

# Nathan's Story

Michael J. McHugh



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By

Michael J. McHugh



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Written by Michael J. McHugh

Cover and text illustrations by Keith R. Neely

Cover design and layout by Bob Fine

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A publication of  
Great Light Publications  
422 S. Williams Ave.  
Palatine, Illinois 60074  
[www.greatlightpublications.com](http://www.greatlightpublications.com)

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ISBN 978-0-9822848-5-8 (print)

978-0-9852077-4-8 (eBook PDF)

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## Preface

One of the most powerful and memorable scenes recorded in the Bible is the confrontation between King David and the prophet Nathan. At a low point in David's life, when he was straying from God as a prodigal son, the Lord sent just the right person with just the right message to call him back from the path of death to the path of repentance unto life.

The beauty and power of the story that Nathan shared with David is founded, in many respects, upon its absolute simplicity. Regardless of age, race, or cultural heritage, few people need to struggle to comprehend the vital moral principles that flow out of the inspired message that was delivered by Nathan. David himself, even in his anemic spiritual condition, had no difficulty identifying where the lines of justice needed to be drawn with respect to the characters presented in Nathan's story. One man was clearly guilty of multiple transgressions against his neighbor, while the other was just as clearly an innocent victim of another man's callous and unlawful behavior. Little wonder why David, who was both a king and judge in ancient Israel, was so thoroughly convicted when he was informed by Nathan that he "was the man", i.e. the guilty party!

Although the story that follows mirrors, to a certain degree, the biblical narrative that first came from the lips of the prophet Nathan to David, it is not intended to provide readers with a strict or literal retelling of the story recorded in 2 Samuel 12:1-9. Nor, I might add, is this book seeking to present some sort of paraphrased version of this scriptural account. The true goal of *Nathan's Story*, simply put, is to provide children with an edifying story that contains many of the key principles of the original biblical account from Second Samuel.

May Almighty God be pleased to use this simple story, which is based on timeless moral principles, to challenge youngsters of all ages to love their neighbor as themselves to the glory of King Jesus.

Michael J. McHugh  
Palatine, Illinois  
2010





# Foreword

The story you are about to read will provide young children with a powerful example of how the sin of coveting can undermine one's ability to love his neighbor. For this reason, both before and after you read this story to youngsters, it is recommended that you explain the following Scripture passages to them:

"You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor's."

Exodus 20:17

"Jesus said to him, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.'"

Matthew 22:37-40

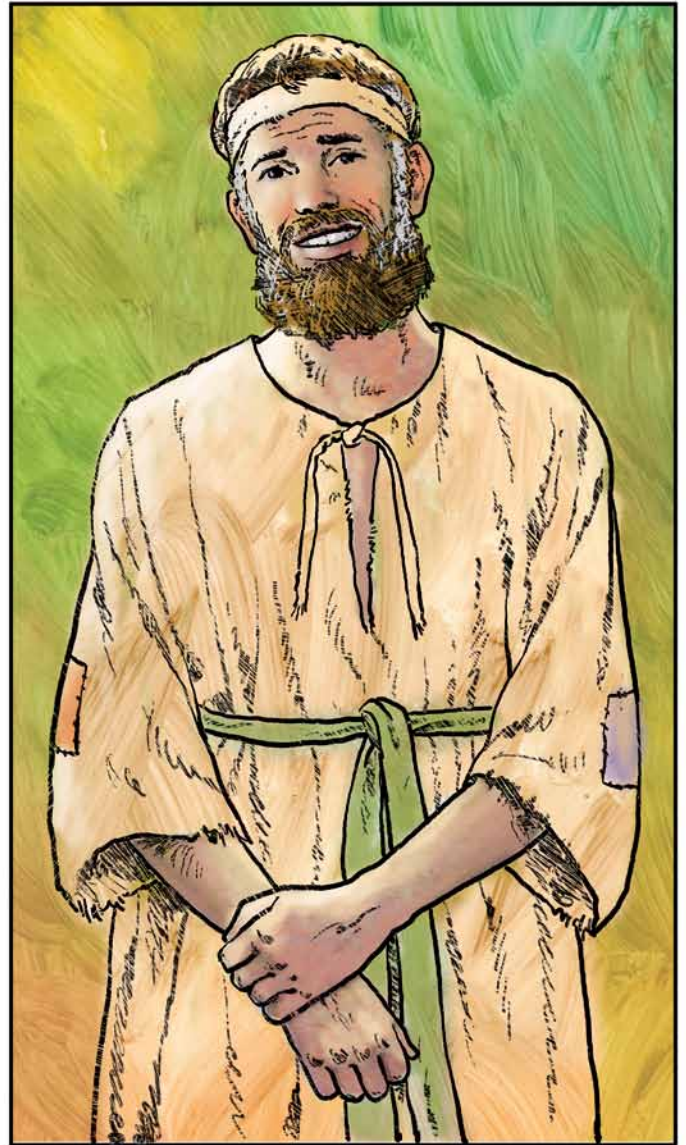
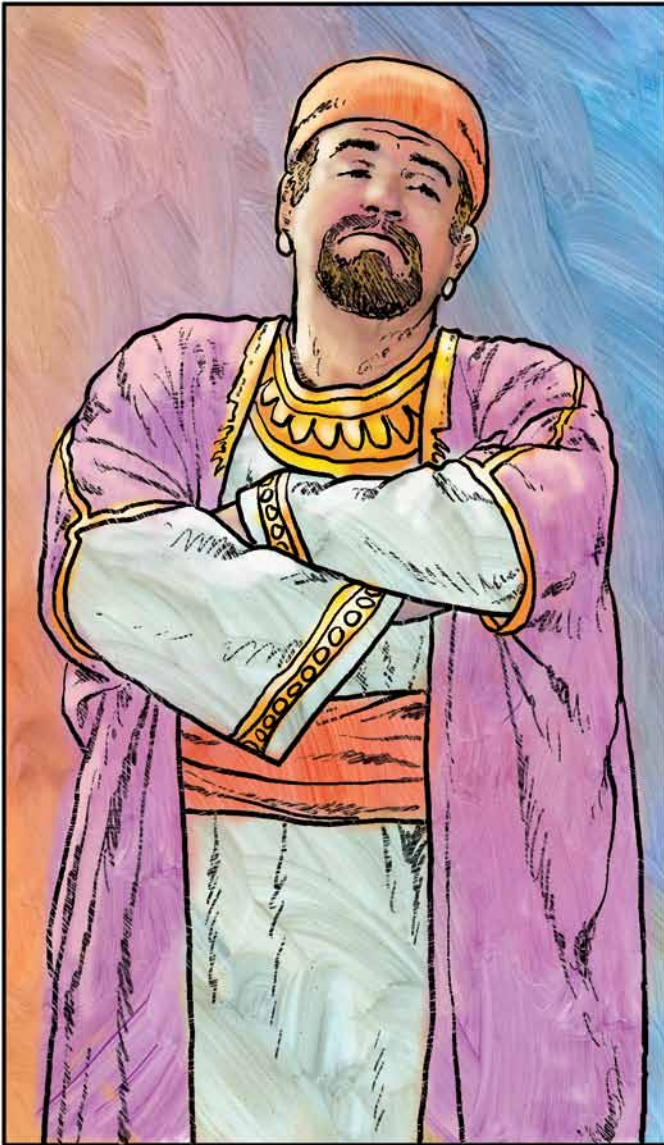
A helpful group of teaching suggestions is provided at the back of the book to aid those who are reading through this story with young children.



## Chapter One

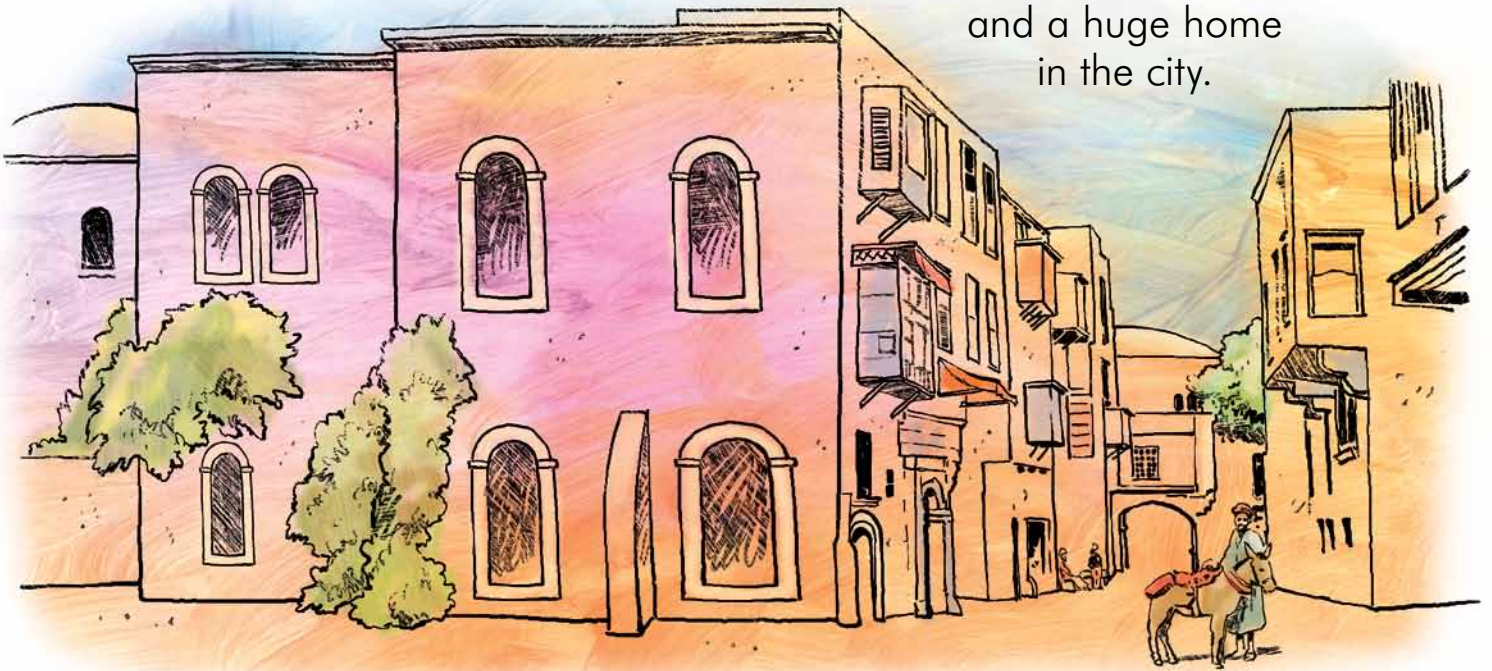
### Rich Man, Poor Man

Long ago, near a big city, there lived  
**a rich man** and **a poor man**.

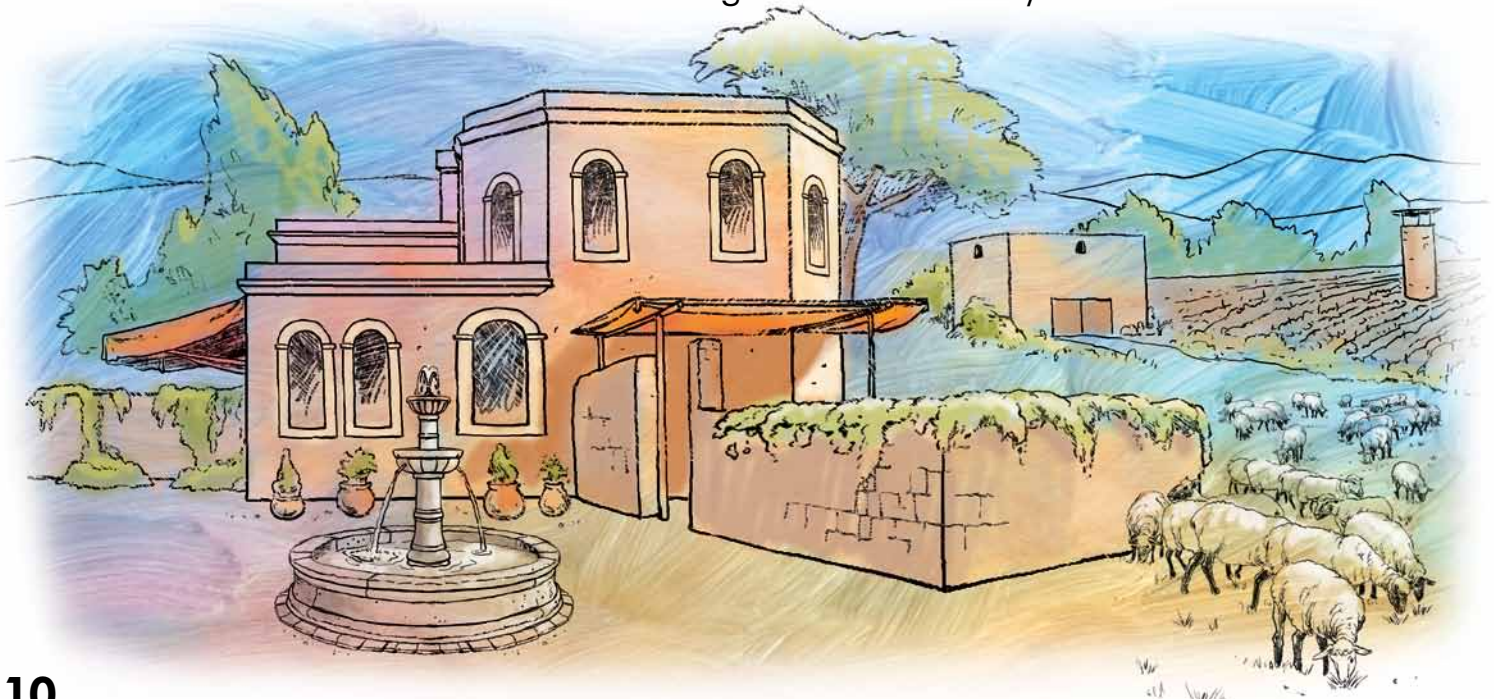




The rich man had nice clothes,  
a fancy gold ring,  
and a huge home in the city.



He also owned a large farm just  
outside of town that had big barns and many animals.





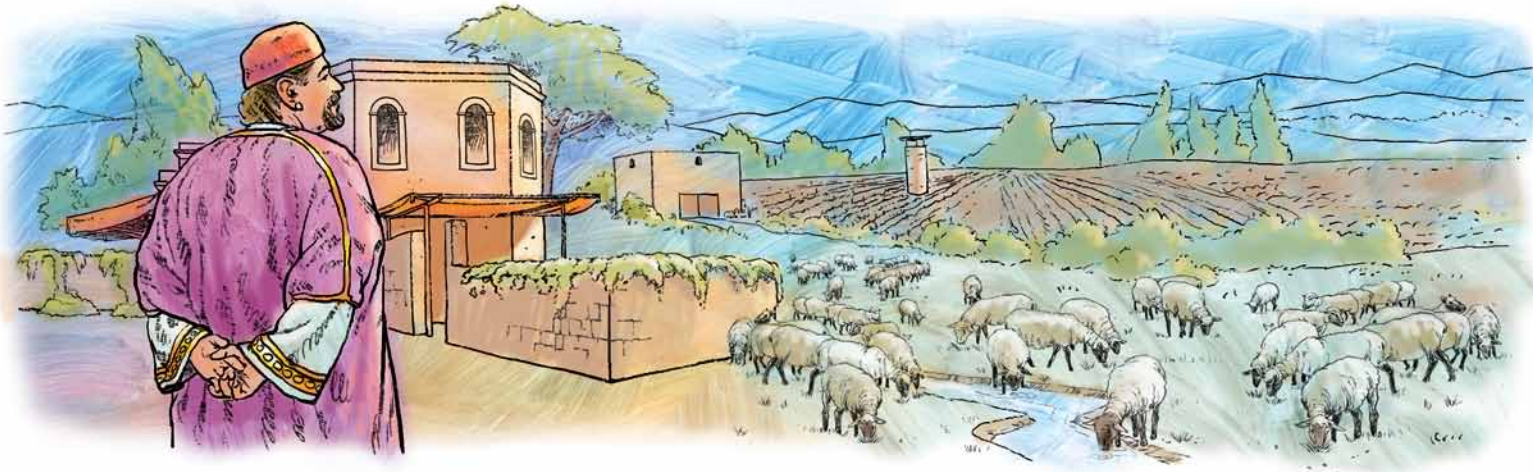
This man had also been blessed with a loving wife,  
five children, and several servants to help him with his work around the farm.



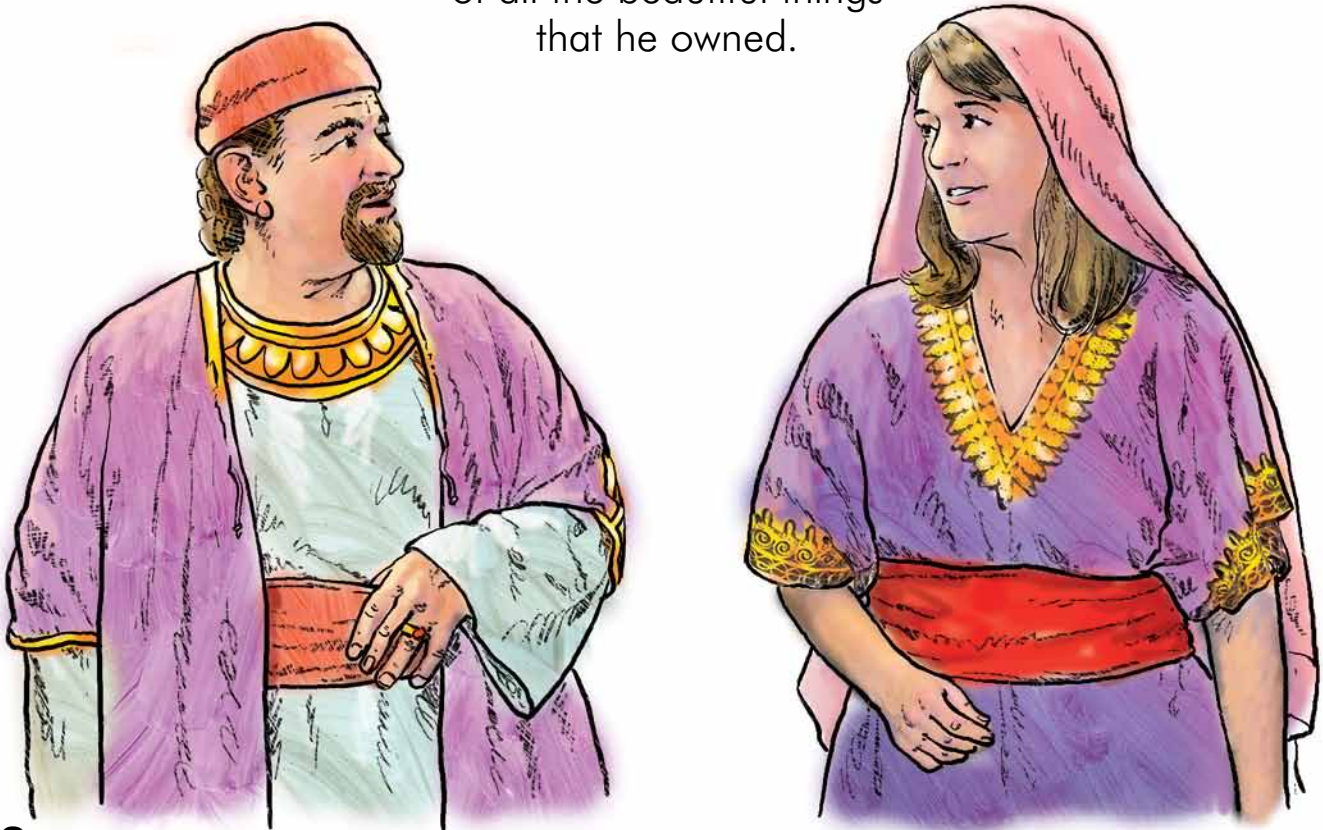
No wonder that people called him a “rich man”.



Every day, the rich man loved to walk around his farm and look at his big house, and admire all of the animals in the field.



He also liked to take long walks with his wife so they could watch their children play. This man was very proud of all the beautiful things that he owned.





Sometimes, the rich man would ask himself;  
“I wonder what I have done to deserve all of these riches?”



The only answer that seemed right to this man, was that his riches must  
have come to him because he was so wise and good.

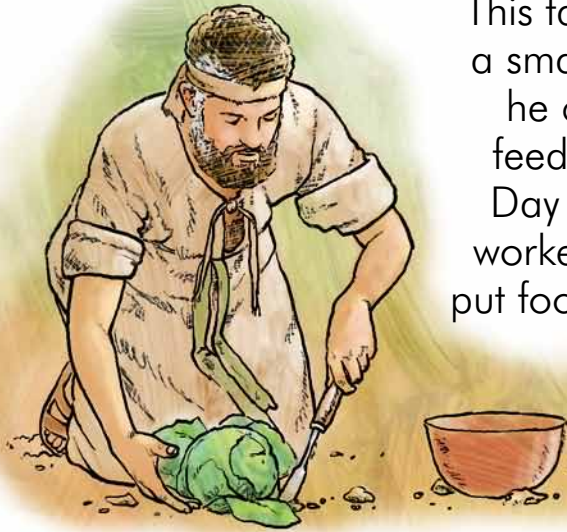


The rich man had a neighbor living close to his farm who was very poor.

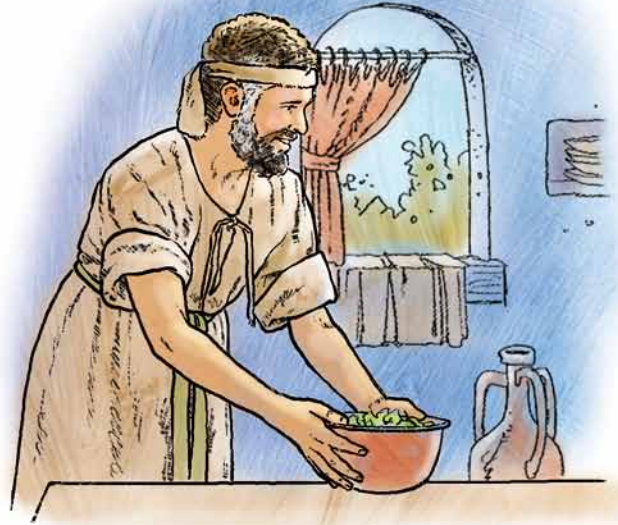


The poor man lived in a tiny stone house with his two sons. His wife had died shortly after giving birth to their second son, so the poor man was very sad and lonely without her.

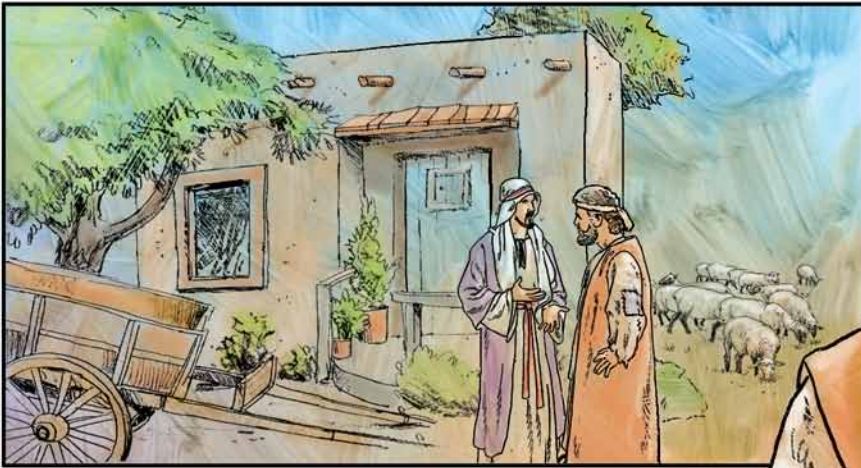




This father had such a small garden that he could barely feed his children. Day after day, he worked hard just to put food on the table.



One day, the poor man decided to do something to try to bring some joy into his hard life. He decided to go to a small farm near his home, in order to buy a tiny lamb for a pet.



Oh, how happy the father was to carry his new friend home on his shoulders. Now he would not be so lonely or sad anymore!

