

# Just Another Winter

“Mom, what are we having for dinner? I’m hungry.” I asked as I worked on my astronomy assignment.

“Ella is making dinner, as part of her 8th Grade Health class. She has to successfully prepare a meal by herself that is large enough to feed the whole family. So, you can ask her as to what we are having for dinner.”

“It seems like too much work to get up. I’d rather stay here and do my homework.”

“Suit yourself, but before you ask, no, I will not ask for you.”

“Maddie, what was the best part of 5th Grade today?” Dad asked me, as I swallowed my last bite of broccoli.

“It was all really fun, but I had a worst part. My teacher said there is another snow storm headed for Brunswick, Maine! We’ve gotten so many storms where it snows and rains and freezes and we don’t get any good snow for playing in, I just hope this storm brings different weather.”

“I heard about the snow storm, too.” Mom chimed in. “At work, they had the news on, and the meteorologists were predicting a small snow storm, not big enough to cancel school, or do any damage. They reported they did not know for sure, because it is

still almost a week away. We might not even get any weather, sometimes meteorologists don't know what they are talking about."

I hoped she was right; I was ready for spring.

As I walked home from school, the slush squashed beneath my feet. I reached down and scooped some up, cradling it in my mitten. I watched as it melted and continued home. This winter had been a real disappointment and I wanted it to end. As I reached the front door, it began to flurry, light and fluffy snow.

"Do you think this is all we are going to get from the storm? It has been a few days since you told us it would happen in under a week." I asked mom as she pulled me in for a bear hug.

"I'm not sure, but I would assume so. How was school? I love you."

"Mom, I love you too, but I really don't want another snow storm."

"Me either. Luckily, I think this flurry is all we are getting."

As I laid in bed, the winds outside howled. Everything was pitch black, but I could just barely see the swirling snow on the other side of the window. Just another snow storm. We got lucky. I got out of bed and groped around in the dark for my light switch, but it would not turn on. The power must be out! As I made my way back to bed, I tripped on something, and it sent me to the ground. I landed on what made me fall, and discovered my flashlight. Perfect! Now I could read my clock. As I pressed the

button, a bright white light appeared out the other. My clock read 2:03. As I walked down the hallway clutching the flashlight to my chest, I heard the phone ring. I made my way to my parent's bedroom, where my very tired mother had just picked up her cell phone. I watched the expressions on her face turn from sleepy, to wide awake, to surprised. When she hung up, she saw the light I was holding and said,

“Maddie? What are you doing up so late? Or, is it early? I can't tell, because the power is out! Can you believe it? What we thought was going to be just a flurry turned into a huge storm cancelling school and knocking the power out!”

“No school? Wow! I never expected this kind of storm. I really hope we can actually play in this snow. The wind woke me up. I tried to turn on the lights, but then realized the power was out. It is about 2:03, or it was when I checked.”

“We just got the call from your assistant superintendent that there is too much snow to clear off the roads, so the busses would not be able to pick students up. I suggest you get some sleep, so you have enough energy to play in the fresh powder tomorrow!”

I made my way back to my warm, soft bed and let the sounds of the wind slowly put me to sleep.

I rolled out of bed, threw a blanket around my shoulders and slippers on my feet, and rushed down the stairs to look at the snow. To my surprise, the aroma of bacon sizzling and coffee brewing did not fill my nostrils. Then I remembered why. No power,

which meant we could not turn on the lights, use the stove, oven, toaster, microwave, or open the fridge. Well, we could, but it would let out all the cold air. I heard more feet pounding down the staircase and saw Ella, dad followed behind her.

“I can’t make eggs or toast”, dad said, “but I can run to the store and get some ice to keep some new milk cold, so we can have cereal. Does that sound good to everybody?”

We nodded, and he tossed on a coat and hopped into the garage to manually open up the doors. When he did, a fifteen inch high wall of snow collapsed into the garage. He stood there in shock. He turned around and said to us,

“Will you help me shovel out a path for the car?”

The snow was still coming down hard, and the snow was heavy. With each shovelful my arms grew more and more tired until I said,

“Dad, I can’t. We still have lots more snow to shovel, and I’m fine with having plain cereal.”

After that, we closed the garage doors and headed inside for dry cheerios. By the time mom was down stairs and we had finished breakfast, it had snowed another two inches. As time went by, the things we had snatched from the fridge and cupboards were not sustaining us. Dad decided to try to get out now, rather than later. So, off he went.

A good ten minutes later, mom's cell phone started ringing. She picked it up, and by the time it was over, she had her coat and boots on and was heading for her car. I asked her where she was going, and she said,

"I am going to help your father. The roads are very icy and his car slipped off and he is now in a ditch."

"Mom, if you go, won't your car fall in the ditch too? Isn't it too dangerous to try to help him?" Ella asked.

"I'd rather help him than not help him." Mom replied.

When we opened the garage doors, we were met the strongest winds I had ever felt. Snow blew into my face, and the snow on the ground was even higher than before! The new snow on top of the old slush and ice reached up to almost three and a half feet! There was no way we were getting out. But we had to!

Then, mom ran back inside and brought out our cross country ski boots. By the time I finished tying my laces, mom and Ella were already attached to their skis. We hoisted ourselves up onto the snow, and set out.

The wind was so much stronger outside than in the garage, it took all my might to stay standing. It took so much effort, that once we had gone ten yards, I fell. The snow acted as a pillow, but my skis swung about wildly, knocking over Ella. Mom tried to help us up, but she came tumbling down, too. As we laid there, spread out in a heap, it seemed to grow colder and colder. It took lots of collaboration and lots more falling

down, but we did all manage to stand up eventually. As we skid on, the truly bitter negative six degrees stung my exposed skin.

After what felt like a century, we spotted his red SUV peeking over a mound of snow. The trunk was not buried, so as soon as dad saw us, he came out. We took off our skis and helped him push the car up the side of the ditch, but it was hard. With mom and dad pushing, and Ella and I pulling, we got the car out. Still in the protection of the trees, mom helped us climb in as dad retrieved the skis.

“So, if you guys don’t mind, I think we should stay here until the snow plows clear the street. I don’t want to drive into a ditch again. Thank you for helping me, if you guys hadn’t come, my car could have been completely buried. At least up here the wind has blown some of the snow away.”

“Well I don’t know about you guys,” Mom said, “but I’d say I had a great time today!”