

EXAMPLE SHORT FICTION STORY

Prompt: Use your imagination to write a story about a person who has a conflict with his or her parents. Show how the person resolves that conflict in a positive way. Make sure that the story contains at least five paragraphs and all the elements of a story. Use the MLA style.

TITLE OF THE STORY: Homecoming

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Homecoming

Rebecca started to focus on food for the first time when she traveled to foreign countries. First, she lived in Japan for two years working as an English teacher. She was on a tight budget and needed to keep her food costs as low as possible. Meat was expensive. Products without meat, such as tofu and rice, were cheap. Rebecca was also influenced by the Japanese culture. Many Japanese people avoided meat because they felt that killing animals for food was cruel. Rebecca became a vegetarian. When Rebecca left Japan, she traveled for nearly a year through several foreign countries such as Russia, Denmark, and Germany. These were some of the biggest meat-eating countries in the world. Finding vegetarian restaurants, especially good ones, was difficult, but Rebecca stuck to her diet. When she traveled to southern Europe, finding vegetarian food was easier. The food in Greece was wonderful. Rebecca ate sheep yogurt, honey, and butter on thick-crust bread, and fried eggplant. She never craved a hamburger or a slice of bacon.

When Rebecca got tired of traveling, she decided to go home. Once in the United States, she flew home to Colorado. Her parents picked her up at the airport. The drive back to the ranch was an hour and a half, and they talked all the way, but Rebecca did not mention the change she had made in her diet. She did not want to upset her parents. Importantly, Rebecca's dad was a cattle rancher. His whole life focused on beef. When she was growing up and living at home, the family used to eat beef at least once a day and often two or three times a day.

Of course, Rebecca knew that the topic of meat would come up eventually. After they had unloaded her luggage, her dad disappeared out to the patio. Rebecca guessed that he was getting the grill ready. Before long, she could smell the smoke from the barbecue grill. She began to feel worried. Animal flesh had not passed her lips for two and a half years. In a little while, Rebecca and her mom went outdoors and sat down at the patio table. She tried to ignore sound of the meat sizzling as they talked. Her dad had that big satisfied smile he always got when he was searing beef over the coals. Soon, he put a big platter of porterhouse steaks dripping with juice on the table. The smell of burned flesh filled the air. Rebecca looked him straight in the eye and said, "Dad, I'm a vegetarian now. I don't eat meat." In response, her father looked back at her without anger, hurt, or malice. Matter of factly, he said, "You are a cattleman's daughter FIRST."

At first, Rebecca was startled by her father's determined statement. Without getting defensive, she excused herself from the table by saying, "Excuse me for a couple of minutes. I'll be right back." She went to her room and started to think. On the one hand, she knew that she was old enough to make her own decisions about what she would eat. If she wanted to avoid meat, she knew she could do it. On the other hand, something deep inside Rebecca responded to her father's idea of who he was and what his life focus had been. She had a lot of respect for the way he had lived his life. Moreover, she cared for her parents and did not want to fight with them. She decided to work things out with them and went back to the table. Without hesitating further, she cut herself a piece of steak and took a bite. As she chewed, she was amazed at how good it tasted, but she ate only two bites. She suggested, "Let me save the rest for tomorrow, please. My stomach needs some time to get used to eating meat again."

Fortunately, Rebecca's mom understood and was supportive. At dinner time the next day, she put the leftover steak on the table as a side dish, and she also served bread, cheese, and fruit. Rebecca thanked her mother for the vegetarian choices, and she also ate a couple more pieces of steak. In the following days and weeks, Rebecca continued to be a vegetarian most of the time, but she did not try to convert friends or family members to her way of thinking. She knew that she had made the right decision to stop eating meat back in Japan because she had felt healthier ever since then. Nevertheless, as she looked toward the future, she knew that she would continue to be respectful of the people with whom she was eating. After all, eating meat occasionally would not harm her. Additionally, all things considered, she knew that her respect for her dad's feelings was more important than insisting on having her own way at any expense.