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STUDENT WRITING SAMPLE

Left Nowhere

by Calley Nelson, Grade 7, Granville Middle School

Prompt: Left _____. Fill in the blank for the central idea of your story.

Grandpa sped down the cracked road in our old, rusty van. Grandma always scolded him, saying, “One day when you are failing to drive this blasted van on the speed limit, the dang thing will begin falling to pieces.”

I liked to rest my head on the sun-warmed glass of the backseat window and imagine pieces of the van marking our trail as we traveled across the country.

“Stop,” Grandma snapped, “I need to empty.” This was Grandma’s way of telling us she had to use the restroom when there wasn’t one around.

Grandpa parked the car where Grandma pointed, and we piled out of the car alongside the dusty road.

There was nothing but sand and cacti as far as I could see. The place almost looked like it wasn’t wanted, like no one thought it was a good place to live in or admire. It was simply left nowhere. Why would anyone want to live in nowhere? I thought it was full of nothing but beauty, the sun high, not a cloud in its path, the hot dirt beneath my feet. It was perfect.

“Grandpa,” I asked after Grandma emptied behind a cactus, “Why isn’t anyone here?”

“Because,” he began, adjusting his glasses to see me clearly. “Because we are nowhere.”

“Can we stay here in nowhere?”

Grandpa looked at me like I lost my hair. “Sweetie, there is nothing here, there is nowhere to stay.”

“We have our van, could we stay here in nowhere tonight?”

That night, Grandpa and I sat together with our toes in the dirt, looking up at the stars left in nowhere. ✨