

My Twist on a Tale:  
Everyday Heroes

Winning  
Stories



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# Winning Stories

My Twist on a Tale was launched for its second year on International Literacy Day 2020 with the aim of providing children and young people with the opportunity to write their own tales of people who have made a difference to them – their Everyday Heroes.

Following an extraordinary year of disruption, we decided to update our competition theme to provide children with a positive outlet to highlight the incredible stories that emerged throughout 2020. We wanted children to be able to express themselves through writing, thus enabling them to reflect their own personality, location and experiences in their narratives. And there was nothing to say the hero needed to be a human!

This book features 15 wonderful stories from children all across the United Kingdom. We offer our congratulations to them all for their fantastic work and for winning My Twist on a Tale 2020!

The beautiful illustrations in this book are by Liliana Perez, c/o Collaborate.

**#MyTwistOnATale**



“It’s not who I am underneath,  
but what I do that defines me.”

*Batman*

“I think a hero is an ordinary  
individual who finds strength to  
persevere and endure in spite of  
overwhelming obstacles.”

*Superman*



“No matter how bad things  
get, something good is out  
there, over the horizon.”

*Green Lantern*



## Contents

Key Stage 1 Winner – Vedantika Chakraborty .....	7
Key Stage 2 Winner – Stamford Bottomley .....	9
Key Stage 3 and North West Regional Winner – Ethan Scot .....	10
Key Stage 4 Winner – Artur Maszczyk .....	14
Key Stage 5 and West Midlands Regional Winner – Jessica Bryn .....	17
Scotland Regional Winner (KS3) – Lilli McCullagh .....	20
Northern Ireland Regional Winner (KS4) – Aidan Sands .....	23
Wales Regional Winner (KS3) – Lois Bradburn .....	27
East Anglia Regional Winner (KS5) – Logan Lee .....	30
North East Regional Winner (KS2) – Payton Twentyman .....	33
Yorkshire and the Humber Regional Winner (KS3) – Hollie Birch .....	35
London Regional Winner (KS2) – Isabella Mahdavi .....	37
South East Regional Winner (KS3) – Lucy Jefford .....	41
South West Regional Winner (KS2) – Isabelle Portch .....	45
East Midlands Regional Winner (KS2) – Eleanor Walker .....	48



# Not all heroes wear capes

by **Vedantika Chakraborty**, KS1 Winner,  
Rockmount Primary School

Not all heroes wear capes and my everyday hero wears an apron! She is my granny. I call her Didi. My day starts with breakfast made by her. She almost makes all the meals in our house. When I come back from school, she always serves me afternoon snacks. Also, she's the one who cooks hot, yum dinner for us. She knows what I like the most and what I can't stand. She teaches me to respect every grain of food and not to waste it.

I had a rough time during the lockdown. There was no school, no friends, no hobby classes and no fun at all. I was quite bored by watching TV all day every day.

Didi planned a tea party for me and my little sister. She made tea, snacks and baked some delicious cookies and cupcakes for us. We had a lot of fun. She made my day. Didi didn't save me for one day or for one specific period but she is my EVERYDAY HERO.



*Illustration by  
Vedantika.*



# Mr Eight O'clock

by **Stamford Bottomley**, KS2 Winner,  
St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Mr Eight O'clock was born in a science lab! He is pink, with no eyes, no mouth and no nose. He is slightly round, and he doesn't say much. He may not look big and strong (or in any way desirable) but my gosh, he is powerful and he saves me every day.

Mr Eight O'clock comes around twice a day. EVERY DAY. I don't even need an alarm to remind me that it is time to see him anymore. He pops out of his pod, raring to help me. He jumps onto my tongue, and whoosh, he goes on an awesome waterslide ride down into my tummy. Mr Eight O'clock doesn't need to be seen to help me. In fact, he helps me from the inside...

Thank goodness for Mr Eight O'clock. He allows me to have adventures, to go on holidays and to have a stress-free life. He also reminds me to keep fit and healthy and to go to bed at a good time because sleep is very important.

Mr Eight O'clock gives me the security for me to be who I am without being scared all the time. He is like a cape made of metal that makes me feel like I can do anything. He keeps me safe and stops me having to go for a ride in a yellow van with flashing lights! Without Mr Eight O'clock I could end up in a very scary place.

It is not just me who has a Mr Eight O'clock, there are lots of children who are helped. Their heroes might be called Mr Seven O'clock, or Mr Nine O'clock. And because we are lucky enough to have these everyday heroes in our lives, people may not even realise they exist!

The pharmacists may call him epilepsy medication, but I call him Mr Eight O'clock, my hero.

# Little Babcia, My Hero

by **Ethan Scot**, KS3 and North West Winner,  
St Bede's Catholic High School

I awoke in my favourite cosiest bed in my favourite cosiest pyjamas at lunchtime in our house in Poland. We had travelled through the night and arrived in the village at 3 o'clock that morning and I was shattered. The village, Plawna, lies in the south east of Poland near the Ukrainian border. The village is stunning with only a hundred houses or so, a river, a train track, one shop, one school and various members of our family scattered in different houses in the village. I rubbed my eyes and stepped out onto the balcony and reminded myself of how beautiful the fields and hills were as I had been here so many times before. The tiles on the floor of the balcony were burning my feet in the hot midday sun like a burger on a griddle. As I ran inside off the hot tiles my mum shouted up to get ready as we were going to see Babcia, which means grandma in Polish. She is actually called Little Babcia, she is my great grandma and as you would expect, is really small. I was actually nearly as tall as her at the time, as this was three years ago when I was nine years old.

We jumped into the car and made the short journey up the steep hill to Little Babcia's house. I was with my mum, dad, brother, grandad and grandma. As we arrived she was stood waiting for us at the back of her house, excited. She threw her arms around me and my brother Jacob, her kisses were as sloppy as a typical grandma's and she always hit the bullseye, my lips! We sat down in her immaculately manicured garden under the altanka (like a gazebo but made from actual tree trunks with a roof). The house sits on a hill in a valley with rolling hills on both sides. I commented on how I would love to walk the hill to my right and Little Babcia noticed me point to the top of the hill. She didn't speak English so my mum translated for us. My pointing had prompted Little Babcia to recall a fascinating true story and before I knew it, she was reliving the events that happened just over 70 years earlier on that very hill. Although she was 93 she was as sharp as a razor blade.



Her memory was better than my dad's and she could still catch chickens with her bare hands.

Her story began, the year was 1944 and the Second World War was in full flow. Poland was at the heart of the war and the village was overrun with German soldiers. Every house had a German officer that they had to feed at meal times. Little Babcia's officer was polite, quiet and on occasions he was discreetly kind. He would randomly slide coins under the empty plate or place butter, sugar and chocolate in the larder which he had smuggled in inside his coat. No words except 'thank you' were ever exchanged, and he could not be seen to be kind for fear of punishment. Little Babcia told us that at the time she was in her early 20s and she had given birth to her first child a few months earlier, a baby boy called Zdjishek. Their family consisted of approximately eight people living in their house. They were very poor and their prized possession was the family cow as they needed milk to drink and it also doubled up as a free lawnmower chomping the grass. The villagers were unaware that Russian soldiers had gathered behind the hill I had pointed at earlier. One day, Little Babcia had taken the cow from the barn to the field to graze when all of a



sudden gun fire broke out from the hill where the Russian soldiers were, leaving her momentarily frozen in the middle of the field with her baby boy wrapped to her chest in a sling – this must be a new mother's worst possible nightmare. She heard loud cracks followed by zipping sounds as bullets rained down scattering areas of soil as they hit the ground around her feet. In a split second she quickly thawed out her frozen brain and began playing the scariest game of hide and seek she would ever play, leapfrogging behind every tree available. She wondered why they were targeting her as she stood sweating and panting with her back pressed against a huge tree big enough to protect her and her baby. She

could only think that they had mistaken her for a German soldier from such a distance away. As the Germans began firing back from the top of their hill on the other side of the village she realised she was now caught in the crossfire. Stranded in a field of trees she felt helpless but her only thought was to save her baby. She did not know if they were going to come into the field to find and kill her and her baby so she decided to make a run for it. The barn 50 metres away was her goal.

With a huge deep breath, her heart was pounding in her mouth, she adjusted herself so she would be protecting her baby whilst she ran, then off she went like an Olympic sprinter at the start of a race. She could hear bullets and remembers them hitting trees as she passed them, she decided not to stop even when she felt one hit her face. They crashed through the door of the barn. Little Babcia then dropped to the floor exhausted, she had no idea of how bad the injury was to her face. She sat up and touched her aching nose and saw blood dripping down onto the dusty floor of the barn. We were sat on the edge of our seats, gripped by the extraordinary tale we were hearing this frail old lady relay. She paused, silently leant

forward towards me and my brother and pointed to her scar on her permanently indented nose, proof of the tale, the evidence visible 70 years on. Little Babcia resumed the story and explained how she hid silently in the barn for six hours and breastfed the baby to keep him from crying so they were not found and probably killed. When it was dark and safe, she carefully crept back to the house to tell everyone what had happened and where she had been. I sat in the garden and remember thinking that this had actually happened here in this field and on this hill a short walk from where we were sitting. I stared at the bullet scar on her nose, I was mesmerised, WOW.

She went on to have six more children, grandchildren and great grandchildren including my grandmother, mum, brother and me. Zdjishek is now in his seventies and has children and grandchildren of his own who I play with. None of us would have been born or would be alive today if it wasn't for Little Babcia, MY HERO. I saw her one more time the following year after which she sadly passed away. I was pleased I had managed to stroke her brave little hand one final time.

# Meow

by **Artur Maszczyk**, KS4 Winner, CATS College

In the sprawling urban housing environment of the 21st Century lurks a breed of animal that carries an amount of sass, utmost royalty, and an unhinged resentment for all life so grand, it pierces the heavens till present day.

Cats... or for a more explicit description... me. I was born in a humble litter of five. All of my four blood-brothers were taken in one by one and scrambled across what I can only assume the globe, but I was left behind. I never was engaged with the idea of humans placing their dirty, bare, fleshy hands upon my soft, delicate fur, so I returned their bestial acts with a hiss, and the point of my claws. I was very lonely at that time, but not for long, fortunately...

She was quite an elderly woman, and even though I did my whole ritual of hissing and scratching, she still placed her wrinkly hand upon my head. The malaise welling up inside me almost made me puke out my hairballs, but even though it felt moist and coarse and disgusting... it felt good really.

"I'll take this one." Her voice sounded gravely, but trembled at the same time.

And thus... I was taken to my new home. It was a small apartment, every corner populated by a potted plant. The walls and ceiling were painted in a pale light green an-

"SWEET SPHYNX! What is that?" It was black and round and it was moving at me at unimaginable speeds. Its roar reverberated in my ears over and over. I dashed in between the seam in the couch and felt paralyzed by the horror and loathing. I composed myself now, and was ready for battle. I dashed out from the couch and prepared for a battle to define my gladiatorial skills, but, as my owner bent down and stretched her finger to the beast and pressed its back, it let out a cold, robotic voice, "Power off."

"Ugh," what a despicable sound. My owner looked at me chuckling. Well for one, I would be as jolly as her if I had the chance to tame a beast like that. From that moment,

I knew my new home would be... abnormal, to say the least.

After a few months in my new home, I grew accustomed to the specifications one of my species should follow when living in such a high-fashion, though isolated, residence that was my owner's home. She throws a toy mouse, I feverishly chase after it, always go to the toilet in the magic poop disappearing box, always reject the crunchy food etc...

One day, I was minding my own business when I felt the sensation of those moist, coarse hands once more wrap around my body in a vice-like fashion, like I was prime-time coiling material for an African python. "Is she going to eat me?!" "Did she just pamper me to just devour me whole and gag out the hair chunks?!" These thoughts zipped past in my head back and forth like a fierce tennis match, but, thankfully the woman just placed me in her lap (I live another day).



"You know... you've been such a great friend ever since Marsha died. My grandchildren are talking about placing me in a retirement home, but I said I'll see if this kitten thing would work out... and it did. Well, I did need to move from our cottage to this apartment to cope, so isolation can be quite an issue considering the circumstances... well you're here to save my day from boredom and isolation." She bent down and kissed me on the forehead, my neck retracted like an arrow between a bow string. I probably was still too in shock to hear what else she said but as I came to, I heard the words, "My little hero."

Since then I became way more protective of the apartment and my owner, always keeping a watchful eye on everything that could pose a threat. I... cared for these things and I meant to keep them protected and happy. But as one day would have it...

My owner would always lock me out of her room when she went to bed, but this night she left her door open, and when I trudged through to see her, she was just lying there, unmoving. A feeling of absolute horror smothered me. I pranced onto the bed and desperately battered my paws against her body, shouting until my throat was sore and hoarse.

All the thoughts that withered my proud stance over all the previous days came flooding back; "what will I do if I lose her?" "Were all the days we experienced for nothing to her?"

I continued to batter her with the distilled hope that she would wake up and take care of me and love me and we'd continue to live our lives in peace. She's the only one that ever showed me kindness, I can't lose her... I CAN'T lose her!

Tears were welling in my eyes. Now my batters gradually became weaker, and stopped. I knew it was over. I looked up at the ceiling and let out a grieving wail that echoed through not only the room, but the whole floor. I didn't know why I did it, but it felt less like I was trying to vacate my sadness, but I was shovelling more misery into me, coming to terms with the fact that she was gone. I was completely lost... until... I felt a keen... moist and coarse sensation... I dashed my head to the left and saw my owner there, alive and petting my head when she murmured, "oh... I'm sorry, did I worry you... I had quite the late night, I took one of those sleeping pills... would you like some breakfast?"

I was flustered, angered and shocked all at the same time, b-but yes, as the noted "hero" of the apartment... I-I would indeed like breakfast.

# When the world lost its beat

by **Jessica Bryn**, KS5 and West Midlands Winner,  
Rugby High School

I've always found that life has a kind of beat to it. De, de, school, de, de, dinner, de, de, bed. Every single day is the same, the same rhythm, the same pitch, the same feeling, like the world is stuck on a giant metronome. Life is a clock and you are the hands, ticking past the same numbers over and over again.

Tick. Tick. Tick.

I was so caught up in the beat that controlled my life I didn't know what to do. When. It. Stopped. On the 23rd March that exact scenario happened. And no one, including me was ready for it. School bells stopped ringing, car alarms stopped beeping, people stopped sneezing but most importantly they stopped talking. When the beat stopped, all that was left was silence. How can we live in a silent world?

For four months I didn't talk to anyone. The four walls of my messy, spotless room became the four walls of a shrinking prison. Getting smaller and smaller and smaller. My hands didn't know what to do. My mind was a mess of anxiety, a paint palette with

shades of loneliness and isolation mixed in. Yet I didn't choose those colours. They were chosen for me.

I did a lot of thinking.

Thinking, and page turning and sighing and watching. I watched cats with more freedom than me, the ghost of roads crying out for cars and at one point the house opposite landscape their garden. No one was smiling. How can we live in a world without smiling?

For me, it was on the 17th June that the clock started ticking backwards.

Kcit. Kcit. Kcit.

For months, I had watched heroes swapping scrubs for cakes, dusting off cake tins and achieving feats that only captains could reach. Everyone has the power to be a hero. To save someone from unimaginable situations, that was something that was only heard of in comic books. But no one imagined this. No one was ready for the beat to stop but they helped to restart it. Yet I still felt detached from it all, stuck in the prison of my four walls.



Until I noticed you.

Gathering dust in the corner of my room, under mountains of revision guides and folders, you were a hero ready to strike back to help me restart the rhythm of my life. Yes, it's true, we were not best friends straight away. Some days the sound of a dying cat was enough to drive even the smartest assassins away. But you offered no judgement, only beckoned me to persevere.

Hello forgotten friend.

You helped me to face my fears. Taking steps outside felt like a mountain to climb but you were always waiting for me when I got back. Some days reached a crescendo and at those points I was walking on sunshine, others left me with tears on my pillow. You knew that this was going to be a long battle, so you called in backup. Soon your bow was accompanied with the melodies of a guitar and the keys of a piano. Every hero needs a sidekick. I was playing every day, my hands getting more confident with every note I played.

You faced many demons yourself.

From people shouting to be quiet from the street to a radio being turned up a little bit higher. But you didn't care. You still beckoned me to play. On the 6th July, a girl walked past my house, stopped and turned to her mum.

"Mum, I think I can hear a violin."

And from that moment you were a true hero. Because I no longer cared what people thought. I wasn't afraid to break the rules anymore. I wanted to test my limits. The old beat may have stopped, but a new mix was starting to be created. By me.

I always thought that there was only one beat to life. Only one song worth singing. But there's not. You can live to the tick of the clock. Or you can move at your own pace and make a life worth living. I thought I could never live without the beat but I was wrong. There is a beat to life and that is the one being made by me.

You helped me see that.

# Gone With The Windy-Pops

by **Lilli McCullagh**, Scotland Winner,  
Humbie Primary School

Tucked into the folds of the heathery Lammermuir Hills lay a tiny settlement full of kind and friendly folk. Most treasured of all was the warm-hearted Mr Beck, who worked tirelessly for the community running the local cafe, cinema club, newsletter AND pretty much anything else anyone needed help with.

Mr Beck lived next door to the village primary school. He loved to hear the children play, listen to their stories and see their artwork which he often displayed in the cafe. He didn't even mind when the children accidentally kicked balls into his garden.

All was well in the neighbourhood until one day, like a dark cloud overhead, Mr and Mrs Glump arrived, taking up residence in the heart of the village. As everyone soon discovered, the grisly pair were not good or kind people; they were loathsome and vile. So vile that they seemed to infect everything they touched, like a contagious disease. Their garden, once bright and full of life, was now overgrown and littered with junk. The bluebells, tulips and roses that once stood proud in the

flower beds were now shrivelled and faded to the colour of sea haar. The humming bees and chirping wildlife were heard no more. Even their house became misshapen and crooked like an ancient haunted house. Misery hung over them like a velvet curtain.

The Glumps despised any signs of joy and happiness, especially from CHILDREN. Their faces soured like they were sucking lemons every time they heard the delightful squeals of a child or the excited barks of their neighbour's dog as it chased a ball. Hammering at their window and wailing BE QUIET, they would shake their gnarly, twisted fists at innocent passers-by, ordering them to MOVE ON! Soon enough the village fell into a lonely silence as everyone tried to avoid the spiteful, cold-hearted Glumps. The villagers no longer ventured out of their houses and even the school closed its doors and sent the children home to learn. Mr Beck greatly missed seeing his neighbours and saying hello to the children over his garden wall. But most of all, he worried about those alone and

isolated in the rural hamlet, so he set about delivering meals and company to those in need, ignoring the Glumps' frowns and venomous stares as he went on his way.

Then, one cold, murky evening as Mr Beck was returning from his soup run, he overheard the Glumps' bitter voices. They were devising a plan so evil it made his blood run cold. A plot to trick the children... filling sweets with yeast and soap and hydrogen peroxide... to blow them up in one gigantic, foamy, clean sweep... ridding the village of children FOREVER!! Mr Beck had heard enough. He dashed home and set about making his own plan.

Early the next morning Mr Beck visited Miss Dearson, the very knowledgeable schoolteacher, who also loved nothing more than science and problem solving. She was the perfect accomplice!

Miss Dearson cracked it immediately. "Elephant's toothpaste! The children eat the sweets, the components mix in their bellies and boom, off they will pop in a gassy explosion. The yeast," Miss Dearson explained, "is crucial! It's the catalyst. No yeast, no explosion!"



Mr Beck knew what to do next. It was very simple but very clever. He would swap the Glumps' yeast for brown sugar, which looked similar and Mr Beck had mounds of it in his kitchen. That night, under the cover of darkness Mr Beck peered up at the towering garden wall the Glumps had erected to keep life out. He doubted his stiff, aging legs would be flexible enough to make it over the wall and a bead of sweat formed on his forehead as he thought about breaking into the Glumps' house. He couldn't go through with it, but he wasn't ready to give in just yet.

He slinked across to Milli's house and knocked gingerly on the blue front door, crossing his fingers that her parents didn't answer. Rotten luck, it was her dad! Mr Beck cleared his throat and wearing his most convincing smile, politely

# A Twist on a Tale

by **Aidan Sands**, Northern Ireland Winner,  
St Paul's High School

asked if Milli, who would usually be found up a tree, could possibly be let out to help him with a quick errand. Milli's dad paused for a moment, captivated by the sight of a high standing member of the community clad head-to-toe in black and wearing a balaclava. But it was a tight-knit kind of a place where everyone did their bit, so he said yes. Bursting with ecstatic energy Milli, who had been eavesdropping from her bedroom window, flew out the door faster than a shooting star, hauling Mr Beck by the arm back to the Glumps' house.

Like a rat up a drain pipe, Milli scampered up and over the



wall; skilfully picked the Glumps' lock; completed the swap and was back on the other side of the wall with the yeast in one hand and a fistful of fizzy cola bottles in the other before Mr Beck had even had time to put his head torch on. Mr Beck breathed a heavy sigh of relief. But he had one more trick up his sleeve. The next day was Sunday, and Mr Beck knew the Glumps would come into the small shop where he worked for their papers, milk and breakfast rolls so he thought he'd give them a taste of their own medicine. The Glumps left the shop looking rather pleased with themselves, unaware their evil plan had been foiled and that their breakfast was going to be served with a big dollop of just desserts.

The villagers looked up in wonder when they heard the belch-like explosion, but no one ever questioned what happened to the Glumps, who were never seen again.

Like a newly tuned violin, harmony returned to the village. Children's chatter filled classrooms and playgrounds, the church congregation gathered, and friends and neighbours were able to meet again.

In memory of Mr Beck. Our hero.

This is a story about an ordinary man doing his ordinary job. Although he might not look like the type of hero that you see in movies, he definitely has done as much as anyone during a time where everyone was suffering.

It was a cold, dark and empty night in the middle of March. I was tired and hungry. The rain pounded off the roof like each drop was a stone. The violent vibration of the rain made me shiver. Although I was warm and safe inside the comfort of my own home, I couldn't help but think about those people who were out in the storm risking their lives during the pandemic to ensure that everyone was safe.

I strolled out to the kitchen for something comforting to eat. I opened the cupboard. Empty! I sorrowfully walked back to the living room and slouched on to the chair. My attention turned back to the TV. Suddenly I heard the rattling sound of an engine creeping closer and closer and closer. The wheels crunched the pebbles on the driveway. The

headlights shot through the gap in the curtain like a searchlight, making the room move. Then the engine swiftly came to a halt. The doorbell rang. Its familiar and friendly "ding dong!" echoes through the whole house. "Who could it be at this time of night?" I thought to myself. My mother's footsteps creaked the wooden floorboards as she neared the door. The key rattled in the lock. My heart pounded. The door opened.

"Good evening!" said a kind and friendly voice. "Hello" responded my mum. I was so relieved to hear this warm-hearted voice. Tension had been slowly building up inside me ever since I had heard an engine at the bottom of my drive. I felt like a balloon filling with air, getting bigger and bigger until it suddenly bursts.

Still confused, I peered out through the curtains to see who it was. I saw a van with 'Tesco Deliveries' on the side. I rushed to the hall where I was greeted with the loud crashing sound of crates. I glared at them. In a



flash, I realised what it was. I was overjoyed. Food! Bread! Butter! Bars! Biscuits! Sweets! Everything I had hoped for. I paced towards the door, as happy as a child on Christmas morning. It was then I first saw him. "Hello!" he exclaimed, "I'm Paul." He smiled behind his mask. Judging by the tone of his voice, I knew that he was a pleasant and cheerful man. He wasn't allowed to come into our house with the groceries because of restrictions, but he did all he could to help. He stayed for a few minutes, talking to me about how he was coping with the Coronavirus outbreak. He made sure that we were satisfied with everything and he said a warm goodbye. I never realised how much it means to talk to other people until that day.

Paul gathered up the crates and climbed up into his van. He started up the engine and was off. I stood on the doorstep watching the van drive to my ninety-three-year-old neighbour, Anne. If she caught COVID-19, the impact would undoubtedly be fatal. But thanks to Paul, Anne is safe and protected from the deadly virus. Paul is facing the dangers of COVID to protect her. He didn't know that Anne was recovering from a stroke or that she was ninety-three. He just knew she needed help!

To me, Paul just seemed like a normal man doing his normal job. It was only when he left that I realised how important he was and how a seemingly small act could go such a long way for me, my family and the whole community. He always puts others first to ensure that they are okay. He always makes sure that no one feels lonely by having a friendly chat with them. And above all, he works tirelessly to ensure everyone has what they need. Well that is what heroes do – they act.

Lockdown has taught me many things such as: don't take things for granted and appreciate the simple things in life. This lesson has helped me see Paul, the delivery driver, as Paul the superhero. A man who rescued countless members of my community when we were trapped in our homes, unable to get out. Paul put his life at risk to do his job and to make sure everyone survived. If he hadn't been there when we needed him, we would have had to go out to the shop, exposing ourselves to the Coronavirus. He is an unsung hero who saved countless lives. His warm heart lights up people's days, just like the headlights of his van. People like Paul make life better.

Not only does he care for his customers, but he thinks of his own family as well. He loves visiting his elderly father and cherishes every minute he spends with him, but he couldn't do that for four long months because of his essential job. He couldn't wait to talk to his mother-in-law in person because he hadn't seen her since the start of lockdown. The personal sacrifices he made during lockdown were unbelievable. I went to bed that night having enough to eat.

I woke up really early the next morning. 6:43 read the clock. I tiptoed into the living room. It was a bright and sunny morning. I heard people talking outside, in the distance. I stared out the window. I saw the Tesco delivery van parked outside my next-door neighbour's house. I smiled as Paul got into his van and drove away. Anne stood by her window smiling and waving goodbye. Her face was lit up.

I will never forget what Paul did for me and my community during the biggest challenge of our lives.



# What Goes Around Comes Around

by **Lois Bradburn**, Wales Winner, Myddelton College

I woke up and all I could see was a light blinding my eyes. I had never felt so tired in my life and I could barely keep my eyes open. I felt numb. But I knew that if everything went well then things would get a lot better and I could be with mum. I started to hear a very quiet and faint voice. It was one of the nurses. They were saying my name over and over and asking if I could hear them. I didn't think I'd have the strength to reply. I tried, however. "Yes" I replied with a weak and trembling voice. Things were getting less blurry now so I could make out some faces that were above me saying my name. I felt lightheaded still. Like the world was spinning around me. All I could think of was mum though. Hopefully I'd be with her soon.

I woke up a couple of hours later. I had gone to sleep. I was in a bright room full of other children in hospital beds and the same light blue gowns everyone had to wear. I was still quite sleepy, but I managed to lift myself up ever so slightly and take a glance to my

left. There, right in front of me was mother. She looked down with anxiousness in her eyes. "Mum" I whispered. She looked up with a relieved look on her face. She smiled and gave me a massive hug. I hadn't seen her for a few days. Then, she worked two jobs so that my sister Poppy and I had enough food to keep us going and a roof over our heads. She worked really hard. Every day of the week. So I hadn't seen her since the Tuesday she dropped me off at the hospital. I had to go two days without seeing her and then have a massive operation. She must have taken the day off, I thought to myself, whilst she was giving me a warm and loving cuddle.



Afterwards, we had a long conversation on how the operation went and if I felt OK. Then a nurse came in with my lunch. She was my favourite nurse. Diane her name was. She helped me for months whilst on the cancer ward. She always made me smile and laugh and she brightened up my day. She brought a nice warm bowl of soup, which filled me with warmth. I was more awake after lunch. I played 'I spy' with the other children in the room and we got stories read to us by Diane. But, around 3 o'clock I got really tired again. I'd been getting tired throughout the chemotherapy I'd had over the past three months but not like this. It was draining. This happened over the next three weeks. I had constantly been really tired, only being awake for around a constant four hours at a time at the most. However, an unfamiliar doctor and Diane walked into the room one Saturday and sat down. The doctor had sheets of paper which I thought probably had my operation information on. The doctor cleared his throat and began speaking. "Tom, I've never seen such a fast recovery from an operation like this before. Especially not an eight-year-old. You've done so well and we're pleased to say that the operation worked and you're free of any cancer." That's when I heard mum

start to cry. She held my hand tightly and constantly gave me a smile. Two days later, I left the hospital and went home. I got to see Poppy, granny and grandpa. I got my life back.

Twenty years went by and I ended up becoming a nurse myself. I had gone to a university quite far from home and studied medicine. I loved the city I was in and chose to stay there in the most popular hospital. I had that job for around six years but missed my family. They were the most important thing in my life. So, I moved back home. I start my new job today at the local hospital. It's the one where I got treated.

I walked in feeling very nervous but excited at the same time. I knew many people there, which was comforting. I took the lift to the ward I was going to be working on, got to the front desk and asked the woman behind it what rooms I was taking care of today. She told me it wasn't very busy and I was only allocated one room. Room 616. She told me it was an old woman, in her late seventies. She had dementia and was taken there for blood tests. But they found out she was dying in the next few days and so they kept her there to die in the environment she worked at once before.



I opened the door to room 616. I immediately knew who she was. However, for reassurance I looked at the whiteboard. Diane Fletcher I read. The nurse who helped me through chemotherapy and the operation.

A few hours went by and her heart rate was going down. She was dying today. I couldn't leave her side for more than ten minutes and I was constantly trying to make conversation with her. She was just how I remembered even though she had dementia.

Speaking was getting more difficult for her. I got some other nurses in the room. I was trying to get them to help me try and save her. But that wasn't possible. I held her hand and looked into her bright blue eyes and cried "Diane." Her eyes widened as she whispered "Tom." At that same moment, her eyes closed and she took her final breath. I felt empty. Like I'd just lost someone I'd known for my entire life. Tears dropped down my face as the other nurses held me. She had just died in front of me, my hero.

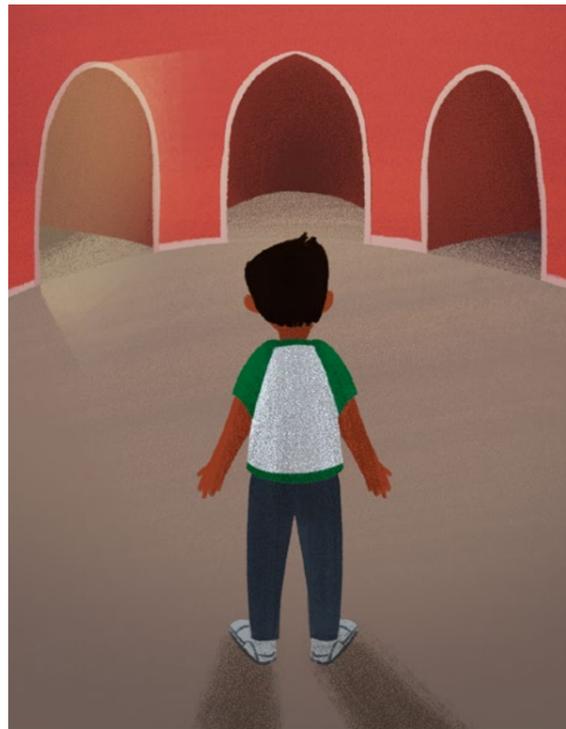
# The Cape Around My Neck

by **Logan Lee**, East Anglia Winner, CATS College

I open my eyes and I'm in a room. A crimson reddish coloured room. It's oddly familiar. I notice three tunnels. A chamber that looks uninviting is also present. I ignore it and enter the first tunnel. I am greeted with an awful blinding light.

The first tunnel: a crowded hospital. Not an uncommon sight. A boy passes me and catches my eye. I follow him. His mother brings him a pack of his favourite batch of cookies. He smiles and gets ready for his next syringe shot. As a bulky needle penetrates his arm, he doesn't flinch in the least. He's used to it. The nurse leaves as he starts to open the pack of cookies. Devouring them one by one, he stares into space until he meets my eye and says, "What should I do now?" I stare at him not knowing what to say. Then I hear my mother's voice behind me, "You're going to get better." I move aside. I now recognize the boy, he's me. Our mom is now having a chat with us. Well, with the young me at least. She supports the boy, staying

beside him day and night. Family members take turns visiting the boy. Aunts and uncles, grandmas and grandpas, cousins that I didn't even know existed went in and out. I sit in the corner observing everything that's happening. I feel a burning sensation in my eyes. Each tear that falls comes together creating a silhouette that resembles a halo. I look up to see my hero that's been with me through it all. People say that a parent with a child has been blessed. Sometimes I wonder if I'm the one that's been blessed.



A wave of goosebumps takes over my body like a tsunami. I take a deep breath to calm myself only to feel my heartbeat in my cheeks. I'm feeling faint. I look around for something to lean on but see nothing. Being the bull in a china shop that I am, I trip on my shoelaces and go stumbling down the second tunnel.

The second tunnel: I wake up to a rather peculiar up and down motion. It feels like my body is in space (not that I would know, I've never been to space) but it feels stiff. I feel like I'm sinking. My senses suddenly come back to me and I realize I'm in the sea, surrounded by millions of people throwing beach balls and splashing water. I see children swimming so effortlessly while I struggle to even keep my head above the water. I frantically wave my arms to grab something that isn't there and my legs kick to keep the salty water out of my mouth. I'm going to die. I'm actually going to die. Just as I feel my legs freeze, an arm grabs me by the waist and pulls me back to the surface. I regain awareness and hear the loud chatter left and right. I gain some stability and throw myself on an abandoned rubber doughnut. I flip my wet hair back and look around for the person that basically saved my life, but they were nowhere to be seen.

I must've drifted about 20 minutes before the forgiving body of water brings me back to shore.

I get off the toy that helped me through my short but unforgettable journey and I collapse on the sand. "I don't think I'll ever be able to use my legs again," I mumble whilst moving around with my arms. I start picking out the small stones stuck in my nails before a wave of water violently knocks me out.

The third tunnel: my legs are moving swiftly and I feel the breeze of the wind gently touch my face. I'm moving at a fast pace though I don't feel too tired. I look down to see myself on my bike. "Makes sense," I chuckle to myself. I find this funnier than I should have. My friend's cycling beside me at a similar speed. Ahead of us are two girls on a tandem bicycle. I catch a glimpse as we go past them. Dressed in white dresses, food in basket, my senses tell me these girls are out for a picnic. Just as we were about to pick up the speed, I hear a loud crash and the sound of metal vibrating. I stop the pedals and turn around to see a flash of red. The colour was vivid and the juxtaposition of the white dress and blood was harsh. My friend and I give each other a look and rush towards them. I lean my bike towards a metal pole which



takes a few seconds to balance it. I search through my bag. A stroke of serendipity blesses me as I pull out a first aid kit. I knew that the day would come when I would actually use this. I remember receiving this as a gift from my doctor uncle. However there was one major problem, I hadn't the slightest clue on using this thing. Opening the manual, I look at the girl. One was sound, but the other was hurt badly and I couldn't tell if the blood was coming from the nose or another unwanted area. Tick... Tick... Tock... An imaginary timer in my head makes the

letters all jumbled up. I take a cloth and hand it to her which she swiftly held against her nose. Then I take the bottle of water I was saving to drink later and offer it to her. She washes herself and hands it back to me which had just enough for one gulp. Luckily the ambulance we called arrives. She thanks me and I nonchalantly get up forgetting my first aid kit on the floor. We get on our bikes and say goodbye to the two girls. I feel a soft cloth brush my neck and I look down to see a cape, wrapped around my neck.

# Crystal Virus

by **Payton Twentyman**, North East Winner,  
Witton Gilbert Primary School

Crystal was a thirty-two-year-old woman with long brown hair and dark brown eyes. She lived with her dog in a little village and a small house with three bedrooms and an ensuite. She had black leather couches in the living room and a big television. She was very tall; 5 feet 4 inches to be precise. She liked to go on walks with her dog when the sun set. Anyways, let's get into this story from when Coronavirus, also known as Covid-19, rules changed and you could leave the house again.

It was early one morning when Crystal awoke from her beauty sleep. She went downstairs to get her breakfast and she heard her phone ringing from in her pocket. When she answered, her mother's voice said "could you please get my medicines from the doctors in Langley Park?"

"Yes Mum," she replied. She then headed upstairs to get dressed in her normal day clothes. She quickly got into the car and went to Langley Park.

As she drove past the grassy hills

she could see a lot of wonderful nature. She arrived at the doctors and got out of the car to then see a homeless person sat across on the other side of the road. She decided to give him some food. So, she crossed the road and gave him it but, he was allergic to wheat. She decided to get some money out of her purse and she again crossed the twisty road over to the old man. She watched the smile spread across his face as she handed him the money.

"Thank you, I appreciate the offer but I cannot accept this," he said.

"No, I insist," replied Crystal. The homeless man smiled and took the money. Though he was grateful, he felt bad for taking money from other people.

"You deserve it," she said, as she crossed the road to head to the doctors.

When Crystal had got the prescription, she proceeded back to the cold outside and instantly spotted the homeless man coming out of the mini shop, the CO-OP, across the road holding



hand sanitiser and a mask in his scrubby hands. "I think I'm rich oh my GOD look what I have!" Crystal smiled and as she went to get back in the car, the man yelled "THANK YOU!" She got back into the car smiling because she knew she had made someone's day and that is enough to put a twinkle in her deep brown eyes. She went to her mam's feeling

pleased and after giving her the medicines, Crystal explained to her mother about the ancient man and said how happy she felt when she heard him say that. Little things help; they can make a big difference, even through lockdown when you have to stay home or social distance. It does not mean that you can't enjoy and make people's day better.

# One Day Everything Went Dark

by **Hollie Birch**, Yorkshire and the Humber Winner, Baysgarth School

My vision is constantly cascaded by pooling murky clouds that relentlessly taunt my eyes; not letting them see through the dense, eerie fog that smothers the colour that I once took for granted, just like everyone else. Suddenly, my world felt empty. I felt alone. That was until you came and dived head first into the desolate pit of sorrow with me. This was a new beginning, a new page.

A life filled with joy and chaos; freedom and vision, came into view through the haze that was once so dense. For the first time in a long time I was able to live, and see the prodigious sphere, that we call home, in all its glory again, with you by my side. With every step that I took, I could see. Vibrant and vivid images flashed through my mind. I could see. I could see. I watched the world in awe through your eyes. However, I can never truly adore the beauty that the world has to offer. Just like the way that the grass around the bottomless lake only gets greener and the surface

of the water, like millions of sharp shards of glass, dances elegantly in front of the dipping sun on the horizon. The way that the gentle water twinkles in the glowing moonlight and reverberates the surreal astronomy that invades our luminous night sky.

Your padding paws against the pavement led through the seeping loneliness that flooded the darkness in my mind. It was suffocating. You showed me how to live a life of hope, showed me how to look at the universe in a way that I'd never been able to before. You saved me from the ever-growing fear of being incompetent. I am forever in your debt for making my life like it was meant to be.

I cherished the feel of happiness that radiated from your soft, luscious fur. You were my home, my everything. I miss the way my tender loving hands caressed your head as I praised you. I hated it when you used to wake me up with that hoarse bark of yours at



7 o'clock on the dot each morning without fail, but I'd give anything to hear it one last time. You were and still are the most precious and adorable thing to me.

However, eventually all must come to an end. My emotions run deeper than any words could express. I am devastated to see you leave me so soon. Our journey had just begun, but unfortunately, every twisting road of adventure must come to an end. Oh – how I

wish I could have just had a little more time with you, but time waits for no man, nor dog in our case. I will never forget you, I hope you know that thunder buddy. My sweet little angel, soaring above the clouds. You are missed in a way you could never begin to imagine.

You were the most perfect guide dog anyone could have asked for.

I love you...

# My Human

by **Isabella Mahdavi**, London Winner,  
Frith Manor Primary School

My human has always been my hero. He can't see like the other humans, but together we make a great team and he's my best friend. I've been with him since I was just a little puppy, when he named me Bear. This is very confusing to me because I am not a bear. I am just brown and furry like a bear.

My human and I did everything together. He took me to the park, where I'd chase the furry golden creatures as they scurried swiftly up the oversized sticks and I would frolic in the long grass below the fluffy, marshmallow-white sky, not a care in the world. But my human needed my help as well. I helped him across the road and guided him through busy squares.

I also helped my human to see his friends. I helped him on to the moving big red box on wheels and then off again to meet them in the city. They laugh and joke and yell and talk about school and call him Adam (Adam? Why? His name is human!), but all of my human's friends stay far away from each other, as if they don't want to

touch each other. My human didn't stay far apart, hugging them and fist bumping and high fiving. And I think that that is the reason he is now in the big white building with a red cross.

It all started with the coughing. Not the tickly coughing that you get when you have a cold. The coughs that my human made were dry and harsh, and they went on forever, so much so that I thought he might cough a lung out. Then he started staying in bed for much longer, always making that continuous coughing sound. He started going out a lot less often, and soon we didn't go out at all. This kept going for weeks, until one day people with masks came into our home and rolled him outside onto a plank on wheels. My human's mother looked sad, very sad, and she came with him, walking behind him. I was strapped to a leash and taken with them into a blue and yellow box that moved. We got off and entered a huge white building. My human was rolled away on his plank, and my human's mother sat down on an armchair, and



when I tried to go after my human, the leash, which his mother was holding, held me back.

I barked at the strange people in masks. Who were they, and why were they taking my human away? Why couldn't I be with him?

This was a few days ago. Now my human's mother and I are staying in the building which I heard is called a hospital. Right now the mother is off in the toilet hole and one of the masked people walks to me and takes my leash. She has a light brown bun under the small net over her head. I bark at her, angry for her taking my human, but she scratches my ear, just the way my human used to, and I stop.

"You're the guide dog of my patient, hmm? You're called Bear?" she asks softly, stroking my back with her gloved hand. "2020 is turning out to be a stranger year than we thought." She smiles sadly. "I know how you feel. My father has been in hospital for over six months. They just can't find a cure to this wretched virus, and we have to see hundreds of people every week, whose sickness might kill us off or our families." She stops and bends her head. "I suppose you can't understand a word that I'm saying, can you?" She stands up as my human's mother reappears from

the toilet hole and she passes the leash to her. "He is very sweet, madam," she says to the mother, and then she leaves.

I do understand what the woman said, though. Her human is in the treacherous hospital, and she can't stop his coughing and his sickness, just like I can't with my human. The difference is this woman has to help everyone who is sick, but she risks catching their sickness and becoming ill. She is helping my human, but she has to be careful so that she doesn't end up like him.

I lay my head down on the cool, smooth hospital floor. It is all my fault. I should have kept my human away from the other humans who made him sick. We could have stayed at home, gone to the park every once in a while. We wouldn't have had to stay here.

The woman comes back every time my human's mother goes to the toilet hole. She tells me how my human is. She also tells me how her human is. She thinks I don't understand what she is saying, but I listen carefully to every word. Apparently, her human has not gotten better, and is getting weaker and weaker. My human has not changed, neither becoming weaker nor stronger. I suppose that is good, but I am still worried.

I ask myself, "What would happen if he got worse?" Well, he would get sicker and sicker until... I remember what had happened with some of the dogs of my human's friends. When they got sick, they didn't come with their human shortly after. If my human didn't get better, he could end up like that, and I would never see him again.

I shake my head and try to erase the thought from my mind. I will never let that happen.

Today, when my human's mother goes to the toilet hole, the lady comes to look after me. She doesn't say much to me, and I wonder why. We wait for longer than usual. The mother has never spent so much time in the toilet room before. Just as I start to get worried about her, she appears through one of the many hospital doors, and she is not alone.

Walking with his mother, my human has grown thin, with dark circles under his eyes, but I still recognize him, and as soon as I am unleashed by the lady I jump on my human, tongue lolling out of my mouth. My human is smiling and kneels down to give me a giant hug. My human goes with his mother to talk to some of the other masked people. I am alone

with the lady again. She sighs and gives my ear a scratch, slowly, sadly. Sensing something is wrong, I lay my head on her lap, waiting for an explanation.

"My father didn't make it. You are very lucky, Bear. What I wouldn't give to see my father again" she says, her voice breaking. I nuzzle my head against her thighs in understanding. She has lost her human to the sickness. She will never see him again. I suddenly realise how lucky I have been, that my human was not too sick, that he got through it. I turn to see my human leash me, and I have to say goodbye to the woman. She has done so much for sick people, only for someone she loves to get ill and move on. My human is a hero, and he suffers through so much, but this woman is one too. Without looking for praise or a reward, she puts aside her feelings and places others first, and I know that the hospital is filled with people just like her, and that we are always surrounded by everyday heroes.

# On The Frontline

by **Lucy Jefford**, South East Winner, St Francis' College

I woke from my nightmare paralysed with fear. The wind had whipped my ginger hair across my face, gushing in from the window I had opened last night.

Yawning, I relaxed from my tenseness and propped my head on to my elbow, glimpsing at my cluttered bedside table. Unfortunately, I'd woken too early for the third time running. My clock said 4:50 and my alarm would – inevitably – ping in ten minutes. Sighing, I lay my head back against the pillow and picked up the golden-heart-framed picture next to my dust-coated lamp, stroking the image fondly. There was me, standing on the right-hand side of my husband, Thomas, our baby girl resting between my arms, gazing into the camera lens.

"Laelia..." I whispered, softly kissing the photo. How long had it been since I'd last given her a proper hug? Not a virtual one, empty of comfort, but an actual squeeze to my chest? Too long.

Despite seeing her every day on facetime (either asleep or awake), my heart was yearning

for a chance to touch her and Thom. After all, my daughter's first birthday was no more than two weeks away and how could I help my patients then? They needed me. In fact, they needed me all the time and their families depended on my colleagues and I even more. If I didn't manage to help the people with Covid, many heartbroken tears would spill and I couldn't face another scene like that. Not after yesterday's work filled my brain like a cunning fox in a rabbit's burrow and made me wake – just now – blindly reaching for the elderly couple in the ward, as they fell down and down and down into a dark cavern of gloom, which had featured prominently in my nightmares for the past six months. They had been a million miles away from curing before...

'Beep! Beep! Beep!' My alarm started to ring out its morning call and I sluggishly rolled off the bed, tugging on jeans and a t-shirt. Then, unwillingly, I sent a brush to the over-tangled knots in my hair. Once I looked at least remotely presentable, I rushed down the stairs and grabbed a banana from the china fruit bowl, stuffing it inside my lightweight rucksack.



Suddenly, my mobile vibrated inside my pocket and I saw a message appear from Thom:

*Good luck today. Love you lots!  
Hugs and kisses from me and Laelia X*

Although that brought tears of longing to my hazelnut eyes, it spurred me to feel a distant sense of pride and happiness as I unlocked the car and collapsed into the leather driving seat.

“Right,” I told myself. “Let’s go.”

The vehicle beeped into action and, in a matter of minutes, I was pulling up in the car park of the hospital – cutting the song on the radio off when I stopped the engine. Pulling on my stuffy mask, I hurried up the steps to the staff’s side door and entered the simple code to open it. At once, the hinges creaked and I wandered into the dimly-lit corridor, remembering to squirt a blob of sanitiser onto my sweaty palm.

“Hey, Ella!” Professor J. Spenser grinned, his dark green eyes reflecting the small spotlight on the ceiling. I waved as he pulled on his blue PPE, disappearing into the room directly ahead. Dumping my bag in the TV room (as my colleagues called it), I continued to the sinks and began scrubbing my hands and wrists until they felt numb. Then, pulling on my long,

protective coat, I slipped my hair into a plastic cap and fitted my fingers into a pair of tight, elastic gloves.

“E!” my fellow front-line worker – and my friend – called. I noticed Josephine’s freckled face pop round the doorway. “You’re needed!” One had to admire her optimistic look and feel she gave me every morning, every day, but most others shrugged off her enthusiasm, telling her to get things into perspective. However, I loved the way she kept a smile on her face – even sitting beside patients at the end of their time in this world. If my child had seen her smiling all the time, she’d have giggled more than ever before and scrunched up her nose in the adorable way she did when I was at home to see it. So, thinking of my family, I followed Josie down the complicated-if-one-hasn’t-walked-it-before route to the intensive care wards and we entered the room, taking in tubes and machinery and many occupied beds I should have been used to seeing by now.

Giving a sideways glance at my friend, whose chin was held high, I straightened my doctor’s collar and heaved a confident sigh. We had walked all the way to hell-on-earth... and I was not likely to forget it.

# Generous Georgia

by **Isabelle Portch**, South West Winner



## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION – A DOG CALLED GEORGIA!

Once upon a time there lived a dog called Georgia. She was very generous, so she thought of herself as Generous Georgia.

Generous Georgia lives with a lovely family with a kind and thoughtful girl called Isabelle, her very trustworthy Mummy called Anna and a very brave and kind Daddy called Nick. They all look after Georgia very well.

Georgia lives in their garden where the birds hum their songs and flowers bloom all around. Georgia is actually a superdog. She is the same size as a guide dog and is black with a ginger belly, chin and paws. She helps people in need but does not let her family know this.

She also pretends to be a dog that jumps up, so they think she'll break things in the house. This is a trick and means her fabulous family put her in the garden to live, which enables her to do missions WITHOUT them knowing!

## CHAPTER TWO: WHAT HAPPENED ON SUNDAY NIGHT!

One cold breezy night, it was 4:30pm and Isabelle, her Mummy and Daddy were watching the Britain's Got Talent Semi-Finals and Generous Georgia was having a peaceful rest in her snuggly, warm and relaxing kennel.

Georgia was listening out for trouble, but no sound came. Then suddenly... 'Flash! Crash! Lightning and thunder!' Generous Georgia had been afraid this would happen. However, she had been prepared and span around to get her cape on, because she could only fly with it on. Luckily, she always had her mega hearing, with or without her cape on!

Bang! Flash! More thunder and lightning came. Generous Georgia knew what to do! She flew high up into the clouds and that was much better, because she was above the storm. The sun was so bright people would think that the sky was red because the sun was burning it.

Generous Georgia sat on a cloud and after about ten minutes had passed Georgia was fast asleep, but just then there was a very loud BANG!!!! And knowing Generous Georgia has mega hearing, it was amazingly loud for her. Generous Georgia woke up with a jump! After that, the storm had gone and she was able to go back to the ground.

In a few minutes time when Georgia was in her kennel and her cape had disappeared, she was about to nod off, when suddenly there was a scream saying "Help somebody, anybody help me!" in a very worried voice. Generous Georgia span around and her dazzling pink cape came on bit by bit, with purple lining and a yellow 'G.G' on it, which stood for 'Generous Georgia'. Generous Georgia was on her way!

### CHAPTER THREE: GENEROUS GEORGIA'S MISSION!

When Georgia reached the distressed voice, she saw an old woman, about 76 years old, who had lovely grey hair, a long skirt and was also wearing a big woolly jumper with lovely patterns.

Generous Georgia hovered in the air and said "Hello I am Generous Georgia, what is your name?" "Hello my name is Maureen," she

said in a rush. "What's happened?" asked Generous Georgia, noticing that Maureen was clutching her ankle and groaning.

"I was wearing some of my new shoes and they were too big for me and they fell off and I tripped over them and hurt my ankle. As you can see, my shopping has tipped all over the road on the zebra crossing and the light is turning amber so we need to be quick."

The zebra crossing was right outside the shop and the mess was awful. There was spilt milk, cracked eggs, squashed bread and bruised apples. It was everywhere!

What could Georgia do?

### CHAPTER FOUR: WHAT GEORGIA DID!

"Are you okay?" Georgia said, lifting Maureen up. My ankle hurts a bit, but nothing else thankfully."

Georgia took Maureen home and said "Please can I borrow your wheelie bin!" Maureen replied saying "Yes."

Georgia got an icepack, put it around Maureen's ankle, flew outside, grabbed the wheelie bin and took it to the zebra crossing. By the time she got back to the

zebra crossing the traffic was moving! Georgia pressed the button on the traffic light and the traffic stopped!

Georgia collected up all the shopping and put it in the bin. As for the spilt milk and the cracked eggs, well Georgia span around and around until there was a mini tornado and all of the spilt milk, cracked eggs and other items went whirling into the tornado. Georgia brought the tornado to the bin and everything was clean and tidy again and safely in the bin!

WHAT A RELIEF!!!!

### CHAPTER FIVE: THE END OF GEORGIA'S ADVENTURE

After collecting the shopping, Georgia noticed that the light had just turned green. She flew into the shop with the bin and the unbroken food and told the shopkeeper, Joan, everything that had happened to poor Maureen. Joan understood at once.

Joan got her replacements for the broken shopping and also got one of their best cakes and gave it to Georgia. "What's that yummy looking cake for?" asked Georgia. Joan replied saying, "It's a present for Maureen to say we hope she is okay." Georgia thought that was very kind of her.

Georgia said goodbye, flew out of the doors and back to Maureen's house. She put the bin back and went into Maureen's house to see if she had recovered. "Are you okay?" asked Georgia. Maureen replied saying "Yes I'm fine thank you." Georgia told Maureen what she did and how Joan gave her the cake. "How kind of her," Maureen said gratefully. From then onwards Georgia got Maureen's shopping every week.

Georgia flew home and arrived at about 7pm, just in time for tea. She had a lovely bone for dinner.

WHAT AN ADVENTURE! But now it's time for Georgia to go to bed so let's leave her to sleep.

THE END!

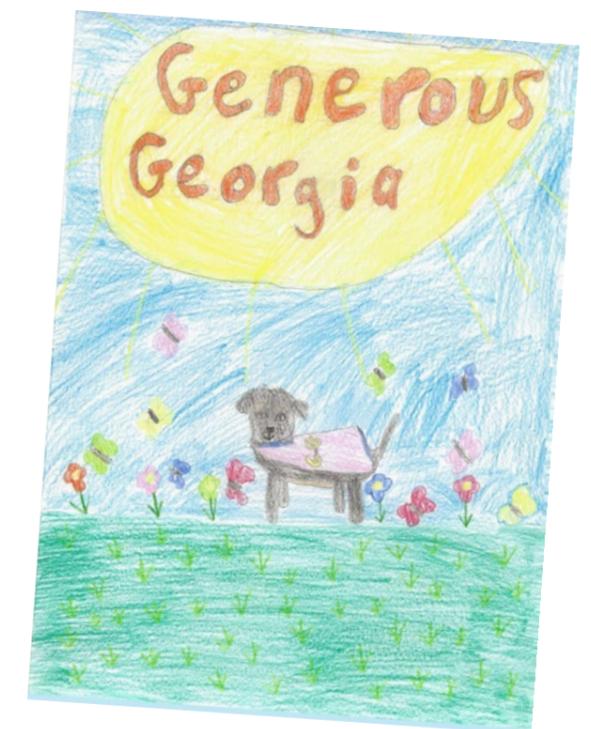


Illustration by Isabelle.

# Jennifer, Jenny, Jen, Mummy / Mum, Mama

by **Eleanor Walker**, East Midlands Winner

I call you Mama. I always have from the day I was born. You make my world magical so that I can see fairies in our garden. I love baking, painting, walking in puddles, collecting berries, planting and playing with you. Just one of your kind smiles makes me smile. You encourage me to do big things, to be kind and brave.

My brothers call you Mummy or Mum. I see you doing lots for them too! They eat a lot so you always have to cook two times the dinner. You take them to rugby, hockey, and cricket and to friends' houses. I know you buy my brother lots of crickets for his chameleon, Winston, and his leopard gecko, Nelson.

Jen is what Daddy and your friends call you. You are very funny because I see your friends and Daddy laughing around you and you get the giggles so much it takes you ages to get back to normal breathing. Friends always come to our house where you cook loads of yummy food. Whenever a person is down you

bring them up.

My grandparents call you Jenny. You always make sure they have the best birthdays ever! I love sitting at the tables together as one big family and giving them their presents. The cake time is the best because we turn off the lights and sing 'Happy Birthday' and they always look so happy.

The people you work with call you Jennifer or that is what you are called on your work card. You do a lot to help people and keep people safe. Every time we go out you know lots of people who want to chat. One day we were going out for a walk and we met three people before we got to the park – that is only a ten-minute walk! I know you help lots of people around the world.

I want to be like you when I grow up because you are lots of things to lots of people; a friend, a daughter, a colleague and a mummy. You are my local hero because you would do anything for anyone to help.





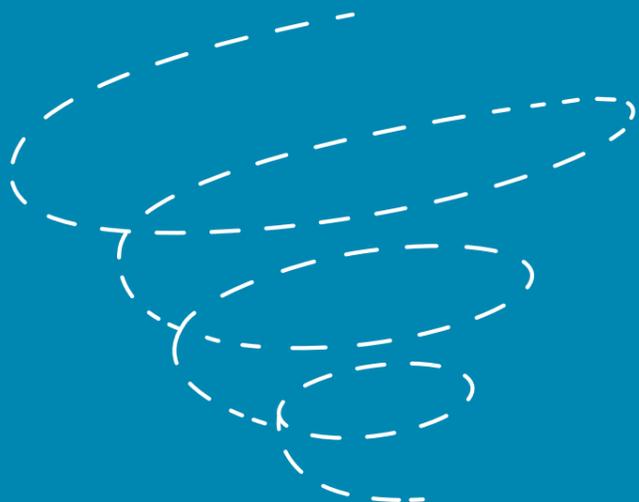
“It’s about what you believe.  
And I believe in love. Only  
love will truly save the world.”

*Wonder Woman*



“I think you just have to appreciate  
who you are and hopefully they  
can see what a superhero is about.”

*Lucy Liu*



At Pearson, we work to empower those working with children, young people and adult learners to explore the different dimensions of literacy, improve outcomes and inspire a life-long love of reading and writing.

Diversity, inclusion and relatability matter. They matter in the literature we consume and the books, poetry and plays we put in front of our children. We believe that at whatever age – from early stages to adulthood – people should feel represented in the literature they read and the stories they write.

For more information on My Twist on a Tale and to access free writing resources, please visit [go.pearson.com/mytwistonatale](https://go.pearson.com/mytwistonatale)

# Acknowledgements

The My Twist on a Tale 2020 writing competition would not have been possible without the support of our amazing partners. Please take a moment to find out more about their incredible work.



In addition, we would also like to say a special thank you to our judges for the time they spent choosing the winning tales.

Irfan Master, Author

Annie Everall, Director, Authors Aloud UK

Joseph Coelho, Children's Author and Poet

Deborah Maclaren, Managing Director, LoveReading

Joshua Clarke, Chair of the Secondary Working Group, NATE

Stella Thebridge, Principal Librarian: schools and reading, Warwickshire Libraries

Guy Fowles, Director of Marketing and Communications, National Literacy Trust

Gill Worrall, Resource Developer, Corum Beanstalk

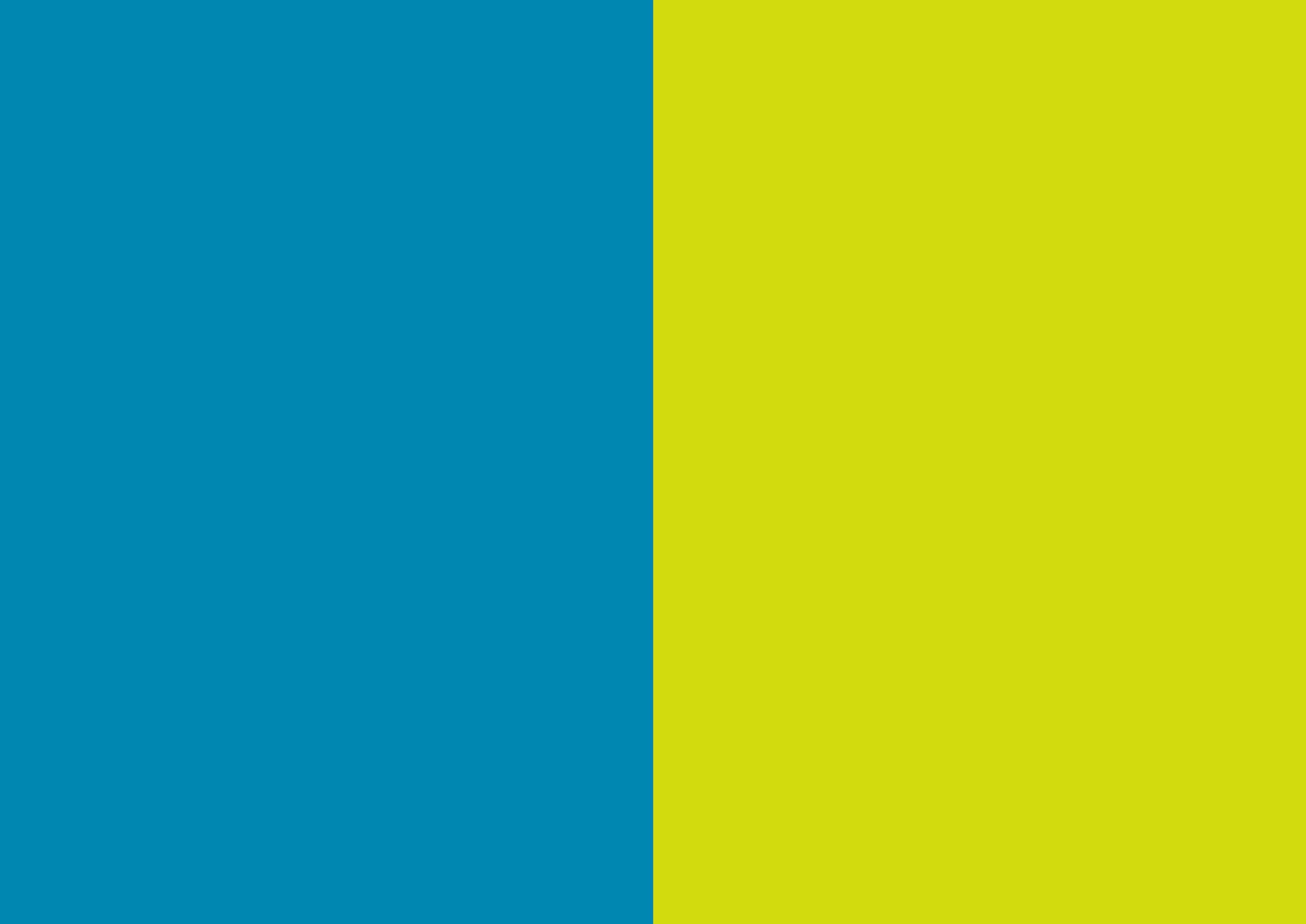
Jemma Wallace, Author

Emma Braithwaite, Programme Manager for Children's Reading, The Reading Agency

Rachel Tonkin, Director of Communications, Family Lives

#MyTwistOnATale





A collection of the winning stories from the **My Twist on a Tale 2020 writing competition**, written by children across the United Kingdom.

The stories within were selected by our judges for their exceptional writing, creativity, and for the representation of their everyday hero through a narrative which reflects the writer's own personality, interests or experiences.

**#MyTwistOnATale**

