

# God, help me **TO FORGIVE**

3 God, help me series

Harriet Omondiagbe



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**Harriet Omondigbe**



**GODLY PEARLS**  
New Zealand

Written by Harriet Omondigbe  
Illustrations by Paper Gazelle Studio

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And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another,  
even as God in Christ forgave you.

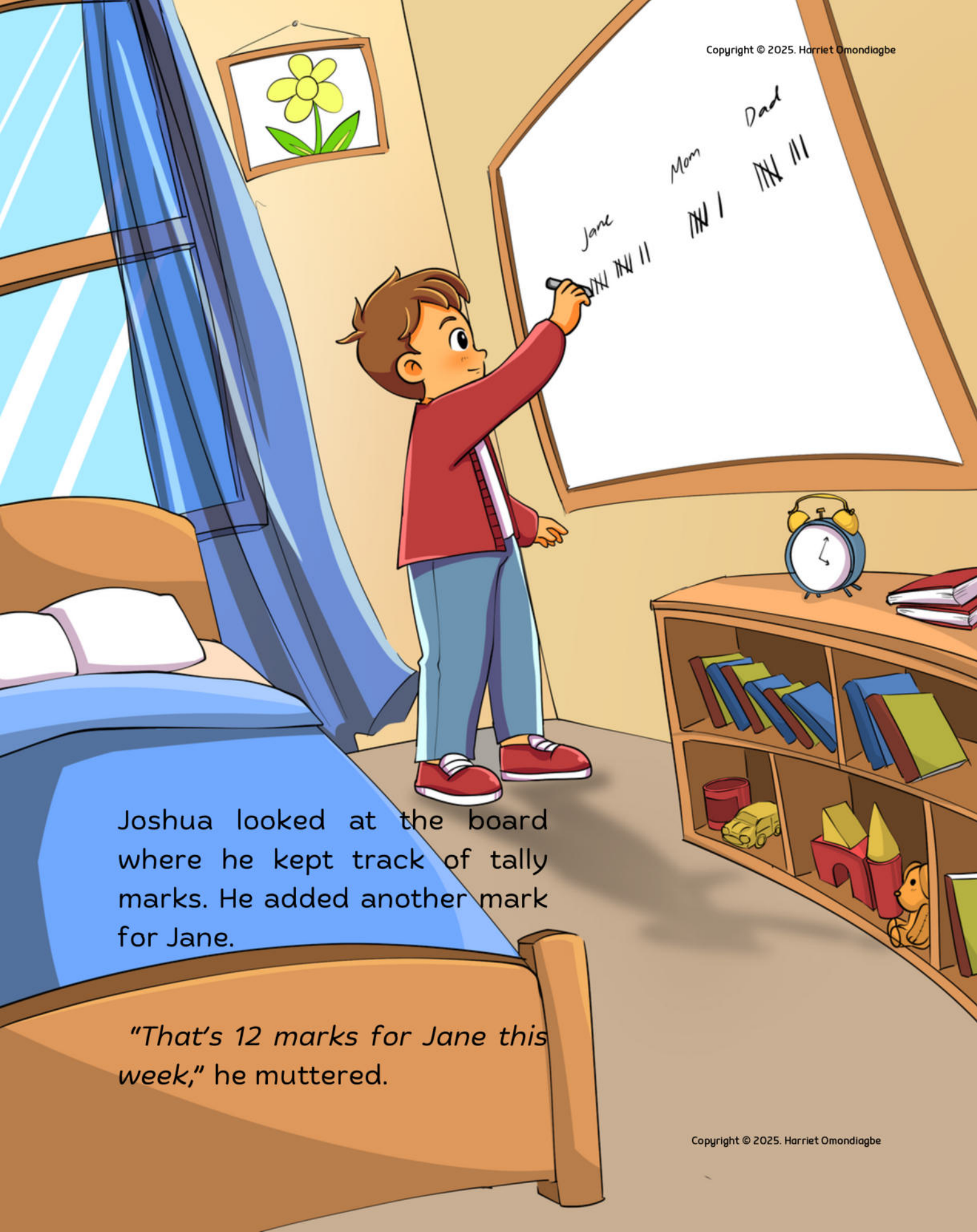
Ephesians 4:32.

Then Peter came to Him and said, “Lord, how often shall my brother  
sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?”

Jesus said to him, “I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to  
seventy times seven...”

Matthew 18:21-22

Text quoted from The Holy Bible, New King James Version®  
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Joshua looked at the board where he kept track of tally marks. He added another mark for Jane.

*"That's 12 marks for Jane this week,"* he muttered.



Just then, Jane, his younger sister walked in.  
"I'm sorry," she apologized.

Joshua turned around, angry. "You promised not to tell mum about my diary!"



"I didn't mean to," Jane explained.  
"She asked why you were mad,  
and I thought it would help if I told her."



"Help? Now she wants to talk about everything in my diary! I'll NEVER trust you again!" Joshua yelled.

"I said I'm sorry, Joshua," Jane said quietly.



"You're sorry!"  
Joshua shouted,  
slamming the door  
behind him as he  
went outside.





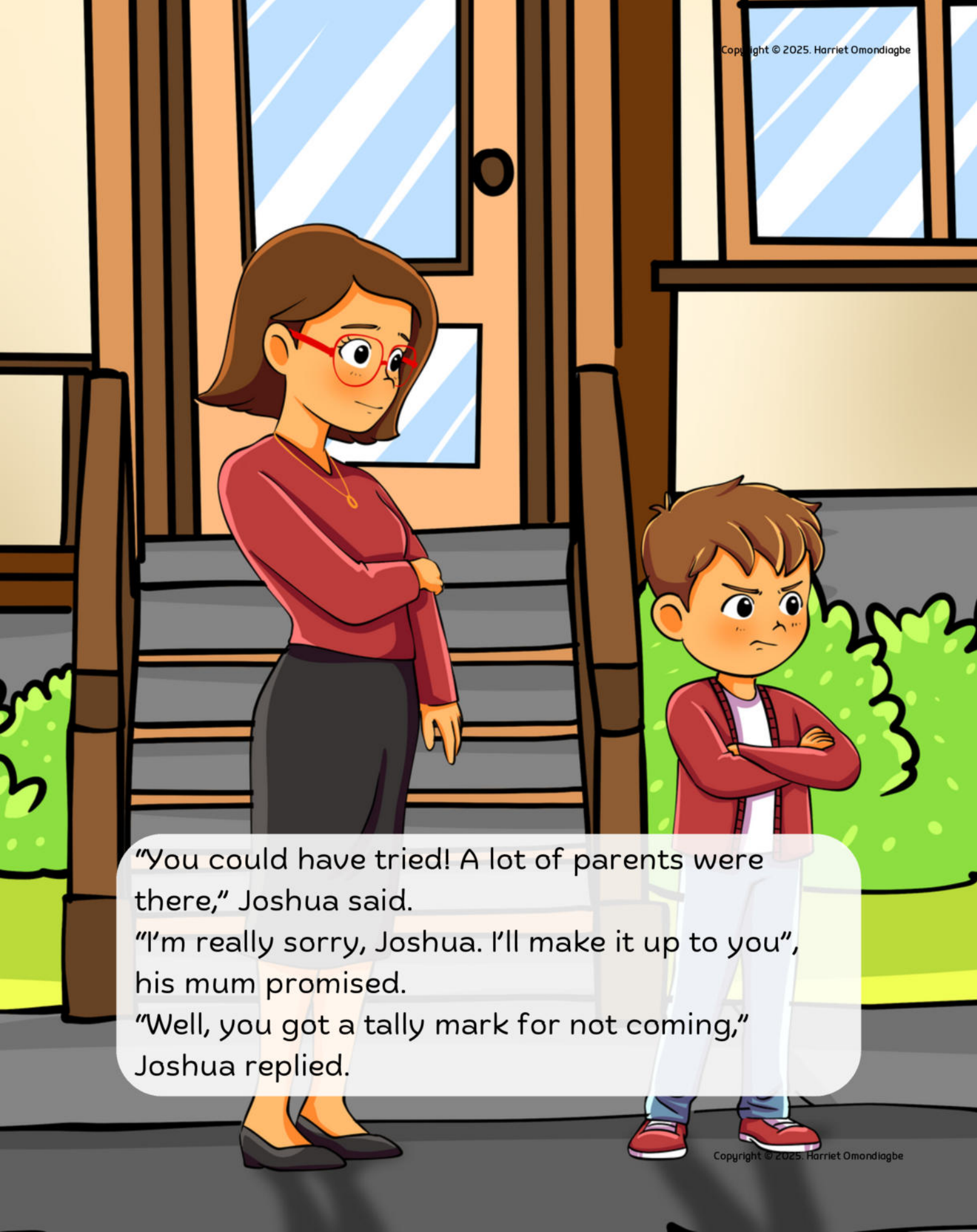
*I'll stay here and cool down,* Joshua thought. "Can I talk to you?" his mum asked. Her voice made him jump. Joshua looked up. She was smiling. He nodded, with tears in his eyes.

"What's wrong?" his mum asked.

"You missed my swimming contest," he said, tearfully.

"I'm sorry," Joshua's mum apologized again. I got stuck at work, and traffic made it impossible."





“You could have tried! A lot of parents were there,” Joshua said.

“I’m really sorry, Joshua. I’ll make it up to you”, his mum promised.

“Well, you got a tally mark for not coming,” Joshua replied.

His mum looked at him with a serious face. "Joshua, those tally marks worry me. Not because I might get one, but because they're hurting your heart. They don't just keep track of what people do – they keep anger in your heart."

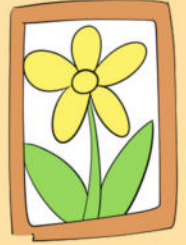


Joshua's mum explained that holding on to the bad things people did would only hurt him more. Then, she prayed with him, and they went inside.





On Saturday, Joshua's cousin, Tim, came over. They had fun playing until Joshua's favorite toy car got broken.



"You broke my toy car!" Joshua yelled.  
"I'm sorry. It was an accident," Tim apologized.  
"That's what you said last time! I'm not sharing my toy cars with you EVER again!" Joshua replied.





“Ahem,” said a voice behind Joshua.

It was his dad.

“I see those tally marks are piling up,” Joshua’s dad said calmly.

“Tim broke my toy car again!” Joshua said, frowning.



His dad sat on the bed. "Come here for a minute, Joshua. What's the point of keeping these tally marks?"

"So I can remember who hurt me," Joshua replied.



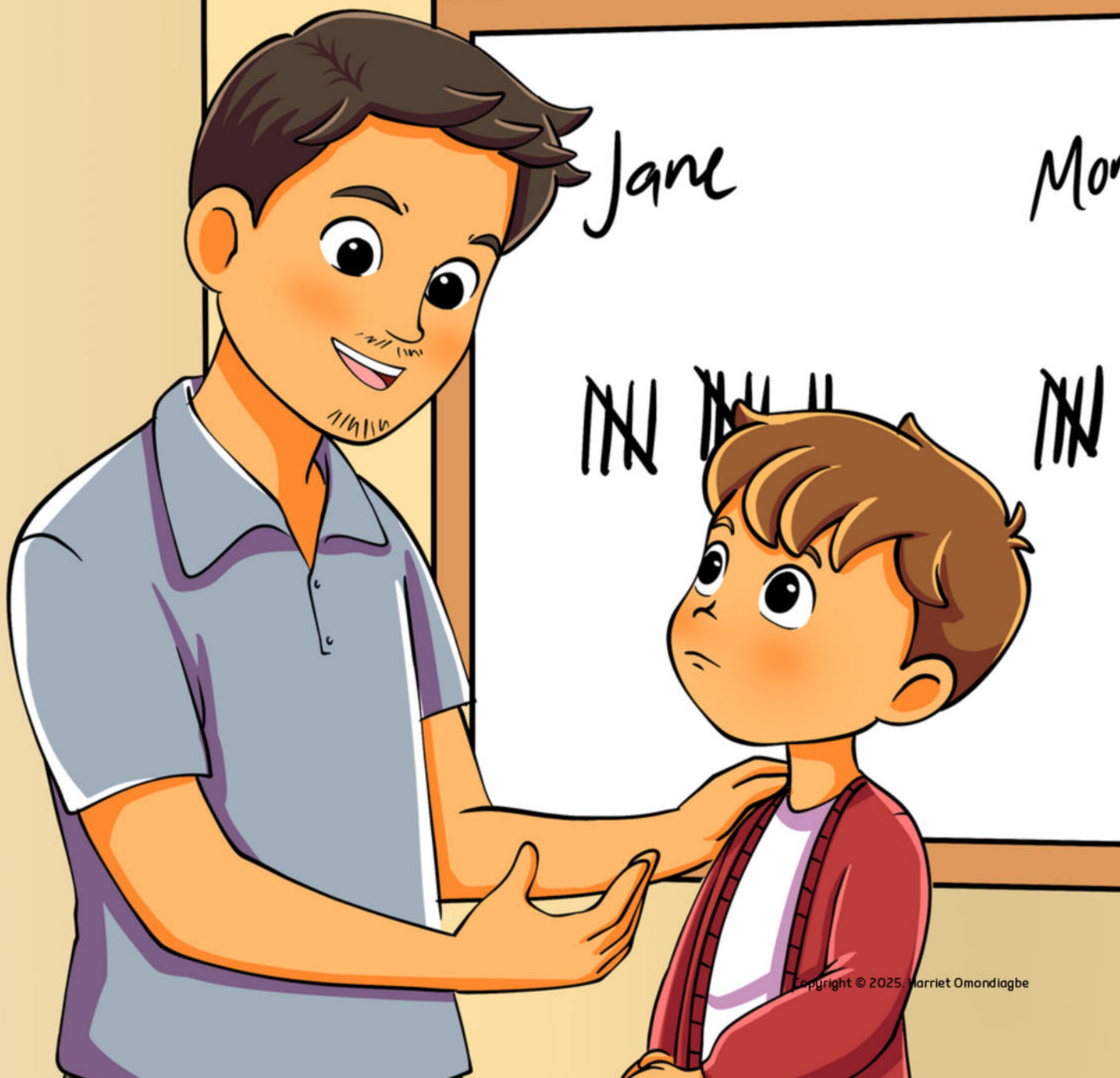


“They take up space in your heart. That space could be filled with kindness and love instead”, his dad explained.

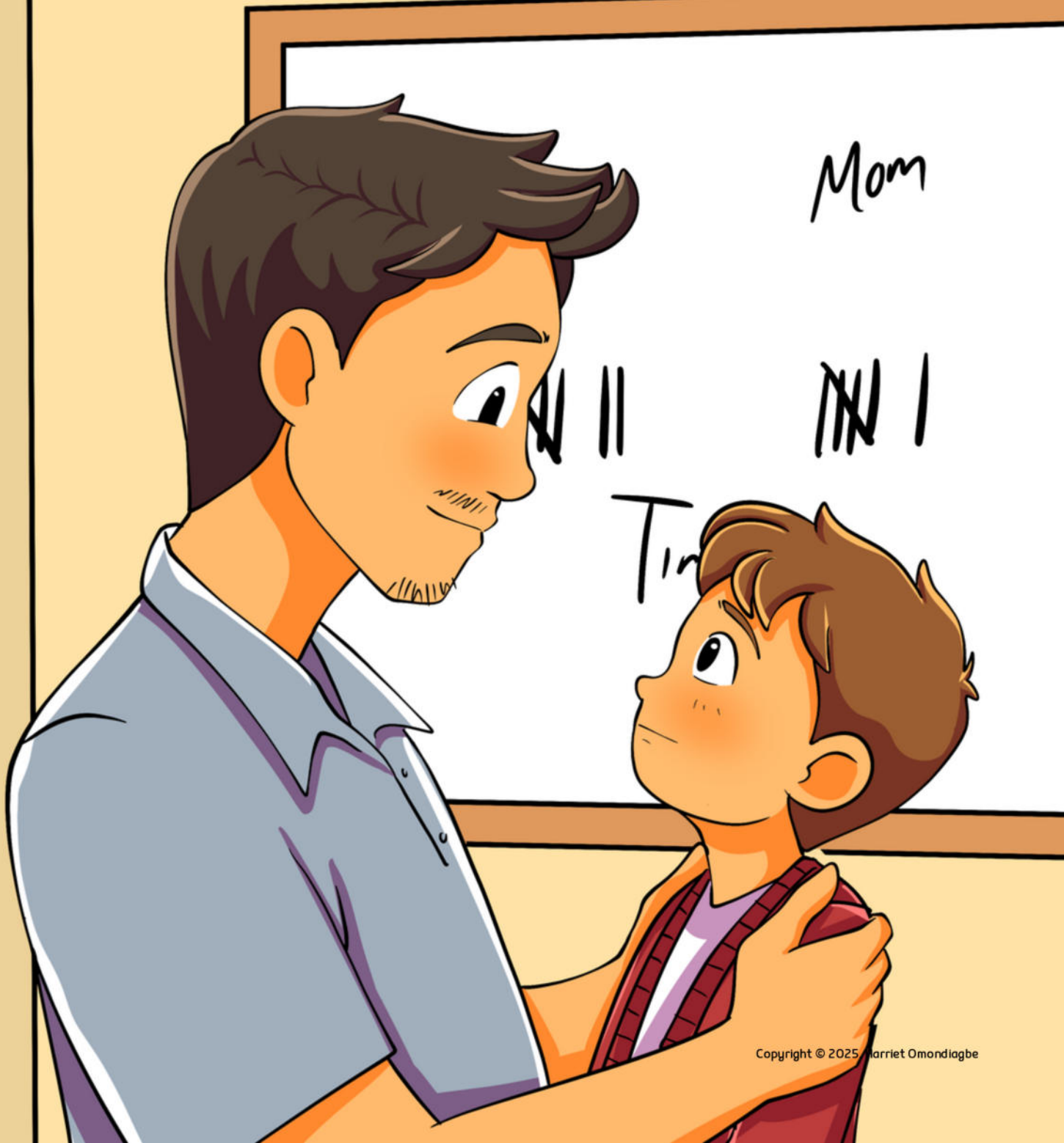
“But what if they hurt me again?” Joshua asked.



“You can forgive, just like Jesus taught us. Jesus said we should forgive seventy times seven – that means over and over again. Feeling angry and upset makes you feel heavy inside and when you choose to forgive, you let go of that anger”.



"I know it can be difficult to forgive. But Jesus loves you and understands your hurt. He can give you the strength and courage to forgive when you ask Him," Joshua's dad continued.

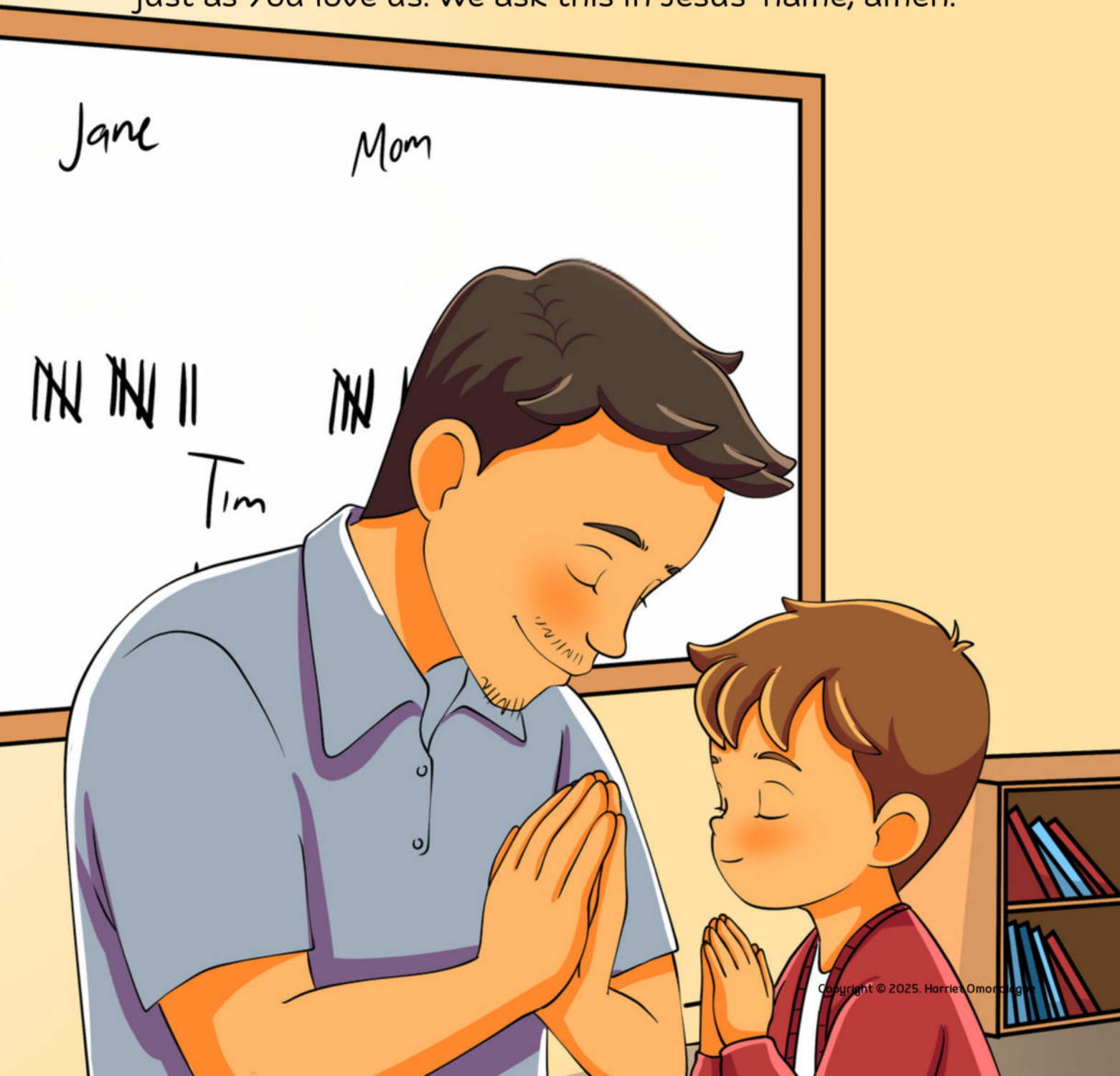


Joshua's dad's words made him think of what his mum said earlier. Was he letting the tally marks take over his heart?

"Can we pray together?" Joshua asked.  
"Of course," his dad said.



“Dear Jesus, thank you for loving us and forgiving us of our sins. You understand how we feel when we are hurt. Please help us forgive those who hurt us. Fill our heart with Your love and peace so we can love others just as You love us. We ask this in Jesus’ name, amen.”



That evening, Joshua sat staring at his board.  
“*What should I do about the marks?*” he asked himself.

Just then, Jane came in holding something behind her back. “I know I told mum about your diary, and I’m really sorry,” she said. “But I made something for you.”



She gave Joshua a drawing.  
It showed the two of them  
playing and smiling.



Then she whispered  
quietly, "*Best Friends  
Forever.*"

“You made this for me?” Joshua asked, surprised.  
Jane nodded. “I don’t want you to be mad anymore.”  
Joshua smiled. “Thanks, Jane. This drawing is nice.”



As Joshua looked at his sister's happy face, he thought about what his parents said. Maybe they were right - maybe it was time to let go. He muttered a quick prayer. *Dear God, please help me to forgive.* He knew what to do next ...



Joshua grabbed the eraser and wiped away Jane's tally marks.

"Really?" his sister asked, her eyes widened.

"Yeah. I forgive you".



Joshua gave his sister a big hug and felt happy inside.

"I'm sorry I was mean to you. Please forgive me", Joshua apologized.

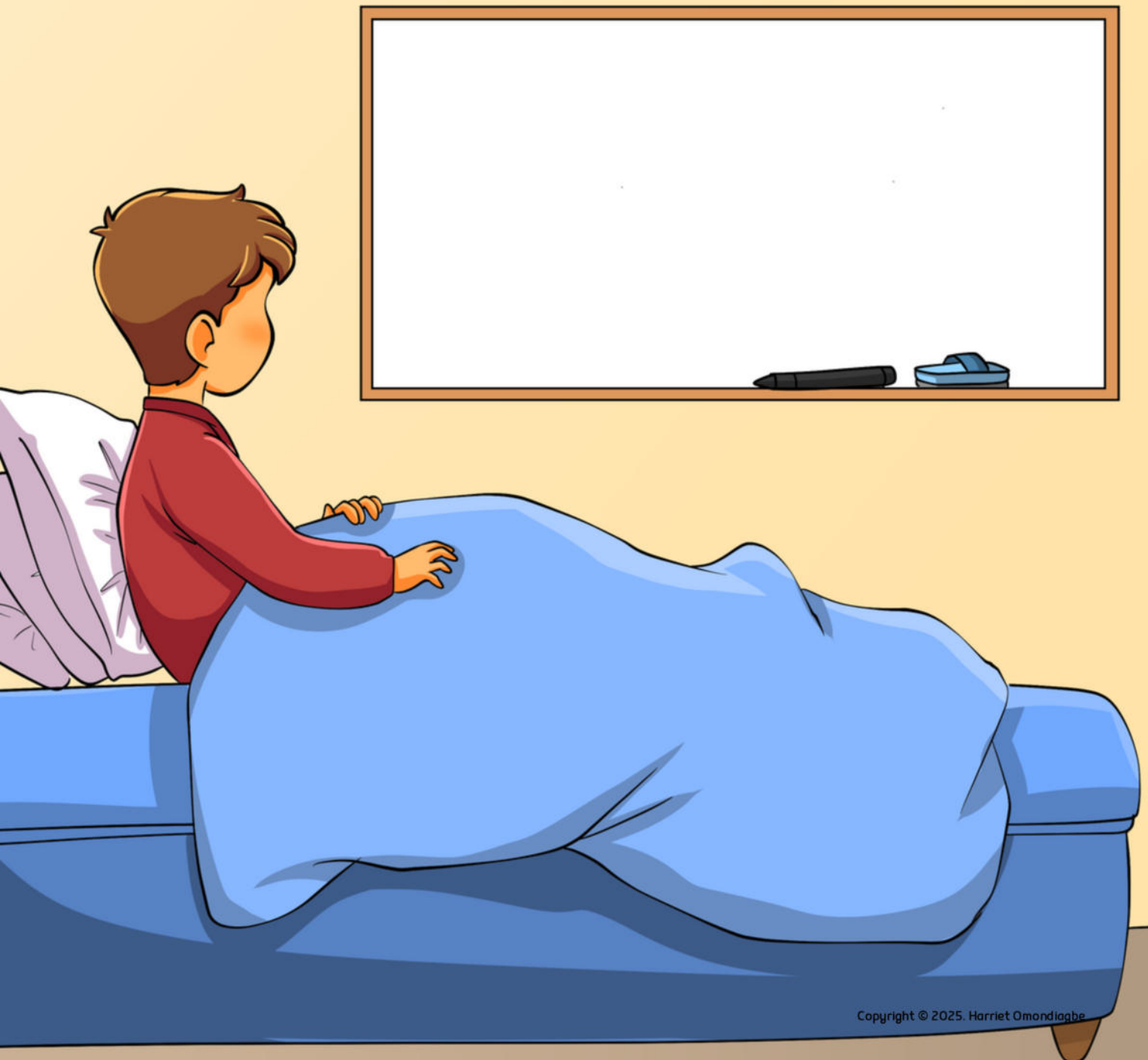
Mom  
Dad



That night, before Joshua went to bed, he erased  
mum's marks, dad's marks, and Tim's mark.

He looked at the empty board.

The tally marks were not important anymore.



# DISCUSSION AND ACTIVITIES

## TALK ABOUT IT

### **When someone hurts you...**

1. Can you think of anyone that hurt you at home, school, church, or your neighborhood?
2. What did they do to hurt you or make you feel sad?
3. How can you forgive those who hurt you?

### **When you hurt someone...**

1. Can you think of anyone that you hurt, or made to feel sad?
2. What did you do that made them feel hurt or sad?
3. What can you do to make things right?

## TRY DOING THIS

Here are some examples of things that you can do to make things right.

1. Accept that you hurt the person.
2. Say sorry and ask them to forgive you. You can write them a letter or draw a beautiful picture too.
3. Ask them how you can make things right.
4. Listen calmly when the other person wants to tell you how they feel.
5. Be patient with yourself and with the other person.
6. Ask Jesus to help you forgive others when they hurt you.



## OTHER BOOKS BY THE AUTHOR

- My emotions and God
  - I can praise God
  - ABCs of nighttime talk with God
  - Not disabled: A letter to Grandpa Graham
  - Looking for Larry
  - Skateboard Pride
  - No hat, no play
  - Mr. Denver needs a helping hand
  - Beth's graduation speech
  - No drama on Saturday
  - I can be kind like Jesus
  - I can be calm like Jesus
  - I can play nicely like Jesus
  - God, help me to be thankful
  - God, help me to be patient
  - Then and Now: God has not changed
- ... and many more!**



## ABOUT THE BOOK

Joshua has a special way of keeping track of the times someone upsets him using tally marks. But as the tally marks add up, so does the heaviness in his heart. When his parents share lessons from the Bible about forgiveness and love, Joshua realizes the harm in holding on to anger. But he must decide whether to hold on to those tally marks... or find the courage to forgive.

The book, **God, help me to forgive**, is a part of **God, help me series**. The book illustrates the joy, love and freedom that comes with forgiving those who hurt us.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

### HARRIET OMONDIAGBE

Dr. Harriet Omondiagbe is a Christian writer and author. She writes for Godly Pearls, a Christian organization in New Zealand.

Harriet is passionate about godly parenting and wants to see kids thrive in a godly home. Through her writing, she hopes to offer biblically-sound resources to teachers, parents and caregivers, so they can in turn, help their kids to develop a growing faith in Jesus, and real love for God.