

## THE GRAND CAMPSITE

By Reece Langley  
Raft River Elementary  
Grade 7

One day in the middle of summer, my family went for a camping trip. But the campsite was in the middle of nowhere and it had no cell service, which was bad. But my mom and Dad didn't care about that anyways. After we unpacked everything we went for a swim in the lake right beside our campsite. When we jumped in my sister screamed. I decided to go swim over and help her out. She looked fine so I told her to roll on her stomach. I saw about 6 leeches on her back. So I called my dad over and told him to grab tweezers. When my dad came back my sister had already lost so much blood that she fainted. I told my Dad to help me carry my sister to the tent. So we laid her down and told mom that there is a gas station about 3km away.

I said, "we need you to stay here well me and Dad go to get medical supplies."

So me and my Dad took the road back from the way we came. But a quarter way to the gas station, we heard a loud scream. My Dad looked so shocked and scared.

I said, "I think it's coming from the forest."

So we yelled out if anyone was their and if they were are you okay? After that we didn't hear any noises so my Dad and I walked over and went into the forest to check it out.

So we went in to the forest and then we heard a man's deep voice from behind us saying you entered my camp now you will pay. And we booked it. We were so scared that my Dad was shaking. We ended up running all the way to the gas station. When we

got to the gas station it looked old and runned down. So we walked in and asked the worker where the

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medical supplies were. The lady working said in aisle five. So we walked over and looked for what we needed. We needed tweezers and bandages and rubbing alcohol. After looking down the aisle for about five minutes we finally found it but when I went to grab the tweezers the lights turned off. My dad tried to whisper to me to see where I was. He grabbed at my arms to pull me over. The worker at the front had already made it into the staff room to hide. Me and my Dad were confused why she went and hid. We walked over to the staff room and knocked and said, "Can you let us in please?"

The worker said, "no, he's here just hide somewhere."

So we listened to her and hid in the bathroom. A minute later, we heard loud banging on the bathroom door but we were in the corner and we forgot to lock the door. So when we heard the door knob rattle my dad whispered get ready to run out and go to the camp. I got ready and when the door opened we saw a tall buff body and after that all you could see was my Dad tackling the guy to the ground. I stood there in shock for

about ten seconds but when I realized that my Dad was holding him down I booked it. I was surprised my Dad held him down because my Dad was short and scrawny. But I

didn't care I was just so scared. I ran so fast I thought if I tripped I could easily break my arm or leg. But when I got to the camp everything was gone I yelled for my Mom and sister but no one answered. I decided to walk around the campsite to see if I was not seeing anything because it was so dark. But when I walked for a good ten minutes I heard loud steps from behind me so I turned around and it was my Dad running towards me. When he reached me he was so out of breath and he looked so pale. He hugged me like he was about to die and then I saw why. The guy that chased after us was right behind him I said to my Dad watch out but by the time he turned around the guy grabbed him and lifted him up and slammed him on the ground. My eyes watered up and I thought I was done, that it was my last minute to live. But a minute later the guy just fell to the ground. Behind him was my mom with a tranq gun. I was so happy because I had my life planned out for me and my job. My Mom ran to me and hugged me my sister was in the back just crying from what she saw. My mom asked where Dad was and when I pointed at his body she dropped to the ground and cried. I told her we needed to go because I don't think this was a safe place. We picked up my Dad and laid him down in the trunk of the car. We were driving to the hospital. I was going to ask my mom why all the stuff was gone but I was too scared and shocked to speak. When we got to the hospital, we picked my dad up and carried him in to the hospital. The people at the front desk asked what happened so I told them everything. They took my Mom and Dad to a exam room and told me and my sis he would be okay. Two days later, my Dad turned out to be okay but his left arm was broken. After he came out we all hugged

each other for a good five minutes. And that's it. We all went home and just did what we did. THE END

### Crimson Academy

I stare down at my shackled hands wondering how I got in this situation. Of course I knew our mission to assassinate the king failed. But how does a flawless plan like that fail so spectacularly? I mean it wasn't exactly flawless, but it wasn't supposed to end with me and a few other members of the Crimson Killers, the group of assassins sitting in the dungeon of the castle, being arrested.

"Hey, Aria."

I hear Rouge's deep voice coming from the cell next to mine. I grunt in response, the sound echoing through the large dungeon.

"Do you think we'll ever get out of here?" Rouge asks pitifully.

"I don't know, Rouge," I reply, my voice rough from not talking for the last few days.

"We better," he replies darkly, "or else Master Sting will have our heads."

I go to reply but am cut off by the dungeon doors swinging open on squeaky hinges and a knight walking down the stairs his armour clanging with every step.

"Get up," he says roughly pulling open my cell door and pulling me to my feet.

"Quick, no time for slacking," he says pulling on my shackles and dragging me along behind him.

I stumble up the stairs as he yanks my shackles again, but this time was harder it was meant to bring me down to my knees, down to earth like a beggar. But I refused. I tried to stand up straight but my knees buckled beneath me causing me to fall to the ground just like he wanted.

“You see sweet, you can’t defy the king,” his voice whispered in my ear and his rancid breath stung my nose.

I pulled away from him wincing as the shackles dug into my wrists. He yanks back so I am facing him.

“Sweet,” he says. “Did anyone ever tell you not to play with fire?”

He pulls me to my feet and tugs me up another stair, this time rougher. I cry out in pain again the sound echoing through the large stairwell.

“Shhh,” he says. “We don’t want any trouble now do we?”

I roll my eyes and mutter, “Well I sure do.”

“What was that, sweet? Did I sense some defiance?” He was right by my ear now his hot rancid breath tickling my neck. I lean my head forward like an act of submission but then whip it back trying to headbutt him. But I misjudged my aim and end up hitting his ear. He just chuckles until we hear footsteps coming down the stairs.

“Casios,” I hear a deep voice call. The guard Casios lets me go and looks up the stairs his posture straight and his face solemn. I follow his gaze to see a young man in what looks to be his mid thirties wearing heavy armour with a large sword strapped at his side.

“Casios,” he says again this time more sharply. “The king is waiting upstairs, and you know how he doesn’t like to be kept waiting.”

“Yes, Lord Trillion, sorry for the wait just this one,” he says pointing to me, “is being difficult.”

I scoff at this and am about to say something when Lord Trillion shoots me a look that could stop a bear in its tracks.

“No excuses, Casios,” Lord Trillion says grabbing my shackles and dragging me up the stairs behind him. We go up one hundred and thirty six stairs, before we reach the top. Casios is panting for breath behind me his hands on his knees and his face red as a tomato. Lord Trillion knocks on the large oak paneled doors”

“Aria Grant of the Crimson Killers, and Lord Trillion of the Arcadios Kingdom request an audience with the king,” Lord Trillion booms.

The large double doors open and as if on cue, I hear “welcome Lord Trillion we have been expecting you for quite some time now.”

Lord Trillion just chuckles “your Majesty it has been quite some time now since I’ve last seen you, can we skip the formalities?”

“Sure thing, Trilly,” the king says happily.

I haven’t caught a glimpse of him yet because I was looking around the room with sheer amazement. I mean who has pure gold chairs and a large oak table about the size of a Kampa, a large water buffalo. This guy must be filthy rich. But then when I catch a glimpse of the king from the corner of my eye, I am slightly underwhelmed.

I was expecting a large battle ready warrior not a two foot tall old man. He was wearing a large red robe that he kept tripping over which was quite comical and a huge gold crown which kept falling off of his white hair, he also had a large white moustache curled up at the ends.

“Well,” the king says staring right at me. “Who do we have right here?”

“This is Aria Grant of the Crimson Killers and she is the seventh to make her decision,” says Lord Trillion.

“Wait, what decision?” I rasp now very confused.

“The decision of your freedom,” says the king. “Now kneel.”

I go and kneel in front of the throne because defying the guard is one thing, but the king you don't want to.

“Listen,” the king says. “This is a very big decision, many others in your group decided to be executed rather than join our cause but I'll hope you make the right choice.”

I gulp because this is a huge decision, one that could impact my life forever.

“I think I need some time,” I mumble.

“Now or never,” the king warns.

I look down at my hands and weigh my options. I could join the royal army and learn new things but I'd probably be scorned or I could choose to give up my life stay on my side and be able to see my parents again. I weighed my options and I decided what decision to make.



# Spring

Brianne Le Beau

Grade 7

Dufferin

Spring is like the earth's time to reset. Flowers of every colour bloom in the blazing sun and the snow melts to reveal the dark green grass. The chirping birds come back and the bees come out to pollinate the beautiful flowers. Some people may dread spring due to the pollen in the air. The pollen will make some people sneeze and their noses will run faster than a river. The best part of spring for most people is the warm calming and relaxing weather. But with that comes rainy gloomy weather that drenches everything. Even though spring has some bad weather it is one of the most beautiful times of year.

In the warm weather you will find an abundance of cheerful and happy kids. You will find kids of every age doing every activity imaginable. Some you may find on a field playing soccer with friends or they might even be on a team. Other kids enjoy biking. You may drive by kids biking on the street with their family or friends. As for other kids you will have to go on a hike or up in the mountains to see them because some kids enjoy mountain biking. Whatever the activity you will most likely see kids outside in the warm weather doing it.

For some people their favourite time of spring is Easter. During Easter families will come together and enjoy an amazing lunch or brunch. Some families will even do an egg hunt. For most kids the best part of Easter is when the big fuzzy bunny comes to their house with candy and foil wrapped chocolate eggs. The Easter Bunny will also leave a bunch of colorful eggs around your house or outside. Easter is a holiday filled with colour and fun.

Spring is a beautiful time of year exploding with warm weather and fun. During spring many family will come together for easter and kids will search and search for the foiled wrapped chocolate eggs. You also can't forget about all the activity you can do in spring. Overall spring is an excellent time of year.

“Alright girls, let’s go before you’re late to ninjitsu!” called Mrs. Lockerby to her two 13 year-old twins, Emmeline and Audrey Lockerby-Brown.

“Coming, mother,” responded Audrey “Emmeline, she means you.”

“Well, you can never EVER rush beauty,” retorted Emmeline, whilst dabbing powder on her perfectly shaped nose.

*Wow, conceited much?* Audrey quietly thought to herself. Audrey went downstairs to the car where her mom was waiting. The air-conditioning was blasting as she got into the car. This would make sense, since it was a hot summer day in the eighties. Audrey scooped her hair up into a ponytail to keep it off of her already warm neck. She looked up at the window of her sister’s room, aggravated that she was causing them to be tardy.

“How long does it take to put on a baggy t-shirt and some old, beat-up pants?” she asked her dad sarcastically.

“If you’re normal, a minute, if it’s your sister, 42 years just to pick out the pants,” replied Audrey’s dad with a chuckle.

“Harold!” scowled Audrey’s mom. Sophie Lockerby was a very stern but gentle character with a respectable manner. Audrey vowed to be exactly like her mom, but with her dad’s sense of humor.

After what seemed like hours, Emmeline finally came out of the house in what looked like the thing Princess Jasmine™ wore in the movie *Aladdin*™.

“You’re kidding, right?” scoffed Audrey “I hope you realise that you have made us sit in this summer heat while you run off to play dress-up! Black hair doesn’t help with the heat either, I’ll have you know.”

“At least I don’t look like a boy in geeky glasses,” Emmeline shot back.

Now this was a rare occasion. Audrey and Emmeline never fought unless it was important. This was definitely pathetic. But Audrey hated being late, so I guess there was a reason: Her inconsiderate sister, Prissy the Princess.



They were in an accident on the way to ninjitsu, a big accident. Everyone in the car was hurt, and no one could call the hospital, for they all were covered in glass from head to toe. Some shards even managed to burrow into their skin and permanently scar their bodies and their mental health.

“M-mom?” asked Audrey groggily.

“Honey, a-are you alright?” she replied.

“Ye...” Audrey said as she slowly fell unconscious.

“Audrey. Audrey, wake up!” called the twins’ mother. Mrs. Lockerby frantically looked for her phone to call an ambulance, but her fingers were cut so viciously that she could barely hold her daughter’s hand. Even though she was worried about her daughters, she was terrified for her husband. When Mrs. Lockerby thought all hope was lost, sirens in the distance gave her faith.

“Ma’am, are you okay?” asked a paramedic when the ambulance came.

“My family, where is my family?” she asked as she frantically searched for her husband.

“They’re fine, they’re in the ambulance, they’ll be okay,” the paramedic reassured her.

“How do you know? They could be dead!” she roared in a fit of tears.

“They are only unconscious,” the paramedic said calmly. The paramedic may have been fine and relaxed like it’s a Sunday morning, but Mrs Lockerby was everything but calm. She would do anything for her family, even jump in front of train for them. Nothing would stop her from keeping her family safe. Nothing.



At the hospital the girls were being bandaged up and so was their mother. As pieces of shattered window were plucked out of their skin, their dad was still unconscious.

“What’s wrong with him? Is he just resting, or does he have a concussion?” Mrs. Lockerby asked the Dr. Porter. Her husband was bleeding and his heart rate was slowing to 18 beats per minute.

“Mrs. Lockerby, I hate to tell you this, but your husband may or may not pass away in the next 24 hours. His heart rate is quite low, too low to pump his blood. We were really hoping no casualties happened in this accident, but it appears we might have one. I am so sorry,” Dr. Porter said, shaking her head in sadness. The darkness was what you saw before the sun shines. You’re trapped in a black abyss, yet somehow the light rips through dread. That didn’t happen in this case. Instead, you stay in the dark forever, without even a sliver of light.

“Mom?” Emmeline called to her mom. She’d been awake for less than a minute, but she was conscious enough to understand what was going on.

“Where’s dad?” she asked, even though she knew the answer already.

“Honey, he, um, he...passed on,” said Mrs. Lockerby. She was trying with every fiber of her soul to not cry. She had to stay strong for her daughters. She had to.

Emmeline didn’t say anything. She couldn’t find the words to describe how she was feeling. Especially the fact that she had to wear black now. But she thought more about how her sister would feel. Audrey was so close to her dad and Emmeline was so close to her mom. Emmeline had no idea how Audrey was going to deal with this. Would she suffer from depression, or would she express her feelings through anger? And what was Emmeline going to wear? All of this thinking was making her dizzy.

“Emmeline?” Audrey’s voice cut Emmeline’s thoughts like a knife. “Em, what’s going on? Is dad up yet, because I want to say hi to him soon.” Emmeline could only stare at her sister. But her small voice broke through her gaze.

“Dad died, A. He’s gone.” Two fat tears rolled down Emmeline’s face. Their mom had gone to get them some food, so they were all alone.

“What?” Audrey looked at her sister with such confusion. One thing she knew, her dad would not die forgotten.

**Haven**  
Sage McCabe  
Westmount Elementary  
Grade 7

After World War III in the year of 3000, the Earth went into chaos causing mass destruction everywhere. There were few communities left but the ones that remained were terrifying places full of fear, loss and memories of the past. Memories before the war when the sun shone in the sky. The sky that was now covered with smoke. Humankind sucked everything they could out of the Earth, leaving nothing. A lot of people knew this would happen including many scientists and engineers but during the nuclear attacks all of their hard work was destroyed, leaving no way off their damaged world. There were rumors of a place that was protected from the war, still beautiful, untouched by machines. Were the rumours true?

**Year 3010**

I ran from the store owner, as fast as I could with my bag full of stolen food. I could hear the man come to a stop behind me. With his yelling getting further away, I slowed my run to a jog, then I stopped. I quickly glanced behind me before carrying on to my home. My home wasn't anything special, a creaky building all worn down like everyone else's. I lived alone and I had no family or friends, life was different now, no more caring and love, just survival.

I started to put the food away when I tripped over something on the ground. I fell, hitting the weakest shelf and breaking it. With a thud I was on the ground, the shelf I broke along with all the food it was supporting was now all over the floor. I felt my eyes start to sting with tears as I looked at the disaster of all the wasted food that I had accumulated. That's when I saw it. A piece of paper mixed into the mess on the floor. It was a big piece of paper with some words on it

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reading “Haven.” I picked it up and shook off the crumbs. I peered at the odd paper, not understanding at first but then slowly realizing that I was looking at a map!

I started to pack, not knowing where or what my destination was, but it had to be better than this. I rummaged through my stuff finally finding an old backpack. I packed the food I had left and the last item I had of my family, an old compass. I rushed to the door, opened it and looked once more at my house, knowing I would probably never see it again. With that I walked through the door slamming it behind me hearing the old hinges squeak.

I kept a steady pace for an hour until I heard the deep sound of thunder in the distance. I shuddered, knowing soon I would be stuck in this dreadful storm. I started to look for shelter. I found a dying forest. Slowly I gathered some branches and put them between two Y shaped trees making a shelter. I sat there watching water gather on the ground making puddles. Then I got an idea, looking through my backpack I came across an empty jar. Carefully I placed it right beside a puddle. Then I sat back and thought of how great the place I was headed could be. I slowly drifted off into a deep sleep.

The next morning I woke up with wet clothes and a sore neck. As tired as I was, I could not spend another day here. I had to carry on with my journey. I took a sip of the fresh rain water from the jar before putting the lid on and tucking it in my side pocket. I continued to trek through the forest, until I realized I was lost. Stuck in the forest that was supposed to protect me. I yelled, “I should have never left! I'm so stupid!” After what felt like hours of laying on the damp ground, I got onto my knees to look through my now almost empty backpack. I came across a



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small object, an object so significant to my survival and to my future. I picked the circular object up and flipped the hatch open revealing a beautiful compass pointing east. Swiftly I grabbed the rolled up map and packed up my things. Holding my map in one hand and compass in the other, I proceeded to turn the compass so it was pointing north. I struggled with the oversized map until I had oriented the map to my compass. After studying the map, I found the forest and I began to walk. I kept a close eye on my compass, paranoid of making a wrong turn but soon I was clear of the dying trees.

I made it to the little bridge that was indicated as the entrance to the Haven on the map. But there was no grand entrance, nothing special. It looked just like my old village, except abandoned. I froze. I checked my map and compass multiple times. I squinted into the distance. There were houses! I started to run, forgetting my injuries. I cried tears of happiness and excitement. I arrived at the closest house. I could feel my hope, my excitement, my anticipation come to a screaming halt and shatter at my feet. The house was abandoned. No one could live here. I went to the next house, then the next one, and the one after that. The Haven was no haven, just another abandoned village.

There must be an uncontaminated place out there. There must be a safe place where people don't think about survival and loss and heartbreak. People still believe in love and joy. Right?

## **The Flood**

### **Prologue**

Step, step, step. I sighed. For the last few hours, that's all I'd known. My backpack seemed to be getting heavier and heavier and the sun seemed to be getting hotter and hotter. I sighed again, louder this time. "I don't know how much farther I can walk," I drearily told my older brother Tom. "Your fine," Tom said. "We only have another hour to go." Another excruciatingly boring hour, I thought. Tom and I had been walking for hours already to get to a boring old campsite, on this boring old hiking trip that I didn't even want to go on. But I knew that once I got to the campsite I could rest. So I just kept walking, and walking, and walking. Soon enough, we arrived, but it wasn't much of a campsite at all. It was just a grassy clearing near a river. "What was the point of even coming here," I groaned. "Because it's a good experience," Tom replied. "We're out in nature! Enjoy it! Now, help me set up the tent." "Okay," I sighed. We put up the tent and unloaded our backpacks. It was getting late, so we put on our pajamas and got into the tent. Tom pulled a deck of cards and a bag of gummy bears out of his backpack. "What do you want to play?" He asked. I grinned. We played every card game we could think of before finally deciding to go to bed at around 10:00. "Good night," I said. "Good night," said Tom. Maybe this hiking trip wasn't such a bad idea after all, I thought. But in a matter of hours, my thinking would change.

## Chapter 1

“Do you hear that?” Tom asked. “What?” I replied sleepily. I was only half awake and it was still really dark. “That sound,” Tom said. I (now more awake than before) listened carefully. I did hear something, but I couldn’t quite put my finger on what it was. “Yeah, I hear it,” I said. “That’s weird, right?” said Tom. “Yeah,” I replied. “Do you have any idea what it could---” I was cut off. The sound seemed to be louder. Almost like it was getting ... closer. “Does that almost sound like water to you?” Tom asked. “Yeah,” I replied. “You don’t think that it could be a---.” Wham! I went flying backwards. It was like all the force in the world was being directed at me. I couldn’t breath. “HELP!” I tried to scream, but nothing came out. I was panicking. “I can’t move! I can’t move, I can’t m--- ...” Then, everything became even darker than before.

## Chapter 2

Where am I? I thought. I looked to the left, then the right. I saw a narrow dirt pathway and a dusty road in front of me. And to the right, I saw the tent in shambles. Tom! I ran over to the tent as fast as I could. I hastily tore open what was left of it, only to find that there was nothing inside. I was confused. Where could he be? I felt the wet nylon between my fingers. At that moment, I realized that I was also soaking wet. What happened? I thought. I looked around again, and then I noticed a small building in the distance. I ran to it as fast as I could. I’m saved! I thought. As I got closer, I realized that it was a small restaurant. I went to the entrance and

opened the door. I looked around. The whole place was empty except for one person at the front desk and Tom sitting at one of the tables. "TOM!" I shouted, running over to him. "There you are!" he said. "What happened?" I asked. "Well, not much really." He replied. "I woke up soaking wet outside of this place and came inside to warm up." I noticed that he was still wet. "How long ago was that?" I asked. "Only around five minutes ago," he answered. "Where have you been?" "I just woke up across the road," I said. "Do you know what happened?" I asked. Tom pointed up to the TV. There was news of a massive flood that swept over a big part of the country. "This is terrible news for hundreds of thousands of residents!" The reporter said. "Thousands of deaths have been reported in only 8 hours!" Wow, I thought. It must have been a huge flood. "Here we have a victim of the flood." The reporter continued, "Tell me, sir, what happened?" A man walked into view. His clothes were ripped and he was soaking wet. "W-well," the man stuttered. "I was just in my b-bed, and I heard this sound, like, rushing water. Which it was," The man chuckled a little, then went back to a sad, cold look. "Then I j-just wasn't in my bed anymore. I couldn't breath and I didn't know what was happening. It was terrible. Anyway, I ended up on the street in this city, soaking wet," the man concluded. "Well, thank you for sharing sir," the reporter said. I turned back to Tom. "We were caught in that, I assume." "I'm pretty sure," he replied. "Well, what are we supposed to do now?" I asked. "My phone was wrecked in the flood, so we can't call anyone; I'm not sure what we should do."

**To Be Continued**

## Albert

Albert and Elizabeth were sitting across from each other, the bus was taking longer than normal. They didn't think much about it--they were having such a laugh-filled time they didn't notice the time. The bus was stopped in a tunnel; he thought it was weird there wasn't a traffic light near the tunnel. Albert glanced out the front window and he noticed the traffic lines were to the exit of the tunnel.

All of a sudden there was a flash of light, the ground shook. Elizabeth screamed, "Albert, what's g-" She was interrupted by a surge of heat, Then flames burst out of nowhere outside the tunnel, the heat increasing. Albert grabbed Lizzie by the hand, opened the door of the bus, and ran out first, followed by Lizzie then by the rest of the passengers. The flames started to creep into the tunnel. The others on the bus try running for the other exit, but then they burst into flames. Albert spotted a maintenance tunnel door on the tunnel wall; in a split second he grabbed Lizzie by the hand and yanked her hand with him towards the door.

They were about to reach it when he woke.

Albert was sweating like crazy, breathing heavily as he came back to consciousness. He realized it was a memory caused by trauma. His friend Alec walked in from the other room to wake him. Alec murmured " Oh, good you're up, it's time to prep the garden." Albert was in charge of preparing the garden so they could grow their food.

Mark didn't hate this job nor did he love it. Albert was walking on the path to the garden when Alec walked over to him "You on your way to the gardens?" Alec was like a father figure to Albert after the meteor strike. Alec was an older man who fought in the military during the Third World War. Surprisingly he was quite friendly.

"Yeah, I'm on my way there right now," said Albert.

"That's good, I'm going to go check on Allie, see you around." After he said that, Alec went wandering off on the northern path leading towards the cabins.

Albert was just arriving at the Gardens when he heard the slight sound of a faraway thruster. It must have been a surviving oxcraft, some would often come by the swampy land in the past, but they stopped almost a year ago. It was sort of a relief to know other people were alive.

Albert finished up his job and went over to the northern wing of the small rickety village where Elizabeth was living. She often was out somewhere in the forest. Albert walked into her cabin and to no one's surprise she wasn't there. "Why do you always do this?" Albert said to the empty cabin like Elizabeth is gonna hear it or something.

He was walking towards the forest when we saw Alec waltzing his way over towards the gardens, probably to check if he'd screwed anything up. He wouldn't do this often and Alec always had a lot of confidence in him. Albert went over to check on his friend so they talked for a few minutes. Not much of importance was brought up.

-Blam- an electrical shock grenade flew through the air and hit a group of people near the village square. Shrieks filled the air. There were electrical snakes running up

and down each person. It was horrifying, but before he could do anything Alec was grabbing him by the shirt and yanking him into an alleyway between the cabins when Albert got a sense of what was happening. He saw more bodies hit the floor: they all looked like they were in so much pain, but Albert couldn't do anything to help them without the same thing happening to him. He was scared and angry at the same time. He wanted to help, and he was about to when a dart went flying through the air and hit a woman, she wriggled for a second then flopped to the ground. She was dead. It hit Albert, he just saw someone die. He was staring at the bodies, when the woman got up, her skin pale, eyes white veins gone purple and popping out of her skin. It was disturbing looking at her.

When she was up, she saw Albert and Alec, and when she looked at them her eyes went back to human-like. She crawled over to them with a dart through her shoulder; it looked like it hadn't even hurt. She sounded not human. "Help me," the woman barely managed to say, then her eyes went back to white and she lunged at Albert. She started to scratch at his eyes. He kicked and punched, but none of it phased her.

Alec Kicked her off and hit her in the face with a rock; they exited the alley and saw Elizabeth: she was fighting four of the things. Alec looked at Mark. They nodded. They knew what to do: they ran at the things attacking Lizzie. Albert dove into two of them and Alec took the other two. There was a bloody battle consisting of punching, clawing of eyes and throats, but they won.

Albert and Alec helped Elizabeth up, and the three of them looked up to see an aircraft fly overhead; it landed about five cabins away from them. They made a dash for it. Three pilots were standing outside. They pointed the guns at them, and Allie dove into them, taking them down. The four ran into the craft, and Albert slammed his hand into the button that closes the hatch. It took a few minutes to go up into the craft. They heard darts flying in entire time. Alec and Allie ran over to the control panel, and it started up, " Hold on kids," Alec shouted. The ship surged towards the sky. Albert heard a shard of metal smashing through a window. Albert felt a man dive into him, and they both flew through the window. As he fell, he knew it was finally over.



**Wounded colours**

Red is the war  
From which bombs fly  
Through the misty clouds  
As they destroy all  
Leaving ashes behind.

Red is that gunshot  
Which booms in the middle of the night  
The shooting soundtrack  
Leaving memories behind  
As you gaze upon its destruction  
Wounded.

Red is the call of blood  
The glistening colour  
Dripping down your skin  
Struck, as you become numb.

Red is death

Laying on the war ground

Surrounded by the distant beating in your chest

Isolated

As it fades off into the distance

Dead.

Red is that angry state of war, of mind

Where you act as if you're blind

You're a robot only to follow directions

Not make decisions.

Tears race down your face

Red is the emotion running through your veins

The bitterness you showcase.

Red is the intention for revenge

To harm and to seek

To suffer with all defeat

Never looking back

Never thinking twice.

Is Red Really just a colour? Looking through this new lense of perspective it is clear that red is more than just a colour... it's a feeling, it's an emotion, it's a sound of destruction, it's that state of hurt mind. In the war everyone was involved, both mentally and physically wounded. It didn't matter how everyone was affected. As war is the first sight of destruction.

**Bird Whisperer**

A bird

As it first takes flight

A silky feather falling below

Disappearing from sight.

The quiet chirping sounds

As it conveys its message

Humming to the tune

Without feeling restless.

Distant

As it leaves the nest

Helpless

Falling through the branches

Hard to resist the overpowering urge to rescue.

Free, limitless

Soaring through the skyline

No restrictions, no guidelines  
Connected to the heavenly skies  
Soaring across the evergreen Earth.

Delicate wings flapping constantly  
Pushing through the wind  
Struggling as it is too strong  
Relentlessly pulled away.

Fighting it's way through  
Pursued to follow the sky  
Wherever path it takes  
Unspoken  
undecided.

The bird is generally thought to symbolize freedom, they can walk on the earth and swim in the sea as humans do but they also have the ability to soar into the sky. They are free and many consider that they symbolize eternal life, the link between heaven and earth.

Sophie Neufeld

Lloyd George Elementary

Grade 7

### **Life Brings Heartbreak & Heartbreak Brings Old Friendships**

I soothe my burning forehead against the frosted car window and look out to the bleak road ahead. The rain-slicked roads glow from the moon's reflection. It's after 4 am and I find us pulling into the police station. As a seventeen year old senior, I realize they will have questions, and expect me to have answers. But all I have are more questions... like who killed her? After we park, a young police officer opens the car door for me from the outside. I get out of the car and level my unsteady feet on the gravel before I can follow the officer inside the building. As we pass the front desk, I choose to stare at the ground. I can only imagine the secretary's mouth hang open by my presence. She was fairly young, although old enough to know my story. It's not a surprise. I have lived with the same stare for eleven years now. When you're the main character of the only gossip in a small town, you get used to the stare. We reach the interrogation room and the detective gestures for me to follow him through the doorway. As I pass the officer, I glance at the badge sewn to his uniform and read. "D. Cooper." The room is small with nothing more than four chairs and a short rectangular table. "Please sit." Officer Cooper gestures to the seat across from his. "For the record, you're not in any trouble. All

weneed is your statement for the case.” He pulls out his notepad. I fake a smile to please him as he starts questioning me, hard and fast. “To start, I’m going to need you to state your legal name.” The room fills with bitter silence and the air stiffens. The officer looks up for the first time since we sat down. I look up and our eyes meet. I realize I should say something, I mean it’s *my* name. “April. April Charles,” I add. His face is full of shock. “Oh.” I silently nod. “Well, a... April I’ll be right back.” He stands up and leaves without another word and with that my mind drifts back to the day my six year old life changed.

My last memory was typical, as was the day. I was sitting on a velvet chair, watching my dad inhale a tall glass of chocolate milk. I remember his eyes, large and green. I remember his smile, warm and welcoming. I even remember his slightly shaggy brown hair that he would let me comb. Every aspect of him makes me feel stuck. To this day, I can count the things I know about my father on one hand. He loved the color purple, his favorite animal was an elephant, he was a police officer and he disappeared the day I was kidnaped. The hardest part is that I don’t want to believe that the man in this once happy memory, is a kidnaper and potentially the homicide suspect for the murder of my best friend, Jane. I was kidnaped when I was six years old and don’t remember a thing. My Mom says I was drugged and the only way that I am alive is because my kidnaper left me on a park bench two weeks after. Eleven years later, I’m back in the same room bracing myself for the police officers to tell me they have no suspects. That is... except for me.

I jump as the door swings open, recognizing my mom's face. Arms open wide, I reach to her. I fight to hold back my tears. Tears that I thought I long since cried out. My mom slowly releases her grip and we both sit down waiting for the detective to return.

Detective Cooper walks in and informs the two of us that new information has been brought to their attention and for us to leave and await his call. As we walk to our car, the darkened sky depend my thoughts, and for the second time, my head wanders back to Jane and how she met her end.

I was walking back from last period, which was gym. My suspicions grew as she was absent that block. Jane was an honor roll student with no more than three sick days in a year. In every class, she was an impeccable classmate. Finding her reading in school on a Saturday was fairly typical. Finding her lifeless body in the library bin for returned books nonetheless, was devastating. I can still hear my scream echo through the halls of the empty building.

When we arrive back at our house I notice a shadowed figure. As we exit the car, I see the smile of a familiar face. I recognize the man with green eyes, a warm welcoming smile and somewhat shaggy hair that he has now cut short. As I stand, frozen in my shock, he runs to me. I hear sirens approaching in the background. My vision is spinning. Three police cars stop at my home and the officers practically jump out of their seats. Two men run up to my mother and handcuff her. I feel light-headed and I can't do anything other than let my silence continue.



I hear my mother scream my name and I reach for her. "What are you doing!" In all the chaos, an officer looks at me. "This woman is under arrest for the murder of Jane Dunkin and for the kidnaping of April Charles." I yell, confused. "I'm April Charles!" My father grabs my shoulder as he whispers, "I'll explain."

My mother is taken away as my dad starts to explain himself and how she threatened to hurt me if he didn't leave... and how she kidnaped me to frame him... and even how she killed Jane once she found out Jane knew about my father. My heart brakes. Because life brings heartbreak and heartbreak brings old friendships.

### The Count Down

About six months ago. . .

"Hey Joanne, wanna go for a walk around town?" Dianna said

"Yeah, sure! When?" Joanne said excitedly

"15 minutes, my place."

"Got it, I'll be there!"

"Hey Joe," I asked

"Yeah Alice, what's up?"

"I wanna get out of the house can I come along?"

"Yeah, why not!"

Joanne and I stalked through the darkness trying to be quiet so we wouldn't wake any children in the neighborhood. I tripped over my feet and my shoe sole ran over the concrete road. We stopped, giggled, and kept going. Dianna was waiting for us at her door and walked down, she showed us a bag, its contents were; 5 pieces of 1-meter rope, 3 cans of spaghettiOs, life straws, a dagger, a bow, ten or twelve arrows, a sword, and a gun with ammunition.

"What is all this?" I asked confused.

"Well Alice," Joanne exclaimed in a whisper, "when other countries are plotting war, I don't wanna die, alright?"

"Yup, every time." Dianna snickered

Ally Nikkel, Grade 7, Pacific Way Elementary, The Count Down

"I got a tent and three sleeping bags and threw it over my shoulder into the trunk, we are going camping. Ohh! I also have the propane fire pit."

"Good," Joe said

"Wow, I was not told we were going camping," I said surprised

We hopped in the truck and Dianna started it up. The air smelt of Diesel as we drove through the warm summer's night.

"Get the tent!" Joe yelled

"Okay, okay! I'm getting there!" Dianna screamed back.

"I got the mallet in the back, should I get it?"

"Yeah, duh! What else will I use? Alice?" We all laughed for a while then set up the tent.

We heard a chopper land somewhere near where we were camping, I got up to investigate. Dianna and Joe flanking me, we stalked our way through the roofed forest, running to the sound of large helicopter blades chopping through the air. We saw about six people come out of the helicopter all wearing camo.

"Is this the army?!" I whispered

"No."

"Look at the left side of their chest that's a foreign flag."

I saw them rough handling a metal object, place it on the ground and run into the chopper then they proceeded to fly away.

“What the heck was that all about?” I asked very skeptically.

“I don’t know.”

“Maybe we should head home . . .”

“Yeah, maybe.

We got into the old grey, rusty, Chevy diesel and drove away.

One week later . . .

“Well the bombs surely weren’t expected, but witnesses say that they saw the act happen,”

“I can’t believe you filmed it, Dianna!” I half screamed

“I know right! I’m so happy I did!” Diana said enthusiastically

“We have been interviewed by the news!” Joe screamed

“Wait. turn up the radio. . . And rewind twenty seconds.” Diana said with a scared look on her face.

“With that act, our allies are enraged, but will this be the start of another war, I sure hope not,

Witnesses say they saw foreign flags on the six army soldiers that climbed out of a chopper on Friday, February 13th, the police are currently looking through the footage to confirm.”

Horrified the three girls sat in their basement with wide eyes.

“This could be nuclear war!” I screamed terrified

“Well, we’ve got to think posi-”

A huge boom rattled my house walls. When I looked outside it was a nightmare in pure daylight, there, in the middle of picawidle field was a smoke cloud. I heard Diana scream and Joe cradled herself in the tightest ball.

Present time

Since the bomb was dropped Joanna became schizophrenic, always nervous and was on the brink of starvation, and feared that the food was poisoned. I was worried about her health.

I stared around at the complete wasteland of a town, that was my home. Nothing remained except huge craters where the bombs landed, I heard a slight clopping of hooves.

“Hide!” I instructed Diana, Joe and I ran to the nearest safe house. We climbed down the rusted metal ladder into an absolute dump of a place. The walls were not even fortified,

they were dirt.

"Mines better," I whispered. I peeked my head out the metal burrow in the ground.

"Foreign army," I whispered to Diana to tell Joe.

"they're armed," I whispered.

"If we attack we don't stand a chance," Diana said

"Well then let's hide better and not get ourselves murdered," Joe whispered

I shut the lid and I rotated the wheel to lock it I sighed and we were silent for a very long

Diana looked out and whispered "I'll go check. Bye . . ."

Just the way she said it made me nervous I watched as she climbed out. I locked the lid and looked at Joe terrified. She had the same look plastered on her own face as well.

I heard a scream, a shot and I heard something fall, I was praying it was not someone. I

heard a gasp and Joe ran to the door and let herself out. One more shot rang my ears I

locked the base and sat there wide-eyed than I heard the marching fade they left, I ran

out of the ladder into the forest and sat there, silent tears running down my face.

Hoping, hiding, praying, to not be killed.

The Life Of A Novelist

# Life Of A Novelist

## Chapter 1: Trapped With Myself

My life feels like I'm in a loop. Every night, I do the same thing. Go to work, come home, eat take out, then work some more. The only time I get to think is while I'm eating. I'm supposed to work on my new story, which is due in a week, but I would prefer to get some sleep. At least if I slept for an hour, I could get some rest once in my life. Ever since I was a kid, it seems like I've been expected to do more than what I am capable. I guess I can't complain, I was the one who chose to be an author. My editor expects me to work from six until eleven everyday working on the same story, every week, for the whole month. I don't even know the last time I had a break. I guess I should at least do a page.

"Bzzz, Bzzz. Bzzz, Bzzz" My phone rings. It's probably Josh again. It's probably about the fact I haven't finished page one-hundred five.

"Hello," I answer his call.

"Trinity! I don't know how you expect me to work when you haven't finished a page!" He shouts at me like he's in the room.

"I know I'm finishing it now, chill," I tell him.

"Okay, just make sure you get it done by midnight tonight, or we'll have to push the due date," He tells me with an anxious voice.

"We'll probably have to push the due date anyway...." he murmurs away from the phone. Trying to make sure I don't hear him, but I do.

## The Life Of A Novelist

“Anyways, good night, Trinity,” Josh says in defeat.

“Night Joshy,” I smirk as I call him his nickname to annoy him.

“You need to stop calling me that!” he says, obviously annoyed by me calling him that.

He hung up and I started writing. I don't know how people expect me to work when I've been up since three this morning. I look at my clock on my stove, it's already ten o'clock. I don't feel tired physically, but mentally I could pass out right now. Being by myself most of the time is the usual, but it feels lonely now. Don't get me wrong, I'm an introvert, but being alone twenty-four seven is lonesome. I want to phone Josh up again, but he's probably asleep. Even in my office I'm alone, it feels like I'm trapped within myself.

## Chapter 2: Friends Come At The Strangest of Times

I slept for an hour last night, which was a relief considering I haven't slept since Thursday. What day is it? It's Sunday, May 25, year of 2023. That means it's my birthday in three days. I hate celebrating my birthday, because I always spend it alone. At least this year Josh said he would spend it with me. Josh is my editor, but he's also my brother. He moved here to help me with 'Getting My Stories Public'. When my first story did get public, I wasn't expecting to have to work twenty-four seven. I sat in my office, trying to get out of my writers block. Why did I choose to be an author? When you have to write a ten story series, you'll see what I mean. Instead of starting a new book, I start reading my fan mail. They are so supportive of me, they deserve this story. I look at my trash bin and see the pile of crumpled pages; I might as well take them out to the recycling. I slowly open my office, trying not to make a sound. If Josh heard me, I'd get in trouble again. I check the hallway. When I see the coast is clear, I quickly run to the recycling room.



The Life Of A Novelist

On the way in I run into someone's back, causing us both to tumble forwards. I quickly get up and immediately start picking up papers.

"I'm so, so sorry!" I tell them as they stand up, rubbing the back of their head.

"It's fine, don't worry about it Ms. Hemson," The man says, quickly picking up sheets as well.

"I'm Jaxx, Josh's assistant editor of your stories," he says quickly grabbing the papers from my hand and putting his other hand out.

"I'm Trinity. You already know that, sorry," I say shaking his hand.

"That's okay, Ms. Hemson," he says again.

"Please, call me Trinity, I hate sounding so professional," I tell him, looking at the pages he's holding.

"Okay, Whatever you say, Miss Trinity," he says with a smirk on his face.

My face wrinkles every time he calls me miss, it's annoying. Besides his annoying smirk, he's a really nice guy. After that, he comes over to help me think of ideas for my new story. I am still very curious about his important pages that he is hiding from me. Instead of starting my book, again, we go out for dinner. Even if it is just Boston Pizza, it was a good change to have someone to eat with.

"Why did you decide to become an author?" He randomly asks me.

"Well, when I was younger I wanted to be able to express myself through words, but I also didn't want to make it direct." I explain to him.

"So, you wanted to write out your life, but you didn't want people to know it's your life?" he asks.

The Life Of A Novelist

“Pretty much,” I say smiling at him.

“That’s great, Trinity,” he says smiling back at me.

“Thanks, Jaxx,” I say. Friends truly come at the strangest of times!

To be continued....

## When the Sun Rises

The vibrant yellow pencil rolled off her desk repeatedly. Each time she bent over she noticed that the lead came out and rolled into the same familiar crease in the floorboards. She shifted her weight on the rolling chair where she spent many depressing hours contemplating how she was going to do it. She sighed heavily as she bent *one last time*, she told herself, to pick it up. *One more time. That was it.*

She didn't know why she was writing a note. *It's not like it would change anything*, she thought to herself. Her parents didn't love her and her friends had abandoned her. It's not like anyone would care; they probably wouldn't even read it.

Little did she know that if she would have died her parents wouldn't get out of bed for days. They would refuse to eat and barely drink. They would become lifeless for years because they hadn't known how to raise and protect their only daughter who didn't even bother to leave a note. At 15, the love of both their lives left them because they supposedly didn't love her enough for her to stay. They didn't want her; she was an accident. That was true. But what was also true was that they came into her room every morning to watch her be inanimately at ease because it calmed them. While she slept she never made a sound but still managed to make them smile, just at the thought that she was their daughter.

Their irreplaceable daughter.

If she would have died they would have struggled to enter her room. Wherever they would go they would see visions of what would have been their daughter if she had been happy and alive. They would keep door to her room shut: it would hold too many heart-wrenching memories of their daughter and the fact that now she only exists in their imagination and a bundle of flowers from the neighbor across the hall.

She didn't know all this. She saw herself as a setback to her amazing parents. She was just an obstacle that was better removed from their path. She was a misfortune; a stumbling block. Although, despite all this, she couldn't bring herself to do it. She saw the window open in front of her that led to the solution to *everything* that had gone wrong in her life. Every delay, every barrier, every impediment. Everything that happened over the years was leading up to this: so why couldn't she bring herself to jump? *Maybe it's just the window*, she thought.

She crept into the small enclosed space of their two bedroom apartment, the living room and kitchen, the only one they could afford. The dirty, stained cork that luckily made no sound compared to the creaky floorboards in her room reminded her of why she shouldn't be doing this. Every stain was a memory that they could laugh about when she would be older. When she would come over for dinner and they would grin over the wasabi in the carpet, or the baby food stained to the wall. Everything was there for a reason; and now when she looks at those happy memories all she was going to see is what she lost and what could've been. Surely they wouldn't look back at those stains and think that, right? They didn't even care. All her parents would think about was

how those blemishes kept them from getting a new home where they could be finally happy as a family.

She averted her eyes from the kitchen and found them gazing out into the view of the city. The lights polluted the air as people lay awake restlessly in their apartment buildings across the street.

She coughed when she opened the balcony door so her parents wouldn't hear. The small gust of wind in the open air made her feel refreshed and relaxed. She had just seen the small hint of light escaping through the stars as the morning approached. She had to do this quickly before anyone saw and called someone. Then again; they probably would think it's just another depressed, mindless teenager who didn't know the consequences of her actions. Which in fact, was true. She didn't know all the pain and sorrow that would float through the once-beautiful breeze that she stood in. She didn't know.

That's exactly why she didn't jump.

Not knowing what was going to happen made her realize that not all outcomes need to be bad. They can be whatever path she chooses all based on the choices she makes. She can be the one to choose happiness over negativity; she can be the one to decide what she feels. She can be the one to decide where her life is headed and where her actions will take her. She didn't know what would happen if she died. She would never know because she wouldn't be alive to tell what she wanted and where she

wanted to take herself. The truth was she wanted all that life could give her. The truth was that she knew she didn't have that. But a story even more truthful would be the one she could tell her kids and her grandkids about how she realized her mistakes made her the person she is today. The person who once stood on a balcony contemplating her death before she turned around and saw her beautiful parents running towards her because they cared about her that much. She didn't jump not because of the beautiful embrace that her parents held her in, or the lights that shone in her eyes in the best way, but because while the sun rose so did many opportunities that she could take. She would be one of those many people walking in the streets on their way to work, holding their motivation in a briefcase; ready to conquer the world, and she decided, so would she.

Grade 7

I awoke to my alarm blaring, annoyed, I shut it off immediately. I sat up in my bed and remembered last night. I remembered crying until 2 in the morning.

"Kendra! You up yet?" my dad asked outside my door.

Wiping my silent tears, I replied: "Yeah, be out soon."

I caught a glimpse of myself in my body mirror before opening my door.

*Man, I hate myself so much,* I thought.

"Good morning Kendra! How was your sleep?" my dad asked cheerfully, he must have slept through my crying. I wouldn't be surprised because he slept all the way across the house from me.

"Morning. I had a good sleep." I replied dully.

*Lies,* I thought.

I began to eat breakfast, well what I want to eat. I barely eat anything anymore. Some people say I'm starving myself. I say it's a diet. My dad goes off into his room to finish getting ready and my brother is busy watching TV. I head towards the garbage and throw out the rest of the food.

*At this rate I'm able to feed the kids in Africa,* I joke to myself.

I head to my room to get changed. I hate this part of the day because I'm so insecure with myself.

*Why the heck do I wear the same things every day? Ugh, I really hate how this looks on me,* I think as I look at my outfit in the mirror. *This has to do.*

I walk to the bathroom and immediately look for my hairbrush. I really hate my hair. It's too short and has too much volume.

I finish getting ready and grab my earbuds, phone, charger, bag, water, and watch. I make my way to the car and get in. My dad then gets into the car, followed by my brother who also gets in. I put my earbuds in and play some My Chemical Romance.

He starts the car and drives out. It's a gray morning, really depressing, to be honest. If my Grade 5 teacher was right, there are about 2 inches of snow. She said to find out what an inch is, use half of your thumb. So if I did the math right that means that there's a whole thumb of snow.

*Why am I overthinking snow?* I asked myself.

Grade 7

We arrived at school, late again, of course. I'm glad I'm off the car, I get really anxious whenever he drives because I think he's going to get road rage, I really don't like it when that happens.

I practice my fake smile for my friends, making sure it looks convincing enough. I'm hoping I don't breakdown in the hallway again. It's been happening a lot recently and I really don't know why. It's pretty cold, probably going to be an "in-day". The second bell rang.

*Shoot*, I think to myself, *I don't want to be late again*.

I jog inside and open up my bag to get my math when I realize it's not there, I must've forgotten to put it away last night. I choke back the tears of stress and grab the rest of my stuff and walk inside my class. I was about to look on the board to see where I sat but I heard a familiar voice calling my name. Grace.

"Kendra! Over here!" said Grace who was waving frantically. Grace is the kind of friend that points out a lot of things but is really nice.

"Kendra, you okay? It looks like you're about to cry," asks Grace quietly while I find my seat.

"Yeah, sure," I reply, reassuring her that I'm okay.

*Can you even talk about your feelings once?* I ask myself.

"Okay class, get out your Problems Of The Week and work on them!" says my teacher, Mr. Bell.

"Um, Mr. Bell? What do I do if I forgot it at home?" I ask quietly. I don't want to speak too loud because my friends say I'm too loud.

"Oh, well work on your Heritage Stamp and Paragraph, if you're finished that then you can read," he replies while smiling.

I realize I didn't get my book earlier so I get up and walk toward the door. I was about to put my hand on the door when another familiar voice calls my name.

"Kendra, you okay?" asks Savannah, one of my closest friends, "You don't seem to well, want to go to the bathroom?" We always go to the bathroom if one of us is either about to or having a breakdown.



"No, just leave me be," I said harshly. I didn't mean to but I'm always being asked if I'm okay. I keep walking to my locker and being careful to not look back. I grabbed my book and walked back into class. I took my seat and started to read one of my favorite series.

The school bell rang, finally, school is over. Luckily, it's Wednesday, which means I get to see Ari. I really like Ari. She's funny, nice, and we have a lot in common. I spot her walking up to me and wave at her. She's the only one that can make me genuinely smile.

"Hey, stranger!" I say smiling.

"Hey. How was your day?" she asked, also smiling.

"Bad," I pretty much blurted out. I felt ashamed to admit that.

"Awe, you poor thing." she responded while putting her arm around me, "Did you eat at all today?"

"No," I revealed. She cares about me too much.

"Well you should," she suggested while pulling me into an embrace.

Silent tears go down my face and he notices. She hugs me tighter. We just stand there in each other's embrace. She released from the embrace and looked me in the eyes, wiping my tears.

"Hey, you're going to get through this, wait, no. We're going to get through this. Now please remember this one thing, I love you." she said calmly.

"I love you too," I admitted.

Maggie Pearce

Grade 7

St. Ann's Academy

"Inspiration"

"Inspiration"

No one is born perfect.

Everyone needs to try.

You have to believe before you can succeed.

Every goal starts with a dream.

Then, continues by passion and motivation.

You have to be brave.

Space isn't discovered by astronauts that don't get inside the rocket.

Tests aren't faced by students who are ready to stop trying.

You always have to give it your best shot.

Maggie Pearce

Grade 7

St. Ann's Academy

"Sounds"

"Sounds"

There are bells to be rung.

There are songs to be sung.

There are whistles in the night to cause a little fright.

The sounds around are sounds of peace,

so take a breath and breathe.

Maggie Pearce

Grade 7

St. Ann's Academy

"Fly"

"Fly"

You can follow your dreams.

You can hold your head high.

You can reach for the sky.

Then, try your best to

fly,

fly,

fly.

"Dancing Eyes"

My name is Olivia and this is my story about my "Dancing Eyes". It all started when I was about 14 years old, I was at my dance class practicing for my competition and suddenly my left eye was red, dry, and itchy. It continued to be like that for a week so my parents decided to take me to the doctor to see what was going on. We went the next day and the doctor said it wasn't pink eye and he didn't know what it was so he wanted to do some tests to make sure everything was ok; it turned out nothing was ok.

Two weeks later the doctor called my family and asked us if we would come and see him; we went that afternoon and I could tell something was wrong. We were in the same room as last time but this time something was different; it felt less cheerful and it was more sad, dull, and quiet.

Five minutes later the same doctor walked into the room and sat down; he seemed sad. Right away he said he had some bad news. I panicked right away. My parents managed to calm me down, but it didn't last very long because the doctor told me that I had cancer in my left eye. I burst into tears and I could see my parents almost in tears too. They hugged me as the doctor continued to talk about what would happen. But the worst part about finding out that I had cancer was that the doctor said I couldn't do dance anymore or go to school, which broke my heart. I had been doing dance since I was three years old and now all of a sudden I couldn't dance. I also had to quit school, the two most important things in the world to me beside my family. He said I would undergo chemotherapy to get rid of cancer, which scared me a lot and he said that I would feel really tired and dizzy for the next few weeks or maybe months and that

"Dancing Eyes"

my hair might fall out from the chemotherapy. This scared me a lot, but I tried not to think about it. I was scared about not being able to dance. I quickly decided that all my energy should go into surviving cancer.

We started the chemotherapy as quickly as possible, but it wasn't quick enough. Three weeks later it spread to my right eye. I had already been in the hospital for over a month and finding out that my other eye had cancer. I immediately knew I would be there much longer than a month. Another month passed and I found out that my right eye wasn't responding to the chemotherapy at all.

One afternoon I was taking a nap in my uncomfortable and lumpy hospital bed and I heard my parents talking to the doctor. My mom was crying I was tired so I couldn't really hear them, but I did hear them say that they are going to try and give me a higher dose of chemotherapy. They said that if that it didn't work they would have to surgically remove my eyes so that cancer wouldn't spread. After I heard that I woke up instantly and I could tell my parents were shocked that I heard them, and that I obviously wasn't supposed to hear that. I cried so hard when I heard this news, and my parents kept saying it would be ok, that I was strong, and I would get through it, but I knew it wasn't going to be okay or at least not for a while.

They started the extra chemotherapy that day which surprised me because I knew I would get more chemotherapy but I didn't think it would be that soon. It made me extremely tired, and to make the situation worse my hair started to fall out. So that night I decided to just shave it all off so that I wasn't just watching it my hair fall out piece by

"Dancing Eyes"

piece. When my parents saw my head all shaved and bare they were in complete shock. When I told them why, they understood and gave me a lot of extra hugs. It took a month and a half for me to react to the medicine which was a long time. Since I did respond to the chemotherapy, they didn't have to remove my eyes. I was very happy that I could still see and I didn't have to have glass eyes. I did, however, end up getting even more chemotherapy just to make sure the cancer was gone for sure. In total it took two years for my cancer to fully be cured.

Then suddenly my vision started to go. It started in my left eye, then carried over to my right eye, and within a month my vision was completely gone. The only thing that was good about this was that I was cleared from the doctor to go back to school. I was supposed to be in grade eleven, but I was in grade nine. Because of my illness, I missed a lot of school, which I didn't like very much because I wasn't with any of my friends. Also, I couldn't see! Can you imagine how hard it was for me to make new friends and to basically just try to learn. I went from a straight A student to a B and maybe even C student. It was hard, but I managed it. On the positive side, I could dance! I couldn't see, but I could dance. I tried my best, but I could just feel all the people staring at me.

On the way home from dance, we were bringing my friend home and my mom noticed that my friend, Anna, kept looking at my eyes a lot. When she asked why my eyes were always moving or shaking, we started talking about it and Anna said, "Hey, it's kind of like your eyes are dancing!"

Raidin Petrie  
Grade 7  
Logan Lake Secondary/Elementary School

## Fear

I was a normal teenage girl until yesterday, the day I was kidnapped. All I could feel was a strange sensation running through me. All I could feel was fear. Fear fills the empty feeling in my chest. Fear takes over my body. Fear is the only thing I can turn to. Fear only makes things worse, and that's why I'm here.

There was a man that came into my house late last night and took me and pulled me around by my arms then threw me into a car and slammed the door. I was too scared to even try to scream and fight back. I must've blacked out.

I could hear him stomping around my bedroom looking for something, and I tried to stay as still as I could but no matter how hard I tried, I still moved, a lot, trying to grab my phone to call my mom and warn her that there was someone in our house she needed to leave immediately. I squirmed and shuffled looking for my dang phone but he heard me. He heard me moving. He saw my eyes. He looked me dead in the eyes and laughed.



“ Where are you taking me?!?” I managed to shout through the pain and the fear. He only smiled. “ Where is my mom?!?” his smile widened. I was able to see the rotting chunks of food stuck in his teeth. “ Please..... She needs me. She isn’t well. Please just bring me home.” He laughed a sinister laugh and pulled over on the side of an abandoned highway. I looked out the window and saw the old Bernie’s house. “ What do you want? Cash? What?!? Whatever it is, tell me so that I can give it to you.” He turned around and faced me, grabbing me by my hair and pulled me so close to his face, I could almost smell what he had for lunch. His breath was rancid. All I could smell was a brewery. I dug into my pocket and pulled out my mints. He saw me doing that and struck me hard. Although it stung, I pushed through the pain and laughed. He struck me again, I laughed again. Still holding onto my hair, he threw me into a window, causing it to shatter into hundreds of pieces, cutting my head, knocking me out. When I woke up, I saw that I was still in the car, my head dangling out of the window, blood dripping onto the snow that must’ve fallen while I was unconscious. The man that had taken me was long gone, running further and further into the woods. I brought my head back into the car thinking, why? Why would he run off? Why would he leave me here alone and wounded. I feel around for my phone there was no luck . No man, not even a kidnapper, would take a phone. I was able to find it in the middle console of his car but when I turned it on, there was no cell service. It was getting late and I had no idea where I was nor how to get a hold of anyone. My only choice was to walk. Walk until my feet bled. Walk until I found someone or something. Walk until I found life.

### Week One

One week of being alone. One week no service. One week full of fear. One week on the road. Somehow I was able to find some food and shelter that I would use, but it was never enough. I would get cold at night and hungry during the day. I was able to make it into the city but my phone had died and I was far from home with no money and no friends. I had hardly been able to get used to the

town I live because my mom and I had just moved here and I was not ready to go on by myself. I tried and tried to find my way home but it was no use. I've been missing for over forty-eight hours and nobody came to look for me, not even my own mother. Going on with no money, phone, or food, I was going to die here, alone, hungry, and full of fear. I sat down and pondered. Pondered why? Why wouldn't anyone come look for me? Why wouldn't the police come? Why was I alone? I looked down at my striped pajamas that were once white but now stained with my blood. Then it hit me. I've been leaving a trail of blood. My phone has a tracker on it. I'm probably only fifteen minutes from home. My slippers were drenched from the blood and the snow. Knowing that I could go home, I ran. I ran so fast that I started having troubles breathing. As I was running, I started having second thoughts about everything. My mother didn't come save me. She didn't call the authorities. She didn't do anything! And I hate her for that. I turned back and ran. Ran back to the car. Back to the highway. Back to him. Back to the man who wounded me. Back to the man I want to kill. I followed my trail of blood back to the car. Another week long travel, but this time, he will be the one full of fear. When I approached the place where the car had once been, I noticed that there were fresh tire tracks but not just one, three. Three fresh tire tracks and one of them were my mom's tracks. I followed them until I came upon an old school. I felt an odd feeling here, like I've been here before, like all of this was supposed to happen. Then it all started coming back to me. That man wasn't a stranger and my mom was looking for me. That man was my father coming to take me away from my mom. Take me back to this school. My childhood school. The first place I felt fear.

### Expertise

Look, I didn't mean to create a real live Pegasus in my designated art area. I've been told I'm a really good artist, especially when I'm painting. I was painting a super realistic Pegasus - so realistic, it could've fooled an ancient Greek. I didn't fully realize how good I was until the Pegasus I was painting peeled itself off the canvas. Its vibrant golden brown coat of hair flashed in the sunlight. Anyway, it freaked out in my large but crowded art room and made a huge mess.

Every time she (her spunky attitude gave me a pretty good clue) twitched one of her large but graceful wings, she sent paintbrushes flying. I was slightly upset by the monopolization of my art room, but this was a Pegasus, and I could afford to forgive that one, slight inconvenience.

Sorry about the lack of introduction. My name is Alison, but I prefer Ali. I used to have a horse of my own (his name was Flame), but we had to sell him to pay off some debt. I have been dreaming of having a horse ever since, but this was even better! She was a golden bay Pegasus with black wings and a narrow white stripe down her face. I left the room quickly (for fear she would bring the house down), for a piece of rope that I could lead her with. When I came back, she was just standing there, glowering. She clearly did not like confinement. She would have to go into the paddock with the walk in shed for shelter. I walked toward her with the rope, my hands outstretched so she could sniff it.

“Hey there girl, how's it going?” I said softly as she gave me the once over. I stretched my hand out slowly and stroked her neck. I could feel her muscles tense as I did so. I made a

crude halter out of the rope, and quickly put it on. She looked not at all pleased with the latest update, and made it clear by tossing her head a few times. Great, I thought, Let’s just hope she’s halter trained! I turned my back on her and walked away. To my surprise, I wasn’t taking up much slack in the rope, and then I heard hoof beats behind me. She must’ve decided to humor me, because looking behind me, she seemed a little grumpy. Luckily, my art room was downstairs, so it was possible to get her out of the house. I put her in the paddock, expecting her to fly off, but she stayed on the ground. In fact, she started grazing! I watched her for a while, before I went back to my art room to clean up and experiment.

After I had cleaned up the huge mess in my art area, I decided to paint a realistic pet rat, because it was small and wouldn’t mess up my art room again. Sure enough, the rat pushed itself off the canvas and fell on my lap. It was too cute to let go! Since my parents never came into my room, I decided to keep her my old bird cage I had in my room (it had been unoccupied for three years now). The rat had a light brown hood with small dots of the same color down to the base of her tail. Other than that, she was white and looked quite young, and from the spots on her back, I named her Pebbles.

My parents soon came home from their other occupations, “Ali, why is there a full grown Pegasus in the paddock?” they asked. I told them all I could, and seeing as the Pegasus didn’t want to leave, we let her stay. Later I told this story to a fellow artist, “Oh, yes, I’ve heard of that. Happens to every good artist. That is why all good artists don’t paint realistically.” Now I know why good artists paint real things in weird colors.

## **Impossible**

They said it wasn't good enough.

They said it would never happen.

They said it was impossible.

Yet here I was standing outside the White House putting all those words and comments behind me. This was a new start. A new adventure.

It had always been my dream to become the first female president. When I was younger I would pretend to be reading acceptance speeches. As I grew up, that dream was ridiculed.

"You'll never become President. You're a woman."

"Women can't be Presidents."

"It's never going to happen."

"That's *impossible*."

My mother was always too busy when I brought it up.

"Oh, Tori. What a nice dream you had last night."

In college, I dared not to talk about it. It was the thing that made everyone laugh at me in high school so what was the difference? Instead, I tried to make them see that a woman could be powerful. I excelled in government class and trumped the boys. But when they asked what I

wanted to be I told them and yet everyone still laughed. It was never-ending. You can't be this. You can't be that.

No one supported my dreams. No one wanted to believe that I could become president. I had to pursue my dream on my own.

When I decided I was ready, I was going to run for President. When I said this one of the other presidential candidates laughed.

“Who would ever vote for a woman to be president?”

I wanted to make that man pay for what he had said. I wanted to prove to him that I could become President.

It was a month before the official voting and I had no one supporting me. There was something that I was able to do to make them realize that I could take on the role of president. So I went to the people. I didn't want to be recognized so I didn't wear anything presidential. I went and talked to people. I started on the bus. I sat beside a young woman who looked about sixteen.

“Hi,” I said to her, “How has your day been?”

“Great,” she said with large amounts of sarcasm. She turned to face the window. This was going to be harder than I expected. It must have seemed weird that a stranger wanted to talk to someone about their day. Most didn't care much for that.

“Well, my day has been really hard.” I had to find a way to spark conversation.

“Wonderful.”

“Well I am the first woman who is running for president and so far no one thinks that I can do it.”

The girl turned around abruptly. “Your Tori Kanida,” she said with large eyes.

“That’s me.”

“Oh my gosh, you are such an inspiration. When I heard that a woman was running for president, I was so excited. Finally, we’re getting the recognition we deserve.”

“Ever since I was young I wanted to become the first female president.” It was nice to know that someone appreciated what I was doing.

“Since you started as a presidential candidate I have felt so, powerful. Like I’m truly special.”

“It hasn’t always been easy for us has it? We get paid less and we’re expected to tend to the house while our husbands do all the “dirty” work. My mother had always hated doing all the work around the house.”

“When I grow up I want to do something to inspire girls all around the world. Like you have.”

“What do you mean? I’ve inspired one person.”

“Is that what you think?” she sounded surprised. “Ever since you started running for president, most girls have felt as though they are powerful. All my friends feel like they can do anything.”

“Really?”

Our conversation continued on for the whole bus ride. When I had to get off, I remembered the time when I was her age. I looked up to my mom. My father had died in the Second World War and she had taken care of me. She had managed to be a mom and worker at the same time. She was the reason I was where I was. She showed me how to persevere.

Two weeks had passed and as the election drew nearer, I felt good. I had had so much support from women, young and old. There was one more thing that I had to do. I had to show people that a woman wasn't something that was taken for granted. All of the people that I had talked to felt as though they didn't have a voice. And so I gave them the opportunity. I prepared a stump speech which is the most common speech among Presidents for they say little. I let the women who thought they didn't have a voice express their feelings. I let them show the world what they were missing.

"This is what you are missing," I said, "These magnificent, strong, wonderful women. This is what *wasn't* good enough. This is us."

I was nervous as the names of the votes were counted. Even if I wasn't voted in as president I was proud of myself for doing something that others said was impossible. As it drew near the end I was leading by five hundred votes.

At twelve o'clock, I heard my name come from the screen.

"And the new President of the United States is Tori Kadina. She is the first female president. Congratulations."

I had done it. After all they had said, I did it.

I ran out onto the street to celebrate and I was confronted by many people.

"You are such an inspiration."

"You are a history maker."

"Nothing is impossible after what you just accomplished."

At the presidential swearing in, I was nervous but I pushed through it. This is what I prepared for.



“My name is Tori Kadina and I am the first female president. Let me show you what a woman can do.”

## **Spring**

When the flowers bloom and the birds chirp,

When the sun beams and the wind blows,

When the snow is melted and then you'll know,

Spring is finally here.

When animals come out of hibernation and the trees regrow their leaves,

When the grass becomes greener and the smell of flowers refills the air,

When the lakes begin to thaw then you'll know,

Spring is finally here.

### **Fall**

Red, orange, yellow, and purple.

People in sweaters scattered here and there.

Warm drinks and pumpkin pies.

Cold breezes blow through your hair

The crunching leaves,

and bare trees.

Cozy socks and the damp ground.

The familiar smell of nutmeg and cinnamon.

Red, orange, yellow, and purple.

Jacob woke up early. Ever since the Hatachi tribe had invaded his homeland, Jacob never got enough sleep. The Hatachi tribe were a ruthless people, who sought control over anyone that was weak. The Hatachi tribe used a cursed blade that was so powerful that no one could stand in their way. No one would stick up for themselves because it was suicide.

'I will make this right' Jacob thought. Even though he was only 5'6' and didn't have a large build, he was still very strong for a sixteen year old. Jacob was the best bowman in his tribe. Although there were other men trained in the art of the bow, he still remained the best. What was he going to do about the Hatachi tribe? He didn't have the slightest clue. But he was planning on taking his two best friends with him to help.

Jacob's parents told him that he was making a big mistake going into the land of the Hatachi tribe, and he would most surely not return. But Jacob was his own man, and no one could tell him what to do. The next day he took his bow and quiver and said his goodbyes to his parents, and went to meet his friends at the rendezvous point in the meadow. "Took you long enough" Jared grunted as Jacob found his friends. Jared stood at a height of 6'4' with muscular biceps and a stocky build.

Jared specialized in sword combat, and was very good at it too. He never wore armour because he was untouchable in any battle. Jacob always marveled at Jared, since he was taller than most men at just age fifteen. Peter, on the other hand

was a scrawny kid with no muscle whatsoever. He was often teased by the other boys in the village because of his height.

Peter was so small that he would make ants look like skyscrapers. But Peter held a lot of surprises. He was the fastest person Jacob had ever seen, and was a flawless hand-to-hand fighter. He could take down a grown man in under five seconds. "Well?" Peter said "let's get going!" and with that, the three boys started off with their journey.

Only halfway through their trip, they had already got into trouble. Jacob, Jared and Peter had been walking through some trees when out of nowhere, "*snap snap snap!*". all three boys had been caught in snare traps. "What the heck?" yelled Jared as the ropes snagged them up. Jacob's arrows and Jared's sword fell to the ground with a thud. "Come on!" Peter complained, "stay calm guys" said Jacob "we'll get out of here". But they never had the chance, because soon enough they heard someone speak. "Well, well, well, what do we have here boys?"

Then, suddenly more than a dozen men stepped out behind the trees. "Let us go!" Peter yelled. "Oh but you're not going anywhere-" he never got to finish his sentence because a dart had pierced straight through his chest. All the other men fell back in horror as they watched their friend fall to the ground dead. There was a long silence as the men stared at the lifeless corpse on the ground. What broke the silence was a scream. But not just any scream, the scream of more darts flying through the air. There were only ten seconds of panic before all the men had been killed by darts.

"What just happened?" Jared asked.

“You should be thankful we saved your butts” a woman's voice said. Jacob, Jared and Peter never thought this journey could get any weirder. But it did. Twenty woman dropped down from the trees above with blowguns in their hands. The woman who had talked to them drew a knife and cut the ropes. All three boys fell to the ground, then got up quickly. “Who the heck are you guys?” Jared asked

“We do not tolerate any impoliteness around here” the woman said.

“Oh-ho!” Jared said, “a little hot around the edges are we now?”

In an instant, the woman put Jared in an armlock. “Ow!, let go!” the woman pushed him to the ground. “We never save someone twice” the woman said and with that the rest of the woman disappeared in the trees. “ o-o-okay” Jacob said, “that was interesting”. “We can't stand around all day” Jacob said. “Forget that happened, let's get going”.

It didn't take long for the boys to arrive at the Hatachi border. Except there were two sentries with swords guarding the only entryway. I'll take care of this” Jacob whispered. Unseen in the tall grass, he took his bow and two arrows, knocked them at the same time and fired. He made a clean shot into the men's chests, and the guards fell to the ground unmoving. Then, stealthily the three boys moved into the land of Hatachi. The streets of Hatachi were very quiet, with only the sounds of mice skittering along the roads. It was dusk by now, the only people outside were drunks sleeping on the walkways.

The three boys couldn't risk being seen so they traveled by climbing, and hopping from roof to roof of each house. A squadron of Hatachi warriors were patrolling

the streets below and unfortunately, they saw the boys. "You there!" one of the men shouted. "Get down!". Jacob, Jared and Peter couldn't risk attracting more attention so they did as they were told. Once on the ground one of the soldiers said "come with us". But before they started walking, Jacob and his friends looked at each other as if reading each other's minds, then sprung into action. Jared drew his sword and stabbed the closest man in the back, and Peter was delivering deadly blows to another. Jacob started firing arrows, and within one minute all the warriors had died. The warriors didn't put up much of a fight either. The boys didn't have much time so they ran as fast as they could to the biggest building in the village. The boys got there in five minutes and entered the building. But nobody was there, only the sword on its pedestal glowing in the night. "It's a trap!" Peter yelled, and as he yelled outlines of people started coming out from the shadows. "Run"! Jacob yelled, and they ran like they never ran before.

They barely made it out, but dozens and dozens of warriors were still running after them "keep going!" Peter yelled. Now there were at least two hundred warriors running after them. "If I die i'm going to die fighting" Jared said "I agree" Peter said. Suddenly horns started blaring around the oncoming barrier of Hatachi warriors. The men didn't seem surprised or frightened at all, They just kept running towards the boys.

What happened next, was something most unexpected. "Stand your ground!" a familiar voice said. "Let this land run with the blood of the Hatachi warriors!". The boys turned around and there she was. The woman who had saved them in the woods, and an army with her. "Show no mercy!" she said, then both armies clashed together in an uproar of metal against metal and the outcry of pain as warriors died. "Don't just stand

there!" Jacob shouted at Jared and Peter, dumbfounded. "Attack!", but it wasn't long before a man came out with the powerful sword. "Jared, Peter!" Jacob called as both boys finished up with the warrior they were fighting. "Come with me". They ran towards the man with the sword who was obliterating female fighters all around him with a single swipe. It seemed to just be Jacob, Peter and Jared with the courage to fight the man with the sword. "You cannot defeat me!" he said. "You will be killed by my hand!"

"Oh yeah?" Jared said. Jared's ego got the best of him, and he charged with his sword in hand. "Jared! no!" Peter roared. But it was too late. The man raised his sword and struck Jared with a deafening '*bang!*'. Jared flew twenty feet back into a wall, and lay unmoving on the pavement. Jacob's eyes swelled up with tears. His friend was dead, and the man, along with the sword would pay for it. "I'll kill you" Jacob said under his breath. "I will KILL YOU!" Jacob knocked an arrow and fired. The man deflected the arrow with ease. Jacob drew another arrow, he only had two left in his quiver. He drew back, and shot.

Again the man deflected it. Jacob drew another, and once again, fired. Blocked. That's when Peter attacked. 'He's making a distraction' Jacob thought. He drew his last arrow, and released. The arrow sailed through the air, everything seemed to go in slow-motion. The man with the sword stabbed Peter in the shoulder, then turned around to face Jacob just as the arrow went into his head. All the Hatachi warriors froze, as their leader crumbled to dust, and the sword disappeared. There was a long moment of silence, then, the remaining Hatachi fighters also turned to dust. It was quiet now. Peter seemed alright, he was standing which was a good sign. Jacob and Peter watched the



body of Jared as they realized what he did for everyone. He sacrificed himself to save the ones he loved. Everyone was free now. The blade would reign no more.

## Spirits

I wander down the disinfected hallway, my mother's hand in mine. In front of us is a man in a white coat, and the luminescent lights glare down at me.

"Mama? Is the man gonna hurt me?" I sniffle. My mother smiles into my watery eyes, her nerves hidden behind a confident facade.

"Of course not, honey. He's going to do a simple cut and put something in your arm to help you, okay? I'll be right beside you the whole time." We reach the room for the procedure and when I step inside; I smell the sterilizing solution, see needles, and shrink away. The man smiles and chuckles anxiously.

"Don't worry, I've done this many times, you're safe." I know he's lying. He pats the chair next to him. I sit, tapping my fingers on the armrest. The chair moves toward the ground with a mechanical hum. I squeeze my eyes shut and brace for the pain. I feel a mask go over my mouth and everything goes black.

That was 10 years ago. My parents were worried, and even more so when I woke up screaming as the doctor placed the chip inside of me. They said the scream changed sounds, like a jaguar, or a howler monkey. I was lucky the procedure has been curing my rare disease since then. Well, not really a disease, but I have a sleep issue. I walk out of the house and cannot wake up until I'm in danger. Once I almost walked off a cliff but two steps before, I stopped myself. I'm an outcast at school because of it. My best and only friend, Tyler, is helping to keeping me safe, and she's a real help.

I slip into reality as my car pulls up of Stag's Leap High school. I heave my backpack onto my shoulder as I step out of the car, facing the drama queens, peering through the

### Spirits

chattering groups to find Tyler. I've known her since the first day of preschool when she offered to share her favourite doll with me. She always knows how to cheer me up when I'm sad by baking the best cinnamon apple bread ever. I spot her easily since she's about 6 feet tall, and has shocking blue hair. Her parents would've killed her if she didn't pierce her nose right after. I realize she's with her boyfriend, James who I'm not a fan of. Tyler spots me so I wave awkwardly. She beams, sprinting towards me. James sees me and rolls his eyes. I stick my tongue out.

"You look sad," she reaches into her school bag and pulls out a container. "Good thing I have some cinnamon apple bread!" I look at her with gratitude.

"I love you, but more?" I ask, reaching for the treats. She pulls it away, and shakes it in front of my face.

"No more treats until after the science test." She chides. My chest starts to squeeze. I forgot to study!

"You're my best friend..." I plead. She shakes her head, trying not to giggle. "Fine, you can borrow my notes..." We waltz down the hallway with James trailing behind us, shaking his head. I stop, seeing a glimmer. My magpie spirit likes it, and it piques my interest more. I pick it up, realizing it's a diamond bracelet. As I put it on, James walks past me, taking my infatuation with the bracelet as a chance to say goodbye to Tyler.

"I love this bracelet! I think I'll wear it until I walk past the office." I say, breaking them up.

"Okay, thief." James sneers. I frown, looking at the glimmering bracelet. I shake my head.

### Spirits

"I'm borrowing it till I can get it to someone who'll reunite it with whoever owns it. I'll see you at lunch, Tyler?" I ask. She nods and we duck into class.

On my way to the cafeteria, I see Persephone with Lydia and Valentina, stalking towards me. I cover my face but the Harpies (as I call them) have seen me.

"You!" Persephone shrieks. "You stole my diamond bracelet."

I start to stutter. "I t-thought it was-" I wheeze as she shoves past me, her shoulder clipping mine into the lockers. I turn, realizing the floor is warping beneath my feet. The students around me disappear into puffs of smoke. Except the harpies, as I stare at them, a high pitched whine fills my head. I feel my spirits escaping, making me stronger, so I can fight these... I realize with a start that the Harpies are actually harpies! I take a deep breath and try to get my spirits under control. I pick the lion, and I feel my senses sharpen, my fingers are now claws, and my voice sounds like a growl.

"You need to leave." My lion spirit was once a predator, killing, eating, until one day, he was the prey. His soul, like all the others, was given a second chance, living inside me until I needed them. The harpies cackle.

"Foolish girl. We have orders from the god of the dead, Hades. You will let us destroy you without a fight." They glide toward me with their feathered wings.

"Like I'll come quietly, seagulls!" I roar defiantly, rushing at them with my powerful legs. I leap towards what was Lydia, clawing her eyes. She shrieks, realizing she can't see anymore. I head for Valentina, but she backhands me into the wall. I change into my wolf, howling, hoping someone will come. I hear more howls, and a pack of wolves rush to my aid. My heart lifts, and we charge into battle. A blue wolf stops me, and I realize it's Tyler! I never knew she had a chip

### Spirits

like me. We shift into rocs, soaring into the harpies. They open a portal and glide towards us. Most of the wolves have retreated, but they've done some damage. Together, Tyler and I soar and claw and shriek and drive them back into the portal to the Underworld. They screech and scratch at us, but fall into the portal, sealing it.

“Too bad you couldn't catch me.” I spit.

Tyler smiles at me, panting. I give her a high five as the students start to appear and the floor stops shaking. School resumes as usual, and we keep this secret to ourselves. Some say they can see a blue and a brown wolf in the forests surrounding Stag's Leap.

Maggie Sinclair, Grade 7, Aberdeen Elementary

**Time**

After a long winter  
you wait for the sun to come out  
and the water to go warm

Finally your dream has come true  
but you just want it to be winter again  
You wait in the blazing heat for the chill of a  
Snowflake  
It never comes

In a flash before your eyes  
you see what to do and  
you follow your vision

Maggie Sinclair

Maggie Sinclair, Grade 7, Aberdeen Elementary

**The sky's the limit**

Anywhere  
you may be  
you can imagine  
anything  
Enemies  
War  
Peace  
Family  
Friends  
Beyond the sky  
and in your heart  
there is everything you've  
ever wanted  
Nothing you can't do  
Don't let anyone  
shoot your dreams down  
You can step on broken glass  
or step on clouds  
don't let anyone choose for you

Maggie Sinclair

### My Testimony

I was bullied from Kindergarten to Grade 2 in my old school. In 2014, all the teachers at my school went on strike. It was about mid-September when my family and I started looking for a new school for me to start Grade 3 at. I wanted to go to a private school because I thought there would be no bullying. That is when we came across Kamloops Christian School (KCS). When I went for an interview, I could sense there was something different about this place. I just didn't know what. My family and I decided that I would be attending KCS. I made friends automatically, but that whole thought I had earlier "there would be no bullying at a private school", well, that was not the case. There were a few incidents where there was conflict between my friends and me, but the conflict was always dealt with properly, and now, four years later, I can confidently say that I am friends with everyone in my class.

For the next 2 years, I was taught about Christianity in weekly Bible classes. It was not until my dad went through a very life threatening time that I chose God on my own. It was then that I started praying outside of Bible class. Without God in my family's life, I don't think my dad would have made it. After things were all good again, I just went back to only really thinking about God in weekly Bible classes.

The summer before I started Grade 7, I went to Eagle Bay Camp, and it was a life changing experience. Without my cabin leader, who was an amazing, godly person, I don't think I would be as strong in my faith as I am today. Although "Aurora" was amazing, it was



not until worship night 2018 that I truly gave myself to God. I was singing and dancing at a worship night and all of a sudden I heard God's voice say to me "I want you to know I love you, and I don't want you to be frightened by this message". I was blown away because I had been praying the prayer "God if you are there speak to me". All my prayers were answered. I knew from that day on I would love God forever.

I really enjoy going to church with my family now and I especially like going to Youth every week on Thursday and/or Friday evenings with my friends. My current relationship with Christ on a scale from 1 - 10 would definitely be an 8. There are many ways I could make it stronger, but I already have a stable relationship with Christ. I pray very often because I believe the more you talk to God the stronger your bond with him becomes, just like if you never talked to your friends your relationships would collapse. I feel the same thing goes with God, so I pray whenever I can. That is my life testimony. As long as you keep your faith in God everything will be okay.

**By: Heidi J. Spahmann**

### My Dog Day

I raise my head as I wake to see that John is still sleeping. I decide to go rest my head back down on my old bed, to try and go back to sleep. I think about my breakfast that I will be gobbling down soon, then I realise that It is the same boring breakfast I have every dang morning.

“Ugg, why the same thing every morning.” I think to myself. I get around half an hour sleep until I wake up again, John is still asleep. I hear Theresa walking around in the house getting ready to take Ella to the bus for school. I trot down to the kitchen, to give Ella a sweet face so she will give me my breakfast. Ella rubs my head, then walks over to the counter to pour me my breakfast. As Ella puts down my food, I give her a sweet face as a way to say thank you.

After gobbling down all of my food, I hear John turn on the faucet to get in the shower, and I hear his electric toothbrush. That means it’s time to go down there and get my teeth brushed. When I get there, John is already washed up and sitting down in the shower. John’s face is foaming with excess toothpaste from when he brushed his teeth. I start to lick his face silly because I love the taste of toothpaste.

Eventually, after a little bit of me licking off all that toothpaste, John decides to brush my teeth, even though I mostly just lick the toothpaste. Now is about the time, just after my teeth

have been brushed, and John is out of the shower when Theresa and Ella leave to go to the school bus and work. After that, John is home for about half an hour. All

### My Dog Day

he does is sit at his desk at his computer and eat his breakfast, which is way better than mine by the way, we need to get on that. While he is eating I lie down on one of my beds beside him. When John is done eating he goes outside to start his truck, then comes back inside to give me a treat, grab his bag, say goodbye and leave for work.

Now I'm all alone until Ella comes home at around 3:30 in the afternoon. But, until then it's just me. The first thing I do once everybody leaves is go over to John and Theresa's room. Once I'm in there I take a look at my bed and think about if I would like to lie down on there, but then I look up at their bed, I think about it for a little bit and I decide that I should sleep there instead. After making that not so difficult decision I jump up onto their bed and have a sleep. My sleep goes from what I thought would be only a little bit to a few hours. A few minutes after waking up from my power nap, I spread my body across the bed. I eventually have to get up, and continue my routine for today.

The next thing I do is, make my way out to the foyer so I can grab Theresa's pink pom pom toque to chew on while I lie down. This will upset her but it just feels so good in my mouth. Now, according to the microwave, it's around 2:30 in the afternoon. I look over at the back door and through the window I can see our neighbors black cat cruising through our backyard. This is always fun because I get to bark at the back door. Then after a little bit, he notices me and heads back to his

### My Dog Day

house. Ella should be home in about half an hour, which is great because sometimes I can get lonely and when she gets home she gives me the rubbings and lovins. After Ella gets home, the first thing she does is put her bag away and go to the washroom. But after that she always comes and finds me on one of my beds. Today I decided to be on my bed in John and Theresa's room. When Ella does find me I am usually pretty mellow, but very happy because she puts her hands on the back of my head, lightly touches my ears, and gives my wet cold nose a kiss she says to me.

"Hello Babes! How are you?" I give a little bark as a response but really inside I am laughing my tail off because she called me Babes; it's not like i'm dating her or something.

Ella gets off the bed and says " Come on babes let's go outside Babes." I think to myself; again with the name Babes, but I would like to go outside and take a poo. Once we get outside I go over to the far back right corner of our yard, to sniff around do my little spin around three times that I do and go take a poo. After I have taken care of that business, it's time for Ella to go pick it up. She goes over by the shed and picks up the shovel, walks over to my spot of choice, picks it up and tosses it over the fence. It's almost like I have a servant; it's is so great. Ella and I go inside I have a sleep and she does the rest of her chores.

After a couple hours and a few trips outside, Theresa comes home. I am so excited that I am barking at the back door until someone lets me in. I am happy to

### My Dog Day

see her, but she won't be as happy as me when she sees her toque on the ground all slobbery.

A little bit after Theresa comes home, my favorite person pulls into the driveway after a hard day's work. You guessed it, John! When he walks through that door I come racing down from whatever room I was in and I start to jump up on him I am so excited.

Before their supper, Ella gives me my supper on the porch. Then after I gobbled it all down, she gives me my Dentastix to go back outside with because they are good for my teeth. Theresa and Ella eventually start supper, I am always hoping it's steak because John will give me some of it. Tonight they had chicken, pea's, and Rice-A-Roni. Being the big beggar I am, when they eat, I sit between John and Ella at the table. Then I look up at John, give him a sweet face, and put my head on his knee hoping he would give me something. He usually does give me some scraps, but he doesn't tonight. Maybe that means I should watch what I eat. They send Ella to bed at around 9:00 at night. Then the rest of us chill out for a while until hot tub time. I go outside, roll around in the yard, eat tree branches, and also get a little bit of lovin. I want to be cuddled though, so I jump into the hot tub. John is not so happy with me. Right away he grabs me and pulls me out of the tub. A wonderful rap up to the day. Off to bed John and I go together, as I like it.

My name is Indiana and that was my day with the St. Louis family.

By Julia Steiger grade 7 Lloyd George.

## Mia's First Trip to Switzerland

It was the night before the big trip to Switzerland and Mia could not sleep. She kept thinking about how exiting her trip to Switzerland was going to be. It was her first time going back to Switzerland since her dad died. Then finally that day came. The flight was so long and boring, but it was all worth it for the beautiful place called Switzerland. When they got to Zurich, Switzerland, her mom and Mia were greeted by her grandma and her cousin. Two hours later, they arrived in Basel. The views were amazing and they got to stay at an apartment right beside the bakery where her grandma worked. The apartment had two floors and one bedroom where Mia and her mom would sleep. The roads there where so small, and there was always a separate place where people could ride their bikes beside the cars. Instead of driving cars to go to the next town over, they used trains. About one or two weeks into their trip, they decided that they would go to a town in the mountains called Zermatt. There they saw the mountain that is on the logo for Toblerone chocolate and went to a zipline park. It was when they were in the mountains that a terrible accident happened. Mia was playing and dancing around on the mountain when she tripped on a rock tumbled and twisted her ankle. She was in a tremendous amount of pain knowing she had badly hurt her foot. A first aid attendant rushed over and started to examine her foot trying to figure out what happened. In the end, he could not figure out what had happened and recommended they go down the mountain to seek medical attention. Finally, they had arrived at a small drop-in clinic at the side of the road. They went inside and almost immediately got

placed in a examination room. When the doctor arrived, he explained that Mia had a badly sprained ankle and would need to be on crutches for the next four to five days. When they got back, it was time to go to bed. So they got into bed and dozed off not knowing what horrors would be there when she awoke. When she got up, she noticed she had a terrible headache and a nauseating stomach ache. For three straight days, Mia was cooped up in the hotel trying to get better. But she just wasn't getting better. Finally, her mom decided that it was time to go to the doctor...again. When they got there the doctors could not figure out what was wrong. Finally, they thought they figured out what was wrong and said that Mia would be fine and gave her some medicine. So Mia and her mom decided they would return to Basel where they had family. So they took a train and, about two hours later, arrived back in Basel. But something was wrong. Mia did not feel any better than before she took the medicine. Since she was not feeling better, they decided to go to the hospital in Basel. The doctors figured out that she had a virus, and since she could not keep any food down, she had to stay in the hospital hooked up to a machine for three days in order to regain her energy. Those three days did not go too well. The first day, she was just feeling sick and horrible. The second day, she was bored and tired. And when the third day came, she ended up getting a roommate and having to stay a day longer than expected. The roommate was nice and playful, but Mia was sick and could only focus on that. Mia's fourth day was much better. She felt completely healed and had no problem eating. That afternoon, she was released from the hospital. When she got back to the place she was staying,

she felt free to do as she wished. She was no longer sick or hurt. It was the best feeling she had felt in a long time.



Landon Taylor

“The Beast”

Grade 7, Logan Lake Secondary

## **The Beast**

### **Part 1**

#### **November 27th, 2089**

I was exploring the deepest, darkest depths of the ocean, hoping to find new life. I was alone, cold and afraid of what could happen. “I have to get back to my sub.” I thought as was leaving a cave with just scuba gear on. “I am almost out of oxygen and I am freezing.”

Just as I was getting into my sub something grabbed the water pod and sent it hurtling through the water into another crevice, “Crap... I am stuck!” I yelled while trying to dislodge myself from cave rocks.

#### **November 29th**

It had been two days that I was stuck in the rocks, but I finally made it out. “I need to find what threw me in there,” I mumbled. “It looked like it had tentacles.” I was doing research and exploring for the day until I found the beast.

#### **December 3rd**

“I think I found it, there we strange and loud noises coming from this cave and I watched closely at the tentacles occasionally going in and out of the cave.” It was finally time to chase the beast and see what it really was. WHOOSH the sub went speeding past the cave and right behind the beast. It looked like a shark, but with

Landon Taylor

"The Beast"

Grade 7, Logan Lake Secondary

tentacles. I was chased it through the ocean and caves, trying to grab it with the grapple arms on my sub. Suddenly, the creature hit my sub with its tentacles. I was stuck in another cave, but this time it was a bigger cave, a darker cave with more creatures, just like the other one. A whole family of them.

### **December 4th**

"They were beautiful creatures, so harmless, so strange." "But if they were so harmless, why was the one going crazy?" I thought, "Unless something was chasing it, something bigger, something stronger. What could the bigger monster be?"

**To Be Continued**

**In Part 2**

It stood, stooped over like an ancient tree,  
wailing in the wind.

Cracked, and misshapen.

A lump of wood and dirt,  
skin and bone.

Hungry, tired, scared.

A cold, broken, statue standing proudly  
having faced many, terrible,  
savage acts of war  
from the people who came into his country.

Brutally breached  
like a bull in a china shop  
and created havoc everywhere.

Not even a human according to others.

Alienated.

Unequal.

Came from a poor, war-stricken  
who knows what to call it.

A living purgatory?

No. Home.

This is the life of a terribly treated refugee.

Coming up as a "world issue"  
yet never addressed.

Is this what our beautiful ball of blue and green is made of?

It won't always stay coloured.

Military ripping them out of their homes  
like a limp plant hanging by old roots  
being hacked out of the soil.  
Forcefully torn with a final pull  
and the base of civilization crumples to the ground.

*- life as a refugee*

**Wordless**

The old tree stood  
silent  
leaning  
wicked and weather warped  
wind washing like waves  
through wispy branches  
wailing  
whining  
wilted

The old tree stood  
wordless  
but not silent

## The Escape

What cure will save the world?

I was young when it happened. Eight, I think. They took me from everything that I had. I was out of the house that day. Went to the field that I went to everyday after breakfast. Those were the good old days. Now it's following orders, being tested on. They're say that it's a virus that's spreading across the world infecting people. I don't believe that. I think they're waiting for something, then will get sent somewhere but no one knows why.

A buzzer went, the door opened, two guards entered. Hazel finished up what she was writing and put the piece of paper under her bed before they could see. But she was too late. One guard stepped forward and asked for the paper. Hazel didn't move. She just sat there, her face in terror.

"Give me that piece of paper!" the guard said firmly. Hazel got the piece of paper and handed it to the guard. The guard ripped it into pieces, Hazel couldn't do anything, but just watch.

"The world's not perfect but it's not that bad, same with people." She said to herself to not cry. The guards took her to one of the labs for testing. There were a few people in there that Hazel didn't recognize. They sat her on one of the beds next to a sleeping girl. She looked white as a ghost, her hair greasy like she hadn't washed in a week or two. The two guards left and a doctor started to prep some things.

Hazel finished the testing and went to the cafeteria to have lunch. Her thoughts kept going back to the girl she saw in the bed and how she looked, gone.

Someone came up to Hazel and sat down beside her. She didn't know what to do, she never had someone come up to her. His face was blank and white. He looked at Hazel but turned away quickly. He looked young, 16, 17.

A few minutes went by in silence. Hazel finally broke the silence. "Are you okay?" He replied quickly but didn't look at her. "Yeah, I'm fine. What about you?" "I'm fine, my name is Hazel, what's yours?" He didn't move or answer just stared at the wall. Hazel ignored it and thought about the girl in the bed.

He spoke, but whispered. "I know a way to get out of this place and I need you to come with me." Hazel was stunned at what he said. She didn't know what to say, she just gave him a blank face. He didn't answer back right away, he was fidgeting with his hands most of the conversation. Hazel could tell that he was hesitating on speaking. "Nyko, my name is Nyko," he said it very softly Hazel could hardly hear him. Nyko mentioned again how he knew a way to get out of this place and that Hazel needed to go with him. Hazel didn't know how to answer to this question or suggestion from Nyko. "What do you mean that you know a way to get out of here?" Nyko had turned to face Hazel, they both had blank faces. Nyko gave a smirk and whispered in her ear, "Meet me in the change room that they're fixing, tonight. If you come we're leaving this place

and if you don't, well you'll figure it out soon why you should have come." He got up and left, leaving Hazel in a deflated situation.

After hours of thinking, Hazel decide to go and meet with Nyko after dinner. She went to the cafeteria to eat dinner. Hazel couldn't see Nyko anywhere, so she made her way to the change room and got pulled by the arm into a room. Hazel turned around to see Nyko dressed just in black.

"There's no time to talk right now Hazel, I need you to get changed into the clothes that are there." Hazel did as she was told but was still unsure of going with Nyko. Hazel thought about how this place could be bad and that the cure was nothing, just fake tests for something bigger, but she never went into detail on it. Nyko kept guard.

"What's going on, why do we need to leave now?" He turned around and he had a bruise on his eye. "That we need to get out of here, I can't answer your question." Hazel had so many questions but followed what he said. "Okay, I'm with you." Nyko and Hazel ran down some hallways. Hazel knew something was off. There were no guards. Everything was empty and quiet. They finally came to a stop, but no one said anything, they just caught their breath and went back to running. Nyko took a left, then a right, another left. Hazel asked "Where are we going?" Nyko went into a jog so he was beside Hazel. "We need to take a few more turns and then there will be a car that we'll take and find somewhere safe." Hazel wondered as to how Nyko knew there was going to be a car? "How do you know that there's going to be a car there? Are there more people

escaping?” He hesitated to answer, “There are more people escaping. I know that there is a car there because a few people know that we’re escaping and they’re watching the car. Now run!”

They finally made it to the car and there were absolutely no guards, which gave Hazel a strange feeling. She couldn’t believe that she was escaping. They were actually escaping from this dreadful place. Now what were they going to do?



Alice Willms

Lloyd George Elementary School

Grade 7 Mme Kozy

## Elementale

I watch my silvery wings allow me<sup>to</sup> descend in the on coming night. My eyes search for some sign the others are here. But I don't see them. Why aren't they here yet, don't they know I can't handle Onslaught alone? We got intell that he would be arriving in New Orleans tonight. So far no destruction. I watch as the fantastic four show up on my left side. They spot the shiny metal that is me, in the darkness. They wave and I creep back into the shadow of the buildings. I see something move and start to panic, because I didn't quite see what it was. All of a sudden I hear a twig snap and I start to sweat. My mouth goes dry and before I know it I'm panting, making me a big target for whoever is behind me. I tremble as I turn around so slowly and see Human Torch, Mister Fantastic, Susan Storm and Thing. Somehow they made it passed my hyper senses and they just seem too big and bulky and shiny to be able to sneak up on someone. I want to yell and scream at them but that will only alert Onslaught that we're here. So I go over to Human Torch and wait until I can shapeshift to a ant. I can't stop screaming at them about scaring me and making me take my eyes off surveying the city and why the heck the group isn't here. I start to melt again when I'm done my ranting. I take on my normal form of silvery wings on a silvery body. I take slow deep breaths to calm myself down. Turn around at the sound of the wind rushing down and see a huge hooded figure just about to land. Too late for waiting I rush to the edge of the shadow we were hiding behind and a massive brown arm stop me in my tracks. Thing shakes his head at me telling me to not go alone or at all. I back off. He lifts his arm out of the way and I see my opportunity. I launch into action by running and

taking flight. They move as quietly as they can without being caught or seen by anyone. Sadly they cannot reach the flying squirrel while they are still grounded. There is no time to waste as I glide down as careful and slow as a leaf just leaving the branches of a tree. I analyze where Onslaught is and spot where he is planning his first attack. The Avengers are just going to come at the last stand in this fight and not quite make it in time, like they always do. I creep from my place on a tree branch toward him. My ears pricked and listening intently at my rival. I think I'm going to have the surprise attack on the guy that left nothing but ruins of my village, when he starts to speak,

“Ah I see you made it to our little soiree Agnia. I'm not surprised though.”

I just grimace at him. A small grin plays across his lips.

“You won't win this time.” I growl at Onslaught.

He breaks down laughing at me and I just attack him. He's already prepared for me though and just catches me by my throat. He reaches in his pocket and grabs a small bright yellow thing that is crawling all over his mighty claw. It's Sulfur. The thing that lives for killing anything that's silver, which means me. I back away slowly and Onslaught creeps forward with a smug smile. He puts his free hand up and shot at me trying to steal my powers like he does to everyone he encounters. Everything in my world backs out.

To Be Continued....

# The fire within

Emersyn Wright, Grade 7, Lloyd George Elementary

I stare down at the fire from a high up branch. It licks softly at the wood and greenery around it. My tail flicks around irritably, hanging down behind me. The pyre only grows faster with every gust of wind. I twist my ears around, searching for any sound around me. The rustling of the leaves in the wind and the flames are the only sounds nearby. It's only a matter of time before it reaches me. I'm all alone here. They left me. All of them. They left me here to get burned away by the blaze. I quickly jump to another branch, moving gracefully and quietly among the trees. I can't help it as I start whimpering softly. If I don't make it to the river quickly then there's no chance for me. I should've left earlier. I had no warning though. Memories flash through my mind of how this all started.

*It's was the middle of the night when I woke up to an odd smell. I only realized it was smoke when I saw the fire raging outside. I quickly raced out, my paws padding softly at the dry greenery underneath me. My side caught on a tree, causing a long scratch along it. There was no time to worry about that. I was blinded by fear and didn't even notice the pain at first.*

Now it's just me. All alone here. I'm back to running now, branches whipping at my face, scratching me up more. It's not much farther now. I might make it. I push myself to my limit, not trying to be quiet. My paws ache with every small touch, slivers scattered along the bottoms. I can hear the flowing water now. I break through the clearing in the trees, a burst of encouragement coursing through me as my eyes catch the river. I feel a small splash of cold water hit my face before I'm knocked off my feet by a force in my side. Pain jolts through my entire body before I fall unconscious.

# The fire within

Emersyn Wright, Grade 7, Lloyd George Elementary

When I wake up I see a large branch beside me, it's all calm now. I was so distracted I didn't notice the wind picking up. I try to stand up but have no strength. Besides, the pain is unbearable now. On the other side of the river, there's berries and shade, unlike the length of gravel and rock. Where I am, the sun's beating down on my wounds. If I could just get to the river. I notice all the debris around me, I've got more wounds on me than before. I can't see over the branch so I don't know how far I was thrown. This doesn't look like where I was before though. I may have taken more damage than visible. Of course, they left me. They know I'm weak. They didn't want me to weight them down as I would be right now. My dark reddish-brown fur rustles softly in the wind. It takes me a minute to remember the pyre. The other side of the river is fine. Our forest must be fine now too, right? I summon all my strength and turn my top half around. I wish I hadn't.

I'm in more pain now and it's almost for nothing. I can't see any damage, through the fire had gotten pretty far behind me. My heart sinks as I start to smell smoke and see a slight glowing as deep as I can see into the forestry. I whimper loudly, trying to get anyone, anything's attention. I can hear some birds chirping so it's not completely hopeless. My eyes search the forest edge for anything. I can't do anything but lay there as the flames slowly approach. I sigh deeply and close my eyes, defeat tak

ing over me. I might as well try to rest if I want any small chance.

# The fire within

Emersyn Wright, Grade 7, Lloyd George Elementary

I wake up to a snap. I look around but don't see anything. I scan the outline of the trees before spotting a dark shadow moving swiftly through them. Why did I try to call for help? After a while of pacing, it stops and locks its glowing eyes on mine. It stares for a while, taunting me, as the fire approaches faster behind it. How is it not running? This is it. I take in a deep breath, holding it for a minute.

I try to stand up, managing to get support on my front legs, though my back legs don't move. I howl out in pain as I realize they aren't going to let me go anywhere easily anymore. I turn myself around, trying to fight back the pain, and take a step. I fall back down, panting softly. I see a stick beside me so grab in my mouth and bite down to distract myself. Crawling forward slowly, I drag my hind legs behind me. The river grows closer with every small slide.

My heart drops as I hear small steps behind me. I bite down harder as I squirm as fast as I can towards the river. One of my paws reaches over the edge so I pull myself in. The rushing water tugs at my legs, causing me to scream out. The water fills my mouth, tugging the stick away from me. I paddle as best I can to the surface, though I'm only able to take a small breath before I get pulled back under. It feels like I'm under forever before my ears bump against something. I swim up and get a grip on the shore. Heaving myself up, I pant and look around. I cough up a bunch of water that I had swallowed. I see that the creatures staring at me from the edge of the other side. I smirk before pulling myself over to the berries. The pyre has swallowed up the edge as well now, causing the beast to pace around the river, whimpering with its tail between its legs, ears back. I'm safe. There's no danger. For now.

**The Big Race**  
by Ava Zirnhelt  
Gr. 7  
Westmount Elementary

The sun beamed down on me as I ran through the forest, avoiding fallen trees and rocks. When I reached the end of the forest I panted, out of breath. Now I'd have to go all the way up Herbert Drive and along Wallaby Street before I reached my house. I followed this route everyday, training for the big race. When I reached my house my mouth was parched. I ran towards the backyard and turned on the hose. The cool water ran down my face, drenching me. I quietly entered my house, careful not to wake Rosey, my old hound dog. I slipped into my room and threw my sopping wet clothes in a pile on the floor. I checked the time, 9:30am. I was right on schedule. I threw on some summer clothes and left to find Scarlett, my best friend. I ran to meet her, excited to play and discuss what had happened since the last time I saw her.

After what seemed like only ten minutes, we were picked up by Scarlett's mom. I was dropped off at my house after lunch, but it pained me when Scarlett left. It was always boring without her.

"Dad?" I asked. "Can Scarlett come running with me tomorrow?" I pictured us running side by side, having a good time.

"Of course she can," my dad responded.

I phoned Scarlett right away. After our lengthy conversation we decided that she would be dropped off at my house and we could start running from my house. I couldn't wait to see her again! I got ready for bed at 8:00pm so I could be awake when she arrived.

**The Big Race**  
by Ava Zirnhelt  
Gr. 7  
Westmount Elementary

“Aliya! Scarlett is here.” my mother called.

“Coming,” I called back, bursting with excitement.

We started our run right away, me in the lead to show the way. We both got tired quickly but kept going.

“Are you okay running through here?” I asked her, as we neared the forest entrance.

“I’ll be okay!” puffed Scarlett as she tried to answer back.

We raced through the forest, trying to best each other as we avoided tree stumps.

“We should take a shortcut to the General Store!” I exclaimed after we exited the forest.

When we reached the store Scarlett yelled, “Lill! I’m so glad to see you!” Their conversation went on forever.

“Scarlett!” I called, angry and confused. “We need to go now or we’ll be late,” I said, starting to leave.

“Bye Lill! See you tomorrow,” Scarlett called to her friend as she tried to catch up to me. “Slow down,” she said but I didn’t stop. “Please?” she asked. I sighed and slowed to a jog.

**The Big Race**  
by Ava Zirnhelt  
Gr. 7  
Westmount Elementary

“Who was that? Your new best friend?” I asked, wincing at the anger in my voice. I continued, unable to stop myself. “You talked to her for fifteen minutes without even acknowledging I was there!”

“Sorry,” Scarlett mumbled, still shocked at my outburst.

We continued the rest of the run in silence, waiting to see who would speak first. When we arrived at my house Scarlett’s mom was already there. When we entered I excused myself to the bathroom. I must have been in there for a while because when I got out Scarlett was just leaving. I waved to her as her car drove away, but I don’t think she waved back.

For the next two weeks I didn’t talk to Scarlett. I saw her at the art store but she was with Lill, my replacement. Sometimes she phoned me and told me she couldn’t play, usually she left a message and I listened to it after my run. I wanted to apologize but I couldn’t do it over the phone, it needed to be in person. I knew that there were only two weeks left before school started, and I didn’t have much time.

I couldn’t believe that I hadn’t made up with Scarlett yet. I thought all was hopeless. There was nothing else I could do about it if Scarlett was avoiding me, so I went for a run to calm myself. I ran to the most comforting place in town, a secluded pond in a clearing of trees just off of the hiking trail I run every day. Scarlett and I spent a lot of time together there.



**The Big Race**  
by Ava Zirnhelt  
Gr. 7  
Westmount Elementary

When I finally got there I tore off my socks and shoes and stepped into the crisp water. I walked along the shoreline until my feet got sore, then I went into the back forest where Scarlett and I built a treehouse. We tried it out last year; it barely held both of us. I climbed the tattered, yellow rope that hung off the edge of the treehouse and swung myself over. I froze when I saw Scarlett painting in the corner of the small room. I thought she didn't hear me. I could leave without being noticed, I thought, but she chose that exact moment to look up. She then got up, bumping her head on the low roof and threw her arms around me. I hugged her back unable to control my emotions.

"I'm so sorry!" I sobbed. "Please forgive me!"

"No, I'm sorry! I should've introduced you to Lill and talked to you after you got mad!" Scarlett started.

"It's okay," I said and we instantly felt better feeling the weight come off our shoulders.

I felt bad for making assumptions about Lill after I learned that she was from Scarlett's art class. Now all that's left to do before school starts is our big Town Race. Tomorrow I'll be racing too!

"Today's the day, Aliya!" my dad called.

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The drive there was torcherous. I was so nervous as I took my place at the starting line. I looked up and saw Scarlett cheering me on. That was all the confidence I needed.

“On your marks, get set, go!” the starter yelled. I ran with all my strength as the sun beamed down on me.