

# The Secret

*A story written and illustrated by students  
of the Amphitheater School District*



2019-2020

## The Story Behind 'The Secret'

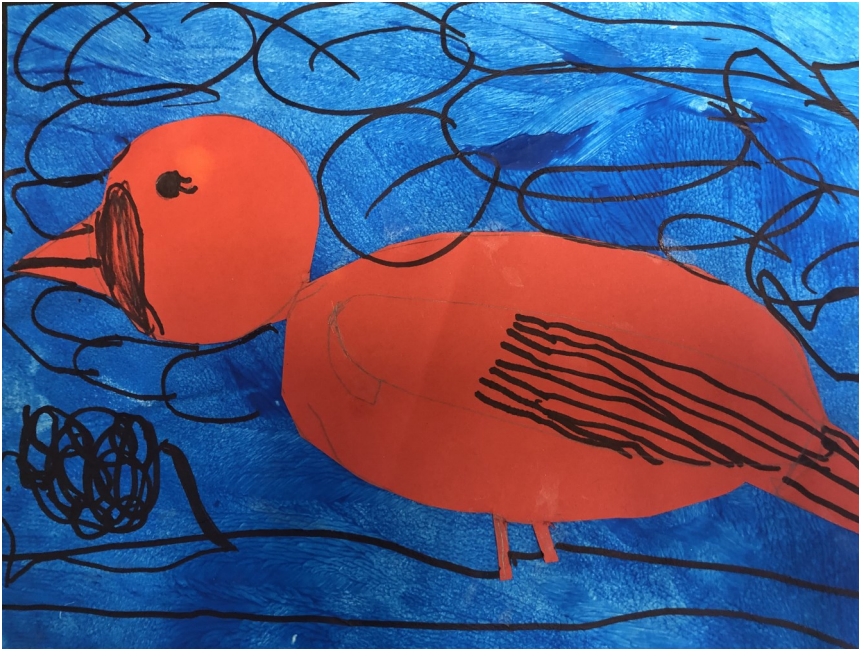
'The Secret' was written by students from all 21 District schools with a kickstart by Superintendent Todd Jaeger. Mr. Jaeger started the story, introducing us to Maggie, the young girl trying her best to hold in a secret. The story was then passed to each of our schools in a "tag-team" fashion. One by one, each school received only the preceding two to three parts of story, and students were asked to write the next part.

The only rules: Write no more than 200-250 words, use at least one character from the preceding parts and end on a cliffhanger, or even midsentence. The students were also asked to submit illustrations for their stories.

'The Secret' debuted during February 2020's Love of Reading Week as an audio/video production. Find that version at [www.amphi.com](http://www.amphi.com).

We hope you enjoy this story with all of its twists and turns. Our students have vivid imaginations and clearly enjoy the magic of storytelling.

- Superintendent Todd Jaeger
- Innovation Academy
- Mesa Verde Elementary
- Cross Middle
- Rio Vista Elementary
- Amphitheater High
- La Cima Middle School
- Copper Creek Elementary
- Coronado K-8
- Donaldson Elementary
- Keeling Elementary
- Ironwood Ridge High
- Harelson Elementary
- Walker Elementary
- Amphitheater Middle
- Rillito Center
- Holaway Elementary
- Canyon del Oro High
- Nash Elementary
- Wilson K-8
- Painted Sky Elementary
- Prince Elementary
- The Amphitheater Communications Department

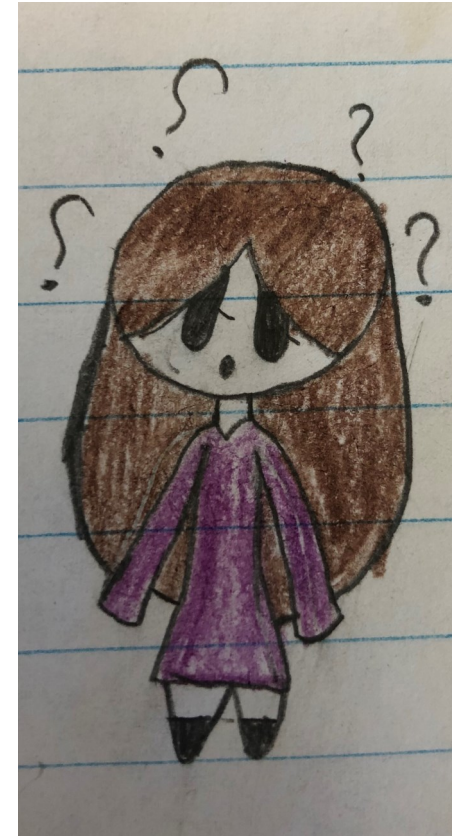


To anyone else, it would have seemed like any other day. The sun was shining. Birds were chirping in the trees. There was the occasional barking of a dog. Yes, it all seemed so normal to everyone – except for Maggie.

Maggie knew it was going to be a very different kind of day. She knew that something special was going to happen. She had known about that special something for many weeks now, but she was sworn to secrecy. She had wanted to tell someone that very big secret many times, but she had made a “pinky promise,” and you simply cannot break a pinky promise.

So she had kept that secret, and as the day began like any other, she was happy most of all that she would not have to worry about keeping the secret much longer. Sometimes, a secret wants to jump out of you and it takes every bit of strength to hold it in.

When Maggie got to school, her friends started talking to her, and she really wanted to share the secret, but she reminded herself not to.



After a few minutes of silence, her friends started smiling and acting weird. They were whispering to each other and making silly faces. That made Maggie wonder if they knew about the secret. How could she find out?

Hundreds of thoughts were going through her mind. She was confused and finally decided to act like everything was normal. A couple hours later when she got home, her sister Adalee was waiting at the door with a big smile. Maggie wondered why her sister was smiling, when usually she never smiles without a reason.

Her friends acting weird and her sister smiling added to Maggie’s confusion and frustration.

She couldn’t keep the secret anymore. Her tummy started hurting, and the answer for that, Maggie thought, was to reveal her secret to someone she could trust.





Maggie couldn't handle it anymore. She told Adalee in the smallest whisper ever, "Ryder from school told me he saw in the future, and in the next 12 hours, our lives would change forever."

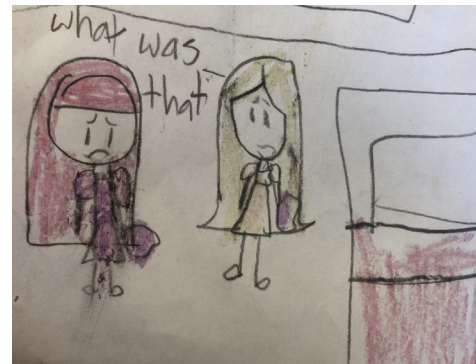
"What are you talking about, Maggie? Ryder knows the future?"

"Yes, Adalee," Maggie said. "I ran into Ryder at school last semester during lunch. He was acting strange. He told me that he and his dad had created a time machine. They traveled into the future. They traveled to today. He saw what was going to happen tonight. Everything is going to change. EVERYTHING."

"What? When?" Adalee asked.

Maggie said, "Ryder said about 11:30 tonight."

So, they played board games until it was time for bed. When they were sound asleep, the time came.



At exactly 11:30 there was a loud "CRASH!"

Maggie woke with a start. Adalee ran to her sister's bedroom door petrified from the noise. "Maggie, are you alright?"

Maggie responded, "Yes, I'm okay. But, what was that noise?"

Adalee said, "I think it came from outside. Should we check?"

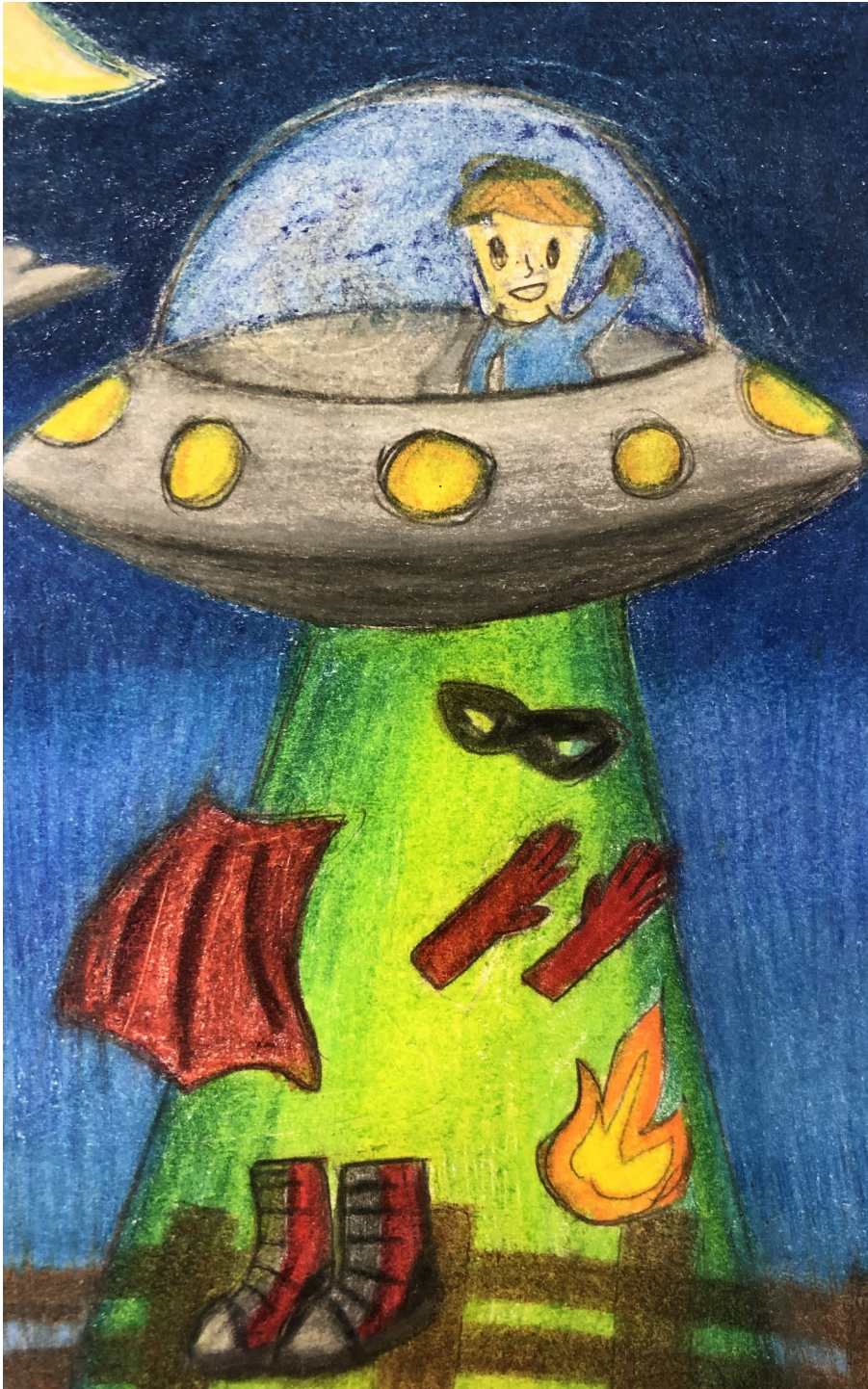
Maggie gulped and replied, "Sure." So, they went outside to check.

What they saw was breathtaking. There was a spaceship that had crash-landed in their front yard. They walked excitedly toward the spaceship. They looked in the open door and saw it was full of superhero costumes.

They entered through the open door and suddenly seemed to have







special powers. Maggie felt like she could fly and she did. She took a spin around the spaceship. She also realized she had laser vision.

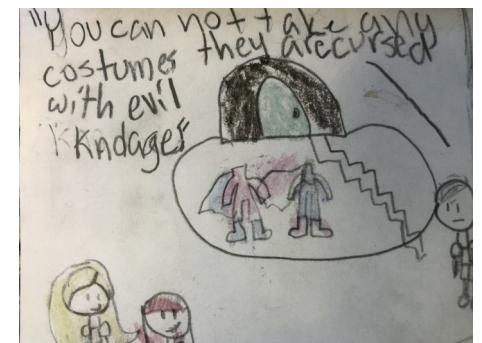
Adalee realized she had super speed and heat in her hands.

Adalee asked, "What suits should we take?"

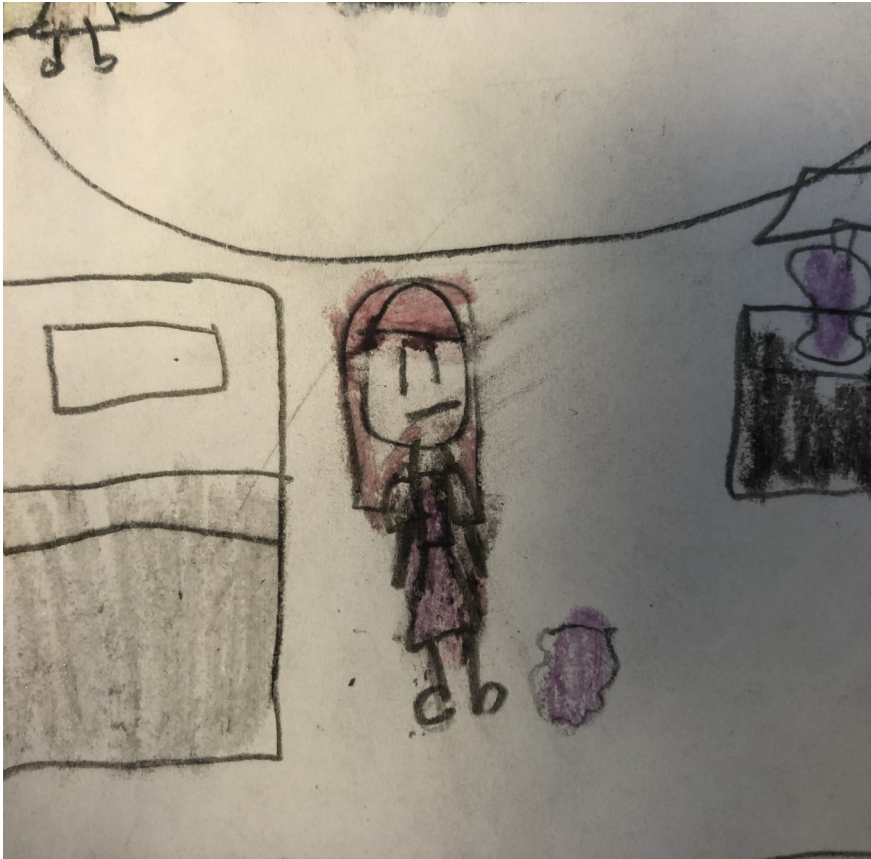
It wasn't Maggie that answered.

It was Ryder. He told the girls the suits were cursed with evil knowledge.

The three of them heard Maggie's parents wake up, so they hid the spaceship in the garage. The parents looked outside, and the girls pretended







to sleep walk. The parents put the girls back in bed.

Adalee woke up and tripped on something.

“That’s funny. I cleaned my room just this morning.”

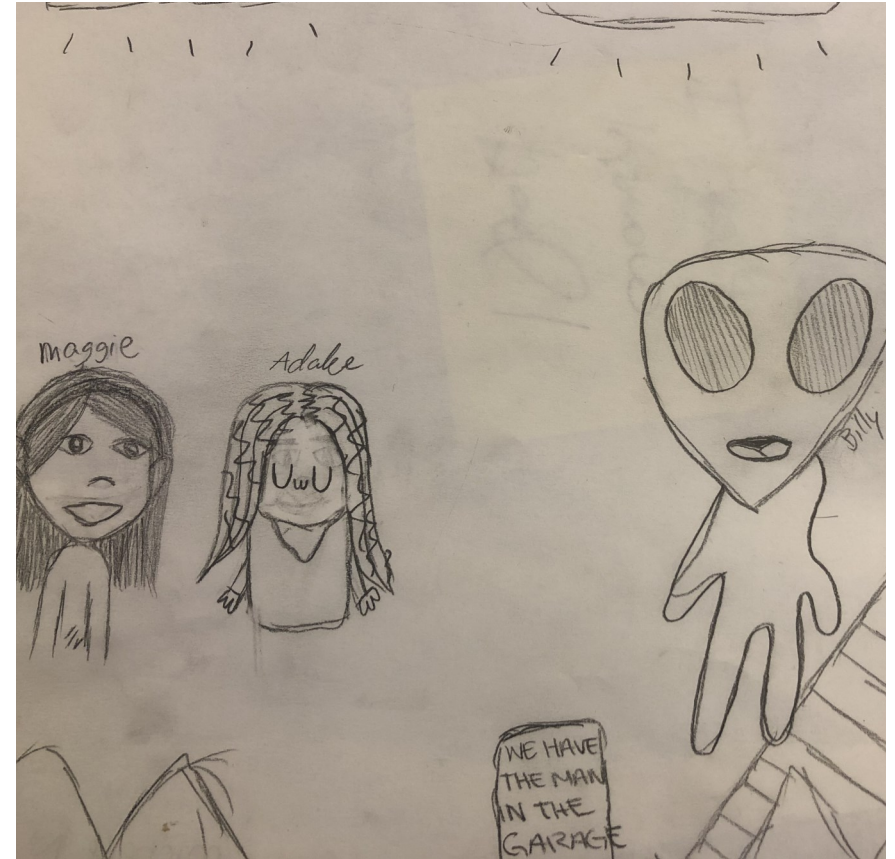
She turned on the light and found a purple glowing rock. She went to Maggie’s room and asked what it was.

“I don’t know. I saw the exact same thing,” Maggie said.

Then the window broke.

“What was that?”

Both of the girls looked down to the floor. In the pile of glass they saw a rock with a note attached to it.



“I got it,” Maggie said as she bent down to get her note. “Hmm. Maybe it’s from Ryder?”

Adalee responded giggling, “Yeah most likely since we left him in the garage all night.”

When Maggie looked at the note, her face went from happy to scared.

“What’s wrong? What does it say?” Adalee asked, wondering if they were in trouble.

“Ummm ... sis, it says ... ‘WE HAVE YOUR FRIEND RYDER IN THE GARAGE. COME DOWN IF YOU WANT HIM TO BE OKAY. – SIGNED, THE ALIENS.’ ”

As Maggie finished reading the note, they heard a knock from the door. “Yes. Who is it?” they both said, sounding scared.





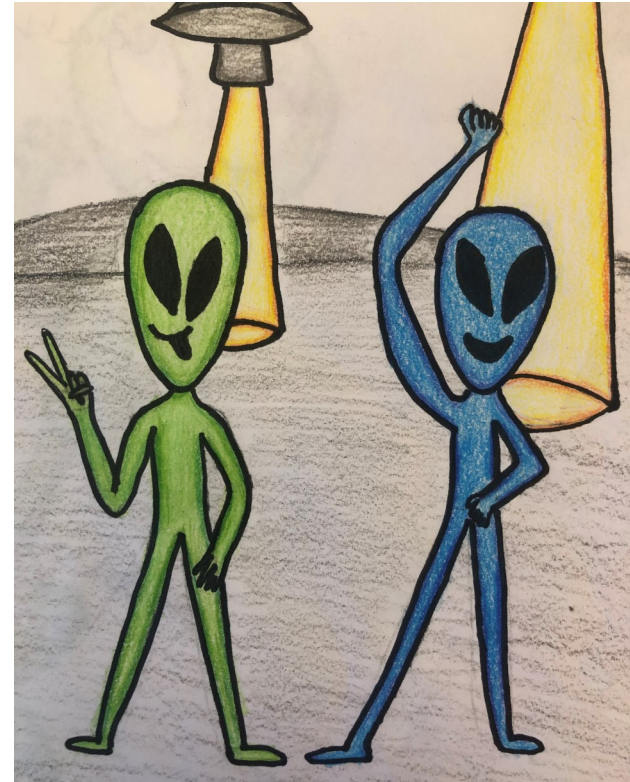
“Who do you think it is, silly? Breakfast is ready, Sweethearts,” their mom said.

As both girls sighed in relief, they headed downstairs. They made sure to keep away from their garage door on their way to the kitchen table.

“Look at these two sleepy heads. Your mother and I found you two sleepwalking last night. I think we will have to tuck you in tighter tonight,” their father said while laughing.

“Sorry Daa-” the girls said.

They were interrupted by the aliens. The aliens came into the kitchen and sat down at the kitchen table as if they were invited to breakfast.



Maggie and Adalee sat silent and scared as their parents welcomed the aliens to eat breakfast with them.

Suddenly Adalee started to scream out to her parents, “Mom, Dad, they are aliens. What are you doing?”

Maggie and Adalee’s parents started to laugh. The girls looked at each other in bewilderment and fear.

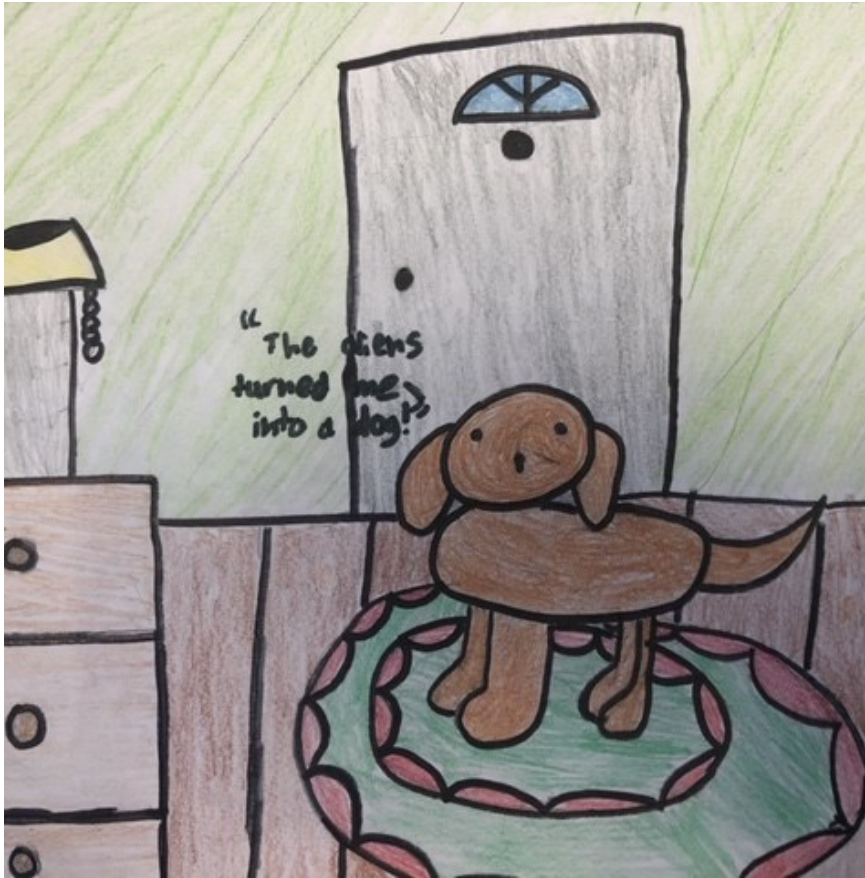
After their parents stopped laughing, their mother said, “Girls, we are all aliens here. We have just disguised it from the world.”

The girls started to cry.

The door that led to the garage flew open and a little puppy ran through the door.







The dog said, "Everybody, the aliens turned me into a dog!"

Adalee and Maggie ignored the talking dog and turned to their parents. Maggie cautiously asked, "Since we're your offspring, does that mean we are aliens, too?"

"Indeed you are," their mother said. "But first you must pick a form or animal."

The dad said, "Just know that you can't turn into an alien until you're 13."

The mom continued, "Don't tell anybody or else we will have to go to Area 51 like our ancestors did."

Suddenly there was a knock on the door.

"FBI, open up," a guard said.

"Quick, hide," Maggie screamed.

"What about me?" Ryder/dog said?

"You stay here," Adalee said quietly, while walking upstairs.

The aliens yelled from the kitchen as the doorway blew up.

"Get down!" The FBI had put C-4 on the door.

The girls' ears were ringing, and they passed out. They woke up in the hospital with their tentacles wiggling around, smacking stuff on the tables. A scalpel went flying and now was stuck in the wall.

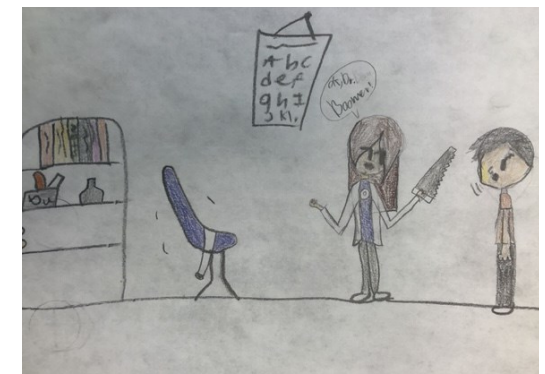
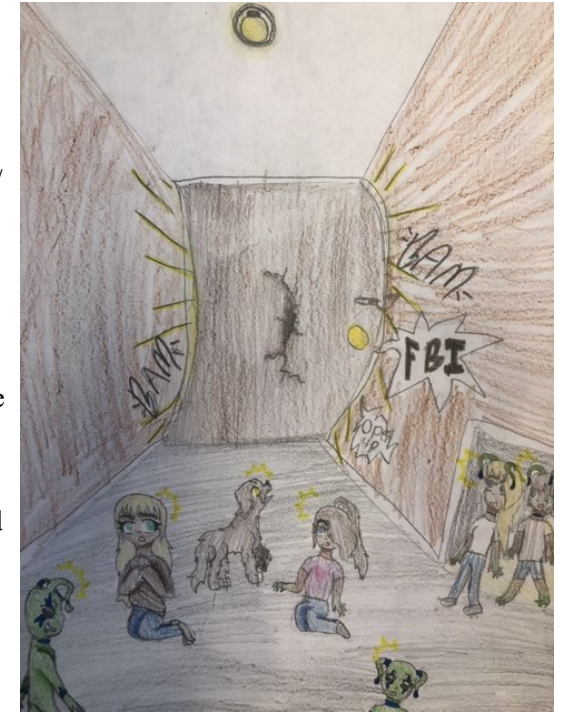
The nurse ran in to subdue the tentacles, pulled out a bone saw, and scared the sisters. Then she said, "J/K. Just kidding." The nurse was a millennial.

The doctor came in and said, "Stop scaring these poor children."

"OK, Boomer," the nurse replied.

Adalee and Maggie said, "We were scared to death. We're not supposed to be aliens yet! We're not 13! And also, you made us ink each other."

The nurse and Dr. Boomer







ignored the girls as they realized something new.

“Whoa, the ink in these tentacles gives them super strength!” Dr. Boomer said.

Adalee and Maggie discovered that they could break out of the binds that the nurse put them in with their tentacle super strength. Before they knew it, they escaped out the window.

Dr. Boomer looked at the nurse and said, “They will destroy the whole world! We need to do something right now! It is time to call the SWAT team in!”

The nurse asked, “Who is the SWAT team?”



Dr. Boomer answered, “They are teenagers who were injected with a super serum that makes them stronger and faster than anyone in the world.”

The doctor and nurse thought Adalee and Maggie were headed to the Statue of Liberty to destroy it so the people on their home planet could rule the world.

But the SWAT team soon found out that the sisters were really trying to find their way home to their parents and their friend Ryder, who apparently was turned into a dog.

Thanks to the SWAT team, they got back home. There, they were greeted by a walking potato who gave them a glass filled with purple liquid.

He said, “I need you both to drink this. It is the only way you can save this Earth.”

“What does it do?” Maggie asked.

“It will give you powers to blend in with your environment,” the potato said.

The girls drank the liquid, and they turned invisible.

It turned out the walking potato was an evil experiment that was created

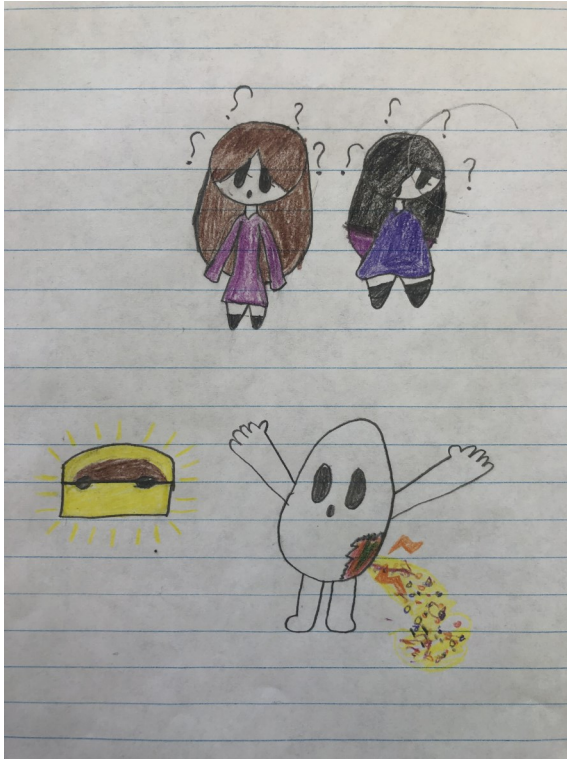




by Dr. Boomer, and in addition to turning the girls invisible, it took away their powers—POOF! No more tentacles, no more strength!

“Ha, ha, ha,” the sinister potato laughed. “You really thought that I would help you? You really trusted a potato!? Potatoes are full of carbohydrates! Everyone knows that carbs cannot be trusted!”

“Oh no!” cried the disembodied (invisible) voice of Adalee.



“Get cooked,” said the disembodied (invisible) voice of Maggie. “We will foil your plan!”

Then, working together, they wrapped the potato in tin foil and shoved him into the oven. The girls stepped back and watched as the potato screamed in agony.

“HELP ME! I AM BEING BAKED ALIVE!” screamed the potato.

“I’ll get the butter and chives!” said Adalee, walking to the refrigerator.

“Don’t forget the bacon bits and sour cream!” said Maggie. “And I like grated cheese on mine. Yum!”

Then the girls ate the potato and regained their powers.

That’s when the parents got home, and heard Maggie and Adalee yelling, “We’re in the kitchen! We can see you.”

Their father said, “We can’t see you!”



Maggie and Adalee replied, “Oh, yeah. We’re invisible.”

Their mom asked, “How are you invisible?”

Maggie and Adalee answered, “An evil potato gave us a potion that turned us invisible and made us lose our powers!”

The invisible girls had an advantage because Dr. Boomer couldn’t see them. Maggie had the idea to cover themselves with blankets and act like ghosts. Luckily, Maggie and Adalee had twin telepathy, so Adalee knew what Maggie was thinking. They snuck into the basement and got two blankets.

“Boo!” Maggie yelled.

“Ahhh!” screamed Dr. Boomer.

“I’m a ghost and you have to do what I say or I will haunt you for





the rest of your life,” said Maggie.

“OK, OK. I will do whatever you say, but whatever you do, please don’t haunt me!”

“Then stop being evil,” demanded Adalee.

“OK. Fine,” said Dr. Boomer.

“And you have to give us the antidote to turn Ryder back into a person,” said Maggie.

“Fine. I’ll tell you how to make the antidote,” Dr. Boomer said. “You need 1 cup of toenail clippings, 3 drops of squid’s ink and 5 ripped up pieces of paper.”

Dr. Boomer then helped them with the antidote, but he added a piece of grass, and the antidote made Ryder into a frog.

Adalee and Maggie got mad and threw the rest of the antidote at Dr. Boomer.

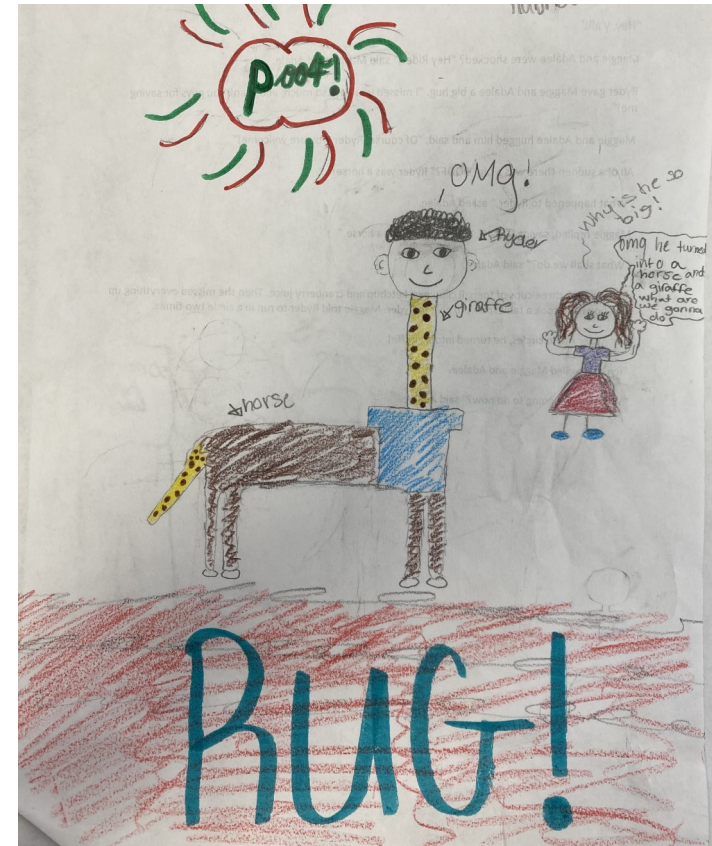
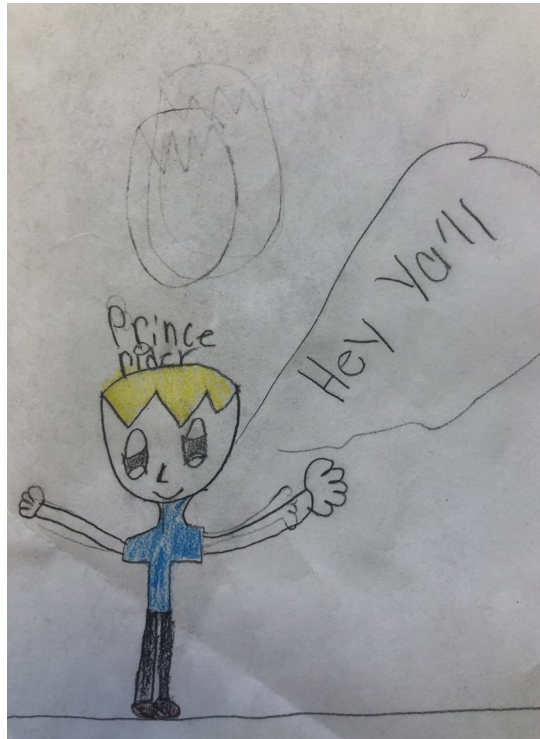
Maggie and Adalee had to remake it, but they forgot how, so they guessed.

They put 2 cups of toenail clippings instead of 1 cup of toenail clippings and gave it to Ryder. Ryder turned into a prince!

Maggie and Adalee screamed in surprise.

Ryder said, “Hey, y’all!”

Maggie and Adalee were shocked.



“Hey Ryder,” said Maggie and Adalee.

Ryder gave Maggie and Adalee a big hug. “I missed you guys so much, and thank you guys for saving me!”

Maggie and Adalee hugged him and said, “Of course, Ryder. You are welcome!”

All of a sudden there was a “POOF.” Ryder was a horse!

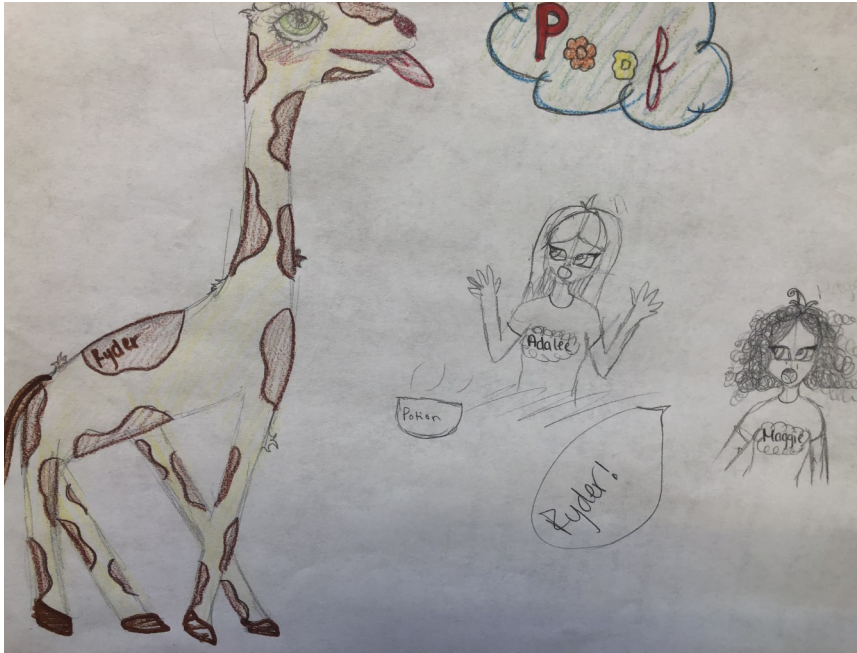
“What happened to Ryder?” asked Adalee.

Maggie replied, saying, “OMG, Ryder turned into a horse.”

“What shall we do?” said Adalee.

Maggie mixed 3 cups of toenail clippings, ketchup and cranberry





juice. She used a tablespoon to feed it to Ryder. Maggie told Ryder to run in a circle two times.

As Ryder ran in circles, he turned into a giraffe!

“Ryder!” yelled Maggie and Adalee.

“What are we going to do now?” said Adalee.

“I don’t know,” said Maggie.

“Maybe we could visit the great sorceress Griselda and ask for help. She will know what to do! She will help us make a potion or tell us a spell to help Ryder be human again.”

Adalee smiled and said, “What a great idea, Maggie!”

“I know,” said Maggie.



Then Maggie thought of another good idea:

“Maybe we need to add 4 cups of toenail clippings and melt them down and add beans to the potion. We can give the potion to Ryder, and he might turn back into himself -- or a good-looking dude!”

Adalee said, “I think we all need a break, so let’s take Ryder to the Reid Park Zoo.”

“Perfect. He can eat some leaves there,” Maggie said. “Let’s get some animal food and feed the black panther.”

Adalee and Maggie asked together, “What do they eat?”

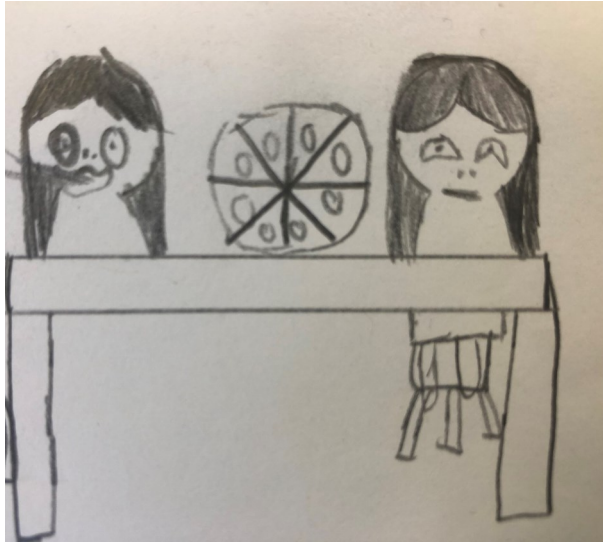
“Dr. Boomer says peanut butter and jelly sandwiches,” Maggie said.

Adalee said, “What about the T-Rex? Can we feed him?”



“The zookeeper said if we feed the tiger some meat, he will turn into a popsicle,” Maggie said.

She looked around the zoo and thought, “What a strange zoo. It looks like the snake is listening to music, the hippo looks hungry and is smelling a pie, and the cow is mooing in the rain!”



Before the girls left the zoo, they ordered a pizza. They decided to add a slice to the potion, and it turned Ryder back into himself.

To celebrate, they played Mario Party 8 for hours and then Maggie and Adalee went back home to see their parents and went to sleep.



The next day, they wanted to go back to Ryder’s house to play more Mario Party 8, but he was not home. So instead, they went to Funtasticks with their parents to play some games and go on the slides.

When they got to Funtasticks, a boy pushed the girls down because he wanted to play first. Maggie’s leg got hurt, and Adalee was very upset because they couldn’t play together.

Adalee knew what she had to do... make a potion to heal her sister. She needed ½ cup of eggnog, ½ gallon of apple juice and 4 cactus fruits.

She mixed it up and poured it all over her sister’s hurt leg.

It worked!

Maggie stood up and said, “Woohoo! My leg is fixed.”

Then the girls went home, and their mom called the mother of the little boy who pushed Maggie. He got in big trouble and was not allowed to go back to Funtasticks.

Adalee said to Maggie, “I’m sorry that boy pushed you. Let’s play hide and seek.”

Maggie said, “Okay, let’s go outside and play!”

Their mom told them, “Be careful out there, girls. No getting into trouble.”

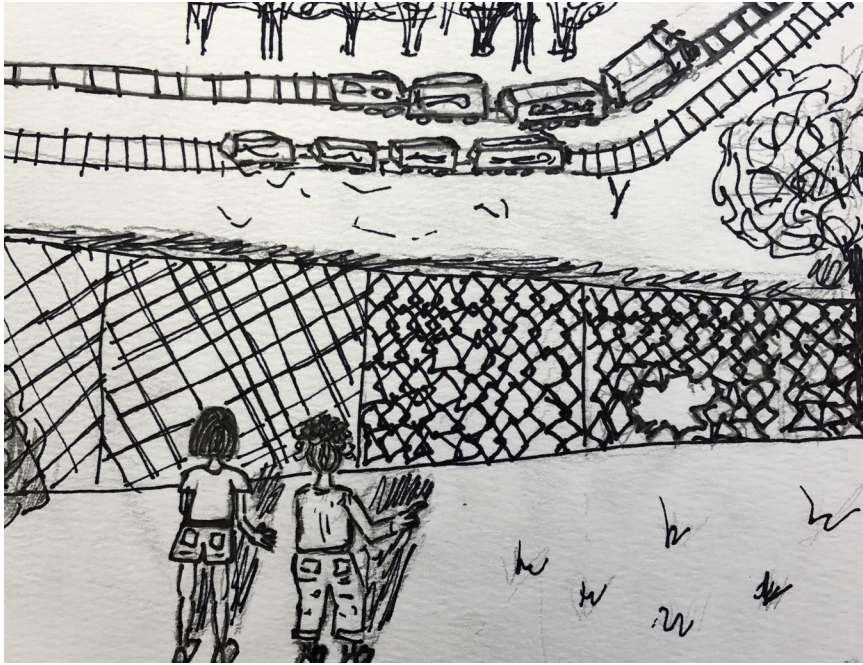
The girls said, “We won’t.”

When they were playing, Adalee got lost in the bushes outside of their house and called out for Maggie.

After 10 minutes, they finally found each other. However, they both were lost now. They started on their way back trying to find their house but instead found the nearby train station.







Maggie said, “Maybe if we go in, someone will know where we are and how to get back.”

To get into the station, they needed to show a ticket. So instead, they found a hole in the fence and snuck in.

Adalee said, “Wow! There are so many trains!”

Maggie said, “I know, right? I wonder what it’s like riding a train?”

“I bet it’s fun!” said Adalee, looking through the window of one. “Do you want to try to ride one?”

“I don’t know,” Maggie said. “We might get even more lost.”

“Come on! It’ll be fun! Don’t be such a stick in the mud!”

“Ok fine, but just one ride.”

They waited for a train to come for what seemed like an eternity. They finally saw a bunch of people boarding one and snuck on.

They found a seat in the back and waited. When the train started



to move, Maggie looked up and saw a sign that said, “This train is headed to the City of the North Pole.”

“Wow!” said Adalee. “We are at the real North Pole!”

The girls got off the train and saw a sign welcoming them to the North Pole. The city was beautiful and awesome. Everything was covered in snow.

Just then, something in the snow moved.

“Aahh!” It’s a polar bear!” shouted Maggie.

The polar bear walked closer to them, reached out his paws, stretched his sharp claws, and gave the girls a big hug.

“We are lost,” said Adalee. “Can you help us get home?”

“I can’t!” said the polar bear. “But I know someone who can. Hop on my back. We are going to see Santa.”

Santa’s house was a gingerbread and candy house. Yum! Santa said he could take the girls on his sleigh.







“HO, HO, HO, here we go!” said Santa. The sleigh took off through the sky, and Maggie felt something cold.

“It’s snowing!” said Maggie. Maggie and Adalee snuggled closer together under a blanket that Santa had given them to stay warm.

Adalee asked Santa if he knew where they lived. Of course Santa knew, but he wanted to show the Adalee and Maggie a surprise first.

“Would you like to see my workshop?” asked Santa.

“Oh, yeah!” squealed the girls.

As Santa flew his sleigh and reindeer toward his workshop, Adalee and Maggie imagined all of the bright and shiny new toys they would see. They couldn’t wait to meet Santa’s helper elves!

Maggie secretly wondered if Santa would let them choose a toy



even though it wasn’t Christmas yet.

The reindeer slowed down and landed. Both Adalee and Maggie were giggling, waiting for Santa to help them off of his sleigh. He helped them down and opened the gigantic red doors of his workshop. It was buzzing with excitement!

The girls stood wide-eyed as every toy they could possibly imagine sat on rows and rows of shelves. Santa’s helper elves were busy building, banging, painting and wrapping toys.

Santa knew the Maggie and Adalee were hoping for a special toy, and he had something very special to give them.



Each girl received a brand new Journey Girls doll! Maggie and Adalee were overjoyed with their new toys!

Then the girls moved on with Santa into the loading room, where





thousands of elves were packaging and loading them onto the sleigh.

Adalee said, “Maggie, it’s wonderful her—”

ATTENTION! Said the loudspeaker, THERE HAS BEEN A TOY BREAKOUT IN THE CREATING ROOM.

“Uh oh!” said Santa, “Ho, ho, ho, I’d better go!”

“Wait, Santa!” said Maggie. “We need to get home!”

Seconds later, the girls were alone in the packaging room.

But then Adalee heard something from a nearby side room. “Who’s there?” said Adalee.

All of a sudden a dog jumped out of the room! The dog started licking Maggie’s face! “Hey stop!” said Maggie.

“What’s his name?” said Adalee.

Maggie took a look at the dog and spotted a shiny collar around his neck.

Maggie grabbed the bone-shaped collar and read it, “His name is Jingles,” said Maggie.

“Oh my gosh!” said Adalee. “He must be Santa’s dog!”

“No way!” said Maggie. “We’ve got to tell Santa!”

Maggie and Adalee went to the creating room. What they saw they



would remember for the rest of their lives: A truly magnificent sight.

There were machines and elves working their hardest, stitching Teddy bears, giving little dolls clothes.

“Quick!” said Maggie “We have to find Santa!”

“Over there!” said Adalee.

They only got a glimpse of a big man in a red suit.

“It’s Santa!” said Adalee.”

The girls ran over, only to run back into the loading room where the sleigh stood and a giant red sack was propped upon it. They saw Santa sitting in the front seat, but then Jingles ran over to Santa.

“Woah-ho!” said Santa.

“There you are, Santa!” said Adalee as she rushed over to catch Jingles.

“We need to get home!” said Maggie.

“But we found Jingles!” said Adalee.

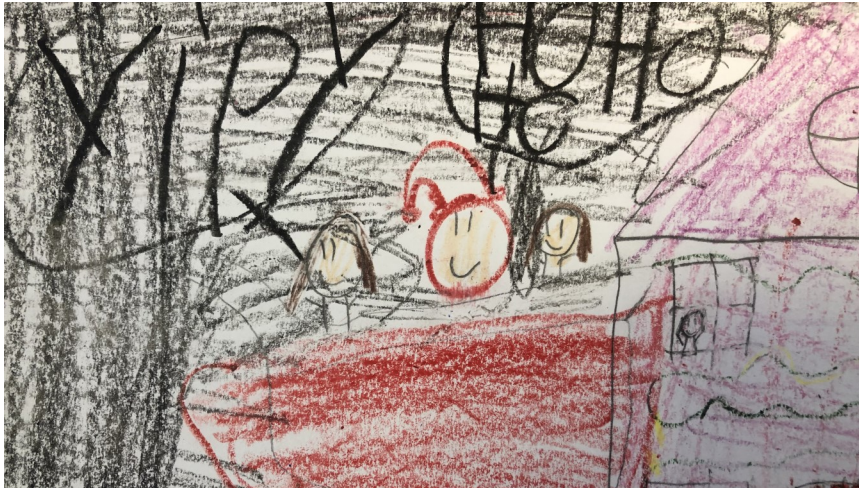
“I can see, I’ve been looking for Jingles all over the workshop!” said Santa.

“But Santa!” said Maggie. “We need to get home!”

“Ho, Ho. You’re right!” he said.







Then all of a sudden, the sleigh started to hover off the ground, and with a great big WOOSH, they were up in the sky! The wind WHIPPED through their ears, and they saw all of the lights of North Dakota.

As they soared through the air. Jingles was sticking his head out of the side of the sleigh. The girls did the same and saw the magical dust follow behind them.

WOOSH! The sleigh had just landed right in front of their house.

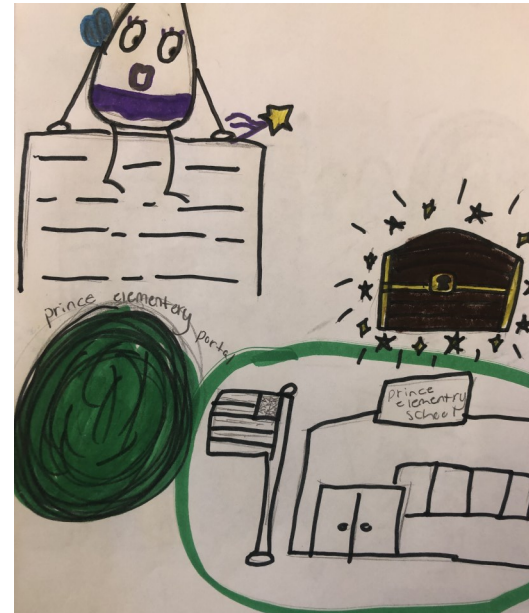
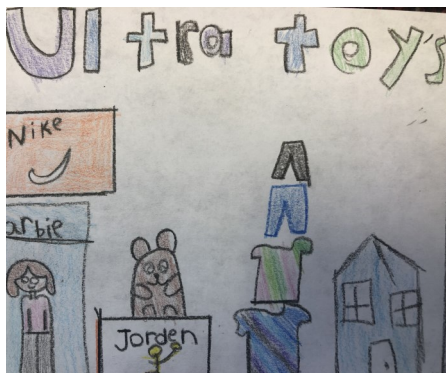
“Thanks, Santa,” said Adalee.

“No problem. Ho, Ho, Ho,” said Santa.

Jingles came over to lick their faces. “Bye, Jingles,” said Maggie.

The girls went home, but when Adalee opened the door, she didn’t see her parents. She saw ultra-rare toys. They were sparkly and were to die for! There were also handmade toys from Santa’s hands, and in the very, very back, she saw a Humpty Dumpty sitting on a brick wall about to fall. She was dressed up as a fairy throwing glitter.

When Adalee and Maggie



walked in, all Humpty Dumpty said was, “Want to put on a fairy dress with me?”

Then Humpty Dumpty fell and cracked. Glitter came out. The girls cleaned it up and saw a treasure box.

“Should we open it?” they said.

They decided to open it, and inside was a portal that led to Prince Elementary School, which was their favorite place.

When they got there, it was Christmas, and the school gave them a whole bunch of lessons.

When they got out of school, they were so smart that they got to meet Albert Einstein. They were inventing light bulbs.

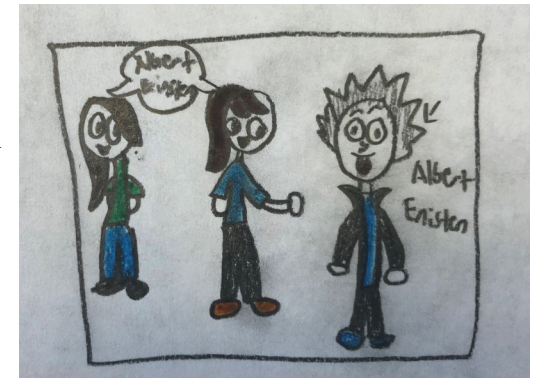
Prince Elementary gave them Prince shirts so they could be wearing them with Prince pride.

Outside, it started to snow out of nowhere. People started making snowmen.

After a long day and a fun day full of excitement, they went back home and cleaned up their mess.

After they were done, they watched a movie and ate some popcorn. They watched the “Grinch” and drank green smoothies.

“And that’s my life,” said Maggie and Adalee.







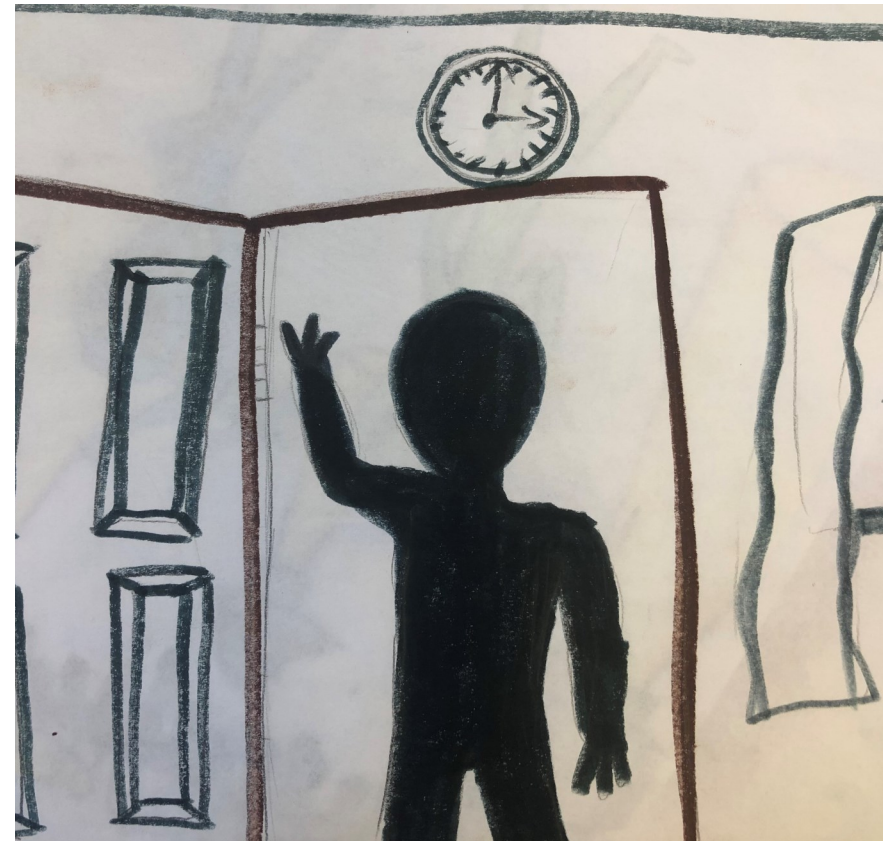
### A FEW YEARS LATER ...

Maggie and Adalee were getting ready to celebrate their 13th birthday. This would be the day they would choose their form or animal. Their parents had said so during that crazy few days when the spaceship landed, they found out they were aliens, their friend turned into a dog and they met Santa Claus.

What form or animal would they choose? Everyone wanted to know, but the girls had kept their decision a secret. They had made a pinky promise that they would not reveal it until their party, and you simply cannot break a pinky promise.

As their friends and family gathered around their birthday cake—shaped like a glittery Humpty Dumpty, Maggie and Adalee finally answered that burning question.

“After a lot of thought and discussion, we have chosen our forms,” Adalee said.



“We have decided to be HUMAN GIRLS,” Maggie said. “We like ourselves just as we are.”

Their parents were thrilled that their daughters had decided follow in their footsteps and become human beings.

After the party, Maggie and Adalee sat by the window and talked about what their next adventure might be.

Just then, there was a knock at the door.

“Who is it?” Maggie and Adalee said.

They couldn’t believe who answered ...

*The End.*



**What do you think happens next?**  
**Write the next part of the story just for fun!**



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