

FIRST PRIZE

Antonio the Magic Bike

ONCE UPON A TIME, there was a magical bike that could talk. The bike's name was Antonio. Antonio was green with shiny pedals.

Every time Antonio rode, sparkles would come out of the spokes. No other bikes talked to him. They could not talk like him.

One day, Antonio met another magical bike. The other magical bike was named Domenico. They became friends because they were the only magical bikes in the world. Domenico played tag with him and sang songs with him. Antonio was happy to have a friend.

by Dominic Cicconi (Kindergarten)
St. Angela Merici Catholic Elementary School
Woodbridge, Ontario

FIRST PRIZE

An Elf and a Bad Thief

ONCE UPON A TIME, in a country named Marya, there lived a princess and a prince. They went to bed at ten o'clock every day.

One day, a thief stole their treasures when they were sleeping. They woke up shocked the next day and cried with big tears.

Another day, when they were walking down the street, they found a castle called "A Bad Thief." They went into the castle and saw the thief was sleeping on his bed. Suddenly, a guard was coming to check on the thief. The princess and prince quickly camouflaged in the dark. Then, they went into a glowing room and found their treasures there. But all the treasures were protected by a fairy.

Unfortunately, the glowing light made the thief wake up. "Get off, you hare!" the thief yelled.

The princess stood in the front of the prince and said, "No, you must return our treasures!" The thief was so angry and became bigger and bigger. Both the prince and the princess were scared.

In the end, the fairy flew out and said, "Wow, that was a little too crazy. He is my friend, and the thief was actually an elf. He took people's treasures because he wanted to rebuild the fairies' homeland, which had been destroyed by a storm."

The princess and the prince looked at the elf and gave him a hug. "Let us help you!"

They helped the elf and the fairies to rebuild their homeland and lived happily ever after.

by Lillian Gao (Grade 1)

Havergal College
Toronto, Ontario

FIRST PRIZE

The Super Sisters

ONCE THERE WERE TWO SISTERS in the forest looking for water. They needed water because they lived in a village.

When they reached the lake, they froze. They heard a noise, and then they saw it. A bat! They hid in a bush, but the bat was still behind them. The bat picked up one of the girls and flew away!

The girl had never been so frightened in her life! Then a voice came out of nowhere. The girl looked behind her and saw a big ghostly face in the sky.

“My name is Zane, and I heard you lost your sister.”

“Yes,” the girl cried. “How did you know?”

“Because I can watch what’s happening. Did you know you had—” He stopped.

“I had what?” she asked curiously.

“Well, you and your sister have superpowers!”

“Really?” she said in awe.

“Yes.”

“How do you use them?” she asked.

“Well, I could give you magic lessons.”

“Yay!” she said excitedly.

“First, you have to concentrate your mind on what you want to do!”

She thought, *Hmmm*. Then she concentrated really hard, and it worked! Her sister’s shadow was right there in front of her! She ran towards it. She looked closer, but it was only a bunny’s shadow. Sad, she sat on a rock.

Zane said, “Don’t give up yet. It was only your first time trying it!”

Then a misty hand gently rested on her shoulder. It was her sister! But . . . a ghost!

“What happened?” she asked.

“It is a spell!” her sister said.

“Maybe you could use your superpowers to come back to life!”

“What superpowers?”

“Oh, this is Zane, and he told me all about our superpowers.”

Then they heard the bat again. “We hear you!” they all shouted.

She concentrated her mind, and . . . it worked!

There was a night catcher right there with a net sneaking up on the bat! “Gotcha,” he said, putting the bat in the cage.

Then, as Zane taught the girls how to use their powers, the ghost sister came back to life!

They came back to see Zane for lessons every day until one day Zane got the ghost fever. There was only one special cure, and it was a long way down the mountains in a cave. So, the super sisters went off down the mountains.

Finally, they reached the cave. They saw a lot of cavemen drawings. One looked big and was a circle. One of the sisters put her hand on it, and . . . it opened! It was the ghost cure!

The girls ran back. They gave Zane the shot, and he got better. Then, the super sisters went off and started saving people in the village.

by Sienna Komenda (Grade 2)

St. John’s-Ravenscourt School

Winnipeg, Manitoba

FIRST PRIZE

A Dog's Trip to the Rainforest

THE EAVESDROPPING

Goldenfur the Pomeranian puppy was very energetic. He was sleeping on his bed when he heard his owners discuss some exciting news. They were going to go to the Amazon Rainforest! And they were bringing him! He nearly fell off his bed while he was daydreaming. So many insects to chase! So many plants to sniff! So many suntanning spots! Then he remembered the scary part. Goldenfur would have to brave his greatest fear: heights. As a newborn, he had nearly fallen off a cliff on his first walk at the animal shelter. What if he fell off the plane? He would have to be brave to get to paradise.

THE FLIGHT

Goldenfur was sitting in the back seat of their red Honda. He was thinking about the plane ride. *I'll be okay. My owners are here with me.*

Soon, they arrived at the terminal. Then, Goldenfur was terrified. All he knew about planes was that they were big, clumsy, white things that flew.

When he got to the waiting room, he saw one, a *plane*. They were humongous! Gigantic! Colossal! Goldenfur had never seen anything so big.

When they got on the plane, he saw comfortable seats. His owners filed into a row of seats. Goldenfur decided to forget everything, cuddle into one of his owner's laps, and go to sleep. So, he did.

THE AMAZON RAINFOREST

Finally! He was here! He yapped, wagged his tail, and jumped around the whole time they were in the airport. His owners tried to calm him down, but he would not. He was just too excited.

When they got to their hotel room and unpacked, his owners let him explore the rainforest. Goldenfur only had half an hour and so many things to do! He ran around, sniffed plants, made animal friends, chased butterflies, and did a scavenger hunt he made himself. (He was also going to sunbathe but didn't have time.) Then, his owners called him for training time. *Ugh*, he thought. He did his tricks well so he would have more exploring time. He did this every day in the rainforest.

When it was time to go, everyone was sad. He and his friends exchanged gifts. Goldenfur said many goodbyes, and so did his friends.

When Goldenfur arrived at the airport again, he knew what to do. He stayed beside his owners the whole time, and when they got onto the plane, he daydreamed about all the fun things he had experienced until he fell asleep.

When he got home, he jumped onto his bed to eavesdrop and see if he could find out where they were going next.

by Ariel Chen (Grade 3)

St. Mildred's-Lightbourn School

Oakville, Ontario

FIRST PRIZE

Friendship

THERE WAS A GIRL in fourth grade named Zoe. Her favourite part of going to school was seeing her best friend, Rosie. Rosie was the class hamster. Zoe would play and talk to her. She would even stay in for recess to read a book to her. Zoe thinks that Rosie likes the book *Hamsters Are Amazing* because Rosie always stares at page 107.

One day, Zoe got to school and went to play with Rosie, but Rosie was not there. She looked everywhere in the class but saw nothing. She asked everyone, "Have you seen Rosie?" No one had seen her. Every day, she would stay in and search the school. It was hard because she went to a big school.

Then one day, she found a piece of fur on the ground. She looked at it closely. It looked as if it belonged to Rosie. It was peach coloured and super soft. She put it in her pocket and ran to class to work on her project.

Zoe was partnered with Jack. Jack was known for being super quiet and always off by himself. They went to Jack's desk and started working. Just then, Zoe saw another piece of peach-coloured fur sticking out of Jack's pencil case. It looked just like the one she had found before.

The teacher then said, "This week, you need to get together with your partner to finish your project."

Zoe instantly saw her chance and said, "Can we do it at your house?" Jack agreed.

Later that week, Zoe went over to Jack's. When she got there, she asked if she could use the bathroom. On her way to the upstairs bathroom, she saw Jack's room and decided to take a quick peek inside. She saw a blanket over a box. She went closer, and at the back, the blanket was not fully covering what she could then see was a cage. She peeked underneath the blanket, and there she was! Rosie!

Zoe went downstairs and said to Jack, "Why did you take Rosie?" Jack didn't answer. "Jack, you need to tell me. I saw Rosie in your room."

Finally, he spoke. "Well, . . . I was feeling left out at school. I don't have many friends. I saw you having fun with Rosie, so I wanted to hang out with her the way you did. That probably sounds stupid. I'm sorry I took her."

Rosie thought for a minute. "I understand," she said. "How about this? I won't tell anyone if you bring Rosie back. Maybe the three of us could hang out together." Jack smiled.

Mystery solved, Zoe said to herself. And now I have a new friend.

by Pippa Millman (Grade 4)
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SECOND PRIZE

Puffy and Polly

ONCE UPON A TIME, there was a little girl named Lulu. She had a kitty named Polly. Polly was stuck in a tree. A dog was chasing her. The dog's name was Puffy.

Lulu helped Polly out of the tree and gave her some delicious milk.

After Polly had her milk, she wanted to go out for a walk. Lulu took her out for a walk. They went to the playground.

Lulu was on the playground while Polly was playing with her ball. Then, Puffy came and started fighting Polly. They kept scratching each other and pushing each other.

When they stopped, Lulu picked them up and took them home. Polly said sorry to Puffy. Puffy said sorry to Polly. Puffy gave Polly a hug attack! Then, they became best friends!

by Maymunah Mohamed (Kindergarten)

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SECOND PRIZE

The Magical Dog, Sherlock!

ONCE UPON A TIME, there was a magical border collie dog named Sherlock. He lived in New York City with his puppy family: Arabella, Abigail, Julian, and Ashleigh.

One day, Sherlock woke up and started to fly! Arabella shouted, “Ahhh! Mom, Dad, come quick!”

When they came to her room, Sherlock was sitting on Arabella’s bed. They asked her, “What’s wrong? Why are you shouting?”

“Mommy, Daddy, Sherlock . . . was . . . FLYING in my room!”

Suddenly, Abigail walked in and said, “What’s going on in here?”

“Abigail, . . . Sherlock was FLYING in my room,” said Arabella.

Abigail, Mommy (Ashleigh), and Daddy (Julian) all saw Sherlock sitting on her bed, and they all said, “Arabella, Sherlock is right beside you. Dogs cannot fly!”

“But . . . we have a magical dog, I swear. I will show you,” said Arabella.

Arabella grabbed her fairy wings and put them on. She opened her box of pixie dust and said, “I will sprinkle this dust on you, Sherlock, and you will fly for everyone!”

All of a sudden, Sherlock began to fly around the room, and everyone was surprised! Arabella said, “Mommy, Daddy, and Abigail, do you believe me now?”

They all hugged and said, “Wow! We didn’t know we lived with a magical daughter and a magical dog!”

by Arabella De Gasperis (Grade 1)

Bannockburn School

North York, Ontario

SECOND PRIZE

The Wizards Fight Back

THE WIZARD WAS ON GUARD. Then he smelled smoke. That could only mean one thing: *Dragon!*

The dragon used to be a wizard. The wizard was looking for a spell to turn the dragon back into a wizard. The wizard searched for the spell for a year. Finally, the wizard met the dragon. He said the spell, “Dragon no more, human once again!” He tied the dragon to the tree. “*Arresto flam-o,*” said the wizard, which took away the dragon’s fire.

“Thank you for turning me back into a wizard my old friend,” said Zayn.

“You’re welcome,” said Orion. “We need to find Lady Nature to help restore the forest,” said Orion.

At Lady Nature’s tree, they saw huge footprints. This could only mean one thing: *Giant!*

The wizards met the ninjas. Oh no! The ninjas were going to the wizard’s campground. They wanted to steal the wizards’ staffs. The ninjas were about to put a cage on the wizards, but then the wizards did a spell. It was called Stop-o! Right past the ninjas, they saw the giant and Lady Nature, but they couldn’t defeat the giant, so they had to go to the evil castle to get the mythical sword that could end evil.

The wizards dressed up in disguises, and so they went in the castle. The guards caught them and put them in the dungeon. Thankfully, they had shrunk their staffs and hid them in their cloaks. The wizards shrunk themselves with their tiny staffs and then flushed themselves down the toilet. The sewer is not a nice place to be. There are rats and all kinds of bad smells.

Then they found the panel to the mythical sword. They opened the panel . . . and there it was!

As they approached the mythical sword, Zayn accidentally fell into one of the lasers, setting off an alarm in the medieval castle. Orion took the sword as quick as he could, and then they escaped.

Hot on their tails was the whole evil castle army. So, then they escaped the medieval castle, and then fought off all of the evil guards and went to Lady Nature and battled the giant. . . .

They won, and they saved Lady Nature. But then, she was infected with Giant disease. So, they had to make a potion to cure her.

They went back to the castle and stole the ingredients to save Lady Nature. And then they gave the potion to Lady Nature, and then it took three hours for the potion to make her better again. And then she restored nature, and all the evil was gone.

by Remy Wood (Grade 2)

Westmount Public School

Kitchener, Ontario

SECOND PRIZE

The Quest for the Ruby of Power

IT WAS ANOTHER SUMMER DAY in Fox Village. Kids were playing hide-and-seek, men were cooking and fishing, and women were hanging the washing. Alexander, Jeremy, and Willis were playing tag. Eight-year-old Jack had blond hair and sapphire eyes. He was playing with his game cards, not knowing what was about to happen.

Ralph the elf came on his donkey. His donkey's name was Sunny. Jack approached Ralph with quick steps. Jack said, "You are Ralph the Brave."

"Yes, I am, child. I have terrible news. Your village is doomed!"

"What?" said Jack, surprised. "What is it?"

Ralph said, "Crusher, the rock monster, has stolen the Ruby of Power."

Jack's sapphire eyes just stared in terror as the wind blew through his blond hair.

Ralph said, "Go get your family dagger. It is the only thing that can defeat Crusher. And go get Jeremy; his family sword will help you. It is also magic. Your dagger will only save you when you are about to die."

Jeremy arrived. "This is dangerous, Jack," said Jeremy.

"But we need to save the village," said Jack.

Then, Jack called to his horse, Thunder. Jack's horse came with clapping hooves. "Go!" said Jack as he sped with blazing speed, his hair in the wind.

When he got there, he was in a rock canyon. Jack told Thunder, "This is too dangerous for you." Thunder neighed in agreement, and then Jack went inside the canyon alone.

He was surprised when he saw Crusher. Crusher had glowing gems on his back and was enormous. He roared loudly at Jack as he smelled the prey.

Then he charged at the prey! Jack and Jeremy held the dagger and the sword and charged. Crusher tried to stop but was too late. The weapons hit his chest, and a beam of light shot into the sky! Crusher instantly crumbled into rocks. Then Jack and Jeremy ran to the monster and took the Ruby of Power. Then Jack and Jeremy ran to Jack's horse and went back to Fox Village.

When they got there, they saw Ralph. With happy voices, they said, "We have the Ruby of Power!"

Light came back to the sky. Then they celebrated in the light.

by Jack Earp (Grade 3)
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SECOND PRIZE

Eyes in the Dark

THE BOY'S MOM told him to go to bed. He was trying to fall asleep, but he couldn't; the boy felt as if he were being watched. Then, he fell off his bed. The boy saw eyes staring at him. But the boy thought the eyes were just stars. "I'm probably just tired," said the boy.

Then, the boy started hearing his name being called. "Ben! BEN!" the eyes said loudly. Ben was startled; he turned around and saw a phantom. "My name is Simon," said the ghost. Ben almost passed out! "Please don't run," said Simon. Ben was scared and excited at the same time. Simon was happy that Ben wasn't scared; in fact, he was relieved.

Then, Ben's mom, Sarah, heard the noises and went to see what was happening. "Simon, you need to hide. I'll explain later," said Ben quickly. Ben tried to make it look as if he were sleeping. It worked. After Sarah was gone, Ben got up and Simon came out of hiding. "That was close," said Ben. "We need to avoid my mom."

The two boys became quick friends. "I know! In the mornings before I go to school, we could go to the park."

Then, Simon had an idea. "Hey, Ben, could you maybe take me to school?" said Simon. Ben instantly regretted mentioning school. He wasn't sure that was a good idea. Simon and Ben argued, and Ben finally agreed to take Simon to school with him.

As Ben and Simon went to school, Simon floating happily beside Ben, they spotted some of Ben's friends. Ben ran to hide behind a nearby bush. "I can't have my friends see you," said Ben breathlessly.

Simon smiled and disappeared. "Ben, I can turn invisible, you know," said Simon.

They rushed to Ben's class. "Simon, stay invisible and make sure that no one sees you," said Ben.

After a long day of school, Ben left with a lot of homework to do, but instead of doing it, he went to the park with Simon.

The next day, they went to school again. Like yesterday, Simon turned invisible. This time, Simon decided to explore around the school by himself.

After school, Ben and Simon walked home, but then Ben remembered something. "WAIT!" said Ben. "There's a problem. My house has a bunch of cameras. They may have caught sight of you. . . . We need to somehow delete the evidence." Good news, Ben had access to the cameras. "Simon, by any chance do you know how to hack?" asked Ben.

"Actually, I am an expert hacker!" said Simon. "I've been watching you in the dark for years, you know."

by Austin Peters-Duda (Grade 4)

Forest Avenue Public School
Mississauga, Ontario

THIRD PRIZE

The Boys Drive Their Monster Truck

TWO BROTHERS WERE PLAYING with their monster truck in their backyard when, suddenly, a witch appeared. She had a magic wand shaped like a flower. She told them to give her their monster truck, which had a booster rocket to go extra fast.

The boys didn't want to give her the monster truck, so instead, they gave all their Halloween candy.

The witch was happy. She grabbed all the candy and went away and never came back. And the two brothers kept playing in the backyard.

by Alexander Dias (Kindergarten)
The Progressive Montessori Academy
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THIRD PRIZE

The Day When Pumpkin Got Lost

IT IS THE NIGHT BEFORE HALLOWEEN. On this important night, the witch realizes that Pumpkin is missing.

The witch enters the forest and looks around: "Pumpkin, where are you?" she shouts.

Vampire looks around the corner.

"Can you help me find Pumpkin?" asks the witch.

"Haven't seen him. Why are you looking for him?" answers the vampire.

"Don't you know what day it is? Pumpkin has to glow for Halloween," says the witch.

Vampire thinks for a minute and suggests, "Let's go find Ghost in the secret cave. He might know."

"Hey, Ghost!" says Vampire. "Did you see Pumpkin?"

"No, but maybe Black Cat knows," answers Ghost.

Black Cat lives in the tower. Witch, Vampire, and Ghost march to the tower.

"Hello, Cat," says Ghost. "Have you seen Pumpkin?"

"No, but maybe Brown Bat who lives on Spooky Tree knows."

All four of them run to the tree. "Hello, Bat, do you know where Pumpkin is?" asks Cat.

"No idea. We could ask Dirty Moth who lives in Spider Cave," suggests Brown Bat.

"Hello, Moth, have you seen Pumpkin? We have searched everywhere!"

"No." Moth shakes her head. "Have you searched the neighbourhood?"

All of them run around the neighbourhood and shout, "Pumpkin, Pumpkin, where are you?"

"*Ahhh!* I'm here! Who is shouting so much? Let me sleep!" A sleepy sound comes from the witch's house.

"Pumpkin, have you been here all this time?" asks the witch.

"You can't sleep! You really have to glow!" everyone shouts. "It is Halloween, and you have to be a jack-o'-lantern."

"Fine, but can't you do Halloween without me? I'm tired . . .," grumps the pumpkin.

"No," everyone answers. "You are the only one who can glow, and Halloween without light is impossible."

They all hug Pumpkin and pull him out of the house. Finally, he glows.

Now that Pumpkin is back and glowing, we can have a fun Halloween Night. Let's go for candy and scare people!

by Karl LeVan (Grade 1)

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THIRD PRIZE

The Legend of the Snake Dragon

AT THE DRAGON CAVE, a new dragon was born. The new dragon was a serpent. So, he went to the serpent's cave. Then he was met by a ton of serpents, and one of the serpents had a name for him: The Legend of the Snake Dragon.

Meanwhile, in the middle of Costa Rica, there was a boy named Steven, and he was hiking towards the forest. At the same time, the snake dragon was camping with the serpents. All of the serpents could breathe fire to roast their marshmallows. When he saw it, he put his marshmallow over the fire. Then he listened to the oldest serpent telling a tale: "At a volcano far, far away, there was lava, which made serpents and dragons breathe fire."

After he heard that tale, the snake dragon asked the oldest serpent, "Where was this volcano?"

The oldest serpent answered, "It is over a few mountains away."

Snake Dragon said, "Because it's so far, I can't breathe fire yet."

The oldest serpent said, "Okay, you can go, but make sure to come before morning."

Back at Costa Rica, Steven was halfway through the forest. He looked up at the sky and saw that it was dark. So, he set the tent up. The snake dragon was right over the volcano. He decided to climb down into the volcano and drink some lava. After he drank some of it, he could breathe fire far away.

It was four o'clock in the morning, so he flew hard, and his breath reached the other side of the forest. There, he saw a small tent, so he flew down to the tent.

Steven felt very hot, so he unzipped the zipper. In front of his eyes, he saw a fire serpent with wings. Steven asked, "Where did you come from?"

Snake Dragon answered, "A lot of mountains away. Where do you live?"

Steven answered, "I live in the middle of Costa Rica. How can you blow fire?"

Snake Dragon answered, "I can do it because I am half serpent and half dragon."

Steven was very happy, and they became friends.

by Tyler Chen (Grade 2)
Central Montessori School
North York, Ontario

THIRD PRIZE

The Cat's Final Escape

"DAISY!" said Jasmine. "We're going to a fashion show tomorrow!"

I did not like fashion shows. I don't like being the centre of attention.

Jasmine went to her room. This was my chance to make my getaway, but I did not have a plan.

If I don't have a plan, then I can't make my getaway.

After thirty minutes of thinking, I thought of a plan. I took my bag of cat food and put my toys in it. I pulled my bag to the window frame. I looked at Jasmine. I jumped out the window. I pulled my bag away from home.

I found an old broken house. Nobody lived there. There was no door. I dragged my bag into the house. The place wasn't bad. It was dark and quiet. I felt a little lonely. It wasn't the same without Jasmine.

She was looking for me everywhere. "Daisy!" *Where is she?* Jasmine wondered. Jasmine checked the closet. She checked under the table. She sighed. "How am I gonna find her?" asked Jasmine.

Soon, it was lunchtime. "It's gonna be lunchtime," said Jasmine. "Daisy's gonna be hungry."

I wasn't hungry. I ate my cat food.

"I'm gonna be late for the fashion show!" said Jasmine.

I felt bad for Jasmine. If I didn't go to the fashion show, I would let Jasmine down. I didn't want to let her down. I was going to go home.

I pulled my bag towards the door. I opened it. I pulled my bag out the door. I dragged it all the way home.

When I got home, I opened the door. Jasmine was so happy to see me. I was happy to see her too. "Where have you been?" Jasmine asked me. "Let's go to the fashion show. We don't want to be late!" Jasmine said. She opened my bag. "What a smart little cat," Jasmine said.

For the fashion show, Jasmine was wearing a white sparkly dress with a yellow hairband. I was wearing a white dress too. I also had a yellow bow on my head. Jasmine carried me into the car. We went all the way to the fashion show.

Soon, it was our turn. Jasmine and I walked across the red carpet together. I had so much fun!

Once the fashion show was over, they announced the winner. We won! Jasmine ran to the stage. She held the microphone. "I'd like to thank my cat for coming back when she was lost." The crowd cheered. A man gave her a trophy.

When we got home, Jasmine put her trophy on the shelf. I was never going to leave Jasmine again.

by Bernadette Gomez (Grade 3)

St. Timothy Catholic School

Toronto, Ontario

THIRD PRIZE

The Not-So-Stray Cat

RIIINNNG!

Yes! Alexa thought, racing out of the classroom. *Tomorrow is gonna be a great day*, Alexa thought, as she walked home. After all, tomorrow was her birthday.

Lost in her thoughts, Alexa didn't notice as a small ginger cat stepped right in front of her. Just as she was about to walk over it, she noticed and jumped back. She didn't usually see any stray cats, but no one else was nearby. *I'll name you Coco*, Alexa thought. Glancing at her bag, Alexa picked Coco up and placed her inside. She zipped it up, leaving it a crack open. Then she jogged home.

"Mom, can I please get a cat?" Alexa asked.

"You know I don't like dirtiness. The cat hairs will get on the carpet," her mom sighed.

"Okay," Alexa said.

She went to her room and opened her closet. She grabbed a pillow and put it there with the stray on top. Then, she FaceTimed her best friend, Allie. "I hav—" Alexa stopped when she saw Allie's red eyes. "What happened?" Alexa asked.

"I got a cat, and she was outside, but now she's gone! She's a ginger cat and purrs a lot. She has a lot of hair, and it falls a lot too," Allie said, describing a cat just like Coco.

"I'll send you a photo and let me know if it looks like your cat," Alexa said, grabbing Coco and placing her where you could only see white. She took a photo and sent it.

"That looks just like my cat! Where did you find that picture?"

"I hate to cut things short, but I gotta go." Alexa hurriedly ended the call before Allie could say more. *I must've stolen Allie's cat!* Alexa thought. She realized she'd have to either give Allie Coco or hide her.

Alexa glanced back at Coco and did a double take. Coco was gone! *Oh no!* Alexa thought, rushing out.

"*Aaahhh!*" Alexa's mom screamed.

"Wait!" Her mom listened while Alexa explained.

"Apologize to Allie and give the cat back. And I don't want to see the cat's mess," her mom added as Alexa grabbed Coco and went to Allie's house.

Alexa explained everything, and Allie forgave her.

"You didn't know, and you gave her back, so no hard feelings," Allie said.

"Thanks," Alexa said.

The next morning was better. Her family gave her a rather large box compared to most of the other gifts they gave. *What's inside?* Alexa wondered, opening the lid. Out jumped a little . . . kitten! Alexa squealed.

"Sometimes a little dirtiness is okay," her mom said.

"Thanks! I'll name her Chloe!"

Alexa hugged Chloe tightly, glad to have her.

by Amina Naeem (Grade 4)
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