

The Lottery

"It's a secret. Don't tell anyone!" Maya crossed her heart. "I swear. I won't tell anyone. What's the secret?" Tina looked around. She wanted to be sure that no one could hear her.

Then she whispered into Maya's ear: "My parents won the lottery. We're rich!" Tina and Maya then talked about how different her life would be. "I guess I'll travel around the world now. And get new sneakers. These are falling apart." She looked down at her worn-out shoes. Then, she kicked them off. "I'm sure that now that we have money, my mother won't complain if I just throw these away."

It was getting late. They headed home for dinner. Tina waited for her parents to announce how much they had won. But dinner was the same old thing: rice and chicken wings. They didn't talk about their riches. Tina figured they were waiting for just the right time to tell her.

Maya met her sister on the porch. "I've got something to tell you, but you have to promise not to tell anyone." Then she said, "Tina's rich. Her parents won the lottery."

Her sister didn't understand about secrets. She burst through the door and yelled, "Tina's family won the lottery!" She was loud enough for all the neighbors to hear. There had been talk around town for days about the lottery. Someone in their town had won. The winner had not come forward. So everyone was guessing about who it could be.

Tina's father was doing the dishes when the first neighbor arrived.

Her mother opened the door. "Excuse me," Mrs. Hanly said. "But we are having some trouble with the rent. Could you lend me \$100 please?" There was soon another knock at the door. Then another. "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." Soon the house was full of people. All of them needed something.

"We would love to help," Tina's parents said. "But what makes you think we are so rich to help everyone?" One by one, they mentioned the lottery.

"I did win a lottery," Tina's mother said. "At my work. It was a drawing to see who would get next Saturday off. And I won."