



# Stolen Treasure

Anne Schraff

MEET THE



Isa

**Age:** 10

**First Crush:** Mikey Alvarez from third grade

**Dream School:** Harvard

**Favorite Flowers:** pink peonies and green spider mums

**Best Quality:** compassion

# CHARACTERS



RAFE

**Age:** 18

**Favorite Movie:** *Dogtown and Z-Boys*

**Future Plans:** would like to be an electrician

**Favorite Skating Music:** punk rock

**Best Quality:** cares about his mother's feelings

# 1

## IT'S GONE

Ten-year-old Isa Rodriguez heard her mom scream. The sound came from the living room. Isa rushed to her mother. “Mom! Mom! What’s the matter?” Isa cried.

Mom was standing in the middle of the room. She was pale. “It’s gone!” she cried. “It’s gone!”



Our family's  
frame for over  
150 years!



Isa looked at the wall. Her mother was pointing there. “Grandma’s picture!” Isa gasped. It had always hung there. Over the mantel. It wasn’t there.

Grandpa hired an artist. The artist painted a picture of Grandma. Grandpa wanted to give Grandma a great birthday present. Something beautiful. He saved money for a long time. It was the most beautiful picture Isa had ever seen.

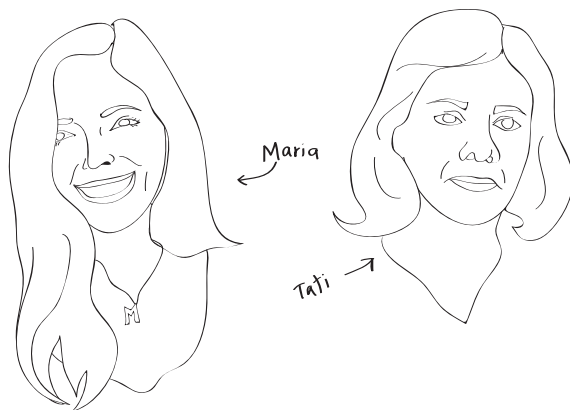


Ten years. That's how long it hung on the wall. It was the family's greatest treasure.

"What happened?" Isa asked. "It was there last night. My friends came over. They looked at it."

"I don't know," Mom sobbed.

Grandma had kept the painting at her house. Until ten years ago. Then she gave it to her youngest daughter. That was Isa's mother.



Isa's mom was Maria. Maria's older sister was Tati. Tati wanted to keep the picture

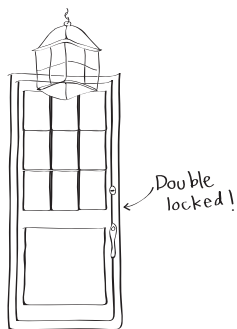
in her house. She was sad when Grandma gave it to Maria. Tati was mad at Maria too. Grandma thought Maria was the best. She gave Maria the picture.

“Who could have taken it?” Isa cried. The picture was beautiful. But it was not worth a lot of money.

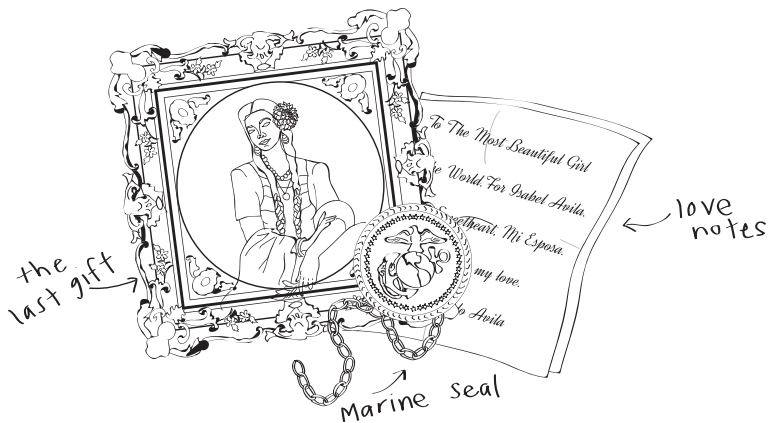
Just then, Dad came in the room. “What’s the yelling about?” he asked.

“Oh, Ric,” Mom said. “Somebody stole Mom’s picture!”

“Stole it?” Dad said. “That’s crazy. Who would do that? Nobody broke in here last night. The door is still locked.”



“But it’s gone,” Mom said. She was crying. “That picture. It was the most prized thing in our family. It was special. Dad gave mom the picture. He died right after that. He was a Marine. He got sent to war. He died for our country. It was his last gift.”



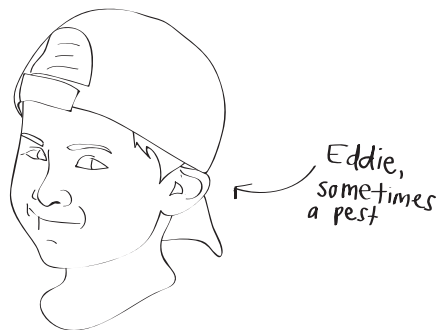
Isa knew the sad story. She began to cry too. How could it be gone?

Dad looked at the wall. There was just a nail. The picture was not secure. But nobody thought it had to be. Who would steal it?



Isa's nine-year-old brother came into the living room. "What's up, you guys?" Eddie rubbed sleep from his eyes. The noise had woken him up.

Isa looked at her little brother. They got along okay. Most of the time. But he could be a pest too.



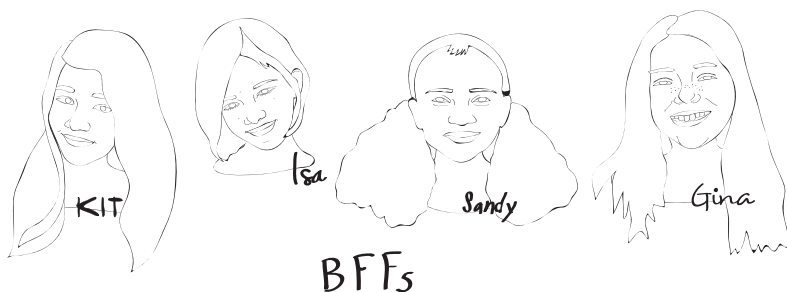
"Somebody stole Grandma's picture last night," Isa said.

"Stole it?" Eddie said. "Why? It's old. Any windows broken?" Then he made a funny face. He looked at Isa. "You had those girls over. They were here last night. Maybe one

of them took it. Kit Shaw. Everybody at school says she's a thief."

Isa gasped. "Eddie! How can you say that? Kit would never do that."

No one else came over last night. It was just Isa's friends. They made bracelets. Kit Shaw, Gina Luna, and Sandy Alvarez were her BFFs.



Kit was Isa's favorite. Isa knew the gossip about Kit. She didn't believe it. Some girl who didn't like Kit started it. Isa hated lies. Plus, she knew Kit's heart. It was honest.

Gina Luna was jealous of Isa. They



always competed. Isa usually won. Gina didn't like that. But they were still friends. There was a lot to like about Gina. Isa tried to overlook the jealousy.

Sandy Alvarez was a nice girl. Her family was poor. She dressed badly. Hm. But that didn't mean anything. Did it?

Isa glanced at Mom. Her eyes were big. Her mom was thinking something. She was thinking one of Isa's friends could have done it. No way!

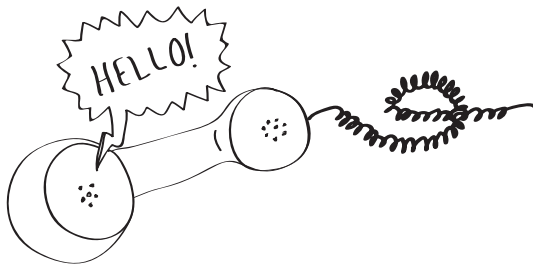


## 2

# WAS IT KIT?

“Honey,” Mom said slowly. “I know your friends are good girls. But they *were* here last night. What I’m thinking is—”

“Mom,” Isa cried. “How can you even think that? No way! My friends do not steal. They know we love that picture. They would *never* steal it!” Tears ran down Isa’s face.



“Well,” Dad said in a serious voice. “Somebody took it. Call the girls. Ask them if they saw anything. Heard anything. It can’t hurt.”

“Oh, Ric,” Mom groaned. “Mom is coming to dinner. On Sunday. I can’t take it. She will be so sad. She’ll see it’s gone. And she’ll cry.”

THURS	FRI	SAT	SUN
1	2	3	4
X	X	X	grandma dinner

“I guess we better call the cops,” Eddie said. He thought it would be pretty exciting. The police coming in. Looking around. Asking questions.

“The police!” Mom cried. “Nobody broke

into the house. The doors were locked. I checked before going to bed. I always check.”

Dad turned to Isa. “Isa, why not just call your friends? Tell them what happened. Kids sometimes do dumb things. Maybe it’s a trick.”

Isa was shocked. Dad thought her friends did something. Knew something. Stole the picture. Really? How could that be? A cold fear came over her. What if it was true?

“Everybody at school says Kit steals,” Eddie said.



“That’s a lie!” Isa yelled.

Eddie backed off. “Maybe it was a joke. Or something. Like Dad says.”

Isa knew what her parents were thinking. Maybe Kit *was* a thief. Maybe Gina was sick of Isa winning. Getting praise. Maybe Gina decided to hurt Isa. Maybe Sandy was tired of being poor. So tired that she decided to steal. The picture looked expensive.



Isa went to her room. She called Kit first. “Hi, Kit. About last night. Something bad happened at our house. To my grandma’s

picture. Somebody took it. We feel awful. I was just wondering. Maybe you heard or saw something.”

There was a long silence. When Kit finally spoke, she sounded angry. “Wow. Really, Isa? Any time something goes missing? Everybody looks at me. But, silly me. I thought we were close. I didn’t think you believed the talk. I thought we were best friends, Isa. I guess I was wrong.”

Kit sounded like she was crying. Isa’s heart sank.



# Stolen Treasure

No way did my friends take the treasure. But it's gone. Now what?



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