

Twists II



Douglas Evans

He also wrote MVP: Magellan Voyage Project,
The Elevator Family, and Classroom at the End of The Hall

Twists

2



Douglas Evans



WT Melon

Twists

1. Rainbow Hunt	4
2. Parking Meters	8
3. Dollar Bill	12
4. Missing Chair	15
5. Hiccups	18
6. Handwriting	21
7. Halloween Costume	24
8. Time Capsule	27



Twist One

Rainbow Hunt

Jimmy Prune hiked down the street. He dragged a plastic trash bag behind him.

On the curb stood a woman wearing a white hat. “Where are you going with that sack, Jimmy Prune?” she asked.

“I’m out to catch a rainbow,” Jimmy Prune replied.

“Well, I see a rainbow right in the street,” said the woman.

Jimmy Prune saw the rainbow, too, a round swirling one on the surface of a puddle. He dipped his hand into the oily water, but the colors dribbled though his finger.

“That rainbow got away,” Jimmy Prune said. “But I’ll catch the next one for sure.”

He continued down the street, dragging his bag behind him. At the corner stood a girl with braids, bangs, and braces. She was blowing soap bubbles.

“What’s the bag for, Jimmy Prune?” she asked.

“I’m out to catch a rainbow.”

“A rainbow?” said the Girl With Bangs, Braids, and Braces. “There’s one floating above your head.”

Jimmy Prune saw the rainbow, too, a small, square one on the skin of a bubble.

He swiped at the soapy sphere, but the colors burst in his hand.

“Rats!” said Jimmy Prune. “I’ll catch the next rainbow for sure.”

Jimmy Prune’s neighbor, Mr. Evans, sat on his front steps. He held a glass of ice water.

“Where are you headed with that sack, Jimmy Prune?” he asked.

“I’m hunting rainbows,” said Jimmy Prune.

Mr. Evans held up his water glass. “Hey, I see a rainbow on the sidewalk.”

Sunshine beamed through the water glass. It cast a thin, straight rainbow upon the cement.

Jimmy Prune held out his hand. The rainbow lay across his palm. But when Mr. Evans took a drink from the glass, the rainbow disappeared.

“Another close call,” said Jimmy Prune. “I’ll catch the next rainbow for sure.”

Farther along the street, Jimmy Prune looked up. The sun lit half of the sky, and clouds covered the other. Soon wet spots dotted the pavement.

Jimmy Prune’s best friend, Loud Larry, rode up on his bike. “Why do you have that bag, Jimmy Prune?” he shouted.

“I’m out to catch a rainbow,” he said once more.

Larry pointed to the sky. “See, Jimmy Prune?” he said. “There’s a rainbow behind you.”

Jimmy Prune turned. Arching the sky was an enormous rainbow--red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet.

Jimmy Prune’s eyes widened. “Rats!” he said.

“What’s wrong, Jimmy Prune?” asked Larry. “That’s a great rainbow.”

Jimmy Prune held up his sack. “But I can’t catch it,” he said. “My bag is too small.”



Twist Two

Parking Meters

Jimmy Prune sat on a street curb. A green compact car pulled into a parking space nearby. Mr. Evans got out and checked the parking meter.

“Jimmy Prune, how’d you like to make an easy dollar,” he said. “I’ll give you eight quarters. Plug one into the meter every fifteen minutes. When I get back, you can keep all the money that’s left.”

“It’s a deal,” said Jimmy Prune.

Mr. Evans handed Jimmy Prune eight coins. “See you soon, Jimmy Prune,” he said.

After his neighbor left, Jimmy Prune stuck a quarter into the meter and turned the crank. An arrow pointed to a 15 in the little window.

Jimmy Prune returned to the curb. He watched a line of ants crawl from a crack. When he thought fifteen minutes was up, he walked backed to the row of meter. But he found not one but two green compacts parked along the street.

“Which one’s the one?” he wondered.

Zip! Clink! went the meter by the first car. TIME EXPIRED appeared in the little window, and Jimmy Prune put in a quarter.

Zip! Clink! went the meter by the second green compact and he stuck a quarter in that meter as well.

Back on the curb, Jimmy Prune watched a worm wiggled in a puddle. Fifteen minutes later, *Zip! Clink!* went the first meter. *Zip! Clink!* went the second meter, and Jimmy Prune inserted a quarter into each one.

At that moment, a meter monitor drove up the street in her white cart. She checked a meter a half block away and began writing a ticket for another green compact

“Could that be the one?” Jimmy Prune asked himself.

He ran up to the meter and stuffed a quarter into the slot.

The meter monitor gave him a look. “You just saved someone a twenty dollar fine,” she said, crumpling up the ticket.

Jimmy Prune checked his quarters. He had three left. He was glad when a tall woman drove off in the first green compact. But when time ran out on the second meter, he had to spend another quarter. Shortly afterward, time ran out on the third meter and one more coin disappeared.

“Thanks, Jimmy Prune,” he heard a voice say. Mr. Evans sat in the second compact. He waved and drove away.

Jimmy Prune sat on the curb, flipping the last coin. “Not enough change to buy sweets,” he said.

Farther up the street, he spotted the meter monitor writing a ticket for a blue van. The van belonged to his mother.

“Wait!” Jimmy Prune cried, and he rushed up to the meter.

The meter monitor slapped her ticket book shut.
Jimmy smiled as he crammed in his last quarter.



Twist Three

Dollar Bill

Jimmy Prune entered a department store. He found a dollar bill on the floor.

“My lucky day!” said Jimmy Prune.

He walked to the toy section, waving the bill like a flag.

A clerk was placing games on a shelf. “I see you have a dollar, Jimmy Prune,” he said. “That’s not good for much at this store.”

Jimmy Prune folded the bill into an airplane. “You can do a lot with a dollar,” he said. He tossed the plane into the jewelry section and chased after it.

The Woman Wearing a White Hat stood by an earring rack. “Is that your dollar bill, Jimmy Prune?” she asked.

Jimmy Prune unfolded the bill. “You can do a lot with a dollar,” he said.

The woman checked the price of some earrings. “Not in this department,” she said.

Jimmy Prune folded the bill into a ring. He placed it on his finger. Pointing forward, he headed to the sports section. There he found Loud Larry, trying on a baseball mitt.

“You only have a dollar, Jimmy Prune?” said Larry. “What good is that?”

“You can do a lot with a dollar,” said Jimmy Prune. He rolled the dollar bill into a spyglass and peered through it. He spied Mr. Evans standing in the household section and walked toward him.

“What are you doing with that dollar, Jimmy Prune?” Mr. Evans asked. “That’s not worth much here.”

“A dollar is good for many things,” Jimmy Prune said.

He folded the bill back and forth until he held a fan. Fanning himself, he walked to the front of the store.

A clerk at the checkout counter smiled at Jimmy Prune. “There goes Jimmy Prune with the dollar bill he found,” she said to another clerk.

“There’s little for it in this store,” said the second clerk.

Jimmy Prune folded the dollar into a tiny hat. He put it on his head.

“You can do a lot with a dollar,” he said, and walked out the door.



Twist Four

Missing Chair

“This afternoon we’re getting a new student, class,” said Mrs. Friendly, the teacher. “Jimmy Prune, the new boy will sit next to you. Will you show him around the school and help him with anything he needs?”

“Sure,” said Jimmy Prune. But at once he saw a problem. The desk next to him had no chair.

At recess time, Jimmy Prune walked down the hallway. “I’ll find a chair for the new boy,” he said.

Mr. Z, the school janitor, stood by the Boys' Room door.

"Mr. Z, do you have any extra chairs?" Jimmy Prune asked.

The janitor turned a bolt on the door with his wrench. "Can't help you now, Jimmy Prune," he said. "I've got to finish putting this wider door on the restroom."

Jimmy Prune continued down the hall. He spotted a new ramp leading up the library steps. Inside the library, he found Mr. Good, the school principal, moving tables.

"Are there any extra chairs in here?" asked Jimmy Prune.

"None to spare, Jimmy Prune," said Mr. Good. "But come help me. We need to clear a wider passageway to the book shelves."

As Jimmy Prune pushed a table toward the window, he saw workers in the parking lot. They were painting blue lines by the school's front door."

The recess bell rang.

"No one cares about where the new boy will sit but me," Jimmy Prune told himself.

Back in the classroom, Jimmy Prune watched Mrs. Friendly. She moved the computer to a wider table and lowered the pencil sharpener. Jimmy Prune was going to remind her about the missing chair when the classroom door opened.

“Class, meet Sam, our new student,” the teacher said. “Sam, your desk is next to Jimmy Prune’s.”

Jimmy Prune smiled. Now he understood everything. The new boy didn’t need a chair at his desk after all. He had his own, a wheelchair, and as he wheeled himself into the classroom, Jimmy Prune stood.

“Come on, Sam,” he said. “I’ll show you around our classroom.”



Twist Five

Hiccups

Jimmy Prune sat at his desk. He was painting a picture of a rainbow.

Hiccup! Hiccup!

And he had the hiccups.

“Jimmy Prune,” called Mrs. Friendly. “Go to the sink and get a drink. Gulp nine times.”

The teacher said this to anyone who got the hiccups.

Jimmy Prune walked to the drinking fountain and slurped some water. He counted his gulps--one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine.

Hiccup! Hiccup!

The hiccups were still there.

“I know how to get rid of hiccups, Jimmy Prune,” said a boy with green paint on his chin. “Spin around until you’re dizzy.”

So around and around Jimmy whirled. He sat down at his desk dizzy.

Hiccup! Hiccup!

But the hiccups still came.

The Girl With Bangs, Braids, and Braces crept up behind Jimmy Prune.

“Boo!” she shouted. Her braids swept across some yellow paint. “Did I scare you, Jimmy Prune? Did I? Spooking people makes the hiccups go away.”

Hiccup! Hiccup! went Jimmy Prune.

“Jump up and down while holding your nose, Jimmy Prune,” said another girl. “That’s my cure for hiccups.

“Touch your toes ten times, Jimmy Prune,” said a boy with a drop of orange on his cheek. “That always works for me.”

Jimmy Prune held his nose. He jumped up and down. He did ten toe touches.

However, he still--*Hiccup! Hiccup!*--had the hiccups.

“You should run in place,” suggested Loud Larry. He sat next to Jimmy Prune and was painting a purple tattoo on his arm.”

“You should gargle with water,” said a girl. She wiped her pink fingers on her white socks.

Jimmy Prune ran. Jimmy Prune gargled. Jimmy Prune spun some more, and jumped some more.

“Are you sure you swallowed nine times, Jimmy Prune?” called Mrs. Friendly. “Not eight? Not ten?”

Jimmy Prune sat down. His head dropped onto his desk.

The painters stopped. The room grew quiet. Everyone turned toward Jimmy Prune. They heard no hiccups.

“Jimmy Prune?” Mrs. Friendly called again. “Jimmy Prune?”

But Jimmy Prune was sound asleep.



Twist Six

Handwriting

Jimmy Prune sat at his desk. With a stab of his pencil, he put a period at the end of a story.

“My prize-winning story is finished,” he said and took it up to the teacher’s desk

Mrs. Friendly looked at the paper and frowned. “Your handwriting is very sloppy, Jimmy Prune,” she said. “What’s this story about?”

“When I had cold hands,” said Jimmy Prune.

“That’s a good idea, Jimmy Prune,” said the teacher. “But please rewrite the story so I can read it.”

Jimmy Prune began writing again. A half-hour later, he brought a new story up to Mrs. Friendly.

“My prize-winning story is finished,” he said. “It’s about when I swept the sidewalk.”

The teacher frowned again. “Jimmy Prune, this story is sloppier than the first one,” she said. “Please write it neater.”

For the third time Jimmy Prune began to write.

“My prize-winning story is finished,” he said a half-hour later.

Mrs. Friendly frowned at this story, too. “Jimmy Prune, this is the sloppiest story of all,” she said.

“It’s about my goose bump experiment,” said Jimmy Prune.

The teacher just shook her head and handed the story back.

Jimmy Prune started a new story. This one took him much longer to write. When he showed it to Mrs. Friendly, the teacher smiled.

“Jimmy Prune, your handwriting is beautiful,” she said. “I had no idea you could write so neatly.”

“This story is about my noisy stomach,” said Jimmy Prune.

“But this story is still hard to read,” said the teacher. “Almost every word is misspelled.”

Jimmy Prune looked at the floor. “I knew this would happen,” he said. “If I made my handwriting neater, you’d discover what a crummy speller I am.”



Twist Seven

Halloween Costume

Today was Halloween. Soon Jimmy Prune's class would march in the school costume parade.

"Jimmy Prune, what costume will you wear in the parade?" Mrs. Friendly asked.

"It's a surprise," said Jimmy Prune.

"An ugly monster?" guessed Loud Larry

"A ghost?" guessed a girl in the front row.

Jimmy Prune shook his head. "Here's a hint," he said. "I will dress as a famous person."

“George Washington?” said Mrs. Friendly.

“Christopher Columbus?” guessed the Girl With Bangs, Braids, and Braces.

“No, no,” said Jimmy Prune. “I’m dressing as a make-believe character we read about.”

“Johnny Appleseed?” Larry said.

“Paul Bunyon?” said a boy in back.

“No, no,” said Jimmy Prune. “My character is a famous ruler.”

“You’re going to be King Midas?” said Mrs. Friendly.

“King Arthur?” guessed a girl.

Again Jimmy Prune shook his head. “Last hint,” he said. “I’ll be a ruler from a story by Hans Christian Anderson.”

The classroom went silent.

“I’m stumped, Jimmy Prune,” said Loud Larry.

“I can’t even guess” said the Girl With Bangs, Braids and Braces.

“It’s time for the Halloween parade,” said Mrs. Friendly. “Go put on your costumes.”

Dressed as ghouls, ghosts, and goblins, students marched out of the school. Moms and dads stood on the playground, holding video cameras to their eyeballs. Marching music played.

Mrs. Friendly's class joined the parade.

"Where's Jimmy Prune?" the teacher asked.

"He's coming," said Loud Larry. "He's wearing a great costume."

"Like he told us, he's dressed as a famous ruler in a Hans Christian Anderson story," said the Girl With Bangs, Braids, and Braces.

"His costume is the best one in the parade," said another girl.

Jimmy Prune strode out of the school. He marched onto the playground and all the students cheered. But as he passed the parents, a father lowered his camera. A mother screamed.

"That boy has on no clothes," another father shouted.

"He's buck bare!" cried another mother.

Yes, indeed, Jimmy Prune was marching in the parade without a stitch of clothes on.

"Notice my fine new outfit," he called out. "I am the emperor, and I have on my new clothes."



Twist Eight

Time Capsule

Jimmy Prune held a shovel and a shoebox. Inside the shoebox was a plastic baseball, a school picture, and his last spelling test. He began to dig a hole in his front yard.

Mr. Evans looked over the fence. “Greetings, Jimmy Prune,” he said. “What are you doing?”

“I’m burying a time capsule,” said Jimmy Prune. “So people one-million years from now can see how we lived today.”

“Good idea,” said Mr. Evans. “And I have something you should put in your time capsule. Here’s a magazine. Then people will know what we looked like.”

Jimmy Prune put the magazine into his shoebox and continued digging his hole.

Marsha, his baby-sitter, called out the screen door. “What are you doing, Jimmy Prune?”

“I’m burying a time capsule,” said Jimmy Prune. “So people one million years from now we lived.”

“Interesting, Jimmy Prune,” said Marsha. “Here is a quarter you can bury. Then people in the future can see how we bought things.”

Jimmy Prune put the quarter in the box and continued digging the hole.

Loud Larry rode his bike up the driveway. “What are you doing, Jimmy Prune,” he asked.

“I’m burying a time capsule,” said Jimmy Prune. “So people one-million years from now can see how we lived.”

“Great idea,” said Larry. “Here’s my old baseball cap you can put in your time capsule. Then people in the future can find out what we wore.”

Jimmy Prune put the baseball cap in his shoebox and continued digging the hole.

Now the Girl With Bangs, Braids, and Braces walked up the sidewalk. “What are you doing, Jimmy Prune?” she asked

“I’m burying a time capsule,” said Jimmy Prune. “So people one million years from now can see how we lived.”

“Here I’ll give you a candy bar,” said the girl. “Then the people in the future will know what we ate.”

Jimmy Prune put the candy bar into his shoebox and place the box in the hole. He pushed dirt over it and patted the dirt down with his hand. Then he sat by the time capsule thinking. His stomach rumbled with hunger. The wind messed up his hair. Oh, if only he had some money to go play a video game. And that magazine? That looked very interesting.

“Would people one-million years from now need the things in my time capsule as much as I do?” Jimmy Prune said. “I don’t think so.” Then he picked up his shovel and began to dig.