

A

THE CHOSEN TWO

Bring! Bring! Bring! The last school bell rang as I was putting my math book away. "Yes," I muttered. The school day was finally over. It was the weekend, but rain clouds were all over the sky when I got outside. I heard thunder, but I didn't see lightning. I looked around for my friend Michelle. "Casey, there you are. I was looking for you," said Michelle. We started to walk when I heard thunder, loud thunder. Then out of nowhere, my skin started to burn. I got dizzy and passed out.

When I woke up, There was ice and snow all over. I saw a polar bear caring for Michelle and a penguin over my head. "What happened?" I asked. The penguin replied, "My name is Olive. I think you came through a portal. We're on Saturn." I turned around and saw that we were in an igloo. In the corner of the igloo, I saw my backpack with black burns. I looked down at my hands and arms and saw the same black burns. I lightly brushed my hand against my arm, and pain swept through my limb. "What happened to us?" I asked after seeing Michelle had the same burns. "It appears you got struck by lightning," Olive replied. Then she got some ointment and put it on my arm. She got more and put it on Michelle. "That explains the burns, but why are we here?" I asked. "Every full moon, a portal appears between our planets. Two people are

transported from Earth to Saturn, and two penguins, seals, or polar bears are transported from Saturn to Earth. You have to wait till the next full moon to be transported back. You don't have to choose to go back though," Olive explained. "Why us." I groaned. Then a thought struck me. "Wait when is the next full moon?" "It's in 6 days." she replied. "You've been out for 13 days," "13 days!" I exclaimed. The polar bear looked up when he heard me shout. "She's up," he grunted. "My name is Andrew, Olive and I can help you guys get back to Earth. I see your burns are gone." I looked down at my arms, and sure enough, they were gone. "Wait how? What happened?" I asked, after touching my arm and not feeling scars. "The cream," he replied. Grumble! Grumble! "What was that?" asked Olive. "My stomach," I responded sheepishly.

After a couple of hours, Michelle woke up. Andrew made dinner while I explained everything to Michelle. We ate fried fish and discussed how we could get back to Earth, specifically California. They told us we had to go to the sacred palm tree on the veerna iceberg and read a poem. "Tree Tree, as beautiful as can be, bring me home, now that I've read this poem." "How far away is the veerna iceberg?" I asked. "Three miles, 4 days on skis going northwest. We should probably leave tomorrow at dawn. We need to pack food and clothes. Take a good rest, your guys' legs will ache for days after skiing." Olive replied. "Quan tolo plesa maog," Andrew said in rapid-fire Lugish. "What does that mean?" Michelle asked. "No need to worry," Andrew responded.

At dawn, we set out on skis. Olive came with us to help so we knew where to go. We came across a swamp a little before we stopped for lunch. After a little while, we stopped and ate tuna fish sandwiches. "These taste good, did you make them?" I asked Olive. She smiled, "Yeah, I also can make steak on a fire tonight." "Thanks, that would be great," Michelle said. After lunch, we started to ski again. We passed a lake that smelled like algae and we went down a hill. That night Olive made steak, just like she'd said. "This tastes so good," Michelle said. "Thanks, Michelle, Andrew likes it as well." That's when something hit me! "Is there a time difference between Saturn and Earth? Everyone will be looking for us if there isn't." I stated. "Relax, of course there's a time difference. By the time you're back on Earth, it'll have only been several minutes," Olive said calmly. I sighed with relief.

We continued with the same routine for the next couple of days. In the middle of the night on our last day, we woke up to the sound of squawking from outside our tent. Olive came in. "What's going on?" I asked. "We penguins want to keep humans on Saturn to work for us. That's why I'm kidnapping you. By the time Andrew realized I was evil, he came straight here. He tried to stop me, but I got away." Michelle and I ran outside to look for Andrew, but he was nowhere in sight. We found a seal swimming in a nearby pond. Michelle and I asked the seal where the sacred palm tree was. "Go north till you find a hill. Then go east and you

will find the palm tree." explained the seal. Once we had gotten the directions, we walked and got to the sacred palm tree 7 hours later. When I finally caught my breath, I sat down beneath the tree and we recited the poem "Tree Tree as beautiful as can be, bring me home now that I've read this poem," Michelle and I said in unison.

I saw a swirl of color as I was transported back to Lincoln Elementary. I saw rain clouds above me and Michelle was next to me. "I'm so happy to be home!" I exclaimed. "Me too," Michelle added. As we walked home that day, I realized how happy and lucky I was to be home. When Michelle and I got to her house I felt a rush of wind and a blur of colors. "Do you feel that?" I asked Michelle. "Yeah," she responded. Then I saw a familiar icy landscape, Saturn. **"NO!"** We yelled.