

“I Like Blue...”

Madhavi Senagolage*

Department of Biology
Lake Forest College
Lake Forest, Illinois 60045

I should find a way to get out of here; I will never come here again. I walked so as to pass as many people and as much as possible. *Are they all staring at me? I should get a glimpse of my painting before I leave, because thinking about my painting as an exhibit in the Art gallery is a relief.* I walked toward my painting with an upright posture. But, there is someone already there. *What he is doing? Is he sniffing my painting? Yes, he is...* I stopped suddenly. I wanted to yell at him. *Go away, what are you doing with my picture? Oh, he saw me, what should I do now?* My legs felt so heavy that I couldn't move. I'm rooted to the floor. *He is smiling. Should I smile with him? No I shouldn't. He'd better not ask me anything.*

"Hello, did you feel it?"

I felt what? What is he asking? I frowned.

"No, you didn't feel it? Come here, feel the picture," he kept saying while pointing his finger at my picture. He ran toward the painting again and kept touching it for a few seconds. *Why is he acting like this, what's wrong with him?* He turned back.

"Let me show you how to feel, come here," suddenly, he grabbed my hand and forced me to walk toward my painting. *I should run; this man is mad.* "Feel it," he placed my hand on my painting. I looked at my picture. I could see my name "Jessica" written on the bottom right corner of the drawing. *This is my painting, which I drew a few days ago. The building with blue walls... my favorite color. I also drew a yellow-colored sun with full rays because it was a cheerful day.*

"Hey hey, are you here, are you here..." I was drawn back to reality by him. For a moment, I didn't know there was another person around me.

I was annoyed and wanted to retort.

But, "I like this painting... especially the color blue..." he said. *Wait, he likes my painting.* "I can feel the smell of all the colors." He continued.

What can he feel? There's something different about him. He is different from all the people who are wandering around this building. Why is he so different? I tried to notice what was so different about him.

The next moment he was running around the gallery. *He moves fast, why can't he stay in the same place for at least a few seconds? This makes me nervous. Stay still... stay still!*

Within seconds he is back. "Here, the painter's name is Jessica, can you see that?" he asked while pointing to my name on the canvas. *Of course, I can see that.* "Are you deaf?" he peered into my face. *What? Am I deaf? I was right this man is mad.*

"I'm na...not deaf and this is ma...my painting" I retorted. *He was staring at me. I don't want to look at him.* I turned back and walked toward the next painting. *This place is so crowded. I can't see where mom and dad are.*

"Hey Jessica, let me show you something," he appeared out of nowhere. I got scared.

"Doe... Don't do that!" I screamed. *Why is he so annoying? It doesn't seem like he can hear me, and he thought I was*

deaf. He ran to another painting and screamed at me from there.

"Come here, Jessica, over here," I ignored him, but I couldn't, he ran back to me and began dragging me toward the painting. *Where's mom? I wanna get away from him. He is scary, I'm nervous; oh please I wanna go.*

"Touch it?" he asked. I looked at the picture. *A horse... white horse in a grass land full of green... it looks so nice... and the sky was full of blue clouds... Is it the same blue color as in my painting?* I looked at the bottom right corner of the picture to see whose painting it was. The name, "Shane" was written on the canvas.

"It's the same blue, isn't it?" He asked.

He is unusual. Why did he want to find a painting with the same blue color as in my painting?

"Ye... yes," I answered. *Where is he? I couldn't find him. Oh, why can't he stay in the same place for few seconds? He was at the other end of the gallery. He is trying to talk with others, but it seems like nobody wants to talk with him. They completely ignore him. I'm being ignored by people just as he is. Is he like me? Am I like him?*

He ran back to me again. "Wha... what's yo...your na... name?" I asked. Suddenly, he kneeled on the floor. *Why is he kneeling, what is he doing? He was pointing to the name "Shane" on the painting. Is this his painting? No, it can't be. How can he draw a picture? He can't even stay still for few minutes.*

"I'm Shane and this is my picture," he answered while getting up. "There's another one of my paintings in that corner, do you wanna come and see?" he added.

"No no, this is na... number 12, I g... go in the or... order," I replied. *I don't wanna skip paintings. I should go in the order; it is crazy for him to go from No.12 to No.40. I like numbers, they never change. There is always after two... and thirteen should come after twelve, not forty...*

I went from one number to the other. I immersed myself in the paintings. "Ok, here you are...here you are..." he began to repeat those words again and again. *Is he doing it on purpose? Why can't he control himself?* I looked at the other painting he mentioned was his.

His other picture is a tiger. He is not lying, I know that. Do we both have things in common?

"Here you are Shane," I was again drawn back to the reality by a familiar voice. I turned around to see who was calling him. *Dr. Sacks... with him... Dr. Sacks was once my doctor... what is he doing with him? Is he a patient of Dr. Sacks like me?*

"Oh my god, Jessica, what are you doing with Shane, do you know each other?" he asked.

"Yes... Yes, we know," Shane replied. *Do we know each other? We just met, no, maybe I know him more than anyone else in this gallery, except for my parents and Dr. Sacks.*

"There you are Jessica," it was my parents; *it's time to go home.*

"Ga... good bye, Dr.Sacks...Ga... good ba... bye Shane."

In our lives we look for peers who will be the same as ourselves. Sometimes we want others who are around us to be perfect. We think that it is really hard for us to get along with a person who is quite different from us. Jessica thought Shane was mad at first just because he was not like anyone else. Jessica is autistic, while Shane suffers from Tourette's syndrome. Even though they have certain differences they both enjoy painting and want to be accepted by society. If you get a chance to explore the depths of a person who you think is different from you, you will find that both of you have

*This author wrote the paper for FIYS 106: Medical Mysteries taught by Dr. Shubhk DebBurman.

more things in common than you may think. Sometimes, people like Jessica and Shane, more than anybody else can teach us how to be content with what we have and who we are.

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