



The New Beginning

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A Teen Friendly Book
for 15 to 16 year olds

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My Sister

I know my sister. I know what she does before she will consider going out in public. Most days she looks at herself in the mirror for at least two hours before she is satisfied with what she sees.

I know on this day, her first in a new situation, she would be looking at herself in the mirror, shaking her head in disbelief and disgust.

She would not be impressed. As she stood there looking at a mouth filled with metal, "How long do braces take to do their work?" she would be fuming. Two pimples were on the rise and she was wearing the ugliest uniform in the world. She would be

thinking about how her life changed and so quickly, how it had gone to the dogs in such a short time.

This day was to be her first day at a new school, in a new town in a new country. She was now living in the slums as she saw it. Gone was the apartment that overlooked the Park. Now she lived in a house that looked like everyone else's.

"Who in their right mind would make 15 year old girls wear black shorts as part of a uniform? They have no form and no style; no style!" I heard that comment screamed again and again and again, at least a hundred times in the days before our first day of school.

I know that's what she saw, a girl with no style frowning back at her. "And the shirt is so ugly, grey with a green boat on it. Grey and colourless and mostly ugly! Ugly, ugly, ugly and unattractive. I have never worn a boat on a shirt ever!" She told mother time and time again.

What impression would she make? Not a very good one. She was certainly sure about that. She wanted to sparkle. She wanted to look good and

feel good. Instead she looked like a dork and felt like one too.

Mother called her name and said it was time to go. I know Stephanie's pace. She would slowly picked up her bag, take one last look in the mirror for ten minutes to see if anything had changed, but no luck, she would still see the same skinny stick wearing a hugely dull uniform.

She arrived in the kitchen to see me dressed in the same uniform that she was wearing. She shook her head and screamed. Imagine wearing the same outfit as her brother, like they were twins. I said, "We look like twins" to make her a little bit more angry, as if she needed that.

This was my first day at the new school too, in the new town and it was also my first day in High School.

I was not looking forward to it. I was not in the least worried about the uniform. I did not remember or even care about the clothes I wore. My mother often told me to put something different on because I had been wearing the same thing for a week. I

never noticed. I never thought much about the clothes that I wore.

I had other worries about this day. I was sure my head would be flushed in the toilet and I would get lost on my way to class and be laughed at and tortured by big, monstrous kids. I heard all of the stories and was terrified about what was about to happen.

But this is not the start of the story. The story began a few weeks ago in New York City, the city where I was born, the city I knew for twelve years before my mother decided we needed a change.

1. Who is the story about?
2. Who is telling the story?
3. State three reasons why Stephanie is unhappy.
4. How did Stephanie want to be seen by others?
5. Why did she think the shirt was ugly?

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The Loud Shout

Some said it was an unbelievably loud shout, others claim it was more like a horribly high pitched scream. I heard it and I was 10 blocks away and was glad that I was 10 blocks away.

We knew life was going to change. My mother and father had been fighting for months, years really. Finally, enough was enough and their final shouting match ended in him walking out.

She said that she did not want to be anywhere near him. We thought that meant that we were going to go to live in another part of the city, or move out to the country. We got that wrong.

That's when my lovely, uptight 15 year old sister let it rip. That's when my mother informed her that we were moving to Australia.