

The Police Found My iPhone

By Eliza Siddiqui

“Come on Ray, you can’t be late for school *again*, get out of bed!” I groaned as I rolled out of bed. *What sucks*, I thought, *is that mom has a point*. I looked at myself in the bathroom mirror: my crazy red hair, bright green eyes, thick-ish eyebrows, and my small nose overtop not-too-thin, not-too-luscious, lips. Add in a spatter of freckles, my average sized body, and you got me, 11 year old Rachel Finnigan. I managed to bound down the stairs, bag swung on my shoulder, stuff my face with a muffin, and get to the stop just as the bus turned the corner. Once I got to school, I met up with Sierra, my best friend, at the lockers. We talked as we walked toward our class, before the corner, she wheeled around to look at me, all serious like, her hands on my shoulders, and stared her brown eyes into mine. “I need to tell you something” when she lowered her voice, I swear I started to panic. Was she moving? Was she *dying*? (I started to list all the diseases I could think of, I had convinced myself that she was dying) *Typhus? Cholera? Pneumonia? Cancer* (my mind started listing all types of Cancer)? *EBOLA???* (I can get very melodramatic and caught up with my imagination sometimes). “My team is going to crush you in dodgeball for the championships.” I smiled. “Not if I have a say in it!” The in-class championships for phys ed were today, and I was going to be amazing. We entered our class giggling, which earned us a glare from Mr. Z, our teacher. He looks about middle-aged, and he’s a pretty cool guy, unlike a lot of teachers. Sierra, being the Sierra I know, just flipped her silky brown hair back and gave him an innocent little wave. The class laughed, Mr. Z joining in, I laughed along with them and shook my head at her. The bell rang, and class started.



All the kids around me jostled and bumped as we made our way to phys ed. I remembered Sierra's earlier warning. *This will be easy, we'll blow them out of the water*, I smiled to myself, I love dodgeball, and everyone knows it. Also, unlike a lot of girls, I actually give my all to a game. We neared the gym, and suddenly I heard it. *THUMP. THUMP.* Something was up. I entered the gym warily and looked around. Nothing was amiss. Then I heard something else. *THUD. THUD.* I whirled around, looking to see if anyone else had heard it. Then a hand grabbed my shoulder and yanked me around. I felt a fist connect with my face, and the world went black.



I woke up with a gag in my mouth and a crick in my neck. My hands, it turned out were tied behind me with a thick rope that was digging into my skin. I tried to get up, only to discover that my feet were also bound. I looked around, and I only an inky black darkness, with dull and hazy outlines of things I didn't recognize. I heard footsteps coming my way, behind me, and then a blinding light filled the room. I blinked twice, my eyes adjusting to the light. "How much you think we can get for her, Rico?" a gruff voice asked. Another voice, Rico's, answered "Hundred, minimum." His voice was nasally, and he didn't sound very tough. Whereas, the other guy sounded like he crushed children's dreams for a living. The 2 men finally came around in front of me. I took a good, long, look at them. The one on the right-I assumed it was Rico- was wearing a navy blue T-shirt underneath a black hoodie. He actually looked pretty wimpy, a weasel face, a skinny and lanky kind of build. The other guy's look screamed 'TOUGH GUY!' with tattoos, huge boots, leather jacket, glasses. They both looked me over. The tough guy finally spoke "100 minimum, eh? I think we can do a little more." He bent over and took the gag out of my mouth, looked me in the eye and sneered "What about you, how much do you think mommy and daddy will pay for you?" I said nothing, and instead gave him my most defiant stare. "Shoot, that's a no-

brainer, \$500 on the spot.” he stood up and made to leave. As he walked away, the tough guy turned to Rico and muttered “Get us on air, 500, and don’t screw it up this time.” To which Rico nodded and hurried away. *...and don’t screw it up this time...* then it hit me. A couple weeks ago, in the middle of all broadcasting, a message had appeared, stating that 2 anonymous men had taken 8 year-old Jamie Wiliker. Then, they had demanded \$350 for him. I felt a strange surge of pride, knowing I was worth more than Jamie. But then, I remembered, one of the men-Rico! - had betrayed their position. Sierra said the police were there in less than a minute, and everyone had stifled their laughter as they were carted off to jail. The Wilikers didn’t have to pay for their child. Come to think of it, they were pretty bad criminal child abductors, though the TV broadcast idea was ingenious. “Testing, Testing, 1 2 3.” Rico’s nasally voice filled the room I was being held in. “Yes, that’s right, we’re back, you’re jail system’s lousy, yada, yada, ya,” I admit, the way he said it, with his bored tone, made me giggle a little, and I could imagine him saying it while examining his nails, all uninterested like. “...right from her school,” he was saying, and then I remembered, yeah, I was taken from school! I, Rachel Finnigan, admit, that I was very impressed. Even when I heard “...so yeah, your school system sucks as well.” *You know, if this criminal thing doesn’t work out, being a comedian might not be far down the lane,* I mused. Then his tone dropped and things became serious. “Alright, we want \$500 for the girl, and a guarantee that we walk away, not tailed, no secret police ambush, nothing, we are going to go on our flight alone.” Soon, the gruff voice of Tough Guy filled the room “This time,” he said “we’re coming to you, leave the money at the corner of West and Smith. Oh, and if it’s not there by 1:30 then bye, bye, little girl!” he paused, and I heard a sound I’d only ever heard in movies-the clicking of a loaded gun. “And look, it’s 12:30 now! Remember: no cops, no ambushes, no FBI, no nothing. Or else.” With a little click, and a small burst of static, the mic turned off, and Rico spoke “And we’re out, good job Lupa, I bet you scared the socks off em” They both did the thug/goon laugh and hi-fived each other. Just as Rico was wincing in pain, there was a loud banging behind me, the sound of a

door straining against an unknown force, and the words “Police! Open up and give us the girl or we’re coming in!”



It turns out my mom still had the ‘Find My iPhone’ app I had forced on her the second I got my iPhone. Right when she heard I was missing, she used it, and called the cops, because who knew how dangerous those ‘nefarious men’ were. Me, I guess I was happy that Rico hadn’t messed up again, who knows what Lupa could’ve done to him? The only downside--other than the fact that I’d been kidnapped-- was that I’d missed dodgeball. Oh, and the sounds I heard in the gym never did get discovered, so who knows what they were...