

HOW
TO

LOSE A FRIEND

*Had Charlotte
ruined their
friendship forever?*

By Sheila Kindred

(Based on a true story)

"Let's speak of all the best we can" (Hymns, no. 233).

Charlotte's friend Joan came running toward her, grinning. "Guess what?" Joan said. "I saw the list! I got picked to be one of the soloists for the choir concert!"

Both girls shrieked and jumped up and down. "Am I on the list too?" Charlotte asked. They had gone to tryouts together.

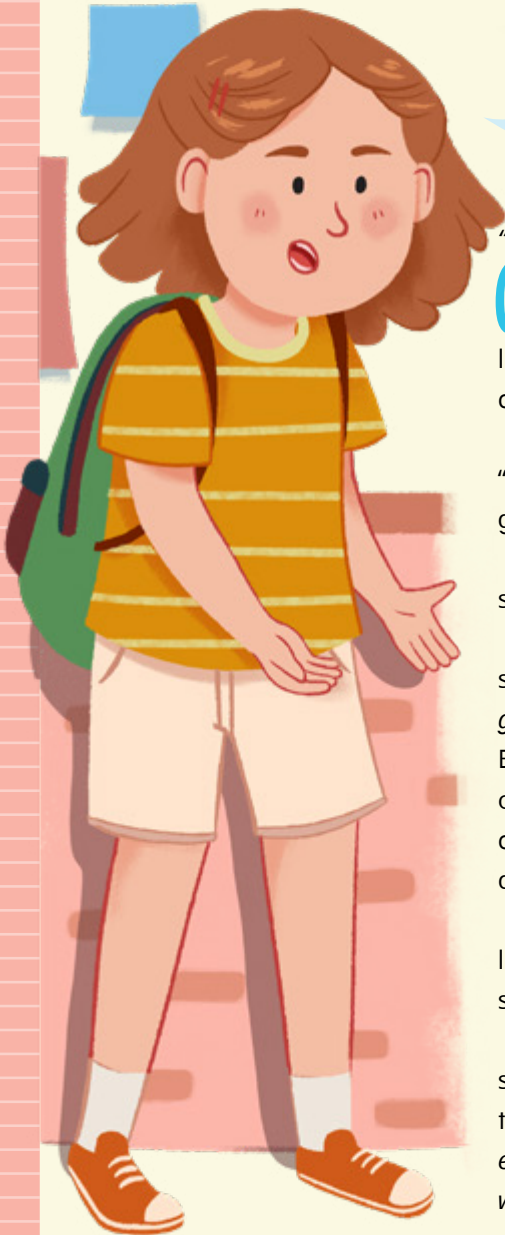
Joan stared down at her feet. "Sorry," Joan said sadly. "You weren't chosen."

Charlotte's face felt hot and her stomach felt sick. *Why was Joan chosen and not me? I'm just as good a singer! I should have a solo too!* she thought. Before she knew it, some unkind words popped out of her mouth. "I bet you only got picked because your parents are friends with the choir director."

Joan's face turned pink and her eyes looked a little wet. "That was mean," she mumbled. Then she walked away.

During the whole bus ride home, Charlotte stared out the window. *Why did I say that?* she thought. *Joan is right. That was mean. And I don't even think it's true. She's a really good singer. Why would I hurt my best friend?*

When Charlotte got home, she prayed in her



room. "Heavenly Father, please help me know how to fix my friendship." Charlotte waited by her bed for a moment, hoping for an answer, but she still wasn't sure what to do.

Finally she stood up and pulled out her homework. It said, "Think of something you do well, then teach the class how to do that same thing badly. Write down a list of instructions to share in class tomorrow."

Charlotte said to herself, "The only thing I did well today was lose a friend."

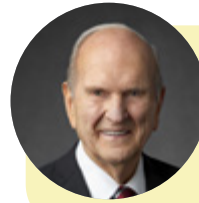
Then she got an idea. Maybe it was an answer to her prayer! She pulled out a stack of notecards and started writing.

The next day Charlotte kept sneaking glances at Joan. Usually the girls would smile at each other during class. Today Joan wouldn't even look at Charlotte. Charlotte tapped her foot all through the lesson until it was her turn to teach the class. She swallowed hard and prayed silently, *Please, Heavenly Father, help this work.*

Charlotte tried to catch Joan's eye when she stood at the front of the classroom, but Joan wouldn't look up. Charlotte held up her cards. "These are friendship cards," she said. "One side tells you how to lose a friend, and the flip side tells you how to gain a friend."

At last Joan looked up.

Charlotte read the cards and showed them to the class:



"Cherish those friends who lift you and make you better . . . [a]nd be such friends to one another."

President Russell M. Nelson

"Reflection and Resolution," BYU Devotional, 1990.

"1. Bully and laugh at others." She flipped the card. "Be kind and include others."

"2. Gossip about others." Flip. "Say kind things."

"3. Get upset when people win." Flip. "Be a good sport."

Charlotte held up the last card.

"4. When you are upset about something, say hurtful things that you don't mean." She glanced at Joan.

"And the other side says?" her teacher asked.

"Say sorry and ask them if they can forgive you."

At recess, Joan came over to Charlotte on the playground. "That was really good," she said.

"Thanks," Charlotte said. "I'm sorry for saying those hurtful things. I didn't mean them."

"I forgive you," said Joan.

The two friends smiled at each other.

"I can't wait to hear your solo," Charlotte said. She was really glad that Heavenly Father helped her make things right. ●

The author lives in Iowa, USA.

