SOAR [4] History/Culture

Bold Words



by M.G. Higgins



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Loud machines clank. Dust fills my nose. The heat reminds me of the farm. But this heat is stuffy.

My mind wanders. Thoughts of late summer harvests fill my head.

"Flo!" a voice yells. "Stop dreaming!"

The foreman is speaking to me. I nod and turn back to my machine. The loom is what turns thread into cloth.



I lace a thread through the harnesses.
Then I start the machine.

Clunk, clunk.

One harness rises. The other harness lowers. The shuttle with thread passes between them.

Clunk, clunk.



The day goes by slowly. My shift is twelve hours long. There are two more hours to go. I try not to think about time.

I hear a scream. It is Molly. She is at the loom next to mine.

"My hand!" Molly cries. "It's caught!"

Oh no! I run over and turn off the loom.

“Get back to work,” the foreman yells.





Molly cries out in pain. Her hand is still trapped. My stomach turns. Her bones must be crushed.

The foreman tries to help her. He stops to **glare** at me. “This is your last warning,” he says.

There is nothing I can do. I return to my loom.

Molly holds her broken hand. She cries as she leaves the building.



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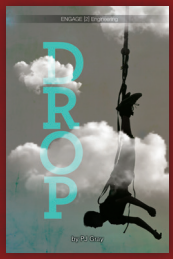


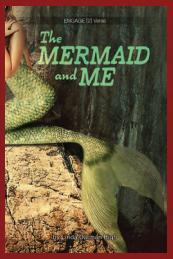




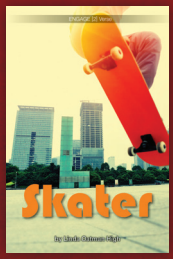








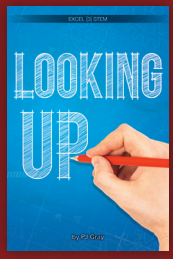


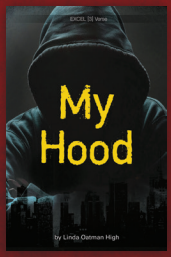


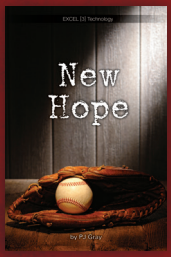


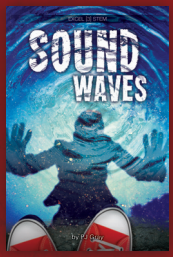


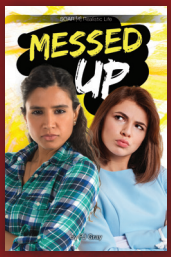














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SOAR [4] Realistic Life



Joe's summer had not even started. But it was already **ruined.**

To him, summer meant playing sports with his friends. His mom had other plans, though. She had gotten him a job.

Even worse, the job wasn't at a pizza place or a store. It was at an accounting office. That meant dressing up and taking the early bus.

Not fun, he thought when she told him.



“Why accounting?” he asked. “I know nothing about it.”

“But you’re good at math,” she said. “They will teach you what you need to know.”





“A job using math doesn’t sound fun. I don’t even use it in real life.”

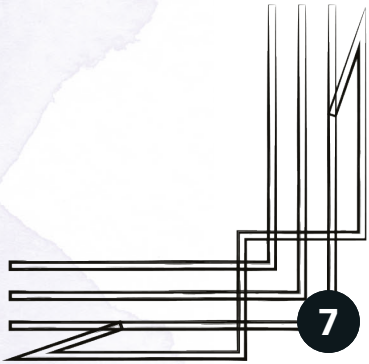
“You use it every day,” she said.

Joe rolled his eyes. “When?”

"Whenever you buy something. And when you play sports. Did I tell you the pay is good?"

Joe perked up. "Really? Then I'll do it."

She smiled. "I thought that would convince you."





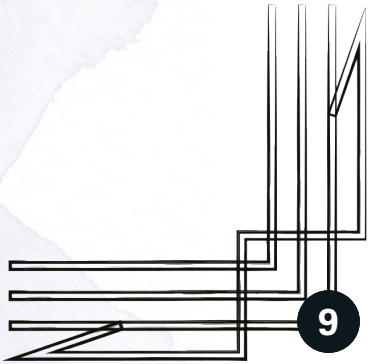
A few days passed. It was Joe's first day on the job. He was tired. And his tie felt too tight. Dressing up was the worst.

It was summer. He should be with his friends. Instead, he sat on the bus and read their texts.

Ed and Tom were headed to the park.

“Where are you?” Ed texted.

“On my way to work,” Joe texted back.



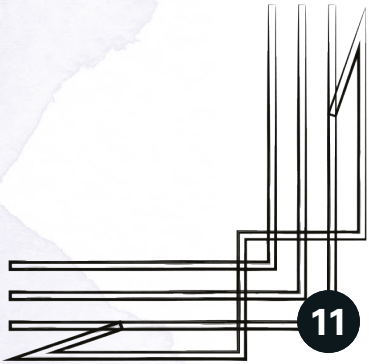


When he got to the office, his boss greeted him. Her name was Mrs. Dunn.

“Follow me,” she said.

She led him to a room. There was a folding table in the corner. This was his desk.

Then she handed him a piece of paper. "These are the office rules. Read them, and I'll be back."





Joe read the rules. Then his phone **buzzed.** It was a text from a friend. No one was around, so he texted back. Then he played a few games.

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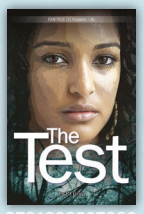
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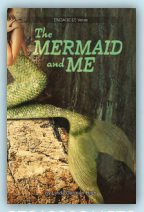
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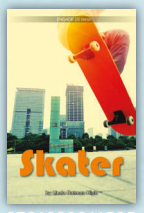
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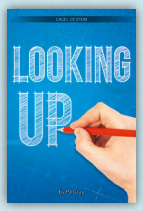
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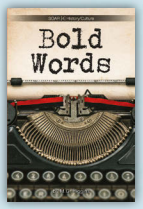
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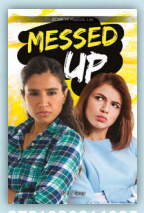
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