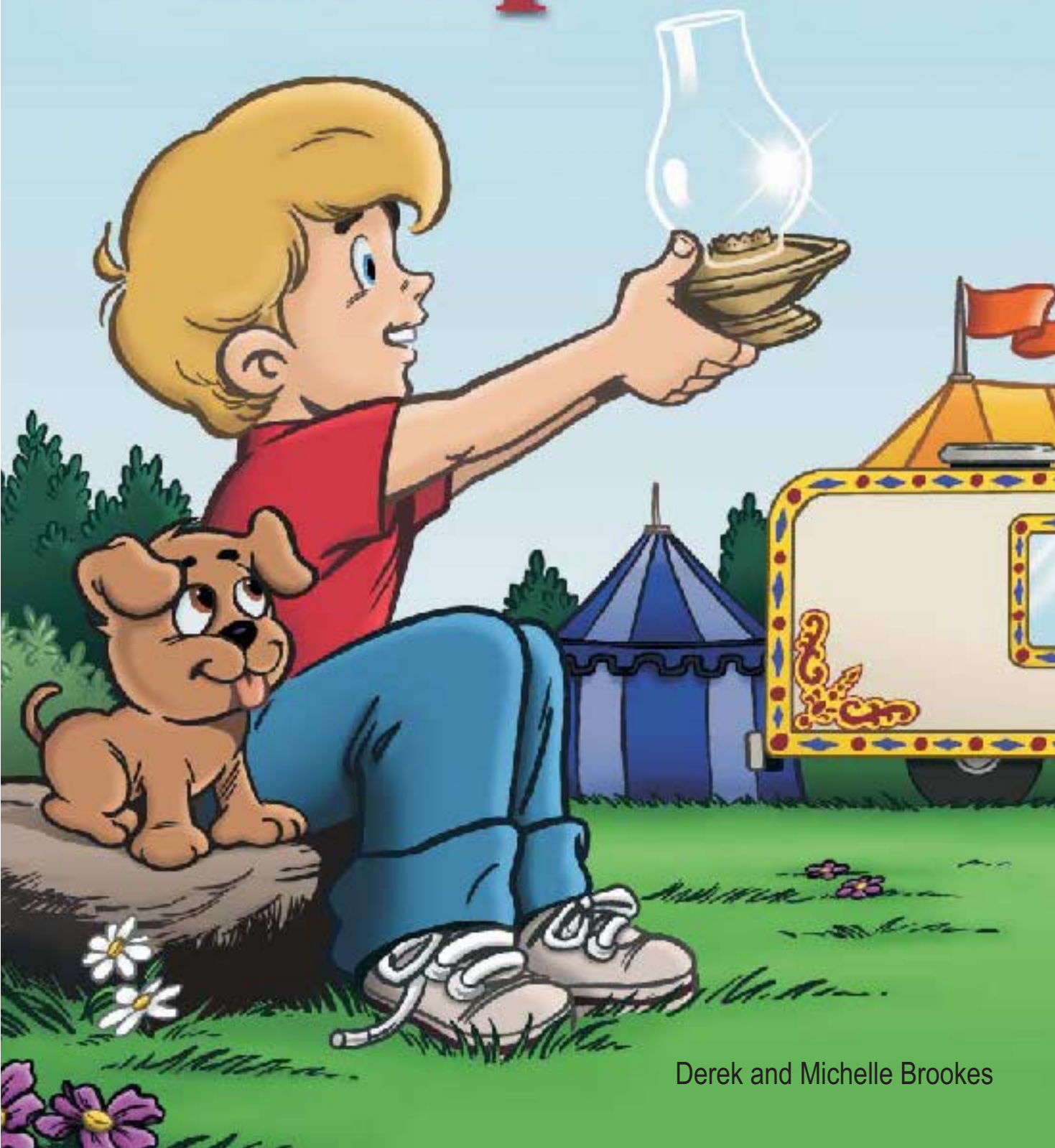


# Jimmy's Lamp

STORIES  
to grow by *plus!*



Derek and Michelle Brookes

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Derek and Michelle Brookes



Illustrated by Etienne Morel

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Jimmy was a friendly little clown, who worked in a big circus. He was much shorter than most people, but that didn't matter to him. Jimmy was a happy fellow, and he wanted to share his joy with others.

One day some new people joined the circus. They were a family of acrobats. The father was a kind, strong man—gentle and soft-spoken.

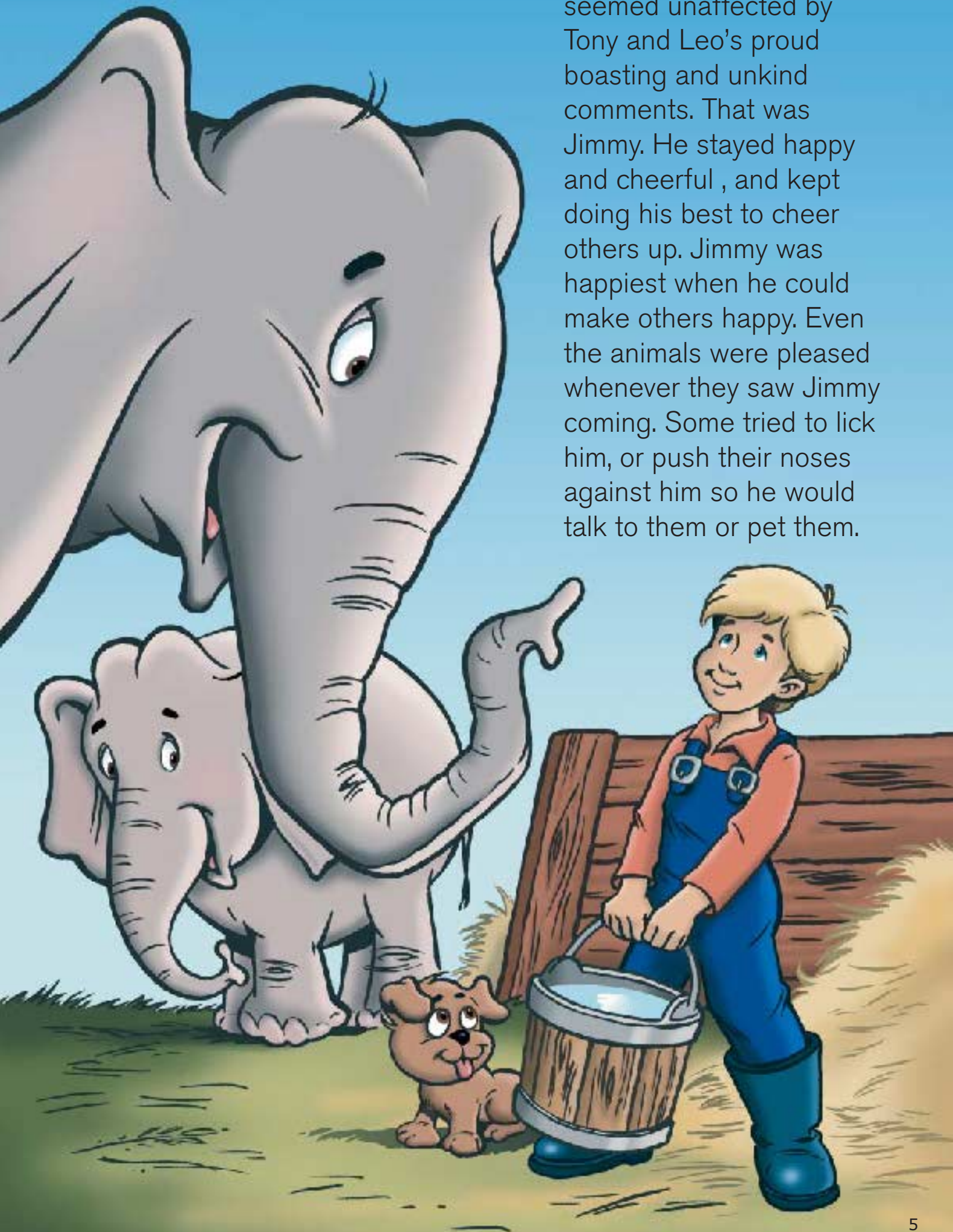
But sad to say, the two older sons, Tony and Leo, were not kind like their father. They made fun of members of the circus team who were not performers—the workers who did the hard work of setting up, caring for the animals, attending to the costumes, the equipment, the kitchen, and so forth.



Tony and Leo seemed to enjoy teasing anyone they felt was weaker or less important than they were. They acted even worse if they had an audience who would join in their cruel mocking and making fun. They were also particularly unkind towards and critical of the clowns, and especially of Jimmy. They made joke after joke about him.

Tony, the older brother, was very proud of his athletic abilities and his strong agile body, and he often goaded his brother into doing some extremely daring performances high on the trapeze. Tony and Leo liked to brag to anyone who would listen, about the important people they had met, the world fame they had achieved and the places they had been. Their constant habit of constantly lifting themselves up and putting others down made people feel so badly that others soon started to avoid them.

Only one person seemed unaffected by Tony and Leo's proud boasting and unkind comments. That was Jimmy. He stayed happy and cheerful, and kept doing his best to cheer others up. Jimmy was happiest when he could make others happy. Even the animals were pleased whenever they saw Jimmy coming. Some tried to lick him, or push their noses against him so he would talk to them or pet them.





Everyone liked Jimmy, and hardly took notice of how short he was. Most of the circus people's children confided in him, and sometimes even the adults would come and tell him their troubles. Jimmy often didn't know what to say, but it seemed that just being a sympathetic listener was a help to others. Many people seemed to find the answers to their problems while they told their troubles to Jimmy. He always seemed to have a way of getting them to look at things in a more positive light.

Jimmy's joyful attitude, however, did not make the two self-centered acrobats happy. Tony in particular went out of his way to make life difficult for Jimmy. Yet as hard as Tony and Leo tried to upset Jimmy, their unkind comments seemed to roll off of him like water off a hippo's nose. Even more upsetting to them was how, just when they had managed to make someone all sad and upset, Jimmy would come along and brighten the person up again with some kind words.







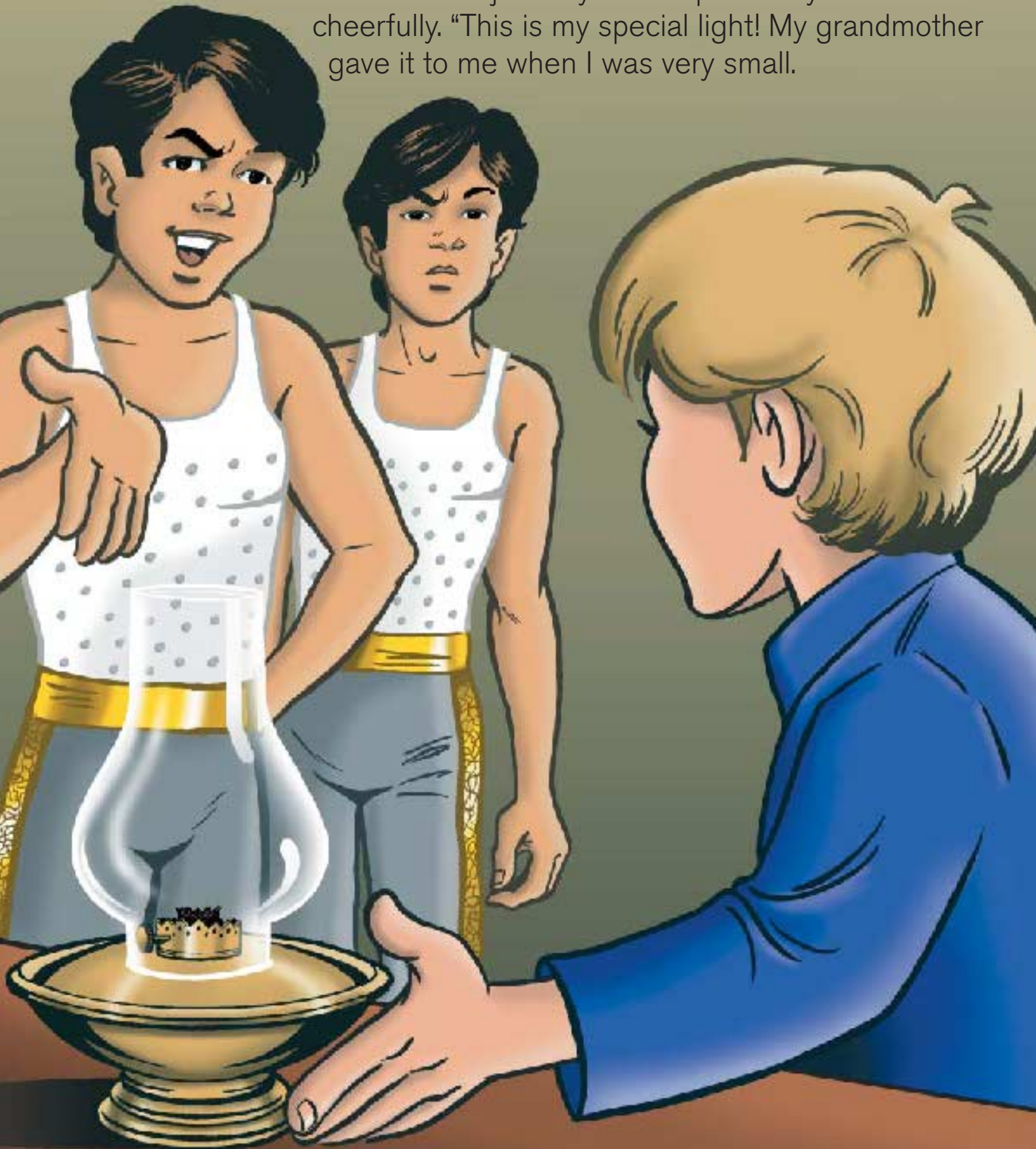
The truth was that Tony and Leo were jealous of Jimmy. His kind, outgoing nature won him many friends. Their unkind and selfish behavior drove people away, and they were slowly beginning to feel less and less important. They liked being the center of attention. They liked being able to keep everyone's attention on themselves. But their attention-getting tricks were not working, and they blamed it on Jimmy.

"Jimmy is just too happy to be real," Tony said to his brother. "I think he just puts on that happy act to hide how unhappy he feels inside. One little pinprick will pop his happy balloon. I bet if we find his weak spot he will fall apart, and everyone will see what a fake and a phony he is."

From that moment on the two brothers kept their eyes and ears open, looking for a way to upset the little clown.

One day they noticed that Jimmy had an unusual little lantern in the window of his caravan. It was so old that it looked like an antique. So they asked him, "Why do you keep that silly old lamp in the window of your caravan?"

"This is not just any old lamp!" Jimmy said cheerfully. "This is my special light! My grandmother gave it to me when I was very small.





“I went with her one time to visit someone she knew who was very sick. We had to walk far a long way and it was getting dark on the way home. At one place on the path I looked up and saw a dark, old tree. It seemed to have a face and long arms and I was scared that it would grab me or something. I stood frozen to the ground in fear. My grandmother thought I was still walking behind her and kept going. Finally she looked around and realized that I was not there and came back and got me.



“By this time I had come running and screaming after her. ‘I was lost and alone and it was all dark and I was afraid,’ I told her through my tears.

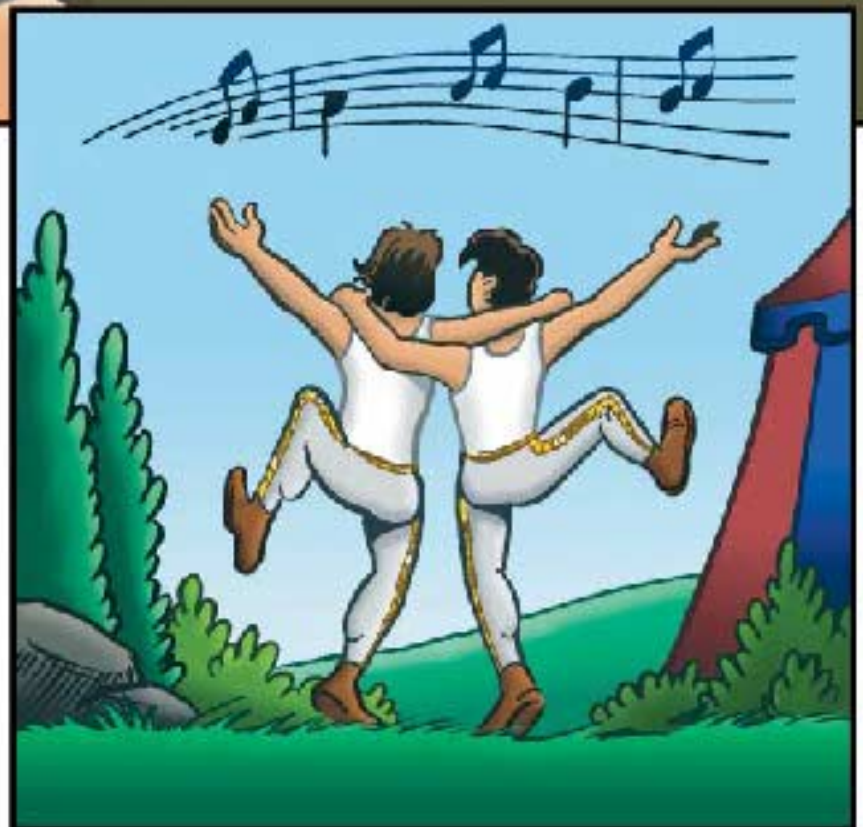
“Hush, hush,’ she said. ‘You’re never alone, my boy. You never are alone! Even when Grandma is not with you, Jesus is always with you. He never leaves you or forsakes you. He goes with you wherever you go. Never forget that, my precious child. Never!’

“When we got home I was still upset, so Grandma went to her room and brought me this old lamp. She told me I could keep it near me as a reminder that I am never alone; that there is always Someone with me who cares for me. My grandmother is in Heaven now, but whenever she looks down at me she sees this lamp in my window. It’s a sign to her not to worry about me.”





The two brothers gave each other a little smile. They had got their plan. They snickered and slapped each other on the shoulders, and walked off singing a silly song. Jimmy hardly saw them the rest of the day.



That night before going to bed he polished his little brass lamp with his big hanky, checked the wick, and put in more oil just in case he would need to light it at night. Then he said his prayers and fell fast to sleep.





The next day Jimmy woke up early. As soon as he opened his bright cheery eyes he felt that something was wrong. He didn't know what was wrong, he just felt uneasy.

"What could it be?" he muttered to himself. He checked his clothes. He went outside to check under the brightly colored circus caravan he lived in. He went back inside, began making breakfast, then decided to check all around inside his caravan again, but couldn't find anything wrong.

“Dear Jesus,” he prayed, “if something is wrong please show me.” Then as he was getting ready to go out the door of his caravan, he looked out of his window and realized what was wrong.

My lamp! Jimmy thought to himself. Where is my lamp? That’s what is wrong, my lamp is gone! That’s odd! I am sure it was there last night. Yes, I remember filling it.

The missing lamp puzzled and perplexed Jimmy all day. It is a beautiful old lamp, Jimmy reasoned, but it can’t be that valuable for someone to want to steal it.





Some of the circus people noticed that Jimmy was not himself and asked if anything was wrong. "I don't know," he said. "It's the strangest thing, but the old lamp I keep in my caravan window has just disappeared! I can't imagine why anyone would want to take it."

Word about a possible thief in the camp spread quickly throughout the circus community. Soon everyone was talking about it. Tony and Leo were surprised to discover how seriously this was being taken.

"Well, we sure stirred the pot up this time!" Tony laughed. "I wonder how our little clown is doing today?"

"Let's go find out," Leo suggested, and off they went.





They found Jimmy sitting quietly petting one of the watchdogs, a beautiful German Shepherd named Mikal.

“What’s wrong Jimmy?” Tony asked. “You look a little down today.”

Jimmy was not generally one to mistrust others, but this was one time he could not brush away some serious suspicions about Tony and Leo. Jimmy never liked to hold onto a bad or negative thought about someone, so he decided to ask the two acrobats if they knew anything about his missing lamp, or if they had perhaps taken it.

Solemn-faced and with as much outward sincerity as they could muster, the two brothers swore to Jimmy that they had nothing to do with his disappearing lamp, but had come to help solve the mystery. Jimmy felt badly that he could have thought such a terrible thing of them, and apologized for even asking.



When they were gone, Jimmy bowed his head and prayed to his dear friend Jesus, who had never failed to help him through every difficulty. "Dear Jesus," he said, "I know I should not let a little thing like this bother me. It is just an old keepsake lamp. But since I know You know exactly where it is, could You help me find it, if it can be found? Thank You."

Jimmy's grandmother had taught him how to pray when he was still a child, and ever since Grandma had gone to Heaven, Jimmy had talked things over with his friend Jesus. Jimmy was a small person in this world, but God had blessed him with a lot of faith. Soon after he prayed, Jimmy felt peace in his heart. He knew that he would find his lamp again in God's time.

Jimmy looked up at the sky and smiled, "Jesus, You are the best lamp anyone could have in the whole world. You never get lost or stolen. You just keep shining and filling my life with sunshine. Thank You for loving me, as small and unimportant as I am."



“Hey, Jimmy, did you find that thing...uh, whatever it was you were looking for?” a friendly voice called out. It was Bruno, the circus strongman, getting ready for his act inside the big top.



“Not yet, but I am sure it will show up,” Jimmy replied. “Don’t overdo in there!” he cautioned his friend, who sometimes tried to lift too much. Then, realizing that he too needed to get ready for the next show, Jimmy waved and hurried off to get dressed.

That afternoon’s show was terrific. Jimmy was funnier than ever, and had the audience roaring with laughter in no time.

High up on the trapeze, the two young athletes prepared for their daring performance, but something was wrong. "I guess that old lamp we took from him didn't mean as much to him as we thought. I was hoping he would be miserable today, but look at him! He is happier than ever."





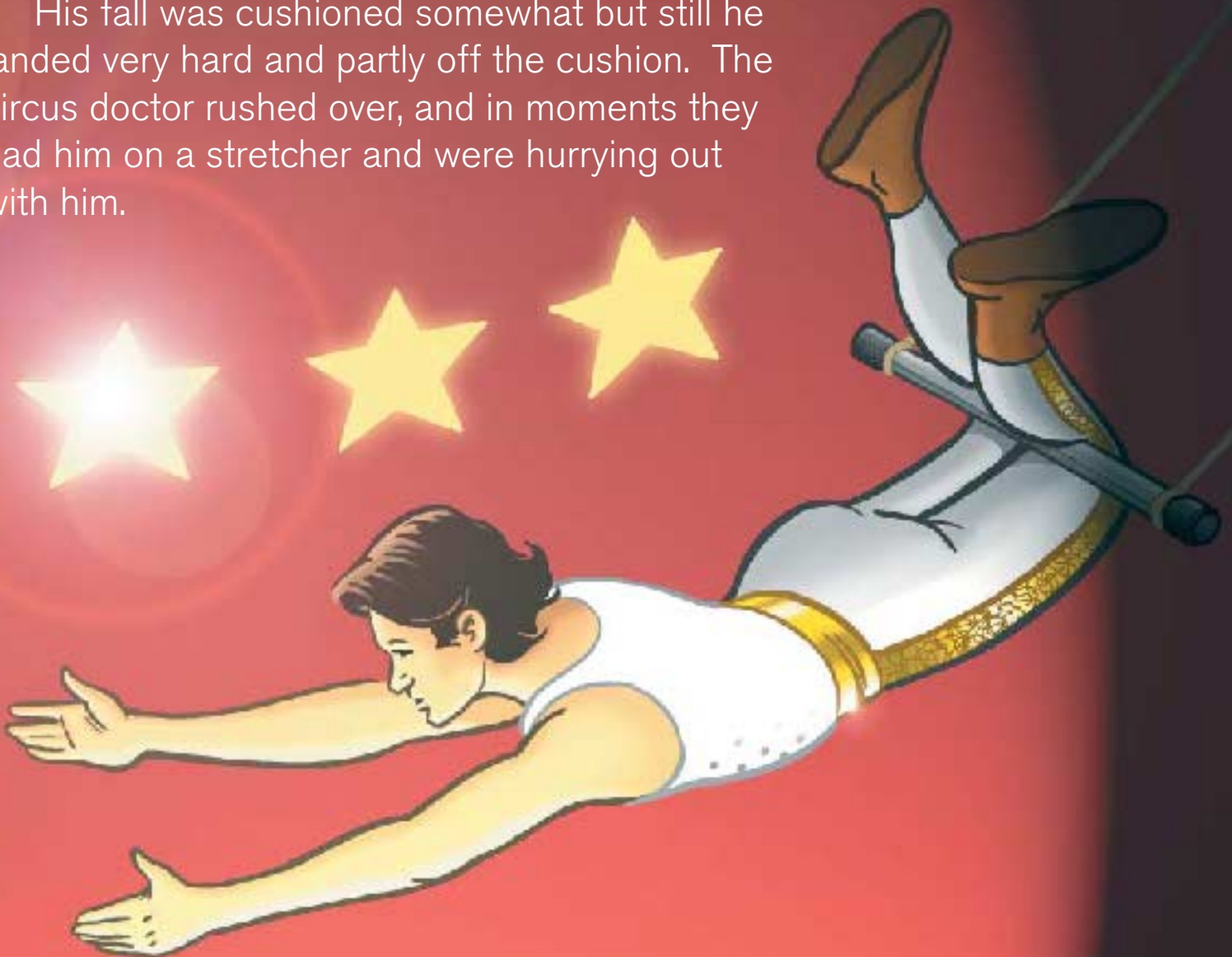
Soon the drums rolled and the trumpets blared, announcing that the high wire and trapeze act was about to begin. The ringmaster stepped up to the microphone. "Ladies and gentlemen! Let me present to you the world famous Averrio family.



I must ask the audience to please remain perfectly silent during this performance, as any distraction could cause our trapeze artists to fall. You will notice that, at their own request, they are not using any safety net today. We have, however, put an air-bag security cushion should they fall.”

The drums rolled again and the whole audience went silent as the brothers began their incredible leaps and flips and daring turns, high up near the tent ceiling. At one point one of the brothers nearly missed a catch and the audience let out a gasp. But he caught himself just in time. Then the most dangerous moment of all arrived, when the brothers did double flips in opposite directions, and in unison caught hold of separate trapezes. They swung gracefully toward each other, but as they came out of their mid-air flips, Tony missed grabbing the bar of the trapeze and fell. It was a horrible moment. Many people in the audience gasped as the young man fell to the ground.

His fall was cushioned somewhat but still he landed very hard and partly off the cushion. The circus doctor rushed over, and in moments they had him on a stretcher and were hurrying out with him.







The ringmaster announced that the young man was still alive and they would let the audience know his progress, but that the show needed to go on. With that, the elephants came marching in, ridden by smiling girls in pink and blue costumes covered with shiny sequins. On the side, Jimmy's part was to play with one of the trained monkeys. Jimmy did his best to make the audience laugh, but he couldn't help but think of poor Tony, and he prayed a silent prayer for God to help him.





As soon as the show was over, Jimmy hurried over to the Averrio trailer. A small crowd of circus people had gathered around. Soon father Averrio came outside and called Jimmy over to him. "We think Tony will be all right. The ambulance is having a hard time getting here quickly, because of heavy traffic. But as soon as it does they will take him to the hospital for x-rays and observation. He wants to talk to you, Jimmy. It seems very important to him. Would you go in and see him?"



Jimmy went into the trailer quietly and was soon beside Tony's bed. Tony was in pain, but looked surprisingly well for having just survived such a terrible fall.

As soon as Tony saw Jimmy, he motioned him to come closer. "Jimmy," he said, "I have something of yours." He tried to reach under his bed but couldn't manage it. He asked Jimmy to reach under for him.

Jimmy bent over and looked under the bed and to his great surprise, he saw his old brass lamp. He took it out and looked at Tony, who explained, "I lied to you about the lamp. I took it from you because I wanted to upset you and prove to everyone that your happiness was just a put-on. I was envious of what you had that I didn't have—your happy heart. I just want to tell you I am very sorry for how badly I have treated you."

Leo was standing nearby. He nodded his head in agreement and said, "I'm sorry too. Please forgive us, Jimmy."

“I forgive you gladly,” Jimmy answered. “But the secret to my happiness is not really a secret at all. You can have the same happiness I have. I feel sad sometimes, just like other people, but Jesus is my best Friend, and He always helps me make it through. Jesus wants to be your Friend too, Tony and Leo.”

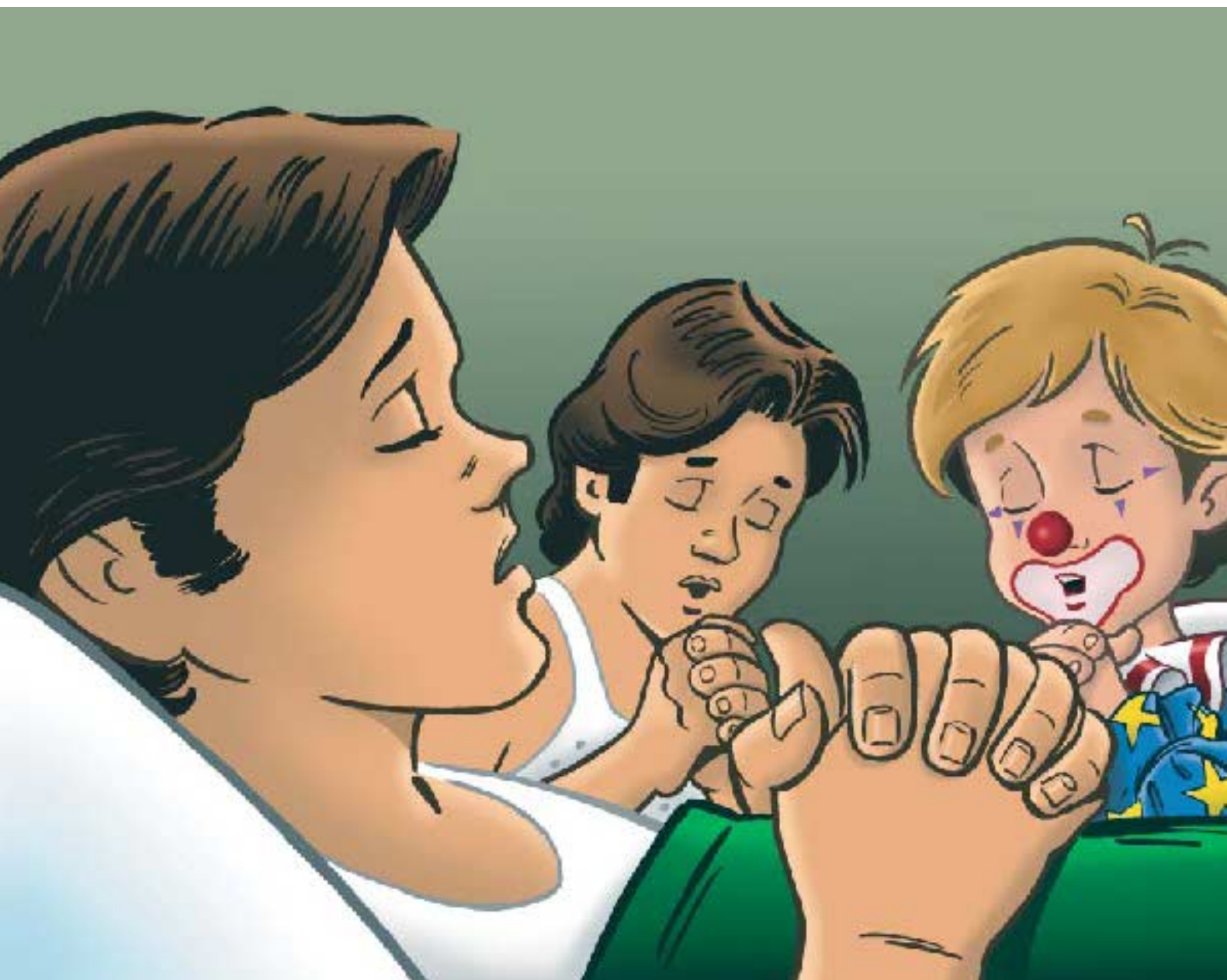
Jimmy’s words comforted Tony. The sound of the approaching ambulance could be heard.

“Would you like to pray and ask Jesus to be your Friend?” Jimmy asked.

Tony and Leo nodded in agreement.

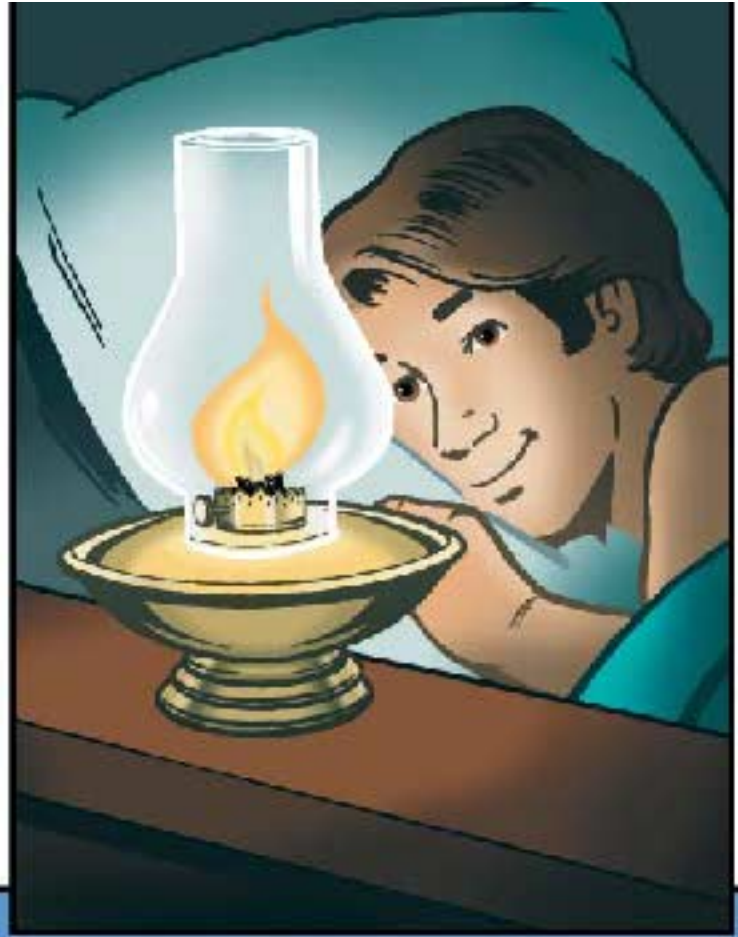
So Jimmy led them both in a simple prayer in which they asked Jesus to forgive them for their mistakes and to be their best Friend.

Jimmy then prayed for Jesus to help Tony to recover, just as the ambulance was arriving.



Tony's eyes were a little sad as he wondered if he would ever be able to perform again.

Jimmy said to him, "Tony, I am going to leave my lamp in your window, so you will have it when you return. It will remind you that Jesus will help you through this. He is the light of your life now. Also it will remind you that I consider you my special friend. Thank you for telling me the truth."

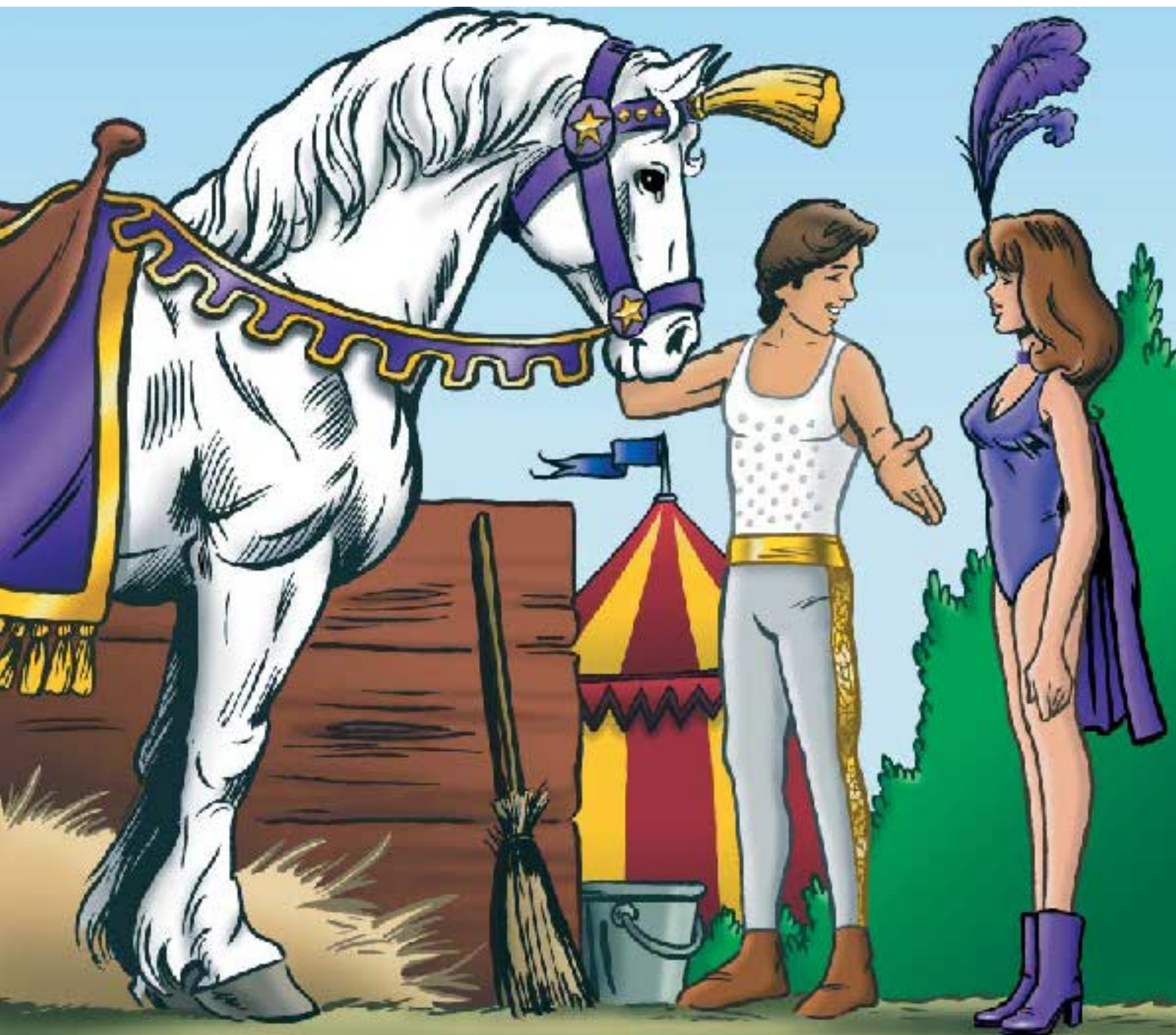


Tony did recover from his fall, but it took time. He was unable to walk around for a long time. Jimmy's little lamp did inspire Tony, but not as much as the many visits that Jimmy made to the caravan while Tony was recovering.

Tony, Leo and Jimmy became the best of friends.

When Tony was well enough to walk around again, he decided to be more helpful to everyone, like his new friend Jimmy was. Tony was often seen cleaning the animal pens and feeding the animals, setting up and taking down the sideshow tents, taking care of costumes and show props, selling tickets, and helping out with all the little jobs that needed to be done.

Tony was a changed man, and soon he had lots of friends. He was no longer Tony the terrible teasing trapeze artist, but many people were happy to call him their friend. Leo quickly followed his brother's good example, and in time was as warm and friendly a person as you could wish to meet.



One day, many months later, Jimmy answered a knock on his caravan door. There was Tony, with the little brass lamp in his hand.

“I got the point,” said Tony with a big smile as he handed Jimmy the lamp. “Thanks for lending me your lamp. Jesus has healed me enough now that next week I can begin performing again. Don’t worry, Jimmy—we plan to use a safety net from now on.”

“That’s wonderful news!” Jimmy replied.

Tony looked at Jimmy once more before turning to go. “Thanks, Jimmy, for everything. I never thought I could be happy just being humble and helping others, but I am! Thanks for being a real friend to me.”

So Jimmy’s little brass lamp went back to its familiar place on his window sill, a little reminder of the wonderful light Jesus can give, not only to help each one of us through those dark times in our life, but to be a constant companion to bring us joy and happiness.



# MORE STORIES TO GROW BY

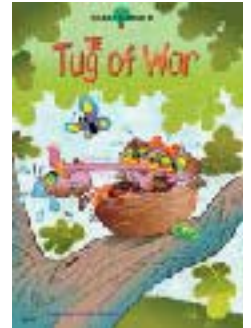


## Farmyard Heroes

Jenny the baby chick wanted more action and adventure in her life, but she could not have guessed how suddenly her world was about to change!

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Billy, Reddy, Cherry and Chirpy are four little baby robins with a variety of personalities and preferences, huge appetites, and a few things to learn about manners! Find out what happens when Mama and Papa Robin fly away to find food, and Billy has his first brush with danger.

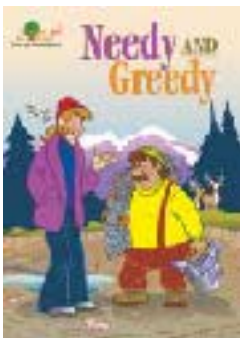


## A Christmas to Remember

This beautifully illustrated storybook will bring the warmth of the Christmas season into your heart and home. Meet the jolly Grandfather Ray, young Peter and his mermaid friend and many more Christmas friends in these enjoyable and touching stories that will make your Christmas season truly a Christmas to Remember.

## Trudge and Zippy

Two fun animal friends with very different characters share a day at the carnival and are brought closer to God and to each other through a serious turn of events. With beautiful color illustrations throughout that your child will love!



## Needy and Greedy

Fredrick and Hans have been fishing partners for years at Pirate's Cove, until one day they stumble upon a wooden chest. Needy and Greedy is a story about friends and the discovery that drove them apart. Can anything bring them back together again?

## Grandpa Grumpy

Will there ever be cheer and laughter in Grandpa and Grandma Grumpy's house? "Good morning!" Grandpa Grumpy hears from the yard next door, as he grumpily takes out the trash. Little does he know that something special is about to happen!







## **Come one, come all— the Circus is in town!**

Little Jimmy was the kindest and most cheerful clown anyone knew, brightening lives and putting smiles on the faces of audiences and fellow circus artists alike.

But can Jimmy remain his happy self when two mean and mischievous young trapeze artists join the circus and set out to cause Jimmy as much trouble as they can?

Discover how kindness can touch anyone's heart, and forgiveness can even make friends out of enemies!

