

Making the Team



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Chapter One: Noah

It was Shad's first day at his new school. Holt made pancakes and syrup. But Shad couldn't eat. His tummy felt tight, like he going to ride on a roller coaster.

"Don't worry. Gus will be waiting by the bus stop when you get home," Shad's mom said.

Just then he heard a knock at the door.

Shad opened it to see a small boy in a wheelchair. He had red hair and a friendly grin. "Hi, Shad," he said. "I'm Noah."

Beth had told Shad about Noah. Noah was in their grade at school, even though he looked younger. He had brittle bones that could break if you bumped or poked him.

The problem was that Shad was clumsy. He dropped and bumped into things all the time. What if he hurt Noah by mistake?



Shad said goodbye to his mom. He looked at Noah, feeling shy. “Should I help you get on the elevator?” he asked.

“I can move around fine,” Noah said. “But pushing elevator buttons is hard for my fingers.”

Shad hurried over and pressed the button to call the elevator. He shifted from one foot to the other, not knowing what to do or say. The elevator door opened. Shad didn’t know whether it would be better to hold the door open, or . . .

“If you get on first, we won’t bump into each other,” Noah suggested.



Shad and Gus were glad to see Luz, Beth, and Bandit waiting outside.

“You were right. Shad’s great. But what did you tell him about me?” Noah asked. “He’s acting like he’s afraid he might break me.”

They all laughed, and after that it was okay.



Chapter Two: The Museum

The kids crossed the street to the museum and their bus stop. The museum was usually a quiet place. But not today! Trucks unloaded boxes in the parking lot. Workers were carrying ladders and wrenches.

Beth ran to a big man in a suit.

“That’s Mr. Kalani, Beth’s dad,” Noah explained. “He’s the director of the museum. They’re getting ready for the festival.”

Shad saw two workers kneeling on the roof. They were using a knife to remove some wrapping from a big roll of something. Then they unrolled a big bright sign.

The sign had no writing. It just showed a red, wrinkly monster head with staring yellow eyes. Shad stared right back. He knew he’d seen that strange head before. “What is that?” he asked.

“That’s the lion from the Lion Dance,” Luz said. “From the Lunar New Year Festival.”

“Some Asian countries have a big festival during the first full moon of the new year,” Noah explained. “Lunar means moon. They give each other presents and eat mooncakes. The Lion Dance is one of the most important parts of the festival. Look.”



Noah showed Shad a tiny computer screen he wore on his wrist. A video began to play. A huge red and gold lion wound through the streets. One person wore the head. Many more crouched together to make the long, wriggly body. Drums beat and firecrackers popped.

Shad did know the Lion Dance! He hadn't known its name. It felt good to understand more about it.



Beth ran up just as the bus arrived. “Dad wants to know if we can help Mom get the museum ready for the festival,” she panted. “After school on Friday. We’ll have a barbecue after.”

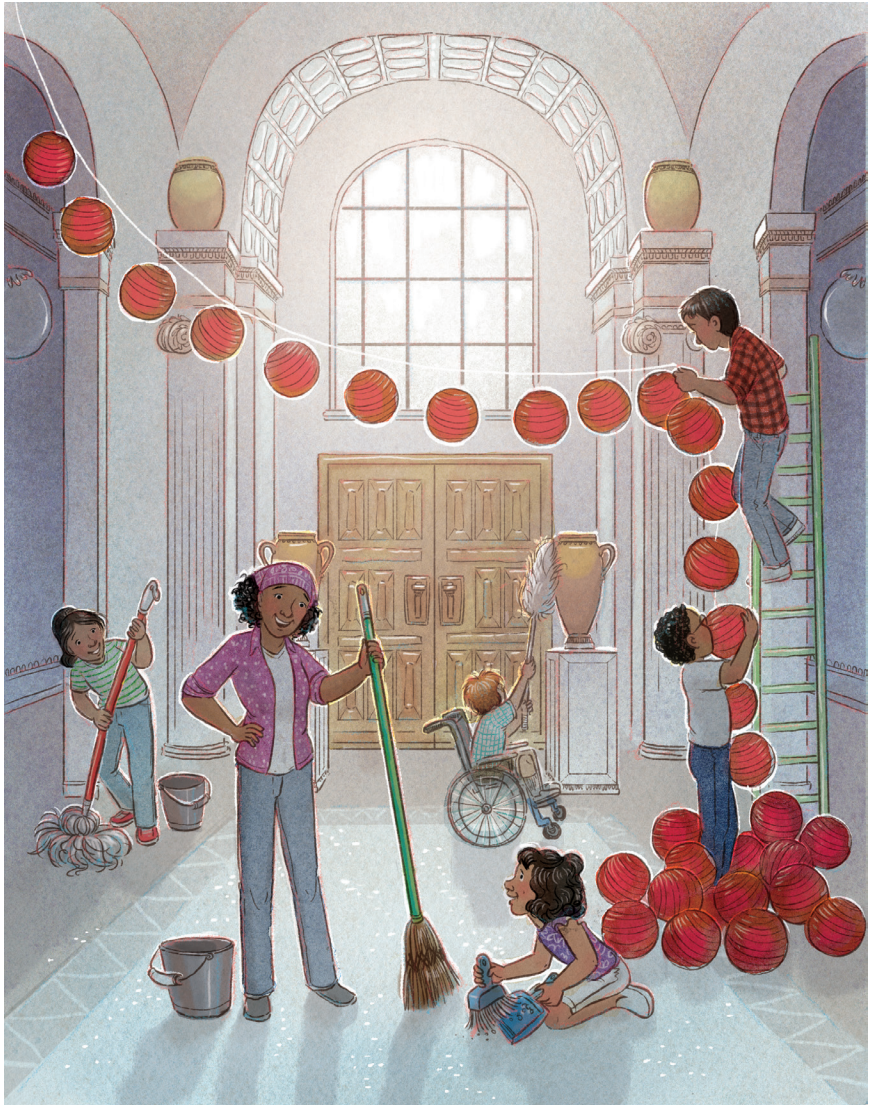
“Sounds fun,” said Luz. The others nodded as the bus door opened.

Shad climbed on and found a seat. The driver put down a ramp and Noah wheeled himself on.

The bus drove off. Shad watched Gus getting smaller through the window. He and Gus had waited at the bus stop for his mom all those years. Now Gus was waiting for him.

Beth was also watching Bandit. “Bandit has needed a friend,” she said. “I’m glad you and Gus are here.”

Shad was, too.



Chapter Three: Getting Ready

Beth's mom was waiting when the bus dropped them off at the museum on Friday. She handed out buckets and rags for them to use. "It's important to get everything clean to start the new year right," she said. "If everyone works hard, this should only take a few minutes. I've invited the lion dancers to our house for a barbecue later. We might even set off some firecrackers!"

Everyone ran around, sweeping and cleaning. Shad helped Beth's big brother Thad hang up red New Year lanterns.

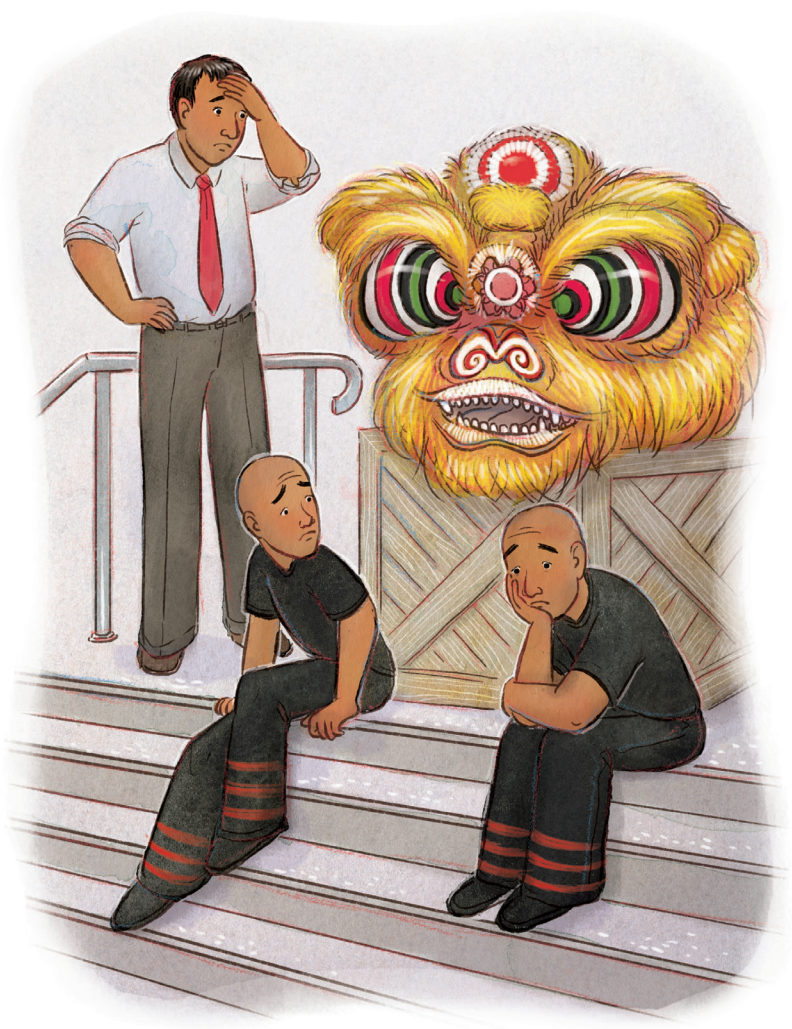
Doc, Malia, and the little Kalani kids got restless. Luz took them outside to the parking lot. They found some crates and empty boxes that they used to build a huge fort. Beth's little brother Doc refused to leave his box when it was time to go. He dragged it all the way home.



Everyone ate too much at the barbecue. They listened to music and talked about how great the museum looked. Thad lit the fuses of some firecrackers. The loud pops scared the dogs. The little kids ran behind the big box Doc had brought home. They refused to come out until the noise stopped.



Shad was awakened the next morning by someone banging on the door. It was Noah. “Hurry! Come quick! Part of the lion costume is missing. We need everyone’s help to find it.”



Chapter Four: Eureka Kids

Shad and Gus ran to meet the others at the museum.

The big lion head sat on a crate. It looked sad and lonely. The lion dancers looked confused. Mr. Kalani looked upset.

Noah held up his wrist computer. “Is that what we’re looking for?” he asked.

Everyone crowded closer to see the picture of a long, graceful robe made of red and gold fur.

“That’s it!” said Mr. Kalani.

“Let’s go find it then!”

Noah and Luz searched the main floor. No clues.

Beth and Shad searched the storage unit. No clues.

Gus and Bandit searched the parking lot.



The others came running when they heard excited barks. The dogs had found a scrap of soft yellow fur!

Noah wheeled himself in circles, hoping to find another one. “Here’s a red one,” he yelled, breaking into a grin.

“Look at the dogs!” Luz cried. Gus and Bandit wagged their tails in front of the apartment house. They held more scraps of fur carefully in their mouths.



They followed the dogs to the back garden. Doc and Malia were playing dress-up with . . . the LION COSTUME!

“It was in the trash with the other boxes,” Doc explained. “No one else wanted it.”

“It must have fallen off the truck,” said Beth.
“Sorry, kids. This belongs to the museum.”



Later, the kids stopped by Noah's apartment.

Noah was playing computer games with a boy in a soccer uniform.

"Have you met Kenji yet?" Luz asked. "He lives upstairs. He's a really good soccer player."

"Hey, Shad," said Kenji. His voice was friendly, but he didn't take his eyes off the screen.

"Kenji's mom doesn't like computer games," Noah explained.

Shad sat on the couch. He was feeling pretty good. He looked around at his new friends. "It's awesome that we solved a mystery," he said.

"We're a good team," Luz agreed.

"This is the first team I've ever been on," Noah said with a grin.

"Then let's keep it going," said Beth. "What kind of team should it be?"

"A team that helps people," said Luz.

"A team that goes on quests for good," said Kenji.

"A team that makes discoveries," said Shad. "Like Archimedes in the bathtub."

"Eureka!" everyone shouted. Bandit and Gus barked.

"We're a team: the Eureka Kids!" Noah said. "Stay tuned for our next adventure."

Reading

Eureka Kid Adventures: Book 2

Shad and his friends live across the street from a museum where plans are underway for the Lunar New Year Festival. The celebration will end with the exciting Lion Dance, but part of the lion costume is missing! What happened to it? And will they find it in time? In *Making the Team*, the second book in the Eureka Kids Adventures, the group of friends grows and the kids learn about teamwork and belonging.

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