



A Celebration of Stories In the City of Literature

Feb. 24-26, 2017

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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Contents

Zaira Ahmad	Wickham	5	FH	<i>Students with “FH” after their name were recognized with the “From the Heart” award, which is judged based on creativity, passion, and expressiveness.</i>
Sylvia Broffitt	Horn	3		
Siena Brown	Mann	3		
Sarah Bunyan	Northwest	7	WS	
Adelaide Capps	Hoover	2		
Brooke Chandler	Borlaug	4		
Ruby Frank	Penn	5		
David Gugliuzza	Lucas	5		<i>Students with “WS” 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. 26 “Write Out Loud” event.</i>
Jhael Herrera	Twain	4		
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Kenton Huynh	Central	4		
Mae Knights	Mann	3	FH	
Lochlan Krupa	South East	7	FH	
Rhys Long	Van Allen	5		
Braeden Marker	Alexander	5		
Julianna Mascardo	Weber	6		
Kora McClure	South East	8	FH	
Rob McMurray	Hoover	4	FH	
Abby McNeely	Garner	6		<i>Students with no designation after their name were selected to represent their school at the kickoff “Once Upon a Time” banquet on Feb. 24.</i>
Macy Mickalson	Hoover	2	FH	
Violet Mowrey	Longfellow	6		
Alan Nass	Hills	3		
Willa Ohlmann	Lincoln	1	WS	
Ahlonko Porto-Rico	Wood	6		
Tallulah Proulx	Willowwind	3	WS	
Mary Cate Pugh	Regina	6		
Praneel Rastogi	Wickham	3		
Rial Shriver	Willowwind	2	WS	
Sage Slessor	Prairie Creek	6	WS	
Eviann Smith	Lemme	5		<i>Thank you to the nearly 800 students who submitted work this year, and to our partners at ACT for evaluating that work and selecting our winning students.</i>
Leela Strand	Lincoln	5	WS	
Charlotte Windmill	Kirkwood	6		
Kyros Yuefan Wu	Van Allen	1	FH	
Chuan (Alex) Xu	Lincoln	4		
Reece Yang	Northwest	8	WS	
Kento Yahashiri	Longfellow	6	FH	
Eleanor Ziehr	Shimek	4		

Honorable Mention

The following students received Honorable Mention in the 2017 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 nearly 800 submissions to the festival. Thanks to our partners at ACT for evaluating the student writing.

Fareeha Ahmad, North Central, 8	Abby McNeely, Garner, 6
Ella Anneling, Coralville Central, 5	Rachel Meehan, South East, 8
Sylvia Broffitt, Horn, 3	Kiva Meeks-Mosley, South East, 7
Siena Brown, Mann, 3	Hannah Michalec, Penn, 4
Adelaide Capps, Hoover, 2	Violet Mowery, Longfellow, 6
Brooke Chandler, Borlaug, 4	Alan Nass, Hills, 3
L'Engle Charis-Carlson, South East, 7	Celeste Obara, South East, 8
Lillian Cheney, NorthBend, 3	Julissa Paz, Twain, 5
Ava Cross, Longfellow, 6	Chayse Pearl, Longfellow, 6
Mira Cunning, Willowwind, 3	Carson Perry, Van Allen, 2
Lydia Evans, Weber, 3	Sam Perry, Van Allen, 2
Eero Foliente, Willowwind, 1	Natalie Ramsey, Garner, 3
Thomas Fowler, Penn, 4	Praneel Rastogi, Wickham, 3
Ruby Frank, Penn, 5	Owen Ruth, Twain, 4
Dahlia Garcia, North Bend, 5	Benjamin Sauder, Willowwind, 1
JamesHaack, Lemme, 1	Anushka Saxena, Lincoln, 6
Ben Haines, Lincoln, 2	Madeleine Seitz, Willowwind, 3
Jhael Herrera, Twain, 4	Eviann Smith, Lemme, 5
Dania Hussein, Central, 4	Aidan Spurgetis, South East, 8
Natalie Kaiser, North Central, 8	Julia Stoll, North Central, 7
Jayden Khamphilanouvong, Garner, 5	Edmund Svoboda, Lincoln, 1
Hahyeon Kim, Borlaug, 4	Miya Swenson, Prairie Creek, 6
Kael Kurtz, Lucas, 5	Rigby Templeman, Lincoln, 6
Kaj Larsen, Lemme, 4	Maria Volkman, South East, 7
Rhys Long, Van Allen, 5	Ferguson Ward, South East, 7
Flora Laurian, Willowwind, 3	Tate Williams, Longfellow, 5
Lily Lumb, Hoover, 4	Ellie Wilson, Garner, 2
Alexis Mapel, Penn, 6	Charlotte Windmill, Kirkwood, 6
Braeden Marker, Alexander, 5	Chuan (Alex) Xu, Lincoln, 4
Juliana Mascardo, Weber, 6	Sonya Zhu, Borlaug, 1

Helping

Drip, drip, drip, the rain splashed as Lora walked to the bus stop to meet her parents. Her backpack was full of homework and all she wanted to do was to sleep, but she and her parents had to get to the grocery store.

As Lora walked, she wondered why she had to go to the grocery store on a Friday afternoon instead of playing like other kids. When she reached the bus stop, she found her parents. They asked her how her day in school had been as they boarded the public bus. "Fine, I guess," Lora sighed. "It could have been better if we didn't have to go to the store."

Lora's parents frowned and then turned to talk to each other. The bus ride wasn't very long, and they got off in ten minutes. They all walked into the grocery store. They placed vegetables into the cart and paid for them. Then, they got onto the next bus. Lora watched as they rode past other kids playing hopscotch and jumping rope. She wished that she were playing with them.

Lora and her parents got off the bus at the next stop and walked into an old building. There were many people were sitting down on the ground inside the entrance. They looked hungry and tired. Lora kept on walking with her parents into a kitchen. Lora's parents started boiling the vegetables and putting them into a broth. Lora decided to help by pouring the soup into bowls and placing them on trays. She finished off by adding a side of sliced bread to each tray.

About an hour later, Lora and her parents brought the trays out to the people on the ground. They served and served many trays of food until Lora stumbled across a man. "Thank you for coming. We all really appreciate it," the man said as he smiled.

Lora smiled back and said, "I'm glad I came."

After everyone was served, Lora and her parents walked back to the bus stop and got on the next bus. They sat down and were quiet for a few seconds. Lora's dad broke the silence by asking her, "Are you glad you helped?"

Lora smiled to herself and said no more than, "Extremely."

The Fish and the Duck

There once was a duck who loved to swim. The duck loved to eat fish which was very strange. All of the duck's friends told him over and over, "WE DO NOT EAT FISH!" But he kept on eating fish. By the way, the duck's name was Ahja. One day, Ahja was swimming and a small fish popped out of the water. This was strange because Ahja thought all the fish would swim away from him so they would not get eaten. Ahja was confused. Then the fish said, "My name Conala and you leave all us fish alone or you will be sorry." Then Conala swam away as fast as she could. Ahja thought, 'A little fish can't stop me.' Then he flew in the direction the fish had swam. As Ahja was flying, he noticed that the water was getting a little wild. A little farther up rapids were rolling over rocks. "This is wrong. I must have made a mistake because the fish do not live in dangerous water like this." Ahja looked back. There was a small stream going off the river. "That is the way the fish went. I am certain." Ahja flew back and followed the small stream. Then a big fish jumped out of the stream and said, "I am guardian of the fish. You can call me Minajin. I am wondering who you are and what you are doing here." Ahja was frozen. Then he said, "Ahja." Minajin yelled, "You are Ahja!!! I have heard of you. You must leave right away." "I won't." said, Ahja. Then Ajah flew up into the sky. He flew up and up. Then he started to dive down. All the fish screamed, "He's acting like a peregrine falcon!" Ahja liked the sound of that. But he did not know that a big tiger shark was down in the water. When Ahja skimmed the water, the tiger shark leaped out of the water. Ahja flew back up and saw many more tiger sharks gathering up. Then Ahja flew up and up as high as he could. He found himself in a flock of crows. One came up to him and said, "I am Orlen. We are here to take you to a place with no fish and you cannot escape from there." Ahja wondered how the crows would take him away. But suddenly he felt dizzy with swirls of black in his mind from the crows flying around him. He got carried away to a desert with no fish. No one knows what happened to Ahja after he got carried away to the desert but maybe he still lives there or maybe he found a way out. I doubt that he still lives there because I have never seen a duck in the desert.

Once there was a girl named Scarlet. She lived in a small village near the sea with her dad and her cousin Meg. Everyday she would walk with her cousin the long five miles to and from school. Scarlet enjoyed riding her horse and some of her chores, like feeding the horses and cows.

In her village traditionally only men competed in horse riding. When a girl would ride she would have to ride with both legs on one side. Girls could never compete. Scarlet thought that was most certainly unfair. She decided to try to enter the horse riding competition. She practiced. When she had school she rode her horse the long five miles to school. People pointed at Scarlet but she did not care. Everyday people pointed at her but that did not stop Scarlet's determination. It actually helped make Scarlet even more determined. Soon people stopped laughing at Scarlet. Over time they got used to seeing Scarlet ride with one leg on each side.

One morning several days before the competition Scarlet woke up to the sunlight shining through the window. She looked out the window and she saw ice everywhere. She ate breakfast and got dressed and got on her horse. She rode to school and as she rode the horse slipped on the ice and she fell off. Her friend's mom saw her and helped her pick herself up. She told Scarlet that her arm was broken. Scarlet was very worried the competition was that very Friday. Scarlet hoped she could ride with one arm. If not she would try again next year.

That Friday morning, her dad said she could try to compete. When she got to the competition there were so many people. Her dad said there were normally a hundred men there. She was very nervous. When they told Scarlet to come up her arm was trembling in her cast. She was told that she would have to get her horse to go up to 30 miles per hour. The fastest Starlight (her horse) had ever gone was 31 miles per hour. She hoped she could ride with only one arm to hold on with. Starlight at first went 22 miles per hour, then 29 miles, then....wait....wait....it went 30 miles per hour. Scarlet felt proud of herself and her horse. When the judges gave the awards out Scarlet was in second place. That night as she rode home with her dad, she felt more brave than ever before. She decided not to give up. She would ride again next year.

THE END

Page Turner

“I hereby find Marcus Taylor guilty of damage to books of the first degree. I sentence him to an eternity of deterioration. Court is now adjourned.” The sound of his gavel lingered through the air as I bombarded my lawyer with the questions that were gnawing at my psyche.

“W-What’s deterioration? What does he mean by eternity? Paisley, what does he mean? Paisley!”

“Calm down, Marcus. Take a deep brea-”

“No. Don’t tell me to take a deep breath. Tell me what’s going to happen to me.” Paisley, my lawyer, closed her eyes slowly before she revealed my fate, a fate I didn’t dare to comprehend on my own.

“You’ve been sentenced to an eternity of deterioration. Which means that you’ll spend the rest of your existence in prison.”

My breath hitched in my throat and I froze like a statue in my chair. I didn’t process Paisley’s words until after I was escorted by two brawny men equipped with tasers out of the courtroom. I could’ve stood on my own but I was too shocked by the decision. I frantically scan the courtroom for Jade, the love of my life. Or ex-love I should say. She’s watching me being dragged with a disappointed look on her face. Eyes cold, body rigid. How can she just sit there and not say anything? My hands were shaking involuntarily and the twitch in my eye had gotten worse. I started to hyperventilate because I knew what this meant, I knew that my inevitable fate was not going to be a good one. I knew that my time being a reckless teenager was over. I mentally cursed myself for being so stupid, so immature.

Everyone knew that if you destroyed a book the book would destroy you in a way that felt like an eternity. That is, unless you found a way to stop it.

****2 days earlier**

I inhaled the cool night air as I opened my bedroom window and swung one leg out, straddling the frame. With my backpack in one hand and flashlight in the other I made the five-foot drop to the ground. Without missing a beat, I took off across the lawn in full speed. When I made it to the forest line, I slowed down to a light jog and shined my flashlight into the dense forest. I came to a complete stop once I was surrounded by dark green figures swaying in the wind. I started to gather wood for a fire I was about to create. I positioned my flashlight between my teeth and squatted down to remove the lighter from my backpack. With one stroke of the thumb, there was a medley of colorful flames before my eyes. I lowered the lighter to the dry kindling and watched a sheet of flames rise like the sun. As the fire grew I took a seat on the rocky ground and removed the book from my backpack. I turned it over in my hands several times while having an internal debate with myself. I know what the punishment is for damaging books. They call it: The Eternity of Deterioration. Probably something to scare us kids into “treating books with respect.” You see, centuries ago books had some sort of magical importance. They preserved earth with magic from the Jade Rock. Or something like that. This book, I now hold in my hands, is special because it tells the history of the Jade Rock and how it helped earth, and that’s exactly why I’m burning it. This now reminds me of Jade. The most beautiful girl in the world and how she broke my heart. Let me explain.

I had just arrived at the library to check out a history book about the Jade Rock for a research paper that was due the next day. The first thing I saw were her eyes that beamed an alluring green color. She was decked out in green earrings, a green pendant, and of course a beautiful off the shoulder green dress that fell right above the knees. I gathered that her favorite color was green. She was standing behind the Information Desk assisting another customer. As soon as the customer walked away she started to twiddling with her fingers. I strode right up to her with all the confidence I could muster and looked her right in the eye, or forehead I should say. When she caught my stare she flashed me the biggest most genuine smile I’ve ever seen. I then lost all my confidence, looked down at my feet, and started to blush like a madman. After seeing her up close I was completely and utterly mesmerized. I didn’t believe in love at first sight ... until that very moment.

“Um.. Er. Could you, uh, show me where I could, uh, find, uh a history book on the, uh, Jade Rock.”

She could probably tell that I found her attractive by the disjointed words that had just left my lips and the strawberries that had made a home on my cheeks. Not to mention the fact that my eyes didn’t leave the ground, an absolute indication of how I embarrassed I was. She chuckled and began to type in my request on her keyboard with her fingers, that were in fact painted green.

“Sure, right this way.” I followed her to the section dedicated to history books and watched her thumb through the shelves until her fingers came to a stop. She handed me the book, but I was too distracted by her name tag... Jade. Her name was Jade, how fitting. I finally had the confidence to meet the green orbs she had for eyes. I started to smile uncontrollably which made her smile and this time I didn’t look down or blush or say something stupid. One book, one girl, one prison sentence and the rest is history.

Zoey's Lucky Day

One day Zoey was washing her cat. Her mom said, "do you need glasses, honey?" as she poured maple syrup on her cat. She was doing a good job until that particular day. Zoey's mom thought Zoey needed to go to the eye doctor but Zoey said, "no." But they went to the eye doctor anyway.

Zoey got her eyes checked. The eye doctor said she needed glasses. They were blue with pink stripes. On the walk home, Zoey found a lucky penny. She wished she never had glasses. IT WORKED! But she was back where she was before she started wearing glasses. The next morning, she was eating breakfast when she poured ketchup on her pancakes.

A Stinky Situation

When my parents announced, “Guess What???” We are going on a trip to..... Colorado!!” I got suuuuper excited. So did Ryan. Caroline? Not so much. “Why do we have to go to Colorado?” Caroline asked as we got on to the interstate. “Are you two excited?” asked Mom, ignoring Caroline’s question. Caroline frowned. “Yeah!” Ryan and I answered. “Because we get to go camping!” Ryan said. I nodded. “Who in their right minds would want to go.....camping?” Caroline flailed her arms around. “Because,” Ryan said, “It’s fun!” Caroline cocked her head like a confused pigeon. “I still don’t get it.” Caroline grumbled. I heard mom and dad sigh. I felt like sighing too, but I knew Caroline would scold me.....

“Ding!” an idea poured into my head.” There’s a lot of shopping in Colorado....” I began. Caroline’s eyes widened. “Okay,” she hummed before I got the chance to finish.

One day later.....

“We’re here! We’re here!” cheered Ryan. “Ugg” Caroline and I groaned. It was such a long drive! I yawned. “Well, we will pitch a tent and go right to bed!” Dad assured us. I woke up early the next morning. “Rise and shine everyone!” I called out, slapping and banging pots and pans together to create a loud noise. I took note:

Pots and pans

Cause: banging and slapping

Affect: A grumpy family

“OH COME ON!” moaned Caroline.

“Brookie!!!!” Ryan tugged on my tank top.

“Okay! I’m sorry, I’m sorry!” I laughed.

Everyone gave me a tired look. “What?” I said.

Suddenly out of nowhere a skunk sprayed its’ foul odor at me. “ACK!” I yelled. Ryan and Caroline burst into laughter. “Hey!” I frowned. Even Mom and Dad started to laugh as well!

I had to take a bath in tomato juice IN A BARREL!” I will never forget that moment!!

The wolf of wishes

By Ruby Frank

The forest can be a beautiful place, but it also can be a place of fear. A young girl the age of 12 went to find food in the forest. Her name was Alana. It was sunset and she was heading to her house when she heard a howl. She could tell it was a wolf. Alana ran. But she ran toward the howl. She came to a stop. A beautiful white wolf was drinking at the creek. The wolf didn't know that Alana was there. Alana was behind a large rock watching the wolf. The wolf looked up and saw Alana. The wolf charged her and she ran. She looked back and saw that the place she had been was covered in rocks. Alana realized that the wolf had saved her life. The wolf was gone now and was nowhere in sight. Alana went back to her house. It was a teepee made of buckskin. Her mother and father had died when she was ten. Alana made herself supper. As she ate, she thought about the wolf. She wondered where it had gone. She decided that she would find it tomorrow. The next morning, Alana went out with deer meat. She went back to the spring. Alana found the wolf. It was slowly creeping towards her. It smelled her hand and took the meat. After it devoured the meat. The wolf came and sat by Alana. Alana found the wolf licking her face. Alana told the wolf that she wished that she had enough room for the wolf to live with her. She went to her house with the wolf and Alana's house was three times as big as it was before she left it. Alana realized that the wolf was magic. It would grant her wishes. Alana became known as the wolf girl. She never aged since she met the wolf and the wolf became known as the wolf of wishes. If you go to the forest and you hear a howl, consider going towards it. You may just run into Alana and the wolf of wishes.

Emma's Dream

I heard my mom call, "time for bed!" I crawled under my covers and went to sleep. Then I found myself in a garden. It had all sorts of flowers I had never seen before. Then I saw a little man with a bushy beard come down from the steps leading from his house and he yelled, "Get out of here! Get out of my garden you hatred human." "Oh sorry," I quivered. "I didn't mean to yell," replied the dwarf. "We are just mad from the witch sending her minions to destroy the village. I thought you were one of them." "Would you like to see our village?" he asked. "Sure!" I exclaimed.

"So here is the sleeping quarters where the houses are. Here is the town square," said the dwarf. "In front of us is the cafe and bakery. To the left is the castle and to the right is the blacksmith's office." "Where does that path lead?" I asked. "Speaking of him, it is almost dinner time and you can't fit in our cafe. We better ask him for a shrink potion.

"Hello!" said the wizard. He was much shorter than I thought and he had a long beard that trailed behind him. "So, what can I do for you," he asked? "We need a shrink potion for our guest--what's your name again?" he whispered to me. "Emma." I whispered back. "Emma," said the dwarf. "The wizard gave us the potion and said, "it won't last long, but here." I thanked him and we left.

The cafe smelled delicious! We sat down and I asked him what his name was. He replied and said, "Garot." When we were leaving, I noticed my shoe was untied. I bent down to tie it and ... my stomach ached. I thought it was because I ate too much, but then I grew HUGE! Well, I felt huge because I had felt tiny for awhile. At least all Garot had to do was walk to the tower and come back. A few minutes later he came back and said, "the wizard said this potion will last longer." I drank it and grew tiny again.

All of a sudden I felt thumping, and saw a whole lot of monsters, that had to be the witches came over the hills. All the dwarfs dashed to the blacksmith's office to get armor and weapons. The wizard's tower roof oped and a big cannon came out and shot a blue liquid that was probably the shrink potion because it made ALL the minions shrink to dwarf size. All of the dwarves ran into battle. The wizard called me up to his tower and gave me a red potion to make me big again. He gave me armour and a magic sword. "What's all this for?" I asked. "You will fight the witch," the wizard replied.

The dwarves were taking care of the minions while I fought the witch. She knocked me down a few times. She sent a rock at me and I felt back and could not get up. She was about to strike me with magic lighting when the wizard jumped in front and deflected it. The lighting shot back at her and struck her. The witch tumbled to the ground and the wizard helped me up. The witch shot fire at us. I raised my sword and blocked the fire. I raised my sword again, but over my head, and I swung toward the ground and the fire flashed toward her. The witch yelled, "NOOOOOOO!" and turned into a pile of ashes. The minions retreated to the hills and the dwarves through a party. I heard someone saying my name. I thought it was a dwarf, but then realized it was my mom.

I woke up and my mom said to hurry or I would miss the bus. I got dressed and went downstairs for breakfast. At breakfast I told my mom all about my dream.

The Mexico Waves

When I was in Mexico I went to the beach. I saw a big wave. I ran and jumped like a dolphin swimming. Beautiful. Big waves were crashing on me as the salt water covered me. It was noiseless underwater. It felt like lots of water was using force and bringing me back to shore. I opened my eyes and saw the sunlight. I ran back in the waves.

Nothing was distracting me. It felt like a dream with water covering me as I went for shore. Something big and strong was behind me. I was trying to run but I was too late. It already covered me but this wave was stronger than any wave. I was panicking underwater thinking in my head, "What do I do? What do I do?"

The wave was pulling me back. I thought it was over. I was wrong. My back cracked. I thought it was over. My head thinking, "Where am I?" Opening my eyes seeing the sun like it was right in front of me. My mom holding me. I didn't breathe. All I wanted to do was sit on shore not thinking about anything, not looking. But I survived.

Journey on the Prairie

Hi. My name is Caleb. My friends, David and Mag, and I love to go on adventures. This will be our biggest one yet. We are going to explore the new Iowa territory prairie. The year is 1835. Everyone in town comes to say good-bye, because we would be gone for a while. The next day we cross the Mississippi River into the Iowa territory in a canoe. Then we hike. We hike all day long. We finally get into the prairie. There are rolling hills with grass as far as the eye can see. We can barely see each other the grass is so tall. That night when sunset falls, we set up our camp next to a bur oak tree.

In the morning the noise of animals wakes us up. The weather is chilly today. It is fall and that worries me. Winter is coming soon. We have to prepare. I recall my grandma saying, "In the wild you can conquer anything." We set out to find food. Then we see the animals. Lots of them! A herd of bison is nearby. Near the bison, a flock of prairie chickens await and ducks fly over. We decide to hunt the bison, because we can use it for a lot of things. We manage to kill a bison. We use the fur to make a warm blanket and dry the meat to last a long time. A gush of cold air sweeps past us. That was just another sign that winter is going to start soon. We return to our camp and go to sleep.

The next day, snow starts to fall. It is winter and now we really have to think about how to survive. Our teeth chatter as the temperature drops down to -10 degrees! We eat some bison and find that our water is frozen. We have to break the ice. We put a chunk of ice in our mouths and it melts. We write in our journals for the next few days.

Then one day we realize we are running low on food. Likely we will be out by the next day. A blizzard is coming, but I am forced to go out and hunt anyway. I kill some prairie chickens and head back to camp. With the blinding snow and the tall grass, I can't see where I am going. A huge blast of snow overtakes me. Everything goes black. The last thing I see is our camp in the distance.

"Caleb!" I open my eyes. David is calling my name. I am lying face down in the snow. I force myself up.

"David!" I scream. A figure outlined in the snow comes toward me. David helps me to my feet and we walk to the camp. Mag is there. She gives me some food and I scarf it down.

"We've been looking for you for days!" Mag explained. "We don't have any food or water."

"I have a little left over from what I killed while I was gone," I say. We cook one of the prairie chickens. The next day, the blizzard has passed. Over a few days, the snow melts and we are able to go out hunting. We find a bison and kill it. For the next week we eat as we've never eaten before. We decide we need to head home. When we have enough energy, we pack up everything and start walking. We pass the border of the Iowa territory and this time we cross the Mississippi River on foot over the ice.

Finally we see our town in the distance. As we begin walking up the main street a huge crowd gathers. Everybody screams with joy when they see us. It turns out that they thought we were dead. We share what we wrote in our journals while we were gone. Everyone found it very interesting and thought we should let the governor of our state know about it. We traveled to the state capital and met with him. He said we had discovered very interesting information and asked us if we would go out to a new territory. We said we would consider it, but knew we would have to be better prepared for winter.

Years have passed since we had these adventures, but now I know that my grandma was right when she said, "In the wild, you can conquer anything."

Narrator: There was once a boy who had a pet parrot named Sammy.

Boy: "Say, 'Polly want a cracker.'"

Parrot: "Sammy want a doughnut."

Boy: "No, 'Polly want a cracker.'"

Parrot: "Sammy want a doughnut."

Boy: "Why aren't you saying, 'Polly want a cracker?!'"

Parrot: "Because my name is Sammy, and I want a doughnut."

Narrator: So the boy brought Sammy a cracker and a doughnut.

Boy: "Which one do you want?"

Parrot: "I want a cupcake."

The End

Mae C. Knights
Horace Mann Elementary
3rd grade

MY OBSESSION

I love the way they walk on their toes. It is very soothing to me.

Their whiskers twitch,
they purr softly as I drift into my dreams.

The gray tabby likes to knead my armpit as I am falling asleep.

The fluffy ginger cat goes limp when I pick her up,
becoming a puddle of cuddle.

The dark calico, very vocal.

The long-haired brown tabby has a crinkled ear,
signs of a past infection.

They are adorable, hungry, playful, and mischievous.

Curious,

furry,

And funny.

I pet their soft, furry tummies
and fill their dishes with kibble.

When I'm supposed be brushing my hair, I pet the cat.

Dad says, "Put on your socks!"

I pet the cat.

"Where's your backpack?"

I'm petting the cat.

Twenty Four Years

Lochlan Krupa

Grade 7

I sat in the tree, admiring the gentle curve of the branches. What I would give to be that tree, to have no brain, to feel no sorrow. To simply live. Unfortunately, it's impossible, because my name is Jack Dooran, and I'm about as human and un-treeish as a twelve year old boy gets. I haven't seen another human in almost four months. I do get lonely, but I have a dog, and get along fine. My dog's name is Rover. Ok, ok, I know it's lame, but I was six when I got him, and couldn't think of a different name. I am tall and lean, with broad shoulders, long scraggly black hair, blue eyes, and a supposedly brilliant smile that I don't use much any more.

It started back in 2065. I sat with my mom in our living room, looking out our window and watching the sun rise up above the grassy hills of Antarctica. It was a great place, but was (and is) not permanent. In 2065, we had twenty five years to get off the planet before Antarctica became a dead wasteland like the rest of our once habitable planet. All the people on our planet had settled there, about 5 billion, so you can imagine it was a pretty crowded place. I thought that on the other side of Earth there must be another place like ours, someplace with grass and trees. But if there is, I will never know because of the thousand miles of wasteland separating us, where temperatures can reach 220 degrees Fahrenheit. One year before, in 2064, the International Committee for the Preservation of the Human Race (I.C.P.H.R) sent out a desperate plea for help into space, in the hope that some other race would receive it, and help us leave this planet in some way. The good news, someone did receive the message. The bad news, they had no intention of helping us.

In June 2065, I decided to take a walk. I exited our back door and strolled down the foot-trodden path through our neighborhood. Houses were packed so tightly together that there was barely enough room to squeeze between them. I walked to the edge of our village, if you could call it that, with the next residential area in plain view about half a mile away, the cob walls of the buildings flashing in the rising sun from the glass embedded into their walls. I explored in this small area separating the villages. I found the cave where I always hung out, a small opening in the ground sheltered by a willow tree. It slanted steeply downward until it leveled out for about ten feet and ended abruptly in a wall of stone. I sat my back against the stone wall, using a candle to make out the words of the book I was reading. Suddenly, I felt a sudden tug in my gut, and I shot up towards the top of the cave, about ten feet up. I smacked into it so hard that I could feel my brain vibrating inside my skull. I kept sticking to the ceiling, almost as if someone was trying to pull me through to the other side. Every inch of my body was vibrating from the tension. As suddenly as it had started, it stopped. I fell to the ground, my body spent.

I lay there for what? Seconds, minutes, hours? I couldn't tell. All I remember is getting up and making the slow ascent upwards. I don't know how, but I knew this hadn't happened just to me. As I reached the surface, the sun had fully risen, and I was met with the sight that will haunt my dreams for years to come. Everything was the same, the dogs were roaming in back yards, there were still birds flying through the sky, and yet, it still seemed...wrong. It was too quiet, no sound of children squealing over some new discovery, or the sound of adults laughing at the endearing way their children played. Then I noticed the holes. In most houses, there were two or three holes through the straw tops of the houses. I noticed something in the horizon. It was a small, black speck, flying away into space. They had been taken. Every human on Earth had been taken, to be used for the unknown purposes of another people. I was too shocked to cry. I ran back to our house and buried my face in Rover's fur, the only living thing I had left. So here I am, alone on a soon to be inhabitable planet, the year is 2066, and I have twenty four years to live. My family and my species were literally sucked into a alien hovercraft. Is it just me, or does my life sound like a joke to you?

Rhys Long

Dragon Fighter

Once upon a time there was an evil dragon named Bob. He was very evil and he terrorized the village below the mountain that he lives in. Every year he came down and would not go away until the villagers gave him a child. The dragon made sure that the kids would not grow up and be warriors that could kill him. So he made them live in his cave with him and he would not let them come out until they were very old and wrinkly so that they were not a threat anymore. But the villagers found out what he was doing. The king held competition to see who was the bravest of them all to rescue all of the children and to slay the dragon.

All the villagers participated but only two prevailed. Those two would have a duel and the winner would be the dragon hunter.

"I am going to win because I have had years of practice sword fighting and you are just a child, you can not beat me." the first challenger boasted.

"We'll see about that soon enough, won't we?" said the small boy confidently. And so they fought and the small boy quickly swept the opponent's feet and he fell over. The boy pointed his sword at the first challenger's throat and the king's guards blew their trumpets ... the boy had won!

First the boy had to climb to the tip-top of the mountain, slay the dragon, and save the day.

"Doesn't sound too hard." the boy thought. But when the boy reached the top of the mountain he realized how high up he was and was frightened but then quickly remembered his goal and kept going to the mouth of the cave. He took a deep breath and walked inside.

The dragon was sleeping in the corner of the cave and in the other corner was the cage full of children. The boy ran up to the dragon and shouted, "YOU KILLED MY FATHER, THE LAST ADVENTURER, AND NOW I WILL GET MY REVENGE!" And the small boy slit the dragon's throat and freed all of the villagers.

When he got back down to the village carrying the dragon's head, all the villagers cheered and the boy went to his small cottage and was mourning his father's death when he thought he heard his father's voice. He opened up the cellar door and found his father in a chair surrounded by bits of food . . .

"Dad!" The boy shouted excitedly. "You're alive!" The boy was so happy that his dad was alive and the small boy really thought that there was a happy ending.

The End

Why the Bakken Pipeline Should Be Stopped

I believe the Bakken pipeline should be stopped. If you're curious as to why than just wait and I'll explain. In this informational text I'll teach you about the Bakken pipeline, (North Dakota access pipeline) why it should be stopped, and an example of the reason it needs to be stopped. If you don't know what the Bakken pipeline is than here you are. The Bakken pipeline is an oil pipeline that is planned to go through the Native American's land up by North Dakota. Simple as that. Now, let's get started.

The Bakken pipeline runs through American Indian territory where we (our government and us Americans) promised we wouldn't touch. In this area, there are ancient burial grounds that oil could potentially damage if the pipeline were to leak, which is known to happen. In addition, if the pipeline were to leak, it would infect their water source which in retrospect, could critically harm them and, or anyone else who lives by the pipeline. According to Wikipedia, in 2009 on May 21 a pipeline in Superior, Wisconsin leaked. It spilled an estimated 6,500 gallons of oil and about 700 cubic yards of oil infected dirt had to be extracted because of the possibility of harm. That's insane!! That just goes to show how terrible oil leaks could be & how harmful the oil truly is when it leaks.

I think the Bakken pipeline could be harmful to the Native Americans and their territory. Therefore, it's not right to forcefully dig up their land and build an oil pipeline. Even if we did build it, there would still be the possibility of leaking oil, making this counter-productive. That's why I think it should be stopped.

In order to help these Native Americans and others involved, you could protest against the pipeline. But, if you can't protest you could also help spread the word about the pipeline and get more people involved in the project. Your contribution could help dramatically no matter how small it is.

I hope this informational text taught you about the Bakken pipeline & helped you realize how dangerous it could potentially be to the environment. Thank you for reading.

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Grandma Baba

Every summer, my parents head on their anniversary journey which leaves my nine year old stubborn sister Olivia and me at Grandma Baba. My parents would stuff our bags with clothes and electronics. But the problem is when we arrive at her beautiful red brick cottage with her marvelous stocks of golden sunflowers towering around the sidewalk to the entry. As normal when we reach her home, my mother complains that Grandma Baba hadn't taken her advice to renovate the entrance and get rid of the sunflowers. Our mother asks us if we concur. She eyes us with her deep navy eyes and her eyelashes painted with coal black mascara.

"Sure," Olivia shrugs.

"Whatever you think, Honey," Dad admits. But I slip into my seat. Baba's cottage isn't ugly, it's wonderful and mystical.

Our parents drop us off, talk to Baba, take in our suitcases, and leave. Naturally, Olivia carries her iPhone and headphones to our bedroom and does her normal routine. Just playing games on her iPhone.

"What would you like to bake Chloe?" Baba questions me as we enter her snow white kitchen. "Could we make your homemade blueberry muffins?" I requested.

"Of course!" Baba agrees, "Frosting?"

"Nah," I say, "Your muffins are better without frosting."

"Well then, let's get crackin'," Baba opens the nice cool fridge and we start cooking. Baba allows me stir the eggs, flour, and sugar.

"How old are you now, Chloe?" Baba would ask.

"Six!" I show her with my nubby fingers, "This much!" "That's great!" She would smile at me and I would smile back at her. After we finished mixing it up and put it in Baba's double oven, I am covered from head to toe with flour. "Come on," Baba carries me to the bathroom, "You look like a ghost!" Baba fills the tub with fresh water. She makes the water not too hot, not too cold. Perfect. Baba puts her pink bubbles into the tub and I can't even see my toes. When I'm done with my bath, Baba wraps her white fluffy towel around my cold wet skin and dries me off.

Then it's time for bed. I sleep with Olivia but she's too busy playing on her iPhone. The brightness makes my eyes hurt. I crawl out of the nicely quilted bedspread and walk down the hallway to Baba's bedroom. I tell her I can't sleep. She let's me sleep with her for the rest of the night. I miss that. Five years after that adventure Baba passed away. My whole family never talked about anything at the dinner table. It was too quiet without Baba. One summer mom and I started cleaning out Baba's attic. Baba's attic was full of cardboard boxes containing lots of unusual objects. I was going through one of her boxes when I found an old note card. The card was so smooth and beaten it felt like fabric. I dusted off the dust and squinted at the letters. It was Baba's blueberry muffins recipe.

The Wild Mustangs

Joanna stepped out of her grandma's old, faded blue pickup truck. The mountain air smelled of pine trees, and the sun was shining a glorious gold in the perfect blue sky. She had come to live with her grandma for the summer and was excited to see her grandma's horse. Her grandma's house was a classic Victorian-style farmhouse, with a barn and a couple acres of land behind the house. Her grandma used the acres to ride her horse, Phoenix.

"I'm so glad you came to stay with me! Why don't we get you unpacked and fed, Joanna?" her grandma said with a smile.

"I've missed you too grandma. I'm excited to be here!" Joanna exclaimed with an exuberant grin on her face. They headed up the steps and into the house. By the time they finished unpacking and eating dinner, it was late and they decided to go to bed.

The next day, Joanna decided to go exploring on her grandma's land. She found herself wandering through a field that was towards the edge of her grandma's land. The landscape was beautiful. There was a small pond in the distance that shimmered a lovely blue in the afternoon sun, and lush green grass that covered the ground. The trees all seemed to be different shades of green and brown, and were tall and sturdy-looking. Patches of purple and yellow wild flowers grew along the border of the pond and in the grass. The sight was breathtaking.

Her stomach started to rumble. She was glad she'd brought a couple of apples, since she was getting hungry. She turned around and was about to head home when she heard pounding noises that were getting closer and closer. When she turned back around, she was shocked to see a herd of wild Mustangs. They seemed oblivious of her, and obviously didn't deem her a threat, since they were grazing ten or so feet away from where she stood.

She was staring in awe. They were an assortment of colors - pinto, roan, chestnut, buckskin, cremello, black - every color you could imagine. Some grazed quietly eating the lush, green grass while others playfully chased each other around. A mare was affectionately nuzzling her foal. Their coats shone as the sun shined down on them.

Joanna was astounded. Wild Mustangs almost never came this close to civilization, much less than a few feet from her. Joanna wanted to get a closer look at them, but before she had a chance to step forward, the mare and her foal came towards her. She held out one of her apples, and after a few moments of hesitation, the mare took a tentative step forward and gobbled it out of her hand. Joanna laughed. The mare was even more beautiful up close than she was from afar. She was an attractive black and white pinto with a blaze running down her face. Her long black mane blew lightly in the wind. Her foal was just as breathtaking except instead of a blaze it had a star.

Joanna looked around. The other members of the herd were gathered together to graze quietly. The mare nudged Joanna with her muzzle. She fed her other apple and tentatively reached out a hand to pet her on the neck. The mare liked it, leaning into her touch. Joanna smiled to herself as she realized that these wild creatures were some of the most amazing beings she had ever seen.

As it was getting late, Joanna realized that she had to go home. As she started to leave, she turned back to see the mare and her foal walking leisurely back towards the herd to graze some more. Joanna couldn't wait to get home and tell her grandma. She swore to herself that she would return soon, with her grandma perhaps, in hope that the Mustang herd would be back.

Suseeni Temple

Rob was an archaeologist who worked in Egypt. He loved Egyptian artifacts, and studied them a lot. Today he was on an archaeological dig in Cairo. Rob and his team had found a new temple in Cairo so they were digging around it for artifacts.

Rob said, “My shovel hit something. I dropped to my hands and knees and started to dig. I slowly but carefully pried the piece out of the ground. I brushed off all the dust and looked at my discovery. It was a statuette of Anubis, the god of death.”

The next day the team went off to the lab and studied the piece. When they finally started examining fingerprints, they found it was touched by Suseeni. It was a wood figure. It had a lot of patina. Patina is when a figure is touched a lot and the oils on your fingers made the wood a darker brown. If you’re an archaeologist, patina is very important because it means many ancient people have touched the piece.

This statue was very important because it was the only wooden statue of Anubis found today. Then they noticed that the temple was probably Suseeni’s temple. They quickly jotted down some notes and headed home.

Rob said, “When I got home I was thinking: “Who built the temple? What is it made of? Why was it there? Why was it right next to a tomb?”. I decided to eat dinner and head to bed. I was tired, today we had gone to the lab and worked in the hot blazing sun of Egypt. I closed my eyes and dozed off the sleep.”

The next day all of the questions were answered. When you’re an archaeologist you have to note your findings very carefully, so in my notebook the notes read, “When we enter the temple the whole team exclaims, “Wow!”. The walls are covered in paintings. Even the floor has paintings.”

The team ran out for tools needed from the lab. Rob drove his jeep, grabbed the tools and returned to the temple. The team took samples and read the hieroglyphics. Then they walked into the next room which was the holy of the holy. That meant the shrine was in here somewhere. Then they saw the shrine. It was gorgeous. In a small square there was a statuette of Amun Ra, the sun god, with paintings all over it. Then they walked into the last room. This room was decorated everywhere and there were a couple of scrolls.

It was time to leave so the team grabbed some scrolls, got in their cars, flicked on the headlights and zipped off.

Rob said, “When I got home I was content. All my questions were answered. The creator was Usermaat. It was made of sandstone. It was next to the tomb so the tomb wouldn’t be found. I decided to eat my dinner and go to bed. I dozed off and that night I had a dream.”

Finding the Light

I clutched my growling stomach. "Why did life have to be like this?" I thought miserably as I lay on the sun-baked ground. Night had fallen, providing a short relief from the blazing sun, but the air was still warm. Mother lay beside me. We had always come up with enough food to survive, but since the drought, it was extremely hard to get something to eat. All of our crops had withered and died, despite our desperate attempts to keep them alive.

I felt Mother's arms wrap around me and pull me close. "Mom?" I asked softly. "Yes Imani?" she said.

"I love you," I said, glancing at her. A tear ran down her cheek.

"I love you too Honey," She whispered. I decided to get some rest and closed my eyes. I drifted in and out of sleep. When I woke, the sun was beating down on me. "Mom?" I said, and shook her softly. She didn't get up. "Mom!" I said loudly. No response. I felt her chest. My heart stopped. "No..." I whispered, but words failed me. My mother was dead.

I bent over her and sobbed. It was all too much. But my Mother's death seemed to light a fire inside me. I was determined to survive. I walked until I reached a village. For days I tried to get money for food. I offered to do work, but no one needed me. I searched for plants, or anything that was edible, but there was nothing growing on the hot, barren terrain, and there wasn't a drop of water in sight.

Finally, I gave up. Hope was lost, and without my mother there with me, there was nothing left to live for. Grief-stricken, I wandered aimlessly until the sun set, and I was too weak to walk. I crumpled to the ground and cried. What would I do now? I was so hungry. My eyes slowly drifted shut. My last wish was that others would not die the way that I would. Suddenly I was rising. Rising into warmth and light. Was this a dream? I didn't think so. I soared through the sky. Once I touched the clouds I saw a paradise. A huge green landscape stretched out as far as I could see.

There wasn't a patch of land that wasn't covered in thick, soft grass. A sparkling lake lay to my left, surrounded in trees. Swans glided peacefully across the water. The sun shined, and for the first time I enjoyed its warmth. There were a lot of people here, enjoying this strange place. People swam in the lake, sat under the shade of trees, and strolled across the grass. People were smiling and laughing. I wandered around for awhile, taking in everything. Suddenly I saw... My mother. Were my eyes playing tricks on me? She was talking with some others. She turned and saw me.

Joyful tears welled in her eyes. I ran to her and jumped into her arms. "I missed you so much." I whispered.

"Not as much as I missed you." she said softly. When she released me, I saw something I hadn't seen before. It was a huge table loaded with food. Corn, rice, meat, stews, loaves of bread, fish, and other foods I didn't even know the names of. My mouth watered. Mother smiled and said, "Hungry?" We sat down. I ate and drank. There was so much love here. What was this wonderful place? Then suddenly I knew. I was in heaven.

Sarah and the Mean Old Dog

Once upon a time there was a little girl named Sarah. She lived by the woods.

One day she said "Mom? Can I go to the park?"

"Yes hon" her mom said. And so she put on her boots, opened up the door, and went outside.

But her neighbor's dog got out and disappeared and Sarah didn't know. It was a clever, mean dog. When Sarah finally got out of the woods there was a bush and Sarah just about walked past it. The clever mean dog was hiding behind it. Right when Sarah walked past it, BOOM! The dog jumped right to Sarah and bit her knee.

"OOOOOOWWWW", she cried as the bite swelled up.

The dog disappeared off in to the bushes again. Sarah got up and continued walking to the park. When she got to the park, she limped over to the slide, climbed up the ladder and slid down and it put pressure on her knee and it hurt. Then she limped over to the swing. The same thing happened. And so since everything she did hurt her knee, she limped on home.

Her mom was there. "Hi honey. Did you have fun?"

"No. (sniff) I did not have fun. A dog bit me right on the knee!" Sarah said.

"Oh. I'm sorry to hear that hon. Here, lets go put on a Band-Aid on that," her mom said.

And so they went to the bathroom, opened the cupboard and got a Band-Aid and put it on her. "Are you okay hon?" Her mom said.

"(sniff) yes" Sarah said. Then Sarah went on her porch and just watched the sun go by.

Then she saw something moving in the bushes in her front yard. Then the same dog that hurt her knee poked out of the bushes and, somehow, said "Sarah." Sarah was surprised.

"YOU SAID MY NAME! S-A-R-A-H-!" Sarah cried.

"I'm sorry I bit your knee. I'm lost, cold and hungry. Please take me inside." The dog said.

"I will keep you until your owner comes and gets you. I'm also going to call you Sarah Jr."

Sarah said, and they all lived happily ever after.

Violet Mowrey

The snow layers on the ground, making the sidewalk slippery. I rush through the falling flakes, feet crunching on the snow, as I approach the front of the school where my 7-year-old sister, Lavinia, waits.

She marches, grinning, down the front steps, amongst the crowd of first and second graders. Her hands are in the air and her tongue is out. I don't have the heart to tell her that her hair looks like it hasn't been combed in days.

"Isn't this awesome!" she laughs, examining intricate snowflake patterns.

She spins around, her arms raised to the sky. It is wonderful to have snow here in California, instead of just rain and fog.

Lavinia skips ahead while I lolligag behind. Then she pauses, face dressed in a worried expression.

"The car's going to be completely covered!" she cries.

I run after her to Westport Auto Wash's parking lot, where our car, draped in snow, is sitting patiently. I still remember that day when Mom and Dad fought so hard, when Mom took me and Livie and drove away. She didn't have enough money on her own to rent an apartment.

We brush the snow off the food crate we left outside the night before, and I fish the car key out of my pocket. Safely inside, I turn on the defroster and set the frozen food crate near the vents to heat up.

That's when we see the note. 'Can you go to the Laundromat?' Mom wrote. Lavinia and I shrug at each other and leave the toasty car. Carrying the bag of clothes, Lavinia follows me to the Laundromat, where I give Lavinia the quarters to put in the token slot (Lavinia loves that part.)

While we're waiting for the clothes to dry, I sit at the window seat in the front while Lavinia watches the clothes spinning around and around. I stare at the passersby and wonder what kinds of houses they live in. Could any of them live in cars, like me, Mom, and Lavinia?

Then I see the man eating shrimp cocktail at the fancy place across the street. Is that him?

"Lavinia!" I cry. She comes to the window, and we stare out at him.

"That's him," I breathe.

We rush across the street.

"Dad!" we cry.

"Girls?"

"Yes," we say, wrapping him in a tight hug.

My Life in Fishing So Far

One time I caught a catfish. Here is the story. I was going bass fishing. I caught a frog on the shore by the boat ramp and used it for bait. It was as big as my hand and so was the hook.

We sat in the boat for two hours. After an hour, I got bored and fished with a lure for 30 minutes. Then I switched back to the frog. It really stunk like fish guts.

I noticed my trout pole had moved across the boat, but it happened slowly. It almost fell in the water but my sister grabbed it. She has freaky fast reflexes. It really set off the drag. The drag made a squeaky noise. I could reel it in fine, but I was afraid it would break the line. The line is like a rubber band - you stretch it too far, it breaks.

The catfish was two feet long. We cleaned it, took it home, and cooked it in a boiler. It still tasted good even though it was a little big and old. Catfish are bottom feeders. The older they get they taste mucky.

* * *

Another day I woke up at 5:00 AM in the morning and got dressed, got worms, a bucket, and a pole. I went to my grandma's lake. I caught a bluegill at 5:20 AM. It was about 8 inches. Then a largemouth bass that was 14 inches at 1:30 PM. After that, I caught a smallmouth bass that was 17 inches at 7:30 PM.

* * *

Just weeks before my birthday we were fishing at Volga Lake. We were fishing the lake and didn't catch anything, so we fished at the Volga Lake spillway. My grandpa had just bought me a new fishing pole. It was a gray Ugly Pole and had a little hole in the bottom by the reel so you can hook your line down there. It also had a button that you could pull a little and it would adjust the drag. When you cast it, you could make it so you could reel it backward like it was just casting, but when it reels backward it doesn't have any drag. I was fishing with stink bait. I reeled my pole in about 30 minutes later and the stink bait was gone.

My sister caught a big chub on her pole, and it was dead and sat in the sun for a while so it smelled bad. I let it sit in the sun a little more, and while I was doing that I used a chub that I caught out of a neighbor's creek. I reeled that pole in about 30 minutes later and it had nothing, but my other old pole that had a dead frog on it had moved. And whatever it was ate dead stuff, so I knew it was either a catfish or a bullhead, which is very rare. I had caught a bullhead!

I reeled in my other pole and it had no fish, but no bait either. So I put out my sister's big chub and waiting for about 30 minutes. I started reeling in my pole, and it felt and looked like a rock. It was a snapping turtle. My very first snapping turtle! I was so happy! The snapping turtle was about 2 ½ feet long and camouflage color because it had algae on it.

Willa Ohlmann

The Book Ostrich

Ollie the Ostrich was super shy. Whenever another ostrich would come near, Ollie would hide her head in a book – much like other ostriches in her family hid their heads in the sand. Ollie was afraid that the other ostriches would not like her so instead she imagined herself a character in many of the books who had

Courage, Strength, Confidence and Love for Themselves
And all the other cool things that book characters have.

When she read books like *Olivia the Super Ostrich*, Ollie imagined herself flying over a city, saving it from a terrible earthquake or creepy aliens or bad guys.

Or When she read books like *Olga the Amazingly Awesome Ostrich*, Ollie would dream of being as strong as Olga who would wrestle alligators or live in the wild where lions and panthers and all the dangerous animals lived (like pythons).

Or When she read books, like *Olana the Outgoing Ostrich*, Ollie admired her ability to talk to everyone and everything. Even Willa the Whale who only surfaced once in awhile.

One day when Ollie was reading one of her favorite books, *Olive the Great*, a new ostrich, Oscar, came over to see what she was reading.

“Hi, my name is Oscar. What are you reading?”

At first, Ollie pulled the book so close to her face the words went blurry. “I’m so scared”, Ollie thought but then she remembered Olivia, Olga, Olana, and Olive and all of a sudden she felt very brave, strong, and confident.

Ollie raised her head from the book, and said, shyly, “Hi, my name is Ollie. I’m reading *Olive the Great*. Do you like books?”

Oscar answered, “Yes, I do,” pulling a book from out of his feathers, *Orion the Outstanding*.

Ollie and Oscar sat the rest of the afternoon and read their books. Two book ostriches reading together as new friends.

Space

Space is Fascinating! Deep Space, Outer space or just space. It's a vast area of numerous forms of objects such as; supernovas, nebulas, black holes, stars, comets, asteroids, planets and many versions and variations of these throughout various sections of our galaxy and other galaxies, also. There are various spaces that lead to space and I will name them one by one starting with the Troposphere.

The Troposphere is the lowest part of the earth's atmosphere and contains 75% of earth's atmosphere. The next layer is the Stratosphere, which contains the earth's ozone layer. It also doesn't have any clouds and is favored by pilots around earth. The final layer is the Mesosphere, the layer where most meteors burn up upon atmospheric entrance. It is too high above Earth to be accessible to jet-powered aircraft and balloons, and too low to permit orbital spacecrafts.

Next we'll talk about the phenomenon that started the universe around us: *The Big Bang* About 13.8 billion years ago, *The Big Bang* happened when the universe expanded from a very hot and dense state, but after 380,000 years the universe cooled down which then allowed subatomic particles, and later simple atoms, to be created. Giant clouds of these elements later came together through gravity, eventually forming the stars and galaxies visible today.

A star is a sphere of plasma held together by it's own gravity. A star is formed when gravity collapses in a gas-filled nebula composed of hydrogen, helium and other heavier elements. When the star becomes dense, hydrogen converts into helium through fusion releasing energy in the process. After several years, the star grows becoming a red giant and after a few more years a black hole.

Now I'll talk about comets and asteroids. A comet is an icy, small body that, when passing close to our sun, heats up and releases gas, displaying a visible atmosphere and sometimes a tail. Halley's Comet is one of the most well-known comets around the world. It appears every 75-76 years. The last sighting of the comet was in 1986 and it will reappear in 2061. It is also the only comet that is visible with the unaided eye. Asteroids are small planets; the larger ones are called planetoids. 4 Vesta is the only asteroid which is visible with the unaided eye from earth due to the fact that it has a reflective surface.

In the vast are known as "Space," there's so many things in Space that I can't list them all in this story. I would have to write another story to list all of the other facts I know about Space.

Jade felt cool as she walked up to her attic room carrying a big box filled with all her things from her old house. She set her things down and started unpacking with memories flooding through her mind. She remembered the times when she used to travel and all the things she brought back. Chopsticks from China, a necklace that said aloha on it from Hawaii, a Irish dancing dress from Ireland, a pair of leather shoes from Italy, a bracelet with ancient symbols on it from Greece, a painted fan from Spain and a drum from Africa. They were all adventures she had with her mother and father until her mother caught Zika virus in Africa and died.

She was so concentrated on everything she didn't notice her dad walking up the stairs to her room and told her it was time to go to lunch. He said they could stop at the bookstore to get a new book. When they got to the mall Jade went to the bookstore and her dad went to Pasta Paradise to get lunch and her favorite dish-pasta bolognaise

She started walking to the bookstore. She entered the bookstore walking through the halls then something caught her eye. It was a fairly small book with silver cursive lettering and the title was Marainia. She bought the book and returned to the restaurant. As they drove home from pasta paradise, Jade started reading the book. She read about a land called Marainia and read about the animals that lived there, and soon it seemed as if she were there.

When she felt the car stop she was about to open the door when she looked around and realized that she wasn't in a car for she was in a flying carriage pulled by two dragons. They just stopped near a tall castle with big iron gates that had vines wrapped around it.

Then out flew hundreds of fairies wearing the same gold vines, and the same green dresses with purple flowers and in the middle of them all was Queen Esmeralda wearing a crown and a matching necklace made of pure silver and gold, with emerald jewels on top. It was the most beautiful thing Jade ever saw. Esmeralda asked who was in the carriage in a stern but gentle voice. The driver said he believed it was the princess. When the door opened they saw it was not the princess and the queen demanded to know who it was. Jade told the queen her name and the queen said she liked it. The queen said she was looking for Princess Rosetta and went on her way, leaving her necklace behind.

Jade thought she must return the necklace to the queen. She picked it up and hurried into the gigantic castle astonished by all the pictures hung up on the walls. She kept walking until she heard footsteps. She hurried and hid under a dining room table with a beautiful silk tablecloth and chairs edged with gold. As soon as the people left, she got out from under the table. She walked up the steps and she was amazed. Sitting in a throne was Queen Esmeralda. Jade gave the queen her necklace. The queen was grateful and asked her to stay for the banquet.

Then suddenly there was a *thud*. An almost silent thud awakened Jade from her day dream about fairies, crowns, and riding in a dragon carriage. She turned around, and there was a girl, wearing a white skirt with a rose pattern on it. Her hair was blond and in a fancy French braid. She was wearing a gigantic red velvet hat that had two large roses on it with golden vines. She was 5 years old. The girl said she was Rosetta Flowsong! Jade was so surprised that she met the girl from her dream! Then her dad stepped out of the car saying, "Oh good. You've met your new neighbor."

Mary Cate Pugh
6th Grade
Regina

“Winter”

Winter wonderland, a breathtaking sight
Cold and dangerous, yet so beautiful.
A blank blanket, sparkling, pure, white
Covering the land so precisely.
Tiny, perfect jewels falling peacefully
To their destination.
Silent, soft, weightless.
Children playing happily.
Joyous laughter fills the frigid air.
Excitement fills the people’s hearts.
Winter wonderland, a breathtaking experience.

THE MAGIC FLAG

Trent liked to collect flags. He was waiting for show and tell on the last day of school. He had it all ready -his unique flag collection of 36 countries including the beautiful United States of America. He stood up nervously in front of the class to tell everybody, which flag belonged to which country. When he got back home he carefully put away the flags in his collection box, taking special care with the United States flag. It was given to him by his grandpa Larry who had brought it in 1969, the same year the first American man Neil Armstrong had landed on the moon.

The next morning Trent ate his breakfast and scanned the newspaper. Screaming headlines on the first page caught his eye- 'Moon Space Station in Peril, Possible End of American Scientific Mission to the Moon- Nuclear Battery Malfunction in the Power Plant at the American Base on the Moon'. According to the report if the nuclear battery exploded not only would the base become useless, but there could be radiation fallout, harming life on earth. This needed to be stopped. However, the quickest repair crew would be able to reach the surface of moon, to fix this disaster, would be at least 1 month.

Trent was thinking about this with his grandpa's flag in his hand. As he pulled on the strings of the flag he heard a loud whoosh and suddenly everything went dark in front of his eyes. When he opened them again, he found himself standing on the moon, in a space suit. "Hmmm! isn't moon supposed to have zero gravity". He tried a daring jump and found himself launched in the air several feet much to his surprise. "Am I dreaming?" Then he suddenly remembered the news about the nuclear battery. As he was jumping around he spotted a series of metal bunkers leading towards a shallow hill with a metal door on its side. "That's got to be where the nuclear battery is!" And he approached it nervously. He opened the metal doorway and slowly stepped inside. To his amazement inside was a jumbled mess of hundreds of wires and circuit breakers of all colors running in several directions. "I am never going to be able to figure this out by myself." But he pushed the big mess of wires to the side and continued inside. On the back wall he saw a control panel with 3 buttons. "This looks exactly like the panel on the old Super Mario game" he thought. There was a red button that said STOP, green START and orange that said TRANSFER POWER. He pressed the red button. Immediately the nuclear battery countdown stopped. Whew! He heaved a sigh of relief.

As he began backing out of the battery chamber, he found himself tripping over one of the wires. He fell down on the floor and everything went dark before his eyes. "Trent! Wake up! Wake up! You will be late. We have to go to the magic show". He heard his brother's voice calling him. He opened his eyes and carefully looked around. The walls and posters all looked familiar and so did those flags. Gasp! He was back in his room. Whoa that was quite a dream! He got ready and began to head out with his family. Next morning he quickly scanned the newspaper and saw the headlines "Disaster Averted- Battery Functions Again. Moon Space Station Will Continue to Work Despite Recent Battery Malfunction for Several More Years. Power has been surprisingly restored without any intervention".

He couldn't believe his eyes. Did he really dream it or was it all real. Well that is for Trent to know and us to guess!

Snowflake

A snowflake is as soft as a pillow.

As quiet as leafs falling on the ground.

As white as milk.

It floats like a balloon.

Then it lands on my nose.

The Creature

Sage Slessor
Prairie Creek Intermediate
6th Grade

The girl's hands wrapped around a warm cup of hot chocolate. Outside, December winds flew around the city, freezing everything it touched. Snow started to fall. The girl looked out the window of the coffee shop, far away the sun started to set behind the horizon, creating colors the girl had only imagined seeing. More people departed as day turned to night. Soon, she was alone. Her brown hair fell in front of her face and she tucked it behind her ear. She hopped off chair and listened to her boots click against the floor. The old woman behind the counter waved her away and the girl stepped into the winter night. Up above bright stars filled the dark sky with light. The girl sat on the bench and pulled mittens over her cold hands. Chilled winds brushed against her skin...but something caught her attention, across the street in a dark alley, two eyes glinted in the moonlight. They stared at her. The girl sat still, afraid to move. Frozen with fear, she mustered, "come out." The creature stepped out of the shadows. The girl gaped at what she saw before her. Giant paws sunk beneath the snow, with claws like talons, Fangs like daggers shot out of a mouth dripping with slobber. Long, tangled fur covered every inch of its body. The creature had long legs and broad shoulders, and those eyes made the hair stick up on her arms. A chill ran down the girl's spine, she was more cold than ever now. The creature sat there in the quiet street, examining her. It started to move, the girl shook with fear. Her teeth were chattering. The horrifying creature stood on its four legs and took a step...and another...and another. The girl's hands clenched the sides of the bench, she was still too afraid to move. The creature licked her. A big slobbery kiss on the cheek. She let go of the bench and stood up, the creature wasn't horrifying at all, its eyes now looked like big chocolate chips. She reached out and touched its smooth fur. The creature nuzzled its nose into her arm. The girl wiped the slobber off of her face and embraced the creature. A warm feeling filled her heart. That night the girl walked home with her loveable creature running alongside her.

12:05 AM NYPD

My name is Thorns. Marion Thorns, female detective for NYPD.

“Marion, you have an assignment around the corner on 3rd Avenue East,” yelled Billy. Oh yeah that's my partner, Billy Young. He got recruited last year as a ride along detective. I've been here for ummm..... 13 years. Believe it or not, I started this job when I was 13. I was the best one for the job even though back then it was called an “internship”.

“Marion, are you coming?” asked Cory Jones almost out of breath, with his hands in his pockets, He is a police officer, and also my dream future husband. He is just one spot ahead of me for getting the spot of Chief. *But whatever, he is still dreamy.*

“Let's go!” said Billy grabbing my keys off my desk.

“So demanding...jeesh. Get the car ready, we're going to the crime scene. Let's roll!” I demanded to Billy.

12:15 AM 754 Third Avenue, scene of the crime

“What's the case?” I said to the forensic.

“It's likely this man died of a chemical in the air right inside of this house.” the forensic stated. I don't know how this could happen. I asked for the info about this man from the police. It states that this man is 37 years old with no record of criminal activity.

“Well, do you have any suspects yet?” I demanded to the police.

“Um not yet, Miss Thorns. We are sorry and will keep looking,” an officer said.

“Good, keep looking!” I snapped and turned to leave.

12:35 AM NYPD

I went back to the office to do some more research on the man. I looked online and called the realtor who sold the house to the deceased man 13 years ago. She said that the man's name was Norman Lawrence Parker. “I also know that back at the crime scene the forensic said that the murder happened at *midnight*, but I'm still questioning why midnight.” I said to myself. I called Billy down to my office, because I think I figured out who committed the crime.

1:00 AM NYPD

“Cory Jones,” I said.

“Yeah, what about him?” Billy asked confused.

“He committed the crime. Hear me out. He came into the office at 12:10, ten minutes after the murder. He was out of breath with his hands in his pockets and when he called me he **knew** the man's name before I could tell anyone. Call him into the interrogation room, NOW!”

“So do we have a suspect you want me to interview?” asked Cory Jones confused when he entered.

“Yeah you, you are our suspect for the Parker murder.” I replied in a brave tone. I handed him the paper of all my proof that says he killed Norman. “In your pockets you had the leftover chemical, that's why you wanted to leave quickly, to get rid of it. Lock him up boys.” *But why would do such a thing? He would NEVER do such a thing.*

Journey Across the Sea

Leela Strand

Dear Diary,

July 9, 1892

Today Mama, Papa, Patrick, and I started our journey from Dublin to America by boat. Patrick has had a cough for a while now. Mama and Papa were worried that he wouldn't make it through health inspection, but somehow he did. We share a cabin with three other families. You always hear the drone of the engine. It's so powerful that sometimes I feel like the power goes right into me! I can't stop wondering what the rest of our journey will bring.

Dear Diary,

July 10, 1892

I got a glimpse of two dolphins when I was wandering around the ship, lost, trying to find our cabin. I got really scared that I was never going to find it. It's really hard to find. I mean every door is numbered but our cabin is so deep in the ship that the numbers don't help very much. When I finally found it, my reward was a room of metal. Everything smells of iron and oil. Even worse, someone threw up and Patrick was coughing up blood! It was very scary.

Dear Diary,

July 11, 1892

A great sickness has come over our ship. Many passengers are sick, including Patrick who is very bad. I'm so worried about him. Mama is also the tiniest bit sick. All day we heard crew members yelling and people talking about how they think everyone is going to get sick. This definitely does not raise our spirits.

Dear Diary,

July 12, 1892

So many people are sick and Mama and I have to help tend to lots of them. Papa has to help the crew because so many of the crew members are sick. Everyone who's not sick has a job to do. Mama hasn't gotten worse but Patrick is dreadfully sick and I heard the doctors telling Papa that he should prepare himself for the worst. That can't mean what I think it means... Oh, I'm always crying. I really don't know what I'll do... I wish we were back at home. Even though the poor house was really bad, it was better than this.

Dear Diary,

July 13, 1892

Last night was the most horrible night; I don't want to think about it but I can't think of anything else. There is nothing else. Patrick passed away from a disease the doctor called consumption! The tears won't stop. It wasn't just horrible for Mama, Papa and I. Everyone in our cabin area was awake, pacing the hallways. Patrick was so young. There is nothing left. Mama keeps on crying, Papa is so very quiet. Mama, Papa, the doctor and I were the only ones in the room with Patrick. He just kept getting worse and worse every hour. He couldn't breathe, kept coughing up blood and just looked so awful. Then there was nothing... I don't understand how this could happen! I keep flipping through memories of him in my head, how he used to be the most annoying person ever-pulling my hair and singing stupid songs in my ears for what seemed like hours. I would get so mad at him and scold him so badly. Now I would let him do it all happily just to have him back. This doesn't seem real. It can't be real. I don't know what I'll do! I wish we never even got on this boat ! It's done us no good, no good at all.

Dear Diary,

July 15, 1892

We just saw the Statue of Liberty a few hours ago and Mama has somehow gotten better instead of worse. There is hope that they will let us go into quarantine rather than sending us all back. I keep on thinking about Patrick's beautiful smile, his laugh like no other. Then I look around. Everyone is torn and beaten down, and then there is the Statue of Liberty. Patrick's death has to be for something, right? It's not over yet, but maybe there is hope.

The Girl With a Hundred Tattoos

Imagine if you had one tattoo that described your personality. Imagine if everyone had them and were born with them. Now imagine if whenever one person fell in love with someone, that person's tattoo would appear on the other person's body.

I live in this world. I see people with more than twenty tattoos and some with just two. I see little boys and girls in the schoolyards talking about how many tattoos they want to get when they grow older. And with the older children, I hear them bragging about how they got a second tattoo or gossiping about how they saw their tattoo on their crush's arm.

And then I see the impressionable people who fall in love easily. There are more than fifty tattoos on most, but there's one girl that stands out from the rest.

I see her often. She sits alone, and she seems to pick her fingers a lot. She doesn't talk much, and she wears many layers, even in summer. She is the girl with exactly one hundred tattoos.

I talked to her once. Emphasis on *once*. She told me that she didn't want to be this way. She told me that she didn't like how her skin looked anymore. I wasn't quite sure, but I think she was crying.

That was 3 years ago.

I walk outside and see her waiting for me at the bus stop, waving.

"You're late," She teases once I reach the bus stop. I playfully punch her arm. "You're the one who woke up at 11:30 yesterday," I tease back.

As the bus arrives and we take a seat, I think about how far this girl next to me has come. Not to be narcissistic, but I think I'm the reason she got here in the first place. She used to be so reserved, so silent, but now, after I started to sit down and actually speak to her? She's more outgoing and friendly than ever.

It's funny, really. 3 years ago, She was only considered an acquaintance for a while, then a friend later. I didn't even know her actual name until about a year ago.

Madeline.

I look up from my thoughts to see Madeline rummaging through her daisy-printed handbag, pulling out two hand made bracelets.

"I almost forgot," she smiles and hands a bracelet to me, "this is for being a friend."

As I slip the bracelet on, the bus slowing to our stop, I smile back at Madeline.

The girl with one hundred tattoos.

The End

Kyros Yuefan Wu

MY TREE

My tree grows hair

It needs a haircut

Winter comes

Cut, Cut, Cut

My tree is bald in the air

A Kid in A Park

A bright summer day, Yellow Stone, here I come.

1916 to 2016,

100 years of national pride.

Snowy mountain tops,

rainbow hot springs.

Burned trees, fresh greens.

Old faithful, new fans.

Roaming bison, jumping deer.

Mr. coyote and Ms. Bear.

Chipmunk Chi-Chi, waterfalls laughing.

Fishing, boating, horseback riding,

I want one more day!

Crocodiles and Alligators

It was late at night. Shadows drifted across my bedroom wall, and an eerie breeze drifted through. Downstairs the light flickered. I lay in bed, pretending to sleep, but what I was really doing was listening to the conversation my parents were having in the living room with the police.

“... the license plate on the car that was spotted at the crime scene matches your son’s. Where has he been today?” the police officer asked my mom.

“I- I don’t know,” my mom stammered. “He left early in the morning, but he never said where he was going.”

One of the officers sighed. “Look, it’s late. We will come back tomorrow to contemplate the bottom of this convoluted case. In the meantime, if you have time, talk to your son.”

My father thanked the officers, and soon there was a tremor as the door closed and the sound of the police car outside starting up and leaving. There were footsteps coming up the stairs to my room. Suddenly, there was a figure in the doorway. It was my father. Almost inaudibly, he tentatively whispered, as if he were scared of me, “Ollie, who are you?” and I couldn’t help whispering back, “I’m sorry. I didn’t mean to do it.”

With that, the figure disappeared, and the light downstairs went out. It was obvious that my father was not cynical that I had done it, and at that moment I decided: I had to leave.

The stars light my escape as I run through the city’s alleys, leaving my home, Alligator Apartments, behind. Occasionally, police car’s sirens sound in the distance, looking for the culprit of the biggest murder case in the city, ever: me. I duck behind the shadows when the lights come near, but the sky is already brightening as dawn approaches, and I know that soon, there will be no place to hide.

I duck into an alley to catch my breath. Suddenly, a fist strikes me out of nowhere. I try to scream, but a gag fills my mouth before I can. Then another fist collides with my head, and everything goes black.

I awake to the sensation of cold metal pressing against my neck. The world spins into focus. I am standing in a dimly lit room, facing three masked figures. I realize one of them is holding a knife to my neck.

“Well, well, well, Oliver. We have heard a lot about what you did yesterday,” one of the masked figures says.

“What do you want?” I ask insolently, through my gritted teeth.

The same person responds, “We are the Crocodiles, a criminal organization. We want your skills. How you accomplished the assassination... it would help us a great deal with our business. And you would be handsomely rewarded too. Will you join us?”

What has happened to me in the past hours was very hard to believe. I had done some very bad things, and now even a criminal organization wanted me to join their conspiracy. I can either live a life of crime, or end it right now. I say no. The knife cuts my throat, and I die.

Poem

Once in a uneventful yet peaceful time,
There was an artisan with a cape of lime,
Born in France,
Without a chance,
A man from the class in the middle,
Lost everything but a fiddle
Despite his guaranteed fame and social class,
His respect was that of a lass with sass and no class,
So he journeyed west in search of fame,
Not wanting to be full of shame,
He traveled wide and traveled far,
In Portugal found a broken car,
In Spain found something that made him hoot,
A junkyard full of shimmering loot,
Metal scraps, and loads of wood,
Being an artisan this was a really good,
Crafted a mansion, he did with time,
Installed his very own door chime,
Went back to France,
Where he was showered with chants,
Earned his fame with creativity,
You know we can do that too,
You and me.

UNIVITED GUEST

BY NORA ZIEHR

The car halted to a stop. I got out and stared at the house in front of me. My mom, dad, dog, and I had moved from Denver, Colorado to Louisiana. Looking at the dump of a house in front of me I missed Colorado already. I remembered what my mom had said about giving Louisiana a chance, but I knew I would never like it here. The house was a wreck, the town was poor, and the whole place gave me the creeps. I took some boxes downstairs. The whole basement was just empty brick walls there wasn't even a window. I set the boxes down and went up to my new room. My dad helped me put up my bed and I went to sleep. I missed my home so much, my friends, my school, and my house. Before I knew it I was surrounded by darkness. I woke up to a sound of voices in my head and they didn't sound like friendly voices either. I went downstairs where I thought they were coming from and saw a small door about the size of a guitar where the empty wall had been. The voices seemed to be coming from the other side of the door. My heart was pounding as if it was going to jump out of my chest. I wanted to run upstairs, but my feet seemed stuck to the floor. Finally I forced myself to walk toward the stairs, but before I got very far I heard a voice say "I think we will be seeing her soon."

The next morning I ran into my mom and dad's room and dragged them downstairs. "Where are we going?" my mom asked in confusion. I didn't answer and just kept running. When we got downstairs I stared in shock at the blank wall. "But, but" I stammered, "It was right here." My parents looked at each other in a weird way. "Um, Taylor" my mom said, "there's nothing there", without answering I ran upstairs. "I'm going for a walk." I yelled from the top of the stairs. I grabbed my coat and rushed out the door. The swaying trees lured me deeper and deeper into the woods. Suddenly, I heard the voices the same ones from the night before, except I heard another one. It was sweeter than the other two. Two of them told me to go deeper into the woods the other told me to go home. I walked home confused.

That night I went downstairs not entirely sure what I was doing. I went over to the door and put my ear against it. I could hear the voices just not very clearly. I looked down and saw a little sheet of paper mostly covered in dirt. It said in very faint writing "if you don't find us we will find you." I opened the door and crawled in. After what seemed like forever I saw a red little glow. I got closer and found myself in a little room. Suddenly I saw two red lights and one blue light. "Run!" the blue light seemed to say. The red lights came closer and closer. I felt a weird tingly feeling. I felt like I was starting to change. Then I saw the red lights were wrapped around me. "Run Taylor!" The blue light said again. I twisted and turned and finally I broke free. Then the blue light said something I didn't really understand. "Get the stone." I looked around confused, but then I saw it. A glimmering stone the red lights were guarding. I ran over and dodged the lights. With the stone in my hand I ran toward the door. I got out just in time. Breathing very hard I turned around, but the door was gone. More tired than ever I went to bed. The next morning I woke up and went outside. There was someone waiting for me in the yard. She had pale skin, gray eyes, and dark hair. "Thank you for saving me last night" she said very quietly and with that she was gone.

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