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## What Zephyr Saw

Zephyr's clear blue eyes peered through the window intently; something was wrong. In the playground outside, the baobab tree's eyes had opened sluggishly. It yawned and smacked its lips. Then, to Zephyr's surprise, he saw a fairy plummeting from the sky, flailing and screaming with her mouth wide open and her cheeks billowing like a parachute filling with air. The baobab caught the fairy, gently wrapping its branches around her, and placing her on the ground, scanned the surrounding buildings.

Zephyr's fingers made a squeaking sound on the glass as he slid out of view.

"Did that tree just look at me?" he gasped, heart pounding.

He peered out. The fairy's bottom lip trembled, her wings were splintered with twigs, and tears spilled over her red cheeks. Pouting, the fairy plucked the prickles from her appendages, soon noticing that she was no longer tiny; she was now as big as a human.

Within moments, a young male fairy and an eagle hovered frantically to her side. Her wailing, however, had reached a deafening decibel and repelled the fairy and eagle away. Zephyr could see the reverberating pulse of the sound waves. Then, as if it couldn't get any more intriguing, he watched the clever fairy trim the sound wave, find the perfect surf line, and ride it back into the sanctuary of the tree's canopy. The young male fairy and eagle's faces were etched in horror. Then, the fairy looked straight toward Zephyr and

mouthed, 'Help'.

Zephyr froze; what could he do? He tapped his forehead to regain focus. Slowly, nervous energy took hostage of his eight-year-old body as his feet tapped, and he began to rock back and forth. He looked around the room and couldn't understand how all the other children sat mesmerized in front of their screens. Even more peculiar was that all the fairies who typically visited him had vanished.

He turned and signalled a thumbs up to the fairy and eagle. Zephyr's classmates had finished breakfast and sat plugged into their online activities. The teachers were due to go on their break. He watched them leave the room as the digital numbers on the clock above the doorway clicked over to eight-thirty; he had two hours before the adults returned.

With sloth-like stealth, Zephyr rose from his seat, dropped onto his stomach, and crawled along the floor, ensuring the surveillance cameras didn't detect him. He waited for the lens to rotate and quickly slipped through the doorway and out of the classroom. Zephyr slowly stood up and pressed against the walls, zig-zagging down the hall. A glowing trail of glitter led the way out to the stairwell door that had been left ajar. He followed the glitter trail to a storage area and found a large door at the back of the room. Zephyr turned the handle and pushed with all his might. It didn't budge. Then a little tickle on his shoulder made him sigh with relief.

"Just in time," he said, "It's a bit tricky. Can you help me, please?"

A little fairy with simple braids and a dilly bag danced merrily on his shoulder. The fairy nodded, threw a handful of fairy dust into the air, and then poured the entire bag of magical powder over the door. The heavy door creaked open as the dust dissolved, and the fairy and Zephyr slipped outside.