

The Tina Kean

Modeled after The Lorax

At the far end of town
where the Grickle-grass grows
and the wind smells slow-and-sweet when it blows
and the beautiful birds sing to tell of their woes
is Lucy Wortham James Elementary.

And deep in the Grickle-grass, some people say,
if you look deep enough you can still see, today,
where Tina Kean once stood
just as long as she could
before retirement took her away.

Who was Tina Kean?
And why was she there?
And why did retirement take her somewhere
from the far end of town where the Grickle-grass grows?
Several teachers still work there.
Ask them. *They* know.

They will love to tell you.
Their memories abound.
They sit there unsure without her around.
They sit there unsure, in the classrooms and halls,
when the kids are all gone
and there's just empty walls.
And on special dank midnights in quiet
they peek
out of their doorways
and sometimes they speak
and tell how Tina Kean was lifted away.

They'll tell you, perhaps...
if you're willing to stay.

“Now I’ll tell you,” they say, with their teeth sounding gray,
“how Tina Kean got lifted and taken away...”

It all started way back...
such a long, long time back...
Way back in the days when Tina was a kid
and she first came to school
and she loved it, she did!
“A teacher I’ll be” she yelled out in space...
she couldn’t get enough of this wonderful place.
I will teach fourth grade!
What a wonderful grade!
The best place in the school is in 4th grade!
And that’s where a good many of her years were made.

And, while in 4th grade, she saw many a child
and she taught them all well - even the wild
some made her crazy, but at others she smiled.

And the teachers all beamed
with Tina to be teamed
with her enthusiasm flowing
better it all seemed.

For that Tina! That Tina!
That wonderful Tina!
Soul poured into her teaching-
kid’s hearts she did win.
From Missouri Day fun
on to Westward Ho!
She taught about Lucy
And on many field trips did go.

And with a great leaping
of joy in her heart
She mentored many a teacher--
and gave them a great start!

She planned rewards and parties to get kids to read.
She worked hard
figuring out what each kid did need
to learn to love reading and writing some more.
And most of them did ... or they worked anyway, so
Tina Kean would be proud. Then as most of you know...
Tina did more. Tina went bigger.
She learned eMints and desktops and then....
Macbooks and ipads and smart boards
And even airplay and more!

“Kids!” she said with a smile on her face,
“I’ll be the best teacher you’ve seen in this place!
I’ll do what it takes to keep you engaged
and teach you to love school - no matter what it takes!”
And though all of the students were very impressed
Tina’s “its not that cold, go outside!” left the teachers a bit stressed.

“Look, teachers,” Tina said “There’s no cause for alarm.
The Kids will be fine. I’ll be doing no harm.
I’m being such fun! The kids think I’m cool....
and kids do come first at our elementary school!”
And the teachers all followed Tina Kean’s lead
Because a menor like Tina is what all teachers need.
To lead them and guide them and mother them too -
Making 4th grade much greater than other schools do.

The teachers said,
“Tina! With you as our lead,
we’ll do our very best
to give kids what they need!”

And for many a year Tina held down the fort
put kids first, handled each parent retort.
Planned many a scheme to help others do good,
built them up, helped them out, like all great friends should.

She handled each with wisdom and grace
and a drive to make sure all things good happened in the place.

And, in no time at all,
With the team that she built,
the whole 4th grade staff,
was working full tilt.
They were all teaching kids
just as busy as bees,
and capturing hearts just as
quick as you please.

Then...
Oh! Baby! Oh!
How Tina's family did change!
Now, grandkids join in
parents and
Tina herself aged.

So, too quickly for those who still teach here to like
Tina threw out that "r" word, decided to hike
on to new adventures
of grandmotherhood and beyond!
And the teachers?...
Well on them it slowly donned...

That Tina Kean
retired
meant so many things...

A new team mate
adjustments
and changes galore

All the 4th grade felt sad as they watched Tina go.

BUT...
Teachers are teachers!
And these teachers know
Tina's legacy must be carried on, so...

They'll teach just the same
but they'll think back and say
"Remember how great it
was back in those days?"
And while Tina will relax and enjoy sleeping in
She, too, will think back every now and then.
With much fondness all remember and
and with eagerness all plan
to join Tina someday in retirement land!

And so off to retirement
she'll go with a grin
leaving inspiration and memories...
what a journey it's been!

Thank you for the years of inspiration, the support, and the memoirs! I wouldn't be who
I am without you, and our 4th grade teams wouldn't be where we are. I am so, so
thankful for you, your mentorship, and your friendship.

