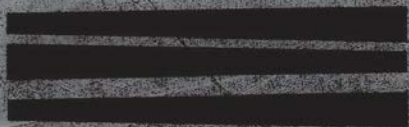
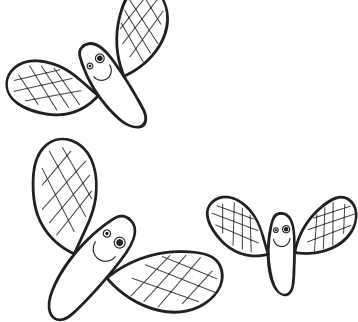


MADISON AVE

The
Magic
Stone

Anne
Schraff





MEET THE



Ms. Nealy

Age: 84

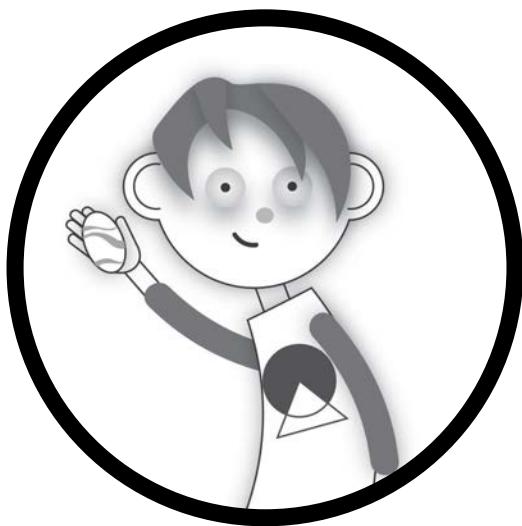
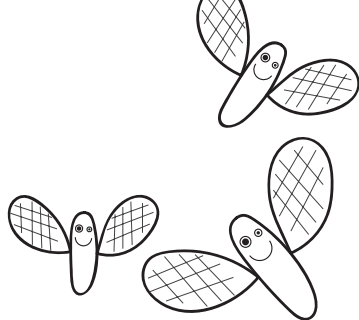
Biggest Secret: she invented toe socks

Favorite Sport: baseball

Best Health Tip: don't eat sugar

Best Quality: she always has a positive attitude

CHARACTERS



KIRBY

Age: 10

Worst Habit: bites his nails

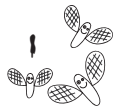
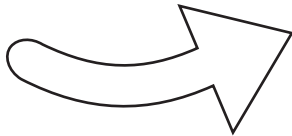
Least Favorite Food: bacon

Biggest Fear: that he hit his growth spurt too soon

Best Quality: he is a loyal friend

1 DON'T WALK

It was a sunny Monday. Kirby Aki stood at Madison Avenue. Cars rushed by as he waited to cross. This road was always busy. But there were no other ways to get home from school.



His mom had told him what to do. “Push the button. Wait for the Walk signal. Look both ways. Only cross if it’s safe. And be careful! Drivers don’t always stop. Not even for red lights. Sometimes they speed right through.”

A man in a red shirt walked over. Kirby had never seen him before. The man was on his cell phone. He seemed very busy.



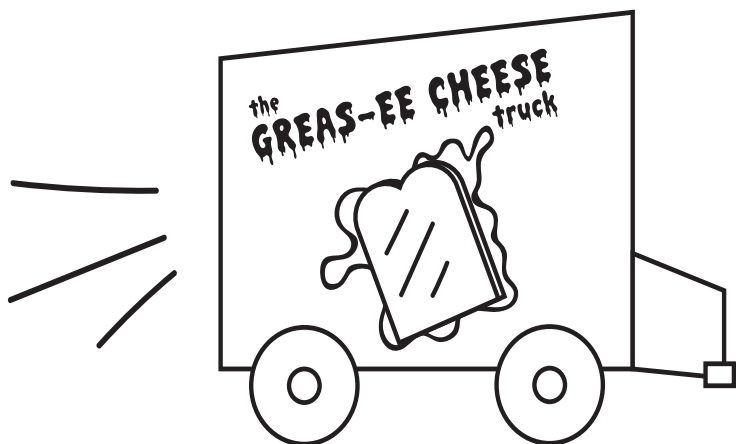
Suddenly, the man stepped into the street. Kirby gasped. A big truck was coming. The light turned yellow. But the truck didn’t slow down. In fact, it sped up.

“Look out!” Kirby wanted to yell. But would the man understand? He was still on his phone. Plus he wasn’t speaking English.

Kirby panicked. What could he do? There was no way the truck would stop in time.

The man had a bag slung over his shoulder. Kirby grabbed the strap. Then he yanked it back.

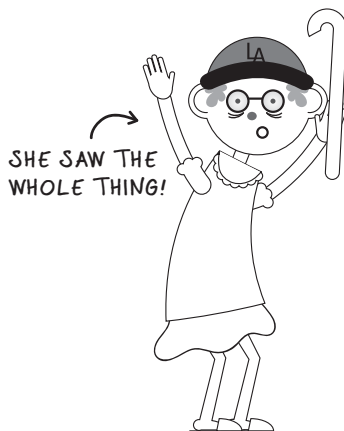
“Ah!” the man cried. He fell to the sidewalk as the truck raced by.



Slowly, the man got up. He didn't look hurt.

Phew, thought Kirby. That was close!

An old woman saw what happened. Kirby recognized her. Her name was Ms. Nealy. She always wore a baseball cap.



“Oh my! That was crazy,” she said. “Are you both okay?”

“You saved me,” the man said. He seemed stunned. His hands were shaking. Tears filled his eyes.

“Yeah,” Kirby said quietly. He couldn’t believe it either.

“I could have died. You’re a hero!”

The man reached into his bag. He took out a yellow stone. It was small and round.

“Take this.” He handed the stone to Kirby. “I don’t have any money. But this stone is special. It’s magic.”

Kirby stared at him. The stone was pretty. But could it be magic? *No way.*

“Rub the stone,” the man went on. “Then make a wish. It will come true. I promise.”

“Thanks,” Kirby mumbled. What was happening? He felt like he was in a dream.

“No, thank *you*,” the man replied. “For saving my life!”



2

AN OLD ROCK

Ms. Nealy spoke suddenly. “Both of you should go home. You are shaken up.”

Kirby had forgotten she was there. Her voice snapped him back to reality. He put the stone in his pocket.

“Yes,” the man said. “Good idea. Thank you again!” He looked both ways and ran across the street. Then he vanished into a crowd.

Ms. Nealy smiled at Kirby. “You did a good thing.”

“Thanks,” he replied.

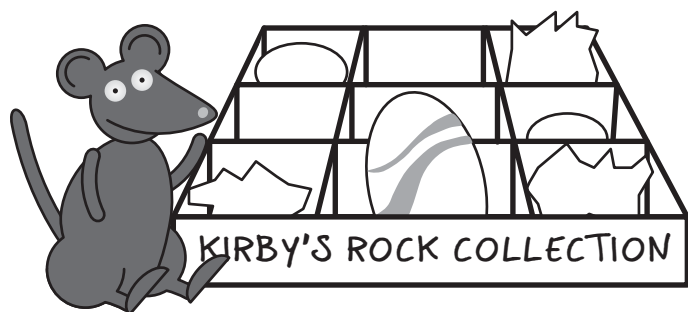
“Get home safe now.” Ms. Nealy waved and went into a store.



Kirby stayed on the corner. Everything had moved so fast. It felt unreal. Had it happened at all?

He reached into his pocket. The stone felt cold and smooth. It was definitely real.

Sometimes Kirby collected small stones. He kept the best ones in a box. But they were just rocks. This one was different. The man said it was magic.



Kirby thought about the man. He had dark hair. His eyes were bright. A beard covered his chin. Maybe he was a wizard.



No, Kirby shook his head. That's crazy. Wizards are made up. He is just some guy. It's just an old rock. A magic stone? Not possible.



Still, Kirby was a hero. He had never been so brave before. It felt good.

The man had been very thankful. Maybe the yellow stone really was all he had. He could have made up the magic part. A regular rock is a lame reward. But a magic one would be amazing.



Kirby shook his head again. *It's not magic!*

While walking home, Kirby thought about the stone. He decided to keep it. It would remind him of his bravery. Plus it was pretty. Most rocks in his collection were dull. This one was by far the best.

He had never seen a stone like this before. *What kind is it? Where did it come from?* Kirby had many questions. Luckily, he knew someone who might help.

Jalen was his best friend. His uncle was really smart. He might know about this stone. Kirby would show it to him.

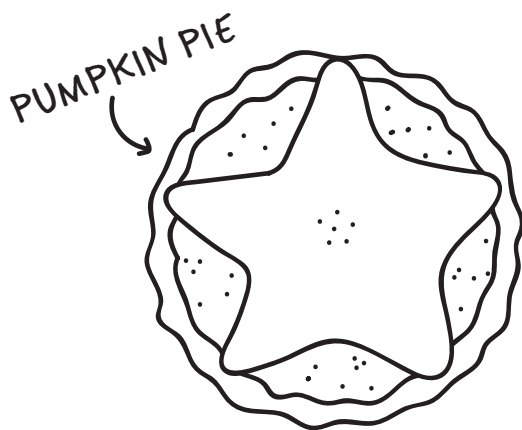
Then Kirby had another thought. Maybe the magic was real. He could test it. But how?

Pumpkin pie was his favorite. His mom



didn't make it often. It was a holiday treat.
Wouldn't it be cool if Mom made it today?

Kirby rubbed the stone in his pocket.
Here goes nothing.

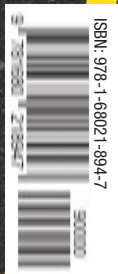


The Magic Stone

Do you believe in magic?
I do. I have a yellow stone
that grants wishes!


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