

A photograph of a beach with waves washing onto the sand. The water is a vibrant turquoise color, and the sand is a light tan. The waves are breaking, creating white foam that spreads across the sand. The overall scene is bright and sunny.

# **Friends on Vacation**

**NED—23**



# Friends on Vacation

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Illustrated by Fleur Celeste

*Dedicated to my three wonderful boys!*



It had been about a month since Tony and his family had gone to the seaside for a few days. They went with their friend Mark, and his family also.

Instead of traveling in their cars, the two families traveled in a big bus. The place they were visiting was several hours away. It was fun getting to sit together and chat all the way there. Or sometimes they were quiet, and dosed a little. Their mother's also handed them all snacks to eat. There was so much to see outside the windows.

“Look over there!” Tony would say to Mark.

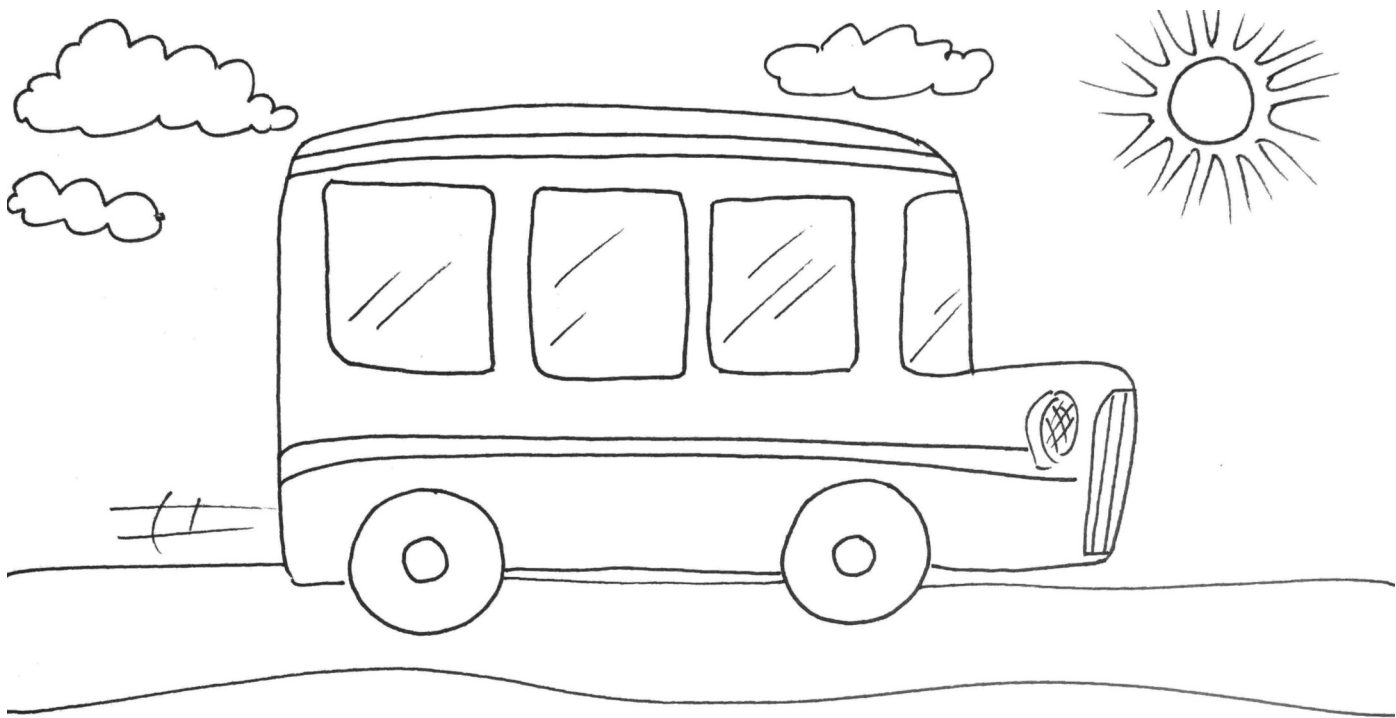
They didn't want each other to miss anything interesting.



At one point in the journey Daddy pulled out his guitar to sing songs of praise to the Lord together. This was fun; there were extra voices to join in the singing. It sounded like the whole bus was a moving speaker playing music.

At last they arrived at their destination, and before too long they were enjoying the beach.

There were other activities and outings they got to do while there. It was a short vacation with a lot of enjoyment packed in.

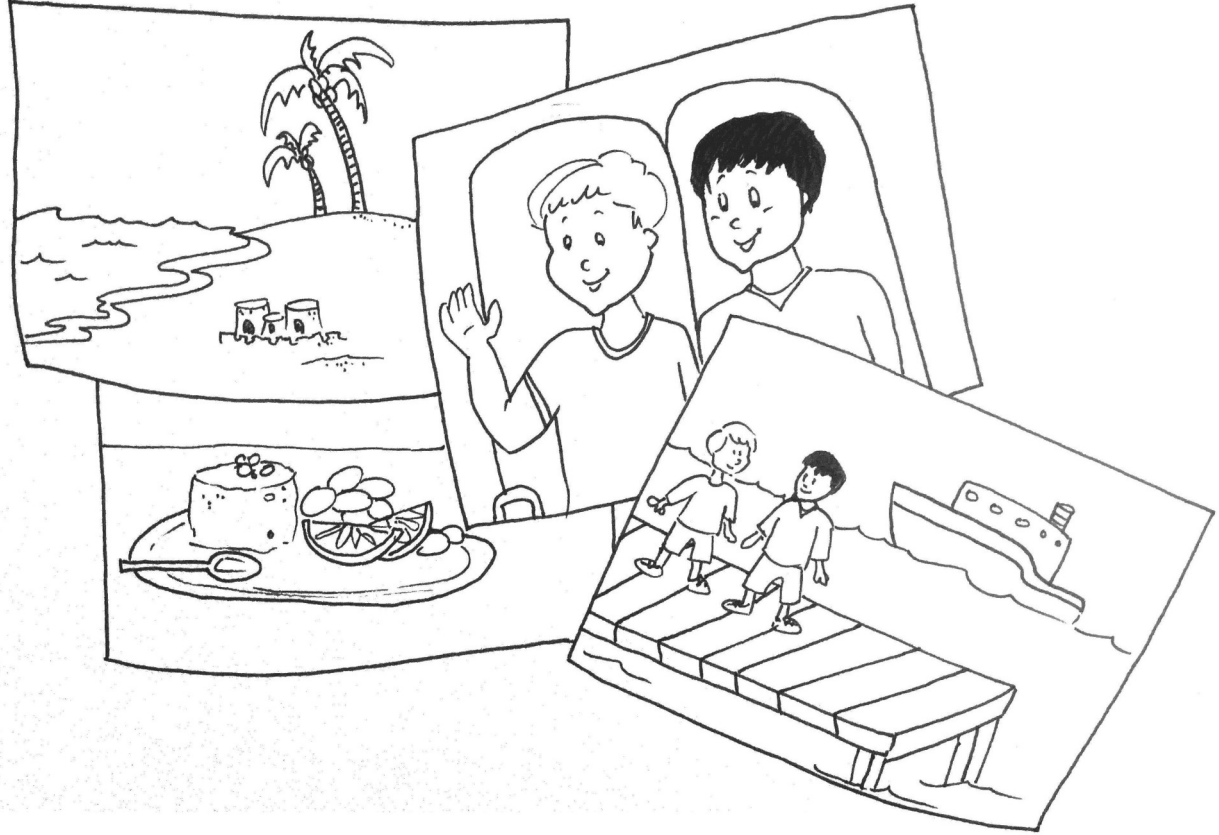




Before too long, everyone was back on a bus again going home. First, the bus would stop at the town where Mark's family lived, then it would continue on driving to take Tony and his family to their home.

The best part of the trip for Tony was the friendship time he had with Mark.

Though he was a bit sad to say good-bye, their families had decided to take another trip together in the future.



One day Tony got a letter! In the envelope was a letter from his friend!

*It said, "Dear Tony, I miss you. It was so fun going on that trip together. I hope you are happy. See you next time. Love, Mark"*

Included were some pictures of Mark and Tony, and some of the fun things they'd done on their trip – their bus drives, going on a ferry boat, and a snack their families had at a little restaurant.

Tony was so happy to hear from his friend.



“I miss Mark too,” he said.

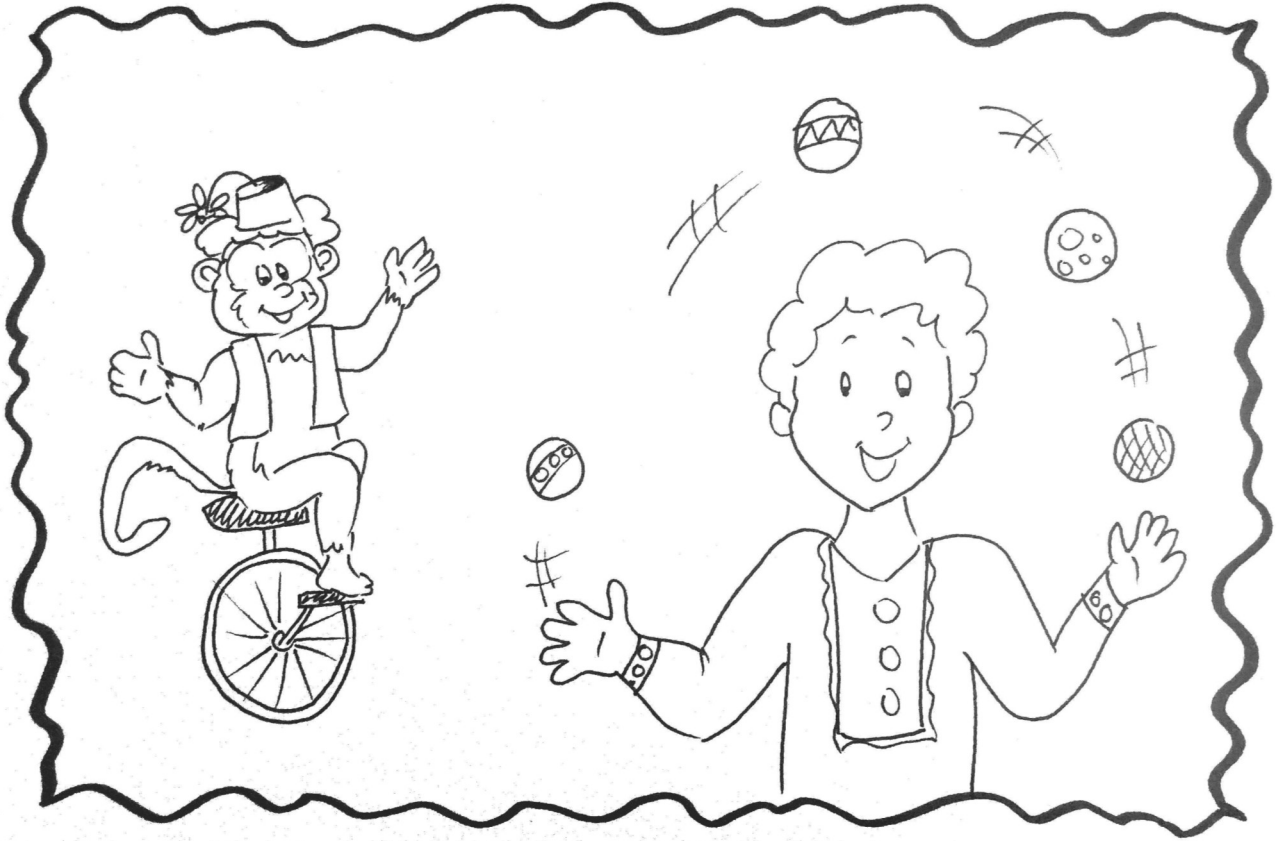
“Well,” Mother said, “Do you want to write him a letter also? I’m sure he’d love to hear from you.”

So Mother got a pencil and some paper and Tony sat down to write a letter to Mark, while Ned kindly read some books and drew pictures with Teddy, so mother could help Tony do this.

“I don’t know what to say,” Tony said.

“You could start off the way he started his letter.

“Say, ‘Dear Mark,’ and then, why don’t you tell him something you did last week?” Mother suggested.

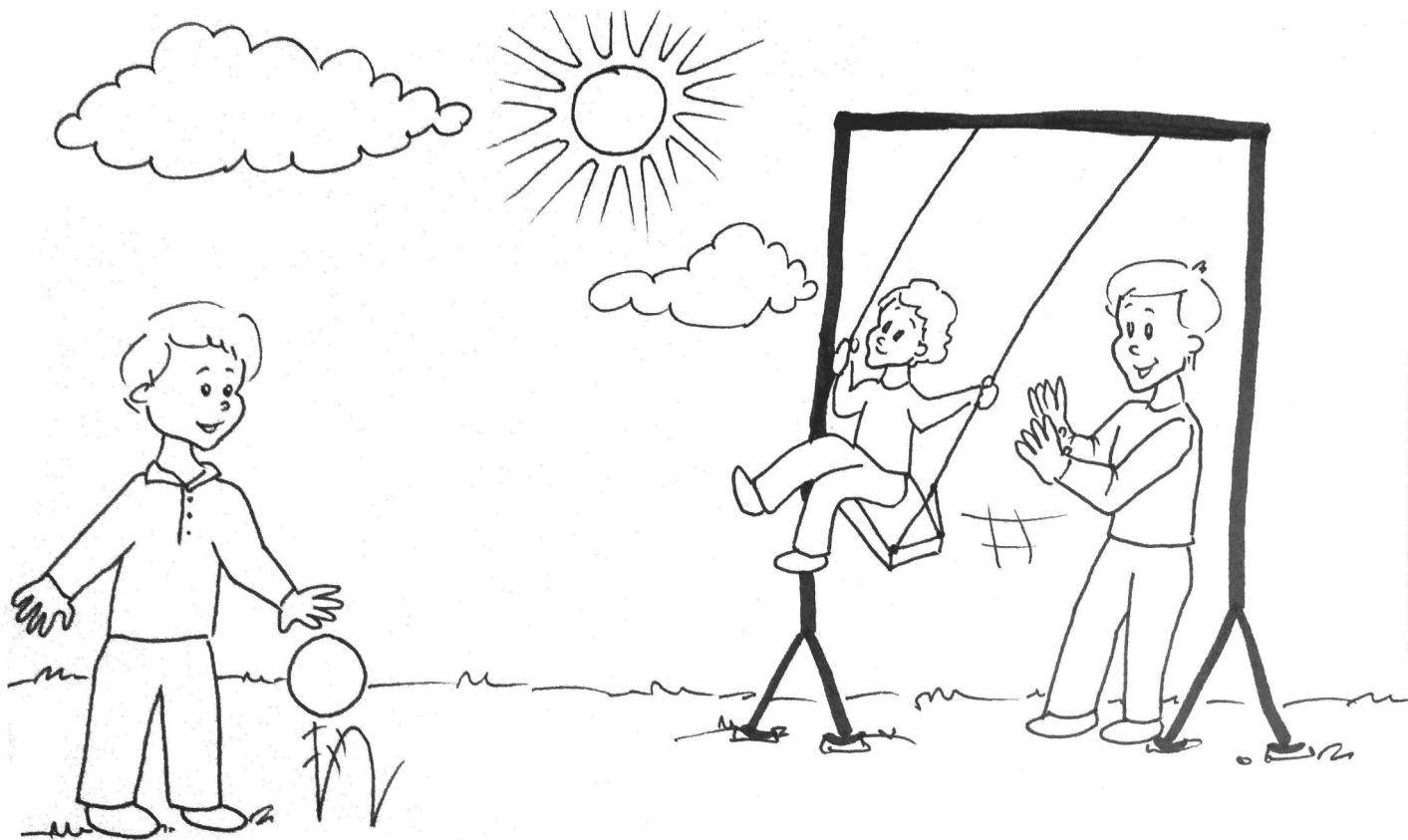


Tony thought about it and said, “Oh, I remember something fun. We got to go to the circus!”

So Tony wrote:

*“Dear Mark, I miss you too. Last week we got to go to the circus. There was a juggler, and some funny monkeys that were dressed like clowns and they could even ride the tricycle. I hope to see you again. Love, Tony”*

Mother helped Tony know how to write the words, and helped put the address on the envelope, and they included a picture that Tony had drawn.





“I’ll mail your letter for you tomorrow. It should get to him soon.”

“Oh, that would be great. Thank you so much,”  
Tony gave his mother a big hug.

Tony went off to go practice his ball bouncing,  
while Mother went to wash the dishes in the kitchen.

“Oh, I’ve got an idea,” Mother suddenly thought.

She then made a telephone call, and then called  
out the window,

“Tony, there’s someone on the telephone to talk with  
you.”



“Who is it?” he asked. He came in really quickly to the house.

“Hello.”

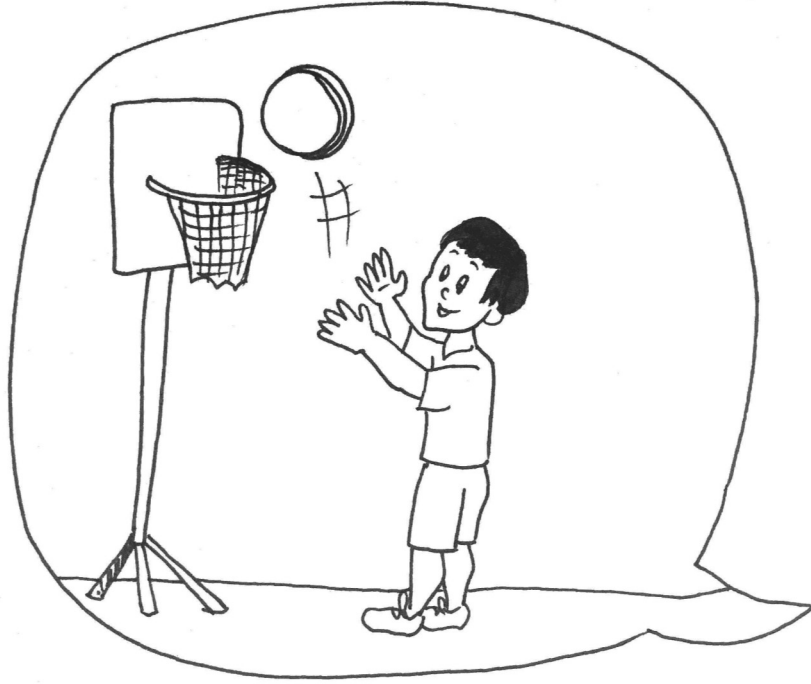
“Hi, Tony. This is Mark!”

“I just wrote a letter to you!” Tony said.

“You did? Did you get my letter?” Mark asked.

Tony said, “Yes, thank you for sending those pictures.”

“You know what, Tony, I was just thinking about you and then your Mother phoned us,” Mark said.



Then Mark asked, “What are you doing today?”

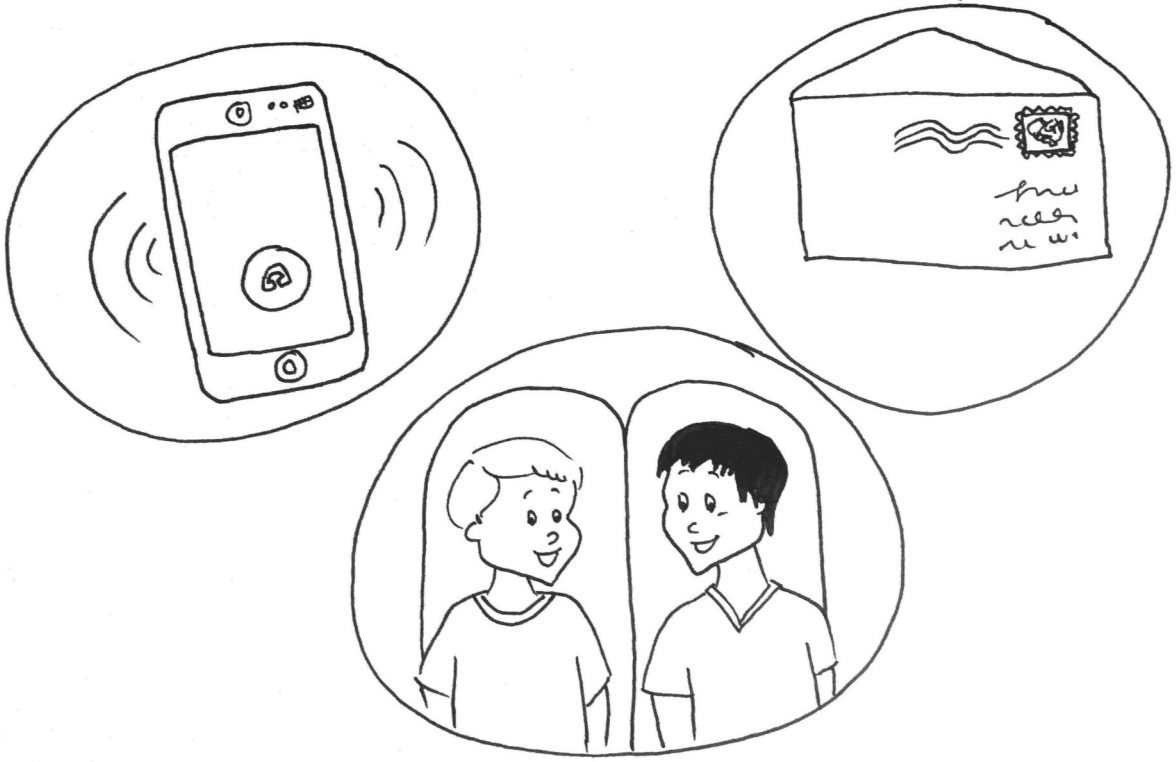
“I’m practicing my ball bouncing,” Tony answered.

“Really? I’m practicing getting the basketball into the hoop. Okay, I’ll look forward to getting your letter later. Bye.”

“Bye,” replied Tony.

Then they hung up the telephone.

“Thanks, Mother,” Tony said, handing her back the phone.



Mother said,

“I thought it would be fun to talk with him. It’s fun to talk with friends sometimes when you can’t see them or be with them. And when you can’t talk with them, at least you can write them. That’s nice too.”

Tony was glad he was learning to write. It felt nice to talk to a friend, and nice to talk using paper sometimes. The paper talks from his friend he could keep and read again and keep in a special place.

