

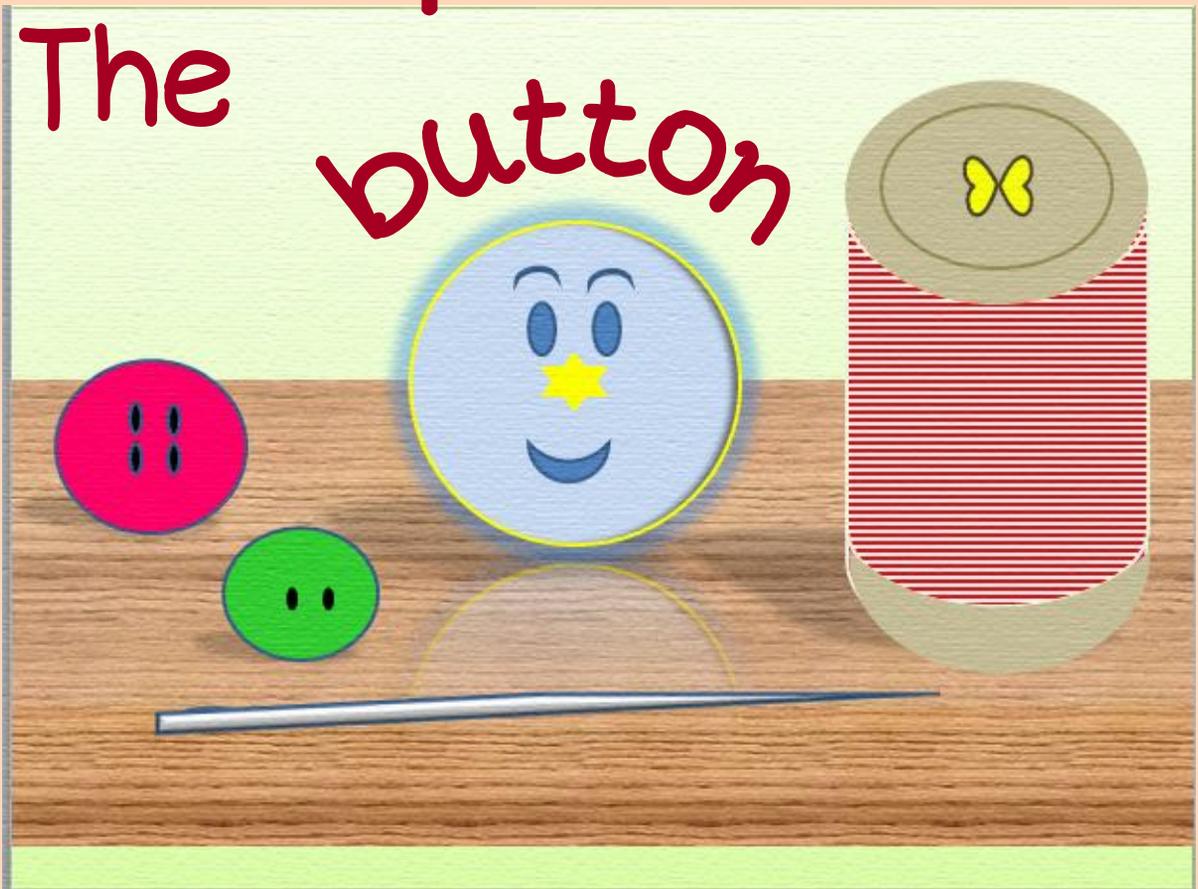
Stav Papadopoulos

Maria Chatzi

top

The

button



Illustrations by
Stav Papadopoulos



Stav Papadopoulos was born in Thessaloniki, Greece and grew up in New York where she studied. She attended Queens College, CUNY in New York, where she majored in Education and recently retrained at the Department of Elementary Education at Aristotle University in Thessaloniki, Greece. Stav is an English language instructor and prepares students for language and standardized admission tests for their studies abroad. She is a regular contributor to teaching and creativity sites where she writes about creative teaching.



Maria Chatzi has graduated from the department of English Language and Literature of Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and has worked as a teacher of English. She is also a self-taught artist; she designs crafts (for kids and adults), jewelry and other home decor items. She's been a creativity enthusiast for over fifteen years now. She writes articles and activities on Creative Writing, as well as Craft Projects.

She spends a great deal of her time volunteering for public libraries in Thessaloniki, where she offers creative courses, mainly creative writing and crafts for kids. She also teaches jewelry making and various techniques for crafting with recycled materials.

Both her contribution to public libraries and the publication of this mini ebook, with a Creative Commons License, are an offer of free services for the common good in the local community and an effort to promote Creativity.

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Maria Chatzi

THE TOP BUTTON

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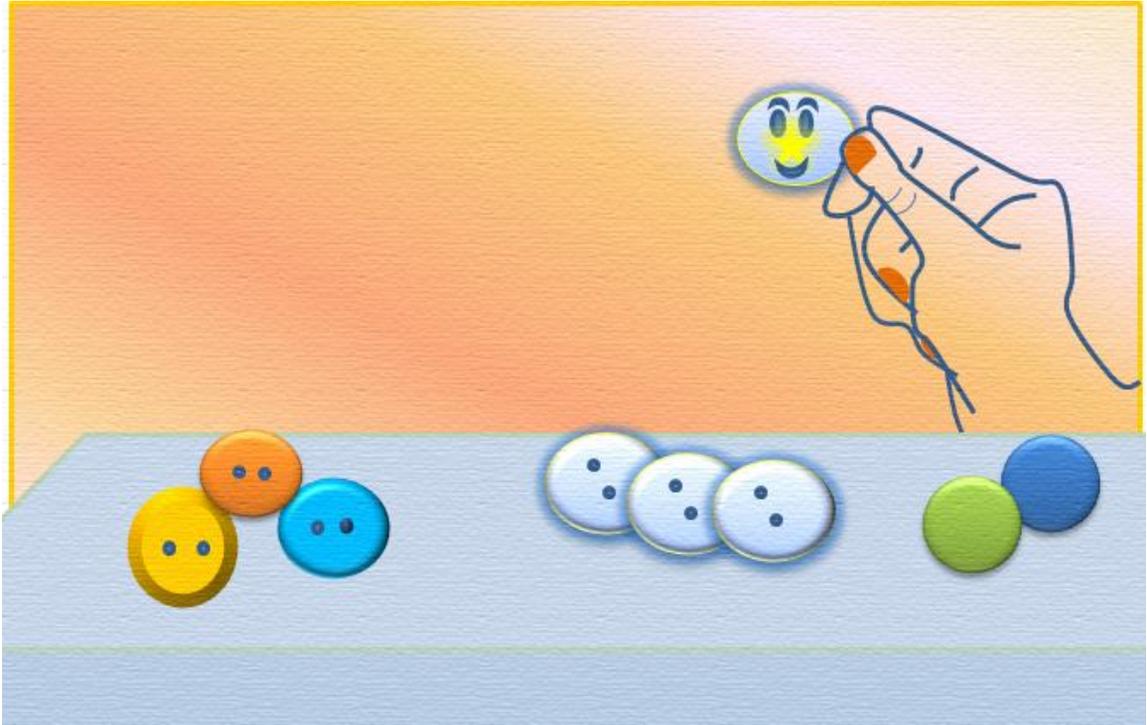


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There once was a button in a sewing supplies store which always did its best to draw attention to itself as it wanted to be admired. It was a brilliant, sky blue color button and its holes were hidden on the bottom. Right in its center there was a bright star. It was a hand painted masterpiece.



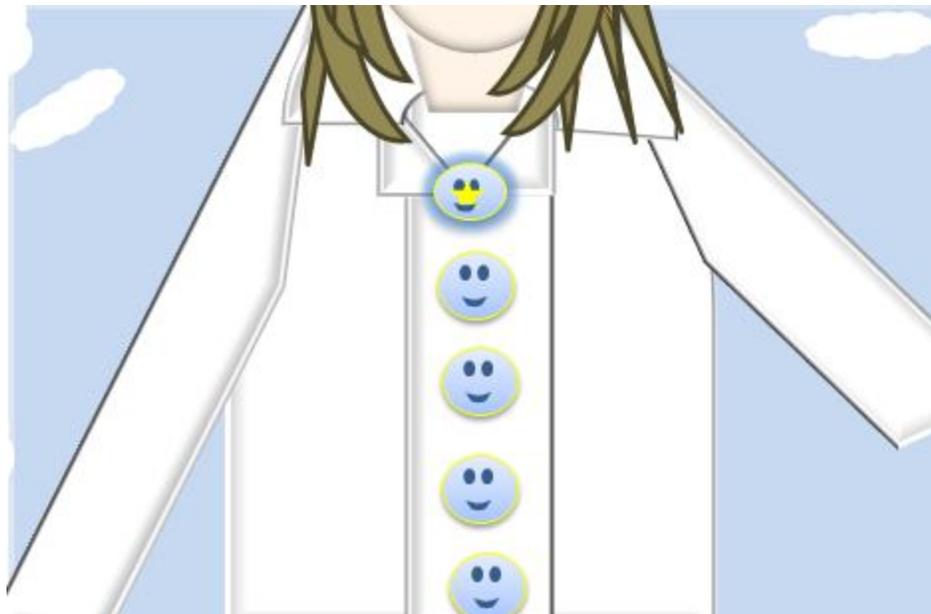
"I would like a button for the top buttonhole. I'm looking for something special" said a customer. She was holding a white knitted jacket.

The salesperson placed the sky blue button, Brighty, on the counter along with some other buttons. Brighty wanting to stand out, pushed the rest of the buttons aside and said, "Pick me, I'm the brightest!"

The customer marveled at the shining bright button but said, "It's really beautiful but rather expensive." "Why don't you buy this one to put on top and get some plain but much cheaper blue buttons for the rest of the buttonholes?" suggested the salesperson.

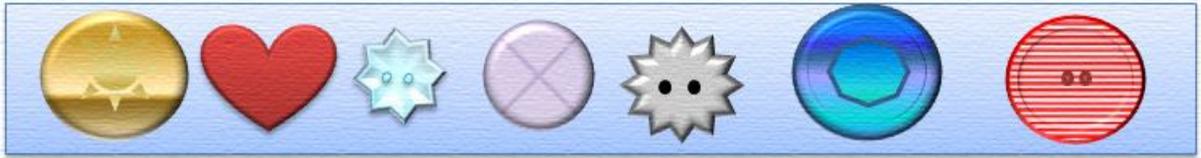
That's how Brighty came to be the top button on Kate's jacket. Everyone admired it and it wanted nothing to do with the other buttons on the jacket. Why, it didn't even care to know their names. Of course, life wasn't always that pleasant or easy for this bright button, nor did things always happen the way Brighty had once imagined.

There were times when people just didn't notice it and it was often jealous of the other buttons even if they weren't as fancy as it was. When Kate left the top unbuttoned it would scream at the lapel "How dare you cover me up?!"



On cold days Kate's scarf would get in its way. "Get this off of me, immediately!" Brighty would order the rest of the buttons. "We are doing all we can to keep the jacket buttoned up so that Kate is warm." they responded.

Whenever the wind was blowing, Kate's long hair made it difficult for Brighty to be seen. It would shout at the top of its lungs and struggle with her flyaway hair until it was exhausted. Yet, despite all that this bright button was pleased with its good fortune and felt it deserved that top spot on the jacket. .



Kate was growing fast and the white knitted jacket was now too small for her. She gave it to her younger cousin Irene. Unlike Kate who was always well-behaved, Irene would often get into fights with the other kids in the school yard or in the neighborhood park. Once as they were going at one another, one of the kids pulled on Irene's jacket as if to tear it apart. The thread holding the top button in place stretched and was screaming out, "Heeeelp!" and Brighty turned to the other buttons for help. "Hold on as tightly as you can. We are also holding onto our own threads. Irene's jacket needs all of us now!" they cried out.

One day, Irene was in the middle of a squabble with one of her classmates when she took off her jacket. Nick grabbed the jacket and tossed it on the wired fence. All the buttons got tangled in it and Irene was frantically pulling on the jacket. As she was pulling the top button got caught in the netting and almost choked but luckily a kind gentleman came to Brighty's rescue and got him out. "That must have been one of my admirers" thought Brighty.



Irene later noticed that one of the other buttons was missing and looked for it but could not find it.

“We’ll change all the buttons except the top one” said her mother that same evening. “New buttons?!” What could Brighty do? Be happy, worried, scared or pay no attention? What would this change mean for the top button? When Brighty saw the new buttons on Irene’s jacket it didn’t know what to think! They were all exactly the same now and how could it stand out now?

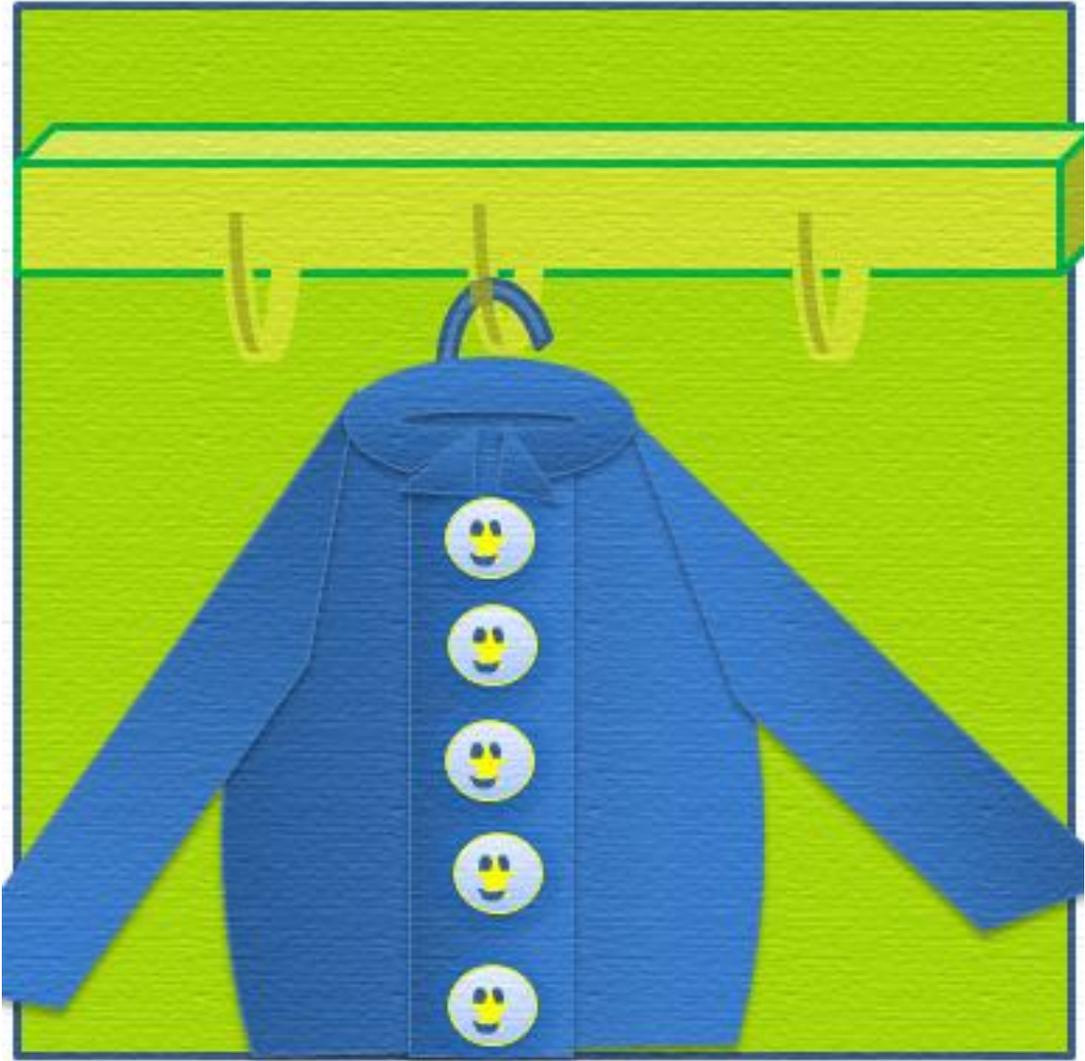


“Ugh! It can’t be!” Brighty thought. “No! Even if they are like me, it doesn’t matter. I am no ordinary button. I am the top button...I am special!” it consoled itself. The truth was that now that they were all the same, which button held the top spot made no difference.

“The other buttons, the plain ones, looked better on the jacket” claimed Brighty but he was lying. No one listened. The new buttons on the jacket were excited. “We’ve found another family member! I’m Sunny and this is Twinkles” said one of the buttons.” “And I’m Goldy and this here is Sparkles. We will make a great team!”



Whether he liked it or not Brighty had to accept this new situation. He wasn't all that happy about this “family”, “team” and “working together” business. “Oh, well!” Brighty thought. At least he was still the top button. Over time, he got used to sharing people's attention with the rest of the buttons on the jacket. It wasn't all that bad. These relatives were not lazy. They all saw to it that the jacket buttoned up perfectly well.

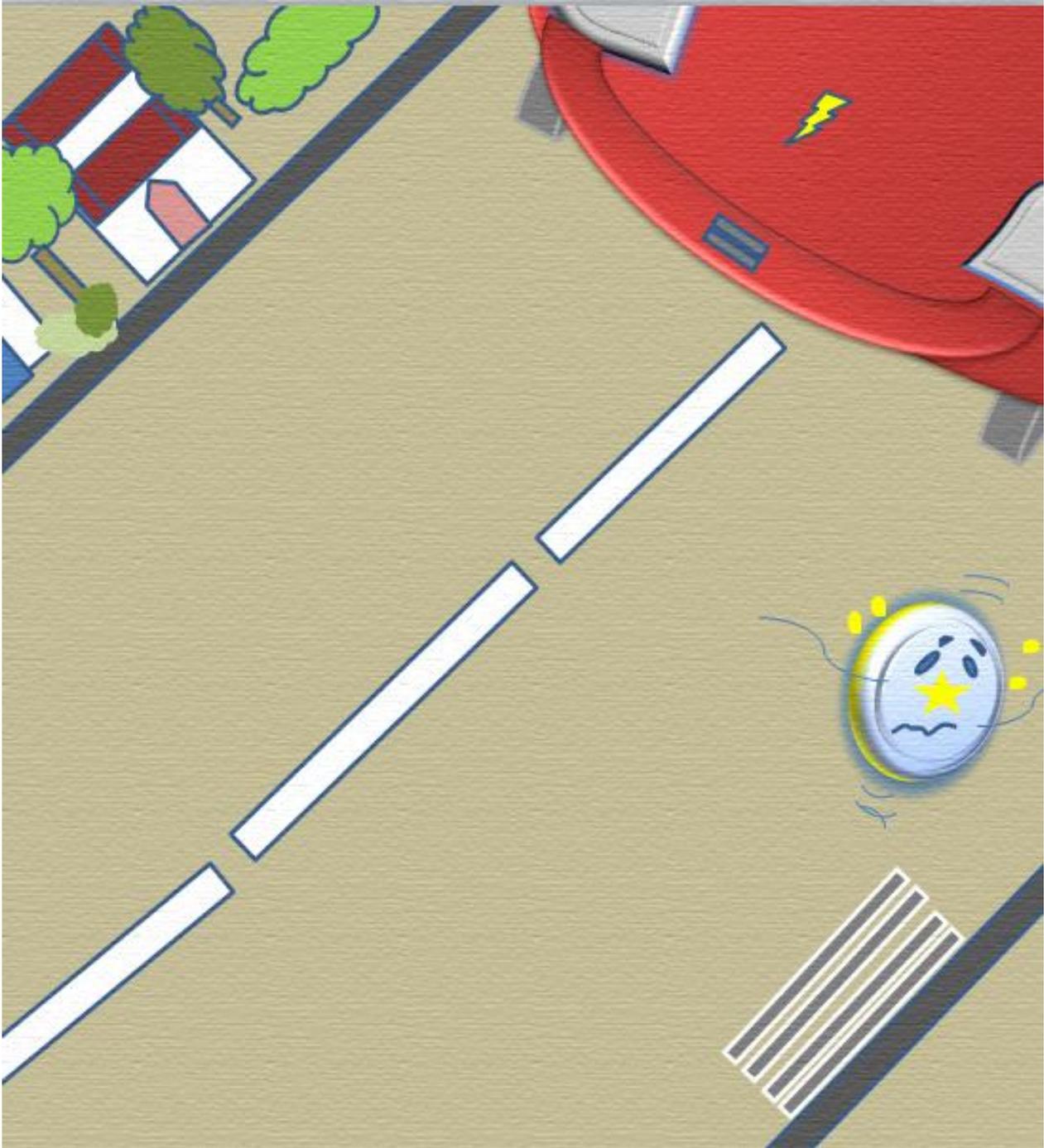


With the passing of time, Irene too just as Kate grew big. The jacket with the bright blue buttons could no longer fit her. She gave it to Peter, a boy who lived next door and his mom colored it blue.



How beautiful the bright blue buttons with the hand painted star in the center looked! You'd think they were like small sail boats floating on a deep blue sea. People certainly took notice of them more than ever before.

"If only my relatives would stop taking my admirers! I wish they had their threads cut off and maybe they'd get lost" he thought one day. What he was forgetting though was that the rest of the buttons had just been sewed on and had a strong hold. It had been a while for the threads that held Brighty down. Peter went out one morning wearing the jacket and that's when it happened. The thread that held Brighty in the top spot was worn and as it broke the top button found itself rolling down the street.



A cat saw Brighty as he was rolling and chased after it wanting to play. Brighty ran to get away but got stuck behind a cardboard box next to a garbage can, where he stayed hidden for a day. The following day the garbage truck came and along with the garbage it swallowed the cardboard box.





In trying to escape the button took a wild spin and found itself under a car, only a short distance from the sewer lid. Just as Brighty thought it was safe, the car driver turned on the engine and there was the button again. All alone and unprotected, in the middle of the street. "But why isn't Peter coming to get me? I'm so afraid. I want to go home!" Brighty kept muttering. People walked past but no one stopped to notice the once proud button.



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