

ESOL VOICES: Student Spotlight

Samar Ahmed

Samar Ahmed is an ESOL student from Iraq. Samar has lived in the United States for almost three years. Prior to moving to the United States, Samar studied agricultural engineering in Iraq, and she hopes to continue her studies at MCC in a health related field. Samar lives with her husband and her 8 year-old twin boys. In this short narrative, Samar shares a sweet childhood memory.



Samar Ahmed, 2016

Childhood's Whisper

"Mom, look at my tooth," my son called to me. I ran to him to see if he lost another tooth. I asked him to open his mouth.

He replied, "No, not in my mouth. It's outside in the sky."

We went outside together, and I asked him to show me where it was. He pointed to the sky, and he said, "Look next to the moon, a shiny star; it's my tooth."

I said, "What! How did your tooth become a star?"

He explained, "The fairy took my tooth from my desk and gave me ten dollars. Then she went into space and landed on the moon. After that, she took all the germs off the tooth, and turned it into a star. Afterwards, she stole the wishes from the star and put it in my parents' brain. This means she put it in your mind. Therefore, my wishes will become true soon."

When I heard him say this, I was surprised. I questioned him, "How do you know that?"

He replied that his friend told him.

After I finished the amusing conversation with my son, I went to sit on the swing. The weather was so clear. The stars were bright in the sky. I looked at them and closed my eyes.

The fresh air covered my whole body and took me to my childhood life. I found myself dreaming of summer season in Baghdad.

When I was 7 years old, one day I was playing with my friends in our club house. My dad built it for us in our garden. The house was tight as a cage. We had everything inside it because we brought supplies from our house. We had food, drinks, toys, and bedding. Even though the inside was so hot, we didn't care about that. We liked to spend our time in it. We talked about many things. One day, my friend told me that I could choose a star from the sky, and ask it to make a wish for me. As any child, I believed that was true.

At sundown, my mom called me to get inside because it was getting dark. After that, we climbed the stairs to the roof. My mom washed the roof of the house. Then, she prepared the beds. At that time, each person used to have a bed on the roof of his house because they believed it was healthy to sleep in open places. My mom brought us dinner and lit candles. After we finished our dinner, she brought us watermelon. It was fun because we used to race about who

could eat more, and we looked silly. Especially my little brother because he used to be the winner. For this reason, he was eating in a crazy way. After we laughed together, we went to our beds.

My brothers' beds were beside me. I landed on my bed and looked to the sky. There were many stars. At that moment, I remembered what my friend told me about the wishes, so I started to see which one I should choose. When I was pointing to them, my brothers asked me about what I was doing. I explained to them that I had to choose my star to make my wish come true.

My older brother said, "I don't believe that. Who told you that?"

Then my little brother said, "We can try it to see if that's true or fake."

So, he started to make a wish. He chose his star, and he asked his star to make my parents buy a black suit for him.

Subsequently, my older brother chose another star. He said in a humorous way, "I want to get a big box of popcorn, so I can eat as much as I want." Actually, my mom didn't allow him to eat too much because he was a little bit beefy.

Then my brothers said, "Your turn, you have to make your wish." But, I had already decided my wish. I wished to join the music and ballet school.

After we made our wishes, my mom came and saw us pointing to the stars. She shouted to us, "Do not count the stars."

I asked her, "Why not mom?"

She answered, "If you count them, you will have warts on your body, especially on your face." Then, she explained her theory. She said that her parents warned her about the negative energy which comes from the stars.

When we were done with talking, we went to sleep. In the morning, I woke up to the sound of birds on a new exquisite day.

After several weeks, my mom told

us that we were going to another city to attend our cousin's wedding. The first thing that happened was my Mom bought my brother's favorite black suit. He was so pleased when he got it. He told me that his star made his wish true, but I didn't believe that. I told him it was just a coincidence. But then, when we were on our way to my cousin's city, something else happened. The journey was so long, so my parents brought all the things that we needed. While we were in the car, my brother was laying down on the back seat. My father put a big box of popcorn close to him, so he could eat as much as he wanted. He was thrilled because nobody asked him to stop eating.

My little brother said, "Wow, that's another wish that came true. Samar, it's your turn."

At that time, I believed maybe my wish could come true. Sadly, I waited many years, but I didn't achieve my goal. My dad tried to register me, but the school was so far away. Thus, I couldn't attend it. I guess maybe everything related to the stars was only a myth, and my brothers just got lucky.

Sitting on the swing, I realized that we never forget our childhood memories because small details of sights and sounds bring them back. Life returns us to our memories. In fact, we live the same situations again in our life, but in different places, times, and with different people. My son may one day be looking at the stars with his children remembering the night he told me about his tooth in the sky.

ESOL Voices a collection of stories written by ESOL students at Monroe Community College. This publication highlights our students MCC who come from all over the world. Look for a new story in the Tribune each month. We hope you will find these stories interesting and inspiring.

Katie Leite & Pamela Fornieri, ESOL Program, November 2016
