

# Raina Tries Again

By Jane McBride  
(Based on a true story)

This story happened in the USA.

Raina read the words on the flyer at her school again.

Essay Contest: Win a free trip to New York City!

It was a contest for students in many schools in the area. Raina thought of herself in New York City, with towering skyscrapers around her and the Statue of Liberty nearby.

She wanted to go!

*"That's the last time I'll try anything new ever again," Raina said.*

"You should enter," Sydney said. "You're the best writer in our grade!"

Sydney's words made Raina feel good. She didn't know a lot about writing essays. But she wanted to try.

After school, Raina sat at her desk. *Tap, tap, tap.* She tapped her pencil on the paper as she thought about her ideas.

Finally, she started writing.

It took a whole week for Raina to finish. But with some help from Mom, she finally felt ready to turn in her essay.

A few weeks passed. Raina was excited to see who won. Maybe soon she'd be heading to New York!

"Over one hundred students entered," Mr. Wright said from the front of the classroom. "Thanks to all of you who wrote an essay."

Raina's heart thumped in excitement.

"Although none of our students won the contest, Raina was in the top

five of all entries. Congratulations, Raina," Mr. Wright said.

Raina smiled while her classmates clapped. But inside she was frowning. Being in the top five wasn't as good as winning. Her dream of seeing New York was gone.

When Raina got home, she slumped into a chair in the kitchen by her parents. "I lost the contest," she said. "That's the last time I'll ever try anything new again. I'll only do what I know I'm good at." She covered her head with her hands.

"I'm sorry you didn't win. Mom and I are both so proud of you for trying," Dad said. He sat down next to Raina. "Do you remember when I was out of work a couple of years ago?"

Raina nodded.

"I applied for lots of jobs and wasn't hired for any of them," Dad said.

"I was feeling pretty discouraged."

Raina lifted her head. "Really?"

Dad nodded. "But I didn't give up. After a long time, I found a job that was perfect. But it wouldn't have happened if I had stopped trying."

Mom put a comforting hand on Raina's back. "Do you know how many stories I send to different magazines?" she asked. "And how many are rejected? But I can't give up if I want to see my work published. Writing is important to me, so I keep trying."

Raina had always thought her parents were good at everything they did. She never knew that they had been turned down too.

She was still sad, but it did seem silly to *never* try anything new again. That wasn't what Heavenly Father wanted for her. Raina decided she wouldn't give up. She could try more things, even things she didn't do well right away.

"I think I'll enter the contest again next year," Raina said. Losing the contest didn't have to be the end of her dreams.



Raina went to her desk and picked up her pencil. Writing had been fun. *Tap, tap, tap.* So what new thing could she write next? ●



**"The Lord loves effort, because effort brings rewards that can't come without it."**

President Russell M. Nelson, quoted in Joy D. Jones, "An Especially Noble Calling," *Liahona*, May 2020, 16.