

Creative Writing Competition:

Vivian Maier's Photography

Classe de 3^e1

Collège Foch

7 rue du Général Frère

67000 Strasbourg

Professeurs :

Madame Elodie Steinmann (anglais)

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Mathilda was a poor Irish immigrant. In Ireland she was a poor baker in a poor village, she didn't have enough money to feed her family. She crossed the Atlantic to get a better life. Since 1928, she sold Pretzels every day from 9.00 to 5.00. The summer days were extremely hot in New-York city's streets and she was really bored of her job. She dreamt to go to Paris but she needed to save money. On day she had a new idea for a recipe. This recipe was a lemon cake. Her lemon cake became more and more famous in New York City, people loved it and travelled a long way to get a slice of the yummy dessert. She saved a lot of money and managed to buy a ticket to Paris, her dream destination. She succeeded in opening a baker's shop. At the end of her life, she was so famous and talented that she owned seven baker's shop in New York City.

THE SHADOW by Marius and Max



I saw it. I know it's somewhere. I even took a picture of it.

It was during a day of summer 1977. I was taking pictures of street things as usual.

Suddenly, I saw a shadow, but it was not an ordinary shadow. No one was linked to it! I had just enough time to take a picture of it, before it disappeared.

It has now been three years that I'm looking for it. Sometimes the shadow comes to me in the street. I think that it is the shadow of a man who is approximatively thirty years old. It often wears a hat and a large jacket.

During this three years I have discovered many things, I found out that his favourite location seems to be Oak park in Chicago and it appears when there is no one. To take an another picture of it, I'm going to Oak park tonight...

So, I need my camera and a notebook, to write what I see. Well, I found all I need, I'm now ready for this expedition.

It's 11 p.m., I go out of my house. There is no one in the street, the park is empty. To light the area, there are just four standard streets lamps. Suddenly a shiver runs into my veins. I can see it! The Shadow! It is going from one source of light to an another. At the same time, the bells of a church start to ring. The shadow begins to be faster. When the bells stop ringing, the shadow disappears. And a voice says: "it's me the shadow..."

Naji



I was taking my breakfast as usual, but this day wasn't like every day.

As usual I enter the café at 10.00 p.m. , in Noble Square in Chicago. I have nothing to do in the day because my husband is fighting in France. So I do little things: I go the café, I dance in a club, I read books.

So, I take my black and hot coffee, a slice of a delicious lemon pie and my newspaper, even if I don't like to read newspapers.

As usual there is only useless information, but this time I took the last newspaper of the box and everyone around me seemed shocked about the headlines. I went out of the café and started reading this intriguing newspaper that puzzled so many customers.

I turned around and there were two people standing behind me.

One woman started to cry.

"My husband is in London, I think that he is dead", she said.

There was only bad news in this newspaper like a kidnaping, a fire.

Janna et Martin



You are certainly asking why I was there, me too.

My name is Billie and this picture was taken when I was 87 years old. I was born in Ireland and my parents got rich in the USA when they immigrated from Ireland. I always had a happy life. When I was 25 years old, I became a candy maker at Bartons in Pittsburg PA. After 50 years of hard work, I got fired because the customers thought I was mean and rude. After my parents' death I inherited of a lot of money, but I gambled and lost all of my money.

Afterall, I decided to open my own street pretzels shop. All the money I earned, I used it to pay back my debts and to ruin Bartons bonbonnière's business, even if it was hopeless. Currently, I'm in a hospital bed. I know I'm about to die soon, so I wanted to share this little souvenir to anyone who wants to hear it.

I'm not afraid to die, but at least, I wanted to tell you not to spend all your money on revenge and resent. Enjoy every moment and memories of your life.

Chaima, Lisa et Elise



The forgotten photo

It was the 4th of April 2002. I decided to order my old papers from when I was a kid. In the bottom of the last box, I found a picture that instantly caught my attention. It was a picture of me and a friend. On the back, I saw the date written: 09.28.1947. We were nine years old. I was overwhelmed and tears started rolling on my cheeks. My heart stopped beating for a moment.

I immediately remembered this very special day. Our parents were in a meeting that lasted more than expected, so we played outside longer than usually. It was on a Friday; we had been playing for two hours in front of our block of flats. It was after the war, our parents couldn't afford a decent place to live, so we lived in an accommodation provided with the job.

Every day after school, Charlotte and I played outside for an hour, and on this day, we began to play jumping rope. I remember that my mom had bought me a new coat, I was so happy to have it, I didn't want to take it off to play outside. We played jumping rope for a long while, that was a nice game! We were joyful and really into the game that we didn't see a big puddle: I accidentally jumped into it and ruined all my clothes. I was really sad and afraid of being punished by my parents. In order not to get dirtier, we decided to play hide and seek. I began to search Charlotte, but after 5 minutes I couldn't find her. I continue to look for her 20 minutes. She had disappeared! After one hour my parents

came to us. When I told them, while crying, that I had lost Charlotte, they were stressed and panicked. They were trying to hide their panic, but I could feel it anyway. My dad brought me back home, while my mom decided to look for Charlotte. She came home at midnight, but without Charlotte...

After two weeks, we still had no news about Charlotte's disappearance. Their parents were destroyed and after 1 year, they decided to move into another city, to begin a new life. We never heard about the family again.

Just a week ago, my husband and I read in the papers, that the remains of a body of a little girl, 9 years old were found in the warehouse where we used to play. The investigators said that it was likely that the girl was playing hide and seek with a friend and that an accident had happened. She probably tried to find a good hiding place, a hole in a basement was perfect for this. The warehouse was too old and in bad condition, so the ceiling had collapsed. She felt and her head hurt something hard. According to the forensic, she died instantly.

Jeremie and Nathan

JOSEPHINE



Josephine travelled the Atlantic to have a better life in America. She bought a little house in Chicago.

She also bought a bakery in the suburb of the city. But in the thirties, the economic crisis came, and Josephine life's became hell. She had no choice but to sell her bakery and her house. She bought an appartement in a very poor neighborhood.

She is now selling pretzels in the center of Chicago. The conditions are very bad, the place is windy and cold. She has not many customers. She always got remorse and second thoughts and remembers how peacefully her life in France was. During the days she remind her pleasant days in Europe and her family. But she now needs to accept her fate. She regrets this risky bet.



Bilal and Jad

3rd February, June 1950

On that very hot day in the summer, the kids of a Chicago neighbourhood , decided to play with water. Instead of going to school, Peter and Jason who were 12 years old decided to open the fire hydrant. Charles, the kid always wearing a military outfit watched the street and looked out for the police.

Unfortunately, ten minutes later a police patrol came and they arrested all kids and brought them back home. All parents were upset with their kids. It was the owner of the black vehicle who had called the police because he was afraid that his vehicle would be damaged.



Elisabeth and Mary had adopted six children: Steve, Maria, Jordan, Jason, Lucie, Mike.

In 1982, in a small village in Mexico, there was a bank.

The women had a plan: rob the bank!

First spotted they visualized all the cameras, their found a partner in the bank.

That way they knew everything, every detail about the bank, their plan was perfect!

Their children were going to play a part in the robbery.

The women broke into the bank, stole the money.

During this time the children prevented people going in the bank.

Suddenly two people arrived. Steve and Maria scared them, they left.

Elisabeth and Mary ran back to the car.

At the same time, they heard the police sirens. Elisabeth drove off with her family.

Thanks to their fake passports, they bought a boat.

Safe and sound, they went in a shop to buy food, but the police were already there, they were waiting for them.

Elisabeth and Mary were afraid for their children and hoped they would be okay.

Fortunately, by instinct Jason knew it, Jason and his brothers and sisters left with the boat.

Today they live on a secret island and return to the city to buy food.

They manage to survive but they miss their mums very much



It was a hot day of spring in 1963. May was sitting in the bar where she used to go every evening, when she heard the lottery results... She had won! For 15 years she had been poor, but that days would be over soon.

She lived in a small house in a slum. Every morning she woke up at 6:30 am. She took the subway to go to the supermarket. During the thirty minutes that the trip lasted, she thought about her poor life. When she arrived at the market, she bought sixty fifty-pence-pretzels that she was going to try to sell.

After that she settled on a square, in Manhattan, next to the "Barton's" shop, where she always bought a \$4 lottery ticket. She tried to sell her pretzels for 2\$.

May had a motto.

"\$2 pretzels! Cheap pretzels!" she yelled to attract clients.

She would do that for a few hours. She always earned enough money to buy her snacks and lottery tickets and do others purchases. Her days were boring and repetitive. May didn't have a choice. But on that hot day, her life changed.

On that day, she was listening to the radio, in Barton's shop, when someone announced the lottery results:

"The first number is 4! The second is 1! The third is 8! The fourth is 3!"

May looked at her ticket. She played had been playing the same numbers for many years but on that day the four first numbers were good. She was shocked.

"And the last one. The suspense is at its peak... It's number9!"

May was looking at her ticket. There were the same five numbers that the guy at the radio had already announced! She had, in her hands, the winning ticket!

She could at last live in a house, take a shower every day, eat enough food and get a nice job. She would soon be a happy woman.