**Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Period \_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Short Story of the Week #1 –“Those Three Wishes” by Judith Gorog**

No one ever said that Melinda Alice was nice. That wasn’t the word used. No, she was clever,even witty. She was called—never to her face, however—Melinda *Malice*. Melinda Alice was clever and cruel. Her mother, when she thought about it at all, hoped Melinda would grow out of it. To her father, Melinda’s very good grades mattered.

It was Melinda Alice, back in the eighth grade, who had labeled the shy myopic new girl

“Contamination” and was the first to pretend that anything or anyone touched by the new girlhad to be cleaned, inoculated, or avoided. High school had merely given Melinda Alice greater scope for her talents.

The surprising thing about Melinda Alice was her power; no one trusted her, but no one avoidedher either. She was always included, always in the middle. If you had seen her, pretty and witty, in the center of a group of students walking past your house, you’d have thought, “Theregoes a natural leader.”

Melinda Alice had left for school early. She wanted to study alone in a quiet spot she hadbecause there was going to be big math test, and Melinda Alice was not prepared. That A mattered; so Melinda Alice walked to school alone, planning her studies. She didn’t usuallynotice nature much, so she nearly stepped on a beautiful snail that was making its way across the sidewalk.

“Ugh. Yucky thing,” thought Melinda Alice, then stopped. Not wanting to step on the snailaccidentally was one thing, but now she lifted her shoe to crush it.

“Please don’t,” said the snail.

“Why not?” retorted Melinda Alice.

“I’ll give you three wishes,” replied the snail evenly.

“Agreed,” said Melinda Alice. “My first wish is that my next,” she paused a split second, “mynext thousand wishes come true.” She smiled triumphantly and opened her bag to take out a

small notebook and pencil to keep track.

Melinda Alice was sure she heard the snail say, “What a clever girl,” as it made it to the safety of an ivy bed beside the sidewalk.

During the rest of the walk to school, Melinda Alice was occupied with wonderful ideas. She would have beautiful clothes. “Wish number two, that I will always be perfectly dressed,” and she was just that. True, her new outfit was not a lot different from the one she had worn leaving the house, but that only meant Melinda Alice liked her own taste.

After thinking for a while, she wrote, “Wish number three. I wish for pierced ears and smallgold earrings.” Her father had not allowed Melinda to have pierced ears, but now she had themanyway. She felt her new earrings and shook her beautiful hair in delight. “I can have anything: stereo, tapes, TV, videodiscs, mo-ped, car, anything! All my life!” She hugged her books to herself in delight.

By the time she reached school, Melinda was almost an altruist; she could wish for peace. Then she wondered, “Is the snail that powerful?” She felt her ears, looked at her perfect blouse, skirt, jacket, shoes. “I could make ugly people beautiful, cure cripples…” She stopped. The wave of altruism had washed past. “I could pay people back who deserve it!” Melinda Alice looked at the school, at all the kids. She had an enormous sense of power. “They all have to do what I want now.” She walked down the crowded halls to her locker. Melinda Alice could be sweet; she could be witty. She could—Thebell rang for homeroom. Melinda Alice stashed her books, slammed the locker shut, and just made it toher seat.

“Hey, Melinda Alice,” whispered Fred. “You know that big math test next period?”

“Oh, no,” grimaced Melinda Alice. Her thoughts raced; “That darned snail made me late, and Iforgot to study.”

“I’ll blow it,” she groaned aloud. “I wish I were dead.”

**Directions:** Answer the following questions by circling the correct answer:

1. From what point of view is this story told?

 a. First person

 b. Second person

 c. Third person

 d. Melinda Alice’s

2. Using Melinda Alice’s actions as a guide, what does the *malice* in her nickname mean?

 a. A desire to harm others

 b. A desire to help others

 c. A desire to spread joy

 d. A desire to dress nicely

3. “The wave of altruism had washed past” is an example of:

 a. Simile

 b. Personification

 c. Allusion

 d. Metaphor

4. The story is set while Melinda Alice is in

 a. Sixth grade

 b. High School

 c. Eighth grade

 d. College

5. The ending of the story implies that Melinda Alice will

 a. Change her ways

 b. Pass the math test

 c. Continue to make wishes

 d. Perish due to her use of hyperbole

6. “It was Melinda Alice, back in the eighth grade…” indicates that the story has moved into

 a. flashback

 b. foreshadowing

 c. third person

 d. plot

7. **Label the below plot structure with the following terms:** *climax, conflict, exposition, falling action, resolution, rising action*



**8. For each element of plot listed below, write a piece of direct evidence from the story that shows that element.**

**Exposition: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Conflict: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Rising Action: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Climax: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**