



“So, wait,” Poodle paused.

“You are your childhood version
of your grown-up self? You wrote you?”

Poodle tried to understand this.

“Yes,” the boy said.

“Here, I’m a boy forever.
I’m always the boy in my poem.”

This made sense only to Dickinson.

He whirred in approval.

They all liked this boy, Robert.

“Robert, why are you in bed?” asked What?.

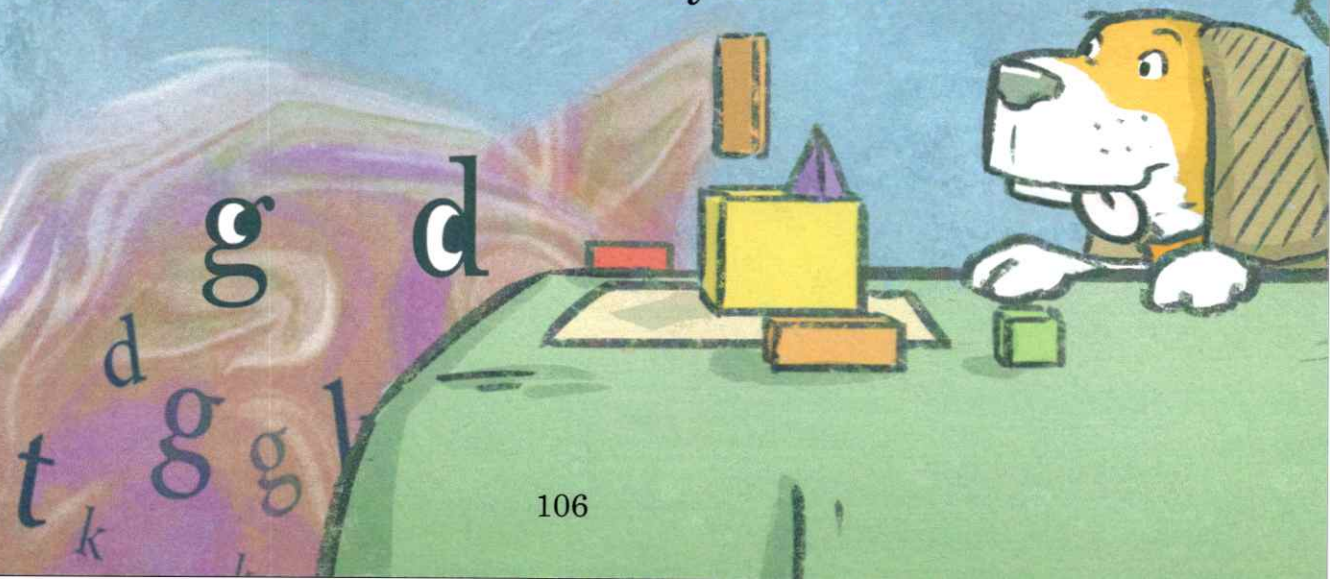
“I’m sick sometimes,” he said.

“I can’t go out to play.

But I can be happy and building at home!

I make worlds with my blocks—
castles and palaces and things.

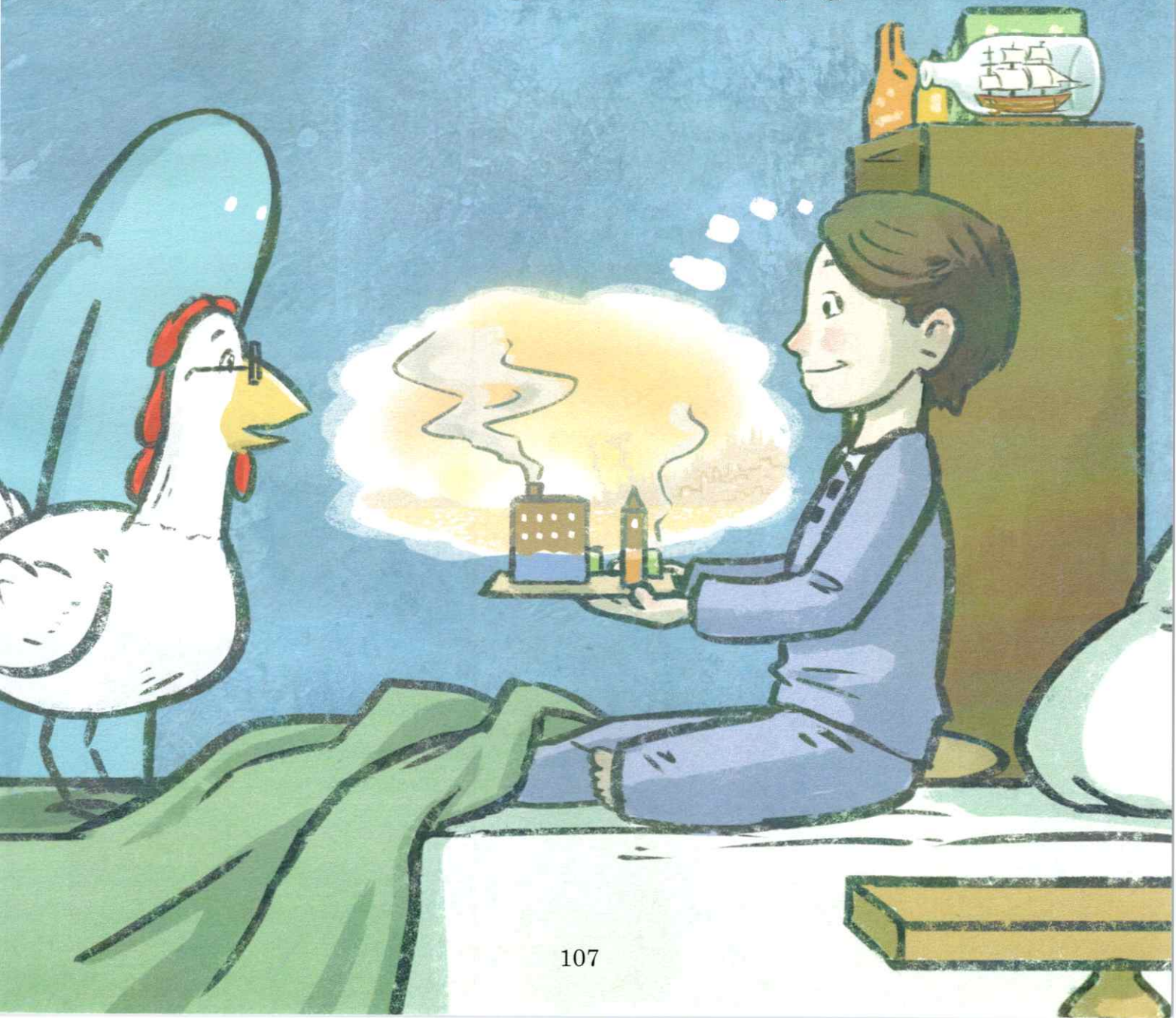
I can establish a city for me.”



“We’ll play with you!” said Poodle.
“We’ll have great fun.”

Everyone smiled at everyone.
Even Bizzie, just off stage, smiled,
and she wasn’t even on the page.

Even the author smiled.
He hadn’t known
he was going to write this page.





“Grbrkr,” Burgull smiled,
looking at the blocks.
“You build with these grblocksg
on your bedgk?”

Somehow, Robert understood Burgull.
In fact, he liked monsters. He loved monsters.
He had a child’s understanding of monsters.
He always knew what they meant.
He spoke Monster fluently.
He nodded. Vertically.

“Show us your toys,” asked Poodle.

It made Robert’s day.

