

## **Her Top** by Ellie H.

One afternoon, Elenore was walking down the alley in her scraggly, itchy clothes when she came upon a bag of food that was just waiting to be eaten! She saw it and thought, "That bag of food must have been waiting here for me."

She pulled out her favorite (and only) toy, a top, spun it four times and whispered, "I want to be adopted someday."

Then she put the top away, opened the bag, ate what was inside and stood up and looked around. She saw someone running and screaming at the top of their lungs.

"What did you do?" she yelled. Elenore started running, and tripped. She heard a loud crack, like the sound of something hitting the ground. But she didn't care. All she cared about was getting away from that monster and...her top. But where was her top? She thought. "Oh, no, it's not in my pocket!" she said to herself. But she couldn't go back to look for it with that monster running behind her. If he caught her, she could have to pay a fine that she couldn't afford. Soon she realized that the orphanage was just ahead. She knew John – her only friend – would be there to set a trap for the man following her. So she ran right up to the orphanage, went inside right through the door (because that's usually where the traps were) and when she looked behind her, there was the man, trapped in a net hanging from the ceiling! Then the orphanage keeper came out to see what all the racket was, and saw the man in the net.

"Elenore," the keeper Mary said. "John. What is the meaning of all of this?" She was screaming at the top of her lungs.

"Well, um, you see, we uh, well..." said John.

"What he's trying to say is I usually come in with a person chasing me because I always find a bag of food or something that is another person's, so John puts up traps to catch them so they can't catch me," Elenore tells them.

"Well," said Mary, "you are now only allowed out if this orphanage once a week."

"Once a week?" said Elenore and John at the same time.

"Yes."

Then she walked away from them, but Elenore shouted back, "NO! You can't do this to us!"

"Well, actually she can," said John.

"Well, she shouldn't," said Elenore.

"I'm just going to bed," said John

“Me, too” mumbled Elenore.

The next day, both John and Elenore asked Mary if they could go outside and play in the orphanage’s back yard. After agreeing, they went out, and discussed how they were going to get Elenore’s top back.

“We could go next week,” said John.

“I think we should sneak out at night,” said Elenore.

“But what if we get caught?” asked John.

Elenore replied, “You have your pencil and it’s your favorite toy. I don’t have my favorite toy.”

“You’re right,” said John. Tonight we will sneak out and try to find it.

“I’m with you,” Elenore said. “But we will need Mary’s flashlight, right?”

“Yes, we will,” said John. “We will get it when she does the weekly shopping trip.”

An hour later, after Mary left for the store, John and Elenore walk over to her nightstand, open the drawer and yes, there is was – the flashlight. “Ok,” said Elenore, “tonight we go.”

That night, when Mary came back from shopping, she seemed out of breath and tired. She went to bed right away and in ten minutes she was asleep. Elenore and John went to an open window and jumped to the ground. John reached for the flashlight – but it wasn’t there!

“Oh NO!” John said. “It’s not there!”

“Do you think you dropped it?” asked Elenore.

“Maybe, but..oh, here it is!” said John and off they went.

When they got to the place where Elenore dropped her top, she stopped, got on the ground and started looking for it with the flashlight. She looked in every nook and cranny that she could see, but – no top. She told John that she couldn’t find it, and after John looked, he decided that it just wasn’t there.

They headed back to the orphanage, and upon entering the grounds, saw Mary looking around.

“Oh, there you are,” she said. I have been looking for both of you. I just got a phone call from someone who wanted to----wait! What are you two doing out here??” she asked. We went to go look for Elenore’s top,” said John.

“Oh – you mean THIS top?” said Mary, pulling out the toy from her pocket.

“YES!” yelled Elenore and John together.

“Well, here you go then,” she said.

Elenore spun the top and said, “Thank you, thank you, thank you!”

“What I was going to tell you, before I got interrupted,” said Mary, “is that there is a couple interested in adopting a boy and girl who are both nine years of age. I thought you two would be perfect for them.

“We would love to be adopted by them!” they both said excitedly.

“They will be here tomorrow to fill out the paperwork and then you will leave for your new home! Mary said.

The next day, the couple came to meet John and Elenore and to complete the necessary papers. Once done, it was time to go. They got into their new parent’s car and headed off, saying goodbye to the orphanage but holding on tight to the toys they cherished for so long.