

Writing a Short Story

by Brittany W. of Heskett Middle School in Bedford Heights, Ohio

Excuses, Excuses

BEGINNING
Dialogue

“Jenny, bring that note up here right now!” yelled Mrs. Hirko.

Introduction of
main character

“Yes, ma’am,” I replied. Now what am I going to do? That note is just the secret of the boy I like. If she reads it to the class, I’ll be sunk! I have to think of a way to get it back. A plan that is subtle, yet effective.

Conflict

MIDDLE

Dialogue and
thoughts

“Mrs. Hirko, I can’t give you the note because I don’t want you to read it.” Real smooth, Jenny. Now she will read it for sure.

Suspense

“Why not, Miss Jackson?”

“Because . . .” I looked at the clock. Wait, that’s it. If I can stall for the last five minutes of class, she won’t have time to read it! “Because if you do, I will have to turn you in.”

Rising action

“Turn me in?”

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“Yes, turn you in,” I replied nervously.

“For what exactly?”

“Well, for not honoring my rights for privacy. You know. It’s in the Constitution or something.”

“Yes, I know what you are trying to state. Please enlighten me and the rest of your classmates on why I should do as you ask.”

“Well, if you don’t,” (two and a half minutes to go!) “you would be breaking a law. A really important one, too. Breaking laws calls for legal action, which means I would have to call the police. Maybe even the FBI. Since you are a kind, loving, caring, and absolutely gorgeous person, I would never want to do that.”

“Oh, really,” Mrs. Hirko retorted. “Well, after hearing your fascinating rebuttal, I have decided to read it anyway.

Attention, class!”

“No, wait! What about the Miranda Rights? The right to

Climax

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Narrative action

remain silent, and . . .”

Brrring! . . .

I did it! I actually did it! I quickly collected my things and bolted out the door.

END

“Miss Jackson, come here, please.”

“Yes, Mrs. Hirko?”

“I want to commend you.”

“For what?”

“That fabulous stalling technique! I have seen many excuses in my time, but this was the best. It reminds me of what my old teacher used to say, ‘Excuses, excuses!’ Good night, Miss Jackson.”

“Good night.” I headed for the door.

Denouement

“Oh, by the way, Bobby is already going steady with someone else.”

“Oh, well,” I said, “maybe next time!”