

# Small Wonders

## The Other Story

*Percy discovers a startling secret.*

**Lesson Link: Kingdom of God and eternal reality.** Though we don't deserve it, God helps us and shows us the wonders of his love in many ways. He also reveals to us that our life stories are not the most important things in the world, but are part of a much bigger reality: God's great story, unfolding throughout all of history and eternity.

Percy the Possum had been following Manifold the Robot to find out why he was going off alone—and was caught by Manifold after a terrible encounter with a thorn bush.

"Are you all right?" Manifold asked Percy.

"No," said Percy, who was not only in pain from all the thorns but now embarrassed. He was filthy from dirt, and his usually perfect clothes were shredded.

"I'll help you," Manifold said.

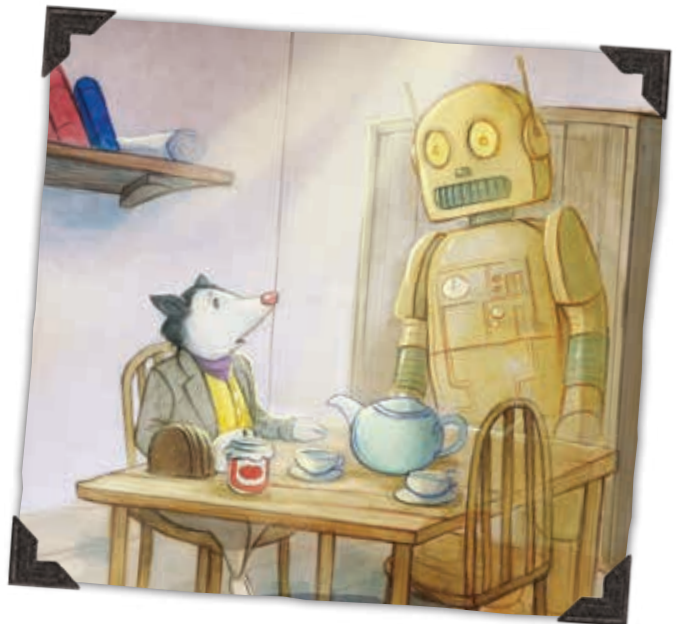
Somehow the robot picked Percy up in a way that didn't hurt very much. He carried the possum into the log cabin.

"Stand still," Manifold said when he put Percy down.

Even with his pain, Percy was curious about the cabin. There wasn't much to see. A small table with a lamp and a couple of chairs sat in the middle. There was a single shelf on one wall with some books and a large Scroll on it. There was a tall wardrobe on another wall. And on another wall was a metal stand with a sink and a large tub underneath.

"This is my haven," Manifold explained. "I come here to think and recharge."

Manifold used tweezers and began the grim process of removing the many thorns stuck in Percy.



"Ouch," Percy said a lot.

Then Manifold filled the large tub with water. "This is a special kind of water," Manifold said. "Get in."

The possum sunk into the warm water.

"Why were you following me?" asked Manifold.

"To see what you're up to," Percy said.

Manifold smiled, though Percy didn't know how that was possible when Manifold's robot mouth never moved. "You could have asked me," he said.

Percy felt even more foolish than he already did. He closed his eyes. Maybe he fell asleep. He wasn't sure. But he opened them again to see Manifold next to the tub with a towel.

"It's time to get out," Manifold said.

Percy stepped out of the tub. The swelling and scratches and spots from the thorns were gone.

"You can get dressed," Manifold said. Percy's clothes hung on a hook, perfectly clean. All the tears and holes were gone.

"How did you do that?" Percy asked.

Manifold chuckled, but didn't answer.

Percy got dressed. His clothes fit better than before.

"Please sit," Manifold said.

Percy saw that the table had been set with a pot and cups for tea and some bread with strawberry jam. Strawberry jam was Percy's favorite.

Percy ate and drank and felt even better than he did before.

Manifold watched with shining eyes.

Percy worked up the courage and asked, "Why are you helping us?"

"I'll show you," Manifold said.

The robot went to a wooden door near the far corner that Percy hadn't noticed. He opened it. A bright light flooded in. "Come and see."

Percy went to the door and looked. His mouth fell open in wonder.

He saw a room with big windows and small desks and chairs and a big board with writing on it and pictures on the wall and books on the shelves. Through the windows, Percy saw trees and grass and a playground.

"All of you Toys are in a story," he said. "But your story is part of a bigger story."

A bell rang, making Percy jump. He heard a lot of talking and laughing as small creatures entered the room. Percy knew right

away that they weren't Toys. Granna had often talked about things called *people* and *humans*, but Percy always thought they were fairy tales. He was now seeing them for real.

"Their story is part of an even bigger story," Manifold said. "All stories are small parts of one Great Story."

Manifold closed the door.

Percy sat down at the table again. He was stunned.

Manifold said, "I came here so the Toys will know how things were meant to be. That's why I help and fix what needs to be fixed. The time will come when everything that is wrong will be made right. Toys will be what they were truly made to be."

"I'll tell the others," Percy said.

"You'll try," Manifold said. "If you remember."

"I won't forget," Percy said.

The color of Manifold's eyes turned from a golden sunlight to a light gray, as if clouds had covered the light. "By the time you return home, what you saw here will be like something you read and liked, but can't remember very well."

Percy said proudly, "I'll remember." But even as he said it, what he saw through the door seemed a little fuzzier.

Manifold said, "Don't worry. You'll have reminders all over, if you look for them."

Manifold led Percy home. The trip back seemed much easier.

Later, when Stern the Owl asked him where he'd been, Percy said, "On an adventure." But he had trouble remembering what the adventure was.

### Questions:

1. **What did Percy learn when Manifold took care of him?**  
(Percy learned that even though he didn't deserve it, Manifold still helped him.)
2. **What did Manifold mean when he said all stories are part of one Great Story?** (God has a plan for the world, and we are all a part of that bigger story.)