

Nobody Cared

3rd Place

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Grade 5 & 6

The sun rose in Blueclaw Forest. Life sprung from everywhere, just like it always did. Trees, bushes, and flowers burst into magnificent colors. Everything awakened – everything except the bats. The forest’s colony of bats was a shy, gentle group, only taking what they needed. Unfortunately, they needed more than the forest could supply.

“Sarkin wake up,” uttered bat council member, “It’s time for another raid.”

“Why do we have to steal,” moaned Sarkin.

“Because we can’t survive on just the forest bugs,”

That’s how it started, more times than not, as Sarkin strongly disagreed with the thievery of his colony, both because his claws were too weak to hold fruit, and because he knew that they couldn’t rely on it forever. But every morning, Sarkin gave in and soared with the rest of the colony to Mr.Thack’s farm.

They blazed through the air like knives, bolting from side to side, looking for ripe fruit. As always, they all grabbed a few pieces, digging their claws through the tough flesh of the plant, and carried the food back to the colony. Sarkin, though, was always laughed at and mocked, for he had fleshy claws, rather than the hard, sharp talons that the other bats had.

“This time I have to do it,” thought Sarkin, diving for a fruit at break- neck speed, “Then they won’t make fun of me.” His claws sank into the skin, and then rose out. He tried time after time, now crying. Why couldn’t he be like them? He left the fruit, just to get away, though he knew what awaited him back home. Hurt both physically and mentally, he soared.

“No this time I *have* to do it!”

He turned around, slicing through the wind. Sarkin’s claws crippled as they broke through the skin, weighing themselves down into the pulpy core of the fruit. His claws

bled and a bolt of sharp pain ran through his body. He thrashed wildly, but kept his claws, now caked in blood, in the fruit. Sarkin pulled himself through the endless farmland. He looked into the sky, his eyes blurred by tears. Nobody seemed to care. His parents had abandoned him at birth, leaving him to be torn apart by the pain of his differences. His vision blackened – and Sarkin collapsed.

Sarkin was wrong. People did care. Though his body was never found, Sarkin was given a proper funeral. The colony wept for him, remembering how they had treated him. The funeral was held near Mr.Thack's farm, just off from where Sarkin's body lay, invisible under the grainy dirt.

Sarkin's loss showed the colony how cruel they had been. No longer were young bats allowed to be left alone. The colony grew, both in maturity and in population. The Blueclaw colony had learned something that day – a little love can save a life. And though he didn't know, Sarkin had made a difference, which was just what he had always wanted to do.