

Happy Tears  
by Marie T.

A freeverse story of a girl, a ghost, and a boy.

This story is written in freeverse

Poetry. Which means pages of a normal story can

Fit into one act of this one. In order to let the story sink in, I suggest you

Pause, and do something else between each "Part."

Happy reading!

## Part 1 Ghosts

### act 1 **the garden**

Walking out of school,

the wind hits my face.

A warm day with a cold breeze.

School-mates run past me

to yellow buses.

Bright and happy like the sun.

My footsteps are calm,

walking to my bike.

I feel the sun warmed metal

as I unlock it.

Feet on the pedals

It feels like I am flying.

Not going home yet.

I have a schedule.

Every day, right after school,

I go somewhere else.

Past stranger's houses

to my favorite place.

I come here often to work.

Slowing my bike down

I walk reverently.

Birds sing and dragonflies flit

from flower to leaf

It's all so alive,  
but my gifted eyes see death.

act 2 **the boy**

Since I was little  
I could see ghosts.  
Something most people can't do.  
They stay on this earth  
tied down with burdens,  
it's all they can think about.  
They cannot move on.  
never leave the spot  
where their soul left their body.  
I look at him now.  
Barely eleven.  
sitting on the teal bridge  
I often sit on.  
He looks far away  
into the distant somewhere .  
Waiting for something  
Or maybe someone.  
I walk up to greet the boy.  
A smile, "hello."  
He waves in return.  
Making motions with his hands.

Speaking without words.

I recognize it.

American sign language.

All the ghosts I've seen,

Deaf is new to me.

I wave but cannot say more.

act 3 **learning**

I finish my work.

But now I have more.

American sign language

talking with my hands.

Communication,

telling people how you feel,

but without your voice.

New things excite me,

like a challenge to conquer.

I enter my home,

warm and familiar.

A long hallway; my bedroom.

My comfortable bed.

Excited to learn,

I open my computer.

Searching ASL.

I'm a beginner,

so I start with the basics.

Hello, goodbye, please.

Thank you, yes, and no.

Sign language is really fun.

There's still words I need,

I can't sign so much...

So I learn the alphabet.

I can spell my words,

But need to translate.

I find a packet.

Something I can print.

Top 100 signs to know.

I print off the list.

Looking over it,

I get excited again.

When the school bell rings,

and I get my bike,

I will leave for the garden.

I'll speak to the boy,

a ghost that can't hear.

I'll ask about his business.

act 4 **talking**

school bell, bike, garden.

I can hardly wait.

I have so many questions.

Will he be friendly?

He seemed nice enough.

I don't really talk to ghosts

they get scared of me.

Because I'm alive?

Hopefully this one's different.

I come to the gate,

and set down my bike.

The boy is still on the bridge.

He notices me.

I walk towards him.

He waves and I feel happy.

We can talk this time.

I sign \*How are you?\*

His eyes light up with surprise

and he signs back \*good.\*

Next, I gently ask

\*Why are you a ghost?\*

The words he signs next

aren't what I was expecting

\*I'm waiting for mom\*

I check my print-out

to make sure I saw it right.

\*You look sad\* he signs

I smile up at him,  
so he knows I am alright.  
\*I can wait with you\*  
This makes him happy.  
Together we sit and wait.  
He signs his story.

act 5 **business**

\*There was a before,  
when we were happy.  
Then my mom got really sick.  
It made my dad sad.  
All of us were sad.  
Mom told us not to worry,  
but she got more sick.  
To the hospital,  
in a sanitary room.  
I didn't like it.  
Mom had to stay there.  
She's been there for a long time.  
I went on a walk,  
to be in nature.  
I hadn't been here before.  
The water was deep.  
Deeper than I thought.

I didn't know how to swim.\*

A single tear rolls

down his opaque cheek.

He pauses for a long time,

then signs, \*Now I wait.\*

I tried hard not to,

but warm tears roll down my face.

I wanted to be

strong for the young ghost.

Make him feel like it's alright,

but that's hard to do

when I can't hug him.

I can only help one way,

swooping my right hand,

\*it will be alright\*

act 6 **Familiar.**

I notice something,

the next day in school.

Somebody looks familiar,

this boy in my class.

The shape of his eyes,

the bouncy curl in his hair.

How do I know him?

Who does he look like?



Then I realize; the ghost.

His hair is shorter,

and he's much older,

but the resemblance is there.

The bell rings loudly.

The students pack up.

I plan a conversation.

Talking to people

is not my strong suit.

I prefer ghosts, they don't judge.

It is the third day

of my tenth grade year.

This boy is new. Did he move?

I don't know his name.

He doesn't have friends,

not that I have seen at least,

but neither do I.

I keep to myself.

But today will be different.

He's had a hard time,

if he's who I think.

I walk over to his desk,

"Do you have someone

to sit with at lunch?"

He looks up at me blankly.

Did I sound stupid?

Then, a tiny smile.

He looks grateful as he nods.

### Act 7 a new friend

“My name is Renae,

You can call me Rin.

Honestly, either works fine.”

The boy nods his head,

“My name is Evan.”

We didn’t talk much

‘till my backpack fell open

when I tried to stand.

The pages of signs

on the ground. Evan sees them,

recognizing it.

“You’re learning to sign?”

I feel like I should tell him.

About his brother.

About my strange gift,

but I have never shared it.

So instead I say,

“Yes, I am. It’s fun.”

Evan looks happier now.

“I love sign language.

I learned so I could..."

He's not able to finish.

The rest of his words,

too painful to say.

Happy thoughts, but also grief.

The words just hang there,

between me and him.

Then the bell rings and lunch ends.

It's kinda awkward.

Evan smiles at me,

"Thanks for being kind.

No one else did that for me."

And with that he's gone.

I smile to myself.

The ghost boy has a brother.

## act 8 **Family**

That day, after school,

I go to the bridge.

I won't get much homework done.

I practically run

to get to my friend.

He looks happy to see me,

And uses a sign

I just learned, \*What's up?\*

I sit by him on the bridge,

signing, \*I'm good. you?\*

He signs that he's great.

I get right down to business.

\*Do you have siblings?\*

he grins, and signs back,

\*A sister and a brother!\*

\*Tell me about them.\*

\*The oldest is jane,

She's seventeen. then Evan,

He goes to your school.\*

I raise an eyebrow,

\*How do you know that?\* I sign

he shrugs, \*I went once,

to pick Evan up

with dad. I saw you walk out.

You were smiling big,

and getting your bike.

I wanted to be your friend.\*

The last part melts me.

\*I want to be friends

too.\* He smiles at me,

\*You should be friends with Evan.

He's really awesome!

but also quiet.

He doesn't like to talk much.

not to dad at least.

He would talk to mom,

but she's in the hospital.\*

His hands are still now.

Our conversation,

drifting away on the breeze.

### Act 9 **the truth**

I'm in school again.

The class with Evan.

He sits on the other side

of the room from me.

I can't help but glance

across the classroom.

Look at his curly brown hair,

his dark amber eyes,

always seeming sad.

He catches me staring once,

It's embarrassing.

The very next day,

a new seating chart.

Evan sits across from me.

I smile a little.

He smiles back at me.

I should tell him about ghosts.

How I can see them.

Or maybe I won't

Maybe he'll think it's creepy.

The teacher's talking,

“Talk to each other!

say your name and a talent

to your new buddy.”

Evan grins at me,

“My name is Evan,

and um... I know ASL.”

I almost laugh, “nice

to meet you Evan.”

I say jokingly, “I'm Rin.”

Evan shakes my hand,

“Nice to meet you too.”

How can Evan be so kind?

His life has been hard.

I make up my mind

to stop procrastinating.

“My talent's secret.

I'll have to whisper.”

Evan grins and leans closer.

*“I can see ghosts.”*

## Part 2 friends

Act 10 **bittersweet**

Me and Evan made

a plan to meet up.

I've waited for five minutes.

Is he not coming?

but then I see him.

We set off slowly.

I walk my bike beside me.

We don't talk at all,

but it's not awkward.

In fifteen minutes,

We arrive at the garden.

Evan turns to me,

"Rin, you sure it's him?"

I smile gently, "Positive."

Evan still looks sad,

"I can't see him though.

Not really. I'm not like you."

I'm not good with words,

"he can see you though.

I can tell you what he does,

Like you could see him."

Evan nods, "Ok."

We walk slowly down a path.

I'll never forget,

how happy he looked

when he saw his big brother.

Evan couldn't see.

So I touched his arm,

“He's so happy to see you.”

Evan smiles softly,

“Jason would always

hug me tight when I'd come home.”

So his name's Jason.

I'll remember that.

We reach the bridge and the pond,

Jason starts to sign.

looking at Evan.

My stomach twists into knots.

\*Evan can't see you.\*

I sign it slowly,

and slowly Jason's face falls.

\*I forgot\* he signs

\*I forgot I died\*

I don't translate to Evan.

act 11 **Happy**

Evan stays quiet



for most of the time.

After a while, he warms up.

“Rin, can you ask him

If he’s happy here?”

He looks so concerned, I nod.

Then sign, \*you ok?\*

Jason smiles, \*I am.\*

\*Are you happy here? \* I sign

Jason shrugs, \*I guess.

Evan still looks sad.\*

I turn to Evan,

“He said he’s happy... But also sad.”

Evan looks concerned,

“I wish he wasn’t”

I sigh, “he’s sad ‘cause you’re sad.”

He’s taken aback,

“what? That makes no sense.”

I roll my eyes, “People care.

They care if you’re sad,

when you feel happy,

People care for you Evan.

Jason cares,” I say.

“You should smile more. It

keeps people from worrying.”

He puts his hands up,

“I’m not *always* sad!”,  
“I know that, but you *look* sad!  
smile for your brother.”  
Evan flashes a  
big cheesy smile, “See?  
I can be happy, Ranae!”  
I sign to Jason,  
\*Evan’s happy, see?  
We are friends. Like you wanted.\*  
Jason smiles so big.  
Bigger than Evan,  
\*I told you he was awesome!\*\*You’re so right.\* I sign.  
I turn to Evan,  
“He’s happier now.  
He smiled bigger than you did!”  
then, a real smile.  
I laugh, and then say,  
“Jason thinks you’re pretty cool.”

#### act 12 **questions**

The next day, in school,  
Evan has questions.  
“Why is my brother a ghost?  
I know he died but,

like, how does it work?"

I grab his shoulder, "Evan!

Shhhh! keep your voice down!"

Evan rolls his eyes,

*"Why is he a ghoooooost"*

he says in a raspy voice.

"That's a lot better, thank you."

We're at a pine tree.

The lunch room's crowded,

so we eat outside the school.

No one else is here,

but I'm still worried.

I don't want rumors to spread.

"Well?" Evan questions.

How do I explain?

"You're not a ghost if you die,

It's not that simple.

If you have "what if "'s

like, unfinished business, then

you stay on this earth,

in the place you died,

'till you can somehow fix it."

Evan's deep in thought,

"He drowned in the pond.

So that's why he's on the bridge.

But what's his business?

you did ask, right Rin?"

I smile, "yes, I did ask him."

Evan's impatient,

"So what is it then!?"

I feel a bit sick again,

"I don't want to say."

His eyebrows shoot up,

"Oh Rin, is it bad?"

He looks so concerned.

"Um... he's waiting for your mom."

Evan's face goes pale,

I can see his world,

Spinning, fast, out of control.

"I don't know what to-"

His eyes look glassy.

Just like my own eyes right now.

"It's ok Evan.

It will be alright."

I put my arm around him.

He leans into me,

"I've been hoping that...

Mom would get better somehow.

The doctors said she

has a slim chance though.

I've been praying so hard but...

I don't know Renae."

I'm not used to this.

Evan seems so vulnerable.

Like a fragile shell.

A shell of my friend.

I don't know how to help him.

act 13 **a note**

I don't tell Jason.

It would make him sad.

We talk about happy things.

Like the dragonflies,

and the lily pads.

But the next day, Evan's gone.

Third hour, empty.

I'm alone in school.

The bell rings, it's lunch time now.

I go to our tree,

and find a small note!

I unfold it carefully,

small, neat, handwriting.

*"Mom got really bad.*

*My family is visiting.*

*I had to leave school."*

Then at the bottom,

*“253 east mountain dr.”*

Evan wants me to

come to his house? Why?

I stuff the note in my bag.

Then remember, right.

That's a normal thing.

Friends go to each other's house.

I'm not used to friends.

They're nice to have though.

The rest of School shoots by fast.

No garden today.

it takes me a while,

to bike to east mountain drive.

253. I'm here.

I ring the doorbell,

and wait on Evan's front porch.

act 14 **swings**

The front door opens.

A stranger answers.

Probably Evan's father.

“What do you want?” He

askes in a tired voice.

“Dad! Let her in, it's Renae.”

Evan's voice is soft,  
His dad looks fragile.  
Evan grabs my wrist, "come in."  
He drags me inside,  
Closing the front door.  
"Don't worry dad, it's all good."  
His dad nods and leaves,  
drifting like a ghost.  
He's dealing with so much pain,  
it's behind his eyes.  
"Sorry about that,"  
Says Evan, hesitantly,  
"Want to go out back?"  
I nod, "Don't worry about  
your dad. I get it."  
Evan looks grateful,  
"Not a lot of people do.  
I'm not surprised though,  
that you get it. You  
can read people's faces, Rin."  
I'm a bit confused,  
Is that a good thing?  
We come to a small backyard.  
Half the size of mine.  
There's a small swing set.

“Jason’s the only one who  
ever played on this.

I sit here sometimes,  
so I can feel closer to him.”

He sits on a swing.

Yellow, with frayed ropes.

I sit on the swing by his.

“Is your mom ok?”

I ask, carefully.

Evan smiles at me sadly,

“Not for much longer.

they said she had three

months left, and it’s been three months.”

### Part 3 waiting

#### act 15 **Hope**

When a person dies,

they go to heaven.

Some have unfinished business,

so they become ghosts.

If they can finish

what they couldn’t in this life,



an angel comes down  
to collect the ghost.  
And in that window of time,  
Something cool happens.  
The invisible,  
becomes seen by the living.  
So when Evan asks,  
“Rin, can I see him?  
Is there any way I could?”  
I’m very happy.  
I can give him hope,  
“It will take some explaining.”

act 16 **pain**

The next couple days,  
all go the same way.  
School; Evan. Garden; Jason.  
Sometimes Evan comes.  
Jason likes those days.  
They’re the only friends I have,  
but they’re amazing.  
Evan makes a plan.  
To see Jason one more time.  
The hospital is  
five minutes away.

His mom will have to go soon,  
and it makes him sad.  
More than he lets on.  
Evan puts on a brave face,  
but underneath it,  
I can see his pain.  
He's such a wonderful boy.  
Silly, but solemn  
thinking of Jason,  
wanting to make him happy,  
but at his own cost.  
I want to help him.  
coax the smile back out of him,  
from that deep dark place  
where it went to hide.  
But I'm afraid that I can't.  
I'm afraid I'll fail.  
I'm only one girl.  
His whole family needs my help.  
How am I supposed  
to fix all of them?  
We're walking to the garden,  
when these thoughts hit me.  
I walk slower now,  
and the sidewalk gets blurry.

A warm tear falls down,  
hitting the concrete.  
“Oh, Renae! Are you crying?  
Hey! Hey, stop walking.”  
Then, Evan hugs me.  
“Don’t even worry  
Renae. It will be alright.”

act 17 **Renae**

I’m in third hour,  
when Evan gets called  
out early by the office.  
He gets up to leave,  
Then he nods at me.  
I know I have to get out.  
Bike to the garden.  
I hope the plan works.  
I hope Evan’s dad will drive.  
After third hour,  
I leave the building.  
I’m skipping class, but oh well.  
I want to be there  
when the plan works out.  
*If* the plan works out at all  
I’m biking so fast.

Practically flying down streets.

The wind whips my face

and tangles my hair.

All at once I start crying.

Crying for Jason,

for Evan's family,

crying from pain, and from hope.

Happy tears and sad.

They blow off my face.

I arrive at the garden.

Jason still sits there,

his spot on the bridge.

He smiles at me like normal,

always so happy.

I take a deep breath,

let his calm wash over me.

Let it soothe my pain.

Happy people's smiles

can be like band-aids for hurt.

\*It will be alright\*

Signs Jason, warmly.

So I sit by him and wait,

like I said I would

weeks and weeks ago.

Together, we wait for mom.

act 18 **Evan**

I leave third hour,

worrying about

everything. Renae, my mom,

the plan, and Jason.

My dad picks me up.

Jane is in the car as well.

Red hair and brown eyes,

She looks just like mom.

She smiles at me sadly, "Hey,"

I get in my seat.

"Hey Jane," I reply.

The drive to the Hospital

is long and anxious.

The car is full of

tension, brave faces and pain.

The doctor called dad.

Said to get his kids

Together to say goodbye.

it will be alright.

I tell myself that

in the hospital lobby.

The elevator,

and my mother's room.

She looks so vulnerable.

A wilting flower.

she smiles at us though,

as if to reassure us.

Dad's hiding his tears

jane's arm wraps around

my shaking shoulders, "Evan?

it will be alright."

"Joseph? come here Jo."

my mom reaches out to dad,

"Jason's waiting, Jo."

my dad holds her hand,

"Jason's gone. Remember dear?

It's just us four now."

Tears rolling down cheeks.

It's too much to take,

almost. "Go to the bridge Jo."

My mom sounds desperate

"The water lilies.

The peaceful garden,

where we would walk together."

She's crying now too.

"Please. Promise me Jo."

a pause, then dad nods his head,

"I promise Mary."

“We’ll both wait for you,  
it will be alright Joseph.”

act 19 **together**

I’m signing to him,

Explaining the plan

\*You will see them soon, ok?\*

Jason smiles and nods,

\*I’m so excited!

Is mom really getting me?\*

I sigh, \*I hope so.\*

Then, a car pulls in.

Parking against the sidewalk.

Evan comes running

a smile on his face

relief washes over me.

Jason looks downcast.

\*I’ll miss you, Renae.\*

I sign, \*It will be alright.

I love you, Jason\*

Jason’s smile returns,

\*You’ll be alright too, Renae.\*

Evan reaches us,

“He’s still there, right Rin?”

I step quickly off the bridge,

“He's still here, Evan. ”

His smile grows bigger,

he faces the bridge and signs,

\*Renaë is awesome!\*

Evan can't see it,

but Jason signs, \*I love Rin!\*

A small, “Aw.” Escapes.

“What did Jason sign?!”

Evan asks, excitedly.

My cheeks turn rosy,

“Uh, he said that he loves me.”

He shrugs his shoulders,

“I'd have to agree.”

Then runs off to get his dad.

act 20 **goodbye**

We stand on the bridge,

all of us, silent.

Jason watches patiently

then something happens,

everything gets bright.

I have to squint my eyes shut.

It's bright, but not hot.

Evan grabs my hand.

We hold on to each other.



Then the light goes down.

I open my eyes,

Everybody does the same.

His waiting's over.

Jason smiles so big.

He's holding his mother's hand.

I look over at Evan,

large tears roll down his

smiling, happy face,

\*I love you so much Jason.

Are you happy now?

I know life was hard,

Is it finally all better?\*

Evan signs so fast,

Jason still answers,

\*I was sad because you were.

But you're all smiling!

You're all happy now,

Which means my business is done.

I love you Evan.\*

Evan chokes a bit,

We are both crying so hard.

Jane signs to Jason

and their dad talks to

his dead wife for the last time.

And then they're both gone.

We stand there alone.

The teal bridge looks empty now.

Then it all sinks in,

“We did it, Evan....

We did it! Our plan, it worked!!”

And then I hug him.

And he hugs me back,

“You were right, Renae.” He says

“About everything!

it was all alright”

I can't let go. I'm so glad.

I fixed everything.

I did it right, and

I can't stop crying happy tears.

**THE END**