

# Abigail

## and the Summer Situation

Will Maggie EVER get  
to hear about Jesus?



illustrated by  
**Katie  
Saunders**

**Bethany McIlrath**

## Praise for the Abigail series

“These fun, cheerful, and meaningful books help kids become more deeply aware of the grander story God is writing in their own lives.”

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

“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.”

**Laura Wifler**, Cofounder, *Risen Motherhood*

“Each Abigail book not only tells a clever, funny story but also successfully unpacks the biblical truths that Abigail discovers along the way—helping readers with the everyday problems they face.”

**Bob Hartman**, Author, *The Kingdom and the King Storybook Bible*

“Bethany is a master at helping young children think about their emotions and how they relate to others through the lens of God’s kindness. Relatable, easy-to-read, full of wisdom, and best of all—centered on the grace of God.”

**Chris Ammen**, Founder, *Kaleidoscope Kids Bibles*

“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 and discover the beautiful and immensely applicable power of the gospel in their own very real lives!”

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

“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, *Kids in the Bible*

“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*

### What readers are saying

“I love this book! It has been the most relatable chapter book I have read to my daughter. It portrays the struggles, conflicts, and pressure that Christian 9-10-year-old girls face. I hope the author writes many more books like this one.”

“The Abigail series has quickly found its place in our hearts and a permanent spot on my daughter’s bookshelf. For her, reading these books is like reading about a friend she knows and can relate to. What could be better than that?”

“As a homeschooling mom, I’m always looking for books that spark meaningful conversations, and this one does just that.”

“This fiction series for older elementary kids will help them learn how to implement their faith in real-world situations.”

“Abigail’s adventures are full of relatable experiences and applicable lessons for readers. I especially love this series’ emphasis on Scripture and discipleship. Simple and profound truths are communicated in a story form that allows young readers to really connect. Thank you!”

“Fun, entertaining, and clever. A definite recommendation for the little girl in your life!”

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and the

## Summer Situation

Written by  
**Bethany  
McIlrath**

Illustrated by  
**Katie  
Saunders**

The Goodbook  
COMPANY

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## Chapter One

# The Summer Situation

“Again!” Henry said, kicking his feet on the swing. “Higher! Higher!”

“Henry,” Abigail argued, “we’ve been doing this all morning.”

“So?” Henry asked, wiggling around and yelling more loudly. “Again, again, push me again!”

**SIGH.**

It was only the first day of summer break,





and Abigail was already getting bored. She mostly liked playing with Henry, but he always wanted to do the same old stuff over and over until she felt like she

was trapped in a time loop.

“This is the LAST time,” she told him, running to get up to speed before she gave him a good push.

Just as soon as Henry’s swinging settled back down, he said, “Again!”... again.

“I’m going to do something else,” Abigail announced, not even waiting for him as she stomped away from the swings.

She thought about going to the seesaws, but Henry was only three years old, and she had just turned ten. He wasn't big enough to seesaw with her. And she didn't know any other kids there, and you can't seesaw alone.

Next she thought about the big slide, but Henry always wanted to go with her and then screamed so loud as they whooshed down that her ears hurt.

Her best idea for finding something fun to do was to climb on the big rocks by the woods, across the grassy field. But Mom always said she couldn't take Henry over there because he was something called a "flight risk."

"Mom," Abigail said, deciding to just go to the benches near the bubbling fountain, where Mom was reading a book. "Can we go home?"

Mom sighed. "We've only been here a little while," she said. "I thought you *wanted* to come to the park, Abby girl!"

“It’s not the same without anyone to play with,” Abigail explained.

Mom opened her mouth, but Abigail knew what was next.

“Henry doesn’t count—he’s too little!” she argued before Mom could say the words.

“Mommy!” Henry yelled, running at them from the swings. “Push me? Push me pwease?”

“Sorry you’re missing your friends,” Mom told Abigail, sighing again as she put her book down. “How about I push Henry for a while, and you go make up an adventure on those big rocks you like?”

Looking across the field, Abigail twisted up her mouth and bit her lip. Those big rocks were her and her best friend Flora’s favorite spot to invent games and swap secrets and make up incredible stories. Sometimes their sort-of-friend from school, Greg, joined them. Usually, Abigail loved those rocks. She had *just*

been thinking about climbing on them.

But... it wouldn't be the same without any friends.

But... she wouldn't have friends to hang out with for *weeks*.



Flora had gone to Florida for the whole summer to hang out with her grandma.

Greg was busy visiting one cousin, and then another.

Emma, her friend from church, was going to camp after camp—starting with gymnastics camp with most of the other girls from church.

But Abigail?

She only had one short trip to see some cousins next month. The rest of her summer just sounded boring and lonely.

Well... except for Backyard Bible Club. That

would be fun! That week she was going to go over to her friend Smarty-Pants Sam's house every single night. They'd have games, a little Bible talk, and other cool stuff. Maybe snacks too. She hoped there would be snacks!

But for now, all Abigail could do was play by herself.

**SIGH.**

"Mommmyyy," Henry called out again, kicking wildly on the swing and flapping his arms like a bird, as if that would get him soaring up into the air.

"Coming, buddy," Mom said, laughing. "Have fun on the rocks, Abby girl. Your brother has a lot of energy, so I'll be a while."

"Okay," Abigail answered, taking a deep breath and asking God in her head if maybe, please, he could just send her a new friend for the summer so she wouldn't have to hang out on the big rocks alone, or only at home with

Henry following her around trying to mess with her stuff.

She took off her sandals to feel the grass between her toes as she crossed the field. It tickled, like a bunch of little fairies were teasing her.

*Oo, fairies, Abigail thought. I can pretend that fairies live in the woods and the grass and... and... the big rocks are a dangerous mountain range in between their homes! I'll help them cross!*

"Come on, fairies," she whispered, bending down and picking a puffy white dandelion carefully. She would walk super slowly and try to make it to the rocks without a single little white fluff blowing off! She pretended that the fairies were hanging on to the puffs, so every time one did break away and blow off with the breeze, she whispered, "Sorry, fairy!"

**PFF. PFF.** Slowly, slowly, she went step by step toward the big rocks.

Then a voice whispered, “Abby?”  
It wasn’t how she imagined fairies sounded...  
“Hang on tight,” Abigail whispered back to  
the fairy.

Then she blinked, and looked up. That *wasn’t*  
how fairies sounded! And she wasn’t imagining!  
Somebody really was whispering at her.

“Oh!” Abigail said at a normal volume, feeling  
her cheeks turn red. “Hi, Maggie.”



Maggie had been in Abigail’s  
class at school that year.

She was buddies with  
Flora. Sometimes Abigail  
and Maggie hung out  
too, but never just the  
two of them.

In her head, Abigail  
made a quick list of what  
she knew about Maggie.

*She’s my age.*

*She likes fashion and elegance and fancy things.*

*She loves acting and dancing.*

*Her best friend is Brianna, who told everyone  
that she was going to be busy “being in charge”  
somewhere else all summer—whatever that means!*

*Aaaand... Maggie acts like I’m weird a lot... and  
catching me whispering to dandelions might not  
help with that...*

**GULP.**