

## (2) The Lottery

“It's a secret. Promise you won't tell anyone,” Tina whispered.

Maya nodded eagerly, crossing her heart. “I swear. I won't say a word. What's the secret?”

Tina looked around carefully. Leaning in close, she whispered to Maya so softly that only Maya could hear. “My parents won the lottery. We're so rich now!” Tina was full of excitement as she shared the news with her closest friend.

Tina and Maya then talked about how different her life would be.

“I guess I'll travel around the world first. And get new sneakers. These are falling apart.” Tina looked down at her worn-out shoes, and then kicked them off.

“I'm sure that now we have money, my mother won't complain if I just throw these old sneakers away.” Tina added with a grin, feeling excited about getting rid of her old stuff.

As the evening passed, they said goodbye and returned to their homes. Tina couldn't wait for dinner, hoping her parents would share the news about winning the lottery. She imagined a life of fancy things and luxury. But dinner was still the same old food, rice and chicken wings. Her parents didn't talk about their wealth.

Meanwhile, Maya met her sister on the porch, bursting with excitement to share the juicy gossip. “I've got news, but you have to swear not to tell anyone.” Then she said, “Tina's rich. Her parents won the lottery.” Her sister's eyes widened in disbelief. Maya's sister wasn't able to contain her excitement. She busted through the door and yelled, “Tina's family won the lottery!” It was loud enough for all the neighbors to hear. Tina's heart sank as she realized their carefully guarded secret had been laid out. Their secret was no longer a secret.

There had been talk around town for days about the winning of lottery, stirring up gossip and guesses among everyone. The winner had not yet come forward to claim the prize. So everyone was guessing about who it could be. They talked about it

all the time, wanting to know who it was.

One evening, as Tina's father washed dishes, the neighbors started to come in, each asking for money.

“Excuse me,” Mrs. Hanley said, “we are having some trouble with rent this month. Could you lend me \$100?”

Confused, Tina's dad looked at his wife with a puzzled expression as more people poured in asking for help.

“My car is broken down. Could you maybe help me get it fixed?” asked one.

“We need just \$50,” said another. “Just enough for a bus ticket, please.”

Before they knew it, their house was filled with neighbors asking for help, believing Tina's family to be very rich. All of them needed something.

“We would love to help, but what makes you think we are so rich to help everyone of you?” Tina's parents spoke their confusion. One by one, they spoke about the winning of the lottery. Tina's mom thought for a while. “I did win a lottery,” she said, “but, at my work. It was a drawing to see who would get next Saturday off.” Tina felt really embarrassed because she realized she made a mistake without knowing everything. She was sorry about her quick words.