



Surprises

By Hilda Wong

In late November 2006, a family moved in next door and became our new neighbours. It was a 3-member family with a 10-year-old daughter called Mimi. She was an energetic child who never stopped talking or shouting, and very sporty. I could often hear her scream at night which was most annoying especially when I was doing my homework or studying. She got on my nerves not because of her bad looks but her impolite manners. She never reciprocated when I greeted her.

About six months later, Mimi's parents had to leave town for a few days and the mother asked us to look after her daughter during their absence. Dad and Mum were glad to oblige. It was summer and my parents told me to use a few days of my long break to look after her. I sighed and imagined what a nightmare it would be to have a deal with such an impossible girl.

Mimi was in tears when she was taken to our house. In order to console her, I suggested playing ball games after lunch. She burst into a smile and agreed. We went to the nearby playground where a crowd of children were playing their favourite game-----kickball, which didn't interest me much. The kids saw us and welcomed Mimi to join in. She was a bit older than the rest so I thought she would not be bullied. I left her to the game and found a bench to read my book. I was relieved to have a chance to enjoy a quiet afternoon.

Suddenly, I heard a little girl crying. I saw Mimi sitting beside the girl, trying to soothe her. She then took out a bar of chocolate and gave it to the girl. Soon, the little girl was all smiles again and left. I walked up to Mimi and asked what had happened. A boy nearby came over and told me that Mimi was actually trying to protect the little girl from being hit by a ball but Mimi herself was struck by it instead. I then realized that Mimi was in fact the one to have fallen and got hurt. The little girl was just scared into crying.

I quickly brought Mimi home and cleaned her wound. It looked bad and I wondered why she had not cried. Her unfussiness and bravery changed my opinion of her instantly. I was ashamed of my prejudice against her before.

Now we have become good friends and are spending more time together playing computer games and chatting. Mimi is really talkative and no doubt a chatterbox, but it does not bother me at all anymore!