



It was the summer of Covid-19 and the entire world was in 'Lockdown'. The kids of 6RW, like the rest of the world's children, were stuck inside their houses. For the first few weeks, they had been thrilled at having the opportunity to have time off school. They could stay up late at night, mess around on their phones and tablets, have lie-ins and eat whatever they wanted, when they wanted. Josh and Sam had managed to reach pole position on the leader board for Fortnite, despite falling out and making up 137 times; Seth had learned every single line of dialogue from his favourite film, Titanic, and acted out every part in his bathroom (even Jack's final scene, which Seth re-enacted in his bath); Mia had spent every day stalking Harry Styles online and was in the process of officially changing her name to Mia Styles; Sky had taken over Charli D'Amelio's top spot on TikTok busting her own moves and choreographing her own routines and Jacob had solved every type of Rubik's Cube known to mankind, even designing and creating his own version: the 'Jay-cube'. In short, 6RW had done everything. Now, they were bored.

One evening, a message popped up on Olivia's mobile phone. It was from her class What's App group: a message from Thea.

Thea: 'I'm bored.'

Olivia typed a reply: 'Me too.'

Other kids from 6RW joined in.

Maryam: 'Same.'

Daisy: 'Me tooooooo!'

Eve: 'Wait. What's going on?'

Rosie: 'We're all boooooored!'

Thea: 'I wish we could see each other.'

Olivia: 'I know, I really miss everyone. I wish we could all get together.'

Isla was the next to reply: 'We can't even go to the park.'

Alfie S replied with a little devil emoji: 🍆 Or can we?’

Spencer added his own devil emoji: 🍆 What are you thinking?’

Alfie S: ‘Homefield Park. Let’s all meet there tonight.’

Mikey wrote: ‘Yesssss! I’m in!’

Valeria joined in at this point: ‘How can we meet in the park? We’ll all be spotted leaving our homes. We can’t be on the streets!’

‘Lera’s right. It’s impossible!’ Harriet’s message read.

Zedd wrote: ‘We need to come up with a plan... Leave it with me.’

While the others continued to discuss ideas, Olivia sighed and put down her phone. She couldn’t see how anyone would be able to leave their houses – for a start, their parents wouldn’t let them. It was a nice idea, but it was never going to happen...

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Janek was getting into bed with his cuddly polar bear toy, quietly singing a song to himself, “I am Jan the good man, oh yes I am, yeah yeah yeah...” when his phone buzzed.

It was a message from Bill: ‘Meet me outside.’

“What?” Janek muttered to himself. He typed: ‘What are you talking about? Are you crazy?’

‘Just come downstairs!’ Bill’s message said.

Sighing and shaking his head, Jan pulled on his Chesswood leaver’s hoodie over his polar bear pyjamas and tiptoed out of his home until he was outside the front door.

It was dark and quiet. Only the occasional sound of seagulls having an argument could be heard. Jan peered into the night.

“Psst!”

He jumped and whirled around. He couldn't see anything.

"Janek! Over here!"

There was a peculiar-shaped shadow on the ground. Jan crept towards the voice that came from it.

"Look down!" hissed the voice.

Jan did as he was told (for once) and burst out laughing. The grubby, muddy faces of Bill, Zedd and Caitlin were peering up at him from an inky black hole.

"I don't believe this!" Jan giggled. "What are you doing here?"

The children grinned up at him.

"We're having a 6RW reunion!" smiled Caitlin.

"Zedd came up with an awesome plan for us all to escape," whispered Bill.

Zedd was beaming. "Tunnels!"

"No way!" laughed Jan.

"See for yourself," shrugged Bill, scrambling up from the hole to show Jan. "It was all Zedd's idea."

Zedd patted Caitlin on the back. "But Caitlin came up with the design and how to build the tunnel. She's a genius!"

"It's true! I am!" Caitlin nodded.

Jan was in awe as he peered into the crater past Caitlin and Zedd. It dropped down into darkness, but from the light of his phone, he could tell that it was big enough to fit 11-year-old children in.

"What happens now?" he asked.

Bill pulled out a crumpled, dirty piece of paper, on which there was a rough sketch of a map, dotted with scribblings and crossings out. "We pick everyone up and head to Homefield Park!"

"Who's next on the list?" asked Caitlin, retying her hair in a ponytail showing she meant business.

"Wiktor," Bill replied. He looked around and pointed in the opposite direction. "We need to go that way."

Zedd passed Jan a large spoon. "Get ready for some serious digging."

"With a spoon?" asked Jan, incredulously.

"It's that or your fingernails," said Caitlin, firmly, wagging her dirty hands. "Let's go."

Caitlin led them back into the tunnel. As Jan passed Bill, Bill patted him on the back. "Nice PJs."

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Wiktor was sitting at his desk, announcing the news to his lamp, when there was a quiet knock at his bedroom door.

He got up to answer it and squawked in surprise when he came face to face with Emily. She quickly put her hand over his mouth and shoved him back into his room, closing the door behind her.

"What are you doing here?" Wiktor hissed when he'd got over the shock.

"I'm breaking you out!" Emily waggled her eyebrows, her hands on her hips.

"You're joking?"

"Nope. There're a load of us outside, waiting. So hurry up, get your shoes on."

Wiktor didn't have time to ask any more questions so he hurriedly put on some trainers, wondering if he had actually fallen asleep and was now dreaming.

"Ready?" Emily asked. "We'll have to tiptoe past your parents' room."

"Ready," said Wiktor, shaking his head vigorously to check he was awake.

Emily started to open his door and then stopped abruptly and turned back to Wiktor. "By the way, just now, who were you talking to?"

"No one," Wiktor looked confused.

"But I heard your voice," Emily cocked her head to the side.

"Oh. That. I was practising being a newsreader," Wiktor shrugged.

Emily thought about this for a moment and then nodded. "Fair enough."

They left Wiktor's room.

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Lucas and Alfie H were whispering excitedly in the darkness of the tunnel. Mariama, feeling her way along the damp, earthy walls, bumped into the back of Lucas.

"Who's that?" squeaked Lucas, startled.

"Mariama. Are you okay?"

"Fine," said Lucas, shakily. "You just surprised me."

"What are you two doing?" Mariama asked.

"Well, we've come to get Summer," Alfie H said, warily.

"O...kay. And is this where she lives?" Mariama gestured to the tunnel opening, which was letting in a much-needed, cool breeze.

Lucas nodded, "Yeah, it's just that..."

"What?" Mariama looked between the two boys, who were shifting from one foot to another.

Alfie H blurted out, "She's got snakes!"

"So what? They're not killer snakes!" Mariama rolled her eyes.

"Good, you can go and get Summer then!" Lucas pushed her towards the tunnel's exit, just as Summer jumped down through the hole. The three children shrieked in fright.

"It's only me!" cried Summer, brightly. "I've got Ami behind me."

At that moment, Ami jumped down into the tunnel herself. "Hi!" she grinned.

"How did you get here?" Lucas asked.

"Summer texted me that you were on your way so I snuck out and crept along the shadows in the street. I was like a ninja!" Ami beamed, darting around to demonstrate.

"Awesome!" said Alfie H. "We just need to get Anakin, then we can meet the others at our assembly point."

"Where's that?" asked Summer, as the children began shuffling along the tunnel.

"Right in the middle of where all the different tunnels meet," explained Lucas. "Everyone else has been collected now, and once we're all together, we can dig to Homefield Park."

"Cool!" said Ami. "Let's go!"

The kids hurried forwards, but Alfie H kept glancing over his shoulder.

Lucas noticed and asked, "What are you looking for?"

"You don't think Summer's snakes have followed her, do you?" Alfie H whispered.

"Course not," Lucas snorted, as if it were a ridiculous idea. Then, "Move faster!"

The boys quickened their pace, trying to look nonchalant.

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Anakin was busting some moves in front of his mirror, practising his waffle dance, when his phone buzzed.

It was Zedd: 'Meet us outside.'

"Whaaaa?" Anakin whispered to himself. He typed a message into his phone: 'What do you mean?'

Zedd: 'We're breaking you out! Come on!'

Anakin whooped, then did a victory walking dance around his room. "Oh yeah, oh yeah, I'm getting' outta here, oh yeah, oh yeah!"

His phone buzzed again. 'Stop dancing and hurry up!'

Zedd knew him too well. Anakin robot-danced out of his door.

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A while later, 6RW was reunited in the centre of the underground labyrinth. Several of the children had torches, but most of them were using the lights from their phones to illuminate their surroundings. They were having the best time.

Mia, Sky and Maryam were already practising TikTok dances, while Seth attempted an opera rap which he'd written about Mr Voycheck (*I don't know how to spell his name but I did try looking it up!*) being the best teacher in the world and Alfie S circled them doing his funky chicken dance. Rosie and Harriet were busy organising a group into first and second wave spoon-diggers, while Isla and Daisy bent over Bill's map, discussing which route to take with Bill; Thea and Eve were making artistic shadow puppets by the light of Josh's torch, while Josh did a voiceover in silly voices, and Sam was leading a game of Grandma's Footsteps, but getting very squeakily angry because Jacob, Spencer, Alfie H and Olivia weren't listening to him, which resulted in Sam stamping up and down on his hat, then picking it up and putting it back on, then throwing it on the floor again and re-stamping up and down on it. Alfie H was giggling so much, his glasses were steaming up.

While all of this was going on, Lucas and Wiktor were having a 'who can be the most serious newsreader' staring competition; Emily and Ami were comparing their sparkly slippers and fancy PJs, twirling and strutting up and down as if they were on a catwalk; Mariama, Anakin, Summer and Lera were playing their own game of Grandma's Footsteps where Lera was trying to be patient with Summer, Mariama and Anakin who kept either running towards her 'invisibly' or rolling across the floor crying out, "I'm a duck. Miaow!"

And finally, Mikey was whizzing up and down on his scooter in front of Caitlin and Brooke (who had been in Lockdown with her mum) trying to impress them with his best stunts.

All in all, 6RW was having so much fun, that not a lot of digging was getting done. Eventually, Harriet noticed the time.

"Wait, 6RW! Everyone!" she cried, while Rosie jumped up and down flapping to get everyone's attention.

"It's 7.30 in the morning! We've been here all night!" Harriet continued.

Everyone gasped and checked their watches or phones.

"What do we do now?" asked Maryam.

"I say we still go to the park," shrugged Jacob.

"Shouldn't we go home? Our parents will wonder where we are," pointed out Isla.

"Really though? Who here lies in every day?" asked Sam, hopefully, who was always thinking about sleep.

"I do," Alfie H nodded, who thought about sleep almost as much as Sam.

Everyone else put up their hands or murmured in agreement.

"That settles it then," said Spencer with a fist pump. "The park it is!"

The others all cheered and whooped and Isla and Daisy led the way to the appropriate tunnel while Harriet and Rosie gathered the first-wave spooners.

"Are we ready?" the girls called out.

"I was born ready!" yelled Seth, waving his spoon around and nearly taking out Sky's eyes.

"Then let's go!" Caitlin shouted, leading the charge.

The class swarmed forwards, ready to dig.

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"Are we nearly there yet?" moaned Mia, blowing the hair out of her face.

Janek was also getting fed up. "Yeah! We've been doing this for ages!"

Thea was so busy looking down that she bumped into Olivia, who was in front of her.

"Hey!" cried Olivia.

"Sorry!" said Thea. "What's happening? Why have we stopped?"

"I don't know," said Olivia. She tapped Daisy on the shoulder. "Who's at the front?"

Daisy shrugged, "I don't know. I can't remember which wave of spooners we're on now. Hellooooooooo! Are we there yet?"

At the front of the line, there was a heated discussion between Eve and Jacob. They were both certain that they were at Homefield Park, but they were arguing about whether they needed to go left or right from the place they had stopped.

"It's left!" insisted Eve.

"It's not" protested Jacob. "It's definitely right!"

"I'm telling you, if we want to come up at the playground, we need to go left. We're by the gazebo!" Eve jabbed her finger at the map.

Jacob ran his hand through his hair. "We're by the skate park! We need to go right!"

The two children continued arguing until Rosie cleared her throat loudly. She was peering over Eve's shoulder. Eve and Jacob turned around to look at her. Rosie plucked the map from Eve's fingers and turned it upside down.

Bill was stifling a laugh. Eve and Jacob looked at the map, then back to Bill and Rosie, then back to the map again.

"No way..." murmured Eve.

"We didn't..." muttered Jacob.

"Yep," Bill nodded.

"You had the map upside down," smiled Rosie, raising her eyebrows.

Janek shuffled forward, "Let me see that."

"So where are we?" asked Alfie S who was behind Jacob.

A new voice interrupted them, bringing their attention to the hole above. "It's funny you should ask that."

Eve gasped. "Wait. What?"

"Is that who I think it is?" asked Harriet.

"Noooooo..." Anakin shook his head in disbelief.

A black pair of Converse shoes dropped into the hole, dangling and swinging in front of Anakin's eyes.

"Well hellooooo, 6RW," cooed Mrs R-W. "How nice of you to visit us at school."

"Well, slap my sassy bum cheeks!" cried Jan.

THE END

'AUTHOR'S NOTE'

Dear 6RW,

I hope you enjoy this story; it's only a little fun. Obviously, I don't know where you live or what kind of homes you have so I have no idea if you live in flats or houses; if you share a room or have your own, so if some of the details seem incorrect, just go with it.

Also, I do understand it would be impossible to dig tunnels with spoons (funny though, right?) and trying to do all of that in one night, burrowing through the whole of Worthing to collect each other is also a RIDICULOUS idea, but again, just go with it. If Harry Potter can have flying cars and enchanted clocks, I don't see why we can't have a little magic in our story too.

Lastly, OBVIOUSLY in the real Covid situation, we all socially distance and wouldn't gather in groups, but if I followed the rules exactly in our story, we'd all have to stay where we are and have no adventures at all. And where's the fun in that?! Also, I know in reality, that most of you weren't having lie-ins or doing whatever you wanted in Lockdown - that your parents were keeping you in check (quite right!); again, all just a bit of fun.

Lastly lastly, I have made little jokes and teases about you in this story. I hope you all know that they are meant with fondness and affection, and not in a mean way. (Although I do love the idea of Jan in polar bear PJs cuddling a polar bear).

Lastly lastly absolutely lastly, you've been a fab class. Absolutely bonkers at times, but a lot of fun. I'll miss you. Now off you go into the big world of high school. Don't lose your sparkle and sass.

Love Mrs R-W 😊