LENA & KAI
On the Case

1

The Lost Brick

5S for Kids

Less searching. More play!



Written by Marek Dabrowski

LENA & KAI

On the Case

The Lost Brick

5S for Kids

Less searching. More play!

Book 1

Written by Marek Dabrowski

Hedgehog had a picnic to get to.
There was just one problem.
A river.

“My sandwiches are over there,”
said Kai in Hedgehog’s voice.



Lena stretched a blue scarf
across the mat.

“Then we’ll build you a bridge.”




Lena built the supports.
Kai started the steps.
Between the supports was a gap.
Lena held up a short brick.


"Too short. We need a long one."
"The red one?" asked Kai.
"I know where it is!"

Detective Lena was on the case.
Lena looked in the blue box.
Then the basket.
Then the blue box again.





Kai searched the tub by the shelf.

"Back and forth! A new record!"

A small creature held up
a zigzag of red thread.

"Max Zigzag," he announced, with a bow.





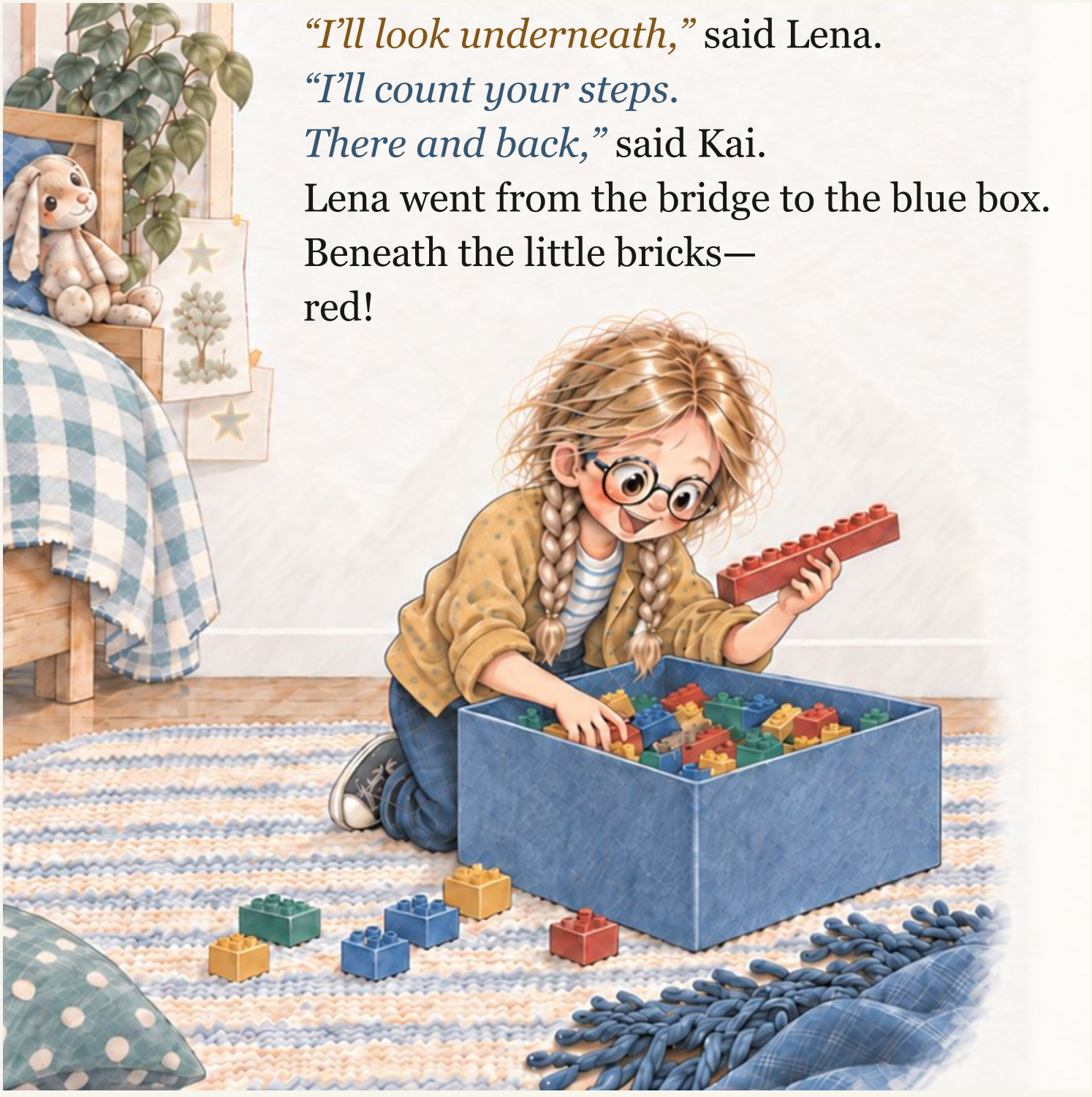
"Shoo!" Lena hurried after him.
Max ducked behind the basket.
"Did that help?" asked Kai.
Lena looked at the gap in their bridge.
"No."

Kai pointed into the boxes.

"Long bricks here. And here."

"Under everything else," said Lena.





“I’ll look underneath,” said Lena.
“I’ll count your steps.
There and back,” said Kai.
Lena went from the bridge to the blue box.
Beneath the little bricks—
red!

She brought it back.

"Twenty-four," said Kai.

Lena wrote the number in her notebook.

Then she fitted the brick across the gap.



Hedgehog reached the first step.
"Nearly there," said Kai.
"We still need long bricks for the steps."
He looked in the basket. Then the tub.



He put Hedgehog down.

"I wanted to build. I'm still looking."

Lena sat beside him.

"Me too."




Kai picked up an empty tray.
"What if the long bricks lived together?"
"Here," said Lena. "Where we build."

They found a place beside the mat
that they could both use.
Lena opened her notebook.
"Detective's guess: I think I'll take fewer steps to get the next long brick."




They checked all three containers.
Lena lifted.
Kai looked underneath.

Long bricks went on the tray,
where both children could see them.
The other pieces stayed for other ideas.
At last, the tray was ready.
"Shall we try?" asked Kai.




Lena started beside the bridge, just as before.
This time, she could see a long brick on the tray.
One step to get it.
One step back.

"Two," said Kai.

Lena fitted the brick into the steps.

No trip to the blue box.

Or the basket.

Or the tub.




"Twenty-four before. Two this time."
Lena wrote:
"Twenty-two fewer steps!"
Check the clues
Before: 24 steps
This time: 2 steps
24 - 2 = 22

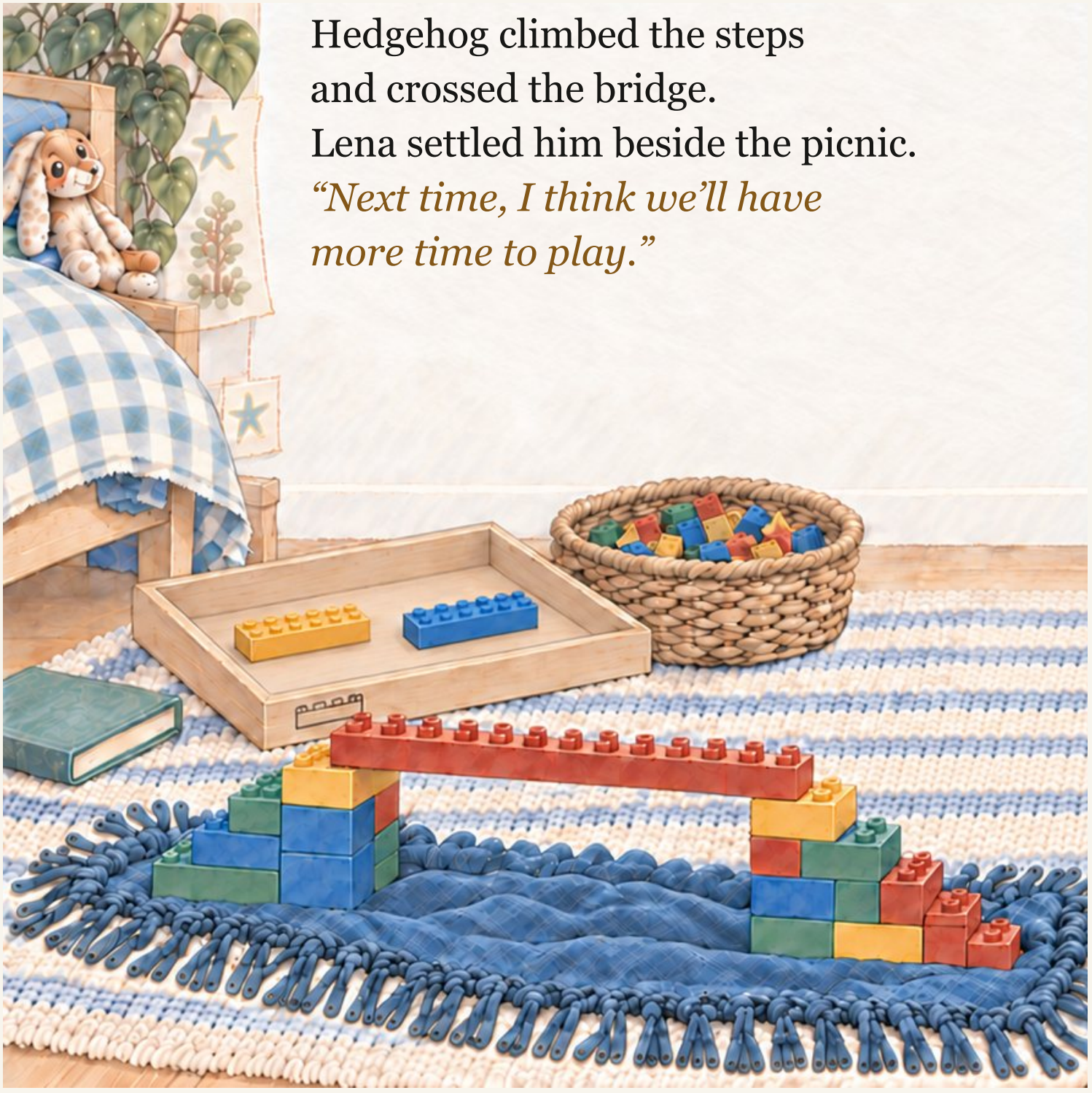

Nearby, Max had shrunk.
He held up a tiny length of thread.
"A very small record," he muttered.
Kai picked a brick from the tray
and finished the steps.
"Your bridge is ready, Hedgehog."


"Let's keep their home here," said Kai.
Lena drew a long brick on the tray.
"One home for the long ones," she said.
Behind them, Max packed up his thread.

"When we take the bridge apart, they can come back here."

"We'll see how it works next time," said Kai.





Hedgehog climbed the steps
and crossed the bridge.
Lena settled him beside the picnic.
*“Next time, I think we’ll have
more time to play.”*

“And more time for sandwiches,”
said Kai in Hedgehog’s voice.
He offered Lena an imaginary one.
She took a very big bite.



A Home for Your

Five ideas to try together,



Sort

Choose what you need.

Keep useful things nearby.
Save other things for other ideas.



Set in Order

Give it a handy home.

Put things where you can find them and reach them.



Shine

Keep it clean and ready.

Try it yourself: clean your things and their space when needed.

For grown-ups: These five practices are called SS.
The story explores a useful home for materials.

Next Adventure

wherever you play or create.

Standardize

Agree where things go.

Make a simple plan together so you both know where things belong.



Sustain

Keep it working for you.

Try your plan next time.
If it stops helping, change it together.



Meet Max Zigzag

Max loves extra trips to find things.
He never hid the brick.
A handy home meant less searching.
Running, dancing, and playing are not waste!



Max represents unnecessary movement, or motion waste.
One successful try does not prove a plan will always work.



Case File

Your Next Adventure

Choose something you want to do. Investigate with someone you like playing with.
Draw, write, or tell your ideas.

1 Our mission

What do you want to do?

2 Look for clues

What made it hard?
Watch what happens when you need your things.

3 Guess & try it

Choose one change to try.
Detective's guess: I think…

Optional: Count Your Steps

Count one trip to get something AND return.
Try your change. Count again for a similar thing.
Same person. Same starting place.

4 Check the clues

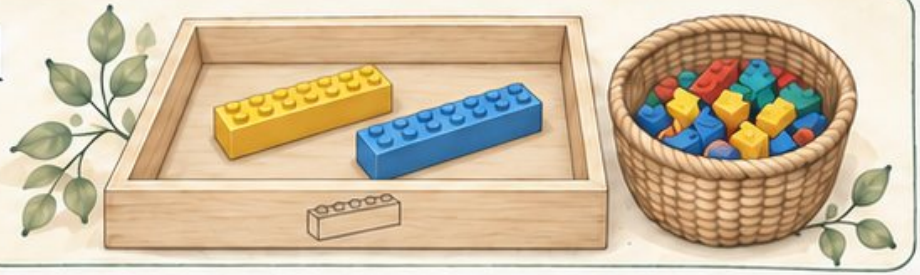
What happened? Was it easier, the same, or harder?
What did you notice?

5 Our next move

What will you keep? What will you change or try next?

Detective's Tool

Give it a home where you use it.



Before: _____ steps. After: _____ steps.

☐ ____ fewer steps ☐ the same ☐ ____ more steps

What else changed? _____

FOR GROWN-UPS & YOUNG DETECTIVES

A little less searching. A little more play.

Hedgehog wanted a picnic. Lena and Kai wanted to build. A handy home for their bricks helped them get back to their adventure.

---

01 **Start with something your child wants to do.**

Build a den? Draw a dragon? Ask what gets in the way, then watch together. Let your child help choose the change.

---

02 **Make a guess. Try one small change.**

Give one useful thing a home near the action. Compare the same task before and after. If you count steps, include the whole trip there and back.

---

03 **Follow the clues, even when they surprise you.**

Fewer steps? The same? More? Setting up takes effort too. Ask whether the change helped. Keep it, improve it, or try another idea.

The story's 24 and 2 steps are examples, not a target. Your own result is the clue that matters.

Running, dancing, resting and playing are not waste.

ONE CASE SOLVED. MORE TO EXPLORE.

What will you notice next?

Lena & Kai: On the Case | A 12-book series

THE NEXT CASE / BOOK 2

Who's Ready?

Ready to go… or still waiting? Lena and Kai look for a way to see who is ready.

03 **The Backpack That Forgot Nothing**
Can a good routine make room for a calmer morning?

04 **The Help Signal**
A signal is only the start. What happens when help arrives?

05 **The Lid That Wouldn't Fit**
Could the shape itself help prevent a mix-up?

06 **The Mystery of the Missing Paper**
Paper, paper everywhere. So why is there none here?

07 **The Great Brick Traffic Jam**
One slow step can hold up a whole adventure.

08 **The Greeting Card Challenge**
How many cards are needed, and when?

09 **The Case of the Missing Shoe**
Found it! But why does the shoe keep disappearing?

10 **The Paper Airplane Experiment**
Which change helped the plane? Time to test a guess.

11 **One Tiny Change**
What could a small improvement make possible?

12 **The Great Morning Map**
Follow the whole morning. What connects the clues?

Every adventure begins with a good question.