

## *Diary of Stolen Innocence*

*A rewrite of my childhood diary during our family Christmas vacation to New York. A trip that I made sure to document because I knew it would change my life. I did not realize at the time how memorable this trip would become.*

*By Gwen Bracey*

*Nov. 16, 2008*

*IT IS MY BIRTHDAY!!! I turned NINE years old today! I had SUCH a great birthday! My parents bought me my favorite food for lunch (Mc Donalds!!). Then, all my friends came over for dinner and games at my house. Dad made his famous burritos. He only ever makes them on holidays because they are a lot of work. All my friends LOVED them. We played Just Dance till we were so tired that we thought we were gonna collapse. Then we ate cake and opened presents. I got sooo much STUFF. Mom and Dad got me a karaoke machine with a microphone!!! I also got me a dog ~~Insyklopedia~~ encyclopedia. I am so excited to look through all the cute puppies. Then We watched Harry Potter and ate popcorn and lots of candy. I thought I was gonna throw up from how much candy and cake I ate. Plus, my mom gave me some great news. She said we are going to New York for Christmas! The best part is that we are stopping in Washington, D.C. for a few days before we head to New York. Guess who we are staying with in Washington. Blake! My*

favorite person from church. He is in high school, but he still hangs out with me all the time. Him and his family moved to D.C. a few months ago. I've missed him so much. Church is so boring without Blake there. I can't wait to see him again. We will have so much fun. I hope he will give me piggy back rides. They are so fun because he is so tall. It feels like I'm flying.

Dec. 14, 2008

G- GUESS WHAT!!

E- WHAT?!?!?

G- I get to go to NEW YORK for Christmas!!

E-OMG! Not fair!!! Take me with you!! PLEASE!!

G- It gets better!!

E-HOW???

G- We are stopping in D.C. for a few days with the Goldenes!!

E- Thats awesome!!! You get to see Blake!!!

G-I knowwww I am excited to see him

E- Tell him I say Hi!

G- I will!!!

E- oh no! Do you see the pastor's wife staring at us?? Creepy

G- YIKES! Talk later :)

E- yes! :))))

*It is finally the week of our New York trip! I am so excited to go to New York, but I might be more excited to see Blake. And the snow! There is gonna be so much snow up north. We never get snow in Clarksville. Mom says Blake is going to take me sledding! Me and Ella have been talking about my trip all day. We even got in trouble in children's church because we were talking. She says her parents are talking about going to D.C. next year. She misses Blake, too.*

*Dec. 17, 2008*

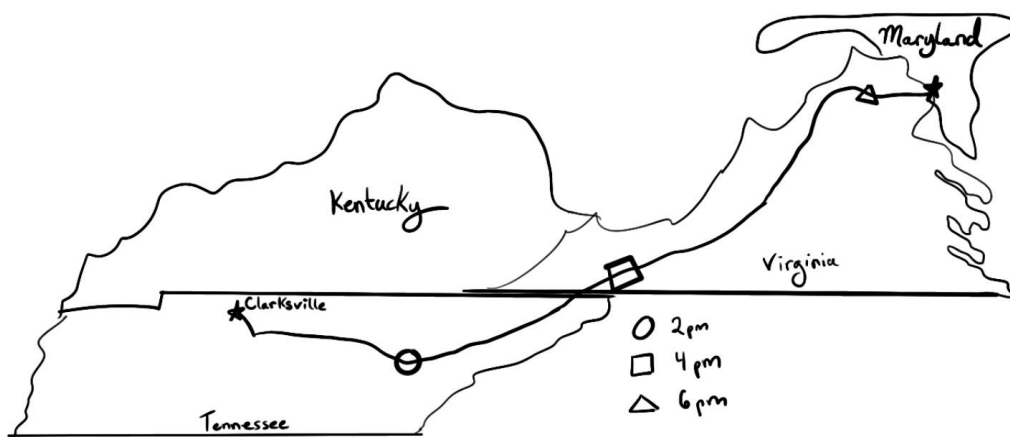
*I packed for our trip today! EEEE! My winter clothes took up so much space that I have two bags. It is gonna be so fun! We leave in TWO days!*

*Dec. 19, 2008*

*2pm- somewhere in east Tennessee*

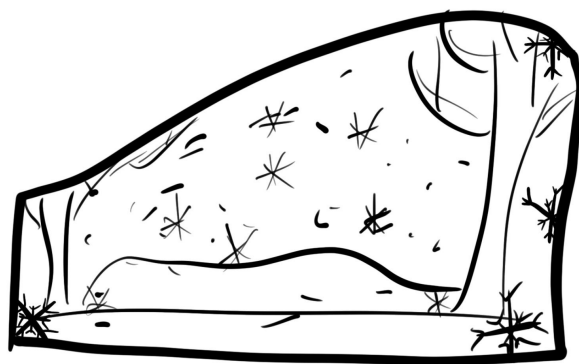
*We got up super early to drive today. I was so tired. I am not so tired now because Dad bought me a soda and some candy at the last gas station. Mom got upset at him, but he just smiled and winked at me. I love my Dad. Mom also drew me a map in my diary so he can show me*

where we are! :)

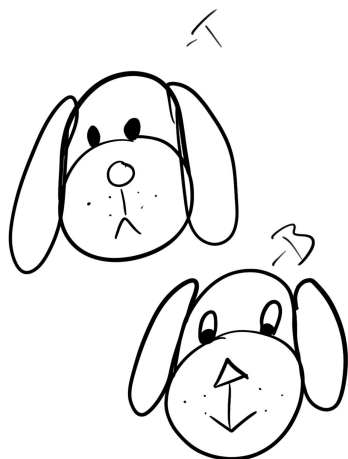


4pm- somewhere in Virginia

The snow has built up so much! I can't believe how much snow there is. We just stopped at a gas station and T, my brother, threw snowballs at me. I tried to tackle him, but Mom made us stop because we would bring snow into the car.



The view out of my window.



My brother told me a story on how to draw a dog.

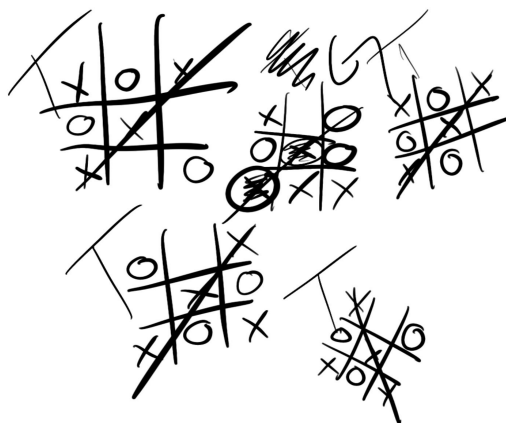
There once was a man with no arms who lost his dog. He got stung by six bees from a pond. Then he found two fish and put them in a basket. Last, he picked up two leaves. Then he found his dog. - T I made it better. Phineas (from Phineas and Ferb) had no arms and he found two baskets and put them in a bigger basket. :)

6pm- still in Virginia

I am so excited. I can't stop moving. There is so much snow, and we are only a few hours from Blake's house.

8pm - D.C.!!!!

We arrived! We said "Hi," and Blake gave me a big hug. The parents are still upstairs talking, but they said me and Tristen have to go to bed. It's okay though. I am super tired, and we will have plenty of time to play tomorrow. Goodnight!!



Dec. 20, 2008

Blake and I played games all day. We played a new game that I have never heard of. It was weird. I didn't like it, but he promised that he would give me a piggyback ride everytime we played it so I didn't mind. He said girls his age love that game. After our games and piggyback rides, we went outside and sledded down the hills in their backyard. It was so fun! It was super cold though. That will take some getting used to. But hey, with cold comes hot cocoa, and I LOVE my hot cocoa. Mandy, Blake's mom, made me a cup when we came in from the snow. She calls me her daughter, and spoils me. She has three sons so I don't blame her. I'd want a daughter too.

*Dec. 21, 2008*

*He made us play some more weird games today, but we also played Mario Kart. He lets me sit in his lap when we play Xbox games. Sometimes it is uncomfortable, but he is warmer than a blanket so I don't mind. We all went out to eat for dinner. I got a meat lover's pizza. It was so yummy. It was made with lots of sauce just the way I like it. Plus, my mom got me ice cream! They all made fun of me for getting ice cream in the middle of winter, but it was so good! It was my favorite, Moose Tracks! Blake gave me his jacket to stay warm while I ate it. Mom made me give it back though. :(*

*Dec. 22, 2008*

*Today is my last day here. I'm not sad though. Blake was acting so weird today. My brother got mad that Blake had me on his lap while he had no shirt on. So Blake made me go upstairs with him. He locked me in his room and wouldn't let me leave even though my hot cocoa downstairs was getting cold. He hurt me, but he said he didn't mean to. By the time I got to go back downstairs, my hot cocoa was cold. His mom pointed out that I never forget about my cocoa, just like I told him she would. I claimed I didn't want it anymore. I did though. He walked into the bathroom while I was in there. I told him that I was hurt, but he said it would go away. I wanted to tell my mom,*

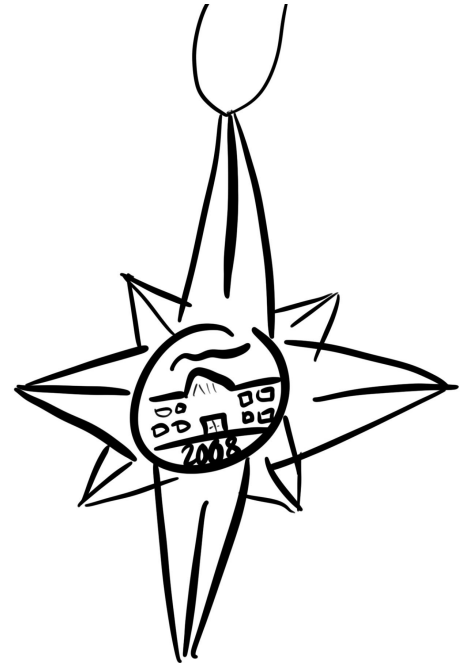


but he said I can't. He said I can't because we love each other. I don't know what that means. I don't think I love him. If he loved me he wouldn't let my cocoa get cold. I hate cold cocoa.

*Dec. 23, 2008*

*1pm*

We opened a few presents this morning with all of them before we left for New York. Blake got me a pretty snowflake ornament with "Washington, D.C. 2008" on it. He says it's so I won't forget our trip. He says we should come back soon. I don't think I want to. I didn't tell Mom and Dad that though.

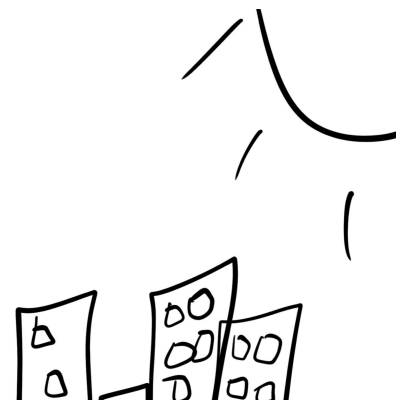


*6pm*

New York is so pretty at night. We only drove to the hotel so I didn't see much. We will see more tomorrow.

*Dec. 24, 2008*

It's Christmas Eve! We spent all day shopping around New York. I saw the biggest toy store I have ever seen! They had



stuffed animals two stories tall! Dad said they were so big because the stuffed animals are life size.

I didn't realize Giraffes were so tall. I wish I could get one, but Mom said I could only get \$10

worth of stuff. I guess New York is expensive because I only got one bag of candy.

By the end of the day my legs hurt soooooo bad. Mom says it is because we walked all day. I've never

hurt this bad from walking, but I guess I've never walked this much. Mom gave me some pain

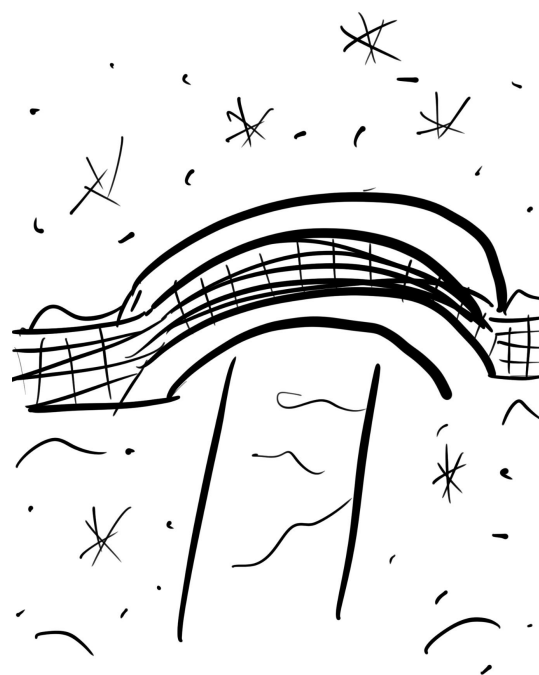
reliever.

Dec. 25, 2008

Merry Christmas!!



Today was so fun! We had yummy food all day, and we walked around the park. When my legs hurt too bad, Mom gave me more pain relievers. Then Mom and Dad let us ride the princess carriage pulled by the pretty horsies. After that we ice skated in the park. Oh! And we saw the bridge from Home Alone! It looked exactly the same as the movie with the snow. I fell asleep between my parents watching Home Alone.





### *About Author*

*Gwen Bracey is, as of April 2022, a college student and amateur writer. They will soon be a high school English teacher. They hope to further this piece and one day get it published. If you enjoyed their writing, please reach out. Their email is [gwen99bracey@gmail.com](mailto:gwen99bracey@gmail.com).*