



A Celebration of Stories In the City of Literature

Feb. 21-23, 2020

Iowa City UNESCO City of Literature's

ONE BOOK
TWO BOOK

A Celebration of
Children's Literature
in the City of Literature



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Students listed as a Once Upon a Time Friday reader were recognized as part of the festival kickoff banquet, Feb. 21, 2020

Students listed with “From the Heart” after their name were recognized with the “From the Heart” award, which is judged based on creativity, passion, and expressiveness.

Students with “The Write Stuff” after their name were recognized with the “Write Stuff” award, which is judged based on language, clarity, structure, and emotional impact.

These students, as well as the honorable mention winners listed on the next page, will be recognized at the Feb. 23 “Write Out Loud” event.

Thank you to the more than hundreds of students who submitted work this year, and to our partners at ACT for evaluating that work and selecting our winning students.

Honorable Mention

The following students received Honorable Mention in the 2020 One Book Two Book Children's Literature Festival writing competition. These are students whose work was deemed to be of excellent quality, and were selected from the hundreds of submissions to the festival.

Thank you to our partners at ACT for evaluating the student writing.

Aashritha Snigdha Aedhu, Tiffin, 1	Kaelyn Beeding, Kirkwood, 6
Goldie Grove, Kirkwood, 2	Sylvia Broffitt, Horn, 6
Louisa Capps, Mann, 3	Estelle Ralston, Penn, 6
Peter Spragg, Lemme, 3	Lydia Valiga, Regina, 6
Ian Ballantyne, Willowwind, 3	Corte Beal, Northwest, 7
Adrian Cardoso, Kirkwood, 4	Samantha Glass, Regina, 7
Olivia Friedhof, Coralville Central, 4	Anora Klauke, South East, 7
Rachel Matiyabo, Kirkwood, 4	Luis Solano de Almeida, South East, 7
Kyros Yuefan Wu, Van Allen, 4	Jen Tran, South East, 7
Archie Fisher, Twain, 5	Sidney Tranel, Northwest, 7
Hattie Galloway, Hoover, 5	Jadyn Franklin, West Branch, 8
Willa Jackson, Willowwind, 5	Nevaeh Hoffman, Northwest, 8
Sarah Kalnins, Willowwind, 5	Kamakshee Kuchhal, Northwest, 8
Vidya Kumar, Willowwind, 5	Olivia Naber, West Branch, 8
Mira Mannheimer, Penn, 5	Addison Prantner, South East, 8
Annabelle Pedersen, Grant, 5	Leela Strand, North Central, 8
Ismail Shaheen, Willowwind, 5	Athena Wu, Northwest, 8

Light

A hole into darkness... not fitting in this warm comfortable woods with sunlight filtering through the green leaves on all the tall trees above and around me. I descend into the darkness with only a headlamp to guide me. It gets colder, the stone walls are damp because the cave floods when it rains. The climb is hard, I keep thinking to myself that I'm going to fall. I carefully test every step I take and after a while I finally get to the bottom of the hole and sigh with relief. Then the rest of the group of nine or ten people follow suit. I am grateful for the warmth of my black jacket in this cold, damp, lightless, colorless, prison-like cavern. What would it have been like to be a caveman and actually live in a place like this? I shudder at the thought. We continue through the decently sized cavern until we come to a small tunnel. We are deciding whether to go on through the narrow tunnel and continue, or go back. The tunnel is unfortunately full of water, very cold water, so the only way to continue would be to crawl through an ice-cold puddle on hands and knees, and no one really wants to do that. We are about to turn back when I take a deep breath, get on my hands and knees, and start to crawl. The ice-cold water hits me like a slap in the face, but I continue. My long pants (for warmth and protection) cling wet and cold to my skin. When I get through to the other side of the tunnel I stand up (something I am thankful to be able to do), cold, wet, and dripping with water, but triumphant. Right about now you would expect a glittering pile of gold or a bandit's hideout with fragments of broken bottles strewn across the hard stone floor, or maybe even a dead body. Well, sorry to disappoint you but when the beam of light from my headlamp sweeps around the cave floor I see nothing but a long twisting tunnel. Which to my delight is tall enough to stand up in. After a few minutes, the last of our group of three to four people climbs cold, wet and shivering through the puddle. The rest are going back. To the light. We continue. If we were to turn our lights off, we would be plunged into complete and absolute darkness without a single ray of light to guide us through this lightless cave deep underground. As we progress, the tunnel starts getting thinner and thinner and after what seems like hours we come to the end. It's blocked off with planks of wood and it's so thin we have to go sideways to get to it. We turn around and go back, and after another eternity of going through the tunnel for the second time and after we crawl back through the puddle, and through the bigger room like a cavern, we come to the hole. The hole that I climbed down all that long ago. I start the climb and before I know it I'm almost at the top and then I see it. Light. I let it flood me, fill me up. And then I see something else. Color. Beautiful color, the greens look so much greener and the browns so much browner. At that moment I realized how precise and how beautiful light really is.

The Elevator

As I get into the hospital lobby elevator, I have three things on my mind: cancer, my sister Greta, and the bland hospital food she always complains about. It all feels so unfamiliar and strange. Energy bursting, vibrant Greta who could barely contain herself for a second, was now limply laying on a monitored hospital bed.

Once Mom steps into the elevator, I thoughtlessly close the doors with the press of a button, but as the doors slowly join together I hear a tiny, high-pitched voice.

“Wait!” the little voice squeals.

I rapidly press a button to make the doors separate again. As the doors part, a little girl stands, panting out of breath.

“Fourth floor,” she says as she gets into the elevator.

I nod and press the fourth button in the array of silver domes. The elevator then subtly shakes, which forces me to lose my balance, so I clutch the metal bar attached to the wall. After I stabilize myself, I take a moment to look at the little girl. She is wearing a sky blue shirt, with pajama pants that drag on the floor. She holds a red balloon attached to a thin string, and it floats above her head. Her head only has little specks of blond hair on it, and there are two transparent tubes following in from her nose to her chest. She holds a small grin as she notices me examining her. I’ve seen it before: the balloon, the hair, the tubes, and the smile. The little girl reminds me a bit of Greta — how Greta is able to remain hopeful and optimistic through everything, even cancer. At that moment, I realized that maybe I need to start looking at things through the same lens as Greta, with hope and determination.

My thoughts are interrupted by the ding of the elevator, followed by the doors parting again to deliver us to the fourth floor. The girl steps on to the level first, followed by Mom and I. We all go through the left hallway, where we start to look for Greta’s chemotherapy room. We find it after strolling to the near-end of the hallway. The girl keeps walking, and abruptly stops four doors across where Greta is. Mom walks into the room, but I stay behind for a few seconds to look at the little girl one more time. She turns her head and holds the same small smile she gave me in the elevator. I return a warm smile to her, and I walk into room 546.

"Shining Winter"

Snow falls from the sky, as if the sky were falling.

Hot cocoa sits by the warm fireplace in the quiet loving room.

In the silent quiet room lays a sleeping cat.

Next to the cat is a pale brown couch.

Inside the fireplace lighted quiet room, everything is relaxing.

Next to me lies a little, brown, leather book.

Glammering in the light of the fire there lies a shelf of elegant, glittering, glass cups.

When the cat wakes up it climbs on the couch and purrs satisfyingly.

Innocent silence fills the room.

Near the fire, I sleep in peace, with a beautiful aroma.

Tenderly the cat purrs again,

Enjoying the cocoa, I pet the cat.

Relaxing my feet on a pillow, I fall into a deep, relaxing sleep.

Pirate Cats

"Yo ho ho!" Blackbeard cried. "There are rats on my ship! Cats, come!"

Immediately an orange fluffy ball of fur leaped onto the rat. Then the cat, Peachy, took the rat and dropped it into the water. Blackbeard turned to his first mate, Scurvy, and said "Your idea to bring cats onto this ship and train them to catch mice was an excellent plan!"

"One thing, Captain." Scurvy replied. "To be officially welcomed onto our ship, I think these cats need pirate hats."

"No, no, no!" Captain Blackbeard exclaimed. "Cats with hats?" He shook his head.

"Just an idea, Sir." Scurvy bowed.

"And *not* a good one." Captain Blackbeard mumbled.

However, the cats had heard Scurvy's idea. And they liked the idea..... a lot. "Off to the hold!" Peachy yelled. This was where they held their secret meetings.

They went to work, gathering feathers, leather, gold and other supplies to make the hats. "Now cats, put the first hat on me and bow to me." (Peachy was obviously enjoying this way too much.) The cats looked puzzled and they just sat there. "Never mind!" Peachy chuckled nervously. Now that the hats were ready, the cats put them on. Then the cats feel asleep wearing their hats.

The next morning, there was a rat on the ship again. "Cats!" Blackbeard called. "There's a rat!"

"Yes," Scurvy added. "And it's a mighty big one too!" When Peachy came in to chase the rat away, he was proudly wearing his pirate hat.

"Scurvy!" Captain Blackbeard yelled, pointing his hook at the now very frightened man.

"Yes, Captain?" Scurvy's voice shook. "You put hats on the cats!" Captain Blackbeard bellowed. "I'll get you!"

"No, Captain. I did not put hats on the cats." Scurvy looked wildly around the ship for help. "I couldn't have. You were with me all night! We sleep in the same room!"

The captain looked angry. "When you went to the bathroom, you put hats on my cats!" Scurvy wanted to say they were everyone's cats, but Captain Blackbeard was mad enough at him anyway. Just then, Peachy dropped the rat he'd been chasing at Captain Blackbeard's feet.

"Eww! Eww!" Captain Blackbeard shrank back with a disgusted look on his face. "Take the rat off the ship. Don't bring it to me!" He cried. But instead, Peachy picked up the rat again and headed toward Captain Blackbeard with the rat in his mouth. The captain began to run away and Peachy immediately started to chase him.

"Stop!" Captain Blackbeard yelled frantically. "Scurvy, do something! Help me!" But Scurvy was tired of being bossed around, besides, he liked the hats, so he stood there, grinning.

"Do something!" captain Blackbeard howled. But Scurvy still did nothing. Peachy wouldn't give up. He kept chasing Captain Blackbeard around, rat in mouth, into the ship jail where Scurvy locked him up.

The End

Amanda Bennion

My Friend, the Dragon

Look at this fierce dragon,

See its fangs and its jaws,

Its long twisty tail,

Its sharp pointy claws.

Why, does it tremble,

Not with rage,

But with fear?

Why, as it sits,

Does it shed tear by tear?

I should be the one,

Shaking with fear,

Next to this thing,

Too afraid to come near!

As I stood there for minutes, and minutes,

On end,

Feeling the Dragon's need for a friend,

I decided, that I,

one person of many,

Will befriend the Dragon,

(His name being Kenny.)

Me and the Dragon.

The Dragon and me.

We will be the best friends anyone can be.

Our friendship isn't based off appearance, you see,

I saw passed his scary looks

And I learned that we can't be judged like covers of books.

To this very day we are together.

This is a friendship that will last forever.

Addison Bollier

Dear Daddy,

I miss you! I am five years old it has been three years since I got to see you. I've asked Mommy why you didn't come back from work many times she just says that I won't understand until I am older. She cries in her room every night and when I ask her if she is okay she says "I'm okay, I just hope he is still here." I got to go to bed now, me and Mommy will be here when you come back! Love you! - Addie (P.S. Mommy lets me sleep with your shirt every night!)

Dear Dad,

I am ten years old now. I miss you so much! Mom finally told me what had happened, I cry every night into my blanket you gave to me when I was two. It has been eight years since I got to see you. I started playing basketball I love it so much. Mom waits at the door each night. She finally got herself to go into your office yesterday. She tells me that everything will be okay. I go to sleep think about that if you didn't... die what would it be like? Every Christmas mom still buys you a present and so do I. Last year I got you a picture of Mom and me it is put in a basketball picture frame just like the one you got mom for your anniversary. I gotta go, I love you! Bye. - Addie

Dear Dad,

I am starting highschool in two days. I am fourteen years old now. It has been twelve years since I last seen you. You have always encouraged me to try hard at things I loved, even when you are not here I always did. So I made it on varsity basketball team this year! I hope your proud of me. YourDeath Day is coming up. I am making this years amazing for you and Mom. She still waits for you every night until it is passed when you come home. I love you! -Addie

Dear Dad,

I stayed home from school today because Mom is sick today. I am starting collage in two months. I am eighteen years old now. I haven't got to see you for sixteen years. I wish you were still here. I got a scholarship to the UI (University of Iowa) for basketball. Mom, is sick and I wish you were here, you would know what to do. Mom is calling now, I have to go help her. I will always be here for you. I miss you so much. -Addie

Dear Dad,

Right now I am in the hospital with Mom. Dad I don't know what to do, Mom has cancer. I put college on pause and I am never leaving Mom's side until she is better. Mom says hi. She is struggling, but we both know she is a fighter. I just turned nineteen, and it has been seventeen years since I got to see you. I got to go the doctors are coming in. I love you so much! I wish you were here. - Addie

Dear Dad,

I wish you were here right now. I know I had said that you were going to come home to me and Mom but now you only have me to come back to. Love you. - Addie

Back Home

I tighten my grip on my suitcase. Here we go, about to go on an airplane. This is my first time to be in an airport. It's pretty nice. Everything was in white, blue, purple, and pink. There were a few restaurants on the side of the hall with big signs that read 'Welcome to Airport 5, but I have to say the thing that I realized the most is that people are huddled together.

"Section A we're ready to get you on the plane," the speaker said. My mom got up, we must be in section A. Everyone is getting in a little line to scan there tickets. My mom looks in her purse shuffles around a little and finally gets our tickets. Now that would be bad if we forgot or lost our tickets. Finally, FINALLY we get to scan our ticket. I get on the airplane and I'm amazed. It looks so cool.

"Elizabeth come get in your seat". When we take our seat this guy sits next to my mom. You know in school we learned about cause and effect. Well cause this guy sits next to her and he's really chatty, except my mom starts talking to him and now I'm really annoyed, so I put my headphones on. The airplane starts moving we go high in the air. I think I'm going to like being in an airplane.

My mom and dad are divorced. My dad lives in Florida and me and mom live in Oregon. My mom wanted to get as far away from my dad as she could. But right now we're taking our first airplane to Florida to see my dad I'm so ready to see him. I haven't seen him in three years. My dad has a wife already and I can't wait to meet her. My mom seems annoyed whenever I say dads name or his wife's name Elise. My mom's name is Emma and She says that dad was lucky he didn't have to take care of me though I disagree whenever she says that. I was 7 when he left.

4 HOURS LATER. We're in a limo my dad rented for us because mom didn't have enough money. We arrive at a large cozy cottage. House number 629. The house has a red door with a gold door knob, brown bricks all over, the windows have red curtains. The door opens I see a tall woman with blond hair, red lipstick, white shirt, and jeans at the door. I'm not positive but I think that Elise. She lets us in. When we walk in my dad is waiting there for us. I hug him so tight I thought he might explode.

We came here because it's almost Christmas and he wanted Christmas with me and Elise. I walk to the dinner table there's lots of food. When were done eating my dad walked me over to the Christmas tree they have in their living room. There's a really big present.

"I got you the best present of all" my dad said. I look at my mom it looks like she's about to cry I go over and hug her, she shrugs me off. I go back to my dad. He lets me open the biggest present. Before I open the present it barks. I open the present so fast. I'm ready to see the dog. The dog barks and licks my face. The dog is a golden retriever. I look at her and I decided to name her mea. At the end of the box in the corner. I open the note It says, will you live with us "will you". My dad asks.

Tigers eye

Swift and lean.

Stripes of black.

Something moves in the trees.

Glowing yellow eyes appear in the bushes.

They glow like full moons.

Stalking their prey.

Protecting their home.

Giving life to their kind.

Those eyes tell a story.

A story of life.

A story of death.

A story of new.

A story of old.

Those glowing eyes live wild.

They represent freedom.

They represent life.

They represent a creature.

A truly magnificent creature.

The tiger.

The eyes of a tiger.

That's what they are.

Tigers eye.

CHIPPED
A True Story

One day, in the month of March, it was a very normal day, just like all the other days. Little did I know that something that was definitely not normal was about to happen. It was a Monday- the day I took swimming lessons at the rec center. I was rushing, packing my towel and goggles, trying my best not to be late. Before I knew it, I was already in the pool with my coach and group of students. I was standing in the pool waiting for instructions from my coach when all of a sudden, this boy right next to me showed me a cool swimming stunt. He told me to try it and it was so cool that I decided to try, without knowing that I was totally going to regret it.

This is where things start to get spicy! I tried the stunt and turned to face the wall of the pool when my mouth hit the wall really really hard! Pieces of my front tooth were falling out. That's when I realized that I must have chipped my tooth. The counselor noticed this happening and immediately told me to go to the nurse. That meant class ended early for me, before it even started. That was kind of good because my arms were tired anyway.

My mom eventually heard the news and came rushing to the nurse's office, looking worried. Before she came, the dude in the office asked me questions like my mom's phone number, etc. My mom was so shocked when she saw me and everyone in the room started talking about my tooth. When we came back home, my dad was disappointed and told me that I should have been more careful and responsible. After my scolding, I went upstairs to look in the mirror. I honestly thought that I looked like a vampire. It was a very big deal and I started crying.

I went back down, my eyes filled with tears. When my dad asked me what was wrong, I burst out crying and said I looked so hideous. My dad hugged me and told me that everything will be ok and my dentist would fix it. The next day, I went to school and showed my teeth to everyone. They were really shocked. One of my friends told me that I looked like a shark. That actually kind of cheered me up.

I left early from school to see my dentist. I told her my story and everyone there was surprised especially when I showed them the piece of my tooth that had broken off. The boy next to me in swimming class had caught it. They told me to sit on a chair and said I could watch TV when they performed the surgery. I watched "The amazing world of Gumball". Every once in a while, I laughed my head off! When they were done, I saw my teeth. I couldn't believe what I was seeing! My broken tooth was back to normal.

I went to school the next day and everyone was so surprised. A lot of people asked me how the dentist did it. I told them I had no idea because I was more focused on the TV than my teeth.

THE END!!!

Glass Bottle

Once I was walking along the beach and I felt something beneath my toes. It did not feel like a shell, but some sort of glass. As my parents kept on walking, I stopped to see what it was. I picked it up from under the sand. I dusted it off. It was a corked bottle, and it had a note inside! I took off the cork and the note fell out. I read it in my head so nobody would know what the note said. As I read the note, my eyes got wider and wider because it said:

Dear reader,

Please find the hidden treasure under the sea. It sunk when my boat crashed into an iceberg (and no, not the Titanic). Return it to my locker in the sunken ship closest to you. - Davy Jones

Right away I thought I should tell my parents, but then I thought maybe Davy wanted this to be a secret. I ran across the beach trying to catch up with my parents and then I saw it: a safe! I was so relieved when I saw it in the "washed up junk" pile.

Again, I let my parents walk ahead so I could check it out. It was the safe with treasure in it! Now to find a sunken ship. *I thought how in the world am I going to find a sunken ship without my parents noticing?* I thought and thought about how to distract my parents - then it hit me! I told them I wanted some ice cream. Now they would have to wait in the long line at the "Pirate's Treasure Snack Shack" that seemed to stretch all the way to China. That way, I'd have plenty of time to find the ship, find the locker, find my way out, then swim back. I was a very good swimmer, so I wasn't worried about that. What I was worried about...sharks. So, I rented some scuba gear and the guy said that sharks would not hurt me. I took his word for it, but still was a little worried - okay a lot worried, but I had to be calm, so I put on the gear for protection.

Now I really felt like I should tell someone about this right away; but only a quarter of my body said that and the other three quarters said just keep going. I had to keep on going, so I slowly dove in. Once I had fully submerged, I looked around until I saw a tiny flag pole sticking out of the water. I waited to see if the wind would pick up so I could see the flag. The wind revealed that it was the one and only skull and crossbones pirate flag! I knew that I had to swim over there. While I was swimming, I saw so many colorful fish! It was like magic. I saw angel fish swimming everywhere, and I saw clown fish too. Plus I saw so many beautiful starfish. I wished I could stay there instead of returning to some old locker once owned by a pretty nasty pirate, but I didn't want him to put a curse on me, so I just kept on going. Eventually, I entered the deep scary depths of the ocean, and this time instead of beautiful fish, I saw terrible fish like angler fish and...SHARKS! After that, I'm pretty sure I was swimming my fastest!

I finally got inside the ship. I was lucky because Davy's locker was right in front of me. I wanted to explore, but then I saw a flash of light. It was Davy Jones, and the locker was moving with him. He looked relieved that I had returned the treasure to him. I asked him why he was so relieved and he said "it was my treasure at first, then rotten thieves stole it." Or at least that's what I heard. I could not quite understand him because he was basically a half dead barnacle. He thanked me, but before he left, he said "go up and see the sunset." It was a beautiful sunset and I still don't know how Davy could have known about it. It had been a long day and I was tired, so I quickly swam back to shore hoping my parents hadn't noticed I'd been gone. Luckily, they were just standing at the water's edge with my ice cream, which had a little pirate flag sticking out on top - WINK!

Protect the Flowers & Save the Bees

Protect the wildflowers

Because they have special powers.

They sway in the breeze

And attract lots of bees.

The bees fly and land on flower tops

For a short little pollen pit stops.

The nectar they slurp,

And they try not to burp!

From flower to flower the bees jump and play.

Oh what a way to spend their day!

Afternoons on daisies, roses & daffodils

The honeybees are never still!

And soon when it's night,

The bees settle just right.

Taking the pollen to spread around

To other plants on the ground.

Then they head back to the hive

And end the day with a wing high five!

The flowers and bees have done their jobs,

And soon the honey drips out in globs.

So protect the flowers and save the bees.

And save some honey for me! Please!

A 12 year old's life

Dear Diary,

I got this journal for my birthday so I decided to start writing in it about my life. My name is Kindy. I suffer from cystic fibrosis. (When I was younger I pronounced it as 65 Roses. Which I guess other kids do too.) It doesn't keep me from doing most things everyone else does. I am 12 years old and I have a younger brother. He is so hyper! His name is B.B. He always wants to play. It gets tiring though. I want to hang out with my friends and read, but my brother doesn't.

I was supposed to be on a date with my boyfriend right now, but B.B. needed a babysitter. So I volunteered to watch him. (Not that I wanted to.) Ever since I can remember B.B. and I haven't been the closest. I always want to hang out with my friends. B.B. is five years younger than me. So, I don't always like being with him. It probably started because when B.B. was born I was stuck in a critical care unit. I was having complications with my lungs at the time. I hated B.B. for a long time because he got more attention than I did. I was only five years old, and I was a spoiled child. Now, I know better.

Although he is my brother, B.B. doesn't understand what it means to have cystic fibrosis, so he is always running away from me and jumping on me. I love him to death, but he is a stinker. Clay just called (that's my boyfriend). He's coming over to help me watch B.B. I can't wait because he always loves to hang out with B.B., and B.B. loves to hang out with him too. I gotta go now. B.B. is being a stinker. I'll continue in the next entry.

See ya.... Love, Kindy.

Source

"The 65 Roses Story." Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, www.cff.org/About-Us/About-the-Cystic-Fibrosis-Foundation/The-65-Roses-Story/. Accessed 6 Dec. 2019.

Malala is a Muslim girl who always made sure the people in her country got freedom. Everything was good until an army called the Taliban came and took advantage of her country. She lived in Swat Valley. The Taliban banned teenage girls from going to school and anywhere outside! Malala thought this was very unfair, she wanted to become a doctor and study. So, she sneaked going to school. Finally, the Pakistan soldiers arrived and drove the Taliban into forests. But, the Taliban returned this time with bigger and better weapons. Soon she started giving speeches. The Taliban got tired of her talking about them so, they shot her in her hand. She was taken to the hospital. After her hand healed, she kept giving speeches. She kept on fighting and fighting for freedom, until one day the Pakistan army found a way how to drive the Taliban out of their town for good. But only on one condition... They had to leave their town immediately. Malala's father told everybody to pack. Malala started to pack, but then stopped. She looked at her study books. She was about to grab them until her father said Malala come quickly! We must leave! Malala sighed sadly and, read some prayers on her books, then left. They had a car to pick them up. She thought about her study books until a huge missile came flying in the air. Then finally after a long drive they arrived by a nearby creek. They had to spend some nights in their aunt's house. She was lucky because, some people had to sleep in tents in the wilderness. She heard some rumors that some of the Taliban lurked around the tents. Just thinking about that made her quiver. "Her father told her" "Don't worry Malala." "It'll only be a few days." Malala waited days. Soon the days turned into weeks and the weeks turned into months. Until one day they got to come home! "When they entered Swat Valley it was a disaster!" They saw big holes in buildings, schools were bombed. She hoped her school was ok. When they got home she dashed to her room hoping her books were ok. Malala was so happy her books were safe, and she couldn't wait to go to school. The next day she was taking her bus to school as usual. Then a man who wore all black was entering the bus. Her friend whispered I think it's one of those journalists! As he entered he said... "Whose Malala"? Everybody stayed quiet. Then the man lifted a pistol and started firing. A bullet hit Malala's head and then went flying into her right shoulder Two of her classmates were shot in the right shoulder as well. Malala was rushed into the hospital. Soldiers surrounded it. But it turned out that this hospital wasn't enough so they transported her to a different one. But that was not enough either so, she had to be transported out of Swat Valley. Her parents and brothers were really scared. But they knew that if they didn't let her go, she would die. So they said goodbye. Malala woke up a little, she threw up, Then went back to sleep. Finally, she arrived at the hospital. They ran tests on her head. They couldn't find the bullet, but they figured out that the bullet went a little too close to her brain. Her brain was kind of damaged. So to do good work on her brain they shaved half her head bald. Then they did surgery on her skull. They removed a giant piece of her skull. They did not know where to put it, so, they put it in her stomach for safe keeping. When she woke up, she didn't feel her normal headscarf, she felt a soft white headscarf on her head. When she was sitting up she felt a lump in her stomach. The doctor gave her some letters to spell out words. She spelled What happened? And Where's my father? The doctor answered her questions. Then Malala went back to sleep. Later she woke up again and touched her hair one side didn't have any hair. She spelled: why does my stomach feel heavy? The doctor answered her question. Then she asked for a mirror. The doctor brought her a mirror. She looked horrified when she saw herself. Then she spelled why I have no father? The doctor answered he is safe don't worry. Soon she had to be transported to a hospital in England. There she healed and went back to her parents.

Jealousy

Jealousy is a feeling that consumes your mind. It's like a never-ending rollercoaster. You might not understand this yet, but when you are jealous, you are just saying what you have isn't good enough compared to what they have.

I once got jealous of my sister and my brother because most of my family's birthdays are in the fall, but mine is in the summer. I felt like I had nothing to talk about because my siblings were talking about all their gifts. Then, I realized I should be happy for them because I knew Christmas was coming, and I will have a birthday later on, and I will get presents then.

When you are jealous, you are putting a weight on your own shoulders. If you are jealous all the time, it will make life really hard because you will never be satisfied with what you have.

Remember when I said that jealousy was like a weight on your shoulders? Well, you can take it right off. You just have to realize that you need to focus on what you have instead of what someone else has. I did it, and I know you can too. Give it a try!

Deep Down Inside

Deep down inside the world is crashing like a snowglobe

A bottle

A window

Crashing down like a glass

Shattered

Deep down inside

Our democracy is falling

Turning over like a building

Pain stains your body

Like a needle in the chest

Why?

Why me?

It's happening so quickly

Like a bullet flying past

Hitting you

You fall

Down

Down to the ground like an anvil

Like a bowling ball

Shattered inside

Deep down inside you know

You know like you're a genius

That something is building up

Like a volcano

It bursts up like lava

Anger

Raging anger

Deep down inside

So deep

Like a trench

The anger

Falling down

It turns into

Anxiety

It has you trapped

It stays in like money in a safe

Deep down inside

Iowa

Iowa is the heartland.

Corn.

Beans.

So many crops.

Pigs.

Fertilizer.

Machinery--breaking down, paying out.

Selling grain, getting paid, trying to earn a living.

Farmers plant to make ends meet.

Must grow.

Harvest time, no sleep. Not always fun, but we have to do it.

My family.

Many generations.

Uncle,

Grandpa,

Great-grandpa. Farmers.

Cycles of farming, so many cycles,

Season after season,

Planting and growing.

Feeding the animals.

Feeding the people.

Feeding the world.

Iowa.

Have you ever felt like you didn't have a voice? Well I have, time after time after time. Whether I'm getting ignored, bullied, or both. All I could do was wait. I'm tired of that now, I'm tired of just watching as another school shooting happens to add on the hundreds of others that happened in the last year. I'm tired of watching our Earth getting destroyed and have most people just pass if off.

If I ever made a peep, a peep, about topics like this, just me, no one else. I would get shut down and frowned upon. I feel like I can't make a difference, that I can't change anything. Now before you ask, "hey, you know that walk outs exist right?" I know, but I can't do that, I physically can't. So no protests, no walkouts, no nothing. I have a disability called EDS that makes sure I can't do what a normal kid can't. Sports? Ha! Never had done it, never will. In a way, it makes me the person I am today.

So I can't do anything by myself. I've said this, so I might as well get to the point. Yes, I can't do it, but we can. If we can stand up for our future together and push what our generation believes is right, toward those with power, they won't ignore us anymore. Sure, they may not listen, they may try to push us aside again because of our youth. Though, they can't ignore us anymore, they won't. That is because we can make a voice so powerful and loud that it would make sure they hear us. Then, eventually, they will listen.

This is already happening right now. People our age are speaking up. They are getting acknowledged. Some are even listened to, but more needs to be done. More voices need to be heard, local, statewide, nationwide, worldwide. So please, I may be just a random teen from a random town in Iowa, and nobody would probably not care about this speech anyway, but for those who are listening: stand up for what you believe in, stand up for what you think is right. Work together for what you plan to get done. Whether it is protesting, or just in your everyday lives. One person would crumble under a large load, but if you would work together to move the load, it would go quicker and easier for each person. If we all stand up for our future something might get done.

Thank You for listening. Let's make sure everyone else does too.

The Red Bird

I was walking down the road when I saw a red bird.

It wore its crown like a queen.

It was on a tree and it was singing a song

That sounded like Christmas bells to me.

It liked to fly when it was cold,

And it was red as a bright cherry.

This Is Me

I am from Bikes, Arabian dolls, and toys. From Samara's and Tom n' Jerry.

I am from a small apartment building, built up to a beautiful house with unthinkable landscaping and a garden at the front. From Iraq to America 'The Land of Opportunities' I'm grateful.

I am from palm trees to camellias, and lilac to a forest just outside. From the beautiful garden we left behind, still as luminous and extravagant, you'd mistake it for a jungle.

I am from Ramadan, delicious authentic food, and Eid.

I am from my father, hard-working, built his way up from the ground. He took care of us, brought us here, and taught us only good. From my mother, her smile so warm and sweet, her presence comforts and brightens up the room. Unfairness had attacked her badly, but her strength overcame, she persisted. From my sweet, dignified grandfather, God bless him, our cherished moments we shared left behind, along with his veneration. I miss him terribly, but his memory will always stay in my heart; he will never be forgotten. From my kind-hearted grandmother's gentle smile filled with delight and beauty, so intricate as she is. To my huge family, indescribable in the American language.

I am from happiness, kindness, and the brave.

I am from "Try your best" "Push past your limits" "Be yourself" "Have good character" "Be nice, but stand up for yourself" "You know you can do it" and "I love you"

I am from loyalty to Allah, from five prayers a day since I was nine.

I am from the same hospital my mother worked in back home. From Sumerian and Babylonian ancestors.

I am from teshrebe, fassoolia, tebsee, and chicken with fried rice. From lebban, berianni, that tastes so nice.

I am from my mother, foulness scarred her terribly, overcame such cruelty, with hard work and loyalty from scratch to earn a job. From my grandfather's depressing release of his life. A heart attack unable to be recovered by the doctors of my hometown. His funeral I wasn't able to attend due to the cruelty of this nation. I loved him so, I was very close to him as a child.

I am from our old beautifully intricate pictures, back home from when I was little and before. All locked away back home, in Iraq. Its tendency, proneness, and this nation's president keeping me from such a momentous and beautiful family once more.

A little girl arose with a sick feeling in her stomach. She looked at the window that revealed her worst nightmare; a thunderstorm on a full moon. Panic arose in her face, then her head turned to the door as her mom came in. Her mom said, "Sweetie? Oh, thank goodness you're ok, Darcy. Come on sweetheart there's a thunderstorm, we need to get to the basement, ok?" The girl named Darcy obeyed and got out of bed as she followed her mom downstairs. Darcy was a little eight-year-old girl with brownish-black eyes and light golden-brown hair. Her cheeks always flushed bright pink when she laughed, although they were pale now, and she always looked on the bright side. Darcy lived with her mom and her grandma. Her dad died only a few months after she was born fighting in the military, so she doesn't remember much about him. Her grandpa suffered a major seizure when Darcy was six, but she always remembered him and kept him in her heart. Darcy used to love going down to his "studio" where he loved to paint beautiful paintings that he would sell for thousands of dollars. Darcy always thought that it was weird how Grandpa called the attic his "studio", how could something be two different things? Her Grandpa explained that anything can be different, like how he's an artist, but he's also a grandpa. When she was little, Darcy always wanted to be like her Grandpa as she loved to draw, color, paint, and do anything really that required a little bit of imagination and creativity. Darcy's grandma is suffering a major injury to the pancreas and she has to take a lot of medicine and she has to use a cane when she walks. Her grandma always felt tired and had to stay in bed a lot, so Darcy helped her mom make cookies and tea for her to make Grandma feel better. Grandma woke up in a daze. She wasn't feeling too good and the thunder outside woke her up. Blinded by the dark, Grandma shivered and tried to get up—too quickly. Grandma felt a sudden shock as she found her way to the ground. As the light flashed open, she realized that she had tripped over her cat. Grandma felt a huge pain in her leg and she slowly let out a scream. Darcy's face only showed terror as she ran to her injured grandmother. Mom had brought her first aid kit in case of emergency—she was a doctor. She slowly examined Grandma's leg and had bad news; Grandma had a sprained ankle. Darcy hugged her grandma and started to cry as her mom went to get some more supplies. Her grandmother hushed her and told her that she didn't deserve her tears. Darcy thought it made sense—crying couldn't help Grandma get better, but she was still sad. As Darcy looked into her Grandma's eyes, they both thought the same thing; Grandma couldn't seriously heal from such huge injuries at the same time, she might die soon. Grandma looked at Darcy and put a bracelet in her hand without taking her eyes off their place. Grandma said, "Darcy, my sweet little angel. I want you to take this bracelet, and it's not just any ordinary bracelet. This bracelet can take you to a magical place, where anything you dream is possible. My grandma gave it to me, as her grandma did before her, and now I am passing it down to you, and you will someday pass it down to your own grandchild." Darcy took the bracelet and thanked her grandmother. Her mom came back and Darcy waited as they talked and said goodbye, finally it was Darcy's turn to say goodbye. She hugged her grandmother and said, "I love you." As the life died from inside her Grandmother's soul. Darcy couldn't help it, but she kept on crying.

Later after the funeral, Darcy decided to test out the bracelet's magic powers. She put it on, but nothing happened. Then as she closed her eyes, the most magical thing happened, and she was transferred into the beautiful world of imagination.

IF EVERYONE DID

If everyone could simply stop all the bad things they do, the world would be almost perfect. But sometimes, people think that they're doing good. A young soldier might go to war proud of serving their country, but then they wound, they kill. On the battlefield, would it be so hard to imagine that deep inside the enemy is holding hands with your heart? Would it be so hard to know that across the bloodied and body-strewn ground, where your gun is hoping to find a lodged bullet, there is someone who is heartbroken and homesick just like you? Why do we not look into the eyes of our falling rivals? Because somewhere inside us there is kindness beyond our dreams. And when we meet our rivals' eyes we cannot kill them. We cannot possibly let our dagger find the heart of those despairing eyes, those eyes that know their life is lost, that they will never train their gaze on their loved ones again. For every person has a true life! We must let this kindness inside our hearts flow through our veins. The human race was not made to be a race of heartless killers! Let love overtake you on the battlefield, and let not your eyes pass over the enemy's heart. Feel the world around you and feel the heart at your feet before your weapon takes their life, for life is good and we must live for the sake of others. Live to help not kill. Don't take life, bring life, the possibilities are endless. LOVE. Let love flow through your veins like blood of gold. Don't shut your heart away from the world. Open your heart and LIVE.

I wake up and regain consciousness. I'm still in my nest. It's dark. I can see two of the moons. I unfold my black galaxy colored wings. They are wet. I flap them back and forth. They are still damp. I try to roar, all that comes out is a mewl. I wish I had someone to talk to. I look around at my surroundings. I'm in a building of some sort without a roof, On the floor there are lots and lots of eggs a different color than mine. The nests are all different colors. I see an opening at the far side of the room. I start to panic. I mewl as loud as I could. This seems pointless.

I look into the future and I see one where I keep mewling and no one comes until I'm out of breath and desperate for water, one where I wait until sunrise and someone comes in, and one where I walk out and get lost and eventually die, I choose to wait. Morning comes and a Dragord walks in. When she sees me she runs out yelling "She's hatched!" Three Dragord's come in. One picks me up. I know this is my mother because the love in her eyes. I mewl happily. She awws. The other ones however do not like me at all. Darkness. I claw at the walls keeping me from the outside world. I need to get out. Minutes pass. I keep hitting the walls. I'm tired, I decided for one last punch. CRACK. Light streams into my crowded prison. Sunlight! It warms my fur. I get a rush of hope. I slam the area the sunlight is coming from. The wall gives. I fall on the moist earth. Freedom.

I watch the moons move in the sky. Sunrise. I stare at the pinks and oranges and yellows. My eyes flutter close and I give in to sleep. I'm flying! The wind moves my fur. I soar above a sea of green. Wait. Where am I! I swoop down through the trees. I almost got caught by a sundew! I land and look around. My eyes lock on a gigantic dragon trap. I shiver. I also see a scavenger village. I roar and pounce on a female with light hair. She squeaks under my powerful paw.

Claire Locher

The Best Day Ever

It was easily the best day of my life,
when we got my dog that warm night.

We cuddled her so,
and tapped her sweet nose,
I knew the dog we had got was just right,

When we got home she walked,
Onto the grass as we talked.
It seemed like she tip-toed,
As she smelled with her nose.
She looked more for shamrocks.

As I watch her today and see
The way she holds her head as she sleeps
Slightly to the side
Tilted just right
She is the part that completes me

Dinosaur Dreamland

One night I went to bed and... I was in a dinosaur land. I did not know it at first but then I almost got eaten by a T-REX!!!! I scrambled for HELP. I ran in the forest, I hid in a tree, and in the tree there was a hole just for me. So I hid in that hole that was just for me, and I hid and hid for a long time from the t-rex. Then I heard a loud cry for HELP!!!! It was a creature behind my tree, you see. I want to help him, but with that t-rex, with those big claws and big jaw with little but thousands of teeth in his jaw. But, I got an idea. If, just if, I could be a big strong dinosaur. As the sun set, I cut branches to make a mouth in the tree, and by sunset I was ready. I quickly grabbed my flashlight and shined it on the tree. It scared the t-rex away. I turned around and there was the creature, full of joy. It was night time so we went to bed underneath the tree. When we woke up, I was back home, but where was the creature? Oh no! He was back in the dinosaur land! So I quickly closed my eyes and ended up back in the dinosaur land too. When I got there, I followed his trail. The trail ended, but then I looked up and there was the creature, going to fall off a cliff. The creature was holding onto the edge. I pulled him up with all my strength. He fell on top of me. We stayed there for a minute catching our breath. Then, I closed my eyes, but the creature said, "WAIT! I cannot come with you. This is only a dream! Thave to stay here in dinosaur dreamland." I said goodbye to my new friend and closed my eyes. When I opened my eyes, I was back in my bed. What a dream!

The End

Our Moon

I remember just sitting there and looking up at the moon with Ma and just having fun before all this mess started. My ma and me were always looking up at the moon and sharing our dreams and what we hoped for our future because it was just something that we had always done together. Even though I knew that my mother was sick, I never expected for her death to come so soon. So now I just look up at the moon wishing that my mother was still with me and I wasn't just sitting here by myself.

My dad tries to help but he's always at work. He tries to come home earlier, but he never does, so I write about it in my journal and just remember all the moments we had together. "When I die, I know that you'll be sad but you will have Dad. And even though you won't be able to see me, just know that I'll always love you." As I wipe the tear that's coming down my face, I remember that those were the last words she told me and I should honor them in the name of her.

But before I was able to do anything my dad walked through the door and told me to bring a blanket because we were going outside. After I grabbed the blanket he opened the door for me and told me to sit and look at the moon. "I know that it's been hard for you to handle things since your mom's death and that you've been missing her but I was hoping that we could have a tradition for us two." I started to stare at him blankly and tried to hold back the tears but it all came out in a rush and with tears running down my face. I replied, "Yes". Then he held me close and told me, "I could never take the tradition you had with your mom, so instead of looking at the moon we'll be looking at the stars and remembering your great mother." I smiled and I told him that I loved him and that I was happy that he was there with me.

So even though I lost my mom, I always have the moon to remember her, I have my dad and the stars to remember her, and I have my love for her.

Scarlett Mims

Purple

The beautiful night sky shining down on us

The chirps of birds

Grapes all together til the end

A beautiful core of a rainbow

Make people sad as the waves are infinity, we realize we are not.

My Favorite Season

In my opinion Winter is the best season. One reason is because it's very cold and I like the cold better than the hot. Another reason is because I can catch Snowflakes on my tongue. And the last reason is because all of the winter animals are super cool. That is why I think that winter is the best season. What is your favorite season?

All About My Trip!

My mom and dad wanted to go to New Jersey, so we did! We were celebrating my uncle's 40 th birthday. My grandpa used to live in New Jersey, and he used to bring my dad, uncle, and aunt there for vacation when they were little. Now it's my turn to go to New Jersey.

On the way, we stopped at McDonalds and The Great Wolf Lodge. The Great Wolf Lodge has a waterpark and is a hotel! My favorite part of the waterpark is to walk across the lily pads. I was too short to hold on to the hanging ropes for balance, so I crawled on the lily pads to get across. I felt nervous!

Then we were there. We went crabbing. I saw a live crab! I thought it was scary because it looked like it would nip me with its claws, but my dad grabbed it off the deck and dropped it in the bucket. We had to let those crabs go, but my parents and other people ate different crabs later on. I had hot dogs instead.

I swam only in the bay because it was warm and calm. There were not many waves. On the ocean side, I dipped my feet in the water. The waves were so big, so I spent most of my time picking pretty rocks and shells.

Then we had to go home. I didn't want to leave, because I was having so much fun. I asked my parents if I could come back for my 10th birthday in New Jersey. They said maybe. The End

Take Me Away

Once upon a time there lived 2 kids named Jason and Leva. Their parents used to quarrel a lot. Jason and Leva wanted to get away from it all so Jason signed up to work at Pets a Million, the local pet store. Leva went to her friend Allie's house every day.

One day something strange happened. Jason was in the room that he shared with Leva. He saw a flash of purple by the desk. He ran to Leva who had just come into the room. "Leva did you see that?!" asked Jason. "Duh! C'mon let's go!" Leva yelled. "Go where?!" Jason asked. "That thing we just saw was a portal!" said Leva. As you can tell Leva is the smart one. "I-I'm n-not going Leva!" Jason yelled. Leva stared at him. "Fine!" Jason yelled. Together they jumped into the portal.

WOOSH! They got sucked into the portal. Soon they ended up near a sign that said NEVERLAND THIS WAY. They walked on cold rough stones. After a while they ended up near a pond. Luckily it had stepping stones in it, Leva carefully stepped on a stone but still lost her balance and fell into the pond, SPLASH! After about 20 seconds her head bobbed back up. "Trespassers! Hold them in the dungeon!" Someone yelled. "AAAAAH! Leva and Jason yelled in unison. They were thrown into an empty room. In the middle was a fire pit, next to it were 3 people. A boy, and 2 girls. They all had black glasses and thin noses. The boy was reading, and the girls were staring at Leva and Jason. "Hello, I'm Leva and he is my brother, Jason." said Leva. "OH sorry, I didn't see you come in. I'm Aidan and these are my sisters: Melanie and Raina." Aidan spoke with a thick accent. "I'm Melanie she is my sister Raina." said Melanie. "Okay, let's get this straight, why are we meeting you here?" Leva asked. "Every year Neverland opens up a new portal, and this year it opened up in your house." Raina said. "Cool!" Jason said. "And we are the people who talk to the people who come through the portal." Aidan said. "Can you guys do magic?" Leva asked. "Yep!" Melanie said. "Can we ask you a favor?" Leva asked. "Sure thing" Raina said. "So, our parents have been quarrelling and we really want them to stop." Leva said. Aidan thought for a minute. "I don't know any spells or incantations that make people stop quarrelling." As he said that Raina jumped in and said, "But I'm sure Melanie does!" Melanie pulled out a little book and flipped through it. "A-hh here look at this Aidan, Raina, Leva and Jason, I found the perfect potion." Melanie said. "Wooh! Yeah Melanie!" Everyone cheered.

They got to work right away mixing rose petals and lilacs. After an hour the potion was ready. "Now we just need mom and dad to drink this!" Jason said. Melanie Aidan and Raina nodded sympathetically. "Thanks a lot, guys, we are really grateful, it was such a pleasure meeting you! & we hope you guys can come by some day." Leva said. "Same to you." Aidan said. Just as they said that they got sucked into the ground. They ended up near the desk. Leva had the small vial of the potion in a sachet. They snuck downstairs. "Mom and dad are in the living room!" Jason said. Leva snuck into the kitchen and poured the potion onto their lunch. Leva hid the vial in the back of her closet. When the family sat down to eat, Jason and Leva's mom suddenly said, "I'm sorry Greg." Their dad suddenly said "I'm sorry too Violet. Thus, the potion worked, and Leva and Jason's parents never quarreled again. And they all lived happily ever after! The End!

Drifting

Feeling like a feather

Lifting through the air

Flying through the clouds

Soaring like a bird

Moving on

Drifting

Chris

Once there was a boy named Chris. He was four years old with his family in their car, in Canada. They were in the woods when suddenly a moose ran into the car. The car tumbled and the moose jumped over the car. Then ran into the woods! The mom and dad died but Chris survived. Chris wobbly walked out of the car and yelled "MOM? DAD?" No answer. Then a wolf howled, so Chris ran. The wolves started chasing him, suddenly a brown bear jumped out of the woods and hit the wolf in the face. The bear hugged Chris.

Twenty-nine years later Chris learned how to be a brown bear except he could climb. Chris and the bear could do everything else, but flying of course. They were happy at their den, until Chris got lost. He ended up in Vancouver City. Someone came and said "Get your shirt on!" Chris roared back. The person said "Excuse me! That was super rude!" they turned around in a mean way and walked away. Chris bent his neck and ran like a bear on the sidewalk. A car passed him. Chris got mad so he ran faster and ran right past the car. The girl behind him was impressed. She ran over to and said "How did you do that?" Chris smiled the girl said "I'm Ola what's your name?" Chris grunted. Ola said "Wait you're Chris! That guy everyone is talking about. Let me show you how we live here!" and she did. After Chris' little tour they were walking together. All of a sudden a huge phoenix flew right over them and a really hot feather soared right into Chris' hand. Ola said "That will give you really good luck!"

THE END

The Clear Crayon

Sage's family is very poor and all of the people in her town are very poor too. (Most of them are starving.) It was finally Sage's birthday. Every year all she gets is some old newspapers to draw on, with a pen her mom finds in the trash heap. This year she expected the same, but when she came down for a breakfast of rice, there was a box, wrapped with the only cloth napkin that Sage's family owned.

Sage almost cried with happiness. "A present, for me?" Said Sage.

"Happy Birthday Sage!" said Poppi (that is what Sage calls her grandpa.)

She opened the present, "Crayons! Thank you so much Poppi!"

At school, Sage was about to tell her best friend Mina about the crayons, but Mina already started talking. "Oh my gosh Sage, I am so glad to see you, I need to tell you everything."

At this point Mina was panting because she was talking so fast. "Okay slow down Mina, first of all, it's my birthday," said Sage. "Happy Birthday!" Mina exclaimed. "Thanks, and also what do you need to tell me so bad?" Sage said.

"Well, the inspectors came to my house because they heard a complaint of the condition of it, and they said if we can not get it renovated in 3 days than we will be sent to another country!" said Mina.

Sage wished she could help Mina, but she did not know how.

Right after school Sage got out her crayons to make a picture. In the crayon box there were all rainbow colored crayons and a clear crayon. Sage was curious about the clear crayon so she picked it out of the box and drew a watermelon and a loaf of banana bread. The pictures glowed then disappeared. When Sage woke up she went downstairs to find a loaf of banana bread and a watermelon. *My pictures became real!* she thought.

The next day Sage invited Mina over and they drew a fancy house. Sage told Mina to take the picture home. In the morning Mina woke up in a beautiful room with a canopy over her bed and the outside of her house was light blue, there was even a fountain and a bunch of pretty flowers. She ran over to Sage's house and told her, "Sage the inspectors do not have to send my family away!"

And from that day on, their town was the prettiest, fanciest town ever. Sage and Mina were heroes because they helped others not just themselves.

Friends...or not

There were these two girls not the best of friends...at all! One of the girls names was Lily she loved makeup! And the other girl well makeup was a nightmare to her! Her name was Cloey. She LOVED sports! So you can tell they're very different. But little do they know that they are soon to be best friends!

That started two days later. Cloey bumped into Lily. Lily was yelling ...you messed up my makeup. Then a girl with a prom dress on came up to them and said cloey made a new friend then... these two 1st graders came over with pom poms in their hands and yelled, "we hoooooo friend alert!" Lily said, "no we are not friends!" Cloey was surprised. She looked at Lily and said, "are we friends?" At that minute Lily said yes and ran away...

Later in the day back at Lily's house Cloey was walking down the street past Lily's house with Lily looking out the window at Cloey. Cloey walked two houses over from Lily's house and entered.

Lily walked over and from the sidewalk and looked in the widow. Cloey saw her and said, "come in!" Lily said, "is this your house?" her response was yes. Cloey said ...what brings you here? Cloey's response was... my house is two houses down!

So the next day they did everything together except the fight between sports and makeup. That was sort of a bad thing but they were still friends! And nothing would stop that!!!!!!!!!!!!

THE END!

Baby Adele: A Daring Rescue

Peering over the bloodred Nazi flag stamped with the four L's conjoined into that sinister swastika, my mind read one thing: **Injustice**. Having to walk over the remains of buildings and carcasses littering the streets of my hometown: my friends, neighbors, books, and my father's old synagogue—any connection of my old life destroyed by the Nazi regime—ignited the fiery anguish in my soul. Walking with my accomplice, Harry, while briefly gazing at the street, my eyes began to dampen. "Hold it in, Esther." I reminded myself as I breathed in the morning's smog shakily. "Hold it in." Harry, sensing my agony, took my hand into his and squeezed it. It was just about a year ago when Harry and I were sent to be couriers because we were aged 10 and adept at our work. It was difficult being a courier, having to search and help citizens in need. We veered over to the next street, and the next, in desperate hopes to find any living soul.

The impact of the bomb had left central Berlin indistinguishable. Ashes and burnt ruins were the only devastating landscape Harry and I could spot from eye to eye. Suddenly, we heard a squeak from a few yards or so behind the two of us shattering the silence. Startled, we jump around. We find a small, nearly dead chicken settled in front of us—a rare find. Whoever lived here must have been wealthy. No longer than a few seconds, Harry and I hear something twice as shocking—a whimper not far from the same area. Soundlessly, Harry and I excavate the site to find an infant, one so frail and weak that it seemed almost worthless trying to save her. However, swimming through the blue ocean in her eyes made us realize that she was special, worth saving. So, while Harry fed the bare infant sleeping pills, I wrap her in a blanket, and while doing so, found the Star of David dangling loosely from her bony neck. On the back of the ornate, golden-wrought necklace was the engraving, 'For Adele L. Alperstein'. I rubbed the cold metal between my fingers. Quietly, I whispered, "She had a family," Harry nodded slowly. "Oh, what I would do for a family."

We hid Adele with us in our rucksack as we continued to scan the streets for any other soul. We had no luck. Faster than when Adele fell dozing, we spotted two soldiers, one looking in his thirties, the other looking a little older. They were chatting in German while walking their dogs when they spotted us. One thought ran through our heads: Oh, no.

Harry and I rubbed ash on our cheeks and began an impressive limp. We tugged at our clothing and tore a few inches of the seams. The realization dawned that we were gifted adolescents, though imperiled. Within seconds, we were disguised. The guards straightened their backs, defying their careless composure, and walked towards us, following their dogs closely. "Who are you and what are you doing here?" The younger guard questioned, posing more as a command. "I am Augustine and she is Mabel. We live south of this area. We did not expect a bomb—" Harry began, as he pulled out a new, thick, chunky accent when the dogs began barking. "WHAT IS IN YOUR RUCKSACK, MISS?" the older guard boomed. "Our baby sister...Madonna," Esther replied, scavenging for a name. "WHY IS SHE IN A SACK?" the guard interrogated. "She is cold and sick. This was the only way to help her." "Show us your ID's, both of you." The younger guard interjected. Harry and I handed out our forged IDs to the guards, which they skimmed and then concluded that we were fine. Harry and I turned away, relieved. Then came a bone-chilling question from the younger guard: "What about the baby?" Harry and I froze. "She was born four days ago. She still has no ID." I responded. The guards were quiet for a moment. "Go" was the response.

With a sigh of relief, dutifully, Harry and I made a frantic dash for the orphanage.

Life

Life is like scoring a goal for the first time,

Or being the world's best mime!

Life is being a meme,

Or be playing on the world's best sports team!

Life is tasting beer battered cod,

Or seeing somebody nod.

Life is doing art,

Or being super smart.

Life is vaperly turning the water from hot to cold,

Or looking young not old.

Life is playing video games,

Or remembering everybody's names.

Life is being lazy,

Or going coo coo crazy.

Life is picking up litter,

Or tasting something bitter.

Life is drinking Fanta,

Or spying on Santa,

Or going to Atlanta.

Life is being a cool dude,

Or not being super rude.

Life is being Roger Federer that's what Ary says.

I prefer maybe eating pez.

Life is drinking Coke,

Or being a joke

Life is learning how to bake,

Or eating cake.

Life is being the best,

Or just not being a pest

To Rob a Prince

My tale is not fairytale-like or magical in the least. I am not a delicate damsel who spends her life yearning for a prince. In fact, the first time I met one, I was robbing him. I am the most famous spy in all the kingdoms. In the beginning, misfortune led me straight into the Stuffed Pig Inn, which was as stuffy as it sounded, in a muddy town called Ferrent. It was all Father's fault. Going off on a sea voyage for fabled glory and marrying off me and my sister! Luckily, I escaped that gap-toothed old suitor. After my escape, I went to my sister for help. She refused to house me. I was off again with a lighter purse and my sister's wedding ring which I slipped off her finger. I went searching for somewhere to stay.

I rode till I came to a pigsty of a town called Ferrent that I could afford. I gave up the ring in exchange for two months' rent. Then, I looked for work in shops. Nothing. The farms. Nothing. Soon, I was about to give up until I noticed a sorry-looking inn on the other side of the road. I stepped inside and rang the bell. I convinced the sour innkeeper to give me a job with my last silver coin. Money wasn't much. So I resorted to stealing. A watch from an unlucky tradesman, a purse from a thin-lipped old woman. Soon, I was stealing anything of value. Then I noticed a handsome green-eyed young man sitting in the corner of the inn. I scanned him with stormy gray eyes. There. A silver wrist cuff. "Your cider," I announced and unlatched the cuff. I spilled the drink, and under the pretense of cleaning it up, sloshed it on a nearby man.

"Hey!" he yelled. At the same time, I tripped a knight, a farmer slapped a sailor, a tradesman dropped his glass, and the whole inn went into a frenzy. There was no one behind me. I breathed a sigh of relief. Until that is, I heard the all so familiar cry of "Thief!". Needless to say, I ran.

"Stop... you're...cornered," I heard a voice pant. I leaned against a pile of crates, completely unfazed, and blew a strand of dark hair from my eyes. He noticed my smirk and frowned. In the blink of an eye, I climbed the crates and swung myself onto the roof. I heard the satisfying crack of the crates breaking against the man's weight as he tried to follow me.

"Exercise, much?" I leaned forward and smiled. But he wasn't there. "Hey, thief!" I spun around, tripped, and fell over the edge. The man caught me. "You don't look like a pickpocket. The daughter of a wealthy merchant, maybe a noble. What brought you to stealing?" I pulled out the cuff.

"I ran away from a suitor, crossed the Wren Forests on a horse, and survived in this wretched town for more than a month now. I am not a hapless noble anymore!" His eyes widened.

"Crossed the forests by yourself? And running away from a suitor? You must be insane!"

"Let's just say I don't wish to be told what to do," I said coolly. I handed him his cuff back. He didn't take it. Then he paused as if startled. "Let us hope we meet again," he finally said.

"I hope we don't!" I spluttered. He did seem quite pale when I said that. I left. Behind the inn, I saw a girl clothed in rags staring at the stale food on the trash heap. Without hesitation, I slipped her the cuff. She looked at it in disbelief. I felt eyes watching me from behind. Brushing off my skirts, I returned back to the inn to finish my shift. That night, in my room, I found a pouch by the door. I shook its contents out. Gold coins! A parchment read, Dear thief, your gifts would be very useful to the kingdom. And certainly your awfully brave spirit. Use this money to go anywhere you wish, but the castle will always welcome you. Sincerely, The Prince. Oh, the green-eyed stranger! I packed, threw a coin at the innkeeper's face, and rode into the sunset.

My Amazing Family

Some are close, some are far, some are funny, some are serious, some are whole, some are broken, some are crazy, some are calm. What describes mine? All of these are a part of having a big, tight family, and I love it!

My mom has 6 siblings, so my family is big. My mom's side of my family is very musical. I have so many cousins and aunts and uncles. I get to visit them a lot.

My great grandpa always loved to direct musicals for our family to be in. The first time I got to sing on a stage at church, I was so scared and nervous. Great Grandpa, he sat on the stage with me in his lap and made me feel more confident. After he did this, I still get a little stage fright, but I remember my grandpa. Then I feel a lot better about myself. However, performing on stage is my passion and my family says, my greatest talent.

Great Grandpa always was an amazing person to anyone and anything. He and my great grandma are the reason my moms' side of our family is so close. Every year we have family reunion to honor our grandpa and grandma and to have fun together.

The other side of my family is my dad's family. I have a lot of cousins on that side as well. Many of my cousins on my dad's side live in California, the Philippians, Illinois, and Iowa. Although I have never been to the Philippians, I love to go to San Diego to visit family. It's so fun! Normally it's very warm there. I've heard my dad's side of my family, whom live in the Philippians, are very hard working.

Some families that are close in distance are not as close in life. For example: some of my family that are close in distance fight or don't talk to each other. Despite that, whenever we get together, we have an amazing time.

As for every part of my family: in San Diego, the Philippians, and beyond, when we get together it is as if no time has passed. We pick up right where we left off. However, goodbyes are always the hardest.

Last year, I had to say goodbye to Great Grandpa. He was my biggest inspiration. That was the hardest thing I have ever had to do. My Grandpa will live on forever in my family and me. I will take everything I learned from Great Grandpa and carry it with me forever. He will always be part of me.

So, who am I? I am a sister. I am a daughter. I am a granddaughter. I am a cousin. I am a niece. I am a great granddaughter. I have so many titles, because I am part of a family. Just like Great Grandpa, my list of titles will continue to increase as my family grows forever. And that is just part of being in my one big, amazing family.

Labels

What are these things?
These, Labels?
Why do we use them?
Everything and everyone,
Is, Labeled...
Straight,
Lesbain,
Bisexual,
Pansexual,
Black,
White,
Boy,
Girl,
Transgender,
Right,
Wrong,
Lucky,
Unlucky,
Fat,
Skinny.
Without thinking,
We label each other,
Like gifts under a tree,
Like types of cars,
Like cities in states.
Each and every day,
We never stop and think
"Why did I just label him, straight?"
Or
"Why did I label her, a girl?"
For all we know,
That guy you labeled, straight,
Could be gay,
Just talking with a girl,
But we,
Categorize.

What about that girl?
We labeled her
A girl,
Female,
Woman,
But for all we know,
She,
Could be,
He,
Or they could be,
Them

But,

What do our parents say again?
Guardians,
Moms,
Dads,
"Always step outside the box"
But,
What if that box is covered?
What if you can't step outside of it
Because those labels
Are weighing down the lid,
So we can't get out
But we just need to be
A little stronger,
A little bolder,
A little nicer,
A little less categorical
And we can pop through that box
like Jack-in-the-box

The Assessment Scheme

Brandon sighed as he got on the bus. He had just remembered that today was test day in every one of his classes. He definitely was not ready to be humiliated in front of all his friends as he got bad grades in class after class. Was there any trick that was yet to be tried? Feigning sickness? Pretending to be absent as he hid in the bathroom? Flat-out staying home from school? He racked his brain as he thought of another way to miss a test.

His mom always said that he had a lot of grit when it came to skipping school, but not when it came to school itself. He supposed he would have to use the oldest trick in the book: begging. He called his mom on his phone and asked her, "Mom, can I PLEASE stay home from school today?" His mother was absolutely irate when she heard this. "Young man, if you don't cut this nonsense RIGHT NOW, I will remove your privileges for having friends over until the year ends!" Brandon decided to end the call then.

He then resigned himself to the fact that he would have to take the test. On a last desperate attempt to prepare for the gauntlet of assessments he would have to take, he went over his notes. Scratch that, he thought. There was no way he could possibly study enough in this short amount of time. He saw one of his friends and ran to catch up.

"Hey, Jack, will you help me on the test?" Jack turned to him and said, "Sure. You're going to have to take out your notes quickly, though, because we don't have much time to-" Brandon cut him off there. "No, no, Jack, I want you to give me your answers." Jack looked at him in horror. "Brandon, that's cheating!"

Brandon sighed and said, "Come on, Jack, you know that I'll never pass any test." Jack sighed but agreed. But that morning, Jack had to go home because he was sick. What was Brandon going to do? He suddenly realized what he could use. His phone! He quickly ran to class. This was going to be the most amazing class he'd ever had! He was charged with indescribable joy as he filled in answer circle after answer circle. Finally, however, came the math test. He looked at the first question and gawked. He couldn't even understand it! How could he even use his phone? He desperately looked around. People were giving him dirty looks as he tried to copy them. No, no, no! This couldn't be happening. If he had just taken that little bit of studying time with Jack, he could've at least passed.

He sighed and resigned himself to the fact that he couldn't do anything about not being able to do the test. He groaned inwardly and thought as hard as he could to try and do the question. He could not. Even though movies depicted it all the time, he did not start using 100% of his brain or reach a higher level of intelligence. As the teacher called, "Time's up!" he braced himself for humiliation.

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