

STORY  
WALKER  
365

7 to 10  
YEARS

BUILDING BEAUTIFUL INSIDE

WHOSE SIDE ARE YOU ON?

A Story by Arkedelic



# STRETCH YOUR VOICE

## WHOSE SIDE ARE YOU ON?

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## WHOSE SIDE ARE YOU ON?

“Tomorrow. 4 PM. Be there,” Sid announced, holding up the community flyer like a trophy.

Jane squinted. “Kids vs Parents’ Cricket Match and Mela’?”

“It’s war,” said Sid. “We win, we get bragging rights and two extra plates of momos. We lose... we get bedtime jokes for a month.”

“Who’s the captain?” asked Mario, already flexing.

“I am. Obviously,” said Sid.

“And I,” came a dramatic voice from the balcony, “will not be participating.”

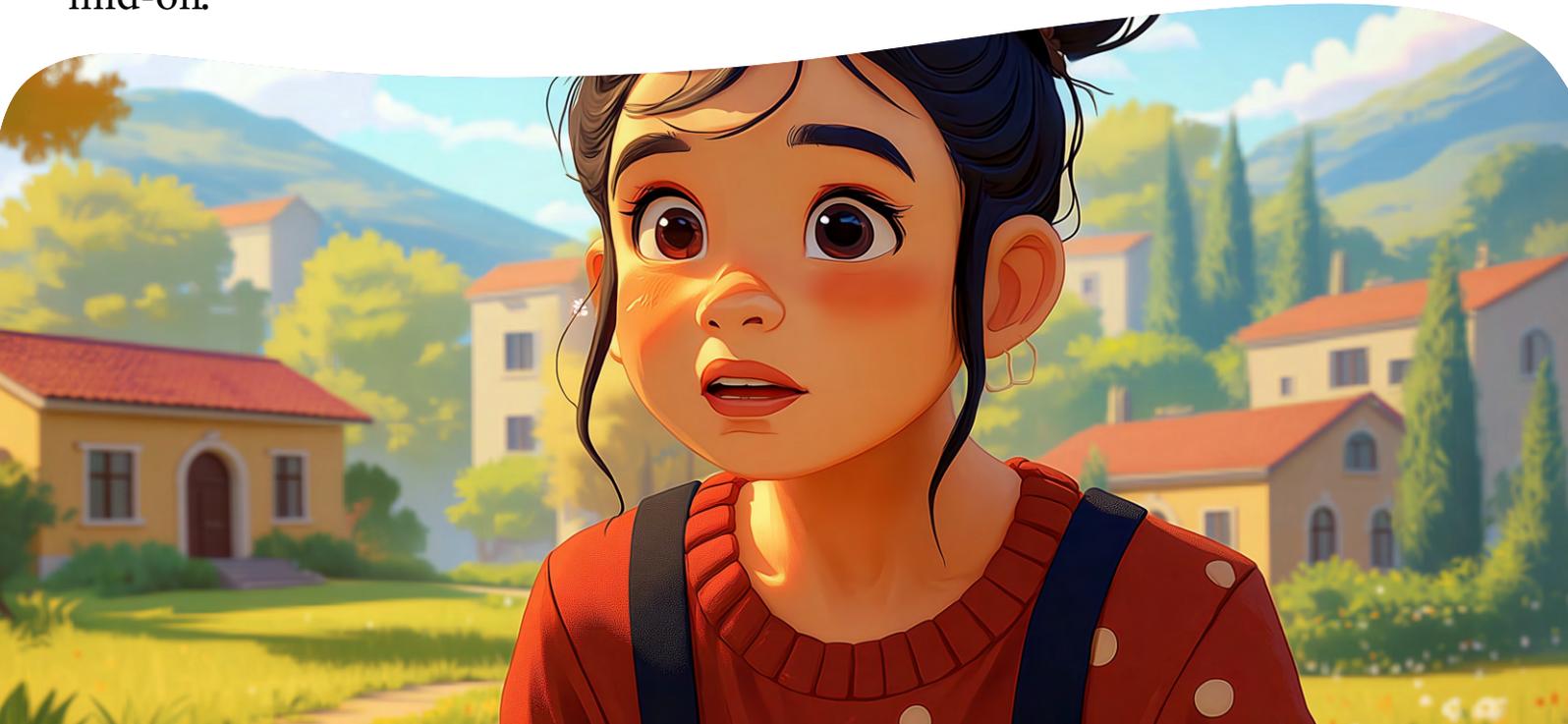
Everyone turned.

Sam stood in her tracksuit. Arms crossed. Eyebrow arched.

“My mom,” she said slowly, “is captaining the parents’ team.”

Later that night, the Squad gathered in Sid’s hallway, strategising.

“We open with Mario bowling, Nik on long-on, Jane keeping,” Sid said. “Sam, mid-off”



Sam hesitated. “About that...”

Five heads turned.

“Come on, Sam,” said Jane. “You’re good at this.”

“I know,” Sam muttered. “But my mom’s on the other side.”

“Exactly why we need you,” said Mario.

“No, I mean... what if she thinks I’m taking your side against her?”

There was an awkward silence.

Then Nik said, “Why is this so complicated?”

“Because,” Sam said, “sometimes the pitch is flat, but the situation isn’t.”

The next day, the park was buzzing.



Kids in face paint. Dads in sneakers that hadn’t moved since the 90s. Mums with caps, whistles, and matching wristbands.

The umpire was Jane’s grandfather, armed with sunglasses and a foldable chair.

“Coin toss,” he barked.

Sid called heads. Lost.

The parents won and, just to be annoying, put the kids in to bat first.

By the time the kids wrapped up their innings, they had managed a modest score. Not great.

Not bad.

Then the parents came in to chase.

And things started heating up.

Sam’s mom, bold as ever, was not just hitting runs, she was also offering loud commentary.

“Textbook swing, but I’ll give it a 5 out of 10 for flair,” she said mid-over, winking.

Kids whispered.

“She’s trash-talking us!” Jane hissed.

“She’s not wrong,” Mario whispered back.

Then came the big moment. Sam’s mom hit a high one. It soared toward the boundary.

Sam sprinted under it. The ball dropped cleanly into her hands.

OUT!

“Not out,” her mom called immediately. “Too close to the rope. Her heel touched the line.”

“What?!” Jane exploded. “She was a metre inside!”

Umpire Grandad looked uncertain.  
“Hard to say. Let’s redo the ball.”

Sam opened her mouth, then closed it.

Her mother met her eyes. Just for a moment.

Sam stood frozen in the grass.

The rest of the over was a blur.

Later, sitting by the snack stand, Sam stared at her drink. “She didn’t cheat. She just... defended herself.”

“She also didn’t respect the call,” Jane muttered.

“She thought I stepped out.”

“Did you?”





“I don’t know.”

Sid sat down next to her. “Look, it’s okay. You don’t have to pick us. But you don’t have to pick her either.”

Sam looked up. “Then who do I pick?”

Sid shrugged. “Maybe fairness. Maybe you.”

Final over. Parents needed 6 to win. Sid was bowling. Sam was back at mid-off. Her mom was on strike.

Two balls left.

CRACK! Her mom hit it flat between two fielders.

Sam saw it happening.

One fielder hesitated. The other lunged too late.

Sam darted between them, dove forward, and snatched the ball just before it hit the ground.

Stunned silence.

“OUT!” Grandad shouted.

Sam got up, grass on her elbows, dust on her knees.

Her mother smiled — a half-smile. Not angry. Not proud. Just knowing.

Sam jogged back to the Squad.

“Good catch,” Jane muttered.

“Solid spine,” added Sid.

Sam shrugged. “Didn’t want either side to lose unfairly.”

That evening, as the sun dipped and the winning plate of momos arrived, Sam’s mom walked over.

“You were brilliant out there,” she said.

“Thanks,” Sam said. “You too.”

They stood quietly for a second.

Then her mom added, “Just so you know — the boundary call? You were in.”

Sam laughed. “Too late now.”

“Maybe. But it matters that I say it.”

Sam blinked.

Then smiled.

Because sometimes standing up doesn’t mean standing against.

It just means standing.

Even when both sides matter.

**† THE END**



## THE FAIR CALL GAME

### What you need:

A few friends or family members, any small object (like a ball or coin), and a space to play (indoors or outdoors).

### HOW TO DO:

- 1 Choose one person to be the referee for the first round. The others will play a quick, simple game — tossing a ball, drawing something, or doing a mini race.
- 2 When a tricky moment happens, like two people reaching the ball at the same time, the referee must make a call.
- 3 Everyone else must respect the call without arguing, even if they disagree.
- 4 After each round, switch roles so everyone gets to be both player and referee.
- 5 End with a short chat:
  - What was hard about being fair?
  - How did it feel to make a call when others disagreed?

- Did anyone notice when fairness mattered more than winning?

**Reflection/Purpose:** This activity helps children experience fairness from both sides — the one making the decision and the one accepting it. It builds empathy, perspective-taking, and calm confidence under pressure. Like Sam in the cricket match, it shows that fairness doesn't mean taking sides — it means standing steady. Over time, it helps children learn that real strength isn't in choosing who's "right," but in choosing what's right.

# FIVE FASCINATING FACTS ABOUT THE WORLD'S MOST BELOVED FAMILY GAMES



## 1. SNAKES AND LADDERS WAS ONCE A MORAL LESSON!

The game began in ancient India, called Moksha Patam. The ladders stood for virtues like kindness and honesty, while the snakes represented greed and anger. It wasn't just luck — it was a lesson that good deeds move you up, while wrong choices slide you down.

## 2. MONOPOLY WAS ORIGINALLY ABOUT FAIRNESS, NOT FORTUNE

When it was created in 1903, it was called The Landlord's Game, meant to show how unfair land ownership could be. Over time, it became the fast-paced money game we know today — but its origins were actually about justice and balance!

### 3. UNO WAS BORN IN A BARBERSHOP

In 1971, a man named Merle Robbins created UNO to stop family arguments during card games. He printed 5,000 decks and sold them from his barbershop in Ohio. Today, over 150 million decks have been sold worldwide — proof that solving family fights can become a global hit!

### 4. LUDO AND PARCHEESI TRAVELLED THROUGH CENTURIES

Ludo, played in millions of homes today, was inspired by Pachisi, a royal game from 6th-century India. The earliest game board was found carved into stone in an ancient palace courtyard, meaning kings once rolled the same style of dice we do now.



## 5. CHARADES IS OLDER THAN ELECTRICITY!

The guessing game Charades began in 18th-century France as a quiet salon game before spreading across Europe. Long before screens or consoles, families used imagination, laughter, and teamwork to keep fun alive — and they still do.



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## THE LINE ON THE FIELD

The sun was bright over the school courtyard as Luca and Matteo stood face-to-face, both gripping the cricket bat.

“It was my turn!” Luca insisted.

“No, you already had two!” Matteo shot back.

A few kids groaned. “Here we go again...”

Sofia watched from the sidelines, arms folded. She was the umpire for the match — or at least, that’s what everyone had agreed ten minutes ago. Now no one was listening.

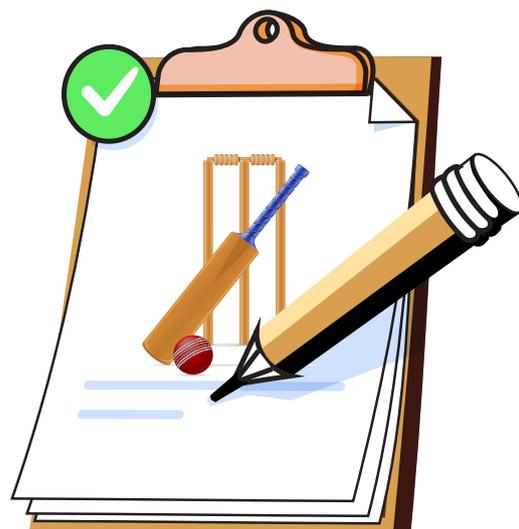
“Can we just start over?” she asked.

Matteo frowned. “You’re friends with Luca. You’ll just take his side.”

“That’s not true!” Sofia protested.

But the others were already murmuring. “Yeah, she’s in his group.” “It’s not fair if she decides.”

Sofia felt heat rise in her cheeks. For a moment, she wanted to throw the bat and walk away. Why did being fair feel so lonely sometimes?



She looked down at the dusty line drawn in chalk — the crease where all the shouting had started. Then she took a breath.

“Okay,” she said slowly, “if you think I can’t be fair, then I’ll prove it another way.”

She picked up the chalk again and began to draw something new on the ground. The kids leaned closer, confused.

“What are you doing?” Matteo asked.

Sofia smiled faintly. “Changing the rules. For everyone.”

And then...

- What new rule do you think Sofia wrote in the dirt?
- How did Luca and Matteo react to her idea?
- Did it help them find a fair way to continue the game?
- What might the other kids learn from how Sofia handled the situation?
- Have you ever been in a moment where being fair meant standing alone for a while?

***Your turn to finish the story***

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