

Write an account of a time you were late:

Closing the door behind me, I took a deep breath and strode towards the bus stop. I had freshly washed hair; my tie was straight and in my bag nestled my favourite bacon, lettuce and tomato sandwich, which I knew, no matter what the day held, would make my lunchtime happy. Today was my first day at my new school and I was determined I would use this fresh start to create a new me. I would be smart. I would be friendly. Most importantly, I would be on time!

The hot September sun was already radiating rays of happiness onto the rooftops of Alpraham Crescent. The cloudless sky was a metaphor for the clean slate that I had been given and nothing was going to mess this up for me.

'Help!'

Did anyone else hear that? No. It must have been my subconscious having a little panic.

'Help me!'

This time the words were clear as the sky above me but distant. Was it the kid from down the street playing games on me before I have even set foot into the grounds of my new school?

'Help me. Please!'

This plea was louder, clearer and closer than before. Could it be?

I quickly checked my watch. I had five minutes before the bus would arrive. The only bus that would get me to school on time. But if I was right, I could not leave this person on their own struggling.

Like an Olympic athlete, I jumped the hedge between my drive way and Enid's next door.

Enid Elizabeth Johnson-White. She had introduced herself by her full name approximately five minutes after we had moved into number 52. Her long white plaits lay across either shoulder and she peered at my family and I through half-moon glasses that clearly were used for intimidation

rather than sight improvement. Enid had made it clear from the start that as a retired head teacher she was not a fan of people, especially those that still went to school.

Peering through the pristine windows I could clearly see a pop-sock covered leg languishing from behind the sofa. Enid was stuck!

'I'm here Mrs Johnson-White' I called through cupped hands, and immediately regretted the mist stain I had created the polished glass. 'Mrs Johnson-White? Can you hear me?'

"Of course I can hear you. I can't move though. Do something. I'm stuck!" Even while squashed between her sofa and a fallen bookshelf, the distain in her voice was palpable. I checked my watch again, I had three minutes.

I rushed to the front door. Locked. At full speed I pelted round to the back door. Locked. The only way in was through the small window that was letting the late summer air into the downstairs toilet.

Reaching my hand through the small opening I hoped that I was tall enough to reach the latch to the main window. Bingo!

I scabbled as quickly as I could to find my way to the casualty.

With the strength of one of those strong men you see on TV on Boxing Day, I managed to haul the bookcase from atop of Enid. The relief and gratitude on her face was undeniable. Reaching my arm down to pull her back on to her feet I caught glimpse of my watch. I knew my fresh start was over before it had even begun.

At nine twenty three I had to ring the reception bell to be allowed to enter the school gates. There was no sneaking in this time. Pushing open the door to reception I was met by the fierce looking Deputy Head. Mr White. The scowl on his face quickly softened when he said, 'I've had a phone call from my Aunt. You did well this morning. Welcome to your new school...Head Teacher.'