



*The Painting of
Our Voices*

Foreword

I am privileged to have worked with 15 talented and gifted writers of the Writers' Circle in CHIJ Primary (Toa Payoh).

The opportunities to explore the furthest and deepest reaches of our imaginations seemed endless as we gathered weekly to celebrate and be entertained by the world of words and stories.

Through their writings, the pupils have discovered the world around them, have discovered each other, and most importantly, have discovered their own writer's voice.

I would like to personally thank these writers - *Elizabeth, Jennifer, Averlynn, Claire, Felicia, India, Nicole, Therese Ong, Erica, Phoebe, Amanda, Chloe, Therese Tan, Glennice and Tarra*. They have made my teaching both memorable and meaningful.

A painting is indeed a beautiful image that is created by an artist to evoke emotions, thoughts and possibilities. So, just like the paintings of artists, let these writers open your eyes to your very own emotions, thoughts and possibilities, through *the Painting of Our Voices*.

Mrs Davina Tan
(Teacher-in-charge of Writers' Circle 2017)

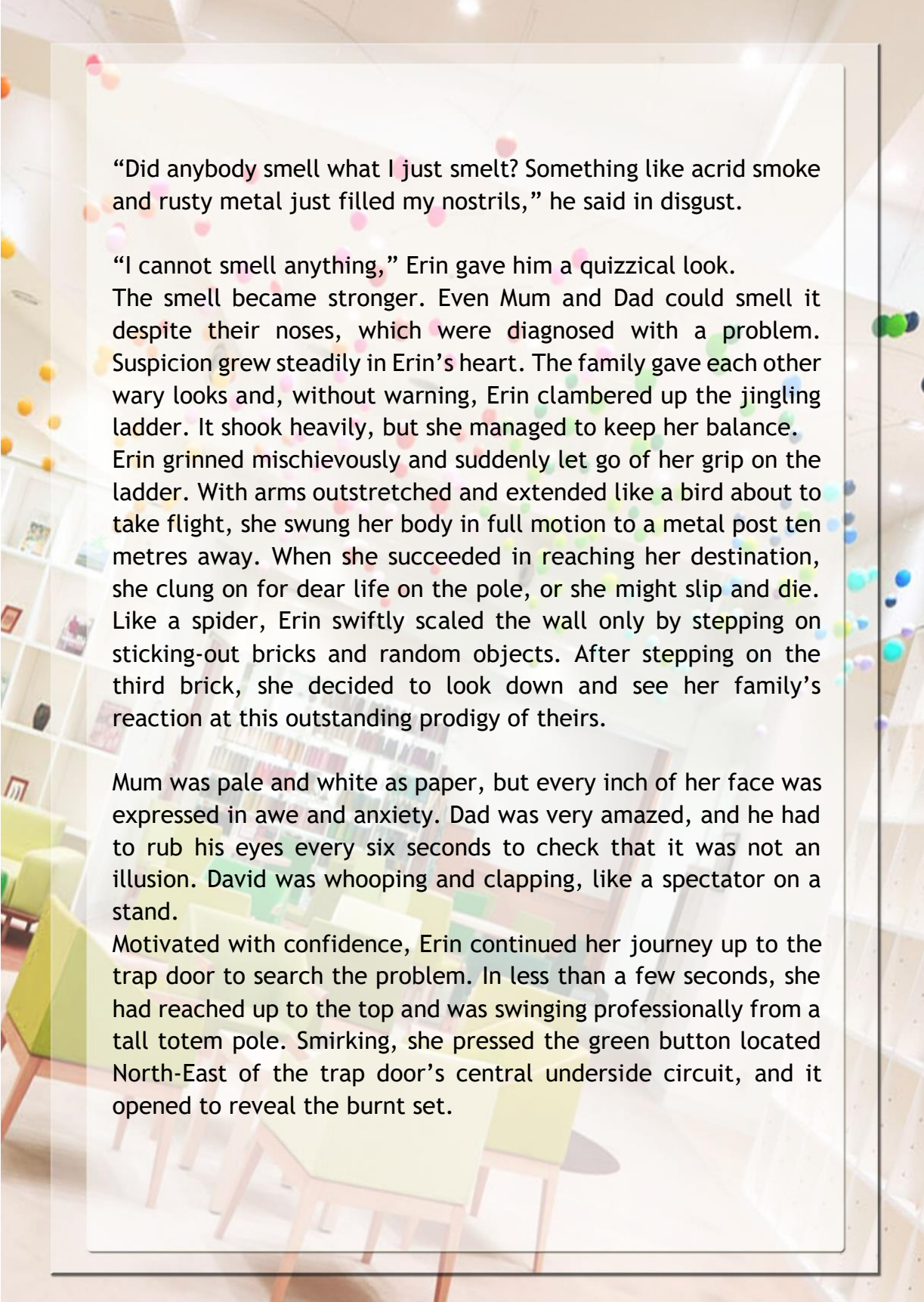
Technology Twist

Huddled in a forlorn corner of her room, Erin shuddered under the freezing winds. As she gazed out of the window, she saw a moving black swirly object that seemed to reach as high as the heavens above, yet there was something familiar and crude about it. For the tiniest space of time Erin thought that she was hallucinating a tornado until a tree branch crashed outside her window and the branches shook abnormally.

“To the cellar!” she screamed out to her family. Her brother David stopped peering out of the window panes and tasting the meaning of Erin’s words, immediately dashed to the trapdoor and flung it open. As the little family bobbed their way inside, they could feel the violent rippling shakes of the approaching tornado flip them like laundry in a washing machine. Once they were all down safely in the cellar, the trap door automatically shut and sealed itself.

Since both of Erin’s parents were inventors and geniuses at technology, they would come home every day with an invention, whether it was a gizmo or funky gadget. The trapdoor was the best, designed to withstand harsh natural disasters such as earthquakes. Under the trapdoor was the cellar, filled to the brink with safety regulations, equipment, beds and supplies. The trapdoor had experienced several tornados before and remained intact, but, Erin shook in fright as she thought of it. Today’s tornado was twice as big and violent as the average tornado. Under circumstances, it seemed impossible that none of them could hobble out of the aftermath with just a broken leg.

David sniffed the air, then wrinkled his nose.

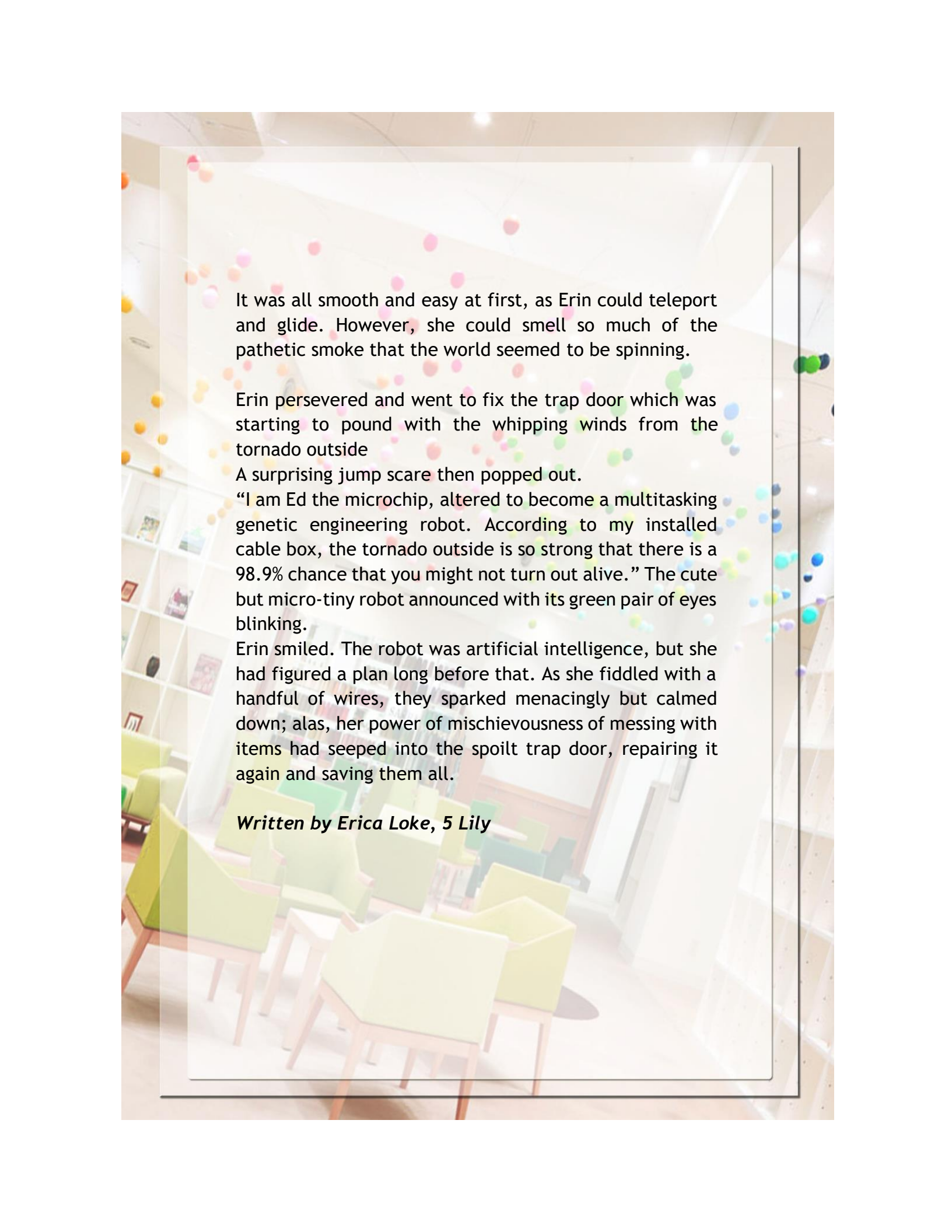


“Did anybody smell what I just smelt? Something like acrid smoke and rusty metal just filled my nostrils,” he said in disgust.

“I cannot smell anything,” Erin gave him a quizzical look. The smell became stronger. Even Mum and Dad could smell it despite their noses, which were diagnosed with a problem. Suspicion grew steadily in Erin’s heart. The family gave each other wary looks and, without warning, Erin clambered up the jingling ladder. It shook heavily, but she managed to keep her balance. Erin grinned mischievously and suddenly let go of her grip on the ladder. With arms outstretched and extended like a bird about to take flight, she swung her body in full motion to a metal post ten metres away. When she succeeded in reaching her destination, she clung on for dear life on the pole, or she might slip and die. Like a spider, Erin swiftly scaled the wall only by stepping on sticking-out bricks and random objects. After stepping on the third brick, she decided to look down and see her family’s reaction at this outstanding prodigy of theirs.

Mum was pale and white as paper, but every inch of her face was expressed in awe and anxiety. Dad was very amazed, and he had to rub his eyes every six seconds to check that it was not an illusion. David was whooping and clapping, like a spectator on a stand.

Motivated with confidence, Erin continued her journey up to the trap door to search the problem. In less than a few seconds, she had reached up to the top and was swinging professionally from a tall totem pole. Smirking, she pressed the green button located North-East of the trap door’s central underside circuit, and it opened to reveal the burnt set.



It was all smooth and easy at first, as Erin could teleport and glide. However, she could smell so much of the pathetic smoke that the world seemed to be spinning.

Erin persevered and went to fix the trap door which was starting to pound with the whipping winds from the tornado outside

A surprising jump scare then popped out.

“I am Ed the microchip, altered to become a multitasking genetic engineering robot. According to my installed cable box, the tornado outside is so strong that there is a 98.9% chance that you might not turn out alive.” The cute but micro-tiny robot announced with its green pair of eyes blinking.

Erin smiled. The robot was artificial intelligence, but she had figured a plan long before that. As she fiddled with a handful of wires, they sparked menacingly but calmed down; alas, her power of mischievousness of messing with items had seeped into the spoilt trap door, repairing it again and saving them all.

Written by Erica Loke, 5 Lily



MY NAME POEM

Jennifer is my name,
For days
For years,
Forever.
For I am a white wave,
Continuing to strive for the better.

On my journey to the shore,
It would not be easy.
From dark blue to pearl white,
I make my decisions maturely.

Sometimes,
It was as if I was neglected by the whole world.
However, with my friends and my family,
Everything seems to glow.

I am now still trying to figure out
The right route,
The right path,
To reach my shore,
To reach my goals.

Once again, I'm Jennifer,
A white wave which is doing its best
In the middle of the ocean,
For better or worse.

Written by Jennifer Jing, 5 Daisy

The Hero Of Peace

Hate.

Hate is everywhere. There is so much violence. It is terrible. I am Emily. I am ten years old this year. Everywhere I go, I see people fighting. Every day I come across news of violence such as family violence or youth violence. I always ask my mother what was going on, but she always brushed aside the topic by saying "You are too young to understand, Emily."

Today, I found out the truth...

It was a mundane morning. I was at school and we were having lessons on the topic of peace and rights during our Social Studies period. So I asked, "What is happening? Why is everybody fighting?" My teacher told me that they were fighting for rights. It was a simple and short answer and that got me thinking. The lesson continued but my mind was glued to what the teacher had said earlier. Such a simple answer for such a complicated matter. I kept on thinking of a way for people to settle dispute peacefully without violence. Then, out of the blue a bright idea popped up. "Why don't I use words instead?" My idea was, instead of us fighting over small matters, we should start with communication and understanding of the issue. With more understanding, I believe we can tolerate and forgive more willingly. Do not judge the problem by only looking at the surface.

After some thought, I decided to tell my friends about my idea and they liked it so they started spreading the word. They told their friends and even teachers. Soon, less fights occurred in school and I found out that some teachers had told the principal. So she praised me in front of the school. From that day onwards, the school started putting up posters about using words instead of violence and many parents saw the posters, so they also started spreading the word.

Soon, there were less fights. The Minister of Education found out that I had started the campaign so he praised and rewarded me. I was filled with pride.

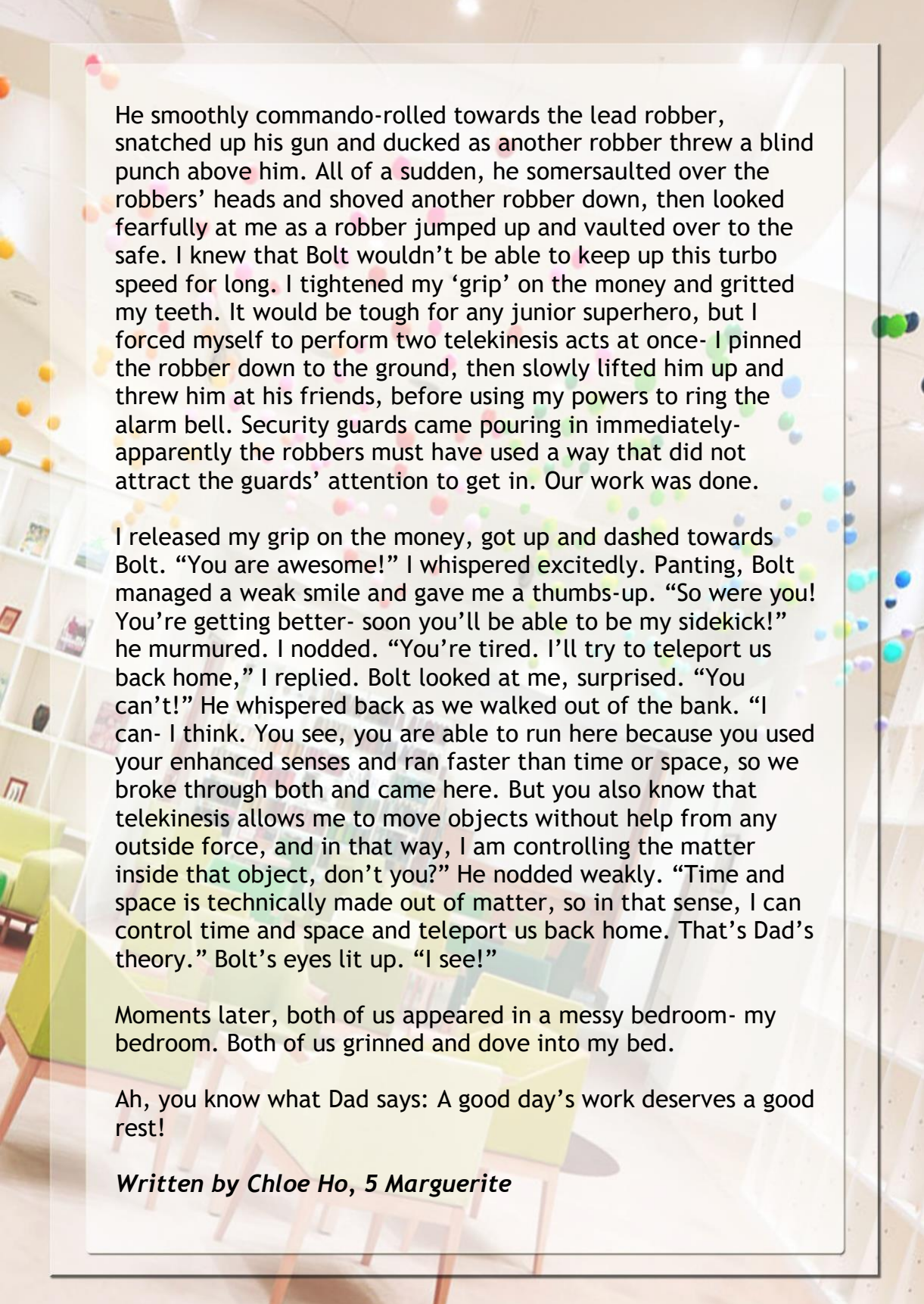
Written by Glennice Khor, 5 Violet

Silent Superheroes

“Hey, Leo, I think I hear someone,” Bolt muttered under his breath. “Where?” I demanded, then immediately rebuked myself. *Stop that, Leo! How can you save a person when you can’t even keep your identity safe?* Being a silent superhero was tough at times. I glanced at Bolt, who was still staring intently at the sky. “At Apple Tree Village. Bank robbery. With my enhanced senses, we should be able to reach there in ten seconds.” I glared at my brother, who was casting a smug look at me. I had come to the conclusion a long time ago that all my brothers were smug, regardless of whether they were a superhero or not. “Stop that smug grin, won’t you? That’s exactly the kind of heroic look Dad won’t approve of,” I hissed softly. “Whatever. Don’t order *me* around, Leo. You may have telekinesis, from being bitten by a lightning-struck eel, but I’m your elder brother, who was bitten by a lightning-struck hyena, which is way more powerful than an eel and so I got enhanced senses. So there,” Bolt replied back calmly.

“Hold my hand. We have to travel at the speed of light in order to reach Apple Tree Village before it’s too late!” Bolt ordered. I slipped my hand into his and felt Bolt sprinting. He ran so fast, his black hair flew out behind him, uneven wavy locks trailing behind him. I followed suit, speeding myself up by flying through telekinesis- the act of lifting things without any outside help. A ripping sound. Blank, empty nothingness. Darkness engulfed us- and we were at Apple Tree Village, at the scene of the crime.

“Hide! Don’t let them know you’re here to save them!” Bolt gasped, tired but determined to stop the robbers. I nodded, sensing the area around me. *There*. The safe, where all the money was kept. Using telekinesis, I ‘held’ the money inside. *I will not let those thugs get the money*, I willed myself, before diving down to the ground like the rest of the villagers were doing. I then watched Bolt in awe, as he darted and dashed, careful to keep up the ‘invisible speed’.



He smoothly commando-rolled towards the lead robber, snatched up his gun and ducked as another robber threw a blind punch above him. All of a sudden, he somersaulted over the robbers' heads and shoved another robber down, then looked fearfully at me as a robber jumped up and vaulted over to the safe. I knew that Bolt wouldn't be able to keep up this turbo speed for long. I tightened my 'grip' on the money and gritted my teeth. It would be tough for any junior superhero, but I forced myself to perform two telekinesis acts at once- I pinned the robber down to the ground, then slowly lifted him up and threw him at his friends, before using my powers to ring the alarm bell. Security guards came pouring in immediately- apparently the robbers must have used a way that did not attract the guards' attention to get in. Our work was done.

I released my grip on the money, got up and dashed towards Bolt. "You are awesome!" I whispered excitedly. Panting, Bolt managed a weak smile and gave me a thumbs-up. "So were you! You're getting better- soon you'll be able to be my sidekick!" he murmured. I nodded. "You're tired. I'll try to teleport us back home," I replied. Bolt looked at me, surprised. "You can't!" He whispered back as we walked out of the bank. "I can- I think. You see, you are able to run here because you used your enhanced senses and ran faster than time or space, so we broke through both and came here. But you also know that telekinesis allows me to move objects without help from any outside force, and in that way, I am controlling the matter inside that object, don't you?" He nodded weakly. "Time and space is technically made out of matter, so in that sense, I can control time and space and teleport us back home. That's Dad's theory." Bolt's eyes lit up. "I see!"

Moments later, both of us appeared in a messy bedroom- my bedroom. Both of us grinned and dove into my bed.

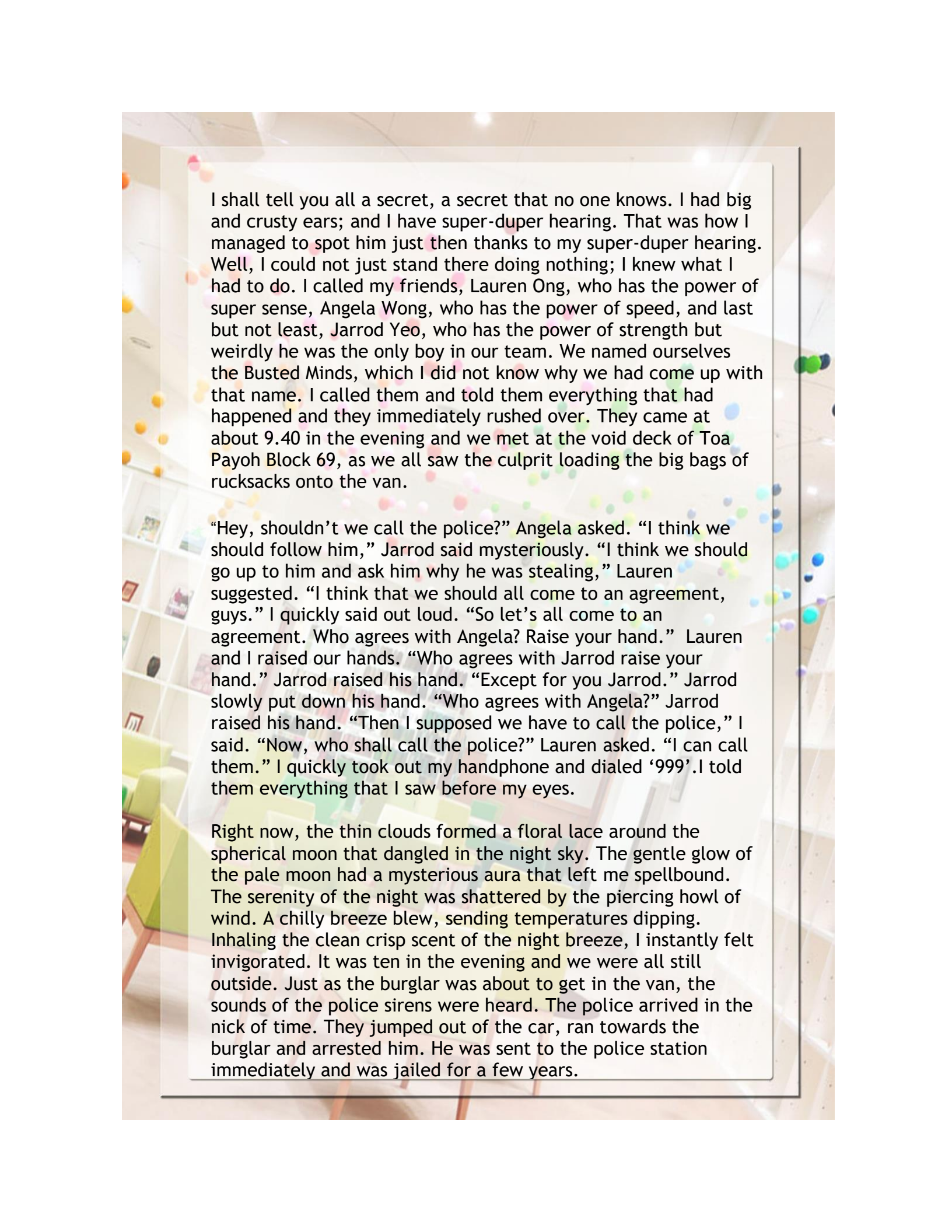
Ah, you know what Dad says: A good day's work deserves a good rest!

Written by Chloe Ho, 5 Marguerite

Hero

The darkness swamped out any spot of light sending an icy chill down his spine. His breath was caught in his windpipe as he tried to steady his breathing. It was his first time. He held the heavy metal lock in his hands shakily. He glanced around nervously, his lips turned into a deathly grey as he gasped and panted involuntarily. His palms were drenched with sweat as he quietly opened the door. The screeching sound was sending anxiety down his back. His face was stretched thin with fear when the door was screeching loudly in the night. Suddenly, the howling winds of the night slammed shut behind him making him jump out of his skin. He stopped dead in his tracks when he heard some footsteps getting louder. He quietly closed the door and hid in a corner. A man, dressed in branded clothing, opened the door of the house opposite with his keys. He heaved a sigh of relief that it was not the one he was targeting. He went in the house and closed the door behind him. He slipped from room to room, emptying the drawers and filling the rucksacks to the brim. The thief was drooling greedily when he caught the sight of the loot. The house was wrecked and destroyed in a bid to ruin all evidence. All its previous glory was now replaced by a sense of despair. He slithered out of the house, closed the door, and locked it. He smiled with accomplished ease. He knew his father would be proud of him.

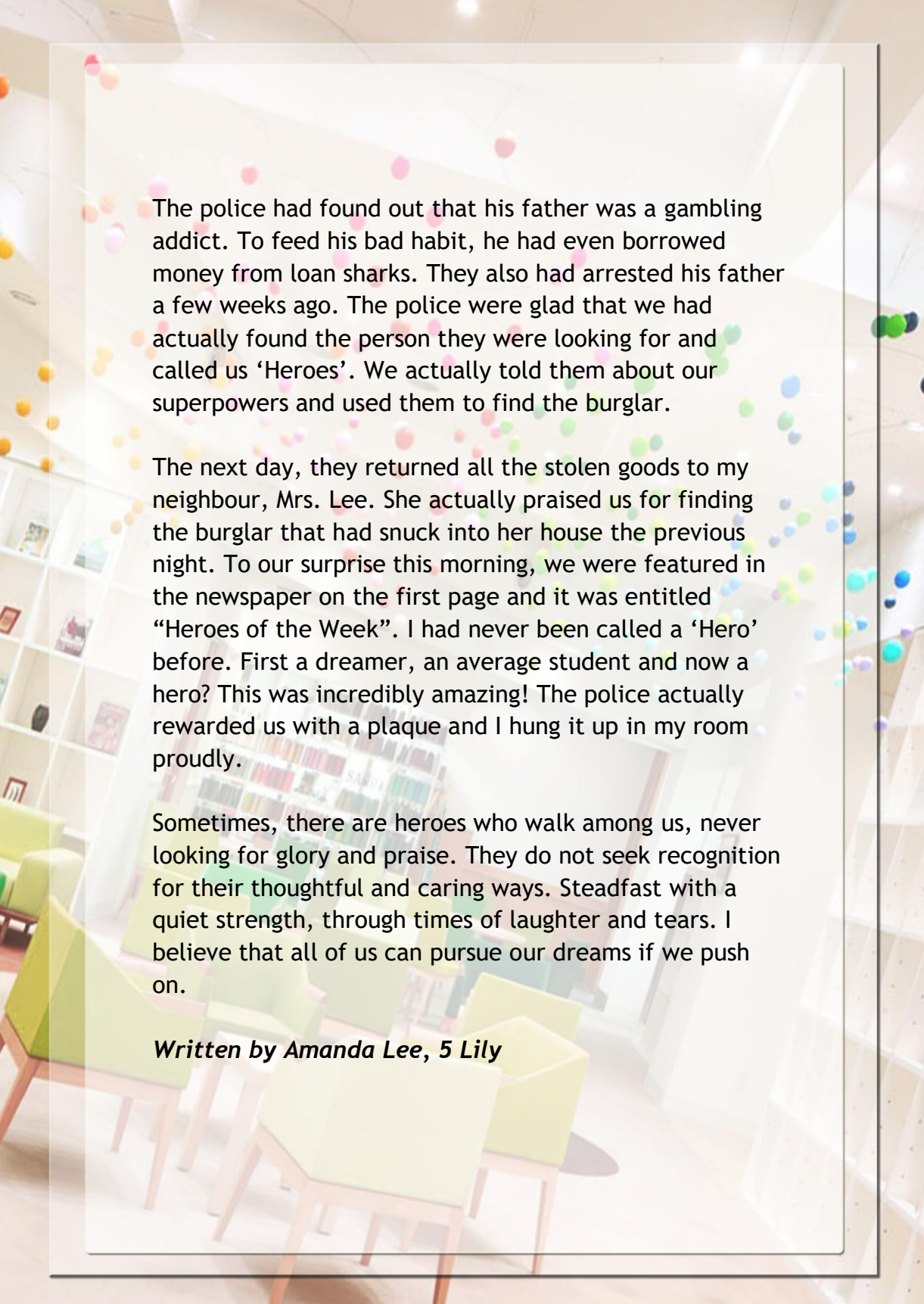
But he forgot someone. Someone called Rosella Ng. That's me. He didn't know that all this while I was watching him. He actually came somewhere around 9.20p.m. when I came back from my grandma's house. The lift was under maintenance so I took the stairs. When I arrived at level 20, I spotted him going in the house. I hid at a dead end next to my house. I just wanted to see what he was up to. I am the type of person that is shy, but inside me I am actually a very nice person. I didn't dare call out to him and stop him, as I was scared that he would kidnap or harm me? I had a fear of being kidnapped. A lump of fear lodged in my throat. My face was frozen in a glassy stare of horror when I saw him leave. I could not just let him leave like that. I had to follow him down the stairs and you shall soon know why...



I shall tell you all a secret, a secret that no one knows. I had big and crusty ears; and I have super-duper hearing. That was how I managed to spot him just then thanks to my super-duper hearing. Well, I could not just stand there doing nothing; I knew what I had to do. I called my friends, Lauren Ong, who has the power of super sense, Angela Wong, who has the power of speed, and last but not least, Jarrod Yeo, who has the power of strength but weirdly he was the only boy in our team. We named ourselves the Busted Minds, which I did not know why we had come up with that name. I called them and told them everything that had happened and they immediately rushed over. They came at about 9.40 in the evening and we met at the void deck of Toa Payoh Block 69, as we all saw the culprit loading the big bags of rucksacks onto the van.

“Hey, shouldn’t we call the police?” Angela asked. “I think we should follow him,” Jarrod said mysteriously. “I think we should go up to him and ask him why he was stealing,” Lauren suggested. “I think that we should all come to an agreement, guys.” I quickly said out loud. “So let’s all come to an agreement. Who agrees with Angela? Raise your hand.” Lauren and I raised our hands. “Who agrees with Jarrod raise your hand.” Jarrod raised his hand. “Except for you Jarrod.” Jarrod slowly put down his hand. “Who agrees with Angela?” Jarrod raised his hand. “Then I supposed we have to call the police,” I said. “Now, who shall call the police?” Lauren asked. “I can call them.” I quickly took out my handphone and dialed ‘999’. I told them everything that I saw before my eyes.

Right now, the thin clouds formed a floral lace around the spherical moon that dangled in the night sky. The gentle glow of the pale moon had a mysterious aura that left me spellbound. The serenity of the night was shattered by the piercing howl of wind. A chilly breeze blew, sending temperatures dipping. Inhaling the clean crisp scent of the night breeze, I instantly felt invigorated. It was ten in the evening and we were all still outside. Just as the burglar was about to get in the van, the sounds of the police sirens were heard. The police arrived in the nick of time. They jumped out of the car, ran towards the burglar and arrested him. He was sent to the police station immediately and was jailed for a few years.

The background of the page is a soft-focus photograph of a room. On the left, there is a white bookshelf filled with books. In the foreground, several light green chairs with wooden legs are arranged. The ceiling is decorated with numerous colorful balloons in shades of pink, orange, yellow, green, and blue. The overall atmosphere is bright and cheerful.

The police had found out that his father was a gambling addict. To feed his bad habit, he had even borrowed money from loan sharks. They also had arrested his father a few weeks ago. The police were glad that we had actually found the person they were looking for and called us 'Heroes'. We actually told them about our superpowers and used them to find the burglar.

The next day, they returned all the stolen goods to my neighbour, Mrs. Lee. She actually praised us for finding the burglar that had snuck into her house the previous night. To our surprise this morning, we were featured in the newspaper on the first page and it was entitled "Heroes of the Week". I had never been called a 'Hero' before. First a dreamer, an average student and now a hero? This was incredibly amazing! The police actually rewarded us with a plaque and I hung it up in my room proudly.

Sometimes, there are heroes who walk among us, never looking for glory and praise. They do not seek recognition for their thoughtful and caring ways. Steadfast with a quiet strength, through times of laughter and tears. I believe that all of us can pursue our dreams if we push on.

Written by Amanda Lee, 5 Lily



Happiness - My Identity Poem

Happiness comes now and then,
You cannot be sure just when.
But when it comes, make it last
Forget the bad things in the past.
Happiness is peaceful, as you can see
Happiness is being free.

When I am down
And people frown
Happiness will be my guiding light,
Bring forth a smile, ever so bright.
What peace of mind happiness shows
Even makes someone glow
For happiness, it lives in me,
It is my name, for eternity.

Written by Felicia Duwana, 5 Ixora



Peace Poem

Peace is a moon shining in darkness!
Living in grace as everyone is united...
Terror is a mirror shattering in brightness!
Moving in daze as everything is divided...
Tranquil is an ocean shimmering boundlessly!
People singing beautifully; animals gallivanting
playfully and worms wiggling cheerfully...
Fear is an alarm shaking mercilessly!
People screaming horridly; animals scrambling
awkwardly and worms trembling timidly...
Silence is a garden engulfing us secretly!
Staying calm; no one in distress...
Violence is an arrow hurting us cruelly!
Causing harm; someone under arrest...
Joy is a child mumbling innocently!
Riding horses; laughter around all night...
Anger is a fire burning fiercely!
Gliding forces; terrorism around all fright...
Hope is an album embracing us tenderly!
Listening in our heart with wonderful melodies...
Sorrow is a cactus prickling us sadly!
Blistering in our heart with painful tragedies...
Harmony is a star blessing us quietly!
Glittering in our heart with plentiful memories...
P E A C E... is a moon in the dark, a boundless
ocean, a secret garden, an innocent child, an
embracing album and a blessing star!

Written by Claire Lee, 5 Daisy

A Peaceful Society

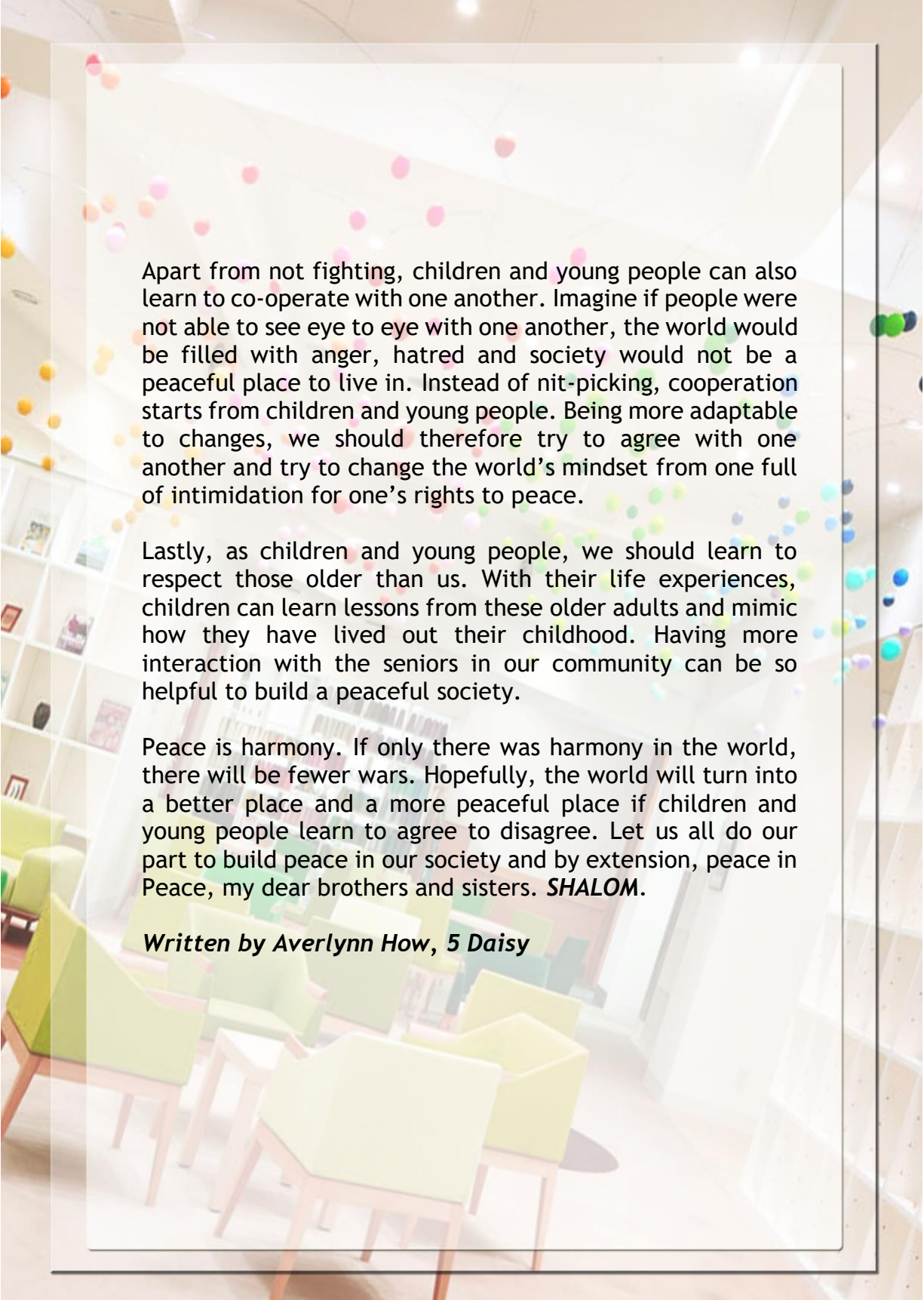
To me, peace is tranquillity, harmony and calmness. Sadly, there is ongoing war and terrorism in the world today. It is therefore of paramount importance for children and young people to come together to build a peaceful society.

Peace is not the absence of conflict but the ability to manage conflict in a harmonious manner.

“We, the citizens of Singapore, pledge ourselves as one united people, regardless of race, language or religion, to build a democratic society, based on justice and equality, so as to achieve happiness, prosperity and progress for our nation.” This is our Singapore National Pledge which reflects how in multi-cultural Singapore, we respect one another and stand for peace. As such, I believe that children should be taught from a young age to respect all individuals regardless of their skin colour, culture or religion. In this way, children and young people will learn to be less judgemental and more tolerant towards one another, for where there is respect, there is peace and harmony. This will be the essence of a peaceful nation.

Most people today are inconsiderate and self-centred and thus there are numerous arguments, acts of revenge and fighting between grown-ups. Children and young people should learn to talk things over calmly instead of allowing the conversation to lead to an argument. With open communication, children and young people can establish a peaceful society. We should seek first to understand than to be understood.

If I see young people quarrelling with one another, I would intervene and attempt to calm things down. If appropriate, I would offer to be the mediator and talk to both parties with regards to the situation. In this way, I can help to promote harmony among young people to create a peaceful society in the world.

The background image shows a bright, modern interior space, likely a library or a community center. In the foreground, there are several light green and yellow chairs with wooden legs arranged in a semi-circle. The walls are white, and there are shelves with books and decorative items. A string of colorful, round ornaments hangs from the ceiling. The overall atmosphere is warm and inviting.

Apart from not fighting, children and young people can also learn to co-operate with one another. Imagine if people were not able to see eye to eye with one another, the world would be filled with anger, hatred and society would not be a peaceful place to live in. Instead of nit-picking, cooperation starts from children and young people. Being more adaptable to changes, we should therefore try to agree with one another and try to change the world's mindset from one full of intimidation for one's rights to peace.

Lastly, as children and young people, we should learn to respect those older than us. With their life experiences, children can learn lessons from these older adults and mimic how they have lived out their childhood. Having more interaction with the seniors in our community can be so helpful to build a peaceful society.

Peace is harmony. If only there was harmony in the world, there will be fewer wars. Hopefully, the world will turn into a better place and a more peaceful place if children and young people learn to agree to disagree. Let us all do our part to build peace in our society and by extension, peace in Peace, my dear brothers and sisters. **SHALOM.**

Written by Averlynn How, 5 Daisy



My Name

My name Therese has different meanings.
In Greek, 'Reaper'
In French, 'Harvester'
Both of these meanings are similar and both
of them are farmers.

Being a farmer may sound like a lowly job,
but that does not mean it is not an
important one. Farmers grow all the crops;
without them, we will all starve to death
without food. This is just one of the reasons
why a farmer is so important to us humans.

Another reason is that in the Bible, when
Jesus told the crowd the Parable of the
Sower, he referred to the sower as God and
us as the seeds. A sower is much like a
farmer or maybe even exactly the same as
one, but either way, God is a farmer and we
are the seeds.

I am proud of my name and I am proud to be
a farmer for every job is important to us.

Written by Therese Ong, 5 Ixora



My Name Poem

My name is Nicole,
It means “Victorious People”.
Many people look up to me,
To help them with their work and studies.

My name may mean victorious,
but that is not always true.
I mess things up a lot,
and get into trouble.

Those were minor incidents,
but people see it as something major.
Reputation matters a lot,
here at C.H.I.J.

I am thankful to the people who stuck by me.
For months, for weeks, for days.
Every second they waste,
Was to support me through thick and thin.

Even if we quarrelled or fought,
We stayed as friends no matter what.
The four friends of mine,
Thank you for helping me live up to my name.

Now it truly means “Victorious People”,
All because you are all my friends.
Thank you so much!

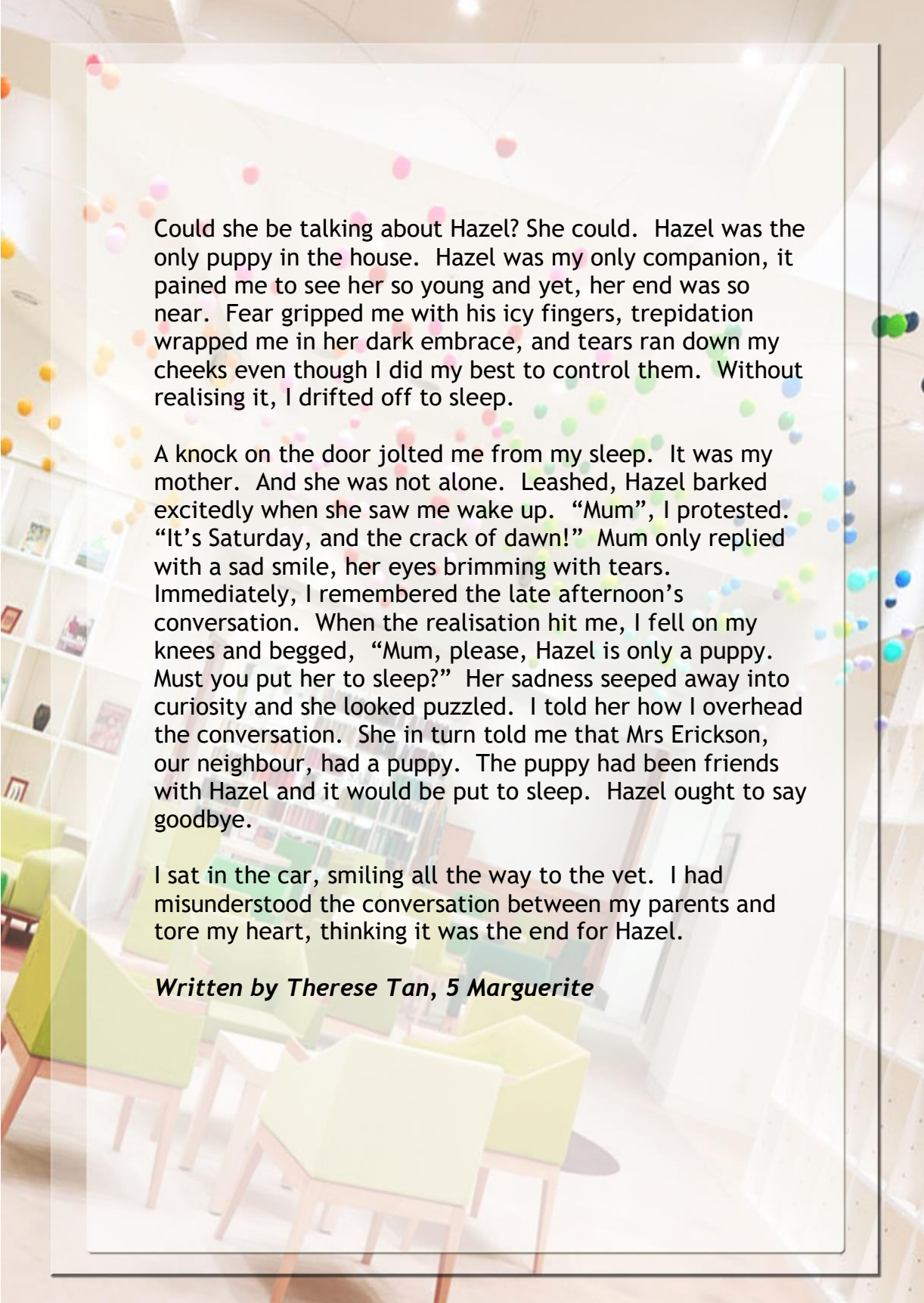
Written by Nicole Wee, 5 Ixora

A Misunderstanding

It is a truth universally acknowledged that a single eleven-year-old girl in possession of no siblings, cousins or friends, must be in want of a pet. This was certainly my case. A year and half ago was indeed a wonderful chapter of my life! On my tenth birthday, rollicking into the living room was the very dog I had wished for. Hazel, the brown Border Collie, was my faithful companion. Nothing doubted our friendship until that day.

I woke to the sound of my parents' angry tones, cutting through the late afternoon's silence. At the sound of Dad's gruff bellow, I cracked open an eyelid, and what I saw made my skin crawl. The burly figure of Dad towering over Mum's cowering. Head still resting on my arm, I could slowly make out the words of the conversation. "I can't put a little puppy to sleep!" whimpered Mum, trembling from head to toe. The reply was quick, and filled with anger. "I don't care! Just put that nuisance of a dog to sleep!" There was a snarl and Dad let loose a string of swear words and curses in different tongues. Then came a long, deadly silence, before a reluctant nod.

After my parents left the living room, I stood up, head aching with worry, a thousand thoughts crashing like a wave in my head. And I dashed to my room where I could brood over the unexpected conversation with Hazel. "Why would Mum and Dad argue?" I wondered out aloud, absent mindedly scratching Hazel behind her ears. My parents rarely argued, I had never seen both of them argue like this before. Picturing Mum's tear-stained face and Dad raging, I could not help feeling sorry for Mum. The sight and recollection came together in an instant and I remembered Mum's cry, "I can't put a little puppy to sleep!" This sentence played over in my head, echoing with menace.

The background of the page is a soft-focus photograph of a room. On the left, there is a white bookshelf filled with books and small decorative items. In the foreground, several light green chairs with wooden legs are arranged. The ceiling is decorated with numerous colorful balloons in shades of pink, orange, yellow, and blue. The overall atmosphere is warm and celebratory.

Could she be talking about Hazel? She could. Hazel was the only puppy in the house. Hazel was my only companion, it pained me to see her so young and yet, her end was so near. Fear gripped me with his icy fingers, trepidation wrapped me in her dark embrace, and tears ran down my cheeks even though I did my best to control them. Without realising it, I drifted off to sleep.

A knock on the door jolted me from my sleep. It was my mother. And she was not alone. Leashed, Hazel barked excitedly when she saw me wake up. "Mum", I protested. "It's Saturday, and the crack of dawn!" Mum only replied with a sad smile, her eyes brimming with tears. Immediately, I remembered the late afternoon's conversation. When the realisation hit me, I fell on my knees and begged, "Mum, please, Hazel is only a puppy. Must you put her to sleep?" Her sadness seeped away into curiosity and she looked puzzled. I told her how I overheard the conversation. She in turn told me that Mrs Erickson, our neighbour, had a puppy. The puppy had been friends with Hazel and it would be put to sleep. Hazel ought to say goodbye.

I sat in the car, smiling all the way to the vet. I had misunderstood the conversation between my parents and tore my heart, thinking it was the end for Hazel.

Written by Therese Tan, 5 Marguerite



My Name Poem

A name so rare and unique
Far from normal and usual
Stands a name "India" that originated from the river Indus
A name so pure and tender that was made by the Greek language

A name represents as much as this world
Extraordinary with a touch of magic
Far beyond this planet
Further than any eyes can reach

Lips move
Teeth conspicuous
A meaning brand new
And a bold name announces

Many people know girls who are named "India"
As candles who light up magnificently
It comes as a surprise for me
I am like the wind that blows the light away

My name is not common
And I bore all the characteristic
Individualistic and quiet
But I may be very sensitive

I am especially annoying
I am very naughty
Nothing can ever stop me
When it comes to being cheeky.

I just wish I would change
Into a beautiful and bright light
That glows everywhere you take it

I adore my beloved name
Nothing can stand in its way
For it is significant
And makes confused faces pop up just hearing this name

Written by India Yung, 5 Ixora



A Poem Dedicated to Myself

My name is Phoebe, for I am pure and bright.
In Greek mythology, it is a name for Artemis,
The Goddess of the Moon.

In the Bible, a female minister in the church of Cenchreae.

I was given the name Phoebe as it represents the Moon.

I live by the traits of being

Feminine

Nurturing

Secure

And instinctual

My family and friends make me who I am today,

As I strive to be my very best every day.

Some may call me Pho-bee which cause many to be in
stitches,

But I still treasure our friendship as they are not like leeches.

I love my name Phoebe
For it is unique and unusual.
Exactly the way I am
For I am truly Phoebe.

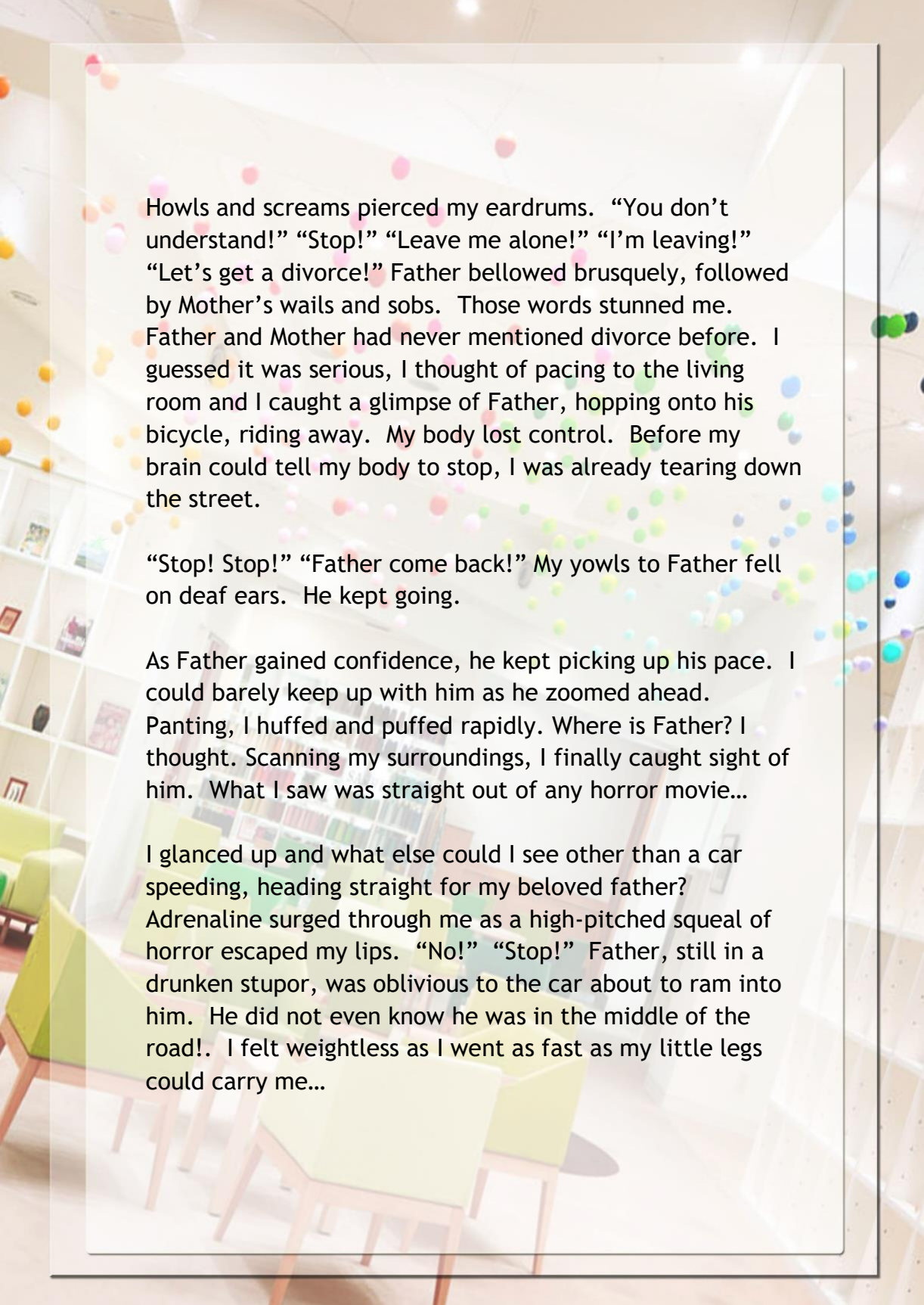
Written by Phoebe Lian, 5 Lily

A Disappointment

Days. Weeks. Months. Memories fly by, like birds just released from their cages. However, in my mind and heart, a flightless bird dwells. Its wings paralysed and body wounded, it has given up hope of flying once again. Every night, I toss. I turn, drifting in and out of sleep. I will never forget the anguish, the misery, the anger. Mostly, the disappointment. It started when.....

It was deep into the night. The clock was ticking. The moonlight that filtered through my bedroom window had just disappeared. Darkness engulfed me as I tossed yet again, trying to sleep.

The door burst open. The creak in the door just made shivers go down my spine. Keys jingling, I heard a slurred voice mumbling. That was when I relaxed. It was Father. Father was an alcoholic and a drug addict. Although he had a few run-ins with the law before, they had not helped a bit. Nothing had changed. My classmates often teased me and called me names because of what my father did. They called me “drug addict to be” and “drunken girl”. Mother rushed to Father’s side as she helped him to the couch. “Stop drinking!” “It’s not good for you!” “Drugs again?” Mother chided. With that, another quarrel had begun. Tears welled up in my eyes as I dashed back into my room. I really loathed those arguments. Every day, I would pray, that one day, hopefully, the disputes would just vanish. Maybe, one day, just one day, I would have a perfect family. I know it would never happen. Bye, dreams. Hello reality.



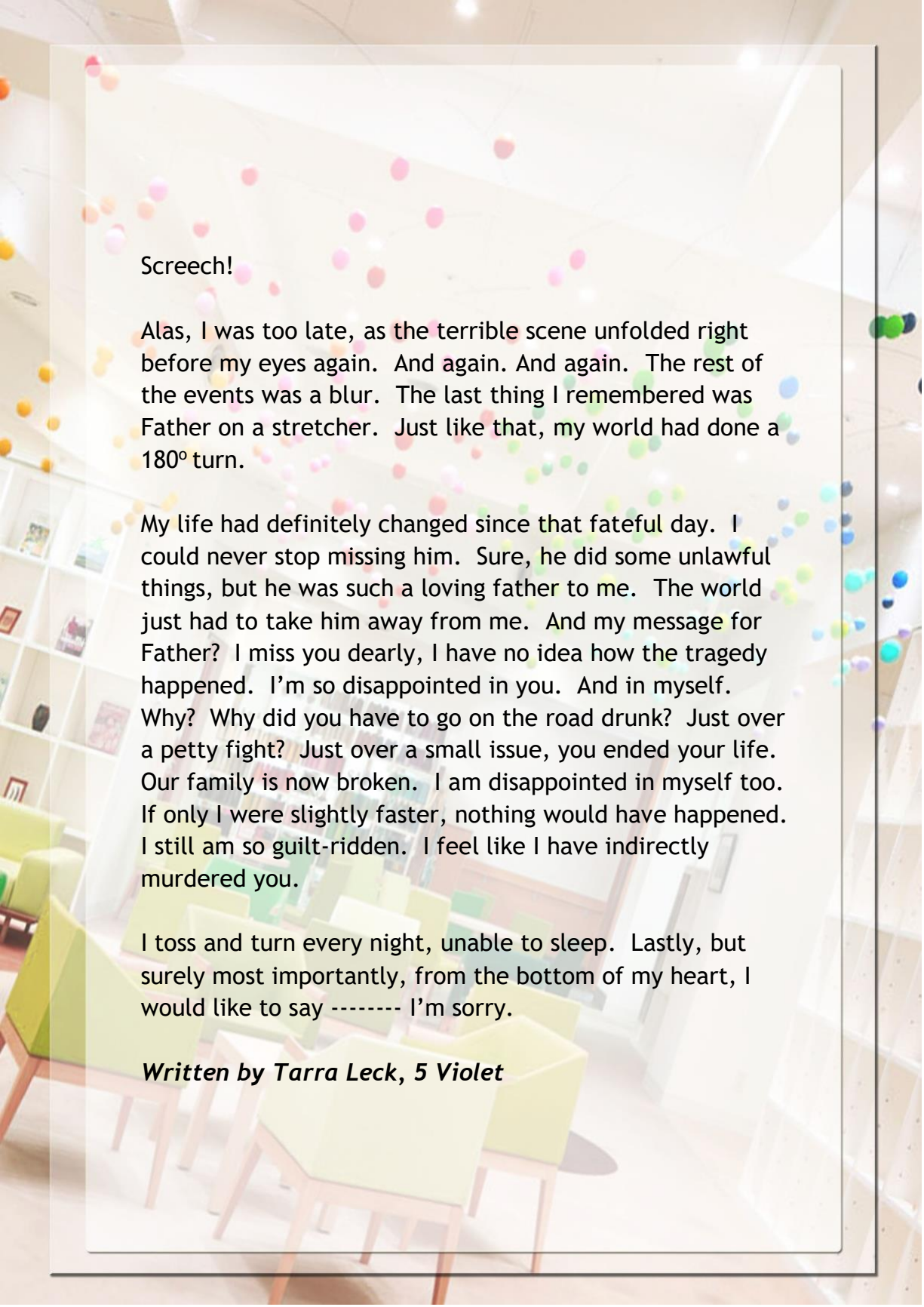
Howls and screams pierced my eardrums. “You don’t understand!” “Stop!” “Leave me alone!” “I’m leaving!” “Let’s get a divorce!” Father bellowed brusquely, followed by Mother’s wails and sobs. Those words stunned me.

Father and Mother had never mentioned divorce before. I guessed it was serious, I thought of pacing to the living room and I caught a glimpse of Father, hopping onto his bicycle, riding away. My body lost control. Before my brain could tell my body to stop, I was already tearing down the street.

“Stop! Stop!” “Father come back!” My yowls to Father fell on deaf ears. He kept going.

As Father gained confidence, he kept picking up his pace. I could barely keep up with him as he zoomed ahead. Panting, I huffed and puffed rapidly. Where is Father? I thought. Scanning my surroundings, I finally caught sight of him. What I saw was straight out of any horror movie...

I glanced up and what else could I see other than a car speeding, heading straight for my beloved father? Adrenaline surged through me as a high-pitched squeal of horror escaped my lips. “No!” “Stop!” Father, still in a drunken stupor, was oblivious to the car about to ram into him. He did not even know he was in the middle of the road!. I felt weightless as I went as fast as my little legs could carry me...

The background of the page is a soft-focus photograph of a room. It features a white bookshelf on the left filled with books and small decorative items. In the foreground, there are several light green chairs with wooden legs. The ceiling is decorated with strings of colorful balloons in shades of pink, orange, and blue. The overall atmosphere is bright and cheerful, contrasting with the somber text.

Screech!

Alas, I was too late, as the terrible scene unfolded right before my eyes again. And again. And again. The rest of the events was a blur. The last thing I remembered was Father on a stretcher. Just like that, my world had done a 180° turn.

My life had definitely changed since that fateful day. I could never stop missing him. Sure, he did some unlawful things, but he was such a loving father to me. The world just had to take him away from me. And my message for Father? I miss you dearly, I have no idea how the tragedy happened. I'm so disappointed in you. And in myself. Why? Why did you have to go on the road drunk? Just over a petty fight? Just over a small issue, you ended your life. Our family is now broken. I am disappointed in myself too. If only I were slightly faster, nothing would have happened. I still am so guilt-ridden. I feel like I have indirectly murdered you.

I toss and turn every night, unable to sleep. Lastly, but surely most importantly, from the bottom of my heart, I would like to say ----- I'm sorry.

Written by Tarra Leck, 5 Violet



My Peaceful Place

Every country is an open book,
Always half read.
I remember the tiniest details from each book,
Forming the whole story.
Reading day and night,
My mind is at ease.
Stress seems so far away,
Imagination closer.
They transport me everywhere,
At each page a new story.
Each flip,
A new plot.
I can read just about anywhere,
About anything, about anyone.
I read about some Commonwealth countries,
Some still striving for peace.
Through their multitude of challenges,
There were riots battles and wars.
Though none can compare,
To the ones we face daily.
If people can write about peace,
How they gained it, lost it,
We can learn how to find it in the little things we do.
Each country has different strategies,
A different way to attain peace.
Some actually succeed,
Some create chaos instead.
Through fiction or fantasy,
Our focus should be the same.
To live in a world in harmony,
Together, without pain.

Written by Elizabeth Leo, 5 Daisy