

Wendover Community Library

Short Story Competition 2024

'The Popular Boy at School' by Zachary Lazar

Once upon a time there was a very popular boy in school; some would say he was the most popular. His name was Jayson. Everyone liked him, they liked every last atom of him. He collected football cards, Pokémon cards, and had loads of friends, had constant playdates and never got bored of them. His dad was called John, his mum was called Margot. And the story goes like this...

Jayson, sitting next to all of his friends, was writing English. When the lesson ended they went out for break and played all the usual playground games. When they came back inside, everyone noticed there was an empty chair behind Jayson and everyone was staring at it. In that moment, Mrs Karing announced "there will be a new student, her name is Daisy and she will sit behind Jayson". Daisy entered the classroom and all eyes were locked on her, which made her tummy butterflies turn into tickling mutants. She put her stuff away and sat on the chair, cautiously. Jayson said to her "welcome to Mrs Karing's class, do you want to be my friend?" Daisy replied, "thanks for the welcome, but I don't really want to be friends". Jayson was disappointed, he thought everybody wanted to be his friend. He didn't talk to or look at her for the rest of the day.

When the school day came to an end, Jayson and his friends were walking and talking all the way home. When he arrived home he was questioning himself; why didn't Daisy want to be his friend? Everyone wanted to be his friend, what was wrong with her? He was thinking of so many questions, it took hours and hours. By the time he had finished it was bedtime.

That night, it took him a while to get to sleep, but he eventually managed to. He didn't have any dreams that night, he woke up at 7:00, had a shower, brushed his teeth and made breakfast. Just as he was about to leave for school he saw a news report on TV of a woman who had died of a heart attack 2 weeks ago. Jayson was shocked but had to rush ahead to catch the bus.

He got on the bus, went to school and told everyone about the news report he'd seen. When he told Daisy, she seemed to block him out. Then it was maths class, which he wasn't looking forward to as he wasn't very good at maths. In his last lesson the teacher had given him a 'frowny face' in his book. He was disappointed that day, but today he tried to do better, and his score was, (drum roll please...) 5/20. Not very good. His friends knew he wasn't good at maths, but they never mentioned it. Because, well, they were his friends. Maths class finished and the class was excused for break.

During breaktime he was pondering how he had annoyed Daisy so much just by telling her about the news report. He went off with his best friend (his name was Wynthta), he was his best friend in the whole school, even though he was friends with everyone at school - apart from Daisy that is. They played *cross my river* with some friends, and *chicken or hero* with other friends.

After break he saw Daisy and went up to her to ask her why she was so annoyed. She stayed silent for the whole 15 minutes he was talking to her. Then it was science time. Jayson enjoyed science, it was his favourite topic. He disliked many others but he liked computing and P.E. and he especially hated maths. He enthusiastically did all the 'sciency' stuff, including fun experiments and interesting predictions, but then the lesson was sadly over.

It was lunch time after this. He noticed Daisy sitting all alone, looking rather sad. He decided to try again, and went to sit with her in an effort to try make a new friend. Initially, she didn't even look up at him but she shuffled over to give him a little space to sit. Jayson sat down and asked her "for real this time, why did you not listen to me when I told you about the news report?". Daisy quietly replied, "you know the woman you mentioned on the news report?", "yeah" answered Jayson. "Well...she was my mum. She died 2 weeks ago from a heart attack". Jayson was taken by surprise. "Gosh, that's terrible! I am so sorry to hear this". She replied "that's ok, I still have my dad and my aunt". Just then, the bell rang, and they had to go back to class. Next it was history. Jayson was clueless about history. Not that he was bad at it, it just didn't mean much to him. His favourite topic was King Henry VIII. They did lots of boring history about Anglo Saxons and then it was home time.

Daisy walked home to her dad's house, Jayson felt sorry for her. On Jayson's walk home he was thinking: *how could I have been so foolish! Of course that's why she blocked me out, I mean, it's not common but it's obvious!* He had all thoughts like this, it was ridiculous, but then he arrived home. It was dinner time, he had sweet 'N' sour chicken that night. Then he went to sleep and he dreamed of Daisy's mum having a heart attack, it replayed so many times in his head and each time it would get **gorier** and **gorier** and **gorier** until he woke up from this dreadful nightmare. He overslept, it was already 10:00! Jayson got ready as quick as he possibly could and rushed to school in a panic. He was aware that nobody seemed to notice Daisy, they just walked straight past her and into class. Nobody liked Daisy, and Jayson couldn't work out why. It just didn't seem fair to him.

Jayson got to class, it was maths again, sigh. He asked to go to the toilet and stayed in there the whole lesson, because you know his record on maths now! When the lesson ended he came back to class. All Jayson could think about was being friends with Daisy.

It was break time again. Jayson sat down on a bench trying to get his head around his mind-boggling thoughts. Out of nowhere, Daisy sat down next to him and asked why he was so late to school that morning. Jayson felt confused, he thought Daisy had no time for him. But he timidly replied, "you know you told me your mum had a heart attack? Well, I was dreaming about it all night long, it was like a record playing in my head". Daisy froze, her heart skipped a beat, her brain was stunned. Jayson actually cared? She had no idea. "I didn't mean to startle you when I said that". Her heart skipped two beats. She felt almost guilty that what she said had given him nightmares, even though she was the one actually *living* a nightmare. Her heart skipped three beats. He stayed silent, it was so quiet you could hear a pin drop.

At that moment, a child from the year above walked past them, and shouted out "WEIRDOS!" thinking they looked like strange statues. Just then, the loud bell jolted them out of their daze. Daisy plucked up the courage and nervously asked him if he wanted to be friends. She stood,

preparing herself for a *no*, like she was used to getting. Jayson laughed and said, “I was about to ask you the exact same thing!”. They burst out laughing, and at that moment a rainbow appeared in the sky. There and then, they both realised they would always be friends. They also realised that it doesn’t matter who calls you a “weirdo”, it doesn’t matter if barely anyone one likes you or if everyone likes you, what matters is that you have a true friend. Who colours your life, as a rainbow colours the sky. Just like the one they were standing watching, together.

THE END. 😊