

# Children's Stories

## Culture Chats Writing Program



# Acknowledgement

Culture ChatsBC Association piloted a Project to develop multicultural stories for children from October 2019 to March 2020. Local community members from diverse cultures were invited to participate in the training workshops. This booklet comprises of a short collection of the stories written and illustrated as part of the project. The project supported engagement and relationship building among the participants and the wider community. The enthusiasm and creativity of the participants made it a unique and fun project. They shared their cultural and traditional stories in these sessions. Thank you to the Project Participants Karla Brambila, Tanya Kan, Vasana Chinvarakorn, Allyssa Dolino, Osnah Ca, Krishna Veni, Shijing Xiao and Illustrators Isha Singh, Brenda Torres, Eda Erhan.

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We invite community members to contact us for more information about our writing programs. Our association aims to promote intercultural connections through such literary and arts-based events and projects.

Asmita Lawrence

**Culture Chats**

[www.culturechats.org](http://www.culturechats.org)



**Canada Post  
Community  
Foundation**

# LILY'S TRIP

Lily was done.

"I'm leaving! I'm sick of making my bed and cleaning my room. Work, work, work...All I do all day is work and everybody ignores me. I'm done, I'm leaving, the world will be my bedroom and the sky will be my blanket. I'm out of here!"

Lily started packing what she thought were the essentials for her trip. A Flashlight, her very special blanket, some candy, and her beloved stuffed rhino Alex.

Lily knew her neighborhood well for a 5-and-a-half-year-old. She knew that Ms. Pickle's house was always surrounded by the sweet smell of warm cookies and she also knew that to go to the playground, she needed to pass Mr. Berry's green house and then follow the road.

"This will be easy-peasy" Lily thought and grabbed Alex by the tail.

After walking for some blocks Lily started wondering if this was such a good idea, she was getting tired and hungry and cranky. She was wondering if she should go back when suddenly she noticed a yellow light flashing in front of her. It was a bus stop! And she had a bus pass! The odds were in her favor, Lily ran as fast as she could and got to the bus stop.

Hello there, said a sweet and gentle voice. The voice belonged to a little old lady; her face was covered with wrinkles, but her eyes shined like two stars. Lily couldn't help but like her already.

*"Are you also running away?" asked the old lady.*

*"How do you know?" replied Lily.*

*"Because I'm also a runaway," said the old lady.*

*"You?" asked Lily. "But but you are too old!"*

*"Old people also get tired of being ignored you know."*

*"Hmmm..." Lily thought for a moment. "Old people must be just like children!"*

Written by : Karla Brambila

Illustrated By : Isha Singh



# FORTUNE COOKIE

A 10-year old girl was standing near the store holding a fortune cookie. She was trying to open the fortune cookie, but she could hardly manage it. The cookie was hard, and the girl could only break off small pieces from a cookie making a mess. When she finally broke open the fortune cookie, a tiny slip of paper fluttered on the ground. The fortune read: "You will achieve great fortune and much bad luck." The girl puzzled. What kind of fortune cookie is it? She opened the paper and read again: "You will achieve great fortune..." When she's read the first part, she smiled wide, squared her shoulders, straightened up as if she became much taller. She smiled happily anticipating all this fortune started coming to her in abundance. She was visualizing already that candies, cookies, sweets, ice creams, and toys would be showering on her. She was visualizing that her parents were telling her not to go to school, and she could watch her favorite cartoons and kids' shows the whole day. She was blown away with the first part of the fortune paper. The only thing was unclear to her, when this fortune was supposed to come, today, tomorrow, tonight or perhaps, in 15 minutes her mom would call her and tell not to go to the piano lessons that she hated. She opened the fortune paper again to confirm that it was not a dream. But suddenly her eyes fell on the end of the paper "... and much bad luck".

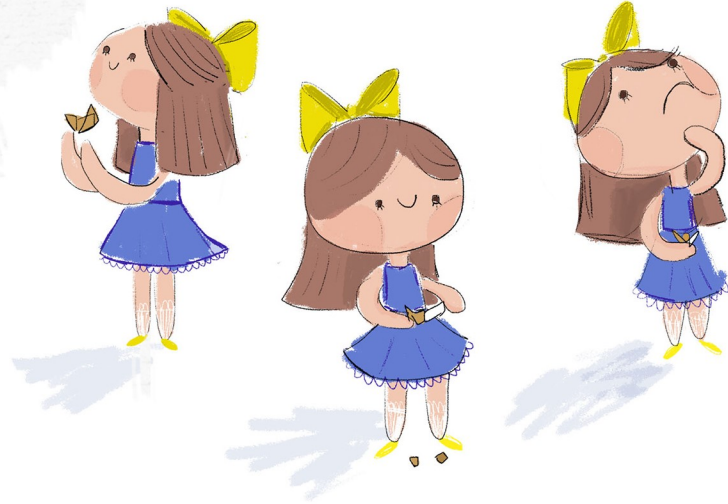
Like a cold shower, this phrase returned her to the earth. What "bad luck" can be for a 10-year old girl? She immediately thought that somebody took her candies, cookies, sweets, ice creams and toys. That her parents would be pressuring her with the school, homework, piano lessons and limited time for watching her cartoons and favorite kids' shows. At this moment the girl's face became so sad that the woman who was passing by stopped and asked her, "Are you ok, my dear?", "Do you need any help?".

The girl opened the paper and read again as if she wanted to find something different there, "You will achieve great fortune and much bad luck." She tore off the second part of the fortune paper, and the windblew it as an autumn leaf. Oh, miracle! Now she had only "You will achieve great fortune." The girl smiled wide and happily went to the store to buy her favorite candies.

On that day, the mother did not call her, and she had to go to the piano lessons. But that did not spoil the girl's enthusiasm because she was absolutely sure that the fortune was on its way to her.

Next day in the school she told about fortune cookies to her close friends in the class. The girl was so impressivethat her friends decided to go to the shop after classes and buy fortune cookies too because everyone wanted to have their piece of fortune.

In the store, there was a big bowl with fortune cookies near the cashier stand. Everyone was serious and focused on picking his or her fortune cookie from the bowl as if the future of the whole world depended on picking the right cookie.



Written by : Tanya Kan

Illustrated By : Brenda Torres

# FORTUNE COOKIE

Finally, the moment has come when everyone held the fortune cookie. Children looked at each other, and as if somebody gave permission, they began to carefully open their fortune cookies.

As children's facial expressions cannot hide their emotions, it was seen who have got good fortunes or who have not. After 2 minutes, the children started vigorously discussing and showing to each other their fortunes.

One girl's fortune read: "Say hello to others. You will have a happier day." Another girl's fortune read: "Happiness begins with facing life with a smile and wink." One boy who was a big eater read "If you eat something and nobody sees you eat it, it has no calories." He became so happy that the fortune was particularly addressed to him. So, he started looking at sandwiches. These three kids were overwhelmed with their fortunes that they did not notice that one boy and one girl were standing nearby and crying. Children with good fortunes surrounded those two unlucky ones wondering what's happened. The girl's fortune read: "All the darkness in the world is there in front of you." The boy's fortune read: "I see money in your future. But it's not yours though." These two kids with unlucky fortune cookies were crying so bitterly that others could not say a word and were just standing and listening to their sobbing. Suddenly, the girl who told them about fortune cookies entered the store. She approached the group of her friends and they told her about two unfortunate kids. This girl knew how to make an unlucky fortune to a lucky one. After reading two unlucky fortunes she tore off the second part of the boy's fortune "I see money in your future. But it's not yours though." and gave it to the girl with fortune "All the darkness in the world is there in front of you." Oh, miracle! Now the boy's fortune read: "I see money in your future." and the girl's fortune read: "All the darkness in the world is there in front of you. But it's not yours though." It changed everything. Now everyone

The kids spent some time in the store still vigorously discussing something. The vendor and customers were wondering why one girl was continuously saying them hello, while another one was smiling wide to them and winking all the time, and why one of the boys was hiding in the corner eating his sandwich.



# WHO IS THE WINNER?

I have got a collection of Legend stories in both Chinese and Japanese. Frankly speaking, I was not impressed by any of them. My dad once collected two bags of picture-story books and stored them under the bed. I finished reading all of them. My dad was smiling when he saw me unstoppable reading one after another one.

One day, he found his treasures were gone. He chased after me holding a shoe in his hand. I scrambled to hide under their bed where he used to store the books. He changed it to a stick trying to sweep me out. I was shocked that he was so mad. Under his sweeping shoe, I have no escape. I told him that I sold his books as wastepaper. It was a couple cents per kilogram. I thought he always liked me keeping the place neat.

In the out of breath chase, I told him I finished reading all the books.

I remembered all of the contents. Finally, he calmed down, he told me, those picture-story books became valuable because they were no longer published. So, they had gained collecting values. He collected them with big efforts.

So, what did those fairy tales tell me? I do not remember. I did remember very clearly that, when I was a kid, one time, after I saw an advertisement on TV, I begged my parents to buy the same orange powder and when back home, I drank it, imagining there would be gas emitting from ears as same as what the ads said. My parents laughed out so loudly seeing my failed trials.

When I grew up, I got addicted to the martial arts films. Same as my parents. We sat in front of TV after dinner. The one golden hour after dinner, one episode per day, from no ads to not many ads. We enjoyed those classic ones together. Nowadays, screens are becoming wider, actresses are becoming slimmer, some with plastic surgeries, but rarely have new classics established or exceeded the ones in the past.

Each classic has its own plot. But all of them have to figure out a winner at the end. The opposite side of the winner must suffer, receive penalties. Hate is hate, love is love. White is white, black is black, right is right, wrong is wrong. When I was young, I wished I could do the same as what the protagonist does. I wished the final winner would be me.

Now I no longer think in that way.



Written by : Osnah Ca

Illustrated by : Eda Erhan

# LAUNDRY RHYMES

Time to do the laundry  
I have no clothes to wear  
Even a single pair  
I tried to look under the chair  
I only found a single hair

I peek under the bed  
Then I hit my head  
"Ouch!" I said  
And touched my painful head

All I wanted was a piece of shirt  
Now my head hurts  
Then suddenly my mom come from the outside  
And she sits on the beside

Head hurts and no shirt to use?  
Please help me! Hope you don't refuse  
As my head heals  
She took me with all my will

Time to do the laundry  
As I'm excited, we passed by the pantry  
We brought our basket  
Full of dirty shirt and a huge blanket

She said we first need a soap  
"YAY bubbles!" as I hope  
We pour it in, in the machine  
Next we throw our stinky dirt in

One by one we drop  
I waited for a bubble to pop  
Tightly, my mom closed the lid  
She said "That's all we need"

The machine spins  
She said this is what laundry means  
I felt sad I can't play with bubbles.  
I wait while playing pebbles

Then the spinning does stop  
And so, I saw a chair and hop  
I looked for my shirt  
I find it no stink, no dirt

My mom said time to fold  
As I firmly hold  
Okay, she said wear that  
My little munchkin cat!



Written by : Allyssa Dolino

# AFTER THE RAIN

“We have enough of this. But I don’t see how we’ll ever get out of the soon-to-come calamity to us all.”

At the edge of land and sea, where no humans ever heard of, let alone dwelt, the assembly of animals were convening on their most pressing issues. Each species came with a long list of man-made malaises they could find no solution but to share with their peers.

“The garbage stinks, but I have no choice: there is no more real food where I live and I don’t know how much longer before the ice will completely melt away,” sighed the Siberian polar bear, his once snow-white fur turned smudgy revealing emaciated bones underneath.

“I lost my family and friends by a billion!” declared Ma Kanga whose pouch was barren – obviously the little ‘Roo’ did not make it. “I myself barely got out of the wildfire alive.” Large teardrops flowed non-stop down her cheeks.

“My uncle got busted when he tried to stop the loggers,” said a hairy orang-utan, swaying his limbs back and forth. “From our hiding spot, we saw him shot and carted away. We never saw him since.”

The din got louder. A herd of elephants showed their missing tusks; the lions talked of their mates turned into rugs or trophies hung in mansions. Birds tweeted of oil spills. Bees buzzed of pesticides that knocked them out and made them lose their way. Even whales spurted out long spouts in Morse code, describing the agonies of unbearably loud noise caused by tankers that drove them mad to strand on the beach. Fishes could not say much, being already choked in their throats by plastic bags as were the turtles by straws in their nostrils.

Written by : Vasana Chinvarakorn

Illustrated By : Isha Singh





# AFTER THE RAIN

A monarch butterfly fluttered its wings. She fortunately found a cone-shaped flower that worked perfectly as a loudspeaker. "I am sorry to disappoint you guys," she said in her tiny voice. "You entrusted me to send the 'butterfly effect signal' to humans, but it did not seem to wake them up. A number of children did hear it, but even their demonstrations could not turn the tides."

Everyone bore a gloomy face. If nothing was done soon, they would all head to their doom. Suddenly a gust of wind whispered by and prevailing above all animals was an eerie echo: "we will do it, we will do it, we will do it".

They turned to one another. But nothing could they see. Only the out-of-this-world sound that made them shudder to the core: "No food nor drink do we ever need, nor rest is necessary; the only thing we do is to multiply, in the human host that is. We will stop them from harming you again."





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