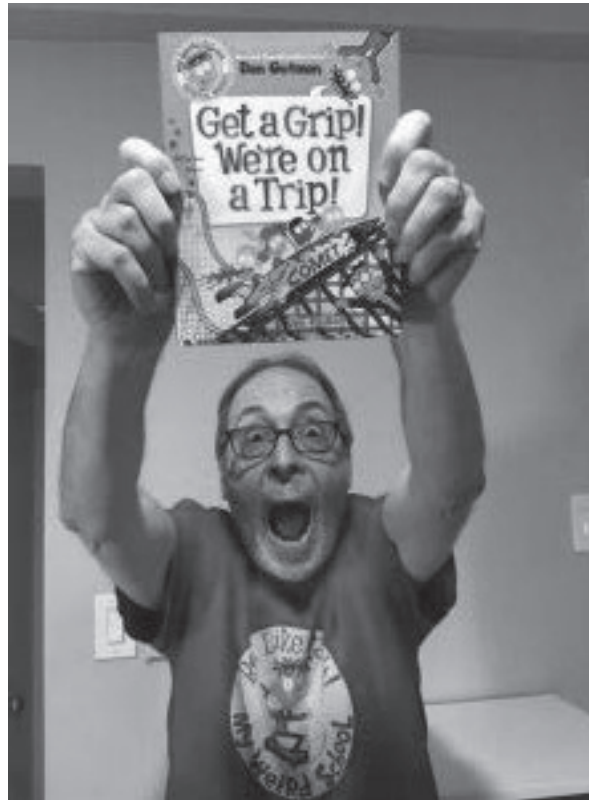


Young Authors Workshop
May 13, 2022

Guest Author & Keynote Speaker
Dan Gutman



Dan Gutman is an award-winning author for children and young adults. Among his many awards, Dan's books have been honored as Junior Library Guild selections and as best books by Barnes & Noble, Bank Street College of Education, and the New York Times Bestseller lists. He lives in New York City with his wife Nina.

Author of:
My Weird School series
Flashback Four series
Jackie & Me
Babe & Me
The Homework Machine
Funny Boy series
... any many more

Visit his website to learn more: <https://dangutman.com/>

2022 Aroostook Right to Read Literacy Award Recipient:

Kevin Sipe

Kevin Sipe has dedicated his life to promoting literacy in our community. During his thirty-one years teaching in the MSAD#1 school district, he enriched the lives of many students by teaching them the value of reading for enjoyment. He had a unique way of teaching students how to understand what they are reading while integrating writing to show their analyses of literature. Though teaching English would not be something Kevin would say he was an expert at, the students he taught would say differently. While educating students he would always provide book recommendations and assist them before or after school in finding a book that interested them.

Kevin's role in promoting literacy in our community has changed a bit since his retirement from teaching in a public school. With a long connection to the public library, he currently sits on the board and is actively involved by reaching out to educators and administrators in our community offering to personally provide tours and getting students free library cards. Kevin believes all students should be provided the opportunity to access literature and has actively provided exactly that.

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Friends and Family

A Valuable Lesson

One normal September day, my sister Danika had some news. It was bad news and good news at the same time. Danika told my family that she was accepted to go work on a ranch with horses in Alabama. Ever since Danika attended college, she was looking for ranches that would accept her. I acted like I was happy for her, but on the inside, I was really disappointed. I have a significant bond with Danika, so her leaving the state was devastating for me.

My family only had a couple of weeks left with her. So we tried to make the best of it, we didn't want Danika to leave with her family being upset. It seemed like the weeks went by so fast, when the dreaded day came I felt like crying forever. When she came to say goodbye, I cried! I cried so hard because I knew I would miss her so much. She came to talk to me and asked, "Does it seem like the months go by fast?" I responded with "Well, yeah!" Then she said she would be back by November. I hugged her tight and said "Good luck Dee Bee." She responded with "I love it when you call me that. Remember when you made the nickname "Dee Bee" for me when you were in 1st grade?" I said, "Of course I do!" Then she was gone.

Usually, months go by fast, however, waiting for Danika to come home felt like decades. I told my mom about how I felt. She said, "You just have to wait." I tried doing things that I like doing, like painting, playing with my dog, reading, playing soccer, baking, and drawing to keep me busy and my mind occupied.

No matter what I did I could not stop thinking about how far Danika was, it was like me leaving my mom and dad because that is how big mine and Danika's bond are. One night, I thought about how far Danika was. All I could console myself with was: I just have to wait.

Finally, the day came that Danika was coming home. I wanted to pass the time, so I went shopping with my mom and dad. On the way to the grocery store, I saw Danika pass by us. I knew it was her because the truck was red, it was a Chevy, and it had an American flag license plate. I wanted to go home, but it was too late. We were almost at the grocery store. It was not till about three hours that I arrived home. I ran up the stairs and gave Danika a big hug and said, "You better not leave me again, missy." My other sister, Adriana, Danika, and I then watched a movie together. I was so glad she was home. The rest of the night was filled with laughter and the sound of Danika's beautiful voice.

Waiting for something is always a challenge, but it is all worth it because it teaches you a valuable lesson: Patience.

Alex Deschaine

Van Buren District School

Mrs. Levasseur

Grade 5

Scary Roller Coaster

Last summer, I went on vacation to Hershey Park in Pennsylvania with my family. There was a new roller coaster there called “Candymonium”. It was the largest roller coaster in the park and I wanted to ride it! We went to wait in the long line. It was a really long wait, but we stayed in line. I’m glad we waited in line, because it was the most awesome roller coaster ever! After that, we went on a lot more roller coasters and they were also fun. There was one ride called the “Laughing Track” and it was great. It lets four people go, two in the front and two in the back. When you start, you go up a hill and then start to go down, but instead, you twist on your way down, so the people in the front can see in back and the people in back can see the front. You’re spinning around, but not too fast. Riding in the back when going down a hill was so much fun!

The next day, my brother didn’t want to get up so he didn’t go and my mother stayed at the rented house with him. My dad, sister and her boyfriend and I went back to the park and we rode the same roller coasters. It was more fun this time because the park was not as busy and the lines were shorter.

On day three, when we went, we went on the biggest and newest roller coaster. At the end, we got stuck. We didn’t know what had happened, but thankfully there was no sun and we were in the shade! Next, we went on the second fastest ride and it went straight up in the air. Once again, it stopped and we were stuck. After about ten minutes, it started again. The last ride we went on was called Comet. That ride went up and down hills very fast many times.

Then, sadly, a storm came with lightning, thunder and lots of rain. Because of the weather, we had to leave the park. Before going back to the rented house, we stopped at the store to get things for dinner. But me and my sister, Kourtney still felt like we were on a roller coaster!

Even though I felt overwhelmed and afraid of the roller coasters a lot of the time, I still had a great time at Hersey Park!

Peyton West

Limestone Community School

Ms. Seeley

Grade 5

The Adventures of Europe

In 2019, my parents had arranged a trip to Europe. Lots of my family lives there, in Poland especially. It was my first time ever being in Europe, and also my first time ever meeting my dad's parents. My trip to Europe turned out to be a BLAST, so I thought I’d share some of it with you. The trip was filled with memories I’ll definitely never forget, really happy memories at that.

It was really hard communicating with my family seeing how most of them only speak Polish which I couldn’t understand or even speak. We still found a way to talk back and forth. One of my most favorite parts of that trip was meeting my family. My aunt for instance did know how to speak English, and she and I communicated the best. I really enjoyed meeting her, in particular, almost like we shared a lot. Meeting my cousin was also really nice, overall meeting my family was probably the best part of it all.

Another really fun thing we did was hiking, we hiked up so many mountains to get to castles. All of the castles were so interesting, one day we hiked up a mountain to get to one of the castles, and by the time we got to the top, the castle had just closed for tourists. Although that was one of the downsides of the trip, it was still really fun to hike up the mountain. Even though everything else had closed, the gift shop was still open. We also went up to a restaurant on top of a mountain. It was so beautiful on top of that mountain, that was the dinner where I met most of my family.

Having the ability to be able to visit such a place is one of the things I'm really thankful for. It's super amazing to be able to see the things I saw such as things like the astronomical clock in Prague, or the many cathedrals we saw, and lots of museums. One of the days that we were there we took a tour of Prague with a foreign tour guide that only my father could understand, and the guide made us follow his umbrella through Prague. Although it was a fast tour, it was still a pretty interesting experience. Overall we saw whatever we needed to, and hopefully when we go back we get to see more of the things that we wish we would have seen more of. Although chasing the umbrella wasn't the highlight of the trip there were many other times that made up for it, and none of us are to complain, as we are all thankful that we got to participate in such wonderful and educational opportunities.

Going to Europe was probably the best experience I've ever had so far. Our trip was both educational as well as fun. We did other smaller things like we ate a lot of Polish food, and we went to many stores, and restaurants, as well as other things like horse carriage rides and such. We even saw a miniature museum of Poland, it was just miniature sculptures of monuments and famous buildings around Poland and around other places like Germany. We saw things like the Berlin Wall, and the Brandenburg gate. During the trip my family and I did go to see a salt mine as well. It took a lot of stairs to get Down to the mine , but it sure was worth it. We did many other things in the 2 weeks we were there, and every last bit of that trip was a memory that will never be forgotten. I had such a great time meeting everyone, and seeing the things i never believed i would ever see. Now that I have shared my journey with you, I suppose I should say until next time, and to Europe, I hope to see you again this summer.

Alice Korzekwa

Presque Isle Middle School

Ms. Henne

Grade 7

Cabin in the Campground

“Hey mom. When are we leaving for our camping trip?” I asked.

“Right now.” She answered.

We were off. We were headed on the trip I had been looking forward to for the past six months. We were going on a camping trip for my birthday weekend at a campground called Hallows Hauntings. If you look it up online you will see that it has a history of scary things that have happened to the people that have stayed there, but I was not that worried about that because I loved spooky stuff!

“Hunter!” I yelled. “We are leaving!”

The car ride was long because we were traveling to the Mountains of New Hampshire and we live in Northern Maine. Once we arrived it seemed pretty normal. We checked in and headed to our campsite to unload all of our stuff.

“I’m going to go walk around. I will be back later.” I said.

“Okay hun! Be back by 6:00 for dinner, remember we are celebrating your birthday tonight!”
Said my dad.

As I walked through the woods it started to get colder, darker, and much creepier. And then I started to feel like someone or something was watching me. I decided to turn around, but I was in a part of the campground I didn’t recognize. I did not see my campsite and nothing looked familiar at all. Panic!! I was lost and I did not have my phone or any way to communicate with anyone.

I just kept walking and walking until I saw this cabin in the distance. I ran faster than lightning to reach the cabin door. When I arrived, I knocked on the door and said “ Is anyone home??” When no one answered I just opened the door and walked in. When I walked in it was very plain, dusty, and the windows were boarded shut. There was no one in the house. Silence! When I turned around to leave there was someone standing in the doorway with a long black trench coat on.

“AHHHHHHH.” I yelled.

“What’s the matter? Are you scared?” Said the person with the coat.

“Who are you?” I asked.

“Your worst nightmare.” The person replied.

BAM!! The door slammed shut.

“HELP! HELP!” I screamed.

Crack crack. I felt the floor begin to give way underneath me. I began to fall. I closed my eyes and screamed as I plummeted down. Then...poof, boing, bounce...I landed in the middle of a huge foam pit surrounded by my family yelling “SUPRISE!” I shook my head and tried to focus on what was happening. They all began to sing Happy Birthday and I realized this was all a joke. Actually it was a party. My party! My family knew how much I loved a good scare and planned a party for my birthday with a creepy surprise.

Abigail Reed

Presque Isle Middle School

Ms. Henne

Grade 7

A Brother Moment

Bounce! Bounce! Bounce! It was midday and the sun beamed down. It was blistering hot. I was in my driveway playing P.I.G. with my siblings. First of all, let me just tell you something about playing P.I.G. with people who are more than three years older than you. The expectations of you winning are pretty low!

Anyways, back to the story. Marion lined up for a side shot in the dirt. I saw her knees bend down, then one of her eyes closed. All of a sudden she pounced up! I noticed the sunlight reflecting off the ball as it went flying through the air. Then, I heard a thud! As I looked over, I saw that it was four feet behind the basket. Wyatt slowly walked over and grabbed the ball. “Hey, I’m gonna shoot a free throw to get Wilder out!” he exclaimed.

My heart started racing. I realized I only had one letter left. I trotted out of the way and prayed to God that Wyatt wouldn’t make the shot. I saw him roll the ball around in his sweaty hands. Next, his knees bent down and he jumped up. The ball was put at a perfect angle, and I saw it rotate through the air as I closed my eyes. The next thing I heard was a bang and swish.

My palms started to sweat, and I slowly made my way to the dirt patch that we call the free throw line. Wyatt passed me the ball, and I dribbled it on the ground. My knees slowly tweaked down. Then, I jumped and the second I jumped up, Wyatt swiftly said, “Don’t mess up!” I looked over toward him and let go of the ball. I completely missed! As I went to get the ball I tried to think of a way to retaliate. Then, I remembered Wyatt had to pick up the apples under the apple tree that day.

I could feel the air rushing through my hair as I ran over to the apple tree and shook the branches as hard as I could! You may call it being a poor sport, but hey, I call it being a brother.

Wilder Young

Mapleton Elementary

Mrs. Fox

Grade 4

At Rogan’s House

Have you ever been to a friend's house? On Wednesday it was a half day so I was going to Rogan’s house. “I can’t wait!” I said. “It is now time to dismiss K-2 pick up students,” they called. We both stood up straight. I had to laugh but I held it in. “Now time to dismiss K-2 pick up and 3-5 bus riders.” We both held hands. “Okay, I am the last bus.” Rogan said. We got on the bus and it was SO LOUD!

It was our stop and in no time we ran out the door. We walked inside and Wren and Piper were there. “So this is my house,” she laughed. I did too. “Hi Wren,” I said. I was shy, but when I look at Wren I know she doesn't have a shy bone in her body. We went in and Rogan showed me around.

We went upstairs and played school. We waited til Wren and Piper were sleeping. When they were, we played outside. We went down in the woods and played. We found these covers

for this fort. We also found this blue chair beside a big bin which we found out that it was in a burn pile.

Next we played soccer. After a while we went into the woods. We went to look for more things and I tried to go on this stump but I fell! "Ouch!" I yell! Rogan helped me up and she also helped clean the dirt off. It hurt so bad that I wanted to cry, but I didn't. It was like a 3 foot hole I fell in! She helped me up the hill and we told her mom. Next we went inside and I got some water and candy.

We went back outside and played soccer. "Wow, that was a big fall!" I said. We kicked back and forth back and forth. We heard a car pull in front of the house. "It is Mell!" Wren said in an excited voice. "Mel is here!" she said one more time. We hoped that Avery was there but she was not. We went back and played some more.

We started walking across the road and Wren and Piper had to hold our hands."Okay, the coast is clear," I said. We got a basketball to use. We walked across the road and when we got to the other side a car went by. "We got here at the right time," I said. We ran to the court and played Pig. "WOW Rogan I won 5 times in a row!" I said. Wren and Piper were like ,"ALIYA and ROGAN YOU DIDN'T MAKE IT!"

After that, we made some bracelets. "When we are done we can go play basketball?" Rogan asked. "Well make sure that you wait for Wren and Piper," said her Mom. We waited for the girls before we went to play basketball. We made two bracelets and got the girls. "Okay Aliya, you take Wren and I will take care of Piper," said Rogan. "Okay," I said back.

Afterwards, we went inside and had supper. We had mac and cheese. I loved it! After that, we ate a cookie. It looked like a pumpkin with green and orange frosting. After we cleaned the hermit crabs tank. When we were finished, my Mom came to pick me up and we went home.

The End

Aliya Walker

Southern Aroostook Community School Mrs. Starrett Grade 4

The Worst Week of the Year

Today was that time of the year. The WORST week of the year. Gabby's family would be packing their bags and going to their beach house at Santa Monica. She had a family of five. It would be her, her dad, her step mom (that she didn't really like), two step brothers, and one step sister. She didn't want to go. It had always been just her and her dad and their aussie, every year until three years ago when her dad met Stacy. Everything has gone wrong ever since he met her. After one year of her dad meeting him they got married and she was praying that before the wedding something got sabotaged or maybe a truth would come out and they would break up and Gabby would never have to see Stacy and her kids again. Her and her step siblings didn't like each other so they worked hard to try and get them to break up but nothing ever worked.

As Gabby was in her room packing and knowing she was going to regret agreeing to go on the trip, she was trying to think of a plan to break her dad and Stacy up.

Her thoughts got interrupted when her dad yelled, "GABBY, COME ON! WE'RE LEAVING. GET YOUR STUFF IN THE CAR." Gabby rolled her eyes and walked down stairs

to put her stuff in the trunk of the car. She got to the car and realized that the trunk was stuffed and she was gonna have to sit in the way back with her bags on her lap. There was already no room in the back because everyone's stuff was piled up. She was lucky that there was even a seat left. At least she got a third of a row to herself and didn't have to sit next to her annoying step siblings.

They stopped at a gas station so they could get snacks and her dad was gonna fill up the gas tank. Gabby was trying to get over all the luggage and was close to the door when her step sister slammed the door in her face and even noticed her. As she was picking out her snacks she had to run out of the store because her dad almost drove off without her. When she got in the car her dad was trying to apologize to her but she just wasn't having it and she already knew that something was gonna end up bad on the trip. She was alright with that as long as it didn't happen to her.

Gabby woke and remembered the view. They were at the beach house now and no one even bothered to wake her up. She yawned and opened the door to the car and grabbed her bags. She walked up to her room and started to unpack when she realized that half of her clothes were gone. It had to be her step sister. She planned that when her step sister fell asleep she would just go take them back. She got ready to go to the beach.

They all got to the beach and stayed there for a couple of hours. They took some pictures of the sun set and went surfing. They were actually kind of bonding for once. Gabby through a frisbee to her aussie. Her dad then yelled that they were getting ready to leave, so they started walking back since the beach house was right there.

After a week they were packing to go back to their home. Gabby thought to herself 'This trip wasn't as bad as I thought it was gonna be,' as she was walking down the stairs. She called out for her dad and then Stacy. And then her step siblings. No one answered her. She saw that everything was neat. Then she looked out the window and saw that their car wasn't in the driveway. She had jinxed herself. She was left in Santa Monica by herself.

Haylee Given

SACS

Mrs. Harbison

Grade 7

Daigle's Nest

It was the Fall of 2017. My family was interested in purchasing a camp by the lake. We visited many different places, but there was only one we really liked. My parents finalized the purchase and the camp was ours. My brother and I were so excited about all of the different adventures we would experience during the summer months. We were so anxious to go swimming, boating, fishing and kayaking.

Our camp is on Cross Lake, Maine. Each year, my family and I move to the camp at the end of May. We live there for the entire summer. My brother and I have a large open room upstairs. We pack all of our things and set up our bedrooms every spring. We have an amazing view of the lake from upstairs and can see across to the other side. It is always nice and cozy. I love hearing the birds and different sounds around us.

My family and I love doing different things by the water. My favorite activities are fishing, kayaking, tubing and waterskiing. When we go out fishing we often catch yellow perch

and catfish. We like to catch and release and watch them rapidly swim away. Kayaking is also a lot of fun. My favorite places to kayak are through the therofares. One thoro fare leads to Mud Lake and the other leads to Square Lake. I love how the therofares have rushing water and slowly bring us through without much paddling. When we change direction, we have to work hard to go against the current. This is sometimes difficult, but still fun. The therofares also have beautiful bald eagles. They swoop above us and travel from tree to tree. I love seeing their nests and babies.

One of my favorite things to do is go boating. My dad always takes us out on the boat and we love watching the sunset each night. The loons always circle around us and their sounds echo across the water. It is so relaxing. My brother and I sometimes go swimming in the middle of the lake. We jump off the end of the boat. On really hot nights, it feels so good to be in the cool water. I also love tubing and waterskiing. When being pulled behind the boat, the sun and water hit my face. We sometimes ride across the lake to pick up friends. They join us on the tube and we have a blast, laughing and jumping the waves. Waterskiing is probably my favorite water sport because you glide across the lake. The water seems to sparkle below you. Once you rise up, the skis glide on the water, splashing up onto you. It's a lot of fun.

Another thing that I really enjoy about staying at camp is biking down the camp roads with my brother. We have many different trails to follow and it is really fun. We sometimes bike down to the country store and buy lunch or a snack. Sometimes our parents join us and we go for a long ride. It is thrilling to go fast down the road and feel the breeze on our faces. We sometimes ride to other camp roads and look at the different camps. We also enjoy riding the 4-wheeler trails, where we sometimes see small animals. Rabbits often cross in front of us, while we ride down the trails.

Another wonderful part about being on Cross Lake is to see the beautiful animals that surround us. We often see bald eagles, mallard ducks, rabbits, moose and many different types of fish. I love walking through the shallow water to find different creatures. I wear my goggles to find fish and crayfish. There are usually a lot of crayfish hiding under rocks. Our black lab Sadie, especially enjoys all of these animals. She loves chasing the ducks in the water. She has so much fun running on our dock and splashing into the lake. She also chases the rabbits across the yard and barks at all of the chipmunks. We also see many of these animals on our boat rides. Sadie often joins us for boat rides and loves to swim in the water. She likes the cool wind on her face and her big ears blow in the wind. She always curls up on the boat seat with us and naps in the warm sun. She barks at all the seagulls and loons, but they really aren't scared of her. It is really fun to see.

On cool summer nights, we often make a campfire and roast marshmallows. One of my favorite nights of the summer is the 4th of July. The firework shows around the lake are amazing. We float in the middle of the lake from our boat and watch the beautiful colors explode in the sky. My dad plays music and we watch the show. Many camp owners compete to have the best and biggest fireworks display. It is so cool when they go off at the same time from different places. My dad sometimes does fireworks as well. He sets them up on the dock and we watch from the campfire. We usually have relatives over to celebrate the 4th of July, with a big BBQ and picnic. I look forward to this celebration every summer.

Each summer at camp has created many wonderful memories. I love my time there with my family and friends. There are so many things that I love to do in the water. We named our camp by the lake, Daigle's Nest and it will always be a special place to me.

My Big Catch

One day my dad told me about a sea monster called the Pohenegamook. The Pohenegamook has been said to roam the water of Beau Lake for years. My dad said he was fishing for muskie one day and caught the Pohenegamook! He said that he almost fell out of the boat and into the water, but he didn't! Instead, his fishing pole snapped in half. He saw the beast jump out of the water, and it looked back at him. Dad said it was 90 feet long and 10 feet wide!

The first time my dad told me that story, my eyes almost popped out of my head! After hearing my dad's story again and again over time, I started to think the Pohenegamook wasn't real. One day my dad was going fishing. I said to him, "I want to go with you." Dad said, "Okay." We packed three fishing poles (one for just in case), fishing lures, food and water, and a camera. We packed everything into the truck and left home, waving goodbye to mom. The boat was on a trailer being hauled by the truck. We were going to Beau Lake. Halfway there, there was road construction going on, so we had to sit and wait in traffic. We waited for 30 minutes and then finally got out of the traffic. The rest of the way there we sang songs on the radio.

We finally got to camp on Beau Lake! The camp is huge, almost like a house! We unpacked everything from the truck and went inside the camp. After we were done unpacking we went to go see the water. It was glistening in the sunset, and it was crystal clear. It was getting dark though, so we ate supper and went to bed.

In the morning, we ate eggs, bacon, and toast for breakfast and then went down to the water. We put our life jackets on and got into the boat. Dad started the motor and then we were off onto the lake. Our camp is actually on a river, but the river connects to the lake. We went around a corner and we were on Beau Lake! We glided straight to the middle of the lake. We put down the rock anchor, turned off the motor, and we cast our lines out. We waited a bit. As I sat and waited, I was excited to maybe see the Pohenegamook, but I was also nervous because if it was real, I didn't want to get eaten by it.

After two hours of waiting and no bites on the fishing line, we took out our lunch. We ate lunch and talked about different types of fish. It was such a nice day to be out on the lake. Soon it had been three hours on the lake. We had no fish biting our lines, so we decided to pack up for the day, but just then the end of my pole bent down and the line started zipping! What if I had the Pohenegamook? I grabbed my pole and started reeling. It was like I was pulling a slimy elephant out of the water! I pulled, and the fish pulled. I reeled for so long that my arms got tired, but then I finally got it close enough to the boat that my dad could scoop it up with the net. It wasn't a Pohenegamook! It was just a nine foot long and one foot wide muskie! My catch was pretty big, but it was not the Pohenegamook sea monster! We took pictures of it, and I felt thrilled! I let the muskie go back into the water. That was a big catch!

My Favorite Cuz

My family, yeah, I love them, but my favorite cousin, no one compares to her. We are weird together, we laugh together, we put makeup on her brother, but our age gap doesn't change a thing at all. She might be two years older, but it doesn't change how close we are, ever since we were younger. One time over the summer, she and I, and our siblings, were playing chicken. My cousin anwon, of course. When we dance in the rain and thunder, we are not like everyone else at all; we are different. When we pulled donuts on the Go Cart in my yard, that was so much fun. When we laid down in our grandparent's bed because we didn't like people. She will always be my best best friend. Even though we are cousins, no one can replace her. Even if we just lay on the ground at her brother's soccer game and roll around and end up hitting each other. Sprinting to the cabinet to get food together. She will always have a special place in my heart no matter what. We share the same music taste and we both love food!! We had matching ankle bracelets, but she had to take hers off, sadly, after six months. She always takes my side and I take hers. It doesn't matter the situation, I have her and she has me. I don't think any other cousins have the same bond we have. When we were camping and it was dark out, we would go to the playground there. We lived in the pool, and we made friends we would never see again.

We were inseparable and we still are to this day. We sing random songs like "I'm a Barbie Girl." Our random no effort kicks we do to each other; we stare at each other; we just have so many memories together now that I can't keep count. When we were younger, we would run and hug each other. We still do; some habits don't die, I guess. One time, she came over and all we did was laugh at Memere the whole time. She and I did this give away thing and got what we wanted. One time, not long ago, we stood still and said: "If we don't move, they cannot see us." It was fun until we fell. We were talking weird things about *Dora the Explorer* until we fell asleep. We laughed so hard that night. We just have too much fun together.

Bella Mailman

Mill Pond School

Ms. Saucier Grade 4

Life Changing Purchase

It started as a regular Sunday morning in my neighborhood until about eleven o'clock. Then my life changed forever.

"WOAH!" I exclaimed as my Uncle Bub pulled his little truck and trailer up on the road in front of our little house. We were going to use the John Deere tractor this winter to snowblow our yard since all we had was a little Craftsman walk-behind snowblower. He was going to let us borrow his tractor for the winter because he had two.

“This is going to be awesome!” I told my stepfather Garret as we walked down the driveway. We chatted for a while after Uncle Bub unloaded the pristine 18-year-old tractor.

“This is the PTO switch and this is the choke,” he mentioned showing us how to work the tractor.

After my uncle left, I of course had to wash it to get it ready for the first snowstorm

About two weeks later it snowed, and it snowed a lot, about a foot of wet, packy snow. So later that day I tried it out, and it was doing pretty well until I got it stuck. We hadn’t got the tire chains yet to put them on. After about five minutes of shoveling and driving back and forth, we freed it up. By the time I was done, the yard was looking great and I was thrilled!

A few weeks later, my uncle came back over and had the tire chains, so he put them on and it was a beast! I never got stuck again except that one time.

On March 29, 2021 my uncle came back over to our house to seal the deal. I bought the mower for 800 dollars with the snowblower and deck. That mower would be the key to making all kinds of money that summer! It was a dream!

Not a month later, I had just gotten home from school and it had snowed again so I went out and fired up the mower. I was getting ready to go down in between some trees that we had that didn't get plowed last time it snowed. The deep heavy snow went over the snow blower and buried it. That little 18 horsepower briggs and stratton motor didn’t have the strength to pull it out so I was spinning. I needed some weight on the back end of the mower but I had no way to do that so I got an old wood sign out of the garbage barrel to put under the loaded tires and a shovel to shovel out the front of the mower. My mom had since come outside to see what I was doing, so she helped me. Garret was not home to help us so we had to do it ourselves. My dad happened to be driving by in his loader that he used to plow the road for the town. He stopped and gave us just the strength we needed to get the tractor out of the snowbank.

Today, I spent a lot of my time mowing lawns and using my new mower and a little dump cart to haul my push mower and my weed whacker to and from the lawns. This is how my life changed forever.

Jacob London

Mill Pond Middle School

Mrs. Harris

Grade 7

Scary Times in the Eyes of Hayloe

“Hayloe, you’ve got to calm down!” said my father dramatically, picking me up off the office floor. That, ladies and gentlemen, was one of the worst and best days of my life. It was the middle of October 2017, and my life was changing drastically. My younger sister was going to live with her father and my father had come down for a visit. That visit turned into a stressful nightmare. My father had come down to Tennessee because while I was living with my mother, he had found out some things that no father wants to find out. Life with my mother and my stepfather was hard. When my stepfather came into our lives he had gotten my mother into hard drugs and gang violence. That really reflected on me and my sister, and I was the “caretaker” of the family. That put a lot of stress on me and caused me to have anxiety at a young age. But

while I was taking care of everyone else, no one was taking care of me so I had to take care of myself on top of everyone else. This caused me to have depression and negative thoughts.

One day I had received a call from my father that I would later find out would change my life right around. He called me around the same time he did everyday right after his work shift, and I had told him, "Mom has a coffee pot in her room." He found that very suspicious and concerning and finally had enough of my mother's behavior. At this point, my sister was already taken away from my mother and sent to live with her father.

School the next day was so long that it seemed like I was this depressed zombie walking around for hours. Finally, recess had come and my anxiety had kicked in higher than it ever had before. I had a feeling my father was going to get my mother in trouble. This was the scariest thing ever. I started having anxiety so overwhelming I felt nauseous and thoughts of harming myself because I couldn't take the thought of getting my mother in trouble. I couldn't take it anymore, and I started shaking. I couldn't control the thoughts of me hurting myself because I had betrayed my mother. So, I went to tell my best friend Isabelle. I told her everything, the abuse, the drug use, and the neglect. I told her my father was finally coming down to save me from everything, but I couldn't take the feelings I had of betraying my mother.

I think by telling Isabelle all this information, it frightened her enough to the point where she didn't know what to do. But, at the time, I didn't care if she told anyone; I had finally let out everything I've wanted to, without getting screamed at. I felt so good I started to cry, crying so much my face felt like it had been under water. But that shortly ended when I looked over and my best friend had vanished. My heart dropped, and I was flung back to reality. Then, when the teacher came over to me and escorted me inside to the guidance office, I knew I had messed up. I sat in that spinning office chair, slouched over with my anxiety increasing. I couldn't talk, I couldn't move, all I could do was cry and cry til I ran out of tears. Then the guidance counselor with the soft voice and wide smile looked at me and asked me to tell her everything I had told Isabelle. After about 30 minutes of crying and thinking I was in trouble, I had finally calmed down enough to once again explain everything going on at home and that I was having thoughts of harming myself because I felt as if I had betrayed my mom. I could tell she was just as concerned as Isabelle and she told me she had to call my father, then gave me a cookie and an orange juice for a snack.

I could hear my father's concern over the phone when the guidance counselor was speaking with him, and at the time, I felt as if he was mad at me. He and his friend Amber got all the way down to where I was sitting faster than lightning strikes a telephone pole. He barged in the door of the guidance office and just looked at me with worry and love. I just fell to the floor, crying waterfalls and begging him not to be mad at me. I couldn't even explain what I was feeling at that moment, but I knew I wasn't okay. That's when my father slowly picked me up and said, "Hayloe, you have to calm down." The soft tone in his voice told me he wasn't mad at me, but worried for me. As soon as the tears were gone, the guidance counselor told me to step out of the room because she had to talk to my father. Me being nosey, I put my little ear to the crack of the door and heard them discussing the words "hospital" and "therapy". I was so confused, mostly because my mother told me therapy was for crazy people. "I'm not crazy!" I say to myself. When I heard my dad's footsteps towards the door and the "Hope she gets better", I quickly stepped away from the door and pretended I didn't hear a thing.

After we left the school, it was a silent ride to the hospital. I struggled to get out of the car, my legs felt frozen. My dad just knelt down in front of me, tears rolling down his face and just apologized for everything even though it wasn't his fault. I just wanted to get whatever was

going to happen done and over with. We walked into the emergency room and he explained to the nurse with tattoos and colored hair what was going on. I was admitted immediately to a room without a door and a window to another room with a camera. After five long hours of waiting, I finally talked to a therapist and a doctor, and they told me it would be in my best interest to go to a hospital for people struggling with the same thoughts as me. I got scared again and my anxiety started to rise, but my father agreed that I needed to go to get better, so I had no say in that decision. I was in the emergency room for a week, and in that week, I only saw my mother once. I felt like she hated me, and after a while I didn't care if she did or not. Then, the day finally came to me waking up to a nurse in my face with ambulance drivers in the room. It was finally time to go. My father went to walk me out, and I just hung onto him like a sloth attached to a tree and cried and cried. He told me he would visit me every day and he did! I finally got the help I needed and today I'm happy to say I'm glad I told Isabelle.

Hayloe Sherman

Hodgdon Middle/High School

Mrs. Harris

Grade 8

The Frightful Story of Harley

"AHHHHHHHHHHHHH!" my mom screamed at the top of her lungs. Something was wrong, I don't think I've ever run faster in my life. I finally reached the raggedy chipped door that was about to fall off of the hinges. I looked over to my mother to see her curled up in a ball, in what looked like some type of liquid, and that's when I knew her water had broken. I quickly rushed to the bathroom and grabbed three towels, and tucked them over the wet sheet that she was on and asked what I could do to help. That's when my father came rushing in and helped her off the bed. The moment was here, but could it really be? Her due date wasn't for another month, I didn't even know it was possible to have a baby that early from your due date, but I had to face the reality. The baby was coming.

Dad barked a couple orders at me while he rushed Mom to the bathroom while her water was still breaking. I couldn't really understand anything. It was all a blur, but the only thing I could think to do was call my grandmother. As soon as she picked up, I quickly yelled into the phone, "The baby's coming now, we need you, quickly!" After she said she was on the way and hung up the phone, I collected myself and started to do what my father had previously asked me to do. Take the sheets off of Mom's bed and put them in the washer, get Mom some clean clothes together for the aftermath of the hospital, and to put the dogs in my room so they wouldn't get in the way of Dad getting Mom from the toilet to the door.

Through all of this, I had not realized that I still had a friend over, Alyssa, my neighbor. We had been in my room listening to music and taking pictures before this all happened. I took a minute and noticed she had been behind me helping me do everything my dad had asked me to do. She stripped the pillow cases while I stripped the sheets, and she got Mom a shirt out of my dresser for me because we share clothes, while I went through the baskets to get her pants, underwear, and socks. She also stayed in my room to keep the dogs calm and distracted while I accompanied my father and helped get Mom down the crooked, broken stairs that are about to

fall off one of these days. We finally got Mom safely to the bottom of the stairs and the backseat door was already open for her. My father and I lifted her up into the back seat and she slowly layed down. Dad hopped in the front seat, and had his hand in the back for Mom to squeeze. Before they pulled away, Dad told me to stay downstairs with Alyssa while Damien, my brother stayed upstairs with the dogs until we heard from him again. I softly nodded my head and they quickly drove off into the dark night.

I followed my dad's wishes and stayed downstairs at Alyssa's while I looked at my phone waiting for any sign of communication from him. I think Alyssa was starting to notice I was worried because she was trying to make me feel better. We made popcorn and started watching YouTube. She had put on Shane Dawson for us because we always watch his conspiracy theories, even if we'd already watched them 100 times.

A couple hours went by, and my phone went off. It was a message from my grandfather's phone telling me to go upstairs. I told Alyssa I had to go then I zipped up the stairs like I was a roadrunner. I walked through the door and the look on my father's face instantly wanted to make me break down, I knew something was wrong. I kept a serious face and asked softly, "What happened?"

He looked at the phone then at the floor then to me and my brother. He tried keeping a serious face and voice but soon failed after he was almost in tears, "Your sister was born at 10:01 pm. The doctors told us that she was born with a hernia in the middle of her chest, and she's being taken by an ambulance in an incubator. Your mother is ok, just very upset. I am going to go with Papa and follow them down to the hospital," he said. He was full out crying by the time he finished his statement, as well as me and my brother. Dad had picked up the pile of clothes we had out for Mom and gave us both bear hugs stating it was going to be alright, but in my mind I was saying yeah right. I didn't see either of them again that night, I had stayed the night with Alyssa. It was almost impossible trying to sleep with the thought of never being able to see my sister.

Ding! My phone buzzed, waking me up the next morning. As I unlocked it with my fingerprint, it was from my dad, saying he was on the way home with my mom. Even though it doesn't sound that scary, it was one of the scariest experiences of my life. We had to wait 5-6 days to bring my new sister home because her heart needed to be monitored. My sister is five months old now and she's the best thing that's ever happened to me. My mom named her Harley, and she's so smart. I've learned from this experience that family truly is everything, and I always need to hold my loved ones close to my heart.

Samantha Reeves

Mill Pond Middle/High School

Mrs. Harris Grade 8

Animal Tales

Soldier Dog

Would you risk your life for someone you love? Well, here's a story about a courageous dog who did just that.

In 1985, my great-uncle, Chuck, retired from the army as a first class sergeant. At the military base where he was stationed, many guard dogs had been professionally trained by the US Army. One dog, specifically, was named Soldier. This is the dog that Uncle Chuck fed and protected. There is no doubt that they were best friends.

On the day that Uncle Chuck retired, one of the sergeants who had been stationed there with him gave him a going away gift. They knew that Uncle Chuck loved Soldier very much, so they decided to send Soldier home with him, since Soldier was retiring too.

When Uncle Cuck returned to my great-grandmother Bonnie's house, Soldier quickly began to get used to the place and attached himself to everyone there. He always wanted to protect them from people who walked by the house. Although they didn't mean any harm, Soldier wasn't going to take the chance. He loved them too much.

One day, my dad and a few of his close cousins were playing in the sandbox outside. Soldier was with them. As several people walked by, Soldier snarled and growled at them—only because he thought they were going to hurt the boys. When Grammy Bonnie walked out to the sandbox to bring drinks to the kids, she startled him. Soldier turned around really fast and bit Grammy Bonnie on the leg.

Everyone just stood there, shocked by what had just happened. When Uncle Chuck heard the kids yell at Soldier. He quickly stopped what he was doing and ran outside. When he got there, he yelled at Soldier. He was very upset and disappointed in him. He made Soldier sleep in the doghouse for several days. Grammy Bonnie and the boys disagreed with this. In fact, Grammy Bonnie said, "No, Chuck. He was just doing his job!"

After a few days, Uncle Chuck noticed that Soldier had stopped eating. Of course, Uncle Chuck had no idea what was wrong. Soldier didn't appear to be sick, and Uncle Chuck was giving him the same food he always had. So, what could have been the reason for this?

A little while later, Uncle Chuck found Soldier dead in his doghouse. He was gone—just like that. It was too soon for this to happen. Uncle Chuck needed answers, so he went to have Soldier's body examined. After the examination, the veterinarian said, "There is no possible reason why he would just stop eating and go like that—other than heart failure."

Suddenly, Uncle Chuck realized that Soldier must have died of a broken heart. Soldier must have been crushed after being scolded by his master, the person who loved him the most—and the person who *he* loved the most. Soldier was disappointed in himself. Uncle Chuck still feels guilty about what happened to this day...Rest in peace, Soldier. We miss you!

Autumn Unterreiner

Katahdin Middle School

Miss Bouchard Grade 6

The Eagle and the Swallow

Usually, people wouldn't think that an Eagle and a Swallow would be best friends and not enemies. This is my story on how the Eagle and the Swallow became friends.

One day while the eagle was perched on her dead tree branch she heard a noise behind her. There was a Swallow that had been shot and landed in her nest. Usually, the eagle would be appreciative and eat the bird, but that's not what she did. Instead, the Eagle retracted her claws and hesitated. She shook her head and stretched her tarsus on her foot.

This swallow looked different. It was blue and brown with a rust-colored chest and belly. "Is this a swallow?", the Eagle wondered quietly. She only knew about Tree swallows. She looked around and saw that she was close to a barn. She realized then that it was a barn swallow. She had never seen a barn swallow. The swallow twitched and hopped around. The eagle jumped.

"Oh, my! You ought to scare the feathers off of me to make yourself joyful!" The Eagle said, alarmed.

"You best get up and away until you don't see another day!"

"Sorry, sorry, my fault," the Swallow answered, jumping up fast. "Ouch!"

"What's wrong this time, Swallow?"

"I can't flap my wings, they're as stiff as a boulder right now!"

"Alright, you have to trust me for this."

The eagle started to flap her wings and then she bolted off into the higher part of the sky where the Swallow could not see. The Swallow was frightened and ducked her head. As soon as she looked up she felt a gust of wind and closed her eyes again. Next thing she knew she was at the barn with her eggs and wooden roof. That wasn't the last time she saw the Eagle though. The eagle, like always, was perched on the tree branch, but this time she wasn't alone. She was surrounded by baby Eagles also known as Eaglets. There were three eaglets. The Eagle looked down to see that the Swallow was surrounded by fledglings. About four or five.

Ashlyn Bouchard

Van Buren District School

Mrs. Hartvigsen

Grade 7

The Snake

One day I was at the stream with my friend Hunter. We were looking for crawdads and salamanders. We didn't see any, so we went up the hill to the other part of the stream to look. Suddenly, I saw a snake sun basking on the rocks. It was brown and black and yellow, with a little bit of white. My fear of snakes would be the same kind of fear as being buried alive!^[L]_[SEP] I, Devin, screamed for dear life. I bet people in China heard me. I couldn't run up the hill fast enough and I was grabbing rocks and grass. My sandal slipped off my foot and slid back down right next to the snake. My friend Hunter kept yelling, "What? What is it?" I told him and he said, "I'm not dealing with this! I'm going home!" So he left me!

I was crying so much, and then it started to rain. I got to the side of the road in the grass and sat down...criss cross applesauce. I was feeling mad, sad and scared.

Just then, two people who live in my neighborhood drove by and stopped. They asked me what was wrong and if I was Okay. I said, "My sandal is down there by a snake. I'm so scared! I'm not going back down there to go get it. Waa!"

They stopped and got out of the car. They went down there by the snake and got my sandal back. They said, "Here you go. Do you want a ride home?" I said, "No, but thanks for getting my sandal back. See you later, I guess. Thank you for your help."

When I got back home, I told Hunter's brother, Eldon, what had happened. He laughed and said, "oh, that's what that girlie scream was!"

Devin Martin

Limestone Community School

Michelle Branscom Grade 4

Gypsy and The Spider

I was five years old at the time. I lived in this trailer and big woodsman spiders were in the area. My cat Gypsy would usually get rid of the spiders. I did know one thing for sure and that was the spiders would probably crawl on me when I sleep. My mom told me a story when I was eight that she was in the shower and a woodsman spider was on her back. I would occasionally see them in the trailer. The thought of it now just freaks me out.

When I was little, I liked to be wherever my Mom was. I remember one day walking into the laundry room, while she was doing laundry. When I was there I felt thirsty and so I went to get a drink. As I was about to walk out I looked down to find this huge spider just half way through the doorway.

The spider wasn't moving at all. I quickly told my mom and then I sat on a stool that was tall. I was convinced the spider wasn't going to get me. My mom said "stay here I'm going to get a broom."

My Mom jumped over the spider and ran to get the broom. I was frozen still, I was so scared. The spider started to slowly crawl towards me. It was inches away from me. I was about to scream at the top of my lungs. Then, I saw my cat Gypsy. She crouched down and pounced on

the spider. The spider didn't seem to care and Gypsy just WALKED away to leave me for the spider. How nice of her to do that!

In a blink of an eye my mom smashed the spider with a metal pole. Then my mom got the broom and cleaned the spider up, and I got my drink. We were both relieved the spider was GONE.

Two years later we moved out of that place and into a new house. There were too many woodsman spiders at the old place. I'm glad I'm not there any more!!!

Dorian Auger

Limestone Community School

Mrs. Dillon

Grade 7

Black Beauty

She was beautiful, the black coat and black mane. She was strong, a good runner for our team. I would watch her gallop along, hair flying and yet I have no name for her. I think and think! My head is about to explode! Finally a name, Black Beauty. She will win every race. She will be hard to tame as well. As I sit with her, I admire her beauty. I think of how beautiful she would be on that race course, and how hard it would be to get her there. I watch my father's assistants try to ride her but fail numerous times. Sometimes, I'll go over the fence around her pen and feed her apples. I groom her almost every day trying to keep her coat soft and clean. What I wonder is will I ever get to ride her or is it destiny for me to tame her?

We tried our best to get her to settle down, but she wouldn't. She jumped, kicked, and ran. We couldn't even get the saddle off the fence! She started with her back legs then she jumped to her front. Back and forth - back, front, back, front until she stopped. My friend, Alex the stable boy, was stopped dead by the stare of Black Beauty. Alex had brown hair, tan skin and a worn out hat. Black Beauty dragged her front, right hoof on the ground blowing dust everywhere. She charged, making Alex jump to the side to dodge her attack. Like a bullfighter in a ring with one overpowered bull! We all laughed, Alex laughed too, but the Black Beauty wasn't done just yet. Alex ran around the tree in the middle of her stable over and over trying to stay away from Black Beauty's wrath, but Black Beauty got to him. She picked him up then made him fall on his head and after, apples fell! I laughed so much I was afraid my lungs were going to burst! What I am wondering now is, will we ever be able to get a saddle on her?

All I did was laugh while Alex was getting bonked in the head with apples. Finally, Alex was buried. As I helped him out, he said, "I think she wants revenge from brushing out a knot in her mane yesterday." She went crazy because of it. I could tell because of the way she went all out on Alex. It finally came to night and the stars were bright and of course, white. Black Beauty was somewhere in her pen. It was pitch black out, so I couldn't see her. I get into bed. It felt like days, but it was only about four hours. I was so excited to see Black Beauty that I barely got any sleep. I step out into the sunlights, UGH, I feel like a vampire suffering from the light of the sun. Black Beauty looks like she's going to melt. It seems right black attracts sunlight. I slowly

approach her. She looks beat, I look around for some shade. Alex doesn't start work for an hour and I don't think beauty can last that long without getting the least bit of shade. A gust of wind blows my hair up hers too. That might cool her down. I sit next to her, drawing the landscape surrounding her pen. She slowly drifts away as I pet her slowly, time after time.

Kara Sizemore

Presque Isle Middle School

Mrs. Bragg

Grade 6

Thankful

I am most thankful for my hedgehog named Nugget. Nugget is my favorite pet because she is cute and she is my best friend. She makes me laugh because she attacks my dad. She steals stuff that is shiny too! I like to dress her up in costumes. Last year, I got her a reindeer costume for Christmas. I also got her a witch costume for Halloween. I am most thankful for her because she is cute and cuddly.

Braelynn Luciano

Zippel Elementary

Mrs. Bua

Grade 5

A Dragwolf

A dragwolf is a mythical creature from 2,000 years ago. It was said to have come every 5 years for its food. It is big, hairy, and scary with fangs. It has pretty cool markings and wings. It is extinct because it was hunted for years. I love this mammal!

Eliana Ramsey

Zippel Elementary

Ms. Watson

Grade 4

A Wild Horse and a Wild Adventure!

"No, Flynn! No, you're supposed to... no..." my voice faltered as I burst into laughter. My horse, Flynn, was tickling me as he tried to grab a treat. I was trying to teach him to nod his head yes, but his determination to get the treat out of my hand without doing the work was ruining my whole plan.

“Okay, look. You trying to get the treat from me without actually doing the trick is more work than the trick itself!” I laughed.

“You havin’ trouble with your horse?” My friend Sadie asked.

“Uh, kinda. He’s not being bad, just trying to get some treats,” I responded.

“You can hand feed him now? I thought you had to give him treats in a feed pan.”

“We did, but that was because as the dominant horse, he thought he was stealing my food. We don’t have to anymore because he isn’t food aggressive.

“That’s cool,” Sadie said over her shoulder as she grabbed her horse, Maverick, and snapped a halter on him. “Do you want to come with me and Mav for a walk in the meadow? Ms. Sonja said that if we can mount them without help, we can ride them.”

Maverick and I, I silently corrected, then grabbed Flynn’s halter and said, “Sure. Let me get his halter on and I’ll be right there. Are Sam and Isabella gonna be there?”

“Um, yeah, I think so,” Sadie said after hesitating. “Are they going to be a problem?”

“No, no. Be right over!” I shouted as Sadie led Maverick out of the barn. I walked in the stall, and Flynn came right over. “Halter,” I said, and Flynn put his head down so I could reach over his 15.3 hand self. 15.3 was pretty common for a horse, but what if Flynn was even taller? Whew, mounting him would be an adventure. Flynn nickered, and it snapped me out of my daydream. I snapped the leadrope on his halter, snatched up a helmet, and led Flynn out of the barn. I heard the sound of excited screams and laughing across the pasture and was anxious to get to the meadow. I snapped on my helmet and tied Flynn’s leadrope to both sides of his halter to act like reins.

I walked Flynn over to the meadow and used the fence of the far pasture to get on him. Once I got settled, I leaned over and whispered in Flynn’s ear.

“Ready for this, buddy?” I said. I clicked my tongue and Flynn started cantering, both of us excited for a friendly ride in the meadow. I could see the figures of three horses with riders through the tall grass, and I automatically knew who they were. The Saddle Club: four girls and four horses. Sadie and Maverick, Sam and Gypsie (Sam is actually a nickname; her real name is Samantha), and of course, my best friend and her horse, Isabella and Copper.

We rode for hours, laughing at each other falling off and getting back up, smiling at the sound of our horses nickering to each other. Flynn had walked up the hill in the meadow and was racing down it to catch up to the other horses. That’s when it all went wrong.

A wolf walked out of the forest. All the horses spooked, but as the three others and their horses bolted for the barn, Flynn bolted into the forest, and also in the opposite direction of the others. The wolf, of course knowing that a single animal is easier to take down than a whole group, chased after Flynn and I. Flynn galloped, and I almost fell off because I had never galloped before. And bareback, it’s even harder to balance.

“Flynn, stop! Ho, ho! Stop! Whoa,” I screamed as Flynn bolted. He rushed into the forest. I lost track of time, my focus on staying up on my horse rather than keeping track of time. We had ridden in the meadow for hours, yes, but it was only about lunchtime when the wolf had spooked us. When Flynn finally calmed down, the sun was starting to set. I hopped off him and looked for a suitable area to make a shelter. Some fallen leaves on a tilted rock would have to do. I decided that right now it was horses before people. We were in a forest, so Flynn had plenty to eat. I found a piece of bark, big enough to hold plenty of water but small enough to be carried by a 13-year old like me. I went to get water, and when I came back it was dark. Flynn, being a dark brown and black horse, was hard to find in the dark forest. *Where is my horse?* I was worried. But as I turned in one direction I saw his bright white star on his forehead, and headed over to

give him the water. I was hungry, but tired. I didn't know what food to eat because I knew nothing about surviving in the wild. *I can eat grass. I do it anyways. But not now...* I thought as I drifted off to sleep.

The whinnying of my horse and the tweeting of birds woke me up in the morning. Tired and sore, I set out to get water. But the sound of neighing, horse hooves clapping, and shouting stopped me. "Sorry buddy," I said to Flynn as I interrupted his eating and hopped on. We have to go investigate. I cantered him out of the forest into the sunlight, and it took a while for my eyes to adjust. It was still early morning, so the sun was still in the east. That was the sound the voices were coming from. I couldn't make out what they were saying, so I told Flynn to walk on to see what was up.

I just kept going towards the sun, and towards the sound of the voices. After about an hour the voices became louder, and I could hear what sounded like two names being said. Flynn was hot, so we trotted over to a nearby stream to take a rest. But I didn't just stop there, I got right back on Flynn after he had taken a drink. The voices were really loud now. I could hear what they were saying: "Abby? Abby? Flynn? Is anyone there? Abby?"

It wasn't just any voices either. It was Sam! My heart filled with hope as I trotted Flynn over to the source of the sound. There they were: six horses and six riders. Ms. Sonja, the owner, on her horse Saxon; Ari, Ms. Sonja's helper, on her horse Anslo; Sam on her favorite horse Gypsy; Sadie on Maverick, and Isabella on Copper.

"Abby! We are so glad to see you!" Sam shouted.

"I was only gone a day," I laughed.

"The longest day ever!" Ari and Sadie chimed.

"Let's get you home. Your parents are worried sick," Ms. Sonja said.

It turns out that Flynn had just gone in a big circle. We were only a mile away from the barn, just in a place that I hadn't recognized. I saw the barn come into sight after about a half-hour of riding. We cantered to the barn, and my parents jumped out of the car and hugged me, my brother not far behind. All was well once again.

Abigail Siddiqui

Easton Jr. Sr. High School

Mrs. Hill

Grade 8

The Dogs' Bad Day

This story starts about half a year ago. I have two dogs. One is a Boxer Doberman named Tyson. The other one is a pit bull named Lucy. It was mud season, so we left the dogs outside quite a bit. Every night, though, we let them back inside since Tyson would keep us up all night because he is afraid of the dark. That is how mud season usually goes for my family.

One morning, my brother and I were running late for school, so we let the dogs outside before we left so they could do their business. We didn't hook them up this time because we thought they were just going to do their business and come and wait at the door. But of course,

that did not happen. They ran away! Carter and I kept yelling for them, and they didn't come. We knew they smelled an animal near the house and went after it. We were about five to ten minutes late for school already. We just kept on yelling and hoping they would come back home soon.

After a few more calls, Tyson finally came back. We were so excited and happy he was finally back. Then, we looked at his mouth. It had porcupine quills all around his face. He has had a few porcupine experiences, so this one wasn't the worst one he has been in. After another minute, Lucy came back. I couldn't even recognize her. She looked like a porcupine. She has never been in a porcupine accident. It looked like she rolled on the porcupine. When we looked in her mouth, they were all through her mouth and all in her throat. There was blood everywhere. We couldn't do anything. We called our stepfather, Brad, and we hooked the dogs up and went to school while he came and got the dogs.

Brad finally got to the house and saw the dogs. He instantly went and unhooked the dogs, and he then got them up on the back of the pickup. As he got to Ashland, people who were walking started to stare at his pickup. He just kept driving, but when he got to Mapleton, he saw that people were staring at his pickup again. Then at the corner of his eye, he saw that Tyson was at the edge of the pickup with his head sticking out. Then, he saw Lucy with her head sticking out. Then, he saw the people laughing. He now knew why they were staring and laughing at him. It was because the people thought he was bringing his dog to the vet and brought the porcupine, too. Brad started to laugh and laugh.

Brad kept on driving, and he finally got to the vet. They instantly took them in. It took forever. The veterinarian had to put both of them under so they could take them all out. When the dogs came out, they couldn't even walk. They kept falling over and started to sleep. Brad had to pick up Lucy and bring her to the pickup. Tyson was awake enough to walk a little ways. This time, they got to be in the back seat of the pickup. The whole way they fast asleep. A few times, though, Lucy kept having bad dreams. She kept whining really hard. When she does this, I think she is dreaming of her other owners. Her other owners treated her badly, so every time she did this, Brad started to pet her and make sure she was okay.

When they all got back, we got them food. We gave them both their medicine. When they were both done eating, Tyson was standing up, and he was swaying side to side. He almost fell over, so we knew it was time to bring them inside. When we brought them in, they went straight to their bed and went to sleep. After a few weeks, they both got better.

When Lucy got better, we still kept finding quills. The quills were in her skin, so the veterinarians couldn't find them. We had to take them out ourselves. That was okay, though; Brad had to take them out of Tyson a long time ago, so he took them out every time he found one. Then, after a long while, we didn't find any more quills. We were so happy.

Luckily, Lucy and Tyson have never come across another porcupine again.

Millie Craig

Ashland District School

Mrs. Merrill

Grade 6

Shadow Fang

“Ahh!” Axel whelped in pain. She, for one thing, had puppies without anyone knowing and another was ripped up to shreds by Spirit, the chief wolf.

“Why do you always have to be *so* hard, Axel?” Spirit coldly growled. He was walking slowly behind Axel. “You always have to....what’s the word....muck things up.” Spirit grabbed her with his razor sharp teeth and threw her to the ground. She was too weak to get up. Spirit walked over to the weak body of what used to be a wolf. Suddenly a little pup came up from behind him and barked the tiniest bark in all wolf history. Spirit looked down at the little pup and smiled. “Now what do we have here?!” He chuckled a little then grabbed the pup by the neck.

“No! Leave him alone!!” Spirit turned his head to face Axel. His eyes showed rage and pain. He was insane. There was a ledge close by where they were. Spirit had the craziest thought. What if something happened to the poor little pup? “W..What are you going to do to him?” Axel slowly got up and groaned in pain.

“Oh nothing much...we’re just going to have a delightful conversation.” He smiled and started to walk to the edge. Axel knew what she had to do to save her son. She ran as quickly as she could toward Spirit. Spirit was only steps away from the edge. She leaped towards Spirit but....she missed him. Spirit had just moved out of the way right before she landed. He saw her lose her balance. Somehow she dug her claws into the ledge. He walked slowly to her and looked into her pale yellow eyes. “Oh it would be such a shame if something happened to....you.” He sank his claws into her paws. She screamed in pain. The last words she heard were, “I’m sorry...” He let go of her. He even made sure she had touched the bottom. He grabbed the pup and walked back to the camp. He went to her little bush and looked at five other pups. He looked so nice and kind in their eyes. He looked at them. All white, some with black markings with the same pale yellow eyes. But one was sleeping and looked different than the rest. She was all black with white paws. He watched her intently. She quietly woke up and opened her eyes. He went from a face of kindness to terror. Her eyes had no color. They were pure white. She was blind.

He grabbed all the puppies, and one by one, and threw them off the cliff. But when he got to the little black one, he couldn’t. He saw something in her. Bravery. She was brave and almost looked ready to go be with her brothers and mother. He grabbed her and walked back to camp. When he got back he named her Shadow Fang.

Years later, she was about 2 years old (about 14ish years in dog years?). She lived with Spirit and knew everyone in the camp. But she, for some reason, didn’t have any friends. When people saw her they just....looked at her and walked away. Some people looked scared to see her face. She knew she was blind but she could feel their eyes all over her. She could feel their feelings and thoughts. She knew all of her surroundings pretty well, so she didn’t need anyone to guide her around the place. But she didn’t know the people around her. She didn’t even know much about herself. She didn’t know anything about her past or family. She just knew that Spirit was her father and her mother died. She knew nothing.

“Father?” Shadow Fang was using her nose to feel where she was.

“Yes, darling?” Spirit *was* laying down, taking a nap when she interrupted.

“Am....am I different from the other children?” Spirit opened his eyes slightly. He looked up at the bright eyed girl. Her eyes looked like a terrible blizzard.

“Yes. You’re very different from the other kids.” Spirit didn’t feel compassion for her. He just looked into her eyes, even if she couldn’t see him. Shadow Fang frowned a little but

continued to feel around. She suddenly felt something soft. It was fur. But not like bear or fox fur. It was....wolf fur. If her pupils were there, her eyes would show fear.

“Father...” Shadow Fang’s voice trembled a bit when she said it. She smelt the fur again. She had smelt the scent before. She couldn’t think what but she had smelt it before. Then suddenly, a memory played in her mind. She could feel a female wolf caressing her face with her nose. The wolf was...singing. She was singing an old wolf song. Shadow listened to the wolf singing and feeling her warmth. Shadow Fang couldn’t think who she was, but she was lovely. But then, the wolf suddenly...stopped her song. Shadow Fang heard one more thing from the wolf.

“Momma will be right back ok! Remember....Momma loves you!” Shadow could hear the wolf run in fright.

Shadow Fang then came back to the real world when her “father” said, “Yes dear?” She looked back at her so-called “father”. She was fighting back tears but trying to be mad at the sametime. She had figured it out.

“How....could..you” Shadow Fang growled at her Spirit. He looked at the rock where she had found the fur.

“Now I can explain, dear.” Spirit got up from his spot. He slowly backed up from Shadow Fang. He started to run. Shadow could hear him and started to run after him. He ran in zig zags trying to lose her, but she could hear him and followed him to the cliff. He stopped down and just missed the edge. He turned around and saw Shadow, glaring at him. “You wouldn't hurt your own father....would you?”

“Not unless he killed my mother...” Shadow started to walk to him. He backed up as much as he could. Shadow kept walking toward him until she was close to his face. She smiled at him. “I thought you were the perfect father, but I guess not.” She grabbed him by the neck and threw him off. He cried, but she smiled, watching him fall.

Ruth Greene

SACS

Mrs. Harbison

Grade 7

The Missing Piece

“Alright, get on the trailer, you—” There was a word that I could not understand. There were three humans, slapping my backside. I tried to get away from them by rearing up on my hind legs, but the men held their ground. The other horses on the trailer were getting impatient, pawing at the floor. Everything going on made me dizzy. One of the humans brought out a long rope and struck me with it. I had to get away, but the only way to avoid the whip was in the trailer. I had to take that chance. Once I hopped onto the trailer, the beating stopped, but I was squished between all kinds of horses. *What is going on?* I thought.

I rode in the trailer like that for a very long time. It reeked of urine, dung, and fear scent. Looking out the window made me dizzy. My legs ached from standing still for too long. It was like that for a really long time. I watched the sun set in that trailer, and I watched it rise again. I was starving, dehydrated, and absolutely terrified. Then, I heard the trailer door open, and

humans yelling. Many more horses were in sight, eating hay and playing outside. But I watched as all of the horses on the trailer were taken inside by the humans. *What's going on?* I thought. *Will I ever make it to safety?*

When I woke up, I found myself in a noisy barn. I don't remember falling asleep, or much of anything after the trailer stopped for that matter. A donkey brayed somewhere in the barn, chickens clucked, goats bleated, cows mooed, and other horses snuffled and whinnied. How could I have fallen asleep in this awful racket? A human walked around all of the other horses and a couple of donkeys with a small rectangle thing in her hand. It was almost like she was talking to it. Then she came over to me. "And here we have a black and white paint gelding," she said. She lifted my lips, but I stood still. "About nine or ten years old," she rambled on. "He has a cute face on him, a little thin, huh, sweet boy?" She stroked my back and then patted my head. I didn't know many humans who weren't in front of me to steal my food or slap me. As she walked away, they threw a saddle on a horse a couple ties down from me. They unhitched her and walked her out. I soon heard a human, his voice was going so quick, that not even the other humans could understand him. There was one word towards the end that I could understand. "Sold!" He said. The mare came back in and the humans untacked her.

It was my turn. A lot of horses had gone through the tunnel before me and they were all okay, so I figured I should be too. I made my way warily into a huge white room that was extremely bright. I was in a pen with a tall podium in it that a human stood on. Some humans stood in the pen with me and the one on my back, but most of them sat on benches outside the pen, watching. "Here's lot number 513, we've got a black n' white paint geldin'. Let's start at twenty five hundred!" The human on me kicked me hard with sharp spurs and I went forward. "How bout' 24, 24, 24, do I hear a 24?" The human kicked me to go faster and the numbers were getting smaller. "How bout' 18, 18, 18..." The human yanked on my mouth and told me to back up and one in the crowd raised his hand, then another. "Is that a 19, do I hear 19?" The man on the podium said. "HYAP!" Another man in the crowd shouted.

"That's \$1,900 once, twice, sold! Byer ten, he's yours!" The man on my back yanked my head back towards the tunnel and tied me up in my original spot and untacked me. The horses nearby gave me worried looks. No matter where I looked, horses were giving me these stares. Even heard some of them murmuring things like "Did they say buyer ten?" "You can make it last chance sometimes, you know!" I was really confused.

"Hey," I said. "Is something wrong? With me, I mean?" All the horses looked at each other. "Naw," one said. "Nothing's wrong with you." The more these horses talked, the more my mind spun. If nothing was wrong with me, why did they all look like I was missing a nose? "It's just- Buyer ten- rumor has it that he takes horses... To slaughter." I was no longer confused, I was panicked. I was going to die, and there was nothing I could do about it.

"Hurry UP!" The humans shouted. How was a creature this small so strong? They were also persistent, they kept up with the fight for a long time. I eventually gave up, and reluctantly shuffled into the trailer. A human mare hopped into the truck that would haul us- to slaughter. "What is your name?" Someone said from the front of the trailer.

"I-I don't have a name," I said.

"What kind of master doesn't give a name?" The voice said. I looked over the trailer divider to see an extremely thin yearling, slowly lifting up his feet one by one. Why was *he* on the slaughter trailer? He wouldn't give much meat.

We stopped over and over again, letting different horses off. So we weren't all going to slaughter, just me. *But why?* I asked myself. *What's wrong with me?* I was a panicked mess for a very long time.

I was the last horse on the trailer when the brakes screeched and the truck slowed. It would all be over soon. My sore feet, my hunger, my fear; it would all be gone soon. When the woman led me off the trailer, I didn't fight. There was nothing I could do to save myself now. She led me into the barn murmuring something. "That was a long journey, huh, Puzzle?" She led me into a little stall with food and water, and I realized how thirsty I was. There was a horse next to me, too. "Hello," he said. "I'm Sparrow, Jack Sparrow. You're thin, but you're safe now! Those two won't hurt us!" I was confused. If this was a slaughter, then why wouldn't the humans hurt us?

"Really?" I said. "I was told I was on my way to slaughter." Sparrow looked confused. "Well, you must've been mistold because this is no slaughter barn! That human there, she takes care of us, and that one is her friend, she visits on occasion." The visiting one came over to me. "Goodbye, Puzzle! Kend is going to love you!" Wait... was I hearing that right? "Oh, um," Sparrow said. "Forgot to tell you, your name is Puzzle and you are a birthday present for one of the visitors' human foals!" My eyes lit up. I didn't know how I ended up here instead of the slaughterhouse, but I'm glad it happened; a human foal to love me, and an actual *name*? This couldn't get any better!

Ashlyn York

SACS

Mrs. Russell

Grade 8

The Adventures of a Talking Cat and a Talking Dog

One day a family left for school and work. They had a cat and a dog. They said bye to the pets and then they left. Usually, the cat would meow, and the dog would bark. Today when they tried to make their usual noises, a meow or a bark didn't come out. Instead came talking. Both pets were speechless for a few minutes. The dog was the first to speak, "What happened?" he asked "I don't know, but it sure is confusing." the cat replied. The dog agreed with the cat. Then the dog said, "Hey, I just got a wonderful idea. Why don't we leave and go for a walk in the snow-covered woods and then we will be sure to come back before anyone comes home and notices that we are missing." The cat said "I had no idea what you were thinking, but that is a wonderful idea. Now that you mention it, I guess I was kind of thinking the same thing." The pets left and made sure to lock the door behind them so the family had no idea that they were missing from the house. They stood on top of the high snowbank and looked in through the window. Before they left, they had thrown a bunch of their toys around on the floor to make it look like they were still home. When they looked inside, they felt happy and excited to not be in the house anymore. They were ready for some adventure! They looked both ways before crossing the street to get to the woods behind the neighbor's house. They ran across the snow-covered lawn and made it into the woods. Then, the dog realized something. He asked the cat "Did you bring a watch so we know what time it is?" The cat said "Yes. I thought of it just

before we left the house. I grabbed it out of the kitchen. Why?" The dog replied "I was just wondering because we are going to make sure that we are home before anyone else. They come home at around 3:30, so we should probably head back around 3:00." The cat nodded and they walked and talked through the woods. Eventually the dog said "I'm hungry. What about you?" The cat replied "Yeah. Me too. Did you bring food?" The dog said "Yes, I did. Should we stop?" The cat nodded and they sat down and ate their lunch. When they were done eating, they continued their walk through the snow-covered woods. In the late afternoon, the dog said, "What time is it?" The cat looked and said "3:15. We are later than we wanted to be." The dog said "I can see the house through the trees from here. If we run through the trees we can be there before anyone comes home." The cat agreed and they ran really fast through the trees, onto the neighbor's property. They ran to the edge of the lawn, looked both ways before crossing the street, and ran across the street to their driveway. When they got home, they were relieved to see that nobody was home yet. The dog asked "What time is it?" The cat looked and said "3:29. We still have about one minute before anyone comes home." The dog got the key that they had brought with them, unlocked the door, and they went inside the house. They were just in time because as soon as they had closed the door and put the key back where it belonged, they heard the family come home. The cat locked the door while the dog barked. This time no talking came out of the dog when he barked, or the cat when she meowed. They greeted the family like they usually did. After that day, they never talked again unless they were home alone.

Meredith Lahey

Caribou Community School

Mrs. Levasseur

Grade 5

The Lost Chickens

Ruby Rose, a twelve year old girl, lived at home with her mother. Ruby owned some chickens, which took a lot of begging to actually get. Ruby had always loved birds. Back when she was ten, she had begged her mother to let her get a bird and unfortunately, she refused. That made Ruby begin to think of another idea.

"Chickens won't fly or bother mom and chickens will make noise *outside*. This is perfect!" she thought before going to her mother and once again begging. After Ruby stated all of her points, her mother agreed to get her two chickens and no more. Well, those two chickens decided to mate and two turned into ten with one mom, one dad and a whole lot of chicks.

Just about two years after all of the chicks had hatched, Ruby was left to tend to ten chickens. Ruby and her mother had also gained new neighbors that year which were an odd little girl and her grandmother. Ruby never spoke to the little girl, but she would always stand on her lawn and stare at Ruby's house without speaking. It all went smoothly until something went horribly wrong.

One day in mid-autumn, when Ruby got home from school she came to find that one of her chickens went missing! She immediately called her mom, who was still working and wouldn't get back home until around 5:00 that night, to tell her the horrible news.

“Mom, Daisy, my chicken, is missing. I really need to find her. Can you come home and help, please?” she asked into the phone.

“Ruby dear, you know I can't leave work unless it's a big emergency. I'll help you look for her when I get home. Just go inside and calm down.” Ruby's mom reassured her.

“Okay. Bye.” Ruby replied before abruptly hanging up.

Ruby didn't go inside. Instead, she began searching around her entire yard and she never found Daisy. Once she was finished looking she sat down with the rest of her chickens and waited for her mom to come home. The girl next door stood and watched Ruby as she sat. When Ruby's mom got home the two of them searched for Daisy together and there was still no sign of the chicken. Her mother thought it was best if they went to bed and waited to see if Daisy would turn up in the morning.

Ruby woke up the next morning and there was still no sign of Daisy. When she got home from school she immediately went to check on her chickens. She counted them and there were eight chickens. Another chicken went missing! Ruby began searching the yard for her second lost chicken and realized the girl next door was watching her again.

“Maybe she knows about my chickens...” Ruby thought.

“Hey you! You seem awfully interested in what I'm doing. Do you want to spend time with me?” Ruby called over to the girl.

The girl shook her head no and continued to stand in her spot.

“Don't worry! I just want to play with you.” Ruby fibbed to get the girl's attention.

The girl didn't move. This initiated Ruby to go over to her herself.

“What's your name?” Ruby asked the girl once she got to where she was standing.

“Eddie. Like Evie but with a d.” Eddie answered. Her voice was very dull; she sounded uninterested in the conversation entirely.

“Well that's a super cool name! I'm Ruby.” Ruby tried to make her voice sound full of excitement.

“So? What's your favorite animal?” Ruby attempted to start a conversation.

“Cats.” Eddie responded blankly.

“Cool! I like birds. I have a whole bunch of chickens!”

“I know. You have ten of them.”

“Well, I *had* ten. Two of my chickens went missing! Have you seen them?”

Eddie quickly shook her head no.

“Are you *sure*?” Ruby asked suspiciously.

Eddie nodded her head quickly.

“Right. Hey, I almost forgot! I have a present for you. I’ll be back! Stay put.” Ruby ran off.

Shortly after, Ruby returned with her hand in a fist formation.

“Alright, are you ready?” Ruby asked.

Eddie nodded.

“Confetti bomb!”

Ruby released her fist and threw what was in it out onto Eddie’s front lawn. Her hand was full of chopped up fruit. The fruit landed. Then suddenly, the sound of a chicken could be heard.

“Aha! I hear chickens. Take me to them!”

“No.” Eddie refused.

“Fine! Then I’ll go get them myself.” Ruby ran off in the direction of the noise.

“Wait!” Eddie ran after her.

Finally, Ruby reached the spot. There, tied to a tree with jump rope were her two missing chickens, Daisy and Mocha.

“Wait!” Eddie reached the spot as well as she panted.

“Why do you have my chickens?!” Ruby demanded.

Eddie didn’t respond.

“Answer me!”

“I was going to feed them to my cat because she needs a variety of food. Not just simple cat food.” Edie replied as if it was obvious.

“That doesn’t give you the right to take things from people!”

“Fine I’m sorry just don’t tell Granny please! You can have them back!”

“Fine. As long as you've learned your lesson this can be our little secret.”

Once Edie agreed Ruby took her possessions and went home. She put her chickens back where they belonged and never told anybody the real reason her chickens went missing. When her mom asked about it Ruby simply said, “They must have gotten lost.”

Sadielee Violette

Caribou Community School

Ms. McDonough

Grade 7

Seasonal Lore

The Winter Solstice Banquet

It was almost the Winter Solstice Banquet. Vladimir was very excited about the upcoming party because the girl named Alyona he had asked to go with him had said yes. It was now two nights before the Winter Solstice Banquet and he was out doing some late Christmas shopping for his brother and his parents. When he got home he wrapped the presents, put them under the tree, and went to bed. When he woke up he put on his clothes, brushed his teeth, and ate breakfast.

“Today is the big day of decorating!” Vladimir’s father said with a big grin.

“I know, it’s so exciting,” Vladimir said.

“Let’s start decorating the big tree in the town square,” suggested Vladimir’s younger brother.

“Okay, okay, we can go there first,” Vladimir’s Mother said.

“How is Alyona doing?” asked Vladimir’s mother.

“She is doing good,” Vladimir replied.

“Glad to hear that she’s a nice girl,” Vladimir’s Mother said.

“Come on, let’s go to the town square!” Demanded Vladimir’s Father while honking the car’s horn twice.

“Okay Father, let’s go,” said Vladimir while getting into the car.

They drove off to decorate the town square. Once they arrived at the town square, they got out and started to decorate the big tree in the middle. While they were decorating, Alyona walked over.

“Can I help you decorate?” Alyona asked.

“You sure can,” Vladimir’s Mother answered. Now that Alyona was decorating the tree with them, Vladimir’s younger brother was teasing him about his “date” with her at the Winter Solstice Banquet. After they were done decorating the big tree, they went over to a nearby diner and had lunch. Once they were done with lunch, they went on their last stop of decorating and that was the Banquet Hall where the whole Dinner & Dance was being held the next day. They finished decorating and went home to bed. In the morning everyone got dressed in their nicest clothes and went to the Winter Solstice Banquet. They got there at 12:00 and played some games and ate some snacks while waiting for the event to start. At 4:00 the event started and everyone went out to dance. Vladimir found Alyona.

“May I have this dance?” asked Vladimir.

“I would love to,” answered Alyona. They danced and danced the night away. When it was time to go home Vladimir said goodbye with a kiss.

Goal

I stood on the right side of the red circle. James was taking the face off. I took in a deep breath and bent over, my stick planted firmly on the ice. The score was 2-0 and I already had the feeling that we would win this game. I smiled at the thought of our clean, perfect blue and white jerseys. My skates were tight and sharp. I was ready to play hockey. We were on the left side of the ice, in the other team's zone. I was in the perfect position to score. All it took was a straight pass to my stick and I could slap the puck into the net.

The ref blew the whistle and everything suddenly got serious. I watched as the puck slapped the ice, and James passed the puck... to Colby. Oh, no! The other team darted over to pin him against the boards. They took hold of the puck and skated up the ice, but they only made it a few feet just past the blue line until Dylan came in and knocked them to the ground. I skated as fast as I could so that they wouldn't call offsides. Once I was across the line he took a look around and saw me open. He passed it right to my stick and I darted into the offensive zone. I passed the puck to James dodging another player. I was ready to make the goalie eat rubber. Once the player wasn't in the way, James passed it to me, and I slipped the puck right under the goalie's pads... going right into the goal. The crowd erupted with cheers from the bleachers! My team patted me on the back. There's nothing better than scoring a goal for your team.

Henry Robinson

Presque Isle Middle School

Mrs. Bragg Grade 6

The Elf on the Shelf

On December 2nd, an elf came, but it was not an ordinary elf, not the elf that works for Santa, but the Elf on the Shelf. The first morning it sat on a building that the kids made. On the second day it was on some fake candles. But on the third night, something not very likely happened. Something that you wouldn't expect.

Well, every Elf does this, but on the third night it went to the North Pole to visit and tell Santa about the kids. Snowflake, as the kids call her, told Santa that the kids were behaving really well, except the youngest child. Santa told Snowflake to keep an eye on him and keep a really good eye on him. Snowflake went back to the house and hung some markers on the family's whiteboard. Then Snowflake got a message from Santa.

Dear Snowflake,

I hope you're keeping a really good eye on them, especially the youngest. Come back on the sixth night. I got something that can really help you out from now on.

Sincerely,
Santa

Snowflake, on the fifth night sat on top of the refrigerator so she could write Santa a letter and deliver it on the sixth night. But then, something terrible happened..the letter got swooped up by the wind and landed on the floor. Then the youngest came in and spotted it. He picked it up and read it.

Dear Santa,

I will be there at 2 am. The youngest is still a troublemaker, but not that bad. I made my conclusion that he should be on the nice list this year again.

Sincerely,
Snowflake

The kid told his parents, but the parents didn't believe him. So on the sixth night, Snowflake went up to the North Pole and talked to Santa. After that, everything was back to normal, at least for now...

Michael Ireland

Presque Isle Middle School

Mrs.Bates

Grade 6

Getting Up On the Kneeboard

One hot 90 degree day, my mom shouted my name. "Halle! Time to wake up! We have to go grocery shopping!"

"Okay!" I yelled back. I got up and got dressed. My mom and I headed to the grocery store because we were going on the boat that day. I said, "Okay," and we drove back home.

When we got to the lake, I changed into my bathing suit and went out on the dock. I did a cannonball into the water. When I jumped into the water, it felt like bath water. My dad yelled, "Halle, get out of the water!" I asked him why. He told me we were going on the boat. I asked my dad if I could do the kneeboard. He said yes. I jumped up and down in excitement because it was my first time ever on a kneeboard. I couldn't wait to get on it, but we had to have fun on the tube first.

After playing on the tube, my cousin tried the kneeboard first. He was a pro. He told me how he did it, so I listened. I could not wait any longer! The conversation ended. I was so nervous I had butterflies in my stomach. When the boat started I started to pull and pull. Then my dad said it was time to eat dinner. I said okay. We ate and then went to bed. Before I fell asleep, my dad came in and said good night. He told me that when I woke up I would be stronger. That really motivated me!

The next day, I tried kneeboarding again, but this time I had a plan and was motivated. You know how surfers wait for big waves? That's how I was sitting on the kneeboard. I started

like that. The boat began to move. I pulled my knees up, and I was riding a kneeboard for the first time ever! My dad was so happy! My mom was, too. My two brothers started yelling, “Go HALLE!” They were freaking out. I was riding the waves! Woosh! Woosh! The water started to splash in my face! Bounce! Bounce! I was bouncing over the waves!

Little tip: don’t try to do a 360. That will not end well!

Halle Esancy

Mapleton Elementary School

Mrs. Wright

Grade 4

The Gift

My name is Ethan Grace and I have a story to tell. Not a creature was stirring, not even a dog. Every Christmas was the same. On Christmas, we’d open presents, go to my grandparents, and eat food. But this Christmas was different. My dog died. Now I know this sounds odd, but I’ve had my dog ever since my first Christmas. I just knew that Christmas would never be the same without her. So, this year I wrote something different on my list instead of toys and stuff; I wanted to see Missy one more time.

As my family started to pile in the house on Christmas Eve, my sister and I greeted every single one with water and a place to sit at the table. Then, my mom and I handed out some salad and garlic bread to go with the spaghetti. After my mom said the prayer, everyone started to dig in!

Once the guests had gone and my parents put us to bed, I thought about Santa. Would he like the chocolate chip cookies I made? Will my Christmas wish come true? I really hope Santa could let me see Missy again, but how?

I woke up at 4:50 am but I had to stay in my bed for ten more minutes because my mom and dad wanted to sleep in. Once my alarm clock went off, I jumped out of bed, slipped on my slippers and ran downstairs. I heard my family's footsteps behind me as I walked downstairs. “Ethan, wait up!” called Emily as she stumbled down the stairs. “Okay! Dig in!” said my mom and dad as we each pulled out our presents (my sister went snooping last night before bed and told me where they were). “Yes, Yes, YES!!!” said my sister as she opened up the new Barbie Adventure Doll. “It’s even cooler than I had imagined!” said my sister, hugging it. Then under a clump of presents that all had my name on them, was a small green and white present with a small red tag that read: Dear Ethan, I got your letter and I feel your pain. I tried my best to give you what you wanted, but some kids ask for so many things that I can’t even give. These are presents that come from the heart! Signed, Santa.

“Wow!” I breathed as I pulled off the shiny ribbon, took apart the box, and looked inside. There, sitting on a pillow, was the prettiest thing I’ve ever seen! A snow globe. Not just any snow globe, though. In this snow globe was Missy and me, in our backyard on top of the hill where we used to go sledding together. As I got up to go to my bedroom to put it in a safe spot, my sister saw me and blurted out “Where are you going?” She gave me that look when someone knows what you’re up to, but then she just shrugged her shoulders and continued to rip open her

presents. After I made my way upstairs, I put the snow globe in my room and looked at it. I saw yesterday, today and tomorrow all in that globe. A treasure indeed. *I love you girl, Thanks Santa Claus!*

Emma Graves

Caribou Community School

Mrs. Plante

Grade 5

New Year's Eve

Black and gold balloons falling, brightly lighted fireworks
People chatting, the ball dropping
The most delicious pizza and nachos with lots of cheese
The body odor from people dancing, the amazing baked goods
My confetti popper at midnight, my noise maker
It is New Years

Amber Williams

Mill Pond School

Mrs. Quint

Grade 5

Gingerbread House

Gingerbread, delicious gumdrops, and icing
Crunching of the gingerbread in my mouth
Smooth icing mixed, gooey, sticky gumdrops
Pepper minty candy canes and mints in the air
Rough, crunchy gingerbread with sticky icing
It's a Christmas house of candy

Graysen Boisvert

Mill Pond School

Mrs. Quint

Grade 5

Super September Day

What I see on a September day is,
Roots in the ground
Too hard to pull out,
Ferns, some dead, some alive,
Mushy dirt covered with
Leaves of many colors,
Burdocks sticking to my legs,
Fresh apples and wild berries,
Rocks with moss,
And rotting logs.

What I hear on a September day is,
Crickets chirping in the tall dry grass,
Bees buzzing looking for flowers,
Sticks snapping under my shoes,
Wind blowing making the trees sway, and
The river current swishing over rocks.

What I smell on a September day is,
The cedar leaves off of huge trees,
Apples that have fallen off an apple tree,
The fir leaves that remind you of Christmas, and
Wild flowers in the grassy fields.

What I taste is an apple.
The apple tastes tart,
It tastes juicy,
It's also very hard and firm.

What I feel on a September day is,
The rough tree bark that could easily be peeled off,
The thorny bushes in the woods,
Wild cucumbers with soft spikes, and
Wet, hard apples straight off the tree.

A September day makes me think of,
Sitting in a log cabin in front of a fireplace
Drinking hot chocolate.

Jameson Marino

Mill Pond School

Mrs. Oliver

Grade 5

Sweet September

As I walk across September's
Wet, dewy, grass
I see apples falling from trees
One by one,
Like rain hitting a roof,
"Pit, pat, pit, pat."

I hear the leaves crunching under my feet
As I walk through an alley-way of trees.

I smell freshly chopped wood waiting
To burn in the winter.

The apples I find on a September day
Feel smooth like a freshly waxed floor,
But hard like a rock.

The apples taste sour like pickle juice, and
I can see juice oozing out as
I bite into it.

A September day reminds me that there
Is still beauty in the world
Even during the roughest of times.

Hunter Sanford

Mill Pond School

Mrs. Oliver

Grade 6

Adventure

Stuck On A Mountain

One day I got stuck on a mountain with my Grandpa. I was getting ready for a big trip to a big mountain to climb, and I couldn't wait until we got there. It was my first time on a mountain. We got there at about noon time and it was extremely hot out. My Grandpa and I were getting ready to walk up the mountain and my Grandpa said hopefully we can get to the top in time before it gets too dark. We walked and walked for 2 hours and finally got to the top. We sat there and looked around at the nice view for about 20 minutes. We were tired. After all of that, we were getting ready to walk back down the mountain, and out of nowhere this lady walks up to us and says "are you guys looking for a shorter way down?" My Grandpa said that would be very nice and better for us. She told us that we should walk down that side and it would bring us right to the parking lot. Grandpa looked at me and said "let's do it" so we were off in the hot weather, dying to get water and trying to get home. After 4 hours my Grandpa says "she sent us down the wrong side". He had cuts all over him. We walked and walked and finally my Grandpa said "I hear cars, the highway must be right over there". We walked over and saw a car go by so we yelled "STOP!" They didn't hear us. Luckily my Grandpa knew where it would be so he said we have about 4 miles to walk. "My legs hurt so bad" I told him. I was only 8 years old at that time, so it was hard for me to walk long distances without getting tired. We walked until I couldn't anymore so my Grandpa was carrying me the whole way to the truck. We finally got to the truck. The water in the truck was very hot so we went to the store and finally made it home without saying anything to my Grandma. It is a forever kept secret between my Grandpa and me.

Isaiah Anderson Limestone Community School Mrs. Dillon Grade 8

The Trout

We were driving home from school one day when my dad said, "Hey Goobers, let's go fishing!" When we got home we grabbed a drink, snack, and changed into some old clothes. As soon as we were ready we hopped into the car. While we drove dad said, "How about we go to that spot in Easton?" Both my sister and I said, "Sounds great!"

We got there at about 3:00 pm and started getting our poles set up with lures and other fishing stuff. We all chose copper phebes because they're the best for trout. We walked down the weed infested slope to the river/stream with our fishing gear. We all went to different parts of the river/stream so we'd have enough room. We stayed there for about ten minutes and didn't even get a bite so we moved to the river/stream on the opposite side of the road.

Again we climbed down a weed infested slope down to the river/stream. I was standing on the edge of a wet rock ready to cast, but before I could lift my pole I slipped and fell into the water! It was shocking how cold the water was, and when I fell in I started to panic. Then after a second or two I realized that the water was shallow so I got up and walked to shore.

I sat down and casted a couple times and on the third cast I felt a tug. As soon as I felt that tug I started reeling my line in. On the end of my reeled up line I saw a native brook trout. It's back was teal with yellow spots, and its belly had crimson edges with a bright white middle. After looking at it for a little bit we decided to put the trout back into the river.

Because I was cold and soaking wet we decided to leave. Me, my dad, and little sister got into the car and drove home. And when I got home I wondered what my next adventure would be.

Annabelle Johnson

Presque Isle Middle School

Mrs. Bates

Grade 6

Lost in the Attack on Pearl Harbor

As the morning started, the ocean swayed and the birds chirped. Pearl Harbor was running well. I was a serviceman. I worked hard keeping out ships and planes that shouldn't come into Pearl Harbor. It was 7:10. I was reading my favorite book. I had snuck into the control tower and read my book for about twenty minutes, when suddenly I heard a warning call from the other control tower, and it said that thirteen planes were headed our way. As I was listening to the warning call I thought to myself, *What planes would be headed our way? Would it be an attack or planes just in the air flying together?* I hit my warning call that rang out over the whole base.

I was scared. I grabbed my gun and ran toward the ladder. As I was going down I heard a loud bang. I fell down the ladder, 30 feet to the bottom. I hit the ground so hard that I felt paralyzed. *I just broke my arm*, I thought. I laid there for one minute until I heard another service man scream, "Get down! The planes are dropping bombs." I tried to get up but my legs felt broken. "Finally," I said as my legs started to cooperate.

I slowly stood up straight and looked outside. At first it didn't look like many bombs were dropped until planes started to attack and drop more bombs. I got scared and booked it out of the control tower. I was thinking *I should get on a boat*, but I knew it would be too dangerous, so I ran and got cover with three other soldiers from the control tower. I tried to talk to the other soldiers but they had the wind knocked out of them. They couldn't even talk normally. I just told them, "We need to make a move before a bomb gets dropped on us". We all stood up and counted down from three. When I got to

one, the first gun fire went off. We got jumped by the sound but we still ran. We got to better cover and started shooting at the planes. Then I heard a big explosion in the air as one of the planes blew up. I thought the other planes would have flown away by now, but no, they were still dropping bombs.

Thirty minutes had passed. I looked toward the harbor and flames were covering dozens of ships. "Oh, God," I said, as another ship blew up. All of a sudden the soldiers and I heard a whistling sound. *I know that sound*, I said to myself, *I remember it from military practice*. Then my eyes went big and I looked up. There was a big bomb coming down right on top of us. I screamed, "Go! Go! Go! They're dropping a bomb on us." The soldiers and I ran as fast as we could but we didn't make it far before the explosion sent us flying into the water.

I woke up an hour later on a piece of exploded sheet metal. I heard no gun fire nor bombs exploding. All I saw was Pearl Harbor up in smoke. I crawled to a spot out of the water and just laid there. Suddenly, I heard soldiers moving debris, looking for those of us that survived. They didn't find a lot of soldiers that day, but I'm lucky they found me.

Mason Pelletier

Easton Elementary School

Mrs. McQuade

Grade 6

Crazy Day At Katahdin

One day we woke up early in the morning and got ready for a nice climb at a mountain in Maine called Katahdin. We were so excited! We packed and got right on the road. My brother Colby, my Dad, and I were going. It was not too long of a ride, maybe an hour. When we got near the mountain we drove through the whole park looking around. Then we got to the complete other side of the park, which took about another hour. We went swimming, but it was the middle of Fall and it was freezing cold, so I immediately got out. Then there was a problem. They had no open lean-tos, so my dad showed us this little secret path right at the park. We went out and found a perfect camping spot. We took out the tent and started setting up our tent. When it was all finished we just played around for a little bit. Later we had dinner and went to bed because tomorrow was the big day, the climb.

Dad, Colby, and I got up at 4:00 in the morning and packed our bags with supplies. We got into the truck and were on our way to the park. We didn't have a reservation to climb, so we were hoping for some luck to get a spot. We waited about two hours, then the line started to move. We were fifth in line. Then a guy came up to us and asked if we would like to do Roaring Brook, Abol, or Hunt. We decided to pick Roaring Brook because we wanted to go up Cathedral, across Knife's Edge and down Helon Taylor. We were so excited and we drove to the Roaring Brook campsite. We signed in and told the ranger the trails we were going to hike before heading off.

We had to start off at the Chimney Pond trail to get to Chimney Pond. That's where the Cathedral starts. We were just hiking and going over bridges and boardwalks

until about 30 minutes later when we reached Chimney Pond. When we got there, we met a guy who said that Knife's Edge was going to have up to 60 mile per hour winds. It made me kind of scared. We went down to the pond for a break. We sat down and looked at the lake. It was crystal clear. You could look through it and see the rocks at the bottom. I grabbed a snack and we filled up our water bottles. Then my dad pointed up to show me the Knife's Edge. He said, "We're going across that".

It started off as just some woods to hike through, kind of like the Chimney Pond Trail, but then we came out of the woods and saw a giant mountain of boulders. I was so excited because it looked like Haystack back home. We climbed up by finding footholds and handholds. Some spots were tricky, but we just kept working through it. We were having so much fun climbing. Little did we know that was all going to change when we got on Knife's Edge. When we got near the top of Cathedral it got pretty windy and cold, so I reached into my bag and got my jacket. I threw it on and we continued.

We were so close to the peak now. We followed this little path and we were at the peak of Mount Katahdin. Colby, Dad, and I were so excited we were giving each other high-fives and jumping. We were so relieved. We took a picture by the sign. Then we went to sit down and have a snack and drink. We just looked out into the view but then a big cloud rolled over us and the wind picked up, so we decided to start down on the Knife's Edge. This is when everything went downhill.

We started off on a wide trail, but the wind just kept picking up. It was at 20 mph. I wanted to turn back but we went on. Soon it got more narrow so we were on either side of my dad. We were in a giant cloud. The winds were up to 60 mph now. Getting blown around, we went down to the right a little bit and took cover. Then my brother slipped and a shock went through my body. He was hanging onto a root. My dad laughed because he knew Colby was going to be okay. "Help! Help!" Colby screamed. I just remember seeing the terror in his eyes. Then my dad pulled him up. We started moving again because we were almost to the end of the Knife's Edge.

We were now at the Chimney which is two small cliffs where you go down one and go up one. I was scared at first, but we did it easily. We had a snack, but it was just a granola bar, so I was still starving. The winds were still picking up, so we wanted to get down fast. We were still over the tree line which means we had no cover. We stopped to take a picture, and Colby got blown hard by the wind. We just kept going until we finally hit the tree line, but we still had five miles to hike down. It took so long. Sometimes I would just sit down to rest, and it would take five minutes to get back up. When we finally got to the bottom I thought I was going to die. My feet felt like they were going to fall off, and I was freezing cold. I immediately got in the truck and fell asleep.

I woke up in Houlton. We got some food at McDonald's. When we finally got home it was 10:00 at night. I went to my bed and thought to myself that *it was a crazy day at Katahdin.*

William Browning Easton Elementary School Mrs. McQuade Grade 5

Against Dixie Land

I was stationed at Fort Knox as a cannon operator. Fort Knox was in Prospect, Maine along the Penobscot River. We were protecting the fort from Rebel attacks. Soon after, most of us were shipped off to Maryland or Delaware, but I was shipped off to Virginia to fight more Rebels.

We would march across fields, forests, rivers, and sometimes swamps. Once, when we were crossing a field we heard trumpets playing, which meant there would be an attack. Then almost a thousand Rebels angrily charged through the woods. The Rebel officer said, "Charge!" Artillery hit the ground and bullets fell everywhere. Canons were firing and men were screaming. Our officer said, "Move up the left flank!" I was severely injured after a cannon ball hit my leg. I woke up in a hospital room. They had to amputate my whole leg. They sent me back home to Bucksport, Maine.

I learned later that the Rebels had lost the battle, and soon after they lost the war. Five days after the Rebels surrendered, Abraham Lincoln was shot and died. I have been traumatized every day since that battle. It is 1945 now, and we just ended World War II. I'm 97 and soon there will be none like me left, so don't forget all the lives lost in that bloody conflict.

Benjamin Mills Easton Elementary School Mrs. McQuade Grade 5

Amaze The road to victory

Lula was riding the bus to school. It was her first day of Canton School. When she walked in, she went to the office, she remembered where it was from the tour they gave her and her mom. When she went to the office she asked where Miss Sissy's room was. Then, a girl appeared and said her name was Lavender White and asked if I was Lula.

I said, "Yes." She said that she would be helping me for the week.

I said, "Awesome." When we got to Miss Sissy's room, Lavender showed me to my seat. It was right by hers. Miss Sissy told me to stand up and tell everyone my name. I told them a little about myself and then sat back down. Miss Sissy started the first lesson. It was math, "I am great at math", I said in my head. When Miss Sissy started, I answered all of the questions right. I was so surprised with myself.

Miss Sissy said "Wow, you answered all of the questions right, you can get a prize if you want. Wow, really? Miss Sissy went out of the room with a huge box. She told me to follow her.

She looked around the hall and said, "Don't tell anyone about it, because I don't bring the box out a lot and it makes it a surprise and a unique thing to get. I nodded my head and took out a pink sparkly necklace with a jewel that had a leaf.

I said, “I want this one.” It felt like it was pulling me to pick that one and I don’t know why. When I went back inside, I felt weird like I had something inside of me. Then my stomach started hurting. I asked if I could go to the nurse.

Miss Sissy said “Yes, do you know where it is?”

I said, “Yes” and started heading to the nurse’s office. When I got there, it felt like someone just stabbed me in the stomach. The nurse called my mom. By the time she got here it got a lot worse. I was seeing things now like gnomes, tiny people, and dragons. My mom took me straight to the ER. They said I was fine and it happens sometimes if you get too tired, just get some rest. So, I went home and slept for a while. After I woke up, I told my mom about my day.

Mom said, “Lu, my darling, come with me.” We went to her closet. Then mom took out a pocket watch and said it was time. She opens the closet door and ... “Wow!” I said.

To be continued

Taylor Griffeth

Caribou Community School

Mrs. Pelletier

Grade 6

Wonder Land

Chapter One:

I’m Not Crazy.

She stood in front of the two trees at widow's peak, the big forest that wrapped around her home. Her dirty blond hair tucked tightly behind her ears, and her long blue dress hugged her from the waist down as the wind pulled it back. The sun was shining on her face, making out every freckle that lined her cheek bones. And the small white flowers that grew stood almost as high as her ankles. She felt like Alice, from her favorite childhood book, just before she fell down the rabbit hole.

Natalia danced along the path back to her home, the soft green grass brushed against the soles of her feet as she lifted them up and down. Her small basket swung back and forth all the way. She had just picked about a dozen tulips for her mother, and had stored her shoes in the basket with the flowers. She admired every tree, every bit of sunshine, and every small critter that crossed her path. She loved ‘Lonely Woods’. She could just about see the garden and the fence that circled her home. Her palace. The path home was short, but with Natalia's mindset it would be dawn before she made it back.

As Natalia walked along the path back to her home, the grass that fluffed under her feet transitioned into a harsh stone texture. Not wanting to hurt herself, she pulled her mud-stained white flats out of her basket, she bent over and set the basket down gently, and brushed off her dress. Her mother would not be happy with a dirty dress, she then slipped on her shoes, picked up the basket, and started home. Suddenly, she felt something fall to the ground, she inspected it, it was a small wet dot, then another, then another, and another. Rain.

Natalia's feet picked up, from a slow skip, into a gentle trot. The water, picked up, from a slow dribble, into a loud fast pour. Onto her head the rain fell, streaming down her hair, making it a slight darker color than before. She felt the icy cold water run down her forehead into her eyelashes, then down into her mouth and past her chin, then down her neck and onto her shoulders and finally followed her forearms. Looking down she noticed her dress was already soaked. The rain sped up and her feet moved faster into a slow sprint. She felt the wind blow solemnly in her hair, just cold enough to leave shivers down her back. And in a moment or two she would be at the palace gates. A guard standing tall and firm against the blowing wind and rain spoke with a startle.

“Miss Natalia, what have you been doing out in this unpleasant weather?” Natalia could make out small drops of water splashing into his mouth as he spoke, but he didn’t notice.

“I was out picking flowers!” she noticed the water splashing in her mouth now. The man unlocked the gates and Natalia ran into the palace only to be stopped by her mother, Catherine, “Natalia!” she called.

“Sorry mother, I was out picking flowers for you, but I guess I lost track of time.” Natalia claimed.

“Oh, your dress!” She noticed it was soaked with rain and mud. “It’s ok mummy, I’ll ask Martha to make me a new one,” Martha was their nanny. She was a seamstress.

“Well, go freshen up and get ready for dinner, at six-o-clock” Catherine exclaimed.

“Ok!” She listened to her mother though Natalia had other plans, again she picked up her feet and leaped up every step of the stairs, past her mother. She left muddy footprints all the way up and down the long hallway into her bedroom. She swung the door open and stepped into her room and over to her bed which sat right in the middle of two curtains. Past her mirror, eyeing how muddy her dress was for a split second, and ran all the way over to her big glass window.

Natalia’s mind was racing back and forth, and finally, she opened the large window frame. She swung her legs over the edge, and gazed down. She scanned the drop and decided to jump.

It couldn’t be that far, could it?

Heather Gustin Caribou Community School Mrs. Barnes Grade 8

Trip to Delaware

We hopped in the car anxiously, ready, and excited to get on the road to Delaware!

14 long hours on the road, only eating gas station food and staying up till 3:30 we FINALLY arrived at our gorgeous beach house mansion at 3:30 am. We were exhausted so we went to bed right away and slept like babies throughout the night.

We woke up at 6:30 in the morning so we had barely any sleep that night but we were still ready to start the day. We showered, got our bathing suits on and headed to the beach at 7 in the morning.

We brought our boogie boards with us to the private beach and had a blast, except my friends little brother almost got taken out to sea so i swam like satan to save him , I almost lost my boogie board but my best friend Max saved the boogie board i brought him back to shore and his mom brought him back to the beach house and he watched tv, while Max and I where still boogie boarding.

We got tired after a while, and the sun was crossing the horizon so we went back to our house, got cleaned up, and ate dinner, and watched tv for a while until it was completely dark outside. We got up and shut the tv off to go on our nightly walk with Serena and saw ghost crabs, ghost crabs are little crabs that are white that only come out at dusk.

The lightning was on the coast so we decided to head back because it's very dangerous to be hit by a body of water while a thunderder storm is happening.

We walked back to our beach house. The weather was amazing too. It was like 80 degrees out at night, it was lovely. We got ready for bed, by the time it was late so we went to sleep straight away.

The next day we woke up at 10am, we hit the showers and got dressed ready to go to the swimming pool! After a while of lounging at the pool we got tired of being there, so we went out to get lunch at a beach restaurant right by the coast. It was very nice.

We went back to the beach house to change. We changed into nice clothes ready to eat our lunch. After we ate our delicious meal we went home to take a rest for a while, we sat down and watched tv for a bit, then we went to the beach, it was around golden hour so it was beautiful.

Max and I hung out at the private beach for a while then we went back to the beach house for dinner. We were having sushi for dinner! Danielle ordered it, and it arrived about 20 minutes later. We ate, we cleaned up and we hung out until bedtime. After a while of chilling we went on our nightly beach walk, got home, got into our pjs and went off to bed.

Evanna L. King Hodgdon Middle High School Mrs. McQuarrie Grade 7

**Fantasy
And Other
Fiction**

Thomas and the Cove of Blackbeard

The first sign that things were going to be bad was the righting of Ripjaw. Ripjaw is the legendary ghost shark of Reef Bay. Legend has it that Ripjaw is Blackbeard's megalodon pet. It died whilst fighting The Flying Dutchmen, a legendary ghost ship. Yet to this day, Ripjaw haunts Reef Bay.

As my crew and I sped toward the reef to go scuba diving, Ripjaw leapt out and ate part of the boat! I jumped on the jet ski as it swallowed the rest of the boat and my crew whole! I found an upside-down speedboat as I sped away, so I turned and used it as a ramp! Unfortunately, Ripjaw was right behind me, so the chase continued until we were in an uncharted part of the ocean and Ripjaw caught me. Luckily, it was in shallow waters, so I jumped off and swam into a coral reef. Unfortunately, there was a giant Megalodon!!!

I didn't question why there was a megalodon in the reef, I just swam as fast as I could. Just then, I saw a shipwreck, and it was partially above water! I swam up, jumped up, and grabbed the nearest cannon...and the whole ship collapsed! I was above water when a giant wave came along and washed me to shore. A few feet from me, I found my jet ski. I saw a ship farther down the beach. I went to it, and I found some supplies: a backpack, a lot of rope, and a knife.

A few weeks later, I had finished my tree fort. I still hadn't explored, so I walked into the jungle. Suddenly, a velociraptor leapt out and tackled me! And then, strongly, it licked me. After a few days, I was able to tame it. Suddenly, a sabertooth tiger ran past me! I jumped on Raptor and rode down to the beach.

Then I saw Chad Wellington, an infamous treasure hunter. He turned around and said, "Hey kid, you wanna look at this map? See if you can help me figure it out."

I went over, looked at it, and said, "I think this is a map of the Bermuda Triangle. The island is shaped like a skull, so the triangle in the middle must be...a cave?"

So we went to the triangle, and there was a cave. There was a glow, and Chad shoved me down. Then Raptor jumped down with me. Ahead, I saw the source of the glow. The ghost of Blackbeard was holding a chest. It gave it to me, and I opened it. There was...a piece of a map!!!

To be continued in "Thomas and The Flying Dutchman".

Thomas Cheney Washburn District Elementary School Ms. Silver Grade 4

The Snow Forest

Once upon a time there was a girl whose name was Claire. She was 10 years old and she was very curious. She would go for lots of walks and play in the snow for hours and hours. She lived with her mom, dad, and sister. Her sister was also 10 and they were always together. Her sister's name was Clay, and they had a really good bond between them. It was the first snow day, and it

was snowing so hard they had no school, so they had to wait a little while for the snow to calm down so that they could go outside and play. Two hours went by and it wasn't snowing hard anymore. It was still snowing but they could not wait any longer.

They went outside and it was kind of cold but not freezing. They each built a snowman. Then they made one together. Their mom and dad would never ever let them go on the trails out back. They always asked their mom if they could but she always said, "NO." Then one day they heard that the best snow was on their trail out back where they weren't supposed to go. So she and Clay had to go down to get buckets of snow to make an igloo. They didn't have a lot of good snow left because they were outside for hours and they made a bunch of snowmen, igloos, and snow castles. They did not have a lot of sticky snow left.

They decided to go to the back of the yard. That's when they saw the trail! They made sure their parents did not see them, because they would yell at them if they saw them go down there, and they headed for the trail! They finally got to the trail and it was very deep snow, so they started getting the buckets full with snow when they heard a loud noise.... They are very curious little girls so they had to go see what that loud noise was. As they started walking it seemed to get darker out, but then they heard their mom yell, "SUPPER." They ran so fast so their mom and dad didn't see them come out of the trail. Later that night, they went back outside to go back to the trail. They finally got to the trail and they started hearing a noise. It was a different noise from the first noise.

They finally went deeper on the trail. You won't believe what they saw.... It was a YETI! They screamed so loud but their mom didn't hear them so they ran up to the house. They didn't tell their parents what they saw, but the next day their parents got curious because they didn't go outside the whole day. Eventually they got bored inside so they went out. You would think if you saw a yeti you would not go back to the same spot where you saw it, but they still went. They saw the yeti but he was sleeping so they didn't scream. They went over to him and started to pet him. After a while he woke up and stared at them. Clay was kinda scared, same with Claire. They took their hand off him and then the yeti put his head on their hand and rubbed it. They both heard a girl's voice. A girl popped out from behind a tree and she said her name was Tasha. They talked for a little while and she said that they were in the snow forest.....

After a while of playing with Tasha and the Yeti, they heard their parents yell, "TIME FOR BED." They told Tasha and the Yeti they would be back tomorrow, and they would bring them some hot cocoa. When they got inside their parents asked where they were. They said they were in the backyard. Their parents said they looked through the window and didn't see them. The girls got really worried that they got caught, but then they said that they were on the porch. Their parents did not believe them but just went along with it. The next day they went back outside to see the yeti and they brought some hot cocoa with them. The yeti started to smile when he saw them. Tasha had never had hot cocoa before. She started to drink it and she burned her tongue on it because she did not know it would be hot.

After like 45 minutes the parents sneakily came outside to see what they were doing. First they looked in the front yard, and then on the porch. They were nowhere to be found. There was only one other place they could go which was the trail that led to the snow forest. They were

getting kind of scared because before they bought the house the owners said never to go on that trail. They had said bad things could happen. Their parents started to walk around the house into the backyard. It was a really big backyard so it took like 5 to 10 minutes. They finally got there and they didn't hear anything so they walked in a little further and then they saw Clay and Claire. They ran to them and asked, "WHAT ARE YOU DOING IN HERE?" That is when they saw the Yeti sitting right there. They screamed, AHHHHHHHHHHHH. Then Clay and Claire told their parents to stop screaming. That is when Clay and Claire told them everything that had happened. Their parents were still a little shaken because they were still standing in front of a Yeti.

The yeti went over to their parents and rubbed his head on their hand and was bumping his head on them to pet him, but they didn't get it. Clay and Claire had to tell them to pet him and they did and he started PURRING. They were all so confused! Their dad said, "hey, Buddy" and the Yeti started to smile. Clay and Claire looked at each other and yelled, "WE FOUND A NAME, BUDDY!" The Yeti started to jump up and down joyously. Clay and Claire said, "Now we have a pet." Buddy has never gone out of the snow forest, so they took him out to the front yard to play. It's a good thing they live where there's not a lot of people close by! They played outside for hours with their new pet Buddy!

Alayna Labreck

WDES

Mrs. Good

Grade 5

THE VIRUS

It was a cold, breezy night. My friends and I were out and about when I saw something in the distance. I pointed it out to my friends. Then, as we got closer, we saw that the "thing" in front of us was not human! The "thing" took notice of us and started approaching at a rapid pace.

Startled, we started running, looking for a safe place to hide! We stumbled upon a police station, so we raced inside. We quickly realized no one was there. The place looked abandoned. We split up to look for something to defend ourselves with. We heard the radio saying that there had been a virus infected zombie outbreak!!

Quickly, we looked for gear and supplies. Sage realized the whole town had been evacuated and then all of a sudden we heard a bang on the door! Ace went to check it out. It was one of our friends, Kenji, from college and we let him in. I asked him what he was doing here and he said, "I ran all the way here from the college because it has been overrun by zombies".

We were shocked that he had made it this far without getting attacked by the zombies. By the time he made it into the building the zombies were banging on the door. Using the weapons we found, we defeated the zombies. We gave Kenji some weapons and some gear. I told everyone that we could use the upstairs of this place for our safe spot and they all agreed. We went outside

to search for more supplies for our safe spot. Once we arrived at the nearest store, I told them that we should all split up. We found some duffel bags to carry our supplies.

Thankfully Kenji was with us. He'd been studying to be a nurse at the local hospital. I hoped he would be able to find some medical supplies for us. All of a sudden I heard a high pitched scream coming from the other side of the store. I rushed toward the piercing screams and saw Sage's fifteen year old niece, Cora. She was injured, unable to move. "What happened?" I asked her.

"I fell and twisted my ankle and I think I broke it", she sobbed.

"Ok, try not to move. I'm going to go find one of my friends to help you, ok?"

She nodded and I ran off to find Kenji. He was not that far from us and I told him that I had found Sage's niece, Cora, and that she was badly injured. I told him that I was going to find Sage and told him to go to Cora. Sage was a little farther away from where I had found Cora. When I approached Sage, I told her that I had found Cora, badly injured on the other side of the store. We both ran to her and Kenji had already gotten her bandaged up. Sage was relieved to see that Cora was alright.

About an hour later we headed back to our safe spot. We went upstairs and Ace said that he would keep guard. We found a room where the officers used to rest so we brought Cora in there to sit down and rest.

We heard the radio going off, "There is a safe haven located at a mall about three miles from the town of Kraniya. If you are still in the town please head there as soon as you can."

We all looked at each other and then I told everyone that we would be leaving first thing in the morning. Exhausted, we headed to bed. In the morning, we gathered our supplies and started to look for a car or some kind of transportation. Cora couldn't walk the three miles to safety. Fortunately, we found a truck that had four gas cans in the back, so we decided to drive that. After helping Cora onto the front seat of the truck, I sat in the driver seat and started the truck. Sage, Ace, and Kenji got in the back. We headed off to the safe haven while keeping an eye out for zombies.

As we crossed the bridge, I saw a hoard of zombies ahead! Frightened, I alerted the others. Everyone except for Sage and Cora got up on top of the truck to fend off the snarling zombies. Suddenly a large truck drove our way and stopped in front of us. Armed and ready to help us, the soldiers motioned for all of us to get in their truck. Breathing with a sigh of relief, we were on our journey to safety from the virus infected zombies.

Madison Plummer Washburn District Elementary School Mrs. Hernandez Grade 8

A Scene From A Nightmare Comes True

“AHHHHH!” Where am I? What's happening to me? I feel shivers go right down my spine. The wind is howling so bad it feels like a messenger trying to bring me a note. *Is this a dream?* I'm freezing, and my body is weakening. My feet are killing me, and my frightened body has been running forever. Something is chasing after me. “BANG!”

It all started on a cold misty day in Riverdale. Tessa, who is my best friend, and I were going to go to a ski resort and planned on staying for a few nights. We thought that would be a good way to spend Christmas break. “Let's get gas before we head out,” I say.

“Yeah, good idea. Let's get this day on!”

“Tessa, let's listen to music.” She turned on the radio, and we started singing SUPER LOUD to “*Maps*” by Maroon 5. Then all of a sudden, we hear a special news report, interrupting the chorus of the song...

This is a special news report. Earlier this evening someone was abducted, and found dead in the woods near South Side Creek.

“That's awful and very scary,” Tess said. “Why would someone ever do anything like that?”

“Probably some psychopath capable of doing such crazy things and thinking that it's enjoyable.”

“Yeah, you're probably right.”

WHACK! All of a sudden, I start to lose control of my Ram 1500 classic. “What was that?” Tessa wondered.

It was then we realized a deer had struck my truck, and we were stranded in the middle of nowhere. “What are we supposed to do?” Tessa asked.

I made the comment, “Let's try to get a hold of a tow truck.” As I attempted to use my phone, I suddenly realized I didn't have service.

Tessa said, “Well, that's just great! Our weekend is ruined! We have no service, no food, and I'm freezing my butt off!”

“There is no sense standing around here. We might as well try to find some help.”

The night air was so cold, we could see our breath in front of us. “Hey, Tess, do you see that? Is that what I think it looks like?” After a very long hour or two, we came upon a cabin! We were so tired and chilly, we decided to try to get in, but when Tessa tried to open the door, and before I even knew what happened, we were staring into the face of a man. *Could this be the serial killer that we had heard about on the radio?*

All I could hear was screaming. I wanted to help my friend, but all I could do was run.

So, here I am, still running, hoping help will come along. The wind is howling so bad, I can barely keep myself on the ground. I'm trying so hard not to look back, but it's so very hard not to. At this very moment, I hear a big gunshot. I pray my friend is okay.

Suddenly, I see headlights coming towards me, so I stop running, and I start screaming for HELP! As the car slows down, I try to get a look at who the driver is—*NO, IT COULDN'T BE...*

It Was Real

When I was little, I would help my grandpa on his farm. I absolutely loved helping him. I got to milk cows, eat peanut butter and jelly sandwiches on a tractor, and even made some money. One day, my grandpa called me up on his old fashioned flip phone and told me he needed some help putting the new tires on the tractor. I, of course, said, “Sure,” and got on my rusty bike and rode to my grandpa's house.

I arrived at his house and got off my bike. Running to give him a big hug, he said, “Go get them old tires out of the big red barn.”

“Okay,” I replied. I ran over to the barn and turned on the flickering light. I found the tires and started to roll them out of the barn, but out of the corner of my eye, I saw something that made me start shaking like I was having a seizure.

“GRANDPA! GRANDPA! THERE'S A BOY IN THE BARN! HE IS SUPER PALE AND LOOKS LIKE A GHOST!”

Grandpa just said, “I think you're a bit tired. Maybe you should go home and take a good long nap. I will finish the job.”

As I headed home, I felt bad for leaving Grandpa alone, but I thought I was seeing things, so it was for the better. When I got home and went up to my room, I got into my twin bed and curled up in my favorite blue blanket. As I turned off the lights, I saw the same boy, coming closer and closer to me—nobody ever saw me again.

Kiarra Conklin

Katahdin Middle School

Ms. DeTour

Grade 6

The Basement

There was a rumor going around school that there were people hanging out in the school's basement at night. Rumor had it that it was just the janitor, but it remained a mystery. So Tiffney, Trishey, Jen, and Taylor decided to try to sneak down and investigate.

The rules were you had to stay in the basement all night. The moment they snuck down there, they saw something move, making them all jump back. They thought about leaving, but decided that if they did, they would be the laughing stock at school, so they stayed.

They laid their sleeping bags down and tried to call their other friends, but there was no cell service. Then all of a sudden the door slammed shut. BOOM! They all ran to hide. Jen felt a little chill down her back, but she didn't say anything.

It was around 12:45 a.m. when they finally decided to lie down in their sleeping bags, but it was really difficult to go to sleep, tossing and turning. The ones who were sleeping were having bad dreams, and the ones who were awake were having bad thoughts.

They were really wishing they had more warm blankets and food, but other than that they were basically okay—all except Taylor. She was really scared because she was one of those kids who believed everything that she was told.

Unable to stay asleep, the girls decided to get up and do some more exploring, but what they found out was shocking....

Emily McNally

Katahdin Middle School

Mrs. DeTour

Grade 8

The Voices in My Dreams

Hi, I'm Summer Autumn Winters. Most people like my name, others think my parents have a weird science obsession. Which is understandable, I mean they are both scientists, I have 2 sisters, Phoebe and Anne. I'm the youngest out of all 3 of us. I'm only 13, but I have the mind of a 30 year old. At least that's what Mom and Dad say. Anyways, here's my story on how I made history as the youngest person in my town to have sleep paralysis.

One night I looked out the window, the world looked distorted. I wiped my eyes to make sure it wasn't just tired. Well let me tell you it wasn't. All the nightly pedestrians looked like some kind of monsters from the movies. I thought I was going crazy, I went to tell my older sister to come see but she wouldn't wake. "Okay, this doesn't make sense, where even am I, is this a dream?" I said.

"This is only a figment of your imagination" a distant voice mentioned.

The voice wasn't familiar, it wasn't something I've heard before. "Mother? Phoebe? Anne?" I shouted.

The strange voice giggled, "I'm not your Mother nor your sisters. I'm your dream teller. The little voice in your head. I am not you, but the one who shows your dreams every night. Kind of like a 'night time only television station' you create them, I play them."

Just as she left I awoke as my alarm went off. "That was crazy," I said. It wasn't logical, nor was it practical. I couldn't see her but I could hear her and I could feel her presence. It was like one of those moments in horror movies. You know what's going to happen, but you just can't grasp the feel of it. Sometimes I think about what it's like to be in a horror movie. Though I can never tell for sure.

The next day I was walking to school with my 4 best friends, trying to get the thought of the voice out of my head. I have 4 best friends, Charlotte, Sophia, Madison, and Zoey. I've always been jealous of Zoey, she's pretty, smart, kind, and not to mention pretty rich. I asked Charlotte if she has met the voice in her head before, sadly she replied with, no, so I have no idea where mine came from.

"Who are you talking about 'the voice in your head', come on smarten up, you must be really tired," Charlotte said.

"She's real, I promise!" I shouted. Disappointed that she didn't believe me.

"If this so-called 'talking thing' is real, show us," Sophia said.

"Guys, stop, okay? Look you're making her cry, it's happened to me too okay? So just be quiet. I'm sure no one here wants or needs your opinion," Zoey said.

"Were you being serious about the whole thing where you have a voice in your head too?" I asked Zoey.

“Well, I have a voice in my head, of course, I think almost everyone does, but no, not in the way you described it.” Zoey said with a sigh.

“I knew it, you know what, maybe they're right, maybe I am a weird, sloppy, freak.” I said.

“No way. I actually think it's kinda cool, it's like having a super best friend that you have everything in common with, I kinda want one now.” Zoey said.

“Thanks, but, you didn't have to lie to them, you could've just told the truth.” I said.

“No, if they're gonna treat you like that, they don't deserve the truth. I'd rather lie to them about having invisible people talking in my head than let them tear my best friend down.” Zoey replied.

So today was awful. I fell asleep in writing class and everyone heard me talking to the voice in my head. I asked the principal, Mr. Shane, if this whole voice thing was normal and all he did was suggest I get more sleep. Pfft, like that's gonna help. Some kids in my class posted all over their Instaglam feeds on how dorky I was. I am officially the social reject, well to everyone else I am, at least Zoey is still my friend. I bumped into Charlotte in the hall, sadly.

“During writing, was that the voice you were talking about?” Charlotte asked.

“Yeah, why are you being nice to me all of the sudden?” I asked.

“We all did research on sleep paralysis, and realized how serious your condition was, and I wanted to let you know we're all really sorry,” Charlotte said.

Well I can't say I wasn't glad that they took the time to acknowledge my condition, but that still didn't help. For weeks and weeks they would still poke fun at me. I'm just glad we don't have nap time still, that would be torture. So now six years later I am known as a symbol of truth, even when one does not believe. Which personally I think is a seemingly long title but, it fits. Well this was my story, until next time.

Sincerely,

Summer Winters.

Kaitlyn Caron

Van Buren District School

Mrs. Hartvigen

Grade 7

A New Mind

The sun shined brightly through the white curtains, the air conditioning blowing them faintly— intertwined together in swerving motions as my eyes suddenly fluttered open. I narrowed my eyes as my vision fixed to the sudden brightness that seeped through my eyelids, the color of my room matching the brightness of the sun; Bland, yet bright colored with the highlights of white that mixed together. I blink my eyes a few times before properly adjusting to the brightness, pressing my fingertips into the cotton of the cloth that covered me with warmth and slowly pulling it down, exposing some of my skin to room temperature— which caused a shiver to erupt through my spine. I could have estimated the time it took me to finally get out of

bed approximately 10 minutes. Every morning when I wake up it's like my body is brittle and weak. Just waking up to gain my strength back to set to my feet once more like every other morning. It was a waste to just lie there and do nothing anyway, My room was nothing special: A white painted room with creaking floorboards underneath me, a vintage dresser and some books here and there, the only colorful thing in my room was the multiple clothes that were thrown on the floor, the first thought that anyone could possibly have when walking into my room for the first time would be: Bleak or Not so pretty.

I gained the strength within myself after a few minutes before pushing my bodyweight to the side and bridging my knees over the edge of my bed as my feet hit the solid ground, it was cold to the first touch but I soon got used to that feeling after I started to walk around, I was only dressed in my trousers and a loose tee that morning since I didn't have any school. My father and his girlfriend were probably out somewhere squandering their time at the restaurant or a tavern place out of town. The neighborhood we lived in was just a sandy desert with nowhere to go but out in the middle of nowhere, unless you had taken a certain passageway to get out of the town and go somewhere else that wasn't so empty. All the houses in the Neighborhood were empty, except for some of them. I remember the day that I was taken here, Las Vegas is where they live. I was taken in a taxi to the airport, I was told to not take many things from my old room from my mothers apartment.

Ever since there had been an accident. A terrible accident, and what had happened to her wasn't fair. That day of the Museum bombing, the place was nothing but dust and ashes when I woke up there. I remember the headache that raged through my head, so memorable that I could almost feel it now, The constant pounding that rang through my mind like a migraine; and those weren't pleasant to have. I was accused of having a pack of tubes, Yet I didn't and no one believed me. All Because of my 'friend', my only friend back in Amsterdam Schooling, I honestly could have thought to trust him, but that turned quickly. I hated thinking about it, and I still blame myself for my mothers passing. If it wasn't for me being friends with him we wouldn't have gone to that Museum and she wouldn't have died, I still dream days if she didn't die in the bombing. Those restless nights I stayed up in the apartment, calling and dialing every hospital that I could think of in a sudden panic. But, to no avail did anything happen. I sat there hours on end just waiting to hear the knock on the door and my mothers voice again. Yet it never happened. I still have nightmares, and they only seem to get worse. I hate being here in Las Vegas, I could have thought that my father had died because he never wrote to us, he never even bothered to keep any contact with my mother and I. And yet he had the nerve to actually come back and get me ever since my mother had passed. I figured it was because he was my only family that was alive. There were days that I hated it the most here and some days it was just bearable enough to survive, At least they were gone half the time. But when they weren't, it wasn't peaceful at all.

I open the door of my room after the thoughts flood around in my head like a whirlpool. Being able to push those thoughts aside for a bit just to be able to ponder enough to make myself go downstairs and get something to eat. I was soon greeted by a small face at the end of the stairs who looked up at me happily yipping, I smiled down at the pup bending down slightly and ruffled the mess of white fur on the top of his head gently.

I straightened myself out a bit and stretched before looking back down at the big eyes that locked onto me, ‘He must be hungry’ I thought and shifted myself into the kitchen where I saw my friend, The black haired boy who went by the name Boris. It had startled me at first but as soon as I realized who it was I shrugged my shoulders and tilted my head slightly “morning to you too..” I said.

In return he just nodded at me with a grin plastered on his lips, I crossed my arms over each other and looked at him dully for a moment, it was only because I had just woken up not too long ago. I fixed my posture a bit before asking him “How long have you been here?” I clear my throat. “Mm.. since 5 possibly?” he replied. “5?.. What time is it now?” I ask, Even though glancing at the clock would have been an easier option, if I had my glasses. I knew I had left them upstairs somewhere.

I watched as I saw him also look in the direction of the clock, His eyes narrowing a bit. ‘Did he not know how to read a clock?..’ I thought, smirking to myself. “Eh.. Roughly 7.. Maybe.” he said, unsure of himself; I rolled my eyes at that before replying with a sly comment “You don’t seem so sure, do you know how to even read a clock?”- almost immediately I got interrupted by him “Of course I do potter, It’s not like I’m inarticulate.” he sounded defensive through the tone of his voice, I put my hands up quickly like to block the defensive tone teasingly “Of course, Of course. No self doubt, Boris.” I said sarcastically before making my way around the kitchen where the black haired male sat so I could get breakfast, I could tell that he wanted to say something but was unsure on what to really say, so I decided to interrupt the silence with a common question since he had been here so long— “have you already fed popper?” I asked, he nodded his head “ah, yes. I came in and you seemed to still be sleeping, so I decided he was probably hungry.” I glanced over my shoulder at him and said “How did you get in anyway?” since the door was locked. Last time I remember. “Eh, Well” he hesitated “The window.” he smirked as I raised an eyebrow at him “The window?” I questioned, he nodded like he was proud of himself for doing so. “Guess I’ll have to lock the windows more often too.” I joked.

“Tch, Maybe just give me a key then” I shook my head “For you to just break in at any given time? You’re truly weird.”-“Hah! And you’re friends with me.” he replied laughing.

It was true, Being around him did make my constant thoughts fade for a while. Sometimes all you need is a good friend to help you get through rough times and it’s really all I needed right now. He would listen to my rants and non constant rambling all , I hoped that it wouldn’t end any time soon, I did enjoy his presence.

Dylan Hutchins

Van Buren District School

Mrs. Berube

Grade 8

Crazy Camping Trip

“Hey, Ava! Wait up. I have a question for you,” said Olivia. “Do you want to go on a camping trip with me and Griffen?”

“Sure, where are we going?”

“Summerset Falls.”

“Are you kidding me! People go in there and don’t come out.”

“We will be fine. Trust me. Please.”

“Okay, fine. I will go.”

When Olivia got home, her oldest brother, Griffen, was sitting on the couch with his camping bag packed. Olivia’s bag was in her room. Griffen was 19 and Olivia was 13. Their parents had disappeared in a car crash when Griffen was 18, so Olivia had moved in with him instead of her grandparents.

“Olivia, go get your bags. I will put them in my truck,” said Griffen

“But, Grif, we have to wait for Ava,” replied Olivia.

“Fine. We can wait for her. How long will she be?”

“She said 5 minutes.”

When Ava got there, they put her bags in and left. When they got to the forest, Olivia and Ava stayed in the truck while Griffen went to set up camp. From inside the bed of the truck, Olivia and Ava heard someone scream...and they knew who it was. It was Griffen.

The girls didn’t know what to do. They didn’t know if they should go into the woods after him. Or take the truck and drive to the nearest police station. They tried to track Griffen on their phones, but they couldn’t get enough service to connect to his phone. They walked a little ways toward the main road, but it was too far. After they got back to the truck they thought about if they should go into the woods after Griffen. They decided to go after him. When they got to the campsite, they were so surprised. The tent had claw marks all over it, there were drops of blood on the ground, and, worst of all, there were human footprints all around. They didn’t know what to do. They decided to follow the footprints. That was the only way they could find Griffen.

After what seemed like hours, the footprints ended. The girls had no idea what to do. They searched around in the leaves on the ground until they found a trap door. When they pulled on the door, it opened. As soon as they opened the door, they heard another scream. They then heard more screaming.

“Shush, someone will hear you,” said the unknown voice.

“Who was that?” whispered Ava.

“I don’t know, it wasn’t Griffen. But it was Griffen that screamed. I think that we should go in there,” replied Olivia.

To get down to the room there was a ladder and no light. It was a short climb down, and, when they got to the bottom, there were two doors. One went left and one went right. They could hear voices in the door on the right, but nothing from the door on the left. They decided to go to the left. When they opened the door they saw Griffen.

“Griffen! What happened! Where have you been!” yelled Olivia.

“Shhhhhhhhhh, he’ll hear you!”

“Who? Who will hear us?”

“The person or thing that captured me. I couldn’t see his face, so I don’t really know,”

“Well we need to get you out of here. Me and Olivia were so scared we didn’t know what to do,”

They untied the ropes around Griffen’s hands and feet, but while they were doing this, they heard footsteps coming their way. They froze. There was nowhere to hide and nowhere to go. When the person walked in the girls both screamed, but Griffen just sat there with a look of fear in his eyes. The person grabbed both of the girls by their wrists and yanked them out of the room that Griffen was in. When he brought them into the room across the hall he tied them up to the chairs and left them there. When he left the room, the girls looked all around the room trying to find something that was near them that they could use to escape, but there was nothing. They had no idea what to do; they would just sit there and wait.

The next time the door opened there were two people. They whispered to each other in the corner of the room for a while and then one of them stepped forward.

“What is your name?” said a voice that sounded like a woman’s.

Olivia thought for a moment about what would happen if she didn’t answer. She thought of all the bad things that would happen - she would have to stay here longer, they would separate her and her brother forever...or they could do worse. So she answered.

“Olivia,” she said quietly.

“And what is the boy’s name?”

“Griffen,” she said even quieter.

The two people went back to the corner and then walked toward the two chairs and untied the girls, but the girls just sat there, until both of the people took off their hoods.

“Mom? Dad?”

“It’s us, Olivia,” said her dad. They then opened the door and out came her brother. Olivia ran at her mom and dad and hugged them both.

“Griffin? Did you know?”

“No, I didn’t.”

“Why did you guys leave us?” asked Olivia.

“We did it for a good reason, but I promise we will never do it again!”

Taylor St. Peter

Woodland Consolidated School

Mr. Tompkins

Grade 7

Impossible Cube

To anyone who saw it, it was just a red cube about six inches by each side. In reality, it was an impossible shape that was imperceivable to all beings apart from its creator. The cube was incapable of most everything at the beginning, except for learning and adapting. That’s why it was created, to learn about the earth and what it held. Earth was still underdeveloped, having nothing modern, and there were much fewer humans alive at the time.

The cube was first dropped onto a large grassy hill in the middle of a forest. It sat there for six days where it became aware of the weather and nature. Since the cube was never really alive, it could never die, so it did not need to eat, drink, or breathe. After seven days the cube was picked up by a small boy. He was under the age of twelve, had ginger hair, and very pale skin. The boy put the cube into a burlap bag and brought it back to a small wooden house. It only

had two rooms with a small bed and a fireplace in one and in the other, a sink next to a couple of barrels of salted meat and water with a couple of candles placed on a window. The boy took the cube out of the bag and set it onto his bed. He kept on asking himself what the cube was, but never found an answer. Finally being presented with its first conscious life, the cube was confused. It didn't understand what the boy was saying or doing, and it couldn't realize that he was alive and aware. He kept the cube on top of the fireplace for about three months. The boy decided that the cube had no use so he didn't touch it for a while. After those three months, winter was upon them. Life was more difficult because the boy had to harvest more wood for the fire, and hunt more so he wouldn't starve. The cube had seen what the boy had to do to survive. It knew that the boy was aware of his surroundings now, and not just a plant or part of nature. It had also learned what a few of the words the boy said meant after them being said so much. It sat there for about seven months altogether and had been presented to lots of different types of food and different objects the boy had brought back. The cube had begun to grow fond of the boy and disliked it when he had to go out to hunt or get water for himself. To make room for some new candles he pushed it off of the mantle and onto the floor. Never had experienced any form of hostility, the cube subconsciously reacted. It removed the vision of the cube from itself and had shown its true shape. The boy looked at the impossibility and instantly went insane. His brain simply couldn't handle the concept of what the shape showed. He backed away, tripping over a couple of logs for the fire, and fell onto his bed. He curled up and began to cry. The boy lay there sobbing after simultaneously seeing both infinity and void. He could not understand anything anymore. He had completely lost his sanity. The cube had made its first advancement, starting to be able to switch its appearance to adapt to its surroundings. The boy could no longer handle his life and stopped hunting, which led to his starvation.

The cube, now knowing how to change shape to adapt to its surroundings, manipulated its body into a sphere, and slowly rolled out of the house. The house was on a steep hill, so the sphere could roll away without wasting too much of its energy. It stayed in a puddle of mud for the next few days, taking in information about things around it. This is the first time it had touched the water before, and it didn't know what to think about it. It saw water as an opportunity more than anything. It would be a very useful trait to be able to change form into a liquid. After about two days of being in the mud, it decided it wanted to leave. It returned into sphere form and had the hill carry it away. It was brought down to a river next to a garden where about fifteen people were working on the crops. Most of them stopped working to look at the sphere. An old man even walked up to it to pick it up. Ready for hostility the sphere readied itself to defend. The man lifted the sphere and examined it. The people around him started to ask questions on what the sphere was with what he answered "I don't really know." He stuck it into a bag he had around his shoulder. People around him whined that they didn't get to keep it and he did. He didn't care and kept it anyway. After he was done working, he walked home on a trail in the woods. He walked for about ten minutes before stopping at a large white building. He walked inside and spoke to a man who took nearly half of the man's money from his work. This was the only way the man got to keep on living. He had to pay the man every night or else he would be either killed or exiled from his home. When the old man got home he placed the sphere onto a shelf next to his bed while he slept that night, and when he woke he stuck it back into his bag and headed out for work. It was about a twenty-minute walk to the gardens where he would work until the sun began to set. The whole day people were asking him about the sphere and he just kept saying he didn't have it on him or that it wasn't important. The sphere began to learn more words and ended up knowing when people were talking about it. It liked the attention and began

to not like the old man for hiding it away from everyone. He was held in the old man's possession for nearly a week. The old man never showed any of his fellow workers it for the whole time. For the sixth day, he was walking home admiring the sphere. He paid the man at the big white building and kept walking. He was stopped by a man in the middle of his trail. The old man was being robbed. He made the old man give him everything. The old man did as he was told for the most part, but hesitated from giving him the sphere. The robber noticed he had something else in his bag and pulled it out. The old man fought back as much as he could, but the criminal still got it. He shoved the old man down onto the ground and looked over the sphere. The sphere respected the fact that this man was willing to do awful things to achieve his goals. As punishment to the old man it removed the veil and drove the old man insane. He stopped moving and muttered unintelligible words to himself. The criminal stuck the sphere into a bag, and luckily, for him, didn't see it change form.

He ran away quickly, not knowing what happened to the old man, and arrived at the large white building where he sold the sphere for a large sum of money. A government official was now in possession of it. He didn't have it for long though. The day after he gave it to one of the top men of the city. He admired the sphere and showed it off to people who all envied him. The sphere enjoyed being loved by everyone who had seen it and enjoyed its time with the leader. It could tell this man was powerful because he heard it when he told one of the poor people of the city to do something for him, they would almost always do it. There were a few times that the citizens would revolt against his reign, but they were put in their place soon after. The sphere stayed with him for many years until the man had passed him unto his son who took his place. The sphere had learned and adapted to lots of things. It was now able to influence the thoughts and actions of people just like the king it had admired. It went this for generation after generation. Each time it was given to a new son it became more powerful. By the fifth son, it was able to completely control all actions of up to nearly five-hundred people. This was how it was now.

Jameson Tateishi-Ouellette

Woodland Consolidated School Miss Craig Grade 8

Don't Blink

“Don't blink. Every time you blink, it gets closer.” I'm writing this because I don't know how much time I have. All I know is that it has managed to evolve itself faster, stronger, smarter, and it can clone itself now. One more thing, this thing can't see, but its hearing is very enhanced. I can't supply any more information about it, but I can tell you that this isn't going to be easy. You have to find a way to kill this unknown thing before it's too late. Good luck.

Sincerely Dr. Jones.”

That was the last note my father wrote. I don't think he meant for me to find it. He always wanted to keep me safe but that failed, and now I'm all alone. Well, not ALL alone. I have a three-year-old brother, Jamie, with me. I'm only twelve years old with a three-year-old

brother saving the world from something that was created in my father's lab. The worst part is that. I. Can't. Blink.

"Yes, yes. I know it's going to be scary," I said. I'm having a long talk with my brother about how we're going to do this. I'm trying to sound strong, but, in reality, I'm scared this unknown thing was created, and now I'm the one to fight it while being blind?

"But why can't I open my eyes?" Jamie said.

We had socks over our eyes and kept them closed. I thought just keeping our eyes closed could help us instead of keeping our eyes open and fighting the urge to blink. "Because it's going to keep us safe," I replied with a shaky voice.

"Oh, o-ok."

And with that, we were off. I had a small backpack with food, water, more socks, a med kit, and some sort of "weapon." It was set aside with the note that my father left me. It doesn't really look like a weapon, more like a stick with a button on the side of it. The weirdest part of it was the corn-feeling thing at the top of the stick. It's hard to know what things look like, so I have to use my feeling sense a lot more than I normally would.

We had barely walked a mile when I heard a loud thump. At first, I thought it was "It," so I quickly turned around, weapon in hand, gripping with all my might. I took a big gulp before stepping in the direction the sound came from. Just before I was about to find out just how powerful the weapon really was, I heard a soft cry. It was Jamie. I quickly threw down the weapon and ran towards Jamie. Big mistake.

"Shh, shh, Jamie. What happened? I-I-are you ok? Are you hurt?" I heard a small snuffle. He didn't answer me, but I just assumed that he was just being a kid. I hugged Jamie tight. I reached into my backpack for the med kit. Once I had it in hand, I set it down and grabbed Jamie's hand and told him to point to where it hurts, but he didn't point to anything on his body. Instead, he pointed behind him. *Huh*, I thought to myself. Just as I was about to ask again, I heard a noise, a loud one. It was as if a pterodactyl was screaming. I froze and went to reach for the weapon in my bag but it wasn't there. It was on the ground. I got up and was running towards the weapon as if I was thrown...my back hit against an abandoned car. My vision was giving out and just then everything went black.

Gabriella Vargas

Woodland Consolidated School

Ms. Swan

Grade 6

The Artist

Once there was an artist named Opal. She was the most unique. She based her art work off of people's fears. The most popular being the fear of death, which was the only one that scared her. She decided to create a piece of art on the subject of death but did not realize that it would soon make her one of the most popular artists in the world.

It all started when Opal decided to make a piece of art based on the theme of clowns. Clowns were her older sister's biggest fear, she often had nightmares about them. The painting

she created was immaculate. Soon after Opal gave her sister the painting, she was not scared of clowns anymore. Everyone was so confused, because she made the picture very scary and real.

Opal then asked her mom what her biggest fear was? When her mother replied, “spiders”, Opal knew what her next painting was going to be of. She ordered spiders from petco.com and created the most real painting for her mom. Her mom’s fear of spiders went away.

Opal was confused, everytime she made a picture of something that someone was fearful of their fear went away, but not hers when she made one of death. Maybe it was a coincidence, she thought.

She continued on with her Dad. Asking him what he was fearful of. His response was heights, so she made a painting of the tallest building in New York. She showed her dad the picture and he went on his phone and applied for a job at the tallest building on the tallest floor in New York City.

Opal thought if her art work worked for her family, she was going to be able to change the world. She did worry that after she gave her pictures to her family they changed and wondered if they would ever go back to normal. When talking to her family a sudden idea crossed her mind. She ran downstairs and grabbed all the pictures and ripped them up.

Suddenly her phone rang. When Opal answered the phone it was her best friend Meg. Opal started yelling, “help!” Meg was confused, she told Opal to calm down, and started asking her what happened. “Just come to my house now!” Opal responded.

When Meg got to the house Opal started to tell her how when she painted a photo for her family it started to erase all their fears. They all started to change! Opal started to laugh because Opal had been pranked! Opal's pictures were wonderful but never changed her family or erased their fears. Her dreams of being famous were over but her family was back!

Journey Bragg

WDES

Ms. Erica Smith

Grade 6

Wish for Love

Maggie is the youngest of three, her older brothers are Jack, who is thirteen, and Caleb, who is fifteen. She’s twelve, so she’s old enough to babysit, but still young enough to be the baby of the family. She wishes she could have younger siblings to play with. So Maggie started a babysitting business so she could be with little kids. Her favorite child to watch was Arya Smith, a quiet eight year old girl who loves games and books. Arya never leaves her house without a book. One reason Arya was her favorite was because she was never loud or silly.

One day when Maggie was walking home after babysitting Arya, she saw a new store built and the sign was lying on the ground. It said “Magical Mishaps and Wishes by Larry B. Allie”. A man with big circular glasses, blue eyes, short brown hair that was parted in the middle, and kooky clothes came out of the store. She assumed he was Larry B. Allie because he had a name tag that said “Larry”.

“Why, hello! My name is Larry, Larry B. Allie! Won’t you come in?” Maggie had a five dollar bill in her pocket, so she decided to go in and take a look around. “Is it true you sell wishes?”

“Yes, yes it is! Larry led her to the front counter, where three bottles sat with slips of paper inside. The tags read “Any wish you want is 99¢”. “Will I really get a wish from that?” Maggie asked.

“Why, you will, you will,” Larry said. All you have to do is write your wish and shake the bottle three times.”

“I only have a five dollar bill,” said Maggie.

“Well I do have change for that bill,” He replied. So Maggie gave him the money and took the first bottle.

Maggie ran home and bolted up the stairs and flopped on her bed. She opened the bottle and wrote on the slip of paper ‘I wish I could have a little sibling to play with me everyday’. She shook the bottle three times, set it on her desk and went downstairs for supper. When she got to the table, there was a blonde, ponytailed, eight year old girl sitting there. It was Arya. Her wish had come true!

The next thirteen days later she had fourteen younger siblings. After school she went up to find the wish paper shredded and took the paper to her bed.

“I wish everything would go back to normal!” After a while she put the shredded paper in the bottle, wiped her eyes and went downstairs to find only her mom, dad, and brothers.

“Where’s Arya?”

“Maggie, you only watch her on Friday and Mondays remember,” Mom said.

Anna Castonguay

Zippel Elementary

Mrs. York

Grade 5

Insignia

She comes out of nowhere. One moment Elias and I are only yards away from the checkpoint, the next, Valaa Penni is directly in front of us, taking me in a headlock and holding a narrow blaster gun to my head. Elias halts immediately.

“Go!” I tell him. “Go! Get to the checkpoint before her!”

He looks torn. Being the first one through the portal is a huge advantage. The first person (or team) there, is the only one who can actually go through that portal. Everybody after that has to go to a separate one. That portal is fairly far away to get to the next part of the Chase. The only thing left at this portal would be the coordinates leading to the other, so not being first meant losing a lot of time. We both know what’ll happen if he keeps advancing towards the checkpoint.

“Don’t,” Valaa hisses at him, confirming what we both thought would happen. “One more step and you can say goodbye to your brother.”

Elias is slightly closer to the portal than us, and he's quick. He looks like he's about to listen to me and run to the portal, but instead he starts running towards Valaa and I. He's almost reached us, when I hear a blaster shot and see his body hit the floor. Valaa's grip on me loosens as she shoots him, and I use the opportunity to twist out of her grip and grab my own blaster.

Now we're facing each other. My back to the portal and her in front of me. We both have our blasters out and ready.

I shoot before she has the chance.

I hit her leg; I don't kill her, but she can't do much now. I run over to knock her blaster out of her hand, then go to grab my brother, and step through the portal.

I lean over the bed. Over the body of my dead brother. He didn't die immediately, but he bled out. Blood smudges onto my hands as I wrap his body in the cloth of our family colors, blue and silver. Before I finish, I place my hand over his heart, and mutter, "I'll finish the Chase. I'll finish it for you. And I hope Nova will guide your soul peacefully into the center of our sun."

"Creek!" I hear the voice of Bracken, my copilot and engineer, call out to me. "We're nearing Tear, should I prepare to land?"

I wash my hands, then leave the med-bay, and head to the cockpit, where Bracken is. We could mourn later. Falling behind in the Chase would mean that Elias had died for nothing; so I compose myself as I make my way up front. When I get there, he is running scans of the planet as our ship, the Starspark, enters its orbit.

"Any storms approaching?" I asked, glancing over his shoulder at a monitor.

"There is a small acid rain storm brewing up west of where we need to land," he replies, pointing at the small swirl of colors indicating precipitation on the screen. "It shouldn't bother us though, we're far enough away and it isn't moving very fast."

"Then we should be good to land," I say, hopping into my seat, and strapping myself in. Bracken does the same, as I guide the ship towards the planet. The Starspark rumbles a bit as we enter the atmosphere, but before long we're close enough to touch down.

As soon as we've landed on the small planet, we head towards the back of the ship to get suited up. Tear's atmosphere doesn't hold oxygen, so we need suits and oxygen tanks to leave the ship. The space suits are thin, as the planet still has an atmosphere. We don't have to worry about the vacuum of space. In about ten minutes, we are stepping out of the ship and making our way towards the spot on the planet with the coordinates we had been given.

When we approach the cave at the given coordinates, one of the planet's two suns has begun to set. The mouth of the cave is huge, and it's fairly dark inside. Bracken flips on the light on his wristband, and in front of us stands something like a stone altar, with nothing but a red gem embedded in the middle. The Insignia Crown, I realize. This could be the end of the Chase. We

glance at each other excitedly as we cautiously walk forward, and when we get close enough, it suddenly sinks underground. The loud noise of rock scraping on rock fills the echoey cave, and behind where the altar had stood, two words are carved into the stone.

Prove it

Then a big slab of rock on the wall falls away, and from the shadows behind it, a huge mass of darkness charges straight at us.

Mia Shaw

Presque Isle Middle School

Mr. Carmichael Grade 8

Glitch Back To Reality

The air outside felt like a thick fog, it was hot and smelt like burgers on a grill. Children laughed as they ran through a sprinkler. It was a beautiful summer day and everybody was out enjoying the weather except for Raymond. Raymond was always inside, sitting in his room playing video games, however, this would soon change.

That evening when his mother called him for dinner, he found himself so consumed with his game, that he turned up the volume on his headphones to silence her voice. A few minutes later, she showed up in his doorway, but Raymond sat unaware of her presence. That was until she walked over to him, removed his headphones and looked him directly in the eye; “Raymond, game off, it’s dinner time.”

Once excused from the dinner table, his mother said; “No more gaming for the rest of the evening.” Nodding his head, Raymond made his way back to his room. Slowly closing the door behind him, he disregarded his mother’s words and went back to playing his video game. Hours passed and before he knew it, it was midnight. His vision became blurry, his head heavy and then everything went dark.

When he opened his eyes, he found himself lying in a potato field, but this was no ordinary potato field. These potatoes were all cube like, something straight out of a video game. He slowly sat up, to take a better look at his surroundings. That’s when he heard somebody calling his name. There stood before him, an older man, his eyes were tired and his clothes ragged.

“Do you know why you’re here?” the man asked.

“No”, Raymond replied, “is this a dream?”

“No, this is your wake up call to stop living your life in front of a screen and to start enjoying life more presently.”

“Wake up Raymond, look around you, do you want to end up like me one day?” “I missed out on so many of life’s real moments, all because I was too consumed with living my life virtually.” In a blink, Raymond’s life flashed before him, he was shown an image of himself all alone playing video games in his living room. His hair was gray, his eyes were sad and his

family was gone. Raymond looked at the man with tears in his eyes, “I miss my family, I want to go home.”

“Raymond, it’s breakfast time!” his mother called from the dining room. Raymond jumped out of bed and made his way downstairs . He ran over to his parents who were sitting at the table and gave them both the tightest hug.

“Can we go for a bike ride after breakfast?” His parents both smiled and answered “yes” at the same time. Raymond learned a valuable lesson that weekend, family is far more important than any video game could ever be.

Bentley Picard

Mapleton Elementary School

Ms. Black

Grade 5

A Hairy and Scary Tale

It was a dark and stormy night, wait no it wasn’t... let me start again... It was a bright and glistening night, Halloween night. It all started out like a normal Halloween, but then all of the sudden, as I was trick or treating, I saw kids turning into what they were dressed as! Good thing I chose the wizard costume instead of that zombie costume. Then, all the zombies chased me on my bike all the way to an abandoned playground! That’s where I hid.

Last summer, a family went to the playground with their dog and the dog got lost. The kids went after him, getting themselves lost as well. Then, the parents ran away from the park after failing to find their kids, never to be seen again.

I had a head start, and quickly hid under the really wide slide. After the zombies left, I found some pretty weird stuff. What I found was a wand, a wizard’s hat, and a bucket full of worms. I thought the worms were useless, but I kept them anyway. Just then, I heard the bushes move. “It’s just the wind, it’s just the wind!” I told myself. I hid back under the slide though, just in case. It wasn’t wind though; it was a... a... A MONSTER! A big fluffy, green and yellow, smelly monster. The monster smelled like sour milk mixed with moldy, spoiled, rotten cheese.

I snuck away and it didn’t notice me. I got to my bike when it fell over, making a big BOOM! It saw me and grabbed me. It cackled and croaked as it bolted away to its nest behind the climbing wall. I tried to get away but it clenched me harder. I gulped. I lost both of my shoes because they were slip on and they were a size too big so they slipped right off. After we got to the monster’s nest, he picked me up by the foot and his fur tickled my feet. I laughed because of the ticklish fur the monster had, but then it bellowed. I squirmed and squiggled as it swung me from his arm. Then he dropped me into a big pile of sticky goop that oozed from his mouth. I was stuck! I kept on moving from side to side to try and get out. I just kept sinking in more, getting more and more stuck. Eventually, that’s when I remembered about the wand. I was able to get my arm unstuck, and then I used a spell to get out of the goop. When I got unstuck, I tried to turn the monster back to normal, but I missed. Then the monster was coming right at me!

The monster was coming right at me, I had to act fast. So, I did a spell, “Abra cadabra elli abra!” And the monster turned back into a kid.

Turns out the monster was my best friend, I forgot that he was dressing up as a monster. We quickly rode back to town on my bike and I turned everyone back to normal! I was a hero. Everyone cheered and clapped. And that was the story of the Halloween of 3065. The end. Or was it?

Kallie Beltran

Zippel Elementary

Mrs. Hoffses

Grade 5

The Mysterious Tree House

Once when I was 8, my brother and I were walking through the woods on August 5, 2017. We were just on a hike in the woods in our backyard when we heard a strange noise. We came across a tree house that looked like it had fallen down years ago but we had never noticed it there before. So, we decided to head back and ask our parents about it. When we got inside of the house no one was home. We looked everywhere and even the cars were still in the driveway. So, I went and got my phone and texted my parents. I waited but there was no answer. I didn't know what to do so I asked my brother what we should do. He said that we should probably go outside and look for them but he had to find his phone.

After he found his phone he looked at it for a long time. So I walked over and saw the date. His phone read August 5, 2020. I heard a voice in my head telling me to go down in the basement. Once I got down there I saw scattered flyers and a couple old random newspapers. I picked up one of the scattered flyers and noticed it said MISSING Olivia Sherman and so I began sifting through more flyers and found other flyers that said MISSING Jason Wilcox both dated August 5, 2017. WE HAD BEEN MISSING FOR 3 YEARS. I walked over and picked up one of the newspapers dated to August 5, 2018 saying that it had been one year since Olivia Sherman and Jason Wilcox have been missing from the woods. I showed Jay and he said that we need to go back to the woods and find the broken tree house to look for a clue why it is 3 years later.. We looked for about an hour before we gave up. There was no more treehouse.

We were starving. We went back inside and looked for some food but there was only junk food in the cabinets. I walked over to the fridge and luckily there was some milk not rotten so I could make some Mac and cheese. Everyone likes Mac and cheese. There was no meat in the fridge, just some fruits and veggies which I washed then put on a paper plate. After we ate we went to bed. The beds were so comfy. The next morning I made some breakfast because it was going to be a long day if I wanted to go back home or something. I made some scrambled eggs and gave Jay some leftover milk from last night. I found a charger that would charge our phone so maybe just maybe we could try calling someone. I got my bag and packed some lunch, water, and snacks I didn't know when we were going to get back home. We walked out the back door and into the woods. We looked for about half an hour until we finally found it. I felt a wave of relief. I was so happy. We had looked for so long.

The tree house was in a tree now and had golden sides with a red roof in great shape. I didn't understand because just a day or so before there was a tree house but it had been on the ground and broken. There was nothing leading up to the tree house, but we needed to get inside

to see why we were there. There was a rope leading all the way up to another tree. We walked over to the tree and climbed up the gold ladder. When we got to the top of the ladder and onto the platform the ladder disappeared so we had no choice but to go over to the flimsy rope. I started to walk across the rope and one of my feet was starting to shake but I made it across. My brother did too so we went inside the tree house and the door slammed shut as soon as we both got inside. There was a book in the tree house. I picked up the book and it flipped its self to page 324 and it said **HOME** in bold lettering and all uppercase. It told us to say home 3 times. I knew I had to say it, it was my ticket home after all.

“Home!. Home!. Home!.” We said.

The treehouse started to spin faster and faster and faster until it just stopped. I looked out the window and it was the same as before but there were stairs leading out to the ground. I walked down the stairs and ran to the house my parents were at. They said I had only been gone for about an hour but I knew it was longer. I ran down stairs to see no missing papers. They were gone. I checked the date, it was really August 5 2017. I was so happy. My brother started crying. “I thought we were never going to see our parents ever again.” Jay said.

“Relax, I had this all planned out.” I said.

“You did?” Jay said

“No but if it makes you feel better. Yes.” We both laughed

Olivia Sherman

Presque Isle Middle School

Ms.Henne

Grade 7

The Monster In My Closet

When I was five I had this closet. My closet was dark and I mean DARK DARK! Even in daytime it was still dark! Once I heard a noise in the closet. So then I called my parents to come open it. When they opened it, I screamed. AHHHH! But then my dad said it was just clothing. Phew!

Khloe Fitzherbert

Zippel Elementary

Ms. Watson

Grade 4

The Magic Valley of Sapphire Springs

Once upon a time there was a beautiful princess named Princess Eleanor and there was another princess named Princess Samantha. They may be princesses but they go on tons of adventures together. At the castle they act like your average princess, all sweet and delicate.

One day they were on a trail ride together on their royal horses when they came across a very mysterious waterfall. The waterfall's water was so bright! Then the two girls drank it and it was so good, to them it tasted like a cupcake. Then they looked behind it and there was a secret passageway. The two girls went into the waterfall. They heard a bunch of hooves galloping and before their very eyes was a magical wild horse herd galloping at top speed. Behind them a magical blessing of unicorns were chasing them. The two girls decided to follow the herds. In the distance they both saw what seemed to be a finish line. They got out of the way. They were glad that they did because then out from the dust they saw a large group of pegasus. They can't believe their eyes. All that they needed to see now was an ancient creature called a songwing.

Suddenly, the princesses heard singing, and it was so beautiful. The two girls decided to follow the voice. As they followed the voice they were on the outside of what seemed to be a very colorful cave. Princess Eleanor and Princess Samantha both decided to go into the cave. Inside there was a beautiful land. The grass was green, the sky was blue, and it wasn't too hot nor too cold. Suddenly, something flew by them so quickly they couldn't believe it. Then a little lizard-like creature landed in front of the two girls. It said, "Come see the beautiful singer."

"What's her name?" said Samantha.

"You mean boy," said the creature.

"Ok then what's his name?" said Eleanor.

"His name is Dakota," replied the creature in a sly voice.

"And what's your name?" said Eleanor.

"My name is Slither. I'm a hipnozoid. Just come with me."

"Ok " said the two girls at the same time.

The two girls followed Slither into a free and open area. There were rocks all set up to look like a stage. Then a skinny, dark-blue creature with wings and bright blue spots on his shoulders and on four legs stood in front of them. "I'm Dakota and who might you be?"

"I'm Eleanor and this is my sister Samantha," said Eleanor.

"How about you follow me to our seats?"

"What do you mean about our seats?"

"Oh, you don't know? There's a huge concert in a few minutes," he said in a snappy voice.

"Okay, okay, geesh, but..."

"No time. Just come on," Dakota said while pushing them forward.

Eventually the two girls decided to cooperate with him. When they got to their seats the girls were surprised, because it was in a forest clearing. They had to sit on the ground. When they sat on the ground it was covered in soft moss, and they saw a bunch of other creatures that they didn't think existed. Eleanor leaned over to Dakota and whispered, "What's going on?"

"All of the songwings are coming to listen and see who will be crowned this time."

"What do you mean?" Eleanor asked.

"I mean that each year songwings compete by using our magical singing abilities to be crowned as prince or princess of song. Unless we get challenged by r...r ...rock songwings " he said nervously.

"What's wrong with the rock songwings?"

"Long ago all songwings lived together in harmony, but one day a songwing named Warrior discovered how powerful he was and took his powers and tried to take over the whole land. He didn't win. Soon all types of songwings broke into war, and it ended with all of us splitting up different types of music," he said in a sad voice.

“The show is beginning! It’s the queen of song Queen Gwen Golden and her mate Blake the King of Country music,” all of the pop song wings cheered at once.
“Well, here we go,” said the princesses.

Gabriella Fuller

Easton Elementary School

Mrs. McQuade

Grade 4

SUKI AND THE DRAGON

Suki Ashton was a young fragile girl that had just moved to Pennsylvania from Japan. Her parents, who lived in the time of dragons, were always telling her stories of fierce warriors that lived long ago and fought dragons. Suki longed to be a warrior, but she knew the truth... She could never be a warrior if there were no dragons around. Suki was sad and yet relieved at the same time; she knew she could never fight a dragon even if they were still here.

It was Suki's first day of school and she was nervous about meeting people. *Let's hope this school is better*, Suki thought. She took a deep breath and got on the bus, she sat with nobody. She talked to nobody. When they got to school, she sat at her table with two other girls. They looked at each other.

“What's your name?” girl one said to girl two. “I'm Amanda!” said girl one, “and you are?”

“Kate, I'm Kate!” Both girls looked at Suki.

“What's your name?” Both of the girls said to Suki.

Shyly Suki said. “M-my name is Suki...”

“Oh, it sounds like a Japanese name,” Kate said. Suki explained that they had moved from Japan. Many hours went by as the girls talked and then, RRIINNGG. The bell had dismissed everyone. The girls said bye to each other and walked home.

After a long walk Suki was near the forest and heard almost crackling noises coming from the trees. She timidly walked into the forest and the sound got louder and louder... And in a quick second SLAM! Suki was pinned to the ground, she couldn't even open her eyes. She was terrified. She heard a small growl, she opened one eye and was shocked. She thought it was all a dream, no it was real?! A dragon? She reached out her hand to touch it, but it snapped at her and flew off into the pitch-black woods. Suki, who didn't believe what she saw and didn't know what time it was, glanced at her clock in surprise. It was 7:15. Oh no! Suki thought as she ran home quickly. Suki layed in bed and thought about the dragon... glimmering purple skin with piercing blue eyes and blue horns, sheathed orange claws. Suki fell asleep and dreamt of that same dragon all night. She even thought of names.

The next day was a weekend day, so Suki told her parents that she was going out. Her parents told her to be careful and she left to go find the new dragon, she went into the woods with a pocket knife and a steak. She threw the steak and hid behind a rock until a few hours later when she heard chittering. She jumped out and there was a squirrel sitting there chittering and munching on the steak. Suki made the squirrel leave by scaring it off. She waited, and waited, and waited some more. But no dragon... So, she tried the next day and she heard a loud thump.

She knew it was the dragon landing peacefully on the ground to eat the steak. She jumped out and startled the dragon. She wanted to capture it, but something told her not to. It was a glistening purple dragon that could've been the last of its kind. Suki patted it, and this time it let out a deep noise almost sounding like a purr. She sighed and said, "Oh I can't kill you..." She patted the dragon gently. "Come with me" Suki said and the dragon followed. They ran all the way to Suki's house when she realized that the dragon had turned ink black she stopped and looked at the dragon.

"I'll figure this out tomorrow," Suki said softly, they both ran to Suki's house and panted. She told the dragon to wait outside and it did. Suki ran inside and grabbed a water bottle and then ran up to her room and opened the window. There sat the dragon peacefully, so Suki threw down the water bottle and with quick reflexes, the dragon grabbed it with her mouth. She crunched the bottle and some water went in her mouth. She spit out the plastic and then Suki yelled down, "Goodnight, Dragon I'm Going to Sleep!" The dragon lifted its head and said "Rwarr?"

"Sleep!" Suki yelled down again, "when you dream and stuff?" The dragon widened its eyes and nodded and flopped on the green grass. Suki's parents came in and said they thought they heard her shouting, nervously Suki denied. The next morning the dragon had its shimmering purple color back, and when Suki opened her window, she realized that the dragon turns black in the night but purple in the day! She took out a dragon book her parents had given her for her birthday and discovered it was a twilight ink dragon, only 4 were left on the Earth. Suki looked out her window again to see the dragon nuzzling a butterfly. Suki went outside and ran it back to the forest so nobody would see it.

"I'm naming you Sweet Ray!" Suki said proudly. They strolled around the woods for a while. When Suki came home that night, she thought to herself... *Maybe a dragon killer isn't the best title for me... I am Suki Ashton and I am the Dragon Tamer of the Forest.*

Dayna Berry

Ashland District School

Mrs. Belanger

Grade 4

War Zero

Chapter 1

This story is about a man. His name was Adam Jenkins. He worked for the military; there he was known as Commander Jenkins. He was an amazing fighter and strategist. Any fight he got himself into, he got himself out of it perfectly fine. The only thing wrong was, he wasn't careful. Sometimes reckless.

One day he was making himself some breakfast and getting ready to start his day. Then he heard a...RING. He went to the door. On the welcome mat there was a package. He brought it inside and began to open it. Inside there was a cube. The cube had a button on top of it. He started to become curious. He told himself not to press it, but he couldn't control the temptation...KA-BOOM.

"How could I have been so stupid?" Adam thought as fire swirled around him. There was debris crushing him. He was in so much pain. He started to hear helicopter blades overhead, then he went unconscious.

Chapter 2

"AAAHHH!" screamed Adam.

"Calm down, you're fine," said a strange man. The man was bald and he had a white lab coat. He also spoke with a British accent.

"Where am I?"

"You'll find out soon enough. As for now, I'm Dr. Simins and you, Adam Jenkins, can't move."

Adam looked down and almost screamed. The man was right. Adam was missing his right leg and right arm, his chest was bandaged, and he just realized that he could not see out of his right eye.

"What happened to me?"

"Well, your curiosity got the better of you. I am working on something that will make it so you might be able to walk and see again, but in the meantime, you need to start to train," said Dr. Simins.

"Have you seen me? How am I supposed to train? I am missing half of my body!" yelled Adam.

Chapter 3

A few days went by and Adam hadn't heard or seen Dr. Simins.

"Finally, I've finished the gadget!" screamed Dr. Simins. Dr. Simins came around the corner with messed up hair and coffee stains on his coat. In his hand he had what looked like an earpiece.

"Put this in your ear," said Dr. Simins.

"Okay?" said Adam. When Adam put it in his ear nothing happened.

"Try tapping it," said Dr. Simins. Right when Adam tapped the device it expanded into a helmet, then a metal arm. The metal parts expanded down the right side of his chest until he also had a metal leg. These weren't just normal prosthetics. They were fully functional limbs. He could also see again through both eyes.

"It's amazing!" they both said in unison.

"The war will break out in 3 days, you need to be ready," said Dr. Simins.

Chapter 4

"Wait, what? Be ready for...what war?" asked Adam.

"War Zero. The savior or the destruction of the planet," said Dr. Simins.

"And how did this all start?" asked Adam.

"The government sentenced Organisms in space. We think that it could be..." said Dr. Simins.

“Yeah, okay,” Adam said softly. He tapped the helmet again and it shrank down into the earpiece.

“I’m ready now,” said Adam.

“We leave in three days,” Dr. Simins replied.

The next two and a half days were quiet. Then just an hour away from the start of the war, Adam heard helicopter blades. He and Dr. Simins went to the elevator. They got in and went up. Just then Adam realized they had been underground this whole time. They got in the helicopter and took off. They were in a flat valley with nothing for miles. One hour went by.

Chapter 5

A battlefield started coming into view. Explosions were everywhere. Then Adam looked up. There were thousands of objects in the sky. In the middle, there was one that almost completely blocked out the sun...the mothership. Swarms of smaller ships poured out of it. There was an ear-piercing.... BANG! The helicopter was going down. CRASH! Adam was fine, but when he looked over, Dr. Simins had a gash in his chest.

“Leave me. Go help *cough* the others!” said Dr. Simins. “Good luck Commander!”

“Noooo!” screamed Adam. Then he tapped his earpiece and walked off to help his fellow soldiers. They battled and battled until the mothership fell.

“That was for Dr. Simins,” said Adam, standing in the wreckage of the mothership.

Griffin Holmes

Ashland District School

Mrs. Beaulier

Grade 5

Scarecrow in the Garden...

Every year, my dad put out scarecrows in our fields because he thought they were effective in not only keeping the crows out, but evil spirits as well. I guess he is a little superstitious. The scarecrows he set out were the same ones, year after year. After so much wear and tear, they were showing their age. All the scarecrows were so old and patchy that they looked like ragged dolls.

One particular day in fall, I felt like I was being followed. I had no idea why I had that hunch all of sudden. I finally thought to myself, *I cannot stand this!* One night, I sat out in the garden all night long. I do not think I have been any colder than this in my entire life!

That very next morning, I found myself asleep, I was so mad with myself I did not eat anything until supper came along, and what I had for supper was one piece of chicken and exactly thirteen peas! I ate those directly in front of that scratched up scarecrow. Then, I punished myself by accidentally staying up all night, making sure I did not fall asleep. I still had that same hunch about someone following me, so guess where I sat? Exactly right in front of the scary scarecrow! That is when I saw that scarecrow flinch...I was petrified for my life and was so scared. I was not quite sure where I was running to, but I was running for my life...when all of a sudden, I was in my black, luscious, charming car.

It seemed as though a couple of hours passed by. I was just about ready to get out of the car then... something broke the car window. The scarecrow had been shocked by the electrical wires a few nights before when it was raining. Little did I know that electrical wires had made the scarecrow come alive. I was astonished and very confused. The scarecrow was no longer a friendly scarecrow that would just scare the birds away; he was the scarecrow that scared everybody and everything away.

“Boo!” shouted someone.

“Ahhhh!” I shouted back, frightened.

Then I was wondering who in the world said that. “W-w-w-who said that?”

From out of nowhere, I heard, “It is me!”

I thought that was very creepy, so I questioned, “Who is me?”

“ME! I will give you a hint. Your hint is, I live on your property somewhere, and you fell asleep last night?!”

I immediately knew that it was the scarecrow. I must've accidentally fallen asleep when the scarecrow came alive. I then howled, “You, you are my enemy.”

“I wouldn't exactly say I'm your enemy. I would say we don't get along very well.”

“N-n-nooooo I would most definitely say we are enemies. You were the one who didn't get any sleep last night and barely had any supper!”

“That wasn't exactly my fault now was it! You were the one who chose to do that to yourself... you could have gone inside in your nice cozy bed.”

“No, I couldn't because I had to scare away the birds because you weren't doing your job correctly.”

I sat there staring at the scarecrow, waiting and waiting for him to leave. Hours and days passed, and he still harassed me. Would he ever leave? I was fearful the answer was no... I was starving, and the groceries that accidentally got left in my car weren't holding me over for the amount of days I have been in here. My family kept having to sneak me food through the driver side door, so the scarecrow wouldn't see them, either. Oh yeah, forgot to mention that my car was broken down, so I couldn't just drive away. Little did I know what was ahead of me...

Kaydence Howes

Ashland District School

Mrs. Merrill

Grade 7

How Germany Outlawed Love

Oh, how I loved how to play piano. I was the best and serenaded the crowd every day. After the injury to my hand, I was no more a piano man, but was now a businessman at a Cabaret. Not a pianist anymore, I could only watch and hope that I could someday be resurrected into my old form. But now I shall never be any of my old self because my new self cannot love anything without harm.

Now love has brought me to jail, since this Hitler is now Fuhrer of the World and everything in it, even love. Without anything left of my old self, I went to love. My love was of the same kind, but that shall not matter in the eyes of love.

Hitler can outlaw all he wants, but he shall never take love. With all I can do, I shall never be able to do everything. Even without my freedom, I can still get out and love.

Even though they shall always watch me, I shall always try to love.

They have caught me and are putting me with this lower class. Why do they hate love? Why are they sending me to Sachsenhausen?

I guess this is what I shall have to do in the name of love.

Will they beat and torture me like the Jews and Gypsies? Shall I never live through this day? What shall happen to me there?

This is my stop...the horrendous Sachsenhausen. Let's see if I shall even get into there without getting gassed.

As luck would have it, I am there to suffer another day. I have to have an office job; at least it isn't anything goes.

Despite the fear in my body, I'm actually surprised how my hand flies as I write. This may be my substitute for the piano. If I got paid and got fed, this could actually be classified as a job.

I am actually thinking about having friends. These five people, Pan, Daniel, Andras, Shulamit, and Marcus. I think that they will always be with me.

With hope, I shall stay in my job and stay in the living realm. Without me, I think that Andras would have withered away by now. He was skinny from the beginning, and now, without a sustainable amount of food, he would have been dead. I give him half of my food every day, so that he can live and I can survive.

I have been steadily losing weight, and I am skin and bones now; Andras has been slowly withering away, but not quick enough to be noticeable.

Andras was deported from Hungary and had at least half of the people die from his cattle car.

As time marches on, we are all getting to be skin and bones. There was talk that they were taking anyone who had enough energy to walk on a death march. I hope that they give us some food to actually have a chance to live.

They told us that we each had a loaf of bread to get us through the whole march. Most people would want to opt out of this march, even though we would never be able to talk to the officers to even try.

On our way to the borders of the camp, we saw American planes flying overhead. Hopefully, they would see us and take us to a place without the officers and all of the torture that comes with their eerie presence. With lost hope, most of us just kept our heads down and started to walk. Even with our German gun "encouragement," we thought that we would never make it without more food.

As we started on the trail, our feet were immediately soaked from the morning dew that rose up like the dead of the camp, haunting the soldiers.

After about a week of walking, all of us were about dead. We all met up when we stopped for the officers to have a break.

We discussed our escape all of that night.

When we woke up, we began to execute our plan. When it looked like it was high noon, that was our time to escape. With the guards on the downhill slope of the day and the sun in their faces, it would be hard to tell that we had even left. They would want a bite of food or a drink of water that we would never even think about getting the crumbs or drops of.

We ran to the corner with no guards watching us. We went into the woods and laid on our bellies. After all of the officers and outlaws were gone, we started on our way to civilization. I knew where this was because I used to live here with my lovemate. When we reached civilization, I bought everybody new clothes with the money that I miraculously kept from all of those searches that happened almost daily. Eventually, we all started new lives in America where we were all allowed to love whomever we wanted.

Daniel went to Kentucky to go anywhere and see everything. He also went on to love another of the same kind.

Pan moved to North Dakota for no reason except that he heard good things about it. He went on to have a good job and a better life with a wife and fifteen children.

Shalunit went to Texas for the sole reason that it is hot. She went on to have a husband and no kids.

Marcus created a life for himself in Washington D.C. where he became a famous politician and changed the world. He went on to have a wife and two children.

Andras went to Virginia because that was the only place that he could afford. He went on to kill twenty Aryans and spend the rest of his life in prison.

As for me, I spent some time in the hospital to get my hand back to working like it used to. Thanks to the advances in health care that the Americans have, they were able to fix my hand within a few short months. Now, I am back to serenading the crowd every Tuesday. I have been reunited with the love of my life back from Germany, and we now live in California.

Carter Craig

Ashland District School

Mrs. Merrill

Grade 8

A Day Living with A Fairy

Whoosh, Whoosh, Whoosh! This is how I found out that a fairy was living in my house! I woke up and it was very windy and cold. I got ready and went downstairs to get breakfast. I opened the cupboard to get the pancake mix and there were shimmery footsteps all over the food. I went into shock! I started to follow where the footsteps led to.

The footsteps went through the living room and on the wall just a little bit. Then there was an outline of a door on the wall that was shooting glitter into the air. I tried to open it. The handle was so small that I had to get a really good grip on it. It opened and then a bunch of glitter swirled around me. Next thing I knew, I turned into a tiny fairy and went in through the door. Inside there was a little bed, a sofa, a bathroom, and a kitchen. There was nobody inside, so I went back out of the door, and I started looking for where the fairy went.

I went upstairs to my bedroom and all of my doll clothes were on the floor. When I was picking it up, I noticed that some of my doll clothes were missing. I thought to myself, "The fairy is looking for something to wear." I went into my bathroom and on the wall I saw a little toothbrush and toothpaste. By then I knew there was something wrong going on. I went into my toy room and I saw that there was food from my small toy kitchen set being cooked. The food was cooking in the oven and it was getting burnt. I picked up all the food and I went to see if the

fairy was eating anywhere. I followed the smell of the food she or he was eating. It led to the little tiny door on the wall. I opened the door and I became a fairy again. I went inside and the fairy was at the kitchen table sitting on a chair.

I said, "Hi! My name is Brook. What is your name?" "Hi! My name is Riley," said the fairy. "Nice to meet you." I asked, "Can you turn me into a fairy so when I get out of your home I can still be a fairy?" "Yes, I can," said the fairy. "That's great," I said. So she took her fairy wand and made me a fairy. I had a teal dress, brown hair, and pink shimmery shoes. "Thanks!" I said. "You're welcome," she said.

"Now, do you want a tour of my tiny house?" asked the fairy. "Yes, I would love to look around," I said. "So you want to come look at my kitchen?" asked Riley. "Okay," I replied. "Now do you want to go look at my toy room?" asked Riley. "Yes, I would love that," I said. We went in, and we played with her doll. We had a super fun time together. For supper we had alfredo and chicken wraps. After supper we watched a movie and had popcorn and ice cream. We got so excited because we had the idea to go in the hot tub. There were lights in there and even some bubbles! It felt so nice because it was warm and toasty. We had to go to bed, so we got into the warm, cozy sheets and drifted off to sleep. The next morning we made toast and bacon for breakfast. I told Riley that I had to go home. We said our goodbyes, and I went home. And that's how I found out that there was a fairy living in my house with me my whole life.

Avery Hebert

Dr. Levesque Elementary School

Mrs. Jenna

Grade 4

The Dead End

I always wondered why the dead end on our road had always been so creepy to me. Just looking in its direction gave me the shivers. The trees always made it dark, so you couldn't see what was there, like it was keeping secrets from the world. My mom always said, "There is nothing at the end of the road. You should forget about it, Thomas." I never *really* believed that.

I was playing basketball with two of my friends one morning, Zeke and Liam. I tried to shoot a hoop when I lost control of the ball. It rolled away towards the end of the street and just fast enough, so I couldn't grab it. Zeke and Liam looked at each other and quickly said, "Not it!" while touching their nose.

I rolled my eyes at them and said, "Okay, fine! I'll get the dumb ball." I walked closer to the ball, breathing heavily. Luckily, it hadn't gone *all* the way to the end of the road. It had gotten caught in a thorny bush maybe a few feet from the sign that said "DEAD END" in big bold letters. I tiptoed closer and reached inside and grabbed the ball, getting my hands scratched up. Then, the ball felt like it had been pushed out of my hands or something. Now, it had rolled into the abyss. "You gonna get the ball today or tomorrow, Thomas?" Zeke yelled to me, laughing with Liam.

"I'm fine, just give me a second," I yelled back.

This was just great. I had to go *in the dead end!* I couldn't do that, like what if someone, or something tried to grab me and take me away? Nobody would ever see me again. "Guys, could we maybe get a new ball?" I said while shrugging. "Liam, don't you have one?" I asked.

"Don't be such a wuss! Why are you *always* scared of some stupid dead end?" Liam said marching over to me.

"We'll go get the ball since *you* can't," Zeke said following Liam. They both marched off into the darkness.

Five minutes later I yelled, "Guys, are you close to the ball?" into the darkness, worried. "Hello??" There was no response. I waited and waited, still nothing. "You guys better not be playing a trick on me! This isn't funny! Come out!" I said yelling with anger. "Guys?" I then said in a small voice. Were they coming back?

I walked slowly to my house hoping they would see me giving up. I was sure that they would get bored and come out soon. I had dinner with my family. Then, I did my homework and went to bed.

I woke up in the morning, had breakfast, and was getting ready to go to school while planning on what I was going to say to Liam and Zeke. I was planning on telling them something like, "You shouldn't have done that! It didn't scare me at all," even though it did. Then, *KNOCK KNOCK!* at the door. "I'll get it."

My mom said in a surprised voice, "Oh! Hi, officers. What can I do for you?"

"We are here today to ask you some questions about two missing boys next door," the first officer said.

"May we come in to take a seat?" the second officer asked.

The officers asked me about what had happened last night, and I told them about everything that had happened. I said that I was sure that they would turn up, but they never did. They left our house saying they were going to form a search group. They went off to search the area, but they didn't find any clues. Not even a footprint. It had been very muddy, so there should have been some. But, absolutely nothing. It was like after they were out of sight, they would never be seen again.

Eliza Dube

Dr. Levesque Elementary School

Ms. Liza

Grade 5

The Cupboard

It was a delightful, hot Saturday summer morning. "I am so happy yesterday was the last day of school," Bella said into a walkie talkie. "Same, now we can finally go see that scary bakery. Did Sage fall asleep again? SAGE YOU THERE?" Rosey yelled, really excitedly, talking into another walkie talkie. "Hey! Keep it down why don't ya. I fell asleep," mumbled Sage on the walkie talkie as she got out of bed. "So we are meeting at the bakery after breakfast at our house today?" asked Bella. "Hey guys, isn't that person named Lily who used to run the

bakery? Maybe we can go talk to her and see why she closed it!” Sage exclaimed. “We could also use my Nerf guns to protect us.”

“Bella! Come get your breakfast!” screamed Ruby, Bella’s mom. “Coming! Sorry guys, I have to go,” replied Bella. “Bye!” shouted Rosey. “Oh yeah, bye,” Sage said quietly, as she was still waking up. “Hey, Mom, what is for breakfast?” Bella said as she was going down the stairs. “Waffles,” said Ruby. “Yes, my favorite!” Bella said while rubbing her stomach. “Good morning,” Bella’s dad, Henry, said. “Hey, where are you going in such a rush?” Ruby asked. “Um, I’m going to the lake with Rosey and Sage,” Bella added. “Okay, have fun,” Ruby said. “See you later. Be back by noon. You have three hours, okay!?” exclaimed Henry. As Bella was walking through the screen door onto the porch she saw Rosey and Sage riding bikes together. “Hey guys, wait up!” yelled Bella as she got on her bike. “Do you guys know where Lily lives?” whispered Bella. “Um, I think Lily lives on Brooklyn Avenue. I also think Lily’s house number is 125,” said Sage. “It’s kinda creepy how you know all this stuff,” chuckled Rosey, almost laughing, as they turned onto Brooklyn Avenue. “Look, we’re here,” announced Bella. “Ummm, Lily’s house is creepy. Do you guys also notice that her windows are covered up by wooden planks?” said Rosey. “Yeah,” they replied. “Let’s go knock,” said Bella. “Hello, who are you kids?” Lily said quietly as she crept open the door. “Hi, my name is Bella, this is Rosey, and this is Sage,” noted Bella. “Can we come in? We would like to talk about why you closed the bakery all those years ago,” said Rosey. “Come in then,” Lily said quietly. “So why *DID* you close the bakery all those years ago?” Sage asked as they were sitting down in the living room. “I shut the bakery down all those years ago because this thing was...” whispered Lily as her heart began beating faster and faster. “Was what?” said Bella. “What was the thing?” Sage exclaimed as her heart beat faster. “What did that thing do to you?” murmured Rosey quietly. “The thing was scaring me and I didn’t know what to do, so I ran away and never went back to the bakery,” replied Lily. Bella could see the fear in her eyes. “WHAT WAS THE THING?” exclaimed Sage, almost screaming. “We should go,” said Rosey quietly. “Maybe we should leave her alone, let’s go,” stated Bella. “Yeah let’s go,” noted Sage as her heart was beating regularly now. “If you guys go to that bakery, you will need something to protect yourselves. It isn’t safe in there,” mentioned Lily. “Yeah, we are going to my house after to get my Nerf guns,” Sage said as they were walking out of the house. “WAIT! The thing...is a Zoltar machine. I could always hear the Zoltar machine saying, “Come here Lily, come here,” Lily said loudly. “You would be surprised by how it works. I read about it in history, and it is supposed to tell your future, but it could also tell you creepy things,” Bella blurted as she got on her bike. “Be careful!” said Lily as the girls turned the corner. “So, I guess we are going to your house to get the Nerf guns?” asked Rosey as they were riding their bikes from Brooklyn Avenue. Upon arriving at Sage’s house, she said, “Okay, these are my Nerf guns. Hurry up, guys,” as she picked up Nerf gun bullets from the floor. “All done,” said Rosey, “It looks pretty cloudy out there all of a sudden,” said Bella. “That’s weird,” whispered Sage to herself.

They got on their bikes and headed for the bakery. It started to rain...softly, then hard. “Guys, let’s hurry up and get to the bakery so we can get shelter,” said Bella. “Yeah, let’s go!” said Rosey, almost screaming because of the wind, thunder, and lightning that came out of nowhere. “The door is locked!” yelled Bella as the storm got worse and worse. “Let’s break it open!” said Rosey as she put her elbow next to the glass door, ready to break it. “One, two, THREE!” said Bella, Rosey, and Sage as they pushed on the door. The door shattered all over the place. “I am mostly worried about the thunder and lightning,” added Rosey. “Guys, the...THE LIGHTS ARE FLICKERING!” yelled Bella. “Ummmm, guys, do you hear that?”

said Sage. “Hear what?” asked Rosey. “Wait, I hear it too,” said Bella. “It sounds like carnival music, doesn’t it?” questioned Rosey. “Let’s follow the music,” ordered Sage. “Wait, maybe we shouldn’t,” said Rosey. “Yes, we need to find out what happened here,” pleaded Sage.

As the three girls walked past the sitting area of the bakery, then through the door into the kitchen, they noticed a cupboard door was open, so they climbed through it. “Wait guys, I don’t think we should go in there,” said Bella as Sage and Rosey were getting in the cupboard. “Just come on,” said Sage. “Fine...” said Bella. Once the three girls climbed through the cupboard, it led to a hallway, where the girls started exploring. Then they noticed the hallway was getting longer and longer, and then there were other hallways. They didn’t know which way to go. “Guys, I... I don’t know where to go! I can’t tell where the music is coming from!” Sage said, as she pulled her Nerf gun out of the bag. “Here guys, take your Nerf guns,” said Sage, holding her Nerf gun tightly, as if zombies were coming. “Wait guys, I think I can hear the music. It’s getting louder and louder!” exclaimed Bella as sweat was running down her face. As the three girls ran through the hallways, a lighting bolt hit the bakery. “Sage, Rosey, I think the power went out,” said Bella. “Wait, I can see a light down at the end of this hall,” said Sage, trembling. As they continued down the hall, the three girls approached the light they saw. When they arrived at the room where the light was coming from, there was a Zoltar machine in the room saying, “Come here girls, come here.” “WHAT DO YOU WANT FROM US?!?” said Sage. “We have done no harm!” exclaimed Rosey. “Guys....did you notice that the lights are flickering again?” asked Bella. “MMMMMMMM!” screamed Sage. “Oh my god, SAGE!” exclaimed Rosey. “She’s stuck in the BOX! With tape around her mouth!” Rosey said to Bella. “We have to get her out!” screamed Bella. As the two girls were trying to get Sage out, the Zoltar machine was laughing...“Hahahaha...hahahaha!” laughed the Zoltar. *Flick, Flick, Flick...* The lights went out. “GUYS!” exclaimed Bella. *Flick, Flick, Flick...* The lights turned back on. “ROSEY!!!!” screamed Bella. “MMMMMMMM!” yelled Rosey. In a deep voice, Zoltar announced, “Now what are you going to do Bella?” “HELP!” shrieked Bella. “MMMMMMMM!”

Mikayl Michaud Dr. Levesque Elementary School Mrs. Vicki Deschaine Grade 6

The Missing Pieces

“Hello, this is scientist Dr. Rosemary Carter, and if you are listening to this recorded message, that means that something terribly wrong has occurred on my journey to the future. If this do...e...s *crack* h.a..pp..e.n....sen..d s..ome *crack* ..on..e t..o f..in..d m.” The speaker cuts off. Ugh, what happened? Why does my body hurt so much, and more importantly, where am I? My head. Is that... blood? My head hurts. I need some food. I *am* in a forest, so some berries and a small animal should do to hold me over. Maybe there’s something in the wreckage that could help me hunt and gather sustenance.

There’s a loaded hunting rifle, some rope, a medkit that has some bandages, medicine, and matches. As I walk through the dark and dense forest, all I hear is the *crunch* of the newly fallen fall leaves and the *crack* of the small twigs under my feet. I’m looking for a small animal,

like a rabbit, and some berries. Huh? What's that? It looks like a tarp. Maybe there's something under it. "Ahh!" I scream.

Ugh, I can't believe I fell for that trap. Well, maybe I can use this to get some well-needed rest. This is the first time in a long time that I've been able to see the stars. I've lived in the city for most of my life. It sounds like someone's coming. Maybe I can ask them to help me out of this hole. They're getting closer. It's a boy, and he's looking at me. Because of the moonlight, I can just barely make out a fairly large bow, some arrows in a quiver, and a small knife hanging from his belt. He is pretty scrawny and is probably only about fifteen or sixteen. "Do you want some help out of that hole?" He asks. I nod my head in response. He grabbed my hand and pulled me up.

Now we're on the way back to his camp to eat some food, and he offered to let me stay the night at his camp. He has dirty blonde hair and has very bright green eyes that shine like a newly polished emerald. His name is Ian, and he's a hunter. I told him why I was here. I need to save the world from an alien-made disease, and I need to get my time machine fixed so I can get back to 100 years in the past. I also mentioned that in the morning I should head off to the nearest military base. After conversing for hours I was finally able to get some sleep.

I woke up before the sun rose, but Ian was already gone. Last night I was able to get information about the nearest military base and an abandoned junkyard from Ian. There's a military base about five miles from here and a junkyard about seven. So, I picked up my things and headed out.

I don't think I've ever walked that far in my life. Now, my government official ID should be in my right jacket pocket. I found it! I just have to show this to the guard in the front. He said that my ID is invalid but that's impossible. This was made specifically for me to be able to use in the future. He sent me off with a warning. He told me that if they ever caught me trying to get in with a fake ID again that they would take me into custody. So, now I guess my only two options are either breaking into the base or going to the junkyard. The junkyard sounds like the better option. But, the junkyard is twelve miles away now. My best course of action would be to get some rest then head to the junkyard tomorrow morning.

I woke up before the sun was up again. I feel like the sun comes up later than normal. I collected some sticks to make a fire and started cooking some of the meat that Ian gave me before I left.

The junkyard is pretty empty. Let's just hope that what I need is here. There's not even any old, jacked-up cars. I think that the metal scraps are in the right back corner over there, near what looks like some old tires. I need a special type of metal; a metal that is only made with volcanic materials because it's very durable and can withstand the force of time travel. It also has a very distinctive black and silver color. I don't see any in the pile, but I know that even if I did look I'd have a very tiny chance of finding even a tiny piece of it because it's incredibly rare but it was worth a shot. I guess that leaves me only other option; infiltrating the military base. I'm not going to stop this time. I'm going to head straight into the flames.

Now that I'm hidden in the bushes, I need to look for a possible entrance or hole in the electric fence surrounding the building. Aha! I can see one on the far right of the gate entrance. It looks pretty tiny from here though. Maybe I could use a stick or something to try and make it bigger. Wait,- someone's coming. Hide! Huh, is that Ian? He is apparently here to help me, he saw me coming back from the direction of the junkyard and thought that I might need help breaking into here. He gave me some tools that I could use to pry open the hole in the fence and then left.

I walk to the fence very carefully because guards are watching about every inch of this place. The guards aren't looking; now's my only chance! Ugh, why is this so hard to make bigger? Ok, that should be big enough for me to crawl through. I'm on the other side of the fence! Now is not the time to celebrate. I think some of the guards noticed me. Well, that took care of them. They could only take one punch. I guess they're weaker than I thought. There should be a vent somewhere around here. I can use them to traverse the facility. Now I'm inside, so the vent will be right about here. That rope will definitely come in handy. I'm in the vents, I have to be very careful that I make little to no sound and try not to cause an unwanted commotion. Where is it... where is it... found it! That didn't take long. Now all I have to do is jump down. Ah! Ow, that hurt. Oh no! I think I alarmed the guards!

The guards keep asking me questions. It's like their mouths are going at 100 miles a second. I can't understand a word of what they're saying. Someone else just walked in, he looks like someone that I know, but he's a little bit older and has different colored eyes. He has dark brown hair that's the color of dirt but has blue eyes the color of the ocean. He has a very round face and kind of reminds me of one of my coworkers. But, my coworker is younger and doesn't even have any children. Maybe it's just a coincidence.

They said that they're bringing me in for questioning, and will put me into custody if guilty of stealing precious military-grade metals and parts. They're asking me basic questions like where I'm from, what's my name, age, why I'm here, all that stuff. So, I told them everything; about the time machine, the pandemic, that I came to the future to look for a vaccine, that I needed to fix my time machine to get home, and that I'm from the year 2975. Of course, none of them believed me and, after fighting for days, they finally decided to lock me up, forever. Now the future of the human race is in danger in both the past and the future.

Faith Belanger

Wisdom Middle High School

Mrs. Sonya

Grade 7

Flipped

My vision goes blurry, and colors spiral through my vision. I fall to the ground, losing control of my body. I felt a tap on my shoulder, but I was too stunned to react. After a minute of regaining consciousness, I'm laying sprawled out on the ground of the glowing room. Looking around, I see my sister kneeling next to me. The upbeat smile she has is drained into a concerned frown, and the sparkle in her eyes is dull. Nadia helps me up to my feet and explains that things are getting out of control, including us losing our abilities. She grabs me by my arm and pulls me ahead, and the once glowing room starts to flicker, pieces of it are broken off. Nadia turns to me and motions her head at the circular portals.

The dimensions are fading, and so are we. This wasn't normal for either of us, despite how much havoc is spat on us. I should know what to do, because I'm in control of all that is Inferior, which is the dimension I control, but I don't feel in control at all. Nadia is used to everything being perfect, as she has the responsibility of the Ethereal dimension. Our worlds are crumbling in front of us, but it's not a metaphor.

She looks to me for guidance, but even I'm lost. I look into her fading eyes and say, "We should switch. You go through my portal, I'll go through yours. Clearly what we are doing isn't working. Trust me, it has to work."

She nods her head and walks over to mine. I place myself in front of hers and cock my head over to see her. Nadia is looking at mine with a blank expression as she slowly turns her head to me. A weak smile slips from her mouth, as she waves and walks forward. Without a second thought, I took a step forward into her portal and light flashed before my eyes, blinding me momentarily.

The light glows brighter than looking directly at the sun, I whip my arm up to shield my eyes. After regaining consciousness in my vision, my eyes adjust to the light. I take a moment then look at the world before me. The sky is painted as if a bucket of glowing colors was splattered in a pattern amongst it. Since my sister is so perfect, I thought that her world was the same as she was. In some ways it is, as both are bright when they are brought into view. I step down from the portal, glancing back at it one last time before setting off to make things right. After a bit of walking, I came up to a meadow. Trees are blossoming as the sun beamed through them from above, flowers covering the floor like a blanket, vines sprawling amongst branches. As I walk through, I brush my hand against the bright green grass that thrives below the flowers to see the sun. Everything about this place is breathtaking, but nothing seems to be the matter.

Careful of where I place my feet, I stroll ahead looking for what could possibly be wrong in this beautiful place. Birds tweet like waking up on a warm summer morning. I follow the sound, and ahead I see a flower that is not like the rest of them. It is wilted and drooping down, colorless compared to the surrounding scenery. It is fenced in by thorns and vines, trapped in a cage. I reach my hand out, and place my fingertips onto the withered flower, letting my fingerprint lay embedded into it. Sun shines down on it like a spotlight, lighting up the flower. "Maybe it needs water, it seems dehydrated," I mutter to myself. I walk around once more and spot a glistening pond. The sun bounces off of it, making it seem see-through. Seaweed dances in the water, and fish glide past it. I pluck a large leaf off a tree about the size of my torso and walk up to the pond. The fish scatter and I dip the leaf into the water, letting it scoop up the liquid. I hoist my arms underneath the small puddle and slowly prance over to the dying flower. Leaning the leaf over, the water trickles into the flower's bed. The water begins to spiral out of the leaf into a circular formation above the flower. A gust of wind launches the water into the air spiraling high into the air, soon exploding like a firework. A mist of water surrounds the land, everywhere but the flower. My mind is focused on the water, it takes me a moment before I notice the luminescence of the flower. The flower radiates a bright pink color, then flashes white. I observe the flower once again, and it is absolutely stunning. It seems back to normal, so I turn around and head back to the portal.

I stand in the glowing hallway and see that Nadia's portal is no longer flickering. It is glowing brighter than before, making a clear separation from the wall behind it. I turn my head to my dimension, and it has faded much more than it was previously. More hesitance grows and sends shivers down my spine. My stare draws to the ground, slowly the ground starts spinning. A pit grows in my stomach. Clearly, it isn't that bad, or I would be done for. I take a moment to breathe. I've made it this far, and nothing bad has happened. Nothing out of the ordinary is spiraling out of control, so things should go smoothly from now on. Whether it will or not, I choose to not take any chances.

I sprint to my portal with the floor crumbling at my feet. I push off and jump towards it, as the rest crumbles from beneath my feet. There's nothing left, and soon I will join it. I have to get my sister back and set things right.

I head face-first into the portal, with the scorching fires heating up my body, and the smoke suffocating my lungs. A stinging feeling dwells in my eyes, but scratching at them is making my vision blurry. With the portal crumbling, so are my abilities, and everything, as we know, is in grave danger. I run despite the parched feeling growing in my throat, and search for Nadia. It can't end like this, I won't let it, no matter what happens.

Ahead I see a small pool of light, glowing a radiant yellow against the rest of the deep red undertones. I wave my arm in front of my face to get the smoke away from me and pull up my shirt to my nose. A slow gesture of an arm waves back, very far in the distance. Without a second thought, I sprint as fast as my legs can carry me through the burning surroundings. There are burning rocks, pools of lava, fires as far as the eye can see, the dim sky painted black from the smoke.

I bring my feet to a halt, as rocks trickle down into a pool of liquid fire below. I'm right there, all I have to do is make it across this gorge of a cliff. Backing off slowly, I sprint to the edge of the cliff and push off with my feet, landing on the rough ground. My whole body aches and burns as a stream of blood pours down my face from the fresh scrape on my cheek. I gather whatever remaining strength I have left in my body and push myself to my feet. I stumbled over to her holding my arm that had been ignited with fire. I fall to my knees next to her, putting the back of my hand against her cheek. There is no movement, she's icy cold to the touch. Tears swell in my eyes as I run my hand down to her wrist where I check for her pulse. My eyes sting and burn as a lump forms in my throat. I stare at her emotionless body, frozen in time. I punch my fist into the ground and scream as loud as I can, my lungs emptying themselves. I pull my shirt down, letting smoke fill my once healthy lungs. They sting and burn, as hacking comes from my mouth. I let myself fall next to my sister, and I saw a flash of white, before seeing eternal darkness.

Katelyn Zetterman **Wisdom Middle High School**

Ms. Sonya Michaud **Grade 8**

The Reign of the Sasquatches

Hello. I cannot tell you anything about myself because they would come for me. But, I can tell you a very interesting story from the future. 5867 AD to be exact. Now listen closely while you read, for you might find some things interesting indeed.

Now it will be in Van Buren, ME, USA. The sasquatches were making a diabolical plan. They were going to turn any living creature into a sasquatch and make an army to take over earth!

There I was walking down a woods path when I heard something. Something very large. Then I saw sasquatch. Wow a real sasquatch I thought.

Then it charged at me "AHHH!!!!" I yelled for my life.

Then it knocked me out and took me into a hole and jumped in. Now I will be pretending to be unconscious.

I was seeing everything for what looked like a human sanctuary. They all looked happy but something was wrong. Some were being taken away to a place even further underground. Then I heard screams. Human screams.

I was put in the sanctuary. I realized why they were so happy. They were getting all of their life wishes. Suddenly I got everything I wanted except getting home.

Then I noticed something above me. A large glass thing that had Sasquatches looking down at us. I could hear mumbled Sasquatch language.

“Zechli kopghy gyujh!”

Then out of the blue, one grabs me and takes me underground even further underground. I realized that it was where all the other people were being taken. The one that captured me and brought me here, grabbed me.

I was so scared that I almost fainted. Then I saw cells with people in them. They were still happy. All of their things were still there and they were joyful.

Then I was put in one of the cells and I was so scared.

After one came and told me to come with him. “You can speak English?” I said surprised.

He said nothing and just kept walking. Then I saw a weird machine that was so odd looking. One person was forced to put their head in and out real quick and turned into a sasquatch.

A legit Sasquatch. I was taken toward it, when all of the sudden they all stopped and ran off in the same direction.

Weird,” I thought in my head.

But then I was back in the cell before I even finished the word. I tried breaking out but all I had to do was walk through the bars. They were fake. Holographic.

I saw a crystal and it was so beautiful I almost touched it, when a humongous Sasquatch said “NO! NOT THE CRYSTAL!”

Then I decided to touch it and when I thought it was a stupid idea, I was at my home like nothing happened.

I have come back in time to tell you. “YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED!”

Thatcher Lawlor

SACS

Mrs. Clark

Grade 4

Everyone for Themselves

It was late September and you could feel the weather changing into fall. I was walking home from the store, it was getting dark. I had to pick up a few groceries before the store had closed for the night. A cold blistering wind gave me chills down my spine. The night had been silent with only the chill of the northern wind to be heard. My attention was grabbed when I heard an unfamiliar sound behind me. Out of the corner of my eye, I saw a blur of movement;

not knowing what it was left me uneasy. I began to run, dropping the bag on the ground, ripping the bag open, and spilling the contents. I desperately reached for my phone which was in my back pocket, so I took it out. The battery was dead. I started running, knowing I'm not gonna go very far.

Being about a mile or so from anything, I looked around, my head was dizzy and I couldn't see straight. It looked like the world around me was spinning faster and faster. *Just keep running*, I told myself! I started to panic, screaming and trying to find help, then everything went black.

I woke up in a panic in my bed. Sweat-covered and shocked, I could barely move. *Must have been a bad dream*, I tried telling myself. But the only problem with that was I knew it wasn't and that's what frightened me the most. I got up from my bed to get dressed. I was going to meet up with my friend in a few hours. The previous night still had me feeling light-headed, but I decided to ignore it. Ignoring these feelings, I walked over to the bathroom where I splashed water in my face. I looked in the mirror, I looked like a mess! My short brown hair was going in all directions, and my skin was way paler than usual.

"Samael, can you come down here for a second?" My mother had said from the bottom of the stairs. I was wondering what she wanted. I mean it was early in the morning, wasn't it? I went to check my phone, but it was dead. I shuffled to the top of the stairs to see what she wanted. She was standing, her face twisted into a frown. "What do you want?" I ask with a hint of annoyance in my voice. I sighed and stood up, and for the first time, I realized that a girl was standing with her.

The girl had long black hair, kinda silky looking, her hair was pulled back into a loose ponytail. Her eyes had a beautiful reddish-brown look to them. She didn't look very tall from what I could see. She appeared to be tiny. She was almost as pale as a ghost, way paler than anyone that I've ever seen before. She had a devilish look to her and didn't look any older than me.

"Samael, this is Azrail. She will be staying here for a few days. She's the new transfer student at your school that I told you about. I want you to show her around the place and the area in general," Mom said, with a glare of warning.

"Yeah, whatever!" I say, rolling my eyes. "Well I'm going to my room," I say looking back at them then turning around to walk back to my room. Out of the corner of my eye, I see a smirk on her face while I am slamming the door behind me. I took a shower and threw on a sweatshirt and a pair of sweatpants. I went back to my room, plugged my phone in, and headed downstairs. My mother was in the living room, seeming like she was waiting to talk to me.

"Samael, if you're leaving you taking Azrail, or you not going," Mom said, in the most annoyed tone she possibly could make. I ignored her and headed for the kitchen. Azrail was standing there drinking coffee. I poured my coffee into my travel mug.

"Azrail, go get ready. We are meeting up with my friend. Mom said I had to bring you along," I say as I run upstairs to grab my phone. When I got back downstairs, she was waiting. She was wearing a black shirt and a pair of black jeans. Her clothes were torn. She looked as if she had gotten into a fight. I ignored it, but little did I know it wasn't far from the truth. We walked onto the screened-in porch to wait for my friend.

A few minutes later, a guy with about shoulder-length black hair pulled back into a loose ponytail, stepped out of a black truck. His eyes were golden brown, and he was also pale, but not as pale as Azrail. He was about the same height, maybe an inch or so taller than me. This was my friend, Kaiju.

We stepped out and the first thing I noticed was the cold. The sun was starting to show through the trees. It was the prettiest sight I'd seen all year. Azrail didn't seem to like it though because she was yelling at me to get going. I gave her a look of confusion but then Kaiju agreed with her. What's wrong with these people? I took a picture and then put my phone away.

"Let's just go, Kaiju." I go to walk down the steps and Azrail pulls my arm, so I turn to her and say "What do you want?" She looks at me with a look I could not quite read, leaving me in confusion.

She whispers, "I don't trust this guy, neither should you." She was watching Kaiju very carefully. He gives her a slyish smile as if he knows what she's trying to do and is trying to taunt her.

"Azrail, you're overreacting. Now let's go before it gets too late," I say, trying to change the subject. I get out of her grip and start for the road. Azrail and Kaiju both run to catch up to me. Azrail throws on a black hat and Kaiju pulls up his hood and instructs me to do the same. I don't understand, but I do it anyway.

We walk down the driveway to the road. From there we take a left, turning towards where our school was. There are not many cars out today, which is a little odd, but I try to ignore it. There is no one on the streets either. Everything looks abandoned. I look at Kaiju with a little concern on my face. I'm not the only one who looked worried. So doesn't Azrail, which is weird since she isn't from around here. Kaiju seems not to be bothered by this as he has a little grin on his face.

"Where is everyone? I've never seen this place so empty. What's going on?" I ask looking at Kaiju for an answer. But all he does is give me a sly smirk, with a bit of a creepy laugh then proceeds to say,

"Don't worry about it Samael. It doesn't concern you." And I could have sworn he said, "Well not yet at least." I try to ignore what I hear and look to Azrail to see if she has heard him too. She gives me a calm look then smiles.

To be continued

Serenity Campbell Southern Aroostook Community School Mrs. Russell Grade 8

She's Gone!

One July summer day Darcy, her friend Harley and her niece Lola were outside playing. Harley went to get popsicles to eat! Lola went with her to get the last grape popsicle, leaving Darcy alone on the front lawn with a soccer ball in her hand. All the sudden a black car drove slowly by the house staring at Darcy. She got uncomfortable and scared, so she turned away then she heard a stop to the car. Then everything went black... She woke up inside a trunk, her hands were tied and so were her feet.

Darcy untied her hands with her mouth and then her feet with her hands. She looked around, there were red velvet seats. The car stopped and the trunk opened. Two tall men dressed in all black carried her to a dark scary looking place with concrete and water puddles all over the

floor. They put her down and then gave her an old bottle of water with a whitish tint to it. One of the men sassed her, “Drink up; now kid we don't have all day. She drank it “it tastes horrible” Darcy said. The men ignored her and walked away, she ended up passing out.

Lola and Harley came back “Darcy!” Lola said, No Darcy? The girls looked around and Lola started to cry “cheer up we will find her” Lola wiped the tears dripping from her eyes, she looked up and saw a light Lola ran towards it “HER PHONE!” Lola yelled out. Darcy had left her phone on the stepping stones. So they walked up to the phone and clicked a red button. The girls heard a voice mail start playing and it said “HAHA you will never find her but- I’ll give you a hint.. Go to the Kmart or Villain ST. you will find your clue...” the voicemail ended “what the heck!” Harley said “Did you hear the crying!?” Lola asked Harley nodded her head. Lola started to run towards the car, she jumped in the car swinging the door shut she looked over and Harley was in the car too

Fifteen minutes had passed and they arrived. “Look a paper!” They grabbed it and read it. The note said “your next clue is something with legs but doesn't walk..” Lola didn't understand the note.. “A TABLE!!” shouted Harley “A TABLE HAS LEGS BUT DOESN'T WALK!” said Lola ‘wait where is a table?’ asked Lola. They looked around “I don't see one Lola” “me neither Harley”. “DARCYYYY!!!” yelled Harley, ‘This is your fault she got kidnapped” sassed Lola “to be honest i am more important than you” said Harley “no I’m family i am!”. They argued back and forth till about 10 minutes later Lola walked away and headed to the car crying with tears running down her face. She cried while quietly saying “Darcy please come back please”

Darcy rose up in fear as she awoke, one of the men was standing in front of her “We have to move you people are going to find you, come on.” He said in a dark deep voice “I'm not leaving until you tell me your name!” Darcy yelled “fine... my name is Robert Stevens.” “MY UNCLE!?” Darcy yelled. As she woke up, she didn't remember anything besides yelling. As Darcy sat up she was in a different basement place, “strange” Darcy said quietly. Darcy Walked to a staircase. She walked up a little bit, enough to see a half open door as she peeked through. Freedom!

Darcy ran out not taking any chances. She ran for about 5 minutes and stopped it was noon and then Darcy saw a familiar looking car with two girls in it Darcy thought it was Lola and Harley so she ran after the car “STOP THE CAR STOP!” Darcy yelled. Lola heard the faint yelling and shouted “STOP”, the car tires screeched “DARCYY” yelled Harley. Lola jumped out of the car running towards Darcy,

Lola was crying happy tears Lola ran into Darcy's arms hugging “I'm so happy your home!” Lola said as she hugged Darcy tighter “let's go home and get you showered and fed” Harley said Lola agreed. They drove home singing loud POP music, as the girls got home Darcy went inside to shower and Harley and Lola followed along about twenty minutes later Darcy walked out of the bathroom smelling fresh as a daisy, Lola greeted her with a hot fudge sundae a stack of 3 blueberry waffles with syrup dripping all over them and Harley came behind with a can of whipped cream and made a tower on the waffles, Darcy said “It looks delicious guys!” Darcy took the platter of food and sat on the couch watching TV whilst eating.

My Magic Pebble

One sunny day I was at the ocean and decided to go in the water and explore. It was pretty amazing to look at. I saw fish, coral, and squid . I swam into a deep dark cave. While I was exploring, I saw a shiny blue pebble. I was so excited, I put the pebble in my pocket and swam to shore. Could it be a magic pebble?

On the shore I looked closely at the pebble and saw that there was writing on it. It said “This Pebble is Magic”. I jumped up and down! I was so happy! I wished to have the superpower of invisibility. Then I became invisible. I jumped back into the ocean and kept exploring. This time was better because the fish couldn’t see me. I even got to swim with the sharks. It was so cool! When I was tired I swam back to shore. I was still invisible and stuck like that! I became sad because I couldn't do the things I wanted to do with my friends. I wanted to play tag, hide and seek, have a party and so much more. But then, I was bored so I went back in the water. I swam and swam until I got lost! I followed a shark until I found where I was before, swam back up and went back to land.

I put the pebble back in my hand and I wished for the powers to go away. I went back to normal and I was so happy. I swam back into the cave and put it back. I put it back because I didn't want it anymore. I am happy just being me. The end

Jaxson Saucier Fort Kent Elementary School Mrs. Crystal Jandreau Grade 5

Invasion

One day I was at a camp with all my family. It was night and my cousins and I did not know what to do. We were bored and one of them wanted to play a game that they made up called Zombie Apocalypse. We were really bored so we did it. We would pick who would be the zombie so we hid, ran and sometimes jumped, scared because the person came around the corner and tagged us and scared us. It scared me so much I felt like I had to run like a lightning bolt! I felt like a bolt of lightning and I saw everything like a little pixel.

Then I came to a dead stop because I was so tired and I felt like my legs hurt and it was dark. There were so many trees. I was confused. I just fell and fell asleep.

I woke up and I was not at my camp. I was in New York City, but now I heard a bunch of groans from the dark, the light shining through my eyes. I opened my eyes and the sun went down. Then I picked myself up and I saw....A Zombie! I ran at night. I was so confused I just went to sleep.

Now I'm here. I saw restaurants with so much stuff I thought it was so cool, but how do I get out of this place? I was just playing a game and I got scared and ran. Then I waited. I stopped running. Maybe someone or something knew. I ran into a building with no Zombies, and it even had awesome food. I said I was so happy. I could survive. It was night. I heard a bang and banging on the windows. I could hear my heartbeat bump, bump. My breathing was harder and harder. I needed to survive. I ran to the basement. What is this place...?

It's a lab. It's been exploding with dead zombies, but something is up. It has chemicals. I organized to see what was here. I put the chemicals in the corner of the room. I saw something in the corner of my eye. I saw a knife on the handle. It had Chinese writing. The shape of the blade is magnificent! I had to take it.

I went up the stairs to the main room. I kept on trying to figure out with the knife clenching in my hands. I threw it across the room. I was teleported and confused. This is a weird universe or whatever this is.

Then I went up to the second floor, step by step, and it creaked. I made it up and I went to the bedroom. It had a desk, computer, and a TV. I went to bed and I thought about how to get out. I fell asleep.

I woke up and went outside. It's dimming and I'm hungry, but I have no pans to cook or knives. I went outside. Then the sun went down, but I felt ok. I just need to go back to the house. I heard a dog barking and I sprinted to the sound. It was turning dark. The zombies! The dog was going to get attacked. I felt a fury, and I saw the dog. I threw the knife and hit the zombie in the chest. I teleported where my knife was and took the knife and slashed the zombie in the head. I ran to the house with the dog following me and he bolted in the house and hid.

I looked around the house to check if we had any bandages because I accidentally cut myself with the knife. I put it on my arm. I thought it's pretty sharp. The dog went up to my room where I found him. I was thinking about what to name the dog. He seemed very nervous, but I named him Blaze. I closed my eyes and I just felt the dog right next to my leg.

I woke up and the dog was still sleeping.

I have to search how to get out of here. Maybe in the dark, it has information. I left my dog at home, but my door is not locked. It should be fine. I walked into the dark. I heard a groan and a zombie was behind me. I stabbed the zombie in the head. upstairs and they were feasting on animals or something but I found a bunch of papers right next to them.

I grabbed the paper and they turned around slowly. I put the paper in my pocket and they ran at me. I jumped down the stairs and they were chasing me. I threw my knife, one hit his head and I grabbed the knife and stabbed one in the back and he fell.

The zombie hit the knife out of my hands and I hit the zombie in the face. The one behind me that was going to bite me in the neck I kicked him. I ran and got the knife.

I ran home when I opened the door and the dog raced to the zombie behind me. I yelled, "BLAZE come here!" He ran back. I had to go back. I opened the door and slashed his neck. He felt I hate to kill. I hate it. I never wanted to be here. I heard a bunch of huge footsteps. My mouth dropped. I looked up and saw a huge monster. I didn't know it had no claws. It was so tall. It smelled like dead bodies holding its sword. I looked at it and it had blood all over it. I don't think it could see me. It looked 23 feet tall. I think it heard me because my breathing was hard. I have to stop hiding. I ran at him with my knife and I hit him. I screamed, "Yes!"

I teleported and grabbed my knife and he grabbed me. I already got so many gashes. He threw me to a concrete wall. I heard a crack in my back with a huge pain. I screamed in pain. I'm on the ground and I got up. I put my hand on my back and pushed till I heard a crack. I have to do this to get back to my family. I still have to read the note though. I clenched my knife in my hand. I ran towards him and he tried to punch me. My anger gave me more strength. The blade was a glow of blue and the blade cut his head off and the thing was still able to move and he

punched me. I threw my knife right when he hit me. It hurt, but I stabbed his chest 3 times and he fell. I fell with him. I was on the ground and my eyes were shutting...

I woke up in my house and it had a sticky note saying, "Read the note in your pocket." I got up from my bed then I read the note that said he summoned the monsters. He is in New York City, "HE'S COMING, THE MASKED MAN". Who's the masked man? Something taped was a shard of the mask green with lines. I am so confused.

I went outside and the dog had to come. I'll grab a water bottle. I was walking down the street and I started sprinting around for thirty minutes. I had to take a break. I saw a huge building saying, "Come for hire". It never had that there when I got here. I went in to the door and it had a manikin at the front desk with a paper saying to go up 5 stories.

I found the stairs and I kept on walking up. I saw a hallway. I went up 5 stories and in the hallway it had a door and it was pointing arrows and I went in. He says, Hey Shadow, I yelled. Who are you!"

He said, "I can't tell you what he said. I brought you here to get out. You have to beat me. You are ready to kill so many zombies. He punched me and I went through the door. His eyes turned red and I opened my eyes and it showed me getting stabbed and I screamed, "No, I can't not die stopppppp!"

The masked man says, "How did he get out of my illusion?"

I punched him and the window shattered. Then he grabbed me with him and pushed him into the ground. I got up and had a sword. I hit and hit and he hit my knife and it went flying. I had to use my hands. He slashed my chest and I hit the sword and then grabbed my sword and I stabbed him. He punched me and I hit a wall and I got knocked out. Someone was screaming my name and he grabbed my head and kicked him.

He went up into the air and made a 360 spin and kicked him. He went flying and stopped himself. I hit the ground in my head saying, "How did I jump so high?" But I was caught off guard and he was running toward me and I saw him. I ran. I threw my knife in the air. I grabbed then I jumped up and stabbed him really hard in the back. He was on the ground not moving. I thought how did I defeat him? How did I get stronger? It's weird. And I said he's dead and now the universe was turning back and I blacked out. I woke up and I was in my bed. My parents are home because I heard them talking and they saw me going down the stairs and mom ran to me in happiness. She said, "You disappeared! Where did you go?"

And I said, "I don't know...."

Emmett Bourgoin

Fort Kent Elementary School

Mrs. Kelly Marquis

Grade 6

How I Got to Magic Land When Our House Was Destroyed Real World, Real Tears

Hello my name is Daniel Chouinard I'm going to tell you how I got to the magic land when my home was destroyed. One day I was just chillin, when my dad came into our light

brown house and told us it was crooked! He told us that we had to destroy it, and I panicked. I was going insane. I kept saying, “How, what and why?”

We got out of the light brown house and other family members came to watch. My dad started the yellow backhoe to destroy the light brown house! I was very scared because I didn't know where we would live in the meantime Well, we built a new house. My dad started to smash into it.

I started to cry, but I closed my eyes and viewed the house as a massive dark gray stone wall blocking the light and the dark gray wall was getting destroyed! Out of nowhere I shouted, “YEAH” as the dark gray wall was almost destroyed.

The light brown house was destroyed with the dark gray wall. With the wall gone it was so bright and filled with happiness and joy.

Magic Land Adventure

There were animals as far as I could see, like dinosaurs, flying cows, and I saw a sword. I was confused, but I kept walking. I was walking around in Magic Land and the ground started to turn black, and the sky red, and all the animals went into hiding, basically praying for their lives.

I turned my head and I saw one horrifying 12ft lengthy beast. It's head was a deer skull with venomous 4ft long fangs, it's body had it's rib cage barley under the skin, and 5ft spikes out of it's back. It's arms are 8ft long and are basically bone. It has three fingers and 4ft long claws and 3ft long spikes on its elbows, it has 4ft legs that are like a falcon's legs and the claws are 6ft long, it has 4 tails that are 20ft long each and there are rattlesnakes!

I knew I couldn't beat it, but I knew who could hold it off; Yacky the 8ft gorilla yak! I was sure he could

hold off the monster, I was wrong. All it took for the monster to win was to get Yacky to charge at him and the monster flipped Yacky with antlers! When Yacky was on the ground the monster got him in the neck with its fangs and Yacky was dieing! I was scared, but I remember how I got there. I figured how I got there could also go back the same way.

I closed my eyes, but when I was leaving the monster grabbed my leg just before I left. I heard Yacky say, “No” and opened them to go back to the real world.

We already have plans to sleep with other family members. Well, we built a new house, but I felt weird. I turned around and I saw it...

Real World, Real Monster

I turned around and I saw it. The monster from Magic Land had come to the real world. I was paralyzed in fear, I couldn't breath, and I was scared sick to my stomach. How could something from Magic Land come to the real world? Unless it wasn't from Magic Land in the first place. It started to charge at me. I knew if I didn't move it would kill me. I ran to one of the four wheelers. I started it up and repeatedly mashed into the monster. Once it looked like it was dead I got off the four wheeler. I got close to it and it grabbed my leg and slammed me into the Earth!

The Monster's Origin

I found myself miles in the Earth's crust in a dark cave. I saw some flintstones and a stick, so I made a torch. I saw thousands of skeletons and cave paintings from the corner of my eye. I walk to it and I see cave paintings of the monster's origin story.

It was a beast made to kill everything and everyone. Everything it kills becomes a blood zombie. Quillions of men and women died to trap it in Magic land. I saw something about a sword that could kill it.

I look and see everything that happen to me! I look and see a giant painting of the monster and learned it was beast called The Blood Demon.

I was unable to take all of it at once. I was very confused, suddenly The Blood Demon jumped down and grabbed me and threw me into another universe.

Earth 283

I found myself in an abandoned building in a different universe. I was just standing there due to just learning there is a multiverse. If I don't get back to mine soon the multiverses will combine and destroy space, time, and reality. I realized that this was my fault. If I never had went to Magic Land this never would have happened. I knew the only way I could fix it was by going back to my universe and killing the monster, but how could I kill it? It took quillions of people just to trap it. How could one kid kill it?

I just noticed that the sky was red and the ground was black. I saw the monster charging at me from this universe, but in this universe I didn't move! I knew this was a universe where the monster wins! I saw myself die to the monster! After seeing me try to kill the monster and fail I lost all hope, but I remembered in the cave paintings there was a sword that could kill the monster! I closed my eyes to go back to Magic Land walking past the animal's skeletons and see the sword.

I grab it, but before I leave I look at the skeletons and I say, "Sorry". I closed my eyes and opened them back into the world. I jumped out of the building and with every step I started to cure the Earth. I made a sheath for the sword and I said, "I'm gonna save this universe".

I saw the monster's lair. I pulled the sword out of the sheath and walked into the lair. I saw the monster sitting on a throne of skulls. It knew I was from another universe. It ordered the blood zombie of me! I was very surprised but I knew I had to overcome my fear to save this universe. I ran at my blood zombie and cut it in half! The monster got off of the throne and prepared for battle. It sent it's tails at me and I cut off the rattlesnake tails head's off! I flipped behind it and stabbed it in the back! The sword went through it. I pulled the sword out and cut the monster in half vertically. I smiled as I watched the world go back to normal, but the monster from my universe jumped in behind me and it's tails threw me into another universe.

Earth 593

I woke up and realized I had losted my sword. I realized I was in Magic land, but it was like it was before the monster was at Magic Land. I felt good until I thought what if in this universe the monster never got trapped in magic land. So I closed my eyes and opened them.

The real world had the monster's black ground and red sky. I knew I needed the sword to save this universe. I saw the monster and it had the sword! I saw a tree, so I went behind the tree and knotted it over onto the monster!

I grabbed the sword and went back to Magic Land to assemble a plan.

I decided I would do what I did on Earth 283. I had a full plan, but before I left magic land I saw the other sword. I grabbed the sword and went back to the real world.

I saw the monster had gotten comfy in an abandoned building. I walked in and the monster sensed me! The monster sent thousands of blood zombies after me. I pulled the swords out and swirled myself like a tornado and cut all of them into millions of pieces!

I went up to the next floor where there was a blood zombie of Yacky! I was sad to see my friend turned into an enemy. I ran at blood zombie Yacky, but he grabbed my arms and stabbed me with his horns! I was hurt, he was standing over me. I cut out his knee caps and he fell onto the blade of one of the swords. I got up and I said, "I'm sorry" to Yacky. I ran up to the top floor and saw the monster. I screamed at the monster in anger and I ran at the monster, but it held me back with its tails. I remembered how I killed the blood zombies, so swirled like a tornado and I swirled and sliced the monster into millions of pieces. I watched as I saved another universe. I knew the monster from my universe would come, but I would be ready.

Chapter 7 The Multiversal Battle

The monster jumped behind me, but I grabbed it by the throat then I threw it out of this universe, but it grabbed me with its tails and used me to statter thousands of universes.

Once it thought I was dead it flew into Earth 936. I grabbed the monster and I slammed it through the universe. I realized that with all of the universes I went through enough universes that I got an infinite amount of power! I grabbed the swords to stab the monster, but it grabbed the swords and shattered them! I knew that I would have to fight with my new found powers. I tried to fight the monster, but it easily beat me. It had millions of years with its powers, but I only had a couple of minutes. I use all of my power to make a new sword. The battle was even. It was a 50/50 fight.

I charged at the monster angrily screaming at the monster. The monster grabbed my sword, but I cut off its fingers. It quickly grew back. I was surprised and confused at the same time, but I knew the multiverse wouldn't be safe if it survives. It charged at me and I stabbed it through the gut. What I didn't know was that was what the monster wanted me to do! Its tails grabbed the sword and shattered it! All the power went back to me. I knew I had to kill it, hopeless or not. I uppercutted the monster, but it grabbed universes and slammed them on me. It jumped down to me to kill me. I grabbed the monster's legs and slammed it through a universe, flipped and slammed through thousands of universes. I flew down and It grabbed my arms and legs with its tails. It started to choke me. Then it talked in a pride filled voice and it said, "No matter how much you try Daniel you will only get your friends and family killed". I started to glow in anger and then I said in a powerful voice to the monster, "DIE"! The monster watched as it turned into dust, it shouted, "NO"!

I use all of my power to push back the multiverses back into place.

With all my power gone and the monster dead I reunite with my family and live a happy life.

The End ... for now

Daniel Chouinard Fort Kend Elementary School Mrs. Kelley Marquis Grade 6

A Dragon's Perspective

Have you ever heard about the fairytale about the brave knight saving the princess in a dark tower from a terrifying, malicious fire-breathing dragon? Yeah, that dragon would be me. I watch over the tower day and dawn as lionhearted chevaliers come to retrieve the princess. What they never tell you, though, is how the dragon feels. You think I watch that tedious tower like a hawk and barbecue knights for fun?

I'm always in a bad mood because I never get any sleep from having to watch that dull pillar. At least the princess can have some rest, she can sleep on a soft, velvety mattress. Every single day a knight comes over that hillock and demands for the woman trapped in the tall architecture. They attempt to attack me; they never even ask if they can pass. You'd think they'd have the decency to ask politely. Although, I have to barbecue them anyways, it's a very lonely life. Everybody thinks I am a fearsome brute just because I look frightening. In reality, dragons are quite pleasant creatures.

I never wanted this job; I was captured in the forest as I was roaming freely. A cool breeze flowed beneath my wings, the sun beamed down in light rays, and the fresh ginger air was sweet. A perfect day, until a petite, cruel man with swept back graying hair with ocean eyes that held an evil glint caught me. All I remember is waking up in this daft place, as the little man told me my fate of fending off men from the princess as he laughed. Then I set him on fire.

I've tried to talk to the princess once or twice, but she seems to have quite a distaste for me. I can't blame her; I am the one keeping her from every chance of freedom. This morning I sat on the scattering stones and decaying bones, absently nudging my chains. Another knight stood upon the hill, marching toward the tower. I sighed and rose, barely lifting my claws off the ground as I trudged toward him. However, this knight yielded no weapons, no shield, not even a chain. I towered over him and uttered an empty roar, but all he did was stare up at me.

I roared again, louder, giving him warning before he got roasted, but still not even a muscle twitch. I tensed, shoulders drooping for another day of burning victims, but he did the unthinkable. He removed the armor covering the face of my next-to-be casualty.

I stood dumbfounded, claw hovering over empty air above the past scorched dirt. Long, jet-black locks fall loosely from the knight's helmet as he lifts it away, revealing his face. Paper white skin, pinched features with rosy cheeks, dazzling pearly teeth, and emerald green eyes. I gasp, a lone flame escaping my scaly throat as steam fizzes from my nostrils. I may not have the best eyesight, but even a blind person could see the truth that stood before me. Standing at my foot defiantly, was no man, but a woman.

Caela Day

Caribou Community School

Mrs. Barnes

Grade 8

Darling Roberts' Side of the Story

It was all just meant to be a few dares.

Hi, I'm Darling Roberts!! You probably heard of me from a few years ago, I had a

little accident in the snow. I've never shared my side of the story before so I decided it was time. So, this is how I remember it. I woke up that morning with 2 missed calls and 3 text messages from my friend Ivan. I called him right away when I saw the 2 missed calls. "Ivan what's wrong?! Did something happen?" "Uh no, Ruby, Julian, and Molly just wanted to know if you wanted to go for a walk at Pick Pike Cove." "Uh, sure let me get ready and I'll meet you there in around an hour." "Ok sounds good, see you then, I will tell the others." He hangs up the phone and I get out of bed. I slip on my favorite bunny slippers and open my curtains, the sun radiates on my face. I pet my dog Jade and she slowly wags her tail at me. After I'm done giving Jade a belly rub, I get ready then make my way to the kitchen. Bagels or toast? Bagels it is! I grab a bagel and plop it in the toaster. Cream cheese or butter? Cream cheese for today! I wait by the toaster for my bagel to be done. *BEEP* *BEEP* "AHH" I let out a scream, Jade looked over to me from the couch. "Sorry Jade, just me." She's old and losing her sight, so when something is not right in front of her she looks around to see what happened. I attentively take the bagel out of the toaster and put it on a plate. I quickly eat the bagel. I put the cream cheese away, toss the butter knife in the sink and throw the paper plate away. I walk into the living room where Jade is sleeping soundly. I make a little noise so she knows I'm coming. So picks her head up and waits for me to do something. I gingerly kiss her on the head and walk to the coat rack. I grab my fuzzy coat and slip on my winter boots. I grab my favorite winter hat with a pom pom on top, my keys, phone and head out.

When I reach the parking lot of Pick Pike Cove I see Ivan, Ruby, Molly, and Julian all sitting in their cars. There are two or three other cars in the parking lot too. Once they see me they all hop out of their cars. Molly shudders in the cold. Julian is prancing around the parking lot trying to warm up until Ruby speaks and says "Ready to go in?" Ivan answers with "Wait, what if we make this more fun. Let's play truth or dare." We all agree and head in. Once we are about half a mile in, we start the game. Julian picks Ruby to start with. "Ruby, truth or dare?" "Mmm, truth!" "Ok, is it true that you've never drank coffee?" "Nope, I've never drank coffee." Ruby's turn is over, now Ruby gets to pick somebody. Ruby picks Ivan, Ivan takes his turn. Then, he picks me. "Darling, truth or dare!" "Mmm, well I'll be the first to say dare!" "Ok, let's see." He takes a look around and we all stop walking for a minute. Now we are about 1 mile in, we walk a little bit more and then stop and he says, "I dare you to let us bury you in snow, and when people come by you jump out of the snow and scare them." "Start burying!" I say and lay down. I put my hood on, and slip the mittens in my pocket on. My eyes open, the sun is so bright in my face. But snow starts falling down, just little flakes of snow. It's cold when they reach my face. There's the smallest breeze but it's chilly when it reaches my face. As my legs start feeling heavier with snow I feel the snow climbing up my body. It's cold, really cold, freezing cold. After a few more minutes my whole body is covered with snow except my nose and eyes.

Some people come by. It's a young man and a young lady. Maybe siblings? I raise my arms to scare them, they're stuck. My legs, too, are stuck there. I can't move, I can't get up. Ruby starts saying "Darling! That was your chance! They were perfect, they would have screamed so loud!" She starts laughing so I think she's imagining what would have happened. "Guys, guys! I'm stuck! I can't move!" Snow is falling harder now, big snowflakes. My friends look worried, until Ivan starts running away back to the

start of the trail. Ruby looks like she thinks I'm joking. Molly and Julian start running after Ivan. When Ruby sees them running, she goes with them. I'm stuck here, alone, it's probably -30 degrees, maybe even -40. I keep trying to get up, my arms are weak, my legs feel heavy. Snow is starting to fall on my nose and eyes. The breeze slows down thankfully, but the snow starts falling harder and harder. My eyes are almost all covered now. My nose is thankfully not fully covered. I can't feel anything, my arms, hands, legs, feet. Nothing, I'm numb. I'm alone. I'm scared. I close my eyes thinking that if I don't get out of here soon, I might not make it. I kept trying to call for help, but it came out as more of a moan than anything. I think I was unconscious for 2 hours before someone found me. I woke up to someone digging around me. I try opening my eyes but it's hard, I'm tired, I can barely move.

Once they get me out of all the snow, they pull me up and I tumble over trying to stand up. My legs feel weak. They practically carry me to their car. I get in and lay in the back, they put a blanket over me. I'm still cold, blanket or not. My saviors drive me to the hospital, they ask my name and age. I spit the words out barely having enough energy to talk. We arrived at the hospital, the doctor gets me a room and he takes my temperature and blood pressure. He says I have hypothermia but he needs to ask me some questions. After considering my answers, he says that I have severe hypothermia and if I would have been out there for 35 more minutes I would have died.

The doctor let me leave a day later, he wanted to make sure my organs were ok and my blood flow was on track. The two people who saved me stayed with me too. They told me what happened and how the police were looking for me too but couldn't find me. I asked their names. The young girl was Valerie Davis and the older looking man, John Davis. Valerie let me stay with her at her house for a few days to make sure I was alright.

A year later and I still talk and hang out with Ivan, Julian, Ruby, and Molly. But not as much. I'm so thankful Valerie and John found me. We walk on Pick Pike Cove almost every day, sometimes even with Jade and Valerie's dog, Charlie.

Lindsey Ouellette

Caribou Community School

Mrs. Keaton

Grade 7

Detective McStern and the West Avenue Murder

It was a beautiful June day and Detective McStern decided to go for a hike with his brother Mike, his nephew Clifford, and his son Carson at one of the most popular mountains in town called St. Rogers, which was very close to a street called West Avenue. The party met there around 10:00 a.m. and were excited to get to the peak. They planned on taking a difficult trail called the Whiplash which was very rocky and has some sharp turns. The party started going up the Beaver Trail where all of the trails begin. Detective McStern started talking to Clifford about football and college. Mike also joined in the conversation, but Carson seemed like he didn't want

to be there mostly because he had wanted to go to his friend's house but he was forced to go on the hike.

The hike was going well. They were going to stop at a bench to sit and eat lunch. Carson went to go use the outhouse when he saw something. It looked like a dead animal. He went in for a closer look, then realized it was not an animal! It was a person! Carson was shocked and ran back-to-back to his dad to tell him about the body. The Detective told Mike to go home with Clifford, but he told Carson to stay so he could act as a checkpoint. Detective McStern hiked down the hill, got into his car, and drove to his office to get his equipment. He headed down to the Police Station and told Police Chief Buck Howard about finding a body on St. Rogers.

Arriving a little less than an hour after the body was found, Detective McStern started to climb the mountain with 10 other officers. They arrived at 12:30 p.m. and the first thing they did was close the part of the mountain where the body was found to investigate. They checked to see if there were any clear signs of how the victim might have died. The body looked like it had been dead for at least 10 years. They found a clear sign that he had died from a large object and immediately thought something like an axe or a hatchet, maybe even a large machete. But Detective McStern saw a little piece of metal in his collarbone not too far deep. He pulled it off the body and examined it. The piece was about 2 inches long and looked homemade. Nothing else was found at the site. They called the coroner to pick up the body and then left. On the car ride home Carson asked what they were going to do about the body. Detective McStern said that they had to see what they could do. The next day Detective McStern went into his office to see what he could find out about the piece of metal that he pulled out, he still had it in his briefcase so he decided to examine the shard. The first thing that he did was to see what type of metal it was. He had no knowledge about metals so he went to the local blacksmith, Ryker Hart to see if he could identify it.

The Detective arrived at the store and saw all kinds of metal work. Almost no one was there, mostly due to not many people needing weapons for much of anything. Ryker used to be big on an old street called West Avenue where he thrived until Wayne Douglas, the owner of the largest farm that supplied the stores on the street, went missing and most of the businesses either moved somewhere else or closed. Detective McStern went to the front counter where Ryker was. He asked him if he knew what kind of metal the shard was, but Ryker was acting really weird, smelling the shard, poking it. Eventually he said it was most likely a mix of iron and copper. The Detective asked if he knew anyone that might have used it. Ryker said that no one had made things with that combination for at least 15 years. Ryker said the only person who ever did was Jared Wood, who owned a small business on West Avenue back in the day. The Detective thanked Ryker and drove to his friend Harrison James, the lead coroner in the autopsy of the body. When he arrived, Harrison was thrilled to see him. He quickly informed McStern that the body was of Wayne Douglas, the person who used to own the largest farm in the city, and practically ran West Avenue. The Detective was shocked, Wayne Douglas had gone missing 17 years ago! Had they found his body? Harrison also told him he had some huge blows to his face making them come to the conclusion that he was murdered. Detective McStern thanked Harrison for the information and then left for his office to gather his information and see what to do next. The Detective came to the conclusion fast that Jared Wood may have had something to do with the murder. It made a lot of sense that if a metal machete made of the metal that only he uses is found in Wayne Douglas's body, that he at least supplied it.

The Detective told the newspaper to publish a cover page about the finding of Wayne's body, and they agreed. Next, he asked Buck Howard to have two officers stake out Jared's home

to see if he did anything suspicious and then waited for his plan to unfold. About three days later, the police reported that they saw Jared Wood carrying a broken machete. The Detective ordered to have twelve cops at the scene just in case. When they arrived at the home, they told him to get out of his house with high hands in the air but he fired a shotgun at the police which killed two officers, forcing the police into a standoff. A few more officers died, but Detective McStern shot Jared in the leg wounding him severely. Jared surrendered and was brought in for questioning. But before they left, they unburied the machete and compared it to the shard. PERFECT match. They interrogated the suspect asking him if he killed Wayne Douglas and at that point he decided to just confess and tell why he killed Wayne. He told the police that Wayne rudely declined his son for a job offer and made a joke out of his son so he decided to take revenge. Detective McStern won a key to the city for his role in the case and was happy to finally rest after a long, few days.

Parker Ouellette

Caribou Community School

Mrs. Keaton Grade 7

Equations of Friendship

The area of- what? She tapped her foot on the ground. She felt annoyed, wanting class to end. What would she have to do when she got home? Ah, right. Video games. Nothing was ever as entertaining as video games were. Is that really what she wanted? Did she really want to go home and play?

“I suggest that *someone* should pay attention to this lesson.” She was snapped out of her daydream world, and back into reality. She nodded her head, almost panicked. She hated when her teacher did this, right in front of the whole class. She could almost *feel* their gazes, she just knew the class was looking at her. But they weren’t. She was just overthinking it, again.

Math has never been her strongpoint. She hated it. *Despised* it. But she couldn’t do much about it. She sighed, and fidgeted with her pencil while she listened to the boring lesson. She found herself yawning, and laying her head on the table.

The bell rang. Wasn’t it a little early? Realization swept through her like a shock. She slept through math class. She knew people were talking about her this time. Pointing, and laughing, taking glances at their phones. With a sigh, she gathered up her stuff.

“Kate.” Her teacher’s voice sounded behind her. She spun around to face him. She expected a lecture, she’s never gotten one, no matter how many times she’s fallen asleep in class. “I was looking at your assignments, and I can’t believe how well you do. Why on earth are you not doing higher level math?” She was confused, shocked and confused. She gave a shrug.

“I guess I never thought of it.” She replied. Sure, she didn’t like math, but you don’t *have* to like something to be good at it. “*Hard work and dedication!*” - or at least that’s what her mother would say.

“You *should* think about it Kate. You’re smart, even if you don’t think so.” She nodded. Her feet guided her to the doorway, but she stopped herself.

“Thank you.” She muttered, her teacher nodding and waving goodbye.

Kate stared at the raindrops splattered on the window. The car's speed led the little drops of water to travel at an angle down the glass. She watched two; it was as if they were having a race. She chuckled at the thought, knowing it's something she, and lots of other kids, have done multiple times. Maybe they really were racing?

"Did you have a good day?" Her mother asked, breaking the silence.

"The same as every day." She muttered, watching the scenery fly past the window, the green trees blowing in the wind under a dark, cloudy sky, with soaked branches and leaves. She thought it was pretty, in a dark, gloomy way. Her thoughts were again interrupted.

"Your teacher asked me if you wanted to join the math team." She quickly turned her head around to look at her mother in surprise.

"Me? Why me? I'm not that smart- and I'm not social at all-" she was cut off.

"I think it would be a good opportunity for you to make some new friends-" Kate cut her off this time.

"Do you think I can't make friends if I don't do anything '*cool*'?" She scowled in question.

"That isn't what I said." She ignored what her mom said, and continued talking.

"It's probably what you thought." She muttered, but again began speaking with a larger voice. "I don't *have* any friends because *I* choose to." That wasn't at all true. She wanted to fit in so badly. Everyone thought she was weird. Maybe she was, but she didn't think so. Of course, though, that's what a weird person would say about themselves.

"Maybe *you* should *choose* to make some friends, then. You're smart, and caring, if anyone should be able to make friends, it'd be you!" Her mother explained. Kate sighed, and looked back out the window, focusing on the droplets of water once again.

Her alarm blared in the morning. She lazily smacked it, the old-fashioned alarm clock smashing onto the ground. She got ready for the day, which included brushing her teeth, getting dressed, brushing her hair...

She hopped in the car; her dad always dropped her off at school in the morning while he's on his way to his work. The math team was going to be picked today... Why was she thinking about this? Did she actually *think* she would make the team? Did she *want* to? Kate turned the dial for the radio ever so slightly to get to the radio station she enjoyed listening to.

"I'll see you tonight!" Shouted her dad, as she hopped out of the car, her shoes landing on the old, chipped, pavement, which was slightly damp due to the rain the night before. They said their goodbyes to each other, and she closed the car door. The air almost seemed wet. The humidity caused tiny droplets of water to form on plants, which was probably most noticeable.

She watched the deep red car roll away, and she walked to the tan doors of the school. *Another day.* She silently thought to herself with a sigh.

She opened the doors to the school. The doors were surprisingly heavy.

Later, after a grueling day of school, she sat at her desk anxiously. She fidgeted with her pencil as she always does, her mind racing with possibilities. Most of the rest of the class didn't look like they cared. Lots of them glanced at the clock every five or so seconds like it's going to magically change to the time of dismissal. Kate, though, was wide awake this class; most of the time she falls asleep in math, though, it doesn't stop her from acing almost every quiz.

"Alrighty class, first off, does anybody have any questions on the quiz?"

No questions, just tell everyone already! She thought. If she gets chosen, will people call her a nerd? Would she take offense? Would she figure out she's not smart enough for the team

and be kicked off? If she messes up at a competition for the team, will people like her even less? Or maybe she should focus on other things? *Would she finally have friends?*

“I will now be announcing the new members of the math team.”

Her heart was racing. She had never been this nervous before. Maybe she has, and she just doesn’t remember it. Times like that weren’t probably important; it was probably when she was hoping she got the flavor ice cream she enjoys for school lunch years ago. She brings her own lunch to school now.

As she was zoned out with her mind racing with numerous possibilities, names had been called. She focused on the names being called off, as she knew with each name called, her chances were getting lower... and lower...

“...and, I believe that’s it.” My math teacher stated, as her heart sank. Her name hadn’t been called; she knew that for a fact, if her name was called, her attention was usually immediately pulled back into reality. “Oh, hold on...” Her teacher flipped the paper over. “And... Kate, alright, now that’s it.”

Her eyes widened in complete shock.

“Me..?” Kate whispered to herself. Everyone turned to look at her. She could again feel their gazes, but this time she could tell.

The gazes were good.

After class finished, people were congratulating her. Her *classmates* were talking to her. Was she dreaming?

“Hey, Kate!” She heard a voice say. It was another student picked for the math team. “I was wondering if you wanted to study tonight.” The girl paused. “Right! My name’s...”

Madison Thibeault

Caribou Community School

Mrs. Barnes

Grade 8

My Hero!

Disclaimer: This was inspired by *Alexa & Katie Netflix Original*.

Hi, I am Katie and this is my story of how I battled cancer at the age of 12.

My nurse told me to write down things I was grateful for. I wrote: my family, basketball, and my best friend Natalie. Natalie and I had been best friends since we were born. Natalie was more into reading and writing stories. I was into basketball and she was not. My mom's job is veterinarian and my dad is a coach for a boys’ basketball team. I was in my first year of high school and it was going fine until one night I was brushing my hair and a chunk of my hair came out. I ran to the bathroom. Then I screamed. My mom came running up the stairs. She ran in the bathroom. She screamed even louder. Then my dad came in, then my best friend, then her mom and then her younger sister. They all saw that my hair was coming out. They all knew that it was because of my meds.

“Honey, are you ok?” My mother asked.

“Yes, I am, I promise!” I said back.

“I saw you five minutes ago!” Natalie said. That night ended up being a pretty good night. There was no drama about my hair and we even had game night.

I woke up the next morning and Natalie came over. It was Saturday so we got to sleep in. When I saw Natalie, I couldn't believe what I saw!

“NATALIE WHAT THE HECK!” I yelled.

“I know you don't like my hair anymore, now what do I do?” Natalie said.

“It's not that I don't like it, it's that your hair is gone!” I yelled.

“Yeah, I shaved it off for you because you needed it!” Natalie said.

“What if my hair never grows back?” I said.

“It will. You're getting all the treatment you need and you're healthy!” Natalie said. We went down for breakfast and my mom was so happy to see us, but when she saw Natalie, she froze and then she screamed. Then her mom came and screamed too.

“WHAT DID YOU DO?” her mom asked.

“I shaved my head for Katie!” Natalie said.

“WHEN?” My mom asked.

“When I woke up this morning because I felt bad!” Natalie said.

“Honey, this is the nicest thing you have ever done,” My mom said.

“Yeah, I felt bad!” Natalie said.

“Louis come downstairs it's breakfast time” My mom said. “Trent, it's breakfast time come downstairs!” my mom said.

“Isabelle I am getting Louis out of bed!” my dad said.

“Louis you're gonna be grounded!” my dad yelled.

“How are you feeling Katie?” my mom asked.

“Eh a little cold.” I told my mom.

“I will go get that comfy sweater I bought you!” my mom said.

“Natalie, how long have you been awake?” Louis said.

“6:30 I like to get up early, you should know this already!” Natalie said.

“Eh she doesn't like me back so no.” Louis said.

“Ok whatever!” I said.

“Hey honey here's the sweater!” my mom said.

“Mom I am gonna go shopping for a wig today so that I can wear it to school when I go back!” I said.

“Yay I will have my little girl back!” my mom said.

“What's that supposed to mean?” I asked. I ran upstairs.

“Honey!” my mom yelled, but I didn't answer.

There was a knock at my bedroom door.

“Go away!” I said. The door opened, it was my mom she had this face like she was very sorry, but I still said “Go away!”

“Honey I am so sorry I didn't mean it like that, I meant to say it differently, I swear!” my mom said.

“Yeah right!” I said.

“Honey, you will always be my baby girl, always, no matter if you have cancer or not!” my mom said.

“I know but then why did you say it like that?” I asked.

“I didn't mean to!” my mom said back.

“I know!” I said.

“Here give me a hug baby girl!” my mom said. “Oh honey you’re burning up, like bad, we need to get you to the hospital. You know the drill, pack up your stuff. I will call your dad!”

“Wait, can I call Natalie really fast?” I asked.

“Yes of course hurry!” my mom said.

“Ok I will!” I said. I tried calling Natalie, but she never answered. I was terrified I had no time to waste though I had to go to the hospital. Hey Katie you awake?” Natalie asked.

“Mmm, yeah now I am!” I said yawning.

“Ok good news, but there's also bad news which on first?” Natalie asked.

“Good news!” I said, smiling.

“Ok, you get to go home today!” Natalie said.

“Yay I want to see my own bed again!” I said.

“The bad news is you have to stay home and do online school so that you can stay healthy!” Natalie said.

“To be honest I thought it was worse than that!” I said.

“Come on lets get you home!” my mom said. I am a senior in high school, which means its my last year of school and I am picking out what I want to do for college

“I think that I am going to be an Interior Designer!” I said.

“You are growing up so fast!” My mom said. “I wouldn't have been able to get through it if I didn't have you. You're my hero mom!” I said.

Kassidy Saucier

Caribou Community School

Mrs. Pelletier

Grade 6

What Comes After

I (Zoey) go to a high school for kids with a higher GPA score than most. I first came here when I was in second grade. At the time there were only 5 students. There was this girl, her name was Hannah, she and I became best friends fast. After a couple years, more students came to the school. When I was in seventh grade I became friends with a boy, his name was Josh. All 3 of us were always in the same class. Now that we are in twelfth grade and getting ready to go to college, we have been hanging out more. We always knew that this day was going to come, but we didn't think that much of it. We all are still really close and in the same class. Josh and I want to go to the same college to become teachers, Hannah wants to be a doctor. Josh and I have picked out what college we want to go to, and so has Hannah. My family and friends have always been there for me, and I am so glad I have them. Josh and I want Hannah to do her best, but she wants to go to school with us. Of course, we said no and that she should follow her dreams. A couple weeks before we graduated the 3 of us were inseparable. We would always be at one of our houses talking about the times when we were little. In those times we were hanging out, we were laughing, we played games, and cried, mostly me and Hannah. I never thought that I would have a friendship like ours. The day of graduation finally came. So when it was time to say our goodbyes to everyone, we cried, laughed, and talked about all the good times. When the 3 of us were alone we hugged and wished we could never let go, when we did let go all of us

were crying, even Josh. Hannah had to leave that night to make sure she was at the college in time to get a good dorm room. We hung out until her parents came to pick her up. 6:30pm was the last time we would see Hannah in person for almost 2 years. Josh and I had to leave the next morning. I stayed over at Josh's house that night. Around 6, my parents came to say their goodbyes to Josh and I. We loaded the vehicle, then left for college at 8am.

It was an 8-hour drive to the college in New York. When we finally arrived, we went to get a 2-person dorm room. I walked into the room, set my stuff down and looked around. It had 2 beds, 2 desks and a window seat. There were 2 small closets and dressers. The walls were a dark blue color and the floor had a white rug in the middle. Josh and I have been friends since we were 12. I was one of the first people to talk to him. Hannah didn't really like him at first, it was not until I started to hang out with him that Hannah slowly became his friend too. Josh wanted to be a math teacher and I wanted to be an English teacher. While being at the same school does not guarantee we get to see each other all the time, every night, we would both get back to the dorm room and we would catch up on how our days went.

One night when we were laughing about a YouTube video and eating ice cream, I noticed Josh acting strange when he was with me. When we got back, I asked him what was going on. At first, he was hesitant to tell me, but when he finally spoke it was something I never thought he would say. Josh said that he was in love with me. At first, I was too shocked to say anything. All of a sudden, I heard myself say "me too". The look on his face was nothing but shock, so was mine. He was the first one to find his voice and he asked "Since when?" What I said to that was "Since 9th grade". I asked him the same question he asked me. He didn't have to think about what he would say, "The first moment I laid eyes on you", I think that is what he said. At first it was a shocking moment but then it turned into an "awww" moment. In my mind I silently prayed that our friendship wouldn't become awkward or change. He did something that I never thought he would do at that moment, he got up to hug me and I hugged him back.

When he pulled away, we just looked into each other's eyes for what seemed like forever. We went to sit on the bed. I had a lot to think about but one of the questions that kept popping up was what are we going to do now? I was going to say it but he beat me to it. Without hesitation he asked me out and I said "Yes". Then things happened so fast. We talked for hours about why he didn't say anything to me about how he was feeling, and why I didn't say anything either.

The next day Josh and I went to classes and had a normal day. We still talked about how our day was and did our normal night time things. The following days we talked a lot about what we wanted to say to our parents. We decided that when we go home for summer vacation that's when we would tell our parents. I was thinking one night about Hannah and what she would be doing and how she was doing. Hannah and I have been friends since we were 7. Hannah was always that outgoing friend, where I was always the shy friend. Hannah took me out of my comfort zone and for that I will always be grateful. Knowing that Hannah is so far away and that I won't be able to see her in person breaks my heart to its max. Hannah is like a sister to me. Lying in bed I knew that I had to call Hannah tomorrow night, with Josh. We would tell Hannah together. I knew Hannah had liked him at one point in our friendship and she did nothing about that. I wondered how Hannah would take the news.

When summer vacation came and Josh and I went home, we talked about what we would say to our parents. We both agreed that it would be nothing big but a simple, "Hey we're together," type deal. My parents were so happy to see me and spend time with me. Josh and his parents came over to have dinner one night and that was when we told them. At first, I think they

were a little weirded out, but as we explained how it happened, they were happy for us. They asked a lot of questions about when this all started. We answered all of them. After we all stopped eating, they all just kept asking questions. After a little I was getting annoyed and told them to stop. Josh and I went upstairs, to talk about telling Hannah. That same night we called Hannah to tell her the good news.

Katie Ellis

Caribou Community School

Mrs. Anderson

Grade 8

Our Necklace

Last night, I had a family gathering and we talked about my great grandmother's necklace and how it got stolen. My family was so disappointed and truly devastated. That necklace has been with my family for however long my great grandmother was alive. That necklace is my everything for my family. "C'mon Lexi, we have to go to another family meeting for the necklace." My mom was more than upset, I haven't seen her this upset since our dog, Oliva died. All she would do is sit in her room and cry or read a book. Mom walked out the door slamming it, shaking the small table with a flower on it. I sighed, shut the lights off and walked out the door. Mom was sitting in her car on her phone probably texting our family group chat. I opened the car door and sat in my seat behind my mom. She starts the car and drives off to her mother's house. We finally get there, then mom shuts the car off and me and her go inside. My uncle, my grandfather, my great grandfather, my aunt, and my 8-year-old cousin were all there. My mom goes and sits down at the table. "Lex, go and take Remi to the living room." My mom didn't want me or Remi to hear the conversation on what they were going to do.

I take Remi to the living room and turn on her favorite show, Free Rein. It's about these horses and she loves horses. Since I was an only child, Remi has always been like a little sister to me. Remi has an older brother and a younger brother. Logan and Oakley, Logan is 15 and Oakley is 4. Oakley is too young to come to these and Logan has soccer practice. We meet up every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. But whenever Logan doesn't have soccer practice, he usually goes to his friend's house, so I rarely get to see him.

In the kitchen, I heard yelling then crying. It sounded like my aunt was crying but I didn't feel like going in to check. Remi of course ran to the kitchen; it was her mom. If it was my mom, I would also be running to her. My uncle came in with Remi to calm her down so she wouldn't worry too much. Remi has really bad anxiety, the doctors can't figure out why. "So, how's Alexa doing?" My uncle said, "Eh alright, ever since the necklace went missing, nobody wants to do anything anymore." I replied, "I know, don't worry, everything will be back to normal." I nod my head and go get a book to read, these meetings take forever to discuss, one meeting took 7 hours. My uncle walks out of the living room to catch up on what he missed.

"Lex, do you know who stole the necklace?" Remi said, "No I don't, do you?" "Yeah, I do" How does my 8-year-old cousin know who stole the necklace? She's only 8 years old and barely knows how to do division! "If I tell you, do you promise not to tell anyone no matter who they are?" "Yes of course!" "It was Logan." "Wait, what, why would Logan ever do anything like that? He knows how much that necklace means to this family and he takes it?!" "I don't

know why either, I tried to ask him but he always says go away.” “Hey! That's probably why he never comes to these family meetings, I don't even think he actually has soccer!” “Yeah, I don't think he does either, he once told me he hated soccer, and I even saw the same necklace in his room!” “Wow, I can't believe this, Remi, we need to tell someone.” “No, if we tell someone that Logan stole the necklace, they would be so mad at him!” “Yes, but we have to, I'm sorry Remi, I need to do what needs to be done.”

I walk to the kitchen and announce that Logan stole the necklace. Everyone's face turns bright red in total shock. Remi runs to the kitchen and sees their faces, her jaw drops. Remi turns me around and brings me to the bathroom. I hear the parents talking. “Alexa! Why did you tell them?” “Because Remi, it needed to be done!” Her face turns red, and she starts crying. She walks out the door and goes upstairs. Next thing you know, the door shuts. I look and Logan is standing there holding the necklace. Everyone's eyes just stare at him like a famous person just walked through the door. “Logan, you stole the necklace?” My aunt said in disbelief. “Um yeah, I thought we needed to focus more on this necklace, this is a very important necklace, you guys never did anything to protect it or talk about so I decided to take it so you could realize how important this necklace is, and to teach you guys a lesson, always keep something that you love, locked up.” My great grandfather stood up and gave him a hug. “That was a very good thing you did kid” he said. “Yes Logan, thank you for remembering how special that necklace is.” My aunt said.

Aubree Dickinson

Caribou Community School

Mrs. Levasseur

Grade 5

Andy and the Monstrous Boy

One moonlit night Andy went hiking into the woods. Andy is 10-years-old and lives with his grandparents. His grandparents shouted, “Don't go far or you will get lost in the woods.”

Andy said, “Okay!” Then he hiked into the strange woods looking for a rare komodo dragon.

Suddenly, there were shaking bushes! Andy saw a wolf and ran the wrong way. Then he went too far in the woods that he couldn't find his way home. Andy started to feel scared. He felt he'd been in the woods for months, but he actually was just there for a couple hours. Without knowing where he was going, he went farther into the woods. After a couple of miles, he found a cabin. Without hesitation, he ran towards the cabin and found a little boy around his own age. But when Andy stuck his hand out to help him get up, unfortunately the little boy clawed at him. The little boy was scared of Andy. Andy tried to find out his name, but he didn't speak. He couldn't speak! Andy tried to help him no matter what the boy did. The boy punched, kicked, scratched, and did anything he could to get Andy away from him. A couple moments later, Andy was covered in scratches, bruises, and bite marks.

After all the pain the little boy put Andy through, Andy felt tired and weak. So he sat down a couple feet away from the boy, but the boy seemed to be very still. Then after a couple minutes, the little boy wrote a number on a piece of wood, but Andy did not understand what the boy was trying to say. The little boy grunted at Andy, but no words came out. The boy tried

harder, and this time he tried to yell at Andy. Andy was terrified when the little boy had yelled “I smell your fear, you’re scared of me. “NO ONE CARES ABOUT ME! I’M A MONSTER! GO AWAY!” Then all of a sudden the little boy bursts into flames! Andy sat on the ground, frozen in terror. Then out of the smoke there was someone walking towards Andy. Andy thinks it’s the little boy he was talking to before, but finally whatever it was stepped out of the smoke. It wasn’t the little boy anymore... It was a GIANT MONSTER! It had huge wings, claws and sharp fangs. Blood was running down the corner of his monstrous smile. The monster then pointed at Andy and said “You’re next!” Andy was terrified but at least he could move now. Andy ran towards the woods from which he came from. After running to the edge of the woods Andy looked back to take another look at the monster that he had seen, but it was nowhere to be found. All that was left was a little puddle of blood where it had been running down the corner of the monster’s smile. The little boy was gone as well.

After staring at the tiny clearing, Andy then tried to find his way home. He then finally got home. He knew that no one would believe him if he had told him what he had seen. Every night when Andy goes to bed, he looks out his bedroom window and till this day he can still hear the little boy’s yelling, and the monster roars from the woods.

Now, readers of this story, listen to your parents or grandparents when you decide to go for a hike in the woods, or you may not get as lucky as our friend Andy. Sleep tight, don’t let the monsters bite.

Aidyn Kramer

Mill Pond Elementary

Mrs. Drew

Grade 4

Feelings, Dreams and Reflections

KES Should Have Cooking Classes At School

KES should have cooking classes at school! Children will learn how to use cooking equipment. They will learn life long skills and you can make recipes. Do you say that we should have cooking classes at school?

Learning how to use cooking equipment is acceptable. Kids will learn how to use a stand mixer. Children will learn that your arm muscles are a cooking tool when mixing. Your kid will learn stove safety.

Being responsible is a HUGE thing in life. It is a thing in life that you have to know because it will be a life-long skill. It can be a nice thing for a kid to learn so you can bring your mom or dad breakfast in bed. It can be so fun to cook. It will be a break from school.

You will invent new recipes that will be yummy. Your child will use their imagination and it will be a writing lesson. Your kid will do math and learn measurements.

In conclusion, there should be cooking classes. In the future we can have cooking classes at school for all these reasons. Do you say that we should have cooking classes at school?

Clara Powers

Katahdin Elementary School

Ms. Sirois Grade 4

The Kid Who Went to School

There was a kid named Bob and it was his first day of school in sixth grade. He was not happy to go back to school because he hated school so much. Bob hated school because he hated to learn and hated not being able to be home all day.

He got dressed and put his shoes on and went outside to wait for the school bus. When the school bus got there, he got on the bus, he rode to school. When he got to school, he got breakfast and then he went to his class.

His first class was not too bad. It was science. He was surprised to see a new teacher! Science was not going to be like last year! It was going to be fun! We would be doing a lot of projects and going outside.

And his second class was not bad at all either. It was social studies and it was another new teacher! She also was the reading teacher and there were lots of good books to read. Bob liked to play the Kahoots for social studies review.

His teachers were going to like him and not be as demanding.

So the rest of his day was fun for him so he started to like school and never hated school again.

Matthew Thibodeau

Limestone Community School

Ms. Seeley

Grade 6

The Boy in Blue

I am the Boy in Blue.
I'm not sticky because I'm not glue.
Check my gears - I think they blew.
Oops! Not me! I meant you!
Your mind thinks, "Oh! This is new!"
But I'm not new. I'm much older than you.
Your brain is twisting - tied in a knot. Thinking who?
Who is this Blue? Not glue, Not new and Not you.
Are you confused? Did the message not get to you?
Is this simple message really not getting through?
Do you want me to give you the answer, so true?
Fine! But only on the super simple count to two.
Okey-dokey here we go...one...two...here we go!
Wow! Ok, since you want to know. I am actually...
The Boy in Blue

Riley Harvath

Presque Isle Middle School

Mrs. Bragg

Grade 6

NONSENSE

I like to doodle
when I eat my noodles.
When I put them in my
tummy it feels yummy.

I could of and my
sister thinks I should of turned
my mama into a lama.
But I did not turn
my mama into a lama.

The next day in the bay,
I caught a dab.
It was not a bad catch.
After that catch we had a
batch of fish for dinner.

Emily Pelletier

Zippel Elementary

Ms. Watson

Grade 4

Reality

What is real? What is not real? This is the question Alethea had been asking herself for as long as she could remember. She was named after the Greek goddess of truth, after all.

So, when she went to the garden only to find her petunias being munched on by a deer, she asked herself this question once more.

These petunias were my prized possession, and now they are dead. Deer chow. Is this real? Maybe it's just a dream.

The deer looked up, startled. It's eyes were strange. They had a purple hue to them. This deer was unlike any deer she'd ever seen. It had a somewhat...magical aura about it.

Yet, it wasn't a dream. She went inside and took a nap, hoping that when she woke up, the petunias would still be there. When Alethea woke up, no petunias were planted in her garden.

Were they ever even there? She asked herself. Reality seemed to be getting less and less...well, real. Alethea went to the store to get more petunia seeds, but the minute she got there, they were sold out. When she looked again, there wasn't even a section for petunias. Not a single thing labeled petunia.

Alethea ran to the nearest person, an old lady with white hair and a cane. "Excuse me, miss? Do you know where I can find petunia seeds?"

"Petu-what now?" The old lady asked. "I don't know what you young people are up to, messing with us old folk!"

Alethea dragged her hand across her stressed face. This lady must have just never seen petunias before. Nothing to worry about.

The next person, and the next, knew nothing about petunias. They seemed to have vanished from existence. Were they real or not?

Finally, after hours and hours of looking for someone, anyone, who knew what petunias were, she gave up. Dragging herself back home, Alethea was in a funk. It seemed that her favorite flowers no longer existed. That wretched deer had ruined her flowers, and there were at least thirty people in town who thought she was insane.

The petunias were not real.

After four days of constant pouting over her flowers, she'd been on the news twice. Ten of the thirty people she'd talked to had told a reporter about the strange incident. Worse, they got pictures of Alethea in her crazed state.

As she was about to go cook dinner, her phone rang. A common occurrence, yet something about this call was special. Something was going to happen, she knew it. Then again, what did she know? She was just some crazy lady who had a fantasy about nonexistent flowers.

“Hello?” Alethea answered, sounding quite melancholy.

A man’s voice shot through the receiver, “Are you Alethea Brodimus?”

“Yes, yes I am.” She answered. “Can I help you?”

“I heard about you on the news, Alethea. You claim to know of a flower called petunias?”

This caught her attention. Someone knew. Someone knew that these flowers weren’t just made up.

“I do.”

“Let me tell you a little secret, Alethea. I know about them too.”

Her breath caught in her throat. “You do?”

“I do. My name is Dolion. I can bring you your petunias.”

This gave her hope. Maybe, just maybe, petunias were real after all.

MacKenzie McLaughlin Presque Isle Middle School Mr. Carmichael Grade 8

The Basketball Game

I was doing the jump, and I tipped the ball to my teammates. Jackson passed it to me and I was wide open for three and...*SPLASH!! THREE POINT LEAD! SKIP! SKIP!*

Fourth Quarter Time 5 Minutes Left, 113 to 109. I was losing but Jackson stuffed Greg. I got the ball and I lobbed it to James and...*SLAM! And the crowd goes wild!! SKIP! SKIP! 5 seconds left! 118 to 116!!* I have the ball from deep, everyone silent and...*SPLASH!! THE Buzzer beater game winner! And I won! Let’s Goooooooooooo!*

Matthew Shaw Zippel Elementary Ms. Watson Grade 4

Skipping Stones

Skipping stones
on the pond that is blue and,
in the sun, glistening,
like an eye with a tear, belonging to a girl
who wants nothing more than for
someone –anyone– to hear, but who will never be found
for fear of breaking a promise she made
to no one.

Deep down, I'm a crier, too,
one who's just learned to cry in a different way, one that
shows less, hurts more.
This pen, this paper– these are my tears,
Running down my face and onto my tongue, so they
can rain down on *you*.

Don't you feel it? Isn't it sad
that a person with two eyes can't *see*
how short this life really is?
I'd show you with my fingers,
But I can't snap, so I won't.
I'll explain with a **wink** instead.
A single moment between me
and you
among thousands, billions, trillions, countless moments–
crammed together and stuffed into a can– with a tight lid–
Passed from hand– to hand– and stacked into a box– with an even tighter top–
and sealed and packed into a plane to be shipped, far, far away.

I might not remember that little moment we shared, and *you* certainly won't remember *my* name
But I will– I will remember this:
somewhere, our moment remains.

Perhaps it will bloom where the pussy willows grow, behind the old oak tree,
or maybe I'll find it in my tears,
tears that really aren't all that different from yours– not anymore.

Or maybe *it's* already waiting for *me* at the pond that is blue
passing the time
by skipping stones.

Maggie Bell

Caribou Community School

Grade 8

Mrs. Anderson

I Have a Dream . . .

There are many dreams that I would like to see happen. Some of my dreams are that there would be no littering. Another dream is we wouldn't have to wear masks anymore. Also, I dream drug abuse would stop. Lastly, I dream people would read more books.

My first dream is that people would not litter. I dream people would stop littering because the litter gets in lakes, rivers, oceans, and water, in general. Also, when you litter, certain kinds of litter can wrap around an animal's neck, or it can wrap around an animal's intestines if ingested.

Another dream I have is that we wouldn't have to wear masks. I dream that we wouldn't have to wear masks because wearing masks makes it hard to breathe. If you have glasses (like me), they fog up, and masks can poke your eyes. Also, most people don't wear masks properly. They wear them under their noses and (or) chins. They're uncomfortable, too.

Another one of my dreams is that drug abuse would stop. I dream drug abuse would stop because some of the hurt or ill population who take medication can get addicted. Then they may overdose and die. Drug abuse can also increase mental illness and make people who have that decide to do things they wouldn't normally do. For example, they might rob a bank, raid a store, or worse! I would never do that!

My last dream is that people would read more books because they make you better at reading. Some books are educational, and they help you know how to read for when you're older, like for when you have to pay bills. Reading can help you know how to spell better, and it can help you to be able to get jobs easier. Also, if you want to be a teacher, you should be good at reading. Sometimes you can read if you're angry, happy, or sad! Reading can fix many things!

Those few dreams are very important to me. I wish that they'll come true.

Tyler Hollabaugh

Mapleton Elementary School

Mrs. Wright

Grade 4

Lost

I was in my room. Mother was on the couch worried. Our cat hadn't come home last night after we let him out. It was about two o'clock and it was going to get dark soon. Father was out looking around the yard. My mind was spinning. I had gotten a headache sitting in my room for minutes just staring at the wall. My eyes burned with fire. I couldn't take it anymore.

"I'm going outside to look with Dad," I said thinking that maybe he would come to my voice if I called loud enough. "Maybe he is in the woods. That's where I am going."

“Yes, well good luck. Maybe he will come to you?” Mother said getting up and looking out the window.

I stomped out of my room, got my shoes, and left.

I looked around my backyard to see where I should go first. *‘Maybe I should go into the field and look.’* I thought to myself.

My footsteps seemed like they were sinking. Every step I took, the ground, dragging me down. It was deathly silent. I looked to the woods that were on the right of me. I walked in not even thinking. My mind controlling my every move.

I was searching around looking down at the slushy ground and almost bumping into a log and tripping over it. I found some footprints that looked like little cat prints, his little feet. He wasn’t even one yet. While looking up, finally, from my hunchback position that I had been in, I followed the zigzag pattern that it made, hoping that maybe they were his.

It felt like the pattern was going on forever. In the endless void of trees. They led to a little stream that the prints crossed over a fallen tree. It looked like it had been dead for years. Rotten. Decayed. I was surprised that it hadn’t snapped when the animal crossed it. I was definitely not going to try. I would rather jump, than cross that thing.

I looked around to see the closest separated pieces of land.

I shuffled my feet and feeling the air. I concentrated, jumped and failed.

I got one of my feet on the other side, but the other fell right in the water. I could feel the freezing water soak through my shoe. Then my sock and to my foot. I pulled it out after zoning out from my failure. I didn’t pay attention because I told myself that I had to keep going, even with my soaked foot. It sloshed as I kept following the prints.

I felt something on my hands that felt like cold drops of ice. My eyes widened.

Rain.

I was going to lose the track! I sped up almost running. Zigzagging through the trees, around the bushes.

Then I noticed the tracks. They had been washed out with everything else.

I had lost them. What was I going to do now? Were they even his?

It was freezing. I should go home and get warm. I looked around and all I saw was woods for days. The tracks had stayed on the outside of the woods, the field on the right. The field looked like it went across the world. I came out of the woods. I looked for my house. I guess that I had traveled farther than I realized, and I couldn’t see it. I panicked.

My feet stumbled back and forth as I looked side to side hoping that my house would just magically appear when I looked the other direction. It must be here somewhere. There were too many hills that the field went over, it must be over one of them. I had to look for a house or road.

I could surely find my way back to my house from one of those. The left hill just led to more woods, so I had to walk back and across the other side. As I walked I thought about all of the possible outcomes of me not getting out of here. I had just gotten back to where I had started and was heading in the other direction. A little figure came into focus. It seemed like a little cottage from this far away.

I tripped over my own feet.

I ran.

I ran for the little house.

I shouldn’t have even left by myself.

It became bigger as I lunged forward toward it.

It seemed familiar as I came closer.

The backyard met the field.
My fear was completely clouded. I didn't even notice that it was my own.
My home.
I was home.

Mea Lagasse

Easton Jr. Sr. High School

Mrs.Hill

Grade 7

The Bear Hunt of a Lifetime

It was one of those fall afternoons when all you can hear is the quiet whistling wind while the trees shake, the crunching of leaves beneath your feet, and a cloud of cold breath right in front of your face making your eyes foggy. I got the call from Timmy while I was eating breakfast.

“I got nine bears out at the bait if you wanna come take a crack,” he offered.

“Sure, what time?” I exclaimed.

“4:00 is good enough,” he responded.

I was thinking to myself, *hard work hopefully will pay off this year*, because I had already been out last year with no luck. I went to my hunting room and grabbed my camo carhartt pants, camo t-shirt, face mask, and some nose jammer. I went to the boot rack and grabbed size eight Warthogs. I was hung up on which gun to use. I thought of the 223 Winchester but then it hit me: Grampy's 30-30 Winchester. I had my doubts about it. Nevermind the fact I had never shot a 30-30 but then I thought to myself, *the slick wooden stained stock with the iron sights was perfect*. I grabbed 6 shells. The copper smooth slick bullet with hydraulic press says “30-30 Winchester, 1908.” *I only need one*. I arrived at 3:55 just as he was coming back from putting out the bait.

From his porch, with a giddy grin, he screamed, “Come on in!” So I did in fact go in and I had two of the three girls give me a tour of the house. The third is only three weeks old so we had to be a little quiet but we might have broken the rules a little bit.

“Are you ready to shoot a bear?” He giggled.

“Heck yah!” I laughed.

So he gave me the training and talked me through some situations and “Let's go!” he instructed. And we did. We walked down the trail quietly. He sprayed butterscotch on our boots so they would smell it; it was a smell like apple crisp that just came out of the oven. Then we were ready and we walked in like a mouse sneaking supper. I got up in the stand first. It was pretty wobbly but sturdy; it felt like sitting in the old playhouse at Merrill Park. He had no foot rest so his legs were asleep with the blood rushing to his legs. He told me he might fall out of the stand, which he almost did. We were sitting there, half asleep, looking like two people who had driven ten hours to a party and then partied all night.

Out of nowhere Timmy looked up from his phone and said “Right there! He's coming!”

I looked at him, surprised, and responded “Huh? No he's not. I don't believe you.” I was confused. But then I saw him and my heart started racing with adrenaline and excitement, almost like I had lightning rushing through my veins instead of blood.

“Shhh.. calm down. He's small but you can still shoot,” he whispered. So I nodded and watched and I cocked my gun and raised it more gently than a mouse's walk.

“When you're ready, fire,” he instructed.

I was ready so I took a deep breath and when I let out, I pulled the trigger and when I shot I knew he was gone.

Timmy whispered, “Watch him, watch him!” After a few minutes he yelled, “I think he's down!”

I yelled “Let's go!” So we left the stand and went to the bait and we were looking for blood. I saw the first drop and I almost passed out and then we saw blood after blood. Out of nowhere, there he was, laying so droopy. I knew I had just killed that bear. I punched Timmy's arm so hard I thought I heard a bone crack. He got my picture and instantly we called Jon, my uncle, who is crazy about blood and loves gutting anything. I'm sure his house erupted when they heard the news. Timmy and I went and got the tractor. He drove down and scooped him up and put him in the tractor bucket. We hung the bear from the bucket so everyone was able to see him. Excitedly, Jon said, “Let's cut into this thing!”

Jon started gutting it. We found the gallbladder and put it in a bag since they were worth money; In 1939 they were worth 3000 dollars an ounce. The kids were all so into checking it out. My cousin Malon, he was about 4 ½ at the time, had his Jurassic park headlamp and fire jacket on. It was hilarious. Jon finished gutting it and we loaded it on the back of Timmy's GMC Sierra work truck. And then we went and showed Jon's dad at the potato house and I showed a group of guys that are probably more funny than the “Impractical Jokers.” My Uncle Jon called Ben Henderson's butcher shop, and we took it there and tagged it. I'm getting a shoulder to head mount so he gave us the skin and head (which is presently in my mothers freezer). He gave 10 good swipes of the knife sharpener and he had that thing skinned in 10 minutes flat. I got as much steaks as I could off it then the rest was sweet sausage. There were rib cages and blood all over the place and it was super cool. Timmy and Jon shook his hand and he congratulated me on the kill. On our way home we went by Kim Folsom's house, a lady that works with Timmy and Jon, and she said “I'll let this one slide.” and a little bit of advice with hunting: you see any animal when you least expect it.

As we rode off into the pitch black frosty night I realized that hard work does pay off and I couldn't be more proud of myself for killing a bear with my Gramp's gun. Life was good to me that day and I couldn't be more thankful for the call from Timmy for the chance, the help from Jon gutting it and cleaning it, the s'more flavored granola bar from Sarah, the custom meat cutting by Ben, impractical jokers at the potato house, Malon and his little head lamp, the ride over from Mom and Dad, and most importantly, my Grandfather. I don't remember him much but I do know that he would sacrifice everything or anything for anyone in his shadow. His 30:30 means more than a heart can feel to me. Love you Grampy:)

Jakoby Porter

Southern Aroostook Community School

Mrs. Harbison

Grade 6

I Am From Poem

I am from the old Xbox 360
From the old squeaky floor boards and the small cramped hallways
I am from the big apple tree
Who sways back and forth

I am from “NO IS NOT AN ANSWER!”
I am from Nana’s Homemade molasses cookies
From Meme’s mac and cheese and Grampy’s Burgers
I am from Taylor and Jon
I am from a kind, loving family

I am from huge Thanksgiving dinners
from Happy Birthdays filled with fun
I am from smart grandparents
It’s these fun memories that make me who I am

Michael Spooner

Mill Pond School

Mrs. Belyea

Grade 6

The Game

With five seconds left on the clock during the championship game, I skated down the ice, and took a powerful shot. As I watched the puck flying toward the goal, I thought back to all my training.

There were two days until the championship. I had been training all day for each of the last two days. Any game I had ever played was nothing like the championship was going to be. Our team, the Mighty Ducks, was in the championship for the first time since 1984. I was ready.

I played right wing. This year was the best year I had ever had. I was so focused on training that the only breaks I took were for lunch and snacks. I practiced every skill I needed to know over and over.

Our team had practice today to get us ready for the championship. I remembered grabbing my gear and going out the door. I was lucky to have home ice for the championship. We practiced shootouts and I won. I didn’t talk much, but I was still one of the best on the team. I always did drills right, and didn’t mess up.

I remembered when we got to the arena, I saw people coming in. I got to the locker room, and started to get ready. Everyone was focused. When it was time to get on the ice I was ready. I played first line so I was out first. Right out of the gate I scored. We were immediately up 1-0. With twelve minutes left the other team scored. We were tied 1-1.

In the second period I scored again and the other team scored two goals; down 3-2. It was tough and after those goals there were no more goals until the third period. We tied it up, 3-3. It was a tough game and it came down to the final few minutes.

I remembered when I finally got a breakaway! With five seconds left on the clock, I skated down the ice, and took a shot. DING!!!! I hit the post, we went into overtime. Overtime went by quickly with only a few shots. In shoot outs we were tied, 2-2, I had the final shot. I remembered going down the ice, shooting to the goalie's bad spot which was above his shoulder.

I heard the net swish! I did it, I got the winning goal! We had won for the first time since 1984, the first time in thirty-eight years!

After that my picture was framed at the rink holding the trophy. I was a hero, and I liked it. We had a victory party and I had fun, but still the best moment of my life was the game.

Isaiah Foster

SACS

Mrs. York

Grade 5

Perks and Pitfalls of an Only Child

Have you ever wondered what it's like to be an only child? Well, I am able to tell you because I **am** an only child. There are benefits and disadvantages. Most of the time, it is cool to be an only child. But there are some times when it isn't very fun.

You know, even though I have many toys and games, it can be lonely. I don't have any pets. So yeah, it would be nice to have a friend at home. And other places too. Like once, I went to Fun Town Splash Town, and Maman can't get in the water with me. So, I had to find other people to play with. But most of the other kids there weren't my age, and the ones that did look like my age spoke a different language. I guess it can be lonely sometimes. It would have been nice to have a sibling at Fun Town Splash Town to play with. At least I have friends at school!

A lot of the time, being an only child is AMAZING! Like when I can spend some time with my mom. Just her, and I. I don't have to share her, so there are very few interruptions. For example, when I went to Disney World a few years ago, it was just my mom and I. I didn't have to share her, so I didn't have to worry about what a sibling would want to do, or if they wanted to take a break. So yeah, that's what I like most about being an only child.

Some people envy me, and would love to spend a day in my shoes. They say being an only child would be the best thing ever. Now, I will let you in on a little secret; being an only child isn't all that it's cracked up to be!

You see, there are both perks and pitfalls of being an only child. Just like having pros and cons to having siblings. They could be annoying sometimes, but they can be fun. Although sometimes I wish I had a little sister, I am thankful that I am an only child. After hearing what I think, would you like to be an only child?

Isabella Albert

Caribou Community School

Mrs. Plante

Grade 5

Aroostook County

My Deer Hunt

It was a mid-November afternoon. There was a cold nip in the air. Me, my Dad, and my sister Anna were four-wheeling down to our heated hunting shack on the east side of our property. It is located in a small out of the way field we call the “Hidden Field.” Once we arrived, we climbed into the shack and got in our seats. Dad tried to start the heat but it would not fire up. We decided to head to a different shack on the south end of our property. We gathered our gear, jumped into the four-wheeler, and headed off in the direction of the “Gate Shack.”

Once we arrived at the Gate Shack, we climbed the short green ladder and got into our seats. Once again Dad tried to fire up the heater, and this time success!!! It worked. Instantly we could feel the warmth on our chilled cheeks. Finally, we settled in for the evening hunt. The field was calm. We could hear birds chirping behind us in the tall spruce trees. A sneaky red fox came out of the tall dry grass beside the shack. With one look at us, he whirled around and vanished into the grass.

CRACK!!!! We knew that sound. It meant an animal was nearby. I spun around and looked at Dad and then at Anna. Dad motioned to us to keep quiet and still. We sat motionless for about three minutes, which seemed like forever at the time. Suddenly, we noticed movement to our left. It was two does and a button buck, which is a yearling male deer. Once we could see their full bodies they were in the soybeans we had planted last summer. Each deer continued to eat while being completely alert of its surroundings. I quietly raised the rifle and set it on the window sill so I could take a steady shot. Then the deer stepped broadside, presenting me a clear view of its entire side.

BANG!!!! The rifle roared with a loud boom. In an instant, all three deer bounded off towards the safety of the woods. As the deer made it to the far tree line we noticed that there were only two deer. My deer must have fallen in the field. At this moment I was shaking like a leaf in the wind. I was so excited that I shot my first deer. We gathered our gear and headed out of the toasty heated shack to recover my deer. We quickly found the blood trail and started to follow it. The blood that had dripped on the leaves had already frozen because of the cold evening air. After a short time, we found my deer. Then we took pictures of me and my deer. It was a really fun and exciting experience. I can't wait until next deer season!!!

Bonnie Haley

Woodland Consolidated School

Mrs. Robertson

Grade 5

The “White Tail”

On one bright Saturday morning, it was 35 degrees out. There were deer tracks everywhere. My mom and I were thinking of going to look for the white tail we saw a couple days ago. So, she and I grabbed all the things we needed. If we don't go prepared, we always see something, but if we do go prepared, we never see anything. The things we brought with us were

my thirty-thirty and her two-seventy. We did not bring any knives or anything. We were also hunting close to home, so it was not a far trip back to come and get the things we needed if we got a deer.

As we were driving up a dirt road, we found some tracks, so I told Mom to stop and park on the side of the road. Her response was “Why?”. So I said, “Because there are fresh tracks crossing the road.” After arguing for, like, ten minutes, we finally parked and started walking into the woods. We followed the tracks, and then they stopped. All we could think of was, “Where did the tracks go?” After losing the set of tracks, we walked around to find a place to sit and wait. We found a big tree that was on the ground, and we used it as a seat. I placed my rifle on the tree and sat and waited to see what “life” was in the woods. An hour passed and we heard walking around, but we couldn’t tell where. Our took out our deer call and called to see if something responded. Nothing. Whatever was walking was loud. I grabbed my rifle just in case it was something that decided to be aggressive. I asked my mom if we were going to die. She said, “Why would we die?” I said, “Do you hear the walking?” She said, “What walking?” I just wanted to scream at that point. She thinks that I'm hearing things.

After she was done assuming that I was “hearing” things, something black was scurrying through the leaves. Right then and there I had a feeling that I knew what it was. I asked my mom what she thought it was and she said, “It looks like a cat”. When she said it looked like a cat, I kinda thought the same thing. She walked up to the “black” thing. She was looking around and it popped its head up. When I saw the face of the animal I wanted to scream. I yelled at my mom and told her to back up. She was getting ready to pet it. All she saw was a white tail going up in the air... Needless to say it did not smell good. She got sprayed by a skunk that was supposedly a “cat”. Well, she found out the difference between the two. I thought we were going home without seeing anything. Well, we saw an animal, but an animal we did not want to see. So needless to say our hunting was over. So we went back home smelling like a skunk.

Cierra Boutot

Woodland Consolidated School

Miss Craig

Grade 8

The Amazing Fair

Have you ever been to the Northern Maine Fair? If you haven’t, you are missing out. There is food, animals, and usually rides. It is something that I look forward to every summer. It is in Presque Isle, Maine. You are probably wondering why I was at the fair, well I was in a club called Aroostook Valley 4H Baby Beef Club. It is a club with farm kids from around Aroostook County that brings steers to the fair and sells them for big money! A lot of farmers go to the fair. My dad, his sisters and his brother all went to the fair. Even my dad was part of the 4-H Club. My papa always brought his camper to park on the fairgrounds. I remember the camper always smelled like mold. I don’t know how they stayed in that thing. They cleaned it all the time and it still smelled like mold.

I met so many people at the fair! I made five new friends named Frankie, Julia, Charlie, Aubrey, and Jazzie! Before the fair even started, we were allowed to go get food from the food trucks. The blooming onion was the best thing at the fair. My mother tried to copy it at home, but it just came out as flour on an onion. After we all got food, we headed back to the barn where our steers were mooing at each other. Three of the girls had steers and two of them didn't have steers. This year, the four steer's names, including mine, were Hudson, Wrangler, Beef Jerky and Philmore. Frankie, Julia, Charlie, and Aubrey are all sisters, but this year, only two siblings are allowed to be in the 4H club at the same time and Frankie and Julia are in the club right now. Next year, Charlie will be in the club. Also next year, there will be a change and three siblings will be allowed to join the 4H Club at the same time.

At the fair, there were sheep, cows and one horse named Mac. There was a pet obstacle course and Jazzie and I borrowed ferrets from the guy that ran the petting zoo on the fairgrounds to use on the course. Our first attempt was to use one of my calves in the course, but he wasn't having that. We tugged on that calf, and after we finally got him in the ring, he decided that he was done for the day, so he plopped himself down on the ground. The borrowed ferret's names were Alaska and Love Bug. The course was pretty easy, considering the fact that ferrets run about one mile in three hours. After the obstacle course came the boring part, we all had to go give the ferrets back to the petting zoo guy and go clean up our steer's stall. I mean that wouldn't be too bad if you could just make one trip, but there were multiple trips and the shavings were heavy.

My favorite part of the fair was the Baby Beef Show. That is my favorite part because I like walking around the ring and having a judge look at your animal and ask you questions. All the steers get a bath and a groom and you clip their toes and brush them out. The process of clipping their toes is painful. First you have to tie one of their front legs up, so if they try to kick you, they won't be balanced standing on three legs and they will fall down.

If you ever go to the fairgrounds, it is a lot of fun! I hope you get around to seeing all the steers and animals. Also, make sure to see the goat petting zoo! That was fun because this year, some of the goats were scared and fell over when I walked into their pen!

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Potatoes

I could never live without potatoes. It's a weird thing to not be able to live without. It's a weird thing to be a part of so many of my memories. Well then again it's a weird thing living on a farm your whole life. To be isolated with just your own company. It's not like there were any animals on this farm too. Just potatoes. Just a potato farm.

I kick rocks with my feet until my mom hands me a paper bag.

"What's this?" I ask

"For the potatoes." She says while walking back into the house.

The potatoes? She can't be serious. The store is only what? Seven minutes away. We could even stroll right down to the warehouse and grab some. But no. I have to walk behind the big dusty harvester so we can have dinner tonight. Whatever. Let's just get this over with.

I sigh as I put on my gloves and tuck my jeans into my boots. The harvester groans as it moves along. Leaving me a variety of dropped potatoes. I cough as the dust surrounds me.

I swear it took hours. I touched a thousand potatoes. My hands were caked in dirt by the end. But it wasn't the end. Because when I heard my Papa call my name from his truck, I knew I'd be gone for a lot longer.

"Come on! I needa show ya somethin'."

I walk slowly to the truck.

"Hop in. We're going for a ride."

The inside is very dusty and smells like soil. He adjusts his cap.

"Pickin' some taters I see."

"Yes, sir."

Nothing is said until we arrive. It's one of the fields we own. A little down the road from the farm.

"This is where you find the best ones." He says proudly.

"The best taters?" I ask while making fun of him.

He chuckles and pats me on the back. I take my bag and follow him through the dirt. He pulls up one of the plants. And my oh my were they some of the ripest, prettiest, best-shaped, and healthiest potatoes I've ever seen. He smiles when I gasp.

I didn't need many more potatoes so I just followed him down the field, grateful I was wearing boots. He knew the land better than any living thing. He knew potatoes even better.

When I get home my mother marveled at the potatoes I had brought back.

"How did you ever find such good taters?" She asks.

My Papa gives me a wink.

"Oh you just have to go a little farther for the good stuff." I answer back.

"That's for sure."

We finished harvesting that night. For a celebratory dinner most of my family came to our house. It has the biggest kitchen and dining area. Plus there's lots of space to play outside with the cousins. Everyone chats and laughs. We're all happy to cross another job off of our list. But one thing I've learned from being a farmer's daughter and granddaughter is that the job is never truly done.

When we're called in for dinner from playing soccer, I'm the first to the food. The parents have set up a buffet. It looks delicious. The potatoes are the first thing on my plate. When I sit down I take a deep breath and look around. I'm often the one to observe. And that night I observed our unity as people. It didn't matter if we were in a graveyard and eating just plain toast. We had been through much together. And much more would come.

The next year we lost our Papa. Like I said before, he knew the farm better than anyone. He was a stone in our chaotic ocean of flowing seaweed and colorful fish. He was our solid foundation. The night they took him away, we all got together again. We ate. We laughed. We talked. We cried.

So why can't I live without potatoes you may still be wondering? They symbolize more than just dirt and grass. They are a landmark in this voyage through the winding and rocky river we call life. The farm will always be attached to me whether I like it or not.

The Time I Catch the Biggest Salmon of my Life

It was 5:30 when my dad woke me up and said, “Get up”. So, I hopped out of bed and put on my gear. I got in the truck and we drove thirty minutes to the lake. We pulled in at 6:30 and started setting out traps, it was about 5 degrees. James and I were freezing, so we built a fire on the shore.

After about 10 minutes by the fire, I warmed up and I said, “Dad, I’m going to check the traps.” So I got up and walked to the five traps we had set right by the shore. The bait fish were still all alive, so I walked out to the traps we had set out in the deep waters. Once I got ten feet away from the sixth trap I was going to check, the flag popped up. I ran over to it, and saw that the line was zipping off the reel! So I bent down and pulled the trap out of the water.

I grabbed the line and set the hook, which pulled the hook right out of his mouth. I was mad because I knew that it was a big salom. I stood up and yelled “I lost him”. Then the line took off again. So I got down on my knees and set the hook the right way. He jerked the line back and forth. It was like a game of tug of war.

I yelled, “I’m back on.” He was just on the bottom of the ice,when he took the line all the way to the bottom I pulled him straight up and through the hole in the ice. My dad yelled “that’s a nice one!” I took the hook out of his mouth. And when I measured him, he was 32 inches long! That was the second salmon I caught in my life and the biggest salmon I’ve ever caught!

We didn’t catch anything else that day, but it was one of my favorite ice fishing trips I’ve gone on. It was so worth waking up at 5:30,
and I had a very good time fishing

Phoenix

There is a bird that lays no eggs and has no young. It was here when the world began and is still living today hidden in a far away deserted spot. It is the phoenix, the bird of fire. One day, when the world was still very young, the sun looked down and saw a magnificent bird. This bird was beautiful and had shimmering feathers. They were bright, red, and gold in color and shone like the sun itself! The beautiful bird dazzled the sun. “Glorious Phoenix bird, you shall be my bird and live forever! Live forever!” the sun called out.

After hearing the sun, the Phoenix was overjoyed. It danced around in the sky among the clouds. “Glorious sun, from this day onwards, my songs shall be for you alone!” the beautiful Phoenix said. But the poor bird was not happy for long. It was so magnificent that everyone wanted to have a feather from it. All kinds of men, women, and children chased the Phoenix, attempting to trap it. The bird was incredibly upset so the Phoenix thought, “I shall fly away and go east. I shall fly to the land of the rising sun.” The Phoenix flew and flew. It flew for a very long time. At last, the Phoenix came to the desert. The desert was free from all humans. It flew freely in the desert, singing the praises of the sun above. The Phoenix was happy and peaceful in the desert. It spent its days flying and singing.

Years passed and the Phoenix did not die. Almost five hundred years later, the Phoenix grew old and feeble. It could now soar high among the clouds nor could it sing as it used to. “I don’t want to live like this,” thought the old Phoenix, “I want to be young again. I want to fly and sing again.” So, the Phoenix sang, “Oh glorious sun, make me young and strong again.” The sun did not listen. The Phoenix sang and sang. Day after day the old phoenix sang to the sun. When the sun did not answer, the Phoenix decided to go back to the land it came from. There it would call out to the sun one more time.

It flew across the desert, over hills, green valleys, and high mountains. The journey seemed to be tiring and long to the old Phoenix. Whenever the Phoenix stopped it would pick up some cinnamon barks and some fragrant herbs. It carried some in its claws and hid the rest in its feathers. Finally, the Phoenix reached its destination. There the Phoenix found a tall tree and set to building a nest there. It built the nest with the cinnamon barks and lined it with the herbs.

Then the Phoenix flew to a nearby tree and collected some gum called myrrh. It made an egg out of the gum and carried it to the nest.

Now, everything was ready. So the Phoenix lifted its head and sang one last time, “Oh glorious sun, make me young and strong again.” This time, the sun heard the Phoenix sing. The sun swiftly chased the clouds and put the winds at rest and shone down the hillside with all its power. A blinding sight it was! All the animals ran back to their caves and hid away from the sun’s fierce rays. Only the Phoenix sat on its nest. It bathed in the sun’s light. Suddenly, there was a flash and the Phoenix was surrounded by fire. The flames died out after a while but the Phoenix was nowhere to be seen. The tree and the nest were not burnt. All there was left was silver gray ash. Then the ash began to tremble and it started rising upwards. Slowly a young bird’s head popped out. It was very small and stretchy. But the bird grew as every minute passed by. Finally, the bird was itself again. The Phoenix had risen from the ashes. It lifted its neck and spread out its beautiful wings and soared high into the sky.

The Phoenix picked up the ash and put it in the egg. Then it closed the egg and flew away with it in its claws. It sang, “Sun, glorious sun, I shall sing my songs for you alone! Forever and ever!”

When the song ended the wind began to blow again. All the birds came out of hiding. Birds of all kinds and sizes flew behind the Phoenix. “You are the greatest bird of all! You are our king!” They sang together.

The Phoenix and the birds flew towards the city of sun, to the temple of the sun, the Egyptians had made. There the Phoenix placed the egg at the altar. “And now I must fly alone,” said the Phoenix and flew to a faraway desert. The Phoenix lives there still. But every five hundred years, when it grows weak it returns and builds a nest with fragrant herbs. It sings to the sun again and is surrounded by flames. And each time it rises from its own ashes young and strong.