

## The Letter

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There was a young girl named Alice. Alice had just moved away from her best friend Belle, and felt kind of lonely. She had no siblings and her parents were often too busy to play with her. She laid down on her bed and stared at the ceiling. She missed Belle so much. She had read almost all of her books and thought playing with toys was not very exciting unless you had someone to play toys with. Alice's mom saw Alice and came in to talk to her. "What's wrong?" asked her mom. "I miss Belle." said Alice. "How about you write her a letter?" asked mom. "Does that sound good?" "A letter?" asked Alice. "Yes." said her mom. "You can be pen-pals!" "Okay." said Alice. "I'll try." She grabbed a piece of notebook paper and a pen as her mom walked out to do the laundry. When she had finished writing, this is what her letter looked like:

Dear Belle, I really miss you and I hope you are having fun at school and the park next to our, I mean your neighborhood. I am not having very much fun here because I haven't met any of my new neighbors yet. Are you having fun playing with your dog Alvin? I hope you are. I hope I will get to see you again. Love, Alice

She looked at her letter. Then, she went to show her mom. When she couldn't find her, she went into her dad's office. "Hi Dad." said Alice as she walked in. "Hey, kiddo." said her dad. "What's up?" he asked her. "Mom said I should write a letter to Belle." she said. "Can you check it?" "Sure." he said, turning his spinning chair to face her. He looked at the letter Alice had handed him. He read the letter as Alice watched, waiting for his answer. "I like it." her dad said. Alice relaxed. "It's a little bit short, but it's your first letter. If you write more letters, you'll have a better chance of writing longer, better letters." "I probably will write more. Mom suggested that I become pen-pals with Belle so I won't be so sad and bored." "That is a great idea! Plus, it sounds super fun and you know her so you'll have more to talk about than if you didn't." "Okay." said Alice. "Can I have an envelope and a stamp?" "Sure." said her dad, handing her an envelope and a set of stamps. "Thanks!" said Alice, running out of her dad's office. She took her letter and slid it into the envelope. Then, she activated the stickiness on the back and then put a stamp on the front of the envelope.

She then wrote her's and Belle's addresses. She was ready to put it in the mail.

The next day, she and her parents went on a walk to the mailbox when they had some free time, and Alice slid the envelope into the slot that said "Outgoing Mail" on it. Then, they all walked home.

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The next day, Alice lay on her bed rereading her favorite book. It was an adventure book about a pair of best friends, a unicorn and a dragon. She was rereading the blurb and looking at the picture on the back. She started reading the rest.

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About a half an hour later, she put a bookmark in her book and put it on the shelf. She was about halfway through when she started to want to do something else. She was bored. Really bored. SUPER bored. She stared at the ceiling, trying to find pictures in the bumps on it. In her old room, she had found a cat sitting on someone's lap, a monkey riding a unicycle and a lemon squirting juice out of it. She really missed her old room, in her old house, in her old neighborhood and she especially missed Belle. She hoped the people living in her old house liked it there. She hoped the new person in her old room found those three pictures, or even more. On her new ceiling, she found a picture of two friends, holding hands and laughing. Ughh. It reminded her of Belle way too much, and she did not want to think about that. So she went into the hallway and found a small shelf full of board games and puzzles.

She grabbed a 50 piece puzzle and started to put it together.

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"Dinner!" called her mom about 2 hours later. Alice ran to the kitchen after washing up, hoping to see a plate of her mom's macaroni and cheese and her dad's chicken nuggets and salad. No. She looked at the meal that was about to be served and thought to herself: *Frozen pizza and salads.*

*Again.* She liked it when they had frozen pizza and salads, but it got kind of boring after having the same type of frozen pizza for 2 nights (3 if you count that night) in a row. Her mom had been working overtime and her dad was usually busy answering phone calls, filling out paperwork or typing lists on the computer, so they did not have enough time to make a homemade dinner and they only were able to throw a pizza in the oven and grab some lettuce, olives, tomatoes and a bottle of ranch dressing to make a side salad. Alice sat at the table and waited for her food. Then, they all ate.

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About 2 hours later she got ready for bed. She was in the bathroom brushing her teeth and heard an owl call. "Hoo whoo hoo!" it went as Alice went into her bedroom to turn on her alarm clock. She then snuggled into bed as her parents came to read a book and say goodnight. When they had finished, she lay on her bed. She reached over and turned off her lamp. She was going to go bike riding the next day and wanted plenty of sleep.

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"Ding...Ding...Ding...DING!" went her alarm clock the next morning. She stood up, stretched and turned it off. It was a warm Saturday morning and Saturdays meant some quality family time! She pulled on her bunny slippers and her robe and ran to her parents' room. She quietly opened the door. Good. They were awake already. She had almost forgotten that they got up at 6:35 everyday except for Sunday when they were up at 6:50 but did not come out until about 7:00. She got up at 6:45 on school days but reset her alarm to 7:00 on weekends. But last night, she set it to 6:50. Her parents were doing some Saturday adult stuff: Typing or writing shopping lists for Sunday, watching videos that Alice was not allowed to watch but they thought was super funny, reading super thick books that were almost 4 times as big as her biggest books (though her biggest books were only about half an inch thick) and planning activities to do that day. "Hi." she said as she sat on the bed. Her dad was making a shopping list and her mom was planning activities. She saw that there was a book on her parents' bed where they were sitting and her mom's phone sitting next to them, so she thought they had had some fun before doing work. "Hello to you too." said her mom. Alice giggled. She loved it when her parents weren't busy. She liked how silly they were. Then her dad said "Come here you silly little monkey! I want to tickle you!" "Aghh!" Alice screamed as her father pulled her onto the bed. She was also laughing at what he had said and started laughing even harder when he tickled her. Pretty soon, the whole family was laughing, tickling each other, screaming and crawling all over the bed, knocking off the book and the phone onto the carpet. Then, they sat upright to take a breath. They all went out to have breakfast after that, and grabbed a box of cereal. Yum! It was Alice's favorite kind of cereal: Chocolate cereal! She loved how it turned normal milk into chocolate milk. When they had all finished eating, they turned on the TV and watched a show about superheroes that was on. Then, they changed into their clothes (They were not going bike riding in their PJs, no way!). Afterward, they went into the garage and Alice's mom helped her

snap her helmet's buckle. Her parents put their helmets on and they grabbed their bikes. Alice's bike was a purple bike with stripes of pink, blue and white. It did not have handbrakes like her parents' but she didn't mind. She wasn't ready yet. After all she had only just turned 7. Her dad's was neon blue with red and white lightning bolts. "It helps me go fast." her dad always said. Her mom had a pinkish-purple bike that Alice had learned was called magenta. It had a few black stripes and pink flowers, which Alice thought looked really cool. Her bike had a little see-through case on the handlebar and her parents' had little baskets. Alice then zoomed down the driveway super quickly and then made a turn to the left and tore down the street. When she reached the end of the street she made a tight circle that let her almost touch the ground with her feet and then zoomed back and up the driveway. Then she did the same thing to the right. She then raced back to the driveway where her parents were watching her. "Race you all to the end of the street!" said her dad, mounting his bike and putting on an "I'm about to zoom right passed you." kind of face. Her mom said "Your on!" and she too mounted her bike. Alice rode up the driveway and then stopped next to her parents. "Oh, it's on!" she said. "Three..two...one...GO!" said dad, springing into action and pushing hard on his pedals. Alice and her mom started only a few seconds later. Her dad was in the lead, her mom close behind and Alice only a foot or two behind her mom. Then, she suddenly sped ahead of her mom and was about 4 feet behind her dad. *I guess I just, I guess I maybe just got a couple of good pedals and a lot of motivation and could really speed up. I didn't know I could go this fast.* she thought to herself, but that didn't slow her down. She pedalled, harder and harder until she was only about 2 feet away from her dad. They were almost at the end of the street. *If I speed up now I'm sure to win!* she thought she pedalled hard and fast, faster than she ever had even. Her mom was catching up to her, so she zoomed so fast, it was crazy! She was less than a foot away from her dad and then-ZOOM she went zooming past her dad as her mom caught up to him. Then, they reached the end of the street. Alice had beaten her parents! "Great job, kiddo. I'm so proud of you!" said dad. "Yeah, great race Alice. You beat us! Good job! High five!" said mom. They all high fived and then turned and pedalled to the mailboxes. "Alice, do you want to get the mail?" asked her mom. "Sure." said Alice, happily grabbing the keys that her mom held out. She skipped to the mailbox and put the key in their keyhole. When she opened the mailbox, she saw...A letter back from Belle! She jumped into the air, waving the envelope like crazy. *That was fast.* she thought to

herself. She put it into her bike's clear case. Her family rode for about thirty more minutes and then went home.

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As soon as she got home, Alice opened the letter. It read:

Dear Alice, I really miss you and hope you are getting used to your new home. I want you to know that I really wish you were here so we could still play together. I am having fun here, but not as much as last summer. Love, Belle

*What?!* thought Alice. *This doesn't answer any of my questions or seem like any kind of response!* Alice told her parents that the letter had been strange. "Hahaha!" laughed her mom. "I think that Belle's parents must of had the same idea I had only a bit sooner. "I guess you're right. That's pretty funny, though." she said. "I agree." said dad.

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That next Thursday, Alice was in her room, writing. She was writing a story about a monster and a butterfly that were friends. She was lying on her bed writing when her dad came in. "Hey little monkey. I've got something for ya." "What is it dad?" asked Alice. "And why do you keep calling me 'Little Monkey'?" "I like calling you a monkey." he said. "Because you're silly and cute like a monkey. What I have is an envelope for you." "Thanks!" she said, taking the letter. "You're welcome Alice." he said, walking off. Alice took the letter. It was a response from Belle! It read:

Dear Alice, I think our parents must have had the same idea about the letter and I am sorry about that silly inconvenience we had. I'm sorry things haven't been very fun but I hope you get used to your new home. Alvin is doing good, in fact, I taught him a new trick! I think I'll ask my mom to take a video of him and send it to your parents to show to you. I got a cool new board game about dragons! I was thinking that maybe we could have a playdate sometime before the end of the summer? Love, Belle

P.S. Why did you ask if I was having fun at school? We don't have school, silly. It's summer!

Alice immediately started writing back. Here's what it looked like:

Dear Belle, I am so glad that we are pen-pals! I would love to see a video of Alvin and I would like to come over soon. I'll ask my parents if we can come next week or the week after if that's okay. I know that you have a busy schedule, so that's why I'm asking you if we can do that day if it's okay with our parents. I am glad that you got a new game and I hope we can play it together sometime. I am sorry about the school thing-I almost forgot we did not have school and anyway, I wrote in pen, so I can't erase. I'll see you soon! Love, Alice

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"Catch!" yelled Alice that next week. It was a sunny Friday morning in the beginning of August. She had gotten a response from Belle that Tuesday saying:

Dear Alice,

My parents said that we can have a playdate this Thursday or Friday! Since I don't think you'll have time to write back on time because of how long it takes to get it to me, you can just ask your parents to message my mom so we know what we can do. I'll see you SUPER soon!

Love, Belle

She and Belle were having a playdate and were playing catch. Afterward, they played Belle's new dragon board game and a game of tag. Then they went inside and played princesses in Belle's room with her dress-up toys. They played adventurers too, and then had a snack. They had a one-person-size bag of chips, 5 pear slices and a glass of milk each. Next, it was time for Alice to go home. "Bye!" called Belle as Alice's mom started driving them home. "Bye! I'll see you next summer!" Alice called back as the two waved goodbye. After that, they kept writing letters to each other, visiting each other every summer and began having video chats weekly. Plus, Alice is starting to like her new home and Belle is having her mom send them new videos of Alvin every month!

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And now, years later, they are still pen-pals and they are still best friends.

The End.