

The best birthday present

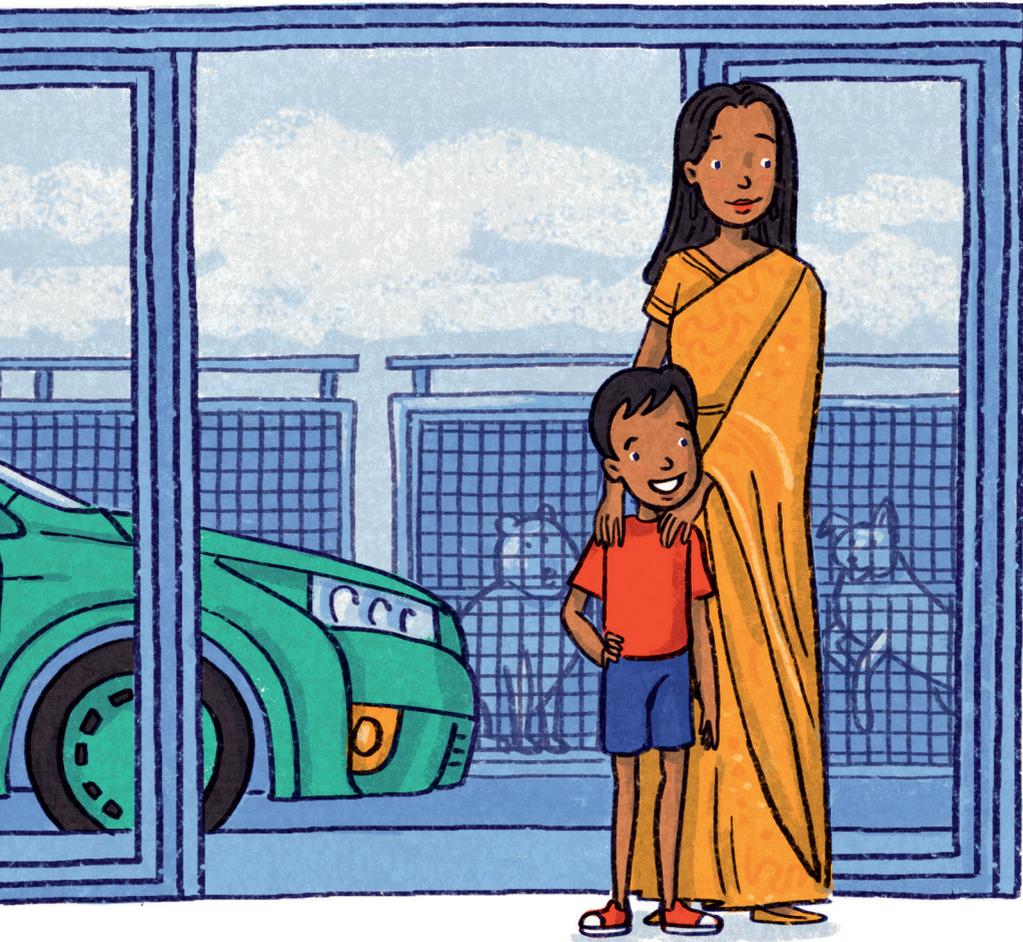
Written by Zaheera Jina Asvat

Illustrated by Chantelle and Burgen Thorne



Zakariyya woke as the sun peeped through the gaps in the curtain. Outside the world was waking up.

It was Zakariyya's birthday and he was very excited. Mum had promised him a very special birthday present. After breakfast and dressing, Mum helped Zakariyya into the back seat of the car.



The car stopped. Zakariyya could hear dogs barking and cats meowing.

“Mummy, where are we?” Zakariyya asked.

“We have come to a very special place where animals are cared for. It’s called the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals – or SPCA, for short.”



Mum held Zakariyya’s hand and together they entered through the glass doors. A woman in a blue uniform greeted them.

“I’m Dr Molete.”

“Hello, Dr Molete.” Zakariyya smiled.

“Welcome to the SPCA. I am a veterinarian, but most people say “vet”. I care for sick animals.”

“Zakariyya,” Mum said. “We have come here to adopt two kittens.”

“Two kittens?” Zakariyya was very excited.

Dr Molete led them to the kennels. She opened the door and gently placed one ginger kitten and one black-and-white kitten into a cat carrier.

Mum signed the adoption papers and paid the adoption fees.

Zakariyya waved goodbye to Dr Molete.



At home, Mum and Zakariyya prepared a place for the kittens to sleep. Later, when the moon waved goodbye to the sun, Zakariyya cuddled in bed with his kittens.

“Ginger and Liquorice are the best birthday presents ever, Mum!” Zakariyya laughed.

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Ideas to talk about

How old will you be on your next birthday? What would be the best birthday present ever?

How do you think Ginger and Liquorice got to be at the SPCA?

In your family, do you give each other birthday presents? Why or why not?



Visual

Do you have a pet, or do you wish you could have one? Draw a picture of yourself with this pet.



Reading

Find these things in the story:

- ★ two noises that animals make
- ★ three colour names
- ★ one number
- ★ two things we see in the sky
- ★ the name of a meal



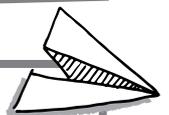
Writing

Zakariyya wanted a kitten for his birthday. If you could have anything you wanted, write a list of birthday presents you would choose.



Craft

Use a cardboard box to make a cat carrier like the one in the story. Then use playdough or clay to make Ginger and Liquorice and put them in your cat carrier.



Performance

Pretend that you are Zakariyya and retell the story without using any words. Use only body actions to show what happened on your birthday.

