



Innis and Ernest

written and illustrated by
Carissa Shillito

To

From

Presented on



*Dedicated to the little ones
and to the old ones.*



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I'm Innis, and I'm an only child.

There's only me.



Which means ...

All the marshmallows,
all to myself.



All my cars,
all over the place.



Any show.
Anytime.



But one day...

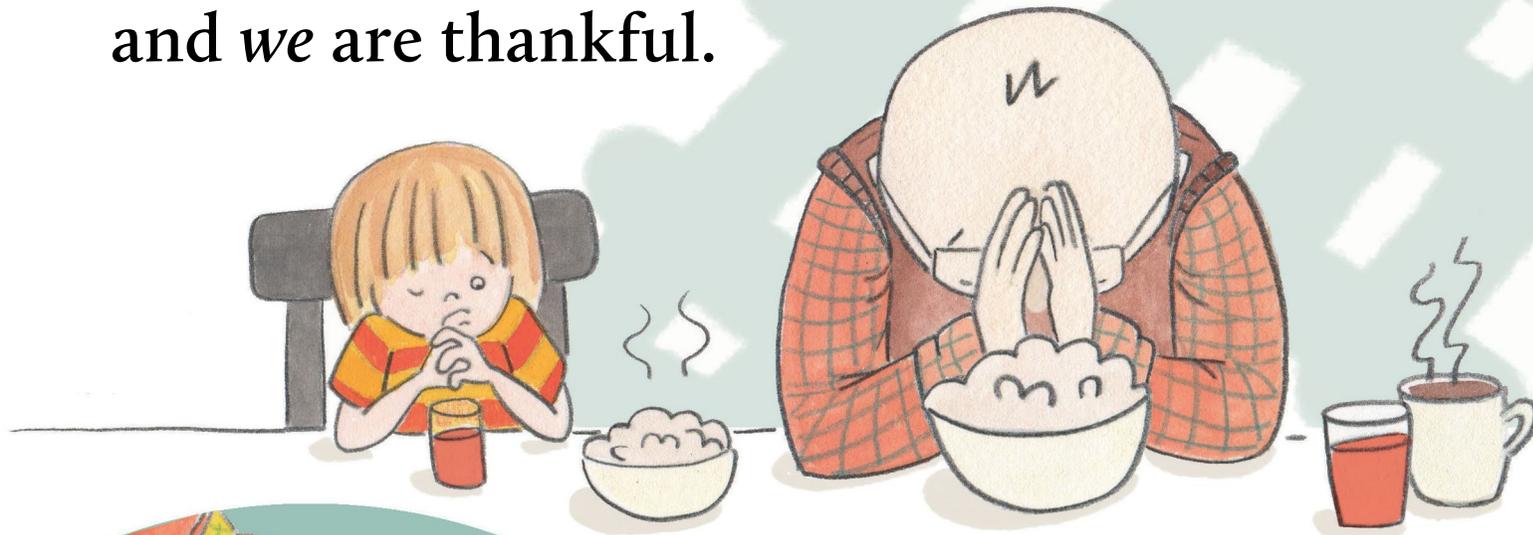
Ernest came to our house.

And he stayed.

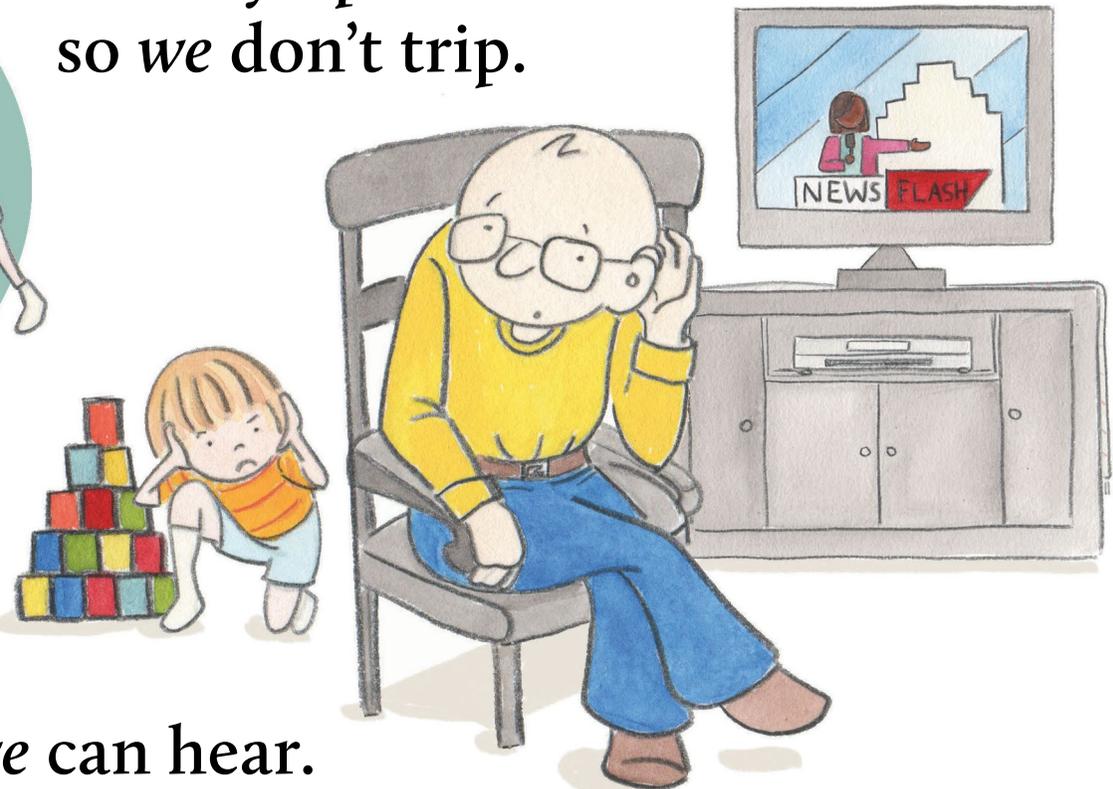


So now it's *we*,
which means ...

We eat oatmeal,
and we are thankful.



We tidy up cars
so we don't trip.

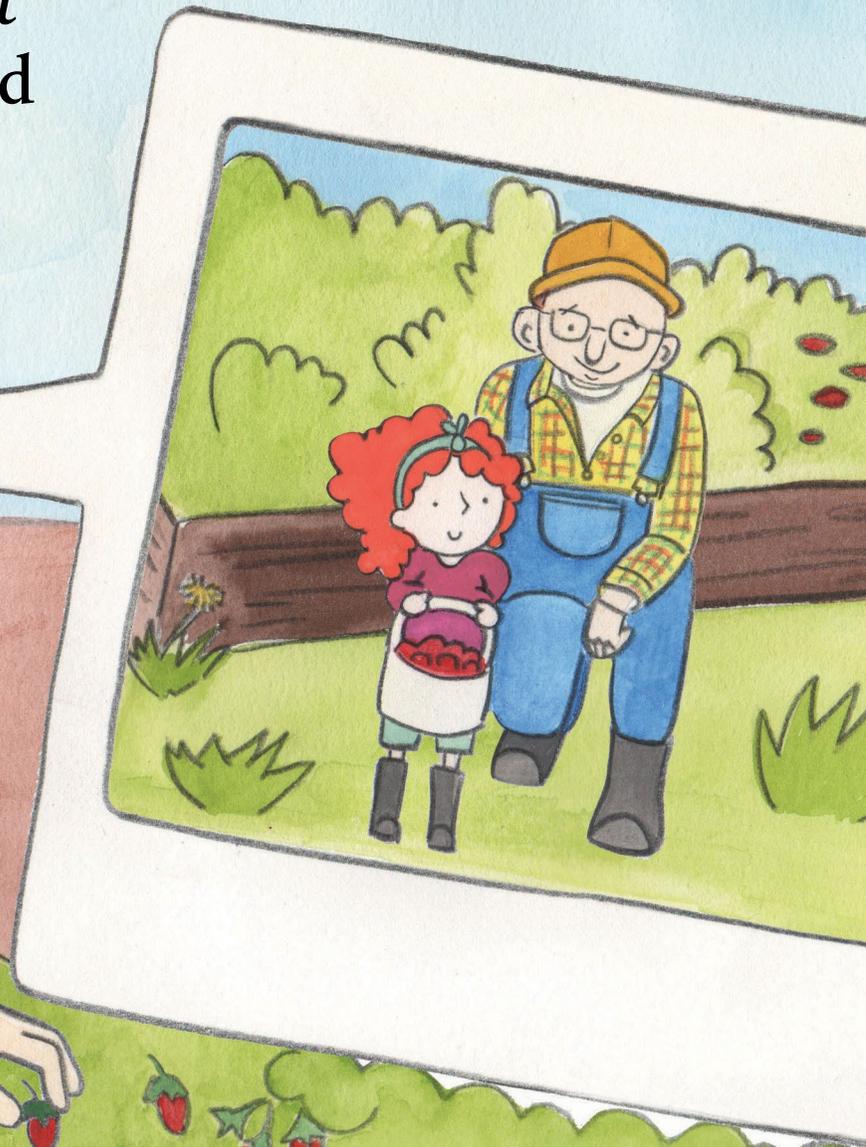


We crank up the news so we can hear.

Mom says Ernest is *not* a stranger. He just used to live far away.

She calls him *Gramps* and says I can too.

“No thanks,” I say.
“Ernest will do.”



He takes his time ...
which takes



Forever!

He takes tons
of my care and
patience.

He stirs chunky stuff in his coffee—
it has something to do with
his vowels.

I don't know why
he cares so much
whether or not
they're moving.

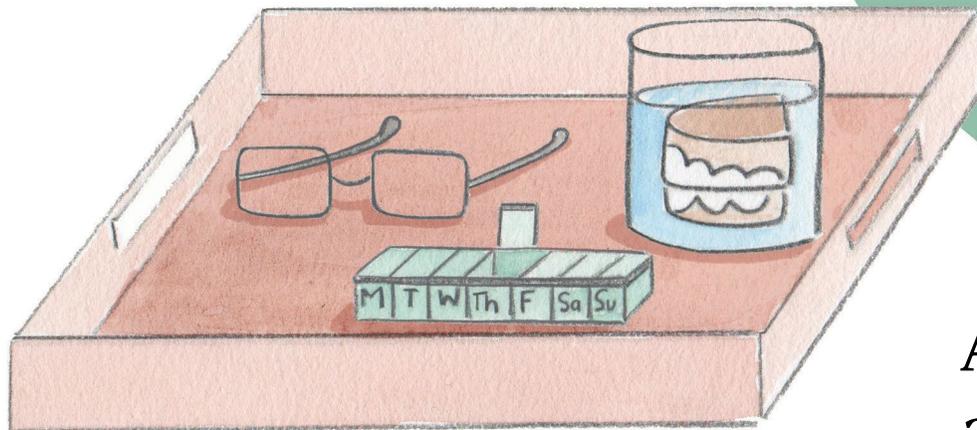
clumsy me...



Sometimes he cries,
but I don't think he minds.
And boy, that feels

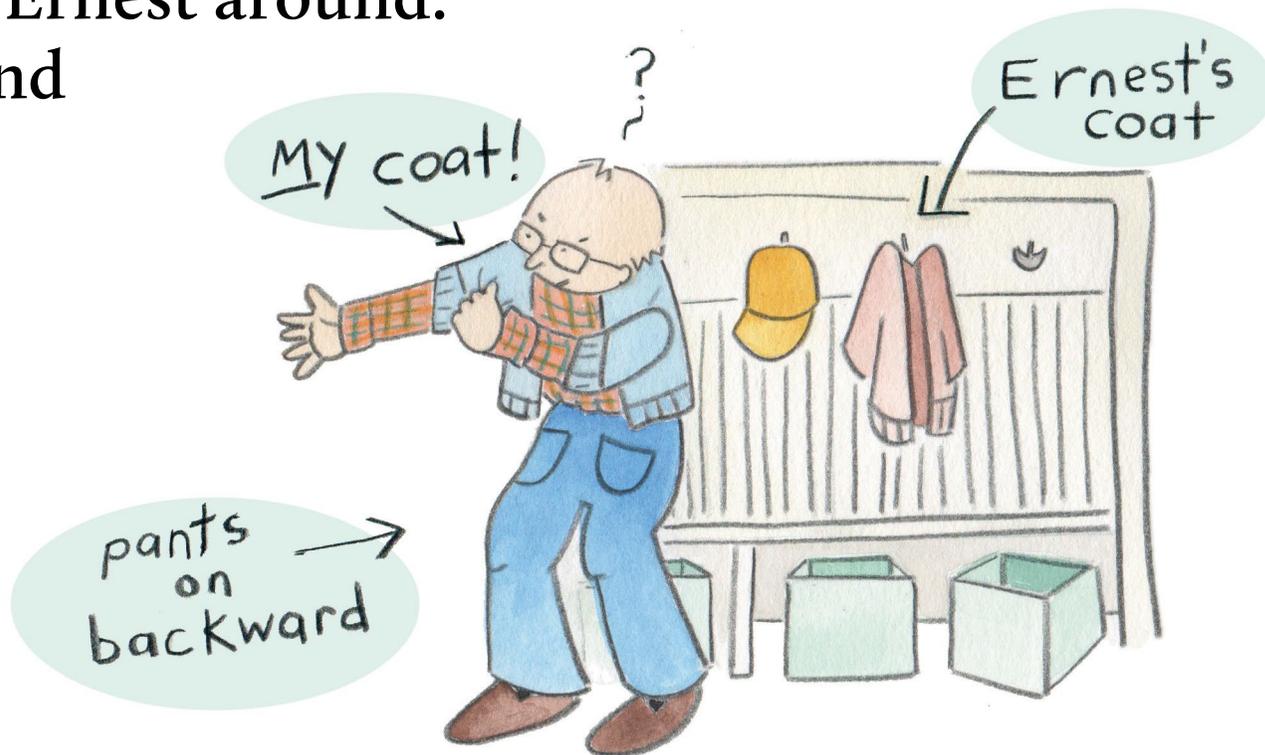
awkward to me!

Mom says he's
not a burden,
and that makes him smile.



And his teeth grin
along from their glass.

It's not *all* bad having Ernest around.
He shares his candy and
the stickers he gets
in the mail.



He's not too picky
about clothes,

and he takes me on an "Ernest Tear."
He can't drive a car,
but he sure can

FLY!



His doodad collection must be worth millions!
(Maybe that's why he says he's a rich man.)



The little things are
great big treasures,
and the old things
are still super special.



REMEMBER: Gray hair is a glorious crown; it is found in the ways of righteousness.—Proverbs 16:31

READ: Isaiah 46:4 and Hebrews 2:14-16

Each stage of life has changes and challenges. Innis takes naps, needs help from grown-ups, and struggles to share his space and stuff. Ernest uses a walker, wears dentures, and takes a lot of medicine. As he says, “Growin’ old ain’t easy.” But Isaiah 46:4 tells us that God will always be with us and take care of us. Unlike humans, God never changes. That makes growing up and growing old much easier!

Innis wonders what he’ll do when Ernest is no longer around. Aging and death can be sad and scary, but because of Jesus, we don’t have to fear either one.

Read Hebrews 2:14-15. When Jesus died and rose again, He proved He is stronger than death! When we love and worship Jesus, we don’t have anything to fear about growing old or dying. And He can help us enjoy and serve the older people in our lives too!



THINK:

1. What sounds fun about getting older? What seems hard? As you go through the changes of growing up, how does it feel to know God never changes?
2. Psalm 68:6 says, “God provides homes for those who are deserted.” Why do you think Ernest moved in with Innis’s family?
3. Innis had a lot of energy, and he had to learn to be patient with Ernest, who took “FOREVER.” What are some ways you think God can use kids to help elderly people whose bodies and minds are slowing down?
4. Do you know any senior citizens, maybe in your neighborhood or at church? Are there any nursing homes in your area? How might God use you to brighten the day of an older person?

Growing up and growing old aren't easy!

Innis loves being an only child.

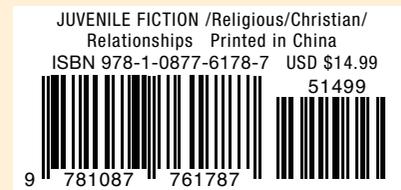
But when elderly Ernest comes to live with his family, Innis is no longer number one. Generations apart from Ernest, yet on the same nap schedule, Innis soon discovers the responsibility, hilarity, and heartache of being Ernest's "brother."

Readers of all ages will adore watching this unlikely friendship unfold. Young ones will be inspired to honor and serve the elderly in their communities, and old ones will feel valued and affirmed.



Photography by Aubin Skipper

Carissa Shillito lives in Kansas with her husband and four boys. They drive their dust-covered van along country roads to their home, a Christian retreat center called *Shalom*. There her family had the privilege of living with an "Ernest" who was 100 years old. Relationships are the most important part of Carissa's life, especially with her best friend, Jesus. She thinks you, the reader of this book, are a great, big, super-special treasure, and she wishes she could read *your* bio.



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