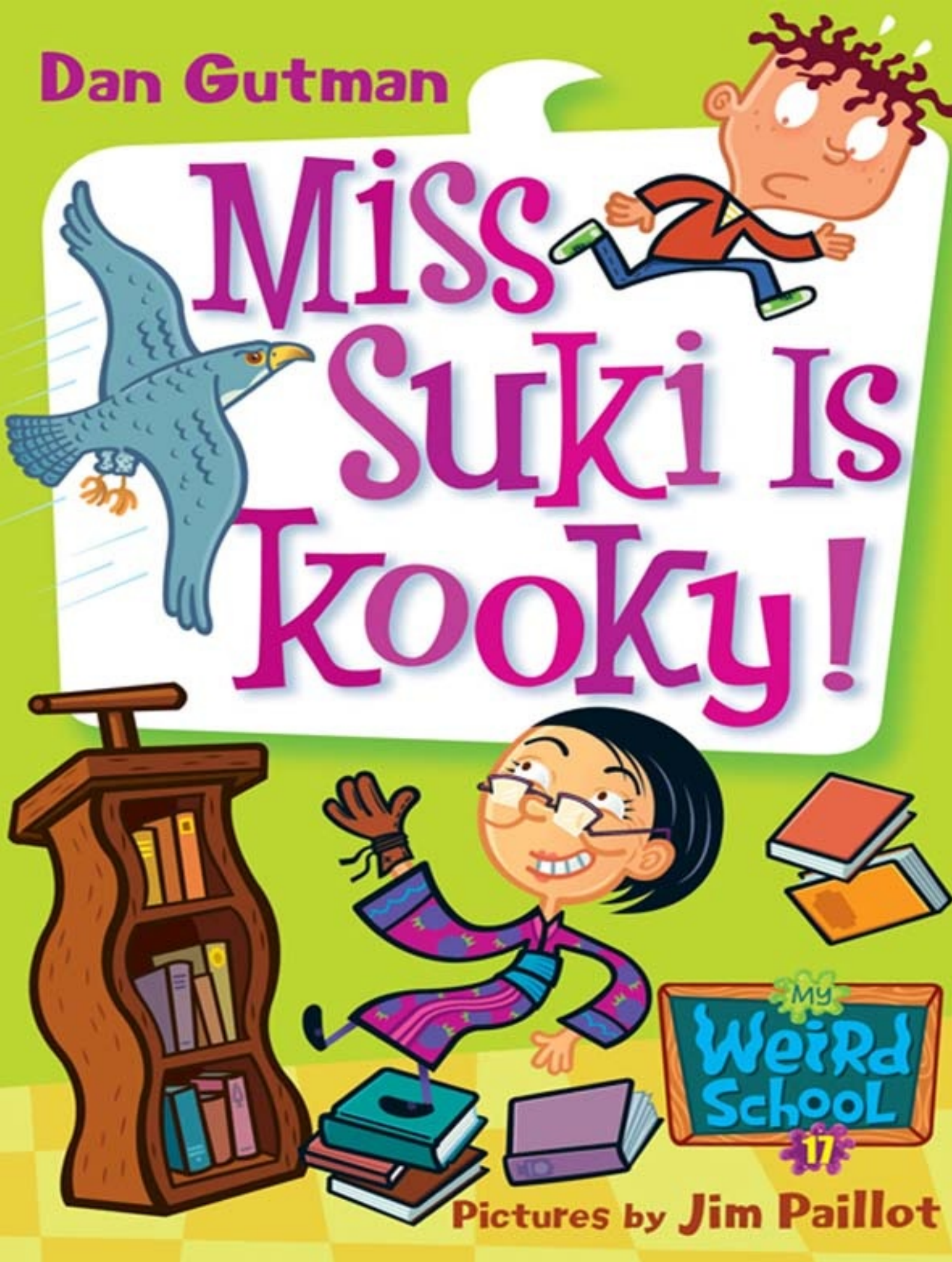


Dan Gutman

# Miss Suzuki Is Kooky!



Pictures by Jim Paillot



**Miss Suki Is Kooky!**

**Dan Gutman**

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 HarperCollins e-books







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# The Weirdest Thing in the History of the World

My name is A.J. and I hate school.

It was Monday morning, and all the girls were playing with these fake makeup kits that they got at some birthday party over the weekend. I thought I was gonna throw up.

“Picture Day is in three weeks,” said my teacher, Miss Daisy, as she handed us each a piece of paper. “A photographer is going to come and take pictures of every student in school. So make sure your parents fill out this form if they want to order pictures.”

“I love getting my picture taken!” said this annoying girl with curly brown hair named Andrea Young. (The girl’s name is Andrea Young, that is. Not her hair. Hair doesn’t have a name.)

“Me too,” said this crybaby girl named Emily, who always agrees with anything Andrea says.

“They should take your pictures,” I suggested, “and burn them.”

My friends Ryan and Michael laughed. Emily looked like she was going to cry.

“It just so happens that Emily and I are very photogenic,” Andrea told us.

“Wow!” I said. “You can read minds?”

“‘Photogenic’ means you look good in pictures, dumbhead.”

“That’s good,” I said, “because you’re ugly in real life.”

“Oh, snap!” said Michael.

“Do you know where they should put your picture, Arlo?” asked Andrea.

“Where?” I asked. I hate when she calls me by my real name.

“In the post office,” she said, “with all those pictures of criminals and bank robbers and murderers.”

“Oh, snap!” said Ryan.

“So is your face,” I told Andrea. Any time somebody says something mean to you, always say, “So is your face.” Even if it doesn’t make any sense. That’s the first rule of being a kid.

“Enough chitchat,” said Miss Daisy. “We have library now with Mrs. Roopy.”

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“Yay!” said all the girls.

“Boo!” said all the boys.

Bummer in the summer! Libraries are boring. Do you know why? Because they’re filled with books! And there’s nothing more boring than a book. Why are you even reading this one?

Library would be even more boring if we didn’t have a librarian like Mrs. Roopy. She’s always dressed up like somebody else, whether it’s Little Bo Peep or Johnny Appleseed. Mrs. Roopy is loopy.

When we got to the library, we saw Mrs. Roopy dressed up like a giant bird, with lots of feather and a beak.



“Why are you dressed up like a bird, Mrs. Roopy?” asked Neil, who we call the nude kid even though he wears clothes.

“Squawk! Squawk! Squawk!” shouted Mrs. Roopy as she flapped her wings. “Who’s Roopy? My name is Rappy. I’m a peregrine falcon, the main character in *The Fearless Falcon*.<sup>\*</sup> It’s a wonderful book written and illustrated by the famous children’s book author Miss Suki Kabuki.”

Mrs. Roopy read us a few chapters of the book. It’s about this falcon that sees its reflection in a window and thinks it’s an enemy. So it attacks its own reflection by flying right into the glass. *Bam!*

Man, was that bird dumb.<sup>\*\*</sup>

“That’s the saddest story I ever heard!” Emily said, with tears in her eyes. That girl will cry over any old thing.

After library we went to the art room. Ms. Hannah, our art teacher, was waiting for us.

“Today we’re going to draw pictures of Rappy, the peregrine falcon in *The Fearless Falcon*,” said Ms. Hannah. “It was written and illustrated by the famous children’s book author Miss Suki Kabuki.”

Hmm, that was strange. Why were we doing something with the *same* book in both library *and* art?

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After we finished drawing our pictures and cleaning up the art room, it was time to go to music with Mr. Loring.

“Today we’re going to sing a song about a falcon named Rappy,” said Mr. Loring. “He’s the main character in *The Fearless Falcon*, which was written and illustrated by Miss Suki Kabuki.”

This was getting really weird!

After music class was over, we went to the computer lab.

“Good morning,” said Mrs. Yonkers, our computer teacher. “Today we’re going to visit [www.sukikabuki.com](http://www.sukikabuki.com). That’s the website of children’s book author Miss Suki Kabuki.”



What the heck was going on?! How come *all* the teachers were talking about this dumb children’s book author? It was the weirdest thing in the history of the world.

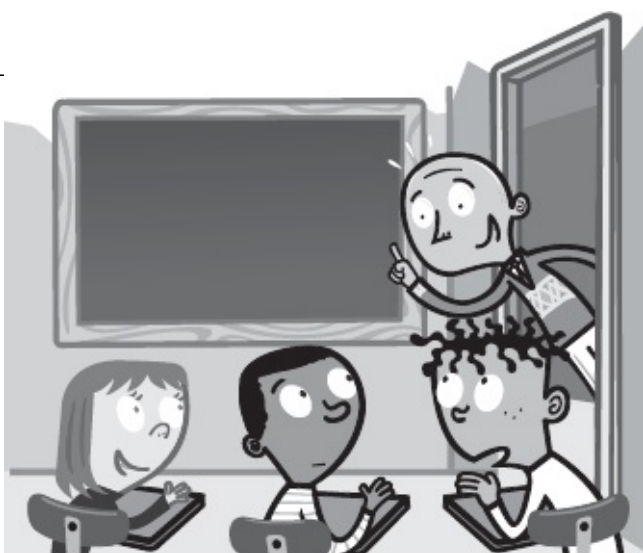
After we finished computer lab, we went back to our class to get ready for lunch. Suddenly I heard a knock at the door. Miss Daisy answered it.

It was Mr. Klutz, the principal! He has no hair at all.

“I have big news!” Mr. Klutz announced. “Guess who will be coming to visit our school in three weeks?”

“Who?” we all asked.

“A famous children’s book author,” Mr. Klutz said. “Her name is Miss Suki Kabuki!”







## Children's Books Are Dumb

So *that*'s why all the teachers were talking about Miss Suki Kabuki. She was coming to visit our school. I never met a real live author before. Come to think of it, I never met any dead ones either.

"Wow!" said all the girls.

"Who cares?" said all the boys.

Mr. Klutz was so excited about the author visit, he had to go tell all the other classes the news.

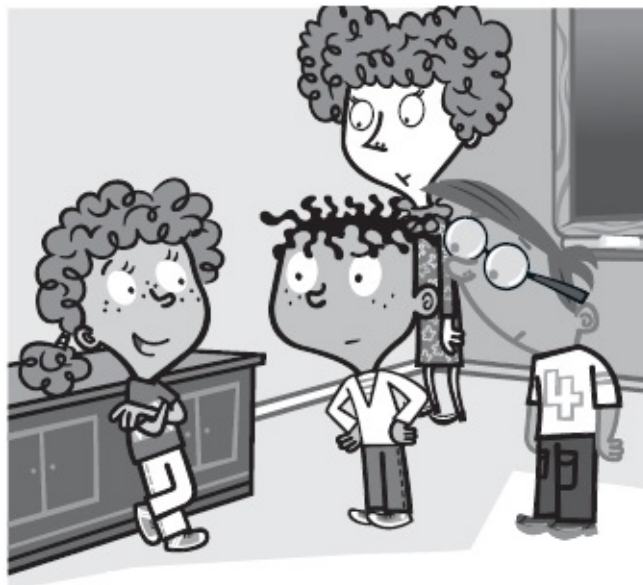
"I *love* Miss Suki Kabuki!" said Andrea, who loves books and anything else that's boring. "She's my favorite author!"

"Never heard of her before today," I said.

"Well, maybe if you picked up a book once in a while, Arlo, then you would know who she is."

"Hey, I picked up a book once," I said. "And then I put it back down again."

Andrea had to show everybody how smart she was by naming some of Miss Suki Kabuki's books like *The Fearless Falcon*, *The Reluctant Rhino*, and *The Courageous Crane*.



"That's right, Andrea," said Miss Daisy. "Suki Kabuki has written a lot of great books. She's coming all the way to America from Japan because she won the Blueberry Award. That's an award

that is given for the best children's book of the year. Miss Suki is only visiting a few schools in America, and ours is one of them! We're very lucky our PTA was able to get her."

"I knew Miss Suki was coming," said Andrea, who loves telling people how much she knows.

"How did you know?" asked Neil the nude kid.

"My mother is vice president of the PTA," Andrea said. "She knows everything."

"I'm sure it was very hard to get Miss Suki to come and visit us," Miss Daisy said. "She lives in the rainforest, where she writes all about those animals."

"I love animals," Andrea said. "When I grow up, I want to be a veterinarian."

"You're not going to eat meat?" I asked.

"No, dumbhead," said Andrea. "That's a *vegetarian*. A veterinarian is an animal doctor."

"It is not," I said.

"It is too," Andrea said.

We went back and forth like that for a while. And then I came up with a genius idea to win the argument.

"Oh, yeah?" I said. "Well, a veterinarian who doesn't eat meat is a vegetarian. So nah-nah-nah boo-boo!"

In her face! No wonder they put me in the gifted and talented program.

"I can't believe Miss Suki is coming to our school," said Emily, all excited. "Do you think she'll sign autographs?"

"I don't know," said Miss Daisy, who doesn't know anything. "Maybe she will if you kids are on your best behavior."

I didn't want Miss Suki's autograph. I had never even heard of her or any of her dumb books before. How come we have to have an author visit anyway? Why can't we have a professional skateboarder instead? That would be cool.

Children's books are dumb, if you ask me. So anybody who writes children's books must be dumb, too. Except for Dr. Seuss, of course. The only books I read are by Dr. Seuss. He was cool, even if he wasn't a real doctor.

"Why can't we invite Dr. Seuss to our school?" I asked.

"Because he's dead, dumbhead," said Andrea.

"So is your face," I replied.



## I Hate Andrea and She Hates Me

“Miss Daisy, please come to the office,” Mr. Klutz said over the loudspeaker a few days later. “Oh, by the way, Picture Day and Author Day are both going to be two weeks from Friday. So we will be killing two birds with one stone, you might say. Thank you for your attention.”

“Killing birds is mean!” said Emily.

“It’s just an expression, dumbhead,” I told her. “Killing two birds with one stone means doing two things at once.”

“I knew that,” Emily lied. She looked like she was going to cry, as usual.

Miss Daisy was still in the office. Andrea and Emily pulled those fake makeup kits out of their desks again. They were looking in these little round mirrors and fussing with their hair.

“You look fabulous, Emily,” said Andrea.

“No, *you* look fabulous, Andrea,” said Emily.

“What do you think I should wear for Picture Day?” asked Andrea. “My blue skirt or the red one with the boat on it?”

“Oh, definitely the blue one,” Emily said. “It brings out your eyes.”

“I think I need more lipstick,” said Andrea.

“I need to moisturize,” said Emily.

“Ugh,” I said. “What is your problem?” I thought I was gonna throw up.

“We’re making ourselves pretty,” Andrea told me.

“That’s good,” I replied, “because you couldn’t make yourselves any uglier.”

“You’re mean!” said Emily.

“Why don’t you just put paper bags over your heads so we don’t have to look at you?” I suggested.

“Very funny, Arlo,” said Andrea. “When I’m a teenager, I’m going to put on *real* makeup, and

I'll be even more beautiful. Then you'll ask me out on a date, and I'll say I'm busy because I don't want to hurt your feelings by telling you that I don't like you."

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Why can't a truck full of makeup fall on Andrea's head? I hate her.



"Oooooh!" said Ryan. "A.J. is going to ask Andrea out on a date when they're teenagers. That means they're in *love!*"

"When are you gonna get married?" asked Michael.

Just then, Miss Daisy rushed back from the office.

"Guess what?" she said.

I was going to answer by shouting "Your butt!" Any time somebody says "Guess what," you have to say "Your butt." That's the first rule of being a kid. But Miss Daisy is a grown-up, and grown-ups get angry when you say "butt." Nobody knows why.

"What?" we all shouted.

"We got a letter from Miss Suki!"



## Here Comes the Big-Shot Author

Miss Daisy read the letter we got from Miss Suki:

To my dear friends at

Ella Mentry School,

I can't wait to meet you!

I love children and look forward

to visiting your school. I will

have a big surprise to show

you. See you soon!

Sayonara,

Miss Suki Kabuki

Miss Daisy tacked the letter up on the bulletin board. She was so excited that a real live, famous author actually took the time to write to us. She made us write letters back to Miss Suki, draw pictures for her, and think of questions to ask her when she arrived.

For the next two weeks, pretty much all we did at school was get ready for Miss Suki's visit. Mr. Patty, the secretary, put up a big chart in the office that said COUNTDOWN TO PICTURE DAY AND AUTHOR DAY. Every day, she crossed off a number so everybody would know how many days were left.

14...13...12...11...

The reading specialist, Mr. Macky, came into our class and told us all about Miss Suki's books. Man, that lady sure likes animals! I think she likes animals better than people. That's why she lives in the rainforest instead of in a regular house with her family. People who live with animals are weird. I wondered if Miss Suki runs around the rainforest in a loincloth like Tarzan.

10...9...8...7...

In science, Mr. Docker taught us all about peregrine falcons, because that's what Miss Suki wrote about in *The Fearless Falcon*. Peregrine falcons are called raptors, and they eat other birds, like pigeons and ducks. Yuck! Mr. Docker said they don't have teeth, so they use their beak and their razor-sharp toenails called talons to tear into flesh. Ouch! Their eyesight is so sharp that they can spot a rabbit from a mile away. *And* they're the fastest birds in the world. They can fly almost two hundred miles an hour. One time my dad drove eighty miles an hour, and a policeman pulled him over and gave him a ticket. But I don't think peregrine falcons have to obey the speed limit.

6...5...4...3...



Some classes made shoe-box scenes from Miss Suki's books. Some classes made sculptures of Miss Suki's animal friends out of Popsicle sticks. Our class made a "Welcome" sign in art with Ms. Hannah. We also made a long red carpet out of construction paper so Miss Suki could make a grand entrance into school. We also made acrostics out of Miss Suki's name, like this:

*Marvelous!*

*Interesting!*

*Serious!*

*Same as the last S!*

*See above!*

*Understanding!*

*Knowledgeable!*

*I can't wait to meet her!*



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