



The Well Boxes



BY JENS KRISTOFFERSEN
(A true story)

The Holy Ghost . . . shall . . . bring all things to your remembrance (John 14:26).

When I was a boy growing up in Denmark, my friends and I liked to play tag. But one day we grew tired of playing the same old game, so we sat down and tried to think of something new and exciting to do.

“Let’s go to the harbor,” one friend suggested. “We can look at the boats and watch the fishermen.”

We all liked that idea, so we hopped on our bikes. Sure enough, there was a lot more action there! Sailors washed their boats while other fishermen cleaned and sold fish. Until the fish were sold, they were kept alive in well boxes—floating crates with small holes to allow water to flow in and out. The boxes bobbed between the boats and bumped into each other as the waves rushed in.

It wasn’t long before we were bored of just watching.

“Let’s play tag,” a friend suggested.

“Again?” another boy groaned.

My friend pointed to the well boxes with a sly grin.

“Out there.”

Soon we were all leaping from box to box, which

was much more exciting than playing tag at home. The slippery boxes jostled with each incoming wave. One time I fell off and landed with a splash. Sputtering seawater, I pulled myself back onto a crate and leaped onto another one. My foot broke right through it! Fish nibbled at my toes. It tickled, and I shrieked in laughter.

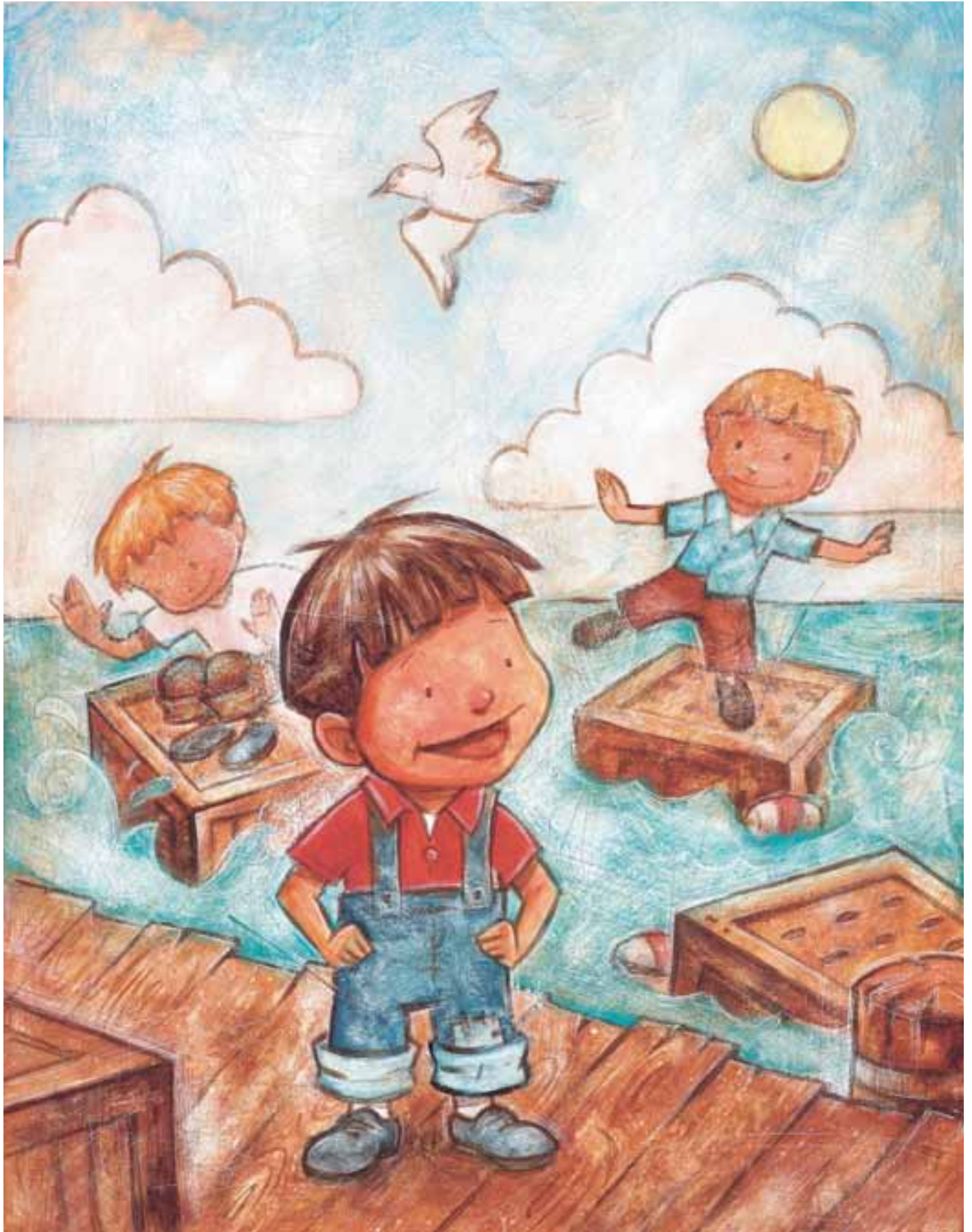
“Hey, you boys!” a gruff voice called. I looked up to see an angry fisherman coming toward us. “Get away from those well boxes before you break them. If you don’t get out of here, I’ll tell your parents!”

We scrambled back to shore, took off our wet socks and tied them to our bicycle handlebars, and took off. Our clothes dried in the wind as we pedaled home.

My clothes may have dried, but the smell of fish gave me away. When I walked in the door, Mother took one sniff and asked what had happened.

“I went to the harbor with my friends. I was playing on a well box, and I slipped and fell in the water,” I admitted.

To my surprise, Mother’s eyes filled with tears. “Jens, you must never play there again. Think of what could have happened! You could have been hurt or even





“Remembrance . . . comes through the gift of the Holy Ghost.”

Elder Henry B. Eyring of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Remembrance and Gratitude,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1989, 12.

drowned.” She hugged me tight. “I would be so sad, Jens. What would I do without you? You must promise never to play there again.” I gave Mother my word.

But a few weeks later, my friends came over and invited me to go with them to the harbor. Remembering the fun we’d had last time, I got on my bike and followed them. I forgot all about the promise I had made to my mother.

“You’re it!” A friend tagged me and jumped onto a bobbing well box.

I was about to chase him when suddenly I saw my mother’s face, just as if she were right in front of me, her eyes filled with tears. My heart stopped. I had broken my promise!

“I have to go home now,” I called to my friends.

“What?” one of them whined. “Why? We just got here.”

“I have to go home,” I repeated, climbing onto my bike.

My friends complained and tried to coax me into staying, but I wouldn’t listen. One by one, they all headed for home, too.

I put my bike away as quietly as possible and went to my room. I felt sick with shame that I had gone where I had promised Mother I would not go.

After a while Mother came into my room. “I can tell something is bothering you, Jens. What’s wrong?”

Lowering my head, I said quietly, “I went to the harbor with my friends today. I forgot that I had promised you I wouldn’t. But as soon as I got there, I remembered.

I came right home. So did my friends. Mother, I’m sorry I forgot!”

When I looked up, Mother was beaming. “Jens! I’m so happy you remembered. Because you did, you set an example for your friends and none of you were hurt.”

A while later she brought me a glass of milk and a piece of freshly baked cake. Mother made the best cake in the whole world. I was grateful for the warm treat—but more grateful for the warmth of remembering to do right. ●

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