# BELÉN TOLEDO

## Colegio Pedro de Valdivia - Peñalolén

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This document contains two texts. First one is the Round 1 Finished Work Entry on the theme of "Family". Second one was done on the day of the in-person final 10th June 2023, as a Freewrite/First Draft activity with the following prompt: "Write about the friendship that inspired your favourite song."

ENGLISH-SPEAKING UNION
discovering voices

# First Text: Round 1 Entry

## Home

“Mother always said, 'Be good and nice things will happen’”, was the last thing I heard before turning off the television. I’m not sure what show or film was playing. For some reason though, that phrase stood out to me.

After a while of sitting on the floor, I decided to get up and go to the kitchen. My mum was there as well, we didn't talk though; it felt like she wasn’t there with me. I went back to my room afterwards. I sat on my bed until I heard my phone vibrate on my bedside table. I checked my phone and saw that I’d received one message. The name of the contact read “*Bean*”. The void I normally feel in my chest began to feel full and turned into a comforting warmth in my chest. The thought of them never fails to make my day better. Their name isn’t Bean though, wouldn’t that be a strange name to have? Just a nickname that stuck. All I could think of now was how much I missed them. It’s been about 4 months since my family moved away. I started feeling a painful sting in my eyes and my vision became blurry, I blinked the tears away, I didn’t feel like crying in my room again.

After sitting on my bed with my phone in my hand for a few minutes, I opened my phone and read the message.

**- “Hello”**

I felt my mouth curl upwards, and began to start typing back.

**- “Howdy, how ya doin'?”**

**- “I’m doing good, what about you?”**

**- “Bit tired, but good”**

**- “How’s your new school? Is it different than before or is it pretty much the same?”**

My stomach felt like it had been shot when I read that message. I deeply considered telling them that everything was alright, but as I typed out that message I felt as if I were going to puke. It felt as if the sky was on my back, and that at any moment, it would crush me.

**- “It’s been a bit rough, I still don’t have any friends and it’s already been a month since school started, and none of my classmates are interested in talking to me”**

**- “I’m sorry about that, man, that’s horrible. Also, if none of your classmates want to talk to you then they’re all idiots.”**

I couldn’t help but smile at their message. What did I do to deserve someone like them? I constantly spend my time sitting in my room and moping, it’s either that or just being a cynical jerk. Yet, somehow, there’s someone who’s still willing to spend their time with someone as terrible as me.

My thoughts were interrupted when I heard the front door of the house open and close, followed by someone talking. “Dad’s home,” I thought to myself. I felt dread and annoyance when I realised he was home. Apparently, I’m supposed to be happy whenever my dad comes home from work. But I don’t think I’ve ever felt happy when he comes back because eventually, my brother and I would have to spend the rest of dinner awkwardly eating whilst trying to tune out the sound of our parents arguing.

**- “Thanks mate, I appreciate that. I gotta go, talk to you later?”**

**- “Of course dude, see ya”**

I stood up from my bed and left my room, as I was leaving I noticed that my brother had also left his. As I went to the stairs, I said to him “Alright?”

All I got in response was a “Whatever” from him. I guess that’s better than when he told me to shut up. I don’t think my brother likes me. I don’t blame him.

Saying hi to my dad was a nightmare, anything involving him always is. Every single time he would put his hands on my shoulders made me feel like punching him in the gut. I wanted to be as far away from him as possible. I hate being with my family so much, they’ve never felt like my family, it’s always felt like I share a house with a group of strangers. I want to run away from it all.

I guess that’s why afterwards I was walking through town. I didn’t know where I was going. I vaguely remember taking a few things and stuffing them inside my bag before I told my mum I was going out and then running out of the house. Before I knew it, I was speed-walking through town, until I ran out of breath and stopped. I checked the time and saw that it was 6:00 pm, hadn't it been around 5:30 when I left? I wasn’t sure where I was, I think I'd been to that area maybe once or twice before. It's quite beautiful, it was a dock with a pair of boats at it, or were they ships? I'm not sure, I think they're sailboats. They looked incredibly similar, the only difference being their colours. One was orange, like a mandarin. The other was yellow with a slight tint of green, like a slightly unripe lemon.

I opened the bag I took with me, I didn’t remember what I threw in it before I left. Inside were my earphones, my keys, and a small Lego figure. I didn’t know why it was there. I decided to take it out of my bag. My friend and I had each made a figure while at a Lego

store, where they were allowing people to make their own Lego figures for free using different parts.

I noticed that the sun was just starting to set, I've always loved the sunset. I decided to take a picture of the sailboats and send it to Bean.

**- “Do you want to help me name the boats?”**

**- “Yes. I’ve decided that the one on the left is called Bo”**

**- “Alright, then the other one is called Oobnar”**

**- “Perfect”**

I thought about the sentence I heard before I turned off the TV. What was it again? Was it “Be good and nice things will happen”? I’ve never believed in that. Many people have been nothing but good, only to have the worst things happen to them.

I decided to watch the sunset while I talked to them. I sat on a bench at the dock, opened my phone again and sent them another message

**- “Hey are you free to call?”**

**- “Yes”**

They started calling before I could, so I pressed the answer button. I felt that no matter what happened, everything would be okay, it felt so strange. The more time spent with them, the more the cold void in my chest felt full. Strangely, it felt like home.

# Second Text: Free Write/First Draft 10th June 2023

## "UNTITLED"

It felt like I was sinking into my bed, like I was lying in quicksand, it felt like even if I tried to get up, that I wouldn't be able to. A part of me wanted to sink in the bed, maybe I could escape that way. That way, everyone would leave me alone. I think that's why I put the 'Do Not Enter' sign in the doorway. I almost groaned when I heard the knock on the door. So much for being left alone, I'm still surprised that I was able to get enough energy to get up and open the door. My bones felt like they could be used as weights in a bodybuilding competition. I opened the door, expecting to see one of my parents, but instead it was you. I felt so surprised, I didn't even know what to say, I think the only way to summarize how I felt is by multiple question marks.

'Well, you began. 'Why are you looking at me like I'm a ghost? I know that I'm not exactly the prettiest of them all but I'm not that hideous.'

'Why are you at my house,' was all I could manage to say.

'I'm bored and I missed you, besides I have some fun things that we can do,' you replied, with a smile so wide, it looked like your face was split in half.

'What do you mean you have a few things planned for us to do? Are we going out?' I felt like my brain might explode from the confusion

'Yes, we're going out, make sure you put on a jacket, bring your bag and your wallet,' it was clear that I had absolutely no choice in the matter, so I did what I was told to and took my things.

After getting dragged out of my house and thrown into a taxi, we began to drive off to who knows where. I wasn't entirely sure as to what was going on, but if I'm being honest, it seemed fun. I watched as trees on the side of the road would blend in with each other, some of their leaves had already started to change color, the green would turn into yellow, the yellow would turn into orange, and the orange would turn into red. I repeated that thought process until eventually, the car had stopped, and we arrived at our destination. I got out of the car with you, I looked around as I began to realize that we were at the thrift shop near our school.

'Come on let's go in! I know how much you love thrift shops,' you told me, before running in, leaving me to chase after you.

I felt like a little kid who had been given permission to go to the candy store alone. So many fun items, all with their own history and memories that others will never know. We spent a while going around, laughing at strange items that didn't seem real. After a while of looking around, I found something that caught my eye. It was a hoodie, it was multicolored, I think it was supposed to be some sort of tie dye design. The colors were pastels, and slightly faded. It seemed like it had once been loved, I wonder why something that seems to have been held dearly, was in a thrift shop. I went to try it on, it was slightly big on me, the sleeves were longer than my arms, yet something about it felt perfect, like it was there for me. You had seen me try it on, and you had asked if I wanted it, and told me to put it in the basket we were using to carry everything we wanted to buy. We went back to looking around the store, eventually I found a small teddy bear that was wearing a red scarf, and a long Santa hat, I think it was almost two inches long. It was so silly, but I think that made me like it even more.

'I could use this as a friend to have in my treehouse,' I said, turning to look at you.

'You have a treehouse?' Your eyes looked like they were shining, like two beautiful sapphires.

I don't know why I told you about the treehouse, I've always kept it secret from everyone, it's my little safe space to be alone and to be free. But I guess I wanted more than just a Christmas themed teddy bear to keep me company in the treehouse.

'Yeah, you should come see it,' I told you, a strange feeling began to grow in my chest, I'm not sure what it was, but it felt nice

After we paid for the things we wanted, we got another taxi back to my house, I decided to cut off the tag that the thrift shop had put on the rainbow hoodie, and I put it on. You spent the rest of the car ride asking me about the treehouse, and why I never mentioned it.

After a while, we finally arrived. We practically flew out of the car and into my backyard. We took all of our things with us to the treehouse, I put the teddy bear on the ground, next to what seemed to be a tower of cushions, that would probably make the Empire State Building look tiny compared to it.

We spent so much time sitting in the treehouse, being as loud and obnoxious as we wanted. I watched as you laughed at the jokes I made, I'm really glad you think I'm so funny. I don't think I've ever felt this safe around anyone, usually I want everyone to go away, but I think that you're the exception, you can stay and I wouldn't mind. Out of the two of us, you're the captain and I'm the deputy. I don't think I'm ever gonna let you leave. I want you to be able to stay with me forever, something tells me you feel the same way. You make me feel like I could survive winter in the Arctic using only the warmth you make me feel.