

KAYTLAN MITCHELL EVANS – WRITING SAMPLE

*“S’mores for Breakfast” features Samson Brinxley and his daughter Imogen (Ginny), who are mourning the loss of Aisling, their respective wife and mother. As Samson doesn’t have the skill for spinning bedtime stories that his wife did, Ginny takes it upon herself to write one and have him read it. As he begins to read, he gets sucked into Ginny’s imagination, where Aisling is still alive and well. Everything that unfolds represents the five stages of grief; below is anger. Ginny and Aisling have been kidnapped by a hybrid of a dragon, alligator, and Samson’s Aunt Doris. A giant winged version of Ginny’s late puppy, Eggy, is helping Samson save them.*

Samson watched the landscape slide away beneath him. There was a village of what appeared to be centaurs, but with kitten bodies instead of horses; there were fields where the ground was bouncy; there was even a metropolis composed entirely of different kinds of cake. Samson had always known his daughter was imaginative, but now that his head was literally in the same clouds, he was filled with awe.

“Fortunately, I know where the Dralligadorish livezh,” Eggy called back to Samson. “Sho, unlesh she took them grocery shopping firsh, that’sh probably where they are.”

“Thanks, buddy,” Samson shouted back, petting his soft fur appreciatively. He remembered with a pang when the real Eggy had gotten hit by a car while chasing a ball. That was really the first time anyone in Ginny’s life had died, and they had to explain death to her. Samson was prepared to take the scientific route—he had a book on embalming ready and waiting—but Aisling said that version of death could wait, and simply told Ginny while tucking her in, “Our bodies are just like cups, and while we’re here, they contain us, like this cup of milk. When we die”—she drank the milk—“the cup is empty, but that’s okay, because the cup isn’t really us; we’re just milk.”

“What happens to the milk?” Ginny asked quietly.

“The milk goes...somewhere else. Some people call it Heaven. Eggy’s at a big beach, splashing around all day, eating shoes and sleeping on God’s most expensive sweaters.”

Now, Eggy lighted on a desert-ish patch of land with a thud and a crackle. It was considerably hotter here, Samson noticed. “Where are we?” he asked.

Eggy shrugged his huge shoulder, accidentally pushing Samson off. “Mount Shoop. I’ve never been here before, but I’ve flown pasht it a bunch’a timezh. The Dralligadorish izh a grumpy neighbor, but she alwayzh shendzh me a fruitcake for

Chrishmush. It makesh a pretty good chew toy.”

Samson got up and brushed himself off. Mount Shoop was the least fun place he had seen so far since waking up that morning. They wandered a bit until they found the cave where the Dralligadoris resided. *Shouldn't she live in a swamp?* Samson wondered. *Ginny must have stopped paying attention in class after she heard "jaws of a T-Rex."* “How are we going to rescue them? We have no weapons,” he reminded Eggy.

Eggy held up a TV-sized paw. “No worriezh. I have a plan.” He lifted his left wing, beckoning Samson, who climbed up and was instantly enveloped so snugly in Eggy’s wing that he didn’t even really have to hold on. Eggy then proceeded to whine and paw at the ground.

The Dralligadoris stomped to the entrance, a cigarette hanging daintily from her many ferocious-looking teeth. “What do you want?” she rasped.

Eggy expertly assumed the best puppy-dog eyes she had ever seen. “I wazh jusht in the area, and thought I could shtop by for a vizhit. Maybe we could chat over shome of that fantashtic fruitcake?” He looked away, swinging his front paw back and forth coily.

“Uh...it’s not a good time. Maybe next time, huh?” She started to go back inside.

“Wait!” Eggy barked. “Um...I have shome sheashellzh. I thought maybe they might look nische in your houshe?”

The Dralligadoris softened a bit. “Aw, alright, kid. Just give me a sec.” She disappeared for a moment. They heard some shuffling sounds, and a door slam shut. Then she reappeared, sporting a wide, toothy, lipsticked grin that made Eggy shudder. “Come on in.”

The interior of the cave reeked of menthol and mothballs. The walls were decorated with a host of snail and turtle shells, many of them broken. The furniture was largely vinyl chairs with floral prints, but the floor sported a bearskin rug that made Samson’s heart skip a beat when he peeked out.

“Now, I think I’m outta fruitcake,” she said, “but I might have somethin’ better. I’ll be right back, hon.” She waddled to the kitchen.

Eggy lifted his wing and dropped Samson. “I’m not sure, but I think that door beside the framed cross-stitch of a teddy bear eating a deer is where she hid them when we came in. Hurry, before she comes back!”

Samson ran to the door, opening it as silently as he could. Sure enough, Aisling was

in the little room, which was full of mud. They fell into each other's arms. "Where's Ginny?" he whispered.

She shook her head, eyes brimming with tears. "I don't know," she whispered back. "She fell off when we were passing over that bouncy field."

"Well, I guess that's a good place to fall if you're going to," he said. "Come on. Eggy's helping us. Let's escape, and then go find her." He took her hand, and tentatively peeked out the door.

Eggy's eyes were bugging out of his head. "*Hurry*," he whispered furiously. "She's coming back any shecond. She'zh jusht sho long that she hash to make a five-point turn to come back, but she'zh finishing the third now!"

Discarding decorum, Samson pulled on Aisling's hand and made a break for it. They were just reaching the entrance when they heard, "I have this hide left over from—hey, why is that door open?"

Eggy poured every seashell from his bag on a chair. "Well, thish wazh fun, but I gotta shkedaddle. Shee you around!" and fled as well.

As they all started running, Samson noticed cracks in the ground under them, and some yellowish liquid oozing from between them. It had also gotten even hotter. "What smells so good?" he shouted. "It smells like...my mom's house." He almost stopped for a moment, but forced himself to keep running. The air, he realized, smelled like bread baking, and...oh no.

A horrid screech emanated from the cave behind them. "YOU STUPID, UNGRATEFUL ANIMAL!"

Samson suddenly recollected the angriest he had ever seen his daughter.

"HOW DARE YOU TAKE HER FROM ME?"

Ginny was three, and they were feeding her chicken noodle soup at Grandma's for the first time. She loved it instantly, and had eaten half the bowl, when she noticed the little orange circles floating around. "Was dis?" she asked innocently, poking it with a spoon.

Before Samson could stop his mother, she was informing Ginny, "They're carrots, dear."

Next thing they knew, soup was everywhere. "You *tricked* me!" she had screeched, banging her spoon in the soup several times before pushing the bowl off her tray altogether.

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“SHE WAS MINE,” the Dralligadoris was bellowing. “I GOT HER MYSELF, AND YOU STOLE HER.”

A low rumble came from under the ground. “Watch out!” Samson shouted, grabbing his wife before she ran over the bulge in the crusty earth. Sure enough, a tire-sized piece of carrot burst out of the ground.

Mount Shoop, Samson realized with a groan, was not only actually Mount Soup, but a volcano—and it was about to blow.

“Hurry, guys, get on!” Eggy caught up and bent down so they could mount him. He took off, but was closely followed by the Dralligadoris. Soup was erupting everywhere, and Eggy kept opening his mouth to lick whatever he could.

“Not to be critical, Eggy,” Samson shouted over the intermittent explosions, “but what took you so long to catch up? We weren’t that far ahead of you and you’re, well, a huge dog. With wings.”

“It’sh hard to shay,” Eggy shouted back, “but it’sh definitely not becauzhe I ate shome bread azh I wazh running.”

“GIVE HER BACK,” the Dralligadoris screamed.

“Go shave your home!” Eggy shouted back to her. “It’sh about to get shouped!”

Strangely enough, only moments after he proclaimed it, the mountain ruptured. Chicken bits the size of cars and noodles the size of buses rained from the peak, and the mountain was doused in soup. The Dralligadoris screeched, and flew back to salvage what she could.