

## Megan Hern 13 Years old (the golden wrapping paper)

Once upon a time, there was a man who didn't like Christmas. Money was short and he could never afford to buy his children good Christmas presents. A few days before Christmas, he punished his five year old after learning she had used the family's only roll of expensive gold wrapping paper.

As money was tight, the man became even more upset when on Christmas Eve he saw that his daughter had wrapped a whole shoe box with the wrapping paper and put it under the tree. He was concerned about how his daughter had got the money to afford whatever was inside the shoe box.

Nevertheless, the next morning, the girl eagerly brought the shoebox to her dad with a lit up face.

As he opened the box, the man couldn't help feeling bad by his overreaction, now regretting he had punished her.

When he opened the shoebox, he found it was empty and his anger flared. "Don't you know, when you give someone a present, there is supposed to be something inside the box" he said angrily.

The little girl looked up at the man with tears rolling down her face. "Daddy, it's not empty, I filled it with kisses until the box was full"

The man was crushed. He fell to his knees and pulled his precious little girl into a big hug. He begged her to forgive him for his unnecessary anger.

Before the man knew it, his daughter had moved away from home to start a new life with her new family. The man kept the gold shoebox under his bed for all the years of his life. Whenever he felt discouraged or faced difficult times, the man would open the box, take out a kiss and remember the love of his beautiful daughter who put it there.

In a very real sense, each of us has been given an invisible gold box filled with love and unconditional kisses from our children, family and friends. There isn't a more precious possession anyone could hold.