

# TUG AND FRIENDS



## A Little Help Goes a Long Way

Story by Daniel Adams

Revised illustrated draft 2

This book is dedicated to

**Jimmie Ponder**

---

Nothing but love, brothers forever.

## A morning together



Daniel and Lucas had spent the morning fishing. The lake sparkled, the birds sang, and Lucas had a story about every nibble.

**“Best part of fishing?”** Daniel asked.

**“Catching one bigger than yours!”** Lucas said.

Daniel chuckled. **“I was going to say spending time with you.”**

**“That too, Dad.”**

## Time for lunch



With their fishing poles tucked away, they headed into town.

**“All that fishing made me hungry,”** Lucas said.

**“Even the fish stopped for breakfast,”** Daniel replied. Ahead stood their favorite little roadside diner.

## Someone beside the road



Near the diner, a black car sat beside the road. His tire was flat, his bumper was bent, and a crack stretched across his windshield. He looked as though his morning had been very different from theirs.

## Unkind words



Three shiny vehicles had stopped nearby.

**“Perhaps if you took better care of yourself, you wouldn’t be sitting here,”** said Franklin. One companion snickered.

**“You picked an unfortunate place to park,”** added the other.

**“I didn’t exactly pick it,”** the black car answered quietly.

## Daniel notices



Daniel recognized Franklin and his companions. They were customers at his service garage. He hoped the unkind remarks would stop before Lucas heard them. But Lucas had already noticed.

## A difficult question



**“Dad, why are those men being mean to him?”** Lucas asked.

**“He’s just broken down.”** Daniel looked at his son, then toward the stranger.

**“You’re right, Lucas. Let’s go say hello.”**

## A familiar face



**“Afternoon, Franklin,”** Daniel said. Franklin’s smile came quickly.

**“Oh! Daniel. We were just—”**

**“I heard,”** Daniel replied calmly.

**“He’s having a hard enough day. Let’s give him some room.”**

## A proper introduction



Daniel turned toward the stranger.

**“My name’s Daniel. This is my son, Lucas. What’s yours?”**

**“Jimmie.”**

**“Well, Jimmie, what seems to be the trouble?”** For the first time that morning, someone was asking because they wanted to help.

## A run of bad luck



**“First one thing went wrong, then another,”** Jimmie explained.

**“Now I can’t get any farther. I don’t know anyone here, and I haven’t had much of a welcome.”** Daniel listened without interrupting. Lucas moved a little closer.

## An offer of help



**“I’ve got a service garage,” Daniel said.**

**“Rayzig can take a look.” Jimmie hesitated.**

**“I can’t afford shop work right now. I don’t want to be anybody’s problem.”**

**“Needing a hand doesn’t make you a problem, Jimmie.”** At last, Jimmie nodded.

**“All right. Thank you.”**

## On the way



Daniel called the garage, and Tug came to help Jimmie get there safely. Lucas stayed close to his dad as they followed. Jimmie still felt nervous, but now he knew where he was going—and he wasn't going alone.

## A warm welcome



Rayzig rolled out to greet them, his little glasses resting low and a smile spreading across his face. Tug stopped beside his dad.

**“You came to the right place!”** Tug told Jimmie. Rayzig laughed.

**“Let’s have a look before my helper promises you a new engine!”**

## Under the hood



Soon Jimmie's hood was up, and Rayzig was finding out what needed attention. Tug brought over the tools his dad asked for. Lucas watched from the safe waiting area with Daniel. Little by little, the work began.

## Good company



While Rayzig worked, Tug kept Jimmie company.

**“Dad says waiting is the hardest part,”** Tug offered.

**“Your dad sounds smart.”**

**“He is. I’m helping him practice.”** Jimmie laughed—a real laugh. It felt good.

## Looking like himself



Rayzig finished the repairs, replaced the damaged tire, and made sure Jimmie was ready for the road. After a wash and a little straightening up, his black paint shone again. Jimmie put his familiar gold chain back on.

**“There you are,”** Tug said with a grin.

## On the house



**“What do I owe you?” Jimmie asked.**

**“On the house,” Daniel said.**

**“I can’t let you do that.”**

**“You can. I’ve had hard times too. When I needed help, somebody helped me. Today, I’ve got a chance to do the same.”**

## Glad to help



Jimmie looked toward Rayzig.

**“You put your time into this.”**

**“And I’m glad I could,”** Rayzig answered, smiling. Jimmie paused.

**“Thank you. All of you.”** Lucas saw that accepting kindness could take a little courage too.

## An appointment to keep



Just then, Franklin and his two companions rolled into the garage. Franklin had arrived for his scheduled service appointment. He stopped when he saw Jimmie, repaired and smiling beside Daniel.

**“You repaired him?”** Franklin asked.

**“Rayzig did,”** Daniel said.

**“He needed a hand.”**

## A real apology



Franklin looked at Jimmie.

**“What I said outside the diner was cruel. You hadn’t done anything to deserve it. I’m sorry.”**

**“I laughed,”** one companion admitted.

**“I’m sorry too.”**

**“And I joined in,”** said the other.

**“I shouldn’t have.”**

Jimmie answered, **“Thank you for saying that. It was already a hard morning.”**

## A quiet conversation



Daniel took Lucas aside.

**“You knew those men?”** Lucas asked.

**“Yes. They’re customers.”**

**“Were you worried they’d get mad at you?”**

**“A little,”** Daniel admitted.

**“But I couldn’t leave Jimmie there being treated that way.”**

## Something we can share



**“People have shared their time and talents with me,” Daniel said.**

**“We have a shop, good tools, and people who know how to fix things. That gives us a responsibility to help when we can.”**

**“Like sharing?”**

**“Exactly. Your time, what you know, or a place beside you. Being better off doesn’t make you better than somebody else. Everybody deserves respect.”**

## You can sit by me



Lucas glanced toward Jimmie.

**“Dad... we never had lunch.”**

**“No, we didn’t.”**

**“Can Jimmie come with us?”**

Daniel smiled. **“Ask him.”** Lucas rolled over.

**“Jimmie, would you like to have lunch with us?”**

**“I’d like that very much.”**

**“And you can sit by me.”**

## A place for everyone



Soon Daniel, Lucas, Jimmie, Rayzig, and Tug were sharing lunch and enjoying one another's company.

**"Now,"** Lucas said, turning toward Jimmie,

**"I haven't told you about the biggest fish yet."** Daniel smiled. He had a feeling that fish was about to get a little bigger.

The biggest fish

