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Flat Stanley and the Japanese Ninja Surprise

Written by

Jeff Brown

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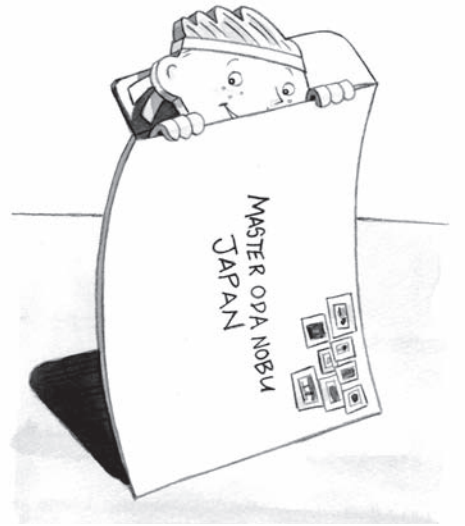
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FLAT STANLEY

The Japanese Ninja Surprise



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(coming in June 2011)

FLAT STANLEY

The Japanese Ninja Surprise

Created by Jeff Brown
Written by Sara Pennypacker
Illustrated by Jon Mitchell

EGMONT

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The Seventeenth Samurai

'I salute you, Master Oda Nobu, greatest of all Samurai warriors!'

Arthur Lambchop bowed deeply from the waist as he spoke these words to the large poster hanging in the bedroom he shared with his brother, Stanley. The poster was for a movie called *The Seventeenth Samurai*. It showed

two warriors – a tall samurai and a small ninja – looking very fierce. The tall samurai wore a long kimono and held a shining silver sword above his head. The small ninja was dressed exactly like Arthur, in black pyjamas with a strip of white cloth knotted at his waist and another tied around his forehead. He held his hands high, like the blades of knives ready to strike. Both warriors looked as if they could leap right out of the poster.

And then the small ninja did just that! 'Hiii-*yaaaah*!' he shouted, as he flew off the wall. He bounced high on the bed and landed with a *thud* in front of Arthur!

‘Prepare to be defeated, Arthur-san!’ the small ninja cried.

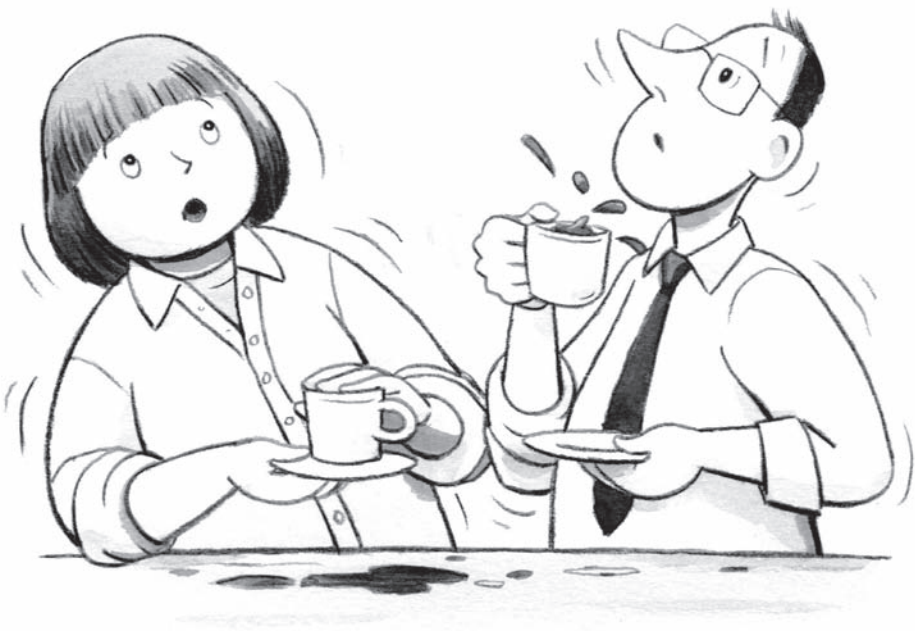
‘Never!’ Arthur leaped up, bounced high on the other bed, and landed with a *boom* on the opposite side of the room. ‘It is you who will be defeated, Stanley-san!’

The small ninja was Arthur’s older brother, Stanley Lambchop. Not long before, he had awoken to find that a large bulletin board had fallen upon him in the night, leaving him unharmed, but as flat as a pancake. By now, Stanley’s family was used to his unusual shape, although Stanley wasn’t always so happy about it.

At the moment, however, he was

enjoying himself tremendously. He and his brother chased each other around their bedroom, leaping on and off their beds with *thuds* and *booms* as they imitated the karate chops and kicks of their all-time favourite movie star, Oda Nobu.

'Boys!' Mrs Lambchop called. 'My teacups are rattling!'



‘Is there nothing you fellows can do that doesn’t make a ruckus?’ called Mr Lambchop. ‘How about a little quiet time?’

‘Quiet time,’ Stanley grumbled. He pulled off the white cloth around his head. ‘Where’s the fun in that?’

But then he had an idea. ‘Arthur, let’s write a letter to Oda Nobu! Maybe he’ll write back and send us an autographed picture!’

‘Or a ninja throwing star!’ Arthur agreed, his grumpiness disappearing. He rummaged through his desk until he found a pad of paper and a ballpoint pen. ‘You’re good with words, Stanley. What should we say?’

'Hmmm,' Stanley said. 'How about "Dear Master Oda Nobu, we are your biggest fans ever. We have seen every one of your movies . . ."' He sent Arthur a questioning look.

Arthur shrugged. 'A hundred times?' he suggested.

Stanley smiled. 'Yes, that's good. Write "We have seen all of your movies at least a hundred times."'

Arthur began to write. Then he stopped. 'Stanley,' he said, 'Oda Nobu might think we're exaggerating.'

Stanley looked up at the poster, now with only one warrior on it, and bowed. 'You're right,' he said to Arthur. 'Honesty is an important part of the ninja code

of honour. How about this: "We have seen every one of your movies several times."'

Arthur nodded and Stanley continued to dictate: '"Master Oda Nobu, it is too bad Japan is so far away. If you were closer, we would offer our services as your personal ninjas."'

Stanley paused. 'Wait a minute, Arthur!'

'"Wait . . . a . . . minute . . . Arthur,"' Arthur repeated, as he wrote the words down.

'No, don't write that!' Stanley said, and took the pad out of Arthur's hands. 'I have a better idea!' He dropped the pad on the desk and began to rummage around

through the drawers.

'Aha!' he said, and held up a large brown envelope.

'There!' he said, and held up a sheet of postage stamps.

'Got it!' he said, and held up a thick black marker.

'Stanley, what's your idea?' Arthur asked.

Stanley placed many, many stamps in the corner of the big envelope. He uncapped the marker, printed something on the envelope in big block letters, and then held it up to show Arthur:

MASTER ODA NOBU
JAPAN

Stanley turned and bowed deeply to his brother. 'I salute you, Arthur-san. Now fold me up!'

