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**Family  
and  
Friends**

## **Sleepover Gone Wrong**

There once was a girl named Julie she always wanted to go to a sleepover. Her friend Bailey heard about it and they had a sleepover. And all her friends were invited to it. Their names were Amy, Sarah, Hailey, and Ria. They got to her house, “ knock knock Matthew, Bailey’s brother, answered. What are you doing at my house. Bailey ran to the door. Come in Bailey hollered.

They went to her room. Omg it’s beautiful exclaimed Julie. “It looks amazing Bailey!” said Ria. “Thanks” answered Bailey. The door swung open. “Sup,!” said Matthew as the girls screamed and popcorn went everywhere. The girls ran up the stairs. “Leave the girls alone!” yelled Erica, their mother, Matthew left and whilst saying, “Prank time!”

Matthew put salt in the sour gummy worms. Flower in a bowl above the pantry door. Plastic wrap on the toilet. The girls got pranked and weren’t happy. They left Bailey’s when they felt enough was enough. Bailey got furious at her brother. The next day at school the girls did not talk to her at all. Bailey got really sad. For the rest of the day she sat by herself while the girls would sit with each other. She went home angry at her brother. She sassed him then went to her room.

**Rylee Labreck**

**Dawn F. Barnes**

**Grade 4**

## **The Joyful**

Ellie, Holly, and Dad were sitting in the living room opening presents around the christmas tree.

“Thanks,” said Ellie as she found a ball under the shiny pink wrapping paper with a gold bow and silver sparkle on it.

“Are you still mad about what mom did? It’s not your fault that she left.”

“I know, but it is also not your fault either. She didn’t need to leave! I can’t help it if tear comes to my eye and runs down my cheek!” shouted Ellie.

Holly was furious at Ellie because she was shouting at Dad. “It’s also not my fault that you’re giving Dad a hard time because you’re being a brat. You still have a roof over your head, Aces to food, and you have a family that loves you!”

Ellie was mad at Holly and ran to her room. Holly and Ellie did not get along very well, and their dad was the one to fix everything.

Dad, John, had no control over his two daughters who fought all the time. Also, since Mom had left and Holly was the older sibling by 4 years, she thought that she could boss everyone around. Ellie was six, and Holly was ten, so Ellie was a little weaker but could still stay strong. John ran to Ellie’s room and sighed.

John slightly cracked the door open and said, “ Ellie are you good?”

Ellie looked up. Her face red and wet from crying. “ No, I’m fine.”

He went into Ellie's room and said, "There's still a present with your name on it. You can open it and eat all the candy you got."

"That sounds good," said Ellie wiping her tears off her face as she was smiling. She walked out and saw a small gift with a note. It said "From: Mom To: Ellie." Ellie opened it slowly, scared for what was inside. She saw her Mom's necklace, and she got teary eyed. It was Mom's locket, and inside there was a picture of all four of them in it. She remembered how happy they were that day. She didn't think that that feeling would happen again.

#### Four YEARS LATER

"Ellie! Stop it. That's mine!" complained Holly.

"Too bad. You can deal with it. After all, I'm just the crybaby," sassed Ellie.

"I take it back," said Holly trying to shove everything in before her dad came in.

"Stop arguing. You guys need to start to get along!" said Dad.

"I've been diagnosed with cancer, and this is too much pressure!" he said almost shouting, but in tears.

In that moment Ellie's heart sank. It felt like the Titanic, but with just her on it and no one to help her. Both girls started to cry and ran to their dad who they love so much. They just sat there. They had felt hopeless, and had no ideas to help their dad who was ill.

A few months passed, and Holly had been gone for short periods of time, like an hour or so. Ellie had enough and followed her sister to wherever she was going. She was working for her dad who was in the hospital, so she could pay the bills so dad wouldn't have to worry.

"What are you doing?" asked Holly as she was staring at Ellie.

"I was hungry and wanted to find you, so I came out here and found you," Ellie lied. She was scared and unsure of what to do.

"Okay, you can stay here for a little bit, but you can not tell anyone. Got it," said Holly. Ellie just nodded and stepped in.

"What are you going to cook? Mac and cheese, sandwiches?" Suggested Ellie.

"Wanna go out for supper?" asked Holly.

"Sure." said Ellie still in shock.

"Okay, you should probably get a jacket," said Holly.

"Can we see dad? I haven't seen him in a while."

"I guess," Holly sighed.

As they were on the bus driving to the hospital, Ellie got a weird feeling in her stomach. They walked in and the feeling got worse. They were in the hall knowing that on the other side of the door, was their sick father. The feeling was unbearable. She opened up the door and there he was laying in the bed. Holly and Ellie's eyes watered up, and they ran over to their sick dad.

"Hey guys, I am able to leave the hospital and go home! I am able to go home tomorrow," said Dad proudly. He had gotten diagnosed with cancer three times.

"So you are coming home tomorrow?" asked Ellie.

"Yup." said Dad.

### **The Food Hater**

Ben is picky he does not like food  
When he eats he has attitude  
That's why he's really rude  
He hates chicken that is barbecued  
He does not show any gratitude  
When he eats he's in a bad mood  
Food is not his dude  
He chewed  
He swallowed but never liked food  
Ben just does not like food

**Kellen McCrum**

**Fort Street Elementary**

**Mrs. Thomas**

**Grade 5**

### **Learning to Ride My Bike**

Something very exciting happened at my memere's and my pepere's house! First, I got my bike out of my pepere's garage. Second my pepere got a tool and took the training wheels off I was scared to try it, but I knew I could do it. Then my memere said "I will hold your bike for a while then I will let go of it." Next, we did that for a while, but I keep on falling on the ground. Then memere got tired of it, so my brother Peter took over for her, but I still kept on falling on the ground. I still tried again and again. Then it was getting dark outside, so we came inside and called it a day, but I didn't want to give up doing it. The next day when the sun came up, I ate breakfast and put on my clothes so I could go outside and practice some more. I practiced getting my balance on my bike, so I could have my balance when riding my bike. Then my pepere held my bike and we did the same thing, but I kept on falling as I was trying to ride my bike. Finally me and my pepere did it! He was holding my bike when I kept on riding he let go of it and I kept on riding all the way to the ditch-I did it! I rode my bike all the way to the ditch! I was very happy and proud of myself. Everybody clapped and said good job, Emma. I was very excited to tell my mom and my dad everything I did this weekend at my memere's and my pepere's house. I had a wonderful time at their house and now, I can ride my bike all by myself anytime I want!

**Emma Parent**

**Van Buren District School**

**Miss Theriault**

**Grade 4**

## The Bracelet

“What's that shiny thing over there?” asked Bailey. It was Sunday evening, and Bailey was hanging out with her friends, Hailey and Mia. They were at the park playing when they saw the bracelet. It was gold with blue beads on it. Blue was Bailey's favorite color. She ran over towards the bracelet, picked it up, and said, “This is beautiful!” She slid it in her bag, and then she ran back to the swings.

Mia asked, “So what did you find?”

“Oh, nothing. It's just a piece of trash I slid it into my bag. I'll throw it away when I get home,” said Bailey.

Once Bailey and her friends said goodbye, Bailey darted home. When she got home, she ran to her room and took the bracelet out of her bag. She started to feel guilty, but then she shrugged it off and thought, “Oh, it's not a big deal.” “It's just a bracelet.” But it was so beautiful she slipped it onto her wrist, and then she felt like she could take on anyone or anything!

The next day she wore the bracelet to school, Hailey asked, “Where did you get the bracelet?”

Bailey said, “Oh, this. I've had this forever. My Aunt Chelsea got it for me 2 years ago.”

“Oh, OK. I've never seen you wear it before,” said Hailey.

“Yeah! I used to think it was childish, so I never wore it,” said Bailey.

Then Mia walked in, and said, “Hmm, what is that on your wrist? I've never seen you wear it.”

“Oh, this. This is nothing. My Aunt Chelsea got it for me two years ago,” said Bailey.

“I thought it looked kind of like the piece of trash at the park yesterday,” said Mia.

Bailey thought, “Oh, no! She is catching on to me.” She said to Mia, “No, the trash that I found was a soda can.”

Bailey left school, and she ran down the dark path to her house. When she got home, her older sister, Sky, walked into her room and said, “Where did you get that bracelet? I have never seen it before.”

“I found it at the park yesterday, and I didn't tell Mia and Hailey. Now I feel guilty because I said it was just trash at the park,” said Bailey.

“Well, I think you should tell them the truth. Get them bracelets so you have friendship bracelets.”

“That's a good idea. Thank you for the advice,” said Bailey. Sky left the room.

The next day Bailey ran down the sidewalk to pick up the two bracelets from the store for Mia and Hailey. She found two bracelets that were identical to hers. She bought the bracelets, and she ran to the school. As soon as she found her friends, she told them the truth and gave them the bracelets. They forgave her, and they put on the bracelets. They had a group hug!

**Caraline Elhoff**

**Southern Aroostook**

**Mrs. Clark**

**Grade 4**

## **My Best Friend**

It was a windy fall day; I was thinking about going hunting later that day. I heard the phone ringing. I heard a strain in my mother's voice; it sounded terrible. I thought in my mind, "Could it be my great-grandmother or my great-grandfather?" I started to get scared. If only I knew what they were talking about.

"If only I could hear," I thought to myself. My mother started to hang up and I heard her say, "Oh, I'm sorry." Immediately I knew it was the hospital. I looked over at my mother as she started to tear up and I said, "Who was that?"

She managed to choke out, "It's your great-grandfather!" He hadn't been doing well and apparently was getting worse.

My hands were getting sweaty. Then all of a sudden, I started to tear up. I didn't know what was going on, and I was very worried. I stared at my mother for about fifty seconds. Then I turned around and ran to my bedroom, slammed the door, making a loud noise that vibrated the house.

I heard my mom say to my dad, "Get the keys. We have to go to see your grandfather." My father practically fell off the bed and rushed to the car. I heard the engine start, and the car left.

In that moment, as I was crying into my pillow, I heard the door open, and it was my dog. I realized that he was trying to tell me something. Suddenly my dog jumped up on my bed, started snuggling me, and licking my face. Immediately, I started to feel better. Unlike before, it seemed like my dog, Trapper, was talking to me. I thought that was impossible until he started to nod his head and bark. It looked and seemed like Trapper was talking to me in his own language. I stood up and wrapped my arms around Trapper's body and told him "Thank you," even though talking to an animal is silly. It seemed like my dog was telling me everything will be okay.

Six hours later into the night, I was lying in bed, and it was either my vision that was going wrong or this actually happened; but I thought that I saw my great-grandfather standing in the doorway telling me everything will be okay. I stood up, my eyes seemed like they were broke. My heart stopped. I was frozen like a fish in a freezer. I felt like crying, but then I looked over and saw my dog, and immediately I felt better.

I realized after that big moment of my great-grandfather dying, that Trapper is my best friend. He seems to always understand me and he is loyal to me. Dogs are truly a man's best friend. Out of nowhere I realized that my dog was one of the only reasons I was going to get through this. I also realized that one day things would be okay and get better. I felt better knowing that I had family to guide me through this big event. My family had to transition from being happy and smiling to being down and sad when my great-grandfather died. I realized that going through a loss in your family puts your family members in a state of sadness. Always remember to treasure the happy moments. If Trapper wasn't there, I don't know what I would have done.

**Kason Lawlor**

**SACS**

**Mrs. Harbison**

**Grade 6**

## She Promised

She promised we'd always be friends, no matter the distance or what happened. That's what I tell myself every morning when I wake up and every night when I go to sleep. My name is Erin, and I've spent most of my life in the hospital, in the hospital for my cancer. I had cancer for the first part of my life from age three to age fifteen. I didn't have many friends because the treatments would cause me to lose my hair. All the kids at school would make fun of me, all except for one, my best friend, Maggie. Maggie has been my friend for what seems like forever. I can tell her anything, and she's always right by my side for everything. She's there for appointments, at the hospital for all my surgeries, and just there for anything else, really. A lot of people who have cancer don't survive, but I wasn't one of those people.

My mother and I entered the hospital after being gone from it for over two weeks. The light gleamed through the windows illuminating anything that it touched. It smelled like it always had, very warm and almost like cinnamon apples. This place was a very important building for me, though I didn't enjoy it. I passed the service desks and saw many familiar faces that all welcomed me with smiles that made me feel joy all through my body. I could hear, "Hey Erin!" from almost every nurse, doctor, or, sometimes even patients we passed. I was there for what I hoped was the last time. I was there to see if my cancer had gone away or if it was still in my body. My stomach ached, and I felt like I was going to throw up. Cancer had been the worst thing in my life, and I wanted it gone. My mother and I got to the waiting room where we both had been many times.

I pulled out my phone and FaceTimed Maggie because no matter what was happening, she could make me feel better.

"Have you heard anything yet? Is it gone?" Maggie asked with an obviously large amount of excitement.

"No, we just got in the waiting room. I really hope it's gone. I don't know what I'll do if it's not," I said.

"I bet it's gone. God has a plan for you; you have so much to offer and so much to give. Maybe there is a reason for all of this. I really wish I could be there with you, for the extra support," Maggie told me, raising my spirits.

"Maggie, you are fine! You go to everything with me. I'm surprised people didn't think you were the one with cancer. Sometimes I feel like you were at the hospital more than me," I explained.

"Well, I know, but I wanted to spend time with you no matter what. Remember the time my dog died, and I wouldn't leave my house for a week? You know who sat on that bed with me and comforted me every day? You. What about the time I broke my leg and had to stay in the hospital. You asked the nurses to move my bed into your room so we could still hang out. Or what about all of the other times? Erin, going to all these appointments with you has been the least I could do. I just wanted to spend time with you because I didn't know if you..." Maggie stopped talking. I knew what she was going to say, but I shared the same fear.

"I know, Maggie, but it's just how it is. But, hopefully, that will change today," I said, almost in tears.

Maggie and I talked until I heard my name being called from across the room. "Erin." I looked up, feeling dizzy. My heart was beating so hard, my whole body was affected by its pounding rhythm. I told Maggie, "goodbye," and my mother and I got up out of our chairs and walked to the door where the nurse would then lead us to the doctor's office.

I was in tears when I found out the news. My mother and I were both loudly sobbing. I pulled out my phone and texted Maggie to get the hospital quick. I was so happy. It was gone, my cancer was gone! Now I could finally have a normal life.

Thirty minutes later the nurses and doctors began to panic as an ambulance pulled up to the hospital doors. They all rushed to the door and someone on a wheeled stretcher was brought into the hospital. My mother glanced at me and began to cry as she told me to look away. I then saw her. Maggie. She was all bloody and she looked nothing like herself. She looked like a torn piece of leather. My whole body felt like it was shrinking; it felt like cancer. I ran after the nurses and doctors wheeling her away, but I was soon stopped by my mother who grabbed me and held me as I cried. Maggie didn't deserve this was all I could think. After all she had done to help me in my life this is how she's repaid?

"I hate my life!" I screamed, as I fell into my mother's arms crying more.

It wasn't too long before the doctor came back and told us, "it's too late now." He explained she was thrown from her car when a truck hit her, and she was killed instantly. They tried to revive her just in case there was a chance. They had no such luck.

I got up and ran out of the hospital and fell to my knees in the parking lot and I screamed her name. I didn't understand why this would happen to such a sweet girl. Why? It is a question I ask myself a lot. Maggie had been my friend my whole life, why would God take her? She was always there. He took my cancer and my best friend. I will never get the part of me back that I lost. Maggie will always hold a place in my heart. She is still my best friend.

She promised we'd always be friends, no matter the distance or what happened. She's with me. I'll never get her back in the way that I wish she was. My cancer, which was holding me back from making memories with my best friend, is gone. Now all of those things that we could have done have simply crumbled before my very eyes as I watched. The pain of losing your best friend is worse than cancer. I would go through all the surgeries, all the treatments, all the days in the hospital, just to see her one last time.

I love you, Maggie, if you can hear me.

**Tristen Hardy    Southern Aroostook Community School    Mrs. Russell    Grade 8**

### **Puerto Vallarta**

On a hot day in Puerto Vallarta, when the waves were crashing and the wind was blowing, my dad, my mom, my grandmother, and me chartered a private fishing boat. Early that morning we woke up and headed to the lobby for a drink at the bar. I sat there and had a virgin Pina Colada. We waited for the shuttle to arrive to take us to the docks. Around twenty minutes had passed when the loud white and blue shuttle with a ton of people pulled in front of the resort. The doors opened with a *WHOOSH* and a gust of cold wind. We strolled up to the shuttle and walked climbed the few steep steps. We found a spot at the front of the bus to sit. We took a seat and took off to other resorts. It was about a thirty minute ride to the docks, but it felt like forever!

I was so excited. I had always dreamed about doing this. We finally got to the docks and left the shuttle. We saw our tour guide and followed him. He was really funny and spoke several languages. We walked past huge boats and ships. We strolled down to a little, but convenient, fishing boat and boarded the ship. The captain greeted us on our way into the ship. The captain was a very experienced fisherman and captain. The boat started with a rumble when we were ready to take off. We passed many ships from all over the world.

On our way out of the docks, the captain told us how he competes in fishing tournaments. He has won eight sports cars from the tournaments and a little money. He told a story about how he caught a five hundred pound marlin. He fought with it for over six hours! On the other hand, he won a Lamborghini, so it was worth it. We finally left the docks and were out into the large, bright blue, salty water of the Pacific Ocean. We casted out several lines one by one. We did an age old technique called trolling. Trolling is a way of fishing by slowly moving the ship with the lines casted. When someone got a fish on the line, the boat stopped so they could reel in the fish.

We trolled for about ten minutes when it happened. I got my first bite of the hunt. The captain came running to the pole. He took the pole out of the rod holder and handed it to me. He told me to reel it in fast because on the radars it said that it was a school of fish. I started to reel it in when I realized that this would be a long, hard working day on my shoulders. The fight was tough and long. Every distance I reeled, the fish would counter that distance. After a long hard fight with the fish, I finally landed it. I didn't know what kind of fish it was. The captain told me that it was a schooling fish called bonita. It wasn't the biggest or best looking fish, but I didn't care. We put the fish into the cooler and continued fishing. After that experience, a sense of pride swept over me like the waves crashing onto the shore.

We trolled for a second and then... **BAM!** Now, two lines were hooked at once! The captain and tour guide rushed over and handed me and my mom a line. We both reeled them in fast. The fight was tough, but worth it because my mom caught a bonita on her line. I caught two bonita at the same time! We tossed them into the cooler and fished some more. We trolled for more and I reeled in a line within seconds. I finally landed the fish. I caught three bonita at the same time and on the same line!

We trolled for a couple more hours and had caught fourteen bonita in total. Time was up on the trip, but I didn't want to go. I wanted to keep fishing and stay on the boat. My dad could tell I wanted to stay, even though he isn't the most observant person. He talked to the captain and bought us four more hours. We fished some more and we caught one more bonita and I caught a spanish mackerel. We had to release the spanish mackerel because it was too small to keep. We had a choice to go snorkeling, or keep fishing. I decided to go snorkeling because my shoulder hurt from reeling in all the fish.

We went to a very popular rock area. The waves were rough but that didn't stop me. When I was swimming, I saw so many cool, bright colored fish of all shapes and sizes. On my way back to the boat I felt a strange feeling. I looked down and realized that a bright, small fish swam into my pants! I shook my legs trying to get it out. By the time I touched the ladder the fish finally swam out. I felt a wave of relief crash over me. I climbed the ladder as fast as I could.

We still had three more hours left. We went to a place that the captain goes to a lot. It was a little village in the mountains on the coast. We couldn't go all the way in on our boat, so a little taxi boat came to the rescue. They then said we had to jump from boat to boat like in the movies. I thought to myself "**No Way! The waves are WAY to rough!**" My dad went first and

then I did. Before I took my leap of faith, the captain tossed me the bag of only four bonita. I took a breath and leaped into the boat. We all made it onto the boat and took off slowly towards shore. We got to shore and walked along the hot, fine sand of the beach to a restaurant. It was made of logs and leaves. We walked inside and up the steps and to a medium sized patio with an awesome view of the turquoise color of the Pacific Ocean.

The owner lead us to our table and asked for our drink orders. I ordered a virgin strawberry margarita on the rocks. Then a while later a young boy my age came out with our drinks. I looked around and saw that a lot of kids were working. The owner said that the kids were on spring break and came to help their families. They took our orders soon after. We got red snapper, guacamole, salsa, and the bonita grilled with garlic butter. A young girl my age came up to our table. She said she was selling pies that her aunt made. She was selling a slice for five dollars U.S. and we agreed. We asked what kinds she was selling. She had berry, coconut, and pecan. We bought a piece of coconut and she wrapped it up in tin foil. Soon after we bought the pies our order came out. It looked amazing. As soon as they set it down the smells and fumes were everywhere. When my mouth was done watering, I dug into the bonita. It was phenomenal. When I was done eating, I went down to the rough, salty waves of the Pacific.

After a little bit of swimming I headed back up to check on things. We finished and left the restaurant. On our way out, a small mexican man stopped us. He was selling really cool necklaces with shark teeth on them. I could tell they were fake, but they still looked really cool. I saw one with five on it and asked how much it was. He said a one thousand nine hundred and thirty nine pesos and I typed it into my money translator. The translator said it was one hundred dollars! Me and my mom tried to bargain with him but we couldn't. So we ended up with a necklace with only one. We took the taxi boat to our boat and headed back. We sat and watched the waves rush against the boat and felt the wind in my hair.

After a long, fun day of fishing, it was over. But the day wasn't. We gave the rest of the fish to the captain and tour guide to eat. We chilled around downtown Puerto Vallarta with table side guacamole and enjoyed our time. We went back to the resort and rode horses and walked down the beach. The day was now over, But another day was just starting.

## **The End**

**Nick O'Neal**

**Limestone Community School**

**Grade 6**

## **Nate Allen**

Nate Allen is a hero. He saves lives almost every day. He works really hard, and he doesn't have to save lives, but he chose to be a hero. He runs into burning buildings to save someone's life. He climbs a hundred-foot ladder to save a life. Even when he is not working, he saves lives. He is a hero to many people. He works at two fire stations. He works in Washburn and Presque Isle. He is the chief of Washburn and the assistant chief in Presque Isle. He is also Silas Allen's dad. He works really hard at work and at home. He is also a great firefighter.

He drives people to a hospital in an ambulance, and he drives a firetruck to fires and car accidents. Almost every day, he jumps into a firetruck and drives to an accident. He breaks open car doors and takes people out of a burning car. He stays up all night saving people. He likes to go hunting and fishing sometimes, and he is a really good builder. He is also a really good father. My dad is the best dad I could wish for. He is a hero to many people and not just to Silas Allen.

**Silas Allen**

**Washburn District Elementary School**

**Ms. Silver**

**Grade 4**

### **My Grandfather**

My grandfather, Paul Barnes, went to Vietnam in 1965. The government did not have enough people in the Army so they made a draft, it is a recruitment for the military. When he graduated high school, he had to sign up for the draft. In 1963, he signed up on the draft scroll sheet. My grandfather, deployed to Pleiku, Vietnam. His job was a door gun on a helicopter. A door gunner is a person that shoots a machine gun out of a helicopter. When he got to Vietnam, he could only leave unless his mom, dad or siblings died. He lost both grandparents while he was in Vietnam.

When my grandfather got in to Vietnam there were no buildings. He lived in a tent for a year, on top of steel called perforated steel plating (PSP). My grandfather ate C-rations in Vietnam. It came with a little candy bar and two cigarettes. He traded his cigarettes for the candy bar. When other people would smoke the cigarettes, they were so dry that when they would take a puff it would explode. He also ate food that was packaged in 1944 but ate it in 1965. He could not bring any personal items to Vietnam, but he had to have camo t-shirts and underwear, so his wife dyed his t-shirts green. It was so hot in Vietnam, that he turned green because of the dyed t-shirts.

My grandfather had to do things to stay safe so he didn't get bite from rats and scorpions. One thing he did was put a net over the top of his bed and over the foot of the bed so rats and scorpions didn't go in. Whenever the generator got shut off at night, he saw the tent move because rats and scorpions were climbing up. When he went to put his boots, on a man that was there longer said, "You need to dump them out before you put them on." Scorpions go in to warm places so they would hide in the boots.

If my grandfather got shot down, he and the other door gunner would detach their machine gun and do a perimeter around the helicopter. When my grandfather flew in a helicopter in Vietnam, they would fly treetop level and the pod at the bottom of the helicopter would clip the top of the trees. They did this so the Vietnamese didn't see them, so they couldn't ambush them.

My grandfather's longest tour was 1 year and 2 months. He got a calendar and he would mark off one day at a time, but that was boring, so he would wait to cross off a whole week. He counted down the last 30 days before he got to go home.

When my grandfather knew that he was going home, he was going to be safe in the USA. My grandfather said, "When you finally know you are going home, you look forward to seeing your family and you kind of take more precautions to stay safe."

A friend of his gave him some pictures of some of the unclassified missions that he was on. He got three medals, a bronze star, Vietnam campaign medal, and one he did not name. He said he missed his family, especially his wife. My grandparents had been dating for 3 years when he got deployed. His prize possession was the letter I wrote to him thanking him for his service.

**Brady Barnes**

**Caribou Middle School**

**Mrs. Pelletier**

**Grade 6**

### **TRAMPOLINE PARK**

Max: I will beat you in dodgeball on a trampoline. You aren't better than me.

Matthew: No I will beat you. I have better aim than you.

Mom: Okay, we are almost there. Now you better be good okay?

Max: Okay mom.

Mom: That means you to Matthew.

Matthew: Okay mom.

(sometime later) Max: We are here. Okay, let's go inside now.

Matthew: Wait for me bro.

Mom: Wait for us.

(we go inside and we get our stickers) Max: I'm a class D What are you?

Matthew: I have class D too. Lets play now.

(we take our shoes off and we play for a little while) Max: I am going to play dodgeball now.

Matthew: Okay wait for me Max.

(we go to the dodgeball area) Guard: Hold up kids. You need a group of class D's to play dodgeball.

Max: But I can smell the win sir.

Guard: Okay fine.

(so we gather up some kids and we PLAY)

Guard: 3...2...1...GO!

Max: Alright Matthew is on the other team this is not good.

(one kid gets out) Max: Give me the ball! Okay good I have a ball. (throws ball and gets

someone out) Max: yes. (another kid gets out) Max: Now we have 6 and they have 7. (three kids

get out a little later) Max: Good and bad. (a kid hits me with a ball) Max: Noooooooooo,

I...am...dying ah. (a little later we lose they win and we had to go.)

THE END

**Maximus Ramos**

**Katahdin Elementary School**

**Mrs. Russell**

**Grade 4**

## **I Had A Hole In My Heart**

I was born with a hole in my heart. The doctor told my parents that I had something wrong and that I would need surgery to fix the problem and stay alive. I was too tiny to have the surgery, so I had to wait til I was a little older.

When I turned one, the doctor did surgery to repair my heart. I don't remember anything about the surgery because I was a tiny one year old. My mom doesn't like to talk about it. It makes her cry. She hopes that it never happens again.

When I turned four, I was able to ride a pedal bike without training wheels. When I turned 8, I could jump into the deep snow from my roof. I've been able to play soccer at the Connor Rec this past summer. My heart works very hard, but I feel very strong when I am active.

Now, I have a scar from when they cut me open. It runs from my chest down to my ribcage. My doctor says I can do sports, but I have to be careful and that I have to take care of my heart. I can't play football because I can't slam against anything hard. My mom is still very protective of me. She tells me not to do dangerous stuff and I listen to her.

I am thankful that my parents called a friend who came and prayed over me. It helped me get better. I'm thankful that I am alive and can play basketball, tag, hide and seek, dirt bike, and snowmobile. I hope I never have to have surgery again.

**Kyle King**

**Connor School**

**Mrs. Lugdon**

**Grade 4**

## **There Is Hope**

"I don't know where that car came from, I didn't even see it! Wait, wait, wait where is Marcy?" "Where is Marcy?" Anna screamed! All she wanted to know was where her dog Marcy was, she had no idea what had happened.

It was a normal day for this "ordinary" 18 year old Anna. Anna wasn't your normal 18 year old girl. She was about to graduate high school and from there she would move on to college. Anna never really had friends at school. She was always "older" than most people in her classes since she liked school, she liked to read, and she enjoyed learning new things. Most people thought she was weird and crazy because she liked learning and she enjoyed school, and because of that she didn't fit in at all. The only "friend" she had was he dog Marcy.

Marcy wasn't your ordinary dog either, she enjoyed running, playing, and even getting in the water. Most dogs just like to sleep all the time, but not Marcy. Marcy and Anna made the best teams and they were each other's best friends. Their day had started off just as it did any other day. They started off going to their favorite park which was about 25 minutes from their house. They were about 3 minutes away from the park and a car comes out of nowhere and Anna's car was hit!

Anna's car was hit so hard it knocked her out immediately. When she came to it took her a little while to realize that she had been in a car crash. She woke up to paramedics asking her

“miss are you okay” “ can you hear us” “miss?” She said “I... I.... I think I am okay, I just hit my head a little.” Anna only had a little scratch, but right as the paramedics tried to help her out of the car she starts saying “ the car came out of nowhere” “ I didn’t even see it”. They were trying to calm her down but then she says “Wait! Where is Marcy, does anyone know where Marcy is?” “I need to go find Marcy!”

The paramedics are trying to check her out and make sure she is okay but she is still freaking out and continuously saying “does anyone know where Marcy is?” The police come over to get her side of the story, but she just wants to find Marcy. They start asking her who is Marcy, but Anna is too busy freaking out she isn’t ever hearing them. After a few minutes she finally calms down and starts explaining that Marcy is her dog and means the world to her and she needs to find her!

The paramedics and cops are just about done questioning and checking Anna out, and all of a sudden Anna thinks to herself “ wait a second we’re on our way to the park and maybe Marcy decided to just run towards the park.” So Anna just starts running towards the park. After about 3 minutes she arrives at the park and checking every place she can think to check. Anna just keeps looking, but the park isn’t very big and she has just about checked every place. Anna is continuously screaming “Marcy” “Marcy” but she has now checked the entire park and she has no sign of Marcy.

Anna keeps looking and searching all around the street of the crash. And then her parents show up to help her, and somehow the word had got out to people at her school of what had happened. Suddenly a bunch of people from Anna’s school show up and say they want to help her find her dog. She was shocked and couldn’t believe what was happening! It was nearing dark and still no sign until one of the guys shouts “ I think I found Marcy!” Anna couldn’t believe what she was hearing. She ran over as fast as she could and there she was, Marcy was stuck in some wire from a fence she must have tried to jump through. The worst of Marcy’s injuries was a broken leg.

Anna was so thankful for everyone who had shown up to help, and she couldn’t believe all the support. She was very happy, but she knew after that night everything wouldn’t go back to normal. The next day at school Anna immediately was surrounded by many kids saying how very strong she was last night and that she was actually way cooler than they all thought she was. Anna couldn’t believe how many people were supporting her and also how many people were apologizing for always being rude and never trying to be friends with her. There were even a few who said that she has inspired them to be strong and give everyone a chance. Anna was very popular after that, she didn’t mind it but she wanted just popular for what had happened to her that night she was popular because she had inspired many, many people!

**Alivia Smart**

**Presque Isle Middle School**

**Mr. Blackstone**

**Grade 7**

## **Sister**

I was six years old and five months  
My sister was being born  
Caribou Hospital  
November 8, 2013  
The most beautiful thing  
So tiny  
Tears of joy running down my face  
Name was Paisley Winter Davenport  
Paisley Winter  
Paisley Winter  
Paisley Winter  
Paisley Winter  
Over and over it went  
I was so happy  
She is already my favorite sister

**Payton Davenport**

**Presque Isle Middle School**

**Mrs. Bates**

**Grade 6**

## **What I'm Thankful For . . .**

I'm thankful for many blessings. I'm thankful for my mom, my dog, and my dad.

I'm thankful for my mom. The reason I'm thankful for my mom is because she cooks for me. She cleans my dirty bathroom. Mom does so much more. That is why I'm thankful for my mom.

I'm thankful for my dog, Mulligan. The reason I'm thankful for my dog is because he runs to the door when I come home. Mulligan barks at turkeys, and he knocks me over when we do races and when we wrestle.

I'm thankful for my dad. The reason why I'm thankful for my dad is because he works on my snowmobile. Dad takes care of my brother and I when Mom travels. Dad makes sure that we're okay, and he takes us on Ranger rides. Dad does as much as he can to make us happy.

I'm thankful for so many blessings, but those are my favorite blessings of all.

**Peyton Chandler**

**Mapleton Elementary School**

**Mrs. Wright**

**Grade 4**

## The Tree

Have you ever had a bad experience with a tree? Have you ever gone house hunting? Have you done both?

It was a normal spring day. My family pulled into the driveway of the little yellow house we were going to look at. My family had gone house hunting before, but little did we know that this was going to be a weird trip. We knocked on the door, and a woman with blonde, frizzy hair opened it. She looked like she was from the sixties and had kept the big hair.

She told us to come in. We walked straight into a small, closed-off kitchen with a sliding glass door that led outside. It had a wall of wine corks; she said that she drank all of them with her husband. While she chatted with our parents, my brother and I went exploring.

We ran around the house like madmen. After we circled the ground floor twenty-five times, we ran upstairs. We walked into a small plain room and saw that it had a small door, so we slowly walked over. I grabbed the handle and slowly pulled it open to freak out my brother. Then we crawled into the small room. It was pretty boring in there—just glitter and cheesy inspiring messages like, “Reach for the stars” and “Fake it until you make it,” and worst of all, a poster with a kitten hanging onto a tree with the words “Just hang in there” above its head. We left that room, scarred for life.

We checked out the rest of the house pretty quickly because our favorite part of house hunting was about to happen. We were going to see the backyard.

It wasn’t anything special—rotten leaves and flowers, a few old pine trees in the back of the yard, and an old picnic table, but in the middle of the yard stood two beautiful trees, and one of the trees had a branch low enough for me to climb onto.

I got up onto the picnic table for a running start and for dramatic effect. Then I bolted toward the tree. I jumped off the picnic table, grabbed the branch, and stood sideways, my hand on the branch and my feet on the side of the tree. My hand was gripping the branch so tightly that it was white. I started to say something, but then I heard it—the horrible sound I still wake up sweating in the night because of. The cracking.

I heard cracking and Eli yelling, “Marigan, move!” Then it went black. I opened my eyes and sort of laughed. There was a fifty-pound branch on top of me, I had a migraine, and it felt like someone was hitting my back with a mallet. I actually couldn’t laugh because I could barely breathe, but it still seemed funny to me.

It took a minute, but I shoved the branch off of me, walked over to my parents, and said, “I’m fine. Thanks for asking.”

**Marigan McBreairty**

**Presque Isle Middle School**

**Mrs. Blake**

**Grade 6**

## Saving Myself

Happiness, it’s a given. We only question what it means to us when it is taken away. Probably the most common thief of happiness is fear, but we only fear what we don’t know. All

my life I have taken happiness as a given, a gift that could never be stolen no matter how hard people try to take it away. Then the summer between seventh and eighth grade happened.

I went headlong into summer vacation with no plans. No plans for sports (other than an occasional run) and no planned vacation or, for that matter, no plan at all. I didn't even know what teachers or class I would have in the coming year, so I was clueless, and it was terrifying. With the memory of both my brothers moving away for college still fresh in my mind, the only thing keeping me somewhat happy was the idea of going to my old baseball teams' games and taking pictures. For me taking pictures is like reading a good book. You go places that no one else will see in exactly the same way. If you read a description in a book of a person, the image is unique to you, even if one thousand other people read the exact same thing. That's what it's like to see the world through a camera lens. So anyway, I was miserable. The WHOLE summer.

Toward the end of summer, I found out that one of my close friends had developed feelings for me. I eventually caught feelings for him, but I really didn't want to date until high school, so I made a deal with myself to just not put a label on it. In the moment, I was convinced I was happy, but I really wasn't. I was happy when I was with him, and constantly missing him when I wasn't. I was in a civil war between my brain and heart. My brain telling me that kids my age are physically incapable of loving someone in a romantic way, and my heart screaming at my brain to shut up, and that I was falling for the one and only. I was forcing myself into a fantasy that can't exist at age 13. After a month or so he lost feelings for me. I got over it in like a week or less (I even saw him briefly a little while ago, and it was just like when we were just friends, no weirdness). Ever since that blew over I have been on a record high. I have never been so happy and confident. It's not that I wish the relationship had never happened, it's just I'm glad it ended when it did. I saved myself from artificial love and learned so much about myself. When I told one of my brothers about the person I was unofficially dating and I said something about not wanting it to end, he said, "What's the worst that could happen? You come out of this knowing way more about yourself than you did before?" And that's exactly what happened. I finally understand myself and know that even if another super cute freshman tries to sweep me off my feet again, he'll have to find someone else, because I now know that it wasn't my parents stopping me from dating, even if that's what I told myself and him, it was me.

Eighth grade has been amazing. My teachers are like the dream team and my class has allowed me to connect with some kids with whom I wouldn't normally hangout. Math is easy, science is fun, social studies is interesting and, ELA is all that I could hope for, and more, me wanting to be a somewhat successful writer in the near future. I was actually panicking about this project for the past few days because I had no clue what to write about. Julia Bartley not knowing what to write is like Tom Hanks not knowing how to act.

Being stuck, I asked my ELA teacher and she told me to doodle. She said then maybe an idea would come. I was reminded of a picture I drew. The word happiness doodled across the page. That is what prompted me to write about my own happiness. I hope my story of drowning in depression and then finally learning to swim with sharks is somewhat inspiring. People say to leave with a big bang, but I think I'll leave that to Sheldon Cooper.

**Julia Bartley**

**Presque Isle Middle School**

**Mrs. Gardner**

**Grade 8**

# **Animal Tales**

## **My Dog Max**

One day my brother and I felt like something was going to happen. So thinking in my head it could be one of two things. One, we were getting a dog or, number two going for a long car ride somewhere. We had breakfast at around 8:30 that day, then finished around 8:50. My grandparents had come over and gave us some doughnuts from Dunkin Donuts and some hot chocolate for all of my brothers, sisters and myself. We watched tv for about an hour after.

I played some Uno with my stepmom Chelsey. After we played Uno for about a half hour. She had gotten a call from a lady saying that he is ready. I had a clue, it was a dog. I didn't know 100% it was a dog. I didn't really hear what she said, so my Dad and Chelsey left to go get something.

When my parents left, my grammy asked, "What do you think is going to happen when your Dad and Chelsey get back?" I replied, "I know what's gonna happen. We are getting a dog!" My parents showed up a couple hours later.

Well guess what? It was a dog! He was so cute! He was only 8 weeks old and so small! I knew he was going to get bigger because he was only a puppy. I knew he was going to be a small dog because of his breed. The dogs name was Snowball but our family changed his name to Max. He looked like a dog named Max from the movie Secret Life of Pets.

The next day which was February 26, 2018. He chewed on some cords and some other small items he could get to. He was only 2 months old, so he was going to do that, just like any other dog would. Max had to get potty trained because he was little and he didn't know where to use the bathroom. So we got him some puppy pads to start off with. He had to use puppy pads until he got his shots so he could go outside.

After a month he got his shots, now he is 3 months old. He was able to go outside. Every day we let him outside so he could know where he needs to use the bathroom. Eventually he was potty trained after about six months or so. Then my Dad and I put a fence in the backyard, he was able to roam around and use the bathroom outside.

Max is a great dog, I love him. He is special to me because my family got him for an early birthday present for me. If he is good he gets to go on car rides and walks with us. If he is bad he doesn't get to do fun stuff. One of the funniest times I had with Max was the first time he saw snow. He didn't know what it was. He was just staring at the snow. He was a little scared. Then he went in the snow. After he put his nose in the snow he started to eat it off the ground. I told him not to eat it. Then he just started to bark at me, which was really funny.

**Danny Berentes**

**Dawn F. Barnes Elementary**

**Grade 8**

## **The Wonderful Chloe**

Once was an ordinary puppy waiting to get adopted, but that's what people think. So one day a nice family looking for their first puppy. They went to a ladies house that lives a little out of Bangor and just had a litter of puppies. They name their puppy Chloe, and took the puppy into their loving arms but the sweet fluffy dog took a turn for the worst. She chewed on things,

jumped on people, took food from the table, she lays in the middle of the bed when you are trying to sleep, and constantly had potty training “accidents”. But sometimes she is sweet in the mornings she lets us hug her.

It was a normal Saturday and Chloe was acting weird. She started eating rapidly but it didn't affect her. She didn't get fat she grew. She got larger and larger. You couldn't move her. The more she ate the bigger she got. At the end of this feeding frenzy she was the size of the couch, sleeping on the floor on a large quilt. She was as big as an elephant.

I knew my father would NOT be happy about this, nor would my mother who was napping upstairs. I had no idea what to do. Panicking I looked for Rylee. She was next to Chloe squished up against her side skin like slime and telling her how cute she was. She was happy about the dog, but I wasn't my thoughts bounced around like a watermelon on a trampoline.

Then I remember my friend Laura knows a lot about dogs and animals in general. I decide to call her, I hope she knows what to do. She agrees and says she'll be here in a quick minute. She gets here and walks in the room. Chloe didn't even move. That is not normal for her we need more help. I decided to call Brayden. I call him but he's busy at the moment. Laura was over by Chloe petting her. That's definitely not helping, she started pulling a plastic jar out of her bag Treats said. Chloe was looking out of the window at Braydens mom's truck pulling into the driveway. Thank god she didn't bark. It would of shook the house.

He runs into the house he the red truck pulls out of the driveway” Brayden glared at the large dog. “yeah, she is a big ol' pupper” Laura laughed. “Alright that is it we are going to have to do something..” “Get the treats” I yelled lets shrink her. We found our neighbors wizard potion add it to the treat, fed it to her and then boom. Chloe began to shrink we all started to burst with laughter and that's how we shrunk my dog Chloe back to normal size.

**Delaynee LaBreck**

**Dawn F Barnes Caswell School**

**Grade 6**

### **Puppy Prints on My Heart**

It was an extremely hot summer day. My brother Easton and I were riding bike. This is what we did every day to have fun. As we rode down our long driveway, we heard the neighborhood dogs barking. “Do you know how everyone in our neighborhood has a dog?” Easton asked.

“Yeah”, I answered with confusion.

“Maybe we could get one for ourselves, to keep us company!” Easton said in excitement.

“That's a terrific idea!” I said in agreement. After we were done riding bike, as usual we went inside to tell our mom our awesome idea. But first, our caring mom made us some lemonade for this terribly hot day.

While Easton and I were drinking lemonade on the front porch, we shared our idea with mom. “Hey, mom, we were thinking about how much we would love to get a dog!” I said.

“Only if your dad agrees to this, then yes; but, you'll have to train it to be a hunting dog, like what dad has always wanted. It will have to be a small dog, maybe a runt,” Mom said. “We can talk about it with dad.”

“Thanks mom!” Easton said in a high-pitched voice.

“I’ve heard that one of the teachers at school has a female dog that’s about to give birth to chocolate and black labs. Maybe we can ask her for first pick,” Mom said in curiosity.

Eventually, mom called her on the phone for the first pick, and she agreed. As soon as we heard the good news, we thought of which color lab and what name it could be, while going outside to ride our bikes again. “How about a chocolate lab, I love their little snouts!” Easton said.

“However, black labs are so cute with their shiny black fur!” I disagreed. We couldn’t decide what color lab we would get, so we decided we would wait and let our dad choose. While waiting for dad to come home, Easton and I noticed that mom came out to watch us ride our bikes. Thinking about getting a dog, I asked mom what the perfect name for the dog could be. “Well first, we need to figure out if we are getting a boy or a girl,” Mom said.

“Since we already have a cat that’s a boy, how about we get a female dog?” Easton said while going to put away his bike to get a basketball.

“Sure!” I said. “A girl would be perfect!”

“Ok!” Mom said. “Now let’s think of a name. How about Daisy?” Mom asked for an idea.

“Yeah, I also like the name Sadie!” I said.

“I like both of those names, but let’s wait until we choose her!” Mom explained.

Later that summer, we got a phone call that the chocolate and black labs were born. There were ten puppies. The owner explained that we could visit the cute puppies in a couple of weeks and Dad had agreed. Easton and I couldn’t wait to see them!

Meanwhile, we waited patiently. Days and days, then weeks and weeks went by, and eventually, it was the day we had been waiting for... we were going to choose our new puppy! We all jumped into the truck and headed to Eagle Lake, which is where the puppies were born. I was so full of excitement that I felt like I was going to explode! Mom, Dad, Easton, and I arrived in the driveway. We were greeted by a large black lab and a smaller chocolate lab. The owners came to the door and led us to a room in the back of the house. “Come meet the puppies!” the owner said kindly.

“I can’t wait to see them!” Easton said anxiously.

As I walked in, I noticed all the tiny puppies cuddled up together, some stacked up and some sleeping alone. The puppies were as cute as buttons. The owner began to explain that the small black lab in the back corner was the runt of the litter. Her fur was black like the night sky. My mom immediately picked her up and cradled her in her arms. While mom did that, I pet the puppy. She was a fluffy feather. Easton and I sat on the floor to play with the rest of the puppies, but we kept staring at the one in mom’s arms. She had fallen asleep on mom with her cute little paws criss-crossed. My mom had fallen in love and so did we. We made the decision as a family to choose the little black runt and we had the perfect name: Sadie.

### *Two Years Later*

That day was the best day of my life - to have a dog of my own! I knew she would be the best dog that I would ever have! My family loves her deeply and she loves us. Puppy prints will forever be on my heart!

**Wyatt Daigle**

**Fort Kent Elementary School**

**Mrs. Desjardin**

**Grade 5**

## **My Old Pal, Bern Man**

It was a Friday, a beautiful summer day. My grandparents had a dog named Bernie. He was eleven years old. He had arthritis and hip problems. On that beautiful day we were outside, and Bernie didn't seem to be acting normal. We went over, and he tried to get up but he just collapsed.

My grandparents called the vet and made an appointment for a checkup at the Presque Isle Animal Hospital. They put fluid in him to keep him alive. That only lasted two days. On July 18th, 2019, Bernie was scheduled to be put down.

It was such a hard time for me. He was my best friend, and best friends are hard to find. Bernie had me caught - I just couldn't seem to let go.

Bernie meant a lot to my whole family. My mom was just a teenager when they got Bernie. He was my grandfather's best friend. He always said his other dogs were like the appetizers and dessert, but Bernie was the main course.

Bernie was a great house dog, too. He chased squirrels up the trees, kept crows out of the garden, and really kept things going around the place. He even went to our camp. He didn't let his hips or arthritis drag him down. If he went down, he got right back up again.

My grandmother goes through photo albums of him now when she's alone, at least when she thinks she's alone. I don't like spying on her, but I feel badly. I saw Grammy sweeping up his hair after they put him down, and she bagged some up and keeps it in her room. She is going through a lot.

My grandfather is going through a lot, too. Every day he goes into the woods all by himself. I wish I could help, but when I talk about Bernie, they just get in a mood. They are just sad and emotional.

When they took Bernie to be put down, he was happier than he had been in a long time. It was like he knew he was on his way to happiness. If I had a chance for him to come back, I would want him to stay happy and not suffer. He was a good dog. There is just a time when you need to let go.

**Jakoby Porter**

**Southern Aroostook**

**Mrs. Clark**

**Grade 4**

## **The Last Adventure**

"Come here Chief," one of my owners said as he put a collar on me.

I knew where I was probably going, but I dreaded the moment that he put me in the car. He left to go in the house. When he came out, he had a boy and a girl (my two other owners) with him. When they all got in the car, we started down the road. I heard my owner say that I was getting a ribeye steak.

"A ribeye steak!" I yelled, knowing that they couldn't hear a hundred and five year old dog (that is in dog years).

"It's probably going to be his last good meal," my uncle said, looking at the floor of the car.

"Don't say that!" My sister said. "But it is true."

“He can’t hear you,” my dad said. “He’s deaf and blind, and if he could hear, he wouldn’t understand you.”

The second he said that, I looked up at him and said, “I can understand you and no, I’m not deaf. I just have selective hearing.”

When we got to wherever we were supposed to go, my dad got me out and brought me to the house. Once we got in, I saw a few familiar faces. And my cousin looked very upset.

After spending some time eating my steak and spending some time with everyone, the kids went upstairs and the adults stayed downstairs and watched a very noisy movie. One of them went outside, and I followed him out.

There was a stream by the house and it looked like it was not frozen over. When I got there, I saw that there was a little bit of ice and I thought it would be easy to get a drink from the stream with that there.

Once I got on the ice, it cracked and sent me plunging into the river. Once I came up for a breath of air, I saw that I was floating downstream and fast.

Once the stream ended, I came up in an unusual place. There was a pole and on top there was a flag with what looked like a maple leaf in the middle, and next to it was a sign that said, “Welcome to Canada.”

“Hey, you,” I heard someone say. I looked down and saw another dog.

“Can you help me get to Maine?” I asked.

“Oh yeah. Just up over that mountain,” he said.

“Well, I guess I better be on my way,” I said, turning to the mountain.

When I got to the top, I saw people with skis and ski gear on. I looked down the slope and thought, “I’ll just slide.”

At the bottom, I saw a road, so I started down it. I knew my way around, so when I got to the place where I lived, I followed the little path that the car took to get me to the place where all of my family was. As soon as I got to the house, I saw the person that let me out, start to go in. I quickly followed him in. I got there at the right time too, because they were getting ready to go.

Once we got home, the second I got in my bed, I was out like a light. The next morning, I went down to my favorite patch of trees, and around 7:00 AM, I saw my uncle get ready to get on the school bus. He saw me, and then looked down and got on the bus. I lowered my head and walked away knowing that was the last time I would see him again.

**Agis Clark**

**Fort Street Elementary**

**Mrs. Lagasse**

**Grade 5**

### **“The One I Love”**

The day had come, the first day of summer vacation, but this was no normal day of summer for Elizabeth, for this was the beginning of something amazing.

“Mom, I’m going out and getting a summer job,” she explained. She was almost fifteen and her curly, blond hair needed a cut.

“Are you sure? You want to go out today?” Her mom answered.

“Yes, I have a good feeling about today,” she replied.

“Okay then, have fun,” her mom said, staring her coffee.

Her mother tried to say “bye”, but Elizabeth shut the door before she could. This wonderful girl did not know what she would find, but she knew she’d find it today. Looking at the list of available jobs in town, she saw, at the bottom of the page, Craig's Pet Kingdom. It was her only choice, she had tried everywhere else.

“Worth a shot,” she said under her breath, as she put the paper into her bag along with the other things that she had. DING! went a bell that hung just above the door to Craig’s Pet Kingdom.

“Hello, is anybody here?” She tried not to yell. As she walked past a little goat in a fenced in area, she stuck her hand in just then the owner came out.

“STOP! He bites!” yelled the shop owner, but she did not hear. The goat trotted over and licked her hand. She picked up some straw, that was scattered on the floor, to feed him and he took it gladly. The owner walked over and said, “you’re hired.”

“How did you know that I wanted to be hired?”

He tilted his head, gave her an evil smile, then on his way to a door that said “keep out”, he said, “you start tomorrow at six in the morning.”

As Elizabeth walked toward the door, she heard a dog bark, then a man yelling, and a whimper. Maybe there was a dog in there. She was going to come to work early the next morning, really early.

“Mom, I have to get to work. I will see you at seven when I get home,” Elizabeth murmured with a bagel in her mouth. She would be finding out what was behind that door today. DING went the door, just as it did when she first walked in the other morning. The sign on the door read “Closed”. This gave her some time to investigate the pet shop. She walked around the store and slowly opened the door that read DO NOT ENTER and peeked inside. She couldn’t see anything, so she went in. A big dog came to her. At first, the dog backed away, then tilted her head in curiosity, and layed down. The dog was gray and white, but had spots of blood and wounds that Elizabeth wanted to help her with.

She said as nicely as she could, “it is okay girl, I’m not going to hurt you. In fact, I want to help you.”

There were chains around the dog’s neck and paws. When Elizabeth unhooked them, the big, hurt dog bolted to the door, but she came to a sudden stop. Elizabeth ran after her and stopped next to her. Then, they snuck out the door together and walked home, to the new home for Libby, which is what they called her. They never returned to the pet store again. Elizabeth hugged Libby and said, “I love you. You are the one I love.”

**Emma Cooper**

**Southern Aroostook**

**Mrs. York**

**Grade 5**

### **I Can Secretly Fly**

Oh hello, my name is Ruth and I come from Australia. This spring, June 22, 2018 was the weirdest, craziest, and most awesome spring ever. It all started after school, on a hot day when I went over to my best friend, Brian’s house. We love to play together all the time, but this time it was going to be a little bit different. We were in Brian's backyard tackling each other like wild wolves. I pinned her so many times I was getting tired of it. After I pinned her the 20th time, she

stopped to look up. She pointed to the tree right next to her and asked me, "Hey! Do you want to climb the tree and talk for a while?"

I nodded my head and we climbed the tree like silly monkeys. When we got to the top of the tree, we saw a weird looking bird. The bird was bright scarlet with rich purple wings. It had a bright green neck and a golden head. It looked at us with its light blue marble eyes. It was not like the other birds, it was bigger than an eagle! So, of course, we thought it must give wishes. We asked it for a wish that we wanted. I was thinking that I always wanted to fly. Flash-forward, I was thinking that I could go anywhere in the world and wherever I wanted to go.

"I wish that I could have a bird just like you, but have infinite wishes!" Brian suddenly saw a scarlet bird just like the first one on her arm. She looked at its marble green eyes and named it Fred and the first bird she named George.

Then it was my turn to make a wish so, I looked at the bird's bright blue eyes and said, "I wish...I could fly! Just like you, George, but of course, I don't want to be a bird."

But I didn't move up and start to fly, I just sat there waiting for something to happen. Brian was lucky, her wish came true but mine didn't. Little did I know that something was going to happen. Early the next morning, I went to go run to the bus to go catch it. As I ran, I had my arms flapping like a bird's wings and I felt a sudden chill. I also felt like I was off the ground. I looked down to the ground, and to my shock, I was off the ground and flying! I started to go down to tell the bus driver that I can't ride the bus, but instead he looked at me, shut the door, and drove off like there was no tomorrow. I watched the bus as it drove away to school. Brian came out and saw that the bus was gone. The only thing was me, our old town, and the old street. Brian looked at me while I was flying in the air. She looked at her bird and wished to fly too just like Fred, her bird. So, we flew to school together and at school kids were talking to me all the way to my classroom. They asked me stuff like, "How did you do it?" and "I wish I could fly. Do you have super powers?"

I said back to them, "Well, it's a long story that can't be shortened." The rest of the day was great and when Brian and I went to go home, we flew together, and played in her backyard for the rest of the day!

**Ruth Greene**

**SACS**

**Mrs. York**

**Grade 5**

### **"Escaping Havoc"**

That world, my old world, was full of yelling, yelping, growling, and death. We were always hungry and we were submerged in mud and feces! Really, it was havoc. The only thing good about my life was Deathmark, one of the most violent dogs around, to the point where most dogs let him eat before them. The strangest thing was that he took me under his wing. While everyone else called me Roadkill, he insisted I needed a tougher name. But, he was wrong about me, I was more roadkill than a German Shepherd. I'd been beat up, I'd lost most of my fur, and I was no heavier than a twig.

"Daggerclaw, hurry!" I heard Deathmark bark one night. When I realized he was talking to me, I scrambled my way to the rugged, scarred dog who was stuffing a bunch of food under his blanket, that he kept above the dampness.

“One to ten, how hungry are you?” he questioned.

“Eleven,” I said as he gave me a pinch of food. It wasn’t rude, here you had to conserve food and he didn’t even take one bite.

“Thanks,” I said, crunching little pieces of food.

“No prob,” he replied, “but I’m not always going to be around to protect you, White Fang Jr. You’re gonna have to steal, kill, and even fight The Beast,” Deathmark said worried. I knew I would one day be without Deathmark and would have to face The Beast, who was the lady that housed us in such horrible conditions and treated us like garbage. I remember hoping that day wouldn’t come soon.

The next morning, loud cars with blinky lights roared along the road and came straight towards us, screeching to the side of the road. Humans jumped out and put metal bands on The Beast and took her away. We all yipped, barked, and cheered, but the nightmare wasn’t over just yet, we still needed to escape this havoc. Bigger cars pulled in and people stepped out with handheld snare traps and went after Deathmark.

“No!” I whined as I raced towards my protector, my only friend.

“Stop, Daggerclaw, let them! I have a feeling that this is for the best. They took The Beast away. I really think they’re here to help,” he explained as he walked with the men to a transport truck.

“Hello, Haverick,” whispered a human who came toward me. This was all too much for me and I was going to dart away, but then Deathmark’s advice echoed in my head and I realized they just named me. That time came and it was time for me to be on my own. I hopped into a different truck that said “Shepherds Beyond Borders” on the side and started moving away.

Months later, after loads of recovery, some people were looking in at me from the outside of my kennel at the rescue. Even after I heard my rescuer tell them my sad story, even though I cowered in my kennel every time they looked at me, and even though I was as shy as a turtle in its shell, they decided to give me a chance and took me in another car, on another drive.

“We’ll call you Havoc,” one of them said. The name reminded me of Deathmark. That would have been something that he would have called me. That was a name for a German Shepherd, not roadkill. After what I had been through, lived through, that was a name that I had earned. My awesome new name was just the beginning, little did I know the best was yet to arrive.

**Ashlyn York**

**SACS**

**Mrs. Harbison**

**Grade 6**

Interested in adopting a German Shepherd? Check out Shepherds Beyond Borders on Facebook.

### **Missing Ferret**

Mrs. Wheeler, my history teacher, told me to take care of the class pet. It was Mia, the ferret. She was an albino ferret. She was usually asleep so this was going to be easy. After history was lunch, so I brought little Mia with me. Since I don’t have a carrier, I put her in my pocket.

We had chicken nuggets today, but to be honest they looked more like coal and tasted like grass. Instead of eating, I went straight to music which was my next period. The music

teacher, Mr. Jonathan, was asleep in his office. So, I took a seat and waited. Unfortunately I dozed off too. Mr. Jonathan woke me up to tell me that I had been asleep for 2 hours. He told me that school was almost over and that I would meet Mrs. Crow in detention. I headed down to detention. Mrs. Crow was in front of the door waiting for me. I stepped inside of detention and took a seat. My enemy Carl and bestie Gwen were there, so I was ok with being there. A few minutes in and I reached in my pocket to see if Mia was ok, but I felt nothing in my pocket.

The only thing I felt was a hole! OH NO! Mia must have chewed a hole in my pocket.

I had to do the right thing, which was escaping detention to find a ferret that I lost! Doesn't seem so innocent when you say it out loud. Anyway, Mrs. Crow was asleep at her desk so of course I went to the door and slowly opened it so I didn't wake Mrs. Crow or Carl who was also asleep.

First I went to the history classroom, but that wasn't too smart since I lost Mrs. Wheeler's pet. Instead I went to the cafeteria. It was dark so I suspected nobody was there. I looked everywhere in the kitchen but Mia wasn't there. I finally looked in the music room. I tip-toed since Mr. Jonathan was still in the music room. That's when I see Mr. Jonathan holding Mia.

Did he steal her? I stood up and told him he had been caught red handed. He told me the truth that he took Mia from me but only because he didn't have a pet of his own. I made a deal with Mr. Jonathan and told him that I would tell Mrs. Wheeler to let him take care of it once or twice a day. In the end it all worked out, but the only problem I had was that I now have extra detention.

At least everything worked out fine.

**Savannah Navilla Cuyler Washburn District Elementary School Mrs. Bragg Grade 5**

### **A Cat's Life**

"Luna come to eat!" Luna was starving! She ran over to the kitchen as she heard the hard pellets hitting the bowl. "Aww, such a good girl." said her owner; Edna, stroking Luna's back. She had always preferred soft-food, but whatever- food is food! After she was done eating, she washed herself head to toe, with the little strokes of her tongue. She then found Edna sitting in the chair and she laid down neatly, curling up into a ball. When she woke up it was morning. Seeing that Edna had gone outside, she stretched in a downward-dog position, then walked through the cat door. She went over to the carrots in the garden where she had found a mouse a week before.

Luna smelled it again. *Mouse!* she thought as she followed the scent trail. It faded away. *Ugh! I wonder where it went...* She wanted that mouse so badly, but it wasn't worth getting lost... so she went back inside. Luna went over to her pile of toys and grabbed a toy mouse. Then, she walked around the corner and... "Bark!" Her sister Dawn must of heard her coming. Luna jumped as if she had just seen a ghost and landed and her tail poofed ten times its size. She then sat down licking her fur back down. Embarrassed, she mewed "Y-You didn't scare me one bit!" "Yeah, sure!" Dawn meowed, laughing. "You looked like you just saw a dog with three heads! And-" She stopped silent as there was a scream. A bang came from outside. The two cats ran into the garden and saw their Edna, laying on the cold ground...

“No...” Dawn started. Sirens rang as the young cats ran back inside and hid behind the couch. Tears ran down the two cats’ faces. They huddled close together, scared out of their minds. Their tails poofed up and their back fur raised. Once it seemed quiet, the cats emerged from the hiding spot. Luna smelled the mouse again and followed the scent trail, Dawn following her cautiously. They went into the garden and past the carrots. It led to what looked like a cave, but it didn’t lead underground. Just as they stepped into the back of the cage slammed closed. Dawn spun rapidly trying to get out, and then, came and pulled something off the top. They were in a live trap! Luna bit the bars trying to get out. A person was standing there with a blanket in his hand that used covering the cage. “Poor things.” The human said. The cats didn’t understand what they were saying, but they could sense sadness.

The human picked up the cage and sat them in the back of a truck. Dawn was shivering, Luna lifted her tail and sat it on her shoulder. “It’s going to be okay...” she whispered. Dawn nodded her head.

The truck went to a stop. And the door of the truck swung open. And they were brought to *the pound!* Luna started to panic. Therefore, Dawn did too. They were sitting down on the ground just as the opening to the trap opened and a hand came and pulled Dawn out. “No!” Luna hissed of frustration as she bolted out. Her scruff was grabbed and she was put back in the cage. After about an hour, Luna was pulled out of the cage. She hissed and struggled to get out of the human’s grasp. It was no use, she was brought into a room. A human that had white gloves started to examine her, when they were done. She saw something on a paper they were writing on. ‘As healthy as can be.’

The human grabbed Luna and put her in a cage, different than the one before. She was only one of the cats on that side, there was meowing coming from all sides. Despite all the meowing, she could make out one that was familiar. “Luna? Is that you?” It was Dawn, she was straight across from her on the other side of the room. They talked, and then a human came in, and the commotion was louder, everyone wanted to be brought home. Then, the human opened Dawn’s cage then, Luna’s, they jumped out and licked each other’s heads. “Aww! So cute!” After a little bit, the cats started to like the new humans. The humans decided to take them to their home, and once again they were in a cage, in a truck. They finally got to their new home and ate, explored the place, then went to bed in a fluffy cat bed.

They woke up from yelling, the girl was in tears and walked towards them, then put them in a cage, again. Luna had just started to fall asleep when the truck stopped abruptly. And the girl put them outside, opened the cage and drove away leaving them behind. “Are they coming back?” Mewed Dawn. “I-I’m not sure...” replied Luna. So, they set off. Trying to find a new home.

After a long time the cats finally found somewhere to stay, an ally-way. They found a box on the side of the road, just as rats came up and instantly, they pulled Dawn into the sewers. “Dawn!” Yowled Luna “Luna!” Cried Dawn. Luna was left alone, she was cold and hungry. She then ran out of the ally-way. After about two months, she found food. She ate, and ate. It was the best food she had had for a long time. She truly understood her motto now. ‘Food is food!’ She was still saddened by her sister’s death. At least she thought. Once she was done eating she decided to go back to the ally-way. She was walking down the ally-way and...“Luna!”

*Could it be? It was Dawn!* They ran up to each other licking heads, like they had in the pound. “I’ve been waiting for you for months!” Dawn said, “I fought off the rats, and have been waiting here ever since!” “I’ve been scared to come back here... I’m sorry.” Said Luna. “That’s okay, I would’ve been scared too.” They then set off. And they found the food Luna was eating.

And a girl walked up to them. She was really nice, and she put them in her truck, she checked over the cats like the girl with the white gloves did. “As healthy as can be.” She said after checking over both of the cats. She then took them home, they had a great rest of their lives.

‘Don’t ever leave your cats on the side of the road, it doesn’t always end as well as it did for these two.’

**Madison Thibault**

**Caribou Middle School**

**Miss LaJoie**

**Grade 6**

## **Bulldoze**

### Chapter 1

He nudged his sleeping siblings, desperately trying to reach his mother’s warm, comforting side, mewling in protest as they sleepily shoved him away. After struggling for awhile longer, he finally managed to lay by his mother’s flank and drink in her sweet smell, only to get pushed back again.

“Oh Simon,” his mother meowed, reaching over and picking him up by his scruff, setting him in front of her. He purred happily as she washed his brown fur, he found the constant motion of her gentle licks somewhat comforting. He finally managed to drift to sleep, no siblings to get in the way of his slumber, only to be woken by his obnoxious kin, who were meowing very loudly, and had practically squished him flat.

He sat up grumbling and padded to the entrance of the den. He bent down and gave his chest a reassuring lick, lifting his head to look around. The sun pierced through the leaves, leaving a dappled pattern on the forest floor. As he gazed on, he noticed that he and his family rested below two rocks propped against each other, roots weaving in and out of the small space. He sat there bored, when a small movement caught his eye. He squinted to get a better look, and to his surprise, out hopped a plump squirrel. It was oblivious to them, somehow not noticing the family of cats who lurked so close by. Simon dropped down, getting ready to spring. He couldn’t wait to show his mother his catch! He prowled forward, crying out in surprise as a dark ball of fur hit him.

“Hey!” He growled, jumping to his feet and whipping around. “What was that for! I was gonna catch that squirrel and you know it!”

“Yeah right, we all know that you couldn’t ever catch a squirrel. you’re so clumsy it would hear you coming from a mile away!” mewed his sister, Ember. His brother snorted, turning to her and muttering something in her ear. He raised his voice so Simon could hear.

“Besides” Shade meowed, batting Simon with a paw, “You’re so small the squirrel would probably catch you!” The two laughed and began to tussle.

“I’m gonna be the greatest hunter this forest has seen, he muttered, shaking himself. He glanced wistfully at the two, who continued to wrestle. He peered hopefully outside, but sadly, there was no squirrel in view. He sighed and padded to the back of the den. In the short time he had spent in his small home, he decided that this was his favorite spot. It was out of the way of

his bothersome siblings and there was a hole in the roots that the sun shone through, warming his fur. He lay there thinking for a while, drifting in and out of sleep.

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Simon woke suddenly, fur cold and heavy. He pushed himself up, jumping in surprise when tons of large, white flakes swirled around him. He stumbled to his mother pressing close to her side, fur fluffed up. She gave an amused purr, nudging him away.

“What is that?” He mewed watching as the white puffs drifted lazily down through the hole. His hole. The one that the sunshine always shone through, not where these obtrusive flakes of... of...what was this stuff? His mother had yet to answer his question, busy dealing with Ember and Shade. He pondered for a while, finally running out of patience. He turned to his mother.

“Well?” He mewed, a little louder this time. She looked over at him, still purring.

“It’s called snow,” she mewed, flicking her tail towards the entrance. “It’s cold, but harmless.”

He turned away, daring to venture out of the cave. Gazing around in awe, he noticed a rather large flake drifting his way. Tail twitching in excitement, he leaped into the air, trapping the snowflake in his paws. He landed with a thump, rolling over onto his back. His sister jumped on him, pinning him to the ground. He sneezed when a snowflake landed on his nose, and she jumped off in disgust. Using that to his advantage, he pounced on her back, flying off when something hurtled into him. He looked around dazed, trying to pinpoint what had hit him. Looking back at his sister, he realized that his brother’s light gray pelt had disguised him in the snow. He shook his fur, leaving the two to play. Fluffing his fur up against the cold, he turned around and immediately saw the squirrel he had tried to catch earlier that day. It hopped into the woods, Simon following close behind. He walked for a while, before the squirrel had finally stopped. He dropped down, getting ready to spring, when he smelled an odd scent. He looked around and realized that there was a group of full grown cats approaching. Laying his ears flat, he turned and bolted away, his small legs making him stumble. He turned, noticing that the bigger cats were close behind. He tried to run faster, but just ended up tripping over a log and stumbling into a clearing. He looked around, and realized with a jolt that he was in a clearing full of more cats. He shuddered, turning to bolt, only to barrel straight into one of the cats that had chased him.

**Raegan McCormick**

**Presque Isle Middle School**

**Mr. Blackstone**

**Grade 7**

### **Turisa the Turkey**

Hi, I’m Turisa the Turkey, but my friends call me Turisa. If you don’t know by now I’m a turkey. A turkey’s life is hard because every year Turkey Day comes around. All turkeys should hate turkey day. It’s not what it sounds like either. Turkey day is a day that one turkey will be taken by the farmer and never be seen again. No one knows what happens to them.

I woke up one morning, cooed a little, stood up and shook out my feathers. Then I looked at the calendar. “Holy Crow!” I shouted. Today was the day! Today was Turkey Day. I ran up to my mom and cooed some more until she woke up. “Mom, Mom, Mom! Today is turkey day!” I

cried. Everyone had heard. "I think I said that a little too loud," I said to myself. My mom was a smart turkey. She knew he'd be here soon.

"Run! Hide! Everyone stay out of sight!" My mother cooed. She was a head turkey. Everyone listened to her. Everyone was running around to find a hiding spot, but I stayed put.

"No," I muttered to myself, "today I'm going to fight back! The Farmer has been running our lives for too long! Today is the day we stand up!" The coop was silent, no one knew what to say. No one ever stood up to this. One of my friends popped their head out of the hay she was hiding in. "Turisa, hide please! He's coming." My mother started pleading too. "Please, hide, don't stay out there!" Soon enough the whole crowd of turkeys were pleading and begging to move. But I didn't move.

My family and friends pleaded more, but soon the coop went silent, dead silent. The coop door creaked, cracked, and BANG! The door made a loud sound stating The Farmer is here. I froze. My mother gave one last plead and hid her head back in the hay. I felt my claws lift off the ground as if I was flying. I screamed, "HELP! DON'T LET HIM TAKE ME!" I screamed and hollered but no one came out of their hiding spots. I was alone. No one was with me. I sighed and gave up by the time we left the coop.

I said to myself, "I'm sure they're thinking haha she deserves that. She should've listened."

I finally was taken into the farm house and there was a little girl inside. She hollered, "Papa! No stop! Leave the turkey alone!"

"Silly child I am making us our dinner." The Farmer said.

The child cried, and sputtered out, "You're being a big poopy pants, Papa!"

I started to cry with the child. "Yeah listen to the little girl! She speaks the truth! How would you like it if I broke into your house and cooked you up for dinner?" I said to him. "Actually that might not taste bad." I muttered to myself.

The little girl, whose name was Hazel, said, "Yeah, listen to the turkey." Then Hazel said, "Yeah listen to the turkey Dad!"

"Haha!" He spat out, "The turkey, talk? Hazel, turkeys don't talk. Now go see mom. She'll deal with you while I'm cookin'!"

"Hazel, I like that name," I said while watching. She walked away.

"You do!?" Hazel asked while turning around.

"Why yes, actually it's a beautiful name!" I said "Trust me I speak the truth, and this isn't right. Please help me Hazel."

"You're right! This isn't right!" Hazel said in a low shout.

"Who on Earth are you talking to!?" The Farmer said. "Now get out, I'm trying to make food!"

"No, just listen. Please Papa! The turkey speaks. She spoke to me!" Hazel said while her mother walked out into the kitchen.

"Now Hazel, that's nonsense, but go ahead we'll listen."

"Well uh.. What do I say?" I asked.

Suddenly, there was a scream. It sounded like a little girls scream, but it wasn't Hazel. It was the farmer. He was on the floor backing away from me slowly. Hazel was laughing really hard but somehow managed to spit out, "Haha! Your laugh sounds like a girl!" I couldn't help but laugh a little too, but after I finished snickering at him I said, "Now Hazel, that wasn't very polite." The Farmer managed to get up after his wife ran over and helped him up. "Yeah.. really

funny Hazel, I don't really care... just get that... creature out of here!" He managed to spit out of deep breaths.

I had started to feel my feathers being touched once again but this time I wasn't scared. I was happy, I snuggled in, realizing it was Hazel, and cuddled her. I almost fell asleep when suddenly I was back on the ground. I looked around, Hazel stepping back behind me. "I'm back!" I hollered so everyone around could hear me. I was back with my family! My mother was the first person to pop her head out of the hay.

"Get in here! Hide! It's right behind you!" She whispered.

"No, no, no don't worry she's on our side. Right Hazel?" I said still pretty loud.

"Yeah!" she said making some of the other turkeys come out of their hiding spots.

"Trust me, we are all safe now, Hazel is nice, she saved me! No other turkeys will disappear ever again!" I said, my voice full of pride. Soon after ensuring everyone it was safe, they all came out of their hiding spots, greeted Hazel, and a new tradition began!

Now Turkey Day is what it really sounds like, celebrating the turkeys! It might not be the same in other places, but at least here it is! Everyday Hazel comes into the coop and feeds me and the rest of the turkeys. She'll also take me on a picnic once and awhile. We'd have imaginary tea because her dad didn't support the playdates with the turkeys, but I'd get fertilizer and she'd get her lunch. That is only a little bit of what we do. There is also so much more! This is my story of how I saved the turkeys.

**Lexus Botting**

**Zippel Elementary School**

**Mrs. Buck**

**Grade 5**

### **The "Bear"**

It was midnight. I was exhausted, but the number one rule at Brynna Fox's sleepovers was that you had to stay up until at least 3:00 A.M., but I just couldn't help it. I was drifting off when I heard terrified screams from the other girls. Brynna and Karee were just going to the outhouse. It was a little spooky out there, and in my opinion, I would have held it until daylight, but since the two of them had to go, they decided it would be alright. But they'd been gone for thirty minutes, and I was starting to get worried. Then the screams stopped, and I figured it was just a prank.

I was in a deep sleep, dreaming, when the door SLAMMED shut. I swore I could hear the windows rattling. I heard more shrieking. I bolted upright, screaming a little myself! After all, they sounded like they'd seen a ghost and looked like it, too! Their faces were as white as snow, and they were quaking. I immediately panicked. What on earth could have made them scream and shake all over? I could only think of the ghost story Brynna had told us when it was still light out. It was about a girl who died in these woods. She told us the small child still haunted the woods to that day. I had no more time to think because Karee almost jumped out the window, and Brynna and I had to grab her. Brynna calmed her down enough so she could make decent sentences, so I asked the question that had been numbing my brain, just gnawing to get out.

"What happened?" I asked, trying to sound calm.

"I-I saw a BEAR, that's what happened!" Karee screeched.

I quickly saw the urgency of the situation, and my voice became a mouse's squeak. "Where did you see it?" My efforts to stay calm were definitely failing.

"On the trail by the outhouse! It was so big!" Karee sobbed.

"Guys. Stop. I know what we need to do," Brynna solemnly said.

Grasping her phone, Karee almost listened to Brynna's plan. It was to call 911, but what were they going to do? So I convinced her to stay inside, put the couch against the door, and, my favorite part, stop making my ears bleed. We stayed up, but whenever anything made the tiniest movement, she jumped out of her skin. Breaking branches, squirrels, birds—so many sounds in the woods that weren't bears. But she wouldn't listen to us. She eventually drifted asleep, along with us.

That morning, after a breakfast of Poptarts, we decided to venture off into the woods. Big mistake. Soon enough, we all ran out of the woods screaming our heads off, all because a branch snapped. We were really uptight, so I just looked at them and said, "I'll go look for the bear."

They told me I was crazy, but I was sick and tired of that bear, so I set off into the woods, shivering. I heard something to my right, so I turned, and holy moly, it's—it's—a STUMP?! I saw the squirrel and knew what had happened. Karee had heard the snapping of the branch, went to investigate, saw the stump, and assumed it was a bear.

"So it wasn't a bear?" Brynna asked after I got back.

"Nope," I responded. "Just your imagination going crazy."

"Thank goodness!" Brynna exclaimed. "I thought I'd have to ditch the place!"

At that point, my mom turned into the rocky driveway, so I said my goodbyes and left. Even though there never was a bear, I never want to go into those woods again.

**Charli Casavant**

**Presque Isle Middle School**

**Mrs. Blake**

**Grade 6**

### **The Turkey Plea**

Billy was just a turkey trying to survive. When Thanksgiving comes, he always puts up a fight. A turkey gets chosen every year and he made sure it was never him. Thanksgiving was just around the block and a turkey was about to be chosen again soon.

"Everybody hide!", I yelled. All of the turkeys scattered around until eventually finding their hiding spots. Sooner or later, a man walked through the shed. "Okay, let's see what we have here." His voice was deep and rough. He looked around, eventually eyeing a turkey named Henry. Henry was just a shy, fluffy turkey. He doesn't take talking to others well. Billy watched from afar. He was just an innocent little turkey that never wanted to do harm to anyone! Billy, conflicting first about what to do, then taking action by jumping out of his hiding spot and yelling, "wait!"

The man turned and looked along with Henry, eyeing him nervously...and also curiously. "Don't take him!" Billy shouted. Then finally, "...take me." Henry and the rest of them gasped in shock. He didn't blame them.

"Billy are you being serious right now?!" A turkey named Joey demanded. "Yes I am." The man walked over, letting Henry go. He looked down on Billy. "Very well then."

Henry looked over at him with wide eyes. Surprised he would sacrifice himself for him. Billy took one last look at all the other turkeys. “Well, see you on the cliffside guys.” Then he was gone.

**Keirah-Lynn Thompson**

**Zippel Elementary School Mrs. Hoffses Grade 5**

### **The Diseased Cat**

There was a kid named, Brandon who lived in the outskirts of London. Levi and Brandon were really good friends from school. One night, Brandon and Levi were having a sleepover. They were helping Jessica, Levi’s mom with the garden out back. That’s when Levi and Brandon saw a strange cat outside. It didn’t blink, it just stared at them. The cat finally moved, headed for Levi’s feet and sat in front of him. Levi petted the furry creature, and then the cat left. After the sleepover, Levi started feeling really sick. Brandon went home, and Levi died in his sleep.

Later that week, Brandon was walking to the store across the street when he saw his neighbors on the sidewalk petting something. The figure moved out from under their legs. It was the cat, the same cat that Levi had pet before he died. After that, Brandon went home and put the groceries away.

The next day, Brandon heard the phone ringing, so he went to answer it, but his mom got there first. “Hello, yes, yes, oh no!” She said while covering her mouth. “I’ll be there,” she said with a sigh.

“What was that all about?” Brandon asked.

“Our neighbor, Sierra died.”

“Why, what happened?”

“The doctors said she died from an undetected heart condition called Arrhythmia.”

Brandon went to his room to think. He said to himself, “How could this be possible?” Brandon was worried and he was scared. What if he was next? It has to be the cat that was doing all of this!

Not long after, Brandon was going through his phone, when he got a message from his other best friend, James. He had invited Brandon to go to a carnival with James and his other friends. Brandon was picked up by James and they headed to the carnival. There were so many rides, houses, and roller coasters. All of the friends picked one roller coaster and got on. Brandon buckled his seat belt and waited. The ride went straight up and stopped. Before it dropped, Brandon saw the cat! It was the same cat that Levi and his neighbors pet before they died. Right as the roller coaster started to drop, Brandon yelled out, “STOP THE RID

**Sara Thompson**

**Mapleton Elementary School**

**Mrs. Bernier**

**Grade 5**

## **The Adventurous Camel**

Once there was a spitting camel that traveled a lot by its hooves. This time the camel was going to Wisconsin, but not just anywhere in Wisconsin, he was traveling to a cornfield. It took the camel 3 days and nights to get there. Once the camel got there he began to look around.

First, the spitting camel saw a lake (he jumped into it) and when he got out he looked for something soft so he could go to sleep. The camel looked around. At last the camel saw a cozy place after looking for one hour he saw MOSS with HAY he could use as a blanket. He set up and slept and made sure he got his eight hours.

When he woke up he went back to the lake he saw before so he could go for a morning swim. When the camel got to the lake he heard a buzzing sound, he looked over and saw an angry bee. He said to him, "Good morning bee!" The bee responded, "No, No good morning!" The camel looked at him and said, "Why Not?" (the camel thought the bee was going to sting him so he was nervous) "The sun is too bright and I don't have sunglasses", said the bee. The camel responded, "I have an extra pair I can give to you!" The bee said, "Really? No one has ever done something so nice like that to me." The camel said, "I'm glad we're friends!"

**Jenna Holmes**

**Zippel Elementary School**

**Mrs. Morrison Grade 4**

## **"The Subway Polar Bear."**

Here I sit. On the warm, steady train. Wishing these two more hours would go by quicker. Looking out through the frosted window, but slightly wiped down from my thick fur so I can see. Looking at the colorful, orange, and slightly yellow trees. Seeing the piles of leaves at the end of every yard. Looking, and seeing the people staring at me because I'm just the "Subway polar bear."

The looks I get from the other passengers. The questions.

"Is this a costume?" A confused lady asks. "It isn't even Halloween yet."

"No," I complained, "it's not a costume."

I get looks of disgust a lot. I take up two seats on the train. People won't sit next to me because I'm "scary" to their kids. I'm "scary" to them. The driver. Every Monday and Wednesday Karrie drives. She's amazing. She's the only person who doesn't stare at me, or think I'm scary. Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday Mr. Stripes drives. He isn't so amazing. He stares and laughs at me. Every new person who comes on, he tells them the same old joke..

"Be careful," he says, "the subway polar bear is on. And he might bite."

Yea, abhorrent right.

**Addison Hafford**

**Zippel Elementary School Mrs. Norsworthy**

**Grade 5**

# Seasonal Lore

## Blizzard

It was a cold and stormy day in 2014. There was a terrible blizzard and everything was completely white, nothing could be seen because there was so much snow!

I was wrapped-up on the couch with a blanket, trying to forget about the snow. I could smell hot cocoa even though there was no power at all. Outside there was nothing but snow, everything was covered. Our dog, Shiloh, was playing with her toy, and the cats, Midnight and Princess, were upstairs laying on my Mimi's bed trying to avoid all of us (typical cats). The house was quiet and everyone was off doing their own thing but there was one problem, there was no Christmas music or movies.

I walked over to the window and the glass was freezing and the paint was starting to come off. My mom, dad, and Mimi, were all talking about the damage the snow would cause. I went over to the Christmas tree to fix one of the ornaments. The Christmas tree felt nice, it was kind of prickly but soft at the same time. When I left the living room I went to the kitchen to get some of the hot cocoa that I had smelled earlier. I could also smell vanilla bean candles, burning for some light.

That was how I celebrated the blizzard of 2014. With the warmth of the blankets and candles. Then when the power turned back on I made more hot chocolate and popcorn. Then I sat down on the couch and watched *The Grinch*.

**Madisan Patterson Easton Elementary School**

**Mrs. McQuade**

**Grade 5**

## The Crazy Elf Circus

Hi, my name is Bailey. I am going to tell you about my trip to the crazy elf circus.

I was sleeping and I heard a weird scratching noise, but I kept sleeping because I thought maybe it was my dog meandering in the hall. *Squeak, squeak, squeak*. I woke back up in a place I never saw before. It smelled like Christmas cookies. I sat up to see what that great smell was. Once I looked up, I saw millions of elves! I could not believe my eyes! Then, on accident I yelled, "Hey where am I?!" All the elves looked at me like I was crazy.

One of the elves came up to me and said, "Well, I will take you to Santa. We can ask him." So that elf took me to see Santa. We walked down a long hallway with lights so bright that they may have been brighter than Rudolf's nose! When we got there, I heard, "Hohoho! Come sit near me Bailey." So, I went so sit near Santa.

"Why did you take me here?" I asked.

"I took you here because you are at the top of my nice list so you deserved it. Also, I need your help. Now, the elves have had too much oozing marshmallow cream! I gave them a little bit, but they stole the bag from me and ate it all! They are too hyper so can you watch them while I do my work?" Santa asked.

"Okay." I agreed to the job.

"What do you want for christmas Bailey?" Santa asked.

"I want a new bike."

“Okay, Bailey follow me to my secret workshop.”

As we walked into the workshop the lights were dimmed because it was a secret place. There were toys everywhere! There were cans of paint and glitter on work shelves with paint brushes, nails, hammers, and stickers too. He brought me to the bike section.

“Okay, pick out your new bike.” Santa said.

I looked around at all the bikes and chose one. It was teal, shiny, and a mountain bike style. It was about 2 and a half feet tall.

“Bailey, now you got your payment. You go get to work. Oh and don’t tell anyone about this okay?” So I agreed.

I went to the wrapping room and all the elves said, “Welcome back!”, but some of the elves were pretending to be Batman. I could tell that the oozing marshmallow cream was kicking in. It was a crazy elf circus up in here.

“Okay everybody, listen up! Santa told me to look after you because you ate a little too much oozing marshmallow cream.” I explained to them.

So they asked me to help them wrap gifts and put the bows on the presents and write who it goes to. Soon, we were done. All we had to do is put them in Santa’s sack.

Once we were done, I went to go see santa and he took me home in his sleigh. When we got into the sleigh, Santa let me do the famous calling routine. “Now Dasher, Dancer, Prancer, Vixen. On Comet, Cupid, Donner, and Blitzen.” I called to the reindeer. We took off into the sky.

Then, when I got home my mom asked me where I had been. I told her I had been at Kailey’s house all day. Surprisingly, she believed me! I thought she would not believe me and umm I thought I would have to tell her because she found my bike! I just told her that my friend got it for me as a christmas gift. I’m so glad this all worked out in the end. Merry Christmas to all!

**Brinley Voisine**

**Fort Kent Elementary School**

**Miss Devoe**

**Grade 4**

### **The Catastrophic Ice Snowman**

It came down as quick as The Flash. It sat on cars, pushed down trees, blocked all traffic. It was a gigantic snowman right in the middle of the road! People got out of their cars to see it, and it was around fifty times the size of an adult. There was no way they were going to get this off of the road in time for people to get to their Christmas parties and family feasts. Nothing like this had ever happened in Toronto, Canada. No one knew where it came from or what to expect from it. This story was probably going to be blowing up on the Canadian news and go down in history!

Townpeople were walking down to the police station to ask the police officers to get the snowman out of the way. The police station was crowded with people yelling and telling them, “Get that thing off the road!” So the police went down to check it out. It was way too large and too heavy for them to just push aside. One of the policeman thought for a minute and said, “Well, we could try to tow the snowman out of the way.”

Another one said, “Maybe we could get a helicopter to fly it out of here.”

The chief said, "We'll tow it off in the morning."

The next morning, the police got right to work, but when they got to the site where the snowman was yesterday... it was gone from the road, but somehow the giant snowman was sitting on a house. The chief said, "Oh no!" They investigated the house to see if there were any bodies stuck inside. There didn't seem to be anybody in the house. So they tried to tow the giant snowman away, but it wouldn't budge. It was like the snowman was putting all its weight on the house and ground. "We'll have to wait and figure something out tomorrow. Let's just see if it gets out of the way," said the chief.

The next morning it was too foggy to attempt to move the giant snowman so the police officers waited until after lunch to get to work. When they got to it, they thought it looked the same, but it wasn't. One of the policemen walked around just to make sure. "What...?" said one policeman.

The chief yelled, "What?"

"Come here!" said the policeman.

On the back of the snowman's head it said, "DON'T touch" and "DON'T move me".

"What do we do now?" asked one of them in a whiny voice.

"We are going to plow the snowman out. But we will have to wait until tomorrow when we can get all of the right equipment. Everyone get a good night sleep," the chief told them all.

Early the next morning they got right to work. Thankfully, the snowman had not changed at all, and by this time they had the plow with them. The plow tried to push it, but it wouldn't move. So they tried again. Nothing. They tried about ten times, but the snowman wouldn't budge. They didn't see that the blade of the plow was cracked. On the twelfth push the blade on the plow snapped in half. The snowman didn't even get a scratch on it! It was like this giant snowman was invincible. "What do we do now chief?" asked one of the police officers.

The chief inspected the snowman more closely. It seemed to be made of solid ice.

The chief said, "Men, go back to the police station and get the pick axes."

When they got back with the pick axes they all started to whack the ice snowman. After a while they started to see a crack. It was working but it was starting to get late. They just had one more piece left to break into pieces. They all took about five hits a then BOOM! The ice that was on the snowman shattered into pieces. "Nice work everybody," said the chief. Then the chief got three big trucks to take all the ice pieces away.

When they all got back to the police station he announced to the town that it is safe to get onto the roads again and he hoped this ice snowman never came back. Everyone got into their cars and drove to their Christmas celebrations.

**Raiden Cochran**

**Easton Elementary School**

**Mrs. McQuade**

**Grade 6**

### **The Elf Who Tries to Ruin Christmas**

The night before Christmas, all the elves were working very hard. All but one elf that is. The elf's name was Tim. Tim was not an ordinary elf. He hated Christmas! No one ever knew

why. He was such a grumpy elf. The other elves were wondering why he was an elf to begin with.

That night Tim and his friend, Biscuit, went to town. He did not want her to come, but Biscuit has a habit of following Tim wherever he goes. Back at Santa's village, Santa and Mrs. Claus were worried about Biscuit and Tim! Tim had an evil plan to ruin Christmas but did not want Biscuit to know. While strolling through town, Tim started to flick and tap his nose. Suddenly a whole bunch of gold dust was going around Biscuit and Tim. As the dust started to settle, Biscuit noticed their surroundings had changed. They were now inside. Biscuit was very confused of what was going on. Tim told her not to speak, so she didn't.

They were in someone's house! Tim looked around and started to take all of their stockings, presents, and tree. He did the same to all of the houses in town. Finally, Biscuit stood up to Tim. She said, "I know you have never been a happy type of person. But I believe, yes I believe, deep down inside of you, you have a good place in your heart."

Tim felt awful about what he had been doing! They only had one hour left until daylight. If he wanted to return all of the belongings to their owners, he would have to work fast. Together they worked steady for the full hour, until they had just about 3 minutes left. Tim and Biscuit still had one more house. They used some of Tim's magic. With a flick and tap of his nose, they returned all of the items to the last house.

Christmas morning came. Tim drank hot cocoa, ate Christmas cookies, and opened presents. He was filled with joy. Tim turned out to be a very happy elf, and lived a good rest of his life with Biscuit.

**Jaici Rosie-Carney      Washburn District Elementary School      Miss Smith      Grade 6**

### **Letter to Mother Nature: A Sonnet**

Dearest Mother Nature, how I adore thee.  
For all things living do thee tenderly care.  
From the smallest flow'r to the tallest tree,  
From the largest ox to the tiny hare.  
Thou protect us in the palm of thy hand,  
Hold us in the cradle of thy arm.  
Through the harsh winds, helping us to stand,  
To no living creature come any harm.  
Thy gown the plains, thy hair the riv'rs flowing.  
The sky, the color of thy beautiful eyes.  
Thou are like a tree, always steady and growing.  
Thou are like the sun, shining in dark skies.  
Thy arms are always open wide,  
Thou waiting patiently at our side.

**Maggie Bell      Caribou Middle School      Ms. Crawford      Grade 6**

## A Christmas Eve Dance

It was the twenty-fourth of December--Christmas Eve. After a great deal of preparation, Santa was *finally* ready to go and deliver presents to all the good little boys and girls. As he approached his sleigh, Santa suddenly thought he heard a reindeer calling.

“That’s odd. I already have all of *my* reindeer harnessed to the sleigh.”

Santa walked toward the trees in the direction of the sound he had heard. He soon came upon a small clearing in the woods. There, in the clearing, he saw a reindeer. It was dancing all by itself! Santa walked toward the reindeer. He simply wanted to say hello. Unfortunately, Santa startled the reindeer, and it ran off.

Of course it was snowing, but Santa decided to try and follow the reindeer tracks anyway. He really wanted to find him. After walking a short distance, Santa finally found the reindeer lying down in the snow. As he slowly walked toward the reindeer, Santa realized that it had hurt its foot.

Santa reached out to touch the reindeer’s foot. The frightened reindeer tried to get up, but it just could not walk. Every time it tried to walk away, the reindeer just fell down.

Santa was determined to help. He decided to give it one more try. Santa slowly reached out his hand and gently touched the reindeer’s foot. This time, the reindeer let him. As Santa touched the reindeer’s injured foot, it was magically healed. The reindeer was so happy that he started to dance. He even invited Santa to dance with him!

Santa was very surprised. He did not know that a reindeer could dance like that. He invited the reindeer to join him and the other reindeer for their Christmas Eve ride. That night, they successfully delivered all the presents to all the good little boys and girls around the world.

Lydia Qualey

Katahdin Middle/High School

Ms. Bouchard

Grade 6

## Reindeer Auditions

Once there was a reindeer. The reindeer’s name was Dancer. Dancer loved to fly. One day she was skipping around when she found a poster that Santa had put up telling about auditions for a place on the reindeer team. He needed extra reindeer to pull his sleigh because there were more well behaved kids this year. He had more gifts to deliver causing his sleigh to be heavier. The winner at the auditions would get to be on his sleigh team.

Dancer was excited. She went down to Santa’s workshop. She was very well known and helpful. The elves knew she would audition so they had already made her cute little pink boots with snowflake designs on them. Then she went to the reindeer clothes’ designer and Wendy, who was the store owner, gave her a little pink outfit with blue bells on it. Dancer went to the dressing room and put her boots and outfit on. She was adorable.

Finally, it was time for auditions. She lined up in the very long line. Would she ever get a turn?

A half hour passed. Finally, it was Dancer’s turn. She was a bit nervous. She started with a flip, but landed with a slip.

Santa said, "Go ahead. Try again."

Dancer tried again, but fell and hurt her leg. She flew out of the room in a flash, tears rolling down her cheeks. She decided to go home and lay down. After a night of rest, she felt better.

When Santa rang the doorbell, Dancer had a confused look on her face. She opened the door and saw the whole reindeer village at her door. Dancer was so surprised.

"Dancer," Santa said with a smile. "The way you flew from the stage in a flash convinced me how fast you could fly. Would you join my reindeer team?"

Dancer cried tears of joy. She had finally gotten her Christmas wish!

**Garnet Gillette**

**Connor School**

**Mrs. Lugdon**

**Grade 6**

### **The Scarecrow**

During a dark and chilly fall night, I woke up rather hungry, so I crept downstairs to get a snack. As I passed the front door window, I noticed my scarecrow was missing!

I pressed my face against the cold window to look outside, I thought maybe my mom took my scarecrow inside so squirrels won't eat it. I went back upstairs with a handful of marshmallows and climbed back into bed.

A shrill laughter broke the silence and I woke up quickly. I tried to go back to sleep, but the laughter got louder. I went for my phone as a source of light. I slowly leaned down and shined it under my bed. I saw a flash of glowing eyes, so I quickly jumped out of bed and turned on the light. With my heart pounding I dove into bed. I hid under my pillows and stayed like that the whole night.

I didn't get any sleep and I didn't hear anything the whole night either so I thought to myself, "I must have had a bad dream." I didn't want to seem crazy so I didn't tell anyone what happened.

It was breakfast time so I went downstairs to eat. While I was eating my breakfast my mom asked where the scarecrow was. I was terrified and I said, "I don't know." Lying to mom was my first mistake.

The bus was here so I got up and rushed out the door. On the bus on the way to school someone kicked my seat so hard I jumped and quickly turned around and staring back at me was my scarecrow! I rushed to another seat and when I looked back, nothing was there!

When I got to school I ran straight to the restroom and splashed cold water on my face. I thought, "I must be losing my mind."

During recess when I felt as if someone was following me, I looked back and the scarecrow was there again! I tried running away but my chest hurt from running and how hard my heart was pounding. It felt like he was close enough to touch me. My legs were about to stop so I quickly rushed behind a tree. It felt like I was hiding for an eternity. I realized recess was over and all the doors were locked. I was too scared to stay at school so I walked home. No one was home but I stayed anyway, that was my second mistake.

I got a glass of milk to calm down. I made sure all the doors were locked and the curtains were closed and then I quietly went upstairs. I locked my bedroom door but as I was closing the curtains I noticed someone walking down the street. As I looked closer I realized it was the scarecrow and he looked straight at me and slowly pointed his crooked stick finger at me. I quickly shut the curtains and crawled under my bed. He was laughing as he quietly turned the doorknob. I didn't move. I stayed as quiet as possible. I was so quiet he didn't find me. I don't know what was going through my mind but I followed him.

I heard laughter coming from the kitchen. I tried to think of how to get rid of him. I had eaten a banana for breakfast and I forgot to pick it up, so I grabbed the banana peel from the table and threw it in front of his feet without him noticing and he slipped. As quick as I could I grabbed the kitchen faucet and sprayed him and slowly he started melting away until he was just a pile of straw.

By the time my mom got home I had cleaned up the scarecrow. She was still upset that the scarecrow was missing so I made her another one.

By the time I was done building the other one I saw it blink. Building the other scarecrow was the worst mistake I have ever made.

**Sophia Archer**

**Zippel School**

**Mrs. Norsworthy**

**Grade 5**

### **The Halloween Curse**

During a dark and chilly cold night, I woke up to get a midnight snack, but as I was walking by the window I saw that my scarecrow was missing...

I figured that maybe my parents had moved the scarecrow so I really didn't really think that it was that weird. I was getting ready for school in the morning when I looked out my window and saw my scarecrow was out in the backfield. I grabbed my shoes and ran downstairs to go and get my scarecrow but by the time I got to the backfield the scarecrow wasn't there. I heard my bus coming so I had to go...

I arrived at school and was talking to my friend Ally at break time when I noticed that my teacher had the same belt that my scarecrow did. I asked him where he got the belt and he said that he had got it from an old friend of his. I found it weird but I wasn't about to question the guy who gives me A's. I decided I'd look for my scarecrow after school.

I got home from school and I immediately went inside and put on some warmer clothes, socks, and my boots. I was heading outside when my dog (Tiger) ran past me and almost tripped me! I immediately ran after Tiger when he suddenly halted at a tree. I looked around the tree but there wasn't anything there, when suddenly Tiger turned around and started barking at me! I turned my head around slowly and there I saw my scarecrow. I ran back to my house as fast as I could! Not looking back once.

That night I was almost asleep when I heard a rustling of leaves below my window I got out of bed slowly and quietly put on my slippers and jacket so I wouldn't wake my parents. I slowly walked down the stairs and quietly opened my front door as a cold chilly breeze blew

across my face making me shiver. I slowly walked over to the bush under my window and looked in it, realising there was nothing there, when suddenly I heard my window slowly opening. My head flew up and there I saw the scarecrow standing in the frame of my window, just a black silhouette of him. I ran into the house slamming my front door behind me and running up the stairs as fast as I could flinging my bedroom door open to see nothing... absolutely nothing. Suddenly thunder clapped! I looked behind me and there was my scarecrow...

I jumped back onto my bed and held my pillow as if I was gonna throw it at him. He then said, please, give me a chance to explain, I then said okay go ahead. He then said look I'm really sorry about everything, I just have to tell you something really quick before the clock strikes midnight. I haven't been trying to "torture" you or "hurt" you in any way at all! But I needed to let you know that I'm Mr. Adam, my family has a curse that was put on them generations ago, and they've never been able to break it. Before my father passed he told me how to break the curse. He said that in order to break the curse I had to tell someone before the clock strikes midnight on Halloween night but the whole time I have to "scare" them or else it wouldn't have worked. I then said," Well, congratulations Mr. Adam you have successfully scared me oh so bad and broken the curse."

**Isabella Rogers**

**Zippel School**

**Mrs. Norsworthy**

**Grade 5**

### **Christmas Eve**

Christmas,  
Shining snow and twinkling lights.  
Decorated houses and yards.  
Children sleeping.  
Elves working on toys for the young.  
Reindeer getting saddled up.  
Santa in his sleigh.  
Elves loading presents for Santa  
And off he goes!

**Maude Drew**

**Zippel Elementary**

**Mrs. Watson**

**Grade 4**

## Rhyme The Seasons

It all began when....

Giggles and laughter filled the air, and snow angles flared,  
Sleigh bells ring when you feel the tinga ling ling in your feet,  
Santa HO HO HO'S when you snow blow,  
Bye-Bye it is time to fly into Spring,  
Bye-Bye.

When the sky rains it is in pain,  
When the sky is in pain feel free to go running around in the rain,  
Jump jump, JUMP on your feet spin around because you're FREE,  
Muddy puddles, Muddy puddles are brown just as brown when things make me frown,  
Bye-Bye it is time to fly into Summer,  
Bye-Bye.

When flowers are blooming it's time to start vrooming,  
Lets go on vacation and get in the pool with a big floatation device,  
Lets jump in the pool with a big SPLASH and a CRASH,  
Lets jump on the tramp and go as high as the sky,  
Have an Ice cold root beer float on a boat,  
Bye-Bye it is time to fly into Fall,  
Bye-Bye.

The birds are tweeting and the woodpeckers are beating, so let's go and play today,  
Rake and rake there are little flakes falling,  
Crackle crinkle leaves are wrinkled,  
Flying swooping leaves, and it's time to leave,  
Bye-Bye it's time to fly away,  
Bye-Bye.

It is always a magical time wherever and whenever  
You just have to believe in yourself and  
Believe in magic

**Taylor York**

**Mapleton Elementary School**

**Ms. Black**

**Grade 5**

**Adventure**

## The Big Races

One hot, sunny, summer day in Los Angeles, California, James Gaddis, Elijah Jay, Ben Porter, and Hunter Sanford were racing. James was in a 2014 Audi r8, Elijah was in a 2016 McLaren p1, Ben was in a 2012 GTR and Hunter was in a gt3rs Porsche. But they could not race because everyone's car ran out of gas when we were doing donuts in the driveway. Anyway, we drove the truck, A.K.A. country boy mobile; anyway, we were heading to the gas station and got twenty gallons of gas.

We put the gas in the very expensive supercar and we raced and we totally did NOT get pulled over because we were going 120 in a 40. The cop told us not to go three times the speed limit and he gave us all tickets! So, the next time we raced we made sure we would not street race and we made sure of that!

Seven years later, well, guess what we did..... we had a street race, but this time there was a twist; all of the cars were supercharged and went double the speed!!! So, we raced and made sure we had gas this time. And Officer Ben pulled Ben over and gave him a ticket, but because he was seven years older he looked different and he forgot that he gave him a ticket before. But somehow the rest of got away. Because Ben got pulled over, he and his GTR came in last, James was second to last with his Audi r8, Hunter was in second place with his GT3RS and Elijah was in first place with his McLaren p1. But it was a very close call between the McLaren and GT3RS. But Elijah did win. Not to brag or anything, but they all put in five hundred thousand dollars and I won one and a half a million dollars. For the third time there was another race, but fifteen million dollars on the line and we had to switch cars!!

James switched to Nissan GTR, Elijah swished to the Audi r8, Hunter to the McLaren and Ben was in the GT3RS Porsche. We were only going sixty miles an hour when Officer Ben pulled James over and said, "Did you steal this car because I just pulled Ben Porter yesterday." "No, no. I didn't steal this car. Ben and I switched cars for a race." "Oh you are getting a ticket anyway," said the police. "I was not even speeding. The speed limit is sixty-five. I was going sixty!" "Oh, okay. I guess I will be more careful about who I pull over." "Okay you do that," said James. The cop said, "Do not go over sixty-five." The cop watched us race, but we did not go over sixty-five. We went sixty-four. James Gaddis came in last place because he got pulled over in the Nissan GTR; Ben Porter in third place with the GT3RS Porsche, in second place was Hunter Sanford with the McLaren p1. It was a close call, but Elijah Jay won the fifteen million dollars.

Elijah bought all of his friends a one million dollar house so they could move out of their parents' basement. Elijah also bought each of his friends a Ferrari. But he uses four of the five million dollars to buy a Nissan GTR, Audi r8, GT3RS Porsche, Ferrari and a Tesla cyber truck. And put the rest towards gas for his car collection and also for food.

**Elijah Jay**

**Mill Pond School**

**Ms. Saucier Grade 4**

## **The Bear Attack**

“Don’t let your supper get cold!” Mom hollered from the kitchen.

“Okay,” I hollered back. I looked up at the beautiful stars above me.

“Johnny!” Mom, hollered again.

“I’m coming!” I groaned back. I licked my plate clean, and it was time for bed. So... I walked upstairs and leaped into my big comfy bed.

Mom came upstairs and said, “it’s time that you should be able to stay home alone. I’m going to a meeting at work tomorrow. Ms.Won will be in her house. If anything goes wrong she’ll be right there.”

I woke up the next morning jumping up and down. Slam! The front door went shut. I jumped out of my bed and ran to the basement. I got my shiny rifle and went outside hoping I would see some type of creature. Crack! I held my breath thinking it was a deer. I whirled around to see a giant grizzly bear in front of me. I dropped my gun and bolted to the house as fast as I could. I turned around again to see that the bear was still right on my tail. “Ms.Won!” I screamed with all my might, but she didn’t hear me. Just then I saw Mom’s car pull into the driveway. She just picked up my older brother Fred. Help! I heard a voice call, and then I noticed it was mine. Then I heard my Mom talking. She said, “Fred, go see what your brother wants. Just go hunting with him or something. I have a surprise for him when you guys get home. Don’t stay out there too long.”

There was air flying past Fred as he went running to the basement to get his gun. Fred thought to himself, “I am so happy that I’m able to go hunting with Johnny.” Once he got down there he saw a bear chasing me. He had no idea what I was doing down there without a gun. Just then Fred saw my gun about thirteen yards away from me. Fred was thinking about tossing it to me, but it would be too late. Just then my brother approached, he picked up his rifle and shot the big Grizzly. I was terrified and really happy that my brother came just in time.

**Austin Quimby      Mill Pond Elementary School      Mrs. Drew      Grade 4**

## **EXIT**

Once there were a group of friends. Their names were Taylor, Katie, Leah, Angel, Makena, and Olivia. They all were so excited for tonight because their moms had a surprise for them. They all had so many ideas on what the surprise could be. Taylor said, “Maybe the surprise is that we’re going to have one big slumber party”.

“Yeah, and it could be at my house,” said Katie since she had the biggest house and lived the closest to school. The girls all agreed that it was one big slumber party.

It was the end of the day at their school, and they were getting ready to go home. All of the girls rushed to Katie’s house and took off their jackets and hats. They also took their sneakers off and went to sit in Katie’s theater room to watch a movie. Katie’s mom came and got the girls. They all jumped right to their feet when she came in. Katie’s mom told the girls to go upstairs and put their jackets, hats, and sneakers back on and then wait for her in the car. Finally they

were all in the car and off to the surprise destination. Taylor kept asking Katie's mom what their surprise was, but she refused to tell them.

Once they arrived, the smiles on their faces were wiped away. They were at this creepy house that had only one window and a roof that was half finished. The grass was dead and looked like it hadn't been mowed in years. The girls were terrified. Taylor whispered, "I think we're at the wrong house."

"No, we're at the right place," said Katie's mom. When all the girls got inside, Katie's mom shut the door and locked it from the outside. It took the girls about 5 seconds to notice that the door was locked and they were locked inside. What the girls didn't know was that there was no light switch and all they had was the one window. When they finally figured that out, they started to scream. They then noticed that there was a tv so they turned it on. "Welcome to our scary escape room," said the voice on the tv, "You will have three clues available whenever you want them but here's the catch, you only get three clues so use them wisely," said the tv voice again. So the girls started to look for clues. All of sudden, Makena shouted, "I found a clue!"

All the girls rushed over and read the note out loud, "If you want to escape you need to retrace".

Taylor said, "What does that mean?"

Katie shouted, "It must mean that we need to retrace our steps!" So Katie retraced her steps while all the girls watched her in shock. Once Katie retraced her steps they heard a door unlock. They all rushed to the front door, but it didn't unlock. The girls wondered what door could be unlocked. Angel leaned against a bookshelf in frustration. The bookshelf turned, and there was a secret passage. They ran down the stairs but back upstairs the the bookshelf closed. Then they saw another tv so they turned that one on, and it said, "Great job you passed the first test now it's time for the next test. What is black and white and is read all over?"

"A clock," shouted Katie .

"You are wrong! One life left," said the tv.

Taylor thought hard and then shouted out, "A newspaper!" The tv then showed emoji faces that looked shocked.

"No one has ever passed that question," said the voice on tv. Then the bookshelf opened, the front door was unlocked and slammed open. All of the girls rushed up the stairs and out the door.

Taylor said, "We finally exited!"

The girls all wondered what kind of surprise that was and why their mom would do that to them.

**Cassidy McBreairty      Fort Kent Elementary School      Mrs. Nadeau      Grade 5**

### **The Elite Test**

One day a boy named Mark received a strange letter from a weird mailman wearing a black jumpsuit. "Strange," Mark said. "Mister," he tried to say to the mailman, but all he could see was smoke. After the smoke disappeared, nothing was there. Soon Mark opened the letter and a small, tiny sized ninja ran up Mark's hand. The ninja whispered to him about an elite ninja

class. Mark gasped in amazement. All Mark could hear was, “shhhhhhh,” from the tiny ninja whispering. He told Mark where the class was located, and it was in China, hidden underground. “How do you expect me to get to China” Mark asked the tiny ninja.

As Mark was standing on his doormat, whoosh! Mark zoomed down underground all the way to china. It took 6 seconds! BOOM! He was shot down to a secret underground with a 890 inch tower. There was a long hallway with 20 classmates, then 560 steps and 80 more classes.

Mark said, “Let's start the day.” In Mrs.O’Blairs, she teaches the class how to work well with other ninjas. The room had a calendar, a white board, and big books. “This is going to be an awesome day,” Mark thought. Soon the class bully came in, her name was Britney Smears, she had blond hair and wore a shirt with a cat on it.

“Haha, look at Mark! He's still wearing his pajamas,” she chanted. Mark was embarrassed, “It wasn't my fault! You don’t expect to fall under your doormat every day. Do you?” Mark asked.

“No, but at least I didn't come in with pajamas,” Brittney snorted. Mrs. O’Blair ordered Brittney to sit in her seat.

It was gym time and Mark was terrified. The sport was called, “The Legend of Strength and Speed.” “It’s self explanatory, I’m Mr. Kakashi. Today we will have a race and then the winner will get to have wall running shoes. Now we shall start in 3..2..1.. Go,” said the teacher. Mark and Brittney were tied when they got to the ladder, then they climbed up, next they had to dodge bean bags, then make a far jump, 4 meters long and lastly there were bounce springs. Brittney tripped because random walls would appear out of the ground or come down from the roof. Mark finished 2 seconds before Brittney and got wall runners. Mark would have to run on walls, and show his class how good he is at wall running. He was good, quickly.

It was katana practice after gym class, and then ninja star practice, then samurai armour for being the best ninja. Mark said, “This was a good day.” He jumped into the tube to speed him back to his house, and zoomed into bed with ninja speed shoes, and went to sleep for the next day.

**Deyshaun Houtz      Fort Kent Elementary School      Mrs. O’Clair      Grade 4**

### **The Adventures of Fred 1: The Great Adventure**

“Hi James,” Fred called as he slowly swam back to shore for a rest.

“Hey Fred,” James called back.

Fred had finally made it to shore and collapsed on the sand, pulling his head into his shell, as he drifted off into a deep, deep, sleep.

Fred woke with a jolt when he heard: “Chop...Chop...Chop...Thump.” Fred knew what was happening, he had drills for it at school. Humans were chopping away at their forest! He saw others running to the pond, probably to get to the river. Fred knew he had to leave too. But where was James?

The next thing Fred knew, he was running into the forest to look for James.

As he was running he found one of the trees getting dragged away by one of the human’s strange machines. Could James be with the humans, trapped in one of those machines? Had they

taken Fred's best friend away? Fred's stomach was in knots, he needed to find James, but first, he needed shelter. He ran into the woods, and hid in a hole in a tree.

When Fred came out, he was the only one in sight. He tried searching the pond and even the river, but nobody was to be seen, that is nobody except the underground animals.

Fred started asking if anyone had seen where everyone else went. At last, he got an answer, not from where he was looking, when he asked a groundhog.

"Did you see where everyone went?" asked Fred.

"Of course," said the groundhog, whose name was Joe.

"Where did they go?" Fred asked.

"Where did who go?" Joe asked.

"You said you knew where everyone else went," Fred said.

"Oh...right! This is my family," said Joe as his family came out of the hole.

"No! I mean all of the—oh forget it," Fred yelled angrily.

"Okay. You're welcome!" said Joe as Fred stomped off.

As Fred left Joe, he spotted something green. He looked harder, it moved! His heart leaped with joy! Could it be James? He ran off toward it. No, it wasn't James, but it was another one of his friends!

"Caleb!" Fred yelled as he ran off towards his friend.

"Fred!?" yelled Caleb so loud that you could hear it from a mile away.

"Oh Caleb, am I glad to see you!" Fred yelled back. "Where is everyone else?" he asked.

"Everyone else? I thought I could ask you that," said Caleb.

"Well then what happened?" asked Fred.

"Well, I was running away with everyone else when I hurt one of my legs. James tried to help bu—" said Caleb when Fred cut him off.

"Wait, wait, wait, James?" asked Fred.

"Let me finish," said Caleb, "James tried to help me, but I was too slow. I told him to let me go, he hesitated but finally left to the pond. I started to limp towards the pond, and when I looked back, he was gone," Caleb replied.

"How is your leg feeling?" asked Fred.

"Fine now, why?" answered Caleb.

"Because I'm looking for James, want to come with?" said Fred.

"Sure," replied Caleb.

Later in the day, they spotted something moving in the bushes ahead. When they walked closer to see what it was something brown jumped out ahead of them.

"Boo!"

It was Joe.

"Who is this?" Caleb asked in confusion.

"This is Joe the groundhog," answered Fred "I talked to him right before I found you. Oh and don't try to get anything out of him, he's not very smart."

"Okay," said Caleb, "Hi Joe, I'm Caleb."

"Well, if we are going to find James we should get going. Joe, want to come with?" said Fred.

"Okay," answered Joe.

"Then let's get a move on," yelled Caleb, who was already far ahead of them.

"Are we looking for one of your friends?" asked Joe as he and Fred ran up to Caleb.

"Yes, why?" replied Fred.

“Because I saw one get carried off in this truck, it had a big sign on it that said AQUARIUM. It went this way,” answered Joe.

“Okay, you take the lead then,” said Caleb.

That night, Fred, Caleb, and Joe arrived where Joe said the humans took James. Then, they found a cluster of bushes to sleep in.

–BAM!–Fred jolted awake. It took him a moment to find where he was. Then he remembered, he was looking for his friend James. He started to run, full of fear, back to their camp. He had to warn his friends!

“Get up, get up, get up!” Fred yelled as he ran, “The humans are coming!”

Fred and his friends got up and started running, but the truck was getting nearer! They ducked into a hole just in time. There was a loud roaring as the truck passed over them. Then all was silent.

They made it back to the aquarium and made it inside. They found a hall with a sign saying: SEMI-AQUATIC. They walked down it and then spotted James! But he was in a small glass room.

“James, can you hear me!?” Fred said, knocking on the glass.

James nodded.

“We have got to get him out of there!” Caleb said

Caleb, Fred, and Joe went back the way they came, and then spotted a door saying: EMPLOYEES ONLY. When they went in, there were halls just like the ones outside of the door. They went the way they did outside of the door, and Joe insisted on bringing this shiny silver thing.

When they found James again, there was a door. They tried to open it, but it wouldn’t move. Then Joe accidentally stuck one of his shiny things into a hole in the door. He tried to pull it out, but it just turned. When it turned, they heard a click. They tried to open the door again, and it worked!

They helped James out, and led him through the woods, back home.

When they got back, it was already afternoon, and all of Fred’s friends and family were back! They told their stories, but best of all, they knew how to get anyone back from the woods.

**Alexander Grange**

**Fort Kent Elementary**

**Mrs. Roy**

**Grade 5**

### **Lucky Boomer**

On a stormy night all you could hear was rain, thunder, and the sound of a baby crying he was lost on an old muddy road. Three days later, a horse pulling a wagon with a mean old crook smoking a cigar in it. In the old wagon was lots of stuff like a mattress, a bookshelf, and an oil lamp it. The old crook was always on the go after what happened so long ago.

The crook was named Lucky Boomer. Lucky Boomer would take anything to help him rob Arizona's largest bank. Lucky Boomer had wanted to take this from the people of Tucson. When old Lucky was just little fella when they noticed that all of the money in the school safe was missing. The hot sun beat down on the playground pit. Lucky was guilty. There was no

doubt about it. They searched from head to toe and they of course found it in the money in little Lucky's locker. After recess they kicked little Lucky out and he was like a lone star cowboy.

“What is this?” the crook declared. Lucky Boomer smiled, “A baby. His name is Dusty. He will be my new assistant.”

As Dusty grew up, he looked up to Lucky and became the second baddest bandet in the world. Then went over to a convenience store no one cared as much for him as the store clerk, Amelia. She had a beautiful dutch accent.

“Well good morning Dusty,” Amelia greeted him with a huge smile.

“Good morning Amelia, Lucky needs some cigars and he's feeling very cheerless,” Dusty swiped the cigars of the counter.

Amelia and Dusty chuckled over many different things. Only if they knew that right through a shelf there was a woman named Sandy. Sandy was the same age as Dusty 21. She heard Dusty and Amelia say...

“What are your eyes on today?” Amelia asked.

“The one,” Dusty explained.

“The one! You mean Tucson largest bank! WOW!” Amelia said with a hefty shout.

Sandy chased out of the store and Dusty ran after her.

“Hey, I know what you heard and I have a sick old bandet in my wagon home.” Dusty boasted.

“But you are gonna take my money!” Sandy whaled.

It was bone-chilling for Dusty to say, “I won't rob the bank as long as you don't turn me in and you become my friend.”

“Ok, but I have to turn this man in you were buying the cigars for,” Sandy agreed.

“Ok, his name is Lucky Boomer.

They turned old Lucky Boomer in and Dusty and Sandy became the best of friends. But they still lived in the wagon home.

**Hannah Shaw**

**Fort Street Elementary**

**Mrs. Lento**

**Grade 6**

### **The Crash**

“Why Mom?” Cristo asked. His mom didn't want to break the news about moving. Cristo, I am sorry but we have to it's too dangerous in this place. Grandfather just passed and there is no use for us to stay here. We need to leave. Cristo was upset and didn't want to leave. He ran into his room and stuffed his face into his pillow. Later on that afternoon his mother came into his room and said we leave in three days.

Cristo ate dinner with his mother as they discussed why they were leaving. Cristo asked, “Why can't we leave right now if we have to go?” His mother said, “There is only one plane that goes from Haiti to Florida and we are out of fuel right now.” Cristo wondered why there was only one plane that goes from Haiti to Florida. Cristo was still upset. Cristo lost his dad two months ago due to a motorcycle crash. Cristo was hurt but knew that there was no bringing him back. Ricardo was Cristo's father and they did everything together.

Cristo went to bed that night thinking about what it will be like in the United States. They were moving to Tampa Bay, Florida. His mother was excited about the move and he didn't know why she felt no sadness on leaving Hati behind. Cristo was starting to understand why it was right for them to leave. He soon fell asleep and woke up the next morning. He sat with his mother at the table for breakfast. He told her that he gets why it is the right thing to do. He started to pack his bags and saying his goodbyes. He was happy to go to a better place but didn't want to leave his friends. The next day he was getting on the airplane and starting a new life.

The next day he went to the airport. It was time to say his final goodbyes to his family. He was ready to leave. They sat at the boarding station getting ready to board the airplane. He started walking through the tunnel and into the plane. He got to his seat and put his bags in the compartment above him. He sat next to his mother. He was nervous as he had never been on a plane but heard stories of planes and what can go wrong. Cristo looked up and saw the compartment where the oxygen masks are stored in case of an emergency.

As the steward walked down the center aisle to get everyone seated, he saw how there are tables that pull out in front of him. He watched as the worker brought snacks and drinks for people to enjoy on the ride. Cristo sat and waited to take off on the runway. He heard the pilot on the intercom say that they were getting ready for liftoff. He buckled himself into his seat and waited with nervousness.

They were in the air and he was sitting filled with excitement. He couldn't wait to get off the plane and see the new place where he was going to live. They were about twenty minutes into the flight when suddenly the pilot came on and said that they were experiencing issues with turbulence and that there could be an engine failure. Everybody was scared and waited to hear the rest of the news. Ten minutes later the pilot came onto the intercom and told the passengers that there is a left engine failure. They were about ten minutes from landing. They had to land as quickly as possible. The plane had started to descend from the air. Cristo was scared and wanted to land and get off the plane. He hugged his mother as he saw the ocean. He asked if they were going to die. The plane started going down faster and faster. The plane had slowed down and was slowly gliding towards the runway.

The plane was going quicker and quicker. They weren't too far from the ground now. Cristo had started to see how close they were and he hugged his mother tighter. Suddenly the plane was going right toward the runway, but they didn't have enough height for them to land properly. The Pilot had to land in the grassy land near the runway. Cristo braced for impact. He counted and once he had hit three the plane crashed into the grassland. Cristo opened his eyes after the crash to see his mother sitting next to him with blood on her shirt. She hadn't died but was seriously injured from the crash. Cristo unbuckled himself and his mother from the seat and tried to get her to move.

Cristo was bleeding from his head but stayed strong and fought to save him and his mother. As soon as they got out of the plane there were ambulances and sirens surrounding him. He was frightened but they needed help. They were rushed to the hospital where they sought medical attention. The doctor told Cristo and his mother that they would be fine, they just were hurt from the crash. Cristo and his mother were in the hospital for about two and a half weeks. They soon recovered and were fine to move into their new home.

## Seeing Blind

Something is happening. Something is different.

Joannie, Luc, Avery, and Kameryn all walked to school together, never expecting anything to go wrong. When they walked into their 10th-grade classroom, something was wrong. Their teacher, Ms. Blind, was never, ever late, and today she was. Something was up and they knew it. About a half an hour later their principal, Mr. Bronx, walked in and told the class that Ms. Blind would be here in 15 minutes and that she had something personal that was happening, he also told the class to read the next chapter in their book, "Paper Towns." Then finally she arrived.

The first period went by and the four kids stayed back to talk to Ms. Blind, because they could see something was terribly wrong. After they talked for a while, Ms. Blind finally told them what was really going on as long as they promised not to tell their parents or any of their friends. Ms. Blind was a spy. She was a spy for the school. No one knew that she was a spy now except for the four kids. The reason that she was late is that the spy agencies she worked for had just threatened to fire her for not being able to discover who had threatened to bomb the school. The children were shocked, because they wondered who would ever want to bomb a school full of kids, and why they wanted to do it. Then Ms. Blind asked them a question. It was, "Will you help me find the bomber?" The kids were all 15 and they figured they should help. The only thing is that they could never tell their parents. There was no telling how long they would be gone. On Tuesday the 25th of May, they left with Ms. Blind. She took them to the spy agency, and snuck them in because if she would get caught with four teenagers helping her, she would surely be fired.

Ms. Blind went to her office quickly to get a few supplies while the kids waited outside, Kameryn suddenly said, "Why are we doing this?"

Then Avery said, "Because we want to help Ms. Blind out, right?"

Then Luc and Joannie agreed with Avery and said "Sorry Kameryn but we agree with Avery, we should help her".

Then Kameryn said, "But what if we get caught and get into trouble?"

"That's a chance I'm willing to take," said Avery. So they waited for Ms. Blind to come back. She soon arrived and they left the building without being seen. They then headed back to the school and Ms. Blind took them to a secret place in the school where they had never been before.

"What is this place?" asked Joannie.

"We are in the ceiling of the school," said Ms. Blind.

"Whoaaa! Cool! I guess I was wrong, This is pretty cool!" said Kameryn.

Avery laughed and then asked, "So Ms. Blind, what do you need us to do?"

"Well I need you to try and get into every closet and place in the school that you think anybody would hide something in," said Ms. Blind "I also need you to get in two teams. I definitely don't want anybody getting lost or hurt."

"So Kameryn and I will be one team and Luc and Joannie will be the other," said Avery.

"Ok, Avery & I will go to the east side of the school," said Kameryn.

"Joannie & I will take the west side," said Luc.

"We'll meet back here in forty-five minutes," said Avery.

"Okay," they all said.

Forty-five minutes had gone by and Kameryn and Avery met Luc and Joannie but neither of them found anything. “This is useless,” said Luc

“That's what I've been trying to tell you,” said Kameryn.

“Guys!! Let's look, in the basement where people usually hide bombs,” said Joannie.

“Great idea, Joannie, said Avery.

So they all went down to the basement and they couldn't find anything. just as they are about to leave Luc says, “Hey! Look in that cabinet!”

“Joannie runs over to it, “I think I found something!” Sure enough Joannie had found 7 bombs in that cabinet.

All four of them run up to go find Ms. Blind, “Look what we found!!” yelled Avery.

“Oh my! Great job guys! Thank you so much!” said Ms. Blind.

“No problem!” said everybody. Only one thing, they still hadn't found the bomber, only the bombs. So there was still a problem on their hands. The day was over, so they all went home to think. A few hours after school they all met up at Joanne's house. Soon Luc said, “Okay tomorrow at six-fifty we will leave to go to school.” We will search the whole school and then we will split up and search outside.”

“Sounds great,” said Avery.

“Okay guys we gotta go,” said Kameryn and Avery.

“We'll see you tomorrow morning,” said Luc and Joannie.

That next morning at six-fifty they all met at the school. They checked every classroom, every desk, every shelf, every cabinet, every everything for clues. They found nothing. “This is useless,” said Avery.

“Maybe, but let's split up and look around outside.” said Luc. So Kameryn and Avery split into a group and so did Luc and Joannie, Kameryn and Avery searched the west side, and Joannie and Luc the east side. They couldn't find anything so they decided to team up and search the outside all over again.

As they passed all the trees Avery spotted something, a treehouse in one of the trees that was never there before. “Guys! Look in the treehouse!” said Avery. “Girls, stay down here, Luc and I will go search it,” said Kameryn. “Okay, but be careful,” said Joannie.

Up in the treehouse, “There's nothing up here,” said Luc.

“Luc!! Look, it looks like there's a broken board over in the corner!” said Kameryn.

Whoa! Let's look down on it,” said Luc. Sure enough, there was someone sleeping in the ‘hideout’. Kameryn and Luc called down to Avery and Joannie and told them to call Ms. Blind. They called her and she rushed over as quick as she could, she thanked them again and again.

“No problem, it was kind of fun,” said Kameryn.

The next day at school, everything seemed normal again. Then the man who was the bomber came into their classroom and asked to talk to the four. Confused they went to go talk to him, and he told them the most unbelievable news. He wasn't the bomber, Ms. Blind was. He even had proof. They called the cops on her and they came. Later they found out that there was no spy agency, and Ms. Blind certainly didn't work at one. The day she came in late to work was because she had slept in. She soon got fired from her job and was sentenced to jail for 18 years, for lying about her job, her identity, and trying to bomb a school. They never heard from her again. That was the day WaterField High School changed.

## False Alarm

*Faster.* That was all I could think. *Faster.* I was running, the thing behind me never breaking pace. *Faster.* It was catching up, and I had no way to outrun it, let alone fight it. One thing was clear in my mind, the thing, whatever it was behind me, was not human. *Faster...*

When I come back to my senses, still disoriented from the memory, I open my eyes, and I don't recognize the surroundings. It looks like a meadow, a long stretch of flowers and tall grass. I see a forest about a mile away. Something is standing there, a looming dark presence in this otherwise peaceful world. The pastel colors soothe my eyes, and the figure clad in black stands out in stark contrast. Then, my memory came flooding back...the mountain, the thing, and what started out as a normal day.

*Clang. Clang. Clang.* The morning bell chimes. I'm at summer camp. Amid the mumbling and groaning, there is whispering. Last night someone went missing, but it wasn't just anyone. It was Heidi. Heidi was the head nurse, not to mention that she was also everyone's friend. All the "misfits" kind of embraced her as an impromptu leader, a role she wasn't even aware of. I was one of them. Everyone was shocked, and everyone felt the lack of her presence. Once I was dressed, I stepped outside for some fresh air. That's when I noticed it, a thing, no, a presence, behind the tent. So, of course, I went to check it out. I carefully crept to the corner to peek around. And there it was, an enormous animal, completely black from head to toe. It looked as if it were made completely out of shadows. It was staring directly at me. So much for stealth, I thought. It grunted, turned, and left, almost as if it wanted me to follow, so I did. I followed it all the way up the mountain, and that's when the thing started chasing me. Not the shadow animal, but a humanoid thing.

When I resurfaced from the memory, the hooded figure was standing over me. It looked familiar. I know I had seen it before. Just then it sighed, and I instantly know that this was no stranger looming over me.

"Heidi?" No response.

"C'mon Heidi, I know it's you." Still no answer. "Heidi!?"

Something was off. She would never do this...would never pretend to not know me, or her own name.

"Sorry kid, I'm not Heidi, and I don't know who you are. Now get up."

"But you look just like her and sound just like her!"

"Well, I'm not her, now get up," she spat coldly.

"Not until you tell me who you are." She looked as if she was debating all the pros and cons. Finally, she gave in, took her hood down, and began to talk.

"My name is Helen. I work for the camp. Now get up."

"I don't believe you. I have never seen you before, if you're not Heidi."

"Okay, fine. My name's still Helen, but I'm Heidi's twin. I do remember you, since Heidi and I switched places a lot. I'm supposed to be hidden from the world, no one is supposed to know I exist. Happy now?"

"No, but I'll go with you, I guess," I added silently.

And so, the second journey of the day began. We left the beautiful pastel meadows behind, trekking through the dark woods. About half of the way back to camp, I saw a looming shape in the distance. It looked like the shadow animal, and I tensed up in fear and preparation.

"It's all right. He's my pet," Helen said, trying to soothe me.

“Then why had it lead me to that... that thing!?” She paused, realizing she had not told Helen about the thing. So, she retold the whole story and watched realization dawn on Helen’s face. Then she burst into laughter.

“What’s so funny?” I demanded icily, getting angrier by the second.

“It’s—it is just that—” she was cut off by another fit of laughing. “The (thing) you’re so worried about was probably Heidi.” She was still hysterical with laughter, so I had to wait until she calmed down to ask what she meant.

“I only know one person who can run that fast, and it’s Heidi. I’m the only one who was able to outrun her, ever.” She began laughing again, and this time I joined in. We made it back to camp without further incident and were greeted by a smiling Heidi.

“I have to give it to you, Champ, I have never been outrun by anyone other than her,” Heidi said, pointing to Helen.

“Good job, Kid.” she added, coming in for an embrace. It was all over, and I was glad.

**Josphine Tarr          Southern Aroostook Community School          Mrs. Russell          Grade 7**

### **Destination Imagination in Kansas City, Missouri**

Have you ever heard of Destination Imagination? Have you ever been to Kansas City Missouri? If you haven’t let me tell you a little bit about the trip I took.

I went to Kansas City, Missouri for Destination Imagination with my team from LCS. That first morning I woke up super early, around 7:00 AM. I got in my Mom’s car and we headed to the airport in Portland. When we got to the airport, we had to go through security. We had to put all of our bags in a tray that went through a metal detector. Then, we went to the place you wait until it is time for you to get on the plane. I was starving. I asked my Mom if we could get some snacks, so we went to a snack store. I got some snacks for the plane ride. When we were getting ready to check out, I thought to myself, *I should probably get some gum so my ears won’t pop on the plane*. I grabbed a couple of packs and we waited to hear the “boarding now” announcement.

They called our group to get on the plane. We got up, grabbed our things, and gave the guy our ticket. This was my first time on the plane but I wasn’t nervous at all. There were a few kids in my group that were very nervous. A few of them were saying they wished they could drive down, but I was really excited to fly! Next, we boarded the plane. Our group sat in the middle of the plane and I sat by the window. While our plane was getting ready to taxi out on the runway, I watched the air traffic controllers waving other planes in the direction they needed to go. All of a sudden I saw one of the guys “flossing”. It was hilarious. Then over the speaker came the words “prepare for takeoff”.

As the plane took off we were going really fast and then we felt lift off. As the plane climbed higher and higher, the ride got bumpier and bumpier.

A message came over the speakers, “Attention passengers, due to the amount of turbulence we are experiencing, we ask that you do not get up and go to the bathroom and please

keep food and drinks put away for now. Remain seated with your seatbelts on. Thank you”. The remainder of the flight was very bumpy and I was very thankful to land in Kansas City.

When we got to Kansas City, we got onto a bus that took us to the hotel. When we arrived at the hotel, I went straight to bed. It was a long plane ride. Mrs.King said to us “be sure to wake up by 6 AM, we have a lot to do “.

The next day we all got up and got ready for the day. we were going to a World War One Museum. When we got there we went straight to the tower. We took an elevator to the top where we could see all of Kansas City. We could see a lot of buildings, a basketball court, a baseball field, a soccer field, and cars buzzing all around. It was so different from what we are used to in Limestone, Maine.

After that, we went to another floor where there was a bunch of stuff from World War One, like the weapons they used, uniforms, and nursing clothes worn by nurses caring for the wounded during the war. Next, we went to a room where they were showing a video of how the war first started. It was really interesting. We also got to see a slideshow of people in the war. We saw how they got water and food and stuff like that.

Then we left and went to a restaurant where I got a bacon cheeseburger, and it was really good. After that, we went to the opening ceremonies for Destination Imagination. There were so many people I couldn't believe my eyes. There was a big screen that was showing all of the different kids that have been there before. During opening ceremonies, a representative from each team is chosen to carry the Maine flag. There were two teams from Maine, us, and another from southern Maine. A member of the Southern Maine team carried the US flag, and I was so anxious to find out who was going to carry the Maine flag. We later found out they chose me! I was so excited. When I started to walk around the area I could see there were thousands of people. When we finally got to our spots we all sat down and watched the show. Their opening speaker talked a little about the DI World's experience and he told us to have a great time.

After opening ceremonies, we left and went to the hotel. When we got to the hotel I went swimming. We played Marco Polo. It was fun. Then we all went to bed. We were all tired.

The next day we all got on a bus and went to compete. When we got to the place of the competition we had to wait for another team to leave before we could go in. We drew on paper in the waiting room. Then we went into the perform room. We had to talk to the judges first. We had to sign an Independence Form stating we could not talk to other teams or people about the competition after we competed. If someone was caught doing so, our team would be disqualified. We gave them our information. Then we entered the room to get ready to perform.

Our skit was about chess and how it was unfair white pieces always had to go first. We all did a great job and felt confident in our performance. Once we finished our skit we packed up and headed back to the hotel. The next day was our instant challenge, and we were ready. You are probably wondering what that is. The Instant Challenge is a competition where you work independently but with a couple of other members of the team. We had to make a tower using straws and paper cups and it had to be the tallest tower. We did fairly well. Our score would be tallied in with the rest of our scores from other competitions. After the Instant Challenge, we got to attend the “pin trade” with all of the other competitors from around the world. Team members from all teams have pins from their state or country. We had Maine Cat Pins. I traded my cat pin for a pin from China. It was really awesome. In total, I got a little over 40 pins. It was a great experience.

The next night was closing ceremonies. All the teams from around the world gathered in the stands. The announcer announced the top three winners and everyone cheered. Then they displayed the top 10 teams on the Jumbotron. Although we didn't make the top ten we were so proud of ourselves. We had made it to the World's Competition in Kansas City, all the way from a small town in Aroostook County, Maine.

Our flight back to Maine was not anything like the flight to Kansas City. It was a smooth ride. We were welcomed back in our town by a police and fire escort followed by the many supporters in our town. I am so happy to have had this opportunity to go to Kansas City and compete in the awesome competition. Not a lot of people can say they have experienced something such as this.

**Jacob Edgecomb**

**Limestone Community School**

**Grade 5**

### **The Hidden Key**

It was a very dark night. Bill was going to bed. All of a sudden he heard a BANG, and he was launched into the air. He landed in a little town surrounded by glass. He banged on the glass for what seemed like hours, but he was trapped. Then he saw it, a huge door. He tried its knob many times, but it would not budge.

There must be a key, but where, thought Bill. It must be hidden somewhere in this town. He searched every house, trying every knob, but he found nothing. Suddenly he saw the key! It was high above him, stuck in an iceberg. He rushed to the iceberg and tried to climb it, but it was too steep and slippery!

He decided he needed help. He searched the town again and found a small, ugly goblin.

"Hello, what's your name?" asked the goblin.

"My name is Bill and I need your help."

"My name is Brunch. What kind of help do you need?" asked the ugly goblin.

"I need that key," said Bill pointing to the top of the iceberg. "I want to get out of here!"

"Me too!" exclaimed the goblin.

"I will take you home with me, if you will help me reach the key," said Bill.

"Deal," said the goblin.

They both hurried over to the side of the iceberg, and with Bill on his back, Brunch leaped into the air, and dug his claws into the side of the iceberg. He climbed quickly and steadily, and in no time at all they were atop the iceberg. Bill grabbed the key and down they went. Bill was anxious to get out of the glass trap. He unlocked the door and they saw a portal. Bill and Brunch jumped into the portal and suddenly they were home.

**Curtis Wheeler**

**Washburn District Elementary School**

**Mrs. Tompkins**

**Grade 4**

## The Horrible Kidnapping of 2009

It was a dark gloomy night in San Francisco and Addy Frost was home at 99 Lakewood Ave. Not even a cricket chirped, for Addy was home alone watching TV. Suddenly there was a SQUEAK! She turned around and walked out of her room. The air in the hallway didn't feel right. She saw a shadow in the kitchen and asked, "Who's there?" No reply, then suddenly the shadow came lunging at her and that's how a simple burglary became ... "The Horrible Kidnapping of 2009."

Since Addy's parents were somewhat rich, they ordered a manhunt for Addy. Dogs, police, and even the government were involved. No trace of Addy was ever found. Except one clue, her lucky charm bracelet that has a heart, four leaf clover and a little bottle with a little piece of paper inside. Search dogs sniffed the place that it was found, but everywhere the dogs lead them proved to be of no use. It seems something had thrown the scent of Addy off. The police thought it was a skunk or perhaps the person that kidnapped Addy.

Four years have passed since the kidnapping. One day the only piece of evidence surfaced. It was dropped by the parents as they were fighting for it. Smash! went the glass heart, smash! went the clover, and smash! went the little bottle and out rolled the paper. The parents, as they were fighting for it, saw writing inside. They held their breath for such a long time, delicately reading each and every word. Until the dad broke the silence. He said, "We better get this to the police!" As they got there they burst in and said, "We've gotten evidence!" the police read it and it said "help me, please mom, Dad, 66 Woodroad St. - Abby- The police sent in four police cruisers. Abby saw the lights and this is what she thought in her mind... Red and blue lights? Did they finally find the note? YES! I can't believe it! Addy thanked the Gods but little did she know it was not over yet.

Addy's parents were delighted! My little girl! Oh! The police broke into the house. Addy was in the basement. They searched the house and found Addy, but by then the criminal was already in the basement pointing a gun at Addy's head. "Another step and I'll kill her!" the criminal screamed. Nobody moved an inch. Suddenly the window, conveniently placed above the criminal's head, broke and out came a police officer. He said, "Need any help?" As he broke in, he broke a Titanic picture. As they put a gun over the criminal's head, the police officer said, "You're going to jail for a lifetime this time buddy." As the criminal struggled he said, "You'll all pay for this!" As he said that the parents ran over and hugged Abby and said, "My baby girl!" They rejoiced as they hugged her.

A few weeks later in court, the judge said, "by the power vested in me I declare Jonathan Augusta Lastic, "Guilty". The sentence will be a lifetime! "Officers, take him away!" It was on the news: Missing Girl Found. Four years missing! They had a party for her with streamers, balloons, cake, and everything else you could possibly think of! From then on the Frost family lived happily ever after. The End! Or was it?

**Cadie A. Mendoza   Washburn District Elementary School   Mrs. Good   Grade 5**

## Run Ending

“Dennis, Dennis!” Dennis awoke and jolted upright with a gasp. “Wha...what ...happened?” Dennis asked between breaths. “Where ....are ...we?” Dennis was lying in an open field with Mac and Jeremiah at his side.

“Dennis, you’re alive!” Jeremiah and Mac squealed.

“We were so worried. Are you okay? Can you move alright? Does your head hurt?” Mac quickly asked wanting to know if Dennis was actually alright.

“I’m fine,” Dennis said trying to stand up.

“Here, let me help you!” Jeremiah said wanting to be helpful.

“Thanks, but I really want to know what happened,” replied Dennis.

“Well,” said Mac, as he went to sit on a rock, “Anna kicked you very fiercely in the back of your head. When she did that, you blacked out and the car went out of control and started spinning. After I was able to stop it, I got out of the truck and found Anna holding on to the back of the truck for dear life. She looked so frightened and scared. She started to apologize, saying that she couldn’t control herself and that she felt terrible for what she had done.” Mac took a breath and continued, “I told Anna to stay where she was and Jeremiah and I carried you into this field. Anna said that she had to go to the bathroom, so she went in the woods behind the field. She hasn’t come back since.”

“It’s already been 3 hours!” Jeremiah said.

The sun was starting to set, so it was getting colder. “Where are we going to sleep?” Dennis asked.

“Mac told us we are going to sleep in the truck tonight,” Jeremiah piped up. They started heading toward the truck when Anna raced out of the woods and fell down in front of them.

“Survivors, in the woods!” Anna heaved. Everybody was shocked at the news. How could there be more survivors? Mac thought, we’ve searched everywhere!

“What? How?” Dennis asked.

“Well,” Anna started, “I was walking in the woods when all of a sudden I heard the bushes move behind me. I walked toward them and three people started running out. They ran with fright as I turned into a zombie, chased them, and tried to grab them. They managed to get away before I could get to any of them. I turned human again and quickly ran back here hoping you were still here.”

“What are we waiting for? Let’s go find them!” Dennis shouted. Dennis started running toward the woods when Mac grabbed his shoulder.

“No, your head is still injured. We will start looking for survivors first thing in the morning.”

The next morning they went out searching for survivors. “So, where exactly are we going?” Jeremiah spoke nervously.

“We don’t exactly know,” Mac replied, “We will probably start by heading nor-” But before he could finish, Anna started attacking Jeremiah and choking him.

“H....h....help!” Jeremiah was finally able to say. But before anyone could do anything, Anna just ran off into the woods. Just like that. No explanation.

“Are you ok?” Dennis asked.

“Yeah, yeah I’m fine,” Jeremiah replied hoarsely. Mac’s eye caught something on Jeremiah’s neck.

“Jeremiah, are you bleeding?” asked Mac nervously. Jeremiah’s hand touched his throat.

“Oh no, oh no!” Jeremiah screamed, “I am bleeding.”

“Come on, we have to get back to the truck,” said Dennis.

When they got back to the truck, Dennis and Mac cleaned Jeremiah’s cut with hand sanitizer. Afterwards, they wrapped it in a piece of an old blanket that they found in the back of the truck. “Do you think I will turn into one of them like Anna did?” Jeremiah asked nervously.

“It’s hard to tell at this point,” Mac replied.

After they had eaten an early lunch they decided that they would head back to the woods to continue to look for Anna and other survivors. They were all very nervous. None of them knew what would happen or what to expect. Jeremiah was especially worried about his scrape. He didn’t want Anna’s outcome to be the same as his. He hated the thought of turning into a zombie randomly and attacking people. As they were walking in the woods it started to thunder, and lightning started to strike. They started running towards the edge of the woods when all of a sudden a mob of zombies ran towards them from the field! Dennis, Mac, and Jeremiah tried to steer away from the zombies, but the zombies were too fast. The zombies caught up with them and started attacking them. They tried to fight back, but they couldn’t. They were gone.

**Emmerson Brown    Washburn District Elementary School    Miss Smith    Grade 7**

### **Trapped in a Drawer**

The night before Easter, our cat was missing. My family and I looked everywhere but eventually headed to bed. Morning came; Easter. In search of the feline, we checked in bizarre places. One place in my brother’s room was overlooked. Astonishingly, the little furball leaped out of a dresser. Delighted, we wondered how she got there. As young children, my brother and I believed it was the Easter Bunny. We assumed the cottontail only trapped Callie to prevent her from playing with the eggs. The story was never truly revealed, but it was fun to imagine.

**Emmie McIntyre    Caribou Middle School    Mrs. Barnes    Grade 8**

### **Santa Claus**

“Mom? Is he real? Is he?”

“Yes, darling, of course he’s real!”

One day, Tommy went down to the basement and saw what he thought he would never see in his life. A HUGE BOX! “I know what to do!” First, I’ll make breathing holes, then I’ll decorate it! Last but not least, I’LL MAIL MYSELF TO SANTA! What a perfect idea!” Tommy began his search for some supplies he needed for the box.

“One item...Check. Second item ...Check. One more item...OH, I need some survival stuff.” Tommy went to his kitchen, bedroom, and bathroom for items he could bring. He told his mom that he was going to be back soon.

### **The Adventure**

“Everything’s here!” Tommy asked his mother to bring him to the mailing center.  
“Goodbye, Tommy!”

“Bye, Mommy!”

As the time passed, all Tommy could think about was seeing Rudolph! Suddenly, the box shook, and Tommy heard people speaking.

“This one? North Pole. Yes, sir, I will take it there.”

Tommy felt someone carrying him then placing the box down. He felt a truck moving. All the curves and bumps made Tommy sick. Suddenly, the truck stopped, and Tommy was being lifted again. He peaked out through the breathing holes and saw a man. *Cold!* Tommy thought to himself. *NORTHPOLE?*

### **Where am I?**

Tommy heard the truck leave. *Murrr*. “What was that?” *Murrrrr*. Tommy felt something grab the box. *MUURRRR!* Tommy flipped the cover off the box and saw reindeer. “A herd of reindeer, what a surprise!” The Northpole wasn’t what he expected. The reindeer licked his face! All of a sudden, the ground grew a candy cane pole and began shaking when out jumped an elf!

“Are you Tommy Jenkins?”

“Umm...yes, sir!”

“Okay then, come with me!”

### **Inside Santa’s House**

Tommy followed the elf onto a floor board which started to move. “Ahh!”

“It’s alright,” the elf said to Tommy”

When the floor hit the ground, all Tommy could see was elves! Much color indeed.  
“PRESENTS!!!”

“Not yet. Christmas is coming soon.”

“HO! HO! HO!”

“Santa?”

“Yes, young fellow, I’m Santa Claus indeed!”

“Santa!!” Tommy ran to hug him.

“Wait until you hear this, Tommy!”

“What is it, Santa?”

“I’m your grandfather!”

“What?”

“Yes, I am indeed!”

“Tell me more, Grandpa!!”

As Tommy and Santa sat down and drank some hot chocolate with candy canes, marshmallows, and chocolate syrup drizzled on top, they chattered. Tommy didn’t realize why he didn’t know about this a long time ago.

### **Christmas Eve**

“Time to get in your suit, Santa!”

“Grandpa?”

“Yes, Tommy?”

“Can I come with you?”

“Sure thing! We just need to find you a santa suit, too!”  
While Santa got in his suit, Tommy was trying to fit into his.  
“Is the sleigh ready?”  
So, Santa and Tommy climbed into the sleigh and flew away.  
“Off Dasher, Dancer, Prancer, Vixen, Comet, Cupid, Donner, Blitzen, and Rudolph!” Off they went high into the sky, delivering presents to children’s houses. When they got to Tommy’s house, Santa gave Tommy a special gift. A reindeer bell.  
“Ring it when your sad, and you will imagine a beautiful reindeer flying in the sky!”  
“Thank you, Grandpa!”  
“Come visit me anytime!”  
“Thank you, and I will!” Tommy jumped off the sleigh and went inside as Santa dropped down the chimney. Before Santa left, he winked at Tommy then flew back out the chimney.  
“Merry Christmas to all, and to all a goodnight!”

**Addison Heath      Katahdin Middle School      Mrs. DeTour      Grade 7**

### **Imprisoned**

I woke up in the middle of the night to the faint meowing of my cat, Mochi. I sat up in my bed and pet her soft, dense fur as she purred on top of my lap. She was small and lean, white with cocoa colored dapples all over her long, fluffy fur, and a small brown spot on the left side of her muzzle. Small and lean, she loved to cuddle, but completely ignored us when she didn’t get her way. I looked over at the alarm clock on my bedside table. It was nearly two in the morning, and I had school at 7:30. I laid back down as Mochi curled up beside me and started to knead as she drifted off to sleep.

About half an hour went by, and my eyes weren’t getting any heavier. I wonder what my Mom and Dad are doing, I thought. They were out of town for the weekend because of business. Well, my dad’s business, anyway. My mom insisted she go with him in case something happened on the trip or he lost his wallet or something and didn’t have any way to contact me to let me know that they were going to be longer than expected. My parents had been in doubts about leaving me behind, but I’d promised them I would be fine and not get into any trouble. I decided to get up and look out the bay window, observing the north side of the city. I had a deep love for Rochester, and it’s incredibly beautiful night. I loved the gleaming lights of the city, and especially loved the way they shimmered in the moonlight. I gazed at them until I drifted back to sleep at the window.

\* \* \*

I checked the alarm clock again. It was 3:30 in the morning. I had woken up because of banging on my bathroom window. It was faint, but enough to wake me up. I was always a light sleeper, which sucked for everyone, because I got grumpy when sleepy. I went to the bathroom to see what in the world was waking me up this early. Mind you, I was exhausted and had school in four hours. I went to the bathroom and saw this man outside the small, square window. I was startled at the sudden appearance. He looked about my age with short, black hair and luminous red eyes. Freckles, too. He showed no expression on his face. Still alarmed, I grabbed a toilet

plunger for self-defense. Look, I was tired, okay? With the plunger in hand holding it like a baseball bat, I felt somewhat safer, ready to swing whenever necessary. That's when the glass broke. He'd punched the window with his bare hand leaving a single scrape on his knuckles. I, on the other hand, had run.

I ran out of the room so fast I'd tripped on Mochi, not realizing what was below me. She yowled and ran off downstairs. I fell to the floor and before I knew it, he was standing right in front of me, still showing no emotion. A tranquilizer gun in hand, he shot at me, but nearly missed me as I rolled to my right, picking myself back up in the process. "Thank the lord he missed that", I thought. I stumbled to my feet once more and ran past him, shoving him out of my way and downstairs where the phone stood.

Downstairs I went, scared for my life as this guy ran, his eyes fixated on me. I ran to the phone and tried calling the police, but as soon as they picked up, I was already on the floor, knocked out. On my left shoulder a tranquilizer dart was pricked into my arm. I was out like a light.

I woke up, confused of what was going on. I hadn't remembered anything. I didn't know where I was. I opened my eyes, not recognizing anything in sight. The brick walls surrounded giant machinery. I tried to move, but I was completely immobilized, strapped down to a table. All I could move was my head and fingertips. The table was cold and metal. I had a white sheet over my body, but it was small and didn't fit right. What can you expect from a sheet, though? The straps were bulky and didn't look like straps at all. They were silver, lol the table, and acted like chains. Maybe they weren't straps at all. They strapped down my legs, arms and torso, so I couldn't move them.

I have to admit, I was a bit scared, not knowing how I got here or why I was here in the first place. I'd overheard the two people in lab coats talking about my dad, but I wasn't sure why. They'd left the room about five minutes ago, talking about preparing for an operation. I was hoping they weren't talking about me, but I had a feeling they were. I tried wiggling my way out of the straps, which, by the way, got really uncomfortable after a while. As I maneuvered my way to escape, I got my legs free, but now my head was hurting because one of the bars were rubbing against my jawline. Just imagine a cold, massive pole-like strap piercing the underside of your chin, but only your lower body having the ability to move. Yeah, it's like that.

I kicked my legs around in hope for a button or lever to get hit and free me of this prison. And, what do you know, I kicked a lever. The straps released me and I jumped onto the ground, my legs falling asleep. I tried to stay quiet and snuck around, looking for a way out. I ended up wandering into a large, dark room lit by fluids in pod shaped tanks.

I walked closer to one of the tanks of fluid and tried so hard to hold my terror in. A human was in that tank, and they didn't look too healthy, if I may add. Their veins pop out of their skin, leaving unsettling marks on their body. They had deep scrapes on their chest, and eyes speaking volumes, though they showed no emotion. 'God bless your soul', I thought. As I stepped away from the tank I looked around a bit more. That person wasn't the only one in a tank, there were about forty more in this room. Scared from thinking of what these people had gone through, I ran out of the room, still trying to remain quiet. Unfortunately, not quiet enough. I was caught by one of the lab coated people nonetheless.

I was speechless. The man looked behind me, where the tanks of people stood. "I see. You were looking at our past experiments. You know, if you like them so much, why don't you join them?" He grabbed a syringe from behind him and shoved it into my arm. I was out like a light.

### Crash

I was cruising down Route 41 at dusk when a Ford pickup jerked itself into my lane. It began speeding up to what seemed like 90mph. I tried to speed up while zigzagging between the cars in front of me. The truck was right on my tail, going even faster. I was sweating like a dog. My Honda Odyssey couldn't go any faster. Then out of nowhere, a seven foot tall moose sprinted in front of me. WHAM. My car flipped and turned and I was out like a light.

\*\*\*

I woke up with a light shining in my face and a person hovering over me.

"He's back," the person yelled. Then I heard a bunch of cheers. Then I thought about it for a second, I didn't know who I was. I got out of the bed I was in and realized I was wearing a polka dotted hospital gown. I walked into a long hallway. A person approached me and said, "File for Bryan Howard." He gave me a paper that had a bunch of words on it.

"What's this for?" I asked.

"Give it to the guy at the desk," he said back. I walked up to the guy and placed the paper on the desk.

"Bryan Howard," he said. He was pressing buttons on a screen. "Because of the accident the police are holding on to your license. We couldn't reach your wife Mary so we called you a taxi, it should be here soon. You're a lucky man."

"Where am I?" I asked.

He replied, "You are at the St. Francis Hospital in Milwaukee, Wisconsin." I walked outside and saw the taxi with a man in the driver's seat. I opened the door and he said,

"Where to mister?"

"I don't know where I live," I said. The man turned and I saw a very bushy mustache. He and I both knew it was going to be a long afternoon.

We drove all around the city of Milwaukee until we found a neighborhood. I started getting a warm feeling. Then we drove by a house where my heart was beating so hard it hurt.

"Stop here," I yelled. We turned into the driveway. I got out and knocked on the door. A woman about my height opened the door. She paused for a second, her jaw dropped as she looked me in the eye.

She screamed as she wrapped her arms around me, "Bryan!"

Who was this woman and why was she happy to see me?

She welcomed me inside and the warm feeling was just bursting out of my body.

"This is a nice home," I said.

"You don't remember?" she replied.

"What should I remember?"

"This is our home." I didn't know what she meant. Was I married to her? "I've been looking for you all around Milwaukee." I looked at her weirdly. Then after she understood that I

had forgotten, we returned to the hospital. She said something about amnesia, whatever that means.

We entered the room that I was in when the people cheered. I sat on the same bed, but this time I wasn't wearing a polka dotted hospital gown. A man wearing a white coat entered the room.

"Shall we get started," he said. I thought to myself, get started with what?

The man in the coat put a stick down my throat, and a light in my ears and my eyes. Then he wrapped my arm in a gray thing with numbers on it. He pressed a button and the buttons kept getting higher and it just kept getting tighter. Then finally it stopped. But he then stuck a needle in me and a liquid rushed into my body.

We went home and I had a bottle full of medication. Everyday I would swallow one of the pills. One day we got a phone call from a friend who heard that the lady that saved me was just diagnosed with stage 3 breast cancer. Her name was Jennifer Collins.

We were heading for the hospital again, but this time it wasn't for me. When we got there a man in a white coat showed us to a room where Jennifer was in bed. As soon as I saw her face, I remembered everything.

"I remember," I mumbled.

"What?" Mary said.

"I remember everything. I was laying here and the doctors were operating. She was next to me. "She saved me." I looked down at her and was so thankful. I had the warm feeling again.

"What can we do to help?" I asked the doctor.

"Well there is one thing," he said.

"What is it, I'll do anything?" I asked enthusiastically.

"Since you are so excited, I'll tell you. To do her surgery will be expensive." He didn't need to say another word. I needed to take care of her.

So I worked every day at the nursing home until finally I got the money. On the day I was going to turn the money in, I got a call from the hospital.

"Hi Bryan, I'm sorry to say that Jennifer Marie Collins has passed away, and she told me to tell you to keep making the world a kinder place." The doctor said. As I hung up the phone, I felt no more hope, no more warm feeling, everything was just cold.

Over the next few days I felt nothing. Jennifer's funeral is going to happen tomorrow so I rented a tuxedo, gathered a bouquet, and tried to find the words.

At the funeral I performed these words from Revelation 21:4, almost in tears: "God shall wipe all tears from our eyes and there shall be no more death, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away."

We never know when our time will come. Live your life to the fullest.

**Eli Mosher**

**Presque Isle Middle School**

**Mrs. Bates**

**Grade 6**

**An excerpt from novel, "Morning Dew"**

Stumbling in the cracks that seemed to be fresh, she walked farther down the road, dodging anyone around her. Ash now understood our future...strange, yet at the same time filled with high technology. As she entered the city, the sky vanished and everything lit up like a light bulb in a room. The city bustled with people and cars, each having a unique sound. As before, the buildings were tall and stable. The old library that used to be anonymous was now flooding with people of all ages. Even the once torn and worn away apartments were fresh and filled with life.

Ash couldn't believe it, how much her home changed. Where she spent most of her life seemed dead and barren, and the city was now so high-tech it was as if it were a different place. Her mom was right, and wrong too. "Everything will change and change again, and never be the way it was before. Unless you go back in time to when it was like that, but it's impossible to do such a task!" Yes, everything will continue changing, but it is possible to go back in time, somehow.

It was hard to tell what caused her to time travel, but she knew it had something to do with the figure she possessed, and the path that hid from the world. The path wasn't just strange because of what was in it and how it behaved, but also because how it was hidden and the only one. "Wouldn't something like that be in a park or in a zoo?" She thought. So, Ash eventually thought that it was just a hoax, and she was crazy, crazier than a monkey that had a cup or more of coffee.

No, she wasn't crazy, but she didn't know. She couldn't understand herself, and her head told her not to listen to her heart, which knew that everything she's seeing is real, not some dream, or illusion that wouldn't go away. Ash walked towards the city hall to see what had changed there, but when she arrived, nothing was different. The only difference Ash saw in the place was how many people were there. When she was back in the time she should be in, the city hall had at least a hundred or more people visit everyday, now it seemed like only thirty or so visited a day. She walked up to the counter and asked the lady why there was less people, but she didn't respond. Ash forgot that no one could see, nor hear her, unless someone she knew more than she thought would show up, and change how she was going through this strange and complex future.

Just as she walked out, someone she recognized walked in. It was her old friend, which, still is her friend, except that she was now in a completely different time zone. She wanted to talk her friend, but she wouldn't even see her. Ash continued walking, feeling dismal. When she arrived at the dump, which, she didn't intend to go to, her spine shivered like a scared cat. She slowly stumbled over things, and spotted an old lady that seemed wary and lost in her thoughts. Ash reached out to see if she was ok, but the lady quickly jerked upright and grabbed Ash's wrist. "Beware..." The woman said. "Stay out of sight...and be cautious of whoever's house or building you may enter..." As the words fell out of the lady's mouth, she disappeared like she never was there. Ash trembled in fear, what did she mean by beware? No one could see Ash, so why would she need to stay out of sight? But, she did as she was told. Creeping around in the shadows, making sure no human-being could ever notice her.

I didn't come to Ash instantly, mainly because she was too busy paying attention to the light's glittering about in the store, but either way...Ash was being watched. Closely, yet steadily, she sensed a feeling of terror and distrust rushing over her. She whipped around to see a figure dashing behind a building, but she continued walking and staring at the shiny objects that hid behind the huge, glass window. As if nothing had happened, Ash turned around again, puzzled to

what was there and why it was there. This time, the figure was standing right there, smiling down at her. "Hello miss." It said in a low, deep voice.

**Diane Botting**

**PIMS**

**Mrs. Cheney**

**Grade 7**

**Fantasy and  
Other  
Fiction**

## **Mystical Jeff and Jeff in New Zealand**

Once upon a time there was a magical donkey. He could jump and fly like no other donkey. The owner of the donkey trained with the donkey to make him faster and stronger. The owners name was Jeffery III. The donkey's name was Baby Jeff. Jeffrey and Jeff traveled the land showing people there amazing jumping show.

They traveled to New Zealand. They ate nothing but burritos and garlic bread to help them jump better. They were very interesting. It was a sad day when they were traveling and saw an evil zombie outbreak.

Then they became detectives and started the Jeff and Jeff Crime Fighting League. The main job was investigating how zombies infested New Zealand. To avoid the Zombies they wore bear spray, hazmat suits, and they only traveled when they needed to. They traveled from Wellington to Auckland looking to cure the zombies.

They started to find the cure by testing magical donkey blood for the magical particles. Then they separated the blood 4 times through 16 inch tubes. They then added Gerber apple and banana baby food to the blood. Zombies are allergic to bananas creating cell discombobulation, and formatting the new structure of their cells. Gerber baby food was the only thing they could find in New Zealand that had enough concentrated banana.

They went to the largest tower and made camp. In their camp they had no real food they had to eat MRE's. There Castle tower was barricaded with wooden planks. However a zombie got inside the tower. The Zombies tried to eat baby Jeff the donkey's brains. When Jeffrey injected the first zombie cure they created, it worked!

The zombie was cured, he turned into a normal human. However because they used donkey blood to make the cure. The Zombie after turning back into a human turned into half-man half-donkey. Then this creature started talking. He stated his name was Thomas. He asked for a sword to slay the Evil Octopus Lord. All zombies in New Zealand want to slay the Evil Octopus lord. When slayed all Zombies will obey the new evil dark lord ruler. Jeff just turned 5 that is 35 in donkey years, so they threw him a paw patrol themed birthday party. Thomas then left the party, stating that Jeff and Jeff were losers wasting his time, when he could be fighting the Evil Octopus Lord.

Jeff and Jeff were very concerned about the country of New Zealand and wanted to purify it. So they devised a plan. They got 550 Jars of baby food and made a huge cure. They stole a rocket from the New Zealand Rocket Corporation. They loaded the rocket full of baby food medicine. This medicine also would completely obliterate the Octopus Zombie Lord. The rocket exploded over New Zealand and cured all the zombies. Creating hundreds of beautiful half-donkey half-man centaurs that were magical. Then they all grew one horn on there head from the rockets nuclear radiation. This created what is known today as Unicorns. Which are actually Unitaur, but no one today knows this.

**Jacob Patterson**

**Dawn F. Barnes Caswell School**

**Grade 7**

## Chambered

Behind the door, I heard endless tapping as I was locked in a creepy chamber by a mad scientist. He had tried a potion to poison me, but it was the wrong one. He used it anyway, and it caused sandpaper to grow on my toes. It was cutting my toes off. Tears filled my eyes as I puked.

The mad scientist grabbed my hand and dragged me to a jail cell. He locked me in it. There was mold in the toilet, sink, and on the pillowcase. I was sweating, and there was no air conditioning. I screamed, "I think I'm going to die!"

I heard something that sounded like a wolf. I looked at my watch. It was dead. I felt less than fierce. I was still locked in a cell, and my knees hurt. I dropped to the ground and saw something that looked like a paperclip. I thought about what I could do to escape from the cell.

Then, I remembered watching a movie where someone used a paperclip to unlock a door. I tried to use it, but it was useless, and I gave up. I yelled for the mad scientist! I saw smoke in front of me, and I waited for the mad scientist to appear.

He appeared and asked me, "What do you need?"

I said, "Let me out!"

He said, "That is not polite, you parasite."

I told him that what he said was not polite. He said that he was going to wait for me to apologize, and he leaned on my cell. The key was dangling out of his hat. I grabbed it, I apologized so that he left, and I unlocked the cell door.

I ran. I didn't know where I was, and it was so dark. I saw a room, and I ran to it. There was a person in it who had green hair and was really pale. I laughed at the look of him, and he looked back. I hid, and since he looked mean, I left him alone. I said to myself, "This place is creepy. How did I get here?"

My thought was that I got kidnapped and then brainwashed. I was scared, and I didn't even know how old I was or what my name was. I knew that I was in danger. I started walking down a run-down hall. It was pretty quiet so far, but I heard footsteps getting closer and closer. I ran again. I didn't know where I was going, but it sure wasn't safe.

I didn't hear the footsteps anymore. I took to my knee. I took deep breaths in and out. I was so terrified that I hid in a closet. There was a knife in it, and it was sharp. I put it in my pocket, and I felt dangerous. I was going to try to fight the mad scientist and the green-haired man to find my way out of this castle.

I came out of the dark closet, and it seemed pretty quiet. I jogged down the hall. There were toes hanging on the wall as picture frames. I kept jogging. There was no door to get out of this run-down castle! I screamed, I put my foot down, and I said to myself, "I'm getting out of here. I wish I could get out of here!"

A genie appeared. I jumped out of my shoes! He said he would grant me a wish. I told him I wished to get out of the castle and get sent home to my family. He said my wish was granted, and I appeared in a beautiful home. "Mom, Dad, is that you?!"

They teared up, and I hugged them. I told them what happened, and we all lived safely ever after.

**Cayden Nichols**

**Dr. Levesque Elementary School**

**Mrs. Pelletier**

**Grade**

## **The Journey Into The Woods**

It was time for Melanie to go gather some firewood for the winter. Melanie was an adult who lived alone with two dogs, but sadly Melanie's dogs had passed away recently. "Now that my husband is dead I have to go into the woods to get firewood alone," thought Melanie. Then Melanie set off in her covered wagon.

Once she got to the woods, she saw something moving in one of the dark areas ahead of her. Melanie got off her wagon and brought her ax. Once she got to where she had seen the movements, she heard a bunch of growling. She noticed it was a pack of savage wolves! As soon as she saw them, she ran to the wagon. She got in the wagon and started back home, but the wolves kept following Melanie. One of the wolves attacked one of the horses and the wagon couldn't move, so she had to run faster than she ever did in her life!

Once she got home, she locked the door shut and shut all the windows. She peeked through the window blind and checked if the wolves were still outside her house. The wolves' yellow eyes peered at her eyes. Melanie's eyes filled with fear. 10 minutes later she checked the window again. Rather than those yellow eyes, she found her empty field and her cattle. Where had they gone? Melanie started to calm down and the fear in her eyes went from a high level of fear to a much calmer level. Melanie started to get hungry after a while, so she went to cook some food.

After she ate, she went to see where the wolves had gone. Melanie went into her field of cattle and horse to get one more horse to pull her wagon. She got Sugarfoot and Mandy to pull the wagon.

She started to go to the place she saw the wolves, but they were not there. She stopped the wagon and got off to see if they were further in the woods, but they did not come out. Melanie tried to attract them by getting meat, but they still did not come.

She turned around and saw a bear chasing the wolves away far in the distance. She was very happy to see the bear protecting her, but a second later the bear started to approach her. Melanie got scared, but the bear just laid down and stared at her. She saw something in the bear's face that reminded her of somebody...her husband. Melanie fell into tears and made the "I Love You!" signal to the bear. At that point, she knew her husband was always going to be with her in spirit.

**Melissa Blanchette Dr. Levesque Elementary School**

**Ms. Liza Pelletier Grade 5**

## **My Drawing Came to Life!**

Hey! My name is Layla. I love to draw a lot of kawaii animals. I draw dogs, cats, turtles...you get the idea. I've drawn so many animals, I've run out! So me with my creative

mind, decided to draw a little furry animal. When I finished, it had a tiny fluffy body, fluffy tail, big ears, four tiny little stubby horns, big blue eyes, and little feet with sharp claws.

“Hmm...” I said, “what should I name the species?” Then, it hit me. “Fuzlums! What should I name this one? Well, it is a girl. So I’ll call her... Chloe! That’s perfect!” I then wrote at the top that her name was Chloe. Then I remembered it was almost midnight, so I put it right beside me as I fell asleep.

When I woke up, I looked at the paper. Blank? I turned it over, still blank. Had it disappeared? What had happened? I worked so hard on it, and now it was gone. I looked up, and I saw my drawing. It wasn’t on paper, it was on the ground, looking at me. At first, I thought I was seeing things. I rubbed my eyes and looked again. It wasn’t there anymore. I guess I was just dreaming. I rolled over to go back to sleep, and the fuzlum was right there. I freaked out and fell off of my bed. Is it alive? I wondered to myself. It looked at me. I looked back at it. I had written some of its traits on the paper, and one was that it speaks gibberish. “Okay well I’ll make her understand me. There we go. Are you friendly?” It looked at me and said, “Bleqo.” “Is that a yes?” “Bleqo.” “I’ll take that as a yes then.” I put my hand out to see if I could pet it. It looked at me, sniffed my hand, and rubbed its head against me. “Do you like the name Chloe?” “Bleqo.” I put my arms out to pick her up. She jumped in my arms instantly.

I didn’t know how long she would be here. I scooped her up in my arms and ran out of the house. On my way out, my mom saw me, “Good morning honeym, why are you so excited?” “Mom! My drawing came to life! Look at her in my arms! Her name is Chloe!” “OK...That’s.. amazing?” Her face said she was concerned. I hadn’t put much thought into it. “Bye mom!” I rushed out of the house. “We have a very fun day ahead of us Chloe.” With that, we were on our way to an amazing day.

First, we were on our way to the fair. I didn’t know how Chloe would react. When we arrived, Chloe was very excited. She leaped out of my arms and went over to the food stand. I sprinted after her. When I got there she was eyeballing the cotton candy. Chloe looked at me with puppy dog eyes. I sighed and bought her the cotton candy. She looked at the cotton candy now in my hands. She snatched it and started eating it. She reminded me of a baby monkey. Chloe then scampered over to the ferris wheel. I dashed after her but before I could get to her, she had jumped on a ferris-wheel cart and was going up. She then looked down, horrified. “Stay there! Don’t move! I’ll get you down!” I rushed to the guy running the ride. I told him my friend was up there and had gotten stuck. He looked up and said, “Who is your friend?” I replied, “She’s the fuzlum up there.” “Where?” “The one on the top cart’s roof.” He gave me a concerned look. Then he just turned away. Chloe jumped into my arms whenever the cart came down. She then scampered away heading towards something. I yelled, “Chloe, come back!” A lot of people looked at me like I had lost my mind. One lady came up to me and asked, “Are you okay?” With which I replied, “Yeah, thanks for asking, now I need to go find Chloe! Bye! Have a nice day!”

Whenever I caught up with her, I grabbed her and held her a lot tighter this time around. It was almost lunchtime, so I headed to a food stand. “One dough boy and, what do you want Chloe?” She pointed at the hotdogs. “One hot dog, that will be all.” The guy gave us our food as we headed home. We ate our food on the way, while I thought of another place to go to. Then I had an idea! We could go to the beach!

At the beach, Chloe was very curious. She was digging in the sand, splashing in the water, and zooming all around. I went swimming and she came over to me in the water. She seemed to enjoy swimming more than anything we had done today. Later on, I started making a

sandcastle, and Chloe made a big mound of sand. Chloe was very funny. She even buried me in the sand! What a crazy fuzlum!

It was around 3:00 when I decided to head home. When we got home my mom made us a snack. She gave us little strawberries with grapes inside coated with chocolate. Chloe devoured them. I only got 2. We ended up playing hide and seek, tag, and other games. We played hide and seek for an hour, but she never found me so I gave up and went to my room. There I found Chloe fast asleep. She was sound asleep like a little baby. While she was sleeping I did my homework (which might I add I don't like homework) It was about 5:00 when my mom called up to me. "Time for supper!" I replied, "Okay mom! Make an extra plate for Chloe please!" I woke up Chloe and told her it was time to eat. She jumped off my bed and ran out the door. I went to the kitchen. There I found her scarfing up her food. I sat down and started eating, "Hey mom." "Yeah?" "Could I keep Chloe?" She looked at me like she did this morning, concerned. "We'll see. After supper we are going to see the doctor."

At the doctor's office, my mom had me wait in the waiting room. When the doctor took me into the room, he asked, "So what seems to be the matter?" My mom replied, "She is seeing things. She is saying she has a pet fuzlum? and she wants to keep her. She named her Chloe, but as you can see, there's nothing here." "Mom, Chloe's right here!" The doctor looked at me then turned to my mother, "I see. Well we can check her out but-" The doctor looked at me and started whispering something to my mom. Did they think I was crazy? I'm not crazy. Chloe was right on my lap. She is real, right? I could see her. I could touch her. The doctor came over to me, kneeled down and said, "Chloe isn't real, she's just a figment of your imagination, an imaginary friend." I was shocked. "Th-that can't be true! It can't be! She's right here!" I ran away into the car sobbing. My mom tried to comfort me, but it was no use. It was getting late, so when we got home, I went straight to bed. I tossed and turned for hours, trying to fall asleep.

The next morning, I looked at the paper I had drawn Chloe on. There she was. Turns out Chloe WAS just my imagination. She's not real. She never was, and she never will be. I looked at the drawing, and I was disappointed, BUT I felt happy knowing I had a fun day with her. I looked at the paper again and this time the drawing winked at me. What an amazing day!

**Katelyn Zetterman**

**DLES**

**Mrs. Vicki Deshaine**

**Grade 6**

### **The Great Liridona**

Long ago, on an island in the middle of nowhere, lived a tribe. In this tribe was a prophecy put in place that a female child would be born and save the tribe of great evil. So when the wife of the chief gave birth to a beautiful baby girl, all of the tribe believed that this was the child of the prophecy. But days passed and nothing happened, no great evil, no nothing. It didn't help that the child was actually weaker than normal. The tribe was so enraged by the child they wouldn't let the parents name it and told the mom and dad to lock it up and never let it see the light of day.

Days turned into months and months turned into years, but still, no spirit came to the child's rescue. The child's parents locked her inside their home so the world would never have to gaze upon the unwanted child. The girl went years with no form of contact with the outside world. Her parents boarded up the windows and never let her go near anything that might give the child any idea of what the world looked like. One day her father forgot to lock the door on his way out, and so she did what anyone would do. She ran. She ran far away, not looking back for a second.

She felt the soft grass under her feet and the wind in her hair for the first time and fell in love. She stayed out for so long she soon lost track of time and where exactly she had wandered to, but she was so mesmerized by all the forest had to offer that she didn't seem to pay attention to all those bothersome things. She just let herself enjoy the time she had, for she knew she would be punished dearly when she returned home.

Finally, the sun began to set, and the girl found herself beginning to fear what was going to happen once the final ray of light gave way to nothing but cold, unforgiving darkness. She tried to run back the way she came but didn't know which direction she had come. The girl screamed for her parents "Mother! Father!" she raised her voice as loud as she could, but it didn't help.

Scared and alone, she fell to the ground and sobbed. She had disobeyed her parents, and now she would be dead by morning. Unable to stand the cold, her body would freeze and she would die. She would be forever lost.

The darkness grew darker, and in what seemed to be the last moments, she smiled and started to laugh. The girl laughed because, in the end, she got to do what she dreamed most about. She laughed because she got to be free, and to her, that was something worth dying for.

So when she couldn't hold on any longer and her eyelids became heavy, she whispered one last thing into the night, "I am Free."

She exhaled her final breath and died.

Although she died by herself, she was not alone, for The Spirit of The Forest had been watching her. It went to her body and lifted the girl from the ground, carrying her in its arms like a mother with her child.

It looked into the girl's peaceful expression and seemed to see all of her existence, every second of it.

The Spirit walked through the forest to the girl's tribe with her body still in its arms, stopping in the middle of the girl's home to show the rest of the tribe what they had done to the poor child. It wanted them to come forward and tell the truth, to face what they had done. The tribe, terrified of what The Spirit might do, threw forth the mother and father of the girl saying that they were the ones behind the girl's demise. Take them and spare the tribe.

The Spirit was disappointed in the tribe, saddened by the fact they would rather let innocent people die just to make sure they lived. So with that, the Spirit's eyes began to glow a brilliant green, and in a flash, all of the people turned to trees, their bodies forever frozen in place for years to come.

It spared the parents, however, giving them the body of their dead daughter. They cried over their loss, but the spirit told them to name the girl before going into the forest and burying her. Nothing happened at first, but as the parents and the Spirit stood around the grave, something began to happen.

A tall glorious tree sprouted and grew so tall it reached the sky. The parents marveled at the tree, thanking the Spirit for all that it did, but the Spirit held up its woodlike hand to stop them. It opened its mouth and began to speak in what seemed to be a thousand different voices. “It was not I who did this, it was the girl. Her heart was so strong that it moved me. I had not seen a human being so happy with just being free and not taking it for granted.” The spirit paused for a second before continuing, “The tribe thought the evil in the prophecy would come from the forest, but they were so blind they did not see that they were the evil.”

With that, the Spirit disappeared into the wind, venturing back into the forest where it would stay for the next hundred years.

Decades went by and the couple passed away, along with any remains of the tribe. The land went untouched for thousands of years before finally two children playing a game accidentally discovered the tree.

They studied the tree, amazed at its size, and one child noticed a piece of paper shoved in between one of the roots. They unfolded it, and in a messy handwriting it read:

*To the ones who find this letter, we will most likely be long gone by now, but I ask that you take care of this tree. She was our pride and joy, our beautiful, beautiful Liridona.*

**Rebecca Hayes**

**Wisdom Middle/High School**

**Ms. Sonya Michaud**

**Grade 7**

## **Imprisoned**

*Thud, thud, thud...* my mind starts to identify the most peaceful rhythm. If only I could say the same for the feeling, pulsing jabs pound into my head as a vivid light breaks through my eyelids. The smell of pine fills up my nose. With whatever energy remaining in my exhausted body, I open my sharp hazel eyes to some queer sights. The realization that this is definitely not my bedroom starts to set in. Having treetops in my room and being sprawled out on a bed of pine needles, dead branches, and rocks is highly unlikely. Having fear about the predicament I’m in, I sit up, and much to my surprise, the small tree tops turn out to be 30-foot trees. I feel a pit drop in my stomach, but the pit feels more like a rocket smashing into the bottom of my stomach destroying everything in its path. My eyes jump around frantically. Not a person in sight. Where am I? How did I get here? Am I alone?

“Hello, hello,” I scream. No response. “Hello, anybody?” Nothing. My heart drops. They couldn’t have left me here. No. No. No. No. I don’t know where I am. My heart starts to pound

faster, my eyes dart in circles. “HELP!” The throbbing in my head jabs harder, harder with every ticking second. My eyes fill up with cold tears as they look into the dark, lifeless, lonely forest. With one last effort for help, my legs take off in a frantic manner. I shouldn’t be here. Why am I here? I want to go home.

Tree after tree, not one person can be seen. My throat aches for water because of my repetitive cries for help. My legs are begging for a break, being weaker than they already were. Honestly, I’m pretty much running in circles for nothing, making time is an afterthought. At least the tranquility of the soft swaying pine bristols calm my heavy head. *This shouldn’t be you, Carson. This isn’t your fault.* A voice begins to linger in my head. *I shouldn’t be here. Why me? I can’t do this. I don’t understand why me, Carson Stratford, of all people. I don’t deserve to be here. Not me. Someone else...just...not...me.*

A low growling initiates from behind me. The horizon is starting to lose it’s light, giving off an eerie feeling in my chilling bones. I am not aware of my surroundings. No, I do know, I’m surrounded by hundreds of thousands of trees that go on forever. The growling gets louder. Closer. My heart starts to flutter. *Thud...thud...thud*, jabs continue at my head. I don’t want to face the beast that is lingering on my back. I freeze. I can’t move. Closer. Louder. Faster. Closer. Louder. Faster. I start to hear footsteps. I can’t stay. I can’t face this beast. And with that, I’m on my way. My body takes off, pain shooting everywhere inside it. Step after step, I feel farther away. I turn my head back peering into the darkness that trails behind me. Clunk. My body takes off flying, spinning so fast I can’t see a thing. Rocks stab every piece of my body. Pain consumes me. Spinning. Spinning. Spinning. Spinning. Faster with even rotation. Again and again.

The stabbing stops. For the first time in forever, I can only feel silence and peace. It feels good. No throbbing, spinning, or running. Just me. My bare self, in the open, helpless against the beast that tries to get me, that chases me every day, of every week, over and over, forcing me to run away, with only the horror of knowing that it will be back, gnawing at whatever is left inside my empty body. I can’t escape it...

A gust of shivering cold engulfs me with chills. Beside me, a fast-paced river rushes past me explaining why I have soaked, half-torn clothes. My head feels like it has been run over by a stampede. The throbbing is back but has transformed itself into an upper-cut punch of agony. I must’ve fallen down the hill into the river. On the bright side, at least my cuts are clean, and I have water to drink. Gusts of wind start to hit my numbing body. I need to get out of here. This river should dump out somewhere, so if I follow it, eventually I will wind up near civilization.

My legs hurt but I know I must push on. I’ve walked for so long. Earlier I found this beaten path that veered off from the river. It has taken me up and down hills, winding turns that were definitely not made to ensure safety. *Shhhhh*. I jolt my head. The bushes start to rustle behind me. I crouch down to get a better look. *Shhhhh*. It happens again. “Hello,” I ask with whatever confidence is left in me. I get a low growling in return. The same growl the beast made. The beast, it’s back. I need to run. No, I have to face this. A large dark blurred figure rises above the bush. The growling gets louder, meaner with every passing second. I am scared but I know that in order to for it to release me from its pain I have to face it, head-on. Faster, the beast

advances closer to me. Without hesitation, I grasp one of the nearest branches I can lay my eyes on. It comes closer, scarier with every step. I reside here, strong. The roaring becomes louder. Stay strong. Only feet from me, I swing my weapon as hard as I can. Bang! The branch flies through the air, knocking down everything in its path. Where did it go? I spin around, confused. Ashes fall in front of me. Seeing it now. I realize how stupid I was believing that ashes were scaring me. A cold gust of wind sweeps up from behind me. I need to keep going.

Running on the winding path, my back gets an immediate sensation of relief. Nothing dragging it down, just my thin t-shirt and my dirty blonde hair. For the first time in a while I feel fresh, new, rejuvenated. Like a caterpillar coming out of a cocoon, then turning into a beautiful butterfly, eager to experience the colors again, but in a new light. The fears that have been trapped inside me for so long have been released. Through the dense pines, a glimmer of light appears. My heart begins to race, I start to move faster. The trees become more sparse, the light becomes more luminous. I start running. Beyond the trees, lays a field of pale yellow grain.

I keep running, running away from the emptiness that has consumed me. After all this time I've escaped the prison that has captured me. I can't begin to comprehend how my burning legs have thrived for this long. They make me want to crumble to the ground. As the fire travels in my blood through my veins, to my heart and mind, it gives me a sensation of persistence. I can almost see the silver lining ahead of me waiting. *Keep going, keep going, don't quit, don't quit, you can't quit.* The light gets brighter. I can feel it. A voice telling me that there is more just beyond the light. Keep running, keep going. Almost there, almost there. Just another step....

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Thud, thud, thud... my mind starts to identify the most peaceful rhythm. Lighter... like a pitter-patter on a hard floor. My legs aren't sore anymore, nor am I laying on rocks. Not like my bed but soft and pretty comfortable. The vivid light breaks through my eyelids. "Doctor, doctor, get the doctor. She's awake." I am awake. For the first time in my life, I am truly awake.

**Colleen Thamsen      Wisdom/Middle High School      Ms. Sonya Michaud      Grade 8**

### **The Pumpkins**

"Pumpkins! Pumpkins for sale!" Kiara waved a cardboard sign above her head, hair fluttering in the crisp, autumn breeze. The caramel leaves tumbling off the trees and fluttering onto the brown grass made her pulse thrum with joy.

She grinned devilishly as she saw a white van pull into the driveway of the desolate house next door, its tires rumbling on the graveled road, spraying pebbles.

"Hello, sir!" Kiara beamed at the man piling out of the van. "Are you interested in buying some pumpkins?" She skipped over to the man, her overalls clinking and her pigtailed bouncing.

The twelve-year-old had made a successful business of selling pumpkins on the side of the road near her old house. How, you may ask? Well, they're special. The pumpkins smell like sweet vanilla. Folks just want more, and more, and more.

It's not magic; it's a previously unknown species that Kiara Anderson discovered one day while playing in her grandma's backyard. It made Kiara fall into a sort of trance, wanting to spread the word to everyone about her vanilla pumpkins.

What she didn't know was that after long exposure to the pungent scent of vanilla, the pumpkins turn vicious and kill anything in sight.

But she didn't know this of course, and she was making extra pocket money to spend on books and home improvements for her and her grandma. But she was suspicious as some of her regular customers from a few years ago never returned.

"Yes! May I have a look through them?" The man smiled down at the child. "Ah, they smell delectable!" His pupils dilated a little, and he walked towards the piles of pumpkins. "I'll take 7!" He smiled from ear to ear.

"That'll be 35 dollars, sir." Kiara's eyes glittered as he shuffled the dollars towards her. "Thank you for your business. Have a nice day!" He tipped his hat and got into the van.

"You too!" He smiled at her and waved a little. He scoffed after the door closed and he glanced at the pumpkins. "Little rat," he muttered under his breath, and he drove off.

His name was Charles Ricky, and he was an undercover agent for the FBI. After a string of missing person cases, he was the first to volunteer to search around town and see what had been going on. He'd heard whispers of pumpkins. "The pumpkins," they shrieked, before disappearing mysteriously. At first it was only 2 people. Then it grew to 12. He had a seven-year-old daughter himself, and he wanted to protect her with his life.

"I finally got it." He smelled the sweet aroma of vanilla, and he covered his nose with his sleeve. "Well, I got some pumpkins, maybe this could lead to something." He dug into the floor, looking for his manilla folder. Ranging from 2009 to the present, was a range of different missing person cases.

He stopped at a red light, tires rumbling beneath him. He opened the folder. *Disappeared at midnight*. He flipped to another person. *Disappeared at midnight*. He scrambled through the assortments of folders, all saying that they left at midnight and never returned. *Where do they go? What draws them away?* He glanced at the pumpkins again, which seemed to be taunting him, laughing at him, their stems curling and twisting. *Jeez, why do they smell like that?*

He heard a honk behind him. He jerked his head towards the green stoplight, and he slammed on the gas pedal and set down the papers.

"I'm hungry," he wondered aloud, and scanned the street. A cafe - perfect. He peeled into the parking lot and walked into the cafe.

A lady in her 60s, who was wearing a bright pink apron with *Kiss The Cook* printed in cursive along the top, was leaning on the counter. She had short, curly, silver hair and blue piercing eyes. Working in the government had made Charles good at noticing little features about anyone and everyone. Now, to him, it was natural.

He smiled warmly and tipped his hat. "Just poppin' in to get some fresh pancakes." He sat down at the bar on a sleek, metal stool with red cushioning.

The lady nodded and turned. "JAMES! Get this young man some pancakes." She disappeared behind the counter and she returned with his pancakes. He ate, paid, and headed out the door.

Kiara had been rolling on the ground, bored, twirling her hair and sighing. “Not a lot of business today, huh?” The sky had grown dark and the peachy tones of the sunset melted away as quickly as they appeared. She ran inside and bounced up the stairs, racing to her bedroom. She hopped in her bed and snuggled in the sheets.

Her grandmother appeared in the doorway. “Goodnight, honey.” Something had seemed off about her grandmother, but she couldn’t place it. It’s like her eyes had no life.

“Goodnight!” Her grandmother smiled almost too tightly, turned, and walked down the hallway. Kiara waited until she was out of sight to jump up in fear. She tried hard to fall asleep that night, but it was no use. She just couldn’t stop thinking about her grandmother.

In the morning, when Kiara was finally able to get a few hours asleep, she opened her eyes. The house was eerily quiet. “Grandma?” She slunk out of bed and tiptoed down the stairs.

The scene before her eyes would haunt her for the rest of her life. Her grandmother’s apron, on the floor, with blood soaked into the cloth and splattered across the front. She lurched throughout the house, searching for her grandmother. Every single room, every single corner - nothing. She decided to look outside, and she saw her pumpkins, speckled with droplets of red and a sliver of her grandmother’s apron.

Her eyes widened in sickening realization. “Oh my gosh. The pumpkins.” She choked out a sob.

“Grandma!?” Bawling, she ran to the police station.

The guilt in her bones ached to her core and throughout her whole being. When she saw the police station, she headed inside. “Yes, hello?” she said in a small voice and turned towards Charles at the counter. “Oh, you’ve bought my pumpkins before. Please, I’m begging you, throw them out.”

Charles was confused. “Why?”

“I’m turning myself in.” She paused and sucked in a breath. “For the death of my own grandmother. Because of my pumpkins.”

**Izzy Rusnack**

**Valley Rivers Middle School**

**Mr. Lynn**

**Grade 7**

### **The Winds of Terror**

No one knew what was coming that day, when the lonely wind swept across the plains, rattling the pines near the town of Baxter. It was Thursday, October 5, 2013, two days before the tragic incident. I was squirming around in my chair waiting desperately for math class to be over. I was going to my friend Harry’s house for dinner. Harry had the best house to hang out at, since his parents were traveling across the country most of the year and his grandmother spoiled him. He had a gaming system, a trampoline, and a pool. Harry is a pretty good friend and does well in school, but he doesn’t really like social activities. He won the local math-a-thon three years in a row and he won a couple of spelling bees as well.

After school, Harry’s grandmother picked us up and brought us to their house in her red, sparkly Cadillac with tan, cushioned leather seats. After dinner, Harry invited me up to his room. He started talking to me about the upcoming local festival that the town hosted each year

to celebrate the town's founder, David Baxter. Harry had a whole shelf about Baxter and basically knew every nook and cranny in this town. He believed that every 50 years something tragic happens in the town and this happens to be the year. He said, fifty years ago, one of the farmers returned from the festival and all of his three hundred acres were destroyed. All the livestock were dead, and the grass burnt all the way to the cold, hard dirt. I never believed in the theory, but I was curious to see if something was going to happen.

The next day, I woke up feeling sleepy from the long night I had with Harry. I went downstairs, still in my clothes from the day before. I went through my morning routine: showering, making my bed, and brushing my teeth. My mom and dad were already at work so I had to ride my bike to school that day. For sixth period I had social studies with the craziest teacher, Mr. Kindstone. He always taught in the form of poems and rhymes and I have to say they're pretty catchy, like "In 1492, Columbus sailed the ocean blue." But after all the craziness, he is a kind, heartwarming guy, and he is part of the board of directors that runs the festival every year. After class, I packed my bags and got ready for the long ride home. While I was riding home I listened to the leaves rustling in the wind and the birds chirping in the treetops as I felt the cool breeze hitting my body, taking my thoughts with it.

When I got home I went in the living room and fell asleep on the couch. I woke up a few hours later to the sweet smell of onions and steak cooking on the stove. After dinner, my mom told me to go to bed early to rest up for the long festival day ahead. I got in bed and before I knew it I was dozing off.

The wind hit my face, knocking me to the ground. I looked around at the devastation. Trees were down all around and people were running in horror of something. I never saw it, but near my feet was something strange, the sight of a ripped sign. I could barely make out the letters except for the word "festival." I woke up drenched in sweat, thinking the dream was no more than a mere coincidence. I forgot about it and got in the car.

When I got to the festival, it was like every other year: carnival games, a little circus, and some rides, but I thought this year was going to be a little different. After a few minutes of wandering around I found Harry at the cotton candy booth. We went to do a few rides together. We were having so much fun on the rides until we went on the ferris wheel. When we stopped at the top, we could see the whole valley. Something looked different. In the distance I could see trees dropping like lines of dominoes, like in a big thunderstorm, but there wasn't any thunder or lightning. All of the sudden Harry and I felt a powerful gust of wind. Harry turned to me and said, "It's coming!" We started yelling at the operator below us to get everybody off of the ride. The operator looked up, confused at what was happening. But it was no use, we had to wait. Before we had a chance to run, the operator grabbed us, pulled us into his booth, and sat us down on some chairs. We sat on the chairs while the operator mumbled into his radio. Then he turned to us and asked what all the commotion was about. We told him about the wind and he directed us into the main tent. We kept on telling him that it was a big mistake but he wouldn't listen. Suddenly something hit the tent and it collapsed onto Harry, the operator, and me.

I stood up in darkness, searching for Harry. After a few minutes in the dark, I started to get claustrophobic. Every minute felt like an hour, my heart was beating faster second by second. Then I heard someone yelling my name. It was faint, but I could still hear it. I followed the voice and finally made it outside of the tent. When I popped my head out I thought it was going to be torn off by the wind. Then I saw Harry walking around the tent. I tried to get his attention. The winds were getting stronger and people were running around in a panic. I

remembered the dream; it wasn't a thing they were running from... it was the wind. While I was struggling to get free of the tent, something hit me in the head and everything faded to black.

I woke up in a hospital room. There was a bandage on my head, and I had a throbbing headache. My parents walked into the room and sat down beside me. I was confused and asked them what was going on. They told me I'd been struck in the head during the storm and that Baxter had been flattened. Wiped out. I asked them about Harry and they said that he was safe at the local shelter with the rest of the town survivors.

That evening in my hospital bed, I turned on the TV and watched cartoons until a special news report came on. The reporter said the military had created a weapon that can generate enough wind to wipe out a whole town.

Our whole town.

**Quinn Michaud**

**Valley Rivers Middle School**

**Mr. Lynn**

**Grade 7**

## **Drop**

Fog comes at night and Fog goes when the sun rises. The sun, or the Evaporator as all drops call it, evaporate drops. Drop was born from the fog onto a leaf of a berry bush. The sun destroys all the drops on the surface, their only hope is to go underground.

Very few drops have survived the wrath of the Evaporator, saved only when they move into a cave and sit there forever. Don't try to save yourself by going into the ground. The plants will drink you. Don't join a pond or a lake, or else lose consciousness as you become one with the water. Lose what you know, and never be yourself again.

Drop wanted to do something about it. He wanted drops to be able to stay outside without evaporating. To do that, he had to destroy the sun.

A drop fell from the cloudy sky. Then another.

"Hi, do you want to destroy the Evaporator with me?" Drop asked a congregation of drops that had just fallen from the sky. A chorus of "Yes!", "Yeah!", and "What are we doing?" reverberated around their leaves.

Drop saw a creature walking by the berry bush. It had two legs and mysterious fur. Drop didn't know if it even was fur. It made strange noises. The creature hit the bush and picked a berry. All of Drop's army disappeared into the ground below them.

"I guess I have to do it myself."

Later, Drop discovered a way to move between plants by swinging through grass blades. He came across a tree with many drops in it. Drop yelled up to them, "Do you want to destroy the Evaporator with me?! Just drop down onto the grass!"

Many drops fell from the tree and onto the grass. Some missed and got absorbed into the ground, but most landed onto the grass around him.

"Let's get to a cave!" Drop proclaimed to the crowd around him.

"Yeah!"

"Follow me!"

Drop and the others bounded through the field to a cave. When every drop entered the cave, Drop began speaking to them.

“We need a plan.” A drop moved up to Drop.

“I was told the Evaporator was in something called ‘Space’. We should send water to the Evaporator and extinguish it.”

“Yeah!” the crowd of drops yelled. They liked the plan. Drop liked it too.

Drop realized something, “How do we get water into Space?”

“We need a ‘Rocket’ to take the water up,” a drop said.

“How do we get a Rocket?” Drop asked.

“Don’t ask me.” Drop stared blankly at him.

“Let’s start by finding a Rocket,” Drop proclaimed to the crowd. “We need to wait for night to make our move!”

After dark, Drop and the others left the cave to find a Rocket. The smart drop, now the Scientist, said he may know where a Rocket is. He wouldn’t tell anyone where.

“Can you please tell me where you are taking us?” Drop asked pleadingly.

“Like I said, no,” the Scientist said. Drop wanted to know where they were going.

They arrived at this big thing. It was tall, grey, and full of right angles. It had clear things all along the sides. There was an opening on the bottom. The Scientist led the drops through the opening. They traveled on a cold, hard floor to the other side of the thing. They went through another opening and saw a tall, pointy thing on a pad.

“That is a Rocket,” the Scientist said to the group, “We fill that with water and launch it into Space.”

“Look, a tube leading into the Rocket!” a drop said from the crowd.

“We can pump water from the nearby lake into the Rocket!” another said.

“Let’s go!” Drop yelled. All of the drops began pushing one end of the tube into the water. The Scientist led Drop to a panel of flashing lights and buttons. The Scientist pressed on a button. The tube made a sucking noise and the water left the lake.

“We should send a drop with the rocket to make sure it arrives at the Evaporator.”

With the moon at its apex, Drop spoke to the group, “Who wants to fly up with the Rocket?”

A single drop screamed, “Me, me, pick me!”

“OK, your name is now Pilot,” Drop stated. The Scientist led Pilot and Drop into the cabin of the rocket.

The Scientist indicated to Pilot some buttons to press. “This one here makes the Rocket go left,” and so on. “Are you ready? Remember to talk on the radio.”

“Yes!” Drop and the Scientist left Pilot alone in the cabin.

Soon after that, all of the drops were brought into the place with the glowing panel.

“Ready? 3, 2, 1, launch!” Drop exclaimed as he stepped on a button as directed by the Scientist. The Rocket roared to life as shouts of joy came over the radio.

After the dust had cleared, the drops went outside. The night was almost over. Drop and the Scientist stayed at the panel when the fog came. The fog formed new drops next to Drop’s crew. The new drops quickly joined them. Their numbers doubled.

The temperature shot up quickly as the Evaporator appeared. The drops came into the cooler place that held the panel.

“How is it going, Pilot?” Drop asked into the radio.

“Great! I am almost at the Evaporator!” Cheers erupted from the congregation of drops below the panel.

“Almost there, wait, do I ever come...” Static roared over the radio as the Rocket hit the Evaporator. Everyone went silent as they hoped that the Evaporator would disappear. The world became darker as part of the Evaporator slowly became black. The drops went outside to see. The Evaporator became a ring of light surrounding blackness. The temperature dropped. All of the drops were excited that they had completed their mission.

To everyone’s surprise, the Evaporator slowly grew back.

“What’s happening?” Drop asked worryingly.

“Oh, no! It was only an eclipse, we never did it!” The Scientist cried. All of the drops screamed as they rushed to get inside. The temperature was too great. The drops froze in terror as they began to evaporate. Shrieks filled the air as drops disappeared. Drop felt himself bubbling as he started to evaporate. It felt like his soul was ripping from his disintegrating drop-body. He started to float into the air, and he could see other souls fly as well.

“So,” the Scientist said to Drop, “this is what’s next.”

“Yeah, I like this fine.” Drop liked it better. As they talked about why the Evaporator didn’t go away, they rose high above the clouds.

**Daniel Morgenthaler**

**Valley Rivers Middle School**

**Mr. Lynn**

**Grade 7**

### **Lost Hope**

Honestly, I kind of gave up on the whole “anything is possible if you put your mind to it” thing. I’ve been doing that for 7 years and it has gotten me nowhere.

Let’s start from the beginning. I’m a writer, not a professional one, but I write a lot. Apparently my writing isn’t good enough for Charles Bedford, “The Writing Prodigy.” He’s one of the most popular writers in the state, and I love his books. When I heard about his contest 7 years ago I was so excited. Now all I have is hope that’s been lost for awhile.

Anyway, Mr. Bedford puts on a contest for the whole state. They need to write a short story, and whoever he thinks has the best, most passionate story he selects to have published and the author gets to meet him. It’s a big honor.

This year is the last year I can submit a story. I’m 18 years old and I’m going off to college in two months. Hopefully. The college I want to go to is my dream college, but I can’t afford it and my parents won’t pay, so I *have* to get a scholarship. I submitted my application, and since it’s a writing program, I gave them some of my best stories that I have written over the years. And to make sure I get in, I need to win Mr. Bedford’s writing contest. I know the principal of the college will *love* it if I win.

I turned on my laptop and I opened my doc.

*Allison Collier’s Short Story 2019.*

How pathetic.

Writer’s block. I slam my laptop closed and facepalm myself.

“Ugh!” I yell. I look around the room to see if anything inspires me.

Nothing. Why is my room so boring? I have nothing for good story material. Nothing! Nothing! NOTHING!

I take a deep breath and open my bedroom door. I'm met by my cat, who rubs against my legs. I pick her up, and her gray fur gets all over my fingers. I put her down next to the stairs and she hops down them.

I sigh and follow her down the stairs. Now I'm following a cat to get inspired. I'm really desperate for something. Anything.

I walk outside and smell the fresh air. It fills my soul. I look at the breeze in the trees and how the leaves dance with the wind. There are smells of fresh grass and small bits of dew scattered on each blade of grass. I look up at the shining, yellow sun; it somehow smiles at me brightly. I look down and rub my eyes. This is the most beautiful place: nature. It's all around me even outside the door.

"THAT'S IT!" I scream allowed. Joy fills my body and I run upstairs. I have an idea for my perfect story! I opened my laptop and I type away. My fingers blaze across the keyboard - now this is the best story ever!

After hours and hours of writing I finally finish the story that will win it all, that will finally win the contest. Every page, every paragraph, every sentence, and every word is perfect. Truly perfect, the perfection that Mr. Bedford will love. I email it to the contest.

I close my laptop feeling accomplished. I look at the time. 10:30 P.M. already?! I turn off my lamp. I fall asleep feeling like a million bucks.

The next morning I wake up to the sound of my alarm clock. I groan and hit "OFF." I eat breakfast, brush my teeth and get dressed. I run outside to meet the bus.

The bus door creaks open and I hop on.

The bus is really gross. It's full of stinky, immature teens, unlike me. I'm probably the most mature 18-year-old in the whole school.

After a long and loud ride we finally get to school. I immediately got off and rushed to first period. I barely made it to science.

During class, my language arts teacher, Mr. Issac, bursts through the door.

"EVERYONE! Go to the gym, NOW!" His words can be heard up and down the whole hallway and we all rush to see what's going on.

We get to the gym and it's bursting with school spirit. I get all jumpy and sit at the top of the bleachers. I see a man walk over to the stage. It's Charles Bedford. I squeal in excitement, and he grabs a microphone.

"Hello, everyone," he says calmly. It's so strange how he can keep it all together. "I have selected the winner for my contest. Their story truly shows how passionate they are about writing. It's honestly beautiful. This story is *amazing*." he smiles and looks up at the bleachers.

He's talking about me, definitely. He picked *my* story! I know it, and he's right. I worked really hard on it. It's me.

"The winner of the contest is... Matthew Linski!" Matthew goes down and meets Mr. Bedford. They take a picture and smile at each other.

I run out of the gym, tears filling my big emerald eyes.

The rest of the day I'm in a depressed mood and I don't care anymore. If I can't even get one author to notice me, I'm never going to make it in life as a writer. I'm done. I give up. The hope I have is lost forever.

Back home, I am crying into my pillow like a loser. Until I hear a knock on the door.

"Honey, there's a letter for you." I look up from my pillow and I snatch the letter. A shiver goes through my bones. I open it up. Whatever, it doesn't matter anymore.

“Dear, Allison Collier, I am delighted to inform you that you have been admitted to, Hollins University...”

I got in. I GOT IN! I did it!

The rest of the day I’m excited and brag to everyone about it; it’s the best day of my life.

That letter taught me something. It doesn’t matter what someone else thinks about you or your writing. You have to believe you’re good enough.

**Halle Michaud**

**Valley Rivers Middle School**

**Mr. Lynn**

**Grade 7**

### **Dragon Knights**

The year is 771, the kingdom has been under attack so many times im used to it. I am a knight, but I’m training to become a Dragon Knight. Dragon Knights protect the kingdom from Magical Creatures. There are about five Dragon Knights and the king chooses them. They must protect the kingdom until death, or if they are seriously sick or if they can’t move.

It was a normal day in the great kingdom of MoorVine. The children were playing, stores were busy, and the sun provided light to the entire village. Everyone enjoyed the day because they knew they would be under attack shortly. I did my job which was patrolling the kingdom on my horse. I was wearing a metal chest piece and a lightweight leather helmet.

Another knight to me, “the Trolls and Ogres have formed an alliance. They set up a base on the bottom of the hill, they’re planning an attack on the kingdom,”

“What about the Dragon Knights? They surely can’t defend the entire kingdom from an army of Ogres and Trolls,”

He gave me a piece of rolled up parchment, “take this to them. It’s a letter that states the Elves had sided with us and that they will be here shortly. Hurry now, they are in the forest.”

I took the rolled up parchment, “Will do sir,”

And with that I was off. I rode as fast as I could jumping over hay bales, avoiding people, and holding onto the reins for dear life. The gate shot open as I took a secret trail into the forest. The trail was hard for the horse to ride on so I left the horse in the shade. I walked into the silent forest.

I walked fast through the forest. Suddenly a twig snapped, when I looked behind me a Dragon Knight brought me to the ground.

“Who are you and why have you entered the forest? The battle is about to begin,” He asked, putting his fist near my face.

“I have come to deliver a message, captain,” I said handing him the paper.

I have heard of this guy. He was the captain of the Dragon Knights, some say he’s the best knight to ever live. His armor was rusty and sounded awful everytime he moved.

He took it, “The Elves? Something is not right. The Elves hate us. Tell every-” He was cutoff.

A loud noise rumbled the trees, loud footsteps shook the ground, a grumbling noise was heard.

“What is that?” I asked.

“A Troll,” He said helping me up, “of course they would be in the forest they can’t be in sunlight. I’m so stupid!”

Just then the large, green, nose filled with snot, large forehead Troll was in sight. He pulled a tree straight out of the ground and held it in his arms. He threw it at us, the captain pulled me out of the way. We took shelter behind a boulder.

“Got any weapons on you?” Asked the captain.

“I got a flail?” I said.

“Throw it at the Troll, I’ll finish it off,” He explained.

I nodded, I started spinning the flail. When I thought it was going fast enough I let go.

“AAAAAAAAAA!” yelled the Troll.

The flail hit him in the eyes and that big forehead. The captain sprinted at the Troll. I’ve never seen a man run so fast with a suit of armor on. With a quick strike of his rusty longsword, a deep wound was on the Trolls chest. The Troll was dizzy for a moment, and then he fell, motionless.

Without wasting any time he called me over. We ran through the tree filled forest. When we got to a river the captain pulled out a shell. He blew in it and it made a loud, ugly, ear threatening sound. That was the call of the Dragon Knights.

Soon a red haired, big man, who had a big smirk ran over to us. He had a war axe which was the size of me. Next a small man with a bright silver gladius came over. All at once a mean looking girl with a spear, a tough looking lady with a bow, and a tall man with two daggers came running over.

We explained what had happened and that we need to get back to the battle field. Just then I had an idea. I grabbed the war axe, dragged it to some big trees blocking the sun from shining into the forest. I used my momentum to swing an axe to chop down the trees. All Trolls in the forest and near the forest turned into stone. Now it was just the Ogres.

We rushed back to the battlefield where the Elves fought back the Ogres. The Ogres clubs clanked against the armor, horses whinnied, and the Ogres retreated back to their swamp.

Ever since the battle, the kingdom has lived happily ever after.

**Caden Bell**

**Fort Street Elementary**

**Mr. Boudreau**

**Grade 5**

### **The Born Power**

It was a dark and stormy night five days before Halloween, in the town of Transylvania, in a house where five children lived. They were all talented in each state of mind. The first child had the power of time; his name was Timetris. Each day he made himself and his brothers and sisters older. When he started messing with spirits, turning himself into a ghost, his heart grew dark.

Then there was Rosy, the youngest. She had the power of sound. She used her power to cloud her and other people's minds so that she couldn’t remember a bad memory, or to be visible to anyone who was going to punish her, or to bullies who wanted her to die because she was the nicest person in her class.

Finally, Scout was the child who got away with many things; his power was invisibility. He also took special stealth and kung fu classes. The other two children didn't have powers, but they both were training to be top secret agents to keep their brothers and sisters safe.

Before long Timetris was beginning to destroy the world behind his family's backs. One day, Rose and Scout were having a family picnic on top of a cliff. Scout was curious what he could find to make any new collections. Rose was helping him look. "Oh look!" Rose said. "What?" Scout replied. "Look there's a cave!" Rose said. "How!?" he replied. They both went in the cave at the same time. "Whoa!!" they both said. They were back at their house! For a moment they were confused, then they knew what had happened. They knew because Timetris was destroying their brother and sister's souls! Rose tried to erase Timetris's bad mind. She was eaten by Timetris whole! Scout turned invisible.

Timetris was surprised when this happened because he could hear Scout's mind traveling all around him. Then he started to hear his brother and sister's voices. He finally thought he'd done something wrong.

"NOOOOO!!!" Timetris cried. Timetris burst in fear. Then a dark spirit was being separated from Timetris. "I will finish this once and for all," the dark spirit said. Timetris and the dark spirit started battling. Eventually, Timetris won, but it took him a year to do it.

**Bakari Smith**

**Van Buren District School**

**Mrs. Levasseur**

**Grade 5**

### **Before Us**

I awoke in a wooden cart, there were three others with me. Then I noticed my hands were tied with a black leather strap. The sun shone on my face blinding me as well. I could see in the forest a shadowed figure which slowly retreated behind the trees. It had orangish eyes, pretty creepy but that was a later matter, if I ever got to it.

I stayed silent, then looked around me. To my right was a man, he was wearing a black coat made of thick, heavy furs. He was the only one with a strap over his mouth. Then across from that man was a woman. She had her knees against her chest, she was obviously terrified. The man across from me asked "How'd you get here?"

This time I responded, "I remember... nothing, only my name, Tyrodin Althalos."

He looked at me in astonishment, paused then said, "You're Tyrodin Althalos! We're saved!"

The guard steering the cart yelled, "Shut-up back there!"

The terrified woman let her knees down, she was no longer scared. I finally broke the bounds off, the man across from me noticed but stayed silent. I observed around the cart, seeing nothing but forest in all directions. I then got an idea, I grabbed the guard's head and knocked him unconscious. The carriage stopped, the horse was frozen in place. I climbed onto the front and grabbed the guard's body. I slipped his armor over my scraggy clothes and I felt, one-thousand times safer. I slid the guard's sword off of his belt, took the sword and cut the man's bounds off.

He got up and shook my hand, "Name's Froakie, Froakie FrostWorth." He jumped to the front and took the reins, following the stone brick path. The lady stuck her wrists out hoping for

me to cut the bounds. I cut them, she got up, stood still, then hugged me with all her might. I didn't pay much attention to the shifty man, and didn't cut his bounds. I walked over to the front, the lady followed behind me. Over the trees I could see stone walls, and towers.

“Tyrodin, take the reins. Lady sit back down like you're still tied up.”

I did what he said and took the reins. We got closer and finally the trees emptied out into a large stone archway, that was being guarded. A guard came up to the cart and asked if we had the prisoners. I answered with a calm no and let the cart bring itself into the hold of Helgen. The guard waited at the gate for another cart to pass through. The cart came through to the other exit. When I saw the exit I knew we couldn't stay here because they would be on us as soon as they found out we were the prisoners from the cart. So, I whispered back to them and said, “let's get out of here” and pointed to the exit. I hit the reins and bolted out of there with some guards chasing us on foot. We escaped and were now off the cart and on foot through the woods. As we were moving we found a cabin. We checked it for loot and it ended up being our new home.

**Elijah Pinkham**

**Van Buren District School**

**Mrs. Lapierre**

**Grade 6**

### **The Creation of Football**

One day two kids named Landen and Owen were hot and bored. They lived at a lake. The day before, there was a big storm that washed a bunch of junk on the shore. That day they got a bunch of cloth and they had their mother get her sewing kit to make a soccer ball, but she was not the best at sewing. When she was done, it was very weirdly shaped. Landen and Owen threw it, and they even got their mom to play. The next day they brought it to school and played with their friends Myles, Max, Emmett, and Anthony. A few days later, they invited more friends to their house and played 5 on 5.

Their mom got some practice with sewing and made leather gear for the kids, because some of them got hurt when they got tackled. They got a lot of money because their mom started making the ball she made for Landen and Owen, and she made small ones for puppies. Their puppy, Layla, especially loved it! She calls them footballs. They bought a lot of white spray paint and 200 yards of land. They made a field 120 yards long and they painted the field. They put numbers on the field for every ten yards. It went 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 40, 30, 20, 10. After both tens was the end zone and each one was 10 yards long. They called it a “touchdown” when someone got the ball in the endzone.

With the other land, they got someone named Chad to build stands for people to watch when they played. All of the kids who played agreed that when they got into the endzone it was 6 points, but when they played, they thought there was not enough points scored. They remembered their mom tried to make a soccer ball, so they figured it should involve kicking. They had Chad make a metal pole that was shaped as a Y, and it was one point when you kicked the ball through. Some kids thought it was too hard to kick the ball through. They said there should be another way to get points after a touchdown. “Instead of always kicking the ball after a touchdown, you should be able to choose what to do. What if you could run or throw the ball to get 2 points?” They agreed.

They got grown-ups to throw yellow flags that meant someone broke the rules. When you broke the rules, and you were the team on offense, you would get negative yardage. If you were defense, the offense would go farther ahead. Even with the leather gear Landen and Owen's mom made, the people who played still got hurt, so with the material Chad had and the material their mom had, they made hard shoulder pads. They were hard on the outside but on the inside they were really soft. They made helmets that were designed perfectly for their heads. When Chad was making the shoulder pads, their mom was making jerseys because they would forget who's on whose team.

The kids would get tired a lot, so they said, "There should be 4 quarters in a game. After each quarter there should be a 3-5 minute break. After the second quarter, there should be a 15 minute break." They thought 10 players was enough, but then a kid and his brother asked to play. The players said sure. They always kept doing the same running and throwing plays, and they figured that it gets boring doing the same thing again and again. They took a few days off and made more than 60 different plays for each team to use. There was an old rich man that saw them play and thought it would be a good idea to donate money to make it an official sport. The kids who made the sport coached little kids when they grew up and are now head coaches for the National Football League.

**Owen Moutinho**

**Woodland Consolidated School**

**Mrs. Landeen**

**Grade 4**

### **The Forbidden Woods**

Alicia lives in the city with her father; she is 12 years old. Every summer she goes to her grandparent's house in Hannacroix, New York, and they tell her endless stories about her mother, Lia. She left Alicia and her father, Phillip, when she was two; Alicia never understood why. Her father never talked about it.

Alicia and her father drove to her grandparent's house "Bye, Alicia. Love you. Have fun!" said her father, pulling out of the driveway.

"Bye, Dad. Love you, too," Alicia said, waving and smiling.

"Well, let's go inside and eat lunch," said Grandpa James. While they ate lunch, her grandparents were talking about how her school was and how old she was getting. Now everyone was done with lunch so they decided to go walking on the trails.

Alicia loved going on the trails. It was so different compared to the city. Alicia was walking with her grandfather when she noticed this trail she never saw before. She knew the trails like the back of her hand, and she thought they took a wrong turn. She noticed a sign, which read: The Forbidden Woods.

"Can we go on the trail? I've never seen it," knowing he'd probably say no.

"I don't think so. I haven't been on that trail since your mom was a kid."

"What? My mom went on that trail?" said Alicia confused.

"Um, what? Just forget about it," said Grandpa in confusion.

Alicia just dropped the subject, knowing that he knew what he said. Every time Alicia had questions about her mom, people would always just drop the subject. They walked back and noticed a car in the driveway. As they walked inside the house to greet them, Alicia heard a

familiar voice. When she looked at the dining room table, she noticed it was her childhood friend she would always hang out with when she came to the farm. It was Mary!! Alicia started running to Mary to give her a big hug.

“Mary!” said Alicia hugging her excitedly. “I was wondering when you’d come!”

“I was trying to come over, but I've been really busy,” said Mary in excitement.

Alicia and Mary went outside. Alicia told Mary about what happened on the trail. She always told her secrets to Mary. Mary knew a lot about what happened to Alicia when she was little. Alicia really wanted to go on the trail, and so did Mary now.

“We should figure out what’s on the trail. A secret?” said Mary mysteriously.

“Let’s go. They shouldn’t have shown me it if they didn’t want me to go on it,” said Alicia nervously. They were walking on the trails, but Alicia couldn’t remember where the trail was. Then Alicia thought that she saw something. She just kept walking thinking it was probably nothing. She was wrong though. They noticed a sign in the bushes. “We’re here. This is the trail. Should we start trying to walk in?” asked Alicia, seeing the overgrown bushes throughout the trail.

“Yeah, we should before it gets dark,” said Mary nervously. When they finally reached the other side of the overgrown bushes, Alicia tripped over something. Mary ran over to help her. Alicia looked under her foot. It’s a book that she tripped over. She picked up the book. It had a potion bottle on the cover. She read the title: The Spell Book of the Unfortunate. Alicia then notices the author: Lia McGarther....Alicia’s mother!

To be continued...

**Eleanor Rothlauf**

**Woodland Consolidated School**

**Ms. Swan**

**Grade 6**

### **Under the Rug**

Two weeks had passed and it was happening again. Every time it happens my blood gushes faster through my veins, my adrenalin begins pumping and thumping. Except this time was different. This time I feel calm, if only for a few seconds. Then I look for the chair, but just as I am about to hit the lump that is moving under my rug a mysterious creature jumps at me and knocks me down. It starts to claw at my ankles and that is when I finally see it. It is a baby dragon!

Now, baby dragons eat small animals (cats, small dogs, squirrels, etc.) and my cat has been missing for two weeks! Plus, I haven’t seen my chihuahua all day. I can see it more clearly now and it is obvious to me that I have a baby dragon in my house. I’m pretty sure I can see tiny wings, rigid scales, and a small green tail.

This dragon is definitely hungry. As I go to get him some food he follows me as though he wants me to give him a name. I decided to name him Peyton. After that, I got him some of my cat’s food and he devoured it very quickly. So, I guess I have a new pet!

**Nikolai Lento**

**Easton Elementary School**

**Mrs. McQuade**

**Grade 4**

## Inner Demons

I've always been intrigued by the paranormal. The thought of being watched by an unseen presence. Mother believes in it, too. A little too much sometimes. She burns sage around us before we enter the house. Zachary and I think it's ridiculous. She says she does it to ward off the spirits Father may have summoned. I was closest to Father out of my family. He treated me differently for some reason. He would say I was special, that I was chosen. To this day I don't know what he meant. Father was part of a cult that got exposed to the public. Word spread around town quickly. Rumors about our family spread, too. We had to move away and change our names. It's just Zachary, Mother, and I now.

The park bustles with life as children play and people walk their dogs. Mother watches Zachary play on the playground with some other children. No one knows who we are.

"Mother?" I say coming up behind the bench where she sits, "I'm going to walk home, okay?"

"Ok, Gabbie," she hesitates when she says it. I suppose she isn't used to our new names yet. "Don't forget the--"

"Sage, I know, Mother." I roll my eyes as I say it. Mother doesn't notice, luckily, as she is too focused on Zachary.

I walk up the driveway and look around. Our neighbors are in their houses. Except for Mrs. Yorkshire. If she sees me she'll want to talk. I hurry up to the garage door and open it before I hear, "Oh! Gabbie! How nice to see you!"

My shoulders drop as her footsteps grow louder behind me. I turn around to face her. She has a bigger figure and walks with a wobble. Her grey hair is pulled back with a clip holding it in place.

"How are you doing on this fine day?" Her voice is cheery and her Dutch accent is heavier than usual.

"Good I suppose." I give her a weak smile and turn my feet away to signal that I don't want to be there.

We talk for a couple of minutes. Mrs. Yorkshire carries on the conversation while I answer simply with yes, no, or maybe. A box on a shelf in the back of the garage begins to shift. Mrs. Yorkshire doesn't notice, she is deep in her speech about mobility when wearing a hat. The box falls off the shelf. A loud bang sounds from behind us. We jump back and stare into the dark garage.

"I better get going," Mrs. Yorkshire says, her voice wary now. She slowly steps back then turns around and speed walks away. I watch her wobble to her lawn next door. I don't know what made her so scared. It's just a box.

The garage is silent now. I turn on the light and begin to unlock the door to the house. I remember the box and go to clean it up. Some of the items inside have spilled out onto the floor. I start to scoop them back up when I notice a camera among them. I pick it up and examine it. It's a dull silver color. I put it near the door so I won't forget it. I return to the box and finish picking up the items.

The sage is on a ledge next to the door. A lighter sits there as well. I stare at them, contemplating if I should do what Mother says, even though I think it's ridiculous. I shake my head and go inside. Before I close the door, a muffled gurgle follows behind me. I turn around but see nothing unusual.

The kitchen is the first room in the house. I set the camera down and grab some crackers from the pantry. I walk into the living room and sit on the couch. Our house is small but not tiny. It has just enough space for us. For some reason, Father comes to my mind. His laugh echoes in my head. I try to ignore and go to the kitchen for more snacks. The camera stares at me from its spot on the counter. I pick it up and bring it back to the living room.

The screen on the old camera lights up. Faint footsteps start from the front door. They continue over to where I sit but stop next to me. I freeze in place. When I'm sure there is nothing there, I focus on the camera. The memory card is full. I play around with the buttons and find the saved photos and videos. I watch the first one and my eyes widen in horror. At least seven adults wearing long, hooded cloaks gather around in a circle. I hear them chanting something before the video cuts out. I'm not sure why but I keep watching them. With each video, I get more and more horrified. I set the camera down on the end table. Mother and Zachary aren't back yet. I wonder what they are doing that takes so long.

I open the door to my room. The wall is covered with red. My hand cups over my mouth. *Victoria* is written on the wall. I stare at the word unsure what to do. The only people that know Victoria is my real name is Mother, Father, and Zachary.

"Father?" I say aloud. Laughter comes from behind me. I quickly turn around to see nothing there. I frantically look around for the source of the sound. When I look at the wall again there is new writing. *Join me*. A dark figure manifests in my peripheral vision. I spin around to face it. Its mouth spreads into an unnatural smile. I'm frozen in place just staring at it. It starts to move toward me, its smile getting wider. "Hello, Darling," it says. Its voice is deep and muffled, almost a growl.

"Father?" is all I can manage to get out. My eyes fill with tears as I look at what he has become. Father continues walking toward me. I stumble backward, but his long arms still reach me. The world goes dark.

**Ellie Martin**

**Woodland Consolidated School**

**Mr. Theriault**

**Grade 7**

### **My Magic Scarecrow**

I have a scarecrow and it sits in the field doing its job all day long. But recently I found out that my scarecrow wasn't as "normal" as we all had thought.

I found out my scarecrow was magical, but I had to discover what her powers were. All day I tried to get her to talk, but it didn't work. I tried until it was dark. Finally, I said, "Good-bye scarecrow," with no hope left. Then I heard someone say, "Good-bye," so I turned around quickly. I asked the scarecrow if it was really her who said that. It was!

After spending some more time with my scarecrow I found out exactly what her magical power was. She could teleport things from place to place! I asked her, "Can you teleport me to my nanny's house for the night?" She told me she could but there was no way to get me back because she couldn't come with me, and she can only teleport things she can see.

I had an idea! I said, "Maybe if you stood in front of a mirror you could teleport yourself too." She thought it might work, so we went inside my house to find a mirror to stand in front of. Then she suddenly disappeared!

The next morning I found her back in the house, so I quickly walked with her out to the field. We talked for a long time and became great friends. Every night since then we have gone on adventures together as we teleport from place to place. But you can be sure that we always make it back in time so we will not get caught.

**Brenna Carlow**

**Easton Elementary School**

**Mrs. McQuade**

**Grade 4**

### **The Mishap**

I waved our parents goodbye when their car left the driveway. Just like usual we were left home alone. With Alex (My little brother) occupied with the tablet he got for his birthday, and Angela (My big sister) listening to music in her room I (Jonas) had no other choice than to play Minecraft in my basement. We were home alone quite often because our parents are geologists and they go on business trips... A LOT.

Like not even a minute later, Angela comes down and says, "Can you do the laundry sport, I have been doing chores all week."

"Sure whatever," I exhaled not really caring. After an hour later I was getting bored, I headed to the kitchen for a snack, that's when I was greeted by Alex.

"What are YOU doing?"

"Umm... Getting a sack."

"Sure. But will you pass... The Fire Demon!!!!?"

"Whatever," I just wanted something to eat!

"Speaking of fire, does it smell like smoke in here?"

"Ya, I think Angela put the firstove on."

"We should ask just in case, Angela!"

"Coming!!! What do you need?"

"Does it smell like smoke in here?"

"Ya.. It seems to be coming from the basement. I did leave the fire stove on but it wouldn't smell this bad." she exclaimed in confusion.

"Well Angela what are you waiting for!" I said in the most impatient voice.

"Fine!" As Angela crept down the stairs she finally let out a horrifying scream just seconds later.

"NOOOOO!!!"

"Angela? You ok."

As Angela came up the stairs she was holding her melting laptop in a metal pan. "MY LAPTOP!!!"

"It's fine we'll just buy a new one," I said annoyed as Angela was crying.

"Jonas! Do something, Angela's being a crybaby!"

"Whatever just... Get a bucket Alex, and fill it with water." As Alex was getting the bucket, I was panicking really bad. This was the first time I have been in a fire and by the looks of it, it seems pretty big.

"Quick hurry! throw the water onto the fire" Alex exclaimed.

"Im trying!"

Alex threw the water onto the fire, but it did absolutely nothing it just slowed the thing down!

“Wow,” I said in disbelief.

As Angela was weeping on the floor Alex, being the smart one in this situation, said “Quick, we should call 911!”

“What? Oh Ya we should do that, and get Angela out here before she goes berserk.”

“What about Snowball?” Snowball is our cute and beloved cat.

“It’s fine, im sure she’ll find a way out. She IS a very smart cat.”

When the firemen got to our house they they quickly rushed and put out the beast in our basement, which is my favorite room in the entire house. When the firemen came out they were holding our cat Snowball.

“Snowball!!” I think Alex loves snowball the best in our entire family, i mean he feeds her, he takes her outside... I know it’s weird but she is an outside cat.

“So it appears to us that gasoline was spilled onto the fire stove.” One fireman said.

“Do you know who might have done this?” The other said out of the three.

“No I-” When I looked at Snowball’s paws, they were black. “Snowball might have we’ll have to clean her later, but why was there gas near the fire stove??”

“I may have left the gasoline near the fire stove... Opened hehe.” Angela said nervously.

“Why would you leave gas near the fire stove!!”

“Look I was filling Mom and Dad’s car and I came down to you and I asked if you could do the laundry, and I just forgot to put the gas in the closet.”

“You owe me Angela.”

The firemen were able to save the house but said “the basement is totaled,” actually they didn't say that but I forgot so lol. When they said that I got really sad, like really sad because the basement was almost my bedroom.

“Sorry sport, I guess your favorite room is ruined.” Angela said not very caring.

“Ya by YOU.”

“Well you don't have to be mean!”

We all had to clean the basement and give Snowball a bath. We told our parents what had happened and they forgave us, but they had to hire people to rebuild the entire basement.

**Gaige St. Peter**

**Limestone Community School**

**Grade 7**

### **Akari.**

Today is a very big day for me. I just moved all the way from Tokyo, Japan. My Dad got offered a very big job, and he didn’t want to turn it down. I’m very scared. I have to go to this new school knowing little English, knowing no one at all. I’m not like other kids here. I don’t speak their language, I don’t eat foods they eat. I also have a condition called Dyslexia, which means I have a hard time with all my reading, writing, and spelling. When I lived in Tokyo, I didn’t have many friends, they all thought I was weird because I couldn’t read or write at my age. They made fun of me and called me, “The Upside Down Kid” and “Dyslexic Girl.”

“Akari”! My parents call up the stairs. “Time for school.” As I’m walking down the stairs, my parents ask, “Are you excited Akari?” “Yeah,” I say anxiously.

When I walk into the school, people look at me with weird expressions on their faces. I see people whispering to one another. All of a sudden I got a sick feeling in my stomach. I say to my mom, “I can’t do this.” “Oh Akari, yes you can, don’t be so dramatic,” she says.

When the Principal was walking me up the stairs, someone had offered to bring me to my class. “Sure” said Principal Smith. “You’re in her class anyway”.

“Hi, my name is Malia, what’s yours?” “Ak-Akari” I say in a very nervous manor. “Where are you from?” asks Malia. I try to answer in the best english possible. “I’m from Tokyo, Japan”. “Oh, that’s so cool!” she replied.

All that day Malia and I talked. I was so happy to hear her say that she had Dyslexia too! Malia said she didn’t have many friends because she had just moved here a couple of weeks ago from a small town called New Castle, Delaware, or something like that. She also told me she had been learning some Japanese for some school project. I found that to be pretty cool! I’ve never met someone that was or wanted to learn my language.

That night at dinner, I told my parents about my awesome day I had. I told them all about Malia and how she was also Dyslexic. I also told them that she was learning Japanese for a school project.

The next day I got to school and I saw Malia sitting in the corner of the cafeteria. She was crying, and was hiding her face in her knees. I went over and asked her if she was okay. When she told me what was wrong, I felt my stomach drop. “I can’t come to school anymore, it’s too expensive for my family. They’re letting me stay until the end of this week.” “Malia, I can’t believe this, I just moved here. Who will be my friend when you leave”?

That night I went home and told my parents about Malia. “Malia can’t come to school anymore, her family can’t afford it” I said in a very somber tone.

“Well Akari,” my dad said. “I can offer one thing.” I got a very exciting feeling of hope inside. “WHAT! What is it?”

“Akari, I make plenty of money with this new job, we could help her family out with the extra I make.” I wanted to scream, but I held it in. “Oh, thank you Dad, thank you! I can’t believe this.”

That next morning I jumped out of the car and ran to the entrance of the school. When I walked into the cafeteria, I went right to Malia.

“Malia! I have news.” I could tell she was getting excited. “My dad said he could help you and your family out. He said we could only do this if your parents agree.” When I told her about the money, she just started to bawl.

“My dad said with the extra money he makes, we could give it to you so you can stay in school,” I told her.

I was so happy to hear the good news from Malia the next day. “YES! THEY SAID YES! They’re okay with you helping out! Akari, thank you so much for everything. Really, thank you.”

“Well no problem Malia, anything for a friend” I responded.

For the past three months, I’ve been helping Malia and her family get by. My dad recently hired Malia’s dad. So they’re making money fast. If I wouldn’t have moved to America, I wouldn’t have saved a life like I did.

## Escape

“Chief...CHIEF, wake up!”

John opened his eyes to see a familiar artificial intelligence, *Cortana*. The name snapped into his head “What is it, Cortana? Did the cryogenic chamber work?”

“Yes, Chief you’ve been asleep for four years,” Cortana said, “I woke you up because Prometheans have invaded the ship.” A little blue hologram of Cortana flickered to life on his right arm.

“Did you activate the defense systems?” Meanwhile as John spoke the glass door to the chamber he was standing in slowly opened.

“I couldn’t. They took control of the central control room, so you’re going to have to kill them all if you hope to get to an escape pod.”

“How many of them are near the control room and the escape pods?” Asked Chief as he slowly stepped out of the chamber. His legs felt stiff as if he hadn’t used them in a long time, which he hadn’t.

“43, but in total there’s about three hundred, so I would recommend you get to the weapon’s storage room fast.”

“I’ll do that. Thanks, Cortana.” The hologram disappeared. John slowly started down the hallway, careful not to alert attention to himself.

John tried to remember the way through the ship. He turned left, right, and left again until he reached a door that read *Ammunition*. He heard a scuttling sound from inside. John braced himself and kicked the door right off its hinges, making a loud ***bang*** as it hit the floor. John jumped on the thing, half flattened by the heavy metal door, and immediately snapped its head off. Then examining the body, he realized it was a Promethean crawler.

John looked around the room. Many of the ammo boxes had been cut in half by the crawler’s teeth he presumed. Ammo and grenades were everywhere, he started gathering as much as he could carry within his suit when he heard heavy footsteps in the hallway. Of course, that heavy ***bang*** would draw more attention he thought. He risked a quick peek out into the corridor. He counted two Promethean Knights. Luckily their backs were turned and they didn’t see him. In their hands they were carrying suppressors, a type of rifle, John remembered.

Promethean weapons are very high tech. As soon as you drop them they fall apart into little fragments, making them very easy to store in weapon supply rooms, but as soon as you pick it up the gun reassembles itself.

John grabbed one of the five grenades and braced himself to throw it at the Promethean Knights. Then he remembered that there were about three hundred Prometheans still on the ship. If he threw this grenade about two hundred of those Prometheans would immediately run down to see what all the racket was.

John threw the plasma grenade, but not at the Knights. Instead he threw it at the other end of the corridor. The Knights ran down the hallway right past the room John was hiding in. He waited for them to run past, feeling more vibrations as more Prometheans ran towards the scene. John snuck past towards the escape pods.

The pod’s room was more of a really long hallway going down the side of the ship. John climbed into the nearest pod and pressed the launch button. The pod’s door suddenly closed and John closed his eyes as the escape pod zoomed through space.

## The Book Burglar Strikes Again

“May I have your attention for morning announcements,” our school secretary started. I don’t really tend to listen to announcements unless I hear something about books, band, class meetings or FFA. Today was a little off, though. “The book fair will be closing early due to theft of three books,” she said before announcing basketball game times. Uh oh.

Classes were normal until 4th period, when my classmates were being called down to the office one by one. The intercom came on once more. “Darwin Lionheart to the office please.” A knot started to form in my stomach as I descended the stairs. If I don’t come up with something, I’ll be found out.

“Hello, Darwin,” our principal said as I came in. “I just need to ask you a few questions. To start, do you know how to turn off a security camera?”

“No, sir.”

“I know you’re a reader. Would you steal a book?”

“No, sir.”

“Alright. Where were you Monday night?”

“I was helping my brother practice for the upcoming basketball game.”

“At our playground or at home?”

“At home.”

Our principal looked his notes over and nodded. “You’re free to go.”

I made my way back to class, slightly relieved but still worried. I could still be caught and sent to jail. It’s my fault I even stole them, but it’s an urge I can’t ignore. I’ve stolen books before... why do they care now? To make a point, I decided to attempt theft again. This time, I would only steal one because three was a little bold of me. But first, I needed to ask my brother a favor.

“Hey Nathan, I have a favor to ask,” I said when I entered the kitchen upon returning home “for the night.” He looked around at me. He looked exactly like me, but with green eyes.

“Let me guess,” he said with an eye roll. “You want me to cover for you again. I will, but on one condition.”

“What would that be, brother of mine?” I said with a slightly sarcastic tone.

He smiled and said, “You bring me some Rolos when you come back and help me practice again.”

“You got yourself a deal, brat.”

...

I slunk around the back of the library, the cafeteria, and library cameras disabled via the tech room. If I grab the one book, hide it in my bag, and reenable the hallway cameras using a timer to give me enough time to leave, I should be fine. I cracked the library door open to check that the librarian wasn’t there. He wasn’t. I slide through the door and creep over to the book containers. I peeked over the edge of one, and saw a book perfect for the situation, titled *The Book Thief*. I grabbed it and threw it in my bag. I left the library as quietly as possible.

I headed back to the tech room to reenable the cameras. I slipped, reactivated the cameras, and deleted the footage of my entering, exiting, and reentering of the tech room. I set a five-minute timer to give me time to escape.

I checked the hallway before I left the tech room, making sure the door was closed behind me. I exited via the side door of the school and headed home.

The Next Morning...

“May I have your attention for morning announcements,” our school secretary started. Nothing too interesting, just a food drive and class meetings. “The library will not be available, as another book has been stolen. If you must return books, please drop them off at the office.”

The book burglar strikes again.

How about I do it one final time?

**Julian Howes**

**Ashland District School**

**Mrs. Merrill**

**Grade 8**

### **The Ice World**

In the Arctic there lived two monsters in a field of big icebergs outside the land of Polarville where the warrior polar bears live and train for war. One monster was named Glacier and her brother was named Ice. Glacier was a brilliant, thoughtful, daring, and positive monster, and Ice was more afraid, clumsy, chatty, and annoyed that nobody ever listened to him. Today Ice thought he could relax as it wasn't a stormy day like yesterday. Today it was a calm day with no problems from a weird, screaming goat.

Suddenly, the ice started to crack open and everything began to shake. Glacier came out of the hut and ran toward Ice. Ice grabbed on to Glacier's paw and shouted, “We better go, FAST!” Glacier let go of Ice's paw and began to run. Glacier looked back and saw Ice just standing there, shaking, while the ice below was cracking. Glacier ran to Ice and grabbed his paw and moved him out of the way just as the other half of the iceberg sank.

Glacier turned and looked at Ice and yelled at Ice, “You could have died!” Then, all the icebergs started to shake and Ice and Glacier started to run. Glacier almost fell off the edge of the iceberg, but Ice grabbed her just in time. Glacier jumped to the next iceberg and yelled, “Come on Ice! Jump!” Ice backed up and shook his end. Glacier knew he wouldn't jump and she didn't want to make him angry, so she looked for something to throw. Finally, something caught her eye. There, just sitting, was a rope. Glacier ran and picked it up and shouted, “Ice, catch!” Ice grabbed it and swung down and across to the other side.

Glacier and Ice were almost to the snow palace when the flesh eating polar bears surrounded them. “This means war,” they all cried.

“War?” asked Ice.

“For destroying our home!” answered King Know-It-All, the king of the polar bears.

“We didn't destroy your home. Our home is destroyed too.” Glacier said.

“Well then, we will be on our way,” King Know-It-All said.

They finally came upon the snow palace, but it too was destroyed. Glacier was about to give up, when she saw what was causing all the terror. “It's a portal! That's what's causing the world to end!” yelled Glacier.

“How are we going to stop a Godzilla sized portal from destroying everything?” Ice asked.

“We close it? Yes! Yes, we do!” Glacier shouted.

“And how would you like us to do that?” Ice asked irritably.

“I'm not sure.” Glacier answered calmly. “I know! We could try to find two long ropes, hook them on to the portal, then pull as hard as we can. That should close it!”

“That’s the smartest thing you have ever said!” Glacier shouted to Ice  
Glacier still had the piece of rope from when she helped Ice get to the next iceberg and she cut the rope in half with a sharp chunk of ice. Then, Ice carved two hooks out of ice.  
“Now what about our homes?” Glacier asked worriedly.  
“We will rebuild them, but it will take some time and we will wait.” Ice answered.  
Glacier heaved a sigh of relief. “I never want to leave home. It would break my heart,”  
Ice said. The next morning the monsters helped everyone to build the town back up and they even made friends with the polar bears.

**Luna Andrews**

**Ashland District School**

**Mrs. Beaulier**

**Grade 5**

### **The Day of the Snowmen**

It was the scariest day of them all, and it happened every year. Today was the day when all the snowmen built in Amsterville, came to life. You’d think nobody would build a snowman if they knew, but the new people that come to the town of Amsterville, usually two to five families a year, always come from hot states like California and Florida, and just want to see some snow for the holidays. I know what you’re thinking... how can two to five families build enough snowmen for the whole town of 1,089 people to be scared? Well, each year, there’s always a storm that’s like a hurricane but also shoots snow and goes only on the streets, and there’s never a warning when it will come. That storm also drops snowmen at the base every ten inches; some even get merged together. The snow the hurricane shoots also makes the snowmen come to life that are already built, so there’s almost 1,000 snowmen along the streets and backyards of Amsterville.

How does this happen? Well, there is known to be a scientist who makes these storms; he lives in a big black mansion and he hates all the people being happy. He thinks that all people shouldn’t be happy because of all the problems in the world right now, and he thinks we should all work together to solve them, not be happy and give gifts to people who did nothing to help. Why can’t the police just take him out? Well, because his mansion is surrounded by a fence with barbed wire on top and is guarded by sentry guns and proximity mines all around it, so no one even dares to go anywhere close to it. The snowmen shouldn’t be scary, but the storm uses technology to take all the cars and their parts on the streets, and turns them into armor and weapons for the snowmen the storm creates. Many people’s doors can easily get kicked down, and anyone can get hurt. My goal today is to get into that mansion and get as much evidence and data I can so some of the world’s best scientists and builders can build a counter attack for this hurricane.

Today, is the day of the hurricane. It’s happening right around the corner of my street, Bonville Street. I leave my house as quickly as possible so no snowmen come over here... they are really fast, after all. I race across the street to my neighbor's house. I told them the storm was coming and to close their doors and windows, even though they would probably get in. My parents have a secret compartment in the floor of their messy closet, so no one was ever going to find my parents down there. I raced across the open soccer field, into some bushes covered in

snow. I watch as a deer crosses the road in front of me and looks right. He starts to book it into the woods, a snowman chases him the whole way.

I walk over to the road to see if the storm is anywhere near me. I saw it had already passed through because there was a big, long trail heading north up the street. The snow didn't affect humans unless they ate it, so I crossed the street and went into the forest. I now had to walk exactly 6 miles to get to the scientist's big, black mansion, so I quickly started jogging, and soon ran into the deer, laying dead on it's right side, the snowman nowhere to be seen. I kept jogging, well running now, and ran into a sign that said "Private Property." I had only gone a half a mile and already ran into a problem? *I wonder if there are land mines around here?* I stood there staring at the sign, examining its details. This was old and rusted. This was probably a base of someone in World War 2, because I don't think you can buy landmines anywhere near here, or even anywhere in the world. I soon hear leaves crinkling, and all of a sudden, I was hit with part of a muffler.

The next thing I know, I wake up in a green tube, and I'm surrounded by a liquid. I have a breathing tube, but no clothes, except for underwear. I couldn't speak. I was soon let out of the tube by a guy in a white lab coat and combed down hair; he wore goggles that look like they belong in a movie. He was the mastermind behind everything.

"What were you doing on my land son?" the man asked. "Everyone knows that this land is mine in this town, and if you can see the private property sign, then you are far too close to it. I have men all around that are just waiting to pounce on any poor soul that decides to come close to my property. Son, if you decided to go beyond that sign, you would've had to dodge all the landmines I placed years ago, and after that, you would have to dodge the ten sentry guns I have all around the fence which has barbed wire all around it. My men basically saved your life back there, and I hope you know that."

"Than why do you keep me here?" I said, after taking the tube out of my mouth. "Why do you have to hurt people to smarten them up? Why do you have to ruin everything that makes people happy?" I say, boiling with anger.

"Pain is the medicine you take for mischief, son. Pain is your senses telling you to stop. I keep you here because you need to learn to keep away from my house. I'm sorry, kid, but I have to do this. I have to do this to everyone, but just you for today," he says as he leaves the room.

He left me in the room all by myself, only a rope tied to the big tube and my hands were holding me back from escaping. I wiggle out of the rope, assisted by my small hands. I don't have anything on me. I hear footsteps, so I run to a window and open it. I see the whole yard but nothing to climb onto except a rusty old pipe. I look back and see no door, except the one that just opened with the man coming out of it! I get on the pipe and look down... it's a big fall. I look over, and there's more pipe. It's freezing cold, and I'm only in my underwear. I scoot along the pipe. I see a window that just leads to another room. I keep scooting, until the pipe breaks!

I fall onto a pile of snow, too broken to move. The water from the pipe, which is very hot, falls on me. It keeps me warm while I'm on the snowbank. I soon pass out. When I wake up, I'm on my bed at home, parents at my side. It was the next day.

"Oh, John, we were so worried for you," Mom said. "We couldn't let you go to that place all by yourself, so after you left, me and your dad followed your steps and saw the sign and a trail beside it. We stayed on it just in case and found you laying on a snowbank. The trail led through the fence and away from any guns. We saw you, grabbed you, and brought you back home."

“Wow.” I said in amazement. “You guys didn’t see any snowmen?”

“Nope!”

I then went to sleep, but instead of going to sleep, I woke up from that awful nightmare.

**Cole Eastman**

**Ashland District School**

**Mrs. Merrill**

**Grade 7**

### **Animal Space**

It started in a place that wolves and coyotes were free to come and go without being hunted. This place was warm all year around. It had bushes with berries and all kinds of food so they never had to hunt. This place was perfect - it had trees and grass that is really green. There were more animals than just wolves and coyotes, there were foxes, giraffes, lions, and a lot more. There were still people that lived there, but they never hurt one animal. The wolves called these people, the guardians because one person, an outsider, found this place and the guardians fought him off. This is that story...

My name is Max and I am a guardian. One day I was making sure that the animals were good. I found a bullet on the ground. As soon as I found it, I knew an outsider was here. I knew it because we only have spears. When I went to get the others, I saw a blood trail so I followed it. I was still following it for a long time when all of a sudden, I heard BOOM! The others in my group came so fast and gave me a spear. We went to get the outsider. When we got there, the wolves were already in their pack and started fighting against the outsider. I pulled them off to help the wounded. While they were fighting I snuck up behind the outsider and took the gun he had dropped and pointed it at him. I told him to leave and never return so he did. I broke the gun. I rushed to the pack and I saw the alpha dead on the ground. I looked at Beast, the alpha’s son. I knew he was not ready to become the alpha.

I told the wolves they are not going to have alpha for a little while. As soon as Beast heard he ran off so I sent another pack’s alpha after him. It was 2 days until that alpha came back alone and just shook his head. I knew Beast was not coming back for a long time. Then one day, a coyote showed up with Beast dead on his back. There were bear claw marks on his back. The guardians banned all bears from this perfect place. To make sure bears and people do not come back, the wolf packs agreed to take shifts guarding the area.

**Tyler Cunningham**

**Ashland District School**

**Mrs. Belanger**

**Grade 4**

### **Christmas Eve Miracle**

It was Christmas Eve and my family and I were watching Christmas movies in our living room. When all of a sudden my brother Caleb looked out the window and noticed that we could see the ocean. We were getting further and further from shore. Then everything shut off and it was pitch black in our house. It was like we were in a movie, but it was real life. Suddenly we

got our power back and we could tell we were in the ocean. My sister, Bella, started to freak out, but not in a bad way in a good way. She was so happy she got to see all the fish. My brother was taking notes for his science class (they were learning about sea life). My parents, and Mimi sat there in amazement. I, on the other hand, was trying to take pictures of our experience under water. It was a few hours before we went back to our original home in Caribou, Maine, but my family and I will never forget our experience that Christmas Eve night.

**Elizabeth Robbins**

**Caribou Middle School**

**Mrs. Levasseur**

**Grade 5**

### **Detective McStearn**

The time was 5:30 A.M. on what seemed to be a regular Monday morning.

The town Detective, Mr. McStearn, was in his office looking through old case files, when there was a knock on the door. It was Mrs. Miller, the town newspaper editor. She said that her sister Jen has not been to the office in three days, and she was worried about her. The Millers have owned the town newspaper company for the last five generations. The first question Mr. McStearn asked her was, where did she last see Jen? Mrs. Miller said she last saw Jen at her favorite club, Scotts. The old detective said he would find Mrs. Miller's sister, and set off to Scotts. Scotts was crowded, as usual. The first person Mr. McStearn needed to talk to, and see if they knew anything about the disappearance, was Ralph Thump a waiter. Jen came here a lot and he might know something. Mr. McStearn went to Ralph and asked him if he knew anything about Jen's disappearance. Ralph told Mr. McStearn that three days ago he saw Jen leave the club, but it looked like she was taken by Jimmy Williamson, a gangster. Well, Mr. McStearn was a smart, experienced, detective, and he knew the town like the back of his hand. So it wasn't long until the cops were at Jimmy Williamson's door. When they opened it, they did not see him, but they saw a map of an abandoned warehouse. The cops followed the map. They got to the warehouse, where Jimmy Williamson and his crew were and so was Jen. The cops arrested Jimmy Williamson and his crew. They had kidnapped Jen so her family would have to put an ad in their newspaper, to tell the bank to give them money or they would kill Jen. Another case solved by Mr. McStearn.

**Parker Ouellette**

**Caribou Middle School**

**Mrs. Levasseur**

**Grade 5**

### **Elizabeth's Story**

It was December 27, 1984, when a baby was born. This baby's name was Elizabeth Ann Robertson. She was brought home to her loving mother and father, Leah and Andrew Robertson, and her 2 year old sister, Taylor Robertson. She lived her first 8 years of her life with a happy 4

person family, until January 15, 1994, when her “angelic” little baby brother was born. Her parents decided to name the baby after their great grandfather, Eric. At first Eric wasn't too bad, but when he hit two years old it all went down the drain. He learned to talk.

**Elizabeth Robertson, July 1, 1997**

“My turn! My turn! MY TURN!” Eric whined. He had just gotten off the swing so I could play and he already wanted it back! Not fair! “Eric, I just got on. It’s *my* turn right now. Go play with Tay.” “No. Me can’t play with Tay. Tay meanie!” Today was Taylor’s birthday and she had told Eric that he wasn’t allowed to play with her. Taylor told him that if he played with her on her birthday then the boogie monster would come and get him in his sleep. Of course he ran away screaming for Mom. Tay told me that same thing when I was three, too. It scared the living daylight out of me, but I didn’t go screaming for Mom, or did I? I can’t remember.

That night Tay’s friends, Sarah and Jessica, stayed over so I had to sleep with Eric in his room. “I want to sleep with Lizzy on the big bed!” he told mom when we brought in my bed. “Sweetie, you're too little you have to sleep in your bed” Mom told him. “I thought I was big boy” Eric whined, he is such a cry baby.

I woke up at about 3 am with Eric in my bed. How did *he* get there!?! Last time I checked he was in his bed! He takes *everything!* As a started to walk into the living room, to camp there for the rest of the night, I heard a high pitched scream coming from Eric’s room. When I got to his room my parents were already there trying to calm him down. “When I woke u-up Lizzy was gone!” he sobbed. My parents just looked at me. “I didn’t know he would cry...” I mumbled “he took my bed so I was going to sleep on the couch.” Just than Tay stumbled in “W-what.....happened!?” Tay painted. It looked like she had just run a marathon. “Liz left the room to sleep on the couch, then Eric woke up and got scared” Mom explained. “Well look what you did now Elizabeth. You scared our little brother half to death!” Tay exclaimed. “And us, too!” Sarah said when she *finally* got here, Jessica agreed.

The next morning Jessica and Sarah left, and I *finally* had my room back, but when I walked in it was a mess. “Taylor clean this up!” I exclaimed. “You’re not the boss of me!” she said mumbled, “I might not be but mom is! MO-” suddenly cold hands covered my mouth “Fine I’ll clean up...tattletale” Tay said “Good. Now get your hands off me!” I mumbled through her hands.

One hour later and our room was clean again. When I finally got to relax, Eric ran in our room. “We're going to Grandma and Grandpa’s!!” He said joyfully. Every year we went to our grandparents lake house for the fourth of July, until two years ago when, when Eric was only one, Eric took his first steps there. I know this sounds great, but after he took his first steps he decided to take his second and third steps toward the fireworks. And of course he decided to touch them right when dad lit them and we had to spend the rest of summer vacation in the hospital.

At eight pm we got into the car and started driving. Two hours later we were there. We all had to sleep in the same room. There was a set of bunk beds and a king. I got top bunk, Tay got bottom. Eric, Mom, and Dad slept on the king. This was going to be a “fun” three days

The next morning I woke up to the smell of bacon and eggs. When I got to the kitchen everyone was already up and dressed. “Why didn’t you guys wake me up?” I said sheepishly, “You looked so tired last night, sweetie. We didn’t want to wake you” Mom said, “I did...” Tay mumbled. I glared at her. As I sat down I realized that Grandma and Eric were gone. “Hey, where are Grandma and Eric?” I asked “Grandma took Eric clothes shopping” Tay said as she scarfed down an over easy egg. “What? Why?” I asked “She said that he didn’t have appropriate

clothes for the weather.” Mom explained. I could only imagine what going clothes shopping with Eric was going to be like. I was just horrified at the thought. Just as I got some bacon on my plate, Grandma walked in and she looked MAD. “What happened?” Mom asked nervously “He threw a tantrum in the middle of the store!” Grandma yelled as Eric slowly walked in. Eric was sent to time out for ten minutes, and I had to go to my room because I couldn't stop laughing.

We decided to go to a nice restaurant for dinner. We went to a sushi restaurant. Eric had noodles, Grandma and Grandpa both had tuna sushi, Tay and I had the buffet, and Mom and Dad shared a steak. The sushi was so good! This was my first time having sushi. Mom had told me it tasted like fish sauce, and if this was what fish sauce tasted like then I would drink a gallon a day!

That night was like the one before, Dad's loud snoring, mom's soft snoring, Eric waking up crying, and Mel's soft whispering, it felt like home.

The next morning I woke up, had breakfast, got dressed, then I went shopping with dad to get the fireworks. When we got back, Grandpa was taking a nap, and Grandma and Mom were baking for the party. I almost forgot about the party! I helped Grandma and Mom decorate for the Fourth of July. We had banners, streamers, decorative pillows, and blankets.

We invited Tay's friend Sarah, our aunts, uncles, and cousins. Grandma and Grandpa's friends, and some of Mom and Dad's friends. Tay thought of it as “her second birthday” because the aunts and uncles that forgot her birthday, brought her gifts then. Then the day flew by in a flash and it was suddenly 6:00, time for the party!

Dad set up the fireworks while the rest of us had chocolate covered strawberries and Rice Krispie treats. Then it was time for fireworks. We all kept a very close eye on Eric, and whenever he even flinched, we all started to lunge for him. Then Mom got a phone call and left Eric, UNSUPERVISED, when the fireworks started. I was the only one watching Eric. Then suddenly there was a loud bang in the sky and I looked up. Then I heard a loud, high pitched scream, and everyone was at Eric's side in seconds. Don't worry, no one got hurt. Eric was just scared of the fireworks.

The next morning we packed up, said our goodbyes and headed home. I'm honestly just glad we didn't have to spend the rest of the summer in the hospital!

**Charlotte Plourde**

**Caribou Middle School**

**Ms. Crawford**

**Grade 6**

### **My Wish**

Hi, my name is Abi. My best friend is Olivia. Last year we became best friends and we still are. At the end of last year we got put in different classes. I wish we were in the same class, but I know that won't happen. Every weekend I see her, but I still miss her.

After school on Oct. 5, 2019, I was walking home on a gloomy street. I saw a phone with a purple circle in the center right in the middle of the road. I picked it up and it shocked me! I tried to pick it up again and this time it did not shock me, so I brought it home. Later that dark night the phone started to glow. I heard someone say, “Put your finger on the purple circle and make a wish.” I did and I thought, “This is not going to work, but I hope it does.”

The next morning, my mom woke me up with a yummy breakfast, yogurt and fruit. It was so good. When I got to school, I told Olivia what happened and what I wish for, and she said, “We are in the same class and have been for the last 5 weeks!” I tried to tell her we were in different classes, but she said we were in the same class. When we got to the room, her desk was there! I was so confused, but so excited. That day we spent the whole day together. A few weeks went by and we started to fight. We were fighting like sisters. We were spending too much time together. I wanted her to go back to her old class, but I did not want to hurt her.

That night, I went to my closet and I ripped that phone out of there, and made a wish that everything would go back to normal. Instead of pushing the button, I ripped it out! I carried that purple thing to the toilet and flushed it down! I went to bed praying that everything would go back to normal.

The next day I went to school and Olivia was at the door. She told me that she went back to her old class. Apparently, her mom made a complaint about too much homework. I was so happy! A few days later we stopped fighting and we were back to normal. I learned that maybe what want is not what you need.

**Abigail Reed**

**Zippel Elementary**

**Mrs. York**

**Grade 5**

### **Frostbite**

One morning I went outside and it was snowing, I thought that I should go inside and get my winter gear on. First, I put ski pants on; then after boots, I put on a jacket, mittens, and a hat. I then bolted out the door and jumped in a big pile of fluffy white snow. I got up and built a snowman. First I rolled a giant ball of snow. That was going to be the first layer of the snowman. I then rolled the middle and the head. Once I did that, I went to the backyard and gathered two sticks for arms. After that I got six stones that I used for the eyes and the mouth. I went inside and got a carrot for the nose. Once I finished building the snowman I decided to name it Frostbite. I played with Frostbite all morning long, up until noontime when I went inside and ate lunch.

There was a problem when I went back outside - FROSTBITE WAS GONE!! I didn't panic too much because it was just a snowman and snowmen don't move, but I went and searched the backyard anyway. As I trampled the snow down under my feet I suddenly stopped in my tracks and there right in front of me was Frostbite. I went up to Frostbite and said

“How on earth did you get here?” Knowing I wasn't going to get an answer I said it anyway. But I was very wrong because two seconds later Frostbite answered with

“Oh I just walked,”.

I took a step back, stunned that a snowman had just talked to me. I said “ Oh ok,”

“What do you want to do?” asked Frostbite

“Well let me think,” I said. “I got it!” I burst out with excitement

“What, what, what!” exclaimed Frostbite

“We can go sledding on the big hill in the front yard!” I said happily

“Brilliant,” Frostbite said.

So off we went to the front yard. I told Frostbite to go up on the hill and wait while I headed in and got the sled. When I walked back out the door I had a medium size, orange sled in

my hands. I walked up the hill but it was hard because the snow was so deep. I finally made it up and told Frostbite that we could take turns sliding down the hill. Frostbite slid down first and then brought the sled back up to me. I went down-sure was a bumpy ride, but it was fun. Frostbite and I slid down a few more times but it was starting to get dark. I told Frostbite that I needed to head inside. So Frostbite and I said our good byes and I headed inside.

As I lay down in my bed that night, I gently pulled the warm, cozy blankets up over me and thought of my new friend, Frostbite, out in the blowing wind and about what a great day we had had together. I can't wait to wake up and do it all over again, just me and Frostbite.

**Victoria Beaulieu    Mapleton Elementary School**

**Ms. Black**

**Grade 5**

### **Ghost Pony**

October 30,2018

It was the day before Halloween and John had called Isla to come help him build a scarecrow. He never thought he would encounter a legend. But like no other ordinary legend, there was nothing fake about it. Noone believed John, not even Isla until she saw it. It was her worst nightmare! She saw a horse white as a ghost! His mane was gray, he sounded angry and smelled musty.

The mysterious horse came right up to Isla and whined, as if he were in pain. He stared into her eyes for a while. The horse started to circle the plaid shirt, camo pants, straw hat, bandanna scarecrow. He picked up the scarecrow and carried the scarecrow to his lair. The next morning Isla told John. John told Isla the legend of ghost pony, which fit Isla's description perfectly.

“John I think I have an idea to get rid of ghost pony.”

“What is it Isla?”

“We will wait for it to get dark and go to the pony lair and make a trap and get our scarecrow back!”

“Sounds good to me.”

“Great”

He is trapped get the scarecrow’

“I got the scarecrow, let ghost pony go, and we will go home.”

“Oh no, now we can't leave. Ghost pony is guarding the entrance.”

“John throw a rock to distract ghost pony and I will run with the scarecrow.”

They both ran home under a full night's moon with their long lost friend and no sign of ghost pony.

October 31st, 2018

We barely made it home I went downstairs and my scarecrow was gone. Ghost pony took the scarecrow back to his lair again.

“New idea Isla, we need to figure out why ghost pony wants our scarecrow at all.” “Revenge from losing his long lost rider in a storm 35 years ago, said John.”

“What does that have to do with our scarecrow?” Isla asked

“He wants to replace his lost rider, said John.”

“Well what if we made him a new scarecrow?”

“Great idea”

John and Isla went to collect leaves for a new rider for ghost pony. They got pants, a shirt, and some gloves. Then they put the scarecrow out to be ghost pony’s new rider. There was still half a day before nightfall, so John and Isla went to the library. They saw ghost pony through a window. John and Isla tried to follow him, but he trotted away from them.

**Ava Thomas**

**Zippel School**

**Mrs. Norsworthy**

**Grade 5**

### **The Curse of Connor Lowell**

Connor Lowell lived in Crystal Haven, Vermont with his twin sister Luna. They lived alone in a small house with no parents, or supervision of any kind for that matter. Ten years ago at the age of six, their parents Zach and Stephanie Lowell died tragically in a car crash. While driving home from a short road trip, a drunk driver rammed into their car, causing the car to roll off the road, and slam into a tree. Snow had been falling heavily that night, and the temperature was well below zero. Zach’s head had slammed into the steering wheel, and was bleeding tremendously. Stephanie’s door was pushed in so far in, her seat was pushed up against Zach’s. Her legs were crushed under the dash, and her stomach was gashed open. The roof of the car had been pushed down about two feet, forcing them both to lean forward onto the dashboard. They managed to get cloth over their wounds, to slow the bleeding, but the cold was persistent. Unable to escape, all they could do was scream for help. By the time someone pulled up to help them and called an ambulance, they were dead.

Connor and Luna, now age sixteen lived on their own, in that one house that is different from everybody else’s. Their family had always been different, they lived in a smaller house, with less money, yet they remained in the small town. Now that Connor and Luna were the orphaned children in town, they were even bigger outcasts than before. That’s not to say they had no friends though, they were quite popular, despite their rough childhood.

Being twins Connor and Luna had very similar features, both with deep brown eyes, and light brown hair. Connor always had his hair styled with a gel that smelled somewhat fruity, and Luna always wore her smooth hair down, or in a loose braid. Both of them had a medium build, and an olive complexion. Connor and Luna had no living relatives, so they ended up in an orphanage in a town called Willow Creek, nine miles away from their home in Crystal Haven. At the age of ten, they ran away, thinking they could live on their own with nobody to care for them. They left early in the morning, around seven, through the woods, and walked until it was dark. By the time they had arrived in Crystal Haven, they were filthy. Their hair was all knotted up, and their clothes were torn. They managed to get to their old house, and get cleaned up, before starting their journey alone.

Connor and Luna had evolved since then, managing to keep the house up and running. Although technically nobody owned the house, since their parents had died so tragically. The house was under nobody’s name, but they would take ownership once they reached the legal age. “Connor, we should really get to bed, school starts tomorrow.” Luna said, while Connor sat on the couch watching the Patriots game, pigging out on his barbecue chips.

“Ugh can I finish the game first?” he said annoyed, rolling his eyes at her.

She walked towards the wooden steps leading to her bedroom and turned right before she started up the stairs, “Fine, but I actually want to stay awake at school tomorrow.” She started ascending up the stairs to her room.

The light of the full moon shone through the window, onto Connor, reflecting on his eyes. All of a sudden Connor screamed, obviously in pain.

“Connor, what’s wrong?” Luna said frantically running over to see what happened. Connor’s arm was folded half behind his back, and you could tell it was broken. Then his other arm went back, followed by another scream. “What are you doing Connor?” Luna questioned trying to calm him down. He was sweating, and tears dropped from his face, as he lashed there in agony.

His back arched with a loud crack, and he looked at her, panicked. “What is happ-“ he started, but screamed again, as his feet arched back and stretched out. He was getting out of control, he growled and ran into things, breaking everything in his path. Another scream, and all of a sudden his eyes glowed yellow. Fangs jutted out of his gums, and veins came out on his face. Fur sprouted out around his body, and Luna screamed. She knew her brother was in pain, but she was scared. She backed against the wall as he completed the horrifying transformation. He was no longer her lazy, chip eating brother, but a vicious, hairy wolf. His glowing yellow eyes stood out above everything, and his shaggy brown fur hung from his body. He approached her snarling, with his teeth bared, and his snout wrinkled. She wondered how he would react to her, they were twins after all.

Without any warning he pounced at her. She wasn’t prepared so she winced and covered her face with her hands, but he never made contact with her. A figure stood next to her, with his arm outstretched.

She heard a loud crash, and realized he had flung Connor away from her, into a wall. The figure was a guy, probably about 17 with dirty blonde hair and light blue eyes. She looked at him more closely and noticed fangs exposed through his gums. “Wh-who are you?” She questioned, staring at him intently.

“Lorenzo Romano.” He replied plainly, yet somewhat mysteriously. Lorenzo walked over to Connor and dumped a greenish liquid into his monstrous, snapping mouth. In that same mysterious voice he said, “Wolfsbane.”

Connor started transforming back, his fangs retracted and the veins on his face were no longer visible. His fur disappeared, and his limbs cracked back into place. Finally his eyes changed back to the deep brown they were before. He was covered in sweat, and his shirt was gone.

“Are you okay Connor?” Luna said running over. He groaned in pain, as he stood up slowly. He stumbled, and Luna steadied him, putting his arm over her shoulder. “Thank god you’re okay, good thing he help-“ She started, but when she pointed to Lorenzo, he was gone.

He looked at her in confusion, and said, “Who helped? I don’t remember anything.”

Luna looked out the window, but saw no trace of him. “He gave you this drink and you turned back-“

“Wait, turned back from what?” he said more confused than ever.

“Connor you turned into a werewolf!”

## **I Made A Mistake**

I went to the kitchen to cool my burnt dermis.  
I made a mistake and put it inside the hot furnace.

I went to the bathroom to put on a band-aid.  
I made a mistake and put on a blue mermaid.

I went to get tissues to blow my sore nose.  
I made a mistake and blew into a rose.

I went to the store to buy more tissues.  
I made a mistake and bought four horseshoes.

I went to the cosmetic aisle to buy a brush.  
I made a mistake and bought some blush.

I went to the food aisle to buy some French fries.  
I made a mistake and bought six apple pies.

I went to the cosmetics aisle to buy tanning lotion.  
I made a mistake and bought a green witch's potion.

I went to the pet aisle to buy one bag of cat litter.  
I made a mistake and bought three bags of glitter.

I went home to study for the difficult state math test.  
I made a mistake and fell into a much needed rest.

**Sadielee Violette      Connor School      Mrs. Lugdon      Grade 5**

**Feelings,  
Dreams and  
Reflections**

## Old Orchard Beach

Waves. I'm surrounded by thousands, maybe millions of waves crashing all around me. Crashity, Crash, Crash, Crash!

All in unison as I lay my beach towel down to tan.

The first thing, the very first thing that hits me is the scent of the restaurant across the street from the beach. I am so tempted to walk in, but I stick to my original route of going to the best place ever, Old Orchard Beach. The moment I step foot onto the sand, I get a tingly feeling, almost like butterflies in my stomach. As I get closer to the water, the scent of fish and salt creeps up into my nostrils. It really isn't the best smell in the world, but I'm happy and that's all that matters.

The seagulls screeched at me like my mother telling me to do the dishes. I am greeted by the blinding sun blazing into my sensitive eyes. I close my eyes once more. Suddenly, my mother's voice rings in my head like church bells. It started off quiet then it started to get boisterous.

She called, "Abby."

"Abby."

"Abby!"

"What!?" I practically screamed, I didn't mean to, it just came out.

She gave me that mother look and said, "We are leaving shortly."

"Ok..." I couldn't think of anything else to say, I was just in shock. I didn't want to leave. No! No! No! I closed my eyes as the waves sang me a lullaby.

I opened my eyes back up about ten minutes later, the sun felt so sweet on my pale white face. I looked around and spot a little boy running around with bright baby pink trousers on. He ran around like an off-road four-wheeler. I wish I was that young again. I decided to get up and walk around since I only had so much time left. I walked under the bridge and around to the other side of the beach, it looked exactly the same only there was less space over on the other side. The only thing that I saw that was kind of interesting was seaweed and colorful clamshells, that's about it. I thought about going back when I saw one of the prettiest clamshells ever. I picked it up and twirled it around in my hands and I walked back.

I was about halfway back when I felt something super slimy between my toes, I jumped back trying to examine what I had just felt. It was just a piece of seaweed. I was relieved, I thought it was going to be a blue bottle or something along those lines. I picked up the slimy seaweed and chucked it back into the ocean. I wiped the remaining slime off my hand and continued walking back. I was about to sit back down when I noticed a free spot in the water, so I put my stuff down and bolted for the water. The sand squished between my toes and flicked off when I lifted my salty toes. Once I made it into the water I was as still as a statue, the water was freezing! I felt like I was going to turn into an ice cube! I went a little bit deeper so the water reached my chest. I counted to 3...

1...

2...

3!

Under the water I went. I didn't dare to open my eyes knowing what the ocean is filled with, so I let the cool water caress my partly sunburnt eyelids.

I emerged from the water and wiped the water out of my face, I spit into the water, making sure I didn't have any salt in my mouth and hopped out of the water. I grabbed my towel and

rushed to the restaurant across from the beach. We had greasy burgers and mouth-watering fries, followed by a thirst-quenching coke. I gobbled it all up like a cow and walked out.

That was it, we were leaving the beach for a long, long time. I turned back to the beach to take one final look at it, it was almost like the ocean was waving back at me, awaiting my return.

**Abigail Nightingale**

**Hodgdon Middle High School**

**Mrs Harris Grade 8**

### **Camp**

My camp is where we always have family reunions, where we go just to relax on the patio and watch the waves of the lake, and where we go to have barbeques and cook homemade food.

I sat on the patio and watched the waves of the lake flow as if they were ripples in a silk blanket moving in the wind. A cloud moved away from the sun and the rays reflected off of the surface of the lake and shone like the bright stars in the night sky.

I finally walked off of the patio and into the camp, the warm smell of sweet sugar desserts and the musty, nostalgic smell of the camp filled my senses. I headed over to the island in the kitchen and grabbed a steaming dessert off of the platter. The sweetness of the glaze hit me when I bit into it, then the taste of strawberry jam and homemade biscuit mingled, making the dessert taste even better than it smelled.

I decided to go outside and walk down to the lake, where I could hear the waves rolling over one another, and a loon in the distance whose call sent chills shooting down my spine. I bent down and slowly lowered my hand in the water, the lake bit at my hand and it felt like the freezing water was filling my whole body. I heard my sister yell my name. The breeze blew by me as I walked up to my camp, and made me cover myself with my soft, fuzzy sweatshirt.

My sister walked out of the camp as I was heading up, and her car clicked as she unlocked it, signifying it was already time to leave. As we were driving away, I already missed the camp, although it was still in my sight.

**McKenna Tidd**

**Hodgdon Middle High School**

**Mrs. Harris Grade 8**

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### **Working in the Woods**

Beep... Beep... Bee beep... Bee Beep. I look outside and there is a severe snowstorm. I throw my blanket off me and shut my alarm clock off that is just knicking 4:03 am. I know it is time to put my work clothes on and go to work in the woods. I can't wait to get up in the skidder and work all week.

SSSSSSSSSSSS! All I could hear was the snow melting as it hit the hot muffler. As I hopped into the skidder I set my lunch box behind the seat, adjusted the seat and steering wheel, and I was ready to go. When I was all ready, I turned the radio on and waited for Dad to tell me where to go.

Snap... crackle... pop... The ice shattered as the big wheels drove over them and the chains buried in the ice. Water leaked out of the cracks and melted the thin layer of snow covering the hidden ice. As I drove through the woods, I couldn't believe my eyes! "There are two partridge running through the big bulky bushes," I said happily to myself. My heart racing like a Nascar, I had to call my dad up and tell him what I had just seen.

Bwaaaa! (a bogging sound) The skidder moaned as it gripped onto a twitch and started pulling away. The front of the skidder started lifting up, and my heart pounded. I got to the yard and dropped my twitch in front of the limber. I pulled ahead to grab brush like I grip a baseball bat. I trotted back down through the woods and got another twitch.

As I was driving through the woods all I could smell is freshly cut spruce and fir wood. I looked back and saw there was something on one of the spruce trees. At first, I thought it was a broken buncher tooth. So I jumped out and took a look at it. "It was spruce gum!" I hollered to myself. I threw that piece of gum into my mouth and that thing was as bitter as a bag of coffee grounds. I spit it out and kept on rolling.

One day was done. All I had to do was grease the machine and fuel up, and I was ready to go. I threw a grease tube into Dad's grease gun and let 'er rip. I accidentally stuck my hand in a puddle of grease. That stuff was as sticky as a piece of freshly spit out gum. I fueled the skidder up and we were off like a herd of turtles.

**Cameron Schools**

**Hodgdon Middle High School**

**Mrs. Harris Grade 7**

### **The Best Place!**

Sweaty Gloves the wet grass mudding cleats. Padded elbows, hips, and one knee. Mud on one side over my body. The ball hitting my hands, feet, legs, and arms. The sweat running down my face. A little bit of rain. That hot warm sun shining in my eyes. The ball dropping in my hands. Also me realizing why I have knee problems.

The ball sounding like it's gonna pop when we kick it. The whistle blowing almost all the time. My coach trying to help us out. My team yelling, "TALK!!!!" All I hear is, "goal kick," or, "conner." Refs being stubborn, and making some stupid, salty, sarcastic, calls.

Blue, blue, blue, blue, and about 10 more blue, one pink person and that's me!! The gangly, green, grass, everywhere, but in the goal box. The refs in black and yellow, sometimes blue and black. Black and white ball flying, and soaring high. The crazy crowd cheering us on, then the other teams crowd being rude. The team trying to steal the ball and get it, But Aleyahs always right there to stop it. The black flies in the air circling us like animals circling their prey. Ball people struggling like a turtles.

Exhaust in the air from the trucks that go by the school. The smell of the farm, the garden, and lastly those sweaty people! :)) The smell of the fresh non-cut grass. The pollen floating around in the air. Making everyone stuffed up.

My rubber mouth guard, the disgusting water down gatorade. My mouthful of mud, hair, black flies and spit. A little bit of grass in there too. All the tastes in my mouth at the same time. It taste SO bad! It kinda taste like I'm eating trash.

**Paige Fitzpatrick    Hodgdon Middle High School    Mrs. McQuarrie    Grade 7**

### **Four Wheeling**

The key dangling from the ignition  
The engine roaring  
The fresh air as I zoom through it  
The exhaust blowing out the exhaust pipe  
The shifter with my foot

Four Wheeling

**Jacob London    Mill Pond School    Mrs. Quint    Grade 5**

### **Summer**

Tanning in the sun  
Tropical music that makes you want to dance  
Sweet, ice, cold lemonade  
Lots of chlorine pool water  
Big, fuzzy pool towels

It's Summer

**Gemma Wells    Mill Pond School    Mrs. Quint    Grade 5**

## Heavy Water

Do you ever feel like your drowning? You're gasping for air but you're drowning in your thoughts. You strive to lift your head above water, but you realize you can't. It's like your bolted to the ocean floor and the only one that would be able to save you is yourself.

As I lay aimlessly in my room all alone, I think to myself. "How did I get here?" It's dark, so dark that I can't see what direction I'm going in. I stare blankly at the ceiling. I walk around like everything is fine, but inside I'm drowning. I fake a smile and force a laugh every once in a while so no one notices how I feel. Why do I feel this way? I don't know. That's what I've been trying to figure out for most of my life. My mom left me when I was 10, and I was taken away from my dad at 12. My sister and I have split apart, and I've been lost ever since.

I go to school and I try to focus in class. I try my hardest but my mind always wanders to different things. I think about how lost my sister must be. She's alone just like I am. I always wonder how my mom feels about leaving us. My dad tried to get my sister and me back but the Judge didn't want to listen. Nobody did. I was only 15 when I realized that I'm going to be alone for a long time. I want to be able to walk around in public and feel actual happiness. It takes a lot of strength to wake up every morning and get out of bed. It's hard to leave my room, because I don't want to face my friends and family. I'm afraid they'll judge me, or bombard me with questions. Let's face it, there's no way that everything is going to be normal again. I don't know if I will ever find happiness.

I am always tired, and I sleep a full night. I play with my food during meals. I never have an appetite. I can't tell my friends anything, they'd go tell a counselor. I don't need help. I don't want help. I need my dad, my mom, and my sister. I can't help the way I feel. If I can't even help myself, how can other people help me? I want to see my mom every day, and gossip with my sister. Or have my dad teach me something he would normally teach his son. I can't pretend to be okay anymore. It's killing me inside. I don't want to lie to my friends and tell them I'm fine because I am not fine. I want to be happy and be a normal kid. I go to bed at night and I dream about my parents. Sometimes it's a nightmare. My dad, I can hear him calling my name. As I start walking towards him, he disappears.

Every time I close my eyes, I see my dad. He's telling me that I'll be okay. If that's really true, then why don't I feel relieved? I can't help being sad or disappointed. I have nothing to look forward too. That's when I realized that if I'm not going to reach out for help I need to help myself. So I decided that I needed a change.

At 16, I started visiting my dad. That helped with the sadness. My mom calls. She has a new family. She said that she's sorry for the way she left and how she wasn't there for me when I needed her the most. My sister visits me. She has a baby now. I'm an aunt! I feel like everything is going good. I get good grades and I'm not constantly staring at the clock anymore.

I'm hungry all the time, and I eat so much! I know now that if I have something I need to talk about, I need to find someone who will listen to what I have to say. My life was not what you would expect a normal teenage girl to go through. I've been through a lot but that's what made me who I am. I am so grateful for everything that I have. Thanks to all the people I love, I'm not drowning anymore. I am not bolted to the ocean floor anymore. I am swimming to the shore now. I'm home.

## Perspectives

Scratch. Scratch, scratch. These small sounds echoed against the walls of the alley, along with the quiet click-clacking of tiny claws making their way to the main street. Pause. *Click click clack, clack click click clack.* It looked out into the street, turning its head this way and that. With its small, beady eyes, still wary, the rat scurried away in quick bounds. The rat paused to turn its attention to a cardboard box, and once it realized the danger, it attempted to run, but it was too late. With a quiet pounce, minus the pained screech of the rat, the cat came down upon its prey. The starved animal made haste to eat what it had caught and had practically swallowed it whole. The cat then pause and gagged. It gagged and retched. It tried and tried to get the rat bone out of its throat to prevent it from clogging its airway, but it was too late. The cat attempted one last shuddering breath as it fell onto the cold, dusty ground.

Slowly, as the dull light in the cat's eye faded, crows gathered around the body. They truly looked like symbols of death, with sickly feathers and skin stretched taut against protruding bones. Much like the cat, the crows did not wait to fill their stomachs, but they were careful to only take as much as they could swallow. After six or so minutes, the crows had finished their meal, and the flock diminished. One by one, the crows flew off. They flew high over the city, cawing to keep in contact with one another, so that they could find more carcasses to feast on. They flew over destroyed building after destroyed building, over a still and quiet traffic jam, over everything. The area beyond the city wasn't much better; in fact, it was worse. Charred and dead trees stood, many more knocked down and laying on the ground, with no sign of live vegetation anywhere. The sky was dark and full of smog, with almost no sunlight pouring through. Besides the cawing of crows and the nearly silent wailing of the wind, there was no sound.

**Rowan Billotti      Southern Aroostook Community School      Mrs. Russell      Grade 8**

## Eventually

It's weird. It really is. How you can go from having a great day and going home and just releasing it all, the pain and tears that you have been holding in? But you don't know why they're there. You had a good day, so why do you still hurt? Why is the emptiness still there? Why won't it just go away? Maybe if this week goes well, and I surround myself with happy people, and I put a smile on my face, maybe, just maybe, it'll go away. But it doesn't, and it won't for a while, but it will eventually.

That's my life. That's every day for me, over and over again. It just never stops. The dread I feel every day because I don't want to be at school, but I don't want to be home either because I know that my parents hate me. The very thought of me and my existence makes them so angry that they don't know how to cope with it, so they just hit me.

I guess I should introduce myself since you have already learned the interesting parts about me and my life. Hi, my name is Sabrina, and I'm a sophomore at Jefferson High School in Columbia, Missouri. Long story short, the food sucks, the staff doesn't care, and the students are idiotic. I've been here my whole life and still no one knows my name, which I don't care but

you would think after knowing the same people for eleven years that at least one person would know your name, but no. It sucks because you tell yourself that you don't want to be noticed, but you would like some attention if that makes sense.

To tell you more about my parents—well there isn't much to tell. I can remember from a young age, they've hated me. Even when I didn't do anything, they would still beat me. I specifically remember when I was around the age of five. I was asleep and, all of a sudden, the door burst open, and I just saw my dad. He was reaching for his belt, and he just started whipping me and wouldn't stop. I tried to scream, but nothing came out. It was like my voice had just disappeared, and when a little scream did come out, he just hit me harder and harder, so I didn't do anything. I just laid there, not trying to scream or escape because I knew it wouldn't end well—and it never ended well.

Today we had to go to a college fair which was a half an hour from the school. Of course, I sat alone, but I saw an unfamiliar face. When you have no friends and no one likes you, you have nothing to do, so me, I just sit and observe. You see that the prom queen's relationship isn't as perfect as it may seem and that the jock acts like a jerk but is actually a nice guy. You tend to just notice things, and you remember everybody's name because, really, you don't have anything better to do. It was a guy about 5'10". I'm pretty sure he was a junior. The quick glance that I did get of him, I noticed that he had brown hair that looked like he was a wannabe Justin Bieber. He had hazel eyes. His clothes were ragged, and he looked sad. His eyes looked like they had seen things no child should see and, trust me, I know.

When we arrived at the building, I got a weird feeling. There was a knot in my stomach, and no matter how I twisted and turned, it wouldn't go away. I probably looked like a fish out of water to the people around me. This had never happened before, so why is it happening now?

While I was walking around, I was looking at the Dayton State College in Florida just for fun because when you grow up in a house with parents that don't care, your main focus is how you're going to get food or how you're just going to get through the day. You don't really focus on going to college. Anyway, I was just looking at a pamphlet and, all of a sudden, the unknown junior came up to the same table. He just started asking the lady that was promoting the college a whole bunch of questions so I thought that I should just walk away. I started walking, and then I feel a tap on my shoulder.

“Hey, I'm Jake,” he said.

“Hi?” Why was he talking to me of all people?

I introduced myself and all, but I found it weird that he was talking to me, the girl who has no friends, the girl who sits in the corner, the girl that never talks. He asked me a bunch of questions that I really didn't know how to answer. I just let him, though, because a part of me didn't want to push him away. The other part of me, the anxious, self-conscious, insecure girl who thinks the world is out to get her, just started freaking out and ran away. I don't know why, but that part of me was afraid of getting hurt, and afraid to let him in and see the real me and to see what my life was like. I just ran away like a chicken.

I ran to the bus because, in around ten minutes, everybody would be ready to go anyway. I hid in the back because I was scared. As the kids started to pile on the bus, I just stared out the window. I was closest to the window, but my book bag was in the spot next to me so no one would sit there. As I was looking out the window, replaying what just happened, my book bag was moved, and there he was. Jake was sitting next to me, even though I just totally ran out on him. Can't he take a hint? Part of me was glad he was there.

“Let's try this again.” He had a great big grin across his face like he was proud of himself or something. But it didn't matter. He sat by me. He didn't know much about me, and I didn't know much about him. He didn't know my favorite color or my favorite food, but he was there. He was talking to me and that had to count for something, right? He just sat there with that big, stupid grin on his face, but it didn't bother me. You would think that the first time someone showed interest in the loner girl, she would have a meltdown and rant about every bad thing that has ever happened in her life, but that's not what happened. We just sat there, not talking to each other but it was fine because sometimes the silence between two people and their presence can mean more than any word in the English language ever could. The bus drove off, and we talked some after we got over ourselves. I felt good. It was the first time in a while that I had actually smiled.

Eventually, eventually it will be all right and eventually you will be happy. You just have to have hope. At that moment I had hope. I caught a glimpse of what life could be like, and it made me beyond happy. I had something to look forward to. Maybe the world wasn't out to get me after all. Eventually...

**Rylee Webb**

**Southern Aroostook Community School**

**Mrs. Russell**

**Grade 7**

### **Switch**

As Elaina crawled into her bed, she realized that she was exhausted from her day. She had spent her Fourth of July at her family's camp on Madawaska Lake: basking in the heat, swimming, eating, more swimming. Her family had been celebrating the patriotic day at the lake for three years now. Her father is a veteran, retiring because he couldn't keep up with his heart issues in the military. Elaina turned off her lamp, recited her prayers, and went to bed.

When she woke up, Elaina was not in her normal room. She was in what seemed to be a log cabin full of bunk beds, each one filled in by an African American. She looked at her arm-- she was African American as well. No one was awake, so she could not ask where she was, what was going on, or how she got there. She lay in the bed for what felt like forever, just thinking, until morning. She had concluded that she must have either time traveled and switched bodies with a slave or, more realistically, been pranked.

All of a sudden, she noticed everyone getting up. She did not mention anything because she knew that the people around her had no clue about the modern world Elaina had lived in previously. She recognized where she was once she walked out the door. She was at Mt. Vernon and a slave for the Washingtons. She was in awe, but Elaina knew she needed to just work and forget about it.

Elaina had worked the whole day. She never understood how hard it was for the hostage African Americans, but now it was very obvious that it was awful. All Elaina did was sew dresses for Martha Washington. Her fingers were blistered, and her neck was in excruciating pain from looking down. She was relieved to see the bed she had awakened in that morning. She got in and fell sound sleep in minutes.

She was planning on waking up to another day of work, however; that was not the case. Elaina looked around her to see she was in an astonishingly grand room. She noticed a body

mirror on the door. She found that she was not African American, nor was she a girl, but a little Asian boy, a rich one. Elaina looked toward the nightstand alongside the bed and saw just what she was looking for--a phone. She picked it up with much excitement, only to realize it had a passcode. All of a sudden the door opened. Behind the enormous door stood a girl that seemed to be younger than whoever Elaina was. She motioned to the clothes set neatly on the dresser and told Elaina the car was already running.

Elaina nearly got lost on her way to the car (which was some type of fancy sports car). She got in the car and in about seven minutes the wealthy Asian family arrived at a church. Elaina noticed a sign that read "Tomas Catholic Church" and recognized it immediately. Her family had previously gone to that church before they moved to Maine. She knew the priests and attendees would think she is absolutely crazy, so she quietly sat through the service.

Once they arrived home her "Mom of the day" let her know that she needed to go to bed right now because tomorrow was their church's Christmas midnight mass. Elaina thought to herself about what a random time it was in this...life? She wondered if in her world it was Christmas, too, and she was missing out. But she went to bed anyway and hoped that she would wake up as herself.

Elaina's wish was only partially granted. She knew she was herself because of her birthmark on her arm, but she was older. A lot older. She looked to her side and saw a cane, waiting to be used. There was no mirror in the room she was in so she got up with the use of the cane and searched for the bathroom. She was, in fact, an elderly version of herself.

Elaina gave herself a tour of the unfamiliar house and saw a car pull into the driveway. The driver was a woman in scrubs with an ID card pinned to her shirt. When she entered the house she asked "Ms. Panyard" why she was already up and about without her help. Elaina had never been called by her last name like that. The nurse motioned for her to take a seat on the couch, so she sat. She handed Elaina a bottle of water and a pill to take. She just went along with everything the well-informed nurse said.

After a few hours of playing cards and watching T.V. with the nurse, Elaina was on her way to bingo. She could not wait. She loved going to bingo with her Mimi. She figured it would be a little different now that she was one of the elders. Elaina thought it was really weird to be her older self, but she felt more secure, knowing that she was her.

Elaina did not win anything at bingo. However, she did not feel the littlest bit of disappointment. She just wanted to go home, be herself, the same age, the same race, and the same gender. She wondered if someone else had entered her body that night, if she had just disappeared, or if her body had just lain in her bed, lifeless.

When she woke up, the room around Elaina had finally looked familiar to her. She was finally back to her old self! Everything was just as she left it, so she thought of another possibility--no time had passed in this world. She decided she would just go along with her day like nothing happened. She got dressed and went downstairs.

She noticed her mother packing up the bags of food, clothes, etc. they brought to their camp for the Fourth of July. No days had passed! Elaina was not going to tell anyone about her extraordinary experience. She went along with her life as she would have normally, but Elaina's life would be changed forever from seeing the world from the perspective of a slave for the Washingtons, a little Asian boy of a wealthy, religious family, and her older self.

## Letter to Anne Frank

Dear Anne Frank,

I believe that you were born at the wrong time. You were filled with the wits and smarts to become such a role model for women—even boys—all around the world, but you died too soon. It's sad to know such potential was corrupted by man's evils; you deserved to live free, in a world filled with others just like you! People filled with imagination, creativity, and free minds, and the determination to achieve anything. Sadly, neither of us were born in such a time or place, although I was born in a time closer to that perfect dream. A dream people have had for millions of years, a dream that'll never truly be reached. We, as humans, depend on the evil to level out the good.

Even though you'll never read this,—or perhaps there is an afterlife, and you're reading this over my shoulder—I wanted to write this letter out to you to help others realize what an amazing girl you were. I admired the way you smiled in the face of danger, and the way you created light in the darkest situations and for what? Why did you choose to be so unbreakable and optimistic in a sin based world? I could—can—never understand your true nature, but I know you would've done brilliant things if you were given the opportunity. And you did do brilliant things; you wrote your diary with the most perfect dexterity and impeccable potency I have ever read. It's a shame your only published book was your secrets and inner thoughts. Are you ever upset that we took your privacy and released it to the world?

Sincerely,

Kaylie (A friend you never met)

**Kaylie Tompkins**

**Easton Jr/Sr High School**

**Mrs. Hill**

**Grade 8**

### **Why Kids Who are Home-Schooled Should be Able to Play Public Sports**

Did you know that in the United States alone 1,770,000 kids are home-schooled? Imagine if some of them liked sports but couldn't participate because local schools wouldn't let them. Why shouldn't children who are home-schooled be able to play public sports? Kids who are home-schooled should be able to play public sports because there are many health benefits to sports, you can make new friends that you didn't have before, and sports can also boost self-esteem.

To begin with, if you are home-schooled you may be at home most of the day sitting down and you may not get the exercise that you need. In the USA there are 13.7 million children that are overweight or obese. Sports are a good way to lose weight, according to Health Care. "Clearly, sports can help you reach your fitness goals and maintain a healthy weight. However, they also encourage healthy decision-making such as not smoking or drinking. Sports also have hidden health benefits such as lowering the chance of osteoporosis or breast cancer later in life."

Secondly, children who are home-schooled may not have an opportunity to make many friends, and sports is a great way to make new friends and relationships. If your child doesn't have many friends they might become very shy and lonely. Having a friend will make them happier because they have someone their age to talk to. According to Electric Ireland, "Sports enables you to build better relationships with people you may be aware of, but not know personally. Through frequent sport you can get to know a lot about an individual's personality, their strengths and weaknesses. Sport is a good opportunity to build better relationships and networks that may help you in your future."

Some may argue that it isn't fair to let someone play sports since they don't go to school and aren't part of the school system. There are only ten out of fifty states that allow home-schooled children to play public sports. These statements may be true, however, there isn't a clear and firm reason that home-schooled children can't be eligible to play public sports.

Lastly, playing sports can boost your self-esteem by making you confident in how you play sports. Boosting self-esteem will make your child able to cooperate with other people and be happy to know they have friends. According to *Benefits of Sports for Adolescents*, "Watching your hard work pay off and achieving your goals develops self-confidence. Achieving a sport or fitness goal encourages you to achieve other goals you set. This is a rewarding and exciting learning process."

Children who are home-schooled should be eligible to play public sports for three reasons. One, children can make new friends through sports and won't be lonely. Two, if a child didn't do sports or physical activities they can become unhealthy, overweight or obese. Three, if a child doesn't build confidence then they will become shy, but if they play sports then their self-esteem will boost. That's why it's important that children who are home-schooled be eligible to play public school sports.

**Chase Flewelling**

**Easton Jr/Sr High School**

**Mrs. Hill**

**Grade 7**

### **A Good Story**

A good story is a complex but simple story. It makes me want to read all day. That is one of the best things that has happened to me - when I read all day. If a story is good it has to have happy, sad and surprising moments. I prefer adventure stories, but I like other genres, like action and Sci-fi. But my favorite story has a mix of Sci-fi, action and adventure all in one book.

Another thing that makes me keep reading is suspense. Let's talk about cliffhangers. I like them sometimes and absolutely despise them other times. For me, it depends on the way they are used. I like them when they are used at the end of a book but not a series. My absolute favorite author is Rick Ridorian. Another author I like is Scott Reintgen. You probably wouldn't

see this coming but Stephen King, wrote the book *The Dark Tower* and it is probably one of my favorite series of all time and I've read a lot of series!

**Joseph Burby**

**Caribou Middle School**

**Mrs. Plante**

**Grade 5**

### **Lorelei**

“Bring back the guy who didn’t care what people thought about him.” - Lorelei.

Lore has always been there for me. When we talk about my transfer she asks, “Are you being shy or yourself?” In PI, I was always loud or being myself as Lorelei put it. She always says, “You need to stop being self-conscious and bring back the old you. I miss him.” She knows it aggravates me so she says it more often. Lore tries to push me out of my corner and un-stitch my mouth, and to be the same person I was in PI. I love her.

**Wyatt Henderson**

**Caribou Middle School**

**Mrs. Barnes**

**Grade 8**

### **Do You See It?**

In the sky  
shooting star!  
Sliver of gold.  
Quick!  
Choose your wish  
Before it passes.  
Like my love for you...  
We have stayed away for far too long.  
My love for you has passed  
Like a shooting star.  
Do you feel the same way?  
Heartbreak.

**Serenity LaPlante**

**Caribou Middle School**

**Mrs. Plante**

**Grade 5**

### **What Makes America Great?**

Dwight D Eisenhower, the 34th president once said, “There is nothing wrong with America that faith, love of freedom, intelligence, and energy of her citizens cannot cure.” Faith, love of freedom, intelligence, and energy of her citizens are stronger than any terrible events.

Rights are one of the many things that makes America great. In America, we have the Bill of Rights. The Bill of Rights is the first ten amendments in the U.S Constitution. In the Declaration of Independence, it states that people are “endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights”. Everyone in the United States has rights that cannot be taken away from them. Citizens have the right to bear arms, which means that people have the right to possess weapons for their own safety. Americans also have the right to vote, the freedom of speech and freedom of religion.

America is a country where we have opportunities. People from other countries, view the U.S. as “the land of opportunities” because a lot of things that we can do in America, they can’t do in their country. One opportunity we have in America, is education. All children in the U.S.A. have access to public school. Americans also have the opportunity to dream, which sometimes comes true. Jobs in America are different in other countries because they might have to do a job because of their religion or family. In America, we can do any job that we want to do.

Not like other countries, the United States has equality. In the Declaration of Independence says that “all men are created equal”. There is racial equality because now in America, people of any skin color can vote. The African-American Civil Rights Movement was a movement to gain equal rights for African-American people. It was caused because of segregation, but then African-Americans got their voting rights in 1965. Many different countries don’t have women’s rights, but in America women now have the same jobs as men. Women got the right to vote on August 18, 1920.

In conclusion, America is great because of our many rights including the right to bear arms, right to vote and freedom of speech. We also have great opportunities in America such as education and a high amount of options for jobs.

**Emily Fraser**

**Caribou Middle School**

**Mrs. Barnes**

**Grade 7**

### **Curse of 100 Words**

There is a malediction on this document, a hex of exactly 100 words. I cannot print 99, I may not have 101. This corruption was cast by my teacher, this curse of 100 words. What should I compose, given my requirement? The enchantment cast on this paper is eternal, a mirthless curse too strong to reverse. There isn’t a wizard, not a single witch powerful enough to break the spell, to allow 98, 97, or even 413 words written on this piece of papyrus. Wonderful, I’m almost out of words, all thanks to this detrimental curse that’s impossible to reverse.

**Madelein Saed**

**Caribou Middle School**

**Mrs. Barnes**

**Grade 8**

### **Finding Myself**

Always wanting me to do what you want to,  
Making me feel like I didn't belong.  
Said all I needed was you,  
Now I know that's wrong.

Always keeping the real me inside,  
Letting you make me look like a clown.  
Well, now I got my pride,  
This time you'll be backing down.

Now I know who I am,  
The real me is out.  
No more a timid little lamb,  
It's time for me to give a shout!

**Wynonna Gockley**

**Katahdin Middle School**

**Mrs. DeTour**

**Grade 7**

### **The Wind Blows**

Hot. As it usually was in this town. Not a single stir of the air. It was so still that breathing felt funny. I lay on the couch with my brown hair sprawled out everywhere. My sweat stained tank top and shorts did nothing to relieve the heat.

I wasn't just hot though, I was bored too. I lazily roll my green eyes about the room, looking for something that could relieve me of my boredom. Nothing. I close my eyes and try to take a nap, even though I knew I wouldn't actually be able to sleep.

Too bored to even sleep, I sit up. I look out the window into the trees, and get an idea. I stand up, walk over to the shoe rack, put my sneakers on, and head out the door. *Maybe there'll be something interesting in the woods* I think to myself.

Right by my house there is a dirt path that I follow. It winds through the woods, and ends up somewhere... The more I thought about it, the more I realize that I had never walked the whole path.

Glad that I found something to do, I look around as I walk down the path. A variety of trees line the path, and their roots twist up through the dirt, and back down into the ground. Moss grows on trees and rocks, making the woods greener than just the leaves on the trees. I take a deep breath in through my nose and get a faintly sweet scent.

I pause a moment and listen to the sounds of the woods. Only, there were no sounds. Not even a chirp from a bird, or the rustling of the leaves from a small breeze. *Strange* I think to myself. I figured no animal wanted to be out in this heat, so they stayed inside. I continue walking, hoping to get away from the quiet.

The path turns into sharp hills, and rocks jut out for foot and hand holds. I grab them as I climb the rocks, and at the top, I find myself at the end of the path. The path ends in front of tall



As soon as I returned, my teacher got angry that I was away for so long. I said I felt ill and about an hour later, I was sent home early.

That night I was in bed, I was too nervous to sleep. At that moment, I heard a small rustle, I thought it was just the trees until I heard footsteps up the staircase. “What was that sound?” I asked quietly, assuming it was simply one of my parents. There’d be no answer, or so I thought, then I heard a small giggle, my heart was pounding out of my chest! The sound of footsteps approaching my door scared me to death! It then slowly opened as soon as the door was wide open, the room fell into silence.

I held my breath, what would I do? I looked around and began to take cover under my bed sheets. After what seemed like forever, I slowly pushed the blanket off of my face and looked around. I went to closet door

I ran down the stairs and out the door and noticed the scarecrow. Luckily, he didn’t notice me.

I picked up a long walking stick and figured I could just hit it but then I realized a way! I noticed a narrow, yet deep hole in the street. It lead to the sewers. I finally knew what would happen. I swiftly opened the manhole and then I charged at my scarecrow, pushing it into the open manhole, quickly burying it with mud! I knew I was safe!

I walked outside, now 11 years old. Exactly a year after the incident, I then saw something, something odd. I noticed a bushy scarecrow’s hat on top of the manhole. . .

**Isabella Faith Griseto**

**Zippel Elementary**

**Mrs. Norsworthy**

**Grade 5**

### **What Keeps Me Winning**

All the words I’m yelling seem to just get caught in the rain. I can’t hear anyone except my coach’s voice, but even his words seem a little quieter than usual. I’m sweating just as hard as it’s raining. Although you can’t really tell. I’m tired, I’m hungry, and I just want to win. All that this is, is winning or losing. My soccer team, the Presque Isle girls white soccer team, is taking on the Caribou Vikings. If we win we’re league champions. If we lose, Houlton is.

We are now going in to overtime. My coach subs me out, because he knows I need a break. I want to keep playing, but I know I need a break too. I yell some stuff from the bench. I yell things like, “Hustle back!” and “Who’s got twelve?” All though no one can really hear me. Sometimes yelling just helps me stay focused. The five minutes go by fast and before I know it we’re going into double overtime.

There is about two minutes left in double over time and the ball starts to make it’s way over to our goal. I have a bad feeling in my stomach. My team is having trouble getting back on defense, and all of a sudden there is only one defender still standing. It’s the goalie. It all depends on her now. The opposing team player kicks the ball. It’s going fast. I freeze and watch it go in.

Something is not right, the other team is happy and my teams not. My team is hanging their heads and some are even crying. Honestly I don’t feel anything. I’m not sad but i’m not happy. I’m not crying but I’m not smiling. I’m just frozen. I want to say something like, “Nice job” or “Good try” but all my words get stuck in my throat. We shake hands with the other team. Then they run around the field chanting something, but their voices get caught in the rain too. My

coach gives us a lecture, that's supposed to make us feel proud. I am proud, proud of my team. We've accomplished a lot this season, but tonight it didn't go our way. I feel like I may have dealt a few tears, but that could've been the rain too.

On the ride home I pretend that this is all a bad dream, but it's not because I'm wearing my soaked jersey. My cleats are completely covered in mud to the point where you can't even see the Nike symbol. I can feel the water sloshing around in my shoes. My shin guards feel attached to my skin like they're never going to come off. I really don't feel like taking them off either. I just want to crawl under my seat and never come out. I won't have to worry about anything there. I won't have to think about losing the game. I won't have to deal with my homework. I won't have to think about anything, because under my seat nothing matters, but instead I'm sitting in my seat watching the rain fall. From that moment on I realized that I never want to have that feeling again. The feeling of defeat. It especially hurts when you deserve the win more. I won't forget this feeling. It'll be what keeps me going. It'll be what keeps me winning. It'll be what keeps my team winning.

**Marion Young**

**PIMS**

**Mrs. Bragg**

**Grade 6**

### **My Different Life**

Moving from one place to another place is kind of hard, especially when you have to move to a place that you know nothing about. That's what happened to me when I moved to the United States.

I was born in Cameroon, a country located in Central Africa. I lived there for ten years. In Cameroon the laws and cultures are very different. In Cameroon, when you are eight years old, you should start working: like going to the market and selling food, toys and jewelry.

In 2018, when I moved to the United States, I realized that the laws are very different from Cameroon. In the United States you can only start working at sixteen years old. I also realized that the materials that are used to build houses are different types of materials. In Cameroon, we used bricks to build our houses.

Cameroon is a bilingual country, with English and French spoken. The country has more than two hundred and seventy five languages spoken called, dialects in Cameroon.

**Alice Tayong**

**PIMS**

**Mrs. Bragg**

**Grade 6**

## **“The Subway Polar Bear.”**

Here I sit. On the warm, steady train. Wishing these two more hours would go by quicker. Looking out through the frosted window, but slightly wiped down from my thick fur so I can see. Looking at the colorful, orange, and slightly yellow trees. Seeing the piles of leaves at the end of every yard. Looking, and seeing the people staring at me because I’m just the “Subway polar bear.”

The looks I get from the other passengers. The questions.

“Is this a costume?” A confused lady asks. “It isn’t even Halloween yet.”

“No,” I complained, “it’s not a costume.”

I get looks of disgust a lot. I take up two seats on the train. People won’t sit next to me because I’m “scary” to their kids. I’m “scary” to them. The driver. Every Monday and Wednesday Karrie drives. She’s amazing. She’s the only person who doesn’t stare at me, or think I’m scary. Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday Mr. Stripes drives. He isn’t so amazing. He stares and laughs at me. Every new person who comes on, he tells them the same old joke..

“Be careful,” he says, “the subway polar bear is on. And he might bite.”

Yea, abhorrent right.

**Addison Hafford**

**PIMS**

**Ms. Tozier**

**Grade 7**

## **One More Wish**

I (Elizabeth) was sitting on the hospital bed, about to get my remedy thinking to myself what it would be like to be just a normal teenage girl for a day. It all started back on July 21, 2015, when I found out the one thing that would ruin my whole teenage life forever. My mother (Ellen) always thought I was depressed, because of the sad, dreary looks on my face, but I just couldn’t tell her I was always getting sick. I always had secrets that I wouldn’t tell anyone, but this secret was one of the worst. Every day I would wake up and just look at myself in my bedroom mirror and whisper; “ This is the day, the day you finally tell your mom that you’re sick, the day where you won’t give up, the day where you believe in yourself.” I would tell myself that every day, and yet I still couldn’t confess.

When I was three my dad (Jason) left my mom and me for another woman, who he later married. That left us always alone, just my mom and me, so it was still hard to trust others. My dad was never the pleasant type of person, so we never really bonded. I did bond with my mom, though, and yet I still couldn’t tell her the truth. There were only certain people I trusted, most of all ,my best friend, Layla, who was fourteen, the same age as me. Layla was the only one that knew my secrets, the secret I wouldn’t think of telling anyone else.

As I heard my school alarm going off constantly, I was thinking to myself about finally telling my mom. Should I finally tell her my secret? Or should I just keep the secret to myself? I decided that it would be a good time to finally tell her. As I was walking down the stairs in my pajamas, I tripped on one of the steps and tumbled all the way down the stairs. As my mother rushed over to my side, she could tell I was losing consciousness. I was feeling tired and dizzy,

so my mom called the ambulance to come see me. About fifteen minutes later, I was being put on stretcher to be taken to the hospital.

As I arrived, they immediately took cat scans of my body. My mother never left my side. She was always giving me the biggest smile, trying to hold back the tears. It's like she was whispering "Don't worry everything is going to be ok." I was worrying, because I knew they were going to find out my secret.

One hour later, the doctors came into the room, and called over my mother to talk to her. I couldn't really hear what they were saying, so I tried to read their lips. As I saw my mother fall to the ground, I knew she had found out my secret. She ran over to me, and hugged me deeply. She was in tears and trying to talk to me, but I couldn't really hear what she was saying over the sound of her whimpers. "Why didn't you tell me?" she said whining.

I whispered, "What?"

"Why didn't you tell me, you have been getting sick?" she said worriedly.

"I couldn't tell you, because I was scared of how you would react." She just stared at me blankly, listening to the doctor and me as we talked faster than she could think.

The doctor explained how I would not be able to go home any time soon, until they could find a cure for me. My mother stayed with me awhile, but then had to say goodnight, but that she would talk to me later. As I closed my eyes, I could only dream of what my new life would be like.

**Kimberly Cray**

**Presque Isle Middle School**

**Mr. Guerrette**

**Grade 8**

### **Synesthesia**

My alarm went off, causing red spirals to appear in my field of vision. As weird as it might sound, this is how every day starts for me. I'm Tessa Freeman. Your average 13 year old, eighth grade girl. Well, sort of average anyway.

I've associated words, letters, smells and sounds with specific colors my entire life. For example, my name is a navy blue color, and the letter A is green. This might sound like something out of a fairytale, but this is all real. It's what you might call a phenomenon, and its proper name is Synesthesia, a word meaning "crossing of the senses." I've grown up with it, and I can't imagine life without it.

The day I realized I had Synesthesia changed everything. Every morning I wake up to the same red spirals warning me to get ready for school. That day was no different, and I trudged my way out to my bus stop. I checked my phone, fidgeted with the strings on my hoodie. The bus arrived only five minutes later, but something was odd. Just on the edge of my peripheral vision, I could see stripes of yellow, which was the very faint smell of fire. I turned back to my house, knowing that my parents had just left to go to their jobs. Grey clouds of smoke were seen through the window, and I ran to the neighbor's house. Firemen arrived shortly after, and managed to put the fire out fairly easily. Waves of questions followed, the most commonly asked being, "How'd you know there was a fire? It was all the way in the laundry room near the back of the house, from the washing machine malfunctioning. The fire had only just started, I can't believe you noticed it that quickly." Take my word for it when I say this was shocking news. I

was eight at the time, and the colors I'd always seen were very normal to me. I thought the colors were the most obvious way that I could sense the fire early on.

For the next few years after that, my parents took me to psychiatrists, therapists, just about any kind of doctor you can think of. By the time sixth grade came around, we'd finally figured out that Synesthesia was the name for my so-called "abnormality." At first it was tough, I was the "weird kid" in school and some people even thought I was making it all up as an excuse for my weird habits, like getting bad grades in math because the colors didn't make sense to me. Eventually everything became normal to them too though, and they accepted me for this. They finally understand that if the number one is maroon and the number four is gold, the number five shouldn't be green. I guess the point I'm trying to make is simple. Don't judge people for something as ridiculous as seeing words in color. Something about yourself might be a little "different" too. As cheesy as this is, it isn't cool to make fun of someone for anything. You wouldn't want them to make fun of you.

**Kaleigh Phillips      Presque Isle Middle School      Mr. Guerrette      Grade 8**

**Aroostook  
County  
Heritage**

## Serene River Trail

My class and I head down the  
Meduxnekeag River Trail.  
As we enter the woods I hear  
The occasional *Chirp* and *Squawk* from  
birds hidden in the trees like they're playing Marco Polo,  
I can hear them, but despite my best efforts, I cannot see them.  
We stop at a lookout over the clear water of the Meduxnekeag River.  
The river looks like it has hundreds of  
Ravishing rhinestones radiantly  
Sparkling under the little rapids and swirls.  
We continue on the trail and approach tall, old cedar trees.  
Mrs. Oliver bends a few sprigs off the trees.  
She divides them up and passes them out to us.  
I lift it up to my nose, close my eyes, and smell the cedar sprig.  
It smells like mint with woody undertones.  
Moseying down the trail, I see a familiar plant.  
It's a green three leaf clover, but the leaves are shaped like hearts.  
I reach down and pluck a few out of the wet soil.  
I pass them out and say *Eat them, they're good.*  
I munch mine and slowly savor the sour grape flavor.  
As we continue down the path, the dirt changes to small rocks  
to prevent us from sinking into the swampy ground.  
The crunching rocks sound like sticking your hand into a bowl of glass pebbles.  
Tall ferns arch over the pathway,  
reminding me of the overgrown paths you see in jungle movies.  
We walk through fields and  
I can hear cicadas and crickets  
louder than a high school marching band *Zzzzzzz Zzzzzzz*  
I make a flower bouquet bursting with sweet smells.  
We finish the last stretch of the trail and sit down for lunch.  
I hear my classmates chattering loudly and  
the serene silence of the trail slowly fades away.

Paige Bosse

Mill Pond School

Mrs. Oliver

Grade 6

## The Hunting Trip

Dad and I got up at 5:30am to go hunting. It was really cold, so I did not want to take my pj's off. It was dark, but not too dark. We packed some hot cocoa and a muffin. It was Youth Day, September 28, 2018. Youth Day is a day where kids can go and have a chance to go

hunting and see or get a deer. We were going down back on our property. We drove the 4-wheeler halfway and walked the rest of the way. I was very nervous - my hands were clammy, and I was shaking like a pack of jumping beans. The first blind we went to was a heated shack in the trees. When we got to our blind we sat for at least 5-10 minutes, and a doe and two fawns walked in. We did not shoot because they were too little. The fawns still had their baby spots and the boy didn't have big antlers, only nubs. They were out eating with their mom. We sat for another hour but saw nothing else. Then we went home for a few hours.

When we went back, we sat at a different blind. I brought my tablet to watch a movie. I had to turn the volume all the way down so that the animals wouldn't hear it. I wasn't even halfway through the movie when Dad shook my arm and whispered, "Turn your tablet off! Look!" I looked and saw a doe and a spike horn. A spike horn is a buck that does not have really big antlers. Dad quietly took out my earmuffs, and I slipped them on. I had to aim slow and quiet. Once I had it all lined up, I pulled the safety off. When I shot, the doe took off into the woods. Dad and I looked at each other and started to laugh. I was so happy! The first words to come out were, "Did I get her?" We usually record the shooting part, but the deer had come out so quickly that Dad did not have time to get the video camera out. I kept asking, "Can we go to find her?" but Dad said, "No, we have to wait a little longer!" We had to wait because you have to give the animal time to die. It was hard for me to wait, though, because I was so excited I could have actually bounced off the walls!

Half an hour later, we went to find her. We followed the blood trail, but there was not a lot of blood. The blood was on the ground, on the bushes, and on the sides of trees. Then, we finally found a big splotch of blood and found more throughout the way. Then Dad saw her white belly. The doe was in the woods in a little spot where the ground dipped in. We went over and stood in awe. It was so exciting! I got my first deer! Dad dragged her out of the woods. We looked at her, and Dad said that I shot her in the liver. Dad took a picture and I held her ears so you could see her head. Hunter, my little brother, was so excited to see the deer. Bonnie, my little sister, asked if I had fun, and I said, "Yes." Gram took so many pictures we thought her camera would explode! Then Dad and Grampy put the doe in the back of the truck.

I had entered a contest at Ben's Trading Post, located in PI, but it was not open at that time. We thought it was weird because it was Youth Day. So, we brought the doe to Washburn Trailside to tag her. Mom and Dad brought her to Ben's Trading Post on Tuesday. She weighed 104 pounds! We hung the doe on the meat pole, then a few days later we cut her up to eat. I had so much fun hunting with Dad! And I found out that I was the first Haley to get a doe, and the youngest, too!

**Anna Haley**

**Woodland Consolidated School**

**Mrs. Robertson**

**Grade 5**

### **My Moose Hunt**

It all started on Sept. 23rd, which was a Monday, and happened to be a very hot and rainy day. My family and I got up at around 4:30 and started to get ready. My mom, dad, and my brother, Cole, went on the moose hunt with me. I actually was the sub-permittee and my mom was the one who actually got the permit. Once I was dressed and had my orange on, I went down

to our lodge to get some breakfast. I also grabbed some food and water for when we were in the woods. My family and I went to our front lawn to target practice, we wanted to make sure our guns were sighted in. My mom and I were using 30-06 automatic rifles, which we liked a lot. We went to the woods and stayed between Garfield and the Craigville Road because we had a zone 5 permit.

We went to a couple of bogs where there usually were moose and started calling. We didn't get any responses like we normally do, so we decided to stay and call for a half an hour. Still no responses. Normally when you get a response it's a grunt or a loud snap, as though they are coming closer to you. Eventually, we went to another spot. We walked to the end of a winter road where my dad had a game camera, we were going to see if any bull moose had been in the area. My dad walked in to where his camera was and realized it was gone. Someone had stolen it! We kept calling but we weren't getting any responses, or having any luck. This was because it was a hot day and normally moose aren't as apt to move on hot days. They find a nice piece of shaded land or go in the swamps to cool off. We went back home and waited for evening.

We decided, when we went back out, to put out two hunting blinds to sit in at night before legal light was over. We went back into the woods before dusk. We went to the spot where we had set up the blinds and sat quietly until dark. During rut season bull moose will scrape the bushes with their antlers. My dad has a shoulder blade from a moose and he uses it to imitate a moose scraping bushes. My mom and I sat in the blind while Dad and Cole called in moose, both with the shoulder blade scraping brush and with cow calls, but still no response. We sat there until legal light was over which was about 6:00 p.m. Once legal light was over, we went back to the truck. On our way out of the woods we saw a moose run across the road in front of the truck. We didn't know if it was a "bull" moose or a "cow" moose so we knew we should start there the next morning.

The next morning we got up, got dressed, grabbed some food, and went into the woods. It wasn't as warm, but it was still rainy and was still not the best weather for moose hunting. We went to the spot where we saw that moose the night before and started to call. We thought we heard the snap of a branch, but realized it was nothing. We tried the spot where we had the blinds, calling for about a half an hour. We saw and heard nothing, so we packed up the blinds and decided we'd just ride around and hopefully see something. We rode around for at least two and a half hours. I ended up falling asleep in the truck. We went back home, taking a break until we headed out to the woods around supper time. We went back to the spot where we saw that moose the night before and called there. We didn't hear anything, but there was this woodcock, which is a type of bird, that kept distracting us. It kept flying around and was acting like a bird that had a sugar high. Once legal light was officially over, we got back in the truck, unloaded our guns, and went back home.

Wednesday morning was when it all went down. I got up around 4:30, like normal, got dressed, and you know the rest. This particular morning was different. It was about 40 degrees and was slightly overcast. This is really good weather for hunting moose. We went out to a bog, which is an area where it is like swampy land, and we called there for a half an hour like normal, but got no response. We were getting frustrated and annoyed because we continued to call but didn't see moose or hear any responses.

My Dad took us to a spot we hadn't been yet that week. It was an old winter road, this was the place where all the action happened. We hiked to an old log where we set up. While we were loading our guns, my dad stood up on a different log so he could look around the winter road's corner. Just as my Dad got up on the log, a bull moose came walking around the

corner. He was about one hundred yards from us. My Dad motioned me to come closer to him because the moose was coming in our direction. I snuck over to where my dad was, and I instantly saw the moose. As I picked up my gun and looked through my scope, I started to get a little nervous. I saw him walking closer, and closer as my dad started calling. He got within 75 yards of us and then just stopped walking. He kept looking at us, then he would scrape a bush by him with his rack, or antlers. All of a sudden he started to run. We think the wind changed direction and he caught wind of us because he started to run in the opposite direction. When he started to run my dad yelled, “don’t let him get away!” Once he said that, I fired a shot and hit him right below the shoulder. This is where you’re supposed to shoot a moose. I shot again because he was still running. The second shot hit him right next to his spine. He started to walk and then we saw him disappear into the woods. We figured he went and laid down and would soon die after that. We all started to get super excited and my family was very proud of me.

We went home and loaded up my four wheeler, a trailer, and knives so we would be able to get my moose out of the woods. When we got back to where I had shot my moose, we started walking the direction the moose did. We immediately saw the blood trail from the moose. When you shoot an animal, they normally leave a blood trail because some of the blood drips onto the ground from the open wound. We followed the blood trail and eventually found my moose laying in between two trees. We only had to track him for about fifty yards until we found him.

We took a lot of pictures of my family and the moose. My dad gutted the moose for me so it was easier to get out of the woods, and is better for the meat. We used the four-wheeler to get the moose onto the trailer. By the time we left the woods it was noon. We had to go to Gateway to tag my moose. While we were at Gateway tagging my moose, I also got a new sweatshirt and a knife too. My grandmother and grandfather came to Gateway to see my moose and take pictures. That ends the great adventure I went on to get my moose the week of September 23rd 2019.

**Callie Cullins**

**Ashland District School**

**Mrs. Merrill**

**Grade 6**

### **Perspective**

Air rushed into my lungs, sharp and cold as I looked out over the mountain. The pure beauty of Maine stared back at me. The warm-hued leaves stretched for miles on end. It was my first time on Haystack. I was accompanied by my grandmother and brother. We sat on a bench atop the mountain, savoring the scenery while enjoying the crackers and cookies my grandmother had packed. I looked over the land, the vibrant leaves, the gleaming lakes, winding dirt roads and potato fields and I was grateful. Grateful to be able to call this beautiful county my home.

**Claire Ouellette**

**Caribou Middle School**

**Mr. Jepson**

**Grade 8**

## I'm From

I am from a wind chime with pretty colors  
from a porch with red paint  
I am from a white house with a red roof  
and a wood floor with white walls  
I am from a line of pine trees  
which whisper in the wind  
I am from the clothesline with a lot of clothes pins  
and picture frames with family pictures in them  
I'm from a mom and a step dad  
Who raised me with love  
I am from a loving and a competitive  
and from a funny, a talented  
a blessed family  
I am from I love yous and I'm sorrys  
I am from an act of God  
I am from a gram and grandpa,  
from turkey supper and mashed potatoes,  
from watching fireworks on the Fourth of July  
I am from trips to the barn  
I am from the walls with all of our heights  
And a wooden dining room table  
I am from a bronze rooster clock that crows at noon

**Emma Williams    Mill Pond School    Mrs. Belyea    Grade 6**

## 4th Grade Potato Picking

At 9:00 in the morning I grabbed my potato picking gloves and my lunch then got off the bus. When I got off the bus Mrs. Long talked to all of us and explained that the field behind us is the field we usually pick in but, Mr. Long got sick and couldn't take care of it so there isn't any potatoes there any more. Then she told us that we are picking on the field over there.

“Lets go!” she said. We all ran through the path and went to the picnic tables. Then I looked behind me and stared at thousands of potatoes and said in my head, Oh no! My back is going to hurt A LOT! When all of us sat on the picnic tables Mrs. Long told all of us that we were going to have hotdogs, soda, pumpkin chocolate chip cookies, and chips. After I said to myself that I wanted that instead of my own lunch! But she said that if you brought your own lunch you can still have a hotdog.

Mrs. Long and Mr. Long went over the rules and gave us a bucket. Miss Sirois picket partners. I was paired with Erin Mc.Nally. Then we went over by the trees and lined up with our

partner. Miss Sirois gave us a section and we started picking potatoes and putting it in our buckets. When the bucket was full we would dump the potatoes in the barrel. When the row had no more potatoes in it we would play in the dirt, sit on an empty barrel, or get in an empty barrel and wait for the tractor to come around in a different row.

We were getting hungry so Miss Sioris called us over to the picnic tables for a snack. Instead of having a cookie with lunch we had it for snack. When I saw the cookies they were HUGE and YUMMY!

We went back to work. I ran into the dirt and jumped and landed on my butt!

After awhile the tractor came through and we all ran to the other row and picked. We did that over and over again and got like 6-7 rows done. When we filled the barrel we would set another one up and bring it over to our row and start picking again

Soon it was lunchtime and we had hotdogs, soda, and chips. The hotdogs were AWESOME so I had 2 of them! I didn't finish my soda so I left it on the table and grabbed my gloves and picked potatoes. I found a rotten one and it smelled bad! When I dug into the dirt I could taste the yucky dirt!

After awhile we went to the other field and picked different kinds of potatoes. There where red potatoes and 2 other kinds.

“BUS!” Miss Sirois yelled across the field. We all ran to the picnic tables and sat down. Mr. Long gave us a bag to fill it up with potatoes. I got big ones at least I tried. We all got on the bus and said THANK YOU!

Have to ever cooked homemade mashed potatoes? I LOVE mashed potatoes. There are many ways to make potatoes! Such as hash, mashed, baked, tater tots, fries, shepards pie, pancakes, and doughnuts. I like all of them but, I haven't tried pancakes or doughnuts yet. Have you ever picked potatoes by hand?

**Alaina Rodgerson**

**Katahdin Elementary School**

**Ms. Sirois**

**Grade 4**

### **A Delicious Treat**

Crackle! Crackle! The sparks flew into the air and landed on the swaying grass. The smoke of the fire drifted high into the sky. I swiftly walked down the hill to the fire pit that sat in the middle of the lawn. The lawn chairs had already been set up, so I sat down in one and ripped open a big bag of marshmallows. I selected the biggest and whitest marshmallow I could find, and pushed it slowly down onto the pointy stick in my hand.

The crackling fire smelled amazing as I held my stick over it and watched it slightly melt and turn golden brown. Next, I snatched the graham crackers and Hershey chocolate from the

ground and began creating my s'more. I stuffed my marshmallow between the layers of chocolate and graham cracker and began licking my fingers.

"Yummy!" I exclaimed.

I pressed down on my s'more and more marshmallow oozed out. I quickly took a bite so all the marshmallow didn't fall out before I had a chance to eat it.

"Delicious!" I mumbled with my mouth full.

My first s'more ever had been a mouth watering success! As I packed up the lawn chairs, graham crackers, marshmallows, and chocolate, I wondered when I would ever taste another s'more. I hoped it would be soon!

**Audrey Bennett**

**Mapleton Elementary School**

**Mrs. Fox    Grade 4**

### **Where I'm From**

I am from Legos on the floor,  
From funny pictures and crafts.  
I am from a homey and nice house  
With blue walls the color of the sea.  
I am from the old maple tree  
Whose arms reach out and hug the sky.  
I am from story books and tv.  
I am from never on time and always excited,  
from funny jokes  
And from a love of reading.  
I am from Christmas with family.  
I am from Meméres and Pepéres,  
From cookies and steak,  
And from my first Pokémon card.  
I am from those moments with a family that I love.

**Elijah Fournier**

**Mill Pond School**

**Mrs. Belyea**

**Grade 6**

### **The Lost Forest of Ellsworth**

Long ago, in the ancient village of Santon, there was a man by the name of Adam L. Ellsworth. Adam was an expert on adventure, along with mystery, and was recently given the task of going to a forest in Vamile Valley. Hungry for new adventure, Adam packed his belongings for this trip as soon as he got the message. He took his diary and his quill, a couple of batches of rye bread and smoked salmon from his grandmother, and a compass. As he packed these belongings into his satchel, he wondered what would be inside this forest that would be so

interesting. It's just a forest, he thought. Forests aren't that interesting. It's probably just a wild animal. Not thinking about it too much, he shoved the last of his goodies into his bag and dressed himself into his adventurous gear.

His "adventurous gear" was just a buttoned-up and collared, pocketed, beige shirt with some spiffy looking dark brown pants. He also wore a black rough leather belt that was engraved with Latin writing. His shoes were grey, shiny, and buckled, along with a small heel in the back of his shoe. As for his headwear, he wore a dark red fedora with a feather tucked in and a golden pin with his business logo on it.

After he got dressed, he went to his stable and saddled up his spotted brown steed, Misty. He hopped onto Misty and trotted out of the stable, and onto the path. As he was trotting along, he waved and smiled at the people who knew him. After a few minutes of riding down the path and chatting shortly with the townsfolk, he made his way to the border of the village.

"Good evening Adam," said Sir Charles, who was a loyal guard of Santon for 10 years. He was a large man who had a Roman broad nose and tan rough skin. On his face was a large faded, but noticeable scar across his nose, possibly from when he fought in his first battle as a knight. He wore rusted chain-mail armor that looked as though it hadn't been washed for the decade he had been a knight.

"Why hello there, Sir Charles! I have come bearing yet another adventure," he said excitedly, "this time I shall be traveling to the mysterious Valley of Vamile.."

Sir Charles chuckled. "That old place? Ha, what would be so interesting about Vamile?"

Adam pondered for a moment, "Well you see, I got a letter from a buddy of mine who moved there recently," he said with ease, "He said that he had been seeing strange activity from the townsfolk who had gone into the forest."

Sir Charles thought for a moment, "Hmm...well does this forest have a name?"

He pondered quietly. "No, strangely," said Adam. "He said they had discovered it two to three miles from the valley a couple of days ago and had only been seeing this strange activity recently."

"Okay then, do you have all of your belongings for such a short trip, but a long stay?" Sir Charles says questioningly.

"Why of course! You think I would go out without my diary?" They both chuckled softly and Sir Charles opened the gate slowly.

"Go ahead my good sir and I hope you return by the week's end," Sir Charles said with a bashful grin.

"Thank you! I sure hope I will as well. Bye now!" Adam said as he hopped back onto Misty. "Giddy-up now Misty!" he said with his most stereotypical western "cowboyish" accent.

As he went through the other side of the gate, he waved goodbye to Sir Charles and headed down the stone path. As he was trotting, he heard the creaking of the gate closing slowly. The wind on his smiling excited face made Misty go much faster to his destination. He saw the flower shop and the Blacksmith's border shop. He had seen all of these shops before, so he focused on the task at hand instead. On this short trip down the stone path, he hadn't seen much that was interesting enough to write down in his journal. What he saw though, was a brown bear with purple roots wrapped around it. That was interesting. He drew an illustration of the bear with roots on its back and examined that the bear was laying down. Not eager to take a pit stop, he quickly got back on Misty and rode on.

Once he approached the village, he smelled a foul smell coming from somewhere near the small town. He shrugged it off and advanced to the gate. “Sir Garenn!” said Adam, as he stopped at the entrance.

“Pleasure seeing you here Mr. Ellsworth,” he chuckled surprisingly, “Have you come here to investigate the forest?”

Adam snickered, “Why, I’m almost quite certain it was you who sent me here!” He giggled, “you even sent me a letter!” He paused for a second, “by the way, did you smell something awful coming from the forest?”

He says confused. “Smell? No I’m certain I didn’t smell anything from that forest, in fact, I’ve never been in there myself, but the townsfolk seem to have a very peculiar behavior. But, no smell.”

Adam looked back to the forest. “Ok then, do you mind if I enter?” He looked back at Sir Garren excited.

“Of course, Adam my good friend!” he said happily, “Do you not want to check into an inn first?” he asked as he scratched his head.

“No, no. There’s no need! I’m just going to take a quick look and probably head back to my village.” he said. “Besides, I didn’t pack much food anyway, I knew it was going to be a short trip.”

He started to trot down the forest path. “Whatever you say!” Sir Garenn said in the distance. Adam made his way down the path eager to get there, but as he approached the forest, he smelled the same foul odor he smelled earlier when he was making his way near the valley. He shrugged it off and just plugged his nose as he entered. He noticed a carving on a spruce tree that said: “BEWARE, DO NOT ENTER.” That’s odd, he thought to himself. It must be harmless, he thought, and continued trotting.

As he went deeper into the forest, the trees began to gradually turn rotten and become a dark purple. Spiked roots were crowded everywhere, and the foul odor worsened, making him woozy and tired. His eyes began to blink longer. His back arched forward a little and his head became heavy. All of a sudden, Misty stopped in her tracks, her hooves dragging along the dirt to brake herself. This caused Adam to fly forward slightly, springing him awake. “Woah there Misty!” He said surprised, “What was that all about?” His head turned. He was shocked. Behind the purple, spiky roots, was a giant dark purple monster. Not just any monster, but a 10 foot, spiky-rooted, horned, pitch black-eyed, dark purple monster. His heart beat faster. He rubbed his eyes to see if he were dreaming or not. He blinked. Nope. It was still there, staring at him with its blackened holes where eyes should’ve been. He couldn’t move. He had no idea what to do next. Then he slowly moved his hand toward his journal, carefully unzipping each notch on the bag. He grabbed the diary and slowly but surely, pulled it out, along with his quill. From the corner of his eye, he could see that the monster was closer now. Misty got flustered all of a sudden, and bucked him off. He and all of his stuff flew in the air and onto the ground. He blacked out. And the last thing he saw was the monster, closer than ever.