

A painting of a child with a backpack walking away from the viewer on a path covered in fallen yellow leaves. In the background, there is a school building with a clock tower, a bench, a street lamp, and a gate. The scene is set in autumn with warm, golden light.

Елизавета Горбунова

**A STORYBOOK FOR  
YOUNG HEARTS**

**15 Stories for Beginner  
English Learners**

Горбунова Елизавета

**A storybook for Young  
Hearts. 15 Stories for  
Beginner English Learners**

«Издательские решения»

**Елизавета Г.**

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В этой книге пятнадцать историй на английском языке для детей и их родителей, начинающих учить язык. Уровень Elementary. Каждый рассказ — это законченный сюжет о дружбе, честности, доброте и храбрости. Книга построена по беспереводной методике: дети читают, думают и отвечают на английском. После каждого рассказа есть словарь с объяснением новых слов, вопросы на понимание текста и темы для обсуждения.

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# **A storybook for Young Hearts 15 Stories for Beginner English Learners**

**Горбунова Елизавета**

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## **Hello, Dear Reader!**

This book is full of stories about children like you.

They go to school. They have friends. They feel happy and sad and brave and scared.

Sometimes they make mistakes. Sometimes they help each other. And sometimes small moments change everything.

Each story is short and easy to read. After every story, you will find new words, questions, and things to talk about with your friends or family.

You do not need to read fast. Read slowly. Think about the characters. Imagine you are there with them.

These stories are about the little steps we all take – and the big hearts that help us along the way. Are you ready? Let's begin.

## Story 1

### The Red Backpack



It was the first day of September. The leaves on the trees near the school were still green. Children walked through the big gates with new bags and clean shoes.

A girl named Mia stood near the school door. She had a red backpack on her shoulders. It was too big for her. She looked at the other children. They were talking and laughing. Mia did not know anyone here.

Her family moved to this town three weeks ago. Her old school was far away. Her old friends were far away too. Mia took a deep breath and walked inside.

The classroom was bright and warm. There were drawings on the walls. A tall woman with short brown hair smiled at the children. «Good morning, everyone. I am Mrs. Bell. Welcome to our class.»

Mia sat at a desk near the window. A boy with dark curly hair sat next to her. He looked at her red backpack. «That is a really big bag,» he said.

Mia looked down. «I know. My mum said I will grow into it.»

The boy laughed. It was a nice laugh, not a mean one. «I am Sam,» he said. «Is this your first day here?»

«Yes,» Mia said quietly.

«It is okay. I was new last year. The first week is always strange. But then it gets better.»

Mrs. Bell gave everyone a small blue notebook. «Today we will write about our summer,» she said. «Just one page. Write what you remember best.»

Mia opened her notebook. She thought about the summer. She thought about her old garden with the apple tree. She thought about her cat, Biscuit, sleeping on the warm steps. She started to write.

After twenty minutes, Mrs. Bell said, «Who wants to read their story?»

Nobody moved. The room was very quiet. Then Sam raised his hand. He stood up and read about fishing with his grandfather at a lake. He caught a very small fish. His grandfather said it was the best fish he ever saw. Everyone laughed.

«Very good, Sam,» Mrs. Bell said. «Who is next?»

Mia looked at her notebook. Her hands were cold. She did not want to read. But then she thought about what Sam said. The first week is strange, but then it gets better.

She raised her hand slowly.

«Yes, Mia. Please go ahead.»

Mia stood up. Her voice was very quiet at first. She read about her old garden. She read about Biscuit and the apple tree. She read about the day they packed everything into a big truck.

«I was sad to leave,» she read. «But my mum said that new places bring new friends. I did not believe her then.»

She stopped. She looked at Sam. He was smiling.

«I think maybe she was right,» Mia added. It was not in her notebook. She just said it.

The class was quiet for a moment. Then Mrs. Bell smiled. «That was lovely, Mia. Thank you.»

At lunchtime, Sam walked to Mia. «Do you want to sit with me and my friend Leo?» he asked.

«Yes, please,» Mia said.

They sat at a long wooden table in the school hall. Leo was a short boy with glasses and a big smile. He talked a lot. He told Mia about the park near the school, the library on Green Street, and the bakery that made chocolate rolls every Friday.

«You have to try the chocolate rolls,» Leo said seriously. «They are the best thing about this town.»

Mia smiled. «I will.»

After lunch, they played in the schoolyard. It was warm and the sky was very blue. Mia ran with Sam and Leo. She was still carrying her big red backpack because she forgot to leave it inside.

«Your backpack is running too,» Sam said. They all laughed.

When school finished, Mia walked home slowly. The streets were new but not so scary now. She knew the name of the park. She knew the way to the bakery on Green Street.

Her mum was waiting by the door. «How was your first day?» she asked.

Mia put down her big red backpack. «It was good,» she said. «I think you were right. New places do bring new friends.»

Her mum hugged her. «I am glad,» she said quietly.

That evening, Mia wrote in her blue notebook again. Not for school. Just for herself.

«Today I was scared,» she wrote. «But I raised my hand anyway. And everything changed.»

She closed the notebook and put it inside her red backpack. Tomorrow it would not feel so heavy.

### **New Words**

**backpack** – a bag you carry on your back

**moved** – went to live in a new place

**breath** – air you take in and let out

**curly** – hair that goes in round shapes

**strange** – new and a little unusual

**notebook** – a small book for writing

**raised** – lifted up

**quietly** – in a soft, low voice

**lovely** – very nice and beautiful

**scared** – feeling afraid

**believe** – to think something is true

**bakery** – a shop that makes bread and cakes

### **Comprehension Questions**

1. Why was Mia standing alone near the school door?
2. What did Sam say to Mia about being new?
3. What did Mia write about in her blue notebook?
4. Who did Mia sit with at lunchtime?
5. Why did Mia say the backpack would not feel so heavy tomorrow?

### **Talk About It**

- ▶ Were you ever new at a place? How did you feel?
- ▶ What can you do to help a new person in your class?
- ▶ Do you think it is hard to be brave? Why?

## Story 2

### The Umbrella

The rain started at lunchtime. It came fast and hard. Big drops hit the school windows. All the children looked outside.



«No playing in the yard today,» said Mr. Peters, the teacher. Everyone groaned.

A boy named Tom sat at his desk and looked at the rain. He liked the rain, actually. He liked the sound it made on the roof. He liked the way the streets became shiny.

Tom had a yellow umbrella in his bag. His dad always put it there in autumn. «Just in case,» his dad always said. Tom never forgot it.

After school, the children ran out of the building. Some had umbrellas. Some had raincoats. Some had nothing. They stood under the small roof near the door and waited.

Tom opened his yellow umbrella and started walking. The rain was cold but he did not mind.

Then he saw someone. A girl was sitting on the bench near the school gate. She had no umbrella and no raincoat. Her school bag was on her head. She was trying to stay dry, but it was not working.

Tom knew her name. It was Lily. She was in his class, but they never really talked. Lily was very quiet. She always sat in the back row and drew pictures in her notebook.

Tom stopped walking. He looked at Lily. She looked cold and sad. The rain was getting heavier. He walked over to the bench. «Hi,» he said.

Lily looked up. Water ran down her face. «Hi,» she said.

«Do you want to share my umbrella? I can walk with you.»

Lily shook her head. «My house is far. It is on Mill Street.»

Tom thought for a moment. Mill Street was not on his way home. It was in the opposite direction. If he walked Lily there, he would have to walk back alone in the rain.

But Lily was sitting in the rain with a bag on her head.

«That is okay,» Tom said. «I like walking.»

Lily looked at him. Then she stood up slowly. «Thank you,» she said.

They walked together under the yellow umbrella. The streets were empty. The rain made everything grey and soft. Their shoes made splashing sounds on the wet ground.

For a while, they did not talk. Then Lily said, «I forgot my raincoat today. I never forget it. But today my little brother was crying in the morning and I was helping my mum, and I just ran out without it.»

«That happens,» Tom said. «I forget things too.»

«What do you forget?»

«My lunch, sometimes. Last week I forgot my homework. And once I forgot my shoes for the gym.»

Lily smiled a little. «Your shoes?»

«Yes. I had to do sports in my socks. Everyone laughed.»

Lily laughed. It was a quiet laugh, like a small bell. Tom smiled.

They turned onto Mill Street. It was a narrow street with old brick houses and small gardens. Some gardens had late flowers – red and orange ones.

«That one is mine,» Lily said. She pointed to a blue door with a round window.

They stopped at the door. Lily was mostly dry now. Tom was a little wet on one side because the umbrella was not big enough for two people. But he did not say anything about it.

«Thank you, Tom,» Lily said. «That was really kind.»

«It is no problem,» Tom said.

«Wait,» Lily said. She opened her school bag. She took out a small piece of paper. It was a drawing. A drawing of a bird sitting on a rainy branch. The bird was small and round, and the rain around it was soft blue lines.

«I drew this today,» Lily said. «Do you want it?»

Tom took the drawing carefully. «It is beautiful,» he said. And he meant it.

«Nobody ever says that about my drawings,» Lily said quietly.

«Then nobody is looking properly,» Tom said.

Lily smiled. This time it was a real, big smile. «See you tomorrow?» she said.

«See you tomorrow.»

Tom walked home in the rain. The yellow umbrella was over his head, and the small drawing was safe inside his jacket pocket. His shoes were completely wet. His socks made funny sounds.

But he felt warm inside.

The next morning, the sun was out. Tom came to school early. Lily was already there, sitting at her desk. She was drawing something.

«Good morning,» Tom said.

«Good morning,» Lily said. She showed him her picture. It was two children walking under a yellow umbrella in the rain.

Tom looked at it for a long time. «Can I keep this one too?» he asked.

«Of course,» Lily said. «I can draw you one every day, if you want.»

And she did. Every single day.

### **New Words**

**umbrella** – a thing you hold over your head when it rains

**drops** – small pieces of water that fall from the sky

**groaned** – made a sound that shows you are not happy

**actually** – really, in fact

**bench** – a long seat, often in a park or school

**opposite** – going the other way, completely different direction

**splashing** – making noise when you step in water

**narrow** – not wide, thin

**brick** – a small hard block used to build walls

**properly** – the right way, correctly

**safe** – protected, not in danger

**branch** – a part of a tree that grows from the trunk

**Comprehension Questions**

1. Why could the children not play outside?
2. Why did Lily not have an umbrella or raincoat?
3. Was Mill Street on Tom's way home?
4. What did Lily give Tom?
5. What did Lily draw the next morning?

**Talk About It**

- ▶ Did you ever help someone even when it was not easy for you?
- ▶ Why do you think Tom walked Lily home?
- ▶ What is a kind thing someone did for you?

## Story 3

### The Broken Cup

Ben was playing with his ball in the kitchen. He was not supposed to play there. His mum always said the same thing: «Ben, not in the kitchen, please.»



But his mum was upstairs, and the kitchen was warm, and the ball was right there in his hand. He threw the ball up. He caught it. He threw it again, higher this time. He caught it again. Then he threw it very high. Too high.

The ball hit the shelf. Something fell. Ben heard a crash.

He looked at the floor. Pieces of blue and white were everywhere. It was a cup. Not just any cup. It was Grandma's cup.

Ben's grandmother gave that cup to his mum a long time ago. His mum used it every morning for her tea. It had small blue flowers on it and a tiny crack on the handle. His mum said the crack made it special because Grandma held it so many times.

Now it was in pieces on the kitchen floor.

Ben's stomach hurt. He felt cold. He wanted to put the pieces back together. He knelt down and tried to hold two pieces close. They did not fit. Some pieces were too small to pick up.

Then he heard his mum coming down the stairs.

Ben did something fast. He picked up the biggest pieces and put them in the bin. He pushed the small pieces under the cupboard with his foot. Then he picked up his ball and walked into the living room.

His mum came into the kitchen. Ben sat on the sofa and looked at his book. But he was not reading. He was listening.

For a while, nothing happened. His mum made tea. She opened the cupboard. She closed the cupboard. Then she opened it again.

«Ben?» she called.

«Yes?»

«Have you seen my blue cup? The one with flowers?»

Ben's heart was beating fast. «No,» he said.

His mum looked around the kitchen. She checked the dishwasher. She checked the table. She looked confused.

«That is very strange,» she said. «I used it this morning. It was right here on the shelf.»

Ben did not say anything. His mum went back upstairs.

That evening, Ben could not eat his dinner. The food tasted like paper. His little sister, Rose, was talking about her school play, but Ben did not hear her. He was thinking about the cup. About the pieces in the bin. About the lie.

He went to bed early. He lay in the dark and looked at the ceiling. He could not sleep.

The lie felt like a stone inside his chest. Heavy and cold.

In the morning, Ben woke up early. The house was quiet. He went downstairs. He went to the bin and looked inside. The pieces of the blue cup were there, between banana skins and old bread.

He took the pieces out carefully. He put them on the kitchen table. Then he sat down and waited.

His mum came in at seven o'clock. She saw Ben at the table. She saw the pieces.

She did not say anything for a moment. She sat down next to him.

«I broke it,» Ben said. His voice was small. «I was playing with my ball in the kitchen. I am sorry, Mum. I am really sorry. I put the pieces in the bin and I said I did not see it. I lied.»

His mum looked at the broken pieces. She picked up one with a blue flower on it. She held it in her hand.

«I know this cup is important to you,» Ben said. «Because of Grandma.»

His mum was quiet for a long time. Then she said, «Yes, it was important. But do you know what is more important?»

Ben shook his head.

«That you told me the truth. That was very brave, Ben.»

«But I lied first,» Ben said. He felt tears in his eyes.

«Yes, you did. And I am not happy about that. But you also came back and told me. Not everyone does that. That takes courage.»

She put her arm around him. Ben leaned into her. The stone in his chest started to feel lighter.

«What about the cup?» Ben asked.

His mum looked at the pieces again. «Maybe we can glue some of them together. It will not be perfect, but it will still be Grandma's cup. Some things are more beautiful when you can see where they were broken.»

That afternoon, Ben and his mum sat at the kitchen table with glue and small pieces of blue and white. They worked slowly and carefully. The cup looked different now. You could see the cracks and the lines where the glue was.

But when his mum made tea in it the next morning, she smiled.

«It still works,» she said. «Just like us.»

Ben smiled too. The stone was gone.

### **New Words**

**threw** – sent something through the air with your hand

**crash** – a loud sound when something breaks

**pieces** – small parts of something broken

**crack** – a thin line on something that is a little broken

**knelt** – went down on your knees

**bin** – a container for things you throw away

**confused** – not understanding something

**lie** – something you say that is not true

**ceiling** – the top part of a room, above your head

**courage** – being brave enough to do something hard

**glue** – something sticky that holds things together

**truth** – what really happened, not a lie

**Comprehension Questions**

1. What did Ben break?

2. Why was the cup special to his mum?

3. What did Ben do after the cup broke?

4. How did Ben feel when he lied?

5. What did Ben and his mum do with the broken pieces?

**Talk About It**

- ▶ Is it hard to tell the truth when you make a mistake? Why?
- ▶ Why do you think Ben felt like he had a stone in his chest?
- ▶ Do you think broken things can still be beautiful?

## Story 4

### Grandma's Garden

Every Saturday, Emma went to her grandmother's house. It was a small house at the end of a quiet street. The walls were yellow and the door was green. There was a big garden behind it.



Emma's grandmother – everyone called her Nana – loved her garden more than anything. She grew tomatoes and carrots. She grew sunflowers that were taller than Emma. She grew herbs that smelled wonderful.

But this spring, something was different. Nana was walking slowly. Her back hurt. Her hands were stiff in the mornings. She could not bend down easily.

«The weeds are winning,» Nana said one Saturday. She was looking at her garden through the kitchen window. There were weeds between the tomato plants. The flower beds needed water. The path had leaves all over it.

«I can help,» Emma said.

Nana smiled but shook her head. «It is hard work, my dear. You are only eight.»

«I am almost nine,» Emma said firmly. «And I am strong.»

Nana laughed. «All right. But we start slowly.»

Nana gave Emma old gloves that were too big for her hands. She gave her a small tool for digging. They went outside.

The garden was messy but still beautiful. Bees flew between the flowers. A bird was singing in the apple tree. The air smelled like earth and leaves.

«First, the weeds,» Nana said. She sat on her wooden chair near the tomatoes and pointed. «Those green ones with the small leaves. Pull them out gently. Get the roots too.»

Emma knelt down and started pulling. It was hard. The weeds did not want to leave. Her fingers got dirty. Her knees got wet from the ground.

After ten minutes, she looked at what she had done. It was a very small area. The garden was big. «This will take forever,» Emma said.

Nana smiled. «A garden teaches you patience, Emma. You cannot rush a garden. One weed at a time.»

Emma sighed. But she kept going.

They worked together for an hour. Nana told Emma which plants to keep and which to pull out. She explained how tomatoes need sun but not too much water. She showed Emma how to check if the soil was dry by putting a finger inside it.

«Your grandfather planted this apple tree,» Nana said, looking up at the old tree. «Forty years ago. It was tiny then. Look at it now.»

Emma looked at the tree. It was huge, with thick branches and green leaves. It was hard to believe it was ever small.

«Things take time,» Nana said. «The best things always do.»

When they stopped for lunch, Emma's arms were tired. She had dirt under her fingernails. But a part of the garden looked nice and clean.

After lunch, Emma watered the flowers. Nana sat in her chair and watched. She told Emma stories about when she was young. About picking strawberries with her sisters. About her first garden, which was just one pot on a windowsill.

«I killed every plant in that pot,» Nana said. «Three times. But I kept trying.»

«Why?» Emma asked.

«Because I loved it. When you love something, you do not give up.»

The next Saturday, Emma came back. And the Saturday after that. Every week, she worked in Nana's garden. She learned the names of flowers. She learned when to plant seeds and when to wait. She learned that some days you work hard and see nothing, and other days a small green shoot appears and you feel like the whole world is new.

By summer, the garden looked wonderful. The tomatoes were red and round. The sunflowers stood tall. The weeds were gone.

Nana sat in her wooden chair and looked at everything. Emma sat next to her on the grass. They drank cold lemonade.

«You saved my garden,» Nana said.

«You taught me how,» Emma said.

Nana reached over and took Emma's hand. Emma's hands were not so clean anymore. They had small scratches and brown dirt in the lines. They looked a little like Nana's hands.

«Gardener's hands,» Nana said proudly. «The best kind.»

In September, the first apples fell from grandfather's tree. Emma picked them up, one by one. Nana made a pie.

They sat in the kitchen and ate warm apple pie. The kitchen smelled like cinnamon and sugar. Through the window, they could see the garden – green and alive, full of things they grew together.

## **Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.**

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