



Dear Students,

I created many versions of *Dear Mr. Longfellow* before I found a publisher. Here is one of my attempts at historical fiction. Can you write the rest of the story?

*Our horse, Paul Revere, clip-clopped along the cobblestones on Brattle Street. We passed the tree stump next to the blacksmith shop and I could see Pa's breath hanging in the air as he said, "Edmund, every time I pass that stump, I feel glad and sad at the same time. Glad to pass by without bumping into the branches. Sad to lose the tree that Henry Wadsworth Longfellow put into his poem. I watched it grow through the years—from the time I was a boy."*

*We waved as Dexter Pratt stepped out of his blacksmith shop. He wiped his forehead and his face looked red as he smiled at us.*

*"Good to see you, Dexter," Pa said and he pulled the reins so that Paul Revere came to a stop. The milk bottles rattled in the cart against the chunks of ice.*

*"John, it's always a pleasure. And hello to you, too, Edmund. I feel like stretching my legs as wide as the branches of the spreading chestnut tree used to be! It gets mighty hot when I am working the bellows! The cold air feels good."*

*We waved again as Pa loosened the reins and we were on our way home.*

*Along the way, I recited Longfellow's poem, "The Village Blacksmith", in my mind.*

*"Under a spreading chestnut tree The village smithy stands; The smith, a mighty man is he, With large and sinewy hands; And the muscles of his brawny arms Are strong as iron bands...."*

*Suddenly, Paul Revere reared back and neighed so loudly that I thought my ears would burst!*

Now you can finish the story! You can email it to me at [info@storypearls.com](mailto:info@storypearls.com) with the subject line "Finish the Story" and I may post your story on my site! Please let me know your age.

Thanks very much for reading my book, *Dear Mr. Longfellow: Letters to and from the Children's Poet*. I look forward to reading the rest of your story about the horse named Paul Revere!

Keep Writing!

Sydelle Pearl