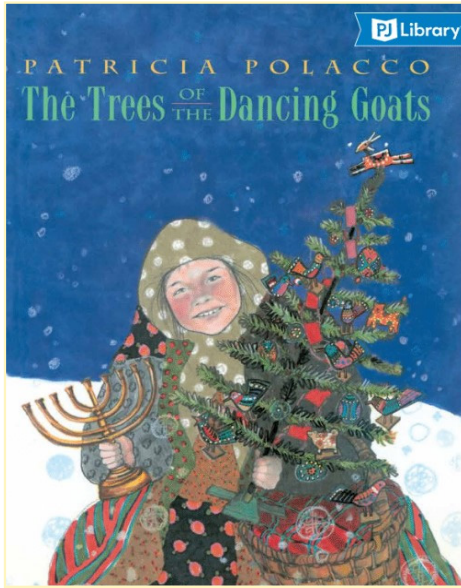


# The Trees of the Dancing Goats

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{ **How do we spread light?** }

## Friendship Means Something

Trisha’s family celebrates Hanukkah, but their neighbors celebrate Christmas – and an epidemic has swept the community just at Christmastime. One of the most important Jewish values is *bikkur cholim*, Hebrew for “visiting the sick” (assuming you won’t get sick yourself, that is). The foremost work of Jewish law, the *Shulchan Aruch*, explains that “the essential part of the commandment of visiting the sick is to investigate the needs of the patient and to do whatever they require.” Well, what do these patients require? Christmas trees! This beautiful story illustrates the truth of Grampa’s words: “Friendship means something.” To learn more, visit [pjlibrary.org/treesdancinggoats](http://pjlibrary.org/treesdancinggoats).

## HANDS ON!

### Make Paper Chains

Grampa makes beautiful carved animals for his grandchildren every Hanukkah – and in a pinch, they make great tree ornaments. Trisha helps by making simple paper chains. Carving dancing goats might be a little tricky, but you can make paper chains to decorate your home.

- Supplies
- Construction paper
- Scissors
- Tape

Cut several pieces of construction paper in strips. You can use different colors or the same color.

Loop one of the strips and secure the ends together with a little bit of tape. Now take another strip and loop it through the first one, and secure that with tape. Keep going, alternating colors if you like, until all the strips have been used up.

Hang the paper chains at the top of doorways or window frames to help decorate your home – or share them with friends, just as Trisha does.

## Spreading the Light

Trisha loves her family’s traditions – homemade Hanukkah candles, handmade (carved!) gifts, and latkes and blessings and stories. One way that her grandparents keep their homelands “in their hearts” is by passing down their traditions to the generations that follow, *ledor vador* (Hebrew for “from generation to generation”). Trisha knows that Cherry’s family also loves their Christmas traditions, and in a difficult winter it’s only right to help each other out. When everyone honors and supports each other’s cultures and practices, the world really feels full of light.

## Everyday Miracles

“God will protect them and make them well again,” says Babushka. That’s what the ancient rabbis thought, too. The first telling of the Hanukkah story – in the Books of Maccabees – describes brave Jewish soldiers and a heroic military victory. But where was God in the story? When the rabbis retold the Hanukkah story, they centered it around the miracle of oil burning for eight days instead of one. Today Hanukkah is a festival of lights during the darkest time of the year, and a reminder that miracles, as Grampa says, “can happen even today.”

## TALK IT OVER WITH YOUR KIDS

**THIS** story contains a few hints about what life was like for Trisha’s grandparents when they lived in Russia and the Ukraine. What do you know about the places where your grandparents once lived?

**TAKE** a look at the illustration of when Trisha first goes to visit her friend Cherry. What do you notice? When you feel sick, what helps you feel better?

**NEAR** the end of the story, Trisha notices that the candles on their menorah have barely burned down. Babushka says this is another miracle. What other miracles do you think happened in this story?