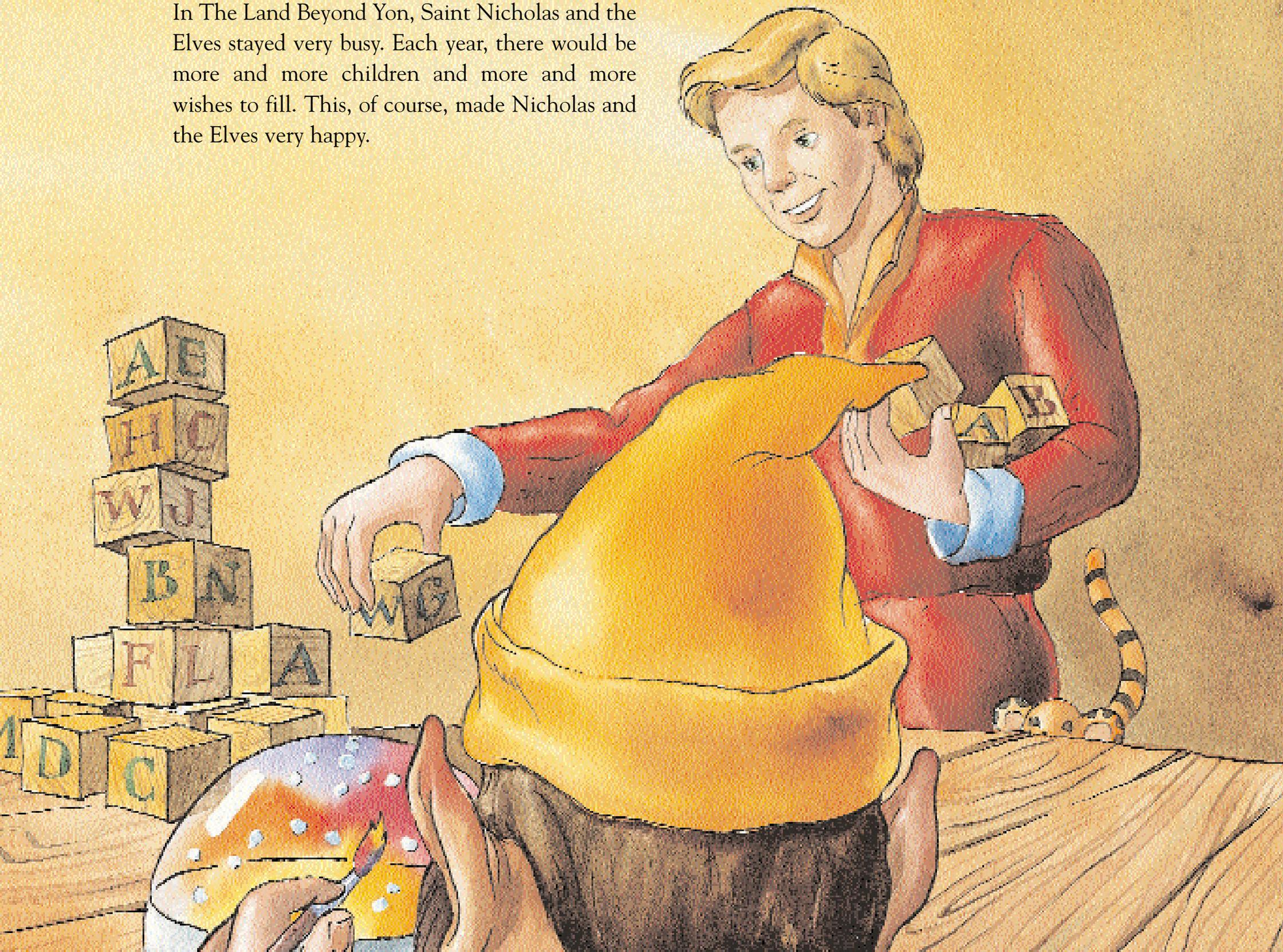




In The Land Beyond Yon, Saint Nicholas and the Elves stayed very busy. Each year, there would be more and more children and more and more wishes to fill. This, of course, made Nicholas and the Elves very happy.



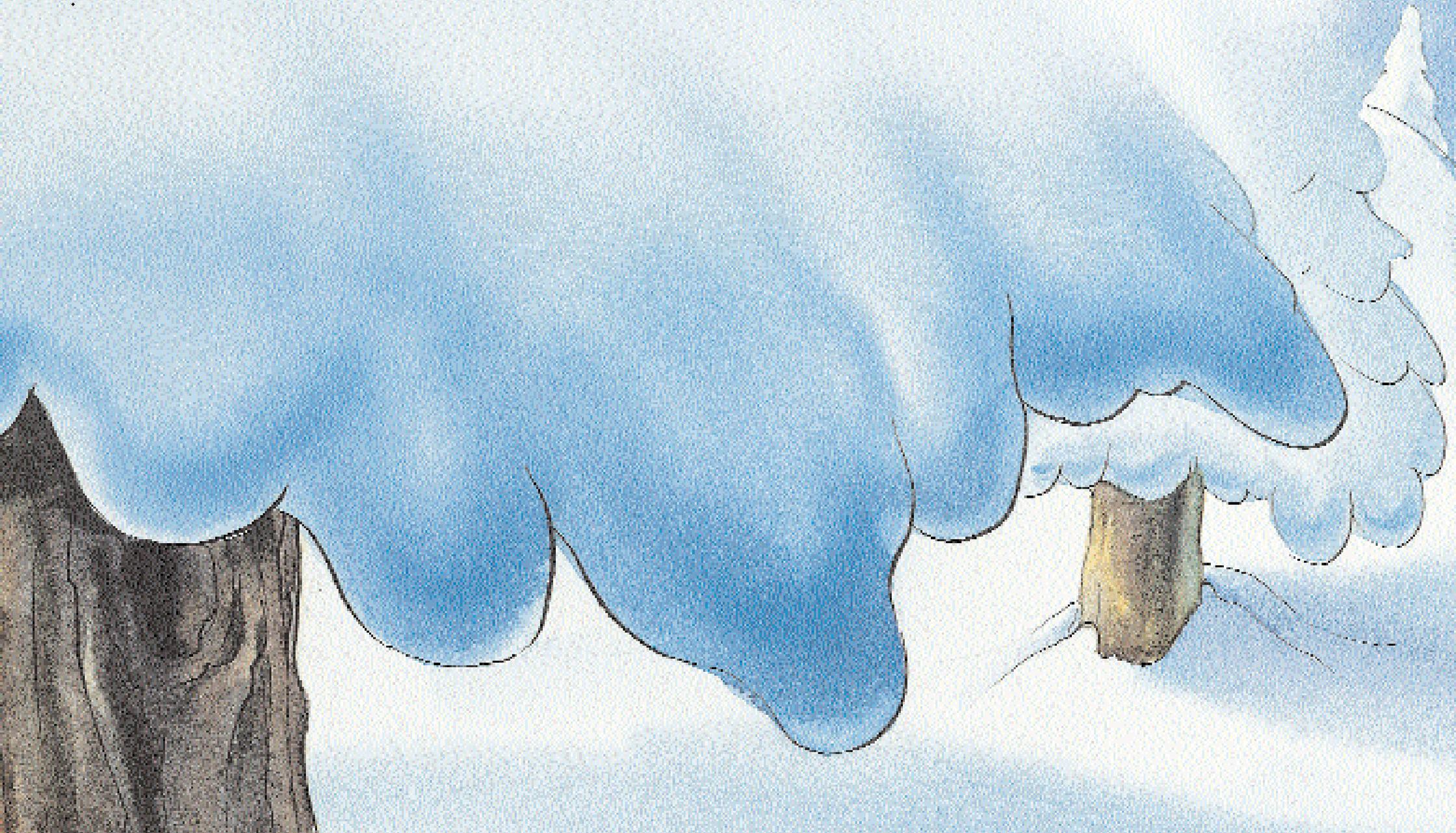


One day, while collecting wood in the forest, Goe found a beautiful doll beside a tree. “Where did it come from?” he wondered. Goe carefully placed the doll inside his jacket and took it straight to Nicholas.



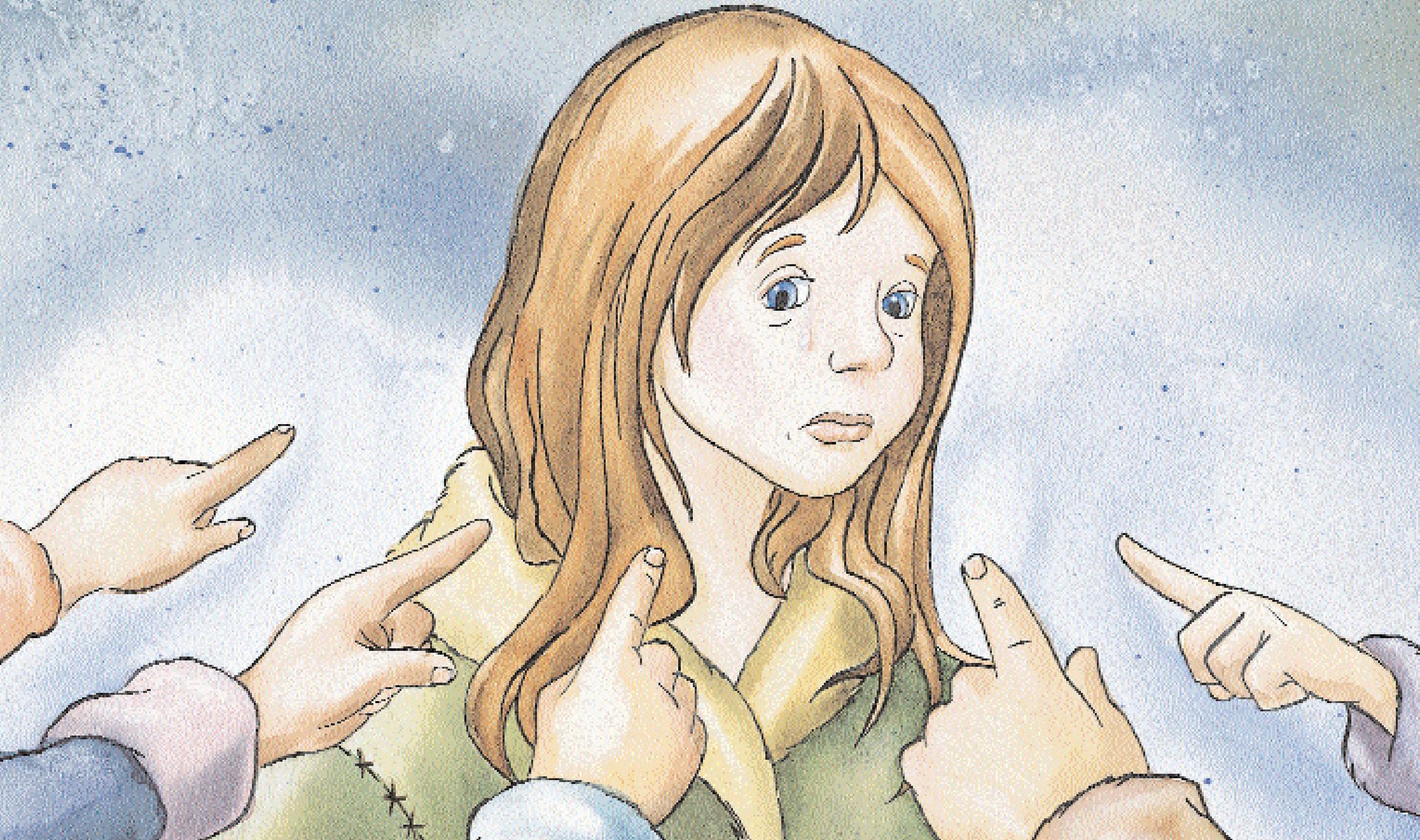
Nicholas recognized the doll right away. He had made it for a young girl named Kristina, several years ago.

Kristina was very ill at the time. She had been wishing for a beautiful new doll and her father thought that the doll would make her feel better. Nicholas made the doll and delivered it on a stormy night, but on the way home he had a terrible accident. Nicholas knew that Kristina would not be far from her doll, and he asked Goe to take him to the place where he had found it. What he did not know, however, is that the doll had changed Kristina's life.

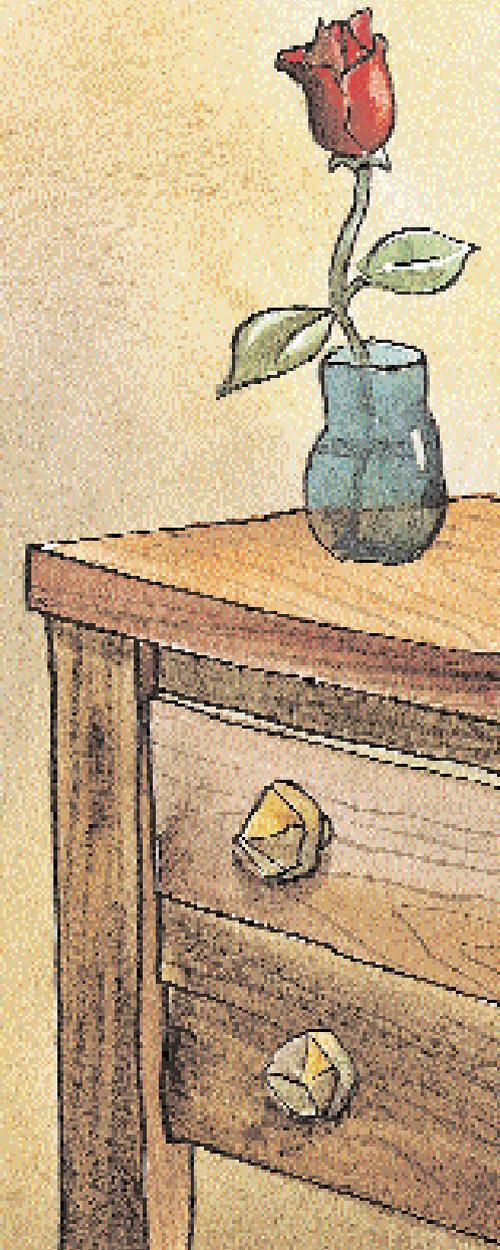
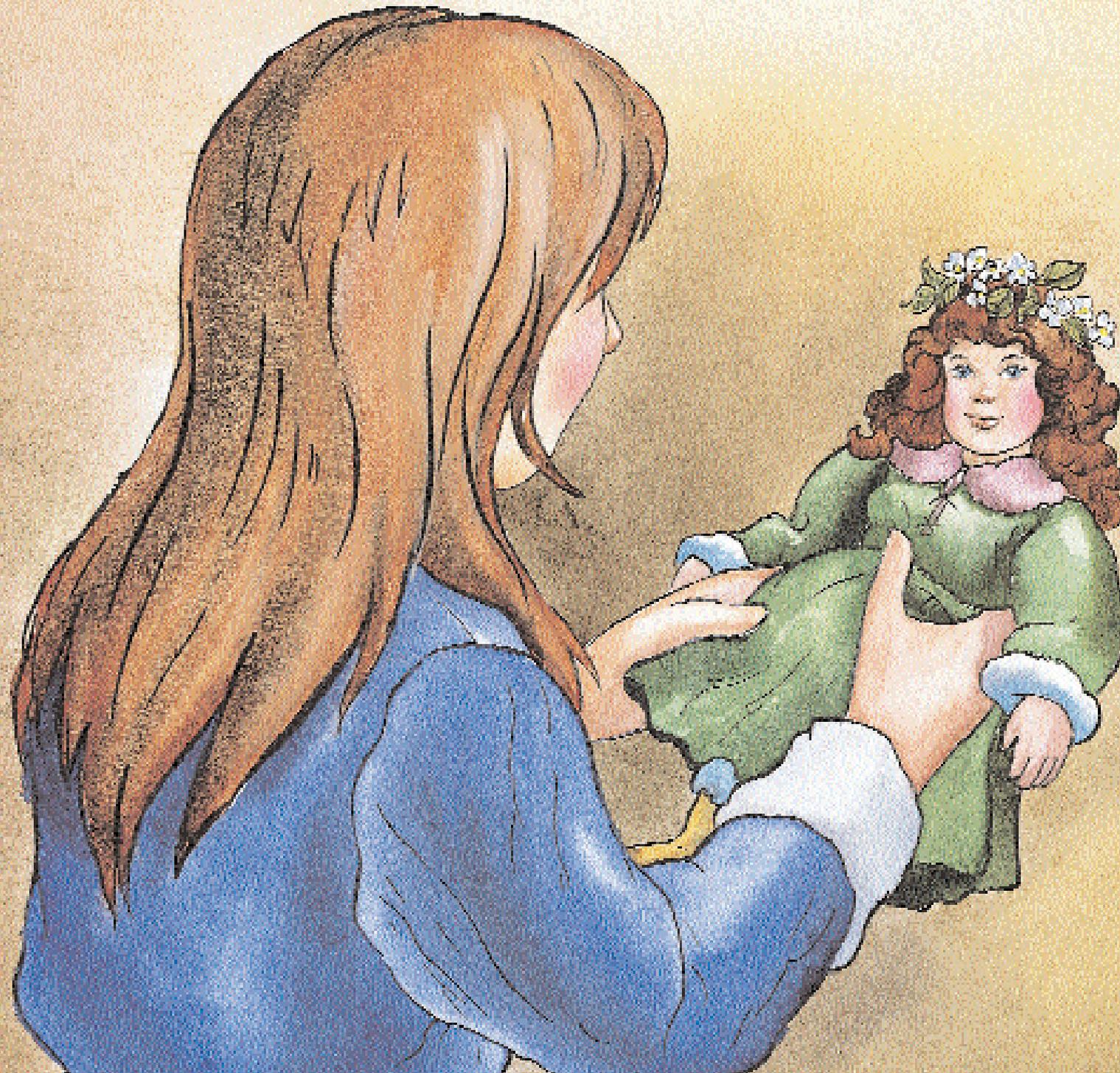




Kristina was born unable to hear. When she tried to speak, she did not sound like the other children. They teased her and made fun of her. These children made her feel so badly that she seldom tried to speak at all.



She named her new doll Rebecca. She could talk to the doll and, of course, the doll never had anything bad to say to her. Rebecca soon became Kristina's best friend.



Kristina loved to read. For her, reading was a great adventure that took her to all parts of the world. Sometimes she would imagine herself as the captain of a big ship.





Other times, she would imagine that she was a fairy princess. The books were her friends as well as her teachers, and how she loved them. She would read stories to Rebecca every day. All this practice helped the girl learn to speak quite well. In fact, Kristina began to sound just like all the other children, even though she could not hear herself speak.

Whenever a classmate was having a problem, Kristina would be there to help. This was something she really enjoyed doing. It was not long before she had many friends.

