Cookies for the Whole Town



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About This Book

At a Glance

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Edition

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1.0	October 2026	First edition

About the Story

The Series

Rosie's Bakery sits on Main Street in the little American town of Maple Falls, where Evie and her mom bake fresh bread every morning and cakes to order. Evie loves to bake — and most of all to decorate, with a ring of red cherries on top. In each book she takes on one baking job, from the first mixing bowl to the last cherry, while her little brother Billy tastes everything and Crumble the shop dog waits for a crumb. Warm, gentle stories for children just starting to read English.

This Book

It is December in Maple Falls. Snow is on Main Street. Snow is on the big maple tree.

Mom has a plan: cookies for the whole town! A bag of cookies for every house. A thank-you for the year.

But how many houses are there? Sara takes her list. Tess takes her pencil. Door by door, they count. Thirty houses. A hundred and eighty cookies!

Stars, hearts, snowflakes and maple leaves. Tray after tray. White icing, and a red cherry on every bag. Then the bags go out on Grandpa's old sled.

But behind the maple tree there is a little street. And one small blue house.

Who lives in the house with no footprints?

Chapter 1: Snow on Main Street



It is Monday morning. It is December.

Evie looks out the shop window.

Main Street is white.

There is snow on the street.

There is snow on the sidewalk.

There is snow on the cars.

The big maple tree by the square is white too.

No red leaves now. Only snow.

“Snow,” says Evie. “So much snow!”

Mom comes in from the kitchen.

“The first snow was on Thanksgiving,” she says.

“Now it is deep.”

Outside, two little boys run in the snow.

It is Billy. And it is Sam.

Billy has his blue boots on.

Sam has his green boots on.

They run and run.

Their boots make lines in the white snow.

Sam falls down. He laughs.

Billy falls down too. He laughs too.

Crumble runs out to them.

He jumps in the snow.

The snow is on his nose.

Crumble is a brown dog. Now he is a white dog.

Evie laughs by the window.

“Look at Crumble,” she says.

Mom looks too. She smiles.

“Billy!” she calls from the door. “Come in now!”

“Your mittens are wet!”

Billy and Sam come to the door.

They stamp their boots on the step.

Crumble shakes. Snow flies all over the shop.

“Crumble!” says Evie.

Crumble wags his tail. He is not sorry.

Billy takes off his mittens.

His mittens are red. They are very wet.

His hands are red too. Red and cold.

"My hands are cold," says Billy.

"My nose is cold," says Sam.

"Come to the oven," says Mom.

Inside the bakery it is warm.

The big oven is hot.

The shop smells of fresh bread.

Billy and Sam stand by the oven.

Billy takes off his scarf.

It is a long scarf. It is blue and white.

It is very long. Billy is not very tall.

"Your scarf is longer than you," says Evie.

Billy laughs. "It is a good scarf."

He puts the scarf and his mittens on a chair.

Sam puts his mittens on the chair too.

Mom looks at the snow on the street.

"It is almost Christmas," she says.

She looks at Evie.

"Do you remember?" she says.

"On Thanksgiving. At the long table."

Evie thinks for a moment.

Then she remembers.

"Cookies!" she says.

"Cookies for the whole town!"

"Yes," says Mom.

"The town is good to us.

All year the people come to the bakery.

They buy our bread. They buy our cakes."

"And they say thank you," says Evie.

"Now we say thank you," says Mom.

"With cookies," says Evie.

This is the plan.

A bag of cookies for every house.

Every house in Maple Falls.

A thank-you for the whole year.

"Cookies?" says Billy.

He jumps up. He is warm now.

"Cookies for every house?"

"For every house," says Mom.

"Can I help?" says Sam.

"We can all help," says Evie.

Ding! The bakery door.

Sara comes in. Tess comes in too.

Snow is on their coats.

"Morning!" says Sara.

"Morning!" says Tess.

"Morning!" says Evie.

Sara has a green scarf.

Tess has white mittens.

Tess takes off her mittens.

She puts them on the chair. Very neat.

Now there are three pairs of mittens on the chair.

"It is so cold outside," says Sara.

"My feet are cold in my boots."

"Come in," says Mom. "Come to the oven."

The girls stand by the warm oven.

"We have a plan," says Evie.

"A big plan."

"The cookies?" says Sara.

"Cookies for the whole town," says Evie.

"A bag for every house."

Sara looks at Evie. Her eyes are big.

"For every house?" she says.

"Every house in Maple Falls?"

"Yes," says Evie.

"That is a lot of cookies," says Tess.

"A lot," says Mom. "We need all of you."

"We all have a job," says Evie.

She counts on her fingers.

"I decorate," says Evie.

"I check the list," says Sara.

"I measure," says Tess.

"I taste first!" says Billy.

"I taste second," says Sam.

They all laugh.

"And I watch the oven," says Mom.

Crumble sits by the table.

He looks up at Billy.

“And Crumble?” says Sam.

“Crumble waits,” says Billy.

“Later you get a cookie.”

Crumble wags his tail.

Sara takes a pencil and a piece of paper.

“Good,” she says. “A list.”

She writes at the top: Cookies for the whole town.

“Now,” she says. “How many houses?”

She looks at Evie.

Evie looks at Mom.

Mom looks at Tess.

Tess looks at Billy.

Billy looks at Sam.

Sam looks at Crumble.

Crumble looks at the door.

Nobody knows.

“Ten houses?” says Billy.

“A hundred houses?” says Sam.

“I do not know,” says Evie.

Sara looks at her paper.

There is only one line on it.

“We need to know,” says Sara.

“Every house,” says Tess. “We count them.”

Evie looks out the window.

The snow is deep on Main Street.

The big maple tree is white.

How many houses are there in Maple Falls?

Chapter 2: Thirty Houses



“Boots on,” says Evie. “Mittens on.”

Billy puts on his blue boots and his red mittens.

The mittens are dry now.

He puts on his long blue and white scarf.

Sam puts on his green boots.

Sara has her green scarf and her list.

Tess has her white mittens and a pencil.

“We walk all of Main Street,” says Sara.

“We count every house. Door by door.”

Ding! They go out.

The cold is on their faces.

Crumble runs out too.

He jumps in the snow. Snow is on his nose again.

"Number one," says Sara. "The bakery."

"Our house too?" says Billy.

"Our house too," says Evie. "We live here."

They look across the street at the Lees' house.

"Number two," says Tess. "My house!"

"My house!" says Sam. He jumps in the snow.

Sara writes it on her list.

They walk down Main Street.

The snow is deep on the sidewalk.

Billy walks behind Evie. Sam walks behind Billy.

Crumble is a white dog again.

"Three," says Sara. "Four. Five."

The bread store. The bookstore. The hat store.

People live over the stores too.

Every door is a house. Every house gets a bag.

A window opens. It is Mrs. Green.

"Good morning, children!" she says.

"Morning, Mrs. Green!" says Evie.

"What are you doing in the cold?"

"We are counting the houses," says Sara.

"Why?" says Mrs. Green.

Evie smiles. "You will see."

Mrs. Green laughs. She shuts the window.

Sara writes on her list. "Number eight."

They walk on.

"Here is my store," says Sara.

Her mother is at the store window. She waves.

"And there is my house," says Sara.

"Two more for the list."

They walk and walk.

This side of Main Street. Then the other side.

Sara writes. Tess counts.

"Ten," says Tess. "Fifteen. Twenty."

Billy is slow now.

His feet are cold in his boots.

His mittens are wet again.

"How many more?" says Billy.

"Not many," says Evie. "Look."

Down at the end of Main Street is a small house.

That is Grandpa's house.

There is snow on the roof and in his garden.

"Grandpa!" says Billy. He runs to the door.

But the door is shut. Grandpa is not home.

"That is the last house," says Sara.

She counts her list with her pencil.

"Twenty-eight. Twenty-nine. Thirty."

"Thirty houses!" says Tess.

"Not a hundred," says Sam.

"Not ten," says Billy.

"Thirty," says Evie. "Come. Back to the oven!"

They walk back up Main Street.

They stamp their boots on the step.

Ding! The bakery is warm.

Mom smiles. "Here you are! So many red noses."

Mittens and scarves go on the chair.

The children sit at the big table.

Tess takes the pencil and the list.

"Six cookies in one bag," says Tess.

"And thirty bags."

She writes on the paper.

"Ten bags is sixty cookies."

"Twenty bags is a hundred and twenty."

"Thirty bags is a hundred and eighty."

Tess looks up.

"A hundred and eighty cookies," she says.

It is quiet in the bakery.

"A hundred and eighty?" says Sara.

"A hundred and eighty," says Tess. "Count with me."

"That is a lot of cookies," says Evie.

"And one for me," says Billy.

They all laugh.

"And one for Crumble," says Sam.

Crumble wags his tail.

Ding! The bakery door opens.

It is Grandpa with his cap on.

There is snow on his cap.

He takes it off and shakes it.

"Grandpa!" says Billy. "We were at your house!"

"I was at the store," says Grandpa.

He smiles at the children.

"What is this? A big plan?"

"Cookies for the whole town," says Evie.

"A bag for every house," says Sara. "Thirty houses."

"A hundred and eighty cookies," says Tess.

Grandpa laughs. "That is a good plan."

"And how do the bags go to the houses?"

"In my wagon!" says Billy.

His red wagon stands by the door.

Grandpa shakes his head.

"The wagon does not go in deep snow," he says.

"The wheels get stuck."

Billy looks out the window at the deep snow.

"Oh," he says.

"Take my old sled," says Grandpa.

"A sled?" says Sam. "You have a sled?"

"An old sled. A good sled," says Grandpa.

"I will bring it tomorrow."

The next morning Grandpa comes up Main Street.

He pulls a long rope.

On the end of the rope is a sled.

It is a wooden sled. It is old and brown.

Under the sled are two long runners.

The runners are red.

The sled goes over the deep snow, slow and easy.

Billy and Sam run out.

“A sled!” says Billy.

“It is long,” says Sam.

“Long enough for three boxes,” says Grandpa.

He gives the rope to Billy.

Billy pulls the rope. The sled moves.

“It goes!” says Billy.

Evie stands at the door and smiles.

“First the cookies,” says Mom.

“Today we make the dough.”

A hundred and eighty cookies!

Chapter 3: Stars and Snowflakes



It is Tuesday morning.

The old sled stands by the bakery door.

The red wagon stands next to it.

There is snow on the sled.

Inside, the bakery is warm.

The big oven is on.

Ding! Sara, Tess and Sam come in.

“Morning!” they say.

Mittens and scarves go on the chair.

Tess puts on her purple apron.

Sara puts on her white apron.

“Today we make the dough,” says Evie.

“A hundred and eighty cookies,” says Tess. “I measure every cup.”

Billy runs down the stairs.

“Wait for me!” says Billy.

Crumble runs behind him.

The children stand at the big table.

On the table are a big bowl, a cup and a spoon.

“First the butter,” says Mom.

“Soft butter. One cup.”

Tess measures the butter.

She makes it flat on the top of the cup.

The butter goes in the bowl.

“Now the sugar,” says Mom. “One cup.”

Tess measures the sugar.

Not too much and not too little.

The sugar goes in the bowl.

Sara stirs. She stirs and stirs.

The butter and the sugar are soft and white.

“Now I taste,” says Billy. “My job!”

“Only a little,” says Mom.

“Before the egg goes in.”

Billy takes a little on a spoon.

He tastes it.

“Sweet!” he says. “Very good.”

“My job too,” says Sam. “I taste second.”

Sam takes a little on a spoon.

"Very sweet!" says Sam.

Mom laughs. "Now the egg."

Evie puts in one egg.

Sara stirs again.

"Now the flour," says Mom.

"Three cups."

Tess measures one cup, two cups, three cups.

The flour goes in the bowl.

"And a little salt," says Tess.

"Salt?" says Sam. "In cookies?"

"A little salt is good in cookies," says Mom.

Sara stirs. The dough is heavy now.

"My arm!" says Sara.

Evie puts her hands in the bowl.

She makes a big ball of dough.

Mom puts flour on the table.

Evie puts the ball on the flour.

"Now the rolling pin," says Evie.

"The rolling pin!" says Billy.

"We made the pies with it!"

Evie rolls the dough.

"Flat and thin," says Mom.

"But not too thin."

Then Mom gets an old box.

She opens it on the table.

In the box are little metal shapes.

“What are they?” says Sam.

“Cookie cutters,” says Mom.

“They are old. I had them as a little girl.”

She takes out the cutters.

“A snowflake,” says Sam.

“Snow outside, snow inside!”

“A star,” says Sara.

“I see stars at night.”

“A heart,” says Billy.

“A maple leaf,” says Evie.

“Our big maple tree!”

“Four shapes,” says Tess.

“Look,” says Mom.

She takes the star.

She puts the cutter on the dough.

She pushes it down.

Then she lifts the cutter.

There is a star in the dough!

“Now lift the star,” says Mom.

Evie lifts the star with her hands.

She is careful and slow.

She puts it on the tray.

“A star cookie!” says Sam.

“My turn,” says Sam.

He takes the snowflake cutter.

He cuts out a snowflake.

And again, and again.

“Only snowflakes?” says Sara.

“I like snowflakes,” says Sam.

Billy takes the heart cutter.

He cuts out a heart.

And a heart, and a heart.

“Only hearts?” says Tess.

“I like hearts,” says Billy.

Evie looks at the tray.

There are only snowflakes and hearts.

“Stop,” says Evie. “We need all four.”

“Why?” says Billy.

“Every bag gets all four shapes,” says Evie.

“Snowflakes, stars, hearts and maple leaves.”

“A bag with only hearts?” says Sara.

“No,” says Billy. “Not fun.”

Evie smiles.

“Sam cuts out the snowflakes,” she says.

“Billy cuts out the hearts.”

“Sara cuts out the stars.”

“And I cut out the maple leaves.”

“And I count,” says Tess.

They all cut. Push down and lift.

Snowflake, heart, star, maple leaf.

Evie lifts the shapes.

She puts them on the tray.

There is dough between the shapes.

Evie makes a ball again.

She rolls it flat again.

Crumble sits by the table.

He looks up at the dough.

“Who gets a cookie?” says Sam.

Crumble wags his tail.

“Not you,” says Billy. “Not now.”

“No dough for dogs,” says Mom.

“Later, Crumble,” says Billy. “Later you get a cookie.”

Crumble lies down under the table.

Tess looks at the tray.

“Five snowflakes and five hearts,” she says.

“Five stars and five maple leaves.”

“Twenty cookies on the tray.”

“The tray is full!” says Sam.

Mom opens the oven door.

Hot air comes out.

She puts the tray in the oven.

She shuts the door.

“Ten minutes,” says Mom.

“Then the edges are golden.”

The children look at the oven.

“Twenty cookies,” says Billy.

“Only twenty?” says Sam. “We need a hundred and eighty.”

It is quiet in the bakery.

Tess takes her pencil.

“Twenty on one tray,” she says.

“A hundred and eighty cookies.”

She looks at the oven.

She looks at the dough.

“How many trays is that?”

Tess starts to count.

Chapter 4: Tray After Tray



Tess looks at her paper.

“Twenty on one tray,” she says.

“Two trays is forty. Three trays is sixty.”

She counts on.

“Nine trays is a hundred and eighty.”

“Nine trays!” says Sam.

“And one more,” says Mom.

“Why?” says Sam.

Evie smiles. She knows this one.

“A baker always bakes extra,” she says.

“Ten trays,” says Tess. “Two hundred cookies.”

“Two hundred!” says Billy.

Ten minutes go by.

Mom opens the oven door.

Hot air comes out.

She takes out the tray.

The cookies are flat and thin.

The edges are golden.

“Golden edges,” says Sara. “Just right.”

“Do not touch,” says Mom. “They are very hot.”

There is a long table by the wall.

Mom puts a big clean cloth on it.

“This is the cooling table,” she says.

“The cookies cool here.”

“Cool?” says Sam. “What is cool?”

“Not hot,” says Tess. “Not cold. Just in the middle.”

Mom lifts the cookies off the tray.

She puts them on the cooling table.

“Cookies need to cool,” says Mom.

“Hot cookies break.”

The next tray goes in the oven.

Mom shuts the door.

“Ten minutes,” she says.

The children cut out more shapes.

Snowflakes, hearts, stars and maple leaves.

The second tray comes out.

The third tray goes in.

Then the fourth tray.

The kitchen is hot now.

“It is hot in here,” says Sam.

Evie looks out of the window.

“It is snowing again,” she says.

Snow falls outside.

“Real snowflakes,” says Sam.

“And our snowflakes,” says Billy. “In here.”

The dough is gone.

“More dough,” says Mom.

Tess measures again.

Butter, sugar, an egg, flour and a little salt.

Sara stirs again.

“My arm!” she says again.

They all laugh.

Evie rolls the dough flat and thin.

They cut out more shapes.

Mom watches the oven.

She watches every tray.

The fifth tray comes out.

Mom looks at it.

“Oh no,” she says.

The cookies are brown.

Not golden. Brown.

The edges are dark.

"The oven is very hot today," says Mom.

"Can we give them away?" says Sara.

Mom shakes her head.

"No. We do not give those away," she says.

"Those are ours."

"Ours?" says Billy.

He looks at Sam.

Sam looks at Billy.

"Can we eat them?" says Sam.

"Yes. But first they cool," says Mom.

"One each. Then back to work."

The brown cookies cool.

Billy takes a brown heart.

He bites it.

"Good!" he says. "Brown is good."

Sam takes a brown snowflake.

"Very good," says Sam.

Crumble sits up.

He looks at Billy.

He looks at the brown cookies.

"Who gets a cookie?" says Tess.

Billy laughs.

"Crumble gets a cookie," he says.

"Later, Crumble. Now it is later."

He gives Crumble a brown star.

Crumble eats it in one bite.

“Good dog,” says Billy.

Mom looks at the tray.

“Now we need one more tray,” she says.

“For the brown cookies.”

“Eleven trays,” says Tess.

She writes it on her paper.

The children cut out more shapes.

Tray after tray goes in.

Tray after tray comes out.

Mom turns the oven down a little.

The cookies are golden again.

The long table is full.

“Count them,” says Mom.

Sam counts.

“One, two, three, four…”

“Too slow,” says Tess. “Count in tens.”

They make little lines of ten.

“Ten, twenty, thirty, forty,” says Sam.

“The hundred cupcakes!” says Evie.

“In tens, too.”

Sara laughs. “I remember!”

The last tray comes out.

Mom puts the cookies on the long table.

It is late now.

Outside, the snow stops.

Inside, it smells sweet.

“Now all of them,” says Tess.

She counts. She counts every line.

The children wait.

“A hundred,” says Tess.

“A hundred and eighty.”

She looks up.

“Two hundred cookies,” she says.

“Two hundred!” says Sam.

“We need a hundred and eighty,” says Sara.

“So there are twenty extra,” says Tess.

“Twenty extra!” says Billy.

He looks at the extra cookies.

He looks at Mom.

Mom smiles.

She gets a little brown paper bag.

She puts some extra cookies in it.

A snowflake, a star, a heart, a maple leaf.

And two more hearts.

“For you, Billy,” she says.

“Your own bag. For later.”

“My own bag!” says Billy.

“Not now,” says Mom. “Later.”

“Later,” says Billy.

He puts the bag on the counter.

Crumble looks at the bag.

“Not you,” says Billy. “You ate a cookie.”

Evie looks at the cooling table.

So many cookies.

Flat and thin and golden.

Snowflakes, stars, hearts and maple leaves.

“Now they need icing,” says Evie.

“White icing,” says Sara.

“Your job, Evie,” says Tess.

“Tomorrow,” says Mom. “Tomorrow the icing.”

Evie looks at all the cookies.

“A hundred and eighty cookies,” she says.

“A hundred and eighty cookies to make white!”

Chapter 5: White Icing



It is Wednesday morning.

There is snow on Main Street.

Inside, the bakery is warm.

Ding! Sara and Tess come in.

“Morning!” they say.

Sam runs in after them.

“Boots!” says Mom.

Sam goes back to the step.

He stamps his boots.

Snow falls off them.

Mittens and scarves go on the chair.

Tess puts on her purple apron.

Sara puts on her white apron.

Billy runs down the stairs.

He goes to the counter.

His own bag is still there.

“Good,” says Billy.

Crumble lies by the counter.

He looks at the bag.

“Not for you, Crumble,” says Billy.

The cookies wait on the cooling table.

They are flat and thin and golden.

Mom puts a big bowl on the big table.

She mixes the icing with a spoon.

It is thick and white.

“White icing,” says Mom.

“Evie, this is your job.”

Evie smiles.

This is her best job.

“First the snowflakes,” she says.

She takes a little spoon.

She puts white icing on a snowflake.

All over the snowflake.

“A white snowflake!” says Sam.

“A real snowflake!”

“Can I taste?” says Billy. “I taste first.”

“A little,” says Mom. “On your finger.”

Billy tastes the icing.

"Sweet!" he says. "Very good."

"And I taste second," says Sam.

He tastes, too.

"Very sweet!" says Sam.

Sara takes a spoon, too.

Evie and Sara make the snowflakes white.

Snowflake after snowflake.

"Now the stars," says Evie.

"The stars get a little white line."

"A line?" says Sam. "What is a line?"

Evie shows him.

She puts a thin white line on the edge of a star.

All around the star.

Tess looks at the star.

"This side is thin," she says.

"And this side is thick."

Evie looks, too.

Tess is right.

"Can I do one?" says Tess.

"Yes," says Evie.

Tess takes the spoon.

She is slow and careful.

She makes a white line on a star.

Not too thick and not too thin.

Every side is the same.

“Look!” says Sara. “Just right.”

“Tess, you make the lines,” says Evie.

“I do the white snowflakes.”

Tess makes a line on every star.

Then on every heart.

Every line is the same.

Evie and Sara make the last snowflakes white.

Then Sara looks at the maple leaves.

“And the maple leaves?” she says.

Evie looks at them.

“They are golden,” she says.

“Golden is pretty.”

Tess looks at her paper.

“A hundred and eighty cookies to make white,” she says.

“Remember?”

Evie laughs.

“Then the maple leaves get one white line,” she says.

“In the middle of the leaf.”

Tess makes a line in the middle of every leaf.

Now every cookie for the bags is white.

Some cookies are all white.

Some cookies have a little white line.

“Wait now,” says Mom.

“The icing gets hard.”

They wait.

Billy waits, too.

He waits next to the cookies.

“Billy,” says Mom. “Not next to the cookies.”

Billy laughs.

He goes and sits by Crumble.

Mom gets a pile of small brown paper bags.

“Thirty bags,” says Sara.

She counts them. “Thirty.”

Evie gets a red pen.

On every bag she draws one red cherry.

“My cherry,” says Evie.

“The cherries on Grandpa’s cake!” says Sara.

“Yes,” says Evie.

“Every cake gets cherries.”

“Now every bag gets a cherry, too.”

She draws and draws.

Thirty bags. Thirty red cherries.

Billy looks at his own bag on the counter.

It has no cherry.

“And my bag?” he says.

“Your bag is not for a house,” says Evie.

“It is for you.”

She gives him the red pen.

“Write your name on it,” she says.

Billy writes his name.

B-I-L-L-Y. Big red letters.

“I can write my name, too,” says Sam.

“S-A-M.”

He writes his name on Tess’s paper.

Tess laughs.

Mom touches the icing.

“It is hard now,” she says.

“Now the bags.”

Tess counts six cookies into every bag.

A snowflake, a star, a heart and a maple leaf.

And two more.

“Every bag gets all four shapes,” says Evie.

“Six in every bag,” says Tess.

Bag after bag.

Mom puts three big boxes on the table.

Sara puts ten bags in every box.

She checks her list.

“Ten, twenty, thirty,” says Sara.

“Thirty bags.”

Billy puts his bag next to the boxes.

“No, Billy,” says Mom.

“Your bag stays apart.”

“Apart?” says Billy.

“Not with the thirty bags,” says Mom.

"Your bag is for you."

Billy puts his bag away from the boxes.

He puts it on the counter again.

It stands there, apart.

Some cookies are still on the cooling table.

They have no icing.

"Fourteen extra," says Tess.

"Extra!" says Billy.

"Not now," says Mom. "Later."

Evie looks out of the window.

The snow is deep.

Grandpa's old sled stands by the door.

"Tomorrow the sled," says Evie.

"Thirty houses in the snow!"

Chapter 6: The Sled on Main Street



It is Thursday morning.

The snow on Main Street is white and deep.

Ding! Sara and Tess come in.

“Morning!” they say.

Sam stamps his boots on the step.

Today nobody takes off their mittens.

Today they all go out into the snow.

Billy puts on his blue boots and his red mittens.

Mom puts his long scarf around him.

“And your coat, Billy,” says Mom.

Billy puts on his big coat.

Then he goes to the counter.

His own bag is there.

B-I-L-L-Y. Big red letters.

Billy puts the bag in his coat.

“For later,” he says.

Crumble looks at the coat.

“Not for you, Crumble,” says Billy.

Dad comes down the stairs.

He carries the three big boxes out of the door.

Grandpa’s old sled waits by the step.

Dad puts the boxes on the sled.

Then he ties them with a rope.

Over the boxes and under the sled.

“Now the boxes stay on,” says Dad.

“Thank you, Dad!” says Evie.

Mom stands at the door with June.

“Be careful in the snow,” she says.

“We will,” says Evie.

Evie and Sara take the long rope and pull.

The sled goes over the snow, slow and easy.

Sara gives her list to Tess.

“I pull today,” says Sara.

“You hold the list.”

Tess has her pencil, too.

“We give a bag,” says Tess.

“Then I cross off the house.”

"Cross off?" says Sam. "What is cross off?"

"Look," says Tess.

"Number one is the bakery."

Billy runs to the bakery door and knocks. Knock, knock!

Mom opens the door. "Yes?"

Evie takes a bag out of a box.

"A bag of cookies for you!" she says.

Mom laughs. "For me? Thank you!"

Tess makes a line on the list, through the first house.

"Now it is off the list," she says.

"Number one. Done."

"Now I know," says Sam.

Billy and Sam knock on the doors.

That is their job today.

Crumble runs in front of them in the snow.

Number two is the Lees' house.

Sam runs to his own door and knocks.

Mrs. Lee opens the door.

"Sam!" she says. "You live here!"

Sam laughs and laughs.

He gives his own house a bag.

"Thank you!" says Mrs. Lee.

"My house," says Tess.

She crosses it off and laughs, too.

Three, four, five.

The bread store. The bookstore. The hat store.

People come to the doors.

"Thank you!"

"Thank you!"

Number eight is Mrs. Green's house.

Billy knocks.

Mrs. Green opens the door.

Mr. Green is behind her.

"Children!" says Mrs. Green. "In the snow again!"

Evie gives her a bag.

Mrs. Green looks at the red cherry.

"Cookies? For us?"

"For every house," says Evie.

"A thank-you for the year."

Mrs. Green smiles.

"Fifty years in Maple Falls," she says.

"And this is new!"

Mr. Green takes a star out of the bag and takes a bite.

"Very good," he says.

Tess crosses off number eight.

They walk on.

Here is Sara's store.

Sara's mother is at the door.

"Mom!" says Sara.

She gives her mother a bag.

"One for the store," says Sara.

"And one for our house."

"Two bags?" says her mother.

"Two houses," says Sara.

Her mother laughs. "Thank you, children!"

Tess crosses off two more.

House after house.

Knock, knock. "Thank you!"

Knock, knock. "Thank you!"

The first box is empty. Ten bags.

Then the second box is empty. Twenty bags.

Billy is slow now.

His mittens are wet. His nose is red.

"How many more?" he says.

"Not many," says Tess. "Look."

At the end of Main Street is Grandpa's small house.

Billy runs to the door.

He knocks. Knock, knock!

This time Grandpa is home.

He opens the door with his cap on.

"My old sled!" says Grandpa.

"Does it go?"

"It goes!" says Billy.

Evie gives him a bag.

Grandpa looks at the red cherry.

"A cherry," he says. "That is Evie's cherry."

"Thank you, all of you."

Tess crosses off the last house.

Sara looks at the list and counts with the pencil.

"Twenty-eight. Twenty-nine. Thirty."

They look in the boxes.

The boxes are empty.

All three.

"Empty!" says Sam.

"We counted every house," says Sara.

"The whole town!"

"We counted thirty," says Tess.

Evie smiles.

Billy puts a hand on his coat.

His own bag is still there.

"Now home," says Evie.

They turn the sled.

It is easy now.

Billy and Evie pull the sled.

Crumble runs in front.

They walk past the town square.

The big maple tree stands in the snow, all white.

Then Billy stops.

"Billy?" says Evie.

Billy does not say a thing.

He looks behind the maple tree.

Evie turns and looks, too.

Behind the tree is a little street.

A very little street.

And there is one house.

Chapter 7: The House on Pine Lane



Behind the maple tree is a little street.

It has only one house.

The house is small and blue.

It has a white door and three steps.

There is deep snow on the steps.

“Look,” says Tess. “There are no footprints.”

“Footprints?” says Sam. “What are footprints?”

Tess walks in the snow.

Then she points at her boots in the snow.

“These are footprints,” she says.

“No footprints,” says Sam.

“Nobody goes in,” says Tess.

"And nobody goes out."

Then Evie sees a face in the window.

It is an old lady.

She looks out at the snow.

Then the face is gone.

Sara takes the list from Tess.

She looks at it for a long time.

"That is Pine Lane," she says.

"Lane?" says Sam. "What is a lane?"

"A little street," says Sara.

"Pine Lane is not on my list."

"I forgot it," she says.

"We counted thirty houses," says Tess.

"Now there are thirty-one."

Evie looks at the sled.

The three boxes are empty.

"No more bags," says Evie.

Nobody says a thing.

Billy puts a hand on his coat.

His own bag is there.

Six cookies. Three hearts.

Billy likes hearts.

Billy wants the cookies.

He wants them very much.

But he looks at the blue house.

The old lady has no bag.

She has no cookies.

She is alone in the house.

Billy is quiet.

Then he takes the bag out of his coat.

B-I-L-L-Y. Big red letters.

“She can have my bag,” he says.

Evie looks at him.

“Your own bag, Billy?”

“Yes,” says Billy.

He wants the cookies.

But he wants the lady to have them more.

Evie puts an arm around him.

She does not say a thing.

She smiles.

They walk to the blue house.

Billy goes up the first step.

The step is icy.

His boot slips.

Evie holds his coat.

“Careful!” says Evie. “There is ice under the snow.”

Billy goes up slow.

One step. Two steps. Three steps.

He knocks on the white door. Knock, knock!

They wait.

Then the door opens, slowly.

The old lady has a cane in her hand.

She has white hair and round glasses.

She has a long green skirt on.

“Yes?” she says.

“Hello,” says Billy.

“This is for you.”

He gives her the bag.

“Cookies?” she says. “For me?”

She looks at the big red letters.

“Billy. Who is Billy?”

“Me,” says Billy.

“They were my cookies.

Now they are your cookies.”

The lady looks in the bag.

“Six cookies,” she says.

“And three hearts.”

“I like hearts,” says Billy.

“Then you can have one,” says the lady.

“No,” says Billy. “They are for you.”

The lady laughs.

“A boy says no to a cookie!”

“Thank you, children. I am Mrs. Hill.”

“We are from Rosie’s Bakery,” says Evie.

“I know Rosie’s Bakery,” says Mrs. Hill.

"In the summer I walk to the square.

I buy bread at the bakery."

"And in the winter?" says Tess.

Mrs. Hill looks at her steps.

"In the winter there is ice," she says.

"With a cane, ice is not good.

I do not go out.

I stay in."

"Alone?" says Sara.

"My children live far away," says Mrs. Hill.

"But they call me."

Evie looks at the steps.

"We can fix the steps," says Evie.

"With what?" says Sara.

"We have no shovel."

"Dad has a shovel," says Evie.

Tess and Sam run to the bakery.

Crumble runs with them.

Then Dad comes up Pine Lane.

He has a big shovel.

Grandpa comes, too.

He has a bag of salt.

"Grandpa was at the bakery," says Sam.

"Hello, Mrs. Hill," says Grandpa.

"You know Grandpa?" says Billy.

"I know everybody," says Mrs. Hill.

"I am old."

Dad laughs.

He takes the snow off the steps with the shovel.

The snow is deep and heavy.

Then the children push the rest of the snow away.

Billy pushes with his boots.

Sam pushes with his mittens.

Sara and Tess push with their hands.

Under the snow is the ice.

Grandpa opens the bag of salt.

He puts salt on every step.

"Salt and ice," says Grandpa.

"Now the ice goes away."

"And then?" says Sam.

"Then nobody slips," says Grandpa.

They wait a little.

Mrs. Hill looks at her three steps.

Then she goes down one step with her cane.

Dad holds her arm.

"No ice," says Mrs. Hill.

She goes down one more step.

"No ice!" she says again.

Her eyes are wet.

She smiles a big smile. She is very happy.

"Thank you," she says.

"All of you."

Billy looks at her smile.

He has no cookies now.

But he is happy. Very happy.

Mrs. Hill goes back up to her door.

She holds the bag of cookies in her hand.

"Come back," she says.

"All of you."

"I have a cookie for you, too."

"A cookie?" says Billy. "What cookie?"

Mrs. Hill smiles.

"You will see," she says.

Then she shuts the white door.

Chapter 8: Snowballs



It is Friday morning.

There is still snow on Main Street.

In the bakery the phone rings.

Mom talks for a long time. Then she smiles.

“That was Mrs. Hill,” says Mom.

“She wants to bake her cookie with you.”

“Her cookie!” says Billy.

“Yes,” says Mom. “But her kitchen is very small.

And her oven is small, too.”

Dad puts on his coat.

“Then she bakes here,” he says.

“I will get her with the truck.”

Ding! Sara and Tess come in.

"Morning!" they say.

Sam comes in after them and stamps his boots on the step.

Billy stands at the shop window with his nose on the glass.

"Is she here?" says Sam.

"Not yet," says Billy.

They wait and wait at the window.

Then the truck comes down Main Street.

It stops at the bakery. Dad helps Mrs. Hill out.

She has her cane and her round glasses.

She has her long green skirt on.

Billy runs to the door and holds it open.

Ding!

"You came!" says Billy.

"I came," says Mrs. Hill.

"Your dad drives very slow.

I saw every snowflake on the road."

Dad laughs.

"The road is icy," he says.

"Slow is good on ice."

Mrs. Hill comes in with her cane.

Mom gives her a long white apron.

"Every winter I baked cookies," says Mrs. Hill.

"Every winter, for a long time."

"What cookies?" says Billy.

"Snowballs," says Mrs. Hill.

Billy looks at her.

"Snowballs? You bake snow?"

Mrs. Hill laughs.

"No, Billy. Snowball cookies.

They are small and round and white.

You will see."

The children stand at the big table.

Tess puts on her purple apron.

"I measure," says Tess. "What do we need?"

"Butter," says Mrs. Hill.

"Powdered sugar. Flour. And nuts."

"Powdered sugar?" says Sam.

"What is powdered sugar?"

Mom puts a little on a spoon.

It is white and very soft.

"It is sugar," says Mom. "But very fine."

Sam puts a finger in it and licks it.

"Sweet!" says Sam.

Then Mom cuts the nuts on the table.

Little bits. Very little bits.

Crumble sits under the table and looks up.

"Not for you, Crumble," says Billy.

"Later you get a cookie."

Mrs. Hill puts the butter in a bowl.

"How much butter?" says Tess.

"This much," says Mrs. Hill.

She puts in the powdered sugar.

"And this much sugar," she says.

Tess looks at her cup.

"You do not measure?" says Tess.

"No," says Mrs. Hill.

"I know it in my hands."

Tess looks at the cup in her hand. Then she laughs.

Mrs. Hill laughs, too.

"Now the flour," says Mrs. Hill.

"Two cups," says Tess. "I measure the flour."

"Good," says Mrs. Hill. "You measure, and I know."

Mrs. Hill puts in the little bits of nuts. Evie stirs.

The dough is soft and thick.

"Now we roll," says Mrs. Hill.

She takes a little dough and rolls it in her hands.

Round and round.

Now it is a small ball.

"Small balls," she says. "All the same."

The children roll and roll.

Evie and Sara make small balls.

Sam makes a big ball. A very big ball.

"Sam," says Mrs. Hill. "That is a big one."

"It is a big snowball," says Sam.

They all laugh. Sam makes it small again.

Ball after ball. Soon the tray is full.

Mom puts the tray in the oven.

"Ten minutes," says Mom. "And I watch the oven."

The bakery smells of butter and nuts.

Then Mom takes the tray out.

The balls are warm and a little golden.

"Now the sugar," says Mrs. Hill.

She puts powdered sugar in a bowl.

She rolls a warm ball in the sugar. Now it is white.

"One time warm," says Mrs. Hill.

The children roll the warm balls.

Sugar on the balls. Sugar on the table.

Sugar on Sam.

Then they wait. The balls get cold.

Mrs. Hill rolls a cold ball in the sugar again.

"One time cold," she says.

"Two times?" says Evie.

"Two times," says Mrs. Hill. "Then they are very white."

They roll them all again.

Now the whole tray is white.

"Snowballs!" says Sam.

"Snowballs," says Mrs. Hill. "Now you know."

"Who tastes first?" says Mrs. Hill.

"Me!" says Billy. "That is my job."

He takes one snowball and takes a bite.

He closes his eyes and says nothing.

“Well?” says Mrs. Hill.

“Soft,” says Billy. “And sweet. And the nuts!”

He opens his eyes.

There is white sugar on his nose.

Mrs. Hill laughs. “Now you have a white nose.”

Billy rubs his nose and looks at the tray.

A full tray of snowballs.

“Are they all for us?” says Billy.

“No,” says Mrs. Hill.

“Then who are they for?”

Mrs. Hill smiles and looks out at Main Street.

“You will see,” she says.

“You say that a lot,” says Billy.

“I do,” says Mrs. Hill.

Chapter 9: The Whole Town



It is Saturday morning.

The sun is out. Main Street is white.

Inside the bakery it is warm.

Mom puts the snowballs on a big plate.

She puts the plate in the shop window.

“Are they for the window?” says Billy.

“They are for the people,” says Mom.

“Today the snowballs are free.”

“Free?” says Sam. “What is free?”

“Free means no money,” says Tess.

“One snowball for every person,” says Mom.

Dad comes in with Mrs. Hill.

She has her cane and her round glasses.

She has her long green skirt on.

Mom puts a chair at the little table by the window.

"Sit here, Mrs. Hill," says Mom.

Mom gives her a cup of warm milk.

"Warm milk," says Mrs. Hill. "Good on a cold day."

Ding! Mr. and Mrs. Green come in out of the snow.

"Morning!" says Mrs. Green.

"Thank you for the cookies!"

"The stars are very good," says Mr. Green.

Evie gives them one snowball each.

"Free," says Sam. "No money."

Then Mrs. Green sees Mrs. Hill at the little table.

"Mrs. Hill! Hello!" she says.

"Hello, Mrs. Green," says Mrs. Hill.

Ding! Sara's mother comes in.

"Thank you for the bag!" she says.

"The hearts are so good."

Then she sees Mrs. Hill. "Hello, Mrs. Hill!"

Ding! Ding! Mr. and Mrs. Lee come in.

Sam runs to them with two snowballs.

"One for you and one for you," says Sam.

"That is my job today."

"Thank you, Sam," says Mrs. Lee.

"And thank you for the bag."

Then more people come in.

People from the bread store, the bookstore and the hat store.

People from all thirty houses.

The bell rings and rings.

Ding! Ding! Ding!

“Thank you for the bag!”

“Thank you for the cookies!”

“The maple leaves are my favorite!”

Evie and Sara give out the snowballs. Tess counts them.

Billy and Sam hold the door.

The bakery is full now. Full of people.

And every person says hello to Mrs. Hill.

“Hello, Mrs. Hill!”

“We do not see you in the winter!”

“Now you see me,” says Mrs. Hill.

She looks at the full bakery.

She holds her warm milk with two hands.

“I asked God for a friend this winter,” she says.

“He gave me a whole town.”

Ding! Grandpa comes in.

He shakes the snow off his cap.

“Morning! Is there a snowball for me?”

“One,” says Tess. “Only one.”

Grandpa laughs and takes one.

Then Mom puts a plate on the little table.

There are cookies on it. Stars and hearts. Snowflakes and maple leaves.

"The extra cookies," says Tess. "Fourteen."

"For you, Mrs. Hill," says Mom.

Mrs. Hill takes a star.

She takes a slow bite.

"The best cookies in Maple Falls," she says.

Grandpa laughs.

"I say that, too," he says. "About Evie's cake."

Evie smiles a big smile.

Crumble sits under the little table and looks up at the plate.

"Mom?" says Billy. "Can Crumble have one?"

"One," says Mom.

Billy takes a heart from the plate.

"Now it is later, Crumble," says Billy.

Crumble eats it in one bite.

Sara takes out her list and her pencil.

She looks at the list for a long time.

Then she writes one more line.

"Pine Lane," says Sara.

"Now it is on my list."

"Thirty-one houses," says Tess.

"Thirty-one," says Mrs. Hill. "That is me."

"Next year Pine Lane is first," says Sara.

Mrs. Hill smiles. "Good."

Now the plate in the window is empty.

Billy looks at the empty plate and says nothing.

Mom comes to him with one snowball.

“The last snowball,” says Mom.

“For me?” says Billy.

“For you,” says Mom. “You gave your bag away. Now this one is yours.”

Billy looks at the snowball.

Then he looks at Sam.

He breaks the snowball in two.

“Half for you,” says Billy.

“Thank you!” says Sam.

They take a bite.

Now there is sugar on two noses.

Mrs. Hill laughs. “Two white noses!”

Grandpa stands at the window.

He looks out at the big maple tree in the snow.

“In March the snow goes,” says Grandpa.

“Then the maple trees wake up.”

“Wake up?” says Sam. “Trees sleep?”

“In the winter they sleep,” says Grandpa.

“In March they wake up.”

He looks at the children.

“Come to my trees,” he says. “All of you.”

“Your trees?” says Evie.

“Behind my garden,” says Grandpa.

“Old maple trees.”

"What do we do there?" says Billy.

Grandpa smiles.

"Maple syrup," he says.

"Maple syrup!" says Billy. "When?"

"In March," says Grandpa. "You will see."

Billy looks at Mrs. Hill. Mrs. Hill looks at Billy.

"You will see," says Mrs. Hill.

They all laugh.

Outside the snow comes down again. Soft and slow.

Inside it is warm.

Ding! One more person comes in out of the snow.

Evie looks at the full bakery.

Thirty-one houses. The whole town.

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