

# Small Wonders

## Along the Path

***The Toys take a very sad stroll and come upon a big surprise.***

**Lesson Link: Joy, resurrection.** Though the world is filled with suffering and death, we have a great hope in Jesus Christ that suffering and death will be replaced by joy and peace.

The Toys were very sad about leaving Manifold the Robot in the Garbage Dump.

“He must get lonely, being there all by himself,” Tell-Tale the Mouse said.

“He is *broken*,” Stern the Owl said. “He can’t be lonely. He can’t be anything anymore.”

“Unless the Toymaker fixes him,” said Pencil-Neck the Brachiosaurus, who hoped it would happen because he felt worse than anyone else. He thought it was his fault that Manifold was broken.

The Toys returned to the Kind Garden to clean up the mess from the accidental fountain.

The picnic tables were tidied and put away.

“That was not a good end to our picnic,” Overbite the Beaver said.

They spent a whole morning fixing Percy the Possum’s roof. They spent that afternoon helping Tell-Tale the Mouse and Trifles the Kitten find a new place to stay while everything in their home dried out in the sun.

They spent another day searching for Pencil-Neck, who had gone off alone to cry about what had happened. When they found him on the bank of the far end of the stream, they had to say things like “There, there” and “Don’t think about it” and “Couldn’t be helped” before he came home again.



The next morning, Granna walked around the Kind Garden looking very thoughtful. Soon she had a few of the Toys following her. They tried to look thoughtful, too. Except Percy the Possum, who looked like he’d swallowed a bug.

“I have a nagging feeling that I have forgotten something important,” Percy said. But he wasn’t sure what he had forgotten or why he was having a nagging feeling about it.

Granna explained that she had read through the Scrolls she kept at home. They were *instructions* for the Toys and had a lot of answers to questions they didn’t even know they had.

"The Toymaker will fix Manifold," Granna told the Toys that followed her.

"But he won't come back here," Brambles the Porcupine said. "No one ever comes back here."

"He'll go to another garden," Pencil-Neck said and looked like he wanted to run away to cry again.

Granna looked very thoughtful again. She clasped her paws behind her back and walked on. The Toys did the same.

Before any of them knew it, they were at the edge of the Kind Garden.

"How did we get here?" Kevin the Duck wondered.

The Toys hadn't realized Kevin was waddling along behind them.

The Garbage Dump was down a path through the trees in front of them. None of the Toys liked to go there. They weren't happy being near it now.

"I think I left something in the oven," Tell-Tale the Mouse said, though everyone knew she didn't have an oven.

"Are you looking for something?" a voice asked them.

The Toys stopped and nearly fell into each other.

The voice had come from the woods. It sounded familiar, but wasn't quite. They couldn't see who the voice belonged to.

The sun came out from behind a cloud and glinted off *something* on the path. The *something* was a bright gold. The Toys blinked and blinked again, and every time they blinked the *something* that was gold became a *something* that had a shape and that shape looked more and more like Manifold the Robot.

A big *gasp* came from the Toys.

"Are you Manifold?" Granna dared to ask.

"I am," Manifold said, then stepped forward so they could see it really was him.

Granna wasn't sure, but she thought Manifold's face looked even more like a face than it did before.

"The Toymaker fixed you and let you come back?" Overbite the Beaver asked.

"Yes," said Manifold.

"Why?" asked Brambles.

"To show you that it can be done," Manifold said. "The Toymaker's love can do anything."

"But *how*?" asked Percy, though that nagging feeling he'd forgotten something came back like a memory of something he could remember.

"You'll find out on your own," Manifold replied. "The Garbage Dump isn't anything to be afraid of. I've made sure of that."

The Toys gathered closer to him. All except Pencil-Neck, who stayed back and had that crying look again.

Manifold noticed and walked over to the giant dinosaur. "Don't be sad, Pencil-Neck. Your accident allowed a good thing to happen."

Pencil-Neck lowered his head and Manifold rubbed the top of it. Pencil-Neck thought later that Manifold's hands felt softer than his robot hands before.

"Will you have to leave us again?" Stern the Owl asked.

Manifold nodded. "Yes, but not yet. Let's have another picnic!" he said to them.

And so they went back to the Kind Garden and all the Toys were there and it was the best day they ever had.

#### Questions:

1. **What does it mean that the Toymaker's love can do anything?** (*Nothing is impossible for God.*)
2. **Does this story remind you of a story about Jesus?** (*Yes, the Resurrection.*)