



The Freddie Stories

Created by Paul Vincent Cable

Illustrated by Carla George

Edited by Ken and Visakha Kawasaki

Tales of Loving-kindness

May you be happy!

May you be safe!

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The author hopes that the stories will be used widely in schools and other programs for children. The images have been formatted into PowerPoint files for presentation to large groups. Individual files of the images are also available for printing. All of these files can be downloaded from

<www.brelief.org/Freddie/The_Freddie_Stories.html>.

You are welcome to translate the Freddie Stories into regional or local languages for educational use. If you do, please send a copy of that translation to <kawasaki@brelief.org>

If your translation is not an electronic file, please send an email request for a postal address.

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Introduction

Dear Teachers and Parents,

These stories sprang out of a wonderful visit to Oasis Kindergarten School in Kibera, Nairobi, Kenya. This fantastic school has around 60 children in it, ranging from the age of 3 to 6. I was especially struck by the devotion of the staff to the children, led by their charismatic headmistress Ms Winnie. During my visit, we talked about developing a strong foundation of wisdom and compassion in the children, even at their tender age.

The challenge for me in helping them do that was that I was due to fly back to London the next day and was not due back in Kenya for several months. We hit upon the idea of Skype lessons and began a few days later – me on my smart phone in London and the 60 children arrayed in front of the sole computer at the school in Nairobi. Although by this point, I had spent over a decade helping develop programmes for wise and compassionate living for young people, I hadn't taught this age group before. I didn't know what would work and what would not, beyond an intuitive sense that stories would be a powerful medium. So I sat that first day on our sofa at home waiting for the call, with the elements of a story in my mind and a simple Loving-kindness exercise figured out. But I had a feeling something was missing. How would these young children, watching me tell a story on a blurry screen, with an uncertain internet connection, and listening in English (their second or third language), really feel involved in the stories?

Just as we were about to begin the call, my wife, Agi, hit upon a brilliant idea. She handed me her soft toy frog to show the children. As

we started the call, I held up the frog and said “Hello children, my name is Freddie the Frog. Would you like to hear a story about me and my friends?” The children grinned, and I knew straight away that we had something. “Mr. Paul and Freddie” talked on Skype with the children once a week for a whole academic year, with a new story each week, with Ms Winnie translating into Swahili any words the children didn’t understand. After each story, it felt natural to go into a Loving-kindness practice, with the children wishing themselves, their friends, all children in the world, their mums and dads, their teachers, all grownups, and all the animals, “May you be happy! May you be safe!”

The teachers reported that, even after a handful of sessions, the children were noticeably kinder to each other in the playground and at meal times. Towards the end of the year, the parents reported that the lessons were making a big difference to the family at home, with the children becoming spontaneously generous with their toys and food, and wishing their parents and siblings, “May you be happy! May you be safe!” whenever they could see that someone was upset. One parent touchingly said, “Freddie has changed all our lives.” Such is the power of Loving-kindness and the other beautiful qualities of heart that the friends encourage in each other – generosity, awareness, and the courage to do the right thing.

There are 21 stories. Each story is followed by a round of Loving-kindness. I wish you and your students much joy with the stories as you bring Freddie, Donnie, Robbie, Leoni, and Jennie into your lives.

May you be Happy! May you be Safe!

Paul Vincent Cable

Acknowledgements

Firstly, I would like to thank Ken and Visakha Kawasaki. Their amazing energy and enthusiasm, as well as skill at editing, is playing an instrumental role in making Freddie widely available.

Thank you too to the many people who have contributed content ideas and materials, and supported the Freddie project in many ways. In particular: Ewen Arnold, who inspired the Activities section; Sarah and Tom Vohya, founders of Oasis Kindergarten, and the whole team there, led by Ms Winnie; my father, Vince Cable, who sponsored my many trips to Kenya and elsewhere; the Sati Pasala UK team, who have brilliantly integrated Freddie into the Sati Pasala curriculum; my wife Agi, who has been a continual source of support and inspiration; and many others – friends of mine, friends of Ken’s and Visakha’s – too numerous to mention, but whose contributions have made an important difference.

May you all be Happy, May you be Safe!

The Freddie Stories

1

Robbie Doesn't Know How to Write

It was the very first day of school for Freddie the Frog, Leoni the Lion, Donnie the Dog, and Robbie the Rabbit. They didn't know each other, and they didn't know anybody there. Ms Winnie, their teacher, who always had a huge smile on her face, was really nice, but, still, Freddie, Leoni, Donnie, and Robbie all felt pretty lonely.

After morning assembly, it was break time. Freddie was standing in one corner of the playground. Donnie was in another. Leoni was in another. And Robbie was in another. They were all too shy to talk to anyone or each other.



Leoni looked especially sad at being all alone, so Freddie walked over and said, “Hi, I’m Freddie. Let’s be friends.”



Leoni lit up in happiness and introduced herself. “Thank you, Freddie,” she said. “Before, I was feeling lonely, but now I feel much better. My name is Leoni.”

Freddie said, “Why don’t we help the others, too?” Together they walked over to Donnie and then Robbie, and before long, all four of them were friends. The bell rang at the end of the break, and they wandered inside together.

“Wow! This is so great!” said Donnie. “At the beginning of break time, we were all alone, and now we’re friends!”

“Yes, exactly,” replied Freddie.

“I’ve a feeling we’re going to have some adventures together,” he said, laughing.





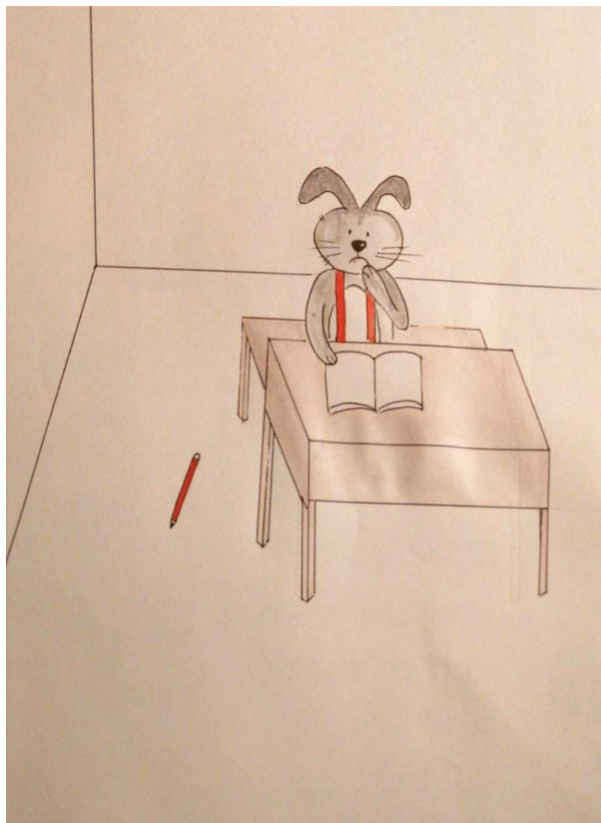
When class started, Ms Winnie announced that they were going to learn how to hold a pencil and to write their own names. The friends were very excited. They had never written anything before. Ms Winnie held up a huge pencil and showed the whole class how to hold a pencil.

Freddie, Donnie, and Leoni managed it with no problem, but every time Robbie tried, he dropped the pencil. He tried and tried and tried, but it was no good.

The tenth time he tried, the pencil fell on the floor and rolled around. Robbie was so sad that big tears started to roll down his face.

Ms Winnie was busy helping some others, and she didn't notice, but Freddie saw what was happening. He leaned over to Robbie and whispered, "Don't worry! We're your friends, and we will help you. May you be happy! May you be safe!"

Robbie stopped crying and whispered back, "Thank you!"



After school, the four new friends walked home together through the forest. Freddie lent Robbie his pencil, and he, Donnie, and Leoni took turns helping Robbie hold it. By the time they were nearly home, Robbie could easily hold the pencil exactly the way Ms Winnie had showed them. He was so happy that he turned three cart wheels, shouting, "I can do it! I can do it! I can do it!"

When he arrived home, Robbie said, "Mummy, there's something I need to do. Can you help me?"

"Of course," she said with a smile, and they sat down to work together before dinner time.

The next morning, as the friends arrived at school, Robbie stopped them and said, "I have something for you."

He gave them each a piece of paper with a beautiful picture of a heart. "Thank you so much for being my friends!" he said to them all. "I could draw this last night because you all helped me hold my pencil."

"May you be happy! May you be safe!" replied Freddie, as they all smiled at each other.



2

Who Will Win?



One day, Ms Winnie walked into the classroom while the children were excitedly discussing who could run the fastest. It was very noisy, because Robbie was yelling that he could beat everyone else, and some of the

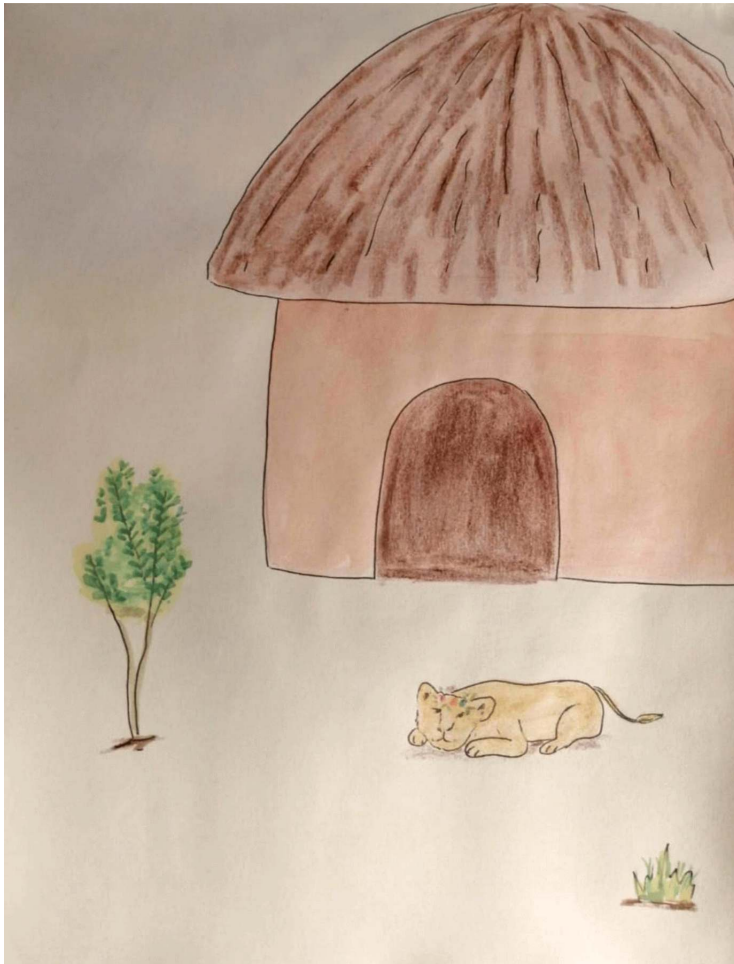
others were yelling back that they could beat him.

Ms Winnie calmed them all down and got everyone to sit back down. She said, “Right! I know what we’re going to do. We’ll have a race and see who really is the fastest, but we’ve got lots to do this week, so we’ll have it next week. Oh, and, by the way, the winner gets a whole packet of those biscuits you all like.”

There was a murmur of excitement throughout the class. At break time, Robbie started jumping up and down, shouting, “I’m going to win! I’m going to win, and I’m going to get a whole packet of biscuits!”

He started practising for the race, running up and down the playground as fast as he could. After a while, he was so tired that he could hardly stand up.

While he was doing that, Leoni and the other friends watched.



Leoni thought, “Wait a minute! I’m a fast runner, too. Maybe I could win the race. Why don’t I practise like Robbie? And then I might be able to beat him.”

So after school, she ran all the way home as fast as she could and arrived home so tired that she flopped down in front of the door and couldn’t move one step more.

Her mummy asked her what had happened, and Leoni said, “I’m practising

for a big race at school. If I beat Robbie and all the others, I’ll get a whole packet of biscuits.”

“Goodness!” said her mummy. “You’ll have to run very fast to beat Robbie. I saw him running the other day, and he was nearly as fast as a train.”

Leoni was pretty worried when she heard that because she really wanted those biscuits, and she knew that her mummy was right.

Meanwhile, Robbie had heard that Leoni was also practising for the race. He knew that Leoni could run fast, and he was getting worried. He really, really wanted those biscuits.

Back at school the next day, Freddie saw Robbie and Leoni when they arrived at school. He could see that they were not happy.

First, he went to Robbie. “Are you all right?” he asked Robbie.

“No,” whispered Robbie. “Leoni is practising for the race, and, if she beats me, I won’t get the packet of biscuits, and I really really want them because I feel hungry nearly every day.”

“Don’t worry!” said Freddie, giving him a hug. “May you be happy! May you be safe!”



Then Freddie went to see Leoni and asked her the same question. And she gave the same reply, that she was really worried that Robbie would beat her and that she wouldn’t get the packet of biscuits. Freddie gave her a hug, too, and said, “May you be happy! May you be safe!” to help her feel better.

By now, Freddie was getting worried, as well. He wanted his friends to be happy, but one of them was definitely going to be very sad and hungry on race day. Maybe one of the other children in the class would win, and then Robbie and Leoni would both be sad and hungry. Freddie said to himself, “I need to think, think, think, and come up with a plan.” But he couldn’t think of anything.



Finally, the big day arrived. When all the children had arrived at school, Ms Winnie said to the class, “Now we’re all going outside into the playground, and we’re going to have our race.” She picked up the packet of biscuits and held it up. “And this is the delicious prize that one of you will have.”

Robbie sat in his chair, sweating. He was feeling really worried now. On the other side of the classroom,

Leoni was sweating, too. She was also really worried.

As they walked outside, Robbie was so nervous that he felt his legs go weak like jelly. He thought, “I feel terrible. I definitely can’t win now.” Ms Winnie called everyone to the starting line and got them all to line up. Robbie was lined up right next to Leoni. He was so worried that he could feel his heart racing. Sweat was pouring down his face. He looked across at Leoni and could see that she felt the same.

Ms Winnie called out, “On your mark!”

Suddenly, Freddie had an idea!

“Get set!” Ms Winnie called out.

Then, before she could blow the whistle for “Go!” Freddie shouted to all the children in his loudest voice, “Everyone hold hands!”

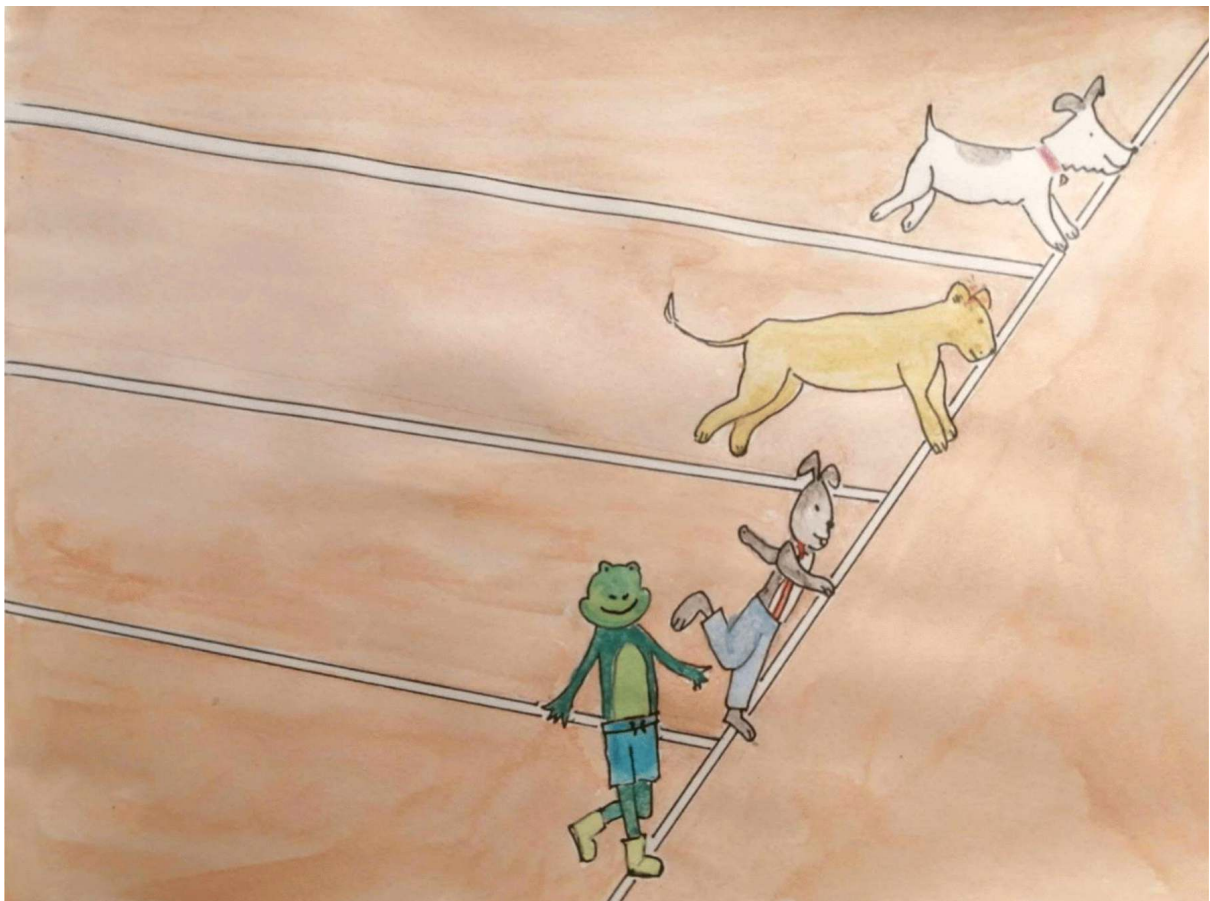
Robbie grabbed Leoni’s hand, Leoni grabbed Donnie’s hand, and all the children up and down the line did the same. The next moment, the whistle blew. The children started running as fast as they could while holding hands.

The finishing line got closer and closer, and they all crossed at the same time.

“Wow! We all won!” panted Robbie and Leoni together.

Ms Winnie had a smile as big as a house. “I’m so proud of you all!” she said. “You took care of each other so beautifully! As a special reward, I have an extra pack of biscuits here. Because you all won, we’re all going to share them, so that everybody has something, and no one is hungry.”

Leoni and Robbie turned to Freddie. “Thank you, Freddie,” they said, “for that fantastic idea for us all to hold hands. Now everyone is happy, and no one is sad. You are such a great friend!”

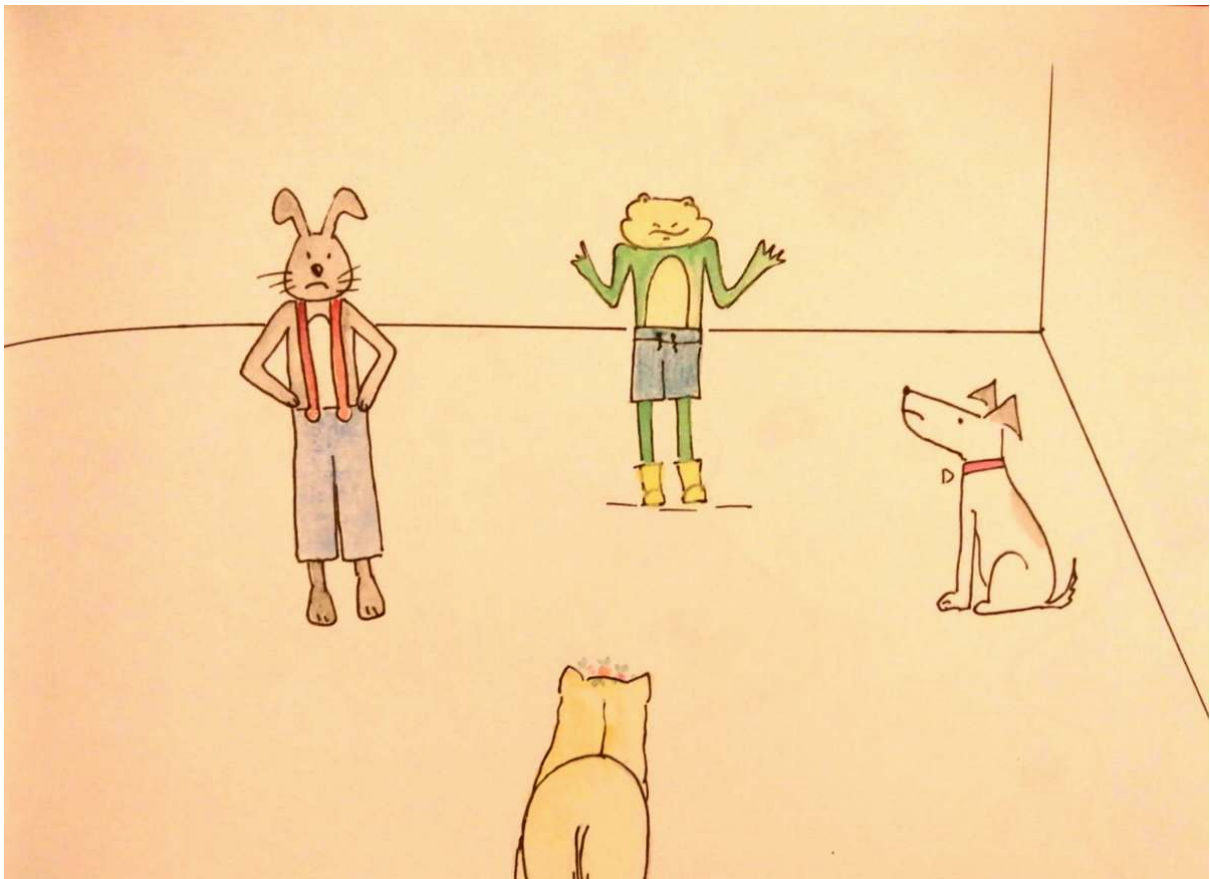


3

Leoni's Lost School Book

One day, after lunch at school, the friends heard the first drops of rain on the school roof. At first, they could still hear what the teacher was saying, but, after a while, the rain got heavier and heavier, and the noise got louder and louder. Finally, it was so loud that they couldn't hear anything Ms Winnie was saying. They could only see her mouth opening and closing.

“Hmm, I wonder what Ms Winnie was saying,” thought Leoni. When school finished, she asked Donnie what the teacher had asked them to do, but Donnie didn't know, either. Nor did Freddie or Robbie.



In fact, Ms Winnie had asked all the children to be very careful going home and to take care of their school books, because it was raining so hard. It was pouring so much that, already, there were little rivers of water on



the playground. As they started walking home, Leoni excitedly jumped in the puddles, splashing water everywhere. By the time she was half way home, she was soaking wet, but it was fun. Leoni swung her school bag in the rain, watching the raindrops bouncing off. She swung it faster and faster.

“Wow, this is such fun!” she yelled.

By the time Leoni got home, her school bag was totally soaking wet, too. Her mummy couldn’t believe how wet Leoni was! She said to Leoni,

“We’d better take your book out, in case it got wet, too, so we can dry it out.”

Leoni opened her bag and looked inside, but there was nothing there.



“Oh, no!” cried Leoni. “My book must have fallen out while I was walking home. I need it because it has all my work in it.”

She ran to Freddie’s house to tell him the bad

news. Big tears rolled down her face.

“Don’t worry, Leoni!” Freddie comforted her. “May you be happy! May you be safe! Let’s get the others together, and we’ll go and search for your book.”

Together, all four friends went outside and searched the path to school. Luckily, it had nearly stopped raining, so they didn’t get too wet again. Finally, Donnie shouted out, “There it is! There it is!”



Donnie ran to pick up the book and passed it to Leoni. It was soaking wet. Leoni opened the book and couldn't believe her eyes. There was no writing in the book. The rain had washed away all of her work. The friends all crowded around the book to see what had happened. They couldn't believe it, either. On every page they looked, there was nothing at all.

Leoni was very sad. Freddie, Robbie, and Donnie all hugged her, saying "May you be happy! May you be safe!"

Leoni said, "There's nothing I can do. Tomorrow, I'll have to tell Ms Winnie that all my work is lost."

Slowly, they all walked back to their houses. When they got back, Freddie went out again to get Donnie and Robbie, and they sat together in Donnie's house.

Freddie said, "I'm sure we can do something to help Leoni. We are strong, and we don't give up!"

"Yes!" shouted Donnie. "That's right! We are strong, and we don't give up!"

Freddie replied, "All we have to do is think, think, think, until we come up with an idea to get Leoni's work back."

There was a long silence while they thought.

"I know!" said Donnie excitedly to the others. "Why don't we all copy from our books into a new book, so Leoni has all the work again!"

"That's a brilliant idea!" cried Robbie.



Together, they all sat around Donnie's table and wrote and wrote and wrote. It took a very long time. By the time they had finished, their fingers were hurting, and it was nearly dark outside.

"Phew! We did it! We did it!" said Freddie, putting his pencil down, exhausted.

The three friends arrived at school a few minutes early the next morning, and, as they sat down for the lesson, Donnie slipped the new book onto Leoni's desk. When Leoni arrived at school, she sat down, too, but she was still very sad. She was just about to put her hand up to tell Ms Winnie the bad news that her work was all lost, when she noticed the new book with her name on it on her desk. She slowly opened the book and couldn't believe her eyes. All the work was in the book!

Leoni looked up, and saw Freddie, Robbie, and Donnie all looking at her, smiling. Immediately, she knew what they had done.



She started crying, but this time it was not because she was sad. They were tears of happiness because she knew that she had the most amazing friends, who had done something so fantastic for her!

She leaned over and held their hands and said, "I can't believe I'm so lucky to have friends like you all. May you be happy! May you be safe!"

4

It's Really Raining!

One night, after Freddie and all the friends had gone to bed, it started raining and raining and raining and raining. It didn't stop raining all night.

In the morning, Freddie woke up listening to the crashing of the rain on the roof. He tip-toed to the door to look outside. "Wow!" he breathed to himself. There was water everywhere. The water was nearly up to his front door. It covered the road, the pavement, the fields, and everything.

After breakfast, Freddie took his schoolbag and tried to walk over to Donnie's house so that they could go to school together. After only a few

steps, he was soaked. Even though he had his favourite yellow boots on, there was water inside them, and his feet were all wet.

"Phew!" thought Freddie, "it's going to be really hard just to get to Donnie's house like this."

Finally, he reached Donnie's house. When she opened her door and saw Freddie soaking wet and all the water around her house, she shouted, "Oh my goodness! I've never seen so much water! How are we going to get to school?"



“That’s what I was thinking,” replied Freddie.

A few minutes later, they set off for school in the rain, getting wetter and wetter with every step. It wasn’t long before Freddie said, “Wait a minute! Isn’t that Leoni and Robbie in the distance?”

As they got closer, Freddie and Donnie could clearly see the other two friends standing still in the road. “Why are they just standing there?” Donnie asked Freddie.

“Hmmm,” replied Freddie. “I’m not sure.” Then, in amazement he cried, “Oh, now I see! The whole road is completely under water ahead, and they can’t go any further.”

Very soon, they caught up to Leoni and Robbie. All four friends stood in silence watching the water rush by. They couldn’t believe their eyes. The road had turned into a river.

“How are we going to get to school?” asked Robbie.



“I don’t think there will be any school today,” replied Leoni. “Everyone will have the same problem. It’s too dangerous to try to go through the water.”

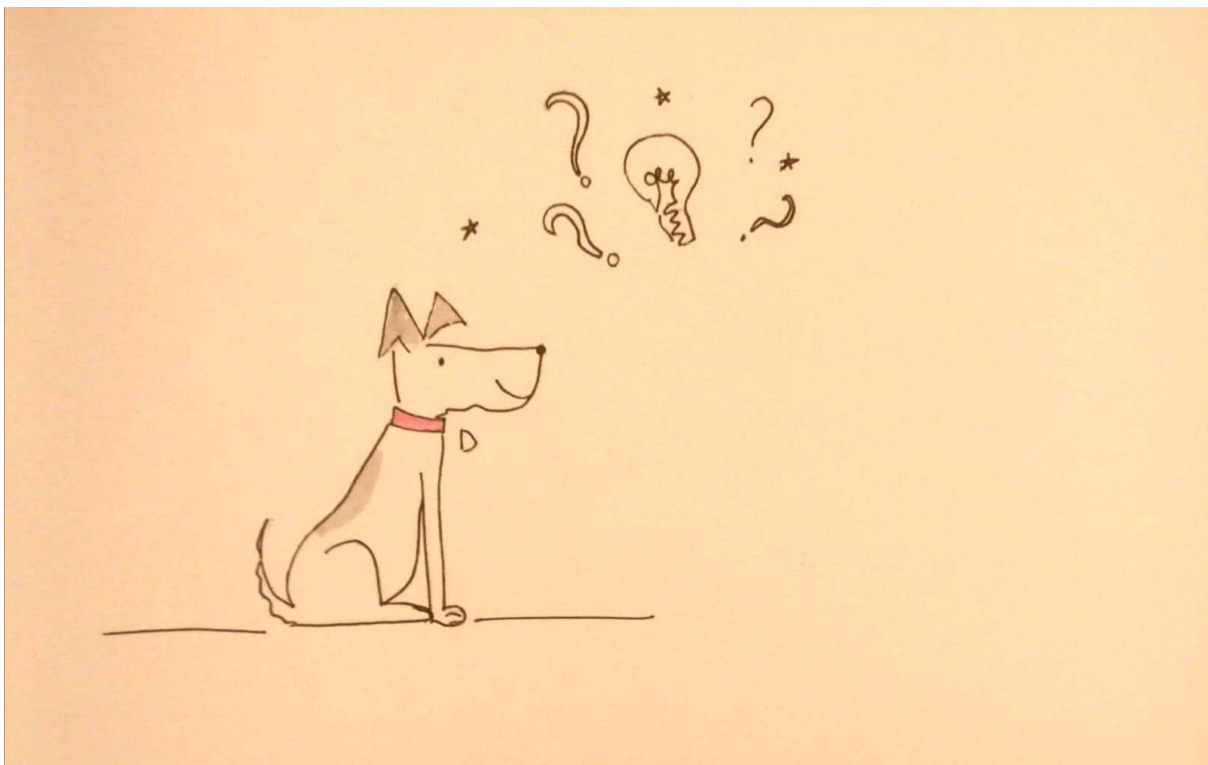
Freddie replied, “I really hope everyone else from school is all right. May they all be happy! May they all be safe!”

“Let’s think, think, think,” he continued, “so that we can come up with an idea about what we can do together today. We can’t learn at school, but maybe we can learn another way.”

For a while, no one could think of anything. They walked back through the rain, still thinking.

“I know! I know!” cried Donnie excitedly. “How about we teach each other something we know ourselves?”

“That’s a great idea!” replied Leoni. “We can take turns being the teacher. It will be so much fun!”



When they got back to the village, Freddie said with a big smile, “Right! Let’s gather at my house in a few minutes, after everyone’s got dry, and we’ll start our Home School.”

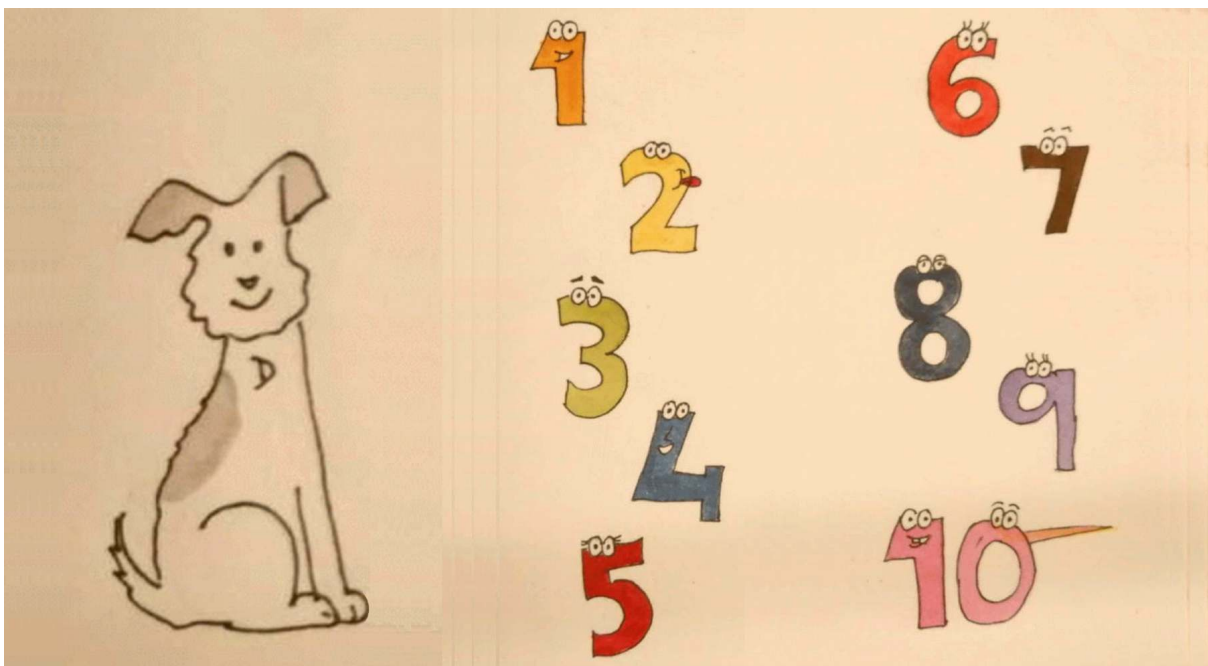
They all sat around the table in Freddie’s house, and, after a lovely cup of juice, Robbie said, “Let’s start with numbers because I need help with that. Who is really good at counting and can teach us?” he asked.

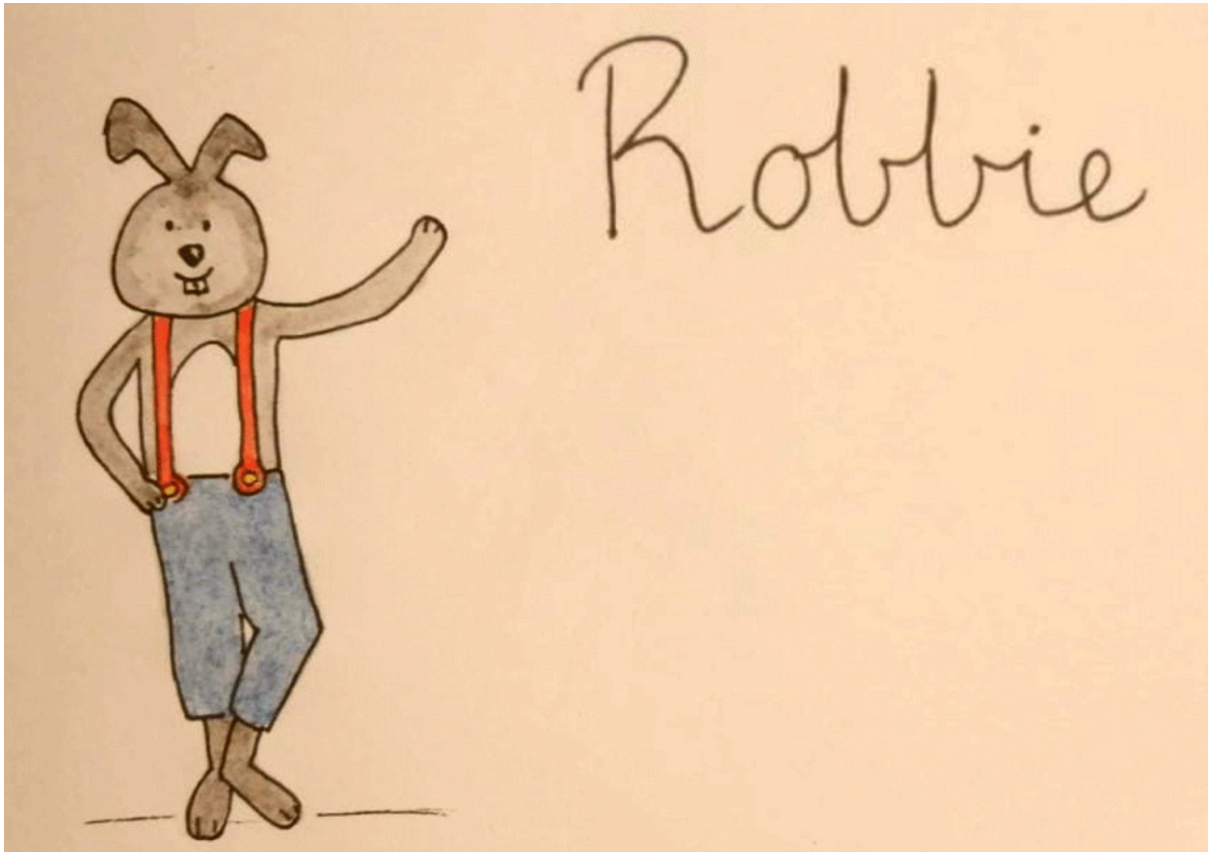
“Me! Me!” yelled Donnie excitedly. Donnie was the best in the whole school at counting, and she was very happy about the idea of helping her friends. On a big piece of paper, Donnie carefully wrote the numbers, starting at 1 and going all the way up to 10.

“Wow!” said Leoni. “I love the beautiful way you wrote the numbers.”

To make it even more fun, Donnie drew eyes on the numbers, as if they were all little people. All the friends laughed.

Together, they all read the numbers out loud, “1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.” Then they did it again a bit faster. And again and again, each time a bit faster!





“I love this!” said Robbie. “Now it feels like the numbers are my friends, and I’m not worried about them anymore. Thank you so much, Donnie! You really helped me.”

Donnie smiled. “And now,” she said to Robbie, “I would be very happy if you could show us all the letters and how to write our names, because you are very good at writing.”

“Well,” Robbie said shyly, “I’m not sure how to write your names, but I do know how to write my name, so I guess I can teach you all how to write ‘Robbie.’”

The others all laughed, and, after watching Robbie write his name, letter by letter, they were all able to write Robbie’s name.

“You have nice writing, Robbie,” said Leoni.

“Thank you,” replied Robbie. “That’s because you were all so kind to me when school first started, and you helped me to hold my pencil.”

“This was so much fun!” said Freddie. “I can’t wait to tell Ms Winnie about it.”

The next day, it had stopped raining, and the friends were able to get to school.

“Welcome, everyone!” Ms Winnie said at the beginning of class. “I’m very happy that you are all safe and well. What did you all do yesterday?”

The friends excitedly told her about their day. They told her that they all knew how to write Robbie’s name and that they could all count from 1 to 10 really fast.

“That’s fantastic!!” Ms Winnie said with a big smile. “Very well done to you all. You all helped each other so beautifully!” As a special treat for helping each other, she gave everyone in the class a biscuit.



5

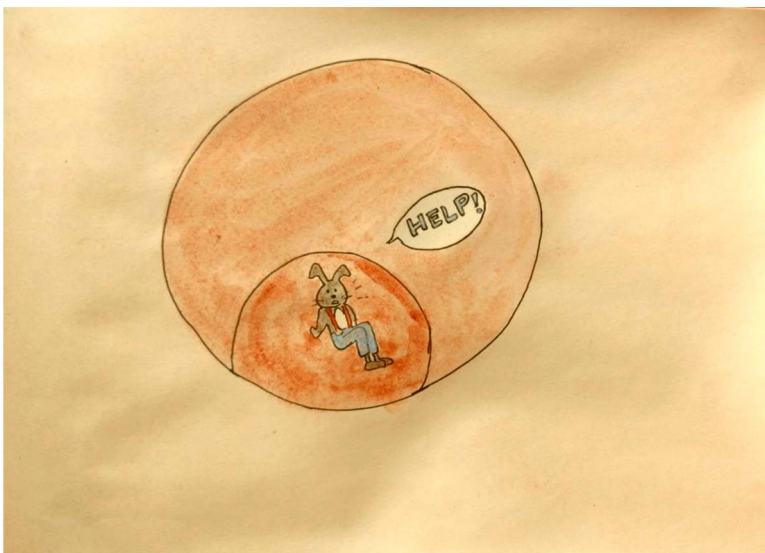
Robbie Falls in a Hole

One day, Robbie was walking over to Donnie’s house to play. He was singing happily to himself and looking up at the beautiful birds in the sky. All of sudden, “A-a-e-e-o-o!,” he cried as he felt himself falling and falling, and he landed with a loud “Bump!” at the bottom of an enormous hole! The day before, some workmen had dug the hole in the pavement, because they needed to fix a pipe, but they had forgotten to cover it up.

Robbie’s legs and arms had bruises all over them, and he was covered in mud. He was all alone at the bottom of the hole.

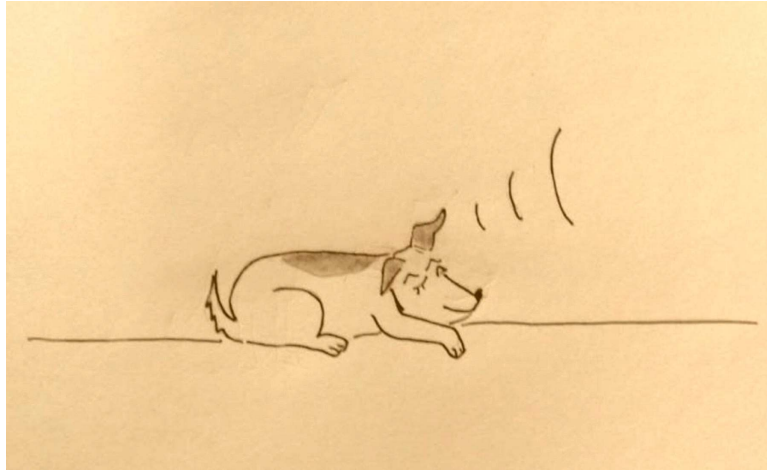
Robbie felt very sad and upset and nearly started crying. But then he remembered Freddie’s words and said to himself, “May I be happy! May I be safe!”

Straight away, he started to feel a bit better. He tried to climb up the side of the hole, but it was very slippery, and he fell back down to the bottom with another “Bump!” “Ouch!” he cried.



Robbie remembered that he was not far from Donnie’s house when he fell in the hole. “Maybe she’ll hear me if I shout very loud,” he thought.

“Help!” Robbie shouted at the top of his voice. “H-e-l-p!



Donnie was playing alone at home, and she heard the shouts. “Wait a minute,” she said to herself. “That sounded like Robbie’s voice. He didn’t sound very happy at all!”

Donnie ran outside towards the shouts and saw the big hole in the road. When she saw Robbie at the bottom, she couldn’t believe it! He was so dirty that all she could make out were his eyes in a big ball of mud.

“Oh, Robbie, you poor thing!” she shouted. “Are you all right?”

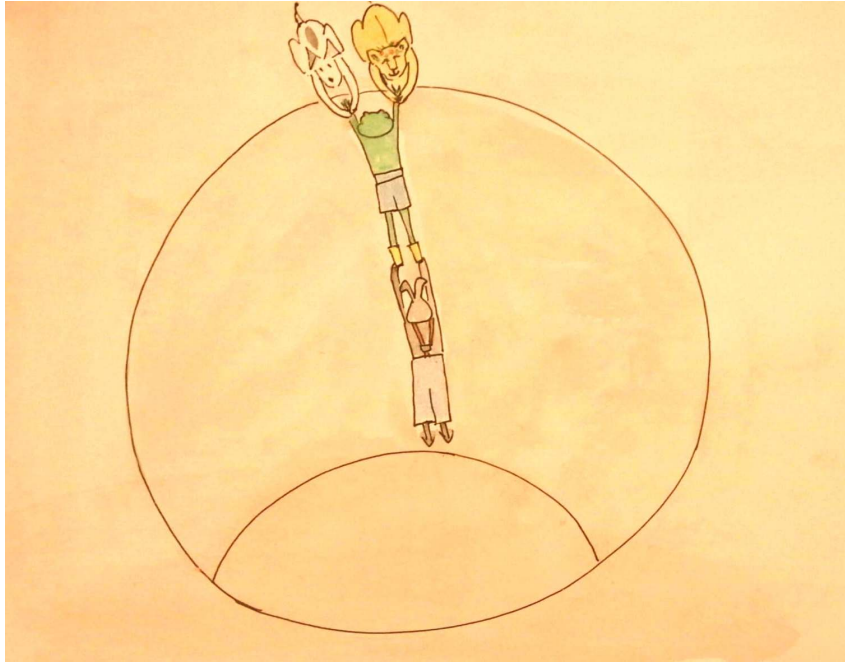
“No,” groaned Robbie. “Everything hurts! And I’m stuck! I can’t get out!”

“May you be happy! May you be safe!” said Donnie. “Don’t worry! I’ll get you out!” Donnie looked around for someone who could help, but there was no one to be seen! “Robbie,” she shouted, “I’m going to get Freddie and Leoni to help get you out. Everything’s going to be all right!”

She ran as fast as she could to Freddie’s house and banged loudly on the door. “Freddie, Freddie, please come quickly! Robbie has fallen in a hole, and he can’t get out!”

Together they ran to collect Leoni, and the three of them rushed to the edge of the hole.

“I’m so happy to see you all!” Robbie called up. “I was starting to get really worried!”



“I’ve got the longest legs,” said Freddie. “so I’m going to hang down the side of the hole. See if you can grab hold of my feet and climb up to the top.”

After Freddie was in position, Robbie jumped up to grab his feet. He got hold of Freddie’s boots and started to pull himself up, but, all of a sudden, the boots came loose, and Robbie fell back to the bottom of the hole holding Freddie’s boots.

“Oh no!” cried Leoni. “Now Robbie is still stuck in the hole and Freddie has lost his boots!”

Leoni, Freddie, and Donnie sat on the ground at the top of the hole. “We need to think, think, think, and come up with a new idea,” said Freddie.

“I know!” said Donnie excitedly. “Let’s find a branch in the forest and see if Robbie can climb up that!”

Freddie called down to Robbie, “Don’t worry, Robbie. We’re going to get a branch. If you feel worried, remember to wish yourself, ‘May I be happy! May I be safe!’ Then you’ll feel better.”

“I will, Freddie,” shouted Robbie. “But please hurry! I really don’t like being stuck here all by myself.”

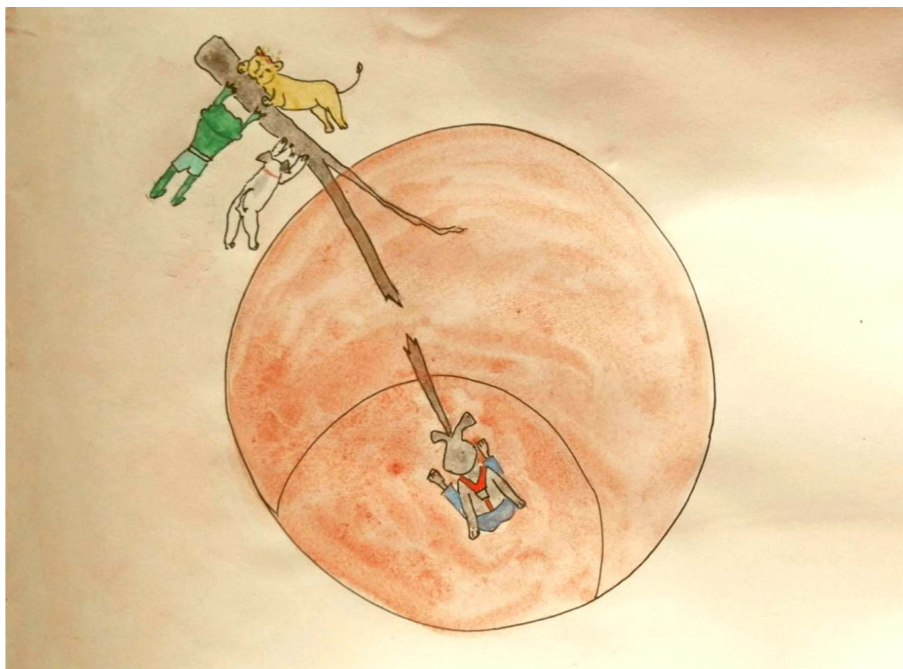
It took a long time for Freddie, Leoni, and Donnie to find a branch and to carry it back to the hole. It was really heavy.

“Phew!” said Donnie to the other two. “I really hope this works. Poor Robbie has been down there a very long time already.”

Together, the three of them held the big branch over the edge of the hole and shouted for Robbie to grab it and climb up. Robbie jumped up and got hold of the end of the branch and started climbing up slowly. The others held on tight to the branch. It was getting very heavy with Robbie on it, too. Robbie was very nearly at the top, when, suddenly, there was a loud “Crack!” and the branch broke in two. Robbie tumbled back down to the bottom of the hole, and the branch landed on top of him. Robbie, Donnie, and Leoni all started crying.

“What are we going to do now?” sobbed Leoni.

Freddie hugged her and Donnie. “Don’t worry!” he said. “We are strong, and we don’t give up!”



“Wait!” said Donnie. “I have another idea! Why don’t we go down the road to the fire station and see if they have something there we can use?”

“Yes, yes!” chimed in Leoni. “Quick, let’s get going!”

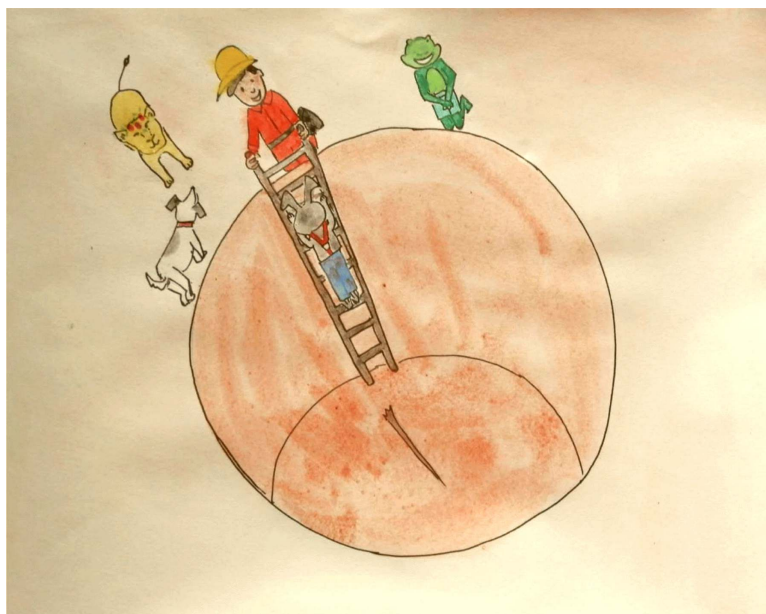
“Please hurry!” Robbie called up from the bottom of the hole.

“May you be happy! May you be safe!” Freddie called back to him, as he, Leoni, and Donnie ran as fast as their legs would take them. Huffing and puffing, they reached the fire station, but they were so out of breath that they could hardly talk. They just managed to get the firemen to understand what had happened to Robbie.

“We’ll help you get him out,” said the fire chief. “Jump in the truck!” The friends could hardly believe their luck. They rode back with the firemen to the hole and jumped out. When Robbie saw the fireman peering over the edge, his eyes nearly popped out. “Wow, that’s a real fireman!” he thought. Then he saw a ladder sliding down towards him and his friends all looking excitedly at him.

“We’re going to get you out this time!” shouted Freddie.

Sure enough, Robbie started climbing up the ladder and made it all the way to the top.



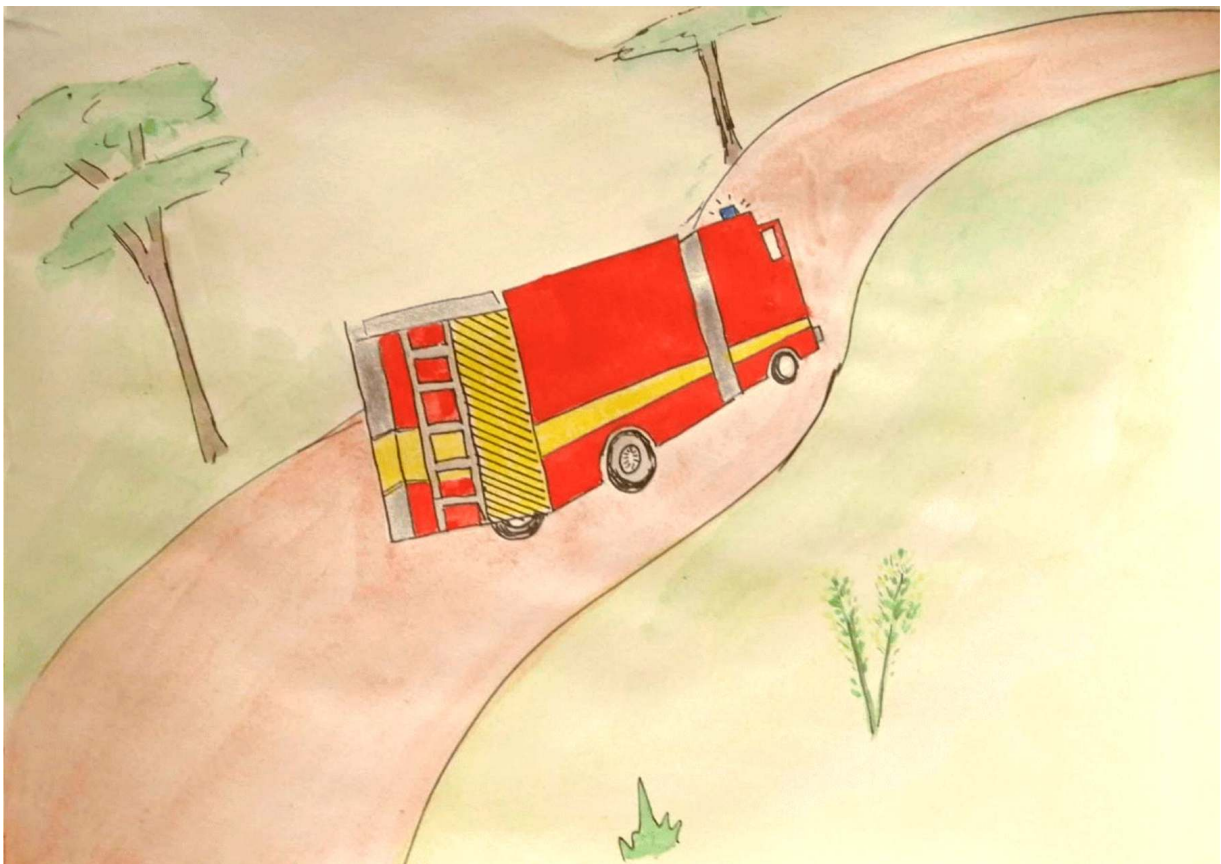
The friends were delighted. They hugged each other and shouted with joy. “We were all strong”, said Freddie “and we didn’t give up!”

“Wait!” said Donnie. “What about your boots?”

Leoni bravely slid down the ladder to the bottom of the hole and came back up with Freddie’s boots. Everyone cheered, even the firemen!

They were so exhausted that they could hardly walk, so the firemen let them climb back in the truck and drove them home.

“Wow!” they all cried. “What an adventure!” Then they thanked the firemen for their wonderful help.



6

A New Pupil

One morning, Ms Winnie had some exciting news. “A new pupil is coming today,” she announced. Her name is Jennie, and she is a giraffe.”

Just then, there was the slow “Clippety-clop” of hooves in the corridor, and everyone eagerly looked at the door. In came a tall giraffe, but there was something unusual about her. Rather than walking on all four legs, she

could only walk slowly on three legs. Her other leg had a huge bandage around it, and she held it up as she walked.

“Welcome to our class, Jennie!” Ms Winnie greeted the giraffe.

Jennie smiled at everyone and sat down at the back of the room. Robbie, Leoni, Donnie, and Freddie all turned and smiled back. Freddie leaned over and said, “Hi, Jennie. I’m Freddie. Let’s be friends!” Jennie looked very happy.





At break time, the pupils lined up and ran out into the playground, all except Jennie. She couldn't run, so she sat quietly on the bench at the edge of the playground and watched the others. Robbie and Leoni tore around the playground kicking a football between them. Donnie joined in.

Freddie was about to play, too, when he noticed that Jennie was all alone on the bench. He wandered over to her. "I'm so sorry you can't play, too, Jennie," he said.

"Don't worry, Freddie," she replied. "I'm used to it. My mum said that my leg got hurt when I was a baby, and it has never gotten better. That's why I can only walk slowly, and I can't run at all."

"Oh," Freddie said slowly, "I'm sorry you can't join us. It would be fun to play with you, too."



He sat on the bench beside Jennie and started thinking. “We have to come up with an idea to help Jennie play football with us,” he said to himself. He kept thinking while he and Jennie watched the others, but nothing came to him.

Meanwhile, Robbie scored a fantastic goal. “I scored!” he yelled at the top of his voice, and he did a cartwheel in celebration! Jennie and Freddie clapped and cheered from the bench.



Freddie walked over to the friends and said, “Jennie can’t run, and she can’t join us playing football. We need to come with an idea so that she can play with us.” The others enthusiastically agreed.

At the end of break, Ms Winnie blew the whistle, and the pupils made their way back to the classroom. Donnie and Robbie were exhausted from running around so much in the hot sun, but they were all thinking about Jennie and how to help her play football with them. All four of the friends kept thinking, but even after they sat in their seats, they hadn’t thought of anything.

“Don’t worry,” said Freddie to the friends. “We are strong, and we don’t give up!”

They stayed lost in thought, trying to solve the problem, while Ms Winnie explained how to do subtraction. “Now we’re going to practice doing some subtraction,” she announced. “Freddie, if you have 10 carrots, and somebody eats 6 of them, how many carrots do you have left?”

Freddie hadn't been listening at all to her explanation because all he could think about was Jennie. "Er, umm," he replied slowly. "I'm not sure, Ms Winnie. Sorry!"

Ms Winnie turned to Donnie. "Donnie, do you know the answer?" she asked. Donnie didn't know, either, because she, too, hadn't been listening to the lesson! Ms Winnie looked around the class and asked, "Anybody else?"

No one answered, but, in the quiet of the classroom, Donnie heard a noise behind her. It was Jennie gently tapping her hoof against the table. Jennie had learned maths at her other school, and she knew all about subtraction. Donnie realised that Jennie was signaling her the answer, and, silently, she counted the taps, "1, 2, 3, 4."

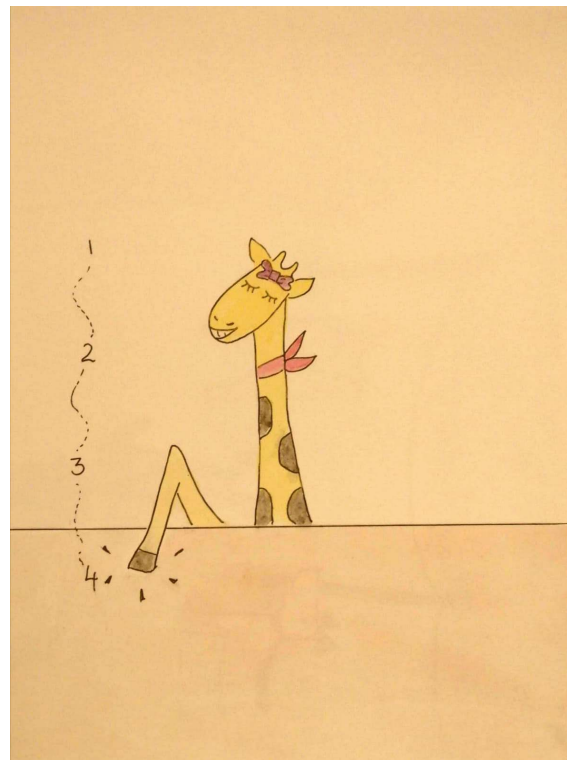
"Er, Ms Winnie," Donnie shouted. "Is the answer 4?"

"Yes, it is!" said Ms Winnie happily, and she wrote it on the board.

Soon, it was time for the next break, and most of the pupils ran back outside. Donnie slowly walked up to Ms Winnie's desk and told her how kind and clever Jennie was. She admitted that it was because of Jennie's help that she knew the answer to the question.

"It's wonderful that you are so honest as to tell me that Jennie helped you, Donnie. Well done! And it's lovely that you have such a kind new classmate."

That made Donnie happy, too. She ran outside to find her new friend. "Thank you, Jennie," she said. "Thank you so much for helping me!"



“You are very welcome,” replied Jennie. “Whenever you like, I can explain it to you and Freddie so that you understand how to do it.”

Donnie went over to the others and said, “Wow! Jennie is such an amazing friend to us already. We have to help her play football.”

“I have an idea!” said Leoni excitedly. “Jennie can be the goalie. That way she doesn’t have to run around.”

They ran to Jennie to share the idea. She readily agreed, and they all went out onto the field. Every time Robbie tried to score a goal, Jennie headed the ball back and stopped it from going in.



“Wow, Jennie!” shouted Leoni. “You are an amazing goalie!” Jennie beamed in happiness.

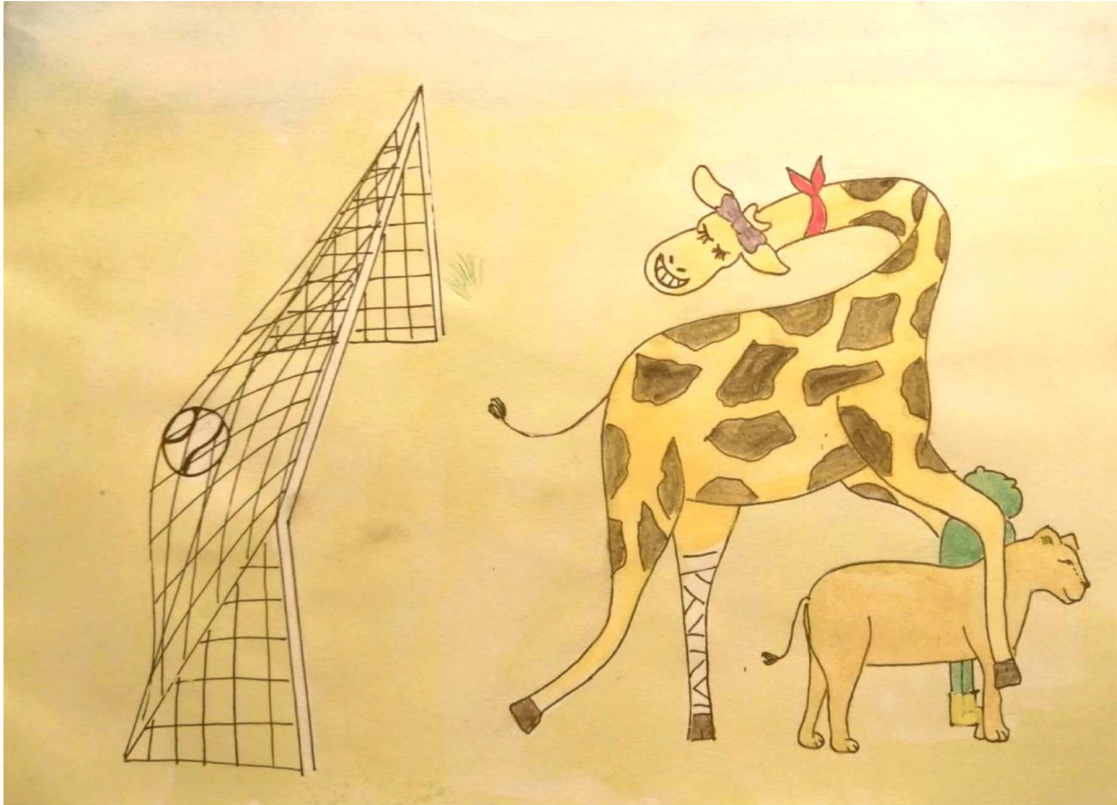
Freddie ran to the others. “I have an idea to help Jennie not just save goals, but score them, too.” He explained his idea, and

they were thrilled with it. Freddie and Leoni went to Jennie and told her the idea.

“Let’s try it!” she replied with a smile.

Freddie stood on one side of her, and Leoni stood on the other. Jennie put her front legs around their shoulders, and Freddie and Leoni lifted her off the ground.

“We are your legs now!” shouted Freddie, while Robbie and Donnie clapped and cheered in excitement.



They started the football game again, with Freddie and Leoni running and carrying Jennie around the pitch. Every time they got near the ball, Jennie kicked it with her good back leg, which was very strong.

“This is so much fun!” Jennie shouted laughingly.

Just before the end of the break, Jennie had a clear shot at the goal. She kicked the ball, and it went straight into the net.

“Goal!” shouted all the friends together.

As the whistle blew, Jennie smiled at Freddie, Donnie, Robbie, and Leoni, and said, “I’m so happy and so lucky to have found such fantastic friends on my first day! Thank you! Thank you!”

“We thank you, too!” replied Freddie. “You are one of us from now on. May you be happy! May you be safe!”

With the happiest of smiles, they all went inside together for lunch.

7

Stuck in a Tree

One day, after school, Robbie was walking home alone through the forest. He was very happy because, earlier that day, Ms Winnie had given them all an extra biscuit for being so kind and helpful to each other. He was singing his favourite song and trying to turn cartwheels at the same time. Robbie was so full of beans and happiness that he thought it would be fun to throw his bag as high as he could while he was walking and to catch it when it came down.

“Wow!” he thought, “This is so much fun! I wonder how high I can throw it?”

With a huge effort, Robbie threw his bag up in the air, and, indeed, it went higher than it had ever gone. He waited and waited and waited, but it didn't come back down. The bag was stuck on a branch and was hanging there, swaying in the wind.

“Oh, no!” cried Robbie. “What will I do now? All my school books are in there. And my mum only just bought me that bag.” Robbie was so upset that he didn't know what to do. Then he remembered what





Freddie had said to him and all the friends – to send loving-kindness to himself whenever he felt sad. “May I be happy! May I be safe! May I be happy! May I be safe!” Robbie repeated to himself over and over, and, after a few minutes, he felt better.

Just then, Donnie came wandering up the path on her way home. She was looking down at the ants on the ground and almost bumped right into Robbie.

When Robbie explained what had happened, she said, “Don’t worry Robbie. We’ll get it down. May you be happy! May you be safe!”

Then she remembered something Freddie had said – that they could think, think, think whenever there was a problem so that they could find a way to fix it.

On the ground lay lots and lots of sticks which had fallen from the trees.

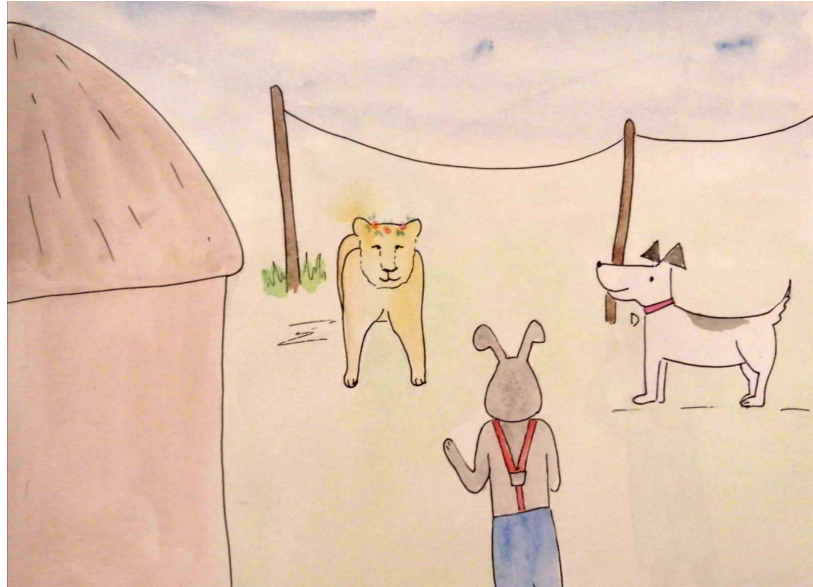
“Look!” suggested Donnie. “Why don’t we try throwing some sticks up at your bag?”

Robbie picked some up and started throwing them up at the bag to see if he could hit it and knock it off the branch. After a few throws, one of them hit the bag and it started to slide slowly off the branch. They were just about to celebrate when the bag suddenly jolted to a stop. It had got stuck on another branch.

“Oh, no!” Robbie cried.

This branch had thick leaves all around it, and they could see that throwing sticks was not going to work this time.

“Let’s get Leoni,” Donnie comforted him.



They set off, running all the way to her house in the village on the other side of the forest. They arrived, hot and panting, and knocked on the door.

“Leoni, you won’t believe what happened,” puffed Robbie. “My bag got stuck in a tall tree. Please come and help us.”

Leoni knew that Robbie was mischievous and was always getting into trouble, so she wasn’t really that surprised.

“Don’t worry, Robbie,” she replied. “Of course, I’ll help you. Let’s go quickly before dinner time.”

When the three of them reached the tree, Robbie’s bag was still there.

“Why don’t I climb up and bring it down?” said Leoni.

“That’s a great idea Leoni,” replied Robbie. “You’re a really good climber. But be very careful, please, because it’s high up there. May you be safe!”

Leoni nodded and started climbing. It was the highest tree she had ever climbed, and she felt a bit scared. Leoni stopped on a branch half way up and said to herself a few times, “May I be happy! May I be safe!”



After that, she didn't feel so scared, and she made it all the way up to the branch with the bag. Slowly, she crawled onto the branch, and picked up Robbie's bag.

"Hooray!" shouted Robbie. "Thank you! Thank you!"

Leoni started climbing back down, but, as she looked down, she saw that it was so steep that she wouldn't be able to manage it.

"I'm stuck!" she called down. "It's too steep and scary for me. I don't know what to do."

"Don't worry, Leoni!" shouted Robbie. "We are strong, and we don't give up! We'll get you down somehow. We need Freddie's help. I'm going to get him. Just stay there until I come back. May you be happy! May you be safe!"

Leaving Donnie to look after Leoni, Robbie ran as fast as he could to Freddie's house. Freddie was in the middle of his dinner. As soon as Robbie had explained that Leoni was stuck in a tree in the forest, Freddie jumped up, and they ran as fast as they could back to the tree.

"We need a ladder," said Freddie, "but the fire station is a long way away. We'll need to run quickly."

"Yes," replied Donnie. "Poor Leoni is getting tired and scared up on that branch."

"Don't worry, Leoni!" they all called up. "We'll get help soon. May you be happy! May you be safe!"

Together, Freddie, Robbie, and Donnie ran towards the fire station. Freddie was right. It really was a long way. By the time they arrived there, they were panting so much that they could hardly talk, but Robbie finally managed to explain the problem to the fireman.

“Goodness!” replied the fireman. “We’d love to help. The problem is that the ladder is broken. We had to rescue Harry the Hippo the other day from his second floor office, and he was so big, the ladder broke in two.”

Freddie, Donnie, and Robbie looked down at the ground. They felt really unhappy and upset.

“What can we do now?” wailed Robbie.

“Don’t worry”, said Freddie. “We are strong and we don’t give up! We need something high that Leoni can climb down on. What is tall and can move?”

“I know! I know!” Donnie shouted excitedly. “Jennie the Giraffe is tall, and she can move!”

The others were thrilled with this idea. They all ran to the village where Jennie lived and knocked on her door. Jennie happily agreed to come with them into the forest. It was slow going because of Jennie’s bad leg, but, finally, they made it to where Robbie thought the tree was.

“Where’s the tree?” asked Freddie.

“Where’s your bag?” asked Donnie.

“Where’s Leoni?” asked Jennie.

“Maybe I got the tree wrong,” said Robbie. “They all look the same.”



“Leoni! L-e-o-n-i! L-e-o-n-i!” they all called out, but there was no answer.

The friends were now really worried. They had lost Leoni! They wandered to and fro, calling up into the trees. Finally, they heard a huge yawn. It was Leoni, waking up from her snooze. She had fallen fast asleep in the tree.

“Oh, thank goodness!” sighed Freddie. They shouted up to Leoni and explained their plan. Jennie got into position with her head up in the branches near Leoni, and Leoni grabbed ahold. Then Leoni slid down Jennies neck, onto her back, and onto the ground.

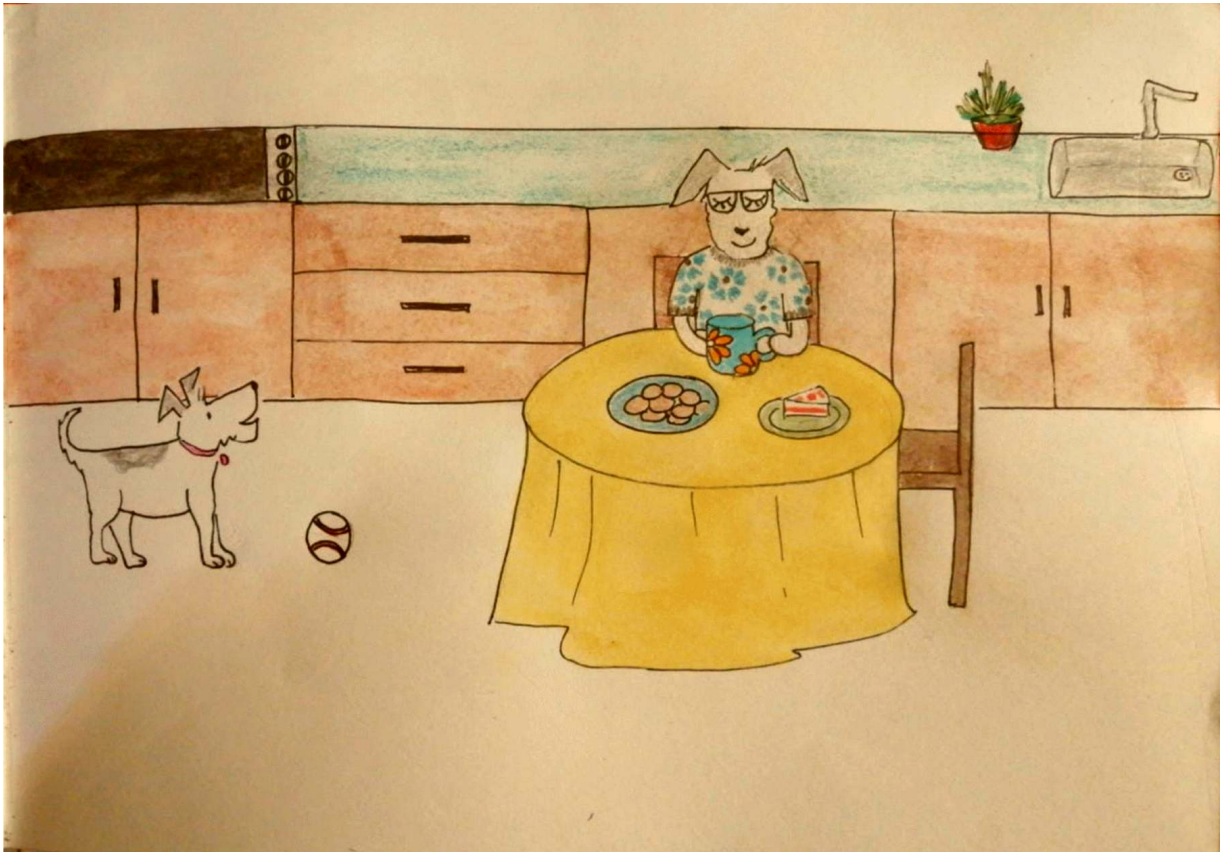
“Whee!” she cried out in delight. “That was so much fun! Except for the getting stuck in the tree, of course.”

They all laughed, and, as they walked home, Robbie turned ten cartwheels in a row in celebration.



8

Donnie and Her Grandma's Favourite Mug



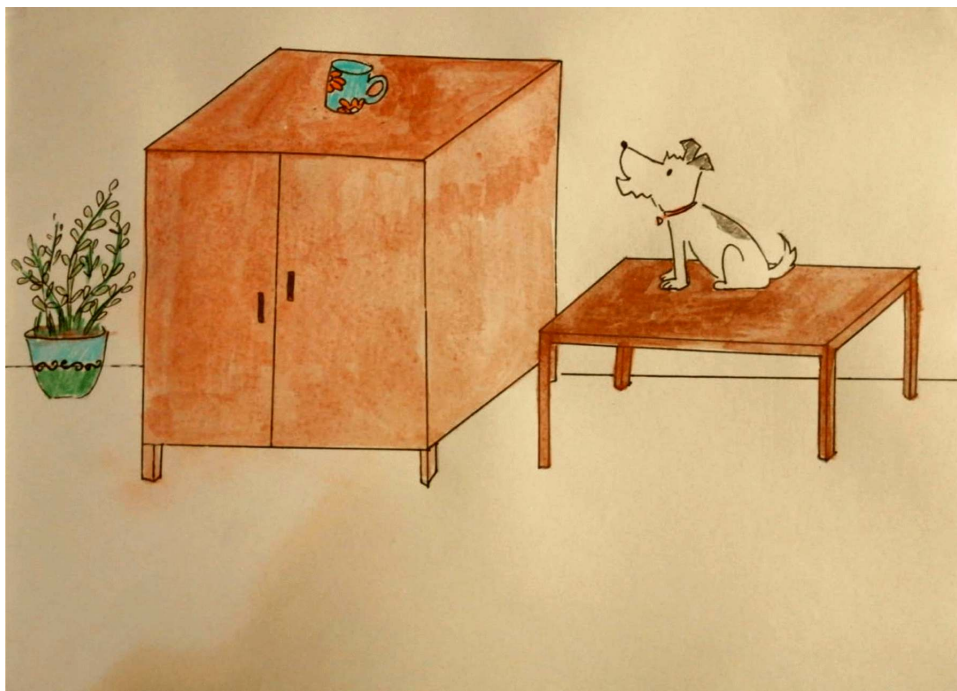
One day, Donnie was at her grandma's house, playing happily. She noticed that her grandma was drinking tea out of a very pretty mug. "I love your mug, Grandma." she said.

"Thank you," replied her grandma. "It's my favourite mug. I got it from my own mother, and she painted these beautiful flowers on it herself. I've had it for many, many years, and I always keep it in a special place so it won't get broken."

Donnie smiled back, thinking how lovely the mug was.

After her tea, Donnie's grandma carefully washed the mug and put it back on the top of the cupboard, away from everything else. She called Donnie and said, "I'm just going to the market to do some shopping. I'll be back soon."

Donnie carried on playing. After a while, she started feeling thirsty and found the water pot in the corner of the kitchen, but she needed a cup to pour some water into. A little idea came into Donnie's mind. What if she borrowed Grandma's lovely mug to drink out of and then put it back before Grandma returned?



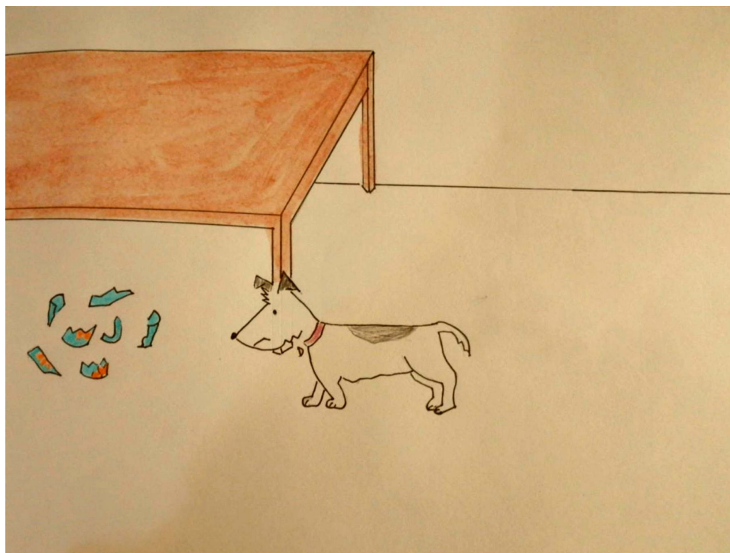
Excitedly, she climbed onto the table to reach the cupboard and got hold of the mug.

Slowly and carefully, Donnie climbed down with it and filled it up with water. She looked at the mug, remembering that her great-grandma had painted it.

"Wow!" she thought. "That's my mum's mum's mum. That must have been a very long time ago!"

After she had finished drinking, Donnie cleaned the mug and climbed back on the table to put it back. She reached the top of the cupboard and started to slide the mug back. Just then, there was a loud “Clang!” outside. A dog had knocked over an old metal rubbish bin, and the noise gave Donnie such a fright that she jumped, and the mug fell straight down onto the floor with a “Crash!” It broke into little pieces.

Donnie was horrified. She stood still on the table, tears rolling down her face, thinking about her grandma. What was she going to do? What could she do?



Slowly, she got down off the table and picked up the pieces of the mug. She knew that she should tell her grandma when she came home, but she was really worried, so she hid all the pieces in her school satchel.

A little later, her grandma came back, singing happily to herself. Donnie felt terrible. “Grandma,” she said softly, “I think I’ll go home now. Thanks for having me.”

Her grandma was a bit surprised that Donnie was leaving so soon, but she replied, “Of course, Dear. Lovely to see you. Come again soon.”

On her way home, Donnie knocked on Freddie’s door and told him what had happened. Freddie could see how sad and upset she was. “May you be happy! May you be safe!” he said, giving her a big hug. Together they talked about Donnie finding a Lion’s Heart inside herself to tell her grandma the truth about the mug.

Donnie was still too scared to go back and see her grandma that day. “I’ll go and tell her tomorrow,” she thought.

The next day at school, Donnie was still sad and worried. By this time, all of her friends knew what had happened. They all held hands with her, wishing her, “May you be happy! May you be safe!”

While they were at school, Donnie’s grandma made herself some tea and reached for her favourite mug, but it wasn’t on top of the cupboard. She couldn’t find it anywhere.



“It’s the strangest thing,” she said to her neighbour later that morning. “My favourite mug has mysteriously gone missing.”

“Gosh, you mean that beautiful mug with the flowers painted on the side?” replied her neighbour. “You’ve used that every time we’ve had tea together for the past ten years.”

The word started to spread about the strange disappearance. All around the village, people were asking the same question, “What could have happened to that beautiful mug?” Obviously, it was very famous

After school that day, Donnie met up with the friends, and said, “Right. I’m going to do it. I’m going to Grandma’s house to tell her what happened.” All of her friends held hands and wished her, “May you be happy! May you be safe!” and Donnie walked along the path to her grandma’s. She was nearly there when she passed a bench on which some of the villagers were sitting. It looked like they were discussing something very interesting. As Donnie drew closer, she heard one of them say, “Yes, it’s the strangest thing that has happened here for a long time. I knew her mother, the one who painted the flowers on it.”

Donnie realised that they were talking about her grandma’s mug. All the worry and upset came straight back into Donnie’s heart, and, when she reached her grandma’s house, she was too scared to knock on the door. She started crying, turned around, and ran back towards home. On the way, she met her friends, who were still together. When she told them what had happened, Freddie said, “We need to think, think, think and come up with a plan.”

After a long pause, Leoni said, “I know! What if we all come with you to your grandma’s house? I think that will help you to use your Lion’s Heart to talk with your grandma.”



“Yes, please,” said Donnie. “I really need my friends with me. This is the hardest thing I’ve ever had to do.”

Together the friends all went to Donnie’s grandma’s house. When they arrived, Donnie stood outside the door, while Freddie, Robbie, and Leoni stood around her.

“Don’t worry,” whispered Freddie. “Just feel your Lion’s Heart, and it will give you strength.”

Donnie reached out and knocked timidly on the door. After a few moments, the door swung open, and Donnie’s grandma appeared. “Oh, hello, Donnie. What a nice surprise!” said her grandma in delight at seeing her granddaughter. “And hello to all your friends, too.”

“Yes”, replied Donnie. “They’ve come to help me, to give me strength.”

“Really?” exclaimed her grandma. “Whatever for?”

Slowly, Donnie opened her satchel and took out the pieces of the mug and started to explain what had happened that day. Then she told her grandma that she had been too frightened to say anything.

“Oh, Donnie,” said her grandma gently, taking Donnie’s hands in her own. “Please, don’t worry! I’m so proud of you that you had the courage to come and tell me the truth. Yes, I was a little sad when I realised that the mug was gone, but then I remembered what my wise mother always said to me – ‘Nothing lasts forever.’ Everything is lost or broken in the end, even if it takes many years for that to happen. What happened to the mug was always going to happen one day. I know you didn’t mean to break it. It was just an accident.”

“Wow!” cried Donnie, joyfully giving her grandma a huge hug. “You are the best grandma I could ever hope for!” Then, she turned to her friends and said, “And thank you, Freddie, Robbie, and Leoni, for being the best friends I could ever have!”



9

The Missing Dress

One day, Leoni's mummy was washing the family clothes. It was hard work, and she was sweating in the hot sun. When Leoni came in from playing, she saw how hard her mummy was working and said, "Mummy, can I help you with that? You look very tired."

"Oh thank you, Leoni. That's so kind of you! Actually, I've nearly finished, but you can help me hang them up on the clothesline to dry if you like."

Leoni and her mummy carried the huge pile of clothes and carefully clipped them on the clothesline, one by one. It took a very long time, but, finally, they finished.

"Hmm," said Leoni's mummy. "There's quite a breeze blowing. I guess that will help the clothes dry faster," and she went inside to rest and

to read her favourite book.

Leoni went off to Donnie's house to play. While she was there, Donnie said, "Gosh! It's getting really windy out there. How exciting! I really like hearing



the wind rustling the leaves.”

By the time she needed to go home, the wind was blowing even stronger than before, and Leoni had fun all the way home, pretending that



she was flying. When she arrived home, she noticed that the clothesline was empty. She said to her mummy, “I was going to help you take the clothes off the line, Mummy. You didn’t need to do it all by yourself.”

“But I didn’t take them off,” her mummy replied, peering outside. “Gosh! They’ve all gone! What could have happened to them?”

As they looked around outside, Leoni spotted one of her T-shirts on a fence. “Wait a minute!” she called to her mummy. “I think the wind has blown them all away.”

“Oh, goodness!” cried her mummy. “I washed all of our clothes, so now we have none left!”

Leoni gave her mummy a hug, and said, “Don’t worry, Mummy. May you be happy! May you be safe!” I will go and ask my friends to help me find them.”

Leoni ran as fast as she could to Freddie’s house and told him what had happened. She and Freddie gathered Donnie and Robbie, and, together, they set off to find the missing clothes.



It turned into a long afternoon. One by one, they knocked on all of Leoni's neighbours' doors and asked if there were any clothes in their gardens. Gradually, they

gathered the clothes back together. Another of Leoni's T-shirts was stuck on Mrs. Kamau's roof.

Standing on Freddie's shoulders, Donnie managed, puffing and panting, to climb up on the roof and to recover the T-shirt, but, as she climbed back down off the roof onto Freddie's shoulders, Freddie's foot slipped and – “Crash!” – Freddie and Donnie came tumbling down in a heap together.

“A-a-o-o-h,” groaned Freddie, rubbing his bruised arms. Donnie didn't say anything, but her arms and legs were hurting, too. Leoni and Robbie helped them both dust off and comforted them, “May you be happy! May you be safe!”

“Phew!” Freddie said with a smile. “At least, we got the T-shirt!”

The friends put all the clothes they had found in a big pile, and, each taking some, they carried them back to Leoni's house. Leoni's mummy was delighted to see the clothes back.

“Oh, thank you so much!” she said, as she took the clothes from them and set them on the table.

“Hmm, wait a minute,” she said, thinking hard. “I think something is still missing. Yes, my lovely red skirt with the green stripes – the one I got for my birthday. It’s not here.



It’s the only one with that striped pattern, because it was made specially for me. Well, never mind. Thank you all very much, anyway.”

The friends were sad. Even though they had found all the other clothes, they couldn’t feel happy without getting the red skirt, too.

“What can we do?” asked Robbie. “We knocked on all the doors in the village. Where could it possibly be?”

“We need to think, think, think!” replied Freddie. “It must be around somewhere.”

The friends remained silent, wracking their brains for ideas. While they were thinking, the sound of shouts in the distance floated in the wind.

“What’s that?” asked Donnie.

“It sounds like people shouting in excitement,” replied Robbie. “Let’s go and investigate.”

“But what about the dress?” asked Leoni sadly.

“Don’t worry. We’ll keep an eye out for it,” said Freddie calmly.

As they drew closer to the shouts, they could hear a man calling out, “It’s a bargain! It’s a bargain! Something so nice for such a low price!”

A lady with a loud voice replied, “Yes, I’ll take it!”

Then a man shouted, “I’ll take it for my wife!”

By now, the friends had reached the place where all the excitement was. It was the local market. There was a really big crowd. It was so big that the friends couldn’t see what was going on. They could only see lots of people’s backs.

“We need to see what’s happening,” said Robbie as he jumped up and down trying to see over everyone’s head.

“I’ll need to climb on your shoulders again, Freddie, so that I can see over the crowd,” Donnie said with a big grin.

The others groaned, remembering what happened the last time Donnie was on Freddie’s shoulders, but they couldn’t think of any other way to see what was happening. Carefully, Donnie got up on Freddie’s shoulders. Leoni covered her eyes. She couldn’t bear to look, in case they

both collapsed on the ground again. Swaying this way and that, eventually, Donnie got high enough to see.

“Oh no!” she shouted down to the others. “I can see Leoni’s mummy’s beautiful red skirt! A market seller has got it up for sale!”

Leoni started crying. Freddie comforted her as Donnie slid down his shoulders back onto the ground. “Don’t worry, Leoni. We’ll get it back. May you be happy! May you be safe!”



“It’s too noisy here. How can we possibly get them to listen to us so that we can ask them for the dress back?” sobbed Leoni.

“I have an idea!” said Robbie excitedly. “Wait here for a minute.”

After a very long minute and just as the others were getting worried about him, Robbie reappeared, running with an armful of pots and pans. “I borrowed these from the kind lady at one of the market stalls,” he puffed. “Let’s bang them together to make lots of noise.”

Taking two pans each, Freddie and Robbie started banging them together as loudly as they could. What a din they made! The people at the back of the crowd turned to see what the noise was, and, gradually, the whole crowd fell silent. Freddie and Robbie stopped banging.

Taking a deep breath, Leoni called to the market seller, “Excuse me, Sir, but that dress is my mummy’s! We washed it this morning and hung it up to dry, but the wind blew it away across the village. Now it’s here. Please, can I have it to take back to my mummy?”

At first, there was silence. Then someone in the crowd started laughing. Soon, everyone was chuckling.



“Of course, you can,” said the market seller through his laughter. The crowd parted, and he walked over with the red dress to the friends. “And because your mummy has had a sad day worrying about the dress, you can also take her a present from me and all the other market sellers – a lovely green dress with red stripes.”

After thanking the market seller, Leoni and the friends carried both dresses back to her house.

When her mummy answered the door, she saw her red dress and shouted in delight, “Oh, thank you! Thank you! I’m so happy to see this again!”

Leoni gave her the new green dress too, explaining the story of the kind market seller.

“Gosh! That was so lovely of him!” said Leoni’s mummy. “I’ll tell you what. I’ll keep this new dress aside, and, when you’re bigger, Leoni, you can wear it yourself.”

“Oh, thank you, Mummy,” replied Leoni happily. “I’ll share it with Donnie when we’re both bigger.” The friends all smiled and hugged, saying to each other, “May you be happy! May you be safe!”



Robbie's Amazing Gift



There was one thing in the world that Robbie really wanted – a football! He loved playing football, whether with his friends or just by himself, kicking it against a wall. But hardly anyone in the village had a real football, so Robbie often made his own, rolling papers and grass into a ball and tying it with string.

Soon, it was to be his birthday, and he was very excited. “Robbie,” Robbie’s mummy asked, “is there anything you would like for your birthday?”

Well, as you can imagine, Robbie didn’t have to think about the answer very long. “I would love to have a football, Mummy, but I know they are expensive, so maybe I should wait and get one when I’m older.”

Robbie’s voice became sad as he spoke because he knew it would be very hard for his parents to get him a ball.

His mummy smiled and said, “Well, we’ll see.”

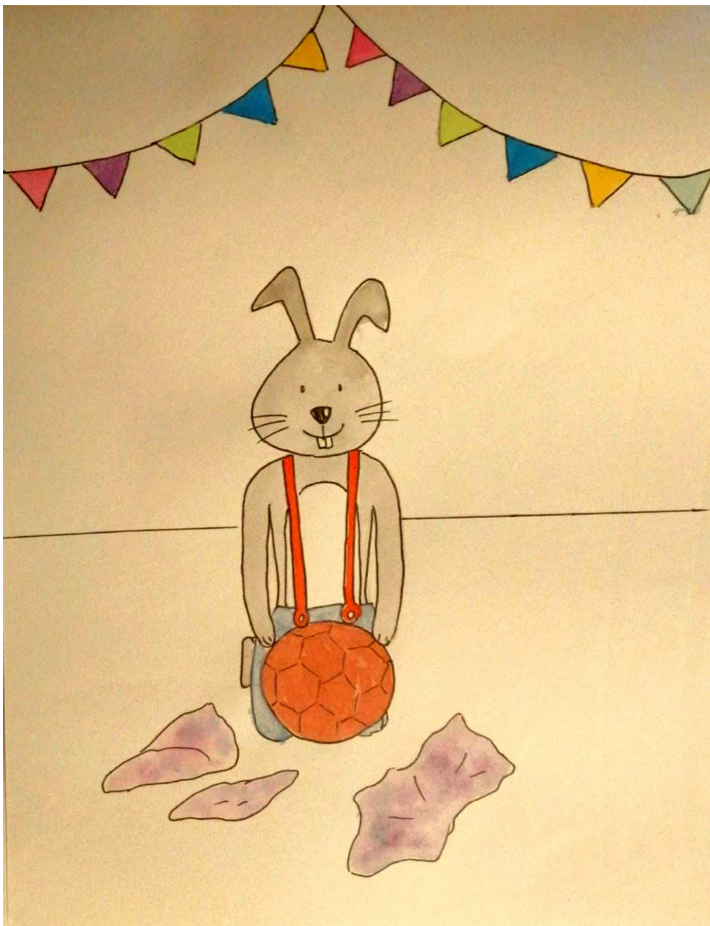


The next day at school, Robbie told Freddie, Donnie, Leoni, and Jennie about his birthday.

“It would be so amazing if I got a football,” said Robbie, “but I don’t think I will.”

“Don’t worry,” replied Freddie. “The most important thing is we will all be together on your birthday, and we can all take care of each other, even if we don’t have a ball.”

The next day was the big day – Robbie’s birthday. He was so excited that he woke up extra early while his mummy and daddy were still asleep. As he opened his eyes in the half darkness, he could see a shape at the foot of his bed. “What is it?” he wondered. With a leap of excitement, he jumped out of bed and picked it up. His name was written on it in big purple letters. With his heart thumping, Robbie peeled off the



wrapping paper. Inside was a fantastic red football, and red was his favourite colour.

“Wow!” he yelled at the top of his voice.

His yelling woke up his mummy and daddy, and Robbie ran to thank them and to give them a big hug .

Later that morning, as he walked to school with the ball, he felt as if he was on top of the world, bouncing the ball every step of the way.

At school, Freddie, Donnie, Leoni, and Jennie were very happy for Robbie! It pleased them to see him so joyful. At break times, they all spent



the whole time playing football together with Robbie's ball.

At the end of the day, Robbie walked home with his ball, very tired but very happy. "Wow! What a day I've had," he thought. "I got a red football for my birthday, and I got to spend the day playing with it with my wonderful friends. This is the best day ever!"

Robbie was almost home when he walked past some children from one of the neighbouring schools, playing football. He could hear the "Thud!" of their football, paper tied up with string – just like he used to use.

Robbie stood and watched them for a while. As he watched, he started thinking and thinking about how he could help the children.

After dinner, Robbie ran to Freddie's house with his football. "Freddie!" he called out. When Freddie appeared at the door, Robbie continued, "I have an idea to help some children at one of the other schools, and I'd really like it if you and all the other friends could come with me."

"Perfect!" replied Freddie. "Let's gather everyone together."



After a while, Donnie, Leoni, Freddie, Robbie, and Jennie were all sitting in the grass in a circle outside Robbie’s house. Robbie told them about his walk home from school. “So, what I’m thinking is this,” explained Robbie. “As I was watching the children playing with a ball of just paper and string, I remembered that we always say to each other that sharing is caring. So I thought, ‘Even though I really, really, really, really, love my new football, maybe they need it more than I do.’ So I will give it to them to play with, and, if they like it, they can keep it.”

“Wow!” exclaimed Freddie, Donnie, Leoni, and Jennie all at the same time.

“That’s the kindest thing I have ever heard!” exclaimed Leoni.

“Yes, me too!” replied Donnie.

“And me!” chimed in Freddie and Jennie together.

There was silence for a few moments as the friends thought about how amazingly kind Robbie was being.

“We can come with you when you offer it to them if you like,” said Freddie to Robbie after a while.

“Yes, thank you. That’s exactly why I called you all here and what I wanted to ask you,” Robbie replied with a smile.

The next day after school, all the friends went home together along the road where the other school was. They had a lot of fun kicking Robbie’s ball between them and over the branches as they walked.

When they got to the other school, they all stood and watched the children playing with their paper and string ball. After a few minutes, Robbie stepped forward, carrying his ball. “Erm,” he said, clearing his throat. Then he called out, “Hello!”

The children stopped playing and stared at his beautiful red football. “What a fantastic football you have!” said the oldest one.

“Thank you,” replied Robbie. “Actually, that’s what I wanted to talk with you about. I used to play with a paper and string ball just like yours, and I know how hard it is. Would you like to play with mine, instead?”

“Oh! That would be amazing!” said the smallest one. “Thank you!!”

“Please come and play with us, and bring your friends!” said another, waving to Freddie and the others.

Robbie, Freddie, Leoni, Donnie, Jennie, and the children from the other school all played very happily together until the sun started to go down and it was definitely time to get home.



“That’s the best football we’ve ever played with!” said one of the other children to Robbie. “Thank you so much for letting us play with it!”

“Well, actually,” replied Robbie, “I was thinking that you can all keep it if you’d like to.”

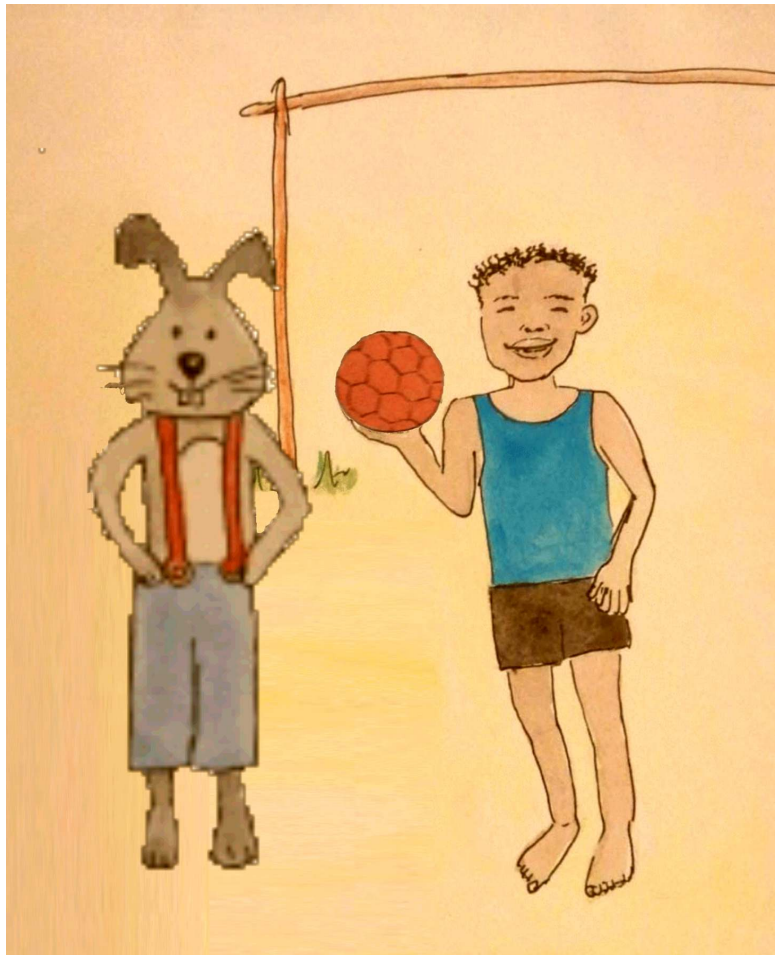
“Really!?” shouted the other children together. “That’s amazing! That’s so kind of you!”

“Please be our team captain!” shouted one of the children to Robbie. “That way you still get to play with your ball, and we would be so happy to play with you!”

Standing to one side, Freddie, Leoni, Donnie, and Jennie had huge smiles on their faces as they saw how happy Robbie was. He was happy because he could see how much joy his amazing gift was giving the children at the other school, and because they had chosen him as their team leader.

“When I got the football, I thought my birthday was the best day ever, but this day is even better. Thank you!” Robbie said to everyone with a big smile.

All the friends hugged each other in happiness.



11

A Very Important Visitor



One morning, on a beautiful summer's day, Freddie and all the friends arrived at school and chatted happily in the playground until Ms Winnie called them all inside.

"I have a big announcement," she said. "A very important visitor is coming to visit the school tomorrow. If she likes our school, we might even win the Best School prize!"

"Wow! It would so amazing if we won!" whispered Robbie to the others.

"Yes, it would." replied Donnie. "What can we do to help Ms Winnie so that the school wins the prize?"

At break time, the friends sat together and talked about it. "I know!" Leoni cried excitedly. "We can paint something and decorate the school with it. That way, the school will look very pretty!"

The friends all agreed that this was a fantastic idea. That afternoon, after school, they collected all the paper and paint they could find.

"What shall we paint?" asked Jennie.

"We could paint a picture of the time when we all ran in the school race and when we all won, because we took care of each other," replied Donnie.

"That's a great idea," said Leoni, "but we don't have any paper big enough to include everyone."

They all sat in silence for a moment.

Robbie broke the silence and said, “How about we glue lots of pieces of paper together into one huge piece of paper, and then paint the picture on that?”

“That’s brilliant!” cried Freddie.

Very carefully, they glued twenty sheets of paper together to make the biggest piece of paper any of them had ever seen. When they had finished, they stuck it on the wall, and they all stood together looking at it in amazement.

“Wow!” said Leoni and Donnie together. “The paper is nearly as big as the wall!”

“Yes,” said Freddie. “And now comes the other part – the painting.”

Together, the friends got their pots and paints and stood next to the wall, painting on the paper.

“We can paint each other,” said Robbie, laughing. Then they all began laughing.

“Yes, I’ll paint you,” said Leoni

“And I’ll paint you,” Jennie said to Leoni.



After a long time, they had finished painting a beautiful picture. They all stood back admiring it. They remembered the race day and how fantastic they all felt when they all won the race together.



“Well, I think for sure the very important visitor is going to like this tomorrow,” said Freddie, “and Ms Winnie will win the Best School Prize.” They all agreed, and, after putting the paints and glue away, they made their way home. It had been a long and tiring day, but they were very happy with their work.

That night, as they lay in bed fast asleep, the wind started to blow and blow and blow. It blew all night.

As the friends walked to school in the morning, they saw branches on the ground everywhere, blown off the trees during the night.

“It sure was windy last night!” exclaimed Robbie.

As they neared the school, Jennie spotted something strange. Big pieces of muddy paper with bits of paint on them were lying all over the ground.

“Wait a minute!” cried Leoni. “These pieces of paper are from our painting! The wind must have blown it off the wall during the night.”

“And now it’s all ruined,” sobbed Donnie.

Freddie hugged her and said, “May you be happy! May you be safe!”

“Now Ms Winnie won’t win the prize,” cried Jennie.

“Don’t worry,” replied Freddie. “We are strong and we don’t give up! We need to think, think, think of a new idea.”

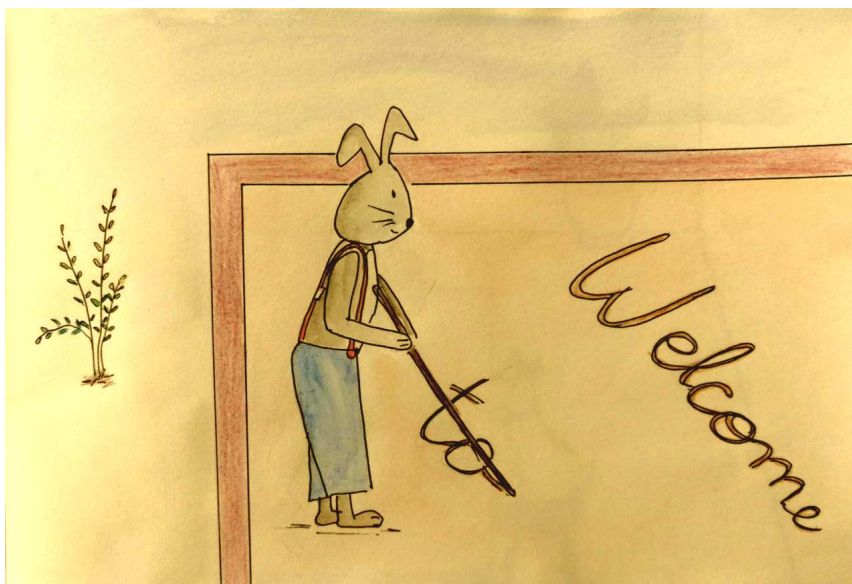
By now, they were in the school playground and standing next to the sandpit.

“Wait! I know!” Donnie cried excitedly. “Why don’t we draw a new picture in the sand with sticks?”



They all loved the idea and asked Ms Winnie if they could spend the first class period making a drawing in the sand. She smiled and said, “Of course. Thank you so much for decorating the school.”

After running to get some sticks, the friends got to work drawing a new picture in the sand. It was hard work, because they didn’t have long before the very important visitor was due to arrive. Finally, they were ready, and they all stood by the edge of the sandpit, looking at their drawing.



“The very important visitor will definitely like this,” said Robbie.

The friends ran inside to wash their hands and to get ready for the visit. Just then, there was a noise on the

school roof. Then another and another. Before long, it was so noisy that the friends could hardly hear each other speak. It was raining really hard.

The rain didn’t last long, and, a few minutes later, the very important visitor arrived. The friends were very excited. Freddie stood up and asked Ms Winnie if the friends could show the very important visitor the sandpit, and Ms Winnie agreed.

“We’ve got something very special to show you,” said Robbie. Together, the friends led the very important visitor toward the sandpit.

The very important visitor smiled and said, “I’m looking forward to it.”

But when they reached the sandpit, there was no drawing to be seen – just a lot of very wet sand and a few puddles. The friends could not believe their eyes.

“It was all for nothing,” said Leoni with a sigh.

“May you be happy! May you be safe!” Donnie whispered to her.

“Well, I can see that your picture has been washed away,” said the very important visitor. “That’s a shame, but, please, don’t worry. I have very good news for you. Ms Winnie has told me all about all of you, and how wonderfully kind and caring you are to each other and to all the people in the village. Being kind and caring is the most important thing anyone can do, so I’m giving this school the Best School Prize.”

The friends jumped up and down cheering and hugging each other.

“This is such an amazing day!” they all shouted, and Ms Winnie had the biggest smile you can imagine.



12

The Football Match

One day, Ms Winnie announced a football match with a nearby school. Freddy and the friends were really excited. When the day of the match finally came, the friends were ready and waiting. They waited and waited and waited, but the visiting team didn't arrive.

“What could have happened to them?” asked Donnie.

“Maybe they have gotten lost,” replied Leoni.

“Let’s organize a search party to look for them,” said Freddie.

“Great idea!” replied Robbie.

Together, the friends got the teachers and some of the villagers to help search for the lost football team. They spread out in every direction, checking all the places the lost football team could be. It was hot and very tiring.



“I’m not sure we’re ever going to find them,” sighed Leoni to Donnie.

“Don’t worry,” replied Donnie. “Remember what Freddie always tells us, ‘We are strong, and we don’t give up!’”

“Yes, you’re right,” Leoni said with a smile. “We can’t give up.”

Finally, after a long time, the friends found the visiting team. They had taken a wrong turn and had gotten lost in a farm with hundreds of goats and cows. By that time, both the friends and the visitors were very tired and thirsty. When they got back to school, Freddie said, “Let’s give our visitors some water and biscuits so that they can get their strength back for the match.”

Robbie counted out the biscuits, but there weren’t enough for all the visitors and the friends, too.

“What shall we do?” he asked the other friends.

“Sharing is caring!” replied Freddie. “We can let our visitors have our biscuits. That way, we’ll be taking good care of them.”

“Yes,” replied Leoni. “Even though I’m a bit hungry, it would make me happy to look after them and give them our biscuits.”

After everyone had rested for a while, they started the match. Everybody was very excited and cheered their team. “Come on! Come on!” they shouted.

The visiting school scored first. Then Freddy scored a fantastic goal, and all the friends celebrated with enormous cheers. They played and played. It was a close match.





Suddenly, Robbie kicked the ball, and it went high into the air. Everyone watched as it flew over the fence and rolled down

the hill – down, down, down into the river.

“Oh no!” cried Robbie.

The friends and all the visitors watched as the ball floated down the river, further and further away, until it disappeared into the distance.

Robbie started crying. “I’m so sorry, everyone!” he sobbed sadly. “Now the ball is lost. We can’t play football anymore, and it was me who kicked it!”

Freddie put his arm around Robbie’s shoulder and said, “Don’t cry, Robbie. It was an accident. You didn’t mean to kick it over the fence.”

All the friends comforted Robbie with a hug, saying, “May you be happy! May you be safe!”

“Don’t worry,” Freddie said. “We just need to think, think, think, until we come up with a plan.”

“I can’t think of anything,” Robbie sighed.

Then Leoni shouted, “I know! We can’t play football, so let’s make up a new game that doesn’t need a ball and play that with our visitors.”

“Wow! That would be amazing!” beamed Donnie.

Freddie looked around, searching for ideas for a new game. There were hundreds of leaves and branches lying on the ground. Once he had seen some children using branches and leaves to build a tent, a kind



of little house for themselves. He remembered that it looked like a lot of fun. He told the friends about it and suggested, “We could have a competition. Each team builds a tent. The team that finishes building the tent and has the whole team sitting inside first wins.”

“I love that idea!” said Robbie excitedly, jumping up and down.

The friends told the visiting team about the idea, and they loved it, too.

Both teams got to work. Donnie and Leoni collected branches while Freddie and Robbie ran to get armfuls of leaves. It was tiring, but it was a lot of fun. The visiting team was doing really well and was getting ahead of them.

“We’re going to have to work faster,” said Donnie, huffing and puffing.

“Yes,” replied Leoni. “We’ve got enough branches and leaves, so let’s start building.”

Piece by piece, the friends started putting the branches on top of each other to make the walls of the tent. The walls got higher and higher.

“This is great!” beamed Robbie.

They looked across at the other team. They, too, had built their branch walls and were starting to add the leaves. The friends worked faster and faster, trying to catch up.

As soon as the friends had finished their tent, they jumped inside. At the same moment, the visitors jumped into their finished tent.

“That’s amazing!” shouted Leoni. “We finished at exactly the same time. It’s a draw.”

Everybody – both the friends and the visitors – cheered loudly.

“That was fun!” shouted the captain of the visiting team. “Thank you, Freddie, for coming up with such a wonderful idea!”

“You’re welcome,” Freddie shouted back. “We had fun, too, and without a ball! Even though the ball went into the river, we all had a really good time!”

Freddie and the friends walked over to the visiting team.

“This is a beautiful tent!” exclaimed Donnie.

“You did a really swell job!” exclaimed Leoni.



“Congratulations!” exclaimed Robbie.

All together, they said, “May you be happy! May you be safe!”

The members of both teams went home with huge smiles on their faces.

13

Robbie Gets Stuck



In Robbie's house, there was a cupboard where Robbie's mummy put clothes and books. There wasn't much extra space in the cupboard, but Robbie enjoyed squeezing himself inside. Twice, he had climbed in and hidden himself inside and closed the door. Then he shouted, "Mummy, I'm hiding!" It was so much fun listening to his mummy, walking around the house opening doors and looking for him. When she finally opened the cupboard door, Robbie shouted, "Here I am!" and he laughed really hard.

Both times, Robbie's mummy scolded him and said, "Robbie, please don't play in the cupboard. It's dangerous! You might get locked inside, and no one will know where you are."

One beautiful morning, Robbie's mummy announced, "I'm off to the market. I heard they have nice oranges for sale. Please be good while I'm gone, and don't play in the cupboard."

"Yes, Mummy, I promise," Robbie replied, and he watched as she disappeared in the distance.





“Hmm, what can I do today?” he thought.

He knew that Freddie and the other friends were helping their mummies and daddies that morning, so they couldn’t play with him. For a while, Robbie sat in the sunshine on the doorstep watching the clouds go by. That was nice, but it was not enough fun for Robbie.

“I know,” he thought. “What if I play in the cupboard for just a few minutes? Mummy will never know.”

He looked down the road to make sure that she wasn’t coming. Then he went back inside and pulled open the cupboard door. Robbie’s mummy had put a lot more clothes and books in the cupboard since the last time, but he just managed to squeeze in. It was a very tight fit.

“I won’t close the door all the way,” Robbie thought. “That way, I can open it for myself when I’ve finished playing.” He left the cupboard door open just a little, so that he could see the room outside. While he was lying there, he felt a bit warm and a bit drowsy. After a few minutes, he was fast asleep.

While he was asleep, the wind began blowing through the little window that his mummy had left open. Soon, the wind became stronger, and the cupboard door started moving. One gust of wind blew the door nearly all the way open. A little later, another gust blew it the other way, and, suddenly, with a “Bang!” the door closed completely.

The loud noise woke Robbie up. He opened his eyes, but he couldn't see anything, and he couldn't remember where he was. After a few moments, he remembered that he was in the cupboard. He tried to push the door open, but without any luck. It was tightly closed. Even when he pushed with all his strength, he couldn't open it.



“Oh, no!” he thought, very worried. “I’m stuck in here, and there’s no one to help me!”

Robbie was so scared that he started crying, but then he remembered what Freddie told all the friends to do when they were worried, and he started saying to himself, “May I be happy! May I be safe!” That made him feel a bit better.

“What if I shout really loudly for help?” he thought. “Maybe, just maybe, someone will hear me.”

He took a deep breath and shouted, “Help! Help! Help me!” He shouted three more times, but, still, no one came. All the neighbours were out, and no one could hear him. Robbie waited a minute to get his strength back, and started shouting again, this time, even louder. “Help! Help! Help me!”

Meanwhile, Freddie had finished helping his mummy clean the kitchen floor and, hoping to play with Robbie, was walking toward Robbie’s house. Freddie knocked on the door, but there was no answer. He knocked again, but, still, there was no answer. Freddie was just about to give up and go to Leoni’s house when he heard a very strange noise.



It sounded like someone trying to talk with a sock in his mouth. “Wait a minute!” he thought. “That sounds a bit like Robbie.” Freddie kept listening and realised that it really was Robbie shouting for help. Because Robbie’s voice sounded so strange, Freddie figured that Robbie must be stuck somewhere. Freddie went to the front door and tried to open it, but he couldn’t. It was locked.

“Don’t worry, Robbie!” he shouted. “I’m going to get help, and we’ll get you out of there! May you be happy! May you be safe!”

Freddie ran as fast he could to get Leoni and Donnie. When they all got back to Robbie’s house, Leoni and Donnie also tried the door, but they didn’t have any luck, either. Together, the three of them shouted, “Don’t worry, Robbie! We’re all together now, and we’ll soon get you out!”

Donnie whispered to Freddie and Leoni, “But how are we going to get him out? We can’t get through the door. And Robbie’s mummy is nowhere to be seen, so we can’t ask her to unlock it.”

Freddie could see that Donnie and Leoni were also really worried about Robbie. “Don’t worry,” he whispered. “We are strong, and we don’t give up!”

Just then, Donnie spotted the small window high up near the roof. “Look!” she said to the others. “There’s an open window up there.”

“But it’s very small,” replied Freddie.

“I’m the smallest,” said Donnie. “Maybe I could squeeze in. But, first, I need to climb up there.”

“Let’s think, think, think about how to get you up there,” said Freddie.

After a few minutes, they came up with a plan. Leoni stood on the ground underneath the window, and Freddie climbed onto her shoulders. Then Donnie stepped onto Leoni's back and climbed onto Freddie's shoulders. When she stretched as far as she could, she could just reach the window. Taking a really deep breath, Donnie squeezed herself through the window. Then she jumped all the way down to the floor inside and landed with loud "Bump!"

She looked around but couldn't see Robbie. She wondered where he was.

"Help!" she heard behind her. She turned around and saw the cupboard. Quickly, she ran to the cupboard and pulled open the door.

Robbie fell out and gave Donnie a huge hug.

"Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!" he said. "I was so worried!"

With the key in the kitchen drawer, they unlocked the front door to let Freddie and Leoni in. All the friends were exhausted, and they just sat in the kitchen for a few minutes to get their strength back.

After a while, they heard footsteps outside the front door, and Robbie's mummy came in with a big bag of oranges

"Oh, how nice to see you all!" she exclaimed. "Well, you can each have one of these delicious oranges."

"Thank you," they all replied together. The oranges were very welcome after all they had just been through.



As they sat in silence eating the oranges, Robbie stood up. “Erm,” he said, clearing his throat. “I need to tell you something, Mummy.”

“What is it, Robbie?” she asked.

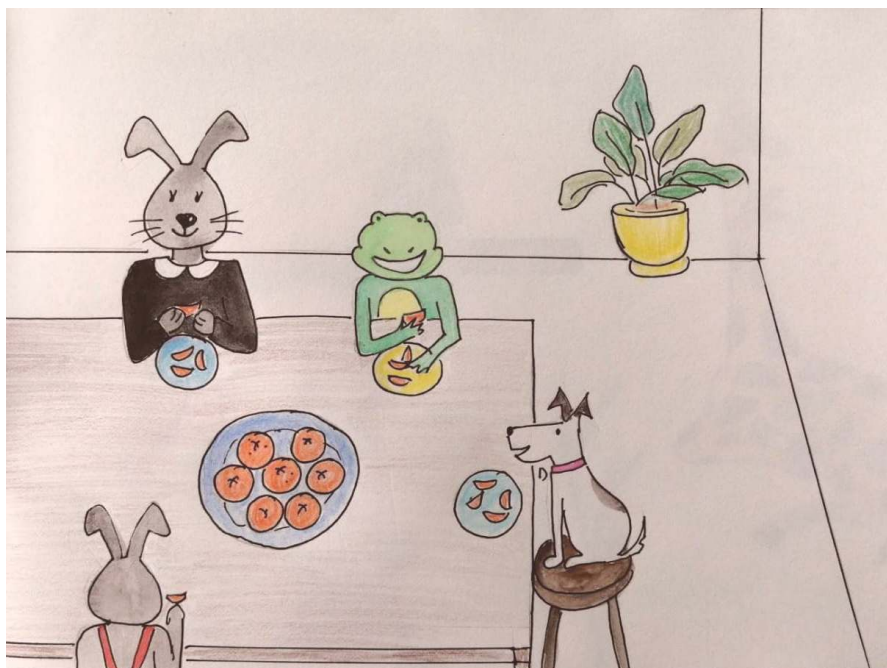
“Well, you know, you told me not to play in the cupboard because I might get stuck, and I promised that I wouldn’t. I’m very sorry, but I broke my promise, and I really did get stuck in there while you were out. I was really, really scared, and it’s only thanks to my friends that I got out.”

“Well,” Robbie’s mummy replied with a smile, “firstly, thank you, Freddie, Donnie, and Leoni, for rescuing Robbie. You really deserve those oranges. Secondly, thank you, Robbie, for telling me. You found your Lion’s Heart and were brave enough to tell me the truth. Well done! After what happened, I know you won’t play in the cupboard again.”

All the friends smiled in agreement.

“I won’t,” Robbie said to his mummy, “and I will keep my promises to you from now on.”

Freddie gave everyone, even Robbie’s mummy, a hug and said, “May everyone be happy! May everyone be safe!”



14

Donnie Gets Angry – Again!



One day, Donnie was having breakfast at home with her mummy and grandma. She was really enjoying each mouthful of her toast, when suddenly a bee appeared in the house, buzzing everywhere.

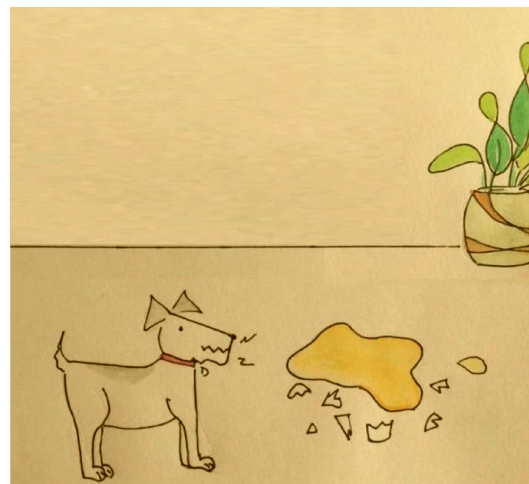
Donnie was excited, watching the bee, but her mummy was worried and tried to make him leave. She ran around behind the bee, waving her arms, so that the bee would fly out the door. While the bee was flying over the table, he landed on Donnie’s cup of orange juice. Donnie’s mummy’s ran to wave him out, but she hit the cup. The cup went flying and landed on the floor with a loud “Crash!”

Donnie was furious. “Mummy!” she shouted. “I can’t believe it! You’ve spilled all my orange juice, and it’s my favourite drink!”

“Donnie, your mummy didn’t mean to spill the orange juice,” replied her grandma. “It was an accident.”

“I don’t care!” Donnie shouted back.

Before either her grandma or mummy could reply, she picked up her school bag and ran out of the house towards school.



“Donnie! Come back here, please!” called her mummy. But Donnie was running so fast that she couldn’t hear her.



When Donnie arrived at school, all the friends were already there. They could see straight away that Donnie was very upset.

“Good morning, Donnie,” said Jennie.

“How are you today?”

“Not very well,”

Donnie replied sadly.

“What happened, Donnie?” asked Leoni gently.

“I got really angry with my mummy and ran out of the house to school without saying goodbye to her or to my grandma. Now I’m sad because Mummy will be worried about me,” replied Donnie.

The friends all hugged her and said, “May you be happy! May you be safe!”



“We can come home with you after school, if you like, to help you talk with your mummy,” said Freddie.

“Oh, thank you!” said Donnie.

Then Ms Winnie rang the bell and they all had to go inside to start their lesson.

When it was break time, they ran outside to play in the sandpit. It was a

beautiful day, and Robbie was running around like crazy, enjoying the sun. While Donnie was playing in the sand, Robbie was having fun seeing how many times he could jump over the sandpit without falling in. After jumping over it twelve times, he was getting tired, but he was determined to try it one more time. He took a big run and jumped, but not far enough. He landed in the middle of the sandpit right on top of Donnie.

Donnie was furious. Not only had Robbie ruined her sandcastle, but her legs were hurting from where Robbie had landed on her.

“Robbie!” she shouted angrily. “I can’t believe you did that! You are so silly!”

Robbie tried to tell her that he was sorry, but Donnie walked away, red with anger, and refused to listen to him.

A few minutes later, Ms Winnie called everyone in for the next lesson. Donnie was still angry, and she sat through the lesson, refusing to look at Robbie.

At lunchtime, Donnie went to Freddie. “Freddie,” she said softly, “please help me. I’m so sad. I keep getting angry, and then, when I’m angry, I hurt people by being unkind to them. I don’t know what to do.”



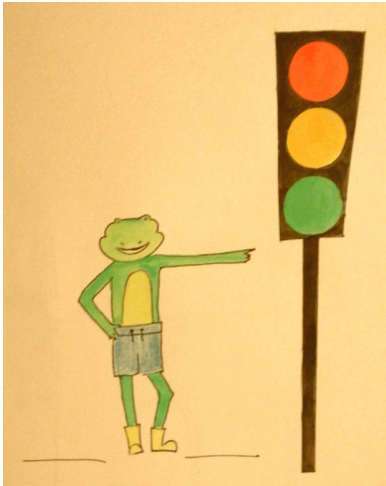
“Don’t worry, Donnie,” Freddie replied. “May you be happy! May you be safe! We’re all your friends, and we’ll come up with an idea to help you.”

Freddie got all the friends together. When Donnie saw Robbie, she said, “Robbie, I’m sorry I shouted at you. I didn’t mean to be so horrible.”

“I’m sorry, too, Donnie,” he replied. “I know it must have hurt you when I fell in the sandpit, and I really didn’t mean to.”

After they hugged, Freddie said “We need to think, think, think, so that we can help Donnie not get so angry in the future. Does anyone have any ideas?”

They hadn’t thought of anything by the end of lunchtime, and they had to go back inside for their next lesson. Freddie found it hard to concentrate on his maths. He really wanted to help Donnie.



After school, he walked home slowly, taking a different way from usual. Instead of walking along the forest path, he took the road through the town. Near the center of town, he came to a traffic light. Freddie stood there and watched. When the light turned red, all the cars stopped. When the yellow light came on, the cars got ready. When the light turned green, everyone drove off.

“Hmm,” thought Freddie, “that’s really interesting.” He walked on to the village and knocked on the door of Donnie’s house.

“I have an idea to help you not get angry,” he told Donnie. He told her about his idea, and she was very happy.

“This is great, Freddie!” she cried. “I can’t wait to try it!”

The next day at school, the friends played happily in the playground before classes began. When they heard the whistle, they stopped playing and gathered their books. As they were walking toward the classroom, Leoni wasn’t looking where she was going. She bumped into Donnie, and Donnie’s books all fell on the ground. Everyone held their breath, expecting Donnie to get angry and to start shouting. But she didn’t.

“Wow!” exclaimed Robbie. “That’s fantastic, Donnie! You stayed so calm. How did you do it?”

“Well,” Donnie began, “yesterday, Freddie gave me the idea of a traffic light. Whenever something bad happens, and I start to feel angry, I straight away think of a red light. That means ‘Stop!’ so I don’t say or do anything. I just stop. Then I think of a yellow light. That means ‘Be careful and get ready!’ so I take a deep breath and let the angry thoughts go away. Then when I’m ready, I think of a green light. That means ‘Go!’ so that I can talk or do something, but kindly and not angrily. It’s really helpful.”



“That’s great!” shouted Leoni. “I’ll use it, too!”

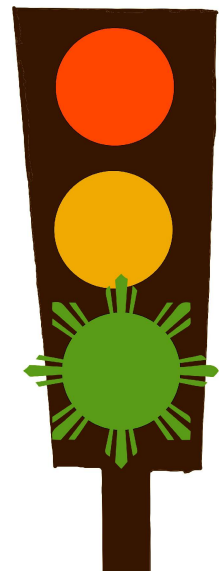
“And me!” shouted Robbie.



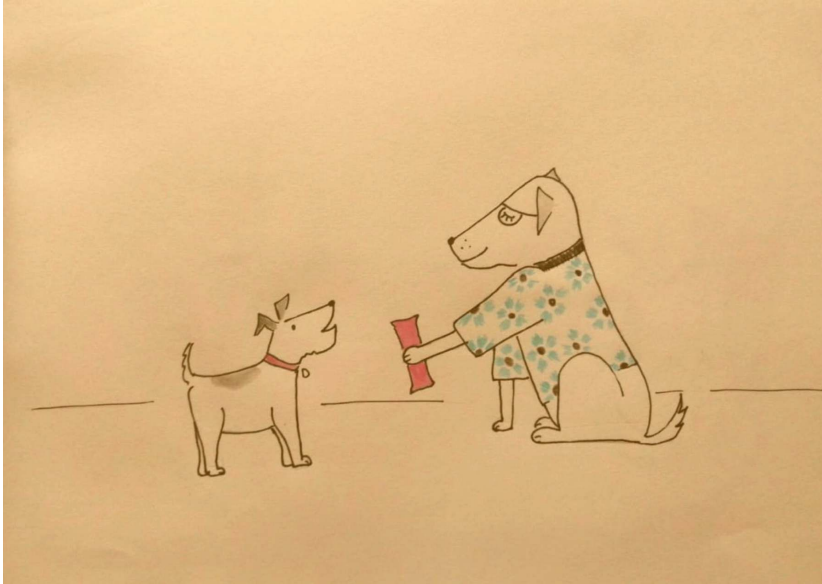
During the next few days, Ms Winnie noticed that Donnie was much calmer and didn’t get angry with anyone. After school one day, she asked Donnie how she stopped getting angry and shouting. Donnie explained the traffic light.

“I love it!” replied Ms Winnie with a huge smile. The next day, she said to the class, “For our next lesson, I would like to invite Freddie and Donnie to teach all of us their brilliant idea of a traffic light. This is something which we can use whenever we get upset so that we don’t get angry and say unpleasant things.”

After Freddie explained his idea, Donnie finished the lesson by saying, “So let’s all remember, ‘Red light, stop! Yellow light, breathe! Green light, go!’ Thank you!”



Donnie and the Packet of Biscuits



One day, Donnie was playing at her grandma's. She had a wonderful day and helped Grandma wash the dishes after lunch. When it was time to go home, Grandma said, "Donnie, you've been so good, here is a

packet of biscuits for you to enjoy. But I want you to promise me one thing, please."

"Sure, Grandma," Donnie replied. "What is it?"

"Please, promise me that you won't eat them all yourself and that you'll share them with your friends."

"Oh, yes, of course, Grandma!" Donnie replied with a big smile. She knew that the friends loved biscuits, too, and she was looking forward to sharing them.

Giving her grandma a big goodbye hug, Donnie set off down the road home. It was a long way back, but Donnie always loved the walk. The path was lined with beautiful trees and bushes, and the birds were singing everywhere.

After a while, Donnie began to feel a bit tired. She saw a lovely spot under a tree and sat down to rest. The grass felt so comfortable that she decided to lie down for a few minutes. As she lay there in the shade, she remembered the packet of biscuits.

“Hmm, it’d be nice to have one,” she thought as she reached into her bag and opened the packet. She popped a biscuit into her mouth. As she slowly munched it, she enjoyed the



delicious crunching. “That was so nice, I think I’ll have another one,” she thought and happily put another one in her mouth. She felt very peaceful, lying on the grass and listening to the birds and grasshoppers. “Ah, this is the life!” she said to herself as she munched on the biscuit. Without thinking, she reached into her bag and helped herself to another biscuit and another and another.

After some time, Donnie sat up, “Well,” she said to herself, “I’ve had such a nice time here, but I’d better get going, or Mummy will start to worry and wonder where I am. I’ll just have one more biscuit before I set off again.” She reached into her bag, but all she found was the empty packet. There were no more biscuits.



“Oh, no!” she exclaimed, starting to cry. “I can’t believe it! I’ve eaten all the biscuits, and I didn’t share a single one!” She walked home very slowly and sadly.

The next day, when Donnie arrived at school, she saw the friends, Freddie, Robbie, Leoni, and Jennie, talking together in the playground, and walked slowly over to them.

“What’s the matter?” Freddie gently asked. “You look sad.”

“I am,” replied Donnie, holding back a tear. Then she told them the whole story.

When she had finished, Robbie gave her a hug and said, “Don’t worry, Donnie. May you be happy! May you be safe!”

“Yes,” added Leoni. “And you are so brave to have found your Lion’s Heart to tell us all what happened.”

“Thank you,” Donnie said, beginning to smile. “You really are such amazing friends!”

After school, Donnie ran home as fast as she could. She had been thinking all day about how to make up her broken promise to her grandma, but she couldn’t think of anything. When she got home, she sat on the doorstep, panting from the long run. As she sat there, Donnie noticed how much rubbish was on the street outside her house. She thought about how hard her mummy worked to keep the house clean and tidy. “What a shame,” she said to herself, “that the street outside is such a mess!”

Suddenly, an idea popped into her head. Donnie put her bag down and started picking up the trash in the street, piece by piece. She found a huge basket and put all the rubbish in it. Gradually, the street



outside her house became clean and lovely again. Then she looked up the street and noticed that there was trash outside all the other houses, too.

“Wow! That’s a lot of rubbish!” she thought. “It would be so nice for all the neighbours if the street outside their houses was clean too.”

Even though she was already tired and hot, Donnie started picking up the rubbish in front of the neighbours’ houses on the rest of the street.

Just then, Freddie, Leoni, Robbie, and Jennie came walking up the street. They were looking for Donnie to check that she was all right, because they knew how sad she had been at school. They were surprised to see her picking up the rubbish outside her neighbours’ houses. When Donnie explained what she was doing, Freddie exclaimed, “Wow, that’s such a fantastic idea! That’s so kind of you, Donnie, to take care of your mummy and all the neighbours like that!”

“Yes!” added Robbie. “We’ll help you!”

“Yes!” shouted Leoni and Jennie together. “Let’s all help!”

“Oh, thank you! Thank you!” replied Donnie. “I’m so tired now, and it would be great to do it with all of you.”

Together, the friends walked up and down, picking up all the rubbish from the whole street. While they were doing this, some of the villagers

watched in amazement. They couldn't believe how beautiful the street was becoming and how hard the friends were working together.

Later that evening, after the friends had finished and all gone home, one of the villagers went to have tea with Donnie's grandma. "You'll never believe what I saw today!" she said. Then she told Donnie's grandma all about Donnie and the friends cleaning the whole street. Donnie's grandma was very happy to hear what a wonderful job her granddaughter and the friends had done.

Early the next morning, Donnie's grandma walked over to Donnie's house and knocked on the door. Donnie was very surprised to see her grandma standing there. Her grandma almost never came over before school.

"Donnie," her grandma said, "I heard the most beautiful story about what you and your friends did yesterday. I'm so proud of you! I've brought you a present." She reached into her bag and gave Donnie another packet of biscuits. "Oh, Grandma!" Donnie cried. "Thank you very much, indeed! But I'm afraid I have to tell you something. I broke my promise to you the other day, and I ate all the biscuits myself. I didn't share a single one with my friends. I'm so sorry!"



"Oh, Donnie, please, don't worry!" said her grandma soothingly. "I'm very proud of you for cleaning the street and even prouder now that you found your Lion's Heart to tell me what happened." In return, Donnie gave her grandmother a huge hug

Donnie took the packet of biscuits to school. At break time, she took the packet out of her bag and, keeping it hidden, went to join the friends in the playground.

“Right, everyone!” she called. “I want you all to close your eyes and put your hands out in front of you.” The friends had no idea what Donnie was going to do, but they did as she asked. Donnie reached into the packet and gave two biscuits to Freddie, two to Robbie, two to Jennie, and two to Leoni.

“Right! You can open your eyes now.” The friends opened their eyes.

“Wow!” they exclaimed together. “Thank you, Donnie!”

“But there aren’t any left for you!” said Freddie.

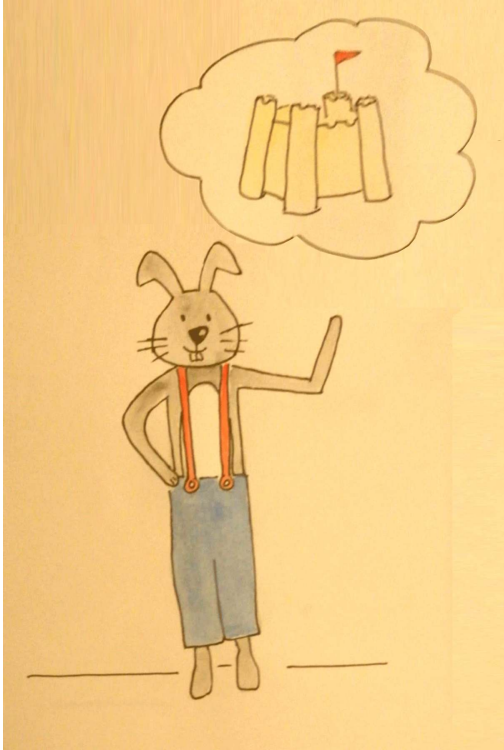
“Don’t worry!” Donnie replied. “I had plenty the other day. And it makes me so happy to see all of you having them. Sharing really is caring!”

“May you be happy! May you be safe!” they all said to her and gave her a huge hug.



16

The Sandcastle



One day, Ms Winnie announced some exciting news. There was going to be a sandcastle contest, and the school with the best sandcastle would win a prize. The friends were thrilled to hear about it. They all loved playing in the sand and building castles, and they were sure that they could build something fantastic for the school.

“This is so great!” exclaimed Robbie.
“Let’s build a huge castle!”

“Yes, but it has to be beautiful, too,”
added Leoni.

“We can decorate it with leaves and flowers,” suggested Donnie.

That afternoon, after school, Freddie, Donnie, Leoni, and Robbie ran into the forest and began collecting leaves and flowers to take to school the next day.

“Oh!” shouted Leoni, holding up a beautiful big red flower. We have to put this one at the top of the castle. It’s so pretty!”

Very carefully, they put all the leaves and flowers in their bags and went home. The friends were so excited about the competition that none of them could sleep much that night. They lay awake imagining how huge and beautiful their castle would be.

The next day, all the friends arrived at school, their eyes shining. “This is going to be the best day ever!” said Robbie.

Ms Winnie smiled when she saw how excited they were. “Good luck!” she called out as they gathered around the sandpit.

The friends were just about to start when Freddie said, “Wait a minute! We don’t have any buckets and spades. It’ll be hard to build a big castle without those.”

The friends fell silent. “Oh, no!” shouted Donnie angrily. “I can’t believe we forgot about them.”

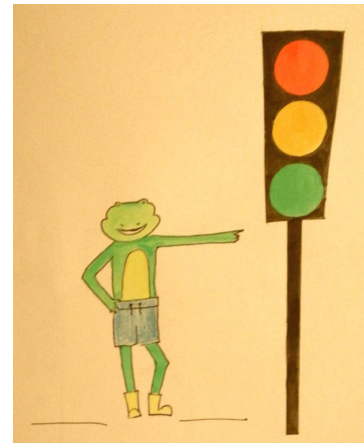
“Don’t worry,” Freddie said, trying to reassure everyone. “Let’s remember the red light and not have any more angry words. Now, yellow light, take a deep breath. OK, green light! Now we can talk again.”

“Phew!” sighed Donnie. “I’m glad you reminded us about that, Freddie. I was getting really angry.”

“Let’s think, think, think!” continued Freddie. “Where can we get some buckets and spades?”

“What about the farm up the road?” asked Leoni.

“Of course,” replied Freddie. “Farmer Joshua is sure to help us..”



All together, the friends jumped up and ran as fast as they could. They explained the problem to Farmer Joshua, and he handed them four big spades and four enormous buckets.

“Good luck!!” he called out in his loud voice, but the friends were already racing back to school.

It was not easy to run with the spades and buckets, and, when the friends finally made it back to school, they were very tired. By this time, half the morning had already gone by, and they had hardly begun.



“I’m worried that we don’t have enough time,” complained Leoni.

“Don’t worry!” Freddie comforted her. “We’ll just work extra fast. May you be happy! May you be safe!”

The friends started digging as fast as they could. With their big spades they could easily dig a lot of sand. Some of them started shaping the pile of sand into walls and towers. Very quickly, the sandcastle grew taller and taller. Soon, it was even higher than their heads!

“Oh, dear!” cried Robbie. “We’re not tall enough to get sand up on the top to make the decorations.”

Donnie started getting angry again, but then she remembered the red light and stopped. She thought of the yellow light, and took a deep breath. Soon she started to feel better and imagined a green light. “We have to find a way to get up to the top and do the decorations,” she said slowly. “Otherwise, it won’t be beautiful enough, and our school won’t win the prize.”

“I know,” sighed Robbie. “But how? The castle is already too tall. Standing on a chair isn’t high enough. Even a table is not enough.”

“Let’s think, think, think,” said Freddie calmly.

“What about a ladder?” suggested Leoni.

“That’s a good idea,” replied Robbie, “but where can we get one?”

They all looked questioningly at each other. Suddenly, Robbie jumped up and shouted, “I know! Maybe we can get one from the fire station.”

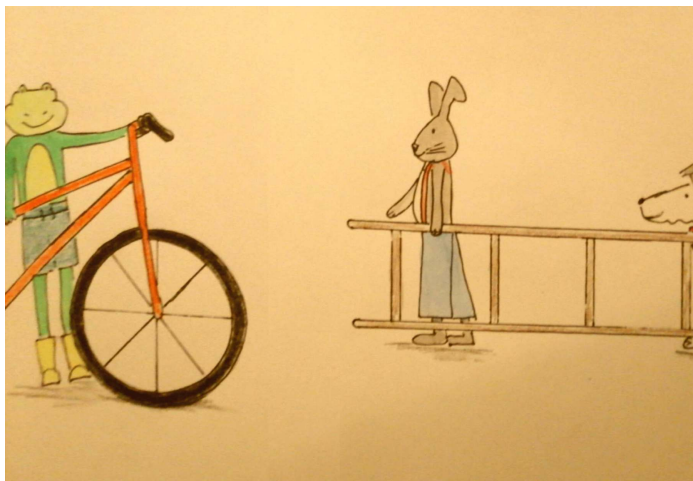
“But it’s so far,” replied Donnie, “and we don’t have much time.”

Everyone was silent again. “We are strong, and we don’t give up!” said Freddie firmly. “What if we go on Ms Winnie’s bicycle?”

Ms Winnie had a special bicycle with a trailer on the back. She used it to carry books and toys to school. Together, the friends went to ask Ms Winnie if they could borrow her bike.

“Yes,” she replied, “but only on condition that you ride carefully and safely.”

Freddie jumped on the bicycle, while the others got on the trailer. Freddie started peddling as hard as he could. It was heavy pulling them all along, but Freddie didn’t give up. After a few minutes, they reached the fire station. They all jumped off. They quickly told the firemen that they needed a ladder, and explained why.



“Well, of course!” replied the chief fireman cheerfully. “Everyone here at the fire station and the village will be very happy if you win the prize for the best sandcastle. Here’s a ladder, but, please, be careful with it.”

“Thank you, Mr. Fireman!” the friends all cried. They took the ladder and tied it to the trailer. Freddie was so exhausted that he climbed onto the trailer with Donnie and Leoni and let Robbie pedal. As they passed the houses and the shops, all the villagers laughed at the strange sight, but the friends didn’t mind. They had a very important mission.

As soon as they got back to the school, they carefully leaned the ladder against one side of the sandcastle. Leoni slowly climbed the ladder and stepped onto the top of the castle. The others handed up the flowers and leaves, and Leoni arranged them around the wall.

“There’s only one minute left,” whispered Donnie.

Leoni slowly stepped to the top of the ladder, and Robbie jumped back to get out of the way. Suddenly, there was a loud “Crash!” Robbie had bumped the ladder, and it had fallen to the ground. At the same instant, the officials arrived at the school. Poor Leoni was stuck on top of the sandcastle.

Donnie started to cry. “Don’t worry,” Freddie whispered. “May you be happy! May you be safe!”

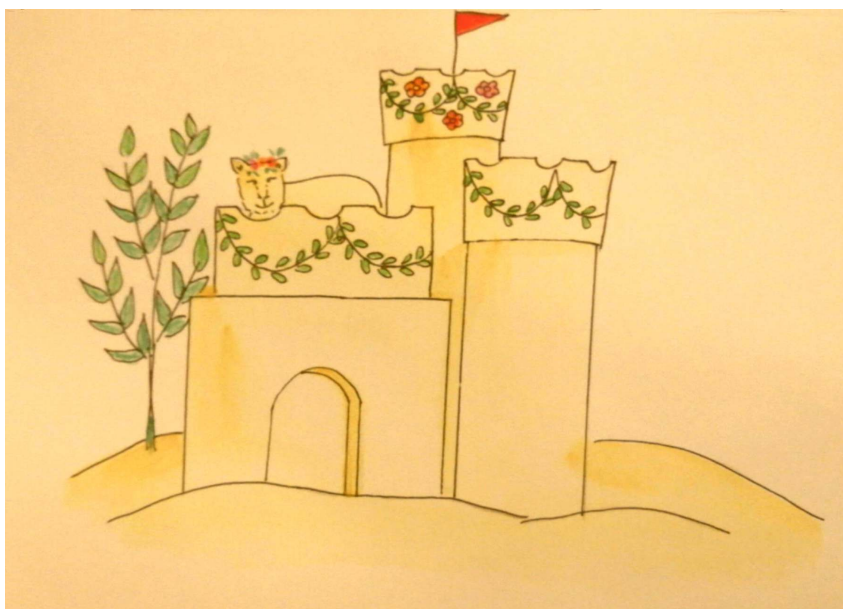
“What shall we do?” asked Robbie.

“I know!” whispered Donnie. “Leoni, you can be one of the decorations! Just sit very, very still among all the flowers and leaves. Don’t move!”

Just then, the judge arrived with Ms Winnie. “Well, I must say,” the judge proclaimed, “this is the last school for me to visit, and, out of all of them, yours is the biggest and most beautiful sandcastle I’ve seen. It’s truly amazing! And you even have a lion as one of the decorations!” she said, laughing. “I am giving you first prize!”

All the friends started laughing, too, and so did Ms Winnie.

“Wow!” Robbie shouted very happily. “This really is the best day ever!”



Donnie's Birthday Surprise



One day, Freddie called Robbie, Leoni, and Jennie to a “secret” meeting in the forest. They were very excited.

“What could the meeting be about?” they wondered..

When they had all arrived, Freddie said, “Tomorrow is Donnie’s birthday. Wouldn’t it be great if we could surprise her with something special!” The others loved the idea.

“So what shall we do?” asked Robbie.

For a few minutes, no one could think of anything. Suddenly, Leoni jumped up. “I know!” she shouted. “We could decorate the school with balloons and draw our faces on them. Donnie would love that.”

The others enthusiastically agreed.

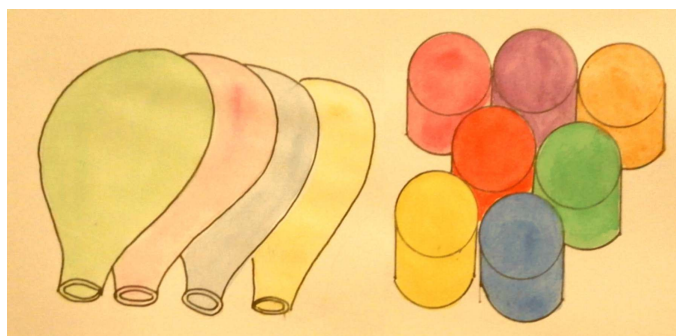
“Let’s go to the market and get some balloons,” said Jennie. They all set out for the market. They had to go slowly because of Jennie’s weak leg, but they didn’t mind at all. Laughing and talking on the way,

they finally reached the market and found the man who sold games and toys. When they explained what they wanted, he said, “Ah, I have the perfect thing for you. I just got these yesterday. If you blow them up fully, they become huge and will float up all by themselves. They are like magic balloons.”

“Wow!” exclaimed Robbie. “They sound amazing! I can’t wait to blow them up and start decorating.”

The friends bought four balloons, seven pots of paint, and some brushes from him and made their way back to the village.

“Let’s have another secret meeting at my house to blow up the balloons and paint them,” said Freddie. “We’ll have to be very careful so that



Donnie doesn’t see us. Let’s wait until it is nearly dark. Then you can all come to my house without her seeing you.” They were very excited. This was turning into a real adventure.

That evening, they all sat around Freddie’s kitchen table. “Right!” said Freddie. “Let’s start blowing up the balloons. We have four, so that’s one each.”

Leoni picked up the red balloon and started blowing. Her face got redder and redder. It was very hard work blowing it up, but, gradually, the balloon got bigger and bigger. The others watched and were amazed at how huge it became. They all began laughing excitedly.

“Right, time for us!” Robbie said, as he, Freddie, and Jennie picked up the other balloons and started blowing them up too.

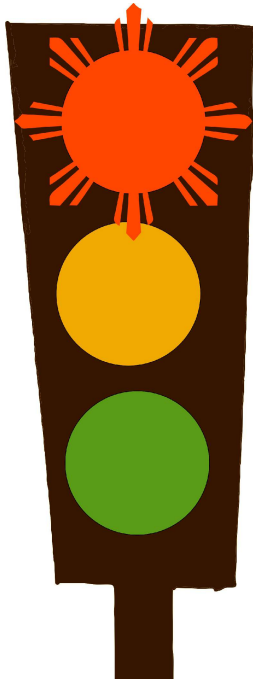
Slowly but surely, all their balloons got bigger and bigger and bigger. After a few minutes, the balloons were bigger than the kitchen table. The balloons were so enormous that they filled the whole room. When Leoni saw those four huge balloons, she started laughing again, and, soon, all the friends were laughing loudly.

“This is so much fun!” exclaimed Jennie. “These are the biggest balloons I’ve ever seen.” And, just as the man at the market had said, the balloons floated up all by themselves. The four balloons floated all the way up to the ceiling. Luckily, they had strings on them, so the friends could pull them down. To keep them down, they tied one to each leg of the kitchen table.

“Let’s start painting them,” said Leoni. “It’s already past our bedtime, and our mummies will be getting worried.”

Quickly, they arranged the colorful paints on the table. Each took a brush





and started painting his or her own face on one of the balloons.

“Hmmm, I’m not very good at painting a picture of myself,” said Robbie angrily.

“Don’t worry!” replied Freddie. “Donnie will still be able to tell that it’s a picture of you.”

“You’re right!” said Robbie. “I forgot my red light and said angry words. I’ll remember next time. Thank you.”

Freddie smiled.

After a while, all the balloons were painted with their faces.

“Let’s paint ‘Happy Birthday, Donnie!’ on each one, too!” suggested Freddie.

“But I don’t know how to write ‘Happy Birthday’” complained Robbie sadly.

“Don’t worry, Robbie” said Leoni, giving him a hug. “I will help you.”

Soon, they had finished. The balloons were beautiful!

“Let’s leave the balloons here for tonight,” Freddie said. “All of you can come over very early tomorrow morning and we’ll take them to school before Donnie gets there. Won’t she be surprised!”

Leoni, Robbie, and Jennie went home and jumped right into bed. They were tired after such a long day, but they were very excited about the big birthday surprise for Donnie in the morning.

The next morning, after a quick breakfast, they all met back at Freddie’s house to collect the balloons. As they set off, they could hardly get the huge balloons through the door, but, finally, they managed.



“We’ll need to hold onto the balloons really tight,” Freddie warned them, “because, otherwise, they’ll float away.”

Very carefully, holding the balloons tightly, the friends began walking to school. On the way, they passed some villagers, who

looked with amazement at the huge balloons with the faces painted on them,

After a few minutes, Jennie said, “Phew! My fingers are really tired, Robbie. Could you, please, hold my balloon for a few minutes while I rest?”

“Of course!” replied Robbie, taking her balloon. He stood there, holding one in each hand. He made sure he was holding very tightly onto the balloons as they danced in the wind.

“Actually, my fingers are tired, too.” said Leoni. “Could you please hold my balloon, Freddie?”

Before Freddie could answer, Robbie said, “Oh, I can hold yours, too, Leoni. I don’t mind. It’s really easy.”

“All right, if you’re sure,” said Leoni. Robbie gave her a big smile, and she handed him her balloon. “Thank you, Robbie,” she said.

As Jennie and Leoni sat down and exercised their fingers, Robbie suddenly started to feel rather strange. The feeling got stranger and stranger. Finally, he realised that his feet were no longer on the ground. “Help!” he cried. “I’m floating! The balloons are carrying me up!”

The others rushed toward him, but it was too late. Robbie was already out of reach.

Suddenly, there was a loud “Bang! Bang! Bang!”

The balloons had hit a tree branch, and all of them had popped. Robbie came tumbling back to the ground. “Ow!” he cried, holding his legs.

In all the excitement, Freddie had let go of his balloon, too, and it had floated away high into the sky. As the friends watched it float away, they realised that they had no balloons left. After all that hard work, they had nothing for Donnie’s birthday surprise. Robbie, Leoni and Jennie started to cry.

“May you be happy! May you be safe!” Freddie comforted them. “We don’t have any balloons left, but we can still think of something else. We are strong, and we don’t give up!”

The friends continued walking to school, this time in silence. No one could think of any idea. When they arrived at school, they were still thinking. “Donnie isn’t here yet,” said Freddie quietly to the others. “We still have time! Let’s think, think, think!”

Leoni spotted the school paints in the corner. “I’ve got an idea!” she said with a big smile. “Let’s paint our faces with ‘Happy Birthday, Donnie!’”

“That’s a fantastic idea!” replied Robbie, smiling. His legs had finally stopped hurting from his fall.

They rushed to the paints. Leoni painted Freddie’s face, and he painted hers. Robbie painted Jennie’s face, and she painted his. All four of them had “Happy Birthday, Donnie!” on their faces.



They had barely finished, when Donnie arrived at school. Seeing her, Freddie whispered to the others, “Quick, hide under the table!”

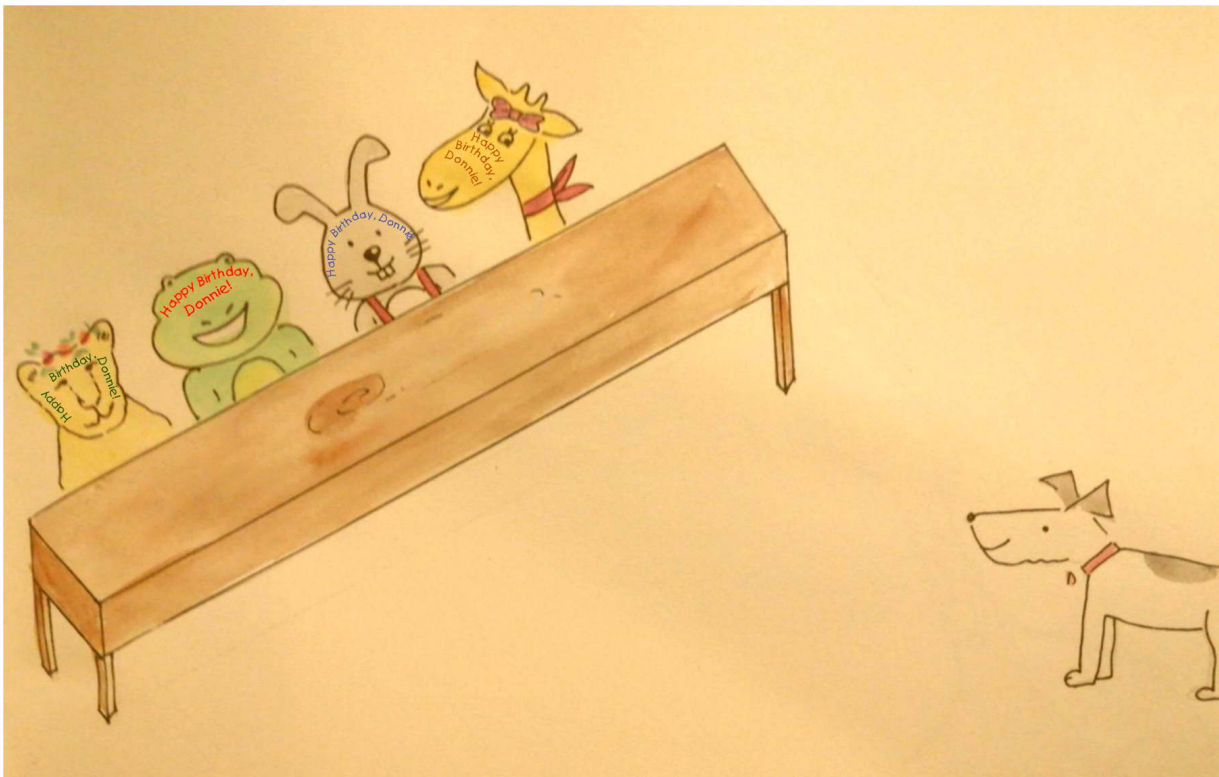
As Donnie stepped inside the classroom, they all jumped out shouting, “Surprise!”

When Donnie saw “Happy Birthday, Donnie!” on their faces, she broke into the biggest smile ever!

“Thank you, everyone!” she said, as they hugged her.

They told her the story of the balloons, and she laughed so hard that they began laughing, too.

“Wow!” she shouted. “You are the best friends ever! May you be happy! May you be safe!”



18

Jennie's Baby Sister



Jennie was very excited. A few weeks before, her baby sister had been born. Jennie loved holding her and walking around the house with her. She invited the friends to come and see her, too.

“Aw, she’s so lovely!”

exclaimed Leoni.

“When she’s older, she can come and play football with us,” laughed Robbie.

When Jennie’s mummy saw how kind the friends were to the little baby, she said, “You know, it’s rather tiring taking her with me to the market every time I need to shop. I wonder if you would mind looking after her a little bit while I pop out to buy some food.”

“Of course not!” Donnie replied with a smile. “We love being with her. Everything will be fine. Don’t worry.”

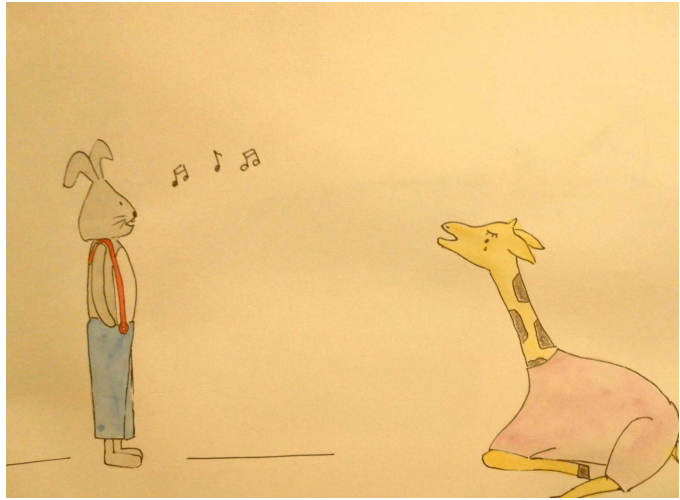
“Well, thank you very much.” Jennie’s mummy said. “If you have any problems, just knock on any neighbour’s door, and they will help you. I’ll come back as quick as I can.”

The friends were very happy. It wasn’t often that they got to play with a baby. They took turns holding her and rocking her in their arms. But it wasn’t very long before she started to cry.

“Don’t worry, Little Sister,” said Jennie gently. “You don’t need to cry.” But the baby didn’t stop crying. Not at all!

“I know! I’ll sing her one of my favourite songs,” suggested Robbie. “I’m sure she’ll like it.”

Robbie started singing. Freddie, Leoni, Donnie, and Jennie listened to Robbie’s beautiful voice and hoped that the baby would stop crying. But she didn’t. In fact, the crying got louder.



“Let’s think, think, think of a new idea,” said Freddie.

“Let’s try funny faces!” suggested Jennie. “My mummy said that, when I was a baby, that always made me laugh.”

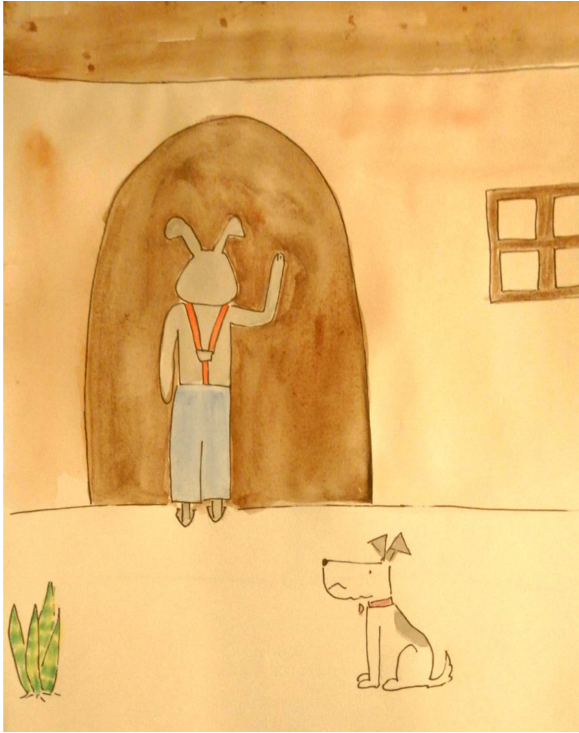
She tried holding her sister and making funny faces. Then Robbie tried. Then Donnie tried. But the little baby just cried even louder.

By this time, the friends were getting worried. Jennie’s baby sister was crying so loudly that people on the street were looking in the window, wondering what all the noise was about.

Suddenly, Robbie jumped up and shouted, “I know! Let’s get help from the neighbours. That’s what Jennie’s mummy said.”

“Of course,” replied Freddie. “Good thing you remembered. Leoni and Jennie, you’d better stay here with the baby while Robbie, Donnie, and I go and knock on a neighbour’s door.”

“Knock! Knock! Knock!” Freddie, Donnie, and Robbie stood outside the next door neighbour’s door, waiting for a reply. But no one came.



“Gosh!” said Donnie. “Let’s try the other neighbours.” Together, they ran from house to house trying to find someone who was in. Every house was empty.

“Maybe all the neighbours on this street have gone to the market, too, to get the fantastic fruit that’s on sale,” Freddie said.

“We can’t go all the way to the market to get help,” said Leoni in a worried voice. “It’s too far!”

“Don’t worry,” comforted Freddie. “May you be happy! May you be safe! We are strong, and we don’t give up! For sure, we will find a way to help Jennie’s baby sister stop crying.”

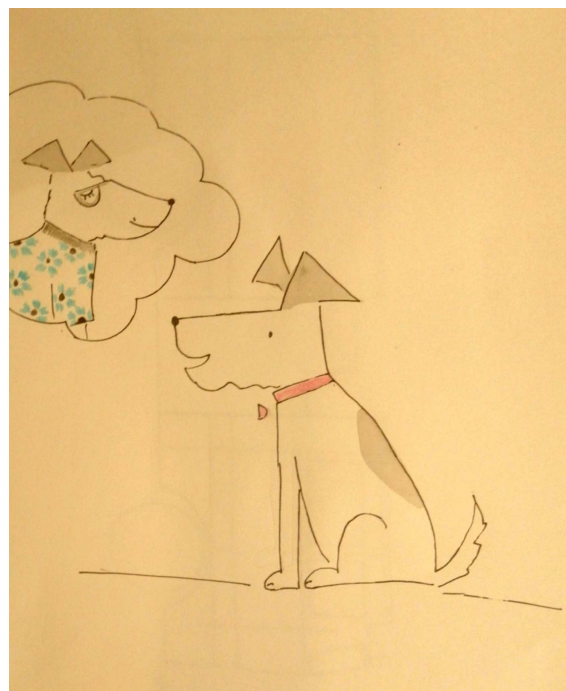
They went back to Jennie’s house, and the little baby was still crying.

“I have an idea,” said Donnie. “My grandma lives closer than the market. She looked after her own children and lots of grandchildren, too. I’m sure she’ll have an idea about what to do.”

“That’s a good idea,” replied Leoni. “But it will take ages even to get all the way there and to bring your grandma back here. We’ll have to take Jennie’s sister with us.”

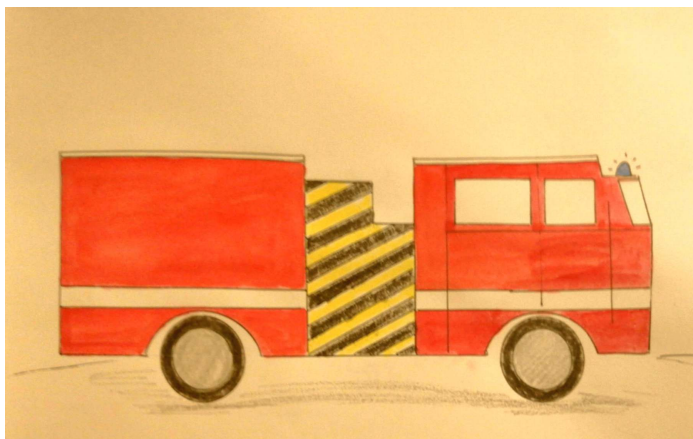
“But it will be very hard to carry her all the way,” Robbie objected.

“There must be a way,” added Leoni.



Just then, they heard a loud noise. It got louder and louder. It was a big vehicle, and it was beeping its horn.

The friends looked out the window and saw the fire truck coming down the street. In it were the friendly firemen who had helped them before. Freddie rushed outside and stood beside road, waving his arms to make them stop. Even though they were in a bit of a hurry, the firemen stopped to see what the matter was. They knew that Freddie would not stop them unless it was very important.



Freddie explained as quickly as he could about the crying baby and how important it was that they get help from Donnie's grandma.

"Jump in quickly!" shouted the firemen to the friends.

Carrying Jennie's baby sister in their arms, the friends jumped in the fire engine. It was a tight squeeze, but they all managed to sit down.

"We're off to help a baby elephant who fell in a hole," explained the firemen. "Donnie's grandma's house is near there. We'll drop you off."

As they got closer to Donnie's grandma's house, they could see a big crowd gathered around the hole. "So that's where all our neighbours are!" said Jennie.

The friends really wanted to go with the firemen to help them rescue the elephant, but they had something very important of their own to do. When they reached Donnie's grandma's house, they jumped out with Jennie's baby sister. Luckily, Donnie's grandma was at home

The friends explained to her that they couldn't get the baby to stop crying.

"Not even my singing helped," said Robbie.

"Nor my funny faces," added Jennie.

"Well, let me see," said Donnie's grandma as she took the baby in her arms. She knew a lot about babies. She looked inside the baby's nappy and pulled out a small stone. "Ah-hah!" she said, "I think this is the problem. The stone was hurting her." As soon as she took out the stone, the baby stopped crying.

"Oh, thank you!" said Jennie. "I was so worried about my baby sister!"

Just then, they heard a big cheer from outside. The firemen had pulled the baby elephant out of the hole.

"Hurray!" shouted all the friends, cheering both the firemen and Donnie's grandma.

"May you be happy! May you be safe!" Freddie said to everyone. Then he exclaimed, "Old people are clever! They know a lot of important things that we kids don't know!"



19

Leoni's Flower Heart



One Sunday, Leoni was playing by herself in the forest. She loved it there. The sun was shining, the birds were singing, and there was a gentle wind blowing across her face. “Aaaah, this is so nice!” she said to herself.

Looking around, Leoni saw lots of beautiful flowers in all her favourite colours. This gave her an idea. “I wonder if I could make a heart out of flowers,” she thought. “Then I could decorate my bed at home with it.”

Leoni started picking flowers. She picked more and more and more flowers, until she had a huge pile. Carefully, she started joining them together to make a chain, which she fashioned into the shape of a giant heart. It took ages. She worked at it all morning before going home for lunch. Then, after lunch, she went back to the forest and worked on it some more. She spent the whole day there.

By dinner time, she was tired, but very happy, and the heart looked amazing. “Wow!” Leoni said to herself. “I’ve never made anything as beautiful as this before. My bed is going to look so great with this on it.”

She carried the flower heart home very carefully. When she walked into the house with it, her mummy couldn't believe her eyes. "Leoni!" she exclaimed. "That's wonderful! That's the most beautiful flower heart I've ever seen!"

"Thank you, Mummy," Leoni replied, smiling. "I'm very happy with it, too."

Leoni laid it on her bed, and, that night, she lay right next to it so that she could smell the flowers all night.

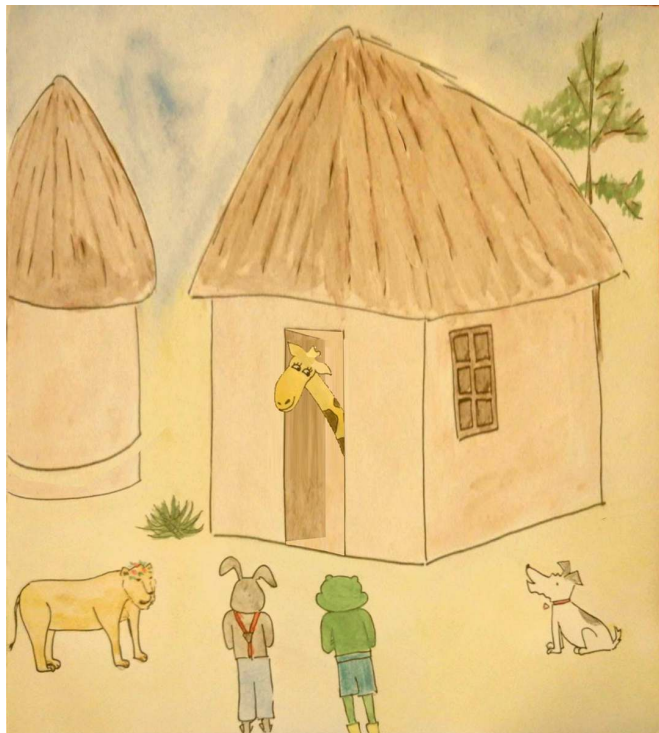
The next day, Leoni walked happily to school. In the classroom, she saw Freddie, Robbie, and Donnie, but Jennie's chair was empty. Leoni asked the others, but no one knew where Jennie was.

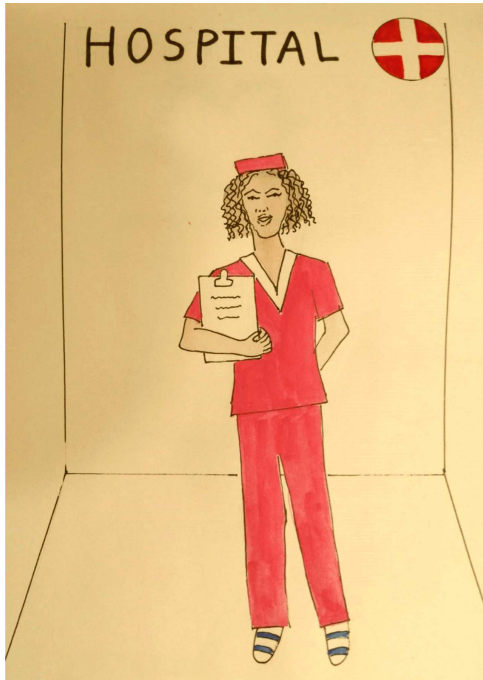
After school, all the friends went to Jennie's house to find out why she had missed school. Her mummy opened the door. She looked very worried. When Freddie asked her where Jennie was, she replied, "Jennie is very sick. It is another problem with her leg. We had to take her to the hospital, where the doctors and nurses are looking after her."

"Gosh!" gasped Freddie.
"We have to go and visit her."

All the friends were worried about Jennie. Even though she was quite new at school and they didn't know her as well as each other, they cared about her very much.

After dinner, they met outside Freddie's house and began the long walk to the hospital.





“I’ve never been to a hospital before,” said Donnie.

“Nor me,” said Robbie.

“We’ll get to meet a real doctor and a real nurse,” added Freddie.

Finally, they arrived at the hospital, and a very kind nurse welcomed them. “I’m so glad you’ve come,” she said with a big smile. “I’ll take you to see Jennie.” The friends followed her through the hospital, looking at the sick people in their beds as

they went.

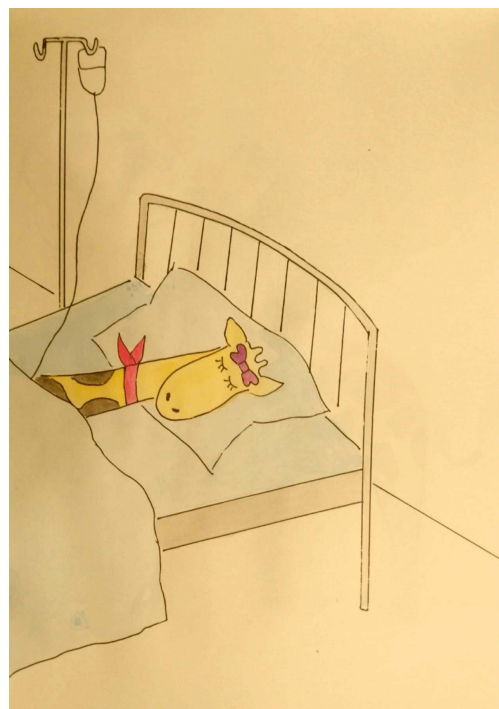
“May they all be happy! May they all be safe!” said Freddie.

When they reached Jennie’s bed, she was fast asleep. They could see a huge bandage on her leg, even bigger than the one she normally had. “Poor Jennie,” whispered Leoni. “Her leg must be hurting a lot.”

“She’s resting now,” said the nurse. “I’m really sorry that you can’t talk with her. I’ll tell her that all of you came to see her.”

“Thank you,” replied Robbie.

The friends all stood around Jennie’s bed very quietly, so as not to wake her up, and whispered, “May you be happy! May you be safe!” Then they quietly left the hospital and walked back home. They were sad that they hadn’t been able to talk with Jennie, but they were glad that they had gone to see her.



The next day at school, they talked about Jennie and what they could do. “How can we help her get better?” asked Robbie. “We’re not doctors or nurses.”

“We can’t cure her leg,” Donnie said, “but there must be something we can do to make her feel better!”

“We have to think, think, think of something to make her happy. That will help her get well,” suggested Freddie.

“Wait! I have an idea!” exclaimed Leoni. “Come to my house after school, and I will show you something.”

After school, they all walked to Leoni’s house, wondering what she was going to show them. When she opened the door, they saw the flower heart, and their eyes almost popped out of their heads. Leoni’s mother had hung it on the wall over Leoni’s bed.

“That’s fantastic!” gasped Robbie.

“Let’s take it to Jennie to bring her happiness,” said Leoni.

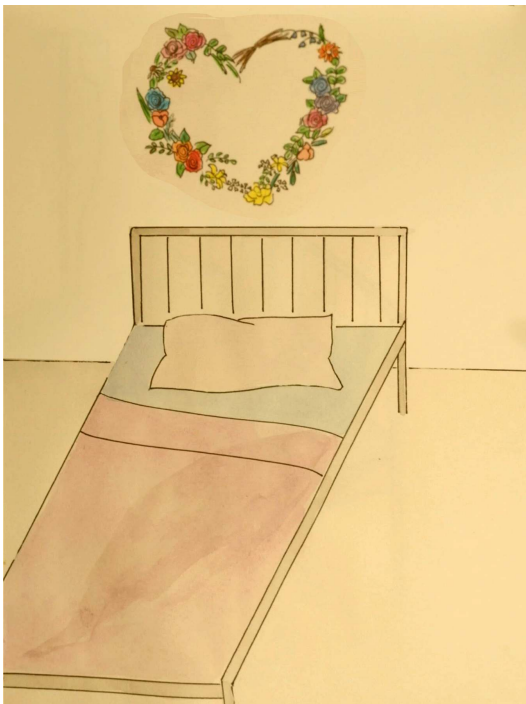
“That’s so kind and caring of you, Leoni!” replied Freddie.

“But how will we take it to the hospital?” Donnie wondered. “It’s so big!”

“Well, maybe we could all carry it together,” suggested Robbie.

“Yes, we could,” replied Donnie, “if we go very slowly and carefully.”

Freddie and Robbie carefully removed the flower heart from the wall, and Leoni and Donnie each took ahold of it, too. All together, they carried it out of the house and began walking to the hospital.



They had to walk slowly and watch where they put their feet so that they didn't stumble. They didn't want to damage even one of the beautiful flowers. It was hard work, walking in the sun.



After what seemed like miles and miles of walking, they were very tired, but it was still a long way to the hospital. They sat down to rest for a few minutes. “We’ll never make it!” cried Donnie sadly. “It’s too far!”

“Don’t worry!” Freddie comforted her. “We are strong, and we don’t give up! We just need a new idea. Let’s think, think, think!”

“Listen!” shouted Robbie suddenly. “That noise is coming from trucks on the big road over there.”

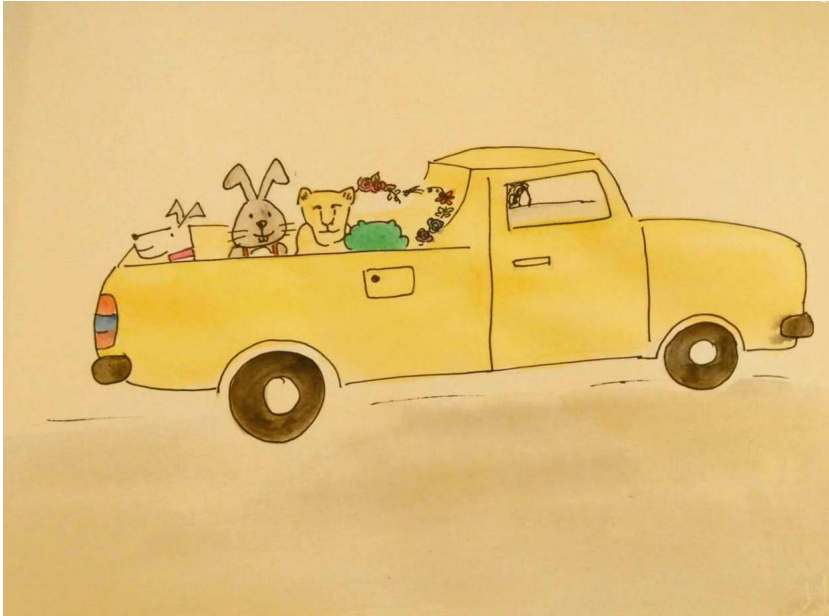
“You’re right!” cried Leoni. “Maybe we could get a ride to the hospital!”

“Let’s go!” agreed Freddie. They all stood up, picked up the flower heart, and very carefully carried it toward the big road. When they got there, they laid the flower heart in the grass. There were a lot of trucks going by. When they saw one that was not going so fast, they all started waving like crazy to get the truck driver’s attention. It worked, and the truck rolled to a stop. “What seems to be the matter?” the truck driver called out.

“Our friend, Jennie, is in the hospital,” Freddie began.

“We want to give her this flower heart,” said Leoni.

“It too hard for us to walk and carry this all the way to the hospital,” said Robbie.



“Would you, please, give us a ride?” asked Donnie.

“Of course, I’ll take you there!” the truck driver said with a huge smile. “You are doing something really kind for your friend. That is very

important!”

Happily, the friends picked up the flower heart and climbed into the back of the big truck, taking special care to keep the flowers safe. As the truck drove down the road, people stared at the friends sitting in the back with the huge flower heart. It was so beautiful that they could not help but smile.

Before long, the truck stopped right in front of the hospital. The friends thanked the kind driver, got down, and carried the flower heart to the entrance. All the doctors and nurses smiled in amazement. The nurse they had met before recognized them and let them carry the flower heart through the halls. When they reached Jennie’s room, she was asleep again.

“Oh, no!” whispered Leoni sadly. “Now we can’t give it to her!”

“We can leave it for her,” suggested Donnie.

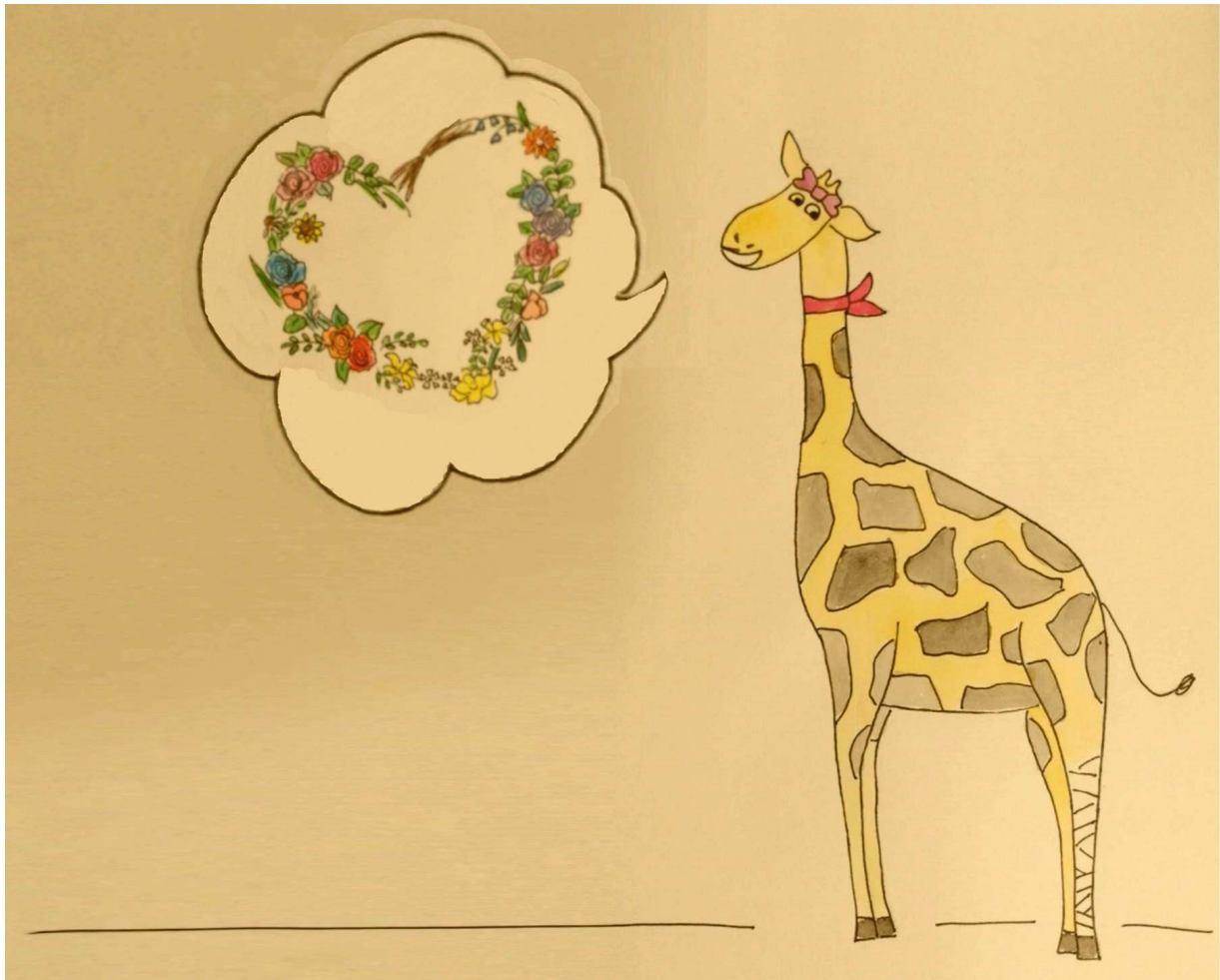
“But she won’t know who brought it,” Robbie complained.

“It doesn’t matter,” said Freddie. “The important thing is that she has it. She’ll see it when she wakes up.”

The friends left the flower heart right beside Jennie and set off on the long walk home.

Two days later, to their big surprise, Jennie came back to school. “It’s so great to see you all!” she said with a big smile as they all hugged her. “The nurse told me that you came to see me. And you’ll never guess what happened. When I woke up, I found the most beautiful flower heart next to me. It was amazing! I don’t know who left it, but it made me so happy that I began to feel much stronger, and the doctors let me go home a day early. Whoever made that flower heart was very clever, and very kind to have given it to me!”

Freddie, Donnie, Robbie and Leoni looked at each other and smiled quietly. Their hearts were so happy that they had helped Jennie get better!



Robbie and the Football Book

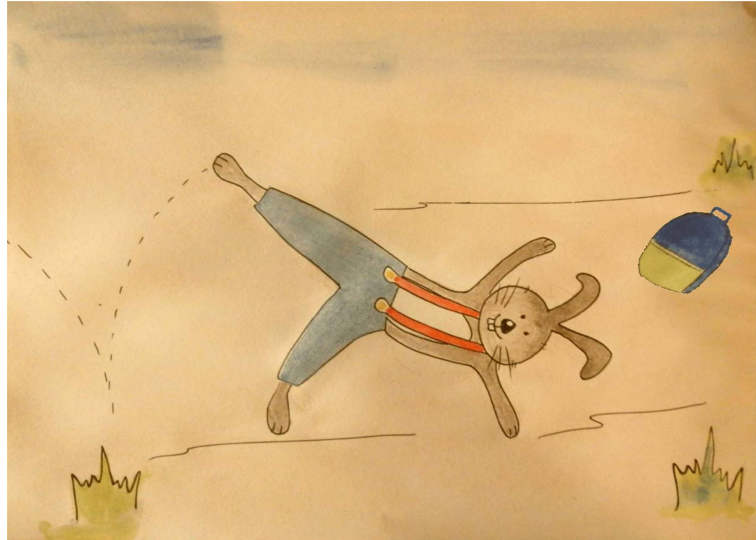


One day, Ms Winnie asked the friends to each choose a book from the shelf and to read quietly. Robbie didn't like reading. He found it really hard work. As he and Freddie stood at the shelf, looking at the books, Freddie saw a book about football, with lots of pictures. He handed the book to Robbie and said, "Try this one, Robbie. You love football, so maybe you'll enjoy reading this."

Robbie took the book and sat at his desk. He opened it and looked at the pictures, which were really interesting, so he started reading. To his surprise, he loved it. He read more and more of it and learned lots of things about football that he didn't know before.

At the end of the lesson, Ms Winnie announced, "If you like your book, you can take it home with you and continue reading, but, please, promise that you will bring it back in the morning, so that others can read it, too." All the friends promised to bring their books back.

As they walked home together, Robbie was so happy he had the book to read that he turned cartwheels. As soon as he got home, he took the book out of his bag and read more. He read the book before dinner and after dinner, and he was still reading it when he had to go to bed



“Robbie,” his mummy said, “please put that book in your bag for tomorrow. It’s time to sleep.”

It was hard for Robbie to stop reading. He loved the book so much that he wanted to keep it, but he remembered his promise to Ms Winnie. “Well,” he said to himself, “I don’t think she’ll notice if I don’t take it back. I’ll just hide it under my bed so that I can read it tomorrow night, too.” Before he went to sleep, he carefully hid the book under his mattress where no one else would find it.



The next day, as the friends arrived at school, they gave their books back to Ms Winnie. All, that is, except Robbie. He hid in the bushes until Ms Winnie started the counting lesson, and, at the last minute, he rushed in and sat down.

“Good morning Robbie!” Ms Winnie said, and she carried on with the lesson.

“Phew!” thought Robbie. “She didn’t say anything about the book.”

The whole day, Robbie thought about the book, even when he was playing with the friends in the sandpit. He was really looking forward to reading it when he went home, but he was also worried that Ms Winnie would remember it and that he would be in trouble.

Freddie looked at him and said, “Robbie, you look a bit worried. May you be happy! May you be safe!”

Robbie smiled back and said, “Thank you, Freddie.”

That afternoon, after the last class, the friends put their books in their bags and started to go home. Robbie was the last one to leave the classroom. Just before he went through the door, Ms Winnie called, after him, “Robbie, could you give me your book, please.” Robbie pretended not to hear her and walked away very quickly without stopping.

After few minutes, Robbie didn’t feel so good. He was worried. He knew that he had broken his promise to Ms Winnie, and he felt bad about that. Just before he got home, he met Leoni on the path.

“Robbie, you look sad!” she exclaimed. “Can I help you?”

At first, Robbie didn’t want to say anything, but Leoni was so kind and gentle that he decided to tell her about the book, and he explained what he had done.

“Don’t worry!” Leoni replied, comforting him. “May you be happy! May you be safe! If you tell Ms Winnie the truth with your Lion’s Heart, she will understand.”

“Thank you, Leoni,” Robbie said. “You’re right, and I feel a lot better now.”



That evening, Robbie read the book without stopping, but it was a big book, and he hadn't finished it by bedtime. The next morning, he put it in his bag and walked to school. As soon as he arrived, he handed the book to Ms Winnie and said, "Ms Winnie, I'm very sorry I didn't give you this book yesterday. It's just that I enjoyed it so much that I hid it under my bed so that I could read it last night, too. I'm sorry."

"Well, thank you for bringing it today, Robbie," Ms Winnie replied. "I'm glad that you were able to find your Lion's Heart to tell me the truth."

Robbie felt much better that he had told the truth, but he still wanted the book. It was the best book he had ever read. Later that morning, he saw that Ms Winnie had put it back on the shelf. When nobody was looking, he took the book and hid it behind the other books.

In the afternoon, while the friends were playing in the sand, Donnie went inside to rest. She went to the bookshelf and looked through the books, trying to find something to read. "That's strange!" she said to herself. "I remember seeing a fantastic book about football here, and I really wanted to read it, but it's disappeared. I wonder where it is."

That afternoon after school, as the friends were walking home together, Donnie said, "You know, a strange thing happened at school



today. I wanted to read that football book because I love football, but I couldn't find it on the shelf. It was gone."

"That is strange," replied Leoni. "Maybe Ms Winnie forgot to put it back on the shelf."

Robbie's face turned red, but he didn't say anything.

At home that evening, Robbie thought about poor Donnie and how she couldn't read the book, because he had hidden it to keep it for himself. He felt terrible.

The next morning before school, Robbie went to Donnie's house. "Donnie," he said, "I have to tell you something. "I loved that football book so much that I hid it behind the other books on the self so that no one else could find it. When you told us that you wanted to read the book, I remembered that sharing is caring. You are one of my best friends, and I need to share the book with you and with everyone else!"

Donnie smiled and replied, "Oh, Robbie! May you be happy! May you be safe! You are so brave that you found your Lion's Heart to tell me what happened."

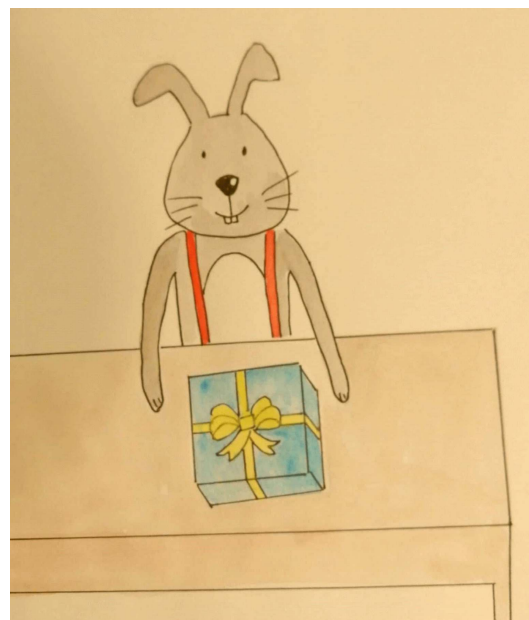
Robbie felt much happier after he told Donnie about the book.

A few days later, Robbie arrived at school and found a large package on his desk. "What's this?" he asked everyone, but the other friends and Ms Winnie just smiled.

"Go on! Open it!" exclaimed Freddie.

Robbie slowly unwrapped the package. It was the football book. He opened it, and on the front page was written,

**To Robbie,
Who loves this book so much
that he should have it!
With love from
Freddie, Donnie, Leoni,
Jennie, and Ms Winnie**



Jennie Leaves



“Hello everyone. I’m always very happy to see all of you , but, today, I have sad news,” Ms Winnie announced as she began the class. “Jennie’s family is leaving for a place far away, so Jennie will be leaving us soon.”

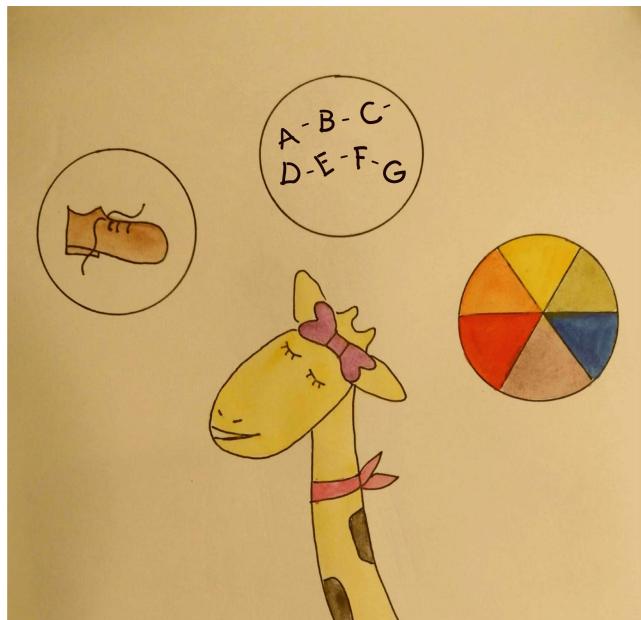
The friends couldn’t believe their ears. Since she arrived, Jennie had become very special to them. At break time, they talked about it.

“Jennie helped me so much!” exclaimed Robbie. “I used to find it very hard to tie my shoelaces. Jennie showed me how to do it properly, and now it’s easy for me.”

“She helped me a lot, too!” exclaimed Donnie. “I had trouble reading, and she spent ages teaching me, and now I can read very well!”

“And me!” added Leoni. “It’s because of Jennie that I am good at painting now. She showed me how to mix the paints and make beautiful colours.”

“Yes, Jennie has helped all of us so much,” said Freddie. “We need to find a way to thank her.”





Just then, Ms Winnie called them all inside for the next lesson, so they couldn't talk anymore. When it was lunchtime, they sat together eating their food. No one said anything. They were all thinking very hard

about what to do for Jennie.

Suddenly, Freddie stopped eating and exclaimed, "I've got it! Jennie taught us useful things. So how about we go and help other people do those same things? That way, Jennie helped not only us but also other people."

"I love it!" replied Leoni. "So one good thing leads to another good thing and then another."

"And then another!" added Donnie. "Yes that's a great idea! It's like a Wheel of 'Sharing is Caring' that goes round and round."

Everyone smiled and felt very happy about the idea.

After school, Robbie walked home happily. "So I need to help someone tie their shoelaces," he thought. "Who can I help?" He looked around, but he couldn't see anyone who needed help with their shoelaces. As he was eating dinner, he heard his mummy talk about his grandpa.

"He's old now," she said, "and can't move about very well. It's even hard for him to put his shirt on." She looked sad.

"Don't worry, Mummy," replied Robbie. "May you be happy! May you be safe! And Grandpa, too!"

After dinner, Robbie thought more about his grandpa. “Wait a minute!” he almost shouted to himself. “If Grandpa finds it hard to put his shirt on, he must find it hard to tie his shoelaces, too. I could do that for him.” He was happy that he could help his grandpa.

The next morning, Robbie walked to his grandpa’s house. It was a hot day, but he kept walking, thinking how much he wanted to help his grandpa. Grandpa was very happy to see Robbie

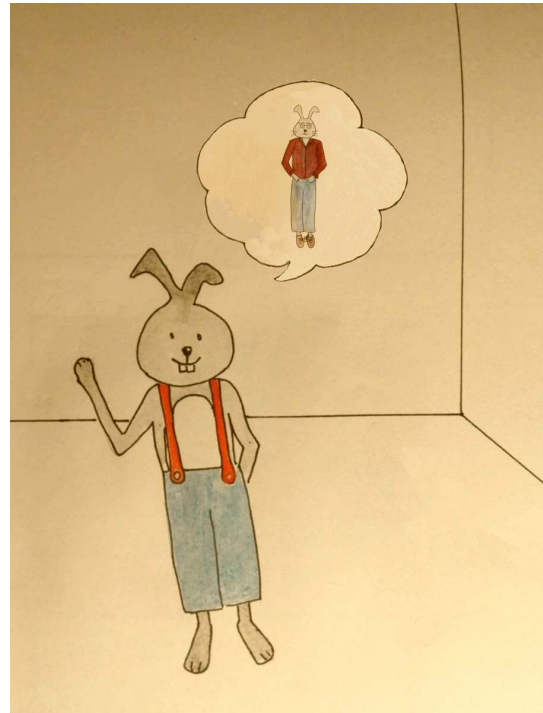
and gave him a huge smile. Robbie noticed that his grandpa didn’t have many teeth left. “Poor Grandpa,” he thought. “It must be hard for him to eat, too”

Robbie sat next to him and explained how Jennie had helped him learn to tie his shoelaces, and that, now, he wanted to help his grandpa with his laces. “Well, that’s very kind of you, Robbie,” replied his grandpa. “You are right. It is difficult for me to do my laces because my fingers don’t work very well.”

Robbie called out happily through the fence to the two little boys who lived next to his grandpa, “I’m going to help my grandpa with his laces.” The two little boys were excited to see him and ran over to watch.

Robbie tied the laces carefully. He was just about to say goodbye to them all, when suddenly Grandpa said, “Wait a minute! I won’t be able to undo the laces by myself. Now I’ll have to go to bed with my shoes on!” Everyone laughed loudly, especially Grandpa.

One of the little boys grinned to his brother, “We can try!”





Excitedly, the boys tried to do the old man's laces, but it was much harder than it looked. The laces got into a mess. And the mess got bigger and bigger. Grandpa stood up and tried to walk, but he couldn't even move. They all looked down. The boys couldn't believe their eyes. They had mistakenly tied the shoes together. "Don't worry. I'll just have to hop everywhere!" Grandpa said with a big smile.

The boys were upset, but Robbie remembered what Freddie always said, and whispered to them, "We are strong, and we don't give up!"

After a while, they could manage the laces by themselves without Robbie's help. Grandpa looked very happy to have Robbie and the boys helping him so kindly.

"We'll come over every day and help your grandpa," said the little boys to Robbie.

"Thank you," Robbie replied. "May you be happy! May you be safe!"

"Thank you, Boys," Grandpa said with a big smile. "And thank you, Robbie, for thinking of me and teaching the boys how to do my shoelaces."

Later that day, Robbie met up with the friends and told them the story. They all hugged him and said, "May you be happy! May you be safe!"

Donnie, too, had been thinking about who to help. She remembered Mrs. Kamau saying how hard her daughter found reading. In the afternoon, she knocked on Mrs. Kamau's door and explained that she would like to help her daughter with her reading.



“Oh, Donnie, that's so nice of you!” she exclaimed.

Donnie sat outside with Mrs. Kamau's daughter and began teaching her the alphabet. First, she wrote all the letters on a big sheet of paper. Then, she tried to teach the little girl to sing “The Alphabet Song.” Donnie pointed to each letter and sang, “A - B - C - D - E - F - G!....”

But when she looked up, Mrs. Kamau's daughter was not listening at all. She was dancing!

“Why aren't you listening?” Donnie asked. “I'm trying to teach you to read.”

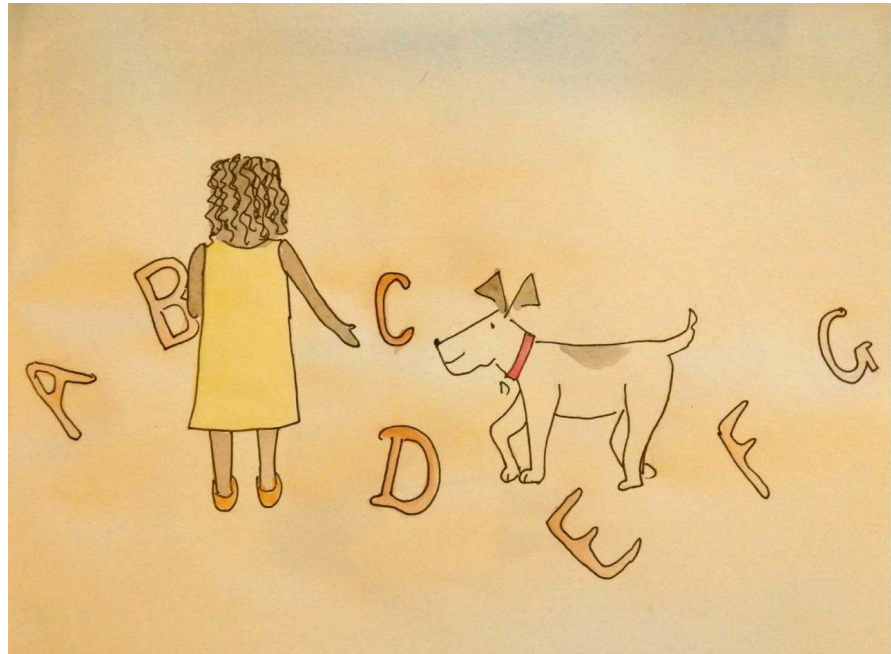
“But I like dancing,” replied the little girl.



“But I'm trying to help you!” Donnie shouted angrily. Donnie had forgotten all about the traffic light that Freddie had taught her. As soon as the angry words came out of her mouth, she remembered her red light. She stopped and waited a few seconds until she could imagine a yellow light. Then she took a deep breath, and watched the light turn green.

“I'm sorry,” she said to Mrs. Kamau's daughter. “I didn't mean to shout. Let's try this.”

Donnie picked up a stone and wrote the letters in the dirt in front of the house. It took a very long time. Mrs Kamau's daughter fell asleep in the grass.



Finally Donnie finished and started singing the song again, dancing around the letters. Mrs. Kamau's daughter opened her eyes and jumped up in delight.

She held Donnie's hand as they sang and danced around the letters. After the fifth time through the alphabet, she had learned all the letters. She was very happy, and so was her mummy.

That same afternoon, Leoni was visiting one of her neighbours. "I'm going to paint my house," the neighbour announced, and she brought out two pots of paint, one red and one white. "I'm going to paint the walls red and the windows white," she told Leoni.

Leoni looked at the house and saw right away that there was not enough red paint for all the walls, but more than enough white paint for the windows. She remembered what Freddie always said, 'Think, think, think!' and tried to come up with an idea to solve this problem. "Well, that's nice," she said slowly, "but what if we do something different and try to make a new colour?"

"Hmmm, I'm not sure," said her neighbour doubtfully.



Leoni found a big empty can and poured all of the red paint and half of the white into it. Then she took a stick and stirred it up.

“Oh, my goodness!” exclaimed the neighbour. “It’s pink! Now my house will be pink!”

“Yes, with white windows. Let’s start painting!” said Leoni excitedly.

“Hmm, I’m not at all sure about this,” said the neighbour, a bit unhappily. Nevertheless, she joined Leoni in painting, and, before long, all the walls were pink. Just as they started to paint the windows white, one of the other villagers walked past and exclaimed, “What a beautiful colour!”

“Thank you,” the neighbor said. Then she turned to Leoni and said, “Gosh! You were right. It was a good idea. Thank you for helping me.”

A few days later, it was Jennie’s last day at school. Ms Winnie invited her to say something to the whole class. Jennie walked slowly to the front of the class. She was smiling, but there was tears in her eyes.

“I’m really sorry to leave you and this village,” she began, “but I have to tell you all something amazing. My mummy heard from the villagers that Robbie taught some boys how to help his grandfather put his shoes on and to tie his laces. And she heard that Donnie helped Mrs. Kamau’s daughter learn to read. Then she heard that Leoni helped her neighbour paint her house a beautiful colour. You are all so kind and caring! I’ll never forget how happy I have been to have you as my friends!”

“And do you know the best part?” Freddie asked. Jennie shook her head, and Freddie told her, “It was all because you helped Robbie, Donnie, and Leoni to do those same things!”

“Wow!” exclaimed Jennie. “You are all the best friends anyone could have! Thank you for making my time here so happy!”

The friends and Ms Winnie all smiled, and everyone shouted, “May you be happy! May you be safe!”



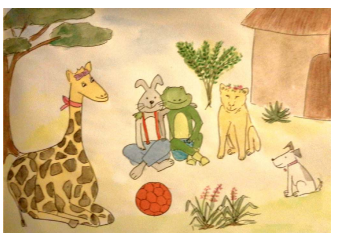
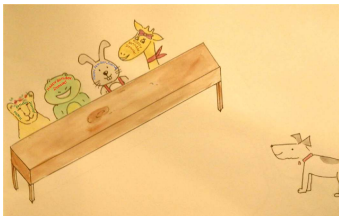
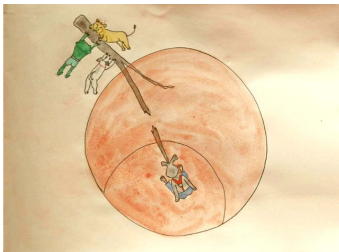
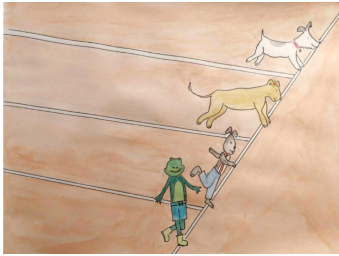
THE END

The Freddie Stories

Created by Paul Vincent Cable

Illustrated by Carla George

Edited by Ken and Visakha Kawasaki



Twenty-one delightful stories for children of all ages. The five animals--Freddie, Robbie, Donnie, Leoni, and Jennie--are classmates in a school in Africa. Each story relates an inspiring experience of cooperation, loving-kindness, and compassion.

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