



# **Whirlwind Missions**

*Ashley's Dispatch*

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"I'm inviting my Bengali friends over for Thanksgiving." My mom tells us over dinner.

"I don't know," Jesse says, "Rahat can be pretty rambunctious." We all nod our heads. Yes, Rahat can be very loud, energetic and unpredictable. But we decide that it will be fun to have them over to share in an American tradition.

Dad drives to Azalea to pick up Mama Selena and her son Joy and Mama Selma with her son Rahat. They are dressed in beautiful saris it makes me feel under dressed. As soon as they pull in the driveway Rahat bounds out of the car and tackles Jesse. Jesse looks to me for help.



"You guys want to see our backyard?" I ask. "SURE!" they scream excitedly and run behind me. "Wow, this is really big!" Joy says in awe. Just then our neighbors two big dogs run up along the fence and start barking, scaring Rahat. He slips his little hand into my dad's.

"You know, this is probably the first time they've ever been to a white person's house." I whisper to Jesse.



Finally, it's time to eat and we show up just in time as everyone is gathering around, holding hands, beginning to pray. I wonder what the Bengali women think of this custom. They smile nervously and probably only understand a few words. Dad leads the prayer and lays it on thick, "Jesus, Our Lord and Savior, thank you for bringing us all here together..."

After the prayer, Rahat is first in line and asks Aunt Ruth for a big helping of ham. "I want some ham." His eyes get big as she lays a fat slice on the paper plate. His mom, Selma, comes into the kitchen, her mouth drops and she says, "No! No! No meat!" (Muslims aren't allowed to eat pork of any kind.) My aunt quickly scrapes the meat off, "Oh sorry, sorry, I had no idea." Selma smiles sheepishly and herds Rahat back into the living room.



Lunch goes over well. The boys have a great time visiting Jesse's room and playing in the big yard. After lunch, everyone piles into the Expedition and ride over to Stone Mountain. I'm happy that we decided to share this tradition with them.

