

**BRIEF:** *One moment, you're shopping by your parent's side. The next - they're gone. The supermarket, once familiar, now feels different. Sounds blur together, figures move past you, and every aisle looks the same. Do you stay put? Do you search? What if you take a wrong turn? What if something unexpected happens? Your challenge is to bring this moment to life in your writing. You could write from the perspective of the lost child, trapped in confusion. Or maybe the panicked parent, searching desperately. First-person or third-person - choose the perspective that will make your scene the most powerful. Take your time. Choose your words carefully. And most importantly - make us feel like we're right there, lost in the supermarket with you/your character.*

*What I am looking for:*

- *A strong sense of place – make the reader see where you are.*
- *A compelling moment – focus on a scene, not a full story.*
- *Descriptive language – don't just tell us what happens - show us with fantastic description and vocabulary.*
- *Tension and emotion – panic, curiosity, adventure ... all well paced. Bring it to life!*

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## **YEAR 6 WINNER: Hadi Kazmi**



"Mummy! Mummy! I finally found the packet of chips I was looking for!" I exclaimed. I didn't hear the soothing voice I was expecting. Turning around, I noticed that she was nowhere to be seen. "M-mummy?" I mumbled, perplexed. "Where are you? Mummy!" I called out, but it came to no avail. 'What if she forgo-' I thought to myself, but shook my head 'No, she would never.' I pivoted around and took hesitant steps, trying to spot her familiar red coat, but unfamiliar faces filled my view. 'What aisle would she be in? Think, think, think!' I demanded myself, but the deafening silence didn't allow me to.

'She has to be somewhere, but where?' I checked all the aisles. The more I looked, the more anxiety in me aggravated with sweat dripping down my cheeks. I fiddled with my fingers, my mind racing with pessimism. Then I came to the last aisle. 'She has to be here, no matter what.' But she wasn't. Her absence from my sight caused a river of tears to flow out of my eyes. I grimaced. Cold pain stabbed at my heart. 'Where is she? Where is she!' Busy shoppers rushed past, making disturbed faces as they saw my expression. I saw my reflection in one of the metal shelves, towering upon me. It was blurry since tears filled my eyes, but I could make out the fact that I was as pale as a candle. More negative thoughts crossed my mind. 'What if I'm left here alone forever, as if I were on an island? Stranded. Isolated. Forgotten.' Then I heard the loud speaker. "Register two now open." This sparked an idea. Mum could be there! My face brightened with renewed hope, and I raced to check my last resort. My eyes darted around, but I was soon met with the horrid truth that she wasn't there. At this point, my vision blurred, sounds were muffled, the world around me started to spin and I became light-headed. My breath shortened, my legs started to wobble and my balance faded. That's the last thing I can recall. Beyond that moment, my memory stands blank.

I woke up; smooth, reassuring and comfortable arms wrapped around me. "M-mummy? Is that you? Mummy!" This time, I didn't shout with anxiety. I shouted with relief. She heaved a sigh. "My poor baby! You'd passed out!" Tears streamed down her red face and her bloodshot eyes looked fatigued; most probably from frantic searching. I'd been looking for her so much that she'd ended up finding me! I tightly hugged my mother. No words needed to be uttered. All I cared about was that I was with her and she was with me. "I love you. I'll never ever lose you again." she whispered into my ear, her voice breaking. There it was, her mellifluous tone. I could hear the fear and relief deep inside of it. I didn't reply. I didn't need to. Mum already knew how I felt. She could feel the wet tears while my head was buried into her shoulder. "Let's go home." I sniffled. And so we did, with solace washing over both of us.

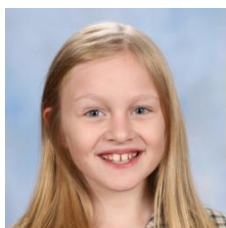
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## **YEAR 5 WINNER: Evie Schutz**



THUD! Roarus crashed to the cold, hard floor. "OW!" he wailed as pain slowly cascaded down his green, stuffing filled arm. He scanned his eyes around the maze-like supermarket. Unfamiliar faces crowded around the shelves. The smell of fresh bread wafted in the air. The fluorescent lights which hung from the ceiling shone brightly. Trolley marks snaked around the grubby, once white floor.

Seconds ago, three year old Elsie ventured down busy aisles by her Mother's side, clutching her most beloved toy, Roarus. But now poor Roarus lay motionless on his side. Feeling like there was a huge hole inside him. Panic rushed through his body, filling every last happy thought with fear. The supermarket floor got more uncomfortable by the second. He waited there, feeling numb all over. Where was his Elsie?

It struck him like lightning. Roarus's stomach flipped and cartwheeled. Fear flooded his mind. His heart hammered uncontrollably against his fluffy chest. The sound of Elsie's cheerful voice had vanished. 'What ifs' swirled around inside him creating a tornado of panic and shock. 'What if Elsie doesn't find me!', 'What if I'm stuck here forever!'. 'What if I never see my best friend again?!'.

Little did he know, small, blonde Elsie stood behind him, scared and trembling. Her terrified gaze shifted to where her favorite teddy was laying on the floor beside her. Elsie's sticky, chubby hand snatched her cuddly companion. Roarus was lifted into a tight hug. Warmth and joy slowly seeped into his body. He recognised the familiar embrace of his precious Elsie. Delight exploded like fireworks inside Roarus. Happiness overpowered his worry. Once again, he felt safe and protected.

Roarus studied Elsie's face. He looked into her sorrowful eyes. Realisation washed over him, he was once again reunited with his Elsie, but they were lost. Elsie's red face crumbled as she began to sob. Her teary eyes darted up and down the aisle, desperately searching for her mother.

Slowly, Elsie aimlessly shuffled her feet forwards. Her bright pink gumboots squelched on the tiled floor. She brought Roarus into a tighter hug, scared he might escape the safety of her grasp. With caution, she made her way to the aisle titled 'Lollies'. Concerned eyes stared down at him and Elsie. Curious shoppers asked Elsie if she was okay. Elsie refused to answer, scared of the strangers.

Elsie held on tightly to Roarus's paw for comfort. She slowly walked along the aisle. Mentos after lollipop, lolly snake after freckle. It all became a blur as Elsie's warm tears dripped onto Roarus's head. Roarus felt Elsie's chest tighten. Worry once again controlled him. Wanting to avoid the unrecognisable people, Elsie kept walking.

The smell of coffee hung in the air as Elsie wandered into the next aisle. She froze, transfixed at the wonderful sight that stood before her. Roarus heard a familiar shout of relief "Elsie!". A blast of happiness pulled Elsie into her Mother's outstretched arms. Roarus felt himself sandwiched in the middle of a big, squeeze hug. With his face pressed against Elsie's purple fluffy jumper, Roarus knew everything was going to be okay.



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## **YEAR 4 WINNER: Evie Goh**

My mum wore a dainty colourful red dress, her long golden hair waving like the waves at the beach. I wondered why she always bothered to dress up so nicely for the supermarket. It was the most boring place on earth.

I held my mum's hand as we sauntered through the shops. Picking out what we needed. Milk, sausages, nutella, apples and many more supplies. We were walking through an aisle side by side until I saw a box stuffed with mouth watering candy. I felt the tightness of my mum's hands slipping away from mine as if butter licked our hands. I heard the delicious candy calling me. Closer.... Closer I stepped towards the treasure with my eyes locked on the candy and my hands worked on their own will. They reached forward and grabbed the box. I turned around to ask my mum if I could buy it and I saw no one. My heart raced against my rib cage as my breathing intensified. My tummy filled with a range of emotions. Loneliness, anxiety and worry quickly extinguished my earlier excitement and happiness.

Bang! The box fell to the floor, scattering the candy everywhere. I stumbled forward into the direction I think my mum went. I sprinted through all the aisles, searching for my mum. I ran and ran - CRASH! - I collided with an old lady's trolley.

The lady screamed in my ear for being clumsy and spilling all her groceries. However, her screams only vaguely registered in my mind. The lady's red face was in my personal space but my eyes were searching rapidly for any sign of my mum. My eyes teared up, my vision blurred. At the corner of my eye, I saw a flash of red. Instinctively, I darted towards the red fabric like a bull in rage. Once I reached there, relief washed over me. This proved to be temporary as I looked up to see an unfamiliar face in the red dress.

My mouth trembled and hot tears flooded down my cheeks. I thought this would be the end of me being lost. Here I was, back at the start of my journey. All these crazy thought bubbles hit me at once. Will I ever go home? What if mum leaves me? Will I ever get to sleep in my soft comfy bed again? Just as I fall into endless despair, a familiar voice calls me. I turn around. Am I saved?