

STORM ON THE MOUNTAIN: A SMOKY MOUNTAIN STICK-BOY ADVENTURE



VOCABULARY, Chapters 1 & 2

Instructions: Read the passage. Use context clues to determine the meanings of the underlined words. Consult a dictionary to check your definitions.

1. He pinned the smaller boy’s wrists firmly to the forest floor. There would be no escape. Then the larger youth made a mistake: he decided it was time for his adversary to eat grass. He let go of one of his opponent’s wrists in order to grasp a handful of the unsavory meal.

2. Mica was unquestionably the best athlete in camp. His nickname was “Lightning,” and it fit him well. No other boy, including Evan, could run faster, jump higher, or catch the ball better than Mica Habber. Evan, on the other hand, was just average—in both size and ability. He was far from the worst player among the sixth graders, but he was also a long way from being among the elite athletes.

3. “My dad is totally fed up with his antics!” declared Charu. “He says Moose takes far too many chances. Dad has confronted him more than once, but every time Moose whines, ‘Sorry,’ and slinks off with a smirk to do it again.”

4. “I love it when Uncle Nunk comes!” exclaimed Mica. “He’s cool! A rough and wily mountain man! You’ll love him, Charu. He’s one of a kind. We’re in for some awesome adventures with him. I can’t wait!”

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VOCABULARY, Chapters 3 & 4

Instructions: Read the passage. Use context clues to determine the meanings of the underlined words. Consult a dictionary to check your definitions.

1. After exploring upstream as far as Habber Creek, Evan, Mica, and Charu turned back and retraced their course. Boone led the way. At The Rock, the kids veered north and walked home via the old farm lane. This gravel roadway was the only cleared route through the southern section of Doc’s forest. Once they emerged from the tree-lined passage, the three split up and headed for their respective homes.

2. “Yo, Rhino! You lost that catchin’ reflex you’re always braggin’ about?” taunted Moose. “You wish!” grunted the older boy, springing to the ground, scooping up the turtle, and heaving it over his shoulder toward Moose. It ricocheted off Moose’s forehead and bounced back into the waiting hands of Rhino.

3. The all-terrain vehicles thundered up the winding trail, alternately careening into and out of the creek, collecting and tossing mud, water, and rocks in all directions—thoughtlessly ravaging land, animals, and stream—the bigger the splash, the greater the thrill. Neither rider looked back.

4. As he made his way home, Evan was glad he had forgotten his phone and returned to find it. On this occasion, at least, the troublemakers had been thwarted. But he couldn’t help wondering, “How will we keep those thugs from trashing our treehouse?”

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VOCABULARY, Chapters 5 & 6

Instructions: Read the passage. Use context clues to determine the meanings of the underlined words. Consult a dictionary to check your definitions.

1. From an aerial view, disaster was imminent on McBride Mill Road. An ancient, rickety, dull-green truck approached from the west, driving east towards Neelburg.
From the east sped two four-wheelers—side by side, down the middle of the highway.

2. The verge was too narrow, the forward thrust too great. The man tightly gripped the steering wheel, trying to maintain some influence over his out-of-control vehicle. But the old pick-up veered farther and farther to the right, as its tires became ensnared in the soft earth. It bumped, jolted, and crashed on down the embankment. Finally, the front tires dropped into a ditch and forcefully halted its momentum. Fortunately, the man’s seatbelt held, delivering him from everything except bumps and bruises.

3. Then he saw the problem. Two hulking teenagers held a little boy face down in dog poop! The child squirmed and cried. His tormentors, whom Nunk recognized from the road incident, laughed at his misery.
“Eat it!” one roared.
“Yeah! Eatin’ dog poop ‘ll give you hair on your chest!” snorted the other.
Nunk Mace seethed! He suddenly grabbed an ear of each ornery teen. He jerked their heads back, squeezing and twisting the elastic flesh.

4. Nunk smiled down at the child and said, “Young man, you may go now. These two clunks won’t bother you anymore.”
With quivering lips, the little guy sat back on his knees and gazed up at his tall, forceful liberator. He swiped at his tears, and then silently stood and took off down the road.

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VOCABULARY, Chapters 7 & 8

Instructions: Read the passage. Use context clues to determine the meanings of the underlined words. Consult a dictionary to check your definitions.

1. The wide-eyed, eleven-year-old girl gazed out the jet’s window as it sat on the hot tarmac. The exterior of the airport terminal was in constant motion—passengers boarding and unloading, cargo handlers driving carts and stowing baggage into the bellies of airliners, crewmen refueling, planes taxiing down runways. Soon her flight would depart, leaving Milwaukee, Wisconsin, bound for Knoxville, Tennessee.

2. Isabella slowly folded the letter and returned it to her purse. Roughing it—how rough? Boys, the forest, a dog, wild animals, camping, knitting, cornhusk dolls—and goats?
Her mom had said, “Give it a try, Isabella. You’d be surprised what a city girl can do when she puts her mind to it. Just remember, no matter what, be courteous! This is Charu’s new life. She needs your support and affirmation.”

3. “Yahoo!” exclaimed four-year-old Nandan Sheil Habber, bursting out his front door like a rocket-powered space ship. He sprang off the porch steps and raced across the yard toward the neighbors’ house. Raising his fists aloft, he swooped from right to left with such speed that his fire-engine red superman’s cape flew from his shoulders.
“Able to leap tall buildings with a single bound!” the young hero whooped, as he vaulted over a bed of petunias, leaving footprints among the blooms.

4. “Yippee!” shouted Nandan, lifting both fists and soaring ahead.
“No fair! Wait for me!” cried Esther, glowering at her runaway friend while she paused to remove her beautiful tiara.

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VOCABULARY, Chapters 9 & 10

Instructions: Read the passage. Use context clues to determine the meanings of the underlined words. Consult a dictionary to check your definitions.

1. “Nandan, stop wolly-gaggin’!” shouted Esther, pulling on her friend’s cape. “Let’s play goats!” “Yes!” exclaimed the captivated boy, jumping down from the gate and removing his cape. He handed it to Grandma Mace, where she stood by Doc, and solemnly explained, “Superman might scare baby goats.”
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2. “Excellent!” said Doc Mace. “So, here we have four pygmy goats—by the way, all are girls.” “*That’s trouble!*” interrupted Nandan with a serious look. “Girls are good!” snapped Esther irritably. “But I need some more *boys* to play with!” countered Nandan. “Mr. Grandpa Doc, aren’t you tired of being the only boy at your house?”
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3. Soon the two children and four goats were all scampering up and down the ramps, around the platform, across the teeter-totter, over the rocks, beyond their shed, and under the trees. The leader changed often as they wove through the length and breadth of their play land. Wanting to share the excitement, Doc’s aged Border collie, Daniel, strolled into the pen and lay down on a grassy spot right in the middle of the swirling activity. He wasn’t afraid of the goats, nor the goats of him. Suddenly Nandan realized that Daniel lay in the direct path of the jumping procession. Would the four frolicking goats land heavily on the dog’s defenseless body with their sharp little hooves?
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4. Knowing exactly what he must do to protect the old dog, Nandan heaved his superman body right on top of Daniel and buried his face in the dog’s furry coat. Without missing a beat, the goats leaped over both dog and boy. Esther, understanding the boy’s sacrificial act, ran into his arms and cried out: “Nandan! You saved Daniel! You’re my hero!”
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VOCABULARY, Chapters 11 & 12

Instructions: Read the passage. Use context clues to determine the meanings of the underlined words. Consult a dictionary to check your definitions.

1. Isabella took a deep breath and then chuckled at her own silliness. She knew and loved her cousin—even if Charu had morphed into some sort of backwoods alien. And herself, well, surely she was brave enough to endure muddy, uncouth boys and open-minded enough to tolerate her cousin’s temporary wilderness interlude. Eventually Charu would outgrow this rustic phase. Wouldn’t she?
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2. Even in the midst of her excitement, Charu couldn’t avoid misgivings. Coming towards her was Isabella in all her fashionable splendor: mode haircut, chic sundress, trendy ballet flats, dangling charm bracelets, matching earrings, and rose-colored lips. Charu had no doubt that Bella had gotten both a manicure and pedicure just before her trip, and that now her fingers and toes gleamed smartly. Charu appreciated fashion; in fact, getting totally dressed up was cool! But she’d discovered that she also enjoyed dressing down, especially since her present lifestyle required it much of the time. “I’m so glad you’re here!” cried Charu, squelching her negative ruminations and hugging this cousin whom she’d always loved like a sister.
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3. “Come on,” said Charu, happy to see her cousin’s fascination with the baby goats. “I’ll introduce you to my friends.” She led the way to the shed where Doc and the boys were working. “Hi, everybody!” she announced, loudly enough to catch the attention of the three engrossed workers. “We’re here, Doctor Mace! This is my cousin, Isabella York, Bella for short. Bella, I want you to meet Doctor Samuel Mace, our neighbor and community veterinarian.”
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4. Then there was a moment of uncomfortable silence until Charu spoke: “Okay! That takes care of the introductions.” She grabbed a shovel and asked, “What’s our next job?” Hoping to ease Bella’s uncomfortableness with her new setting, Doc said, “Evan, Mica, and Charu, why don’t you continue mucking out the goat shed. Isabella, perhaps you could scatter some fresh, new straw on the floorboards.”
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VOCABULARY, Chapters 13 & 14

Instructions: Read the passage. Use context clues to determine the meanings of the underlined words. Consult a dictionary to check your definitions.

1. “You young’uns help yourselves,” said Gran, setting everything on the picnic table. “I have to go bake a cobbler for tonight’s gathering. See you later. Isabella, sure nice to have you visiting Hickory Creek Cove! Thanks for your help squeezing the lemons.”
“You’re welcome,” said Isabella, splaying her lemon-scented fingers on her shorts and noting her two broken fingernails and dulled polish, consequences of the good deed.

2. Mica frowned. They would *not* strike out at this process. It was too important to Charu. Count those last exchanges as foul balls, *not* strike three. He tried again, “Do you like to run?”
“Sometimes,” said Bella, tilting her head in contemplation, then adding, “but in the summer I only run in an air-conditioned gym.”

3. Soon, on the left side of the lane, an imposing grey structure rose up like a castle, proclaiming its dominance over all within its realm. It was the Mace family’s pride and joy—a cantilever barn, defined by its lengthy overhang on all four sides.
“That’s impressive, wouldn’t you say, Bella?” asked Charu.

4. Isabella followed Evan, Mica, and Charu into the barn, and strangely enough couldn’t help but feel her eyes drawn repeatedly to the massive logs that extended overhead. The kids showed her roughly hewn troughs carved from hollowed logs and timeworn wooden barrels. Evan climbed into one crib and sat down on an old-fashioned shaving horse where he demonstrated how folks used to shape wood into shingles.

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VOCABULARY, Chapters 15 & 16

Instructions: Read the passage. Use context clues to determine the meanings of the underlined words. Consult a dictionary to check your definitions.

1. As they rounded the cantilever barn, Bella noticed a small wooden building behind the Mace home place. “What’s that?” she asked.

“That,” said Evan, “is the well-used Mace family outhouse.”

“You must be kidding,” responded Bella, stopping to gape at the aged utilitarian structure. “I’ve read about outdoor privies, but I’ve never seen one.”

2. “Well, then,” said Evan, “this truly is *your lucky day!*” He strolled toward the ancient, gray building, lifted the wooden latch, and swung the door wide open.

Isabella grabbed her nose, as she was assaulted by a variety of *earthy* smells. In spite of herself, she looked in. “Why are there three seats? Surely it wasn’t used by more than one person at a time!”

3. About 6:30 P.M., when the mid-July heat had mellowed and a cool evening breeze was blowing down the adjacent mountains, a petite red-headed girl slowly slipped through the side hedge and entered her grandparents’ yard. The child looked pitiful, cradling her right hand in her left arm and sniffing, for she had been crying.
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4. Grandpa puckered his brow and gently clasped the injured finger. He examined it from every angle, muttering, “Oh, dear me,” and “HmMMM.” He opened his mouth to pronounce words of sympathy and healing, but he didn’t get the chance.

For when Esther began noticing all the bowls and spoons on the table, a truly happy thought entered her mind. She suddenly lifted her head, beamed, and announced, “But I have good news! You’re making ice cream!”

“Ah,” he responded, momentarily rendered speechless by his granddaughter’s abrupt mood swing.

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VOCABULARY, Chapters 17 & 18

Instructions: Read the passage. Use context clues to determine the meanings of the underlined words. Consult a dictionary to check your definitions.

1. “Whoa!” chortled Nunk. “You’d better watch out, or you’ll lose that exalted status called retirement.”

“Retirement is purely doing what we enjoy,” chuckled Doc.

2. Lizetta grinned and then knitted her brow. “Nunk, are you all settled in that ancestral Mace cabin? Do you need anything? I declare, I don’t know why you won’t stay up here with us in our comfortable house. We have plenty of space.”

“Honey Bunch, I tell him that every visit,” inserted Doc, switching his cranking arm. “But he insists that he has to stay in the familial log cabin so he can get in touch with his roots.”

3. Doc continued, “Bella, I don’t think you’ve met Evan’s mother and father, though you already know Esther, his little sister. His mother is Joan, and his father is my son, Jonathan. In my humble opinion, biased though it may be, Jonathan is the best ranger in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. And I might add that Joan is a wonderful mother, daughter-in-law, and watercolor artist.”
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4. And that Uncle Nunk! He was a character—a big tall man, rough and hairy. Unconventional? Yes—but apparently quite skilled in the ways of the wilderness. Bella remembered hearing that he had never married. He was mostly self-educated, but so knowledgeable that he was often called on to help teach and advise in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Add to all that, his storytelling. She could see why Uncle Nunk would be welcome wherever he roamed.
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VOCABULARY, Chapters 19 & 20

Instructions: Read the passage. Use context clues to determine the meanings of the underlined words. Consult a dictionary to check your definitions.

1. “All righty, young’uns! Let’s strategize!” said Uncle Nunk, sitting down and gathering the four eleven-year-olds around him.
“You’ve got my attention!” said Mica, relaxing cross-legged on the grass.
“Camping out requires lots of planning and lots of stuff!” said Evan.
“I’ll make a list,” said Charu, pulling paper and pencil from her pocket. “This is so exciting!”

2. Uncle Nunk sat up straighter. “And good campers, too, no doubt,” he said, wrapping an arm around each hopeful child, while sending an eyeball-SOS to his brother who sat nearby. “But from what I hear, you have previous obligations.”
Esther shook her head. “Nope! We ain’t got no pink alligators!”
“Yeah, all we gots is goats,” added Nandan.
“What I mean is this,” said Uncle Nunk, barely containing his chuckle. “There are baby goats right here that need you.”

3. Evan, Mica, and Charu had the makings of excellent campers—of this Uncle Nunk felt certain. Each was intelligent, hardworking, and considerate. Isabella also had these qualities, but Nunk did ponder the question: “Does Bella have the ability to cope with the really difficult conditions sometimes encountered in the mountains?” Time would tell.

4. “But I trust you young’uns, and we’re gonna have a grand adventure in the Smoky Mountains! Over fifty years of camping and hiking in these parts have taught me two things: 1) As much as possible, be prepared for every contingency; 2) When the unexpected happens, as it sometimes does, stay calm and think your way through the problems. Now, any questions?”
