

## THE WAY HOME

My name is Beth, I'm eleven years old and I live just outside Salida, Colorado with my mom, dad and two little brothers. I also have a horse named Lucy, she is a red roan. My father is a construction worker and my mom works at the bank.

Time has been going by fast recently. I wish it would slow down because memories aren't being enjoyed. So, I think me and my family should get out of the house and enjoy some family time together. My father has been talking about going on a family road trip to Dinosaur National Monument which is in the middle of nowhere. The family definitely needs to get out of the house for a little bit. However, I feel like if we get out of the house we should go somewhere a little more popular. Like, um let me think, the Grand Canyon, yeah that's a good place.

The cold air fills my lungs as I go outside to feed the animals. The smell of sweet feed in the large blue plastic tote reminds me of yellow cake on a summer morning. Feeding the animals makes me feel like a professional animal chef. Mixing in the sweet yummy molasses brings back memories of chocolate ice cream on the beach. Lucy's favorite thing to eat is the yummy sweet feed with molasses and minerals.

After finishing feeding Lucy I ran inside with shivers squirming down my spine because of the freezing morning air. Once I got inside I fed

## THE WAY HOME

Reece, Yeti, Blue, Sandy and Sam; my five dogs who definitely knew it was time to eat. We have a lot of big breed dogs to protect the smaller animals on the farm.

After much debate our family decided we were going to the monument and today is the day we will begin our journey. Blood was quickly gushing through my veins because of all of my excitement. While my mom and dad put all the suitcases in the back of the car I gave my little brothers some toys and their blankets that smell like the lavender soap my mother uses. Everyone gets buckled up and then we are off.

Green grasses and blue skies during the drive are the prettiest things my eyes have ever seen. I wished time could stand still but the sites flashed by.

A few hours into the ride my little brothers started crying due to a loud argument my parents were in. The car was starting to go off the windy road, my father jerking back and forth on the tight wheel, but his efforts made it worse. Sliding off the road the car started flipping, everything turned black, my mind went blank.

I woke up finding myself buried under a pile of debris. I started to cry. My cries became screams as my body told my brain about its pain. As I removed the debris and stood up, I looked for my family. Limping a little bit,

## THE WAY HOME

I searched and searched. I could not find anyone. "Did someone come and find my family but they couldn't find me?", I asked myself. I hope they are still alive.

With no one in sight I started to look for my phone. I found it, shattered to pieces, what will I do now. I try to comfort myself with a reminder of the remoteness, "I wouldn't have had any bars anyway", I say. I made the big decision; find THE WAY HOME.

As I walked I fought the urge to cry, but I loose and bawl my eyes out. I cried so hard I felt deep pain in my chest. I was trying to get as far as I could. I wanted to get home and see my family. I challenged God in prayer, "bring me home, bring me home. Why are you doing this to me? What did I do to deserve this?" To have this happen is my worst nightmare.

My dad warned me of the risk, taking rides from strangers. I think he would understand. I know he would do it too. I slowly lifted my thumb in the air.

About fifteen minutes pass. My hero then finds me and states he can take me as far as the canyon. I quietly but emotionally told him thank you. I was very nervous getting into a car with a stranger. I had to. I wanted to go home.

## THE WAY HOME

The ride was long as my mind raced. I tried not to talk to the man. He's my hero but yet still a stranger. Finally home, I hugged him. I say thank you. I want to say more.

I got out of the car and told myself it is just a ten minute walk from here. I can do this. I feel weak throughout my body but I would do anything to get home.

The big field we owned was all I had left. In the distance I could see people running towards me. They are dressed in black. They tell me they thought I was dead. I don't know them. "Where's my mom, my dad, my little brothers' ", I cried. The lady whimpers, "I'm sorry sweetie," Like an eruption I take a deep breath as I wake from my dream.