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The Zephyrtine

A Ballet Story by David Chesky

1. Stars in the Night

The air was cold and still this late autumn night, the winter solstice was near. The time was four in the morning. Young Ben lay sleeping in his bed, as all the rest did in this small upstate Vermont farming town of Richmond. Ben was the kind of teenager that was always reading books and dreaming of adventure. Richmond high school was not exactly the most exiting place to be, nor was Richmond. Just school and the usual farm chores. Ben's father was a farmer, they grew mostly potatoes, vegetables, corn and in the autumn a small harvest of pumpkins. Ben would always talk to his friends about his wild dreams and the adventurous stories he had read about with mysterious people in far away places. But even Ben in his wildest of dreams could not have imagined what would happen that night.

As the frost lay on the ground the air could not have been stiller. Not a sound. Not even the rustle of the leaves or the sound of the crickets, just the silence and silence and silence.

Suddenly in the corner of one of the potato fields were three small dancing lights. Then four, then five, and seconds later it seemed like hundreds of dancing lights going around and around, faster and faster. Then all of a sudden there was a bright burst of light and then silence and darkness, and stillness. All on the farm was the same it was a little strange that no one was awakened by the lights. All was still the same.

But then there was a quiet noise in the field. Oh so distant and so very quiet. What was this noise that had broken the silence of this clear autumn night?

This sound did not sound strange in fact it sounded familiar. Very familiar indeed. Yes, of course it was the sound of hoofs walking slowly through the potato field. But how could this be this was impossible. On Ben's farm they grew potatoes. Ben didn't even own a dog or cat let alone a horse or a cow. What could this walking be? A wild horse could never have jumped the large fence around the potato field, nor a goat or a sheep. And there were no bears in Richmond and certainly no tigers or lions. What could this be? Maybe a monster from outer space? Maybe yes maybe no.

The hoofs started walking towards the house. Closer and closer. Louder and louder.

Until they came right up to Ben's window. Then the strange creature put its nose right up to the window and breathed a spray of mist on to it, Then the creature bumped the glass one, two, three times. Yes three times the mysterious creature bumped the glass 3 times.

By the third bump on the window Ben had heard the noise and awakened and thought he was just dreaming and started back to sleep. But then the creature bumped the glass again, one, two, three times. This time Ben jumped right out of bed and quickly put on his pants and shirt.

Ben was scared and didn't know what to do. What was it? A bear, a cow, or a horse? What if it was a monster? Yes I bet it's a monster thought Ben.

Ben thought maybe he should run and wake his parents. But just then creature breathed a spray of mist onto Ben's window.

Ben wanted to turn on the light because he was so scared, but he realized that the creature would see him and then what?

Ben then decided he would find out himself. So he got down on his hand and knees and slowly crawled to the window. When he reached the side of the window Ben decided he would peek out of the window with just his left eye to see what was out there. So slowly Ben rose higher and higher little by little until Ben's head reached the window. Then slowly Ben moved to the left until he passed the window sill. Then slowly and nervously he began to open just his left eye, a little at a time. His heart began racing what would he see. What if it was a monster after all? Would it eat him? All at once Ben opened his eye and then.

Standing in front of his at his house in his yard was the most the most beautiful creature he had ever seen. What was it? It was the whitest horse he had ever seen. It was whiter than the snow or the frost on the ground. Not only that, it had beautiful wings and a diamond horn like a unicorn that sparkled as bright as all the stars. Ben had never seen anything that bright before nor that magnificent.

Ben started talking to himself and said quietly "what in the world is this?" The creature replied, "I am a Zephyrtine" Ben could not move or talk. He was completely frozen with amazement. The creature replied "are you okay."

Ben was stunned and unable to speak and once again the creature said “what is the matter”

Ben finally got up the courage to speak and said ‘I didn’t know horses had wings or could talk?’

The creature replied sarcastically “First of all I am not a horse, and I take offense at being called that. I am a Zephyrtine one of the few that are left in this galaxy. And I might add I was just as surprised that you could speak, from what I have heard humans just grumble and mumble about, and war with each other. But, for a primitive you seem quite harmless.”

Ben said “I’m not a primitive, my name is Ben and I’m in the 11th grade at Richmond high and soon I will graduate and go to college”

“That’s nice” Said the Zephyrtine. "But can you fly?"

“No” replied Ben

“Well I can” stated the Zephyrtine. “Ben, are you curious about me?”

“Yes” said Ben.

“Well I am a Zephyrtine. What’s a Zephyrtine you’re probably thinking? Well we are special creatures that live in a beautiful place called Eudora. Eudora is a most magnificent place. No humans live there though, but we have many special and wonderful creatures only the Zephyrtines know the way in and out of Eudora. We have magical powers and we can fly in the clouds.”

“Why did you come here” asked Ben.

The Zephyrtine Replied. “Because I read your dreams and I wanted you to visit because once every thousand years we chose a visitor to invite and this time the Zephyrtines have chosen you.

Ben - “But why me?”

The Zephyrtine replied “no special reason.”

Ben said “No special reason, you mean I’m not special.”

“Of course you’re special.” - Said the Zephyrtine. – “Everyone is special but we just picked you by chance Bill have you ever flown on a Zephyrtine.”

Ben replied “Flown on a Zephyrtine, I’ve never been in a plane.”

Well Ben,” “It’s a little different, first of all there are no seatbelts, or soda drinks, and it can get cold and windy up there.” “Would you like to go?”

“Yes” Said Ben.

“Are you sure you won’t be afraid” said the Zephyrtine.

“Of coarse not, I’m Ben and I’m not afraid of anything.”

“Not even monsters” replied the Zephyrtine.

“Not even monsters” said Ben

But Ben knew deep down inside that he was afraid of monsters, after all who wouldn’t be. But he wanted to go to Eudora so badly; he momentarily forgot he was afraid and besides there are probably no monster there anyway.

“Lets go.” said Ben

The Zephyrtine replied “What about school, your parents, your chores.”

Don’t worry” Replied Ben “I’ll be back soon. They’ll understand besides My dad trusts me and knows I wont get into trouble besides I’m 16 years old almost a man.

In that case said the Zephyrtine: - Jump on my back and hold on tight but first get a warm coat because it cold up there.

Ben ran into the house and got his warmest coat then jumped onto the Zephyrtine and held on tightly to the long white mane. The Zephyrtine reared onto its hind legs and then in one swift motion leaped into the air. Its wings were beating long powerful strokes. The Zephyrtine and Ben rose higher and higher and faster and faster. Ben could see the lights of the towns as they passed over them. The cars and houses looked like toys, up higher and higher they went and soon they were above the clouds. The houses and cities were no longer visible, just a sea of clouds below them and the bright starry night above. Ben had never seen such bright stars from the ground

“Were are we going” said Ben

“We’re going past the Milky Way and then we turn right and head straight for Eudora”
Cried the Zephyrtine.

So Ben and the Zephyrtine flew on and on following the Milky Way. And the morning sun started rising and the sky became a beautiful orange and the clouds below became a sea of white cotton.

Then on the horizon Ben, saw what appeared to be mountains, but they were pink, but he thought how mountains can be pink.

As they got closer the mountains became bigger and bigger and pinker and pinker
“That’s Eudora” Cried the Zephyrtine.

Soon they were over the mountains and Ben could see the trees. What strange trees they were all purple Ben had never seen purple trees. What a strange place this Eudora must be, thought Ben.

The Zephyrtine started slowly down over a small town next to a forest... slower and slower as they neared the ground. And with one graceful motion the Zephyrtine stretched out his lets and landed on the soft ground.

2. Eudora

Ben jumped off the Zephyrtine onto the soft grass “wow” exclaimed Ben. “I’ve never had a ride like that in my life.

As Ben rested on the grass he started looking all around him. What a strange and colorful place this is. Purple trees, pink mountains, and the grass was blue.” Said Ben “This is really odd. “What’s so odd” said the Zephyrtine. “I personally think grass looks better blue, green grass looks strange to me.”

Eudora was a most interesting place. Ben looked and noticed the people, everyone was a different color. Some men where blue, some red, and there were green women with red children. Sometimes one child would be red and the other one yellow. This was most strange and fascinating to Ben.

Ben said. “I’ve never seen people like this, how does this happen?”

The Zephyrtine replied, “What do you mean?”

Ben said, “All the different colors of the Eudorians”

“Oh that.” Replied the Zephyrtine” “Well to tell you the truth I really have never even noticed. People are so oblivious to color. All the colors are just by chance. For instance, a blue father and a blue mother can have a red or green child. Or a red father and a red mother can have a blue child. Or a red father and a blue mother might have a yellow child. No on even notices that sort of thing”

Ben said “I like that, I feel like I’m in a bubble gum machine with lots of different colors.

Ben liked all the new strange people. He felt like he was in a cartoon. The Eudorians were genuinely nice and friendly and most of all curious. They wanted to know all about growing up in Richmond. Ben talked and soon felt at ease with his new friends.

Later that day Ben and the Zephyrtine took a walk in the park and Ben could not believe he saw. In the park were the most beautiful trees he had ever seen. They were pink and purple and glistened like snow. But most interesting of all was at the end of every branch, instead of

apples or pears or peaches, there was ice cream. They were the Royal ice cream trees!!!

.Some trees had chocolate ice cream, some had Vanilla and strawberry. Others have Blueberry and raspberry. And some had mixed flavors.”

“This is impossible” Shouted Ben.” Ice cream cannot grow on trees.”

“Quiet” Said the Zephyrtine. “Or people will think you’re crazy.”

Ben said, “I’m not crazy, you can’t grow ice cream on trees.”

“Why not” Said the Zephyrtine

“I don’t know” Said Ben.

“Well enough of that, everyone knows in Eudora ice cream grows on trees, and that’s final” Said the Zephyrtine.

So Ben went up to a tree and took some ice cream. Ben tasted it and remarked. “I have never tasted better ice cream in my life than tree grown; fresh off the tree. Even better than farmer Jone’s dairy in Richmond.”

As Ben was eating his ice cream he looked up into the tree and saw a very beautiful orange bird. The bird saw Ben, and flew down next to him.

Ben noticed something very strange, this bird had no wings, and how could it fly?

Ben said, “This bird, how can it fly without wings.”

The Zephyrtine said “Birds don’t need wings to fly, they just fly.”

“But Zephyrtine,” Ben said, “You fly, and you need wings to fly.”

The Zephyrtine said, “That’s right I’m a Zephyrtine. Zephyrtines need wings to fly, birds do not.”

Ben thought what a strange adventurous place indeed. But regardless Ben was enjoying his new friends and adventure. The Eudorians were pleasant. They had there land, there ways, their ice cream trees, and yes they had their king. Everybody loved King Kalek. King Kalek had been king forever. He came to Eudora riding one of the first Zephyrtines and he brought the first Eudorians here from the of afar. King Kalek knew that something was going wrong

with the land of Afar. People would fight, and argue, people were not happy. At one time in the land of Afar the Eudorians were like your people Ben. But King Kalek a long time ago brought them here and gave them the wisdom to open up and grow and to see the beauty in life, a long and happy peaceful life.

Ben was impressed by this great wise King Kalek and vowed to the Zephyrtine when he returned to Richmond he would invite the king to his high school to teach his wisdom there. At least it would be more interesting than Mrs. Bells history class he thought.

As Ben and the Zephyrtine continued their walk in Eudora Ben noticed a large building shaped like a potato.

“What’s that?” asked Ben.

“That’s a potato factory” replied the Zephyrtine “They make potatoes in there.”

“That’s silly you don’t make potatoes you grow them.”- Shouted Ben - “My dad grow potatoes on his farm.”

“Ben, are you okay?” replied the Zephyrtine. “You can’t grow potatoes, you make them, yes perhaps you can grow ice cream, and spaghetti, and bread but to think you can grow potatoes is absurd.”

Ben replied, “But where I come from we grow potatoes, and make Ice cream.”

The Zephyrtine replied, “That’s interesting Ben but I suggest you keep those kind of thoughts quiet here in Eudora otherwise people will start saying strange things about you.”

Ben was quite confused and frustrated now but for the time being he decided it was best to listen and observe and most of all enjoy his adventure rather than annoy his hosts.

The Zephyrtine and Ben walked for a while. And the Zephyrtine showed Ben carrot factories, and apple factories. Ben could not believe all this craziness. But in Eudora it all seemed to make sense. So Ben and the Zephyrtine wandered for a while until Ben became tired. They decided to go home for the night. So they returned to the village were the Zephyrtine put Ben up at one of the local Eudorian’s homes.

The next morning the sky was a beautiful bright purple as it always is in Eudora. The

wingless birds were up in the trees singing.

As Ben woke he walked outside the house. There was a big field and the Zephyrtine arrived. Ben saw in the field cows. Brown cows, white cows, and red cows “Why do you need cows don’t you have factories to make milk, like you make potatoes and carrots.”

“Don’t be silly” replied the Zephyrtine. “Everyone knows milk comes from cows. How can you make milk? We have Brown cows for chocolate milk, white cow for vanilla milk and red cows for strawberry milk,”

Sarcastically Ben Says “Of course how silly of me not to know you get chocolate milk from brown cows.”

“Now you are beginning to understand.” - Said the Zephyrtine.

As the Zephyrtine and Ben were talking a strange tall yellow man walked up to them. He was dressed up in an elegant costume; a blue suit with shiny white buttons and sparkling diamonds for cufflinks and a white ruffled shirt.

He spoke “Allow me to introduce myself, my name is Vasili and I am the messenger of King Kalek. The king has heard that a young Ben is now in Eudora. The king would like to meet this young man precisely at two o’clock this afternoon at the Royal Palace. I thank you and have a nice day. See you at two.”

“That wonderfully said” The Zephyrtine said “What an honor, most Eudorians have never had the privileged of meeting our king.”

“Have you met the king?” Said Ben

“Yes” Replied the Zephyrtine “The king and the Zephyrtines go back to ancient times. I have been his servant and one of his advisors for years and years. . And I might add a personal social friend. The king is a most interesting Eudorian. You will like him. Now you must get ready. A bath awaits you and I have taken the liberty to finding you some nice Eudorian dress clothes. It would be improper to visit the King in sneakers and blue jeans.”

So Ben got all cleaned up and put on the Eudorian clothes. What an interesting outfit. First he put on a shiny satin white shirt and then a long white robe that almost touched the floor. For shoes he wore sandals.

Ben said “These are formal Eudorian clothes? I look like I’m going to a Halloween party dressed up like Aladdin.”

“Who is Aladdin and what’s Halloween?” - replied the Zephyrtine.

“Never mind.” - Said Ben - “I will tell you later.”

“How will we get to the palace.” asked Ben.

“Let’s fly” replied the Zephyrtine

So Ben jumped onto the Zephyrtine and they leaped into the air they were above the trees and up they could see the palace up on the highest hill in the distance. It was beautiful, it was shimmering like diamonds. The palace walls were made of diamonds. In Eudora diamonds were like rocks everywhere, but they had no monetary value so people would build with them.

As they got closer the palace got bigger and bigger “They certainly never built anything like this in Richmond.” - Remarked Ben.

The Zephyrtine circled the palace a few times so Ben could get a better look. There were beautiful gardens and swimming pools and there were sparkling diamond pathways leading in every direction.

The Zephyrtine started slowing down and landed right in front of the main palace doors, they were immense. Thirty feet high solid diamond doors glistening like the sun.

The guard asked “can I help you?”

“Tell him that Ben from Richmond is here to see the king precisely at two” Said the Zephyrtine.

“Just a minute please.” - Replied the guard.

The guard walked behind a desk and looked at his papers and said - “Yes you are expected and most welcome indeed, please come in.”

The great diamond doors of the palace started opening and then Ben and the Zephyrtine walked in. There was a beautiful golden pathway leading to another set of diamond doors. As the guard opened the second pair of doors there was a great hallway in front of them. Down the middle of the hallway was a long white carpet with gold designs in it. And all the way down at

the other end of the hall was great King Kalek sitting on his throne. Two guards escorted Ben and the Zephyrtine down the long hallway as Ben neared the King he noticed that the great king was red!! As red as a tomato!! He had a long red beard and red hair. He wore a long shiny red coat with a crown of red rubies. Now he knew why they called him the red king. Actually the king looked in pretty good shape considering he was at least five thousand years old. Sitting on the kings left was Queen Kalek, she was very beautiful women. But she was green, like the color of spinach or broccoli.

The queen had long beautiful green hair and wore a shiny green gown with a crown of green emeralds. As Ben approaches the king one of the guards said. "Your highness King Kalek may I present to you Ben of Richmond Vermont."

Now Ben had never met a king, until now the most important person he had ever met was the mayor of Richmond, but Ben new by reading stories that when you meet a king you must bow and be courteous. So Ben walked up to the king and bowed and said. "It is a pleasure and honor to meet you King Kalek."

The king replied, "Thank you young man, my friend the Zephyrtine has told me all about you, and you seem like an impressive young man.

"Thank you sir." replied Ben.

"So how do you like Eudora?" - Asked the King

"I find it most to be a most interesting and unusual place." - Replied Ben.

"You are the first visitor even to come to Eudora; I must admit it is a little strange to see a white person. You have no color not red, nor blue, nor orange, just white but I like it. It is fresh and different." The king said.

As the king was talking Ben was noticing the king's socks how strange he thought, one sock was blue and one was red.

"Pardon me." - Said Ben

"Yes" - Replied the king

"Please don't think it rude of me but I am curious. You are wearing one red sock and

one blue sock.” - Said Ben.

“So what’s the problem.” said the king.

“Don’t you think that rather odd that your socks don’t match?” said Ben

“But my socks do match perfectly.” - Said the King. - “You see Ben, here in Eudora, we don’t match socks by there color, we Eudorians match socks by their thickness, the thickness of a sock is much more important than its color.”

Ben was a little stunned, “He never even thought of that, how interesting he decided when he got back to Richmond he would start wearing socks by matching thickness. He might even start a whole new fashion trend.

Just as Ben was finishing his thoughts out of the corner of his eye he saw the most beautiful sight he had ever seen. It was a girl, walking towards the king. She was the most beautiful girl he had ever seen or even dreamed of, she was beautiful and tall but most of all She was blue, yes, blue with long blue hair, and beautiful blue eyes and a beautiful blue smile that melted Ben’s heart. Ben’s knees were weak at the sight of her, his heart started racing and he was going to faint.

Just then the beautiful blue girl went up to King Kalek and kissed him on the cheek and said. “Good morning father.”

The king said “Ben this is my daughter, princess Chaya.”

A blue princess thought Ben. What could be more impressive?

The princess turned to Ben and said “Hello Ben, how are you?”

Ben could not speak he was so nervous, he thought I must speak, please let me speak, quietly he forced the words out “Hello.”

The King said to Ben “Are you alright?”

Ben thought to himself what is this strange feeling, could this be love, it must be love. Ben had never been in love with a girl before, let alone a blue girl. He did like Susan a lot at Richmond High, but never like this. This was the first time Ben had ever felt like this. So this is what its like to be in love he thought. What a great feeling.

Just as Ben was enjoying his great feeling, a guard burst into the great room and announced to the king that Ib the Monster of the Mountain had attacked a village and ate all their ice cream trees.

All of a sudden Ben woke up from his light headed dream of being in love and said “A monster, a monster, what do you mean a monster.” “We have no monsters in Richmond.”

The Zephyrtine spoke “Ben, you see Eudora is an almost perfect place, people are happy and peaceful. There is no hate and no wars. All is well here. But since the dawn of time, since there were the Zephyrtines, there has always been Ib the monster. This monster lives way up in the mountains in a cave it has a large head. And four legs and four arms with a giant mouth. It is a hairy, four legged monster with a giant mouth to eat ice cream trees.

The monster never comes down from the mountains, there are plenty of ice cream trees for him to eat, but lately in Eudora high in the mountains it hasn’t been as cold this year as before and there is not as many ice cream trees this year. So the monster has been coming down to the small villages and valleys at night and eating all the ice cream trees and causing havoc and scaring the local Eudorians. Quite frankly Ben, we are not sure of what to do.”

Ben burst out and said, “I know what we can do, let’s form a big hunting party and find the monster and kill it.”

Just then a huge gasp and then a great silence fell over the hall, no one moved or talked. Ben thought - “What is going on here?”

The king stood up and sternly said “Ben, from Richmond, did I hear you correctly, you want to kill the monster, kill the monster. In Eudora we don’t kill anything, and that includes monsters. The mere thought of killing monster or anything is revolting to us,”

Ben said “I’m sorry sir, but back where I’m from it’s common to kill things, in war or you kill animals to eat.”

Just then there was another gasp from the audience and even some Eudorians fainted and there was silence

The king said “We must stop this conversation at once, these words are upsetting to we Eudorians and we can’t imagine that places that you described even exist. How horrible, how

sad.” the King said “Without further ado I pronounce this session closed.”

The King, the Queen, and the Blue Princess marched through a side door to go back to their private quarters. But as the princess left she gave Ben a smile. Ben thought his heart would burst, he was so happy. He was a simple boy from Richmond, and she was a princess.

The Zephyrtine and Ben left the palace and went back to the small village where he was staying

4. Ib Monster of the mountains.

As Ben awoke this morning he walked outside into the garden. The air was cool and the sun was shining, the sky was a beautiful purple as it always is in Eudora. The wingless birds were in the trees singing their morning songs.

The Zephyrtine came by to say hello to Ben and have breakfast with him as they were sitting there talking and eating and having a very good time Ben told the Zephyrtine that he thought he was in love with the Blue Princess. The Zephyrtine thought that was wonderful, but politely added that King Kalek loved his daughter more than anything else in the world and would only choose the finest and bravest man to marry her. All the Eudorian men loved Princess Chaya; she was undoubtedly the most beautiful girl in all of Eudora.

As Ben and the Zephyrtine were enjoying their breakfast, they heard a great commotion coming from down the street at the town square.

“What’s all the fuss?” - asked Ben

“I don’t know” - said the Zephyrtine - “Lets walk over and find out.”

So Ben and the Zephyrtine walked over to the town square where a large crowd was fussing, and chatting and milling about, in a state of commotion. Just then a well dressed palace guard got up on a platform and began to address the crowd.

“My name is Berba, I am one of the palace guards, I bring you bad news, I bring you terrible news, I bring you the most horrible of horrible news; the monster Ib has gone crazy. Last night he broke into the palace and kidnapped the blue princess Chaya. The monster took her back to his cave and said unless the king brings him one thousand ice cream trees by tomorrow, he will eat the princess.

“The king wants all Eudorians outside the palace at twelve noon where he will address all of his subjects.”

There were cries; Eudorians fainted at the horrible news. People shouted “What can we do, where can we possibly get one thousand ice cream trees, they are not a thousand ice cream trees in all of Eudora thought. The Zephyrtine was sad, even Ben was on the brink of tears, -

what can I do he thought.

The Zephyrtine said “In all of my life I could ever imagined anything so terrible happening in Eudora. It’s a sad day for Eudora and all Eudorians.”

“What can we do?” asked Ben.

“I don’t know, let’s go hear the king’s speech at noon and see if we can be of help.” - Said the Zephyrtine.

So Ben and the Zephyrtine went off to the palace. As Ben and the Zephyrtine approached the palace thousands of Eudorians had gathered outside the gates. All of Eudora was there. Red ones, blue ones, small ones, green ones and most of all stunned

The gates of the palace opened up and a guard came out and said

- “His royal Highness King Kalek.”

The king came out looking so sad and terrible. He was so weak he had to be helped. The Green Queen was beside him in tears.

“My loyal subjects,” He said sobbingly “The news is true, in all my thousands of years a king I could never have imagined anything this bad, this sad happening in our beautiful Eudora. I have met with my advisors and they can not think of anything to save the princess. Unless something is done, tomorrow night Ib the monster will eat my daughter the Princess Chaya, The Blue Princess. I beg each of you to think of anything to save her life. As king I will reward any boy or man brave enough to save my daughter from the monster with one of my prized ice cream trees and the title of Prince of Eudoria.

Thank you all for coming here.” With that the king wept and walked back into the palace, and the great doors closed behind him.

The Zephyrtine told Ben “Jump on lets fly over the palace walls and see the King.”

Ben jumped on and the Zephyrtine leaped into the air and flew up and over the palace wall and landed in the garden. They walked into the great hall were King Kalek was on his throne weeping.

“What is it Zephyrtine?” - Asked the king.

The Zephyrtine replied. “I am your servant since the beginning of time I will be by your side and help in whatever way I can.”

Ben burst out “ I know what we can do, I shall organize a hunting party and go up to the mountains and find the cave and kill the monster.”

“Quiet Ben” Yelled the king “You shall do no such thing, I will not permit it. Just because the monster is wrong does that mean I must be wrong? To kill in Eudora is wrong and I will not permit it. There must be another way.”

So the king and Ben, and the Zephyrtine and all the king’s advisors thought and thought and thought, but could not come up with anything. Just as it seemed hopeless the Zephyrtine said “We should go see Gortee the wise old talking fish, he could probably help us.”

The king said. “That’s an excellent idea, please go and take Ben with you and report back to me at once.

5. Gortee the wise old talking fish

“What is this wise old talking fish,” asked Ben.

The Zephyrtine replied, “Since the beginning of Eudora, since there were Zephyrtines there was Gortee, the talking fish. We don’t have many fish in Eudora only a few, but fish here have magical powers, they can sometimes see into the future and solve riddles, puzzles and problems. They have remembered everything in Eudora since the beginning of time. Gortee is the oldest and wisest and most respected of all talking fish. We must go search him out and to find him won’t be easy, even for a Zephyrtine, he lives deep in the forest of the Sapphires.”

“How will we get there?” - Asked Ben.

“We must fly.” Replied the Zephyrtine

So Ben jumped onto the Zephyrtine and rose into the air, higher and higher, faster, and faster until they were way above Eudora. They flew for an hour past the pink mountains, almost to the end of Eudora and below Ben could see a sea of blue sparkling trees

“That’s the Sapphire forest, and those are the Sapphire trees” Said the Zephyrtine.

So the Zephyrtine started slowing up and descending until they landed in front of the Sapphire forest.

“What shall we do now?” remarked Ben.

“We must go into the forest and look for Gortee.” Said the Zephyrtine

So Ben and the Zephyrtine entered the forest. They started walking and looking for Gortee. The Sapphire forest was amazing, there were sapphires all over the ground, and every inch of the ground was covered in sapphires.”

“Where do all these beautiful sapphires come from?” asked Ben

The Zephyrtine replied. “They fall of the Sapphire trees. They grow and every six months they fall off the trees and new ones grow.

Ben said “Back home, Blueberries, peaches and apples grow on trees, but never sapphires.”

The Zephyrtine remarked “Remember Ben this is Eudora and things are different here.”

So Ben and the Zephyrtine walked deeper and deeper into the Sapphire Forest looking for Gortee.

Ben said to the Zephyrtine, “Why are we in this forest, I don’t see any lakes, or rivers, or streams, or ponds here. How will we find this talking fish?”

The Zephyrtine replied “We will look up in the trees.”

“The trees” cried Ben. “That’s crazy; everyone knows that fish live in the water.”

“The water!” exclaimed The Zephyrtine “If fish lived in the water they would drown, everyone knows fish can’t swim, how they would breathe.”

“Now just a minute Zephyrtine.” -Said Ben. “I know this Eudora is strange, but this is just outright silly and crazy.”

“Ben,” Said the Zephyrtine “Maybe Eudora is right and where you live is silly and crazy. You must learn to accept things for what they are and not what you expect them to be.” “Just because things are different does not mean there wrong or right, there just different.”

Upon hearing this Ben thought to himself and realized perhaps he had come been to judgmental on the Eudorians. Then he decided it was best to listen and learn instead of always arguing and comparing.

Just then there was a noise up in the tree, and some sapphires spilled to the ground

“Gortee” called out the Zephyrtine.

“Is that you Zephyrtine” Replied Gortee.

Ben looked up into the tree and saw a golden fish about two feet long with long grey whiskers, with big droopy eyes and a golden tail sitting, on a branch.

“Zephyrtine” - said Gortee “It has been so long, so very long, but its good to see you again.”

“Yes Gortee, you look well.” replied the Zephyrtine. “But I have come for help.”

“What is the problem” asked Gortee.

The Zephyrtine said “If the monster has taken King Kalek's daughter, the blue princess and threatens to eat her unless the king brings the monster one thousand ice cream trees.”

“One thousand ice cream trees, that’s impossible, they’re not one thousand ice cream trees in all Eudora” Replied Gortee. “This is terrible, what shall we do.”

“That’s why we came to see you Gortee,” said the Zephyrtine.

“Yes I almost forgot” Replied Gortee “I must admit since as long as I can remember I have never heard of anything ever happening like this in Eudora, this is so terrible, so sad. Oh my poor friend King Kalek, I know he loves his daughter Chaya more than anything else, and right now I can feel his sadness.”

“But what can we do.” asked the Zephyrtine.

“I must think a minute” replied Gortee.

“Hmmm, I think I can remember something like this happening in another land a long time ago. I think one of the other talking fish told me a story once of how an ice cream monster went a little crazy.”

What did they do?” asked Ben

“As I can remember” said Gortee “I think they built a pumpkin and fed it to the monster.”

“What happened then” asked Ben.

“I think the monster ate the pumpkin and fell asleep.” replied Gortee.

“How long did he sleep for.” asked Ben.

Gortee replied. “I believe it was, yes fifty years, that’s it now I’m sure if you feed an ice cream monster a pumpkin he will sleep for fifty years and then wake up and will be happy, peaceful and harmless forever. This is what you must do, you must build a pumpkin and then you must take the pumpkin to the monsters cave. The monster will eat it and fall asleep for fifty years and when he wakes up he will be happy forever.”

The Zephyrtine said. “But Gortee, we have no pumpkin factories in Eudora. Know one her knows how to build one.”

Gortee said “Go back to the king and tell him what I’ve told you, it is your only chance to save the Blue Princess.”

“Thank you Gortee.” - Said Ben.

So Ben jumped onto the Zephyrtine and off they flew back to the palace to see the king.

When they arrived, the guards quickly escorted Ben and the Zephyrtine into the Kings chambers.

The King was sad but glad to see Ben and the Zephyrtine. The Great red King Kalek said “Zephyrtine, what did the wise old fish talking fish Gortee tell you?”

“King Kalek.” - Said the Zephyrtine. “Gortee said that we must build a pumpkin and then go to the monsters cave and feed the pumpkin to him. Then the monster will fall asleep for fifty years and then wake up happy and peaceful never to bother anyone again.”

“That’s good news.” replied the king “Lets get a pumpkin and feed it to the monster.”

“But King” replied one of his advisors, “We have no pumpkins here in Eudora.”

The King said “Then we must make one, I order all potato, carrot and apple factories to start building a pumpkin now. We have no time to waste. Every available Eudorian must help; we must learn how to make a pumpkin.”

Ben burst out. “King we don’t have time to build a pumpkin; I can go back to my farm in Richmond and get one! We grow them there.”

The King said. “Ben, stop this nonsense, you can’t grow pumpkins. We must build one.”

“But king.” said Ben “We grow them on my farm.”

The King said. “Ben, this is no time for nonsense, this is a crisis.”

“But King.” - Said Ben - “I’m telling the truth, we grow pumpkins.”

The King said “Enough, enough of this crazy talk. I’m tired of these outbursts Ben. Guards lock him in a room in the palace and watch him until he stops this nonsense.” “Ben this is for you own good, you are crazy! We will get you help and medical attention.

The guards took Ben off to a room in the palace and watched over him.

King Kalek, was very upset and the king and all off his advisors were convinced Ben was crazy nobody even in Eudora had talked such nonsense as growing a pumpkin, or potatoes. This Ben was so strange indeed.

The Kings words went out and factories stopped making potatoes and carrots and everything and all the efforts were concentrated on making a pumpkin. No one had ever seen a pumpkin before so all the great scientists started working to design and build this strange vegetable called a pumpkin. What should it look like?

How big? What color? The truth is they didn't have enough time? Time was running out. The princess seemed doomed.

6. In search of a pumpkin

Ben was all alone and so sad. The king had put guards in front of his room and ordered him to stay put. Ben thought, I'm certainly not crazy, why everyone thinks I'm crazy.

Ben did not know what to do. All he could think about was the Blue Princess; the beautiful Blue Princess was going to be eaten by the monster. He must save her, if only he could!

Just then he heard a noise outside his window. Ben knew that noise and ran to the window. It was the Zephyrtine!

"Zephyrtine" Said Ben, "how did you get up here?"

The Zephyrtine said "Ben, you seem to forget that I am a Zephyrtine and I can fly."

Ben said. "I'm sorry, I forgot. But Zephyrtine, we must save the princess we must, what can we do?"

The Zephyrtine replied. "Ben, everyone in the entire kingdom is working on it, I'm sure they will come up with something."

Ben burst out. "Zephyrtine, I have an idea, I have a great idea. You can fly me back to Richmond, to my father's farm. We have hundreds of pumpkins there. We can collect a whole bag of pumpkins and bring them back to Eudora"

"Ben, are you sure you really have pumpkins there?" - Asked the Zephyrtine.

"Yes, Zephyrtine, I swear, please believe me, we have hundreds of pumpkins there." - Said Ben.

"I believe you Ben." Replied the Zephyrtine, "You have no reason to lie your heart is pure, you only want to save the princess." "But Ben, the king ordered you to stay in your room. How can we go, I've never disobeyed King Kalek." - Replied the Zephyrtine

"We must go, we must." - Said Ben.

"Hmm let me see, you know Ben I don't think we have another choice, I'm willing to disobey the King just this time in order to save Princess Chaya, The Blue Princess." - Replied

Zephyrtine.

So Ben jumped onto the Zephyrtine, and the Zephyrtine and Ben flew high up into the sky, over the mountains towards Richmond.

They flew higher and higher and soon it became night and it was cold up in the sky. This time Ben had forgotten to take his coat and he was so cold, oh so cold. Ben thought to himself, I must not freeze; I have to save Princess Chaya. So on into the night they flew past the Milky Way. Ben could now start to see the lights of the small towns in upstate New York. Then the Zephyrtine started slowing down and Ben could now see the lights of Richmond. Then he could see his farm. By now it was almost midnight and everyone in the house was asleep because Ben did not see any lights on. So the Zephyrtine circled the farm a few times each time slower and slower and lower and lower until he landed in a field behind the barn. Ben quickly jumped off the Zephyrtine and ran into the barn where he grabbed a large canvas sack. Then he ran into the pumpkin field followed by the Zephyrtine where he began gathering pumpkins and putting them into the sack.

“These are pumpkins.” Said Ben

“You’re right.” - Said the Zephyrtine.

“I can’t believe it but I have seen it with my own eyes, they are actually growing out of the ground.” –m Said the Zephyrtine.

Ben put all the pumpkins in the sack and he was just about to jump on the Zephyrtine and go back when he thought a moment. He thought to himself. I will show the king that we grow vegetables in Richmond and I’m not crazy. So Ben ran into the barn and grabbed another sack and ran into the field and began putting potatoes and carrots and squash into the bag. And Ben jumped onto the Zephyrtine.

The Zephyrtine then leapt off his powerful hind legs right up into the sky. Ben and the Zephyrtine flew and flew up into the cold night, and once again Ben was cold. And once again they flew past the Milky Way straight to Eudora. And as the morning sun rose, Ben could see the pink mountains of Eudora. They were back at last.

Ben and the Zephyrtine flew right over the palace they had no time to stop. They must

hurry to save the princess. Ben yelled into the Zephyrtine's ear "How do we find the monster." The Zephyrtine replied "I know where his cave is."

So they flew up into the mountains, higher and higher until they saw the highest mountain.

"That's where the monster's cave is." Yelled the Zephyrtine

So Ben and the Zephyrtine circled the mountain and landed on a ledge outside the monster's cave.

7. Ben Meets The Monster

Ben Jumped down off the Zephyrtine and put the sacks on the ground.

“What shall we do now?” He asked the Zephyrtine.

“I really don’t know.” - Said the Zephyrtine “I have never fought a monster before. But I think we should be very quiet and sneak in and surprise him.”

So Ben picked up the pumpkin sack. Gathered up all his courage and took three deep breathes and began climbing down a tunnel into the cave. The tunnel was long and dark and winding. Ben was scared but he loved the princess so much he pushed on. Down the long dark tunnel Ben and the Zephyrtine walked. It was cold in there and getting colder. Ben was shivering but he knew he had to be silent in order to surprise the monster.

Suddenly the tunnel ended and opened up into a large black cave. It was so large; Ben could not have imagined how big a cave could be.

Ben whispered to the Zephyrtine. “What do we do now?”

The Zephyrtine said. -“Lets tiptoe quietly around and look for the princess.”

So Ben walked around so quietly so that the monster would not hear him. Ben looked everywhere but could not the Princess. Ben had thought what if the Monster had already eaten the princess, what then, how terrible a thought. But Ben refused to believe this and refused to give up., He knew the princess was still there. Suddenly in a clearing in the cave Ben saw a huge rock and yes on that rock was it was the blue princess tied to a wooden pole. Ben was just about to go up and untie her when the princess screamed. –“Ben, look out!”

Ben turned around and froze in front of him was the Monster. It was so ugly. It was so scary. It was big and hairy and it had four legs with claws, and two big heads with giant teeth. And it was coming after him.

The monster yelled “Who are you?”

Ben could not reply, he was frozen, he was so scared he was shivering...

The Monster said. “I don’t care who you are, I’m going to eat you anyway.”

Ben thought he would faint from fright oh no. To be eaten by a monster. No, No what can I do.

The Zephyrtine yelled, “Ben, Ben the sack, the sack with the pumpkins throw the monster the pumpkins.”

Ben remembered the sack with the pumpkins, and with all his courage he picked up the sack and reached into it and grab a pumpkin but oh no IT WAS A POTATO!!! Ben had taken the wrong sack by mistake!! The pumpkin sack he left and outside the cave.

Just then the Zephyrtine flew right in front of the monster to confuse him.

The Princess yelled. “Run Ben, run for your life.”

Ben ran but really had no where to go.

The Zephyrtine yelled “I will fly out and get the sack.”

So the Zephyrtine flew down the tunnel to get the pumpkins.

Now it was just Ben and the Monster. The monster began chasing Ben around the cave. Ben tried to hide behind a rock but the monster found him. Then Ben started throwing stones at the Monster but this made the monster angrier. And the Monster said.

“I will now eat you slowly, you can not escape.”

And the monster started chasing Ben around the cave getting closer and closer. And then Ben slipped on a wet rock. And the monster stood up over him and said “Now I will eat you.”

Just then the Zephyrtine flew into the cave as the monster was about to eat Ben.

“The Zephyrtine yelled “Ben I have the pumpkins, catch the sack.”

The Zephyrtine dropped the sack to Ben. Ben jumped up and caught the sack, just then the monster opened his mouth wide to swallow Ben and Ben gathered up all his courage and strength and reached into the sack and grabbed a pumpkin and this time it was indeed a pumpkin. And he threw it into the Monsters mouth. The Monster closed his mouth and swallowed the pumpkin in one gulp. Then the Monster yelled loudly and roared.

The surprisingly the monster stepped back, and yawned, and yawned again and again. Then the Monster stumbled and stumbled and then let out one big yawn and collapsed. The Monster fell down with a big loud bang.

Then there was silence and stillness. Ben and the Zephyrtine walked up to the monster to see what had happened and yes he was asleep. Gortee was right. The pumpkin had put the monster to sleep. Into a deep, deep, deep, sleep.

Then Ben rushed up to the Blue Princess and untied her. The princess gave Ben a big kiss and said. "Thank you for saving me Ben."

Ben was in shock. He was so happy that the princess gave him a kiss, he had completely forgotten that a few minutes ago he was almost the monsters dinner. So Ben and the Princess still shaken climbed onto the Zephyrtine, and flew out of the cave and into the beautiful purple Eudorian sky. Over the pink mountains they headed back to the palace.

Outside the palace there were people gathering and when they saw the princess on the Zephyrtine they cheered and cheered. The King was in the palace and asked what all this commotion is about. One of the king's aides replied: - "I don't know sir; perhaps we should go out and see."

So the King and all his aides walk outside of the great palace gates and looked to the sky.

"I can't believe this, it's a miracle, my eyes, are they telling me the truth. Is it my daughter the Blue PRINCESS." said the king.

"How can this be?"

Yet it was. The Zephyrtine circled the palace a few times for all to see and slower and slower and lower and lower they went until he landed with Ben and the Princess right in front of the Great palace doors.

The Blue Princess jumped off the Zephyrtine and ran up to kiss her father King Kalek. The king was so happy; tears of joy were flowing from his eyes onto his red beard.

"This is the happiest day of my life and a great day for all of Eudora." - Said the King.

The crowd let out a big cheer and the king, his aides, Ben, The princess and the Zephyrtine all filed through the great gates and into the palace. The King got onto his red throne next to the queen and said. "I am so happy, but explain to me how can this be?"

So the Zephyrtine stepped forward and told the whole story of the rescue to the king. And then Ben showed his majesty the sack of pumpkins, potatoes and squash, he had brought from his fathers farm.

"Simply amazing." Said the King "Amazing, I never thought I would live to see the day when you could actually grow a pumpkin or a potato. It's simply amazing."

"Zephyrtine" said the king "You have never disobeyed me for all the years you have been in my service, but I thank you from the bottom of my heart for your disobedience. I guess I'm not as wise as I had thought; perhaps I should listen to you more. As for you Ben, I guess your not crazy after all, you have shown me yourself that in some places people actually can grow a pumpkin, and furthermore to save my daughter from the monster. You have demonstrated yourself to be a most brave young man. Yes to face the monster you have shown yourself to be a young man of great courage and a leader. And I deem you worthy of being prince Ben of Eudora. And I am honored to keep my word and offer you my prized ice cream trees.

Ben replied humbly. "Thank you, your majesty."

The King said, "Ben as of tomorrow noon you shall no longer be called Ben, but Prince Ben of Eudora."

Ben Bowed and said "Thank you your majesty."

8. The Royal Celebration

That Morning in Eudora was especially beautiful. The sun rose high into the purple sky. All of Eudora was invited to the great wedding at the palace.

All Eudorians red or blue, large and small were there. The wingless birds were singing there songs from the palace wall. All the Zephyrtines in the land were there with there shining diamond horns. The Eudorians were dressed in their most lavish dresses. Even Gortee had traveled to the palace to witness this great event.

Then the wingless bird started singing one of the great loved Eudorian marches and the King walked into the courtyard with the green queen and walked down the long aisle to his throne were he and his wife sat down to there cheers of all the Eudorians. And then fifty small red and blue flower girls came down the aisles throwing diamonds and sapphire flowers into the air; after them, four young red boys carried a velvet carriage with the great wise Gortee the talking fish down the aisle. As everyone was assembled the royal celebration march began and the great diamond gates of the palace opened and in came Ben and the Blue princess in their royal outfits, each riding on the back of a beautiful white Zephyrtine. In they rode to the cheers of the crowd. For this was truly a great and happy day for all Eudora. Down the aisle they rode until they were at the kings torn were his aides helped them off the Zephyrtines.

Ben walked up and knelt in silence before the King. The king stood up and addressed the crowd.

“I king Kalek, humble servant of Eudora; invite all of Eudora to share in my joy. Prince Ben has proven himself to be a loyal Eudorian as well as a courageous prince. I am honored to invite him to join my court. So without further ado and witnessed by all of Eudora as king I herby proclaim Ben of Vermont prince of Eudora and give him my prized ice cream tree.

A great cheer went up in the crowd. The chimes started chiming the wingless birds started singing and all the Eudorians and Zephyrtines celebrated into the night with the greatest celebration that Eudora had ever seen. Even old wise Gortee stayed and had a great time.

Eudora was now happy again, they had their Red King and their green Queen and now they had their beautiful princess back. And most of all they had a new and brave Prince, Prince

Ben of Eudora.

Ben took the great prized ice cream tree and got on the back of the Zephyrtine. They rose into the sky and Ben went home to his farm in Vermont and planted the ice cream deep in a cold cave where it could grow. And then the next morning Ben woke up and ran to his best friend Jerry's house and told him about the story.

And what do you think happened next?

Well that will be another Story.

David Chesky