

HOW TO BE BRAVE

by
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Chapter 4

Daniel sat at his new desk. He watched kids file into the room. He wondered which one was Andrew. But more importantly, he wondered if he'd be nice.

He didn't have to wait long. A skinny boy wearing glasses slid into the seat next to him. He smiled at Daniel. "You must be the new kid," he said. He had a tooth missing in exactly the same spot as Daniel.

Daniel nodded.

Ms. Belliveau walked over. She smiled at Daniel. "I see you've met Andrew," she said. "He's going to take you and your sister on a tour of the school." She looked at Andrew. "But before he does that, here are a few 'icebreaker questions.' They might help you

to get to know each other.” Ms. Belliveau handed Andrew a set of cards.

“Some of the questions on the cards are kind of cool,” Andrew explained to Fiona and Daniel. “Some of them are kind of boring. But Ms. Belliveau does this whenever we get a new kid or meet other kids in the school — like our reading buddies from Grade Five.”



Andrew looked at the first card. “They’re supposed to be short answers. And quick. So just say the first thing that you think of. Here we go. The first category is called ‘Favourite Things.’ Ready? Vanilla or chocolate?”

“Chocolate,” answered Daniel.

“Vanilla,” said Fiona.

“Colour?”

“Red.”

“Purple.”

“Hamburgers or hot dogs?”

“Hot dogs!” they both answered.

The next categories were about family, vacations and school. When Fiona answered the last question, Andrew handed her the cards. “Now it’s your turn,” he explained.

“The category is called ‘Numbers,’” she said. Then she read, “Teeth lost.”

“Eight.”

“Brothers or sisters?”

When Andrew answered, “Almost one,” Fiona laughed.

“What do you mean?” she asked.

So Andrew explained that he didn't have any brothers or sisters — yet. “But my mom is going to have a baby pretty soon. Her belly looks like she swallowed a beach ball!” He giggled. “So I have either a brother or a sister. Just not born yet.”

Fiona nodded. Now his answer made perfect sense.

“Phone number?” read Daniel.

Fiona and Daniel took turns asking questions. When they were finished, they started the tour of River Haven Elementary. The three of them walked out into a hallway that twisted and curved out of sight. Andrew pointed to the left. “Down that way is the other Grade Three class.” He pointed to the right. “That’s how you get to the Grade Two rooms. But first I’ll show you where the gym is. That’s the best part about school.”

It seemed like they walked around in circles, through a bazillion doors. “Here’s the gym,” he said. “And past that is the cafeteria.”

Fiona's eyes were huge. "This place is humongous," she said. "And it's so neat!"

"And old," added Andrew. "My mom went to this school when she was little. She got lost once. She couldn't figure out how to get back to her classroom from the basement."

"What was she doing in the basement?" Daniel asked.

Andrew laughed. "Not much. Just looking for the caretaker. That's where his workroom is."

Fiona glanced at Daniel. He knew exactly what she was thinking. Sometimes she didn't even have to say a word. Daniel knew she was thinking the same thing as him: River Haven *was* really big. It would be easy to get lost.

After seeing the library, the principal's office and the music room, Andrew pointed to a set of stairs. "Those go to the basement," he said. "There's nothing much down there. Just the caretaker's room, a bunch of ladders and old stuff."



“And maybe a missing kid from a hundred years ago,” laughed Daniel. Andrew and Fiona laughed, too.