

# *Oh, these Christmas lights*



Granada, 20th December of any year...

This is the story of Omar and Lila, two Senegalese children who are five and seven years old. They are spending Christmas in a little village in this beautiful city with a host family, Manolo and Pepi, a married couple in their fifties whose children are working abroad. Manolo and Pepi miss their kids' noise, laughter and kisses at Christmas.

Omar and Lila woke up very early Christmas morning and went into Manolo and Pepi's bedroom to spend a little time together playing and laughing. After thirty minutes, Manolo suggested they go to the city centre later that afternoon to admire how marvellous the Christmas lights are and how amazingly the city is decorated. This would be a surprise for Omar and Lila because their village in Senegal does not have the same Christmas tradition. They were so excited to get to the city centre that they couldn't stop asking what it looked like at Christmas.

Dressed with their hats, scarves and gloves, they took the bus to get to the city centre. Suddenly, just when they arrived, a power outage occurred, turning off every light in the city. Manolo and Pepi couldn't believe what just happened. They explained it to Omar and Lila, but their sweet sorrowful faces said it all. They didn't know what to do, but Pepi had a wonderful idea: Omar and Lila had not yet tasted Granada's traditional churros with hot chocolate, so they decided to go to a terrace that had working artificial electricity.

Unexpectedly, when they were sitting around the table with their new favourite snack, a jolly, chubby man dressed in red and wearing a big Christmas hat appeared. He approached them and gave them some sweets. He told them to ask for a Christmas present because Santa brings presents to every

child around the world and makes every wish come true. The children's jaws dropped to the floor. They couldn't help but ask if he was Santa Claus. The man in red responded that of course he was! They made a wish and he bid them farewell. Then he disappeared into the crowd..

Just when they were finishing their churros, the lights came on and the city centre shined bright once again. They could see for the first time the amazingly decorated Christmas trees, the sparkling decorations and the colourful lights. Omar and Lila were so delighted about what they were witnessing, they started to jump and yell. "This is so wonderful," they said to Pepa. "The next time we see Santa Claus we will thank him for granting our wish so soon." Amazed by what they heard, Manolo and Pepi asked Omar and Lila if their wish was to bring the city lights back again. "Yes," they said. "This is our best Christmas present ever."

Manolo and Pepi held them very close and they all went home very happy..

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