

THE LEOPARD PRINT

Vol. 2 No.1

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adventure, tragedy, and dreams come true!

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Whether it's introducing ourselves on a first day at a new school, posting fan fiction, or writing a future Pulitzer-prize winning novel, everything we write reveals ourselves.

In the first issue of the year we're highlighting personal stories shared with us from students 5 to 15 years old.

While most submissions were nonfiction, a few students chose to submit pieces that, while fiction, still reveal the personality of the writer.

Before you continue to the writing, I'd like to make an important clarification:

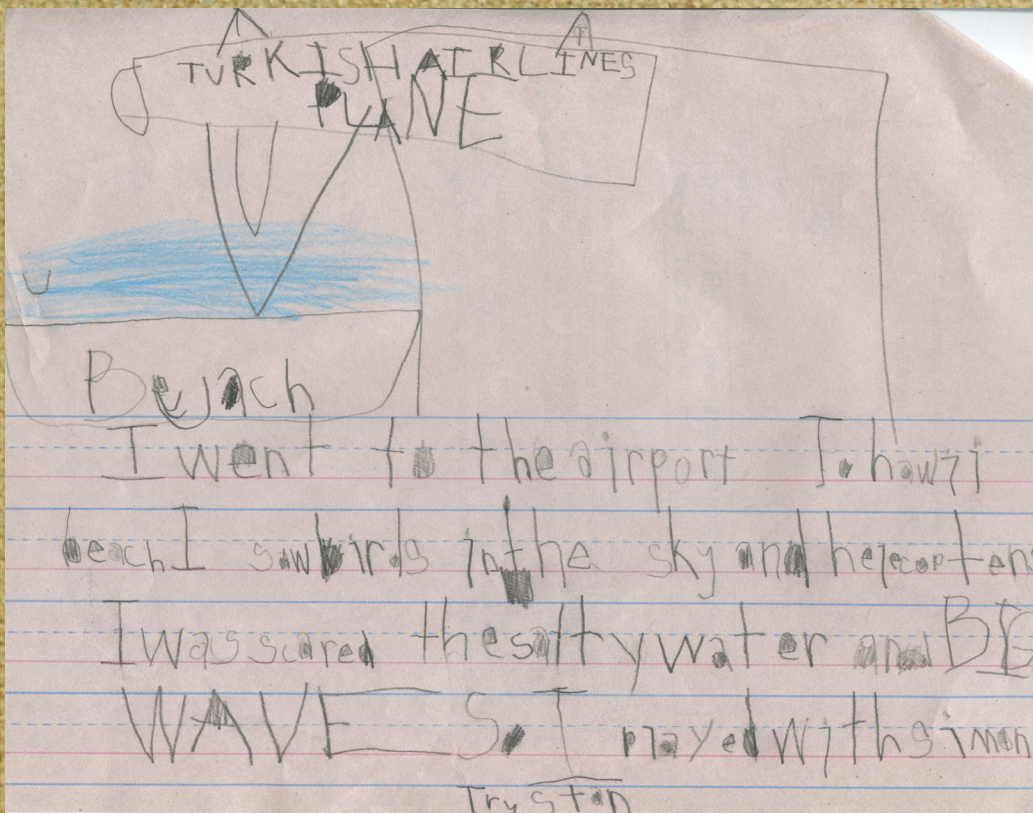
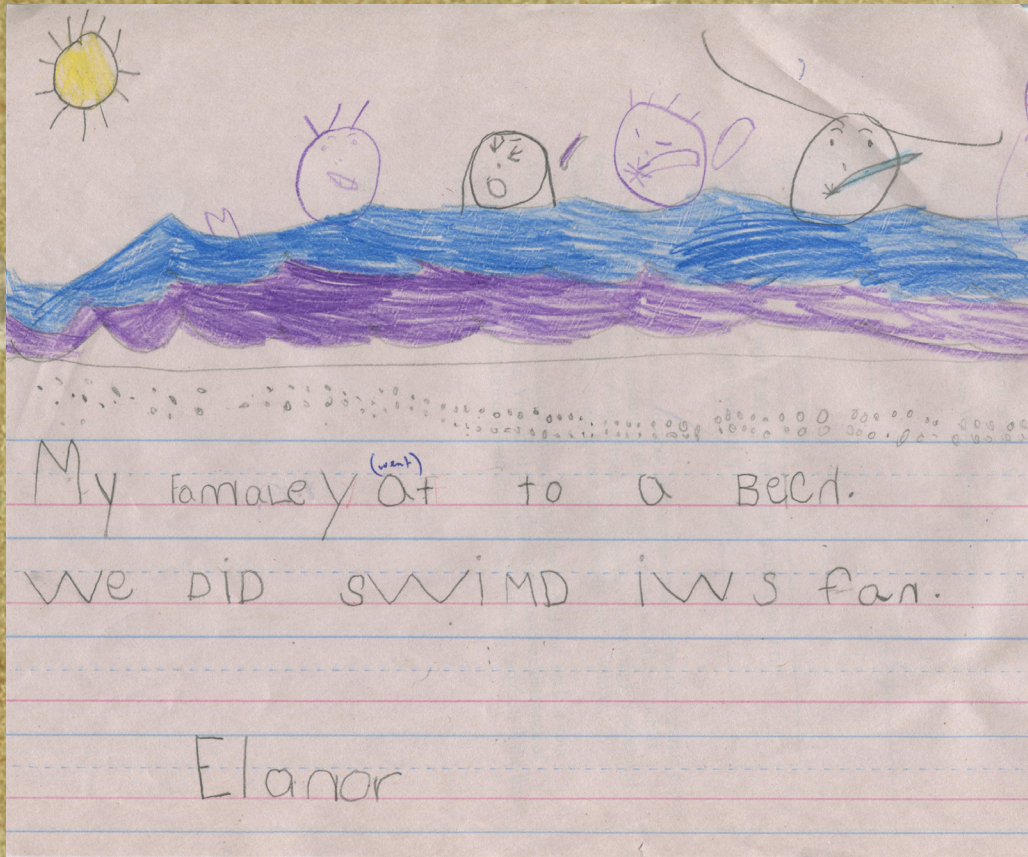
With only a few minor exceptions, Leopard Print staff did not edit the pieces we received. *Grammar and spelling errors were retained as an artifact, a record, of where each student was at a certain time in his or her writing career.*

Thank you for your support of QSIB student writing.

Sincerely,
Chris Hilgeman
Issue #1 Editor

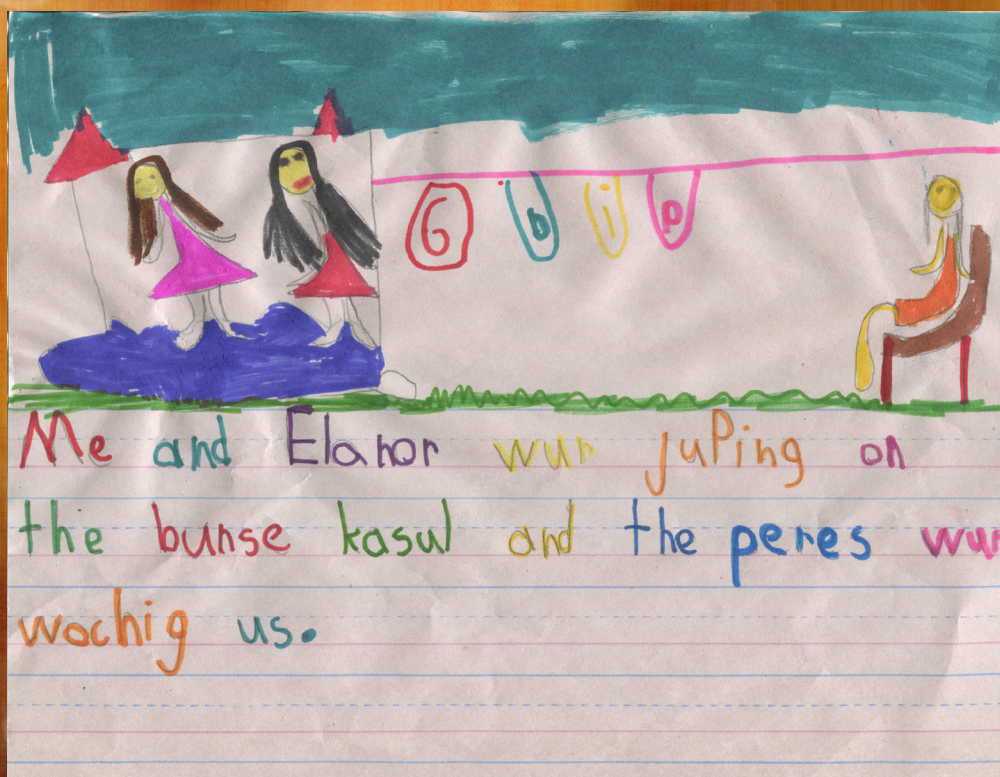
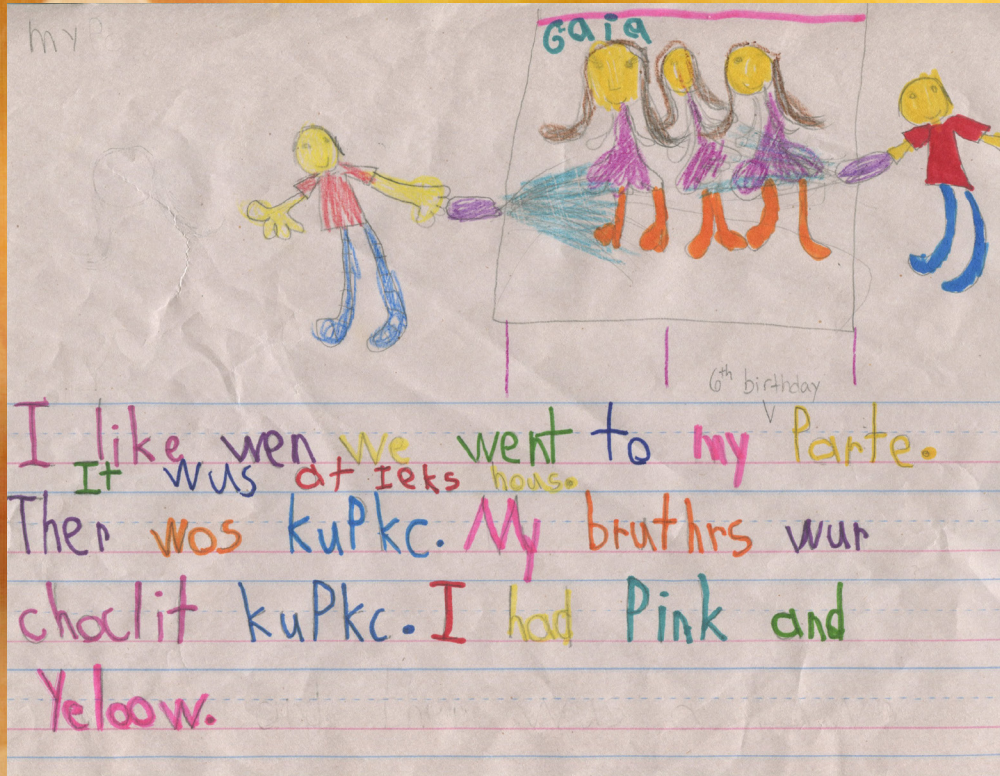
A Trip To Remember

By Elanor Kortlucke and Trystan Brown



A Memorable Party

By Gaia Sarandrea



7 Year Old Personal Stories



Yesterday I went to TashRobot, I went on the bumpercars, I drove on my own bumpercar. I bumped into my nanny more than she bumped into me. I was faster than her, we did it a second time I won again. it was time

to eat dinner we ate at siera it was good, we had fluffy's they were still hot! we also had sprite too, My sister had sprite too, she loved it!

by Lizzy Boles

7 Year Old Personal Stories



It was the first time that I ate ice cream. when I tased it I get so happy!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! The icecream flavor is strawberry and lemon. That is the best ise cream in my life. Now it is my fravorite

ice cream. And I miss eating the ice cream. I miss being young and my brothers phone. I miss eating ice cream.

by Gasu Kinlay

7 Year Old Personal Stories



When I was two I learned how to walk. When I was three I went to pre-school and I knew three words. I learned how to maice a fiure when I was four. I got a dog when I was

five. I went camping I learned hot to make a tent then we went to Indoniesa and we had a pool then I Learned how to swim!

by Isa Olson



Great Grandma

by Caroline Vilson

Hurry up," yelled Grandma, "The bus is waiting, hurry." Get my shoes and Grandma's purse is what I did.

As soon as we got on the bus I realized that Grandma only had a little money in her purse. I was sad because I wanted my favorite Mango ice-cream, so I asked her if she took extra money and she had! After we bought ice-cream

we went on a tuk-tuk to Great Grandma's.

"Why didn't you come last week? You were supposed to."

My Grandma replied, "I didn't have time to come."

"Why are you staying their come on in!" exclaimed Great Grandma. So we went in.

After a while, Great Grandma was busy cooking spicy nuts.

"Do you need any help?" I asked and she said no.

As soon as she said that, I ran out to play tag with my friends. To be honest with you I hope she would tell me she didn't need help. While I was playing I heard her mumbling something and I got worried because accidents had happen before so I went and looked. Guess what I saw...her balancing on the table...well I thought she was but she was there like that because she slipped. I was going crazy until she said to call Grandma and I did. She took both her arms and told me to help, so I just pretended to help because I was lazy.

Mostly, I did nothing but asked what happened, so she told me "I went to the storage room to get salt. I walked all the way outside and then I realized that I forgot the key. On

Continued on pg. 9

A Trip To Illusions

by Cami Doherty

It was a rainy Saturday. We decided to have a play date with Gerda at Bishkek mall. My dad didn't want to come so he stayed home. When we got outside, we decided to walk. When we got to Bishkek mall I ran because I hadn't seen her for a whole year.

Then we got ice cream. Gerda got two scoops of strawberry ice cream and one scoop of chocolate. I got to pick mine next. So I chose two scoops of chocolate ice cream and one scoop of mango. Finally it was Kaya's turn. She had one scoop of mango and one scoop of chocolate and one scoop of strawberry.

When we got to Illusions we had to put shoes and gloves on. When we were finished putting them on, we had to go through different hallways. The lights were flashing. We couldn't see each other. I was so shocked of all the powerful colors! When I saw myself in the mirror there was ten more of me. I was hollering to Gerda really loudly. She was hollering back to me but we still couldn't find each other. I thought I saw Gerda so I reached out to grab her but it was the mirror reflecting from her. Then she grabbed me. Then my mom saw me through another mirror and said, "Cami it's time to go."

Gerda found me...she found me in the mirror but she knew it was the mirror so she turned around and there I was. When Gerda found me we teamed up and looked for Kaya. Then we found Kaya. In another hall. She couldn't hear mom so she tried to find her own way out.

Sadly, it was time to go home. Boo! I can't wait to see Gerda again. We have already made plans for another awesome play date.

"Gymnast" Continued from pg. 13

changing room. In a few minutes, Arsen, the more anorexic version of the Incredible Hulk, sat next to me and handed me an icy water bottle, to place on my damaged nose. For a second we just awkwardly sat there; I could feel the way Arsen was staring at me with a question on his face.

"Listen, why do you need this? This is dangerous. You might get hurt next time too," he asked.

"You won't understand anyway," I said.

"You should probably tell me because it is not normal for a girl to do such a sport," he said.

"It's an escape."

"Escape from what?" he exclaimed.

"From being the ballerina-type girl I was, who never felt adrenaline."

"I understand, but it's too risky for you and you should probably remind yourself that you're a girl," he uttered and disappeared from the changing room.

I suddenly heard noises from the boxing room. I was curious enough that I even forgot about my injury. My ears caught the slapping of leather and I couldn't resist taking a look. I decided to join the attentive crowd who gathered around the fighting fellows.

"That's all you got?" one of the fighters obnoxiously blurted, his mouth full of blood. It was clear that he had taken too many hits. I thought he had no chance for victory until...

"Left hook! End it with your left hook! Move! Come on!" my trainer shouted. The beaten-up boy considered the coach's instructions, but he could barely lift his arm. Scuffling with exhaustion, he slowly began restoring his agility as if the trainer's words programmed him. Punch drunk a second ago, the boy was already raging his returned fury on the frightened opponent. I could feel myself grinning. As if time stopped, I felt that left hook of his. Knockout.

I tightened my gloves. Confidently I made way to Arsen.

"Hey, let's continue."

Quicksand

By: Filippo Valerio-
Sarandrea

Not so long ago there lived a boy named Johan. When he was little, he had a dream he hoped would come true. It was that one day he'd go explore the jungle.

When he turned 12, his parents actually took him to the jungle.

"I've wanted to explore the jungle for 7 years!" he exclaimed.

As soon as he got off the plane, they went straight to their tour.

"Careful with your broken finger!" shouted his mother at the top of her lungs.

"I'll be back in half an hour!" he replied.

As Johan walked along the narrow dirt path between the gigantic leafy trees, sweat started dripping down his face. Hidden monkeys in the trees chattered to each other. The moist warm air filled his lungs.

Suddenly something flashed by his head and disappeared in a nearby bush.

"Who's there?!" he shouted.

Then he spotted a waterfall and while he was jogging to it, he accidentally stepped in goopy and muddy quicksand! When the sand got to his knee, he started screaming as loud as he could.

"Please help! I want to get back home to the nice and warm South Sandwich Islands!" he shrieked, but nobody could hear him except a chimpanzee with brown short hair and green eyes. That's when he figured out the chimp is what flashed by his head.

The chimp saw him because of his bit of freckles, spit on his face, and whacked him with a brown, rotten banana. Then it started jumping away but the boy begged it for help. So the chimp somehow understood him, called his parents, and his dad pulled him out.

Johan couldn't believe that a chimp saved his life so the next day he brought the chimp an ambulance full of bananas.

"Bad Hiking Trip"
Continued from pg. 18

muddy path. It wasn't too bad compared to everything else that happened. I was freezing and the hail started up again and was coming down hard. The hail was stabbing us like little tiny swords. It was so cold up there that the hail didn't even melt when it was on the ground. A nice man gave me a rain jacket so I would at least not get any wetter than I already was. It was still freezing and the rain was still coming down quickly, but we made it back alive and in one piece.

That will be a hike I will never forget. The sad part is we never even made it to the waterfall after all. We were headed in the right direction, but we were just to the right of it and didn't see it. My mom still wants to do that hike to the waterfall again, but I don't want to. I probably won't go on too many hikes anymore because of that wretched experience. I hope we never have to experience anything like that ever again.

"Great Grandma"
Continued from pg. 7

my way back, I tripped because there was oil poured on the floor."

So now, since mom told me that tomorrow I had school and I had forgotten my uniform, I had to go back. Grandma had a nice time staying with her in the hospital for a day or two.

Addicted to Wheels

By Stephan Lunev

Once in a small neighborhood filled with huge apartment buildings in Moscow, Russia there was a boy named Roma Katkin. He loved everything that had wheels. Bikes, cars, skates, and even scooters! Although he was 10 he rode everything that had wheels. His favorite mode of transportation was a special trick bicycle. It was a bike motó cross with an abbreviation of BMX. It was small but very powerful.

Roma also had a friend. His name was Vova. Vova was just the same. He loved the same things. Tricks and wheels it was. But there was only one difference. Vova owned a BMX bike. He didn't know how to do anything on it. So Roma volunteered to try.

"May I try to do at least something on your bike?" Roma questioned.

"Only if you don't break it." Vova declared.

So Roma got on the bike and practiced a bunny hop. At the end he did a perfect high one.

"Wow!" Vova said.

"Just a talent," Roma said "I can also perform a tailwhip and a barspin!"

"Prove it!" Vova requested

Roma proved it like a boss! The next day he sold his old bike for 7000 rubles and bought the same BMX as Vova had. Roma

mastered it quickly and became famous on streets and skateparks. His advanced tricks were hard and interesting to watch. He performed stunts on funboxes and ramps. He was better than anybody.

But once he released his bike and fell horribly landing on his ankle breaking his right arm. He and his bike fell and then Roma shouted in horrible and never ending pain. People around the skate park didn't know what to do so they picked him up and lay him on the ground. They helped him calm down. Someone called the ambulance for help. Doctors came and put him on a stretcher and took them to the ambulance truck. The sound of the alarm made fans and friends cry rivers of salt and clear tears. The ambulance drove off a long way to the hospital trying to calm him down.

When they arrived at the hospital they took Roma to a warm cozy and interesting place. They wrapped his hand around with medical band around his arm and then left. In two hours they came in and asked the phone number of his parents. Roma told them their phone number and in half an hour his parents were there to see him. He was not quite alright so his parent fed them and took care of him for the rest of 2 weeks. When he came home he had a terrible shock. There was nobody home, but when all of a sudden.....

"SURPRISE!" everyone shouted

His friends, his uncle and aunt, and his parents were there. He got scared but then turned happy. They ran a long and joyful welcoming party. They watched videos of Roma's best stunts, told fun jokes, hit a pinata with lots of delicious candy, sang Roma's favorite songs, danced, and enjoyed their time. They all left at 12:35 PM and went to sleep. In a month Roma's arm was fine. So Roma got on his bike and started riding again.

The Haunted House

By Kaya Doherty

Every year, four girls named Emily, Sara, Clara, and Brook work for the Bear Scouts. They said that they would stay Bear Scouts from seven-twelve years old. They absolutely could not change or leave because the court minister made it a law! They must visit every house on four blocks. Emily and Brook pair up for two blocks and Sara and Clara pair up for the other two blocks.

One Sunday afternoon they met at the park. "Let's hurry up selling all the cookies so then we can meet back here and play." declared Clara.

"Yeah, and since we're all eight, we're never late!" cheered Emily

"Let's go." Sara exclaimed. So instead of walking they ran.

Emily and Brook were on their last house. "It's sort of creepy that this house looks so old and battered down but was just put here this year." said Brook in a scared voice.

"I'm going in you wait here with the wagon", "okay?" asked Emily. Sara nodded.

Then Emily lifted her foot onto the first step which made a loud creak! The rest of the steps did the same. Then she knocked on the door and the door opened by itself. Emily stepped in and the door closed behind her. Brook on the other hand waited in horror five minutes, then ten, and finally, after waiting 20 minutes she started to freak out. Brook crossed the street and hid the wagon behind a thick rose bush. Brook ran to the park to get Sara and Clara. Brook, Sara, and Clara came back to the creepy old wreck.

They did rock paper scissor shoot. Brook lost so she had to go in the house and find Emily.

Twenty minutes later they didn't come out. But Clara and Sara heard laughter though. It sounded witchy! Then they pecked through

the key hole and saw cookies, cookies and more cookies! They saw every kind of cookie you could name! So they went in.

Clara and Sara saw Emily and Brook stuffing their faces. Then their Bear Scouts teacher Ms. Obrien greeted them and said "you won't leave until you eat all the cookies in the house. And your friends already started. But I will give you healthy food as well. Oh and your allowed to send letters to your parents and 1 phone call.

For two years they ate cookies but Ms. Obrien baked more cookies. Then one day they all got sick of cookies. Then one day they all got sick of cookies. "I am telling you Ms. Obrien is out of the house so new can escape." groaned Sara. Just as she finished her sentence Ms. Obrien rushed in to the house. "Girls!" she screamed at top of her lungs. Emily, Brook, Sara, and Clara ran down stairs. "You need to stop eating and start baking! There is a contest for the most cookies ever baked!" hollered Ms. Obrien at the top of her lungs. They baked wildly all day. They ended up baking 500 cookies. Then they stopped.

It was 9 a clock when Ms. Obrien returned. She said they tied for 1st place and they could go since that happened. Then a ghost appeared and chased them out of the house! Each one of the four girls never ever wanted to eat a cookie again.



The Lonely Boy

By Hamad Al Naimi

One day in a tall school building, a lonely boy named Louis was really sad all of the time. His class was on the 30th floor. He had no friends and the teacher was really mean to him. The class ignored him. He had nobody to play with or to talk to him, when they talk they just say impolite words.

The next day everybody got to say what they wished for, and they got it, but Louis didn't. They all bragged like "hahahahahahaha you didn't get what you wanted HAHAHAHAAH because you're dumb, yelled all of the students. Louis ran as fast as he could. "You're running because you're nothing," taunted the kids Louis felt inside like nothing while running home.

When he arrived home he was in a small house without any body to take care of but the director, who paid for his learning. Louis talked with the director and told him what happened. "I will find you a new teacher, just wait for a day".

The next day a new student came, his name was John. John was really confused why Louis was sitting sadly by himself. "Choose where you want to sit" said Ms. Crazy. "I am sitting next to you Ms. Crazy," answered John. While Louis and the rest of the class had a math test, "Miss Crazy I am done," celebrated Louis. Ms. Crazy changed all of Louis answers. "You did not get a single correct problem," thundered Ms. Crazy. John saw what she was doing.

Later, John saw that Ms. Crazy is writing in a piece of paper that Louis "Stop! All of you! Why are you treating Louis like that? Did he do anything bad to you John asked "No" answered Ms. Crazy. "So don't do that are you kind are you polite think about that" replied John.

They all were really sorry about what they did and also brought presents except Ms. Crazy thought that she knows everything and can tell everyone what to do.

Two days later, Ms. Crazy resigned her job and never came back again. The Director found a new teacher that was nice

"Hi, I am Ms. Jewels and today we are writing a story about what happened in real life" said Ms. Jewel. They all wrote about Ms. Crazy and how she was treating students. Ms. Jewels thought that it wasn't true so she laughed. Later, the class got really happy that everyone was treated fairly.

"The Camping Trip" Continued from pg. 13

We found a field and started playing dodgeball. Steven threw the ball, the ball got stuck on a tree. It was on the top branch.

"Who knows how to climb a tree?" Mrs. Manny asked. One hand poked the sky, it was none other than mine. I climbed the tree and got the ball. After that we played the robot game.

The night fell, we made a fire and I ate 2 fried marshmallows. Martin and I were so tired, so we went to our tent and slept early. It was freezing cold. We were the first one to wake up early. We build a fire and ate breakfast, when the rest of them woke. We packed our tent, camping bag, sleeping bag and our gear. Then we walked what felt like thousands of miles to explore the forest.

We reached a pond, were we caught a lot of fish and frogs We set the frogs free and took 2 fish with us. We made our lunch we ate and got in to the van (the van was late).

Everybody was yelling and talking really loud. My head suddenly started to ache. When we reached the school, my father came and led me to the car. I sat down and my dad began to drive. Now I feel like I will never go to that place again. I am so tired now, so see you again. Bye.

The Camping Trip

By Catherine Vilson

Once in Quality International School of Bishkek (QSIB) the students of the 10 year old class planned to go to a camping trip to the woods. They planned to go on Tuesday.

Hi I am Tom this is the day before camping. It was a Monday. The 10 year old class was rushing.

Oh my bag is ready Mrs.Manny" lame Lucy.

"Let me check" Mrs. Manny replied.

"I am after Lucy" I said. Everybody was eager to go. "I can't wait" jumping up and down silly Milly squeaked.

"We are scared" sobbed sobby Nobby and sobby Obby (Twins).

I went to my seat and sat down with my friend smart Martin.

"Hi dude" Martin said trying to be cool. Well

everybody call me dude or that guy or Tom. I am thankful for whoever gave me my name (godmother) because nothing matches my name.

"Hi smarty pants" I called out to Martin.

On Tuesday everybody climbed into the van with their bags. As usual, I sat with Martin. We started to talk about what might happen when we reach there.

"The fun part is that we are going to explore the forest" exactly Martin said "it will be cool if there are animals like lion, tiger, and elephants.....".

"Nope nope nope. There are no animals in that forest Martin" Mrs.Manny interrupted him.

"It is going to be awesome", I shouted

"we did not get to go in Mrs. Sally's class." Mrs. Sally is the 9 year old teacher.

The rest of the time we sang songs, played games, and looked out the window.

"Yay, we are here." Everyone screamed except for me and the other boys.

Girls always want to be teacher's favorite saying yay or wow or I like your dress or

But boys are different.

By the way back in to story .the van stopped in front of a huge forest. We took our bag and started to walk.

"Aaaahh help me" Annie squeezed Jessie's hand.

"What is it Annie" Mrs.Manny's face

is turning red. If someone scares Mrs.Manny, she is going to get real angry.

"A.....a.....LIZARD" Annie is almost crying.

"Phooo, it's just a WHAT?" ok this is the number one bully in our school. Mean Matthew.

"It is a lizard" I told him. Matthew's face turned red. This was the first time Matthew turned red (how I wish I had my camera).But the grossest thing in the world happened.....he wet his pants!

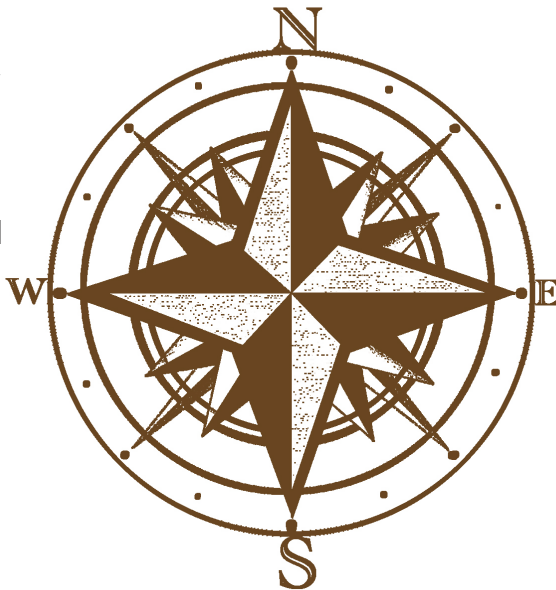
I heard a 'gluch' around me. I recognized that it was the sound of a hundred 10 year old jaws dropping open at the same time (then I recognized that my jaw is also hanging open Mean Matthew cried "I want to go home".

Do you think our class is supposed to be in 5th grade? I don't think so 1st grade. Matthew didn't go to his house.

We found a flat area to put up the tents.

"Martin and Tom" Mrs.Manny called the partners for the tent.

"Lucy and Milly" she continued. Lucy and Milly hugged each other and made a 'yesssss' sound. Snakes say sssss. We set up the tent and put our bags inside it. I helped them with setting up the toilet, higen and food.



Continued on pg. 12

The Little Boy's Dream

By Gauri Mallik

Hi There, Look at my mansion and the space around it. It's so big! It has a swimming pool with glittering, warm water and lotus leaves. I also have a garden with big, colorful flowers, soft green grass, and mango trees. We have a warm sauna and a bouncy trampoline. Now looking at my mansion, It is as tall as 15 of you standing on top of shoulders and 30 meters wide. It has 4 storeys. It has a garage underneath and a gazebo attached to the house. It's green in color with 10 balconies! Oh, so beautiful!

"Hey, Dad"

Here comes my son, his name is Tom Roger. He is 9. Oh! Totally forgot to introduce myself! My name is John Roger. I live on Gillete Street in Hawaii. This is my wife Alexa Roger. My son is curious about everything. He has blond hair and green eyes. He also has freckles. Tom looks just like me! My wife Alexa is beautiful. She is thin with many different shades in her hair. She also has glasses.

One night Tom asked me to tell him a story about my childhood before going to bed.

"Tom, when I was your age my life was not as good as yours is now. Your grandma had died and your grandpa had married again. My step mother was really mean. I had to roam around the streets finding food. I used to wear ragged clothes, and worn out shoes!

Then one day my step mother left me out in a forest and forced my father to move to Pennsylvania. I was lost!! It was so scary,

I tried to live in the forest but the creeks and the roars frightened me. I survived somehow until the age of 12 and then one day, I fainted on the front steps of a house. The next day I found a dog licking my face and someone squirting water on me. I introduced myself and by living with them 11 years I found out that they were a really kind family. They treated me like a son and a brother. My dream was to find my mom and dad in Pennsylvania but I didn't have enough money.

"Wait dad, can you tell me about this family?" questioned Tom.

"There was a dog, a boy named Adam and their mom and Dad. Later on the family moved to India, and gave their mansion to me. This is the mansion you are living in! Remember I told you about going to Pennsylvania. We are leaving tomorrow!" I finished.

The next morning.....

"Thud!"

"Ooucchh!"

"Tom, hurry up, we are late for the flight!"

"I hurt my toe!"

"Hurry John I am ready!" screamed Alexa.

"Mom, my toe is bleeding,"

My house is a mess, we are late for the flight it's 9:30. Our flight is at 9:45!

I said, "We are too late, we will never make it, Alexa let's just skip the flight,"

So we did.

My dream is not fulfilled yet. Somehow I have a feeling that I won't be able to meet my mom and dad.

14 years later.....

I told you I couldn't go to Pennsylvania until this day, when I am 64. I am in Pennsylvania! It's so exiting. My mom died of an illness and here is my father. He is 84 now. We decided to take Tom's grandfather with us to Hawaii! We lived happily ever after!

A Visit to Juliet's House

By Amelia Georgievska

During this summer break, my family and I went to Italy. We visited many places and my favorite was Verona, a city in northern Italy. What I liked about it was its architecture, the streets full of tourists and its soul. The city itself is like a museum. To me, this was the city of love and the highlight of our visit there was the visit to Juliet's House. That was in fact the most exciting story that mum shared with us on the train, travelling to Verona, the story about the tragic love of Romeo and Juliet, written by the famous writer William Shakespeare.

I could guess that we were going to the right direction because of all the tourists heading towards the house. While we were talking, I entered the house whose walls were full of love notes and quotes. Inside the house in the country yard we saw the bronze statue of Juliet and many people taking photos with her.

Just above, there was the famous balcony which was the most attractive part of the house. I immediately pictured the scene when Juliet stood on the balcony while Romeo declared his love to her. I remembered the line she said when looking for him: "O Romeo, Romeo wherefore art thou Romeo?" meaning: "Romeo, Romeo, Where are you Romeo". This is what Juliet said to Romeo from

the balcony when he came to visit secretly. Although this story was fictional, I was really interested in seeing Capulet's house, because it was one of the biggest tourist attractions in Verona. And that's not all. Inside we could see the house dated from the 13th century as we were informed by the lady working in the museum. I saw how life looked back then, the beds, the utensils and other house furniture. The room on the second floor led to the balcony with the admirable sight looking over the garden. Taking a photo on the balcony was a must. Opposite of the balcony there was another room with three small computers. I wrote a letter to Juliet expressing my feelings of joy and excitement being there. While this maybe Shakespeare's imagination, I let my imagination lead me through the drama of Romeo and Juliet. There were several quotes of the play itself which made the house so real and showed the love of two people who cannot live apart from each other.

The time passed by quickly. It was time for saying goodbye to this romantic scene. So we passed the hallway and near it was a small souvenir shop. I took notice of the pretty key chains, small heart wallets, and other creative things. All of the souvenirs had a spot that was written: "Romeo and Julieta, Verona", and two small hearts that represent their souls. I bought a keychain with two pieces that make a heart. There also were books, brochures, and photos of Romeo and Juliet. Finishing our tour, I thought to myself that all people in love or just visitors should come to Juliet's House to feel the ancient Verona and the marvelous drama about Romeo and Juliet!

"Parting from this place was such a sweet sorrow", I said to myself remembering Juliet's words as my mum quoted the great lines from the play while we were on the train.

First Day at QSIB

By Anna Matherton



Stressed and I cannot sleep. New school, I have no idea where to go. Do those words remind you of something? Let my first day of school at QSIB begin!

Today is D-day, my first day of school in Bishkek! My mom, especially because of this, wakes me up earlier than normal, she wakes up at 6:45 and I do at 7:00. We get ready with the radio playing. Unfortunately, the music doesn't untie the knot of nervousness in my stomach. I tell myself, "OK, remember last year in Ashgabat? You didn't know anybody! Now there is still a girl you know! Think positively!" I pass the school doors and meet Mr. Doherty, the Director of Instruction, who leads us to my class. I'm impressed, the school is so big and it has two floors!

Once we reach my class I meet my new teacher Mrs. Doherty. She seems very kind. After that, I see a girl climbing up the stairs. I immediately recognize her. It's Vera my classmate from last year! We were in Ashgabat International School together. We hugged each other so hard that we could hardly breathe! She leads me outside where I see Ruby, her sister, again a hug.

The first period we had was Language Arts with Mrs. Doherty. I hadn't missed a lot of stuff. I did what I missed during the evening, at home.

The next period was snack. In Ashgabat we had to bring our own snack.

But here they gave us snack. Today it was biscuits and bananas. I met new friends at snack which made me feel pretty good! After recess, we had Math. The teacher's name was Mr. Marat, he was pretty cool! I ended up with a lot of homework because I had missed a lot of stuff in math. I want to learn Spanish for languages, but unfortunately there weren't any Spanish teacher so for the first class I went to French. I'm a native French speaker so it was pretty fun! Then it was lunchtime. I don't exactly remember what was for lunch but I remember that I liked it. Cultural Studies was after lunch. Ms. Alicia, the teacher, was so funny and cool! I have never had a teacher like that! (In a good way!) Technology was our next period. I really liked Mrs. Iullia! But my favorite part of the day was still when I met up with Vera!

After that day I knew that everything was going to be alright. I met new friends such as Lucy, another Anna, Summer, Tanya, Alisa and many many others! And I started the school year with a smile on my face.

Turkmenistan Hospital Noooo!

by Vera Stalker

It was a perfect Thursday night; I was hanging out with my family at home. I knew Friday was going to be an awesome day. I felt amazing! I wasn't behind on anything on school work. Until something terrible happened.

Friday morning, when I woke up, I was light-headed, more over heated than normal. This fever couldn't stop me from going to school. Getting ready for school was hard. My mom checked my forehead, she knew I had a fever, but she didn't know how bad the fever was. We got in our driver's car and headed for school. When we got there I went to my mom's classroom; she went to the nurse to get something. My mom told me to go to the nurse's room and lie down. In the afternoon, my mom asked the driver to come to school to take us home early. I took a sleepy nap, and then I watched a movie. Ruby and Jack came home after school and asked me if I was feeling well. Then two minutes later, we had dinner.

My mom said "Vera, I think you should go to bed early."

I said "Ok," in a sad voice. After four hours of fun with my family, I went to bed.

The next day, I felt really bad, worse than ever. I couldn't even get up from bed. After a couple seconds, I walked out to the living room and I lay down on the floor. I walked in the kitchen and sat on the couch. Right as I took some medicine, my eyes rolled back. My mom panicked as she told my dad, to keep me hydrated. My mom quickly called Sergey and Jennet, the people you call if you need help. clothing and a white

hat called my name in Russian. We all went in; she did everything like an American nurse would do. Weight, height and other things. During that my fever was breaking out. Then Jennet told us that I needed a blood test. We followed the nurse to the place where you get a blood test. So they got the blood test ready and I sat on in the chair. The man who was doing the blood test was trying to find my vein. He started poking me with the needle part of the tube, but he couldn't find my vein. In my mind, I wanted him to stop, but he kept poking to the point that I started to cry. My dad had to wait outside the room because he would have fainted if he had watched.

My mom asked Jennet, "Can we have someone else do it?" So Jennet translated it into Russian and the man said "Yes." Then a woman came and found the vein and put the needle in. My blood was coming out very slowly. My mom exclaimed "If this is going to take a long time I am going home because Ruby and Jack are home alone probably worrying about their sister. A minute later we were done with everything and heading home with medicine and papers. Taking the medicine was ok. After resting for three days at home and three days at school, not doing soccer or P.E, I felt like running again.

I hope I don't have that happen to me ever. That was the worst experience ever in my life! I hope it doesn't happen to anybody else in Turkmenistan, because it would be a horrible experience for anybody.

Bad Hiking Trip

By Lucy Tyson

It was a sunny day in summer and my mom made my brother, my dad, and I go hiking with her at Ala- Archa. Ala- Archa is a local hiking area in the mountains near where I live. She really wanted to go because there was a waterfall she wanted to see but had never got the chance, until today. I really did not want to go, but she made me go.

After a pretty long drive, we made it to the trail and the hike started off alright. It wasn't too warm or too cold. It was just right. Every now and then it would drizzle a bit, but it went away after a minute or so. Every time it started raining, I got the feeling that something bad was going to happen. After 20 minutes more of walking, the rain started again, except this time it didn't stop. It only got harder and harder until it was too hard and too cold for us to handle. We had to stop under trees to escape the rain. I still had the bad feeling.

My mom kept jinxing our situation by saying, "It can only get better!"

It didn't. We were definitely not prepared for this kind of weather. We were wearing thin pants and short sleeves and light sweaters. Even though the rain would not stop coming, my mom insisted that we march onward to the waterfall.

We stopped under another bunch of trees really close to the waterfall when my mom made a huge mistake. She said, "At least it's not hailing!"

Then, of course, hail started. White, piercing, hail! There were these American guys who were also hiking and got caught up in the storm with us.

We decided to go down the path with them. All we had to do after that was go back to the little stream we hopped over a few minutes before.

Then we would have a short hike back, which

would be easier said than done. The path was now muddy and slippery, but we somehow made it back to the stream. But instead of the small stream, it was a raging river! Brown, muddy, frigid, glacial water! The whole time this was going on I didn't say a word. I was cold, shivering, and miserable. All I wanted was to get home and take a long shower to wash this cold off. There was another group of men, Russian and American, and they were stuck too just looking at the river wondering how to get across it. Luckily, they looked like serious hikers and probably knew how to cross. To get across, we had to make a human chain across the river. Holding hands and not letting go was hard. Our hands were wet and the water was putting up a fight. Some people were wearing shorts! To make things worse, a guy had hurt his ankle crossing the river and couldn't walk. Once he recovered a bit, we had to keep going. However, there was one more big obstacle. The path was broken by fallen rocks and a mud slide was starting! Just when I thought, and hoped, that it couldn't get any worse, it did. Lightning came. It was really close and purple lightning lit up the dark cloudy sky. I hate lightning, so I was freaking out. It was so loud with the rain and thunder, that I could barely hear anyone which made it hard to follow their directions.

Since that part of the path was down the drain, we had to climb up a very steep hill covered in thorny bushes so we could get back to the main trail. It was total chaos! People kept almost tumbling down the hill on top of me. Luckily, they didn't. After we found the part of the main trail that wasn't broken, we had a downhill hike on a

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Another Mindboggling Dream that Changes You Forever

by Jack Stalker

Tanya did not want to go (she knew that the weather would be just awful, full of storms, rain, and in some cases, snow). She knew that the raging wind would be howling like a wounded dog. What she didn't know was that the teachers would be crazy enough to continue the plan of going on a hiking trip. They seemed like loons, and Tanya's theory that the teachers were robots immune to logic was becoming true in every minute. It was May of 2014, and Tanya and the school were forced to go on a hiking trip to the Ala Archa National Park.

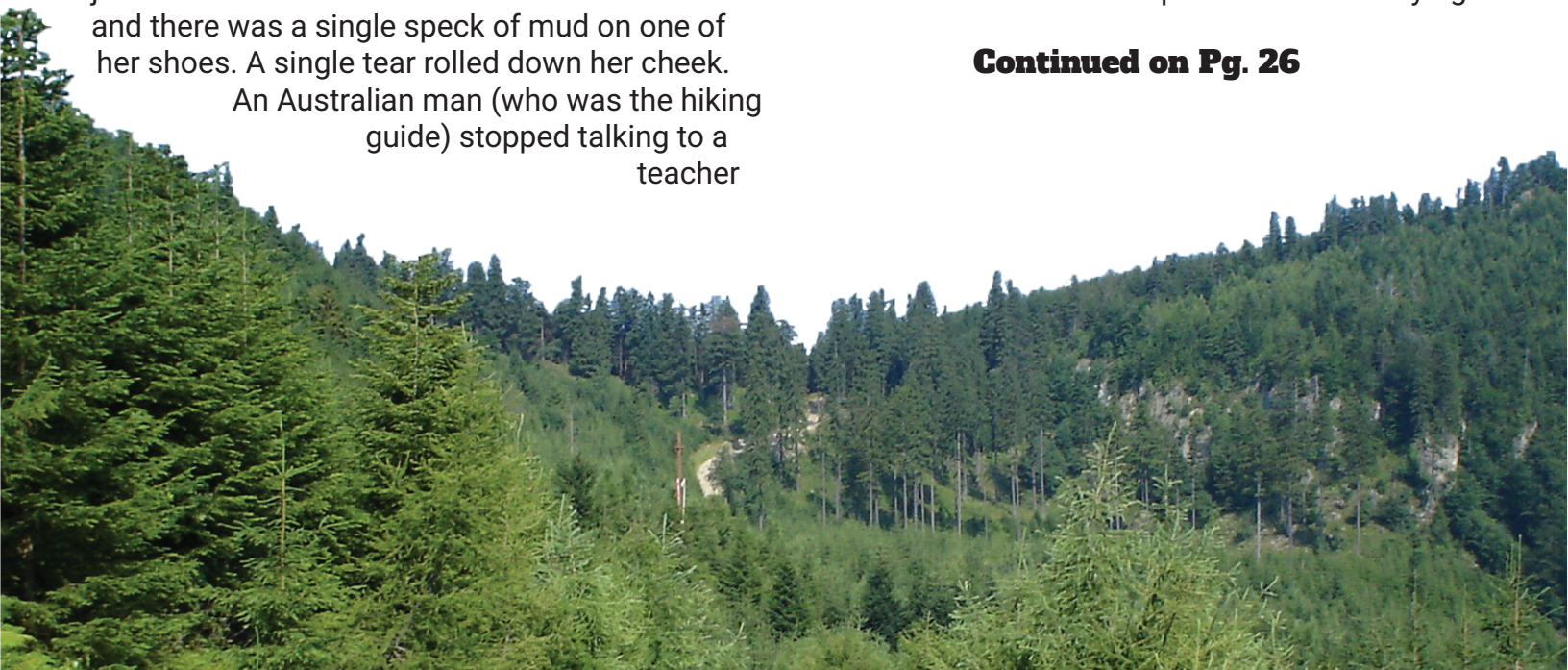
The rain drizzled down the bus windows. Tanya stared into the cold air outside the warm, but slightly uncomfortable bus. They came to a stop at the start of one of the mountains in Ala Archa National Park. The kids started trudging out of the buses, grumbling to themselves. Tanya wondered why it was that today, when it was raining and muddy, she HAD to wear her favorite jeans and sneakers. She looked at her sneakers and there was a single speck of mud on one of her shoes. A single tear rolled down her cheek.

An Australian man (who was the hiking guide) stopped talking to a teacher

and started shouting, "All right everyone! I will be your guide today. My name is blah blah..." The guy continued chattering, and all the kids couldn't care one bit of a bit about him, until the moment he stated the nine magic words, "...and I will give each of you five sandwiches." Everyone's eyes darted to the colossal bag of sandwiches he had pulled out of nowhere. After everyone had received their magical treasures, they started their ascent.

It was anything but fun to Tanya. Every time she got any part of her clothing wet, she stifled back a few tears. The mud was on her beautiful designer jeans and on her fabulous sneakers. Her hair was soaked from the rain and she was soaked. She kicked a piece of bark on the road in front of her and it flew into the neck of a student, hurting him. Tanya didn't care though. The only things that kept her from giving up were her glorious sandwiches. In her mind, they were golden sandwiches that could keep someone from dying

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Gymnast No More

By Darine Usupova

“Anything that doesn’t kill us makes us stronger,” I remember my mother saying before I headed off to my first boxing experience. Growing up I was a gymnast, who hated her trainer and struggled through those five years like a child that had been accidentally placed in the wrong family.

“Darina! You stupid girl! Why can’t you balance those fat legs! Come on move it!” my trainer angrily shouted at me each training session. After hours of leaps, balances, and pirouettes I would come home for my guilty pleasure: watching boxing on television with my father.

The participants of this dangerous game were like modern-day gladiators fighting for fame, money, and most importantly their tickets to becoming legends. I adored the way these dominant beasts reveled in their success. Their risk would cost them their blood; their dedication, tremendous pain. I wanted to define myself as brutal boxer instead of a gracious gymnast. My parents were well aware of my disastrous pirouettes and were easily convinced by my decision.

I finally reached to my destination

which was an ancient gym that had a smell of fresh sweat that hung in the air.

“Thump, thump, thump!” I could hear the loud music of my heart. The little steps I took pushed me closer to my childhood dream. I was ready to become a gladiator.

My trainer came out with an inviting vibe and a radiant smile.

“Treat her like little sister!” my trainer loudly introduced me to the boys. Their eyes studied me. I felt like the new kid in school when I arrived, afraid of people’s thoughts and very shy, but then determined.

The trainer paired me up with Arsen, a tall, skinny, and skilled boxer, for a practice sparring. Any newbie sparring with a more experienced fighter would at least try taking punches, but I ran and Arsen patiently followed. I kept fleeing from his sight by hiding behind the punching bags. Eventually I ran out of hiding places and Arsen’s glove connected with my face.

I dropped to the floor and Arsen’s eyes widened from surprise. He grabbed my arm and pulled me up. Both of my gloves covered my injured nose as I shamefully rushed to the

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Dream Come True

by Kunshita Gumbhir

Mum, can I join the school drama," I asked at the top of my voice, flinging my bag on the couch and running into the kitchen.

"Do you want to," she asked, without looking up at me.

"Yes, I really do," I exclaimed.

"Alright you can," she said, still busy roasting her spices.

"Thank you," I said, running over to hug her.

"But," she said, now turning to me, I stopped mid-step to hear what she had to say.

"It shouldn't affect your grades."

"Okay Mum."

I walked out of the kitchen feeling happy and excited about the idea of auditioning the next day. Ever since I was a little girl I had always wanted to act, in fact my parents used to say "here comes the heroine," whenever I walked in the room. I used to stand in front of the mirror for hours looking at my face, thinking I was the most beautiful thing in the world, but then I grew up, and all of that became history.

Now as I walked out of the kitchen feeling happy and excited about the idea of auditioning the next day, questions started to form in my mind. Will I get selected or not? Will I be good enough or not? Will I even be able to say anything, or will I just stand there like a statue, completely motionless?

I walked further into my room still thinking about the audition, when suddenly, I felt something on my shoulder, a something that hurt. I looked up and saw that it was my dear little brother.

"So did Mum say that you could join the drama," my brother asked.

"Yes," I said a little steamily, still massaging my shoulder where he had left a burning sensation with his fist.

The next day passed as usual starting with Shakespeare, then moving on to essays, and then going on to break. Next came triangles and angles, followed by a lot of Bonjours and saluts. Finally the bell rang at 11:45. I banged my books shut, hastily put my pencil in my pencil case and then fumbled with the zip until I finally managed to close it. I rushed out the classroom and ran towards my locker saying quite a few excuse me's. Once I was there, I threw my books in, slammed the door and quickly walked back to Mrs. Doherty's room.

Will I even be able to say anything, or will I just stand there like a statue, completely motionless?

There I was given a script and told what characters I had to play. My friend Maggie and I were auditioning together, so we practiced together trying to get the feel of the characters. By the end of our little practice session we had both gotten a rough idea of how we were supposed to present the characters. The person before us came out and told Maggie to go in. We were the last ones left and when she went inside, I was the only one outside the room. I stood outside the room for a little while, patiently waiting for my turn. I was actually half hoping the bell would ring and I would not have to audition at all. This was because even though I had always wanted to act I but was also stricken by stage fright which would make me smile for no good reason and this

really made me nervous as I did not want that to happen during the audition. So to not let the fear block my head I started strolling up and down the hallway glancing at Mrs. Doherty's door whenever I passed by it. Finally Maggie came out, she looked very contented and pleased, and she gave me thumbs up, hugged me, and wished me luck for my audition. I went inside the room and saw Mr. and Mrs. Doherty seated at a table. They gestured for me to start. I told myself that I would be perfect and that there was no reason for me to start smiling of fear and with that thought I started, I tried to put as much expression and confidence as possible. I let myself feel that I was the character, that I knew the character more than anybody else. I let myself flow freely without thinking too much, let it all go naturally, with ease. When I was done Mr. and Mrs. Doherty told me that I was good and that they would take me for a few roles. They also told me that practices would start after school on Wednesday and they would put up the cast list during lunch on the same day. Taking that as a yes, I tried to walk out of the classroom even though it seemed like the hardest thing in the world. I had to take every step with full concentration in order to not start skipping or running in joy. Once I got outside the room, I carefully shut the door, or else I would have slammed it. Outside, I found Maggie sitting on the floor, hugging her knees to her chest and head resting on her knees, all in all, she looked like a human ball. The sound of the door woke her up from her deep meditation and she looked up.

"How did it go," she asked.

"They said they I would have a few roles," I said my voice dripping with pleasure.

"That is great, so now we will all be in the play."

"Yeah, except Sasha and Masha."

"Yeah well, forget them."

"Yeah. Come on lets go downstairs," I said.

The whole week after that was pretty slow paced, I felt like I was traveling through time on a turtle, which for some reason took

me through the same places every day. It started off with the Odyssey, moving on to essays about Christmas, Obama writing a letter to his daughters (but it was not really a letter to his daughters) until it went on to break. Next came circles, equations, graphs, proofs, basically the whole lot. After that a lot of Bonjours and saluts and au revoirs until

We were given our scripts as if they were top secret documents from a secret intelligence agency...

the bell rang and indicated to rush into the hallways, jog up to the lockers and dash to the playground. Once lunch was over, someone's skeleton seemed to come to life, a very little skeleton to be specific. Next came a lot of boring landforms called mountains, deserts, ice capes, rainforests and etc. The only thing that changed was the last thing we did in the day, Art, P.E, Music or Technology.

At last, the long wait came to an end and I found myself outside Mrs. Doherty's room, along with my friends, trying to find my name on the cast list and found my name on the list for the characters Rudy and Mom. After finding out what characters we were playing we all settled into Mrs. Doherty's room. There Mr. and Mrs. Doherty gave us a little pep talk about what our schedules would be, how we were not supposed to tell anyone about the plot line and then we were given our scripts as if they were top secret documents from a secret intelligence agency. After that we all left the room chitchatting, giggling chuckling all excited about our first practice and then what would come eventually, the big

night, the night we would perform, but there was still time left for that.

The two days wait seemed like eternity, but at last, Friday did come and when the bell struck three all of the cast filled into the cafeteria. There we rehearsed two scenes where the same people were not needed at the same time (a lot of us were in two or even three scenes. There were four scenes in total). This went on for the first few rehearsals and as if that was not enough, all the cast could not make it every day due to the ongoing basketball practices for the inter-school tournament that would be taking place in Almaty. These factors did not allow us to rehearse properly and well, which meant that we would not be able to practice properly until the girls' and boys' teams went to Almaty in March and then come back.

But things do happen eventually and so did the Almaty tournament. Once the teams were back we could actually have proper practice. Ms. Alex, Mr. Doherty and Mrs. Doherty came up with a schedule where only one scene would be practiced on that specific day. For the next four weeks we practiced and practiced and rehearsed until we became the characters. This took quite some time, but eventually it happened, which meant that we were fully prepared to perform.

The big night arrived and it was quite different from what I had thought it would be like. Whenever I had thought of this day I had thought to come in a colorful, exciting, beautiful and cheerful gift wrap and inside, there would be a lot of confidence and certainty that I would do it perfectly due to all the practice. However, when it did come, it was packed in something quite the opposite of what I had thought. It was packed in a gloomy and dark gift wrap and inside there was nothing even close to confidence, in fact there was nervousness and anxiety. The whole day at school was spent in talking about the show at night, how it would go, would we mess up big time or would we be able to do it just as we had done it in the rehearsals? The answer to all

our questions were answered in the one hour of our lives where we could not afford to do things wrong.

The whole cast and our instructors went into the gym, there we were told to go in the changing rooms and get ready for the play.

After an hour of loosening up, doing our hair and make-up, the audience started coming in, sitting down on the benches, chitchatting with each other, giggling, chuckling, and even laughing, quite the opposite of what was going on in the changing room. It was becoming difficult to breathe in the room because of all the toxic uneasiness and tension that had combined with the other gases. Not only that, it looked like it had been inhaled as the only thing anyone was talking about was how nervous, uneasy, tense, frightened, scared they were. Then we heard the signal.

We all abandoned the room as quietly as possible waited behind the curtain. Standing there, an inch away from being visible, I felt like someone had wrapped me in a blanket of anxiety which had stoned me to the ground. I caught a glimpse of the audience and I started panicking because of the huge audience that had come to watch us perform. I thought of me fumbling, murmuring, stammering or even crying my lines. Then I got a hold of myself and said that it would be fine and nothing would happen. Thankfully Maggie nudged me forward, I stepped on the stage. Then the lights went on, and we started.

What happened after that still remains a little blurry in my mind. I started speaking and then the whole show went on like that. I didn't think of anything except my lines, kept replaying them in my mind, like an old broken tape recorder. I didn't have time to think or remember anything as I had put all my concentration on not saying my lines and acting as well as possible.

Once the show was over it felt like a huge burden had been lifted from our shoulders, it is over I thought, we are done and I think we did it pretty well.

Winning Isn't Everything

By: Daniel Bobocel

I could feel a stitch forming in my side and my legs felt like jelly, but I couldn't stop running, wotherwise they would catch me.

"WeeooohWeeoooh" screeched the sirens.

I could now see those haunting blue and red lights, chasing me like ghosts down the dark alley. Then I saw Angelo pull-up in his father new Mercedes S600. With the last of my strength, I lunged forward, fly into the car, and I was home free.

"WOW" bellowed Angelo, "That was close."

"Yeah man." I answered in rapid gasps. My head was swimming, I wished that Angelo would stop talking and let me catch my breath.

"What the heck was that about man? Why was th...?"

Then everything went blank.

"Beep Beep Beep" sounded my alarm.

I heavily lifted my hand and dropped it with a crashing sound. My eyes flickered open and instantly lit up on my mother who was sitting on a chair across the room.

"How are you going to explain this", she said holding up the Iphone 6.

"Mama, I can explain."

"Explain what, that your friend had to drag your limp body to your bed. Or do you want to explain the thousand dollar phone I found in your pocket. "

I knew there was no sense in arguing so I sat there and stared at my mom for what

seemed like forever. I knew exactly why I stole the phone. I needed the money to attend professional football practices. I need to continue football. It was the only thing that brought happiness into my life of labor.

Then the silence was finally over when my younger brother Pablo ran into my room yelling: "Juan, Juan, they are advertising a competition on T.V; the winning teams gets ten thousand dollars!"

My heart was seized with shock and excitement from the news that my brother told me. I started thinking to myself that this was my chance. I could arrange a team of 11 of my good friends and I would have a chance at changing my life. But all my hopes came crashing to the ground when I looked at my mother. She gave me a cold stare that pushed all thoughts of the competition away. I knew it wasn't a time to argue. My mom's next words confirmed it.

"If you try and attend this competition after what you have done, I will personally turn you in to the police." She said this barely louder than a whisper, but her words cut like a whip.

"Yes mama." I answered with a defeated note in my voice, yet inside I knew I was all but defeated. I knew that this was a chance for a new life, a new beginning for me.

Two days had passed since my mother found out that I stole the Iphone 6. I was working on the fields, picking the plump, ripe and juicy tomatoes. Yet I was still thinking of a way to organize a team and participate in the tournament that was being advertised. I had only one day left to create a team and sign up for the tournament.

"RRRRINNG" wailed the alarm telling the workers that it was time to go home.

I started at the sound but quickly recovered. I was so caught up in my thoughts that I didn't even look at the time. I quickly ran over to the lockers, grabbed my bag and rode off on my bike as fast as possible so that I could go and play football with the rest of my friends. We always met on Wednesdays

because we were let off work two hours early. Today I was going to tell them my idea for what we should do for the tournament.

I arrived at the field and saw that my friends had already started playing. I hopped off my bike, slipped on my torn and beat up soccer shoes and ran over to talk with them.

"Hey guys," I called to them. They all nodded in return. "Could you guys come over here? I need to tell you something very important." They all huddled around and I started explaining my plan to them. "Ok guys, you all know about the upcoming tournament. Well, I think that the 11 of us should participate as a team." They all nodded in agreement. "But I would like to ask all of you, could I please have five out of the ten thousand dollars. After time I'll pay you guys back later."

There was a moment of silence.

"Of course you can have it, Juan," said Angelo "Besides you're better than all of us." Everyone nodded in agreement.

"Thank you so much guys. Well now that we got that settled, are we going to play football or sit around like a bunch of girls?" The boys laughed at my futile joke and ran onto the field and continued the friendly scrimmage which I had interrupted.

* * *

"Tweet!" sounded the whistle which signaled that it was the end of the second half.

The hot Californian sun was beating down on my open head. I was soaked from sweat as if someone had poured a bucket of water on me. I sluggishly jogged over to the side line to catch up with rest of the team. We had won all of our previous games with ease but this team put up a huge challenge. Now it was the final game and we were down by one with only one half left to go.

"Ok guys, I know you are all wore out and we are down by one, but I need you guys to step up and catch them off guard. They think we're done for, but let's show them what we can do. This is the finals for crying out

loud."

"YEAH!" chorused the team.

"We are the ones who deserve this victory, so lets take it!"

"YEAH!!" chorused the team now with a note of determination in their voice.

"Now let's get out there and show them who's boss."

"YEEAAHH!!!" yelled the team as they ran out onto the field.

"Tweet" sounded the whistle and we were off, working our legs like the drive wheels on the train.

We ran up and down the field attacking the other team's players and defending our own net. Then finally one of the opposing players fumbled with the ball and I was able to steal it. With the ball I ran down with only two defenders in my way. They both charged at the same time. When they were within five meters of me, I quickly rain-bowed the ball over them and dashed between. I heard a clanking sound as their heads collided and one of them shrieked in pain and frustration. Now I was left with only the goalie between me and the net. I slowed my pace hoping he would charge. Luckily he took the bait and I chipped it over him. The ball lobbed up over him and started to descend. I knew I was a good shot. The ball bounced into the net with the goalie scrambling to stop it.

"GOAL!" yelled my team and the fans.

I sprinted with excitement towards my team, who embraced me. I felt like I was on top of the world. But we were only tied now. I moved away from my friends and said "We haven't won yet, so let's get our heads in the game and finish what we started."

"YEAH!!" yelled the rest of the team.

We went back to our positions and the whistle sounded "Tweet!"

We played 30 minutes without any opportunities. I was becoming frustrated and started yelling and swearing at my teammates. "Angelo, what the heck was that? Control the ball you cow. Do you even want to win?"

Angelo nodded his head and went back.

The rest of the team just stared at me.

"What are you guys looking at!?"

They hurriedly looked away and went back to playing. We were still tied with only one minute to go. I was working as hard as I could to get the ball. Then, I saw the player take a shot 30 meters away from the net. The ball left his foot like a rocket and flew towards the net. The one second that ball was in the air felt like forever. Pablo jumped to stop it but the ball brushed off his finger tips and was in the net. "GOOOAAALLL!!!" cheered the fans.

"Tweet Tweet Tweeeeeet" sounded the whistle signaling the end of the game.

We had lost. All the hard work we put it in was done for nothing. I lost my shot at having a better life. It was my team's fault. They were useless and pathetic. We could have won if they played better. I was about to yell at them then a thought came to me. I had lost the money and a chance at a better life. I thought I had nothing left but I was wrong. I had my friends who were there for me when I needed them most. This was better than any prize in the world. I huddled with them and had a little chat.

"It's ok guys. We may have lost the money and the tournament, but we still have each other and that's better than any money."

They stared at me for a few seconds then slowly started to understand what I had said.

"So guys are we still friends?"

"YEAH!!!!!" they all chorused louder and more meaningful than ever before.

It was the day after the tournament and I was out working in the fields under the beating sun. Even while doing this grueling job I had a smile on my face because I knew that whatever challenge life threw at me that I had friends who be there for me. This meant more than anything to me.

"Another Mind Boggling..." **Continued from pg. 19**

and keep war from happening. In reality, she left her backpack open and they were now soggy. Finally, they reached the top of the mountain.

"Ugh", grumbled Tanya. "It's finally over." But before someone could tell her that she also had to walk down, the mountain exploded in a fury of debris and flames.

Tanya woke up to the sound of the wind blowing and the birds chirping. She looked around. "Where am I?" she asked herself. She glanced at herself and screamed. Her designer clothes were slightly burned and covered with dust. A few feet away from her were some missile shells. "That explains the explosion. How am I alive?" she muttered as she tried to get up. She felt a huge amount of pain as she tried to stand, so she fell to the ground and started to crawl her way through billions of rocks and pieces of dust. After about five minutes of crawling, she heard someone cough.

It was her friend, Selima. She was hurt just a bit on her arms, but nothing too bad. Selima tried to get to her senses but unfortunately, at that moment a missile spontaneously combusted 2 feet away from them.

Tanya awoke with a start. Her head banged against a window as the bus came to a stop. She groggily came out of the bus. It was raining, but not as much as before. Had it all been just a dream, a vision of horrible things to come? The group started their climb, and it started out as usual. Tanya's clothes got muddy, her hair got soaked, but strangely, she didn't care much this time. Someone fainted because they fell, and Tanya helped them up this time. As they reached the top of the mountain, Tanya looked around, and gazed at the amazing view! The mountain scenery was basked in a golden light, and Tanya realized that her mind was telling her that life isn't so bad, and she shouldn't think of it that way. From that day on, she was as optimistic as a chipmunk, unless you talk about her poor, destroyed jeans .

COMING IN THE NEXT ISSUE:

Students write about this scenario:

Alexander is stranded on an island covered in forest.

One day, when the wind is blowing from the west, lightning strikes the west end of the island and sets fire to the forest. The fire is very violent, burning everything in its path, and without intervention the fire will burn the whole island, killing the man in the process.

There are cliffs around the island, so he cannot jump off.

How can the Alexander survive the fire?
(There are no buckets or any other means to put out the fire)

How would YOU survive?

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IMAGE CREDITS:

Textured Paper-John de Boer, Chocolate Chip Cookie- Gary Tamin, Villa Vizcaya- Lisa Setrini-Espinosa , Curves of Sand - Bernard Delobelle, Soccer ball - James Eberlein, Beskid Mountains *2 - Gosia Siechowicz, Ala Archa River in the Ala Archa National Park-Vitaliknyc, Children at a Fun House Mirror in Parque Naciones Unidas El Picacho-Nan Palmero, Making the best pie in the world-Kyrre Gjerstad, IV Dtip-public domain, Garden,-Public Domain, Fire-Public Domain, Red Curtains - Public Domain, Chalkboard-Public Domain, Chairs1-Gokhan Okur, Boxing Gloves - Jean Scheijen, Bicyclist Jump-Steve JC, Mountain View-Marcel Herber