



3rd prize

11-13 years age group

Name: Beren U.

Age: 11

Bio of author:

Title: The Good Water Festival

Judge's notes: N/A

The Good Water Festival

Out in the dry, hot, never-ending desert, cheers of happiness and joy leaped around the peace loving village of Dune. It was a lovely, joyful village that belonged to the Mohawks, who called it: Kahneki:io, which meant Good Water, named after a fresh water spring. There were many large mountains that loomed over the village. The sacred mountains were full of gold that had developed underground for thousands of years.

"Today we're celebrating the Good Water Festival," Sheriff Saav boomed. "This marks the 127th year since we arrived here. We fought the Mohawks and then learned to live in peace with them; never to have any violence again."

He looked at the village of Mohawks, settlers and other sheriff officers and he continued. "Thanks to you Mohawks, we settlers had...oh no!"

Everyone turned around and all joy disappeared into thin air. Crimson, a greedy, violent settler was approaching with his gang of ex-soldiers on horses.

"Hello there!" Crimson yelled over to the horrified villagers. He walked over to Sheriff Saav, who noticed Crimson grip his gun.

"What do you want?" Saav asked.

"A trip to the gold mountain is what I need," Crimson calmly responded. He pulled out his gun and ordered his gang to do the same. "Give me the gold or die!" Crimson yelled for everyone to hear but his eyes were fixed on the Mohawks. "You have twenty four hours to decide!"

He and his gang moved out, sniggering and laughing.

"Alright," Saav yelled. "Everyone, we need a plan. Get into the Town Hall!"

They all came up with many plans over the next day but none of them worked because they were vastly outnumbered.

"This isn't working!" One of the villagers cried out in frustration.

"Five minutes left." Saav reminded everyone.

"We need to think," a Mohawk called Shawatis said.

"Maybe we could get our essentials and run?" A villager suggested.

"No. They have horses. They can easily catch up," Saav pointed out.

"Two minutes!" Shawatis reminded everyone.

"Crimson's arriving!" A watcher informed them from outside.

It all seemed lost as they walked out to the street.

Shawatis remembered the last time there was a war. An elder told him about the Great Spirit. No one had been able to invoke it for countless generations but it was their only hope.

Shawatis told Saav, "buy me some time, I've got a plan." He gathered a wooden toy, a weapon and water.

Meanwhile, Saav and the village surrendered to Crimson. "We reluctantly surrender," Saav said.

"Good. You will take us to the mountain now!" Crimson demanded.

Inside the Town Hall, Shawatis was chanting in his language. "Sehnhotoniko! Satketsko kahnkei:o to:tis!"¹

Suddenly, a large portal appeared in front of Crimson and his gang.

Everyone froze.

It slowly but surely creaked open and a blinding blue light emerged to reveal itself as a beautiful, blue and green, giant lizard.

It charged at the shocked and frightened gang.

Crunch! Snap! Burp!

The lizard, cleaned up the mess of evil and disappeared through the portal once more. It was Kahneki:o, the spirit of Good Water.

¹ Translation: "Open the door! Wake up Good Water Lizard!"