

Second Place Prize: Grade 4-6  
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Grade 5/6

## The Path to Survival

I no longer had any purpose, family, or hope even if I made it to China, what would I do without my family? It was two years ago when the humans started to interfere with the ecosystem. The rain was scarce and the food was low, and the biodiversity was off balance so the humans decided that it was their job to fix it. Within two weeks of the dry season, the humans put feeding tubes all over North and South America. The humans thought that if animals couldn't kill each other it would help. In time the population of animals went back up to normal but the humans did not stop. Soon the woods got more and more full of animals and now there is barely any room.

In respect of the wolf way, Father Wolf, Mother Wolf, Joseph, Xander, and myself refused the human food. But it was only one year in when my brother Xander was killed. Xander found a fresh deer carcass and because he was so desperate he had to eat it. The next day when Xander went out for a walk he was killed by humans and found as a threat to the

environment. That was when we left. The death of my brother was caused by humans so we left. There were only a few places where we could go, but having your brother killed is a game changer. Last week it was decided we would go to China.

Father Wolf had heard of a boat that could take us to China but it was at the edge ocean. Since we had nothing to pack we left there and then. Travelling was hard because we had to scavenge for food, and whenever we came across the water we all had to drink, thirsty or not. It was sunset when we found a crystal-clear creek, but there was more fish than water. Lucky for us the creek was so full that dead fish were everywhere. It was the first good meal we had in a very long time.

Early the next morning we set off strong and hard, by nightfall we were not too far away from our destination, the ocean. Weary and tired with no food or water all day, we hope there will be food on the boat that will take us to China. Midnight was peaceful as a daisy and as quiet as a mouse, until I heard footsteps. I lifted my head to see there are men with guns pointing it at my family. Scared to near death I howl at the moon to wake my family.

Father wolf wakes from his slumber and soon spots the men and works to wake the rest of them. When the rest wake we all run for the ocean fast as we can go.

Because Mother Wolf and Joseph just woke up they are slow but still fast enough to outrun the men. The men eventually stopped to rest their sore and tired muscles. We ran ten more minutes and stopped. The ocean in a running distance now. Now we run to the ocean, and when we get there we have perfect timing, the boat was just about to leave.

It was then I realized Mother Wolf and Joseph were not far from the boat but they were closer to the men. Me and Father Wolf were in the boat and all we could do was wait and watch. Then one of the men raised his gun and shot it. Joseph fell and his eyes filled with fear, his soul filled with despair. When the man who shot Joseph got to Josephs lifeless body, he slung him over his shoulder like a sack of potatoes.

Mother Wolf was now almost to the boat but it started to pull away. Mother Wolf lunged. She was too late she barely touched the boat as she fell in the water. Mother Wolf was

swallowed by a wave and lost a battle with death. It was now just me and Father Wolf.

The waves were just as high as my sadness and sorrow.

“They are gone to a better place.” Father Wolf stated. “We must move on.”

Tears started to form in my eyes but I blinked them away. I couldn't help but think that all this sorrow and torture and death was because of the humans. I thought right.

It was sunrise but wanted to run and meet the sun half way but I couldn't. I was trapped on a boat with no water, food, or safety. Hunger and suffering, not one happy memory to save of this trip.

Crash! Bang! Yelp! Pushing my legs forward I see Father Wolf. His breath is slow and blood is leaking from his side.

Father Wolf whispers to me “Hide and don't come out until the humans have left.”

Those were Father wolf's last words before closing his tired eyes and releasing his last sore full breath. I looked around for any danger before I looked at Father Wolfs lifeless body and spotted a silver blade sticking out of his side. I sprinted and hid as a man walked toward Father Wolf and hurled him into the deep sea.

I no longer had any purpose, family, or hope even if I made it to China what would I do without my family. I laid down on a cargo box and this time I did not hold back my tears. When I woke up I headed voices, hundreds of thousands even! I took my chance and darted off the cargo box into the crowded streets of China. I made it! Until I realized there were no woods anywhere.

I walked to a silent spot, not a sound. I rested my sore and weary paws, I lay my head and rest my eyes while feeling my soul drift away into darkness. The Earth is a horrible and reached place where I was born and I died.