

Ceiling Full of Stars

By Daniel Green

“Just put on *Toy Story* again,” Daddy says.

“He’s watched it twice already today!” Mommy replies.

Daddy lowers his voice. “It doesn’t matter to him, just put the tape in.”

“I’m just starting to prepare dinner. It’ll be another one or two hours. You figure it out.”

Daddy takes a deep breath, puts down his book, and walks over to me. “Hey, buddy. How ‘bout we check out another movie?”

“Okay,” I reply. I love my movies. They’re my favourite things ever. I like the way it feels when I watch them. Like I’m there with all of the characters and they’re my friends. I get to learn about so many other places and people and creatures. So much more fun than the living room.

One time, we went on vacation, and I just wanted to come home to my movies. When I got home, I ran to the bookshelf that has all of my VHS tapes and had such a hard time picking what to watch first. I chose *Toy Story* because it’s my favourite. I love Buzz Lightyear; I think he is so cool. But when he learns he’s a toy and jumps from the railing thinking he can fly, it plays that music and I always cry. I have to. I don’t know why.

I sit down on our big grey sofa. It has holes in it where springs poke through, but we covered them with duct tape. Daddy walks over to the T.V. with a VHS tape in his hands. He shows the cover to me. It says *Toy Story 2* and has Buzz and Woody with a girl-character that I’ve never seen before.

“Let’s try this out for a change,” he says with a smile. He puts the VHS tape into the machine, walks over to the couch and sits down beside me.

Another thing I really like about movies are all of the things that happen before they start. In some movies, there’s this lamp that jumps across the screen smooching the letters “PIXAR” and then smashes the ‘I’ and becomes it. In others, you see a castle, and then it says “Walt Disney” and this magic ball of light goes across the top. I also like it when it says THX and that big noise plays. Sometimes it says, “Coming soon to theatres” and plays this weird future music. I don’t get it though, because it shows trailers for movies I already have on my shelf.

The movie starts and Woody is stolen in a cardboard box. I’m so worried, but Buzz and some other toys go out on a mission to get him back. After running for a while, they all get tired because Woody’s been taken so far away. Buzz keeps them going because he asks, “Come on, fellas. Did Woody give up when Sid had me strapped to a rocket?” They all moan “Nooooo,” and then Buzz says “No!” and asks them, “Did he give up when you threw him out the back of that moving van?” Mr. Potato head replies, “Oh you had to bring that up,” and then Buzz says “No he didn’t! We have a friend in need. And we will not rest until he is safe in Andy’s room.”

It reminds me of the song that they always play: *“You’ve got a friend in me. You’ve got a friend in me. You got troubles and I got ‘em, too. There isn’t anything I wouldn’t do for you. We stick together, we can see it through ‘cause you’ve got a friend in me.”* I love listening to it. My mom loves it too. We always sing it together if she watches it with me. Or if she’s home. She works full-time and my Dad stays home with me. My dad is an author. He writes books and stuff. He knows so much about stories and always picks the best ones when he comes home from Blockbuster with something new. Sometimes I get to go there with him and that’s always fun. I like to look at all the different movies.

I really like when he watches movies with me. So, on most days, I walk into his office and ask him to watch something with me and he usually says “Sure, in five minutes.” So, I go back to my room and play with my toys and walk back in and ask, “Has it been five minutes yet?” And he says “no,” so I walk back to my room and play with my toys and then I go back to his office to ask the same thing and he lets out a deep breath and says “yes.” Then we watch something.

Toy Story 2 ends. They defeat Stinky Pete and get a new cowgirl friend, Jessie.

“Dinner is ready boys!”

“Alrightttt” my dad says in a funny voice. “Just in time.”

“Alriggghtttt” I say as well.

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“Okay, guy. Time to get you in the sack,” Daddy tells me.

“I’ll take him up,” Mommy says.

“Sounds like a plan.” Daddy leans over and kisses me on the head. I hug him and run upstairs. Mommy follows me up and I get ready for bed with her help. I brush my teeth and go through the same thing we always do every day.

She tucks me in. “Don’t let the bed bugs bite!”

I smile. “If they do, I’ll squish them tight with all my might.”

Mommy blows me a kiss. “Atta boy.” She closes the door. I have this awesome Batman poster that looks at me straight on. I love *Batman: The Animated Series*. I’m going to be Batman when I grow up. Or something like that. Before the show starts, the WB turns into the lights of a blimp. The criminals are robbing a bank and then Batman has to catch them. The Batmobile is so cool. The police try their best to get them, but they escape to the top of a building. Batman flies

down out of nowhere and stops them. He stands in front of them and all you can see is the shape of his body. It's kind of scary, but that's the point. He scares the bad guys. He's the good guy. They pull out guns, but Batman uses his Batarangs to hit them away. Batman never uses guns. They're for bad guys. By the time the police catch up, the bad guys are tied up. On top of an even higher building, Batman stands there, watching over Gotham City. He protects people no matter what. It gives me goosebumps every time I watch it.

I change my gaze from the poster to above me. I have glow in the dark stars all over my ceiling. I stare at them. It's like I'm sleeping outside.

After a while of waiting to fall asleep, I'm feeling kind of hungry. I open my door and go outside to tell Mommy, but hear them talking.

"How was your day?" Mommy asks.

"Good, lots of *Toy Story*. The usual."

She sighs. "I don't know. I'm not sure if watching so many movies is a good idea."

"You're not home with him all day... it's a good distraction."

"He should be outside, doing something active."

"He gets bored of that too quickly. I take him to the park quite often, you know. He can't stay there forever. But, a movie... Movies keep him occupied. He rarely breaks focus. Most kids are transfixed by them. And besides, I think these stories are important. They're captivating. It's a way that morals can be taught nowadays. They're like the picture-book Bible stories that we were read as ki—"

"Oh, come on."

"What? Seriously, these are foundational stories that will ultimately form his morals—"

"Mommy! I'm hungry!" I shout.

“Okay! I can bring up some milk and crackers, but you’ll have to brush your teeth again.”

I hear her walk to the kitchen and get some things. The noise of her footsteps as they climb the stairs excite me. I run back into my room and hop on the bed.

She opens the door, turns on the light, and puts the crackers and milk on the table beside me. “Here you go, big guy. You really should get some sleep, though.”

“I know. I was hungry.”

She gives me a weird look. “That’s why you finish your dinner!”

“You’re right. I’m sorry.”

We talk a bit more and I finish my food. I get up to brush my teeth again and Mommy tucks me in for a second time.

I lie in bed and look at the stars, wondering what morals are.