



Barnaby Bear **and the Volcano Belly**

A read-aloud with a question on every page

By Aashif Shaikh

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Barnaby Bear and the Volcano Belly

Proof edition, 2026. Not for sale.

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How this book was made. This is a test run of THE 2026 AUTHOR BLUEPRINT. The story was drafted with AI, then line-edited for rhyme, logic, and meaning under the author's direction (every change is logged in the manuscript). The illustrations are original vector art created with AI assistance under the author's direction.

A note on feelings. This story offers simple calm-down ideas for young children. It is not a substitute for professional support. If big feelings often feel unmanageable, talk with your child's doctor or a counselor.

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*For every little one with a big feeling,
and every grown-up who kneels down
beside them.*



Barnaby Bear lived deep in the pines,
Where sunlight dripped gold through the vines.
Most days his heart felt soft as moss,
But some days his temper got tangled and tossed.

ASK Have you ever felt happy one moment and grumpy the next?



His sister Pip snatched his pinecone toy,
The one he twirled with such careful joy.
His paws grew tight. His cheeks turned pink.
Something hot rose up. He couldn't think.

ASK What happens in your body when something upsets you?



Deep in his belly, a rumble began,
Low as a drum and as hot as a pan.
It bubbled and simmered and hissed as it grew:
His Volcano Belly was ready to spew!

ASK What does your volcano belly feel like: warm, tight, or shaky?



His paws balled up. His breath came fast.
Steam puffed from his ears in a whistling blast.
"GIVE IT BACK!" he wanted to roar,
As sparks skipped over the forest floor.

ASK What words or sounds come out when you feel this way?



He opened his mouth to let it fly,
A roar so loud it could shake the sky.
But just before the fire burst out,
A soft voice said, "Wait. Let's work this out."

ASK What do you think happens next?



Grandma Bear knelt down by his side.
"I see your volcano is bubbling inside.
Let's cool those rocks before they blow.
Come, little one. I know where to go."

ASK Who helps you when your feelings get big?



"Picture this river, cool and blue,
Flowing slow, the way we can too.
Breathe it in and let it flow through:
In through your nose, then out, slow and true."

ASK Can you take a slow breath in through your nose right now?



Barnaby breathed in the cool river air,
And held it a moment, without a care.
Out it went, slow as the tide,
And the rumble inside began to subside.

ASK Try breathing in for three counts, then out for three. How does it feel?



"Now count the stones along the shore:
One, two, three, and a few more.
Each number cools a fiery spark
And turns hot orange back to dark."

ASK Can you count five things you see around you right now?



One pebble, two pebbles, three in a row,
The fire in his belly burned soft and low.
Four pebbles, five, and the rumbling grew still,
Like rocks settling down at the foot of a hill.

ASK What could you count when your belly feels hot?



Grandma poured tea, warm and honey-sweet.
"Sip it slow. Feel your paws. Feel your feet.
Let the warmth spread soft and wide,
And melt the last of the fire inside."

ASK What warm, cozy things help you feel better?



The rocks stopped tumbling. The smoke drifted thin.
A garden of calm bloomed softly within.
His paws unclenched. His breath felt light.
Barnaby's belly felt cozy and right.

ASK How does your body feel once the big feeling passes?



He found his sister beneath the tree.
"I'm sorry I roared. Can we share, you and me?"
Pip said, "Sorry I grabbed it. Here, let's share!"
They twirled it together, a happy pair.

ASK Is there someone you could say sorry to today?



Every creature, big or small,
Feels a volcano rise and fall.
It's okay to feel the heat.
What you do next makes the ending sweet.

ASK What is one way YOU could cool your volcano belly next time?



So when your belly starts to rumble and roar,
Remember the river, the stones, and more.
Breathe deep, count slow, sip something warm.
You are the calm inside every storm.

ASK Can you practice your breathing right now, just for fun?

Barnaby's Calm-Down Tools

When your volcano belly starts to rumble, try one of Grandma Bear's three tricks.



1. The River Breath

Breathe in through your nose for 3. Breathe out slowly for 3. Picture a cool blue river.

1 2 3 4 5



2. The Stone Count

Look around and count 5 things you can see. Each number cools a spark.



3. Warm and Cozy

Sip something warm, wrap up in a blanket, and feel your feet on the floor.



My Calm Plan

Fill this in with a grown-up. Keep it somewhere you can see it.

When my volcano belly rumbles, my body feels

It usually happens when

☐

I can breathe like the river

☐

I can count

☐

I can ask for help.

☐

Something cozy that helps me:

Draw Your Volcano Belly

What does it look like inside you?



When it rumbles



When it's calm

For Grown-Ups

Anger is a normal feeling. What children are still learning is what to do with it. Barnaby's story gives your child a picture (the volcano), words for what their body is doing, and three tools they can practice.

- **Name it.** "Your volcano belly is rumbling" gives a big feeling a name without shame.
- **Kneel down, like Grandma.** A calm grown-up nearby helps a child's body settle. Stay close before you teach.
- **Practice when calm.** Try the River Breath and Stone Count at bedtime, so they are easy to reach for in a hard moment.
- **Use the questions.** Each page has one. There are no wrong answers; the goal is talking.
- **Repair together.** Barnaby and Pip both say sorry. Model that repair is something everyone does.

These are general ideas, not professional advice. If your child's big feelings often feel unmanageable or unsafe, talk with their doctor or a counselor.

Barnaby's Breathing Card

Breathe in

1 · 2 · 3

Breathe out

1 · 2 · 3

Do it three times. You are the calm inside every storm.

THE END

About This Edition

This proof was produced as a first-user test of THE 2026 AUTHOR BLUEPRINT: niche validated (emotional regulation for ages 4 to 8), story drafted with AI, a human-in-the-loop line edit, then layout and illustration at KDP's 8.5 x 8.5 in picture-book trim. It shows the workflow end to end; it is not yet a published title.