

Name _____

Read the passage. Use the ask and answer questions strategy to tell about the most important details of the passage.

Painting From Memory

12 Few people know of Damyang, South Korea, but I think it is
25 impossible to find a place more beautiful. It is known for its bamboo
37 forests. When I was younger, I spent much time in the forests
painting pictures of the bamboo. Painting is one of my talents.

48 I lived in Damyang until last year when my family moved to
60 New York. My mother, a scientist, was asked to come work here.

72 “There are no bamboo forests in New York,” I said. “There is
84 nothing to paint in New York.”

90 “Bae,” she said, “that is nonsense. You will find many things
101 to see and paint there. You will see.”

109 I was unsure. “But I will miss home,” I said.

119 “Then you must paint pictures of your favorite places,” she
129 said. “They will make you feel at home even in New York.”

141 So when we moved, I brought my forest paintings with me.

152 New York was not easy at first, because I knew no one and spoke
166 only imperfect English. Yet I didn’t feel homesick when I looked at
178 my paintings of home. I soon found friends at school, too. Like me,
191 they were artists, and we now paint in a group after school.

203 Last month someone moved into the apartment next to my
213 family’s. “Come, Bae,” said my mother. “Let’s welcome our
222 neighbor.” We crossed the hall and knocked on the door. An old
234 woman who looked kind yet unhappy answered.

Name _____

“We are your new neighbors,” my mother said to her. “I am Hana and this is my son, Bae.”

The woman smiled. “I am Varvara. Please come in.”

We learned that Varvara had moved from Vyborg, Russia, to be closer to her daughter. Still, she was sad to leave her home.

“I am so homesick it is unbearable,” Varvara said. She laughed, but I could tell she was sad. Varvara told us so much about Vyborg. I could picture her home in my head.

When I came home from school the next day, an ambulance was leaving our building, and I asked my mother why.

“It’s Varvara. She misses her home so much that she has become ill. I hope she can get used to living here. Try not to worry.”

I had to do something for Varvara. I had been in her situation before. I had missed my home so much it hurt. But at least I had my paintings of home. She didn’t even have that. Unless...

A few days later I heard Varvara on the stairs. I cracked the door to see her. She looked better but still sad. When she got to her door she gasped. Propped against the door was my gift to her: a painting of Vyborg. I had painted it from her memories.

I closed the door as she began to cry. At first I was worried that she didn’t like the painting. But later she told me that those were tears of joy. I knew just how she felt.



New York was not easy at first. My paintings helped me feel better though.