

DAVID'S DIARY

THE SUMMER CAMP DISASTER



USA TODAY BESTSELLING AUTHOR

BUNMI LADITAN

ILLUSTRATED BY ELISA ROCCHI



DAVID'S DIARY



THE SUMMER CAMP
DISASTER

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IN DAVID'S DIARY**

The Summer Camp Disaster

The Science Fair Sabotage

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(coming October 2026)

**DAVID'S
DIARY** **BOOK
1**

THE SUMMER CAMP DISASTER



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**ROCKY PINES
SUNSHINE CAMP**

To: David Jesse King and Family

Dear David,

Congratulations! You're invited to Rocky Pines Sunshine Camp this summer! Your youth group submitted a wonderful application. We noticed you decided to also submit one on your own. Your passion for nature is one of a kind, as shown by your ten-page report "Fire Ants: Why They're Awesome." Super creative! The live fire ants you included with the report were a . . . surprise. We released them back into the wild, although a few did escape the cardboard box you packed them in.

We are excited to have you and your church group with us this summer. But please leave the ants (and all other insects or animals) at home.

Sincerely,

Melinda Howard

Rocky Pines Sunshine Camp Director



To: Mom, Dad

From: DavidDaLionSlayer7711923@CampMailSite.com

Subject: BEST DAY EVER OF MY LIFE

Dear Mom and Dad,

We made it! The bus pulled into Rocky Pines Sunshine Camp at 9:06 P.M. on the dot. I'm tired but as excited as 1,400 bees in a honey factory. Thank you so so so so much for letting me go to real, honest-to-goodness, actual sleepaway camp! I made sure to apologize to Ms. Melinda about the whole live-fire-ants thing like you told me to. I hope she knows I only poked holes in the box so they could breathe. I hope Tommy and Bobby (my favorite ants) are doing all right.

All the kids from church are in the same cabin as me, and guess what? Nate and I are sharing a bunk bed! I'm on the top bunk because he's afraid to fall off in the middle of the night and crack his head open. I'm not scared of cracking my head open because I brought superglue. Don't get mad that I didn't tell you I packed it. I know you said I can no longer use superglue without permission since I accidentally glued my fingers together that one time. But my *101 Survival Tips for Noobs* book said it was a necessary tool for camping. I promise to use it only in emergencies like if I need to glue a sandwich to a tree to hunt deer if I get lost.

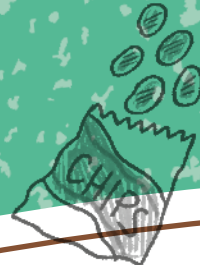
Pastor Joab (I like to call him "the General" because of his love for rules) just read us the Cabin Dos and Don'ts. There are at least five hundred. Okay, maybe only ten, but they feel like five hundred. He's already taken away Nick's fireworks, the whole cheese pizza Eli had in his backpack, and Hector's guinea pig. The guinea pig is on his way home in an Uber.

I miss both of you already but not enough to come home yet. Try not to have too much fun at home without me. Don't let Ben go into my room, please. It's a little-brother-free zone. Tell him I'll bring him a stick back for his birthday if he stays out of my stuff. If not, I'll bring him a rattlesnake. I'll know if he does or not because I've set up several booby traps.

Love your favorite child,
David

Send

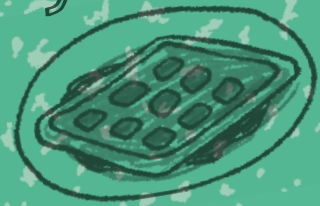


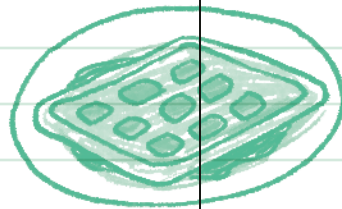


This Diary Belongs to
David Jesse
King



yum!





HA-HA

Rocky Pines Sunshine Camp, Day 1

TIME: 8:00 A.M.

LOCATION: Cabin C, Top Bunk

FEELING: EXCITED. Let the adventures begin!

Dear Diary,

I can't wait to jump into Lake Rocky Pines in one of those big red-and-white-striped inner tubes! Or climb a tall oak tree! Or see a black bear! Or fly down the mountain on the zip line! This is going to be the best week of my life.

Mom and Dad only agreed to let me come after I promised to be good and not cause any problems. Although I never actually try to cause problems. They just seem to happen to me.

I miss my dogs, Chips and Soda, but other than that I'm super happy.

My back tooth is super wiggly. If I lose it here, I wonder if my parents will send me some money. I hope so because I could use it at the canteen (that's the fancy name for the camp's gift shop) to buy cotton candy. Maybe I should try to knock out a couple of extra teeth because the canteen has Pop Rocks too.

Gotta go! The General said breakfast starts in thirty minutes, and Nate is nervous we'll be late if we don't go brush our teeth right now.



Rocky Pines Sunshine Camp, Day 1

TIME: 8:00 P.M.

LOCATION: Cabin C, Top Bunk

FEELING: AWFUL. The worst. Camp is ruined.

Dear Diary,

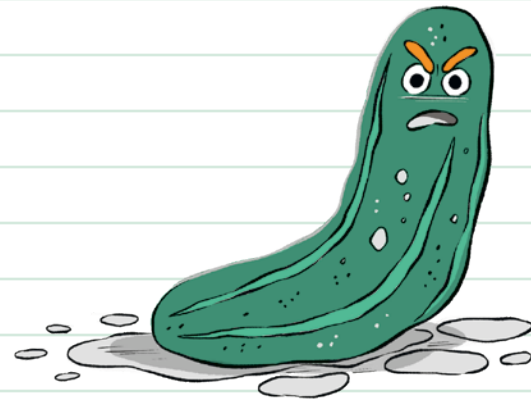
You'll never believe what has happened.

Where to start?

Pickles. It all started with pickles.

I hate pickles. Mom says hate is a terribly strong word for a nine-year-old, but I can't help how I feel about those salty, sour-juice-filled, squishy sea creatures.

Pickles are not vegetables. They're not snacks. They're not even food. They're wart-covered monsters and probably somehow related to frogs. And tonight at dinner there was not one, but THREE pickle slices staring up at me from my turkey sandwich.



"Maybe pick them off?" Nate said.

"Pick them off?" Even though my head was exploding at the idea, I didn't scream because Nate hates loud noises. When we first met in Mr. Landers's second-grade class two years ago, I dropped our enormous class dictionary and the BOOM made Nate practically jump out of his skin. I said sorry a bajillion times. But he still shook like a leaf for forty-five minutes.

Anyway, back to the pickles. I couldn't believe my summer was in danger of being ruined by soggy vegetables. And there was

no way I could just pick them off! If they were earthworms, would he tell me to pick them off?

Pickle juice pollutes everything it touches. Pickles are a plague. A virus. You can't pick off a virus.

Back to my pickle problem . . .

I thought it was a bit unfair that no one told camp about my dislike of pickles. Especially because they were told about Nate's dislike of his food touching. His sandwich arrived on three plates with the bread, cheese, and turkey slices each on a separate one. I knew his parents must have included "No Touching Food Please" in his camp forms. If only my parents had loved me enough to write "No Pickles Anytime Anywhere" on mine.

Even after pulling the neck of my camp sweatshirt over my nose I could still smell the deadly pickle fumes. (By the way, I like

our camp sweatshirts. Everyone got the same one last night. They are forest green with "Sunshine Camp" written in happy blue text with a rainbow underneath and a smiling yellow sun.) No one else seemed to be bothered by the pickles. The General ate three pickle-infested sandwiches!

Thankfully, Nate shared half of his pickle-free sandwich with me. He really is the bestest best friend.

I felt a new bubble of happiness rising in my chest. I had one full week of real sleepaway camp with exciting games and funny campfire stories. I'd been waiting for this the whole school year. No way was I going to let a few pickles ruin it. No, not me. That's not who I am!

I took a bite. The bread was soft, the turkey tasty, not too salty, not too dry . . . just right. As I chewed, I felt the bad mood that had been



creeping up on me start to melt like a Popsicle in the middle of July.

But then something ice-cold hit my head with a big SPLAT. I was too shocked to move or scream. The cold thing started to glop down my nose and my cheeks and into my sweatshirt. The back and front. It was such a disgusting feeling, and my mind finally let me open my mouth to yell in protest. Except that made me taste the cold thing in my MOUTH!

And it tasted like . . . chocolate pudding? Normally I like chocolate pudding, but not when big wet gobs are all over me.

Even though it felt gross, I wiped away some of the stuff. I had to blink a few times to see more clearly. And what did I see? The entire dining hall was staring at me. A million eyes wide and mouths agape. And then they all started laughing. Yup, that's right. The whole camp was laughing at me.

I needed to get out of there quickly. But I had to turn around really slowly so I wouldn't make more of a mess. Plus, my eyelashes were still kind of sticky. I could barely see the shaggy-haired boy standing behind me.



Carrying a huge yellow plastic bowl.

That was now almost empty of chocolate pudding.

I think the kid tried to say sorry (or at least that's what Nate said, but how would he know? I saw him cover his ears the moment the cruel laughter began). All I know is I didn't hear an apology.

And now, even after an hour-long shower, I can still smell the pudding. The General said I could stay in the cabin after having THE MOST EMBARRASSING MOMENT OF MY LIFE. And Nate didn't want to go anywhere without me. So he's here with me while everyone else is at the camp's opening night ice-cream party.

"Maybe you've still got some up your nose," Nate said to me.

I tried blowing my nose into the gray handkerchief Mom packed for me. (She's

always trying to get me to be more of a "gentleman." I told her I wouldn't need one, but now I'm glad she packed it.)

Nope, still smell pudding.

How could this happen to me on the first day of camp?! Everyone gets nicknames the first day of camp. I'm definitely going to be Pudding Boy.

I said the words aloud to see how they sounded.

"Pudding Boy."

Nate burst out laughing. "Sounds like a superhero to me!" he said between chuckles. "Except instead of shooting out a web, you shoot pudding from your wrists!"

That's when I stopped talking to him and started writing in my diary. 'Cause your best friend isn't supposed to laugh at you.

Sure, the idea of me as a superhero, wearing a green cape with a pudding cup

on it and spraying sweet chocolate pudding out of my hands, was funny. But this was no time for jokes.

Why did this happen to ME? Wasn't there someone else's head the pudding could have fallen on?

I'm never going to live this down.

Everyone is back from the ice-cream party, so I'll have to finish this later.



Rocky Pines Sunshine Camp, Day 1

TIME: 10:00 P.M.

LOCATION: Cabin C, Top Bunk

(using a flashlight to write)

FEELING: Still awful.

Dear Diary,

It's been lights out for forever, but I can't fall asleep. I'm just too angry.

Everyone was talking about how much fun they had during the party. Singing songs and eating ice cream while I was stuck in our cabin with my reputation ruined all because of HIM.

I now know a few things about the kid who threw pudding on me:

1. His name is Harrison Baker. (Nate remembered from when they called roll this morning. I'm so glad I have a friend who never forgets

anything. It's why I sometimes call him Elephant Brain. Which is a nice nickname. Not like Pudding Boy.)

2. He's really bad at carrying bowls of pudding.
3. He got to have fun at the ice-cream party.

Harrison Baker.

HARRISON BAKER.

HARRISON BAKER.

Harry Baker.

He's like a big hairy gorilla throwing chocolate-pudding-covered bananas in a bakery.

Except imagining that doesn't make me feel better. Every second I think about him I get madder and madder.

Can you believe Nate told me the whole thing was an accident? Yeah right.

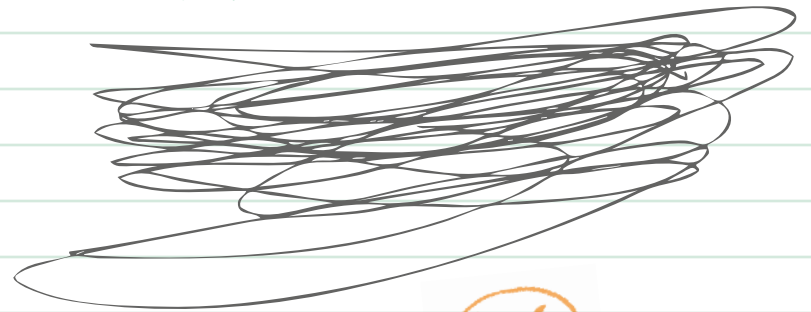
He thinks I should let it go.

Not a chance. Not while I still smell like chocolate pudding.

I know what I have to do.

I need

REVENGE.





To: Mom, Dad

From: DavidDaLionSlayer7711923@CampMailSite.com

Subject: A few small requests

Dear Mom and Dad,

Remember that time we ran out of glue so I tried to make papier-mâché with yogurt? How did you get the smell out of the carpet? Do you think it would work with chocolate pudding? And on a nose instead of a carpet?

Also, I need you to send me a few things:

1. More shampoo
2. Binoculars
3. A TIME MACHINE

Love,
David

PS: Do you mind putting a rush on the shampoo? I used up the whole bottle.

Send



Rocky Pines Sunshine Camp, Day 2

TIME: 6:01 A.M.

LOCATION: Cabin C, Top Bunk

FEELING: HUNGRY AND MORE FURIOUS
THAN A THOUSAND BEES TRAPPED IN
A JAR AT THE BOTTOM OF A VOLCANO.

Dear Diary,

I CAN'T WAIT FOR BREAKFAST!

But I'm the only one awake. The General is even snoring.

I'm so hungry I can barely think. Why do we have to wait until eight thirty to eat?

You know what would be amazing? Living in a house made of waffles. Then instead of having to get out of bed in the morning, I could just take a bite out of my waffle pillow. I'd keep the syrup in a spray bottle next to my bed.

Oh man.



I just remembered what happened yesterday. Waffle dream gone.

Not only will I never have a house with a TV and bathtub made out of waffles, but I'll also never be able to stop being the kid who got ten pounds of pudding dumped on his head.

The hairy Harrison Baker really ruined everything.

So far I haven't come up with any good ideas for revenge. But there's still time.

Nate's waking up. Gotta go. Maybe he'll help me hunt for berries (or candy) before everyone wakes up.

I could eat a horse.

Not really. That would be weird.



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