

"You dropped your lunch, Cali," Allie said as she dumped her lunch on me. I was walking away when I heard her say "Cali, such a cry baby," snickering. Believe me I would have liked to punch her but, I never had the nerve to stand her up. Sometimes I wish she would change her personality. I think the whole reason she hates me is because when she worked on her painting, and she lost to my painting in an art contest. My friend, Lila came up to me and helped me get the corn off my shirt. Lila is one of the nicest friends you can ever have. You can tell by the way her big brown eyes and her carmel colored hair are brimming with kindness.

"Cali, it's okay she is just jealous," she said.

"You always say that."

"I know," she said laughing. The bell rang and I scurried to my locker and headed to my favorite class writing. This week we are writing about our favorite animal and making up a story about them. Our writing teacher, Ms. Neal came in and pulled a paper out of our "Guess who is it," box. At the beginning of the school year we write a brief description of our self then every week we pull out a name. Who ever guesses right first can share their story.

"Today's person has blue eyes, blondish brown hair, female and goes to sixth grade." Ms. Neal said. Right away I knew that was me.

"Oh, that person is Cali." Allie, said without raising her hand, rude I might say. Of course out off all the people Allie had to guess my name. She came up and read her story with "passion" as Ms. Neal likes to say.

"My story is about cute little puppies. Enjoy," she said.

"One day there was a cute little puppy named Allie and everyone loved her. Then this mean old grouch poodle named Cali came up and kept bossing people around. Then when she died everyone was so happy and loved Allie so much more. The End." I was shocked. What kind of story is that? No one puts The End at the end of their story, but every clapped like crazy. I sighed and went back to editing my story. It's about my one of my favorite animals, the dolphin.

Later on gym came rolling around and I changed to my sneakers and shorts. I didn't have time to stuff my story into my locker, so I took it with me.

"Hey Cali," Lila said strolling up to me.

"Hey," I replied as we walked towards the gymnasium. Today was dodge ball, and our team got some pretty good players. There was James, the fast one and Brian, the strongest boy in gym. Allie was on the other team, so I was glad. Running around trying to dodge balls being thrown at you like crazy is not fun. In a miracle I managed to knock out some other players and soon it was me versus Cane, the all around sports guy. I managed to throw the ball at him and take the win! Soon the bell rang, and I headed to the girl's locker room. I noticed my paper was torn around the edges.

After school, walking around in the nice Michigan air was like heaven. The air was crisp, clean and cool. That is why I love Ann Arbor. The leaves change into gorgeous colors of red, orange with a tint of green.

"I'm home, Mom!" I yelled. My mom is the best mom in the world. She has caramel hair and warm brown eyes, and her cooking is to die for.

"Hi sweetie," she replied and gave me a big hug. I eyed the pasta, which she left out for me and mom encouraged me to dig right in.

"Also this letter came for you," she said right as I was finishing my pasta.

"Okay mom." I said taking the letter and heading up stairs to my room. It was a nice room with a lot of light and cozy furniture. I plopped on my bed and ripped open my letter. It read:

Dear Cali,

As a local writer for the daily news in Michigan you have been selected to participate in a worldwide writing contest. Prizes as followed: First prize 10,000 dollars, and have any one of your stories published. The second prize is \$1,000 dollars, and your name in a drawing for a \$100 gift card to any book store. The third prize is a \$50 gift card to a book store. Runner-ups get a book prize

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package. More information included in the packet.

I'm was so thrilled! I can't believe I got chosen to be in a national writing contest.

Hurrying on my computer I had a chat with Lila:

Cali: Lila, I got exciting news!

Lila: Really?

Cali: Yup!

Lila: Okay, so what is it?

Cali: I got invited to a worldwide contest.

Lila: Cool! I got to go I got swimming lessons, bye!

After taking a bath, and eating dinner I went upstairs and fell asleep.

The next day I was feeling happy. It was early morning. I got dressed, and headed downstairs for breakfast. Mom was there drinking her daily cup of coffee stressed out over documents. Mom being a news reporter always wakes up early and checks over each article. She lets me help out by getting good stories around town. I munched on my cereal and I heard my mom mumble "Too many editing mistakes." I know how that feels. "Mom, I'm leaving!" I shouted after cleaning up my cereal. "Bye, my sweetie!" she shouted and I was out the door.

Later on, at school I didn't see Lila anywhere. I sighed. I was looking forward to telling her all about the writing contest. In the hallway I heard Allie say "I knew that they would chose me for the Life Lessons writing contest." Her followers going "You're amazing!" and "Because you're the best writer ever!". I can't believe that she got chosen for the same writing contest I'm in. I was so shocked, that I was almost late to gym.

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After school, I found myself enjoying the fresh autumn air. The maple leaves and the crisp air cheered me right up. At home my mom and I had an

intense talk

"Mom I need an adult to go with me to Florida for the writing contest." I said.

"Sure I can come I just have to make breakfast, lunch, and dinner for your dad," my mom replied.

"Yes! Thank you so much mom." I said squealing all the way to my bedroom.

What should I write about? I wondered. I'm stumped on what to write about.

There is not lying, don't steal or.... Yes, I got a brilliant idea! I sat on my desk and went to work.

The next morning I woke up with my head on my desk and my essay. I yawned. Today was Saturday and the day I was supposed to leave for the "Life lessons" writing contest. I looked at my alarm clock. It was 9:35. Oh my gosh, I was going to be late if I didn't hurry. I quickly stuffed my bag with my clothes, toothpaste, pencils, notebooks, my cute dolphin erasers, and some spare change just in case. My mom was down stairs calmly sipping her cup of coffee.

"Good morning sleepy head," she said.

"Morning, Mom." I replied while making my toast. Spreading on the creamy butter, I quickly munched it down and grabbed my suitcase. Stuffing my carry-on bag with my essay, I waited for my mom to finish her breakfast.

At the airport I was literally jumping around I was so nervous. My mom was asleep, and I really needed to go to the bathroom, but I was worried about my essay being stolen. Why would someone do that? I thought to myself. In the end I decided to go because I really needed to go. After going to the bathroom I found my bag in a sprawled mess. I searched ever where, but I couldn't find it. The flight attendant said our plane was ready, so I had no more time to look for it.

After the plane landed, I was so depressed. I was going to have to start my essay all over again. I sighed, sulking all the way to the hotel with my mom following behind me. It turns out Allie was in the room across from me. Great, I thought. I plopped on my bed. Smelled like fresh apples. Depressed I drifted to

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sleep.

Next morning was a normal day until the afternoon. Then I heard my essay

being spoken out loud. My essay! It's here somewhere! I listened carefully. A minute went by. I was about to give up hope, but then I heard my essay again! Tracking it down by sound I somehow wound up near Allie's room. Bursting in I saw Allie shocked.

"Why did you steal my essay!" I yelled.

"Well, I..." She started, but I cut her off.

"Did you know how hard I worked on it?"

"Because I can't think of an idea!" Allie yelled back, bursting into tears. "

"What..." I started.

"I just can't okay?" she said wiping tears from her face. I giggled, and laughed.

Turning to Allie I said to her " Let me help you with that." And we got to work.

Today was the contest. Millions of people swarmed around.

"Why did you steal my essay in the first place?" I questioned Allie.

"Oh it's because I read your dolphin story while you were at gym." she said. No wonder my story was torn a little. My turn was up next and I read " You should try to do things yourself and ask for help if needed." After explaining the rest of my essay it was Allie's turn. It was basically about being yourself. Soon the judges were choosing the winners. I broke into a cold sweat. What if they hated my essay? was the question that was racing through my mind. Finally the judges said. " This year's winners are Colt in third place, Allie in second and Cali in first!" My face in a big smile I proudly stood atop the stage. I grinned at Allie, and she smiled back.

I was thrilled. The contest was over, and I have been enjoying my break here in Florida. Also, the winner gets six extra tickets to Sea World. I invited Allie, and some of my relatives who live here. I enjoyed getting splashed, and looking at the bright fish. Pretty soon we had to leave. I waved good bye to Florida, and boarded the plane.

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Life returned to normal as I returned to school. Except now Allie smiled at me.

Lila came up to me. She didn't talk, but we knew Allie has changed.