

**Ages
6-8**

The First Day Jitters



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‘**M**arc! It’s time to wake up. It’s time for school’ his mother called him as she hurried around the house to pack his bag for his first day of school.



‘I’m not going!’ Marc screamed with a muffled voice from under his bedsheets. Marc dug himself under his covers and pretended to be asleep while his mother came back into his room to check on him.

When Marc's mother saw him under his bed covers, she began to worry. 'Why not?' she asked.

'Do you have a fever, are you feeling unwell?' she asked while feeling his forehead.

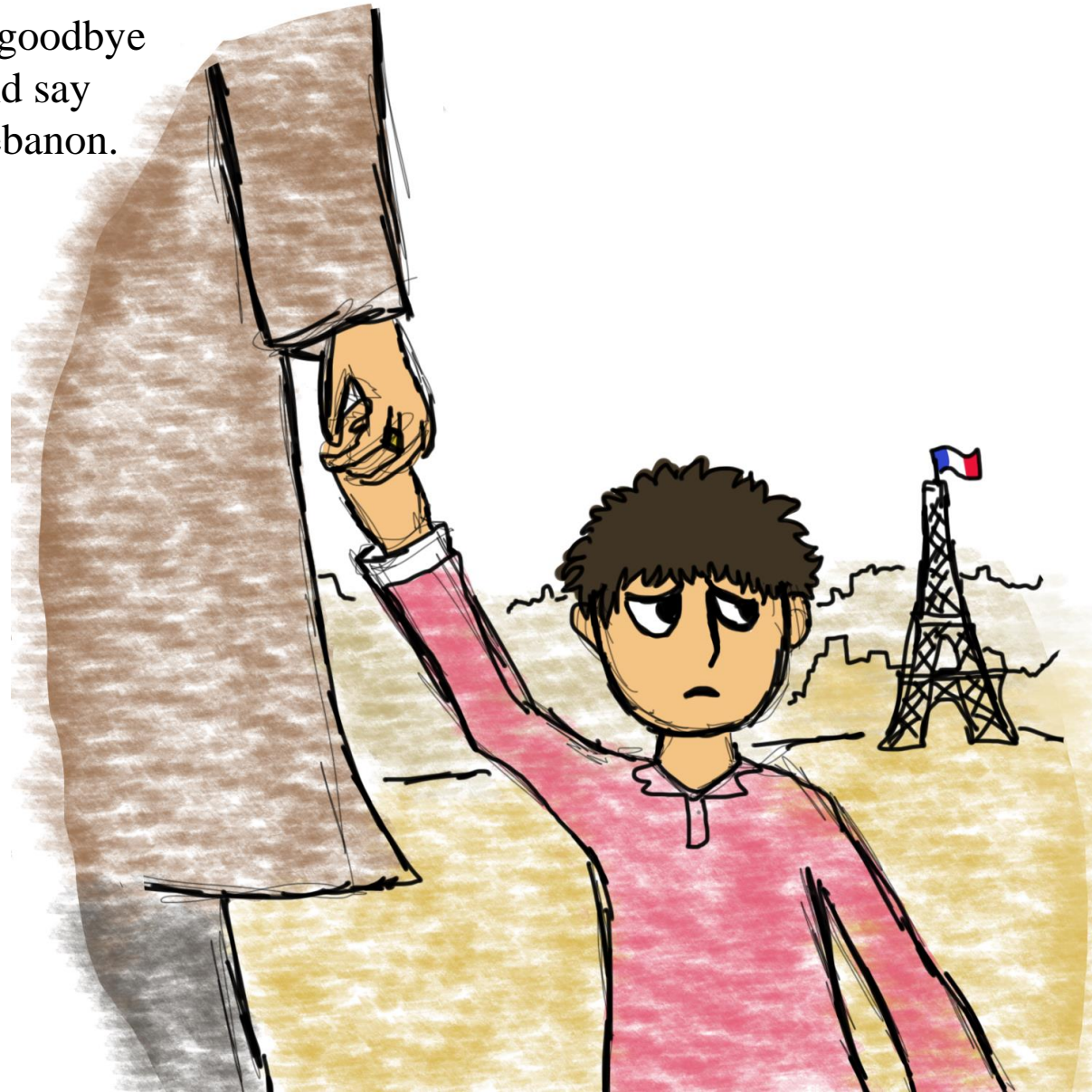
'No.' he responded quietly. 'Then what is it? Why can't you go to school?' she asked again.



Marc removed the bed covers and explained 'I don't want to go to a new school!, I liked my old one. I liked my old teachers and my old friends!' Marc said with a quivering but angry voice, as if he was about to cry.

Then his mother understood. Marc had just moved from France to Lebanon because his father had started working in Lebanon.

This meant that Marc had to say goodbye to his old life in Paris, France and say hello to his new life in Beirut, Lebanon.

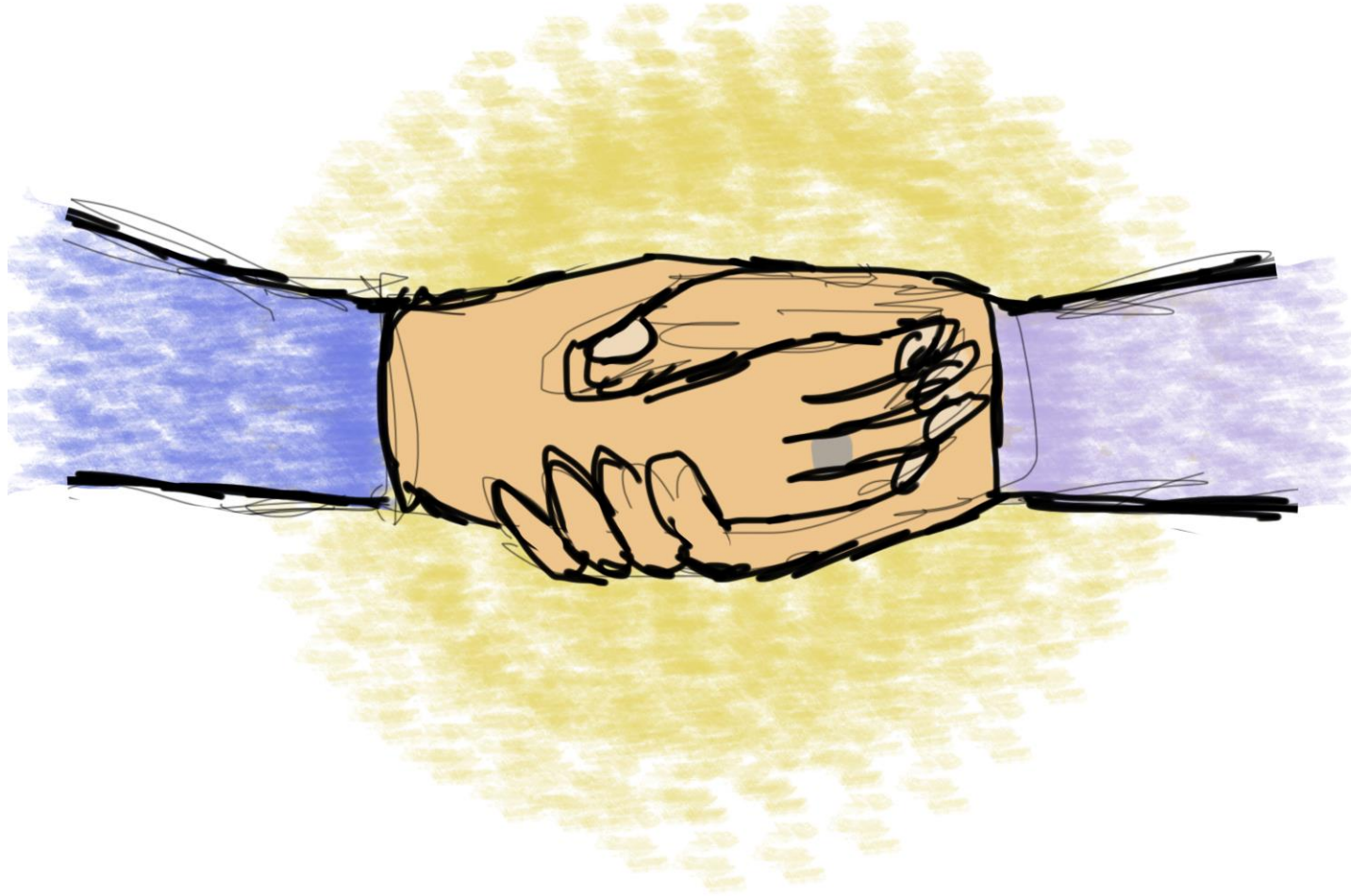


Marc's mother began to explain to him that he would love his new school because his teachers and peers will be very sweet and friendly. But Marc did not listen.



‘The teachers are going to be mean and none of the kids will want to be friends with me because I don't speak Arabic!’ he explained as he began to cry.

‘I know the first days of school are always scary, but it will not be as bad as you think!. Let’s make a deal, if you come home from school today, and you are still unhappy we can look for a new school, Deal? His mother suggested as she stuck her hand out to shake with his.



Marc then started to get ready for his first day of school.

The drive to school was very quiet. Marc was looking around at the new country he was in and realized how nice it actually was. As they drove down the Manara, he looked out onto the bright blue sea and saw many old fishermen with bright clothes setting up to go fishing which reminded him of when he and his grandfather would go fishing along the Seine River in Paris.

This made him feel like he was back home.



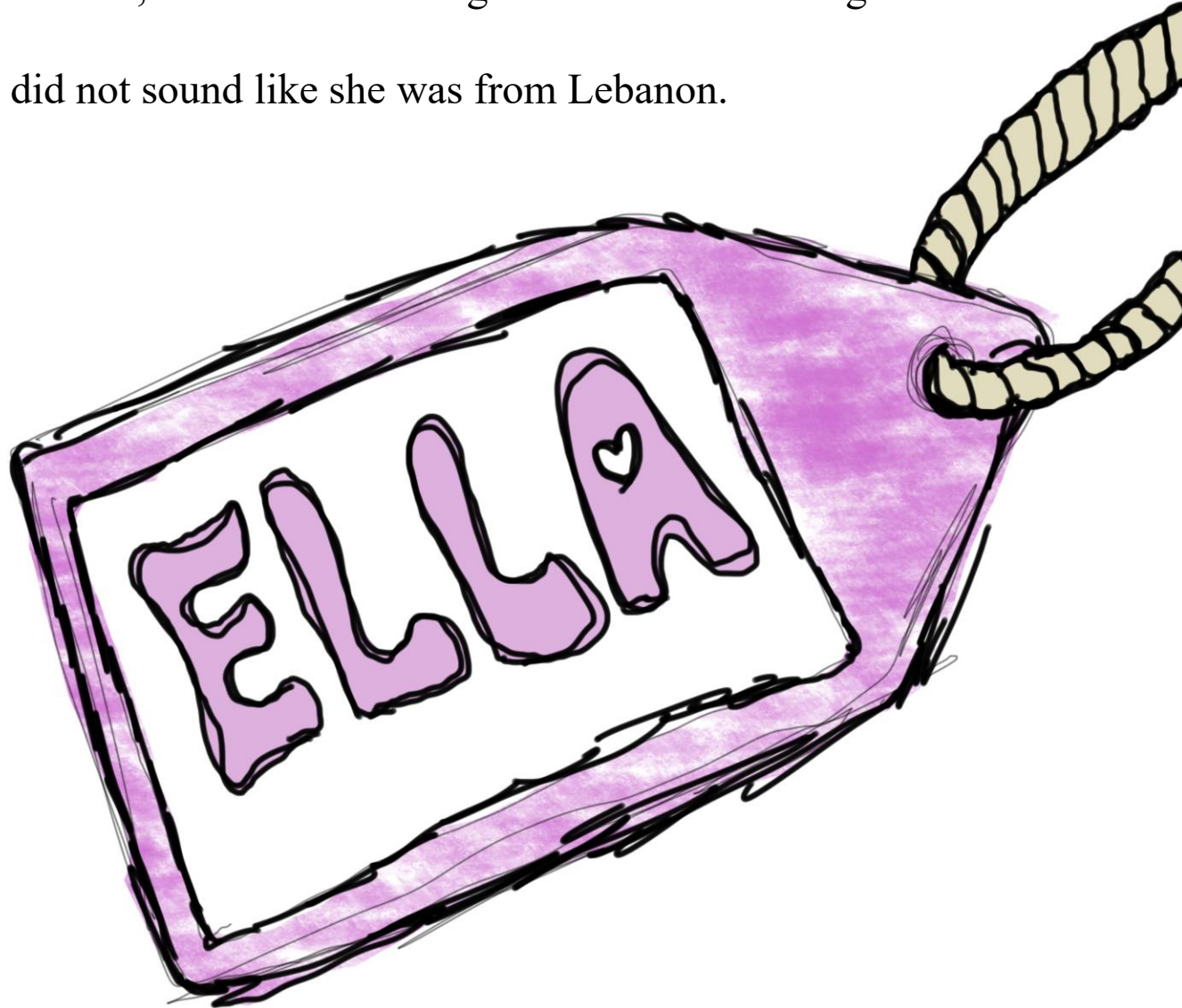
As their car came to a stop, Marc started to feel a pit in his stomach as if there were butterflies inside trying to escape. His mother opened the car door for him, held his hand and walked him into the school and to his classroom.



‘Have a great day’ she said as she kissed him on his head. ‘If you start to feel scared or nervous just remember that I’ll be here to pick you up in a few hours’ and then he watched as his mother walked away

As he turned around, he spotted a name tag outside his classroom with his name on it and a bag hook under it. As he began to hang his bag and lunch box, he looked to his right and saw a name tag for someone called 'Ella' right next to his.

'That's odd' he thought. Ella did not sound like she was from Lebanon.



Keeping this in mind, he took a deep breath and walked into the classroom.

There were kids running everywhere, kids drawing on the whiteboard, kids coloring.
The class was like a zoo to Marc! And then...

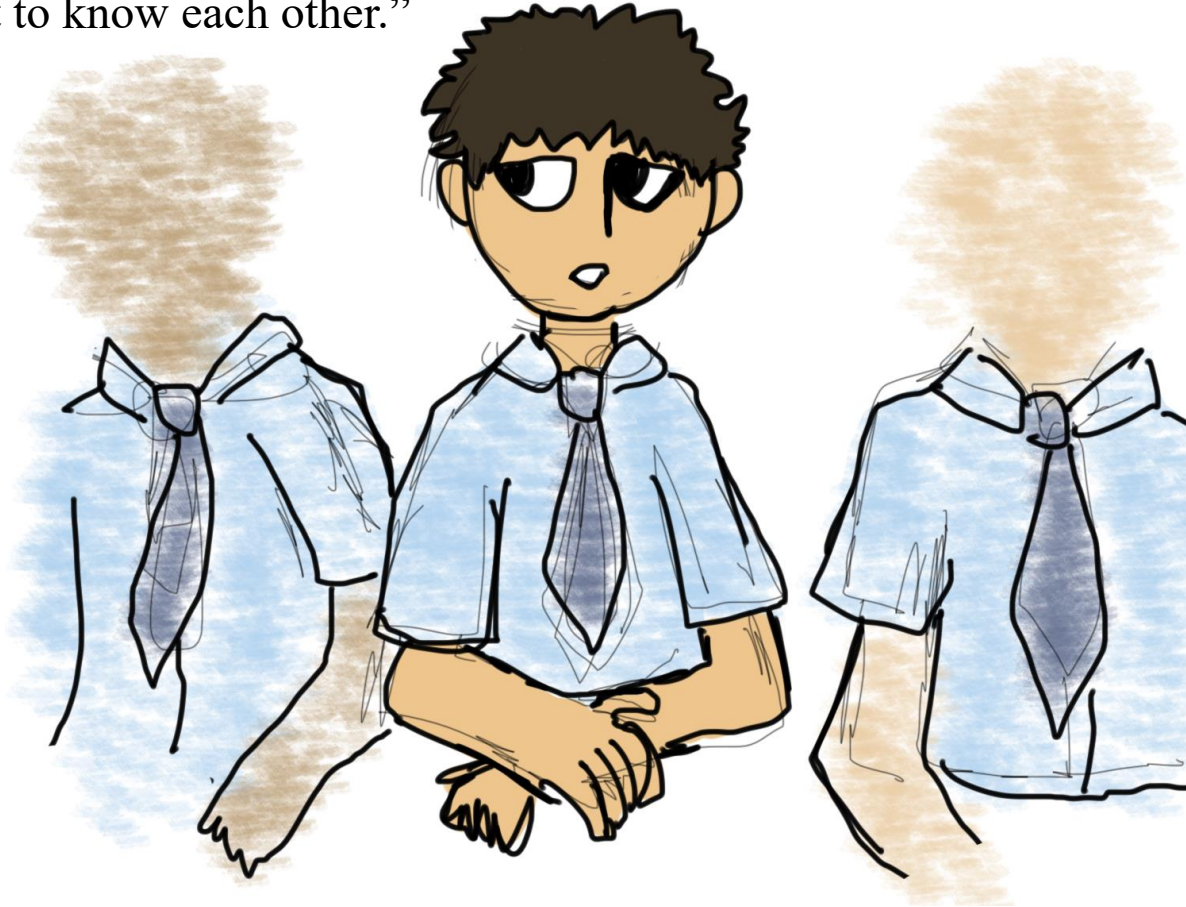
RING!!



The class was silent in the blink of an eye. Everyone took their seats on the colorful carpet covered in letters of the alphabet.

‘Hello Children! My name is Ms. Rania and I’m going to be your teacher this year!’ Ms. Rania said with an enthusiastic tone.

She began to explain that the class seating plan will be arranged so that every boy will be sitting in between two girls. She said “This would help everyone get to know each other.”



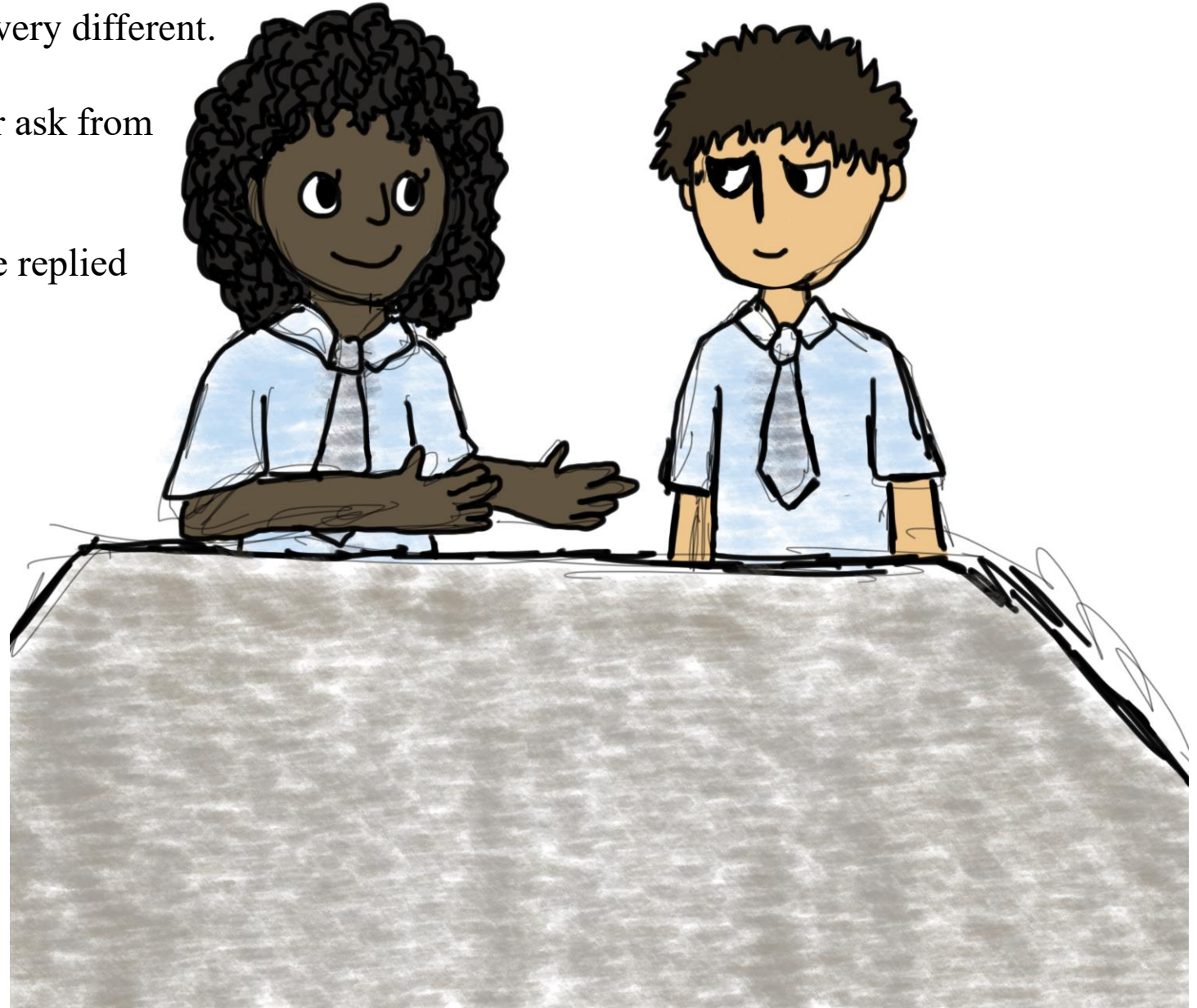
This made Marc more nervous because he had preferred to be sitting next to boys and because he thought they would be easier to become friends with. But he kept silent and followed Ms. Rania’s instructions.

As the seating plan was rearranged, Marc found himself in between 2 girls, one of them looked different from the rest of the class. Her skin was a bit darker, her hair was a lot curlier and her accent was very different.

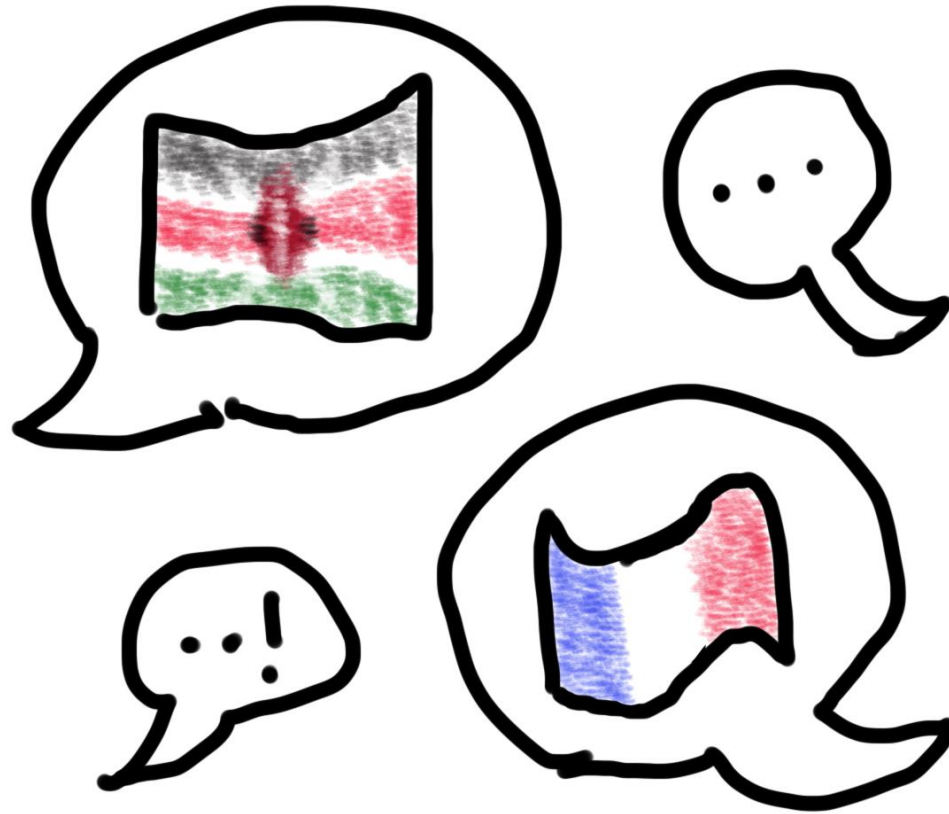
‘Hi I’m Ella what’s your name?’ he heard her ask from right next to him.

‘I’m Marc, I just moved here from France’ he replied quietly, as his cheeks became more pink and he became more shy.

‘France? Wow! My family and I moved here from Kenya last year’ Ella began to explain with a wide grin on her face as she started to move her chair closer to his.



Marc and Ella began to talk about their lives back home, Kenya and France. Soon enough, the rest of the students at their table joined the conversation too, asking them questions about what it was like to live there.



The teacher began to teach, and the class fell silent, Marc started to realize that this wasn't so bad after all.

The day flew past quicker than Marc expected! During break time, almost everyone from his class had come and introduced themselves to him.



Ali and Jad, two young boys who also sat at his table in the classroom had invited him to play football with the rest of the boys during their second break.

By the end of the day, Marc had forgotten why he had ever had those first day jitters.

That night, his mother had come back into his room to remind Marc of the deal they had made earlier in the day to which he replied ‘You were right mom, It wasn't as bad as I thought’ and he kissed her goodnight.



Marc went to bed earlier than usual,
excited to go to school the next day.