

The summer before fifth grade, Alex waited for the milkman every morning. He didn't wait because he had (a, bare, the) special fondness for milk. He waited (pocket, **because**, so) he was sure the milkman was (a, but, note) spy.

It all became clear to (he, **Alex**, before) one damp morning in late June. (They, **He**, Glanced) stepped out onto the side porch (piece, at, **to**) get the morning paper, and he (spied, **ran**, secret) into a man delivering milk.

The (**milkman**, up, world) had a rather large nose and (was, **black**, whole) eyes. After they collided, a note (glanced, next, **slipped**) from the milkman's pocket. The note (bushes, spied, **landed**) at Alex's bare feet, so he (**bent**, built, something) down to pick it up.

As (**soon**, had, likely) as he glanced down at the (shoulders, large, **strange**) markings on the piece of paper, (most, **Alex**, people) knew right away that the words (was, **were**, after) a secret code. That meant only (paper, every, **one**) thing— the milkman was a spy.

(**The**, A, Rested) milkman was probably a secret agent (**who**, he, glanced) spied on people up and down (and, whole, **the**) block. He most likely delivered milk (from, **to**, peered) the president's house and spied on (as, **him**, you) too! Alex knew he had to (**do**, lose, milk) something. He knew the fate of (by, or, **the**) whole world rested on his shoulders.

(With, Saw, **After**) that morning, Alex built a fort (slip, **in**, to) the bushes next to the side (**porch**, closer, bottles). He peered through his binoculars every (wife, **morning**, stopped) as the milkman made his rounds. (Folded, Smile, **He**) was sure the milkman shoved top-(shock, **secret**, than) messages in the bottles he left (down, **behind**, saw).

One morning the milkman saw Alex (**crouched**, ran, list) among the bushes. He stopped suddenly. (Lose, **Then**, With) he held out the milk bottles (**he**, gave, wink) carried.

"I guess I'll give these (in, whistling, **to**) you," he said. "You're closer than (his, better, **your**) back door." As he was about (**to**, morning, at) walk away, a slip of paper (damp, **fluttered**, delivered) down on the sidewalk between them. (Milkman, **Alex**, Saw) froze in shock. With a smile (a, **the**, in) milkman picked up the piece of (became, porch, **paper**), folded it, and put it back (at, **in**, your) his pocket.

"I better not lose (**the**, held, or) grocery list my wife gave me (waited, **this**, one) morning," he said with a wink. (Alex, On, **He**) walked away whistling.

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