




Grannie Annie

Historical Family Stories
Written and Illustrated by Young People



from
The Grannie Annie
Family Story Celebration

Vol. 14



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Saint Louis, Missouri

The Grannie Annie Family Story Celebration

Welcome to the 2018/2019 Grannie Annie celebration of family stories! Students in U.S. grades 4 through 8, and homeschooled or international students 9 through 14 years of age, are invited to interview their family storykeepers and write a story from their family's history. The Grannie Annie experience leads young people to strengthen family and community bonds, encounter history in a personal way, and polish their writing skills. Students are encouraged to illustrate their story and then share their work with their family, school, community, and The Grannie Annie.

The works of thirty-eight young authors and twelve young artists, chosen to represent the submissions received this year, are included in this fourteenth annual volume of *Grannie Annie*. This year's stories are available in eBook, PDF, and paperback editions, and are also published on The Grannie Annie's website and shared through social media.

The Grannie Annie mission — to inspire young people to discover, write, illustrate, and share historical family stories — springs from a belief in the transformative power of “story.” The simple, genuine family stories in this book can help us connect with people in today's world and with people from times past. In unexplainable ways, these stories foster feelings of unity with people whose lives may seem very different from our own. Quietly, surely, the world moves one step closer to peace.

Published by The Grannie Annie Family Story Celebration, P.O. Box 11343, Saint Louis, Missouri 63105.

The Grannie Annie welcomes — and desires to receive and publish — family stories from students of every race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, and creed.

Because the stories in *Grannie Annie, Vol. 14*, were captured from the oral tradition, they represent a unique blend of history, legend, and opinion. Accuracy — historical or otherwise — is not guaranteed, and the views represented are not necessarily those of the authors, directors, or publishers.

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Your tax-deductible donation will enable more young people to take part in The Grannie Annie, and will make the remarkable *Grannie Annie* published stories more widely available. Please mail your donation to the address at the top of this section or visit the donation page of The Grannie Annie's website: TheGrannieAnnie.org/DonatetoTheGrannieAnnie.html

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In memory of
Ann Guirrerri Cutler,
whose passion for saving family stories
inspired The Grannie Annie
1944–2007

* * *

In celebration of my three sons,
Jonathan, Andrew, and Ben,
and my stepdaughter, Liz —
my beloved family,
who always encourage me
to enjoy the story of my life

Honored by donor Anne Perkins

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Invitation to Participate

Grannie Annie Storykeepers 2019 and Their Story Titles

Praise for The Grannie Annie

* The time setting of each story is noted in parentheses here and also on the story pages. Where the exact year is unknown, "c." (circa) indicates the approximate year.

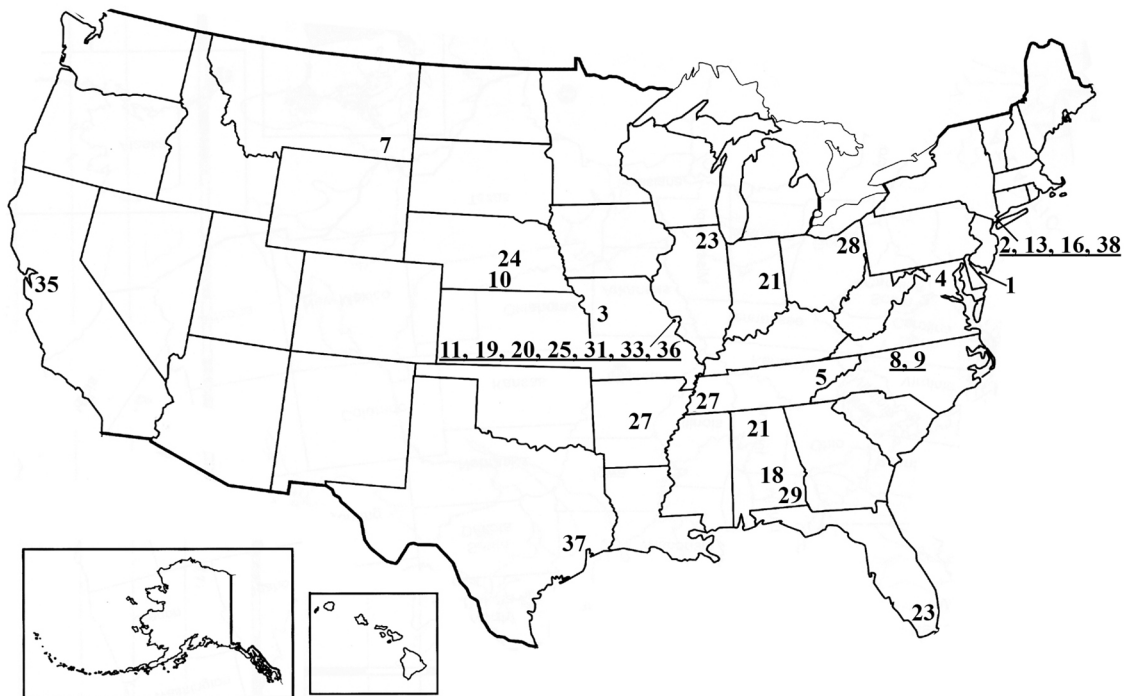
Story Settings Map, International

Numbers on map are story numbers.



Story Settings Map, United States

Numbers on map are story numbers.



A Word from Grannie Annie

Some Native American nations so valued their histories that they designated a tribal storykeeper. My mother filled that role in our family for decades, and before that, our family storykeeper was Mom's mother, my grandmother Randazzo.

Gramma Randazzo lived with us when I was a child. She didn't speak English well; however, at an early age I learned to say "Tell me a story about the Old Country" or "Tell me again the story about the baker's daughter who had dough under her fingernails." Then she would begin, in her broken English that made the stories even more fascinating to me. She told me stories about the olive groves on the family estate in Italy, about Grampa Randazzo's brothers and all their escapades, and about the family's early years as immigrants in Brooklyn. Mom carried on the tradition with her own repertoire of stories — about teaching in a one-room school, about blizzards and floods on the farm, and about rolling up the rug and inviting the neighbors over to dance.

I was fascinated by their tales and still am. I have written down many of their stories, saved them in keepsake books so they won't be lost. They're a treasure to read now, just as I had hoped, but I find I saved more than the stories themselves. Listening had been a way to be close to Gramma Randazzo. When I read Gramma's stories now, I remember sitting near her, hearing the stories from Gramma herself. When I read Mom's stories now, I remember aunts and uncles and cousins gathering around the kitchen table to listen. By sharing their stories, Gramma and Mom created a sense of family, a sense of closeness and security, that will stay with me forever.

Ann Guirrerri Cutler, The Original Grannie Annie, April 2006

Note to Parents and Educators

In *Grannie Annie, Vol. 14*, you can join many families on life-changing, unforgettable journeys. Some journeys the families chose; others were forced on them. You'll travel by land, sea, and air — and in your imagination. You'll find many surprises along the way — some thrilling and others challenging. The stories might raise questions: When should I leave a home I love? How could I survive without loved ones? How would I make a new home in an unfamiliar place?

You'll see people risking their lives for their beliefs or for the rights of others. You'll see people who are viewed differently by different people. You might wonder: Who deserves respect or honor? What makes a hero? How do I decide whether to fight or cooperate? When should I disobey an order?

And you'll have a chance to play — with family, friends, and pets. You might learn to see yourself in a new way or discover an activity that will become important to you and your family.

The thirty-eight stories in this volume represent the 536 stories submitted to The Grannie Annie this year. The stories take place in 16 U.S. states and in 19 countries on three continents over a span of 356 years. The stories entertain, educate, and inspire us — and remind us of the resilience of the human spirit. Our volunteer readers chose these stories with you and your family in mind, yet you may want to preview the stories before sharing them with young or sensitive readers.

We're so pleased that you've joined us! We encourage you to discover and preserve some stories from your *own* family's history. And we hope that you'll join us again next year for The Grannie Annie Family Story Celebration.

Connie McIntyre and Fran Hamilton, Directors of The Grannie Annie

Listening is an act of love.

—Dave Isay, StoryCorps

Grannie Annie, Vol. 14

1. Kidnapped

c. 1645;¹ in Delaware Bay, off the coast of Bowers, Delaware, USA

As the wind brushed against my face and the frigid blue water seeped between my toes, I was filled with joy. This wasn't the first time I was sailing on my father's ship, but every second on that ship had been enjoyable. Unlike other voyages, this one would change my life forever.

This morning, in September of 1645, my father and I were getting ready to set sail to the Delaware Bay. My father was always very well prepared for anything that could happen, such as an unexpected storm or anything else that could endanger our safety, but this time there was nothing that could prepare us for what was ahead.

On this trip, we would be trading with the Indians — a small boat for beaver skins. Father was being cautious of the boat and also was making sure this would be an easy trade.

We set sail early that morning; the journey was long, taking most of the day. In the afternoon I went and helped my father on the main deck of the ship. There were five crewmen, not counting my father and me (Samuel Luther), on board.

After a long time on the ship, but without a lot of difficulty, we finally arrived. We didn't get off the ship and stayed 100 yards away from shore. The Indians wanted to meet us on the water. We sat there for a good hour and a half until the Indians finally came. They had long hair and coats that were made with furs of all kinds. Father started talking to them through the interpreter about how they should trade and the details of the trade. I was only nine years old, and being so young, my mind couldn't focus on what they were saying.

The next thing I knew, the Indians took out hatchets from beneath their coats. Like a galloping horse, my heart started to race. I screamed and told my father that they had weapons, but it was too late. They threw one of the hatchets at my father and killed him instantly. Then they killed the other four crewmen. They didn't kill me or our interpreter, because he was in league with them.

I was so confused. Before I could comprehend, they started wrapping me up with rough ropes, which rubbed my skin sore. We stayed on the boat for five days. Then we were moved to shore and stayed there for five weeks. In those weeks, I grew very ill and bone skinny, because they gave me barely any food or water.

Finally my mother, Elizabeth Turner, had the ransom money the Indians had demanded. The amount was equivalent to all of our money. The day I saw my mother, I was so ecstatic, because I had almost lost hope.

Now I honor my father as I sail his ship and remember the strong, honest man he was. I am so glad that I was saved so that my family's name can continue on.

Mariah Dent, twelfth-great-granddaughter of Samuel Luther; Idaho, USA

1. The setting of each story is noted below its title. In cases where the exact year isn't known, "c." (circa) indicates that the year given is approximate.

2. “Sir, May I Carry Your Bag?”

c. 1847; Galway, Ireland; and New York, New York, USA

The farmland on the other side of the stone wall looked dark and rich, but the few shriveled potatoes lying on the soil said otherwise. About a million Irish people left everything they knew for a better life in America during the time of the Great Potato Famine.¹ One of them was my ten-year-old great-great-great-grandfather Luke O’Reilly, along with his older sister Nina. Their family was dirt-poor and had only enough money to purchase a ticket for Nina — Luke would be left to sneak onto the ship and into the country.

When Luke and Nina arrived at the port, the longshoremen were struggling to load a heavy crate onto the vessel. Luke lurked in the shadows. When everyone’s attention was focused on the crate, Luke raced aboard the large, steam-driven ocean liner. After boarding, Luke reunited with Nina.

Weeks later, the New York skyline was visible in the distance, with towering structures sending shadows over the bay. Once the ship docked, Luke walked beside his sister as they moved to the immigration lines. Suddenly he remembered that he had no documents, which meant no entry to America.

Luke let go of his sister’s soft, comforting hand and hid behind a pile of musty leather suitcases. A man who seemed to be the head of the immigration delegation was carrying a large briefcase as he walked the ramp connecting the ship to the dock. Luke thought of an idea and darted through the crowd towards the official.

The heavysset man smelled of beer and brats as his dark, watchful eyes scanned the throng of people on the ship’s deck. When the man’s eyes landed on Luke, my great-great-great-grandfather said, “Welcome aboard, sir! Can I help you with your bag?” Before the man could answer, Luke took the bag and stepped aside to let the official board the ship.

For what felt like eternity, Luke held his breath as he waited to see if his ruse would work. His body tensed as one of the official porters eyed him suspiciously. Luke could feel his heart pounding in his chest as the porter walked towards him. Abruptly, a first-class passenger demanded the porter’s help.

Luke breathed a sigh of relief as the immigration official kept on walking towards the ship’s captain standing on the bow of the ship. Twenty long minutes later, the immigration officer was satisfied with the ship’s papers and headed back to shore. When they reached the immigration office, Luke returned the bag to the official and walked off into the city bustling with pedestrians.

Luke O’Reilly used quick thinking and confidence in order to accomplish his goal. Despite not having a ticket, Luke was clever enough to board the ship. When Luke posed as a porter, he again displayed his ability to analyze a situation and come up with a quick-witted solution. When faced with adversity, use your God-given gifts and abilities to overcome obstacles.

Caidan Brophy; Missouri, USA

1. The Great Potato Famine was a severe food shortage that occurred between 1845 and 1849. It was caused by a disease that affected potatoes, reducing the supply of one of Ireland’s main foods and leading to the death of about a million people in Ireland.

3. The Journey to Utah

c. 1852; Lexington, Missouri, USA

On the steamboat *The Saluda* I never suspected that my life would get any worse. I had lost my mother due to typhus¹ when I was very young. A hurricane had hit *The Kennebec*, the ship we journeyed on when my family was traveling over the Atlantic from Liverpool, England. When we had landed in New Orleans in March of 1852, we had been persecuted for being Mormons.² But when the steamboat *The Saluda* stopped in Lexington, Missouri, the worst was still to come.

I was sleeping in my bed on *The Saluda* until I woke suddenly to a haunting boom. I could smell smoke and fire. The boat suddenly began shaking. I stayed on my bed, crouched in terror. My father came rushing toward me. “Louisa!” he shouted. “Go with John, Ellen, and Sarah Ann. I will get Joseph.” He rushed to get my little brother.

As I was leaving, I saw the horrific sight of burning metal and smoke. I turned to run until I felt excruciating pain in my left leg. I looked down to see a burning gash in my lower calf. The world spun around me. In a fuzzy daze I saw my siblings — Ellen, John, and Sarah Ann — running towards me.

“Get her off the boat!” John shouted at my two sisters. “Help me carry her out!” My vision was fuzzy. I saw glimpses of the destroyed boat, and people screaming in terror.

I awoke in a bed. I felt bathed, and my wound had been attended to. “Breakfast!” I heard a voice shout. I left my room and went to the strange kitchen. At the table I saw Ellen, John, and Sarah Ann, plus a man and a woman sitting at the end.

“Good to see you all up, children,” the woman said. “You are all welcome to stay here in our home due to the loss of your father and brother.”

That hit me like a bullet. My pa was dead? How could this happen? I wasn’t ready to be an orphan. I was only ten years old.

“However,” the woman continued, “you can stay here on one condition: Give up being with those Mormons.”

This comment also hit me hard. I didn’t know what to do at all. I looked around and looked at John, who shook his head at me.

“I’ll stay and do what you ask,” Ellen spoke up.

“Wonderful! Anyone else?” the woman asked.

We all shook our heads.

“Well, then you can all leave immediately!” the woman cried. So we did. It was unbearable leaving Ellen.

“Do we have any money?” I asked John.

“No, Louisa, it was robbed from Pa,” replied John.

We were orphaned and broke. Eventually we joined up with the pioneers and traveled across the plains with the Kelsey Company to Salt Lake City, Utah, in

October of 1852. The journey was mostly good until I fell and the wagon rolled over my jaw. It was a difficult trial, but it didn't stop me from reaching Utah.

Xander Patterson, fourth-great-grandson of Louisa; Idaho, USA

1. Typhus is a group of infectious diseases generally transmitted by fleas, lice, or mites. Typhus is now easily treated with antibiotics.
2. A Mormon is a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. In the mid-1800s many Mormons traveled across the continent, sometimes in large groups such as the Kelsey Company, to what is now Utah, where they hoped to be able to worship freely.

4. A Legacy Toward Equality

1861; Prince William County, Virginia, USA

My family has always taken pride in our American heritage. My great-grandma's face glows with delight whenever she tells the story of my fifth-great-grandfather. He was more than a military veteran — he was a Civil War hero.

1861 found my fifth-great-grandfather preparing for the greatest battle of his life — one that would change American culture forever. In his bedroom he put on his ornate navy blue coat. His shiny silver sword hung at his side with a sense of command. He combed his rough beard. Then he kissed his wife, gave his children a hug, and left.

My fifth-great-grandfather had been promoted to brigadier general at the outbreak of the Civil War. He was excited for the battle ahead. He knew that the impact of this battle would forever change the culture of America. This is shown in how he presented his troops for battle. His men expected to win this battle, as well as the war. The Union Army¹ felt confident with their finely made guns and polished swords, and they looked invincible on their highly trained steeds.

The Union was favored to win this battle, but they were slow to advance and had little nourishment prior to the battle. As he awaited support, Grandfather attempted to make the most of the situation by rallying his troops and boosting their morale. However, reinforcements arrived late, giving the Confederate troops the chance to receive reinforcements by railway. The battle would now involve nearly 40,000 soldiers vying for victory as a show of their superiority.

As the guns blazed and the cannons fired, it became clear that this would not be an easily won battle. Grandfather's soldiers screamed in terror as the enemy surrounded their flanks. His soldiers fell in bloody pools, yet he persuaded his men to advance. His troops were outnumbered. They were exhausted. The once confident and proud regiment was forced to face the reality that their fate was gloom.

Grandfather observed the field, his troops lying on the ground. Those not dead cried out in pain. It was then that my fifth-great-grandfather Irvin McDowell had to accept the painful reality that he had lost the First Battle of Bull Run to the great Stonewall Jackson.

Although history books often attempt to focus on his failure, Irvin McDowell has been honored as an important part of American history. Irvin died of a heart attack in 1885, but his legacy lives on in the stories passed down through generations of my family. We now proudly house the letters and other artifacts from his collections as priceless mementos of our family heritage.

I am proud to share the story of McDowell's heroism and bravery, and I know that his actions are an example of how those who can, *should* stand for justice for all. That is why Irvin McDowell, my fifth-great-grandfather, will always be remembered for his legacy toward equality for all.

Carter Chance; Missouri, USA

1. In the U.S. Civil War, the Union Army fought for the United States, or "the North." The Confederate States Army fought for the Confederacy, a group of Southern states that had formed a new country.

5. Forty-Eight Years

1862, 1910; Cades Cove, Tennessee, USA

The sweet grass waved gently in the breeze, reflecting the sun's light on Carter Shields's face. A smile shone upon him as he looked at the glade. It was dotted with broad, green-leaved dogwood trees casting shadows over the dusty dirt path leading up to a wooden cabin. Its chimney was made of stone, the top melting into the shingles tiling the roof. The sides were made of horizontal wood, going from darker to light and back again, and a small porch sat out in front, with four strong beams supporting the overhanging roof. There was a window to the right of the door, as well as two windows on the side of the cabin — a tall, thin one below a shorter, fatter one.

Carter took hobbly steps toward his new cabin, the one he had chosen to retire to, right in the same place he'd been born and raised — Cades Cove, Tennessee. But he had been born a long time ago, back in 1844. Now it was 1910 — forty-eight years since he had been wounded, forty-eight years since the Battle of Shiloh in April of 1862.

The South was in Carter's blood, so when the Civil War¹ broke out, he'd known he had to fight for his people. He'd joined the Confederacy and had become a part of the 6th Tennessee Infantry Regiment, organized in May 1861 at Camp Beauregard, Jackson, Tennessee. Carter's involvement in the military was cut short on one fateful day — April 6, 1862.

As his regiment had neared the battle, Carter could feel his heart beating in his chest, like the drum of thunder after a flash of nerve-wrenching lightning. Soon the soldiers were given the signal to attack, and suddenly the air was filled with shouts and cries of anger, fear, and pain. In the thick of fighting, Carter didn't remember much of what he saw — just flashes of gray and blue uniforms, and gunfire ringing in his ears like an echo in a deep canyon. He couldn't tell how long it had been, but some Federal soldiers made stands against the Confederates, and the fighting lasted longer than he could remember.

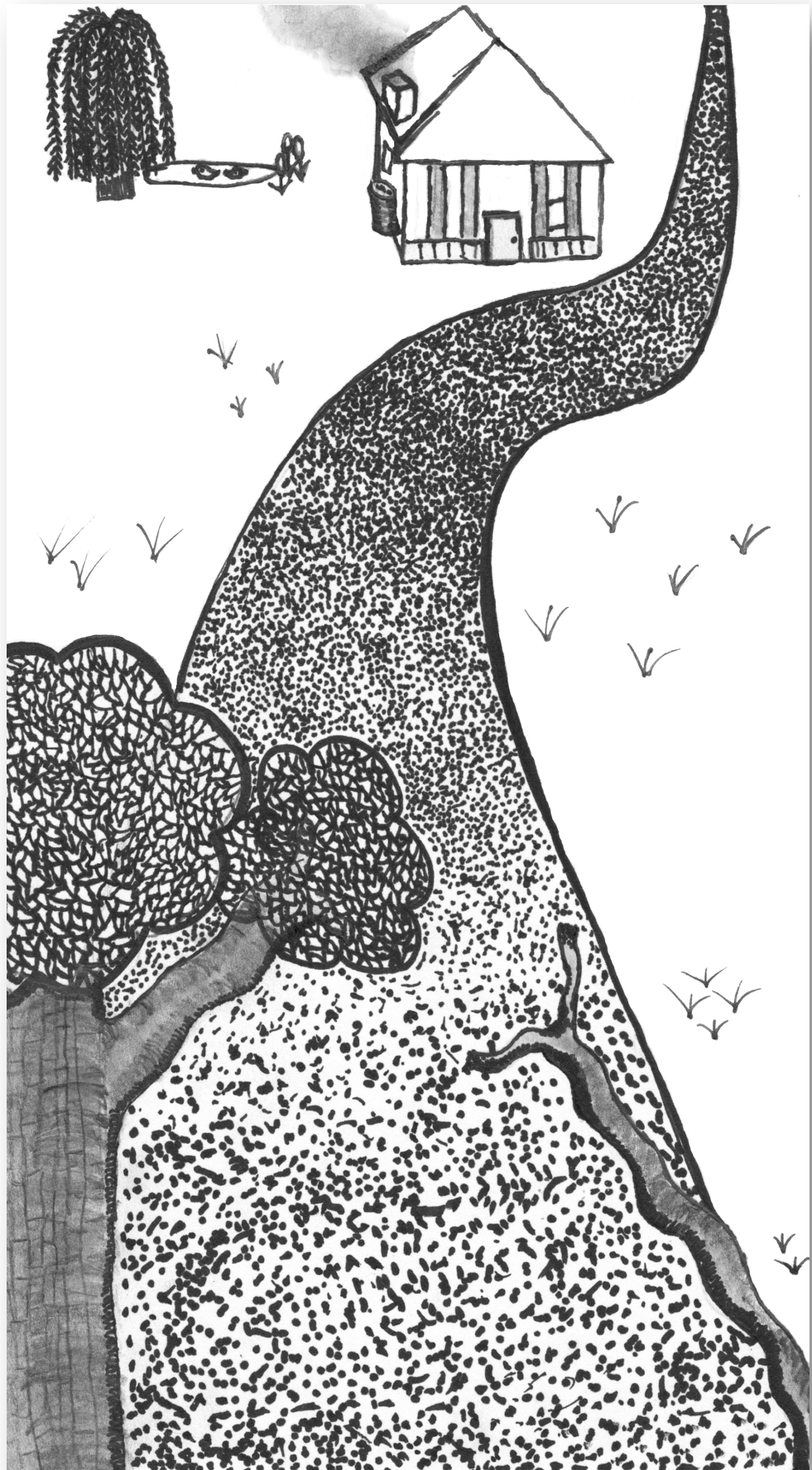
At some point, when he was sweating and struggling to stay on his feet from tiredness, Carter had felt excruciating pain in his hip. All he recalled was being carried off the battlefield, his view being blotted out by dark clouds that faded in and out — just a few clips of things that no longer fit together, and most of all, the pain in his leg.

Carter Shields left the military and was forever crippled by his wound in the battle of Shiloh; it is unknown if he was hit by a bullet or artillery. He retired to his cabin in Cades Cove in 1910, living there until 1921. He was born February 5, 1844, and died on November 20, 1924, at the age of eighty. He is buried at Maryville, Tennessee. Carter Shields was my great-great-grandfather's uncle, and his cabin still stands in Cades Cove today.

Maddy Pense; Missouri, USA

Illustrator: Emma Holmer; Missouri, USA

1. In the U.S. Civil War, the Confederacy was a group of Southern states that had left the United States and formed a new country. They fought the Union Army, which represented the United States, or "the North."



6. Perils of War

1918; the Marne, France; and Villingen, Baden, Germany

World War I was a conflict so bloody that many thought it would end war forever, exposing combat as both barbaric and futile. My great-great-uncle O. L. “Pat” Mowry fought in this conflict. The loss of life was catastrophic, and many American soldiers died in battle, far away from home.

The war in which Uncle Pat Mowry found himself was fought in hundreds of places around the globe. It was a terrible and deadly conflict that took the lives of millions. The machine gun stopped advancing armies in their tracks, forcing them to dig into the earth for their survival. Trench warfare was the result. Men lived and died in long rat-infested troughs. But thanks to mortar fire, digging into the earth wasn’t that safe. A mortar could fire a 100-pound exploding shell nearly 4,000 feet. The shells went high into the air, coming down directly into the trenches and blowing soldiers to pieces. On the way down, the shells made a screaming noise so that the soldiers knew when the shells were about to hit. Uncle Pat described the sound as pure terror.

Uncle Pat witnessed soldiers crawling into their blankets and weeping, unable to recover from what was then known as “shell shock.”¹ He described the terrible carnage to his family back home: “Those who could handle this new kind of combat risked being ripped to shreds in the trenches any time a shell exploded, and thousands had limbs blown away from their bodies in the violent blasts; others were permanently deafened or blinded or hideously maimed.”²

Early on the morning of March 10, 1918, Uncle Pat’s battalion was overcome by a German poison gas attack. Hand-to-hand combat followed, and Uncle Pat was shot and beaten senseless. Those Americans who were not killed were forced to surrender. Because Uncle Pat was an officer, he was taken to an officers’ prison camp, where the Americans were treated decently and given medical attention.

That year an illness then known as “*le grippe*”³ spread all over Europe, killing millions. Today we know this illness as influenza, the flu. Influenza was the enemy that killed Uncle Pat.

The Germans had Uncle Pat hospitalized, and just when they thought he was stable, he passed away. His German captors paid for his funeral, provided a casket and buggy, and attended the funeral procession themselves as a sign of respect. They also photographed the procession and provided his family with the pictures.

Uncle Pat’s story reminds us not of the glory of combat but of the terrible perils of war — war’s reality. Uncle Pat’s life was full of adventure and travel, yet it ended suddenly and far too early. My grandfather says that Uncle Pat’s sister Maude

Mowry could hardly speak his name after his death, preferring to remember him in his youth, before the terrible war and the tragic series of events that took his life.

Hadley M. McConkey; Missouri, USA

1. "Shell shock" was a mental disorder brought on by the emotional and psychological stress of war or other trauma. Today we would call it PTSD (posttraumatic stress disorder).
2. From "Pat" Mowry correspondence in the McConkey Family Archive.
3. "*Le grippe*" is pronounced "luh GRIP." This influenza was the deadliest epidemic in history, killing 50 to 100 million people worldwide.

7. Just One Light

c. 1919; Broadus, Montana, USA

Imagine your last hope being a dim light in the distance. In the winter of 1919 my great-great-grandpa Howard Clary was preparing for a 100-mile cattle drive on the Powder River in Broadus, Montana. Howard had just bought a cattle ranch and was getting ready to leave with six or seven other ranchers for his first cattle drive to the stockyards.¹

Howard was thirty years old and about five feet, five inches tall. He had super-strong hands, and shoulders as broad as the Mississippi River. Howard's wife, Mary Clary, was very worried that something might happen to Howard on the cattle drive since this was his first, so she took several precautions to make sure he was ready for the trip, including packing extra food, water, and supplies that would help him along the way. Little did Howard and Mary know that this particular cattle drive could be his last.

After successfully delivering the cattle to the stockyards, Howard and the other ranchers conquered the difficult task of breaking down camp, repacking the heavy goods, and resaddling their horses. The first fifty miles of the trip were cold, but the skies were clear and the temperature was normal for winter in Montana.

Once Howard and the other ranchers got to mile fifty, dark clouds started rolling in, the wind picked up, the temperature dropped, and Howard had a bad feeling that something terrible was coming. Howard knew it was too late to turn back, so the ranchers pushed on.

That's when the first flurry fell down from the sky and onto Howard's head. The snow accumulated by the second, and blizzard-like conditions soon arrived. Nervousness took over Howard, and all he wanted to do was to get everyone home to their families.



Howard's small five-foot-five body made it harder for him to overcome the thirty miles left when the snow reached the horse's thigh. The snow got taller, and Howard and the horse got deeper in it. With twenty-five miles left, the snow had gotten so deep that his horse couldn't walk any longer, so Howard abandoned the horse to continue the trek. Howard thought he was going to be buried alive by the frigid Montana snow. He prayed and hoped for a miracle.

Suddenly a small, dim light appeared in the distance. Howard followed the light for miles. The snow whipped and whirled, but Howard thought that the light could lead him to safety. Eventually, Howard got so close to the light that he noticed that he had made it back to his cattle ranch on the Powder River in Broadus, Montana. He could almost feel the warmth from the light.

Mary had left an oil lamp on the porch in hopes that Howard would see it and follow it home. That's exactly what Howard did — without realizing that the light had been burning on his own porch. Mary later realized that just one light had been the difference between life and death for Howard and the other ranchers.

Audrey Christian; Missouri, USA

Illustrator: Evan Yang; Missouri, USA

1. A stockyard is an area with pens to confine animals shortly before they are transported, sold, or slaughtered.

8. Wedding on the Pitcher's Mound

c. 1928–1940; Stokes County, North Carolina, USA

In 1928 Ernest Rogers, my great-great-grandfather, became a widower. He was a fifty-one-year-old farmer with eight children, and he had no clue how to cook. After a couple of years of struggling to keep up with all of his children, he decided it was time to find a new wife, who he hoped would be an excellent cook.

During that time he had gotten to know Columbus Green Hall, a fellow worker at the sawmill. Hall was the father of six children, and the oldest one, Annie Hall, was twenty-two and worked as a cook at Ernest's kids' school. Ernest had known Columbus and Annie for a while, since they went to the same church, and so he properly courted¹ Annie.

One day Ernest traveled to the Halls' family home to get permission to marry his newfound love — Miss Annie Hall. As he had hoped, Columbus gave Ernest a *yes*. Ernest immediately went to Annie and asked her to marry him. Annie said yes, and they were off — they were off to get married at the local church.

They arrived at the church, thinking that the preacher would be there. But the preacher was not there! He was at a baseball game, acting as an umpire. Annie and Ernest were determined to get married that day.

The soon-to-be Mr. and Mrs. Rogers traveled to the Little League baseball game miles from the church, looking for the preacher. After they arrived, they got the preacher's attention, and he stopped the game. He asked the couple if they wanted to be married, and they said yes.

The preacher gestured for Annie and Ernest to come to the pitcher's mound. They exchanged vows and rings on the pitcher's mound — right in front of the crowd. Everyone cheered, and Annie and Ernest were married! Even though they were newlyweds and were to go on a honeymoon, they stayed and watched the end of the baseball game.

Six years passed, and Annie and Ernest had six children (one child per year). Three months after the sixth child was born, Ernest died suddenly of a heart attack while working in a cornfield with three of their children. And so Annie became a widow at just twenty-eight years old, and she was mother to fourteen children in a three-bedroom house. How amazing is that! Most of Ernest's children were already grown and living adult, happy lives, but Annie's youngest children needed her.

Every Sunday night all of the children would come together and eat a good meal for dinner. On the third Sunday of the month, instead of eating dinner at Annie's, they would go to the local church and take their meal there for *all* to eat.

Annie and Ernest had fourteen children, and one of those children is my great-grandma, Betty Ruth. She is still living today and was able to share this story with me. She is the best grandma and cook I have ever known!

Caroline Hort; North Carolina, USA

1. To court a woman is to spend time with her so that the couple can get to know one another and can decide whether they want to marry.

9. Top Spy

c. 1930–1944; Leipzig, Germany; near Winston-Salem, North Carolina, USA

In Leipzig, Germany, Luis, my great-grandfather, was in the German Army in 1934. He rose in ranking very quickly to soon become a spy. As he went on being a German spy, Hitler came to power and discovered how great a spy Great-Grandfather was. As a spy, he was around top generals and was treated as one of them.

Hitler, after becoming aware of how powerful Luis was, asked him to work under him and to spy on the United States. Accepting the opportunity, Luis spied on the United States for a while — until he realized that Hitler’s beliefs were wrong.

After realizing that Hitler’s beliefs were wrong, Luis decided to turn himself in to the United States as a German spy. Turning himself in was very dangerous, but it was the right choice. When Luis turned himself in, he gave information about Hitler’s plans.

After many days, the United States asked Luis to be a double spy. A double spy is a person who spies on two countries — in this case, the United States and Germany. Luis became a double spy in 1939. Back and forth he went between the two countries, getting information. Luis had information about the United States, but the information Luis was giving Germany about the United States was false. On the other hand, he gave true information about Germany to the United States.

One day after returning to Germany from the United States, Luis decided to tell Hitler that he could send his family to the United States to help “spy” on them. Hitler gladly agreed, but little did he know that Luis’s family were not going there to help spy. Instead, Luis was getting them out of harm’s way. Little by little they trickled into the United States.

As Luis continued to spy, Hitler became so overly powerful that the United States decided to try to assassinate Hitler. In 1943, Luis planned with the United States and a resistance group to assassinate Hitler with an explosive device. With the device, Luis and a few other spies went to Germany with the plan. There was a meeting that was going to be held with Hitler and many other important spies and generals. The plan was working out greatly, until it all went downhill. The device exploded, but it did not kill Hitler. Instead it made him scared of his own shadow. Afraid Germany would find out what he had done, Luis got the rest of his family and himself back to the United States.

From 1935 to 1944, Luis’s family were making their way into the United States. In all, thirteen children, Lewis, and his wife, Grace, made it into the United States.¹ Once they all arrived, all had to vow to never speak of Germany and never to speak in German. My great-grandfather did not keep the vow. By speaking of times in Germany, he broke the vow.

This story had a very large impact on me. I never knew that my family had a past like this. It made me feel excited, confused, ashamed, and many other emotions. I never had heard this story. That is because all of the information is top-secret and is never spoken about throughout the family.

Sydney Taylor; North Carolina, USA

1. Luis changed the spelling of his name to “Lewis” because that seemed more American to him.

10. On the Way Home

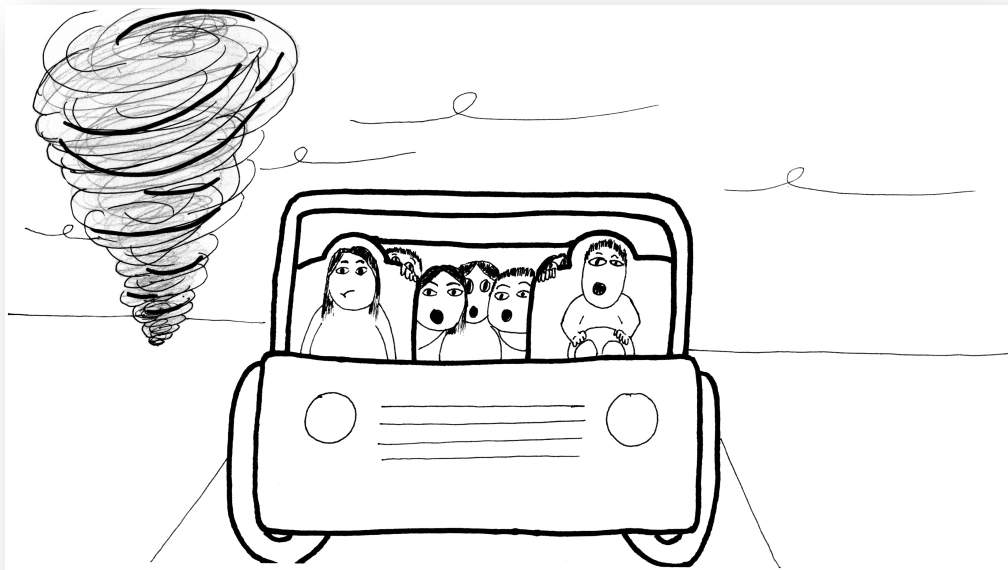
1933; Upland, Nebraska, USA

Imagine driving along the road and seeing a black tornado-shaped storm headed straight for you and your family. What would you say? What would you do? My great-grandma and her family had to figure out what to do — and *fast!*

It was the 1930s, the time of the Great Depression. My great-grandma Jean was eight years old and lived on a farm near Upland, Nebraska, with her three sisters and two brothers. They lived in the Dust Bowl,¹ where tornado-shaped clouds of dust often formed because the vegetation was lost and the soil was reduced to dust and eroded. Dust storms caused a lot of damage to a lot of people, like my great-grandma Jean and her family.

Even though life on the farm was hard, family was still important. One calm summer morning in 1933, Jean and her family got into the farm truck to go to an aunt and uncle's anniversary party many miles away. Jean's mama left the windows to the house open to air the house out, just as she did every other summer day.

Later that day, Jean was celebrating with family and friends when they saw the black tornado picking up dust from the ground and spinning it around into a storm. Jean and her family immediately got back into the truck to go home.



The wind was blowing so fast that dust was swooping off the ground and running over fences like snow. Cars were being covered in dust. Very quickly, Jean's family knew they could not drive on in this storm, so they stopped at a farmhouse off the road.

No one was home, but the door was unlocked so they went in. They knew the house was welcoming because of the beautiful cake on the table. Of course, all the

kids wanted a slice, but Mama said no. Later that evening, they realized they couldn't get back out on the road and would have to stay the night. They begged Mama enough that she finally let each kid have one slice of cake, but then they had to go to bed. Mama knew she would make the family a cake to replace the one they ate.

The next morning the dust had settled, and the family made it the rest of the way home. When they got inside their little farmhouse, everything was covered in dust. The windowsills had an inch of dust on them, the stick of butter on the countertop looked like a stick of mud, and the floors and furniture were hidden under a thick layer of black powder.

Once everything was cleaned up, Mama and the kids made a cake for the friendly people whose house they had stayed at that night. My great-grandma Jean and her family may not have made it home that night, but they realized that night that families could get through anything as long as they stayed together.

Cami Kohmetscher; Missouri, USA

Illustrator: Eva Stern; Missouri, USA

1. "The Dust Bowl" usually refers to an area of the central United States that had a lot of dust storms in the 1930s.

11. A Long-Lasting Love of Theater

1939; St. Louis, Missouri, USA

We all have our own summer traditions. In 1939, for my thirteen-year-old great-grandmother Toby, summertime meant going to the Muny Theatre¹ in St. Louis, Missouri. Every summer, The Muny would present live professional musicals that were sponsored so that the rich and the poor could see them. Every summer Sunday in St. Louis, Toby and her friend Sylvia had a standing date to watch a Broadway spectacular at America's oldest and largest outdoor musical theater.

After lunch on Sunday, Toby packed herself a peanut-butter sandwich for dinner and threw some change into her pocket for an ice cream cone, and headed to Sylvia's house so that they could walk together to Forest Park.² An hour into their walk, the two eager teenagers arrived at the air-conditioned³ Missouri History Museum, where they could cool off a little during the hottest part of the afternoon. Toby and Sylvia's favorite part of the museum was the antique dress exhibit. After a quick stop in the restroom, the two friends giggled as they left the museum and skipped to the Muny Theatre.

Most of the time they would get to the theater early, before the gate opened for audience members, but that would not stop them! Instead of waiting for the gate to open, Toby and Sylvia would climb over the back fence and run straight to their favorite seats in the front center row of the "free seats" section. Toby loved everything about these breathtaking musicals — from the glamorous actors and actresses to their vibrant costumes. But Toby's favorite parts were the joyful music and dancing, and the ice cream novelty she bought during intermission — usually a Drumstick ice cream cone covered in chocolate.

As a girl, Toby would watch the dancers leap across the stage, and she would dream that one day she would be lucky enough to buy season tickets to The Muny. As an adult, that dream came true when she and my great-grandfather purchased four center-orchestra season tickets.

The theater was really something special to my great-grandmother, and that love has not left my family. My grandmother took theater lessons as a child instead of dance classes like her friends did. My mom and all her siblings acted in plays when they were younger — my mom was in sixteen plays when she was a child. My aunt runs a children's theater company in New Jersey, and my mom created and runs a performing arts overnight camp in Pennsylvania.

I am very lucky that theater and music are such a big part of my life, and I am so grateful to everyone who supported public theater and for the continuing influence of my great-grandmother, who made the trip to the Muny Theatre every Sunday during The Muny's summer season.

Aliyah Kahn; New York, USA

1. The Muny, formally named "St. Louis Municipal Opera Theatre," is a nonprofit organization funded by individuals, corporations, and others. It celebrated its 100th anniversary in 2018.

2. Forest Park is the largest park in St. Louis, featuring cultural attractions (such as The Muny and the Missouri History Museum), athletic facilities, and green space.

3. Unlike today's air-conditioning, the museum had ceiling fans, which effectively cooled the space and were called "air-conditioning."

12. First Grade with No Shoes

1940s; Tarnobrzeg, Poland; and Yoshkar-Ola, Russia, USSR

My great-grandmother Frances Birnbaum went to school without shoes. Isn't that crazy?! I mean, just think about going to school without your blue Nikes or your gold Adidas! It started during World War II in my great-grandmother's small hometown of Tarnobrzeg, Poland.

The year was 1940, a long time ago — before iPhone XR and Nintendo Switch were even invented! My great-grandmother was six years old and in first grade. She lived with her parents Gela and Moshe, who owned a shoe store, and her younger sister, Helen.

One day my great-grandmother was looking in her parents' shoe store for a new pair of shoes, when the German Nazi soldiers stormed up to the door. BANG, BANG, BANG, BANG! "OPEN THIS DOOR IMMEDIATELY!" the German Nazis screamed.

"Can we just get Frances a new pair of shoes?" her parents begged.

"NO, GO OUT NOW!" the German Nazi soldiers yelled back.

My great-grandmother and almost all of the Jewish people in her small town in Poland were kicked out of their homes and forced to live in work camps in Russia. My great-grandmother ended up going to school in Yoshkar-Ola, Russia, without any shoes! It was so freezing cold and snowy in Russia that you could build more than fifteen snowmen! The crystal snow was often as high as the rooftops. My great-grandmother had to walk every day to school and back. There was no school bus or carpool — and there were no shoes! The walk from her home to school was so far that most of us today would want to take a fancy coach bus with TV, reclining seats, and Wi-Fi on it. My poor great-grandmother had none of that! Her mother tried to make DIY¹ shoes by wrapping rags around my great-grandmother's tiny ankles, but her toes were still numb and turned purple like an eggplant!

"Excellent, Frances!" her teacher proudly exclaimed. "Another gold star for you!" My great-grandmother was the best student in her new school in Russia. I'm sure you are probably saying, "That is unbelievable! How can a little girl with no shoes who lives in one room of a peasant's house be the smartest in her class?" But this is all true!

My great-grandmother was a very smart and very hard-working student. Her mother used to cook soup in exchange for a Jewish man nearby to tutor her, along with her friend Ruchel Rappaport, every night after school. But my great-grandmother was such a good student that she no longer needed the tutor and instead became the teacher's pet.

"A special reward for you, Frances," her teacher told her one day.

"What could it be?" my great-grandmother wondered. No, it was not slime! No, it was not a \$100 Amazon gift card! It was a little white box that made my great-

grandmother's dream come true! It was a pair of plain black Mary Jane shoes² that she received from her teacher as a reward for being the best student!

Sarah Kalter; New York, USA

1. "DIY" stands for "do-it-yourself" — made or repaired with substitute materials or methods.
2. Mary Jane shoes are low-cut, low-heeled shoes with a rounded closed toe and a strap across the instep.

13. Reunited at Last

1940–1947; Ostend, Belgium; New York, New York, USA; London, England, UK

Imagine an eight-year-old girl with her family, running to a gate at the Belgium-France border with a huge line of people. That little girl was my great-grandmother Suzy Gunzburg. She thought waiting on that line felt like years instead of hours. Then she and her family reached the front of the line after waiting a very long time. The Allied¹ soldiers were about to close the gates. They let Suzy's parents go, and one sister, but not Suzy herself, her uncle Chaim, or Suzy's other sister. The gates were closed in their faces, and Suzy's parents and her sisters began to cry.

Then Suzy's uncle came up with an idea. He proposed to the soldiers to let his nieces go to the other side of the gate, and that day Chaim would sign up to fight with the Allied forces. The guard agreed to have him enlist.

Suzy's family could not get a visa to go to the United States, so they settled in Cuba. Five years later they got their visas to go to New York City.

After years of worrying and wondering what had happened to his brother, Suzy's father, Judah Gunzburg, still had hope that his brother would arrive in New York, or that he would even hear that his brother was alive. Then one day Judah placed an ad in the Yiddish newspaper, hoping his brother would see it and come to America.

It turned out that Suzy's uncle Chaim had survived the war and lived in London. He also didn't know what had happened to *his* brother and his brother's family, but he hoped to see them again.

It happened that one day Chaim went to buy a herring at the fish market. In that period the fish in the market were wrapped in newspaper. The fish seller just happened to be Jewish, and he wrapped all the fish in Yiddish newspapers that he had finished reading. And it just so happened that the newspaper Chaim's fish was wrapped in was the newspaper Judah had put the ad in for his brother. Once Chaim saw the ad, he reunited with his family and lived in America for the rest of his days.

Yonina Pfeffer; New York, USA

1. The "Allies" were the twenty-six countries, including the United States, Great Britain, France, and the Soviet Union (USSR), that fought against Germany, Japan, and other countries in World War II.

14. The Great Escape

1945; Sevlus, Czechoslovakia,¹ and Auschwitz concentration camp, Poland

People always asked my great-grandmother how she lived to be 105. She told them her story, and now I will tell it to you.

My great-grandmother lived in Czechoslovakia during the Holocaust. She was sent to Auschwitz concentration camp in Poland. One day the concentration camp had to be evacuated, because the Americans were coming to fight the Germans. My great-grandmother had to line up with her friends in rows of five. Then they had to walk out of the concentration camp, and anyone who stopped walking was shot by the Germans. My great-grandmother and her seven friends (one was her sister) were planning to run away to the forest, but they were scared.

One night almost all of the people walking were told to sleep in a barn. One girl came to my great-grandmother and asked if she could sleep next to her. This girl had asked everyone else, and they had all said no. My great-grandmother said, “Yes.” The girl snuggled up to my great-grandmother and went to sleep. In the morning, when my great-grandmother woke up, she realized that the girl was dead.

The German soldiers started to yell, “Wake up!” My great-grandmother got back into the line and started to walk. She and her friends looked at each other and ran into the forest. A few minutes later a German soldier who had been watching the line found them. The man shot each one of them, and all of my great-grandmother’s friends, including her sister, died. Miraculously my great-grandmother didn’t die. The only thing she couldn’t do because she had been shot in the head was that she was not able to cry.

After my great-grandmother was shot, she found another barn and slept there. The next morning she heard the owner of the barn screaming, “Come out!” She went out of where she had been sleeping and put her hands up. He asked, “Who are you?”

My great-grandmother answered, “I am a prisoner of the Germans. I was shot yesterday and needed to rest.”

The barn owner said, “You must be the girl who got away! I know you are telling the truth! The German men came and told me to bury eight women. When I got there to bury them, there were only seven bodies!” The man took my great-grandmother inside and fed her.

For the rest of the war she worked at different people’s houses every day. She cooked, cleaned, and helped do work. And she listened to what they would say.

Later, when the Holocaust was over, she went to a hospital and they pulled the bullet out of her head.

My great-grandmother believed that the reason she lived such a long life is she was kind and comforting to the girl who slept next to her in the barn in the last moments of her life.

Yaelle Merrill; New York, USA

1. In 1993 Czechoslovakia was split — mainly into two countries: the Czech Republic and Slovakia. Sevlus is now part of Ukraine.

15. The Inheritance of Hope

1945; Manchukuo;¹ and Tokyo, Japan

Slosh, slosh, slosh. The water slapped against the ship. The smell of fish wafted through the air of the ship during the war.² My grandmother Yoshiko was about seven years old and was fleeing with her family from Manchukuo to their home country of Japan in 1945.

My grandmother had been born in Manchukuo after her father had gone there to work as a civil engineer for the Japanese army. She had been happy there and had everything she needed. When the Soviets³ came, everything changed for her.

One day a plane suddenly flew over her head. Yoshiko quickly lay flat on the ground. She asked her friends, “What is that black smoke?”

Her friend responded, “*We are getting bombed!*” Terrified, Yoshiko ran for cover into a bomb shelter. Unfortunately, this episode became a common occurrence in her childhood.

One night, when Yoshiko was getting ready for bed, Russian soldiers abruptly came inside her house. “Will they hurt me? Will they take me away?” she thought to herself. The soldiers stole her radio and her family’s watches. Thankfully they did not lay a hand on anyone. Yoshiko’s father was worried, but he didn’t show it for the sake of his children.

Later Yoshiko’s family had to escape from Manchukuo to Japan. Everything they had, even their clothes, were stolen on that ship. The ship, and the fish they ate, carried bacteria. Many people developed infectious dysentery. My grandmother’s little brother was only one year old and did not have a strong immune system. Yoshiko was carrying him on her back when he died. There were so many deaths on the ship that the crew had to throw the dead bodies into the ocean as they had run out of coffins.

When Yoshiko’s family finally got off the ship, life in Japan was very difficult. “Why are you so stinky? Why do your bangs hang over your face?” taunted Yoshiko’s classmates. The stench was her clothes, as she had only one pair. Her parents were too busy and too poor to get her haircuts.

Even though her father had been an engineer in Manchukuo, in Japan there were no jobs. He bought pots and pans, and sold them to farmers to get food. Yoshiko was determined to have a better life. Her dream was to make it to America. She worked extremely hard; she studied and read all night. It paid off, and people started to notice the girl with the bangs. She won a scholarship to a great college in America. Once again, she found herself crossing an ocean, but this time it was not to escape war, but to build a future full of hope.

As my grandmother shared her story, tears welled up in her eyes. “Are they tears of sadness or grief?” I wondered. No, I was an heir of this future hope. My grandmother beamed, “With hard work you also can achieve your dreams!”

Karissa Hsu; Missouri, USA

1. Manchukuo (pronounced man choo kwoh) was controlled by Japan from 1932 until 1945. Today the area once known as Manchukuo corresponds roughly to the three provinces in northeastern China.

2. China and Japan had been fighting since 1931. After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, their conflict became part of World War II.
3. The Soviets were from the USSR (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics). Russia was the largest and most powerful republic in the USSR, which was fighting on China's side, against Japan.

16. The Lucky Baby

1946; Bergen-Belsen concentration camp, Germany; and New York, New York, USA

After World War II ended in 1945, people tried to start a new life. Many people had lost their families and thought they would never be happy again. People who survived the war had nightmares and cried almost every day. Millions of people had been murdered in the war, including little kids and babies.

My grandmother's parents (Lily and Joe Reich) met after the war and quickly got married. They were very excited to finally start a new life and feel happy after being sad for so long.

Lily and Joe lived in Bergen-Belsen, in Germany, because they had no other place to go after the war ended. Bergen-Belsen had been a concentration camp, but after the war it became a camp for displaced people. Joe and Lily knew that they didn't want to stay in Bergen-Belsen with all the bad stuff that had happened there.

On May 16, 1946, Joe and Lily had a baby girl — my grandmother! They decided to name her Judi. Judi was the first baby girl born in Bergen-Belsen after the war (a baby boy had been born three days before her).

Judi was a beautiful baby, and her parents were so happy to have her. Everybody in Bergen-Belsen came to see Judi and asked to hold her. Most of the people smiled when they held her, but some of the people would cry. Judi reminded them of all of the children who had died in the war. Everybody called Judi the “lucky baby,” because she brought joy and luck to all the people.

In 1947 Joe, Lily, and Judi looked for a way to leave Germany and get to America. They were ready to start a new life and to make new memories. HIAS¹ helped them get money. On October 2, 1947, my grandmother and her parents arrived at Ellis Island by ship. Judi was only eighteen months old and the youngest person on the ship. Joe and Lily could not wait to get their new life started in America. They always told Judi that she brought them luck along their journey. That is how my grandmother Judi became known as the “lucky baby,” and I am lucky to be her granddaughter!

Rachel Turk; New York, USA

Illustrator: Devyn Shelton; Missouri, USA

1. HIAS, the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, is a nonprofit organization that now provides assistance to refugees of all religions, nationalities, and ethnic origins.



17. Family Separated Forever

1948; Pyongyang, North Korea; and Seoul, South Korea

A long time ago my grandmother and her family lived in North Korea. My grandmother's great-grandmother Heungsook Chung lived with my grandmother's family and took care of the house with their maids. When my grandmother was one year old, she and her family, including Heungsook Chung, her daughter and son-in-law, and their daughter Jeongok Lee, went to South Korea because the Communists¹ had begun to take over North Korea two years before the Korean War² would start.

My grandmother's family left everything behind except some gold, because they thought that they would return home very soon — after the Communists left. After the family left North Korea, Heungsook Chung told her son-in-law that she wanted to check their house and make sure that everything they had left was okay. She especially wanted to check on the cabbages that they were going to use to make kimchi, which is a Korean food. There were about 300 cabbages that they had stored underground.

Heungsook Chung kept asking her son-in-law to send her back to North Korea, just to make sure that the house and all of their belongings in the house were okay. My grandmother's family thought that she would be able to return to South Korea right away, so they decided to send her back to North Korea to check on the house. But they did not want her to go alone, because she was old. So her daughter and son-in-law sent their daughter, Jeongok Lee, who was only sixteen, along with her. Jeongok Lee cried because she did not want to go, but her father told her that she didn't have a choice — she must go. So Jeongok Lee had to go with her grandmother back to North Korea.

Shortly after Heungsook Chung and Jeongok Lee got to North Korea, the Communists closed the border back to South Korea. Heungsook Chung and Jeongok Lee weren't allowed to return to South Korea, and if they tried to cross the border that separates North Korea and South Korea, then they would get shot by soldiers who were keeping guard. They could never return to South Korea because of this. It broke their family's hearts, knowing that they wouldn't be able to return and they would never see them again.

The family couldn't communicate with Heungsook Chung and Jeongok Lee at all. They weren't allowed to send letters to them, to ask them if they were okay, or to call them. They had no idea what happened to them. They didn't know if they had tried to cross the border but got shot, or if they got sick, or if anything had happened.

Jeongok Lee's mother was sad because she knew that she would never be able to see her daughter again or be able to communicate with her, but she still had dreams about her until the day she died at the age of 100. After Heungsook Chung and Jeongok Lee had left, nobody in the family saw any trace of them ever again, and the family was separated forever.

Esther Sohn; Ohio, USA

1. A Communist is someone who believes in Communism, in which farms and businesses are controlled by the government rather than by individuals. The Soviet Union, the People's Republic of China, and North Korea are Communist countries.

2. The Korean War (1950–1953) was fought between North Korea (with support from the People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union) and South Korea (with support from the United Nations, most troops coming from the United States).

18. “Mr. Gardner Please?”

1950s; Montgomery, Alabama, USA

My grandmother grew up in Montgomery, Alabama, under racial segregation in the 1950s. Many whites practiced lawful racism (the immoral oppression of, and discrimination against, blacks). Many whites did not consider blacks to be equal, and routinely disrespected them. Blacks and whites had separate schools, restaurants, movie theaters, and libraries, and they rode in separate sections of trains and buses. They also lived in separate neighborhoods.

My grandmother’s grandfather (my great-great-grandfather) was Monroe Gardner. He was born in 1892, and he died in 1972 at the age of eighty. My grandmother called him “Granny.” During my grandmother’s childhood she lived with her grandparents. She lived in the house with seven other people. The house had three bedrooms and one bathroom. My grandmother’s father was a high school principal, and her mother was a superintendent. They worked in Shelby County, about sixty miles away, and came home on the weekends.

Granny had a wood delivery business. At that time most people did not have central heating in their homes or gas stoves in their kitchens like we have today. So they used wood-burning stoves. Granny got the wood he sold from a local lumber company. That lumber company sold wood to contractors who built houses, but the company allowed black men like Granny to collect the unused wood to sell to people for heating and cooking. My grandmother’s family used the wood, too.

My grandmother served as Granny’s secretary. She took the orders and wrote them down for him. One day there was a family emergency at home. My great-great-grandmother had gotten sick, and my grandmother had to call her grandfather to ask him to come home. When the receptionist at the lumber company answered, my grandmother asked to speak to “Mr. Monroe Gardner.” Then the receptionist yelled into the phone, “WE DON’T HAVE A MR. MONROE GARDNER!” She hung up the phone angrily, even though she knew my great-great-grandfather well.

A few minutes later Granny rushed in the door and asked my grandmother what she had done. He said that after her call he had been banned from that lumber company’s property because she had referred to him as “Mr.” After that incident, Granny lost his wood-selling business. Even though he had been mistreated, he eventually found a new supply company.

Morgan Durant; Alabama, USA

19. Dinnertime

c. 1950; St. Louis, Missouri, USA

One day in 1950, when I was eight, I was playing softball outside with my friend Donna when my mom called me in for dinner. The bright orange sunset blinded me as Donna threw the pitch. I glared at the ball soaring straight at me and hit with all my might like it was the championship game. The ball went into the empty lot across the street, down the hill, and into the creek. As we ran to retrieve it, my mom yelled sternly, “*Jane, come for dinner!*”

When I went in, I heard a familiar slam of the car door. It was my oldest stepbrother. He came in and dashed up the stairs, where I always longed to be. He had his own room, while I slept on a cot in my parents’ room. My parents had barely any extra money. Building an extra room, or even just getting a real bed, was out of the question. My stepfather was strict, we were always on a budget, and that’s just the way it was.

I heard repetitive footsteps coming down the dark, gloomy hall to the kitchen. The footsteps grew louder and louder, and whoever was walking was very angry. I knew my stepfather was always angry or grumpy, but today he seemed extra angry. We usually just stayed out of his way when he stormed into a room. My stepfather — a big, strong man — filled the doorway, pausing to survey the room to see if everything was how he wanted it. He took a seat in his usual chair.

“Boys, come down for dinner!” my mom announced. Then, like it was on cue, the phone rang! My heart sank as I prayed it wouldn’t be for me.

My stepfather got up out of his chair, rushed over to the phone ripped it off its hook, and said, “Hello,” in a deep, scary voice. At that point, it was so quiet that you could have heard a pin drop! My brothers and I prayed it wouldn’t be for us! I was petrified. I could hear my own teeth grinding! “Jane!” he grumbled. He dropped the phone and gestured to it. “For you,” he said.

I got up and wanted to move quickly, but my feet dragged like cement. “Hello, who is it?” I said frantically.

“Hi, Jane. It’s Donna. I was wondering if you wanted to come back out?”

“Donna, not now! You know what time it is!”

I sat there for a second after Donna had hung up. The phone buzzed, like a gazillion bees swarming for dear life. I discreetly snuck back over to the table. Everyone pretended not to notice. I sat down, waiting to get yelled at.

“GO TO YOUR ROOM!” my stepfather screamed. My left ear felt as if lightning struck through it! I got up, trudged to my room, and tried not to cry.

Life in the 1950s was different for me. There were strict parents and strict rules. This taught me to be extra kind and to value family.

Gracie Luedde, granddaughter of Jane; Missouri, USA

20. A Christmas Miracle

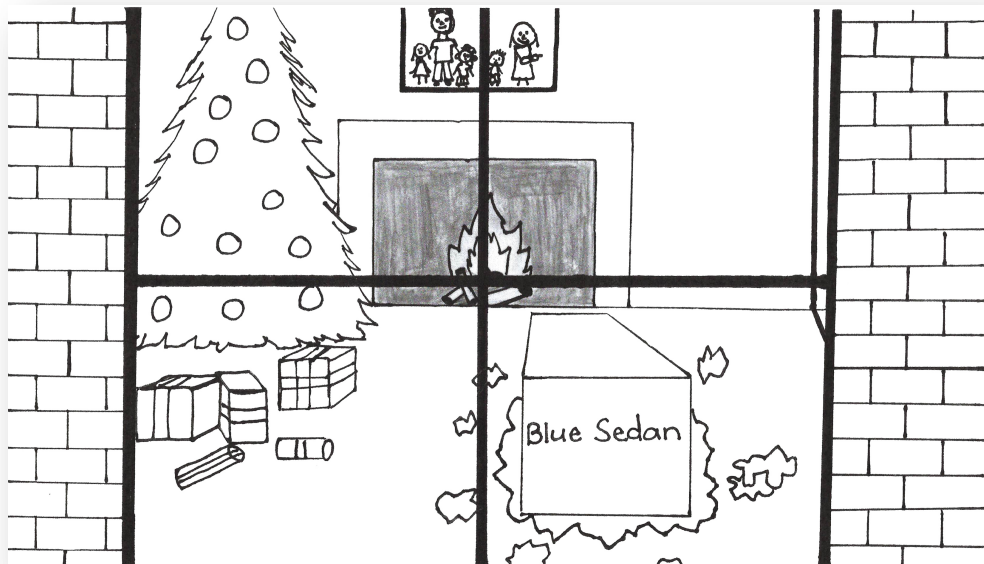
c. 1951; Vinita Park, Missouri, USA

It was 1951, and my grandpa, four-year-old Edward Wiegert, sat on the couch in his home, located in the suburb of Vinita Park, Missouri. He was writing his wish list for “Santa” and knew exactly what it would contain: a red pedal-car fire truck, with a step on the back and two wooden ladders on the side. He’d seen it advertised in many toy stores, and to him it was the coolest thing he’d ever seen. But there was only one problem: “Santa” couldn’t afford it.

My grandpa and his family weren’t rich or poor; they were just a working family like most people at the time. They could afford many things — the fire truck, however, was not one of them. My grandpa’s parents pondered the dilemma but could come up with only one option that worked: They would have to buy something that would substitute for the fire truck. They visited a local store and bought a toy car that was a blue sedan. “It’s not the fire truck, but it’ll have to work,” they thought. Then they loaded the box into their car and drove off, unaware of the surprise that would come next.

The next morning, screams of joy and excitement filled my grandpa’s household. “It’s Christmas!” Ed and his siblings shouted. It was indeed Christmas, and the Wiegert boys ran down the stairs, eager to see if “Santa” had come and dropped off gifts. Their wishes were granted when they noticed the colorful array of red and green boxes under their lit-up tree, sparkling in the daylight. Then Ed’s parents arose and went downstairs to see what the commotion was about. They noticed the gifts and nominated Ed to go first.

Ed picked out his large, long present wrapped in red and examined the package. “What could it be?” he wondered. Anxious to see what was inside, Ed tore at the wrapping paper and started to open the cardboard box labeled “Blue Sedan.” Fortunately for Ed, he couldn’t read, so the contents remained unknown.



Then, with all the red paper strewn across the floor, he could see what the box held: *the fire truck!* He leaped up in the air and pumped his fists. “Yes!” he screamed. “I got it!”

His parents’ jaws dropped. How could this be? This wasn’t what they had gotten him! But somehow the fire truck — the gift that Ed had wanted — had ended up in the box after all. They were amazed and truly in awe. “What a miracle!” they thought. It wasn’t until a few years later that Ed discovered that there had been a mystery about his gift. However, he still truly believes that Santa used his magic to fulfill his wish.

To this day, my grandpa remembers this story fondly and has enjoyed proclaiming the tale to family and friends over the years. He believes this story truly symbolizes what “Christmas magic” means. He also believes it shows that God has little ways of expressing himself through miracles — and that anything is possible with Him by your side.

Avery Piñon; Missouri, USA

Illustrator: Bella Patino; Missouri, USA

21. Join the Fight for Freedom

1958; New Castle, Indiana; and Alabama, USA

My name is Freida Hasek, and I am fifteen years old. In 1958 my parents opened their first supermarket. The first time that my parents had a little extra money and they also had a lot of employees, they decided to take our family on our first vacation to Florida. We couldn't be gone long. We drove from New Castle, Indiana, to Florida.

My parents took turns driving. We stopped only to eat and to go to the bathroom. There were not fast-food restaurants, only local restaurants. My dad didn't want to wait that long, so we stopped only at Dairy Queens.

At one stop in Alabama I ordered my ice cream cone and went to the side of the Dairy Queen to get a drink from the outdoor drinking fountain. While I was drinking, a group of white people started yelling at my parents and me very horrible names. My parents were very frightened, like I was.

My dad grabbed me and threw me into our car and peeled his wheels, racing out of the parking lot as fast as he could. My mom was crying, and I was crying, and I could tell that my dad was very scared. I asked, "What's wrong? What's wrong? What happened? What did I do?"

My mom explained that I had gotten a drink from the "Negro Only" drinking fountain. Because we had a license plate from Indiana, the locals thought we were there to start trouble by drinking from the "Negro Only" drinking fountain. The truth was that I didn't know there were different drinking fountains for whites and for blacks. I hadn't read the sign above the fountain. My dad was telling my mom to look behind us to see if we were being followed, and he was telling me to be very quiet. We did not talk about this during the rest of the trip.

Back in Indiana my mother joined the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP).¹ She told me that if I told people she had done that, then the Ku Klux Klan (KKK)² would burn down our stores. The KKK's meeting spot was right down our road, so we had to be really careful. The KKK was as mean as a monster. If our stores would get burnt, my parents would be out of work. That would not be good, because my parents wouldn't have a job and would not get more money.

This was a lesson that I learned — to always look above the drinking fountain.

Aiden Hasek, grandson of Freida; Missouri, USA

1. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) is an organization that works to eliminate discrimination against African-Americans.

2. The Ku Klux Klan (KKK) is a secret organization that tries to limit the rights of minorities, especially African-Americans, often by using threats and violence.

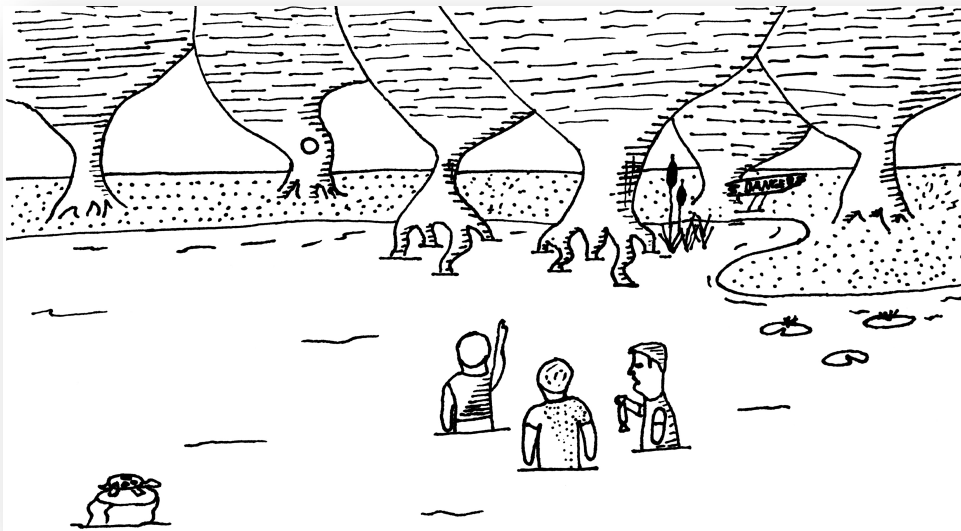
22. Life or Candy?

1960; Vizag, Andhra Pradesh, India

One late winter afternoon when my grandpa was a teenager, he was hanging out with his friends. They were going to take a dip in the pond after a long day at school. They were having lots of fun. They were having water fights, having swimming races, just enjoying time by themselves.

Just as the sun went down, when my grandpa felt like wrapping up the day and was about to go home, his friend dared him to go and swim in the deeper end of the pond. Grandpa knew about that end of the pond. It had many different types of algae and unusual water currents. There were rumors that people had died there. Pretty soon the rest of Grandpa's friends were also daring him to swim in the deeper end of the pond.

My grandpa was about to loudly say NO, but his friend bribed him, saying that he would give him candy if he did it. My grandpa was about to decline the deal, but then the rest of his friends were already chanting, "SWIM, SWIM, SWIM. . ."



Now, my grandpa loved candy. Even a tiny sprinkle would make him very happy. Also, he didn't want to act like a scaredy-cat in front of his friends.

So he went into the deeper end.

But as soon as he did this, he started drowning. My grandpa could swim, but not that well. He yelled, "HELP . . . HE—"

His friends tried to come and save him, but they were too far away. Just when my grandpa's life seemed almost over, a worker cleaning up the pond area came to his rescue. He pulled my grandpa out of the pond by his shoulder. And he scolded my grandpa for attempting such a stupid dare.

You may think that my grandpa had learnt his lesson. But he didn't learn his lesson at all. Guess what he did next. He ignored the worker completely, walked up to his friend, and asked, "Dude, where's my candy?"

Shiva Garuda; Colorado, USA

Illustrator: Nathan Little; Missouri, USA

23. *Sobrevivientes* (Survivors)

1961; Havana, Cuba; Miami, Florida, and Chicago, Illinois, USA

“He needs out! Right now!” I could hear *mi madre*¹ sobbing from the other room. Children all over the island, five years old and up, were being sent to dreaded youth camps, where they would be put to work. Unfortunately for me, I, Sergio, was fourteen.

I needed out of the country desperately. Fortunately my family had a plan for my sister Elisa and me. We had recently moved closer to the biggest of the three airports in Cuba. My only hope of escaping was with the visa American “missionaries” had brought me. When they heard about Castro, priests all over the United States rushed to find a way to rescue kids from the mayhem. One American priest had the *only* good idea: He got help from some people in the U.S. government and several other organizations.² Thanks to him, there I was, visa in one hand, sister in the other, ready to leave at a moment’s notice.

The phone lines were tapped, and we didn’t know exactly *when* the plane would leave. A “code” was eventually used to let us know that the plane would leave at three o’clock that day.

I took my pocket watch out. “Let’s go!” I shrieked at Elisa. We scampered to the plane, but I sat far away from her. I was sweating, and my hands were shaking. I dared a glance back. Elisa looked nervous too, and I knew exactly why.

Everyone was nervous because there was a chance that this plane wouldn’t even get into the air. Men were sauntering down the aisle, nearing Elisa. I gulped. I *prayed* she wouldn’t get thrown off the plane like others had, and it seemed to work. A few minutes later we were in the air, and soon we landed in Miami, Florida.

A person from customs³ gave us papers saying that we were permanent political refugees. Then we stayed overnight with Spanish-speaking friends.

The next morning we boarded a plane headed for Chicago. When we landed, we were hopelessly lost in the enormous airport. We needed to find the plane that would take us to Peoria. Elisa and I wandered aimlessly, unable to read any signs or understand English. By some miracle, a man whose ticket matched ours helped us to our gate and bought us hot dogs on the way. We reached the plane just in time. The second we landed in Peoria, relief flooded over me.

I knew I was lucky. I had made it to America, and so had my sister. We stayed with another one of my sisters, who lived in America. I was only fourteen but had escaped one of Castro’s youth camps. I may not see my family for many years to come, but I will forever carry my memories of them in my heart. *Madré* would be proud of the life I have made for myself in this new country. I will never forget this part of my life as long as I live. I am a survivor. Looking back now as a seventy-two-year-old, I still remember it like it was yesterday. I will never forget you, *querida familia*.⁴

Ava Fernández, granddaughter of Sergio; Missouri, USA

1. Translation from Spanish: “my mother.”

2. This flight was part of Operation Peter Pan (*Operación Pedro Pan*) that moved 14,000 children from Cuba to the United States between 1960 and 1962. Parents had requested this opportunity for their children.
3. Customs is the place where documents and baggage of people entering a country are inspected by a government agency.
4. Translation from Spanish: “dear family.”

24. The Window

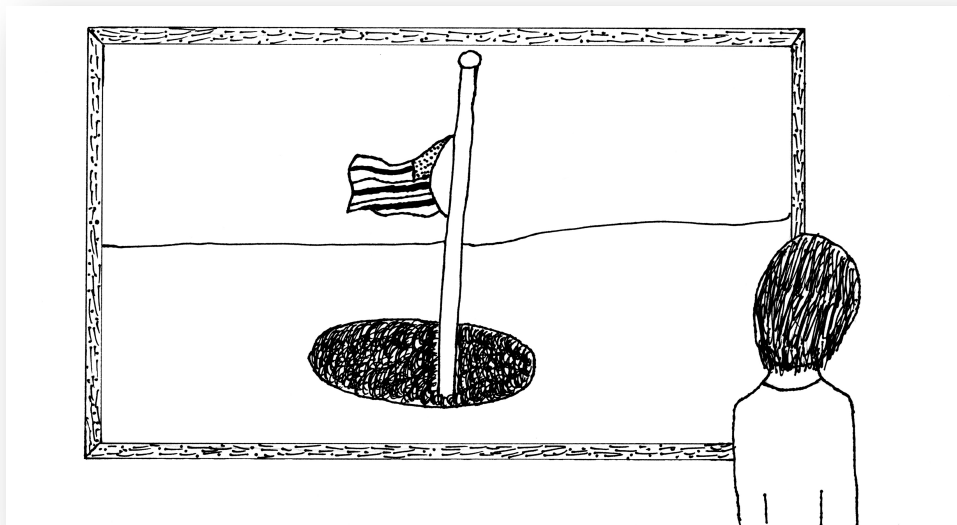
1963; Grand Island, Nebraska, USA

When I was six years old, I was in first grade at Wasmer Elementary School in Grand Island, Nebraska. I was just like any other six-year-old who was worried about what to do after school and what we were having for lunch. I did not have an understanding of what titles meant, except that when an older person told you to do something you always did it.

It was a chilly November day, and we had just come in from lunch when the principal came to our classroom to speak quietly with my teacher, Miss Glade. I could tell she was surprised by what he whispered. After he turned and quickly left our classroom, Miss Glade sat a few minutes and then asked all of us to quietly stand from our desks and walk over to the window of our room.

We all did exactly what she said, except we were noisy and loudly talking to each other the whole way over. Miss Glade was a first-grade teacher, and she did not usually raise her voice, but she raised her voice that day when she told us we must not speak and must stand quietly. She then quickly explained that the president, John F. Kennedy, had been killed while riding in the back of a car during a huge parade. I remember thinking that was sad, but I didn't understand why we had to get up and go to the big glass window.

We watched as someone lowered the flag to half-staff, another event that I didn't understand. We solemnly said the Pledge of Allegiance while they lowered that flag, and again I thought how strange it was, because we had already said the pledge that morning. Why would they lower the flag? Why were we saying the pledge again? What did all of this mean?



When I got home that day, my dad was already home and I could tell he was not himself. He was visibly upset. I asked him why, and he said, “John F. Kennedy was killed today.”

I said, “I know, but why is everyone so upset? Who exactly is the president of the United States, and why does his death upset so many people?”

My father looked a little taken aback, but he told me the importance of the president’s job and all the ways his decisions affect all of our lives. He told me why they slowly lowered the flag and why they always take it all the way to the peak before dropping it to half-staff. He said that the flag is lowered out of respect for the lives of those people who have dedicated their lives to making our lives better.

This event was life-changing for the entire world. This story was told to me by my grandma, and it helped me realize how important the president of the United States is to all of us and how fast an act of violence can affect so many people.

Callie Wadas; Nebraska, USA

Illustrator: David Evans; Missouri, USA

25. A Secret Love Story

1965–1973; St. Louis, Missouri, USA

Teen Town was a lively hot spot in the '60s — where teens would dance and hang out. I was fourteen at the time and was hanging out with my friends, watching an African-American dance group. There was one dancer whom I had my eye on. He was gorgeous, his wardrobe was unique, he could dance. It was obvious that I had a crush. My name is Debbi Thorpe, and this is my crazy, rebellious love story.

Suddenly that dancer was walking towards me! I couldn't see, think, or even talk! My heart began to pound! I tried to smile, but I worried I had something stuck in my teeth. "Hey, my name is Leon," he said.

Finally I took a deep breath. "Hi, my name is Debbi." Leon and I talked for quite some time, and soon I felt like I could tell him anything. That day we decided to secretly date, because I was positive he could be "the one."

We had to date secretly because in the 1960s races were still segregated. Our school forbade us to talk to each other. We met at Leon's house, at the Fox Theater, and behind the school. We were tired of the rules that did not matter! Leon would tell me how people would treat him. I truly felt bad for Leon because he had to go through every day dealing with ignorant people just because of the color of his skin.

Four years later I was still dating Leon. I believed he was the one. One day I was at home in my room when suddenly my telephone began to ring. I picked it up. I scrambled to lock my door, and stretched the phone cord towards my closet as far as it could go. Leon began to speak. "Debbi, you're the love of my life. My brother is married and he is happy with his wife, and I want that for us. What I'm saying is, Will you marry me?"

"Of course! A million times yes!" I said. We planned to have our wedding at the Normandy Justice of the Peace. It was, of course, also to be a secret.

The only people at the wedding were my friend Sharren and Leon's friend Willy. The next day my mother called me. She had discovered our marriage through a newspaper article. My heart sank like the *Titanic*! I had to do something, so I called my father. I explained everything to him, and he decided to move me in with Leon.

Four great years later, Leon and I already had one son, Brent, and were expecting our second child. Our love story started as a secret, but would last a lifetime.

Meghan Thorpe, granddaughter of Debbi; Missouri, USA

26. Before Honor

1967; Hanoi, North Vietnam¹

“Before honor comes humility.” This is a quote from the Bible.² This verse became an important life lesson to my uncle, Captain Eugene “Red” McDaniel. He was a pilot in the United States Navy during the Vietnam War. During an alpha strike³ bombing raid over Van Din, sixty miles south of Hanoi, on May 19, 1967, he was shot down and captured by the North Vietnamese. While in captivity, he learned about humility and about being honorable.

Red was born in Kinston, North Carolina, in 1931. He was the oldest of eight children. Before he entered the navy, he was a remarkably talented student and athlete. He was the hometown basketball and baseball star, and he went on to play baseball on scholarship at Campbell Junior College in Buies Creek, North Carolina. Red was popular and had many friends. It was at Campbell that he met his future wife, Dorothy Howard. He succeeded in almost everything he attempted to do personally, academically, and athletically.

When Red finished college in 1955, he entered the United States Navy. He immediately had an interest in aviation. Over the next decade, Red trained diligently to become a pilot. He was eventually deployed for a combat tour to Vietnam in 1966. From November 1966 through May 1967, Red flew eighty-one combat mission air strikes. It was on his eighty-second alpha strike bombing raid that he was shot down by the enemy with a surface-to-air missile. He crashed his plane but ejected out of the cockpit. He was then captured behind enemy lines.

Red was held as a prisoner of war for the next six years. He was tortured in ways the average person cannot even begin to understand. The North Vietnamese would make Red kneel on his knees on cold, dirty floors for days. They kept him in isolation. They would run electricity through his body. They mostly kept him locked in a cage, but at times would chain him to a wall.

It was during those darkest hours, thousands of miles from home and family, that Red came to understand the true meaning of humility. He had lost everything — his plane, his family, and even his freedom. This was a new concept for the always-successful, always-in-control pilot. In his darkest hour, Red learned to lean fully on God for strength.

After six long years, Red was finally released from captivity on March 4, 1973. His family welcomed him with open arms. Red spent almost a year recovering at Portsmouth Naval Hospital in Virginia. He eventually resumed active duty in the navy and retired in 1982.

For many years Red advocated for the return of other American prisoners of war. He considers himself one of the lucky ones, because he got to return home alive. Many prisoners of war did not. Despite the torture and abuse from the enemy, Red found strength in God to survive and to return home with a heart filled with love and hope.

A. W. Tribula; North Carolina, USA

1. In 1976 North Vietnam and South Vietnam were merged to form one country: Vietnam.

2. Proverbs 15:33, New American Standard Bible.

3. An alpha strike is a large air attack by dozens of planes from an aircraft carrier.

27. His Name Was Alfie

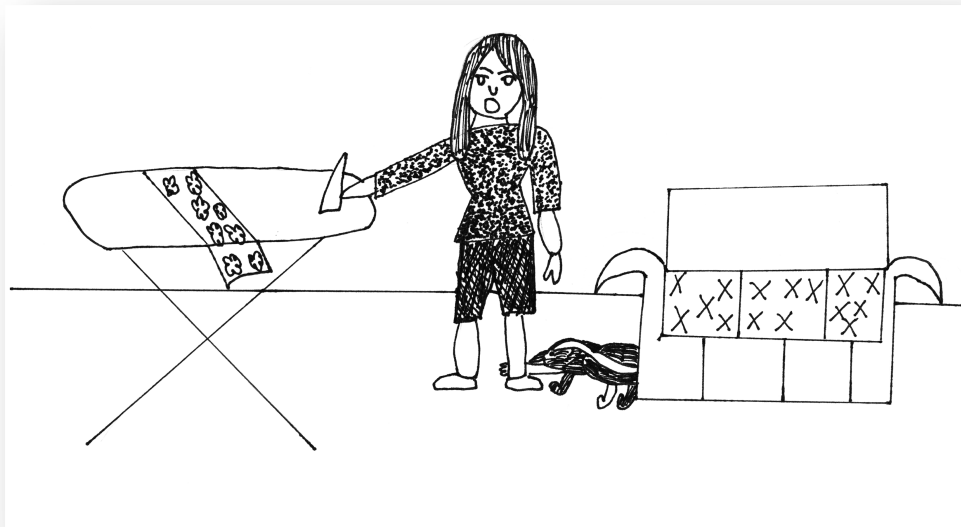
1967; Memphis, Tennessee, and Little Rock, Arkansas, USA

It was 1967, and I was fifteen years old. My name is Janice Jane Pandolfi, and I was living in Memphis, Tennessee. I went to visit my grandmother in Arkansas for the summer. My great-uncle heard about some baby skunks whose mother had been killed by a dog. My sister Rebecca kept one of the baby skunks and named him after the song “What’s It All About, Alfie?”

Alfie bit Rebecca too much, so she gave him to me. Alfie was all black with a white spot on his nose, and when his tail stood straight up you could see a white line going down his tail. Alfie ate cat food, grub worms, and meat scraps, and he loved pecans. He lived in a pen in the yard. Sometimes he would come in and wander around the house.

Alfie did not like my brother, David. Alfie would stomp and do a little handstand and chase and bite David, and even though Alfie had gotten his scent gland removed, he would still act like he was going to spray him. Alfie also didn’t like my dad, because one cold night my dad was going to bring Alfie in so he wouldn’t freeze. When he picked Alfie up, Dad slipped and Alfie sailed through the air into a puddle of cold water. Alfie never forgave him.

Alfie liked to be grabbed by the legs and flung down the hallway — he’d slide on his back like a hockey puck, and run back so he could go again. One time when Alfie wanted to play but my mom was ironing, he hid under the couch and wrapped his hands around her ankle and slipped one hand into her shoe and scratched the bottom of her foot really hard. When she jumped up, he ran away.



Alfie was like a cat and a dog in one, because he was soft and cuddly like a cat and he used a litterbox, but he also liked to go for rides and stick his head out the car window. Once I took Alfie to school, and he got his picture taken. He ended

up in the yearbook! One day he got out of his cage and ran away. Later a car pulled up in our driveway, and the people said, “We think we have your skunk.”

I said, “I sure hope that’s my skunk!” It was! Alfie was in the back seat playing with their kids. He looked at me with his soft blinky face, innocent as a daisy on a spring day.

Alfie was really playful. You might not think so, but a skunk is a very good pet to have. Alfie lived for thirteen years. I will never forget him.

Elizabeth Merrill, granddaughter of Janice; Missouri, USA

Illustrator: Nautica Fowle; Missouri, USA

28. Half the Dam

late 1960s; Youngstown, Ohio, USA

A long time ago in the late 1960s in Youngstown, Ohio, I was sitting around my house feeling extremely bored. It was summertime, and the temperature was rising. I so badly wanted to go to the public pool, but I wasn't allowed to go by myself, for I was only nine years old back then. Suddenly the light bulb in my head turned on, and I got an amazing idea.

My house was on a small hill above Mill Creek Park, a public park with many streams that led to lakes. There were also many rocks and pebbles around, something I kept in mind while I thought up my plan in my head. I went to my sister Mary Pat's bedroom and told her my idea. "I see no flaws with this plan," she said sarcastically.

"Great! Then let's go get the others!" I exclaimed. Amazingly, she went along with my plan.

With Mary Pat lagging behind me, we walked down to Debbie's house, a friend of mine from school. I knocked a rhythmic tune on her door. When she finally came to the door (after my knocking several times, that is), I told her my plan.

"Sorry, no can do. It's my turn to do chores today," she said glumly. "But maybe tomorrow?"

For a while I thought about what she'd said. Then I came to a solution. "How 'bout you just don't do them?"

She looked at me like I was the next Einstein. Then she started shouting up the stairs, "Mom, I got my chores done. I'm going to play with Paula and Mary Pat!"

"It's *Polly*," I mumbled under my breath. I hate when people call me "Paula."

With Debbie at my side and Mary Pat still slowly lagging behind, we went off to Bonnie's house. "Do we have to get Bonnie?" Debbie said sourly.

"Yep, we need as many people as we can get," I said with confidence in my voice.

"Oh, fine," Debbie said, as though she was being forced to eat broccoli. "But don't expect me to be nice." Debbie and Bonnie had been fighting ever since they both got a crush on the same boy.

After we got Bonnie and Karen (we had to sneak Karen out of her bedroom window because she was grounded), we went down to Mill Creek Park and found a pretty spacious stream. "Perfect," I thought in my head. I ordered the four girls around, making them gather rocks and make a pile of them by a tree. "Okay, let's start making the dam!" I ordered. We spent the hour making a dam out of rocks and pebbles.



Then we started swimming around and splashing in the stream. It was so much fun — until the park officers found us, that is. We had to take down the rock dam. We took down only half of it, for some unknown reason.

To this very day, I can still see the wall when I drive past.

Josie Phillips, granddaughter of Polly; Ohio, USA

Illustrator: Erica M. Kalista; Missouri, USA

29. 70-Pound Soldiers

1969; near Da Nang, South Vietnam;¹ near Dothan, Alabama, USA

I don't remember my grandfather very well — he was dying before I was born. But I *do* know that he was a hero. We called our hero “Papa Lee.”

On a hot summer day my mother and grandfather Thomas Lee Shannon (Papa Lee) were driving in his truck. Cotton fields were in full bloom on either side of the country road. My mother loved riding along, listening to music and to my grandfather's stories. Papa Lee didn't enjoy talking about Vietnam, but my mother asked him about it. Maybe he thought she was old enough, maybe it was a whim. He did not tell this story to brag about himself — he just told the story.

It was April 27, 1969. My grandfather was stationed near Da Nang in the Republic of Vietnam. Papa Lee and his unit were attacked. The North Vietnamese bombed their ammunition supply, causing fires and explosions all over the camp. The building where the Marine sentry dogs were kept, caught on fire, and my grandfather could hear the helpless cries of the dogs trapped inside.

Papa Lee and a few other men decided to disobey direct orders from a superior officer and rescue the dogs. The sentry dogs had been willing to die for their trainers, and Papa Lee was willing to risk his life for them. My grandfather carried dogs from the burning building. He saved the lives of five 70-pound German shepherds.

Papa Lee was awarded a bronze star with a “V” for “valor.” “Only the military gives out awards for surviving bad decisions,” he said.

Later Papa Lee got cancer. His cancer was caused by exposure to Agent Orange, a herbicide that was sprayed from planes over the jungles of Vietnam. Although he didn't die during the Vietnam War, it was the Vietnam War that eventually killed him.

Few of the soldiers returning home from Vietnam were welcomed as heroes. To all of the soldiers who served in Vietnam, I would like to say, “Welcome home, and thank you for your service.”

Lily Naylor; Alabama, USA

1. South Vietnam's official name was “Republic of Vietnam.” In 1976 North Vietnam and South Vietnam were merged to form one country: Vietnam.

30. An Unforgettable Journey on the Island

1969; an island in Jiangxi Province, People's Republic of China

In 1969, when my father was six, he lived in Beijing, China, where my grandparents were professors at Peking University. In the summer of that year, right in the middle of the Chinese Cultural Revolution,¹ Chairman Mao² sent all the professors at Peking University to an isolated island in Jiangxi Province, to do labor for re-education.³ My dad had to go with his parents to Jiangxi.

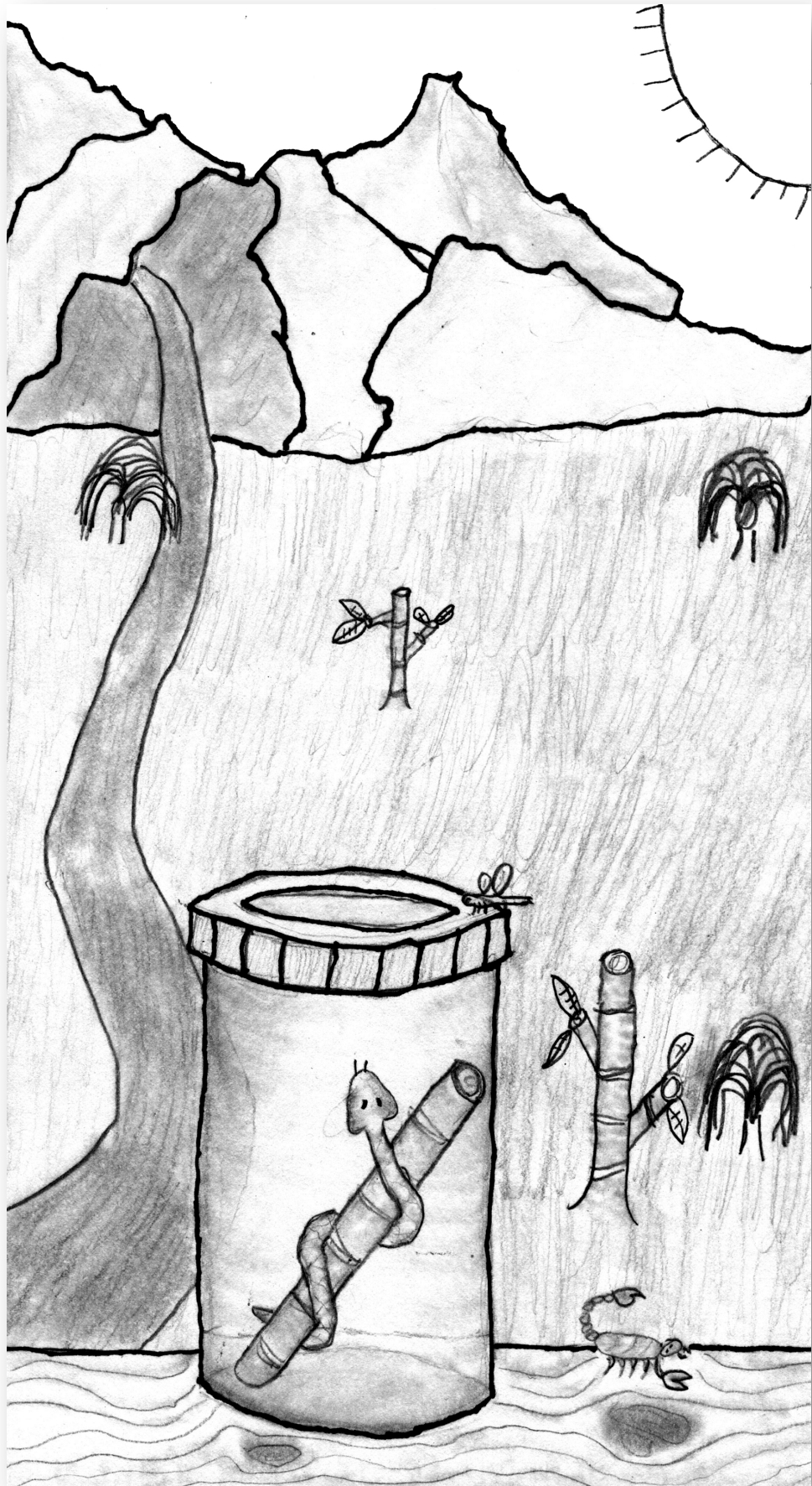
It was a long journey. My dad took a train, many buses, and finally a boat to get to the island. When they reached their destination, they found no houses, almost nothing to eat, and dirty water. Mosquitoes, scorpions, snakes, and rats were there to welcome them. My grandparents and their colleagues had to build shelters. They also had to boil their drinking water. The food became monotonous after a while.

Having lived in a nice Beijing apartment, my dad didn't understand why his family had to live in such a harsh environment. He missed the candy he loved and the toys he had spent many hours playing with.

My grandparents were forced to do farm work, and my dad was too young to go to school, so he completely immersed himself in the beautiful scenery around him. Every day he would go out exploring, and the nature was his good friend. My father taught himself basic survival skills, such as how to start a fire and how to catch crickets and dragonflies, and he would often enjoy inspecting the bugs. Sometimes my father would cook and eat the insects after he caught them. He even taught himself to identify which crickets were female and which were male. Every day there was something new to explore.

There was a professor who was a master at catching snakes. One time the professor caught a beautiful, poisonous bamboo leaf snake that was a foot and a half long. The snake had green skin and a triangular head, and the underside of the snake was white with a red line down the middle. The professor kept the snake in a glass jar, so my father and his friends were able to study the structures of the snake. When the snake opened its mouth, my father could see the needle-shaped teeth that could inject venom — and the black tongue.

At the time, meat was a rare delicacy for the people on the island, so the snake later was killed and chopped into pieces, but each piece still wiggled for a while after the chopping. The professor cooked a delicious meal, and it was the best meal they had had in a long time. Later, my father followed the professor along on his snake-hunting journeys. They caught many more snakes, and that delicacy turned into a regular meal. My dad still remembers savoring the marvelous meals and tasting the freshness of the meat.



Even though life was very cruel on the island, it was the most memorable time from my father's childhood. He learned to withstand harsh conditions and learned how to enjoy himself with the nature.

Sarah Ding; Missouri, USA

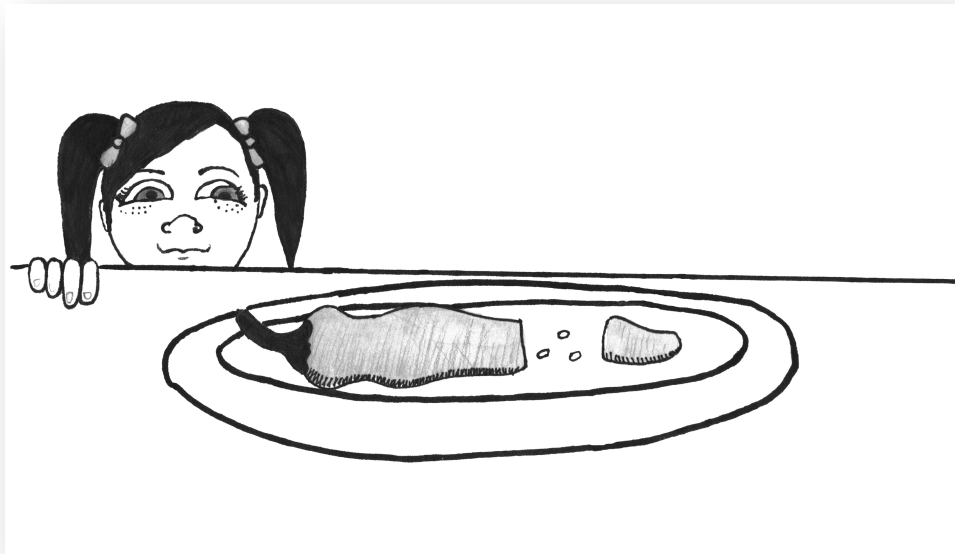
Illustrator: Noah Palmer; Missouri, USA

1. The Chinese Cultural Revolution was the government's attempt to strengthen Communism in the People's Republic of China by removing non-Communist practices and Chinese traditions.
2. Mao Zedong (mow zuh DOONG — first syllable rhymes with “how”) was a founder of the Communist Party in China and served as chairman of that party from 1943 to 1976. He also led the revolution that established the People's Republic of China, and served as leader of that country from 1954 to 1959.
3. Re-education, which often involved placing people in harsh living conditions, attempted to change people's thinking about their government.

31. The Twins and a Chili Pepper

1970; St. Charles, Missouri, USA

The day began like any other day, and nothing had gone wrong — yet. Five-year-old twins Danny and Lisa were enjoying another lovely day in 1970, but little Lisa decided to bring chaos into their home once more. They were simply standing in the kitchen, because they had just finished eating dinner, when Lisa saw her key to revenge for all the annoying things Danny did. There on the counter was a small chili pepper.



Lisa was the one who usually got picked on, but she had finally found a way to get revenge. Just a small chili pepper — that’s all it took. Danny was missing a tooth, which gave Lisa the perfect idea of how to get devious little Danny back.

“Hey, Danny, I have something for you!” she said. Danny thought that Lisa might have candy, so he walked over to her. Little Danny loved candy so much that he had once run away to a candy store, which had scared the life out of his family. He also had once eaten a small green and red glass ornament, thinking that it was candy. Young Danny seemed to be quite gullible, which made it pretty easy for Lisa to trick him.

When Danny walked over to Lisa, she told him to open his mouth. There was a gaping hole caused by the missing tooth, so this was the perfect idea. Lisa turned around, put a pepper seed on her finger, and held her hand behind her back. Danny opened his mouth, anxiously awaiting a sweet treat. Instead, Lisa violently shoved the seed into Danny’s gum.

At first Danny was confused. But then he slowly felt an awful feeling. His mouth felt like an actual fire was burning inside it. His face slowly turned red, his eyes were watering, and it felt like a volcano had erupted inside his mouth. Danny

began screaming so loud that Lisa thought the neighbors could hear him. He looked like he was crying waterfalls, and he was running around like a psychopath.

Little Lisa was laughing so hard that she started tearing up. She rubbed her eyes to wipe her own tears, but then realized the huge mistake she had made. It's not smart to rub your eyes after touching a pepper seed. Lisa's eyes began to water and sting. She began screaming and running around, too.

From the other room their mom, Bev, heard them. Bev was worried out of her mind and ran to see what was the matter. Between the cries and screams, Danny and Lisa told her what had happened. Bev had to wash out Danny's mouth and Lisa's eyes.

Despite what happened with the chili pepper, Danny loves spicy food. Lisa learned a good lesson that day: What goes around comes around.

Sarah Schneider, daughter of Danny; Missouri, USA

Illustrator: Kylie Taliaferro; Missouri, USA

32. Heart of God

1974; Panama City, Panama

Years ago, in the Central American nation of Panama, lived a ten-year-old girl who was about to discover her passion for medicine. One day Anabela's teacher brought a heart model to her class — the girl was amazed by the intricacies of the human heart. A fire had been lit in Anabela's heart and mind — she discovered her love for medical sciences.

The moment Anabela arrived home from school, she told her father that she wanted to grow up to become a heart doctor. Anabela's father supported her dream and even went so far as to buy her a microscope. The little girl was ecstatic about her gift and immediately set about obtaining interesting samples to observe under her microscope. She scoured her neighborhood for plants to observe — she even took some hairs from family members to study!

Anabela, with her family's love and support, studied hard and graduated at the top of her class. She went on to attend college, using scholastic merit scholarships.

Along with the support of her family, Anabela found a guiding hand along the road to her dreams — God. She was extremely faithful and even dreamed of becoming a missionary. Anabela attended church services, but she couldn't understand the preacher because her native tongue was Spanish. She was very worried about starting medical school when she was still struggling to learn English, but the missionaries reassured her and implored her to not be afraid, because all things are possible through God.

Anabela attended medical school in the United States of America and had to work very hard to learn everything. She had to attend her classes, translate all of the coursework into Spanish so that she could effectively study it, and then prepare herself to be able to take tests written in English! Despite the difficulty the language barrier presented, Anabela persevered through faith and hard work.

Over the course of her time in medical school, Anabela became proficient in the English language, which made the coursework easier for her. She graduated with her Doctor of Medicine degree with a specialization in cardiology. Anabela had achieved her childhood dream of becoming a heart doctor! In the years that followed, she was commissioned in the United States Navy, married a fellow cardiologist, opened her own heart practice with her husband, and had two daughters. Although she never became a missionary, her faith in God has remained strong and has been a pillar of strength throughout her life.

Lauren Lee, daughter of Anabela; Alabama, USA

33. Room for Two

c. 1978; St. Louis, Missouri, USA

The Jeep Wagoneer was packed and ready for moving day. Five kids piled into the vehicle, including my father, six-year-old John. John's father, Alvin, started the engine, and the family set off towards their new home in Arizona. Alvin drove for miles before they needed more supplies. Then they stopped at the nearest Walmart.

As soon as they pulled into the parking lot, the family began a hunt for a parking space. The lot was unusually crowded, and it was jam-packed with honking cars, shopping carts, flashing lights, and busy people. John was surrounded by noise and motion. Eventually, after circling the parking lot multiple times, Alvin found a comfortable spot large enough for the Wagoneer, and still roomy.

Alvin began to pull the vehicle into the parking space. Suddenly a driver coming toward them hit the gas and sped into the empty spot. The man who had been driving hopped out of the car, and to the horror of John's entire family, sprinted towards Walmart. Alvin swiftly jumped out of the Wagoneer and chased after him, calling, "Hey, hey! Wait!" When Alvin caught up to the man he asked, "Do you think that we can both fit?"

The man was surprised by the question. He stuttered, "Um, yes. Yes, I suppose we could." They returned to the parking space and adjusted their vehicles so that they could both squeeze into the spot.

Afterwards, John was surprised. He'd thought that his father would yell, or even beat the stranger up. In the end, they were able to go into Walmart and get what they needed to buy.

The reaction from Alvin was pleasantly unexpected. John was surprised at the generosity his father had shown the man who had taken their spot. He realized that the correct thing to do was not what he had expected to happen. This made a large impression on John as a kid. Kindness is more important than self-righteousness.

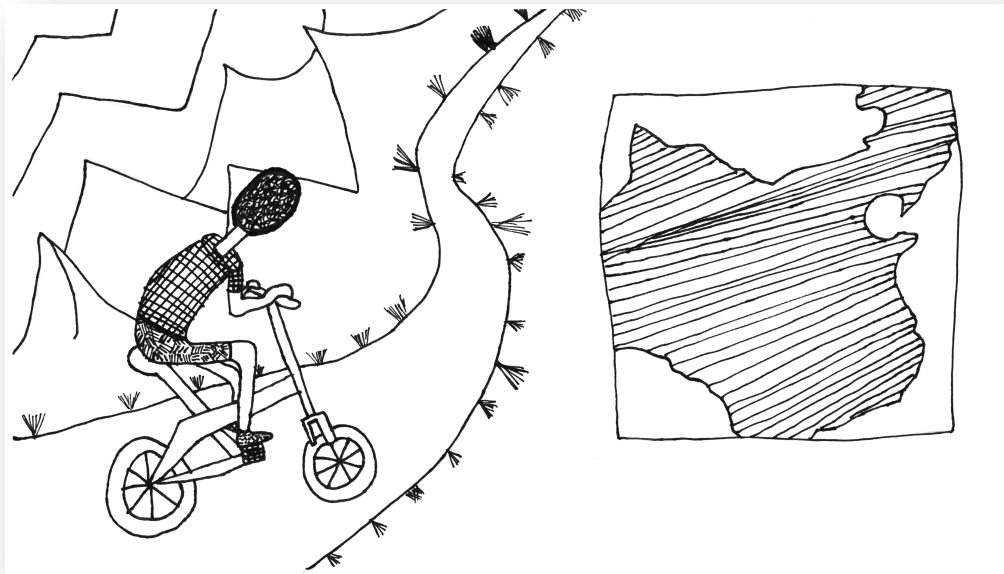
Florence M. Sarra; Missouri, USA

34. My Father's Game of Dreams

1980s; Xi'an, Shaanxi Province, People's Republic of China

Every person has dreams, but not everyone has the resources to follow those soft and eager dreams. My father's dream, when he was a starry-eyed ten-year-old, was to travel the vast land of his beautiful home country of China. He longed to go to the rice paddies of Yunnan, to follow the busy life at the capital (Beijing), and to travel to all the unique parts of China — from Tibet to the southern tip of China, to where Nanjing is kissing Thailand. My father longed to go and explore every single corner of China and, eventually, of the world. So he invented a game with my uncle, who was then twelve and resourceful, with many interesting ideas.

My father's family did not have a lot of resources to actually visit these diverse places, but the boys still wanted an authentic experience. Kids in China during that period were not left with much to play with — only what they could make, or random “found” items. My uncle decided to think of his own game with the meager materials he had: a bicycle, a map of China (which my dad looked at for countless hours), and the will to travel.



So then the game began. Older brother and younger brother chose a place to “visit” and then got onto the bike. They pedaled until their legs were jelly or it seemed to be a correct amount of time to get to their mysterious destination. Then they “explored” their place and got to “meet the locals” and marvel at the fact that they were finally there. “Wow, did you know that Tibet was this cold? Don't forget to bring your coat next time!” “Sichuan food sure is spicy!” It was a game of dreams, something that took the combined effort of both young and older.

As the boys grew up, this game was left aside, both brothers instead using the time to study. My father, in today's age, is finally able to travel to the places he

“visited” as a child. He marvels at the food that my uncle had made during their travels and laughs at what they thought the weather would have been like. He gasps at the beauty of every single place and, thankfully, takes my sister and me along for the ride. This game of dreams lives on within every single one of us, in our imaginations.

Karen Yang; New Jersey, USA

Illustrator: Carissa Mitchell; Missouri, USA

35. The Cookbook

1987; San Francisco, California, USA

In the first twenty-four years of his life, my dad lived in the People's Republic of China with his parents, grandparents, and sisters. Always a good student and hard worker, he had completed his Doctor of Medicine degree and was a radio oncologist¹ by the time he was twenty-four. Although my dad loved his family and his job, he wanted more than China could offer him. Consequently, when he had the opportunity to go to America in 1987, he decided to go, even though that meant leaving his family and restarting college.

Having stayed up for two full days playing cards and talking with his family before departing China, my dad felt adrenaline pump through him as he boarded the plane for America. Although he knew barely any English, he couldn't wait to start his new life in the United States. After he landed in San Francisco, he struggled to understand the immigration and customs officials. When he finally cleared customs² and burst out into the airport, a lady rushed over to him and handed him a book. "This must be a book all Americans are required to carry," he reasoned to himself.

"Twenty dollars," the lady demanded. Since my dad had only \$200, that was a lot for him to pay. In fact, \$20 was two months' salary for him in China.

"Nevertheless," he thought, "if everyone in America has to have this book, I'll have to buy it." And grudgingly, he handed the lady a crisp twenty-dollar bill. Since he was rushing to the gate for his next plane, he didn't stop to look at the book until he had checked in for his flight. When he opened the book, he saw that it was filled with pictures of food. It appeared to be a book of recipes. "Why are Americans required to carry a cookbook?" he wondered.

When my dad boarded his next flight, jet lag overtook him, and he slumped, exhausted, but he was too excited to sleep. Just then the plane began shaking violently. My dad panicked, fearing that the plane was going to crash before he ever got to experience life in America. He gripped the armrest, trying to still his trembling hands. Next to him, a woman smiled and said something in English. Seeing the terror in his face and realizing he couldn't speak English, the woman grasped his hand and held it for the rest of the flight. When the plane landed safely in St. Louis, all that my dad could say was "Thank you."

When my dad reflects on his trip to America, he is ambivalent. While extremely grateful for his life in America, he feels embarrassed about how naïve he was when he first arrived. Although he long ago threw away the cookbook, he no longer feels angry that the woman tricked him out of two months' salary. What he most enjoys retelling is the experience on the plane when the compassionate woman comforted him. He learned that day that while some try to deceive you, some show compassion and kindness.

Courtney Wu; Missouri, USA

1. A radio oncologist is a doctor who treats cancer by using radiation to kill cancer cells.

2. Customs is the place where documents and baggage of people entering a country are inspected by a government agency.

36. Buzzer Beater

1998; Florissant, Missouri, USA

It was a normal day in Florissant, Missouri. My uncle Drew, who was twelve, was slowly eating his breakfast, dreading a big basketball game against his school's rival. He was feeling mad and upset because he didn't want to go to the game. Drew didn't believe his team needed him.

Drew knew he wasn't that good at basketball and feared he might hurt his team. Drew was talking to his dad about how he didn't want to go. His dad insisted that he was going because Drew couldn't quit in the middle of the season. While Drew was eating, he couldn't help but think about playing. As he got angrier, milk flew out of the cereal bowl and he clenched the spoon with more muscle than usual.

As Drew's dad drove him to the game, Drew was still trying to figure out how to escape. Drew's stomach hurt and a headache developed, but Dad drove on. When they got to the game, Drew said, "I can do this." He walked into the hot gym, where his teammates were already warming up.

When it was time for the game to start, the coach told all of the players their positions, but Drew was left on the bench. Drew smiled because he was getting what he wanted. Drew thought how relieved he was that he didn't have to play.

A couple of minutes later, Drew's team was winning. Then Drew saw his coach slowly get up. Drew started to panic. His coach walked straight to him. Then his coach said, "You're going in."

Drew's heart felt like it was going to pound straight through his chest. Drew couldn't believe he was actually going in. He was put in at point guard, which was his usual position.

Drew's heart was still racing but had calmed down a bit. Drew wiped his drenched palms on his jersey. The other team was coming at him. Drew went for the steal. He missed and fell straight onto his back. Then the other team scored. At halftime Drew's team was still winning, but not by much.

Drew was sitting once again to start the second half. About eight minutes later Drew went in. He didn't care that much, because his team had a big enough lead — at least that's what he thought. Drew was playing point guard, but he must have had one of the worst games ever, because almost everyone got past him.

Suddenly the score was 28–26, the other team leading. There were only five seconds left in the game. Drew had the ball, and his coach screamed, "Pass it, Drew!" Drew looked at his coach, smirked, looked back at the hoop, and shot from just behind the three-point line on the left side of the court. The ball rolled off his fingertips. Everyone stared at Drew as the ball sank through the basket. As Drew stood there in awe, everyone around him cheered.

Drew was shocked that he had made the basket and had won the game for his team. He learned that he could help his team without even realizing it. Drew never tried to miss another game.

James Bowman; Missouri, USA

37. A Miracle of Life

2001; Houston, Texas, USA

In 2001, when my aunt Marti was pregnant, a doctor called her in for further testing because her unborn baby, Cayden, had tested positive for a disorder called trisomy18.¹ The chances of Cayden having the disorder were four out of five. My aunt Marti now needed to have an amniocentesis (that is when they draw fluid out of your belly).

When the doctor said to abort² Aunt Marti's pregnancy, Aunt Marti and Uncle Matt refused. They wanted the pregnancy to continue so that Cayden could be born. The doctor told them that Cayden had the worst test he had ever seen, so he was almost positive that Cayden had trisomy18. Since my aunt and uncle refused to abort Cayden, they had to sign a release saying that they would not sue the doctor if Cayden wasn't born alive or if she had birth defects. So they signed the paper. A witness also signed the document. The doctor said it would be cruel and inhumane to carry the child to term. Aunt Marti had to see the doctor every week.

After they signed the release, Uncle Matt had to help someone move, which meant that Aunt Marti was home alone. She didn't eat or sleep, because she was so scared. So she said, "Lord, give me a scripture to stand on and believe." God gave her Jeremiah 29:11-12. Aunt Marti had heard it before, so she didn't really believe it was from God. But the Lord told her it was from Him.

When Aunt Marti had an appointment, the things the doctor said were wrong with Cayden were an open palate, heart problems, an exposed spine, and a cyst on her brain. And the doctor couldn't see Cayden's kidneys. Aunt Marti called her brother-in-law and sister-in-law and told them to call their church and tell them to pray for her. (Aunt Marti's church didn't believe God was the healer.) Aunt Marti also called her friend Sami Carla. Sami told my aunt to come to church with her to get prayed for.

When prayer time at the altar came, Aunt Marti told the pastor's wife that her baby was going to die. She told her that Cayden had a 25-percent chance of being born alive and a 10-percent chance of surviving one year if born alive. When the pastor's wife heard this, she put one hand on Aunt Marti's head and the other hand on Aunt Marti's belly and she said, "For I know the plans I have for you, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, to give you a future and a hope." This is Jeremiah 29:11. When the pastor's wife prayed this, Aunt Marti's stomach shook. She immediately knew that Cayden would be fine.

At the next doctor's appointment, during the ultrasound,³ the doctor said nothing. At the end, he said he didn't understand. The doctor saw Cayden's kidneys, her back was healed, there was no cyst on her brain, and on the ultrasound Cayden had smiled! Three months later Cayden was born perfect! She is still perfect to this day.

Tori Brand; Missouri, USA

1. Trisomy 18, also called Edwards syndrome, is a genetic disorder that severely affects many parts of the body.

2. To "abort" means to stop something before it's finished, often because of a problem.

3. An ultrasound is a procedure that uses very high frequency sound waves to show the inside of the human body.

38. An Untold Story of 9/11

2001; New York, New York, USA

It was a regular day, and a regular man was on his regular route to work, listening to his regular radio channel: 1010 WINS. My grandfather Michael J. Barry was in his car on his way to work when he heard the news of the first plane flying into one of the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center. On the day of 9/11, he took part in the biggest evacuation by water in the history of the world. More than 500,000 people were carried from Manhattan Island to safety in New Jersey, and my grandfather helped these anxious, stranded people.

My grandfather had been on his way to work on a normal day, expecting nothing but the usual. Suddenly an emergency alert had come on the news saying that a plane had flown into one of the Twin Towers. "It's just a small lost plane," thought my grandfather. "It probably just went out of control."

He continued on his way, and about fifteen minutes later there was news of the second tower being hit. "It must be more serious than I thought," he remembers telling himself.

It was also announced on the radio that the Federal Aviation Administration had shut down all New York City airports. The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey had also ordered that all tunnels and bridges between the two states be closed to help keep people safe.

My grandfather made a U-turn in the middle of the highway, as he had realized that the only way for people to get from Manhattan to New Jersey was by boat. He drove to where his boat was docked, quickly took it across the Hudson River, and docked at the boating service where he worked: the Circle Line, based in New York City. Once at work, my grandfather got onto another boat and got to work in the engine room, as he did every day.

The Coast Guard got involved, too, sending out a universal message to all boats in the area, telling them to help in any way they could. Flocks of boats answered the call: tour boats, big boats, small boats, even tug boats. Everyone was trying to get people off Manhattan Island. Every boat was filled to maximum capacity. All day long the boats took people across the river to New Jersey. Back and forth, back and forth the boats went.

At the end of the day, my grandfather was proud of the service he had done for his country. He had done everything he could to help, and he knew he may have saved many lives. It had started out as a regular day for my grandfather. But by the end of the day, he had helped thousands of people get to safety.

This story is important to me because it taught me that during emergencies anyone can help. Help was needed in evacuating people from Manhattan Island, and my grandfather responded. Michael J. Barry is a hero.

Kaitlyn Iannace; North Carolina, USA

Illustrators of *Volume 14*

5. Emma Holmer; Missouri, USA — “Forty-Eight Years”
7. Evan Yang; Missouri, USA — “Just One Light”
10. Eva Stern; Missouri, USA — “On the Way Home”
16. Devyn Shelton; Missouri, USA — “The Lucky Baby” (Also on cover)
20. Bella Patino; Missouri, USA — “A Christmas Miracle”
22. Nathan Little; Missouri, USA — “Life or Candy?”
24. David Evans; Missouri, USA — “The Window”
27. Nautica Fowle; Missouri, USA — “His Name Was Alfie”
28. Erica M. Kalista; Missouri, USA — “Half the Dam”
30. Noah Palmer; Missouri, USA — “An Unforgettable Journey on the Island”
31. Kylie Taliaferro; Missouri, USA — “The Twins and a Chili Pepper”
34. Carissa Mitchell; Missouri, USA — “My Father’s Game of Dreams”

Invitation to Participate

The Grannie Annie Family Story Celebration invites you to discover, write, and submit a story from your family’s history. Your story can be humorous, tragic, inspirational — it can be about *anything* that happened in your family before you were born. The annual submission deadline is February 1. Complete details, including the guidelines and required submission form, are available on The Grannie Annie’s website: TheGrannieAnnie.org/SubmitStories.html

Grannie Annie Storykeepers 2019

and Their Story Titles

Pesha Sara Ackerman — “Thunderstorm Weddings”
Naomi Yaffa Acobas — “Saved by a Parrot”
Sophia Akhter — “The Hospital Surprise”
Avital Akilov — “The Sharp Pin”
Chloe Albritton — “Remembering Past Mistakes”
Emma Allen — “The Knopf German Christmas”
James Colby Alpert — “Camp Chaminade”
Asher Amanuel — “The Deadly South”
Isabel M. Ammerman — “The First Deer Hunt”
Leeby Amsel — “A Mother's Kiss”
Hailey Anderson — “The Events at Lake Taneycomo”
Cole Andrews — “The Puppy in the Dorm Room”
Max Andrews — “The Thanksgiving Call”
Yehudis Aronovitch — “Tickets to America”
Ben Atkins — “Spiders in My Safe Space”
Joshua Avery — “Bad Candy”
Lizzie Avery — “Chocolate from the Bathroom Cabinet”
Batsheva Baalhaness — “Leaving Iran”
Yael Chana Badalov — “Saved from the Snake”
Meredith Bahnak — “Not All Heroes Wear Capes”
Harrison Bailey — “The Incident”
Makari Baisden — “One Man's Fight”
Jennavieve Baker — “School”
Emma Ballew — “Blink of an Eye”
Dena Basalely — “A Simple Man with a Big Heart”
Jordyn Baysden — “Jenn's Cancer”
Dylan Beal — “A Spectacular Discovery”
Ashley Beam — “A Living Miracle”
Ava Becker — “Trying to Survive”
Eric Bellamy — “The Big Hit”
Dasha Belopolsky — “The Magnificent Move to America”
Tzipora Malka Ben-Ari — “Grandma's Adventure to Jerusalem”
Olivia Benefield — “The Blizzard of 1978”
Cadance Benson — “Bob Kloeppe and the Evil Chicken”
Dante Benson — “Dangers of Corn”
Leo Berding — “The Baseball Game in 1984”
Leah Berger — “The Journey Through Israel”
Gila Beylus — “The Amen Group”
Esther Bilitzky — “The Fruit Man Story”

Ava Bischof — “Pumpkin Head”
Grace Blair — “Runaway Camper”
Atara Bleiberg — “The Kindness of My Grandmother”
Tikki Boiangiu — “The Shul Walk”
Mary Hanson Borders — “Excitement in the Sky”
Elise Boschert — “Stationed in Germany”
Isaac Boss — “\$18,379 — The Price That Changed My Dad's Life”
James Bowman — “Buzzer Beater”
Rivky Braffman — “A Big Thought in the River”
Tori Brand — “A Miracle of Life”
Walker Brand — “The Jump”
Josie Brengarth — “No More Fireworks”
Alex Brennaman — “Security”
Logan Briesemeister — “The Santa Fe”
Joah Briley — “Papa's 55”
Jackie Briner — “Mysterious Masked People”
Blake Brodish — “A Helping Hand: The Explosion of West Pharmaceuticals”
Caidan Brophy — “Sir, May I Carry Your Bag?”
Scarlet Brothers — “Things Will Always Turn Out Okay”
Cameron Brown — “The Cattle-Prod Catastrophe”
Kayla Brukner — “The Memory Plant”
Darci Buck — “The Seven Tornadoes of June 3, 1980”
Molly Kate Bugh — “It's Just a Drill”
Max Burgdorf — “The Storm”
Zoë Burnley — “Finding the Right University”
Sophie Buzzini — “The Kindness of a Few Men”
Garrett Byrd — “Hook in the Cheek”
Andrew Cahill — “Right Place, Right Time”
David Cahill — “The Rock vs. the Streetcar”
Elliott Campbell — “The Backfired Trick”
Mackenzie Carff — “What Is That?”
Lexi Cella — “The Big Day”
Skylar Chan — “Under Water”
Carter Chance — “A Legacy Toward Equality”
Elsa Chapell — “The Big Chase”
Jack T. Cherniawski — “Time in the Air Force”
Audrey Christian — “Just One Light”
Dalia Chulpayev — “The Jewelry”
Ella Churchill — “Herkimer: A Symbol for Bravery”
Noah Clark — “The Wagon That Got Away”
Batya Cohen — “Surviving the Holocaust”
Mikayla Cohen — “Little Things Count”
Madison Collins — “Dad's Stolen Identity”

Caden S. Collison — “Bootleg”
Lexi Connolly — “A Gift from God”
Lexi Conti — “A Good Idea Gone Wrong”
Atara Cooper — “Coming to America”
Katelyn Corbett — “Our Hero”
Luke Corbett — “My Family's Champion”
Emma Corman — “Journey to America”
Dalton Costick — “Hot Hit”
Drew Cox — “Enduring Your Fate”
Julia Crowe — “Mr. Banes's Predicament”
R. J. Cummings — “A Normal Day at Work”
Alex D. — “My Childhood”
Maggie Dalby — “A Storm of Bad Choices”
William Dana — “Melted Butter”
Dagny Dash — “The Birdkeeper of Reed Avenue”
Peyton Davies — “Rags to Riches”
Alex Davis — “The Doomsday Rabbit Invasion”
Jesse Davis — “The Long Journey to America”
Sofia Daws — “Immigration from Mexico to St. Louis”
Maddie Dean — “Stuck”
Raleigh Delf — “The Little Breyer Horse”
Emma Dempsey — “Carved in Her Heart”
Lindsay Dendrinelis — “When My Grandparents Met”
Mariah Dent — “Kidnapped”
Jansen Dents — “Thousand-Degree Church”
Lily Diamond — “The 9–11 Catastrophe”
Chloe Dieter — “The Spelling Bee”
Sarah Ding — “An Unforgettable Journey on the Island”
Rebekah Dobay — “The Family Dog”
Hadley Donnelly — “Silver Ring”
Kennedy “Kiik” Doyle — “My Grandmother Can't Drive!”
Logan Doyle — “A Navy Day Gone Wrong”
Ryan Doyle — “The Riverport Riot”
Isabel Draper — “The Cross-Country Road Trip”
Hannah Drooger — “The Big Blue”
Tanvia Dua — “The Partition”
Simone Duncan — “Part of Lauren's World”
Morgan Durant — “Mr. Gardner Please?”
Maia Durnbaugh — “Growing Up on a Farm in Ohio”
Racheli Dvash — “The Amazing Dream”
Shoshana Dym — “Following Your Heart's Desire”
Kohen D. Earleywine — “My Parents' Love Story”
Grace A. Earnhart — “The Bermuda Shorts”

Preston Eash — “Small Town Parade”
Eli Eaton — “The Blizzard of 1982”
Eva Edery — “A Childhood Different from My Own”
Natalie Edwards — “Car Troubles”
Seth Edwards — “Grannie at Gunpoint”
Ele Elden — “My Great-Grandpa Goes to Japan”
Callie Elder — “Jack's Terrifying Best Time Ever”
Atara Elias — “The Missing Number”
Lydia Elking — “Army Journey”
Anna Enger — “A Brothers' Quarrel”
Aidan Espy — “A Murderer on the Loose”
William Evans — “The First Million-Dollar Contract”
Lucy Abbott Fader — “The Missing Eyebrows Mishap”
Katie Grace Fadlovich — “Into the Ravine”
Kaylee Farnsworth — “Grandpa Kirk's 1980 Chevy Pickup”
Isabel Faulkner — “Growing Local”
Trey Feeney — “The Long Way Home”
Joseph Ferebee — “Thomas Wilson Ferebee”
Mary Pat Ferebee — “Facing Death in Darkness”
Ava Fernández — “*Sobrevivientes* (Survivors)”
Elizabeth Fieser — “Scariest Hunting Trip Ever”
Zoe Finley — “When I Got Diagnosed”
Brooklyn Fleck — “Losing It All”
Thomas Fleming — “Capture in the Ardennes Forest: Battle of the Bulge”
Quinn Fogarty — “The Day I Almost Died”
C. J. Francois — “Lighting Leader”
Allie Grace Frank — “Timing Is Everything”
Atara Frankel — “The Korean War”
Tamar Frankel — “My Great-Great-Grandfather Isaac Mond”
Bailey Grace Franklin — “Las Vegas”
Ari Friedman — “The Unexpected Trip to Manhattan”
James “Powell” Fry — “The Reason for My Name”
Tristan Truett Fusco — “The Ruskin Heights Tornado”
John Galakatos — “Easter Bunny Incident”
Shiva Garuda — “Life or Candy?”
Sophia Gedman — “The Motorcycle Mishap”
Hannah Georgy — “The Lost Child”
Kylie Gerken — “A Baby”
Aviva Gewanter — “The Cleaning Material”
Mai Gherardi — “Bonjour, America”
Mikey Giannotti — “A Game to Remember”
Lauren Gingerich — “Rumbles of the Heart”
Shoshana Glatt — “A Man with a Plan”

Eliana Goldman — “*The Howdy Doody Show*”
Eitan Goldress — “The Bike Accident”
Annie Goldschmiedt — “The Blackout”
Lane Goodwin — “Quicksand”
Jacob Gordon — “The Stolen Potatoes”
Weston Grabow — “The Flood of Dead Horse Hollow”
Griffin Grabowski — “The Red House”
Eliza Grady — “The President Comes to Dinner”
Thomas Grady — “Unbreakable: The Bond of a Dog and Her Boy”
Andrew Holman Gray — “The Airport Cat”
Paine Gray — “The Great Coin”
Jacob A. Green — “Cavalry Runaway”
Ryder S. Grega — “Not Worth It”
Xander Griffin — “My Confection Connection”
Max Grossman — “The Crazy Horn”
Matthew Grothaus — “An Unfortunate Trip”
Ryan Guebert — “The Big Game”
Evie Haar — “A Dime”
Huntleigh Elliott Hager — “The Costly Switch”
Sydney Hamilton — “French Class”
Miriam Hammer — “The Red Scarf”
Ava Harper — “June Bug”
Killen Harper — “The Last Friday of Summer”
Michael Harris — “D-Day”
Aiden Hasek — “Join the Fight for Freedom”
Lexi Heberer — “Horrid Study Night”
Adam Hedvat — “Going to Iran”
Rebecca Heienickle — “Trust But Verify”
Hannah Herlong — “Wishful Thinker for a Positive Life”
Blima Hershman — “Spinach or Ice Cream”
Elizabeth Hickel — “The Totally Unexpected Cow Incident”
Tyler Hicks — “Grandpa's Trip to Thailand”
Tamar Hisiger — “The Troublemaker”
Yocheved Hochster — “Disaster in the Restaurant”
Dovid Holczer — “The Escape from Hungary”
Yosef Holczer — “The Bushel”
Taylor Holdmeier — “Angels Among Us”
Canon Holley — “A Secret Assignment”
Ben Hollman — “Family's Palace”
Sabrina Holohan — “Ziplining Gone Wrong!”
Brady Holtgrewe — “Life in the Country”
Tressel Holton — “Princess Great-Great-Great-Great-Grandma”
Luke E. Hornburg — “The Sunken Truck”

Sarah Horowitz — “The Emergency”
Sophia Horsefield — “Murder or Self-Defense?”
Caroline Hort — “Wedding on the Pitcher's Mound”
Aliza Howitt — “Should We Knock on the Door?”
Karissa Hsu — “The Inheritance of Hope”
Arianna Huang — “Bitten”
Mallory Humphrey — “Poland to America”
Reed Hunter — “The Plan”
Allen Hutchinson — “The Wire”
Mary Elizabeth Hutchinson — “An Icy Walk for Life”
Lauren Hyman — “NYPD President”
Kaitlyn Iannace — “An Untold Story of 9/11”
Aidan James Irby — “How the Army Changed My Life”
Naomi Isakov — “The Truth”
Rebecca Iskander — “A Miracle”
Kinley Jacobi — “The Sled Crash”
Max Jacobsmeyer — “The Generous Mail Route”
William Jinkins — “The Florida Incident”
Ella Johnson — “A Simple Gift”
Gabrielle N. Johnson — “Vacationing in Hawaii”
Morgan Johnson — “Follow Your Dreams”
Van Johnson — “The Life Saver”
Ellen Jones — “He Made the Shot”
Thomas Jones — “The Bloody Eye”
Will Joyner — “The Beyond-Compare KFCs”
Andrew K. — “A Piranha in the Toilet”
Aliyah Kahn — “A Long-Lasting Love of Theater”
Sarah Kalter — “First Grade with No Shoes”
Malkie Kaminetzky — “Saving the Stars”
William B. Kandlbinder — “Light Sensation”
Hank Karlovic — “Twelve Months in Iraq”
Sasha Kats — “The Move”
Adina Katz — “The Very Big Raffle”
Shaina Katz — “The Dangerous Mouthwash”
Daniel Kazakov — “The Wedding Problem”
Stella Kidd — “Junior's Red Boot”
Cody Kilgore — “No Control”
Holland Killinger — “The Terrifying Turnover”
Elan Klein — “The Ticket”
Shachar Klein — “The Adventure on the Bay”
Avery Kline — “Bert and Cherry”
Lucy Knerr — “Speck of Hope”
Kenneth Kochan — “The Bootleggers”

Esther Koenig — “The Name Changer”
Shalhevet Koenigsberg — “A Fall for the Good”
Cami Kohmetscher — “On the Way Home”
Mason Kohout — “Cat Catastrophe”
Tziporah Koslowitz — “The Kidney Stone”
Ryan Krygiel — “The Lens-Cap Rescue”
Jake Kuenne — “The Green Hornet Streetcar Disaster”
Charlie Lafata — “Lost in Germany”
Thomas G. Langloh — “The Adventure of My Uncle Tim”
Miriam Lapp — “The New Path”
Tzipora Lapp — “The Crazy Ride”
Catherine Lard — “Top Secret Town”
Hannah Lawson — “Uncle Vernon's Bad Day”
Noam Dovid Leban — “The Ink Incident”
Angela Lee — “The Lollipop Challenge”
Jaiden Lee — “A Child's Promise, a Doctor's Passion”
Lauren Lee — “Heart of God”
Aaron Lehmbeck — “One Phone Call”
Rivka Levant — “The Little House on the Prairies”
Shaindy Levenson — “All Because His Father Died”
Meira Levine — “The Russian Experience”
Luke Levy — “Up and Over the Ravine”
Georgie Lewis — “Surviving Pearl Harbor”
Elizabeth Yunjue Li — “The Homesick Weeper”
Tehila Lieberman — “A Mother's Love for Her Son”
Grace Lojka — “Wrong Time, Wrong Place”
Nick Londono — “The Encounter”
Nathan Long — “An Easter to Remember”
Emily Lu — “The One Who Saved His Life”
Yeshaya Lubner — “The Civet”
Landen Lucas — “How My Parents Met”
Gracie Luedde — “Dinnertime”
Stephanie Macagno — “The Mall Tragedy”
Wells Mahoney — “Road Trippin”
Jay Mainard — “World War II Life”
Eliza Manning — “Captured”
Gracie Marble — “Who Needs *America's Got Talent* When You Have *The Ted Mack Amateur Hour*?”
Shana Margulies — “The Miracles”
(Lua) Louisa Markert — “Baba and the Bear”
Addie Martin — “Whiteout”
Meghan Maschmeyer — “The Best Trip Ever”
Kaylie Maslansky — “Crawling Across the Street”

Shayna Tova Mason — “Presents and the President”
Isaac Masri — “My Family's Holocaust Story”
Shira Massihesraelian — “The Revolution in Iran”
Shira Matatov — “Life and Death”
Bracha Maybruch — “How My Great-Grandparents Got Married”
Jackson McCarren — “Metzy and Maggie Are Lost”
Hadley M. McConkey — “Perils of War”
Addison M. McCrory — “The Bear”
Molly Measamer — “A Hero”
Shira Meirov — “The Glass Door”
Talya Mendelson — “The Missing Fish”
Elizabeth Merrill — “His Name Was Alfie”
Yaelle Merrill — “The Great Escape”
Faith Meyer — “On Top of the World”
Adelyn Miller — “From Inside the Pueblo”
Grace E. Mitchell — “A Teaching Mishap”
Charles Perry Mizelle — “A Flame Upon Water”
Devin Modlin — “The Dangerous Hike”
Faith Moeller — “A Terrible Mistake”
Alexandra Moore — “Miracle in the Hollar”
Chase Morgan — “The Special Dress”
Madie Morgan — “When Fishing Goes Wrong”
Joey Morici — “Joseph Sheehan”
Nell Mason Morris — “Becoming Commissioner”
Tziporah Chaya Mosheh — “Lost Memories”
Gila Moskowitz — “The Train Ride”
Lydia Muehleisen — “The Spoon”
Maxwell Mueller — “Camping Catastrophe”
Olivia Mueller — “Dad Gets in Big Trouble”
Zunair Mulji — “The Mystery of the Pool Pooper”
Ester Muradov — “The Runaway”
Charlotte Murr — “The One Who Did It All”
Lew Murray — “The Calamitous Candy Disaster”
Aden Muskat — “The Escape”
Sydney Lee Myers — “The Honeycutt Tragedy”
Lily Naylor — “70-Pound Soldiers”
Jack Nelson — “Camping”
Landon Nelson — “A Birthday Surprise”
Maura Nelson — “The Fire at Bertie Hunting Club”
Max Nelson — “The Heist”
Abigail F. Neulinger — “When the Bombs Took My House Away”
Kevin Ni — “Teacher Wu”
Priscilla Nicholas — “The Trip of His Life”

Rochel Noble — “Not Enough Money”
Emma Nolan — “A Tree Tradition Transformed”
Patrick Nolan — “The Fake Submarine”
Jasmine Nurieli — “Never Give Up Hope”
Shep Nye — “The Houseboat”
Gabriel O'Donnell — “The Clapping Leaves”
Kyle O'Keefe — “Dog Days”
Perry Oetjen — “You Crazy Fools!”
Nehemiah Oginni — “One Crazy Trip”
Andrea Jane Olsen — “My Adventures on the Old Farm”
Isha Omer — “The Lie to End All Lies”
Atara Oppenheim — “The Torah Dedication”
Adina Orbach — “The Lost Diamond”
Gali Osofsky — “The Traveling Spice Holder”
Silas Osterhoff — “The Day My Great-Grampa Almost Died”
Kat Owsley — “A Close Call”
Jonathan Paimany — “The Big Escape”
Rachel Paluczak — “The Broken Engine”
Emmy Paris — “A Catered Kindness”
Henri Paris — “The Statue”
Ryan Parker — “The Trip to Ireland”
Dorsey Parrott — “Parrott Brothers”
Xander Patterson — “The Journey to Utah”
Avi Pearlman — “The Day My Great-Grandmother Held Up a Train”
Ashi Pelikow — “The Miracle of the Tallis Bag”
Maddy Pense — “Forty-Eight Years”
Cooper Perrott — “The Army Trail”
Yonina Pfeffer — “Reunited at Last”
Jonathan William Yoni Pfeifer — “Speeding”
Mallory E. Pfuetze — “An Accident in Vietnam”
Josie Phillips — “Half the Dam”
Aubree Pickard — “The Life of My Parents in Minnesota”
Kevin Pierce — “A Family Pet”
Amila Pieris — “An Unexpected Ally”
Ashlynn M. Piñon — “Winning the National Championship”
Avery Piñon — “A Christmas Miracle”
Layla Pinson — “My Aunt Was Born”
Corinne Plumb — “On Fire”
Gabriel A. Ponce — “The Six-Year-Old Desire”
Hunter Pope — “The Decision”
Adrian Portell — “Witchcraft or Insanity?”
Sara Leah Praeger — “A Time to Remember”
Ryder Pressly — “The Wreck of 1988”

Hannah Puetz — “The Hospital Room”
Porter Radcliff — “The Time My Grandpa Almost Died”
Ava Rademeyer — “Surviving the Crash”
Naomi Railsback — “Finding Your Way Home”
Maya Raleigh — “A Broken-Ski Day”
Nathan Ray — “A Life Without Marty”
Haim Razla — “Twin Towers Destroyed”
Ellie Reel — “5,662-Mile Difference”
Kyrie Reeves — “Distinguished Flying, and Falling”
Kannon M. Reisch — “The Toomskinners”
Tehila Reiss — “Miracles Happen Everywhere”
Leah Kate Riggs — “World-Wide”
Patrick Robson — “Don't Get Carpet”
Ava Rockwood — “In This Burning House”
Julia Grace Roerman — “The Bus Angel”
Maddox William Rosenberg — “It Looks Thin”
Peri Rosenholtz — “India”
Tziri Rosenholtz — “The Petrifying Night”
Eliav Rothbort — “The Lost Boy”
Rebecca Rothrock — “The Unexpected Check-Up”
Braxton Rouse — “Pappy's Revenge”
Stockton Rouse — “The Trip of a Lifetime”
Will Rouse — “Get Help”
Lucas Rudolph — “The Day They Won”
Netanel Sadigh — “How the Birds Flew Back”
Karsten P. Sandbothe — “The First Job”
Aubrey Sanders — “A Sailor's Story”
Florence M. Sarra — “Room for Two”
Eliana Sassoon — “The World's Kindest Man”
Cameron Schlegl — “Frank's Mistake”
Evan W. Schmitt — “The Baseball Dream”
Sarah Schneider — “The Twins and a Chili Pepper”
Darine M. Schreidah — “Found in the Ashes”
Morgan Schulte — “Percival's Disappearance”
John Schuster — “A Dirty Trick”
Noah Schuster — “Artillery in Vietnam”
Rivka Schwartz — “Skating on the Lake”
John Schweppe — “Never Forget”
Avigael Sdayeb — “Plane and Simple”
Tara Sebbag — “Soup in a Bathtub”
Genevieve R. Selk — “In the Midst of a Blizzard”
T. J. Serber — “Where To?”
Samantha Settle — “The Water Disasters”

Ava Shaffer — “Love So Deep”
Sophia Shahravan — “Car Crash”
Yael Shemtov — “Even War Can't Break Humanity”
Alex Shoemaker — “Crazy Car Adventure”
Adam Shoman — “My Dad's Journey”
Stephen T. Skaggs — “Always Be Honest”
Matt Small — “Dread”
Anne Milbray Smith — “The Miracle of the Bloody Finger”
Autumn Smith — “A Tail of Two Kitties”
Ben Smith — “Grandfather”
Natalie Snyder — “The Test”
Esther Sohn — “Family Separated Forever”
Adina Sokoloff — “The Special Coins”
Jaylen Solomon — “The Uncle I Never Knew”
Taesian Soto — “A Heart-Stopper”
Izzy Spears — “How I Almost Died Before I Died”
Blake Spiller — “Summer Tragedy”
Madison Standifer — “The Trouble with Senior Pranks”
Drew Stegmann — “How to Deal with Bullies”
Will Stephens — “The Crazy Car Catastrophe”
Nicky Stephenson — “The Road Ahead”
Jadyn Stern — “The Hippie Under the Hair Dryer”
Oliver Stiles — “Grandpa's Car Crash”
Allison Stilt — “Doyle's Disaster”
Jonah Stolker — “Selma Kramer with the Native Americans”
Connor Stone — “Simulator Specialist”
Charlie Stone — “The Farm Destruction”
Cooper Sturr — “The Prank”
Dayva Sugg — “Loss of a Finger”
Evan Sugg — “The Never-Ending Baseball Game”
Connor Sullivan — “The Egg Incident”
Noah Suthar — “A Vietnam War Hero”
Charlie Sutton — “A Life of Courage”
Logan Swenson — “The Airport Disaster”
Allison Sydes — “Angie”
Kelly Ta — “Grandpa's Half Life”
Rivka Tabibov — “Laundry in Russia”
Elisha Takhalov — “Miracle”
Ben Taylor — “The Icy Accident”
Sydney Taylor — “Top Spy”
Olivia Thober — “How Dogs Changed My Uncle's Life”
Olivia Thomas — “She Insisted . . .”
Meghan Thorpe — “A Secret Love Story”

Abbie Todisman — “Christmas Under Water”
Riley Torbit — “The Family Spy”
Colin P. Torretta — “The Booming Terror of World War 2”
Elana Traum — “Getting a Job”
A. W. Tribula — “Before Honor”
Leah Tropper — “There Goes the Bulldozer”
Sarah Tropper — “The Homeless Man in the Kitchen”
Rachel Turk — “The Lucky Baby”
Kaley Bree Turner — “A Road to Success”
Kate Van Zee — “Whack-a-Mole Rats”
Luciana Venetis — “Coming from Cuba”
Isabell Viles — “Keep Up the Fire”
Sam Villa — “A Scary Sequence in the Bahamas”
Tammi Vo — “The Liberty Voyage”
Corrin Voltz — “First Flight on 9/11”
Ella vonAlmen — “The American German”
Callie Wadas — “The Window”
Arana Wahab — “Anger and Frustration”
Alaina Waldron — “The Coke Bottle”
Rachel Walfish — “The Second Thumbtack”
Katelyn Wang — “Wild”
Gwen Wardenburg — “The Snake Situation”
Baylee Wargon — “A Changed Name”
Yocheved Wasserlauf — “The Dairy Queen”
Peyton Watts — “Chased to the Airport”
Sydney Wedberg — “Hooked”
London Weiler — “How My Parents Met”
Ethan Weis — “A Hero in the Flood of 1993”
Racheli Welcher — “The Sliced Finger”
Myk Weldon — “The Yellow Dress”
Nathan Wessler — “The Mischievous Goat”
Averie West — “A Time of Innocence”
Adyson Whaley — “Before the Sun Goes Down”
Mitchell Wheelis — “How My Grandpa Almost Went Blind”
Tamara White — “The Fall”
Layla Whitfield — “A Toddler's Tune”
Peyton Whitley — “Love and Compassion Towards Others”
Anna Claire Wiggins — “A Family's Legacy”
Lauren Wiley — “A Pig's Place at Home”
Gabrielle Willette — “Crashed!”
Sae Williams — “Ghosty Posty”
Abigail Williamson — “A Mom She Would Be”
West Wilson — “The Lake House Party”

Mitchell Wisniewski — “The Half-Eaten Dessert”
Brady Witte — “Spiderman Gets Caught”
McKenna Wittenauer — “Dream Come True”
Mason R. Wittock — “Fate”
Zaden Wolf — “All Is Not Lost”
Lucas Wolff — “Grandma and the Seven Boys”
Henry Wood — “Recruited”
Libby Wood — “The War Hero”
Eleanor Elizabeth Wooten — “Space Alien”
Muhammed Dawud Woqas — “Disabled But Not Different”
Malaina Wright — “My Grandpa Proved Them Wrong”
Courtney Wu — “The Cookbook”
Elisheva Yakubov — “The Bold Move”
Karen Yang — “My Father's Game of Dreams”
Christian Young — “The Dog That Could”
Amber Yu — “Can We Go Home?”
Tamar Emma Yusupov — “A Hot Burn”
Sophia Zara — “Unforgettable Moment”
Brady Zare — “The Snow Shift”
Rocco Zavaglia — “Play Pretend”
Alex Zhong — “A Survival Story”
Katherine Zhu — “Education Is the Passport to the Future”
Nora E. Zoellner — “Candy Kid”
Hannah Zou — “Blessings of Lunar New Year”
Nick Zywiciel — “The Humiliating Bouquet”

Praise for The Grannie Annie

Thank you for this great honor to be included in The Grannie Annie Family Story Celebration. I took my daughters to South Korea this past summer to meet extended relatives like my grandmother, who is from North Korea. It is very special that the story of her family can be memorialized in this way so that Esther and her sisters can appreciate their heritage.

—Sandra Sohn, Parent; Ohio, USA

My family has really loved the whole Grannie Annie process — the interview, the research, the editing, and of course the honor of having our family's story selected for publication. It's been such a pivotal writing experience for Aidan, who has just finished fifth grade.

—Mindy McCoy, Parent; Missouri, USA

Thanks for such a great opportunity to write powerful stories and to showcase our work!

—Carol Fitzsimmons, Teacher; Missouri, USA

The Grannie Annie has brought all 51 children in my language arts classes closer to their families — and to each other. When they discuss their stories, they notice similarities between their own stories and their classmates' stories. The Grannie Annie is a valuable program that has provided my students and me with a powerful learning opportunity.

—Elie Bashevkin, Teacher; New York, USA

Perhaps the greatest value of the Grannie Annie stories is something not written in the book. When a child interviews an older relative, the child gets to know a person he or she may have taken for granted. The relative gets to tell a story that might have been lost. A bond is created or strengthened. A story is recorded for posterity. New memories are woven, and — just maybe — a writer is born.

—Lulu Delacre, Author/illustrator of *Salsa Stories*

My daughter, Sophia Rose, contacted my mother in Germany after her language arts teacher suggested that she write a story about my mother in World War II. The two had a wonderful e-mail and phone correspondence over a couple of weeks. When I saw the final draft of my daughter's writing, I read a story my mother had never told me. My daughter created a new memory of my mother's life through her writing. What an amazing gift The Grannie Annie gave our family!

—Petra Swidler, Parent; Missouri, USA

The Grannie Annie gives students and their parents a chance to reflect on the varied experiences that weave together their family's identity. Many people have brokenness in their family history, and by identifying and writing about hard experiences, our children learn to see the strength and restoration of our loved ones. We're grateful to The Grannie Annie for providing an opportunity to publicly show honor and respect to our family members who have persevered.

—Christan Perona, Parent; Missouri, USA

Participating in The Grannie Annie offers my students a wonderful opportunity to learn about their families' history by interviewing a family member, and an authentic audience for their writing.

—Kathy Lewis, Teacher; Missouri, USA

Because of The Grannie Annie, I have been motivated to continue writing and am now working on my first novel!

—Aaron Schnoor, Author, *Grannie Annie, Vols. 5, 6, and 7*; Grannie Annie Selection Committee 2014 – 2017, and 2019; North Carolina, USA

When young people participate in The Grannie Annie and discover, and then reflect upon, their family's stories and the family stories of others, the experience can create in each of these young authors an enhanced sense of appreciation, understanding, and "connection." Thank you to The Grannie Annie for giving our communities young people who will see our diversity as an asset rather than a deficit, will recognize the sameness even in our differences, and will bring to our world a bit more compassion.

—Dr. Phil Hunsberger, Senior Partner, Educational Equity Consultants

This is my daughter's first time submitting her writing outside her school. It's very encouraging to her. She loves reading and writing. I believe this experience will have a great impact on her.

—Daniel Liu, Parent; New Jersey, USA

Year after year, my fifth-grade students are eager and excited to submit their work to The Grannie Annie. The experience of submitting a manuscript — with the hope of publishing — gives newfound meaning to their learning. The students stand taller when they become cognizant that the world is benefiting from their contribution.

—Rebecca Friedman, Teacher; Maryland, USA

When I showed my student his illustration in the book, the whole class gave him an ovation. Thanks so very much for providing him with this opportunity to succeed.

—Clayvon Wesley, Teacher; Missouri, USA

Thank you for starting such a heartwarming project where *all* the kids are winners, whether their stories are published or not.

—G-g Metzger, Teacher; Texas, USA

Publication of our daughter's story is special to us for so many reasons. . . . Both my mother and grandmother passed away a few years ago. Growing up, I heard this story countless times from my grandmother. It's wonderful seeing that story told through my daughter's words.

—Andrea Rominger, Parent; Alabama, USA

Orion's writing a family story was extremely important to his grandmother, who had a serious illness. When he called her to tell her that his story was going to be published, she was as happy as anyone had seen her in months. She read the story to anyone who would listen. I can't even begin to tell you the positive impact that this has had on our family.

—Andrew Jones, Parent; Pennsylvania, USA

The Grannie Annie provides the perfect opportunity for students to start asking questions about their families' past — not just the facts, but the stories. Then as they write, students begin to understand how *telling a story* differs from *writing a biography of facts*.

—Mark Futrell, Teacher; North Carolina, USA

I would like to thank you for giving Yifu such an encouragement, and working diligently to publish his first article! Our families in China are very happy to hear about this. It is an amazing experience to me that I witness that a part of my family heritage is being connected from my father to my son through the event you support! Thank you!

—Yuxing Feng, Parent; Missouri, USA

This book should be on the bookshelves in all elementary and junior high schools.

—The Reading Tub™, www.TheReadingTub.com

My students were so excited to write their family stories! Since the stories were written during our immigration unit, the students had even more reason to ask their families questions. The stories really enriched our classroom discussions and helped the students to connect to the concepts being taught.

—Amy Del Coro, Teacher; New Jersey, USA

Since my mother died recently, I have been cleaning out her house and going through her things and wondering, “Who made this quilt? Who’s in this old photo?” Trying to remember the family stories that she told me has really driven home the need to preserve family history. It is so wonderful that *The Grannie Annie* encourages this continuity of memories.

—Beverly Miller, Teacher; Alabama, USA

The Grannie Annie challenged my students to go beyond their comfort zone, to write for a broader audience, and to see that learning goes beyond the four walls of a classroom.

—Ann-Marie Harris, Teacher; Maryland, USA

The Grannie Annie is a good start for kids to get published. And I love the way *The Grannie Annie* helps people understand their family history. It also helps children get closer to their families.

—Andrew Malphurs, Author of the *Grannie Annie, Vol. 5*, story “Grandpa’s Saddle”; Georgia, USA

Since first becoming involved with *The Grannie Annie*, we look forward every year to the truly unique and heartwarming stories each student brings to the classroom.

—Brian Billings and Laura Amburgey, Teachers; Ohio, USA

Stories connect people in families and communities, giving them a common language and understanding of the present as well as the past. Through *The Grannie Annie*, generations connect as students take time to listen to the stories of their older relatives — and learn from them. Then, as the students write and share their stories, the connections multiply.

—Amy Glaser Gage; Children’s author, writing teacher, and consultant to *The Grannie Annie*

Although most students in our Eastern European village live next door to family members from earlier generations, *The Grannie Annie* prompted them to talk with their grandparents in new ways — and to discover the customs and challenges of times past. In addition, stories from the *Grannie Annie* books have given my students a glimpse of the world outside their village, where differences may abound but the underlying human condition remains the same.

—Martin Ellinger-Locke, Peace Corps volunteer in Glodeni, Moldova

The Grannie Annie is all about connection. As it hearkens back to the original Grannie Annie, it continues her tradition of oral storytelling to link generations and cultures. Grannie Annie family stories written by young people illuminate a long span of history, often revealing family values honed from adversity or triumph and tempered by humor and love.

—Janet Grace Riehl, Author of *Sightlines: A Family Love Story in Poetry & Music*

The Grannie Annie is remarkable in its goals and in its approach. Recording and sharing the stories of preceding generations goes to the heart of education — it teaches us who we are as family members, citizens, and members of human civilization.

—Matthew Lary, Co-author of *Victory Through Valor: A Collection of World War II Memoirs*

Our son's *oma* is overwhelmed that her “story” is in print in *Grannie Annie*. . . . Every family member and family friend has a signed copy.

—Karie Millard, Parent; Indiana, USA

My son “harvested” several stories from my father, including one that appeared in *Grannie Annie, Vol. 1*. My father has since passed away, and I am forever grateful that my son recorded these stories before it was too late. I doubt he would have done so if it had not been for The Grannie Annie.

—Karen Metcalf, Parent; Tennessee, USA

When kids learn details about what life was like decades ago, the past comes alive for them. History becomes real — and they want to know more! The Grannie Annie provides an opportunity for kids to be inspired by their own family's history.

—Florrie Binford Kichler, Patria Press, www.PatriaPress.com

Taking time away from your technology-filled life to join in The Grannie Annie is like trading fast food for Sunday dinner at Grandma's.

—Debra K. Shatoff, Ed.D., Family therapist and author of *In-Home Child Care: A Step-by-Step Guide to Quality, Affordable Care*

Teachers and parents, if you want to motivate students to love writing, ask them to write for The Grannie Annie.

—Bonnie M. Davis, Ph.D., Author of *How to Teach Students Who Don't Look Like You: Culturally Relevant Teaching Strategies*