

A Bad Move

This was the fourth time this year that Lin was the new kid in school. Four moves in seven months--all because her mother's job kept them moving. She had decided back in December that making new friends was a waste of time. She would join no more clubs. She would add no new names to her phone list.

On her first day, the teacher welcomed her to the class and assigned a "buddy" to help her find her way around. This time, it was a girl named Marley, or Carly, or something. Lin had stopped paying attention to kids' names.

Lin knew that she would forget them all, just as the other kids from all those other schools had probably forgotten her. As the teacher was giving Lin papers filled with assignments to make up, Lin made her decision. At this school, she would be memorable.

The next day, Tuesday, instead of wearing the usual jeans and tee shirt, she wore a pair of bloomers from an old Raggedy Ann Halloween costume. She didn't brush her hair. On Wednesday, she wore an old dress of her mother's, along with soccer cleats. "At least they'll remember me after we've moved away," she thought on Thursday as she put on a plaid skirt, a tee shirt, and a pile of long beaded necklaces her grandmother had given her to play with.

On Friday, they called her mother to school. She was a bit worried about what her mom would say when she saw her outfit—a hula skirt from a vacation in Hawaii worn on top of a pair of tattered jeans. From inside the principal's office, she heard her mother and Mrs. Leonard talking.

"She'll be so excited," her mother said to Mrs. Leonard in the hallway. "We've moved so often, but this time, we're here to stay. I've got a new job in town. Finally, she'll be able to fit in."