First Day Nerves!

‘It will be OK Granny, don’t worry. Just hold my hand tightly!’

Morag was feeling uptight, even though it was only a few years since she had been in a Primary One classroom herself to welcome new entrants on ‘Induction Day’, as the new terminology called it. She was clutching her granddaughter Olivia’s hand tightly, as she had been ‘instructed’ to do by the child, thinking to herself, “Morag, for goodness sake, she’ll be alright, so why are you nervous?”

The Teacher stepped forward. ‘Hello, I’m Mrs Brown and I will be your Teacher; and what’s your name, please?’

Before Morag could answer, Olivia piped her reply in a clear sweet voice, ‘I am Olivia, and I will be coming to join your Class in August, after the holidays! Oh, and I can spell my name, its O-L-I-V-I-A, it means ‘like an Olive, which is a little fruit that grows on trees, especially in Italy and Greece and Spain, where it is hot and dry.’

‘Oh, Olivia, well done you! What a clever girl you are!’ exclaimed Mrs Brown.

‘Well,’ continued Olivia, getting into her stride, ‘I can also write my first name, quite well Mummy says, but so far I can’t write my surname.’

‘Oh’, said Mrs Brown, ‘and you can write your name too Olivia, you are a very clever girl indeed!’

Turning to Morag, Mrs Brown continued; ‘Well Mummy, may I have your name please?’

‘Morag Boyle’, said Granny, without thinking that this might not be what Mrs Brown was after.
‘Oh Granny!’ said Olivia, slightly exasperated, ‘not your name, you have to give my surname!’

Continuing while Morag shared a little smile with Mrs Brown, ‘My surname is 'Far-quhar-son',’ speaking the name very slowly so that Mrs Brown would be able to try to spell it, as Olivia herself had tried to do many times, so far without success.

‘You know Mrs Brown, you might get it wrong because it’s quite a difficult name, even for some grown-ups. But I know you will be able to do it, because you’re a Teacher!’

‘Mmmm, I hope so. Is that it Mrs Boyle?’

Morag nodded.

‘But I can tie my shoe laces and put my own clothes on and I should be able to help with other children because I already help my little sister. She is called Emily, but she is only three, and she cannot write her name yet so I have to write it for her.’

‘Emily, what a nice name too.’

‘It’s E-M-I-L-Y. I can spell Granny’s name too, it’s M-O-R-A-G.

‘And Mummy’s name is Elaine, that’s E-L-A-I-N-E.

‘And Daddy’s name is David, that’s D-A-V-I-D.

‘I can spell other names too but I cannot do Farquharson yet.’

‘Well Olivia, that is absolutely wonderful. Do you think you would like to be my Special Helper when you start here in August?’ asked Mrs Brown.

‘OH YES PLEASE! Thank you Mrs Brown. I promise I will do my best to help you.’

‘Right-O then, Olivia. Would you like to find a seat for you and your Granny and have a go at making some Flowers with the Stickers and Glue?’
‘OH GREAT! Sticking Games, Granny, come on, COME ON!’ said Olivia, grabbing her Granny’s hand and leading her firmly in the direction of the desks and tables.

Morag looked back over her shoulder at Mrs Brown who was beaming widely, now that the child was no longer watching, and saw the Teacher mouth to her:

“What a Wee Sweetie! She’s a real Teacher’s Delight!”