

# Short Story: Let Life Happen

## Level: B1-B2

He was not in a hurry to come into this world.

Weighing exactly 2.5 Kgs, he wailed into our lives one week later than his due date. The clock read 11:55 p.m. when the midwife handed me my wrinkled bundle of joy.

“Finally, he is here. You took your time, didn’t you? Feed him please, he must be hungry after all these hours making his way out of your womb.”

I cried with relief and general contentment as the nurse helped him nestle in my arms and take his first meal. It was difficult to feed him because he would not open his mouth and it took us a while to show him that it was all right to be there. Gradually his whimpering and fidgeting subsided and he fell into a deep sleep, curled up on my chest.

As he slept, I recalled the arduous journey that had led us here. We had been trying to have this child for years and when nature let us down, we turned our eyes towards science. It was a long process and we had almost given up. We had been longing for this baby for ages that his arrival was nothing short of a miracle.

## VOCABULARY FOR TALKING ABOUT TIME (1)

- ✓ From time to time
- ✓ Time works wonders
- ✓ To be ahead of one’s time
- ✓ To be behind the times
- ✓ To bide your time
- ✓ All in good time
- ✓ To make time for something
- ✓ To beat the clock
- ✓ To work against the clock
- ✓ To be like clockwork



My husband and I called him **Tafika**: 'We've arrived'.

The road to this child had been a winding and thorny one but we'd made it. We knew that life after Tafika would never be the same. We did not know to what extent he was going to jumble up our lives.

Tafika was a beautiful child and his beauty turned heads.

From time to time, people stopped when they saw him and voiced out their wonder.

"What a pretty baby you have! Look at his skin."

He had even features that neared perfection and we marvelled at this because neither my husband and I were what you would call 'beautiful' people.

Tafika was a fragile child and his fragility robbed my sleep and peace.

I could not stop worrying about him and more than often, I rushed to his bedside at night, soaked to the bone with sweat and I would stare at him for hours on end. Later, my husband would come and take my place because we did not want anything to happen to Tafika.

Tafika was a curious child and his curiosity made my heart leap!

It seemed as if he was trying to make up for the lost time he had wasted in the beginning of his years. We followed him everywhere because he touched everything and made no difference if the object was sharp or smooth, hot or cold, dirty or clean. He endangered his life many a time and we had to make frequent visits to the hospital to mend his self.

## VOCABULARY FOR TALKING ABOUT TIME (2)

- ✓ Time heals all wounds
- ✓ It is a race against time
- ✓ To make good use of one's time
- ✓ To make up for lost time
- ✓ Time flies
- ✓ A stitch in time saves nine
- ✓ To be in the right place at the right time
- ✓ Time will tell
- ✓ To live on borrowed time
- ✓ Once upon a time



Tafika was a fearless child and his fearlessness threatened my sanity.

The more he explored the world around him, the more anxious I grew and I became fidgety. I could not take my eyes off him. I feared for his life.

“Do not be afraid mother. I know what I am doing.”

He was a child.

“He knows what he is doing,” my husband said. “Nothing will happen to him. If he falls, he will rise up and dust himself.”

He needed protection.

“I don’t mother. I am big now. I can go to school and fight for myself. Time is too short to worry about what will become of me. I know what I want to do with my life. Let life happen.”

I lost weight. He thrived. I saw him thrive and I gained weight. He liked school and he had a bunch of friends that he met every weekend at the basketball court. Every now and then, he came with a scratched knee or elbow but it was nothing worse. He grew in stature and mind. I was proud of my son.

Tafika was an intelligent child and his intelligence BLEW my mind.

It was not school intelligence. It was the type of intelligence that helped him to understand the world around him. He understood people and situations and knew when a risk was worth taking or not. He knew the value of experience and banned fear from his life.

## VOCABULARY FOR TALKING ABOUT TIME (3)

- ✓ To take one’s time
- ✓ To be a matter of time
- ✓ To have all the time in the world
- ✓ To hardly have time to breathe
- ✓ In next to no time
- ✓ In the blink of an eye
- ✓ It’s high time/ It’s about time...
- ✓ At the crack of dawn
- ✓ Better late than never
- ✓ To take ages



Tafika is now a man. He has a wife and we welcomed his daughter a few months ago. My granddaughter reminds me of her father. Her beauty drops jaws and she is a bit of a restless child. From time to time, my anxiety crawls its way up from the recesses of my heart. I fear for her life because she is full of life.

Then, I catch myself fretting and sweating. I watch her take her first steps in life. I hold out my hand so she doesn't fall. I see the cold fury in her eyes. My hands drop to my side and I smile as she stumbles across the room to the safety of a chair.

"Let life happen." I whisper to myself as her mother rushes from the kitchen to comfort her.



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