

Passages

Reading Level 7



Title: Stargirl

Author: Jerry Spinelli

Sample From The Book

When I was little, my uncle Pete had a necktie with a porcupine painted on it. I thought that necktie was just about the neatest thing in the world. Uncle Pete would stand patiently before me while I ran my fingers over the silky surface, half expecting to be stuck by one of the quills. Once, he let me wear it. I kept looking for one of my own, but I could never find one.

I was twelve when we moved from Pennsylvania to Arizona. When Uncle Pete came to say good-bye, he was wearing the tie. I thought he did so to give me on last look at it, and I was grateful. But then, ”

with a dramatic flourish, he whipped off the tie and draped it around my neck. “It’s yours,” he said. “Going-away present.”

I loved that porcupine tie so much that I decided to start a collection. Two years after we settled in Arizona, the number of ties in my collection was still one. Where do you find a porcupine necktie in Mica, Arizona – or anywhere else, for that matter?

On my fourteenth birthday, I read about myself in the local newspaper. The family section ran a regular feature about kids on their birthdays, and my mother had called in some info. The last sentence read: “As a hobby, Leo Borlock collects porcupine neckties.



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