The Gingerbread Girl,

The Lamb, and the Lantern



A story about noticing who needs a hand

A little note for grown-ups

This is an imaginary story inspired by Jesus' teaching to love our neighbors. The gingerbread character and her conversation with Jesus are fictional.

Invite little readers to join in the rhyme, listen for the lamb, and look for the lanterns lighting the way home.

For little hearts

with big kindness to share.

Let's begin…

One snowy morning, a baker made a little gingerbread girl with a white dress, red sneakers, and a white bow perched on one side of her head.

When the baker opened the oven, the gingerbread girl hopped off the tray.



“Run, run, as fast as you can!” she called. “You can’t catch me. I’m the gingerbread girl!”

Out the door she dashed, her little sneakers going tip-tap, tip-tap down the snowy lane.



Beside a fence, a lamb gave a tiny baa. A loose strand of wool from his scarf had caught on a nail. Every time he took a step, the scarf pulled tight again.

“Could you untangle me?” asked the lamb.

“No time!” called the gingerbread girl. “I’m much too fast to stop!”

And around the corner she went.

By the village steps, an old lantern maker was trying to light the evening lanterns. He held a little lamp, but when he bent down, his shadow fell right over the latch.

“Would you hold my lamp?” he asked. “I can’t see what I’m doing.”

“No time! No time!” she called.

And up the hill she went.



Beneath an olive tree sat Jesus, sharing bread with a few friends.

The gingerbread girl planted her feet.

“Run, run, as fast as you can!” she began.

Jesus smiled.



“You’ve come a long way. Would you like to rest?”

The gingerbread girl blinked. Nobody had offered her a rest before.

She sat on a smooth stone beside the tree.

“I’m the fastest cookie in the village,” she said.

“What have you seen on your journey?” Jesus asked.

“A lamb with a scarf. A man with a lamp. A whole row of lanterns.”

Now that her feet had stopped, she could hear a little baa from down the hill.

“The lamb is still stuck,” she said. “And those lanterns are still dark.”

Jesus listened.

“I could have helped,” she said.

“You can still go back,” Jesus told her.

So down the hill she ran, all the way to the fence.



“Hold still,” she told the lamb. “I think I can reach it.”

She stood on tiptoe and lifted the little loop of wool off the nail.

Pop! The scarf came free.



The lamb bounced backward, landed in a snowdrift, and came up wearing a little snow hat.

The gingerbread girl giggled and brushed snow from his ears.

“Come with me,” she said. “I know someone else who could use a hand.”



At the village steps, the lantern maker was still trying to see his latch.

“I can hold the lamp now,” said the gingerbread girl.

She climbed onto the bottom step and held the lamp high.

“There it is!” said the lantern maker. Click went the latch.

Soon every step glowed gold.



A family coming home crossed the steps, one by one. The smallest child hopped from one pool of light to the next.

“Look!” whispered the lamb. “We made stepping-stones out of light.”

By sunset, the gingerbread girl was back beneath the olive tree. Her sneakers were wet, and her white bow had slipped sideways.

“Did you win your race?” Jesus asked.

“I forgot to have one,” she said. “I was helping.”

Jesus smiled and made room beside him.

From the hill, she could see the lamb trotting home in his scarf. The lanterns lit the steps all the way to the last one.

Tomorrow she would run again. But she had a new rhyme:

“Run, run, as fast as you can—
then stop and lend a helping hand!”

Kindness keeps going

Who needed help in the story?

What did the gingerbread girl notice when she stopped to rest?

Who could you lend a hand to today?

The End