

Sophie was so happy! And not just because she was going on a field trip. (She really, really, *really* loved those.) Sophie was also happy because she had a perfect new name. A name that made her special. A name that said it all!

“Don’t call me Sophie M. anymore. Just call me Sophie the Honest!” she told her best friend, Kate Barry, as they climbed onto the field trip bus.

Ms. Moffly’s third-grade class was going to see where George Washington was born! It was nice to know that something special had happened close to Ordinary, Virginia, where Sophie lived.

Sometimes Sophie thought it was the most boring place in the whole wide world.

Sophie used to also think she was the most boring girl in the whole world.

But not anymore!

Not since she told Ms. Moffly the truth about stealing the fifth graders' snake. Now she was sure that she was the most honest kid in her whole class. Maybe the whole school!

"By the way, Kate," Sophie went on. "Have I told you, *honestly*, that you're my very best friend ever?"

Kate grinned. "Right back at you!"

Sophie smiled and grabbed Kate's hand. Then she pulled her down the aisle to the last row of the bus. That was their favorite row to sit in, mostly because it bumped so much.

But there was a problem when they got there.

The very back seats were already full. And what they were full of was Toby and Archie.

Toby Myers and Archie Dolan were the worst boys in their class. Sophie knew that for a fact.

They were very loud and very Yucky (with a capital “Yuck”). And they were taking up both back seats, even though they knew that Sophie and Kate liked to sit there.

That made them even worse!

Sophie was used to this, of course. Toby was always bugging her somehow. Usually she acted like she did not care, but today she could not do that. She was Sophie the Honest, after all!

“I have to be honest,” she said to Toby. “This disappoints me very much.”

Toby smiled a big smile. “Good!” he said. Then he stuck out his tongue.

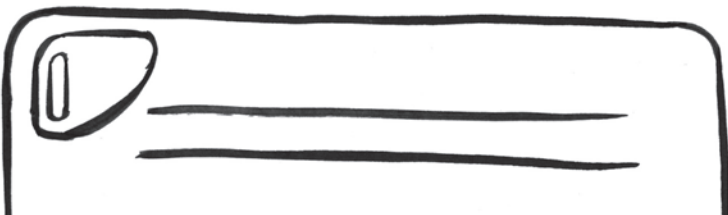
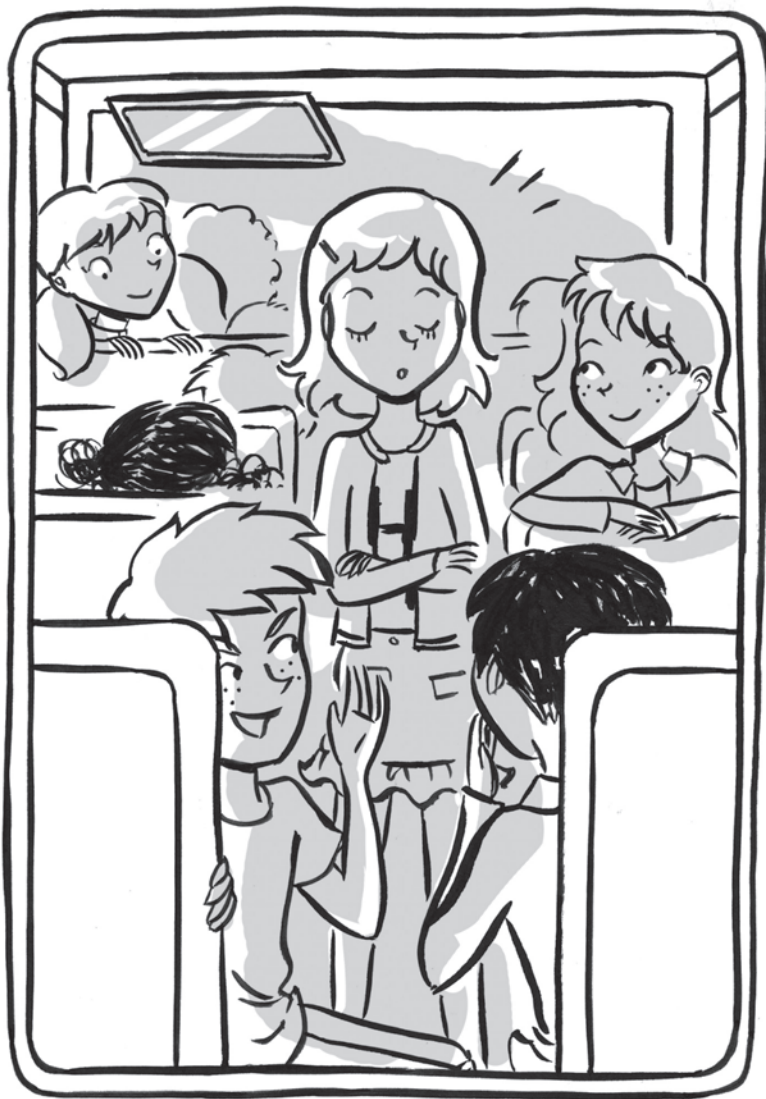
Archie laughed.

But Sophie was not done being honest yet.

“This also makes me want to pinch you,” she said.

Toby frowned and crossed his arms.

“But I won’t,” Sophie went on. “Because I don’t want to get in trouble like I did last time. So instead, I’m going to sit down next to you. And Kate is going to sit down next to Archie.”



"I *am*?" Kate said.

"You *are*?" said Toby and Archie.

"Yes," Sophie said to Kate, ignoring the boys. "Even though we don't want to. Because there's room. And because I know that they will hate that. And because if they don't let us, I'll tell Ms. Moffly." Sophie smiled. "And she will make them."

With that, Sophie sat down next to Toby. And she stuck out *her* tongue.

"Ew, gross! Girl cooties!" Toby cried. He jumped up on the seat and looked at Archie. "Come on. Let's move!" he said. "As far away from *them* as possible!"

A minute later, Sophie and Kate had not just one very back seat, but two! Still, they sat together. They were best friends, after all.

"I like you being Sophie the Honest!" Kate said.

They shared a high five.

Then Kate twisted her mouth. "Can I be honest?" she asked.

“Of course!” That seemed like a funny question to Sophie.

Kate shrugged. “It’s just that ‘Sophie the Honest’ . . . I don’t know . . . It’s kind of a dull name. Don’t you think?”

“Well, no . . .,” Sophie said. Then she sighed. “Okay. Yes. Maybe.”

To be honest, Sophie thought Kate was right. This name was not as exciting as “Sophie the Awesome” or “Sophie the Hero.” Those were the two names Sophie had tried before. (Too bad they had not worked out as well as she’d hoped.)

But “Sophie the Honest” was still a good name. It made her special. And that was the point!

Plus it meant she could still wear the shirt she had on. She had made it when she was Sophie the Hero. It had a big *H* on the front. But *H* could be for “Hero” or “Honest”! And that was good, since her mom said not to write on shirts anymore.

“Maybe it’s not an exciting name. But it is

important,” Sophie told Kate. “Just think about George Washington!”

“What do you mean?” Kate asked.

“I mean, why was he so great?” Sophie said.

“Because he was our first president?” Kate guessed.

“No.” Sophie shook her head. “Because he was so honest!” she said. “Remember when he cut down his father’s cherry tree? And his father asked what happened, and George Washington said, ‘I cannot tell a lie. I did it’?”

“No,” Kate said. “But hey! Is that where he got his wooden teeth from?”

Sophie shrugged. “I don’t know. But that’s not my point. My point is that the story shows how important it is to tell the truth. They’ll talk all about it on our field trip today, I bet!”

“Okay . . .,” Kate said. But her mouth was still twisted.

Sophie sighed. “What?” she asked.

“Well,” Kate said, “you’re right. Telling the truth is important. But is it really such a big deal?”

I mean, I tell the truth, too. Like right now.” She grinned. “Your epidermis is showing!”

Sophie rolled her eyes. She had heard that joke before. (From Kate.) It meant that her *skin* was showing. She made a face.

“But can you tell the truth *all* the time?” Sophie asked her friend. “No matter what the *consequence* is?”

Sophie knew that was a hard question. She and Kate didn’t like *consequences* very much.

She stood up. Then she yelled across the bus: “I cannot tell a lie. I left a banana peel on the lunchroom floor. On purpose!”

She sat back down and winked at Kate.

Then she heard her teacher’s voice. “Who said that?” Ms. Moffly asked.

Sophie stood up again. “I did!” She waved her hand.

“Sophie Miller,” said Ms. Moffly. She was standing at the front of the bus. And she was not alone.

*Oops.*

She was with Grace's mom. And Sydney's dad. They were the field trip chaperones. They were looking like moms and dads, crossing their arms and shaking their heads.

The kids in her class were looking like kids. They were all turned around, staring at her.

"I have to say, I am surprised by you," Ms. Moffly told Sophie. "If that's true, I think a consequence is in order. Don't you?"

Sophie nodded. Bring on the consequence! "Yes, Ms. Moffly," she said.

"You will stay in for recess tomorrow," Ms. Moffly told her. "Now turn around, everyone. Take a seat. It's time to go."

Sophie sighed and sat down. No recess? That was too bad. Sophie hadn't planned on *that* consequence.

She looked at Kate. "See? It's not so easy being honest," she said.

Kate patted her on the arm. "You are definitely Sophie the Honest!"

They felt the bus lurch forward. A round of

“On Top of Spaghetti” started up, but Sophie and Kate did not sing. Sophie was tired of that song, for one thing. Plus the “no recess” consequence was still sinking in.

*And* she had some more Sophie the Honest stuff to tell Kate.

“So, guess what? I am so honest, I even told my mom and dad about taking the fifth graders’ snake. And that was before my big sister, Hayley, could say anything,” Sophie said.

Kate looked a little surprised. And a lot impressed.

“Did you get in big trouble?” she asked Sophie.

Sophie grinned and shook her head.

“No! That’s the best part,” she said. “My mom and dad were so proud of me for being honest they didn’t punish me or anything—just like George Washington’s father!”

And that was not all Sophie had told her parents. She also told them about the squash stuck to the bottom of the dinner table (by her—every time they had squash for dinner).

“Wow!” Kate said. “And how about your basement? Did you tell them why it stinks? That we were making potions?”

“Oh . . . that,” Sophie said. She had forgotten about that. Kind of. “I haven’t told them about that yet.”

“Well, how about your mom’s stockings? The ones we played Fashion Show with? Did you tell her Tiptoe didn’t rip them and we did?” Kate asked.

“Er . . . no,” Sophie said. And she did not really want to. Tiptoe was a kitten. She could not really get in trouble. But Sophie sure could.

Still, if she was really going to be honest, no matter what the consequence was . . .

“I’ll tell them,” she said to Kate. “I will! I promise!”

From now on, Sophie would be completely, totally honest, just like her new name said.

And to be completely, totally honest, Sophie was getting a little hungry.

She picked up her lunch bag. “I wonder what my mom packed for me,” she said.

Then she opened the bag. And right away, she knew.

Someone with a snooty voice from two rows up did, too.

“Ew! Gross!” the voice squealed. It belonged to Mindy VonBoffmann. She spun around and held her nose.

“Quick! Open a window!” Sophie whispered to Kate.

She rolled her lunch bag closed. But it was too late. Mindy’s best friend, Lily Lemley, grabbed her nose, too.

“Ew!” Lily cried. “Gross!”

“Who packed egg salad?!” Mindy asked.

Kate looked at Sophie. And Sophie looked at Kate.

Sophie slowly raised her hand. “Um, that was me,” she honestly said.

The whole bus started to groan.

“We’re here, class!” Ms. Moffly called.

*Thank goodness!* Sophie thought.