

THE ADVENTURES OF DREW AND ELLIE

Saving Christmas

by Charles Noland



Illustrated by Sherri Baker

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∞ Introduction ∞

On a rainy Saturday in the early part of fall, seven-year-old Drew and his sister, Ellie, who is almost five, receive a bag of hand-me-down clothes from a family friend. Ellie falls in love with a beautiful white, sparkly dress that her mother finds at the bottom of the bag. She soon discovers, though, that the dress isn't just beautiful, it's also *magical*.

In the first three books of the series—*The Magical Dress*, *The Daring Rescue* and *The Missing Medal*—Drew and Ellie learn some of the secrets of this special dress. They discover that it can transport them to different places as long as they're holding hands. They can also use it to retrieve things, but it won't work if the dress or the object becomes wet.

Throughout their adventures with the magical dress, Drew and Ellie must use their problem-solving skills to achieve their goals, especially when that goal is to safely return home.

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A Christmas Lesson

“I want the new *Mighty Transports*, the one where the bus turns into a monster truck,” Drew said.

“Well, I want the new *Pretty Patty* doll for my collection,” Ellie responded.

“I also want a new sled so Sanjay and I can go sledding over at Cobbs Hill this year,” Drew added.

“I want some new boots to match my pink mittens,” Ellie continued. “And I want...”

“Andrew and Ellen,” their mother interrupted. “Christmas is about more than just *I want*

and getting presents. Don't you remember what you were taught in Sunday school?"

Drew and Ellie, who were sitting at the dining room table, were making Christmas elf decorations with their mother. Ellie handed Drew different pieces of colored felt, he traced the proper patterns and their mom cut them out with a pair of scissors.

"Sure, Mom," Drew finally answered. "It's just that Ellie and I have already made our lists for Santa."

"I know you're excited about getting presents, but Christmas is about so much more than that," she said. "Tell me what Christmas is really about."

"Well, it's on December 25th," Ellie replied. She quickly added, "And it's the birthday of Baby Jesus."



“Yes, that’s true,” their mom said, turning to look at Drew. “What else?”

“It’s a religious holiday,” Drew responded, trying to find the right answer to his mother’s question.

“Yes, it is,” she agreed. “But remember, many religions hold special celebrations during this time of year. For us, Christmas is more than just a day. It’s a season. It’s about *giving* as much as it is about *getting*. Sure, it’s fun to get gifts. It feels even better though, when you give someone a gift.”

Drew thought for a moment and then said, “Is it like when we do our spring cleaning and give our old toys to kids who don’t have any of their own?”

“Yes, honey, it is,” his mom said. “Now imagine if it was a toy that you *really* liked, then that would be a very special gift, one given selflessly.



When you give a gift like that, you'll always get a good feeling inside. And sometimes the best gifts are given in secret, without telling anyone where they came from."

Drew and Ellie thought this over while their mom counted up the cut pieces of felt.

"All right," she said, getting up from the table. "Let me go sew some of these pieces, and when I get back we can put our elves together. In the meantime, would you please put away the rest of the felt and get the foam balls and pipe cleaners ready?"

"Okay, Mom," they both replied.

Drew reached for the white foam balls, and Ellie stuffed the felt back into a bag. Even though Drew was seven, he couldn't resist teasing his five-year-old sister now and then. He threw one of the balls at her when she wasn't looking, and it bounced off her head.



“Drew!” Ellie said in surprise.

Just after he threw another one, their mother came around the corner.

“I saw that, Andrew,” she remarked, picking up her scissors and heading back out again. “If you’re going to start fooling around, we’ll stop this project right now,” she warned him from the hallway.

“Sorry, Mom,” Drew called out to her.

He picked up the balls from the floor and placed them on the table where Ellie was counting out the pipe cleaners. Then he walked over to the window. Ellie joined him when she was done, and together they stared outside at the cold December day.

When their mom returned, she sat down and showed them how to twist the pipe cleaners together to make each elf’s neck, arms and legs.



She used a foam ball for the head and topped it with a green felt hat. Then she added eyes, a mouth and the rest of the felt clothes. When she finished, she turned it around and showed the children what their Christmas elves would look like.

“Cool!” they both shouted excitedly, as they reached for the materials to begin making their own elves.

Little did they know just how important those elves would turn out to be.

It's Christmas night, and a tragic accident threatens to ruin the first Christmas for Drew and Ellie's new friend. Ellie has an idea that she hopes will save the day. Using the magical dress, they set out on their adventure to play Santa, but an encounter with Max just might spoil it. Will they be able to pull it off before being discovered?

