

The Project and The Poppy —Part 4—



The Project and the Puppy **—Part 4—**

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Illustrated by Fleur Celeste

Dedicated to my three wonderful boys!

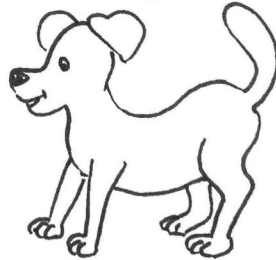
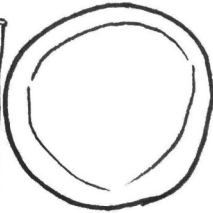
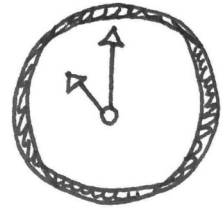
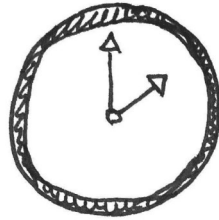
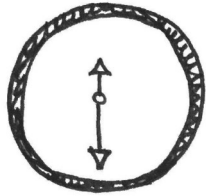
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The morning after receiving the shop owner's invitation letter, Daddy phoned to let him know that they had received it.

They talked about some details of when to come to his house, and when to visit his shop as well to select the needed supplies he was giving them freely, for their project.

Three days later the boys were dressing nicely, and practicing a few songs that they knew how to sing, along with their daddy.



It would be a little gift they could give to those at the New Year gathering that they were invited to.

They would visit the shop owner's house in the midday, when the feast was being served. In the afternoon they could see and play with the animals, and meet some other visiting children as well. The day afterwards they could get supplies from his shop for their next project.

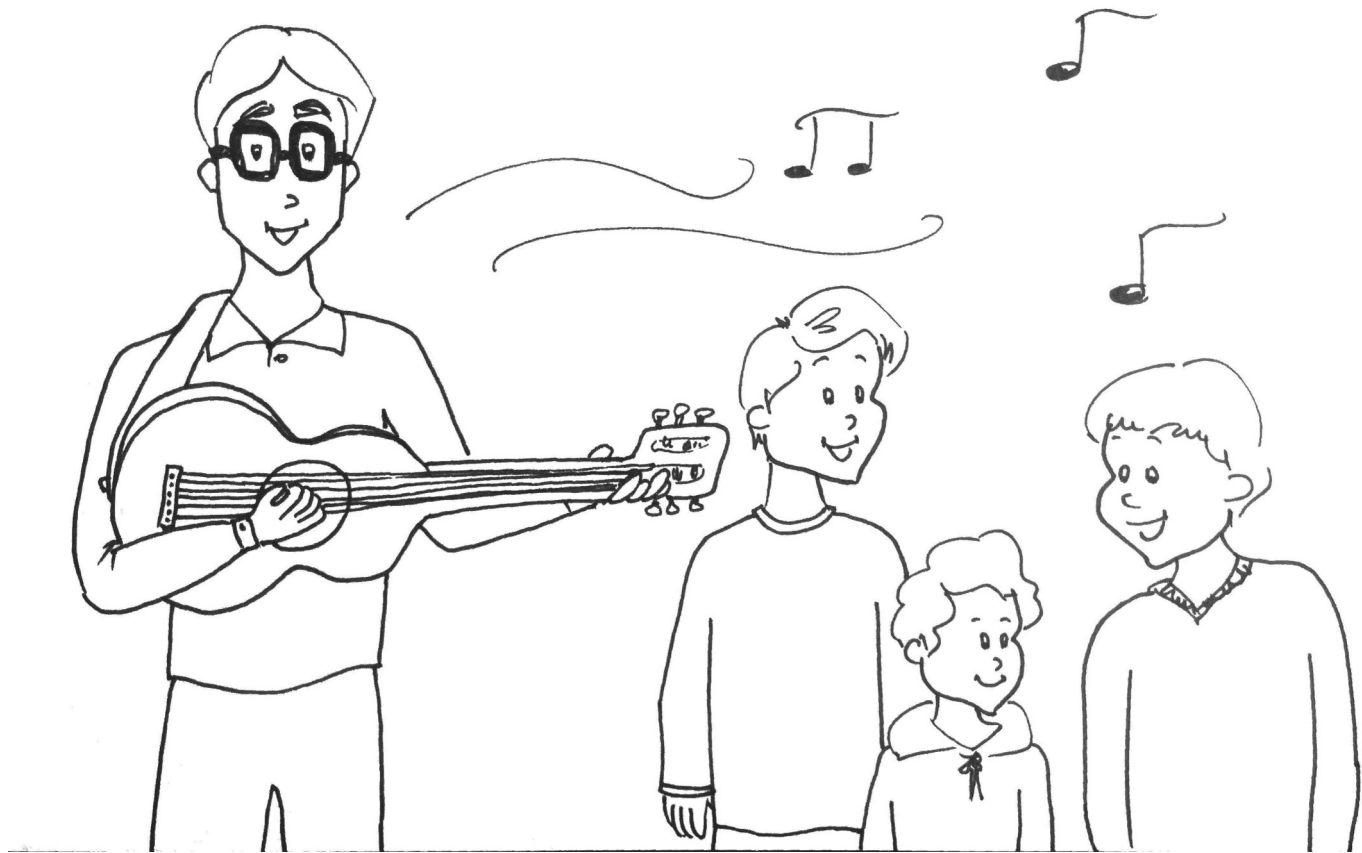
This was the plan they were looking forward to. When they arrived at the shop owner's house, it was filled with guests, but seats were reserved for them at the long table.



Mother helped the boys select the foods being served that would be best for them. And of course only the best table manners were used. This pleased everyone there.

After the meal Mother said that the three boys had a New Year's gift for them all. Everyone was surprised! The three boys stood up where they could be seen and heard well, and sang while Daddy played the guitar.

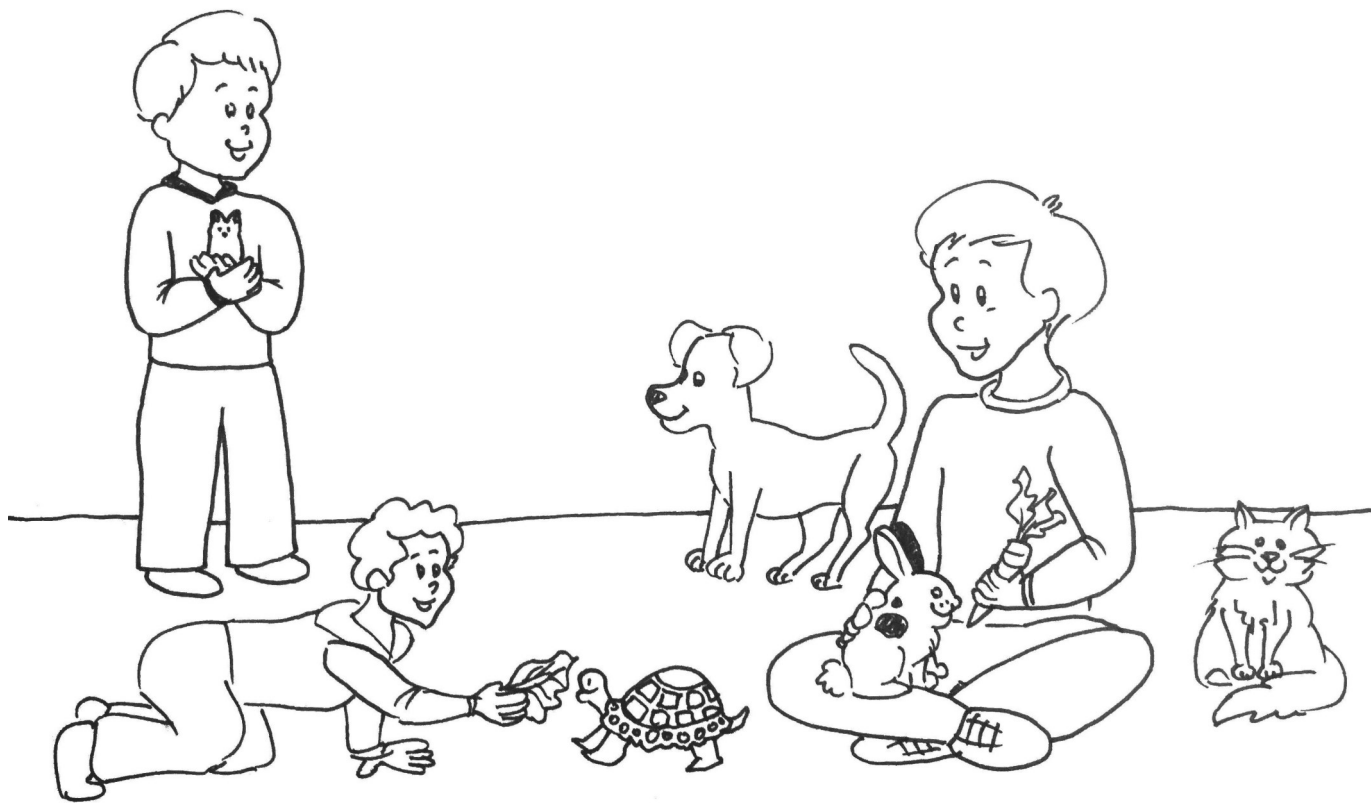
Teddy liked to stand near his brothers, even though he didn't really know how to sing all the songs' words. Mostly he just looked cute, and tried his best to smile.



The boys smiled and sang so lovely that when they finished, all the guests clapped for them for a long time. The guests enjoyed it, and the boys were glad.

Maybe that kind of gift couldn't be put into a box and wrapped up, but maybe it was better, as everyone could share it, and remember it for a long time.

“I think there are some animals that need a few friends!” the shop owner said. And there were at least three very eager boys ready to be those friends.



Off they went—in fact everyone at the table did—as they all wanted to get a grand tour of the new miniature animal park that was being created.

Tony got to hold and play with the hamster, while Teddy helped to feed some lettuce to the turtle.

Ned held the bunny on his lap and gave him a carrot to gnaw on. Then came a little active puppy that was ready for some fun.



When the other creatures were safely in their homes, Ned and Tony and Teddy ran around with Black Pup, laughing and playing.

They played and ran around until it was time to go.

“Thank you for letting us shop tomorrow, freely, for our next meal-giving project,” Mother said to the shop owner, as they were walking back into the house.

“Your welcome,” he said. “I found out that when I give to others, not only am I a bit happier, but things also go well in my work. So it’s really worth it.”



Daddy shook his hand to say good-bye, as did the rest of the family. The shop owner then offered,

“I’d like you to come over every month, if you want, to let the children play with and feed the animals.

“I will prepare a few boxes of supplies for you to use in your meal-giving projects, and you can get them from me when you visit.”

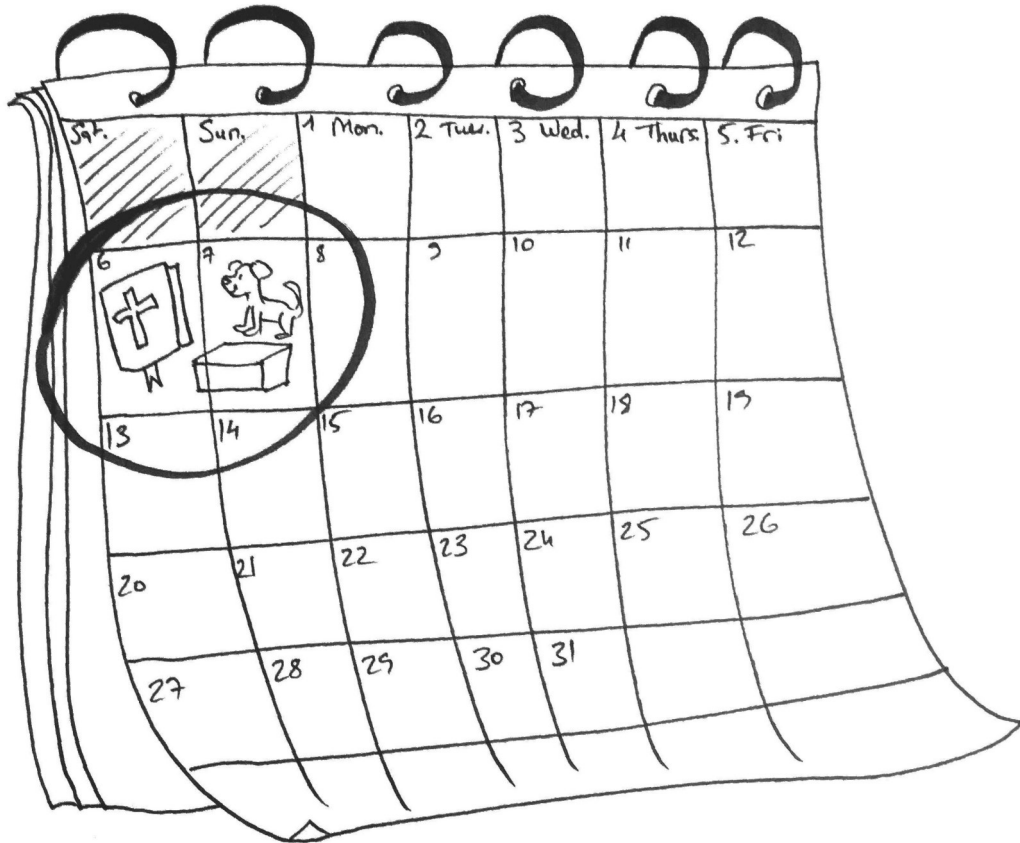
Mother and Daddy thanked him heartily, and then Mother asked, “Is there anything that you need, that we can help you with?”



The shop owner replied,

“Well, there is one thing that I did really enjoy. As you know I live alone, and I don’t often have company. Perhaps I will now, with the visits of children to see the animals.

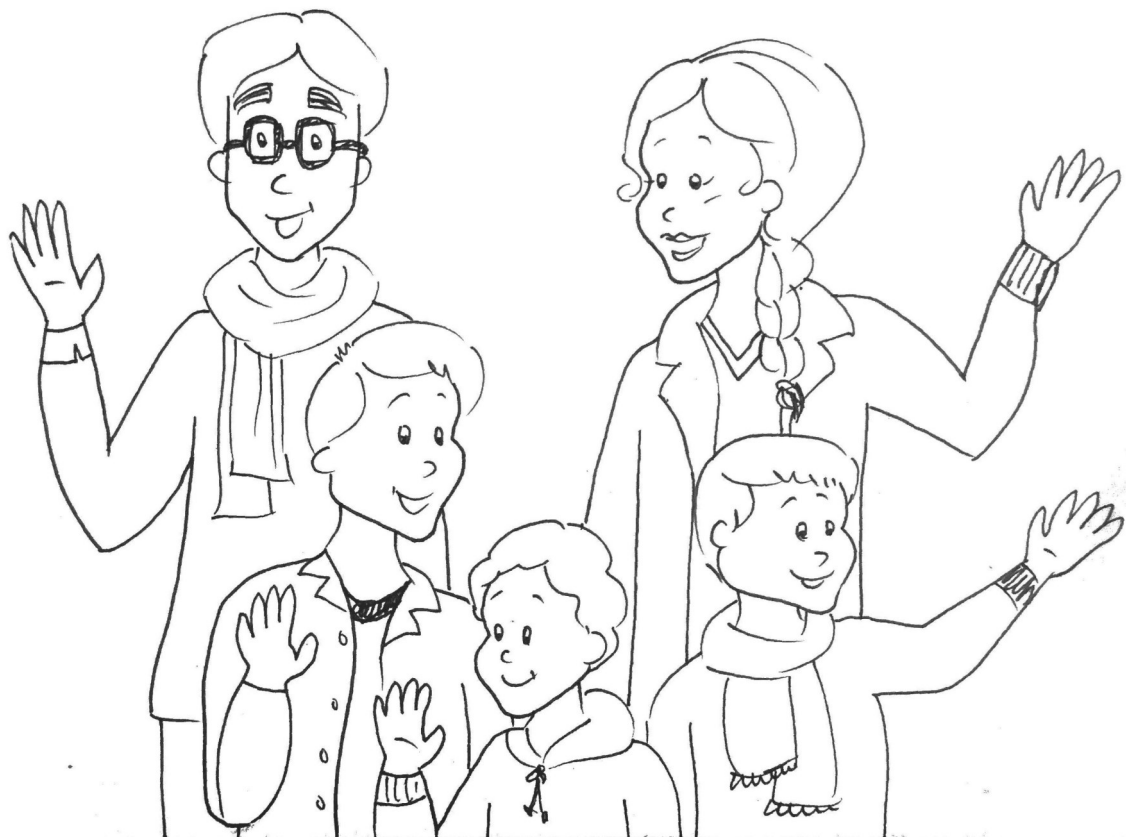
“However, if you could spare some time to read more of the Bible with me when you visit, I would enjoy that. Reading the Bible makes me feel better in my heart, and helps me think clearly.”



“It was the Bible that motivated me to begin giving to others, and it is what gives me the strength to show love and kindness, no matter how I am feeling.”

Mother remembered the little card she gave him when they very first met, as she shopped at his store many months before. On it was a little Bible verse.

And so it was decided that on the first weekend of each month in that New Year, they would visit the shop owner to read the Bible—as a family all together, and then play with the animals.



The food the shop owner would donate to them when they visited would be used that week in their monthly project of meal-giving.

Hugs and hand shakes ended the visit, and soon jackets were put on. It was time to leave.

“Bye then,” they waved to the shop owner and the other guests who were relaxing over in the livingroom.

“Until next time!” he called out and waved.

It would be a fun year ahead for sure!

