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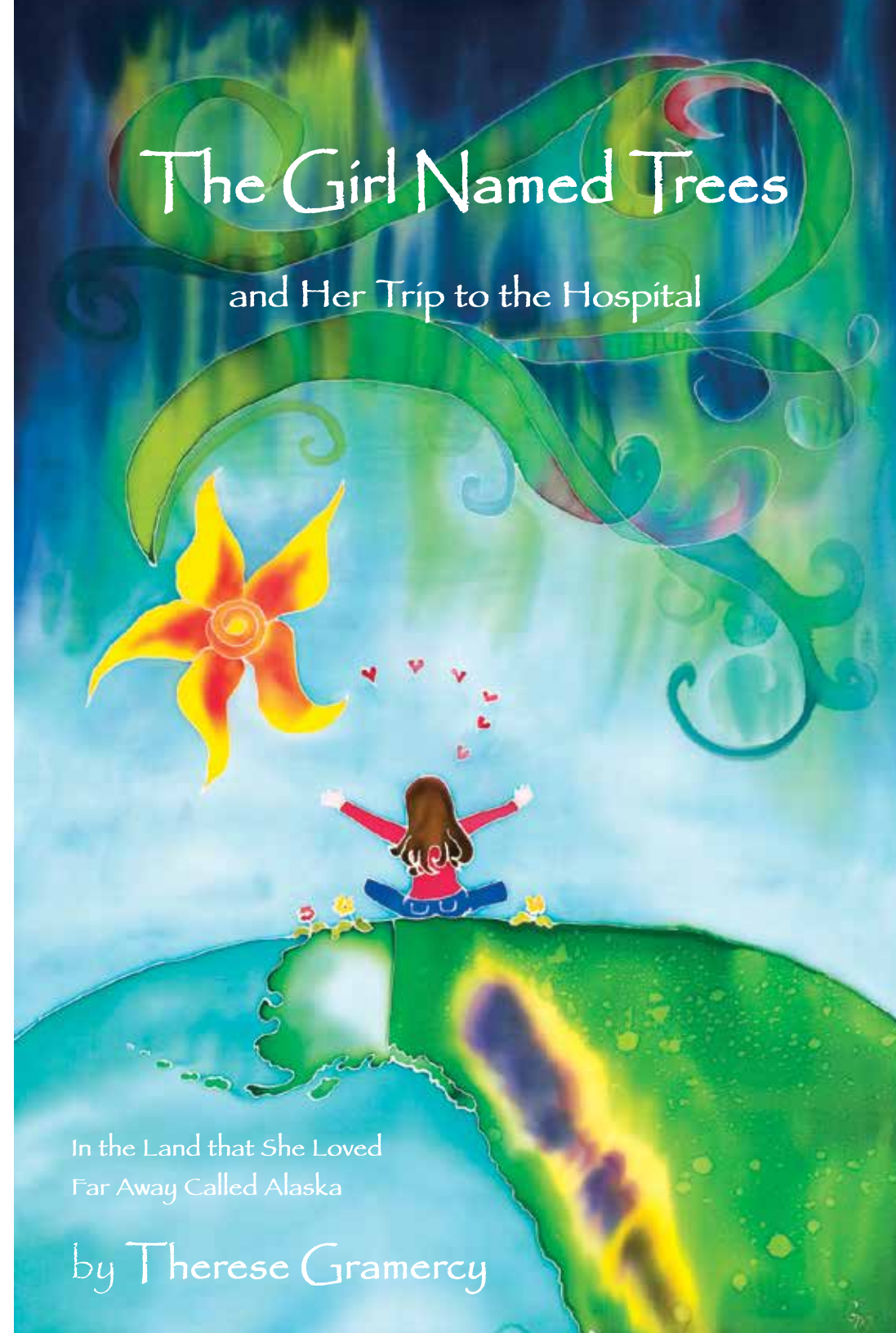
We hope you enjoy our very special book tree-mendously,
and we thank you for sending beautiful thoughts to our project.
May many kindnesses follow you always.

Love,

the one who was once the smallest among us
the girl whose name sounds kind of like Trees
Therese



The Girl Named Trees Project
www.girlnamedtrees.com



In the Land that She Loved
Far Away Called Alaska

by Therese Gramercy

Thank you for your interest in reading this web publication of

The Girl Named Trees

Please visit www.girlnamedtrees.com
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The Girl Named Trees

and Her Trip to the Hospital

in the Land that She Loved Far Away Called

Alaska

written by Therese Gramercy

with artwork by Gina Murrow

Dedication

To health care workers
of every nature of assistance
and every level of care

Acknowledgements

Our thanks to everyone who helped with this project
to benefit child surgery patients everywhere!

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Story, design, and creative concepts by Therese Gramercy
Artwork (originals hand-painted on silk) by Gina Murrow, Silk Creek Studio
and delicately digitized by Norstar Color

Visit **The Girl Named Trees Project** online at: www.girlnamedtrees.com
Designed by Therese Gramercy, author
Website and online book prepared by Rhonda L. Howard

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This Page is Just for Adults

Before this story can be told,
make sure that you are relaxed,
and that you are not too warm or too cold.
For first there is some work that we must do!
We must take some time to make a child of you.

Pretend to close your eyes now – just for a minute.

And let's forget – just for awhile,
the You that you are at this older age,
and remember for me,
the You that you were back then
when you were . . . really quite small.

When you laughed away the most of the day,
and work and worry did not come your way.

Can you see yourself then?
Can you smile with those eyes for me now?
You can open your eyes again.

Ahhh . . . I see that you are ready now.
For the story that you are about to read
was waiting just for that!

And now this story can be told. . .





Once there was a brave girl who lived all alone
in a very big garden that was all her own
filled with roses and lavender and camellias and daisies
and geranium and tomatoes and tall lemon trees.

Her name was Therese
which sounds kind of like “trees”.

She wished she could see some new faraway places,
a dream that was to send her way up north to Alaska.

What, you say? Where is that?
Is Alaska a part of the United States?

Yes it is, that is true, but it is so far, far away
that to fly there it will take you the most of a day.

And to show us the weather there on our TVs
they tack it up on the map anywhere it will fit,
so some people think it is in the south or out west
or right next to Hawaii but that's really not it.



It is really up north at the top of the world
above the mainland of the U.S., to the left of Canada, you see.

It's the land of polar bears, moose, caribou and bald eagles,
otters, salmon, raven and dogs – even some who are beagles.

It is truly a magical place to go visit
even the North Pole is there right above it!



Much of the year it is a cold snowy place
and the sun disappears from the sky for most of the day.

But because it's so dark and so near the North Pole,
wondrous lights can be seen in the sky when it's cold.

The scientists call this sight the Aurora Borealis
but "the Northern Lights" is the name that the rest of us call it.

During the summer it stays light outside after
your bedtime or later.

The Land of the Midnight Sun – by some it is called,
with long days without night time – and what could be greater?

And with all that light, the plants grow gigantic,
so birds and whales migrate there just to be a part of it.

Tourists like to visit on cruise ships to join all the fun
and they play there all summer in that midnight sun.



So this girl with the name that sounds kind of like trees
really wanted to see for herself such a land
with Northern Lights in the winter and no night in the summer,
so that was how she came up with her plan.

One day she packed up everything that she owned
called a big truck to come get it
so she could start her new home.

She sent it all to Alaska in the next cargo ship
and flew up on a plane for her very own trip.



She lived in a house in a wet boggy place
near a bluff where she sat and took photos on any nice day.
Where the moose lazed all day and the geese snoozed at night
and when it was dark she might see Northern Lights.

She planted a big garden and when she was done
she watched birds fly by her with no reason why
and she danced in the Land of the Midnight Sun
in the summer while the sun twirled around in the sky.



Most days you feel great, and once in a while you might sneeze,
and once in a very great while you might feel truly awful it seems.
And so it was with Therese whose name sounds kind of like trees.

One day she just did not feel right – not right at all.
So she called her friend Carmel who lived across the bog
to come by for a visit and see what she thought.

Oh, the comfort you feel when a friend comes to visit!
She started to feel better and they guessed that was it,
so back to her home her friend Carmel went
back to the chores and the phone calls and the emails she sent.



But then the awful feeling started all over again and Therese knew it was time to come up with a plan. Then she heard a knock on the door, what a surprise!

It was her friend Laura dropping by for a visit, they'd figure this out with their two heads in a minute.

Laura put her hands on her hips and she frowned at Therese who was achy and pale and weak in the knees.

"I don't know what is wrong, but you don't look so hot. We better go to the hospital and let them decide what you've got".



They took Laura's red car then they walked into the E.R. Therese filled out their forms, and sat down on a bed there.

They asked lots of questions and her tummy they touched to find where it hurt, here and there and how much.

After that they started doing some tests and said she should stay calm, just lie back and rest.



Laura and Therese just sat there . . . and studied their shoes,
and after awhile the doctor came in with the news.

“Your tests are really not looking so good,
and neither do the pictures of your insides we took.”

Therese said, “Yes, I think I know what you mean.”
The doctor said “Frankly, Therese, you are turning quite green!”

“So that means we must keep you here at the hospital with us
and see how we can solve this without too much fuss.”
And they wrote down the words “very nice” at the top of her chart
and her friend Georgi brought her more forms,
gosh, she’s so smart.

Then they wheeled her bed up to a room with a view of the trees!
“Oh, how nice” said Therese, with this she was pleased.
Then she said “Good night” so her friends could travel back home
and she slept all night long until it was dawn.



In the morning another doctor came to visit Therese.
He didn't like her tests either and asked
two million questions it seemed.

He said she might need surgery to fix the ache
and that he would find her a surgeon that very same day.

And she told him what a nice tie it was that he wore,
then he left so she'd go back to sleep and dream a bit more.



And just in case 'surgeon' is a word you don't know about,
that's a specially trained doctor with a fancy tool kit
to fix parts inside you, and that's all there is to it.

They call that a 'surgery' or an operation,
and it's done in a special hospital location
called the 'operating room', or for short, the O.R.
and it's a million times cleaner than your bedroom floor.



Therese slept away all the rest of that day,
and missed when her friend Amelia came all the way
from her home high above the Seward Highway.
But she would not wake up Therese for a visit,
not even just for one tiny minute!

The nurses were so quiet and so very sweet
and gave her extra warm blankets so that she would sleep
more deeply that night without having cold feet.

The next day, the nurse came in to see her again,
and she smiled a shy little embarrassed grin.

“Your surgeon is here checking your chart and your name,
And I must tell you this, I can’t remember his name!

So please tell me what it is when I return.”,
then she spun back out fast before he had time to come in.



And the next thing she heard from the foot of her bed, was “Hi, I’m Doctor Muffoletto, I’m your surgeon.” he said.

But the medicine had made her so very groggy that her thoughts were scattered and even more foggy.

And she knew right then that his very long name had made only one tiny dent in her so very tired brain.

But he told her that her tests were getting better and better which meant he could do the surgery the next day or the day after.

“See you then, get some more rest, Therese, that is best”, and out the same door whence he came – there he went!



Then the nurse came back to check for her answer, “So, what is his name? You know that’s what I’m after.”

Now this time it was Therese who felt really guilty because she couldn’t remember his name now, how silly.

So she said, “I’m so sorry but I’m not really sure. His name was too long and it was all just a blur! But it starts with an M . . . and has lots of F’s in it . . . and it sounds like . . . My Buffalo? . . .

Do you think that could be it?”



“That’s a pretty good guess,” the nurse said
and seemed very pleased,
“Now I can tell you what his name is . . . Muffoletto”, she beamed!

And they were so very happy and they laughed really loud
that at last they had figured that great puzzle out!
It was no longer a mystery to remember his name
and they knew they would know it the next time he came!

And Therese whose name sounds kind of like trees,
slept all the night and most of the next day while she dreamed.

The next thing she knew when she opened her eyes
is that they were wheeling her bed down the hall and she smiled.
For two nice transporter guys who were very cheery
took her downstairs to O.R. to prepare for her surgery.





So Therese and her friends and the O.R. team waited for the call that the surgeon would be on his way.

He had to drive there from another hospital first and drive very safely . . . yet quickly . . . without any hitch like getting a ticket . . . or his car going into the ditch!

They told her jokes and stories to pass the time while they waited, and she told them the name for the surgeon that she had created.

Even though now she remembered his name very well, it was still much more fun to call him Dr. My Buffalo.



So they wheeled her bed into the operating room
so they could fix the pain in her stomach quite soon.

The next thing she knew, she was out like a light!
When she woke up again, the surgery was done
and they took her back to her room and wished her “Good night.”

Then Dr. My Buffalo went over just to see Georgi
so that he could tell her the rest of the story.
“The surgery went well. We fixed Therese up in a snap!
Go see for yourself. She’s now back in her room, taking a nap.”



And she slept all through the long night . . . once more,
and in the morning, Dr. My Buffalo came in through the door.

“Great news!” he said “You are really all right now!” And so,
he signed more papers that said back home she could go.

She should get some more rest, but then come back to see him
the very next week so he could check on her healing.



And she went home a little bit achy but that did not last,
and went back to see him the very next week, just like he'd asked.

But she never informed him of the new name he'd been given,
even though, truth be told, she had grown to like saying it.

For just how do you tell someone something so silly like that
without feeling like you are some kind of clown in a hat?

But she told lots of her friends – who enjoyed the fun name.
They said they probably would have done just the same.
Then she used the Internet to look up the names
of the doctors and the schools from which they came.

Now, everyone knows how to Google in these times
and that you just never know the exact thing you'll find.

Will it be the information you seek?

Or just the name of some far away street?

Maybe it will only be just a photo
of something you might like to eat come tomorrow.

So, there is simply no way on this earth you can guess
what she would find when she typed 'muffoletto'
and Enter she pressed.





Who knew 'muffoletto' is just one of the ways to misspell the word 'muffoletta' in haste?

All that's required is just one little swap an 'o' for an 'a' and then see what you've got!

And she learned that muffoletta is name of a bread and also a sandwich . . . and . . . an olive salad!





Muffoletto and muffoletta are both words in Italian, (that's the language of the land that looks like a boot), they mean the same thing - the only change is the spelling!

Next to that boot is an island that's called Sicily, where the first muffoletta bread really was cooked, and they still bake it there now ever so easily.

It is a round bread, like a mitten, without fingers, and they made up the word 'muffoletta' just to mean this!

So that meant her doctor had two fun names in her head, Dr. My Buffalo, and his real name that meant a round mitten bread!





Everyone in Sicily loves this bread so very much that they celebrate it each year and invite everyone to lunch and make lots of muffoletta sandwiches to munch!

And that party in Sicily is held in November, the very same month as her surgery and birthday, how about that for a way that Therese can remember!

But . . . it turns out that Alaska was just far too cold for her to stay in that snowy place all alone as her home.

So she said “Good-bye” to her new friends and she moved, to find a much warmer place for her new home, where she could grow lavender and roses and camellias once more, and without even a sweater, walk down to the store!





But every year in November, she has a great party!
Just to celebrate like they do in Sicily, for her birthday.
She serves mufioletta sandwiches for all and the real reason for it?
Is to remember Dr. My Buffalo whose name really did start it!

Then, Therese whose name sounds kind of like trees,
sits down on the floor and hugs her arms 'round her knees.

And she tells the story of Dr. My Buffalo
and how he once saved her life a long time ago,
late one night in November it was, don't you know?
In a place called Alaska way up north where it's cold!

But that's not the only time the tale of Dr. My Buffalo is told,
for it is mostly the children who won't let this story rest.
Since they are the ones who are not very old,
is why they love the story of Dr. My Buffalo the best.

And you see, this girl Therese is a real special friend.
She loves children very much and lets them play in her garden.

And they learn just how sweet and silly that she is
and that they can tell her about 'most any old thing.

Sometimes they tell her that they are worried because
they don't feel so good and to a doctor they must go.





So she tells them a story,

about a nice doctor who saved her life once.
In a hospital way up north at the top of the world,
in a cold snowy place – Alaska it’s called.

And that she was so very sick it was hard to remember,
what her surgeon’s name was, that day long ago in November.

So Dr. My Buffalo was the name that she made up for him,
but that his true name Muffoletto is really Italian,
that’s the language of the land that looks like a boot,
and it means a round mitten bread that is easy to cook!

And the children can't get enough of that story,
they ask her to tell it again while they pick morning glories.

They laugh and giggle! . . . and that's the secret, you see,
to make your fears disappear, oh so easily.

They vanish – like magic – into sky far above, as you know,
and float away on a breeze, with nowhere to go.



So . . . maybe next November you'll throw a big party
and serve your friends sandwiches called muffoletta,
the round mitten bread that is easy to cook
from an island near a land that looks like a boot!

And when you are so stuffed that you can't even move
you'll plop down on the floor together in a group.



And you'll tell them the story from a long time ago,
about a surgeon with a name like that bread, don't you know?
Who once saved the life of a nice girl, it's been told,
whose name was Therese,
which sounds kind of like "trees".

It happened up north, in a cold snowy place,
Alaska it's called! . . . Can you envision her face?



She lived in her garden at the top of the world, so it goes,
and the name that she gave him? . . . was Dr. My Buffalo.



Ahhh . . . that's the end of the story!

. . . but it's not the end of the book . . .

This page is just for kids!



Hi there! We hope you liked reading our little book about Alaska and Therese (whose name sounds kind of like “trees”) and all about her silly trip to the hospital and all of the things that she likes to do.

But wait! We still have some more fun for you!

The next page has lots of questions about the story.

See how many answers you can remember.

Look at the pages in the story if you need extra help.

We warn you though - some are a little tricky!

The answer just might be in one of the pictures!

The pages after that have all the answers – but no peeking until you try to find them on your own first! Have fun!

Oh, and one more thing . . . the next to the last page in this book has a special message just for the adults again. After that, on the very last page of the book, the author of the story and the artist who painted all of the pictures have a message for you!

All of the Questions:

1. Where is Alaska?
2. What is above Alaska?
3. Is Alaska a part of the United States?
4. How many states in the U.S. are there?
5. Which state is 49? Which state is 50?
6. What is the nickname for the mainland U.S.?
7. What is the closest country to Alaska?
8. What is the scientific name for the Northern Lights?
9. What is a nickname for Alaska?
10. Can you name an animal, bird or fish in Alaska?
11. Where did Therese live in Alaska?
12. What things did Therese like?
13. What color was Laura’s car? And the surgeon’s car?
14. What color was Therese in the ER?
15. What was the main thing Therese did while she was in the hospital?
16. What could she see outside her window?
17. What was the number of the room she was in?
18. What did she like about the doctor who asked 2 millions questions?
19. How many doctors did she see?
20. Where do they do the surgeries?
21. What is the name for the kind of doctor that does the surgery?
22. What was the surgeon’s nickname in this story?
23. What signs did the doctor have to obey when driving on the road?
24. Why did Therese have to see doctor after she left the hospital?
25. What is the name of the country that looks like a boot?
26. What language do they speak there?
27. What is the name of the island next to it?
28. What was the name of the bread?
29. What are three other things muffoletta can be?
30. What city in the U.S. has the famous Muffoletta sandwich?
31. What month were all the parties in the book?
32. Can you name a flower or fruit in one of the gardens where Therese lived?
33. How do you forget your fears?
34. Do you know who the author is?

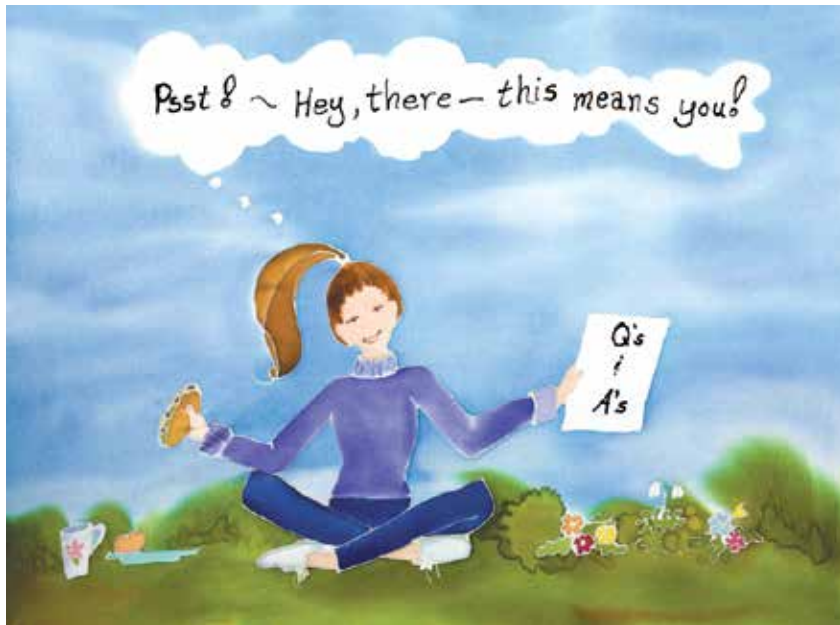
All of the Answers:

No peeking until you have tried to answer the questions on your own or by looking back to find the answer in the story!

1. Any of these:
At the top of the world, Above the mainland U.S., or, to the left of Canada.
2. The North Pole.
3. Yes.
4. 50 (this is tricky – it's in a picture).
5. Alaska is 49 and Hawaii is 50 (tricky – both are in pictures).
6. The Lower 48 (tricky – it's in a picture).
7. Canada.
8. Aurora Borealis.
9. The Land of the Midnight Sun.
10. There are lots of animals in Alaska, but these are the ones in the book:
Animals: polar bear, moose, caribou, dog, beagle, otter, whale, buffalo (near Tok).
Birds: bald eagle, raven, geese.
Fish: salmon (tricky – otters and whales are in the ocean but they are animals).
11. Any of these:
In a bog, in a garden, Anchorage (tricky – it's in a picture).
12. Any of these:
Alaska, birds, the bog, children, dancing, faraway places, figuring out puzzles, friends, flowers, gardens, nice ties, the nickname she gave the doctor, the Northern Lights, parties, taking photos, telling stories, trees!
13. Red for Laura. Blue for the surgeon (tricky – it's in a picture).
14. Green.
15. Any of these:
Sleep, dream, meet with doctors, talk with nurses, have surgery.
16. Any of these:
Trees, the sky, a helicopter (tricky - in the pictures – and that helicopter flies around a lot . . . see if you can find it in nine of the pictures!)
17. 466 (tricky – it's in a picture).
18. His tie.
19. At least three:
The ER doctor, the doctor with the nice tie, the surgeon (the surgeon is also Dr. Muffoletto or Dr. My Buffalo). She also had tests and was in the O.R. which means there were lots more!

20. Any of these:
Operating room, O.R., special hospital location.
21. Surgeon.
22. Dr. My Buffalo.
23. Any of these:
No Speeding, Moose Crossing, Icy (tricky - they are all in a picture).
24. To check on her healing.
25. Italy (tricky – it's in a picture).
26. Italian.
27. Sicily.
28. Muffoletta.
29. A sandwich, an olive salad, a person's last name – but it might have an 'o' instead of an 'a'.
30. New Orleans.
31. November.
32. Any of these:
Flowers: camellias, roses, lavender, daisies, geranium, morning glories.
Fruit: lemons and tomatoes (tricky – many people say a tomato is a vegetable).
33. Laugh or giggle.
34. Therese Gramercy.
Hey there – did you notice – her first name is Therese too?
So . . . you may have already guessed it . . . she was the girl in the story!





Did you notice that we have a page of questions for you? . . . just for fun!

Be really careful when you flip the pages back to find the questions . . . or you might see an answer by accident!

The two pages before this one have the all the answers to the questions – no peeking yet!

This page is just for the adults again!

A Message from the Author

This story was written just to inject a tiny bit of joy and laughter during a time that is so difficult for children to understand and to undergo, something that the author understands first-hand as one who went through surgery herself at age five. This story also gives special thanks to a whole host of health professionals who helped her through a much later medical predicament even though only one of them is named – the surgeon.

We are all grateful to this man for being so kind as to allow a story to be told that wraps such silliness around his name. For just how wonderful and humble is that? We take the gift of this name and we use it to stand for all the people who are involved in helping patients through all levels of their health care, including hospitalization and surgery.

This includes the doctors, the nurses, the aides and assistants, the many types of technicians, the pharmacy staff, the receptionists, the kitchen helpers, the maintenance and housekeeping personnel, the office workers, the volunteers and even you, the moms and the dads and the families that are there to support your children's health needs every day of the year.

We are grateful to every last one of you too – for your love and compassion is what truly makes the world go 'round and 'round.



A Message from the Author & the Artist

Our little book was imagined, typed, painted, digitalized and printed in a cold snowy place, Alaska it's called, at the top of the world.



I never set out to write this book, it just poured out of me one night. I recited it to the dear doctor in this story and he said I could publish it. You can never dream too big or hope too high!

Your author,

Therese Gramercy
TGML Publications
Anchorage, Alaska



I thank my dog Pepper that Therese let me illustrate her book. She saw Pepper on a scarf that I had painted and she believed in me. After many months, I learned to believe in me too!

Your artist,

Gina Murrow
Silk Creek Studio
Chugiak, Alaska

