

# Earrings for Jasmine



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(Based on a true story)

*“Jesus walked away from none. He gave his love to ev’ryone. So I will! I will!” (Children’s Songbook, 140).*

Abby stared at the words on the TV screen: HURRICANE KATRINA HITS NEW ORLEANS. There were pictures of houses flooded clear to the roof. Her eyes widened. “Mom, have you seen this?”

“Yes.” Mom sat down. She looked sad. “So many people lost their homes.”

Abby slumped back on the couch. “I wish I could do something!”

“You can always be a friend.”

Abby looked up. “How?”

“A lot of the people who lost their homes are coming to Texas. Maybe some will come to your school.”

Mom was right. A few weeks later, Abby spotted a new girl sitting in the corner, staring down at her desk. Her hair was really short, and she wore long earrings that almost touched her shoulders. Abby thought they looked nice on her. But it was definitely a different style than she was used to seeing.

“This is Jasmine,” Mrs. Franklin said. “She’s from New Orleans. Let’s all make her feel welcome, OK?”

“Yeah, right,” someone whispered. Abby turned to see Isabella and her friends giggle behind their hands. Abby caught Isabella’s eye and looked away. Isabella always made her nervous.

The next day at lunch, Abby saw Jasmine sitting alone, picking at her food. Isabella sat nearby with friends. “She’s so weird!” said one of the boys sitting by Isabella. Everyone laughed. Jasmine just stared down at her tray.

Abby felt like she should sit with Jasmine, but she didn’t want to be teased too.

Then she remembered what Mom said. How would Abby feel if she lost her home and had to move someplace where she didn’t know anyone? She knew what Jesus would want her to do.

“Can I sit here?” Abby asked. Jasmine looked up and nodded.

“I’m Abby. Nice to meet you.”

“You too.”

“Cool earrings!”

Jasmine gave a small smile. “Thanks.” Abby sat by Jasmine every day that week. Jasmine never said anything about Isabella, but she always looked sad whenever Isabella and her friends laughed. Abby wished she could do something to make Jasmine feel better.

One day after school Mom poked her head into Abby’s room. “Wanna go to the mall?”

“Sure!”

Abby’s favorite store was selling surprise bags filled with mystery items like jewelry and nail polish. She bought one and pulled out a pair of long feather earrings that weren’t really her style. She remembered Jasmine’s long earrings. Maybe Jasmine would like them?

The next day Jasmine beamed as she put them on. “This is the nicest thing anyone’s ever done for me!”

Abby smiled back. “They look so great on you!” Then she saw Isabella watching from across the room, and her smile faded.

In gym class Abby and Jasmine were on the same dodgeball team. Isabella and her friends stalked over with their hands on their hips.

“Hand over those earrings,” Isabella demanded. Jasmine shrank back.

Abby’s heart was thumping. But she wanted to stand up for Jasmine. “Leave her alone.”

Isabella crossed her arms. “You should’ve given those earrings to me. Why *her*?”

Jasmine flinched. Abby swallowed and stood up tall. “Because she’s my friend.”

Isabella glared. “Whatever.” She turned and left.

Jasmine threw her arms around Abby.

“Thank you!” Jasmine said over and over. “Thank you! Thank you!”

Abby was glad she had stood up for Jasmine. She had chosen to be brave and kind, like Jesus. And now she had a new friend! ◆

