

STEPPING STONES™


a chapter book

Fiction

The Stories Julian Tells



Ann Cameron



*The Pudding
Like a
Night on the Sea*

“I’m going to make something special for your mother,” my father said.

My mother was out shopping. My father was in the kitchen, looking at the pots and the pans and the jars of this and that.

“What are you going to make?” I said.

“A pudding,” he said.

My father is a big man with wild black hair. When he laughs, the sun laughs in the window-panes. When he thinks, you can almost see his thoughts sitting on all the tables and chairs. When he is angry, me and my little brother, Huey, shiver to the bottom of our shoes.

“What kind of pudding will you make?” Huey said.

“A wonderful pudding,” my father said. “It will taste like a whole raft of lemons. It will taste like a night on the sea.”

Then he took down a knife and sliced five lemons in half. He squeezed the first one. Juice squirted in my eye.

“Stand back!” he said, and squeezed again. The seeds flew out on the floor. “Pick up those seeds, Huey!” he said.

Huey took the broom and swept them up.

My father cracked some eggs and put the yolks in a pan and the whites in a bowl. He rolled up his sleeves and pushed back his hair and beat up the yolks. “Sugar, Julian!” he said, and I poured in the sugar.

He went on beating. Then he put in lemon juice and cream and set the pan on the stove. The pudding bubbled and he stirred it fast. Cream splashed on the stove.

“Wipe that up, Huey!” he said.

Huey did.

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Julian is a quick fibber and a wishful thinker. And he is great at telling stories. He can make people—especially his younger brother, Huey—believe just about anything. Like the story about the cats that come in the mail. Or the fig leaves that make you grow tall if you eat them off the tree. But some stories can lead to a heap of trouble, and that's *exactly* where Julian and Huey end up!



“There’s a glow here that’s hard to resist.” —*Booklist*

“You have to go a long way these days to find a book that leaves you feeling as happy as this one.” —*The New York Times*

“The voice of a poet is heard here.” —*Publishers Weekly*

- ★ An ALA Notable Children’s Book
- ★ Winner of the Irma Simonton Black Award

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