

Jarod leaned back on the inflatable raft. It was too hot to paddle and he needed to conserve his energy. He had been lost at sea for the last three days. He was out of food and water, and he only had one emergency flare left. Yesterday he saw a plane pass overhead. He lit two flares, hoping to attract the attention of the pilot. The plane did not turn around. Jarod used the map he had salvaged from the wreck as a makeshift visor. He knew that continued exposure to the sun would kill him sooner than anything else. Then he saw a small blob on the horizon. He could do nothing but wait.

Johnny was walking home on a cool day when the wind caught his hat and carried it out onto the lake. There was a thin layer of ice that covered the water. The hat sat on top of the ice layer, looking like the day that Johnny had bought it. Johnny tested the ice with his toe. It seemed secure, but he could see the water at the edges of the ice. He carefully tiptoed across the sheet of ice to his hat and picked it up. As he did so the ice cracked. A large sheet began drifting away. Johnny was surrounded by cracks. He took another careful step, putting his weight directly on one of the cracks and then...

"Remember to study for the test tomorrow!" Ms. Claire said before dismissing her class. Lisa wrote the assignment in her notebook but when she got home she just wanted a break from school, so she watched TV. A couple of hours later, Lisa knew that it was time to get to work, but first she would check her email. After another hour on the Internet, Lisa noticed that it was getting late. She opened up the textbook and began looking for the chapter. Then her friend Jenna called. Bobby and Suzy had broken up! Lisa couldn't believe it. She and Jenna talked about it for another hour. Now it was really late and Lisa was tired. She hung up with Jenna and turned to the chapter on rock formations in her science book. She began reading it. Her head felt a little woozy, wobbly and then...

*Ding!* The timer rang. Cassandra pulled the oven door open and the fragrance of hot cherry pie filled the room. Steam was emanating from the surface of the pastry. Cassandra took a deep whiff and said, "Mm..." She then put the pie on the kitchen table to cool and went off to knit a hat for her grandson. Her dog Champ must have smelled the pie too. He wandered into the kitchen, put his forelegs on the table, licked his lips...

Tex opened the can of peaches with his knife and cooked them over the fire. He shared them with his buddy Dusky and they told stories of stampedes and bandits until they tired of talking. Tex took off his boots and unrolled his blanket. He didn't mind sleeping under the stars. He put his hat over his face and fell asleep with his head on his pack. During the night a scorpion found itself next to Tex. The scorpion was very tired and, unlike Tex, the scorpion did not want to sleep under the stars. He liked small dark places, like Tex's boot. He crawled into the front of Tex's boot and fell asleep. When Tex awoke in the morning, he couldn't wait to get a jump on the day. He put on his hat, clicked on his belt and gun holsters...