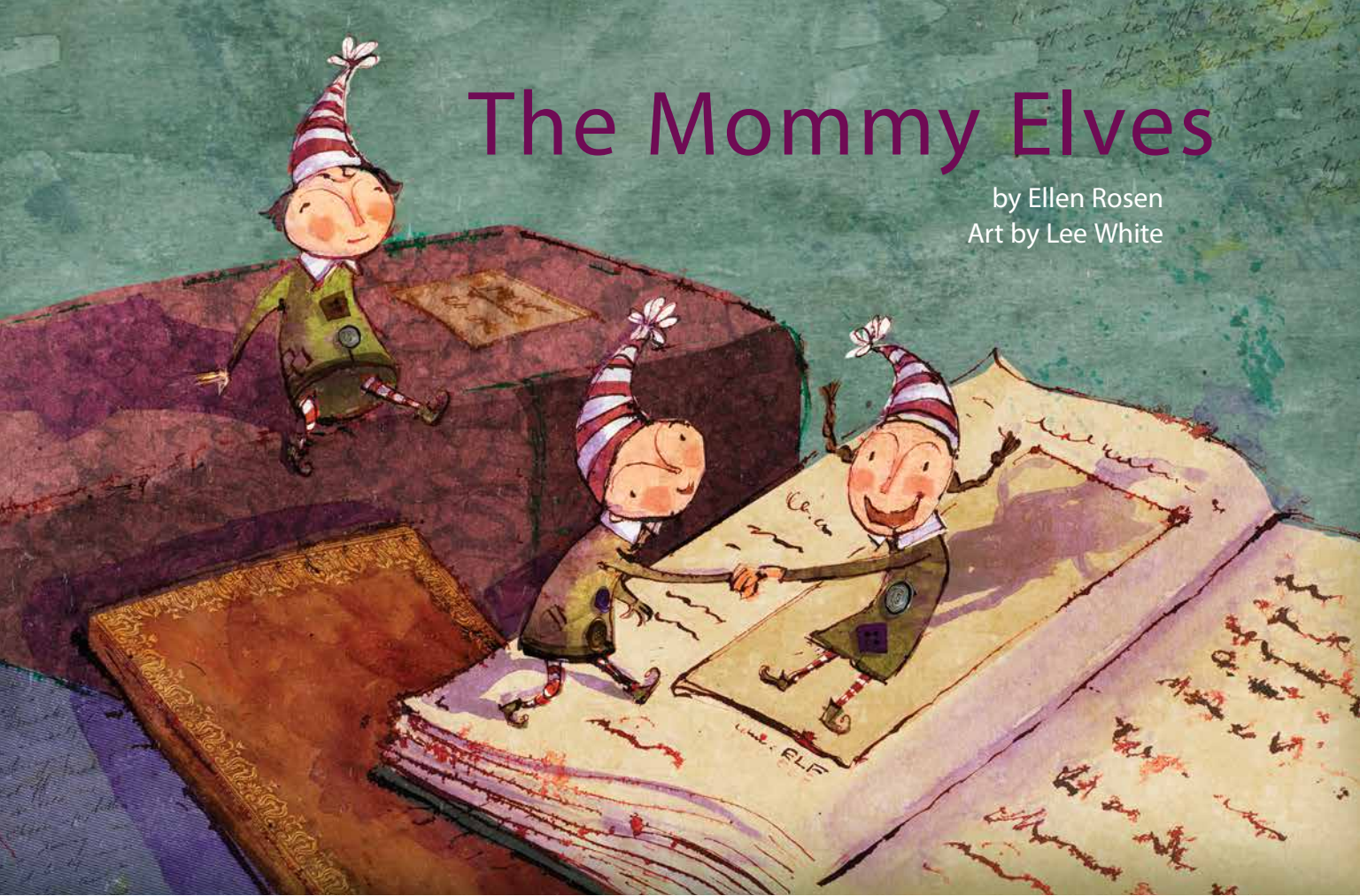


The Mommy Elves

by Ellen Rosen
Art by Lee White



"Daddy, can we go to the park?" asked Abby.

"Not right now," said Daddy. "I'm feeding Baby Pete."

"Mommy, will you read me a book?" asked Abby.

"Sorry, Abby," said Mommy. "I have to give Baby Pete a bath."

Abby stamped her foot. Baby Pete, Baby Pete! She went to her room and kicked the bookshelf. Out fell one of her favorite books, *The Shoemaker and the Elves*. On the cover was a picture of three tiny men and a large shoe. Abby turned the pages thoughtfully.

After dinner that night, Abby watched Daddy load the dishwasher while Mommy cleaned up Baby Pete.

"I know what you need," said Abby.

"What?" asked Mommy and Daddy at the same time.

"Mommy elves."

"What are mommy elves?" asked Mommy.

"They help you do the housework," said Abby.

"Then you'll have more time to play with me."

"Sounds great, Abby," said Daddy. "How do we get some?"



"I think you just wish for them," said Abby.

The next day Abby kept squeezing her eyes shut.

"What are you doing?" asked Mommy.

"I'm wishing for mommy elves," Abby said.

"Great," said Mommy. But no mommy elves came.

The next week, Abby followed Mommy around the house and told her all about the mommy elves she was wishing for. "Their names are Pim, Dixie, and Boo," said Abby. "They're as big as crayons, and they live in a shoebox."



"What do they eat?" asked Mommy.

"People food," said Abby. "Especially chocolate chip cookies."

A week went by. Still there were no mommy elves. Finally, the night before Mother's Day, Abby told Daddy a secret: "Pim, Dixie, and Boo are coming tomorrow!"

"Who?" asked Daddy.

"You know, the mommy elves. Remember? They're a present for Mommy."

"Oh, yeah," said Daddy. "But how are they getting here?"

"You'll see," said Abby.

Early the next morning, Abby jumped onto Mommy and Daddy's bed, waving a shiny present. "Happy Mother's Day!" she yelled.

Mommy slipped the ribbon off the foil-covered box and carefully lifted the lid. Inside were three cotton balls lying on top of three tissues.

"What is it, Abby?" asked Mommy.

"It's the mommy elves," said Abby. "They're going to help you and Daddy with the housework."



“Are they made of cotton balls?” asked Daddy.
“No, no,” said Abby with a laugh. “Those are pillows! They didn’t want to be stuck in the box, so I let them out before I wrapped it.”



“Where are they now?” asked Mommy.

“I think they’re in my room,” said Abby.

“They wanted to do some cleaning. Let’s go check on them.”

Abby tiptoed down the hall. Mommy and Daddy followed.

“Wow!” said Daddy.

“Amazing!” said Mommy.

“Pim had trouble making the bed, so I helped her,” said Abby.

“I showed Dixie where to put my toys. Boo dusted my dresser.”



Hop to the Web to print out the mommy elves’ top secret to-do list.

The next day Abby was playing in the living room. Mommy set down a basket of clean clothes and went to put Baby Pete in his crib for a nap. When Mommy came back, the clothes were in neatly folded piles.

"What happened to the laundry, Abby?" asked Mommy.

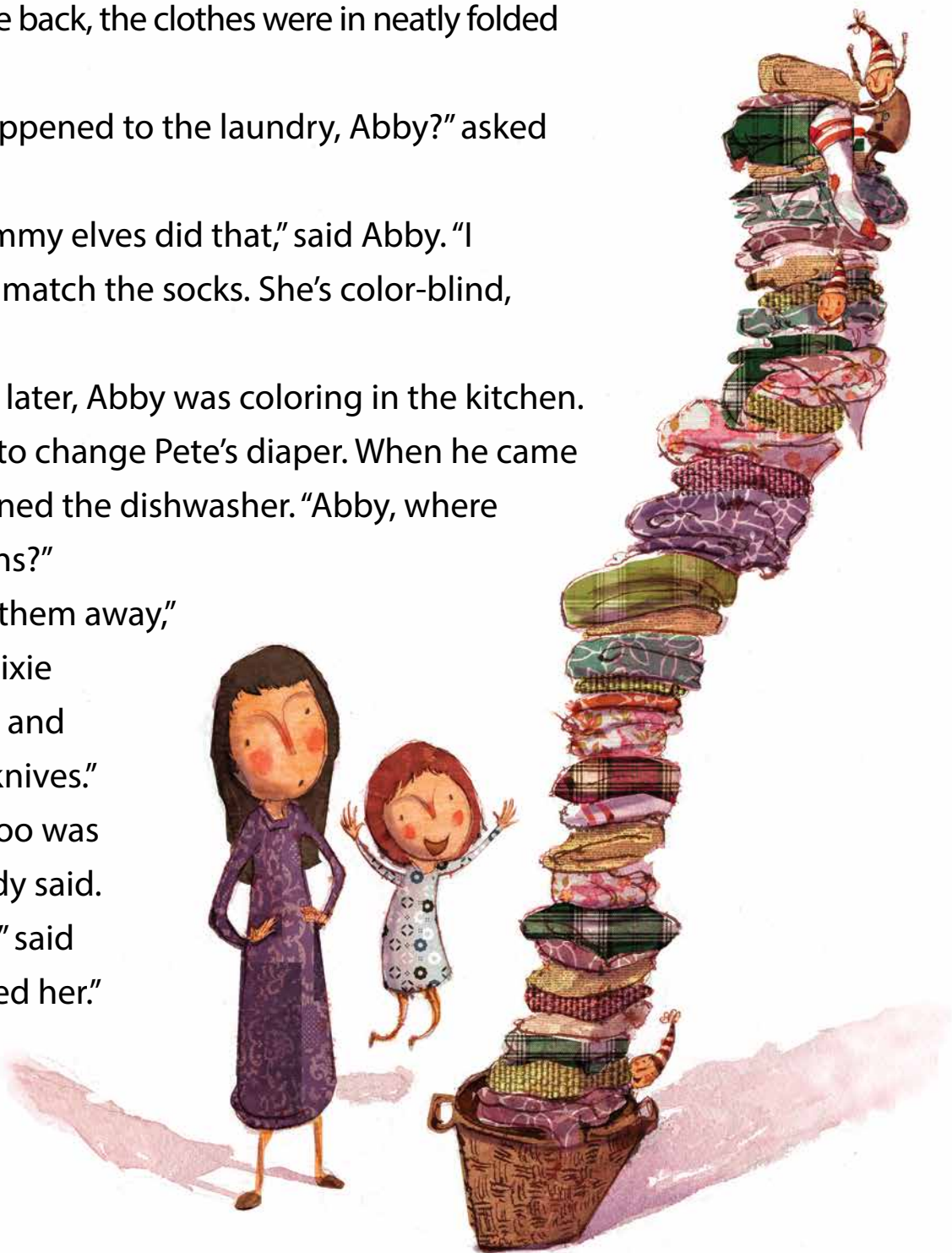
"The mommy elves did that," said Abby. "I helped Dixie match the socks. She's color-blind, you know."

Two days later, Abby was coloring in the kitchen. Daddy went to change Pete's diaper. When he came back, he opened the dishwasher. "Abby, where are the spoons?"

"Pim put them away," said Abby. "Dixie did the forks, and Boo did the knives."

"I hope Boo was careful," Daddy said.

"She was," said Abby. "I helped her."



Every day the mommy elves helped around the house. Mommy and Daddy weren't as busy and had more time to read books and play games with Abby.

"I told Grandma about the mommy elves," said Mommy one afternoon. "She sent this for you to share with them."

Abby opened the package and smiled. "Chocolate chip cookies!" 🐛

