

# GETTING EVEN

BY AMY WEIR

*I wanted revenge, but it wasn't sweet.*

“Pizza face!” I winced and sunk down into the bus seat, trying to disappear. The 20-minute ride home from school every day was pure torture for me. Lance and Sean always took the seat right behind me, and thought up as many names for me as they could. My face, full of acne since the fifth grade, provided them with such entertainment that they acted like I should be proud to receive so much verbal creativity.

I would run home from the bus stop, sit in the corner of my room with a blanket over my head, and cry. This experience was detrimental to a young girl's self-esteem, but after a few months the boys moved on to some other poor soul with a visible affliction.

My self-esteem seemed to recover at the same rate my acne cleared—slowly. By high school a pimple was rare for me. On the other hand, both Lance and Sean, whom I still avoided, had acne problems of their own. They were much more withdrawn and had few friends.

“Serves them right,” I would think. “Now they've got exactly what they made fun of me for.” I felt inclined, even entitled, to some revenge of my own.

My chance came one day when Sean and I were alone in a large school hallway. He didn't see me walking his way,

and when I judged he was close enough for maximum damage, I said in a most disgusted way, “Pizza face!”

He winced, hung his head, and quickened his pace. As I watched him fleeing my torment, looking so alone in the huge hallway, I was astonished at what I felt. I had expected to feel triumphant. Instead I felt guilty and small.

Revenge had seemed like the clear answer for me, but standing there in the hall, I realized that revenge was empty. I felt worse than I'd ever felt in my life. I wanted to apologize. I learned my lesson that day: revenge is not the way to heal your inner injuries.

The Savior said, “I, the Lord, will forgive whom I will forgive, but of you it is required to forgive all men” (D&C 64:10). I always thought forgiveness was for the benefit of the one being forgiven.

That day I realized that whether or not Sean was ever sorry for what he said to me, forgiveness is required for our own benefit. I had torn myself up wanting revenge when I could have built myself up with forgiveness instead.

Forgiveness is the salve for the soul that the Savior made available to us through His atoning sacrifice. We don't need to pay the high price revenge demands to feel whole again. We only need to hand over our pride to gain the forgiveness that the Savior has already paid for. **NE**

