

The Christmas Tree

At the time when Jesus was born, all the people, the animals, and the trees and plants were very happy. Jesus was born to bring peace and happiness to the whole world. People came daily to see the little one, and they often brought gifts with them.



There were three trees standing near the stable where the baby lay, and they wished that they, too, might give presents to the Christ child.

The palm said: "I will choose my most beautiful leaf, and place it as a fan over the child."

"And I," said the olive, "will sprinkle sweet-smelling oil upon His head."





“What can I give to the child?” asked the fir, who stood near.

“You!” cried the others. “You have nothing to offer Him. Your needles would prick Him, and your tears are sticky.”

The poor fir tree was very unhappy, and it said: “Yes, you are right. I have nothing to offer the Christ child.”

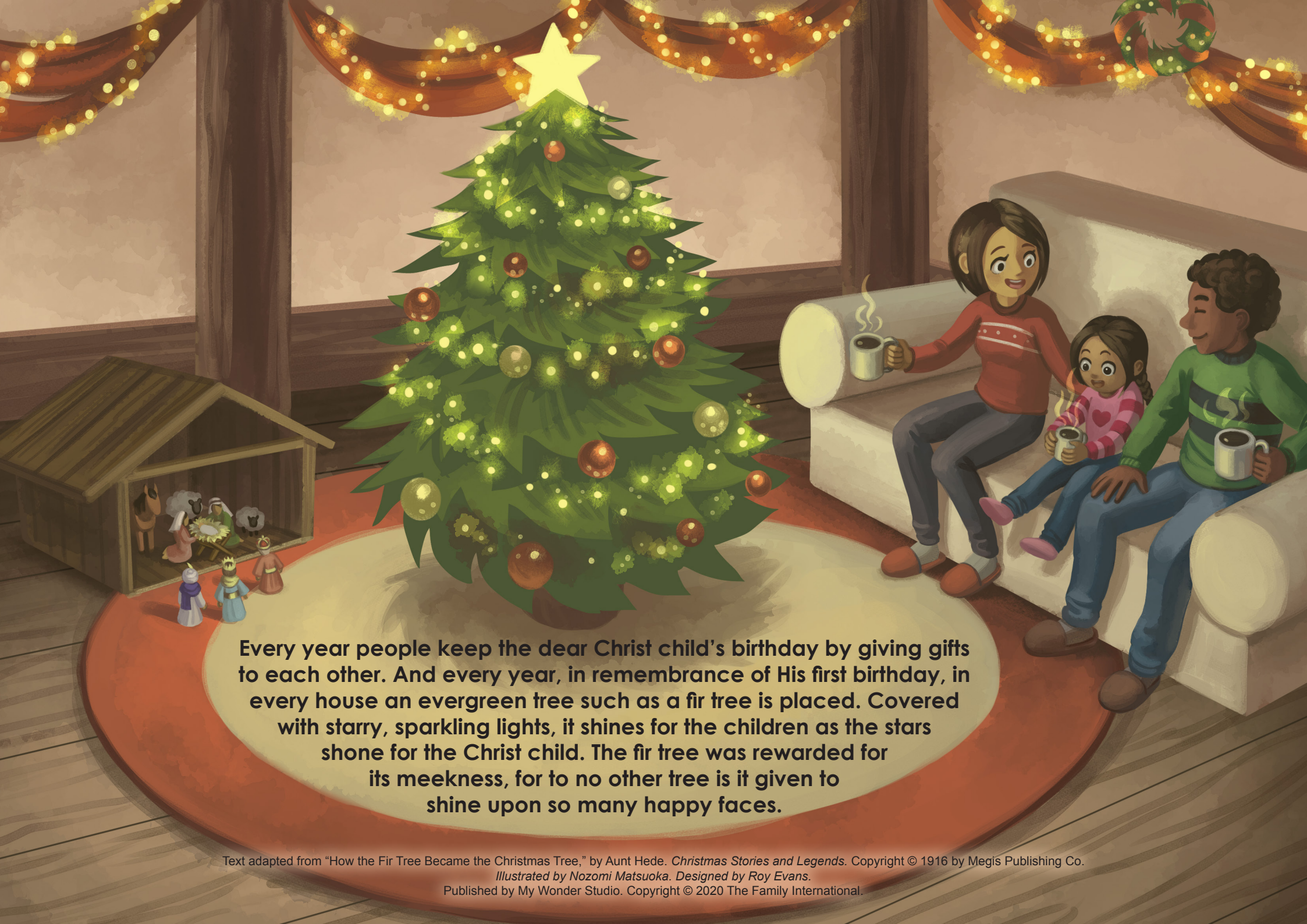
Now, quite near the trees stood the Christmas angel, who had heard all that the trees had said. The angel was sorry for the fir tree who was so lowly and without envy of the other trees. So, when it was dark, and the stars came out, he begged a few of the little stars to come down and rest upon the branches of the fir tree.



The stars did as the Christmas angel asked, and the fir tree shone suddenly with a beautiful light.

And, at that very moment, the Christ child, who had been asleep, opened His eyes, and as the lovely light fell upon Him, He smiled.





Every year people keep the dear Christ child's birthday by giving gifts to each other. And every year, in remembrance of His first birthday, in every house an evergreen tree such as a fir tree is placed. Covered with starry, sparkling lights, it shines for the children as the stars shone for the Christ child. The fir tree was rewarded for its meekness, for to no other tree is it given to shine upon so many happy faces.