A Celebration of Stories

One Book Two Book
A Celebration of Children’s Literature in the City of Literature

FEBRUARY 22-24, 2019
A Celebration of Stories in the City of Literature
Selected Student Writing

Coraline Beland, Coralville Central, grade 2, *Once Upon a Time Friday reader*
Alma Bhandary-Narayanan, Mann, grade 5, *From the Heart*
Andi Billerbeck, Solon, grade 6, *The Write Stuff*
Butali Butali, Kirkwood, grade 6, *Once Upon a Time Friday reader*
Ethan Che, Wickham, grade 1, *Once Upon a Time Friday reader*
Tarun Chezhiyan, Garner, grade 3, *Once Upon a Time Friday reader*
Isabella Coreas, Lincoln, grade 1, *The Write Stuff*
Eleanor Decker, Mann, grade 6, *Once Upon a Time Friday reader*
Selah Dickerson, Longfellow, grade 3, *Once Upon a Time Friday reader*
Natalia Flack, Wood, grade 6, *Once Upon a Time Friday reader*
Camille Ford, Weber, grade 1, *Once Upon a Time Friday reader*
Kinze Freitag, Longfellow, grade 3, *From the Heart*
Hattie Galloway, Lucas, grade 4, *Once Upon a Time Friday reader*
Samantha Glass, Regina, grade 6, *Once Upon a Time Friday reader*
Mara Greathouse, Twain, grade 4, *Once Upon a Time Friday reader*
Lana Greenleaf, Hoover, grade 4, *From the Heart*
Rachel Haack, Lemme, grade 5, *The Write Stuff*
Elanor Hanna, Northwest, grade 7, *From the Heart*
Aliana Hoffman, Van Allen, grade 4, *The Write Stuff*
Nadia Holden, Regina, grade 2, *From the Heart*
Sophie Mellecker, Hills, grade 5, *Once Upon a Time Friday reader*
Violet Mowery, South East, grade 8, *From the Heart*
Willa Ohlmann, Wickham, grade 3, *The Write Stuff*
Isabel Pedersen, West Branch, grade 8, *The Write Stuff*
Will Ramirez, Lemme, grade 4, *Once Upon a Time Friday reader*
Jude Salten, Horn, grade 3, *Once Upon a Time Friday reader*
Shanza Sami, Borlaug, grade 5, *Once Upon a Time Friday reader*
Sloane Seebeck, Hoover, grade 1, *From the Heart*
Polly Sherlock, Hoover, grade 2, *Once Upon a Time Friday reader*
Luis Solano de Almeida, Willowwind, grade 6, *From the Heart*
Anjali Lola Strand, Lincoln, grade 1, *Once Upon a Time Friday reader*
Leela Strand, North Central, grade 7, *The Write Stuff*
Zahria Stratton, Alexander, grade 5, *Once Upon a Time Friday reader*
Jefferson Turner, Penn, grade 3, *Once Upon a Time Friday reader*
Ruby Van Heukelom, Van Allen, grade 2, *The Write Stuff*
Claire Vos, Shimek, grade 2, *Once Upon a Time Friday reader*
Kyros Wu, Van Allen, grade 3, *Once Upon a Time Friday reader*
Cordelia Zirnhelt, Willowwind, grade 4, *Once Upon a Time Friday reader*

*Once Upon a Time* readers represented their schools at our kick-off banquet, Friday, Feb. 22.
*From the Heart* awards are based on creativity, passion, and expressiveness.
*The Write Stuff* awards are based on language, clarity, structure, and emotional impact.
### Honorable Mention

The following students received Honorable Mention in the 2019 One Book Two Book writing competition. These are students whose work was deemed to be of excellent quality and were selected from more than 400 submissions to the festival.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alyssa Denneny</td>
<td>Hoover</td>
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<td>Goldie Grove</td>
<td>Kirkwood</td>
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<td>Van Allen</td>
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<td>Kirkwood</td>
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<td>Molly Nolan</td>
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<td>Hoover</td>
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<td>Horn</td>
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<td>Lemme</td>
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<td>Lucas</td>
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<td>Thomas Berry-Mike</td>
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<td>Southeast</td>
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<td>West Branch MS</td>
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<td>West Branch MS</td>
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<td>Karley Staker</td>
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<td>Bailey Walker</td>
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<tr>
<td>Andrew Samuelson</td>
<td>West Branch MS</td>
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Bella’s Home

Cora Beland

“Why is that woman staring at me?” I asked my mom.

“Maybe she wants to take you home, Bella.” My mother suggested.

“How would she want to do that?” I asked her.

“Well, you’re a really playful puppy. I don’t see why not.”

“But how could she? I like it here in the shelter! Sometimes humans don’t think of dog feelings.”

I told her.

“I know it’s not fair. I want to keep every one of you.” My mom sighed and shook her head.

I looked at her. “What are their names of my brothers and sisters? How many do I have?”

Mom smiled at me. “Well, let’s see. There’s Razor, Kitty, Pom-Pom, Trixie, Eagle, Squawk, and then you, so, six.”

Just then Eagle marched by. “I can see farther than anyone!”

Then Trixie said “How did you get so wet? Have you been swimming in the water bowl again?”

“But I never swim in my water bowl!” I laughed.

Then Squawk shouted “TRIXIE KNOWS YOU DON’T!”

“Shh!” I said. “That’s really loud for my ears!”

“Sorry” Squawk said. “She was just trying to be funny.”

“I know” I said. “And it was funny.”

“Yes” Squawk agreed. “It was.”

I heard a lot of commotion coming from the other end of the cage. “What’s happening over there?”

“I don’t know” Squawk shrugged, eyeing me. “But I bet you’re going to find out.” He added.

I nodded. “Yes, I am. And if you’d like, I will tell you when I get back.”

I marched over to the other end of the cage. My sister, Kitty, was being scared by a mouse toy

Trixie was throwing at her. Kitty was really scared. But then again, she always was. I ran back

and told Squawk what was going on.

Then I heard human voices outside the cage. “That lady wants the pup.”

“She can have her” said another voice.

“What’s the name of the pup?” The other voice wanted to know.

“The manager said she was named Bella.”

I ran to mom. “Am I leaving?” I asked.

“I’m afraid so.” My mom shook her head.

Then one of the men took me out of the cage and put me in the arms of the woman I saw staring

at me earlier! She was so soft, so I stayed there. Then she gave me food. It tasted good, so I ate it

all. Then she walked me out to the car and put me in it. I felt sad and excited at the same time. I

would miss my family, but I was excited to see what my new home would look like. I hoped

there would be more of those yummy dog treats. Then, with my tail wagging happily, I was off

on a new adventure.
**Coming Home**

When I left, it was spring
Branches bending in the graceful breeze
*Shush, shush*
Brushing against each other

Flowers shyly reaching out
Their petals are arms
Saying, hello

Green leaves unfolding from their tiny buds
Restarting the circle of life

I was sad to leave
But now, I’m glad I left

When I returned, it was fall
The crisp wind biting my face, shaking the branches
It knows who’s in charge

The leaves crackle mischievously under my feet
They turn the world into an explosion of color, laughter

The flowers drying up,
Making room for new blooms and other plants

Soon,
I will leave again
A Flash of Scales

by Andi Billerbeck

caaaw! caaw! a flutter of black feathers emerged from the trees. a crow flapped away from the swirl of orange and red leaves stirred by an 11 year old girl named briar. she skipped along, blond hair flowing, delicately making her way around the clusters of honeysuckle surrounding the path as she was studied the animals in the woods. binoculars whisked by her side as she walked up to the tree stump and sat down, watching the blue jays squabble over treats that they had found. she stared up at the sky, wondering, why did the animals just go silent? a whoosh in the trees then...silence. the blue jays stopped shrieking. the chipmunks and squirrels stopped sniffing in the dead leaves. even the wind, which had been delicately blowing, halted in its weightless tracks. everything was still, quiet, lifeless.

"what just happened?" briar said under her breath. she stood up, shoving the binoculars into her pants pocket. she wanted to go. to leave the eerie silence. she started to walk back up the path when she heard a sudden crashing in the brush behind her.

she turned abruptly, almost tripping over her own heels. the noise stopped. briar’s eyes scanned the honeysuckle in front of her. wait...was it that? a flash of black. a shadow. it was huge, and rising out of the bush in front of her. briar breathed heavily, tentatively taking a step back. but the black shape had made it up out of the brush. no, it can’t be...woah. briar’s eyes widened, her heart skipped a beat, and her stomach twisted.

a dragon. standing in front of her. a dragon, its scales shining and obsidian. its eyes, deep, amber, gradient. it unfurled its broad wings, which had a wingspan of 35 feet. the underside of the dragon’s wings were speckled with glowing, star-like patterns.

briar stifled a scream. she didn’t want to attract attention because the dragon didn’t seem to notice her. she slowly walked backwards, but her sock got caught on a stray stick that was poking out of the ground. she yelped through clenched teeth and winced. then watched through widened eyes as the dragon whipped its head around to face her. briar gasped as the dragon narrowed its eyes. smoke curled up from its nostrils. it growled, slinking closer as if to investigate her.

then very cautiously, briar took a step toward the dragon and reached out her hand. it reared its head back nervously. briar quickly pulled her hand back. please don’t hurt me, night dragon. please. briar held out her hand again as night watched through his amber eyes. finally, briar felt the hot black scales on her palm. she sighed. i did it...i actually did it!

suddenly, briar heard her mother’s voice through the trees, “briar! it’s time for lunch! hurry up!” briar turned to night. he was breathing hard, his chest heaving in and out. briar knew she had to do something. then it came to her, she knew what she had to do.

“mom! c’mere! you need to see this!” she yelled so loud that night almost bolted into the air. her mother came bursting through the brush.

“What is it Briar?” she asked as if she didn’t see anything.

“I needed to show you something.” briar answered, turning around to face night. but he was gone. her mother took briar’s hand and pulled her away. briar never saw night again.
The Fight For Freedom

Alexander Williams was a 4 year-old living with his mother, father, two sisters, and one brother. They were a happy family living on a dangerous street in Alabama 1955. When Alexander went to go play with his friends, all the doors ignored his knock. It was because he was black. It hurt his feelings so much. The hatred on his street was so bad that he and his siblings couldn’t play outside without being insulted. The neighbors would call them the n-word repeatedly.

At dinner Alexander asked “Why are we insulted”? His dad gave a long sigh and put his arm around him. “We are blacks, and blacks in this country are not respected.”

Alexander looked at his dinner with sadness. He had so many questions. Why am I insulted? Why are blacks not respected? When will I get a new bike? Ok, let’s admit that question had nothing to do with blacks.

Alexander went to bed thinking of a world without everyone treating each other badly. Maybe in the future a kind of world like this could happen.

In 1956, Alexander was a smart 5 year old at the top of his kindergarten class. One day when he was 5 and going to the shop he saw a woman in handcuffs off a bus. He was curious to know who she was. His dad read the newspaper and looked at the name. Her name was Rosa Parks. A short woman with glasses. Alexander saw her at my church millions of times and she always gave him tiny candies when he was little. His dad was a preacher for a living, so it was like everyone at church was family. As Alexander got older he moved to Washington DC. In 1963 Alexander saw so many classmates leaving the room. He was curious to see what was happening too, so he went with him. All of them shoved him because of his color.

“Why are you coming with us” questioned a girl “You are just a stupid black” Alexander walked away and put his head in shame as he walked towards the Lincoln Memorial. He saw people looking at him with disgust but some were looking at him with happiness. As he walked, he saw a man. A man who was black. A man named Martin Luther King was speaking. He was reading a speech called “I Have A Dream”. All the words from there were powerful and strong like a wind.

Afterwards he walked back home and saw all of his family in the living room. They were watching the news in shock. They saw a man sticking up for blacks. His dad said “We are walking tomorrow with this man, to stand up for our rights”.

Alexander grew up to be a political speaker encouraging young adults to be proud to be black. Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King helped him get through life. In an interview a reporter asked “What will you do help stop racism?”. Alexander replied “I will fight for freedom and speak out for people who are black because they need a voice.”
The Time I Broke My Arm

This is the story about how I broke my arm. It happened when I was in Kindergarten. I was swinging on a high beam. I was holding on with one hand. Then, my hand got slippery and I fell off. I put my right hand under my body to protect my tummy. When I got up, my arm really hurt. It felt like my arm was pressed down hard and I told the teacher. The teacher made me go to the nurse. The nurse put an ice pack on my arm. She made me put my hand on a wooden board and wrapped my hand up. Since my sister, Claire, was at the same school, the nurse called my sister’s teacher. The office told the teacher that I broke my arm. My sister told me later that on the outside of her head she was just like “oh”. But on the inside she was thinking what, when, why, who, where, and how did that happen? So, she walked into the room and saw that I actually broke my arm. When my mom came, my sister was like: “hey, mommy, Ethan broke his arm!!!!!!”

We went to my house. My mom and my sister went inside to tell my dad and I stayed in the car. We went to the hospital. First, I sat on a wheelchair to wait for my turn and then, they put a clip with a red light on my index figure. And then, my mom pushed me on the wheelchair to the ER. They gave me I.V. to stop the pain. Then, they put 2 things on my heart, and checked if my heart was beating well. They put a sticker that had a needle under it and the needle went into my vein. They put a funny thing in my nose. They wrapped my arm with a band that squeezed my arm. The nurse made my mom, dad, and sister wait outside. The doctor told me that the medicine would make me fall asleep. But all the things I saw got doubled like I was cross-eyed. After I woke up, I realized that I got a green cast as I hoped. The end.
My Trip to India

Have you ever been so happy that your smile literally reached to your eyes? That’s how I basically looked when I heard I was going to India. So, on Saturday morning, we woke up pretty early. We got into our rental car and we drove all the way to O’Hare Airport in Chicago. We waited for 2 hours, before our flight finally came.

When we got in the plane there were TVs in each seat except the first seats. We got our seats in the economy and waited for the airplane to go up. Meanwhile, we watched some movies. Then the plane started to rise! When it was too late we slept [if you are wondering how it works through night without a pilot, they put it on auto drive.] When I woke up we were still on the plane. After a while we landed at Doha airport in Qatar. I thought we were in India, but it turns out we weren’t. Just another boring, exhausting airport. After sometime, we had to go on another plane. This plane was as awesome as the first one, it had comfy seats and a TV! So we watched TV and then we slept on the plane overnight. When we woke up, it was morning and after about half an hour we landed and reached the airport in Bangalore, India.

My Gramma and Grampa picked us up and we drove to their apartment. There were six towers separated but were still a part of the apartment complex. After a while, I met my uncle. He came out of his room and hugged me. He is wickedly cool. He is also really good at playing musical instruments. I went into his room and met my aunt. They had a pet hamster named Fluffy. We stayed here for a few more days and then it was time to leave.

We went to a train station. We waited, then the train came. We were on the train the whole night. We stopped at another train station in Trichy and we drove to my dad’s kid day’s house. There I met my dad’s mom [my other grandma]. It was late so I brushed my teeth and slept. We stayed here for a few more days. We went for lots of shopping. I visited my dad’s birth place and the home he grew up in until 4th grade. It is called Kattur. I saw a cow and her calf and some goats. I met my cousins there. In Trichy, I got to eat lots of ice cream, I ate a giant dosa [which had to be carried by 3 men].

The next day, it was the last day I was staying in India. I was so SAAAD! Then when evening rolled in, we packed all our things. My grandpa, grandma, aunt, uncle, brother, mom, dad, and me drove to the airport they dropped us there and left. I had a LOT of fun in India. We took two airplanes and went to 3 airports and drove back to Iowa from Chicago to our boring, original, old house. The end. The story is over!!
My Best Friend

My pet cat likes to jump
My pet cat likes to play
She is so furry and so cuddly
   I must say

When she wobbles her head
   I can hear her jingle bell
When I pet her soft back
   She lifts her fluffy tail

Sometimes she tries to sneak outside
   Other times she likes to hide
She’s so silly she even eats dog food
   When her cat food is right beside

She likes to play with my hands
   And she pretends to eat them
She has sparkles in her eyes
   And they glow like a gem

My pet cat is my best friend
   And she’ll be there til the end

By: Isabella Coreas
Violet rowed a mile or so off the rocky Newfoundland coast in her small yellow dinghy. Rough, rocky gray clouds buffeted and tumbled against one another in the charred and smoky sky. A thin cloak of fog had washed like the cool, lapping pearl grey waves over the bay across the choppy water where Violet fished, and only barely when she looked back could she see the tumultuous, jutting outlines of familiar cliffs. It was a night for a storm, but since her father had left her and her sister alone in their tiny cabin in Labrador, fishing and canning was all she could do to make money in the early spring. And money had been tight, with their garden wilting in the biting wind- if she could smoke and salt this catch, she might bring in a dollar or so for fabric and food. It was their only chance for survival. Her father had died a hero, standing tall against the mighty waves, she told herself, and if she wanted to provide for herself and her fragile young sister, Kate, she had to do the same, to bring in one last fish... Violet tugged her line, to come up with an empty hook, slick with salt water. A clump of algae clung to her pole, leading her to believe it was a fish in the haze of twilight. Violet shuddered. It was chilly, with a nip in the air, and she was missing her blazer. She had been in such a hurry, but she regretted it now, as her gooseflesh rippled up her arms. If only she could get one more... WAIT A MINUTE, WHAT IN THE WORLD WAS THAT? Looking out into the distance, she suddenly spotted a flash of gray and white flicker up and down in the spray. Could it be- a seal? If it was, that skin, that and meat was invaluable, and could buy her a new dress and pounds of food. If this was a seal, as she hoped it was, she was going after it, she HAD to get it, her life depended on it. Tossing her pole into the belly of the boat, she rowed furiously into the turning sea, panicking in desperation, until finally, she cleared her last hurdle, and the boat splashed to a stop. It was only then that Violet realized it was not a seal at all, but a small, white rowboat, full of people in fine dress, with children and meager carpetbags and satchels on their laps, and squeezed in. Suddenly, Violet spotted the name on the side of the boat- RMS Titanic. She got cold chills running up her arm- this lifeboat could only mean one thing- she may be one of the only people on earth who knew that the gargantuan, unbeatable, unsinkable ship, raved and ranted about as the strongest in the world, had slipped below the waves, and these few passengers were lucky to have survived. A man suddenly spotted her, wearing a grosgrain suit, and wildly waved at her, shouting over the wind. “Miss, please help us! Our boat has struck an ice sheet a few miles back, and the crack has only enlarged as we came. We are overcrowded, and with young children aboard, and we cannot bail out much longer.” “I have a rope. We can tie it around the front bow and I can steer you to shore. My name is Violet Alton, and I live on the coast. You may stay at my house for the night, and catch a train to New York, your intended destination, tomorrow.” “Oh, Miss, you’re most kind,” sobbed a woman in gaudy pink silk, “The boat... snapped in two, ours one of the last lifeboats, barely any room, so many drowning, so may dead, couldn’t sink... I’m indeed lucky my Annie survived, but my oldest was...” Violet looked around for the child but saw no one. “Ma’am- where is your child?” The lady’s head snapped from side to side, and her expression drained of color, terrified and lost within itself. Suddenly, she pointed outward, into the murky, fog clouded depths, at a small hand bobbing above the water, clutching nothing but air, sinking slowly. “She fell when the boat tipped, oh, no, she never was a good swimmer! Wilfred, you must save my daughter!” she gestured to the man, who sniffed in a dignified manner, trying to come up with an excuse. But meanwhile, Violet had tied a length of rope to the bow, the other end to her waist, and prepared to jump. The lady suddenly spotted her. “Miss, you? How?” “I lost my father to the sea, and I’m not going to lose someone I can really save!” Violet yelled, and like her father before her, dove into the spray after Annie.
MUSIC
By Selah Dickerson

When winter comes, the green turns white, and I listen to the guitar every night. As it plays, the white turns green and finally it is spring. The next morning, the green turns white and I can hardly wait until night... to hear the wonders of sounding strings... and The wonderful sound of hearing music ring.
I hear the voice before I see, someone laughing, taunting me.
I gulp down the words, letting them
  sink
  in
  slowly
slipping down my swallowing throat. I go to a place no one can see and those words,
  up
  up
those very words, filled with hatred and jealousy come, swimming up my throat, up
‘till they reach my eyes and come out like a
  a
  t
  e
  r
  f
  a
  l
  l dripping down,
     down,
     down,
before they reach the ground, a gasp escapes my lips, a gasp of sadness and shame.
I wipe away my
  a
  t
  e
  r
  f
  a
  l
  l of words and Keep. Moving. Forward. Until, nothing... not even
those words shrouded in a fume of hate-filled laughter can slow me down. Again and
again they’ll try to bring me down,
  down,
  down,
  Up
  Up,
  but I’ll bring them Up, ‘till they can’t see
the ground
Babies are cute
And they like to toot
Babies like to sleep
Yes babies count sheep
It was March 25, 2015. I was walking out of my friend’s house when I saw my brother crying in the car. I opened the door to the car and I sat down. My mom said that she had some news for me. She said “WE ARE GOING TO MOVE.” I was speechless. I found out later she had already told my brothers while I was at a sleepover. I did not know what to do. Should I cross my arms and be mad? Should I ask questions and be fine with it? Should I be happy that I wouldn’t have to drive for an hour just to go to the grocery store? Would it be fine in our new town?

3 months later (June)...

We got all of our rooms all packed up except for in mom and dad’s room, where we slept for two nights while we waited for the movers to come. It was fun but I was also nervous. We played a lot outside and go to see the moving truck. The truck was HUGE! The movers arrived one day, loaded all the boxes into the truck and the truck drove away.

My mom and dad said that we needed to pack our bags for three days because we were going to stay at our friend’s house while they got our new house decently ready for us. We already got to see it but just briefly. So after that, we got all of our stuff and left.

2 months later (August)...

We quickly got all settled into our new house. I liked it but at the same time I didn’t know what to think of it. My brothers got to share a room, but I got my own room. Then it was time to start school. I was really nervous. When we pulled up into the school parking lot my mom took me in. Dad took my big brother in, and my little brother was already dropped off at his daycare. When I walked into the room a girl came up to me. I was in a grumpy mood and didn’t really want to even be at school. I said hi back, but in an awkward way. The next day the same girl asked me again if I could play with her out on the playground. Now I wanted to know what her name was and if she wanted to be my friend. Her name was Jayda, I thought that was a great name. I was excited to get to know her and be her friend. We became good friends from all the troubles that we had. We made a pact to be the best of friends. We have been through a lot together. We made nick names for each other mine is kk hers is jj.

In kindergarten I had the BEST teacher ever! She got me through a lot of tough times, especially friend trouble. She made me excited about school and very smart! All of the things I’ve done so far in elementary school I want to thank her for helping me with it all. I still get to see her at recess and I talk to her about everything! Jayda and I are with each other every week. We have helped each other through a lot of times. During tough times in life, great people always get you through!

P.s jayda this is for you,you are the best
My Dearest Emilia,

I am sorry to carry the burden of bad news, but I must tell you that your parents, your parents have passed away. They have entered the void, passed the line of life and death. I am so sorry, and I can not begin to imagine how you feel.

And, right this very minute, I am trying to find you a foster home, because until your eighteenth birthday, you must have a proper guardian. I hope this all goes well, and I hope you like your new home. I hope your parents will approve of the foster parents I find you.

Your Friend,
Dr. James P Howard

My Dear Dr. James,

I am extremely saddened by your bad news, but it is to be expected. My parents were far from young. As for me, I am seventeen, do I need a foster family? I can take care of myself, why must I have a guardian?

I am also grateful that you are looking out for me. I too hope that my foster family is nice. But what of college? Will I get a college tuition? My parents wanted me to go to college.

Your Friend,
Emilia Von Troell

My Dear Emilia,

Your parents didn’t die of old age, I am sorry to say they died in an accident, a car accident. It was the day when the clouds dumped buckets of rain on the earth. The driver in front of them had to stop very hard, so as not to run into the person in front of him, and your father wasn’t able to stop fast enough, and they collided. Again, I am very sorry.

As for your college tuition, I am working on that. I know that your parents wanted you to go to college, so I will try to find a family who also wants you to go to college. While I am looking, please behave yourself, and, remember your promise, Miss Van Troell.

Your Friend,
Dr. James P Howard
Cassava

Rain and hail pounded on the flat tin roof and cracked earth, warm from Kenya’s blazing sun. Outside the young girl’s mud-brick shanty, the night was cool, and light breezes danced across the hard-packed earth and sparse vegetation. An unexpected cold front had come in, bringing much-needed rain to her cassava plants and lab lab vines. The cassavas, brown and wilted from the drought, looked pale green in the dawning sky, water still dripping from their leaves. Kisambe, the goat, slept soundly in her tiny, corrugated tin shed.

Alitou, a short, slender girl aged nine years, watched this from a dirty glass window in her tiny shelter, her eyes dark and worried. Too much rain would kill the cassava plants and flood their small fields, and would leak through the little roof they had. Her tired parents slept on a blanket in the driest spot of the house. Alitou glanced out the window again. It was almost dawn, so soon her father would wake up, put on his work-day linen shorts, and head out to the cassava field to till the soil and harvest their tender leaves. Soon her mother would wake up, put on her work-day cotton dress, and cook breakfast for Alitou and her younger sister, who lay beside her on the blanket.

As her mother prepared milk and cornmeal flatbread, Alitou could see the worry plainly stamped across her pretty face. She knew this worry, and shared it with her mother. She worried for her father, alone and far away all day in the fields. As revolutionaries stomped by outside, gleaming rifles over their shoulders, she thought of only this: Her father. Would they kill him like they killed her brothers?
Once upon a time there was a girl named Julie. Julie was a poor girl but she loved her mother dearly. Her mom was blind and sick a lot. When Julie was 3 she went to the city for the first time, she asked a nice woman for some money, the woman gave her some money and said “Don’t forget what’s most important, love and family.”

Julie never forgot what that woman said. Five years later, Julie was now 8 and is starting a free school. Julie excitedly went to school the first day and enjoyed meeting everyone she saw. There were four girls that didn't want to be friends with her. Instead, they bullied her and made Julie's life miserable.

One day she went to the cafe to have a break when a woman saw her and she had the appearance of being wealthy. The woman approached Julie and said, “Hey there young lady! Would you like a job at the cafe? Because I would love to hire you!” Julie replied, “OMG! Yes, please! Thanks so much! You don't know how much I needed this! Thank you, thank you, thank you!”

The next day she went to her new job at the cafe after school and inquired about what she would be doing. The woman who hired her said her name was Blake, and that she was going to clean up after customers. Julie worked hard and was able to keep her mother close to her. A few months later, her mother died and everything went downhill there. Blake said she was doing things “wrong” and fired her.

She while things were hard; between school, being alone, and looking for work to feed herself, she found other work. There was an ad for models at the local department store, tried out for the position and got it. Julie got more confidence and felt better about everything.

One day she was at work when her boss said someone special came to visit me. When she went to her bosses office she saw her mother standing there. She hugged her mother, “Remember the woman who helped you when you were three? She has been watching you and the love you have for others. The woman brought me back to you as a gift. You have always taken care of me and your friends, now it is my turn to return the love you have shown. I'm not blind any longer and have my health back! I love you with all my heart so when I was dead and watching over you, I realized that I didn't tell you. I wished I told you sooner...sorry.” said Julie's mother.

The End
My Only Friend

Hi, my name is Avaley. I live in Chicago, Illinois. Life is hard. People are rude sometimes and you can’t do anything about it. It’s what I get for having a hearing aid. Now you’re probably thinking, are you deaf? Well, yes I am and it seems to be a big deal.

Tomorrow is school. This will be the worst day ever because it is my first day of middle school. It makes me anxious! New kids, new school, new teachers. I’m going into 7th grade. I only have one friend and he’s not in my class or grade.

You’re probably asking yourself who would be my only friend. It’s my dog Juniper. He is a German Shepherd and he is mine. He is the only best friend I have ever had. He’s the most protective friend ever.

Oh my gosh, today is school. I think I’m going to walk to middle school by myself. After I get there, I am standing at my locker and the girl next to my locker is a cute girl. I dislike cute girls. They’re so popular. I went to math and notice that I have sat by this really pretty girl. Soon after, she starts whispering really mean things about me with her friends. I try to ignore it and but end up walking home after school in a bad mood.

Later mom came into my room and said, “How was school.” I told her everything that happened. She said that she was thinking that she should homeschool me so I didn’t have to deal with all the bullying.

The next day, I went to school with Juniper because he is my service dog. Everyone thinks that it is no fair that I get to bring a dog to school. I went to my locker and grabbed my math stuff. When I got to class, I heard the mean girls saying that my dog was horrible, they have better dogs then I do and they were going to bring their dogs to school. They called me names because I am deaf. They also hung mean notes on my locker.

After math class, I told the teacher about what happened. The next day, I went to the front of the room and explained to everyone how they were making me feel. I said,” Today I’m going to tell you why I have a dog at school. My dog's name is Juniper, and he is my service dog. He is a German Shepherd and my best friend. You’re not allowed to bring just any pet to school. I am deaf, as some of you know, and he helps me with some stuff. Some people hurt my and Juniper’s feelings. I hope you all understand. Thank you.”

Then at lunch, everything changed. I sat by the mean girls. One of them said that they were sorry. They told me they were going to try to be better and help me feel welcomed at my new school. I said, “That’s ok, I just hope you won’t do it again.” Then they asked me if I could stay the night at their house. Of course I said yes, they were finally being nice to me.

When I got home, my mom asked me again if I wanted to be homeschooled. I told her, “Na, I’m fine. Hey, I’m going to a sleepover on Friday.” I went to the sleepover and I had the most amazing time.
The Coffee Shop

I sat down in a cushioned chair with my coffee and looked around the coffee shop. A Saturday morning is a time when everyone comes to get coffee. A mother was holding her child by the hand, ordering coffee with extra whipped cream. A group of teenagers was laughing and sipping their frappuccinos. An elderly couple talked peacefully, drinking their mugs of hot coffee. There were so many different ages of people in the coffee shop on this Saturday morning.

I focused my eyes on an old woman, maybe seventy years old, bringing her cup over to the side counter. She had the happiest smile on her face. I could tell this was the best part of her day. She waited patiently, not knowing if she wanted cream or skim milk to compliment her brew. She finally decided she would add the cream into her steamy hot cup of coffee. I leaned over in my chair to watch the cream mixing in the brown liquid. The white was swirling into the brown coffee like fluffy clouds.

“A hint of sugar,” she exclaimed, taking a pinch of sugar and dumping it into her cup. “Ah, just right,” she said, as she mixed the ingredients together.

Slowly, she walked with her cane, carefully keeping her cup from spilling. CHA-CLUNK, CHA-CLUNK, she steadily shuffled, until she finally reached her table. With a slight wince, she eased herself down and relaxed.

“Ba ba ba!”

Startled, I looked up and saw a chubby toddler running down the aisle, waving his arms and squealing. He had a toothless grin and shrieked as if he was ecstatic that he had escaped from his mother. Abruptly, he stopped when he reached the old woman. He looked up at her and happily greeted her with a smile and a wave.

“Oh isn’t he the cutest!” the old woman said, gleefully.

“I’m so sorry,” said the frantic mother, “he always runs away from me like that.”

“Oh don’t be sorry, he is the sweetest thing,” the old woman replied. She smiled happily and tore off a piece of her cinnamon roll and gave it to the toddler.

The little toddler squealed in delight and grabbed the chunk of cinnamon roll from the old woman’s gentle hand. He planted it in his mouth and gulped it right down. Satisfied with the sticky treat that left his hands covered with frosting, he patted the old woman’s knee in his own gesture of thanks.

Beaming with delight, the old woman clasped the plump little hand and proceeded to converse with more giggles and joyful smiles. They shared the cinnamon roll until the last sticky morsel was gone. Waving goodbye, the mother and toddler continued on their way.

As I drank my coffee, I realized that this is what matters most in life. Smiles. Laughter. Finding joy in one another. It doesn’t matter how old you are, it matters how we act toward each other. We should be kind to one another and think about the little things that make life so much better. I smiled to myself and continued to enjoy my coffee.
Freak

Melody’s walking over to me. I can feel my heart beating faster and my face getting hot. What do I do? What do I say? I can’t be partners with her. I’ll try too hard to act normal, and she’ll know I’m... abnormal. If I were a boy she might not be uncomfortable if I act unnaturally, because after all, most people get tongue-tied around their crushes. Too bad I’m a girl.

Melody arrives at my desk. “Howdy, partner. Alright. So, James A. Garfield, the 20th president of the great US of A. Do you want to do the essay part or the presentation part? I don’t care what I have.”

“Uh, well...” I ponder the choices. “I guess I’ll take the essay half. We’d better get started if we want to have any free time over the weekend.”

She groans. “Don’t remind me! Anyway, he was born on November 19, 1831, in Moreland Hills, Ohio...” I try and epically fail not to zone out looking into those beautiful gray eyes.

Melody is such a pretty name. It has a nice ring to it, don’t you think?

Then I see Chelsea sneering at me from the other side of the room. Great, now they know specifically who I like.

After school, I try to hurry out, but I wasn’t fast enough. The Mock Dolls caught up to me. They are a gang of five, also being the most feared and worshiped girls in the entire middle school. Everyone calls them the Mock Dolls because they’re fake, unconditionally beautiful, and have no feelings. I used to be one of them until I trusted them too much and told them I was a lesbian.

“Hey freak,” says Chelsea nonchalantly, “where exactly are you speeding off to?”

“We heard you were partners with your crush, isn’t that so sweet?” sighs Honey, her voice dripping with sarcasm. “Why, if only she were a boy.”

“I know I’m different.” I spit, trying desperately to formulate a logical escape plan.

“Leave me alone. You corner me every day, can’t I catch a break now and then? By the way, where’re Julia and Eva? They usually show.”

“They have cheer tryouts,” a sickeningly sweet voice behind me answers, nearly scaring me out of my skin, “didn’t you know?” Oh, god. It’s Avery, the ringleader. She used to be my best friend. She usually lets her entourage deal with those who displease her, so I’m shocked that I’m on her personal hate list. Chelsea and Honey exchange a nervous glance. Even they are afraid for me.

I don’t turn around. “Avery,” I scoff, “old friend, I thought you didn’t like to get your hands bloody. Or has your mom rubbed off on you?”

The last thing I remember is a crippling pain in the back of my skull. I told the wrong people I’m a freak. Some people would accept me. Everyone should.
Time to Surf

This was it. I looked down at my feet as my tummy twisted in knots. I was about to try surfing at a place called Surf School. We were in a small wooden shed full of wetsuits and surf boards. When I managed to look up, I found a woman. She had a blue wetsuit on. I looked at the other vibrant shades of the wetsuits, holding the colors tight in my mind. Then again I stared at my feet, feeling the warmth of my mother’s soft hand. A young man wearing a beach hat gave me a yellow and black wetsuit. At least I think he was wearing a beach hat. When I was changed, we went out to the driveway and I studied the other kids. There was an older boy about 14 with red hair and there was a younger girl with brown frizzy hair. And there was my brother, a smile on his face. Maybe deep inside of me there was that happiness. That smile. I looked down at the surfboards, washed with the color of ocean blue. I walked over to the last one and cautiously stepped on the old board. It was cold and damp, and it sent a shiver up my spine. I watched as the leader came out carrying the same ocean blue surfboard. She began to talk about safety and the basics. We practiced standing on our boards, getting up and paddling. After we practiced it a lot, it was time to do it on the water. I didn’t feel so good. I didn’t feel prepared. I shivered, my teeth hitting against each other. But it wasn’t because I was cold. I ran over to my mom hugging her tight. I just wanted to leave and the pain of my shivers and anxiety to just go away. “Is there a way I can do just land and not water?” I asked my mom, gripping tight on her jeans. “But the waters the fun part!” she answered me hugging me. Holding my hand, she led me to a white van where the other students were piling in. The van was wet and soggy. I looked around at the beat up van, having visions of me surfing the waves. I looked at the soft leather seats wet from fellow surfers. The van suddenly stopped. We were here. I followed my brother to the sandy beach. Our mom waited for us there, a big smile on her face. “I can’t do this”, I whispered in her ear my face burning a pale red. I dug my toes into the damp sand thinking about all the things that could go wrong. What if I fall? What if a shark attacks me? My whole body burned with the anxiety. The visions of my worries swirled around me like a tornado. My hair blew in the wind. My feet dug in the sand. Waves crashed against the beach. My life flashed before me. I knew it. I knew I had to do it. I put my hand on the surfboard. I knew it would end soon. I would be safe. Right now it was time. Time to surf.
Snowflake

Starts in the sky,
floats down beautifully
then fades away as it falls.
The stars make it glow, then
it finally lands on me.
Moon surrounds us.
I changed to be better, because I tried.
Spice’s Adventure

Once there was a horse named Spice. She was white with brown spots. She also was one of the best jumping horses.

One night after a show when everyone was asleep someone snuck into the stables where Spice was stabled. That morning Sarah, Spice’s owner, went out to get Spice ready to go to a jumping competition. Instead, she got a shocking surprise that Spice was GONE!!!!!!! Sarah told Lisa and Maggie, who were Sarah’s friends, that Spice was gone. Then they all went out to look for Spice. They couldn’t find her so they called the police to help them. No one could find her, not even the police.

The police started going deeper into the case. They started by investigating the crime scene. They found footprints of Spice and the people who stole Spice. They also found tire tracks, so they followed them. They found the tracks led to an old barn, but when they looked no one and nothing was there except hay, wood, and a dock on a lake. They thought that there would be more tire tracks but there weren’t. Why weren’t there tire tracks? Then they remembered that they were by a lake. Could they have taken a boat across the lake?

After they got across the lake, they came to a house. When they went in, there was someone there. They sat him down and started asking him questions.

“Heave you seen this horse?” Sarah asked as she showed a picture of Spice.

“Yes – She was with four men. The men demanded that I drive the boat. They said if I didn’t, they would hurt me,” the man said with fear in his voice.

“What said that?” the police asked.

“The guys with the horse,” the man replied.

“Where’d they go?” they asked.

“They went to the fair to the horse jumping competition with that horse,” said the man.

“Oh no! What are we going to do? We will never get there on time,” Sarah said.

“We might if we take our police cars.”

Thirty minutes later, they walked into the fairgrounds.

“We have to find Spice and get to the horse jumping competition, ok?” Sarah told them.

“What if we split up? You look at the horse show and we’ll look at the trailer park,” the police suggested.

The police looked behind trailers and in front of trailers. Sarah looked by the horse show. Suddenly, there was Spice right in front of her! Sarah ran toward Spice, but the men with Spice ran jerking her by the halter. Sarah ran to the police and told them that she saw Spice and the thieves running away from the fairgrounds. Everyone went after the men, and they finally caught them just in time for the show.
Blind Colors

I stumble down the steps of my new school. It was the first day, and it was awful. Everyone acted like I was a baby. They spoke to me loudly and clearly and in a sweet voice, like I was stupid. I hate being judged. Just because I’m blind doesn’t mean I’m dumb.

And anyway, during the crash my sight wasn’t the only thing I lost. I lost my dad. Isn’t that more important than one of my senses will ever be to me?

“I’ll be right there, Abi!” Mom calls when sees me staring straight ahead, blankly, at nothing in particular. I know my stare creeps people out. That’s all they see when they meet me, I guess. That’s why whispers trail me through the hall and the voice people use when speaking to me is all fakey fakey nice.

I guess I wanted people to look past my milky, sightless eyes and into the rest of me. To see that maybe once I was truly happy, and maybe once I had tons of friends and a dad and a home in a town far away from here. And I guess today, maybe I just wanted people to see me as what they would have seen me as a year ago, before everything had shifted my orbit and tore my carefully constructed life into little pieces. Maybe I wanted to feel welcome, to fit in.

But that’s not how life works.

Mom guided me over to her truck. She didn’t say anything. She didn’t even ask me how my day went. She just lifted one of her hands from the wheel and rested it on my leg. That was enough for me.

When I get home, I went straight to my bedroom. And I think about that feeling stirring inside me. It’s something other than sadness, frustration, and anger. It’s a longing. A longing for colors. A longing for sight and for vision and for art and for painting.

I wish I could let loose all those colors trapped in my mind, blind to the world. I wish I could let go of all those blind colors.

I take a sheet of paper. I dip my brush in one of the jars, not caring what color it is, imagining it’s some sort of aqua, and touch my brush to the paper. I start out timidly, making a few cautious strokes, and then begin to get faster and more confident and happier as I go on. I never actually switch colors, but in my head each stroke is in another vibrant shade. I add purples and teals and greens and yellows and scarlets and turquoise and oranges. When I’m done, I probably have a mess, in a dark shade of green or maybe a jet black, but to me, it’s a vivid masterpiece. Something only I understand. Some sort of special secret.

I stick the painting under my bed. I’ve forgotten, for the moment, about the crash and Dad and school and my blindness. I’ve finally found a way to free my feelings. And let my blind colors out into the world.
You may think that libraries should be quiet. Well, the Iowa City Library was anything but quiet on the night this tale took place. As dusk settled, the books sitting peacefully on the shelves began to shimmy, then to shake, and each one began to pop off the shelves like movie popcorn. When they hit the floor, there was a flash of light and the characters so many of us love, once only confined in words and imaginations, emerged from their stories.

The fiction section burst into reality. The first character to sashay out of leather-bound copy of Beauty and the Beast was Belle, holding a book and looking lovely in her yellow gown and silk slippers. She hurried to hide among the book stacks when out strutted Gaston with his chest puffed out. Next, Judy Moody skipped from her pages of a paperback book with her hair messy as usual. Judy crossed her arms and looked around to see who else had come to the party. She saw Cinderella and some other princesses sipping tea, but Judy was in a particularly bad mood and stomped off to sulk in the reading corner. “Princesses,” she mumbled on the way. From the holiday book aisle, the Grinch flew from his book and landed with a “Humph. Here again?” He stalked off to join Judy Moody in the reading corner. From a picture book aisle, out marched King Max, ruler of the wild things, in his beloved wolf suit while in the background there was the hoot, howl, and growl of a wild rumpus.

It all seemed a typical living library night, until the sound of raised voices coming from the corner drew the attention of all the others. The Grinch and Gaston were arguing! “WHAT DID YOU SAY?” roared Gaston. “Your story is not the best” muttered the Grinch. “OH YES IT IS!” shouted Gaston and they broke out in another barrage of insults. King Max gleefully joined in insulting Gaston’s story, and then the Grinch’s. Then Gaston’s. Then Grinch’s. Then Gaston’s. Then Grinch’s. Then Grinch’s…Well you get the idea. To make matters worse, Cinderella joined the fight! She had looked down and found her shoe missing! Then she had begun to accuse the others… which led to more shouting.

Then the nonfiction section got into the act. The person that had been chosen to represent them tonight was George Washington, who stepped out of his book in a regal pose with his hand upon his velvet jacket. When he saw the fiction characters bickering, his elegant face contorted in disgust “I cannot tell a lie. My story is the best. It’s real and educational.” George was soon drowned out by the all the ruckus. To make matters more confusing, positive picture book characters meandered around the argument. Pat the Bunny hopped by. “Pat the bunny?” it asked hopefully. Strangely, everyone stopped arguing to pat the bunny. Then, Rainbow fish went swimming by in the air as if it were water, handing each of them a scale. Each of them stopped arguing long enough to accept their scale and utter a thank you. But the pause was only momentary as they all went back to bickering.

Suddenly in a puff of emerald-green sparkles, Harry Potter appeared with his wand raised ready to cast spells. Harry cried, “Petrificus Totalus!” freezing everyone in their tracks. “What is all this racket about?” Harry unfroze Cinderella, who answered, “We have been arguing about whose story is the best. Which is silly of course.” Harry nodded in agreement. Cinderella continued, “Because obviously my story is the best.” Harry rolled his eyes. “EVERYONE’S story is worth a read. We all have something to share.” As the first rays of the sunrise peeked over the window, Harry unfroze the rest of the characters. Gaston and Grinch begrudgingly hugged. The characters dove back in their books and the debate was settled…until the next time.
You’re a coward, Hayden. Dad’s words. You’re a coward, Hayden. Only four of them.

“H-Hayden?” Selena stammers, terrified by my sudden breakdown. If only people knew
how close I was to doing this everyday. But they don’t, and I have to keep it that way. She makes
the sound that she always does when she’s frightened—the noise that sounds so much like an
injured puppy, carelessly kicked in the face by life itself. “Hayd—” her voice cracks and she
chokes on her own tears. “Haystack, w-what’s w-wrong?”

I don’t answer her. Instead, I swallow whatever sound would have came out of my
mouth—I’m not sure if it would’ve been a formulated string of words or broken syllables
intercepted by sobs—and continue to remain silent. I rub my eyes tiredly. I hear her begin to cry
louder and louder. “Hayden…,” she weeps, “p-please answer me…”

I don’t. Her cries get even louder. She chokes again. I stand up from the couch and walk
towards the bathroom, the thoughts growing stronger no matter how hard I try to get rid of them.
A part of me feels selfish for just leaving her there with her tears, but I need to think about
myself for once. I’m sure that if I had stayed on that couch I would’ve either started crying in
front of her, or I would’ve laughed hysterically and maniacally because of my mental state—like
a patient isolated in an insane asylum with only the walls as conversation partners.

Upon entering the bathroom and locking the door, I hear heavy yet light footsteps racing
up the stairs and another door closes and locks. I still hear her cries of agony, though they are
stifled by walls and floors. I try taking a deep breath, hoping that maybe some of those stupid
breathing exercises that they teach you in stress-management classes will help me clear my mind
and empty my thoughts. They don’t, and I only feel a dread resting in the bottom of my stomach
like an anchor weighing down a boat when I look up from the ground and see my reflection in
the mirror.

Same eyes. Same nose. Same lips. Same bone structure. Same height. Same skin. Same
hair color. Same eye color; that strange, piercing color that looks like it wasn’t sure whether it
wanted to be brown or yellow, so it settled for a blazing amber color, encased by a small, golden
outer ring. They look just like his, down to the last abnormal speck.

I feel like I am going to collapse to the floor and maybe even pass out or die, so I let my
legs crumple underneath me, hitting my forehead on the bathroom counter as I go down. The
loud noise resounds in the bathroom that is too big for such a small and broken family, and I’m
almost certain that the sound would’ve made it to Selena’s room up the stairs. I lay there on the
floor for a couple seconds, focusing my gaze completely on the fan droning quietly on above me,
and the thoughts swarm my head—a very unwanted presence like mosquitoes in the summertime.

Why do I live this way? Anger. Why do I pretend that everything is fine? Frustration.
Why does Aaliyah hate me so much? Jealousy. Why does she have to assume so many things?
Bitterness. Why do I have to be a father for my sister? Desperation. Why can’t he do that?
Resentment. What if I’m not there in time? Terror. Why can’t I just quit? Depression. Why do I
have to look like him? Grief. Why doesn’t he love me? Loneliness. You’re a coward, Hayden.
Will Ramirez

15 things about the girl /boy in the corner of the room

1. She is shy
2. She love unicorns
3. She is a artist
4. She is a real nerd
5. She worries about her weight
6. She is not a she, she is a they
7. Their pronouns are they them there
8. They are a singer
9. They are quiet
10. They want friends they has 2 real friends
11. They don’t trust others
12. They love to read
13. They are 9 years old
14. They had 1 sister and 1 brother and 1 cousin who lived with us
15. They have a hard time coping
My Journey with Cerebral Palsy

My name is Jude. I am 9 years old and I have cerebral palsy. Cerebral palsy is something you get if you are born in a different way. It affected my brain and makes it hard to control my muscles.

One thing cerebral palsy makes difficult is walking. I use a wheelchair most of the time because it is hard for me to walk. When I walk, I use a reverse walker or someone supports me. Sometimes I fall down, but I get back up and push through it because I am strong. If I don’t walk or use my wheelchair, I crawl to get somewhere.

Another thing that cerebral palsy makes difficult is using my hands. It is hard to eat and write. My letters come out awkward and big. When I eat, I can eat pretty well, but sometimes I have trouble with putting the fork in the right position. Stabbing my food is not always easy. Cerebral palsy also make it hard for me to get dressed. I can’t always hold myself up when I put on a shirt or get my arms behind my back. Sometimes I need help, but I am getting better at doing it by myself.

The last things that cerebral palsy affects are my eyes and ears. I cannot see very well. It’s easier for me to see big letters and numbers instead of small ones. I wear glasses and go to eye therapy. Eye therapy helps my eyes to get stronger. I also wear a hearing aid. It’s harder to hear out of my left ear so sometimes I turn my head to listen.

Even though cerebral palsy is hard, I push through it. I don’t let it stop me from doing anything. I sing opera, play football at recess, and go to coffee shops with my mom to eat cookies together. Just because someone has cerebral palsy, it doesn’t mean they can’t do anything. They can do whatever they want and be whoever they want.
For My Fawn

Shanza Sami, Grade 5
Borlaug Elementary

As I ventured out in the ruins of branches and debris, I noticed my footprints were the only along this path. I shuddered. I thought I should turn back, but my stomach grumbled, and I had forgotten how hollow it was. I wondered if my fawn felt the same way. I kept on walking.

The previous day, I gathered all the wilting leaves I could find, for this was the closest we could get to warmth. As I trudged with the unwieldy pile, my attention was diverted to my fawn. Was she okay? Was she warm? When I returned to our rather precarious tree we lived under, I was stunned. All of the precious leaves had fallen! I wondered what we would do. I decided to use the leaves I brought and the remains of our tree as protection. Would we survive? My fawn whimpered, close to frostbite, as I stuffed and piled every scrap of the leaves I could find.

“I hope this will work,” I thought, doubtful. And as if the beautiful night stars granted my wish, my fawn immediately stopped whimpering. Yes! One of my first successes in my first year of parenthood. My fawn nudged me. This meant she was hungry. Where would I get food? Sadly, I never had any help after my partner’s disappearance. I also lived in a forest with no cedar trees, nuts, or berries to eat from during winter, and all the signs of life during the coldness were somehow gone. This was true until my thoughts were interrupted by a flock of birds above.

Finally; Life! I marveled at the dozens of brave geese. Some animals flew away, and some hid in their habitats and never came back out in the cold. I decided searching for food alone would be fine. But I was very wrong.

Before my attempts of finding food, I decided to never hesitate. But as I took a step, I disobeyed the rule, and froze. There were tiny, white, and flaky pieces of the sky falling slowly, slowly… It was so mesmerizing! I began trotting, to a gradual sprint. Still there was no food.

Suddenly, the flakes began to whirl, blinding me. Everywhere I sloshed in was freezing cold. I broke into my fastest sprint until my hooves cracked and I was under shade. I wondered where I was. But it was too dark to see from the gray clouds that devoured the forest. I decided to stop, rest, and eat, but my stomach kept on bothering me, desperate to be filled. Sleep was impossible. But the violent whirling wind and swaying of the branches somehow calmed me…

The next day, a pang from my stomach, and I was up. The blazing flakes had calmed, and the wind had settled. I scrambled up, though my hooves were shattered. “I should be with my fawn!” I thought. “But, before I go, I need food.” So, in the forest that had no sign of anything edible, I hiked the frontier that never had I explored; the evergreen forest. It was the only sign of, “leaves,” I could find. I chewed through the destructive leaves, and struggled to chew the thorns. It was tangy at first, but then bitter. I realized that the bitterness was from the blood oozing out of my tongue. “For my fawn, for my fawn,” I repeated, as I pricked out the softest thorns I could find. As soon as I finished, I ran for my fawn’s life, and I ran for mine. It began snowing. When I returned, I was relieved to see my fawn, and knowing there was food for her. As she ate, she had an odd expression when she was eating, but still satisfied that her stomach was filled.

Suddenly, the last sign of life came; Half a dozen birds flying! I saw the last chance of hope, and ran with my fawn. I didn’t know where I was going as my eyes teared and blinded, but I kept on running. Not for me, but for my fawn.
Once I caught a fish alive.

"Why did you let it go?"
"Because it bit my little finger!"

"Which finger did it bite?"
"The little finger on the right!"
Bump, bump, bump, bump, bump, bump, bump, bump, bump, bump, bump.

I wish I never caught that fish.

"Why did it take a bite?"
"Because she gave it a nasty frown!"
"What did she do to it?"
"She gave it a face that looked like this:"

mhm mhm mhm Yah!

Sloane Seebeck
Help the Earth

Once there was a girl named May. She loved to travel around the world. One time she was famous for traveling. She gave a speech. She said, "There are many places to explore. The world is great right now but we shouldn't just have one day that's Earth Day. Everyday we should have Earth Day. If we don't pick up garbage the Earth could look like a hairball. Gross! We should recycle, go places, and throw away wrappers. I think one day all of you could help the world, travel, and be famous too." The audience clapped. Her cousin June shouted "Bravo! Encore! Encore!"

On the news there was a report that said "Our city is so clean! But, we should still clean up trash because everyday we should throw away trash. Thanks to May- that was an awesome speech!!"

The next day her mom was so proud of May! For dinner they had an Earthpizza!!!!!! She ate and ate until it had vanished! After dinner she saw people throwing away trash. She was proud of them for listening to her speech about helping the Earth and traveling.

Later that day May went upstairs in her room and saw people outside with signs that said "Good Job!" and "Your Speech Was Great!", and waving at her. Suddenly she heard thumping coming from the door of her house. She peeked out and all of the people were crowding around the front of her house. They wanted her autograph so badly they piled on her trampoline to get a better look at her.

The next day she woke up to the smell of fresh pancakes and bacon. She had a surprise, her mom said, and May wanted to know so badly she almost burst! Her mom told her the surprise was that all the people were coming to dinner who were at the speech. May was happy. She said that was the best surprise ever because people listened to her speech and supported her. Hours passed and it was bedtime. Her mom tucked May in. She said, "Good night, sleep tight, don't let the bedbugs bite!" May slept soundly and softly.

The End.
How the world goes

Move around! Look alive! Listen to the world’s beautiful sound!

Well, that’d be true if the earth’s health wasn’t already looking down.

California is on fire, Florida’s hurricane city, Nevada’s drying,

Can someone please see that our planet is dying?

Alright, maybe that was a little insensitive

But I thought it was okay because it was said by our representative!

And that’s not all!

Michigan’s water is unhealthy, West Virginia is obese, Ohio is depressed,

Will someone pay attention, at least?

And were not even done!

Media’s like a bug in your hair

Spreading lies here and there

And does anybody even care?

Alaska’s filled with smoke, Oregon’s already said “bye!”

Sometimes I wonder if I should even try!

But hey, that’s just my opinion, if you think we can change then go ahead!

But I already said what needs to be said.
Stop Bop

Stop Stop.
Why is it called Stop?
Isn’t it called Bop?
Stop Bop.
Which one should I chose, Stop or Bop?
Stop Stop Bop Bop.
It is so hard to choose.
Stop or Bop.
I choose…. I can’t.
Hey that sign over there says Stop.
Why?
I thought it was Bop.
Stop Stop. Bop Bop.
I don’t know which one - I’m just going to go with Stop.
Stop Stop, not Bop.
It’s Stop. Bop is no.
Stop is yes. Yes yes for Stop.
No no for Bop.
Boo Boo for Bop.
Yay yes for Stop Stop Stop. Whooooow.
Bop Booo0oo0000000000000.
I love Stop.
I don’t like Bop.
Stop is the best.
Bop is the worst.
The end.
Partition in Delhi

Leela Strand

Purva was scared. She could not find Soorya. Amma and Appa said she would be here. They said it would be ok... She closed her eyes. Deep down she knew this was inevitable but she still called out in vain, “Soorya!”

Her lifelong friend Lakshmi also cried out but she was soon answered. A young man came running over. Purva recognized him right away, it was Akil, Lakshmi’s brother. He had been away working for the colonial government for so long. They both screamed in joy and joined in a big hug.

“Akil have you seen Soorya?”

“No, I didn’t know to look for her. I’ll drop you off at the house and see what I can do.” He started walking and they followed.

As they walked Purva looked around. Starving, injured, dying, people surrounded her. People desperately looked for their loved ones. Others were being reunited with those they hadn’t seen for months or even years. There were so many different emotions around her and yet they all made her want to cry.

When they finally got to the house they were greeted by an old lady. Lakshmi ran over and gave her a hug. “Ajjii!”

“Hi Chimma. I was so worried about you! How did you manage to make it all the way here?”

Purva sat down in a chair to the side and watched as they had their reunion. Watching them brought a glimpse of hope. She wondered what the future held for her. Where was her sister? Would she ever see her again? What had happened to the rest of her family? Would Lakshmi’s let her stay? Before she knew it, she was asleep. Her aching body at rest.

Purva opened her eyes to see the old lady bustling about. What was she doing? For awhile she just lay there and watched as Ajjii’s shadows moved up and down across the room. She listened to the murmur of the people outside.

When Ajjii finally noticed she was awake, she had finished making sambar. It smelled so good. Purva noticed her hunger and her mouth watered. Without saying a word Ajjii handed her a plate and watched for a moment as she ate.

When she had finally finished Purva thanked her wholeheartedly. It was a delicious meal.

“Did Akil find Soorya?”

“Not yet,” Purva looked at the ground. A tear rolled down her cheek. Ajjii put her hand on the poor girl’s knee. “Our entire nation has suffered greatly from this terrible event. We managed to make it through with each other. We must be thankful for that. You will be part of our family now. Together we will build from the ground up with this newborn family, in a new nation. Hardships will be faced with dignity and courage. When we make it through to the other side, we will help others like us. Everyone is born on this Earth with the opportunity to succeed, to blossom, to be the best version of ourselves, and that we will.”

Purva looked up to see Lakshmi and Akil walk in carrying Soorya, “Look who we found!”

Purva screamed in joy. She ran over and held the little girl in her arms. She was thankful. She looked at Ajjii and smiled. Smiled for hope, for family, the one that she had lost and the one she had found. Together they would build a new nation, a new future.
Earth’s Atmosphere

Earth is the only place that is able to have life
Not Mercury, not Venus, not Mars, or Jupiter
Or Saturn or, Neptune, or Uranus or even Pluto

So stop pollution
Because when the atmosphere gets to thin
The sun gets hotter and things could vanish

So stop the pollution
Or we will all be finished
There will be no more life
This will hurt wildlife

But wait there is still a solution waiting here
No more factories, also no more trashy seas
Trashy seas are not the key
Water is why we’re alive
Throwing trash in the water
Sends deadly animal traps
Start using a compost bin to collect all of your scraps

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle
Use the good three R’s cycle
Don’t litter or the place won’t glitter
We don’t want everything to taste bitter.
Earth is not a big junkyard
Earth is a big beautiful place in space.
**Pots and Dragons**

Chapter One.
Once upon a time two witches were gathering things for a pot, so they went home and started stewing. Something went wrong, and they accidentally created a dragon! Then the dragon quickly flew off far away and went into the forest.

Chapter Two.
One year later, the dragon was found by the witches on an island. The witches kept it as a slave at their house. The witches made more and more dragons to plan for a war against the humans.

Chapter Three.
The witches started the war against the humans. It was a long, hard war, but the humans ended up winning. They succeeded in taking all of the dragons away from the witches so they could live a better life.

Chapter Four.
The humans tamed the dragons and started a safe dragon community. Everyone was living a fantastic life, and everyone was happy. The witches were busy planning their attack to take back the dragons.

Chapter Five.
One night, the witches snuck to the dragon community and captured the dragon to have their slaves back. The humans decided they had to end this. They planned another attack on the witches.
The Little Boy’s Adventure

Once upon a time, there was a lonely little boy. Days passed, months passed, even years passed. Then one day, the little boy found a bear. The bear was a boy and lots older and lots bigger. The bear said, “Would you like to stay with me?”

“Yes,” said the little boy. “Where do you live?” he asked.

“Under the stoplight to the left. I scare everyone who goes on the street!” said the bear.

“Oh my gosh!” said the little boy.

“Yes!” said the bear.

“Oh my gosh!” said the little boy.

“Yes!” said the bear.

“Oh my gosh!” said the little boy.

“Yes!!!” said the bear a third time.

“Ok, Ok, Ok,” said the little boy. “So you live by the stoplight.”

“Yeah,” said the bear.

So they lived under a stoplight for a very long time. The bear fed him. The bear took care of him. And everything else that a parent would do for the boy. For a long time the bear was like a parent for the boy.

Soon the boy was old enough to take care of himself. So the bear left him. All alone. Soon the boy got lonely again so he went to an orphanage to be with other kids to play with. So the little boy lived there at the orphanage for about seven months. Then finally someone wanted to take care of him. The boy was so happy! He finally had a family!

When his new family showed him his new room, there on the bed was a stuffed bear. It looked exactly like his old friend.

Every day the boy and his new mom and dad played ghost in the graveyard after school. The little boy and his stuffed bear would be on a team trying to spook his new parents, just like he used to do with the bear on the street. He was so happy to finally have real parents to take care of him, but he would never forget who first took care of him. And he had a stuffed bear to help him remember.
A MONARCH ADVENTURE

Once upon a time… There was a monarch named Elizabeth.

She was a lonely monarch. One day Elizabeth saw a bunch of monarchs flying in the air. She asked her mom, “What are they doing, why are they doing this? Why? Why? Why?” Her mother answered by saying, “We monarchs migrate every year. We start in Iowa and fly through Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma, and Texas. Then, we arrive in Mexico.”

“Let’s start our migration.”

When they were in Missouri, a big, loud thunderstorm kicked up and the butterflies got scattered in all different directions. The direction that Elizabeth got scattered in was in to a butterfly park. There, Elizabeth saw something huge, with 2 legs, 2 arms, a head. It was a big, scary human! The human said, “oh what a pretty butterfly! It shouldn’t be out in a thunderstorm. It’s wings shouldn’t get wet or it may never fly again.” The human sounded scared, only Elizabeth thought that the human was trying to kidnap her. She tried to fly away, but she couldn’t. The rain was wrecking her wings.

So, she decided to go with the human. The human took her to a butterfly garden where there were hundreds, maybe even thousands, maybe even millions of butterflies there. They were swooping, flying, laughing together, up and down. Then, Elizabeth saw a little butterfly in a corner. She was huddled and shivering like she was scared. Elizabeth went over to that butterfly and said, “Will you be my friend?” The small butterfly was too afraid to answer. But, the little butterfly managed to murmur her name. Her name was Eliza. Elizabeth said, “your name is part of my name, my name is Elizabeth!”

Eliza laughed and threw back her head and said, “yes, we can be friends. That is so cool that your name is Elizabeth because my name is Eliza and my sister’s name is Beth. My name plus my sister’s name equals your name. Yes, definitely! We can be friends!”

So, the butterflies swooped up and down and up and down, laughing together. Then, Elizabeth’s mom said, “we must finish our migration.” Elizabeth was so sad she had to leave Eliza she cried. She sobbed. Then, Eliza came over and said, “My family must finish the migration, too. I will go with you. Elizabeth almost fainted in relief. So the monarchs finished their migration.

The End
Willow in a Snowstorm
A willow standing in the white
Waving long, long sleeves in sorrow
Wiping tears
The wind roaring in the sky
The snow freezing the ground
While I’m in my house snuggling
Sparkling Sunrise

As the sparkling sun rises
In the plum purple sky,
A lavender ladybug licks a leaf
And the lily lark sings a solemn song.
A dazzling day begins.
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