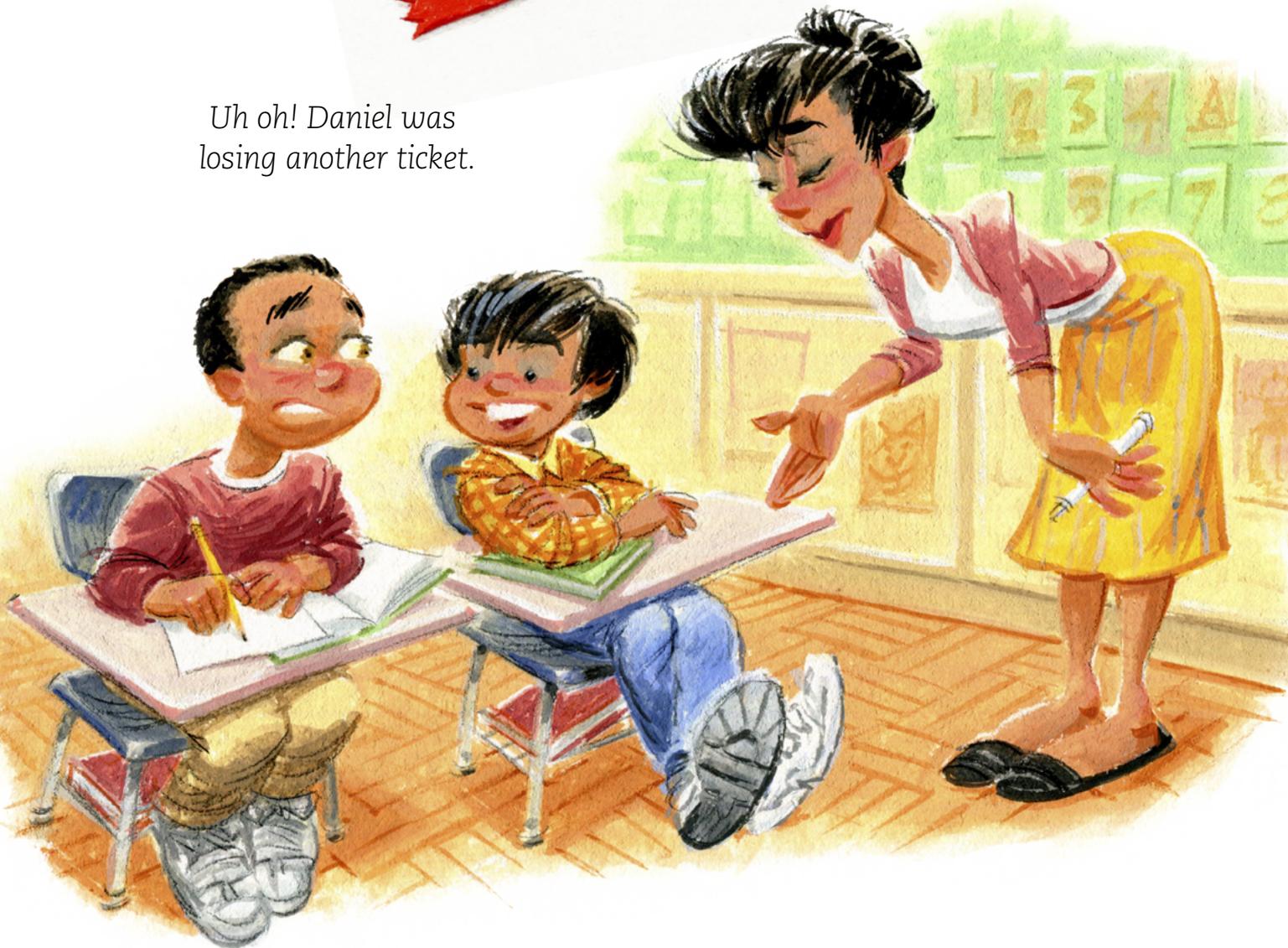


The RED Ticket

Uh oh! Daniel was losing another ticket.



By Darcie Jensen Morris

(Based on a true story)

"Whenever I am good and kind and help someone I see, I feel so very happy" (Children's Songbook, 197).

Mateo looked at the math problem on the board and quickly wrote it down in his notebook. Math was his favorite subject, so he really wanted to pay attention. But he could barely hear what Mrs. Santos was saying because his friend Daniel was talking.

"Shh! Daniel, I can't hear!" Mateo whispered. But Daniel kept talking. Finally Mrs. Santos heard him.

"Daniel, you're interrupting again," Mrs. Santos said. "You've already had a warning. Now you need to give me a ticket."

Daniel slowly reached into his desk and handed her a red ticket. His shoulders slumped, and he looked down at the floor. Mrs. Santos gave tickets to students who behaved well and followed directions. The students wrote their names on the tickets and put them in a jar each day. But you had to give a ticket back if you misbehaved. Every Friday, Mrs. Santos pulled a ticket out of the jar, and the winner got to choose a prize from the

class treasure chest. Daniel had to give a lot of tickets back for talking, so his name wasn't drawn very often. Mateo felt bad that Daniel was losing another ticket.

At recess Mateo ran out to the field to play soccer. He saw Daniel standing alone by the swings. He could tell Daniel was crying. Mateo wanted to help him feel better.

"Do you want to play soccer?" Mateo asked.

Daniel didn't say anything. Mateo tried to talk to him more, but Daniel just turned away.

"Well, I'll be on the playground if you change your mind."

Mateo went to play with his other friends, but he kept thinking about Daniel. Mateo was turning eight and was going to be baptized soon. He wanted to be like Jesus and be a good friend. Was there something he could do to help Daniel?

The next day, the class was reading a story in small groups. But instead of reading, Daniel was tossing his book high into the air.

Mateo tried to stop him. "Daniel, we need to read the book, not play with it."

Daniel tossed the book again. Mrs. Santos saw it almost hit the ceiling. She walked over to Daniel and held

out her hand for a ticket. Daniel reached into his desk. Panic crossed his face as he kept searching.

Oh no! He must be out of tickets! Mateo thought. No tickets meant Daniel would have to stay inside for recess. Mateo's mind started racing. What could he do? Then he had a good thought.

"Daniel," Mrs. Santos said, "if you don't have a ticket for me, then—"

Mateo took a deep breath. "May I pay for him, Mrs. Santos?" he asked.

The class went quiet. No one had ever asked her that before. Mateo wasn't sure what she would say.

Mrs. Santos looked surprised. Then she smiled. "You're a very good friend. Yes, you may pay Daniel's ticket for him." Mateo handed Mrs. Santos one of his tickets.

"Thanks, Mateo," said Daniel.

"Sure!" said Mateo. "Do you want to read together now?"

Daniel nodded and picked up his book.

As Daniel started reading, Mateo felt warm and happy inside. That good idea had come from the Holy Ghost! Mateo knew that Jesus had wanted him to help Daniel—because He loves Daniel. And Mateo felt Jesus's love too! ♦

The author lives in Utah, USA.



JESUS PAID FOR US

Mateo paid Daniel's ticket because he cared about him. We can't pay for someone else's sins, but Jesus Christ can! Because He loves us, Jesus paid the price for all of our sins. When we do something wrong, we can repent and be forgiven. Jesus can help us do better!