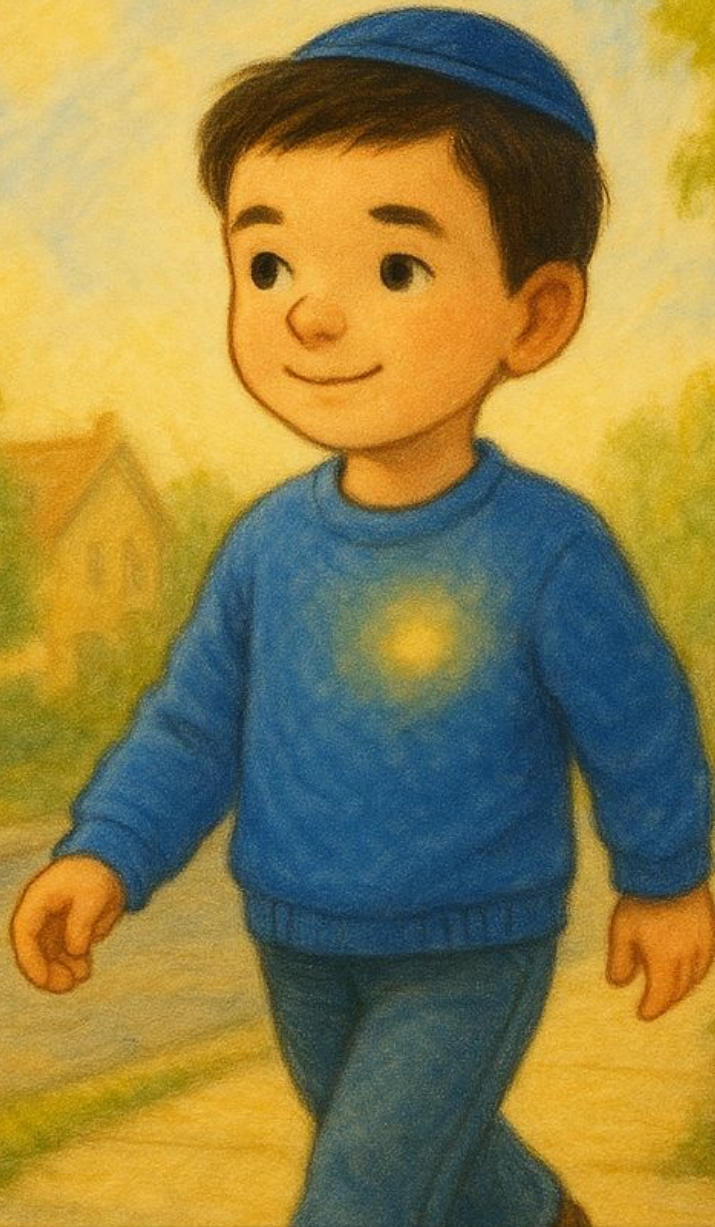


The Star Inside Me

Steve Brown
(Yisrael ben Yacov)



Max carefully adjusted his small navy yarmulke.
Today was just another school day, but Bubbe's words echoed in his mind:
"You have a star inside you, Max. Let it shine."



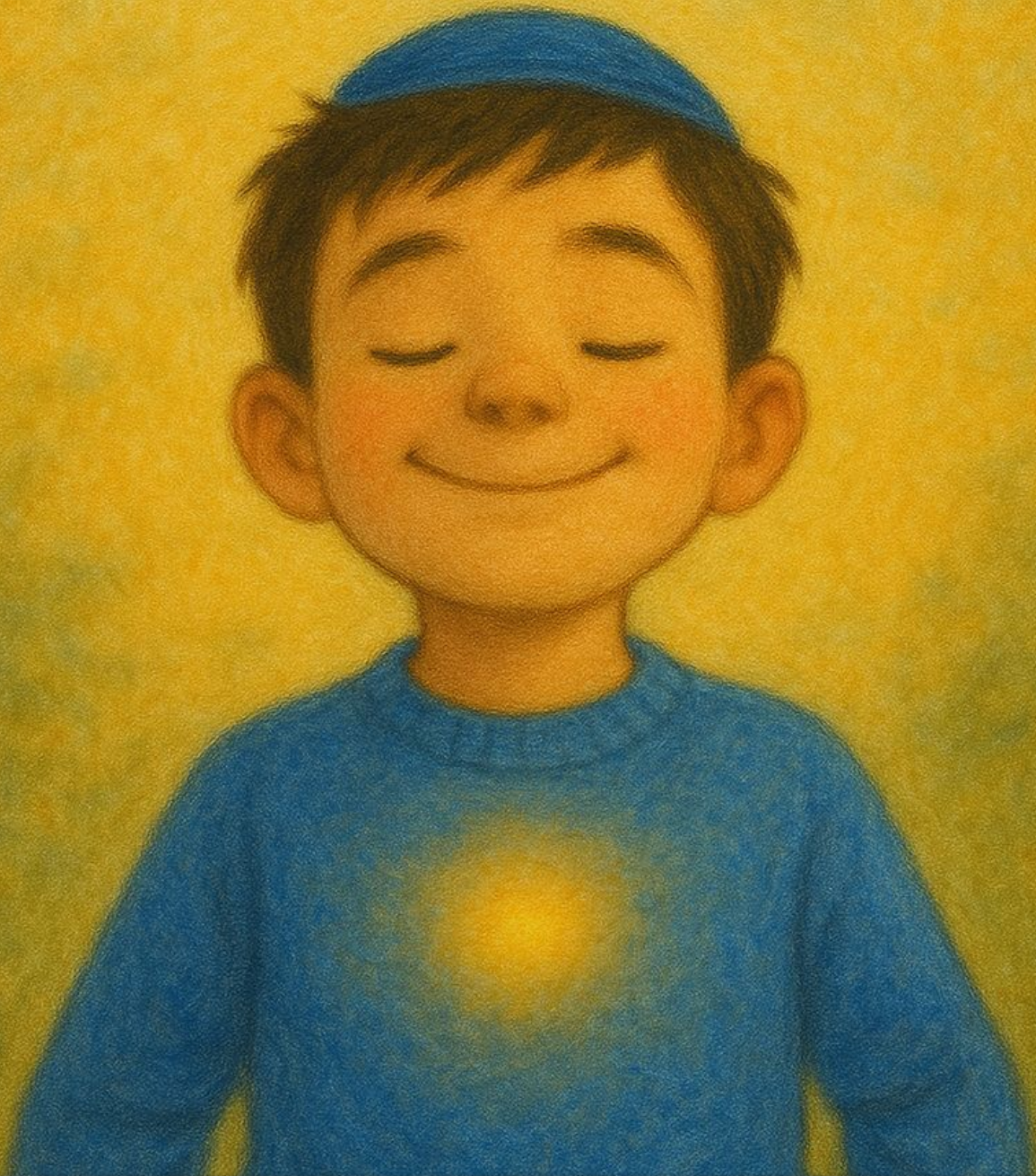
As he walked to school,
Max felt a warmth in his chest, like a soft candle glow.
He smiled without even knowing why.



At recess, Max sat in the sandbox, building a castle.
A few kids stood nearby, whispering.
“*Why does he wear that little cap?*” one asked, pointing.
Max looked down, his light was dim.



He touched his yarmulke, feeling shy for a moment.
Then Bubbe's voice whispered in his memory:
"The star is not what's on your head, Max. It's what's in your heart."



Max took a deep breath and smiled.
The warm glow in his chest grew brighter, like a secret only he knew.

Later, a friend dropped her crayons.
Max knelt and helped pick them up, handing each one back with a grin.
The glow in his chest shimmered gently, like a tiny lightbulb turning up.





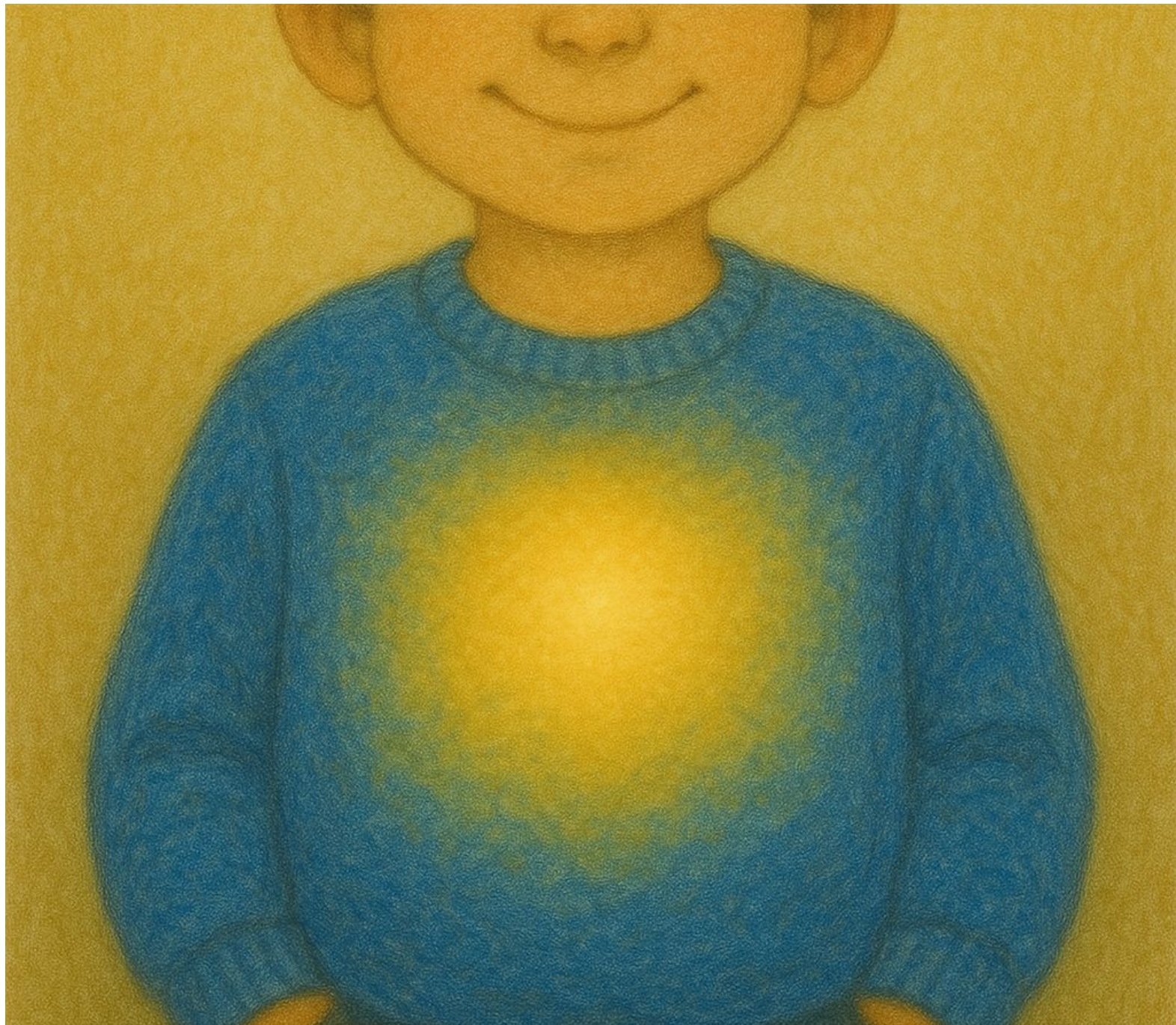
By lunchtime, the glow flickered every time he said “thank you,”
every time he held the door,
every time he laughed with a friend.



Some kids still whispered, but now it sounded different.
“*He’s nice,*” one said softly.
“*Really nice.*”



That afternoon, Max's best friend, Jonah, asked,
"Hey, does something sparkle on your shirt? I thought I saw it glow."
Max blushed. *"Maybe it's just the sun,"* he said.



But it wasn't the sun.
The glow was spreading, warm and golden, like sunlight trapped inside him.



When school ended, Max ran home, heart pounding with happiness.
The light inside him felt bigger than ever.



Bubbe was waiting on the porch, smiling.
She always seemed to know things before he said them.



*"Bubbe!" Max shouted.
"I think they like me now. Maybe... maybe because I was kind."*



Bubbe hugged him tight.
"Of course, Max. *That's your star shining.*"



Max pulled back, puzzled. *“But no one can really see it, right?”*



Bubbe tapped his chest gently. *“Oh, they can see it, even if they don’t know what it is.”*



Max looked down at his sweater.
The glow was brighter than ever,
a soft circle of golden light across his upper chest.



Bubbe whispered,
"Would you like to see what I see?"



Max nodded.



The glow grew stronger, warming his whole chest.
It shimmered and softly changed shape...



...until a perfect Star of David appeared, glowing gently near his heart.



Max gasped. "*Bubbe! It's real?*"



Bubbe smiled. *"It's always been there, Max.
Every kind thing you do makes it brighter."*



Max placed his hand over the glowing star.
He felt proud. Not because kids liked him now,
but because he was himself.



Max smiling quietly, one hand on his heart,
the soft golden star shape still glowing under his sweater.



The stars sparkled in the sky,
but none were as bright as the one near his heart

For all the children who
have a light inside them.
May you always let it shine.

Copyright © 2025 Steve Brown.

All rights reserved.

No part of this book may be reproduced or
distributed in any form without written permission
from the publisher.