

“Bethany McIlrath truly understands how to construct an easy-to-connect-with narrative around a gospel-rich passage! *Abigail and the Career Day Catastrophe* is a charming, relatable, and engaging story. Fourth-grade Abigail works hard to be good, experiences crushing disappointment when her efforts fall flat, and delights in the good news of Jesus. Kids who read about Abigail will be entertained, feel understood, and, most spectacularly, come away better equipped to press God’s good news into their everyday lives.”

**Caroline Saunders**, Author, *Remarkable: The Gospel of Mark*

“The second in a new series by Bethany McIlrath, *Abigail and the Career Day Catastrophe* finds Abigail navigating a big career day project at school. As she dreams about what she might be when she grows up, she comes to understand that a person’s job isn’t to be perfect, because that is a job only Jesus can do! Readers will learn, along with Abigail, that God gives good gifts to each of us to do good works—but that the greatest gift is his saving grace.”

**Amanda Cleary Eastep**, Author, Tree Street Kids series

“In the Abigail books, Bethany McIlrath demonstrates how a family’s commitment to their shared faith can help a nine-year-old girl navigate the everyday problems that children face. Each book not only tells a clever, funny story about Abigail but also successfully unpacks the biblical truths that Abigail discovers along the way.”

**Bob Hartman**, Author and Storyteller

“Bethany has created a delightful series that helps young readers connect their faith with their everyday life. Abigail’s adventures are fun and relatable, delivering valuable lessons for all kids and making this series a great one to add to your bookshelf.”

**Laura Wifler**, Cofounder, Risen Motherhood

“I love the way Bethany McIlrath shapes her books! It really feels like you’re there with the characters.”

**Nora**, age 12

“I like how Abigail thinks about the Bible and Jesus.”

**Zion**, age 8

“Abigail wants to be perfect like Jesus, but she keeps failing. This book will help girls see that you don’t have to be perfect to make God proud. My favorite part was when Police Officer Dave saved Abigail from falling off the monkey bars!”

**Adelaide**, age 9

“It was REALLY good. I like how Abigail is trying to impress God and then she realises that she doesn’t need to. God just loves her anyway. It was a reminder that you don’t have to earn God’s love. He’s always proud of you.”

**Jess**, age 9

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Praise for *Abigail and the Big Start Over*

“Bethany McIlrath has written a fabulous book that somehow entertains while it teaches truth!”

**Dannah Gresh**, Author, *Lies Girls Believe and the Truth That Sets Them Free*

“Delightful. Relatable. Entertaining. Accessible. True. I am so eager to introduce *Abigail and the Big Start Over* to all of my elementary-aged friends so that they too can adventure with Abigail, identify with her, and discover the incredibly beautiful and immensely applicable power of the gospel in their own very real lives, right alongside her. These stories about Abigail will doubtless impact the stories of their readers in a powerful way.”

**Abbey Wedgeworth**, Author, Training Young Hearts series

# Abigail

and the  
Career Day  
**CATASTROPHE**

Written by  
**Bethany  
McIlrath**

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the goodbook  
COMPANY

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# Contents

1. Officer Dave	7
2. An Adventure	17
3. A Hero	26
4. The Yellow Bucket	35
5. A Bad Guy	45
6. Extra Good	54
7. No Fun Allowed	62
8. Walking Feet	72
9. Pedro in Peril	82
10. I Am the Police	88
11. All Cleaned Up	94
12. Being Like Jesus	104
13. Sticky	113
14. A Faucet to Fix	123

15. The Bible in the Toolbox	131
16. Good Work	141
17. Career Day Cake	152
18. Filling and Spilling	161
19. The Big Day	172
20. Glued!	179
21. Flying Baking Missionary	
Police Officer Hero	187
A Note From the Author	197
A Sneak Peek	201
Book-Club Questions	211
Acknowledgments	217

## ★ Chapter One

# Officer Dave

“Sorry,” Mrs. Hennig said, straightening her pointy glasses uncomfortably as she looked up at Maggie’s mom. “But it’s time for our next presenter.”

*Finally*, Abigail sighed inside. She felt a little bad about thinking that. But Maggie’s mom had been standing on the makeshift stage in the school cafeteria talking about her job in something called investments for a long, long time. To Abigail, it just sounded like math.

*Boring!*

Hopefully the next presentation would be more exciting. Leaning forward, Abigail saw the last parent stand up. His heavy, shiny black shoes thudded against the steps, and he paced to the center of the stage.

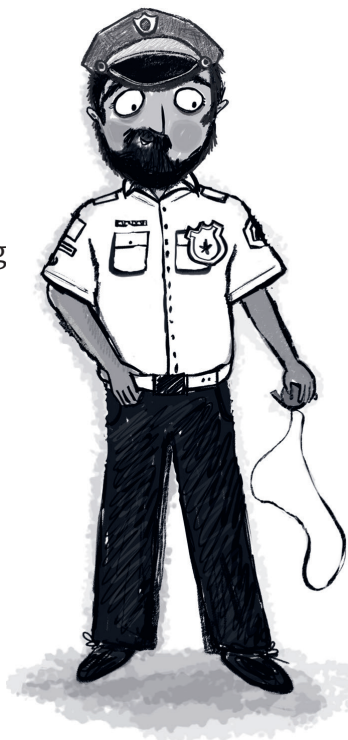
**THUD. THUD. THUD.**

Abigail's heart beat excitedly. As she looked closer, something shiny on the man's chest caught her eyes. A police badge! That meant it was Ian's dad, the police officer! His presentation *had* to be more fun than Maggie's mom's math!

"Hello," boomed Ian's dad, looking out over Abigail's class, "I'm..."

"You have the right to remain silent!" Greg interrupted from next to Abigail, giggling.

*What's funny?!* Abigail wondered, looking wide-eyed at Greg. But





then she remembered: *That's what police officers say when they stop people.* And Ian's dad was about to talk, and they'd been listening to parents talk for, like, a whole hour and... they wanted it to stop!

"If only *Maggie's mom* had the right to remain silent," muttered someone irritably.

"Ha!" Abigail let a giggle out, and so did lots of other kids in her class. Abigail clapped her hand over her mouth, trying to stop! *You wouldn't like it if people laughed at you,* she told herself sternly. *Especially if you'd just been up on stage!*

**GULP.** Abigail knew she was going to have to stand on stage for their Career Day on Saturday. What if she messed up? Or talked too long? Or picked a lame career? What if everyone laughed at her?!

"Greg!" Mrs. Hennig started.

"Ha ha ha!" Greg was still laughing, even as Abigail nudged him to stop.

**PFWEEE! PFWEEE!**

Ian's dad blew on his police whistle, looking very serious. He tapped his foot and put one hand on his hip.

**GULP.** Abigail glanced over at Greg. *Can 9-year-olds get arrested?* she worried. His cheeks were bright red. He was just joking... but...

"As I was saying," the officer continued, leaning forward intently, "I'm Officer Dave. I'm a police officer by day, and..."

**PFWEEE PFWEEE PFWEEE!**

**PFWEEE PFWEEE PFWEEE!**

"... an excellent whistler by night!" he continued, cracking a smile. "Can anyone in here whistle using just their mouths?"

Abigail didn't raise her hand. Whenever she tried to whistle, she just accidentally spat! But she knew without even looking that her best friend, Flora, sitting in the row behind her, was

raising her hand excitedly. Flora was the best whistler in the fourth grade. She'd learned how when she was only two.

“Let’s hear it,” Officer Dave grinned, nodding at Flora. Abigail turned around and gave Flora a thumbs up as she began her usual whistling playlist. Happy Birthday. Feliz Navidad. Twinkle Twinkle...

Officer Dave interrupted Flora’s performance with applause. “Thank you!” he exclaimed, motioning for her to sit again. “Well, now you all know what a whistler does. But remember I’m also a police officer. That means my job is to keep everyone safe.”

**CLAP, CLAP, CLAP!**

Now it was Officer Dave’s turn to be interrupted. Mrs. Hennig kept glancing at the clock as she came to stand in front of the stage. “Sorry to cut you off, but it’s almost time for recess!”

Officer Dave looked a little disappointed, but he nodded and climbed back down the steps where all the parents now stood, facing the class.

He was right next to Flora's dad, a dentist. *Blegh*, Abigail groaned inside, looking at the fake teeth Dr. Flores was holding. His job was all about flossing and cavities and icky stuff. Whatever career she picked, Abigail definitely did *not* want to be a dentist!

Mrs. Hennig started one more round of applause. "Thank your parents, class," she said. "They were great examples of how to present about a job."

**CLAP, CLAP, CLAP!**

Greg thumped his hands as loud as he could, inspiring everyone else to clap louder. Abigail thought two of the parents liked it, especially Officer Dave, but the other three blushed.

If *her* dad had been there, he probably would have bowed. He was a good sport like that. But

his job as a chaplain at the hospital didn't let him take the day off. People needed him, and they needed the hope he gave them in Jesus when they were having a hard time—that was what Mom said. Dad always said that even though sometimes his job was hard, he knew it was good work that God had prepared in advance for him to do.

*Good work that God prepared in advance for us to do* was a verse from the Bible, but Abigail didn't remember which part. She just knew that when she grew up, she wanted to do something good for God, too. Something that would make God proud of her—and make her parents proud of her too! Something that everyone would say “good job!” about and not laugh at her about, *ever*.

“When it's your turn to present for Career Day,” Mrs. Hennig announced, flapping her hands to get the class to quiet down, “you'll

each go up on stage and talk about your career goal, just like your parents did.”

Abigail’s knees quaked at the thought of everyone staring at her when she was up on stage.

“Will we get whistles?” Greg blurted out, staring longingly at Officer Dave’s.

“No,” Mrs. Hennig said flatly, “but you’ll make a poster in art class to help you present. Here’s a flyer for your families with all the information.”

Abigail felt her heart pound with excitement as she took one of the flyers. She LOVED art projects! If she could bring a super-cool poster on the stage, maybe everyone would look at that, and not at her. Then she wouldn’t be so nervous. And after Career Day, she’d hang it in her Adventure Central in her bedroom at home. Mom had made it at the start of the school year; there were special shapes where she could



# Corolla Elementary Fourth Grade Career Day

**Saturday 20th at 11 a.m. in the cafeteria**

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Your child is expected to dress for their career goal and give a short presentation about it. We will make posters for the presentations in art class.

Family and friends are welcome to attend. Please sign up online as a parent helper to decorate the cafeteria **OR** to bring a career-themed cake.

---

**Child should arrive by 10:45 and wait with their class in Hallway D West.**



draw on the walls with chalk, and pinboards where she could stick tacks in to hang stuff up. Abigail knew *just* the spot where she would put her Career Day poster. She would keep

it forever, and it would always remind her of how proud God and her parents and everyone were of her—which they would be, of course, because of her amazing poster, awesome career choice, and bravery presenting on stage!

Now she just had to figure out what that amazing, awesome career should be. Which couldn't be that hard, right?