

Faraway Short Story Competition 2016

Closing date: 26th August 2016

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Title: The Red Hood: The Classroom Of Doom

Category:10-13 years old

Age: 13

The stars shine high above my head, casting a pale glow over my destination, the Tower of London. That's where the Queen's precious crown jewels sit on their ancient velvet pillow. Tonight was the night. Tonight The Red Hood was going to obliterate the record for the youngest thief ever to steal the crown jewels. A challenge worthy of my talents. Shame I wouldn't get to keep them – GRANDMA made me promise to return them after two weeks. Still, it would be hilarious to see the fuss I caused, a plain 13 year old with braces. I crept towards the tower and started scaling the wall, fingers slipping easily into the gaps between the bricks. Soon I was at the top of the wall, a guard started to turn towards me and...

“Jasmine, could you please answer question 15?” the voice asked. Strange, it sounded just like Mr Grem. Before my eyes the Tower of London melted away and I was left sitting in a hard plastic chair, with Mr Grem, the owner of the voice, staring at me desperately. Blinking I looked down at the book on my small, white desk. I began searching frantically for question 15. There it was, second last.

“110, sir”, I answered, hoping it was correct.

“Finally,” he roared. “Someone who has been paying attention to my lessons!” I couldn't help smiling. If only he knew. Around me I heard my class mates whisper 'teachers pet' and 'geek', followed by 'freak'. I groaned inwardly and wished, not for the first time, that I didn't have to be undercover. In fact they should count themselves lucky that I was, otherwise I probably would have made their school experience a lot more uncomfortable a long, long time ago.

I looked up at the the clock above Mr Grem's balding head. It proudly proclaimed that 2:30pm was, rather unfortunately, the time. I scowled at it. Why was it that when I was on a job, time was my best buddy, but here in the classroom, my immortal enemy? Why did it make home time – and those beautiful gems – so far away? Mr Grem started talking again and I tried to pay attention as best as I could. Slowly, painfully, the seconds trickled by, followed sloth-like by the minutes. After what felt like an age, it was 3:00pm. Home time, precious home time, was only half an hour of boredom away.

At last the bell rang. The beautiful bell, freeing me from the classroom of doom. In a blink I packed up my things and shoved them into the depths of my backpack. Around me other kids were doing the same. Finally I would be free of Mr Grem and his navy blue suit. Free of the white washed halls. Free of the screaming jostling kids. I raced through the winding corridors and out the front entrance, my mind already far away, sneaking towards the those royal jewels.