

The Best Summer of my Life

Kelly rolled over in her bed. It was the first day of summer vacation, 1981.

“Jayme!” Kelly called to her younger sister while springing from her bed. Jayme groggily sat up.

“What is it?” She moaned.

“It's the first day of summer vacation!” Kelly exclaimed. “Come on. I can smell pancakes.”

“Good morning girls!” mom called.

“Good morning mom!” The girls dug into their piles of sticky pancakes.

“Do you have anything special planned today?” Mom asked.

“Yes,” Jayme said around mouthfuls of her breakfast. “We are going outside and ride our bikes and play all kinds of games.”

Kelly laid her fork down. “Mom, are we going on vacation this year?” Mom slowly shook her head.

“Your dad can't get anytime off, sweetheart.”

“That's okay,” Jayme said. “We can do stuff here. We'll have a stay-cation.”

“It's not the same,” Kelly told them. She got up and went outside. She climbed up the small hill and laid down in the grass. Jayme soon joined her.

“Let's play a game,” Jayme suggested. “I bet the next car to come by will be blue.”

“No,” Kelly objected, “It's going to be red.” The girls waited thirty seconds before they heard a car rumbling in the distance.

“Its red!” Kelly squealed. “The next one is going to be silver.”

“It's going to be blue,” Jayme insisted. It wasn't long before another car drove down the road.

“Its black,” Jayme sighed. “The next one is going to be blue.”

“No it won't,” Kelly predicted. As it turned out, Jayme had to wait three more cars before her blue one rolled around the corner.

“Its blue!” Jayme jumped up and screamed. Kelly laughed at her sister's enthusiasm.

“Say,” Kelly said , “how about we ride our bikes down Bemis road?”

“Yes!” Jayme agreed. The two girls ran into the kitchen to ask for mom's permission, which she readily gave. The two girls flew out the front door, down the porch steps, around the house, up the hill, and into the barn. They grabbed their bicycles and coasted down the hill and onto the road. With Kelly in the lead, they rode past the cow farm 'mooing' at the cows. They rode past the little creek, stopping to look at the minnows and throw a few pebbles in. They continued riding up hills and downhills, twisting and turning around the curves. They rode past the horse farm, longing to ride one. At the end of the road they turned around, and Jayme led the way home. The wind whipped through Jayme's hair causing her to smile. She loved the feeling of riding into the wind. Jayme didn't notice a small pothole until it was too late. The bike fell with Jayme landing on top of it. Kelly, who had been watching the horses, had just enough time to hear Jayme yell, “Kelly no, no! Kelly stop!” before she ran over the screaming girl. Kelly stopped, dropped her bicycle, and ran to her whimpering sister.

“Did you break any bones?” Jayme just moaned.

Kelly pulled Jayme to her feet, but Jayme sat back down. Her arms and legs were scraped up and a bruise was forming on her knee.

“Oh.” Kelly murmured as Jayme, ever so carefully, started pulling gravel from her wounds.

Kelly helped Jayme to her feet again. They resumed their journey home, not stopping to throw pebbles in the creek, not 'mooing' at the cows.

When they got home, they made their way into the house. Mom took one look at Jayme's cuts and scrapes and said,

“To the bathroom!” Kelly heard Jayme moan, groan, and whine as mom cleaned her wounds.

Kelly felt bad about the accident so she offered to wash the dishes after supper that night for Jayme.

Kelly stepped out onto the porch after she had finished the dishes. Jayme was there staring at the sky. Kelly walked over and clasped Jayme's hand in hers, and together they stargazed.

“Maybe one day we'll look back on this and laugh,” Kelly whispered.

“Maybe,” Jayme nodded “but not today!”

Two weeks later, Kelly and Jayme were up in their bedroom writing.

“Now let's see,” Kelly tapped her pencil against her notebook, “what should we name the alien?”

“Um, how about... Weedle?” Jayme suggested.

“Perfect! Now the main character has to save planet Zenopolis.”

Jayme giggled as Kelly wrote all of this down in her notebook.

“Let's go outside and make up gymnastics routines,” Jayme said.

“Okay,” Kelly agreed. Both girls ran outside and spent the rest of the afternoon doing cartwheels, handsprings, and splits.

The first day of August, Kelly and Jayme were playing frisbee when their father came to them. He handed them five dollars and told them to go to McDonalds and purchase some cheeseburgers. The girls hopped excitedly onto their bicycles and pedaled the two miles to McDonalds.

When they reached the restaurant, they ordered ten cheeseburgers for thirty-four cents each. The cheeseburgers were soon done and the two girls raced outside to their bikes and sped away.

About halfway through their journey home, the bag ripped open and the burgers spilled everywhere. The girls slammed on their brakes. Their eyes met and they sprang from their bikes to collect the lost cheeseburgers. They surveyed the mess before them. Pickles lying in the grass, buns lying in the dirt, patties rolling down the road, and the wrappers were flying everywhere. The girls quickly rounded up the scattered items and did their best to put them back together. The girls had to stuff the cheeseburgers into their shirts. Jayme refused to put more than two in hers, forcing Kelly to put the remaining eight into her shirt.

They continued on their way home, traveling at a much slower pace than before. The girls made it home and slowly walked into the house to explain the unfortunate turn of events. Mom saved the day by suggesting they roast hot dogs over the fire pit.

It was not long after the cheeseburger mishap that Kelly and Jayme were outside swinging.

“Come on!” Jayme pumped harder. “Kelly, we can't get to Mars without more fuel. Load in the peanut butter and jelly sandwiches.”

“Aye aye captain!” Kelly nodded

“That's pirates,” Jayme pointed out.

“Right,” Kelly said “Then... yes sir!” She saluted.

“I'm a ma'am,” Jayme said. “Oh just throw the sandwiches in there.” Kelly picked up an armload of fake sandwiches and threw them behind Jayme's and her swing. Kelly climbed onto her swing and began pumping.

“Are we almost there?” Jayme asked.

“How should I know?” Kelly asked.

“Look at the speedy thingy.” Jayme said.

“The speed-o-meeter?” Kelly asked. “That tells you how fast a car is going. You need a lesson in your car parts.”

“We're not in a car,” Jayme pointed out “We're in a swing ship.”

“Look over there, an alien!” Kelly pointed to their black cat walking across the yard.

“That's just Sylvester,” Jayme said.

“No,” Kelly insisted.

“Oh yeah,” Jayme straitend up. “First mate, go and see if the cat, er, natives are friendly.” Kelly jumped off her swing and ran to the cat. She reached down to pick him up, but the cat hissed and clawed at Kelly.

“Yaow!” Kelly yelped. She ran back to Jayme and saluted.

“The natives are unfriendly, sir,”

“I'm a ma'am!” Jayme yelled.

“Yes ma'am.” Kelly corrected.

“Come on!” Jayme squealed. “Let's go explore Mars.”

The first day of school rolled around and the two girls climbed onto the bus and took their seats.

“I can't wait to tell all of my friends what I did this summer,” Jayme said excitedly.

“But we didn't do anything,” Kelly complained. Kelly sat back and listened to her classmates' summer stories.

“I met the Governor”

“I went to Florida.”

“I ate at the biggest restaurant in New York City.”

“What did you, Kelly?” Kelly's face turned red.

“I didn't,” she started to say but then stopped. “I met an alien named Weedle. I went to Mars on my swing ship. I ate at McDonalds and all the cheeseburgers fell out on the way back.” Kelly stopped and remembered all of the fun she had had this summer.

“I had the best summer of my life, and I did it all with my best friend!”

“I told you!” Jayme said from behind her. Kelly jumped up and squashed her sister into a big hug.