

Abigail

and the
BIG Start Over

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Chapter One

Hurry Up, Headband

New, new, new!

Abigail sang happily in her head as she sat down on the front seat of the bus, straightened the pretty, new headband she was wearing, and got ready to smile. *Please God*, she thought, *let the next kid who steps onto the bus be someone super fun!*

She pulled her carefully decorated, new pencil case out of her backpack, slipping it onto the seat next to her. Its purple polka dots sparkled and glittered. In her mind,

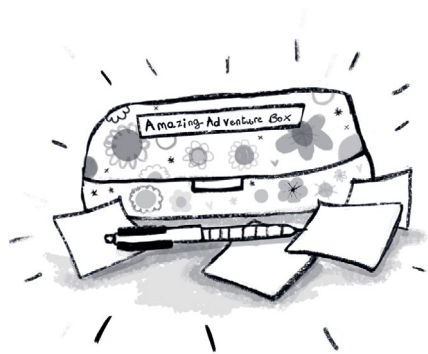
she played out the conversation she'd have with the kid who sat next to her on the bus. It was going to go just as she'd imagined it every single day while she was staying at her cousin's for the summer.

"Your glitter pencil case is awesome," the kid would say.

"Oh thanks, I got it when I turned nine in May," Abigail would say back in her coolest fourth-grader voice. "But it's not a pencil case."

"It's not?" they'd ask, sitting down next to her, super-curious.

"It's my Amazing Adventure Box!" Abigail was all ready to answer. Then she'd whip it open, flashing her rainbow sticky-note stack and pulling out the chunky multi-pen she could pick any color from. She'd



ask her new friend a surprising question like “Where’s the most awesome place you’ve ever been?” And they would say someplace like Australia or, even better, the moon! She’d pop down their favorite color on her multi-pen and start doodling and writing and sticking up the notes on the window. Before you knew it, all the kids on the bus would move to sit nearby, and they’d spend the whole journey imagining adventures together! And even better, Abigail would be able to invite her new friends over to her new house, where Mom had promised they’d make a new “Adventure Central” space in her new room.

That was how this new year at this new school was going to start. Abigail just knew it.

WHOOSH! The door opened as the bus came to a stop. Abigail smiled eagerly as she waited to meet her new friend.

But...

“Move it, headband!”

A boy had reached the top of the dusty school-bus steps. He had dark hair and red sneakers, and he was staring right at Abigail.

“Move it, headband!” he said again.

Abigail reached up to touch the pretty new headband she was wearing. “Do you... do you mean me?”

