

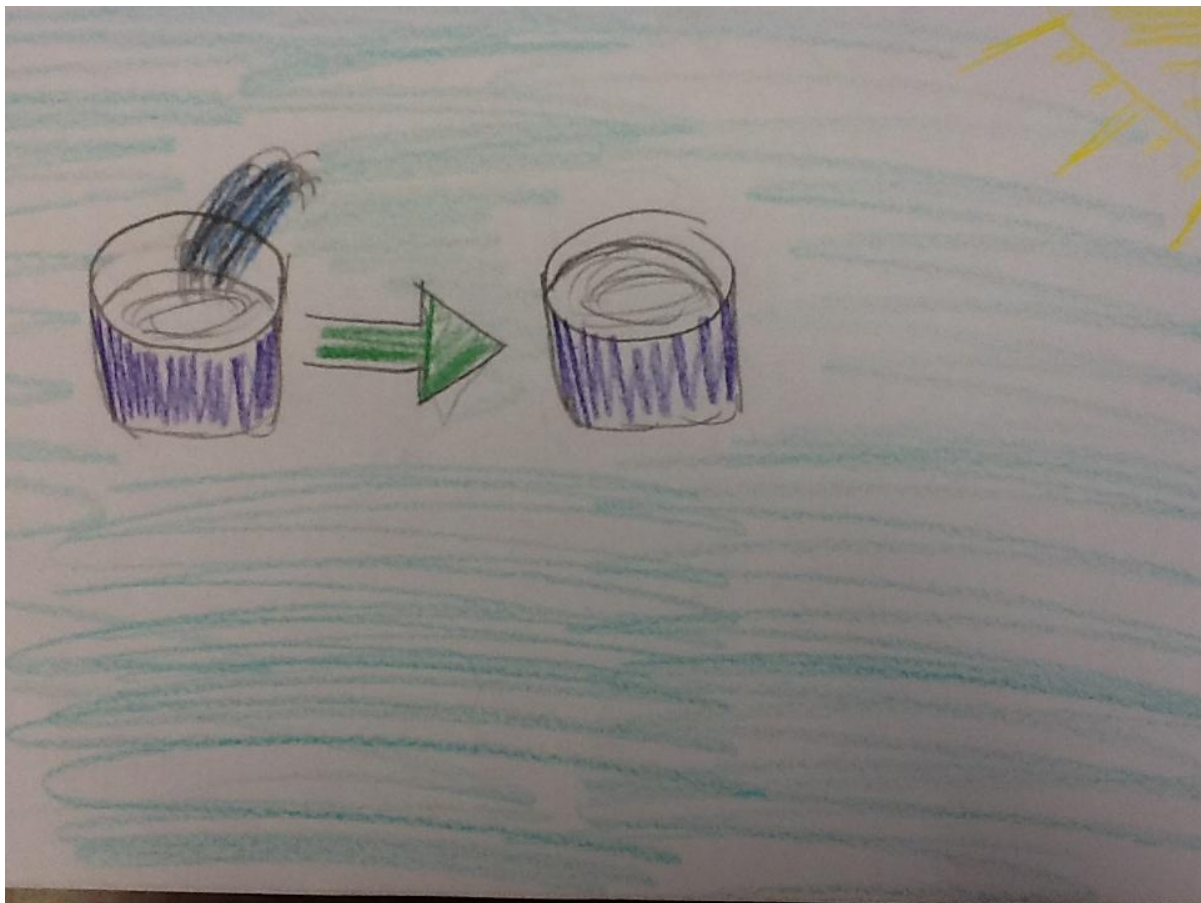
Our Journey  
across the world  
by Sunita



# Our Journey Across the World

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My mom and dad decided to move to Wisconsin because they thought their kids' lives would be better in America. In Nepal, we didn't have our own house. It was provided by the government. We didn't have enough to eat. Sometimes we didn't have food, so would just eat rice with salt. If we didn't have much yogurt, we would add a lot of water to it so there would be more of it.



### **Life in a Nepali Refugee Camp**

In Nepal the refugee camps were divided into sectors. In Nepal the roads were bumpy. Also in Nepal there are no traffic lights. People would go to a building where food was rationed out. Each family would receive provisions like rice, oil, or beans according to the amount of people in the family. We would all wait there, and when they called out our address we would go pick up the food.

In Nepal I had lots of friends. In my refugee camp there was lots of sand on the ground without many plants. The people in my village had bamboo houses. Inside the houses there were holes in the walls between the stalks of bamboo, which were woven together. When it would rain it was always in a big storm. Sometimes people would glue newspapers on the walls to keep the cold air outside. They would use sticky rice to glue the newspapers. In my refugee camp people use fire to cook food. They make the fire using wood.



The teachers would hit kids with rulers if they had nail polish on their nails. The kids had to wear their school uniform when they went to school. In school, when it was time for lunch, kids would go home to eat lunch. School teachers would check if kids cut their nails or not. If kids hadn't cut them, teachers would hit the kid's hand with a ruler. They would also hit kids if they didn't turn in their homework on time. Kids would have to find their own way to get to school. During recess, kids could leave the school grounds, but have to back in their classroom by the time the bell rang.

We used to have fun in simple ways. My brother used to climb trees. We should play marbles or go fishing. Sometimes we would take a walk in the woods and pick up wood to make a fire. In movie theaters there would be lots of people. People had to smooch together closely on the floor to fit in. Only fancy theaters had seats.

In Nepal there are lots of festivals. One of the festivals is called Tihar. It celebrates goddess Laxmi, and people pray for brothers to have a long life. During Tihar people decorate their house with marigold flowers. People also cook sweets and breads. People sing and dance. Everyone's home looks beautiful.



## Moving to America

On the way to the United States, we spent 4 days in Kathmandu, the capital of Nepal. While we were there, my brother and I watched our first English language cartoon movie. You might have heard of it, *The Lion King*. In Kathmandu there was a place you could trade Nepali money for US dollars, but my family didn't do it. Also in Kathmandu we met a Nepali family of three, a mom, dad, and little girl.

When we arrived in the US and landed in New York, my brother and I cried because we still had more plane rides to take, but we were sick of riding in the plane. The family we met in Kathmandu stayed in the same hostel as us. My brother looked out the window at night. He said New York was beautiful outside at night. The family we stayed with went to Michigan and we went to Wisconsin.



## **Making our Home**

The apartment that we moved into smelled bad to my family for a couple months, but then we got used to it. At home my mom cooks Nepali food. Learning English was the most challenging thing for my family and me.

On the first day of Kindergarten at Midvale school Emily brought me. When she and I got to my school, I went to eat breakfast. Then Emily left. Every day when pizza was served for lunch, I would throw it away. Then one day I tried it and I liked it. I kind of got used to eating American food in my school. That year I had one friend. My class and I used to go on field trips. My first grade teacher's name was Ms. Purdue. She had short, blond hair.

Learning English was difficult. But now I feel like I can express myself better in English than in Nepali. Sometimes it is hard for me to speak Nepalese. I want to speak Nepalese, but I just can't speak it well.

The things that I like about America are the holidays. I find them interesting. My favorite holiday is Christmas. The thing I like about it are the lights on the tree. I also like the schools, stores, foods, houses, and books in America.

Life is better in America. The move was worth it. My parents achieved their goal of having a better life for their kids. My life is better in America.

