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New Jersey Association for Lifelong Learning Adult Learner Writing Contest

Category: Fiction
Title: Confused Young Man
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Confused Young Man

A young man was missing for three days. The mother and father were worried about their son. The family put photo pictures all over the town. With the picture was the message, "If anyone saw my son, call us."

The father called the police station.

Officer Reed said, "May I help you, please?"

The father said, "My son is missing for three days."

Officer Reed said, "Someone will be over to take your report. What is your address?"

The father said, "222 Hillside Avenue."

His wife said, "What did the police say?"

"They will be over in a half hour to take a report."

The doorbell rang. The father answered the door.

Officer Peterson said, "I'm here to take a report for a missing son."

The father said, "Come on in and have a seat."

Officer Peterson said, "Start from the beginning."

The father said, "Me and my son got into a big argument."

Officer Peterson said, "About what?"

"He was stealing from us and would lie. He ran out the house. I ain't seen him since. I should have made it clearer before he went out the door."

Officer Peterson said, "How old is your son?"

The father said, "18 years old and his name is Michael."

Office Peterson said, "We'll be in touch."

The father said, "Thank you very much, Officer Peterson."

The mother said, "Go up to his room to find some telephone numbers to call some friends."





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The father was driving around in the neighborhood to find his son. He stopped at a couple of places he thought he hung out at. He approached the young men on the corner. A young man said, "I saw him walking around on the streets. He was wearing blue jeans and a blue jacket."

The father said, "Thank you for your information." He went back into the house. The mother called a couple of places – no answer. The father told his daughters that their brother was missing. The mother noticed some of his clothes were missing. The two daughters came over to the house. One daughter said, "How long has he been missing?"

He said, "Least three days. I didn't mean for him to leave."

The younger daughter said, "Did you call any of his friends? He will come back when he cools down."

The other daughter said, "What are you talking about, Dad?"

The father said, "Money was missing from the house. He wouldn't go to school. I got tired of it."

The father got a strange telephone call. A man said, "If you want your son back, I want you to give me \$3000. I'll call tomorrow to tell you where to come. If you tell anyone, I will kill your son."

The father kept the phone call from his family. He did not want them to know.

The mother said, "Who was that on the phone?"

The father responded, "Is no one, Honey. I'll be right back."

The father went to the police station. He went up to the desk. "My son was kidnapped."

The police officer said, "Calm down, sir, take a deep breath. How do you know your son was kidnapped?"

The father said, "I got a phone call at my house from a man. He told me my son was kidnapped. I'm supposed to meet him tomorrow with \$3000. When I get more information, I will tell you."

The police officer said, "Go back home and wait until tomorrow. We will be there. Don't tell anyone."

The father went back to the house. He walked into the house. He did not say anything to anyone.

The wife said, "Where did you go?"

He said, "I went to the police station."

She said, "Why would you go to the police station?"

He said, "I got a phone call from someone to tell me our son was kidnapped."

The mother said, "Why couldn't you tell me the truth where you were going?"

He said, "I did not want to get the family upset. We all have to focus on the situation. The police officer is supposed to be here."

The police came to the house. The father asked, "What took you so long to get here?"

The officer said, "We had to put someone on the case."

The phone rang. The father picked up the phone. The police officer was recording the information. The man said, "Bring the money to 362 Drive Street and make sure the money is in small bills. Make sure you come alone. If you love your son, you will do the right thing."



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“How do I know my son is alive? Can I speak to him?”

The man said, “No more questions.”

The father asked the officer, “Did you get all of that?”

The police officer said, “Yes, I’m going to replay the tape. Make sure we get everything we need on tape so we have this plan tight. Do you have the money?”

The father said, “Yes, I have the money. The money is put away.”

The police officer said, “Go get the money and meet me outside.”

The father said, “I’m very nervous.”

The police officer said, “This is not the time to be nervous. You got to be tough to get your son back. I will be following you. Don’t give him any idea someone is following you. First before you give him any money, make sure you see your son. Be very careful what you say to him. We got police around the area.”

The father spotted the man with his son.

The man said, “You have the money?”

The father said, “Let my son go. I will give you the money.”

The man said, “Give me the money and I give you your son, no trick.”

The father threw the money over to the man. The son ran over to his father. The man ran away with the money. The police officers chased the man for a minute. The man ran into an abandoned house. The police officers surrounded the house. They said, “Come out with your hands up.” The man was shooting at the police. The police officers shot back at the man. The man kept shooting. The police officers kept shooting back. The shooting stopped on both sides. The police officers rushed into the abandoned house. The police found the man dead on the floor. The man hid the money before he died. The police officers searched the house. They found the money under a board in the floor.

The report said, “The man is dead.” The police went back to the location where the father and the son were standing.

The father said, “Did you catch the kidnapper?”

The police officer said, “Yes, but the kidnapper is dead.”

The father said, “Did he have the money on him?”

The police officer said to the son, “Did you know the kidnapper?”

The young man said, “No”

The police said, “I have to take your son in for more information.”

The father said, “Can I take my son home now?” He demanded, “Where is my money? I’m not leaving till I get my money.”

The police officer said, “The money is yours. Make sure your son will be there tomorrow morning.”

The father said, “I will make sure he is there tomorrow morning.”



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The father said to his son, “Everyone will be glad to see you come home. Mother will be so happy to see you.”

The father and son walked into the house. “The man was caught by the police officer. He was killed by the police officer.”

The mother said, “Thank God my son is ok. Did you get the money back from the police officer?”

The father said, “Yes, I got the money back. Count all the money. We both have to have a long talk about rules and regulations in this house. You have to listen to me and your mom. Go to school or to work. Do you have anything to say?”

The son said, “Mom and Dad, I will change. I’m so sorry what I put you through but I have a drug problem. I need help.”

The father said, “We will get you help.”

The mother said, “We love you very much. We want you to do right thing.”

The father said, “Since we cleared all this up, everything is ok. Let’s go to the police station to clear everything. I will drive you there.”

The son said, “Dad, I have something to tell you. Promise me you won’t get mad with me, Dad.”

The dad said, “I promise you I won’t get mad with you. What’s important, Son, is to talk to me about what? He pulled the car over. Tell me what you have to say.”

“I planned the kidnapping, Dad. I made the call. The man was homeless on the streets. I knew he had a criminal record in the past. I told him he would get a thousand dollars. Only thing he needed to do was to go to the location and pick up the money. The man had no idea what was going on. I really need that money. I got in really big trouble with a drug dealer. I didn’t have no idea where to get the money from. He will kill me in four days. I’m very sorry, Dad. I didn’t want no one to get hurt. If the drug dealers can get to me, they will hurt my family. I do not know what to do.”

The father said, “You got an innocent man killed for nothing. There’s nothing I can do for you. Turn yourself into the police.”

The son said, “Before I turn myself in, I would kill myself.”

The father said, “Son, you do not have to kill yourself. Turn yourself into the police. That will break your mother’s heart if you kill yourself. Killing yourself won’t solve the problem. Think for a minute before you go in. We will keep that to ourselves what we talked about. Promise me this will not happen again. I put my neck out for you, Son, and you really have to keep this to yourself what we talked about. Don’t talk to no one about what you told me.”

The son said, “Promise, Dad, I would keep that to myself. Thank you, Dad.”

The boy walked into the police station and told the police that the man kidnapped him.”

The policeman said, “Did you know the man?”

The boy said, “I never saw him before.”

The police officer said, “I’m going to ask you one more time, did you ever see this man before? If I find out you lied to us we’re going lock you up.”



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The boy said, "I am telling you the truth."

The police officer said, "You can leave but we will be looking out."

The boy walked out of the police station. "That was very close," he thought.

The boy went back to the car. The father said, "What did they say to you?"

The boy said, "I told the police that I did not know the kidnapper. If they find out I am lying, I am going to jail. Dad, I am very nervous and scared. I am going to have a drug dealer on my case soon. Dad, what should I do?"

The father said, "You want me to give you advice? What should you do? Make a better life for yourself and go back to school. Stop putting this family to too much stress. How can I help you if you keep lying to me? I need to trust you. First you need to prove to me you are a better person which you have to become. I want to help you this time. I'm going to give you a second chance. Don't mention this to anyone especially your mother."

The son said, "Thank you, Dad. I won't let you down, Dad."

The father said, "Let's go home."

They went home. The mother said, "Is everything ok at the police station?"

The father said, "Everything is fine."

The mother said, "You must be really, really hungry."

The father said, "Don't forget what we talked about. Don't mention anything to your mother."

The son said, "Dad, I remember everything we talked about."

There was a knock at the door. The father answered the door. He said, "May I help you?"

The drug dealer said, "Can I speak to Pete?"

The father said, "No one here named Pete. Maybe you got the wrong house."

The drug dealer was searching for the house in the neighborhood.

The mother said, "Who was that at the door?"

The father said, "Someone was looking for Pete. Do you know anyone named Pete?"

The son said, "Dad, That's the name I gave him. Did he say what he wanted? He's gonna keep searching until he finds me. He wasn't sure where I live."

The father said, "Lay low in the house for a couple days."

The son said, "Dad, he's not gonna stop until he finds me. I don't want to put this family in danger."

The mother came into the room. She said, "What are you talking about? Don't lie to me. I need to know what you are talking about."

The father said, "Nothing."

The son wrote a note, "Mom and Dad, I love you both. Dad, thank you for everything you have done for me. This is the best thing for me to do—run away. I did not want to bring any trouble to my family."



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The boy left the house. As he was walking, someone was following him. He kept looking back. A car got closer and closer. The boy started to run. The car approached him. The drug dealer said, "Get in the car." The boy kept running. The drug dealer stopped the car, got out and started running after the boy. The drug dealer caught up with him and beat him up. He drove away. A neighbor called the police. The police arrived at the scene. The boy was beaten up very badly. The police called an ambulance. The ambulance came. The boy was rushed to the hospital. The police took a statement from the neighbor who had called the police. The lady said, "I saw a man beating up the boy."

The policeman said, "Can you recognize the car he was driving?"

The lady said, "A black Mercedes."

The police officer said, "Thank you for the information you gave me."

He went to the hospital. "How bad is he?" he asked the doctor. The doctor said, "He is in a coma and has a broken nose. You need to call a family member."

The police officer said, "He did not have any information on him. I will have another police officer sit by the door. Someone beat him up very bad. Do you recognize him?"

The other police officer said, "Yes, it was a case that happened a couple of days ago. You have to open this file and see where he lives. Don't leave this room. I will be back."

The first police officer found the file and went over to the boy's house. He rang the bell. The father answered the door. "Good afternoon, sir. My name is Officer Tony. Sir, do you recognize this picture?"

The father said, "Yes, that's my son. What happened?"

The mother said, "Who's at the door?"

The father said, "The police."

Officer Tony said, "Your son was beaten up very badly."

The father asked, "Where is my son now?"

Officer Tony said, "He's at the hospital."

The mother and father drove to the hospital. They both went upstairs. They approached the nurse. The nurse said, "May I please help you?"

The father said, "Yes, ma'am. My son was beaten up. Can I see him?"

The nurse said, "Yes, Room 16."

They both went into the room. They started crying when they saw their son lying there.

The nurse said, "Your son is in a coma."

The mother said to the father, "Where are you going?"

"I am going to make a phone call." He called his daughter. He said, "Your brother was beaten badly. Call your sister."

His daughter said, "Where is Mom?"

"She is sitting by his bedside."



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The daughter said, "I will see you later, Dad."

He said, "Don't forget to call your sister."

He went back into the room. He said, "Carol will be here later. Tracy should be here soon."

The police officer came into the room. The mother said, "Did you catch the person who did it to my son?"

He said, "I need to ask you a question about your son. Do you know who did this to your son?"

The father said, "I remember his face. He came to my house looking for my son."

The police said, "Can I take you down to the police station to show you some pictures?"

The father said, "No problem."

He said to his wife, "Honey, I will be back. I'm going to the police station to look at some pictures."

The mother said, "Ok. Don't be long."

The police drove the father down to the station. The father was looking through the photos. The policeman asked, "Like to have some coffee?"

The father said, "Yes."

The police said, "How you like it?" He brought the coffee to the father.

The father looked at the pictures. He recognized the drug dealer's face in the photo book.

The police officer said, "Thank you very much. You did enough here."

The father went back to the hospital. His son was still in a coma. Tracy was in the room.

The mother said, "Did they have any luck catching the person?"

The father said, "No, they have a picture of the person. Go home and get some rest, Honey. I will stay with him. I will call you if there are any changes. Tracy, take your mother home. Ain't much we can do here."

The daughter said, "Dad, I will be back. Do you want me to bring you something to eat?"

The father said, "Yes, make sure your mother eats."

Detective Mitchell came to the hospital. "I have good news. We caught the person. How's your son doing?"

The father said, "He's doing about the same."

Detective Mitchell said, "If there are any changes, give me a call."

The doctor came into the room. "Your son has swelling to the brain."

The father said, "What does that mean?"

The doctor said, "We have to get the swelling down. If we get the swelling down, I think he will come out of the coma. Pray the swelling goes down."

The father called home. The phone rang three times. The wife answered the phone. "Honey, I got good news. They caught the person who beat up our son. The doctor said if the swelling goes down, he will come out of the coma. I will call you again if there are any changes."



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The nurse came into the room and took another x-ray. She said, “Would you like something to drink?”

He said, “Thank you very much.”

The nurse came into the room with the drink. He said, “Thank you a lot.”

The mother came back to the hospital with her daughters. The father said to the mother, “What are you doing here? You didn’t have to come. I would have called you if there was any changes.”

The mother said, “I couldn’t sit home knowing my son is in the hospital.”

He said, “The nurse came to the room and took x-rays. The doctor said if the swelling goes down, he will come out of the coma.”

The mother said, “Let’s pray he will come out of the coma.”

The doctor came back into the room. “I have good news. The swelling went down. Let’s keep your fingers crossed.”

The father said, “The only thing we can do is wait and keep praying. Let’s take a walk, Honey, I have something to tell you. The drug dealer beat him up because he owed him some money. The man who came to the house that day was looking for our son.”

The wife asked, “Why didn’t you tell me the truth the first time?”

He said, “You know I didn’t want to get you upset. You have health problems. I didn’t want to get you upset again. I got more to tell you. I will tell you it another time. Let’s go back into the room. Don’t mention it to anyone.”

One daughter said, “Mom and Dad, he moved a little bit!”

The wife said, “Go get the nurse.”

The nurse said, “May I help you, Sir.”

“My son is moving his hands.”

The nurse and father rushed into the room. The son came out of the coma! Everyone was very happy. The nurse went to get the doctor. The doctor came back to the room. He asked the boy, “How are you feeling?”

The boy said, “I feel great. Why is everybody here?”

The doctor said, “You were in a coma for three days. You know everybody in this room?”

The boy said, “Yes.”

The doctor said, “I need to keep him one more day to run more tests on him before I can release him. I want to make sure you are ok.”

The mother said, “Thank God you are ok.”

The nurse said to the boy, “You must be very hungry. I will bring you something to eat.”

The boy said, “I thank everyone for being here.”



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The father said to the daughters, "Take your mother home. Everything will be all right here. I will be home later."

The mother said to the son, "I love you. I will see you later."

The father said, "How are you really feeling today? The doctor will take the bandage off tomorrow. The reason I stayed back is that we have to talk. They caught the person who beat you up."

Detective Robinson came to the hospital and walked into the room. "How are you feeling, young man? The reason I am here is that I need to get a police report. I need to show you a photo for you to identify."

The boy said, "Yes, he's the one."

Detective Robinson said, "Do you want to charge him?"

The boy said, "No, because I owe him money - \$3000."

Detective Robinson said, "We have to let him go. He will be back on the streets again. He is going to come back after you again. This is your last chance to talk. You need to do something very fast. If you need to call me, this is my card. Call me tomorrow."

The father said, "I will call you tomorrow."

To the son, "You hear what Detective Robinson said. That bum will be back on the street. You need to think of something very fast."

The son said, "I will think of something by tomorrow."

The father said, "I will see you tomorrow. You will have a long day. Get some sleep. Don't forget what I said. Think about it."

The father arrived at home. The wife asked, "Can we finish that talk?"

The father said, "Yes, our son is in a lot of trouble with a drug dealer. He owes the drug dealer \$3,000. He didn't want to testify about the dealer. He will be back on the streets, the bum."

The wife said, "We have to do something fast because our life can be in danger too. Pay the money back. I have money saved. You never know what the drug dealer might do next. We are very happy he came out of the coma. The next time he might kill our son. That's why we have to pay the money."

The father said, "We need to talk to him first before we pay the money. Tomorrow I have to pick him up at the hospital."

He arrived at the hospital the next day. The doctor said, "It's ok for him to go home. Good luck, young man."

The father said to his son, "How are you feeling?"

The son said, "I feel great but I am a little nervous."

The father said, "We need to talk some more. Did you come to a conclusion what you want to do?"

The son said, "Yes, I need to borrow \$3000 to get the drug dealer off my back."

The father said, "I told your mother."

The son yelled, "You told Mom. What did she say?"



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The father said, “She wants to help.”

Everyone was there to see him back home.

The son said, “Thank you for being here.” They said he was very lucky.

The mother and father said, “We have to talk. We both came to the agreement for you to pay the drug dealer back the money. You have to promise us you will never do this anymore. We are only doing it because we love you.”

The son said, “Mom and Dad, I thank you so much. I will never let you down. I will pay you back, I promise.”

The father worried whether he had done the right thing with his son.

The son thought, “I don’t want to put pressure on my family any more. Maybe I should get some counseling for my drug problem. My father should talk to someone he can trust about this whole situation even if I have to put some time in jail.

He said to the mother and father, “I want to do the right thing and change my life around.”

