

Hearts of Gold



Written by Maddie Smith

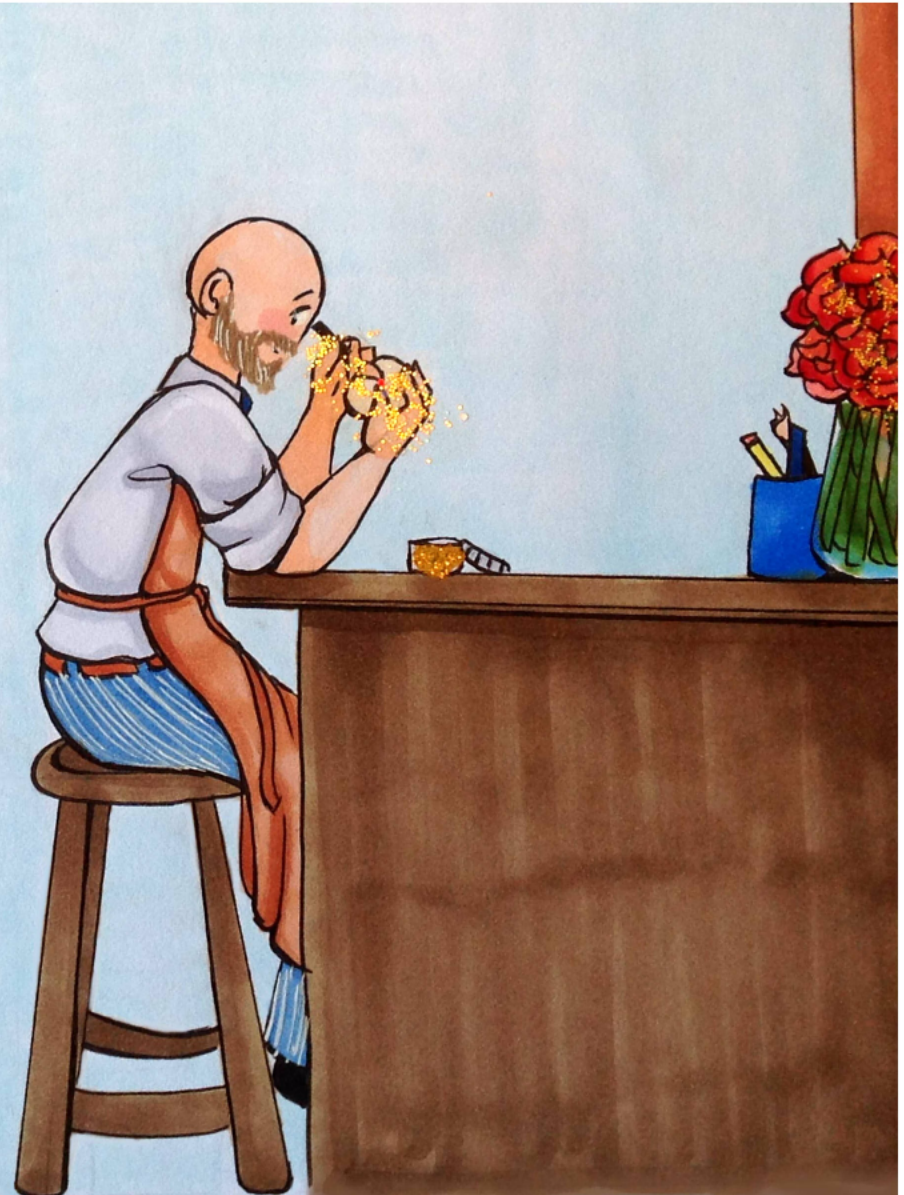
Illustrated by Morgan LaMonica

There was once a Dollmaker who made the most beautiful dolls in the world.



The dolls were unique,
hand-crafted by their
maker, and intricately
designed, down to the
smallest details.

He used only the finest
and highest quality
materials.



All the dolls were different - no two were the same. His dolls represented the people of the world. From Mexico, to Africa, to China, and everywhere in between, the Dollmaker captured their beauty. People from far and wide came to see his dolls.





One day, a curious little girl walked into the Dollmaker's shop, her eyes big with wonder. She ran her hands over the colorful faces and gently fingered the clothes that were so different from her own.

From Indian saris, to French berets, the little girl saw the details put into each and every doll. She was amazed at all that she saw.



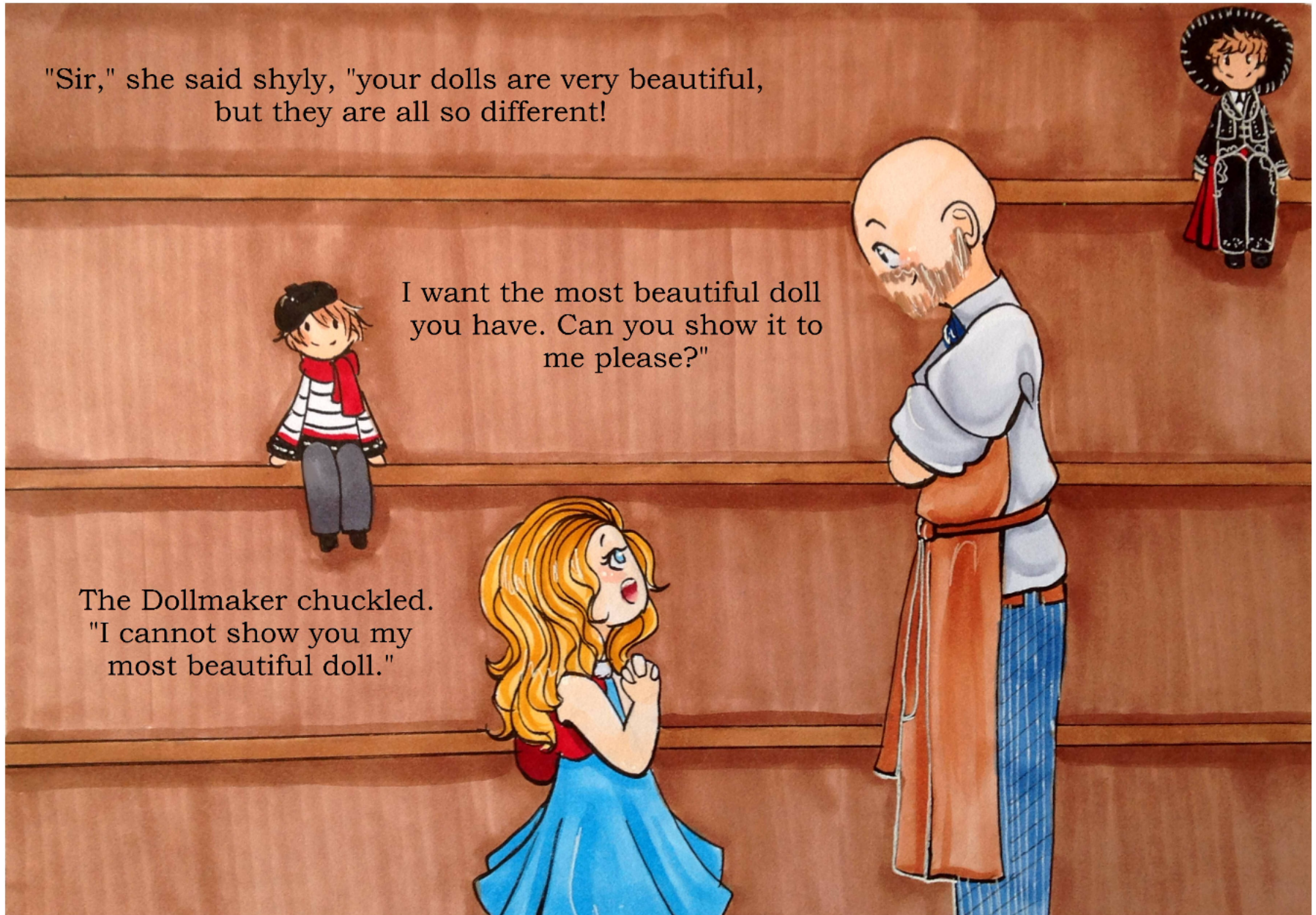
The kindhearted
Dollmaker saw the little
girl, and approached her
to see if he could help her.

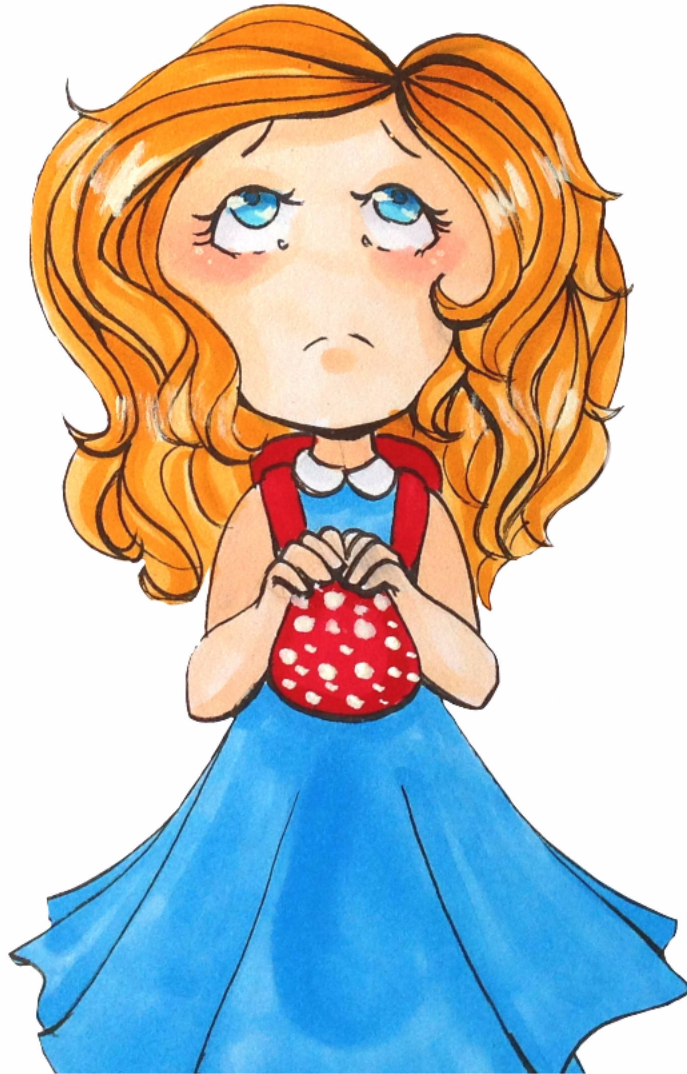
"Hello there, can I help
you find something?"
His deep voice startled the
little girl, and she turned
around.

"Sir," she said shyly, "your dolls are very beautiful,
but they are all so different!

I want the most beautiful doll
you have. Can you show it to
me please?"

The Dollmaker chuckled.
"I cannot show you my
most beautiful doll."

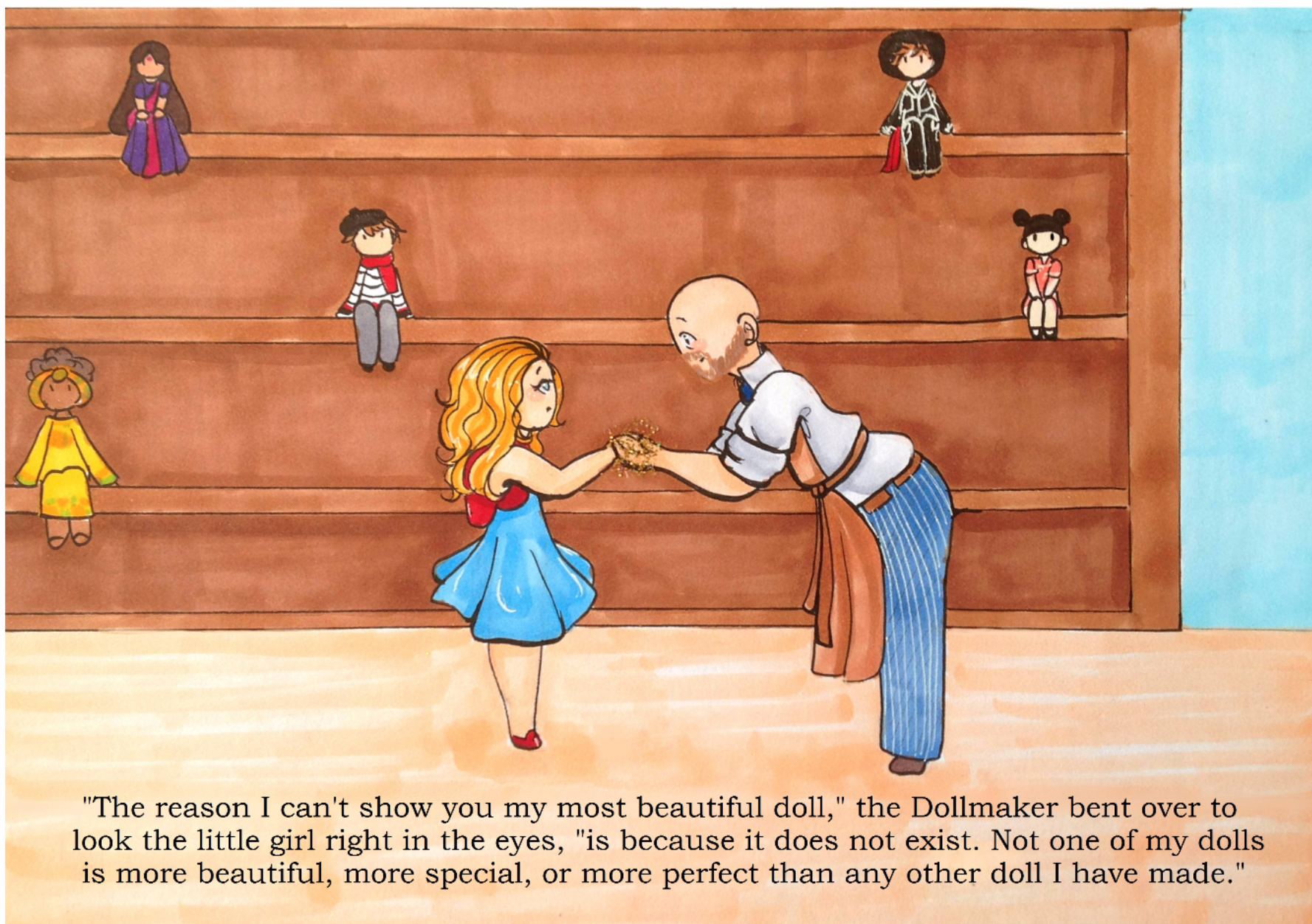




A confused look came across the little girl's face.

"Why, sir? Why can't you show it to me?" she asked, looking up into his loving eyes.

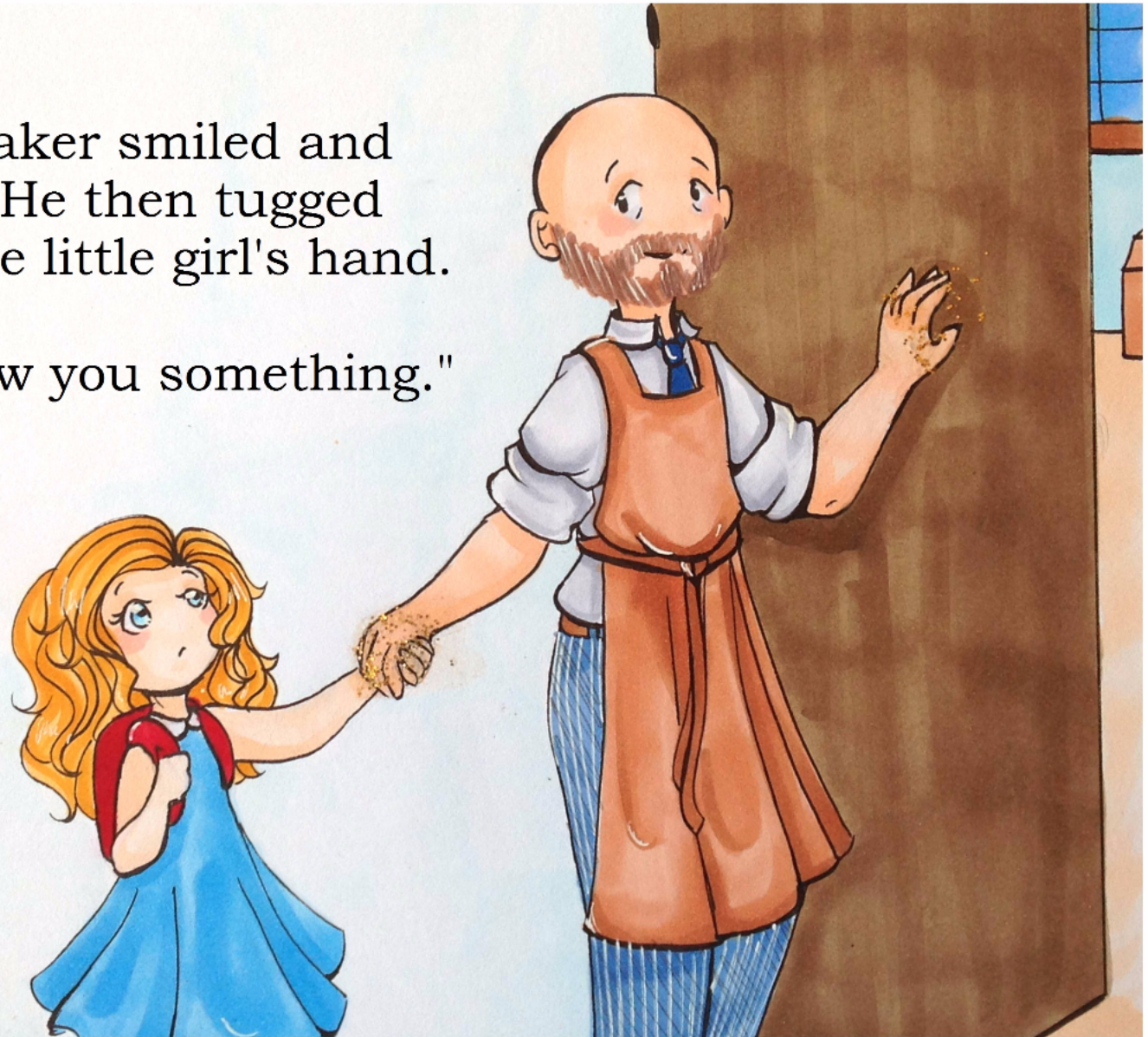
"I only have enough money for one doll, and I would like the best one you have."

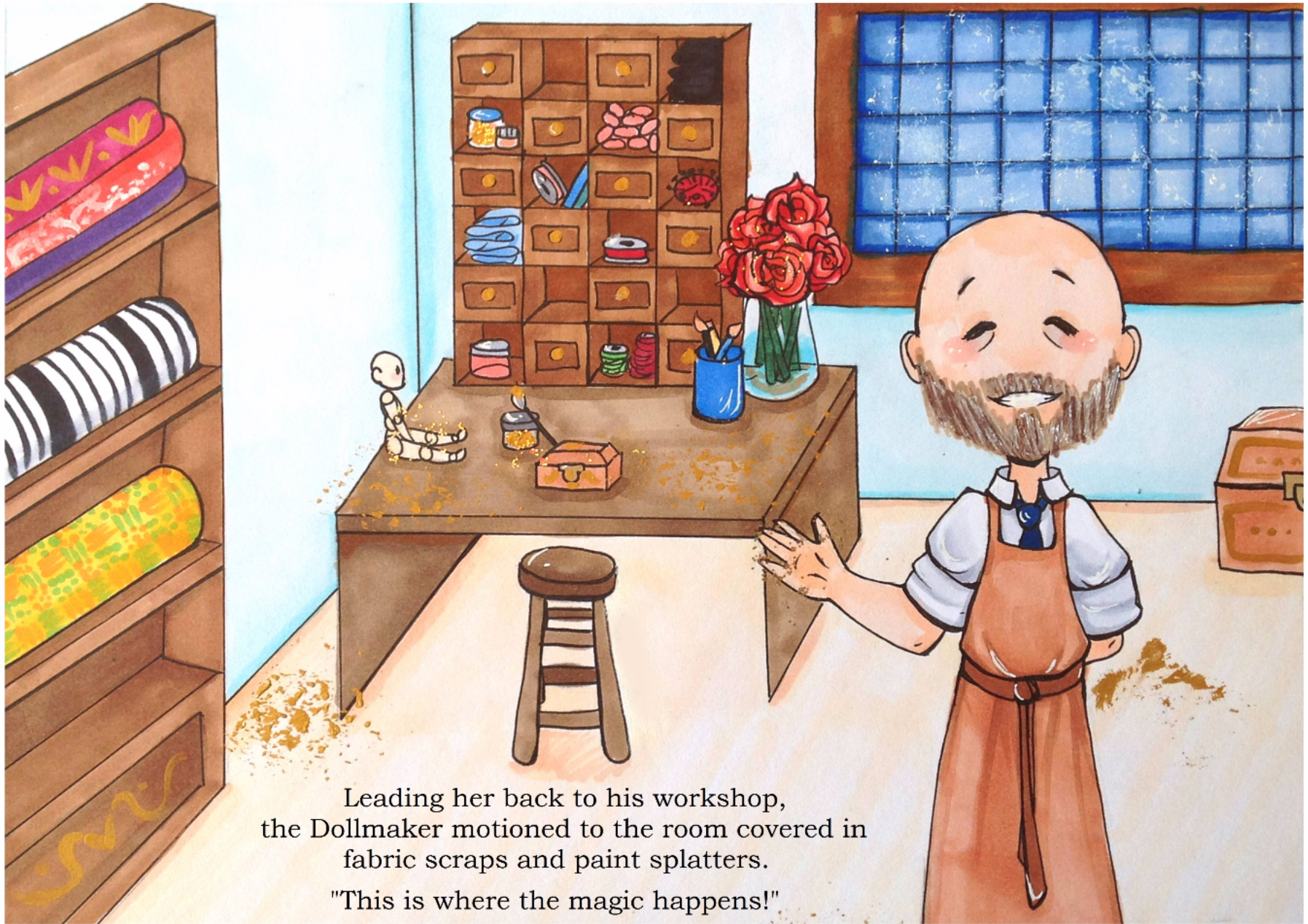


"The reason I can't show you my most beautiful doll," the Dollmaker bent over to look the little girl right in the eyes, "is because it does not exist. Not one of my dolls is more beautiful, more special, or more perfect than any other doll I have made."

The Dollmaker smiled and
stood up. He then tugged
gently on the little girl's hand.

"Let me show you something."





Leading her back to his workshop,
the Dollmaker motioned to the room covered in
fabric scraps and paint splatters.

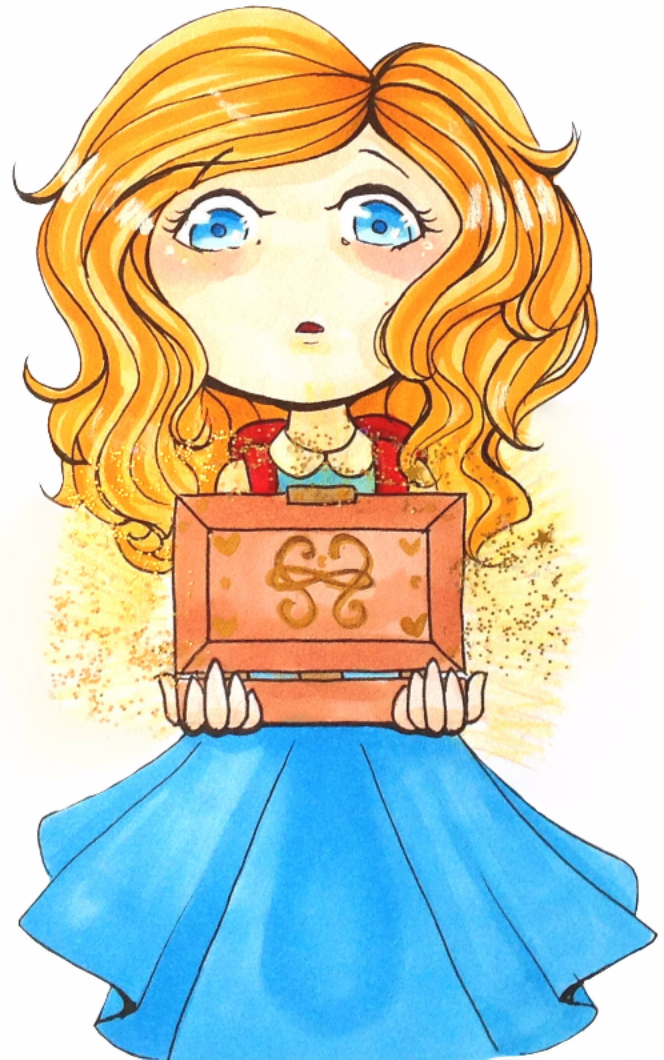
"This is where the magic happens!"

The Dollmaker led the little girl over to a small table set up in the corner. He reached for a box, and kneeling, brought it to the little girl's level.

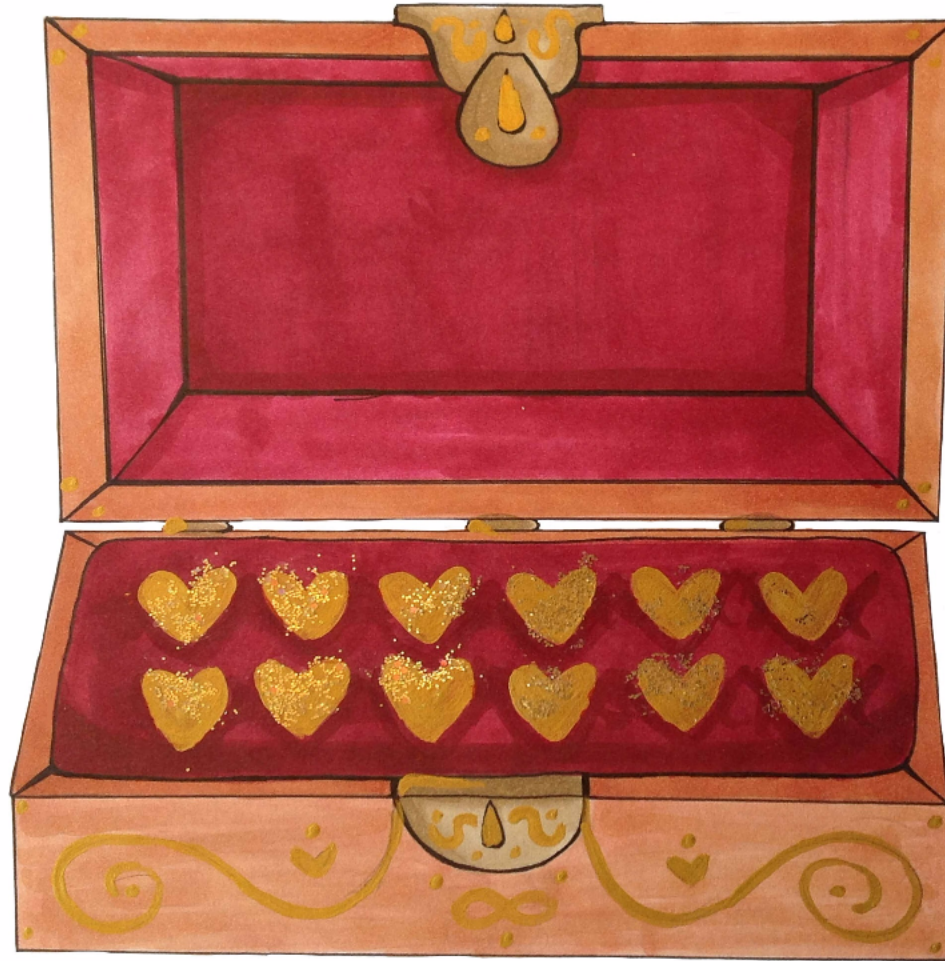
"Open the box, miss," he gently instructed.



The little girl knew
this was important,
and with shaking hands,
she gingerly opened
the box.



What she saw made her heart skip a beat. For inside that little box, were a dozen gold hearts, perfect in every way.



They were the most beautiful things the little girl had ever seen.



"When I make my dolls, they all have one thing in common.



It is not their skin color or their hair.



It is not their clothes
or their size.



Inside each doll is a heart of gold.
And that is what makes them
truly beautiful."

