

I saw the view from the airplane windows. Apartments and houses dotted the land. The sun was glimmering in the sky. Sara, my mom called me as we reached Florida. Yay! Screamed my little sister Zara. I was happy too! I never saw America before. Dad push open the overhead bins and took out our luggage and we headed out the airplane.

It was 8:00 am by the time we got into a taxi and headed to a restaurant to eat. Once we were done eating, Mom said we are going to stay at Amina's house until we a buy house. We went to Amina's house.

How are you Maya, mom asked.

Good Zuri, Amina's mom said.

Sara should go to Amina's school. Both girls can play with each other, Amina's mom said

I will think about it said my mom.

Amina why don't you play with Sara, said Amina's mom.

Sure. Sara, come I will show my room, Amina said.

Wow your room is wonderful I say as I eye the draped curtains and books lined up on the shelves.

Thanks! By the way what school are you planning to go to? I go to Rosemary Elementary school.

Oh no! School!!! How will I handle it? Are people going make fun of me? I say in my head. Questions, concerns, and doubts take over.

Hey are you ok Sara? You seem worried about something is it this new place and settling in? Amina said

No, I am just... worried about school I say finally.

Why?

I don't know how school is here and what if people bully me because of my... skin color

Hey no one will bully you trust me. Your skin color is beautiful. It makes who you are.

Get your mind off school instead let's eat. I am hungry

Okay I say as we race downstairs in a flash.

Whoa hold your horses what's going on. Mom says

We're just hungry for food.

Perfect timing Amina's mom says its lunch time

I wash my hands and sit on an empty chair and wait till lunch is given.

Mama walks over to me and tells me she registered for me for the same school as Amina and I have to go to school tomorrow.

WHAT!

By the way what's Zara doing?

She is playing with Makena.

Oh, I will check on her

Okay

I go to the playroom and see what the 2 little girls are up to. They were playing with dolls.

Fun, I thought

Lunch time! Amina's mom announced

Coming! I yell, Zara, Makena we have to eat lunch!

Coming Makena and Zara squealed

We all raced downstairs right in time for lunch.

After lunch Amina's mom shows pictures of Rosemary Elementary School. Its huge compared to the school I used to go to in Africa I thought. There long hallways and tons of rooms some are classrooms and some are rooms for Library, Music, and PE.

Is Sara in my class Amina asks her mom

No Amina's mom said sadly but you can play in recess!

What!!!? Amina said

You can still play in recess Amina

But it's not the same if she in my class then I can talk to her all day long. Amina says with a sigh

True I say

Sara and Zara do you want to see how Rosemary Elementary School looks like?

Yes!!! Me and Zara say at the time.

Well then lets hits the road

We get into the car and start driving to the school.

Florida is so beautiful and city like.

We arrived Mama said.

I jump out of the car and gasp by the beautiful painted walls with pinkish white and huge swirly letters on the top. I trace them with my finger in the air Rosemary Elementary School it said. Wow I say quietly in my head

I can tell someone likes their school Mama says

Let's shop for school supplies before its dinner time

Let's go to Costco Amina says with a bubbly voice

Alright quick its getting dark.

We jump into the car and Amina's mom starts driving again to Costco.

This is Costco, Sara.

Cool it looks like a nice shop

Mama gets a cart and we buy and all the supplies on the list I get mostly all pink stuff and Amina gets mostly purple stuff. That's a lot of supplies I say

Your right that's a lot of stuff, Mama says

Oops I didn't check the clock its little past dinner time now hurry we have to check out our items. Amina's Mom says with a worried look

Sara and Zara wash your hands you have to eat dinner, Mama says

Me and Zara quickly go to the bathroom and wash our hands and take a seat at the table.

Amina's Mama puts rice in each of our bowls and then puts some curry.

Tell me if you want more Amina's mom says.

I am done with I dinner I say. Mama, can I search something in google in your phone.

Why? Mama asks with a questioning look

I want to learn more about the...

School? mama completed

Here is my phone, Mama says finally

Thanks Mama.

Girls you have to sleep, you have school tomorrow, my mom and Amina's mom say in chorus.

Ok, we echo.

Goodnight!!! Sweet dreams, Mama says

Sweet dreams to you too Mama, I said.

Girls, wake up. You have school today, Amina's mom says

I see the sun gleam through the window. It my reminded me of the plane ride to Florida.

Girls quick go to the bathrooms you have to brush your teeth and do bath.

Sara and Zara go to that bathroom over there Mama points

Okay Mama

Zara come on follow me we have to brush our teeth.

You all done brushing your teeth.

Yes, Amina's mom

Quick, no time to lose, grab towels and do bath.

In a flash we all come downstairs ready to eat breakfast and ride in Amina's mom car to the bus stop.

Grab a plate and sit down. I will serve breakfast.

Yum the breakfast is really yummy Maya Aunty

Thank you Sara, Amina's mom said

Sara grab your comb and your sister's comb. Mama says

Mama braids me and Zara's hair in beautiful braids and ribbons.

I quickly put on my new pink shoes and practically jump into car.

Are you excited for your first day at school?

Yep, I say with a confident smile.

After a few minutes we arrive at the bus stop.

The bus already arrived quick join the line.

Me and sara go to the end of the line and move along.

Hi Good Moring the bus driver says.

Good morning to you too sir I say politely

He is the nicest bus driver you will ever meet Amina says

Find a seat the bus driver says

Come on sit next to me. Amina, I found a seat.

Ok Amina says

Ooh. Its dark African girl she looks so bad. She is sitting next to another nonbeautiful African girl, Sabrina said.

Bus driver, Sabrina stereotyped another girl again, Mahima said.

Sabrina, this is your last and final warning. Do this again and I will tell the principal, the bus driver said.

I felt terrible, I knew I was not beautiful and this proved it, I said.

Hey don't listen to her she is the meanest, you're really pretty, Mahima said.

Thank you

What's your name?

Mahima

Nice to meet you Mahima

See you at recess bye she waved

I stepped down the bus followed Amina to the place where 5th graders line up.

What's your teacher's name? Amina asked me. See those orange cones over there with the teacher's names go to the cone that has your teacher's name.

Oh no what's my teachers name. Mama did tell her name is it Rosa Grace.

Come on Sara find the cone that says Rosa grace.

Finally, after searching the rows of cones, I found the one that said Rosa Grace.

Before you go to your teacher's cone don't call her Miss Rosa call her Miss Grace. ok?

Yup

Quick head to your cone

Ok I said as I walked to my line.

I saw the girl I met from the bus. Hi Mahima

Hi Sara

Uh you too are friends. Mahima don't be friends with her she is so not beautiful and her skin is so dark it makes her look black. My skin looks so light.

OMG stop saying absolutely mean stuff about her. Nothing you say is going to change being friends with her.

My words may not stop you from being her friend but nothing can let me stop bullying her.

My heart sank I knew I was terrible and I was never going to be beautiful.

I saw our teacher walk to our cone and say Good Morning class I hope your ready for fun first day of school.

She started walking and everyone followed as she walked through the building into our classroom.

This is our classroom where we all belong now, please find a seat.

I found a seat next to Mahima and waited until class began.

Before we start class, I want to introduce myself my name is Miss Grace. Let's start class with the new students introducing themselves

I can tell we have a couple of new students if I call your name, please stand in front of the room she said with a smile.

Sara, Mackenzie, Noelle, and Anna

I stood with the rest of the new students waiting for the teacher to speak.

Sara, please introduce yourself to the class

I eyed Mahima giving me a thumbs up

My name is Sara I came here to Florida a couple of days ago. Before I came to Florida I lived in Africa. My favorite color is pink and my favorite animal is a cat.

Thank you for the introduction, Any questions for Sara

Only one person raised her hand, Sabrina.

Sabrina what's your question

Why does she have to look so dark and non-beautiful?

The teachers face turned stern Sabrina remember what I told the class earlier?

Umm...

I told the class everyone belongs no matter where they came from understood.

Yes Sabrina said reluctantly

Sorry Sabrina but you're going to have to stay indoor for morning recess.

Class continued Miss. Grace asked everyone for introductions and later we played get to know each other games.

Recess time!

Sabrina, you stay right here everyone else enjoy recess.

Me and Mahima went outside to the playground on the swings.

You know what Sabrina said earlier was awful she was stereotyping you.

What does stereotype mean?

It means to treat people by their look on the outside or their races.

Oh.

Let's walk around the playground

As soon we took the first step down a person asked why does she not look beautiful? Is she an African because in my opinion Africans are the worst race? A boy said

Please stop! it stop spreading racism.

I am just saying my opinion the boy said

Come on Sara lets ignore him recess is almost over we have to get back to the classroom.

I have to tell Miss Grace something Mahima said

We walked into the classroom and I heard Mahima saying something to Miss Grace she seemed Angry.

What did you tell her you will see she said with a grin?

Class before we start Art, I want to tell you something.

Racism is not okay at our school you shouldn't discriminate races just because of their looks. Sabrina, you discriminated Sara that's why you got in trouble. Class, if you see anyone being discriminated stand up for them. Understood?

Yes, the class announced louder yes

