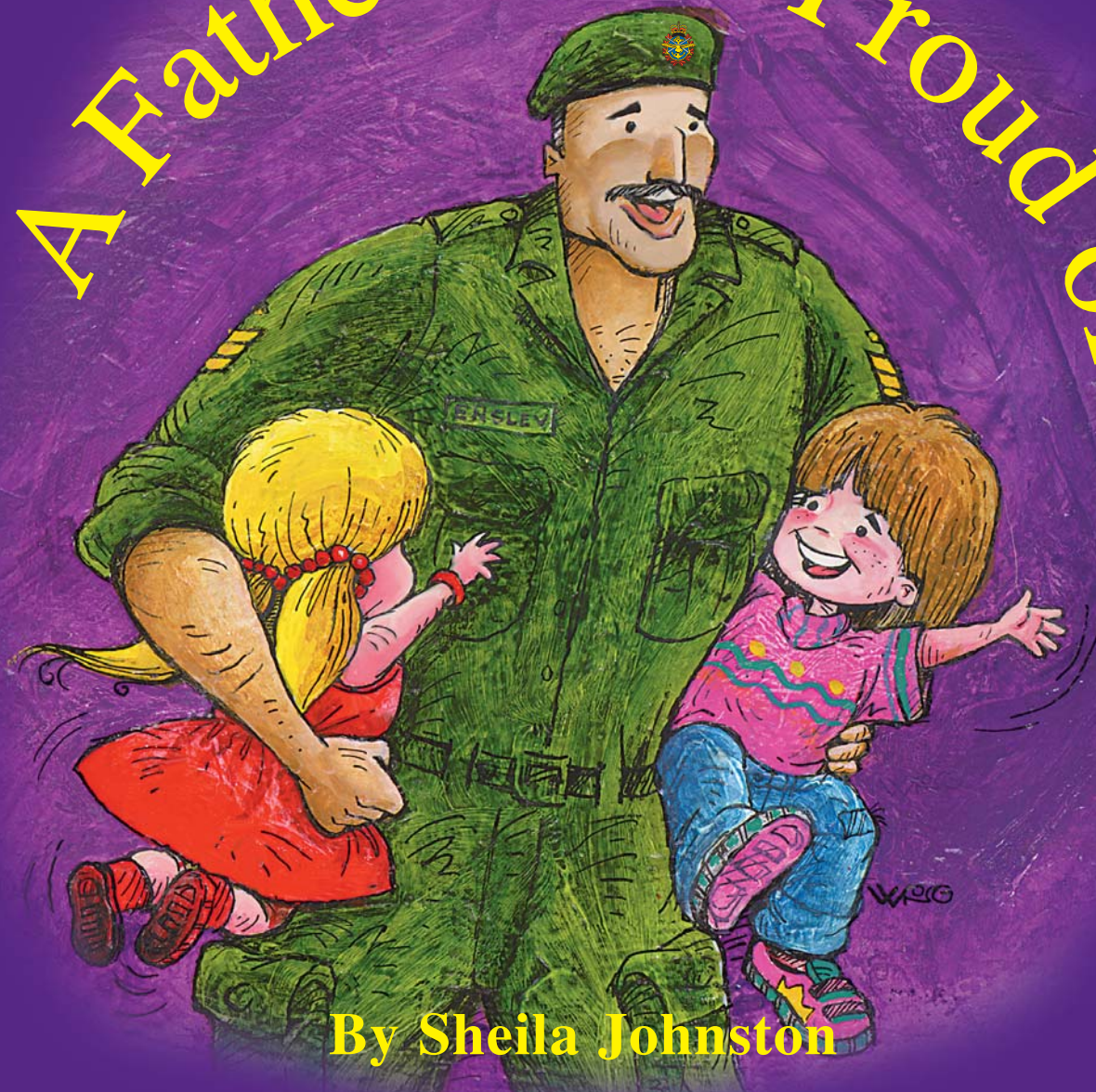




National
Defence

Défense
nationale

A Father to be Proud of



By Sheila Johnston

Illustrations by Don Wong



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Canada 



Produced and distributed by Director Military Family Services (DMFS)

To my father,
Jens Christian Enslev
Canada's finest.

Jason and Sheila are the little children who live in northern Ontario.

Their father is a soldier who works on an Army base called Petawawa.

Jason and his sister Sheila do many things together with their father.

They take long walks in the country and play catch.

They like to ride in their dad's jeep best, and once even rode in a tank.

That was at a big birthday party for all the children on the base.

It was neat!





One night, their dad told them that he was going to be away for awhile.

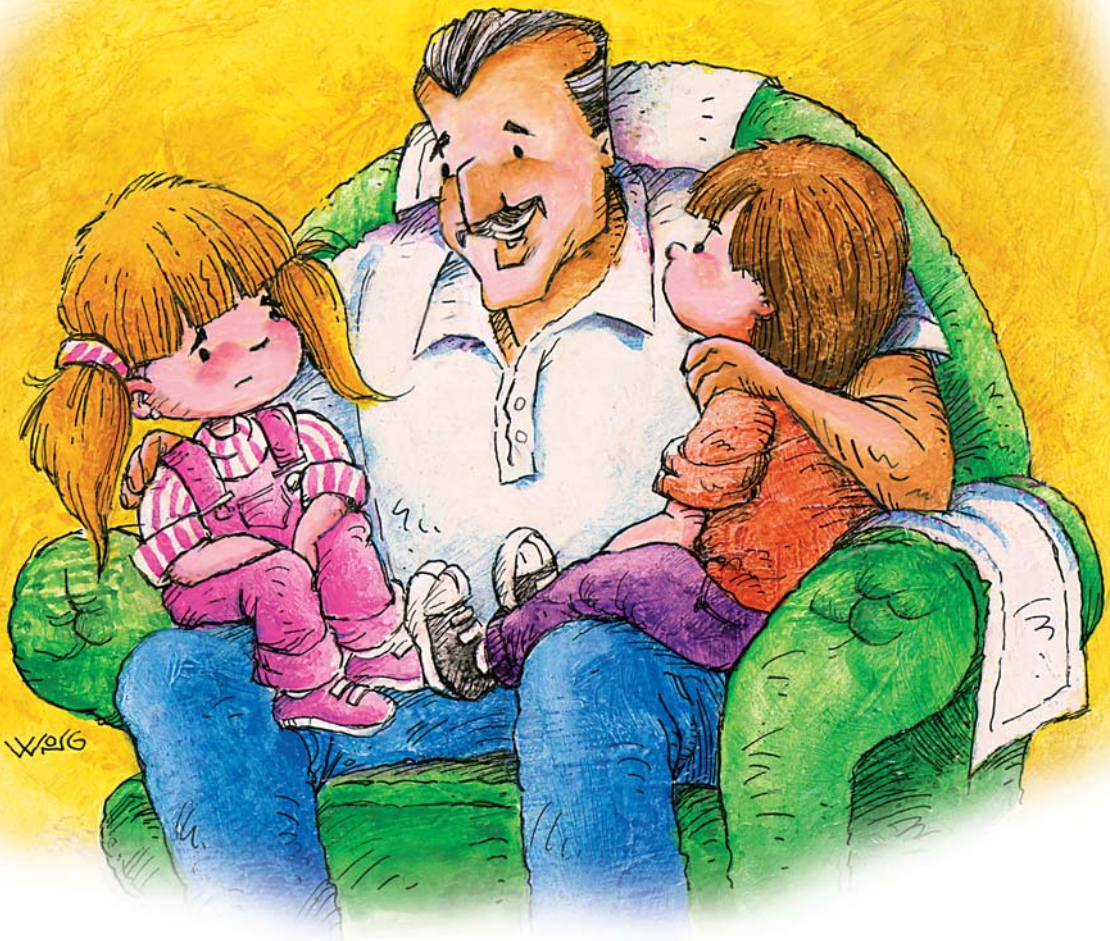
“How long?” Jason asked.

“Six months”,
his father replied.

Jason and Sheila
began to cry.

They didn't want their
father to go away for so long.





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The next day Jason and Sheila went to the park with some of their friends. They were very sad.

None of their friends' fathers had to go away.

It wasn't fair.

They wished their father had another job.

Then he would be home all the time.



Jason and Sheila were upset all week.

Nothing their father said cheered them up.

One night their father came to their room.

He told them that tomorrow they

would all go on a trip.

They would leave early in the morning.





The next morning, Jason and Sheila went to the base where their dad worked.

They went to their father's office.

It had many maps on the wall.

Their father pointed to a country that was far away. Their father said that there were many problems in that country.



He would be going there to work with the United Nations.

The United Nations was like an umpire.

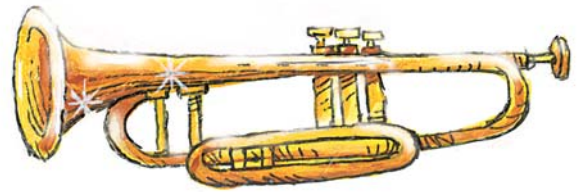
It kept people from fighting in a war. It was keeping the peace.

That was a very important job.





Next they went outside to a big square. There were many people marching around and a band was playing. They thought the uniforms looked neat and the music was great!



Their dad then said, “Canada is a wonderful place. By being a soldier I can serve my country. I can help other children like you and your sister. It’s hard work and sometimes it means I can’t be home with my family. Do you understand my job now?”



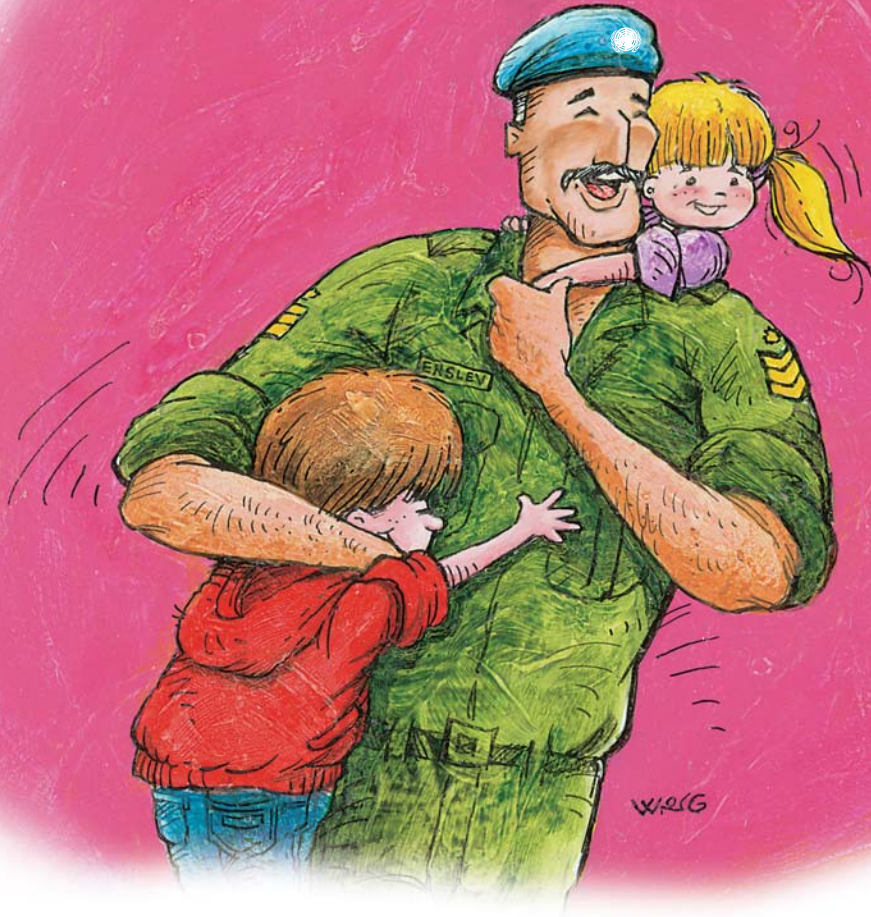


Jason and Sheila thought for a moment.
Their father was very smart and brave.
They loved their father and they were
beginning to think about Canada in a new way.
They were happy they had come today.

Their father was a soldier and they
were glad their dad cared.

“We understand,” they both said.





When their father left for overseas, Jason and his sister waved him goodbye. He looked very handsome in his uniform. He wore a blue beret now instead of a green one. He was off to represent Canada and to make the world safe. It was a very IMPORTANT job!





They would miss their father, but they
were very proud of him.

And when they grew
up, they would
be soldiers too!!





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About the Author

Sheila Johnston is herself a military brat who spent her childhood in Petawawa, the daughter of Jens Enslev. This book is based on the true story of how her father explained his absences to her and her brother Jason.

Sheila joined the military in 1986 as a signals officer but reclassified to artillery in 1990, becoming Canada's first female artillery officer. Her brother, Jason also enrolled in the military at the same time and served as an artillery gunner. He was tragically killed in 1989 in a car accident while on Christmas leave. This story also serves to commemorate her much loved sibling.

Sheila left the Army in 1992 to pursue her doctorate in military studies. After a research trip to Bosnia in the summer of 1994 Sheila organized "Operation Homefront" a project that sent carepackages and childrens' letters to Canadian peacekeepers deployed abroad. The many resulting conversations she had with military parents led her to realize the need for a book like this.

Sheila is the wife of Captain Paul Johnston and mother of three children, Kelcei, Jens and McCauseland. She now resides in Ottawa and is currently working on her second children's book, a juvenile guide to the United Nations and Peacekeeping.