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'Wait, Sonya'

onya was a very pretty girl. She had dark brown skin that Mommy called "chocolate" and two thick black braids that she liked to get all wet in the tub while pretending she was a deep-sea diver, and dark brown almond-shaped Sonya also had many toys, trinkets, clothes, books and lots of love. She even had

beautiful birthstone locket that her grandmom had given her on her sixth birthday. This was her most treasured possession. These things should have made Sonya feel like a lucky little girl, but they did not. Sonya was sad. Sonya was lonely. Sonya's mommy was a student, and although Sonya knew she loved her, she was often busy. Sometimes when Sonya was listening to the story Mommy read her every night, she would question, "Mommy, when are you going to be all fin-

ished getting to be a doctor so that you can spend more time with me?" Mommy would giver her a hug and a kiss and say, "Very soon Sonya. It may seem like a long time to you but you will just have to wait." "Wait." Wait ... wait ... wait! That Sonya heard. She did not like to wait for things. When Sonya asked Mommy for a baby brother or sister, she laughed and said, "You will have one, Sonya, but not right now. You will have to wait, and one of these days you will." When Sonya and Mommy went shopping and passed a pet store window, Sonya cried, "Buy me a kitty, Mommy?" Mommy patted her on the shoulder and said, "That is a cute little kitten, Sonya. But we are away from home so much we could not care for him very well. You will just have to wait and see And, when Sonya missed her grandma and cousin Danielle back home in Ohio, Mommy would say, "Wait, Sonya, we will visit them this summer."

Mommy almost always kept her word. When she would tell Sonya to wait 10 minutes until she finished making the salad, or until the weekend and they would go to the zoo, or even six months until the summer came, she kept her word. They did the things Sonya wanted to do, but Sonya had to wait. Sonya did not like wait-

ing; she was lonely and wanted things now.

Sonya knew that Mommy understood how she felt, but did she really know how long the wait seemed to her? Now that Daddy no longer lived with Sonya and Mommy, she did not get to see him every day and play tickling games. She enjoyed their times together, but that was not enough. Now that Sonya and Mommy lived in another state, she did not have her cousins and old friends around.

One day, while Sonya was riding her bike on the sidewalks of their apartment court, she saw a circle of little girls about her age. Sonya whizzed right over to them and stopped right in the middle of the circle. "Hi," she said. "Can I play with "Hey!" one of the little girls screamed. "You ran right over our jacks with your bike. Can't you see?

Sonya looked down and indeed she had. She backed her bike away and then said quickly, "I am sorry. Would you like to ride it, though? It is a new bike." The girls quickly brightened up and they began to have the most fun while taking turns riding Sonya's bike. Sonya had thought this would be a good way to make friends, but somehow it did not help her loneliness very much. The girls went off together with her bike and left her sitting on the curb. When the other girls tired of her, they brought it back to her and ran off before she could even utter, "Can I play

The next day, Sonya saw two of the little girls on her bus and ran to where they were sitting. Since there was no room on the seat beside them, she sat behind them. "Hello," whispered Sonya cautiously. "Hi," giggled both girls, but they did not say another thing to Sonya. Suddenly Sonya got an idea. "Would you like to have my chocolate chip cook-

gave all her cookies to the two girls, who thanked her and gobbled them up. Then they whispered and giggled and ignored Sonya the rest of the way home.

The very next day, Sonya was sitting in front of her home playing with her doll.

She noticed one of the little girls she met the first day standing watching her.

"Hey, can you come over?" called Sonya. The little girl came all the way up

the walk and sat beside Sonya. Before the little girl could say anything, Sonya blurted, "What is your name?" "Kandy." "Kandy, please play with me. I will give you my birthstone necklace if you'd like." The little girl looked with wide eyes at Sonya and nodded her head. "Yes, I will play. I would like to have that necklace. It is very pretty."

Sonya unclasped her necklace and handed it over. She enjoyed herself more than she had in weeks while playing with her new friend, but every now and then she would steal a glance at her necklace and feel a little uneasy.

That night while Mommy helped her bathe, Sonya was very quiet. Mommy noticed because Sonya usually chattered away to Mommy at bath time. She did not say anything because she figured perhaps Sonya was tired from playing hard

Suddenly Mommy exclaimed, "Why Sonya, where is your birthstone? You wear it all the time." Sonya's eyes flooded with tears and stuttering, she told mom-... g ... ave it away, Mommy.

"Because I didn't have any friends and I wanted someone to play with." Now Sonya was afraid to look at her face; she though it would be mad. After a while



Andrea Velox is a Texas A&M graduate student.

Mommy helped Sonya out of the tub and dried her off "Sonya," Mommy started, "you tried to buy yourself a friend. Do you'e about giving your necklace away? Do you think it worked?"

"No," said Sonya, "and I want my necklace back, too." Mommy went on, "You cannot buy friends, Sonya. You are a friend bouncy little girl. If you give people half a chance, they will be your friend." ones who do not become friends are the ones that would not have like matter what you gave them. Giving or sharing things with real friends is a ferent than trying to buy friendship." Sonya did not say anything. "Rement the friends you had at home? You will have them again, Sonya, but you me for people to get to know and like you. Be open and friendly and wait. Down

Sonya thought she did, and she was ready to wait now, but she also we eighth ann her necklace back

"But Mommy, will I get my necklace back?"
"I don't know Sonya, you gave it away. It is no longer yours. I am so haps that will be a lesson to you." Mommy snuggled her in the bed and

The next morning, on the way to catch the school bus, Sonya saw h friend. She did not say anything, but she smiled at her. Kandy walked up and handed her the necklace. "Here Sonya, my mommy would not let me keep your necklace. She s

it would not be nice of me. "Thank you," said Sonya. "May I sit beside you on the bus, Sonya?"

Sonya was surprised and delighted; she couldn't believe her ears. Su

Shyly, she held out her hand and she and Kandy held hands as they of catch the bus. Sonya and Kandy became best friends.

And when Sonya got home that evening, guess what she found? ... A little kitten all cuddled up in a box in the kitchen. "Oh, thank you Mommy!"

Sonya. She picked up her kitty and hugged him. He was well worth waitin

The MSC Literary Arts Committee recently sponsored a community-wide writing contest. The committee received approximately 60 entries divided evenly among five agebased categories. The entries were judged for style, clarity and creativity.

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