

# Twists



**Douglas Evans**

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

# **Twists**

**Twist: A short silly story  
with a surprise at the end**



**WT Melon**  
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*"good stories; good tunes"*

**Twists**

# **Twists**



**Douglas Evans**



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**Twists**

**For Charlie**

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# **Twists**

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# **Twists**

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Cover by Douglas Evans



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# Twists



## Twist One Cold Hands

**J**immy Prune stood on the snowy school playground. He wore a puffy down coat, a wool hat, and rubber boots. But his hands were bare.

“My hands are sooooo cold,” he said. “My hands are sooooo cold.”

Nearby, a girl with bangs, braids, and braces was busy building a snow fort. She looked up. “If your hands are cold, Jimmy Prune, rub them together, palm to palm,” she said. “It’s called friction. Do it fast, and they’ll warm right up.”

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Jimmy Prune pressed his hands together and rubbed. They did get warmer, but all that rubbing soon wore him out.

"My hands are sooooo cold," he said. "Oh, my hands are cold."

By the swings, Loud Larry was stomping a giant L in the snow.

"Try blowing on your hands, Jimmy Prune," he called out. "Cup your hands over your mouth and blow on them."

Jimmy Prune put his hands over his mouth. Smoke poured through his fingers as he blew. His hands got warmer, but he soon ran out of breath.

"My hands are sooooo cold!" he said. "My hands are so so cold."

"You look miserable, Jimmy Prune," called Veronica, a fifth-grader, who was building a two-headed snowman. "Shake your hands in the air. That gets your blood flowing. Shake your hands real fast."

Jimmy Prune spread his arms. He flapped them like a penguin. His hands got warmer, but in no time, his arms grew tired.

"My hands are sooooo cold," said Jimmy Prune. "When will recess end? My hands are like icicles."

Mr. Z, the school custodian, set down his snow shovel and walked over.

"Jimmy Prune," he said. "Your hands will

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never warm up just standing there. When mine get cold, I use the old Armpit Trick. Cross your arms and stick your hands in your armpits. Go on, try it."

Jimmy crossed his arms and tucked his hands in his armpits. A smile spread across his face..

"Yes, my hands are warmer," he said. "But I feel silly. I look like an Egyptian mummy in a museum."

Mr. Z shrugged. "Suit yourself," he said. "I'd rather look silly than spend an entire recess with cold hands."

After the custodian left, Mrs. Friendly, Jimmy Prune's teacher, walked up to him. Her silver whistle swung from her neck as she bent down and smiled.

"What's the matter, Jimmy Prune?" she asked. "Why aren't you playing in the snow like everyone else?"

Jimmy Prune held out his hands. "Because my hands are cold," he said. "I can't make snowballs, and I can build a snowman."

"Why don't you stick your hands in your pockets?" Mrs. Friendly said. "Your pockets are snug and warm."

Jimmy Prune sniffed. "But I can't," he said. A tear ran down his cheek and froze on the tip of his nose.

The teacher looked puzzled. "Why ever not?"

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“Because my pockets are full,” Jimmy Prune replied.

“Full? What do you mean by full?”

The boy sniffed again and said, “I can’t stick my hands in my pockets...because my mittens are in there

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## Twist Two Rainbow Hunt

**J**immy Prune hiked down Oak Street. He dragged a giant 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,” he said.

“A rainbow?” She pointed to the street. “Why, I see a rainbow right there.”

Jimmy Prune saw it, too—a round swirling rainbow floating on a puddle. He dipped his hand into the oily water, but the colors dribbled through

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his fingers.

"That rainbow got away," he said. "But I'll catch the next one for sure."

He continued down the street, dragging his sack along the pavement. 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 going to catch a rainbow."

"A rainbow?" said the girl. "There's one floating right above your head."

Jimmy Prune looked up. Sure enough, a small, square rainbow shimmered on the skin of a bubble.

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

"Rats!" he said. "That rainbow got away. But I'll catch the next one for sure."

Next, he passed his neighbor, Mr. Evans, sitting on the steps. He held a glass of ice water.

"Where are you off to with that trash bag, Jimmy Prune?" he asked.

"I'm hunting rainbows," Jimmy said.

Mr. Evans held up his water glass. "Hey, I see a rainbow on the sidewalk. Isn't that something?"

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

Jimmy Prune held out his hand. The rainbow

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lay across his palm. But when Mr. Evans took a drink from the glass, the rainbow disappeared.

"Another close call," he said. "But the next rainbow is mine."

Farther along the street, wet spots dotted the pavement.

Jimmy Prune's best friend, Loud Larry, rode up on his bike.

"Why the bag, Jimmy Prune?" he called.

"I'm trying to catch a rainbow."

Larry pointed to the sky. "Then turn around. There's a rainbow behind you."

Jimmy Prune spun on his heels. Across the sky stretched a giant rainbow--red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet.

His eyes widened. "Rats!" he said.

"What's wrong?" asked Larry. "That's a great rainbow."

Jimmy Prune shook his head. "Yes, it's a good rainbow, and it wouldn't be hard to catch," he said. He raised his sack. "The problem is ...my bag is way, way too small."

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## Twist Three Goose Bumps

**J**immy Prune sat in the TV room with his babysitter, Marsha. While Marsha chatted on her cell phone, Jimmy picked up a pencil and a sheet of paper.

“I’m going to do an experiment,” he said. “I want to see how many ways I can get goose bumps.”

“Fine,” said Marsha. “But do it quietly.”

At the top of his paper, Jimmy Prune wrote:

**Ways To Get Goose Bumps**

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First, he walked to the window and opened it wide.

"Test number one," he said.

Cold air rushed into the room. After a minute, he checked both arms. Small bumps dotted his skin.

"There!" he said. "Goose bumps!"

And he wrote on his list:

## **1. Cold**

Next, Jimmy Prune ran up the stairs to the attic. A single light bulb lit the sloping roof and bare wood floor.

"Test number two," he said.

He flipped off the light, and the attic turned inky black. Something clicked in the corner. A creature skittered across the floor.

Jimmy Prune bolted out the door. Again, he checked his arms.

"There!" he said. "More goose bumps!"

This time, he wrote on his list:

## **2. Scary things**

Now Jimmy Prune stood at the top of the stairs. He sat on the railing.

"Here goes test number three," he said, and he slid all the way down to the bottom of the stairway.

*"Wahooooo!"*

At the bottom, Jimmy Prune checked his arms.

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“Goose bumps again!”

He added to his list:

## 3. Excitement

Next, Jimmy Prune ran into the kitchen.

“Test number four,” he said.

He opened the kitchen door and shut it. *Squeak! Squeak!* went the hinges. He opened and closed the door again. *Squeak-squeak! Squeak-squeak!*

“Success!” he said Jimmy, checking his arms. “More goose bumps!”

And he wrote on his list:

## 4. Squeaky noises

Jimmy Prune looked around the kitchen. “What next?” he said. He was out of ideas.

At that moment, Marsha shouted from the TV room. Her voice sounded mad.

“James Prune! Shut the window! Stop running in the attic! Stop shouting on the stairs! And stop playing with the squeaky door!”

Jimmy Prune checked his arms.

“Goose bumps!” he said.

Then he added the last item to his list:

## 5. Getting yelled at by Marsha

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## Twist Four Sweeping

**M**rs. Friendly faced her class. "It's time to do our classroom jobs," she said. "This week, Jimmy Prune, it's your turn to sweep the sidewalk outside the door."

Jimmy Prune groaned. He rose from his desk and grabbed the yellow broom in the coat closet.

"Sweeping is the worst class job," he grumbled.

Outside on the sidewalk, he gripped the broom handle with one hand. He stuck the other

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in his pocket. He dragged the bristles back and forth, back and forth.

Loud Larry stood in the doorway. "Jimmy Prune, that's not how to sweep," he called out. "You've got to hold the broom with both hands. Here, let a pro show you how."

Larry grabbed the broom. He swished it across the sidewalk.

Jimmy Prune nodded. "I see, I see. You do that very well."

Loud Larry swept another row before handing the broom back. "And that's how you sweep," he said, strutting back into the classroom.

Jimmy Prune leaned on the broom handle and groaned again. "Sweeping the sidewalk is torture. Why can't I feed the class snake or clean the whiteboard? Anything but sweeping."

He spread his legs wide. He swung the broom forward and backward like a croquet mallet.

The Girl With Bangs, Braids, and Braces stepped out of the classroom. "You're sweeping all wrong, Jimmy Prune," she said. "Here, give me the broom. Watch."

Her braids swung as she swished the broom left and right.

"I see, I see," said Jimmy Prune. "You're very good at sweeping."

The girl smiled and swept some more. "See?"

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Back and forth. That's the way. Now you do it. I have to get back to watering the plants."

She handed the broom back to Jimmy Prune and skipped back into the room.

Leaning on the handle, Jimmy sighed. "This job takes forever. Why can't I straighten the bookshelves? Why can't I empty the pencil sharpener? I'll never finish all this sweeping."

He shoved the broom forward like a wide push broom. He stepped sideways and pushed it forward again.

Mr. Good, the principal, came walking down the sidewalk toward him. He stopped and frowned.

"That's no way to sweep, Jimmy Prune," said the principal. "You've got to swing the broom like a hockey stick. Think of how hockey players move the puck down the ice. Let me show you."

Mr. Good swept a strip of the sidewalk. He stepped forward and swept another. At last, he raised the broom high and whipped it forward as if shooting a slap shot.

"Score! he shouted.

"I see. I see," said Jimmy Prune. "That's very helpful."

The principal swept one more strip and handed the broom back. "Keep up the good work, Jimmy Prune," he said. "And remember...sweep like a hockey player skating for the goal."

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Most of the sidewalk was now clean. But not all of it. Jimmy Prune bent and grabbed the broom by the bristles. He whisked it back and forth as if he were dusting off home plate.

Veronica, a fifth-grader, stepped out of her classroom. "Jimmy Prune, you're not sweeping the right way," she said. She snatched the broom. "Watch how I do it."

With quick, short strokes, she swept the sidewalk clean.

"Oh, I see," said Jimmy Prune. "So that's the right way. You're a great sweeper."

By the time she stopped, the sidewalk was spotless.

Jimmy Prune took the broom back to his classroom. As he dropped it in the closet, he muttered, "Sweeping is the worst classroom job ever. And in a few weeks, it'll be my turn again. By then, I bet I'll have forgotten how to do it and have to learn all over again. I hate sweeping."

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## Twist Five Halloween Costume

**T**oday was Halloween. Soon, Jimmy Prune's class would march around the playground in the school costume parade.

"Jimmy Prune, what costume are you wearing in the parade?" Mrs. Friendly asked.

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

"An ugly monster?" guessed Loud Larry

"A vampire?" asked Harper

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

"Willie Mays?" said Mrs. Friendly. "I know you like baseball."

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"George Washington?" guessed the Girl With Bangs, Braids, and Braces.

"No, no," said Jimmy Prune. "I'm dressing as a make-believe character from a story we read in class."

"The Cat in the Hat?" guessed Freddie.

"You're going to be Paul Bunyan," said Jenny.

"Nope," said Jimmy Prune. "My character is a famous ruler."

"I know," said the teacher. "You're going to be King Midas with the Golden Touch."

"King Arthur," guessed Harper.

Again, Jimmy Prune shook his head. "Here's my final hint," he said. "I'll be a ruler from a story by Hans Christian Andersen."

The classroom went silent.

"I'm stumped," said Loud Larry.

"I can't even guess," said the Girl With Bangs, Braids, and Braces.

"Well, we'll soon find out," said Mrs. Friendly. "It's time for the Halloween parade. Everyone, go put on your costumes."

Dressed as ghouls, ghosts, and goblins, the classes K through 5 marched out of the school. Moms and dads lined the playground, holding up cell phones. Marching music played.

Mrs. Friendly's class joined the parade.

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

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"He's coming," said Loud Larry. "He's wearing the greatest costume."

"Like he said," added the Girl With Bangs, Braids, and Braces, "he's a famous ruler from a Hans Christian Andersen story."

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

At last, Jimmy Prune strutted out the school doors. He marched onto the playground, swinging his arms and grinning ear to ear.

The students went wild.

"Yay, Jimmy!" cried a fifth-grader.

"You've outdone us all!" a fourth-grader said.

"That's my favorite story," called a third-grader

They clapped, cheered, and stomped their feet.

But the parents fell silent. They lowered their phones and stared.

"That boy has no clothes on," said father.

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

Yes, Jimmy Prune was marching in the parade without a single stitch of clothing. Only a cardboard crown sprinkled with gold glitter sat on his head.

"Behold my fine new outfit!" he called out. "Aren't they splendid? I am the emperor... and these are my new clothes."

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## Twist Six Hiccups

**J**immy Prune sat at his desk. He was painting a picture of a rainbow.

*Hiccup! Hiccup!*

And he had the hiccups.

"Hiccups are weird," he said. "*Hiccup! Hiccup!* They come out of nowhere! *Hiccup!* And you never know when they'll go away. *Hiccup! Hiccup!*"

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

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The teacher said this to anyone with the hiccups.

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

*Hiccup! Hiccup!*

But he still hiccupped.

"I know how to get rid of hiccups, Jimmy Prune," said a girl with green paint on her chin. "Spin around until you're dizzy. That always works for me. Spinning scrambles them up."

Jimmy twirled and twirled. Then he flopped back down with his head spinning.

*Hiccup! Hiccup!*

And he kept hiccupping.

Loud Larry crept up behind Jimmy Prune.

"Boo!" he shouted. "Did I scare you, Jimmy Prune? Did I? Spooking people always cures the hiccups."

*Hiccup! Hiccup!* went Jimmy Prune.

"Boo! Boo!" Larry said again. "How about that time?"

*Hiccup! Hiccup!* went Jimmy Prune, shaking his head.

"I know a better hiccup cure," said the Girl With Bangs, Braids, and Braces. One braid swept through some yellow paint. "Hold your nose and jump up and down. That's what my mom tells me to do. I hold my nose and hop."

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For the next minute, Jimmy Prune hopped while pinching his nose. When he stopped—*Hiccup! Hiccup!*—he hiccupped some more.

“What’s the point of hiccups anyway?” he said. “What good do they do? *Hiccup! Hiccup!* I understand why we cough. And I get sneezing. But hiccups? They make no sense at all. *Hiccup!*”

“Try touching your toes ten times, Jimmy Prune,” said Harper. “That’s what I do.”

“No, you should run in place,” suggested Hamid, who was painting a purple tattoo on his arm. “Lift your knees high and go as fast as you can.”

Jimmy Prune did ten toe touches and ran in place. He did ten more toe touches and continued running in place. Finally, he sat down, breathing hard—*Hiccup! Hiccup!*—and still hiccupping.

“I don’t know what’s worse, hiccupping or doing all those hiccups cures,” he grumbled.

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

“Try spinning some more,” called the girl with a green chin. “That’s got to work.”

“Boo! Boo!” shouted Loud Larry behind him. “There. That did it. I spooked the hiccups right out of you.”

“No, hop some more while holding your nose,” called the Girl With Bangs, Braids, and

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Braces.

"Try doing twenty toe touches instead of ten," said Harper.

"Keep running in place," said the boy with a purple tattoo.

So Jimmy spun some more, ran some more, and did twenty toe touches. Exhausted, he plopped back down in his seat and put his head on his desk.

The class waited but heard no more hiccups.

"I think Jimmy's hiccups are gone at last," said Mrs. Friendly. "My nine-gulp cure worked after all. So, let's get back to painting."

"I bet it was my spinning cure that stopped his hiccups, not the gulping," the girl with a green chin.

"Wrong," said Loud Larry. "My spooking did the trick."

"I'm sure hopping was the cure," said the Girl With Bangs, Braids, and Braces.

"Twenty toe touches were the answer," said Harper.

"No way. Running in place did it," said the tattooed boy. "It always does."

Mrs. Friendly smiled at Jimmy Prune, with his head still down. He hadn't budged in over a minute.

"You know, class, maybe all our hiccup cures worked," she said. "Poor, Jimmy. Look at him. We

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tired him out so much...he's fallen asleep."

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## **Twist Seven** **Rumbling Stomach**

**L**unchtime was near. Jimmy Prune sat at his desk when his stomach began to sputter.

*RRRRR! SQUEAK! SPUT! FFT! FFT! POP! RRRRR!*

He placed a hand on his lap and leaned forward

“Not again!” he groaned.

Still, the noises went on.

*RRRRR! SQUEAK! SPUT! FFT! FFT! POP! RRRRR!*

Jimmy Prune blushed to his toes. He knew what was coming next.

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First, the Girl With Bangs, Braids, and Braces giggled. Next, Loud Larry burst out laughing. Soon, the whole class was snickering.

Mrs. Friendly sat behind her desk, grading papers. She turned to check the clock above the whiteboard. "Lunchtime, class," she said. "Please line up at the door."

*Whoosh!* The class grabbed their lunchboxes and formed a zig-zag line at the door. Jimmy Prune trudged to the end of the line.

"Why-oh-why?" he muttered. "Why must my belly make those embarrassing sounds every day?"

The next day, it happened again. Minutes before lunchtime, Jimmy Prune's stomach tightened. He held his breath. He thumped his belly with his fist. He even put his math book on his lap. But the eruption came anyway.

*RRRRR! SQUEAK! SPUT! FFT! FFT! POP! RRRRR!*

Laughter filled the classroom, louder than ever.

"Lunchtime, class!" Mrs. Friendly announced.

In the lunchroom, Jimmy Prune sat by himself. "Why-oh-why?" he said, shaking his head. "How can I stop those awful sounds?"

He chomped into his sandwich and chewed. When he swallowed, he made a discovery.

"My gut stopped growling," he said. "That's it!. My stomach only makes noise when it's

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empty.”

The following day, Jimmy Prune came to school with his shirt pocket stuffed with soda crackers. Ten minutes before lunchtime, he crammed five crackers into his mouth. He chewed and swallowed.

A short time later, he ate three more crackers. He checked the clock and grinned.

“Twelve o’clock, and all is quiet,” he said.

Yet something was wrong. At five minutes past noon, Mrs. Friendly still sat at her desk, grading papers. Jimmy Prune felt the entire class staring at him.

Two minutes later, the Girl With Bangs, Braids, and Braces whispered, “Jimmy Prune, what gives? What happened to the lunch alarm?”

Jimmy Prune only shrugged.

Finally, twelve minutes late, the teacher checked the clock. “Oh dear, look at the time,” she said. “Please line up for lunch.”

*Whoosh!* The students snatched their lunchboxes and rushed to the door.

Loud Larry stood behind Jimmy Prune. “I thought she’d never dismiss us,” he said. “Hey, what’s wrong with your stomach?”

Jimmy Prune gave another shrug.

“The lunch alarm,” said Larry. “You know, the way your belly growls before lunch.”

Jimmy Prune scowled. “Yeah, everyone

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thinks that's a big joke."

"Are you kidding?" said Loud Larry. "Your stomach's the only thing that reminds the teacher it's lunchtime. She gets so busy, she only checks the clock when your belly goes off. That's what cracks us up."

Jimmy Prune placed a hand on his shirt pocket. "Well, how about that," he said, as the hungry line of students marched out the door. "Jimmy Prune, the human lunch alarm."

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## **Twist Eight Solo Baseball**

**J**immy Prune stood in his front yard. He held a whiffle ball and a plastic baseball bat.

“Now up to bat, number one...Jimmy Prune!” he announced. “Last of the ninth! Two out! The Jimmy Prune All Stars need one run to win the game!”

He tossed the ball up. He swung hard. But the ball dropped onto the grass.

“Strike one!” he called.

Loud Larry rode up the street on his bike. He stopped to watch the baseball game.

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"Keep your eyes on the ball when you swing, Jimmy Prune!" he said. "Watch the ball, and you'll clobber it."

Jimmy Prune threw the ball up again. He swung and missed again.

"Strike two!"

Next door, Mr. Evans was mowing his lawn. He stopped to watch the game as well.

"Take a good, even swing, Jimmy Prune," he called out. "You'll hit that ball if you keep the bat level."

Jimmy Prune tossed the ball up a third time. He kept his eyes on the ball. He swung evenly, and—*whack!*—the ball flew across the yard.

"It's hit deep!" Jimmy Prune yelled.

He raced toward an old sock serving as first base.

"Safe at first!" he cried. "Now he's heading for second!"

He ran toward the towel that marked second base.

"Go, Jimmy Prune!" Loud Larry shouted.

"Great hit!" said Mr. Evans.

"The fans are going wild!" Jimmy Prune cried. "Jimmy Prune rounds second and goes for a triple!"

He charged toward third base, a bare patch in the grass.

A girl with bangs, braids, and braces rolled

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up on her skateboard.

“Run, Jimmy Prune! Run!” she shouted.

“Jimmy Prune is trying for a home run!” Jimmy Prune said. “If he makes it, his team wins the game!”

“Go, Jimmy Prune! Run!” yelled Mr. Evans.

“You can do it, Jimmy Prune,” called Loud Larry.

“Hurrah for Jimmy Prune,” cheered the girl.

Jimmy Prune slid across the paper plate home plate.

The fans fell silent. They watched him stand, brush the dirt from his knees, kick the grass, and shake his fist.

“What’s wrong, Jimmy Prune?” asked Mr. Evans. “That was a great hit.”

“And a terrific slide!” added Larry.

A woman in a white hat walked by on the sidewalk. “Don’t worry about those grass stains, Jimmy Prune,” she called out. “They’ll wash right out.”

“Did you hurt yourself?” asked the Girl With Bangs, Braids, and Braces.

Jimmy Prune grabbed the whiffle ball and plastic bat. He trudged toward his front door.

“I’m not hurt, and I don’t care about grass stains,” he muttered. “I’m mad because I was out at home plate...and the Jimmy Prune All Stars lost the game.”

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## Twist Nine Parking Meters

**J**immy Prune sat on a street curb outside the ice cream parlor. A green compact car pulled into a parking space nearby. Out stepped Mr. Evans, his neighbor, jingling some coins in his pocket. He bent down to check the meter.

He turned toward Jimmy Prune and said, "Want to make an easy dollar? I'll give you eight quarters. Just drop one in the meter every fifteen minutes. When I get back, whatever's left is yours to buy some ice cream."

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Jimmy Prune grinned. "It's a deal," he said.

Mr. Evans handed him the coins. "See you soon, Jimmy Prune," he said.

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

He sat back down on the curb and watched a line of ants crawl from a crack in the sidewalk. When he thought fifteen minutes had passed, he got up and walked back to the row of meters.

But now, instead of one, there were two green compact cars parked along the street.

"Uh-oh," he said. "Which one's the one?"

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

*Zip! Clink!* went the meter by the second car, and he popped a quarter in that meter, too.

Back on the curb, Jimmy Prune watched a worm wiggle 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 small white cart. She checked a meter a half block away and started writing a ticket for yet another green compact.

"Uh-oh," said Jimmy Prune. "Could that be the one?"

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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 big parking fine," she said, crumpling up the ticket.

Jimmy Prune checked his quarters. Only three left. He sighed with relief when a tall woman climbed into the first green compact and drove away.

But when time ran out on the second meter, he had to spend another quarter. *Zip! Clink!*—the third meter also blinked TIME EXPIRED, and there went another coin.

"Thanks, Jimmy Prune," a voice called. Mr. Evans stood by the second compact. He got in, waved, and drove off.

Jimmy Prune sat on the curb, flipping his last coin. "Rats," he muttered. "Not enough change for an ice cream cone."

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, rushing up to the meter.

The meter monitor slapped her ticket book shut. Jimmy smiled as he jammed his last quarter into the slot.

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## Twist Ten Starry Night

**J**immy Prune was camping in his backyard with his babysitter, Marsha. They built a small fire in the fire pit and roasted marshmallows for s'mores.

Afterward, they lay in the grass and gazed into the twinkling sky.

With a sticky finger, Jimmy pointed upward. "I spy a star that's moving," he said. "I'm naming it the Jimmy Prune Star."

"Stars don't move, Jimmy Prune," Marsha

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said. "You're watching the blinking light of an airplane flying by."

Jimmy Prune kept staring at the sky. Again, he pointed. "I spy another star that's moving. That one will be the Jimmy Prune Star."

"Stars don't move, Jimmy Prune," Marsha said again. "You're now looking at a firefly. The light on its end is flashing on and off."

At that moment, the campfire cracked. Again, Jimmy Prune pointed to the sky. "I spy another star that's moving," he said. "I'll call that one the Jimmy Prune Star."

"Nope, stars don't move, Jimmy Prune," Marsha reminded him. "You now see a spark from the fire."

Jimmy Prune yawned. He crawled into his sleeping bag. He lay on his back, studying the stars some more.

Suddenly, a bright flash streaked across the sky.

"But that star moved," he said. "I'll name that the Jimmy Prune Star."

"That's not a star either, Jimmy Prune," said Marsha. "That was a meteor—a space rock burning up in the earth's air."

Jimmy Prune drifted off to sleep. The next thing he knew, morning had arrived. A sunny, blue sky stretched overhead.

Jimmy Prune shook Marsha awake.

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“What is it, Jimmy Prune?” she grumbled.

“Stars do move!”

The babysitter sat up and rubbed her eyes.

“What are you talking about?”

Jimmy Prune pointed to the bright morning sky. “See. Every single star has moved away!”