

**Once upon a time...
the story of a Grandad**

By Christine & Alice Readman



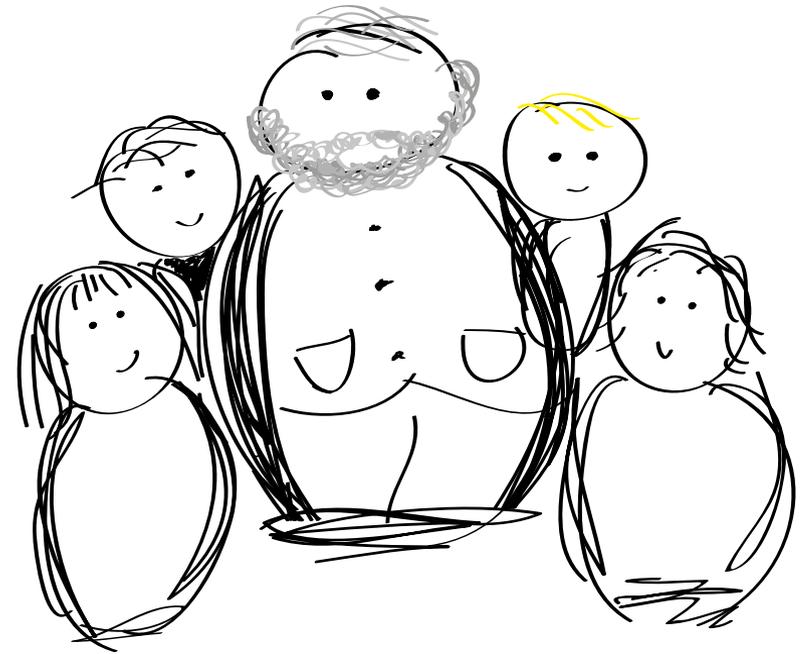
Once upon a time there was a grandad.
He was a good grandad, with a soft
grey beard and a happy smile.



This Grandad knew he was a lucky Grandad...

he had grandchildren...

Not just one or two or three but many...



As the children grew up so the Grandad grew older,
not into an old old Grandad, just an old Grandad.



Over time the Grandad became unwell, much to the surprise of his grandchildren.

He went into hospital and they all visited with their smiles and concern. They looked at his wounds, named his equipment Noo Noo, (after the Teletubbies), they ate his chocolate and reminded him they loved him.



The Grandad knew he was not well and would not get better. The Grandad knew that people would be sad. But the Grandad knew that it was his time to go and that he would have lots of work to do watching over his grandchildren as they grew up.

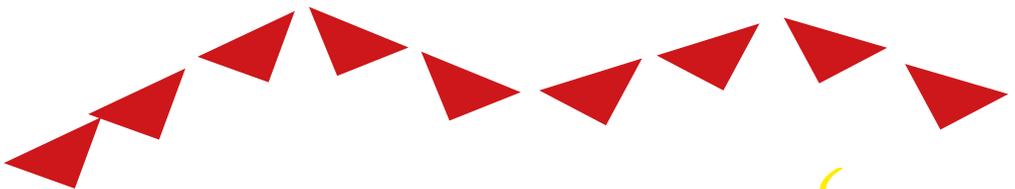




Christmas was coming and the Grandad loved Christmas. He knew he was failing, and he knew it would be his last Christmas... like this.

He knew it was important to surround himself with his grandchildren's love. And he knew it was important to surround them with his.





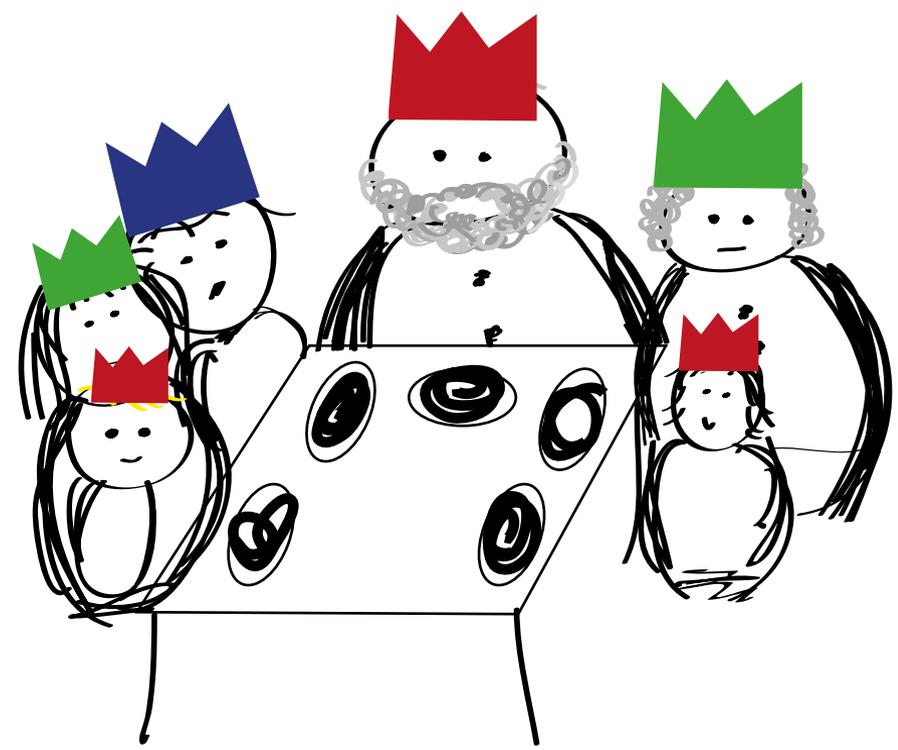
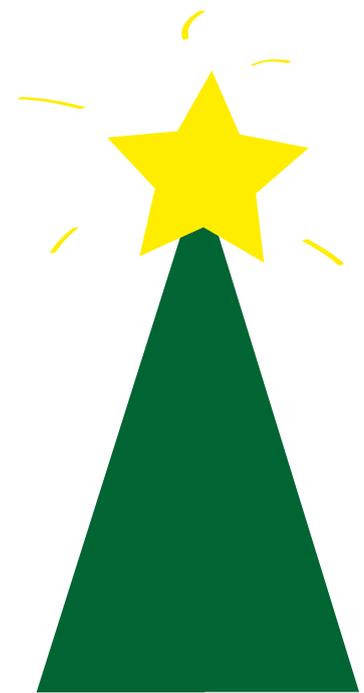
On Christmas morning he woke to the excitement of his last Christmas.

Some of the grandchildren were there ... lunch was had (he skipped breakfast as it was only 11.30 am and he had to fit in with his pills!) ...

presents were opened and tried and silly gifts practised upon ...

photo's were taken of smiling children and a smiling Grandad ...

the faces smiled but the hearts were sad ...



The Grandad was a happy man amongst his family, not knowing that next year and those beyond, he would still enjoy these moments but from somewhere beyond his wildest imaginings.



The next day, Boxing Day... his special family day, he made his way to his Grandchildren's house.

This was a special journey, and to be his last or so he thought ... for he did not realise that he would be at every Boxing Day with his Grandchildren, watching over them sending them an extra twinkle from the Christmas tree lights.

A special twinkle for each, sent with his love, knowing that each child was growing into themselves, growing to be the loving, energetic, funny, caring children that they were.



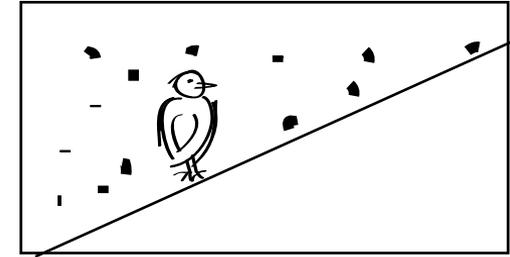
Boxing day passed in its usual haze of activity, memories collected and stored knowing they would be called upon for many years to come.

A new year turned, a new year, much like all those before, the sun rose ... the sun set...

the birds still sang, the wind still blew, but the Grandad's breath was fading.

As the Grandad prepared himself to leave his family he set about his goodbyes. He set about preparing himself and his family for their life from here on.

He knew that to this point he had cared for his family, and was deeply touched by the love shown by all those from far and wide who came to say goodbye.



'Goodbye
Grandad'



In this knowing , and surrounded by this love he felt more able to let go of this earthly body and in time he passed into the arms of his loving family. Not his earthly family, but all those that had loved him and passed before.

Yes, they had been waiting to welcome him to the beauty of the worlds only they knew ...

They knew this was not his end, they knew of all the joys and pleasures that this Granddad would have watching over his family and most especially over his Grandchildren ...

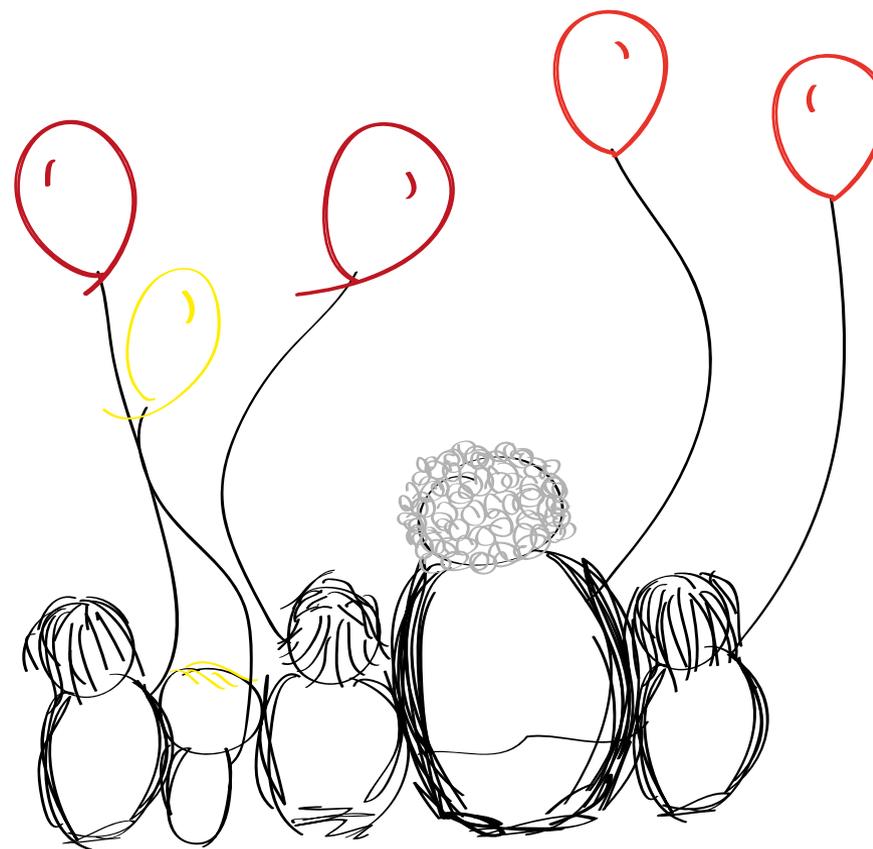
and so Grandad passed ...

The Grandchildren were sad, but knew that they would always carry a part of their Grandad with them.

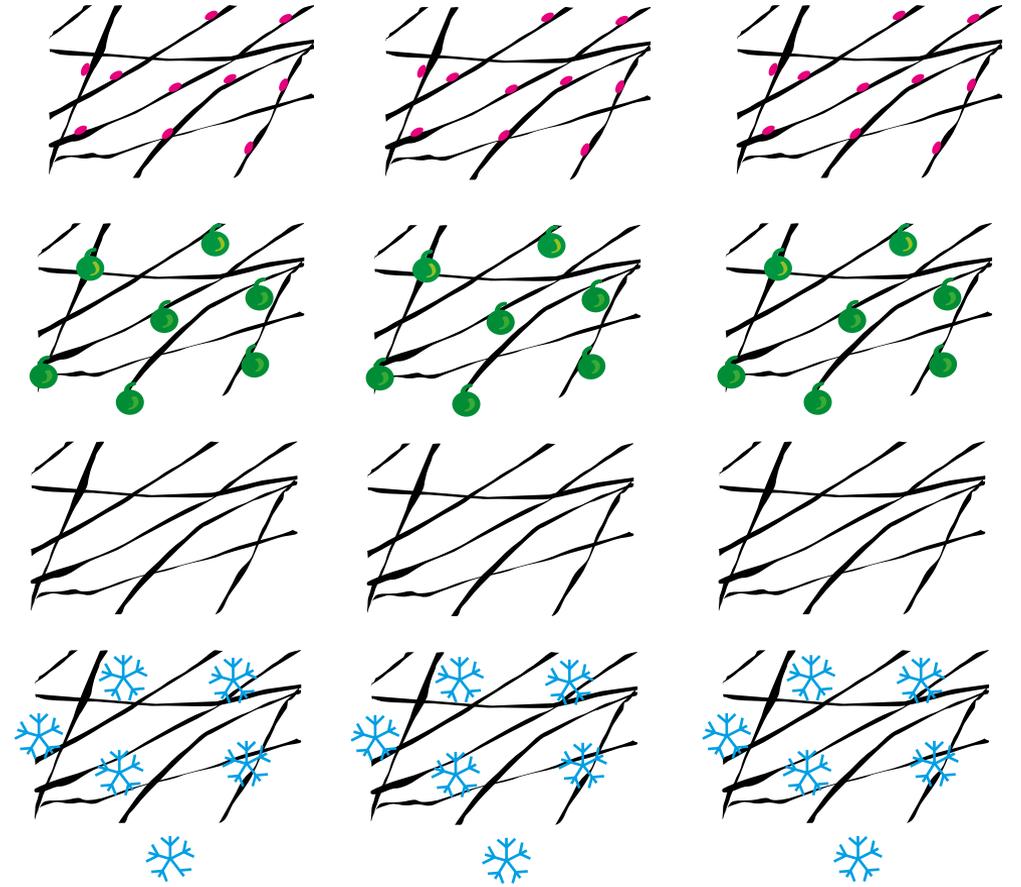


The Grandchildren let off balloons at the Grandad's favourite beach to wave their Grandad on his way.

It was a happy occasion and they all shared fish and chips, then had an ice cream remembering the happy times they had spent with their Grandad.



Time passed and the sadness eased, although the Grandad was no longer in the grandchildren's lives in person, he was still there in spirit.



The Grandad was there at every birthday celebration, and there were many!

The Grandad was there at every visit to the beach.

The Grandad was there as they progressed through school, took exams, went on holiday and visited their Nanny.

The Grandad was there to protect and watch over them for as long as they needed him.

The Grandad was a happy Grandad as he watched his Grandchildren grow and grow and grow ...

Happy Birthday to you squashed tomatoes and stew...
Bread and butter in the gutter...
Happy Birthday to you...





In loving memory of our Dad, Norman William Readman, who was a very special Grandad to Aimee, Ella, Robert, Esther, Matthew, Elliott & Melissa.

And to the grandchild that came after; Benjamin, whom he would have loved just as much, and now watches over from above.

Dedicated to children everywhere who have loved and lost a grandad.

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