

# THE SPECIAL ASSIGNMENT

By Alison Bentley  
(Based on a true story)

*"As ye would that men should do to you,  
do ye also to them" (Luke 6:31).*

**E**lliott was excited to be in second grade. He had a new box of crayons and a new friend named George. Last year Elliott had felt lonely at recess. But then George moved in. Now the two boys played together every day. They liked pretending to be secret agents. But today they were playing soccer.

"Hey, kick the ball to me!" George yelled. Elliott kicked the soccer ball as hard as he could. Then George kicked the ball right into the net. "Score!" Elliott shouted.

Everything was great. But then Oni showed up.

Oni and his family had to move from another country to escape danger. He was pretty quiet and didn't have many friends. Now he sat down at the edge of the grass and just watched.

The other boys didn't like Oni following them around. "Oni is the enemy," one of the boys shouted. "Let's go play on the slide."

Elliott got a sick feeling in his stomach. He knew it

wasn't right to run away from Oni. But if he stood up for Oni, maybe the other boys wouldn't want to play with *him* either. Maybe George wouldn't.

Elliott thought about what he should do. He remembered how lonely he'd felt last year and how hard he'd prayed for friends. Maybe Oni was feeling that way now. Elliott thought about how Jesus helped people others didn't like. Elliott wanted to choose the right.

Two of the agents assigned to the case: Elliott and George.



After school, Elliott told Mom all about his problem. "That does sound tough," Mom said. "Have you prayed to ask Heavenly Father for help?"

"How could He help?" Elliott asked.

"Well, maybe He'll help us come up with a good solution," Mom said. "It's always good to have Heavenly Father on your team."

Oni, a new boy in class.



which is why I thought of you boys. Can you boys find Oni at recess and help him feel included, and then come back and tell me how it went?" The boys stood up a little straighter. Elliott and George smiled at each other. They were on the case!

When Mom picked Elliott up from school, she asked him how the day went. "It was great, Mom!" Elliott said. "Oni was so surprised that we all wanted to play with him. He had a big smile on his face all recess!"

"You know, Elliott," Mom said, "maybe Oni has been praying for a friend, just like you did last year. Maybe you are the answer to his prayers."

Elliott felt good to know that Heavenly Father had helped Oni. And now Elliott had another new friend too. Mission accomplished! ●

The author lives in California, USA.

Turn the page for an activity to go with this story.

Elliott and Mom bowed their heads as Elliott said a prayer. Then he and Mom talked about some ideas for solving the problem.

The next morning Mom took Elliott to school early. They wanted to tell their ideas to Elliott's teacher. Mrs. Williams really liked their ideas, especially one.

Later on, just before recess, Mrs. Williams asked Elliott and a few of the other boys to come up to her desk. "Boys," she said, "I have a special assignment, and I know I can trust you with it." The boys looked up at their teacher.

"I know a boy in the other class who could really use a friend. His name is Oni." Some of the boys looked down at the floor.

"Now, I don't want just any friend for Oni," Mrs. Williams continued. "He needs some really good friends,



The assignment: A success!



One year, on my first day of school, I saw a little girl crying. I asked her why she was sad. She said she didn't have any friends. I told her I would be her friend. Her name was Rayna. I was being kind by being a friend to her.

Sofia L., age 8, Arizona, USA