

Staying Home



SALLY NICHOLLS VIVIANE SCHWARZ

*To Tom, Peter and Robin – my companions in chaos.
I couldn't have asked for nicer people to be isolated with. – Sally*

To my neighbours. – Viv

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Staying Home



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Emily, Harry and Charlie are staying home today.

Emily is not going to school.

Harry and Charlie are not going to nursery.

Mummy and Daddy are not going to work.



They wash their paws before they eat.

You:



*Rub
your hands
together.*



*Wash
the backs
of your hands.*



*Make two fists
and rub them
together.*



*Make a wiggly
hedgehog with
your fingers.*



*Rub your fist
around
your thumb.*



*Wash your
fingertips.*

Hurray!

*You have to keep washing for as long as it takes to
sing “Happy birthday!” twice.*

Emily sings
“Happy birthday,
Mr Poo!”

Harry sings
“Happy birthday,
Stinky Bottom!”



When Charlie wakes up,
they all watch a film.



Emily and Harry play a computer game while Daddy and Charlie cook dinner. Emily is cross because Harry isn't sharing. "It's my turn!" she says. "I'm not finished!" says Harry. Emily tries to snatch the computer. Harry starts to cry.



Daddy comes through from the kitchen. "You know," he says. "Sometimes it's hard being together like this. I know we annoy each other sometimes. But aren't you glad we've got each other?"

“I know how to
cheer us up,”
Daddy says.
“Let’s do some
exercise!”



Then dinner is ready.

“Why did people start getting sick?” says Emily.

“Well, we get new illnesses all the time,” says Mummy. “Mostly it’s just a new type of cold. But sometimes it’s something more serious.”

It’s nobody’s fault.

It’s just something that happens.”



After dinner, Mummy and Daddy clean the table and sideboards with bleach. They wipe the doorknobs and light switches.



“That’ll kill that silly virus,” says Emily.



Mummy comes in to say goodnight.

“Is everyone staying home?” says Emily.

“Not everyone,” says Mummy.

“But lots of people in countries all over the world.

And of course, some people are working.

They’re looking after people who are sick, or trying to find new medicines.

They’re driving lorries and delivering post and growing crops and putting out fires.”



“I wish I were a fire fighter,”

says Emily.

“Perhaps,” says Mummy.

“But what we’re doing is just as important. We’re saving lives too.”

Mummy and Daddy kiss Emily and Harry
and Charlie goodnight.
Outside their window, the stars are shining.
The streets are quiet.
People go from house to house, delivering food
and checking on their neighbours.
And in the houses, people are waiting.
They're not going out.
They're not seeing their friends.
They're staying at home...



...until everything is safe again.