

**THE
GARBAGE
COLLECTOR**

NED—04

Imaginary Stories

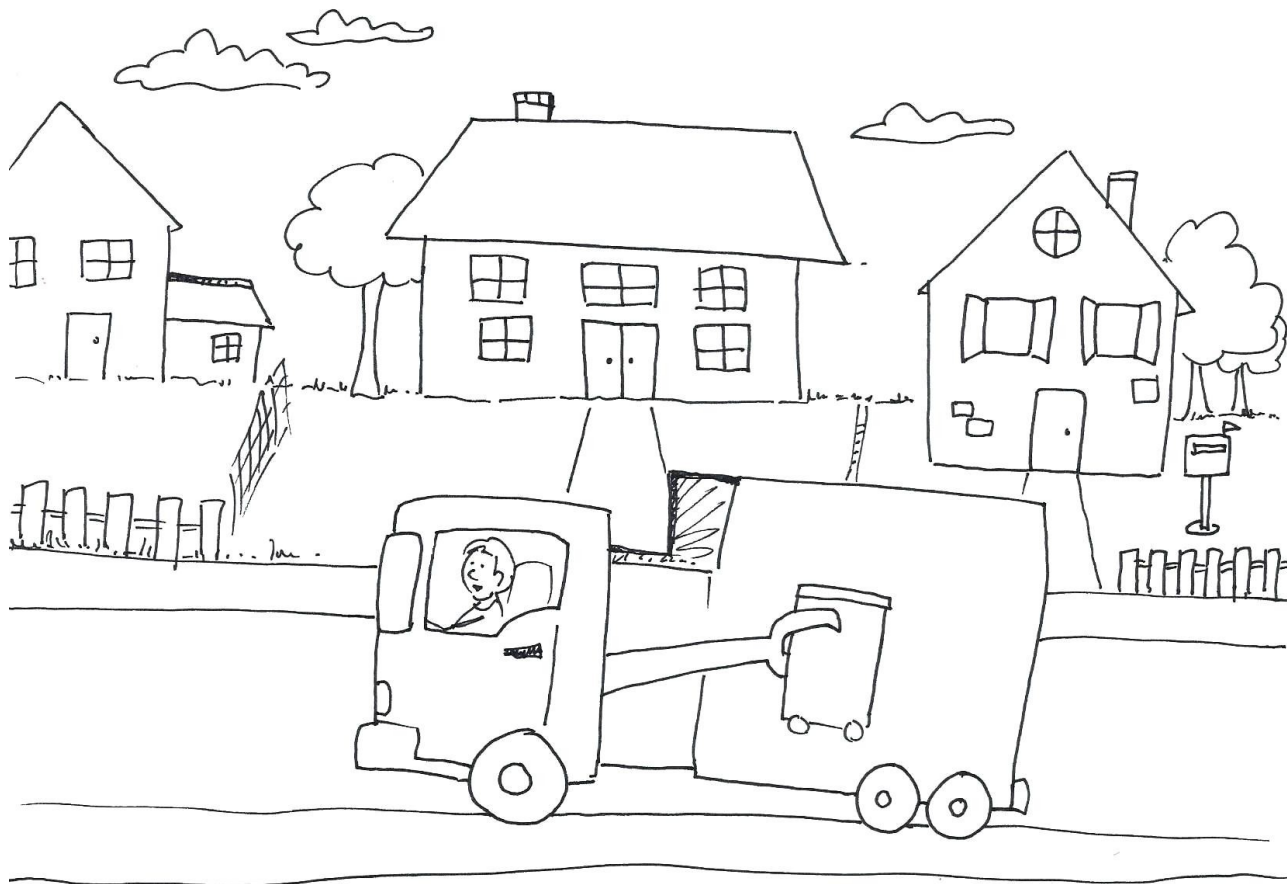
NED, TONY, AND TEDDY —BOOK 4

The Garbage Collector

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Illustrated by Fleur Celeste

Dedicated to my three wonderful boys!

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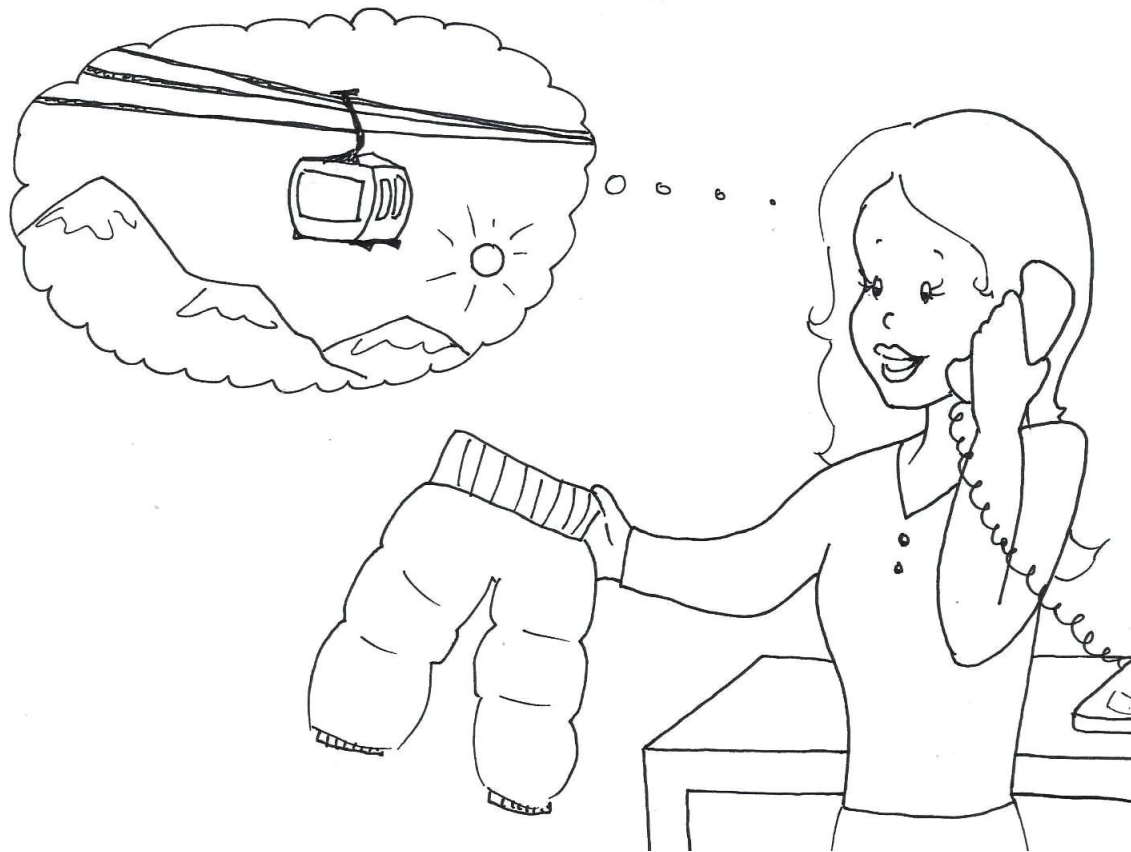


Ned came running to Tony and Teddy, “Come quickly. The garbage truck is nearly at our house!”

The boys raced to go and watch this amazing machine pick up the big garbage bins that Daddy had placed on the roadside. The truck would dump the trash from the bin into it. The garbage truck also had a way to then squish it and make room for the next house’s trash, too.

“Even though it’s probably not a very fun job, I’m sure glad that it gets done,” said Ned.

The boys then raced off to play in the sandbox.

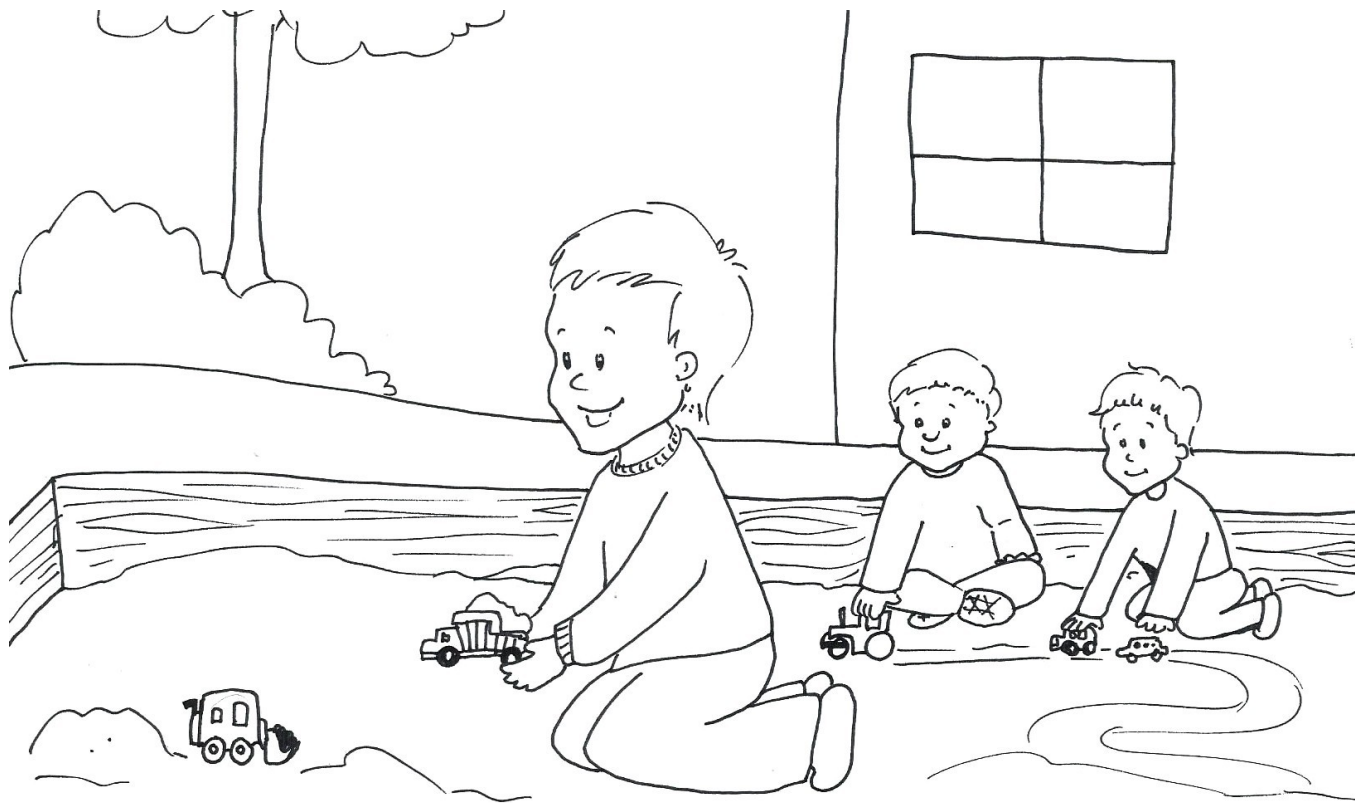


“Ned, could you come for a minute, please?”

Ned heard his mother say. Not sure what she wanted, and hoping it wasn't going to mean the end of play time, Ned decided to keep playing for a bit longer, without answering his mother.

Mother was unable to call him again right then, because she was in the middle of answering and making phone calls.

She'd needed to see if Ned could still fit into his snowsuit, or if he needed a new pair of snow pants. They were going to go to the mountains to play in the snow at a ski resort.



After about ten minutes, Mother wondered why Ned had not come in yet. She went out to see.

Ned was still playing happily in the sand with his digger and dump truck set. Tony was making roads in the sand with his road roller, and Teddy was driving cars on this new sand road.

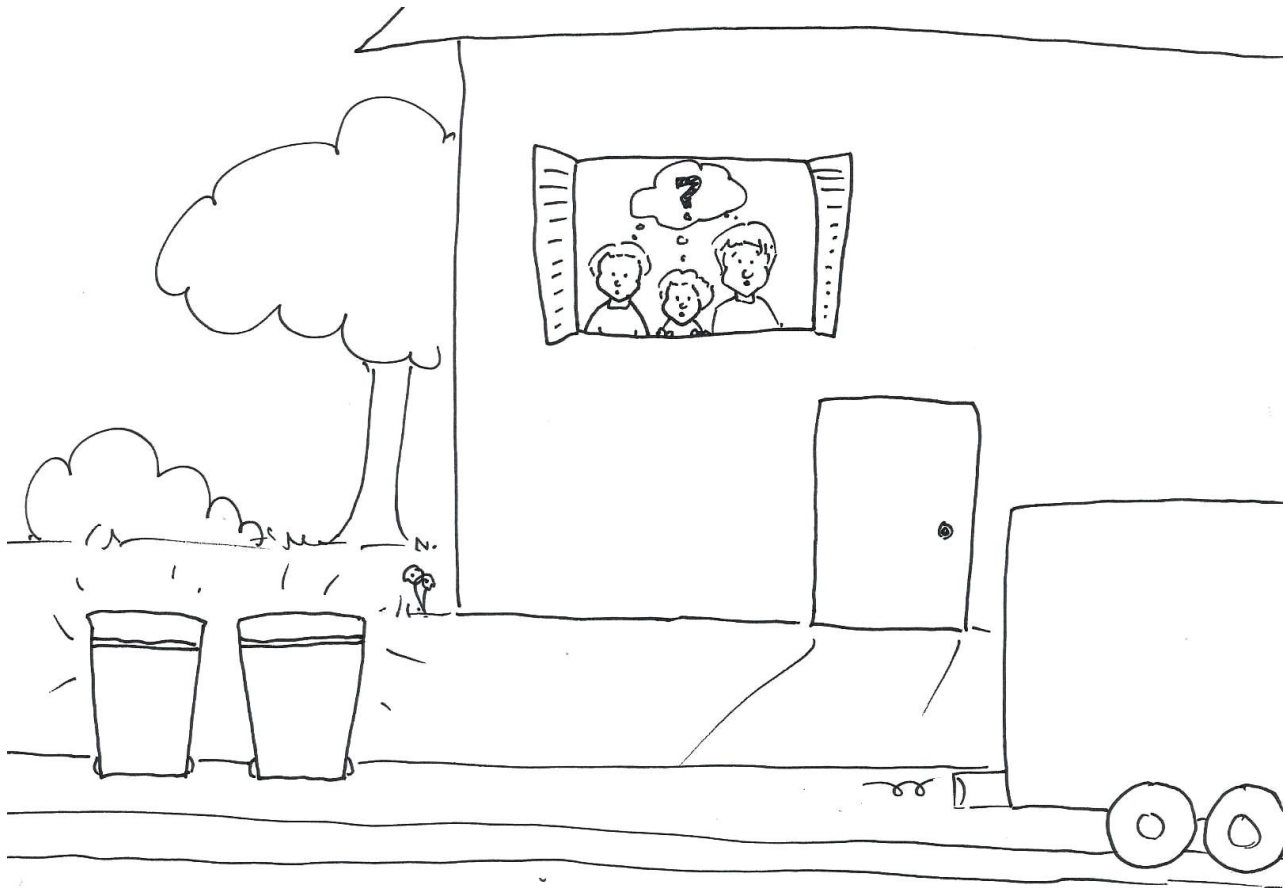
“Did you hear me when I called you?” Mother asked Ned.

“Yes, but I was in the middle of filling my last three loads, and then I was going to come.”



Mother then explained,
“A friend called and asked if we needed any new suits for tomorrow’s snow trip. But since you didn’t come, I couldn’t try yours on you to see if it still fits.”

“Oh,” responded Ned sadly. “I thought you were going to tell me I needed to stop playing, and I didn’t want to stop.”

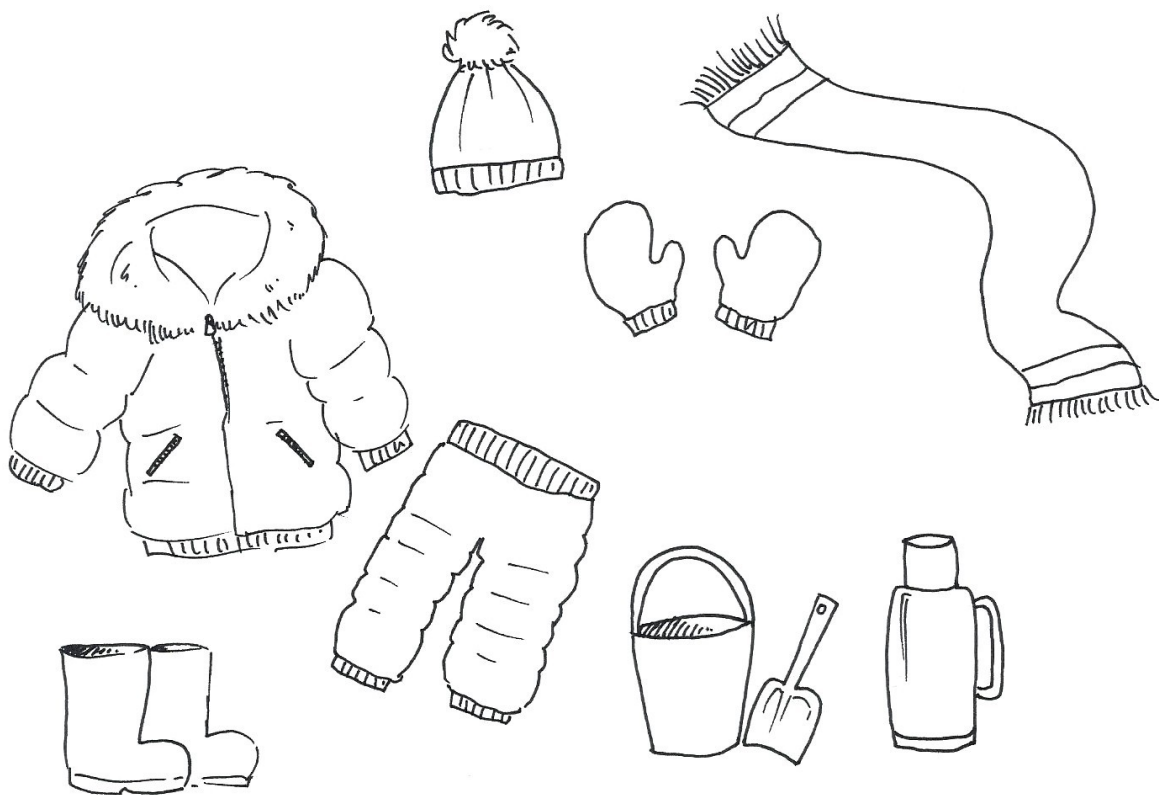


Mother replied,

“How would we feel if the garbage collection truck had said the same thing as it drove past our house,

“I just don’t want to stop. And it’s something I don’t want to do anyway.’?”

“We’d have such a messy yard and tons of flies, and soon there would hardly be any way to drive out of the driveway as it would be so full of trash!”

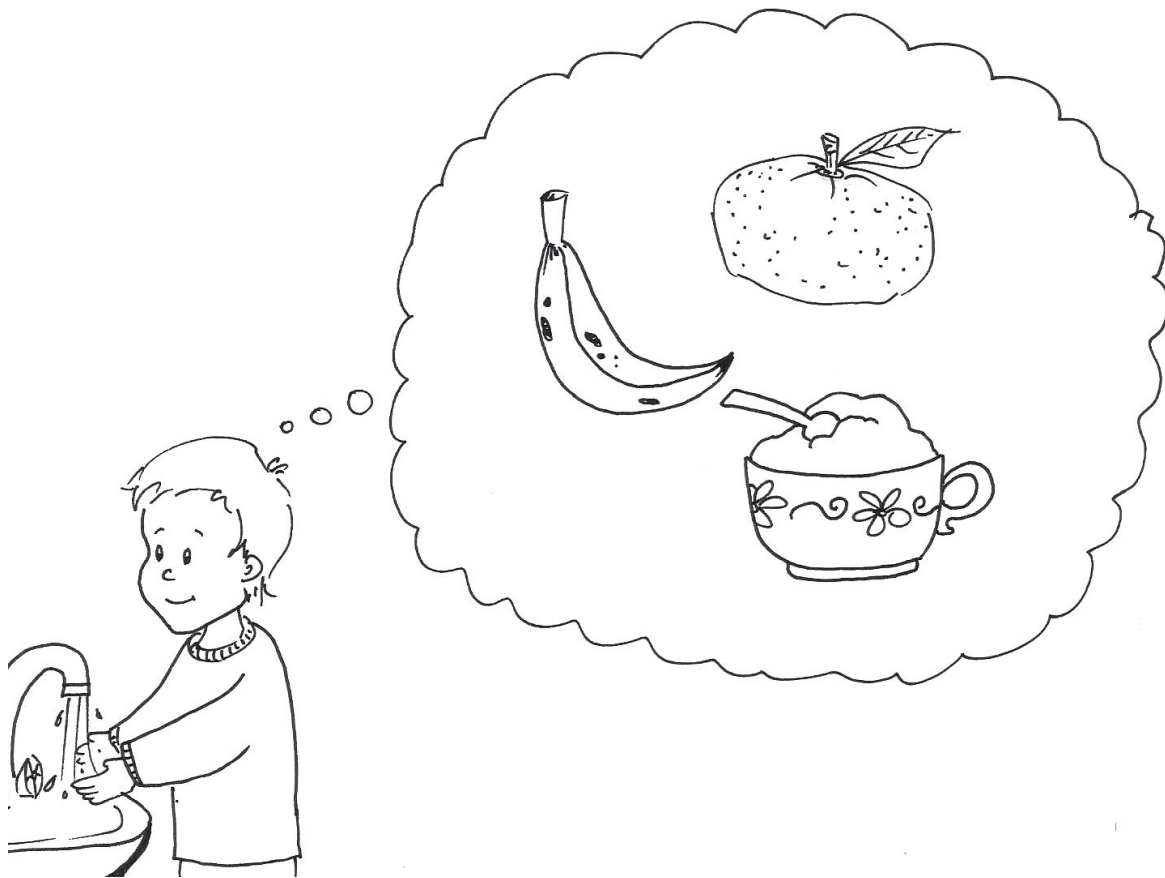


“I’m sorry,” Ned apologized. “I’ll come quickly next time.”

“That would be wonderful, Ned,” Mother said, “because you never know what you’ll miss if you don’t.

“Our friend said she was going to phone later on to check if we needed anything for our trip tomorrow. Will you promise to come right away when I call for you, no matter what you are doing?”

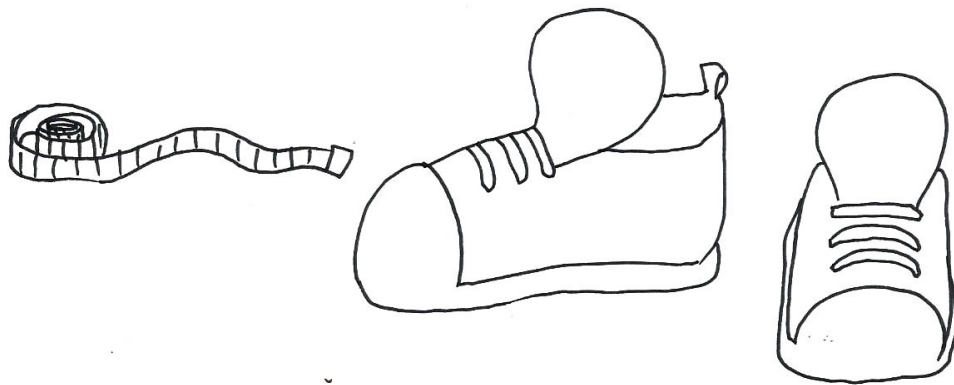
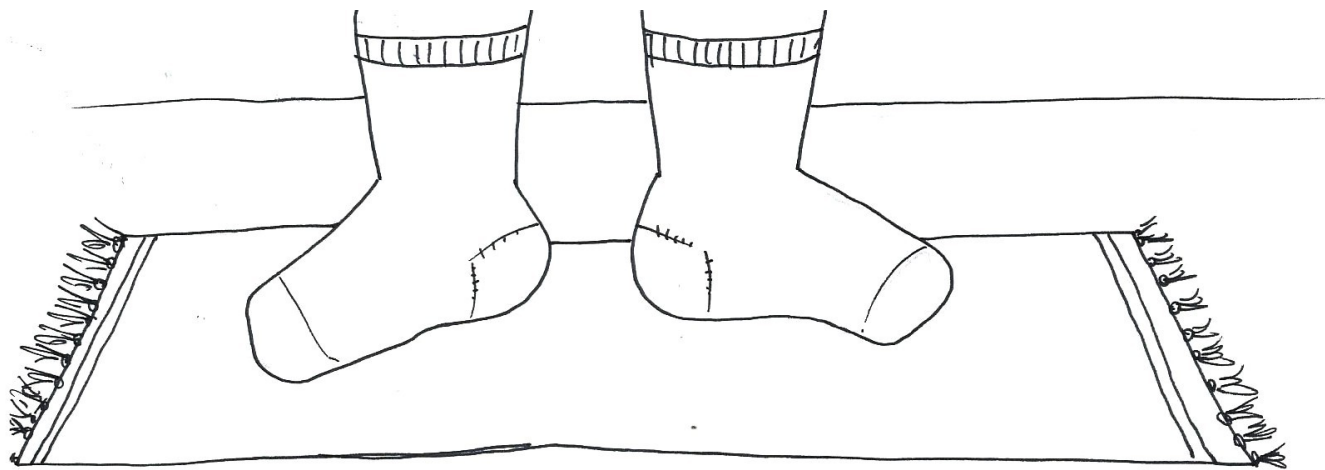
“Yes, I will!” Ned said. And he did.



It was about half an hour later and Ned was washing his hands to have snack. Tony and Teddy were already enjoying the food, and Ned was looking forward to eating, too.

But just then, Ned heard his mother say, “Ned, I need to see you for a minute, can you please come?”

First he was about to walk the other way and take just one or two bites before going to his mother. But then he remembered the garbage truck lesson.



Ned pretended he was driving and went straight and fast to his mother.

He had the faith that, just like the truck could fit in lots of bags of trash, if he obeyed he'd be able to also fit into his day all the things he'd like to do—and fit lots of food into his tummy, as well.

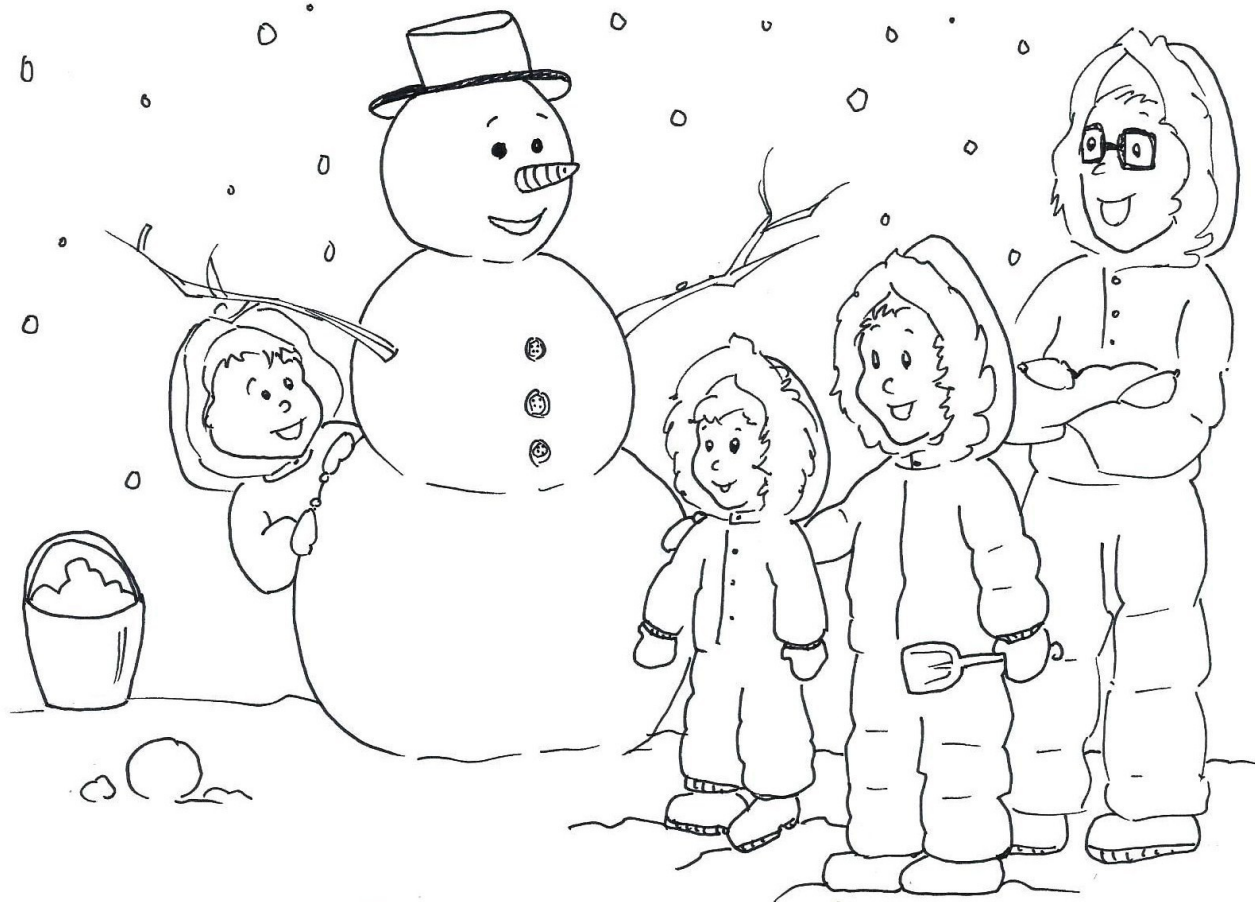
“I’m so glad you came, and so quickly, too. Our friend said that she had some good snow boots for you, but I needed to make sure of the size of your feet. It will just take a moment, then you can go eat.”



Mother continued,

“Because you came right away, Ned, now we’ll be sure to have extra fun tomorrow, without feeling cold and wet! Remember last year we had to come home early, because we were getting too wet and cold?”

Ned nodded. He didn’t want that to happen again. And it wouldn’t. He continued to come quickly every time Mother called. As a result, they had all the things they needed for their fun in the snow the next day.



What a great day they had! Ned, and Tony, and Teddy with their daddy built the tallest, biggest snowman they'd ever seen.

Mother served a great snack of warm carob drink and banana loaf slices. They stayed a long time playing, and were warm enough and pretty dry, too.

When Ned thought about the day, he realized that he'd gotten to do so many things. It was a good day because he had learned to "stop", just like the garbage truck, to do something that was needed.

