Daan and Floor

Stories

Written By Christy Bel

Table of contents

1 Daan and Floor voorwoord
2 April Fools
3 By Accident on Purpose
4 Daan and Floor Go Dancing
5 Daan Wants to Dress Up Too
6 Dex and the Little Mouse
7 Floor Helps Mum
8 God Loves Everyone
9 God Takes Care of You and Me
10 I am so bored
11 It s okay to make mistakes
12 Jesus in Your Heart
13 Jumping in Puddles
14 Knights in the Woods
15 Martians
16 Mixing Colours
17 My Bird Friends
18 Never Give Up
19 Pizza
20 Playing Shop
21 Praying
22 Setting a Good Example
23 Silly Dog
24 The Christmas Doll
25 The Crying Clown
26 The Lazy Eye
27 The Wind and the Questions
28 Three Is Too Many
29 Tomato Hole
30 Vacation Poop
31 What Do You Want to Be When You Grow Up
32 Whiny Kids
33 talking with your mouth

34. Afraid of monster

1 Daan and Floor

Hello!

Come and take a look.

You probably want to know who we are, don't you?

Well, let us tell you all about ourselves.

We are the Bloem family.

A dad and a mom, and of course, us: **Daan and Floor!**

Daan is already six years old, and Floor is four.

We live close to the woods. We often go there. Mom says that's where we can have fun and be as noisy as we like!

We have friends who live nearby, but we also love playing together.

Will you read along with us in this book?

Love from Daan and Floor

2 April Fools' Day

It is April Fools' Day, because it is the first of April.

Daan is already a big boy, of course, and he knows lots of jokes from school.

"April Fools, a frog in your bottom, and it will never come out!" sings Daan.

At school, the children play tricks on their teacher, and of course the teacher plays tricks on them too.

When Daan comes home, he has a joke present for Floor.

"April Fools, a frog in your bottom, and it will never come out!" Daan sings again.

"There's nothing in it at all!" says Floor angrily.

Dad and Daan laugh very loudly.

"April Fools!" Daan sings again.

That only makes Floor even more cross.

"Stop singing your silly song!" says Floor.

Floor thinks it is a very silly day. She can't think of any jokes herself, and she doesn't like that.

When they are setting the table, Daan starts playing tricks again.

Daan makes Dad jump and pulls his chair away just as Dad is about to sit down.

When Dad wants to get his cutlery, he suddenly finds children's cutlery instead.

Dad laughs.

"I'm funny, aren't I?" says Daan with a big grin on his face.

After dinner, Dad and Daan go for a bath. Mum clears the table.

Then Floor asks, "Mum, do you think I'm a funny joker too?"

Floor thinks Daan is the only big joker, and she doesn't like that.

"I want to play a joke too," she says.

“You funny girl,” says Mum. “Has Daan teased you a little too much today?”

“Yes.”

“You know what? We’ll get him back. I have an idea.”

Mum whispers something softly into Floor’s ear.

Floor starts to giggle.

“That’s a good idea, Mum!”

Quietly, Mum and Floor creep upstairs with a little bowl of cold water. Very carefully, they open the bathroom door.

Daan and Dad are sitting in the bath, singing together.

They are going to be so surprised!

“SPLASH!”

Floor throws the bowl of cold water over them.

Then Floor sings as loudly as she can:

“April Fools, frogspawn in your bottom, now it’s going to be a big mess!”

“Serves you right! Serves you right!”

Then they all burst out laughing.

“You’re the best joker, Floor!” says Daan.

3 By Accident on Purpose

Daan and Floor have dressed up.

Floor is wearing Mum's high-heeled shoes. She wobbles as she walks. When she almost falls, she grabs Daan's sweater. That helps her stay on her feet.

But Daan gets angry.

"Stay away from me! You're pulling my sweater!" says Daan.

"But I didn't do it on purpose," says Floor. "I was almost falling, so I had to hold on to you."

Daan gives Floor a push, and she falls onto the floor after all.

Floor is just about to get very angry, but then she hears Dad coming home.

She runs to him.

Dad gives Floor a big hug. Then he flops down on the sofa, and Mum gives him a cup of coffee.

"Did anything happen today?" Dad asks Floor.

Floor tells him about dressing up and about Daan giving her a push.

Then Daan sees that Dad is home from work. He runs over and jumps onto Dad's lap.

Dad has just taken a sip of his coffee.

Because Daan jumps onto his lap, the coffee spills onto the floor.

"Oh, sorry!" says Daan. "I didn't do it on purpose."

"That's okay, Daan," says Dad. "If you do something by accident, you haven't done anything wrong. Just like Floor, when she almost fell. I heard what happened."

Daan looks at Floor.

"Sorry, Floor," he says. "I pushed you by accident on purpose."

Dad looks surprised.

"By accident on purpose?" he says. "You're quite a funny one!"

"It really isn't easy to walk in Mum's high heels, you know, Daan," says Floor.

She takes off the shoes and throws them towards Daan.

"Here, you try!"

Daan is happy to give it a try.

He wobbles just as much as Floor did.

"You were absolutely right, Floor!" Daan laughs. "This is way too difficult!"

Floor starts laughing.

And Daan laughs too.

4 Daan and Floor Go Dancing

Daan and Floor are watching television. On the TV, they see people who are very good at dancing. They look amazing.

“I want to dance that well too,” says Floor.

“Me too!” says Daan. “Just watch me!”

Daan moves the chairs out of the way. The sofa needs to be pushed back a little too.

“There!” says Daan. “Now the living room is a big dance floor!”

The music goes up loud.

Here they go!

Bend your knees, jump into the air and spin around. They are trying very hard.

Floor spins around and around until she feels a little dizzy.

Daan waves his arms wildly.

“Look how cool I am!” he shouts.

Then he starts making all kinds of difficult moves with his legs.

CRASH!

Oh no!

The glass vase with the flowers falls off the table.

Daan and Floor freeze.

“The vase...” whispers Floor.

Water is all over the floor, and the vase is broken into pieces.

Just then, Mom comes downstairs.

She does not look happy at all.

“I go upstairs for just a little while, and now you've made a huge mess again,” says Mom angrily.

“Go to your room for a while. I'll clean up the broken glass,” says Mom.

Daan walks upstairs sadly.

He feels terrible that he broke the vase.

“I only wanted to dance,” he says quietly.

Floor still thinks dancing is great.

“I want to practise a little more,” she thinks.

She looks at the bed.

“If I dance on the bed, Mom won't hear me.”

Oh, Floor!

She climbs onto the bed.

Higher and higher she jumps!

“Look how well I can dance!” she shouts.

Then she jumps much too high and...

BANG!

She bumps into the lamp.

“Oops!”

Now Mom comes upstairs too.

“Floor!” calls Mom.

Floor looks very sorry.

Dancing doesn't seem quite so much fun anymore.

After a while, Daan and Floor are allowed to come downstairs again.

Floor sits next to Mom.

“I wanted to be as good as the people on television,” she says.

“And I wanted to dance really cool,” says Daan sadly. “But I'm not very good at it.”

Mom looks at her two children and pulls them close.

“Oh, dear Daan and Floor,” says Mom. “You are exactly the children I wanted.”

“God made you both wonderfully. He has given each of you different talents.”

“You can certainly practise dancing,” says Mom. “But not in the living room, and not on the bed.”

Daan nods.

“Then we'll practise outside.”

“That sounds like a much better idea,” says Mom.

Floor looks at Mom.

“Yes, Mom,” she says. “And you're really good at telling us off.”

Mom looks surprised.

“Do you really think that's a talent?”

Floor nods very seriously.

“Yes. But you're exactly the mom I wanted.”

Mom starts to laugh.

She gives Daan and Floor both a big kiss.

And from that day on, Daan and Floor practise their dancing... **outside!**

5 Daan Wants to Dress Up Too

It is Saturday morning. Mom and Dad are getting the children ready to go to the market.

Floor is dressed up as a princess. She is wearing a pink dress and a pretty little crown in her hair.

“Can I keep my princess dress on when we go into town?” asks Floor.

“Of course you can,” says Dad. “You look beautiful!”

Daan teases his little sister.

“How silly to wear your dress-up clothes into town!”

Floor doesn't like that at all. She angrily gives her brother a little push.

“Come on, you two. No fighting,” says Mom.

“Here you go,” says Mom, giving each of them a banana to eat on the way.

“Well, those will be gone soon. We'd better buy some more bananas later. You both love them so much.”

“Let's get some apples too!” calls Floor.

“Of course, Princess,” says Dad.

Daan climbs onto the back of Mom's bicycle, and Floor sits on the back of Dad's.

When they are almost in town, they hear music.

There are lots of people walking around. They all look a little strange.

“Look!” says Floor. “All those people are dressed up!”

“Why are they doing that?” she asks.

“Oh yes, I completely forgot,” says Dad. “It's carnival, of course. People dress up and have a big party.”

“But we don't celebrate carnival,” says Dad.

“Ha, ha!” laughs Floor. “I'm dressed up, so I'm joining the party!”

She sticks her tongue out at Daan.

That's a little unfortunate for Daan.

He isn't dressed up at all.

But Daan soon comes up with a great idea.

He has eaten his banana, but he is still holding the peel.

Daan puts the banana peel on top of his head.

“Look at me!” he shouts.

“I'm a banana! Now I'm dressed up too!”

Mom and Dad burst out laughing.

“We have a beautiful princess and a real Daan-a-banana!” says Mom.

“Clever boy,” says Dad.

Daan grins proudly.

“Then I need another banana for my tummy too!”

“Well, you'd better start with eating a real banana first,” says Mom.

And together they cycle into town, laughing all the way.

6 Dex and the Little Mouse

Daan and Floor have been given a toy mouse by Dad. Floor has put her mouse in her bed. She doesn't want Dex to take her new cuddly toy. And Dex is not allowed upstairs. She wants to keep her new mouse safe.

But Daan has brought his mouse downstairs. And Dex keeps trying to take it away.

Dex the dog really likes the little mouse. He wants to play with it and takes it to his dog bed.

Daan takes the mouse out of his bed, but Dex wants to pull on it. He thinks Daan is playing a game with him.

"Let go!" Daan calls to Dex.

"I thought only cats went hunting for mice," Daan says to Mum.

"I can understand why you think that," Mum says. "But Dex thinks everything you play with is very interesting. Last time, I even had to take some Playmobil out of his bed. Dex carries toys to his bed as if they all belong to him."

When Daan comes home from school, he sees his mouse lying on the floor.

But... the tail is gone!

"DEX!!!!" Daan shouts angrily.

The dog quickly runs to his bed.

"Don't be too angry with Dex, sweetheart," Mum says. "Dex is a dog, and he doesn't really understand what belongs to him and what belongs to you."

Daan gives Dex a hug.

"I think Dex does know that it's my mouse," Daan says. "He looks very guilty."

"But Dex," Daan says to the dog, "I think you forget that you're a dog and not a cat!"

Mum takes the mouse's tail out of Dex's bed.

"I can fix this," she says.

“Do you know what we should do?” Mum says. “We’ll get Dex a real doggy cuddly toy. And a tasty bone, just for dogs.”

Daan looks at Dex.

“Then you won’t have to eat my mice anymore!”

7 Floor Helps Mum

Mum walks into the room.

“What a mess you two have made again!” she says.

Daan and Floor have certainly been having lots of fun playing, and yes, playing usually comes with quite a lot of mess.

“I think we should really help Mum,” says Dad.

Mum is allowed to sit on the sofa and doesn’t have to do anything for a while. Dad makes her a nice cup of coffee, and Daan gets to take it to Mum.

Very carefully, Daan walks over to her. Step by step, very carefully.

Only one tiny drop spills onto the floor. That’s not too bad.

Mum is very happy with her coffee.

“You’re my sweet boy,” she says.

And Daan gets a big cuddle.

Daan feels very proud.

“I brought Mum her coffee all by myself,” he tells Floor.

Now Floor wants to do something really special for Mum too. But she can’t think of anything.

They are all going to tidy the room together: Daan, Floor and Dad.

But Floor is still thinking hard.

Dad runs a nice warm bath for Daan and Floor. Daan is finished first and gets a little bag of crisps.

Floor wants a bag of crisps too.

Daan brings one to his little sister. Floor happily munches all the crisps.

Her hands are completely orange from the crisps. She pulls the bag all the way open and sees lots of little pieces of orange paprika crisps.

Then she has a great idea.

“Mum, Mum!” calls Floor.

Very pleased and proud, she shows Mum a sparkling clean crisp bag.

“Look, Mum! This is for you!”

Floor proudly holds up the clean bag.

“Are you very proud of me too?”

Mum looks at Floor.

The whole bath is covered with little orange pieces of crisps. The tiles are orange too. Floor’s mouth and hands are orange.

But the crisp bag is completely clean.

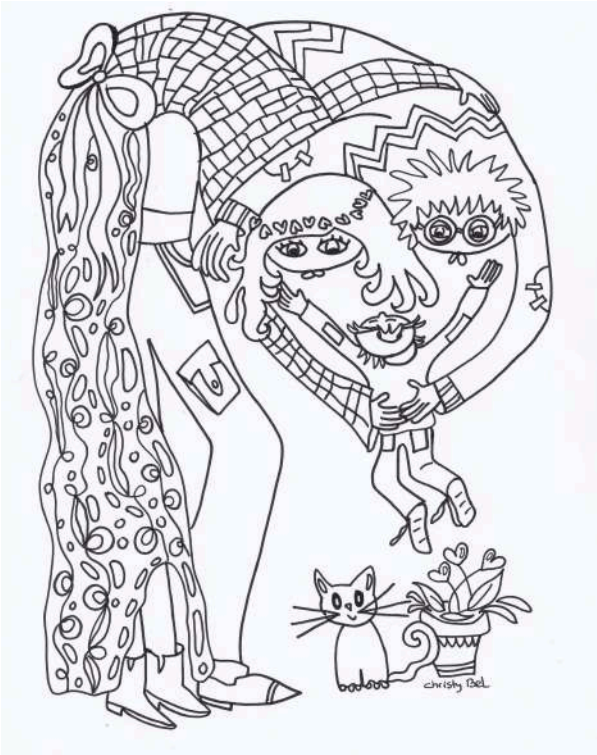
“Well, the bag is certainly the cleanest thing in the whole bathroom!” says Mum.

Oh, silly Floor!

Mum gives Floor a big cuddle.

“Shall we clean the bathroom together?” Dad asks Mum.

And the two of them can’t help laughing at Floor.



8 God Loves Everyone

Daan comes home from school with a little mirror.

On the back of the mirror is a Bible verse:

John 3:16
"For God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not be lost but will have eternal life."

Daan proudly shows the mirror to Mom and Floor.

"Today I learned that God loves the whole world," he says.

"Look in the mirror, Floor."

Floor looks into it and starts laughing at her own face.

"See?" says Daan. "When you look in the mirror, you know that God loves you too."

Daan turns the mirror around.

Now he can see the whole living room reflected in it.

"God must love my Lego too," says Daan. "And my Playmobil!"

"Now me!" shouts Floor.

She grabs the mirror and starts showing all her toys in it.

Of course, her favorite doll has to be in the mirror too.

"God loves my doll too," says Floor.

Just then, their dog Dex jumps onto the sofa.

"Look! Dex wants to look in the mirror too!" shouts Floor.

Daan holds the mirror in front of Dex.

"God loves dogs too," he says.

"Show my somersault!" shouts Floor.

She does a somersault on the sofa.

“Of course,” says Daan. “God probably likes your somersault.”

“Now me!” shouts Daan.

He jumps a little higher than Floor.

Daan has been practicing for a real somersault in the air.

But then...

BOING!

Daan lands right on top of Dex.

“YIPE!”

Dex jumps off the sofa in fright.

Mom quickly comes to see what happened.

“Daan and Floor,” says Mom, “Dex isn't allowed on the sofa. And I don't think doing somersaults on the sofa is a good idea either.”

Daan quickly picks up the mirror.

“But Mom, you can't be angry! God likes our somersaults, and God loves us.”

Mom has to smile.

“That’s true, Daan. God loves you. And I love you too.”

She looks at the sofa.

“But I don't think everything you do is okay.”

Daan looks at her questioningly.

“How can that be?”

“Well,” says Mom, “I can love you very much and still tell you when something isn't right. I also want to teach you what is good and safe.”

Daan slowly nods.

“It is the same with God,” Mom says. “God always loves us. But that doesn't mean he thinks everything we do is good. He also wants to teach us what is right and help us make good choices.”

Daan thinks for a moment.

“So God loves me even when I do something that isn't right?”

“Yes,” says Mom. “His love for you never changes.”

Daan looks at the little mirror.

“That’s good to know.”

Then suddenly, he has an idea.

“Do you and Dad still need to be taught how to behave too?”

Mom starts laughing.

“Of course!”

Floor looks surprised.

“By who?”

Mom laughs.

“By God, of course.”

Daan and Floor both start laughing.

“So we're all still learning!” shouts Daan.

Mom nods.

“Exactly.”

9 God Takes Care of You and Me

Floor is sitting on the back of Mum's bike. They are going to buy bird food for the birdhouse in the garden. Daan is riding his own bike along the cycle path, swerving from side to side.

"Be a little careful, will you?" Mum says.

Daan tries to do a little stunt with his front wheel.

"Who made all these hard roads?" Daan asks.

Floor calls out, "God makes everything, so He made the road too!"

"No way," says Mum. "The road builders have to make the roads, don't they?"

"Yes," says Daan. "The builders make the world strong, don't they?"

"But what if the sky falls down? Who makes that?"

The sky probably isn't very strong, Daan thinks.

"What if I fall through the road with my bike, or a cloud falls on my head?"

"Can that really happen?" asks Floor.

She doesn't like Daan's scary ideas very much.

Mum doesn't know the answer to all these difficult questions either.

"God takes care of you and me," says Mum.

But Daan isn't satisfied with that answer.

"I saw earthquakes on TV," Daan says. "I really saw them! Why did God let the earth shake like that? Why didn't the builders make the roads and houses stronger?"

"Yes," says Mum. "It is a little difficult to understand. We also have to take care of many things ourselves."

"And yet God promises that He will take care of us, just like He takes care of the birds."

That afternoon, they make a very long string of peanuts for the garden. The

birds will have a wonderful feast.

When Floor goes to bed, she still thinks about all the things Daan said.

Dad gives her a big cuddle.

"Dad and Mum take good care of you. And God does too."

Then Daan walks into the room and gives his sister a hug too.

"If God ever forgets to take care of the birds, we will do it, won't we, Floor?"

"Every winter," says Floor.

"We're all going to take very good care of each other," says Dad. "And now, time to go to sleep."

10 I'm So Bored

There sat the two little rascals, Daan and Floor, on the sofa. Two grumpy little faces and four dirty feet on the table.

"We don't want to play outside anymore," says Floor.

"No, there's nothing to do," says Daan.

"Mum, shall we bake some cookies?" asks Floor.

"No, sweetheart, not right now," says Mum. "It's lovely outside and there are plenty of children at the playground. Why don't you go outside and play? The sun is shining!"

But today Daan and Floor don't want to go outside, and they can't think of anything to do themselves. Mum is cleaning and doesn't have time right now.

Daan and Floor keep sitting on the sofa, grumbling.

"Okay," says Mum. "I know what we can do. Come with me. We'll think of something fun together."

"Yaaaaay!" shout Daan and Floor together.

They run after Mum outside.

"Do you know what we're going to do?" asks Mum. "We're going to make something really difficult."

"See these daisies in the grass? We're going to make a pretty chain from them."

With beautiful homemade flower crowns on their heads, the children dance through the grass.

"See? You really can think of something fun to do!" says Mum.

"Pick some more flowers for home too. We can put them in a pretty vase."

Floor finds some tiny blue flowers.

"What are these called?" she asks.

Mum knows.

"They're forget-me-nots."

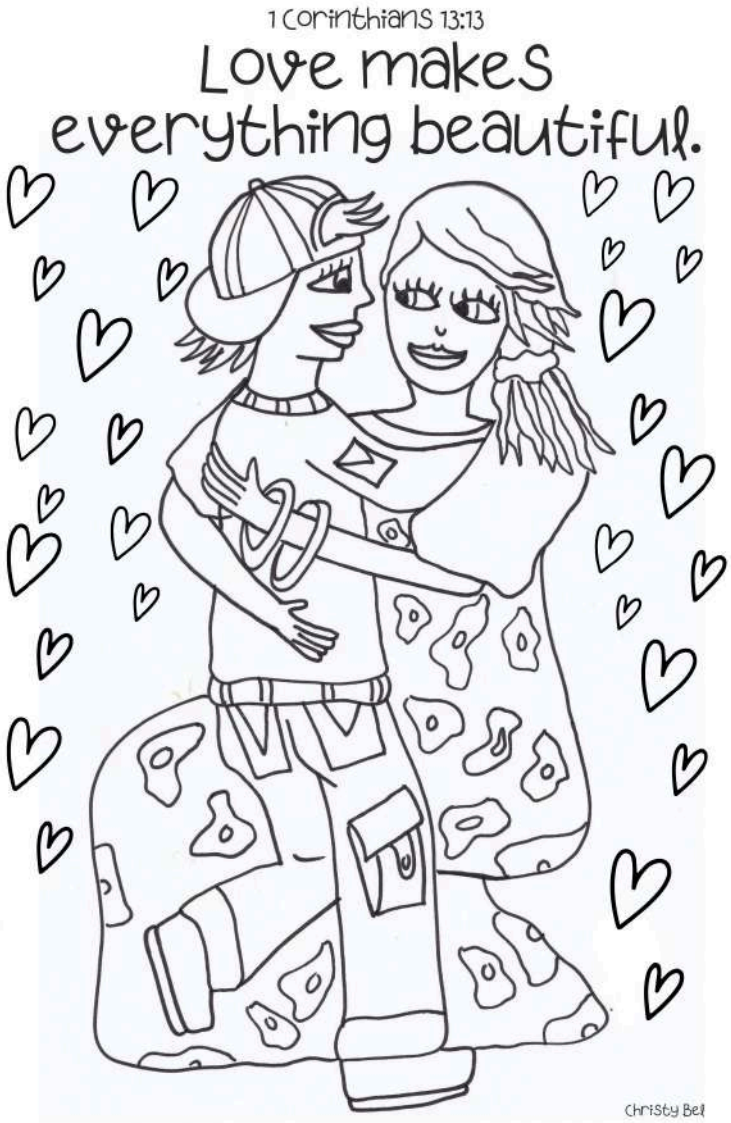
"We'll put them on the table. Then I can think of you every time I look at them."

"It was a lovely day with you!"

"That's a good idea," says Floor. "Then I'll always play outside, because I can look at the **don't-forget-to-play flowers**."

Daan and Mum have to laugh.

"We didn't get bored today, did we, Floor?"



11 It’s Okay to Make Mistakes

Mom and Dad have done a lot of grocery shopping.

At the checkout, Dad suddenly realizes that he has left the big shopping bag in the car.

“Daan, could you get the big bag from the car?” Dad asks.

Dad gives him the car keys.

Daan is very proud that he is allowed to unlock the car.

He comes back proudly carrying the big bag.

“I’m already eight,” says Daan. “Of course I’m old enough to help Dad!”

In the afternoon, Mom gives Daan a cup of coffee.

“Could you take this to Dad?” she asks.

Daan carefully walks over to Dad with the coffee.

He doesn't notice that a few drops of coffee are dripping onto the floor behind him.

When Daan walks back, he doesn't see them either.

Mom has already quickly wiped them up.

“Well done, my big boy,” Mom says proudly.

Daan sits down to watch television.

He waves his feet around in the air.

But oops!

His foot knocks the glass of lemonade off the table.

“MOOOOM!” Daan cries in shock.

Mom quickly comes to see what happened.

“It's okay,” she says. “We'll just clean it up.”

At the table, Floor wants to pour her own milk.

But the carton is still completely full, so it is quite heavy.

“Come on,” says Mom. “Let me help you.”

But Floor pulls the carton toward herself.

“I want to do it myself!” she says angrily.

She lifts the carton.

SPLASH!

Milk spills all over the table and onto the floor.

Floor looks at the big puddle in shock.

“Oops...”

Mom grabs a cloth.

“It's okay, Floor. We'll clean it up together.”

That evening, they have soup for dinner.

Mom puts some soup in Daan's bowl.

After his second spoonful, Daan suddenly pulls his bowl away.

“I've had enough!” he says.

SPLASH!

Soup spills onto the table.

“Oh dear,” says Mom. “At this rate, I might as well carry this dishcloth around with me all day!”

Daan looks a little guilty.

A little later, Mom puts the pot of soup on the kitchen counter.

But then...

Oops!

A little soup spills onto the kitchen floor.

Mom looks at the soup.

Then she looks at the dishcloth.

And her face turns a little red.

Daan and Floor quickly grab a dishcloth each.

“We'll help!” says Daan.

Together they clean the table and the floor.

Mom looks at the two children.

Floor gives Mom a hug.

“You're allowed to make a mess sometimes too, Mom,” she says sweetly.

Mom starts laughing.

“Thank you, my sweet Daan and Floor.”

She gives them both a kiss.

“Luckily, nobody has to be perfect.”

Daan looks at the dishcloth in his hand.

“Good,” he says. “Then I'm allowed to make another mistake.”

Floor looks at him.

“You've already made enough mistakes today!”

Daan starts laughing.

Mom laughs too.

And suddenly, even the last little drop of soup on the floor doesn't seem so bad.

12 Jesus in Your Heart

Dad takes Floor upstairs to bed. Floor tells him that she learned a new song at school about her heart being like a little house where Jesus can live.

Dad knows the song too. Together they sing it.

Is your door still locked?
Is your door still locked?
With your creak, creak, creak,
open it for God,
because the Lord wants to live with you,
and then you will never be alone.

Your heart is like a little house,
where everything feels warm and nice,
but it is still so dark inside,
there is something I am missing.

Then Floor wants to pray and ask Jesus to come and live in her heart. She and Dad pray out loud together.

Afterwards, Floor is happy that she has done it.

"But I don't feel anything," says Floor.

Floor is a little disappointed.

"Dad, will you put your ear against my heart and listen? Maybe Jesus is already inside?"

"God always sees you and hears you," says Dad. "But we can't always see, hear or feel Jesus. We can believe that Jesus lives in our hearts."

Daan jumps onto Floor's bed too.

"My teacher says you have to ask Him every day."

"If you have a friend, you don't have to ask every day if you are still friends, do you?" says Dad.

"You don't play together every day, and maybe you have an argument sometimes. But you are still friends."

“Mum and Dad also pray every day that Jesus will be the one we listen to and follow. But He already lives in our hearts. When we do something that isn’t right, we can choose not to listen to Him. But He will always love us.”

“No, He won’t!” says Daan. “If you are naughty, Jesus isn’t in your heart anymore.”

“Then He goes away,” says Daan.

Dad thinks for a moment.

“That is a little bit true, and a little bit not true,” says Dad. “We can’t see what is inside another person’s heart, can we? Sometimes people choose not to let Jesus lead them, and they do things that are wrong.”

Floor doesn’t understand anymore.

“Do I have a little door in my heart? Does Jesus go outside every time I’m naughty?”

Dad smiles.

“You really need to go to sleep now. And you don’t have to understand everything. Jesus loves you, just like Mum and Dad will always love you, even when you don’t listen very well.”

The next evening, when Dad takes Floor to bed again, she says,

“You know what, Dad… I think I understand a little bit.”

“I already asked Jesus to come into the little house in my heart. That’s all I have to do, isn’t it?”

“And if I still do something naughty, He will help me not want to do naughty things anymore. Because that’s what friends are for. Friends listen to each other and want to make each other happy.”

“Yes, sweet Floor,” says Dad. “That is beautifully said.”

13 Jumping in Puddles

It has been raining, and the street is full of puddles. The sun is shining now, and Daan and Floor have run outside. They love stomping in the puddles.

Daan looks for the biggest puddles and tries to jump over them. He is getting really good at it.

Floor's legs aren't quite as long yet, and she can't jump as far. Right in the middle of a puddle, she falls on her bottom.

"My trousers are completely wet!" says Floor.

Now Floor is a little worried that Mum might be angry.

"You should have put your wellies and some old clothes on first," says Mum. Mum isn't very happy about Daan and Floor's dirty clothes. But once they have put on old clothes and wellies, they are allowed to go back outside.

Daan jumps over a really big puddle. Every time, he looks for one that is even bigger and deeper.

The next puddle is very deep. Daan jumps in, but suddenly he feels his feet getting very wet.

Mum probably isn't going to like that!

Daan is wearing his wellies.

"Listen to this!" says Daan.

His wellies are making very funny fart noises.

"Prrrrfftt, prrrrfftt!" go the wellies.

The water sloshes around inside them.

"They sound just like farts!" says Daan.

Floor wants to try it too. She jumps into the puddle, and now her wellies are wet inside too.

Daan and Floor stomp through the street.

"Prrrrfftt, prrrrfftt!" go their wellies.

"We've got fart wellies!" they shout.

They stomp all the way home.

"How do you two manage to do this every time?" says Mum. "Now your socks and wellies are soaking wet again."

"Sorry, Mum," says Daan. "My wellies must have a little leak."

"And I've got really bad sweaty feet," Floor jokes.

"Yeah, yeah. Excuses, excuses," says Mum.

But luckily, she can't help laughing.

14 Knights in the Woods

It is a beautiful day. The sun is shining outside.

“Would you like to come to the woods?” asks Mom.

“Just to get some fresh air.”

“I already have a fresh nose,” says Floor cheekily. She sticks her nose up in the air.

Daan sniffs her nose.

“Well, your nose could use a little breeze!” he says.

He blows on his arm, making a funny sound like a little toot.

Floor jumps up and runs after Daan across the sofa.

“Come on, get your jackets on, quickly!” says Mom sternly. “You can be as noisy as you like outside, but not in the house.”

Daan grabs his toy sword and runs outside. Mom still has to help Floor tie her shoelaces. Then they walk together towards the path through the woods.

But where has Daan gone?

He usually waits by the garden gate, but he isn't there.

“Daan?” Mom calls.

No answer.

As Floor and Mom walk along the forest path, Daan suddenly jumps out from behind a tree.

“Ha! Got you!” he shouts.

Bravely, he waves his toy sword through the air and chops at some leaves hanging from the branches.

“I've captured you!” shouts Daan. He pulls on Mom's coat.

“Come with me, prisoner. Keep moving!” he orders.

With his other hand, he grabs Floor's ponytail.

“Come along, young lady!”

“Ouch!” cries Floor. “Leave me alone!”

“Daan, stop that right now,” says Mom.

Daan lets go immediately.

“We're going for a nice, peaceful walk. You can play knights, but you mustn't pull people.”

Daan looks at Floor.

“Sorry,” he says quietly. “I was only pretending.”

Floor looks at him.

“Then you can fight a tree instead.”

“Good idea!” shouts Daan.

“You can fight the pretend knights you meet—or the trees,” says Mom.

Floor picks up a stick and runs through the woods with Sir Daan.

Daan swings his sword through the air, while Floor taps the branches with her stick.

They run farther and farther into the woods.

Suddenly, they stop.

“Listen,” whispers Floor.

They hear something.

Crrr... crack...

Daan looks around.

“What was that?”

Another sound.

Crack!

“That must have been an enemy!” whispers Daan.

Floor moves a little closer to him.

“I don't know...”

Daan grips his toy sword tightly.

“I am Sir Daan. I will protect you!”

Together they look at the trees.

Suddenly, a large branch falls down.

CRASH!

Floor and Daan jump to the side.

“Help!” cries Floor.

Everything is quiet for a moment.

Then they hear:

“QUACK!”

Daan and Floor look at each other.

A duck waddles out from behind the tree.

“A duck!” shouts Floor.

Daan starts laughing.

“We were scared of that?”

“Well,” says Floor, “it was a pretty scary sound.”

They both laugh and run on.

A little later, they find a big tree. They climb into it and look out over the woods.

“Look! The enemy!” shouts Daan.

“The enemy!” shouts Floor.

They wave their weapons in the air.

Then Mom comes walking towards them.

“Well, well... so I'm the enemy, am I? That's nice,” says Mom.

“Surrender!” shouts Sir Daan.

Mom puts her hands in the air.

“I surrender!”

When they have finally worn themselves out, they go home.

Mom is cooking when Dad comes home.

15 Martians

BANG! Floor slams the door shut. She is very angry. Angry with Daan.

Daan runs after her and grabs her.

“Let go of me!” screams Floor.

She gives him a hard push and quickly runs to Mum.

“Daan is a horrible boy,” she says.

Floor presses her little face against Mum’s tummy and wraps her arms tightly around her.

“Did Daan make you a little bit scared?” Mum asks Floor.

“Well, just a little bit,” says Daan.

“We were playing Martians, but Floor thinks it’s scary.”

Daan pulls a very scary face. He makes claws with his hands and grabs at the air.

“Waaahiiiihh!” roars Daan.

“Stop it!” cries Floor.

She holds tightly onto Mum. Mum puts an arm around her.

“You know what, Daan? Why don’t you play this game with Daddy? I think that would be a better idea,” says Mum.

Daddy has to go to the supermarket first, and Daan is allowed to come along.

The shopping goes into a big, strong cardboard box.

“Can I have that?” asks Daan.

“What do you want it for?” asks Daddy.

Daan has a great plan.

When Daddy and Daan get home, they put the shopping away.

“Come upstairs,” says Daan.

Upstairs, Daan asks Daddy if he can make a spacesuit from the cardboard box.

Daddy cuts two big holes in the box.

"There! Your arms can go through here."

Snip, snip, snip.

"And here's where your head goes," says Daddy.

Daan draws lots of colourful shapes on his spacesuit with felt-tip pens.

Daan looks very funny: a cardboard box with two arms, two legs and a head.

Daddy starts laughing.

"Waaahiiiihh!" roars Daan.

Mum calls that dinner is ready, and Daan and Daddy go downstairs.

"Waaahiiiihh!" Daan roars towards Floor.

But now Floor isn't scared at all.

She laughs really hard at silly Daan, and Mum starts laughing too.

Daan looks so funny!

"Look! I'm a Martian!" says Daan.

"No, you're a real laughing Martian!" shouts Floor.

"Ha ha ha!"

A laughing Martian. No, Floor isn't scared of that.

And then Daan starts laughing too.

16 **Mixing Colours**

Mum rides her bike to school to pick up Daan and Floor. It is a beautiful, sunny autumn day. The children run towards Mum. Floor has a red streak in her blonde hair, and Daan has a blue smudge on his face.

"I think you've been painting today," Mum laughs.

"How did you know that?" asks Daan.

"Just look in the school window. Then you can have a good look at your face."

Daan runs across the school playground and kicks up a big pile of autumn leaves. Floor runs after her brother, grabs a pile of leaves and throws them into the air too.

What a beautiful sight! Leaves are falling everywhere.

Beautiful colours swirl through the air and land on the once-boring, grey paving stones. Floor picks out the prettiest leaves she can find to take home.

At home, Mum puts the leaves in a bowl on the table.

"There we go. Now we can enjoy them. A little bit of outside brought inside."

While Daan and Floor eat a sandwich at the table, they name all the colours of the leaves.

"Yellow and red, green and brown."

"I can make colours too! I learned that at school today," says Daan. "We mixed colours. That way we could make beautiful autumn colours to paint the leaves."

"We made a really big tree in our classroom." Daan makes a big gesture with his hands. "If you mix yellow and blue together and stir really hard with a big paintbrush, you get green. Maarten and I got to do that together."

"And Bram and Jeroen got to make orange. They mixed red and yellow together with a paintbrush."

"It was hard work, you know," Daan says proudly to his little sister. "Just look at the muscles I got from it!"

Daan shows off his muscles.

Floor looks at her little arms.

“I don’t have any muscles, but I don’t have dirty hands either. And that’s pretty clever of me,” says Floor.

“We made leaf prints this afternoon. It’s a work of art!”

Mum sticks their beautiful artwork on the living room door.

“There we go. Even more of the outdoors brought inside.”

“You two have worked hard today,” says Mum.

She can certainly see it on Daan and Floor. After a long day at school, they are both getting quite tired.

That afternoon, the children are allowed to play outside for a little while.

Floor comes running into the kitchen with muddy boots. Now there is dirt all over the floor, and Mum isn’t very happy about that.

“Even more of the outdoors brought inside!” says Floor.

Luckily, Mum has to laugh.

That evening, Daan and Floor quickly fall asleep.

But after an hour, Daan has a bad dream. He waves his little arms around and starts talking to Mum.

“Mum! All the chairs in the room are red, and red makes you very excited!”

“Sweet Daan,” says Mum, “just colour all the chairs blue. Blue will make you feel calm.”

“No, I can’t,” says Daan. “Red and blue make purple, and purple makes you…”

“Zzzzzzzzzzz…”

Daan has already fallen asleep.

“Purple makes you nice and sleepy,” Mum laughs.

17 My Bird Friends

Daan and Floor love the little birds in their garden. They put little pieces of bread in the birdhouse. Then they stand very quietly behind the kitchen window.

You mustn't make any noise, because that might scare the birds.

"Look!" cries Floor. "Here they come!"

And there they go again.

"Sssst," whispers Daan.

Lots of little sparrows come to enjoy the pieces of bread.

"I think it's sad when people eat my friends," says Daan.

"What did you say?" asks Mum, looking surprised. "Who eats your friends?"

"My friends, the birds, of course," says Daan.

"I'm never going to eat birds," says Floor.

"No, that would be very sad, Daan, if people ate the little birds."

Floor pulls a disgusted face. She doesn't even want to think about it.

But then Daan has a brilliant plan to stop it from happening.

"You know what?" says Daan. "I'm going to ask the Lord God to make the birds taste really horrible. Then nobody will want to eat birds anymore. And nobody will eat the other animals either, like cats."

"Because a cat can eat a little bird too," Daan adds.

"Well, Daan," says Mum, "that really is a very good plan!"

At the dinner table, Dad reads a Bible story about how God takes care of the birds. Just as God the Father takes care of us too.

Daan and Floor think it is a beautiful story.

"And you know what?" says Floor. "If God doesn't feel like doing it one day, then we'll take care of the birds ourselves. Right, Daan?"

What clever children Daan and Floor are!

18 Never Give Up

Daan and Floor have a day off from school today. Mum had just forgotten about it.

"What are we going to do?" asks Floor.

Two hopeful little faces look up at Mum.

"I want to make things with clay, or do some crafts, or paint," says Daan. He has lots of plans.

Mum doesn't think that's such a good idea.

"I was actually planning to do lots of tidying today, so making a big mess isn't very helpful," says Mum. "You know what? Why don't you make a tent in Daan's room? I need to tidy upstairs anyway."

Daan and Floor run upstairs. Mum gives them a blanket and a few clothes pegs.

Floor goes into Mum and Dad's bedroom and asks Mum to help, but Mum starts grumbling. The bed is covered with clothes and other things.

"What a mess you've made!" says Floor.

"You'll have to figure it out yourself, Floor. I can't help you right now."

A little disappointed, Floor goes back.

Daan wants to help her, but the blanket is so heavy, and the clothes peg keeps popping off.

"Muuuum!" Daan calls loudly.

"You have to help us!" he says crossly. "It's much too heavy for us!"

But Mum really doesn't feel like helping.

From the bedroom they hear Mum call back:

"Never give up! Keep trying!"

Daan and Floor pull hard on the blanket together. This time they manage to pull it over the chair.

There! They put in the clothes pegs, and their tent looks great.

"There! We did that really well together!"

Then the phone rings.

Mum runs downstairs and then back upstairs again. The phone must be somewhere around here.

It keeps ringing, and the sound is coming from the huge pile of things covering Mum and Dad's bed.

"Boys and girls, come and help me!" Mum calls.

"Never give up, Mum," says Daan. "You can find it yourself."

Mum runs after her cheeky little rascal.

Quickly, Daan and Floor dive into the tent.

Lots of giggling can be heard from underneath the tent.

19 Pizza

"Mum, we want to eat in front of the TV!"

Daan and Floor have made a little tent in the living room. They want to eat their pizza and watch TV from inside their very own tent.

What a wonderful plan!

But Mum doesn't think it is such a good idea.

"That will make a big mess, and soon the sofa will be covered in pizza stains."

Mmmm… the pizza smells delicious.

Today it is Floor's turn to pray.

"Lord, thank You for making the pizza taste so good."

"Did God make the pizza?" Dad asks.

Then Daan starts to pray.

"Lord, thank You for putting the pizza in the supermarket so we could buy it."

"Well, I think I'm the one who bought the pizzas and put them in the oven," says Mum.

"If you work, you earn money, and with that money you can buy food. Someone made all those pizzas and sold them to the supermarket."

"And yet we pray every day and thank God for the roof over our heads and for the food we have."

"And when you work hard at school, you did that yourself too. But God makes sure that you are able to work."

"And the beautiful picture Floor drew this afternoon—she made that herself too."

"You did your very best on that," says Mum.

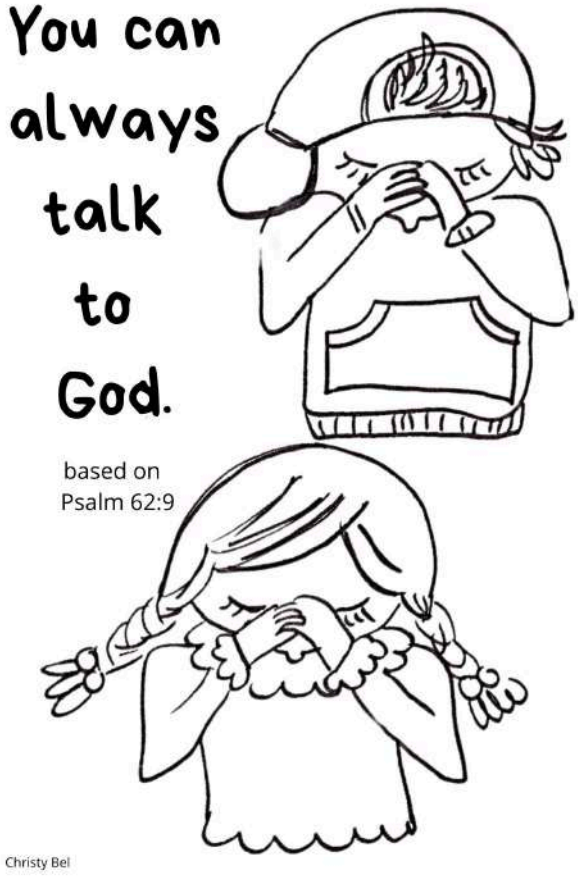
"But being able to move, breathe and grow is something God takes care of. It's a little bit like electricity. We can't make the energy we need to move and grow all by ourselves."

"And the pizza in your tummies gives you energy, so you can keep growing."

When the pizzas are all gone, it is Daan's turn to say thank you.

"Lord, thank You for our food," says Daan. "Thank You for making all the little plugs and for making them fit together. Thank You for electricity. Thank You that Floor and I can watch TV because of it."

Then they quickly run away from the table.



20 Playing Shop

The living room is covered with colorful plastic apples, strawberries, bananas, shampoo bottles, pretend eggs, hamburgers, sausages, little bread rolls, bunches of grapes, and countless toy coins.

"Mom, do you want to buy something from our shop?" Daan calls happily from behind his checkout.

When Mom walks into the shop, Floor politely gives her a basket. "Welcome to our shop," she says with a big, friendly smile.

Floor carries on stocking the shelves. All the fruit and vegetables get their own place on the television, the coffee table, the sofa, and the floor. Looking at the once-neat living room, Floor is very pleased with her well-organized shop.

"Are you going to buy something?" Daan asks from behind his checkout.

Mom carefully looks at all the things for sale. But then Daan suddenly shouts from behind his checkout that Floor has to put everything exactly where he wants it.

"It's my shop too!" says Floor.

Mom buys some plastic ingredients for dinner and tells Boss Daan that Floor had kept the shop very tidy.

Mom doesn't have any money to pay, but luckily Floor quickly takes some money from the till and gives it to her.

In the kitchen, Mom pours lemonade for the children and pretends to cook the vegetables they have bought in a little saucepan.

Suddenly, the mood in the shop becomes a little less cheerful because Floor decides to make the shop much bigger. There are now all kinds of plastic vegetables on the windowsill between the plants. Floor has also put some pretend sandwich fillings on Dad's books, which are lying on the coffee table. She moves things that belong to Mom and Dad and puts them on the floor.

"I've made a big shop!" Floor says proudly.

Daan, the shopkeeper, gets angry. "Mom said you're not allowed to do that. Something might get broken!"

Bossy Daan pulls the golden candlestick out of Floor's hands, and the flowerpots are quickly put back in their places too.

Mom puts her arm around Floor and talks to Daan. "Daan, you're already six. Don't you think you did things like that when you were only four?"

"You know that better than I do, don't you?" Daan says cheekily.

Mom brings some sweets for the hard-working shopkeepers. "You can sell them and eat them too," she says.

Floor eats her sweets without paying. Daan gets very angry about that and pulls the sweets out of her hands.

With an angry face, Floor throws a plastic banana at Daan's head.

There goes the shop!

One by one, chocolate sprinkles, little bunches of grapes, and tiny milk cartons come raining down across the living room.

"That's enough! Shop's closed!" they hear Mom say angrily.

"You're not the boss here," Daan says to Mom. "It's my shop!"

"Honestly, sometimes I could give you a little smack, you cheeky boy!" says Mom.

"You don't seriously think I'm going to pay for that, do you?" says Daan.

21 Praying

Dad and Mum are going to the movies tonight, and Grandma is coming to babysit.

Floor is very excited.

"Are you leaving already?" she asks Dad and Mum.

She looks at all the yummy snacks that are ready for tonight. She is going to watch a movie with Grandma and is allowed to stay up a little later too.

Daan doesn't like it at all when Mum and Dad go out in the evening.

"I don't want you to go," he says.

"I prayed that Grandma wouldn't come to babysit. So why is Grandma coming anyway?" Daan asks.

"Doesn't God always listen to us?" he asks Mum.

"God always hears what we say to Him," Mum says. "But hearing us and doing everything we want are not the same thing."

Daan looks at Mum.

"Of course God heard that you find it difficult when we go out tonight," Mum says. "But God doesn't simply do everything we ask Him to do."

"I thought I was allowed to ask God for anything," says Daan.

"You are," says Mum. "You can tell God anything and ask Him anything. God knows what we need, and He hears our prayers. But He doesn't always do exactly what we ask."

Daan thinks about this.

"So if I ask God for something, that doesn't mean it will happen?"

"That's right," says Mum.

"But I'm sure you'll have a lovely evening with Grandma," Mum says. "And we won't be gone very long."

Daan thinks for a moment.

“Can I pray that God wakes me up on time tomorrow for my favourite TV show?” he asks.

Mum laughs.

“Daan, remember what I just told you? We have our own jobs to do too. If you want to wake up on time tomorrow, you can set your alarm.”

“Oh, right,” says Daan.

Mum gives him a kiss.

“But we can pray together that you and Floor have a lovely evening. You can make it a fun evening together with Grandma.”

“Okay,” says Daan. “I understand.”

He looks at Floor.

“We have to make it fun with Grandma ourselves.”

Then he thinks for a moment.

“And I’ll ask God to wake you up on time tomorrow, Mum. That’s your job!”

Mum starts laughing.

“And what is your job?”

“Waking you up!” says Daan.

“Deal,” says Mum.

Daan looks at the table full of yummy snacks.

“Come on, Floor. Let’s practise making it fun!”

22 Setting a Good Example

After school, Daan asks if Anna can come home with him to play. Together, they want to bake some cookies.

Anna is a girl who says exactly what she is thinking. That is why Daan thinks she is so funny.

As soon as they come inside, Anna looks around.

“Wow, it’s messy in here,” she says. “My mom always keeps everything nice and tidy.”

When they are having some lemonade, Anna takes a sip.

“Our lemonade tastes much better than yours.”

Daan secretly starts to giggle.

While Mom is getting the cookie dough ready, Daan and Anna play upstairs for a little while.

“Are you two coming to bake cookies?” Mom calls.

Anna comes running downstairs.

“Why is Daan’s bedroom smaller than your bedroom?” she asks. “You only have to sleep in your bedroom, but Daan has to play in his!”

Daan looks at Mom.

Mom takes a deep breath.

“Come on, let's make some cookies,” she says.

While they are baking, they have a lovely time.

“What a beautiful dress you’re wearing, sweetheart,” Mom says to Anna.

Anna looks at her angrily.

“I don't want you to say anything about my dress. Only my mom is allowed to call me sweetheart!”

“Oh,” says Mom. “I didn't know that.”

After a while, the cookies are ready.

Well... sort of.

After thirty minutes, they have turned out a little hard.

Daan thinks they taste pretty good.

Anna takes a bite and makes a funny face.

“My mom's cookies taste much better!”

Mom has now had enough of all the comparing.

“You really are a little princess, aren't you?” she says, a little angrily. “Next time, you'd better play at your house if everything is so much better there!”

Anna puts an arm around Daan.

“My mom never gets angry. She always sets a good example.”

Mom looks at Anna.

Then she says,

“You're right. I shouldn't have gotten so angry. I'm sorry, Anna.”

Anna looks surprised.

“Saying sorry is also setting a good example,” Mom says.

She smiles.

“Every family does things differently. At your house, you do some things differently from us. And that's okay.”

“When you play at lots of different children's houses, you'll see that every family does things differently,” Mom continues. “There isn't one house that does everything the best.”

Daan looks at the plate of cookies.

“But Mom...” he says.

“Yes?”

“If you want to know what failed cookies taste like, you've certainly set a good

example today."

Mom starts laughing.

"That's true!"

She pushes the plate toward Anna and Daan.

"Have another one."

Anna takes a cookie.

Daan takes one too.

They both chew very seriously.

"They're actually pretty good," says Anna.

Daan nods.

"But your lemonade is still not as good as ours."

Anna looks at him.

Then they both burst out laughing.

Even Mom has to laugh.

23 **Silly Dog**

Daan comes happily home from school. It was Marloes's birthday, and she handed out little bags of crisps.

"And look what else I got!"

Daan shows them a little mirror. On the back it says:

God loves ……!

Daan proudly looks at himself in the mirror.

"So God loves me," he says happily.

Daan sits on the sofa and shows the mirror to his little Playmobil figures. Floor jumps on top of Daan and pulls the mirror out of his hands. She presses her little face right up against it.

Mum has to laugh.

"I think you want to climb right inside it!"

"God loves me very, very, veeeery much," says Floor proudly.

Then they hear a strange little noise.

"Where is that coming from?"

It's Balou, the dog.

"Ewww!" cries Daan. "Balou is being sick!"

"Oh dear," says Mum. "Silly, yucky dog! There was poop in the house this morning too. It really shouldn't get any worse."

Mum gets a bucket of soapy water to clean it up.

"Poor Balou. You can't help it, can you?"

"Balou has A.D.H.D.," says Daan. "All Day Diarrhoea, Mum!"

Floor quickly runs over to the poor dog and strokes his tummy.

"Are you feeling sick, sweetheart?"

She puts a pretty pink doll's blanket over him.

"Balou can't help it, Mum," Daan says firmly.

Then Daan goes back to playing with his mirror.

"Look, table. God loves you."

"Look, flower. God loves you."

Daan holds the mirror up against the window.

"Hello, big world! God loves you all!"

"Ewww!" he hears Mum shout again.

"And now outside, silly dog!"

Mum is cross with Balou again. The dog has been sick some more.

"I understand now why the dog is so sick."

Mum shows them a bar of soap with a big bite taken out of it.

"That soap smelled really nice too. Balou must have thought it was a tasty biscuit."

"That was very clever of you," says Daan. "If something smells nice, it must usually taste nice too. You're very clever, Balou."

"And Mum, you're a little bit silly," says Daan firmly.

Balou isn't a silly, yucky dog at all.

Daan holds the little mirror up to Balou's nose.

"Look. God thinks you're a lovely dog."

"You're not a silly dog. And if Mum says it again, you just don't have to listen."

"Dear Daan," Mum laughs, "I think you're actually right."

"Balou just wanted a really, really tasty snack."

"Shall we buy him a lovely bone to make it up to him?"

24 The Christmas Doll

It is December, and the whole world is covered in white snow.

Dad helps Floor put on her boots. Daan puts on his thick winter coat.

Today they are going to visit a little nativity scene in the woods near the petting zoo. They come here quite often.

But today the petting zoo looks extra cozy. Little lights are hanging everywhere.

Floor is in a big hurry.

“Come on, Daan! Hurry! We're going to see baby Jesus!”

Daan doesn't walk quite so fast.

He would actually rather go and see the goats.

He feels sorry for the animals because it is so cold.

And that baby in the manger?

Well, that's just a doll, isn't it?

It isn't cold at all.

At the nativity scene, everyone pretends that the story is really happening.

Mom greets Mary and Joseph.

“Hello, Mary. Hello, Joseph,” she says.

Dad looks very seriously at the baby in the manger.

Daan looks at his parents in surprise.

“Don't they understand that this is just pretend?” he thinks.

Floor kneels down beside the manger.

“Hello, dear Jesus,” she says.

Mom gently puts her hand on the doll's head.

Daan quickly takes Mom's hand.

“But you can't pretend that this is the real Jesus, can you?” he asks.

Daan remembers a story he heard at school.

In the story, some people had made a golden calf and prayed to it.

God was very angry with them.

Daan looks at the doll again.

“Shall I pray to the real Jesus with you, Mom?” he asks.

Mom smiles.

“I think that's a lovely idea.”

As they walk home later, Dad talks to Daan.

“You've been thinking carefully,” Dad says. “It's okay for Floor to pretend for a little while that she is meeting Mary and that the doll is Jesus. That's part of acting out the Christmas story.”

Daan nods.

“But you're also right that this doll isn't really Jesus,” Dad continues. “Jesus isn't inside this doll. We don't pray to a statue or a doll that people have made. We pray to God.”

Daan looks pleased.

“I thought so.”

“But we can think about Jesus when we look at the nativity scene,” Dad says. “Because the Christmas story reminds us that Jesus came into the world.”

Daan smiles.

“Then I'd rather pray to the real Jesus.”

“You can,” says Dad.

BAM!

Suddenly, a snowball hits Daan right in the coat.

“Ha, ha!” shouts Floor.

She quickly runs away.

“This snowball was real, Daan!”

Daan looks down at his coat in surprise.

Dad looks at Daan.

Daan looks at Dad.

Then they both start laughing.

“Come on, Daan,” says Dad. “Let's make a really big snowball.”

And Floor?

She is already running away as fast as she can.

25 The Crying Clown

There is a circus in town, and Daan and Floor really want to go.

Daan is especially excited to see the clowns. A clown is a real jokester, and Daan and Floor love that!

Inside the circus tent, it is a little dark.

Floor holds on tightly to Mom. She is a little bit scared. All those people in costumes and all those strange sounds make her feel a bit nervous.

Daan isn't scared at all.

“I want to sit right at the front!” he shouts.

With wide eyes, Daan and Floor watch the animals and the acrobats.

Then, finally, the clowns come out!

Daan cheers so loudly that Mom starts laughing.

The clowns pretend to fall over, make funny movements, and tease each other.

Then suddenly, one of the clowns starts crying very loudly.

“Boo-hoo-hoo!” he cries.

Floor looks worried.

“That’s kind of sad,” she says. “He must have fallen really hard.”

“That’s not real,” says Daan. “Just look!”

The clown is wearing a huge pair of glasses. Two little streams of water are coming out of them.

“They’re fake tears!” Daan laughs.

The crying clown turns around and sprays the other clown with water.

“Serves him right!” shouts Daan.

He laughs his head off.

Daan laughs so loudly that the clown hears him.

The clown looks at Daan.

Then he slowly walks toward him.

“Boo-hoo-hoo...” the clown cries.

Floor moves a little closer to Mom.

“I think it’s a little scary when he comes this close,” she whispers.

But Daan keeps laughing at the clown.

Then the clown starts crying even louder.

“BOO-HOO-HOO!”

And suddenly, a big stream of water shoots out of his glasses.

SPLASH!

Daan gets completely soaked.

The audience starts laughing.

“I don't like this!” shouts Daan angrily.

“He did it!” says Daan, pointing at the clown.

Now the audience laughs even harder.

Daan doesn't understand.

“Why are they laughing?” he asks.

Mom has to laugh a little too.

“You were laughing at the clown, weren't you?” Mom asks.

Daan looks at the clown.

He thinks for a moment.

When he was laughing at the clown, he thought it was funny.

But now that everyone is laughing at him, he doesn't like it at all.

Daan looks a little embarrassed.

“I think I understand now,” he says.

“Understand what?” asks Mom.

“It isn't very nice when someone laughs at you.”

Mom nods.

“No, it isn't.”

Daan looks at the clown one more time.

The clown winks at him.

Daan starts to smile.

And luckily, he isn't angry for long.

The circus is far too much fun for that!

A little later, another clown comes into the ring.

Daan gets ready to laugh.

But this time, he laughs **with** the clown, not **at** him.

When you need to cry,
you can go to God.
Tell Him how you feel.
He listens to your prayer.
based on Psalm 39:13

26 The Lazy Eye

Today Daan has to go to the doctor. The doctor is going to have a look at his eye. At school, Daan had a little trouble seeing clearly with his right eye. The doctor decides that his good eye needs to rest, so he puts a patch over it.

Daan doesn't mind at all because his eye doesn't hurt one bit.

"Can I choose a nice patch?" asks Daan.

The doctor has lots of pretty patches, and Daan picks one. Now there is a wonderful patch with a little dog on his right eye.

Daan walks proudly and happily into the garden, where Floor is playing.

"Look at me!" Daan calls.

Floor gets a fright and runs screaming to Daddy.

"Daddy, Daddy!" cries Floor. "Daan has blood in his eye and a huge patch!"

Daddy comes rushing into the garden too.

"No, silly, Floor," says Daddy.

"There's no blood at all," says Daan.

Floor has never seen an eye patch before. Mum explains what the doctor told them.

"The good eye gets a patch, so the lazy eye has to work a little harder. That helps it wake up and learn to see better."

"That is pretty strange, isn't it?" says Mum. "You've never seen anything like that before."

Floor thinks it is a very strange story.

"The lazy eye isn't allowed to sleep, and the awake eye gets a little patch blanket so it can sleep!"

Daan understands it a little better now. He blinks very hard with his right eye to wake it up.

Floor has to laugh. It looks very funny.

Luckily, Floor is allowed to choose a pretty patch too. She wants a big, beautiful patch just like Daan's, so she sticks it on her arm.

"Now I can look at it properly."

Then Daan and Floor go back to playing together in the garden. And the patches? They have completely forgotten about them already.

27 The Wind and the Questions

When Dad takes Daan to bed, Daan has a whole lot of questions.

"Dad, how come Jesus could do all those miracles, but I have to learn so many things at school?"

Daan thinks for a moment.

"God could just put all the times tables up to ten into my head, couldn't He? Then I wouldn't have to learn them."

Dad smiles.

"That would certainly make things easier," he says.

"And another thing," Daan continues. "If God knows everything, and He knows when an accident is going to happen, couldn't He make sure the accident doesn't happen?"

Dad sits down on the edge of the bed.

"Those are difficult questions, Daan," he says. "And you know what? Even Mum and I don't have an answer to everything."

Daan looks at Dad.

"But there are lots of things in life that we are allowed to learn for ourselves. And there are things that we have to do ourselves."

"Like learning the times tables?" asks Daan.

"Yes," Dad laughs. "Like learning the times tables."

"God has given us things to do too," Dad continues. "God says that He takes care of people, animals and nature. But He also asks us to take good care of people, animals and nature."

Daan thinks about that for a moment.

"So God has things He does, and we have things we can do too?"

"Exactly," says Dad. "And God wants to help us with the things we have to do. He is always with us."

Daan looks towards the window.

“Just like the wind,” he says.

Dad looks at him.

“The wind is all around us too,” says Daan. “You can’t hold it in your hands, but you know it’s there.”

Dad smiles.

“That’s a beautiful thought, Daan.”

Daan looks outside for a moment.

“The wind can blow really hard,” he says. “But it can also be very gentle.”

“That’s right,” says Dad. “And maybe things can become a little calmer in your head now too. You’ve had a lot of questions today.”

Daan snuggles underneath his blanket.

“Dad?”

“Yes?”

“Is God with me when I’m asleep too?”

“Yes,” says Dad. “God is always with you.”

Daan closes his eyes.

“Then I don’t have to know everything right now.”

“You don’t,” says Dad. “The most important answer is that God loves you very much.”

“Goodnight, Daan,” says Dad.

“Goodnight, Dad.”

28 Three Is Too Many

It is Wednesday afternoon. Daan and Floor are both bringing a friend from their class home.

Floor and Emma run to Floor's room and start playing with Barbies.

Daan and Mark want to play outside. The weather is beautiful. They go outside to play soccer with their neighbor, Sven.

Emma and Mark are staying for dinner too.

Mom asks the girls if they would like to help make the pancake batter. Floor has only just learned how to crack an egg.

Floor shows Emma what she can do.

Emma wants to learn too.

It makes quite a mess, but they manage to do it!

Then the boys come inside.

There is a tear rolling down Daan's cheek.

"Did you boys have a fight?" Mom asks.

The boys are making lots of noise and looking angrily at each other.

"Sven was being mean," says Daan.

"You boys have been playing together at school all day," says Mom. "Sometimes, when another friend joins in, things can still go wrong."

"Three is too many!" says Daan angrily.

"I don't want to play with Sven anymore. He pushed me onto the ground."

Mark wants to play with Daan all by himself too.

Mom wipes the tears from Daan's face.

"Today didn't work out very well," she says. "But I'm sure another day you'll want to play with Sven again."

"Come on," says Mom. "Let's make some pancakes."

Soon the children are sitting at the table.

They eat lots and lots of pancakes.

Then Daan suddenly looks at Mom.

“You know what, Mom...”

“What?” asks Mom.

“If three children can start arguing so quickly, then how can God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit all fit inside my heart?”

Mom looks at him in surprise.

“What do you mean?”

“Well,” says Daan, “three is just way too many!”

He thinks for a moment.

“I'll just pick one.”

“Who will you pick?” asks Mom.

“I choose Jesus,” says Daan. “He can always be my best Friend.”

Mom smiles.

“That is a lovely choice, Daan. But you know... God the Father, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit aren't three separate friends who can start fighting. They belong completely together and are one.”

Floor has been listening carefully.

“I know!” she suddenly shouts.

Everyone looks at her.

“God made a very special heart. God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit can all be in it without fighting!”

Mom starts to laugh.

“I really do have the two smartest children in the world,” she says.

Daan grins.

“But I'm still choosing Jesus.”

“That’s okay,” says Mom.

And Floor quickly grabs another pancake.

“And I'm choosing syrup!”

29 Tomato Hole

It is Saturday.

"Come on," says Dad. "We're going to the market. Shall we get some tasty cucumbers and tomatoes? Then we can make healthy sandwiches. We'll let Mum sleep a little longer and surprise her later. That's a good idea!"

The market is very busy, and Floor is afraid she might lose Dad. She holds his hand tightly.

Daan runs a little way ahead. He has been to the market many times before.

"I found them!" he shouts.

Daan sees lots and lots of tomatoes.

"Well, well, young man. What would you like?" asks the market lady.

"I want lots of little tomatoes," says Daan, "because we're going to eat them all this afternoon."

The lady puts some tomatoes into a little bag. Then Dad and Floor come over.

"And one cucumber, please," says Dad.

Daan and Floor are allowed to pay the money.

"Bye!" they shout to the market lady.

The bag is quite heavy, so Dad carries it.

When they get home, they set the table together. Then Daan and Floor wake Mum up.

"What a surprise, Mum! We got lots of yummy things!"

Mum washes the little tomatoes.

"Mmm, yummy!" says Floor. "I want a little tomato hole too."

Mum laughs.

"It's called a tomato, Floor."

"Yes," says Floor. "That's what I said. Tomato hole!"

Daan starts laughing very loudly.

“You sound like a baby who can’t talk!”

“It’s tomato!” says Daan crossly.

Floor starts to cry.

“That wasn’t very kind, Daan,” says Dad. “Floor is only four years old, and you had to learn lots of words too. Just look, Daan. You made Floor cry.”

“Why don’t you say sorry to Floor?”

“Okay, sorry,” says Daan.

“But you have to say it properly,” says Dad.

Floor is still cross and doesn’t want to sit next to Daan anymore.

“I don’t like you anymore,” says Floor.

But Daan doesn’t want to fight with Floor. He wants to make it right.

Daan walks into the kitchen and gets a little skewer from the kitchen drawer. He pokes a hole in a tomato and walks back to Floor.

“Floor, look! Here is your little tomato hole!”

That makes Floor happy.

She starts laughing again.

“See? Tomato holes really do exist!”

“That was a clever idea, Daan,” says Dad. “Now make yourself a yummy sandwich with tomato, cucumber and tomato holes.”

“Mmmmm, yummy!”

30 **Vacation Poop**

It's vacation time! We are spending a few lovely days at the campsite.

Daan is playing in the water and having a wonderful time. He makes some new friends, and together they build beautiful sandcastles.

There is just one little problem.

Daan has a terrible tummy ache.

“Mom, I can't poop very well when we're on vacation,” says Daan. “Actually, I want to go home... to my own toilet. That's where my poop comes out.”

Luckily, Mom understands.

She takes Daan on her lap and rubs his tummy.

“Oh, my sweet boy,” says Mom. “It will come out when it's ready. You just need to get used to being on vacation and using the toilet here.”

“Do you think it will work?” asks Daan.

“I think so,” says Mom. “And most importantly, play lots and try not to think about it too much!”

Luckily, Daan soon forgets all about it and goes back to playing with his little boats in the water.

After dinner, they read a story from the Bible together.

It is about Jesus dying on the cross to carry our sins.

Daan wrinkles his forehead.

“Dad, what does that actually mean? Sin and saved and set free?”

Dad explains it carefully.

“Sin is when we do something that isn't right. For example, when we deliberately hurt someone, break something, or take something that doesn't belong to us.”

Daan nods.

“And what does ‘set free’ mean?”

“Being set free means that you are rescued from something,” Dad explains. “Jesus wants to set us free from our guilt and help us learn more and more to choose what is good and loving.”

“But what if I've done something wrong?” asks Daan.

“Then you can honestly tell God what you've done,” says Dad. “You can say you're sorry and ask for forgiveness. Jesus didn't come to make us afraid. He came to help us and forgive us.”

Daan thinks for a moment.

“So Jesus helps us to start again?”

“Yes,” says Dad. “Exactly.”

Daan still finds it a little difficult to understand everything, but he likes knowing that Jesus wants to help him.

After dinner, Daan plays outside for a little while longer.

But then...

“Dad!”

Daan really needs to go to the toilet.

He walks to the toilet building with Dad.

Daan tries, but his poop just won't come out.

His eyes become a little watery.

“It will work if Mom comes,” says Daan.

A little while later, Mom comes to help.

And yes...

It works!

Daan looks very relieved.

“Luckily, we don't have to go home now,” he says.

Then he runs outside happily and shouts as loudly as he can:

“MY POOP IS OUT! MY POOP HAS BEEN SET FREE!”

Mom starts laughing.

“You silly boy!”

Daan grins.

“See? Even on vacation, poop can be set free!”

And Dad, Mom, Daan and Floor all burst out laughing.

31 What Do You Want to Be When You Grow Up?

This week at school, the children are learning about different jobs.

At the dinner table, Floor tells everyone that a real dentist came to school. The children were allowed to look inside their own mouths with a little mirror, and the dentist told them about his job.

“Luckily, nobody was afraid of going to the dentist this time,” says Dad.

“Tomorrow a baker is coming to tell us about his job,” Floor says. “And a hairdresser is coming too.”

“We can be anything we want when we grow up!” says Floor happily.

“I want to be a knight,” says Daan. “Then I can fight dragons!”

“You can’t do that,” says Floor. “Dragons don’t exist, and being a knight isn’t a real job.”

Daan looks a little disappointed.

“Let’s pretend anything is possible,” says Dad. “What would you like to be?”

“A dragon hunter!” shouts Daan.

“Then I’ll be an animal teacher and I’ll be able to talk to animals!” Floor says excitedly.

“What about you, Dad? What would you like to be?” asks Daan.

“Oh, I’ll be the king of Lazy Land,” says Dad.

“Hey, you’re forgetting about me,” says Mum. “I’d like to be a princess for a day.”

“No, you can’t,” says Floor very seriously. “You always have to be Mum.”

“Yes,” says Daan. “You’re Mum forever. That’s just how it is.”

“Oh, that’s a shame,” says Mum.

“I know!” says Daan. “Dad is the king of Lazy Land. So Mum has to be Dad’s

princess."

"Yesss!" shout Daan and Floor.

"Then Mum can be a princess," says Floor. "But she still has to be Mum-princess!"

Mum starts laughing.

"Well, that sounds like a very special job for me!"

32 Whiny Kids

"Can we come to the supermarket with you?" Daan and Floor ask Mum.

"Great!" says Mum. "Then you can help me with the shopping."

Outside the supermarket, there are lots of children.

"Do you have any stickers?" the children ask people as they come out of the store.

"Aha!" says Mum. "Now I understand why you wanted to come to the supermarket."

Inside the supermarket, Daan and Floor want Mum to spend as much money as possible.

"For every ten euros you spend, we get a sticker to collect for cuddly toys," says Floor.

But Mum just does the normal shopping and keeps a close eye on the prices.

Daan quickly puts something extra into Mum's shopping cart.

When Mum sees it, she says firmly, "Daan, you really can't just put things in the cart!"

"Mummmmm... can we have these crisps?" asks Floor.

"Mummmmm... can we have these cookies?" asks Daan.

Mum is beginning to think that shopping together is much harder than shopping on her own.

"Mum, can we buy ice creams?" Daan asks again.

"Yessss, and chocolate!" shouts Floor.

Mum sighs.

At the checkout, Mum says, "Next time, I think I'll go shopping by myself again. You two ask for something everywhere we go!"

The man at the checkout gives Daan and Floor their stickers.

“Yippee!” they shout happily.

The man looks at Mum.

“Well, look at that! What lovely children you have. And so easily pleased!” he says.

Mum looks at Daan and Floor.

Daan and Floor look at their stickers.

For once, they don’t say a word.

33 Talking with Your Mouth

Daan comes running out of school and flies into Mum's arms. A whole bunch of words come tumbling out of his mouth.

"Tell me calmly what happened, Daan," Mum says.

Floor is standing next to Mum. Of course, she is very curious too. Why is Daan so excited?

With big hand gestures, Daan explains that Lucas has been hanging his coat on Daan's coat hook for days.

"My name is right above it!" Daan says angrily.

"I tell him every day. And then I said, 'If you don't listen to my little mouth, I'll hit you with my little hand.' And that's what I did."

"But then the teacher said I wasn't allowed to do that. She said, 'We talk with our mouths, not with our hands.'"

"But I did talk with my mouth too!" Daan says.

Floor has to giggle a little. Daan clearly hasn't quite understood what the teacher meant.

"You talk with your mouth, not with your hands," Mum explains.

Daan still doesn't really understand.

"I told him every day, but Lucas just wouldn't listen. When Lucas got scared because I hit him, he finally said, 'Okay, I won't do it anymore.'"

"I think my hand talks better than my mouth," Daan says.

"Oh, come here, Daan," says Mum. "I understand that you got very angry. But you mustn't hit someone when they don't listen. Next time, let the teacher sort it out."

Daan nods.

"Now let's go home," says Mum. "Because I can hear two little tummies talking. They want cookies. Can you hear them too?"

At home, Floor quickly pushes a chair against the kitchen counter and climbs

onto it. Now she can reach the cookie jar.

"Oh, but Mum," says Daan, "it's not a cookie from your own dough, is it? Because the last cookies were a little too hard."

"No, Daan and Floor. These cookies are nice and soft."

"These cookies can be picked up with your hands and eaten with your mouth," says Daan happily.

34 **Afraid of monsters**

The living room clock chimes. It is seven o'clock. Just a moment ago, Daan was playing on the couch, but now Mom only sees a pile of toy cars left behind for Dad to clean up later. Mom takes a peek behind the curtain. "Daan, where are you, my little monster?"

Daan is as quiet as a mouse and doesn't make a sound. *She definitely won't see me under the dinner table,* he thinks. But Daan wiggles so restlessly back and forth on his knees that he bumps against the chair leg. The suspense becomes too much for him, and he starts to giggle softly.

"Shh, sillyhead," Floor whispers, giving him a poke in the ribs. "Mom will hear us!"

Daan pokes Floor right back. "Ouch!" she cries out loud.

Then, Daan and Floor suddenly feel two arms wrap around them, and they burst out laughing. Mom has found the two children under the table! And even though they would love to play another round of hide-and-seek, Mom says it really is bedtime now. "Come on, kids, upstairs. Brush your teeth and off to bed."

Mom tickles Daan and Floor all the way up the stairs. Floor runs straight to her room and plops onto her bed, which is full of stuffed animals. She has at least ten of them, and they are all allowed to sleep in bed with her. *Who should I put where?* she wonders. One by one, her stuffed animals get a nice place to sleep. Mom has already gathered the pajamas. "Daan, where are you now?" she asks.

But Daan has stopped on the stairs. It is dark up there, and he doesn't dare to walk any further. "I think I really heard a little monster sound coming from my room," he says softly to Mom.

This has been happening every single night for the past few weeks. Mom walks over to Daan and takes his hand. "Come, let's look in your room together," she says sweetly. Mom tells him every night that he doesn't need to be afraid, but he still is. He would much rather be a tough boy who defeats all the monsters for his little sister.

But Floor isn't afraid at all. She doesn't believe in monsters. She actually has to take care of her stuffed animals, because according to her, *they* are the ones who are scared. Not Floor, though—she is one tough girl. Daan sighs. If only he were as brave as Floor! After all, he is already eight years old, two years older than his sister.

Daan finishes walking up the stairs with Mom. His pajamas are already waiting on his bed. He puts on his favorite pair: a blue and green one covered in dinosaurs. The fabric feels wonderfully soft. He is actually very tired too, and looks forward to sleeping.

"Mom, did you already look under my bed?" Daan asks.

Floor is brushing her teeth in the bathroom. "Scaredy-cat!" she calls out. "Mom tells you every night that monsters don't exist and that you don't have to be afraid!"

"But I am *allowed* to be afraid!" Daan yells back angrily. "I can't help it, can I?"

Dex, their little dog, has come checking out the fun noise. He walks into the bathroom and then wanders into Daan's room. Before anyone can catch him, he jumps onto the bed and plops right down on Daan's pillow. Dex adores Daan and loves nothing more than sleeping with him every night. He curls up his little body and is soon snoring softly.

Because Daan has been getting out of bed so often lately out of fear, Mom thinks it's a good idea for Dex to sleep with him. It makes him feel a bit safer. Dex may be a small dog and a total friend to everyone who prefers not to fight, but Daan loves having his furry friend lying on his duvet.

Mom sees Dex lying there. "Are you two finished going to the bathroom and brushing your teeth? Dex is already sawing logs!"

Floor dives into her princess bed first. Mom made a beautiful pink curtain that hangs from the ceiling all around her bed, making it feel just like a little tent. The sheets have just been washed and smell wonderfully clean. That is the best feeling ever: sleeping in a fresh, nice-smelling bed. Floor is tired. Mom sings a song with her and then walks over to Daan.

Daan and Floor go to bed at the same time, but because Daan is older, he gets to read a comic book for a little bit. He has a whole stack of Donald Ducks next to his bed. He has already read most of them many times, but he doesn't mind. He can read them over and over.

Mom comes to sit on the edge of Daan's bed. Dex wakes up and crawls cozily into her lap. Daan leans against Mom, too. No matter how tired he is, how can you fall asleep peacefully when you feel butterflies of fear in your tummy?

"Mom, I'm still afraid of monsters," he whispers. "Every night I look behind the curtain and under my bed. I never see anything, but what should I do if they come into my room anyway?"

Mom patiently explains that monsters really do not exist. She also promises that she will come in to check on him often while he sleeps.

"And Dex is a great guard dog," Mom says. "I know for sure that if anyone so much as steps into your room, Dex will wake up right away to protect you. You are his best buddy. Dogs sleep very lightly. Dex will definitely bark and growl if anything strange happens."

Daan thinks deeply. Mom is right, he knows that. Mom tries so hard, and she is the sweetest. Actually, deep down inside, Daan knows that monsters aren't real. They only exist in cartoons, and those usually make him laugh. In cartoons, they are funny and not scary at all. Just silly, drawn characters. A gnome, an elf, a

troll, or a unicorn: those are all fantasy creatures that don't exist in real life. Just like the monster characters on TV.
Floor has a coloring book full of those kinds of fantasy creatures. She colors the unicorns pink and loves elves. Daan isn't afraid of those creatures either.
"Mom, that is actually my absolute biggest problem," Daan says, snuggling up close to her. "If real monsters came into my room, I know for sure Dex would growl and bark. Outside, he wants to play with every dog he sees and is a total sweetheart, but he would protect me, I know it. But... Dex can't see my monsters. So he can't bark at them either."
"Are the monsters invisible then?" Mom asks.
"No, you don't get what I mean," Daan says. "The monsters are fantasy. They are in my head, but I am still afraid of them. And Dex can't look inside my head. He won't bark when I think about monsters or when I dream about them, because he can't see them. Those monsters only exist in my mind. I actually know that."
Dex wakes up from Daan's loud voice. He looks up for a moment, stretches his paws, and lets out a big yawn. Dex truly doesn't think about monsters. He closes his eyes and goes right back to sleep. That's how fast it goes with dogs.
"I am all alone in my head, and that's where my monster-fear lives," Daan says sadly.
Daan explained it well. Mom nods and gives him a very tight hug. "Grown-ups are sometimes afraid of things in their thoughts too, you know. Not of monsters, but of things that might never actually happen. That is basically the same thing: being afraid of something that isn't there. And all those scared feelings do indeed live inside your own head."
"I wish I were Dex," Daan sighs. "Or I wish you, Dad, and Dex could crawl into my head to fight those monster thoughts out of my mind."
"I can only talk to you from the outside," Mom says gently. "物理But do you know who *can* fight inside your heart and your mind? The Lord Jesus can help you. We can pray that Jesus makes you a little bit stronger on the inside, so you can learn to trust that you are safe. Just like Dex wants to protect you on the outside, the Lord Jesus wants to protect your thoughts on the inside against the fear."
Mom explains how that works. "In the Bible, it says that Jesus was first like a lamb. He was so gentle, loving, and patient, just like a little lamb. He even let Himself be captured. But because Jesus rose from the dead after three days, He won forever against all evil and all fear. Now He is no longer that vulnerable little lamb, but as super strong as a roaring lion! And that strong Lion, Jesus, lives in your heart. He roars all those scared monster thoughts right out of your head."
Whenever you are having a hard time and feel scared, you can always ask for

Jesus' help. He is as strong as a lion. "But," Mom concludes with a smile, "of course, you are also just allowed to feel scared sometimes. Those feelings are just a part of life, too."