

Short Story

Competition 2026

**CHILDREN'S CATEGORIES
SHORTLIST & WINNERS**



Children Shortlist & Winners

(aged 5-7)

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Shortlisted:

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Children Shortlist & Winners

(aged 5-7)

1

The Secret Forest Akira Raghav

One day a little girl about 7 years old went into the forest. She walked into the forest. There were trees and the birds were singing very calmly. The little girl walked until a big tree was there. She stopped in surprise. What met her eyes was a big hole in the tree! She stared at it in great surprise. She has not seen that when she came into the forest before.

The little girl looked into the hole. She was thinking if she will go down or not. But after sometime she decided to go down. So, she slid down the dark hole. When she slid down the hole she saw that she was not in the forest anymore. She was somewhere else. She did not know where she was. She thought for some time and then she had an idea. She would see what there was to see. So, she got up and went along the street.



She saw some house and heard the birds sing. Then she came to some fairy houses and she saw some fairies. But the fairies were unhappy. One fairy saw the girl and went up to her and told her something. "Hi I do not know _who you are but one of the fairy has gone. You do not need to search and we know where she is and I will tell you where. She is the house which has a black roof and its where the witch lives". "The witch?" the girl asked. The fairy told "Yes the witch. She has got her locked up in a cage. Can you help us?" the little fairy said. "Yes!" the little girl said and she set of after sometime. She came to the witch house and she opened the door. No one was inside and she found the cage but there was no key.

She hunted around and at last she found the key. She unlocked the door and the fairy thanked her. The girl went back home and she lived happily ever after ♥♥♥



2 **Rainy Day** by Norah Hauwaho

One day I was at home and it was rainy so I couldn't play outside.

I had to play inside.

I played with my unicorns, and then me and my mum bounced on the bed.



A Boy Who Loves His Ice Cream

by Yusuf Hassham

He went to a ice cream shop

He said hello

He buys a ice cream

His name was Jason

He loves his ice cream

It was chocolate ice cream

It was very yummy

He loved it very much

The end

The Magic Crystal Adventure

by Hevin Varghese Eldho

Deep in a big forest, there lived a boy named David, his sister Diana, and their pet wolf, Leo. They lived in a cozy tree house near a swamp with sleepy crocodiles. David and Diana liked to explore, and Leo always watched over their home.

One day, they decided to go on a big adventure. They climbed higher and higher until they found a hidden little house under a pile of leaves. Curious, they jumped inside and slid down a deep hole.

At the bottom, David saw something shiny. It was the crystal he had been searching for for many years! He quickly picked it up. Suddenly, the ground began to shake. David, Diana, and Leo hurried back up and raced home to their tree house.

Soon, everything became calm again, and the friends smiled as they looked at the glowing crystal together. The next morning, David and Diana showed Leo the crystal in the sunshine. When the sun's light shined on it, rainbow lights went all around the tree house. The crystal looked very magical and bright. David, Diana, and Leo followed the rainbow lights and found a secret place in the forest. They knew the crystal was very special. It not only shines, but it also takes them on fun adventures. From that day on, David, Diana, and Leo knew the crystal would bring them many happy adventures together in the forest.



Children Shortlist & Winners

(aged 8-11)

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Children Shortlist & Winners

(aged 8-11)

1 The Troll Bakery

by Nidhyathi de Silva

Willow Wakefield stepped into the bakery, smelling the air filled with smells of fresh bread. Now, this wasn't just a normal bakery. This was a troll bakery. Yes. Trolls ran the bakery. They had low, croaky voices and looked terrifying, but they were just as nice as human bakery owners, though most of the villagers didn't think so. 'Wow! I like your new cranberry pie!' said Willow. 'Oh, yes. grandma troll made it.' said the big troll. There were two trolls; grandma troll was traditional and old, while the bigger, younger one (He looked like he was in his forties) was named Christopher, and was fun and friendly.

But what puzzled Willow was why she never saw the trolls themselves eating.

In the evening, the shop would close. So wouldn't that be the right time for the trolls to eat? Willow would scurry down the streets and peep through the glass doors of the little bakery. Surprisingly, there would be nothing to see except the trolls's bedrooms as the trolls lived in the bakery.

So one day, Willow decided to gently open the door of the bakery and look inside while it was closed and no one was there. But she could see the sign. The bakery was called 'llort retnuh live'. It made no sense to Willow, but still she just wrote down the name of the bakery on her special notebook she got from her grandpa.

Willow felt a chill running down her spine as she remembered the time last summer her grandpa was telling her tales about the ferocious pack of moon howlers who ran away after the trolls arrived in Moonbun Hollow. Willow thought the trolls were old friends of the moon howlers, and that was why even though they ate the bakery cakes and breads, most villagers didn't trust the trolls.

The trolls must have eaten something from the bakery, and they did not have a kitchen. Willow had a very good memory. But nothing was eaten. The shelves of food were full like they were in the morning.

Willow looked at her notebook. Then she felt her jaw drop to the floor. Llort retnuh live spelled backwards was..... TROLL HUNTER EVIL!

Willow looked at the forest on the hill. It was called the black forest. No one dared to go there..... except maybe the trolls.

After an awful lot of hiking up the hill, Willow finally reached the black forest. Then, she saw the two trolls.

Did the trolls forage in the forest?

'Trolls! I know your secret! And I know why you named this bakery troll hunter evil backwards!' shouted Willow boldly.


But the trolls didn't do anything. They just stood there, astonished. Then they finally spoke up. 'Oh, we mean no harm!' said grandma troll. 'Then what about the sign?' asked Willow cautiously, backing off and pointing a stick.

'That was to protect us from the real evil, like the moon howlers! You see, moon howlers often get tricked when someone says they are evil. This was the only thing we could do after the moon howlers attacked some years ago. The moon howlers are magical wolves, as you might know, and we have been keeping Moonbun Hollow village safe by running the bakery.' said the troll. Now the whole grandpa moon howler story made more sense. The three of them went back to the village - the girl, and the two trolls. To celebrate the freedom from moon howlers, they hosted a party for the whole village. And from that night, Willow started trusting the trolls more.

The next day, Willow woke up in delight. She got out of bed, and got ready. She wore a black frilled dress with a puffy cute white bow. Her family was hosting a buffet.

Willow scurried down the hallway, and outside, where the buffet was being held. She was delighted to see her whole village gathering up at the buffet. Christopher was chatting about pizza ovens to Willow's dad, while grandma troll was helping display the food table, and carrying the truffles in. Willow was so happy to see big plates of plum loaf and cranberry pie.

Willow took the microphone and got up on the flower filled podium. 'Hem-Hem. Hello, village of Moonbun Hollow. I am Willow Wakefield. I am so happy to see the whole village of Moonbun Hollow here. We are hosting this buffet because of the freedom of moon howlers because of the troll bakery. Help yourself to the scrumptious food.' she said.



Willow ran down the podium and hugged Christopher and grandma troll.

After the buffet, Willow and the trolls went to the Moonbun Hollow fishing river. Willow caught loads of teeny tiny little silver fish. She sighed happily and said, 'Thank you, troll bakery.'



2 **The Blue Blooms** By Lucy Tregaskis

Rose woke up with a flutter in her wings. She leapt out of her bed. She lived in one of the bigger houses, with her parents. Six flowers connected by bridges, hanging off the Great Oak. Her room had dark green walls, a bed in one corner with a view of the plateau below. On one side, there was a wardrobe and dresser. On the left side was a desk with scatterings of origami. She had a rose patterned rug in the middle of her room.

She looked out of the window, and fairies were flitting around, preparing for the festival of the Blue Blooms. Every ten years they celebrated the blue roses that bloomed. This was her first one. She changed into an elegant blue dress with a blue flower pinned onto the top. She added matching blue heels that click-clacked across the floor, and blue eyeshadow to her face. Rose clicked across the floor to the door, feeling glamorous. She walked across the bridge to the kitchen where her parents were sitting at the table.

"Good morning, gorgeous." Her mother said. "I made you berry pies."

"Thanks." Rose made her way over to the breakfast on the table. She was starving. She ate them quickly. They were fluffy and sweet and so good. "Fank oo mamhg." Rose's father raised an eyebrow, and she swallowed saying, "Sorry. Anyway, I've gotta go, bye love you both!"

"We'll see you soon!" Her father called as she ran out the door, barely remembering to grab her purse on the way out. She jumped and flew down to the market. It was decorated for the festival, with blue everywhere, assaulting her eyeballs. She was blinking so much she didn't hear her name being called.

"Rose! Rose!"

"Oh, Buttercup, sorry, I didn't see you there. The market's so bright!"

"Tell me about it! I swear, the festival blinds you more than Poppy's dresses!" Poppy was a girl who loved glitter. "I'm going for a peak at the Blooms. Coming?"

"Sorry. I promised I'd show my little sister around. Maybe later?"

"Of course!" She gave Buttercup a hug. "See you soon!" she said as she jogged over to a quiet part of the festival where a giant willow tree stood, its leaves brushing the ground. She pushed the vines away. Behind, small gardens circled the base of the trunk, where the blue roses grew. The branches blocked the light, but small fireflies buzzed around, giving the place a magical feel. She looked at the gardens and screamed. "AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA!" She dropped to her knees. "No.... Why?" The Blue Blooms were shriveled, looking faded and forgotten. Who did this? She thought. Who could do such a thing? She looked around. No-one else was here. Strange. Usually this place was crawling with people, and if there weren't, her scream should've brought more by now. What is going on? Rose heard a rustling, and she shakily stood up. "W-who's there?" she said, hating her voice for quivering. "Show yourself!"

"My, my. Feisty one, aren't you?" A figure stepped out from the shadows. She had a long black cloak, and it covered her face like a mask, except for her mouth. "Admiring my handiwork I see."

"Y-you did this?"

"Oh dear, are you thick? I thought it was pretty obvious."

"You're a monster."

"Mhm. Anyway, we've dillydallied long enough." She clapped her hands and more figures emerged from the shadows.

"W- AAAAAArghghj!" Rose's scream was muffled as the figure placed a hand over her mouth and grabbed her roughly, dragging her away.

Rose awoke in a dark room, the only light coming from gaps in shutters covering the windows. She had been dragged through a forest, blindfolded and gagged. The next part was blurry, like she was viewing the memory underwater. At some point she must've fallen asleep, as she didn't remember being put in a room like this. She wasn't gagged or blindfolded anymore. She lifted one arm gingerly. Then the other. She wasn't tied up. She still felt her wings. And they moved freely, so she could fly. But why tie me up and blindfold me, and then put me here where I can move freely? The question buzzed around in her head like a bee. Her daze was interrupted as she heard a door open. Rose spun around, squinting in the darkness.

"Hello." said a voice. The voice. This was the person who had kidnapped her. "Do you like the decoration?" Rose blinked in confusion. She pivoted slowly to study the room. There was a small side table with a vase. She hadn't seen it in the gloom. She walked closer to study the flower. Rose gasped as she realised what it was. It was a Blue Bloom, withered and dejected.

"I thought you might like a piece from home." She smiled cruelly, the dim light casting shadows across her face.

"You-," Rose was cut short by a bang and shout from outside. Her heart lifted. Maybe someone was going to rescue her. A lady burst in. She wasn't wearing a cloak. She was wearing armour. Gleaming green and blue in the dark haze of light. Rose smiled. The colours of the royal guard. She kicked the woman in the stomach. She landed with a thud outside. She turned to study her. And then she said as she bowed, "Greetings Rose. I am Lady Mirad, second in command of the royal guard. You've been troublesome to find. We've spent three days looking for you."

"Three days?" She hadn't thought she'd been asleep for that long. "But- what about the- the Blue Blooms?"


Lady Mirad's face showed no emotion. "I'm sorry Rose. We don't know how to fix it"
"Oh."

"We do have our best mages on it. Though... they aren't sure what's happened."
Rose nodded, tears in her eyes. She followed Mirad into the daylight. She stopped, letting her eyes adjust before flying home.

At home, things were in chaos. Her parents looked like they hadn't slept in days. There was a lot of tears and hugs. A few days passed and Rose felt a lot better, but the Blue Blooms were still withered. On her fourth visit to the royal mages, a blue butterfly wing fluttered down from somewhere above. She gasped. It was from a rare Doolan butterfly. She sprinted to where the mages were sitting and talking in hushed voices over a pot. They looked up to see her running toward them, barely stopping in time.

"I know what to put in! Add this!" She thrust up the butterfly wing.

"Where did you-"



“I was walking over here when it landed on my head,” she interrupted. The wizards looked at each other, then one of them beckoned her to put it in. She played it gently on the mixture. Instantly it fizzed and turned the mixture a bright blue, like a bath bomb. Without waiting for more instruction, she took a glass jar and filled it up. Ducking under the willow tree branches, she poured the mixture over the roses. They started to change, becoming bigger and bluer, until they looked like pieces of the sky itself. The Blue Blooms were back.



3 **Lost in the Smoke** by Vida Kyle

SUNDAY 13 JULY 1958

I remember her smile, as warm as an oven, as sweet as syrup. I remember her laugh, and the look on her face when I called her my mama. And then, all too soon, fate took over and I was left in a filthy alleyway with nothing but a blanket and a box to lie in. Eighteen months old, I was only a mere infant.

Days became weeks, weeks turned into months, and months stretched into years. I knew no one but Beverly. People thought of us as friends, but to me she was a dear sister.

"Francis!" There she was now, sprinting towards me, her face clouded with worry. "A ferocious fire has broken out in London. We must leave!" Even before then, I had smelled the ash, felt the embers.

A decent sized crowd had formed down the street and they all had their packs and briefcases, ready to leave at a moments notice. I suddenly came to observe a piece of flaming wood swirling in the wind. It landed on an innocent building and immediately set it ablaze. Screams echoed across the neighbourhood as families rushed from their homes and tore across the street as a mob. More people swarmed in from burning towns and villages and the mob soon became a gushing river of human beings as the block started burning down. I grabbed Beverly's hand and steered her down the street, making sure she was behind me at every turn. The toxic air burned my lungs, yet miraculously we could both still breathe. I stumbled down a side street and collapsed. When I asked Beverly if she was okay and there was no reply, I pulled my hand back only to discover calloused, dirty skin and nobody else's fingers. "Beverly! BEVERLY?" I called her name as loud as my throat would let me. Ash coated faces looked at me with eyebrows raised and scrunched up noses. I wanted to yell at them "Hey! You haven't just lost your best and only friend, have you? So BUTT OUT!" Oh, how I wanted to. Everything had gone wrong. How could this happen so quickly?

The fire took a sharp downhill turn from there. Lives were lost, house remains

were mistaken for cobblestone streets and the smell of burning wood and embers lingered in the air for miles. Many fires still blazed, and a source of water was my last and only hope. The River Thames was crowded with hundreds of people, big and small. I knew the numbers would increase to thousands once the fire started to haunt the heart of London. "Francis? Is that you?" A girl's face appeared in the smoke and I knew who it was by the tone of her voice and the glint in her eye. I waded deeper into the water and exclaimed; "Beverly! Oh, Beverly, what happened? Where did you go?" I asked her questions in a flurry of words, and I wasn't even sure if I was saying them right. "When you cut through the crowd onto the side street my hand slipped from yours and I was swept into the human stampede with no hope of turning around again."

MONDAY 14 JULY 1958

The fires roared all night long, and they were still blazing when the sun came up the next morning. Beverly and I splashed and kicked through the water to the other side of the river. We continued down the countryside, taking in the sweet smell of buttercups and roses. I soon spotted something, a small building constructed beside a healthy meadow. A cottage! I clasped Beverly's hand in mine, never intending to let go, and sped across the farm to the little house. It was perfect in many ways. A well pumped water into the house for cooking and drinks. Honeysuckle clambered up the side of the building and placed itself on the little red door. An old shed sat in the corner, and an old, thin horse whinnied inside. I battered the door down and coaxed her out with a clump of discarded hay. We soon nursed her back to health and called her Walnut. Beverly rummaged in the shed and found some big hunks of hay for seats and bedding. I found a job in the village, earning money for clothes and food. Life wasn't so hard after that, but I still woke up from the same nightmares. Beverly would calm me so I could sleep, and all was peaceful once again.

Monday

by Luna Rama

Sshhh.

My classroom is a snowglobe.

It is being held up by a giant. He tips it back and forth.

My classmates scream every time it shakes.

The noise is so loud it could break a million houses like the big bad wolf huffing and puffing to blow them down.

The pitch of the screaming gets higher and higher and the pressure builds until finally the glass of the snow globe cracks and shatters and I explode into a million pieces.

The water flows out and floods, breaking everything in its path.

A chair.

A couch.

Open books.

The children all float down the flood. still screaming higher and louder.

The words in the books slip from the pages into the water, telling everyone my name, and splashing onto the foreheads of local people who have come to see what the screaming is all about. The words drip into their mouths and they speak an ancient curse.

Smoke comes out of nowhere and forms an hour-glass. It's final grain of sand is about to drop when suddenly everything wooshes back to the start again, and I am back in the same place, holding on, hoping the globe won't shake again.

I walk on tiptoes. Quietly. I wrap myself in paper and hold my pencils in my fists.

My teacher tears a hole in my cocoon and tells me to do my work.

I poke my head out. I listen. I creep out and pull myself up to a chair.

The floor becomes hot, like lava. It trembles under my feet. I am the only one who knows that it is about to erupt.

"Don't yell, it's going to erupt!" I warn but everyone ignores me.

"Please stop yelling!"

The teacher stops me, "Get back to your work!"

It's too late.

The lava rises out of the ground and bursts through the roof, destroying everything in its path. And I am alone.

All that's left is ash.

A gust of wind blows. The ash dances. I cough out smoke. The smoke forms an hour-glass. I sing the ancient curse.

Whoosh.

I am in the middle of my classroom, sitting on the floor. The teacher looks at me, frowns and walks away.

Everything is quieter.

Maybe I can make it to the end of the day.

Then, a whizzing. A rumbling. A crackling.

BOOM!

A giant eraser breaks through the roof! Everyone screams and runs. I yell, "No!" It lands on the teacher's desk. The desk disappears and leaves a void. It zooms across the classroom leaving a trail of oblivion. I jump sideways, dodging its path. It zooms towards my classmates. They can't escape.

BOOM!

Another eraser cuts through the wall.

BOOM!

Another slices through the floor.

They're unbeatable!

The whole classroom has gone. All of the students, even the teacher, gone. There is nothing left except me... again.

Frustrated, sad, exhausted. I just want to go home.

One of the giant erasers slides up next to me.

"Hello" it says.

"Hello?"

"There's nothing left to erase. I don't know what to do. Do you want to be erased?"

"Hmmm... no, thank you." I reply.

"Maybe I can erase the other erasers. Can I erase the other erasers?"

"If you want." I shrug.

The giant eraser glides over to its bigger brothers. It backs up and charges through one and then the other. A huge light in the shape of an hour-glass bursts from the void.

The eraser turns back to me and cries out, "You don't want to be here in this world". He starts chanting the words of the ancient curse.

Bright light. Muffled sounds. I open my eyes. I feel heavy.

I am in my classroom. Everyone is working. The teacher is frowning at me. The clock ticks. The bell rings. It's time to go home.

"Goodbye everyone. See you Tuesday."

The Imagine Story

by Maverick Clark

Imagine you are a little kid who just moved across the world into a new house. The first day that you are in your new house, you find a cool picture frame that got left behind. The picture frame has a picture of a small boy about your age, but it looks like it was taken hundreds of years ago. The frame has dust all over it. You don't know who the boy is, but you like the picture and decide to clean it and hang it up in the living room.

After you hang it up, you go to sleep because it has been a long day. When you wake up, you see that the kid has moved to the farm that was on the picture. You feel scared and your body starts to shiver. You decide to go make a cheese quesadilla and when you come back, the boy is in a different spot beside the house in the picture. "AAHHHHH" you scream. You decide to take the picture to the basement and lock it up, but when you come back upstairs, the boy is in a picture of you when you were a baby. He is cuddling you!

You say, "Um, hi kid. Are you real or just my imagination?" and he doesn't say anything but he just points to his head. "So you're my imagination?" and he nods his head yes.

You shake your head, waking up in your car still driving on the way to your new house. You realized it was just a dream! So you laugh about how silly it was and walk into your new home, where you see an old picture frame with a picture of a young boy about your age.

The end.

The Dream

by Poorvi Pandey

Hi, my name is Haley-Lanette. I was just a regular 12 year old girl in a regular busy city, but all of that changed after my visit to The Land of Imagination....

It was a normal day, went to school, came home, had a snack. After that I usually go to netball practice. I'm not really into netball, but all the girls in my grade play it so I said, why not? Anyways, today netball practice was cancelled because a storm was supposed to hit right smack dab in the middle of it. So I decided to make the most of my free time by drawing. I absolutely LOVE drawing.

By the time I finished the art, I was hungry so I went to the kitchen for dinner. I walked into the dining room to see the usual sight. My sister on the phone (she's 16), my brother playing video games on his switch (he's 12), my dad comforting Layla (my baby sister, she's 2), and my mom cooking dinner. "How was school honey?," asked my dad. "Fine I guess", I mumbled. Most of the time I answer to him like that, so he wasn't surprised. Then mom suddenly announced in this showtime-y voice "Dinner is ready!". As usual, as soon as mom got on the table she said, "Family sharing time!". Then we all shared the best part of the week and boring stuff like that. Finally, when I was done with dinner, I excused myself from the table, put my plate away, and ran into the lounge because my favorite show had a new episode coming in exactly 1 minute and 24 seconds. On my way I went to the bathroom, but as soon as I entered, I slipped on a puddle and banged my head on the sink, and fainted.

When I finally came to, I realized that it was completely dark. Then out of nowhere I saw a golden antler emerge out of the dark, followed by a beautiful white body of a deer! He asked me to get on his back and he will take me somewhere. I thought this was a dream, so I did what I was told. After what felt like hours we finally reached what somewhat looked like a beautiful castle.

I followed him inside and the castle was made out of the shiniest glass. He led me to a room where there was a throne and on that throne was a really pretty, slender girl. She looked about 20 years old and she was wearing the prettiest glass crown. "Oh, the time has finally come!" her voice was as pure as a crystal. "Oh, the princess has finally come home again." "I am so sorry...u-uuum your majesty, but I am not a p-princess, I am a girl called Haley", I stammered. "Oh no, no, no, you are the princess and you must leave at once to find the Heart of Purity", she said. Before I could say anything else she called for a girl that seemed to be called Roxy and she looked like a fox. She introduced herself and told me she was a swordswoman and would accompany me. Then the queen told Roxy to go get someone, and right away she said "Yes, Queen Adinah". While Roxy went to go get them, the queen gave me a bottle of her potion that could heal any wound and said, "Go get the Heart of Purity for this kingdom please".

Soon enough we were saying goodbye to Queen Adinah and we left on more of those deer animal things, which I later learned are called Gakinahs. Roxy told me she has a map on where to go, so I got on one and followed Roxy. We travelled for five days and at dawn on the fifth day both of our Gakinahs landed on a strange blueish green heliport. Roxy informed me "The map doesn't say to land here, why are they landing?". Then she said something to them in their language.

Soon we saw a shadow of a girl coming from the distance. She had pretty red hair and was wearing clothes made out of real jewels. "Hi, I am Ruby, Queen of The Kingdom of Rubies, and you are probably not expecting to be here, and Adinah is my friend and told me to take care of you, but I would love for you to see my castle and spend the night there", she offered. "We would love to Queen Ruby." Roxy answered for me because I was starstruck by Ruby's pretty hair. "Please, just Ruby I would not like my guests calling me "queen", she said. We followed Ruby to her castle and saw the most beautiful, gorgeous and amazing, red castle. "Here we are!", she said. "Woah, this is so cool!" I shrieked, while Roxy was running on the outside of the castle.

"Something doesn't fit, Princess Ha-". "Just Haley, remember?", I reminded her. "Sorry, anyways as I was saying, something just doesn't fit. Why would Ruby be Queen Adinah's friend if she has the guards that rival the...". Before she could finish, Ruby suddenly started yelling at one of the guards that came up to her. "Can't you understand? We have guests over, it doesn't matter that we are one room short!

One of you guys can give up your room for just one night, correct?". Sheesh, talk about bratty. "So sorry about that, please do come in." she said, perfectly calm.

After we went in, one of the guards led us up to our rooms, later we had a very peculiar dinner of Burmese Ruby soup and Mozambique sundae for dessert. Later, we went back into our rooms to get ready for bed, and I have to admit the ruby sheets and the ruby blankets were not very comfortable.

At midnight on the dot, I woke up to someone talking in front of our room door. "We have to....out a way to stop them from....the Heart of Purity in this castle." I woke Roxy up and told her about it. "Alright then, gather your stuff and let's go get The Heart of Purity".

We waited for Ruby to leave and sneakily crept down the hallway to the kitchen, and to our surprise a "cookbook" was left open on a page with a riddle written on it. Roxy told me it was a mirror, but she doesn't know which one. "I know, the bathroom mirror! I knew I saw a note in it when I went", I replied. So, Roxy followed me to the bathroom and we found the location! "We will use one of the Gakinahs to get up to the steeple", Roxy replied. "I will call one right now and we will fly up there".

When we were finally up there, we found a glass case and it said, ONLY FOR HAPPINESS, and we left for The Kingdom of Happiness, but on our way Roxy said "Don't worry I will give this to the Queen", and that made me fall and return home.

Ever since that, I have never pleased anyone for them...

THE END

The Cookie Shop

by Nayeli Daldeniya

Lilly and her friends Daisy and Coco were just walking to the playground.

On their way they saw a new shop. It was called "The Cookie shop" . It was very crowded in there. The girls were very curious to see inside of the shop. So they went to see what's in there. There were big cookies, small cookies, red cookies, slices and some cakes too.

"I really want a cookie," said Coco.

"Me too" said Daisy and Lilly.

"Let's go and ask our mums," said Lilly.

So, they ran all the way back to their homes.

Lilly's mum said yes. But warn just to buy only one cookie.

Coco's mum said "no, I do not have money".

Daisy's mum gave Daisy some cash.

So the girls head back to the cookie shop. Coco looked sad. She said " My mum cannot buy a cookie ". Daisy said" I will by a cookie foy you". Coco was so happy.

The girls went to the Lilly's tree house and ate their cookies.

Everyone was so happy.

Pearl the Dolphin Girl

by Jocelyn Liang

Chapter 1

Once there was a girl named Bella, she had long black hair. At school she has no friends. Even though she tried, it would never work.

Chapter 2

Today Bella was swimming in the sea. Then there was a shark and it was chasing her; she swam and swam until she finally lost the shark. Soon she found an island, so she rested there. Soon she found out she was lost. Then a dolphin appears and it talked. It said "I will take you home if you let me live with you" "sure" said Bella.

Chapter 3

When they got to the beach Bella asked the dolphin if it could turn into a human it said "yes" so it did. First the head transformed then the body transformed. Now they had to think of a name for the dolphin person. At last, they decided on the name Pearl because Pearl thought pearls were beautiful. At least Bella had some extra clothes to give Pearl. Now it's the hard part, explaining to Bella's parents. "Mom, I found this little girl and she needs some help. Also, she's an orphan," said Bella. "I guess we could have another child" said Bella's parents.

Chapter 4

On Pearl's first day of school, while she and Bella were walking to school, Pearl kept jumping. "Pearl, why are you jumping?" asked Bella. "Wait, humans don't do it? Dolphins always jump out of water for fun." said Pearl. At writing class they were writing, Pearl wrote like she was clapping. At PE class, they were passing a ball around, but every time someone passes a ball to Pearl, she hits it with her nose without wanting to. "Can you catch it instead of hitting the ball with your nose?" said their teacher. "I can't help it," said Pearl. It's now lunchtime but Pearl kept on slurping and not chewing. So, Bella said, "Stop slurping and also start chewing" At singing class it was Pearl's turn to sing, and her singing was so high pitched. "That is too high pitched," said a student. "Dolphins always do that." mumbled Pearl.

Now it was swimming class, and Pearl wriggled her body instead of doing freestyle. A teacher said to Pearl "Could you stop wriggling and start doing freestyle?" But Pearl didn't and she was really fast. The teacher was really shocked. The teacher said, "Tomorrow we will go swimming at the beach."

Chapter 5/Last Chapter

Their class was going to the beach to swim. Suddenly there was a shark, and it was being very scary. All the students were scared, and the teacher couldn't do anything about it. Pearl knew what she should do but it was still hard. Because if she turns into a dolphin, everyone will know her secret. Finally, she decided to just do it. If she didn't do it, everyone will get hurt. Just like that Pearl turned into a dolphin. She called her dolphin friends to help, and she ignores the gasps of the children. Together, she and her dolphin friends save the day by forcing the shark to leave. Her dolphin friends wanted her to go home with them, but she decided to stay in the human world anyways, and they all lived happily ever after.

That Escalated Quickly

by Marcus Saker

In the quiet and peaceful village of Ravenwood there ruled a rich chief named Mefler Wood, who wasn't very kind. People said that if you got one coin per kind deed, the chief would be as poor and powerless as a mouse. The chief also had a very greedy daughter named Bertha Pier Wood, who was 10 years old, and all she wanted was toys, toys and more toys. She was ungrateful even though she had ten clockwork robots, five remote control cars, three mega nerf guns and one computer (her other ten got overloaded).

One day Bertha was passing by the shops looking for a new thing to break when she saw her dream toy. It was a gigantic remote controlled mechanical shark that moved exactly like a shark in the water. She sprinted to the pay area and pushed her way to the front of the queue and ordered the clerk to serve her. It was only then she realised that she didn't have enough money. She found out the hard way when her coins ran out and she threw a gigantic tantrum, triple the size of the shark. She ran home and demanded her father give her money but he couldn't because he was going through a rough time and couldn't afford the shark right now. This was the exact thing that Bertha didn't want to hear. She stormed out of the room screaming, "I hate you, you hear that, I hate you!"

The chief, you see, loved his daughter and didn't want to get into a rocky relationship with her. He was also dumb, so dumb that he didn't even know what $3+3 =$, so he did the natural thing: he lifted the villagers' taxes, making them angry. They had to pay double the usual amount which was double the taxes of the surrounding villages. One thing led to another. Some villagers went to the other villages to seek refuge. The chief on the other hand only cared about Bertha and didn't notice the missing villagers.

The villagers who sought refuge reached the village of Stonehaven. The chief of Stonehaven, whose name was Swifie, was outraged when he heard about the treatment the villagers had received and protectively put his wing around them.



He knew that he couldn't declare war on Ravenwood because he had too small of an army, but he was also smart. He told the villagers to go back to Ravenwood and find out if the soldiers liked Chief Mefler and if not, to recruit them to join his army so that his army would grow stronger and Chief Mefler's army would grow weaker. Then Chief Swifie could take over and set things right.

So the villagers went back to Ravenwood to recruit soldiers from Chief Mefler's army. Some of the refugees had soldiers as husbands, who had already joined Chief Swifie and started training, but that was only one sixteenth of Chief Mefler's army and still not enough. Days, weeks, months and years went by and Chief Mefler bought the shark for Bertha but still didn't lower the taxes, angering the villagers and army. This made it easier for Chief Swifie to recruit a big enough army to defeat Chief Mefler. Soon after they had a big enough army, Stonehaven decided to do a full out attack on the 25th April but, in the meantime, to send smaller units to attack and weaken Chief Mefler's army. The first raid was a success and they had taken Chief Mefler's army entirely by surprise. They stole heaps of money to invest in Chief Swifie's army and the village.

Meanwhile, in the village of Ravenwood, Chief Mefler figured out that Chief Swifie was purposefully attacking and planning against him. Chief Mefler, not being the brightest person in the village, ordered his entire army to stand and protect Ravenwood and most importantly, his money. This just happened to be on the 25th of April, so when Chief Swifie attacked, he didn't have the element of surprise anymore and the battle was tragic. Both sides lost heaps of men and it lasted for days. It was like no side was going to win and the men would end up killing each other. Then Chief Swifie found out about a spy in Stonehaven who was sending information to Chief Mefler. When Chief Swifie learned about this he instantly acted and sent four men to the spy's house to capture the spy and chuck him in prison. This weakened Chief Mefler's army and strengthened Chief Swifie's army.

On the 25th of June the last battle was waged and it was even more bloody than the first. Chief Swifie only just managed to win the battle and kill Chief Mefler to claim the village of Ravenwood. Bertha was stripped of all her possessions and exiled into the wilderness. Chief Swifie was a very generous chief, lowering taxes and organising meals for the homeless. There was peace within the villages during his reign and for many generations after.



A Mystery in a Holiday

by Mia Skaria

Chapter 1: Arrival and a mystery

"We are finally here!" I joyfully say. I'm Evelyn Appleby and I have long curly blonde hair, pale skin and sapphire blue eyes. I have been on this airplane for the past 14 hours, and can't wait to see Dubai. Elijah, my brother, went to help my dad who was balancing two bags, and trying to get another one out of the overhead lockers. Once we got off the airplane, we headed straight to the baggage claim. After collecting the rest of my baggage, I started running towards the exit making my blonde curls bounce. Soon enough I was out of Dubai airport with my family following behind. Looking around I notice a friendly looking lady in shorts and a t-shirt holding a sign that read 'Welcome Applebys' on it. "Dad," I say, "I think that woman is waiting for us". Dad waved at the woman and she comes over smiling. My name is Aaliyah and I am very pleased to meet you.", introduces the lady. When we get to the hotel, I take a quick shower and put on my new outfit. Then I repack my backpack with things I would need for a day out in Dubai. "Evelyn" my mother called out "time to go". As we drove past the gold souk, we saw a commotion outside and the place was swarming with police. I immediately jump out of the cab and make enquiries. I found out that using the bomb blast as a distraction, someone had stolen a horde of jewellery. I might have forgotten to mention that I'm a girl detective. As soon as I heard that a robbery had happened, I decided that I was going to try and solve the mystery.

Chapter 3: Not a coincidence.

I walked over to the car and told my family what was going on. I asked them to proceed without me, as I wanted to solve the mystery. My mom was the toughest to convince but I forced her to agree. I headed inside the gold souk to do a bit of detective work. I looked around to see what shops had been robbed and what shops had been affected by the bomb blast. The scene wasn't overly bad but damage had been done. I pulled my phone out and took a couple of pictures, jotted down the shops that had been affected. I slipped my phone back into my bag and went looking for some clues. As I walk around I notice a pin from a bomb with a piece of ripped blue fabric. On a closer observation, I note that it had come from a

navy blue women's coat. I put it in my bag. My phone starts ringing and once I saw that it was my mother I answer the call. During my conversation with my mom, I noticed a woman in a ripped blue coat rushing past. With a swift bye, I ended the call and decided to follow her. We leave the gold souk, with her walking faster into a dark alley and me in the shadows behind her.

Chapter 4: Caught

When she is deep inside the alley she turns around and yells "hands up", spinning around to face me with a gun in her hand.

"I know you're following me so come out". Slowly I come out of the shadows.

"Get in front of me and walk" she commands. As we walk she asks, "Why are you following me?". "Because you planted the bomb to steal from the gold souk", I accuse.

"So what if I did, but how does that concern you?" was her reply.

"I'm a detective!", I declare.

After that she was quiet. That's when an idea popped into my head. It was a long shot but I had to try, so I turned around and looked at her and say in my fake apologetic voice "I need to use the toilet". She rushed me to a small cubicle "Go" she says in a disgusted tone "don't try to run away I will be standing right outside." I ran inside and called the cops. I related the scenario and they replied that they would come swiftly. The woman started pounding on the door "What are you doing in there making the bathroom? Hurry up!" she shrieks. I exit slowly but now I have to delay her!

Chapter 5: Rescued

We kept walking but this time I make sure to walk slower, fake tripping a few times. Soon we hear someone shout "hands up, you're under arrest!". We turn around to see 20 police officers pointing their guns at her and that makes her drop her gun. She turns to face me and accuses "you called them didn't you" I just shrug my shoulders as it was quite obvious I did.

"You have no proof", she smirks.

"Oh, actually I do," I retort. "I recorded your confession."

"Noooooooooo!" she screeches.

"Enough is enough!" a police woman commands in a voice as hard as stone, "take her away!"

"Are you okay, did that woman hurt you?", she inquired.

"No, I am all good."

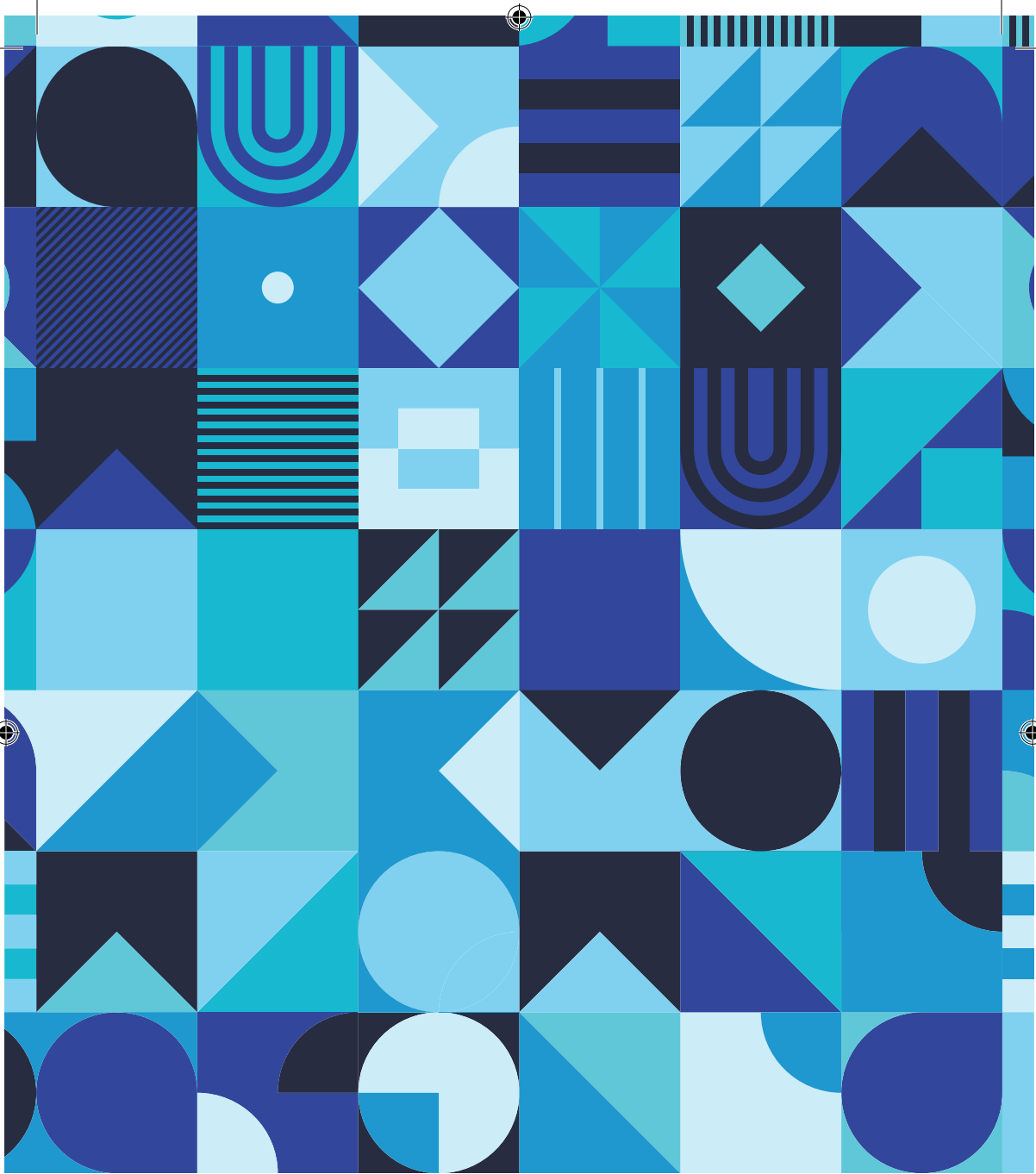
At the police station, I related the whole story and they were very impressed. I asked if I could call my parents and put them at ease. Mum would be frantic after calling me thrice and no reply from me. When they heard what happened they immediately rushed to the station to pick me up.

Chapter 6: Exploring Dubai

After an exhausting day, I was relieved to return to the sack early. Next morning I woke up excited to explore Dubai. First we go to Burj Kalifah (the tallest tower in the world), next Burj Al Arab (a sail shaped luxury hotel), followed by Dubai miracle garden (it really is a miracle with all the flowers in different shapes) and Dubai frame. The rest of our days in Dubai fly by. We visit so many different landmarks like Palm Jumeirah (a man made collection of islands designed in the shape of a palm) and went on Ain Dubai (the biggest ferris wheel in the world) and SHOPPING! We buy all sorts of different outfits paired with accessories, bags and shoes. We explore Dubai and make some new friends and catch up with old friends. My parents don't let me

out of their sight the entire time. Soon enough it's time to say goodbye to everyone and we decide to head to the airport via metro. We head into the airport and soon pass immigration we walk onto the airplane and sit down. As the airplane lifts off, I take one last look out the window and say Goodbye Dubai!

The End



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