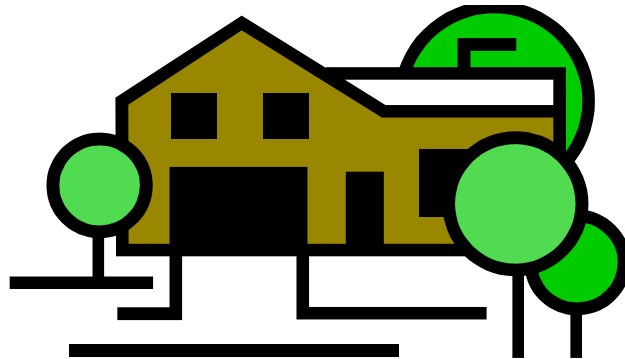


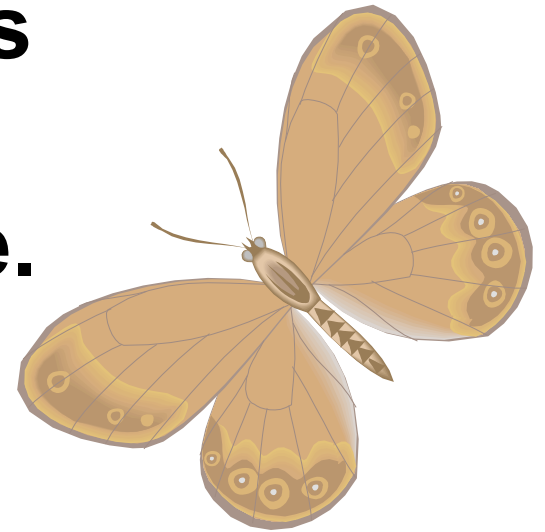
Going Home



Three boys and three girls were going to Florida. When they got on the bus, they were dreaming of golden beaches and the blue sea as the great **chill** of New York disappeared behind them.



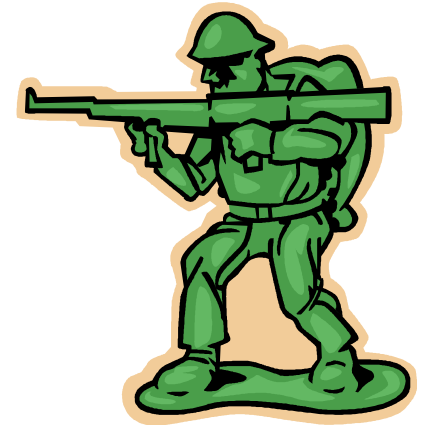
As the bus **rumbled** south, they began to notice Vingo. He sat in front of them, dressed in a plain, **ill-fitting** suit. He seldom moved, his dusty face masking his age. He chewed the inside of his lip a lot, frozen into some personal **cocoon** of silence.

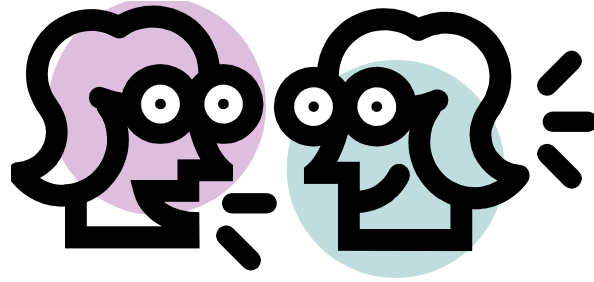


Deep into the night, the bus pulled into a roadside restaurant, and everybody got off except Vingo. He sat **rooted** in his seat, and the young people began to wonder about him, trying to imagine his life:



Perhaps he was a sea captain, a **runaway** from his wife, an old soldier going home. When they went back to the bus, one of the girls sat beside him and introduced herself.





“We’re going to Florida,” she said **brightly. “I hear it’s beautiful.”**

“It is,” he said quietly, as if remembering something he had tried to forget.



“Want some wine?” she said. He thanked her and after a while, slowly and **painfully, he told his story. He had been in jail in New York for the past four years, and now he was going home.**



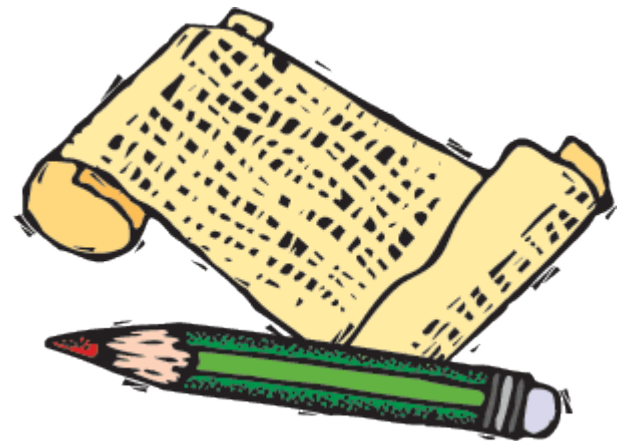
“Are you married?”



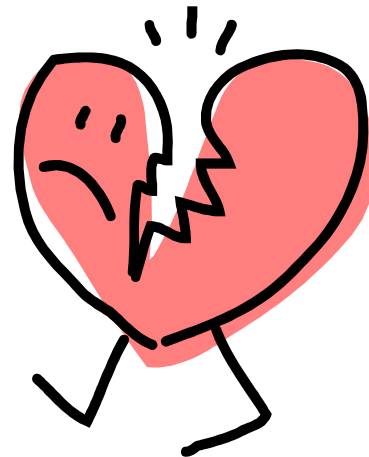
“ I don't know.”

“You don't know?” she said.

“Well, when I was **behind the bar, I wrote to my wife,” he said. “I told her that I was going to be away a long time, and that if she couldn’t stand it, if the kids kept asking questions, if it hurt too much, well, she could just forget me.”**”



“I’d understand. Get a new guy, I said — she’s a wonderful woman, really something — and forget about me. I told her she didn’t have to write me. And she didn’t. Not for three and a half years.”



“And you’re going home now, not knowing?”

“Yeah,” he said shyly. “Well, last week, when I was sure the parole was coming through, I wrote her again.”



“I told her that if she’d take me back, she should put a yellow handkerchief on the oak tree near our house, and I’d get off and come home. If she didn’t want me, forget it — no handkerchief, and I’d go on through.”

“Wow,” the girl said.



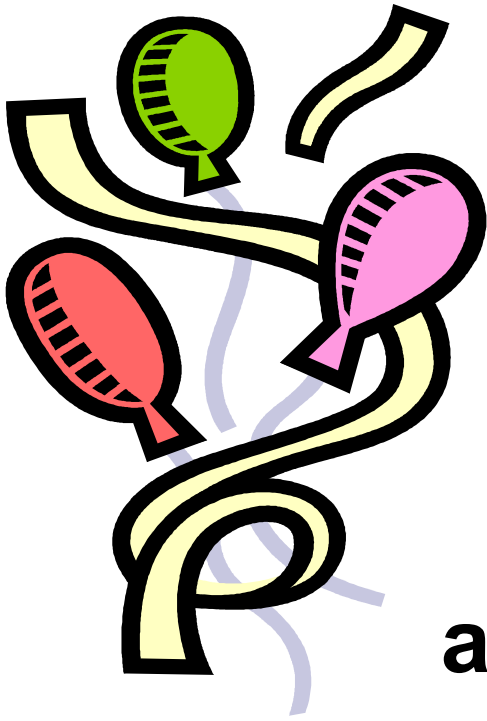
She told the others,
and soon all of them were
in it, caught up in the
approach of Vingo's
hometown.



The young people took over window
seats, waiting for the approach of the
great oak tree.

Vingo stopped looking, **tightening** his face, as if protecting himself from the strike of disappointment.





**Then it was ten miles,
and then five. Then, suddenly,
all of the young people were
up out of their seats,
screaming and shouting and
crying. All except Vingo.**

Vingo sat there shocked, looking at the oak tree. It was covered with hundreds of yellow handkerchiefs, standing like **a banner of welcome** flying in the wind.



As the young people shouted, the old con rose from his seat and made his way to the front of the bus to go home.



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Q & A



Where is Vingo's hometown?

(A) New York

(B) Florida

(C) Florence



What did Vingo use to be?

- (A) A soldier
- (B) A sea captain
- (C) A prisoner



What kind of clothes does Vingo wear?

- (A) A fancy suit
- (B) A shabby suit
- (C) A T-shirt and jeans



Which of the following adjective best describes Vingo's personality?

- (A) shy
- (B) talkative
- (C) violent



How many years has Vingo been away from home?

- (A) 3 years
- (B) 3.5 years
- (C) 4 years



How does Vingo feel in the approach of his hometown?

(A) nervous

(B) excited

(C) calm



Let's find out the answers!

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***Do you get them right??
Say “Yes, I do.”***