

# Ami's Metaphor

by Elisa Oh

art by Tatjana Mai-Wyss



Amy Kim

Monday, September 25, 2006

Mrs. Twiss

Grade 6

- Assignment:
1. What is a metaphor?
  2. Create a metaphor for yourself and explain why you chose it.

1. A metaphor is a comparison. A metaphor says one thing is another thing. It compares two things that seem very different at first. Here's an example: The moon is a lost coin. The moon and a coin don't really seem alike at all. But if you think about it, the metaphor shows you something new about the moon. When the moon is full, it looks like a bright, silver coin. The craters on the moon resemble a person's face from here on Earth, and coins have people's faces on them, too. Sometimes when you look for the moon on a cloudy night, you can't find it, like a lost coin. Other times you see it suddenly without expecting to, like finding someone else's coin, lonely but lucky, on the blacktop.



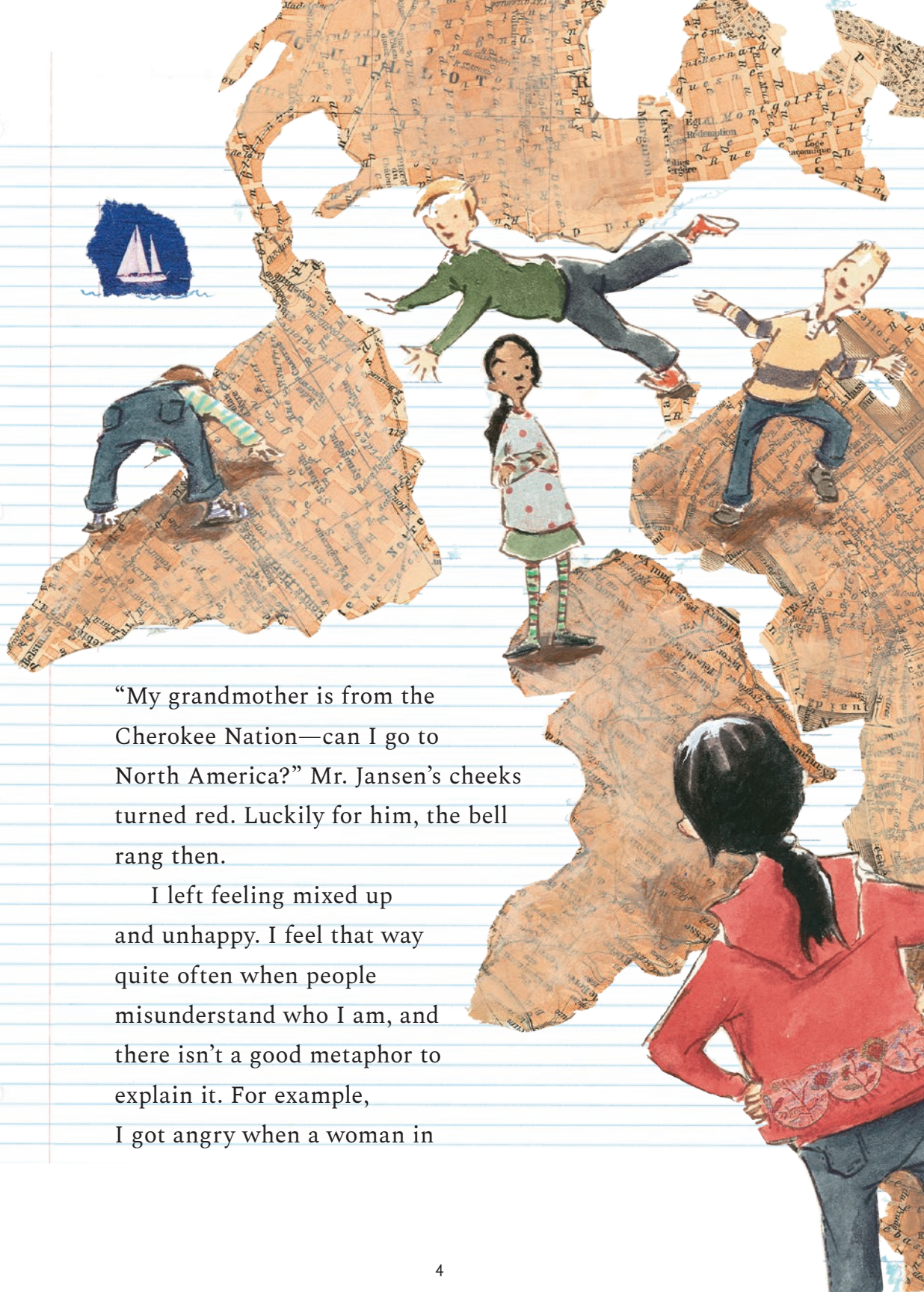
HI! I'M CRICKET. LET'S SEE  
WHAT WE CAN LEARN  
FROM AMY'S ASSIGNMENT.

2. Dear Mrs. Twiss,

I'm having a hard time with this part of the assignment. I'm not sure I can do it. I just can't think of a metaphor that sums up who I am. I'll try to explain why.

Last Thursday, Mr. Jansen had our class in the gym, and we learned about the world's population by stacking "10 million people" blocks on a giant map on the floor. After we put the blocks away, there were still a few minutes left before the bell. As Mr. Jansen flipped through his almanac, he suddenly got a new idea. "O.K., everybody," he said, "let's find out what world-population centers our class came from! I want each one of you to go stand on the continent or country from which your family originated."

I had to go stand on North Korea, which made me mad. It wasn't fair or true to say that my whole family came from Korea, even though I look Asian on the outside, except my nose. My mom's family is German as far back as they go. That's part of me, too. When Mr. Jansen asked Twana to stand on West Africa, she said, "But my ancestors are African *and* European." From Ireland, Sean shouted, "My uncle married a woman from Hawaii—does that count?" He just wanted to stand in the Pacific because that was closest to the door and the bell was about to ring. Somewhere around Switzerland, Tim called out,



“My grandmother is from the Cherokee Nation—can I go to North America?” Mr. Jansen’s cheeks turned red. Luckily for him, the bell rang then.

I left feeling mixed up and unhappy. I feel that way quite often when people misunderstand who I am, and there isn’t a good metaphor to explain it. For example, I got angry when a woman in

the grocery store asked me where I was from, and I said, “Right here in Greenfield.”

“No, where are you *from* from, originally?” she asked.

“Right here in Greenfield. Since I was born,” I told her.

“Are you *sure*? Because you look just like a Japanese girl I knew once,” she said. I said I was sure and then I had to explain the whole Korean-German thing to her, even though she was a total stranger. It’s not fair that people I don’t know can ask me questions about my race and heritage, but it’s not polite for me to ask them, “So why do your ears stick out like jug handles?”

Both sides of my family love me a lot, and we all get along. But I am *not* the same as either group of my relatives. My German cousins don’t know about playing *yut* or making special dumplings for the lunar new year, but I do. And my Korean cousins don’t know about singing “*O Tannenbaum*” and “*Stille Nacht*” at Christmastime, but I do. I go through life with two worlds in me, and no one in my family—not even Mom and Dad—knows what that’s like.

So anyway, I can’t think of a metaphor for me. Mutt, half-breed ... the names rattle around in my head like a handful of broken glass. Mom suggested a fairy princess, because she said I have magic to cross in and out of fairyland, and Dad suggested a mermaid, who can live on



land and in the sea. But I am *real*, and fantasy creatures couldn't survive in the real world. I'm not an imaginary monster like a griffin.

I also made up another metaphor for myself called a *circangle*, which has a triangle for a mother and a circle for a father. It looks like this:



The circangle's too pointy to be a circle and too roundy to be a triangle. I'm sure all the other shapes would treat it like a freak.

You can see that I have tried to do the assignment but can't finish it.

*Amy*



A GRIFFIN IS A MYTHICAL CREATURE THAT IS HALF EAGLE, AND HALF LION.



Dear Amy,

Don't give up! I know you can do this assignment. I think you need to start by changing the way you look at yourself and your metaphor. You have already come up with many things that are half one thing and half another thing. However, all your examples are negative.

I want you to brainstorm a list of things that are *good* combinations of two parts. There are lots of things that are better when they're combined with something else. Here, I'll start your list: peanut butter and jelly are better together than they are apart, and in my opinion, so are root beer and vanilla ice cream. Think about our science lesson where we learned about all those exciting varieties of hybrid roses. What about mixing blue and yellow paint together to get green? Green is my favorite color.

If you keep going with this list, I think you can finish the assignment by Friday. If you're still stuck, come and talk to me before then.

*Mrs. Twiss*



Amy Kim

Friday, September 29, 2006

Mrs. Twiss

Grade 6

2. I am a musical duet. A duet has two different lines of music for voices or instruments. At my cousin Jason's violin recital, he and a friend played a duet called Concerto for Two Violins by Johann Sebastian Bach. Each of the two violin parts could have been played alone, but together they became something new and better. The two parts took turns chasing each other, going back and forth, and then making interesting patterns with both high and low notes at the same time.



Because my family comes from two different races and cultures, I feel I have two musical parts playing in me that create a new piece of music. When I told this to my piano teacher yesterday, she showed me the definition of “counterpoint” in her music dictionary. She let me copy it for this assignment. “Counterpoint: The technique of combining two or more independent melodies to make up a harmonious texture.” This is a perfect metaphor for me, because the two parts of me—Korean and German—could each be an independent melody, but when they play together in me, they make a happy, complicated harmony. Not everyone understands what makes the music so beautiful, but I can help them learn. 🐛



I WONDER IF  
ANYONE STOOD ON  
CRICKET COUNTRY  
IN AMY'S CLASS.



YEAH ... AND  
WHERE MIGHT  
THAT BE?



Cricket Media® Books for Kids at Every Stage!



**Imaginative Stories and Poetry**  
from CRICKET® Magazine

Fiction Realism  
890L • 1188 words

Text and Art © 2006 by Cricket Media, Inc.

Copyright © 2018 by Cricket Media, Inc.

All rights reserved, including right of reproduction in whole or in part, in any form.

All Cricket Media material is copyrighted by Cricket Media, Inc., and/or various authors and illustrators.

Any commercial use or distribution of material without permission is strictly prohibited.

Please visit [cricketmedia.com/licensing](http://cricketmedia.com/licensing) for licensing and [cricketmedia.com](http://cricketmedia.com) for subscriptions.

ISBN 978-1-64262-270-6