

Katharine the Almost Great
Major Mama Drama



Written by Lisa Mullarkey
Illustrated by Phyllis Harris

Story Summary: Third grader Katharine Carmichael discovers her mom's super-duper secret and thinks it's a super-duper dud! Mrs. Carmichael is the new cook at Liberty Corner School—*Katharine's* school! When her mom blows her kisses, bans fries from the menu, and delivers sour milk to her classroom, Katharine's stomach does a flip-flop belly drop. After she's teased about her mom's *In the Spotlight* display, Katharine takes matters into her own hands! Can Katharine survive her major mama drama?

Inspiration for Story: "This story was inspired by my two children: Sarah and Matthew. Both were students at Liberty Corner School where I taught. In fact, I was their librarian! I decided I missed being a classroom teacher and asked to go back into the classroom. The good news: I was going to be teaching second grade at Liberty Corner. The bad news: Matthew was going to be in the same grade! She didn't mind but Matthew sure did! While Sarah loved having me work at "her" school, Matthew wasn't too sure. After kissing him one too many times in front of his friends, he screamed, "You're giving me Major Mama Drama." An idea for a book was born!"

About the Author: Lisa Mullarkey is a former first and second grade teacher and school librarian. She lives in NJ with her husband and two children. Being a librarian and working with kids made her want to become an author. Her first book, *Splashing by the Shore*, is a fun activity book that has beachy science experiments, crafts, jokes, party ideas, and recipes. She also has six chapter books in the Katharine the *Almost Great* series. She's working on writing her first nonfiction books about cheerleading. They won't be published until 2010 so she's practicing being *very* patient! Some of her favorite authors are Andrew Clements, Jarrett J. Krosoczka, Kimberly Willis Holt, Dan Gutman, Lisa Wheeler, and Patricia Reilly Giff. She loves visiting schools to talk to young authors about writing and reading. Visit her website at www.lisamullarkey.com.

About the Illustrator: Phyllis Harris should have known she was destined to illustrate books when she won a poster contest in grade school. Her family didn't have many children's books except for those that came free in family size boxes of laundry detergent. However, the few she did have, she poured over for hours on end, looking at every picture with great admiration and dreamed of making pictures as wonderful as these one day. She has illustrated over 30 books for children including all of the Katharine the *Almost Great* series. Her favorite illustrators are Beatrix Potter, Chris Van Allsburg, Tricia Tusa, Helen Oxenbury, Holly Hobbie and Christopher Denise. Visit her website at www.phyllisharris.com.

NAME _____

DATE _____

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In all of the Katharine books, Katharine often hopes something will happen but then the opposite occurs...most of the time. Sometimes it's a good thing, sometimes a bad thing. Read each scenario below. Tell what you think Katharine hopes will happen and then what actually happened. Be creative!

1. Katharine sees her mother smiling at her in the cafeteria line.
Hopes will happen...

What really happens...

2. Katharine asks her Mom to serve REAL French fries in the cafeteria.
Hopes will happen...

What really happens...

3. Katharine gets back her Math test and peeks at her grade.
Hopes will happen...

What really happens...

4. Katharine smells something delicious coming out of her kitchen.
Hopes will happen...

What really happens...

5. Aunt Chrissy knocks on Katharine's bedroom door. She has Jack in her arms.
Hopes will happen...

What really happens...

6. Mrs. Bingsley asks to see Katharine in the hallway.
Hopes will happen...

What really happens...



NAME _____ DATE _____

Crockett wrote a rhyming poem about Hercules. Write an acrostic poem about your pet. Don't have a pet? Pretend you do or use your name!



Writing an ACROSTIC poem is as easy as 1-2-3! Write your word vertically. The first letter on each line should be used to describe the main word.

NAME _____

DATE _____

~Design the Teacher's Room~



When Katharine finally sees the Teacher's Room, she's disappointed to see how normal it looks: no flat screen TV, no disco ball, no bed for Mrs. Curtin! Design a room your teacher would love. Be creative!

Name: _____

Date: _____

? BRAINSTORM!!! ?



Mrs. Carmichael wants to have theme days in the cafeteria. Make a jot list of themes that would be per-fect-o for your cafeteria. Give a few examples of what food items you'd include on the menu.

Example: Beach Bash: Submarine sandwich, Hang Ten Berry Banana Slurps, Fruit Kabobs, Goldfish Crackers, and Sand Cups!

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____



Name: _____

Date: _____



Katharine did not like her Mom working at Liberty Corner School in the beginning of the story. How would you feel if someone in your family worked at your school? What would you like about it? What wouldn't you like about it? Would it cause Major Mama Drama?



Write the PROS (good points) and CONS (bad points) below. Share answers with a friend.

PROS:

CONS: