

## Lily and the Lake

By: Rhodeza Salisi

Ever since she was two years old, Lily visited her grandparents every summer. Her Grandma Georgina and Grandpa Greg lived far away in a beautiful house near the woods. It had three floors, seven sparkling windows, four bathrooms, and five bedrooms. Lily loved everything about their house. She loved that she got to stay on the second floor all by herself. She loved that she got to play with her grandpa's two dogs, TJ and Chloe. She loved that she could play with her friends for as long as she wanted. But most of all, she loved to play in the big, clear, blue lake near her grandparents' house.



After lunch, Lily and her friends would go to the lake. They would play and play, until one by one, each kid was called home. When the first kid left, Lily swam to the edge of the lake and stood there, waiting for her turn. She loved how the cold water came up to her chin and hid her body from the hot sun. When she got called, she would climb out of the lake and run home.



On Monday, Lily and her friends walked to the lake and played Racing. For the first few rounds, Lily was one of the last kids to cross the finish line. But she kept on trying and trying, and she could feel herself getting better and better. Eventually, Lily managed to get third place, then second, and finally first! She was so proud of herself. When Timmy was called home, Lily swam to the edge of the lake, and noticed that *the water only came up to her armpits*. At that moment, Grandma Georgina yelled, “Lily, come inside now! I’ve baked chocolate chip cookies.” The lake forgotten, Lily quickly climbed out and ran all the way home.



On Wednesday, Lily and her friends skipped to the lake and played Fetch. One kid threw “the treasure” which was a heavy blue ball. Then, everyone else dove into the lake and tried to be the first to find it. Lily could hold her breath the longest. First, she would take a deep breath, then dive into the water, hoping to find the treasure first. When Timmy was called home, Lily swam to the edge of the lake, and noticed that *the water only came up to her belly button*. At that moment, Grandpa Greg yelled, “Lily, come inside now! You promised to help take TJ and Chloe for a walk.” The lake forgotten, Lily quickly climbed out and ran all the way home.



On Friday, Lily and her friends hopped to the lake and played Sea Monster. The older kids pretended to be sea monsters that tried to catch the younger kids and drag them to their lair, which was a rock that jugged out at the edge of the lake. Lily easily avoided the monsters. The one time she got caught, Lily wriggled out of Matthew’s massive monster grip. When Timmy was called home, Lily swam to the edge of the lake, and noticed that *the water only came up to her knees*. At that

moment, Lily's daddy yelled, "Lily, come inside now! It's almost time for dinner." The lake forgotten, Lily quickly climbed out and ran all the way home.



Lily had a really fun weekend with her family. On Saturday, they drove all the way to the city, and went to the zoo. Lily got to see swinging monkeys, growling tigers, whinnying zebras, trumpeting elephants, and lots of other animals. On Sunday, they went to the county fair. She rode on the merry-go-round three times, won a goldfish, and rode on a swan boat with her family. Before they went home, they all took a ride on the Ferris Wheel. Lily liked how everything looked small from the top of the ride. It was the perfect ending to the day.

On Monday, it was so hot that Lily couldn't wait to go to the lake. She imagined jumping into the lake and making a big splash. When she finished eating her peanut butter sandwich and drinking her glass of milk, she joined her friends and they all raced to the lake. But when they got there, they got a big surprise. **THERE WAS NO WATER IN THE LAKE!**



Confused, the kids looked around to see if they could find out what happened to the water. They looked in the hole where the lake used to be. They looked around the shore of the lake. They looked in the woods next to the lake. But they couldn't find anything. Unable to think of anything else they could do, Lily and her friends went back home. Lily was so disappointed that she hadn't gotten to cool off in the lake or find out what happened to the water. When she got home, she went straight up to her room, and stayed there for the rest of the day.

The next morning, it was twice as hot as the day before. Lily thought of the lake, but she remembered there was no water left and there was nothing she could do about it. So she stayed inside and played with her dolls. After a while, Lily became so bored that she decided to play outside in the woods, under the cool shade of the trees. "I'm going to play outside," she yelled as she walked to the door.

"Take TJ and Chloe with you, I haven't taken them for a walk yet. They would love to play outside. Have fun," shouted her grandpa.

"Okay." Lily grabbed a tennis ball, called the dogs, and they headed towards the woods. At the last minute, she changed her mind about where she wanted to play. She felt like she had to play at where the lake used to be.

Lily threw the ball, and the dogs raced to get it. They ran so fast, that they looked like brown and black comets. Then they'd stop in front of her and drop the ball at her feet, their pink tongues hanging out of their mouths. After a while, Lily even made up a little game for herself. She tried

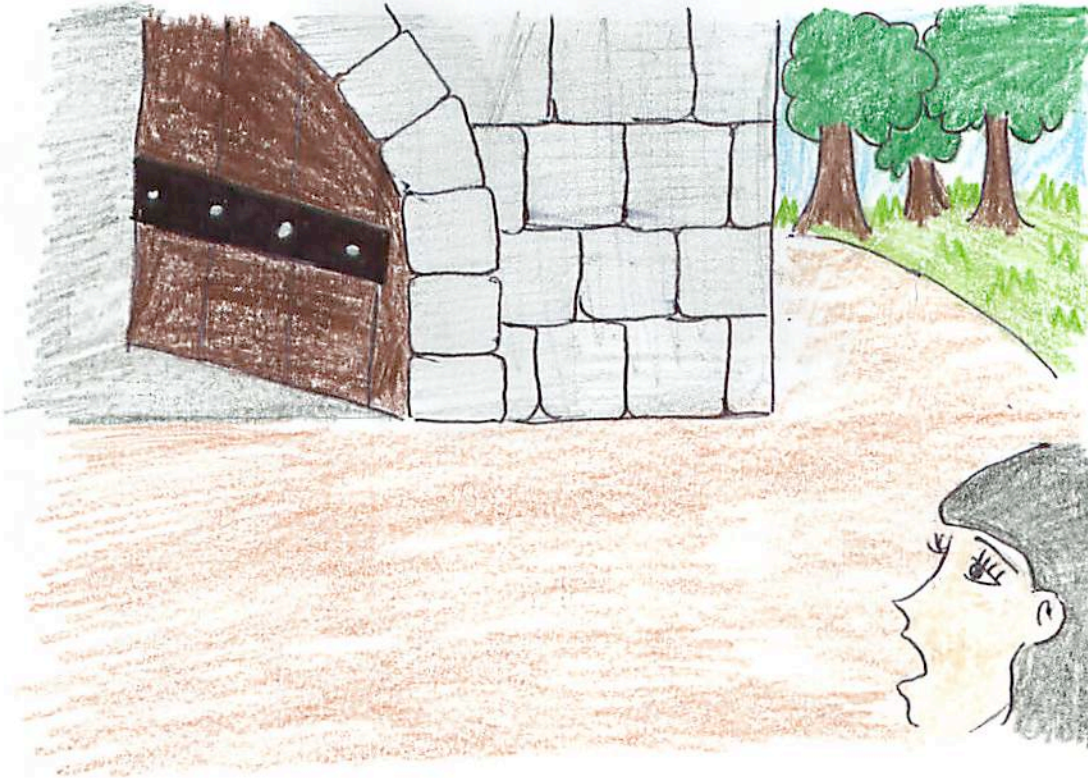


to see how far she could throw the ball. At first, she couldn't throw it that far, but the more she kept trying, the farther the ball went. *Whoosh!* Lily threw the ball, and it landed all the way at the other side of the lake. The dogs raced after it while Lily stood there waiting. And waiting. And waiting. Where were TJ and Chloe?!

She jogged to the opposite side of the lake, looking and calling out for TJ and Chloe. She found the both of them behind the large trunk of a tree, sniffing the ground and growling. "What is

it?" Chloe looked up at her, barked, then both dogs suddenly took off. Lily yelled, "Wait!" and took off after them.

The three of them ran deeper and deeper into the woods. Lily was worried because she had



never been this deep in the woods before. She wanted to go back, but she didn't want to lose the dogs. So she ran and ran, even deeper into the woods. They ran for what felt like forever, but then, TJ and Chloe stopped.

Lily had been keeping

her eyes on the dogs as she ran, so when she looked up, her eyes widened and jaw dropped. There, right in front of her, was an old, gray-stoned castle. While she was still staring, TJ and Chloe had run into the castle and disappeared, so Lily had no choice but to go inside.

Lily squeezed through the doors and walked into a narrow, gray-stoned hallway. The hallway was dark, but at the end of the hallway, she could see a bright white light. Scared that she would get caught for being in the house even though she wasn't invited, Lily stepped slowly and quietly towards the light.

As Lily got closer to the light, she began to hear someone softly crying. When she finally reached the room, she peeked inside, and gasped. Locked in a cage that rested on a table was a glittering, glowing, blue fairy. Sparkling tears ran down her small cheeks as she cried. At the sound of Lily's gasp, the fairy looked up and called, "Is anyone there? Please, someone help me!" When Lily stepped into the room and towards the table, the fairy said, "Hello, my name is Sirena. I am the fairy of the lake. I know you. You're one of the little girls that play in my lake all the time. What is your name? Can you help me?"



"My name is Lily. What happened to you? How can I help you?"

The fairy sniffed and said, "An evil witch wanted to steal the water from my lake so she could use it for her potions. She tricked me and imprisoned me in this cage so I couldn't stop her from taking the water. I need you to get the key and help me get out."

"So that's why the water in the lake disappeared!" Lily exclaimed. She looked around the room for a key, but couldn't find one. "I don't see a key anywhere. Couldn't you just use your magic to poof yourself out of that cage?"

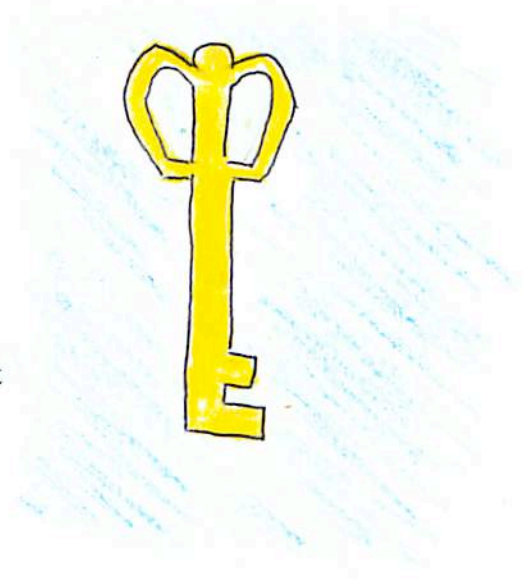
"The witch cast a spell on this cage so that I couldn't use my magic. The only way I can get out of this cage is if you unlock it with the key. Do you see that big red door behind you?"

Lily turned and saw a tall red door with big metal spikes around the edges. "Yes."

"Behind that door is a pool filled with the water that was stolen from my lake. The witch hid the key underwater in the deepest part of the pool. Be careful."

“TJ, Chloe, you guys stay here and keep watch, okay?” Both dogs barked as if to say yes.

Lily walked to the door, and pushed it open. In front of her was the biggest pool Lily had ever seen. The clear blue water in the pool reminded her so much of the lake, that she imagined this mission to be like a game of Fetch. The key was the treasure, and she had to get it. Lily took a deep breath, and dove into the water. She swam and swam and swam and swam, until she finally reached the deepest part of the pool. And there, shining brightly, was the key. Lily grabbed the key, and headed back up to the surface.



Before Lily reached the surface, she saw TJ and Chloe in the doorway with their teeth bared.

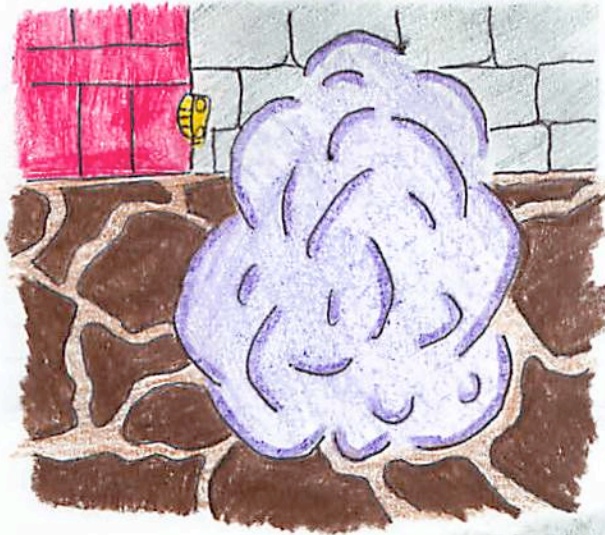
Something was wrong. Before she could look around, she felt a pair of strong bony arms wrap



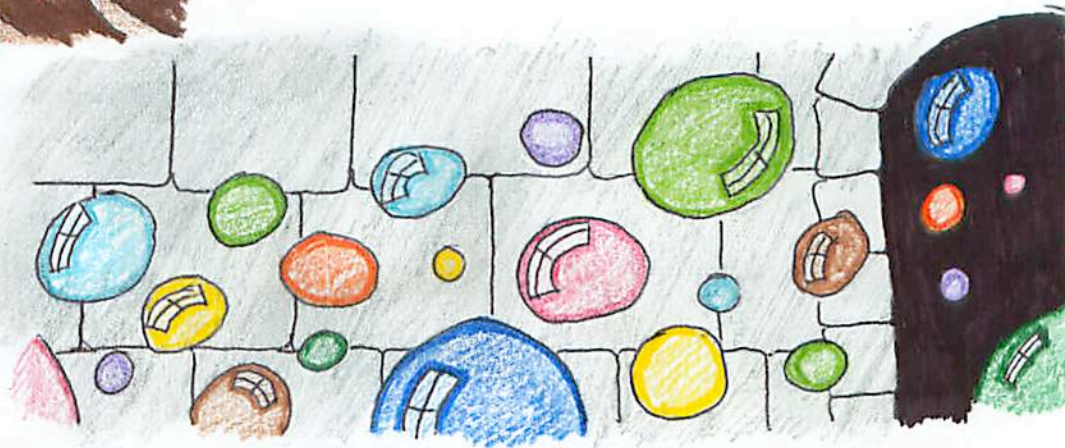
around her body. Lily looked behind her, and almost screamed. It was the evil witch. The witch had a big nose with a wart on it, tufts of purple hair, burning beady eyes, and wrinkly green skin. Lily fought to escape the witch’s massive monster grip, and broke free. She raced through the water as fast as she could, trying to make it out of the pool and get to the door first.

She climbed out of the pool and ran through the doorway. She closed the door behind her, because she could already hear the witch getting out of the pool. She got to the fairy’s cage and opened the lock just as the witch burst through the door. When the witch saw the fairy fly out of the cage, she screeched, “NOOOOOOOOO! You insolent child! What have you done?!”

The fairy waved her hands in the air, and the witch disappeared in a cloud of smoke. “The



witch will never bother anyone again,” said the fairy with a smile. “Thank you so much for rescuing me. Now I can return to my lake.” The fairy disappeared in a bubble of water, but Lily could hear the fairy’s voice saying, “Just follow the trail of bubbles, and you’ll find your way home.”



Hundreds of different glowing colored bubbles appeared in the air and made a trail that led out past the door. With a look of awe, Lily and the two dogs followed the bubbles all the way home. When they got home, Lily was so tired that she went straight to bed. That night she dreamt of swimming, blue fairies, bubbles, and finding a treasure.

The next day, Lily and her friends walked all the way down to the lake and were delighted to see the clear, blue, sparkling water again. Everyone dived in and made a big splash. When Lily hit the water, she heard a whispered *Thank you*, and she smiled. Lily and her friends spent the rest of the afternoon playing with their toys and playing games with each other.

