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## **English sample translation**

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My father bought me from the municipal authorities for 365 francs. That's a lot of money for a child that hasn't got eyes in its head. I didn't tell the parents that for as long as possible. It's not a good idea to destroy all their hopes before you're in the door, even, if you want to become their daughter. The boss hammered that into us. We can't stay with her. There are too many of us, we have to find takers. Ones with beautiful eyes go well, the ones with a good head of hair and good teeth. But we must also have a head to use. It's the most important organ. Can take the place of an arm.

Not everyone is the same. The most important organ, for the parents, is patience.

When they came to collect me, and the new parents were waiting outside the fence, more nervous than the boss's dog, she bent down to me and whispered:

- Now you're going to be a daughter. From there, it's not far to get to life

They drove me and my new suitcase to their apartment. They'd already had me on a trial basis, like later the living room suite with the plush yellow upholstery that took almost as long to pay for as I did. I was glad they decided right away to take me when they'd finished trying me out, and that they only became fussy when it came to suites of furniture. Twice, they sent one back. Once it was to do with the colour; the second time, the comfort factor.

She looked out the window as they drove, was smoking one cigarette after the other. Only sometimes did she turn round and smile, embarrassed, and ask did I like the nodding dog on the back shelf?

He was the exact opposite: bombarded me with questions. What was this called, that called, did I know this, know that? I let on to sleep.

He wanted to sound me out. She wanted to know had she won the jackpot or pulled a dud.

- It can't be avoided, I suppose, the boss had said when, after three weeks, I came back from people who'd supposedly needed a child.

They'd dropped me off a street early. Had been in a hurry not to have a child any more, I'd given them such a fright. The boss scraped the salt stains from my cheeks.

- A child is for life.

Did these two know that? I opened an eye, squinted at the front seats where they were sitting. Her smoking, him kneading the steering wheel. I closed the eye again.

He said, quietly:

- She has no idea about language.

- The world is still all new to her, sure, she answered.

The boss had placed no importance on language, it gave her headaches. I was short of words. But it's my eyes that are to blame for that, they don't see well. My new parents were concerned about that. They took me to the doctor, to have me x-rayed to see was my brain there. What the doctor said, more or less, was: that if you're not born like me, but walk into a family through a door, then certain developments can take their time. They refused to believe it.

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