



Wanda's Wonderful Christmas



*The Santa Shoebox Project
Celebration Story*







The Santa Shoebox Project would like you, the care-giver, teacher or principal, to read this story to the children in your school before they receive their presents.

Kindly note that it is a Christmas story. If any of the children, their parents or guardians, or your colleagues would be uncomfortable with this on religious grounds, then may we recommend that you read only the last page.





Acknowledgments

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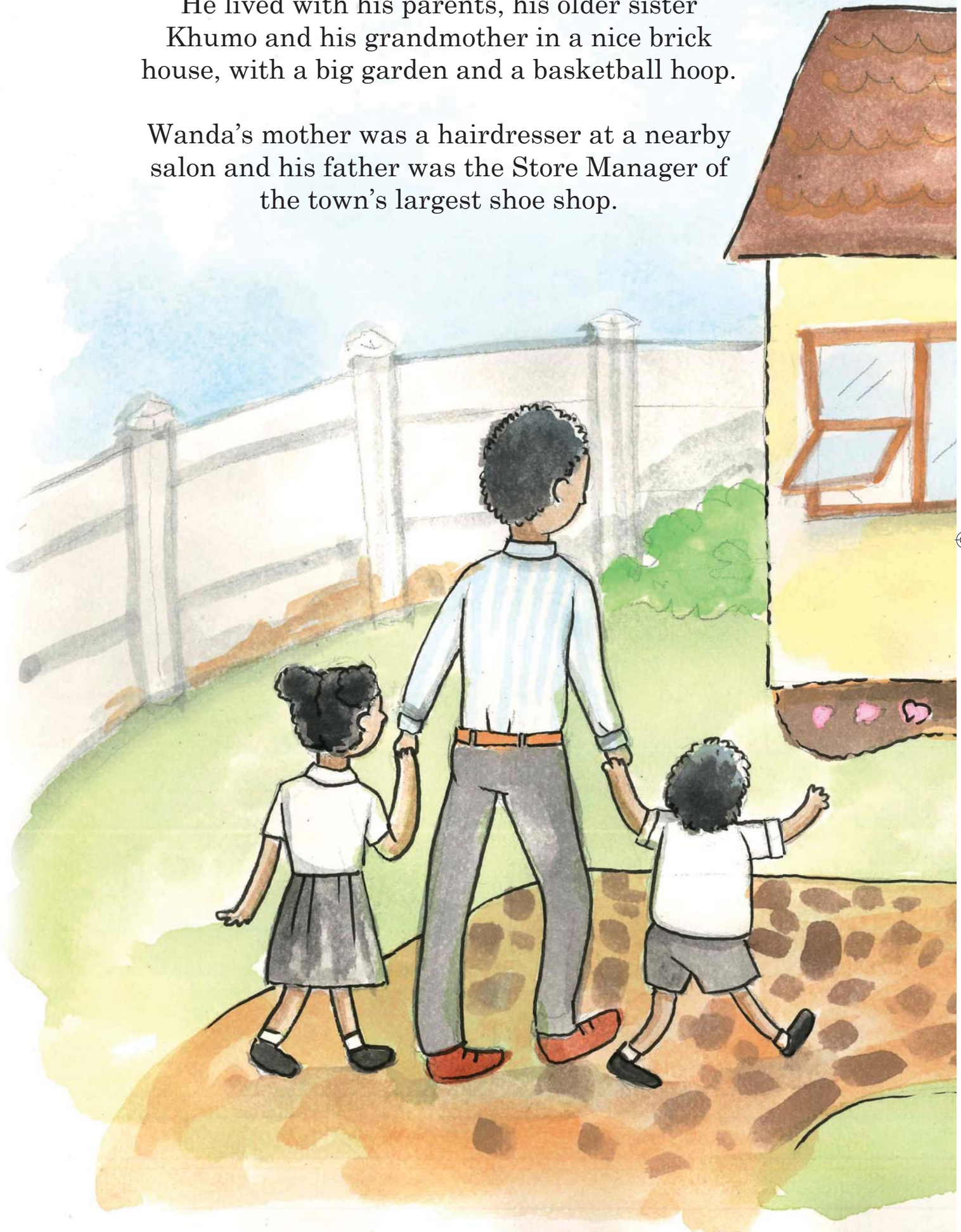




Wanda was a lucky boy.

He lived with his parents, his older sister Khumo and his grandmother in a nice brick house, with a big garden and a basketball hoop.

Wanda's mother was a hairdresser at a nearby salon and his father was the Store Manager of the town's largest shoe shop.







For eleven months of the year Wanda was happy.



He went to a good school,
played club soccer on Tuesdays...





...and spent most weekends washing his dad's car
and playing basketball with Khumo.





But curiously, every December in the run-up towards Christmas, Wanda would become more and more miserable.

“Tell your face to smile,” teased his sister, Khumo, one December. “It’s almost Christmas and I bet you’re getting a bicycle this year!”







The truth was that Wanda had every reason to smile. Every year his family celebrated Christmas with a big, traditional braai and lots of wonderful gifts.

The previous year Wanda got a baseball cap, a new pair of soccer shoes, and a knitted jersey from his grandmother.

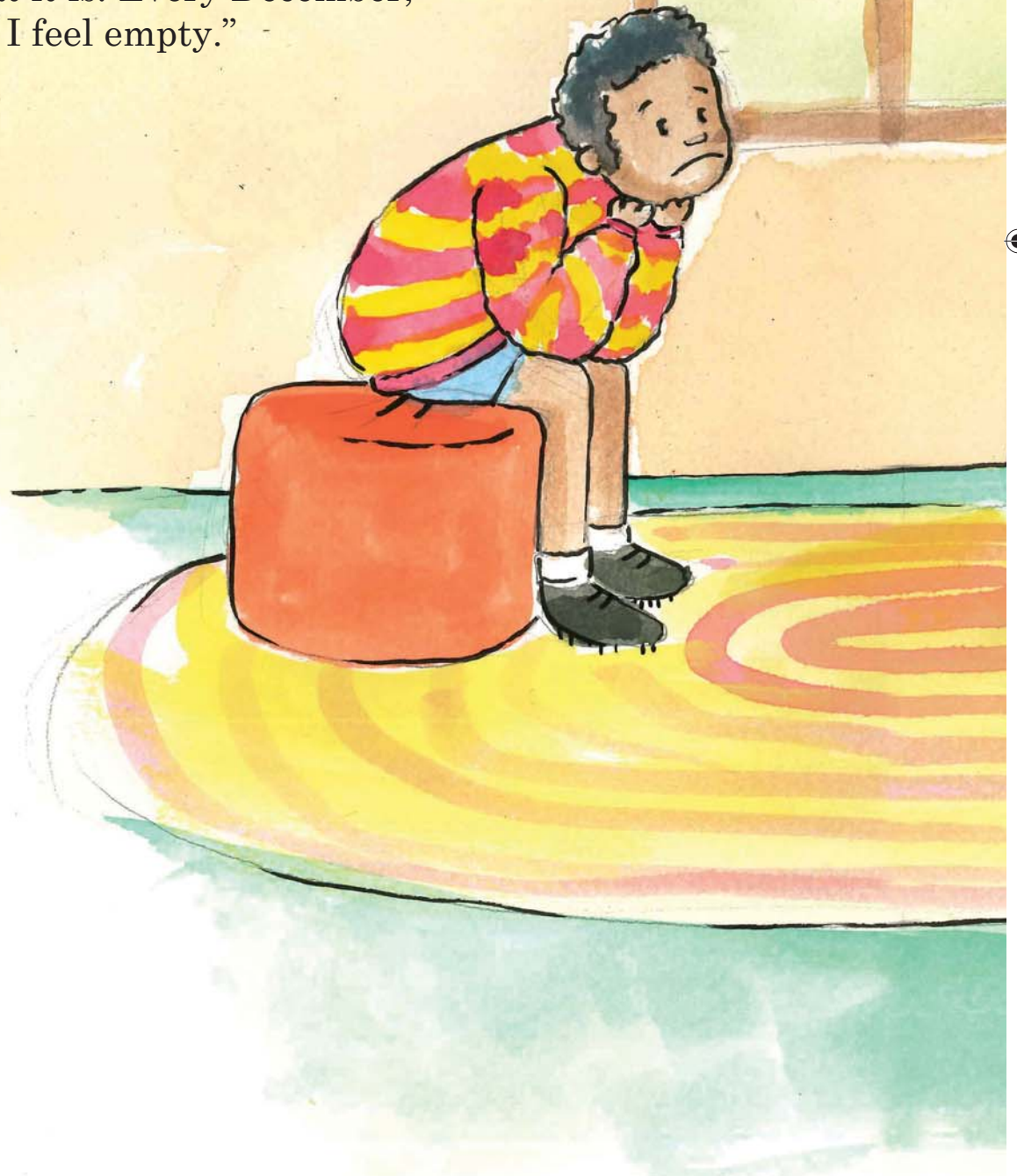




And yet, despite his happy memories,
every December, Wanda would feel
overwhelmingly sad.

“What is wrong child?” asked
his grandmother one day, while dipping
a rusk into her mug of Rooibos tea.

“I don’t know Gogo,” Wanda moaned.
“I feel like the luckiest boy on earth,
but something is missing and I don’t
know what it is. Every December,
I feel empty.”



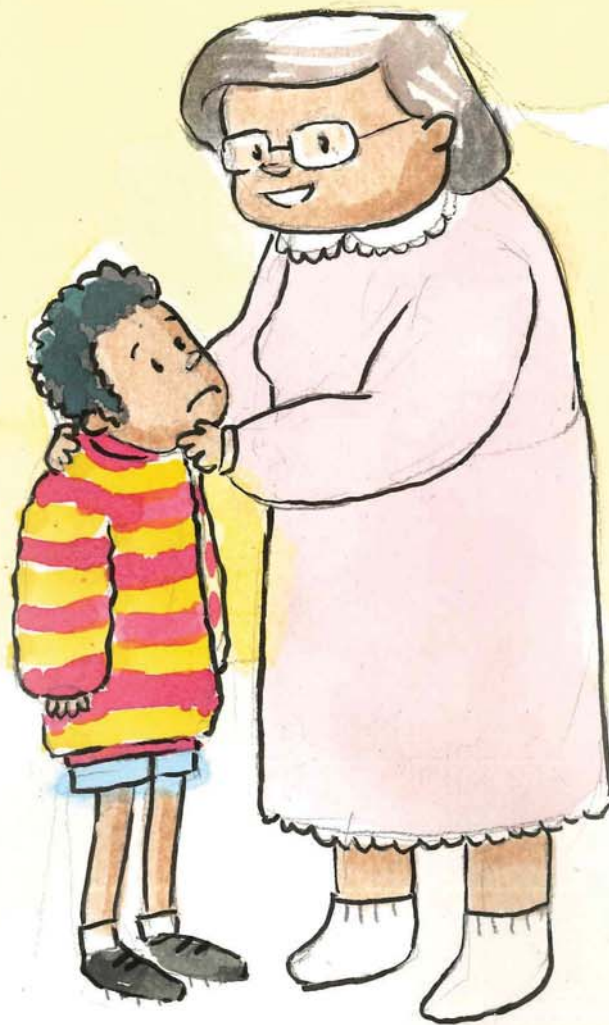




Gogo was a wise old woman and she knew her grandson's heart. "Your father's shoe shop throws away a lot of shoeboxes every day," she said. "What if you tried to fill up some of those shoeboxes with special treats for children who would really appreciate them?"

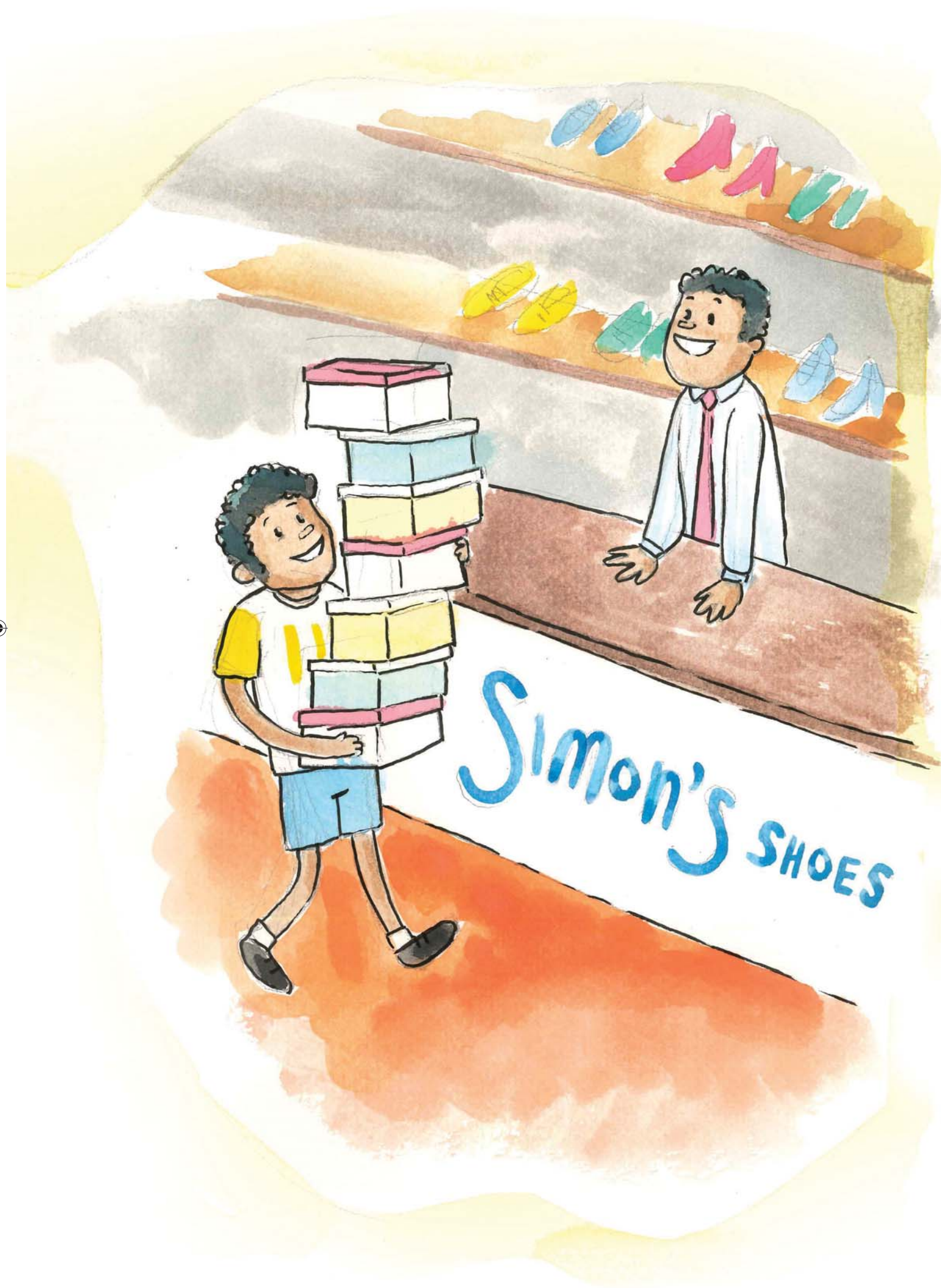
"I don't understand Gogo? How will that make me happy?"
Wanda asked, puzzled.

Gogo just smiled and took the last bite of her rusk.



The very next day, on the 10th of December, Wanda did just what his Gogo had suggested. He collected over a dozen shoeboxes from his father's shop and spent the following two weeks filling them up with as many special treats as he could.







Khumo donated her soccer magazines, his mom gave him some vouchers for her salon and his neighbour Ezra, whose mom had put him on a diet, donated his entire sweet collection.







On Christmas eve, Wanda and Khumo gave a shoebox full of gifts to each of twelve children from a nearby neighbourhood. The children were absolutely delighted. They laughed, sang Christmas songs and tucked into their delicious sweets, courtesy of Ezra.







Wanda was so excited that he dived onto his grandmother's lap when they returned home.

"Gogo! Gogo! That was the best Christmas eve I've ever had!" he shouted. "The children were so happy and my heart....my heart feels like it's going to burst!"

Gogo smiled warmly.

"That, my son, is the Christmas spirit. Now you know that giving is just as much fun as receiving."



"Merry Christmas Gogo," Wanda said gently. "And thank you for the best Christmas lesson."







Every year, people with kind hearts collect shoeboxes and fill them with special treats so that they can be shared as gifts.

Your box was filled by somebody that you don't know, but who cares about you and who takes great joy in giving this special gift to you.

Enjoy your Santa Shoebox, and please share the message of kindness, caring, giving and sharing with everyone around you!











The Santa Shoebox Project is an inspiring community initiative of the Kidz2Kidz Trust (IT2671/2009, PBO 930031301 Section 18A NPO 102-098) that co-ordinates the donation, collection and distribution of personalized gifts at Christmas time to underprivileged children across South Africa and Namibia.

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