





# Go Away, Naughty Monster!



The Asia Foundation



My sister Nadia will perform in the school festival today. I do not want to miss it. But I tend to panic when I'm in crowded places. My panic feels like a naughty monster that plays tricks on me. I named it Gorigori.



“Are you sure you want to go to the festival, Hana?” Mom asks worriedly. “Don’t worry, Mom!” I say. “I took my medicine. Besides, Grandma needs you to take her to the doctor.” “Then don’t forget to take this panic bag!” Mom reminds me. I

have taken my medicine. I have my panic bag. I am all set to go with Nadia.



As soon as we arrive at school —  
Bam! — my body starts to  
freeze. “Oh no! It’s too crowded  
here!” Boom! Bang! Boom! Bang!  
The music blares from the  
speakers. “Stay calm, Hana,” Nadia  
tells me. I take deep breaths in and

out. “One...two...three...four...  
five...



“Focus, Hana! You have taken your medicine,” I say to myself. “Phew...” I breathe out slowly.



Just then, a teacher calls for Nadia. “I’m sorry, Hana. I have to go and prepare for the show. Wait here by the stage. Wish me luck!” Nadia tells me. Nadia leaves, and I am all alone.



“Oh no! It’s swarming with people here!” I start to feel dizzy. Gorigori usually appears in these situations. I have to go find a quieter spot.



Gorigori likes to show up during my most important moments. Last semester, Gorigori arrived during my exams and gave me chest pain. I couldn't finish my exams because of the pain. I really want to watch Nadia's performance, but there's no

quiet space here. What am I going to do?



Suddenly... Oh no! Not now, Gorigori! "Stay calm, Hana. Stay calm, Hana." I try to focus, but my brain just won't register anything I say.



“Eek!” I feel like I am being choked. Gorigori is swinging around my neck.



Thump! Thump! Thump! Gorigori is  
drumming on my heart. Thump!  
Thump! Thump! My heart beats faster  
and faster.



Then Gorigori squeezes me so tight it's hard to breathe. "Heeeh... Gorigori, I can't breathe." At that moment, I remember when Goldy, my goldfish, jumped out of the aquarium.



Brrr... soon I am so chilly. I cannot feel my hands and legs.



A few people try to help. “Are you all right?” someone asks. Gorigori stands in the crowd. It is huge and scary!



I need to hide. But where can I hide?  
Under a table? Maybe a cupboard is  
safer?



“Go away, Gorigori! Go away, Gorigori! I don’t want you here. Go away, Gorigori! Go away, Gorigori! I am a brave girl.” I repeat my mantra to make Gorigori go away.



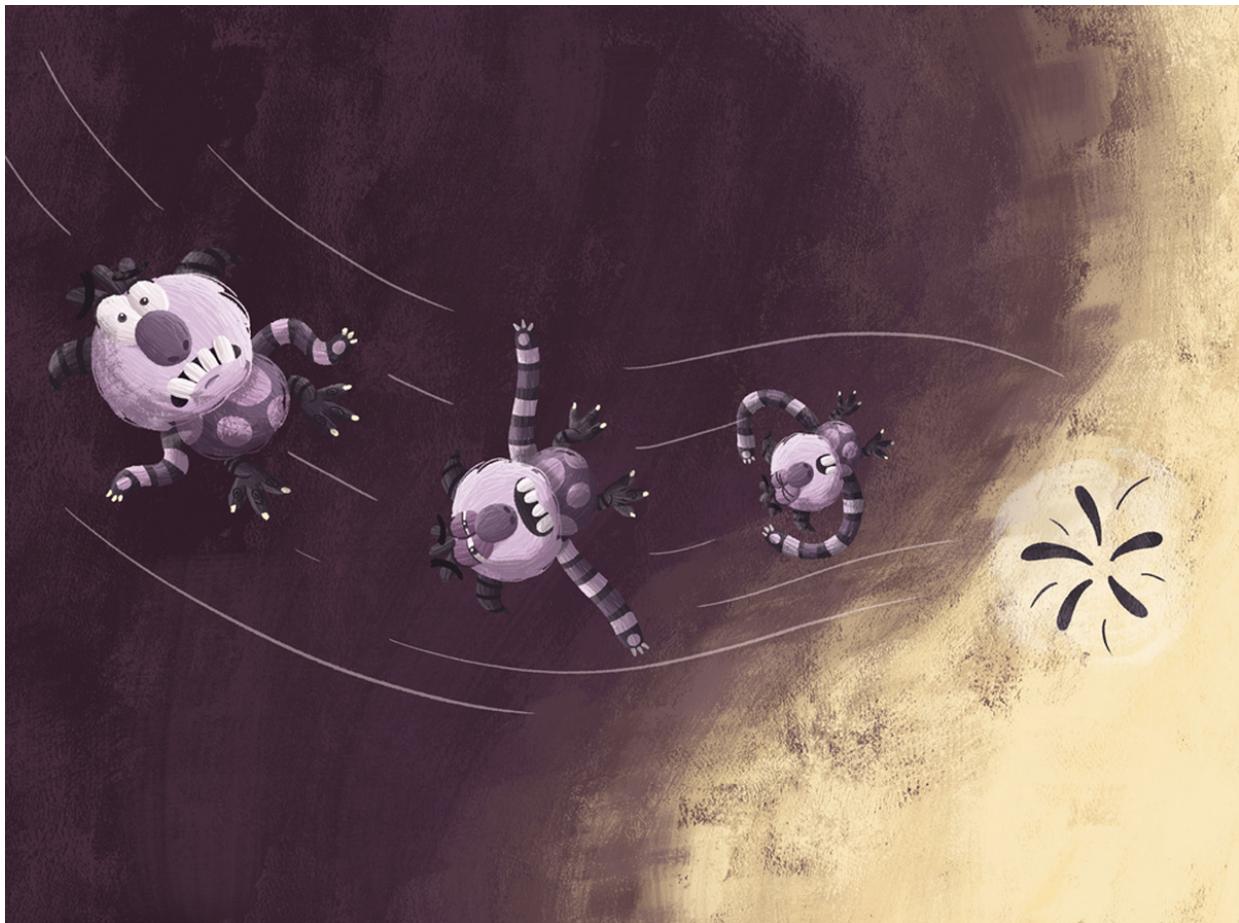
“Hana! Hana!” I hear Nadia’s faint voice. “Hana, stay calm!” Nadia comforts me as she holds my hand. I take a deep breath. I can see Gorigori start to shrink. “Come with me, Hana!” Nadia pulls me out of the crowd.



Nadia takes me backstage. I try to calm myself, but Gorigori is still there. “Hana, use your panic bag!” Nadia reminds me. Ah, yes! Mom gave me a panic bag. Breathing into the bag helps drive Gorigori away.



"Fuh.. Fuh.. Fuh.." I blowed into the quite-bags. I closed my eyes and counted from one to five, "One.. Two.. Three.. Four.. Five.." "My heart started beating normal. Gorigori face seems scared.



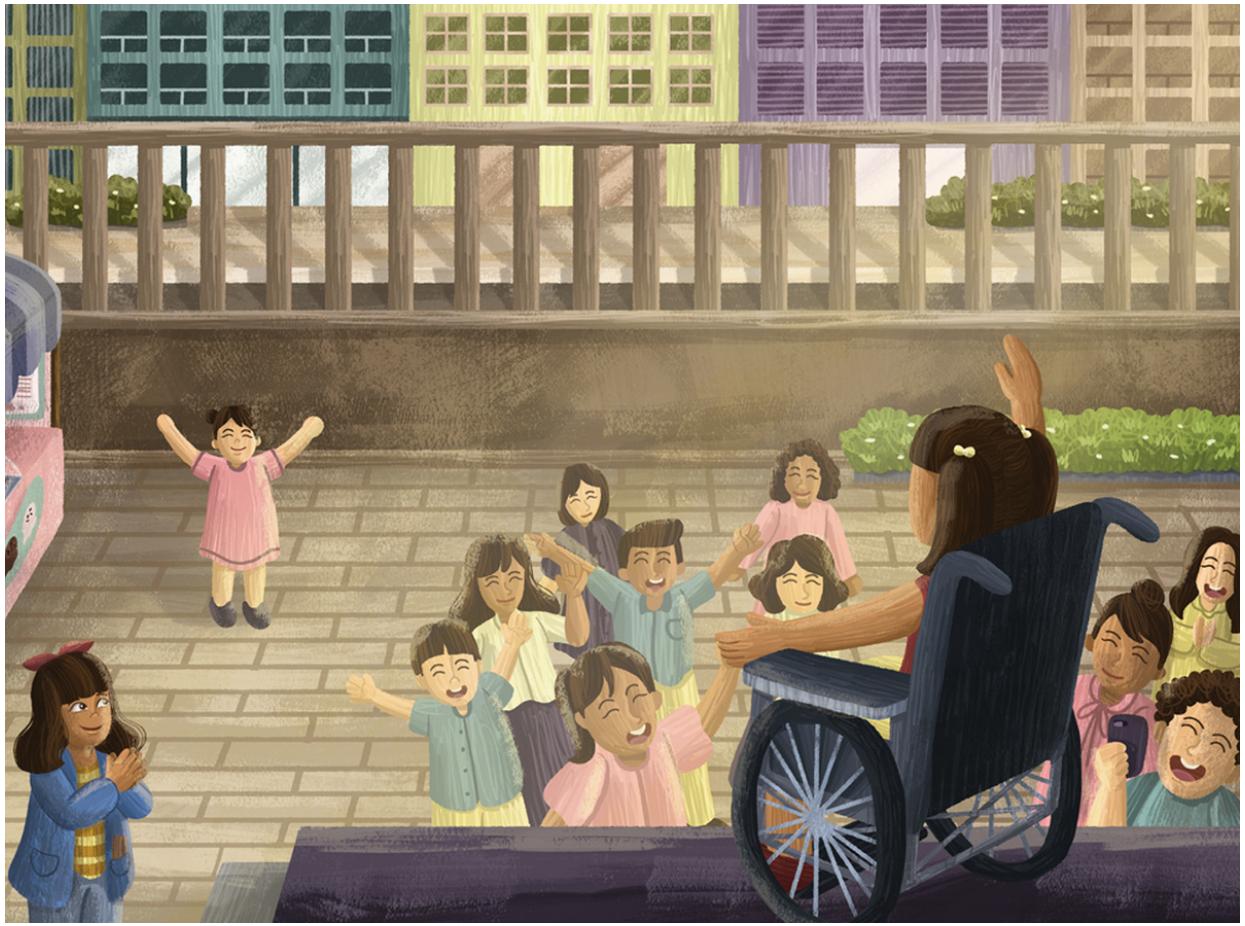
I continue to breathe into my panic bag. Gorigori becomes smaller and smaller and finally disappears. I don't feel weak anymore. I am calm again because Gorigori is gone.



“Are you all right, Hana? Do you need to rest in the clinic?” Nadia asks, concerned. Nadia looks great. I can’t wait to see her perform. “I am absolutely fine, Nadia,” I assure her.



“Hurry and get ready! I’ll watch from the front,” I say. I am still shaking, but I’ll face my fear. I walk out in front of the stage.



I watch Nadia's performance. She looks beautiful. I am so proud of my little sister. I am also proud of myself today because I defeated Gorigori.



What Happened to Hana? Gorigori is Hana's imaginary monster that represents the physical reactions she gets when she is going through a panic attack. People suffering from acute panic attacks like Hana usually also experience agoraphobia, a fear of

public places and situations, especially where there are crowds. What can you do if you have a panic attack like Hana? 1. Try to find a quiet place to calm yourself. 2. Take deep breaths. 3. Listen to calm music to help you relax and stay focused. 4. Take care of your health. Eat nutritious food and exercise regularly. 5. Work on things that make you happy. 6. Talk to someone you trust to get professional help.



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