

Global Partners Junior

OUTSTANDING STUDENT WRITING FROM

2013-14: *LITERARY CITIES*

UNIT 3: BRINGING STORIES TO LIFE

&

2013 CREATIVE WRITING

CONTEST WINNERS





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Literary Cities: Explore the Stories from New York and Around the Globe!

Unit 3 Project: Bringing Fiction to Life

**Students were asked to write a fictional story about
a character taking action to improve the local
community.**

Aruna's Worst Nightmare

It is now 20 years in the future, and Aruna is working as a super agent spy. Aruna was once class president for MS.172, and did many things to improve the school. After he graduated from college he got a job as a spy. He's been working as one for 7 years. When he got this job he was sworn to never play the violin ever again. As much as Aruna likes playing the violin he also loves his job and must follow his boss's orders. One Monday morning Aruna walked into his office and got a very urgent message. He has been noted that there was a villain by the name of Villanious. Aruna and almost everyone on the plant knew that he was the most destructive, powerful, and hard to beat villain ever. But Aruna had no fear and marched right down to that town.

Aruna was sweating like an animal, he has never been this nervous doing his job before. He wore a navy blue bullet proof vest and had all the weapons he could possibly need. At his first try of defeating the villain he was shocked, punched, and kicked badly by the villain. Aruna knew he couldn't stand a chance. He began to turn away, but right at that moment Aruna learned something from his research. That Villanious hated the sound of the violin. Aruna had no choice but to play the violin and disobey his boss. He went home to quickly get his instrument. The villain was almost done destroying the town. The crowd watched in fear, but the Aruna began playing the violin to perfection, That soothing sound made the villain screech after that the villain disappeared and was nowhere to be found. Aruna's boss arrived at the scene and was happy to see Aruna!! Aruna was promoted chief for his act of bravery.

The Bully Secret

It was a cold December morning in the M.S. 179 lobby. Ms. T. Smith looked at the faces of the students crowding the room. Finally, her eyes fell upon her sixth grade friend, Rocky McClaire. Rocky walked up to the guardian of the school, as she always does and said, “Good morning Ms. Smith,” as soft as a whisper. Ms. Smith frowned. “Rocky, what happened? You haven’t been yourself lately. Is something wrong?” Rocky stared at the floor. “Nothing is wrong, Ms. Smith. I’m just...” just then, the bell rang for class to start. “I have to go.” Rocky finished, then spun on her heel and raced to her classroom, leaving Ms. Smith with a puzzled look on her face.

The bell rang again, later that day, for lunch to start. And again, Ms. Smith searched for her young friend. Just then, she caught a glimpse of Rocky’s mint-green sweater. She was about to wave to her to signal her to come over here when she noticed the tears on Rocky’s rosy cheeks. Ms. Smith then noticed a group of kids following her best friend, pointing and laughing at her. Ms. Smith hurried over to Rocky and grabbed her by the arm as fast as a cheetah. She brought her to the side where no one can hear them. Ms. Smith asked the young girl what was going on. “There are these bullies following me everywhere I go and they just wouldn’t stop tormenting and mocking me.” Rocky replied.

“Well why didn’t you tell me? I’m the one who knows the secret to getting rid of bullies.” Ms. Smith smiled. Rocky’s eyes sparkled with excitement as Ms. Smith bent down next to her and whispered the secret to her as her smile grew as big as a watermelon.

The next day, Rocky raced up to her problem-solving friend, calling out to her “Ms. Smith! Ms. Smith! Your trick really worked Ms. Smith. I got rid of those bullies in the blink of an eye. Thank you so much!” Ms. Smith smiled. “You’re welcome, dear. No one tortures my little girl.” She said with a stern voice.”

“Thanks Ms. Smith. But is it okay if I share this secret with someone? Because I saw this girl getting tormented by the same group of bullies and I really want to help her.” Rocky said with a hopeful look. Ms. Smith just smiled and nodded her head. That’s very thoughtful of you, Rocky.” She said. “And of course you can tell her the trick. This secret is needed for anyone who gets bullied.” Ms. Smith finished just as the bell rang. “Run along, now. And don’t forget to help that little girl.” She called out as Rocky ran to her homeroom.

Lucky

-Aruna, as bright as a lightbulb, walked towards the school. He was the school's S.O. president and wanted to do a good deed. Like the peaceful wave of the ocean, he wanted to make sure that no one was being mistreated.

-"I got elected to do the actions I told them about. I will not let this school year pass without making a change," he thought while he was standing outside.

-Anyway, Aruna was an A+ student who loved to attend school. He was a gifted violin player but unlike any other, his violin talked. It helped him know when animals were in danger. This was kept a secret though. Not even his parents knew a single thing about his talking violin.

-All of a sudden, interrupting his thoughts the bell rang as loud as a lion's roar. It was so loud that he heard it from outside. Exhaustively, Aruna had to walk up three floors of stairs and after homeroom three floors back down to band. Sighing and panting, Aruna managed to make it to class precisely 2 seconds before the late bell.

-In the middle of next period his head started hurting. He knew immediately what was happening. Hurriedly, Aruna walked towards his teacher.

-"Can I go back to the music room? I forgot something from my last class," Aruna asked.

-"Sure," she replied. "But come back soon, we don't want you missing anything now."

-Aruna hurriedly walked through the hallways. As he approached the music room Aruna realized that no one was there but this was an emergency so he walked right in. Going through all of the instruments he finally found his violin. His violin was dying to talk to him.

- "An animal has been harmed," said the violin.

- "In what way?" Aruna asked curiously.

- "His owners have abused him. It is a Golden Retriever and 'lives' on 263 Street, 83 Avenue. It is the only gray roofed house on the block."

-After school Aruna made a plan as the violin told him all about the beatings that the poor dog got. Sometimes the owners didn't let him in even when it rained. It was not too big and healthy because they rarely gave him food. If he was lucky sometimes, he would get leftovers.

-Aruna went to their house and right away he knew that they were not going to be nice- there was a "Do Not Come" sign but Aruna kept on walking. His mind pleaded for that dog.

-Out came a man who looked like he just got up.

- "Why are you here?" he asked in a hoarse voice.

-It was time to put his plan into action.

- "I am a real estate agent in training. (Luckily he fell for it) I am trying to see what people want to get rid of."

-Obviously the man was in no mood for this so he threw the dog out and locked the door. Through the door Aruna heard him saying "Get rid of it."

-That same afternoon the couple got arrested. Then the town agreed to let Aruna keep the dog.

Epilogue

-Aruna completed his good deed and ended up naming his dog Lucky, for the great owner he has, for the food he gets, and for the kind family that loves him very much.

Ms Smith, The Hero

Once upon a time, Ms. Smith was protecting the school of M.S. 172. She was protecting the students as an overprotective mother. But she was also reading the newspaper, which was why she heard about the crazy person named Mr. Gordy escaping from the mental hospital. Right after she heard this news, she jumped up from her seat and went straight to the office. Then she said to the principle, “Quick! Lock down the school! There’s a crazy person on the loose!” Because the principle trusted her, he called a lockdown as soon as he heard her. As soon as the school called a lockdown, Mr. Gordy, the crazy person broke into the school. Since there weren’t any other securities in the school except Ms. Smith, she knew that this was her opportunity. It was her time to show how much she loved the school and the students. She went outside and told him, “ First you have to get through me before you get to the school.” She was as bold as a lion as she stood up against Mr. Gordy. Then, she started to fight with him. But before it was too late, she realized that he was stronger than her. She got an idea. She used her beautiful voice to sing. All of a sudden, Mr. Gordy turned into a normal person. He asked, “Who are you, and where am I ?” Ms. Smith explained everything to Mr. Gordy and he was confused. Then everyone started to gather around and congratulate her. It was a big accomplishment that she had done. Ms. Smith also knew that. She knew that she had found another cure to this mental disease.

City: Paris, France

School: Ecole Active Bilingue Jeannine Manuel

THE ADVENTURES OF EMILY BOSC, THE INUIT

« I was born in Nome, Alaska in 5023. As I grew up I dreamed of becoming an astronaut. When I was 21 I went to Bangladesh for a year. There, I learned to speak the language. At the end of that year I learned about a science project in Florida where an organization was trying to make a human colonization on Mars. I applied to go and I was qualified. They accepted me. The day I left was an exciting day for me. I knew it would take a year and a half to get to Mars. It Actually takes that long to get to Mars ! But I was ready to spend that time on the shuttle.

When we arrived (we, meaning the four other people and I) almost two years later, we were very tired. One day, about three years later, I was walking around when I saw a door open up. It was filled with light. I walked through it and found myself in front of the Eiffel Tower. I looked at a newspaper and found that it was now 1964. I was looking for a job when I saw a big sign that said « Teaching Applications ». I walked into a building and with the little bit of French that I had learned in College, I reserved an interview for the coming Monday. That Monday, I got to the classroom bright and early. There I met a tall lady. I learned that her name was Jeannine Manuel. For an hour I had taught English class with Jeannine Manuel at the back of the room. After the hour was over, I turned to face Ms. Manuel. As I did, she gave me a big thumbs up and I knew that was the beginning of my teaching career. »

City: Paris, France

School: Ecole Active Bilingue Jeannine Manuel

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One day there was a young man who was called COSB SCOB he lived in Toronto. He was as smart as a racoon, always precise and very organised.

One day he decided to go to a French speaking country but he was only 20 years old. For his 21st birthday, his family gave him a ticket for a flight to Paris. He was as glad as a person who just won a competition. A few days later he took the plane. In the airport that was in Toronto, it was okay because the airport was clean but...

Twelve hours later he arrived and he was as shocked like a person who just had a heart attack. He went to the director of the airport and COSB SCOB started shouting "Now I'm gonna show you how you deal with an airport!!!" "Why?" asked the director. Who was so scared that his hair went up like a hedge hog. The director thanked him.

One hour later when he arrived in Paris he saw that there was lots of problems his knees buckled. When he woke up he went straight away to help organise the Eiffel Tower. The director thanked him very much.

That is how this young man improved Paris it started in a dirty place to a place as clean as soap.

City: Paris, France

School: Ecole Active Bilingue Jeannine Manuel

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The Helpful Dictionary

Jane, a 22 year old woman is as sweet as an angel. She has a husband and two little girls. Jane grew up in the South of France, in Montpellier. Now she lives in Paris but she is very disappointed about all the people in France who don't speak English as it isn't helpful for the tourists.

One summer day, Jane was going to work. She passed in front of a bakery. Inside there was a tourist, and the baker didn't understand what he was saying. Jane decided to do something and started to think.

A week later she found a solution. She was going to create a dictionary for all the sales people: The baker, the butcher, etc... Jane started to work as hard as an ant and three months later the work was done. She had made one dictionary for each sort of sales people. For example, in the butcher dictionary, Jane put: "which meat do you want?", "what kind of sausage do you want?", and more things like that....

The dictionaries became famous and every sales person had one. English was more and more spoken in Paris shops and there were more and more tourists.

Jane is very proud of her idea!

City: Paris, France

School: Ecole Active Bilingue Jeannine Manuel

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Saturn

In the year 4002, a small girl named Saturn was born in Paris, France. Her parents named her Saturn after their favorite planet (before they discovered the exoplanet Iris). She had joyful green eyes and her hair was pure gold. Saturn was an angel. She was always respectful and never argued with her friends. Also, Saturn was as brave as a tiger! Most girls at her time were scared of spiders but Saturn wanted to have her own collection of them. The boys were scared of golden eyelash pit vipers but Saturn wanted one as a pet.

Saturn was as smart as a mathematician! Saturn loved to build and create. When she was in pre-school, she knew how electric circuits worked. When Saturn was five, she traveled around the Solar System to do sight-seeing and she collected souvenirs everywhere she went. Saturn returned to Paris in 4009.

Paris **used** to be as beautiful as anyone's nicest dreams but now, it had trash on the sidewalk, dog poop in garages and lots of pollution. Saturn wanted to change that. She thought she could build an anti-pollution/trash/dog's needs machine to help Paris be a better place to live in and to regain its title.

Since then, she worked on a blueprint for her machine in secret. She did not want anyone to find out what she was doing because everyone would think she is too young and she wanted it to be a good surprise. That is, except her best-friend Betsy and her father. Betsy's father was a scientist and they both believed in Saturn.

When Saturn's blueprint was finished, she asked Betsy's father to let her borrow some material to build the machine while Betsy and Saturn edited the blueprint. They (*Betsy and Saturn*) worked from 1:05 to 5:00 in the morning every day. It took four years to finish the machine. By then, Saturn was in high-school. She loved to teach kids about how electricity and machines worked. Saturn was very proud to have finished her machine and she already tested it on her room (*she made it extra dirty*) so she knew her invention worked. 'I should present my invention in front of the Eiffel Tower!' she said to herself.

Saturn's invention was a success! Paris was clean in only a few days! Saturn, Betsy and her father earned gold trophies, everyone that lived in Paris didn't have to pinch their noses everywhere they went anymore and Paris itself became well known as << *The Paradise home*>>!

What will Saturn invent next?

The End

All In The Day's Work of a Principal

You pick up your blue pen and tackle the pile of forms on your desk. Beside you, the PC suddenly buzzes as you receive a message from the School Board, permitting the 8th grade graduation trip. Twirling around in your chair, you turn to the side to check off another item on your never ending to-do list.

Returning back to your paperwork, you enjoy a quick glance at the picture of your family taped to the side of your bookshelf (which holds so many folders, it's amazing that it hasn't collapsed yet). Collapsed or not, you still can't wait to get home to your family. Your brief moment of softness is interrupted when the secretary cues you in for a reminder on the announcements about staying off the icy field.

"Remember to stay off the fields kids. It's ice. Which is dangerous," you say with legitimacy, making sure not to bore them. You hand it over to the lunch supervisors, who continue the announcement on how it's dangerous and whatnot.

As you walk back to your office, your secretary says, "Oh, and don't forget to approve the pizza lunches for the 6th graders! They're really excited I hear."

"Thanks, I nearly forgot," your reply as you add another item to your to-do list in your mind.

10 minutes later...

BRRIINNGG!!!!

You jump up as you realize there wasn't a fire drill planned today! Dashing to get your jacket and walkie-talkie, you quickly do a head-count, just to make sure that everyone in the office is safe. Hustling outside, you enter the brisk cold feeling sorry for the students who couldn't bring their jackets. All the classes are lined up, and no one is missing, which makes things *a lot* easier. Your walkie-talkie buzzes and the janitor's voice comes through loud and clear, "Sorry! I dropped the mop and it hit the alarm, causing it to ring. I'll try to get it turned off! Bye!"

You report the news to the teachers and soon everyone is back inside, happily warm. You toss your jacket onto the hook (which takes years of practice to get right) and continue the paperwork.

It's a hard job, that's for sure, but it's all in a day's work of a principal.

City: Warsaw, Poland

School: Primary School No. 103 of Heroes of Warsaw

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Mr. Eriksen and Galaxy Burgers

Some day Mr. Eriksen went to a tennis court. He played two hours. He felt hungry...

In his house he made burgers (he was making the best burgers in world).
-delicious!- he said.

The aliens smelled it. When Mr. Eriksen was a spaceman, he made burgers for other spacemen. Aliens felt this smell, but they couldn't eat it. This time they took him to their spaceship. He had to make burgers for green creatures. -I just make bad burgers to leave- he thought.

He did it. They threw him to Wisla river.

From this time on he could make good burgers. Aliens thought that burgers were bad, but it isn't true. People can eat the best burgers. Mr. Eriksen called them: Galaxy Burgers." He got fortune. He bought red Ferrari and he upgraded Nabo (his café) in Sadyba where our school is.

Be Proud

“Go on!” encouraged my school. They wanted to know my story. How I became a teacher and so on. I didn’t want to but I knew they wouldn’t stop asking.

“Okay” I sighed

“ Well I want you to listen to this story of my life”

How I laughed when the children sat eyes wide and intrigued. They were not always like this during my normal assembly’s they usually drifted away while others sat interested.

I began.

Well I never always lived here in Enfield. I used to live in a town called Sheffield. I went to primary school there and worked hard throughout the whole 6 years. I also worked hard at the beginning of secondary school, but unfortunately I was slacking. I lost my confidence which I advise you NEVER do.

I did not do as well as I thought I could have done.

And that meant that I didn’t have enough to pass my test.

When I was a little older, while I was in college I finally started to look for a job. At first to earn money I became a football coach 41 years ago in 1074. I was pretty good at it. I did my coaching where the Brent Cross shopping centre is nowadays. I earned money and raised a family of 3. That’s when my wife and I decided to get a job. Right after my little lady was born. I trained to become a teacher. But THIS time I did my very hardest, and I did it. That was one of the things that just HAD to go in my Milestone. I was a teacher for a couple of years in year 6. When I became Head master of this beautiful, successful school.

And I have done ever since.

The children wanted more. I chuckled

“ I am sorry I really am but that is the end”

I looked around the room and I could see the future glistening in the children’s eyes.

The End

My Head Teacher

Mr Price sat there gazing at the computer his eyes fixed on the number of e-mails he had received, and still was receiving. 20, 24, 30, 32 and so many more. It would have taken him weeks to read them all. DING! It was 12:00 that meant it was time for lunch.

Children came running down the corridor, screaming with excitement as they made their way fiercely into the dinner hall. Everyone was shouting loudly, pushing and shoving each other disrespectfully.

“That’s it! “Mr Price leaped out of his chair and crossed the room towards his brief case and picked it up. He started loading several items and pieces of paper work into the bag, his face hidden behind a large frown. ”Where are you going?” asked the deputy head, Mr Collins. “I’m going to find myself another job!” replied Mr Price. “But you can’t leave now!” “None of the children in this school respect me!” Shouted Mr Price, and with that he swung open the office door and marched out in silence.

A blanket of grey clouds covered the ceiling of the earth. Mr Price walked slowly down the road, his head facing the ground, his spirit lost, forgotten and disrespected. It started to rain, but Mr Price didn’t care about the rain. He didn’t care about anything anymore he just carried on walking home his mind drowned full of confusion, and him being stuck with a horrible dilemma of what he should do with his life.

“Hurry up and load!” Mr Price shouted as he sat at his desk constantly clicking on the refresh button. He realized he needed to get a new job if he wanted to carry on with his life. He scanned list after list of jobs. He found nothing that he wanted to do. “This is a waste of time.” Mr Price sighed as he started to exit the pages. Suddenly he stopped clicking and turned his chair around to face the newspaper. There was a job description on the front page. The paper read, *Head Teacher Needed*.

Mr Price loved his job and he knew it but he couldn’t go back to his old school. This was a school in Enfield called Keys Meadow Primary School. He needed a job and at least he would have some experience in being a head teacher. With that, Mr Price smiled and picked up the phone to make a call to the school.

There it was. A medium sized building standing right in front of him. He could here several children screaming and laughing, it sounded like a very welcoming place to be. Mr Price started towards the entrance where he was welcomed by a young lady called Mrs Jenna. Mrs Jenna looked kind and understanding. She led him inside towards a small reception desk. “Welcome to Keys Meadow.” announced Mrs Jenna.

Mr Price sat in front of a large shiny desk. In front of him was a pile of paperwork and files of all the different children in the school. There were hundreds of kids, so many different names to remember. He wasn’t sure exactly what lay ahead of him, but he knew that whatever life would throw at him, he would fight back and become the ultimate head teacher.

The Dirty Books

Once there was a rabbit as white as a cloud. His name was Mr. Bob. He was a librarian and his library was in a very, very small white castle in the state of New York. Mr. Bob was a nice librarian, but his books were too dirty. His books were as dirty as garbage. He did not know what to do. Nobody liked his books.

Mr. Bob was very mad at himself for not being responsible with his books. He could not think of what to do. He asked his friends what to do, but they did not know. When he went home crying, he said he would never, ever be a librarian again. Then he took a very nice nap. When he woke up, Mr. Bob went back to the library. Outside the window, he saw his neighbor, Mr. Clitin, cleaning his yard. Then Mr. Bob had a perfect solution. He was going to clean his books.

Mr. Bob said his books would be as shiny as the sun. Then he cleaned his books. It was great. After he cleaned his books the children were amazed by the clean books. After that day the kids went to the library every single day. He was so happy that he celebrated. He lived happily ever after.

THE END



City: Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam
School: Lawrence S. Ting School

On a beautiful morning, class 7A6 was studying NYC. They were doing a project to improve their city, which lasts for 3 months.

Nicole, Jessie, Richard and Damien were chosen as group 1. They have some little time to discuss on their solutions.

Nicole started:

- I think we should make posters and hang them around. Oh, and some leaflets too!

Richard continued:

- But no one would look at the posters on the streets. Neither with the leaflets. I see people trash them all the time, on the streets! That wouldn't help with anything but to make it worse!

Damien gently said:

- What about we open some webs and advertisements on the internet?

Jessie concluded with an angel smile:

- Let's make a list of possible solutions, their positive and negative faces. And then we can decide on which solution is the best, okay?

- Okay!!

20 minutes later...

They all have chosen their best solutions:

1. Open a website and a Facebook account for saving the environment and solving the traffic problem.
 2. Put on posters on the walls of their school and ask for permission to put on other schools.
 3. On the weekend, make presentations and small plays on the street about helping the city.
 4. Also, they are going to have a presentations at the school auditorium after asking for the school's permission.
- Okay everybody!! Let's go!!!!!!

On Saturday morning, they went to the Tao Dan Park, a large park of the city. At first, they made troubles attracting kids to come but it was soon a relief. They gave kids candies and cookies with the words for them to throw the trash into the can. They also did a small presentation and a play for the teenagers. They concluded it a success for the first step.

On Sunday morning, they met up at the cafe shop to write applications for both their school and other schools for the posters and the presentations at the auditorium.

3 days later, the replies came. They all agreed and welcomed the students to do their project.

Nicole, who had the most talented art ability, started to work on their posters. On the other hands, Jessie, Damien and Richard prepared for their presentations and plays.

They glued them on the walls of the halls. At first, they didn't make any attraction, but then students started to recognize the differences.

The presentations were also really successful. The posters worked and their Facebook page, named 'Save the environment for a better world tomorrow' got many views and likes from many students. They are really making changes.

3 months passed, it's the final day to look back and see what they've done. They wrote a report for their teacher, includes the survey about trashing problem before they did the project. The numbers of trashing was lower than before 40%. It was a big success. They got a 10/10 for this project and a letter from the principal to congratulate them.

- Well, I think we did a great job. - Jessie said.
- We learned how to be patient.
- And teamwork.
- And passion, too!

Nicole ended up:

- I think we should treat ourselves with some pizzas tonight!!
- Yeah I'm on!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

The Change in Life

When Vidya was a child she always wanted to be a scientist .She was excellent at science and always topped in class . She was liked by all and was very jolly . She had a group of friends who always supported her .

Then she entered her teenage. She yet continued to have special feelings for science. She used to invent new things . She was excellent .All teachers loved her and she represented her school for all science exhibitions .

Then she grew up and her love for science increased . She was going to give her final examinations that was the final examination after which she would become a world wide known scientist . She passed and got 99.9% . Then she went to her native place in Tamil Nadu where her grandparents lived. When she was going in the train she saw many young girls going with pots walking a far distance just to get water and not studying . There were young boys as well who were doing carpentry and pottery . She was really shocked to see this as it was totally different in the village. Then she realized that she was a human and had to help in making the thinking of the society more advanced . So she dropped out the idea of becoming a scientist and became a teacher . Now if you go to a village called Malgudi in Tamil Nadu you will come to know how famous Vidya is . She is the first teacher in the whole village .

An Adventure at the Bronx Zoo

One day two officers got a call from the police station. Some tiger hunters got inside the Bronx zoo. The officers had to go undercover so when they got to the Bronx zoo the hunters won't expect them to be police officers.

The police station told them the first hunter was an 18 year old girl and the second hunter was a boy named Tristan who is 9 years old. They went in the Bronx zoo and there they spotted the 2 hunters looking at a Bronx zoo map. They followed the hunters to Tiger mountain.



One officer spotted the girl taking the key to the tiger cage. Then she thought that girl is a volunteer at the Bronx zoo!

The girl was just about to open the tiger cage, the officers stopped them. But then the 9 year old hunter stole the Officer's guns and tied them up.

The girl hunter went inside the tiger cage with her Bronx zoo uniform on and pulled her gun out. She was ready to kill the tigers when 4 kids burst into the tiger cage!



One boy jumped on one girl while the other girl stole her gun and broke it!

The other boy got the gun and hid it.

Then they untied the officers and the officers captured the villains.

One villain said “you can’t take me to jail I’m only 9 years old!”

One officer said,
“You are not going to jail but we are going to tell your parents so we make sure this doesn’t happen again”.

Then the officers and kids went to the police station and celebrated. During the celebration the head of the police station said that “These four kids are now part of the NYC police force!”.



2013 Creative Writing Contest Winners

**First, Second and Third Place Winners
&
Honorable Mention**

City: New York City, USA
School: Beach 41st Street Community Center



21

The Unsuspected Thief

Once upon a time, there was a girl named Pearla. People thought she was an angel because she was always good in school but she wasn't. Every night she would pretend she was asleep but, after her parents kissed her good night, turned off her lights and shut her door she would sneak out her window and go to the neighbor's house. She liked sneaking in her friend, Mya's window and playing dress up. Mya and her family were from Tokyo. When Mya moved next door, she showed Pearla all her traditional kimono's she brought with her. Pearla loved her clothes she never saw anything like it before. This was the 3 month that Pearla was sneaking in the house. She wanted to dress up in Mya's new kimono. Mya had bought it to school for show and tell. She wore it and preformed a traditional Suzume Odori or a sparrow dance to show how she celebrate the Oban festival if she was home in Tokyo. Pearla thought she was beautiful as she performed. She imagined herself wearing the dress and performing in front of everyone. That night, she snuck into Mya's room and tried on her kimono. It was lavender with printed flowers on it. The belt and collar were red with gold trimmings. In a mirror she tried to copy the dance Mya did in class.

When she started to get sleepy she took the clothes off and went back home.

When she went home she realized she still had Mya's hair piece. She thought she would put back tomorrow before anyone noticed.

At school the next day, a girl from class was talking about how good Mya's dance was. Everybody else joined her, commenting on Mya's performance\ . Pearla was quiet because she felt bad about having Mya's hair piece. She tried to change the conversation by talking loud about a TV show that came on last night. When everyone joined her conversation she felt better. Throughout the day, different people complimented Mya on her dance and Pearla changed the subject every time.

At home later that day, Mya took her custom out the closet and she noticed her hair piece was missing. She first thought it had just dropped out the bag and she started to look around her room for it, but didn't find it. When she didn't find it she thought lost it at school. She thought tomorrow she would just look around class and ask anyone if they saw it.

When Mya decided to stop looking for the hair piece, the door bell rang out side. Then she heard her mother call and say "Mya, your friend Pearla is here to see you."

Mya came downstairs to see Pearla. Pearla was nervous; she knew Mya would be upset after she told her what she had to say. Mya said, "Hi, Pearla. It's so nice of you to visit me." Pearla smiled and handed Mya the hair piece.

Mya jumped up and said, "Oh my gosh, I was just looking for my hair piece. Thank you Pearla" and she hugged her.

Story Continued....

Pearl didn't hug Mya back, she still looked sad. Mya steps back and asked her what was wrong. Pearla said, "Mya please don't hate me, but I've been sneaking in your room at night playing dress up with your clothes"

Mya laughed and said "You took my hair piece last night" Pearla shook her head 'yes' Mya still laughing said "I thought I lost it in class"

Pearla asked Mya why she was laughing. Mya continued to laugh as she answered "I saw you last night in my room dancing. I've seen you dancing in my mirror a lot of nights but I thought I was dreaming all this time"

Pearla looked shocked and didn't know what to say. Mya hugged her friend and said, "its ok. I'm not mad."

Pearla finally smiled back at Mya. She told Mya that she enjoyed her stories of Japan and liked to watch her traditional dances. Mya was honored her friend wanted to learn about her native home. She had an idea. She said, "Pearla if you would teach me more about New York and the things you like to do, I'll teach you about Japan and teach you some of the traditional dances!"

Pearla liked that idea and the two girls went up stairs to Mya's room to start sharing each other's culture. Mya took her kimono out and taught Pearla the correct names of all the parts as she put it on her. Then she showed her some hand movements. Before Pearla went home, she showed Mya some break dance moves and promised to take her on a trip to Central Park, in the city, to see her perform with her break dance crew.

The two girls continued to share their cultures with each other as they grew up. They spent so much time together they became a part of each other's family. Mya got a chance to dance with Pearla and her crew. Pearla got a chance to go to Japan with Mya and her family. To this day the girls share everything they learn with each other.



Gracias

The light that entered through the blackened and broken drapes in the tiny room woke Pedro from a light sleep. He stared sleepily at an illuminated crack in the wall, idly scratching at a couple of flea bites in the back of his hand. His memories of his hometown of Tamazula, Durango came back as in almost every morning for the last two months since he and his mother Emelia reached New York. He closed his eyes briefly, allowing them to flood him, to give him much needed strength. Tiredly, he dragged himself into a sitting position, and started to grope around in the half-darkness of the musty smelling room. He dressed quickly, well aware of the consequences of his mother arriving late again to the sewing shop. His flesh crawled when he remembered the cries of supplication that old Choni, the woman that got mother the job at the shop, gave when she was fired and thrown out to the street. Her *reumas* had become so severe that she could barely hold a spoon, much less a sewing needle. Emelia and Pedro took turns in the afternoon to help Choni to eat her *merienda*. His stomach growled as the memory of food, more vivid than the fading ones that he still kept of Tamazula hit him with the force of a bus. The memory of the quesadillas he used to have on Sundays in the plaza central of Tamazula, sitting on the sidewalk with his friends, after a morning chasing a ball around in a friendly match of soccer.

Breakfast was as usual, in silence, around a rickety card table too small for the room, too large for their meal, and too soon over to be satisfying. As every morning, they walked briskly and furtively towards the sewing shop, which was only a few blocks away, avoiding eye contact, avoiding being noticed. Suddenly, going around the corner, they almost bumped with the gentleman. He barely acknowledged them, giving them the briefest of glances, in which he, nevertheless, managed to make them feel dispised. Emelia mumbled an apology in bad English, and was about to move on, when the first explosion sounded.

Pedro looked up to the sky, more frightened than he had ever been in his whole life, even more than when he and his mother had to board that moving train in the dark so long ago. Buildings were crumbling all around like they were made of wet *adobe*. Emelia grabbed his hand and pulled him behind her, running desperately. When he looked behind him, the gentleman was nowhere to be seen. After a few moments, Pedro realised that they were not going to the shop, but running back home, where Choni was along for the day, Pedro soon lost his direction, so he gripped Emelia's hand tighter trusting her to know where she was going. Somehow, Emelia found their way back home. It was a miracle that the overcrowded, run-down apartment building was still standing amidst giant piles of rubble that once were adjacent buildings. Fortunately, Choni was already standing on the sidewalk, red-faced and puffing, while she carried a couple of overfull plastic bags. Emelia quickly grabbed one of the bags, Pedro took the other, and each one grabbed one of Choni's elbows and dragged her away from the building. They got clear just in time. Pedro looked back just to see one of the blue silvery flying things shoot something and reduce his home to rubble. Somehow, Emelia knew where to go.

Story Continued....

Pedro's legs ached from the mad run from his lost home to this nameless subway station, and his ears were from the explosions. Choni was in worst shape, barely able to walk. The subway station was crowded with people, covered in dust and with lost or shocked expression. Emelia had given Choni and Pedro some old cloth napkins she had took out from Choni's plastic bags, and they put them on their faces to protect from the choking dust. Both women looked around apprehensively, fearful that someone may try to take their things from them. After some joshed talk in *yaqui*, they decided they might as well leave the questionable safety of the subway station and tried their luck in the darkness, seeking shelter in semi-destroyed buildings. They managed to sneak out to the gloom of the destroyed city. Once or twice they saw strange shapes moving in the darkness, and occasionally, they heard a scream.

Pedro's eyes widened in surprise when he recognised the gentleman from the morning. He was lying injured in the shelter Emelia had found. The gentleman and the women stared at each other for a while, and then Emelia moved her little family to a far corner, never taking her eyes off him. Choni rapidly took charge of the situation taking out of the plastic bags, matches, resinous wood shavings known in Mexico as *ocotes*, and using a small metal pan as a *comal*. Emelia, meanwhile built a small fireplace using broken brickwork while Pedro searched around the rubble looking for broken pieces of wood. Soon, a smashed chair was burning in the makeshift fireplace. Choni took from the other bag some cheese, and some corn dough she had brought on a small can. As countless generations of Mexican women had done before her, she hurriedly claned her hands with water from a bottle produced from one of her bags, and started to make tortillas. Emilia, meanwhile crumbled the cheese with her fingers, and filled the tortillas which were already baking in *comal* with the crumbs. The gentleman on the corner seemed to be asleep and only opened his eyes when he smelled the *quesadillas*. Pedro took one and walked towards the gentleman, ignoring his mother's muted warning. He wordlessly extended his hand and offered it to him. The gentleman took it, and in a bad Spanish, said, with a smile in his eyes "gracias."

Light in the Darkness



Coming From Home

As I slowly stepped into the plane,
all eyes were on me.
This made me sweat under my hijab.
In order to avoid the eyes I stare at my toes,
as if they were interesting.
The airport was too huge to be true.
Daddy was right America *is* luxurious and rich.
Just the thought of him makes my heart twist and turn,
“You must go. Go and seek what your heart desires.
the only place for that is America”
That was the last thing he said when I left Afghanistan.
But as every day from now on he will be in my prayers
“New York, Up ahead!” the voice from the speaker shouted,
shattering my thoughts.

My Life Now

Before I get there,
I’m thrown into a tunnel filled with many people
“This is 14th street Union Square. Transfer is available to the 4,5, and L train.”
the mysterious voice says.
I rush out the second the subway doors open,
before I get pushed into the train without a way to get out.
Once I get out I see an opening of stairs.
I take my time to savor each and every step I take.

There is sunlight shining down,
it looks like the entrance to heaven,
the second I’m up the stairs,
I see it.
A spark of hope rushes through my heart.

Story Continued....

The place itself is overwhelming.
It's like the whole city is trying to swallow me whole.
Busy streets and people walking in every direction,
signs are as far as the naked eye could see.
You never see their faces but you do feel their bodies brushing past you.
I feel like a star floating across the rivers of light in Manhattan,
Even in the darkness, the city always has a way of lighting the place up.
With all of the billboards, and flashing lights,
tall buildings feel as if skinny arms are erupting from the ground.
All around me the world is different,
as if everything is a wonder to look at.

Even though it's cold,
that doesn't stop the millions of people from
walking through their daily lives.
Everywhere is full of life or
at least has a burst of color.
What a sight this place is.

Thinking Back

Ever since living here my life has changed dramatically.
Then, I learned I wasn't the only one who left home to find a new life.
That's what this city is made up of
people searching for dreams.
Every person walking these streets,
whether born here or not has a dream.
Most have a reason for leaving home and
setting out to find hope.
Maybe I will fit in.
Perfectly.

City: Paris, France
School: EABJM



27

Stand Clear of the Closing Doors, Please

It all started on the R train.

Dragging the kids through the crowded train was tough for Charlotte and Elizabeth, two mothers who happened to be best friends. Mateo, Charlotte's son, a mischievous little boy, suddenly wiggled out of his mom's tight grip like a slippery eel and ran down the subway car bumping into passengers who exclaimed: "Slow down there" and "Hey, watch our."

His mother yelled after him: "Mateo, Mateo come back!"

Elizabeth's daughter, Anna, scurried trying to reach him and since she was a little older and a little faster, she caught him by the collar and dragged him back to his mom.

"Are we almost there yet?" chimed the kids.

"Mummy, are almost there yet? A young girl around 8 years old with long blond braids and a British accent inquired.

Her parents stood with a confused look on their faces.

"We're not quite sure Bella. Perhaps it's best if we ask someone for directions to the Central Park Zoo. I'm not quite sure where we should get off," wondered her mother.

At that moment, Elizabeth turned around and blurted: "OH, that's exactly where we're heading. Can we help you?"

"Why, yes! That would be wonderful indeed. Which stop is nearest to the Central Park Zoo?"

"The 5th Avenue and 59th Street stop."

Immediately, the adults started to compare New York to London, while the kids huddled around the window trying to spot the Statue of Liberty as the subway travelled across the Manhattan Bridge.

After what seemed like a few minutes, the train slowed to a stop and the conductor announced: "Fifth Avenue and 59th Street. Stand clear of the closing doors, please."

The parents filed out deep in conversation, when they suddenly noticed that something was missing...As they looked back the doors of the subway closed with their kids still inside and then zoomed away.

A few minutes later, Anna spun around with a wide grin ready to ask her mother if they were almost there yet, when she realized that their parents were gone! She quickly alerted Bella and Mateo who didn't seem worried at all.

Mateo jumped up and down like an excited kangaroo yelling: "Cool! No parents!" He then suggested: "Let's get off the next stop and try and find the Central Park Zoo on our own. Who's with me? Are you in?"

Story Continued....

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Meanwhile, the parents back at the 59th street station ran up the flight of steps as if a stampede of elephants were chasing them. As they rushed out onto the sidewalk, they caught a glimpse of the fancy façade of the Plaza Hotel and the skyscrapers all around like sharp knives pointing to the sky. The parents sprinted through the crowded street panting while breathing in the smell of hot dogs from the hotdog stands. Though the delicious smell almost distracted them from their chase, they continued on their path to finding their kids at the next subway station.

The subway squeaked to a stop like a mouse and the kids leaped out making sure to jump over the huge gap between the subway and the platform. Mateo scurried up the stairs ready to begin his adventure as the two girls trailed behind pushing through briefcases and knapsacks.

Once they reached the street, the girls took a deep long breath and Bella exclaimed: "Oh! Your taxis are yellow, my favourite color! Our cabs are a drab black."

From 59th street and Lexington, they walked towards Fifth Avenue. Mateo spotted the FAO Schwarz toy store first and made a run for it. Anna and Bella shouted: "Wait Mateo, wait for us!"

When they reached the store's window, they stared with their mouths open at all the bright colored candy that made the store look like Candy Land. At that moment, a tall guard in a red uniform and top hat greeted them: "Welcome to FAO Schwartz! Come on in Kids!"

Mateo and Bella clapped their hands and were just about to make their way in, when Anna stopped them and shouted: "No, no, no! First, we're going to find our way to the Central Park Zoo where our parents are probably waiting for us. So come on guys, I promise we'll get some ice cream when we find them. Deal?"

"Deal!" answered Mateo and Bella at the same time.

The guard added: "You're almost at the zoo you know, Once you enter Central Park, just follow the path and you'll find it."

While the kids followed the guard's directions to the zoo, their parents finally reached the next subway station on the R line. To their awful surprise, their children were nowhere to be found! Their faces dropped and they stood frozen until Bella's dad spoke: "Oh dear, where could they possibly be?" They rushed back up the stairs and went straight to the ticket booth to inquire about their kids.

Story Continued....

“Well, in fact, I did see three kids walking together earlier.”

“Which way did they go?” asked Charlotte, Mateo’s mom.

“Umm, I think they went out that exit. Go up 59th street until you reach FAO Schwarz. Perhaps they stopped in. Kids can’t resist that place. Check with the guard.”

The parents sprinted up the stairs and darted to FAO Schwarz and were immediately greeted by the guard who suggested that they take advantage of the sales.

Bella’s mom interrupted him and asked, while catching her breath: “Have you seen any kids?”

“That’s a vague question. I see hundreds of kids a day, but I did just give directions to three kids to the Central Park Zoo.”

“Thank you!!!” shouted the parents at once, as they dashed off towards the zoo.

Running through the entrance, they noticed three silhouettes. Could it possibly be their children? Wondered the frantic parents. Without a moment’s delay, they sprang forward and embraced what thankfully turned out to be their kids. Five minutes later they all strolled together towards the nearest ice-cream shop.

City: New York City, USA
School: Beach 41st Street Community Center



30

A New School

Rachel and Shirley just moved to New York City from Mexico. Their mom Megan took them to Wal-Mart to buy their school supplies. Buying supplies in the United States was different than in Mexico. In Mexico you spend less money because you only have to buy loose-leaf paper, a clipboard and pencils. The other supplies are already there. Their new supply list included loose-leaf paper, marble notebooks, book covers, pencils, pens, crayons, glue and a whole bunch more.

At Wal-Mart, the girls looked for the supplies on the list. They found everything they needed in the same area. Shopping for their supplies, made them excited and looking forward to starting school and meeting new people. Their mom was happy for them, but sad she had to spend so much money on supplies.

They went to the register, paid and then walked out to the parking lot to go to their car. The parking lot was big. Because they didn't remember where they parked, they had to walk around for almost an hour looking for their car. If they were in Mexico, they wouldn't have had to look for their car because the parking lots were smaller. They were tired, but happy when they finally found their car. They packed their bags in the back of the car and drove home.

At home, Rachel and Shirley unpacked the supplies from the shopping bags and put them in their backpacks for school the next day.

In the morning, Rachel and Shirley were so excited they got to the bus stop early. They were the first kids there. Around 7:30 am, more kids started to show up. A girl that walked to the bus stop by herself came over to the girls. She was pretty and almost looked like the girls. The only difference was her hair was reddish short curly and she wore it pulled back. Rachel and Shirley's hair was black long and curly. She introduced herself to the girls, "Good Morning"

The girls responded "Good Morning" together

The girl said, "I'm Vanessa. What's your names?"

Rachel said, "I'm Rachel and this is my sister, Shirley"

Shirley smiled the said, "We just moved here. We're going to Public School 35, What school are you going to?"

Vanessa relied, "I go to that school too. What grade are you guys in?"

Shirley spoke first and said, "I'm in the 4th grade" Rachel spoke second and said, "I'm in 5th grade"

Vanessa nodded her head and says, "Cool, I'm in 4th grade too. Wouldn't it be cool if you're in my class?"

The bus pulled up and all the kids got on the bus. Vanessa sat with Rachel and Shirley. As the bus passed different places and buildings Vanessa told the girls about them. The first thing they passed was a park. Vanessa said, "That's Bays Water Park. It's the biggest park out here." She told them in the summertime they should definitely go there because it's always fun, people have BBQ's and there are games, rides and face painting. Vanessa talked about Far Rockaway like she knew everything. Shirley asked, "How long have you lived here?" Vanessa smiled and said, "I was born right in that hospital." She pointed out the window at a tall yellow building the said, St. John's Episcopal Hospital, on the front. Excited she said, "Do you know, more than half the people that live here were born here?"

Shirley said, “WOW”

Vanessa wanted to tell them all about Far Rockaway. She started by telling the girls Far Rockaway meant far place of sand. Then she told them that Far rockaway is a peninsula, not an island. Jamaica Bay is on one side and on the other side is the Atlantic Ocean. She said the best part of Far Rockaway was Rockaway Beach because it is the biggest urban beach in the United States and its was over 10 miles long. She was happy to say people from all over the world come to Rockaway Beach to surf the waves. Then she told them about the bird sanctuary that is protecting several shore birds from extinction. She was really excited about the bird sanctuary because their school had a program that went to the beach to clean up once a week and she wanted them to join it with her.

Vanessa liked talking about her neighborhood. She wanted new people that moved in to like it to. She told them the best places to shop; where the best pizza and Chinese food restaurants were; which part of the beach to go to swim, collect shells, or skate in the skate park; and the best place to see the sun set or see the NYC skyline. The only thing that seemed bad about Far Rockaway was the extra cold weather in the winter.

When Vanessa finished talking about the neighborhood, both Shirley and Rachel giggled and said, “It almost sounds like our old neighborhood”

Rachel took her phone out of her pocket to show Vanessa their old home. The first picture was of Shirley, her body was covered with sand and only her head was showing. The next picture was of their school which was right across the street from the beach. Vanessa said, “You’re right. It is almost the same. You’ll see when we get to school; our school is on the beach too.”

They finished looking at the pictures just as the bus pulled up to the school. Vanessa pointed out the window toward the beach and all 3 girls started to laugh.

Going into school, Vanessa showed them where they had breakfast and where to meet their class teacher.

When it was time to go to class, Shirley got happy because she saw she was in the same class with Vanessa. After they ate breakfast it was time to go to class. Going upstairs, Vanessa told Rachel, “Don’t worry about Shirley. I’ll look out for her.”

In Shirley’s class, her teacher introduced her and asked her to share something about herself with the class. Shirley said, “Hi everybody, My name is Shirley and I’m 10 years old. I think I’m going to like it here” she smiled and looked over at her new friend and said, “My sister and I met Vanessa at our bus stop and she’s really cool. She was nice and told us about the neighborhood. I think it’s cool because it sounds a lot like my old neighborhood. People here are nice just like home and the beach makes me think I’m home” She ended her introduction saying, “I’m looking forward to living in Far Rockaway and making new friends”

By the end of the day Shirley knew all the kids in her class. Rachel, Shirley and Vanessa talked about their day on the ride back home and the three girls became best friends.

City: Paris, France
School: EABJM



32

Neither Scones Nor Crumpets

Elizabeth Mary Beth arrived in New York November 13th from London. She had been hired as a journalist by the BBC and was sent to interview the famous and talented reporter, Taylor Scott. The BBC was ignorant of the fact that she suffered from crippling homesickness. She had forgotten all about it herself, swept up in the excitement.

Unfortunately, the day before the scheduled meeting, the young star got sick and cancelled. The BBC told Elizabeth they'd rescheduled the meeting for the end of the next week and would send a plane for her in a week's time. So for now, she had nothing else to do but to visit New York City. What a terrible yet happy first day in the Big Apple!

A few hours later, she went out to have lunch but she didn't get to eat her favourite dessert: Scones and crumpets, even after going around to 77 different restaurants looking for them. This was the first time she hadn't eaten scones and crumpets and her first time travelling out of the country. Plus, she was grumpy for the whole afternoon because for lunch, she ate a disgusting thing called a "hot dog"! She tried to forget about it because she was in New York and decided to visit the statue of Liberty! There, the young journalist walked up the stairs, into the crown, and almost made someone fall off by desperately asking him where she could find tea. For that, she was escorted out of the building by security. What a sad first trip to New York.

The next day, she decided to visit the Empire State Building. TO go there, she wanted to take the subway. "Where can I catch the tube?" she asked the concierge.

"Well there's a pharmacy right across the street," the concierge responded, unsure.

"Well, I guess he doesn't know what the tube is," she told herself bitterly.

Since she couldn't take the subway, she tried to call a cab. That was day's-worth of exercise. Catching a cab in New York City is a challenging task! Finally in a taxi, Elizabeth realized that she had forgotten to ask the concierge to exchange her British currency. When she announced the news to the taxi driver, he wasn't happy and he threw here out halfway to her destination. So she had to walk there.

At the Empire state Building, our journalist started taking pictures of the famous landmark. A few minutes later, she looked at her watch and saw THAT IT WAS PAST TEATIME!

Elizabeth stopped a family buying souvenirs and, trying to be calm and smiley for the kid, asked them, "excuse me, but did you know that it is past teatime?"

The family looked confused. They told her that teatime was only in England.

Before I tell you what's going to happen, just know that you all could have guessed that this was going to happen after 48 hours without tea!

Elizabeth screamed at their little kid and ran away. She pushed two taxis out of her way with her bare hands, creating sparks from the tires. Then she ran towards the Empire State Building and started climbing it like King Kong with security guards chasing after her. Her passion for tea made her strong. When she got to the top, she yelled, "I NEED TEAAAA!"

Well, there she was on top of the Empire State Building rocking back and forth while holding her knees and wanting to go back home.

That made for a great story on the news, so she didn't need to interview Taylor Scott but Taylor Scott needed to interview her, and the police had to too.

"Next time I travel, I will have a suitcase for clothes and a suitcase for tea, scones and crumpets!" said Elizabeth to the newest "stealer-of-jobs" BBC journalist.

The BBC forced her to come back on the same night. If I were her, I wouldn't come back to New York, well, at least not with the same name! 20 years later, all of the security guards in New York still remembered her from most of their nightmares and were warned about her next trip. What a terrible thing to have such a bad reputation in New York City! So maybe this time they've learned their lesson from when they carried NEITHER SCONES NOR CRUMPETS!

City: New York City, USA
School: M.S. 172 Irwin Altman



34

The World War II Sculptor

Phoenix Scarlet Bird was born on August 15, 1931 in Nishio, Japan. She was blond with blue eyes and darkish white skin. Her favorite holiday there is the Yonezu River Fireworks Festival on August 15, where 3,000 fireworks fly into the sky along the river by the Yonezu bridge. When Phoenix was born, hundreds of fireworks greeted her into the world. Also, a rumor said that a man spotted a phoenix. Since that rumor was still around, Phoenix's mom, Ava, named her girl Phoenix. Her middle name came from the scar on her forehead.

When Phoenix was six month old, Ava brought her to her friend's house. Her friend, Gloria, let Phoenix play around with her bird sculptures. Phoenix's brain was still developing, so she was fascinated by birds.

On December 7th, there was not a cloud in the sky, but no one was outside. World War II was still happening. Phoenix and her family were inside a birthday party when someone turned on the radio. "...a bomb has hit Pearl Harbor. The United States might seek revenge on us." When everyone heard this, they all panicked, all but Phoenix's dad, Memphis. He was a pilot, so he quickly said to Phoenix and Ava, "Follow me, but tell no one more." Phoenix asked why, but Memphis said sharply, "I only have room for four people, including me. I will fly you to safety, but I will come back for more people who want to come." Phoenix started to ask another question, but her father shot a look that whispers, "Tell you more in the plane."

They walked away from the birthday party and back home. Memphis opened the garage. It revealed a red plane with a hawk painted on each side. There were two seats in each of the two rows. "Get in, you two in the back. I'll be the pilot. While I get it started, pack up. Bring some food, too. I need it on the way back. You will be living with my brother, Amole, in Long Island, by the East river." Memphis ordered. Phoenix quickly rushed inside and packed everything she needed first, then what she wanted. She tried to stuff her doll Hammy in, but she decided to just hold it. Then she packed her father's bag, with some help from Ava, and packed food in a basket, put a sheet over the warm food, pick up her bag and Hammy, and rushed to the plane, where it was all warmed up and ready to go. When her mom sat down, Memphis ordered to put the goggles and helmet on, as well as the parachute. Then Memphis gave Phoenix another pair to put on Hammy.

Story Continued....

They flew into the starry night, waiting to land. To Phoenix it felt as if she was flying, flying to a world where there was nothing but safety. She fell asleep, and let the plane roam the sky.

“Wake up, Phoenix; we’re almost at Long Island!” Ava said, gently shaking Phoenix. She opened her eyes and looked down to see lots of plants and homes with a garden. Then they flew to a house along the east river. A man with a beard looked up and shouted, “Memphis, I see you have mastered the airplane I gave you.” Memphis landed with a smooth glide. “Yes, brother Amole, and I see you live near Isamu Noguchi now.” Memphis said as he landed. Phoenix popped next to Memphis. “Ahh, so this your little girl, Memphis.” The man exclaimed, and then turned to Phoenix, “I’m Amole, but you can call me Amigos. Now tell me your hobbies.” Phoenix, as shy as she can be, didn’t answer. Ava came out with her and Phoenix’s bag, and also Hammy. Then, an engine roared. “Bye now, see you later,” Memphis called out. The airplane flew into the ocean sky and sailed on the wind like surfing the wave.

They lived in Amole’s house. Each of her free time, she studied, drew, and looked at birds. The, she noticed the mud on the river floor was good enough to make a sculpture, the sticks on the floor were strong enough to make the skeleton of the sculpture, and the leaves and old plastic bags were good to make the flesh of the bird. She decided to make a bird sculpture. So she ran inside and got one of her drawings. She made a good shape of the drawing, and then started to cover it with mud. When her mom called her to dinner, she washed her hands in the river and went inside.

One day, a man with curly black hair came by to look around. He was too busy looking up that he didn’t notice a small bird sculpture nearby. When he kicked it, he looked down. He noticed that it was done very well. He picked it up and asked the nearby family if the bird was anyone’s. A blond girl raised her hand.

Phoenix had never seen anyone like this. She almost know everyone in town. Now, he was asking her if this was truly hers. She said yes, and he introduced himself. “My name is Isamu Noguchi. I have come here to get ideas for my upcoming sculpture. I accidentally kicked this sculpture of yours when I noticed that it was done very well. I was hoping who made this would help me make my upcoming sculpture. It would also be a lesson to make a better one too.”

Phoenix can hardly believe her ears. A lesson and help make a sculpture. She quickly agreed, and so did her parents. She quickly got on Isamu’s boat and sailed to a garage. He opened his door, just to find the place empty but sculptures. “This is where I make all of my sculptures” Isamu explained, “I like it here because the door blocks out all the outside noises. This is where I can focus. Here are my ideas.” He landed out a picture of birds and other things Phoenix can’t recognize. “Let’s make this one. It looks nice and easy, but big” Isamu pointed to the eagle picture. Phoenix quickly agreed.

Instead of sticks that Phoenix was used to, they used metal and wires. For the flesh, they used clay and stone. The clay was soft and grey at first, but hardens within a day. Now, Phoenix had to learn to paint. When she tried, she looked like an expert, though it was hard to remember all the color combination.

Story Continued....

Now she made sculptures with Isamu almost every day, and they would chat and talk about the war now and then. Sometimes Ava and Amole would even invite Isamu for dinner. One day at dinner, he said that he volunteered to a relocation camp. Phoenix was worried. Without him, who would help her here and there with her sculpture? They had a lot in common, like the fact that he lived in Japan then moved to his mom in America. "Um, may I use your garage while you're gone?" Phoenix asked him shyly. Isamu laughed and replied, "Of course you can. I don't want you to think that you would make a mess. It already is!" Suddenly, Ava asked, "Phoenix, your dad is coming home soon. Maybe you should make a sculpture for his arrival?" Phoenix had nearly forgotten about Memphis. It had been so long since she saw him. She hoped that he was alright.

She woke up the next morning to realize what she should make. She first made a T shape, but with a metal bar in the middle. She fattened it up, to give it nice rectangle look. She also made the rudders on the sculpture. Then apply clay on it, and when she smoothed it out, it looked exactly as her goal sculpture. The next day, she painted the whole sculpture red, and on each side, a hawk was painted.

The next day when it was finish and dry, a rumble was heard, and a red plane landed. "Memphis" a voice cried. Phoenix grabbed her sculpture and ran to see her father. He had changed from the thin, young man to a chubby, old man. But one thing didn't change, and that was his love and heart. "Phoenix, oh how I miss you. You've grown so tall." Memphis cried. Phoenix smiled and handed her sculpture to her dad, which was Memphis's plane. He stood there, shocked. "Is this a gift for helping all the people back there in Japan?" Memphis whispered. Phoenix smiled and said yes. They hugged and heard a voice. "What's going on here, and who is that guy?" "Isamu, you're back!" Phoenix cried, "How was the relocation camp?" "Let's all talk at dinner" Ava said, with tears for her husband. "We sure are hungry" Isamu and Memphis cried together and they all walked home, with the smell of warm rice and fish welcoming home everyone.

City: London, England
School: Keys Meadow Primary School



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The Wanderer

The wanderer strolled down the stony path of the high-walled Sombre Alley. He had a feeling that someone was watching and following him. He was always very conscious of his surroundings but this time, he was extremely cautious. He turned around no-one was there. He had recently moved to Queens from London, England. His mother had received a fantastic promotion with her job. He had felt very apprehensive about moving thousands of miles from Enfield a town on the outskirts of London to America. He had had to leave behind his friends and family. He wondered what his new school would be like and would he make new friends. He wondered how his mum would adjust from using the London Underground to the New York subway when she commuted from Rockville Centre subway station to her new place of work in Manhattan. There was great deal uncertainty in their lives right now.

His mum had asked him to go to the local shop on Farmers Boulevard to get some bread and milk. He had forgotten the name of the store, what was it again? Ah yes, Western Beef. He thought what a funny name for a store but then again, so was Tesco! As he strolled down the side walk he realised he had lost his bearings. He should have listened to his mother who had told him not to go wandering off in the neighbourhood. He looked around and then heard the base of reggae pumping from a shiny black Lexus. The heat from the sun was making his skin feel prickly and beads of sweat tricked down his forehead. The sound of laughter coming from small children filled the street as they played in a haze of refreshing cold water gushing from the street fire hydrant. He laughed to himself as he thought; he would never see such a sight like this in London, only a burst water main! The next thing he knew he was falling rapidly into a hole in the ground. The sound of the children still laughing rang in his ears. His eyes closed gradually, darkness enveloping his mind.

It was when he surfaced from unconsciousness that he realised that he was in an unrecognisable place. It was dark and had a musty scent. He found that he was in a large room with crates everywhere. He thought it must be a cellar of some sort. He looked up and could see a rectangle of sky above. He rubbed his head from where he had probably hit it on the ground and eventually stood up. He waited for his eyes to adjust to the darkness and began to look around, searching for a clue as to where he was. He saw a mysterious figure in the far right corner of the room which startled him. He slowly edged towards to the person. A glimmer of bright light from the sun in the sky about suddenly pierced through the blinding blackness from the street cellar doors and illuminated the room allowing him to see the person. He saw that it was a girl of about 15. Her eyes were closed and she looked like a forlorn angel. She was sitting upright in the corner of the room with her head slightly tilted to the side. She looked pale which was made even more noticeable by the long brunette tendrils that framed her face, flowing past her shoulders.

He stared at the girl and became concerned. Her eyes flickered open and she then became aware that someone else was in the room. This made her jump, and caused her to scream whilst removing her headphones. He moved backwards stumbling on some crates.

“Who are you” she shouted with her eyes wide open.

“Luke.” He replied.

“What are you doing in my cellar?” she said

“Umm I was going to the shop when I fell through a hole I think?” he said looking sheepish.

“What?” she said with a frown.

“I was on the way to the shop and I fell and here I am” he said sarcastically.

“You’re not from around here are you?” she said

“Erm no. I am from London England” Luke said.

“You’re a long way from home,” she laughed. “I’m Adrianna”

“Nice name. How’d you get down here?” Luke asked her.

“My Pops asked me to go get some beverages from the cellar and the door back to pizza restaurant jammed. I tried stacking the crates up to the street but I kept losing my balance. I have been shouting for the last ten minutes but because of the loud music outside, no one can hear me screaming my lungs out” Adrianna explained.

“Well lucky for you I dropped by Adriana!” Luke joked.

Adrianna rolled her eyes and then smirked. Luke had funny sense of humour and funny accent too.

“Ok how about we stack the crates back up and I steady them whilst you climb back up to the street” suggested Luke.

“Ok let’s give it a go” said Adrianna.

They began working together stacking a crate at a time until it nearly reached the entrance of the street cellar door.

Adrianna climbed cautiously up the crates.

“Make sure you hold them steady Luke” she shouted down to him.

“Yes Adrianna” he replied with a superhero sounding voice.

As Adrianna reached the final crate she hauled herself out of the cellar and onto the sidewalk. The bright light from the sun cause her to shield her eyes. A small child ran past her, dripping wet from playing in the water from the hydrant. Adrianna paused for a few moments and thought how wonderful it would be to stand under the fountain of water from the hydrant.

“Hello up there, newly arrived British teenager still trapped in American pizza restaurant cellar!” laughed Luke.

“So sorry buddy...on my way to get you out” giggled Adrianna.

Luke thought, I think I have made my first friend in America.



A New Home

There once was an immigrant named Jessie who moved to New York from Jamaica. She's only 11 years old and she is scared because she does not know any one. She lives with her grandmother because she never knew her father and her mom died when she was young.

The first night Jessie was scared because she heard arguing in the hallway. When Jessie woke up she heard the doorbell ring. It was their neighbor Mrs. Brown. She had a basket full of baked chocolate chip muffins. Mrs. Brown said "Welcome to the city. My name is Mrs. Brown and I baked you these muffins to welcome you." Jessie's grandmother thanked Mrs. Brown and told her that her name was Helen and introduced Jessie. Mrs. Brown said "I hope you have a good life here". In Jessie's mind she thought that she would have the worst life in the city.

When Jessie and her grandmother went out shopping her grandmother told her that she has to go to school. Jessie said, "I don't want to go to school. Everyone will make fun of my clothes because we're poor". Jessie and her grandmother bought all kinds of cool clothes like shirts, shorts, pants, fashion shoes, boots, and sneakers which she loves now.

Jessie and her grandmother walked to the school that she would be attending. When Jessie and her Grandmother walked into the school all kids started to run out. When they walked into the school building they saw three security guards. When Jessie and her grandmother went inside the main office a lady said "Hi can I help you. I am Ms. Johnson the school principal".

Jessie's grandmother was explaining to the principal that they just moved here and would like to know if her granddaughter can be enrolled in the school. While Ms. Johnson and the principal were talking Jessie went out the office and looked on the wall. Jessie saw many children. She looked at a paper that was on the wall and it said "Congratulations on having perfect attendance. You came to school this whole month and now you have an award to say thank you". Jessie was thinking that she would come to school every day and she would have a perfect attendance. Jessie saw a class come down the stairs. The class was a fifth grade class and some girls in the back of the line were laughing at Jessie so she ran in the office so she won't get laughed at. Jessie heard one girl come in the office door. She was holding a red folder in her hand. That was the girl that laughed at Jessie. Ms. Johnson said "Hi Dianna. How are you?", "Good", said Dianna. Dianna smiled at Jessie's grandmother and her grandmother smiled back. Jessie smiled at Dianna and Dianna rolled her eyes. Jessie was upset that she rolled her eyes. Jessie just wanted to be friends but Dianna was just trying to upset her. Jessie saw her grandmother sitting in a chair and writing down information about Jessie.

As Jessie waited another person walked into the office. It was a teacher but she was getting something from her mail box. Finally Jessie's grandmother was finished. Jessie's grandmother gave the sheet of paper to Ms. Johnson. Ms. Johnson said that Jessie can come in by tomorrow and she does not have to wear any kind of uniform because the school doesn't wear uniforms. Jessie and her grandmother left the school. Jessie told her grandmother that she was very excited to go to school but she was afraid that Dianna would make fun of her again. Jessie's grandmother said "If Dianna bothers you, then you tell the teacher". Jessie thought it was a good plan but what if Dianna still bothered her again. Jessie thought to herself, "I have to stand up for, myself if Dianna tries to mess with me.

When Jessie went home she laid on the floor she really wanted a bed but she knew they didn't have enough money. Jessie wanted a bed, couch, food, money, and a television. The next day she was scared but mostly excited because it was her first day of school and Jessie was also scared of Dianna bullying her but her grandmother already gave her some advice. Jessie was ready before her grandmother. While Jessie was walking with her grandmother she saw Dianna walking with 3 other girls. Jessie turned back around and said "I don't want to go to school anymore". Jessie's grandmother turned around and saw that Dianna was with her friends. Jessie's grandmother said "Don't be scared because a girl your age is bothering you. If she is mean to you just tell the teacher or tell her to stop bothering you." " You always tell me to do the right thing." As Jessie was walking through the door she saw Dianna walking toward her. Dianna went straight to Jessie and grabbed the handle of her bookbag. "Hello new girl. Dianna said. Jessie didn't say anything and walked off. Jessie felt good when she didn't answer but she heard that Dianna called her a cheese nerd. Jessie meet a girl named Jamie and she was also was bullied by Dianna. One lunch period Jamie and Jessie sat all alone. When Dianna and her friends walked pass both of them all of them dumped their spaghetti and meat balls all over Jessie. Jessie got tired of Dianna and picked up her butter knife and pushed Dianna on the table. Everyone stared. Jessie said "One more time you mess with me I will take your eye out. YOU GET ON MY NERVES AND I NEED YOU TO STOP. Dianna and her friends ran out the lunchroom and everyone started to clap.

It was then that Jessie finally realized that she can be happy in her new home as well as her new school.

City: New York City, USA

School: Parks-Sorrentino Recreation Center

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The Manhattan Life

February 28, 2016:

All my life I grew up in London, England hoping to become a foreign tourist just to enjoy the earth we live on. And of all things, my journey started in Manhattan, New York City. Not sure how long I want to stay, but so far over the past month I've learned something interesting about the place. What I learned from it was the nature. It freaked me out at first quite a bit. Now it is like paradise to me. This is my experience of the Manhattan life.

1 Month Ago....

As I wake up today I feel happy but tired. I can't wait to go to New York City as I think this would be an amusing place to visit. But first I need to actually get dressed to go. So as I get my cranky self in the shower I think about what I want to accomplish on my visit to New York City. All I know is that I want to stay in Manhattan- the nightlife, the parks, the buildings and of course to see what all the New York traffic is all about. I keep thinking about what Manhattan is like. As the day gets closer I get even more excited. I can't wait to go!

So now I make my sweet breakfast. It begins with poached eggs with bacon, and sausages with mushrooms and tomatoes. And we can't forget to top it off with black pudding. When I make the eggs and bacon, the bacon strips remind me on how tall the Empire State Building stands. But anyways, breakfast was as some New Yorkers say "the bomb" (meaning it was good!).

As I leave my apartment in London, I tell my boss that I just left and I'm getting in a cab to go to the airport. My boss calls me and tells me that the apartment is set in New York City and that he will wire me \$5,000.00 when I get there. As we arrive at the airport, I start to think about the weather and what will happen when I get there. I get on the plane and as we're taking off, I get so excited, but then the lack of sleep that I've been having gets the best of me and I actually fall asleep on the plane for most of the trip.

All I can say when I land in John F. Kennedy Airport is wow...man this place is amazing! It looks so beautiful-as if angels live here. I see a tall gentleman in a dark black suit and tie holding a sign with my name on it- I figured this was my ride to my new apartment. We get into the car and then drive quite a while to get to Manhattan- along the way though we pass some amazing things- people in playgrounds, basketball courts, cycling and just walking to where they need to be.

**HONORABLE
MENTION**

Before I know it, I'm at the new apartment. It's not so bad and it's really large for just one person; it has two bedrooms, living room, kitchen, bathroom, and a nice balcony with a fantastic view of Central Park. I take a look in the refrigerator and see that it's fully stocked for me- what else can someone ask for after a long flight across the Atlantic Ocean?? I look and see that whoever stocked the refrigerator also left a tray of fresh sushi for me in there. I think what can be better than this?

I take the sushi tray and also some cold soda and head out onto the balcony of the apartment. I realize that I can see the television from where I'm sitting and go and turn it on to see what the local news is like. After I turn it on I notice the local basketball team, the New York Knicks are playing.. wow these guys know how to play basketball! I sit there mesmerized eating sushi and watching the game. If this is what New York City is like then I may not want to leave.

Eventually that night I fell asleep and woke up later the next morning. It took me a few minutes to realize where I was since I was so jet lagged. After having a late breakfast, showering and getting dressed, I decided that I'm going to find out about taking a tour around Manhattan. After buying a ticket on the bus (that really looked just like the double decker bus from back home!) I climbed aboard to get the best seat which is on the top. We first went to the iconic Empire State Building. When they told me that it has 102 floors I was amazed. Then we went onto where the World Trade Center was. I was so sad to see the actual site where the bombing was and to think of all the horror that those experienced that day. We then went to a happier place – the South Street Seaport where we were able to get off the tour bus and walk around and explore the shops.

As we went along, there were so many interesting places to see and explore. I felt so happy and as though I belonged in New York City all my life. I have to say the most interesting place for me was Central Park- it really looks like St. James Park back home in London. I felt so in tune with nature and love every minute of it. Definitely a new place to call home and I'm so excited that I'll be spending more time in my "sister city" of New York City. The transfer over here is going to be an adjustment for me but overall I have to be honest it's not going to be difficult at all.

City: Mumbai, India

School: Arya Vidya Mandir Bandra [West]

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Memorable Manhattan

Having lived most of my life in Mumbai, a city of myriad cultures and people, sometimes lovely, often dirty, very crowded, living in Manhattan was a completely different experience. What struck me the most about this wondrous city were the tall buildings, the places to shop, the clean roads and so much more.

I have been working for an airline for many years, and in all these years I have had the good fortune to travel and see quite a few places around the world. I have gathered various experiences and memories, some great and some not so. However, no other place has left such an impression on my mind as has Manhattan. My stay here has been made all the more interesting because of an exciting episode that occurred with me.

The lure of the fancy stores in Manhattan is irresistible. While window shopping on my first day there, I walked into a particular store which had interesting clothes displayed at their window! Needless to say, I gathered a few garments and went into the changing room, found one of the pieces far too large for me, so tried to open the door to get myself another size, when lo! I discovered the latch was not opening. To my utter dismay, all my calls for help went unanswered. I looked at my watch; the store must have closed for the day. Oh! Dear, what would I do now?

I opened my bag to call someone. But who would I call? I hadn't gone into my office yet, so hadn't made any friends, didn't know anyone, much less know their telephone numbers. I had not even carried the telephone numbers of the hotel I was staying in. How foolish I was!

Besides, my phone had no network, and would anyway not get connected. I then tried to break the door open. I pushed with all my might, tried to figure out if tools like my nail file, tweezers etc, would be of any use, Alas! No luck! I slumped on the changing room stool, disappointed, upset, hungry, thirsty, utterly helpless, very distraught.

I was so tired; I thought I would just fall asleep in the changing room until someone came along in the morning to rescue me. But then, frightening thoughts began to trouble me. What if ghosts came to haunt me, what if someone thought I was a thief! I tried to amuse myself by counting numbers, praying to all the Gods I knew, chant, meditate, sit, stand, walk a step or two.

I come from a city teeming with people all through the day, all through the night! There are horns blaring, people talking, lights flashing, and here I was in a dark changing room, all alone, no one knew, no light even from my phone, because the battery had run out. There were no sounds coming from outside, no one to reach for help. Barely did I have a chance to get used to a new city, here I was trying to get used to a shores changing room! How I longed to be curled up on a bed with a mug of hot chocolate! It was getting rather cold and uncomfortable.

I don't know when I must have fallen asleep. I don't know for how long I slept and how I did, but what suddenly woke me, were a few sounds! A ray of hope beamed into my heart. I got up, stood in front of the mirror and gave a bit of a triumphant smile. Just as I was smiling into the mirror and opening my mouth wide to roar, "HELP!" the door was thrown open and the shriek that the lady outside and the lady inside, gave, could have woken a thousand nations!

I was overjoyed and words came tumbling out as I began to explain why I was there, the lady stood gaping at me and I am sure wondering whether what I was saying was true! But she saw my scruffy look, my airline ID and knew my story was genuine.

I had a few more store keepers gather around me who very kindly gave me a cup of coffee and arranged to have me sent back to the hotel. I always thought people in India are the most warm and hospitable but here were a people even more kind and obliging.

I went to the hotel, my mind in turmoil at all that happened and waiting to narrate the incident to all my friends and family. But can you guess what the best part of it all was! I had my scruffy picture and story in the newspaper the next day and guess what! The tourist in Manhattan had overnight become a celebrity in Manhattan!

City: New York City, USA

School: M.S. 172 Irwin Altman—NYC

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Hello New York

I never thought I would use the word huge so many times in only one day. But that was a word to describe New York City. The stores were huge, the buildings, the sidewalks, even some people were huge some were six feet! Huge was not the ONLY word to describe New York. Bright would be another. In Apateu, besides the stars, the only light you would have would be the lamps that people would use to see. The streets had street lights. They looked like mini suns guiding the way. I have been to the city before in Romania, but it was nothing like this at least not as cool. My thoughts were interrupted when my dad's friend called, (he picked us up from the airport) we are here! He was the one driving the car. He opened the car door and introduced us to his home. We were staying over there for a month and a half for our vacation. It did not seem like a bad place. I liked the name a lot though. It was called Bellerose.

"WE ARE HERE!!!! Come on Alecia!" David, my brother was yelling his head off. I quietly tip toed into the house. Dad said there were children here David's and my age here. I could not wait to meet them. Suddenly, a sinking feeling came. What if they will laugh at my accent and my bad English? I was interrupted of my thoughts when something jumped on me. I spun around to see a German Sheppard. We had dogs back in Apateu, but most of them were strays so we were not actually aloud to keep them just feed and pet them. But dogs do not stay inside houses not even in the city. I ran to Mr. Accine. "I am so sorry! I let that dog inside the house!" I expected him to be upset, but he laughed. Than in English he said, *that dog actually lives here. I almost forgot to tell you that in New York, we keep our dogs inside so they will not get into trouble.* My cheeks turned red. I responded *dog nice?* With a grin, he nodded. I petted the dog. I saw her collar said Lex. That must be her name I thought. My dad passed by and said Alecia, go run upstairs and meet Ellie. I ran upstairs and greeted her with a wave. We sat on her bed and talked. *Do you like books?* She asked. I really don't, so I simply said no. *You like to run?* She shook her head. This went on for 15 minutes. Looked like we had NOTHING in common. I was glad when Mr. Accine called Breakfast. I ran down stairs. Looks like David and Ellie's brother, Jason were getting along. They were running around the house like maniacs. I opened the door to get some fresh air in the house. I barely had any of my venitti or *eggplant* on bread, when Ellie ran up to me panicking and even sweating asking where Lex is. I got up to help her. She froze when she saw the open door. *Who opened the door?!* She whispered. *I did. Get fresh air in house.* She did not look grateful she ran outside. I looked questionly at Mrs. Accine. She shook her head. She responded, If Lex goes outside unsupervised she could get run over by a car.

I felt horrible. I started to run around the block and was amazed at how elegant the houses were. Some were light blue, other red and white. Children in nice, clean clothes were playing basketball. All of a sudden Ellie bumped into me. Tears were spilling out of her eyes, her hair was messed up and her feet were scratched up. *I can't find her!* She puffed. She looked me dead in the eye and screamed, *it is your fault! She could be dead right now because of you! I hate you!* Her words pierced through me like solid rock. I tried to put her words aside but I could not. I screamed back, *I living in another place so I not know!* I ran back into the house to look for bait. Everyone was outside calling for Lex. I found some chicken. I got out of the house and climbed over the pointy fence in the backyard to the otherside of the block. I started to walk leaving chicken crumbs all over. I walked several blocks and noticed how different Bellerose was compared to Romania. It was filled with colors, and no stray dogs walked the streets. The streets were not crooked like they were in Romania. There were also a lot of trees there were not so many back in Apetu. When there was no more chicken, I crouched behind a tree and waited. Nothing happened. Then I heard a whine. It was coming from a backyard. I entered, unsure. What I saw next nearly teared me apart. Lex was caught in a broken fence. I ran to her and started to pet her. I eased her out of the fence and laid her on the ground. I took a napkin from my pocket and started to wrap it around her injured tail. It was not so bad. I tried to get her up, but she lay back on the floor. I was not strong enough to pick her up so I called for help. Nobody answered. I could not leave her. I tried ringing the doorbell of the house of the backyard I was in, but nobody answered. I found an old wagon in the backyard that I eased her up to. Using the chicken crumbs, I found the way back. When I got there, everybody thanked me and went inside to aid Lex. Ellie came up to me and said, *I should have not yelled at you. You did not know. Do you forgive me?* Ellie said. I nodded. We hugged. When we let go, I smiled. Smiling I exclaimed, *we something in common. We love dogs.*

City: Mumbai, India

School: Gundecha Education Academy

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**HONORABLE
MENTION**

Simon's Dilemma

NEW YORK CITY: “*And they lived happily ever after.* My story has come to an end. Are you not sleepy?” inquired Simon’s father. Simon was very irritated. He replied angrily, “no dad. Why don’t you understand? I don’t like stories ending with—and they lived happily ever after. I hate fairy tales. I tell this to you each and every day. You are so boring.” “Stop it Simon. Is this the way to talk to your father? Say sorry to him. NOW,” ordered Simon’s mother. Simon replied, “No, I won’t,” and he tucked himself under his thick colourful and very attractive blanket.

Simon lived in a nuclear family—Simon himself, his mother, his papa and his three year old sister, Sara. They had shifted to New York City from France. His father had bought a large mansion. Simon loved his new home. He always wanted to see New York and his dream had now come true. He slept with his dad in one bedroom and his mother and sister slept in another bedroom. His father’s name was Peter Smith and his mother was Rose Smith. He liked to hear stories narrated by his father every night but somehow this night was not very pleasant.

Simon was a sincere and hard-working boy. He was a studious child and was marvellous in sports, especially boxing. His friends called him BBB—brilliant boxer buddy. Simon loved this title dearly and tried his best not to lose this title.

The only value he didn’t have was politeness. He was not at all polite. He spoke harshly to everyone he met. Because of this behavior, Simon even lost some of his friends. His mother was sick of his behavior but his dad always tolerated it. He never scolded Simon and talked to him in the most polite manner. Yet Simon always found faults with his dad.

The next morning, when Simon woke up at around 9:30 a.m., he was very surprised to see his dad still asleep. His dad **never** slept till more than 7 a.m. He went to his mother’s room to ask her what was happening but to his utmost astonishment, he found his mother fast asleep. He was boggled up. He felt that something is missing; it was then that he realized that Sara was not on the bed. He searched the whole room but couldn’t find her.

A minute later he heard a vague, tinkling noise. It seemed to have been coming from the kitchen. Simon walked down to the kitchen only to find **umpteen** number of utensils scattered on the floor, which were making the tinkling sound. He howled, “Sara!” but Sara was nowhere to be seen.

Simon turned the house upside-down searching for Sara. He tried waking up his parents but they kept on saying, “Five more minutes,” just like he used to say.

After a long and monotonous search, he found Sara in the backyard, watering plants! He just couldn’t understand anything. His parents were snoring and his younger sister was working!

Just then, his mother woke up and came running down the staircase to the living room. What Simon found unbelievable was that Rose Smith, his mother was crying and screaming at the top of her voice. She called out, “dad, where are you? Dad! Dad.”

Simon hurried to the living room with Sara. He asked his mother with a dazzled look on his face, “what are you saying, mom? I’m not your dad, and how can you cry and **scream**?” “Dad, why are you saying that you are not my dad? You **are** my dad, and this is mom,” R. Smith declared, pointing to Sara. Hearing these voices, Mr. Smith also rushed down and included himself in the conversation, “What is going on mom? What are Rose and dad conversing about?” “Dad, you too are calling me dad,” Simon exclaimed. “Dad, in our house, we call our father dad,” said Simon’s ‘son’ with a chuckle.

An infuriated Simon couldn’t tolerate all this, yet he didn’t raise his voice. Somewhere in his heart, he was delighted to see all this. He decided to act like his parents’ papa and order them for the day.

Simon ordered his father with a stern voice, “Stop making fun of me, Peter. I am your dad. You have to respect me. Say sorry.” P. Smith lowered his head and said in an unpleasant tone, “I’m sorry, dad. Please forgive me.” Simon was having fun. He fired, “No, you won’t be forgiven so easily. You are grounded. This is your punishment.” Peter yelled, “No! I am very sorry, dad. Please don’t ground me.” “I’ve said it and that’s it,” answered Simon. He asked his mom sternly, “Rose, why were you crying?” Rose replied, “My p ... p ... pen’s c ... c ... cap was lost.” “You were crying just because you lost your pen’s cap. Shame on you. You will surely get a punishment. Your punishment is that you will do 100 sit-ups until I come back from a stroll in the streets of New York City. Sara, keep watch on Rose, Will you?” Sara replied, “Yes, I will, Simon.” Simon was shocked to hear her sister calling him by his name and not brother, but he didn’t protest as he was doing the same as his parents. He left the house without uttering a word.

It was 12:30 p.m. and Simon had lots of time before lunch time. He decided to enjoy and admire the beauty of New York City. He first went to see the famous statue of Liberty. He stood there and praised it for ten minutes. He didn’t know where to go next so he decided to just keep walking.

He crossed the Brooklyn Bridge and after another five minutes of walking, he came upon China town. He stayed there till 2:00 p.m. He was enjoying thoroughly.

After another hour of sightseeing, Simon was extremely hungry. He thought, “I don’t know how I became a dad but if I have, surely my friends would have been grown up too. I’ll visit one of my best friends, Paul, to see how things are going about with him. I’ll also have lunch with him. Yes, this is a good idea.”

Simon was standing outside Paul’s house and ringing the bell for five minutes but there was no response. He waited for another minute and then took a turn thinking that Paul must have gone somewhere out.

Now, Simon was hungrier than a lion, which had not eaten anything for two days. He was so hungry that he could have eaten leaves but yet, he didn’t wish to go home. He was bored of being called ‘dad.’ He stopped outside a restaurant named ‘Little Italy.’ He checked into his pocket. It was empty. Yet, he entered the restaurant, but instead of looking into the menu he went straight to the kitchen and asked the chef, “what are the best choices on food items that you give your customers on a daily basis?” The chef replied, “Sorry sir but all the food items are listed down in the menu. Didn’t you get one?” The, Simon came to his senses. Hunger was driving him crazy. He apologized and left the restaurant with an empty stomach.

He then walked to the central park. There, he sat on a bench and rubbed his stomach. He was wondering whether he should go home or not when he saw two men eating hotdogs. Simon loved hotdogs. His mouth was watering. He kept on staring at the men. They were very tall and had long, thick moustaches.

One of the two men saw Simon and whispered something in the ears of the other man. He then walked towards Simon with a hotdog in his hand. The man asked Simon, "Would you like to have some?" Simon wanted to eat but he remembered his mother telling him not to take anything from strangers. He thought over it and at least came to the conclusion that he was no longer a child, he was a dad. Thinking thus, he stretched out his hand for the hotdog when he saw a van entering the park and the man who was giving him hotdogs gave a sly smile to the van driver and pointed towards Simon. Simon got scared. He got up, rushed out of the park and headed towards his house thinking that if he had not seen the man signalling the van driver, probably, he could have been kidnapped.

Tired and hungry, he reached home at 3:30 p.m. He thought that he'll now eat to his fill but things were not happening just as he had expected. Rose and Peter were waiting for him in the dining room, looking very cross. Rose got even more irritated when Simon asked her to give him lunch and addressed her as mom. She shouted, "Dad, why are you calling me mom and **you** are asking for food! We should ask you for food. Mom told you to get grains, rice and vegetables yesterday, didn't she?" Simon was overwhelmed, "Yesterday! I don't remember anything like this and where do I get the money to buy all this from??" At this Peter replied, "you've got to **earn** money, and dad and what do you mean by 'I don't remember'? What shall we eat now?" Just then Sara came downstairs running. She said, "Did Simon come? Oh, Simon where were you? You didn't get what I told you, did you? Oh, now you ought to go and earn some money by helping others. You can then buy us some food. Go!" Saying so, Sara started pushing Simon out of the house and Rose and Peter joined in. All of them spoke in unison, "Go!" Simon was in trouble. He screamed, "Noooooooo! I don't want to earn."

He woke up with a terrible shriek. He was in total mess. His blanket was covering only his legs and his body was half outside the bed. He called out, "Rose, Peter, Sara!" his parents and Sara came running to his bedroom. Rose yelled, "Simon, how dare you call us by our names?" Simon was perplexed. He thought, "Oh, was it a dream?"

Though it was a dream, Simon learnt his lesson from that dream. He learnt that being a dad was no easy task. His dad struggled hard to earn every rupee and always tolerated Simon's harsh tone. After his dream, Simon never complained to his dad, he always listened to his dad's stories with great interest and never spoke anything against him. Surely, Simon's dad was the best dad of New York City, and this story did end with '*and they lived happily ever after!*'