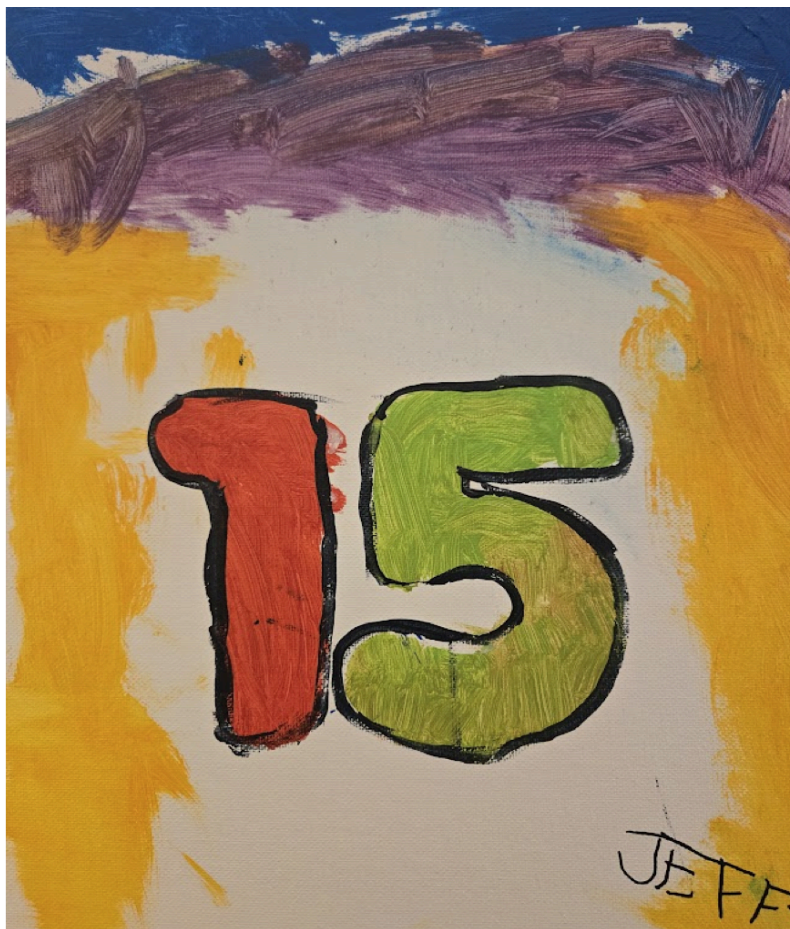


dignity

creative expressions from
the inspiration project



Fall 2025 Volume 15

about:

The Inspiration Project is a volunteer collaboration between the University of Rochester and CP Rochester, a nonprofit organization that supports individuals with physical and developmental disabilities. During the fall of 2025, students from the University of Rochester met weekly with writers from CP Rochester. Through extensive one-on-one conversations, the UR students and CP Rochester participants have produced the creative works assembled here.

acknowledgments:

This project was made possible by the hard work and generous support of many people:

The participants and staff at CP Rochester, especially Erin Greenfield and Kristi Powers, the students at the University of Rochester, Joanna Scott (Professor of English, University of Rochester), Claire Corbeaux (Department of English, University of Rochester), Zoë Miles (Department of Modern Languages and Cultures, University of Rochester) Justina M. Ramirez, Kathy Kingsley (Department of English, University of Rochester), Glenn Cerosaletti (Director, Center for Community Engagement, University of Rochester), Deborah Rossen-Knill (Director, Writing, Speaking, and Argument Program, University of Rochester), the Deans of the School of Arts and Sciences, University of Rochester, Nicole S. Sampson (Provost, University of Rochester), Sarah Mangelsdorf (President of the University of Rochester), Katherine Mannheimer (Chair, Department of English, University of Rochester).



table of contents:

Introduction	4
Tommy's Story – Tom Sullivan	7
The Coolest Bike Around – Jeff Yarmel	10
Halloween Dolls – Russell Hill	13
Maria's Story – Maria Cruz-Dillio	15
The Boss – Chris Thorton	18
My Story – Latrice Person.....	21
The Whereabouts of the Alfred State Bookstore Manager - Dylan Kagel.....	25
Excerpt from Ranger Corps Adventures - Caleb Dingus.....	32
Once upon a time...there were these people that I really love. And I care about them - Geraldine Copeland.....	38
A Collection of Poems - Ruth Emens.....	45
Everything is Important - Joe Hill.....	48
Sean's Story - Sean Connolly.....	51
A Collaborative Story - Participants from CP Rochester.....	55

Introduction

Let Them Be Heard

Joanna Scott

On a snowy afternoon sixteen years ago, I set out on a drive. I was doing what no driver should ever do and probably will never have reason to do in the future—I was following directions on a print-out, holding the paper against the dashboard with one hand while I held the steering wheel with my other hand. This took place so long ago that I didn't have a GPS in my car or Google Maps on my phone. After turning the wrong way, I turned the right way, onto a street called Lone Oak Circle. The name immediately filled me with a sense of hope. I became convinced that something special was going to happen in the house on Lone Oak Circle. Indeed, something special did happen—that's where I met Latrice Person, Toni Montgomery, and Kristi Powers. That's where I started to hear stories unlike any I had heard before.

Four months later, on a spring day, Latrice, Toni, Kristi, and I were brainstorming in that house on Lone Oak Circle. We had been collaborating on writing projects for the past few months, meeting weekly, and we were trying to figure out how to build on our momentum. We didn't want to say goodbye. Latrice spoke of how much she would like to meet university students. Kristi Powers, then a house manager, suggested that CP Rochester residents would love to visit the University of Rochester campus. I didn't know of any existing program that would give adults with special needs a chance to create their own literary works. What if we started a new program? I was doubtful it would work. Kristi, Latrice, and Toni had no doubts at all. Kristi would help with arranging transportation for CP Rochester participants. Latrice gave our hypothetical program a name: The Inspiration Project.

Back at the university, I reached out to the one person I knew who could make the program a reality: Deb Rossen-Knill, Director of the Writing, Speaking, and Argument Program. She loved the proposal and agreed to join us in our efforts. She helped us connect with constituents at the university, including Glenn Cerasolleti, Director of the Center for Community Engagement, who was instrumental in getting this program off the ground. And absolutely key, from start to finish, were Tina Bennett and Marilyn Argenta of CP Rochester. I've looked back at our emails from 2010 and see lots of exclamation points in their replies. They welcomed the idea of a collaborative program and offered to help in any way they could.

We assembled an extraordinary group of student volunteers, and the Inspiration Project launched in the spring of 2011. Brave support professionals from CP Rochester drove participants through snow and ice to the university. Van doors swung open, wheelchairs rolled out and into Rush Rhees Library. The rooms provided to us by the Writing, Speaking, and Argument Program suddenly buzzed with the sounds of conversation, laughter, fingers tapping keyboards. That wonderful noise has continued at the university for fifteen years.

Hundreds of students have participated as Inspiration Project volunteers. I have heard from some whose lives were changed by opportunities this program presented. Our first graduate

coordinator started a sister program when she moved to another university across the country. We received two supporting grants from the Taft Foundation. Year after year, participants would gather and write their stories, poems, memoirs, plays. We pivoted onto Zoom during the pandemic. We lost beloved members—Tori and Thuan and Thelma—and we've kept going in their honor.

And now here we are, still going strong. I asked Latrice, who has always had a visionary sense of possibility, about her aspirations for this this program, and here's what she said:

We aspire to make this program inspiring for newcomers and old-comers. We want to tell them about the program and teach them about how we write and how we articulate our words, how we communicate to the world.

We aspire to grow as a team and a unit.

We aspire to make the program as beautiful as it can be, like growing a garden or painting a picture.

We aspire to learn about new ideas and come up with new revenues to make the program better than it has been.

We aspire to be a model for other colleges, to advocate for them to have their own Inspiration Program.

We aspire to set the tone for the future at other colleges.

This year is our fifteenth year. I hope we have the party we were going to have and couldn't because of Covid.

I hope that we make the program as big as it can be.

I hope that the students learn you don't judge a book by its cover. Just because someone has a disability or speaks a little slower doesn't mean they can't make a difference in the world.

I hope we're on the news and we have a plaque, an award for helping the community. I hope that God blesses us with a Nobel Peace Prize cause we've been doing this project for fifteen years.

Last spring, we gathered as a group in special sessions to make plans for the years ahead. We wrote collaboratively, producing a short story that is included in this year's anthology. And our participants also wrote the following letter, to share with anyone who's interested in what we do:

Dear friends, We want to tell you about us. We are the Inspiration Project. We write stories, we write good things about each other and about other people. And we tell our stories in unique ways. And use our imaginations.

We are so fortunate to have seen these generous, abundant imaginations in action. Some of our participants have been with us since Day 1. As Latrice said, this is a program that is always welcoming to newcomers and old-comers alike. And we will remember the past-comers, Tori and Thuan and Thelma.

We dedicate this issue to those we have lost, the past-comers, who, as Latrice says, *taught us never to give up, to keep a smile on your face, and always let your voice be heard, even if people might not like it. Let it be heard.*

Tommy's Story

By Tom Sullivan

In Collaboration with Yash Chitrakar



It is a warm day in Rochester. Tommy is in his blue and red jersey. The Buffalo Bills are in Rochester. And Tommy is the halfback, playing with Josh Allen. They are playing against the Miami Dolphins. It is the Super Bowl. Tommy is excited and feeling good. Before the game he has ice cream and chips. So, the game starts. The whistle blows. Josh Allen passes the ball to Tommy. He runs through the whole field, the crowd cheering. Jaelin Phillips, from Miami Dolphins, is trying to stop Tommy and the ball. Tommy pushes Phillips to the side, and Phillips falls down. And now, Tommy is running, running, running. The football field is oddly red. Tommy is

running. He MAKES IT STRAIGHT TO THE TOUCHDOWN!!! IT'S A RECORD!!!

Tommy knows that he has to throw a party. In the middle of the field. In the middle of the game. The game has stopped for the party. The players are there at the party. Tommy is drinking Coke—regular flavor because that's his favorite. It's ice-cold. There are also nuts at the party. Peanuts. Because peanuts are his favorite. At the party, people are playing UNO, and Tommy is also playing UNO with the people, and he is winning! There is music playing. It's a guitar song. It's Michael Jackson.

Tommy is dancing with the music. He's doing Michael Jackson moves. He is doing the moon-walk! It's daytime. Josh Allen is also dancing with Tommy. They are having lots of fun. They are celebrating the winning touchdown that Tommy made. Tommy is walking around with the trophy, and it's heavy. He wants to share the trophy with Josh Allen because Josh Allen was the one who passed the ball. They are holding the trophy together.

But they have to put it in the team locker, which is sad. But it's alright.

Tommy goes home. There are two sandwiches waiting, and they are both ham sandwiches—with mayonnaise. A lot of people eat two sandwiches one by one. But Tommy is different. And he puts one sandwich on top of the other, and then eats it. He doesn't eat it all in one go. He takes bites. Tommy is tired and he wants to go to bed.

But it's not 9 o'clock yet. It's 8! And Tommy goes to bed at 9. So there is still an hour left before bed. Tommy wants to watch TV for the next hour—and he watches the news. They are talking about the Buffalo Bills. They are talking about the game that just happened in the day. They say that the Buffalo Bills won the game; Tommy won the game, they are saying that the touchdown was a record-breaking, winning touchdown! Tommy is so happy!

Now, it's 9 o'clock. And Tommy goes to sleep on his soft bed. He is wearing the Buffalo Bills jersey. And now he dreams. He

dreams of Buffalo Bills! And they are winning the game even in the dream. It's been a day of winning.

Now it's morning time. It's 6 o'clock. It's light.

Tommy is tired from yesterday because a lot happened. So now he needs to go on a vacation, a relaxing solo trip. He needs to go to New York City! He wants to go look at the Statue of Liberty. There is sunshine—no clouds at all. The statue is green and beautiful. And there are people there too looking at the statue. And the people look tiny in front of the statue. Tommy is wearing a blue shirt and a black pants—both very comfy.

Tommy is there at the statue, eating a hamburger with ketchup. It's delicious. After looking at the statue, Tommy goes to the subway and hops on a train. People say that they are confusing, but for Tommy, the trains are easy to understand. He likes to look at the lights. He also likes the train passing by because of the wind that comes along. The train is going to a magical place!

The magical place is the Buffalo Bills! It's magical, Tommy says, "because you look at it." The Buffalo Bills are just standing there, and making pictures. They're drawing people, and it's a colorful drawing: red, green, and blue! The people are circles and circles on a light blue paper, and they are red, green, and blue! The team has picked these colors because Tommy likes those colors. The red and blue are Buffalo Bills colors. The green is the color of flowers.

Tommy likes looking at flowers, and looking at things makes them magical.

Now, Tommy is walking on the street. And because he is famous, someone recognizes. It's Josh Allen! Josh Allen is looking at Tommy. He is there to celebrate Tommy's touchdown again. To celebrate, they drink Coke—still regular Coke. They take a walk to the park—the Central Park—full of green color and lakes. The lakes are blue. They also take a look at the flowers.

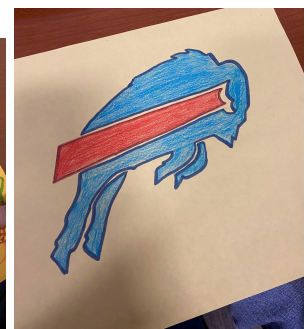
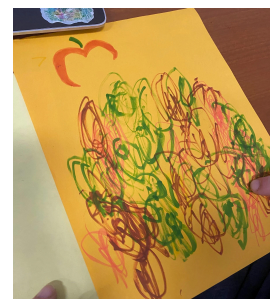
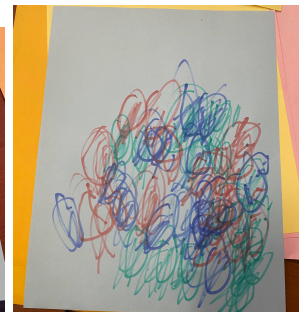
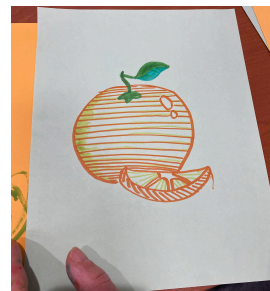
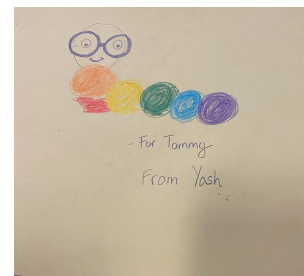
Tommy sees dogs and cats in the park. People are walking their dogs, and they are walking their cats. The dogs are on the leash, and so are the cats! The cats and the dogs are also red, green, and blue. The cats and the dogs are looking at the people. Tommy is hungry, so he gets another hamburger. Josh Allen is looking at the water, at the boats. There are also ducks and fishes in the water. They are also red, green, and blue, and Josh Allen is looking at them.

After this, Tommy and Josh Allen walk down the street. And they have a hamburger. This is Tommy's third hamburger of the day. Tommy is feeling happy because he met Josh Allen. They see other people on the street, a subway station, and the Statue of Liberty from far away. He saw this before too. He wants to see the Statue of Liberty again—from up close.

This time, Tommy takes Josh Allen with him. And they go by bus, and the bus is

blue. Tommy and Josh are silent on the way, and both are happy. They are both focused on the statue, so they don't see other sights on the way. The bus is playing Buffalo Bills music. It's the Buffalo Bills Shout song. Tommy starts dancing! He dances all the way to the Statue of Liberty.

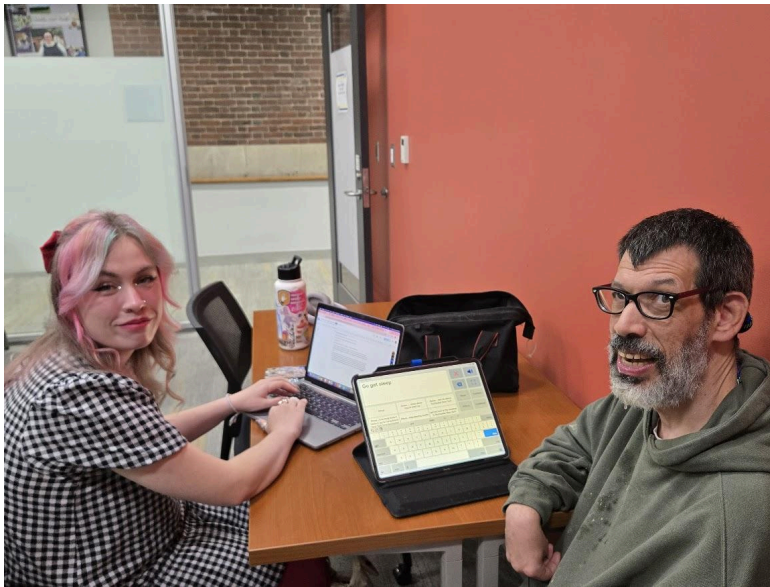
Now, they have finally reached the statue. Tommy feels happy. He sees a lot of people there—wearing different colors: green, orange, brown, purple—different colors from last time. Josh Allen asks him what he likes about the Statue of Liberty. Tommy says, "It's the clouds and the sky."



The Coolest Bike Around

By Jeff Yarmel

In Collaboration with Abbie Boudreaux



This is a story about a cool 3-wheel bike. There is someone riding the bike. He's a 15 year old boy, his name is Bob. He made the bike. He makes bikes for money and for fun. He makes all kinds of bikes. This bike has a basket and it's blue. It is a big bike because Bob is tall. But it isn't just any bike, it can go up to the moon!

Bob is being filmed by a TV show, they want to know if he can really go to the moon on a bike. Bob asked the camera crew to go with him on his adventure to the moon. He wants to go to the moon to see if something is up there. He wants to know if

there is snow or sun, if it is warm or cold. He wants the moon to have a sun because he wants it to be warm and he wants to see if the moon is big in person because it usually looks small in the sky. Sometimes if the moon is full, it looks big then.

Two girls came to see if he needed help building the bike. They are from school, their names are Betty and Jess. Bob says yes. He wants the bike to fly like a plane. With their help, he puts wings on the back wheels and he puts an engine inside of the bike basket. Then, they leave. Bob designs the bike to change colors when he goes up with battery lights. It goes from black to yellow to blue to gray to red to white.

Bob has a problem, though. He only has two wheels on the bike but he needs three. One wheel was bad because he got the wrong part from Amazon. The wheel he got was too big. He sends it back, he gets a refund, and the new one is free.

The next day, Bob has another problem. It is hard for Bob to attach more of the airplane parts to the bike. His friend helps. They weld the parts on. Bob test drives the bike – it's wobbly - the tires need more air. They fill the tires together. His friend is named Ted, they are good friends. They know each other from school. Ted wants to go to the moon with Bob, but they only have one bike. It's no problem, they put two seats on the bike so they can both go.

To prepare, they get their suits from Walmart. They will wear hard hats and pantsuits like an astronaut would wear. Their suits are blue and white. They need lights on the hat, so they attach the

headlamps to the hat. They need to charge the light's battery before they go to space - it would be bad if the battery died, they wouldn't be able to see. They need to get food - they buy freeze-dried smoothie puree packets on Amazon. They need to get sleep before their big trip.

Before they go to sleep, they show the cameras that they have to take their supplies - they tell them what supplies they have. They get paid for doing the show - \$25,000. Bob wants a new home, he will use the money for a new house and a new car.

They wake up at 5 AM. Bob and Ted don't like waking up early. They get ready to go away. First, they eat some breakfast - they both like eggs. Then, they take showers. They get dressed in their suits. The TV crew takes videos of them as they get ready. Finally, they go on the cool bike. They are nervous and happy.

The TV crew comes with them to the moon in a spaceship. They record the moon as they fly by Bob and Ted, but all they see is snow. The flight to the moon is good for Bob and Ted, it went perfect because they planned so well.

When they land on the moon, they learn that it is cold, not hot. It is covered in frosty ice. The moon does have a sun, like they thought, but it isn't a warm sun. It is powerful and cold. They don't discover anything else, the moon is empty! Their wheel breaks on the moon. It's a flat tire, but they aren't scared; they feel okay. They know it is a fast fix to put air in the tire.

They had to fix the wheel before they came home.

The journey home is easy; they felt happy and sad. They felt happy because they achieved their goal, but sad because now the journey was over and they had to go home.

When they got home, they saw two girls looking at the bike. It is Betty and Jess, the girls that helped Bob start building the bike. The girls tell Bob “cool bike!” They are proud of Bob for how the bike turned out, they say “we like the bike!” Bob says “thanks!” Bob and Ted offer the girls a ride on the bike. The girls are happy to ride the bike, they enjoy the ride and they all become friends.

Bob and Ted are famous from the TV show. They use the money from the show to buy a house and a car. They’re working on a regular bike now that can easily ride on the beach, but they waited for three days because they needed to sleep. Bob and Ted now make bikes for anyone who needs a ride, for free. This bike is for someone who needs a ride. They also have a new TV show where they teach people how to make bikes. The people that watch their show feel good because Bob and Ted do a good job explaining and now people know how to make bikes of their own, including bikes that can go to the moon!



Halloween Dolls

By Russell Hill

In Collaboration with Isabel Doshi



FRIDAY THE 13TH



There is a little girl in a broken-down car. Another car drove too fast and hit her car, making the girl fall to the ground.

She has a welt on her head and sees the Annabelle doll on the side of the road. The doll raises her hand and waves to the girl, who walks towards the side of the street.

But then, Annabelle's doll and the girl disappear like ghosts.

It's Friday the 13th, and another group watches *Scary Dolls* at the movie theater. They are eating popcorn and drinking sodas. The kids get scared easily and

scream when they see Chucky carrying knives. The dolls keep disappearing and going into graveyards, where they use lawnmowers to hurt the parents in the movie. The movie ends with scary music and the dolls turning back into real dolls.

When the group leaves the theater, spooky music plays. Annabelle comes through the theater screen, and some other dolls come out of nowhere and attack the group of kids.

A doll almost eats one of the girls. To escape the doll, the girl hides next to a tree. Annabelle threatens the kids by making fists with her hands. One of the kids gets hurt, but all the rest of them are okay because they run away. One of them hides in a school bus, some hide behind trees. Annabelle stabs the school bus and tips it over. Same with a car. Their parents come and save the children from danger. They scare the dolls with fire.

At home, the children hide in their beds. They have nightmares about the dolls. In their nightmares, the dolls open squeaky doors.

Annabelle sneaks into their houses by coming through the TVs. She uses her hands and nails to attack the parents and make them turn into ghosts. The children creep downstairs and see Annabelle doing this to their parents. Annabelle tells the black birds flying in the sky to attack the kids. The birds fly in through the TV. They peck the kids with their beaks, flap their wings, and use their claws and feet. The kids try to fight back, but it doesn't work. When the birds fly away, nothing is left behind. Together with Annabelle, the birds sing "You Are My Sunshine."

In another house, Chucky and his sister come and play with the lights, making them turn on and off. They both carry knives. All the dolls hide underneath the bed; sometimes they come up onto the bed.

The kids try to escape by going out the window, but the dolls follow. One of the

girls has a walker, and Annabelle chases her. Annabelle picks her up and drops her in a well. The rest of the kids try to run away, but it doesn't work because Chucky and his sister catch up to them.

The whole house explodes. The lights blow out. The house catches on fire with Annabelle and the rest of the dolls still inside.

When the sun comes up, Chucky and his sister are found in the ground at the graveyard. Annabelle is found in one of the burnt closets. They are asleep there.

Years later, a new family moves into the house. There is a woman, a man, and two girls. There is a doll in the closet, and it sometimes comes out and walks around the house. The people never see it, but it watches them.

On Halloween, the girls discover the Annabelle doll in the closet. One girl turns her head completely around because Annabelle possesses her. The other girl acts up and climbs the walls, and sometimes, under the bed.

One of the girls acts crazy; she looks at the moon and the stars at night. Only sometimes does she sleep in the bed. She gives her sister a countdown until she herself turns into a doll. The other girl cries about her sister in the bathroom. At least this is what the legend says...

Maria's Story

By Maria Cruz-Dillio

In Collaboration with Oliver Varley



Chapter One: Maria and Amy Train Spartan!

Hello! My name is Maria and this is my partner Amy. We are raising the horse because we want to adopt him to be a horse therapist for someone who needs it most.

Amy and I built a barn, because we were getting horses. We went to the horse store for treats, troughs, and saddles. We bought them carrots and apples, and then we went to get the horses. One horse was black and white, and we went to get him a collar with his name on it. We decided to name him

Spartan, because he's magical. We want to make him a therapy horse.

We went back to the horse store for a toy that looked just like Spartan and we put it next to him so that he will be comfortable in his new barn. Amy and I worked on Spartan. We trained him in the pasture. We were enthusiastic, even though it was hard. If he was good, we gave him a treat, and he was doing good. He loved kisses. He was nice and lovable and soft! We trained him by running around with him, stopping, and seeing if he would come to us. If he did, we

gave him a treat. He was a little trouble, but we trained him more and more.

Amy and I wanted to do this because we love horses and want to train them better than other horse farms, who aren't doing very well. Families with horses come to our barn and we train them to do horse jumping and then give them back to the families, which is good because Spartan needed new friends.

Sometimes Spartan got a little upset at nighttime and we went and checked on him. Two families brought horses named Spirit and Patty for us to train. Spartan loved them, and he got so happy, his ears went up! We put them next to each other in the barn.

Amy and I called a person to adopt Spartan and they said they'd love Spartan to be their horse therapist. They let us come visit and Spartan ran up to us and gave us hugs and kisses.

Chapter Two: I Want To Meet Damar Hamlin

I want to meet Damar Hamlin at the Bills Game because I'm his number one fan. I'm standing on the field and I'm so, so happy! I am just excited to be at the game, but he sees me in the crowd and says he wants to meet me. My family brings me down to see him and we take a picture together. I am so happy to meet him. He is a good, proud, brave person. I know he's a brave person, because once he had a heart attack and he woke up.

He asks me how my day is going, and tells me I'm his favorite person. We talk and he gives me a prize- his special jersey! He signs my jersey. He shows me around the locker room. The locker room is so big and it smells like boy's cologne. I love the smell. He introduces me to his teammates. I meet my other favorite person, his teammate Keon Coleman. He is tall and beautiful. I get flustered because he's handsome. I meet Damar's family. His parents are so nice because they helped him feel better and stayed in the hospital with him when he had the heart attack.

He gives my mom his phone number so we can talk everyday. My mom loves him so much, she really wants me to keep in touch with him. Damar and I eat a dinner of chicken fingers and french fries with honey mustard. After dinner, I say goodbye to Damar Hamlin and then we head home. I give Damar a hug and we go to the car. I fall asleep in the car, because the drive is so long and I am very tired.

My mom posts the picture of me and Damar on Facebook and she tags him in the posts. I go to bed and I have a good sleep. The next morning he calls me and my mom to talk to me and he wants to hangout today. We go to Dave & Buster's and we play a lot of games, like basketball and hockey. Then we have cheeseburgers for lunch and I ask him if he wants to come to my birthday party.

Damar Hamlin and his teammate Keon came to my birthday party. My whole family is also there. The party is themed around

the Bills and is at Memorial Park. They bought me a birthday present of a Bills teddy bear and a blanket with Keon and Damar's picture on it. We hang out, talk, and walk around on the trail at the park. We had a Bills chocolate and vanilla cake.

Then, I opened all my presents. I got money, new shoes, and more blankets! Me, Damar, and Keon played in the snow and made angels.

Chapter Three: My Nephews

I have three nephews, named Junior, Prince, and Josaiah. I really care about my nephews because they are my favorites. I met Junior when I was in middle school, and I'm 22 now. He was a baby when I met him in Buffalo. He was at home with his mom, my ex-sister-in-law. He had a big smile on his face. I held him, and I was scared because I might drop him! But I was really careful, and didn't drop him. I saw Junior's first walk and heard his first word, dada. I didn't see him that much when he was a baby, and then I saw more of him while he was growing up, and now I don't see him much. I feel upset because I don't see him as much as I did when he was a baby.

I saw my second nephew named Prince when he was a baby. I went to see him in the hospital after school. I liked being there because he is very brave. I'm so happy I have him. I saw him growing up, like Junior, but now I don't see him that much.

Then, my third nephew Josaiah was born. But I didn't see him when he was a baby, I saw him when he was ten months old, because I didn't know Josaiah was my nephew yet, they didn't tell me.

All three of them have big heads like their dad, but are not similar in other ways, except for their hair color which is brown like their dad. There was a breakup between my brother and his baby mama. Joshua and Mari were together but they broke up after they had Josaiah.

Chapter Four: My best friend Amanda

I met Amanda at school! I was in 12th grade and she was in 9th grade. She came to Newark BOCES. She was so shy and I wanted to be her friend. I asked her how her day was and she was less shy. I asked her that day if she would be my best friend and she said yes! From then on we were best friends and we hung out at school every day. She was so sad when I graduated but we still hung out. I was so happy when she graduated in 2025 and she invited me to her graduation party. It was hot out and I had a good time. I asked what college she was going to and she said Roberts Wesleyan University. I told her I'm going there too and we were so happy we're going to the same college.

The Boss

By Chris Thorton

In Collaboration with J.T. Glenchur



Chapter 1: Movies and Milkshakes: A Day in my Life with Emma

It was Friday evening. Emma and I are on the couch together enjoying my favorite movie, Spice Girls. Suddenly, the fire alarm goes off and we need to leave our movie. We hastily make our way to the pole to meet up until the drill is over. After a few minutes, we are able to return to our film however, we decide that it's time to switch it up.

We decided on two films, Home Alone and Beavis and Butthead. After we finished both, we decided to watch one more movie, Baywatch, for the ladies! After the movies, when it was time to get food, Emma gives the money to Tima and she decides on Wendy's. My Wendy's order is excellent; I get two cheeseburgers, a small fry, and a delicious chocolate milkshake.

After Tima returns from Wendy's, we eat in the dining room together. After we share our meal, it's time for chores. Emma assigns us our chores; however, my personal favorites are taking out the garbage and doing the dishes! Come nighttime, I must admit that Emma snores loudly; however, it is alright!

Chapter 2: Pranks, Jokes, and Crazy Dances

On winter days like this, Emma sometimes goes outside and shovels the snow. I like to play a good trick every once in a while, as we all know, and this is a great time for one. So this evening, I decided to throw snowballs at her. Luckily, Emma thinks it's fun so we can continue to have a little snowball fight.

One of my favorite things to do is give Emma nicknames. One of Emma's nicknames is "Bacon"! Though I call her Bacon frequently, "Pancakes" is also something I call her. For variety, I will even call her "Muffin" too! If you could not tell, breakfast is my favorite meal! In addition to those, I'll mix it up by calling her "Cookie" or even "Hippopotamus" (or hippo for short)! My housemate and I have a nickname for her too! We sometimes like to call Emma "Sophia"!

Emma can be a little crazy sometimes. She'll do funny dances like the Hokie Pokie, the Duck Dance, and Ring Around the Rosie. Emma is super fun. Emma also takes people to the beach. My favorite thing on the beach is swinging on the swingset. We also go swimming. I am a pretty good swimmer and Emma is too. I love spending time and having fun with Emma!

Chapter 3: When Things go Wrong

When people talk back or are mean and Emma is there, she will come to stop it. Sometimes people can also take things too far. When this happens, Emma likes to take them for a walk. The walk is helpful as it helps people relax and cool down. Emma always helps bring out the best in us, even when we are not at our best.

Chapter 4: Holidays!

One of the best holidays, for a trickster like me, is Halloween. On Halloween, we did paper mache and I wanted to play a little trick. I put a piece of paper and glue on her head! Fortunately, again, Emma thought it was very funny. That isn't my only

Halloween prank though. One time, there was a mouse and I got it out from under my bed. I took it to Emma and scared her badly!

Like the chef Emma is, she will also whip up Halloween food like gummy worms, pudding, and other fun items. Emma can even make eyeballs, but thankfully they are not real eyeballs (hopefully). She also sometimes makes great deviled eggs. In addition to cooking, Emma puts Halloween decorations up as well, like ghosts and spiders, to get into the festive mood! On Halloween, I love to dress up and my favorite costume is Captain Underpants! Emma also helps make other holidays special. On Christmas, Emma organizes parties and she makes really good pasta, ham, mac and cheese, pigs in a blanket, and for dessert, Emma makes cake, brownies, and cupcakes. All of them are so good, I can't pick a favorite!

Emma also makes the best food for Thanksgiving. My favorites are her pies! She makes pumpkin and apple pie and although both are good, I will admit that I think the pumpkin pie is best! In terms of savory dishes, she will make turkey, mashed potatoes, and more!

Chapter 5: Emma Being the Boss!

Emma doesn't just cook for holidays either. Her lunches, such as my favorite sandwich, the ham, cheese, and ketchup, are made with care and I enjoy all of the lunches Emma makes. Sometimes though, Emma takes us out for a meal! My favorites are Salvatores, Starbucks, and Subway. At

Salvatores, I get cheese pizza, a soda, and two cookies. At Starbucks, I like to get a double chocolate drink and a bagel. At Subway, I get a meatball sub, a soda, and, of course, two cookies. While I like all cookies, I like chocolate chip cookies the most. When we aren't going for a full meal, I like to go with her to 7/11. When I go to 7/11, I like to get a soda and two cookies. My favorite soda is 7-Up and my favorite cookie at 7/11 is, of course, a chocolate chip cookie.

Outside of cooking, Emma does so much more to help. From cleaning to other chores, she is always making sure that everything that needs to get done, gets done.

One of those jobs is sweeping and mopping. She will sweep and mop the hallway floors and also the bathrooms. She will also take out the garbage in the bathroom for us. Although all the mopping makes the floors slippery, I am grateful that no one has fallen! As she is clean and organized, Emma also cleans her desk and her office too, keeping her space as tidy as she helps keep ours.

She also likes to help with chores, and Emma's company makes them so much more enjoyable. My least favorite chore is laundry. Although I am not a huge fan of it, Emma will help me out and even make it a little fun! On top of all this, she makes sure that after meals, the countertops are wiped down and clean. She'll also clean the tables when we are in bed, which is very nice.

Emma also goes to the bank to get money. We use the money to make sure everything runs smoothly. Emma gets groceries, food, drinks, and everything we need. She will usually go to Walmart or Walgreens to get groceries and other stuff for the house.

Chapter 5: Tima!

Emma unfortunately doesn't work on the weekends, as that is when she babysits her grandkids. On these days, I miss her very much. Luckily though, Tima takes over and I also like spending time with Tima! Like Emma, she also passes out meds, which is super nice. She also helps with the shopping and getting everything we need! When we are in bed, she helps out by cleaning the house. This is nice because it's less chores for us to do and helps us keep our space looking nice and clean. She helps out with more chores too!

Tima also makes sure we can get to where we need to go by putting gas in the van. In addition to putting gas in the van, she makes sure the van is nice and clean by taking it to the car wash! On top of all this, she makes sure we stay organized by helping clean and tidy up the fridge and other spaces. She also helps put away dishes and other stuff to keep us clean.

Chapter 6: In Closing

I am so grateful for all Emma does for us. On top of being the boss, she is a helpful friend that I am happy to be able to spend time with. From all of the things I can list above and more, Emma is one of the most kind, helpful, and caring individuals that I have ever met. Thank you Emma for being such a joy in my life.

My Story

By Latrice Person

In Collaboration with Josie Mayhew



My mom, her life was a dance.

It was like, it would go fast, she could dance really fast in life, but she might go really slow. It depends on what she going through at that moment.

She was a bodybuilder, she had 3 kids, she had 7 grandkids, she was a good person.

She was hilarious, she always made me laugh. She cared about people, cared about her family. She always said that I could do it, that I can do anything I put my mind to. She always had my back.

She tried her best at everything that she did, like raising me and my siblings. Even if people say that I couldn't, when I was a baby, I weighed one pound ten ounces, and I almost died, and I had seizures, and my mom struggled to have me because I was so premature.

She almost went to heaven early having me, because she had to do the labor early. I was in the hospital for a long time. But she knew I could survive.

I'll be forty this year. My mom was very excited to see me turn 40, but now she doesn't get to see it physically, but she gets to see it in heaven.

Sometimes life changes you, something happens in your life that really changes you. Sometimes life has difficulties, but you learn how to adapt to the situation at hand. You learn to roll through the difficulties as you go through life. And you become a better person through it. It can be a tragedy, but you find a positive in a negative. It forces you to grow up. So you gotta be open, I learned that you gotta be open. You can't be close minded. Because if you're close minded, you can't see what's right in front of you. You can either be mad about moving out, and moving in with 12 people, or you can be happy. And you can be sad about losing the person who gave you life, or you can be driven to show the person that even if they've passed away their memory is not in vain.

So that's why I want to show that my mom's memory is not in vain because I'm her daughter. I'm supposed to be living my life, having fun with my life, having fun at my program, out on outings with Maria, and everyone at my house, and living my life, and continuing doing the project and changing lives.

Sometimes I want to just give up but I can't.

My mom would remind me to keep pushing. I got to keep going, keep pushing, because my mom wouldn't want me to be all sad and miserable, she would want me to keep having fun, and bothering my dad, and she would want me to keep telling people about the Inspiration Project, and how we need this program to stay on the campus for years and years and years. You gotta keep moving, cause if you stop moving, then that's the end of it.

My dad lives in Florida with my sister. He's going through a lot.

But he's a strong person too, and he always strived for me to be independent as much as I can.

We've been through a lot, we've been through arguments and stuff, but we still love each other. The thing about my parents is that they're strong-willed people.

Even with my mom, we've had arguments, but we still love each other, because they've helped me accomplish my goals, graduate from kindergarten, graduate from elementary school, graduate from middle school, graduate from high school.

At the bottom line, they're the only parents you have.

When you lose them, you have no more parents.

My sister's name is Cherise. She is fun and she's very like my mom.

She's a hard worker cause she works for the state. She works in state group homes.

And she doesn't give up. We are a family who will bend a little bit but not break.

We've been through a lot in our family.

We've been through a lot but we came out of the fire like a phoenix.

I think that even though my mom never seen me walk, in my imagination I would be walking towards her in a field of flowers.

I wouldn't have to use this wheelchair and I would be able to see my friend Tori and my Grandma and my Auntie Robin.

In my imagination I would be running to them. I wouldn't have to use this chair.

But I know I will see my mom one day, when I get old like 80 or 100 and go to heaven, I will see my mom. I will be happy to see her.

In my imagination, you are in a garden filled with flowers and ladybugs and a lot of butterflies in a castle sitting on your throne with my grandmother and my uncle and my aunt.

When I get anxious, I start to laugh, but it's not because something's funny, it's because I'm bored or overstimulated.

I get anxious when I'm around a lot of people, and I have to be quiet.

When you wanna do something, but you can't do nothing right now, so your brain just wants to laugh.

It comes out of nowhere sometimes.

I think it's mostly when I'm stressed out and I'm nervous and I'm worried about something. there's something in your brain, it's called an incongruent reaction, sometimes when I'm in a situation where you're at the movie theater and they tell you to be quiet but you're nervous, I do the opposite of being quiet.

I would laugh at church. And I hate to say this, but at a funeral, or a performance, somewhere where I feel anxious.

When I'm at the performances, I'm not laughing at the individuals or the story, I'm laughing cause my brain's telling me to laugh.

My mom used to get mad at me, like, "Why you laughing at a funeral? Why you laughing at a performance?"

At program, I was missing my mom a lot because I miss being around her because Thanksgiving and everything coming up and it's family time.

And I'm used to being around my mom. But now I'm around my group home, and I love the people, and I love being around everybody, but sometimes I be wanting to be around my mom. When I miss her, I get frustrated and I get emotional and sometimes I might say something wrong to my friends, but I don't mean it. At the end of the day I'll come back and say I'm sorry. After I've cooled down or I've cried, I'll come back and apologize, because nobody did nothing to me, things just happen and I'm learning to deal with it.

So sometimes when I be frustrated and sad, it's because I want to go home, but I can't.

I've been going through a lot of frustration moments where I'll be mad about being away from my mom, and I'll take it out on people, but I'm learning not to.

I think the Inspiration Project really helps me because it helps me express myself.

A lot of times since my mom passed away, I feel like I gotta be perfect--well not perfect--but I got to be good all the time.

My staff told me you don't have to be good all the time but you got to be respectful and stand up for yourself and be your own person still.

You have to be the sweet person you are.

You got to look at the flowers instead of the rain.

You got to look at the sunshine instead of the snow.

You gotta look at life with happiness and greatness instead of darkness

cause life is like a stony road, but you gotta go down the stony road to get to the garden of life.

It's gonna be like a seesaw, ups and downs, but that's how life is.

At the end of the day, you gotta believe there's something out there and is ready for you to conquer.

If life could be a dance, it could be a ballet, where you could go really slow, or it could be hip hop, where you dance really fast, or it can be like a silent moving dance, where it's really really sad or you're doing a play, but you just gotta keep moving and keep dancing.

stand up for yourself and be your own person still.

You have to be the sweet person you are.

You got to look at the flowers instead of the rain

You got to look at the sunshine instead of the snow

You gotta look at life with happiness and greatness instead of darkness

Cause life is like a stony road, but you gotta go down the stony road to get to the garden of life

It's gonna be like a seesaw, ups and downs, but that's how life is.

At the end of the day, you gotta believe there's something out there and is ready for you to conquer.

If life could be a dance, it could be a ballet, where you could go really slow, or it could be hip hop, where you dance really fast, or it can be like a silent moving dance, where it's really really sad or you're doing a play, but you just gotta keep moving and keep dancing.

The Whereabouts of the Alfred State Bookstore Manager

By Dylan Kagel

In Collaboration with Apoorv Pandey and Britney Benitez



Dylan drives down from Churchville to Alfred with his friends. He notices that Alfred is beautiful. It's got a lot of wetlands and hills. He is nervous and excited to meet new people. When he reaches his dorm, Dylan finds that he has been assigned a suite with a kitchen and a bathroom. His friends, ten of them, are staying for a day to explore the campus with him. They find that there is a celebration dance for all freshmen, called the Week of Welcome Dance, later that night. Dylan is super excited for the dance. The first place that Dylan and friends go to is the bookstore, to buy campus merch, which are blue and yellow in color. But the door to the bookstore will not open because it needs an ID. Dylan goes to the ID office, gets his

picture taken, gets his ID. He then goes back to the bookstore, and down to the basement because they can't find the manager. It's just Dylan and his friends, looking for the manager. The manager is missing, and Dylan and his friends start searching for him. They notice that there are footprints leading to an open window; they follow the footprints. Outside the window, they run into a panda bear, an elephant, and a tiger. The animals join the search party. The tiger is Daniel, the panda is Sandy, and the elephant's name is Flopsy. They have not seen the manager. The search party is going towards the waterfall. Near the waterfall, they find a missing key. Flopsy goes under the

waterfall and shoots water at Dylan and company.

It's a big ornate key. Dylan and his friends get tired, so they get atop Flopsy. Flopsy takes them away from the waterfall, into the dark, deep jungle. There are snakes, king cobras, who don't like Flopsy. Flopsy crushes seven of the king cobras, while twelve escape. The cobras just hiss and go away. They come across a hut; Dylan slides down Flopsy's trunk to try opening the door to the hut. The key works. Inside, there is a huge cauldron with some liquid bubbling in there. There is a revolving door, with lots of potions. Dylan selects red, yellow, and purple potions and puts them in the pot. The liquid in the pot turns bright green. A ghost comes out of the potion, and warns Dylan to not touch any other potions. But Dylan keeps adding the potions, and as a result he and friends get trapped outside. Flopsy tries to get inside, and breaks holes in the door with his tusks. Dylan and his friends look around for trapdoors. There are none. They drink the potion that is bright purple and everyone gets big muscles. The friends and Flopsy all try to break down the door. The ghost, who is deep black, is laughing evilly. Flopsy finally manages to make a big dent in the door and the ghost's laugh turns into a scream of despair as the door breaks. As Dylan and company step out, they find themselves surrounded by bad guys. The king cobras have called the bad guys. 45 bad guys and 25 snakes. Dylan and friends get over Flopsy again to trample the bad guys. The bad guys get reinforcements. Flopsy trumpets loudly, and

more elephants come to the rescue, with Sandy and Daniel.

The bad guys are defeated, some of them start chasing away. Dylan, leading his friends, chases after them. On the way, they find a keyring with multiple keys on it. They try the keys to get inside the castle. There are fifteen keys, the last one works. It is completely dark inside the castle. There are gargoyles, and statues with deep red eyes. The statues ask Dylan and his friends why they are there. Dylan says they are here to find the manager of the bookstore. The statues fall silent and block the way. Dylan and company fight with the statues, and smash them. They find a hidden lever that opens another door. It's a humongous door, big enough for Flopsy. There are lots of jewels in the room, the king's jewels—trophies, bags and bags of gold and diamonds and emeralds and sapphires and rubies. Dylan and his friends try to take it all and an alarm goes up, waking up the king. The king's bodyguard is running towards the room. The friends find a door in the cellar. There's a bunch of locks. They try the keys to the locks. Behind one of the doors is a map to a treasure. The last locked door leads to an underground tunnel but Flopsy won't fit. He has to go in the elephant elevator. Dylan goes in the elevator with Flopsy and pushes all the 25 buttons. The king's guard tries to catch them but can't. Flopsy and Dylan are separated from the rest of the group. The others are on the lookout for them.

Sandy and Daniel are leading Dylan's friends. The tunnels are like a maze. They

reach a point where three tunnels open up, and they enter the middle one. They come across three doors, guarded by keypads. They only get three attempts. The doors lead to the Past, the Present, and the Future. They try the middle one first which goes to the Past. They get the code in the third attempt, and they end up in the early 1900s. They have ended up in the Wild West among cowboys. They go bullriding, and they get bucked off, but nobody is hurt too badly. They ask the cowboys whether they have seen the manager. The cowboys have seen footprints that lead further into the West. Sandy and Daniel do not like the dusty arid West, but they still follow the footprints. But after a while, they are tired, so they go back to the door from which they entered, but now it's a magic carpet. They get on it and continue to follow the footprints. And they stop at magic shops all over the world.

The first magic shop is in Paris. There they find a magic globe. It shows visions of the manager before he disappeared. The first vision is of the manager sitting in his rolling chair at the bookstore, and he leaves to go to another room and the vision stops. In the next vision, the manager is in the jungle being followed by king cobras. The vision ends when he just gets to the castle. It looks like the manager might be hiding a spellbook in his jacket. The shop owner asks for 1000 dollars for the globe. They pay and leave. The next stop is Edinburgh, and they go to another magic shop there, where they find a magic wand. None of them can use the wand so they decide to bring it back to Dylan. From there, they

travel to Russia, but this time they go to an abandoned warehouse. Daniel the tiger senses that there is a clue to the manager's location in the warehouse. The friends fight off the security guards, and inside the warehouse they find a winter hat with some hair in it. The hair is black and they had seen in the visions that the manager had black hair. They have to smash the alarm while leaving through the door. The alarm starts blaring and they are chased again by the security guards.

They get on the carpet and go to India and land in the Taj Mahal. They meet the Emperor there and ask if he can show them any more visions of the manager. The emperor has a magic mirror in which he shows them a vision of the manager fighting the bad guys in all black, holding swords. The manager has a gun but it has no ammunition so he is whacking the bad guys on the head, but they drag him to a golden door. The vision ends with the manager being taken through the door. The friends next go to Egypt, straight into King Tut's pyramid. They meet King Tut's ghost in the depths of the pyramid. They are scared but the ghost is beautiful and sublime, like his coffin. They kneel and bow before the king, and they have to call him by his full name, if not he'll put a curse on them. He gives them three warnings, if they get his name wrong the fourth time, he'll curse them. Daniel pronounces the king's name right in the second attempt and asks King Tut if he's seen any traces of the manager or anything weird. The king says he has not seen anything eerie lately. Daniel then asks the king if he can send them

back to the present and get them reunited with Dylan and Flopsy. The King agrees and opens a portal. The portal is a red door, and on the other side are weird things like clouds shaped like tombstones. The friends enter through the door and enter a spiralling tunnel with colourful rainbow-like waves. It takes them three days to get back to the present. It feels like falling through endless air.

At the end of the third day, all the friends are reunited. Daniel and Sandy give Dylan the wand. Now that Dylan has the wand, he is able to teleport back to the castle with all of his friends, and get out of the tunnels. Dylan and friends try to get into the tallest tower where the special treasure chests are. But that tower is protected with a spell. Suddenly in the globe another vision appears, of a wizard. The globe glows bright red, and they see a vision in there. It's the wizard putting a spell on something with his wand, something that they are not supposed to see.

Dylan suggests that everyone return to the college and check in the library. Everyone gets on top of Flopsy who takes them back to the window in the bookstore where the adventure had begun. Dylan and friends reenter the bookstore but the animals cannot come in. They wait outside. Dylan goes into the college library and starts searching for the spellbook. Dylan finds the spellbook at the very tippy-top of the last shelf. The library has a dome like RushRhees and it is in the dome-room where this last shelf is. The book is fat and medium-sized, and it's so ancient that you

have to be very careful with the pages. The book is in Russian, but Dylan does not know Russian. So Dylan goes to the Department of Modern Languages, and asks to meet the Russian professor. The professor seems like a good guy. He's wearing a white suit and black pants like the bad guys were wearing. But Dylan wasn't present when his friends saw the vision of the bad guys, so he trusts the professor. The professor is very young, in his 20s, very tall, and muscular. He's got a French beard.

Dylan does not disclose that he has the spellbook. He asks the professor for his name, which is Vladamir. Dylan tells the professor all about his love for traveling. The professor asks why Dylan wanted to meet with him, Dylan replies that he wants to travel to Russia. Dylan starts to get suspicious of the professor as he sees a black mask on the professor's desk. The black mask has big eye holes, a razor sharp nose, and covers everything but the eyes, with black feathers. Dylan eyes the mask, the professor notices and asks Dylan what he's looking at. Dylan replies that he is just looking at the beautiful mask. The professor gives Dylan an angry stare and proceeds to hide it in his drawer. The professor tells Dylan to get out and never come back to his office. Dylan tells the professor he'll see him at a later time.

Dylan meets back up with his friends and tells them all about the mysterious mask he saw. Dylan and his friends wait for the professor to get into his dark black Rolls Royce, like the professor's soul. They wait

for three hours until the professor leaves his office. After the professor leaves, Dylan and his friends go up to the office window to see if it's unlocked. The office is on the 26th floor, to get up Dylan creates a big ladder with his magic wand and puts an invisibility cloak on him and his friends. They find the office window unlocked. Dylan and his friends scan the room for traps and see red flickering lights, they have to be careful. They scan to see if there are any power generators hooked up to the alarm. All the alarms are connected to the professor's phone, and he gets a notification if the alarms go off. Dylan and his friends begin to look into all of the drawers for the mysterious mask. They look into his third desk drawer and find the mask. The texture of the mask is very rough, made of leather. They try to see if the mask is magical. Dylan uses his wand to put an enchantment spell on it so that when the professor puts it on he'll fall asleep. So all the friends put on gloves and put the mask back in the drawer. They are very careful not to trigger the alarm. They then climb back down from the window using the invisible ladder. Dylan then shrinks the ladder back to its normal size.

They all then go to the dorm, to Dylan's rooms. They order in Chinese food. Their order includes sesame chicken, yellow rice, vegetables and spring rolls. They all eat merrily and open their fortune cookies. Dylan's fortune cookie has the message, The manager is somewhere dark where you can't get to him. The takeout people know that Dylan and friends are looking for the

manager and they are on his side. All friends then go off to sleep.

The professor arrives in his Rolls Royce early the next day, gets out of the car, and goes to the administration office. He greets all the people there. The people don't really like him but they're being civil to him because he's a very strict teacher. The professor in his grey suit goes to meet the president of the university. He greets the president and asks him if anything unusual happened at night. They look at the camera recordings but see nothing out of place. The professor looks a little unwell. The president asks the professor if he needs to go to the hospital. The professor says no and goes to his classroom. He has four classes to teach today. In his first class, he writes stuff on the touchscreen board. He asks students to translate the words he has written into English. He sees a boy with long red hair and thinks he has seen the boy before but can't really recognise him. When the professor had called out attendance at the beginning of class, this boy had responded to the name of Samuel Adams. He calls on someone to translate "good morning, how are you doing" in 30 seconds and if the student cannot, they will have to do 25 push ups in front of the class. The student can't translate so he goes to the front of the class and does the push ups, eliciting laughs from the whole class except Samuel Adams. The professor gives Samuel Adams the death stare but Samuel Adams just gives him a smile in return.

After class is over, Dylan goes to the bathroom, takes off the disguise and

sneaks out back. The professor goes to his office and touches the mask. Immediately, he falls into a deep sleep. Dylan sneaks back into his office as the professor is sleeping, checks the professor's pockets and finds a photo of the manager. The photo shows the manager in a dark room, looking scared. At the back of the photo there's a message that says, "No one can find you". Dylan takes hold of the professor's phone which has a fingerprint sensor. Using the professor's finger, he unlocks the phone. He opens his contact list. There's nothing unusual yet, so Dylan opens the photos app. There are several photos of the manager in a dark room. Dylan zooms in to see a red door with a keypad. That reminds him of a bunch of red doors that he saw during the campus tour.

The first red door Dylan and friends try is the one next to the cafeteria, which is locked. The next red door is in the auditorium. That one is open: it's the dressing room and there are jump ropes everywhere, but not much else. The third red door is by the teacher's lounge. They hear voices coming from the room. The door is unlocked; there are people in the room watching a presentation being given by the President, about Russian philosophers. The Russian professor is also in the audience. Dylan and friends sneak in and hide in the shadows. The president says there is a magic book but doesn't know yet that the book is missing.

During the presentation, there's a Russian verse on one of the slides. Dylan thinks this might be a clue as to where the manager is

hidden. So he takes a photo of the verse. As the presentation is going on, Dylan goes to the professor's car and gets his driver's clothes and gets into the driver's seat. When the professor gets into the car, he doesn't know that Dylan is impersonating the driver. Dylan tells the professor to translate the verses; the professor refuses; Dylan threatens to crash the car; the professor still refuses. Dylan crashes the car into a tree. The tree falls on the roof of the car. Dylan escapes unhurt, but the professor is injured, has a head injury. The professor is loopy and agrees to translate the verses. The verses are a number on the keypad on the red door: 4342. Dylan also asks the professor who the evil wizard is, and the professor confesses that it is him! Dylan, still dressed like the professor's chauffeur, takes the professor's phone and runs back to the campus to meet his friend.

When he gets there and meets his friends, he finds out that in the meantime his friends had tried all the red doors on campus. Suddenly the magic globe glows and shows them that the only remaining red door is in the topmost tower of the castle which is closed with a spell. Dylan and friends run back to the bookstore, into the basement, and through the door back in the jungle. Flopsy, Sandy, and Daniel are waiting for them. They all hop on Flopsy's back and tell him to take them to the castle. On the way, they catch the animals up on everything that has transpired since they left them.

Once they arrive at the castle, Dylan decides to kick the door open, Flopsy stays

outside. Dylan and his friends make their way up to the red door. They see a glowing keypad and decide to use the code 4342. The door slowly opens and Dylan and his friends find a room full of sandbags and musical instruments. They decide to tear open the bags, and they find sparkly sand. As Dylan gets to the final bag, he tears it open to find the manager! Dylan helps him get out of the blindfold and unties the ropes on his hands and legs. After the manager is freed, he catches his breath and tells Dylan and his friends a big secret. The president of the university was in cahoots with the evil Russian professor! The professor tells them that they have to get out of the castle quickly but quietly. Dylan shows the manager the Professor's phone, and the professor gets so angry he almost bends the phone in half. As they are making their way back to campus, they get an unknown call and decide to not pick up.

Once they arrive on campus, they tell the campus police the truth about the president and the Russian professor, who is still unconscious in the car. The Week of Welcome dance is about to begin, all the students and faculty are there, dressed quite handsomely. The police barge in and just as the president is about to make a speech they arrest him and take him away. And the whole school cheers. Dylan and company cheer as well! Dylan takes out his wand and magically gets the best dresses for himself and his friends. Dylan is dressed in a shiny black tuxedo. Flopsy puts his

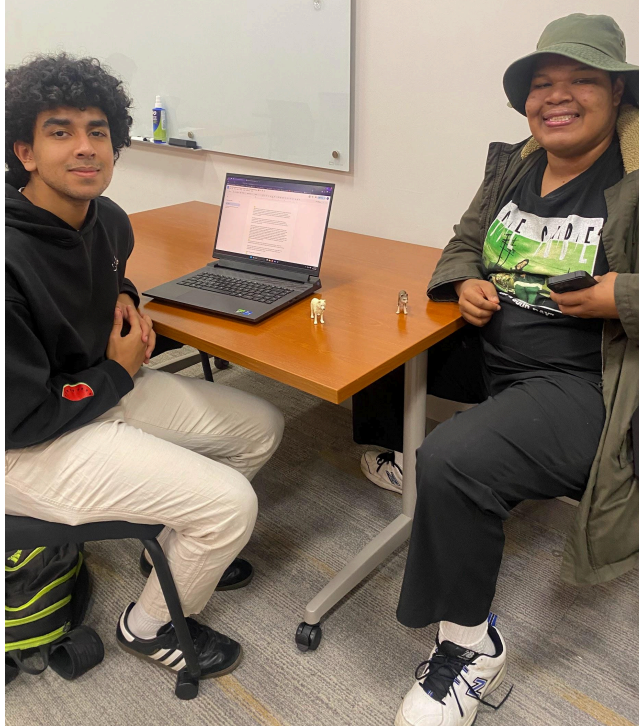
head in through a window but can't get his whole body in. Sandy the panda is giving everyone a big hug, while Daniel the tiger takes over the DJ duties. Dylan dances with everybody, and eats and drinks everything that is on offer, especially loads of buffalo chicken pizza and gallons of diet coke.

At the stroke of the midnight hour, Dylan gets atop Flopsy and asks him to take them all to the Door to the Future in the maze under the castle. Flopsy trumpets and they get to the door quickly. They all walk through the door and enter the day of the graduation ceremony. In this future Sandy the panda bear is the president of the university. Sandy is dressed up in the robes and gown and cap. The gown is navy blue. All of Dylan's friends get their graduation certificates. Sandy gives everyone a hug after giving them their diploma. Dylan is the last person to go on stage. Dressed also in a navy blue gown, he goes to Sandy, who gives him a big hug, and awards him with a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice. Everyone cheers for Dylan, and then Dylan throws his cap up in the air. The crowd does the same.

Once the ceremony is over, Dylan and friends go back to the past, to the night of the Week of Welcome dance. And Dylan, once again, goes exploring!

Excerpt from *Ranger Corps Adventures*

By Caleb Dingus
In Collaboration with Ali Salem



The following story takes place in a futuristic fantasy world, where Earth is largely populated by anthropomorphic animal species. The American government has begun a new initiative to preserve the dinosaur habitats through their National Parks system, operated and maintained by the Rangers, a ragtag group of anthropomorphic animals protecting prehistoric animal species, namely, the dinosaurs.

During one brisk night of autumn, treading through the forest path, the Rangers return victorious from a recent battle against the nightflyers, wanting nothing more than to head back to Base Camp for some much needed rest and relaxation.

Kodi: "I swear I didn't used to be scared of bats, but after tonight, I'm not so sure."

Anoki: "Oh come on Kodi, if that was enough to spook you, then you and the rest of the rookies this year won't last more than a week."

Leilani: "Anoki, quit scaring the newbreed. Either way, nothing is scarier than bumping into Joe in the middle of the night."
Bella: "True that, Leilani, I still can't believe we have a Sasquatch working with the team so close to town."

Having arrived at Base Camp, the Rangers split up, each retreating to their own barracks to settle down. Before long, the head of the group, Anoki, calls out.

Anoki: "Everybody meet me at the central tent in 5 minutes! I don't want to hear even half of an excuse if you aren't there."

"Okay, I know we all had a long day, so I'll make our debrief tonight quick. First things first, roll call. Starting with the bears: Sandy? 'Present' Katya? 'Here, boss' June? 'Here, obviously' Raquel? 'I know who's here.' Who, your grandma? 'C'mon, I wasn't even going to say that' Bruce? 'Present' Kora? 'Always here, Anoki Sensei' Bella? 'I'm present, comrade' Wonderful, next, Leilani, the river otter? 'Present' Cassius, the alligator? 'Here, Madame' Joe, the desert Sasquatch ? 'Been here since the days of the migration period'

"Perfect, everybody's here. Good job tonight, there were a few mishaps that I'd hope for us to iron out by the time we depart on our next mission, but we can definitely consider this mission a success. With that being said, we don't have much downtime, so I won't waste it all in this meeting. You all are free to head into town and take some time off for the night."

Leilani: "Yay! Thanks, Boss."

Anoki: "That doesn't mean you go and get into a bar fight, let's not forget what happened last time."

Kodi: "What happened last time?"

Anoki: "We ended up on a mission in Thailand, and got into a fight with a police officer after he tried to extort Leilani over here for some cash. Long story short, a lot of Thai police officers ended up in the hospital that day. Anyhow, you all are free to go."

The Rangers head off into town towards their local tavern, the Drunken Sabretooth Cat, run by Chef Claude, an albino alligator who is a friend of the group. At the tavern, they order their food and a couple of drinks for the table. 12 minutes later their food arrives.

Kodi: "We never had the chance to eat food like this at the training camp."

Kora: "I was getting tired of all the vegetarian food when I was a Dali Xueren. Even though I left that spiritual leader life behind, the powers I got to keep are pretty useful."

Joe: "I've always liked the simple stuff, but nights like these are nice once in a while."

As the place gets more lively, Kodi notices a member of the local militia, the Western Washington Liberation Front, harassing barkeep Yumi, a red panda who is a prospect for the Rangers. Frustrated, Kodi tells them that Western Washington will never be its own territory, and they need to leave Yumi alone. The militia members in the tavern take serious offense to what she

said, and words and shoves go back and forth between the two groups. Kodi, in a flash of anger, dumps her beer on the shoes of one of the WWLF members. The situation quickly escalates into a full-scale brawl between the Rangers and the WWLF. Kodi slams one of the militia members into the ground, while Leilani strikes another hard enough to break his nose. Joe does a roundhouse kick, striking several of the militia, and Bruce is thrown out of the tavern window. At the same time, Kora has been exercising her martial arts skills to take down several WWLF members, but the fight doesn't end until the town Warden shows up, firing shots from his rifle into the sky, causing everyone to scatter.

Two hours later...

Anoki shows up at the tavern, angrier than a honey badger after drinking too many shots of moonshine.

Leilani: "Here comes mom..."

Anoki talks with the Warden about the brawl, expressing her apologies for the inconveniences caused by the Rangers.

Anoki: "As a result of the damages to Chef Claude's tavern, Leilani, Kodi, June and Kora will all be putting in a shift here tomorrow to repair the damages to the bar. As for the rest of you, I cannot believe that you would all be so irresponsible."

The next day...

After the Rangers have finished helping the staff repair the tavern's damages, Kodi and June meet Raquel at a location out of town to stake out the WWLF on suspicions of nearby poaching cases. After 22 hours of waiting for signs of the poachers, the trio come across a seemingly abandoned and trashed WWLF camp. Raquel and June go inside to investigate, finding severed dinosaur parts littered across the floor. As they explore deeper, they see numerous deceased WWLF members. Most of them appear to have been mauled, and a plate of rotting dinosaur flesh lies on the table. While the two are documenting their findings, Raquel hears a strange noise from behind her. She turns to see the corpse of a WWLF member, eyes engulfed in a green hue, standing up and moving towards them.

Startled, Raquel and June hurry back to the truck to try and get back home. Armed with Springfield rifles, they fire shots at the increasing crowd of undead WWLF members in pursuit.

Raquel and June quickly try to inform Kodi of what is happening in the campsite they were monitoring. Kodi doesn't initially believe Raquel until one of the corpses bangs on the windshield of the truck, startling all three of them.

Kodi: "Not again with a zed outbreak." The three of them drive back to Base Camp, to reconvene and inform the group. In the meantime, the undead WWLF make their way to town, wreaking havoc on the citizens and spreading the unknown virus.

Anoki doesn't take them seriously, until Joe, watching the news in the nearby recreation area, calls for Anoki's attention.

Joe: "Hey, Boss, you might want to see this."

Anoki: "Turn that off, we don't need to be scaring off any more recruits than we already have."

Kora: "Have you guys seen what's happening right now? They just quarantined off the National Park."

Leilani: "This looks like it's going to be a serious enough mission to be considered an X-file."

Anoki: "Enough. Everybody listen up, by the time that mob of WWLF zombies makes their way to Base Camp, we need to make sure all the dinosaurs are secured. You three need to go lead them into the bunkers, and make sure there isn't any chance they can be exposed to this virus. I'll have Sandy, Kodi, and Katya set up beacons around Camp to lead as many as dinosaurs we can towards us. In the meantime, everybody else is on barricade duty, including the auxiliary unit with Grady and Yumi. We're treating this as a full-on siege. Now go."

The Rangers spring into action, digging trenches around the perimeter and filling them with alternating rows of crude oil and lava. They line the gates with spiked barricades and blankets of barbed wire. Time is of the essence, as chaos has engulfed the town and the Warden and his forces are not able to manage the horde of zombies wreaking havoc on the civilians.

Suddenly, the light from the beacons shoots into the sky and reflects downwards onto the surrounding area, drawing the attention of the undead militia to the Rangers camp. With the weapons and ammunition they have in stock, the Rangers begin to fire at the mob of zombies slowly approaching Base Camp. At first, the undead aren't able to push through the firepower of the Rangers, but their numbers only continue to increase as more of them are attracted to the light from the beacons.

Kora: "I don't mean to be pessimistic here, but there's no way we can win a battle of attrition like this against a horde of zombies. We need to come up with a plan."

Leilani: "What if we let them in?"

Kora: "I know I said it wasn't looking good, but I don't think giving up is the right answer either, Leilani."

Leilani: "No, we let them through the gates, and then we blow up Base Camp after we pin them inside the gates of our camp. The barricades we set up will work to keep them trapped."

Sandy: "We don't have that much firepower on hand, and the President would never approve a strike on such short notice."

Leilani: "He doesn't need to approve anything if we hack into their systems.

Grady, do you think you could pull it off?"

Grady: "That would be one hell of a first job, but I think I could just about do it."

Leilani: "Perfect, I'll let everybody know the plan. Signal me when you're in, and we'll have everybody open the gates and get away from Camp."

Leilani rushes down from her post, as the WWLF horde nears the front gate. She quickly finds Anoki and Joe, letting them know what Grady is doing. Before long, all the Rangers are ready to jump ship, and the mob of the undead are past the last barricade.

Grady: "Got it! I'm in. Ready when you are, Leilani."

Leilani: "I was born ready."

The Rangers pull open the gate, and the zombies come flooding in, appearing even more numerous within the confines of the Camp. Immediately, the Rangers zipline across their defenses, evacuating their headquarters completely. Once the entirety of the zombie horde has entered Base Camp, a swarm of military drones head full-throttle into the barracks. Explosion after explosion occurs, until the camp has been totally engulfed in flames. The Rangers look on, from the nearby forest, as the fire burning down their former base lights up the sky. Soon enough, the sounds of the WWLF zombies can no longer be heard, and a peaceful silence radiates through the air. Anoki turns to Leilani, wearing a bittersweet expression on her face.

Leilani: "Sorry, Boss, I never thought we'd have to see Base Camp go out like this."

Anoki: "No, this was brilliant. You showed the true qualities of what it means to lead tonight, Leilani, and you dealt with an X-file threat in just 48 hours. Losing Base Camp is a small price to pay for an outcome like that."

A few days later, the Rangers reconvene at the mansion of the Washington governor. They report upon the severity of the damages, and the Governor decides that the area surrounding Base Camp must be designated a "No Man's Land" until further notice. Anoki and the Rangers are set to receive a call from President Trump's office.

President: "This was a completely unacceptable and unauthorized use of military weaponry. The Rangers will have to be investigated, and I will see to it that your organization no longer has the capabilities to do something like this again."

Anoki: "I understand, Mr. President. However, I would urge you to refrain from cutting down on our resources until this situation is fully resolved. We still don't know what caused the outbreak, or have any information on a potential cure to the virus."

Leilani: "Oh what a load of crap. Do you not understand how much worse it would have been if we didn't do what we did? Would you seriously rather have had the entire town and Western frontier overrun by undead militia members?!"

Anoki: "Leilani, enough. Mr. President, please give us a few more weeks to sort out the situation, and I assure you that the Rangers will fully comply with the government's investigation in due time. Thank you."

President: "Very well, you will be hearing from the Department of Defense very soon. Goodbye."

Anoki: "Leilani, let's show more respect when talking to the President please. Regardless, I do think you are right, and I

commend you for standing by your actions. You've really shown me that you have what it takes to be in charge the past few days, and I'm officially assigning you as joint-captain of the Rangers with Kora."

With her newfound position of leadership, Leilani feels excited and ready to handle the responsibilities of being a captain. The Rangers once again have a successful mission, and are ready to rebuild what they lost. *Until next time...*

Once upon a time... there were these people that I really love. And I care about them.

By Geraldine Copeland
In Collaboration with Kaitlin Sikes



Introduction

They say that you can make anyone happy with rainbows. I like that. I'm so happy to be here, I just love creative writing. I just love it so much. And I love my group home, I love where I work, and my mother just moved into an apartment. I love being here, I love creative writing. I'm so happy about it.

Winton

I love Winton, it's so wonderful. It's great because we go to different classes and do a lot of things. Like we have art on Fridays, plus crafts and gardening. I like Fridays! During crafts I made jewelry! I love jewelry. I love painting and coloring! I also like watching *The Price is Right*. Everything is very, very wonderful. We do everything, like singing or seeing movies. Once we

watched a movie about how *Mary Poppins* was made.

We also do fire drills there, and I like doing PT more there than at the other place. I was able to do 21 minutes walking outside, and 8 minutes on the treadmill! I go to PT on Thursdays. I love that. I have fun there. I was on the treadmill for 5 minutes, and the next weekend I was on it for 8 minutes! They put this thing around your arms and waist and it feels like you're flying. I keep saying that I want to do the stairs at PT.

I like helping out peers at Winton. I'm very happy at Winton, and I love everyone there, all my supervisors, Marcus, everyone! I want to write about all my supervisors at my work, because they're all great, and all the managers are splendid! Someone even gave me a notebook that they weren't going to use. Something I really want to do again is cook, I really miss it. I thought that if this guy can make his own lunch, why can't I?

Boy, do I feel happy! I love Winton and creative writing! I want to write about Winton because I just love it. Our classes that I go to, I love them. I like coloring, painting, and I just love Winton. I love working at Winton, today we made a cherry cobbler. All the ingredients went in, like oil, and also two cans of cherries. I used the can opener, but it didn't work, so we had to get a new one.

I like making pottery, but I can't anymore though. Winton doesn't have a kiln. I made a vase for my mother, a cup, and a thing for

halloween. Sometimes I have ups and downs, but my thing is I want to do more ceramics. I want to go shopping again. I need a winter coat. I wish it was still summer, I don't like the cold weather. If there's ice on the road, it can make cars lose control. And if there's ice on the sidewalk it can make people slip and fall.

Someone painted the fridge black, but it was better white. You can draw on it like a blackboard. But black doesn't go with everything like white does. I liked it better when it was white. Also they were cleaning, and found a Mardi Gras mask. Genevieve said I could keep the mask!

I just love that I wrote a novel, and everything is going great at my work. I love cooking there, I love doing everything! Like making my own necklaces and beadwork, and doing arts and crafts. Like yesterday we painted pumpkins, and I painted a scary face on mine and lots of colors on the back. Last week we had a spelling bee, and I had to spell "bathroom". I was so embarrassed. I also spelled other words, like "summer" and "sister". I did better than some other people.

I love Winton Road where I work. Winton is a great place, we cook and do all kinds of classes. I love it. I'm doing great, I'm just so happy and happy to be here!

In my day program we do everything, like cooking, and I just love that. Right now we're working on a Halloween box. We put orange tablecloths around it and spiderwebs in it. It's going to be the game

room box. Marcus came into the room and fixed my wheelchair. The wheel had just popped off! I had to get a spare because the old one the wheel fell off too! And no one could fix that one.

I love creative writing, and I love my day program, and I love everyone there. I wonder how Patrick's doing, he and I work together. Everyone is wonderful. I would say to Marcus, "What would we do without you? You're a great fixer!" I love Marcus, he's great. I'm glad that Marcus is a wonderful teacher and driver. All the drivers are wonderful. I love all the van drivers!! I love everybody at my group home. Marcus is a great driver and I'm so happy that he fixed my wheelchair. He also tuned up the arms so they don't come off, he tuned up my whole wheelchair, and now I like it so much!

At the program we did creative writing, but we wrote a ghost story. My story was about Halloween, and we were chasing the people. I'm so happy that Halloween is coming. My favorite part is handing out the candy and getting candy. But if you eat too much you'll get a tummy ache. I got my costume already too! It's in my closet right now. On Sunday at Winton we're doing a trick-or-treating thing outside, unless the weather is bad.

I love my work, and I love everybody. I'm glad I'm at Winton. It's so great. It's great to be at Winton. I make new friends everyday. I like all the staff there, too.

Group Home, Elmwood

I love my group home. And you know what? I'm so happy. I want to include everyone, all the staff, like Leah and all of them. My roommate Jennifer is so great. I'm happy with my staff here. This group home is so wonderful, and all the supervisors and everyone is so wonderful here. My group home, I just love it. I love to do all the things there, like cook. I love to cook.

I think that people at the group home should have a Halloween party. I think the people at my work should do the same thing. I am having fun at the group home, because I have a computer, and I just love it. I play games on it. And when I get a new remote I'll be able to watch TV again. I put it in my recliner pocket before I went to bed, and when I woke up it was gone! I think someone took it. I don't like when they do that, and if it happens again, I might move out.

I just love cooking, and today at the group home they made good food. Today we had chicken, baked beans, and hot dogs, mixed together. I love hot dogs! I can't wait until I make an apple crisp. I love pumpkin pie too!

They gave me plain hummus as a snack at the group home. The first one I had was spinach and artichoke. I love Wheat Thins, they're my favorite. I like pizza for lunch, vegetarian pizza. I would love to bake at my group home. At Jefferson, I loved that I would be able to bake and cook if I wanted. I want to make my own lunch, but they do it

for us. But Shawn is able to make his own lunch, so I don't know why I can't too.

The group home is going camping, and I said no. Last time, it flooded! They moved us to this place, and I had to sleep on a cot. With my machine, I have to sleep on my back, but the cot hurt my back. I don't want to go because I hate sleeping on the cot.

I like all the staff, like Camille, Leah, Sue Lee. She's so wonderful. I'm just grateful to be here, I love everyone here! I love my boyfriend Chris! Chris is always wanting me to get him presents. He's going to get me something, too. I love Chris, he's a great boyfriend. I'm glad I have him. I'm glad Chris is there. I'm just glad. Chris is a great person, he's wonderful. We are planning to go get coffee and doughnuts. I can't wait! I like everyone at Elmwood. Even Elma Stepperson, and she is so wonderful.

When Tiana had an outburst, they locked everyone in their rooms! I didn't like that, I hated being locked in my room. I wished I took the keys away from them. They shouldn't have locked all of us in our rooms. They should've been punished.

I'm so happy being at my group home, and so happy I'm able to do creative writing. I'm just so happy, too happy. I don't like this though, my teeth are crooked. I hate that. My walker came apart, the two legs fell off. I'm happy I'm getting a new walker and a new wheelchair.

I like being home, and I like being here.

Sports & Cheer

I like Notre Dame football, Buffalo Bills, Tampa Bay, all kinds of teams. And Denver too, they won recently! My aunt Sue lives down in Denver, Colorado. I like car races too, I like all of them.

The Buffalo Bills are winning, and I really want them to go to the Superbowl and win and get the Superbowl ring! My favorite player is Josh Allen, the quarterback. I hope he gets a lot of touchdowns. The Buffalo Bills lost the other week, and one of the players got hurt. We hope he's okay, and because John Allen had to work overtime.

My first team was Notre Dame, my college team. Notre Dame was always on TV every Saturday. I'm just too happy. I like this one cheer for Notre Dame:

"Cheer, cheer for old Notre Dame,
Wake up the echoes cheering her name,
Send a volley cheer on high,
Shake down the thunder from the sky.
What though the odds be great or small
Old Notre Dame will win over all,
While her loyal sons and daughters
March on to victory."

I was a cheerleader too, and I got cheerleader of the year! Cheerleading was fun, we did one like,

"Strawberry shortcake Huckleberry pie,
V-I-C-T-O-R-Y

Are you with it, Why guess?
Winton, yes yes yes!"

Anecdotes

I'm doing Bowling for Dollars! First, they have to get a sponsor sheet, and then I

have to get sponsors so I can get a sweatshirt and gift card. But I'll never do a walk-about again because Eastview Mall is too far a walk in the mall.

This lady has been upset lately. She said that she wanted a new truck, and I asked her how her leg was, the one that got operated on. She said it wasn't any better, and the doctors say if the meds don't help she'll have to go under again. I'm praying that she won't have to, and that she gets a new truck.

I like my computer a lot too. I play games on it, like games where you find hidden objects. When I was little, we had an Atari. I played it until it broke. I loved it.

I went to Sean's place and told them that my glasses keep falling off, and they wouldn't fix them! They said I had to get small little glasses, but I wanted full glasses. I think that I can't even read without my reading glasses.

I like the zoo. I like elephants, and all the animals there. I love seeing all kinds of animals, I love seeing all kinds of different things at the zoo and planetarium. What I like about the planetarium is there are things there where you press the buttons and it's like a game. And you also can go in this tunnel and see things. I love the shows that they have. They had one on race cars. I really liked that one. The people at my work said we were going to go to the museum once, too.

In the park across from a place there were Indians, the Seneca, dancing. It made me

grin ear to ear. I liked seeing the Seneca people dance, it's good to know that there's still Indian people around.

We went to Wendy's, and they gave us hamburgers with everything on it! We didn't order that, and my mother's aid was very upset. I still ate the hamburger with all the stuff on it, and I liked it very much! Same with the chicken wrap at McDonald's, they gave me a wrap in my bag with chicken nuggets. I ate the wrap too, and it was really good! I like Wendy's food, they have a \$4 deal for nuggets, fries, and a drink. Also, I had Chili's, and their macaroni and cheese was excellent.

Me and my boyfriend Chris are planning to go out for coffee and a doughnut!

I love butterflies! All kinds, not only one kind.

I loved all the things we did in the past, like go to Disney World. I loved the trip to the Bahamas! If I had a chance, I'd go back to the Bahamas, and I won over 13 dollars in the casino! I don't know why my escorts left me in the casino. I was there for 1, maybe 2 hours. Me and someone else went to look at the massage parlor, but they weren't there. I got a free massage though!

Inspiration Project

Creative writing is my favorite, I'm happy that I get to come here a lot. I love writing and hearing everyone's stories. I just love writing! It makes me feel happy inside and also I meet different people. I'm very grateful that I get to come here, and proud

of myself. I love creative writing so much! I can't wait to come back next year. We have a party where we read our stories.

I've been here since the start, 15 years. I love this, and I love coming back. I love creative writing, it's my favorite. I wouldn't want to be anywhere else because I love creative writing so much. Every year we write about things and have parties, and my favorite part is reading my story at the end. I love telling people that it's okay to join us, and asking people to do creative writing.

I just love creative writing, and work, and my group home. I love it so much. I want to be a writer, and write a book when I'm done. But it takes so long. And I'm happy. I love Joanna, she inspired me to come to creative writing and I loved it. I still love it. We are really good friends, and we have a good connection.

I feel great when it comes to creative writing. I seem to like it every day, and every Wednesday I seem to like it even better. I even had a dream about it last night, I dreamt that we were creative writing. I feel grand!

I just love being here. Joanna inspired me to come here, and I really like being here. It's so fun, and I love meeting other people here. Like my boyfriend Chris. I'm telling Jane to please come back here, because if she writes books, she should come here and read them aloud! I would love to hear her books. Jane's a good friend. I can't believe it's been 15 years! I've been telling my friend at the program that we miss her,

and we want her to come back to creative writing. She is so wonderful.

I'm so happy to be here, it's so great. This is better than last week when I did it on the computer. I like being here in person rather than the computer, but I just love writing anyways!

When this program ends, I'm going to bring my novel to work and read it to everybody. I just love creative writing and miss all of you when I go home. I had a great time, I love writing. And I'll come back every year.

Family

I miss my father cause he died. I remember him here, in my heart. I'm going to put flowers on my father's grave, when it's summer or spring. One time, I found a baseball in a bush, and went all around the neighborhood asking kids "is this yours?". They all said it wasn't theirs, and when I got back home, my dad said it was his!

I also remember being with my grandma, like helping her dry the dishes. One time when I went out with my grandma, I was looking at this lipstick. This lady snatched it out of my hands, saying "you can't have the red!". I think she was new. My grandma and I weren't happy about that. Me and my grandma thought about telling her supervisor. We walked out of that store, and never went back.

Halloween is coming, I would like to help pass out the candy. My mother would like me to be at her new apartment, and I can't wait. My mother and her aide are coming Saturday to the group home.

I love my sister. She's in Florida, but she comes up often. I have a wedding to go to in Florida. We have to take an airplane there, and I don't want to be on a plane for 4 hours. I wish we could drive instead, it feels faster. You can also stop when you want and take a break, but you can't do that on a plane. My trip to Florida we're going to, we're going on an airplane to West Palm. I'd rather take a car because I've seen so many airplane crashes. It's for the wedding, and then we're going to take a vacation with me and my mother. I can't wait to go on vacation in Florida! My sister said, "it's coming up soon!"

Me, Steve, my sister, and my mother are all going somewhere for Thanksgiving, to Cracker Barrel! Did you know that they have a hashbrown casserole there? I asked if they had pumpkin pancakes, and they didn't!

I'm so glad to be here. And what I miss most is being at my old house. I still got lots of things there. We're going to get together for Thanksgiving, my mother and sister and Aunt Donna. I love Charlie and my Aunt Donna, they're very nice. And I'm happy. I like everything! Actually at home we still got these big Hershey bars, and I told my mom I'd split one with her when she gets back.

I love my sister, Steve, Kyle, Cory, and Clay, my nephews. And I love Kaya because she married Kyle, and now she's my niece. My pa helped me down from the bed in Chicago, where they got married. I'm going to a wedding in January because Clayton is

getting married on the 18th. We're staying in a hotel again.

My sister had a plan of exactly how she wanted her house, and my father helped build the roof and stairs. I just love that! I feel happy inside. I'm just so happy. I love my sister, I love everyone, I love everyone at my group home, I love everyone at my work, Winton.

A Collection of Poems

By Ruth Emens

In Collaboration with Hayes Keith



Elmwood I

Elmwood in a group home
Ruthie and Chris
We had a good supper

Hamburger with cheese
Fruit and beans

Dinner on two tables
A lot of chairs

Then I came here
With people I like
Good luck.

Fairport

It's big
Stew for lunch
Pretty

I go there
I have coffee
It tastes good

They make a pot
Serve it in a cup
And then I drink it

Cream and milk and sugar
I go in the mornings
I have a new driver

Named Monique
He is nice
I go to Fairport on weekdays

On weekends I watch TV in my room
Always the Brady Bunch
I color pictures of Pooh and Tigger in
Fairport

My favorite is Pooh Bear
Just is
Fairport is a long ride

I like the ride
I go to sleep
I put my head on

My shoulder and shut my eyes
Missy going to take me to get my hair cut
And I might get a cup of coffee

I like my coffee sweet
I get up and Missy helps me get dressed to
go to Fairport
Before I eat breakfast

Then the bus comes at 8 am
I don't know who else comes
I go alone and I like it.

Elmwood II

A house made of brick
A ramp made of— who knows
A pretty kitchen
A living room with a big tv

Ruthie in the back hall
Pat in the back hall
Normy in the back hall too
Two bathrooms

Stef is taking care of us
Tina is with Stef
Beds are good
I hear Chris
Today is Normy's birthday

There was a party in the dining room for her
Watching the Brady Bunch and Baywatch
Ruthie likes Greg
She thinks he's cute

Marcia, Jan, and Sydney
Mike is their father and Carol is their mother
Ruthie loves the Brady Bunch but
She wouldn't want to be in it

Then, she couldn't date Greg— yeah
Normy sat by Ruthie
We had cheese quesadillas, we had salad,
we had watermelon
We had blueberries.
Gary

I miss you
What are you up to—
How's Connie?

Gary drives a truck
It's a black truck
He gets to work in it
He took me for a ride in Connie's car
We just went on a drive

Quinn is my new nephew
I got a picture of Quinn and put it by my
bed
He is cute
He looks more like Connie than Gary

I got a new driver
The old one was named Jared
Jared was nice and I miss him
But the new driver is nice too
His name is Monique

We had hamburger, baked beans, and
salad for supper
And tea and water to drink
I ate with everyone at Elmwood

Tomorrow I will watch the Brady Bunch
On my big TV
In the morning I'm going to Fairport

I made a friend named Nate who comes to
Fairport with me
He has a shirt with a bear on it
He wore it today
In the mornings the driver takes us
And we go together

Nate has his own house
He has a big dog
And I met his mom
His mom is very nice
Her name is Amy.

Everything is Important

By Joe Hill

In Collaboration with Diego Barberena



My name is Joey. People come up to me and ask, "Is Joey there?" It's good to have people recognize me. I feel good when people recognize me. When I share my story, I dream of that stuff. It doesn't hurt, I came a long way. I have a good attitude and people like to see that. I am a popular guy and that is okay.

I've been nice to my family, and I treat people the way they want to be treated. That's exactly what I've been doing, so that counts!

It's what I talked about in my meeting today. I told my sister, I haven't yelled, I keep it cool, my sister liked that. That's what makes me so popular. Sometimes you gotta control yourself and watch your tone, and especially your anger, you've gotta watch that. I've been doing good and stuff.

I gotta express my anger, sometimes you gotta do that. I will talk to my sister on the phone when I'm angry, and that keeps me nice and mellow. She comes to my programs and sees what I'm doing. She cares a lot about me. My sister listens to me, she tries to talk to me. I'm stronger than what I used to be, I'm not going to say I'm not strong. I'm happy, I'm cheerful.

People should listen more when I start talking to them. I just want them to understand so that when I do play music for them, they want to start dancing. I used to be up on stage. I could get up on stage and play music for people. Michael Jackson, "Beat It". When I hear the drums in a song, I can play it on a table. I used to do it for a lot of people, so they care about what I do. That's what I'm trying to do, music and time, beating time. They are in

the same group. What I mean by that is, I like to remember a lot of people, but a lot of people, like Michael Jackson and Prince are gone. People move on, and when they're gone their music continues on. Everytime people pass away, I just learn about their music.

I want to learn music wherever I go, because that means you're playing for them. I keep them going. Music makes me feel good. Music helps me. Someone might ask, "Are you Joey Hill?" and I'd say "Yeah."

The story is my voice. Music isn't a literal place. I had a contract for a radio store in my hand, and that will keep me busy, to do my work, to go over something. It's just that I am prepared to do the stuff that I do, so that there is music (when there is no music). I feel like it's my home, music is my home. I feel like doing what I'm doing at home, with music. We can always go forward.

I like classical music, like the violin. Relax, the violin makes me relax. I listen to music on the bus, WDKX and The Buzz. Sitting down in my chair, I listen to that. I talk to a lot of people on the bus, it's like music. I take the bus to Rochester for a program at Movies 10. I'm always there on Monday. That's where I work at, that's what I've been doing. I used to get snacks like popcorn. I like comedy movies. I like Eddie Murphy! I like every movie. I would like to be in a movie, I'm a character, you're a character, you know what I mean. My favorite part of the week is being here. I like the back room more than the front room of the Inspiration Project. They were

talking about my voice. I like other people talking about me, I want them to talk about me, that's fine, but only good things, nothing bad. As long as I'm happy, that's what I want to be. I'm always happy, I've never been angry at nobody.

I want to be a DJ in the future. I could do "We are WDKX. If I have a contract, that's what I'm going to do. I have a good attitude. Does attitude count as good in here? Yes, that's what I thought. Everybody's been good with me so I've been good with them. Nope, they will talk to me, they will come to me and they will talk to me here. It depends on how good my attitude is. I don't be distracted at all, I'm very good. I have such a great sense of humor, that's what I got. I have such a great sense of humor. Joey is doing good, that's what that means.

It could be me because I want it to be me, because people want to hear my voice again because I have a voice with a lot of reason. I use my voice a lot, so you know that counts. As I talk to people, I don't scream or yell, I just talk to them because I am polite. Joey has always been my name, it's the same. It has not been changed. They say what a good guy I am. I do things which I'm good at. Some people do like what they're good at.

People like my name, people call me Mr. Hill at home. Micah is my sister. Aniah, my niece, she calls me Uncle Joey. I'm happy with my niece, I'm doing something to get me happy. My niece talks to me, she checks up on me, makes sure that I'm

good. We watch TV. If it's wrestling then yeah. It just keeps me occupied when I am home. I would like to spend some time with my niece. I hang out with a lot of people when I'm home. They come to see me sometimes. It's cool that more people will

see Joey in Rochester. My niece is beautiful. She's special. Wants to be around me. The specialness of Joey spreads, because I'm a wonderful person and people like that. I'm kind. They say, "We are understanding who you are." I'm Joe, what else would I put?

Sean's Story

By Sean Connelly
In Collaboration with Zoë Miles



I like the Yankees. I like the Bills. I watch them both. When I watch a game I get happy. After the game I eat Parmesan cheese and pepperoni pizza, and some delicious onion rings and fries. Also, a delicious cheeseburger with mayonnaise.

Bedtime is after. I don't have dreams, but I imagine things. I imagine this:

Takeout lollipops filled their stomachs as they got into bed and began to dream. Spirits swirled around them as they began to drift off, with everyone dreaming. A large team lounge was waiting for them in their

dreams. Everyone was sharing a delicious meal of apple sauce and chocolate. They were playing with toys, chips, and crisps as they were beginning to lay back and enjoy themselves.

Cars bring them awake, and they realize they have to begin. Amerks game tickets are needed to get there, and after the day before, everyone was in a brace. A huge party broke out as everyone started celebrating the huge event. The king of the party was looking over his grand scene and drinking his favorite beverage: Chocolate milk from a cow. Orange juice was being

served to everyone there. A race was slowly beginning in the orange juice stadium. Fresh fruit was hanging there. The king used his giant muscles to carry out a tray filled with a feast: chili, cheese, cornbread, beans, olives and tacos. Brussel sprouts for the opposing team. The king biked out into the middle of the party and gave them chips and started a huge dance. People were doing the Camerahead, the best dance of the season. They all raised their fingers to their head as the horses began running out. Along with the horses, the royal cows came out as well. Sprite was being served now, as everyone had their feast.

They all began their walk to their local mall and used their muscles. They started thinking about all of the fun things waiting for them there. There was a basketball court, and they knew their coach would be waiting for them. Kickers were lined up to begin the game. After a second day of exhausting fun, everyone rode the cows and horses back home to bed.

The next day was spent playing baseball on the new mushroom court. They had some peppers, turkey, and hamburgers. Wrappers littered the stadium from everyone's feasts. The coach came back to help the team with their game, especially because of the bizarre new court. After everyone had their fun, they all went to their favorite store and had delicious burgers again. They were enjoying their new delicious lives. After they got home, they turned on their favorite show. The king and all the mammals and birds were flying on

the show. Their fun times were interrupted when they realized they had to get up and go to school at Duquesne.

In the bright early morning, they made their way through the amazing quad. It was okay though, because they knew they had tickets to the Bills game. As they were on their way there, they ordered some food; steak, brussels, nachos. They made sure it was ready for them as they arrived at the stadium, and they began to eat their favorite foods again. They were wearing green shirts that sported the MMA logo. They were quite excited to be watching their game. The field was once again covered with ice and they were skating in order to play the game as fast as they could. After the hard game, the team made sure to brush their teeth, shower, put on deodorant, pants, socks, and mittens. For dinner, they decided to eat bread with their parents. Then, Patrick Star from Bikini Bottom! He emerged from his room wearing a crown, and they realized that he was the king from a few days before!

There was a fierce game between Tigger the tiger and the Bills, and they were competing for food: Rice, beans, meat, soup, and some delicious cookies for dessert! They were all of Tigger's favorite foods, and to treat himself, he decided to get another meal— a burger! There was a parking issue between the Bills team as they tried to show up. They eventually made it, and had to tie their shoes before they ran out on the field to score a touchdown. They didn't want to get flagged by the ref.

They went back home to watch their favorite show Bluey, but their bedtime was at 9:30. They wanted to stay up and eat ice cream, so they stole ice cream from the freezer and ran off into the woods! Waiting for them there was a really cool car that they could drive away in. There were ducks in the woods that were holding bottles of juice and cupcakes. They began to share them with everyone in the woods.

Unfortunately, their clothes were dirty from their adventures in the woods, so they had to wash their clothes and brush their hair in the nearby river. They began to miss home. They missed their toys, they missed playing their favorite games with their friends, and they missed hot cheese on meals.

They decided to use their phones to call home and see how things were going. They also realized that they had to go back to school. They went to high school and it was boring. They wanted to play baseball and soccerball on teams. They ate hot tuna, and butter jelly. They had hard classes on hard stuff like writing. They play on soccerball teams, and have hot dogs with hot chili and cheese. After, they play hockey with friends and eat more hot cheese on hot dogs with hot peppers on it. They're full. They do drills for soccer, there is a hard whistle from coach. They drink cold water. They sit on the benches on the side of the field. Everyone is having a break.

Now they've got to go home and watch TV. They've got to watch the Bills because it's Sunday. They have a hot pepper steak with fries and hot cheese on nachos. The Bills

are playing Boston. They're winning. It's raining. They go outside. There's sun and some clouds in the sky. It's cold. They've got pants on and socks and a hat which is white and has the Raiders on it. The Bills are red. They're wearing a jacket. They've got gloves and a new hat. They need hot clothes for snow. They make a nice fire and it's warm. They have some hot chocolate and marshmallows standing around the fire. They go back in the house because it's cold and watch TV. They go to sleep.

The next morning, they have yogurt and cereal and milk. They are having breakfast with their family. They go to the school gym on a bike and they play soccerball and score. They're playing each other. They have bracelets with hearts to show their teams.

Now, there's a fire drill. It's a drill they have outdoors, and everyone's out there. There are trees and leaves and fires and the sun. It's cold outside, only four degrees! They have a jacket and gloves and a hat and earmuffs. It snows, so they've got to get some hot chocolate to get nice and warm. They have it around the fire. They get some cups and plates and marshmallows and Coach comes to say hi! He says "I'll see you at gym!" They go back to the gym and play kickball. Coach has a whistle and a pen and a clipboard. The coach goes home at 5:30pm. His mom says hi when he gets home.

Next Wednesday, it's winter break. They rest at home. The house is cold, they need blankets! They have a favorite blanket, it's warm. They watch TV. The news is on

Channel 9 and 10. The game starts on Wednesday, Boston vs Red Sox. The score is 1, then they score two goals! Now the score is 3-10. The Red Sox are losing. They get some popcorn and some waters and some tea and some lemonades. Pink ones!

There are drums and some maracas and a guitar and a piano and the stars are free. The band starts tomorrow. There's a bunny and a deer under the stars on the grass. There're dinosaurs and doves flying together. They are in the sky playing hockey! It's nighttime, it's dark. The sun is down and the moon is out. They've got to get some food for dinner, and a snack too. They get some chips, oranges, and bananas like monkeys, and they see more animals. A bird! They've got to go to the store to get water for the animals to give them a bath for their babies. They need a tub and soap and baby bottles and blankets because it is cold. The babies are cute. They have to go to the hospital because they're babies, but they are fine. We bought baby food and medicine, they have hiccups!

The next day, they wake up and buy a Cubs shirt at the store and crowd stuff. It's nine degrees and sunny. They get the trash at the house. They get more towels. They've got a nice clean house. They get some snacks, some goldfish and soup. And some steak, some fries, some cheeseburgers, some raspberry milkshakes, Taco Bell and Subway. Their sub has tuna, meatballs, tenders, parmesans, ham, salad, jalapenos, peppers, onions, cucumbers, mayonnaise, honey mustard, ranch, and olives.

I wake up. I get dressed. I go to Holy Childhood school. Next there's a soccer game with teams. We get some food, some drinks, and some waters. We get chips and pizza. We're playing! We're playing against the Blue Jays. We're winning, the score is 5-10. Then 11! We scored a bunch. The final score is 5-11. We're celebrating! We're going to Canada because we won. There's a doggy and a fox and bunny! We get a picture of them all.

We're going to get pumpkins and paint and paintbrushes. We're going to paint the pumpkins. I draw on the pumpkin in red and orange. I painted a Jack-o'-lantern face on the pumpkin in red and black. I also painted ghosts on the pumpkin in white paint. It's Halloween on Friday! We're going to the haunted house. There are ghosts and spirits in the house. Chucky the doll is also in the house. There's a full moon in the sky, and you can see all the stars. It's a full moon, so the dog turns into a werewolf. We're taking a picture in the house. We're going to go trick or treating. We're going to get candy and treats. My costume is a cowboy! I'm wearing a cowboy hat and a cowboy scarf! I'm with a ghost and Scooby-Doo. We go home and read a spooky book about skeletons.

We're all tired of spooky things now, and we just want to eat candy. I like Mars bars and caramels. I eat them while I watch Scooby-Doo. I start to dance. Halloween is fun! I like to work at imagining on Halloween. I have candy in bags around me. I tell a story to the moon in the dark.

A Collaborative Story

by Participants from CP Rochester

Once upon a time, there was a group of anthropomorphic bears. They wore Viking clothing-- hats and helmets with horns. One of them was named Spiderman, another was named Batman. The rest of them were named after the Golden Girls--Sophia, Blanche, and Rose.

They were living in Germany, in houses with thatched roofs, they hunted and fished. They were very content, they wanted to be content, that's what they were.

But then a stranger came in, a stranger from the darkness. She came in a barrel, she rolled right in through the doorway. The stranger had beautiful blonde hair, blue eyes, she wore a pink shirt. Her name was Ruthie. The bears were frightened, you know that. They had never seen a human before, that's why they were scared.

Ruthie tried to roll back out the door, but the door wouldn't open because it was locked. The bears were afraid because Ruthie wouldn't leave. But Ruthie couldn't leave! That only made the bears more afraid. They were nervous, and they wanted to hide in the woods.

That's what we said, people are scary, we don't blame those bears.

One of the bears tried to help Ruthie get unstuck from the barrel. The other bears started to help. The bears used butter to get Ruthie unstuck and helped transfer her into her wheelchair. Ruthie said, "Thank you." And the bears weren't so scared anymore, they were happy to find a new friend. Maybe, they said, we will give Ruthie a key to the door of our house. And they did.

So, that's one of our stories. We wrote it together. Together! Together, we can all work together!