

3 Circles

“Happy Birthday, Beatrice! Wake up!”

“Wow,” I mumbled as I groggily sat up “ I can not believe I am thirteen” My parents’ reply was a shower of gifts. “Ok, I know that I am getting a bunch of presents because I am now thirteen, but where are we moving to this time”

“Wow, she is good.” My dad admitted. “I am getting transferred to New Jersey. We are going to live about a block away from Point Pleasant, which is a great place to be around summertime. Oh, look, your grandmother’s here. Hi, Mom!” He finished in a feeble attempt to distract from the fact they were moving...again.

“Hello, Beatrice! Happy Birthday! I definitely didn’t forget this time! That wouldn’t be much fun, now would it?” I gently took the small box out of Grandma’s hand. Inside the box was a medium sized medallion. It was engraved with pictures on both sides.

“Grandma, what are the circles for?”

“Those are the three circles. They present the most valuable things in life. The top one divided into three parts, is the Circle of life. It represents the past, present and future, which are three things we should acknowledge constantly. The one on the bottom left is the Circle of Virtues. The three similar circles inside represent healthy virtues (eating right, exercising, etc.), pure virtues (avoiding bad things in the world), and generous virtues (sharing what you have learned with others). The circle on the bottom right is the Circle of Friends. The infinity symbol inside represents true friendship. The symbol on the back is world painted in many different colors, as our world is today with diversity. I understand that you will be moving to New Jersey, so that necklace might make you quite popular in your new school. They enjoy celebrating diversity”

“Uhm, thanks, Grandma. I...love it.”

“Well, I suppose we should get back to celebrating now” My mom interrupted during an awkward moment of silence.

A few weeks later, we, the Johnsons, completed our trip from Austin, Texas to New Jersey. After some confused unpacking, I set out to my first day yet another new school. When I entered Jacobson Middle School, I was engulfed by a large group of people. In a matter of seconds, about half of the group left. I noticed that there were only pale faces and hair left over.

“Welcome.” One of them spoke. “I am Jessica, unfortunately the rest of our group seem to be unfriendly. Sorry about that. Let me show you to your locker.” She took off at a fast pace with the others following close behind. As soon as I started to follow I was unexpectedly yanked into the girls’ bathroom.

“You are a newbie, right?” This girl had dark hair and caramel colored skin. “Hola, I am Annika Alvares.”

“Hello.” I replied. “I hate to be rude but what is with the strange behavior of some of these people?”

“It is not just some of them.” She answered. “Everyone here is prejudiced against everybody for one reason or another. I’ve tried to end it, but nothing works. All of the newbies get sucked in like that unless I get to them first.”

“What? That’s crazy. I thought New Jersey was about celebrating diversity not destroying it.”

“Me too. Anyway—Hey, what’s on your necklace?” I gave her a basic explanation of what my grandma told me. “I knew you’d be able to help us” Annika confirmed. “Do you want to sit with me at lunch?”

“Sure.” I replied. “It’ll be good to have someone help me navigate the cafeteria.”

Later that day, Annika introduced me to her somewhat meager amount of friends. In a matter of minutes, the group that I met earlier now angrily surrounded our table.

“So.” Jessica spoke. “You managed to suck another newbie into your little ‘cult’. That’s getting really annoying.” For a while, I listened to the argument going back and forth while thinking about the possibility of this actually happening. All of the sudden, they began to turn on me. They started calling me nasty names and gave me rude judgements even though they knew me for two minutes at the most! When Jessica said something particularly nasty, I lost it.

“I cannot believe it! You people are absolutely ridiculous!” I climbed onto our table. “Look around, everyone. What do you see? You see divisions, and biases people separating themselves by the color of their skin or hair. Even these groups of race have biases and most likely forms of civil war because of other matters such as religion or how much money they have. What do you think? Do you like this system? Do you like how everything has panned out in this school? I didn’t think so. Last time I checked, New Jersey likes to celebrate diversity not destroy it. Do you think this whole system is dumb? Do you want to make a

change? Well, I do so, who's with me?" For two minutes I stood there in an embarrassing silence all the sudden I heard the scrapping of a chair and saw my friend Annika stand up.

"I am with you" she answered. After two seconds, I heard a wave of scrapping chairs and people standing up. These were people who ere actually eager to contribute to the cause.

"So what are we going to do?" I yelled.

"Celebrate diversity!"

"What?"

"CELEBRATE diversity!!!"

"I cannot hear you!"

"CELEBRATE DIVERSITY!!!!"

"WOOOOOOW!!!!" Everyone cheered as we prepared for our new way of life and celebrating diversity of others. In order to do so, we're organizing a fair with exhibits about different cultures. Whoops! They reminds me! I better finish the essay I'm writing for the opening of exhibits! Thanks for listening!