

# Scribbles

April 2009

## Four winter rabbits

Winter is here  
Winter is here  
Rabbits have fun,  
A day to enjoy.

They wear socks, scarf  
Gloves and a coat.  
Mum rabbit Dad rabbit  
Sister rabbit and me.

Playing in the snow,  
Playing in the snow,  
Snow, snow,  
It's time to have fun.

By Sandra Carrillo.

## Vampire

by Ellen Mahon  
& Jayne Dolan

Awake in the night  
Asleep in the day  
His skin's an old  
and pasty grey

His big white fang  
sinks into my skin  
A droplet of blood  
so tender and thin

Fangs sink deeper  
pain gets higher  
I open my eyes  
to see a vampire.

## Timber Avenue by Sofia O'Byrne

"Cough cough, god its dusty up here!" Donna was up in the attic clearing out. Her parents had died in a fire. Donna was over the shock she just thought back three and a half weeks ago when she found out, her parents were cruel but some how she missed them. She looked around and saw a box in the corner covered in dust, underneath the dust she could see the words 'Private and Confidential'. Donna made her way over to that corner making sure she did not put her foot through the roof. She sat on a plank of dusty wood and opened the box, right away she saw a thick folder with 'Adoption files' in bold. Startled she opened the folder straight away. She saw the names Harry Anderson and Abigail Anderson, these were her parents names. She continued reading, *adopting* Donna-Alexsa Carmichael! What? Her name was Donna-Alexsa for sure, but Carmichael!? An 'O' shape formed in Donna's mouth. She saw an official stamp in the corner of the page. Donna could feel tears welling up in her eyes she still kept on reading she just couldn't stop. Mother- Annabelle Carmichael. Donna started crying heavily and felt sick, she thought she was going to throw up. "Donna, Donna" River called River was her boyfriend, he was the one who was there for her since the fire. But she decided she would not tell him about the adoption. She quickly put the document back inside the box and hid it behind some crates and went downstairs. She could see River in the hall with her cat Andy-Pandy. "River" Donna called "Donna were have you been, I've been looking for you everyw... Donna have you been crying?" "Am...no just hay fever!! I would be needing some Zirteck or something or something."

"Of course, I was just going to the shop to get dinner. Maybe you should take a shower or change clothes. Did you get much work done?"

Ah, yeh... look I've got to tell you something!?!"

"Oh what?"

"I'll talk to you over dinner. I'll go take a shower."

"See you later, oh yeah I'm making pumpkin risotto."

"Ok, bye love."

River galloped downstairs, this happened to make Donna laugh. Once she new River had left she went back to the attic and took the box from behind the crates. She opened it quickly and took the folder that said 'Adoption Files'. She took her time going down the ladder. She walked to her bedroom but on the way looked in the mirror, she new what River meant! She was covered in dust, it was in her hair and all over her clothes. To make it worse her eyes were red, blotchy and bloodshot. Donna sighed and tried to pick up her cat Andy-Pandy, he struggled and ran into his basket. She went to her bed and dumped herself on it. Soon she got woken up by River. "Donna wakey wokies!!" River whispered shaking her "You've fallen asleep. Come downstairs for dinner."

Donna found herself moments later downstairs eating pumpkin risotto, still dusty. In silence they ate until River broke it.

"Donna darling you wanted to tell me something?"

"Yes I did, I just have to go get something. Please excuse me." Donna had decided to tell River about the forms. She went to her bedroom and saw them on her bed, she wondered why River hadn't seen them. She picked up the folder and feeling cowardly made her way downstairs. She dumped the folder on the table and sat down and could feel the tears in her eyes. River picked up

the folder and looked at the top, his eyes went as large as two bulls eyes.

"What's this are you planning on adopting someone or have you already?" River asked shocked.

"No. Please open it."

River opened it with eyes fixed on Donna his eyes looked down on the paper and they twitched side to side. He began to aloud. "Adopting?" he paused "Donna Carmichael. Carmichael? Donna this is all to much, do you mean Harry and Abby are *foster parents*?"

"Yeh by mother is some woman called *Annabelle Carmichael*. I'm a foster *kid*, but not an orphan. My real mother is still alive or was alive when I was adopted."

"No she's most likely alive" River blurted in.

"How can you know?!?"

"It has your real mothers details and you were adopted in 1981 third of May, isn't that eleven days after your birthday."

Donna felt an unpleasant feeling in her stomach again. She felt unwanted and a nobody.

"What the address??" Donna asked

"34 Timber Avenue, Raheny Dublin 5. Donna that's less then fifty yards from here. Do you want to check it out?"

"NO, I don't want to check it out!"

"Sorry honey I thought you would want to meet your mother, know who she is?"

" Sorry River to get cross. I just want to go to bed and think."

Donna stud up picking her bowl and cup with her.

"Donna I'll do that" River said quietly.

Donna put down her cup and bowl and started to head for the door.

"Donna, that why you wre crying?" River asked.

"Yeh, look I'm sorry because I didn't know if I should tell you or not," Donna said unsurely.

"Oh no nothing like that, I just bought the Zirtek," River said humorously. They both laughed and smiled widely.

"I'm going to take a shower she you in half."

"Bye! Oh, can I sleep in the guest room?"

"Sure you're not going home with me like this."

Donna went up to her room and made sure she did not fall asleep. She went into her en suite bathroom and jumped into the shower. Whe was finished showering she skipped drying her hair and put her underwear and pyjamas on. She went over to the closet on the far side of the room and pulled out a blanket and pillows. She carried them to the spare room and dumped them on the bed. She quickly ran to the cupboard in the hal, pulled out a sheet, pillow cases and duvet cover. She left them outside the spare room and managed to drag herself to her bedroom. She once again dumped herself on her kingsize and fell asleep cold. She woke up about midnight and went downstairs. Donna made her way to the back room where the computer was. She turned it on and webbed local.ie. In the search box she typed 34 timber Ave. Raheny D.5. this was apparently her "mother's" address. The suddenly there was the name – Annabelle Carmichael. The woman still lived in the same house as she did twenty years ago! The only reason she wondered was because it was less than fifty yards from her daughter. Donna slipped into her shoes and coat. She opened the door and sliently closed it. At first she walked normally but heard a creepy noise and so started running.

She ran out the entrance of Timber Close and across the road. She checked her watch; it was quarter to one. She turned the corner and down Timber Avenue. This was the posh road around Raheny, perfectly mown grass, programmed sprinklers to turn on at certain times. She trotted up the road till she got to number 34 and stared at it. It was the shabbiest house there. It looked like someone tried to shape the hedges but it went wrong, The grass was half mown and flowers were still in plastic containers. She sat on the unmown grass and wept. She felt dizzy and wanted to go home but found she didn't have the energy. She also found that she didn't have her mobile so she couldn't ring River. She lay herself on the grass and closed her eyes.

"Love are you okay?" a sweet woman's voice said.

"Oh sorry, I just ... hang on ... where am I?"

"You're at 34 Timber Avenue, Raheny. I've seen you around. Do you live near here?"

"Ah ... yes."

"You'd better come in. You're freezing."

So Donna and her unknown mother Annabelle walked inside together for the first time ever. There was already a pot of tea on the table. It had a colourful tea cosy on it.

"Who are you then ... oh, I should really introduce myself. I'm ..."

"I know who you are. You're ... you're Annabelle Carmichael."

"Oh! How do you know that? Have you heard about me or something? I'm not famous or anything."

"I think you know who I am."

"Really. Oh have we met at a shop or something like that?"

"I'm Donna Alexa Andr... I mean, Donna Alexa Carmichael."

"Really? We have the same name," Annabelle said shaking.

"You're my mother,"

"Me ...mother? You've got to be joking me."

She tried hard to do a fake laugh and then picked up a phone.

"I think you should call someone to come pick you up," she managed to say.

"No!" Donna shouted.

"Fine! I'll say yes but then you'll have to leave."

Donna felt very shaken. She picked up the phone and tapped in River's number. She stood up and walked into the entrance hall.

"River, could you please come pick me up? Oh, sorry, it's Donna. I'm at 34 Timber Avenue.

"Oh, Donna, I was going to call the gardai."

"Just come and pick me up will you?"

Donna hung up, closed her eyes and thought.

"Here I am beside my real mother and I hate her."

It was silent for a few minutes and then there was a loud bang on the door. It was River. A silent journey was what Donna wanted. River could sense this so he said nothing the whole way home.

Later that evening Donna woke up and wept as she thought of that day.

TO BE CONTINUED

## How A Stairs Can Change Your Life

By

**Clodagh Mc Kenna**

Mary doesn't really like her parents and there is a good reason for it. The only nice thing they did for was sending her to playschool. Well it was the worst playschool in town. Mary's parents were horrible to her so was her brother. Her parents liked her brother better than her. They slapped, kicked and punched her. She only got clean clothes once a month. Mary sometimes thought about running away but she never did. Until her parents and brother did that completely horrible thing to her. Mary was sitting in her cupboard, which was her room; well she was there when her mam came storming up the stairs shouting.

"Mary get over her now." Mary came out of her room and asked her mam.

"What is it.?" Asked Mary what is it, what is it" her mam screamed and slapped Mary across the face. Mary put her hand to her face and tried not to cry. "You just ruined your fathers whole career". And that's when Mary saw her brother behind her mam laughing and she was so sure he had done it. Then her father came stamping up the stairs, when he got to the top of the stairs he shouted, " get outside you horrible girl" and her father pushed her down the stairs. The next thing Mary knew she was at the bottom of the stairs with a pain in her arm. Mary tried to get up with her sore arm but she couldn't move it. Mary was at the bottom of the stairs for a while before anybody came to help her. Finally her mam came to help her. When she saw Mary she shouted "George" (Mary's dad) George came over to Anne (Mary's mam) and asked what's wrong. "I think Mary's hurt" said Anne. "So" said George. "So I think we need to bring her to the hospital."

"Hospital!" George almost screamed. "Hospital costs a fortune."

"Well we can pay for it and Mary can pay us back," Anne said.

"With what," asked George?

"She can get some money," said Anne.

"Okay," said George. "I'll drive her to hospital now."

When they arrived at the hospital a smiling nurse came over to them and asked Mary what was wrong. Mary told the nurse that she had broken her arm and that it was very sore. The nurse told her that she would get a doctor and he would x-ray it.

The nurse went off to get the doctor and Mary was left with her parents and brother. Then a little doctor in a white outfit came running, saying "I'll bring you to get an x-ray right away."

Then he went to tell Mary's family to sit on the chairs behind them and Mary would be back in half an hour. He told Mary to follow him. The x-ray room was quite small and it was dark. Mary had to put her arm into some black see-through plastic. The nurse that had come with them pushed some buttons and the machine started to buzz. Another plastic sheet came down on her arm and an x-ray of her arm came out of a big grey machine. Then the plastic sheet lifted off her arm. The doctor told her to follow him and he lead her to a smallish room where he told Mary to lie on a bed. So Mary lay down and the doctor left to get some plaster for her bandage. When he came back he bandaged up her arm and put it in a sling. He asked her how it felt. She told him it felt much better. So the doctor brought her back to her mam, dad and brother. The nurse told her how much money it was and asked for there address. It cost 500 euro. Her parents weren't happy but they still paid. Before they left the doctor said something to her parents that Mary couldn't hear what they were saying. Mary's dad walked over to her followed by her mam and brother her dad pushed her out the door and her brother stamped on her foot and said " you owe me 50 euro". (her mam didn't bring enough money so they had to use some of her brothers money). Then Anne walked over to Mary

and said "you have to pay us back". Mary looked at her mam and said "pay you back". Anne told her that she had to pay her back for going to hospital. She needed to pay them back 500 euro. Then Anne told Mary to go down the stairs that led to the door. When Mary was half way down the stairs George shoved her down the rest, then he ran down to the bottom of the stairs and started kicking her and shouting quietly " You used up my money you horrible girl." He only stopped when he heard footsteps. It was the doctor that put on the bandages on her arm. George said she fell down and she was fine. The doctor wasn't sure whether to believe him or not, so he went to check the video camera and he saw what George did. So he went and phoned an orphanage. He gave them the address and her parents names and told them what her parents did. They told him they would be over at Mary's house that night. By then Mary was back at her house in her coloured room. She wasn't allowed any dinner. She was thinking how unfair it was when the doorbell rang. She got out of her room and went to answer it. George was at the door when she got there. He was arguing but he was losing the argument. He was a tall man. When he saw Mary he smiled and told her to go pack her bag because she was going to live in an orphanage because her parents weren't being nice to her. In the morning she was in a little room in her new bed eating a nice breakfast. She had been sent to the orphanage and they were going to get her into a school in ten months. Then the women she saw on the way in told her that a lovely women and man were coming to adopt a child and she was just what they wanted. Mary asked about her parents and the women whose name was Jane, told her she would never be going back to them, they couldn't take care of her properly. Mary didn't mind. "So what about these people that are coming today ?" asked Jane. Mary told her she would love to see them. Jane left the room and she was back with a beautiful dress. It was purple and white with a purple ribbon around the waist and another ribbon for her hair. She also had a beautiful pair of shoes. "What are these for?" asked Mary. Jane told her that she had to look respectable for when Ruby and Daniel (The man and women) came. When Jane left, Mary quickly put on the dress and looked at herself in the mirror. Mary thought she looked so nice ...and she did. Purple was her best colour. When she was ready she went down to get her lunch. All the other kids thought she looked lovely. While they were having their lunch of ham and cheese sandwiches, Jane was talking to Ruby and Daniel. After lunch Mary was told that Ruby and Daniel would like to see her. Mary was feeling so nervous, it was only yesterday that she left her home and now she might get adopted today. She walked down the long hallway, opened the door, and sitting in front of her were Daniel and Ruby. They looked around 30. Ruby was in a flowery dress and Daniel wore a tracksuit. They looked so nice Mary thought. Mary walked over to them and started talking they talked for ages. Then Daniel asked Mary like to come and live with them. Mary said "YES". Mary had to leave the room while they signed the adoption papers. When Ruby and Daniel came out of the room they told her to go and get her bag packed because they ere leaving in an hour. Mary ran up to her room to get her bag packed because they were leaving in an hour. When she'd packed everything she needed, she waited on her bed for Ruby and Daniel to come. Soon she heard a knocking on her door, it was Ruby and Daniel telling her to come out to their car. There was a normal sized black ford. When Mary got in it smelt of leather and when it drove it made a little whirling noise. When they arrived at Ruby and Daniels house, Mary got out of the car and got her bag. It was a lovely red brick house with a garage and a long garden filled with beautiful flowers. Daniel unlocked the big oak front door, inside there was a long hallway. Near the front door there was a stairs which Daniel and Ruby led her up and showed her into a

big room and told her this would be her room. Mary was so happy she could burst. Just before dinner Ruby and Daniel showed her around the house. They had a dinner of potato, carrots, broccoli and fish. It was the nicest dinner Mary had in ages. When they finished dinner Ruby and Daniel helped unpack her stuff. Then Daniel asked her what colour Mary would like her room painted. Mary thought the colour "Blue" that was there already would be fine. She liked everything about the room, and didn't want it changed. Because they weren't doing any decorating in Mary's room they decided to go to town the next day to buy Mary new clothes. They threw all her old ones in the bin because they didn't fit her anymore. When they got home they had five bags full of clothes and three bags full of toys. Mary was so happy she ran up stairs to try on all her new clothes. She loved them all. That night for dinner she was going to a fancy restaurant. They drove there in a car and parked in a big car park, just outside the restaurant door. When they went in they saw a free table and sat down. A waiter came along with the menus. Mary decided to have a burger and Ruby got a salad and Daniel got a chicken breast. They all tasted lovely. After dinner Mary was too tired for dessert so they went home. Back at the house Mary put on her new pyjamas and got into bed. Ruby and Daniel came in to say goodnight.

"Goodnight Mary" said Ruby.

"Goodnight Mary" said Daniel.

"Goodnight, mam and dad," said Mary.

### My dog Family by Sandra Carrillo.

One day Jacky the sheep dog was busy eating chickens. His wife Candy was looking for water. She was a small terrier poodle. One day she had pups.

She had a male and a female. They called the male Pyjamas and the female Piggy.

When Piggy and Pyjamas were two they went to animal playschool. Every day the other animals said, "Look Its Pyjamas, I wore pyjamas last night"

Pyjamas got really fed up and ignored them. His friend Sprinkles the snoring horse said, "don't mind them, they call me twinkle star."

Piggy was happy with her friends, Mousy the mouse and Piga the pig.

Candy and Jacky had five more pups. Piggy and Pyjamas were jealous of their new brothers and sisters. Because they felt left out. The puppies were now one month old. There were three boys and two girls. They called them Crazy, Adam and Poke. The girls were called Sophie and Pinkie. It was Pijamas and Piggys birthday. They were having a party, they had invited six of their friends. Fat the fat monkey, Sprinkles the snoring horse, big liar the elephant that tells lies, Jazzy the cat, Piga, the pig, Mousy the mouse. They were very excited.

Jacky said "pups we are all moving"

"Where?" said Piggy

"The farmer died" said Candy

"Mr Doughnut is the new farmer, he loves Doughnuts so we are moving to dog City and your birthday has to be cancelled."

"How are we going to escape?" said Piggy

"We will dig up a big hole" said Candy.

Children laughing, playing in the snow,  
Racing building snowmen, ready, set, go!  
Candles burning, on the wick,  
Slowly melting as the wax grows thick.

By Robin

"Pyjamas and me will dig the hole" said Jacky

The animals heard Mr Doughnut talking outside the barn

"Lets get the fat pig and kill it." Mr Doughnut said to his wife Chocolate  
"nooooooo" Said Cow.

Jacky jumped up, took the knife and ran really really fast. He hid the knife in a hole under the ground.

Mr doughnut was really mad  
"WHERE IS MY KNIFE?????" He said then he cried and said "Mummy" in a little voice, he kissed the grass and said  
AAAAAAGH!!! Where are Mr Robert Animals?"

"Sh sh" said Candy holding her puppies  
"Dad are we there yet?" said Piggy  
"No honey, ten more steps" said Jacky  
"Is this the way to make a hole?" said Pyjamas

"Yeah" said Jacky.

The Dog Family walked and walked and everyone helped Candy with her pups. They made it to dog city. When they looked around ...it was horrible. There was a Doggy Bank that had been robbed, some bulldogs having a party with loud music....

Then somebody shouted

"APRIL FOOL"

AND Dog City had flowers, beautiful houses, and they all lived happily ever after.  
Will They!!!!!!!!!!!!

**WHY?****by Niamh Mc Gahon**

The ticking of the clock was getting on my nerves. When it stopped suddenly the silence startled me. I looked up I was half expecting something to happen. It turned out it was only my older brother, his face was red, sweating frantically. "Pack up some stuff quickly," he said, panting, "But, why?" I asked putting the lid on my pen.

"I have no time to explain," he told me. He grabbed hold of my two arms and held me close to his face.

"Anna" he said, "you know I'll always love you, no matter what happens." This was all confused me, up until now I'd lived a normal life, with normal people in it. I don't have any parents, Jake, (my brother) has always looked after me. He works in Tesco's. He's a shopkeeper, he tells me that the only good thing about working there is the employee discounts, and believe me... every little helps.

"they're after me Anna, they're after me!" he shouted, shoving a few pairs of socks into a bag.

"who's after you? Jake! Tell me! Why are you doing this?" I asked "what did you do?" I screamed at him. My eyes welled up with tears,

"Anna! Please hurry up! I have no time! Do you want me to get caught?"

"please! You're scaring me!" I ran over to him and held him tight around his waist,

"I'm sorry," he kissed my forehead and hugged me back.

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I stared out the window of the car, watching the world go by. Worriedly I looked over at my brother, who seemed to be talking to himself -because I'm pretty sure he wasn't talking to me- like a lunatic,

"Why did you do it? You stupid, stupid man!" and he thumped his head with his fists each time he said 'stupid'. I'd given up asking him questions, because every time I did he'd answer me something like: "I can't tell you, at least not now" or "Please stop asking me questions so I can figure out what to do."

He brought us to a small motel called 'The Cosy Corner'. By the looks of it . it didn't look very cosy. The building was made of wood. It had been painted light blue, but it had gotten all chipped off. The door had a hole in it but it had been covered up with a metal plate. When we entered the motel, there was a grumpy old man with a cat sitting on his lap. The man seemed to be moaning about something.

"Ahh!" he scowled at the paper, "we're down by two hundred dollars, Mar..." His sentence was cut short because he saw us standing in the doorway.

"Down, Whiskers," he said to the cat. It hissed with anger and scrambled away down the hall.

"So would you like a room?" he asked us as he pulled a register book out of a drawer under his desk.

"Er, yes please," Jake said. The man asked us a few questions, name, number address, but when Jake said his name was Adam and he lived in 35, St. Margaret's Avenue I was very shocked. The man handed us a key that had a key ring in the shape of a dog on it. The room

was ice cold. I dumped my bag on the bed closest to the window. I looked out the window and wiped a tear of warm salt that trickled down my face. I glared at my brother.

"Well thanks for taking us to this dump." But I didn't say it too loud in case the man in the hall could hear me.

"I'm sorry, Anna," said Jake.

"It doesn't matter. We're already here," I said, trying my best not to make any eye contact.

"You're right - what's done is done and there's no going back," he sighed. Just at that moment there was a loud banging on the door.

"Errr, yes?" I called, quickly wiping the tears from my cheeks.

"It's the police!" a rough voice shouted back. Three big burly men crashed through the door. I looked at my brother who was trying his best to hide behind the armchair in the corner of the room.

"Mr. Philosophy, you're under arrest for the murder of Mr and Mrs Philosophy, April fifth, two thousand and four," one of the officers said in a deep, harsh voice.

Next thing I knew I was in court - well my brother was and I was sitting beside him.

"Is it true you were in the house when your parents were killed?" the lawyer asked, eyeing him with a pair of dark green eyes.

"Yes," Jake confessed.

"And you were the one who found them lying on the floor of their bedroom?"

"Yes."

"Well, that's all of our questions."

And then later.

"Jury, have you made your minds up?" the judge asked the group of people who sat at the side of the room.

"Indeed we have your honour," a short fat man with a grey beard stood up.

"You have been found guilty of your parents' murder on the fifth of April, 2004."

"No!" I screamed. I shoved my way through the big guards who stood beside me.

"No! You can't do this. Where will I go? No!" One of the guards grabbed my foot and I fell to the floor, flat on my face struggling to get up.

"Anna!" Jake called, but when I looked up he was gone.

The ticking of the clock was getting on my nerves. When it stopped suddenly the silence startled me. When I looked up I was half expecting something to happen but it didn't. My annoying little foster sister continued to flick my cheek and the rain continued to hit off the window pane. I was thinking of my brother. More than two years had passed since that awful day in court. He stayed in jail... I stay here.

**Mary Ellen and Nimzy**  
**by Siomha Walsh Garcia**

The ticking of the clock was getting on my nerves when it stopped. Suddenly the silence startled me. I looked up, half expecting something to happen. "Evacuees your train will be here in ten minito, please stand up in a line and wait by the door." The old lady said. I stood up to get into the line but with all the hustle and bustle of the children I got knocked over. I stood up and walked quickly into line avoiding the eyes of the children looking at me. The train arrived a little early, a man stood at the top of the line calling out names and putting tags on the children. Suddenly there were no children standing around me and I heard my name called out. "Mary Ellen" the man called out. I stepped forward "your Age?" he asked. "Eleven sir" I said.

"Your parents are they dead or alive?" he asked.  
 "Dead" I said.

He filled in a little tag and then clipped it to my coat and a different one to my bag. "Carriage 4 compartment 9." He informed me and I walked quickly to the train. There was no-one in compartment 8 so I slid the door open and stepped inside, I put my bag under the seat and sat down.

An hour later I looked at the tag on my coat it said "Stoford. Uncle. Manor House."

Which uncle is that?" I thought to myself. I took out my diary and I wrote:

*Dear Best Friend,*

*I'm on the train to Stoford to an uncle that I've never heard of, well actually I've never heard of any of my relations because my mother and father were so mean to me.*

*Write some more later.*

*Mary Ellen.*

I put my diary away and tried to get a rest before the train arrived in Stoford. The speaker awoke me and it said "Passengers for Stoford to get off at the next station.

When the train stopped I got off and in a line with the other evacuees there was a crowd waiting for the children as well. A man stood with a list of names and a microphone. "Joseph and Elean step forward and go to Mrs Cornwell." The man said.

A woman put her hand up, probably to show where she was. I waited with the evening sun for my name to be called out and again I was last. There was no-one there so I sat down on my bag and waited for them to come. The man sat patiently on a chair and waited. About two hours later when it was dark and the man had asked a few questions a carriage came and a lady dressed in black got out. "Is there a Mary Ellen here?" she asked. "Yes." Said the man and ticked my name off the list. I picked up my bag and walked over to the lady. "My name is Margaret, I am the housekeeper of Manor House, you must be John's niece." Margaret said

"Yes Margaret." I replied. "Come along then." She said and I followed her to the green carriage. "Now Mary Ellen I have to tell you a little bit about Manor House. There will be no running around or shouting, your maid Jenny is going to help you find your way to wherever you need to go and you are not to disturb your uncle when he is at home. He works hard and only comes home sometimes."

"But when will I see him?" I asked.

"Tomorrow at dinner." Said Margaret. I looked out the window of the carriage. We were out of town now and all we could see was countryside.

"There is still another few hours to Manor House. I think you should get some sleep." Said Margaret and she blew out the dim candle that she had in her hand.

When I woke up the carriage stopped, Margaret got out, I got out aswell and followed Margaret to the house. I knew it was big but I didn't know how big because I couldn't see it in the dark. I followed her through a huge wooden door and couldn't believe my eyes. I stopped dead, looking around me Maids were hustling around the place, there was a stairway in the middle of the huge entrance and doors leading to hallways and other rooms. "Hurry up child." Said Margaret nearly half way up the stairs. I ran up the marble stairway and turned right up more stairs. To the left were maids hurrying down stairs. She led me to a small hall with lots of doors. She went in to the third room. "this is your room, you may unpack in the morning, Jenny will help you. Get some more sleep and Jenny will show you around in the morning." Said Margaret. I got my nightgown on and went over to the double bed. I sat up looking around the room, there was a wardrobe, a bedside table and a coffee table under the window. Then I noticed something that at the far end of the room there was carpet on the wall instead of wallpaper or paint. Strange. I lay down and went to sleep. In the morning there was a knock on the door and a girl about seventeen came in carrying a tray. "Good

morning Mary Ellen." She said with a tiny bit of a Scottish accent. "I'm Jenny I am sure Margaret told you about me."

"Yes." I said and I got up. Jenny put the tray on the table. "You have your breakfast and I will unpack your things." Said Jenny. I walked over and sat down at the table, Porridge, milk and sugar was on the tray, I don't particularly like porridge but that was all there was. After breakfast I got dressed and Jenny showed me around but the house and grounds are so big I think it will take three days to remember where everything is.

*Dear Diary August 1<sup>st</sup>.*

*I've been a week in Manor House its quite boring when its raining. I've pretty much learned my way around. Jenny gave me one of her old skipping ropes to play with in the garden. There is a little garden with a cut hedge up to my waist it is just grass and a tree in the middle. I asked Jenny about it and she said it was Manor House grounds so I am not trespassing. Jenny said she will try and get me some seeds to plant. She also said that another girl is coming to stay at Manor House. Her name is Nimzy Anzony and she is staying in the room next to me. Behind the carpet on the wall there is a door leading to the next room.*

*Bye...*

I went down the steps to the front door. Then I heard a carriage. It must be Nimzy! I ran out the door to see a dark skinned girl with black frizzy hair tied up in two ponytails. I stayed at the door for Margaret to introduce me. They walked over and Margaret said "Nimzy this is Mary Ellen.

She is staying here also, you will stay in the room next to her. Nimzy your father wants see you so in five days you will goon a train to London for a few days." When Margaret said that a flicker of fright shot across her face. "Mary Ellen show her to her room please." Said Margaret. I went inside and she followed. When we were on the stairs I asked her "How old are you?"

"Eleven." She said "And you?"

"Eleven"

We giggled and then started to talk more and more. By three o'clock we had told each other about our lives. Like me she had no brothers and sisters. Her parents were very mean to her and her Mom was dead. Her dad was the meanest and always hit her. At seven o'clock Nimzy and I went down to the table with my uncle (The way I did on my first day.) I haven't seen him since. At dinner Uncle John talked to us both and apologized for not seeing me earlier. At night I showed her the door and I slept in the extra bed in her room. I wo;ke up when Jenny gave a Shreik"AAAAAAAAGGGHH Mary Ellen !!! you gave me a fright. How did you

Get into her?" she said. "The door in the wall." I said after laughing my head off with Nimzy." Go into your room and get dressed, I will bring your breakfast when you are ready." While I got dressed I heard Jenny talking to Nimzy.

When we had our breakfast I went to the garden with Nimzy. She looked all sad and angry. I found out why in the garden.

"Mary Ellen, my dad wants me to go and meet him in London today – for two days! And, knowing my dad he will kep me there for more than two. I belong to your uncle now and so do you. My mam wrote a letter and your parents are dead. We are kind of sisters," she said.

We hugged each other and started planting seeds again. Then we heard Margaret call us.

"Nimzy, come on!" she yelled.

"I have to go," said Nimzy. "Bye." We hugged.

"You are my best friend," I said as she ran off. I went up to my room and turned on the radio. They were reporting all the bombs going off in London.

"There is hardly a chance she will live," I sobbed.

Then I lay down for a little nap. There was a knock on the door and Jenny came in.

"Mary Ellen! Mary Ellen!" she exclaimed. "Nimzy is coming back. Euston station was bombed but Nimzy's train wasn't there yet."

"Yayy!"

"She will be here in an hour."

I couldn't believe it. One hour to go. I thought I would never see Nimzy again and now she's going to live with me forever.

### Escape from Dublin Zoo by Fionn Mc Neill

Piplup met up with his friends Pingo and Flippers to play in the water a game of Marco Polo. Piplup asked to be on first they jumped into the water and started to play.

"Marco", said Piplup.

"Polo", said Pingo and Flippers.

"Marco", said Piplup.

"Polo", replied his friends.

He was twisting and turning in all directions to find them but then... thump he hit the edge of the snow.

"Ow", he said opening his eyes to see his friends running away.

"Hay", he said "Where are you going".

Then a big hand grabbed his shoulder a human hand. He turned around to see a man the same man that took his younger bother Cherp. Before he could do anything he was picked up from the water and was being taken to his jeep. He was too strong so when he struggled he didn't even notice. Then he shoved into a small box. He could hear his friends calling he is well was crying for help. The jeep hit a bump on the ice and Piplup hit his head. He couldn't see much and started to hear his friends yells stop and everything went black.

When he woke up he was in a dark place just a little light getting in where he was he saw an exit and walked out. It was very bright so it was hard to see. What he did see was a pool and a bunch of penguins.

"Where, where am I", said Piplup.

"Your at Dublin zoo of course", said a penguin walking up to him "Hi my name is Yin Yang".

"Why do they call you that", said Piplup

"Look at my eyes", he said.

Piplup looked at them one was black with a white pupil and the other was white with a black pupil.

"I see", said Piplup "Where are we again".

"Were at Dublin zoo which is in Phoenix Park which is in Dublin which is a county of Ireland which is a country of Europe which is a continent of the world".

"That's a mouth full", said Piplup "Where are we now".

"Again were at Du..." he was interrupted by Piplup.

"No. What's this spot in the zoo".

"Oh this is the penguin section which is..." he was interrupted again.

"I know, I know" said Piplup.

Wow I was taken all the way here he thought.

"What's your name?" asked Ying Yang.

"Piplup" he said.

"Nice name", said Yin Yang.

"Thanks", said Piplup and walked away.

He walked into the water to think. The water was cold and it was irritating with all the flashing cameras and people staring at him. Piplup smelt something that he had smelt before...

fish. He ran over to see where the fish was. It was coming from the end of the area it was a man throwing fish out at them. As he was running he stopped because he spotted someone familiar. He ran over to see who it was. As he got closer he knew who it was it was Cherp. He ran faster to let him know he was here.

"Cherp it's me", he said.

"What are you talking about", said Cherp.

"It' me your brother", said Piplup .

"Piplup is it you", he said.

"Yes", said Piplup

Cherp ran over and gave Piplup a hug.

"I missed you", said Cherp

"So did I", said Piplup

"I've only been here a few weeks but I want to go home", said Cherp

"Okay do you have a map", said Piplup.

"Yes", said Cherp "Follow me".

Cherp led Piplup to the end of the pool where a map was stuck to the wall with gum. There was also a cup with plastic forks, spoons, and knives in it and next to it was paper plates and boxes.

"Where did you get all of this", asked Piplup.

"In the Thrash", said Cherp.

On the map marked toilets, entrances, places to eat, and truck stops. Piplup started examining the map and the other stuff. Cherp just stood there looking at him.

"Have you got an idea?", asked Cherp

"Yes", said Piplup "How many penguins are there?"

"Thirteen including us", said Cherp

"Tell everyone to meet up here at o nine hundred tonight"

"What".

"Nine o'clock".

"Oh", said Cherp and walked off.

"This just might work", said Piplup to himself "This might just work".

At nine o'clock every penguin was at the end of the pool waiting for Piplup. Piplup stepped up on a rock.

"Okay everyone I've brought you here tonight for a plan to escape this place", said Piplup.

"What do you mean", shouted one penguin.

"I mean I've got a way to get back to Antartica", said Piplup

"We will be leaving in a week gather and save as much food as you can we have weapons and armour to help with our escape my brother Cherp will be making them".

"Are we all going", said another penguin.

"Yes", said Piplup "Cherp will get started on the armour. Next week come here at nine o'clock with your supplies. And if you can find anything else that's useful bring them",

All of the penguins walked away and Cherp took all the supplies in the cave. Piplup followed him in to the cave and both of them got ready for bed.

"Goodnight Cherp".

"Goodnight Piplup".

And both of them went to sleep.

The next morning there were loads of supplies in the cave that the other penguins had left for them.

"Cherp get started on the armour okay", said Piplup.

"Okay", replied Cherp.

"I'll get started on the weapons"

All the other penguins hid most of their fish in the corner of the pool. All week the penguins did this and the zookeepers were getting suspicious. Piplup got all the weapons ready. Cherp had made stuff for everyone with chip boxes he made bags for the penguins fish, bowls for helmets, plates for stomach and back armour, and ice-cream tubs for shoulder and knee pads. Piplup made water balloons he also got paper plates and sellotaped plastic knives and forks to them. He tied knives to the top of sticks and tied forks and knives together. At nine o'clock next week the penguins got everything and brought it to the end of the pool.

"Tonight,"Piplup began to announce, "we're going back hom to Antartica. We are going to steal truck, drive to Howth and get on a boat to Antartica. Go to Cherp to get your supplies."

All the penguins lined up to get their armour and weapons. After all the penguins got over the fence they put the plan into action they started running down the path.

"Shush," said Piplup, "I hear zoo keepers."

Two zoo keepers came out with tranquilizing guns. Everyone began to run. One of the zoo keeper started shooting and then the other one did. One penguin at the back was hit.

"Get him in that car," said Piplup.

They took one of the zoo keepers' cars and started driving for the entrance. Now more zoo keepers came and started shooting.

"Nearly there!" Piplup shouted.

One of the darts hit off Piplup and the mark started to bleed.

"That was a close one," said Cherp but then noticed that Piplup was knocked out and that no one was driving. The car hit the fence and flipped in the air, landed and blew up. Yin Yang, Cherp and eight other penguins were on the roof of the entrance. Piplup and two other penguin were still in the car. The all ran over to see where they were. A penguin came out of the flames carrying Piplup and the other injured penguin. They had no time to thin about what they were going to do. They broke into a car, put Piplup and the other penguin in, hotwired the car and drove to Howth.

By the time they got there Piplup and the other penguin (I'm getting tired of writing that so his name is now Paul) were all feeling much better. They had to get rid of the car when they got there so they dumped it in the water. They got on one of the boats because there was a clue on the boat because a banner had written on it said 'To Antarctica'. They all hid in a giant box just before it set sail. The boat stopped at a few places like Spain, Portugal, Morocco, Mauritania, Liberia, Gabon and Namibia – all the while they were inside the box.

Eventually they arrived in Antarctica. They sneaked off the boat before any of the crew. Piplup and Paul were lifted off the ship because they were still a bit weak and tired. There were no cars they could take so they would have to walk back. Piplup knew where they were. It was was the place where Cherp was taken. They had to lose some weight so they dumped all the armour and weapons.

"I don't think we really need all that stuff," said Cherp.

"Not really," said Piplup.

"Look," said Paul, "it's the other penguins."

All of the penguins ran to them to find their friends and family. Piplup and Cherp ran to their parents.

"We missed you a lot," said Cherp.

"We did too," said their mom.

Yin Yang walked up to them.

"Where's your family?" asked Piplup.

"I'm with them," said Yin Yang.

"Say what?" said Cherp.

"I'm your uncled," he said.

"Say what?" said Piplup.

"I'm your dad's brother," he said.

"Say what?" said Piplup and Cherp's dad. "But you were taken away twenty years ago."

"Well your two sons got me back," said Yin Yang.

So Piplup, Cherp and Yin Yang got back to Antarctica. And no one got penguin-napped ever again, besides Paul.

gotten used to them by now. As I've had to sit here in this drab waiting room Monday to Friday for these past few months. "Honey are you ready to go?" my mam said, while sitting on her vending machine coffee.

"Yeah. Let me just grab my coat." I replied.

Casey (my mam) had recently gotten a job at this hospital. We got home and ate our tea in silence. We always do. We're not very talkative people. We're observers. Talk less, see more. I went up to my bedroom to read for a little while but I couldn't concentrate on my book. I kept thinking about why the clock had stopped ticking. Then I started thinking about all the different people I had seen in that gloomy waiting room. People waiting for good news. But not always receiving it. There are some in particular that I remember. Like the little boy who had fallen into a ditch. He came out with only a sling on his arm. And the old woman who was in a house fire. She came out fit as a fiddle! Or the young woman who was in a car crash. She walked out with a broken wrist and leg.

And all through this the clock was ticking. Ticking through good times and bad times, good news and bad news.

But there are just as many happy endings as sad ones in that room.

I remember the old man with cancer. I remember his families anxious faces as they waited for news.

And I remember their faces when they were told the bad news. The sadness on their faces when they left. But I don't like to dwell on the bad things.

Then I think back... there are so many emotions in that room – anxiety, grief, hope, sadness, happiness, joy, pain. All in there together. Working together.

These thoughts bothered me all night. So I didn't get much sleep. All the memories of people that I had locked up in a box in my head – thinking it was none of my business – was now open. And I remember everything in too much detail...

When I got up the following morning my hair was sticking up at all angles and I had black circles under my eyes.

I really should stop thinking about them I have my own life to lead, just as they have theirs I thought to myself.

I walked to school like I was in a bubble. Because I'm still new here I don't have many friends. Well except for Mia and Gillian. I looked around the school yard for them and when I spotted them I ran over to chat before school started. School was pretty uneventful. Today was geography – and let's just say geography is not my strong point. After school I walked behind the gaggle of girls that always catch the bus. I paid my fare and went to sit at the back of the bus. Everyone else's stop is way before mine so I got off the bus alone. I went in via the revolving doors and walked to the waiting room. I sat down and took out my school books. Just as I was struggling through the maths homework Bill the hospital maintenance man came in.

"The clock's broken" I said in a small voice.

It was true – the clock permanently showed three minutes past four.

"No, the batteries are just dead."

He took some batteries out of his pocket and put them in the clock. He fiddled around with the hands of the clock until it showed the right time. "There we go" Bill said, then he left.

I packed up my books and stood up. Right on time my mam came in.

"Come on, love, let's go" she said. But as we were pushing the big swing doors we held them open for a large family, some of them were crying and some were wringing their hands. And all the time the clock is ticking.

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### Tick Tock by Laura Dunne

The ticking of the clock was getting on my nerves. When it stopped suddenly the silence startled me. I looked up half-expecting something to happen. Nothing did. But in the silence I could hear doctors and nurses urgent voices and the sound of hospital doors slamming. Although there is always so much hustle and bustle in the hospital. This waiting room always seems so eerily quiet. Hospitals give me the creeps – always have and always will. You would think I would have

## Xavier's legacy by Philip Shatwell

Thunder boomed overhead as we sprinted through the old narrow alleys of Dublin. We could hear the strogg footsteps behind us. They were beginning to catch up with us, our breath was running out but we were almost at sentry post seven. We only have a pistol with a few bullets, suddenly we saw the sentry post and we sprinted through the gates then soldiers closed the gates to ensure no strogg get through. We heard the crack of gunfire along the wall, then a stone cold silence. The guards had neutralized the group of strogg. My name is Tom Hanny and my friends are Steve Annabeth and Ming. We were the survivors of a dramatic war between strogg and mankind but the strogg were no ordinary invaders they looked like cold dead robots they have cold green eyes and metal bod. "We need more ammo" said Ming

"Yeah we need more," I said

"We will look tomorrow" said Annabeth

suddenly the alarm sounded. We heard the crack of gunfire along the wall and then a stone cold silence. After that I went to get some rest. I awoke a few hours later to see ming in my tent "the guards have sighted something not far from here they want us to scan the area" said ming

"I will get ready" I said. We left sentry post seven and entered the post apocalyptic wasteland we could hear distant screams but they seemed to be getting closer. Ming called me over "we are being followed" said Ming

"by who?" I said

"something" replied Ming. Suddenly our guns were pulled away by some invisible force and then we were thrown to the ground. A white figure emerged "I am Xavier ruler of the abyss, bow to me" we did as he ordered we knelt at his knees. "up" he said rather abruptly. "what do you want from us?"

"your world is ending, and this world must be saved I need you to take my banner and place it on top of Ardpatrik hill so then my brothers can deliver their fury and vanquish all evil into the dark abyss" said xavier

"when do we leave?" I asked

"now" he replied. He handed us the flag and we were off we ventured through the dark and twisted alleys of Dublin when we had escaped the urban environment we were straight into the dense undergrowth of the forests. The further we got the more strange things we saw, we heard the snap of a twig behind us I raised my weapon and spun around quickly but it was only Annabeth "what are you doing?" I ask

"you haven't been at the sentry post in hours, I got worried that something had happened to you" she said in exasperation

"were fine we just have to bring something somewhere" I said.

She decided to tag along with which was rather handy because she had a backpack with weapons and

a food supply. Suddenly I here a voice in my head "the darkness of abyss takes you. your mind shall spin in circles and demons from the warp shall appear when you back is turned. We shall strike from ten directions and from each one strike a fatal blow." After I heard that voice I ordered the group to hurry up we were now entering the plains and I could feel a melancholy presence entering my heart. The next thing I knew there were gunshots happening and there were demons attack us I spotted a demon preparing to leap at me I pulled out my magnum and blew its head off, I saw Annabeth being overwhelmed by demons so I fired a few shots and showed those demons whose boss. They fled after a few minutes of bloodshed, we were approaching the base of ardpatrik hill we could see Strogg ships hovering in the distance when we were about halfway up the hill we spotted Xavier on top of the hill waiting for us "come" he roared at us. We ran up the hill as fast as we could but we could hear multiple footsteps behind us. I couldn't resist turning around but what I saw was strogg and demons fighting, the strogg were firing their guns desperately to try and stop the encroaching demons from overrunning them but the demons kept respawning. I reached the top of ardpatrik hill. I stuck the flag in the small hole at the hill "you fool" Xavier roared

"Ha, I think not," I cackled

"the void is going to destroy you and your plan is foiled" I said smugly

"but how was that possible?" Xavier said

"why did you use humans to plant the flag to save the earth? Well if you had used your own servants it would have a lot quicker rate and a lot less dangerous than using humans" I said

"you little ;;;;" he said in anger. But it was too late my servants from the void had taken him away but his brothers still remained a major threat "Ming, Annabeth, you stay here. I must leave but I will be back soon". I left them and then teleported to my realm which is known as the void to some humans. When I arrived my mighty battalions were preparing for the war against the abyss demons. My army was not demons but strong super soldiers in massive suits of armour. They have red eyes and a skull painted onto their armour. "Sir, sir, our men are almost ready but the abyss demons are already on earth and if the human governments find them, then they will send earth in uproar" said akunosh

"I see" I said

"are we ready for attack, my lord?" asked akunosh

"yes we are" I replied

"my people, hear me out we are ready to strike and we shall kill every abyss warrior and every demon, now march in the name of the emperor" I said. We marched to plains of earth until we eventually found the abyss army. It was a long bloody battle. We were losing when I decided to show my true form. I transformed into a massive demon and had to rout the scum from the field but that did not happen. We lost, evil ruled, my army was killed. Same with the majority of mankind so the world was in peril and I was locked up but I am planning my revenge and the void is getting stronger.

**The Worst News**  
by Robin Whelan

The ticking of the clock was getting on my nerves. When it stopped suddenly the silence startled me. I looked up half expecting something to happen. At that moment Anna put down her pencil, smiled and admired her work. She sighed happily and smiled at me. After hearing how much she smiles you might think she's a nice, kind, happy girl. She's actually a snobby, mean, smugly nice girl. I suppose she's kinda nice, well, harmless. Mrs. Finch came around and looked at our work.

"Well done, Harry! Very truthful, Maria. Fabulous, Susie! I love it, Anna, well done." Anna pouted and said. "Thanks, it took ages."

"Heidi, this is magnificent! Absolutely fantastic! Everybody come over and take a look."

I had drawn a woman sitting in a tree, in a red dress, Moki dress to be exact, with a gold belt, monochrome striped hairband and gladiator shoes. I love drawing fashion things, items, dresses, shoes, skirts, jewellery – everything.

"Miss," said Anna in her snobby voice which sounds like she has the flu. "I think Heidi copied this. I saw it on Project Runway."

"I did not," I said, glaring at her.

"It doesn't matter. It's still fabulous!" said Mrs. Finch. "Anna?"

Anna sniffed her nose in and pouted.

"Yes, Mrs. Finch?"

"Clean out the paint pots will you?"

"Yes, Mrs. Finch," she said, clenching her fists. The bell rang for science, which luckily Anna isn't in. But my BF Claudia is. Anna shoves into me on the way out the door and 'accidentally' spills black paint on my dress. I then 'accidentally' kicked her in her shin. The great thing about being in high school is that if you hit someone they probably won't tell on you. Although with Anna she most likely will.

"Your brother puke on you again?" asked Claudia.

"What?" I said. Did I stink of BO or something?

"Your top," she said, pointing at the paint.

"Although if that's the colour I'd get him to a doctor. Fast!"

"Oh, Anna spilled paint on me." She nodded. She knew Anna all too well.

They used to be best friends. The two most popular girls in the school, until, luckily, Claudia realized what Anna was like when she told everyone that she drink-drives. Even when she hasn't got a license.

Claudia dumped Anna and became my best friend. I suppose me and Claudia are pretty popular. Well, actually, not to brag, but we're probably the most popular girls. But don't get the wrong idea. I bet when you think of popular girls you see a blonde hair, blue eyed girl, caked in

make-up, fake nails and who keeps tripping up helpless nerds. We're not like that. We're not the most glamorous girls, we always look nice (I hope) but we're not glamour obsessed. We just have loads of friends. We're not catty either. I mean we'd laugh at someone's shoes but that's human nature, right?

"Today you will be learning about the French revolution," said Madame Froggy. No her name is Mrs. Casey.

"The revolution ..." The principal burst in. "I need to speak to Heidi Miller."

"Oooh," said the class.

"Heidi?" said the principal, smiling gently and gesturing to me to come.

I'm in trouble. Maybe it's because I called Janet Turner fat. Or because I tripped up Gilbert Schar. When I got to the principal's office my dad was there. He looked like he'd been crying.

"Dad?" I said.

"Heidi," he said.

"What's wrong? Why are you here?"

"Sit down."

"I'll leave you to it," said Mrs. Magorey, our principal.

"Dad, you're scaring me. Now what's wrong?"

"It's your mother," he said, gulping.

"What's wrong? Is she okay?"

"She's had ... a heart attack," he said, tears welling up in his eyes. "She died." Tears rolled down his face.

I didn't really take it all in. My mother, (don't want this to sound cheesy) my best friend ... is dead. All I could think was "I need to get my schoolbag." My dad looked puzzled.

"I'll get it for you ... I mean ..." he began.

"No, I'll get it," I said, biting my lip. This is going to sound like the most selfish thing ever but I wanted to have a tear stained face and everyone would be like "Oh my God, what's wrong?" and I wouldn't reply and they'd look concerned and say "Heidi?" with a look of fear on their faces.

I'd gulp and say "My mum died," and the whole class would go silent.

People would come over and say "My grandfather died a month ago. I know what you're going through."

Then I'd say something like "what time is it?" and everyone would look puzzled and someone would chirp in "she's in shock."

I liked the idea of everyone walking on eggshells and making sure they didn't say thing like "It's my mum's birthday today."

I liked the idea of the totally selfish attention. It's human nature. I mean, say your grandad died, you would like the attention. You might not want to, or want to admit it, but the selfish truth is that you would.

I went into the classroom and took my bag.

"Where do you think you're going, Ms. Miller?"

"Home," I replied flatly. I said it in the way you would if someone asked you what time it was.

"Excuse me, you can't just leave school!" said Mrs. Casey (Madame Froggy).

This didn't feel like it was supposed to. Suddenly I would rather have had no-one notice me and be, not the centre, but the outer circle of attention, if it meant Mum could be here. I felt angry.

"Says who?" I said, shoving my pencil case into my bag. I slammed the classroom door and went to the car and cried. Not just drips but sobs, bawling. The type of crying you'd do if your sister died. The type you'd do if your mum died. My dad was on his phone.

"I don't think it's appropriate to discuss now. I'm sure. Maybe some other time. For God's sake, no!"

"Who was that?" I asked, steadily rubbing the leather on my car seat.

"No-one."

"No, really, dad."

He turned around in the driver's seat and looked at me.

"That was the principal of Sharon Daley's."

"The art college?"

"Yeah," he paused. "Sharon wants you to join them."

"Me?" Sharon's school was really famous. "But I can't go. Not now. Tell her no. Tell her I can't go."

"You don't have to say no. I mean, I know I just did, but I ..."

"No! Just no. I can't. I'm sorry, I can't ..." I opened the car door.

"Where are you ... Heidi? Where are you going, Heidi?"

"I'm sorry. I'm just going for a walk. I'll see you at home."

I ran to the tree where Claudia and me always studied for tests. I fiddled with the grass. I pulled out little pieces. The sun started to shine. This sounds so lame – Hollywood film like. None of us will ever get better – ever.

*(12 weeks later)*

Mum's funeral was eleven weeks ago. I miss her so much. We're all getting better. We will never be completely but we're better than we were. My birthday was the day before the funeral. It's gold with my birthstone on it. He said that he and mum had picked it out and ordered it before she died, which is nice because now I have something she made for me. And dad's got a girlfriend. Don't start thinking it's too early and he's selfish. Mum wouldn't like us to spend the rest of our lives grieving. And she's really nice. I'm going to go to the art college, but I still have two years in school, which is good because I can do my portfolio and stuff.

My friends were really helpful too. They helped with the funeral. I'm going to counselling because I miss Mum so much. Like I said, we have a long time to go until we can even think about getting better. But, slowly, we're getting there.

**The Wrong Boy**  
by Skye O'Mahony

This story is about a boy called Toby Bell. He has short fair hair (just like his father), His face is pale and his lips are dark red. He is ten years old; Toby is just a bit taller than most year olds. Toby lives in a mansion, in a posh part of town. There are lots of kids near by just a couple of blocks away but his parents think that they might bring germs in so he's not allowed to play with them.

Anyway I'm going to start this story on a stormy day when Tobys parents have just left to go to a dinner party. "Right you, after dinner you're going straight to bed and no BUTS!" said Jenny their maid, although Toby doesn't know what her job is but he still does what she says. Toby sat at he dinner table and carefully cut his steak and potatoes. Then walked up the stairs got into bed and watched two kids playing football until he fell asleep. He woke up to hear his cook Caisy talking to a strange voice. He ran downstairs a Garda was standing outside and Jenny was looking very pale, Caisy has a very pale face so you couldn't tell if she was shocked too. "What's wrong, please tell me!" Toby cried.

What happened next Toby could barely remember, all that he remembered was the Garda saying "Sorry your parents are dead" When he opened his eyes his cousin Margret was at his side with a damp towel held over his forehead. Soon after Toby realised that he was in his master bedroom and what he just experienced was not a dream. "Margret are you going to live with me." Toby sobbed. (By the way Margret is twenty-seven). "No, sorry Toby you have an older and more responsible relative, his name is Frank he lives in the centre of the country, you've seen him once before you were a baby. If you want I'll stay for the first couple of days if you want" Margaret said as kindly as she could. Toby cried for a while then fell asleep. The next week past slowly. Toby packed all his favourite clothes and books Margret even got some new clothes fit for a farm. Toby sadly looked out the window of Margrets car thinking about how his life will be much more different on the farm. (He thought it would be terrible). When they arrived at the station Margret gave Toby lots of hugs and asked him was he sure he didn't want her to come for the week. "Nah, its okay I'll survive without you." He replied. The only reason he said no was he didn't want Uncle Fred's first impression of him to be he's a total wimp! He hopped into the train just as it started to puff slowly away. "Bye Margret I'll keep in touch!" He looked around to make sure his parents weren't running up the station shouting "Wait Toby we've come back". But he'd no such luck. He turned back to Margret nodded and just caught her last words. "Have fun?" Toby searched the train for a spare seat he thought he was going to sit on the floor then he spotted a seat beside an old lady he hated old people he found them so boring and they talk too much. The minute he sat down she started a conversation about how horrible the new style is and that there is a new café opening beside her house. It was so boring he actually fell asleep but it might have been because he didn't get that much sleep last night. He woke up by a gust of bad breath and a croaky voice.

"Boy, boy! Is this your stop? Boy!" Toby opened his eyes he nearly screamed, the breath was coming from the old lady and her face was so close their noses were nearly touching. "What, oh yeah thanks it is." Toby mumbled. "Have fun little boy!" Toby grabbed his suitcase and ran down the carriage and stepped off the train. People were running everywhere. (Toby had never been outside his house only twice to go to the doctor, so this is a big

change). Toby got pushed around he really didn't know where he was going all he knew was he had to meet Uncle Fred by the green and blue striped gate they picked that spot because it was hard to miss it. Suddenly someone pulled him out of the crowd. Toby turned around to see who it was, it was a middle-sized man he had no hair and dark skin. "Are, are, you uncle Fred? sir?" Toby whispered.

"SPEAK UP!" the man shouted.

"Sir, are you Fred" Toby said.

"Yes I suppose I am, yeah" Fred sniggered. Fred grabbed Toby by his shirt collar and pulled him in the boot of a big black van. When he got in another man, a bit younger than Uncle Fred with blonde stringy hair, tied him up and put tape around his mouth he even put an old black scarf so he couldn't see where he was going. Toby started to panick this couldn't be Uncle Fred, where am I going and why am I tied up? All those thoughts started rushing into his head all at once. Toby started to wriggle but the man kicked him hard in on the head before Toby could stop himself he was crying so loud that anyone driving by would call the Gardai. He got a lighter kick on the back but Toby got the message and stopped crying. The journey felt longer as he could not see where he was going. The van stopped and he was released. Fred helped him out of the boot, Toby told him how mean the other man was and Uncle Fred sarcastically said "Oh no I'll punish him after" and Toby believed it.

"Shall I get my bag?" Toby asked

"Nah, its alright you won't need it right now." Toby gave him a puzzled face. "Im here now and this is my home so I might as well make the most of it" He thought. The two men brought Toby inside a house with smashed up windows and bricks had fallen out of the wall, it looked like it had been abandoned for years. The door was hanging off the frame. If anyone kicked it would fall off completely. He followed Fred down into the basement. A was lady sitting on a mouldy coach crying she was about twenty-two. "What is wrong? Can I help you?" Toby asked. She looked up to see who was talking to her. "Is this the boy, Jack, is this the poor little boy!" She cried. Toby wondered who Jack was. The younger man tied him to a chair. Fred watched Toby and glanced out the window every now and again. The lady had stopped crying and had brought his suitcase in and was now searching for something. Fred opened a gate and shoved Toby inside, it was sort of a jail thing. "We have the wrong boy!" was the last words he heard before he he was shot.

## Psychic Detective by Matthew Briody

The ticking of the clock was getting on my nerves. When it stopped suddenly the silence startled me. I looked up, half expecting something to happen. I looked at the clock. It was half two. Soon I would know what the answer was. Detective Lassiter walked out

"Seán," he said.

"Yes," I replied.

"Come into my office."

I stepped into his office, which wasn't actually an office because his desk was in the middle of the hall.

"We'll let you on one case and if you solve it you can join the police."

"Yes!" I said in front of him. "I mean okay, if that's what you think."

By the way my name is Seán and I'm thirty one. I'm not actually joining the police because I'm a psychic, well, a fake psychic. I just notice things then pretend I'm having a psychic moment. And I had been waiting in the police station. Tomorrow would be my first case.

The next day I started working as a police psychic. A man had committed suicide and I looked around his house for clues with my partner Gus. The fridge was open and I saw a marinated steak.

"Why would you marinate a steak before you committed suicide?" I asked Gus.

"I don't know ... maybe he was hungry," Gus said. Detective Lassiter walked towards me.

"May I call you Lassie," I asked him.

"No," he replied

A man blew onto a piece of evidence to get the dust off.

"Hey, Blowy, if you wanna get your spit all over the evidence why don't you just lick it?"

Lassiter said to the man.

"So what do you think happened," I asked his partner O'Hara.

"He got depressed and took an overdose of pills," she said.

"And we have no witnesses," Lassiter added.

"Yes we do," I replied.

"Who?" O'Hara asked.

"Him," I said pointing to the cat which the dead man owned .

"Oh please," said Lassiter, "that's just stupid.

"Fine," I said, "me and this cat and Gus will go, but you'll be sorry when he solves the case."

"Hey look what I got in the house," I told Gus, "his diary. All the numbers he called before he was murdered."

"It was a suicide, Seán, and you can't read that. It's disrespectful," Gus said.

"What's he gonna do," I asked, "arrest me? He's dead."

"You still shouldn't be doing it," Gus said.

"This says the last number he called was a stress helpline," I said.

"I told you it was suicide."

"I still don't think so."

The next day it was an actress who committed suicide in her car. Me and Gus and, of course, the cat went to see what happened. I turned on the car radio and heard loud heavy metal music. "Does she look like the kind who would like heavy metal?" I asked Lassiter.

"Seán, it was a suicide," Lassiter said. "Just like the other one."

"Hey, the cat's got something," I said. "Come on, puss, find it."

I put the cat into the car.

"He's peeing!" Lassiter said.

"No he's trying to attract your attention to the eyeliner pencil," I said. Lassie put the pencil in a plastic bag. "If you and your new partner are done peeing then you can go"

"Are you sure that cats not replacing me?" Gus asked.

"Of course not," I said

"Then why is he riding shotgun"

"Gus, you know he gets carsick, he has to ride shotgun"

"Fine"

"Hey look what it says in the paper"

"Forty percent off all tiles must go"

"No at the top"

"Actress wins big break in romeo and juliet play"

"why would you kill yourself if you got a part in a play"

"It doesn't make sense"

"So what are we gonna do now?"

"Were gonna go to the stress helpline office"

When we got there we went into the hall and I showed him our office. On the door there was a plaque that said dial-a-psychic. 'You rented an office?' Gus asked 'Don't be stupid' I said 'I rented a sign' I opened the door and Gus realised it was just a storage room. 'Now lets meet our co workers' We walked into the main helpline office. 'Hello' I said 'My name is sean spencer and this is my partner Gus' 'I'm a psychic' 'Then tell us something to prove you're psychic'

A person asked me 'Ok' I answered I looked at a man wearing eyeliner who had poetry books under his desk. 'My psychic senses tell me you like poetry' I told him. 'that's right' He said 'I love poetry' Everyone started applauding me 'Thank you' I said 'We have an office down the hall' Well it's actually just a storage space room but still. I saw lassie and o'hara coming 'We better be going' I said Lassiter walked towards the poet. 'You're under arrest for the murder of Julie winters the actress and Tim johnson.' I told you it was a murder but you've got the wrong guy' I told Lassie 'No we haven't sean; I know what I'm doing' 'It was probably his eyeliner pencil. Then he walked away. 'Gus I know who the killer is' 'It's the boss of the helpline office' I said 'He forced the people to call the helpline to make it seem less suspicious' 'He was wearing eyeliner too' 'Then lets go' Gus said. We went into his office and arrested him well lassie arrested him. 'Why did he do it' Gus asked me'

'The man and the woman had rung before but they were going to sue the helpline because they weren't listened to and they weren't helped' I said 'So the manager killed them' 'I see' said Gus 'But there's something I need to get off my chest'

'Is it your shirt?' 'Please say no' 'No seriously' 'Did you get rid of the cat?'

'I gave it to lassie'

'Ok'

### The Megomometer by Finnoughla Madden

"Here come the meteors, look out!" screamed Zork. The meteor crashed into the ship and a bit of it came off. Yes this story is about life in space and it starts in a ship called the Megomometer. It is an old bashed up space ship that smells like Granny Twoface's socks after her exercise circuit. But we still love it, even if we all wanted a new one. At the moment me and my stupid brother are being chased by space ships that are trying to kill us. It all began when we were trying to get back home and just like every other day we passed Sir Evil Floppyfoot's castle but today my brother was felling extra stupid and saw a brand new hover craft in the window and you can probably guess what happened next - alarms went off and ships started chasing us but we finally got away from them.

"Lets make our way home," I said. Since my mam and dad passed away I have sort of taken control. I am the only boy on the ship. There is me, Ezmo, Jellybones and Granny Twoface. We got home and Granny Twoface flopped on the couch. Me, Ezmo and Jellybones went into the kitchen and the minute we got in

"Jellybones, Ezmo, get in here!" shouted Granny two face

"what is it this time?" said Ezmo

"how do you work this gobildy gook?" replied Granny two face

"what gobildy gook?" said Jellybones

"This thing" shouted Granny two face

"You press the button" said Ezmo and the two of them went into the kitchen "what did she want?" I said

"She just forgot how to turn on the gizmo functioner (television)

"oh at least she didn't set the toaster on fire" I said I got on my hover board and went out but then Nizo bumped into me and he said

"Have you heard about the competition?"

"No" I said and then I looked around everyone was running around and looking for something.

"What is the big deal about a competition? There's always competitions on the radio - anyway what is the question and even more importantly what is the prize?"

"The prize is a brand new space ship and the question is *who was the first human to walk on the moon?* Nobody knows!" he shouted as he ran away.

I know the answer, I know the answer! Its Neil Armstrong! I ran as fast as I could past everyone, who is still trying to figure out the answer. I laughed at them. When I finally got home I sat down to get my energy back then when I could feel my legs again I went into the hall. Then the penny dropped, I new there was something wrong, I could feel it, it was the feeling when you are packing for a trip and you are sure you are forgetting something. I DON'T HAVE A RADIO! I jumped on my hover board and set out to the shop. I ran into the shop.

"I need a radio" I said.

"Sorry we're all out" he replied "but I think there is one in Zook's shop. It is just down the road but you would want to get there quick before they are all sold out and if he says that they are all sold out just say that Ploppy sent you and he might just have one under the counter." I quickly jumped back on my hover board and zoomed back down the street and there it was - the shop I had been looking for, I barged in

"I need a radio" I said

"Sorry we're all sold out" he said

"Ploppy sent me" I replied

"Oh then we might just have one under the counter" I grabbed it out of his hand and ran back to my hover board got on and flew home, people were still looking for the answer once again I laughed at them - never gets old - I was opening my door and the another penny dropped ... I forgot to pay, and because I am a good alien I went back to pay. I left the money and a note on the counter and ran back home. Then I plugged in the radio and switched it on got the phone and rang the number on the radio

"we have a caller on line one.. What is your name caller one" said the man on the radio

" my name is Billy Bing Bong Blah Blee Blu" I said

"well Billy you have just one yourself a brand new space ship all you have to do is answer this question who was the first human to walk on the moon?"

"Neil Armstrong" I said with confidence !congradulations you have one a new space ship - do you want it?"

"No," I said.

"Ok, goodbye."

The reason I didn't want it is because I love the megomometer.

### The Fog by Eoghan Breathnach

Thomas Edison said:

"Genius is 1% inspiration, 99% perspiration". I guess that's why I go to school, and that's why I go this morning. I wake up as usual, get dressed, pack my lunch into my bag, eat breakfast, and walk out the door. It is quite foggy today. It's a Thursday today. I like Thursdays. They always mean I can get home early, since my school has a half day every Thursday. I'm just coming out of my driveway now, and continue walking. The fog is making my vision blurry, even with my glasses. I walk to the end of my road and then stop to look back at my house. It's been completely swallowed by fog. I walk nervously down to the roundabout, and that's when I hear the footsteps. Deep footsteps, but the owner of the feet is walking quite fast. I quicken my pace. They quicken their pace. I walk slower then I come to a halt at the roundabout. The sounds of steps continue to walk on. The traffic lights go green, signalling me to walk over the road and get to the other side. Just like the chicken  
As soon as I get over to the other side the lights go red. The footsteps stop. That means they're close. Very close. I

gulp and then walk on. The bus stop is just around the corner, at least I think it is, I can't tell because of the fog. The traffic lights go green again and the footsteps continue. I wonder if they are my footsteps echoing, but my thoughts are dismissed when I look at my feet to see I'm wearing runners. They only make a soft sound, not a clunking sound. The footsteps get closer, heavier, almost as if the person is running but running very carefully, almost as if they think they might step on something. I get to the crossroads. Great! Another five minutes and I'll be at the bus stop. I just walk up to another set of traffic lights, but a baby's deformed cries fill the air. Quiet but piercing, almost inhuman, if not completely inhuman. Was that a baby making that noise? The footsteps speed up. Mine slow down. I don't want to be heard. If I make no sound, the fog will stop whoever it is that's following me from seeing me, so if I stay quiet, I'll be able to stay hidden. I freeze and try to hold my breath so I can't be heard and I hear the followers footsteps slow down and stop. I can hear their breathing. They're so close. If I make the smallest sound they'll find me. I have another few seconds and then they should run out of patience.

Hopefully my stalker will leave if he thinks he's lost me. Just as my stalker seems to be moving away, I feel a furry thing stroke my leg. I yell out and jump, straight into the "follower". It all happens so fast, I don't even get any time to think. A cats meow, my dads startled cries and then I fall over. "What was that for, Daniel?" my dad yells. "What? How did you get here?" I reply in a startled haze. "I was following you. You left your Thomas Edison project on the kitchen table." he replies. "So that was you making those footstep noises." I say. I don't know if it is a question or a statement. "Yes. It took me ages to catch up with you." "And those cries? Were they Timmy?" I stammer. "Yes. Our cat followed you here." My dad replies. I sigh in relief. So no one was following me after all. Good. Great. Brilliant. My dad gives me back my project and I bring it to school. I get high grades and everything works out... But I can't get the stench of fear off my clothes!

### James Blonde 006 by Eoghan Brennan

"Aaaaaaagggggghhhhhhhhh" I screamed just as I turned away from the big jeep that was in front of us. Then, as we were spinning out of control, I saw the I.O.W.R. (International Organization for Weird Robbers,) jeep. I put my foot hard on the breaks the car stopped spinning out of control and we sped away. (By the way my name is James Ganning but all my friends call me James Blonde because I have blonde hair and I'm in a secret agent group. There's another person in the car with me, Elvis Criglington, he doesn't talk very much.) As we drove away, going way over the speed limit, we saw the I.O.W.R. car going off the side of the cliff. "Ha,ha,ha, suckers" I said to myself "You'll never get the diamond" I shouted out the window. Just as I shouted that another car drove past and gave me one of those 'you're a weirdo looks.' When we got back to H.Q. I told them that the diamond was safe and that I didn't think we would be hearing from that part of the I.O.W.R. for a while. I was wrong, when they went off the road they crashed into the I.O.W.R.H.Q. they went flying out through the window of the car then through the window of the H.Q. and landed perfectly in their seats. "Hi boss," said one of them to their nearly dead boss. "How did you get here?" asked their nearly dead boss. "We came through the window." "And why did you do that?" "Because we crashed"

(The two people that crashed names are Fergal and Patrick.) "Did you get the diamond?" asked the boss. "No" "Well then go out and get it!" "Ok, boss" So they drove off to get the diamond. (Not the one jammed into the wall.) As they drove to see if they could find me or the diamond they saw me driving by in my brand new Ferrari Enzo. They started stalking us. "I think we have stalkers," said Elvis "Stupid I.O.W.R.'s" I shouted as I looked in the rear-view mirror just then I spotted a stoppage ahead even though there was only three cars ahead of me it still took half an hour for me to reach the police "Hello, hello, hello, what's all this then," said the policeman "Did you say that to everyone?" I asked "Eeeerrrrmmmm, yes," he replied "Anyway, I'm in a rush so can we get this done quick?" "Maybe, why are you in a rush?" "Well, I'm a 006 agent and there's two crazy people chasing after me because they want a diamond so they can take over the world! Do you know what being a 006 agent means?" "Yes it means your one shot away from the big time," said the policeman, "We'll hold everything up here for a while so you can get away." "Thanks," I said A few minutes later.... "Hello, we need to do a very long inspection," said the policeman "But we're in a rush," said Patrick "I don't care if you're about to become a 007 agent," said the policeman

sarcastically "we need to perform this very long inspection." While they were starting the very long inspection I had arrived at the H.Q.R.E.S. "You have reached your destination, would you like a latte?" "No," I shouted at the car. As we got out of the car Fergal and Patrick were driving away from the police stopping point. We ran out of the car and went into the H.Q.R.E.S. I had never been in there before and I imagine it must be what tutankhamen's tomb is like except more modern. It has fake torches that are actually lights and at the very end of the main hall there is a wall that opens up at a special secret password. The first thing we learned about when we started to train to become an agent. I went up to the wall and said the password just as the wall slid open Fergal and Patrick came a small safe was there, there was another password for that. I said something quietly and the door slid slowly closed again. "I have some unfinished business," I said. I took out a sword and ran forward. "Aaaaaaagggggghhhhhhhhh," screamed Fergal in a very high pitched voice as he ran away. "I guess it's just you and me," said Patrick. "Patrick, will you open the car?" So as Patrick was rooting through his pocket I took a swipe at his neck, I hit it, his head fell to the ground there was blood everywhere. I went out to the Fergal. "Ohmygosh, he didn't open the car." I walked over to him and with one swipe of my sword I killed him.

### Susanne's Boots by Megan Hyland

One day Suzanne was off school. She was at home sick in bed. Her mum came home from the shops with a magazine For Suzanne To make her feel better. Suzanne was watching TV when her mum came up with the magazine. "Here you go Suzanne" said Mum "This is the magazine you were waiting for. Hope it makes you feel better" "Thanks mum I'm sure it will" replied Suzanne. When her mum closed the door Suzanne began to read the magazine. Suzanne turned to the fashion page she couldn't believe her eyes. There on the were cutest and most fabulous boots she had ever seen. And they were on sale too. They were £180 euros reduced to £80 in office. She ran downstairs to ask her mum to buy them for her. "Mum can I get these boots?" "For £180 euros no way" "No it's been reduced to £80 euros" "Yeah sure" replied mum "Mum its true believe me" "I'm not getting you boots and that's final" Suzanne was so disappointed she went straight to her room.

"It's not fair she should believe me"  
"Ha ha you're not getting any boots"  
"Jack"  
"You see you were not sick after all"  
"Jack" replied Suzanne  
"What"  
"You want 20 euro"  
"20 euro"  
"I'll make it higher if you get the boots for me" said Suzanne  
"Deal"  
"Oh and don't tell mum about this we don't want her to freak out"  
"Absolutely" replied Jack  
"Kids dinner is ready"  
"After dinner you go and get the boots"  
"Kids hurry up don't want it to get cold."  
"Will I go know" said Jack  
"Yes I'll make a distraction now go quickly"  
"Suzanne, Jack don't make me come up there"  
"Hi mum " said Suzanne when she was just two stairs away.  
"Suzanne come on it's getting cold"  
"I'm not really hungry"  
"Nice try get downstairs I'm going to get Jack"  
"Oh no"

"Jack Breadyly"  
"Those boots what are they doing here "  
"Well Jack I never knew you could do it this fast" said Suzanne  
"You told him to get the boots?"  
"Yes mum"  
"Thank you for being honest but why?"  
"Because you didn't let me get the boots"  
"You're grounded "  
"For how long"  
"Until I decide how good you're behaving"  
"We're sorry mum"  
"It's alright"  
"Well done Jack"  
"Stop it Suzanne"  
"I just want to say thank you"  
"For what"  
"For helping me"  
"No problem"  
"I still hate you"  
"I know and I still hate"  
"Bye " said Suzanne  
"Later" said Jack

## Benitt's Wander by Jayne Dolan

"God, it's a real pity that when you're on such a nice hot holiday a week flies past, isn't it?," mam said with a jolly sigh. They were just packing to leave our week's holiday in hot New York to go back to rainy old Dublin. All they had to pack for me was the cushion that I slept on and my favourite teddy! Oh! I am dearly sorry where have my manners gone? I am Benitt the family I just spoken about's cat. I really do love my family, I don't know what I would do without them! Some people laughed and some people just gave us funny looks when they saw that my owners were bringing me around on a lead as if I were a dog!

Anyway, back to the story.

"Yes mum a real pity," said Grace dully. I knew she was upset that we were going home today because she told me earlier. Grace was my owner although mam is just as loveable to me as Grace, but Grace bought me.

"Oh, come on Grace cheer up maybe we can come back next year," mum tried to reassure Grace but Grace was having none of it, she was still upset. Grace was quite a stubborn child but she wasn't bossy or spoilt or anything bad that would come into your head when you heard she was stubborn. I suppose you could just say she was an opinionated person and that she stuck to her opinions!

"If we do come back, can we stay in this hotel and this room? I mean it does have a pretty good view of the street!" asked Grace hopefully.

"We'll try, love. But that's only if we do come back, I mean we might go on a different holiday that you love. Then you might want to back there instead of here," mam suggested trying not to get Grace's hopes up too high.

"Are you trying to give me a little clue that we're going somewhere really nice like Hawaii or Jamaica?" said Grace jumping up and down with a big hopeful grin on her face. "I'm afraid not darling. I'm just trying not to get your hopes up too high," said mam unfortunately. Grace had that sad look on her face again.

\*

The trip to the airport just made Grace even more sad. It might have been one of the sunniest days in the

whole week we stayed there! Mam said "well that's just Murphy's law, now isn't?". I hadn't a clue what she meant. Who's Murphy and what law was she talking about?

It took quite long to even finally get past our gate. Luckily after that there was no more delays. Grace got suckie sweets and a drink from the plane. I'm glad she got suckie sweets, mam said that she should get them or else her ears would pop on the plane when we were taking off and landing. I really didn't want my owners ears to pop off that would be terrible. Then she would be deaf *and* earless!

This is the very scary part that changed my life, when we were getting on the plane.

Grace was holding my crate of which I was in. I am such an obedient cat that they didn't even have to lock the crate, the door was closed but I could in and out whenever I wanted, just by the push of a paw! Of course I would never do that, that's why they could trust me enough to leave the door of the crate unlocked. Yet then a little girl dropped her packet of 'Kings' crisps on the floor, her father said that she couldn't eat them anymore, that she was to throw the crisps in the bin and that he'd buy her a new packet. My temptation got the better of me, I ran out of the crate and towards the fallen crisps. The only thing is that the door of my crate was facing the back of Grace and so she didn't even notice I was gone and kept on walking with mam. After I ate the crisps and got shooed away by the father of the little girl, I walked back to where I thought my two owners were but I couldn't see them anywhere. I looked around, I walked around, but my owners were nowhere to be seen...

I was lost.

I didn't know what to do. I'd heard of something once before that in America there's something called a euro or something, oh, wait, no it was a pound, But anyway it's a horrible place where they keep animals that they find on the street and they're horrible and cruel to the animals and if the animals are in there for a certain time .....they put them down! But I didn't know that at the time and I foolishly went out of the airport wandering the streets of New York. The hustle and bustle was huge, I know I was out with my owners on these streets, but it was

never this busy. I was nearly getting trampled on!

At the night I was absolutely starving. I only had a half a packet of crisps five hours ago! I had to eat from the bins at the back of the restaurant, it was horrible! Suddenly the door of the restaurant opened, a beautiful waitress came out "miaow miaow," in despair of my hunger. "Aw what a pretty little kitty ." She said softly. "You look like you're lost and hungry, I think I'm going to take you home. I think I'll feed you there." She took off her apron, put me into the car and went." Cause girls just want to have fun, f-un, yeah girls just want to have fun!" She sang, well really she shouted more than sang! She may have been beautiful on the outside but, well lets just say she should have stuck to her day job! When we got back to her apartment she gave me pasta mixed with ham, it was scrumptious! I spent five lovely days in her house when finally and reluctantly she rang my owner, the number was on my collar. She put it on loudspeaker, I was crying, mam and Grace too. I couldn't bear to hear their voices when I was on the other side of the world from them, so I left the room. Though I overheard them saying that they were on the website there and then that the soonest flight that they could get was 1.30 in the morning. I knew that the flight would be about would be about 5 hours but at 1.30 in the morning I woke, I made sure of it. I'd always seen mam and grace turn their alarm clocks to a certain time and I had sort of picked up on it, so that's exactly what I did. I set the alarm clock to 1.30..I waited, I waited, I waited till 8.00 in the morning. The kind lady with no name that I know of, said that they would be here around mid-day, so I went back to sleep. They came at exactly mid-day I had butterflies in my tummy and I'm sure they did too. We had a pleasant flight home and I never jumped out of my cage when it was on the ground again.

### The famine by Jade Barron

My mam my dad and I were skinnier than ever. We had very little food left and they were getting weaker everyday. We were soon going to lose our house and my mam and dad were sick in bed. As misery went on in the dark foggy days the sickness was getting worse we called it the famine. Five days we had left in our house.

As I was strolling around the house I thought to myself only god can help us now? What's going to happen if I lose them? Knock, knock someone was tapping on the door" I was too scared to answer it so I went as far as way as possible from the door and shouted out. "who is it" "Its me uncle jack" "How do I know that you are really uncle Jack" "Because remember last summer you fell and broke your arm and you didn't want to tell your mam and dad just incase you had to go to the doctors" "Oh right it is you uncle Jack I'll come and open the door now" "That's the best thing you said when I got here, you really come out with good idea's don't you.

Come on lad open up I've got lots of sacks of food on my back"

I ran to the door as soon as he said that.

"Son," shouted mother, "who's at the door is it the priest?"

"No its uncle jack, Mam. Why were you thinking it was the priest, and why would the priest be coming here in the first place?"

"Come on up and bring uncle Jack as well I've got something to tell you."

"Mam, you're making me nervous." "

What's going on," I said as I was walking up the stairs.

"Your fathers gone."

"Gone where?" I replied.

"To heaven."

My heart raced.

"What!" uncle Jack ran into mother

"I am so sorry you do not deserve this Mary"

just as I said to mother I love you, she closed her eyes and seemed to stopped breathing , and tears still coming out of my eyes because what happened to father and now double mother was gone to heaven too.

"Uncle Jack what are we going to do? We have to save them."

"We can't son. We have to go call for two coffins." tears pumping out of his eyes still, "Jack, we have to be out of this house tomorrow."

We couldn't afford to keep it so we lost the house I have to live on the streets.

"Boy you can come live with me for a while but I don't have much left in mine either"

"Thanks Uncle Jack you're all I have left"

Five weeks later living on the streets because Jack lost his house as well. We had very little food left and uncle Jack and I were getting weaker , "Uncle Jack, where do we go now? We buried mother and father. I lived with you for a while we have been on the streets for weeks. What's next. Jack answer me. Jack, Jack! God help me. Jack was gone, mother was and father. I was the only one left in the family. I was sitting in the rain praying to god and crying. What if I get the disease what will I do, I have barely any food left what will I do, what will I do?

### Lexie vs Hannah by Claire Milne

The ticking of the clock was getting on my nerves. When it stopped suddenly the silence startled me. I looked up, half expecting something to happen. There, standing in front of me was a woman, a little woman, plain, but soft, her hands reached out and before I knew it I was in her arms. I don't even know her! I pull away and my head lolls back to heavy for my shoulders all of a sudden. I don't know what's happening, there are a number of things wrong with this picture, first, how is she supporting me? I've always been quite big for my age, who is this woman?, and why am I here? I look down at myself, my stomach is plump, exposed and small, my fingers and toes so pristine and tiny, I'm also wearing a nappy. I reach to my earlobe to finger the gold hoop earrings I got for my birthday; there is nothing there, just a small soft ear. I reach to my head, the expensive hairdo I had isn't there anymore, my hair is thin, wispy and very very short. " what has happened to me!" I shout, but no words come out, just great big roars and gurgles. "I am a baby" I gurgle and suddenly great big fat tears start rolling down my rosy cheeks. " what's the matter sweetie?, the timer stopped your nap is over!, what do you want sweetheart !". "I can't tell her!, I can't tell her that the last thing I remember is me at my sweet thirteen dancing with my friends, suddenly it all comes

back to me.....the flames the ceiling caving in. .... I .....died.

I cry for the next half an hour. My 'mum' is begging me to be quiet, but I cant, I really cant. How am I supposed to stop crying when my whole life is over and my family are probably dead. She puts me back into the cot and goes into the kitchen, I can smell the coffee brewing. I feel bad for this woman I will have to learn to love, for making her like a misery but how am I supposed to just get over my past life? I am vaguely aware of the next half an hour's events , a bearded man in a suit arrives, I'm pretty sure he's my 'dad' but I couldn't be sure seeing how most of there conversation you cant hear because of my screaming. " she just wouldn't stop crying!, my mother moaned she doesn't like me!" she said her face in her hands. "Nonsense! Says my 'dad' She probably doesn't even remember her real mother!" my real mother?, I don't understand, as I get older I will find out more. The days after this I forget more and more of my past life. I've begun to get dumber too, and crave for a bottle every hour or two. But I can't forget me ..I.....I just can't.

(Lexie vs Hannah continued.)

(10 years later)

"OMG!, Mum is going to KILL me!" Hannah shouts looking at the big ugly crack in her mum's 100 pound mirror. "I can't believe I did that!. the hair brush just flew out of my hand!" I sit there, still in shock, that was mum's most prized possession. Between the ugly crack the corner of a yellow piece of paper poked through., "what's that?" I pick up the forms: name of adoption child: Hannah McCintosh age: 3 weeks date of birth: April 2<sup>nd</sup> 1996 name of birth mother: unknown I'm thinking a number of things but no words come out. Suddenly, all the thoughts that were running through my head are gone, washed away, and suddenly there is a girl. A blonde, with dirty converse and heaps of foundation to hide her freckles. "Lexie?!, HELLO!" she said waving her skinny hand in my face. "You always do that!, anyways, I bought the perfect dress for your party, its baby blue to match my eyes with a white ribbon going across the waist." She said dodging a dog poo. "what?" I say mystified, my voice is different its more cockney then inner London and older sounding, I have mousy brown hair and I'm wearing a bottle green uniform for a school I've never even heard of!, in a grey town that.....for some reason is very familiar. "ok your obviously a bit loopy from all the party planning stress so I'll leave you for now and call over later to get ready k?" "em, k? I say, where am I?" but she's already half way down the road, for some reason I know where to go, my legs are moving but I'm not moving them. They're walking towards a busy intersection and I'm worried they won't have the sense to stop but luckily they do. And I press the green man, when I can go they start up again and I walk up the driveway of a very familiar house. And walk in. I call out "hello?" because I don't know who else lives here. This house is so familiar. I walk into the kitchen and make a cup of tea, for some reason I know where everything is, the spoons, the sugar, the milk. It's like I've been here before, but, well. I don't think so.

Then I'm back on mum's bed, the crack in the mirror is still there. The adoption papers are still in my hand. Was that a dream? Whatever it was I don't want it to happen again.

The rest of the day is normal, I go to school, come home and get given out to by mum about the mirror. "go to your room! And no dinner!, but you can take a shower, you're filthy!" mum says wiping chalk dust off my school uniform. My friend Cass and I were kept in from break for passing notes to beat the chalk dusters and got into a bit of a tiff when I accidentally got chalk dust on her school tie, then she hit me back and all of a sudden we were having a chalk war. But anyway, that's why I'm so dirty when I get home from school with a note for my mum about my behaviour, which is why I'm is so much trouble. "two punishments in one day! And then the broken mirror! Hannah what are we going to do with you?" she sighs, but she doesn't wait for an answer and goes downstairs to tell dad about my 'catastrophe!' I can smell burgers down stairs, "Oh why do I have to be in trouble on take-away night?" I say running a bath. I sink

into the hot water, suddenly, it happens again.

Someone, something pulls me under the water, my lungs are flooding with water, I cant breathe, and suddenly, I'm in a blazing building, I'm on the floor people are running over me. Trying to get out. Someone blasts me with a hose, I think I may be on fire but I'm half unconscious so I don't really notice, and then it all goes black.

"HANNAH!, HANNAH!" suddenly mum pulls me up from the water as I gasp for air. "WHAT THE HELL WERE YOU DOING!" "something's happening to me!, it's like I'm two people!" I cry, and suddenly something pulls me under the water again and I'm back in this place, I can hear mum's faint screams in the back round. I'm coughing and when I try to open my eyes they sting with smoke, I can't breathe, and now I'm back, mum's crying now too and dad is staring at me as if I've just grown a second head. "Hannah!, what's happening, what are you seeing!?" my mum cries.

"me I say, suddenly so sure of myself, I'm seeing me, that's me, I died in that fire!"

"What fire!" mum shouts, very panicked now. "the fire at my birthday party."

Suddenly all these things are soiling out of my mouth, about Ashley, some boy called Jason, balloons, a Vivienne Westwood dress and some club called martini 1, "mum, where's my mother?"

Mum's mouth drops open, "wha...what do you mean?, I'm right here!"

"mum really?"

mum sighs and her lip begins to quiver, "they found behind and old burnt down dance club in Manchester, they could never find her!" she says crying again.

Suddenly it all comes back to me, I remember opening my eyes and first realising I was a baby, I remember crying, realising that my family and friends were probably dead. "I....I came back .....this is my after life."

The next few months I take the flashbacks casually, these ones are all before I die, of me dress shopping and texting Jason and things. I know someone, something is giving me these flashbacks as a way for me to remember my past life, but maybe it would just be easier on everyone if I didn't remember. Mum and dad bring me to a counsellor, but were not getting anywhere, nowone believes me. But it doesn't matter because I presume everything will stop once Lexie dies. Then everything will go back to normal.

### Train Trouble by Daire Bruen

The ticking of the clock was getting on my nerves. When it stopped the silence startled me. I looked up, half-expecting something to happen. But nothing came, nothing happened. The whole train station was empty, except for the lady who worked at the mini shop. I sat down on a bench and waited for my train to come. Suddenly I heard someone call my name- "Shannon! Heya!" I turned my head to the left to find my cousin, 'Becky' and my auntie 'Carla' walking in. I turned my head back around and read my 'Bliss' magazine pretending not to know who they are! (If you're wondering why this is, it's because my auntie is a crank and Becky's very talkative and annoying!)

The clock started ticking again, but as it started the train came. I hopped on quickly hoping that I would just miss the sight of my relations, but not knowing that they were getting on the train they hopped on just before the door closed.

"How are you?" Carla asked me. Nothing much," I replied, I looked at Becky chewing her gum and blowing huge bubbles with it.

"What are you doing in town all by yourself? You're only eleven years old!" Carla said (very loudly.)

"I'm actually fourteen now, Carla." I told her.

"Shannon Smith! Don't even think of telling me lies!" Even though she was only thirty-four, Carla had short-term memory! (Which by the way gets very irritating when you see her lots of the time.)

There was a long silence on the train and I heard the same ticking noise start again. I jumped out of my seat, and before anyone could notice I quickly sat back down again.

The train stopped at the next stop and a very tall man in a suit and sunglasses got on. He looked over in my direction and grinned, I didn't know if he was looking at me or not because he eyes were hidden behind his dark sunglasses but assuming he was I smiled at him and then looked down at the ground. As soon as I stopped thinking of the man, I thought back to the ticking noise, only realizing now that it had somehow gotten louder. I felt my heart pumping faster than it normally would and I could feel sweat everywhere!

The train stopped again, this time a big crowd of people got on. The strange man came over and stood beside me. He didn't look nor speak to me. In amongst the crowd that got on, another strange man was on

board, identical to the man who got on at the previous station.. But this one had no sunglasses, one normal eye and one large black beady eye with no iris in it. As the babble of noise calmed down, I set aside my mind. But the sound of the clock was ticking there, right outside my ear: "Tick, tick, tick, tick, tick, tick"

It was getting even faster now! The train stopped at the next stop, the last stop, my stop. I jumped off and ran until I was called back. "Shannon! Would you ever wait?" I turned my head but I was still running, and before I knew it I was on the bus going home.

When I got home my mam said she had a present for me. It was a watch! "I thought since your watch was broken I'd get you a new one!" she said, and then that ticking noise was heard no more.

Jade and Síomha

I woke up this morning  
and got ready for school  
walked out the door and shouted  
"love you."

When I came home  
I shouted I'm home  
waiting for my mam to reply  
but then I heard my sister cry.

I ran upstairs to see  
what was wrong  
she told me mam and dad  
were gone

I heard her story  
I gasped and sighed  
they found us because  
my sister cried

I thought to myself  
what will happen next  
We are just going to have to  
survive our best.

### Food by Shane Mc Cann

There's Jelly Tots  
And Noodle Pots  
There's Sugar Snaps  
Or Old French Baps  
There's Carbonara Or Bolognese  
Corn On The Cob or Types of Maize  
Lotsa Rice And Lotsa Curry  
Or you get a nice McFlurry  
There's Candy Cane or Chocolate Fudge  
Chocolate Plain Or Creamy Sludge  
There's Cream Eggs Or Jelly Rings  
Strawberry Sweats or Snakey Things  
There's Corned Bully Beef  
Or Fish From The Reef  
There's Spaghetti O's  
Or Beshoff's Bros  
There's Chocolate Swirls And Pasta Curls  
There's Lotsa Food Around The World  
Last Of All There's Lemon And Lime  
Oh Look, its Supper Time