A Journey Story Compendium for FAMILY Challenge Day 1

The Way Back Home by Oliver Jeffers

Once there was boy, and one day, as he was putting his things back in the cupboard, he found an aeroplane. He didn't remember leaving it in there but he thought he'd take it out for a go right away.

The plane lifted off the ground and up into the sky… higher and higher and higher. Suddenly the plane spluttered… it had run out of petrol. Now the boy was stuck on the moon. What was he to do? He was all alone and afraid and soon his torch began to go out.

Up in space someone else was in trouble too. His engine had broken down and steering the ship towards a flicker of light, he landed on the moon with a bump. Both the boy and the Martian could hear noises in the dark and both feared the worst. But as their eyes got used to the dark, they both realised they'd met someone else in trouble. They weren't alone any more.

The boy showed the Martian his empty petrol tank and the Martian showed the boy his broken engine. Together they thought of ways to fix their machines and how to get them both back home. The boy jumped down to earth to get the things they would need… right down into the sea… and swam towards home. But by the time he got there, the boy was tired out so he sat in his favourite chair, just to catch his breath.

His favourite programme was just starting and he settled down to watch. Suddenly he remembered what he should be doing and rushed off to the cupboard to get what he needed. He ran outside and shouted. But there was no reply, he couldn't be heard.

The boy climbed to higher ground, called again, and waited. This time a rope was lowered. The boy began to climb and the Martian began to pull, and soon the boy was back on the moon. The boy fixed up the Martian's engine with the right spanner and the Martian filled the boy's petrol tank. They said goodbye and thanked each other for their help. They wondered if they'd ever meet again. After a long night they were both finally off the moon. The boy went one way and the Martian went another, both on their way back home.

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A River by Marc Martin

There is a river outside my window. From where I sit I can see it stretching into the distance in both directions. Sometimes I imagine myself floating along the river swept away in a silver boat towards the horizon. Where will it take me?

It goes through the city, under bridges and past the speeding cars that zoom by in an endless stream of busyness. It flows beside the factories with their machines grinding and plumes of smoke rising into the sky.

It carries me past the farms and animals and moves beyond the fields that look like giant patchwork quilts.

It slides into the hills and valleys and I can hear the murmuring of running water that grows louder and takes me tumbling down a waterfall taller than any building.

The river flows into the jungle and I can hear lots of animals – gibbons, bats and all kinds of birds.

Deep in the jungle, it's very dark. I can feel many eyes watching me. I sail through the mangroves; the river opens up and takes me to the ocean. It's windier now and the air smells of salt and seaweed.

If I peer over the edge of my boat, I can see many fish swimming in and out of the light. When I look up, I see clouds moving and it begins to rain and it's difficult to see where I am. But I can hear raindrops on the window and as the clouds clear I am sitting in my room again, looking through those raindrops on the glass, and gazing out across the sleeping city. And I think I see my silver boat floating in the moonlight drifting past my window once more.

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Journey to Jo'burg by Beverley Naidoo – Chapter 3

On they walked. The sun was low down now and there was a strong smell of oranges coming from rows and rows of orange trees behind barbed wire fences. As far as they could see there were orange trees with dark green leaves and bright round fruit. Oranges were sweet and wonderful to taste and they didn't have them often.

The children looked at each other. "Do you think we could… " Tiro began.

But Naledi was already carefully pushing apart the barbed wire, edging her body through.

"Keep watch!" she ordered Tiro.

She was on tiptoes, stretching for an orange when they heard, "HEY, YOU!"

Naledi dropped down, then dashed for the fence. Tiro was holding the wires for her. She tried to scramble through, but it was too late. A hand grasped her and pulled her back.

Naledi looked up and saw a young boy, her own age. "What are you doing?" he demanded. He spoke in Tswana, their own language. "The white farmer could kill you if he sees you. Don't you know he has a gun to shoot thieves?"

"We're not thieves. We've been walking all day and we're very hungry. Please don't call him," Naledi pleaded.

The boy looked more friendly now and asked where they came from. So they told him about their baby brother Dineo and how they were going to Johannesburg because he was ill. The boy whistled. "Phew. So far!"

He paused.

"Look. I know a place where you can sleep tonight and where the farmer won't find you. Stay here and I'll take you there when it's dark."

Naledi and Tiro glanced at each other, still a little nervous.

"Don't worry. You'll be safe waiting here. The farmer has gone inside for his supper," the boy reassured them, then he grinned. "But if you eat oranges you must hide the peels well or there will be big trouble. We have to pick the fruit, but we're not allowed to eat it."

"Can we stay here for the night?" Tiro asked.

Naledi wasn't too sure if they should.

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The Last March by Robert Falcon Scott - Excerpt

Tuesday, February 28.
Lunch. Thermometer went below -40ºF last night; it was desperately cold for us, but we had a fair night.... Only twenty-four miles from the depot. The Sun shines brightly, but there is little warmth in it. There is no doubt the middle of the Barrier is a pretty awful locality.

Sunday, March 4.
Lunch. Things looking very black indeed.... All the morning we had to pull with all our strength, and in four hours we covered three miles.... We are about forty-two miles from the next depot and have a week's food, but only about three to four days' fuel—we are as economical of the latter as one can possibly be, and we cannot afford to save food and pull as we are pulling.... I don't know what I should do if Wilson and Bowers weren't so determinedly cheerful over things.

Wednesday, March 7.
A little worse I fear. One of Oates' feet very bad this morning; he is wonderfully brave. We still talk of what we will do together at home.

Thursday, March 8.
Lunch. Worse and worse in morning; poor Oates' left foot can never last out, and time over footgear something awful. Have to wait in night footgear for nearly an hour before I start changing, and then am generally first to be ready. Wilson's feet giving trouble now, but this mainly because he gives so much help to others. We did four miles this morning and are now eight miles from the depot—a ridiculously small distance to feel in difficulties, yet on this surface we know we cannot equal half our old marches, and that for that effort we expend nearly double the energy.

Sunday, March 11.
Titus Oates is very near the end, one feels.... Nothing could be said but to urge him to march as long as he could. One satisfactory result to the discussion; I practically ordered Wilson to hand over the means of ending our troubles to us, so that any one of us may know how to do so. Wilson had no choice between doing so and our ransacking the medicine case. We have thirty opium tabloids apiece and he is left with a tube of morphine. So far the tragical side of our story. (R. 53.)

Friday, March 16 or Saturday 17.
At night Oates was worse and we knew the end had come.... He slept through the night before last, hoping not to wake; but he woke in the morning yesterday. It was blowing a blizzard. He said, "I am just going outside and may be some time." He went out into the blizzard and we have not seen him since.... We knew that poor Oates was walking to his death, but though we tried to dissuade him, we knew it was the act of a brave man and an English gentleman. We all hope to meet the end with a similar spirit, and assuredly the end is not far.... We are cold on the march now, and at all times except meals.... We are at No. 14 pony camp, only two pony marches from One Ton Depot. We leave here our theodolite, a camera, and Oates' sleeping bags. Diaries, etc., and geological specimens carried at Wilson's special request, will be found with us or on our sledge.

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Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening by Robert Frost

Whose woods these are I think I know.
His house is in the village though;
He will not see me stopping here
To watch his woods fill up with snow.

My little horse must think it queer
To stop without a farmhouse near
Between the woods and frozen lake
The darkest evening of the year.

He gives his harness bells a shake
To ask if there is some mistake.
The only other sound's the sweep
Of easy wind and downy flake.

The woods are lovely, dark and deep,
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep.