



WHEN DAD WAS AWAY

by Liz Weir

Illustrated by Karin Littlewood

Published by Janetta Otter-Barry Books
at Frances Lincoln

5th July 2012 ISBN 9781845079130 £11.99

“More children experience the imprisonment of a parent than the divorce of a parent, and the number of children with a parent in prison each year has risen from 160,000 a

decade ago to 200,000 in 2012. This is around two and a half times the number of children in care, and over six times the number of children on the Child Protection Register (26,000).

Prisoners’ children are the hidden victims of crime, and feel that they serve a ‘hidden sentence’ and carry the stigma of their parent’s crimes. They come from all walks of life, but losing a parent to prison, and having a parent who is an offender, can be traumatic and lonely. It is a story that is seldom told, and often told badly.

*It is wonderful that Frances Lincoln Children’s Books have published two books that sensitively and realistically echo the experience of children with a parent in prison: Rachel Billington’s novel **Poppy’s Hero**, and a picture book for younger children, **When Dad Was Away**.”*

– Andy Keen-Downs, Chief Executive of the Prison Advice and Care Trust

When Day Was Away, a unique picture book written by a former librarian and acclaimed storyteller with wide experience of prison visiting and the families of prisoners, is a gentle and sensitive story showing how one family comes through a difficult time of separation.

When Mum tells Milly that Dad has been sent to prison, Milly feels angry and confused. She can't believe her dad won't be at home to read her stories and make her laugh. But soon Mum takes Milly and her brother Sam to visit Dad in prison, and a week later a special package arrives at home - a cd of Milly's favourite animal stories, read especially for her by Dad. At Christmas the family go to a party at the prison, and in the spring there's an even better surprise for Milly and Sam...

LIZ WEIR is a professional storyteller and writer from Northern Ireland. Formerly children's librarian for the city of Belfast, she now works extensively in schools and prisons, and travels the world telling stories to adults and children. Weir is the author of two collections of stories for children, *Boom Chicka Boom* and *Here, There and Everywhere*. She has presented 'The Gift of the Gab', a storytelling series for BBC Radio Ulster.

KARIN LITTLEWOOD is an award-winning author and illustrator who studied Graphic Design at Northumbria University, followed by an MA in illustration at Manchester Metropolitan University. She has been nominated three times for the Kate Greenaway Medal, and also gives workshops and performances in schools, libraries and book festivals across the UK. Her titles for Frances Lincoln are *The Colour of Home*, *Catherine's Story*, *Home Now* and *Home for Christmas*. Karin lives in London.



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