

THE CHRISTMAS




BASKET



BY KATE STRONGIN

(Based on a true story)

God loveth a cheerful giver (2 Corinthians 9:7).

 "Katie, time for family home evening!" Dad called. Katie jumped off her bed and ran to the living room. She could smell the pine tree and see the lights sparkling on the shiny ornaments. Her little brother, Seth, was examining the gifts under the tree.

The family sang "The First Noel," and Seth said the opening prayer. Then Dad told them about the Thomas family. This year they could not afford presents or a nice dinner for Christmas.

"No presents on Christmas? We have to help them!" Seth exclaimed.

"That's what we were thinking," Mom said. "But that means we won't be able to afford as many gifts for you. You will only get one present each."

"They're my friends," Seth said. "I want to help them!"

"What about you?" Mom asked, putting her arm around Katie.

"I want to help too," Katie said.

Mom smiled. "We have a lot to do. We'd better get started."

All week, the family worked to fill the Thomas family's Christmas basket. Mom made the food. Katie went to the toy store with Dad to pick out toys for the three Thomas children.

The Saturday before Christmas, it was time to put the basket together. Katie carefully placed in the gifts she had wrapped. She felt warm inside, knowing she was helping the Thomases have a nice Christmas.

Just then, Seth came in carrying some other presents.

I have so many toys that I don't play with anymore.



Me too! Let's wrap them up and give them to someone who doesn't have as much as we do.

“These are for Jake and Ryan,” he said. “Can you wrap them for me?”

“Sure,” Katie said. Seth handed her a little crane, one of his old toys.

Katie frowned. “Why are you giving them this? I don’t think they’ll like your old stuff.”

“Yes, they will,” Seth insisted.

Katie wrapped the crane as neatly as she could. “At least I can make it look like a nice present,” she thought.

Then Seth handed her a jar filled with pennies, nickels, and dimes. Katie sighed as she wrapped the jar. Seth was just too little to pick out gifts for his friends.

Later that night, Katie’s family dropped off the Christmas basket. Dad set it on the Thomas family’s doorstep, rang the doorbell, and ran back to the car. “Mission accomplished,” he said, catching his breath.

Katie was so excited. She wished she could see the children’s faces when they unwrapped their gifts. Except for Seth’s gifts.

The next week at church, Katie and Seth went to the Relief Society room after Primary to find Mom. Sister Goldman, who lived next door to the Thomases, was telling Mom about the Christmas basket someone had mysteriously

left on the Thomas family’s doorstep.

“I gave Jake the crane,” Seth said proudly.

“Seth, you weren’t supposed to tell,” Katie scolded.

Sister Goldman turned to Seth. “Jake loved the crane,” she said. “That was the only thing he had wanted for Christmas.”

Seth beamed.

Sister Goldman continued. “Ryan has been trying to save money for his

mission. His mom told him that if he paid his tithing he would be blessed. And then he got a jar full of money.”

Katie couldn’t believe it!

Jake and Ryan had loved the gifts that Seth picked out for them. She put her arm around Seth. She was proud of him. His gifts hadn’t looked like much, but Heavenly Father had known what they would mean to two boys. ●



“Christmas is . . . a time to remember and show the love Jesus asked us to have for everyone.”²

Sister Vicki F. Matsumori, second counselor in the Primary general presidency

