break while she pushes on full force. The time I rode with her, we practiced on ‘stop’, ‘slow’ and ‘go’, so it would be best if you used the same words. If you want to look around, or do things like singing, just put the bike on the side of the road and stop. Best to keep your full attention on the road if you are riding, don’t you think?”

“It might be useful to first do a little ride up and down the road here to get used to it. After that you can follow the road to the end, then turn left, turn left again, and you are on a road into the country that is very quiet, and after a while will run parallel to the cedar creek. There will be little traffic since it eventually is a dead end, but stay alert anyway. I think you should at least be an hour away, but no more than 2.5: make sure you are back before 5:30PM. Could you give me a call when you turn back, so I know you are on schedule?” Iris promised.



Figure 49 The two person bike

“Do you have any questions? No? Then let’s go get Sabine and get you going.” So they did. Both got coated in sunscreen, Sabine got a blue jacket with Frozen characters on it and a cap against the bright sun. Then she got strapped into her seat and to the pedals. A tie wrap made sure the harness would stay closed. After a little practice run, where Iris rehearsed the commands with Sabine, and practiced steering and braking, she felt confident that she had enough control to start the trip, so they waved to Mrs. Fletcher and off they went.

The weather was very nice, and Sabine was anxious for the workout, so Iris didn’t need to pedal much and could concentrate on steering and traffic. At first she was anxiously looking around if anyone was looking at her childish jacket, but no one seemed to even notice, so she relaxed and enjoyed the ride. Soon they were outside the town, and entered a more rural and green landscape. Iris had learned a bit about nature from her father, and knew several birds, so she sometimes stopped the bike and looked at a family of chickadees, where the almost fully grown young were still harassing their parents for food, or an osprey circling over one of the lakes they passed, and even a kingfisher. Soon they were already an hour under way, and Iris decided to have the juice boxes and cookies before turning back. When she retrieved her backpack from the basket in the back, she got a closer look at the back of Sabine’s dress, and saw that there was a piece of string, probably a shoelace, woven between several larger eyelets in the lace on either side, and tied into a bow at the underside of the collar. That kept

the collar closed, and prevented access to the zipper pull, while the knot was probably hard to reach and manipulate by the wearer. Simple, but it seemed secure enough.

After they started pedaling back, Iris suddenly remembered she promised to call, so she stopped the bike and reported to her friend's mother. Then they took their time on the way back. Sabine had spent a lot of energy on the first half of the trip, so Iris helped a bit more with the pedaling, and even though they didn't go as fast, they made a steady pace and arrived back home some 15 minutes before the deadline.

Back home Mrs. Fletcher had cooked, and during the meal they talked about the tour and what they had seen. Sabine's mother also told that she had tried doing her finances, but there were a few issues she couldn't solve, so she had made an appointment with her bookkeeper tomorrow morning. The rest of the time she had done some sewing and the cooking.

After dinner there was even some time to play a game with the three of them. They played memory, and both Iris and Sabine won a game. Apparently the short-term memory of Sabine functioned fine. Then it was time to bring Sabine upstairs, get her cleaned up and ready for bed. Of course she protested that she wasn't tired yet, but her yawn proved otherwise, and her mother didn't relent. Before they went upstairs Mrs. Fletcher asked Iris if she had called her mother yesterday, and when she hadn't, insisted that she do so now. Then they went upstairs, and Iris prepared for what she did and didn't want to tell her mother, and in general for a less-than-pleasant talk full of unnecessary advice and warnings.

But the call didn't go like she expected. Her mother sounded really glad to hear from her, and told her that it was awfully quiet around the house, and that she missed her. She told a bit about some things she managed to sell on eBay, and of course wanted to know all about Iris's adventures. Iris told her about Sabine, and the fun they had together. With the visit of the special needs store yesterday she carefully steered around her wearing a diaper for the trip, and the car seat on the way back. But there was plenty to tell about the enormous variety of products there, the buffet for lunch, and what they bought. She didn't mention the bunny shorts though. For today there was less to avoid, although she didn't mention her clothes getting wet and dirty. Right at the end the question she dreaded but also prepared for came "Tell me about the diaper". So she told about her clothes getting vomit on them, so she needed to borrow something, and that when Mrs. Fletcher had to leave, she had no way to go to the bathroom and so she agreed, *for this one time exception*, to put on one of Sabine's diapers, and only because she stayed in the house and Sabine was used to them anyway. Then her mother wanted to know if she had also used them, which Iris of course found very painful and inappropriate of her mother, but admitted she had to, and that it was hard to let go, so she went to sit on the toilet all clothed and then she managed to. Then her mother thanked her for calling, and hoped she would call again soon, only adding a brief "stay warm and safe" at the end.

Well, that hadn't been too bad. With all their squabbles and her mother's constant warnings and strict rules, it was easy to forget that they also loved each other, and in the end Iris was glad she called. Still nothing from her father, but she also knew that it happened often enough that he just couldn't find the time or the telephone was occupied when he did. There were a few more posts from her friends, and they also asked Iris for photos about what she was doing, but Iris didn't really know what she would want to send. She didn't really want to post pictures of Sabine, since expected her friends to be scornful of a 'retard', just as she would have been until this week. And of herself or her surroundings? It was not like they visited the Grand Canyon or something. But she decided to try to at least take a picture tomorrow. Perhaps the three of them could do a trip somewhere this week to a more interesting location for photos?

When Mrs. Fletcher returned and sat next to her on the couch, she had brought a set of clothes with her, and a sewing kit. With the reading lamp next to her supplying enough light, she told Iris that she found a set of D-rings in the supermarket this morning, so she had been busy adding them to some of Sabine's clothes that might not be quite safe yet, like Iris demonstrated with the Carebear sleepsuit. She was also trying some alterations to a denim jumpsuit of her daughter to achieve the same restrictions as the straps and the zipper jumpsuit from earlier today.

"But first there was something else I wanted to ask your opinion about. I am actually a bit tired of you calling me Mrs. Fletcher all the time; it is so formal and makes me feel old, or as if I were your teacher. But I don't think my first name is quite suitable either. Like with your mother, I assume you are not calling her Mrs. Tomas or Maria either." "No, I don't. And if we were related, I might call you Aunt Imogen, but we aren't. This is a hard one. I can't at the moment think of something appropriate, but I'll think about it. Or did you already have a suggestion?" "No, I am stumped too."

"I have a suggestion too" continued Iris. "Wouldn't it be nice if we could make a trip this week, like to a tourist attraction?" "That might be a good idea; do you already have something in mind?" "I was thinking of the aquarium that was here before, and that Sabine used to love the fish. I believe it was Sabine's father's hobby. So I was just thinking about the Oregon Coast Aquarium up in Newport." "That is so sweet of you, to think of what your friend would like!" "Oh, well, I guess so, but I would also like it. They have seals, otters and also sea birds, so I would like to see it too." "That is perfectly fine. It would not have been a good suggestion if you were not interested at all. Do you already know how much it would cost?" "No, I just thought of it. Let me get my phone and I'll look it up. Oh, it is more expensive than I thought; \$25 for you and \$20 for Sabine and me. It would have been \$15 if we were still 12 years old." "So that is \$65 in total, excluding gas for the car ride. I'm not sure I can afford that at the moment. Like I said I am working out my finances, and am uncertain at the moment how much I have to spend. And of course we bought a lot from the special needs store yesterday. In principle that is covered by the insurance, but because I have a limited budget, it might not totally, and I will have expenses for her in the rest of the year too. I'm not saying no, but please be patient until I know more; hopefully tomorrow morning will help me there." "OK, I will try to be patient."

"How about Nanny?" "Excuse me?" "How I should call you. You are sort of my caregiver at the moment, so it is sort of appropriate, and nice and short." "Nanny? Hmm, it's a bit weird perhaps, but also fitting in some ways. Why don't you try it out, and I'll try to remember to respond to it. Perhaps tomorrow evening we can see how we both like it."

"Nanny, what are you doing now?" "I have cut these two strips of cloth from discarded jeans that are about the same color as the jumpsuit. I've sewn them to the inside of the elbow on the sleeves, made buttonholes in the ends, and put 2 buttons on the sides of the torso at the same height. Sabine can now still wear the jumpsuit normally, but when I need to restrict her a bit further, I can button her elbows to her sides. I used two buttons per side for more strength, and to limit movement to the front and to the back a bit more. Then I have to figure out something similar for between the legs." "That sounds like it could work. And I assume I get the honor of experiencing it first?" Iris joked. She wanted to sit even closer to Mrs. Fletcher: sitting here with her at the end of the day was so relaxing, and she felt like her opinions were valued and they could talk about anything, that she had really started to appreciate these moments. But Nanny needed to be able to move her arms freely for the sewing, so she stopped herself.

Instead she picked up her phone and looked up a few ideas. "Look Mrs., eh, Nanny, at this Bardot dress with pencil skirt. She showed her this link: <https://www.hautelook.com/s/vince-camuto-popover-cocktail-dress-regular-petite/5650324?color=EMERALD&bvstate=pg%3A3%2Fct%3Ar> . These off-the-

shoulder dresses wrap around the upper arms, and in the reviews people actually complain about having their arms disabled. And the straight skirt at the bottom only allows small steps. So it sort of already does what we are looking for. Of course the design should be a bit different for Sabine, and perhaps have shoulders straps or something to keep it up and modest, but perhaps the special needs store already has something like that among the dresses we never got around to check out.” “Yes, that could very well be. But let me first get my finances straightened out before I start buying new things again. There, that should complete the arms. Are you willing to try it out now?”

On the one hand Iris felt so comfortable hanging on the couch that she didn’t really want to get up and all active again, but of course this was her idea, and she was also curious about the solution Nanny came up with, so she got up and took her sweater off. “Do I need to take off more, or is it big enough that it will fit over my clothes?” “I think the legs might be a bit tight to have pants on under it, even when it will be big on you.” So Iris took her jeans off and stepped into the jumpsuit legs. She thought that she stepped in it the wrong way, having gotten so used that for Sabine everything closed in the back, but Mrs. Fletcher continued pulling it up and let her stick her arms in behind her, so apparently this one closed in the front. It was pulled over her shoulders, and the zip pulled up in front. Then she had a bit of time to look at the suit better. It had bright orange and white stripes down the sides, a tie around her waist, and patches on the chest. (see Figure 50) Of course she had to try if she could lower the zipper again, but she felt from the pull that it probably was one of those locking ones, and indeed it didn’t budge. Her next action was to put her hands in the pockets, but those were sewn closed, and Iris remembered Nanny explaining that too.

“Let me button up the arms now.” Iris could see the little extra strips of fabric at the elbows, but they were not very noticeable, and would definitely not being in the way like this. But of course that changed when Mrs. Fletcher pulled the arm straight down, and buttoned the straps. Now Iris only could move her lower arms, quite similar to the patient jumpsuit, but even a bit less since the denim fit closer. It seemed like they were also held a bit further towards her back. She tried to pull loose, but Mrs. Fletcher seemed to have done a good job, because that didn’t work at all. She could definitely not reach up with the hand of the same arm to undo the buttons, but the fingers of her other hand also didn’t get far enough. Having her elbows attached a bit more towards the back seemed very effective against that. And around the back didn’t work either. “This seems to work well; I can’t escape.”



Figure 50 Sabine’s denim jumpsuit before modifications

“Now for the legs, let me put some safety pins at knee height, to see how that feels. Now don’t pull too hard, but see if it limits your step similar to the patient jumpsuit.” Iris walked around for a bit, careful not to pull too hard, and concluded that it seemed similar or slightly more limiting. “Now follow me to the kitchen. I’ll screw in the bar again, this time slightly higher, and see if you could step over it.” Iris tried to repeat what she did in the early afternoon again, but now the bar was just too high and she couldn’t swing her leg over. “Great, that works as well. I don’t want Sabine to be able to get into the kitchen if she is allowed to run free: too many dangers and sharp objects. And I expect you won’t be able to climb the stairs that way either. That sounded like a challenge to Iris, so she hobbled over. She could swing a foot on the lowest step, but couldn’t transfer her weight on it. She could jump on it with two legs though, but the balance was hard with her restricted limbs, and she thought she would probably fall sooner or later. “I guess you’ll just have to watch Sabine that she won’t try that then. At least it is not very fast, so you should be able to stop her before she gets far.

“Thank you for testing once more. I’ll work out something for the legs, and I might also put an extra strip of denim at her back, sewn to the jumpsuit only at the ends, that we could use as a grip. But I know what to do now, so let’s get you out again.” After she was in her own clothes again, Mrs. Fletcher put aside the sewing materials and put an arm around Iris, pulling her close. Together they enjoyed their closeness and chatted further until it was time to go upstairs again. “You know, I don’t even miss watching TV. Sitting here together and talking is so peaceful.” Iris observed, and she also realized that she was fine with going to bed now. At home she always tried to stay up later, but the day had been so busy again, and the quiet time on the couch helped her to slow down and get sleepy, that she obediently went up the stairs. “Go do your evening routine in the bathroom, and I’ll be there in a few minutes.”

When she exited the bathroom, Mrs. Fletcher was already in her room, and explained that the duvet wasn’t dry yet, so she proposed to do the same as the night before. Iris nodded. If she ignored the Carebear motif, the jumpsuit was actually pretty comfortable, and she had slept well the previous night. “OK, undress and hop on the bed then, and I’ll diaper you.” Apparently the woman had already gotten everything she needed while Iris was still in the bathroom, so she quickly went through the routine. When she applied cream to Iris’s sensitive area, that actually felt so nice that she couldn’t help wiggle a bit to feel a bit more. “Iris, NO! I just told you this afternoon that that isn’t part of the diapering. I understand that teenagers get an urge to rub that area now and then, and I am not against that, but I cannot be a part of that.” “I’m sorry Nanny. It was really hard not to just now.” “It’s OK. I am not angry with you. But I need to be very clear about this.”

Then she completed the procedure and Iris could step into the sleepsuit again. When the zipper was all the way up to the top of the hood, Mrs. Fletcher said “Like I told you, I added a D-ring here. Why don’t you wear it with one of those cute little locks tonight, so we can be sure that it works, and it doesn’t bother you at all.” Iris nodded again. She had no need to take off the suit in the night anyway, so she might as well help with this latest test. “Click.” That sent a little shudder down Iris’s spine and caused her heart to beat a little faster. She was surprised about the reaction to the sound, especially since she was expecting it. But the sharp little sound clearly signaled the moment that escape was now impossible.

Iris also noticed that the hood somehow felt a bit tighter, and moved her mittened hands up to explore. “Oh, yes, I also made the hood opening a bit smaller. Now I can be sure that your head is a little extra protected if you bump it again, and it won’t accidentally come down in the night when you toss and turn. If you get hot you can always remove the feet. Now, let me lift you on the bed.” Once again Iris realized that her caretaker always remembered the little things where Iris went wrong, and even though she might not react to it at that moment, always came up with something to prevent it

from happening again. Usually that meant some sort of extra restriction for Iris, but she still preferred it to her mother being angry with her and shouting. Then she was tugged in and the bed side raised. "Do you want the night light again?" Iris thought for a moment, but then replied that it was not necessary anymore. She didn't need to see anything while she was stuck in the bed. Mrs. Fletcher stayed for a few moments longer, and stroked her head again. That was nice. "Remember, I have the baby monitor active, so just call me if you need anything." Then she left, and turned off the light.

Now Iris could finally focus on that itch in her sensitive area. But with her mittens, the suit, the plastic pants and the diaper, she didn't manage to get any rubbing through. She tried to pull her hands into the body of the suit, but the Velcro wrist straps kept her hands firmly in the mittens. Then she was tempted to try to take the suit off, and pulled on the zipper, but the little lock did what it was there for, and she realized that she stood no chance. If she was honest with herself, probably for the best: suppose she could have eventually gotten the suit off, could she put it on again and get the zipper up? If not she would be pretty cold the whole night long. So she tried to ignore her itch and tried to focus on the bike ride that afternoon. That seemed to help, because she soon drifted off. During the night she had to pee twice, and she still couldn't release lying down, but on her knees it worked, and soon after she fell asleep again.

18. Thursday Morning

Iris woke from a buzzing sound, and it suddenly became quite light in the room: Mrs. Fletcher was moving the rolling blinds up. "Good morning Iris, did you sleep well?" "Good morning Mrs. Fletcher" she started to reply, but Mrs. Fletcher said "no, no" and waited for Iris to realize what she did wrong. "Oh yes, good morning Nanny. Yes, I slept well. I still can't release lying down, but it is easier when I kneel. Easier really than going to the bathroom." "And did you feel anything from the padlock?" She hadn't, and actually felt for a moment with her hand if it was still there. "No, nothing. Except for last night: I needed to rub my sensitive area, but dressed like this I couldn't feel anything. I was actually tempted to try and take the suit off, but with the lock I realized that wouldn't work." "Well, in bed you are supposed to sleep... But what if you would have gotten the suit off; the diaper would still be in the way. Unless of course you were thinking of putting your hand in?" "I hadn't thought it through that far, but it was still clean..." "Oh no, you must realize that I can't allow hands inside diapers here, after what I told you about the mess Sabine had made. This time it might have been clean, but perhaps the next time there was only a little bit of pee, all well-absorbed by the diaper, so that should be OK too. And then after, would you go and wash your hands?" "Eh, not while locked in the bed..." "Exactly. So remember, no hands in diapers, ever." "OK."

"Now, let me lift you off the bed." She gave Iris a hug, and said "Don't worry, you did nothing wrong. I'm just pointing out where you might have. Now, let's get you out of the sleeper and the diaper, and then you're off to the shower. I'll get going with Sabine, and we'll see you downstairs." In the shower Iris realized she finally had access to her sweet spot, and made good use of that opportunity. When it ended she couldn't suppress a moan, which caused Mrs. Fletcher to inquire "Everything OK in there?" "Yes Nanny, all's very well." She briefly smiled and then concentrated on her daughter again. While Iris was washing herself she felt a sore spot on her right chest, around the nipple, and it was a bit swollen. But it didn't seem to be a bruise from all the struggling yesterday, so she wasn't sure what it was.

When she was done she picked her clothes for the day and went downstairs to set the breakfast table. The bar was still blocking the kitchen passage, so she had to step over it, but without anything restraining her that was not hard. When the Fletchers arrived, she saw Sabine was already dressed in the jumpsuit they worked on yesterday evening, but her arms and knees were not connected at the

moment. She assumed that Nanny had already prepared her for when she had to go to her bookkeeper later, and trusted the modifications enough to put them into practice already.

When breakfast was done, Iris mentioned the sore spot on her chest, and Mrs. Fletcher asked if she could take a look. So Iris lifted her top. "Oh, yes, I think I see. Serious. I think this is something that will you will have to learn to live with. Your chest is starting to develop – you have entered puberty!" Iris was stunned for a moment "But, it is only on one side. And is it supposed to hurt?" "Oh, sweetie, it is a bit different for everybody, but this is not uncommon. But don't worry, the right side will catch up." Then the news really got through to Iris, and she jumped in the air for joy. This was what she had been waiting for for years now! She felt a bit dumb for not thinking of what it was herself.

"Congratulations. It is always an important milestone for girls. And I'm very happy for you, although personally I think breasts are mostly inconvenient, unless you want to have a baby. And the periods I could do without as well." "Oh, will I soon get my first period now too?" "That will take some time yet; it might be 2 more years, although sometimes if a girl is later in starting puberty, it can go faster. But for now be glad that you don't have to deal with that mess, pain and hormones unbalancing you." "And the sensitivity between my legs?" "That could very well be related." Sabine couldn't follow everything that was said, but of course did see Iris's joy. In the activity chair she couldn't go and hug her friend, but she held out her arms and Iris came to her. Especially when they hugged Iris could notice the chest development of her friend had progressed a lot already, but that didn't matter since she had started as well now. No matter what Nanny said about the downsides, she now officially was no longer a child!

"Now, I need to start preparing for my visit to the bookkeeper. Sabine, you remember the game yesterday, where you played with the straps on? You could move freely in the living room, but your arms and legs were a bit tied. You said you liked that better than being in your chair. Do you want that again when I go, or do you want the chair anyway?" "Yes Mommy, I like the straps better." "OK, we'll do that then. Let me first get you out of the chair." When that was done, she continued "Yesterday evening I have been working on your jumpsuit, and we use that instead of the straps. Let me show you." She buttoned the elbows to her sides, and showed Iris that she added straps around the legs just above the knees, that went around the leg, and came together on the inside, where the ends were sewn together, sticking out towards the other leg an inch or so. There was an eyelet through both ends. Mrs. Fletcher took one of those heart-shaped padlocks and locked the eyelets of both legs together. "I couldn't come up with something that didn't require a lock, so I did it this way for now. Perhaps we'll get a better idea later. And here on the back is the grip I created." Iris saw a vertical strip of denim in the middle of the back that was not attached in the middle, so you could put your hand through and control the wearer. "I see. You already mentioned it yesterday evening. It seems very useful; I remember how well you could control me with the loops when I wore the straps."

"So Sabine, how does that feel?" Sabine tried a bit to move around and reach for things. "My arms don't go so far. But my legs is better." "Are you sure you want this and not the chair." "Yes mama" "OK, have fun then. Iris, you know what to do by now. Make sure you have your phone near you: if there is anything, call me, even if you think I won't be able to help from afar. I'll go upstairs now to get everything I need." And so she did.

"What shall we do today? Do you want to play with dolls, or do a coloring book, or a puzzle, or I can read you a story?" Iris didn't dare suggest making a drawing, after what happened the last time. "Will you be my baby again?" That didn't seem like a good idea either, remembering that she was locked in the tent yesterday by Sabine. "Sorry Sabine. I have to be the grown-up if your mother is not here." Iris wasn't sure if Sabine would understand the reason, and how she would react, but her friend accepted

that it was not possible, decided she liked to do a puzzle again. "OK, I will go upstairs to find a nice puzzle." But that made her wonder if it was a good idea to leave Sabine alone in the living room. On the other hand it didn't seem fair to lock her in the tent when she had just been promised that she didn't need to with the jumpsuit restrictions activated. So she decided to compromise and see if that worked "Sabine, will you wait from me in the tent until I get back? I won't close it." Her friend nodded, took her Bobo into the tent and sat down.

Then Iris went upstairs and searched for the puzzle with the most pieces she could find, because they would work together on it and Mrs. Fletcher might be away for a while. 200 pieces for a puzzle with puppies didn't seem that much, but it would have to do. When she got back down, Sabine was still sitting in her tent, which was a relief for Iris. She was making the same noises which she made before "gghrrhrrgg ... rggrrhrrh ... rgrhrrh", but since she seemed alright and last time there didn't seem to be anything wrong, Iris ignored it and asked Sabine to come out again. "Look, I picked this one. Is that good?" Sabine nodded. "Now where shall we do it. We can sit on the table, or in the tent, or on the floor. Perhaps the dining table is not ideal because you can't reach very far. Oh, perhaps the coffee table is a good idea. Then we can sit on the couch, and you can lean over easier than with a higher table." That seemed a bit too complicated for Sabine to oversee which choice would be best, but she was content to follow Iris to the salon table and sit on the couch with her.

Then Mrs. Fletcher came downstairs with her briefcase and handbag, said her goodbyes to Sabine and told her to do what Iris asked her to, and also gave Iris a kiss on the forehead and told her to be careful. Then she sped out the door. Iris cleared enough of the salon table for the puzzle and they started. They could have found a better thing to do for Sabine: even at the low table her reach was a bit too limited. Iris thought for a moment of releasing one of Sabine's arms, but was too scared of another tantrum, without her mother present, to risk it. But they found a way where Sabine tried to concentrate on the lower part, and Iris just took a piece from her and put it in the puzzle if it was too far away anyway.

After a while Iris had to go to the toilet. When she returned she got an idea, and let Sabine puzzle on her own for a bit longer, while she searched on her phone if it wasn't possible to get a discount at the Oregon Coast Aquarium for a disabled person. But she only found an offer for special needs groups, where the group members paid \$15 and their caregivers could enter for free (maximum of 1 caregiver per 2 group members). Nothing for a single special needs person that she could find. Too bad. But perhaps they could still go if Nanny could get the finances straightened out. For now it was probably best not to mention it to Sabine.

"Iris" "yes" "Igris" Still half in thought, Iris didn't get why Sabine was saying her name, and looked at her. Sabine looked back in triumph and again said "Iris!" Then it dawned on her Sabine was saying the 'r' in her name! "Sabine, you are saying my name with an r!" Iris suddenly remembered Sabine making those weird noises, like 'ggrhgrh'. "Have you been practicing?" Sabine looked even more triumphantly and happy, and explained "I want to be a big gihl" Obviously saying the 'r' was still a bit of a hit-and-miss, but this was a big development. Iris teared up a bit: it was her name that Sabine had been practicing for. "You sneaky girl, practicing on your own and then surprising me like that!" They hugged for a long time, as far as Sabine's restrictions allowed, and then it developed into a tickling match, where of course Iris had the advantage.

Then they sank on the couch, where they just laid for a while, and chatted a bit. Iris ended up lying with her head on Sabine's lap, not unlike how she laid on Mrs. Fletcher's lap on the first evening. Sabine played a bit with her hair "So butiful". 3-syllable words might still be a bit of a challenge, but Iris got the meaning. In elementary school Sabine had had long blonde hair too, but now it was short,

which was probably a lot more convenient, considering how much care Sabine's mother needed to give anyway. After a while they decided to continue with the puzzle. Suddenly Iris needed to go to the bathroom once more, and only just made it in time to prevent wetting herself. When she peed it stung a bit. Could this be one of those disadvantages of her puberty starting, that Nanny talked about? She cleaned up and went back to Sabine and the puzzle.

When they finished it they were just thinking about what to do next when the door opened and Mrs. Fletcher entered. "How are my girls doing?" Sabine showed her proudly the puzzle they had just completed, and her mother complimented them and then unbuttoned her elbows and unlocked her knees. "Have you been a good girl?" Sabine nodded and Iris added that she had behaved very well. "When I went up to get the puzzle, I wasn't sure if I could just leave her alone out free. But we had just promised her that with her arms and legs like that, she wouldn't need to be in the chair or tent, so I asked her to wait in the tent but didn't close it. She was still there when I came back." "I might have closed the tent anyway, because it was only for a moment, but your way was kinder, and if it works it might be better. Let's see for a while how it goes, and hope that if it doesn't the consequences won't be too serious."

Then Iris turned to her friend and excitedly asked her "Say my name". "Iwris" Mrs. Fletcher realized that there had to be something special, but wasn't quite sure what it was about. "Igris" Now she realized it too, and was also overjoyed. "She has been practicing, without saying anything, and I couldn't understand why she was making those weird noises. But she wanted to say my name right, and be a big girl!" Sabine nodded, while Iris once more felt her eyes go a bit wet. "Oh, that is so wonderful. Well done, Sabine, and Iris, I can't thank you enough for stimulating her like this!" Of course they had to all hug and enjoy all the good developments today. "But what about the issue with your finances?" Iris inquired, having somewhat of an ulterior motive. "Well, my bookkeeper is convinced that it is a mistake from the Department of Revenue, and that our original tax record was correct. He's going to get into contact with them and clear it up. So it should all be good, but until I get the confirmation I'll try to keep the spending down. But let me first put some groceries in the kitchen."

When she returned, she asked Sabine if her diaper was messy, and she nodded. So she took the two girls upstairs, where she first dropped off her briefcase in her bedroom, and then went to the changing table with them. "Iris, do you want to practice changing her again, or shall I?" Iris considered for a moment; she wanted to help out, but the smelly bit was not so much fun. Still, she would be helping her friend feel clean again, so she decided that she would do it. "Sabine, would you like me to change you?" When Sabine nodded, she asked her to hop on the changing table, and started doing the same routine Nanny explained to her last time. This time Sabine's mother stayed more in the background, and only spoke if Iris wasn't certain or forgot something. One new thing was doing up the waist strap, but that was a simple plastic buckle that caused her no problems. No lock necessary with the hands out of the way.

Halfway through the procedure though, she suddenly had the urge to pee herself, excused herself and ran off to the bathroom. Mrs. Fletcher didn't want her daughter to keep lying there half-naked, so she took over and was finished by the time Iris returned. But she didn't look happy at all, looking down at the ground and sniffing a bit. "I didn't make it in time, and it started before I managed to pull everything down and sit." she said in a small voice. "Oh honey, I'm so sorry. Did you wait too long?" "No, I went as soon as I felt the need, but I don't know what is wrong today. I have to go even more often than usual, and then I can hardly hold it. And when I let go, it burns a bit. If that is also from starting puberty, it is no fun!" "No, honey, I don't think this has anything to do with your hormones. It sounds like a UTI – a urinary tract infection, or bladder infection."

"But first let us get you out of your wet things. Do you think you can prevent having more accidents if you put on another pair of panties?" Iris realized that Nanny didn't want to say she needed to put on a diaper, but it didn't seem like she had a choice but to admit she needed one: she didn't think the next time she would be able to reach the toilet any quicker than she did now. "It seems like it is getting worse, and if I didn't make it now I'm afraid that might happen again. I think I need a diaper." Ouch, that was not easy to say! "Yes my dear, I think so too. Why don't you take your bottoms off and I will see what you can put on when you are diapered. Sabine, please go in your bed and wait for a moment while I help Iris feel better again." Sabine obeyed, and after her mother closed the bed doors, she went to Iris's room. Iris took off her pants and panties, and started cleaning herself again down there with some wet wipes. Her wet things she folded in such a way that the urine in them didn't touch the floor she put them on.

Mrs. Fletcher came back with a few clothes in red and black, and lifted Iris on the changing table. "First I need to check if you have a temperature." and got a thermometer from the cupboard underneath the table. She also put on latex gloves. Iris opened her mouth. "No, honey, this is a rectal thermometer. They are more precise than the oral ones, so please lie down on your side, facing away from me." Iris hadn't heard of those, and didn't feel much like having something stuck in her behind, but accepted that Nanny knew best, and obeyed anxiously. "Now, this is a bit uncomfortable, but it is not thick and it takes only about 10 seconds. I put a little cream on it so it slides in smoothly. Just relax." Iris tried to, but found it hard. But when Mrs. Fletcher slid it in, it actually wasn't that bad, and before she had time to get used to it the thing started beeping and was pulled out. "Hmm, a round 100F (37.8C). That might be a bit high, but it is not a fever. We need to keep an eye on it. Now please turn on your back. Hands please" Iris looked questioningly at Nanny; last time she had not required it. "You are so sensitive down there at the moment, let's just remove the temptation and prevent involuntary reactions." So Iris just allowed her hands to be put in the Velcro cuffs and she could no longer move them lower than her head. Then Mrs. Fletcher also closed the waist strap, but that was not tight at all. She had been in this position before, in the store diapering station. But that was because it was regulation, while now she was being diapered, and restrained like a toddler without any self-control. And that only hours after she found out she was no longer a child. It just wasn't fair. Her eyes started filling up once more. "Oh, honey, I know it is not fair, but let's just make the best of it. Once you are ready you'll feel better, and not worry anymore if you can make it to the bathroom in time. You know, many women get a UTI sooner or later, and they all have the same problem. And you'd be surprised how many mature women use diapers occasionally: because of a UTI, for a long car trip if they don't want to use gas station toilets, on airline flights, under Halloween costumes, and so on. That you need a diaper this time is because of a medical condition, and has nothing to do with being a child, an adult, or an old crone."

Iris gave a wan smile "Thank you" and tried to relax and help to make it go as fast as possible. It actually went even faster than on her bed at night, since the changing table was more convenient, and soon her waist and wrist straps were released and she could stand up again. Mrs. Fletcher carefully removed the latex gloves and discarded them. "Now it is important that you stay warm, so I chose this black body with a turtle neck and these red corduroy overalls. Let me take off your top. Now step into the body." This seemed a bit strange to Iris: bodies you normally put on over your head and closed the snaps in the crotch. But this one had short legs, and didn't open in the crotch. Mrs. Fletcher closed it with a zipper up the back and through the turtle neck. Then she held up the overalls and Iris stepped into them as well. They were pulled up, and were closed around the waist. Unlike some of the other overalls, these didn't go up all the way to the armpits, but only up to where the ribs started, and closed with a zipper on the left side, and a buckle over it. It was a bit tighter than the denim pooh bear overalls she wore on the first day, after she was vomited on, so perhaps these hadn't fit Sabine for a longer time.

Then Mrs. Fletcher put the straps over her shoulders, and Iris got the impression that the back part went up pretty high, and the straps split fairly close to her neck. The bib might also be a bit higher than with normal overalls, but the differences were minor. The straps ended in black plastic buckles that loudly snapped to their counterparts on the bib. Then Mrs. Fletcher took a ring of keys out of her pocket and proceeded to twist them in little keyholes in the buckles on the straps and over the waist zipper. Again Iris looked questioningly at Nanny. “Let’s give a good example to Sabine: her clothes should always be locked. And it is not as if you have any need to take them off. And apart from that I am not quite convinced yet that you would not put your hands in your diaper if you got another itch down there.” The overalls looked plain red, except on the bib there was a big Hello Kitty face. It combined well with the black body, perhaps better called a short unitard, and the black buckles almost disappeared. The sleeves of the unitard were a bit strange, in that they had a separate hole for the thumb, and partly covered her hands. (See Figure 51 and Figure 52) Apart from the face on the bib the set wasn’t especially childish. Well, except of course that the buckles were locking...



Figure 51 Hello Kitty bib



Figure 52 Black short unitard

Iris automatically tried to see if she could still undo the buckles at the bib, like a good product tester should, but Mrs. Fletcher intercepted her hands and said “Not now” and aimed a meaningful glance towards Sabine. Iris concluded she didn’t want her to set a bad example for Sabine by trying to escape her clothes, so the product testing should only be done without her present. “Now, there are a few more details we need to go over; I’m afraid some of them you will not like. First, It could be that you sitting on the cold, wet ground yesterday morning has given the bacteria that cause the infection a better chance. So you see why I was hesitant to let you play outside without waterproof clothes, and I am sorry I didn’t make you.”

“Second, it is best too pee as often as you can, to get rid of the bacteria in your bladder. This also means that you’ll need frequent diaper changes to remove the bacteria that end up in there. And you’ll need to drink lots of water to keep you well-hydrated and flush your bladder.”

“Third, you’ll need to see a doctor as soon as possible: you might need antibiotics to prevent it from spreading, like to your kidneys. And we need to ask your mother to take you: she knows your doctor, your medical history, and apart from that she is the one responsible for you in the end. So we’ll need to call her as soon as possible, and see if you can see the doctor before the weekend.”

This was a lot for Iris to take in. “So it might be my own fault that I have this UTI thing now?” “I think that is putting it too strongly. But yes, you did something that was not so smart, and perhaps that has contributed to your current state. But it might just as well have happened anyway.” “And now I give you all this extra work by needing to change me all the time?” “Well, you’ve helped me so much in the last few days that I’ll be glad to do it for you, but perhaps I can teach you how to change yourself after a while. But for now I need to take your temperature and check how much you pee, and how smelly it

is, anyway, so today I will do it.” “I wish we didn’t have to tell my mother, but I believe we have to. I guess I should call her then. If only to explain that it wasn’t your fault: I really don’t want her to stop trusting you with me!” “Oh sweetie, that is so nice of you, to think of that with all that is happening! But I’m sure your mother will understand.” “I hope so. But do I also need to wear a diaper to the doctor?” “Let’s not worry about that yet. We don’t know how you will be tomorrow, so let’s first see how it goes, and deal with that when we need to.”

“OK, now that has been taken care of, let’s not dwell on what we can’t change, and rejoice about the positive things that happened today: we have things to celebrate! Iris, why don’t I show you how to open Sabine’s bed; it could be useful if you would be able to put her to bed or get her out.” Iris was still with her mind on her condition, and didn’t feel like celebrating anything. “Earth to Iris, do you receive me?” “Oops, sorry, I’m coming” At least this was something she could help with, so she let Mrs. Fletcher demonstrate how you had to put a finger in each of the two holes in the door, and pull them towards each other to unlock the door. Then you could use the hole in the middle of the double doors to fold them aside. “There is one more security feature, but I don’t often use it. This beam here can be put across the doors to strengthen the construction further. It slides into these brackets, and then you push the pins to lock it in place. Now try to pull out the pins and lift the bar out of the brackets.” It wasn’t hard, and after a few times Iris was sure she could manage it on her own. From the outside, that is; it was also very clear to her that you couldn’t reach the holes and the pins from the inside.

Sabine was waiting inside impatiently to be let out, and when they did she immediately hugged Iris. “You awre ill?” She clearly had been able to follow the conversation a bit. “Yes, but not so bad. But I will be wearing diapers for the coming days, just like you. Until I’m better.” Iris noticed that practicing with the bed helped her to put the negative feelings a bit behind her, and she could already see a silver lining: Sabine would like to have someone to share her situation with. “OK, you get betteh soon” Then they followed Mrs. Fletcher down the stairs, hand in hand.

19. Plans and Play

During lunch Mrs. Fletcher announced she had a little surprise at the end, so the girls should perhaps eat a little less than usual. This might have been a mistake, because immediately they stopped eating and started demanding the surprise. She noticed that putting Iris in diaper and Sabine’s clothes had caused an instant transformation in her: gone was the girl striving so hard to be mature, and it was replaced by a child that was relaxed and had fun. In this case she even seemed to want to rival Sabine’s impulsiveness, because she jumped up and said “I’ll get it” and moved towards the kitchen. “Iris, come back now. You need to first finish your plate, and I’ll decide when it is time to share my surprise with you!” Iris returned with her head down, half ashamed and half pouting, and she ate the rest of her sandwich. Sabine took her cue from her, and followed suit. Then Mrs. Fletcher went to the kitchen and retrieved a mini cake from the fridge, with strawberries on top, and chocolate sprinkles. That made both girls cheer.

“One piece for Iris, who started puberty today. Hip, Hip, Hoorah. One piece for Sabine, who learned to say the letter ‘r’ today. Hip, Hip, Hoorah. And one piece for me, for getting the finances in order again.” And the girls added “Hip, Hip, Hoorah.” “Sabine, do you want to try and eat it with a spoon?” “Yes, please” So Mrs. Fletcher went into the kitchen and brought back a spoon with an extra thick handle, and also a large glass of water for Iris. Then she first put the bib jacket on Sabine, and then gave her the spoon and the cake on the tray of her activity chair. Even with the spoon it was challenging for Sabine to get everything in, but she managed most, and Mrs. Fletcher fed her a few of the larger pieces from where they landed on the bib. “And now it is naptime.” But Sabine, perhaps a bit on a sugar high

from the cake, protested loudly and tried to prevent her mother from getting her out of the chair. This was apparently nothing new, and her mother just sat down on the chair next to her, and calmed her down with soft talking and stroking. After a few minutes Sabine gave up her resistance, and went upstairs with her mother docilely.

Iris took advantage of the quiet moment by getting her phone out and checking her messages and friends' pages. Then she remembered she would have to call her mother, and realizing Nanny would not be letting that go, she decided she might as well bite the bullet and phoned her home. Her mother was surprised to hear from her, and after the usual how-are-you-doing and such, Iris told her about her toilet problems and that Mrs. Fletcher suspected it was a UTI. She even admitted wearing a diaper again after the little accident, knowing her mother was going to hear anyway. Then she stressed that it wasn't Mrs. Fletcher's fault, but her mother didn't see why there would be anyone to blame, and so Iris had to admit that she got herself wet and cold in the garden the morning before, although Mrs. Fletcher warned her to stay dry, but that it was an accident with Sabine's leash.

"Don't you think it's time to ..." Mrs. Fletcher started when she came down, saw Iris already on the phone, and continued softly "oh sorry, you are already calling her." Iris nodded, and then continued that Mrs. Fletcher thought that she should see a doctor, preferably before the weekend, so her mother promised to call the family doctor and see if she could make an appointment for tomorrow. She'd call Imogen later with the details. Her mother did add that she was sorry for Iris and hoped she would get better soon, but in the meantime she should take good care of herself and stay warm. Then the obligated 'love you's and Iris disconnected. Then she reported what was said to Nanny.

"Thank you for keeping me informed, and for being so responsible to make the call yourself. I hadn't expected it." "Well, I knew you were going to make me anyway..." "Yes, that's true. Although I would not have put it like 'making you do it'. But now I think you should have a nap too. You're not well, and some extra rest will help you recover quicker. And finish your water." "But I'm not used to sleeping during the day, and I am not sleepy." "I understand, but let's try anyway." "Could I at least have my phone with me?" "I would really rather you'd try to sleep. But you know what, I'll keep listening to you on the baby monitor, and if you are not asleep within half an hour I'll come and get you. How is that?" Again Mrs. Fletcher managed to come up with a compromise Iris couldn't really refuse, so she emptied her glass, let herself be taken upstairs, and changed into her grumpy bear suit. "I think I'll use the little lock again, so you won't be tempted to mess with your suit if you are not sleepy anyway." Click. "Now let's get you in bed. No, don't jump. Let me lift you into bed." So she did, she put the sheet over Iris, closed the railing, and lowered the blinds. Then she stood at the head end for a while, stroking Iris's head. "Thank you Nanny, for taking such good care of me." That sounded quite sleepy already, and Mrs. Fletcher soon after softly said "sleep well" softly and left quietly. When she arrived downstairs, she could hear on the baby monitor from Iris's breathing that she was already asleep.

A while later Iris woke up, and was disoriented because of the unusual time she was in bed. She needed to pee, and this time it worked lying down. It hurt quite a bit again, and she assumed it was the bladder infection that made it easier to let go. Now that she was awake again, she didn't feel sleepy anymore, or particularly ill, except for the painful peeing. She assumed she was supposed to stay in bed until Nanny got her out, but lying down again soon got boring, and she started looking for things to do. She reached for the little padlock, not to try to escape, but more like an assurance that she was still safe and there was no temptation. Then she tried the two grips that Mrs. Fletcher used to move the railing. She knew she had no chance to open the railing, with the openings out of reach, but she was just curious if she could feel any leeway when unblocking the sliding mechanism. She did, but of course it didn't go down. "I guess someone is awake again" Mrs. Fletcher said when she came in. "Oh, I wasn't trying to escape, just bored and trying out the sliding mechanism." "OK, I believe you" Iris thought that

was just the thing parents said when they weren't sure if you were being truthful. "Sabine is already downstairs again, but I let you sleep for as long as you needed." "But I surely didn't sleep for more than half an hour?" "Actually it was close to two hours. Trust your body to know what it needs."

"Now, let me raise the blinds again, and get you out. How are you feeling?" "I feel normal, only the peeing hurts. I did manage to release lying down for the first time." "OK, good to hear. It is nice if you don't have to get up every time you need to pee. It might be harder again once your UTI stops interfering with your bladder control." Then she opened the railing and got Iris out. "We need to change your diaper and take your temperature again, so let's go next door. Bring your clothes along." So Iris ended up on the changing table once more, and because of her unitard she had to be fully undressed, so Nanny put a towel over her torso to keep her from cooling off too much. "Hmm, I think I might need to find you something else to wear underneath the overalls, so you don't have to get all naked every diaper change. But first let's clean you up."

She put on latex gloves again strapped Iris to the table, and removed the old diaper. Then it was temperature time again. "You can stay in that position for the thermometer if you can move your feet close to your behind and spread them a bit. Nice, your temperature is normal. Now let's put a fresh diaper on you. Since we are often changing them, you don't really need Sabine's thick ones, so let's get you in one of the cotton backed ones. I bought a new pack at the store, and look, I got some fun tape with animals on it to make sure the tapes won't get loose." She tore off a generous strip of tape and put it on the front of the diaper. "So, all done. And you don't need diaper pants over them. While Sabine is not here, would you like to test the new waist strap?" So Iris tried to roll from side to side, and even though the strap was not tight, it prevented her effectively from rolling off the table. Her hands didn't come loose either, so she could only kick her legs around, but that did no harm.

"It all seems pretty safe." Iris concluded. "OK, thanks. Now let me cover you and then I'll find another bodysuit." Soon she came back with a blue bodysuit with short legs, which she opened with a zip through the crotch. She released Iris from the changing table and pulled the suit over her head and down. Then she closed the zipper again. Where it ended was an extra strip of material that went over the zipper pull and buttoned at the other side. Then she was put into the red overalls again, and all three buckles were locked. Iris was used to being dressed by now, and since there were always things she could not do or undo, it was easiest to let Nanny do all of it, and just relax.

"Nanny, I have been thinking about the Oregon Coast Aquarium." "Well, like I said, we need to be careful with money now, and it is just a bit much for one outing. But I have been thinking of some other possibilities that we could have fun with, that are free or at least cheaper." "But what if it was only \$30 for the Aquarium?" "That would make it possible, I guess. But we've seen the prices, so what can we do?" "Well, I found a special offer online for groups of special needs people, where you pay only \$15 per person, and the caregivers are free as long as there are at least twice as many paying people." "But one special needs hardly makes a group, and then you and I would still be paying full price." "I was thinking, if I need to wear diapers anyway, and Sabine's clothes, perhaps I could pass as special needs as well? Then we would pay \$15 for Sabine and me, and nothing for you. In the store everyone seemed to think I was special needs anyway." "Wow, you must really want to go if you are willing to do that. And it wouldn't bother you that we were committing fraud?" "I think it does, a bit, but not enough if it is the only way we can go. And it is only a partly a lie." "If we would do that, and I repeat IF, you will be treated the same as Sabine all day long. There would be no way for you to quit if you didn't like it anymore, and I won't be asking and explaining. I would just tell you and do whatever needs to be done. And apart from that, wouldn't you be afraid that someone would recognize you?" "I thought perhaps you could put a hat on me, like Sabine had when we met at the flea market. I didn't even recognize my old best friend until she started calling my name!" "I'm impressed by how well you

thought this through, and I will give it serious consideration. But I need a bit of time to think it through. And apart from that we will need to watch how your health is doing. So we can't decide before you've been to the doctor." "OK, I understand and I'll try to be patient. Thank you for listening and taking it serious."

Then they went downstairs, where Sabine was playing quietly in her tent, but as soon as they appeared, she came over to the entrance, eager to be let out. Her mother opened the tent, took the girls over to the couch, and with an arm around each one, sat on the couch. "Girls, I'm not sure what we shall do this afternoon. Before I was thinking about taking a nature walk, but there are supposed to be a few showers this afternoon, and with Iris's health, I think we had better stay at home. But as long as it is dry we could also spend some time in the garden. Inside we could for instance do a board game? It would be nice if I could have some time for rounding off the paperwork and doing another load of laundry, but that shouldn't be too hard. In fact, let me put in a load right now, while you think what you want to do."

When she came back the girls decided they wanted to play in the garden again. "OK, we can do that as it probably won't start raining for another hour or so. I will put down a vinyl blanket within Sabine's reach so you can sit somewhere and stay clean. Iris, can I trust you to not get grass stains on your overalls this time?" "Yes Nanny, I will be careful." "And try not to exert yourself too much; your body needs energy to heal too. Will you warn me if you feel feverish or pain somewhere?" "Yes, I will" Iris promised, though she seemed more eager to get out and play than to listen carefully. "Let me get both of you a coat." When she came back from upstairs, she had a yellow and a multi-colored coat in her hands. The yellow one was for Iris; it was the one they decided against for the bike ride yesterday. (see Figure 48) "Let's keep you warm today, and you won't immediately get soaked when it starts raining earlier than expected." She gave the open jacket to Iris, to let her put it on herself.



Figure 53 Sabine's over-the-head jacket

The other jacket she pulled over Sabine's head and then closed the zipper that ran down halfway the front. Below that was a big pouch – Iris suspected that would be sewn closed again. Then Mrs. Fletcher took a strap that hung down from the front, pulled it through Sabine's legs and clicked it into a buckle at the back. Without opening the strap the jacket couldn't be pulled over the head anymore. (see Figure 53) In the meantime Iris had put on her jacket, zipped it up, and closed the 3 buckles in front. Then Mrs. Fletcher locked the buckles like she did earlier with her overalls, without asking. "I'm sorry if it is a bit warm, but better than too cold, especially today."

Then they went outside, and Mrs. Fletcher got the harness and cable from the shed, put it on Sabine, and connected it to the ring in the center of the garden. Once more Sabine was limited to a 15 foot (5 m) radius. Iris found a garden bowling set in the shed, which seemed to meet the requirements: no risk of falling on the grass, and not too strenuous. The grass was not very smooth though, so it was hard to be precise, but they didn't mind and soon had a lot of fun. Then they tried juggling with the pins, which neither was any good at, and ended up chasing each other though the garden, where Iris played fair by staying within Sabine's reach. Their excited voices drew Mrs. Fletcher away from her paperwork at the dining table, and she watched the girls for a while having fun. Then she called Iris over.

"Let me see how you are" and she felt Iris's forehead. "I think you are spending a bit too much energy. Why don't you take a break here in the swing hammock while I play with Sabine for a while." Iris didn't

feel much like stopping their play, but she did feel a bit tired and flushed, so she tried to get into the hammock (see Figure 40 Sabine's swing hammock). Which wasn't that easy, but with Nanny holding it stable she was in it quickly. "You're not used to a hammock, are you?" Iris confirmed that she had not been in one before. "Perhaps it is safest to use the harness then." and Iris had to put her arms through the straps, and soon was secured. The buckle didn't seem to be locking. It was actually very nice, hanging back like on a beach chair, but also being able to swing front to back and a little side to side. Then Mrs. Fletcher came back with a sippy cup. "You need to drink a lot today, so please drink this up. You can't reach the table, so you have to keep it with you. Therefore I put it in a sippy cup to prevent spilling. I hope you don't mind. Oh, and don't forget to pee as often as you can."

Iris didn't really mind the sippy cup: it seemed easier than trying to hold a glass the whole time, especially while swinging. Peeing was not her favorite activity at the moment, since it hurt, but she tried to, and the swinging actually made it quite easy to let go. It was nice to relax for a bit, but also a bit boring, so she tried exploring the harness buckle, while trying to turn the swing in such a way that the others wouldn't be able to see. It seemed like a regular harness buckle, but simply pressing it didn't work. Her position in the hammock made it hard to look at it, and it wasn't so easy to reach either, with the harness holding her reclined. After a few tries she gave up, and realized she was stuck once more. Then there were the buckles on the jacket, which looked the same as those on her overalls. They were closed with the little plastic key she had seen on the keyring, when she got Sabine out of her clothes for diapering. When unlocked it worked like a side-release buckle, but with the key turned the side buttons were blocked. It seemed simple but effective. Iris tried without much hope if she could turn the keyhole with a nail, and to her surprise she managed to turn it a bit. But then the resistance was a bit higher, and she stopped before tearing her fingernail.

Looking at the others again, it was clear that Nanny had a lot of experience entertaining Sabine, and knew how to challenge her without frustrating her. Iris had just slept for two hours, so she wasn't sleepy, but the swaying motion, the forced inactivity, and watching the others soon brought her in such a relaxed state that she startled when suddenly Mrs. Fletcher stood next to her again and exclaimed that she hadn't touched her drink yet. Iris guiltily reached for the cup and explained that she had forgotten all about it. "Well, start drinking now then. If you haven't finished it in the next half hour I might need to ask Sabine to give you a bottle again." That was most likely a joke, but Iris started drinking anyway. "Come, we need to go inside before it starts to rain" and she did something to the harness buckle to open it.

When Iris was inside, Mrs. Fletcher returned to clear up the used toys and release Sabine from her leash. Inside she took the jackets off the girls. When she opened the buckles for Iris, she paused very briefly when she unlocked the buckle that Iris had fiddled with, but didn't say anything. Then she installed Sabine in her activity chair, without the tray, and put it low enough for her daughter to easily reach the table. "Iris, will you come up with me to find a board game to play?" So Iris followed her upstairs. "Did you wet your diaper already?" "Once in the hammock. It is a bit hard to do it all the time because it hurts, but I am trying." "Good girl. Now about the jacket. I asked you before not to try and open your clothes with Sabine present." "Yes, you did. But you put me in the hammock without anything to do, and you kept Sabine busy, and I turned the swing so she couldn't really see me." "Well, actually I did, but I am sure Sabine didn't. Still, don't do it again. I don't want to take extra measures to stop you." "OK, I won't." Extra measures? Iris wasn't sure she wanted to find out, but it would probably be more restrictions. And what was the harm if Sabine didn't see? Perhaps Nanny was a bit too worried after what she had told about Sabine and her diaper content. But the whole time Iris was here Sabine hadn't tried anything like taking off or getting into her clothes.

"We could do Yahtzee, if we help Sabine a bit, or Candyland. 'Topper takes a trip' is nice too, but that is more for two players. What do you think?" "What is this, Busytown? That looks fun too, but I don't know it." "Oh, that is a cooperative game, where you work together instead of trying to compete. So I thought it would not make Sabine frustrated. But it has a 6 foot (1.8m) playing board, meaning Sabine cannot reach most of it from her chair, so we haven't played it much." "I don't know if this is a good idea, but could we perhaps play with Sabine unrestricted? With the two of us, and her in the jumpsuit with the grip on her back, I'm confident that we can handle a tantrum. Then we can just play on the ground." "You know, I think that could work. Thanks for the suggestion. I'm so focused on keeping Sabine and you safe all the time that I don't always consider when it is necessary, and when it isn't. Let's try it. But if there is a tantrum, please leave it to me. You are probably not quite so strong as normal today, and I don't want you to get hurt." Iris nodded, and happily went downstairs with Nanny to tell Sabine the good news.

When Iris told her friend, she wasn't as enthusiastic as she expected. "But I don't want to hurt you. If I get angry." "That is very sweet, but together we can handle a tantrum." And when Sabine was out of the chair, Iris said "here, let me show you." She grabbed the grip at the back of Sabine's jumpsuit, and asked her to try and touch her. With the grip she could keep Sabine facing away from her, and then her arms could not reach her. If Sabine pulled hard to one side, Iris just moved along. Only when Sabine lowered her arms she could reach behind her and touch Iris. "Well done. But you couldn't hurt me much that way." Sabine now understood, and was very proud that she could play without restraints.

Soon they were fully into the game and racing to reach picnic island before the pigs ate all the food, and calling out "I found it!" regularly. Within half an hour they finished the game and had saved the picnic. Then Mrs. Fletcher asked Iris how she was doing with her water. Oops, that was still on the table – she had forgotten all about it while the game was in progress. "Girls, you clear up the game." Mrs. Fletcher went into the kitchen, searched for a bit in some cupboards, got something from the fridge, and also had the tap running for a bit. Then she came back with an actual baby bottle filled with milk. "Sabine, would you like to give Iris this bottle? She needs to drink a lot today." "Yes mommy, I like to." Then she grabbed Iris by the back of her overalls and led her gently to the tent, where she used the same position as yesterday to give Iris the bottle.

Iris was stunned at first that Mrs. Fletcher actually had carried out her threat, and that she had dug up an real baby bottle with a nipple. But she also remembered how caring Sabine could be, and it didn't seem she could do much about it anyway: Sabine's strong grip on the back straps seemed quite as effective as the grip on the jumpsuit. Then she was lying on her back with her head in Sabine's lap and docilely opened her mouth for the bottle. It was strange to drink from the nipple, but it was also easy, and the milk was not too cold. Apparently Nanny warmed it up a bit. But in contrast to the little bit of milk she had yesterday, this was a big bottle full of milk, and after drinking for a while Iris felt full and didn't want to finish all of it. "Mommy, I don't want to drink anymore" "Iris, you need to drink it all." So Sabine put the bottle against her lips again, and Iris opened up. She definitely didn't want to see how far Sabine would go to force her. When she had finished, Sabine tried to burp her, like her mother suggested yesterday, and this time it was easier for her since her arms were not restricted. To her surprise, Iris actually let out a burp. That was a lot of milk! She had to think back of when they were together at elementary school, and Sabine was like a big sister for her. Apparently her friend still liked taking care of her. Sabine was already holding her in her arms for the burping, and so Iris embraced her back and thanked her for taking care of her. "Now Iris needs to go potty" Nanny came again, so she tried, but it was too weird to let go while hugging her friend, so she sat on her knees by herself, and then managed to produce a little.

She used that to end the baby play, and left the tent. Sabine followed her. "Mommy, can we play outside?" "Honey, it is raining now." Sabine shrugged and simply said "giwraffe". Obviously she wasn't scared of a little rain if she could wear her new suit. "And Iris is a bit ill, so she should not get wet at all." After a moment of consideration, Sabine asked Iris "You want to be giwraffe now?" Iris realized how generous an offer that was, with Sabine being so proud of her new suit. But on the other hand Iris felt intimidated by the suit, and not sure she wanted to be completely enveloped in it. Sabine's mother asked "But then you would need to wear your old suit, Sabine, and the boots pinch a bit." Sabine shrugged once more, as if to say that she couldn't be bothered by such minor details. Iris wasn't sure, and looked at Mrs. Fletcher, but she just looked back, and obviously left the decision to Iris. In the end Iris couldn't disappoint her friend, nodded to Nanny, and thanked her friend for the generous offer.

So Mrs. Fletcher disappeared up the stairs again, apparently not too concerned to leave Sabine unrestrained alone with Iris for a short while. She came back with the familiar suits, and put on a long, clear rain coat herself to get the harness and cable from the shed once more. Then she started dressing Sabine first. Apart from the pink coveralls (see Figure 42) there were also pink mittens, although not as long and sturdy of those with the giraffe suit. And there was also a separate rain hood that was first pulled over Sabine's head, and had fabric that extended over her shoulders, chest and back. There was some Velcro in the back that made it fit better around her lower head and neck. In front the face was mostly open, with a bit of clear plastic extending from the top to keep most rain off her face. When the mittens were on too, the coveralls followed, covering the ends of the mittens and the extended fabric of the hood. Finally the boots, the harness and the cable, which Mrs. Fletcher for now tied around a table leg.

Then the moment had come that Iris dreaded. The gloves went on first, and when the straps were buttoned around her wrists, she felt that she wouldn't be able to get them off herself: even though the mittens were big on her, the straps made them fit closely around her wrists, and the sturdy fabric stopped her from doing much with her hands. Next were the overalls, and the sound of the buckles snapping closed at her shoulders sounded thunderous, so close to her ears. Another layer she would not be able to take off herself. They were really big on her, and the crotch hung close to her knees, but when Mrs. Fletcher pulled it up and tightened the waist band, it was doable. Next were the boots, which were also several sizes too big, but when they zipped closed around her ankles they would at least not fall off. Nor of course could she take them off herself. When Mrs. Fletcher pulled the overalls pants up, and attached the extra flap on them to the boots, they bulged over the boots, but were not really in the way, so even though the suit was way too big, it wasn't actually hampering her. That is, no more than it was meant to.

Finally it was time for the jacket with the hood. Iris didn't quite know why it was the scariest part of the suit for her; her grumpy bear sleepsuit had a hood too, and after the latest modification she couldn't take that one off herself either, but the fact that it also covered part of her face, and the sturdy material, made it feel different. But she had agreed to wear it, so she only hesitated slightly before putting her mittened hands in the arms. The sleeves were so long that her hands hardly reached the ends. After it went over her shoulders, the hood was pulled over her head, and the top half of her face was now covered with clear plastic. She also felt the removable gauze still covering her nose and mouth, so she mentioned that to Nanny. But Mrs. Fletcher only replied with 'Yes?', making clear she didn't see it as a problem. Iris couldn't really think of a good argument why it should be removed, so she let it go. Then the zipper guard was straightened and Nanny was very careful of moving her hair out of the way before pulling the zip down, and carefully closing the Velcro flap over it. The horizontal zip connecting overalls and jacket was a bit hard to do, with the jacket being so long on her, but once that was closed too there were little bulges of excess material everywhere, but nothing seriously in the

way. Nanny didn't forget to connect both zipper pulls to the snap hook, and Iris wondered if that was her own fault, since she had reminded her of it when dressing Sabine in it for the first time. Finally the Velcro straps around the jacket wrists were done up, and the sleeves no longer covered much of Iris's hands. Sabine had watched everything closely; apparently she found it interesting how the suit was put on someone else.

Now she was fully in, Iris took stock of her feelings. At least she didn't feel panic or a great need to get out NOW. Her heart was racing a bit, but she wasn't sure of that was only from fear or also excitement. Being so fully enveloped also felt safe, and she could relate to Sabine not being bothered about rain in this. Like in the closed play tent, the outside world felt a little further away; as if it couldn't hurt her while in this armor. In the meantime Mrs. Fletcher had untied Sabine's cable again, let Sabine go in front while holding the cable as a leash, grabbed Iris's hand and took the both outside. Once Sabine's cable was connected, she said "have fun" and went indoors again. It was raining steadily, but not very hard, and Iris saw the rain slide off her suit harmlessly. The plastic covering her eyes might have been treated against condensation, because it didn't fog up, and was apparently constructed in such a way that the rain water didn't run straight into her nose and mouth, but mostly to the sides. Of course the thick fabric hampered her movements slightly, and the mittens limited her hands, but for the rest it was actually nice, and for the first time she thought she could understand why Sabine had chosen it.

Iris thought the bowling set wasn't very useful in this weather, but that the hopper balls could be great fun, and Sabine agreed. So she went to the shed to get them. Getting the shed open proved a lot harder with her mittens on, but she managed and got the balls out. Soon they were bouncing around again, and Iris realized she didn't have to be careful to fall off: she couldn't get wet, and any dirt would wash right off. How liberating! By now the rain had formed puddles in the grass, and both girls found it hilarious to bounce the balls in them as hard as they could, splashing water all around. When Sabine fell off her ball, she started rolling around over the ground, and that seemed fun too, so Iris joined her and rolled for a bit with their arms around each other, but soon they got tangled in the cable and they had to figure out how to unravel the knot of limbs and cable. For a moment they just lay there, catching their breaths and enjoying each other's company.

Then it started to pour down, but Iris didn't mind. She didn't feel any water or cold entering her armor, so she laughed out loud at the weather. Then they were jumping on their balls again, into the biggest puddles. Gradually the rain lessened, and after a while Mrs. Fletcher appeared again in her rain coat, and told them that it was getting time for dinner, so they needed to come in. The girls only protested lightly; they were getting a bit tired, and without the rain it wasn't quite as much fun. "Iris, you put the balls away again while I release Sabine. Oh girls, just look at you, all covered in mud and grass." It may have sounded like a complaint, but Iris could hear that Mrs. Fletcher was just happy they had so much fun. Before they entered the house though, Mrs. Fletcher got out the garden hose and flushed away most of the dirt. Then their suits were roughly dried with an old towel, and only then they could enter the house. But only in the first part of the kitchen, where they were stripped of their suits. Iris felt so elated with the fun they had that she said "I want a suit like that too!", but then toned it down "well, of course without everything locking or the decorations. Sabine, you have a very lovely suit, and I can see why you chose it. Thank you very much for lending it to me."

Sabine had not been quite as well protected, and at several places there were wet spots on her jumpsuit, but they were not so big, and both Fletchers ignored them. Mrs. Fletcher gave Iris the sippy cup with water again, and said she should try to drink a bit more. Coming out of the rain Iris didn't feel thirsty, but tried a bit anyway, and noticed that all the excitement and laughing had dried her out a bit anyway, so she managed to swallow a fair bit. And then she could fill her diaper a bit more, too. Funny how she had not worried at all about looking childish, even though she was in a diaper and hello kitty

overalls, and even considered wanting a strange rain suit with giraffe decorations. As long as it was inside the Fletcher house or garden she felt it didn't matter, and it might even have brought her closer to Sabine than without.

In the meantime Sabine was brought to the tent and zipped in, and then Mrs. Fletcher came to get her for another diaper change. Seeing the water level in the cup, she said "good girl" and took her hand to take her upstairs. In Sabine's room Iris's overalls were taken off, but not the bodysuit, since this one opened in the crotch. "How do you like these clothes?" "The body is a bit blah, a bit clinical, but the overalls are quite soft and comfortable. I like them." And then hastily added "Except the decoration on the bib, of course." That made Nanny smile a bit, and she continued "I got the impression at first that you didn't like the rain suit, and perhaps was even a bit afraid of it. But when you came out of the rain you said you wanted one yourself?" "Yes, from the outside it seemed scary, but once I was in it I felt really safe, as if it was a suit of armor protecting me, and once in the rain it was so much fun to get as wet and dirty as I liked without needing to be careful. I can't remember ever having had so much fun. So I can understand now why Sabine chose it." "Thank you, that is most interesting."

Iris's temperature was 100.5F (38.1C), which was officially a fever, but she had just exerted herself, so Mrs. Fletcher wasn't worried. Once everything was clean and fresh, and she was dressed again in the overalls, Mrs. Fletcher asked her how she managed to half open the locking buckle on her jacket. (see Figure 27 Key-locking buckle) "Well, there is this round bit of plastic that turns around with the key, and if I put my nail in the slit for the key, and press down on the circle, I can rotate it a bit without the key." she demonstrated on the buckle over the zip on her side. This one seemed to have slightly less resistance, and she managed to turn it the full 90 degrees, and open the buckle. "You know, you are quite the little escape artist. Thank you for demonstrating. Good to know. Those magnetic buckles, like on the rain overalls, might be safer. You don't happen to be able to pick padlocks as well, I hope?" "I don't think so. I have never tried, and wouldn't I need a pick or something for that anyway?"

When they got down again, Mrs. Fletcher explained that she had already prepared for dinner, but needed some 15 minutes to cook. Then she asked Iris if she should already put Sabine in the activity chair, leave her alone in the tent, or limit her elbows and knees for a bit, since while cooking she might not be able to react fast enough if there would be a tantrum. Iris preferred the latter, and thought Sabine would too, so Mrs. Fletcher got her out of the tent and activated the restrictions on the jumpsuit. Sabine did not seem to mind; Iris assumed she realized that it meant more freedom for her to move around. In the end they decided just to hang on the couch and talk a bit, since there was not much time before dinner was ready.

The meal itself was uneventful, and after there was just time for one more game of Busytown before it was Sabine's bed time. When both went upstairs, Iris had a bit of time to check her phone, and discovered a missed call from her father. She must have been in the garden in the rain when he called. That was disappointing, but there was nothing she could do about it now. At least it wasn't so long anymore before he would be back home again; only 6 more days. By then her UTI should hopefully have gone away too. She always looked forward to spending time with him, but this time that also meant she had to leave the Fletchers, like they agreed upon, and that thought made her really sad. But it was still 5 days away, so she decided to not dwell on that too much for now. She quickly started to look at what her friends posted today, but there was nothing new since the last time she checked. Then she thought she should make herself useful again, and cleared the table and loaded the dishwasher. And while she was being all mature and responsible, she also drank more water and wet her diaper. Knowing that especially after the first few times the diaper hardly felt any different, she didn't feel the urge to keep it clean for as long as she could, but of course the pain made it a bit harder to go. Although peeing a little at the time, the pain was over sooner too.

When Mrs. Fletcher joined her again, she brought the paw-like leather mittens with her that they bought two days ago. (see Figure 33 Fist mittens with paws) “Here is one more item that I would like you to test. Not to find out if you can escape from them, because I believe they are pretty secure, but because of what Mark mentioned. He said that they might be less comfortable when worn longer because the wearer’s hands are constantly in a fist. So I wondered if you would wear them for me until bedtime?” Iris joked “If you want to know how they feel, shouldn’t you give them a try yourself?” But to her surprise Nanny took her seriously, and considered the possibility. “You know, I find that scary. I always need to be in control for Sabine, so giving that up feels wrong. But on the other hand I trust you to let me out immediately if there is a need, and you are right; experiencing what I ask of Sabine myself is better than hearing it from someone else, and perhaps only fair to her. So I agree to let you put the mittens on me, but let me first do a few things before I can’t anymore.”

She went into the kitchen to put the laundry in the dryer, got a glass of water for herself with a straw, and a juice box for Iris. “OK, I guess I’m ready. I do trust you, but for me to feel safe would you promise to release me if there is any need, and of course at the latest before you go to bed?” “Of course, I promise.” Iris already had some experience with putting mittens on Sabine in the store, and so they were on Nanny’s hands quickly, safely buckled around the wrists. Then Iris took the padlocks that Mrs. Fletcher brought too, and wanted to apply them to the mittens, but Mrs. Fletcher said “I don’t think those will be necessary.” Iris didn’t agree “Would you have put them on if I tested the mittens?” “I guess I would have” “and do you want to experience what Sabine will?” Mrs. Fletcher sighed and said “bring it on then”, and let her mittens be padlocked.

“You’re pretty strict, Iris.” “Well, I guess I learned that from you. You always want to use all the security features on me too. Like the lock on the sleepsuit, and today you didn’t even ask me if it was OK to lock the overalls and the jacket on me. I wouldn’t even have been surprised if you had used a padlock on the rain suit zippers, too, but I am glad you didn’t because at that moment it was already scary enough.” “Perhaps you are right and I am a bit too casual about using the security features on you. I’m so used to doing that with Sabine that I don’t always realize it is different, and perhaps daunting, for you. But on the other hand I don’t really want to treat you different than Sabine if you are in diapers and wearing her clothes. She might easily want follow your example and not be locked anymore either. We’re doing so well now, and it has not always been like this. That is why I am also so strict with you for not tampering with your clothes when Sabine could see you, and why I didn’t ask to lock the overalls and jacket with Sabine standing right next to us.”

“I understand, and I don’t usually mind. So you don’t really have to change how you did it today. In some way it is a bit exciting too. Like I never minded to be tied to a tree when we played Indians and Cowboys, especially if Robert did it: he always made sure I was comfortable, and I knew I could count on him to free me too. Being rescued by him was wonderful” Iris told dreamily. “And with you I know you’ll keep me safe, and let me out if I really don’t want it anymore. Knowing I can’t do anything wrong, like with the sleepsuit, is also relaxing, and in the tent, or the rain suit, it feels like the outside world can’t hurt me. Only when I am not certain if someone is watching over me, like with the car seat in the store, or the first night in the bed, when I accidentally locked the railing, it was not so nice. And with my mother I would find it harder to trust her to listen to me and not just do whatever she thinks would be best.”

Mrs. Fletcher wanted a sip of water, and carefully experimented if she could pick up the glass between her paws, but her grip wasn’t stable enough so she gave up. Iris brought the glass to her mouth, and she could drink through the straw. Iris drank from her juice box as well, and decided she’d try to fill her diaper a bit more too, but nothing came. “So, how do you like the mittens until now?” Sabine’s mother looked at them once more and the padlocks jingled. “It is strange, and I’m not quite used to being

restricted yet, but I see what you mean about it being relaxing: there are always so many things that need to be done. But now I can't do them, there is no use worrying and I can forget about them for a while."

"Oh, before I forget, your mother called and told me you two have an appointment with the doctor tomorrow at 9:40AM. She'll be here a bit after 9 to pick you up. So I guess that if the doctor has no objections, and your symptoms don't get worse, we could go to the aquarium on Saturday." Iris didn't really want to think about having to go to the doctor with her mother, while probably wearing a diaper, but the second part of the announcement distracted her quickly from that. "So you are OK with going if the doctor doesn't mind?" That is wonderful!" She hugged Nanny, who at first felt a bit awkward trying to hug back with the mittens on, but then did it anyway. "But remember, you will be restrained all the time, and you might not like everything about being treated like Sabine!" "Oh, that is OK. I'm sure I can cope with it. Oh, I am so excited, I would want to go upstairs, and share the news with Sabine right away. But of course she is already sleeping, and I need to see first what the doctor says. I don't have to wear locked clothes to the doctor, do I?" "Of course not. We'll see how you feel tomorrow morning about needing a diaper, and then we'll figure out something acceptable for you to wear."

They chatted for a while longer, huddling together on the couch, and Mrs. Fletcher even ended up lying on her back with her head in Iris's lap. She regularly had to look at her paws and fiddle with them, but of course they were not coming off. She even pretended to threaten Iris with her claws. Like the previous evenings it felt so nice and comfortable that Iris didn't want it to end, but of course it wasn't long before Mrs. Fletcher decided it was getting time for Iris to go to bed. So the girl unlocked the mittens and took them off. "So, what are your conclusions" she asked. "Once I got used to them, they were not bad, and not uncomfortable at all. Very restrictive though, but of course that is the whole point. My hands feel little stiff from making a fist all the time, but I think that should be fine for at least a few hours, and I have never needed to use mittens for that long anyway. And the paw design is kind of fun. So I am happy with them, although I would hope to never need them." "Oh, well, if you want them to see some use, you can always ask me to put them on you again" Iris joked again, and this time Nanny laughed with her, although she also added "who knows, I just might..."

"Now, high time to get you into bed. Up the stairs with you." Obviously play time was over, and Nanny had taken control again. "The duvet luckily was dry before the rain started, but I would really prefer your current sleeping arrangement. If your diaper would leak during the night I would have to start cleaning it all over again. And apart from that you look so cute in the suit." "It's OK. I do like the comfort of the suit. But if you call me cute again I might start to think otherwise – cute is only one step away from childish." "I'll try, but it will be hard. And you should really try to see it as a compliment – lots of boys like their girls cute. Perhaps once you have grown a bit more, and your puberty is a bit further along, you'll be less afraid to appear childish, and start to enjoy looking cute." "Perhaps. But with a diaper on it is a bit hard to not feel childish." "I can see that. Let's get it off you then." They went through their regular routine, and soon Iris was wrapped up warmly in a dry diaper and her sleepsuit. Her temperature was close to normal. "Nanny, aren't you forgetting something?" "Oh, you mean the padlock? I thought I should not use all the security measures on you when Sabine is not around?" "Well, yes, but I am sort of used to it now, and it means I don't have to worry about temptation." "OK, if you want it." Click!

When Nanny lifted Iris up on the bed, Iris gave her a hug and thanked her for another wonderful day. Then the railing was raised, Nanny stroked her head for a bit, and soon left Iris to sleep.

20. Friday Morning - Doctor

During the night Iris woke multiple times with the urge to pee, and often couldn't let go lying down. But even kneeling sometimes nothing came, and if it did it was pretty uncomfortable. So she didn't have a good night at all, and when Mrs. Fletcher finally came to get her out, she felt groggy and the bright light from the opening blinds hurt her eyes. She told Nanny a bit grumpily how the night had been. "Oh dearie, I'm so sorry for you. We don't often take medication here, and I didn't know it was so bad. I should probably have asked if you wanted something. Do you want to wait what the doctor recommends, or have something now?" "Something now please. It is hard to pee as often as possible if you know it is going to hurt." "Yes, of course. I can't give you too much, because that might interfere with the doctor's examination, but I should have something that helps. Wait here." She disappeared into her bedroom, and soon came back with a fairly large round white pill and got a glass of water from the bathroom. "Here is some paracetamol. Let me break it in two for you, so it is easier to swallow." Of course it didn't help right away, but Iris at least felt better that something was being done about her discomfort. "But dear, why didn't you let me know you were in so much pain? That is why there is a baby monitor here." "Oh yeah, I had forgotten all about that. But I would feel bad about waking you up anyway." "Please don't be. I would rather be woken occasionally than worrying every night that you could be in discomfort without letting me know." "Oh, yes, I see. Like you worried when the bed railing was not yet up at night." "Exactly. It is harder to fall asleep when I worry." "OK, I will try then."

"Now, we need to get you out of your sleepsuit and diaper, and check your temperature. Then you can take a shower, and I hope you can also do a number two. It seems to me that you'll need to wear a diaper today; what do you think?" "I think I have to; mom probably wouldn't even let me in the car if there is a risk of an accident." "OK, let's do that then, and then we will see what clothes you can wear. But first things first." She took off the sleepsuit and the diaper. "Ugh, that pee smells pretty foul. Another sign of a UTI. Now let's see your temperature. 99.5F (37.5C). Still a bit high, but not alarming. Now go and take a nice hot shower, and put a towel around you or put a sweater on when you go to the toilet. I'll get Sabine out in the meantime."

The warm shower helped Iris relax, and once she had dried herself off and blow-dried her hair, she mostly felt like her normal self again, although a bit foggy from the lack of sleep. She put on a warm sweater and gave the toilet a try. Luckily she managed to empty her bowels; she *really* wouldn't want to use her diaper for that. She heard Mrs. Fletcher come up the stairs, right on time to help her get ready for the day. When she got out of the bathroom, Mrs. Fletcher called her from Sabine's room; since her daughter was already downstairs they could use the changing table there. Iris knew the routine by now, and put her hands above her head before being asked. Once she was secured, she got one of the plain diapers again. "These don't make much noise and are not so thick, so a bit easier to hide. I won't put extra tape on them, so they can easily be taken off at the doctor's."

"For the clothes I was thinking of your skirtall, combined with a body and a pair of your leggings. If you want a t-shirt, that's OK too, but a body keeps the diaper in place better. And I might also have some neutral tights if you prefer. The skirtall will not totally hide the diaper bulge, but most people won't notice, and you'll not be outside long. And a coat should help too." "I think the skirtall will do, and a body and my black legging please." This time she could have dressed herself, but feeling not quite well she left it to Nanny anyway. Then she looked into the mirror. She might not have picked yellow for under the denim skirtall, but the long-armed body she had worn the day at the store didn't look bad, and with the black legging it looked fairly grown-up. Her behind definitely showed a bulge, but Nanny assured her that people seldom looked so closely that they'd notice. Iris suddenly realized that she could ask her mother to bring along some of her own clothes that would work better over a diaper, so she wouldn't have to be in Sabine's clothes all the time. So she called, and her mother replied she

would try to find something for her, but that she needed to find the insurance papers, and had to leave soon.

When they arrived downstairs, Sabine was already in her activity chair, still in a onesie and holding Bobo. But instead of the unicorn onesie it was one with large Disney princesses on the front, and also a zipper down the front. (see Figure 54) Mrs. Fletcher explained that Sabine didn't mind that she first helped Iris get ready. When she was off to the doctor there would be plenty of time to get her ready for the day. Then they had breakfast. While they were eating Iris noticed Sabine playing a bit with the zipper in front, but it seemed like she couldn't pull it down, even though it didn't seem like a locking zipper pull. "Sabine, stop playing with your zipper" her mother warned, and explained to Iris that it was sewn closed, and the real closure was in the back, but that Sabine knew she shouldn't try to open her clothes. Once breakfast was over, and Iris helped clear the table, Sabine was helped out of her chair and Iris could see that there was a button flap over the back, covering a zipper. Both seemed to be added afterward. (see Figure 55)



Figure 54 Sabine's Princess Onesie



Figure 55 Back zipper + button onesie

It was 10 past 9 when the doorbell finally rang, and Iris's mother arrived. She apologized for being so late; she had trouble finding the health insurance papers, and then traffic didn't help. Iris asked if she brought some suitable clothes, hoping for something better than the skirtall, but her mother replied "Oh Iris, I'm sorry, but I really didn't have time for that. But you look so good in your skirtall." Of course she would say that – she bought it. And Iris wasn't sure her mother didn't really have time, or that she just didn't want her daughter to run around in jogging pants while she was staying with other people.

Mrs. Fletcher gave her mother a plastic bag with a clean diaper and the roll of tape with animals on it, and explained that she could either retape the current diaper if it was still clean, or change it to the fresh one. Then she gave Iris the yellow waterproof jacket (see Figure 48 Sabine's old rain jacket) again, since that was long enough to mask the bulge of her behind in the diaper, but she didn't lock the buckles. Then they had to run, and Mrs. Tomas promised the Fletchers that she would catch up with them after the doctor visit, but that they really had to go now to not be late.

In the car Iris climbed into the booster seat without complaint. It was a lot less obvious than the car seats she sat in at the store, and on the way back home, and she also remembered how the seat belt irritated her neck when she sat on a normal seat. Her mother didn't remark on it; she seemed just happy they could quickly leave. Then it was back to Eugene, where their doctor's clinic was. It was still quite busy on the road, so Iris's mother didn't want to talk much and concentrated on the road. And

after the bad night, and dreading the visit ahead, Iris wasn't too talkative either. They arrived at the doctors 10 minutes before the appointment time, so there was enough time to register at the desk and get the new insurance data entered into the computer. A few minutes later they were called into the office of their family doctor Wolfe. Iris hadn't been to her a lot, but she recognized her from when they looked at her weak bladder, and was very glad they had a female doctor.

After doctor Wolfe greeted her mother, she took the time to also greet Iris, but didn't treat her like a little kid. This immediately helped for Iris to like her and feel a bit more comfortable, even when she was still nervous. After they sat down, the doctor asked what she could do for them. Mrs. Tomas explained that they suspected that Iris had a UTI, while she was staying for a week with a friend, so she didn't know the symptoms firsthand. But she heard that Iris often needed to pee, that it was painful, that the urine smelled bad, and that her temperature was somewhat elevated, but not a fever. The doctor first asked them about Iris's medical history, and also consulted the records on her computer. Then doctor Wolfe started asking Iris on more details of her symptoms, and since Iris could answer clearly her mother was not involved in the conversation much.

Just at that moment Iris felt the urge to pee, and she had no choice but to let go. Of course the doctor noticed Iris's inattention to the conversation, and could also see some pain in her face, so she asked what the matter was. Iris needed a few moments but then explained that she had needed to pee, but that she wore a diaper, since she couldn't hold well. Well, that was one painful subject out of the way. The doctor understood the need, but warned her that it needed to be changed regularly, to remove the flushed bacteria quickly. She could also give a subscription so that the insurance would reimburse them, and Mrs. Tomas was quick to accept that offer. She also explained to Iris that they still needed a urine sample, so she would have to try to produce a bit more shortly.

When all symptoms were clear to the doctor, she had another awkward question: if Iris recently had sex. Both strongly denied it, and she apologized but had to ask to rule out STD's, since it did happen even with 13 year-olds. Next was the physical exam. Iris was asked to first take off her dress, leggings and body, and then lie on the examination table. The doctor put on latex gloves, opened her diaper, and inspected the content. The smell was obvious to all three of them, but she also looked at the color, which seemed OK. Then she inspected and pressed areas on Iris's back, abdomen and pelvic area. It got more and more embarrassing for Iris, and she would have liked to run away, but knew she just had to get through it, so she endured. The doctor also took her temperature. Finally she asked a nurse to help Iris getting a clean urine sample. There wasn't much but it was enough, and when Iris returned the doctor was typing on her computer.

She told Iris she could get dressed again, and her mother sprang into action to put the clean diaper on her daughter. Iris wasn't happy about that, but didn't really see an alternative, since she hadn't learned yet how to diaper herself. Her mother surprised her by still being reasonably proficient with it, and to her surprise she even enjoyed it a bit, having a sort of intimate moment with her mother without demands and warnings. Her mother used a lot of extra tape though to make sure it wouldn't come loose, even when Iris told her one strip at the top was enough. When she didn't immediately took action in getting herself dressed, having gotten used to Mrs. Fletcher helping her dress after diapering, her mother even helped her with the body and the skirtall straps, and made sure they were not too loose.

Then they sat down again, and the doctor told them her conclusions and advice. It was clear that it was a UTI, and likely only an infection of the lower tracts, so her urethra and bladder. The urine testing would show if there was any in the higher tracts as well, but normally there would be back pain and higher fever, and sometimes vomiting. If Iris would start showing those symptoms, she should quickly

come back. But for now doctor prescribed antibiotics for 7 days, and she needed to finish the course even if all complaints were over. If the symptoms didn't improve within 3 days she should also come back. Often the infection and the symptoms lasted for about a week. For the pain Iris could take a painkiller, the paracetamol was OK, but she advised Ibuprofen since it also had an anti-inflammatory effect. She should drink a lot; there wasn't really evidence that cranberry juice was effective, but some people believed in it, and it couldn't hurt. And pee as often as she could, and get her diaper changed regularly. As long as she didn't have a fever she didn't need to stay inside, and could do what she wanted, but should just take it easy. They should call the clinic in 3 days for the urine test results.

Iris asked if it would be OK to visit the Oregon Coast Aquarium tomorrow, and the doctor had no objections. Next she inquired how she could have gotten it, and admitted sitting on the wet grass two days ago. The doctor explained that UTI's are usually caused by bacteria that are normally in the bowels, where they are helpful, but when they enter the urethra they cause an infection. So she had to be careful to wipe front-to-back after a number two, and just keep it clean down there. The cold and wet will not have helped, but was not the cause, also because it most often takes at least 3 days to develop. Still, Iris should be careful with that; it was never good to let yourself cool down too much. Iris thanked the doctor in her mind for that remark in front of her mother, who was already exaggerating keeping her daughter warm anyway.

Finally the doctor gave them the prescription for the antibiotics, the ibuprofen, and the diapers, and said most pharmacies would probably have those in stock. That concluded the consult, and they left the clinic, but of course not before Mrs. Tomas put the jacket on Iris. When she closed the buckles in front, she noticed the keyholes, and Iris had to explain that those were to prevent Sabine from taking off her clothes. Her mother was very interested, got her car keys out and tried if she could lock the buckles with them. Unluckily for Iris that worked, and although she complained that that was not necessary for her, her mother said that she had heard the doctor that she should keep warm, especially now she was not feeling well, and that she was happy knowing Iris wouldn't take it off unauthorized. Iris decided not to tell her that she might manage to undo them with her hands. But she was glad that she didn't have any lockable clothes at home; her mother would surely like to make use of them.

"Why don't we go to Fred Meyer² right away – we can get the prescriptions, some cranberry juice if you want, and also bring a nice lunch with us to the Fletchers." "But I don't want to go into a store wearing a diaper" "Oh, don't worry about that, Iris, with that jacket over your skirt all you can hardly see any bulge." "Can I stay in the car then while you go?" "Iris, stop being difficult. We'll just go in and quickly get what we want. But you need to be present at the pharmacy, in case they give important advice on how to use the medication." As usual, once her mother decided something it needed to go her way, and Iris's opinion didn't matter. She just hoped they wouldn't run into anyone she knew. Well, at least she wasn't wearing Sabine's clothes at the moment, apart from the jacket, but at least that was not too childish. She hoped that the keyholes in the buckles would not be visible unless someone was right in front of her.

Her mother took a straight line to the pharmacy first, and the prescriptions for the antibiotics and the ibuprofen were quickly filled. The diaper was another story. The prescription combined with their health insurance allowed them free choice of diapers for the prescribed 2 weeks. So a pharmacy assistant took them over to the diaper section in the regular store. Iris felt the urge to run away to prevent having everyone see they were looking for diapers for her, but her mother had taken a firm grip on her hand, and she didn't even get the chance. And willing the ground to swallow her didn't help

² multi-department store with an incorporated pharmacy, found in some western USA states

either. Knowing the reason they were prescribed, the assistant explained to them that she'd advise pull-ups for the day, and diapers for the night. With the amount Iris should be drinking, the night pull-ups might not be absorbent enough. The assistant asked her if she would like some nice designs and colors, or some drab ones, and Iris sulkily replied that she wasn't a child anymore and preferred plain ones. The assistant had experience with teenagers being not exactly thrilled they needed diapers, so she tried to make it quick by simply proposing a Tranquility Premium Overnight Disposable Pull Up in extra small and Tena Youth Briefs for the night. Iris immediately agreed, but her mother studied the packs for a while, while Iris was fidgeting on her hand. But her mother had no reason to want something different, so they added them to the shopping cart, with 2 packs of pull ups to last the two weeks, and went back to the pharmacy where they rounded off the administration for the insurance. Iris asked if the assistant had a bag or something so it was not visible what they had in their cart, but they didn't, but that they would get bags at checkout.

Glad that that was over, but still nervous about having to go through the store with a shopping cart full of diapers, Iris first tried to arrange the packs in such a way that the content wasn't too obvious, but that didn't work since there was print on every side. Then she tried to go as far away from the cart as she could, so people might not associate its contents with her, but her mother wouldn't allow it, and finally ordered her to keep one hand on the cart at all times, or she would be put in the child seat of the cart. This was too much for Iris, after such a bad night, and she really wanted to start shouting at her mother, but she just managed to control herself, realizing that something like that would be the best way to attract the attention she didn't want, and finally she just broke down in tears.

Her mother realized she might have gone too far, and came over to comfort her. She explained that she just wanted to make the trip as quick as she could, so that Iris didn't have to be in the store any longer than necessary, and if they got separated it would not only take longer, but also likely to draw unwanted attention to them. Then Iris realized her mother was trying to do what was best for her, and even though she didn't approve of the way she did it, she let herself be comforted and they soon could continue the shopping. Iris liked cranberry juice, so they got a 64 fl oz (2 liter) flask. Then they went to the fresh section for lunch. They looked around a bit, and Mrs. Tomas suggested getting either an Assorted Sandwich Plate, or an Assorted Wrap Platter, and a Caesar Salad. Iris didn't really know the wraps, but they looked interesting, so she chose that. She felt that her mother was trying to be generous and make it a real treat for all of them, but she had nagging doubt that it might be mostly to impress the Fletchers. She was still looking around a bit anxiously for people to recognize what they had in their cart, but all the people were only focused on their own carts and shopping lists. So gradually she started to relax a bit more.

That quickly ended once they approached the line for the checkout. Then suddenly people were just waiting for their turn, so there was a lot better chance that someone would look at the products in their cart. But it was not so busy, and her mother selected a place in line behind a woman that was only looking at her phone. Iris glanced at her mother, who winked at her. She had never done that before! Iris had to conclude that it wasn't a coincidence, and her mother was really doing her best for her. To show her appreciation, she went to stand next to her mother and leaned affectionately into her a bit, which was rewarded with an arm around her shoulders. Perhaps the days they had not been together gave them a bit of a fresh start. Still there was no comparison to the way Mrs. Fletcher, Nanny, interacted with her, but perhaps there was at least some hope for improvement.

Luckily the line was not long, and it wasn't long before it was their turn. The checkout lady briefly looked up at her when she needed to scan 3 big packs of teen-sized diapers, but didn't say anything. Still it was bad enough, and Iris didn't really know where to look. And it got even worse when their groceries were being bagged: at that moment a woman from further down their street passed them

with her bagged groceries, recognized them and stopped for a little chat, just when the bagger was trying to fit the diaper packs into the paper bags. It was clear the woman noticed them, but Iris's mother was quick to tell her that Iris had a bladder infection and temporarily had less control." She put just a little extra stress on the word temporarily, and Iris gave her a thankful gaze. Shortly after the woman told Iris to get well soon, and left.

Iris gave a big sigh of relief when they were finally back in the car and the groceries were hidden safely in the boot, except for the lunch items. Her mother asked her to keep those in her lap, so they would not be shaken apart during the ride. Now that all the embarrassing stuff was finally out of the way, Iris could relax more, and noticed another advantage of the booster seat: she sat high enough to also look ahead over her mother's chair, which she couldn't on the way to the special needs store this Tuesday. Then she remembered that the doctor had no objections against the aquarium tomorrow, so she told her mother about her idea, and Sabine's love for the fish. Obviously she didn't mention her plan for going as a special needs person for the discount.

With rush hour over, the trip didn't take long, and when they arrived Iris quickly wanted to get out of the car and get back with the Fletchers. But when she undid her seat belt, her mother stopped her "Iris, you know better than to unbuckle before I say so. So close it again and wait until I have finished parking the car." Always those exaggerated rules! But the quickest way to resolve it was just to obey, so she did, and soon she was allowed to get out. And undoing the seat belt early didn't help much anyway, since her mother kept the back doors on the child safety lock until the car was parked.

21. Relationship

Iris first rang the doorbell, and then helped her mother bring everything in. Mrs. Fletcher put Sabine in her play tent in the meantime, so she was free to help too. When Iris didn't take off her jacket, she unlocked the buckles, and Iris explained that her mother had discovered the keyholes and decided to use her car key to lock them, totally unnecessary of course. Then everyone had news to tell, but they settled on first going over the doctor visit, to make sure they discussed all the important details. But first Iris went to the tent for a moment to say hi to Sabine, while she felt bad that she had to be separate from them again. To her surprise Sabine wore the green vegan leather dress she herself had worn to the store in Roseburg (see Figure 11 Sabine's green leather dress), and Iris could see it looked better on her – of course it fit closer on Sabine than on her, and her developing chest made better contours in front. She complimented her friend, and Mrs. Fletcher explained that Sabine had wanted to look nice for the visitor.

Then they went over the doctor visit, the conclusion, all the advice, the medication, and the diapers. Mrs. Fletcher said that she had been happy to help Iris out with her stock, but of course would use the prescribed ones now. She thought the pull-ups were a good idea, since that made it easier for the frequent diaper changes, and for Iris to change herself if that happened to be convenient. She took the medication from Mrs. Tomas, and checked the dosage. The antibiotics needed to be taken twice a day, and the Ibuprofen three times per day one, or if needed two tablets. So she gave one of each to Iris, with a big glass of water: she hadn't been drinking anything since she left the house. After that she could also have some cranberry juice, but Iris wasn't used to drinking so much, and the glass of water was quite enough for the moment.

Since Mrs. Fletcher was already doing the right things, not much else needed to change. Iris also told her that her sitting on the wet ground wouldn't have caused it, to which her mother added that it hadn't been helpful either. Iris quickly stuck her tongue out at her when she wasn't looking, and then

told Mrs. Fletcher that the doctor had no objections to the trip tomorrow, and asked if they could go then. When Mrs. Fletcher confirmed that, she immediately went over to tell Sabine the good news, who was very happy too. Then her friend sat down again, and looked a bit lonely. Iris pleaded with Nanny to let Sabine out for a moment, so they could hug and her friend could be more a part of the get-together, and Mrs. Fletcher allowed her to open the tent. Then they could properly hug and have a little celebration dance. Iris wasn't sure if Sabine exactly knew what they were celebrating, or that she was mostly joining in with the happiness of her friend, but that didn't matter too much. She was going to have such a nice day tomorrow!

After that Sabine had to come and sit on her mother's lap, and was enveloped in her arms – a nice combination of a hug and a safety precaution. Iris's mother had heard her daughter call Mrs. Fletcher Nanny, and inquired about that. Imogen explained that she had gotten tired of being called 'misses' all the time, and Iris had come up with Nanny, since she was sort of her caregiver for this week. Next Mrs. Tomas insisted on paying her daughter's admittance fee for the aquarium, and even though it of course wasn't necessary, Imogen finally accepted. Iris made a quick sign with the finger on her mouth for Nanny, to signal her keeping quiet about her plan for the reduced fee, and even though she didn't see any reaction from Mrs. Fletcher, the latter just told her mother that the fee was \$15. Of course she thanked Maria for the money, and also for the luxurious lunch they had brought with them.

Next she had some news of her own: after they left she went up with Sabine to get her dressed, and Sabine asked her if she could go on the toilet. She had not done that before, but when her mother helped her on it, she managed to do her bowel movement. It probably was a bit of a coincidence that they were later than normal with their morning routine, and Iris really disliked having stool in her diaper, but it was something new and wonderful. Having Sabine on her lap, they could compliment her easily and tell her that that was such a big girl thing to do, and especially the big girl part made Sabine show her biggest smile and radiate happiness. Her mother added that they would definitely try this again. Apart from being much nicer for Sabine, it also removed the need for the most unpleasant diaper change of the day.

The mention of diapers triggered another question by Maria Tomas. She had been trying in vain for years to get her daughter to wear diapers on certain occasions, to prevent accidents and constant toilet breaks on longer car trips, but Imogen managed it within a day. She needed to know how that happened. Iris of course was upset that her mother brought this up, and felt she needed to rescue from the situation what she could, to make sure her mother didn't start insisting on her wearing diapers at certain times at home as well. So she explained that her mother had seen she had had to borrow a pair of overalls from Sabine after her own clothes got vomit on them. But since, like all Sabine's clothes, the wearer couldn't take these off herself, she needed help if she went to the toilet. But when Mrs. Fletcher had to leave for an appointment, they couldn't be sure she wouldn't need to go to the toilet before Sabine's mother came back, and so a diaper was the only solution. But she only agreed because no one else could see them, and her friend wore them too.

Her mother listened carefully, and then asked her how bad it was for her to wear them, and if she had needed them. Now Iris was in trouble. She didn't want to lie flat out to her mother, especially with Nanny present who knew the truth. But if she admitted she didn't mind them and had indeed used them, she gave her mother more ammunition to put her into diapers later. And now with the doctor's prescription they would probably have plenty in the house anyway. So she just mumbled noncommittally that it hadn't been too bad, and she had needed to use them a bit. Then her mother also wanted to know more about the overalls and why she couldn't take them off. When Iris tried to explain, Mrs. Fletcher suggested Iris got them from upstairs so she could show them. "Do I have to?" "It's probably best to get it over with; I think your mother will keep asking questions otherwise." So she

dragged herself up the stairs, found them on one of the shelves with Sabine's old clothes, and took them down with her.

When she returned Mrs. Fletcher had just put Sabine back in the tent, took the overalls from her and said "Come, let me put them on you, so we can demonstrate how they work." Iris looked at her pleadingly, but she said "Your mother has already seen you in them, and I thought you didn't like the skirtall." Iris resigned herself to more unpleasantness, and let Mrs. Fletcher take off her dress and leggings, and then stepped into the overalls. Sabine's mother showed Mrs. Tomas that the strap length could only be changed on the inside, before it was zipped up, how the special tool was needed to move the zipper pull, and the extra button at the top. When it was all closed, she demonstrated that the sides were high enough to prevent Sabine from reaching her diaper. Iris' mother was way too interested in all this, but with the two adults working together she could do nothing against it. Then her mother also wanted to try out the safety measures herself, and seemed impressed with them. "Oh Iris, these look so adorable on you, with the Pooh characters, and they do a good job to hide your diaper too." Then her mother even tried to hug her, but Iris twisted away, feeling insulted by the whole process, and especially by the 'adorable'. As if she was 5! Her mother looked a bit hurt though.

The overalls were more comfortable though than the skirtall. With all that happened while she was wearing them, she hadn't really paid much attention to it, but the top of the bib and the buckles were about the same height as her nipples. When she moved they were rubbed, and they were so sensitive at the moment that it quickly became irritating. The bib of these overalls was higher and had no buckles, so her nipples finally got some rest. Only now that it had stopped did she realize how irritating it had been.

"Iris, have you already told your mother about your discovery yesterday morning?" Iris looked at her blankly. "You know, what we celebrated yesterday at lunch." "Oh, yes of course. So much is happening at the moment that it had completely slipped my mind. My breasts, or rather, my right breast, has started developing, so I am officially no longer a child!" "Oh, child, that is wonderful news. You have been so impatiently waiting for it!" Now Iris allowed her mother to hug her. "Sorry, I should have told you before, but I didn't think of it with the UTI and the doctor visit."

Then Mrs. Fletcher started telling Mrs. Tomas how helpful and cooperative Iris had been while she was staying with them, and Mrs. Tomas was glad to hear it, but her face also showed sadness. So Imogen asked her how she felt, and Iris's mother admitted that she couldn't understand why her daughter couldn't be that way at home too. Well, Iris understood that perfectly "And I don't understand why it always has to be done your way, and why you don't listen to me." Mrs. Fletcher stepped in before it got out of hand "OK, it seems like there are some unresolved issues between you two. Perhaps this is a good moment to investigate, because I see a caring mother who tries hard to keep her daughter safe and healthy, and a bright daughter who can be very responsible and listens to reason. I'm sure you could work together a lot better with a few changes in how you communicate. Now I did a minor in Psychology at university, which doesn't make me a therapist, but I know enough to help you in that search as a mediator. Would you be willing to give that a try?"

This surprised both of them, and they glanced at each other, but both were unhappy with their relationship at the moment, so they agreed. "Perhaps we can start with acting out a conversation between you two that tends to go wrong. Maria, why don't you start by thinking back of a recent conversation that led to a conflict. Perhaps something that you wanted Iris to do?" "Hmm, let me think. The first thing I can think of was the day before we met you at the flea market. I asked Iris to put on a jacket when she left on her bike, and that immediately led to drama." "OK, let's try to keep this as neutral as we can, so that the other doesn't feel attacked. Can you recall how you worded your

request?" "It must have been something like 'Iris, you need to put on a jacket if you go out'." "Thank you. Now Iris, why don't you tell us how that made you feel." "Well, mom always just tells me what I *need* to do, as if my opinion doesn't matter. I'm no longer a child!" When Mrs. Tomas started to react, Mrs. Fletcher stopped her, and asked her to give Iris the opportunity to tell her side of the exchange first. "Iris, how would you have liked your mother to ask?" "I don't think she needs to ask at all. It was warm enough, and I can decide myself if what I wear is enough." "Interesting. You just said that your mother treats you as if your opinion doesn't matter, and now you are saying that her opinion doesn't matter to you?" Oops. Iris had never looked at it that way before, and now felt she was as guilty as her mother. "Oh, I am sorry. I guess I should listen to her arguments too then." "Exactly. Communication only works if both sides are willing to listen and give the other's opinions serious thought. But that can be quite hard, and many adults are not very good at it either. So, back to my question. How would you want your mother to voice her request?" "Perhaps if she said 'I think you should wear a coat', I would feel that I would have the opportunity to tell her that I have a different idea."

Iris's mother asked "But wouldn't we have a discussion every time then? Like with the booster seat in the car. I have tried to explain why it is necessary, but every time we end up having the same arguments." "I hear your point Maria, and perhaps we can take a look at the booster seat argument a little later, but let's first focus on the jacket issue. Iris, if your mother asked the question like you proposed, how would you respond?" "I would say that it was warm and sunny, so I didn't need a jacket. But perhaps I should also ask why she thinks I would need one?" "Very good Iris, let's ask her." "When you were younger, you often had a cold, and most years also the flu, so I think your body needs a little bit more protection. When you are cold, you get sick easier, like the doctor said this morning." "But I haven't had a serious cold for ages, and no flu for the last few years either." "So you are saying that I am overly cautious, since your body seems to be more robust now. I guess I got a bit stuck in protective mode. But I still worry that you don't always check the weather forecast before you leave, and that it might get cloudy or windy later, or even rain. And when you are soaking wet on your bike, you are overtaxing even a more robust body. Now I am not blaming you. At your age it wouldn't be normal if you would always oversee all the consequences of your deeds. But that is where it helps to have a person who watches over you and helps you plan ahead. Please let me be that person."

"Yeah, I guess so. But I don't want to wear a jacket while it is so sunny and warm either, and while all the other kids are only in their t-shirts. When Mrs. Fletcher thinks I should do something, but it doesn't feel right to me, she often comes up with a compromise. I don't really like it when I can't do it my way, but I understand that I need to accept her concerns too, and that it is the best I am going to get. Perhaps we can do something like that too. Like with the jacket, that I agree to take one with me for if the weather turns, and you agree that I don't need to wear it when it is still sunny and warm?" "Hmm, I guess it takes some getting used to that my girl is getting big, and that I should trust her more. But I think it is a compromise I can live with. We might need to reevaluate it if you get sick more often though." "I can live with that. I don't want to be sick more either."

"Ladies, my compliments. Once I got you started, you worked out a solution without needing me anymore. Do you both feel like you were being heard? And are there any feelings about it that were not yet addressed?" Both acknowledged that they felt happy about the resolution. "Then it might be a good idea to see why the booster seat argument is repeating itself all the time. Maria, you say that you have explained your arguments to Iris. Let us see what has actually come across. Iris, can you explain to me why your mother wants you in the booster seat in the car?" "Well, even though it is only required for twelve and younger, I am still a tiny bit under the height limit. So apparently I am not allowed to sit in a regular seat yet. But it is mean that just because I am small, I need to be treated like a child." Her mother added "It is not only the law, but it is also for your safety. When you are not so tall yet, the hip

belt doesn't keep your hip in place during a crash, but your stomach. And that can cause serious damage to your organs. So this is not something I am willing to let go." "Iris, do you understand that your mother has to obey the law, and has valid concerns for your safety?" "Yes, I understand" Iris replied sullenly. "Can you tell us then why you keep arguing with her about it?" "Like I said it feels so unfair. Being small, I get treated like a younger kid often anyway, and if they see me in a booster seat they are never going to take me seriously, no matter how hard I try to be mature." "Yes, I can see that is hard. But what could your mother change to make it better?" "Eh, .. eh ... I don't know. I guess it isn't her fault that I have to be in a booster seat. I probably shouldn't vent my frustration at her then, should I?" "I think you shouldn't. But there is one thing your mother could do that might make it a bit better. Can either of you think of something, if you think back about what we talked about with the jacket issue?" Iris's mother pondered "We were talking about listening to each other's opinions, but in this case we know them, but Iris still feels bad about it... Perhaps if I show better that I understand your feelings?" "Yes mama, I think that could help; I know in my head that you don't have a choice, but if you would let me know every now and then that you know it is hard for me, it wouldn't feel so much like you are making me."

"Apart from that, I see some advantages of the booster seat now. When we drove to the special needs store a few days ago, I didn't have one, and the seat belt was irritating my neck. And I could also not look ahead because the chair in front was too high. Though I still would prefer if others would not see me in it." Mrs. Fletcher added "Sorry about that, Maria, I hadn't realized Iris did not have the required height yet, and that we were in violation. At least on the way there." "Oh, what was different on the way back then?" Oh no. Iris suddenly realized where this conversation was headed, and didn't like it at all. But she could not see a way to prevent it. And there it was "On the way back Iris consented to sit in Sabine's old car seat. We needed a new one for Sabine, and they normally need to be ordered. But the store had a great offer on a display model, so we took that and they immediately installed it. I didn't want to discard the old seat, so it was put on the other side of the back bench. And since I had the second front seat removed to create enough room to help Sabine in and out of hers, there was no other place for Iris to sit." "Really? Oh, I have to see it!"

And there it was. Now her mother would also want to see her in it! And indeed they went outside, after Nanny told Sabine they would only go and look at her beautiful new car seat, and be right back. Iris put on her newly-washed denim jacket to hide her embarrassing overalls, and her mother complimented her, obviously drawing the wrong conclusion. At the car the first thing her mother noticed was that it only had one door on each side. Then she understood the need to remove the second front seat. Then she remarked on the size and colors of the new car seat, to finally look at the old one. Mrs. Fletcher explained that it still had the safety features for Sabine installed, but that Iris apparently hadn't minded so much, since she slept almost the whole way back. "But we did adjust the headrest so people wouldn't recognize me in the car" Iris added, trying to salvage at least something of this new horror. "Oh, could you please sit in it? I would love to see that." her mother requested. Iris looked helplessly at Mrs. Fletcher, but she just opened the door on the driver side to fold the driver seat forward, then the passenger door to help Iris in, and let her mother put her in the seat. "Just click the harness buckle together like with a normal 5-point harness. The buckle guard just prevents the occupant from opening it, but you can press the release by inserting your thumb. The chest clip you can lock with anything that fits the hole, like a car key. Soon Iris sat there helpless again. Her mother looked at the seat and the harness, and admired the quality. She also checked how much you could see of Iris from the outside. She concluded that it looked a lot safer, and more comfortable than the booster seat. Silently Iris had to agree with that, but of course she would never let her mother know.

Finally she was released again and they could get back inside. By then it was high time to start lunch, so Sabine was taken out of the tent and into her activity chair, while Iris and her mother got what they needed from the kitchen. Everybody loved the wraps, but they were a bit hard for Sabine, since they kept falling apart when she picked them up. So her mother started feeding them to her. Then Mrs. Tomas offered to help, but Sabine shook her head, not really knowing this woman. "It's OK Sabine, it is my mother." Iris tried to help, but Sabine didn't want it, so her mother kept on feeding her. Both mothers made sure Iris emptied her glass of cranberry juice, which also caused her to fill her diaper a bit more. With the new pain relief that was not nearly as bad, but it still felt embarrassing to do it with her mother right next to her.

When lunch was over Mrs. Fletcher asked Iris if she wanted to put Sabine to bed for her nap. Iris was surprised since she had not even been present at that until now, but Sabine's mother explained that she would like to stay here for their guest. "It isn't hard. Sabine doesn't need a clean diaper yet, so it is just putting her in her onesie, and in her bed. You know how the bed works, and the onesie doesn't need a key. Let me unlock Sabine's dress now, and you can take it off in her room. When she is in bed, just stay with her for a few minutes, and try to get her relaxed. I don't expect a tantrum, but if there is just call me and get out of the room as quickly as you can." Iris felt a little proud that Nanny trusted her with that, and agreed. It was especially nice to allow her to show her mature side again, after all the negative and childish things that happened to her in the morning. Of course Mrs. Tomas showed her interest in the locking mechanism of the dress again, but then Iris she took Sabine's hand and took her upstairs.

In Sabine's room she undressed her friend, and put her in her princess sleeper. (see Figure 54) Ignoring the closed zipper in front, she zipped up the back and then buttoned the flap over it. The buttonholes were a bit small, so she struggled with getting the buttons through, but that was probably intentional. Then she looked at the front of the sleeper with Sabine and together they came up with names for all the Disney princesses and other heroes. Iris tried to talk a bit soft and gently, to not get Sabine all excited when she needed to go to sleep. Then she took her friend into bed, and tugged her in. She stroked her head for a bit, because when Nanny did that to her it made her sleepy very quickly, and it also seemed to work with Sabine. Iris wondered if she should sing a sleeping song, or read a bit from a book, but it didn't seem like Sabine expected anything, and soon had her Bobo firmly in her arms and her eyes closed. Iris slowly closed the bed and sat for a few moments outside it on the ground, but Sabine seemed to fall asleep within minutes, and when her breathing stayed slow and regular Iris softly got up and left.

She could hear the women talking softly downstairs, but they stopped when they heard her on the stairs. When she entered the living room Mrs. Fletcher asked if there were any problems, and Iris said Sabine behaved very well, and quickly fell asleep when she was in bed. Her mother said it was getting time for her to leave, but first Mrs. Fletcher wanted to recap their relationship talk from before. "To me it seems like you have both really tried to come closer together, and if you can keep that up you should soon see fewer conflicts. That is not to say that you should never get angry, as long as you also resolve the problem and make up. And of course Iris is a teenager, and it is natural that she needs to distance herself from her parent in the coming years. But as long as you both listen to each other, and be open about what might bother you, it should be a reasonably smooth transition. And if you find that you run into problems that you don't manage to resolve alone, you are always welcome to visit here and I'd be willing to help you again, insofar I can. How was it for you?"

Iris's mother replied that it had been really useful for her, and that she would try to be more open and less commanding. Iris herself was hopeful too, and for her it had been an eye-opener that if she wanted to be listened to, she should also listen herself. With that she hugged her mother and even

cried a little. After the usual thank you's, and the confirmation that her mother would come pick up Iris again next Tuesday, she left.

Then Nanny said to Iris that she should take a nap too. It had been quite the morning, and she needed her rest to recover from the UTI. Iris's head was still full of everything that happened, and she couldn't imagine falling asleep, but she did feel tired, so she let herself be taken upstairs. It was also time to change her diaper, and Mrs. Fletcher noticed how much tape was used on it. Even with scissors it took her a while to get it off. Then she took Iris's temperature. It was 99.8F (37.6C) – still higher than it should be, but not quite a fever. There were two new types of diaper to choose from. They agreed to try out the pull-ups for the short nap, and Iris noticed that they were not as thick, and felt more like normal underwear. They would surely be less conspicuous under clothes, which she was glad of. But on the other hand it didn't feel as cozy and secure as the real diapers, and she actually felt like she was missing them under her sleepsuit. Then she was put into bed and fell asleep almost immediately.

22. Practice

Iris was gently woken by someone stroking her head. Apparently that worked both ways. "I was trying to wake you as gently as possible. If you needed more sleep you would probably not have woken, but I want to go outside for a while, so if you feel ready I'll help you get up." Iris yawned, stretched herself, and said she felt rested and ready to be active again. Once her sleepsuit was off, Nanny first took a look at her pull-ups, but since they still were dry she couldn't judge how well they worked, or if they might leak. Then she took Iris's temperature once more. "Let's see how you are doing. When I took it last, before you went to sleep, you had been exposed to a lot of stress, and just climbed the stairs, so let us see what it is in rest. 98.9F (37.2C) – very nice, that is almost normal." She proceeded to dress Iris again in the yellow body and the denim overalls. Iris looked slightly doubtful about the clothes "did you say we are going outside?" "We'll talk more about it downstairs, and then we'll see if we will pick clothes that are more appropriate, but I didn't want you to cool down too much, so I put these on you for now."

When they came back, Sabine was not in her onesie anymore, but also not in the green dress. Instead she wore a sturdy looking utility jumpsuit that didn't look particularly childish. It was sleeveless, had lots of pockets in front (probably all sewn closed), a row of buttons in front, and a self-belt. And a black t-shirt, or more likely a body, underneath. (see Figure 56) She was in her activity chair.

"I was thinking that, if we go to the aquarium tomorrow, we need to explain a bit more about your role to Sabine, and then we all need some practice. For you to be believable without overdoing it and making a caricature out of it, and for me to handle the both of you. Therefore I think we'll go to a park, a bit further away, and see how we do." That made Iris realize that things were getting serious now. Before it was just a plan to make it possible for Sabine to go to the aquarium, but now she suddenly had to go out in public in a diaper and childish clothes, and perhaps more? Suddenly she wasn't so sure anymore that she could go through with it. All sorts of reactions flashed through her head, but in the end she had already committed to both mother and daughter, so she had no choice but to go through with it, and trust Mrs. Fletcher to keep her from being spotted by someone she knew.

"Sabine, Iris told you this morning that we are going to the Oregon Coast Aquarium tomorrow. Now we have decided to make it a little game. Iris will be just like you the whole day, so not your sitter, but your playmate. Would you like to play that game?" Sabine nodded vigorously. "OK, but if we are going to fool everyone, we need to practice. So this afternoon she will be your playmate too." Sabine stuck out her hand towards Iris, who took it, feeling the comradeship her friend was sharing. "We are going

to a nice park, and make a beautiful hike. You are already wearing your adventure suit. But for Iris we still need to find something suitable. So I will take her upstairs again, and see what else she can borrow from you."



Figure 56 Sabine's utility jumpsuit

So she gave Sabine her Bobo to keep her company while they were upstairs again, took Iris's free hand and they went upstairs. Sabine did not pull on her other hand, but kept contact until she had to let go. In the storage room where Iris slept, Nanny opened the cupboard once more, and started browsing through it. "Oh, I hadn't even realized I had still kept this! It is the rain suit that Sabine had before she got her brain damage, and that we adjusted to make it secure. Oh, this is so adorable, I hope it will fit you, because it would be perfect. Very cute, and you don't have to worry to keep your clothes clean."

While she was talking she got a two piece suit from the cupboard from a nylon-like material in bright pink with white hearts all over it. "The hearts change color when they get wet, how fun is that? Almost a pity it won't be raining this afternoon. How is your diaper? It might be best if we change it before getting you all wrapped up." "It is only one pee, but I can probably produce a bit more. Can I do that on the toilet?" "I think it is a good idea to use the toilet when you have the opportunity, but in this case I would like to see how well your new pull-ups keep you dry, so could you do it now?" Iris tried to let go, and it even though she felt an urge, and it didn't feel that it was hard to let go, not much came. "Sorry, it is not enough to test the pull-ups I'm afraid." "That's OK. We'll have other opportunities to test it. Now, this suit might be a bit small even for you, so your overalls might be a bit thick under it. Let's do a legging and a warmer bodysuit. So, let me bring this, and this, and now let's go to the changing table." "Do we need the table for changing the pull-up? I can just step into it." "Silly mouse, I still need to clean you!"



Figure 57 Sabine's hearts rain suit

So Iris was undressed, secured on the changing table in Sabine's room, and cleaned thoroughly. Nanny was already treating her like a smaller kid, and even blew a tummy raspberry. Even though Iris found it childish, she had to laugh. The pull-up was put on while she was still lying there, and then she could get

off the table. Next she was put into the black unitard with the high collar and the back zipper (see Figure 52 Black short unitard), then the black leggings, and finally she had to step into the rain suit. The bottom part was overalls again, but like regular kids rain overalls, with straps over the shoulders. There were a few modifications though. With the rain overalls Iris had when she was younger, there were elastic straps that connected with a snap buckle to the front of the bib. But here there were straps of strong webbing that were riveted to the front bib, put over the shoulder, and buckled in the back. Nanny had to pull a bit but then managed to buckle them. The same kind of straps were connected to the sides, and Iris felt them buckled at the small of her back, making the pants fit closely around her waist. Iris concluded that this was to prevent Sabine from getting at the diaper from the top of the wide overalls.

Then the jacket went over it. There were regular snaps at the front, but near the throat there was one more set of straps attached that buckled across the opening and prevented her from taking it off. It was a small belt buckle on one side, and just holes in the other. (see Figure 34 Lock tongue buckle) “Nanny. Why is there a hole in the buckle pin?” “You know, I never realized before, but I believe they are for little padlocks. Mark showed it in the store on one of the other types of mittens. I guess that is a good idea for this little escape artist!” Iris cursed her big mouth, while Nanny collected the locks, and took the jacket off again. “Here is one for the left shoulder strap” Kiss in the neck, and click “and one for the right” Kiss on the other side of the neck, and another click, “and one for the tummy” click. Then she was put into the jacket again, the snaps were done up, and the strap buckled. Nanny showed her a white heart-shaped padlock that was just the shape and color of the heats of her suit, and put it on the jacket strap. Click.

“Now, I need one more thing. But I need to look around for a bit. Please step into Sabine’s bed.” Iris didn’t immediately realized why, but when she did Nanny closed the doors and locked her in. “Can’t have my little mouse skittering off!” Iris had not been inside Sabine’s bed before, and noticed it was a lot roomier than her crib. But the sides were also quite high and having Perspex walls was different than bars: those you could grab and press your face into. But Iris knew how to open the bed from the outside, so she thought she might manage from the inside as well. She quickly had to conclude that there was no way: the Perspex prevented her from reaching the holes for her fingers. And of course everything was very strongly built, so it soon became clear to her that she was staying there until Nanny released her.

But there she was already, and she had a small bundle of gray and pink straps in her hand. Oh no. Iris recognized the coiled wire from the wrist leash she had to wear in the shop. “This should just about fit you as well.” Nanny said, and started putting the straps over Iris’s head. It was V-shaped in front, and the bottom of the V was in the middle of her chest. Two more straps dangled from it, and Nanny took one at the time, put it through her armpit, and fixated it somewhere in the back. From the sound Iris guessed it was another side-release buckle. So it was no surprise to her when Nanny fiddled a bit more with them and then declared it safely locked.



Figure 58 Pink Toddler harness

Then she checked how tight the straps were, and concluded they were a bit loose, and promptly adjusted them for a snugger fit. "Good to know there is still a bit of room to grow!" She didn't wrap the strap on the other side of the coil around her own wrist, but just grabbed it and led Iris back to her room, where the rain boots she had worn with the pink coveralls were put on her, and then they went downstairs. By now Iris realized that 'just' being diapered and wearing clothes she could not take off herself was only a fraction of the restrictions Sabine experienced daily, and wondered once more what she had gotten herself into. Still, the cheery colors of the rain suit, the hug of the harness, and the ever-present Tender Loving Care of Nanny made her feel relaxed and she trusted that no harm would come to her.

Downstairs she was put in the chair next to Sabine, and Mrs. Fletcher wrapped the parent wrist band around a table leg, and locked it. Iris seemed to remember that the wrist leash in the store had only one locking side, but in this case it was rather convenient that the parent strap could also be used as an anchor strap. Convenient for Nanny that is. Iris had other ideas about that. Then Nanny got another big glass of water from the kitchen and ordered Iris to finish it before she got back. "Water again? I don't really like water that much." "Iris, you need to drink a lot, and if I would give you juice or soda all the time, you would soon be bouncing around on a sugar high. And I don't have time right now to make you a bottle of milk. So be a good girl and drink it all, while I get everything ready for the trip." Remembering that she was force-fed a whole bottle of milk the last time she hadn't drunk enough, she quickly started on the glass, but halfway she had to take a pause. Not knowing how long it would take Nanny, she was a bit nervous, but she estimated that she should have at least 5 minutes. So she talked a bit with Sabine, who of course recognized her rain suit and the harness. She liked the suit, and how some hearts turned dark when they became wet.

The rain jacket had some nice soft lining on the inside, making it very comfortable to wear, but inside the house it was a bit hot. Drinking the rest of the water helped a bit, but soon she felt quite warm again, so she opened the lower snaps of the jacket to let some more air in, but at chest height the harness was in the way. She also felt the strap below her throat, but with the little padlock that had to stay closed, too. At least she didn't have to wear the hood as well. Sabine shook her head at her, but Iris was too hot to worry. Then she took a closer look at Sabine's jumpsuit. She saw a zipper down the back, so as expected the front buttons would be fake. Because of the square neckline, the back of the jumpsuit ended just between the shoulder blades, which put the zipper pull at a place that was very hard to reach by the wearer. That was probably why Iris didn't spot additional safety measures. The black body underneath had a row of small buttons in the back. It seemed to Iris that she was treated as being more irresponsible now than Sabine: with 4 locks on her outfit, and 2 locking buckles on her harness, plus one to 'chain' her to the table. So she told Sabine that she looked like such a big girl now, which earned another smile. Then she quickly emptied her glass.

When Nanny came back with 2 full bags, she first complimented Iris on finishing her water, but then asked her "Do you remember what I told you the last time you were fiddling with the closures of your clothes? When you were in the hammock in the garden?" "You told me not to do it again" Iris replied in a small voice. "And?" "And there would be extra measures otherwise. But it was too hot here inside with the coat on!" "OK, that might be true, and I apologize for making you uncomfortable, but what should you have done?" "Eh, just ignored the discomfort?" "Oh mouse, that is never my intention. No, you should have called me. Like I told you when you had so much discomfort in your bed last night. I always listen if there is anything the matter when I am not in the room with you." "OK, I will. I guess I'm just so used to taking care of myself that I don't think about asking for help." "It's OK then, I will not take extra measures this time. But this is the very, very last time, understand? I told you before why this is important to me." "Yes, I understand. Thank you."

Iris didn't exactly feel good about herself at that moment. First seemingly being treated as the littlest one, and then breaking one of Nanny's important rules in the first few minutes she was in her new role, wasn't a promising start, and she was close to tears. Nanny opened the wrist strap keeping her at the table, and let her come to her. She got a hug, and Nanny said "You know I always love you, don't you? Even when I have to be strict with you?" That made Iris feel better, and she realized that she had been forgiven, and could start again, she was determined to try harder. She wanted to give Nanny a kiss, but she was too tall, so she tried to jump and peck her cheek. That didn't quite work out, and she bumped a bit harder into Mrs. Fletcher than she intended. "What are you doing now?" "Oh, I'm sorry, I wanted to give you a kiss for making me feel loved again, but it didn't quite go as I planned." "Iris, not one minute ago I told you to ask for help if you need anything. And there you go again trying to solve things by yourself! But no harm was done, and I do appreciate the effort." Then she bent over to Iris, who could then give her a kiss on the cheek.

"I need to put you in the car seat first, so come outside with me. But first let me close your jacket again. If you want you can put up your hood too so no one will recognize you. Will you carry this bag?" It was the diaper bag, which of course was a little humiliating again, but with her current outfit that didn't seem to make much difference anymore. With the bag deposited in the back, Nanny first did something at her back, and the leash came off, while she was still wearing the harness. Then she was installed in her seat. She considered that Nanny would be glad now that the old car seat was already installed, and still had the safety features, and started wondering if she had deliberately kept them in place instead of transferring them to the new car seat. After all Iris had been careless with the normal seat belt on the way to the store. But on the other hand it might not even be possible to transfer them. She just didn't know.

The car seat still had the head wings folded inward as far as they would go, so that Iris was not easily recognizable from outside the car. She quickly took her hood off again; she was still warm. Having sat in her mother's booster seat only this morning, she realized what a difference in comfort there was, and how safe the 5-point harness felt. If she wouldn't have to worry about being recognized and talked about, she might almost prefer it. But of course the price for that comfort was her freedom. Although, with her mother being so strict about unbuckling, and with the child safety lock on the car doors, exactly how much freedom did she have anyway?

Mrs. Fletcher came back with Sabine, on the same harness and leash she wore in the shop, and she was installed in her new car seat as well, which she obviously still enjoyed. When everything for the trip was loaded, they were off. During the trip Nanny explained to Iris that they were going to Vickery County Park. Actually not far away from their home at all, as the crow flies, but it was on the other side of the Mackenzie river, and they had to make a fair detour for a bridge to get there. This meant that it was often quiet there, and very little chance for Iris of encountering someone she knew.

After a 15 minute drive, they had reached the parking place at the entrance of the park, where there were only two other cars parked, and no other people in sight. Nanny first removed the stroller from the back, and filled it with the two bags. Then she got Sabine out and held her by the harness strap, while trying to free Iris. But Sabine was impatient and pulling on her leash, preventing her mother from undoing the security clips for Iris. So Nanny tied the leash to the headrest of the driver seat, and then Iris could climb out. Nanny was careful to hold her by the arm until the leash was reconnected at her back, and this time she did put the other end of the leash around her waist. Then she got hold of Sabine's leash as well, grabbed the stroller and off they went. Sabine grabbed Iris's hand, and together they started off into a new adventure.

They set a brisk pace, and more than once Nanny told them to slow down and not pull on the leashes, but in their enthusiasm they soon forgot that again. When they entered a more forested area, it got worse: Sabine went one way to hug a tree and pick flowers, while Iris saw a bird and went off in the opposite direction. Mrs. Fletcher felt she was being pulled apart and had to take control. So she called Iris over, who after a strong pull on the coiled leash, reluctantly came to her. Then Sabine had to come as well, which was easier because her leash had no stretch. Nanny looked at the situation for a moment, and then thought of a solution. The leash she used for Sabine was Y-shaped, with 1 strap and a handle on the side of the handler, splitting 2 feet (0.6m) before the end into 2 straps that connected on either side of Sabine's waist. So she disconnected the leash from one side of Sabine's waist, and connected it to Iris's harness instead. Now the girls were connected to each other with a relatively short strap, and Nanny had one leash to control them both. She disconnected Iris's leash and stored that in her bag.

This meant that if the girls moved in opposite directions, they were pulling against each other, and that was a little frustrating for Iris since she always lost to her stronger and heavier friend. She looked at Nanny for help but her silent plea was ignored. Obviously Nanny thought that she should solve this herself. So she decided to take Sabine's hand once more, and try to do, and look at, the same things. When they rode the bicycle a few days back Sabine had watched the birds with her, but then she didn't have much of a choice, since she was harnessed in the bike seat and had to follow Iris's lead. But now there were so many things to look at, insects to chase after, and flower to pick, that Sabine had no interest in standing still for minutes to try and spot a hiding bird. Iris had to give up, and knowing that she would do more birdwatching with her father in a few days, she just focused on the same things that Sabine was interested in. After that things were much smoother, and Iris really enjoyed herself. Knowing that she couldn't soil her clothes, she didn't have to be careful, and knowing Nanny watched out over them, she didn't have to pay attention to where they were going or for dangers. Well, of course there was the Poison Ivy³ to watch out for, but she was used to that, and Sabine seemed aware as well of those leaves that always appear in groups of three. You only had to get the rash one time to know you never wanted to touch that plant again.

After a while they reached a picnic bench and they stopped for a break. Sabine's leash was padlocked to the bench, and Iris's leash was reconnected, and the other side locked to the bench as well. They were placed on opposite sides of the table. Nanny had a juice box and a delicious chocolate-chip cookie for the both of them. Now Iris also had the opportunity to look around for wildlife, and there was a grey squirrel that approached them quite close. It was probably used to being fed here, or at least find scraps afterwards. But Iris had learned from her father that human food often wasn't good for wild animals, and that you had to be careful with the grey squirrels since they could carry rabies. Still it was nice to watch it watching them.

Since Sabine was anxious to get moving again, they didn't stay there too long, and soon were off exploring once more. A while later Iris started to slow down a bit, not being used to the tempo and activity level of her friend, and Nanny decided to put her in the stroller for a while, since she needed to not exert herself too much. Iris didn't really want to be confined and not explore for as far as the leash allowed, but she realized that Nanny was right, and sat down without complaint. Sabine got both sides of the leash attached once more, and Iris was put in the 5-point harness. Her feet were also strapped to the footrest. But to allow her to look around more, the canopy was folded back, so that it didn't

³ Poison Ivy is an American plant that is a bottom-dweller, and looks nothing special. But the oily substance on the leaves can leave an itchy and irritating rash that could last for one to two weeks.

limit Iris's view of the sky and the tree tops. The backward leaning position she was in actually made it very easy to look around and watch for birds. (see Figure 59)



Figure 59 Sabine's all-terrain stroller

They had not encountered anybody yet, but then a woman in a jogging outfit came into view and walked towards them. She stopped for a moment to exchange a few words with Mrs. Fletcher, then said hi to Sabine, and finally also bent over the stroller and asked "And what is the name of this little one?" Iris realized they were practicing for her coming across like a special needs person, but didn't quite know how to respond. Mrs. Fletcher explained to her that little Iris was a bit shy. The woman didn't seem put off, and congratulated Iris on her lovely rain suit, with all the hearts. "You must be a little runner I think: in the stroller harness, and a walking harness, and even your jacket has this cute little padlock, and in the same color as your rain suit, too!" She even touched it for a moment, and gave it a little pull to show Iris she really was secured. Nanny clarified "Yes, she is our little escape artist, and also likes to take her clothes off. Not an hour ago I found her with all then snaps undone, but luckily the harness and the padlock stopped her from getting it off." So then the lady also had to hook her finger in her walking harness and pull on it a bit. "It seems like you are not going anywhere" she concluded. Iris really disliked this lady who didn't respect her personal space and even started touching her without asking, and shouted "leave me alone" and started flapping with her arms. The woman took a startled step back, and Mrs. Fletcher apologized to her, and said that Iris didn't always like strangers. The woman complimented Sabine's mother for being able to cope with two challenging special needs kids, and then went on.

Iris had quite enough of being confined to the stroller, and being gazed at and treated like a toddler, so she tried to get out. She attacked the buckle, but that was covered by a soft layer of fabric that felt spongy. She could press a little on it, but the buckle didn't open. She was just trying wiggle out of the shoulder straps, when Nanny said "Young lady, I have warned you enough times by now not to try and open your clothes or security gear." And she proceeded to retrieve a pair of mittens from her bag, and put them on Iris's hands. (see Figure 30 Patient safety mittens) Iris tried to pull away, but she didn't have much room for resisting in her stroller, and Nanny was experienced in handling a stronger girl, so her hands had soon disappeared in the same mittens that she had voluntarily worn in the store, only these were a smaller size, and fitted her well. The thick cushion underneath her fingers prevented her effectively from manipulating anything, and she sat back angrily.

“Sabine, why don’t you push the stroller for a while?” Nanny suggested, and Sabine enthusiastically took it over and started pushing her friend around. Of course her mother still had a firm grip on her leash. With Sabine it wasn’t as smooth a ride as when Nanny pushed it, but the stroller was like a hammock, and the bumps didn’t hurt her at all. It was actually sort of fun, and she started to say ‘whoop’ every time she was jolted. Sabine took this as a challenge, and tried to find the biggest bumps. Soon both were laughing and yelling out loud. Another effect of all the shaking was that Iris often lost a bit of urine, but since she was well-protected and she was supposed to pass water often anyway, she just let it go. It still burned a bit, but with the pain killers that she took that wasn’t too bad either. But the wild ride and the shaking were a bit much for her stomach, and suddenly she heaved a little vomit. The unexpectedness of it, the foul taste, and the indignity of needing to wear mittens, together were a bit too much for Iris and she started to cry. Nanny took action immediately, stopped Sabine, and kneeled next to Iris. She saw what happened, and started cleaning it up. It wasn’t much, and it wiped off easily from the rain suit. In the meantime she soothed Iris, by telling her it was a little accident, and it was all cleaned up again. “If you promise me not to mess with the harness or your clothes anymore, I will take the mittens off now.” “Yes Nanny, I promise.” After Iris’s hands were free again, she got a water bottle to wash away the bad taste in her mouth, while Nanny used a few more wipes to clean the tears from her face. Soon Iris felt better again, and with her punishment with the mittens over, she realized life wasn’t so bad, and started to enjoy the outing once more.

23. Retrospective

And then suddenly they were back at the car. The way back was uneventful, and back home the harnesses were taken off, and both were taken upstairs. “I think it is high time to give both of you some clean underwear.” Nanny explained, and both nodded. “Sabine, will you wait in your bed while I first help Iris?” “Mommy, may I watch?” That caused her mother to think for a moment. While Iris was being undressed, and strapped to the changing table, she would be seriously vulnerable when Sabine would have a tantrum. Sabine had been quite well-behaved during the trip, and the risk of a tantrum was small if Sabine was just watching passively, but in the end she wasn’t prepared to take the risk. “Sorry sweetie, you have been very good today, and I wish I could allow it. But if you would get angry Iris wouldn’t be able to defend herself or get away. Sabine nodded and let herself be locked in the bed.

For the first time in hours Iris wasn’t actually held or restrained at all, so she thought it would be hilarious to sneak out of the room and hide somewhere while Nanny was putting Sabine in the bed. So she did, and she managed to disappear through the door before Nanny turned around. It was just a little bit of fun, and she wanted to see Nanny’s reaction, so she stayed in the landing and tried to glance through the door opening without being seen. “Now, I was sure I just left Iris here a moment ago. Where can she have gone?” Nanny said exaggeratedly, and started looking around in the room in all sorts of places where Iris could impossibly have fitted in. This made her giggle, and then her hiding place was betrayed, and Nanny quickly got her back into the room.

“It seems like someone really likes her rain suit and doesn’t want a clean diaper!” Iris vigorously shook her head “No Nanny, the suit is hot, and the diaper is wet. Please change me. It was just a little game.” Nanny pretended to think about it for a moment, but then started to unlock and open the rain suit. Iris didn’t actually mind the suit outside, but inside it was too hot and sweaty. It was a bit small on her though, and that meant it was a bit tighter on her, and some tightness around her shoulders limited her slightly in lifting her arms high over her head. “But Nanny, I still haven’t seen how the jacket changes color when it gets wet!” “OK, wait here for a second. I’ll get a bowl of water for cleaning you,

and then I'll make your jacket a bit wet. But you had better be there in the same spot when I return, young lady, or I won't do it!" "Yes, Nanny, I will." And she did.

When Nanny put some water on the sleeve, one of the white hearts there quickly started turning darker, and after a few moments was almost black. The other stayed white. "That one is broken" Iris announced, but Nanny said that it was intentional, and only some of the hearts changed color. "Yes, only some" confirmed Sabine, who of course must have seen it many times when the suit still fitted her. She was standing in her bed and tried to follow the proceedings from there. Then the suit was taken off, followed by the leggings and the unitard, and Iris was put on the changing table. Nanny quickly put a towel over her torso to prevent her from cooling off too much. Her temperature was 99.5F (37.5C), still a bit high, but not unexpected for in the afternoon. The pull-up was quite full, but it hadn't leaked. After more cream she quickly was in the next one, and then Nanny dressed her in the yellow body and denim overalls that she was in before.

Not that long before, Iris realized. She was only put in it when her mother showed interest in it this morning. That seemed like days ago! Even the doctor visit was only this morning. Nanny had taken her hand again, and swapped both girls. She had realized that Nanny couldn't treat her differently from Sabine now, so she docilely let herself be locked in the bed. Now Iris was the one looking on from her prison to see how Sabine was changed. When Nanny opened the back zipper of her utility jumpsuit, Iris saw that there was a little padlock between two D-rings on the inside, anyway. When she inspected the back of the suit before she hadn't noticed, and somehow she felt better that she hadn't been the only one actually locked in her clothes. The black body underneath opened in the crotch, so the buttons in the back didn't need to be opened. Sabine always wore proper diapers, so that took a bit longer than the pull-ups, but not much, and soon she was in fresh underwear too, and then her mother put her in the peach patient jumpsuit (see Figure 45 Patient safety jumpsuit) that Iris had also worn to test the safety measures for letting Sabine move freely. For now her arms and legs were not restricted though.

Then they went down together, with Nanny holding Iris's hand, and Iris holding Sabine's. "I need to start cooking for dinner. But first I'll make a flask of milk for Iris. I'll let you two play in the living room for now, but at the first hint of trouble you'll need to go in the tent. Sabine, for all our safety I'm going to restrict your arms and legs again, like with the denim jumpsuit." Then she pulled the zippers that ran between her arms and torso, and between her legs, halfway down. A few minutes later Nanny gave Sabine a bottle of milk again, and Sabine grabbed the back of Iris's overalls and steered her into the tent. Iris considered that both the Fletchers enjoyed that a little too much, but in the end it worked out well for everybody: she got enough to drink, and Sabine was kept busy and felt needed, and Nanny could focus on other things. So she really didn't mind. Apart from that, milk was a welcome change from all the water.

When dinner was ready, Nanny opened the zippers on Sabine's suit once more, installed her in the chair, and put her in the sleeved bib. Then she surprised Iris by holding up the harness again that she wore in the afternoon. "As long as you are being treated the same way as Sabine, you are not allowed to sit at the table unsecured. And since we haven't yet practiced a meal, I think we should use the opportunity, so we know what to do tomorrow." Iris nodded and let her be put into the harness again. This time there were two straps connected to her chair, that Nanny connected to the sides of her harness. They prevented her from getting up. Next she did something at her back, and she couldn't bend forward either. "So, that should keep you safe. Then she also put a bib on Iris. It didn't have sleeves, but was big enough to cover most of her chest and stomach, and at the bottom there was a sort of gusset to catch an food dribbling down. It was bright pink and had a picture of a teddy bear on the front. (see Figure 60)



Figure 60 Iris's bib

There was a ratchet-like sound when Nanny closed it, and it was tight enough around her neck that she was sure she wouldn't be able to pull it off over her head. Still remembering the mittens she needed to wear in the stroller, she daredn't touch it and explore it she could get it off.

For dinner there was Spaghetti Bolognese, which caused the children to cheer. But it was also messy to eat, and even though Nanny cut up the long strands for the both of them, their bibs soon were decorated with red spots. Iris tried to prevent it, but with the harness keeping her from bending over her plate, it was way more challenging than she was used to. Nanny teased her "Iris, perhaps next time I won't give you a plate anymore, and drop all the food in the bib gusset directly. That should save you some work." and she winked to make sure Iris realized she wasn't serious. Still it made Iris blush and feel small. After they had eaten their fill, Nanny decided she had better get a wet towel to clean them; this was not a wet wipes job. Soon their bibs, their hands, and their faces were clean again.

Then Nanny asked Iris if she wanted to be grown-up again, and Iris thought about it for a moment. It was sort of fun and carefree, but Nanny was quite strict, and she'd be like Sabine tomorrow all day too, so she agreed. Then Nanny released her from the table and took the harness off. Then she was 'rewarded' with the task of cleaning the table and filling the dishwasher with Nanny. Sabine got something to color while they were busy, but she was fiddly and wanted to do something more active than staying in her chair. Her mother asked if she wanted to run a bit more, and Sabine nodded. Iris concluded that they were probably talking about the home trainer upstairs. "I'll let you run for a bit before we get you to bed, but first your dinner has to be digested a bit more. You might get cramps otherwise." "OK, can I play with Iwris then?" So her mother freed her from the chair, closed the arm and leg zippers halfway again, and put them both in the tent. She apologized to Iris from locking her in, but she needed to make some preparations for the trip tomorrow, and Sabine needed to stay quiet for a while. Iris was so used to getting restricted by now that she hadn't even thought about it, and just played with Sabine and the dolls and toys lying around.

After a while Mrs. Fletcher came and got them, and took them upstairs to the gym room. This time she installed Sabine on the treadmill, by putting her in the harness that hung from the ceiling, and lifting it high enough that Sabine couldn't fall far down if she lost her balance. Her hands were also strapped to

the handle bars, and then she turned on the treadmill and gradually upped the pace until Sabine was making fair speed. "If you want to keep her company, you can sit here on the bike. I'll not set a target for you this time, and you can just pedal as slow as you like, since you still need to take it easy." When Iris didn't protest she just steered her onto the home trainer, and closed the harness. I suggest you keep your hands on the bars next to your seat; doing the rowing motion with the upper handle bars requires some practice, and is too strenuous for now." Then she turned on the TV again, this time with another scene, and left them to exercise.

Iris didn't feel like exercising much, but with the moving scene it felt so natural to pedal that her feet almost moved automatically. Sabine had a real workout again, just like the first time. Occasionally she stumbled, but with the harness keeping her mostly in place, and having a good grip on the handles, she could easily get her feet under her again and resume the running. After a while, maybe 15 minutes, Mrs. Fletcher came to get them, and took Sabine with her to prepare for the night. She said to Iris that she would see her downstairs. When she left Iris was still in the harness, but she assumed that was an invitation to free herself, and since the harness wasn't locked, she got out, took her phone and went downstairs.

She heard the regular sounds coming from above of Sabine being bathed and then put to bed, until the footsteps on the stairs announced Sabine's mother joining her downstairs. "Iris, did you take the home trainer harness off yourself?" she asked strictly. That startled Iris, and she started to mumble about assuming that she could, when Nanny suddenly laughed and said she was just teasing. When she sat down next to Iris, she got a mock punch on her shoulder and a "You are mean". But immediately afterward Iris snuggled up to her.

"So, this has been another eventful day, and a pretty emotional one for you, I'm sure" "Yes, it seems hard to believe it all fit in one day, and that it was only this morning that I visited the doctor." "We mostly talked about what the doctor said and prescribed, but not much on how it was for you." "I was certainly relieved that we had a female doctor, but of course even then it was embarrassing. Still, the doctor was doing her best, and I was also glad that I hadn't caused the UTI by sitting on the wet ground. But I suddenly had to wet my diaper just while we were talking, right next to my mother and in front of the doctor." "You do realize that both knew about your condition by then, and that neither of them would have considered that childish?" "Well yes, but it still felt awful. And then my mother changed me, and dressed me. I could tell she loved that." "I know you have your differences with your mother, but how did you honestly feel about her caring for you like that?" "It is actually quite nice when you do it, and mom was not too bad at it, so I guess it wasn't too bad. But I can never tell her, or she would want to do it more often, and probably also when I didn't want it."

"And then she went to the department store with you?" "Yes, it almost seemed like she was trying to do her best to humiliate me. I didn't only have to go among all those people wearing diapers, but then we also had to pick suitable ones for me in the middle of the store. I wanted so badly just to disappear then!" "Do you really think your mother wanted to humiliate you? Can you think of other reasons why she did it this way?" "Do we really have to talk about this? These evenings are always so lovely and peaceful, and now I have to think about all those negative things that happened to me." "Come Iris, sit on my lap for a while and I will keep you safe in my arms. We don't have to talk about it, but I think you will feel better once we have. And I would like you to not go to bed all negative." "OK then, I will try. I guess my mother wanted me to have the medication as soon as possible, and because of the insurance she couldn't leave it to you. And I had to be there too, to hear the instructions for the medication." "That sounds really plausible; much more likely to me than that she did it to humiliate you. And how would you have felt if she had gone in without you and came back with some diapers that she picked? Would you have liked them then?" "Bummer, why are you always so reasonable? Can't I just be mad

at my mother for all that happened to me today?" "I can see that attraction, but after a while it might be better to face the truth, and blaming your mother for everything wouldn't be good for your relationship. I think being honest to yourself, even when you don't like it, is a very grown-up thing to do." "Being a child is certainly a lot simpler!" "Definitely. I am glad you see that, because at your age you are still allowed to be a child every now and then, and I am so glad to see you enjoy that when you can let go of all this pressure you put on yourself to be all grown-up."

That made Iris think, and she realized that was why she felt so happy and carefree when she was dressed and treated like Sabine. "But I really like you as a big girl as well, with your good ideas and our grown-up talks. It is wonderful that you can be both. Oh, one more tip, actually for both you and your mother: if you feel like the other is reacting in the old way, and not open, you can always ask 'can you rephrase that?' to give the other a tip that she expressed herself in a way that didn't work."

Then she continued "When you came back here with your mother, we quickly plunged into a difficult talk. I realized it was not ideal to do it so quickly after all that happened earlier in the morning, but it came up, and I hoped I could help you both to improve things between you." "Yes, I think it has helped. But I'll still have to see if my mother really will change." "And you, are you motivated to listen to her too? Perhaps in this you could be the wiser of you two, and try to keep the exchange open. For people who are not that young anymore it is often harder to change." "Of course I do want a better relation with my mother, and that she'd listen to me more. Couldn't you have said a little more about that to her?" "Iris, suppose I would have done that, and chosen your side. How do you think that would feel for your mother? And would you feel that you needed to work on the relationship as well? It's not about right or wrong, it's just trying to find a way to communicate that works for both of you. As a mediator I can't choose sides." "OK, I think I understand. Thanks so much for trying to help us!" and she snuggled even closer to Nanny.

"This is the sort of thing that is normally done between two adults, and you behaved very grown-up, to also see what was difficult for your mother and work out a way to solve your differences. But then after lunch and nap you suddenly were reduced to being treated like small child." "Yes, that was not so easy. It was a lot more restrictive than just wearing diapers and clothes I can't take off." "Oh, that reminds me, we need to get you something more to drink." So she put Iris on the couch and got a glass of cranberry juice. "I guess you have earned something else than water. And how is your diaper filling up? I probably should have changed you already a while ago." "I think it is still OK. I try to let go whenever I feel the urge. Sometimes I feel like I need to go, and nothing comes, and other times it almost comes out by itself. I don't really have to think about it much anymore, although it still hurts."

"And then you had to go out in public, in your cute rain suit and harness." "The harness definitely took some getting used to. Especially when you connected me to Sabine. She is much stronger and bigger, so I constantly had to do what she wanted." "Yes, I saw, and I am sorry. But I could not think of another way. You two were constantly pulling me in all directions, and I had to push the stroller along as well." "I'm sorry. I should have been more helpful." "No, don't be. You were pretending to be a girl with a mental age of 2 or 3, and you were just as impulsive as you needed to be. And I am very glad we did this practice, because I definitely had to figure out how to deal with the two of you. You seemed to be a natural. I was afraid you might try to overdo it, and pretend a speech impediment or something, which probably wouldn't have been very kind to Sabine. But you just let go of all your inhibitions and tried to have fun. Combined with the right clothes and a harness, and especially the stroller, and that woman we encountered probably wouldn't have believed us if we said you were normal."

"Yeah, that was quite a stupid cow. The way she just started touching me and pulling on my harness." "I can see how that would have upset you. But you'd better get used to it quick, because I'm sure that

will happen again tomorrow; probably multiple times. Most people don't really see Sabine, or you in this case, as a girl of 13, but as a little child. And you probably wouldn't ask a baby's permission either before you bend over its stroller and tickle it or stroke its head. Your reaction was quite in character, but I think tomorrow it might draw a bit more attention than you might want. So you could also just pretend to be shy and turn away if approached like that again." "I'm not looking forward to that part. And I had never seen you so strict before either." "Well, I guess that happens when you let go of your inhibitions: someone else needs to step in to keep you in line. And I do think I gave you plenty of warning before I put on the mittens. Don't expect me to be different tomorrow: in the aquarium they will probably not allow things like running and shouting, or touching things, and I will also need to keep both of you safe in the crowded areas."

Nanny continued "I guess that was quite enough excitement for one day. Do you feel more relaxed now that we talked about it?" "Yes, I guess so. I am not thinking about it so much now." "That's nice. Now let's just sit back and relax. You know, can I confess something to you?" "Anything, Nanny!" "A while ago I had my hands full, and in one of them I held one of Sabine's pacifiers. Because I needed one hand free, I put it in my mouth for a moment, and noticed it was actually quite nice to suckle on it. So now, sometimes in the evening, when I have trouble relaxing, I borrow one from Sabine for a few hours. Isn't that strange?" "I think I can see why you like it. When Sabine gives me a bottle of milk, it is also relaxing." "Thank you for being understanding. What do you think, should we both try one until you go to bed?" "OK, I guess if you like it I should give it a try too."

So Nanny got them both a paci, and they just sat together on the couch and suckled, and Nanny played with Iris's hair. Of course talking was a bit harder, but they had done so much talking already that they just enjoyed the quiet, and occasionally tried to say a few words around the pacifier, or took it out when that didn't work. Way too soon it was bedtime for Iris again, so Nanny took out her pacifier and put it on the table. Then she took Iris's, but she didn't let go of hers and shook her head. "Do you want to keep it in for the night?" Iris nodded. "OK then, for tonight. But you can't use it all the time, that is not good for your teeth." Iris hugged Nanny to thank her for allowing it tonight, and together they went upstairs.

"You will have to take out your pacifier for brushing your teeth though. Here, put it in this little box, and you can have it again when you go to bed. Now first go to the bathroom and get ready." When she came back Nanny was ready with everything to change her, and had opened the package of Tena Youth that the pharmacy supplied for the night. Iris's temperate was 99.3F (37.4C), which was not bad. The new diaper seemed similar to the cotton-backed ones Iris had worn before, and fit just fine. When she was safe inside her carebear suit again, she got the pacifier back, and was tucked in like the previous evenings. Soon she had drifted off.

When she woke later that night because of her bladder, it was easy to let go, but she noticed that her paci was no longer in her mouth. She tried to find it, but there was no light, and with her mittened hands she could not feel it. So she had to give up and went back to sleep.

The next time she woke it suddenly all seemed wrong. There was just enough light to see, and the bars of her bed seemed thicker, higher, and somehow nastier: more like a prison than a cute crib. And although the room was familiar, it wasn't the room she fell asleep in. Suddenly she realized she was back in her room at home. Then the door opened and her mother came in, with a thick stack of diapers. And she was not alone: her friends Anna and Mindy followed, with more baby gear. And then more and more people that she knew came into the room, and started laughing and pointing at her. It was horrible, and Iris tried to get away, but the bars held her firmly and there was nowhere to go. Iris started screaming and sobbing, and then suddenly she woke up. It had all been a nightmare. She tried

to tell herself that it had just been a bad dream, and that she was safe here, but it didn't work. The bed still felt like a prison. She felt so horrible, and Nanny had said that she should ask for help if she was in discomfort, so she called for her, not too loud so she wouldn't wake up Sabine, but what she hoped was loud enough that the baby monitor would pick up and would wake Nanny. No reaction. So she started calling louder and louder, because her panic was rising.

When the door opened and Nanny came in she felt an enormous wave of relief. "Nanny, please get me out of here! Now!" Mrs. Fletcher realized that there was something seriously wrong, so she wasted no time in lowering the railing, picking Iris up, and holding her tight in her arms. Still sobbing and a bit haltingly Iris explained her dream, and how horrible the bed suddenly seemed. Nanny realized that Iris needed a little change of scenery, and carried her downstairs in her arms. They sat on the couch, and Nanny patiently held Iris, stroked her hair, and kept repeating that the nasty dream was over and she was safe now. When Iris had calmed down and stopped sobbing, she asked if Iris liked a little bit of warm milk, and got a nod. "Up you go", and Nanny lifted her off her lap and on her feet. "No, wait for me, and give me your hand. Those feet of the sleep suit are too slippery." So they went into the kitchen, and Nanny filled the baby bottle one-third full with milk from the fridge, and kept it under the hot water tap for a few moments. To Iris the baby bottle seemed totally appropriate at the moment, and she looked forward to being held so lovingly and to suckle.

Walking back to the couch on Nanny's hand, they sat down and Iris got all she wished for, and once it was finished she felt all warm and loved again, and the bad memories had receded. "I think you would just love to sit here with me and fall asleep in my arms, wouldn't you." Iris nodded. "But tomorrow is going to be a busy day, and we both need to rest properly in a bed. Come, let's go upstairs and see how scary your bed looks like now. If you still feel uncomfortable in it I won't make you sleep there, and we'll think of something else" Nanny explained as she took Iris up the stairs, who followed her a bit hesitantly "But it is best to face the big bad bed now, or it might only get worse." In the room Nanny first turned on the night lamp (see Figure 9 Night light), and then put Iris on the side of the bed. "Hey, here is your pacifier – did it fell out of your mouth during the night?" "Yes Nanny, and it was so dark that I couldn't find it anymore, not with my hands all covered." "Ah, I see. Let me look for a moment." She opened the cupboard and retrieved a small string with a loop at one end and a clip in the other. She put the loop through the pacifier ring, and clipped the other end to Iris's sleepsuit. "Now you can always find it back when it falls out of your mouth. If it will not stay in, we can try a different solution tomorrow, but let's first try this."

Then she continued "Now, if you climb into your bed all the way, I will close the railing for a moment, just to see how you feel, and if it is still scary." When the railing clanked into the locks, there was a brief moment of panic again, but suckling on the pacifier helped, and with Nanny there with her hands still on the railing, ready to lower it if needed, the feeling of safety was back, and the bad dream soon was a far memory. She started to lie down, and Nanny opened the railing again to tug her in and kiss her forehead. Then the railing went up once more, and Nanny said "I will leave the night light on tonight, OK?" "Yes, please", and then she stroked Iris's head again until she dropped off.

24. Saturday – on their Way

When Iris was woken in the morning, and Nanny raised the blinds, she still felt quite sleepy. But there was also less light coming in. "Sorry to wake you so early, especially after the interrupted night, but we have to leave early, since it is a long trip, and I want us to have as much time as we can at the aquarium." That got Iris awake quick enough, and she immediately sat up. Seeing the bars of the crib again, she had a brief moment of fear from the nightmare, but she recognized that was all it was, and

that Nanny would keep her safe. Like in the night Nanny immediately got her out when she wanted, and now she also opened the railing, so that Iris could sit on the edge. She wanted to jump out and get going, but remembered just in time that her feet were a bit slippery and she was supposed to wait for Nanny. So instead she stuck out her arms to get help, and soon she stood on her two legs.

"Let's first get you out of that diaper and into a clean one." So the suit was unlocked and Iris was taken out. Both noticed a bit of a urine smell. "Oh, it seems like your new diapers have leaked a bit. I think we had better go to the changing table, so I can better see what has happened. I would be waking up Sabine soon anyway." So Nanny put the sleepsuit around Iris's shoulders to keep her warm, and they went to the next room. When Mrs. Fletcher opened the blinds there, Sabine looked at them sleepily. "Good Morning, my girl, I will get you out soon. But you can lie in for a few more moments. I need to help Iris first." Sabine didn't seem to mind, but just closed her eyes again – apparently still so sleepy that she didn't even bother to look at what was happening with her friend.

"There you go, up on the table." After she was secured, Nanny opened the diaper. "Well, you produced a fair bit of pee, but it doesn't seem like it overflowed. How often did you pee in it?" "Once earlier in the night, and once with you on the couch." "This looks more than two wettings; perhaps you slept so deeply that you didn't notice, or it seeped out a bit, due to the infection. Anyway, it doesn't matter. Now about the diaper: perhaps I didn't put it on quite tight enough; sometimes you have to experiment a little with a new type. But I also had one type that just didn't work with Sabine; you seem to need a bit of luck too. We'll try it again later, but with some plastic pants over them. For today I want to put you in Sabine's diapers again: they are quite obvious, and therefore help with your 'disguise'." Again Iris felt some hesitation: with the clothes and the harness it was already quite embarrassing, and now she had to get a diaper too that everyone would notice instantly? "Does everybody has to see that I am wearing a diaper?" "If you really want to, I guess we could do the cloth-backed diapers as well, but I think it would be best to go all out. You know what the funny thing is: the more you look like a mentally disabled person, the less they look at you and your face, and they will only notice what you are wearing. I bet that woman in the park yesterday would not even recognize you if she encountered you in grown-up clothes." "OK, I guess so. If someone would recognize me in Sabine's clothes and harness, my life would be over anyway, diaper or not."

"Now let us check your temperature. 98.9F (37.2C) Not bad at all. Your pee still smells quite badly, but it is a bit too early to expect improvement from the antibiotics anyway. How painful is it now when you pee? Do you still feel reluctance to let go?" "It still hurts a bit, so I sometimes wait a bit, but I know I should let go as much as I can, so I don't wait too long, and get it over with." "That is very good, but the doctor said we could increase the pain medication if needed. Would you like to have 2 instead of 1 today, and see if that makes it easier?" "Yes please. It would be nice if it doesn't distract me during our trip." "OK, we'll do that then. Now, which diaper design would you like? We have the toy animals, flowers and balloons." "Can I have the flowers today?" "Of course you can." "But can I go to the toilet first?" "Oh, that sounds like a good idea. Go on then."

When she returned she was secured on the changing table, as she had gotten used to. "Let me first put some cream on you, with the long car ride it will probably be a while before I can change you again." Iris felt happy about the nice decorations on the diaper, and regretted her decision a bit to go for plain ones when the pharmacy assistant asked her. When Nanny got to the part between her legs with the cream, it was so sensitive again that it almost felt like a shock through her body, and she had to concentrate hard to not wiggle and get more contact with Nanny's fingers, so she started pulling on the straps around her wrists to distract herself. "Still so sensitive?" "Yes Nanny. But Nanny, I haven't showered yet!" "I know dear, but I thought we could do that tonight, after we returned."

When the diaper was on, Iris had to step in a green body, that she thought she recognized, but couldn't immediately remember where from. It had a row of tiny buttons up the back. Then followed a lighter green pair of tights. "I'm sorry, this was the best color I could come up with, but it doesn't really match your body well." Iris didn't quite know how to respond; she assumed more clothes would follow, and had no idea yet how it all would combine, so she just grunted a bit. With the next item she suddenly realized why she recognized the body: it were the pink bunny shortalls that she got at the special needs store! (Figure 36 Kawaii bunny shortalls) The body was part of that ensemble. "Nanny..." Iris began to protest, but she was hushed "Iris, you agreed that you would be treated just as Sabine today. So today you don't get a say in what you wear. And I think this will make you totally unrecognizable: everybody will just see two cute girls dressed in matching, very childish shortalls." Iris had no choice, and perhaps Nanny was right. But she still shuddered at the thought of going out in public in that! When she had reluctantly stepped in the legs, and they were pulled up, the billowing shorts easily fitted over the diaper. Next Nanny pulled the bib up, and the straps with the connected hood went over her head. The straps were buttoned at the back to the shorts with 2 buttons each. Next Nanny took one of those little heart-shaped padlocks, showed to Iris that it was in matching pink, and locked the shorts with the 2 D-rings on the inside. Finally the back zipper of the shorts was pulled up, hiding the padlock.

Next was something Iris didn't expect: Nanny also had shoes for her. They were Mary Janes, like the ones her mother made her wear to parties when she was younger, combined with lace socks. Because of that she hated them, although they were fairly comfortable. When Nanny buckled them on her feet, she first had to walk some steps through the room to judge if they fitted. Unluckily they did. Then she took out a little tool, perhaps an Allen key, and turned on a little piece of metal that went through the end of each strap. When she was done she concluded "so, now you won't lose your shoes accidentally." As if. (see Figure 61)



Figure 61 Mary Jane shoes

Nanny still wasn't quite finished yet, and got the harness out that Iris wore the previous afternoon. Iris couldn't resist an "Already?" but Nanny just ignored her and locked her in it. Then she took the other end of the leash and locked the wrist strap to a metal ring on the opposite wall. "Your hat you will get when we arrive at the aquarium. It is too inconvenient in the car." Small blessings. Then it was Sabine's turn, and soon she was dressed alike, except that her body was dark blue. And she didn't get her harness on. That didn't seem fair to Iris.

Then Sabine was taken into the bathroom, while Nanny explained "I'll first get Sabine ready and in her activity chair, and then I'll come back for you and get you ready as well." Iris didn't like being left there on her own, leashed to the wall, so she tried to move towards the door, to at least see the Fletchers in the bathroom. She managed to just put her head far enough to see them, but it took too much strength to keep pulling the coiled leash that far, so she gave up and set dejected on the floor. She could only listen to Sabine washing her hands, brushing her teeth, getting her hair combed, and taken downstairs. Finally Nanny came back up and released her from the wall.

"Now, let's get my little mouse ready too." Every time Iris was treated like a small child, she was called 'mouse' or even 'little mouse'. She was teased enough about her height that she felt she ought to object, but when Nanny said it, it sounded so fitting and caring that she didn't feel any resentment

about it. Even though Nanny kept a firm grip on her leash, she could at least wash her own hands and face, and brush her teeth, but under strict surveillance that she did it thoroughly enough. Then Nanny brushed her hair, which was always nice. Next they collected her sleepsuit and went downstairs. The suit was dropped with the laundry in the kitchen, and Iris was once again locked to her chair with her harness and also got the bib (see Figure 60 Iris's bib).

During breakfast they talked of course about the aquarium and what they would like to see there, but they didn't know what the exhibits were yet, so they were just guessing. Iris started to get a little more used to being forced to sit upright, and the breakfast was also easier to eat than the spaghetti yesterday, so her bib stayed almost clean, apart from a few crumbs. Only when she was taking a sip of milk and rushed to be able to say something, some milk escaped and dribbled down her chin onto the bib.

After breakfast Iris was released first, so that she could help with cleaning the table. The bib was still around her neck, so Iris tried to get it off when she was out of sight from Sabine, but the strap around her neck was too tight to pull it over her head, and she couldn't find out how to release it. "Iris, no!" "But I was just trying to help, so that we could leave quicker" Iris pouted. "I understand sweetie, and I appreciate you did it out of sight of you-know-who, but you know the rules. So now you'll be wearing it until we are in the car. Let me wipe it clean though." Iris didn't like that idea at all, but she had to admit it was her own fault. Trust Nanny to come up with something appropriate to punish her without being mean.

The next time she went to the table to clean it, Sabine made a grab for her leash from her activity chair, and managed to get a hold of it. Immediately she tried to put it around her own wrist, but that was not so easy, and even Nanny needed a bit of time for that, so Sabine didn't get anywhere. "Oh, yes, that is a good idea" Nanny said when she saw it, helped Sabine put it on, and locked the wrist band as well. Now Iris and Sabine were connected with neither of them able to free themselves. This made Iris feel very small again, with her big diapered butt, the bunny shortalls, then the bib around her neck, and now Sabine was allowed to hold her leash as well – sort of. But somehow she didn't resent it, because she felt safe and being cared for, and she even felt a bit excited to be controlled like that.

But Sabine wasn't holding her leash for long, because they soon were ready to go, and when Iris was installed in her car seat, the leash and bib were removed from her. Both disappeared into one of the bags. The jacket that Iris wore at the bike ride (see Figure 47_Sabine's old summer jacket) and Sabine's multicolored jacket (see Figure 53 Sabine's over-the-head jacket) were also put in the back of the car. Then Sabine was also put in her seat, and the trip could begin. Of course all were excited and the girls didn't think of sleeping, but once they were on the highway, and the sounds became monotonous, they noticed they had got up rather early that morning, and when Nanny started to sing 'Twinkle, Twinkle little star', both were soon dreaming of the adventures they were going to have today.

25. Morning at the Aquarium

When Iris woke up, they had already stopped at a parking lot, and Mrs. Fletcher was getting Sabine out of her car seat. She was first put in her harness, and then she got a straw hat on where the brim bent down at the sides. It was tied under Sabine's chin, creating a sort of tunnel for Sabine to look through. (see Figure 62) Then her leash was connected to the front seat, and it was Iris's turn. The leash clicked back onto her harness, and she got a straw hat as well. A bit fancier one, with a pink strap around the brim and a large flower appliqué. It was the hat Sabine had been wearing at the flea market. (see Figure 63) Nanny pushed several pins through the inner edge of the brim, so that the hat was fixed to

her hair. Given how Nanny usually did such things, Iris assumed she would probably have a hard time getting the hat off, considering it would probably not be easy to get at the pins because the brim was in the way. The hat was actually welcome, since it seemed to be a very nice day, and the sun was quite bright and hot already. Definitely no need for that jacket, about which Iris wondered how that would combine with the harness anyway.

Mrs. Fletcher put the leash for Iris on her wrist, grabbed Sabine's leash, and asked Sabine to push the stroller with the two bags. Apparently Nanny had gotten that ready before Iris woke up. "Help me remember, girls, we are at the sea otter parking lot." Then they were off to the entrance. There were a fair few people around, and they definitely drew a lot of attention. Sabine ignored it, but Iris felt very self-conscious, and skittishly looked around if there was anyone who might recognize her. She tried to hide a bit behind Nanny, but with people all around that didn't help much. Nanny put an arm around her shoulder and said softly "It's going to be all right, they are only looking at your clothes and harnesses." "I wish I had a hat like Sabine, so that people couldn't recognize me from the sides." "I understand, but I have only one, and Sabine needs it. You might remember I told you she wore a hat inside the flea market to limit what she could see? Now that she walks on the leash, a hat like yours wouldn't help much. This way she doesn't see so many people all at once, so she will not get stressed out so soon. Still, we will need to find quiet spot once every now and then, where she can calm down again."



Figure 62 Sabine's straw hat



Figure 63 Iris's straw hat

Gradually Iris got a bit used to people looking at them, until they reached the ticket office and got in the line. Then suddenly the people were very close to them, and had a lot of time checking them out. A woman behind them remarked to Mrs. Fletcher "Aw, your two daughters look so cute in their matching outfits. Are they a little ..." but instead of using a word, she made a few little circles with her finger pointing at her head: the Cuckoo sign. Iris recognized the lady was asking if they were both crazy, and stuck her tongue out at her. Nanny noticed (of course) and used her hand to turn her face away from the woman, and replied "Both girls have a little issue with impulse control, as you can see with this little mouse here, so they need a little extra guidance. That doesn't mean they deserve your implication, or ignored as if they won't understand you anyway." Iris thought 'you go, Nanny, and tell her', but the woman didn't react and just ignored them from then on, which suited her just fine.

It wasn't long before it was their turn, and Mrs. Fletcher told the young man at the booth it was two disabled with their caregiver. He asked if she had filled in the online form, which she denied, so he gave her the web address and let her fill it in next to the desk, while he helped others. When it was done, she was helped as soon as he had helped the current family. The form said she had to produce

the disability ID cards for both girls, so she showed Sabine's and started to explain that Iris was only a temporary guest, but guy didn't even let her finish and said it was OK. Next he called an older woman, who took them to a separate room. There she introduced herself as the aquarium hostess, and in charge of the special programs. She explained they had special wrist bands that signified the status of the children, and proceeded to put a small band of fabric around Sabine's wrist, and stamped it closed with a metal piece that also had a D-ring attached. Then she did the same with Iris. "This is your ticket for today, allowing you access everywhere, and at some places the staff will supply extra help if needed. We also have leashes that connect to it, but it seems you came well-prepared in that aspect. We also have single and double strollers if you need one. Please contact any of the staff if you need anything. From our side we expect you to try and keep any disturbance to our regular visitors and the inhabitants to a minimum."

Mrs. Fletcher thanked her and said she might want to use a double stroller later on, and that she would do her best to not cause any disturbance. Next she asked if it was OK if they took a break from the park during the day, like for lunch, and then later return. That was no problem, although the lady didn't hesitate to point out there was a well-provisioned restaurant on site as well; but if she wanted to go away anyway she just had to tell the staff when temporarily leaving not to remove the wrist bands yet, and they would allow access again when they returned. Of course they should let it be removed when they left at the end of the day. Next she gave Mrs. Fletcher a stack of papers, with a map of the grounds and information about the different sections. Finally there was a card of the hostess with her phone number. The hostess pointed out on the map that there was a family restroom next to the gift shop if the girls needed diaper changes.

The girls were getting impatient. They came here for the animals, and not for long talks in a boring office. Luckily the formalities were over, and they could leave the office. "Iris, how is your diaper?" "I have not peed yet, so I don't need a change." Nanny felt her diaper anyway, and replied "This definitely doesn't feel like it is unused. I'm sure it can last longer, but since you need regular changes, I think we had better do one before we get engrossed with the animals." Neither girl was happy about that, and Iris repeated "but I haven't peed yet!". But Nanny took them to the changing room anyway. Luckily there were no other people there. She found a pipe to lock Sabine's harness to, and then started undressing Iris. First the harness off, then the zipper and lock at the back of the shorts, then unbutton the straps, over the head, and Iris could step out of them. Then lower the tights: they couldn't be taken off because Nanny didn't bother with the shoes. Her dark green body opened at the crotch. When Nanny lifted her on the table, she folded her jacket and put it on top of the pillow, so that Iris's hat could stay on. "Do I need to find some hand restraints or will you keep your hands away?" Iris definitely didn't want to be tied down in a public restroom, so she promised to keep her hands away. Demonstratively she folded them in her neck.

When the diaper opened the smell was clear, and Iris had to admit that it wasn't dry anymore. "Nanny, what is happening? Am I getting incontinent?" Iris asked fearfully. "Oh, my little mouse, don't you worry about that. This is very likely just temporary incontinence from the UTI, so it will most probably disappear again once the antibiotics have done their work. SABINE, NO." Her daughter had gotten so impatient with all this waiting before they could go to the animals, that she was trying to get the leash off or escape the harness. "Don't make me put the wrist straps on." Sabine stopped, bent her head down and murmured that it was all taking so long. "I know, but we're almost ready now." and then continued to Iris "Anyway, this is very likely the UTI, in combination with the extra painkillers. If it lasts a bit longer before the symptoms clear up, you might need to wear some pull-ups for a few more days to make sure you're fully in control again, but that should be all." Iris breathed a sigh of relief. Needing to wear diapers permanently, and especially to school, frightened her badly.

In the meantime Nanny had put a new diaper on, rebuttoned the body, pulled up the tights, and then Iris could step into her cute shortalls again, and finally the harness on top. “How about you, Sabine, would you like to go do a big poopoo on the toilet?” This surprised Sabine, who hadn’t felt the need yet, but nodded thankfully. So then it was Iris’s turn to be locked to the pipe, and get a big water bottle to keep her fluids up, while Nanny and Sabine disappeared into a regular stall. And now it was her turn as well to feel bored and impatient, but she realized that trying to escape not only brought punishment, but she wouldn’t want to get separated from the Fletchers anyway. Nanny had left the flyers and map of the grounds next to the changing table though, so Iris thought to look at those. But no matter how hard she strained against the coiled leash, it was just out of reach. Disappointed she returned to where she was, and started looking around. But there wasn’t much to see either. So when she finally heard a “Good girl!” and a flushing, she was quite relieved, and moved towards the Fletchers as far as the leash would allow. Apparently Sabine didn’t need a clean diaper yet, so it was retaped, and she was dressed again in the tights, shortalls and her harness. In the meantime Sabine said “I’m a big giwrl now!. She was out of reach for Iris, so she couldn’t hug her, but she complimented her instead.

“And now I need the toilet as well” declared Nanny. Both girls moaned. Nanny found another pipe that she locked Sabine’s leash to, and disappeared into one of the stalls. The girls could reach each other, so now they could hug and keep each other company, and the wait wasn’t so long. Then Nanny reappeared.



Figure 64 Oregon Coast Aquarium map

Soon she had control of both leashes and the stroller again, and now they could finally go to the animals. “Where do we go first?” asked Nanny while holding the map so that both could look. (see Figure 64) “Let’s go to the Sandy Shores or Coastal Waters, so we can see all sorts of beautiful fish” Iris suggested for Sabine, since that was the reason she came up with this trip in the first place. “The seals” countered Sabine. Iris looked at her surprised and a little hurt: didn’t she want to see the fish? Sabine didn’t understand the look, and just repeated ‘seals!’ Oh well, Iris loved seals as well, so she replied

“OK, we’ll do the seals first.” “Don’t worry, we have enough time to visit all the locations, so we’ll see the fish as well. You know what, why don’t we take turns to pick where we go next?” The girls nodded, but now had enough of waiting, and started pulling Nanny together towards the exit to the outdoor exhibits. “OK, OK, I get it, we’re going. Don’t pull so hard, I have to bring the stroller along too!”

Iris was excited about seeing the seals as well, so she took Sabine’s hand. Together they followed the signs to the seal enclosure, just slow enough for Nanny to keep up with them. Now that they were among the other visitors once more, Iris felt a apprehensive about being recognized again, but she saw no one familiar, and gradually she relaxed a bit more. Of course there were still people staring, but most were more polite than that, and of course there were other attractions for them to look at, so it wasn’t too bad and she soon ignored it. A bit harder to ignore was the boy of about 5 that pointed at them and shouted to his mother “Look mama, those two really old girls are still on leashes!”, but the mother quickly drew his attention and started speaking with him. Again Sabine seemed impervious to it all.

They passed the vultures, but since they were going there later anyway, Iris decided not to get distracted and plowed on. Near the sea otter enclosure the path became less wide and more crowded, and when the girls started weaving through the people in their haste, they started to cause a commotion, because their leashes started pressing into people. So Nanny called the girls to her, and started to reel them in when they didn’t immediately react. “Girls, you are hustling other visitors with your leashes. You need to calm down and walk with me. Iris, can I trust you to push the stroller without hitting anyone?” Iris said she thought she could, so Nanny let her take over, and used her hands to grab the girls’ harnesses directly, so they had to stay right next to her. Of course the girls didn’t like that, but now they could proceed in orderly fashion to the seals.

They hadn’t yet checked the feeding times, so it was pure luck that it was just beginning for the seals. One of the staff members spotted their wrist bands, and took them to a specially reserved area with several chairs and room for wheelchairs. They were allowed to sit right in front of the glass, giving them a great view. They were a bit on the edge of the basin, so the show was a bit further away, but that didn’t matter. Nanny fixed their leashes to the chairs, but they never noticed, and would not have run away if she hadn’t: they were exactly where they wanted to be! There was a man with a microphone telling all sorts of facts about the Harbor Seals and the California Sea Lions, who shared the same aquarium. They learned to tell the difference between the two, and that the sleeker California Sea Lions were the ones that were constantly barking. It was amazing to see them glide through the water, chasing after the fish that were thrown in, jump out of the water through hoops, especially the oldest one named Quill. The seals were a bit smaller, and clumsier on land, so it was the sea lions that were the most popular, and they also did tricks like shaking ‘hands’, rolling over, giving kisses, and more. On the other hand there was a baby seal that was so cute that both girls wished they could hold it and cuddle it forever.

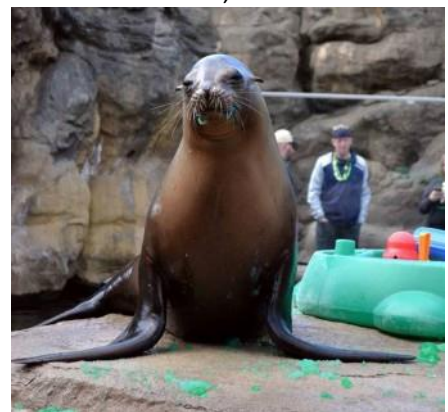


Figure 65 Sea Lion Quill

Much too soon the show was over, and the crowd broke up, though no one asked them to leave the special area. The girls looked for a bit longer, but after the feeding the animals quieted down too, and so they decided they wanted to move on. But they saw that there was another feeding session at 3PM, and they agreed that they had to be back in time for that, and see it all again. Now it was Iris’s turn to decide what to visit next. Since Sabine had ignored her suggestion to go to the one of the aquariums

first, Iris didn't feel like 'wasting' her choice on that, so for her it was between the seabird aviary and the turkey vultures. Because they had already passed their enclosure, and she was curious what those birds were doing in an aquarium, she chose the vultures.

Because they stayed for a little bit after the feeding, most people had moved on by then, and it wasn't so crowded. Still Nanny decided she needed a little more control over the girls, so she once more connected Sabine's Y-shaped leash to both of them, so they had to stay close together, and under tighter control because the leash didn't stretch. Nanny didn't disconnect Iris's leash though, but simply thrust the wrist strap through the chest strap of the harness in the back, and let the coiled part dangle down her back. Instead of holding Sabine's leash at the handle on the end, she grabbed it halfway, so the girls couldn't move much ahead of her. It was not quite as limiting as when she had grabbed their harnesses directly, but they were still forced to follow Nanny's tempo and move in an orderly manner.

On their way to the turkey vulture cage they passed the sea otter basin again, and Sabine wanted to go there, but they had an agreement, so Nanny steered them resolutely onward. Iris had often seen turkey vultures circling in the sky, but never this close up. From the information provided she read that they were orphans, raised by humans when they were small, and then adopted by the aquarium because there was nowhere else they could go. Of course vultures are not the most popular of birds, but this directly endeared them to Iris, and she wanted to watch what they were doing. The twins, Olive and Ichabod, were quite playful, and very curious. They got a pumpkin in their enclosure that they were trying to break open. In the meanwhile Sabine wasn't interested in them, and started pulling them towards the sea otters again. This started to irritate Iris; her stronger friend was always pulling her away from what she wanted to see, didn't even want to go to the aquarium first that Iris went to all this trouble and humiliation for her to see, then she got first choice where to go, and now it was Iris's turn to pick what to see, she wanted to leave immediately again. So she snapped at her friend "Will you stop pulling me around all the time, and give me the opportunity to watch what I want as well?"



Figure 66 Turkey Vulture Ichabod tackles pumpkin

Sabine had no idea she did anything wrong, and looked quite hurt. Iris feared for a moment she might go into a tantrum, but instead she just crossed her arms and turned her back on her friend. Well, two could play that game, and Iris turned away as well. She glanced at Nanny for a moment, but although she was sure Nanny was carefully watching what was happening, she was not interceding for the moment. At least Sabine had stopped pulling now, so she could finally focus on the twin birds again. She tried to concentrate on what they were doing, but being in an argument with her friend, and not even being able to get away from her, made her feel so bad that she kept on thinking about it.

But she was right, wasn't she? Was it too much to ask for her friend to care a bit for what she wanted as well? Was it, though? She was so used to Sabine, and how her friend sometimes still took care of her, like giving her a bottle of milk, that she wasn't really thinking of her much as a mentally limited person anymore, but perhaps it was just her brain damage that prevented her from realizing what her

friend wanted? She glanced over at Sabine, who was looking at her with such a sad look on her face, that Iris suddenly felt so sorry that she started crying and fell into a hug with her friend. "I'm so sorry, I never should have said those things to you. I know you don't do it on purpose!" "But what did I do wrong?" Sabine wanted to know, also tearful. Iris had been right in realizing her friend just didn't know, but what could she say? Would it even be fair to explain what she got angry about, if her friend couldn't help it? She looked helplessly at Nanny, who took the cue and told Sabine "Iris wanted to look at those funny birds, and you tried to pull her away." "Oh, I'm sowwry. I just wanted to see the ottehs." "I know, and I want to see the otters too, but I really like to see the birds too." "OK, we look at bihrds now. Why funny?"

Iris suddenly realized that she had been reading the information signs, so she knew all about them being orphans and playful, but she hadn't told her friend. She had just assumed she would have read the signs as well, but realized she had no idea if Sabine could still read. Not wanting to ask directly about possible limitations with her friend right next to her, she came up with "Shall I tell you what is on the information sign?" Sabine nodded gratefully, so Iris concluded that even if she could still read a bit, the information on the sign must have been too complex for her, so she took her friend's hand, and told them all about the birds and what made them interesting. Nanny stroked her head briefly, and softly said "well done", which made Iris feel all warm inside.

"Nanny, now it is your turn to pick an animal." "Yes, it is. Hmm, let me think. I would really like to see that big octopus. Shall we go there?" The cave with the octopus wasn't far from the vulture enclosure, so it didn't take them long to reach it. Every now and then someone came over to compliment Nanny on her cute girls, and some also said a few words to them, like complimenting them on their outfits. Usually Iris could pretend to be shy and hide behind Nanny or Sabine. She still hadn't seen anyone familiar, so her anxiety had receded to the background, and apart from a few negative reactions most people were kind to them, and Iris realized that being dressed and restrained like this earned her a lot more positive reactions than if she had worn her usual clothes. Some of the people even inquired about the harnesses and said they might consider them, much to the chagrin of their children, although none of them were even close to Iris's age.

With the relaxation Iris also started to look more around her, and thought about taking some pictures: she had been looking for something to share with her other friends the whole week. But now she didn't have her phone with her! In the morning they were just anxious to leave, and since Nanny took care of everything, Iris hadn't thought at all about what she might want to take along. And apart from that, her shortalls didn't have pockets, and her backpack wouldn't have combined well with the harness. "Nanny, I want to have some pictures from the aquarium, but I don't have my phone with me!" "What about I make some pictures, and I send them to you?" "Would you, please? But of course not with me on it! Will you promise not to make pictures of me, Nanny?" "OK, if that is what you want. Would you take a picture of Sabine and me then, here in front of the octopus cave?" So she did, and then Nanny took her phone back.

Then they entered the cave with the aquarium of the Giant Pacific Octopus, a species they learned could grow up to 600 pounds (272 kg) and 30 feet (10 m) long, and were quite intelligent. Iris wasn't sure she wanted to meet such a monster with those scary arms full of suckers. (The information also explained that they were not called tentacles but arms.) So at first she stayed a bit behind the others when they approached the aquarium. But it seemed like the octopus wasn't at home: the water looked empty. Then they read that it was often a bit shy, and hid away in the nooks and crannies of the aquarium, and that they needed to look around carefully in the hope to spot it. It didn't seem fair to Iris that something that Nanny really wanted to see was hiding, so she started tapping on the glass to see if it couldn't be coaxed out of hiding. "Iris, don't do that, it is not allowed." But now Iris was

determined to give Nanny what she came for, and even increased her efforts. Sabine followed her example and started tapping too.



Figure 67 Giant Pacific Octopus

"Iris, come here." Nanny commanded sternly, and followed it by a pull on the leash. So Iris had to stop and turn to Nanny, who got 2 straps from her bag and started to put them on Iris's wrists. "I told you, you are not allowed to tap on the aquariums, and you ignored me when I warned you. Now you will have to wear these wrist straps for a while." And she connected the straps to the sides of Iris's harness. Now suddenly Iris's wrists were kept close to her sides, and she could hardly reach anything with her hands anymore. Iris felt that wasn't fair, because she was just trying to do something nice for Nanny, and now got punished for it. And suddenly a lot of frustration about her mother being unfair to her, and having all those stupid rules, washed over her, and she started to wildly pull away from Nanny, and shouted "You're not fair, I was just trying to help, you stupid bitch." Deep down she knew she was being unfair and making a spectacle of herself, but she was so awash with her emotions that she couldn't stop herself.

Mrs. Fletcher was stunned by this outburst and just stood there with open mouth. But Sabine put her arms around Iris, and softly forced her down, where she firmly held her on her lap, and said things like "It's OK" and "I'm hehre". Iris gradually calmed down, and realized that Sabine was perfectly copying how her mother dealt with her tantrum when they were experimenting with Sabine's restrictive clothes to let her move freely in the living room. And it worked. After a while Iris regained control, and felt enormously bad about herself. She also noticed that apart from all the visitors, a staff member watching them too, and realized that Nanny probably didn't even have a choice in restraining her. And she had said such horrible things to Nanny! She burst out in tears and started to blubber apologies. She wanted to get up and try to make up with Nanny, but Sabine was not letting her go. "It's all right Sabine, you can let her go now. Thank you for calming her down." Then Iris could go to Nanny and hug her and apologize, as far as her restrained arms and her connection to Sabine would allow. "What happened, Iris?" "I thought of my mother and how unfair she can be, and then suddenly all that frustration came out, and I couldn't stop it. But I feel better now, as if something has been lifted from me." "OK, thank you for apologizing and explaining. But the wrist straps stay on for now." "Yes Nanny, I understand, and I guess I deserved them. But I just wanted for you to see the octopus so much!"

Now the male staff member stepped in, and explained to them that the animals in the aquariums were always on display, and they had no say in people coming and staring at them all day long. Iris understood, having experienced a bit of that herself today. "And sometimes, the animals want to have a bit of privacy, so they hide away for a while. And then people get impatient, and start banging on their enclosures. "Can you imagine if you were in there, and you wanted some peace and quiet from all those people gazing at you all day, and then they started banging on your windows? Do you think you

would come out and let them see you, or hide away even further and longer?” “I would crawl away into the deepest corner. Oh, I’m so sorry, I didn’t realize. Is there any way I can apologize to the octopus?” “I’m afraid not, but if you try to be quiet and respectful to it, perhaps it will show itself again soon.”

They waited for about five minutes, but after they read all the information signs, and there still was nothing visible, they decided to move on and check again later. Iris promised the staff member once more that she would then be respectful again. “Iris, I think you should take a bit of rest, so why don’t you ride in the stroller for a while? Then I’ll take off the wrist straps again.” Iris would have preferred to move around by herself, but she knew that Nanny was trying to help her beat the bladder infection. And apart from that she still felt so bad about her outburst that she had every intention of behaving nicely now. So she fully cooperated when her wrist straps were taken off, Sabine’s leash disconnected, and her own leash removed. Then she sat down in the stroller, and put her arms through the harness straps. Nanny clicked it closed, and Iris promised herself she was not going to touch the straps or the buckle this time.

“Sabine, would you like to go to the sea otters now?” “Yes, please Mommy!” So Nanny connected the other end of the leash back to the other side of Sabine’s harness, took a firm grip on the leash to keep Sabine very close to her, and started pushing the stroller towards the cave exit. Now that Iris was sitting down, she noticed she was a bit tired indeed, so she realized that Nanny once more made the right call. She also felt wonderfully light and carefree, and enjoyed the ride and the view. How lucky she was with Nanny, who was still so kind and caring after what she said to her just 5 minutes ago. She wasn’t going to do anything stupid again today, and make sure they had a trip they would always remember fondly.

So once more they entered the busy stream of visitors, back towards the vultures and then right. “Nanny, can we take a picture of the vultures?” “OK, but let’s do that after the sea otters; Sabine wants to see the otters so bad, and it *is* her time to choose.” “Yes, of course. Just as long as I have a picture before we leave.” Iris noticed that with her hat, she couldn’t see the faces of the people who were closer, but of course that also meant that they couldn’t recognize her, so that was nice, even while her narrowed field of vision was a bit of a disadvantage. But what was worse, was that when people came up to them to compliment them, she could no longer hide behind Nanny or Sabine, and some didn’t respect her privacy, like the lady in the park yesterday. But she was determined to stay on her best behavior, so she just tried to turn her head away, and that often worked, especially if Nanny also said that she was shy and didn’t like it when people came too close.



Figure 68 Sea Otter Oswald

The sea otter enclosure was pretty large, considering it was only holding 3 otters. There were supposed to be two different species, a Northern named Nuka, and 2 Southern Sea Otters named Schuster and Oswald, but they couldn't distinguish who was who. A sign said that they were fed three times a day. The first had already happened when they arrived, but the second was at 1PM and the last at 3:30PM. Once more they decided they had to come back for that, but at the moment the advantage was that it wasn't too busy, and there was room at the big glass plate that allowed them to look at the otters both above and under water. They were active and playful animals, and a lot larger than the river otters that Iris had once seen on TV. After a while Nanny could roll the stroller all the way up to the glass, and then Iris had a great view. Sabine was hampered by her hat though, needing to turn her head all the time when the otters swam through her field of vision, and she started first pulling on her hat to improve the viewing angle, and then trying to loosen the straps.

"Sabine, you know you are not allowed to fiddle with your clothes. Come here." She took a little band of pink velvet out of her bag, then undid the knot on the hat straps, and wove the choker through little loops on the inside of the straps that had not been visible until now. Then she turned Sabine around and closed the band around her throat, as a cute little choker. (see Figure 69) Then Nanny knotted the hat straps under her chin once more, making it neigh invisible that the hat would no longer come off unless the choker was taken off first.



Figure 69 Sabine's velvet choker

"I'm sorry, my girl, but you know you need the hat, and that you are not allowed to take off your clothes." Sabine bent her head and mumbled sorry. Iris took her hand and told her that the choker looked so cute, and that she had long wanted one, but her mother didn't allow it. That cheered Sabine up, and she stroked it with a finger, feeling the soft velvet. "Nanny, you don't happen to have one for me too?" "I'm sorry Iris, I have only one. But if you want we can surely find an opportunity for you to wear it, too." "Yes, please, that would be nice." Soon their full attention was on the otters again, and they often laughed out loud about their antics.

26. Lunch on the Beach

After a while Nanny suggested that they should start thinking about lunch, and even though the girls wanted to keep watching the otters too, they were quite hungry, so they agreed. Nanny explained to them that she decided to have lunch at the beach, because it would be a break from the busy crowds, and it would save money compared to a relatively expensive lunch at a restaurant. She had picked a nice beach that should be fairly quiet. So they said goodbye to the otters for now, and moved towards the entrance, stopping on their way at the vultures so that Iris could take a few pictures.

At the admission they explained that they would be back later, and then moved on to the sea otter parking lot, where everything was loaded in the car, and with both girls secure in their car seats, Mrs. Fletcher drove through Newport, along the coastal highway to the north, and after about 10 minutes they found a parking space near Beverly Beach State Park. There Nanny first unloaded a number of items from the back of the car and loaded several of them onto the stroller. Then she got the girls out

and leashed up. She asked Sabine to carry two deck chairs, Iris the umbrella, and she took the stroller herself, giving the girls the full length of the leashes. She directed them to a sandy path over a row of dunes and onto the beach. Even though the beach was somewhat further from Newport, there were several groups of people, mostly families, there, but it wasn't hard to find a place where they were far enough from others to have their privacy.

Even though both girls had been to the beach before, it was far enough away from Eugene that those were special outings, so it was very nice to see the sea again, and hear the sounds of the surf. They did realize again that walking through the loose sand was pretty hard, but they didn't have to go far. There Nanny first took the umbrella, and forced it into the sand as far as she could. Then she opened it, and locked both leashes to it. That gave her the freedom to set up the two deck chairs, and the stroller next to it, and spread the picnic cloth next to the umbrella. Then she spread out the food and drink on it, and invited the girls to sit on the cloth. There were a lot of wraps left from lunch yesterday, and together with some nice tidbits they had a wonderful lunch. Of course there was the big bottle of water for Iris, who hadn't drunk anything since she was last changed, so that was mostly welcome.

Iris noticed how peaceful it was there, without worry of being recognized, without people coming up to them and treating them like small children or even babies, and without the general pressure of moving through crowds and hearing all the noise. Instead there were the hypnotic surf sounds, the sea breeze, and the enormously wide view. It was quite a warm day, and the sun was strong, but in the shade of the umbrella it was wonderful. And she still felt somehow lighter after her outburst at the octopus cave. When they had finished eating, Nanny explained that they would have a little nap in the chairs, before they went back to the park. She only had two deck chairs, so one of the girls would use the stroller – they could decide. Iris and Sabine looked at each other; Iris thought she had already spent time in the stroller, and probably would do more in the afternoon, so she asked if Sabine wanted to. Her friend shrugged and then nodded.

"Nanny, if I am going to be in the sun, the tights will be quite warm. Can't we take them off?" "That is OK with me, but you do realize that we will have to undress you all the way to your diaper to take them off?" Oops, Iris hadn't thought that far ahead. But the other people on the beach were fairly far away, and minding their own business. Apart from that they could already have noticed her diaper anyway, and had seen her dressed like that and leashed, so it didn't seem to matter so much. So she nodded. Before they started Nanny put the stroller in such a position that it partially blocked the view of the others on the beach. "If we are undressing you anyway, I think I'll also change your diaper. Otherwise we'll have to do it in the changing room at the aquarium again, and lose extra time. Iris wasn't thrilled about that, but realized it was the least-bad option, so she agreed again.

The diaper bag provided all that was needed, and soon she had fresh underwear again. Not that she noticed much difference: these big diapers were far from full, but of course it was important for the infection. Then Nanny managed to produce two pairs of lace socks from the other bag. "Nanny, you make me think of Mary Poppins; every time you need something you just grab into your bag and pull out what you need." "Well, I have been planning since yesterday afternoon, and I have a fair bit of experience with Sabine by now. But of course it still happens that I forget something, or haven't anticipated needing something. Like this morning I almost forgot the little tool for your shoes. Then I wouldn't have been able to take off your tights." "Oh, I'm glad you did think of it. Thank you for putting so much effort in making this day a success."

Then Mrs. Fletcher had another idea "Why don't I try to put your harness on underneath the shortalls? Then we don't have to take it off for diaper changes, and your cute shortalls are not partially covered." Iris thought for a moment what the effects would be; shortalls more visible, but harness less, seemed

to cancel each other out, but she was all for quicker changing times, especially in public restrooms, so she nodded. Once harness and shortalls were back on, Nanny checked that the attachment points at the sides and back were still accessible, which they were, so she was put in one of the deck chairs, which had two straps that connected to her harness. Her hat was in the way to let her head rest against the chair, so Nanny took it off.

“Sabine, you want your tights off too?” Her daughter nodded, and since her diaper hadn’t been changed since early in the morning, she got a fresh one as well. She got the harness under her shortalls as well, which made a bigger difference, because the large front piece of the harness blocked view to part of the bib and the rabbit ears on the straps. Her hat was taken off too. Then she was installed in the stroller, and got the built-in sun shade extended to keep her head in the shadow. Of course Mrs. Fletcher made sure both girls had enough sunscreen to not get sunburn, and then they could relax. “Iris, would you like a sleep mask to help you fall asleep?” “No thanks, Nanny, it is so nice to feel the sun on my face, and it is so peaceful here that I think I won’t need it.” And indeed she dropped off quite soon, dreaming of sea otters playing with turkey vultures.

When she woke again it felt so wonderful to just lie there that she didn’t move for a while, but then Nanny started packing up and tried to get the umbrella out. But it was in so deep that she had trouble, and so she got Sabine from the stroller and together they got it out. Packed and loaded they made their way back to the car, and once they were in the car seats again, Nanny once more took off their shoes to get rid of all the sand they had collected in them. Then they drove back to the aquarium, where the parking lots were fuller, and the best place they found was a bit further away from the entrance, in the sea nettle lot. There both girls got their hats back on, Sabine’s complete with choker. Once more she felt the velvet with her finger. Since it seemed even busier than in the morning, Nanny connected both girls again with Sabine’s leash, let Iris push the stroller, and kept the leash short. Then they went to the aquarium once more. Iris felt so happy that she took Sabine’s hand and started skipping. Her friend tried to copy her, but didn’t quite get the hang of it during the short walk, making it a bit jarring for Iris, but she thought it would be a nice challenge for Sabine to practice it, so she kept holding her hand. Back at the entrance their wrist bands allowed them access again.

27. Afternoon at the Aquarium

It was Iris’s turn to choose again which animals to go to next, but Nanny came with an alternative proposal “Iris, it’s quite busy at the moment, and that makes it hard to go crisscross over the grounds all the time, especially with the stroller. The idea of the park is that you start with both shore exhibits and the coastal waters, then the seabird aviary, and finally the tunnel, going from the coast deeper and deeper until you experience the open ocean. Most visitors seem to take that route, which would be easier for us too. Of course we can still go to the feeding of the seals and the otters at the right time, and see if the octopus will show itself. I know we had a deal and it is your turn, so if you really want something else we will do that.” “Oh, it seems so nice everywhere that I don’t mind; we’ll see the seabirds soon anyway.” Iris felt so lighthearted and happy that she really didn’t care, although entering the large stream of visitors also made her feel some of the anxiety again, especially since she felt she couldn’t look at everyone, so there was a better chance that people known to her spotted her before she saw them and could hide. But after the whole morning without seeing anyone she knew, her confidence had grown, and she was determined to have a fun afternoon.

The first hall they entered, the Sandy Shores, contained all sorts of smaller aquariums, information signs, and also screens with video’s and ones that you can interact with, and there were fish, crabs, anemones, and more, but they were all a bit drab-colored and small. Nanny had taken over the

stroller, so the girls could move around for a while, but couldn't really find anything to hold their attention for long. So fairly quickly they moved on to the second hall, the Rocky Shores. This was a bit similar to the first hall, with many different tanks and information signs, but there were some things in there that were more appealing to the girls. The first thing they noticed was an open tank in the center of the hall, where several children were allowed to put their hand in the water. They had to check out what was in there, so hand-in-hand they pulled Nanny along. "Slow down girls, we'll get there soon enough." Nanny didn't sound angry, but they tried to adjust their pace a bit anyway, and then they could see that this was a shallow pool with a number of sea creatures in there that could be touched.

"Welcome to the touch-pool. My name is Francine, and I am a volunteer at the aquarium. Would you like to touch some of the creatures in here?" The volunteer clearly had recognized their bracelets, and made sure they were careful and slow in touching the sea stars, the anemones and other creatures, by holding their wrists. This was perhaps still not as exciting as the sea lions and otters, but it was a big improvement over the boring mussels, tiny crabs and the like of the first hall, and the girls enjoyed themselves again. Then another girl, of about five or six, came to the pool and stood right next to Iris. She was also in a harness, with her father holding the leash. She looked in surprise at Iris, and said "I have to wear my harness today because I got lost last time. But aren't you much too old to get lost?" Iris was a bit at a loss on how to react to the girl. Of course she couldn't say that she was pretending to be disabled, with the volunteer right there, and could not act too mature. But she didn't want to imitate being slow-witted either, so eventually she said "I don't think I need a harness, but Nanny says I'm too impulsive and get into trouble if she doesn't hold me close." And then added in a small voice "Well, I did get into trouble earlier when the octopus wouldn't show itself."

The little girl nodded seriously and seemed to agree that she still needed to be on the leash. "Thank you for making me feel I am not the only one who is so old and still needs to wear one." The girl seemed glad to have someone to talk to; both being on a leash created a bit of a bond, and she continued "I have those shoes and socks too, but I don't really like them." Iris whispered in her ear that she didn't really like them either, but that Nanny thought they looked nice with her shortalls. "But I think your shortalls are cute." "Thank you. My friend liked them and we decided to both get a pair" Iris replied and hooked her arm in Sabine's to show their matching outfits, which were fully visible now the harnesses were worn underneath. "Wow, you are even bigger!" the girl exclaimed, but Sabine didn't really know what that was about, so she just nodded and tried to stand on her toes to make herself taller yet. "Can I touch the rabbit?" she asked next, and Iris nodded. She first felt the bib and the eyes, and then the ears. One of them came loose from the strap, and hung down over the bib. "Oh, I'm sorry, I broke it!" exclaimed the girl, close to tears, but Iris had seen it was connected to the shoulder strap with snaps, and she explained that it wasn't broken, and demonstrated clicking the snaps together again. That cheered the girl up and she thanked Iris.

Then Iris spotted an aquarium with many colored fish, so she had to take Sabine over there, and they waved goodbye to the girl. It was a tank with several species of rockfish, and especially the tiger rockfish was beautifully colored. But Sabine said "Daddy" again and looked sad. Iris could kick herself; how could she have been so insensitive to force Sabine to go look at fish when they reminded her of her dead father? She said sorry and put her arm around her friend, even though that felt woefully inadequate, but Sabine just shook her sadness off after a few seconds and started pointing at the biggest and most colorful fish, and asked Iris about their names and other details. There were several other tanks that didn't seem that interesting to the girls, but the Wolf Eel looked rather imposing, and both girls were glad that it was safely behind the thick glass of the tank, even though the description said that it was actually a gentle fish.

But soon they started wondering what was in the next hall, and went there. The largest tank there covered the whole of one wall, but there were also 2 large cylinders in the center of the hall with moon jellyfish and sea nettles, which drew their attention first. Because of the shape of the cylinders, they worked like a magnifying glass, and the lighting caused the jellyfish to glow with an inner light, that made a both spooky and fascinating sight, and you could see clearly how they moved. Both girls looked at them with their noses against the glass for minutes.



Figure 70 Moon Jellyfish

Then they wanted to see what the big tank was all about. It seemed to be about the salmon migration, and although Iris liked to eat salmon, the live fish didn't look that spectacular. But there were also some large sturgeons and huge spider crabs that were bigger than any of them had ever seen, and could grow up to 13 feet (3.95m) from leg tip to leg tip! While they were staring at all that was moving in the big aquarium, Nanny put her hand on Iris's forehead, and concluded that she was getting a bit hot and tired, and should ride in the stroller for a while. Iris didn't really want to, and thought she was still doing OK. But she remembered the promise to herself to be on her best behavior for the rest of the day, and knew that it was to make the bladder infection go away quicker, so she obediently sat down and let herself be secured in the harness.

This had the upside that people often made way for her to get a good view at the tanks and other exhibits, but she was too low and far away to be able to read the information signs. So now Nanny more often read out loud what they were looking at. Another upside was that with her hat on, she would probably not be recognized by the people walking by, but the biggest downside was that it attracted the attention of several grown-ups, mostly women, who suddenly considered her like a toddler that had no need for privacy, and could not understand what the grown-ups were talking about. Luckily the combination of her twisting sideways, and Nanny telling them she did not like them coming so close deterred most of them.

Then they moved out of the last of the three halls, and into the open once more, and they arrived at the seabird aviary. Iris was a bit disappointed at first that there were no penguins, but there were lots of other birds to make up for it, distributed over 2 large pools, and a large cliff where the birds could rest, nest and dive. The large brown pelicans had such large bills, and though they could often be seen from the beach, flying along the coastline, again it made a huge difference to see them from so close by. And the puffins looked almost as cute as penguins. Iris had once spent some time with her father watching a puffin nest hole in the hope of spotting one, but they never caught a glimpse. Now she could see them in all their splendor. The other birds didn't look so spectacular at first, except maybe the oystercatchers with their black bodies and bright red bills, but when they went to the window where they could watch one of the pools underwater, they could see the birds gliding through the water, much like penguins. And the murrens actually looked a fair bit like penguins, although they had real wings and could fly.



Figure 71 Tufted Puffins

Once more a lady came to Iris, ignored her turning away and the warnings of Nanny and started pricking her in her stomach – Iris assumed that was to make her laugh or something. Iris got quite fed up with all these rude people, who ignored her signals, and when the lady also tried to tickle under her chin, she moved her head as if to bite the lady and let her teeth snap closed half an inch from her finger. Now the lady was suddenly very indignant and complained to Nanny. But Mrs. Fletcher had seen exactly what happened, apologized, but also said that she had warned the woman. The woman stormed off angrily, and Nanny turned to Iris. “I know the woman didn’t behave nice, but you still can’t go around biting people.” “But I missed deliberately. I wouldn’t even want that finger in my mouth!” “I know, but still we can get into trouble for such things, so I have to take a precaution that that won’t happen again. And it might also give you a little rest from people touching your face at least.” Then she took a little roll of plastic with fabric-covered seams out of her bag, draped it around the brim of Iris’s hat and knotted it at the back. Now there was a sheet of plastic hanging from the hat in front of her face. (see Figure 72)



Figure 72 Anti-spitting visor

Automatically Iris’s hands went up to it, to feel it, but Nanny warned her not to touch it, or her hands would be restrained as well. She quickly drew them back to her sides. It was strange to have a sheet of plastic in front of her face, and even though she could still breathe easily and see through it mostly unhampered, there were some reflections, and it was just plain annoying. “Nanny, this is horrible. I can’t see as well anyway from the stroller, and now I can see even less!” “I know, mouse, but you did snap your teeth at the lady. Try to bear it for a while, and we’ll see if I can take it off again soon. It is actually an anti-spitting mask, but it should work for this situation as well.”

Sabine missed her friend standing next to her to enjoy what they were looking at together, and she came standing next to the stroller and took her friend’s hand to support her. Together they tried to enjoy the birds again. Then one of the aquarium staff approached them and asked them to come to the office of the hostess with him, so they followed him on an outside route to her office. There, next to the hostess, was the woman that was ‘mock bitten’. The hostess started “Thank you for coming. Now, I have a complaint about your ward biting one of the visitors. Assault on our visitors is not something we can tolerate.” Nanny immediately went into the offensive, and asked the woman if she could see the bite marks. Of course she couldn’t produce them, and then responded “Well, it might be an attempt to bite me, but that is the same thing.” “So you are saying she was aiming at your finger and missed? Because from where I was standing it seemed that Iris deliberately missed, after you

ignored several warnings.” Then she moved up to the hostess, and said “Suppose I would come up to you like this...” and went straight up to the hostess, pricked her in the stomach and tickled her under her chin. “would you find that acceptable behavior?” The hostess was stunned for a moment by this invasion of her privacy, and replied “of course not!” “And would you consider that proper behavior towards a 13-year-old?” “No, definitely not.” “This lady apparently thought differently, and continued this behavior even when Iris first tried to turn away, and also after I warned her that Iris didn’t like that sort of thing.”

The hostess turned to the woman, and said “Is this all true?” “Well, I just wanted to be kind to the poor child!” “OK, I know enough now. I will speak further with this group. Have a good day at the aquarium, and try to be a little more respectful in approaching the other visitors, please, even if they are in a stroller.” “Hmmpf, if they don’t get banned for life, I will take this up with my husband!” the woman replied and left with her nose in the sky. “Well, I think she might have been as much to blame as you. But still, we do need to talk” she continued to Mrs. Fletcher. “If her complaint had been valid, I would have had to evict you from the aquarium, but that is not necessary now. Still, of course we do not want another incident like this, especially after what happened at the octopus exhibit this morning.” This rattled Iris, who until now had kept quiet, trusting Nanny to resolve the issue. She was surprised that the hostess had learned about her earlier outburst as well, and thought she ought to apologize once more “I’m sorry, I just wanted Nanny to see the octopus, and it was hiding. But then the kind man explained that I was just scaring it further, and I know how it is when people don’t want to leave me alone when I want to, so I feel very bad about it, and will never ever do it again!”

“I am glad that you know that now. And I see that your Nanny has already taken precautions for you not to bite anyone else.” “Yes, I’m sorry, but I just got so tired of people coming up to me all the time and think they can poke me and tickle me. But this thing makes it even harder to see all the animals.” “Hmm, yes, I think that that is not ideal. Perhaps I have another option.” The hostess went to her desk, cut off a strip of blank paper, and wrote some text on it with a marker. She showed it to them. It read ‘Watch out, this little fish bites’ in large letters. Now, if we can attach this somewhere like on the sun shade of the stroller, or the brim of your hat, that should hopefully warn off the most intrusive people, and if not you can bare your teeth at them. Would that work for you?” Iris thought such a sign should feel a little humiliating, but it was also sort of funny, and it was a lot better than that screen in front of her face. Apart from that it might actually give her a bit more rest, so she nodded enthusiastically, and Nanny agreed as well. So the visor was removed again from her hat, and the piece of paper was affixed to the rim of the sun shade of the stroller. That meant that the shade needed to stay folded out, but with the sun so strong that day Iris didn’t mind. “But I’d better not get any more complaints about you today!”

Mrs. Fletcher thanked the hostess for her leniency and the nice idea with the warning, and they went back to the park. It was very close to the time the seals and sea lions were being fed again, so they immediately went that way. With Iris in the stroller, and Sabine on a very short leash, they moved calmly through the crowds, and soon reached the special area that they were in that morning. There was another staff member welcoming them, and getting them seats, but since there were several other people and a few in wheelchairs as well, they didn’t have seats tight next to the glass this time. But with Sabine sitting next to Iris in the stroller, they could enjoy the presentation together, and again had a lot of laughs about the antics of the mammals. After about 15 minutes the show was over again, and they had a little time before the otter feeding started, so they decided to see if the octopus would show itself now. Iris was sort of glad she was in the stroller now, because even though she was sure that she would not start tapping on the glass of its tank again, this made it clear to everybody else, including the staff there, that she wouldn’t have the opportunity to even reach the glass.

She hadn't been scanning the crowds around her for people who might recognize her for quite a while now, but suddenly she heard voices she recognized: two kids from her class! It were two of the popular girls, that were not known for their kindness towards the less popular kids. And they were coming straight towards them. There was little Iris could do to hide, being held in the stroller, so she just had to trust her 'disguise', and the hat covering her face somewhat. The two were looking around at the people and the exhibits, and talking softly to each other, but their eyes always seemed to skip Sabine and Iris, and even when they walked right by her, they totally ignored her. Iris thought she recognized their attitude from when she first saw Sabine again at the flea market. With people who didn't dress or behave normally, you never knew how to approach them or how they would react, so it was easiest to do if they didn't exist. She felt a bit ashamed that she had acted like that too, now that she was the 'deviant' one, but in this case she was so relieved that she was ignored that she had to work hard to suppress laughing out loud. But of course it wouldn't be prudent at all to draw their attention and let them hear her voice just now the danger had almost passed.

When they entered the octopus cave, and she was sure her classmates were not there, she softly told Nanny about them, and that she had been totally ignored. Nanny affectionally touched her shoulder and nodded knowingly. Then they shifted their attention to the octopus tank. That seemed as empty as before, but they tried to be patient, and after a while Nanny suddenly pointed at something: there was one tentacle that had appeared, and was exploring the aquarium bottom. They followed the tentacle back to a hollow where they could vaguely see some more parts of the octopus. But then the arm withdrew into the hole, and nothing more happened. "Sorry Nanny, that you can't see the animal you chose very well." "It's quite OK, Iris, some of the time we are lucky, like that we arrived just in time for the seal feeding, and sometimes we are not, like here. But all in all we have seen a lot of nice animals. Come on, I think it is time to see the otters being fed."

And so they once more left the octopus cave, passed the turkey vultures, and found a place to watch the sea otters again. Like with the seals and sea lions, it was much busier, so the best places were occupied, but with Iris in the stroller some people made place for her so she could see more than just the bums of other watchers. After a few minutes three animal keepers entered the enclosure, and each otter got its own room service. They were fed fish, shrimp and crustaceans, and the otters swam on their backs in the water before the keepers, and caught the foodstuffs thrown at them. Then they took the food in their front paws, and ate it while using their stomach as a table. Occasionally they rolled over, or in other words rotated their bodies around a full circle. Sometimes the keepers sent them away, to spots close to the spectators, and threw the food there so everybody could see them up close. There were also a few rings and balls thrown into the water for them to retrieve. And at the end one of them came out of the water, and the keeper made it stand up on its hind legs. That really showed how tall it was; Iris suspected it might reach the top of her shoulder.

But after five minutes the show was over again, and the otters started playing with each other once more, mock-fighting and doing swimming contests under water, which was also nice to see. Gradually most people around them left, and Nanny said "Come girls, it won't be long before we need to leave, and there are still a few things we haven't seen. The tunnel should be pretty special too." The girls could have watched the otters play for longer, but also got curious about what else there was to see, so they nodded. "Nanny, I've rested in the stroller pretty long now. Can I walk again, please?" "Let me feel your forehead. OK, that feels normal again. I guess it would be alright. But try to be a bit sparing with your energy, and don't go pulling on the leash with all your strength again!" Iris quickly promised – anything to get out of the stroller again. Not that it wasn't comfortable, and it also felt nice to be rolled around, a bit like a pampered queen, but here all the attention of the other visitors was a serious downside, and darting around with Sabine and having adventures together was just too much fun.

Soon she was on her feet and connected to Sabine's leash. "You will not go around biting people now, will you?" "Oh definitely not, on my feet I can just move away from pushy women." On the map they saw that they could pass the seals and sea lions once more, and also the seabird aviary, and of course they had to stop everywhere and watch for a little while, before Nanny urged them on again. Iris had taken Sabine's hand once more, and tried to be responsible and walk at a normal pace. But the crowds were thinning – probably people were starting to go home now – and soon their enthusiasm got the better of them, and gradually they were back at their earlier speed and pulling Nanny along. Mrs. Fletcher sometimes pulled the leash back a bit when it got too much, but she also enjoyed seeing the girls so happy, and getting a lot of exercise, so she mostly let it happen.

As soon as they entered the tunnel, they knew this was something special: it was a glass tube that ran through the middle of an aquarium, almost like you were diving in the sea. The girls pressed their noses to the glass, and felt like they themselves were sea creatures, with all sorts of fish moving below, above, and next to them, with the surface of the water far above. There was vegetation that the information sign said was a kelp forest, with many types of fish moving around them. Most were fairly small, but there also were some Leopard Sharks with large spots all over their bodies, and when one swam towards the glass the girls involuntarily took a little step back. But of course they were perfectly safe.

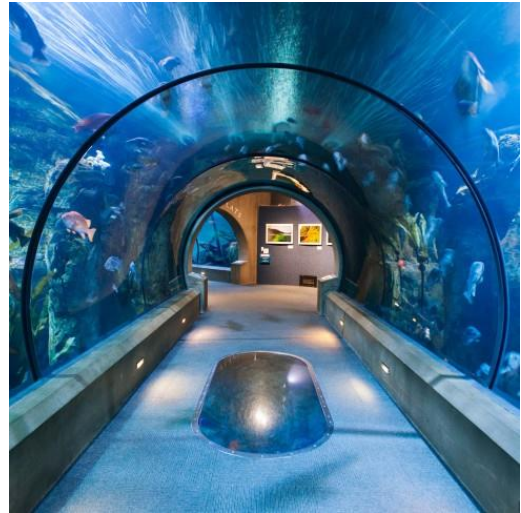


Figure 73 The Aquarium Tunnel

The tunnel consisted of 3 sections with different habitats, and Sabine wanted to go look everywhere at once, and see the other two sections as well, while Iris was still engrossed in the kelp forest, but she thought that once Sabine had seen all three tunnels, she would be more inclined to stay and look around in one place for a while, so she let herself be pulled along. (Not that she had much choice anyway, once Sabine started pulling seriously.) Luckily there weren't so many visitors left, so it was easy to move around. The second part of the tunnel contained an actual shipwreck, with all sorts of fish darting in and out of it. Since there was no kelp, there was more sunlight, and the fish were quite active. But Sabine also wanted to see what the third tunnel was like, so they quickly moved on. That tunnel was the largest of the three, and all open water, as if you were in the middle of the ocean. Here were also the biggest fish, with all sorts of sharks, some of them rather big, but they soon got used to them swimming all around them, and didn't feel the need to step back anymore. There were also huge bat rays that floated through the water majestically, and because they also swam over the tunnel, they could also see the light underside, with the gills and the mouth.

Once they had scanned everything, they started taking more time in the individual tunnels, and some of the time just let themselves drift with the fish and experienced what a scuba diver might feel like, and sometimes they studied the different inhabitants, and spotted crabs or brightly colored shrimp moving along the bottom or on the wreck. Then Iris heard the familiar voices of her classmates again, and once again that scared her: in the stroller her hat hid her face from people close-by, but walking around she might be recognized easier. So she kept herself turned towards the glass, and only occasionally peeked briefly where they were. She also kept quiet to prevent them from recognizing her voice. But once again they were totally ignored, although one of the two remarked after they had passed "Did you see those outfits? Absurd!" and the other replied "I wouldn't be caught dead in that!"

Her disguise had held again, and Nanny had been right: her clothes drew the attention away from her face.

Now she was the one starting to pull the others back towards the first tunnel, to get further away from the classmates. She felt some temptation to see how far she could go and still not be recognized, but she was much too afraid of having her whole school know about her outfit and diaper to try anything. Nanny had realized from Iris's behavior that she was trying again not to be recognized, and supported her, and soon the danger had passed and they could focus on the experience once more. It was such a special experience, and there was so much to see, that it took quite a while before they finally moved on.

By then Nanny was checking the time and said that they really needed to get back to the car, because they still had a long drive back. But the girls tried to slow down now, because they didn't want their adventure to end yet. Once they emerged from the tunnel, and into the bright sun once more, they were on the edge of the park, near the sea, and passed several viewing areas over the Yaquina Bay Estuary. There were those telescopes that you could use if you threw a quarter into them, but Nanny allowed only a brief look from the platforms before they had to move on again. At the end of the path there was a playing area, which of course the girls wanted to try out as well, but Nanny didn't budge, but she said that maybe, just maybe, there would be an opportunity to visit a playing area near Eugene in the coming days.

"Iris, I would really like a picture of you and Sabine together, just a reminder for her and me of this day. If you agree, I promise no one but us three will ever see it." That scared Iris: if the photo ever got out, her life would be over. But she trusted Nanny, and realized it would be very nice for Sabine to have a reminder of this day once she had gone back home, so she hesitantly agreed. Sabine plead "Oh, can we do it with the sea lions?" Nanny didn't look happy about having to go through the grounds once more, but agreed anyway since it was important to use this rare photo opportunity well. When they arrived there, the girls positioned themselves in front of one of the glass panels, as far as their connected leash would allow, and Nanny took a picture. Then one of the staff offered to take one with the three of them, and Nanny gladly gave over her mobile to stand with them. So he took a few more, and then Nanny rushed them on towards the exit.

28. New Arrangements

When they reached the admission area the wrist bands were removed from the girls. Then it was back to the car, and Nanny asked "Girls, do you remember which parking lot we were on?" "Sea otteh" Sabine said, but Nanny replied that they had parked there in the morning, but they had to use a different lot when they came back from the beach. "Sea Nettle" remembered Iris, and Nanny confirmed that that was the one. At the car the hats came off again, and first Iris, then Sabine, and finally the stroller and bags were loaded into the car, both girls got a juice box, and the drive back started. The girls were still full of energy, and kept on talking about all they had seen and what they liked best. Iris was relieved to hear Sabine positively about the fish as well, so they didn't only have a negative association with her father. In their seats the girls had limited direct contact, but Sabine took Iris's hand, so they still felt close. Once they were through Newport and on the highway, Nanny reminded the girls that they needed to drink, and once they stopped talking and started suckle on their juice, they gradually wound down, and at a certain moment Iris felt Sabine's hand go limp – she had fallen asleep. Iris tried to look through the front window for a while, but soon drifted off as well.

When they got home and the car was unloaded, Sabine was put into her tent, and Iris was taken upstairs for a diaper change. She got a pull-up again, and Nanny had another onesie for her “Look what I have for you: a onesie from the movie Finding Dory, with fish on it: isn’t that appropriate?” It was of thinner fleece, and zipped up the front. Iris already recognized the zipper pull: she was not going to take it off without Nanny’s help. “That should keep you warm enough until tonight.” (see Figure 74) Then Nanny picked up the harness again. “Do I still need that now that we’re back home?” “Oh yes, we said you’d be treated like Sabine all day, and I like that you will nicely stay in your seat during dinner.” Iris pulled a bit of a face, but cooperated, and soon was lead downstairs on the leash again, where she was immediately put in the chair and the straps were connected to her harness. Iris was a bit surprised to be at the dinner table already, when Nanny hadn’t even started cooking yet, but when she started putting Sabine in her activity chair, she explained that she had no time or energy to cook, so they were going to use TV dinners, with some cherry tomatoes and cucumber for vegetables. Hearing her talk of food, Iris suddenly realized she was ravenous, and so she was glad that cooking wouldn’t take long. And indeed, soon they were eating, and didn’t stop until all the food had disappeared.



Figure 74 Disney's Finding Dory onesie

When they had finished, Nanny explained that it was already late, and she needed Iris to be responsible for a while: it was high time to put Sabine to bed, and she wanted Iris to clean the table and then, when they had finished in the bathroom, take a shower. “Can you do that for me, and not open your onesie when I open the zipper lock?” Iris promised, got freed from the chair, the harness and the zipper lock, and then the Fletchers disappeared upstairs. She started cleaning the table and loading the dishwasher, surprising herself a bit how easy it was for her to change from careless toddler mode, as she baptized it for herself, to responsible adult mode. There was no urge at all to open her onesie or to behave irresponsibly. She was glad to have her freedom back and not experience the often somewhat humiliating safety measures. Of course she was still wearing a onesie, but those were often worn by adults nowadays anyway, and even her diaper was only a pull-up and for medical reasons.

She thought back about the two classmates from school and wondered how it would be like to see them again when the summer vacation was over, knowing how they missed what they would have considered a great opportunity. But of course she would not be able to say anything. This lead to all sorts of thoughts about school, the grades, the teachers, and of course her two friends from ‘normal’ life. She finally had some pictures to share, so as soon as she finished with the table, she retrieved her phone from her room. From the bathroom came sounds of Mrs. Fletcher giving a bath to her daughter, so she had some time left. She found that she had already received the pictures from Nanny. She quickly deleted the ones that contained her, although looking at them, they all looked so happy that it pained her to do so, but she just didn’t want to risk that someone else, like her mother, looked at her phone and found them. She was just about to post a few of the others for her friends, when Mrs. Fletcher called from upstairs that it was her turn to take a shower. But Iris wasn’t sure when she would get another opportunity to put them online, so she posted at least some of the best ones. “Iris! Shower! Now!”

“Coming” Well, the rest would just have to wait then, so Iris moved quickly upstairs, had no trouble taking off her onesie and pull-ups, and took a shower. That was wonderful; she felt quite dirty after the

whole day at the aquarium and the beach, and she hadn't showered that morning. It was still quite sensitive between her legs, and so she played with herself. To her surprise her thoughts drifted to the feelings of her harness being pulled at, the padlock of her shorts clicking closed, and even the wrist straps in the octopus cave and how helpless they made her feel. Then she was ready cleaning herself, blow-dried her hair, and while she was at it also brushed her teeth and went to the toilet.

Back in her room Nanny was already waiting. "Let us try your new night diapers one more time, to see if we can use them without leaking. Otherwise we'll switch to one of Sabine's types. On the bed she put cream all over the diaper area, and now the area between Iris's legs was not so sensitive anymore, so that made it easier for her. Then the Tena Youth on, and next Nanny asked Iris to stand up and step into the plastic pants she held up. When they were in place, Iris suddenly felt something pulled tight around her waist, followed by a little click. Nanny explained that she wasn't sure yet what Iris would sleep in this night, so she picked a locking pair of pants to make sure the diaper wasn't touched. Then the Dory onesie followed and was locked again. Iris realized 'adult time' was over again.

"Perhaps we should figure out your sleeping arrangements now, so that we won't have to go through that when you are starting to fall asleep. When we picked the carebear sleepsuit, I already mentioned a mummy sleeping bag as an alternative. But that is one where you can hardly move in, and I don't know if that would be too much for you. Sabine doesn't seem to mind it too much, but then she is more used to restrictions. Shall we see how you feel about it?" Iris nodded. She experienced a number of restraints by now, so she was confident she could cope with a sleeping bag too. Then Nanny rolled out the bag on the bed, opened the front zip, lifted Iris on the bed, and invited her to crawl inside. The zipper went down to about the knees, so she stuck her feet in and laid down backwards. "Here are the internal sleeves for your arms, just slide them in from the top." This was something new for Iris, and when she did as she was asked, she realized that the 'sleeves' were more-or-less just long sacks of extra fabric that were sewn to the inside of the sleeping bag. The sacks were long enough that her hands didn't reach the end. Then Nanny folded the sides over her shoulders, the hood over her head, and then started closing the zip, carefully watching Iris. Even though the sleeping bag apparently was large enough for her bigger friend to fit in, it became fairly tight when the zipper was pulled higher, and in the end only a small circle of her face was still in the open. Her legs could hardly move apart, and her arms were close to her sides, and had only an inch or two (3-5cm) to move forward or backward.

Iris tried to move around a bit, and try a position she could sleep in, but she started feeling like she was suffocating and tried to get out. Of course she had no chance, but this was what Nanny was watching out for, and so she quickly lowered the zip again and helped her out. "I guess that was not a comfortable experience" she concluded, and Iris had to admit this was a bit too much for her. Even when she felt a bit excited about some restraints, there apparently was a limit to what was enjoyable. "I felt like I couldn't breathe, being so tightly wrapped up." "Now I think the onesie is too warm in combination with the sleeping bag, so if we replaced that with a thin body, and I allowed you to not put your arms in the internal sleeves, do you think that would make it better?" "We could try, but I doubt it would make enough of a difference." So the onesie was taken off, and they tried again. Now Iris realized what Nanny had chosen the locking pants: her hands were right next to her diaper, and without the plastic pants it would have been so tempting to put her hands inside when she would want to play with her sensitive area again. But soon the suffocating feeling started again, and once more she started struggling.

"OK, so that doesn't seem to work. Let's get you back into the onesie first, so you don't cool down too much. Now, if I can't think of anything else, there still is the duvet you used originally, but I really prefer not to, especially now that I'm not sure if the diaper will leak again. The plastic pants will help,

but can do only so much. Wait a minute, I might have another sleeping bag! It is one that I got from another special needs mom when Sabine first came back home from the hospital, but even then it was a bit too small for her, so we never used it. But perhaps it would just fit you. It should be in one of these boxes. Here, you check this one, and look for something big and in pink stripes.” But then fairly soon Nanny found it herself, and pulled it forth triumphantly.

It was a sleeping bag in light and darker pink stripes, with external sleeves. There didn’t seem to be a zipper in front or back, but Nanny opened on at the foot end. “This one you put on like a night gown, so arms in the air.” Then she lowered the bag over Iris. Her arms went into the arms of the bag, but didn’t come out at the end: this one had mittens too. Her head came out normally although there seemed to be a hood too. Then Nanny lifted her on the bed again, let Iris pull in her feet, and zipped the bottom closed. “Now, how does that feel?” “It is a bit small, and I can’t quite stretch my fingers or my legs fully, but it seems to be OK. It is more like the sleepsuit, although of course I can’t move my legs apart very far.” “Let me try the hood too” Nanny suggested, pulled the hood over her head, and closed a flap under her chin. Iris touched the hood for a moment with her hands, but with the mittens she couldn’t feel much. But when she touched her face, she felt the outside of the bag was sort of velvety material, and very soft and nice to touch. “It’s strange, apart from the arms it is pretty similar to the mummy sleeping bag, but in this one I feel cozy and comfortable.”

“Wait a minute, there was something special with this sleeping bag. Ah, here it is.” Nanny retrieved a pump from the same box, like one used to inflate an air mattress, and plugged it in a valve near the foot end at the back of the bag. Then she started pumping, and Iris gradually felt the bag inflate until there was a thin layer of air all around her, even in her hood and mittens. It made the bag a bit tighter, and a bit harder to bend arms and legs, but it was also super comfortable and somehow funny, so she laughed out loud and tried to bump into the sides of the bed to feel if it cushioned the blow, which it did. She felt she still could move around the bed, wave her arms about, and there was also some room to move her legs, and that seems to make all the difference. “I guess this gets my lady’s approval” Nanny joked, and Iris confirmed. “This sleeping bag has been for a boy who has spasms, and so he was protected from damaging himself when he couldn’t control his movements.” “Pink for a boy?” “I don’t think the color was that important to him, but why shouldn’t a boy have pink things anyway? You wear blue clothes too, don’t you?” “I guess you are right; it’s just that you don’t see much pink with boys, so I was a bit surprised.”

“The sleeping bag might be a bit warm combined with the onesie. Would you prefer to wear something thinner?” Iris already felt a little flushed, so she replied “I think that might be better.” “OK, we’ll do that when you go to bed, so the onesie will keep you warm while we chat on the couch.” Iris looked a little sad. “Can’t I keep it on? It is so much fun.” “Well, I could open the zipper and you could stick your feet out, but I would have to deflate it. You’ll be in bed in an hour or so anyway, and then you can spend the whole night in it. Wouldn’t it be easier to just move around in your onesie, and be able to use your hands?” “I guess so. OK then, I will wait.”

“There is one more thing I want to check. Last night, after we sat on the couch in the night, I put your pacifier on a string so you could always find it back. Did that work OK?” “Not so much; it was out of my mouth every time I woke, and trying to find it with the mittens wasn’t easy, so I became more awake. After the first time I just gave up. I don’t know if that would even work with these mittens.” “OK, let’s try this then.” She took a leather strap of about 25 inches (60cm) that had a buckle on one end, and a slit in the middle. She pushed the pacifier through the slit, so that the ring was on the outside. (see Figure 75) Then she undid the tab of the sleeping bag under Iris’s chin and folded the hood back a bit, which wasn’t so easy while it was inflated. But when she put the pacifier in Iris’s mouth, she managed to buckle the ends in her neck. “Now, how is that? Can you easily push it out of your mouth again?” Iris

tried, and then shook her head. “And can you pull it out with your hand?” That was a bit of a challenge, since Iris needed to struggle a bit against the inflated arms to reach her mouth, but the strap and the ring gave her enough purchase to push it down, and the soft teat offered little resistance, so it didn’t take that long before the strap was around her neck and her mouth was free.

“So, it seems to work as I hoped: the pacifier stays in your mouth, unless you specifically want it out. You need to be able to take it out yourself, like if you want to call for me or feel you can’t breathe freely enough. Let me try it one hole looser though.” She did, but then it came out too easily, so Iris said she liked the first setting best.



Figure 75 Pacifier strap

“OK, I think we know now how you will be spending the coming night, so let’s go down for a bit and chat on the couch. There are a few things I would like to ask you about.” So Nanny deflated the sleeping bag and opened the zipper, removed the pacifier, lifted Iris out of the bed, and pulled the sleeping bag over her head. That left her in her onesie, and although she threw one last longing look at the sleeping bag, for the temperature this was nicer. Nanny locked her zipper again, and took her downstairs holding her hand, which made her feel all small and taken care of again.

When they sat down on the couch, Nanny started “That was another eventful day. I bet it wasn’t as easy to be treated like Sabine as you expected.” “No, it wasn’t. I felt really small and untrusted often, and of course very nervous about being discovered by someone I knew. But you were right, and those two classmates totally ignored me. But in spite of all that, and that I was punished several times, I had such a great time. I guess I really missed being a child, and I didn’t even know it. And the extra restraints didn’t really bother me, since I knew they were there to keep me safe, and unable to make further mistakes. I’m really sorry though about calling you names in the octopus cave. It was almost like I was sick and a sudden wave of puke came out, and I couldn’t stop it. But instead of puke it was nasty words. But the strange thing was that I felt so relieved afterwards.”

“That doesn’t sound so strange to me. When we feel frustration, and we don’t find a way to express it, it sort of gets stored in our system. We don’t really notice it, until it gets too big and it forces a way out. I think you have built up a lot of frustration with the way you and your mother communicated, and that suddenly erupted. And now that frustration is no longer weighing down on your body, so you feel relieved. Normally I would have punished you there and then for saying such things, but I wasn’t sure if you could handle anything more, and I saw that you already regretted it immediately afterward. Still, if I hear anything nasty coming out of your mouth again, especially in front of Sabine, you will be punished.” “I don’t want to say anything unkind to you ever again!” “Thank you dear, that is sweet, but I think that might be hard to avoid, at your age. And that is OK, you’ll just get punished for it and then we move on.” Instead of answering, Iris just gave Nanny a kiss on the cheek.

"There is one more thing I feel bad about though." Iris continued after a short silence. "I was so caught up in trying to do something nice for Sabine, and go look at fish with her, that I didn't even realize looking at fish reminded her of her father, and that made her sad. And I forced her to." Iris said and she felt her eyes filling up. Nanny took her on her lap, and replied "Oh my little mouse, Jack is still very often in our minds, and that makes us feel sad, but we also think back on what a great husband and father he was, and about all the happy memories we built while he was still with us. And yes, fish and aquariums are things that make us remember him, but there are so many things, like here around the house, that the aquarium was no big thing. And now you have added a lot of positive new memories about fish and aquariums too, so I'm sure that it has been a very positive experience for Sabine on the whole." "You think so?" "I know, because I feel the same way." Iris rested her head on Nanny's shoulder for a while, and felt her anger with herself slowly drain away.

"You know, it felt so nice to be a child again, so carefree, that I am actually sad that it is almost over." Nanny hugged her, and gently rocked her to and fro, but didn't immediately reply. "But I came here to help you, and not put an extra burden on you to take care of two difficult children. So I guess tomorrow I'll be a big girl again." "If you really want that, I think we can make a deal. How about this: you will be responsible and grown up when I need you to, like when I need to leave for a while, or have things to do that I need to concentrate on, and the rest of the time you can be little. You have done so much for us already that I'd be happy to do that for you. But apart from that, seeing you two so happy and have adventures together is such a wonderful thing to watch that it gives me great pleasure, and that would be enough by itself. Not to mention how nice and stimulating this has been for Sabine." "Oh, that would be wonderful, thank you so much!" "But you must realize that I will choose when you need to be grown up and when not; you can't just decide whenever you want to stop being treated as a child." That made Iris hesitate for a moment, but since she would be going home on Tuesday anyway, she replied "OK, I understand. But I'm sure it will be alright for two more days."

"This actually ties in very well with another thing I wanted to talk to you about. Sabine has been asking if you two could have a proper sleep-over. Of course you already spend the night here, but you two are in separate rooms, so it doesn't feel the same for her. Now I have been thinking on how to do that. For your safety it would be best if we somehow put your bed in her room, so you are at least closer together, but that seems like only half a solution. And you would need to follow her bedtime too. Of course it would be most fun for you two if you could both be in Sabine's bed – it is big enough for that, but then you had nowhere to flee if she got a tantrum. So she would have to be restrained the whole night." "But didn't you just say that Sabine didn't really mind the sleeping bag that was too much for me? What if we ask her if she would mind sleeping in it if I could be there too? Then I can be in my sleeping bag too." "That sounds like it could work. Let me think about it a bit more, and tomorrow we can ask Sabine if she would like that. Then if I don't come up with a good reason why it isn't a good idea after all, we could perhaps do that next night." "Yeah, that would be so much fun." "But you would need to go to bed quite early, and I won't tolerate you keeping each other awake for too long." "OK, I can live with that, especially for one night."

"Then I think it is high time that this little girl gets her bottle. Stay here on the couch, and I will get it." Iris nodded, and got off Nanny's lap. After a few minutes she was lying there with her head on Nanny's lap, and the bottle in her mouth, and she finished it without complaint, even though it was a bit much. "Good girl, all finished. Then I guess it is high time for you to try out your new sleeping bag." Even if Iris hadn't gotten sleepy by then, that would have made her go upstairs without complaint, and she pulled on Nanny's hand to get there sooner. There her onesie was taken off, and in its place she got a simple pink body with snaps in the crotch. Then the sleeping bag was pulled over her head again, and she was lifted into the bed. Once the zipper at the bottom was closed, it started to feel cozy again, and she put

up her hood, which was easier with the arms not yet inflated. Nanny put the pacifier in her mouth, and buckled it like it was before, and then connected the pump. The bag started to fill once more, which made Iris giggle again. Finally Nanny checked that the hood was sitting right, and closed the flap under Iris's chin. "Please try removing the pacifier one more time; I need to be sure you are safe during the night and can call for me if there is anything wrong." Iris did, and got it out even faster than the first time. Then Nanny put it back in without undoing the buckle, confident that Iris would be alright.

When Nanny closed the railing, she held her hands on it for a while and looked at Iris. At first Iris wondered why she did it that way, until she remembered her panic after the nightmare last night, but that was a distant memory to her, and the bed didn't feel scary at all, so she nodded to Nanny. "Do you like the night light on?" Of course Iris couldn't speak so easily anymore, with the pacifier firmly in her mouth, so she nodded after a brief deliberation. She didn't expect to need it, but with the new sleeping arrangement perhaps she might wake up disoriented, and it might also be comforting in case she had another bad dream, although she didn't think that was likely. Nanny tried to stroke her head again, but with the cushioned hood that didn't have any effect, so she just rubbed a cheek for a moment and then left.

The sleeping bag was so interesting to Iris that she wanted to explore it a bit more. So she first checked that the flap under her chin was firmly keeping the hood on her head, and the opening for her face was too small to fold it back. The flap itself was buttoned, and with the inflated mittens she had no chance to undo them. Then she was curious about the zipper at her feet: she had not seen it was a locking zipper, or there was a flap or anything that would prevent her from opening it. So she tried to explore what she could do. But the inflated sleeping bag gave more and more resistance while she tried to bend forward to her feet, and she couldn't pull her ankles that far towards her either. She had to conclude that she had no chance to even touch the zipper, let alone open it with the mittens. The valve for releasing the air was similarly out of reach. The last thing she tried was if she could pull her arms into the bag, even though she knew the diaper pants were locked. But again the inflation of the arms made them too tight to achieve anything there.

She laid back and relaxed, and felt satisfied that she was safe and secure. Then she turned to her side to find a position to sleep. On her back she had to pull up her knees a bit since the bag was too short to fully stretch her legs, but on her side that was not a problem, and the inflation didn't prevent her from bending them a bit more. It was a bit strange that she couldn't fully straighten her hands either, but her hands were not forced into fists like with Sabine's new mittens either, so that was not a problem. She could bend her arms, but when she relaxed them they tended to straighten again. That was a bit strange, but it wasn't hard to find a position for her straight arms that worked for her, and knowing she was taken care of and had nothing to worry about, she soon drifted off into a deep sleep, and didn't wake at all during the night.

29. Sunday – Movie Time

When Iris woke, the room was still dark except for the night light, but Iris was used to that because the blinds were very effective. She felt a bit sluggish from a long deep sleep, but also refreshed. She tried to stretch, but the small sleeping bag prevented her from fully stretching, and the pacifier in her mouth made yawning a bit different. But it was not a problem, and she was very glad it was still there where it belonged. Realizing she didn't have any recollection of waking during the night, she was curious about the condition of her diaper, but feeling with her hands didn't help at all. The inflated mittens and body insulated all but the hardest contacts. It was actually kind of funny to punch herself with all her strength and hardly noticing the impact. The diaper did feel thicker between her legs, but she

concluded she'd just have to wait until she was released before knowing how much she had peed during the night without realizing. That was still a bit scary, but she trusted Nanny to be right, that her incontinence would not be permanent. She actually felt a bit of an urge, and since she had no idea how long it would be before she could get up, she just let it go, and it actually hurt slightly. Apparently the pain killers' effectiveness was at its end.

Then she realized what woke her: she could hear sounds from the stairs and the landing, and Nanny entered. "Good morning, little mouse, are you awake already?" Iris shook her head to signify she had only just woken up. First Nanny opened the blinds, and then the bed. The sleeping bag made it a bit hard to move and sit on the edge of the bed, so Nanny opened the bottom zipper and pulled her over. Then she opened the hood and removed the pacifier. "So, I see the pacifier stayed in place nicely now. Do you like it this way?" "I actually slept the whole night through; I'm not sure if the pacifier had anything to do with it, but it was really nice that it was there when I woke." "OK, good to hear. We'll keep that in mind for the next few nights. And the sleeping bag was good too?" "Yes, it was very nice as well. Even though I can't quite stretch my hands or legs, that doesn't bother me when I lie on my side, and it gives a weird combination of almost floating on the layer of air, and a gentle hug from the compression. It is a bit restrictive in that I can't easily bend my arms or legs far, but somehow that doesn't bother me. I just like it."

Then she asked "Could you perhaps put the pacifier back in for a moment, I want to know if I can put it back once I take it out." So Nanny did, and with the experience of last night, Iris could get it out quickly by pushing down on it, so that it ended up around her neck. But with the inflated arms and mittens, she just didn't have the dexterity to get it back in. "Too bad. I guess when it's out, it stays out. But of course if I take it out to call for you, you can put it back in." So Nanny concluded "OK, now you know. But if we are testing anyway, let's see if you can still take it out if I put it in one hole tighter." When she put it back, Iris noticed that it was not uncomfortably tight yet, but there was definitely less room, and trying to push out the pacifier with her tongue was definitely not an option anymore. Then she tried with her hands, but that didn't work anymore either. So she shook her head at Nanny, who then opened the valve and let the sleeping bag deflate. "And now?" Not having air anymore in the mittens, and being able to bend her arms easily again gave her a lot more dexterity, but the dummy had a small inflexible part that extended a bit into her mouth, and she couldn't pull that past her lower jaw anymore. So she shook her head again. "OK, that is useful to know. Thanks for helping me test it."

Then Nanny lifted her off the bed, pulled the sleeping bag off over her head and said "Now, let's take a look at the state of your diaper." So she unsnapped the body, unlocked the diaper pants, and let Iris step out of them. She sniffed inside the pants, and felt the outside of the diaper. "Hmm, not fully dry, but very little leaking this time. I guess they are not ideal, even with the plastic pants, but could do in a pinch. Which diaper do you like best for the night?" "Well, I do like it better if they don't leak, so I can let go without worrying. And I sort of like the print on Sabine's ones now; I guess I would choose colorful ones now if I had to pick new ones at the pharmacy. Strange, since they are always hidden underneath my clothes. Or rather, Sabine's clothes." "I guess knowing the cheerful print is there makes a difference." "Yeah, I guess so. For the day the pull-ups are probably easier for the diaper changes, although if I can't do that myself, that doesn't matter so much to me. But they are easier to hide if we go outside, and they are a little more comfortable between the legs, and when sitting down, than the very thick ones, especially when they are filling up. Still, yesterday the thick ones sort of felt appropriate, and matching with Sabine. They do help me feel little."

"We could also try your night diapers today: we change them in a few hours anyway, and they might not leak so soon. Then you'd still have the thicker diaper feeling, and it would also be a shame to not use them at all. I don't expect we'll be out in public today anyway." "OK, we can try that." "Let's go to

the changing table again; I don't want the wet diaper on your bed." So they went over to Sabine's room, who apparently was already awake too. When they entered she stood up in her bed, took her pacifier out and said "Good Mowrning Mamma, Good Mowrning Iris" enthusiastically. Of course she was greeted back, and Iris was put onto the changing table once more, where she was secured, cleaned and rediapered with the Tena Youth, followed by a normal pair of plastic pants, and a simple red body with long arms that Iris hadn't seen before. Her temperature was 98.5F (37C), which was fully normal.

"Not that long ago I found a halter jumpsuit online that I thought would be useful for Sabine. It is in leather look, which makes it easy to clean, and closes with a few buckles at the back that can easily be secured. But when it arrived I saw it was more of a fetish suit, and Sabine didn't like it, so it disappeared in the cupboard. Since you like the leather look stuff, I thought we might give it a try, and you can tell me whether you like it." Iris was curious, so she nodded, sure that Nanny would take it off again if she really didn't want it. Why else would she ask instead of just putting it on her like she did yesterday with the bunny shortalls? When Nanny got the suit from deep within Sabine's clothes closet, Iris could see what she meant. It was white and had straps and buckles that jingled. It didn't look too appealing, but she had agreed, so when Nanny freed her from the table she obediently stepped into it.

When the suit was over her hips, Nanny first closed the zipper up the back, that ended at about the smallest part of her waist, but the suit was large enough that it still needed to be held up. Then she pulled up the suit over Iris's chest, wrapped the collar around her neck, and buckled it in the back. She tested the tightness by putting 2 fingers under it, and decided it was not too tight. But Iris wasn't used to having a wide band of fairly sturdy material so close around her neck, and put a finger under it to see if she could loosen it a bit. "No, Iris, you know better. Take your hand away, now!" Iris obeyed, but complained that it felt too tight. "I understand that it feels that way, but I'm sure you just have to get used to having something around your throat. Sabine also always needs to get used to that velvet choker she wore yesterday. We'll see in an hour how you feel." Next Nanny closed a buckle at the back of her waist, over the top of the zipper. Finally she closed a strap around her lower ribs, just under where her boobs were going to be – hopefully soon now. The straps made sure the suit was held in place, but the fabric was still pretty loose, and Nanny cuffed the legs to make sure Iris wouldn't trip on them.

Iris thought, when she agreed yesterday evening to being treated like Sabine for longer, that the day at the aquarium would be the most restrictive it would get, and that the last few days of her visit, probably mostly in and around the house, it would be relatively easy. But the day had hardly started and she was already starting to doubt her easy assent to Nanny's treatment. Especially when she heard three clicks in a row, where Nanny undoubtedly had added padlocks to the straps. And the suit held one more surprise for her. Nanny took something of the same material as the suit, and clipped it to a D-ring that apparently was attached to the suit right under the neck strap: it was a leash. "The leash was another surprise when I unpacked the suit, but I thought it might be preferable to a harness inside the house. So let's give it a go." Then she continued to her daughter "Sabine, I'm sorry, but please wait a little longer, I need to do some more preparations with Iris." Unlike the previous times, when Sabine was still sleepy, she was wide awake now and looked disappointed, but had no choice in the matter, so she just sat down.

Nanny grabbed Iris's leash, and gently pulled her towards her own room. Iris almost felt like a dog being led around by the collar. She was glad that at least the leash connected at the front, and that Nanny was careful in pulling it: a rough pull from behind would really choke her. Still Iris wasn't willing to enter a pulling contest with it, so she carefully followed Nanny. In the room Nanny started shifting a few boxes and other things, until she discovered what she was looking for. "Look, this is the old high

chair of Sabine, which we used before she got her activity chair. Here, let me get your leash off, so it won't get caught somewhere. Now help me bring it downstairs." It was a chair that was very similar to the ones they sat on in the special needs store restaurant, but this one had a tray.

Iris realized that this must be for her, and that it would probably be more restrictive than the harness on a regular chair. So now she was asked, or rather ordered, to help with her own further 'imprisonment'. Well, that was what she had asked for, and she was curious about it too. And when she tried out the activity chair, it was quite comfortable as well; more secure didn't automatically mean less comfortable. So she stepped up and followed further orders from Nanny to get it safely down. She was to take the top part, and on the stairs just steer and make sure it didn't hit the walls or the railing. With the two of them it wasn't too heavy, and they got it down safely. It was put opposite Sabine's activity chair, and the left-over chair was put at the head of the table.

"Now let us get it adjusted to your size." Nanny put down the leash on the table, and removed the tray. Then Iris could step on the low foot board, and sit in the seat. The footboard was a bit too low, so Nanny adjusted that. Then she tried adding the tray, which was just a bit high for her taste, so Iris had to get out, and both seat and footboard were moved up one more step. When Iris stepped in once more, and the tray was put in again, her arms were resting more comfortably on it, and there wasn't that much room left between the tray and her legs. Nanny was satisfied that it was configured well now, so she removed the tray for a moment to put Iris in the 5-point harness. Of course Iris already knew those from the car seat and the stroller, but at the table that was new for her, and the crotch strap forced her to sit up straight. But for the rest it was a bit more comfortable than with her harness attached to a normal chair, since this seat was made for it. (see Figure 76)



Figure 76 High Chair with Tray

Then Nanny put in the tray again. It had 2 wooden poles that slid into metal brackets at the sides of the chair, and this time she slid them in deeper, until there was a definite click, and then Iris could feel that the tray was stuck, pretty close to her stomach. Next Nanny also secured her feet in the straps on the footboard. Then she put a coloring book and some crayons on the tray, and left Iris there while she went upstairs to get Sabine ready for the day. That wasn't what Iris had expected: being stuck in the chair during the meal was one thing, but now she had to wait there during the whole morning routine of her friend as well! Though to be fair Sabine had needed to wait locked in her bed for her too.

Being alone did have the advantage that she was able to explore her new seat and jumpsuit though. The tray was the most obvious thing to try and open. Just pushing against it didn't work, so she tried feeling the metal brackets, but she couldn't reach them very well, and she couldn't discover a way to unlatch it. The buckle for the harness was below the tray, and while she could put her hands down a bit at the sides, they were in the wrong angle to reach the central release button, let alone press it firmly. Her feet she couldn't reach at all of course, and the straps were secure enough to keep her from pulling them loose. The crotch strap prevented her from sinking down and slipping underneath the tray. So even with her arms free, she could achieve nothing. Not that she had expected to, but it somehow felt nice to explore anyway, and just for fun she tried to struggle a bit more.

Then she started to explore her new suit further. The fake leather material felt sort of nice, although the suit was really too big, so there was excess material bulging over the chest and waist strap. At least it made for more than enough room for the diaper, although she could not really see that at the moment. The material covered almost her whole chest, and ran from the collar diagonally down under the armpits and around her back, leaving the top half of her back uncovered, apart from the chest strap and buckle. That buckle was probably meant to sit in the center of her back, but because the suit was so large, it was pulled in far enough that it was not on her spine. But with the little padlock it was still enough of a bump that it bothered her when leaning against the backrest of the chair. But since she was forced to sit up straight, she couldn't really lean into the backrest anyway.

She couldn't really explore the waist strap, but it sort of felt like she was wearing a belt, so that was not unfamiliar. But the neck strap was. It was pretty wide, perhaps even 2 inches (5 cm), and was wrapped closely around her neck, although she could still stick a few fingers underneath, like Nanny did to test it. When Nanny first closed it, it felt very tight, but now it felt more like an embrace or a scarf knotted tight against the cold, than like something choking her. It was not that flexible though, and thereby limited the motion of her head slightly, but she only really noticed that when trying out the extremes. In the front just below the collar she felt the D-ring for the leash, which was connected to the seam at the bottom of the collar with a little strip of the suit's material. The collar itself was buckled at the back of her neck, and there she could feel that the lock was not on the buckle itself, since its tongue didn't have a hole in it, but just on the next free hole in the strap. So Iris tried to see if she couldn't just undo the buckle, but since the padlock didn't fit through, she still couldn't pull the strap free, and so she closed the buckle again to not get caught fiddling with her clothes.

That concluded her testing, but Iris pulled on the locks and straps a bit more, because it made her feel warm and excited. She would miss this too when she was home again. But she couldn't imagine feeling like this if her mother would treat her this way. Apparently it was only exciting when you really trusted the person restricting you. But why didn't she trust her own mother like she did Nanny? It was not like her mother would do things that would harm her; on the contrary, she was often too protective. So it probably was just that she didn't feel her mother was taking her opinion seriously, and so might not respect her boundaries. Could the talk they had with Mrs. Fletcher make a change there? If her mother would start really hearing her, and they could actually reach compromises, would they start trusting each other again? It seemed unlikely that her mother would change so much, but Iris felt some hope anyway, and was determined to try what she could to make that happen.

The sounds from upstairs suggested it might still take a while before the others joined her, and of course she could not get to her phone. So there was nothing else to do than to take a look at the coloring book. And when she found a line drawing she liked, she thought she might as well start coloring. It had been quite a while since she last did it, but it was strangely relaxing and fun, and soon she was so involved that she startled when she suddenly heard Nanny behind her say "Tada!" and then "Oh my little mouse, did I startle you? I didn't mean to." Iris had a bit of trouble turning around with the restrictions of the chair and the collar, so mother and daughter moved more into her field of view. Then she saw that both Fletchers wore matching overalls, Sabine with a light red top underneath, and Nanny with a dark red top. The overalls was a close-fitting model with higher sides, and while Nanny's had normal overalls buckles and side zip, with Sabine they had been replaced by those black locking

buckles and a locking zip. (see Figure 77) But still they looked enormously similar. Sabine was obviously proud to be wearing the same as her mother, and seemed to make herself as tall as she could.

Until now Iris hadn't paid much attention to how Nanny looked: she was as old as her mother, and usually wore simple functional clothes. But with these close-fitting overalls she suddenly noticed that Mrs. Fletcher still had a very nicely shaped body, and it was clear that Sabine was growing up to have similar looks. Her chest wasn't filled out as much as her mother's yet, but compared to her own she was already quite well-developed. Iris didn't have to pretend to like it, and exclaimed that they both looked spectacular. That made Sabine produce one of her radiant smiles, and even her mother mirrored her. Iris wondered how she could have been with the Fletchers for more than 6 days and never really looked at Mrs. Fletcher. She assumed it was just that mothers felt like different creatures and not to be judged by the same standards as her peer group. Most mothers seemed to either dress up for work in dreary pant suits, or at basic comfortable clothes or even sweat suits. But even mothers were apparently still sensitive to compliments.



Figure 77 Mother & Daughter overalls

"Seeing you both together in your adorable bunny shortalls yesterday reminded me that I got Sabine and me matching outfits too, so today we decided to show them off. I'm glad you like them. But since we'll have a quiet day today, I'm afraid you might be the only one seeing us in them. I do need to go grocery shopping after breakfast, but I think it would be better if Sabine and you stay at home. Unless after yesterday you don't mind people seeing you dressed somewhat different, and leashed..." "No, no, I think I'll stay home, and watch Sabine if you want." "OK, that is settled then." Iris leaned back against the backrest, felt the hard bump of the padlock on the buckle once more, drew a bit of a face and leaned forward once more. "Is there something wrong?" Nanny asked concerned. "Not exactly, but the padlock in the center of my back makes it uncomfortable to lean back. Couldn't you remove it? It is not like I'd suddenly be able to take the suit off, or reach my diaper." "Well, I guess it doesn't serve a purpose at the moment, so I'll take it off. I might add it again later though. You know what, let me put the padlock there on your D-ring, then it is readily available if I do want to use it again, on the buckle or the leash." Iris thanked Nanny and demonstratively leaned back in her chair, for as much as the crotch strap and tray allowed.

Then Nanny helped Sabine in her chair, and started with breakfast. "On Sundays we have a bit more elaborate breakfast; I'll make eggs with bacon. But first here is some cranberry juice for you both." Both Sabine and Iris got a sippy cup, and after a while a plate with a slice of bread covered in omelet with bits of bacon on their trays, cut into bitesize pieces, and Iris got a fork with a thick handle that she had seen Sabine use before. Nanny put the sleeved bib on her daughter and fed her, which might not have been necessary, but which both seemed to enjoy. Iris felt a little pang of jealousy that she was not getting that same attention, although the mature little voice in her head said that she was being silly, and that her friend deserved that attention from her own mother more than she. And it was not

as if they ignored her. Using the fork was a bit strange in the beginning, but the thick handle actually made it easier, and the breakfast was delicious.

When they all had eaten their fill, Nanny explained more about the plans for the day. On Sundays Sabine was allowed to watch a video, or TV, in the morning, so Iris would join her, while Nanny went grocery shopping. In the afternoon there were chores to do around the house, but there should be time for play too. "And Sabine, you have been asking if you could have a real sleep-over with Iris. I talked to her about it, and she would be willing to sleep with you in your bed tonight. BUT, for her safety you will need to sleep in your mummy sleeping bag. Are you willing to do that?" "YES MUMMY!" Sabine exclaimed enthusiastically, and stuck her hands out towards Iris. Of course neither of them could go to the other, so Iris could do no more than stick her own arms out towards Sabine, although she could not reach her friend's arms. But the gesture still felt meaningful.

Nanny came over and inspected her clothes for spillage. There was a little bit on her jumpsuit that was easily wiped off, but some egg had landed on the tray next to her plate and unknowingly Iris had let her arm rest on it, and now there were several stains on the arm of her body. Nanny scraped the egg off, and tried to clean it a bit with a wet wipe. "Well, I guess for in the house that should do for the rest of the day. But perhaps you need a bib with sleeves as well. Then she began releasing Iris, first the tray, then the feet, and finally the harness. Instead of stepping out of the chair herself, Iris wrapped her arms around Nanny's neck and let herself be lifted off, and sneaked in a kiss at her cheek. "Now, Iris, I need you to be mature again, because I'm going to leave Sabine in your care." Iris pouted for a moment, but then stood up straight and made the mental transition. Almost automatically she started helping to clean the table.

In the meantime Mrs. Fletcher retrieved Sabine's harness, released her from the chair, and put the harness on her. Then she took her over to the couch, and locked the leash to a ring screwed into the backrest of the couch, that was normally hidden behind the pillows. Sabine seemed used to it – this was probably the normal routine for the Sunday morning. Something she probably missed out on when Iris and her mother first came to visit, exactly one week ago now. "Sabine, what do you want to watch today?" "Frozen" "Again? Well, it is your choice. One or two?" Sabine seemed less sure about that, and Iris jumped in "Oh, can we watch Frozen 2? I haven't seen it yet." Sabine nodded, and so Nanny popped in the DVD, and when Iris was ready she got the remote. She recognized the buttons for pause, play, and such, and so was confident she could manage. Then Mrs. Fletcher tapped a big glass of water in the kitchen, and put it in front of Iris, while Sabine got a sippy cup again. "You need to finish this before I get back." Nanny said to Iris. "Please help yourselves to juice boxes from the fridge if you want more. And you can each choose four of these." She held a box of Celebrations with a selection of mini chocolate bars. When both girls had taken their pick the box was stored away again. Iris noticed that Sabine's leash was doubled up, so that it was quite short, and Sabine couldn't fully stand up from the couch, but had enough room to sit or lie how she wanted.

Then Mrs. Fletcher left the girls to watch their movie, and went into the kitchen to make her grocery list. Iris started the DVD, and soon both girls were engrossed in the further adventures of Elsa, Anna, and Olaf. They hardly noticed Mrs. Fletcher leaving, and sat on the couch right next to each other. Sabine quickly finished her drink and the chocolate bars, but Iris kept some as a reward for finishing her water, which she bravely attacked until she became so engrossed in the movie that she forgot all about it. After a while though her bowels started to distract her because they wanted to be emptied. Iris realized with a shock that she had forgotten to go in the morning, before she was diapered, and now she couldn't go to the bathroom while Mrs. Fletcher was away. She would just have to keep it in until she returned, because there was no way she was going to soil her diaper.

Sabine noticed her getting fidgety and asked what was wrong, so Iris explained. Sabine hugged her but then shrugged, and pulled a little on the padlocks on Iris's jumpsuit to show that she couldn't do anything about it either. To distract herself Iris asked if her friend wanted a juice box, and when she did she paused the video and got one from the kitchen; she wasn't allowed one yet since she hadn't finished her glass of water. When she passed the table she couldn't resist taking a little look at the leash that was part of her suit. It was a lot like a dog leash: a narrow band of the same material as her suit with a handle on one end and a metal clip on the other. It was about 3 foot (90 cm) long. She decided to leave it where it was, suspecting Sabine to grab hold of it if she brought it along to the couch, and she needed to stay in charge now. And of course she also wanted to take a look at the tray, and how it connected to 'her' high chair. It actually was a simple mechanism, where 2 metal bits popped out of the wooden poles diagonally, so they were level with the poles at the far end, but sticking out on the near side. They had a spring, so when inserting the poles into the chair brackets they collapsed into the poles, but when they passed the end of the bracket they popped out again, and acted like barbs. They were on the side of the poles that faced each other, which meant they were very hard to reach from the chair, and they also needed to be pressed simultaneously to pull the tray out. Simple, but effective, and Iris was sure that even now she knew how it worked, she would not be able to remove the tray when in the chair.

The distraction helped for a bit, but her bowels weren't giving up, and Iris started to realize she wasn't going to be able to keep it in long enough. Since it was getting rather uncomfortable, she decided she might as well get it over with. But of course that was a challenge by itself. Remembering how she first managed to pee in her diaper, she excused herself to Sabine and went to the downstairs bathroom to sit on the toilet. That did the trick again, and soon her diaper was filling up with excrement. The thought almost made her gag, and the realization that she might be sitting in it for perhaps as much as another hour was no fun either. Still, it also felt a bit naughty to poop in her pants. Once she was done she stood up again, repressed the automatic grab for the toilet paper, and rejoined her friend. But instead of sitting, and having the poo spread all over, she decided she was going to lie on her side, and Sabine's leg made a nice cushion for that. But she first emptied her glass, which was a bit of an effort, but then she would not have to get up again.

Lying down on the couch without sitting first was a bit of a challenge too, but she managed, and then turned the video on once more. Soon they were fully into the story again, and Sabine obviously had watched it multiple times before, because Iris could now easily feel when the story became tense, because Sabine tensed up even before the music betrayed that. And she already knew some of the songs, and sang along with the refrains. Iris enjoyed lying there, and Sabine alternatively stroked her head, played with her hair, or fiddled with the padlocks on the collar buckle, and the spare one at her throat. They apparently fascinated her, perhaps because Nanny was always very strict about her not touching such things on her own clothes. She even fiddled a bit with the buckle at chest height, although that one had no padlock currently. Lying like this, Iris hardly felt the content of her diaper, and so could still relax and focus on the movie. Good thing she had such a good night's rest, or the lying and the stroking on her head might have caused her to fall asleep.

When the movie ended Mrs. Fletcher hadn't yet returned, so they chatted a bit more about the movie, Sabine emptied her juice box, and Iris shared her last chocolate bars with her. It was only a few more minutes before the front door opened and Nanny entered with two large bags. Iris quickly sat up to go and help with the groceries, and then realized her mistake: she felt the poo being squished all over the diaper area. Yuck. Well, nothing to do about that now, so she jumped up and took one bag from Nanny and brought it to the kitchen. There she told Nanny about the soiled diaper, and how horrible it now felt. "Oh dear, I'm so sorry. I just didn't think about letting you go this morning, with my mind more on

your clothes and the high chair. And you didn't think about it either?" "No, when you take control I tend to just follow your lead. But I guess it isn't fair to expect you to think of everything, so I'll try to stay aware a bit more." "Well, I don't think we'll be forgetting this again for the coming days." "No, I'm sure we won't."

30. Refreshed and Lunch

When all the groceries were stacked away again, Nanny took Iris back to the living room, grabbed the leash and connected it. She said "I'll take you upstairs now to change you. Sabine, do you want to go to the toilet?" Iris guessed Nanny was anxious to prevent having to change two soiled diapers. Sabine nodded, so Nanny released her and took her upstairs by the hand, while Iris had to follow close behind. Iris assumed her leash meant that mature time was over again. In Sabine's room Nanny first 'parked' Iris by disconnecting her leash, putting the handle through one of the available rings on the wall, putting the end with the clip through the handle, reclipping it to the D-ring at Iris's throat, and for safety using the padlock dangling there anyway to make sure Iris couldn't just unclip it. The method with the leash looked much like you would do with a dog leash when you went into a store, and the leash being connected to her collar gave Iris the feeling again of being treated like a pet, so she said "Woof". "Oh mouse, I don't mean to treat you like a dog; I just thought it more convenient to use the leash that came with the jumpsuit. If you find it degrading I can get your harness instead." This was enough for Iris to not feel bad about it, so she shook her head and for good measure added another "woof". And when Nanny turned back to Sabine she made a few little whining noises for fun, like a puppy that didn't like to be left alone.

She tried to move a bit to the side to see more of Sabine on the changing table, but was quickly stopped by the leash. Because the collar part of the jumpsuit was pretty broad, it didn't hurt or choke her, but it was definitely a stronger reminder to not pull on the leash than with a harness. So she just leaned into the wall and waited for her turn. She realized she didn't feel much of the poo in her diaper if she was not sitting down, apart from that it weighed the diaper down more, but her bodysuit kept that in place. But thinking about it still made her a bit nauseous, so she quickly concentrated on Sabine and Nanny again. Luckily it didn't take long, since for Sabine only the clothes and diaper needed to be removed, and then she was put on the toilet.

When Nanny came back she unlocked Iris from the wall, and started to take off her leather-look jumpsuit. "Iris, why is the chest strap unbuckled? I unlocked it to make it more comfortable for you, and so you went ahead and opened it?" Iris didn't know what she was talking about, although in hindsight the material on her chest had felt more loose since Nanny returned. Automatically her hand went up the back to try to feel what she could discover, but Nanny lightly slapped her hand away. Then Iris remembered that Sabine had fiddled with it during the movie, and her gaze automatically moved towards the bathroom. But it felt like tattling to tell Nanny that Sabine undid it, so she just looked down and said she didn't know how that happened, but that she hadn't touched it. She wasn't even sure if she could have undone the buckle in the middle of her back. Nanny had seen Iris's glance towards Sabine, and so had an idea what might have happened. She didn't pursue the issue further at that moment, but started unlocking the other straps, and then taking the jumpsuit off.

"Let's put you on the table and see what the damage is." And so Nanny lifted her on the table, secured her wrists and waist, undid the crotch snaps of the body, and pulled off the plastic pants. That already released a poo smell, and Iris made a face. It got worse once the diaper was opened, but Nanny was quick to remove and discard it. Then she started to clean the whole diaper area, which took a fair number of wipes. Iris noticed the area between her legs was already quite sensitive again, and she bit

her lip to prevent wiggling. "And what were your favorite animals at the aquarium yesterday?" Nanny asked. That was a hard question; there was so much Iris enjoyed. She had really liked the sea lions, but once she mentioned them, she needed to mention the otters too, and the vultures, and... "All clean again." Iris had realized that Nanny used the question to distract her, but still it had been quite successful.

"Do you want to go to the toilet now, and keep the new diaper clean for a bit longer?" Iris didn't expect to poo more, but she could probably pee a bit, so she nodded. So Nanny released her from the table, and took her to the bathroom in her bare bottom. Sabine was still on the toilet, and Iris saw she had a strap around her waist, so she probably couldn't get up herself. And indeed Nanny opened the strap buckle with the little plastic key, and then Sabine could get up. Nanny cleaned her behind, first with toilet paper and then with a wet wipe. Then Iris was put on the toilet, and she got the strap around her waist as well. Again Iris thought that was not necessary, and felt very untrusted, but that was what she asked for, and part of her also enjoyed it. In the meantime Nanny took Sabine back to the changing table, leaving Iris alone on the toilet. She managed to produce a little bit of pee, but soon got bored. Of course opening the strap didn't work, and it was too short to stand up. So it was just waiting until she was collected again.

She could hear mother and daughter while Sabine got a fresh diaper and was redressed in her matching overalls. Iris could hear the buckles click closed from where she sat. Then Sabine was parked in her bed, and it was Iris's turn for a clean diaper. Nanny decided to use another Tena Youth, since the last one hadn't leaked, and a pull-up would probably not have coped well with the defecation. Then it was plastic pants again and then the jumpsuit. "Does the collar still bother you?" "No, not really. Except when I reach the end of the leash." Iris had to admit. "You see, it just takes a bit of getting used to. Growing up you'll get used to less comfortable clothing more often, like when you start wearing a bra or high heels." So she did up the collar and the waist strap again, and also the chest buckle, which she closed one hole tighter, and immediately added a padlock there as well. "Let's make sure this one doesn't open by itself again. Since you need to not exert yourself too much yet, I made it a little tighter. But that should only hinder you if you start doing too much. Please breathe in deeply." Nanny checked that it only became tight just before Iris's chest was fully expanded, and decided that it was still wide enough for normal activities.

Having the strap one step tighter made Iris much more aware of the jumpsuit again, but it actually felt more like an embrace to her than a restriction, even though she realized that part of Nanny's motivation probably was a bit of punishment for the opened buckle. It was not as if this jumpsuit suddenly was the favorite of everything she had worn this last week, but that was also because it was really too big for her yet. She liked the material though, and thought that was probably because her mother wouldn't allow her such clothes. Even the leash snapped to her collar once more gave her more of a feeling of being included than of restriction. Then all went downstairs, again with Sabine on Nanny's hand, and Iris following.

"There is a little time left before lunch, would you two like to watch a bit more TV?" Iris thought of the coloring book she worked in before she was interrupted when mother and daughter arrived in their similar clothes, but decided she'd first see what Sabine wanted. So when her friend nodded they went back to the couch. Nanny got Sabine's harness again, and then both were locked there. Iris's leash was long enough to comfortably sit next to Sabine, but not much more. Nanny selected a cartoon channel on the TV, and then put the remote back on the table, where neither girl could reach it. So they had to watch whatever was on. It was Phineas and Ferb, which Iris liked, but suspected was not so much to the taste of Sabine. But to her surprise her friend seemed to not only like it, but she was also quite

familiar with it, and spoke along with all the familiar catchphrases like 'Hey, where's Perry?' and 'What'cha Doin'?'.

After a while Nanny came to get them for lunch, but that was just near the end of an episode, and they needed to see how Candice and Doofenshmirtz were foiled again, so they begged for a few more minutes, and that was allowed. Nanny sat down next to them to watch too – probably to make sure that they really stopped watching as soon as the episode was over.

Then she first took Sabine to her chair, while Iris could watch the episode's song, which was always repeated at the end. Then the TV was turned off, and it was Iris's turn to be put in her chair. First Nanny removed the padlock again from the chest strap of her jumpsuit. "For lunch we don't need that, but it will go back afterwards." Nanny explained, and continued "I don't have a second bib with sleeves, so we need to improvise a bit." Then she held up the pink rain jacket with the white hearts, but front-to-back. (see Figure 57 Sabine's hearts rain suit) "Nanny, that is the wrong way around" giggled Iris. "Yes, but as a bib it is better not to have the opening right where you spill the most." Iris could see the logic in that, so she put her arms in, and Nanny zipped up the back, and rolled the hood under her chin to get it out of the way. Then Iris was lifted into the chair, and the harness was closed. Iris decided that she didn't need the tray, and should eat from the table, so when Nanny came with the tray and asked her to lift her hands, she explained she didn't need it and kept her arms low. "OK, if that is what you want" Nanny surmised, and slid the tray in with Iris's arms underneath. Now her arms were trapped: there was too little room to straighten her arms enough to pull them out. She struggled for a bit and then pouted.

For lunch there was tomato soup and bread, and Nanny gave a spoon to Sabine, who of course wore her bib too. Then she started feeding Iris, who really enjoyed that. "I believe this little mouse deliberately got her arms trapped so that she would be fed!" Iris grinned sheepishly and nodded. "Next time please just ask instead of making a scene" Nanny requested, but wasn't mad, and even tickled Iris for a moment to 'punish' her. Iris still had a little soup in her mouth, so that came out and onto the jacket when she started laughing. But like in the morning, Nanny made sure Sabine was not ignored either, and she got a compliment on how much of the soup actually ended up in her mouth. Iris also got a sippy cup with water that Nanny regularly let her drink from.

After lunch both girls were cleaned again, and Nanny first removed Iris's tray, but then told Iris to lift her arms, and put the tray back when she obeyed. Then she collected Iris's phone and put it in front of her. "You need to call your mother while I put Sabine to bed. Especially after your doctor visit, she needs to know how you are doing." Iris knew she was right, and the last phone call wasn't that bad, so she agreed. So when the Fletchers disappeared upstairs, she made the call. Still being stuck in the high chair, with the improvised bib, she still felt little, and then called her mother mommy, which she normally never did. But it didn't get a reaction, so she hoped the slip-up went unnoticed. It was like the week they had not been together, and the talk with Mrs. Fletcher, had given them the chance of a new start, and Iris felt that her mother was also trying hard to make things better between them. She even explicitly said that she trusted Imogen to keep her daughter safe and warm, so she was not going to nag about that. Iris remembered the tip Nanny gave her after the talk to say to the other 'could you rephrase that' if the communication didn't feel open enough, and since her mother seemed serious to improve things, she shared that tip, and her mother agreed that it was a good idea.

Of course she wanted to know how the UTI was, and Iris explained that with the painkillers she was hardly noticing anything, but, after a moment's hesitation, added that she was temporarily incontinent, and that she often didn't even notice she was filling her pull-ups. But that Nanny explained that it was temporary, due to both the infection and the painkillers. Her mother replied that

Iris shouldn't worry, and that she was sure the symptoms would improve in the coming days. She promised to call as soon as she had the test results from the doctor. She also wanted to know how the diapers from the pharmacy were working out, and Iris explained that the pull-ups worked as expected, but the night diapers were often leaking a bit, but that she got some from Sabine instead during the night, and sometimes used the Tena's during the day, when she needed to be changed regularly anyway.

Then she asked about the swishing noise she kept hearing. Iris realized that her phone picked up the sleeves of the rain coat sliding over her chest and the tray, and since she couldn't come up with a good excuse, she admitted that Nanny had put a rain jacket on her because they had tomato soup, to protect her clothes, which her mother thoroughly approved of. Some things would probably never change, but her approval didn't irritate Iris this time: she had to admit to herself that she wasn't the neatest eater or drinker, and probably her mother had to do extra laundry because of that. Then her mother wanted to know if she had had a good time, and what they had been up to. So Iris told her about the aquarium visit, of course without all the embarrassing bits, and that she had babysat Sabine and watched a movie with her that morning, while Mrs. Fletcher did grocery shopping. Her mother concluded that she missed her and was looking forward to having her back home on Tuesday, and Iris responded that she would be sad to leave the Fletchers, but that it would also be nice to be back home again. She felt that saying she missed her mother too was too far from the truth, although when she disconnected she felt better for having talked to her mother again, and wondered if she might not miss her a bit after all.

In the meantime Nanny had come down again, and was occupying herself in the kitchen. When she noticed Iris had concluded the call, she came back and released Iris from the chair and the rain jacket. She picked up the leash, but then took Iris's hand and went upstairs with her. Iris guessed where they were going, and asked "But Nanny, I feel alright and well rested, do I really need a nap?" "Does Sabine take a nap?" Iris bowed her head – this was what she had asked for, and now she got it. So she let Nanny undress her up to her bodysuit, put the sleeping bag on over her head, lift her into bed, and close the zipper of the bag. Then it was filling with air again, which gave Iris that floating feeling once more. When Nanny stopped, it seemed to be inflated harder than before, and Iris had more trouble bending her arms and legs. "Nanny, this is tighter than before." "Oh, do you want me to deflate it a little, or try it like this?" Iris realized that Nanny had not used this sleeping bag before either, so she also had to get used to judging how hard she should inflate it. She wasn't sure she'd like this better, so she tried to lie on her side, pull her legs up and bend her arms a bit, like how she was used to sleeping, but as soon as she relaxed her muscles the bag pushed them straight again, and she soon ended up on her back with her arms spread. "Yes please, I don't think this lets me sleep on my side." So Nanny gradually left out a bit of air, until Iris said that it would do. "Can you touch your toes please?" Iris tried, but could not bend far enough. "OK, then it is still safe. I'll try to remember how hard it is now." Nanny concluded and pressed on it a bit to judge the level of inflation.

Then Nanny closed the hood, the bed railing and the blinds, and started to leave the room. "Nanny, you're forgetting something!" Iris exclaimed, and opened her mouth to indicate what she felt was missing. "You mean the pacifier? I didn't forget that, but like I told you before it is not good for your teeth to wear it too often. If you keep it in all night, we can't use it all the time during the day as well. So try to do without it." So she stroked her face for a few moments, and then left. Iris thought she was wide awake, but in the darkness, in the hug of the sleeping bag and with its floating feeling, she soon drifted off anyway.

31. Chores and Fun

Apparently Iris's body still needed the extra rest, because she was still asleep when Nanny entered her room and opened the blinds. "Time to get up, my little mouse. Sabine is already downstairs." Iris felt so drowsy and comfy that she didn't want to wake up, and turned on her other side. When she still didn't react after Nanny opened the railing and the bottom of the sleeping bag, Mrs. Fletcher started tickling her feet, and that got her awake real fast. But trying to get away from the tickling she kicked around with her legs, for as far as the sleeping bag allowed, and she accidentally hit Nanny on the chest "Oof!" "Oh, I'm so sorry, I didn't mean to hit you, I just couldn't control my legs because of the tickling! ... Are you alright?" After a few seconds Nanny had gotten her breath back, and could say it was nothing serious, and that it was her own fault. Then she joked "Remind me next time I tickle your feet to first tie them down." Iris shuddered of the thought to have her feet tickled and not being able to get away, but joked back "Only when I can tickle your feet too."

"OK now, sleepyhead, let's get you changed and dressed." So she opened the valve of the sleeping bag and lifted Iris out of the bed. Then she picked up the jumpsuit, took Iris's mittened hand and started moving to the changing table. "But Nanny, I'm still in the sleeping bag." "I know, but you can move your feet, can't you? Let's see how this works; I'll make sure you won't fall." Iris managed to grab the side of the sleeping bag with her other hand; with the bag deflated she could grab it even with her mitten. She pulled it up to give her feet a bit more room to move and not step on the bag. Nanny changed her grip and hooked her arm into Iris's armpit, to have a better grip in case she stumbled. But that wasn't necessary, because it wasn't that different from walking in a long dress; Iris just needed to be careful not to make her steps too big.

In Sabine's room the sleeping bag was removed, her diaper changed and temperature measured, and that proved to be fully normal again. Nanny concluded that she was going to keep it up for a little while longer to make sure, but it seemed like the antibiotics started to have some effect, and proposed to lower the painkiller dose tomorrow to three times a single one, so that Iris could better judge if the pain was receding too. Iris replied that was a good idea, as long as the dose could be increased again if it still was too painful.

"And how does the jumpsuit work out?" "I think I would really like it if it would fit better, but it is still OK." "And did the tighter chest strap bother you much?" "No, it was more of a hugging feeling, but then again I spent most of the time sitting, so I can't be sure yet." "Well, you'll have more opportunity to experience it then." Click. Click. Click. Nanny took the leash, but again didn't attach it, and just took Iris down at her hand. Sabine was in her tent again, and Nanny opened it but sat down next to the opening, pulling Iris down with her. Sabine came to the opening too, so they sat in a little circle. Iris had to think of a Pow Pow, a native American meeting in front of a teepee. Nanny started to discuss the plans for the afternoon: there were several chores, like laundry, cleaning and vacuuming. She expected Iris to do a few of them, although she should not do too much strenuous work. Then they'd swap and Iris could be with Sabine while she did the rest. If things were going to plan there should be some time left to have fun with the three of them.

"So Iris, I'm afraid I need you all grown-up again for the next few hours. Perhaps you can do a quick clean of the bathroom again – you already know what to do there. And also the downstairs toilet. For vacuuming I'd say your and Sabine's bedroom. We'll do a break halfway, so you won't get too tired. Your jumpsuit will do, although for the wet parts we'll combine it with the rain jacket again. Do you think you can do this for me?" Put like that Iris felt that she could not refuse, although it seemed to her there had hardly been time yet where she could be little. "I think I can do that. I wish there was more time I could relax with Sabine, but I guess it is only fair that I help clean what I made dirty." "Thank

you, and I always wish there was more time to just relax and have fun as well, so I definitely understand. But if we put our shoulders under it this afternoon, we can have fun the rest of the day and most of tomorrow.” That sounded fair to Iris, and knowing that she was working towards a reward would definitely help.

“Which do you want to do first, the cleaning or the hoovering?” Nanny asked her. “Let’s get the dirty work out of the way first.” “Good choice. Last time you cleaned with your hands uncovered, which makes the cleaning easier, but if you want I can also give you rubber gloves for the dirty work. Or even rain mittens if you’d like more of a challenge.” That last option sounded tempting to Iris, in that she assumed she would not be able to take the mittens off, and combined with the jumpsuit that would surely make the cleaning a bit more exciting. But it would probably also take longer, and she expected that if she got fed up with them, Nanny would likely hold her to her choice. Although if the mittens would prevent her from doing a good job, Nanny would surely take them off again. She decided that if the cleaning was more exciting, it was not so bad if it took a little longer, so she asked for the mittens.

“OK, if that is what you want. I’ll be right back.” Nanny went upstairs, and quickly came back with the pink rain mittens and boots that Sabine wore with her old pink coveralls (see Figure 42 Sabine’s old rain coveralls), when Iris wore the giraffe suit and they played outside in the rain. She put them on Iris, and buttoned the wrist straps. Iris noticed that these were smaller than those with the giraffe suit, and fit her better. Next Nanny held up the pink rain coat that was still on the table from lunch, again back-to-front. Iris realized that she did that for the same reason as with lunch: her chest was most likely to get dirty. So she put her arms in without questioning it, and Nanny zipped her up from behind. Click. “We might as well make sure you’re not going to take it off if it gets a bit warm.” Nanny explained, and watched Iris for a second if she would object, but Iris just nodded. “And please let me know if the chest strap of the jumpsuit is bothering you too much.” “OK, I will.”

Iris started with the downstairs toilet, but quickly noticed that bending over the toilet made the chest strap unpleasantly tight, and the collar was less comfortable too. She was about to go and talk about it to Mrs. Fletcher when she considered that it might be more doable if she squatted down. With her torso more or less up straight, the tightness was acceptable, and it was actually nicer on her lower back as well. Her legs weren’t used to it though, so she needed to stand up and change position every now and then. But she felt proud of herself to have found a solution and avoided to ask for help. The mittens took away part of the feeling in her fingers of course, but otherwise hardly hampered her. Probably no more than rubber gloves would have, so she was happy with that choice. Being restricted in the various ways gave her a bit of the same feeling as when she was treated like Sabine, even if she was working unsupervised at the moment. And overcoming the extra challenges also made the work more interesting.

When she was ready, she saw Sabine was in her activity chair. She appeared to be coloring, while her mother was busy in the kitchen, but also watching and talking to her. She went to the stairs to continue her task in the upstairs bathroom. Nanny asked her to wait for a second, walked up to her, felt her forehead, and nodded. Then she told Iris to mainly focus on the basin and the toilet, and to just do a quick wipe of the shower and the bath. Then she went back to the kitchen, and Iris continued her work upstairs. Having a bit more privacy there, Iris couldn’t resist testing her mittens, but the non-elastic wrist straps made sure she could not pull them off, and buttonholes in them were tight enough that getting the button through with one mittened hand was not working. Then she concentrated on getting the work done, and while with some of the subtasks the mittens indeed proved a bit more cumbersome, it didn’t take that long before she was done there too, so she went downstairs again.

Nanny took a dirty towel, made part of it wet, and cleaned Iris thoroughly before taking off the jacket, mittens and boots. "Would you like to continue your coloring for a while, before you go vacuuming? I am busy in the kitchen for a while yet, so I can watch the both of you. Nanny obviously offered her the chance to be little, until it was time for her to do the vacuuming upstairs. Iris hugged her to show appreciation that Nanny tried so hard to make it as nice an afternoon for her as she could. Nanny took that as a yes, and so she took Iris's hand and put her in her high chair again. Iris noticed Sabine had a different book, so she could continue coloring where she stopped that morning. She immediately started, and Nanny gave her a little pat on the head before going back to the kitchen.

Of course the girls talked a bit during the coloring, but not all the time, since they also wanted to concentrate on their coloring. Iris noticed Sabine lightly sticking her tongue out at those times, and thought it cute. Then she noticed she did it herself as well and quickly pulled it back in. But a few minutes later, during another challenging bit, she noticed she had done it involuntarily again, and decided that if that is what her body wanted, she didn't mind in this company.

All too soon Nanny stood next to her again, felt her forehead once more, suggested Iris had better get the last task over, and without waiting for a reaction removed the tray and got Iris out of her chair. Then she went upstairs with Iris to get the hoover and explain what needed to be done. No extra clothes or restrictions this time, and Iris couldn't really think of any to suggest either, so she just got going. Vacuuming the large open areas was easy, but of course her room was full of stored boxes, some furniture, and other things that made it a lot of work to get to all the corners. She managed to get the railing of the bed partway up so that she could vacuum underneath as well. She wondered if she would sleep in it again; certainly not this night, and perhaps there would be an option to spend her last night here in Sabine's bed as well. She quickly started thinking of other things, because suddenly leaving the Fletchers on Tuesday seemed unpleasantly close. She noticed her legs getting tired, because she needed to sink to her haunches a lot to reach everywhere, to prevent bending over and experiencing the chest strap getting too tight again.

When she had finished the room, she took a few seconds to rest and shake her legs against the fatigue. Then she decided that since she had to take the hoover across the landing anyway, she might vacuum that as well: without corners or things in the way she would not have to squat anyway. Sabine's room was not that hard either: her friend didn't seem to be there a lot, at least not unsupervised and outside of her bed, so there were no toys, clothes or other things lying all over the floor, like in her own bedroom at home. The bed was so close to the floor that she couldn't get under that. So it was mostly the changing table and diaper pail that needed a bit of extra effort, but for the rest it was easy going.

When it was all done, she went downstairs and reported. She was still feeling her legs, and shook them again, which of course triggered Nanny to ask why her legs were so tired. So Iris explained her solution for the tight chest strap, and Nanny complimented her, but also widened it one hole again. She did put the padlock back in though. Iris was relieved because the strap had begun to irritate a bit, so she preferred to do without its hug at the moment. Nanny continued "I'll finish vacuuming upstairs first, so you'll have to watch Sabine. But first, remind me when I last changed your diaper?" "That was after my nap." Nanny nodded, and felt for a moment between Iris's legs. "That feels like it should be OK for a while yet." Iris was startled for a moment, since she was not used to have someone suddenly grope her crotch, but it was clearly done for her benefit, and it made her feel more little, so it was alright.

Then Nanny moved upstairs, and Iris knew she had to be mature again and watch Sabine. Her friend was still coloring, and seemed to be enjoying herself, so Iris took up her own coloring again, since she hadn't quite finished that when she needed to go vacuuming. This time on a normal chair with the book on the table. Soon the unpleasant sounds of the hoover came from upstairs. After a while the

noise came from the staircase, and then Nanny was downstairs again. She stopped the Hoover and came over to the girls. "Iris, you did a good job cleaning and vacuuming. Thank you for that." And she stroked Iris's hair for a while. Of course she also had to look at the results of the coloring, and that meant more compliments.

"Iris, I think your efforts have earned you a nice bottle of milk. I have finished with the work upstairs, so from now on I can watch you both again. Why don't you release Sabine from the chair while I make your bottle. Do you remember how the activity chair works?" "I think so." Iris answered, and started undoing the harness. But the tray was in the way of the lower buckles, so she needed to remove that first, and then did one lower buckle. Like Nanny always did, she only opened one side, and folded the harness to the side. Then she lowered the seat and tilted it forward so that Sabine could step out. By then Nanny already came back with the bottle, and told them to go into the tent together. "And Iris, remember to immediately let me know if you see any sign of a tantrum." "OK, I will." Sabine saw the bottle and knew what her task was. She grabbed the leash from the table, and tried to clip it to Iris's collar, but she couldn't quite combine the action of opening the snap hook and hooking it to the D-ring. Iris was afraid that this might lead to frustration, so she put her hand over Sabine's, and steered her hand and fingers to make the right movement.

But she hadn't thought it through well enough, because Sabine wasn't aware that you should be gentle with a leash on a collar, so she gave an enthusiastic pull to get Iris moving towards the tent. Luckily the collar was wide enough to distribute the force, and Iris's neck didn't seriously hurt, but it was definitely unpleasant, and Iris exclaimed "Whoa". Of course that drew Nanny's attention, and she explained to Sabine that she had to be more careful with a collar than with a harness. Sabine was startled too by Iris's shout and looked concerned at her friend. When Iris stood up again and rotated her neck in different directions, there was a bit of stiffness, but it didn't feel there was anything seriously wrong, so she nodded to mother and daughter, and Sabine gave her an embrace and apologized.

Then they calmly moved into the tent, and Nanny closed the zip. Iris was pushed into the bottle feeding position again, and managed to empty it. It felt great to lie for a moment after the strenuous cleaning and vacuuming, and fully rest her legs. And when Sabine started stroking her head, she quickly drifted off, although Nanny's Hoovering made a lot of noise all around them. When she woke again the vacuuming noises came from the kitchen, so she couldn't have slept for long, but she felt rested again anyway. Sabine was playing with her leash, and practiced clipping it on and off, but she also tried to use the other end of the leash, using the same trick that Nanny did to connect the leash to the ring in Sabine's room. Iris was still drowsy, and it seemed like a good idea that Sabine was practicing her dexterity. After a while Sabine had mastered the trick, and had the leash connected to the D-ring the other way around. She triumphantly took a firm grip on the other side, and suddenly Iris realized that now she had no chance to disconnect the leash from her collar anymore while Sabine held the other end. With Nanny close by she wasn't immediately worried, but she did wonder if her friend had deliberately reversed the leash to achieve that.

Iris tried to sit up, but Sabine held the leash too short, and picked her up in her arms and rocked her like a baby, all the while keeping the leash tight enough that Iris couldn't get away. As always she was being gentle, or at least trying to, and on one hand Iris enjoyed the treatment, but she did feel some worry about Sabine having so much control over her. Even though she loved her friend, she was also aware that Sabine had her limitations and might make misjudgments that could get unpleasant for her, like with the rough pull on her leash. But then Nanny was ready with the vacuuming, opened the tent and sat next to it on the ground again. She noticed her daughter with the leash, and that it was reversed. "Sabine, did you do the leash that way?" Sabine nodded, and Nanny complimented her

“Good girl, that was very clever. Did you watch how I did that with the leash when I changed your diapers?” “Yes Mommy, I watched good.”

Nanny checked how late it was, and decided there was time left for some fun. “Girls, I think you should play in the garden for a while. Get some fresh air. The weather is good. But first I’ll change Iris’s diaper again, because of the bladder infection. Sabine, yours is still OK?” “Yes, Mommy” Then Nanny held her hand out and Sabine handed her the leash, slightly reluctantly. Nanny closed the tent again after Iris got out, clicked the snap hook around the leash a bit from the end to improvise another handle, and led her to the changing table. Of course her temperature was taken, which was 99.2F (37.3C) – slightly higher than in the morning, but that was not uncommon in the afternoon. Then Iris got another Tena Youth and was dressed again. “Now Iris, I want you to try and be a bit careful with your energy when you play outside. So I think I had better do the chest strap up a bit tighter again.” “Nanny, please don’t. My ribs are a little sore from when I was cleaning, even though I did most of it while squatting. It is not bad, but I don’t want to make it worse.” “Of course, Iris. Good that you told me. But I’ll be watching you, and I might need to step in and come up with something different if you play too exuberantly.” “Nanny, what does that mean?” “It means too wildly, too energetically.” “OK, I won’t.”

While holding on to the leash, Nanny collected the bottom parts of Sabine’s giraffe suit, to prevent stains on her overalls from the grass. Then she went to the exercise room and removed the harness hanging above the treadmill. “I’m putting this harness on you, because it is the most comfortable one for when you run into the end of the leash. You only need the rain jacket on to protect your sleeves, and for warmth.” “Can I also have the pink mittens? Then Sabine and I are more equal in dexterity.” “That is very considerate of you, and I have no objection.” Together they went downstairs, where Iris was dressed in mittens and rain jacket, this time with the zipper in front, but also with the little white padlock that matched the jacket’s hearts. Then came the harness, which she closed with a carabiner in the back. The leash was still attached to Iris’s collar, and Nanny had made sure it was outside the jacket, and she used it making a loop around the table leg with the snap hook. “If I see you touch it, there will be consequences” Nanny warned Iris, apparently not wanting to spend time to make it inescapable for her.

Next Sabine was taken out of the tent, and dressed in her new rain overalls. The magnetic buckles at the shoulders automatically locked when they engaged. Then the boots, zipped and Velcroed to the overalls legs. She got her regular rain jacket on. (see Figure 53 Sabine's over-the-head jacket) Apparently Nanny thought the complete giraffe set overkill, or too warm, and to Iris’s surprise Sabine did not protest. Then Iris’s leash was freed from the table leg, and Nanny gave it to Sabine with another warning to be gentle. She took Sabine’s hand to take them outside and to the shed, where she got the harness and line for Sabine, who quickly was secured to the ring in the center of the grass. Then Nanny took a chain with 2 large padlocks from the shed. “I’m sorry Iris, a chain is not the most friendly solution, but I don’t have another long line, so we will have to improvise.” She used one of the padlocks to connect the chain to Iris’s back, told Iris to go into the shed, and locked the chain to the ring. There was a part of the chain still unused, lying on the ground next to the ring, but now Iris had just enough room to get to the playing equipment and away from Sabine if she had a tantrum. Iris estimated her chain was about 6 feet (1.80m) longer than Sabine’s line. Nanny removed the leash to her collar, and then went to sit in a garden chair next to the house to watch them for a while.

As usual Sabine started by running into the end of her line and falling on her behind, and now Iris was in a harness as well, so she could mirror it. Just pretend she wasn’t leashed, and run to the end of the garden. And then suddenly the harness stopped her dead, but because of its construction the force was spread over a wide area, and it hardly hurt. But having her body stopped so suddenly made her lose her balance, and she landed on her diapered behind, just like Sabine did. Again a bit jarring, but the

diaper dampened the impact and she burst out in laughter. Then she went into the shed to see what they could play with today. Iris thought Nanny would probably find the hopper balls a bit too strenuous, and the Frisbee might be too hard for Sabine.

Finally she decided for the inflatable beach ball, but that one was a bit soft, so she tried to blow a bit more air in it. But with the mittens she couldn't get the valve open, so she had to go to Nanny to help her. Before she got to Nanny, she reached the end of her chain again, and this time it was actually unexpected. Still, the harness made it no more than bothersome, and Nanny came to her to help her, and inflated the ball enough that it would bounce again. Iris started easy with Sabine, just rolling the ball over, but gradually they also used kicking, and then throwing. Iris learned a bit of volleyball with gym at school, so she also tried that, and it worked pretty well with the mittens, but of course the ball went faster and further than with throwing. Sabine tried it too, but had less coordination and no practice, so the girls were running up and down quite a bit, and inevitably also into the limits of their leashes. When that happened with Sabine, Iris had extra reach and could still get the ball, but of course after a while it ended up out of Iris's reach too. She turned to Nanny, but she wasn't sitting in the garden anymore. Iris went in the direction of the house, but couldn't see her. She called softly, because she didn't want the neighbors to hear her and perhaps come to investigate, but there was no response.

Iris suddenly was fed up with the restraints: they were fun and all, but now they started to interfere with play, and that was frustrating, so she started pulling on the chain on either end, and on the harness, but of course there was no way she was escaping those. Then Sabine embraced her from behind and sat down with her, and Iris cried for a bit, but then felt some relief. She wanted to turn around to face Sabine again, but her friend kept holding her, and that turned into a bit of a wrestling match, and soon both were rolling around and laughing. "And how are my girls doing?" they suddenly heard from Nanny. Hearing her voice, Iris pulled away from her friend and ran towards Nanny because she wanted the restraints off. Mrs. Fletcher had already come enough towards them that Iris was confident she could reach her, she hadn't counted on her chain and Sabine's leash getting tangled during the wrestling, and 5 foot (1.5m) or so before she reached Nanny she was suddenly halted again and landed once more on her behind, while Sabine experienced a jerk on her harness as well. Iris burst into tears again, and Nanny took her in her arms and comforted her.

When Iris calmed down a bit, she explained that she had enough of her leash and other restrictions, and didn't want to put up with them anymore. "Oh, little mouse, that is a sudden change of heart. What brought that on?" "I just wanted to play and have fun with Sabine, but the restrictions kept bothering me. First I couldn't blow up the balloon because of the mittens, then I sometimes forgot the leash and got abruptly stopped, like just now, and then the ball went out of reach and I couldn't find you. I tried to call, but I didn't want to shout too loud for the neighbors." "I'm sorry dear, I just went upstairs for a moment to prepare for the coming night. I thought you'd be OK for that short while, but I didn't realize that you might need help like with the ball while on such a long leash."

But then Mrs. Fletcher continued "But you know that Sabine can't stop if she doesn't feel like it anymore. If you are determined to quit this, we will do so, but then it will stop for the rest of your visit. Like I warned you when we started, we are not going to do this only when you feel like it." Iris knew that Nanny was right, and that this was what they had agreed on. After venting her frustration on the chain and the harness, and then having a good cry, she didn't feel so strongly about being released anymore. And being mature all the time didn't appeal to her at all; especially playing with Sabine on equal footing meant a lot to her, and then perhaps the sleepover that night would not go through either. So after some consideration she replied "You're right, that was our deal. I think I was just frustrated for a moment, because I needed to be in charge in the morning, and then be responsible

with the cleaning. And now I could finally play with Sabine and relax, the restrictions kept getting in the way. But I don't want to miss the carefree playing, and I would feel like letting Sabine down if I just quit when she can't, so please forget my request, and continue as we did."

"I'm glad that is your choice. Although it means some extra work for me, I am happy to do it, and I think it is very good for Sabine, and also for you. What about I take you back inside and let you move freely with only the minimum restriction I would find acceptable for Sabine. She can run around a bit here to burn off her energy, and then join you inside while I get dinner ready. Sabine, please go run around for a bit while I take Iris inside, and then I will come and get you." This apparently wasn't new to Sabine, and she started running around at high speed in the biggest circle her leash would allow. Nanny unlocked the chain from the back of Iris's harness and took it off. Inside she first took a cloth to wipe her clean again, and removed her jacket. Then she was put in the patient jumpsuit with the zippers along the arms and between the legs. (see Figure 45 Patient safety jumpsuit) It was put on over her leather-look jumpsuit, and Nanny closed the zippers halfway. The mittens were not attached. Now Iris again could only move her lower arms away from her body, and take short steps with her knees kept together. Before Nanny left to store away her chain and harness, and get Sabine, she installed the bar at the kitchen entrance again at knee height, so that Iris couldn't enter there with her restricted legs.

Iris saw her phone was still on the table, all the way against the wall in the middle, to keep it safe. She wanted to check if her friends reacted to her posted photos and post the ones she didn't have time for before she was called away last time. But her arm reach wasn't long enough to get to it. Then she thought she might be able to reach it when she was standing on a chair, or else climb on the table from that position. But climbing on the chair didn't work either with her connected legs. She felt the frustration rising again, but refused to give in to it, and looked for something else to do, before Nanny saw her act unsafely and would decide to add extra restrictions anyway. She thought the TV would be a nice distraction and allow her to rest for a bit after the exercise in the garden. By then Nanny and Sabine entered the kitchen, the latter already without harness, but still breathing hard from her running. She got rubbed clean as well, and the jacket, boots, and rain overalls were removed. Then Sabine was taken into the living room. With unrestricted legs she could easily step over the barrier at the kitchen entrance.

Next Nanny got out the straps (see Figure 44 Patient restraint straps), and started to put them on Sabine. First her arms were fixed to her body at elbow height, like Iris had also experienced. But instead of putting a strap around the ankles, Nanny now put a strap around the waist, connected 2 straps at the sides that hung down, wound one more strap around Sabine's legs just above the knees, and connected the straps hanging down on the outside of the legs to it. Now Sabine's knees were held together, and the straps at the sides prevented the knee strap from being lowered. It looked a bit like the contours of a tight skirt that ended just above the knees. Iris realized that Nanny had thought about the problem that the ankle straps could cause the wearer to trip, and came up with a solution to keep the knees together instead, like with the jumpsuit Iris was wearing at the moment, or the denim jumpsuit that Nanny had adapted for this.

So now Sabine had the same level of restriction as Iris, and Nanny told them to have fun while she started with dinner. Iris was surprised for a moment that Nanny left her alone with Sabine while being restricted herself, because now she might not be able to defend herself very well when Sabine got a tantrum, nor get away easily. But with Nanny being close by she could always call for help, and apart from that Sabine would probably not be able to hurt her badly with her arms limited like that. So she felt she could relax, let go of all the adult worries again, and just have fun with her friend. She grabbed Sabine's hand and went to the couch with her, to watch TV like she planned to, but when Nanny saw

that she stopped them “No girls, you watched TV all morning. Go find something else to do.” “Could we at least have MTV on for the music, while we play?” “I’ll put some music on, if you want.” Nanny went to open a cupboard where there was an audio system, and turned the radio on with classical music. The TV remote control she put on a high shelf that the girls would not be able to reach.

That was not what Iris meant by music, but she expected it was the best she was going to get, so she looked at Sabine what she wanted to do. Her friend took her to the tent to play tea party again, like they did when Iris first visited a week ago. After a while the girls gradually stopped playing, and just sat shoulder to shoulder, talking a little and listening to the music. Iris always considered classical music something that only old people, like parents, liked, but drifting along with the tinkling of the piano was really nice, and she rested her head on her friends shoulder. Then she suddenly noticed her friend was working on the zippers along her arms, and before she knew it they were fully closed and her arms were stuck to her body all the way. Quickly Sabine also did the leg zipper, and now Iris’s legs could not be separated anymore either. “Hey” Iris called out, surprised and feeling a little tricked by her friend, although it was a bit exciting as well.

This caused Mrs. Fletcher to come looking, and when she saw what happened to Iris, she asked her daughter if she did that. Sabine shook her head wildly in an obviously fake denial. “I’m sure you did, because I don’t think Iris could have done that herself!” Then Sabine nodded, but was not able to hide a grin. “And I guess you undid the buckle on Iris’s jumpsuit this morning too?” One more nod. “Then I guess it is paws time.” Iris didn’t know what that was, and Sabine didn’t seem to know either, but when Nanny came back from upstairs with the leather mittens with the paws decoration (see Figure 33 Fist mittens with paws) that they bought on Tuesday, they understood. Since Sabine liked them, she didn’t protest when they were put on her and the click of the locks made sure they weren’t coming off. She started to try and prowl around on all fours, but that didn’t work with the restraining straps around her elbows and knees. So she sat down, and noticed the paws also made it very difficult to pick up any toy or doll. It was easy to see her face reflect her gradual realization that this was a real punishment. Then she tried to get them off, but of course they were very secure, and she soon gave up.

In the meantime her mother walked back to the kitchen, but Iris called to her “Nanny!” “Yes Iris, what is it?” she responded, acting surprised. “Aren’t you going to help me?” “Help you with what?” “Nanny!” “I’m sorry Iris, perhaps it is a little too soon to tease you. I suppose you want your arms and legs free again?” “Yes, please” So Nanny unlocked the zippers, opened them partway, and relocked them. They were a little further down though, limiting Iris a bit more. Iris couldn’t decide if it was intentional, perhaps to remind her not to be caught off guard so easily next time, or that Nanny just hadn’t been that precise, since directly after she hurried back to her stove. This time Iris felt she had the upper hand, with her friend wearing the paws, so she tried to steer her friend to rest her head on Iris’s lap, and get her in the same position Iris was in when she got the bottle. Sabine didn’t resist, probably also because there was not so much she could do anyway, and soon Iris was stroking her head, and playing with the paws on her friend’s hands.

When dinner was ready, the patient jumpsuit and the restraint straps were removed. Iris got the rain jacket on backwards again, put her arms through the integrated harness, and meekly raised her arms for the tray. But Sabine’s punishment was not yet over, so the mittens stayed on, and her mother fed her again. But this time she also fed Iris a bite occasionally. Iris tried to eat normally, but somehow made a mess anyway. She wasn’t sure if that was because she was just too relaxed to care, knowing her clothes were protected anyway, or because she was not yet quite used to the harness keeping her up straight, and prevented her from holding her head above her plate. The latter seemed to be a routine for her, a habit her mother had often complained about, because every time she had loaded

her spoon full, she automatically leaned forward and was stopped again. That jarring alone sometimes caused food to fall from her spoon, but it also was heaped so full that things dropped off anyway, which would normally just land back on her plate, but now ended up on her improvised bib and on the tray. In the back of her mind she realized that she should probably put smaller amounts on her spoon, and that the harness was actually useful in teaching her better table manners, but she was just having fun and ignored that mature little voice.

32. Sleepover

After dinner both girls were kept in their seats until the table was cleared and cleaned, and then they were wiped clean as well. "Iris, what a mess you made again. I'm not cooking for your bib you know!" Nanny complained, but Iris could hear it was more of a friendly banter than that she was actually upset. Then Nanny left them for a moment to go upstairs, and Iris could hear she opened a tap. When she came back she got Iris out of her highchair, and reconnected the leash the normal way. Then Sabine was freed as well, and they were both taken upstairs. Iris was first parked again with her leash at the metal ring, and the click of the padlock made clear she had no choice but to wait there. Sabine was undressed, her diaper was taken off, and that area got a quick wipe. Completely naked she was taken into the bathroom.

Then Nanny came back, released her from leash, jumpsuit and body, and then also from her diaper. She was taken into the bathroom as well, where the bath was still being filled, while Sabine was already sitting in it, in a thick layer of foam. Of course Iris knew there was also a bath in the bathroom – she had even cleaned it. But with her habit of showering in the morning, she had never considered using it. At home they didn't use the bath much either, although it sometimes was nice to warm up, or you had muscle aches, but Iris usually got bored quickly, and the shower was just quicker. But this time it seemed she was getting one. She only didn't understand yet why she was already naked, when Sabine was obviously first. But Nanny helped her in on the other side from where Sabine was sitting. The bath was at least 6 foot (1.8m) long, and both of them fit in comfortably, as long as they were sitting. Apparently they were going to be bathed together.

As soon as Iris was sitting, Nanny pushed some of the foam to the side, and then Iris saw there were suction cups on the sides of the tub, with cuffs attached to them. (see Figure 78) Her hands were fixed on either side. The cuffs just closed with Velcro, but with her hands unable to reach the other, she was pretty sure she would not be getting out of them without help. Sabine was holding her hands in similar position, so she assumed she was cuffed as well. Since the cuffs were above the water line, they didn't have much chance to splash or play with the foam. But of course they could blow the foam to each other, and their feet were free too. They tried to push each other feet to feet, like peddling on a bike, and tickle the other with their toes. But that didn't really work with the foam blocking their view. They also tried to sink more to a lying position and then their toes could reach the other's body and crotch. They were just exploring each other's sensitive area, which was exciting, but for Iris the contact was too hard and uncontrolled to be really pleasurable. Then Nanny turned off the tap and ordered them to sit up straight again. She had put on a PVC apron; apparently she was used to not staying dry. "Girls, if you will behave I will free one hand each, so that you can wash yourselves." The girls nodded, and began to clean themselves.

Then Iris got the idea to wash the feet of Sabine, since that seemed easier than trying to reach her own feet with one hand still cuffed. But Sabine thought that Iris was tickling her, and started wiggling with

her legs and get at Iris's feet. There was enough struggling and splashing that Nanny decided that the girls weren't behaving, and put their free hands out of commission again. Then she sighed and left the bathroom for a moment. When she came back she had removed her shirt from under her overalls, so that her chest was only covered by the bib, but the high sides of the overalls allowed that without being indecent. Once the apron was also on again, she started cleaning the girls. Iris wasn't used to that, but with the diaper changes she had grown accustomed to Nanny touching sensitive areas, so it didn't feel weird. On the contrary, it was very pleasant and she felt her whole body relaxing from the gentle rubbing and the warm water. This was obviously something that Nanny was used to, and she even managed to clean the feet without tickling. Her hair was shampooed as well, also very pleasant. Iris wished it wouldn't end, but of course Sabine's bedtime was nearing rapidly, so Nanny kept the speed up. Iris hoped that perhaps tomorrow they could do this again, and wished they had started it earlier in the week. When both girls were clean from head to toe, Nanny freed both their arms and told them that they could play in the bath for a few minutes while she got everything ready for the night, but that they had better behave this time.



Figure 78 Bath cuffs

Both girls were so soothed from the treatment and the water that they just quietly played with the foam for a while. Then Sabine stuck out her hands towards Iris, and when she took them, her friend pulled her towards her, turned her around, and let her rest against her and between her legs. Then she rubbed Iris all over, like her mother cleaned them before. When she finished, she put her arms around Iris and hugged her. After a while Iris decided to do the same for Sabine, so she softly tried to get loose from the embrace, but that only caused Sabine to hold on firmer. So she told Sabine she proposed to switch places, and then Sabine let go, Iris went to sit at her side, and pulled Sabine to her. Of course it was a little less convenient with her friend being quite a bit bigger, but that was not too much of a problem, especially when Iris pushed on Sabine's shoulders softly to move her into a bit more lying position. Then Iris thought she might get back a bit at her friend, and put her wrists in the cuffs. Sabine let her, and when she was ready gave a few pulls to check she had done it right. Then she relaxed and let Iris wash her again as well. For Iris her friend's breasts were particularly interesting. Feeling them she imagined her own breasts were developed like that already, and now could feel the texture, and the hard nipples. That caused a moan from Sabine, and suddenly Iris realized she was fondling her best friend's breasts, and quickly moved her hands to 'safer' areas. Her friend gave a soft grunt of disapproval.

"I guess next time I can just let you two take care of each other." Apparently Nanny had been watching them for a bit from the door opening. Then she released Sabine from the cuffs, and put them on Iris once more. Next she helped her daughter out of the bath, dried her off and blow-dried her hair. With the towel around her to keep her warm, she led her daughter out of the bathroom. Iris was left alone. She wished Nanny would have trusted her more, and not cuffed her again, because it would have been nice to have the whole bath to play in, but knew what the answer would have been if she had asked: Nanny wouldn't have left her daughter unsecured either. But knowing she had to stay where she was also made things very simple for her: no need to wonder if she should for example get out and dry

herself off to save Nanny time. So she just relaxed and tried if she could float on the water like in a pool, without touching the sides. That didn't quite work because her arms were kept in the wrong position, but it was still nice. She once heard floating in a bath being compared to floating in your mother's womb before you were born, and at that moment she could very well imagine that. The warmth, the floating, the knowing you were lovingly taken care of, and were protected from doing anything wrong, all made her feel very happy.

After a fair amount of time Nanny appeared again, and got Iris out of the bath too. She got a fresh big towel around her and was rubbed dry from top to toe. Then she was placed on the stool, and Nanny began blow-drying her hair and then brushing it. Her long black tresses took a while, but not long enough for Iris, because it felt so wonderful. There was one question though that she remembered wanting to ask Mrs. Fletcher for quite a while now, and never got around to. "Nanny, you told us a week ago that the meningitis damaged Sabine's brain, and that it was likely to be permanent. But since I've been here Sabine managed to learn to say the 'r', and I also have the feeling that she speaks more and better than a week ago. But how can that be if her brain is not working in those places anymore?" "I also think that Sabine is making progress, and that you have stimulated her to try harder. I am so grateful for that. But your question is a very valid one, and it was something I didn't know about until the neurologist explained it to us. It seems that some parts of the brain are not used to their full capacity, and those parts can sometimes take over functions from parts that do not function well anymore. This is not something they know a lot about yet, or can influence, but they see that sometimes people can regain certain brain functions, especially if they are young, and that seems to be happening with Sabine now, although of course it will never be as good as the original. When the damage had just happened she was a lot worse than she is now, and during her recovery she had therapy to help her regain what she could. After a while she seemed to have reached her peak, and I expected that was what we had to live with. So now everything she improves on is a bonus, and it is so wonderful to see progress again!"

That last sentence was spoken with such emotion that Iris was certain Nanny had some tears in her eyes, so she turned around on her stool and hugged her around the waist. They shared that closeness for a few moments, and then Nanny took control again and continued with Iris's hair, which she also braided for the night. Then she took Iris to Sabine's room, where Iris could see her friend already in her bed near the back, and in the mummy sleeping bag that she had tried yesterday evening, but found too confining. With the pacifier in her mouth Sabine could hardly communicate, but she blinked exaggeratedly a few times, which Iris assumed was meant as a greeting. On the changing table, Iris got one of Sabine's big diapers on her, and plastic pants over that. Her temperature was 99F (37.2C), which Nanny thought was normal after a hot bath. Then the pink body she had worn last night, followed by her sleeping bag. She was lead to the bed, where she had to lie down near the doors. Nanny put her pacifier in and buckled the strap behind her head, double checking that it was not tighter than the previous night, and the hood was buttoned closed. Then the bag was inflated, and again Nanny was careful to pump it up just as hard as during the nap.

"Iris, I might not have mentioned this before, but there is a camera with microphone on the ceiling, so that I can not only listen, but also watch the room on my phone. I will be listening and watching to see everything is OK, so if there is anything you can call. But I will also make sure that you are not keeping each other awake for too long. Would you girls like me to read a little story before I leave you alone?" Iris considered that might not be quite appropriate for a sleepover, and looked at Sabine. She nodded, and so Iris did too. Nanny read them the story of the Little Gingerbread Man, then closed the blinds, wished them good night, and left. There was a row of soft yellow lights in the form of a star, allowing them to see a bit.

This was not quite what Iris had imagined a sleepover to be. Both of them pretty restricted by their sleeping bags, and silenced by their pacifiers, there would be no wild partying or keeping each other awake. Nanny had warned them about that, but Iris couldn't really imagine how they could even manage that. She was still lying on her back with her arms spread, because that happened more or less automatically when the sleeping bag was inflated, and Sabine took advantage of that by wiggling over and putting her head on Sabine's arm and her body close to hers. Iris tried to talk a bit, and it actually wasn't too hard to speak more-or-less understandably, but they both had hoods on that muffled the sounds, and that combination made it hard for them to have a conversation. Of course Iris could push hers out, and Sabine's didn't even seem to be secured with a strap, but they knew that if they did that, they would not have their pacifiers in for the rest of the night, and Iris also suspected that Nanny would not approve, and might come and make the strap tighter so she couldn't take it out anymore. So about the only thing they could do was snuggle up to each other. And even that was not so great for Iris, since the inflated sleeping bag prevented her from feeling it.

She liked that Sabine snuggled up to her, but by putting her head on her arm, Iris couldn't really turn on her side, and sleeping on her back was unusual for her. Combined with the early hour, it prevented Iris from falling asleep. Sabine already had her eyes closed, but Iris thought she could hear from the breathing that her friend was not sleeping yet, so she half asked, half pushed to get her friend to turn on her other side, and face away from her. That way Iris could then lie on the same side, and put both arms around her friend. Iris thought she once heard her mother use the term spooning, when she had had a nightmare and was allowed to sleep with her mother for the rest of the night. She used her free arm to stroke her friend's head for a while, remembering how soft the velvety outside of her bag felt, and after a while she was pretty certain Sabine had fallen asleep. She still wasn't very sleepy herself, but enjoyed the cuddle, and thought about her floating in the bath, and Nanny working on her hair. And with those thoughts she gradually drifted away too.

During the night Iris woke a few times, but having someone to cuddle to was better than a cuddly toy could ever be, and soon fell asleep again. One time they were both awake, and seemed to independently decide it was time to turn to the other side, so then it was Sabine who lay with her front against Iris's back. That was nice too, although Sabine couldn't put her arms around Iris, but because of the difference in size their heads were at a more equal level, and they fitted better that way.

33. Fun or Beauty

Iris woke from Sabine snuggling up to her, and felt it was probably morning, or close to it. She turned around and they looked at each other for a moment. Then Sabine turned around as well, and Iris could wrap her arms around her again, for as far as the stiffness of the sleeping bag arms would allow. They lay there for a while, just enjoying the quiet peacefulness and each other's company, and then Iris decided they were unlikely to fall asleep again, so she pulled the pacifier from her mouth, and softly said good morning. Sabine first mumbled back, but then realized she could just spit out the pacifier and they started talking.

After a while the door opened, Nanny came in and opened the blinds. "Good morning girls, have you been awake long?" Iris turned to her back to look at Nanny, and guessed "Mornin' Nanny! Perhaps 10 minutes?" knowing there was no clock in the room, and it would have been too dark to see it anyway. Of course Sabine turned around again and greeted her mother too. "So, both without your pacifier?" "When I woke it felt like morning, and Sabine and I were not sleeping anymore, so I pulled it out to be able to talk a bit. That is OK, I hope?" "Yes, certainly. The pacifier is your own choice; only if you removed it last night and kept on talking I would have stepped in." "Now, who wants to get up first?"

Iris tried to look at her friend, but lying on her back the hood didn't really allow that, so she asked "what do you think? Your sleeping bag is more restrictive than mine, so perhaps you want out?" Iris didn't get an answer, but perhaps Sabine had nodded, because she started trying to get to the entrance of the bed. Since Iris was in the way, she tried to wiggle over her, but without arms that was not so easy. Only after she sat up and folded her body over Iris, she could worm her way towards the opening. This might have been uncomfortable for Iris if her bag would have been deflated, but now it didn't hurt at all. But with the air being compressed by Sabine, it increased the pressure in the other parts of the bag, fully stretching her arms and legs, and she couldn't bend them while her friend was on top of her. But once Sabine was within Nanny's reach, her mother took her mummy bag at the shoulders, pulled her further towards the opening, opened the bag and let Sabine out, who immediately started stretching her arms and legs. Nanny closed the bed doors again.

When Nanny had removed her diaper, she asked her daughter if she thought she could already poop, but after a moment's consideration Sabine shook her head. So she just got a fresh diaper, followed by her utility jumpsuit (see Figure 56 Sabine's utility jumpsuit). Then she was taken downstairs. Since Iris was awake anyway, she had tried to stand up and watch Sabine being diapered and dressed, but the sleeping bag didn't let her: she couldn't bend enough to get her legs under her, and since she couldn't fully stretch them, she wouldn't have been able to stand up straight anyway. And the Perspex sides of the bed didn't allow her to grip anything to pull herself up with, even if that would work with her inflated mittens. The best she could manage was to half prop herself up against the head end of the bed, but looking at the changing table from below didn't give her much of a view. So she just lay down again and tried to enjoy the languorous feeling of the early morning. But she was too awake, and after the others had disappeared downstairs, she tried again what she could do to escape. She already knew that she had no chance, but it was something to do, it was always a bit exciting, and she felt safe and secure every time she had to conclude she had no power to change her situation.

"Iris are you trying to escape?" Nanny suddenly asked strictly. Iris was a bit startled by her sudden reappearance, and felt like she was caught doing something she was not allowed to do, but she answered "Not really, just testing and entertaining myself while I had to wait. I already know I can't get out." "Hmm" Nanny grunted noncommitting, opened the bed and the sleeping bag. Iris suddenly started to giggle, and Nanny looked at her surprised. "I just thought that if I would be a cat, you are 'letting the cat out of the bag'." Nanny had to laugh too, and concluded "Then you are my little secret! Hey, that is actually somewhat appropriate, considering what I was going to ask you." She kept on going to get Iris ready for the day, but also explained that she thought it would be nice to do something fun with the three of them, because it was the last full day that Iris was with them, and they worked hard yesterday.

"You remember the playground at the aquarium, that we didn't have time for anymore? Not far from here there is the Lively Park with a playground and also the waterpark Splash. But you'd have to be harnessed there, unless you're in an enclosed play area, and in the swimming pool you'd need to wear a life jacket or a floatsuit: a special bathing suit that keeps you from drowning. I'm sure Sabine would love to go there today, but I first wanted to check with you before getting her hopes up." "I have been to Splash before, on a birthday party, and I am sure that there is a good chance there will be people I know. The aquarium was much further away, and even there I saw two classmates. I think the chances of getting recognized in the waterpark are much bigger, and I wouldn't have a hat on that partially hides my face. So I'm sure I would not be able to relax at all then. And even if I would go without restrictions and that floatsuit, I'd be afraid of the reactions if they would see me play with a handicapped girl. Some of those girls can be so mean. I'm so sorry for Sabine, but I really don't want to do it."

Iris looked anxiously at Nanny, afraid she might be disappointed or offended that Iris was afraid to be seen playing with her daughter, but Nanny replied “Yes, I thought you might feel that way. It’s just that we couldn’t do the playground at the aquarium, so I thought I’d offer an alternative. Perhaps there will be a better option in the future, if you would visit us again later.” That was something Iris hadn’t even thought about. She was so focused on having fun now, and dreading leaving on Tuesday, which by now was already tomorrow, that she hadn’t thought about visiting again. Perhaps after her father left again she could come over again? She didn’t want to presume too much and ask for another invitation, but she did say that she’d love to visit again later.

In the meantime she was already secured on the changing table, but when Nanny was getting a fresh diaper, Iris interrupted “Nanny, I should go to the toilet first!” “Oh yes dear, of course. I’m sorry, I should have asked. I was just too preoccupied with our plans for today.” So she was released from the table, and taken to the bathroom where she was buckled on the toilet again. And with a “Call me when you have finished” Nanny left her alone. Of course Iris first needed the physical feedback that she was secured, but after futilely tugging at the strap and the buckle again, she relaxed and let her stool go. She was quite glad that Nanny asked her first, and separately, about the waterpark, because even when she enjoyed playing little with the Fletchers, she had no desire at all to go public with it, let alone let her classmates find out she was in diapers, and treated like a very immature child.

“Nanny” she called when she was ready, and she was released from the toilet and immediately secured again on the changing table. Nanny wiped the butt area a bit more, and muttered about Iris not being very thorough in her cleaning, but Iris considered that unfair because it was hard to wipe thoroughly with the limitations of the strap. Her temperature was fully normal again, and she got one of Sabine’s large diapers on once more. Nanny explained that since the waterpark wasn’t happening, she thought they’d visit some of the waterfalls further inland, but that was a fairly long car ride, so Iris’d better wear some serious protection. After the plastic pants that Nanny always used with those diapers, since they were a bit large for Iris, she got on pink tights and then another new suit. Of course it was a one-piece suit again, since those protected best against accessing the diaper area, and skirt bottoms didn’t work well with 5-point harnesses either. This one was black, with pink flowers all over. (see Figure 79) After she was put in the pink body, she had to step in it from the back – as expected again. It seemed to have 2 shoulder straps on each side, which surprised Iris at first, but when Nanny put it on her, one pair was hanging down over her upper arms, while the second pair ran over her shoulders as expected. Iris could already feel that the lower straps would limit the movement of her upper arms somewhat.



Figure 79 black floral jumpsuit

“You know, I enjoy dressing you, since all these nice clothes are too small for Sabine now, and this way they are still useful, and I can see them being worn again. So I try to find something new for you each day.” “Nanny, would it be possible to do the bathing and sleeping together again tonight? The bathing was so wonderful. The sleepover was not quite what I had imagined, with us both so immobilized, and not able to talk much. But it was still nice to be together, and cuddle the best we could.” “I don’t think

I would allow it for every day, but since tonight is your last night, we can certainly do that.” “One thing I missed last night is that Sabine couldn’t put her arms around me, and I also think having her arms fixed at her sides is not a nice position to sleep in, especially on her side. That made me wonder: with my inflated sleeping bag, would Sabine really be able to hurt me much if she had a tantrum? Like if I cover my face with my hands? I tried punching myself earlier, and could hardly feel it. It seems a bit scary, but do you think it would be safe to have Sabine wearing just a onesie for the coming night? Does she ever have tantrums at night anyway?” “That is an interesting and brave suggestion, little mouse. I don’t actually believe she ever had a tantrum in this bed, but that is not enough to rely on for your safety. Of course I would be there fairly quickly if she did have a tantrum, but not quick enough to prevent you from getting a number of blows if you were insufficiently protected. Let me think about it. I wouldn’t want to send you back home with a black eye or a bruised rib!” “Me neither. But if you have thought about it, and you think it is safe enough, I’d be willing to try it.”

And Iris had one more question “Nanny, my mother will be calling today about the results of the doctor’s tests. But I don’t have pockets, so how can I bring my phone if we go on a trip? Could I bring my backpack?” “I don’t think a backpack works with your harness, or in the stroller. Why don’t you tell your mother to call me instead?” “But how would I explain that I can’t bring my own phone? I don’t want to tell her I voluntarily wear clothes with such limitations, and a harness.” “Well, that jumpsuit you wear never had pockets, so I can’t open one for you. But perhaps I have something that would work. But I need to look for that, so please wait in the bed.” Since this was at her own request, Iris went into the bed without complaint, and heard the doors click in their locks behind her. She turned around and watched through the bars how Nanny left the room.

Being alone for a moment, Iris could explore her jumpsuit. With the straps over her upper arms, she couldn’t move her elbows far away from her body. That also meant that she had trouble reaching the straps over her shoulders to try and slide them off, but Nanny had shortened them enough that she doubted that would work anyway. And it also prevented her from reaching the back zipper: she could bring a hand to her back, but with her elbow close to her body, her hand was too far towards the other arm to reach the zipper pull in the middle. So even without any adaptations or locks, she was not able to take the jumpsuit off. She wondered if other girls would realize that when they bought it.

Then she focused on the bed again. While standing, her eyes were just below the top of the sides, and she could easily put her hands on the top, and get a good grip since she wasn’t wearing mittens this time. It wasn’t that she seriously wanted to get out, but given the opportunity and not having anything else to do, she experimented a bit if she could escape. But the Perspex plates at the lower half of the sides didn’t allow her feet any grip, so the only way would be to pull herself up on her arms, but she was far from strong enough to do that. And the soft mattress didn’t allow her to jump up high. She fiddled with the doors a bit more, but had already found out that there was no way to get at the opening holes from inside.

“I see my little product tester is busy again! I guess I really need to be careful to keep you secure.” Nanny said, half joking, when she walked into the room again. She opened the bed again, and then put a fanny pack around Iris’s waist. “This is an anti-theft pack that I once got for a vacation. I can lock the buckle behind your back, so that you can’t lose it if a certain someone decides to play with your buckle again.” (see Figure 80) She turned the pack the other way around, so that Iris could see that it had a normal side-release buckle, but then Nanny slid two plastic parts over the buckle, and put one of the heart-shaped padlocks through eyelets that kept the parts together. Now the two parts formed a solid cover over the buckle, and it couldn’t be operated (see Figure 81). Nanny turned the pack around again, so that the container was in front, and pulled on a strap end in the back to tighten it a bit more. “I’ll leave the zippers of the pack unlocked, so that you can get to your phone as soon as it rings.”



Figure 80 Anti-theft Fanny Pack



Figure 81 Bucklesafe

Nanny took Iris's hand and took her downstairs, where Iris took her phone and put it in the pack. But when Nanny put her in the chair, the fanny pack was in the way for the harness, so Nanny took it off again, and told her she'd put it on Iris again once they reached their destination. For now she put it on the table. Then Iris was secured in her chair with the improvised bib, and they started with breakfast. Nanny explained to Iris "Like I said, I'll give you only one tablet of the painkiller. Please keep me informed if you feel pain again, and whether you have a bit more control already. I expect it is still too early to see a major improvement, but we should see the first effects of the antibiotics." "I'm not sure if I can compare it so well with before, because I only used one tablet shortly. I wonder if it would be better if I start today without any painkiller, and as soon as I have an idea how it compares, and it still hurts, we start again with one or even two?" "If you think that would work better for you, it is fine with me. But make sure the pain doesn't stop you from releasing the pee as soon as you can." "I will. But by then I'll probably ask for a painkiller anyway." "OK, then take only this antibiotics tablet now."

"Nanny, when my mother calls, she will probably ask how late she should pick me up tomorrow. What should I say?" "Why don't you ask your mother for the afternoon, after your nap. Say 3 PM?" Iris had hoped to be able to stay a few more hours, but that would only postpone the goodbyes. And with Sabine always getting ready for the night shortly after dinner, that would only make things harder, so she nodded.

Now that the important things were taken care of, she could relax, and started to have fun by kneading and molding her bread slice into a puppet. Nanny let her, but made sure she ate it in the end. The arm straps of the jumpsuit hindered her a bit, but with everything she needed on the tray, she didn't have to reach far. Of course Iris had to finish a glass of water, and then got some cranberry juice after the meal as well. Nanny left them in their chairs for a while longer, so she could prepare for a picnic. Then

she went upstairs, and returned a few minutes later with the familiar 2 bags. She added the lunch and drink and added "Let me double check: yes, I have your meditation. Do you feel anything yet?" "Not yet, but I'll try to let go." Starting to pee was so easy that Iris suspected she would not have been able to keep it up very well, and when she let go she felt the burning sensation again, but it was easier to bear than before she went to the doctor. So she reported that it had improved a bit, but that she would prefer the half-dose painkiller, which Nanny gave to her.

Then she freed Iris from the chair, and gave her the fanny pack with the words "You just keep this with you in the car, in case your mother calls early." Then she took her by the hand, put the yellow rain jacket (see Figure 48 Sabine's old rain jacket) on her and locked it. The arms of the jacket apparently were wide enough that they didn't interfere with the arm straps of the jumpsuit. Then she took her to the car and secured her in her car seat. The straps of the fanny pack she weaved under the car seat harness straps and clicked it closed, so that the pack stayed on Iris's lap. Then she went and got Sabine, secured her too, and the adventure could start.

As usual the girls started full of energy, chatting excitedly and looking around. Soon after they left Thurston they were riding between an old train track and a river, with lots of trees and few signs of civilization. But with the speed of the car they couldn't see much detail, and gradually they started to drift off again, also because of their comfortable seats. Suddenly Iris was woken again by Nanny calling her name: her phone was ringing. She quickly got it out of the fanny pack and answered it. It was the expected call from her mother, who told her she had had contact with the doctor's office, and the test results confirmed the diagnosis. So she should just continue what they had been doing, and, very important, finish the whole course of antibiotics. Her mother had also mentioned to the doctor that the night diapers were not working out, and so she even got a new subscription to find a better type, for 2 more weeks. Of course Iris was glad that she wouldn't have to deal with leaking diapers at home, and now that she had worn them for a while, she actually started to enjoy them, and the comfort of not needing to worry about reaching the toilet in time, or staying dry in the night. So as long as her mother would not force them on her when there was a chance that others might find out, she might not even mind wearing them at home, at least until the bladder infection had fully cleared up. But perhaps it could be fun too to occasionally wear one at home?

"Iris, are you still there?" Oops, her mind had drifted off. What was it her mother asked? Probably how she was doing, so she replied that she had noticed some improvement this morning, both in control and pain. Then she told her mother that they were on a trip, and Mrs. Fletcher was taking them to some waterfalls. More out of politeness than real interest she asked how her mother was doing, and if she managed to make some good sales. But thinking back about her house, her room and her things, she realized she missed that too, and surprisingly she felt glad to hear her mother again as well. So this time she could honestly say that it would be very sad to leave the Fletchers tomorrow, but she was also looking forward to being home again. And of course looking forward to daddy coming home in two days. Then she asked her mother if she could come and pick her up at three, which was fine. After their 'until tomorrow' and 'love you's she disconnected the call, and reported to Nanny that her mother would be there at 3PM tomorrow.

"Awre you going home tomowwow?" Iris heard from the seat next to her, and realized that she had not yet mentioned anything about leaving to Sabine, who probably had little awareness of which day of the week it was, and how many days Iris had been with them. Iris wanted to look at her friend, who sounded so sad, and so she tried to fold the headrest wings back a bit, but she couldn't exert any force because it was high and behind her, so she had to make do with talking, and reaching for her friend's hand. "Yes, Sabine, I made an arrangement with your mother that I would stay for a whole week, to help you two and for company. At first because of all the terrible things that happened to you, and

how busy your mother was taking care of you. But soon we were such good friends again, and your mother took such good care of me, that it has become a wonderful vacation for me. But I don't live here, my mother misses me, and there are also things from home that I miss. And the day after tomorrow my father comes home, and I want to be there when he arrives. I will miss you both terribly, but I'm sure we'll soon make another appointment to meet again. The summer vacation is still long, so there will be plenty of time."

Sabine was silent for a while. It probably took time to process all that Iris told her, but then came the reply "I undehtand. I will also miss you so much. But you should be with your papa when you can." Iris firmly squeezed her friend's hand, impressed by her mature attitude and selflessness. Once more she realized that the brain damage did not alter the fact that her friend was emotionally growing up too, just like her body was. "But we still have today and tomorrow morning, so let's make it count!" They just held their hands firmly for a while, feeling a mixture of joy in their friendship and sadness for the coming goodbye. Obviously neither girl was sleepy anymore, and neither really knew how to leave this particular mood behind, until Mrs. Fletcher softly started to sing "You Are My Sunshine"⁴. The song perfectly captured the melancholy and the happy feelings, and soon they were all singing, and felt ready again to enjoy the day and each other.

They passed several beautiful spots and views, but Nanny explained that she wanted to get to the waterfalls first, hoping that it wouldn't be so busy yet. After that they could take their time, see where they held a picnic, where they wanted to stop for the views, and there would probably be possibilities for a short hike as well. Now that Iris's UTI was improving, and her temperature wasn't elevated anymore, she could probably exert herself a bit more. That triggered Iris to try and wet her diaper a bit more, and again it came easily, and now with little pain. But the fact that she decided when to let go gave Iris confidence that her control came back, and she would not stay incontinent. Because even if she might enjoy a diaper every now and then, she would definitely not want to have to wear them all the time, and especially to school.

⁴ If you don't know the song, I would suggest listening to this version:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dh7LJDHFaqA>

34. Loads of Water

A while later the car turned off the main road, and soon arrived at the entrance of the waterfall trails. The road ended in a circle that had parking spaces all around. There were already a number of cars at the far end, but Nanny drove further around until there were no other cars near. Then she started to get Sabine out, and put her into her harness. Then it was Iris's turn to be taken out of her car seat, and Nanny locked the fanny pack around her waist. But instead of the harness she expected, Nanny took out of her bag some silvery things that looked like bracelets and a chain necklace. "I'd like to try something new today, something that should make it a lot less obvious that Iris is secured. If it works we could possibly use it during future visits." She took one of the hinged bracelets, put the last link of the chain through it, and clicked it around Iris's right wrist. It was of solid metal, with a heart shape on top that contained a keyhole, and a hinge on the other side. (see Figure 82) It fit her wrist pretty well, and she would not be able to slide it off her hand. Then she did the same for Sabine. Iris could see some velvet-like material on the inside of the bracelet, that seemed to be added later. When it clicked closed around Sabine's wrist, the chain connected both girl's wrists, and since it was only some 6 inches (15 cm) long, they had to stay close together. "Now if you take each other's hand, it will be hard to see you are connected. But you need to keep holding hands, because you might hurt your wrists if you pull wildly. I've added some padding on the inside of the bracelets, and I put it over the sleeves of your bodysuits, but you still need to be careful. If you are not, it will be back to harness and leash."



Figure 82 Locking Bracelet

Iris realized she was still on a leash anyway, but indirectly: if Nanny pulled on Sabine's leash, she would have to follow as well. And of course she still could not get away. But the bracelet actually looked quite nice, and something she might even wear normally, with the heart on the outside, and a few fake diamonds embedded as well. Her jumpsuit looked cute, but not specifically childish, and even the jacket was acceptable. Passersby might consider it a bit odd if they were holding hands all the time, but otherwise they would have to look quite closely to see that the chain actually connected both bracelets. Iris felt elated: being able to walk outside, diapered, in clothes she couldn't take off herself, and restrained, without anybody being the wiser. She went to hug Nanny, but her right wrist didn't want to cooperate. Iris felt the metal on her wrist holding her back, and she quickly stopped pulling. She already felt that pulling harder might result in bruising. Once Sabine realized what Iris wanted to do, she cooperated, and they sort of hugged with the three of them, as far as the connected wrists allowed.

Nanny explained that she had been here once long ago, but thought she remembered the path not being very wide, and occasionally with branches on it. So she decided to leave the stroller behind, and do it all on foot. There were three waterfalls along the path, but Iris should let her know if she was getting tired or hot. They could always turn around if it was too much. "And girls, how are your diapers? I'm not sure if we can find a secluded spot here, but if it is necessary we'll do what we can. Iris shook her head: even though it might be better for her UTI, she definitely didn't want anyone to see her while being changed. Sabine said that her diaper was not full, but she wanted to go poo. So Nanny

took them to the little building at the start of the tracks, and there was a toilet they could use. She left the diaper bag in the car, so that she only had one bag to carry.

Now the connection of the wrists of Iris and Sabine was rather inconvenient, so Nanny decided to open Sabine's, and put it around a water pipe running through the area with the water basin. Of course that meant that anyone entering would see Iris chained to the pipe, so she stood in front of the pipe with her hands behind her back, and assumed a nonchalant pose. This was a lot less embarrassing than a harness with a leash, but somehow having her hand locked to a pipe with such a short chain was exciting in a different way. With no one near the shed, and Nanny occupied with Sabine, she took a better look at the bracelet, but there was not much to see. She couldn't pull it open, and the keyhole was much too small to do anything with it with her fingers. The chain looked like it could be from a necklace, but it was shorter and had no clips at the end; perhaps it was taken from an old necklace. But it was strong enough to keep Iris where she was.

When mother and daughter were done, the other bracelet was locked again around Sabine's wrist, and they were off. The asphalt path was narrow and there were several steps, so Mrs. Fletcher had been right to leave the stroller behind. Along the edges there were fences. All in all it was quite easy to walk there, even if Iris and Sabine could not always walk side-by-side, but with one half-behind the other it was still quite doable. The first waterfall, the Salt Creek Falls, was really close to the parking lot, and a very high one, although it was not very wide. The information signs said it was the second highest single drop in Oregon, with a 286ft (87m) height. There were several viewing platforms where you could either stand right next to the edge, or just beyond the fall where you could see into the depths. Of course there was a lot of noise, and it was pretty moist. Iris could also see a number of swallows skimming over the water, and making spectacular twists and turns in their hunt for insects.

Since she had her phone with her, she took it out of her fanny pack with her left hand, and started taking photos of the waterfall. A bit harder with one hand, and with the straps of the jumpsuit over her upper arms, but still doable. That is, until Sabine decided to suddenly move a bit further, and thereby pulled Iris along. She almost lost grip on her phone, and shouted "Sabine, don't pull when I'm taking pictures!" Sabine turned around and apologized, and Nanny came over, took the phone from Iris's hand, put it in the fanny pack, and locked the zippers. "Let's keep it safe there. I'll take some photos, and you can ask me if you want to have your phone." Iris looked bemused at the pack, with her phone so close and yet out of reach now. But she realized that Nanny had already been lenient in letting her bring it – something she would probably not allow her daughter, and since she had almost dropped it, and it might have gone over the edge, she had to agree that it would be safer if Nanny took the pictures. And she did, first of the waterfall itself, but then also of the girls in front of it. Iris tried to make sure the bracelets and connecting chain were not visible, but sometimes it was hard to judge.

There were quite a few people here, and of course Sabine drew attention with her harness and leash, but few people looked at Iris, and she didn't get the impression that anyone noticed she was locked to her friend. The waterfall was a spectacular sight, and well worth the visit, but unlike the animals in the aquarium it didn't change much, so after a short while they were ready to go on. There also was a trail going down, to see the waterfall from below, but that promised to be a lot of descending and climbing, and Nanny decided that would be a bit much for Iris, so they went on to the second waterfall, the Lower Diamond Creek Falls. Soon the path was no longer asphalted, and it seemed most people just stayed at the first waterfall, so it was a lot quieter there. It was a nice forest, with the river a constant

companion on their right. Both girls got a juice box, and they took their time. It was almost half an hour later when they finally reached their destination.

These falls were not so tall as the first, and more like the water cascading down on a steep slope than a tall vertical drop. It was wider though, and impressive in its own way. In general Iris and Sabine just held hands, and the link between them wasn't noticeable. And the path wasn't so difficult that they needed their hands for support, but of course when they were at the platform they sometimes wanted to move in a different direction. But they had soon learned to be careful enough to not jerk too suddenly, because that could hurt. So even Sabine, who could be impulsive and less coordinated, tried to contain herself. When they had looked around here, and some more pictures were taken, Nanny asked them if they should go on to the third waterfall. It was probably another 45 minute hike, and they also had to go back the same way. They would probably need to try and find a somewhat level place between the trees to have lunch, since there didn't seem to be any benches or tables available. Apart from that she had left the diaper bag behind, so Iris couldn't get a fresh diaper until they were back. Iris mentioned that she had really enjoyed seeing these waterfalls, but perhaps a third one was not so necessary. Sabine agreed.

The way back always seems quicker, and that held true in this case as well. When they were back at the car they were released from harness and bracelets, only to be put in their car seats once more. Nanny felt Iris's forehead and seemed satisfied. But she also asked her how she felt, and Iris responded that she was a bit tired after the walking, but not much worse than normal. She didn't feel particularly hot, and peeing was just a bit sensitive. Sometimes, especially when she was concentrating on something else, it still started without her realizing, but other times she deliberately let go. Reassured, Nanny took place in the driver seat, and explained while driving that it was probably half an hour's drive to their next destination, the Eagles Rest Trailhead, which they already passed on the way here. There they would first find a suitable place to change Iris, have lunch, and take a nap. Then they would hike around there for a while. She gave Iris a water bottle and told her to drink half of it during the car ride.

Next she asked about the construction with the bracelets and chain. Iris was enthusiastic about how inconspicuous it was, but sometimes it was really inconvenient to miss a hand, especially combined with this jumpsuit and its straps over her upper arms, and she needed to be careful about not hurting herself or Sabine. She concluded that it would be a good solution if they went somewhere where she might be recognized, but in places where there were few people, and she might want to use both hands, she'd prefer to be harnessed. Also because she could more fully relax if she didn't need to be careful about hurting herself or Sabine. For her friend the construction didn't have any advantages, but she liked holding hands. Nanny added that Sabine hardly pulled on the leash during the hike, which she found advantageous.

After a while they passed through a small town, Willamette City, and shortly after that they drove alongside a large lake, and Nanny announced that their destination was halfway down the lake. After a few more minutes Nanny turned the car off the road into a small parking lot that was totally empty. There was the customary information board near the start of the trail, and some picnic benches a bit further into the trees. Iris noticed she was getting quite hungry, so lunch was very welcome. And since Nanny had announced that she'd get a diaper change too, she decided to fill the current one once more. It was not as if she liked pain, but the slight burning sensation was a welcome sign for her that she was regaining feeling and control, nonetheless.

Once out of the car Iris was put into her harness again. "Since I expect there will be very few people here, and there might be places where it is a bit steeper or there are branches on the trail, I think

having two hands available would be best for you both.” “Mommy, could we wear the bracelets without the chain?” “Sure, if you want it.” And soon both bracelets clicked closed around their wrists. Sabine held hers next to the one Iris wore, apparently to show that she liked that they both wore the same thing. Iris remembered her picking the matching bunny shorts they wore to the aquarium, and thought this was probably similar. For Iris it felt like a sign of their friendship, and since she liked the look of the bracelet, and expected it wouldn’t bother her if the chain was not connected, she was happy to wear it, and gave Sabine a short hug.

Nanny got the stroller out too, loaded it with the two bags, and took them to the picnic table furthest from the road, which offered some privacy even from the carpark. There she first secured Sabine’s leash to the bench, and then started to undress Iris, undoing the harness again. Apparently Nanny was taking no risks with her little escape artist, and had decided to even use the harness for the short walk here. Then the jacket and the jumpsuit came off, the body snapped open, and the tights and plastic pants lowered. Gradually Iris started to feel more and more uncomfortable, being undressed like this in public, and she really hoped that no one would suddenly show up and see her. Then she was lifted on the table and asked to lie down. Nanny folded the jacket under her head as a pillow, and then asked Sabine to hold Iris’s wrists, gently, above her head. Another lack of trust that caused Iris to feel really small, but that also helped taking her mind of being nude in public. She started to pull a bit with her arms, not really to pull loose, but more like a game with Sabine. But her friend was so much stronger that it didn’t really work, except that her wrists were being squeezed a bit painfully, so she quickly stopped struggling again, and then gradually Sabine relaxed her grip as well.

But that made her more aware again how sensitive she was between her legs, and she realized she had had no opportunity to play with herself lately. She couldn’t quite stop herself from wiggling, but that earned her a short slap on her thigh. That was enough of a distraction to stop wiggling, and soon she was wrapped in a diaper once more. Then she was dressed again, including her harness, which was then also locked to the bench opposite Sabine. Only the jacket and the tights stayed off – it was getting pretty warm. All this caused Iris to feel very relaxed and childish again, with the nice feeling of a fresh diaper between her legs, she started chanting “We want food!”. Of course Sabine quickly joined in, and Nanny responded “OK, OK, It’s coming. Give me a few more seconds.” She still had to take off her rubber gloves, and dispose of the dirty diaper. But Iris was feeling naughty, and kept on chanting. Nanny tried “Iris, I get the message, please stop shouting now.”, but that didn’t achieve anything, so she finally grabbed into her bag, took out the pacifier on the strap, and put it in Iris’s mouth. Then she buckled the strap tightly around Iris’s head. That shut her up, and then Sabine stopped as well. This time Iris couldn’t push the pacifier out of her mouth, like she could in the bed when the strap was looser. And she knew that if she tried to unbuckle it, her hands might end up in mittens, or, worse, tied to her harness. She still felt elated though, and started to hum, and the pacifier did little to block that.

Now Nanny could focus on putting the lunch on the table, and she put the water bottle that was still half full in front of Iris. She grabbed it with both hands and demonstratively brought it to her mouth, where of course the pacifier was in the way. Nanny only gave her a smile and a little pat on the head and continued with the food. There were grilled ham and cheese sandwiches for everyone, and also some more cherry tomatoes and cucumber slices. Once everything was ready, Nanny came to Iris again, and asked her severely “Will you behave now?”. But Iris could hear that she wasn’t angry at all, and was just acting. She probably enjoyed Iris’s enthusiasm. So Iris played along, and shook her head wildly. “OK, if that’s what you want.” Nanny concluded, and went back to her place on the bench. But of course that was not to Iris’s liking so she started yelling “Nanny” from behind her pacifier, and then nodding to signal she would behave anyway. Nanny asked “Are you sure?” and Iris nodded wildly again, so her pacifier was removed, and they could finally enjoy their lunch.

When all had eaten their fill, Nanny started to make preparations for the afternoon nap. A bit further away from the parking lot she found a nice even place for the stroller, and close by improvised a bed by removing branches and stones, and putting a picnic blanket on the ground. Iris's jacket was used as a pillow again. Then she came and got Sabine, and locked her in the stroller, with the sun screen folded back since they were under the trees anyway. Next it was Iris's turn, and she was asked to lie down on the blanket. Then her leash was put around the tree next to it, and locked back on itself. Nanny checked if she was comfortable, and then found herself a place to sit with her back against a thick tree. At first Iris looked around at the trees and the birds, but the nature sounds and smells worked very calming, and soon she drifted off.

35. Lots of Trees

When Iris woke again, Nanny was sitting next to Sabine's stroller, and they were talking quietly. Still sleepy, Iris tried to stand up and go over to them, but she didn't realize her leash was connected to the tree, so she got pulled back and landed on her bum. Luckily it was heavily padded, and the forest floor was soft, so it didn't hurt, but it startled her and she uttered a small 'Oof'. "Are you alright" Nanny asked concerned, and Iris answered that she was fine, but just got pulled back by the leash. She rubbed the sleep from her eyes, and realized it had been a while since she had slept with her hands not covered. Not having mittens on was definitely an advantage for rubbing your eyes. The coiled metal of her leash behaved quite differently than a solid strap like Sabine's, which just stopped you in your tracks: it was like an elastic band that you could pull out, but the resistance got stronger and stronger, until it pulled you back. She realized that if she had tried to pull on the leash as hard as she could, until it finally won, she might get catapulted back into the tree the leash was connected to. But if she was not so rash, feeling the resistance was a more gentle reminder that she should stay closer to the leash holder than the abrupt stop of the solid leash. She liked both.

Nanny came over, released the leash from the tree and put it on her wrist again. The three of them chatted for a moment on how they slept, and Iris realized that it somehow felt more natural, sleeping in the forest, than at home. The fresh air and gentle breeze, the sounds, and the smells somehow felt more fitting to her than the controlled environment inside. But of course with the fickle Oregon coastal climate there were plenty of times when she preferred to be inside. Sabine liked it too, and Nanny had not slept, but had really enjoyed the quiet moment and seeing her two girls sleep so peacefully.

Unthinkingly Iris scratched at an itchy place on her forehead, but Nanny noticed it and took a closer look. "I think a mosquito got you there, Iris. You shouldn't scratch because it makes the itching worse, and especially not in your face." Iris quickly pulled her hand back, and tried to ignore the itching. Then Nanny wondered "I plan to take a hike of 1 to 1.5 hours here. I'm not quite sure if we should bring the stroller along. I don't want Iris to overtax herself yet, but I'm not sure if we might run into obstacles for it on the trail. If there are places where the path is steep or there are branches or trunks on the path, we might need to lift it over the barrier, or even turn around. The stroller is not that heavy, so we could occasionally lift it, but if it would happen more often it would defeat the purpose of bringing it." Iris replied "This morning I felt quite normal, and especially if we occasionally take a break I'm sure I can manage. And once we are back I need to sit in the car again for the whole way home, so I think I prefer to stay on my feet."

And so Nanny cleared up the picnic and nap gear, and put them in the car, together with the stroller. She left the diaper bag there too, and put the fanny pack on Iris once more, after she asked if she could bring it along. Since it was locked now, she would still need Nanny's permission to use it though. "Iris, stop scratching, or I'll need to help you with that." Once more Iris's hand had gone to her forehead

because of the itch without her realizing it, and once more she quickly stopped. When everything they wouldn't take along was safely stored in the car, they went to the start of the trail. "Girls, I want you to hold hands when the trail allows it. You have behaved exemplary this morning, so let's see if you can keep that up." At the start of the trail they took a look at the information board, which contained a map of the trails. There were just two, one that followed a lake and then the stream that fed it, and one that just went into the forest. The former seemed more interesting, and, if they chose to, they could complete the circle around the lake, but that meant taking a road on the way back. And even though there might not be many cars, they thought going back the same way might be preferable. But they could decide when they got there.

The path was easy, and the girls pulled on their leashes to get going. It was a bit inconvenient to hold hands though, since Sabine's leash was longer than Iris's when coiled, but if Iris pulled hard she could get ahead of Sabine. To walk with Sabine at the end of her leash, Iris needed to constantly pull on hers. Sabine didn't quite get that, so she was constantly trying to surge ahead while Iris tried to hold her back. Nanny noticed that it didn't work, and of course disliked Iris pulling on the leash constantly, so she allowed the girls to not hold hands anymore. But since the path was narrow, it was natural for the girls to walk in a line with Sabine on front, and that way they weren't pulling her to different sides anyway.

It wasn't long before she noticed Iris scratching her forehead again, so she stopped the girls and took a pair of mittens out of her bag (see Figure 30 Patient safety mittens). Iris protested that it was not fair that she was punished for something that happened involuntary, and pulled her arms away from Nanny. But Sabine put her arms around her from the back, and then she couldn't pull away anymore. Soon her hands were safely wrapped. Nanny explained that it wasn't a punishment, but just to help her to not disfigure her forehead and make the itch go away quicker.

Iris felt unfairly treated, and a bit betrayed by her friend, so she didn't want to move anymore, but Sabine grabbed her harness in the front, and started pulling her along. "Come on, it is not so bad." Iris had little choice, and had to walk along, but within a minute her attention had drifted again to the flora and fauna around her, and she forgot all about the injustice and the mittens. Only when her hand went to her forehead again, she noticed them, so they functioned only as a reminder not to scratch, and she realized Nanny was right. Again.

The path was easy to navigate, and it was a beautiful forest, with both coniferous and deciduous trees, and lots of ferns. When it split, they took the right hand path, because that one curved around the lake, hopefully giving them some nice views. There was a lot of birdsong, and also the drumming of woodpeckers. After a while they could see the lake through the trees, and Iris spotted several species of duck and some grebes in the water. When they reached the end of this branch of the lake, they crossed a tiny stream, but there was hardly any water left, so they could easily jump over. The path kept following the lake, but sometimes they were a bit further away from it, and sometimes they were only a few yards from the water.

They might have been going for about half an hour, when there was another split in the path. One side bended straight into the lake area, and they took a look where it went. There was only a small stream of water left in the middle, and they entered a sort of meadow. Nanny decided this was a nice place to have a break, and of course there was more to drink for Iris. She had already finished the water bottle, but this one contained milk. Once Sabine saw it, she immediately wanted to take it, but Nanny held it back "No Sabine, we don't take, we ask." "Mommy, can I give Iris the bottle?" "That is fine with me, but ask Iris too." "Iwris, may I give you the bottle?" Iris looked around, but there seemed to be no one around, so she nodded. Sabine decided on a somewhat different position than in the tent at home, and

put one arm around Iris's neck. With that hand she firmly grabbed the harness at her chest. Now Iris could lean back and let her head rest on Sabine's upper arm. With the other hand she put the bottle to Iris's lips. Of course the milk was not as warm as at the Fletcher's home, but they were in the sun, and it was warm enough anyway.

When Iris finished her bottle, Sabine got another juice box, and both girls got a muesli bar. Iris had trouble opening the wrapper with her mittens, and Nanny asked if Iris would stop scratching if she'd take the mittens off. If Iris was honest to herself, she didn't think she could control the scratching if she wasn't concentrating on it. And they made her feel small and helpless, and she actually liked that, so she replied "I'm not sure, it is hard to control." Then Nanny took the bar out of her hands, and opened it for her. Then Iris leaned back into Sabine and enjoyed her treat.

After a while they were getting hot in the sun, and decided to go on. Nanny asked them if they preferred to go the same way back, or over the road, but they all decided the trail was probably nicer, and on the way back everything looked different anyway. The nice thing about having a single trail was that there was no chance to take a wrong turn, so they could relax and enjoy their surroundings on the way back. Especially after the bottle of milk, and still wearing the mittens, Iris was fully in little mode, and just played around, jumped on fallen trunks, and in general was not at all concerned with anything so mature as safety or limiting her energy. One time she misjudged a jump, and slid off a trunk. Her lower leg got a few scratches and a small abrasion, but the mittens prevented damage to her hands. From the shock and the pain she started to cry a bit, although she realized it was her own fault and that it was nonsense to make a scene about it.

Of course Nanny quickly came over and inspected the damage, while warning Sabine that they needed to stop for a moment. She grabbed into her bag, and got out a first aid kit. She first put disinfectant on the abrasion, rolled up the wide leg of the jumpsuit on that side. There was a green stain on the leg of the jumpsuit, and a small tear. She rolled it up a bit and fixed it with a safety pin, so it wouldn't get blood on it. Even though in the back of her mind Iris knew it was nothing serious, she longed for a hug and some comfort, so she slightly exaggerated the crying, and of course she got a long hug. Then her face was wiped, and they went on. But Nanny decided Iris needed to take it easy for a while, and held directly on to her harness, forcing Iris to stay very close. Sabine went full speed ahead again, after making sure Iris was OK again.

At first this was fine for Iris, but after a few minutes she wanted to move around more and started pulling this way and that. "Nanny, I feel fine again, can I please be on the leash again?" Nanny looked at her, and felt her forehead. "I think you have been doing a bit much. I'll give you a bit more leash, but not the full length." Nanny wound the coiled line several times around a shoulder strap, and then reattached the end to her wrist. Now the leash was probably about half as long, and Iris could move perhaps 3 feet (0.9 m) away from Nanny. Not as much as she wanted, but yet another compromise that she couldn't really complain about. At least this way she could sometimes pick a flower or pick up a peculiar leaf or branch.

When they finally reached the car again, Iris was pretty tired, and grumpy from being on such a short leash all the time. Her hands were warm and sweaty, so she demanded that her mittens were taken off. But that wasn't the way to achieve anything with Nanny, and the demand was just ignored. Then she tried pleading, but Nanny answered that in the car Iris had nothing better to do than scratch, and she wouldn't be able to prevent it. Iris didn't want to give up, and kept on begging. That earned her the pacifier again, strapped tightly around her neck, and locked. Then she was put in the car seat, where she sulked. Nanny let her, and focused on installing Sabine in her seat. Her friend tried to comfort her by taking her hand, but Iris was too cross at that moment, and pulled her hand back. Immediately she

felt bad about it, but was still too angry to do anything about it. She felt some tears trickling down her face, and she couldn't even wipe them properly with those stupid mittens. Suckling on the pacifier gave her some comfort though.

After about 5 minutes her anger had dissipated, and she felt really bad about her behavior. She tried apologizing, first to Sabine for pulling her hand back, because her friend had done nothing to deserve that. But it wasn't so easy with the pacifier hindering her speech, the mittens hindering her finding her friend's hand, and the head rest wings from looking at her. Through some more tears she managed to make herself understood, and her friend answered "It is OK, little mouse". Now her friend was using the same pet name her mother used when Iris was being little. Again Iris felt like she was the immature one, not Sabine, but she guessed she earned that. Next she also apologized to Nanny. Mrs. Fletcher thanked her, and then suddenly turned the car off the road into a parking lot. She explained "Your timing is perfect. We are just at a beautiful place to watch the lake."⁵

Since both girls were still wearing their harnesses, it didn't take that long to get out, and it was only a short walk, so Nanny didn't take the stroller or any bag with her. She did remove the pacifier again, since Iris obviously had calmed down and apologized. This made it a lot easier for Iris to tell Nanny how sorry she was, and how she appreciated Nanny taking care of her. "Thank you. I guess the walk was a bit too much for you, and you were just tired at the end. It's all OK now. If you promise to allow me to put the mittens back on you for the ride home, I'll take them off for the moment, so your hands can cool and dry a bit." "I promise." Iris also put the fanny pack around her waist once more, and Nanny apparently didn't mind, because she applied the padlock on it to make sure she couldn't lose it.

From the small parking lot next to the road, there was a strip of land that was a sort of dam that they could walk on, and they had a wonderful view of the lakes on both sides. Iris asked if she could take some pictures herself, since she was not connected to Sabine now, so she couldn't suddenly get jerked around, and had both hands available. Nanny opened her fanny pack, but warned her not to get close to the water, or the edge on the other side. Iris nodded and took some pictures of the view, and then also of mother and daughter together. She realized that that might have been one of the reasons why Nanny allowed her the phone. Then Sabine took her hand and wanted her mother to take some pictures of the two of them as well. Quickly Iris put her phone back in the fanny pack, and then let herself be pulled along. With the harness and leash, she didn't really want to be photographed, but she allowed it because Nanny had promised at the aquarium not to let anyone outside the three of them ever see those pictures. Halfway the dam there was a closed fence; beyond it they guessed was an installation for generating electricity from the water dropping down on the other side of the dam: the lake on their left was a lot lower.

Nanny pointed back in the direction of the car, to the hill beyond. She thought she remembered that there was a viewpoint on top that offered an even more spectacular view⁶, but that that was too much for today. There were some more opportunities for walks around these lakes, so perhaps they could come back here some other time. Iris said she would like that. After a while they went back to the car, where Nanny locked the fanny pack zippers again. Apparently she didn't want Iris playing with her phone in the car, which seemed a bit unnecessary, since Iris probably wouldn't be able to operate it anyway with the mittens on. After having apologized, Iris felt very relieved that everything was alright again between them, and gave Nanny a hug. Having had a rest and now the mittens temporarily removed and even being allowed to take pictures, she felt quite happy again, and voluntarily put out

⁵ [Google Maps 360 degrees view on the dam between Lookout Point Lake and Dexter Reservoir](#)

⁶ [Google Maps 360 degrees view over Lookout Point Lake from a nearby hill](#)

her hands for the mittens. She hadn't felt her forehead for a while, and thought she hadn't touched it at all while the mittens were off, but she had promised to wear them again in the car.

She was installed in her car seat, with mittens on and the fanny pack secured on her lap, and still wearing her harness, but without the leash. Sabine was next and was also still in her harness. Nanny explained that there might be a bit of time left to make one more stop along the way, so it was easiest that they kept their harnesses on. "Oh Nanny, there were a few times when I wanted to look at Sabine, but I couldn't because of the headrest. Could you bend it a bit back for that? I already tried, but couldn't do it while in the seat." "OK, if that is what you want. How is this?" Iris tried, and bending her head forward she could see her friend now. "Thank you Nanny, this is just right."

They drove off, and after a mile or so the car turned right, and the road went straight through the lake. It was starting to get a bit busier on the road, and the sun was already a bit lower, so it might be about 4:30 or 5 PM. The lower sun made the light softer and the colors warmer, and that made it all extra beautiful. Iris thought it was a pity that she had slept through all of this on the way to the waterfalls, but now with the head rests bent more out of the way, she had a better opportunity to watch outside anyway. Both girls enthusiastically pointed at things for the other to look at, and Nanny apologized that she couldn't slow down, because there were too many cars now.

After crossing the lake, they passed through a tiny village, turned left again, and followed the lake on the other side. After another mile or so Nanny turned off the road once more, onto a recreation site with a beach, a swimming area, and a small harbor. Even though it was a Monday, there were quite a few people there, most of them children and teenagers, probably because of the summer vacation. She parked at the edge of the area, near an unoccupied picnic table. "Nanny, do we have to go here? There are many people who will see me in my harness and mittens." "Since you didn't scratch at the previous stop, I'm willing to take the mittens off again. But why is the harness a problem now? You were outside in the harness all day. And at the aquarium many people saw you harnessed and in the stroller." That was a good question, and Iris had to think hard why this felt different. Perhaps it was that her clothes were not particularly childish, so she felt less disguised compared to the aquarium? Or that there were many other children of her age around? "I'm not sure, but could we do the chain between our bracelets again? Or else put me in the stroller – I'd feel more disguised then." How strange, that she felt less conspicuous when she was harnessed in the stroller than when she was only harnessed. But she had experienced firsthand what Nanny already told her: people didn't really look at you when they thought you were handicapped.

So Nanny got the stroller out, and put Iris in. That actually was more comfortable than a picnic bench anyway, and the sun shade helped too. It also meant that they could all sit next to each other facing the lake, which would otherwise be crowded on the bench. With Iris furthest to the edge of the site, she hardly noticed anyone looking at her, or even at Sabine, whose leash of course was locked to the bench again. So she soon relaxed and enjoyed the view and the sun. There were juice boxes again, and they could also choose a mini chocolate bar each; Nanny took one too. Of course the playing children made a quite a lot of noise, and so there was not so much wildlife around, but it was still nice, and watching the kids play was also fun.

After 15 minutes or so Nanny told them it was time to go home now, and put first Iris and then Sabine back in their seats. She took a good look at Iris's forehead, and asked if it still itched. Iris hadn't felt the mosquito bite for quite a while now, but of course the question triggered an automatic response to feel it with her hand. Nanny grabbed her hand before she reached it, and decided it was best to put the mittens on again. Iris didn't really mind; she had little to do with her hands in the car anyway, and the airco kept the car cool enough that they didn't get too warm. When Nanny went to get Sabine, she

pulled on the straps a bit again to feel that she was secured well, and played with her mittens to see what she could and couldn't do. She felt very content, and somewhat tired from another busy day.

36. The Last Evening

Step-by-step they had already traveled a fair part of the way back home, and the final drive took no more than another half hour. Back home Nanny took Sabine's harness off and checked her diaper. She thought it should last until after dinner, and Sabine nodded. But Iris was overdue for a change because of the UTI. Sabine was put in the tent, and Iris was taken upstairs on her leash, and got a quick diaper change. Her temperature was only slightly elevated, which was fully normal for the afternoon of an active day. She got a pull-up, since she would be bathed and diapered for the night before too long anyway. Because the jumpsuit needed to be mended and washed, Nanny decided that the bodysuit was enough to wear during dinner. It was a warm day anyway, and she'd be wearing her rain jacket back-to-front as well. It was quite strange for Iris to walk around in only underwear, and have her pull-ups partly visible, but she had nothing to hide from the Fletchers, and it was only for a short while.

They went downstairs again, with Nanny holding her wrist instead of her still mittened hand, a little change that made her feel extra small. Nanny had been quite careful with keeping her under control the whole day. Iris didn't quite know why - it was not like she had made any serious escape attempts - but she mostly didn't mind, and often even enjoyed it. In the living room Sabine noticed Iris's lack of proper clothes as well, and remarked "I can see all your legs! Like a baby." Iris stuck her tongue out at her, but Nanny didn't approve, and gave a quick jerk on Iris's wrist to make her stop. She was directly taken to her chair, and her jacket put on and the even locked in the back. The click of the lock closing give Iris a little shiver, like so often. After sitting down she was firmly strapped into the chair harness, and finally the tray snapped closed.

Iris was a bit surprised, because normally they could have some playing time while Nanny was cooking, but she explained she had expected to be home late and be tired, so she had prepared a Caesar salad and a potato salad yesterday evening. Sabine was taken out of the tent and put in her chair as well, and then Nanny got the plates and cutlery, drinks and the food, and they could start eating. For that Nanny removed the mittens. "Nanny, will you feed me again?" "OK, but only the potato salad. You need to eat the green salad yourself." So she alternated feeding both girls, and let one eat the Caesar salad while she was busy feeding the other one. Even though Iris got a fork and spoon, she decided to eat the Caesar salad with her hands, which of course made quite a mess because of the dressing. But Nanny didn't forbid it, and soon Sabine copied it. Of course there was a sippy cup with water for both girls, and Iris was promised some cranberry juice as well after she finished her water. But before she managed that, they had eaten their fill, and then Nanny had a surprise: ice cream.

Iris had already decided that she was too full for the cranberry juice, but suddenly discovered there was room for the ice cream anyway. It was chocolate fudge brownie, and of course she needed to use her spoon for it. In the back of her mind she knew about brain freeze, because it regularly featured in cartoons and such, but she took a big bite anyway, and then could experience firsthand what it was, because she suddenly got a sharp stinging headache. It disappeared again after a few seconds, but she decided it wasn't worth it and slowed down. Nanny probably half-expected it, because she didn't react when Iris gave a soft moan and distorted her face. But Iris noticed she had been paying close attention anyway, because she only took another bite of her own dessert after Iris continued eating hers. Sabine asked what was wrong with Iris, and she explained that you get a terrible headache when you take a large bite of cold ice, but that it passed in a few seconds. Of course then Sabine had to try that as well,

with the same results. 'OK, girls, I hope that was fun, but don't do it again, or I'll put the ice cream away again.' But neither felt any need to repeat it, and they quietly enjoyed their treat.

When they had finished, the table was cleared, and they were wiped roughly clean, it was time for their bath. Iris had to hold Sabine's hand, and her other hand was held by Nanny. That way they moved first to the bathroom to get the bath running and the bath gel foaming, and then to Sabine's room. First Iris was taken to the ring in the wall, to which she had been locked before. But she wasn't wearing a harness now, so she wasn't sure what Nanny was planning. But she simply put a padlock through the ring and through the bracelet Iris was still wearing, and she was unable to leave her place anymore. This gave her no room to move at all, but she expected it was only until Sabine was in the bath, so she just settled and leaned to the wall, watching mother and daughter. As expected, Sabine was undressed, the diaper removed, and then taken to the bathroom.

Then Nanny came back, released her, undressed her and secured her on the changing table. Her diaper was taken off, and she got a quick wipe. "Mommy, I'm wready" Sabine called. "I'll be right back" Nanny said to Iris and went to the bathroom. While she was gone, Iris could not do much, with her hands in the straps above her head, and the extra strap around her waist, which she had herself to thank for. But her legs were free, and she experimented with trying to pick up things with her toes. There was not much in reach, but she managed to partially get hold of a diaper on the shelf above. She didn't manage more than to upend the stack though, which dropped down, half on Iris and the other half to the floor.

"I thought I was pretty careful with you today, but you still manage to make a mess. If you would stay with us longer, I might have needed to add straps for your legs as well, to prevent you from breaking down the house." Iris had to laugh about the exaggeration. "Oh, you think it is funny, do you. I'll make you laugh!" Nanny continued, and started to tickle her feet. Because she had gotten a firm hold on Iris's legs, there was little Iris could do about it except wiggle and scream. But her body had one more defense, and deposited a nice smelly puddle of pee on the table. "I'm sorry, I couldn't hold it" Iris said, but she didn't really feel sorry – it was Nanny's own fault. She seemed to think so too, because she stopped fooling around and cleaned up the mess. Then she released Iris from the table, and grabbed her wrist once more. "By the way, I had to go to Sabine for a moment because I put her on the toilet again. Now she usually can do number 2 there, I thought we might as well see how far we get with number 1."

"Oh, that is nice. I guess I'll need some potty training in a few days, too. But Nanny, I'm still wearing the bracelet." "Yes, you are." Iris realized that Nanny was deliberately doing as if she didn't understand, but didn't quite know how to play along, so she just explained her doubts "Is it OK then to wear it in the bath, and during the night?" "These bracelets are usually worn by lovers, where the man locks it around his girlfriend, and the key is part of a necklace that he wears. A bit cheesy, but that way he holds the key to her heart-bracelet. This means the girlfriend has to wear it all the time, including bath and bed, so it should be able to survive that. For me you don't have to wear it. But shall we see what Sabine wants? She asked if you both could continue wearing it, and might be a bit disappointed if you have yours taken off?" Iris hadn't considered that, but it did seem like Sabine might view it as a token of friendship, that connected them both. "Well, if it is safe to wear, I guess we can leave it on for now."

They went into the bathroom, where Sabine already was in the bath at the same end as yesterday, with her arms cuffed to the sides again (see Figure 78 Bath cuffs). Iris was helped in at the other end, and her hands were secured as well. Iris joked to Sabine "Hello, long time no see" but Sabine just looked at her blankly. "Oh, that is just a little joke, forget about it." "I don't understand. Can you explain?" "Well, we see each other all the time. So it is funny when I say the opposite, and pretend it is

long ago since I saw you. ” “Oh. OK. I am a man.” That wasn’t funny, so Iris continued “I’m sorry, I’m not explaining very well. I don’t really know why some things are funny and others not.” “Yes Sabine, it is very difficult to explain humor. It often works best if you consider something funny yourself; then perhaps others find it funny too.” Nanny explained. Sabine still looked puzzled, but then let it go.

“Oh, I forget all about turning the tap off. The bath is a bit full now, so please be careful.” Saying that was not very smart, because the girls of course recognized a challenge when they heard one, and started to wiggle with their legs, causing the water to splash over the edge and on Nanny’s pants. She hadn’t yet put on her apron. Iris saw the wet area on Nanny’s pants, and exclaimed “Nanny has peed in her pants!” and they all had to laugh about that, but then Nanny said “OK, girls, that is enough now. You need to stop splashing water over the edge.” And when that had no effect, she added “Or there will be no sleepover tonight.” That was a very effective threat, and both girls immediately stopped. “Now you just soak for a while there, while I get out of these pants.”

The girls leaned back and enjoyed the warm water, and their feet played a bit with each other. Iris started to feel the warmth and the weightlessness in the bath making her super relaxed again. When Nanny came back, she was wearing a rain coverall. “I guess I need maximum protection with the two of you.” she explained. “Now, yesterday you did a pretty good job of washing each other. Would you like to try that again today, calmly and gently?” Both girls nodded, and so Nanny released their hands and let Iris turn her back towards Sabine, and sit between her legs. She gave Sabine a sponge with some more bath gel, and explained “Now gently start rubbing her from her shoulders downward. She’ll do her face and ears herself. With the sponge it didn’t matter so much that Sabine was a bit less coordinated, and soon her arms and back were done. Then Sabine pulled Iris a bit towards her, so her arms could reach around far enough to do her chest as well. The sponge made the contact more neutral, and the contact on her chest and between her legs was not so stimulating as the hands were yesterday. On one hand Iris ached for relief, but on the other hand she was glad for it, since it still felt weird for her to have her friend rub her in those places, especially with her friend’s mother keeping a close eye on them.

When it was the turn for Iris’s legs, Sabine struggled, and could not reach them well. So Nanny let Iris turn around again, and then Sabine could sit on her knees and comfortably reach them. Then it was time to reverse the roles. Iris first washed her own face and ears, like Nanny said, and then sponged off Sabine the same way. She could feel Sabine’s nipples were erect, because they functioned as a little barrier for the sponge, but Iris ignored it and worked around them. Once she had finished too, Nanny applied the cuffs again, cleaned her daughter’s face and ears, and then washed their hair.

Then she told them to let themselves soak for a bit longer while she prepared the bed. “Nanny, can you release our hands again, like yesterday?” “Not today. With the bath so full, and me not watching, half of the bath water might end up on the floor. You just lie there quietly for a while.” Every time they did something naughty, Nanny found a subtle way to get back at them. But being naughty was just too much fun, and every time they did it again, anyway. Still, just lying there was really nice as well, although perhaps less special for Sabine, because she did it every day, while it was still new to Iris. And now at least there was less temptation to start fondling each other again.

A few minutes later Nanny came to get Sabine out of the bath, dry her off, and take her to the bedroom. Suddenly Iris remembered her request from that morning again, and she wondered if Nanny would allow her daughter to not sleep in the mummy bag that night. And if so, if she would add other measures for Iris’s safety. In the meantime she let herself float in the water, and enjoyed it. Her muscles felt so relaxed and soft, after all the exertion of the day, that she decided she would definitely take more baths at home as well. Now that she was alone, she really wanted to play with herself. But

try as she might, she could not get a hand free, so that would have to wait. Maybe tomorrow morning on the toilet?

It took a while for Nanny to come back and get her out, and then it was the same routine as the previous day: drying off, blow-drying, brushing and braiding her hair, wrap the towel around her, let her brush her teeth, and take her to Sabine's room. When they entered Iris saw Sabine standing up in her bed, wearing the carebear suit she had worn the first half of her stay. Nanny said that she had decided that Iris would be protected enough in her inflated sleeping bag, and to avoid one of them needing a duvet, she put her daughter in the warm sleep suit. For extra safety her hands were in another pair of mittens underneath those of the suit. Iris could see that the thumbs of the suit's mittens were hanging down limply, so apparently her thumbs were inside the main compartment with the rest of the fingers. Sabine looked very cute in the suit, and Iris told her so.

"Come on, let's get you diapered", and Iris was lifted on the changing table where she got another of Sabine's thick diapers on for the night. The usual plastic panties and the bodysuit followed, and she was helped off the table. Nanny took a look at the abrasion on her leg, and touched it gently. "Do you want something on it for the night?" "I don't think I need anything. The sleeping bag will protect it. But might it not ooze and soil the bag?" "It looks like it closed up already, so if you don't bump into something or rub it again, it should be fine."

Iris got her pacifier strapped in again, loose enough to pull free if needed, and then the sleeping bag went over her head. Sabine was asked to lie down at the far end of the bed, and Iris was put in front, the bottom zipped up, and her bag inflated. Iris had the idea Nanny pumped it up a bit more than usual, probably for her safety. Then she buttoned the flap under Iris's chin that kept the hood up. But this time she put little padlocks on the button of the flap, and on the zipper at the bottom, and explained that she wanted to make sure the girls could not free each other. Iris could see another one at the top of the carebear suit as well. Then Sabine got her pacifier as well, and Nanny closed the bed.

Instead of reading a story, she sang 'Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star' to them. With their pacifiers the girls could not really join in, but Iris hummed along a bit. Then it was lights out, but the star-shaped row of little yellow lights on the ceiling allowed them to still see each other and the room. Iris had a bit more trouble than usual turning on her side because of the air pressure in the bag, but this time Sabine could help her. Her friend decided to turn her facing away from her, and hug her from behind. That worked a lot better now that she could use her arms, and it was very cozy to be hugged like that, even when Iris could feel little of it. The physically demanding day, followed by a big meal and a warm bath had prepared her well, and feeling very safe in her friend's strong embrace, she very quickly fell asleep. She must have woken up at least once during the night, because in the morning they lay the other way around, but she had no memory of doing so.

37. Last Time Little

When Iris woke, she estimated it would probably be close to morning. Her stomach was rumbling and a bit sensitive. She turned on her back for a moment, and apparently Sabine was already awake as well, because she turned her further over, crawled up to her and put her arms around her again. Iris would have loved to stroke her, hold her hand, or something, but the air pressure in the sleeping bag allowed very little movement, especially when Sabine half lay into it at her back. So her arms were more or less kept straight ahead. She could move them down though: apparently there was no air around her armpits. Her stomach burbled once more, and she felt the need to pass gas. She didn't feel like farting right into Sabine, but then realized that the sleeping bag would be stopping it, since it obviously was

airtight. Hoping it would settle her stomach, she let go, but combined with gas a fluid mixture escaped: she must have diarrhea! Yuck! Sabine was oblivious to it, and snuggled into her once more.

There was nothing Iris could do about it, except perhaps call out for Nanny, but since she didn't know how late it was, she didn't want to deprive her of sleep, and decided she could wait it out. As long as she didn't think about her diaper content it wasn't too bad. But of course that only caused her to think of nothing else. In an attempt to force herself away from those thoughts, she thought of the coming day. But of course that day was going to bring an end to her being so safe and secure in Nanny's care, and contain a seriously hard goodbye. That was no improvement over her previous thoughts at all, and certainly nothing to help her fall asleep again. Thinking of the previous day was a lot better, with the waterfalls, and the nap in the forest, with the nice smells and sounds. Thoughts of the splashing water triggered a little pee, but she was used to that by now, and that was quickly absorbed by the diaper. She was just drifting off again when she heard another explosion of gas and fluid, but that was not coming from her. Sabine must have diarrhea as well! Iris didn't feel like taking her pacifier out yet, so in an effort to try and communicate her suspicion she lowered the arm she wasn't lying on, and patted on Sabine's side around her bum. Sabine did the same on her bum, and Iris nodded. Iris tried to shrug to signal there was nothing they could do about it, but wasn't sure that Sabine felt it, or that the sleeping bag dampened it fully. Sabine just hugged her a little more firmly and seemed to try and go back to sleep as well. So Iris tried the image of the forest once more.

She was just dropping off again when she heard running footsteps on the landing, and another wet explosion could be heard from the bathroom. Iris had to smile, even though she felt sorry for Nanny, and also for Sabine of course. But sharing the misery helped, and somehow it was funny how one after the other produced that particular noise. She tried to turn around to see if Sabine was smiling too – if this was humor she did understand – but she was held firmly in her embrace. So she patted on the side of Sabine's bum again and then pointed her arm to the bathroom. But she got no reaction; perhaps her friend had drifted off to sleep again. Even with the soiled diaper, Iris still enjoyed lying there, still sleepy, very comfortable on her air cushion, and the strong embrace made her feel even more safe.

Then the door softly opened, and Nanny came in, in a long t-shirt that she probably wore for the night. She looked for a moment if the girls were still asleep, and when she saw Iris looking at her, she squatted quietly next to the bed, and asked whispering if Iris's bowels were OK. Iris concluded that Sabine was apparently asleep, or her mother would not have talked so softly, so she just shook her head, then moved her upper arm backward, and shook her head again. Nanny nodded, and quietly left again. After she left the room, Iris kept hearing little sounds that suggested that Nanny was not going back to sleep, but getting ready for the day, before getting the girls out of bed. Knowing they were probably getting up soon, there was little use in trying to fall asleep again, but she snuggled a bit in Sabine's embrace and just let her thoughts drift, although she was careful to avoid the more stressful subjects.

A while later Nanny came back in, dressed in black corduroy overalls and a dark red top. These were quite different from the close-fitting mother-daughter set she wore two days ago, but they also looked nice on her, with small frilly borders on the bib and pockets. She first opened the blinds, and then the bed. Iris felt Sabine waking up, and stretching. This was accompanied by more rumbling from her stomach, and another wet fart. When Nanny crouched by their sides, she produced one as well. Iris looked startled towards Mrs. Fletcher's bottom, afraid she soiled her overalls. Nanny saw her look, and explained that she saw no alternative than putting a diaper on herself as well, so her clothes were fine. Then she took the pacifiers from the girls and wished them good morning. "It seems like all three of us have diarrhea this morning. I assume there was something contaminated in the potato salad

yesterday, like a bad egg. We'll take Norit during the day, and that should stop it soon. In the meantime we'll just have to change diapers regularly. And drink a lot."

She continued "How are you feeling?" Iris responded "My tummy is rumbling and a bit sensitive. And my diaper is yuck." As if her body was timing it, another blubbery mass escaped her. So drew a disgusted face. Sabine hugged her, and answered that she felt the same. Then she crawled over Iris towards the exit. In her carebear suit that was a lot easier than yesterday in the mummy bag, and in passing she quickly gave her a kiss on the lips. Iris wouldn't have minded going first today, but apparently her friend assumed she was first, like yesterday. And it might also be nice to enjoy the sleeping bag for a little while more, since that would end today as well.

Nanny took her sleepsuit and the second pair of mittens off, and opened her bodysuit between the legs. But then she took her to the bathroom, still wearing her diaper. Nanny left the door open, and so Iris could hear her put Sabine on the toilet to see if she could empty her bowels a bit more before getting a clean diaper. Then they came back, Sabine got a clean diaper on, this time also a pair of plastic pants, and her denim jumpsuit (see Figure 50 Sabine's denim jumpsuit before modifications). Then she was briefly taken into the bathroom again, to brush her hair and teeth, and then taken downstairs.

It didn't take long before it was Iris's turn, and after her sleeping bag was pulled off, she was also taken into the bathroom and strapped on the toilet. She managed to produce a bit, but although she felt there was more, it wasn't ready to come out yet, apparently. So she tried to wipe, but got her hands dirty because the poo was all over the area. And of course it was smelly. So Nanny took over, and cleaned the whole area, and her hands, with wet wipes, before Iris was put on the changing table and she got a Tena Youth diaper with plastic pants on.

"Now there is one more thing that I would love you to wear. This jumpsuit is from when I was young, and I used to wear it for parties and such. Somehow I have always kept it, and occasionally Sabine wore it too, but it has gotten too small for her now. It might not be very fashionable today, but I still think it looks cute. She held up a jumpsuit in a colorful pattern for Iris to step into. The pants were very wide, but had ties at the bottom. The sleeves came up to the elbows, and had similar ties. There was some elastic around the waist, but that wasn't very strong anymore. The strangest thing of the suit was a mass of white lace under her throat in front. After Nanny had buttoned the back closed, she pulled some of the lace over Iris's head, and somehow attached it at the back. It seemed like a combination between a collar and a bib to Iris. (see Figure 83, with the color of the one on the left, and the bib of the center one.) Nanny remarked that she always needed help with dressing and undressing, so she knew it was secure for Sabine, and now Iris, as well, and asked Iris to be careful with it.

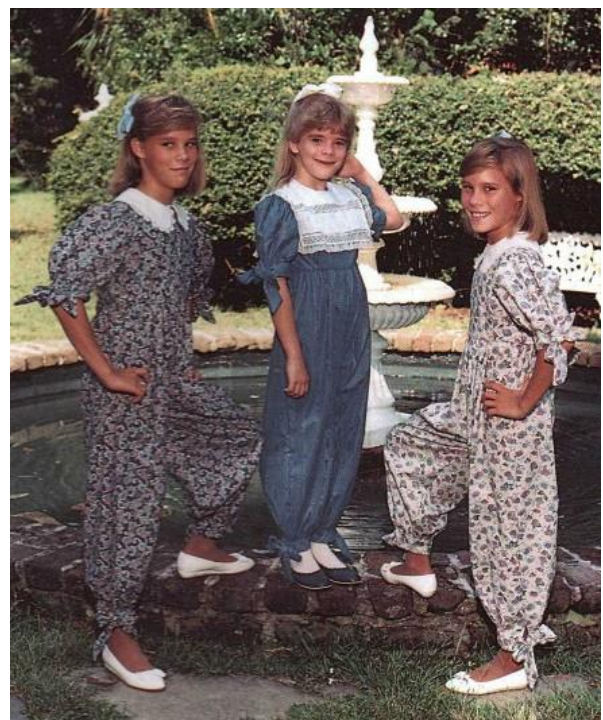


Figure 83 Imogen's party jumpsuit

Iris walked towards the bathroom mirror to better see the strange suit she was wearing, but Nanny grabbed her arm and asked where she thought she was going. Iris explained, and then Nanny took her hand and they went together. In the mirror Iris could see a suit that to her looked quite ridiculous; something that you might put on a toddler thirty years ago. She had gotten used to childish clothes, but at least they were clothes a current day young child would be happy with; this looked more like something that older relatives might choose for their little girl for church or grandma's birthday. But that might be exactly what it was. It was clear that it had a special meaning for Nanny, so she said she felt honored to wear it, even though she thought this might be the suit she would be most ashamed to be seen in, from everything she had worn this last week, with the possible exception of the bunny shortalls (see Figure 36 Kawaii bunny shortalls) Sabine and she wore at the aquarium.

Nanny was obviously very happy with her remark, hugged her, and told her she wanted something special for her last morning. Then it was the normal routine of brushing hair and teeth, and Nanny took her hand to take her down. But Iris had a mischievous idea, and gave Nanny a pat on her behind with her free hand. "And how is this young lady's diaper?" she asked Nanny in a deep voice, and Nanny replied in a little voice that it was a bit poopy. "Then I guess we need to change you too." Nanny nodded, and hand-in-hand they walked back to the changing table. Iris started to take off Nanny's overalls, but the straps didn't seem to have buckles or buttons, and she didn't want to force them over the shoulders either. Nanny told her that they buttoned on the inside of the back bib, and then Iris could undo the straps and let the bib drop. (see Figure 84) Next she opened a small zipper on the left side of the waist, although she wondered if that would have been necessary without the diaper underneath, because the overalls were pretty wide on Nanny. Then Nanny could step out of them. "I don't wear these often, because they are a bit big on me at the moment, and the straps are somewhat of a hassle. I usually manage to pull them over my shoulders, but I should really unbutton at least one of the straps. But today I needed something that fit over the diaper, was high enough at the sides to not show it, and kept it nicely in place." "I really love them; overalls look so good on you!" "Thanks" Nanny answered, and bit emotional. "Sorry, I hardly ever get compliments."



Figure 84 Mrs. Fletcher's Corduroy Overalls

Next she let Nanny hop on the table, and gave the command 'hands', wondering if the adult would allow her to use the straps, but Nanny just obeyed, and so Iris went through the same procedure she

was taught on Sabine. Before she opened the diaper Nanny asked her to put on her apron from the bathroom, to keep the jumpsuit clean, and the disposable rubber gloves for hygiene, which Iris did.

The dark red top Nanny wore under the overalls was a bodysuit, probably the same one she wore under the mother-daughter overalls, and Iris opened the snaps. Nanny wore one of her daughters' diapers, and mentioned those were the only ones that fit her. Iris removed it, and cleaned the crotch area. She noticed Mrs. Fletcher also had to concentrate not to wiggle when Iris cleaned her sensitive area, but managed to. She explained that it was quite a while since someone else had touched her there, and Iris thought that would probably be her late husband. "Sometimes I wish I could have a partner again, although that also makes me feel guilty towards my late husband. But taking care of Sabine like this, I'm hardly in a position to go dating anyway. And who would want a widow with a handicapped daughter?" A few tears appeared on her face, and Iris did her best to comfort her. "But you look so nice – I wish I would have a body like yours when I am your age. And with such a lovely daughter. I think men would stand in line to be allowed to date you. And if you do get a date, I'll watch Sabine for you!" That created both a smile and more tears, and Nanny wanted to hug her, but the straps of the changing table stopped her hands. "Thanks. That is really good to hear. Sorry for getting all emotional, not sleeping well sometimes does that to me." Iris stroked her hair for a while until she nodded that she was fine again, and then used a wipe to dry off the tears and let her blow her nose.

Then they went on with the diaper change, and Nanny chose one with the flower pattern. Iris asked if she shouldn't wear plastic pants too, and she agreed. Iris was curious to see how far she could go, and suggested locking panties because the sides of the overalls were a bit wide, and otherwise Nanny might be able to reach inside the diaper. This made Mrs. Fletcher hesitate for a moment, and she said that she needed to always appear in control around Sabine, but as long as it was not visible, it might be an idea for her to experience how she treated her daughter every day. Iris had to think back to the paw mittens (see Figure 33 Fist mittens with paws) that Nanny tried on one evening, and she was sure the other had the same thoughts. Nanny explained where the pants and the little locks could be found, and soon Nanny had lost access to her diaper. Both realized that it was not really secure, since Nanny was the one holding the key, but nonetheless Iris could still see a reaction in Nanny's eyes when the lock snapped closed. The bodysuit went over it, and with a bit of effort Iris managed to close the snaps.

Iris released the wrist and waist straps and helped her off the table. Then she held up the overalls, and Nanny obediently stepped into them. When Iris buttoned the straps again, she crossed them in the back, to make sure they could not be pulled over the shoulders. This required a bit of pulling, but she managed. It made the bib in the back bulge a bit, but it wasn't bad, and she folded the bulge back and tugged it under the side of the bib. The crossed straps might already make it hard for Nanny to take them off by herself, but to make sure she took two more padlocks and managed to lock the buttons and the keyholes together. She had seen how to do that when Nanny locked the chin flap of her sleeping bag yesterday evening. Nanny looked doubtful, but because the buttons were on the inside, the locks were not visible, and she did not protest. When she was ready, Nanny took control again, grabbed Iris's wrist and took her down.

Sabine was already in her chair, and was coloring again. When she saw Iris, she said "Pretty!". Apparently she liked the jumpsuit better than Iris. Nanny was careful to put the improvised bib on her again, and then she stepped in her high chair, was harnessed, and the tray clicked closed. Except for that one time, Iris always lifted her arms so they were not stuck under the tray. If she asked Nanny would feed her anyway, without losing all use of her arms. Then Nanny put a small wrapped parcel in front of her. 'A small farewell gift from the both of us.' Iris of course got very curious, and started tearing at the paper. Soon she held a little hard box in her hand that could be folded open, and inside was a pacifier with her own name on it, and a picture of a unicorn. (see Figure 85)

Iris didn't quite know what to say: it seemed strange to her to get something that she would hardly be using anymore before she was going home and left all this behind. But of course she needed to show her gratitude, so she thanked them both and said it looked wonderful. And little Iris did like it. Of course she put it in her mouth, and it was just the right size. Nanny explained that she knew someone from the disability forum who made these, and lived nearby, so she managed to get it in time. She must also have noticed the short hesitation in Iris, because she continued that Iris could always use it when she visited, but that there might also be moments at home when she could use its comfort. That sounded attractive to Iris, and although she had felt until now that at home there would be no place for little Iris, she started wondering if there might be some possibilities after all, and that thought cheered her up. She could at least use her pacifier when she was alone in her room. That made her a lot happier about the gift, and she stretched out her arms towards Nanny for a hug, since the chair would not allow her to go to her. Of course Nanny came over and embraced her. Leaning forward against the tray, even the little bit allowed by the harness, put some pressure on her stomach, and that caused another wet fart, but luckily there was not that much in her bowels anymore, so what came out felt like it was mostly absorbed by the diaper, and didn't leave much of the uncomfortable sticky mush that she really disliked.



Figure 85 Iris's personalized pacifier

"Okay, I'm getting the Norit right now." She went upstairs and soon came back with a package containing strips with black capsules. She read the instructions, and proceeded to make 3 stacks of 4 capsules each. "We each need to take 4 capsules three times a day, with water. It may make our stool look black. Oh, and now that I think of it, food poisoning bugs can be spread through the stool. Even though we already have it, we should still be hygienic, and Iris, if your mother is going to help you once you are home, she should be careful, and use gloves or at least wash her hands thoroughly afterwards." "OK, I will pass that on, but my mother is always pretty careful, so I think she would do that anyway." Iris hadn't really thought about the diaper changes at home, but especially now with the diarrhea it seemed very inconvenient to change her own diapers, so it would seem she needed her mother for those. Once the stool was normal again, she should be able to use pull-ups during the day, and she wouldn't need her mother anymore. She wasn't happy about needing her: she wanted to be taken serious by her mother, not treated like a little child. But on the other hand it might be an intimate moment with her, and help bringing them closer together. Would it be possible to have both??

While Iris was deep in thought, Mrs. Fletcher had gotten them all water, and Iris also the antibiotics for her UTI and a single pain tablet. Iris also thought it best not to try to do without any pain medication at the moment, so she swallowed all of them and emptied the whole glass of water. At first Sabine seemed uncertain if she wanted those strange black capsules, but after seeing Iris and her mother take them, she followed suit, and both girls got a compliment from Nanny. Then Nanny went into the kitchen to see what she could make for breakfast. She came back with a jar of apple sauce, distributed it over 3 plates, and gave each girl a plate and a spoon.

Then she went back into the kitchen, and started roasting bread in a pan. She came back with the slices, and explained that apple sauce and toast were well-known home remedies for diarrhea, but since she didn't have a toaster, she improvised with a pan. "Let's try if apple sauce on toast is edible; otherwise we'll eat it separately and use something on the toast that is not particularly helpful." They tried it, and although the sauce made the toast mushy, the combination wasn't too bad, and they

wanted to try anything to quickly get better. Of course it was messy to eat, and the girls needed a good wiping afterward, but that was why their bibs covered both arms and chest.

“Iris, what would you like to do on your last morning here?” “Well, I really liked the trips we did into nature, but I guess there is not that much time if we want to be back for Sabine’s nap. And we probably all want regular diaper changes, so I guess we had better stay in the house then.” “What we could do is take a little walk on the same route you biked with Sabine. If we’d use the bracelets with the chain again, and the yellow rain jacket, would you feel OK with that? I assume on a Tuesday morning there is almost no chance that you run into someone who knows you on that route.” Iris thought about the weird suit she was wearing, but with a jacket covering the top and the strange lace bib, the pants would look unusual, but it didn’t seem likely it would draw much attention if she was walking next to Sabine on a leash. And at the waterfalls she had experienced that people didn’t notice she was chained to her friend, as long as they were holding hands. When she noticed Sabine looking at her expectantly, she decided to agree. Even if people were looking, it was not too bad as long as they didn’t know her. And like Nanny said it seemed very unlikely that they’d meet anyone she knew.

“I think we had better go as soon as we can. I believe there will be some rain later, and it will probably still be pretty quiet on the streets.” Nanny left them in their chairs while she cleaned the table, and then went upstairs to get what they needed. Watching her move around, Iris thought again of how Nanny was locked in her overalls as well, even though you couldn’t see it. That thought excited her, and she was surprised by her own audaciousness. With the straps crossed in the back, the overalls seemed fairly tight on the shoulders and in the crotch, which made her diaper more visible. Iris thought that if Nanny didn’t mind going out like that, she shouldn’t either.

It didn’t take long for Nanny to come back down, with the chain, Sabine’s harness, and only a shoulder bag. “I’m not going to bring the bags along, but I trust you both to behave. I’m sure you don’t want to draw extra attention to yourself” she said, the last part particularly towards Iris. She put her things on the table, and went into the kitchen, where she filled a pitcher with water, and seemed to add something extra. “I made us something to drink. It is water with a little salt and several spoonfuls of sugar, because those help us keep the fluids in our bodies. She poured all three a cupful, and together they drank it. Iris was afraid water with salt would taste horrible, but she only tasted the sugar. And since the water was warm, it was a bit like tea.

Then Sabine was released from her chair, and put into her harness. Iris was next, and both bracelets were opened for a moment to put through the chain ends. Together they walked towards the door, where Nanny gave them both their jackets, the yellow one for Iris, and the over-the-head one for Sabine again. But of course they couldn’t put them on with their wrists connected, so Nanny unlocked Sabine’s bracelet for a moment, concluding that she wasn’t at her best this morning. Then of course Sabine’s harness had to come off again as well. When the jackets were on and locked, the harness was put on again over the jacket, and Nanny had also put on her clear rain coat. She checked everything one more time, and then reconnected the loose chain on Iris’s bracelet to Sabine’s, so that Iris was indirectly connected to her leash once more.

Outside it was overcast and a bit chilly, and they started off at a brisk pace. Sabine and Iris hand-in-hand in front, and Nanny following them. It was quiet on the streets, with an occasional car passing, or a dog walker engrossed on her phone. Iris remembered the route they took with the bike, so she took the initiative in where they were going. But the first time they needed to cross a road, and Iris had seen there was no traffic, Sabine stopped abruptly at the edge of the pavement. “Well done, Sabine. Iris, I’ve taught Sabine to never walk onto the road before I give the OK. Would you please observe the

same rule?" Again something that made Iris feel small and untrusted, but of course with her chained to Sabine, it had to be this way.

Soon they reached the outskirts of the town, and they could enjoy 'wild' nature instead of gardens. Without any traffic around, Iris invited Nanny to take her other hand, and so the three of them walked abreast and swung their hands in sync with their legs. Of course her big friend and even bigger mother needed to take somewhat smaller steps for Iris to be able to keep their steps in sync. It made Iris feel like when she was young and she walked in between her parents. Then they could lift her into the air to make a giant leap, and she's like to try that again, but she was sure that wouldn't work: the size difference wasn't big enough, and it would require a lot of strength. Occasionally there was another diarrhea explosion from one of them, and soon everyone had soiled their diaper. It wasn't enjoyable, but every time it happened they had to laugh, and after a particular heavy fart from Sabine it took them a while before they could stop, and even then they were giggling for minutes.

They got almost as far as where Iris did her first stop on the bike ride, when Nanny suggested they'd turn around so they could refresh their underwear. Iris suggested they go a little bit further, in the hope of seeing the chickadee family again, and if the young had developed in during the week. Unluckily they didn't manage to find them, so they turned back. A very light drizzle started, but Nanny just put up their hoods and they marched on. Iris tried herself first, but with one hand that wasn't so easy, so she let herself be helped. A while later the drizzle stopped again.

When they were back in their own street, an older woman with a little off-white dog was moving towards them, and she apparently knew the Fletchers, because she came right up to them and greeted them by name. Mrs. Fletcher had let go of Iris's hand, but briefly introduced her as Sabine's little friend from school, who had stayed with them for a few days. Iris said a brief hello, but pretended to be shy and hide a bit behind the others, especially her chained hand. But the neighbor wasn't interested in her, and started gossiping to Nanny about some other neighbors that apparently were having marital problems. Mrs. Fletcher didn't say much, but had trouble shaking off this woman. The girls meanwhile were petting the dog and trying to get it to sit and give them a paw, but the dog apparently wasn't trained to do that. At that moment Nanny produced a loud wet fart. She blushed, and explained to the woman that they must have eaten something bad yesterday, because all of their stomachs were upset. She had had no choice but to put all of them in a diaper.

Upon hearing that, Iris's first reaction was anger that Nanny was actually telling others about her underwear, but then realized that she had actually admitted to wearing a diaper herself. The woman just offered them her sympathy, but it gave Nanny a nice excuse to break of the conversation by saying they really needed a change now, so the woman wished them to get better soon, and moved on. "Nanny, aren't you afraid that word gets around that you wear diapers?" "No, because it is only for a medical emergency. Just like you temporarily need them for a UTI. And I happen to know that woman also has some bladder issues, and uses inlays in her underwear. Adults in general understand better that they can just be tools to cope with medical conditions, and don't see other adults as babies when they need them. Unluckily most teenagers don't get that yet."

A minute later they were back inside, the chain was removed from the bracelets, Sabine's harness was taken off, and the jackets unlocked. Iris took off her own, while Sabine's was a bit more complicated, so she got help. "I'm going to change you separately. Iris, please wait in the tent." Iris didn't understand why Nanny suddenly didn't want her present when she changed her daughter, but not wanting to cause any delays in getting changed, she sulkily obeyed. The two Fletchers disappeared upstairs, and some 10 minutes later they came back down, and Iris and Sabine swapped positions. Nanny grabbed Iris's wrist again, and took her to the changing table, closing the door behind her.

"Sorry for the little subterfuge, but I want to be changed without Sabine present." Now Iris understood: Sabine should not see Nanny locked in her overalls and plastic pants. Nanny started with Iris, undoing the closure of her jumpsuit's bib collar in the back, and once it was flipped over her head, undid the buttons at the back. Then Iris could step out of it, while Nanny made sure it didn't get dirty on the floor. Then she put on rubber gloves, took Iris into the bathroom and removed the plastic pants and diaper. The plastic pants were not dirty, so the Tena Youth had coped better with the diarrhea than with a night of wee.

Iris was put on the toilet again, and managed to empty her bowels a bit more. Then she was cleaned and diapered, and once more put into that weird jumpsuit. But because it was clearly special to Nanny, it made her feel honored, and she didn't mind wearing it anymore. Next it was Nanny's turn. Then Iris got the keys, and unlocked the overalls straps. Nanny tried to open the side zipper, but her hands were slapped away, and Iris did all the undressing. Then she unlocked the plastic pants, left the keys on the changing table, and took Nanny to the bathroom. There Iris needed to put on the apron again that Nanny sometimes used with their bathing, and another pair of rubber gloves. Nanny's plastic pants were clean, which didn't surprise Iris, because of Sabine's super-absorbent diapers. The diaper was pretty full though, and of course rather smelly. She put Nanny on the toilet and fastened the strap. "I'm not going to lock it, but I expect you not to touch it." she warned the older woman, and went to Sabine's room to deposit the smelly diaper. She listened for a moment from the corridor to judge what Nanny was doing, but she seemed focused on emptying her bowels and softly moaning with it.

When she reentered the bathroom, the strap was indeed still around Nanny's waist. "I think I excavated all that I can" her charge reported, so she was released and wiped. Then it was back to the changing table, where she put her hands towards the straps without being asked. Iris of course secured her, and gave the area a thorough clean. She was tempted for a moment to see if she could linger a bit on the sensitive area and get Nanny to wiggle, but knew that was frustrating, and decided it was too mean. While she was applying cream and putting a fresh diaper on, Nanny said "Iris, thanks you for taking care of the diaper change. I wasn't looking forward to doing that on my own, and you are already pretty good at it. And it was quite interesting that you treated me like Sabine for a while. Like with the paw mittens, it is useful to know how it feels. But I think I prefer to go back to normal now. My shoulders are starting to feel a bit sore from the tight straps, and I need to be in control when you both will take your naps." "But Imogen, I'm sure you'll want another diaper change before I go to sleep, don't you?" "Yes, that seems likely." "Well then, isn't it soon enough for you to return to normal at that moment? With me I don't get released any time I might feel like it, either!" "OK, I guess you have a point. I think I can stand it until after lunch." "How bad are your shoulders? Shall I take a look?" "Well, I guess I cope with it a few more hours. You're sure you used the last hole of the straps?" "Oh, is there more than one? I'll check when I put it on you again."

When the diaper was on, Iris released Nanny from the table, and made her step into the plastic pants once more. "Those too? But the diaper didn't leak!" Iris was sure Nanny was now just being difficult on purpose, to get back at her for the times she had been complaining as well, so she replied "Young lady, you will wear your plastic pants and the overalls, no discussion." "Yes, Miss Tomas" Nanny managed to say in a serious voice, before they both burst into laughter. When Iris put the overalls on Nanny again, she noticed there indeed was another hole down the strap, so she used those to button the crossed straps again, and then checked if the straps still couldn't be pulled from the shoulders. When she was satisfied that they couldn't, she applied the little heart-shaped locks again. With each click she could feel a little shudder from Nanny.

Once that was all taken care of, Nanny held out her hand and got the keys back. Iris wondered though if she would be able to actually unlock those little locks on the back, since they would probably be hard

to reach, let alone get the key in the tiny hole and turn it. On the other hand, the keys were of no use to herself either, since her jumpsuit was not locked on today, but just had closures out of reach. Planning ahead, Nanny said "We have an hour or so before lunch, and we can play inside. So I'll give Sabine her freedom again, but with the jumpsuit restrictions. Now it doesn't seem quite fair to her if you are fully unrestricted. What should we do about that?" "The obvious choice would be the patient jumpsuit, but that would fully cover my jumpsuit and I think that would be a pity. The patient straps to keep my elbows and knees together we have already done a few times, and I'd prefer something new. I guess it also depends on what we are going to do. Perhaps that board game again, Busytown?" "If you'd like that, it would be quite suitable, and we all had fun with that last time." "Yes, let's do that then. I guess mittens are not suitable then either. Perhaps if I wear my harness, and you connect the leash somewhere that limits where I can go? We didn't find anything suitable to connect Sabine to, but if I promise not to go wild and smash things, that could work?" "Let's try that then." So Nanny got the harness, and put it on Iris again. Now she was the one feeling a little shiver again when the harness buckles clicked closed. They were a lot louder than the little padlocks. These didn't lock automatically though, so Nanny had to turn the key in them to make the harness escape-proof. Not bothering to put the other end of the leash around her wrist, she just grabbed it, ordered Iris to take the game from the shelf, and sent her towards the stairs with a little slap on her behind.

Downstairs Nanny first attached Iris's leash to the stair railing, to have her hands free for Sabine. Then she opened the tent, and when Sabine came out, connected elbows and knees of her jumpsuit to make it safe for her to move around freely. Then they set up the board together. Iris wanted to help, but the leash was not long enough to reach even the side of the board closest to her. But because Nanny hadn't locked the wrist band around the railing, she just opened it when Nanny went into the kitchen for a moment, and went to help with the board. "Iris, how did you get loose?" Nanny exclaimed when she returned. "Well, you didn't lock the leash, so I thought I would come over and help." "Oh, so now it is my fault?" "I guess so" Iris replied cheekily. "I'm afraid you are right. I guess I can't be so careless with you. Here Sabine, you hold her for a moment; I need to get something from the shed." Of course Sabine loved that, and actually didn't just hold the end of the leash, but grabbed the harness directly, and held Iris very close to her. Knowing she would have no chance to get free from her friend's grip, she leaned into her friend instead, and put her head on her shoulder, enjoying their closeness. Before she left, Nanny gave both girls a sippy cup with water that she had just prepared; they needed to keep their fluids up.

When Nanny came back, she brought the chain and the 2 large padlocks that she had used to leash Iris in the garden a few days ago. "These should keep you where I put you!" She put one padlock through one end of the chain and the vertical strap at the back of Iris's harness, and clicked it closed. She asked Iris to sit at the side of the game board closest to her, and then locked the chain to the same railing, with only a little leeway. Iris tried how far she could reach, and concluded "But Nanny, I can't get to half of the board!" "Well, you should have thought of that before you decided to release yourself. Now you will just have to ask us if you want to do something there. If I would make the chain longer, it would probably drag over the board and scatter the pieces." Of course Iris had known that she would suffer some consequences for releasing herself, but it was so much fun to be naughty. And she knew Nanny's punishments were never mean, and usually quite bearable. Being on such a short leash would be inconvenient, but also increased her feeling safe and secure, and that was what she wanted for these last few hours here. Sabine still held her leash though, and tried to wrap it around her wrist. But that was quite challenging for her, especially with her elbows held to her sides. Instead of releasing the leash now that the chain held Iris, Nanny helped her, and then locked the wrist band, as she had done once before. Now Iris was restricted even further!

Nanny was considerate enough to set up the spinner and the other pieces that didn't start on the board close enough that Iris could reach them. And since the start was at her side of the board, they just started playing and soon Iris was so involved in the game that she soon forgot her limits, and then suddenly was forcibly reminded of the chain holding her inexorably back. That immediately triggered another wet mass entering her diaper. The others heard it too, and they started giggling again. Iris also realized that it had been a while since it happened to any of them; probably the measures of Nanny started to have their effect. After that it became less fun for Iris, because she constantly needed to explain to the others what move she wanted to make. And for Sabine the leash on her wrist became a handicap as well, with the coiled rope threatening to drag over the board, and it limited her reach as well, especially combined with the jumpsuit limitations. So Nanny removed the leash on both sides and laid it aside. Then she unlocked the chain from the railing, took Iris over to the side of the board, took the chain into the kitchen, and another click signaled that Iris was locked again, but at a place where she could reach a lot more of the board. Then they could play freely again. Luck was not with them this time though, and the pigs got to the picnic, so they lost the game. Iris anxiously looked at her friend, but she didn't seem frustrated, and there were no signs of an upcoming tantrum.

"Girls, what do you say we take revenge on those pigs? There is just enough time before lunch." They both wanted vengeance too, so they set up the board again. In the meantime Nanny refilled their cups, this time with the sugar and salt mixture, and of course she had a glass for herself as well. This time Iris couldn't quite reach the start of the board, but she knew it would only take a few moves, so Nanny made the first steps for her, and then Iris could take over. This time it went much smoother, and they had quickly reached the island with the picnic intact. After they celebrated their victory, they stored the game in the box again. Nanny released the restrictions on Sabine's jumpsuit, and put her in her chair. Then she unlocked Iris, and put her in her chair too, without removing the harness.

After the medication, with 4 more capsules of Norit each, and those for Iris's UTI, there was more toast, but since Mrs. Fletcher didn't have another jar of apple sauce, it was combined with regular spreads. After the table was cleared, Sabine got her coloring book again, and Nanny took Iris upstairs on her leash. There they changed each other again, and this time Nanny got regular plastic pants, and her overalls straps were not crossed and locked anymore. Iris got another Tena Youth, but the harness and the jumpsuit stayed off, because she was helped into her sleeping bag again, and put into her crib for her nap. Iris protested that she didn't want to spend her last few hours with the Fletchers sleeping, but Nanny replied that she needed it, with both UTI and food poisoning her body definitely needed extra rest. And besides, Sabine would be napping as well. Actually Iris felt pretty tired, even though they had not done that much strenuous activity, so she nodded, but still looked sad.

"Do you want your new pacifier? I don't normally allow that during the day, but this time I'm willing to make an exception, especially since I expect you won't be using it in the night." "Yes please, that would be nice." So Nanny removed the old pacifier from the strap, and put Iris's new one in. Then she put it in Iris's mouth and buckled the straps in her neck. "Please try again if you can pull it out; with this new pacifier it could be different." So Iris tried, and it worked like before, so it was put back into place. Nanny stayed for a little longer, until she noticed Iris was rapidly falling asleep, and then quietly left.

38. Maternal Mayhem

Iris woke up again when Nanny was pulling up the blinds. Then Nanny lowered the bed railing, but instead of helping Iris out, she sat on the bed next to her, and only removed the pacifier. "Iris, I have some news that might upset you. Not long after you went to sleep, your mother called that she needed to be in Thurston earlier, because she had to deliver some vase she had sold, and she asked if it was OK

if she came early. I wasn't thrilled, because I would have liked a bit of a chat with you before she arrived on how you see the rest of the day, and the coming days. But I couldn't really ask your mother to go back home again, so I agreed. When she arrived, we talked for a little while, and of course I told her about our food poisoning, and that you were taking a nap. Then she wanted to see you sleep. That didn't seem like a good idea at all, but I could hardly prevent her from seeing her own daughter, and I really couldn't explain why it was not a good idea without explaining more than you would want her to know anyway. I told her I didn't want to wake you, but when she promised to be quiet, I had to take her to you." "What?" Iris exclaimed. "She saw me like this?? Oh my god, this is bad."

Nanny continued "Yes, I'm sorry, that was not at all what I planned. And your mother was quite upset too, seeing you locked in a cage, in a strange sleeping bag, and with a pacifier! I managed to get her out of the room and take her downstairs before we talked, because I assumed it would have been even worse if you woke while she was in the room. So I explained to her how this had evolved, and that you were fine with it. She found that hard to believe, because you were always so resistant to being treated like a child. I told her that she had best ask you herself about why you agreed and even asked for the pacifier."

Hearing this, Iris got tears in her eyes, and started to panic. The sleeping bag seriously hindered her movements, but she started rolling left and right, and beating with her arms on the mattress. She also started shouting "No, No, No" Nanny laid down next to her, hugged her with one arm, and stroked her face with the other. Gradually the panic receded, and turned into a serious cry. Nanny did her best to comfort her, apologizing for how this happened, and telling her it would be alright. Finally Iris asked "So my mother is downstairs now, and waiting for me to explain why I slept like this? Whatever am I going to say?" "I guess the only way forward is to explain everything to your mother, and see how we go on from there. And who knows, it might even be a good thing. I get the impression your mother really wants to work on your relationship, and at the same time keep you safe. So perhaps you can find a way to have your mother respect you, but, when it is suitable, also treat you a bit like we have done here?" This invoked more tears, but then Iris said in a small voice "You think so?" "I can't be sure, but I think it is worth giving it a go. I guess the biggest challenge is for her to earn your trust again, before you can comfortably give her such control as you did with me. That will probably take time, and require a bit of trial and error. But I decided to give you the pacifier only because I expect there is a good chance you can work it out together."

Iris took her time to process this, and after a minute or so she said she was ready to get up now, and get it over with. Nanny deflated the sleeping bag and opened the zipper, and then said "Obviously this is the end of me treating you like Sabine. So it is your choice what you want to wear. I don't think a pull-up is a good idea though, so that might influence what you want to wear. I had assumed you'd want to wear your own clothes again, but your mother's appearance might have changed things, and if you'd like, you can definitely borrow any of the clothes that don't fit Sabine anymore." "Thank you, I'm not sure yet. Perhaps we can first try what I wore to the doctor?" So Nanny helped her out of bed and pulled the sleeping bag off. "How is your diaper?" "I don't think there is any poo in it, perhaps only a little wee." "Shall we do the diaper change then just before you leave? Then you don't immediately have to let your mother do it when you get home." "Yes, please."

Iris waited for Nanny to help her with the clothes, but she didn't. Iris realized that her being treated as a grown-up again also meant she was supposed to dress herself, so she tried her legging and skirtalls. But it didn't sit right over the diaper and the plastic pants, and Iris realized again that the buckles on the straps irritated her nipples. She knew her mother had already seen the denim overalls with the Pooh characters on it, that she wore the very first day, and that she had even practiced with the escape-proof features when they came back from the doctor. Knowing that she could always put on

something different after the next diaper change, she decided for those. They were quite comfortable, and she liked the Pooh stories. After all she had worn this week, it didn't actually seem all that childish anymore. Of course now Nanny had to help her zip up the back, and button the flap closed. Nanny looked happy with her choice, and gave her a firm hug before inviting her to come down with her.

It was as the air was getting thicker the further Iris got down, and gave more and more resistance. But Nanny walked behind her, and she knew delaying wouldn't solve anything, so she struggled through, and then she saw her mother. Quite uncharacteristically she sat on the floor next to the tent, and was talking to Sabine who was inside it. When she saw Iris she stood up and opened her arms to embrace her, but stayed where she was instead of forcing herself on Iris, allowing her to choose whether to accept the invitation. It felt respectful and that made Iris accept it. Later she realized this might have been a pivotal point, and the whole outcome might have been different if her mother had forced herself on her there. Only now Iris realized that she had missed her mother a lot more than she had noticed, and, still feeling the stress from the talk with Nanny, she started crying again. Her mother just held her for a while, saying she missed her too. When Iris felt more stable again, she let go of her mother, who also let go of her.

They went to sit at the dining table, which somehow felt more appropriate for a serious talk than the couch. Iris saw that 'her' high chair was no longer there; apparently Nanny had been tidying up before her mother arrived. Mrs. Tomas started "Iris, I felt quite upset seeing you sleeping like that. But Imogen tells me that you agreed to be treated like that?" "Yeah, I was also quite upset when I heard you seeing me like that. But I guess it went sort of gradually. I think you already noticed on that first evening that I had needed to wear something from Sabine because my clothes got vomit on them, and because I couldn't take it off by myself, and Mrs. Fletcher had to leave, I agreed to wear a diaper. But only because no one else would see me anyway, and I couldn't be sure not to need a toilet visit before she returned. I think you already noticed it when you left that evening." Her mother nodded, but didn't interrupt.

"Then in the evening the crib was the only spare bed available, but I didn't mind since we left the railing open. But because the mattress is a lot higher than with the normal bed, Nanny worried about me dropping out of it, and made a sort of barrier with a towel during the night, because she couldn't sleep. When I went to the bathroom at night, I was pretty awake and investigated the railing, because I wondered what it was like to be surrounded by the bars, like Sabine used to sleep. But I messed up, and it locked and I couldn't get it down again. Later that night I needed to pee again, and had no choice but to wet myself in the corner of the bed. Luckily the mattress was waterproof, but I soaked the bedding and the duvet, which was hard to clean again."

"The next night we had a problem: the duvet wasn't ready yet, and there was no other one available. So Nanny came up with a warm fleece onesie from Sabine – that way I didn't need any cover. But of course it had a zipper in the back, and mittens, so I would not be able to let myself out for the toilet at night. So I ended up in a diaper again. Then Nanny told me how worried she had been about me falling out, and since I had no reason anymore to leave the bed, with the diaper on, I agreed that she closed the railing. There was a baby monitor, so I could always call for Mrs. Fletcher if I needed anything. It was a bit strange at first, but somehow it made me feel very comfortable and safe, and it was quite useful that I didn't need to climb out of bed and find the toilet in the middle of the night. From the beginning I slept very well that way."

"So when I got the bladder infection, I was sort of used to wearing a diaper already, and Sabine's clothes, so that made it easier. I had also worn one again during the day time: when we went to the special needs store to get several things for Sabine, it was a long car drive, and Mrs. Fletcher didn't

want to let me go alone into one of those gas station bathrooms, but she couldn't come with me either because she couldn't leave Sabine alone. So I agreed to wear a diaper again, and got a beautiful vegan leather dress from Sabine to wear over it, so no one would notice. In the store I helped out by letting them try a few things on me, so Sabine would see it was OK. I was in a car seat, and had mittens on that I couldn't take off. With the car seat we were very lucky to get a show model with a huge discount, so Mrs. Fletcher bought it, and then it was immediately installed. The only place for the other seat was where I sat, so on the way back I sat in that. Well, you already saw it. It is actually very comfortable, and I often fall sleep on longer trips. But we bent the head support inwards so people next to the car can't see my face, because I still worry a lot about being recognized, and the people in school finding out I wear diapers, or sit in a car seat, or dress in kids clothes. I think they might even pick on me if they know I have a handicapped friend, isn't that awful? But I'm so scared that my time at school will be all about being bullied again, like in the first year at elementary."

"Then I had the idea that we should visit the Oregon Coast Aquarium, because Sabine used to have an aquarium that she loved. But the admission prices were so high, and Mrs. Fletcher might have some financial setback, that she couldn't afford it. I thought there should be something like a discount for handicapped people, and I found coupon online with which a caregiver with 2 handicapped people would only pay \$30 instead of \$70. So I offered to be treated like Sabine for that day, to be able to pass as being handicapped as well. Since I was already in diapers and in her clothes that I couldn't take off, I thought it wouldn't be such a big step. It turned out to be a bit harder than I expected, because I needed to wear a harness or be in the stroller everywhere. So I wasn't free to go where I wanted all day long. But it wasn't so bad, because Sabine was treated the same way, so we were equals, and had a lot of fun together. We noticed I was a lot more relaxed and had more fun when I didn't try so hard to be mature. I guess I missed being a child without realizing it, and every time I am restricted in some way, I know that I am safe and secure, and that I cannot do anything wrong, like getting too far away and getting yelled at."

Here Iris looked at her mother to see if she realized that Iris was referring to incidents like at the flea market, where her mother had already started yelling at her when she was some 15 yards away. But her mother was just listening concentrated, and showed no signs of thinking about her own behavior. So she just continued with her story. "I guess I'm weird, but it felt so good to be treated like that by someone who I know respects my boundaries and takes it seriously when I have an issue with something. And with Sabine it was just like we were at Edison Elementary again, and we had so much fun together. So I asked Nanny to keep treating me that way for the last few days as well. It wasn't always easy, and several times I was punished for misbehaving, but that always felt reasonable and fair, so I didn't mind too much. I don't know, it just felt right, and we all enjoyed it, but perhaps I am a weirdo."

Iris looked at her mother again, anxious about how she would react. She reacted "Wow, that is quite a story! But let me first say that I don't think you're weird. I have so often worried about how serious you always were, and how stressed you were by trying to be more mature than you should be. So I think it is wonderful that you managed to reconnect with your inner child, and had so much fun. It is strange though that all the things I consider important, like staying warm, safe in the car, and not getting lost, you subjected yourself to voluntarily here. But that gives me hope that we can work something out that will make us both happy. But there are a few things I don't understand yet. When I saw you sleeping, you weren't wearing a fleece onesie, but in some thick sleeping bag? And with a pacifier strapped in your mouth?"

"Oh sorry, I forgot about those. I slept a number of nights in the onesie, but when we first tried the Tena Youth diaper, it had leaked a bit during the night, and so the onesie got dirty and smelly. When it

was not yet ready the next night, we had a problem again. There was a mummy sleeping bag from Sabine, but my arms were in some sort of sleeves on the inside, and kept straight next to my body, and it was very close all around me, and with a hood, and that was too much for me, and I started to panic, so Nanny quickly let me out again. Then she remembered a sleeping bag that she got from someone else, I think a boy that had spasms, which she had never used, and we tried that. The strange thing is that it is inflatable, and I could hit the bars of the crib, or punch myself, and I hardly felt it. And when it is inflated I feel like I'm floating. So even though that one had mittens too, and a hood, and got tighter the more it was inflated, it felt cozy, and more like a hug than a jail. So I slept in it, and liked it so much that we never went back to the onesie."

"And the pacifier?" "Well, one evening Mrs. Fletcher told me that she once put one of Sabine's pacifiers in her mouth because she needed both hands, and found out that she liked suckling on it, and that it calmed her. So that evening, after a busy day, she suggested we both tried one for a while. I agreed, and liked it so much that I wanted to keep it in for the night. But every time it fell out again while I slept, and with the mittens I couldn't find it and put it back. So Nanny suggested we tried that strap to keep it in. But she always did it loose enough that I could still pull it out if I needed to, for instance to call for help. And she doesn't allow me to use it during the day, or only by exception, because it is supposed to be bad for the teeth if you use it too much. They actually gave me my very own pacifier this morning, as a goodbye gift. It has my name on it and all! I was allowed to try it out during my nap."

"But could you tell me why you were here so early?" Iris asked her mother. "Oh, that was sort of a coincidence. I recently found a vase at a garage sale that they sold for \$10, but I recognized that it was something special, and I managed to get \$500 for it on Craigslist⁷. But the buyers wanted me to personally deliver it, and since it was here in Thurston I agreed, and planned it just before I needed to be here. But unluckily I got a call around half past twelve that they unexpectedly had to leave by 2PM, so they needed me to come earlier. So I did, and called Mrs. Fletcher if it was OK if I arrived here earlier, and she agreed. The rest you know."

"Oh, I understand. So I guess it was just some bad luck that you saw how I sleep here. Although, I think I actually feel relieved that I have told you everything. Nanny, you said it might be for the best, but I had a hard time believing you. But perhaps you were right anyway." Her mother responded "I am very glad you did tell me, because if we want to improve our relationship, I think secrets would get in the way. Now we can think about the coming days. I guess you need a diaper for both your bladder infection and the food poisoning, probably for a number of days yet. Mrs. Fletcher told me that she is willing to let us borrow things that no longer fit Sabine. Would you like to bring some of the clothes and things you used here back home with you? I'm not sure if you have many clothes that would fit well over a thick diaper, let alone hide it. So that would give us a bit more choice."

Iris considered "If you asked me a week ago, I would definitely have said no. Like we talked about last time, I felt like you were not taking my ideas and feelings serious, and I would be scared that you would also use these clothes and things when I really wouldn't want to, like where someone that I know would see me. Now I think you are serious in wanting to change, and work on our relationship, but my fears aren't suddenly gone, and I still worry. Like that I wear something childish, and then you want to take me somewhere, like shopping or visiting someone, and you won't let me change."

⁷ Craigslist is a website for advertisements, a bit like eBay, but locally, and also for jobs, services, etc. Many cities and regions each have their own craigslist site.

Mrs. Fletcher broke in "I'm sorry, I promised myself to let you try and work it out on your own, but I think I might play a role here, if you'd want me to. I'm sure Sabine and I will stay in regular contact with Iris. If she feels that her wishes and feelings are not respected, she can let me know, and I'll see if I can get you both back on the right track. And if all else fails, I can always ask back everything you borrowed. Maria, of course you can also call me for advice if you want. But there is another tool you could use before requesting outside help, a sort of emergency break. You could agree on a safeword that Iris could use to stop and be freed of any restriction, if she really feels what is happening is not OK. That way Maria knows that if Iris is 'just' protesting, she might just be difficult, like a younger child can sometimes be. So Maria might ignore it if she feels the objections are not serious. And Iris knows, as long as she trusts Maria enough to respect the safeword, there is always a way out. Usually for a safeword a word or combination of words is chosen that wouldn't come up in normal conversation, to prevent confusion."

Mrs. Tomas answered "Thanks for the offer, Imogen. I hope we will not need to call on you, but it is good to know we have a fallback. I had heard of safewords, and I think that might be a good idea to agree on one right now. Perhaps we will never need it, but it would be nice to know there is an emergency break. What do you think, Iris, if I solemnly promise to respect the safeword, do you trust me enough that I will keep that promise?" Iris considered the question seriously, but whatever faults her mother had, breaking promises was not one of them, so she could quickly answer "Yes, I trust you in that. But what could we use as a safeword? Something like 'Jabberwocky'?" "Whatever works for you. I will immediately know this is something you would not normally say, and then remember it is our safeword. For you it needs to be something that you will still remember when you need it, even if it is months from now, and you are starting to panic. Some people also use the word 'safeword' as a safeword, because it is so easy to remember. But if 'Jabberwocky' is easy for you too, I am fine with that." "Well, it was the first word that came to my mind, so I guess it will be OK." Mrs. Fletcher added "Of course you can always agree on a new safeword if you can't remember it, or use 'safeword' as a backup safeword." "OK, we'll do that."

Iris felt a bit bad for Sabine, who was locked in her tent during the whole conversation, so she looked at her to see how she was doing. But she seemed content to play with the dolls and toy animals. When she noticed Iris looking at her, she made her toy elephant Bobo wave one leg at her as a greeting, and Iris waved back. Suddenly Nanny said "Oh, I need to give the girls something to drink. We all need to stay hydrated." They talked a bit more while everyone was drinking, and when the glasses were empty, Mrs. Fletcher took the initiative "Before you leave I think we need to do three more things: I'll give Iris a clean diaper one more time, we'll need to sort out what you will be borrowing, and of course Sabine and I want some time to say goodbye to our favorite lodger. Iris, should we change you now, or after selecting your stuff?" "It is already soiled again, so it would be very nice to have a clean diaper now." "OK, then we'll start with that." Iris's mother asked "Could I perhaps change her here, so you can give me some tips? It has been a long time for me." Mrs. Fletcher answered "That sounds like a good idea. Iris, do you agree?" Iris hesitated for a moment; she would rather be changed by Nanny, but she was going to have to get used to her mother doing that anyway, and it would be better if she knew what she was doing, so she agreed.

"Sabine, we'll go upstairs for a while, please call if there is anything; I'll leave the doors open." "OK mommy." Iris saw her friend was watching her with a sad look on her face. She must be realizing that Iris would soon leave them, but she seemed to want to put up a brave face and deal with it like a big girl. Iris wished there would have been a little time after her nap where they could play together one more time, but it hadn't turned out that way. So she followed the grown-ups to Sabine's room. Her mother got the tool to open her zipper, and proceeded to undress her, saying she really liked the

overalls. Then she helped her on to the changing table. Automatically Iris put her hands up, but her mother looked at Mrs. Fletcher questioningly. Nanny showed her the wrist straps, and then the waist strap, and explained that she did this with Iris the same way as with Sabine, so her daughter would not think that she was an exception. And also because Iris had a tendency to move her hands towards her crotch, especially when specific areas between her legs were touched.” So then her mother wrapped the Velcro straps around her daughter. Immediately Iris felt some discomfort about having her mother restrict her, and that must have shown on her face, because Mrs. Fletcher asked her mother to undo the straps again. “Iris, I saw you looked uncomfortable with this. Do you prefer not to be strapped in at the moment?” “I don’t know, I guess I just need a bit of time to learn to trust her more. Let’s try it again though, and see if I can get used to it. Perhaps it is a bit like a swimming pool, where the first dip is always cold, but once you get through it, it is nice.” “OK, let’s see if you can swim then” Nanny joked.

Iris held her hands at the right place again, and this time while her mother did the straps, Nanny told her to keep an eye on her daughter’s face. Now that Iris had experienced that, at least while Nanny was present, nothing would happen that she didn’t feel comfortable with, she allowed it, and even gave a little pull on the straps to verify that she was secure. “You see her pulling on the straps for a moment and then relax? That means she accepts it. Iris thought it was not so nice to talk about her as if she wasn’t present, and stuck her tongue out at Nanny. “And there you see the inner child being released.” Her mother seemed to like the change, and kissed her forehead briefly. Then she went to the business end, unsnapped the bodysuit, and started to pull down the plastic pants. “Wait a moment. With the diarrhea we don’t want any on your clothes, so let me get an apron. Please put on rubber gloves from that box on the shelf, because it might be a contagious bug that spreads via faeces.”

When her mother was all protected, she removed the plastic pants, and verified that they were clean when Nanny prompted her to. So those could be reused. Without the plastic pants the smell quickly became noticeable, and of course got a lot worse when the diaper opened. Nanny explained that Iris’s pee smell was pretty strong too, because of the UTI, but at that moment the other smell was too dominant to notice. Once the diarrhea cleared up, she should check the color and smell of the urine though, to see how the UTI was progressing. Then Mrs. Tomas quickly folded the diaper closed, reused the tapes to make a compact package, and dumped it in the diaper pail. Then she started cleaning the whole area with wipes. “At the moment we all try to use the toilet before getting a new diaper, in the hope that it takes a bit longer before it is soiled again. So you don’t have to clean too thoroughly now, because you’ll have to do it again after the toilet visit. Before today I tried to change Iris’s diaper every 2 to 3 hours, because of the bacteria in the urine. I think I would gradually start to lessen that slowly when the diarrhea is over, because the antibiotics should have at least weakened the bacteria by now, but I’ll leave that up to you. Changing is a bit easier with the pull-ups, but the diaper area still needs to be cleaned, and probably creamed to prevent a rash. But we’ll get to that after the toilet.”

Iris had gotten a bit impatient with all the explanations while she was lying there in the nude, so she started wiggling a bit. That made her mother laugh “she did exactly the same when she was still in diapers the first time.” Then she gave Iris a quick kiss on the stomach, and released her straps. Nanny warned “Little Iris is quite the escape artist, and always tests her restrictions, so I usually take her hand or her wrist to keep her close.” So her mother took her hand, but Iris didn’t think she needed to be belittled so much, so she started pulling on her hand to get loose. Her mother let go, but Nanny said “This is just little Iris being difficult, and thinking she is a big girl already. You can just take her wrist and hold it firmly. You can see it is still play for her, because there is no panic in her face. And she has the safeword now to stop you if you misjudge.” So her mother took her by the wrist and followed Nanny to

the bathroom. "At the moment Sabine likes to try and do her number two on the toilet, since she hates the poo in her diaper. So I put a strap on it to keep her there while I give her a bit of time. These last few days I have used it on Iris as well. After you click the buckle closed, you can lock it with this plastic key." "Oh yes, it is the same buckle as on the yellow rain jacket." "Exactly."

This was all pretty humiliating, the adults talking like she wasn't there, her being dragged around half-naked, and then locked on the potty like a child you couldn't leave alone for two seconds. But the treatment still felt like Nanny had done it before, and it was also enjoyable. Her mother seemed to be trying hard to make it work, and to Iris's own surprise it did. She wasn't sure how she'd feel about it back home, but for now her mother succeeded in making her feel safe and secure. But she was glad that the women left the bathroom, so she could concentrate on emptying her bladder and bowels for as far as she could. The poo wasn't as slushy anymore as in the morning, but still more like pea soup than like a sausage. And there still was gas mixed in between that caused that spraying. After a while she tried to wipe what she could, and then called 'Ready!'.

So her mother unlocked her, checked how she wiped, cleaned a bit more, and then took her wrist again to take her back to the table, where she was strapped down once more. A last round of wet wipes, and then she got the jar of cream from Mrs. Fletcher. She spread it over the area, and actually had a very soft touch on the sensitive area that hardly stimulated Iris. Then it was another Tena Youth, which she managed without help, although she obviously wasn't as practiced as Nanny. The plastic pants again, and the body snaps. But instead of releasing her from the table, she first put the overalls over her legs, released the waist strap, and pulled the overalls further up. Only then the hands were released one by one, and put through the straps. Then she was rolled over, and the zip was pulled up and the flap buttoned over it. Only then was she helped down from the table, and immediately her wrist was grabbed again.

Nanny said "That is an interesting order. I normally let them off the table first, and dress them while standing up, but this works well too, and the child has no chance to run off. Thank you for demonstrating it; I will see if that works with Sabine as well." Iris wasn't sure she liked this; it was like you were a baby that couldn't stand yet or cooperate, and allowed her even less chance for mischief. But it was also very relaxing, since she literally didn't have to do anything, like standing on one leg to step into whatever suit was chosen for her. Nanny explained "Whenever Iris wore a diaper here, I made sure that she couldn't reach it with the right clothes or locking plastic pants. I had some bad experiences with Sabine trying to remove excrement from it, and Iris is so sensitive between her legs at the moment that I wasn't completely sure that she would not start playing there, for instance when she was bored, and get pee on her hands. It probably wasn't necessary, but I preferred to be safe, also to make sure she didn't set a bad example for Sabine."

"Now, of course you cannot keep holding her hand or wrist all day long, so you could use her wrist strap. Slide it around her wrist, pull the Velcro tight, and close the buckle over it. If you lock the buckle, she had no chance to open the Velcro and pull it from her wrist. The other side, without that buckle, you put on your own wrist. The key is the same as you have used in the bathroom, and there is one on your wrist strap." Nanny explained. (see Figure 20 A wrist leash similar to Iris's) In the back of her mind Iris wasn't comfortable about this treatment, but she was fully in little mode, and so used to be treated that way that it didn't really register. And it was not like her opinion was asked.

"Imogen, when you say 'her wrist strap', do you mean that she actually owns it, or more like 'my wrist strap that she used'?" "She has actually earned it at the special needs store, where she got lost and the assistant gave it to her. It was not sellable because of a manufacturing issue: the wrist straps are not in the same color." Now Iris felt she had to set something straight "It wasn't me who got lost: my

phone rang, so I had to get it from my backpack and answer it, and the rest just walked on instead of waiting for me. It only took a few moments before we found each other again, but the mean salesman didn't like kids running free in the store, so he just put me in this wrist band without even asking!" Her mother replied "sure, dear. But it was still nice that you got to keep it. I'm sure it will prove useful."

Now Iris realized what was bothering her, and she quickly exclaimed "To make absolutely sure: this is not something that we will ever use in public!" "I understand. I promise I will not use it in public unless you agree beforehand. I understand that you agreed to be harnessed at the aquarium as well, so perhaps there are exceptions where you would be willing to accept it, but we'll see if anything comes up. But don't worry, I'm not going to put it on you every time we're going to the flea market and such. I know you would feel very embarrassed about it, but so would I: keeping older children on a leash isn't really accepted around here, unless of course they are special needs, so I would probably get a load of negative remarks too." Iris had never looked at it that way, and realizing that other adults might judge her mother for leashing her, or dressing her inappropriately for her age, gave her confidence that her mother wouldn't be inclined to misusing her trust. Impulsively she gave her mother a hug and thanked her. As sudden as her unrest came up, it had disappeared again, and she felt relaxed once more, and started playing with her wrist strap.

Nanny suggested it was time to start collecting things that they wanted to bring home with them. "Let's first start with the diapering. Of course the pull-ups and Tena Youth you already bought, but neither is really suited for the night, since the Tenas seem to leak. They seem to work well for the diarrhea though. Here are 2 of Sabine's thick diapers, and 2 of the white cotton-backed ones, so you at least have something for the first nights. Do you have any rubber gloves? No? You *can* do without, but you'll have to be very careful with what you touch, and wash thoroughly after every diaper change. Here, let me give you some of mine to get you started. How about wipes?" "I have a box of tissues that should do." "OK, but I advise you get some wet wipes as well; they make the cleaning a lot easier. How about diaper cream?" "Of course I don't have that, but I think I still have baby powder, and I guess Vaseline would do too?" "I understand they advise against baby powder nowadays, because inhaling it isn't good for the baby. I am not sure if it would be a problem for 'slightly' larger children" Nanny winked at Iris while she said that "I am quite happy with this cream though. The cheaper ones often smell like fish, but this is more herbal. But I'm sure Vaseline will work too. And you can borrow the plastic pants Iris is wearing as well."

Nanny continued "I think that covers the diapering supplies. Now let us to go to the spare bedroom to see about the clothes. I have several stacks of clothes that no longer fit Sabine, and so I have no use for them anymore. Since she has been growing so fast lately, most are in very good condition, so I didn't want to throw them away or just give them to a charity that probably wouldn't know what to do with them. And I haven't had an opportunity to find a good second home for them. So please borrow whatever you think you could use, for as long as you want." They had arrived in the room Iris had used, and she opened the cupboard. "Please choose anything from these three shelves, or perhaps just take everything and take your time to see what you want to use. You'd do me a pleasure by clearing out the shelves." Mrs. Tomas said "Oh, that is very generous. I guess it would be wonderful to have so many new clothes to choose from. What do you say, Iris? Shall we just take the lot, or are there things you know you don't want?" Nanny interrupted "why don't you think about it; then I'll check downstairs for the things that are in the laundry pile. And don't forget the sleeping bag; it's still on the bed. Just put everything you want to take on the bed too, and then we'll find some bags or boxes for you."

"So Iris, what shall we do? Do you want to go through the whole stack and see which you want? Or shall we just take everything, and let ourselves be surprised when you feel like wearing something from Sabine?" This was all going a bit fast for Iris. She had only recently started considering to perhaps

occasionally put on a diaper voluntarily, or perhaps wear these overalls when she was at home. And her pacifier when she was alone. But now suddenly she was diapered by her mother, locked in her clothes, and on a wrist leash, just when she thought she was permanently switching back to mature mode. "I'm not sure. This is all going a bit fast for me. I don't think there is anything I wore this past week that I definitely don't want to wear again. But as long as I don't need to wear anything against my will, I guess it would be nice to have a lot of choice. I don't really want to go through the whole stack, and see which might fit, and everything. So it would be either only taking what I have already worn, or everything. And since I believe Nanny is honestly glad if we would take it all, I think we should."

So they started taking the whole stacks out of the cupboard and put them on the bed. They had to synchronize their actions because the wrist leash wasn't long enough for one at the bed and the other one at the cupboard. So Mrs. Tomas suggested to remove the leash. This surprised Iris, but she agreed that it would be better to act maturely for the rest of the visit, so she agreed, and said "Thanks, you have already given me confidence that we can make this work." Then they cooperated in emptying the shelves. Mrs. Tomas wanted to look at the sleeping bag in more detail, so Iris showed her the hood with its chinstrap, the arms with the attached mittens, the zipper at the bottom, and the valve for inflating it.

Then Nanny came back from downstairs, with a few of the bodysuits Iris had worn, the floral jumpsuit with the arm straps that she wore to the waterfalls, and made a small tear in the leg (see Figure 79 black floral jumpsuit), the bunny jacket (see Figure 47_Sabine's old summer jacket) and the yellow rain jacket (see Figure 48 Sabine's old rain jacket). Looking at the bed, she concluded "I guess you are relieving me of the whole bunch? Great. Then I guess I'll add these all as well. I'll put the dirty laundry in this bag to keep it separate from the clean stuff. The pump for the sleeping bag is on the ground just to the right of the bed. I only have one pacifier strap, so I can't really miss that, but of course here is your pacifier." She removed it from the strap and put it in its little box. "Now let me see if you have everything. Yes, yes, and that too. Now where is the rain suit with the hearts? Ah yes, there it is. I think Iris has by now seen all the locking mechanisms, so you should be able to figure out how all the clothes work. Let me make a little set of keys and tools that are required. They come with every new purchase, so I have whole stacks of them." She disappeared, and Iris's mother tried the pump to check how the sleeping bag worked. She noticed you could reverse the pump too, to suck the air out again. Iris told her they always managed without, but it could take a while, so that might help.

Mrs. Fletcher was back quickly with a keyring, and Mrs. Tomas held out her hand to take them. "Are you OK with your mother getting the keys, Iris?" Iris nodded; it might be tempting to hold them herself, but that would defeat the whole purpose of wearing the locking clothes. And her mother had done a lot already today to earn her trust. "Now remember, the things that Sabine still wears are not here, like the vegan leather dress and the carebear onesie. And the jumpsuit from this morning I want to keep as well. Oh Iris, where are your bunny shortalls?" (see Figure 36 Kawaii bunny shortalls) "Oh, I don't know. I don't think I have seen them since that day at the aquarium." "Hmm, I'll look around." Nanny pondered, and she disappeared again. Iris was getting a bit tired, so she climbed up the bed and sat against the side in a corner that wasn't full of clothes. Her mother asked about the shortalls. "Well, when we were at the special needs store, at the clothing section Nanny made a joke by holding up this horribly childish pair of short overalls, with the bib made into a bunny face, and ears along the straps. But then Sabine loved them and wanted us both to have a pair, and they happened to be on the two-for-one sales rack, Mrs. Fletcher bought one for Sabine and gifted me the free other. And when we needed something for the aquarium that was convincing in making me look special needs, Nanny came up with these. I must admit they did a wonderful job."

It took a little longer before Nanny returned this time, and in the meantime Mrs. Tomas explored some of the clothes, and the closing mechanisms, trying out the keys. When she returned, Mrs. Fletcher triumphantly held up the shortalls and the green body that was part of the set. "Oh, those look adorable." Iris's mother exclaimed, "I wish I could have seen you two at the aquarium." Nanny got a thoughtful look on her face, and asked Iris "Would you mind if I show your mother the pictures we made there? I know I promised never to show them to anyone else but us three, but now your mother knows about it all anyway, would that be OK?" "I guess so, but just show them on your own phone. You can't send them to her. Mom, I also deleted them from my own phone. I just don't want to take any risk that someone else inadvertently sees them." "Oh, that is so sweet. Look at you two. Sabine could be your older sister like that! But I understand that you want to be careful with those, so even though I would love to have them, I will not ask for them."

When Mrs. Fletcher had come back, she didn't only carry the shortalls and body, but also a plastic bag. She put it on the bed, and said "Here are a few more things that they may or may not like. Just look at it at home, and give back what you don't want." Of course that made Iris both curious and anxious at the same time, but she didn't feel like getting up, so she let it go, and decided she'd find out soon enough. Nanny moved on to the next step "Now, let me find you something to put all this in. Here is the box that I stored the sleeping bag and the pump in. I guess there is enough room to put in at least one more stack." Iris added "the things that I own, like the shortalls, the pacifier and the wrist strap can go in the bag that Mom brought over that first Sunday." She got off the bed and suited the action to the word. Nanny remembered that she must still have the boxes from the special needs shopping trip, so she got two of those, which was enough for the diapers and the rest of the clothes.

When everything was packed, Mrs. Tomas suggested "why don't you two go down and say your goodbyes, then I'll put everything in the car." Mrs. Fletcher replied "Oh, that would be wonderful. Thanks. Iris, why don't you bring your own bag downstairs, there are a few more things from you there. So Iris took her bag, and Nanny took one of the boxes, and they went down the stairs. Nanny first opened the tent, let Sabine come out, and activated the restrictions on her jumpsuit. Now it hit Iris that this really was the end of her stay, and the time of the final goodbyes approached rapidly. Immediately her eyes started tearing up, and she hugged her friend, saying she had to leave very soon now. Sabine hugged her back, but asked her mother if she could give Iris her flask for the last time. Nanny looked at Iris, who nodded. So she went into the kitchen and came back with the familiar bottle. It wasn't filled with milk this time though. "Milk is not yet good for her tummy, so I used the sugar water." Nanny explained.

Sabine nodded, and steered Iris into the tent. There she sat on her knees, and handled Iris into the usual position with her head on Sabine's lap, and put the bottle to her mouth. And as always, she didn't let go of her friend until she had finished it all. In the meantime Mrs. Tomas came down with a box, looked around for a moment, and found her daughter in the tent. She looked a bit surprised at first, but then got a tender smile on her face. Nanny walked up to her and quietly explained "Because Iris needed to drink so much, and didn't always get around to it, I made her a bottle of milk, and Sabine really liked giving it to her, so it has become sort of a routine. Apparently Sabine wanted to do this as a goodbye, so I let them. Shall I help you load the car and let them have their moment? Sabine's jumpsuit limits her, and Iris has shown she can handle her like that if she unexpectedly would have a tantrum."

When they came back, and everything was in the car, Mrs. Fletcher got the remainder of the cranberry juice from the fridge, and the UTI medication. She explained that Iris was on a single tablet of pain medication now, three times a day, and of course the antibiotics as prescribed. "I don't know if you have anything against diarrhea, but I'm running out of Norit, with 12 pills per person each day, so I

can't miss much at the moment." "Oh, that isn't necessary. I'm sure we have some Immodium. You have done so much for Iris already, hosting her, feeding her, and even clothing and diapering her for nine days, taking such good care of her, managing to get her in touch with her inner child again, and even counselling us. And now you let us borrow all of those clothes! I must find a way to pay you back. Let me at least retribute you for the costs you made for her, like the entrance to the aquarium." "Don't you remember? You already paid for that the last time you were here. And for the rest we didn't do anything with admission cost. The little I spent on gas and parking costs I would also have spent without Iris. And you're doing me a favor by taking the clothes."

And Mrs. Fletcher continued "Actually I feel like I am the one who owes a debt to Iris. She came her to help me out and babysit Sabine, and that helped a lot. But she did so much more for us. For me it was wonderful to have someone to talk to, and she helped me out by testing some of Sabine's stuff, and get her to cooperate better. But what she did for Sabine I think I can never pay her back for. Not only was she a companion for her, and a playmate she could interact with on equal level, but that also stimulated Sabine to talk more, and she got better at it. She even practiced until she could say the 'r', so that she could pronounce Iris's name correctly. And, like I told you, we have started potty training. She has said several times that she wants to be a big girl now. After two years of dealing with her brain damage, I had accepted that she had made all the progress that could be expected, but now I have new hope. I don't know how I can ever repay that."

Now both mothers had tears in their eyes, and hugged. They saw that the girls were doing the same. Iris told her friend that she had such a great time, and she was so sad that she had to leave again. But they would call every day, and hopefully they would soon meet again. Sabine said she would miss her friend very much, but she should go home for her father – she still had one. That caused another flood of tears from Iris, and they hugged for a long time. Then she let go of her friend and went up to Mrs. Fletcher. "Nanny, I want to thank you so much for having me, and making me feel at home here. I don't know if I have ever had a week in my life that was more fun. And thanks so much for all the things you let me borrow, I'm sure we will make good use of them." Mrs. Fletcher interrupted "Please remember you can borrow them indefinitely, so don't go replacing them so you can give them back quickly, and make me store them again and try to find another worthy purpose for them."

Iris continued "OK, we will. And I am also very grateful for all the things you taught me and let me discover about myself. And for helping us improve our relationship." She thought for a moment, and then added "Oh, I'm sure that as soon as we leave here I remember so much more I should have thanked you for. But I'll call tomorrow, and tell you the rest. Of course I want to hear how you are doing, and how Sabine is progressing. But it's getting all jumbled in my head at the moment, and there is so much more in there that I want to say, but is not coming out. I guess I shouldn't keep my mother waiting; she probably wants to get back before rush hour. Anyway, a very big Thanks for everything I have forgotten now. And if you ever need someone to watch Sabine, please ask me first!"

Mrs. Fletcher still had tears in her eyes, and said that she felt the same way, and that there were so many things she was grateful for, and repeated many of the things she had already told Mrs. Tomas. "Let me make this absolutely clear though. You will *always* be welcome here, and we will *always* be happy to have you, whenever, and for as long as you want. It is hard to imagine that it has only been just over a week; you have such a big place in our hearts now, and it feels more like we have been together for months. It will be very strange and sad for us in the coming days, not having you around. I certainly would love to ask you to watch Sabine again, and perhaps if we plan another trip we could invite you along, or there might be another opportunity during the summer vacation to have you over for a few days. We'll see, but I'm sure we will be seeing a lot of each other in the coming time!" "Oh, I would really love all of that." Iris replied, and hugged Nanny really tight. Then she went over to Sabine

again, and hugged her one last time as well. Finally she turned to her mother, and said through her tears that they had better get going now.

She put the flask with the cranberry juice in her bag, and suddenly noticed her phone was still lying on the table, so she quickly got that and put in the bag as well, since she had no pockets on her clothes. Mrs. Tomas had already put the medication in her shoulder bag. Her mother put her arm around her shoulder, in a supportive way, and with a few more goodbyes they moved to the front door. There Iris put on her own denim jacket, hiding most of the Pooh characters on her overalls, and let her be taken to the car. The Fletchers followed them outside, with Nanny holding Sabine's hand. Iris went to the booster seat, and buckled up, without her mother prompting her. Then they drove off, and waved for as long as they could see each other. Then Mrs. Fletcher took Sabine back in, wondering if she did the right thing in introducing Maria to all the restrictions she had used with Iris. She concluded that they would probably work things out, but she was going to keep a close eye on Iris for the coming time anyway.

The end (for now).

Notes from the writer

This story is fully fictional, and any semblance to live persons is purely coincidental. The inspiration for the story came from a partially true story though, about a boy who is unjustly treated as mentally disabled. During part of his story an old classmate comes to stay with him to help out for a week, and gets so interested in the diapers and all the equipment that she begs to try out a diaper, and gradually more and more of his stuff. In the end she doesn't want to do without diapers and pacifier anymore, but her mother really likes the car seat she was put in, and gets one herself that the girl can't get out of, and she gets more than she bargained for. Though this was only a minor part of the boy's story, I really liked the idea so I borrowed it to create my own version.

The places in this story are real: there are towns in Oregon, USA, that are called Eugene, Thurston and Roseburg, and there really is a Picc-a-dilly flea market and an Edison Elementary School in Eugene, and the Oregon Coast Aquarium in Newport. There is no Roseburg Special Needs Superstore though. But all the details are partially researched online and partially made up, because although I visited a friend on the Oregon coast a few times, I only drove through Eugene once on my way to its small airport. So even though the descriptions of the parks, the aquarium, the waterfalls and so on should give you a fair idea of the actual places, not all details will be accurate – sometimes even on purpose to fit the story better.

Only a few days after I chose the name **Sabine**, I realized that her condition ABI is actually part of her name. Weird huh? And I hadn't realized that it is also the name of a story by Lord Grey on my site, either.

Because I set the story in the USA, I used the Imperial units for length (miles, yards, feet, inches), weight (pounds) and temperature (F). But for international readers I decided to also add a rough conversion to Metric units (meter, kilogram, C), although that of course is not from the characters in the story.

I want to thank several people for assisting me with this story: of course the writer of the story that inspired me to write this, and who prefers to stay anonymous. Then Der Klaus, an active contributor of stories for my website, for checking for inconsistencies and otherwise giving useful input, and also for making the German translation. Also my little 'niece' Debby for giving me the perspective of a young girl, and making several worthwhile suggestions. And several people across different forums who alerted me to inconsistencies and other imperfections, and offered suggestions and compliments.

Image credits

Instead of trying to describe all the equipment and such of Sabine in words, which I usually find hard to figure out in stories I read anyway, I decided to add pictures instead. Here I give more information on the images and where I found them. I have not requested permission from the copyright holders to use the pictures (with a few exceptions), but hope they don't mind me advertising for them. If anyone of them objects, please let me know and I will remove the picture. On the photos that contain people I did hide their faces. I also explain where the actual product deviates from what I describe in the story, as far as I can judge from the product descriptions online, not actually having ever seen most of the items.

Figure 1 Sabine's playpen	<p>This is the Pop 'n Go playpen tent, from the California Beach company, but that one is normally open at the top. I found a version of the tent that has netting over the top as well ('mosquito-free') which looks more inescapable: https://thebestplaypen.com/collections/exqline-full-bugs-proof-baby-playpen-upgraded. (Note that the exqline website itself no longer lists this product – perhaps a patent infringement?)</p> <p>I have no experience with the tent, and only know what I found online, but I exaggerated the dimensions and sturdiness of it, and that it can only be zipped from the outside.</p>
Figure 2 Sabine's bed	<p>This is a Kayserbetten safety bed, model Olaf: https://www.kayserbetten.eu/site/index.php/en_us/sonderanfertigungen-olaf.html. Sabine's bed is the 135cm high variant though, while the picture is of the 98cm version.</p>
Figure 3 A locking zipper	<p>Zipper brand YKK offers these locking sliders. On Aliexpress you can also find copies. Actual picture from: https://www.walmart.ca/en/ip/YKK-5C-Nylon-Key-Lock-Slider/PRD5IRE893REVHF</p>
Figure 4 Sabine's activity chair	<p>Rifton's Hi/Lo activity chair: https://www.rifton.com/products/special-needs-chairs/rifton-activity-chairs. In the story I mention the pads having memory foam, which is an artistic deviation from the actual product.</p>
Figure 5 Butterfly harness	<p>Rifton (Large) butterfly harness slimcut https://www.rifton.com/products/special-needs-chairs/rifton-activity-chairs?tab=accessories</p>
Figure 6 A detachable zipper pull	<p>Some Japanese jumpsuits for Alzheimer patients and other undressers use this to prevent the suits from being taken off by the wearer. The picture is from: https://item.rakuten.co.jp/futon/aqmk3300pi/. https://www.nihonangel.co.jp/products/medical_support/ has a similar solution, and also magnetic locking snaps.</p>
Figure 7 The exercise bike	<p>MaxKare Recumbent Exercise Bike Indoor Cycling Stationary Bike with Adjustable Seat and Resistance: https://www.amazon.com/MaxKare-Stationary-Adjustable-Resistance-Adjustment/dp/B07TXHYPTV</p> <p>Of course the real bike doesn't come with harness and straps.</p>
Figure 8 Iris's drop-side bed	<p>Paramount K600 bed https://www.paramount.co.jp/english/product/detail/index/10/17</p> <p>In the story I allow Iris to pull the side up without the double handgrip, which shouldn't be possible with the real bed.</p>
Figure 9 Night light	<p>https://www.glow.co.uk/3d-ceramic-lamp-moon.html</p>
Figure 10 Sabine's frilly jumpsuit	<p>From eBay auction: https://www.ebay.com/itm/NWT-Mini-Boden-Toddler-Girl-3-4-Pink-Frilly-Embroidered-Romper-Jumpsuit-/124194361332 (Link will function only a limited time) It is a toddler's jumpsuit, but I upsized it for Sabine.</p>
Figure 11 Sabine's green leather dress	<p>Teal Leather-Look Puff Sleeve Mini Dress https://www.newlook.com/uk/womens/clothing/dresses/burgundy-leather-look-puff-sleeve-mini-dress/p/670071667</p> <p>In the story I added attached lycra shorts underneath, buttons in the sleeves and a locking zipper. It should also be slightly longer (not too mini)</p>
Figure 12 Sabine's current car seat	<p>Diono Radian RTX car seat. Picture from: https://www.carousell.sg/p/diono-radian-rxt-car-seats-2-for-sale-bought-in-august-2018-202730292/ (Link might function only a limited time)</p> <p>In the story it is used in combination with the Merrit Buckle Guard – I know that doesn't work in reality since it is not quite an IMMI buckle.</p>

Figure 13 Sabine's harness, front	Crelling WRCP (Walking Rein with Chest Pad) harness. https://www.crelling.com/wrcp.html
Figure 14 Sabine's harness, back	In the story it also has wrist cuffs that can be attached, which I have found no sign of with the actual harness.
Figure 15 Merritt Buckle Guard	http://www.merrittcarseat.com/escape-proof/ for IMMI buckles
Figure 16 Merritt Chest Clip	http://www.merrittcarseat.com/escape-proof/ Should work with any harness with standard width straps.
Figure 17 The Merritt Roosevelt car seat	http://www.merrittcarseat.com/rooseveltcarseat/
Figure 18 Sabine's new Recaro car seat	RECARO Monza Nova 2 Reha (by Thomashilfen) car booster seat: https://www.thomashilfen.us/recaro-monza-nova-2-reha Picture from: https://www.adaptivemall.com/remoreadcars.html
Figure 19 The restaurant's Tripp Trapp chair	Stokke Tripp Trapp adjustable chair, with matching harness Picture from: https://www.prenatal.nl/slappen-en-thuis/kinderstoelen/kinderstoelen/stokke-tripp-trapp-1225.html Note that the actual harness is baby/toddler sized, so unlikely to have fitted Sabine and Iris.
Figure 20 A wrist leash Figure 21 Wrist strap magnetic buckle and 'key'	Chinese toddler wrist leash with magnetic lock. These actually fit a large range of wrist sizes, and are often listed for 1-12 year-olds, and some even fit adults. Often erroneously called induction lock, since it uses standard magnets, and no current is involved. Since almost all sellers use the same image, I'll not list the one I used these pictures from, but you can find them on Aliexpress, Amazon, eBay, etc.
Figure 22 Rain coveralls in Yellow, with matching boots	Chinese toddlers animal rain coveralls, pictures from: https://www.amazon.com/Unisex-Toddler-Waterproof-Rainsuit-Coverall/dp/B07K9VJQ7P For the story created a teenager sized version, and a closer-fitting version of the boots with zippers.
Figure 23 Regular overalls-jacket combo	https://www.drykids.co.uk/jackets-product/dry-kids-navy-pu-jacket-nem5b
Figure 24 Example of high overalls and jacket Figure 25 High overalls shoulder detail	The Farmerrain Embla suit: https://www.farmerrain.com/en/shop/trousers/embla-stall/ Note that for the story I replaced the snaps on the shoulders with buckles
Figure 26 Magnetic locking buckle	From writer's collection, bought from Aliexpress. Also available on eBay (https://www.ebay.co.uk/itm/1-Plastic-Handcuff-Key-Locking-Side-Release-Buckles-DIY-Paracord-Bracelet-Parts/353182997296)
Figure 27 Key-locking buckle	From writer's collection, bought from Aliexpress
Figure 28 High quality mittens	Farmerrain work mittens: https://www.farmerrain.com/en/shop/work-glove/arbetsvante/ In the story I replaced the snap on the elastic wrist band with a button to make them harder to undo.
Figure 29 Key for magnetic lock	Key for the magnetic snaps of the Japanese company Angel https://www.nihonangel.co.jp/products/medical_support/ . Picture by Lord Grey. Just a regular magnet but in an easy holder.
Figure 30 Patient safety mittens	Infant and Child Hand Control Mittens: https://www.rehabmart.com/product/infant-and-child-hand-control-

	mittens-38271.html Very similar to other patient mittens, like those from Posey.
Figure 31 Magnetic lock fist mittens	Fist mittens from the straitjacket shop, mostly meant for AB/DL: https://www.etsy.com/listing/693198714/pink-soft-polar-fleece-safety-mittens uses Segufix magnetic locks.
Figure 32 leather mittens with fox embroidery	Adult baby leather mittens from: https://adult-baby-shop.eu/product_info.php?products_id=784
Figure 33 Fist mittens with paws	Petplay leather fist mittens from: https://www.etsy.com/sg-en/listing/731269066/genuine-leather-bondage-locking-padded
Figure 34 Lock tongue buckle	picture from: http://zenbackpacking.net/BackpackSecurity-LockingUpBackpack.htm
Figure 35 Set of heart-shaped padlocks	Set of cheap heart-shaped locks, widely available. (search for example on eBay or Aliexpress) Actual picture from: https://shopee.com.my/amp/1X-Mini-Gold-Metal-Heart-Shape-Padlock-Key-Tiny-Suitcase-Crafts-Lock-Set-Lovers-Heart-Locks-i.162168839.7710063882
Figure 36 Kawaii bunny shortalls	You can find these Chinese-made shortalls at several places (e.g. eBay). The picture comes from Aliexpress: https://www.aliexpress.com/i/4000722365285.html The hood in the story stems from my imagination, although there are also some shortalls and skirtalls that have them, like https://kawaiiibabe.com/products/baby-bear-dress - also very cute. I also moved the zipper from the side to the back.
Figure 37 A special needs stroller	Baby Trend Expedition EX Double Jogger Stroller – Griffin: https://www.target.com/p/baby-trend-expedition-ex-double-jogger-stroller-griffin/-/A-79926210 This actual stroller is not for special needs and I'm sure would not hold two teenagers, so I used my imagination there.
Figure 38 Mummy sleeping bag	Therm-a-Rest Space Cowboy summer sleeping bag Picture from: https://www.outsideonline.com/2341506/best-backpacking-sleeping-bags
Figure 39 Carebear costume Grumpy Bear	Carebear costume of Grumpy bear, with attached hood and mittens, and back zipper. The shoe covers are separate. https://www.fun.com/care-bears-deluxe-grumpy-bear-costume.html Note that the normal costume doesn't have Velcro straps around the wrists, and the socks from the story are actually shoe covers.
Figure 40 Sabine's swing hammock	Swingz n thingsz Special Needs Chair: https://swingz.com.au/special-needs-chair
Figure 41 Sabine's garden harness	Singing Rock Zaza Kids Full Body Harness https://www.ropesgear.com/products/singing-rock-zaza-kids-full-body-harness This harness is actually for smaller kids than Sabine.
Figure 42 Sabine's old rain coveralls	'Yuding 70-120CM Cartoon Raincoat Overall Children Kids Baby Rain Coat Boys Girls Painting Clothes Playful Waterproof Rainsuit' from: https://www.aliexpress.com/item/4000786975154.html Sized it up for the story and added a zipper. (Only rain suit I have found until now that closes at the back. Pretty sure it will not be comfortable in the rain though, when it starts seeping in between the snaps.)

Figure 43 Sabine's old rain boots	Stephen Joseph Girls' Rain Boots, from https://www.amazon.com/Stephen-Joseph-Girls-Rain-Boots/dp/B07JY64JPW
Figure 44 Patient restraint straps	Pinel Medical restraint system: https://www.pinelmedical.com/limb-cuff Note that this system is quite similar to Segufix, but that isn't available in the USA. For the story I didn't use the crotch strap or the shoulder straps in the picture.
Figure 45 Patient safety jumpsuit	Arzberger Ar-tex patient safety jumpsuit https://www.arzberger-textil.de/Katalog%20-%20Shop/Funktionsoveralls (in German only) With the actual jumpsuits the zipper connecting the legs only runs along the lower legs; for the story I extended it to along the whole leg. (But you could probably get that from the webstore as custom work as well.)
Figure 46 Sabine's culotte dress	Girls Statement Collar Floral Print Capri Jumpsuit https://www.shein.com/Girls-Statement-Collar-Floral-Print-Capri-Jumpsuit-p-2083016-cat-2007.html
Figure 47 Sabine's old summer jacket	Girl Lovely Denim Zipper Cartoon Embroidery Rabbit Ears Hooded 3D Printing Coat, https://www.amazon.com/Lovely-Zipper-Cartoon-Embroidery-Printing/dp/B07ZZGRJK7
Figure 48 Sabine's old rain jacket	Fleece Lined Rain Coat, https://poshmark.com/listing/Fleece-Lined-Rain-Coat-5bba1226df0307df50b5a01a (no longer available) actual item is toddler sized.
Figure 49 The two person bike	Toogether Standaard duo bike https://www.nijland.com/producten/toogether-standaard/ (actual picture from the 'Toogether Elektrisch' because it shows the footstraps)
Figure 50 Sabine's denim jumpsuit before modifications	NBA patches denim jumpsuit https://www.depop.com/products/klinker7-nba-patches-denim-jumpsuit-soooooo/ (probably the link will only work a limited time) Sabine's version I gave a locking zipper.
Figure 51 Hello Kitty bib	Forever 21 HELLO KITTY red overalls dress: https://ar.pinterest.com/pin/700732023253906942 (no longer available) For Iris I changed these into (pants) overalls.
Figure 52 Black short unitard	Speise Adult Dance Gymnastic Unitard Turtleneck https://www.aliexpress.com/i/33001246985.html
Figure 53 Sabine's over-the-head jacket	ASOS DESIGN over the head rain jacket in marble print https://www.asos.com/asos-design/asos-design-over-the-head-rain-jacket-in-marble-print/prd/10633765 Sabine's version I gave an extra crotch strap against taking it off, comparable to a crotch strap on a life jacket.
Figure 54 Sabine's Princess Onesie	Disney Princess Girls Onesie Ultimate Kids Fleece All in One Pyjamas https://www.amazon.co.uk/Disney-Princess-Onesie-Fleece-Pyjamas/dp/B08HQXLR7D/ref=sr_1_38 For the story I made larger than is normally available.
Figure 55 Back zipper + button onesie	large Ladies sleepsuit with zip in back onezee Sensory, Autistic. https://www.ebay.co.uk/itm/large-Ladies-sleepsuit-with-zip-in-back-onezee-Sensory-Autistic/174497169157?hash=item28a0d77f05:g:nTwAAOSwSatfma-M

	<p>(the link will only work a limited time, but otherwise look at seller https://www.ebay.co.uk/usr/touchyfeelyhandmade)</p> <p>Used to demonstrate how the Princess onesie was adapted in the back; not an actual princess onesie.</p>
Figure 56 Sabine's utility jumpsuit	<p>Utility Jumpsuit - Khaki Green https://www.alyssandra.com/utility-jumpsuit-khaki-green/ Only added a small tab in the back to protect the zipper pull for the story.</p>
Figure 57 Sabine's hearts rain suit	<p>Hatley Colour Changing Sweethearts Raincoat and pants (no longer available) https://www.pinterest.com/pin/233765036894047914/ https://www.pinterest.com/pin/233765036894047601/ For the story I made the pants overalls. They go up to size 12, so no need to exaggerate the size.</p>
Figure 58 Pink Toddler harness	<p>“Child Kid Leash Backpack Harness For Toddlers Anti Lost Wrist Cuff With Lock Anti Lost Belt” https://www.aliexpress.com/item/4000258883511.html Note that these harnesses are often so big that one will probably fit someone like Iris. A similar one I have has a maximum 29” (73cm) chest. The locking buckle on the parent side is made up for the story, although I have seen a few requests for that in reviews.</p>
Figure 59 Sabine's all-terrain stroller	<p>All Terrain/Special Needs Stroller by Kool Stop http://www.specialneedsstroller.com/</p>
Figure 60 Iris's bib	<p>Practical baby bib in soft & comfy plastic BABYBJÖRN (color no longer available): https://www.pinterest.com/pin/358036239099766550/ Obviously exaggerated the size to make it suitable for teenage girls.</p>
Figure 61 Mary Jane shoes	<p>Classic Mary Jane shoes (Lolita style) https://www.ebay.com/itm/Womens-Lolita-Leather-JK-Uniform-Shoes-Mary-Janes-Flats-Shoes-Retro-Round-Toe-/123733788471 (eBay auction, so link will function only a limited time) The locking feature was added for the story.</p>
Figure 62 Sabine's straw hat	<p>Rollup Straw Sun Visor Foldable Wide Brim Travel Hat https://www.desertcart.ae/products/294509514</p>
Figure 63 Iris's straw hat	<p>Sandra Girls Straw Hat, by Lipodo https://www.hatshopping.com/Sandra-Girls-Straw-Hat-by-Lipodo.html</p>
Figure 64 Oregon Coast Aquarium map	<p>The map from the aquarium's official site: https://aquarium.org/exhibits/</p>
Figure 65 - Figure 68, Figure 71, Figure 73	<p>Pictures of the animals from https://aquarium.org</p>
Figure 69 Sabine's velvet choker	<p>Velvet choker 34-40cm, 1cm wide https://www.misstella.com/jewelry/velvet-choker-34-40cm-1cm-wide-j04375/si/47454</p>
Figure 70 Moon Jellyfish	<p>moon jellyfish https://childfreelifeadventures.com/oregon-coast-summer-2018-lincoln-city-newport-and-pacific-beach/</p>
Figure 72 Anti-spitting	<p>Protector Full Face Hat Visor Shield Cover Anti Spitting Saliva Dustproof Detachable Facial Transparente Mask Hat for Kids https://www.aliexpress.com/item/4000904713088.html (Indubitably a visor to protect from others' spit, because of Corona, but of course it works the other way around as well.)</p>

Figure 74 Disney's Finding Dory onesie	<p>Disney's Dory onesie https://poshmark.com/listing/Disneys-Dory-onesie-by-Disney-extra-small-6035462809d7607556300f34</p>
Figure 75 Pacifier strap	<p>Leather AB/DL Maxi Locking Pacifier Holder Gag https://www.subspaceleathers.com/leather-abdl-maxi-locking-pacifier-holder-gag-112-p.asp</p>
Figure 76 High Chair with Tray	<p>Keekaroo Height Right Chair https://www.pinterest.com/pin/39969515419540460 The real chair probably wouldn't allow the tray to be used with a 13-year-old, and the latching mechanism in the story is my invention too.</p>
Figure 77 Mother & Daughter overalls	<p>Flare overalls https://denimology.com/2014/10/frame-denim-le-high-flare-overalls</p>
Figure 78 Bath cuffs	<p>SITS - Suction Hand Cuffs https://www.amazon.co.uk/Sex-In-the-Shower-ESS960-04/dp/B002LVV3Y8</p>
Figure 79 black floral jumpsuit	<p>Girls Black Floral Cold Shoulder Crop Jumpsuit https://www.newlook.com/uk/girls/clothing/playsuits-and-jumpsuits/girls-black-floral-cold-shoulder-crop-jumpsuit/p/629738109 Put zipper in the back, with buttoned tab, and made it a bit tighter.</p>
Figure 80 Anti-theft Fanny Pack	<p>Cali Crusher 100% Smell Proof Fanny Pack w/Combo Lock https://www.amazon.com/Cali-Crusher-Smell-Proof-Fanny/dp/B07SNGJYGF</p>
Figure 81 Bucklesafe	<p>Pacsafe Bucklesafe https://www.bol.com/nl/p/pacsafe-bucklesafe-slot-voor-bovenlader-rugzak/9200000062763295/ Note that the Bucklesafe doesn't seem to be produced anymore, and is getting very hard to find.</p>
Figure 82 Locking Bracelet	<p>Love Heart Lock Stainless Steel Bracelet with Key Pendant Necklace There are a lot of sellers and models and colors on eBay, Aliexpress etc. who all use the same images, so instead of linking to a specific offer, just search there for something like 'steel heart bracelet key' Note that these steel bracelets are actually pretty sturdy, and suitable for concealed restraint, although the locking mechanism of course is rather primitive.</p>
Figure 83 Imogen's party jumpsuit	<p>PBJK's Designs Girls Jumpsuit 6x-12 https://pattern-walk.com/product/pbjks-designs-girls-jumpsuit-size-6x-12-uncut-sewing-pattern/ For ready-made jumpsuit for women that is very similar: take a look at: http://www.cameoappearancevintage.com/shop/90s-floral-jumpsuit</p>
Figure 84 Mrs. Fletcher's Corduroy Overalls	<p>SHEIN Frill Trim Pocket Front Cord Overalls https://www.shein.com/Frill-Trim-Pocket-Front-Cord-Overalls-p-1961642-cat-1860.html</p>
Figure 85 Iris's personalized pacifier	<p>Unicorn customized pacifier https://elycecreation.com/produit/tetine-licorne-korriganne/</p>