



Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

It was the first day of September in 1986, and the morning rain had given way to bright sunshine. A 1..... executive made her way across 56th street toward Broadway, on the west side of Manhattan. A young boy—all of 2..... old and dressed in scruffy clothes—asked for some change for something to eat. Laura Schroff lowered her head and walked on; Manhattan was full of 3....., and she hardly even noticed them anymore.

But something drew Laura back to the boy. She still doesn't know what it was, but she calls it an "4....." There's an old Chinese proverb that says that an invisible thread connects two people who are 5..... to meet and influence each other. Laura believes she felt that thread. She turned back from the middle of the street and took the boy to 6.....

The boy lived in a single room in a 7..... with his mother and numerous other relatives. It was only two blocks away from Laura's home, but it might as well have been a different planet. As they talked over their lunch, Laura learned about the 8..... She herself had not had an easy childhood, but what she heard shocked her, and before she left, she told him to 9..... her if he was ever hungry. When she didn't hear from him after several days, she returned to the 10..... they had met—and there he was, in the same clothes and too-tight sneakers. They arranged to meet again the next Monday.

Every Monday, Laura Schroff and Maurice Mazyck had dinner together. Some Mondays they ate at Laura's home, and Maurice discovered a life he had only seen on television. Gradually, Laura became the young boy's first 11..... She encouraged him to have dreams about his future, and got involved in his education. Maurice's teacher was perhaps the only other person who believed in him, and she made Laura take a long hard look at what she was doing. Was she helping Maurice just as a way of helping herself? Could she commit to being there for Maurice even when she didn't feel like it? What kind of 12..... might it cause Maurice if she were to abandon him after becoming so important to him? Laura thought it through, and came to a 13.....

The two continued sharing dinner every Monday, and a close bond formed between them. Laura 14..... Maurice to new places, new ideas, and new possibilities. And Maurice became almost like the child Laura had always wanted. One day, she offered to make lunch for Maurice and leave it with her doorman for him to pick up on his way to school. He asked her if she could put the lunch in a brown 15....., because then the other kids would know that someone 16..... about him.

Maurice had never left the city until Laura took him to visit her sister's family on 17..... Her memory of their trip is a favorite one. She had expected Maurice to be amazed by the huge front lawn and even larger backyard. But what amazed him the most was the large 18..... where they all sat down and talked and ate together. He 19..... that he wanted a table like that when he had a family of his own. Only months earlier, Maurice had seriously doubted that he would live to be an adult.



Laura and Maurice's 20..... lasted, and in 1997 a magazine published an article, less than one page long, about it. Laura's friends suggested that she write a book telling the whole story. It was 10 years before she began writing—and another three years before she found a co-writer and started seriously getting down to business. The result of their work, *An Invisible Thread*, reached number one on the *New York Times* 21..... list.

Today, Maurice works in construction. He is the first person in his family to 22..... a paycheck. He has a family of his own, and his children are all very fond of their "Aunt Laurie." If you were to visit the family's apartment, you might notice that there is no 23..... in the living room. But there is a 24..... dining room table.

The writer Ernest Hemingway said, "The best way to find out if you can trust somebody is to trust them." Over the years, Laura discovered the truth of that statement. She feels that Maurice has given her one of the 25..... she has ever had. He repaid her trust by giving her life more meaning than her success at work ever did. He taught her to be 26..... for what she has, and for the chance to share it.