Wishing Upon the Stars

Mary Catherine Rolston
Illustrated by Frank Urbanski

Ten Year old MC laid in bed tossing and turning. Normally nights at the cottage were not that hot but this evening her room felt like an oven. The heat of the summer air was thick, broken by the reprieve of gentle warm waves of evening breezes that waltzed with her sheer bedroom curtains, creating an illusion that puffy clouds were dancing above her bed. She listened to the rhythm of the crickets and could hear the odd June bug and moth hit the screen.

Moments before, her father had finished their regular bedtime routine; reading her a story and covering her with a crisp cotton sheet. This night something different happened when MC's father gave her a soft kiss on the forehead, she felt a little tear drop then roll down her cheek. Usually after this routine she was able to quickly fall asleep, but tonight it was not that easy, as she knew this tear was from her dad. The day that just passed was filled with events that brought forth many questions and worries for MC.

Five minutes later, letting out a big sigh, she yelled out, "Dad can I have a glass of water? I'm thirsty and hot!"

In minutes her dad appeared at the door with a large tumbler filled with cool water. "Here you go my princess, drink up."

MC sat up took the water and drank it down slowly making a point of looking at her dad. His eyes were watery but he forced a smile as he stood up, took the empty glass and left the room whispering, "Sweet dreams."

MC laid in bed tossing and turning. Her frustration was mounting, while the sheets tangled in her legs. Angry she flipped her legs over the side of the bed and tried to stand up, but before she knew it she fell to the ground with a loud bang. Her tears followed.

In seconds her father appeared at the door to see her in one massive crying mound on the floor. Shaking his head he approached her chuckling and saying, “What has happened to my little princess? Carefully he began to untangle the sheets from her legs.

The reassuring words from her father unleashed a dam of uncontrollable sobbing from MC.

“Dad why does it have to be so hot? Why did Dzadzio have to die? Can I live with you forever? Are we always going to be buddies? Dad I don’t want to lose you too! She gave her dada a big hug, drenching the back of his shirt with her tears, while he lifted her off the floor.

“Hey buddy, I know it hurts. It hurts me too. Hey what do you say we go down by the lake and sit on the dock, maybe the loons and the night sky will be able to make us feel better. It is a lot cooler down there, “ reassured her father, setting her on the ground and taking her hand.

On the way out her father grabbed a flashlight and a blanket. The full moon guided them with bright beams as they walked together down the gradual stone path to the dock.

The minute they reached the dock they could hear the deep croak of the bullfrog nestled in the shoreline grass. The crickets added their own harmony while two loons off in the distance completed the rich sound of this waterfront concert. Stepping on the dock the water lapped against the wood and MC and her Dad wobbled a bit as they gained their balance then finally sat on the edge letting their legs dangle over into the water. MC's father wrapped her with the light blanket.

"Guess what there is going to be a meteor shower tonight. Look up into the sky, there are so many stars it looks like a dark sheet covered in pin holes!" Her father pointed up to the sky with a big grin.

"Is that a shower of shooting stars? Can we wish upon them?" pondered MC with a big sigh.

"Yep, we sure can and if we are lucky there will be a lot of stars shooting to night and we will be able to make a ton of wishes. Better get your wishes in order."

Seconds later the silence was broken by MC. "Dad, why did grandpa have to die? Dzadzio was so strong, he was so funny, he was so happy and he didn't seem old to me."

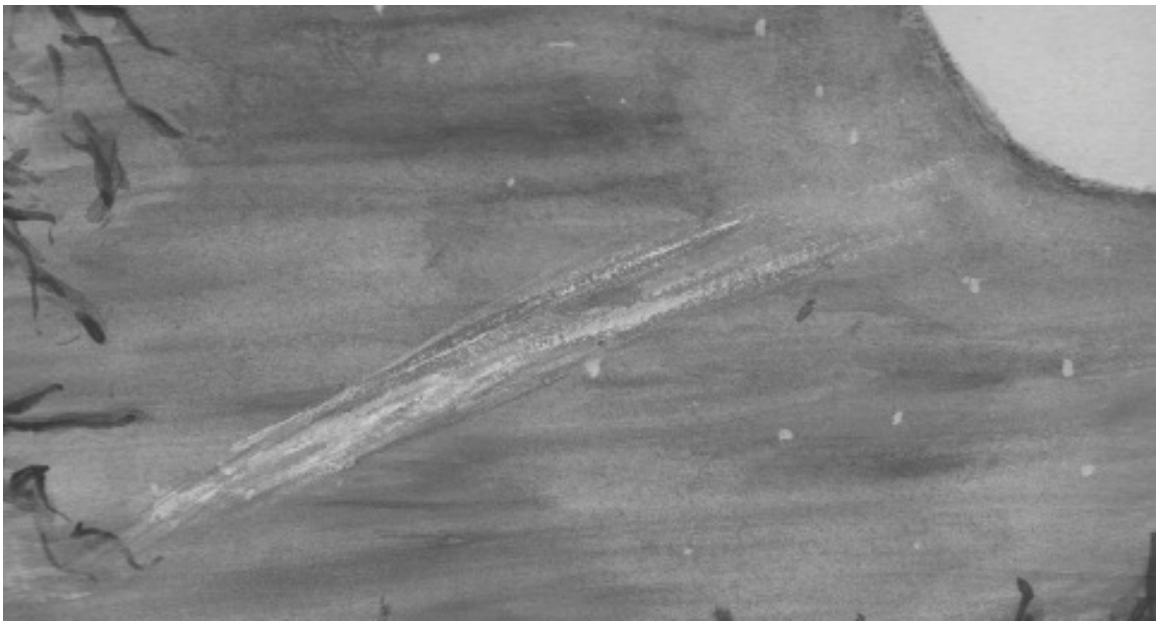
“Awe sweetie Dzadzio had to die because his body was not well. Oh he fought a good fight against the disease, but like anything in this physical world, eventually things wear out and they can’t be fixed anymore. One thing for sure his spirit didn’t break.”

“Do you think his spirit died?”

“No I don’t. I believe his spirit is within us. Some people say that once someone dies their spirit flies up to the stars. They stay there until they sense their loved ones need them, then they fly down to be invisible silent angles on our shoulders. They speak to us in our thoughts. Those encouraging thoughts make us feel reassured. Those thoughts help guide us.”

“Hmmmm, that is neat, so that would mean that even though Dzadzio is gone, he is sort of here with us giving us ideas,” MC thought out loud as she splashed the water with her legs.

“Yep,” sighed her dad gazing into the sky. “Hey look there’s a falling star!”



Off into the distance she saw the longest falling star that seemed to go on for at least three seconds. She wished with her hand over her heart.

“What did you wish for?” asked her father.

“I wished that one day we’d work together. You and me like bright stars. I’d be Dazzle and you could be Sparkle. Maybe the business could bring goodness to the world and make people happy, “ grinned MC.

“Hmmm, sounds like a plan. You might be onto something little Dazzle.”

The loons continued their haunting coos that echoed over the shimmering glass like lake. The bullfrog pulsed out his rhythmic horn.

“Dad look over there, it’s another one! I’m wishing! Shouted MC as she pointed in the direction of the evergreens . Did you wish on something this time?”

Her dad smiled. “Yes I did. I wished that I’ll always be able to be a positive and supportive dad, showing patience and understanding just like my dad.”

“Even when you’re angry?”

“Even when I’m angry.”

“You know dad you just wasted a wish. You’re that way already. You always love me and even when you’re not too happy.”

“Awe thanks princess, but I want to stay that way. I just want to be the best dad I can be,” nodded her father.

Tiny flashes of light danced in the distance.

“Dad did I just see another falling star?”

“Nope, I think your eye caught a glimpse of a firefly.”

Sure enough she began to see fire flies everywhere, darting and flashing like ballerinas performing a majestic crescendo. MC was inspired. She loved to dance and was often known for giving the family dance concerts on Sunday nights. She quickly got up and started to dance on the dock, spinning and waving her arms like a prima ballerina.

“MC please be careful!”

She giggled but continued with her performance, now turning in the other direction, executing a pas de chat.

Mary Catherine, PLEASE BE CAREFUL! You are going to ….” Shouted her father, but not in time because a second later, MC had taken a grand leap off the dock into the water.

Her father immediately dove in after her, pulling her up under his arms while treading water. Panic covered his face as he cried out, “Are you okay? Breathe!”

MC’s hair was covered by her long hair and she was coughing, but with determination she pulled back her hair and smiled, “Hey Sparkle wasn’t that refreshing!”

Her father helped her gain her balance on the dock stairs. Dripping wet they both took a sat on the dock. Her father shook his head with a scowl on his face. MC made a funny face causing both of them to burst into laughter. They huddled under the blanket on the edge of the dock.

“Dad, see you still like me even when I mess up. Thanks!

“We all make silly choices sometimes. Hey Dazzle do you want to stay out here and make more wishes while we dry off?” asked her father giving her a hug.

“Sure Sparkle. I want to dream and wish. I bet we’re not alone.”

“I think you’re right Dazzle.”