



Move Your Mood Folklore Collection, Volume 1

About This Book

This book was created by Red Deer Polytechnic students registered in the Winter 2025 class on Folklore. As a form of community service learning, these students adapted traditional folktales for the children and youth who use the Move Your Mood and the Child Advocacy Centre.

Why do this in a folklore class?

Folklore is our earliest form of storytelling. Many of the stories you're about to read have been retold for thousands of years. For example, the earliest written version of who we today often call Cinderella is from 860 AD China (and it was probably told verbally *long* before this). Embedded in these stories are the values, beliefs, and histories of the cultures that created them. Even more importantly, they were retold to pass on important information about how to take care of ourselves and others. Folktales show us that we should be careful in the "deep, dark woods," but that the dangers we face can be overcome. Folklore is our ancestors, near and far, telling us that if we're willing to try, we're strong enough to overcome anything.

RDP students adapted ten folktales for you! This makes us all part of the thousand-year-old spirals of these stories! Like the versions that came before, they provide lessons on how to take care of yourself and others and are meant to act as a guide through the woods.

We hope these stories make you smile, laugh, and feel brave.

Dr. Anah-Jayne Samuelson, RDP English Instructor

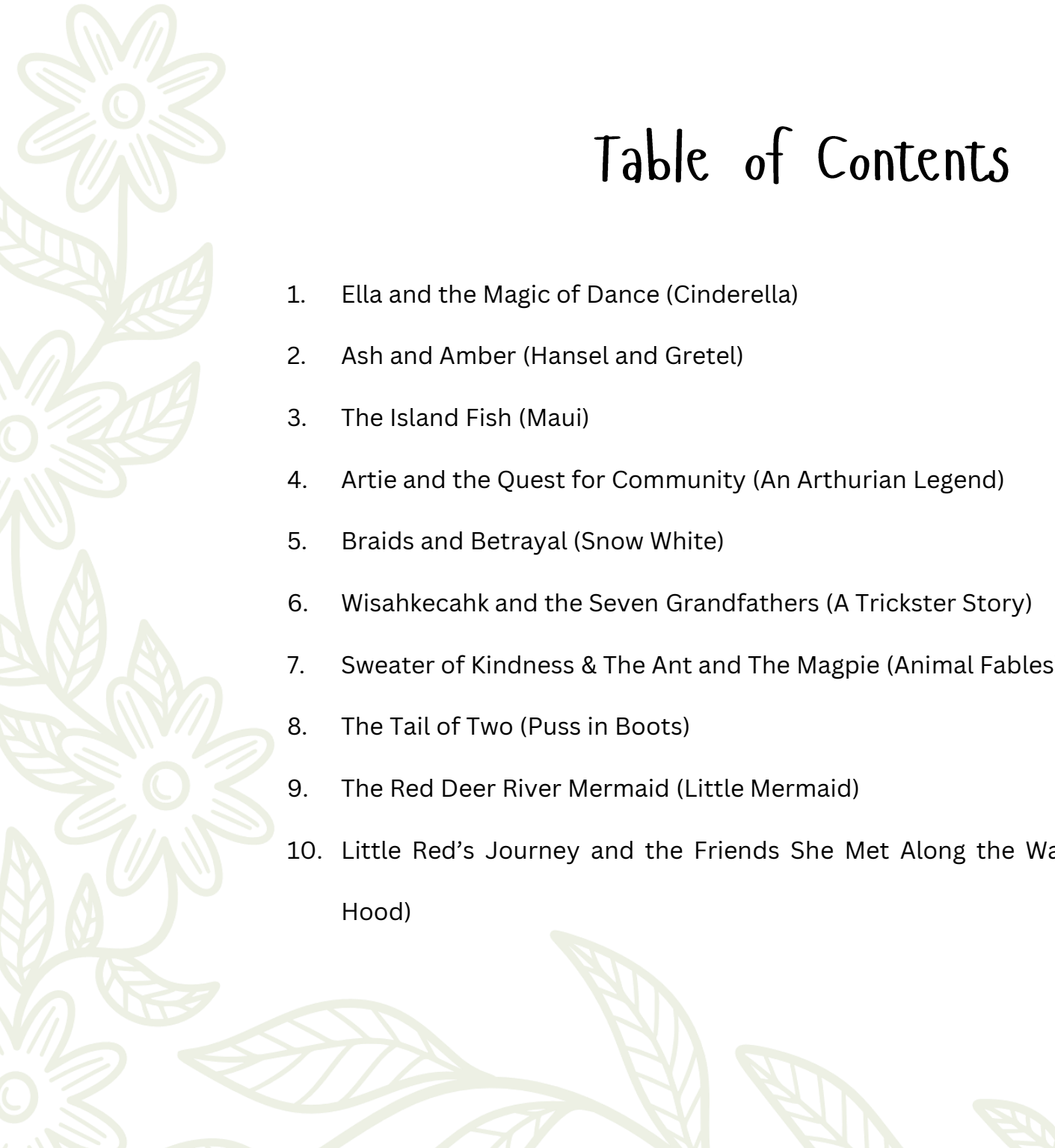
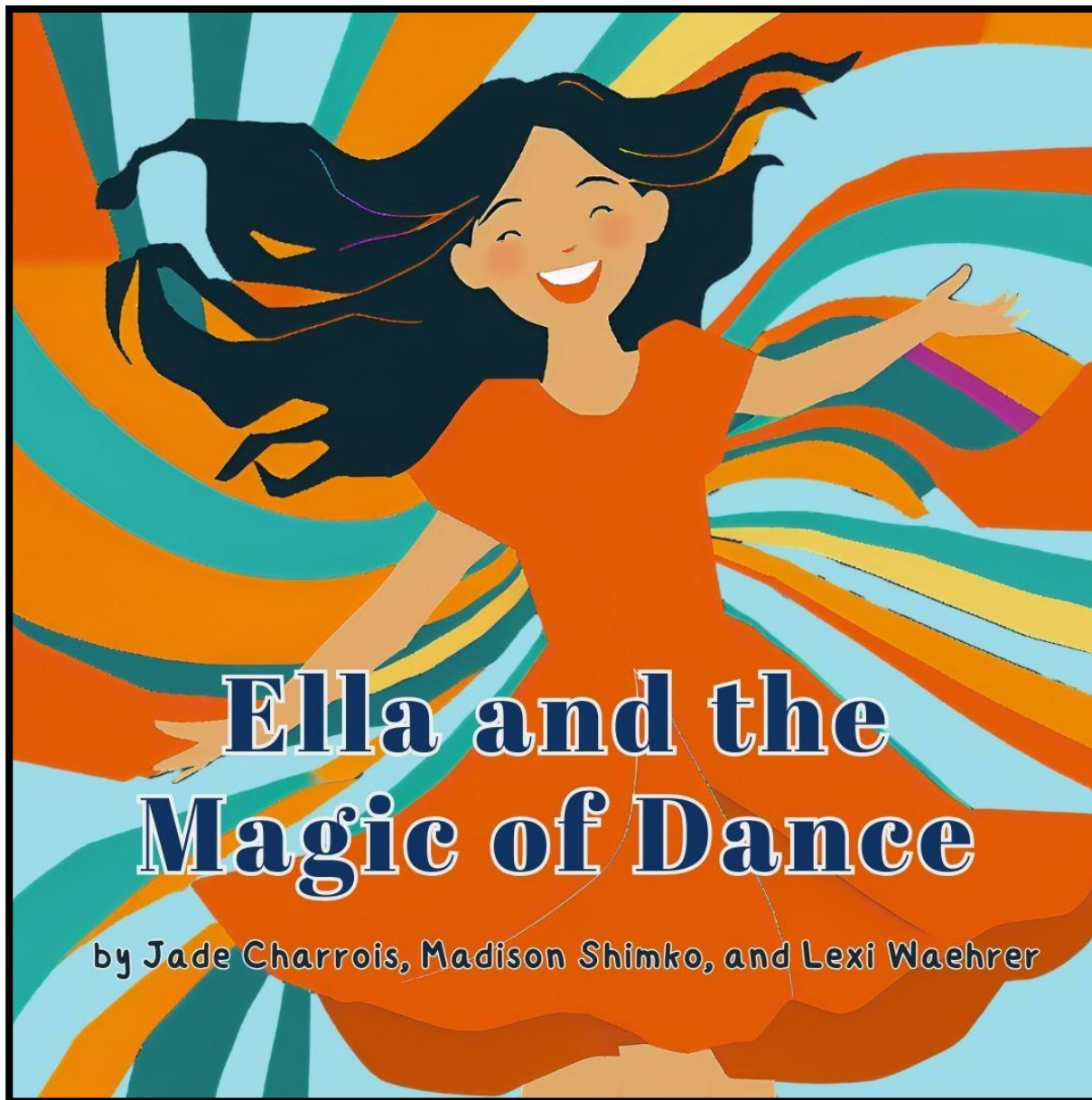


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Ella and the Magic of Dance

by Jade Charrois, Madison Shimko, and Lexi Waehrer

Made in association with
the Red Deer Indigenous Dance Troupe (rdidts.ca) and
The Child Advocacy Centre Red Deer, Move Your Mood
Illustrations by: Canva AI, Magic Media

As Ella sat in the classroom, she felt the weight of her stepmother's constant criticism and her stepsisters' taunts. No matter how hard she tried, she was always left out. She was struggling to work through the feelings they brought up in her.

Henry, a friend of Ella's, noticed that she had been having a hard time. As the bell rang, he approached her with something he thought might help.



“Hey, I was wondering if you’d like to come to my dance practice after school,” Henry asked. “I’m a member of the Red Deer Indigenous Dance Troupe, and today we’re learning the Red River Jig. It’s one of the most important Métis dances.”

Ella hesitated. Her stepmother wouldn’t approve of her not being home to do chores, and her stepsisters would find a way to make her doubt herself. But something about Henry’s excitement and the chance to learn more about her heritage persuaded her to go.



After school, she walked with him to the Red Deer Indigenous Dance Troupe's event at a nearby school. As soon as she stepped inside, she was greeted by the energy of movement, music, and laughter. The sound of fiddles filled the air, lively and quick, while the dancers' feet tapped rhythmically against the floor.



Henry introduced Ella to his auntie, and she welcomed Ella with a warm smile. Henry's Auntie explained, "Today we will be learning the Red River Jig. It is a dance of resilience and joy." Ella observed the dancers' movements, their feet light and fast, their steps full of life. It looked challenging, yet thrilling! Auntie continued, "The Métis are a group of people whose culture comes from both Indigenous and European ancestors. Métis culture can be expressed through dance. The Red River Jig combines the quick, intricate footwork of First Nations dancing with the lively steps of European jigging."



Henry looked at Ella, giving her an encouraging smile that seemed to say, "Go ahead." Ella took a deep breath and stepped forward. At first, she stumbled, her feet not quite catching the rhythm. She felt like she would never get it. But then, she remembered what Auntie had said: this dance was about resilience, about never giving up.

She listened closely to the music, feeling the beat in her chest. Then, she tried again: step, tap, hop. Her feet moved faster, her body lighter. Suddenly, she wasn't just following the steps; she was dancing. Henry cheered, and Auntie clapped. "That's it, Ella! You've got it."



After practice, Henry handed her a red sash.
“Every dancer needs something special,” he said
with a grin. Ella tied it around her, feeling proud of
herself and what she had learned.

The days passed, and Ella continued returning to
the studio. With each step she learned, she felt
stronger. Dancing became her escape, her way of
moving through her emotions and shaking off the
weight of what she felt at home. She was in herself
when dancing and nothing else mattered.



One afternoon, the dance troupe announced a community performance at the local festival. It was going to be a big event, and Henry's Auntie asked Ella if she wanted to perform. Her heart pounded, but she said yes!

She decided to invite her stepmother and stepsisters. Though she feared their judgment, she thought about the music, the rhythm, and the way she felt when she danced. She wanted to do this.



The evening of the performance, Ella sat on the steps outside her home, her heart heavy with disappointment. Her stepmother had refused to drive her to the local festival. Ella felt disappointed that she would not be able to perform at the festival.



Suddenly, Ella heard the sound of a car pulling up.

She looked up and saw Henry's aunt smiling warmly from the driver's seat. "Are you waiting for a ride?" she asked. Auntie's smile widened as she gestured toward the passenger seat. "I can take you.

You deserve to be there." Ella's eyes lit up with relief. "You'd do that?" "Of course," Auntie said, her voice reassuring. "Let's get you to the festival."



Once arrived, Ella stood backstage, her hands trembling. Henry smiled at her. "You've got this," he whispered. The music started, and as she stepped onto the stage, her fear melted away. The rhythm took over, her feet moving effortlessly in time with the fiddles. The crowd clapped along, their energy lifting her higher. She spun, stepped, and tapped. Each movement telling a story of strength, pride, and belonging.



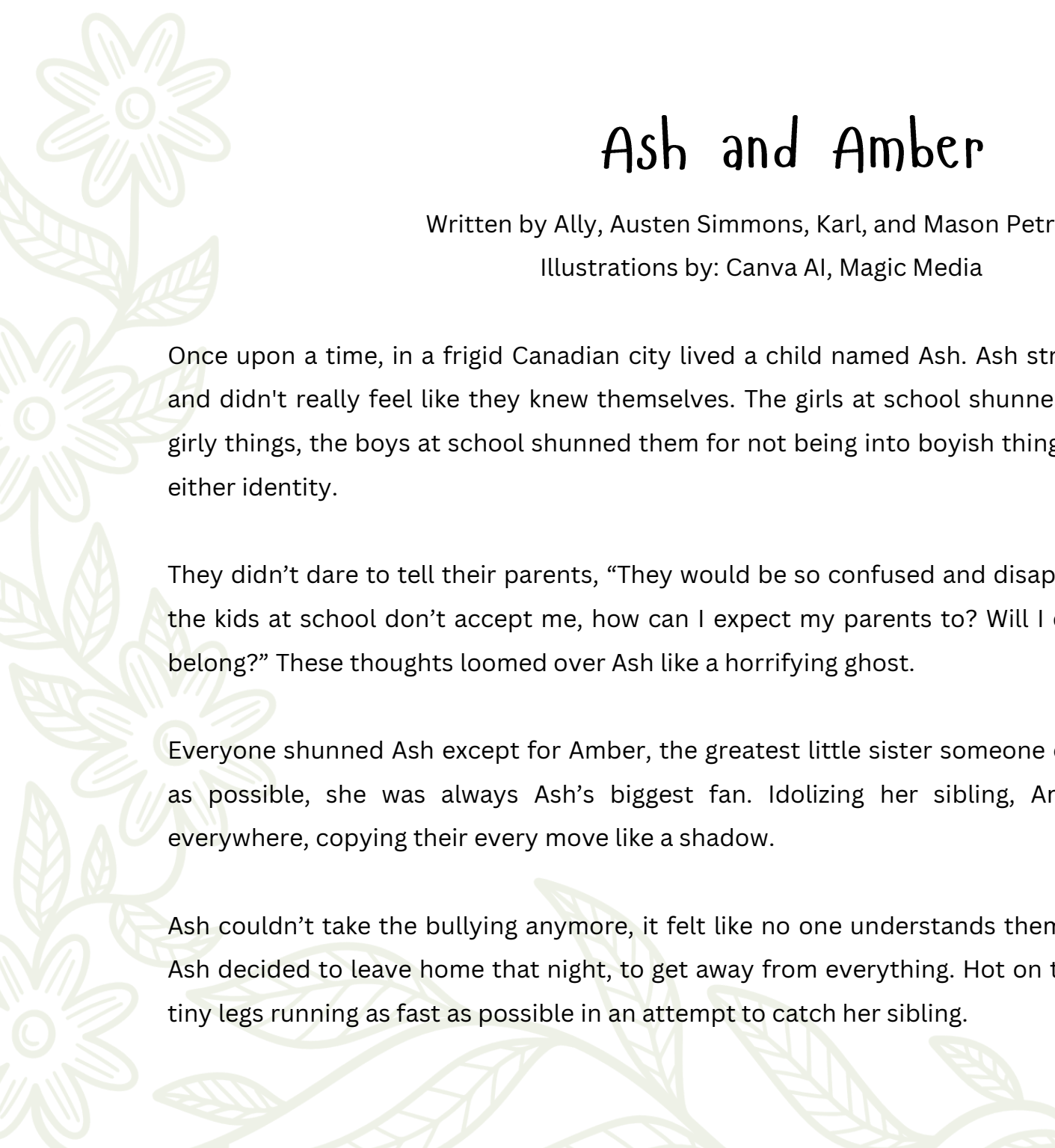
Then, in the audience, she saw something unexpected. Her stepmother and stepsisters were watching, wide-eyed. Her first thought was that they were there to mock her, but something changed her mind. They looked surprised, with wide smiles on their faces, grinning at Ella as if they were seeing her for the first time.

After the performance, as she caught her breath, her stepmother approached her. "I didn't know you could dance like that," she said, her voice softer than usual. Ella smiled quietly. "I didn't either. But I do now."



From that night on, things didn't magically change at home. Her stepmother and stepsisters still had their moments. But Ella had something they couldn't take away: her joy, her sense of purpose, and her story to tell. She found herself in the music, in the movement, and in the community that had welcomed her with open arms.





Ash and Amber

Written by Ally, Austen Simmons, Karl, and Mason Petrisor

Illustrations by: Canva AI, Magic Media

Once upon a time, in a frigid Canadian city lived a child named Ash. Ash struggled with their identity and didn't really feel like they knew themselves. The girls at school shunned them for not being into girly things, the boys at school shunned them for not being into boyish things. They didn't conform to either identity.

They didn't dare to tell their parents, "They would be so confused and disappointed" they thought, "if the kids at school don't accept me, how can I expect my parents to? Will I ever have a place where I belong?" These thoughts loomed over Ash like a horrifying ghost.

Everyone shunned Ash except for Amber, the greatest little sister someone could ask for. As innocent as possible, she was always Ash's biggest fan. Idolizing her sibling, Amber would follow them everywhere, copying their every move like a shadow.

Ash couldn't take the bullying anymore, it felt like no one understands them, and no one ever would. Ash decided to leave home that night, to get away from everything. Hot on their heels ran Amber, her tiny legs running as fast as possible in an attempt to catch her sibling.

Ash walked down the freezing city streets, briskly moving past the closing stores and vacant parking lots until they found an empty playground. They sat, longing for home, until they heard movement from the nearby woods. “Who....who’s there?” Ash called out reluctantly. A tall figure wearing a dozen winter coats ranging in size sauntered over from the woods. He looked quite silly.

“Hey, kid, are you alone?”

“Yes, I ran away because nobody understood me. I fell so alone.”

“Come with me, I was just heading home and it's freezing out here”. Ash was freezing and he seemed okay, so they followed.

Little did either of them know Amber was hiding around the corner, working up the courage to reveal her presence to her sibling.

The house was a beautiful cottage made of gingerbread and candies. All sorts of candy creatures inhabited the house, but most paid no attention. Once Ash was inside, they could see that a burning bonfire in the center of the room was the only source of heat. But no one concerned themselves, as they were more focused on the food, eating handful by handful.

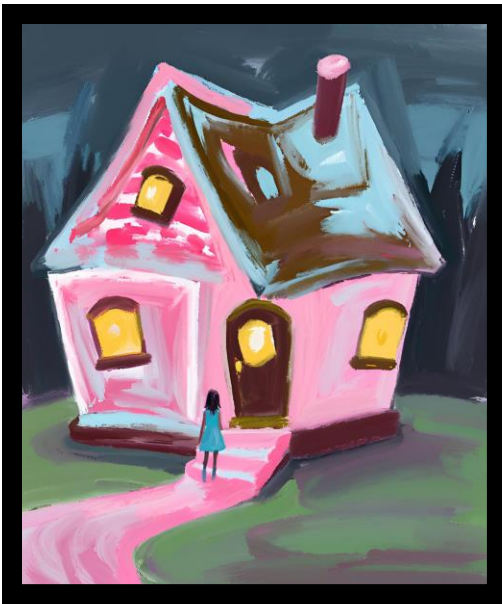
The man slid off his many grubby coats, each hitting the ground in a heavy heap. He was tall and skinny, his ghostly pale skin showing his sickly appearance. “Come, enjoy some candies kid, one bite and you'll never want to eat anything else.” Ash held the candies in their hand and puzzled it over as they warmed up by the fire. Something felt wrong. They glanced at the other people in the room and saw that, despite the bright firelight, no one else casted a shadow on the walls beyond.

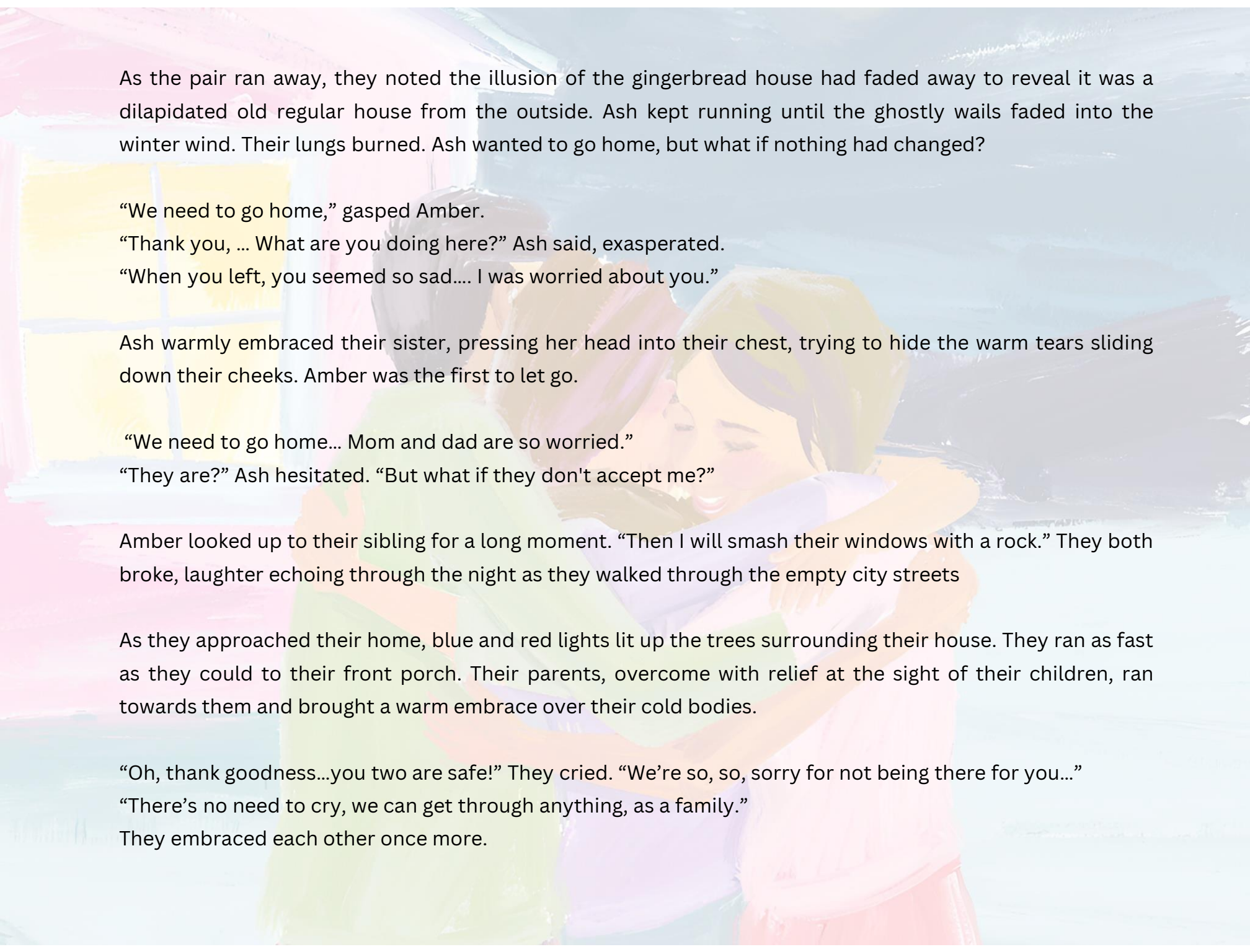
Peering in through the window was Amber, watching the creepy man's leering, and despite her young age, she knew something was wrong.

"I'm not sure mister" he gave Ash a wide toothed smile and for the first time they saw his gnarled, pointed teeth.

"Come on kid, we all eat the candies. They make you feel warm and like you belong. You want to belong, don't you?" his eyes grew gaunt and hollow. As he loomed over Ash, they were aware of how his loose t-shirt fit over his pale thin frame. He looked ghostly. In fact, they all did. As Ash looked around the room, everyone who had eaten the candies seemed hollow and empty, and many watched waiting for Ash's next move.

"I'm truly not hungry, mister but thank you" Ash began to protest when a loud crash accompanied by a large stone came through the window! Peering through the broken glass was Amber! Cold winds blustered into the room, and the creatures, which once appeared human, wailed and writhed. Even the man, who now looked like a horrifying ghost, reached across the flame to grasp at Ash, but they were already bolting to the broken window. They leaped through it, cutting themselves on the glass, but escaping the house as the pained screams of spirits droned into the night.





As the pair ran away, they noted the illusion of the gingerbread house had faded away to reveal it was a dilapidated old regular house from the outside. Ash kept running until the ghostly wails faded into the winter wind. Their lungs burned. Ash wanted to go home, but what if nothing had changed?

“We need to go home,” gasped Amber.

“Thank you, ... What are you doing here?” Ash said, exasperated.

“When you left, you seemed so sad.... I was worried about you.”

Ash warmly embraced their sister, pressing her head into their chest, trying to hide the warm tears sliding down their cheeks. Amber was the first to let go.

“We need to go home... Mom and dad are so worried.”

“They are?” Ash hesitated. “But what if they don't accept me?”

Amber looked up to their sibling for a long moment. “Then I will smash their windows with a rock.” They both broke, laughter echoing through the night as they walked through the empty city streets

As they approached their home, blue and red lights lit up the trees surrounding their house. They ran as fast as they could to their front porch. Their parents, overcome with relief at the sight of their children, ran towards them and brought a warm embrace over their cold bodies.

“Oh, thank goodness...you two are safe!” They cried. “We’re so, so, sorry for not being there for you...”

“There’s no need to cry, we can get through anything, as a family.”

They embraced each other once more.



The Island Fish

Written by Rylee, Dylan, and Sofia

Illustrations by: Canva AI, Magic Media

Levi sat with feet swinging over the edge of the Sylvan Lake pier. He breathed out a big sigh as he cast the rusty fishing rod back and forth. The once black rod had begun to rust, though it was no surprise since he used his allowance to buy it from a retirement garage sale. It was very old, and the line tangled if it wasn't cast in a specific way, but it was the only thing he had. Usually, the rod was lucky, and he never went a day without at least pulling up a couple Walleye. But this time there hadn't even been a bite.

He looked out across the water where he spotted a boat full of seniors that went to his school; he could hear the laughter echoing across the bay. Levi dropped his head in sadness, "I wish I had friends to fish with" he said to himself. He noticed that the boys had settled down and grabbed their oars. His excitement grew as the boat floated closer to the pier. He threw another cast, his line spun off the reel and became tangled badly. "Great!" he said, "Of course this would happen with all the guys watching." He wished that they would invite him to go out with them, but surely, they wouldn't if they saw the shape of his gear. Matt was always bragging to their teacher about the sweet new gear his dad bought him...

Suddenly Levi was pulled out of his thoughts; someone was hollering his name.

“Hey Levi! Levi! Hey man over here!” yelled a tall blonde figure from the boat (surely that was Jake Tubbs).

“Could you grab this rope and help tie us to the dock?”

“Sure!” Levi replied as he ran over eager to help the boys. He grabbed the end of the rope that Jake threw at him and pulled the boat full of people to the dock. As Levi helped tie the boat he asked, “Are you guys done fishing for the day or are you heading back out?” his voice shook as he spoke. Stealing a quick glance towards his beaten-up rod he asked, “if you are, would you mind if I joined in?”

“Sheesh!” said Jake, “I mean any freshman that can pull the boat in by themselves is good to tag along in my books.”

Matt, the other senior in the crew, jumped in with a sarcastic tone. “Yeah, buddy for sure.” He huffed a laugh as he caught sight of Levi’s gear, “are you sure that dinosaur aged rod can handle it?”

Jake stepped in. “We’re just going to walk down to the Big Moo and get some ice cream and lunch. Shouldn’t be too long though. Just fix up your rod and meet us here when we get back”

“Sounds good to me,” Levi said. His cheeks heated with embarrassment as he attempted to strut back towards his rod. Jake, Matt, and the others turned away to head up the boardwalk. As they did, Levi couldn’t help but give a little fist pump! He gathered his gear and ran over to the dock to adjust his reel and get ready for the afternoon.

An hour later the group returned. Levi tried to play it cool as they got closer, but Jake handed him an ice cream cone and said, “hope you like bubble gum”. Levi accepted the cone and followed the group on board. He was forced to sit in front of Matt who scoffed, “fitting that Jake got you bubblegum – that flavor is for kids!” This caught Levi off guard, but he attempted to shrug it off and instead of replying, he reached to untie the boat and push it away from the dock.



At once the other boys grabbed the oars. They rowed in unison until the boat reached the middle of the bay once again. The group didn’t speak when Jake threw the anchor down, and instead they reached for their rods and got right to work. Levi, determined to not make a fool of himself, put all his focus onto the perfect cast. His rod sung out as he released the line. “Nice shot Levi” commented Jake – Levi grinned at the water, losing focus on reeling in his line.

Suddenly his rod tensed, the unexpected pull would’ve ripped Levi right off the boat if Matt hadn’t been watching. Levi gripped tighter on the rod, refusing to let go as Matt lugged him back to his seat. “Jeez kid, Jake should’ve gotten you more ice cream to weigh you down.”

“th th th thank you Matt” replied Levi, still straining against the force of the pull.

“Hey guys! Ditch the rods and grab your oars. Let’s help the kid fight this beast!”

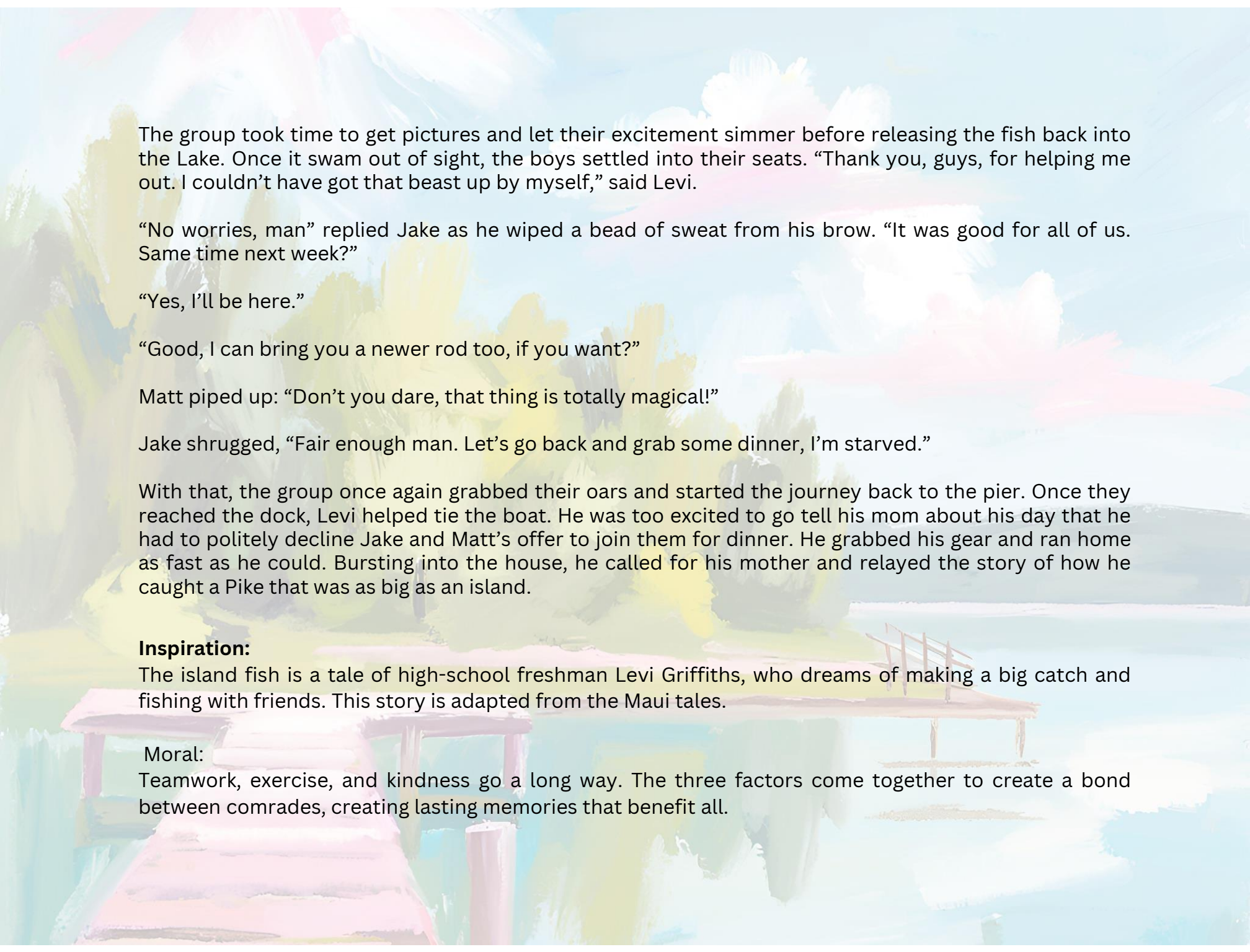
Without hesitation the group followed Matt’s directions, heaving the oars in unison once again. They rowed for what seemed like hours, chanting and cheering for each other. Levi stayed on the end of the boat holding his own against the fish, the fight becoming easier with each stroke into water that led them further out onto the Lake.

“Guys hold up! I think we got it,” said Levi. The group dropped their oars and with one final tug, the fish surfaced beside the boat. “Hurry, hurry let’s grab it,” shouted Jake. Two of the boys reached over to the side and hauled it into their laps. It was the biggest Northern Pike any of them has ever seen! Jake said it had to be at least thirty pounds.

A crisp hand landed on Levi’s back as Matt smiled at him. “Good thing I didn’t let ya go overboard buddy” he said. Matt stood and turned to the rest of the group, the other three were admiring the fish.

Jake shouted, “Let’s hear it for Levi!” The chant was followed by a series of cheers and laughter.





The group took time to get pictures and let their excitement simmer before releasing the fish back into the Lake. Once it swam out of sight, the boys settled into their seats. “Thank you, guys, for helping me out. I couldn’t have got that beast up by myself,” said Levi.

“No worries, man” replied Jake as he wiped a bead of sweat from his brow. “It was good for all of us. Same time next week?”

“Yes, I’ll be here.”

“Good, I can bring you a newer rod too, if you want?”

Matt piped up: “Don’t you dare, that thing is totally magical!”

Jake shrugged, “Fair enough man. Let’s go back and grab some dinner, I’m starved.”

With that, the group once again grabbed their oars and started the journey back to the pier. Once they reached the dock, Levi helped tie the boat. He was too excited to go tell his mom about his day that he had to politely decline Jake and Matt’s offer to join them for dinner. He grabbed his gear and ran home as fast as he could. Bursting into the house, he called for his mother and relayed the story of how he caught a Pike that was as big as an island.

Inspiration:

The island fish is a tale of high-school freshman Levi Griffiths, who dreams of making a big catch and fishing with friends. This story is adapted from the Maui tales.

Moral:

Teamwork, exercise, and kindness go a long way. The three factors come together to create a bond between comrades, creating lasting memories that benefit all.

Artie and the Quest for Community



Written and Illustrated
by: Mackenzie Sawchuk
& Nick Tosioka

Artie and her family had a lot of traditions. Her step-father Hector was Mexican, and he and his son Kay brought a lot of their traditions with them when they moved to Canada. Artie and her mother were Metis. They had several customs of their own that they brought into their house, like making bannock and neck bone soup, making ribbon skirts, and dancing.



Artie was one of the only kids in her class who came from a blended family, and all of the other kids made fun of her for that.



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Artie was the only Metis kid in her school, and none of the other students understood her customs.

Artie often felt embarrassed and ashamed of herself and her culture, especially when they were learning about all the awful things that happened to the Metis people.



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Her friend Theo who lived with his mom, Kwame also avoided eating lunch in the cafeteria because of the reactions the leftovers his mom sent him garnered and preferred hanging out with Theo in the computer lab, which the school counsellor Mr. Merlin let them use as their place.



Penny was a stereotypical European girl from a wealthy family. Her parents were still together, and her mom stopped working when Penny was born to stay home with her full time.

Artie was jealous that Penny got to spend so much time with her mom, because Artie's mom had to work two jobs and always came home really late at night.

"What are you eating?", erupted a voice in front of Artie's table, belonging to the girl who had caught her glancing across the table...Penny."Ummm... it's called Bannock", replied Artie very quietly. "Smells weird, but your clothes are too so I guess that makes sense", huffed Penny, glancing down at Artie with distrust on her face. Ashamed, Artie muttered "Sorry" under her breath, her cheeks flaming and her eyes watered as she listened to Penny's retreating footsteps. "Nice one Penny, she's so weird", said the red-haired girl, "I know right, what kind of clothes is she wearing? In class she never talks, she probably doesn't even know English" snickered Penny, glancing over at Artie still staring into her lunch.



Merlin was also Metis, and he tried to make sure she felt connected to her culture at school and in the community.

Hearing the conversation from the hall, Mr. Merlin quickly walked into the computer lab, saying "Have you kids ever heard the expression, 'fighting fire with fire only gets you burned'?"



Uhhh this is awkward, thought Artie. "From your silence I'm assuming that's a no. You are not in trouble, nor am I excusing Penny's behavior last week, but I want you to think about why your reaction matters and maybe why Penny says these things in the first place", said Mr. Merlin, "Just like I learned the importance of religion in my family from my father, maybe Penny has learned from her father that being different is bad and is talked down upon in her family" finished Mr. Merlin, picking up his briefcase and silently leaving the trio to think amongst themselves once again. Parents can teach their kids bad things too?? I feel bad for saying I don't care why she's crying, maybe her dad says she's bad too? pondered Artie as she looked at her friend.

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“Hi there, I’m Ada”, said the girl while sticking out her hand to Artie, to which Artie shook with a small smile before releasing her hand. “I loooooovvvveeee your hair, it kinda looks like mine but different”, Ada said with a smile while observing Artie’s hair with her eyes. Swelling with pride at the compliment, Artie gushed, “Thank you, my mom always says it’s important to be connected to our Metis ancestors so I wear my beads and ribbon skirt to feel close to them”.

For the first time, Artie felt like she had found a community.



Braids and Betrayal

Written by Samantha, Jelena, and Alyssa

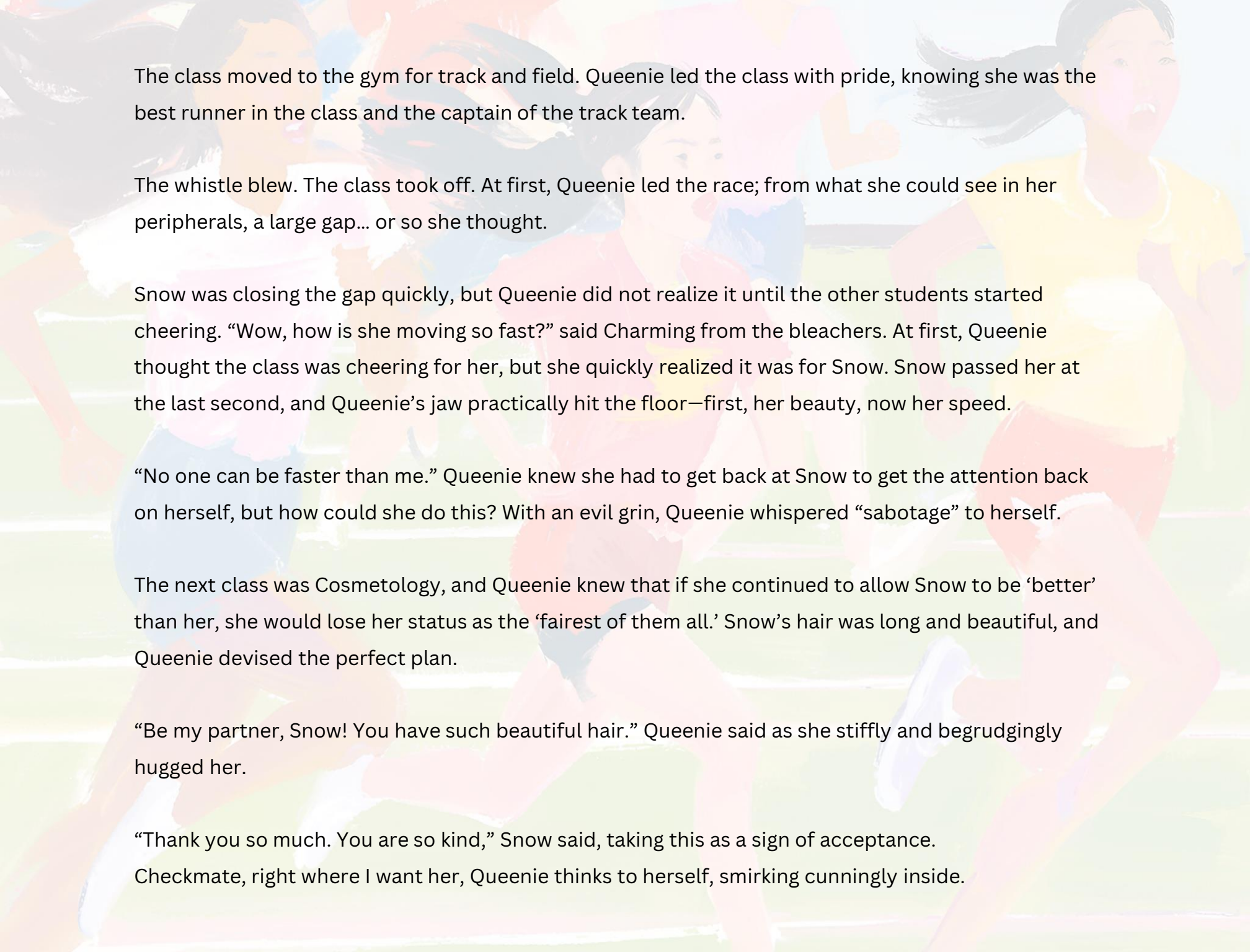
Illustrations by: Canva AI, Magic Media

Once upon a time in Red Deer, Alberta, the worlds of two girls collided when Snow transferred to Mrs. Hood's Grade 8 homeroom class.

Mrs. Hood introduced her: "Class, we have a new student, Snow. She transferred from Camelot. I hope and expect you to give her a warm welcome." Snow's beauty intimidated Queenie, but she still believed she was the most desirable girl.

Queenie quickly realized how everyone looked at her. Something in her stomach churned, and she turned green. "I have to figure out how she does it. We have all the same interests; I can't let her take my crown. I'll have to become her friend and learn her weak spots. Nobody can be better than me." She whispered to herself.



The background of the page features a stylized, painterly illustration of three young women running on a track. The woman on the left is in the foreground, wearing a blue and white athletic outfit, with her hair flowing. The woman in the middle is slightly behind, wearing a pink top. The woman on the right is further back, wearing a yellow top and red shorts. The overall style is soft and artistic, with a pastel color palette.

The class moved to the gym for track and field. Queenie led the class with pride, knowing she was the best runner in the class and the captain of the track team.

The whistle blew. The class took off. At first, Queenie led the race; from what she could see in her peripherals, a large gap... or so she thought.

Snow was closing the gap quickly, but Queenie did not realize it until the other students started cheering. “Wow, how is she moving so fast?” said Charming from the bleachers. At first, Queenie thought the class was cheering for her, but she quickly realized it was for Snow. Snow passed her at the last second, and Queenie’s jaw practically hit the floor—first, her beauty, now her speed.

“No one can be faster than me.” Queenie knew she had to get back at Snow to get the attention back on herself, but how could she do this? With an evil grin, Queenie whispered “sabotage” to herself.

The next class was Cosmetology, and Queenie knew that if she continued to allow Snow to be ‘better’ than her, she would lose her status as the ‘fairest of them all.’ Snow’s hair was long and beautiful, and Queenie devised the perfect plan.

“Be my partner, Snow! You have such beautiful hair.” Queenie said as she stiffly and begrudgingly hugged her.

“Thank you so much. You are so kind,” Snow said, taking this as a sign of acceptance. Checkmate, right where I want her, Queenie thinks to herself, smirking cunningly inside.

Mrs. Hood guided the students to braid each other's hair, with Queenie working on Snow's hair first. Queenie began braiding Snow's hair, carefully placing her gum within the braid. “EW!! Everyone, look! Snow has gum in her hair!” Queenie shouts, dropping the unfinished braid and taking a step back as the other students gather to laugh at Snow.

“Finally, the attention is back on me,” says Queenie while Snow’s face flushed. Snow knew Queenie had stuck the gum in her hair. Her initial gut feeling told her that Queenie was not her friend, and she knew she had to talk to Mrs. Hood about the incident before it escalated.

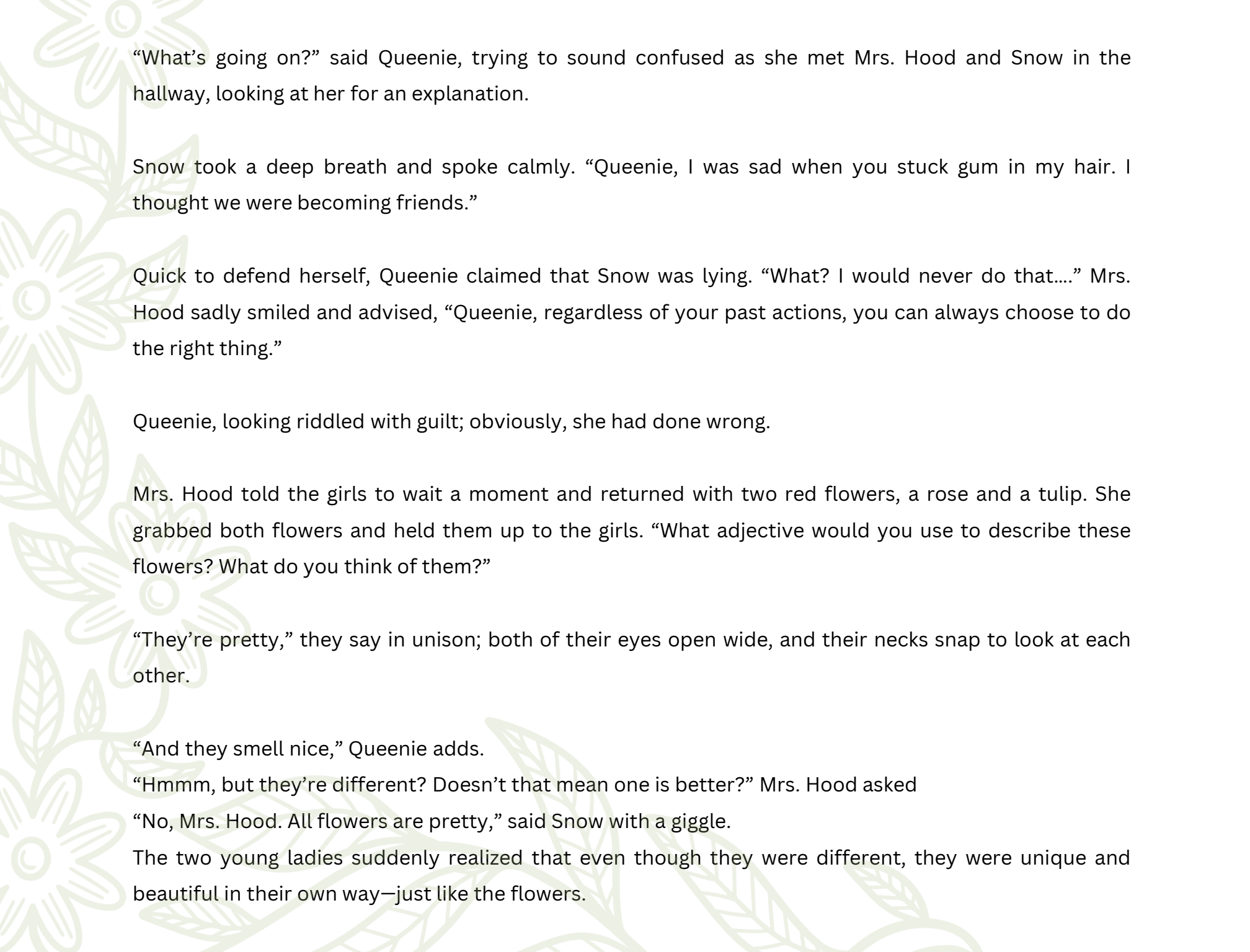
Snow crept up to the front of the line while her class returned to the homeroom. “Mrs. Hood, can I talk to you when we return to class?” Snow said, tapping Mrs. Hood on the shoulder.

“Is everything okay, Snow?” Mrs. Hood asked.

“Some things happened between Queenie and me. Can you have a meeting with us, please?” Snow looked up, and sadness clouded her eyes.

“Sure thing, pumpkin, you can always trust me! Do you want to wait in the hall while I set up the rest of the class?” Snow was right about trusting Mrs. Hood!

“Okay, students! We are going to have 10 minutes of independent reading. Queenie, can you come with me?” said Mrs. Hood as she went into the hallway to meet Snow.



“What’s going on?” said Queenie, trying to sound confused as she met Mrs. Hood and Snow in the hallway, looking at her for an explanation.

Snow took a deep breath and spoke calmly. “Queenie, I was sad when you stuck gum in my hair. I thought we were becoming friends.”

Quick to defend herself, Queenie claimed that Snow was lying. “What? I would never do that....” Mrs. Hood sadly smiled and advised, “Queenie, regardless of your past actions, you can always choose to do the right thing.”

Queenie, looking riddled with guilt; obviously, she had done wrong.

Mrs. Hood told the girls to wait a moment and returned with two red flowers, a rose and a tulip. She grabbed both flowers and held them up to the girls. “What adjective would you use to describe these flowers? What do you think of them?”

“They’re pretty,” they say in unison; both of their eyes open wide, and their necks snap to look at each other.

“And they smell nice,” Queenie adds.

“Hmmm, but they’re different? Doesn’t that mean one is better?” Mrs. Hood asked

“No, Mrs. Hood. All flowers are pretty,” said Snow with a giggle.

The two young ladies suddenly realized that even though they were different, they were unique and beautiful in their own way—just like the flowers.

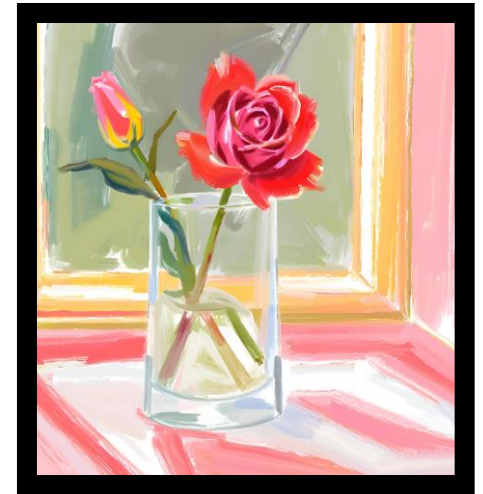
Realizing that her envy had hurt a potential friendship, Queenie said, “Snow, I apologize for acting upon my jealousy. I hope we can still be friends.”

Snow beamed joyfully, “I forgive you, and of course we can!”

Mrs. Hood thoughtfully stated, “we all can get jealous from time to time. We must learn from our actions and create strategies to help us in the future! In the moment, you can take deep breaths to calm down and express your feelings through journaling. Remind yourself that you are a rose, and the beauty of a tulip does not take away from your uniqueness.”

Queenie smiled, realizing that Snow was not competing with her at all. They were both beautiful, athletic, and smart in their own ways. They should not focus on their differences.

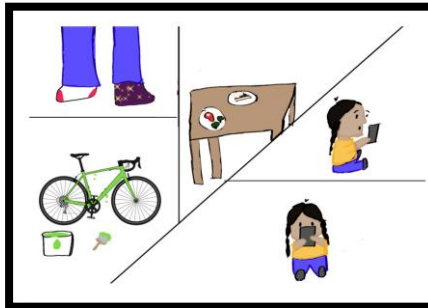
As the school year went on, Queenie and Snow blossomed into a healthy friendship, valuing and respecting one another. Each took away lessons from their conflicts earlier in the year and utilized those lessons in their newfound friendship and throughout their life!





The Mindful Screen

By Emma Maudsley and Savanah Big Charles



Deep in a magical forest filled with talking animals and mystical creatures, there lived a young boy named Wisahkecak (pronounced Weh-saw-key-chak), but his friends called him Jax. Jax was a trickster at heart. He always wore socks that didn't match, ate his dessert before dinner, and once painted his bike with glow-in-the-dark jelly. But still, nothing could excite Jax more than his shiny, glowing screen that promised endless adventures.

Jax was always amazed by the screen, spending hours clicking through games, watching videos, and scrolling through pictures. The bright lights and fun sounds pulled him in so much that he forgot to play with his friends.



He didn't even notice the animals gathering outside his window, hoping for his attention...



One day, as Jax finally glanced up, he saw a bushy tail flicker outside. He rushed out the window, and there, staring right at him, were a wolf, a beaver, and a huge buffalo!

"What a strange group of animals!" Jax exclaimed.



The wolf nodded and said, "We are three of the Seven Grandfather Teachings: I am the Wolf of Humility, this is the Beaver of Wisdom, and the mighty Buffalo of Respect. Your glowing screen has drawn us to you. Do you seek to learn our ways of mindfulness?"

Jax scoffed. "I already know grander adventures than anything you can teach me! You'll never see the things I've seen through my magical screen."

The Wolf of Humility sighed. "Young Jax, you must understand that no one is better than another. Humans, animals, and plants—everything is equal. When you forget this, you lose the chance to feel kindness, patience, and compassion."

Jax paused, thinking for the first time that maybe his screen wasn't the most important thing after all.



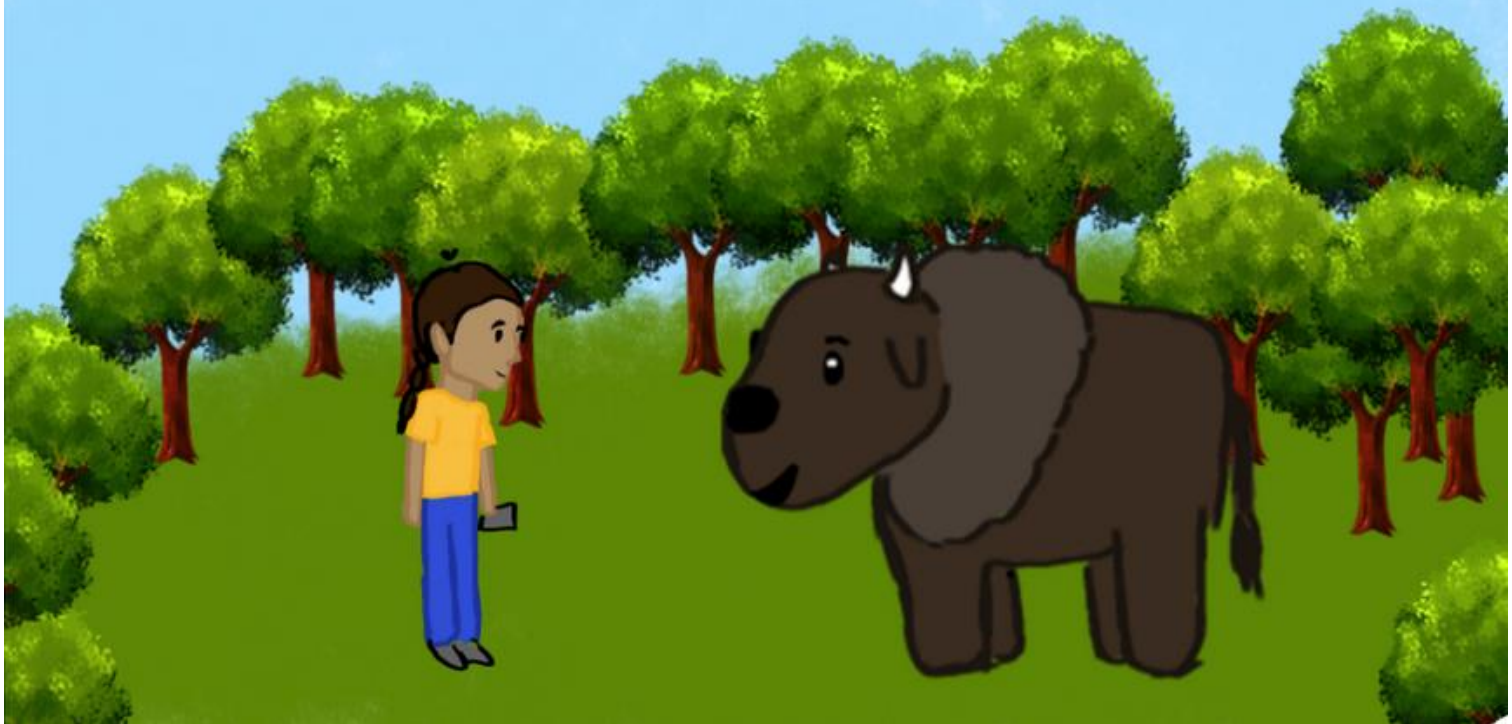


Next, the Beaver of Wisdom spoke up. "As you grow, you will learn many things—some from teachings like this, and some through your own life experiences. But if you only live through a screen, you'll miss so much. Balance is the key, Jax. Moderation will help you see the bigger picture."

Jax felt something inside him stir. He realized how much he had already missed by being too focused on his screen. He smiled and nodded. "I think I've got a lot to learn," he said.

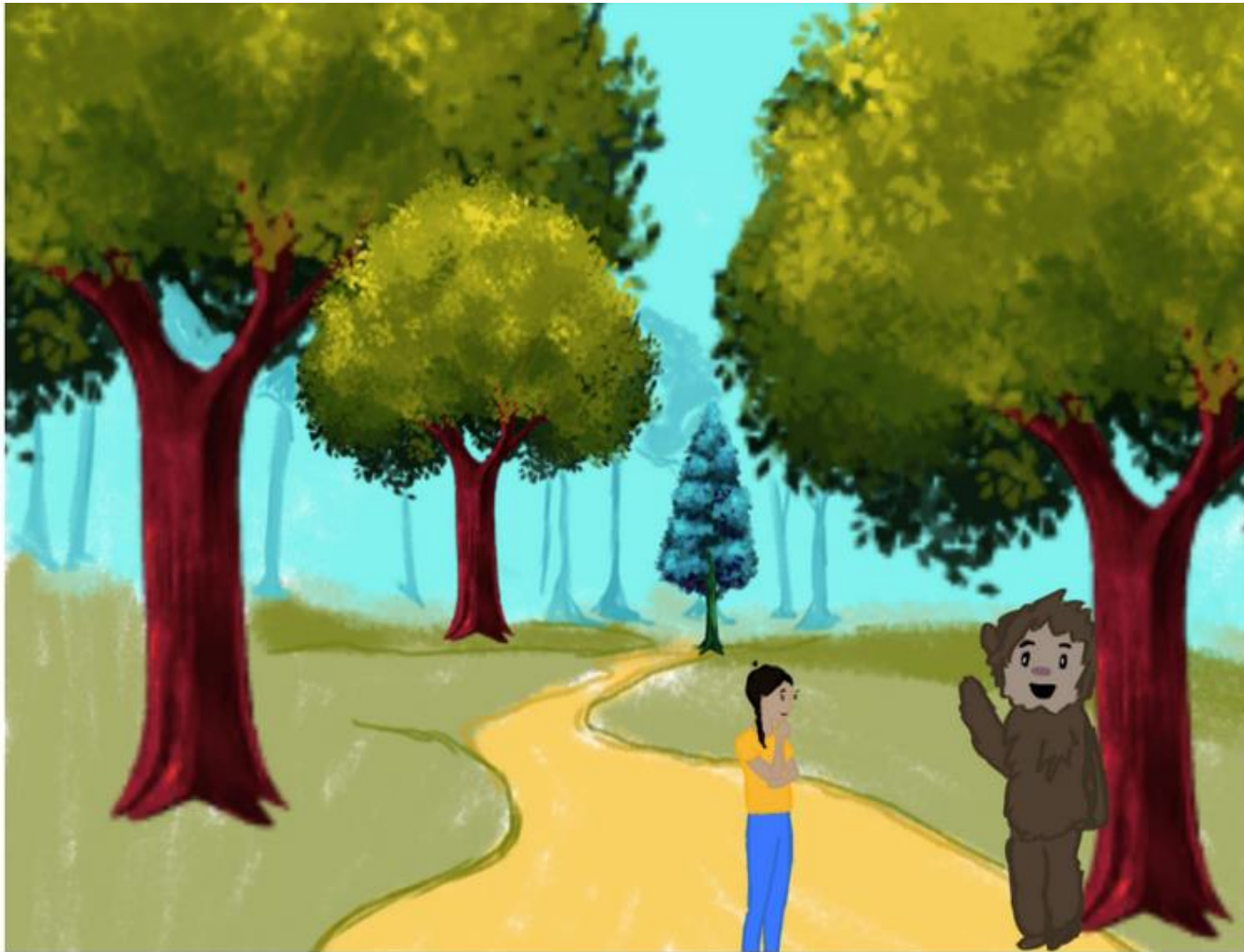
Not long after, the Buffalo of Respect nodded wisely. "The more you open your heart to mindfulness, Jax, the more you'll see the value in everyone and everything around you. You'll learn that those who wish to be respected must first show respect. Are you ready to come with us and learn the rest of our teachings?"

Jax eagerly nodded, excited to discover the magic of mindfulness, rather than staying stuck with his screen.



Together, they scampered into the forest, and before long, they met two more of the Grandfather Teachings...





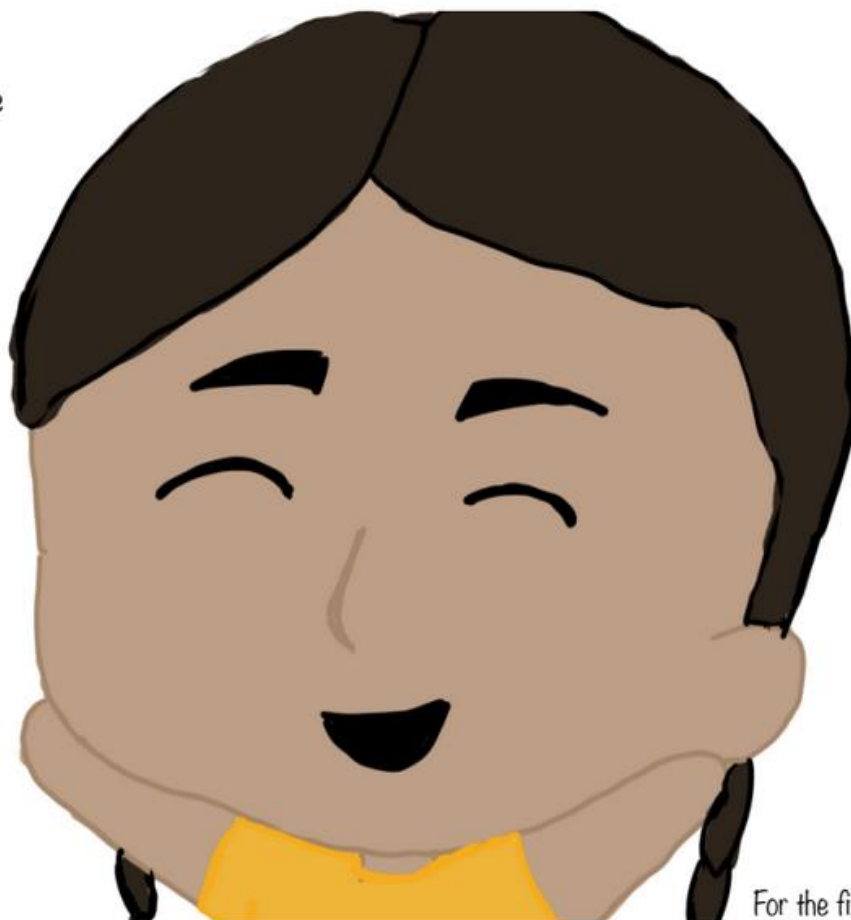
The first was the Sasquatch of Honesty, who spoke in a deep, kind voice. "We've been waiting for you, Jax. I hope you've learned something on your adventure so far. Being honest with yourself is very important—it helps you be truthful and trustworthy. Is there anything you'd like to be honest about?"

Jax hesitated for a moment, then spoke quietly, "I realize now that my lack of balance has kept me from the life I really want. I've spent so much time focused on the wrong things, and I feel disappointed in myself." The Sasquatch of Honesty smiled gently. "It's okay. Recognizing this is the first step toward change."



Then, the Bear of Bravery, who had been quietly watching, spoke up with a deep, strong voice. "It takes great courage to see our mistakes and be ready to change. Be proud. You've already begun learning the skills of mindfulness and moderation. That is true bravery."

Jax felt a warmth in his chest, a sense of pride he hadn't felt before.



For the first time, he was beginning to understand the real magic of the world—and it wasn't on a screen.



Now a group of six, Jax and his friends continued deeper into the forest in search of the last two teachings. Soon, they came upon a peaceful body of water. The other teachings cheered with excitement. "This is the home of the Turtle of Truth!" they exclaimed.

Jax peered into the water and saw a large, weathered shell slowly emerging to the surface.

The Turtle of Truth spoke in a slow, wise voice. "Congratulations, young Jax. You have begun your lifelong journey of truth. This path will help you act with no regrets, knowing in your heart who you truly are."



Jax smiled and waved to the turtle, thankful for the wisdom he had gained. "Thank you for helping me find the truth," he said, his heart feeling lighter.



They continued along their journey, excitement growing as they neared the final teaching. After a short walk, they reached a clearing where the treetops opened up, revealing a vast sky.



Suddenly, an enormous shadow swooped down from above, landing gracefully in the center of the group. It was the Eagle of Love!

The eagle stood tall and proud, its eyes shining with kindness. "Jax," the Eagle began, "along your journey, you have learned humility, wisdom, respect, honesty, bravery, and truth. Now, it is time to learn love. To know love is to know peace. It is unconditional and strong. If you practice all these teachings and keep your mindfulness, you will see the world through loving eyes."

As the Eagle spoke, it stretched its wings wide, creating a circle of warmth and harmony around the group. In that moment, Jax felt the love and peace fill him, like the entire forest was holding him close. Jax stood there, feeling a deep sense of gratitude for everything he had learned. The screen that once captivated him seemed distant now, replaced by something far more meaningful—true connection, wisdom, and love.

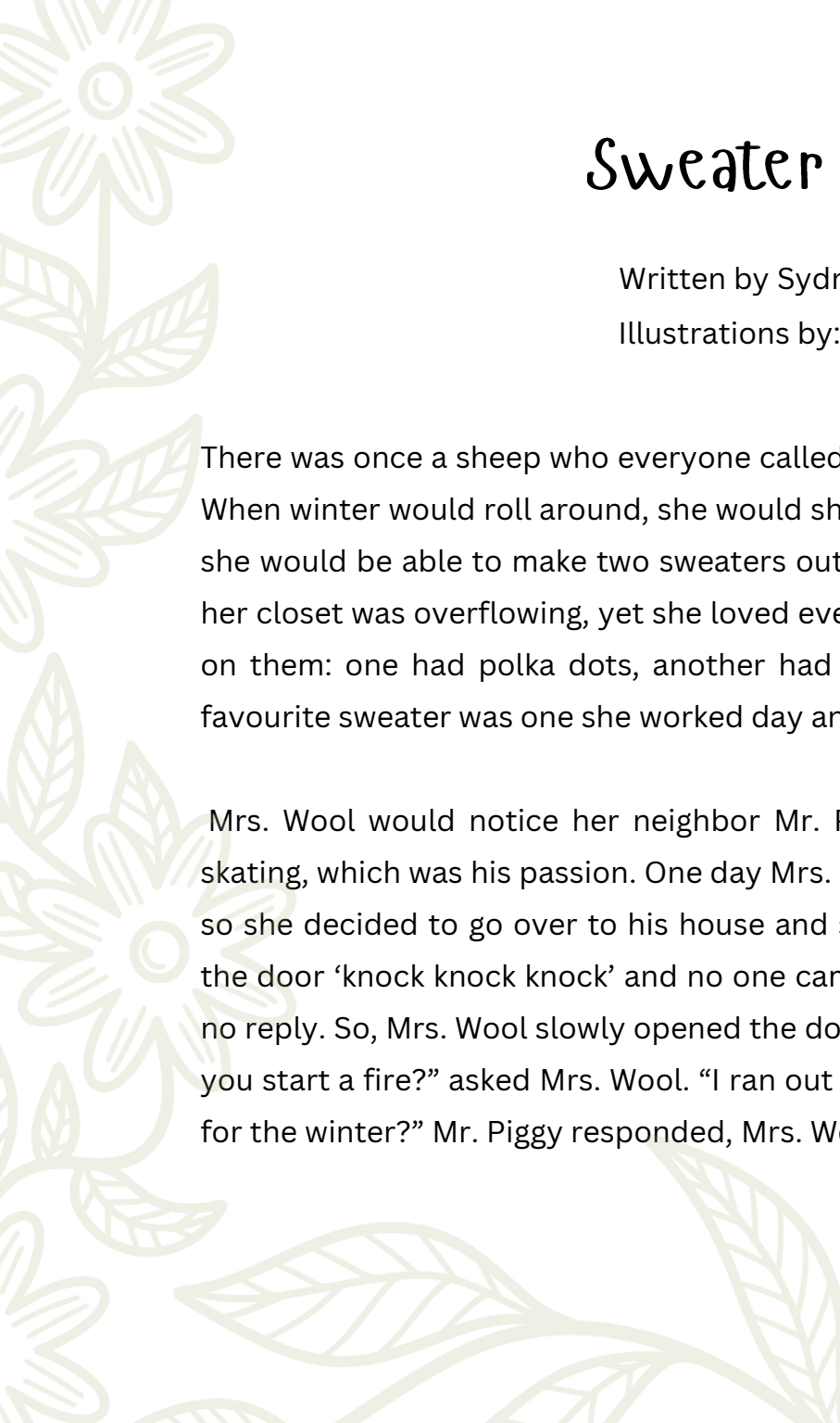


'Thank you, all of you,' Jax said, looking at his new friends. 'I understand now. This is the real magic—the magic of life, love, and mindfulness.'

And so, with a heart full of new knowledge, Jax knew his adventure had just begun. He would carry these teachings with him, sharing them with others and always remembering that the greatest adventures were the ones he experienced with an open heart and mind.

Thank you for enjoying our short children's story regarding mindfulness through the outlook of the Seven Grandfather Teachings! We are two college students out of central Alberta, and this illustration book was completed through course assignments in pairing with the Move Your Mood organization, which can be found at the Child Advocacy Centre in Red Deer, Alberta. For more information of the teachings touched on in our story, please explore the website - <https://nhbp-nsn.gov/seven-grandfather-teachings/> and for more information surrounding the Move Your Mood organization, please learn more on the website - <https://www.moveyourmood.ca/studio>.





Sweater of Kindness

Written by Sydney, Emma, and Teagan

Illustrations by: Canva AI, Magic Media

There was once a sheep who everyone called Mrs. Wool, and she had everything she needed and more. When winter would roll around, she would shave off her wool and knit it into a sweater, and some years she would be able to make two sweaters out of her wool. Overtime she knitted so many sweaters that her closet was overflowing, yet she loved every single one of them since they all had different patterns on them: one had polka dots, another had stripes, and one even had a flowers on it; however, her favourite sweater was one she worked day and night on for a week, it was a sweater with a puppy on it.

Mrs. Wool would notice her neighbor Mr. Piggy was freezing every time he went outside to go ice skating, which was his passion. One day Mrs. Wool noticed that Mr. Piggy wasn't going outside anymore, so she decided to go over to his house and see what was wrong. When she got there, she knocked on the door 'knock knock knock' and no one came. "Is anyone home?" Mrs. Wool called out, yet there was no reply. So, Mrs. Wool slowly opened the door only to find Mr. Piggy freezing on the couch. "Why don't you start a fire?" asked Mrs. Wool. "I ran out of wood. Do you by chance have a sweater I could borrow for the winter?" Mr. Piggy responded, Mrs. Wool selfishly replied, "No, all of my sweaters are in use."



The next few days Mrs. Wool couldn't stop thinking about how cold Mr. Piggy was, so she went through her closet and pulled out her least favorite sweater to give to him. When she went over to Mr. Piggy's house, she offered him the sweater and his gratitude warmed her heart. Mrs. Wool realized that by giving up something she didn't need to someone who does brought her joy.

The next day she brought over three more sweaters and one of them was her beloved puppy sweater. When Mr. Piggy was going through the sweaters he asked, "isn't this your favorite sweater?" Mrs. Wool responded, "you need it more than I do. I can make another one next year." Mr. Piggy was overjoyed with this and so he invited her to go ice skating with him. Ever since that day Mrs. Wool would give any sweater she didn't need to those who did in the community.

Do not grudge others what you yourself do not need

The Ant and the Magpie

Written by Sydney, Emma, and Teagan

Illustrations by: Canva AI, Magic Media

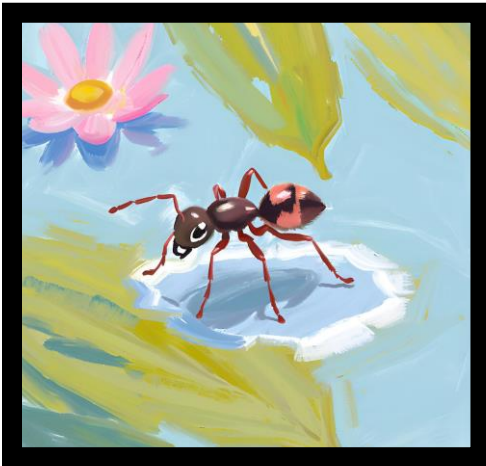
One spring day a little Ant was scuttling along the sidewalk. Up ahead, he could see a gigantic puddle— one of the ones that must have been left over from the snow melting.

“Holy cow!!” The little Ant thought to himself, “that must be one of the great lakes!!”

To give him some credit— this puddle was much bigger than usual. It definitely wasn't the kind that could be easily jumped over. Maaayyybe, if you had a running start, you might be able to clear it. But to this little Ant, it didn't make much difference if this was one of the great lakes or just a puddle. Because from his point of view, it looked like it could be the biggest body of water in the world.

Once the Ant finally reached it, he carefully peered over the edge of the sidewalk and looked out onto the water. He squinted and craned his neck, even hopping up and down a few times. But try as he might, he couldn't see the edges of this water. When he first looked down into it, the Ant couldn't even see the bottom. But when he squinted, he could just start to make out the shapes of some of the pebbles lying on the ground below.

The Ant was gobsmacked. The depth of the puddle was greater than anything he had seen, and taller than any piece of fruit or morsel of garbage that had ever been dragged home to his colony. In fact, this puddle looked deeper than his entire ant-hill was tall. To you and me though, it looked like this puddle might just spill over the top of your shoe.

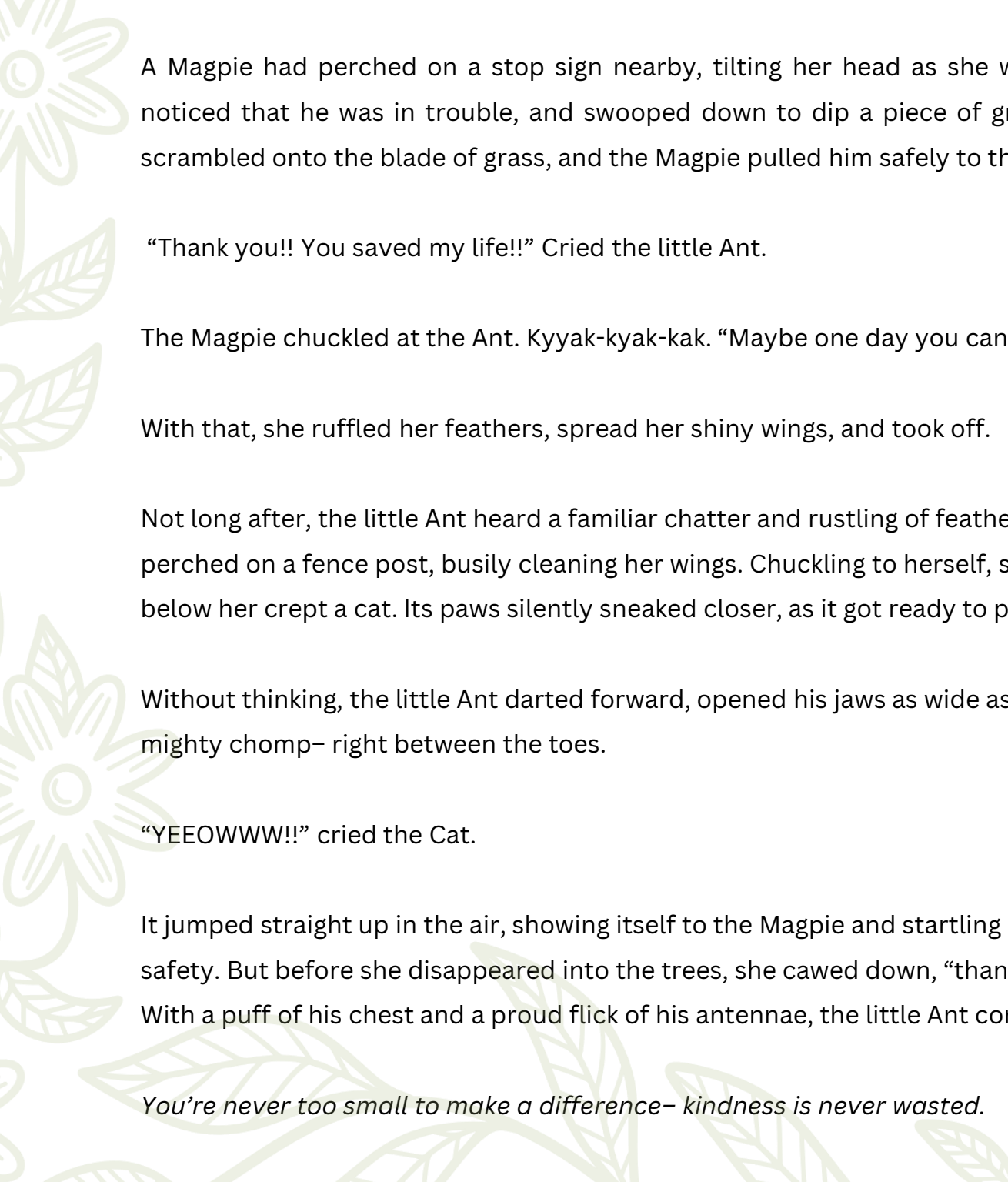


Suddenly, a car came whizzing by. The Ant was too distracted, gazing down into the water to notice it coming. The car hit the puddle, causing a wave to surge over the sidewalk. The poor little Ant was swept out far into the puddle before he even knew what hit him.

The water was icy cold from the last of the melted snow. He was tossed and turned by the still swirling puddle, his little legs flailing as he tried to stay afloat. But the more he struggled, the farther he drifted from shore.

“This is it,” he thought. “This is how I’m gonna go... lost at sea.”

Just as he was about to give up, a shadow passed overhead.



A Magpie had perched on a stop sign nearby, tilting her head as she watched the little Ant. She soon noticed that he was in trouble, and swooped down to dip a piece of grass within reach of the Ant. He scrambled onto the blade of grass, and the Magpie pulled him safely to the sidewalk.

“Thank you!! You saved my life!!” Cried the little Ant.

The Magpie chuckled at the Ant. Kyyak-kyak-kak. “Maybe one day you can return the favor.”

With that, she ruffled her feathers, spread her shiny wings, and took off.

Not long after, the little Ant heard a familiar chatter and rustling of feathers. He could see the Magpie perched on a fence post, busily cleaning her wings. Chuckling to herself, she was completely unaware that below her crept a cat. Its paws silently sneaked closer, as it got ready to pounce.

Without thinking, the little Ant darted forward, opened his jaws as wide as he could, and gave the Cat a mighty chomp– right between the toes.

“YEEOWWW!!” cried the Cat.

It jumped straight up in the air, showing itself to the Magpie and startling her. She then flapped away to safety. But before she disappeared into the trees, she cawed down, “thank you, little Ant!!”

With a puff of his chest and a proud flick of his antennae, the little Ant continued on his way.

You’re never too small to make a difference– kindness is never wasted.

The Tail of Two

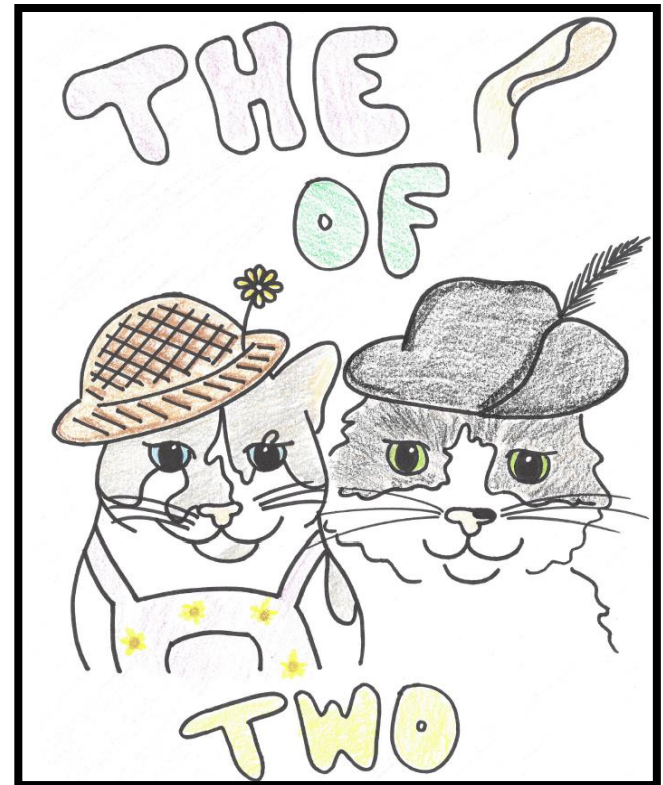
Written by Melissa and Felicity

Illustrations by Melissa

Once upon a time there were two kitty siblings. Patchy is a shy and loyal, wearing her little sunhat, as well as an apron and a pair of boots covered in sunflowers. And Besty, a cunning and mischievous little cat, who wears boots, a chaperon, and carried his sword with confidence (a butter knife).

These kitties grew up closer than ever, as their whole lives they had to rely on one another as they did not grow up with wealth. They both had dreams of becoming professional knights and swordsmen. Patchy wants to help her poor farmer family. Besty has always wanted to gain high status in the kingdom.

Patchy and Besty arrive at the kingdom and the king declares they must complete three trials, the PUR test, in order to prove their abilities to become knights of the kitty table. Patchy and Besty make a pact to above all value kindness and integrity on their journey to become knights.



In their first trial, they are testing their patience. They are expected to help by returning books back to their shelf at the library. The librarian pushes two carts towards Patchy and Besty with towers of books stacked on top.

Patchy goes down the isles reading the labels on the books and on the shelves, and she places them methodically on the shelves, being careful not to bend the corners.

Besty looks at the tower of books and HUFFS. He grabs the first book and shoves it into a random spot on the shelf. He grabs another book sneakily placing it onto Patchy's cart, and Patchy squints at her cart, noticing that the tower is staying stagnant.

Eventually all the books have found their home, some sticking out of the shelves like a sore thumb. The librarian looks at Besty with a scowl, as she realizes she has significantly more work to do to fix his mistakes. But the trial is technically complete.

In the second trial, they are testing their problem-solving/utilization skills. A farmer's cows are stuck on the other side of the river, and the two kitties need to get them home. Patchy blows up a dingy and guides the cow on top, and Patchy pulls the dingy across the river and the cow safely arrives back at her farm.

Besty pushes the farmer face down into the muddy river and guides the cow over his back, successfully helping the farmer get his cow safely home. The farmer scowls at Besty and huffs away. But technically the trial is complete.

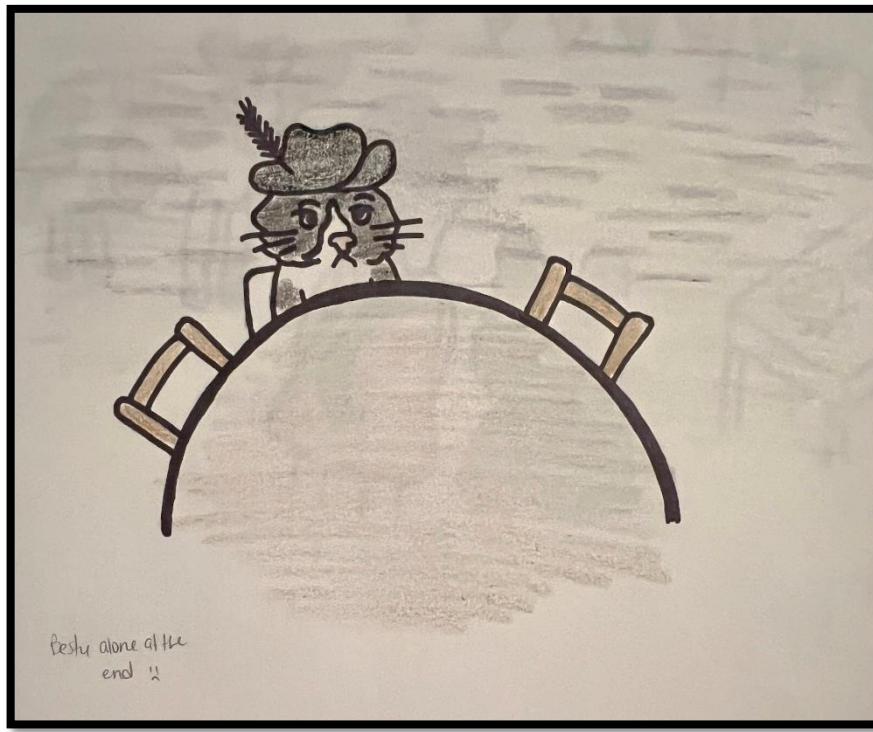


In the final trial Patchy and Besty are escorted to a tree where up at the tippy top sits a very energetic puppy named Rocco. In this trial they are expected to get Rocco out of the tree and bring him back to his doghouse. Patchy walks over to the tree and attaches a hammock to the bottom, and just before she is about to help Rocco to get down, Besty storms up to the tree and is annoyed by the situation. He grabs the bottom of the trunk and shakes the tree aggressively.

Rocco falls out of the tree landing in the hammock. Rocco is angry by the little care Besty showed for him and starts chasing Besty around the park. While Besty runs around screaming, we see that Rocco is out of the tree, so the trial is complete.

Patchy watches this, takes a deep breath and whistles as loud as possible, and Rocco turns around and sits. Patchy walks up and gently pets Rocco. Rocco licks Patchy on the face and she smiles. Patchy gives Rocco a kiss on the nose and calmly leads him to his doghouse.

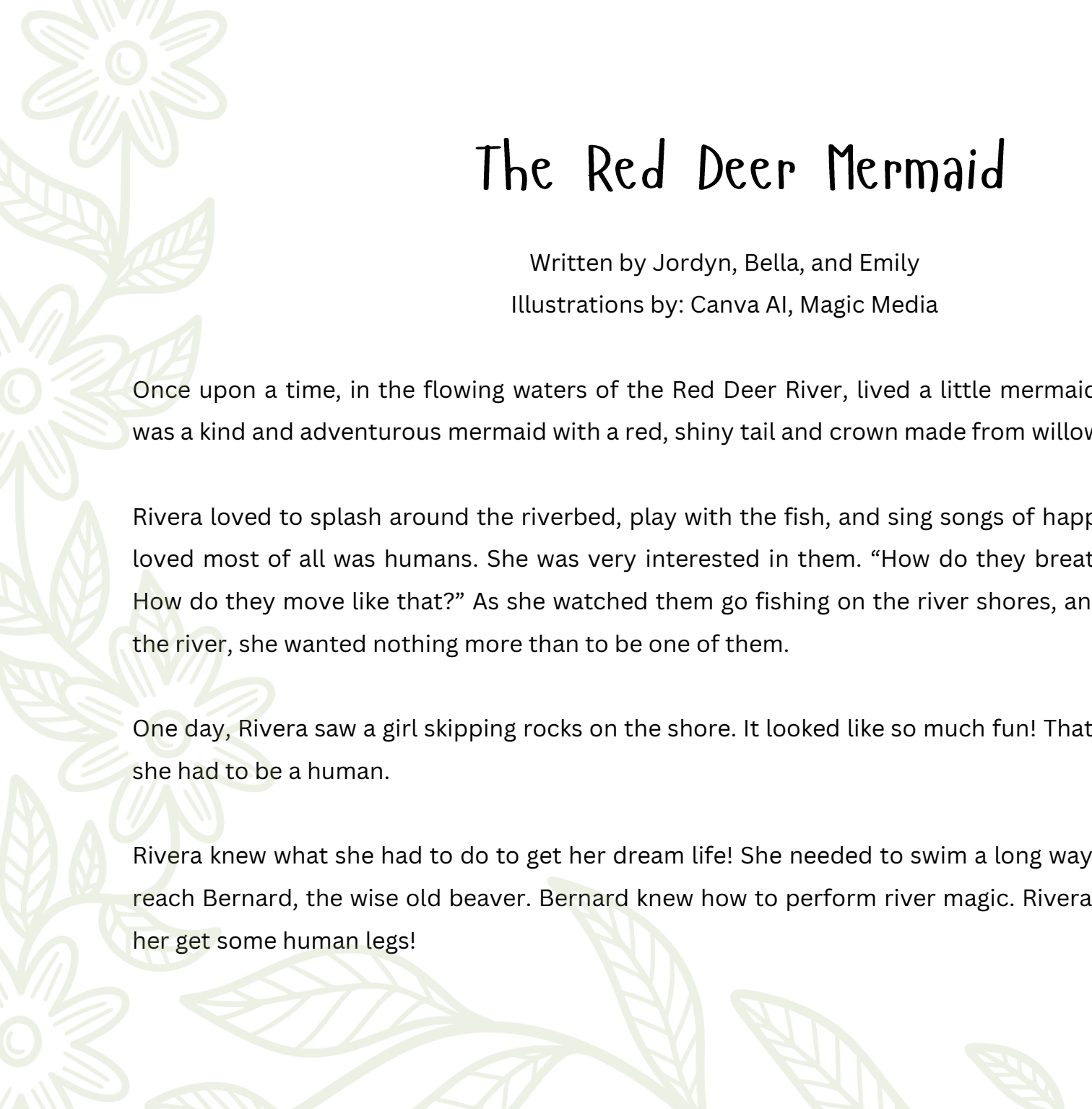
The two kitties come back to the castle to attend the knight ceremony, and the King states that Besty is now a knight of the Kitty Table. Besty has a giant smile on his face, but he looks around but doesn't see Patchy anywhere. Patchy walks out from the crowd and looks up at the King, and looks over at Besty: “if being a knight means we forget the promises we have made to each other, then I would rather stay me: a farmer's daughter.” She walks away, tips her sunhat, and winks at Besty and the King, disappearing into the crowd. In the end, Besty achieves glory, but he is completely alone.





Patchy returns home and they throw a sunflower-themed celebration in the barn. The farmers bring fresh milk, the librarian gives her a stack of books with plant remedies, and Rocco is there too! He wags his tail and exclaims that he will forever protect Patchy, her family, and her plants! As the party begins, the rest of the kingdom floods in, thanking Patchy for her service and kindness. Patchy sits on a hay bale surrounded by her friend and family. Rocco lays his head on Patchy's lap and wags his tail. Patchy takes a sip of warm milk and looks up at the sunset. She smiles, "I don't need a title to be a good kitty. I just need to have a big heart."

Back at the kingdom Besty is alone, he got everything he wanted, but in all the wrong ways by leaving those he was meant to protect hurt and angry with him. Teaching him that you can have it all and still have nothing.

A decorative floral pattern in a light green color is positioned on the left side of the page. It features several stylized flowers with multiple petals and long, pointed leaves. The pattern is vertical and extends from the top to the bottom of the page.

The Red Deer Mermaid

Written by Jordyn, Bella, and Emily

Illustrations by: Canva AI, Magic Media

Once upon a time, in the flowing waters of the Red Deer River, lived a little mermaid named Rivera. She was a kind and adventurous mermaid with a red, shiny tail and crown made from willow leaves.

Rivera loved to splash around the riverbed, play with the fish, and sing songs of happiness. But what she loved most of all was humans. She was very interested in them. “How do they breathe out of the river? How do they move like that?” As she watched them go fishing on the river shores, and go canoeing down the river, she wanted nothing more than to be one of them.

One day, Rivera saw a girl skipping rocks on the shore. It looked like so much fun! That's when Rivera knew she had to be a human.

Rivera knew what she had to do to get her dream life! She needed to swim a long way away from home to reach Bernard, the wise old beaver. Bernard knew how to perform river magic. Rivera knew he could help her get some human legs!



“I can grant your wish, but you will lose your voice until you choose to either give up your tail forever or give up your dream of being a human forever,” Bernard said cautiously. Rivera paused.

She thought about how much she would miss singing, and how much she loved gliding through the water with her tail. But the curiosity in her heart was stronger than ever. With a deep breath, she nodded. Bernard began his magic — he summoned water lilies, twisted reeds into shapes, and chanted ancient words only river creatures knew. A swirl of golden bubbles surrounded Rivera, lifting her from the water. When she opened her eyes, she was lying on the shore with legs where her tail used to be. She couldn’t speak, but her heart was bursting with excitement.

Learning to walk was hard for Rivera! But once she got the hang of it, the first thing she did was walk to the river shore to find that girl.

She searched all day, wandering along the banks, peeking through bushes and trees, until she found the girl again — her name was Alberta. Alberta smiled warmly and invited Rivera to play. Even though Rivera couldn't speak, they laughed and skipped rocks together, drawing pictures in the sand to talk. Days turned into weeks. They built forts, made flower crowns, and shared stories through gestures and giggles. But the longer Rivera stayed on land, the more she missed the river — the cool current, the songs of the fish, and the feeling of being truly herself.

It came time to make her choice. Would Rivera choose to be her true self or hide who she was forever? Rivera feared what her new friend would think. But she knew she needed to stay true to herself.

Rivera dove into the river. Her tail reappeared and she regained her voice! Her human friend, Alberta, was shocked! “You’re a mermaid!?” exclaimed Alberta.

“Yes, I understand if you don’t want to be friends anymore.” Rivera sighed.

“Of course I want to stay friends!”

Rivera was glad she stayed true to who she was. From splashing in the river with her people, to visiting her new human friends by the shore, Rivera lived happily ever after. And if you ever walk by the shores and hear a song of happiness, it might just be Rivera, the Red Deer River Mermaid.

Little Red's Journey and the Friends She Made Along the Way

Written by Phaedra, Jocelyn, and Destiny
Illustrations by Destiny

Once upon a time, there was a young girl named Little Red. Little Red dearly loved her grandma, who lived a little ways into the woods on a small acreage. Little Red had not seen her grandma in a while and asked her Mom if they could go visit her.



"My dear, I would love to take you, but I can't as I am very busy with my work."

"I know the way, Mom. Can I walk there myself?"

Her Mom thought for a moment and then said, "I don't see why not. You are growing into a fine young lady."

Little Red thanked her and was about to walk out the door when her Mom stopped her.

"But, it is cold and snowy. Make sure you take your cross-country skis and your red winter jacket so that you'll be warm and get there quickly", she said while handing Little Red the skis and her poofy, red winter coat.

"But Mom," Little Red whined, "it'll be warm later, and then I'll have to carry it!"

"It's cold now, my dear, so you must take it. I'm your Mom, so it's my job to fuss about you-- And don't forget to watch out for the wolf!"

"The wolf?" said a nervous Little Red shakily.

"Oh, don't worry too much, dear. It's just an old tale your grandma used to tell me, but she warned me, and now I'm warning you. It pays to be cautious, but I'm sure you'll be fine."

Little Red did as she was told and started the journey to her grandma's house. She kept a watchful eye out and did her best not to be scared. At first, she wasn't! Sliding around on the snow was fun! She liked the shhkrirt, shhkrirt, shhkrirt, shhkrirting sound the skis made as they moved against the snow. But it was also hard work. Soon, Little Red was huffing and puffing and had to unzip her jacket because she was too hot.

And then Little Red heard a mighty CRRAAACKKKK! Was that a wolf stepping on a branch?

"My oh my, what big paws he must have to make such a loud sound!"

Little Red felt she would never be able to outrun him with how tired she was. She hadn't caught her breath from skiing yet, and now it got faster and faster and faster with her fear. There was a rustling noise in the dead grass along the tree line, and Little Red was frozen in fear.

Out from the brush popped a beaver, not a wolf! He looked confused and said, "My paws? Big?" He then saw a startled Little Red and added, "Oh, Little Red. Are you alright? You look quite terrified."

"*huff* I thought *huff* you were *huff* a wolf."



"Ah, I see. Well, it's just me, Benny the Beaver. I'm sorry if I scared you, Little Red. Here, let me help you calm down." "I really should keep going."

"You won't get far when you're like that. It's okay to take breaks, you know. Although working hard is important, even I take breaks when I'm building my dam. Why don't you take a few deep breaths with me?"

Little Red took some long, steady breaths with Beaver for a few minutes. The two sat and named the trees around them, and it helped to take Little Red's mind off of her fear and reminded her of the beauty in the world around her. She spotted an aspen and a pine, and Beaver spotted a birch and a willow. After a bit, Little Red felt much better, thanked her new friend for helping her, and continued skiing towards Grandma's.

As she continued along her journey, she began to get warm, so she took off her hat and her mittens and stuffed them into her pockets. She skied past Bower Ponds and into a deep forest filled with more trees just like the ones she and the beaver had spotted together. As she skied, she felt much better, until she glanced to her right and saw a huge shadow of what looked like...

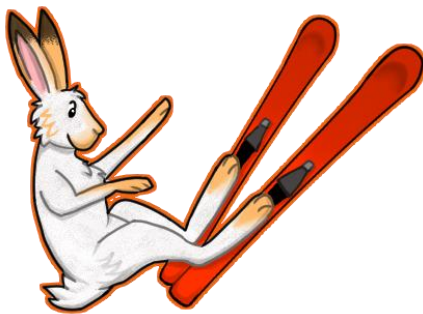
A wolf!

“My oh my, what big ears he has!” Little Red shouted as she turned around, prepared to see a big, mean wolf coming up behind her. You can only imagine how silly she must have felt when she gazed down to see nothing but a small jackrabbit standing on the path

“Oh dear, I’m so sorry!” rushed out the rabbit. “Hi, I’m Jack. I didn’t mean to scare you, I just wanted to ask what those weird-looking things on your feet were called?”

“Oh, these? These are just my cross-country skis,” said Little Red. “They help me to get around a little quicker in the snow. It’s kind of boring, but my mom makes me take them when I go on long trips.”

“Hmm,” said Jack. “Whenever I want to get around somewhere fast, I just hop like this.” Jack hurriedly hopped in circles around Little Red.
path.



“That looks fun! Let me try!” shouted Little Red as she slipped out of her skis. She followed right behind Jack, hoping as fast, as far, and as high as she could, and she giggled and smiled the whole time. “This is so fun!”

“Look at you go!” said Jack. “You looked so nervous when you first saw me, so I’m glad this put a smile on your face. You know, whenever I have too much pent-up energy, I always hop around, and it makes me feel much better. You should try to do the same. Moving your body is a great way to boost your mood, but doing it in a way that you love is even better.”

“Thanks, Jack,” said Little Red. “I think I’ll keep hopping all the way. Could you watch over my skis for me while I’m gone?”

“Of course! Hey, do you mind if I try them out?” Said Jack. Little Red laughed and nodded and with that, she was on her way, hop-hop-hopping down the

Eventually, she came up to a shady area in the forest. Deep into the trees, she saw a set of glowing, yellow eyes, and thoughts of the big bad wolf flashed through her mind.

“My oh my, what big eyes he has!” she said frightfully

“Whoooo are you?” the owner of the shining eyes said from deep in the trees. Little Red covered down and squeezed her eyes shut tight. “I said, whooo are you?” The voice said again, this time even closer.

Little Red mustered the courage to open her eyes and saw a feathery little owl hopping towards her. She breathed a sigh of relief and greeted the little bird. Then, a raven and a magpie flew down from the canopy above her to stand beside the owl.

“Oh, little girl, you looked so scared!” Cawed Raven.

“I know just what you need,” chirped Magpie.

“You need some good music to calm you down. Hit it!”

Just like that, the three little birds started to make incredible music just using the items around them. Raven scratched his claws against a rock, Owl tapped a branch against a melting icicle, and Magpie tweeted some beautiful notes between it all. The music carried Little Red’s scary thoughts away, and she was left with a renewed sense of energy. She thanked the birds for their lovely song and skipped along the path.



“Remember,” called out Owl, “sometimes when you’re feeling scared, all you need is an epic soundtrack to carry you through your journey!”

And with those words, Little Red's heart and mind felt lighter as she hummed a tune along the way. Soon she noticed the drip, drip, drip of icicles on trees, and pooling water forming puddles along the path. Little Red spotted the buds of tulips pushing through frozen ground, and the air took on a distinct smell of spring. She unzipped her red puffer coat, the breeze refreshing her, the sun now warm on her face.

As Little Red continued on her path, she suddenly heard what sounded like a deep growl:

“GrUgEGRRrrUgGG.” Instantly, Little Red's mind was back to racing, fears of a big bad wolf dancing through her thoughts. The wolf was hungry, mouth wide, teeth sharp. “My oh my, what big teeth he must have!” she cried. Squatting down to hug her knees, she closed her eyes in fear...waiting to be swallowed up.

Little Red opened one of her eyes to peek at her coming fate... before her stood a squirrel! “Are you okay, miss? My name is Arthur the squirrel. Was that my stomach rumbling or yours perhaps?” Arthur hopped over to her, leaning into her stomach to listen, “Hm, yup, definitely both of us!”

“I thought it was the wolf...” Little Red's words came out barely a breath

“Ah! I see that must have been a scary feeling, but alas, I assure you the sound was both of us, simply hungry for a delicious lunch!” With those words, Arthur scampered behind a tree and came back hauling a large handful of nuts and berries.

“In order for us to feel our best, it's important that we fuel our bodies with the many different kinds of food that are filled with nutrients. Here, we can share these nuts and berries. Good food makes us feel...well, good!”

Both Little Red and Arthur the squirrel shared the meal together, and Little Red's fear began to fade again. Arthur showed Little Red where to gather some saskatoon berries for her to continue to fuel herself and for her to share with her grandma later



Finally, Little Red made it to Grandma's house, where she was greeted warmly with hugs and kisses. She showed her grandma the Saskatoon berries she had picked, and they excitedly started baking a Saskatoon pie. Bustling around the kitchen, hard at work, Little Red turned to look out the kitchen window and was met with...the wolf! Big paws curled over the windowsill, large, gleaming eyes peering in, tall ears, and a glistening smile of teeth!

Before Little Red could even form a thought, she heard her grandma exclaim, "Charles! Come in, come in, little dear one, the pie is almost ready!" When the wolf, whose name was Charles, stepped through the door, Little Red noticed that he was not big and scary at all...he was tiny! In fact, he was really a young pup! Shyly, Charles approached Little Red and held out a paw to shake, "Hi, my name's, uh, Charles, it's nice to, uh, meet you," his words came out in a stutter.

"Go ahead, dear. Charles is a sweet boy," her grandma said, smiling, and nudged Little Red forward. "Charles' Grandpa Wolf used to give me such a hard time when we were both young and in school, but thankfully, we've gotten past that and are wonderful friends now!"

Little Red took his paw to shake and noticed that Charles's paw was so soft in her hand! He looked quite friendly, with big, adorable eyes and ears almost too big for his head. She smiled at him, and Charles offered a shy yet sweet smile in return.

"Now run along, I called to invite some other friends to play while the pie finishes. We will all enjoy this together when you get back!" Her grandma pointed outside where Little Red could see Benny, Jack, Owl, Magpie, Raven and even Arthur!

"I'm a bit scared to meet new friends..." Charles spoke quietly. Still holding his paw, Little Red replied, "I was scared today, but all my friends here helped me to be less scared. They can show you ways, too." She gave him an encouraging squeeze of the paw, and with that, they both ran into the yard joyfully, Little Red leaving her red puffer coat at the door as the warm spring air blew in.

