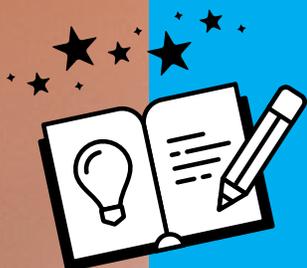


Olive and Fred Robins Junior Short Story Contest 2019



Olive and Fred Robins Junior Short Story Contest is an annual programme held each October. Wellington County students in Grades 4, 5 and 6 are invited to submit original stories for the chance to win great prizes and publication of their work. **Thank you to each person who participated this year! We hope you enjoy these creative pieces as much as we do.**



**Wellington
County Library**



The Mystery of Homestead 309

By Heidi Smits

Katie bounced on the balls of her feet, waiting for her name to be called. She wanted to be accepted into astronaut training. It had been her life goal and so far there was no doubt in her mind, she would be accepted. The last name was called but it wasn't hers. Her colleagues, congratulated each other. Katie called over her teacher.

"I think they forgot me?"

Her teacher shook his head.

"Katie, this was no mistake. I'm sorry, you don't have what it takes to be an astronaut."

After months, she finally decided to follow her second childhood dream, being a detective. Even though everything was alright in the end, Katie never forgot her first dream.

Ten years later

The news was buzzing; the first humans had now lived on Mars for a week. As she pulled into her driveway, Katie saw a black car parked there. Katie crept out carefully. Suspicious, she opened the door to her house. Katie could have sworn she locked it, but it swung open. She crept around to the living room and froze. There was a man and woman standing there. The woman asked, "Are you Katie Duke?"

Katie nodded.

The man said, "There's been an incident. We require your assistance. You'll receive more information once we arrive at the launch bay."

Katie's eyes went wide. Who were these people? The launch bay? And more importantly, what kind of incident? They herded her towards the car before Katie could protest. The car had a darkly tinted partition. She jumped when the partition rolled down. The woman turned.

"We were going to tell you about this incident when we arrived, but we don't have time to spare, so we'll tell you now. A few hours ago, we got a message from Homestead 309. The message said that two astronauts had gone missing. They had tried to radio them to no avail. We couldn't find anything on them either. We're sending you to the homestead to investigate. You're the only detective in the area with knowledge of space. You'll have training at the homestead."

The car stopped and they led Katie to a large building. Katie's eyes were giant before she saw the space shuttle.

"You don't expect me to pilot that thing?"

"Of course not, we're sending you with two astronauts."

Katie sighed, relieved.

The next hour was spent learning about space travel. Before she knew it, she was prepped and in the space shuttle. She briefly met the two astronauts and she watched as they checked things off their checklists and pressed certain buttons. She must have passed out, because when she opened her eyes, she was in a bed. She sat up and saw a small window. Katie was ecstatic when she realized she was floating. She pushed off from her bed and looked out at the rocky terrain of Mars. Another girl floated over.

"You're the detective?"

Katie nodded.

"I'm Natalie."

Katie nodded again

"So what's been happening?"

Natalie shrugged.

"First it was Sarah. She went out to collect a sample and never came back. We tried everything to find her. Then Adam, he went missing while searching for Sarah. We got a message from him right before he went dark. The message said "Guys I found Sarah, wait-" and then he disappeared." She'd never had a case this big. Natalie went to her bunk and got two photos. She gave Katie the pictures.

"That's them."

The first photo was of Adam, he looked around forty. The other photo was of Sarah. She looked about thirty. Katie started asking her detective questions,

"Do you know if any of them had a mental illness, abusive childhood or reasons to leave?"

Natalie pursed her lips.

"Sarah and Adam never really talked about that, but they seemed fine?"

Suddenly an alarm started to ring.

"What's that alarm mean?"

Natalie looked terrified.

"We each have identification cards that open the front doors. We all know not to try and open the door without the cards. That alarm means that something unauthorized is trying to open the door."

Natalie rushed out and Katie followed her. They pushed through several hallways until they arrived at a giant door. There were windows on either side, they each rushed to one. What Katie saw was terrifying. The thing had bulging eyes, shriveled skin and the remains of a space suit. It looked like a mummy.

Katie realized: the thing was Adam.



Nature's Revenge

By Malcolm Medeiros

Nature. One of the most amazing things on Earth. You could say that it can sometimes have a mind of its own. Over the years, we've done a lot of bad stuff to Nature. Over 15.3 billion trees are cut down every year. Either to make room or to make paper. Long story short, human kind is not good to Nature. What you all might wonder is ...What if Nature had its revenge?

In 2034 there are only a few animals that are not extinct. There are only a few remaining trees and fewer plants. Moe Lerbe, a scientist who loves gardening, is concocting a serum that will make plants grow faster and last longer. He's also finding a way to make plants living things. To make them living, breathing beings. He thinks it could be an addition to life. As he sat in his lab, he was so focused on his concoction that he didn't notice his pet monkey sneaking up behind him. Larry, the overly-intelligent monkey was much like a human. He walked like a human. He was as smart as one. He even spoke English. He was like the new and improved Koko (the intelligent ape that learned to use sign language, back in the day).

Moe had found Larry while on a trip to the Amazon jungle (or what was left of it). Moe was with his Science comrades to try and locate the endangered jaguar. Instead he had found a baby monkey hiding in the smoking remains of a Kapok tree. Larry's family had been killed by poachers. He had bullet wounds, including a gash on his cheek. Moe had taken him in. Larry learned from Moe. In a month he had learned to walk. Moe was so surprised that he decided to teach him as much as he could. And he did. Moe had tried teaching Larry the old fashion way but it didn't work. He had to turn to technology. He did an x-ray on Larry's brain. He discovered that there was a bullet still lodged in Larry's head. It had been there since the day Moe had taken him in. Moe pieced together a human brain with different parts (Don't ask). And then replaced Larry's brain with the human brain (Don't ask). After that, Larry was just like a human.

"Moe", Larry said so abruptly that Moe was jolted out of his chair and slammed into his desk. The desk shook violently causing the test tubes to tip over and the serum to pour out and mix with the other liquids. One test tube containing a blue liquid poured into a test tube with a yellow liquid. When the blue liquid mixed with the yellow liquid it turned green. It started to foam and glow.

"Don't do that to me Larry", Moe exclaimed, "You could have..."

Moe froze when his eyes landed on the mess on his desk. Larry looked on in horror.

"What's that?", Larry asked, pointing at the foaming green mixture.

As if on cue, the test tube tipped and the mixture poured into the Venus fly trap next to the test tubes.

"Noooooo!", Moe yelled, running over to his desk.

He let out a very loud sigh then looked back at Larry.

"Sorry", Larry squealed.

Moe opened his mouth to say something, but was interrupted by a high-pitched squeal. He turned to see the Venus fly trap moving. Its mouth opened and an eerie sound was heard.

"What the...", Moe said as he leaned down to observe it.

Larry did the same. Moe scratched the Venus fly trap's chin. The plant seemed to giggle.

Larry and Moe looked at each other in awe.

"I think we've made an amazing discovery", Moe grinned.

Five Months Later

Larry and Moe sat back on their couch. So much had happened. They had raised 1000 Venus fly traps that had been exposed to the serum they called "Larry's Mistake" or LM for short. The plants had been sold across the world as household guards. Because they were rare, they were very expensive, which meant only the very wealthy could afford them. They became a status symbol. Business was good until they discovered that when the plants reach maturity they got confused between the owners and intruders. Before long these rich people became homeless when they could no longer enter their houses due to a giant walking Venus Fly Trap.

For these certain people, Nature had had its revenge.

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