

The Milton Society of Georgia encourages young people to write in English. One of John Milton's beliefs was that writing was the way a foreign language learner might best demonstrate excellence. *Caucasus Journal of Milton Studies* offers young learners an opportunity to have their works published. Consider these to be works in progress by diligent English language learners. Here is a short story by a young learner.

## **The Girl in the Atelier**

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Once upon a time in the year 2055, on a winter's evening, everything was beautiful. Grandma was standing by the window looking out over the city. There was white snow everywhere, there were so many cars on the street, lights, a choir, and everyone was happy because it was Christmas time. Grandma heard a voice: "Oh, why should I sleep?" It was a girl's voice. Grandma moved away from the window and looked at her beautiful face, at her blue eyes and light hair. Grandma tied up the girl's hair and helped her to put on her pajamas. The little girl tried to prepare for sleep. Grandma kissed her on the forehead and Mia said: "Granny, tell me an interesting story, please." Grandma sat down on the chair and started this story:

"Back in 2020 one little girl always watched TV to see how stylists created dresses. She was really amazed. Journalists were saying that stylists first made garments in their imagination and next they chose a soft fabric to sew a dress. In the end, stylists always thought about little details that would embellish the garment. It looked like they were standing in a big factory where there were a lot of fabrics and jewelry."

"One day she told her parents that she wanted to become a designer, but they told her that it was bad and that all the models and designers were fools. In time they forgot about the girl's main desire."

"She was carried away by the thought of seeing it with her own eyes, to begin to fulfill her own wishes. She put on her jacket and went to the atelier."

The girl stopped her grandmother and asked: 'What is atelier?' Grandma replied: "An atelier is a store for shopping. In 2020 there were many ways to shop, but among them, the most famous ones were boutiques and ateliers where you could see trendy and beautiful things."

She continued: "The girl went across several streets and stopped at a bus stop. She had some coins in her pocket. She saw a man selling lollipops. She bought two and continued jogging on, she was still jogging when she saw the signboard: 'Christian Dior'. Her eyes sparkled with happiness. She approached the large shop window and tried to figure out what was going on behind it. First, she saw a woman wearing a beautiful dress decorated with jewelry and read: 'Every woman is elegant in a beautiful dress.' What made the dress beautiful were the most important details: the fabric, a soft yoke, jewelry. "

"She looked to the other side and saw a black woman holding a small handbag and she was also looking at the atelier. The woman said: 'One day I worked there and sewed beautiful patterns. It's wonderful to be there.' She said this without looking at her. The girl asked: 'And what happened next?' The lady looked at the girl and said: 'Now all I can do is just wear my handmade dresses.' She smiled and continued on her way."

"The girl went on looking at the women in the atelier. She saw they all wore high-heeled shoes, everyone except a Japanese woman on the left, who wore Zori, which is like the flip flop. She liked this style so much that she looked at her shoes and wanted to hide them. Everything was fantastic. The girl decided to go home, but her heart was pounding

to get inside.” Grandma stopped for a second to look at her granddaughter. She saw her eyes full of curiosity and went on telling the story.

“As soon as she saw the newly made fabrics, she did not even think about how she found herself in the atelier. She heard the ladies talking there. They said they were out of time and disbanded. The girl was left alone in the room. The first time she touched the fabric, it was fascinating. She immediately unfolded the book and read it: ‘Different materials are used for fabric, for example, hosiery, weft or X-ray fabric.’ The girl whispered ‘color is important...’ and felt that someone was watching from above. She saw the Japanese woman whose shoes caught her attention from the window. The woman looked at the girl’s wide eyes with a smile and said: ‘How did you come here?’ The girl nodded with surprise, and the woman began: ‘You spoke about colors and yes, colors are important. Natural colors for fashion are black, white, gray, brown, beige, and blue. Also, iridescent colors, are imitating the colors of the rainbow. Follow me.’ They went out into the corridor and entered a large room, where many mannequins were standing adorned with various garments.”

“The girl asked: ‘Why were the women in such a hurry?’ She replied: ‘Do you know who Anna Wintour is?’ The girl nodded as a sign of recognition. The woman said ‘She is the editor-in-chief of *Vogue*. We have to present clothes to her and the time is very short.”

“‘What is your name?’ the Japanese woman asked the girl. ‘Anne,’ replied the girl. ‘Anne means grace. I like it. My name is Sakura, it means cherry blossoms, but everyone calls me Sara. Okay, these are only trendy clothes. The unitard is such an aesthetic. These are vintage clothes, knife pleats and some are great masterpieces.’ With great joy, Sara entered the second door. There was only a table and some chairs in the room. There was a man with glasses guarding some shoes on the table. Sara said ‘These are a replica of Manolo’s lizard shoes.’ There was much sparkling light on the shoes; it was brilliant, amazing and the most beautiful thing the eye could see. There was a large banner on the wall:

‘In 2020 the collection is on display, held seasonally in different cities.’ ‘This is Duke’ said Sara. He was like Willy Wonka from Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory. ‘Did you tell her about perfume?’ asked Duke. ‘No,’ said Sara. ‘Okay, I will tell you about only one perfume, one of the best smelling perfumes in the world. No matter how much time passes it is still popular.’ He took the perfect package of perfume out of his pocket. It had the inscription Chanel No. 5 eau de parfum. That smell was indescribable.”

“After looking at everything they left the room. Anne took out the lollipops and gave one to Sara and said: ‘I want to give you something that will remind you of me, but I have only these two lollipops and I want to give you this one.’ Anne and Sara parted. It had been the most memorable day of Anne’s life.”

Grandmother waited for her granddaughter to say something. “The little girl was you, grandma” exclaimed the girl. Grandmother smiled. “It was you, the girl who was in the atelier. Grandma Anne, you never told me about that.’ Grandma Anne stood up, went to the bed and hugged her, covered her with the blanket, kissed her on the forehead, and said: “Sweet dreams, Mia. I hope you will find yourself in a place that will change your life.”



**Barbara**