

How Emma Met Suzy

EMMA THOUGHT FISH WERE A BORING HOBBY. THAT INCLUDED THE FISH IN HER OLDER BROTHER JOE'S TANK.

"FISH ARE SLIMY, SMELLY, AND UNINTERESTING," SAID EMMA. "THEY JUST SWIM AROUND AND AROUND IN THE TANK."

"JESUS LIKED FISH," JOE REPLIED. "HE GAVE THE PEOPLE BREAD AND FISH WHEN THEY WERE HUNGRY."

"FISH ARE FINE FOR FOOD. BUT I'D RATHER HAVE A RABBIT FOR A PET, OR SOMETHING CUDDLY," EMMA RESPONDED.

HOWEVER, IT WAS JOE'S FISH THAT WOULD HELP TO TEACH EMMA AN IMPORTANT LESSON.

JOE WAS GOING TO A THREE-WEEK SUMMER CAMP. "PLEASE, CAN YOU FEED MY FISH WHILE I'M GONE?" JOE ASKED EMMA.

"EEEWH!" SAID EMMA.

"PLEASE. OH, PLEASE?" ASKED JOE.

"FINE," SAID EMMA, ALTHOUGH SHE SECRETLY HOPED THAT SHE COULD GET HER MOTHER TO DO THE WORK FOR HER. OR PERHAPS CEDRIC, THEIR NEIGHBOR WHO ALSO HAD A FISH TANK, MAYBE HE WOULDN'T MIND POPPING IN ONCE A DAY TO HELP HER FEED THE FISH.

JOE WAS DELIGHTED, AND EMMA FELT SATISFACTION AT HAVING MADE HER BROTHER HAPPY. SHE RESOLVED THAT SHE DEFINITELY NEEDED TO MAKE SURE THAT HER MOM OR CEDRIC WOULD HELP HER WITH THIS.



TWO DAYS PASSED, WHEN EMMA SUDDENLY REMEMBERED HER RESPONSIBILITY TO FEED THE FISH. SHE RAN TO JOE'S ROOM AND GRABBED THE FISH FOOD. THE FISH SWAM IN CIRCLES NEAR THE SURFACE OF THE WATER, ANXIOUS TO BE FED. *OH MY! I'M SO SORRY-I HAVEN'T THOUGHT ABOUT YOU AT ALL!*

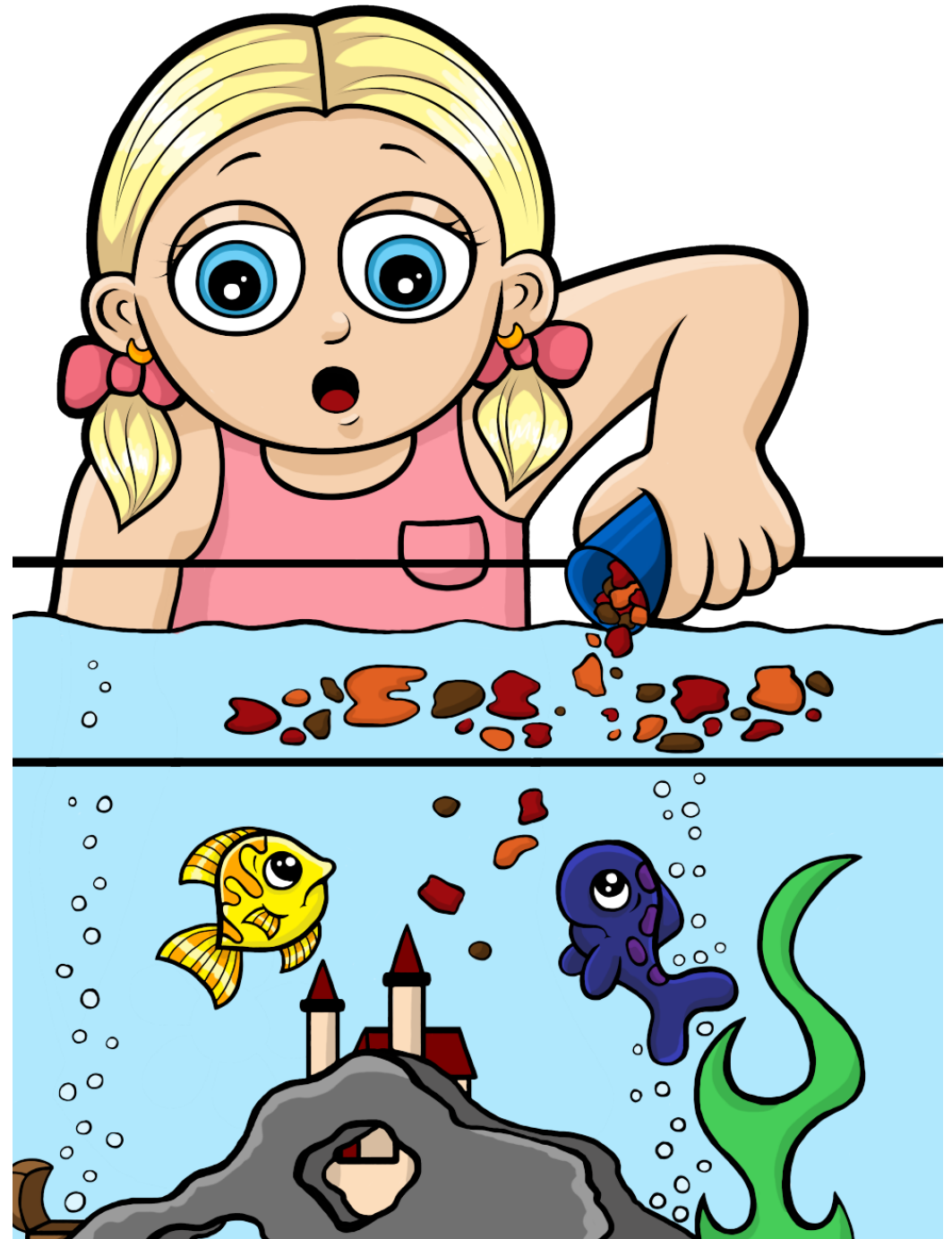
JOE HAD SHOWN HER HOW TO TAKE A LITTLE A LITTLE PINCH OF THE FOOD OUT OF THE CONTAINER AND SPRINKLE IT ON TOP OF THE WATER. BUT EMMA DIDN'T WANT TO PUT HER FINGERS IN THE FISHY-SMELLING FOOD, SO SHE DECIDED TO INSTEAD TIP THE CONTAINER OVER THE WATER.

"OOPS!" NEARLY HALF THE FISH FOOD WENT POURING OUT OF THE CONTAINER INTO THE TANK-THE ENTIRE SURFACE OF THE WATER WAS COVERED IN FISH FOOD!

OH DEAR, THOUGHT EMMA. WHAT AM I TO DO? WELL, I HADN'T FED THEM IN A COUPLE DAYS. PERHAPS THEY NEEDED THE EXTRA FOOD.

OH LOOK, THEY ARE RATHER CUTE WHEN THEY EAT, EMMA THOUGHT AS SHE WATCHED THE FISH.

ANOTHER TWO DAYS PASSED BEFORE SHE CHECKED THE FISH AGAIN. THE TANK GAVE OFF AN UNPLEASANT SMELL, AND THE FISH WERE SWIMMING NEAR THE TOP GULPING AND SEARCHING FOR FRESH WATER. THERE WAS ALSO A LAYER OF GREEN SLIME GROWING ALONG THE WALLS OF THE TANK.



EMMA'S FIRST THOUGHT WAS OF JOE, AND HOW DISAPPOINTED HE WOULD BE IF HE SAW THE PRESENT CONDITION OF HIS AQUARIUM. OH MY, SHE THOUGHT, IT MUST BE RATHER ICKY TO HAVE TO LIVE IN OLD WATER FILLED WITH ROTTING FOOD. EMMA FELT ASHAMED.

I'M REALLY SORRY THAT I'VE DONE SUCH A POOR JOB OF CARING FOR JOE'S FISH. IF I HAD A RABBIT AND ASKED JOE TO CARE FOR IT WHILE I WAS AWAY, I WOULD WANT HIM TO DO HIS VERY BEST.

JESUS, PLEASE SHOW ME HOW I CAN DO MY BEST FOR JOE'S FISH, AND WHAT I CAN DO TO CLEAN THE TANK.

EMMA REMEMBERED CEDRIC, AND QUICKLY HURRIED OVER TO GET HIS ADVICE.

ASSESSING THE SITUATION, CEDRIC TOLD HER. "YOU'LL NEED TO GET RID OF THE REMAINING EXCESS FOOD. RINSE OUT THE FILTER, AND WIPE DOWN THE INSIDE WALLS OF THE TANK WITH A CLOTH. THEN REMOVE SOME OF THE DIRTY WATER AND REPLACE IT WITH FRESH WATER."

EW, GET MY HAND IN THAT WATER? EMMA WAS RATHER REPULSED BY THAT THOUGHT.

THEN SHE REMEMBERED THE STORY OF JOSEPH. HE HADN'T WANTED TO WORK FOR THE EGYPTIANS, BUT HE KNEW THAT GOD WANTED HIM TO DO THE VERY BEST JOB HE COULD—NO MATTER WHERE HE WAS. BECAUSE OF THAT, JOSEPH WAS DILIGENT IN EVERY SITUATION HE FOUND HIMSELF IN. EVEN WHEN JOSEPH WAS IN PRISON, HE STILL DID HIS BEST. EMMA DETERMINED THAT SHE WOULD DO HER BEST—NO MATTER WHAT!



AT FIRST, IT WAS ALL SHE COULD DO TO NOT RUN AWAY FROM THE FISH TANK THAT LOOKED QUITE DISASTROUS. BUT SHE FOUND THAT AS SHE PERSEVERED, IT WASN'T THAT BAD AFTER ALL. AFTER SHE FINISHED SIPHONING OUT THE EXCESS FOOD LIKE CEDRIC TAUGHT HER TO DO, SHE REARRANGED THE ROCKS AND PLANTS.

BY THE TIME SHE WAS FINISHED, SHE FELT GOOD ABOUT A JOB WELL DONE. – THE SIDES OF THE TANK AND THE WATER LOOKED CLEAN AND FRESH, AND THE FISH WERE ONCE AGAIN LOOKING LIVELY AND EXPLORING THE TANK. FRIENDS WHO CAME OVER AND SAW THE AQUARIUM COMMENTED ON HOW BEAUTIFUL IT WAS. CEDRIC TOLD HER HE WAS IMPRESSED WITH HER WORK, WHICH CAUSED EMMA TO SMILE.

FROM THEN ON EMMA WAS CAREFUL TO ONLY PUT THE RIGHT AMOUNT OF FOOD IN—TAKING JUST A PINCH WITH HER FINGERS FROM THE CONTAINER. EVERY FEW DAYS SHE WOULD EVEN PUT HER HANDS BACK IN THE TANK AND WIPE THE INSIDE OF THE GLASS WITH A SOFT CLOTH. SHE STILL DIDN'T LIKE DOING THAT, BUT SHE KNEW IT WAS THE RIGHT THING TO DO. JOE WOULD TAKE GOOD CARE OF HER RABBIT IF SHE HAD ONE.

WHEN JOE RETURNED, HE COULD TELL THAT EMMA HAD GIVEN HIS FISH THE SAME DILIGENT CARE THAT HE WOULD HAVE GIVEN THEM IF HE HAD BEEN HOME.



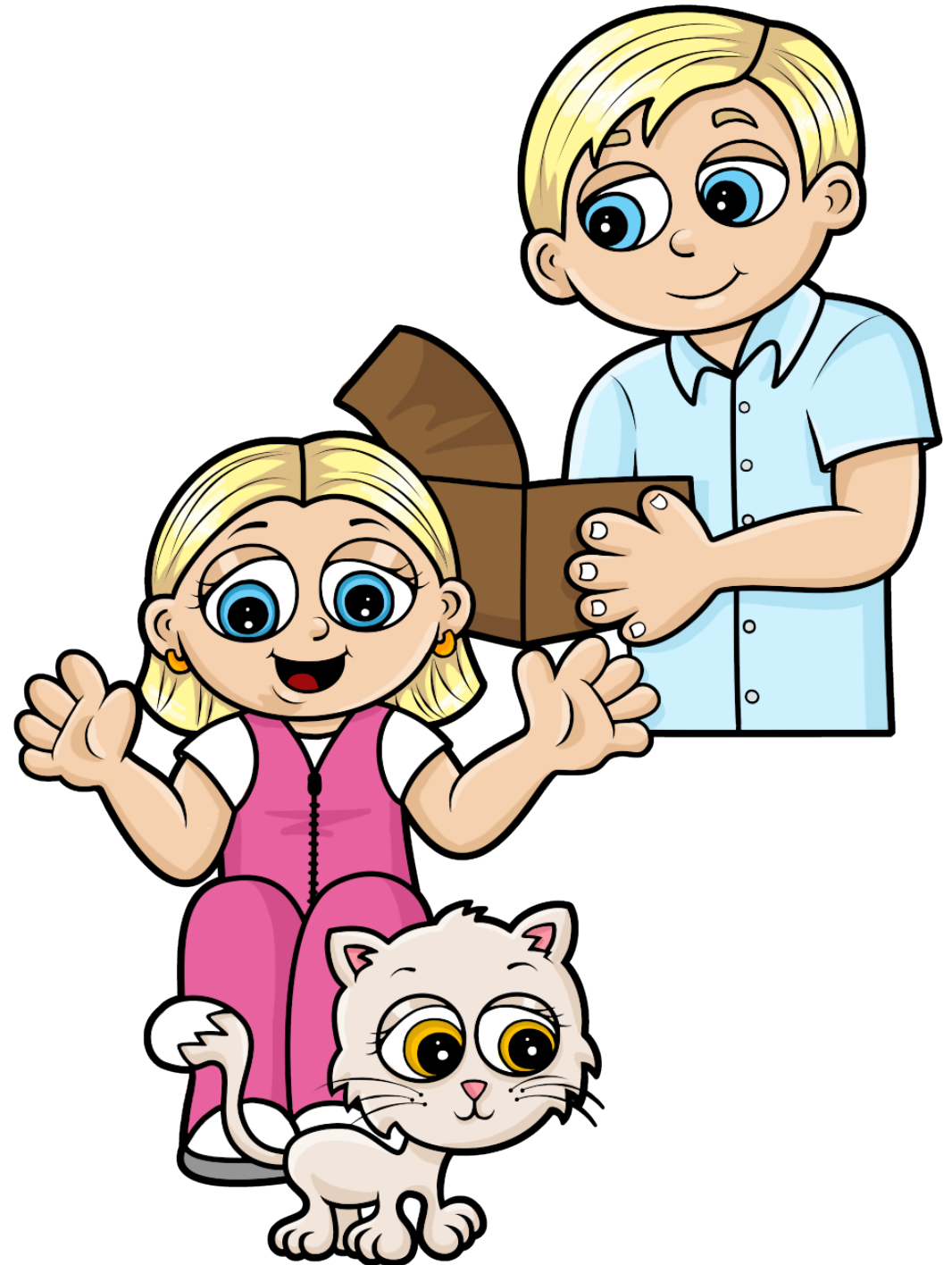
"I HAVE SOMETHING FOR YOU. I WAS GOING TO KEEP THIS AS A SURPRISE UNTIL TONIGHT, BUT I CAN'T WAIT TO GIVE IT TO YOU." EMMA OPENED THE LARGE BOX JOE HAD HANDED TO HER. IN THE BOX WAS A FUZZY KITTEN.

"OH, SHE'S SO PRETTY! SHE'S EVEN CUTER THAN A RABBIT!" SAID EMMA.

"I CALLED MOM ABOUT A CAT AT THE CAMP THAT HAD SOME OLDER KITTENS, ASKING HER IF I SHOULD BRING ONE HOME FOR YOU.

"MOM SAID SHE WAS IMPRESSED WITH HOW YOU WERE TAKING GOOD CARE OF MY FISH, ESPECIALLY KNOWING HOW YOU DON'T EVEN LIKE FISH. SHE SAID YOU HAD BEEN SO DILIGENT WITH THAT JOB THAT SHE THOUGHT YOU WOULD DO GREAT WITH A KITTEN."

THAT IS HOW EMMA MET SUZY (THAT'S WHAT EMMA NAMED HER CAT). EMMA LIKES FISH A WHOLE LOT MORE NOW, AND OF COURSE, SO DOES HER CAT, SUZY, WHO SPENDS HOURS WATCHING THE FISH.



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Responsibility-1b

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