

FOREWORD

THE LAZY BRAIN • For parents and little explorers

**For the parents who sometimes wonder,
“Why does everything have to be a battle?”**

To my beautiful Emma,

I wrote these stories because being your Mama has taught me something I never expected:

children can be wonderfully complicated.

You are funny, curious, loving, imaginative and full of ideas. You can make me laugh when I am trying very hard not to. You can surprise me with the things you notice, the questions you ask and the extraordinary stories your mind creates.

And then there are the moments when I say:

“Emma, please put your shoes on.”

And somehow, ten minutes later, we are discussing dinosaurs, snacks, a missing pencil, the moon, and whether Scruffy needs a bath.

Your brain has other plans.

I call that part of you The Lazy Brain.

But the more I watched you grow, the more I realised that perhaps it isn't really lazy at all.

Sometimes it wants the fun thing. Sometimes it wants the easy thing. Sometimes it wants to know why. Sometimes it wants to do things its own way. Sometimes it simply isn't ready to stop.

And sometimes, when I was asking you to follow a boundary, you seemed determined to cross it.

That taught me another important lesson:

A child can push against a boundary and still need the boundary.

A child can say, “I don't need you!” while quietly checking that you are still there. A child can demand independence and reassurance at exactly the same time.

And a parent can be loving, patient and completely exhausted — sometimes all within the same five minutes.

These stories grew from those moments.